



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit
State Examinations Commission

Leaving Certificate Examination 2025

Economics

Higher Level

Friday 20 June Morning 9:30 - 12:00

400 marks

Examination Number

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Date of Birth

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For example, 3rd February
2005 is entered as 03 02 05

Centre Stamp

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Instructions

There are **two** sections in this paper.

This examination carries 400 marks in total.

Section A: 100 marks
Answer **8** out of **10** questions from this section.
Questions 2, 3 and 4 contain an internal choice.

Section B: 300 marks
Answer **4** out of **6** questions.
All questions in this section carry 75 marks.

Write your answers in blue or black pen.

Write your answers in the spaces provided in this booklet. There is space for extra work at the end of the booklet. Label any such extra work clearly with the question number and part.

This examination booklet will be scanned and your work will be presented to an examiner on screen. Anything that you write outside of the answer areas may not be seen by the examiner.

The superintendent will give you a copy of the Formulae and Tables booklet, if required. You must return it at the end of the examination. You are not allowed to bring your own copy into the examination.

Calculators may be used.

Write the make and model of your calculator here:



Answer 8 out of 10 questions.

Question 1

Germany hosted the European Football Championship in 2024. 2.7 million people attended the 51 matches.



- (a) Discuss one argument for and one argument against the view that hosting major sporting events, such as Euro 2024, benefits the host country's economy.

Argument for hosting events:

Argument against hosting events:

- (b) Outline what you understand by the economic term **cost benefit analysis**.

Cost benefit analysis:

Question 2

The table below shows household disposable income, household consumption expenditure, and household savings in Ireland for Quarter 1, 2024.

Household Disposable Income	€43.91 billion
Household Consumption Expenditure	€37.32 billion
Household Savings	€6.59 billion

Adapted from the CSO

- (a) From the data in the above table, calculate the household percentage savings rate for Quarter 1, 2024. **Show all your workings.**

Workings:
Answer:

Answer either (b) or (c)

- (b) Outline two economic factors which some households in Ireland may consider when deciding how much of their income to save (other than their level of income).

1.
2.

OR

- (c) A high level of household savings is desirable for the Irish economy.

Do you agree or disagree with this statement?

Indicate your answer below by ticking (✓) the relevant box and justify your answer.

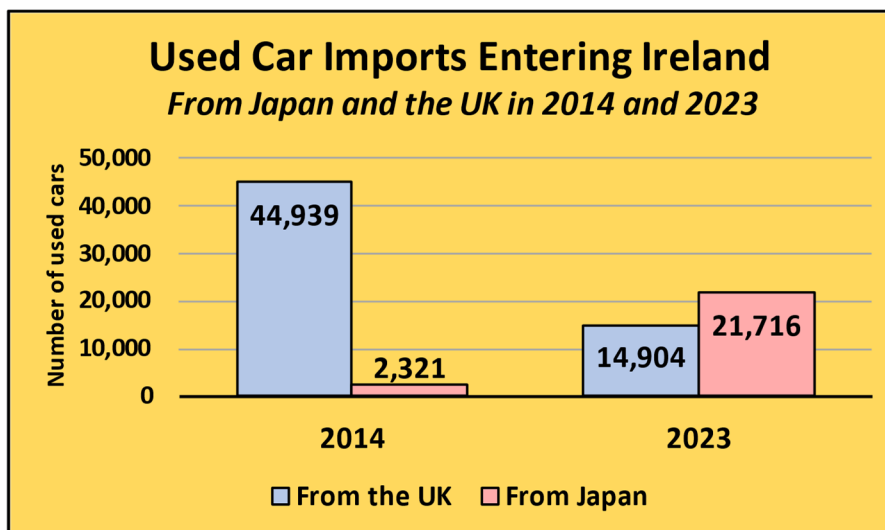
Agree	☐
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Disagree	☐
----------	--------------------------

Justify:

Question 3

The chart below shows the number of used cars imported into Ireland from both Japan and the UK in 2014 and in 2023.



Adapted from cartell.ie

- (a) Outline one economic reason why Irish consumers are switching to importing more used cars from Japan and fewer used cars from the UK, as shown in the chart above.

Economic reason:

Answer either (b) or (c)

- (b) In 2024, the European Union (EU) increased the tariffs charged on electric vehicles (EVs) imported from China. Explain one alternative measure the EU could use (other than tariffs) in order to reduce imports of EVs from China.

Alternative measure:
Explanation:

