

OLLSCOIL NA hÉIREANN, GAILLIMH
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND, GALWAY

SUMMER EXAMINATIONS 1999

NATURAL AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT PAPER 1

1st B.A. (Economic and Social Studies)

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Time allowed: **THREE hours**
Marks: **400**

Instructions: both Section A (short questions) and Section B (longer questions) must be attempted.

SECTION A (120 marks)

Answer any THREE of the following. (maximum one page each)

1. Discuss the role of semi-state bodies in the Irish economy, emphasising the current trends within this sector.
2. Outline some of the potential costs and benefits of a Basic Income scheme.
3. Describe the three principal institutions of the European Union and their respective roles in the EU decision-making process.
4. Have the Structural Funds been well spent?
5. What have been the consequences of the Europe's Common Agricultural Policy? What does the future hold for the CAP?
6. Why are the queues for taxis so long in Dublin?
7. Discuss any three regional development policies implemented in Ireland.

SECTION B (280 marks)

Answer any **THREE** of the following:

1. In the context of the role played by the state in our economic development, describe the three major policy choices and five principal mistakes made since 1922.
2. Using the pluralist model of policymaking, describe fully the policymaking process in Ireland.
3. The interaction between the Irish taxation and social welfare systems has often been accused of being "anti-work". Comment on this statement, making reference to the unemployment and poverty traps, tax credits, and the level and distribution of taxes.
4. Many commentators point to Social Partnership as providing the foundation for Irish economic prosperity since 1987. Discuss this proposition.
5. Competition policy is becoming increasingly important in ensuring a strong and vibrant Irish economy. Discuss this statement, referring to collusion, recent reforms and a case study in competition policy.
6. Discuss the causes of the large increase in the level of traffic congestion during the last decade. Suggest some potential solutions to this problem. Using the concept of externalities, explain why economists favour road-pricing as a policy prescription.
7.
 - (a) Explain why markets sometimes fail to reach optimal outcomes. What policies can the government implement to correct or improve these situations?
 - (b) Why are most healthcare services provided by the public sector, rather than in a free market?
 - (c) Briefly discuss public goods.