



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit
State Examinations Commission

Leaving Certificate Examination 2026

Geography

Part Two

Higher Level

Friday 5 June Morning 9:30 – 12:20

400 marks

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PART TWO – STRUCTURED and ESSAY QUESTIONS – 320 MARKS

You must attempt **FOUR** questions. You must answer one question from three of the sections below.

- Section 1 – **Patterns and Processes in the Physical Environment** (Questions 1-3)
- Section 2 – **Regional Geography** (Questions 4-6)
- Section 3 – **Electives** (Questions 7-12)
- Section 4 – **Options** (Questions 13-24)

The fourth question can be from any section.

All questions carry equal marks.

THESE QUESTIONS ARE TO BE ANSWERED IN THE ANSWERBOOK CONTAINING PART ONE

SECTION 1
PATTERNS AND PROCESSES IN THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Questions 1 to 3

All questions carry 80 marks.

Question 1

1A. Ordnance Survey Map

Examine the 1:50 000 Ordnance Survey map and legend accompanying this paper.

Draw a sketch map of the area shown to half scale.

On it, correctly show and label each of the following:

- The coastline
- The railway line
- The wind farm south of Dundalk town
- The entire area of land above 300 metres.

[20m]

1B. Seismic Activity

Explain how the occurrence of earthquakes can be predicted and their effects reduced.

[30m]

1C. Rocks

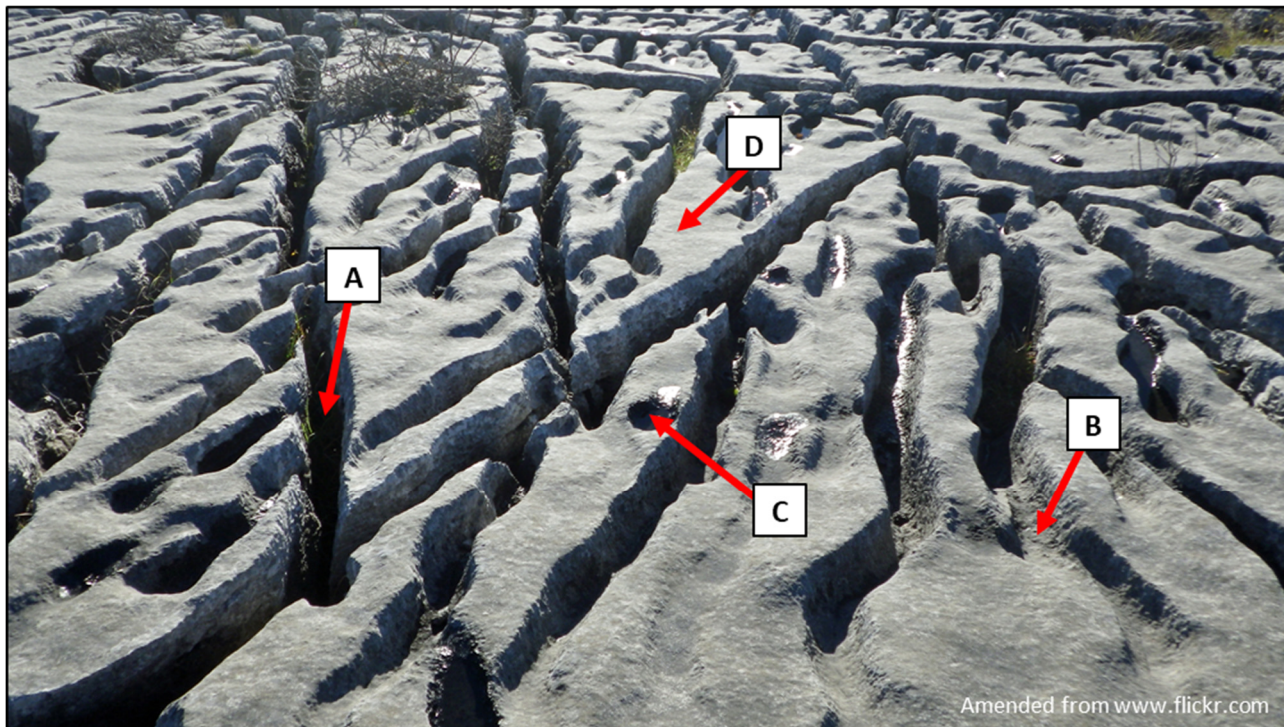
Explain the formation of each of the following, with reference to examples that you have studied:

- **One** sedimentary rock
- **One** metamorphic rock.