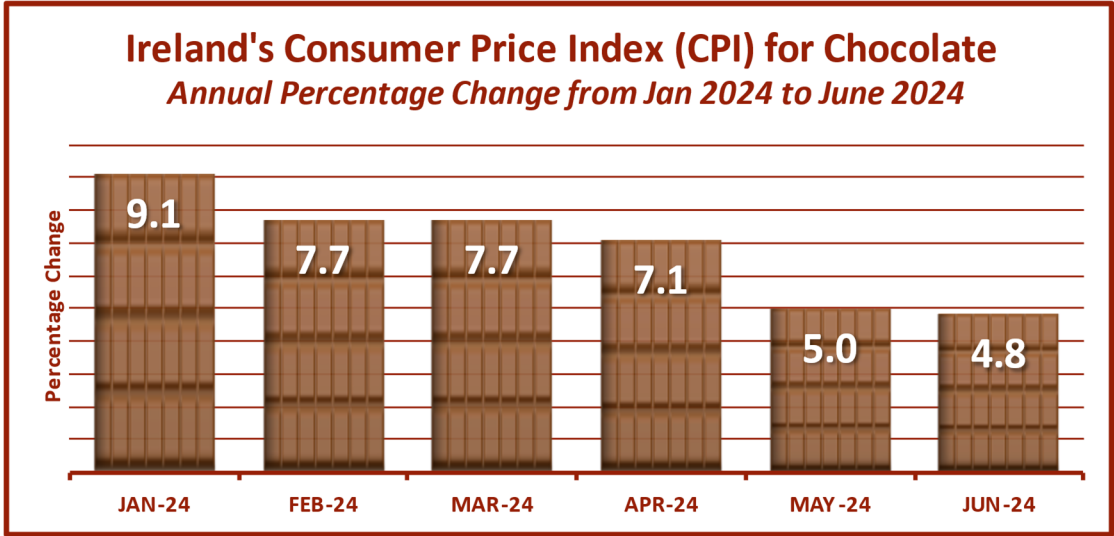
OR

- (c) Trade protectionism seems to be increasing globally.
Outline one reason why, in your opinion, trade protectionism seems to be increasing.

Reason:

Question 4

The chart below displays the year-on-year percentage changes in Ireland’s Consumer Price Index (CPI) for chocolate from January 2024 to June 2024.



Adapted from the CSO

- (a) Comment on the trend in the CPI for chocolate shown above, using data from the chart, and explain if the trend you have outlined is beneficial for chocolate consumers.

Comment on trend:
Explain if trend is beneficial:

Answer either (b) or (c)

- (b) While the rate of price inflation has fallen over the past three years, Irish consumers continue to pay higher prices.
Outline one measure both the Irish government **and** consumers in Ireland have taken to cope with increases in the cost of living.

Irish government:
Consumers in Ireland:

OR

- (c) Chocolate producers buy cocoa in advance of making products. In Q1, 2024, cocoa prices tripled. Manufacturers are expected to pass these higher costs on to shoppers and retailers in Q4, when most of the industry's sales are made around Halloween and Christmas.

Adapted from RTÉ News

Do you regard the above situation to be an example of demand-pull inflation or cost-push inflation? Indicate your choice below by ticking (✓) the relevant box and justify your choice.

Demand-pull inflation

☐

Cost-push inflation

☐

Justify:

Question 5

- (a) Explain the difference between a positive economic statement and a normative economic statement.

Positive economic statement:

Normative economic statement:

- (b) Determine whether each of the economic statements below is a positive statement or a normative statement. Indicate your choice below by ticking (✓) the relevant box.

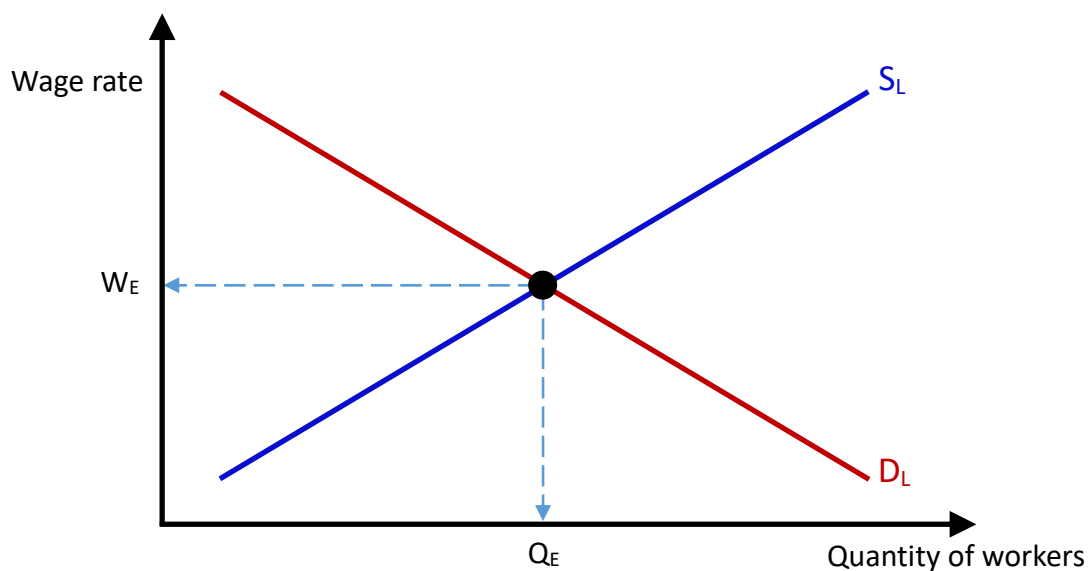
Economic Statement		Positive Statement	Normative Statement
1.	All citizens in Ireland deserve free healthcare to ensure equal access to medical services.		
2.	If the Irish government were to raise the corporation tax rate by 3%, it would reduce foreign direct investment in the country by at least 25%.		

Question 6

- (a) The national minimum wage rate currently stands at €13.50 per hour. This is an example of a price floor. Explain what you understand by the economic term price floor.

Price floor:

- (b) The diagram below shows a free labour market. Complete the diagram below to show how a change to Ireland's current national minimum wage rate, at a rate higher than W_E in the diagram below, will affect the market for labour. Clearly label any changes you make. Explain your answer.



Explanation:

Question 7

The table below shows estimated values for Income Elasticity of Demand (YED) for selected goods in Ireland.

	Product	YED value
1	Domestic electricity	+ 0.1
2	Instant noodles	- 0.5
3	Premium branded clothing	+ 4.1

- (a) Identify one necessity and one luxury good from the above table, using the Income Elasticity of Demand (YED) data provided. Justify both of your answers.

