



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit
State Examinations Commission

Leaving Certificate Examination 2026

Politics and Society

Ordinary Level

Tuesday 23 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

Instructions

There are three sections in this examination paper. Answer **all** sections.

Section A	Short Answer Questions Answer ten out of 20 questions	100 marks
Section B	Data-based Questions Answer all questions	150 marks
Section C	Discursive Essays Answer three questions	150 marks

Write your answers in the spaces provided in this booklet. You may lose marks if you do not do so. You are not required to use all of the space provided.

Additional pages are provided if needed. Label any 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.

You may only use blue or black pen when writing your answers. Do not use pencil.

Answer **ten** of the following items: **(a), (b), (c)...****(t)**. Answer in the spaces provided.

Question 1

- (a)** Why is it important for young people to learn about human rights?

- (b)** Name a group that may be under-represented in the decision-making processes in schools. Explain your answer.

Name:
Explanation:

- (c)** Explain the role of the President in Ireland.



<https://connachttribune.ie/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/aras-connolly-1024x555.jpg>

(d) Answer the questions below on this infographic from the Central Statistics Office.



An
Phríomh-Oifig
Staidrimh

Central
Statistics
Office

Equality and Discrimination 2024



<https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-ed/equalityanddiscrimination2024/>

(i) Overall, what percentage of persons aged 18 and over experienced discrimination?

(ii) Which of the grounds for work-related discrimination is the most significant?

(iii) Looking at the percentage of people who experience discrimination, do you think it is a problem in Ireland?

(e) Describe **two** ways we see patriarchy in the world today.

(f) Briefly explain Thomas Hylland Eriksen's theory of 'Overheating'.



<https://stias.ac.za/2024/12/stias-remembers-thomas-hylland-eriksen-1962-2024/>

(g) Explain what it means for Human Rights to be 'universal'.

(h) What is the process for selecting the Northern Ireland Executive and/or ministers?



<https://nielects.com/executive/>

- (i) Comment on the changing nature of contemporary media.

<https://whatagraph.com/blog/articles/different-types-of-media>

- (j) Is it important to have laws against discrimination?

- (k) Give an example of someone who has engaged in charity work. Explain their contribution.

Name:
Explanation:

- (l) Give **two** pieces of information about the role of a TD (Teachta Dála) in Ireland.

First piece:
Second piece:

- (m) Outline your understanding of a 'Cosmopolitan Culture'.



<https://www.penguin.com.au/books/cosmopolitanism-9780141901985>

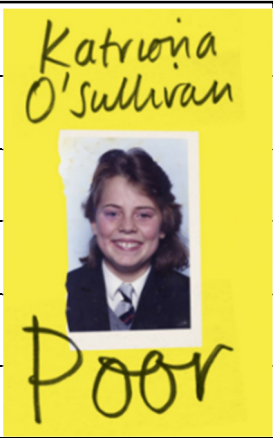
- (n) "We all benefit socially and economically from people with former convictions being able to reintegrate into society." Senator Lynn Ruane.

Give **two** ways we all benefit socially and/or economically from welcoming former criminals back into society.

First way:
Second way:

- (o) In *Poor*, Katriona O'Sullivan shares her experience growing up in poverty. Describe **two** ways poverty can impact on a person's opportunities in life.

First description:
Second description:



<https://www.thejournal.ie/readme/extract-of-book-poor-6083339-Jun2023/>

- (p) Cloughjordan, in Co. Tipperary, is Ireland's first Eco Village with the lowest eco footprint in Ireland. Name and describe another example of a person, group or organisation making a positive impact on society and the environment.

Name:
Description:

- (q) Describe what a rights holder is and give an example of one.

Description:
Example:

- (r) Why is it important for schools to have anti-bullying programmes, such as Bí Cineálta?



