

# Race to the Bottom

**Aim:** To explore the effect of corporate-led globalisation on countries' and workers' rights

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Age:** 12 years and upwards

**You need:** Rights Cards for each team. Flipchart and marker. A copy of the scenario. A copy of the TNC factsheet

## What you need to do:

- Split the group into 4 — 6 teams, depending on numbers (minimum 2 on each team).
- Explain that one team represents a corporation, and the other teams each represent a country.
- Give each country a set of the rights cards and explain that these represent the rights that all the people of the country are entitled to.
- Read out the scenario and begin playing. Teams can name their country and decide which of the rights they would be prepared to do without in order to get the corporation to locate its factory there.
- They also choose which rights they are not prepared to give up.
- Each team then makes a bid for the factory by silently offering up one of their rights cards to the corporation.
- The 'corporation' decides which bid is the most attractive — In the event of a tie, the leader of the corporation chooses and informs the facilitator (youth leader) who removes that right card from ALL the groups. The winning bid is noted by the facilitator and the corporation is said to favour that country.
- In subsequent rounds, it is up to the other teams to convince the corporation to change its mind. Between each bidding round, give the teams a couple of minutes to discuss strategy. After three or four rounds, announce which country has been awarded the factory.

**Scenario:** A Transnational Corporation (TNC) is considering setting up a factory in a country in the Global South. It is looking for the best deal to maximise profits. A meeting has been arranged with the heads of state of a number of potential sites. In return for favourable conditions, the corporation will bring jobs and investment into the economy.

**Debrief:**

- What happened during the game?
- How did you feel when you won or lost the round?
- Was the outcome satisfactory?
- How did the winning team feel they did in protecting their rights? Was it worth it?
- In real life, where is this scenario being played out? In Ireland? In the Global South?

Explain that the game is now over. Mix the teams. In plenary, read out the Transnational Corporations' fact sheet (or parts of). Discuss what is positive / negative about TNCs for people in countries throughout the world – including Ireland.

**RIGHTS CARDS**

<b>Form Unions</b>	<b>Childcare Facilities</b>
<b>Minimum Wage</b>	<b>Safe Working Conditions</b>
<b>Sick Pay</b>	<b>Paid Holidays</b>
<b>Free Transport to work</b>	<b>Contract to prevent unfair dismissal</b>
<b>Normal working hours</b>	<b>Toilet Breaks</b>
<b>Paid overtime</b>	<b>Has to follow strict environmental regulations</b>

**Fact Box: Transnational Corporations (TNCs)**

- Transnational Corporations (TNCs) are enterprises which own or control production or service facilities outside the country in which they are based
- TNCs can influence what we eat, buy and wear through huge advertising campaigns
- Almost 1,000 companies – including some of the world's best known brands – have chosen Ireland as their European headquarters, such as Facebook, Apple, and Google
- Many TNCs locate in Ireland because of the low tax rate for corporations. Because TNCs have many branches, they can locate in different countries to pay less tax

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