	Product	Justify
Necessity		
Luxury good		

- (b) The government announced in Budget 2025 that it would spend €9m on phone pouches (for the storage of each student's mobile phone during the school day) for all secondary school students in the country.

Phone pouches in all secondary schools are considered to be **merit goods**.
Explain your understanding of this statement.

Explanation:

Question 8

- (a) Explain the concept of environmental sustainability and outline one recent initiative introduced by the Irish government to improve the country's environmental sustainability.

Environmental sustainability:
Recent government initiative:

- (b) A study has shown that shoppers struggle to tell the difference between goods that have genuinely low impacts on the environment and those that are 'greenwashed'.

Adapted from the Irish Independent (May, 2024)

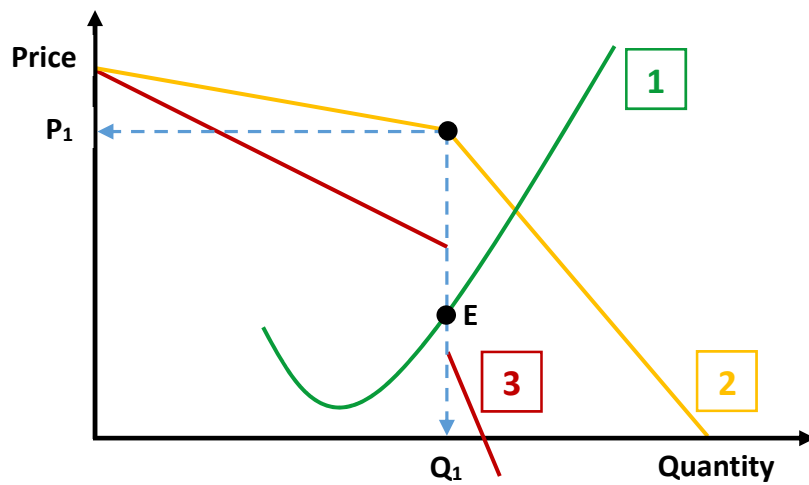
(Greenwashing is a marketing measure / practice where some companies make false or exaggerated claims to appear more environmentally friendly than they actually are).

Explain two ways in which greenwashing can lead to **market failure**.

1.
2.

Question 9

The diagram below represents the long run equilibrium of a firm operating in an **oligopoly** market.



- (a) Using the answer box provided, write out in full what each of the numbered items (1 to 3) in the diagram above represent. **Do not use abbreviations.**

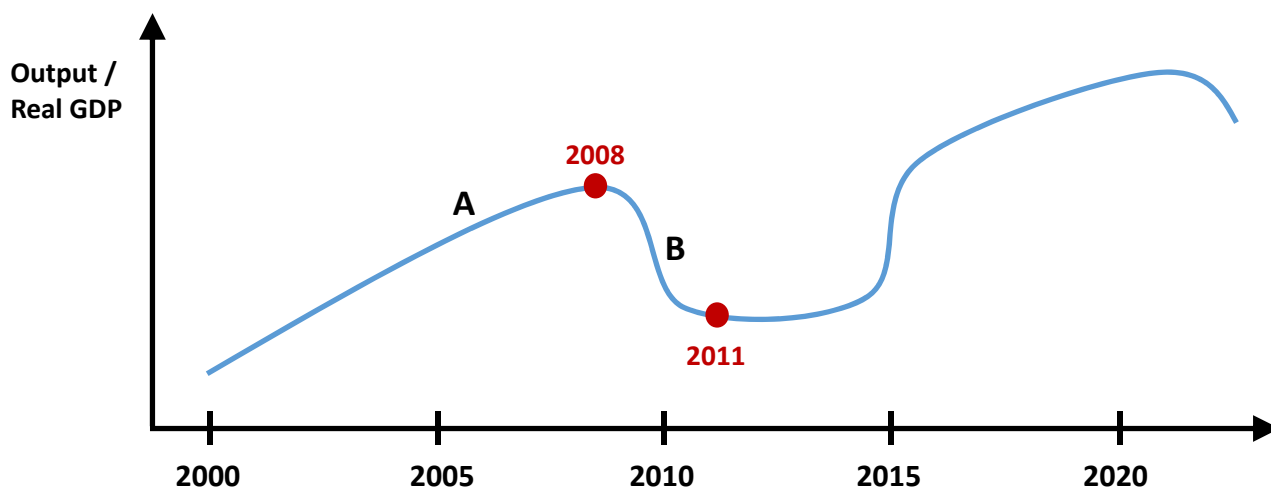
Number	Label (Do not use abbreviations)
1	
2	
3	

- (b) With reference to the diagram above, explain the shape of the curve labelled 2.

Explanation:

Question 10

The diagram below illustrates different phases of Ireland's economic cycle since 2000.



(a) Identify from the diagram above which option (A or B) represents:

- An economic boom
- An economic recession

Indicate your choice below by inserting A or B in the appropriate box and justify your choice in each case.

