

Financial Management Case Study

CHF-denominated loans: A case study

Learning objectives:

1. to develop language skills- reading and writing, listening and speaking;
2. to enrich professional vocabulary connected to finances;
3. to develop problem-solving skills;
4. to develop analytical thinking.

Introduction

The case study on *CHF-denominated loans* is a case study selected by the teachers working in the Unity in Diversity Erasmus+ project. It is directly taken from a report of the National Bank of Romania, <http://www.bnr.ro/SearchResult.aspx>, [05.12.2016]. It aims to develop language skills for learners of English at level C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference. The text describing the case specifically addresses a current problem concerning several Central and East European countries, a real-life issue which involves a large number of people. The case study encourages learners to reflect upon the problem and look for possible felicitous outcomes.

In completing the case study, learners have the opportunity to improve their reading and writing, listening and speaking skills. Reading comprehension exercises assure a proper understanding of the text and develop language skills. Speaking and listening skills are developed through discussions on the topic, expressing (dis)agreement and providing possible solutions to a problem. Writing skills are activated in the process of writing a formal letter. The case study can take between 6 and 8 classroom hours to complete. Some of the activities can be completed by students at home or in the computer laboratory at their school/university.

Explanation of the tasks

The tasks are specifically designed to test students' analytical thinking and problem-solving skills. It also encourages them to develop awareness of the issue. By solving the exercises, they will also learn some useful vocabulary as well as practice grammar. All the activities can be done in a language laboratory or at home in the students' own time.

Warm-up activities: Form nouns/verbs based on adjectives by using the appropriate suffix, then use them in sentences. Discuss some vocabulary items related to finance to introduce students to the situation.

Task 1: Match the given words and expressions with their synonyms in order to develop language skills and acquire professional vocabulary.

Task 2: Decide on the truth value judgment task in order to ensure reading comprehension.

Task 3: Complete the conditional clauses with one word (except for IF) in order to practice variants of IF in conditional sentences.

Task 4: Word-building: use the nouns/verbs formed from adjectives in order to complete the sentences. This task is a continuation of one of the warm-up tasks.

Task 5: Write a letter of inquiry, based on the situation, described in the additional information section. It is a creative task that offers learners the opportunity to develop the skills of writing a formal letter of inquiry.

Background information

In 2007-2008 many people applied for CHF-denominated loans. As the exchange rate of the Swiss Franc increased over the past few years, many borrowers found themselves in a vulnerable situation of not being able to pay the monthly instalments for their loans. Financial institutions offer a variety of solutions ranging from converting CHF-denominated loans into national currencies to implementing debt-rescheduling schemes.