[30m]

Question 2

2A. Chemical Weathering



Examine the photograph above of a section of limestone pavement and answer each of the following questions.

- (i) Name each of the features labelled **A**, **B**, **C** and **D**.
- (ii) Name **two** features formed below the surface of a karst landscape.
- (iii) What is the term used for the type of chemical weathering that has occurred in the photograph?
- (iv) What is the name given to the horizontal line where two layers of sedimentary rock meet?
- (v) Explain briefly the term *permeable rock*.

[20m]

2B. Landscape Development

Answer (i) or (ii)

- (i) Examine the role of the **processes of erosion** on the formation of **one** fluvial landform **or one** coastal landform **or one** glacial landform that you have studied.

Or

- (ii) Describe and explain the **factors governing the operation** of **one** mass movement process that you have studied.

[30m]

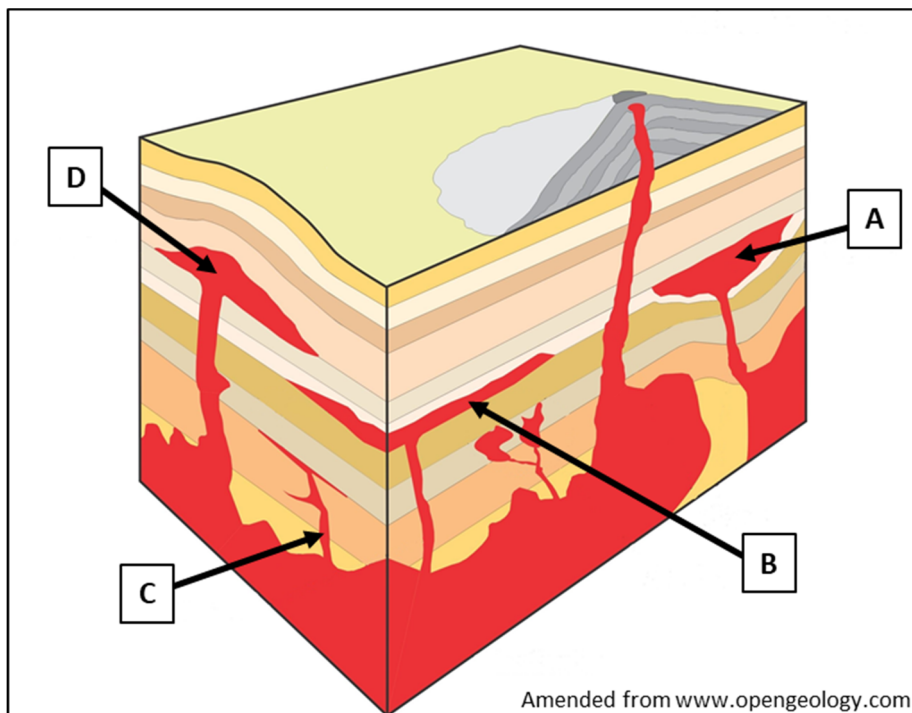
2C. Plate Boundaries

Describe and explain constructive plate boundaries.

[30m]

Question 3

3A. The Tectonic Cycle



Examine the diagram above which shows plutonic features and answer each of the following questions.

- Name each of the features labelled **A**, **B**, **C** and **D**.
- In your answerbook, state whether the following statement is true or false:
All of the features labelled on the diagram above are formed by exogenic processes.
- Name **two** pyroclastic materials ejected from a volcano during an eruption.
- Name **one** example of a plutonic igneous rock.
- Explain briefly the term *convection current*.

[20m]

3B. Human Interaction with Surface Processes

Human activity impacts on surface processes.

Examine this statement with reference to **one** of the following:

- The impact of flood control measures on river processes
- The impact of coastal defence measures on coastal processes
- The impact of human activities on mass movement processes.

[30m]

3C. Weathering

Explain the role of temperature in the process of physical/mechanical weathering.

[30m]

SECTION 2

REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY

Questions 4 to 6

All questions carry 80 marks.

Question 4

4A. Map Skills

Draw an outline map of a **European** region (not in Ireland) that you have studied.

On it, show and name each of the following:

- **Two** named urban centres
- The course of **one** named river
- The outline of **one** named feature of relief (upland or lowland).