An economic boom		An economic recession	
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Economic boom justification:
Economic recession justification:

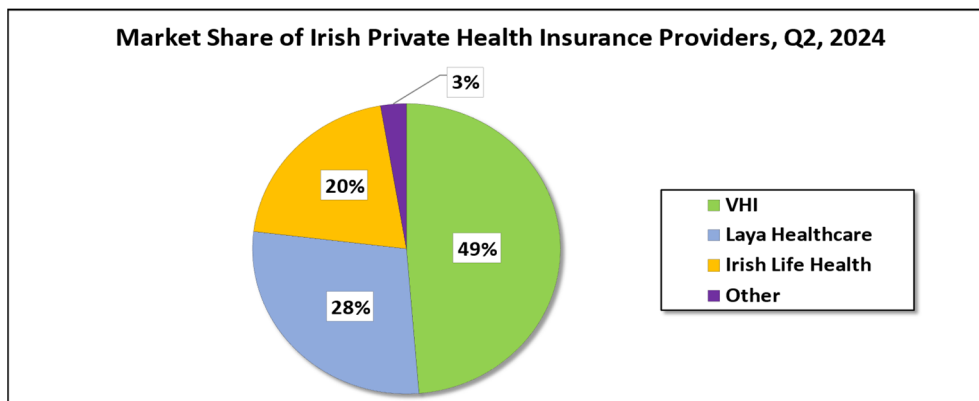
(b) Outline one economic factor which led to a change in Ireland's economic output during the years 2008 to 2011.

Economic factor:

Answer 4 out of 6 questions

Question 11

The chart below shows the market shares of private health insurance companies in Ireland.



Adapted from hia.ie

- (a) (i) Using the data provided above, calculate the Herfindahl Hirschman Index (HHI) to determine whether the market is competitive or highly concentrated. Indicate your answer below by ticking (✓) the relevant box and justify your answer.

Show all your workings.

Competitive

Highly concentrated

Workings:

Justify:

- (ii) New health insurance provider, Level Health, to enter the Irish market this week.

Irish Independent, November, 2024

With the entry of this new firm into the Irish health insurance market, outline two potential economic effects on the **existing firms** in the industry.

1.

2.

- (b) (i) A patent gives a pharmaceutical company the sole right to produce and sell a new drug.
Explain, with the aid of a fully labelled diagram (including the axes), the long run equilibrium position of a pharmaceutical company operating in a **monopoly** market.



Explanation:

Explanation:

- (ii) Outline one barrier to entry often found in monopoly markets, other than a patent.

Barrier to entry:

Barrier to entry:

- (iii) Outline one economic advantage and one economic disadvantage **for consumers**, if a pharmaceutical company has monopoly power.

Economic advantage:
Economic disadvantage:

- (c) More than three-quarters of the approximately 2,500 GP / doctor practices in Ireland have now closed their lists to new patients and over 700 GPs / doctors are due to retire in the next five years.

Adapted from RTÉ News

- (i) Outline two possible effects that the above development may have on existing / potential patients.

1.
2.

- (ii) Suggest one economic measure the Irish government could take to address the current shortage of GPs / doctors.

Economic measure:

- (iii) The Irish healthcare system reflects Ireland's broader mixed economy.

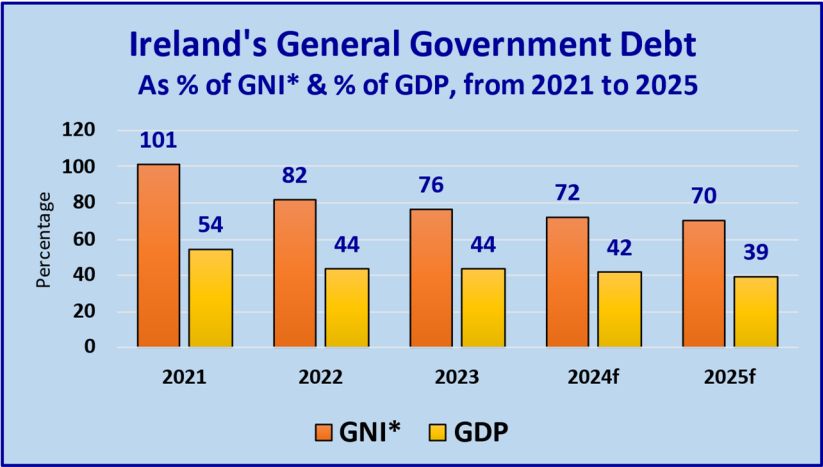
Explain what is meant by the term mixed economy and outline another example which shows that Ireland is a mixed economy.

Mixed economy:
Example:

75 marks

Question 12

The chart below displays Ireland’s general government debt as a percentage of its Modified Gross National Income (GNI*) and of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the years from 2021 to 2025. (Figures for 2024 and 2025 are forecasted).



Adapted from the NTMA

- (a) (i) Outline the overall trend in Ireland’s general government debt, as shown in the diagram above, **using data from the chart**. Indicate which overall trend you are commenting on by ticking (✓) the relevant box:

Government debt as a % of GNI* ☐ or Government debt as a % of GDP ☐

Overall trend:

- (ii) Outline one economic advantage of Ireland reducing its level of general government debt for each of the following:
- Taxpayers in Ireland
 - The Irish government.

