

Lessons 2 and 3

What would you do?

We take responsibility for our decisions

This matrix sums up the information a teacher needs to plan and deliver the lesson.

Competence training refers directly to EDC/HRE.

The learning objective indicates what students know and understand.

The student task(s), together with the method, form the core element of the learning process.

The materials checklist supports lesson preparation.

The time budget gives a rough guideline for the teacher's time management.

Competence training	Competence in making decisions and taking action: handling dilemmas.	
Learning objective	We make different choices in dealing with dilemmas. In doing so, we exercise our human right to liberty. Taking responsibility involves handling dilemmas – collecting information, considering the consequences, defining priorities, making decisions.	
Student tasks	The students discuss dilemma case stories and reflect on their personal experience.	
Materials and resources	✎ Student handouts 2.1-2.4. 📄 Materials for teachers 2.2. Flipcharts, markers.	
Method	Group work.	
Time budget	1. The teacher introduces the key task of the unit.	10 min
	2. Key task: the students discuss dilemmas.	70 min

Information box

Taking responsibility in secular democratic communities has a constructivist dimension: we must find out how to take responsibility in a given situation. Taking responsibility in dilemma situations, often under time pressure, is difficult, but it is something that can be developed.

The key task of this unit serves this goal. The students share and discuss the problems and choices of priorities in given dilemma situations. Taking responsibility is a concrete matter, and therefore the students deal with four dilemma case stories that differ in content (see ✎ student handout 2.3): taking responsibility for something that someone else should have taken care of, a conflict of loyalties to a teacher and a friend, a conflict between loyalty to a friend and the obligation to obey the law, deciding whether or not to support a project without being completely informed.

The students prepare presentations of their choices, in which they are to focus on their reasons (see ✎ student handout 2.4). To support these presentations, the teacher prepares flipcharts based on this handout, with an adapted layout (see 📄 materials for teachers 2.2).

Extended project-type tasks offer the teacher the opportunity to assess the students' levels of competence development (see stage 3 below).

Lesson description

1. The teacher introduces the key task of the unit

The purpose of this exercise is to analyse the ways to solve dilemmas and the criteria used for this. Under real life conditions, we often have to make these decisions in seconds, and may regret them later if we cannot correct them. In politics, decision-making processes also often deal with dilemmas – with conflicting goals.

In this key task, the students can study this complex decision-making process in slow motion, as it were, and reflect on the responsibility they take when settling a dilemma one way or the other.

They should record their decisions and their reasons on *✓* student handout 2.4. If they cannot agree on a certain decision within their group, both views should be recorded and presented.

The students form groups of four to six. They appoint a group manager, a presenter and a writer who will support the presenter. They discuss the four dilemmas on *✓* student handout 2.3 by selecting some questions and criteria from the toolbox (*✓* student handout 2.2). The groups are free to discuss further dilemmas from their personal experience or from politics.

2. Key task: the students discuss dilemmas


The students work in groups. They are responsible for their work, including any decision on breaks, homework tasks, research for materials, etc.

3. Teacher's activities

The teacher observes the students at work. The students' activity is an opportunity for the teacher to assess their level of competence development – co-operation and team work, time management, understanding of dilemmas, level of reflection, analysis and political judgment.

He/she does not support them unless the students ask for help; in such cases, the teacher should not give a solution, but rather assist the students in finding an appropriate approach.

Preparation of lesson 4:

- The teacher prepares a set of six presentation charts (see  materials for teachers 2.2). Each of these is prepared on a separate sheet of flipchart paper. On four of them, the teacher enters the titles of the dilemma case stories and the alternative options.
- The teacher observes the students, and perhaps also asks them how they are coping with their task. If they find it difficult, or even feel they are being taken to their limits, the teacher should address this problem in the reflection phase (lesson 4, stage 3).