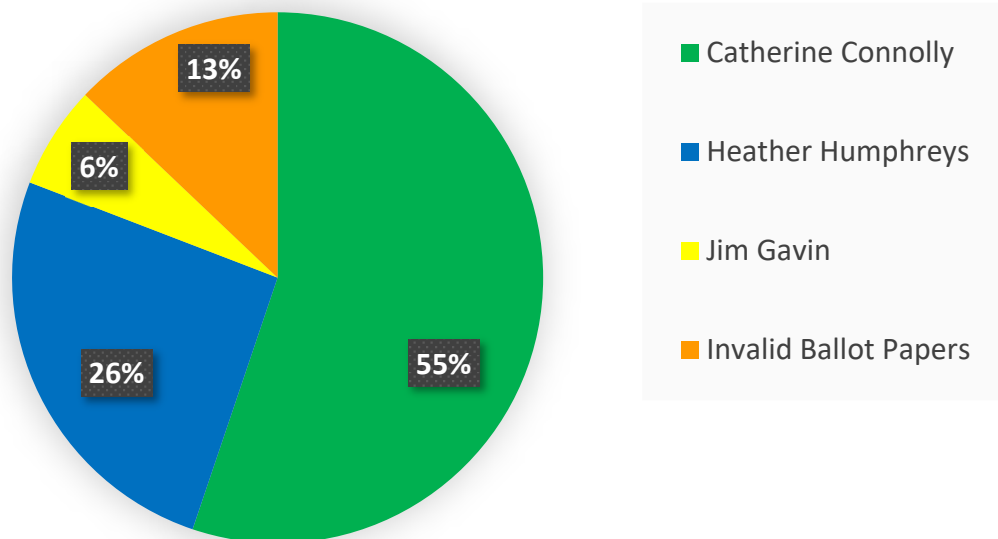
<https://patricianacademy.com/cinealtas/>

(s) Give **two** causes of underdevelopment in less developed countries.

Cause 1:
Cause 2:

(t) Comment on the results of the Presidential Election as presented in this chart:

Presidential Election Results 2025

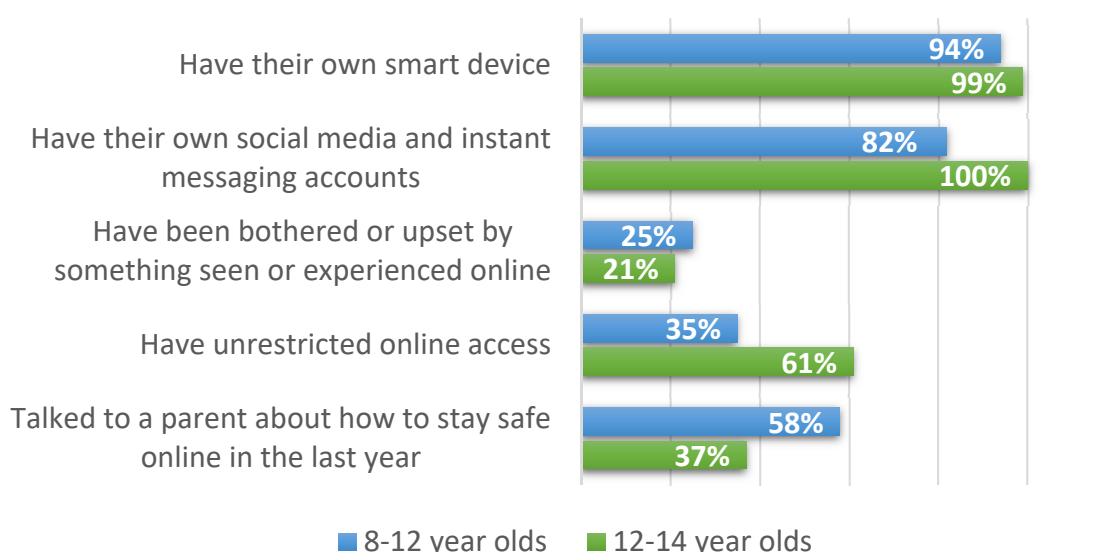


Answer **all** questions in this section. Answer in the space provided.

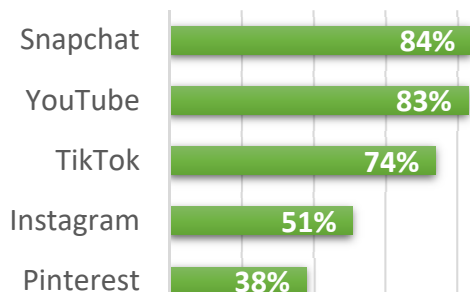
Document A: CyberSafeKids Left To Their Own Devices Report 2023-2024.

Left To Their Own Devices is our new Annual Trends and Usage Report. It provides a detailed overview of data collected in the 2023-24 academic year from over 7,000 children (aged 8-14) across Ireland. It provides a valuable insight into how children spend their time online, levels of access, and children's experiences, both positive and negative. The report also highlights trends, risks and opportunities, in addition to a call to action for Government to do more to create a safer online world for children and young people.

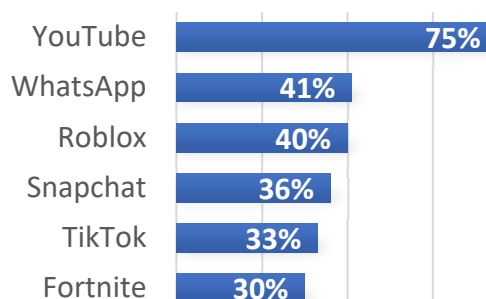
Key Findings



Most popular online environment for 12-14 year olds to have their own account



Most popular online environment for 8-12 year olds to have their own account



<https://www.cybersafekids.ie/report2024/> - Adapted

Document B: Children's Rights Alliance Report Card 2025.