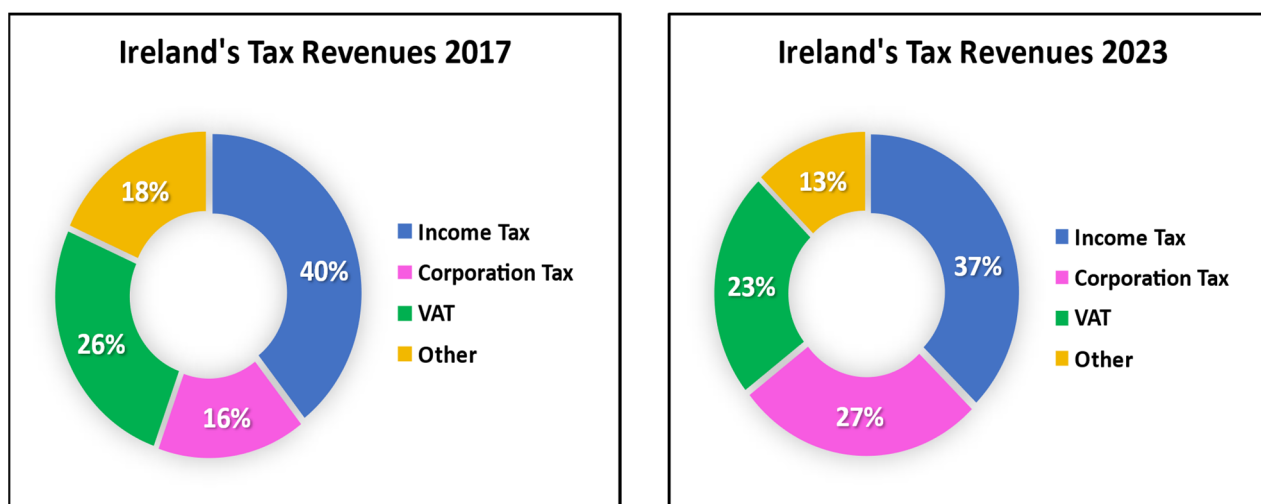
Taxpayers in Ireland:
The Irish government:

- (iii) Which is a more accurate measure of Ireland's debt burden:
debt as a percentage of GNI* **or** debt as a percentage of GDP?
Indicate your choice below by ticking (✓) the relevant box and justify your choice.

Debt as a percentage of GNI*		Debt as a percentage of GDP	
------------------------------	--	-----------------------------	--

Justify:

- (b) The two charts below compare Ireland's main sources of tax revenue in 2017 and in 2023.



- (i) Identify the **MOST** significant change which occurred in the composition of Irish tax revenue from 2017 to 2023, using data from the charts above.
Outline one reason for this significant change.

Most significant change:
Reason for change:

- (ii) Do you regard Ireland's value added tax system to be a progressive tax or a regressive tax? Indicate your answer below by ticking (✓) the relevant box and justify your choice.

Progressive tax	☐
-----------------	--------------------------

Regressive tax	☐
----------------	--------------------------

Justify:

- (iii) Some politicians are debating the possible introduction of a higher rate of income tax on individuals who earn above €100,000 per annum.

Do you agree or disagree with the statement, that individuals who earn above €100,000 per annum should pay a higher rate of income tax?

Indicate your choice below by ticking (✓) the relevant box and justify your choice.

Agree	☐
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Disagree	☐
----------	--------------------------

Justify:

- (c) (i) This September, the Irish government will introduce an auto-enrolment pension scheme for employees, who do not have a private pension.

Note: For every €3 an employee puts into their pension, €4 more will be added to it: €3 by their employer and €1 by the State.

Outline one possible economic advantage to the employee **and** one possible economic disadvantage to the employer of this scheme.

Advantage to the employee:
Disadvantage to the employer:

- (ii) Discuss how this auto-enrolment pension scheme may influence the multiplier effect in Ireland in the short term (if it leads to a lower marginal propensity to consume, MPC).

Influence on the multiplier effect:

75 marks

Question 13

The chart below shows the value of Ireland’s exports, by region, in the first six months of 2024.



Adapted from the CSO

- (a) (i) Calculate the percentage of Ireland’s total goods exports that entered the **United States**. **Show all your workings.**

Workings:
Answer:

- (ii) In 2022, the CSO reported that 11,785 companies in Ireland were engaged in exporting goods.

Outline one economic benefit **and** one economic challenge of Ireland's exports for the Irish economy.

Economic benefit:
Economic challenge:

- (iii) Ireland is now the ninth-largest contributor of foreign direct investment (FDI) into the US.

Adapted from the Sunday Independent

Outline one economic reason why such outflows of FDI from Ireland are important **for the Irish economy**.

Reason:

- (b) Over 90 foreign pharmaceutical companies operate in Ireland and they employ over 45,000 people.

Adapted from idaireland.com

- (i) Ireland has a comparative advantage in attracting pharmaceutical foreign direct investment (FDI).

Explain the principle of comparative advantage.

Principle of comparative advantage:

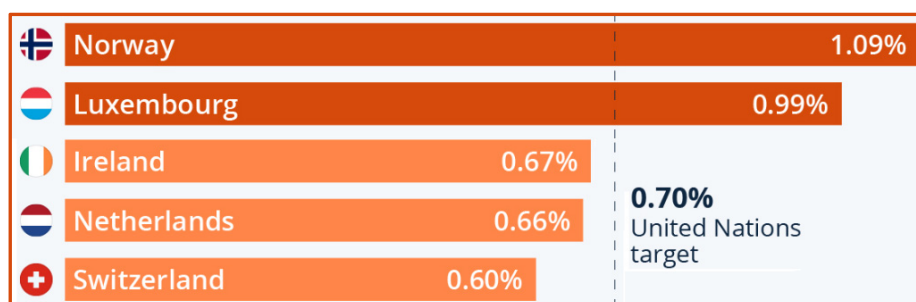
- (ii) Outline two sources of comparative advantage in Ireland, which help to attract foreign pharmaceutical companies.

1.
2.

- (iii) The World Trade Organisation (WTO) plays a crucial role in global trade.
Outline one function of the WTO.

One function:

- (c) The chart below shows the percentage of Gross National Income (GNI) which various countries contributed to Official Development Assistance (ODA) in 2023.