[20m]

4B. Primary Economic Activity

Explain any **two** factors that have influenced the development of **one** primary economic activity in an **Irish** region that you have studied.

[30m]

4C. Complexity of Regions

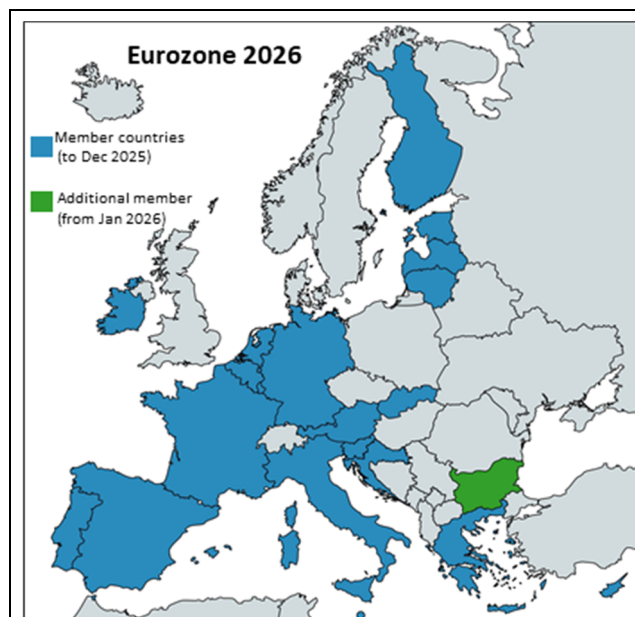
Changes in boundaries over time can impact on cultural groups.

Examine this statement with reference to example(s) that you have studied.

[30m]

Question 5

5A. Complexity of Regions



Regional geography illustrates the complexity of economic processes. This is especially relevant in relation to Monetary Union. When signed in 1992, the Maastricht Treaty set the European Union (EU) on the path to establish a single currency.

In July 2025, the European Parliament endorsed Bulgaria's bid to join the euro from January 2026, changing currency from the Bulgarian Lev to Euro. All EU countries are part of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), and now 21 of them are part of the eurozone, having replaced their national currencies with the single currency, Bulgaria being the 21st.

Economic Integration and Monetary Union have been prominent features in EU history. Issues such as political union, economic union, and sovereignty are never far from the spotlight when discussion of EU development and further integration arise. The single currency has been good for business and investment across Europe since its introduction. Prices in the eurozone are more stable since euro notes and coins were first circulated in 2002. More than 350 million people use the common currency every day. Having a common currency makes it easier to travel between euro area countries and also allows people to compare prices more easily.

Amended from www.europarl.europa.eu

Examine the map and text above that outline the development of the European Union and the expansion of the common currency area and answer each of the following questions.

- (i) In what year was the Maastricht Treaty signed?
- (ii) Name the former currency of Bulgaria.
- (iii) Name **two** countries, other than Bulgaria, that use the Euro.
- (iv) List **two** benefits of the common currency for people who live in the eurozone.
- (v) Explain briefly **one** reason why all EU countries are not in the eurozone.
- (vi) Explain briefly **one** benefit of further EU expansion.

[20m]

5B. Population Dynamics

Account for population distribution throughout a **Continental / Sub-Continental** region (not in Europe) that you have studied.

[30m]

5C. Secondary Economic Activity

Account for the development of secondary economic activity in a **European** region (not in Ireland) that you have studied, with reference to any **two** of the following factors:

