

The European Union — Ordinary Level

Outline three effects of the Single European Market on Irish Firms.

(15m)(LCOL 2004)

Marks: 3 points @ 5 marks each.

A SAMPLE ANSWER:

- Large market available to Irish firms to export to.
- Economies of scale (therefore lower costs) available to firms which export to EU.
- More competition from the EU makes life tougher for Irish Firms.

Also

- Free movement from EU means Irish firms can get skilled workers easily from EU countries.
- Public procurement rules mean that Irish Firms must cooperate with other EU firms for Government contracts.

The European Union – Higher Level

(i) Outline the decision-making process of the European Union.

(ii) Explain the term 'EU Directive' and the effect of one of them on Irish business.

(25m) (LCHL 2006)

Marks:

- Decision making process: 3 points @ 5 marks each. Each point 2 marks for stating it and 3 marks for elaboration.
- EU Directive: Explanation 5 marks, effect 3 marks and 2 marks for elaboration.

A SAMPLE ANSWER:

(i) EU decisions are made as follows:

- A proposal is made by the EU Commission after research and consultation.
- This proposal is discussed by the EU Parliament and changes are proposed
- Opinions of 'interested parties' are sought, and considered
- Decisions are made by the Council of Ministers, either in the form a Regulation, a Directive or a Decision.

Also

- EU legislation is implemented and enforced by the EU Commission which can fine companies or member-states for non-compliance.

(ii) An EU Directive is a legally-binding instruction to a member state of the EU to change its national laws to achieve the desired objective within a certain time-limit.

e.g. The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive which obliges businesses which sell electrical goods to take back old equipment from their customers.

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