The Children's Rights Alliance Annual Report Card tracks how the Government is delivering on its commitments to children in the Programme for Government.

'Child Safety Online' receives a 'B-' grade, a decrease from the 'A' grade awarded in 2024. The Online Safety Commissioner published Ireland's first binding Online Safety Code in October 2024.

PART A	Online Safety Code Part A came into effect Nov 2024 Imposes general obligations on the designated video-sharing platforms to safeguard all users and provide protections for minors.
PART B	Online Safety Code Part B came into effect mid 2025 This part of the regulation specifies what is considered to be restricted harmful content.



Algorithms prioritise engagement and often push sensational or extreme content to maintain user attention. As a result, children risk being harmed through exposure to violent, sexual, or otherwise age-inappropriate material.

Recommender systems, while designed to enhance user experience by tailoring content to individual preferences, can cause significant harm to children. In May 2024, in its response to the industry and public consultations, Coimisiún na Meán expressly acknowledged that "recommender systems ... are likely to be unsafe for minors". Despite this, An Coimisiún determined that recommender systems are more appropriately addressed under the Digital Services Act and that it did not "propose to take further the possibility of a supplementary Online Safety Code at this time".

Recommendations:

Coimisiún na Meán must ensure that platform proposals for safety features, including age verification and reporting and complaints systems, to be submitted by July 2025, are credible and effective and advance the safety and rights of children and young people.

Coimisiún na Meán must design and prepare rules for an individual complaints mechanism in 2025 to be implemented in 2026.

Online Safety Commissioner must continue to actively monitor the effectiveness of this first Online Safety Code, including through Coimisiún na Meán's complaint system, to identify whether it is effective for children's protection and their rights and to propose changes to improve it where necessary.

<https://childrensrights.ie/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/FINAL-Report-Card-2025.pdf> Adapted

Question 2

- (a) According to Document A, what does the *Left To Their Own Devices* Report provide insight on?

- (b) According to Document A, what percentage of 12-14 year olds have their own social media and messaging accounts?

- (c) Referring to Document B, what grade was awarded for online safety in 2024 and in 2025?

2024:
2025:

- (d) According to Document B, what is the core purpose of the annual Children's Rights Alliance Report Card?

- (e) Why is the information in Document B important for young people?

Question 3

- (a) Comment on the presentation of data in Document A.

- (b) Give **one** limitation of the data presented in Document A.

- (c) Choose **one** key piece of data in Document A and describe how it links to the information given in Document B.

Key piece of data:
Description:

- (d) How might the information given in both documents be useful for the Irish government?

- (e) Is Document B a reliable source of data? Explain your answer.

Question 4

- (a) Comment on **one** statistic about children's access to the internet in the Key Findings in Document A.

- (b) How important is it to update our laws and policies as the digital world and technology changes?

- (c) Describe a citizenship project you could undertake, based on organising an event to raise awareness about **one** of the issues highlighted in either document.

- (d) Using the information in both documents, what would you conclude about children's safety online?

Answer any **three** from questions 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10. Answer in the spaces provided.

Question 5**(50 marks)**

Are certain children's rights being denied or restricted in the world today?

You may refer to the following in your answer:

- Children's rights
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- War/conflict
- Racism
- Discrimination/prejudice
- Inequalities
- Key thinkers e.g. Martha Nussbaum.

Al Jazeera:

At least **20,000** children are among the **67,000** Palestinians who were killed in two years from October 2023-October 2025.

That equates to one child killed every hour.

Nearly **1 child in 4** suffers from severe acute malnutrition.

More than **2,300** educational facilities have been destroyed.

450 Palestinian children are being held in Israeli prisons.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/10/7/two-years-of-israels-genocide-in-gaza-by-the-numbers>

Question 6**(50 marks)**

Discuss the idea of protesting in the world today.

You may refer to the following in your answer:

- Examples of protests
- How news of protests spreads
- Hate speech and free speech
- Reasons for protesting
- Responsibilities of the government and citizens
- Impacts of protests
- Civil disobedience
- Key thinkers e.g. Noam Chomsky, John Locke.