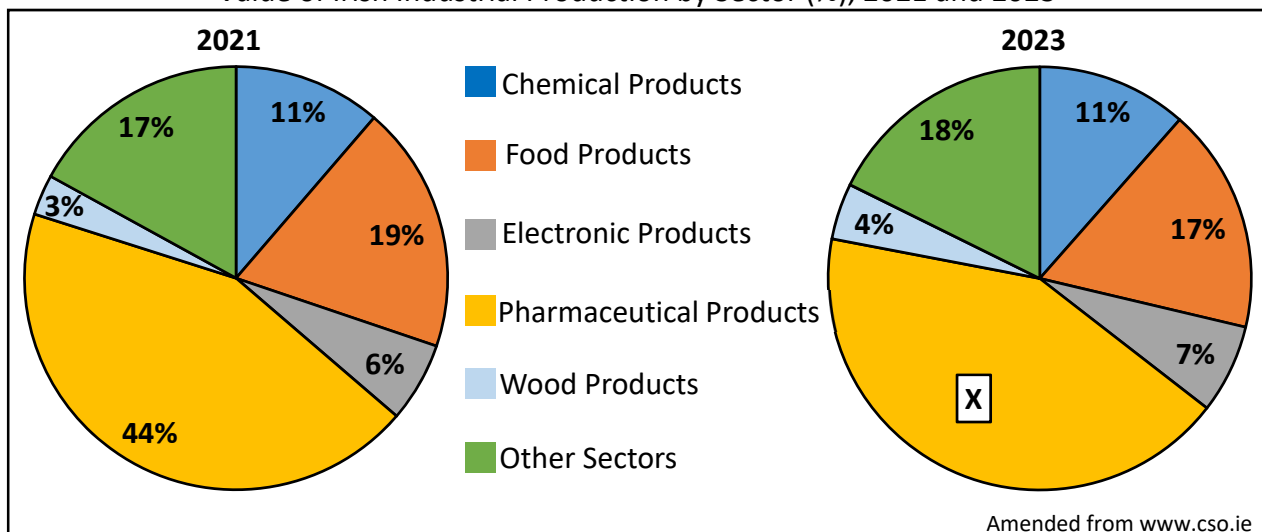
- Labour
- Transport
- Raw materials
- Markets.

[30m]

Question 6

6A. Industry in Ireland

Value of Irish Industrial Production by Sector (%), 2021 and 2023



Examine the charts above showing the value of Irish industrial production by sector (%) for 2021 and 2023, and answer each of the following questions.

- Which sector had the lowest value of Irish industrial production in 2021?
- What was the value of Irish industrial production (%) for Electronic Products in 2023?
- Calculate **X**, the value (%) of pharmaceutical products in 2023.
- Name **one** sector that saw a decrease in value (%) from 2021 to 2023.
- State **one** factor that attracts industries to Ireland.
- Explain briefly **two** challenges facing Irish industries.

[20m]

6B. Socio-Economic Regions

Discuss how economic activity in core regions differs from economic activity in peripheral regions, using examples you have studied.

[30m]

6C. Tertiary Economic Activity

Account for the development of **one** tertiary economic activity in a **Continental / Sub-Continental** region (not in Europe) that you have studied.

[30m]

SECTION 3

ELECTIVES

Questions 7 to 12

Patterns and Processes in Economic Activities (Questions 7, 8 and 9)

Patterns and Processes in the Human Environment (Questions 10, 11 and 12)

All questions carry 80 marks.

PATTERNS AND PROCESSES IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

Questions 7 to 9

Question 7

7A. Aerial Photograph

Examine the aerial photograph of Dundalk accompanying the paper.

Draw a sketch map of the aerial photograph, half the length and half the breadth.

On it, correctly show and label each of the following:

- The river
- A railway bridge
- Industrial buildings in the foreground
- Agricultural land use in the background.

[20m]

7B. Economic Development

Discuss how levels of economic development can change over time with reference to a developed economy that you have studied.

[30m]

7C. Multinational Company

Examine the mobility of modern economic activities with reference to **one** multinational company that you have studied.

[30m]

Question 8

8A. Renewable Energy in the EU

Percentage of renewable energy used to generate electricity, 2005 and 2020

Country	2005	2020	Change (%)
Denmark	24.7	65.3	40.6
Estonia	1.1	28.3	27.2
France	13.7	24.8	11.1
Netherlands	6.3	X	20.1
Germany	10.6	44.7	34.1
Ireland	7.2	39	31.8
Poland	2.5	16.2	13.7

Source: www.eurostat.eu

Examine the table above showing the percentage of renewable energy used to generate electricity in selected EU countries (2005 and 2020), and answer each of the following questions.

- (i) What percentage of renewable energy was used to generate electricity in Germany in 2020?
- (ii) Which country used the lowest percentage of renewable energy to generate electricity in 2005?
- (iii) Which country had the highest percentage increase in renewable energy use from 2005 to 2020?
- (iv) Calculate X, the percentage of renewable energy used to generate electricity in the Netherlands in 2020.
- (v) Name **one** source of renewable energy.
- (vi) Explain briefly **two** advantages of renewable energy.