Adapted from Statista

- (i) Outline one possible economic reason for the Irish government failing to reach the UN target of 0.70% of GNI.

Explain:

- (ii) Outline one possible economic benefit that Ireland's ODA provides to least developed countries (LDCs).

Outline:

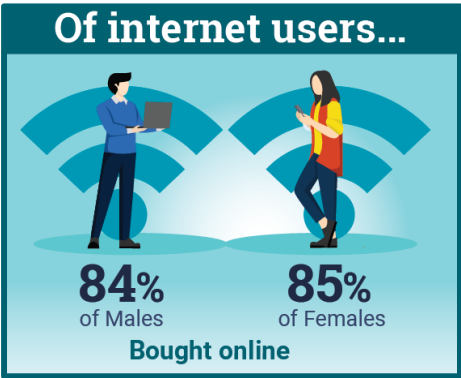
- (iii) Outline one challenge for LDCs who have become dependent on international aid, such as ODA.

Challenge:

75 marks

Question 14

The graphic below shows that the majority of internet users in Ireland bought online in 2023.



Adapted from Household Digital Consumer Behaviour 2024, CSO

- (a) (i) Outline two benefits of online shopping for **consumers in Ireland**, other than being able to choose from a wider selection of products.

1.
2.

- (ii) Amazon plans to open a dedicated store in Ireland in 2025, offering over 100 million products.

Outline two economic **difficulties** which Amazon's expansion may create for small and medium-sized retailers operating in Ireland.

1.
2.

- (iii) Online shopping shows how advances in technology can influence Ireland's market economy. Outline **one other way** that changes in technology may affect how **either** of the following sectors operate.

Indicate your sector by ticking (✓) the relevant box below and outline your answer.

Agriculture	☐	Sports and fitness	☐
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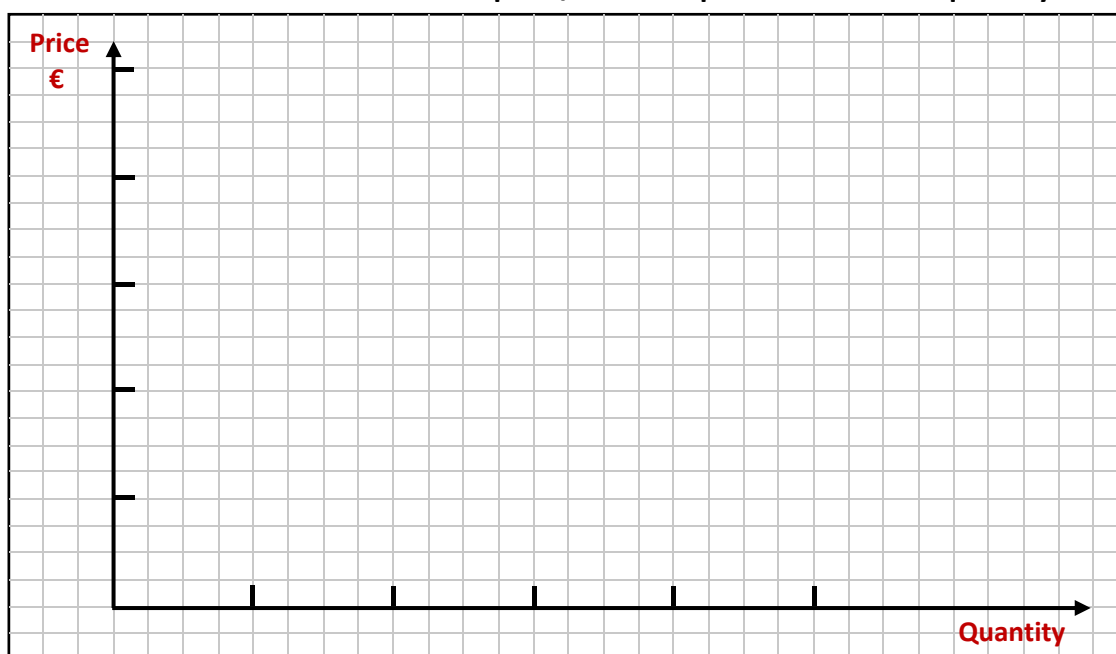
Outline:

- (b) The data below represents the market demand and the market supply schedules for a new deodorant, called Scentastic.

Price (€)	Quantity Demanded (units)	Quantity Supplied (units)
€1.00	50,000	10,000
€1.50	40,000	20,000
€2.00	30,000	30,000
€2.50	20,000	40,000
€3.00	10,000	50,000

- (i) Using the data above, complete on the graph paper provided below:
- The market demand curve for Scentastic.
 - The market supply curve for Scentastic.
 - Clearly label the point of equilibrium as E.
 - Show the equilibrium price (P_e) and the equilibrium quantity (Q_e) on the graph.

Note: You must complete/fill in the price axis and the quantity axis.



- (ii) Using an appropriate formula, calculate the **price elasticity of demand (PED)** for Scentastic, when its price rises from €2.00 to €2.50 and quantity demanded decreases from 30,000 units to 20,000 units.
Explain the economic meaning of your answer and **show all your workings**.

Workings:
Answer:
Economic meaning:

- (c) (i) Nearly 200,000 citizens in Ireland work in the gig economy.

“Navigating Ireland’s Gig Economy: Strategies for Success”, esoftskills.ie

(Note: the gig economy is a labour market where short-term contracts or freelance work is widespread).

The gig economy needs to be better regulated for its workers.

Do you agree or disagree with the statement above?

Indicate your choice below by ticking (✓) the relevant box and justify your choice.