 Irish Examiner

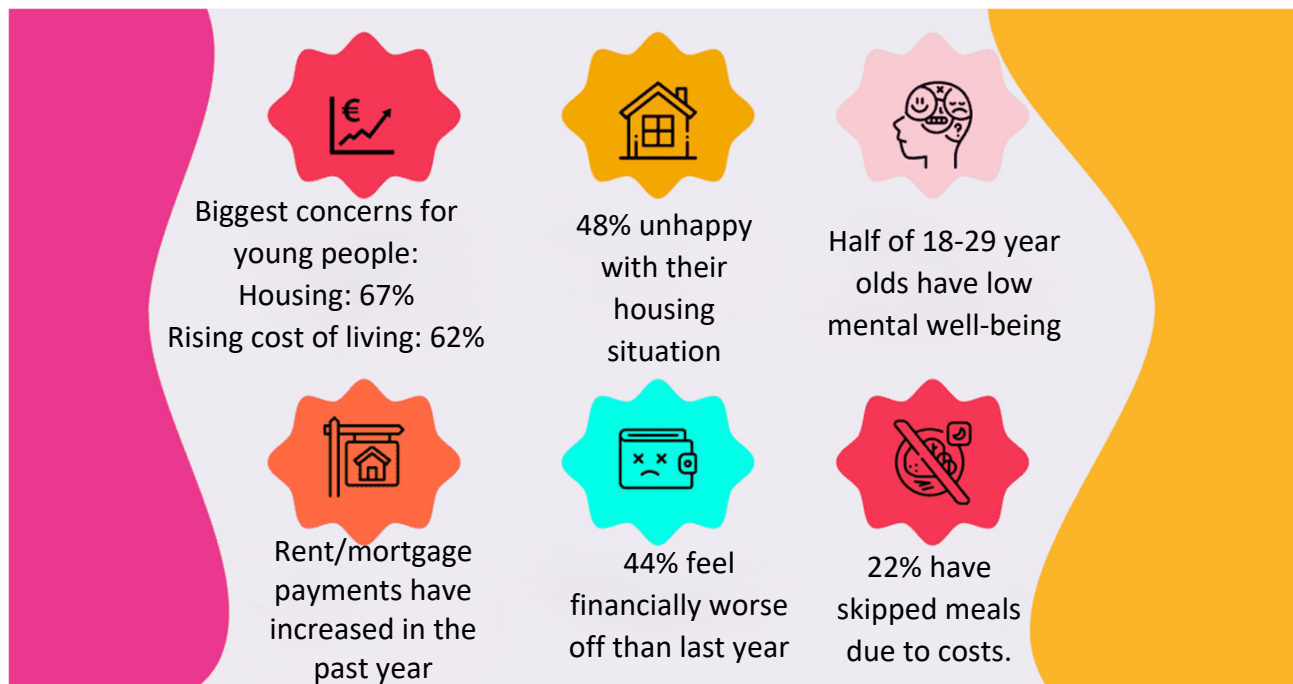
Tipperary schoolgirl Cara Darmody starts Dáil protest over autism services

<https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/munster/arid-41418499.html>

Question 7

(50 marks)

Discuss the reasons why it is important for young people to be involved and participate in decision making processes in Ireland.



<https://www.youth.ie/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/NYCI-Annual-Report-2024.pdf>

Question 8

(50 marks)

Discuss the importance of the work of the European Union.

You may refer to the following in your answer:

- The purpose of the EU
- The way in which the EU is governed
- Decision making in the EU
- The benefits of being in the EU
- The contribution of the EU to world affairs.



https://european-union.europa.eu/principles-countries-history/symbols/european-flag_en

Question 9

(50 marks)

Does inequality in education impact on the lives of young people?

“Money invested in children’s education outside of school (in and of itself) is becoming increasingly important in determining success within school.”

Kathleen Lynch



<https://www.ihrec.ie/about/chief-commissioner-members-of-ihrec/professor-kathleen-lynch/>

You may refer to the following in your answer:

- Poverty
- Affordability
- Homelessness
- Culture
- HEAR/DARE
- Access to technology.

Question 10

(50 marks)



Le Chéile '28 is the Statement of Strategy for the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment for 2025 – 2028. Their vision is to achieve a “climate neutral Ireland, powered by clean energy, where our environment, society and economy thrive.”

Describe the actions that can be taken to help achieve sustainability.

You may refer to the following in your answer:

- Individuals and governments
- International Agreements e.g. COP 30
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- The role of corporations
- Underdevelopment and unfair trade
- Key thinkers e.g. Vandana Shiva, Fr Seán McDonagh.

Section C – Answer to Question ____

Optional space to help you prepare your answer.

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Section C – Answer to Question ____

Optional space to help you prepare your answer.

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Section C – Answer to Question ____

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Optional additional page.

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

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