[20m]

8B. Economic Development

Discuss how Gross National Product (GNP) and the Human Development Index (HDI) can be used as a measure of economic development, with reference to example(s) that you have studied.

[30m]

8C. European Union Policy

Examine the impact of European Union policy on the development of primary economic activity in Ireland.

[30m]

Question 9

9A. Economic Activity

Value of goods exported (€ million) from Ireland to selected countries in January 2024

Country	Goods Exported (€ million)
Austria	52
Denmark	40
Greece	43
Slovakia	12
Romania	28
Slovenia	16

Source: www.cso.ie

Examine the data above showing the value of goods exported (€ million) from Ireland to selected countries in January 2024 and answer each of the following questions.

- Using graph paper, draw a suitable graph to illustrate this data.
- Explain briefly **one** advantage of having a large number of export partners.

[20m]

9B. Conflict of Interest

Examine how conflict may arise between the exploitation of natural resources and the need to protect the environment, with reference to example(s) that you have studied.

[30m]

9C. Economic Development

Using evidence from the 1:50 000 Ordnance Survey map that accompanies this paper, explain **three** factors that have influenced the development of economic activity in the area shown on the Ordnance Survey map.

[30m]

PATTERNS AND PROCESSES IN THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

Questions 10 to 12

Question 10

10A. Urban Population

Population of towns in Ireland,
Census 2022

Town	Population (in thousands)
Ennis	27
Navan	33
Swords	40
Bray	33
Sligo	20
Drogheda	44

Source: www.cso.ie

Examine the data above showing the population of towns in Ireland in 2022 (in thousands) and answer each of the following questions.

- (i) Using graph paper, draw a suitable graph to illustrate this data.
- (ii) Explain briefly **one** benefit of conducting a census of Ireland's population.

[20m]

10B. Urban Land Use

Describe and explain the land-use zones in any city that you have studied.

[30m]

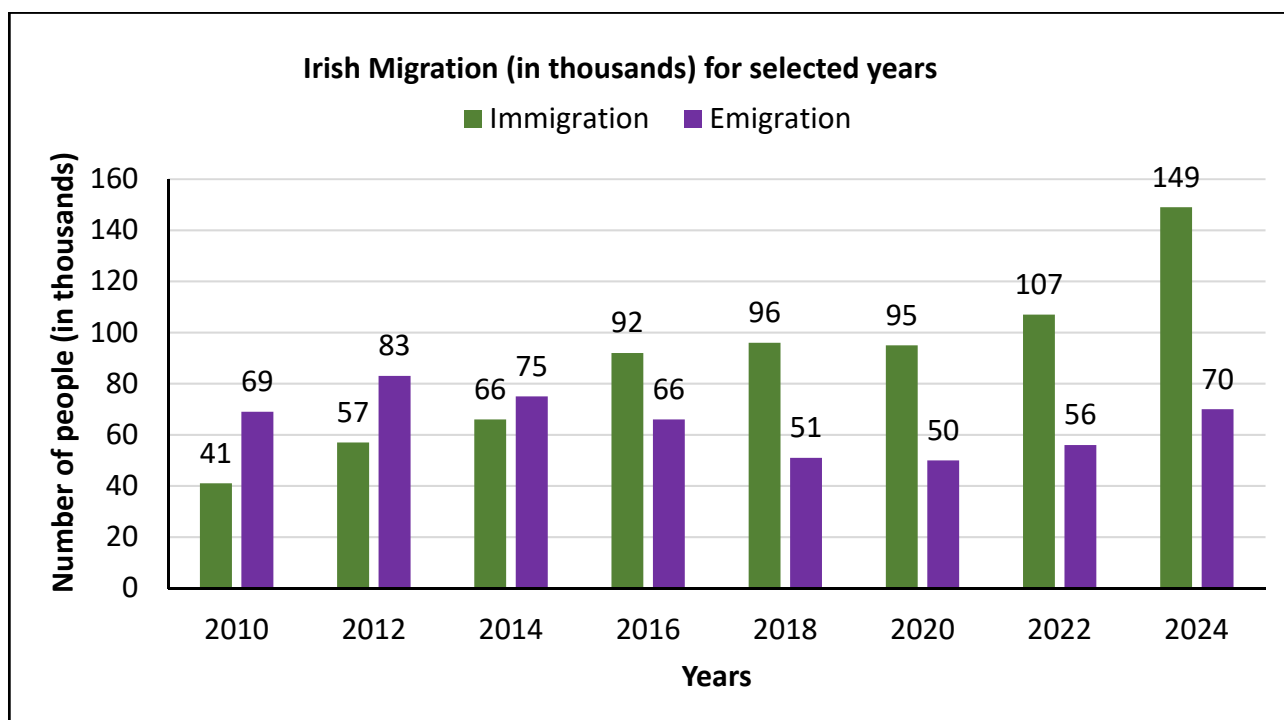
10C. Migration

Examine how ethnic and religious issues can arise as a result of migration.