Agree	☐
-------	--------------------------

Disagree	☐
----------	--------------------------

Justify:

- (ii) Ireland has maintained near to full employment since January 2022.
Outline one positive economic effect and one negative economic effect of full employment on the Irish economy.

Positive economic effect:
Negative economic effect:

75 marks

Question 15

The Government has published The Finance (Provision of Access to Cash Infrastructure) Bill 2024, which **aims to ensure that sufficient and effective access to cash is available across the country.**

Adapted from RTÉ News, (July, 2024)

- (a) (i) Do you agree or disagree with The Finance (Provision of Access to Cash Infrastructure) Bill 2024?

Indicate your choice below by ticking (✓) the relevant box and justify your choice.

Agree	
-------	--

Disagree	
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Justify:

- (ii) Outline two factors that affect the amount of credit that Irish retail banks can create.

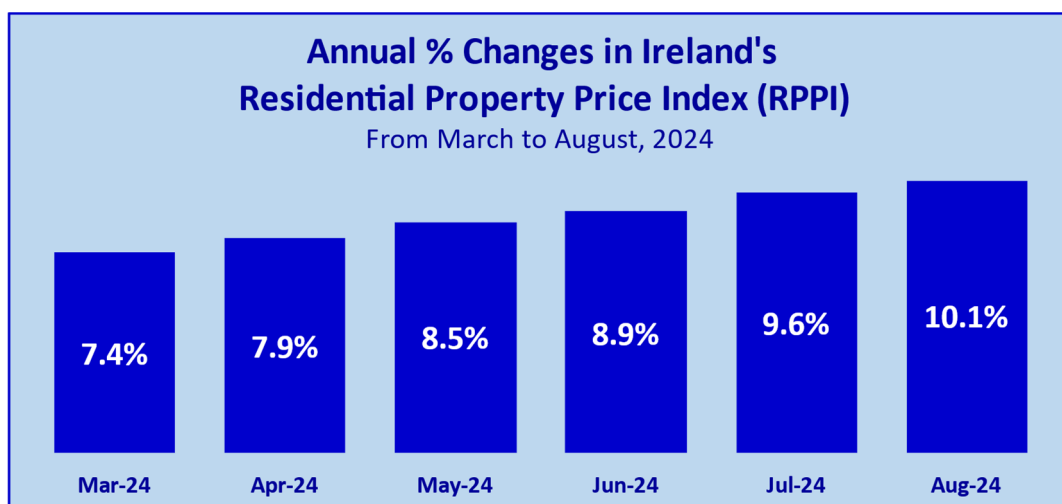
1.
2.

- (iii) According to the Irish Times, Allied Irish Bank (AIB) is investing €40 million upgrading almost two-thirds of its 170-branch network by the end of 2025.

Outline one economic reason, why, in your opinion, AIB is making this investment.

Economic reason:

- (b) The chart below, adapted from the CSO, shows the year-on-year percentage changes in the Residential Property Price Index (RPPI) for Ireland from March to August, 2024.



- (i) Using the data in the chart above, calculate the percentage increase in the RPPI from March 2024 to August 2024. **Show all your workings.**

Workings:

Answer:

- (ii) Rising property prices is affecting the labour market in Ireland.

Discuss two economic effects which this development may have on the **Irish labour market**.

1.

2.

- (iii) In Budget 2025, the government decided it was extending mortgage interest relief for taxpayers who are paying more in mortgage interest in 2024 than they were in 2022.

(Mortgage interest relief is a tax relief on the interest paid in a year on a qualifying mortgage loan).

Do you agree or disagree with this government decision?

Indicate your choice below by ticking (✓) the relevant box and justify your choice.

Agree	
-------	--

Disagree	
----------	--

Justify:

- (c) What we have to prioritise now is enabling infrastructure to deal with the medium-term needs of our economy.

Minister for Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform
Sunday Business Post, October 2024

- (i) Explain the economic term public infrastructure and illustrate your answer with an example.

Public infrastructure:
Example:

- (ii) Discuss two possible challenges for the Irish economy, if government expenditure on long-term infrastructure is **insufficient**.

1.
2.

- (iii) The data below shows the levels of total expenditure by the Irish government for the years 2015, 2019, and 2025 (forecasted).

Year	2015	2019	2025 ^f
Government Expenditure	€54 billion	€67 billion	€105.4 billion

Adapted from the Department of Finance

Explain two economic reasons for the significant increase in government expenditure from 2015 to the projected figure for 2025, other than spending on infrastructure.

1.
2.

(75 marks)

Question 16

The table below shows the daily output and production costs for a smoothie and juice bar in Sligo.

Output of Smoothies	Fixed Cost (€)	Variable Cost (€)	Total Cost (€)	Average Cost (€)
0	60	0	60	—
20	60	A	70	3.50
40	60	30	90	2.25
60	60	55	115	B

- (a) (i) Complete the variable cost and average cost, labelled A and B, in the table below. **Show all your workings.**

Label	Workings	Answer €
A		
B		

- (ii) If the outlet charges €4.00 for a fresh smoothie, calculate the profit it earns if it sells 40 smoothies in a day. **Show all your workings.**

Workings:
Answer:

- (iii) Outline two objectives the owner of the smoothie and juice bar may pursue other than profit maximisation.

1.
2.

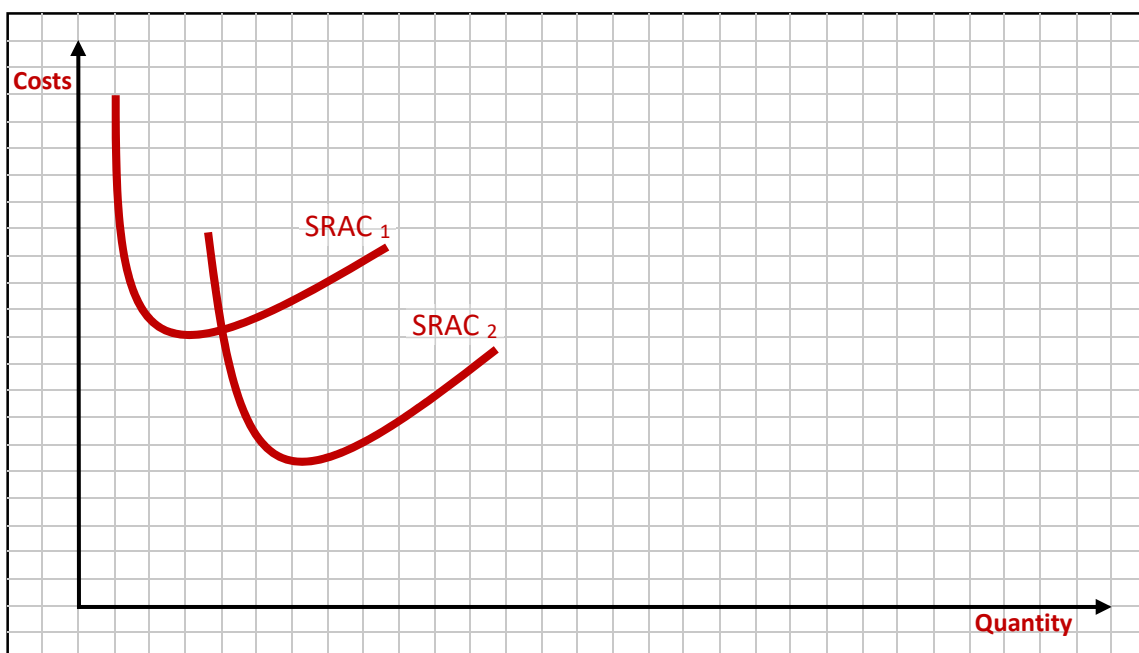
- (b) (i) Retailers in the Irish fresh smoothie market can experience diseconomies of scale. Explain the term diseconomies of scale and outline one example which a retailer making fresh smoothies may experience.

Diseconomies of scale:
Example:

- (ii) The partially completed diagram below shows how the costs for a smoothie bar change as it expands its operations over time.

Complete the diagram with three more short run average cost curves (SRAC) to show how the long run average cost curve (LRAC) is constructed. **Label your diagram fully.**

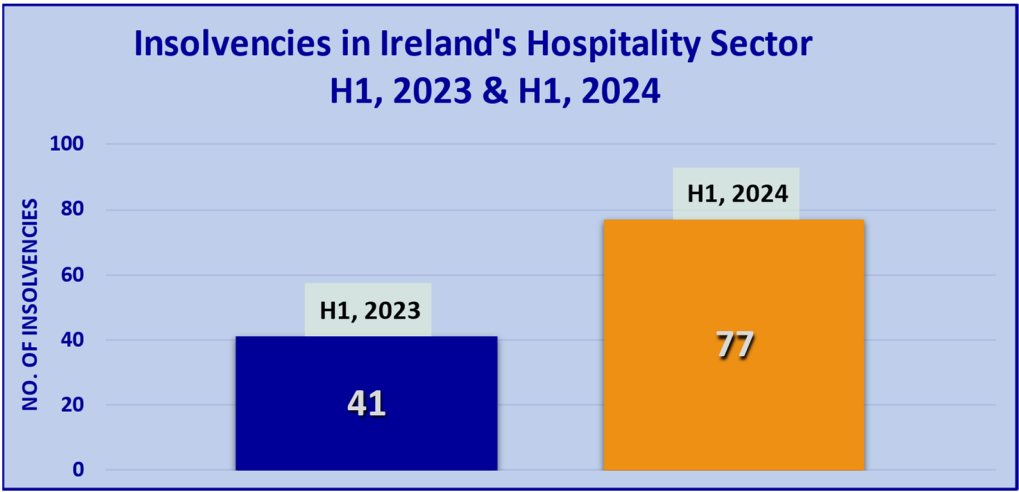
Explain the shape of the LRAC curve you have drawn in the space provided below.



Downward sloping part of the LRAC curve:

Upward sloping part of the LRAC curve:

- (c) The graphic below shows the number of companies in Ireland's hospitality sector that became insolvent in the first half of 2023 and of 2024.
- Note: Insolvency occurs when a company cannot meet its financial commitments and may cease to operate.



Adapted from Deloitte (June, 2024)

- (i) Outline two economic measures the Irish government could implement to help reduce the number of closures in the Irish hospitality industry.

1.
2.

- (ii) In the short run a company may remain in business even if it is making a loss.
Explain the meaning of this statement.

Explanation:

- (iii) Entrepreneurship is central to Ireland's broad-based economic growth and prosperity.

Adapted from the OECD

Discuss two reasons, why entrepreneurship is important to the continued development of the Irish economy.

1.
2.

(75 marks)

Indicate clearly the number and part of the question(s) you are answering.

[illegible]

Indicate clearly the number and part of the question(s) you are answering.

[illegible]

Indicate clearly the number and part of the question(s) you are answering.

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Leaving Certificate – Higher Level

Economics

Friday 20 June

Morning 9:30 - 12:00