[30m]

Question 11

11A. Population Movement



Amended from www.cso.ie

Examine the chart above showing immigration and emigration for selected years in Ireland from 2010 to 2024 and answer each of the following questions.

- (i) In which year did the highest number of people emigrate?
- (ii) Which year had the smallest difference between immigration and emigration?
- (iii) For how many of the years shown was the rate of immigration higher than emigration **and** state **one** reason for high levels of immigration.
- (iv) Calculate the net migration (in thousands) for Ireland in 2024.
- (v) State **two** barriers to migration.
- (vi) Explain briefly **one** reason why young people chose to emigrate from Ireland.

[20m]

11B. Population Characteristics

Examine how changing fertility and mortality rates impact on population structure, with reference to an example(s) that you have studied.

[30m]

11C. Urban Growth – Developing World City

Problems can develop from the growth and expansion of urban centres.

Discuss this statement with reference to **one** developing world city that you have studied.

[30m]

Question 12

12A. Aerial Photograph

Examine the aerial photograph of Dundalk accompanying the paper.

Draw a sketch map of the aerial photograph, half the length and half the breadth.

On it, correctly show and label each of the following:

- The river
- The railway line
- An area of residential land-use
- An area of recreational land-use.

[20m]

12B. Overpopulation

Examine the causes **and** effects of overpopulation, with reference to an example(s) that you have studied.

[30m]

12C. Urban Settlement

Examine the 1:50 000 Ordnance Survey map and legend accompanying this paper.

Explain **three** reasons why the town of Dundalk developed at its location. Use evidence from the Ordnance Survey map to support each reason.

[30m]

SECTION 4

OPTIONS

Questions 13 to 24

All questions carry 80 marks.

Note: It is better to discuss **three** or **four** aspects of the theme in some detail, rather than to give a superficial treatment of a large number of points.

Global Interdependence

Note: It is better to discuss **three** or **four** aspects of the theme in some detail, rather than to give a superficial treatment of a large number of points.

13. Views of development and underdevelopment involve contrasting models and approaches to development.
Discuss.

[80m]

14. Sustainability is a model for future human and economic development.
Discuss this statement with reference to **three** of the following:

- Resource use
- Fair trade
- Justice issues
- Self-reliance.

[80m]

15. Discuss the impact of global trading patterns in relation to both producer and consumer regions, with reference to **one** multinational company that you have studied.

[80m]

Geocology

Note: It is better to discuss **three** or **four** aspects of the theme in some detail, rather than to give a superficial treatment of a large number of points.

16. Explain how soil characteristics impact on soil development.

[80m]

17. Discuss how human activity can have both positive and negative impacts on soil.

[80m]

18. With reference to **one** biome that you have studied, account for the type of climate experienced in this biome and explain how this climate impacts on soils and vegetation within the biome.

[80m]

Culture and Identity

Note: It is better to discuss **three** or **four** aspects of the theme in some detail, rather than to give a superficial treatment of a large number of points.

19. Examine the strategies that have been or could be implemented to aid the survival of minority languages. [80m]
20. Many cultural groups around the world do not have a nation state of their own. Discuss this statement with reference to example(s) you have studied. [80m]
21. Identity as a concept entails a variety of cultural factors including nationality, language and religion. Examine this statement with reference to a European region that you have studied. [80m]

The Atmosphere – Ocean Environment

Note: It is better to discuss **three** or **four** aspects of the theme in some detail, rather than to give a superficial treatment of a large number of points.

22. Examine how solar energy is transformed and redistributed through circulation patterns in the atmosphere and oceans. [80m]
23. Exchanges of water between oceans and atmosphere, over the earth's surface, impact on precipitation and its distribution patterns. Discuss. [80m]
24. Describe and account for the characteristics of **one** global climate type that you have studied. [80m]

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