

Dynamic of a region - Climate | Sample answer

2016 Q6.B

Examine the importance of climate to the economic development of any two contrasting European regions (not in Ireland), that you have studied.

The Paris Basin is a core region in Northern France. The climate in the Paris Basin has aided the development of the primary activity of farming in this region, allowing it to be one of the most productive, varied and intensively farmed areas in Europe. The East of the region experiences a continental climate. It has summers up to 24 degrees in July and winters in January of 2 degrees. The warm summer temperatures are ideal conditions for ripening cereal crops such as wheat, especially in areas such as Ile de France. This region produces 6% of the world's wheat and is even known as the "Granary of Europe". The arid and hot conditions of the climate also allow for great development of viticulture. The dry champagne area, is world renowned for its famous white sparkling wine, Champagne. This also helps to draw tourists to the Paris Basin that wish to see the sunny south facing slope that famous vines grow on and experience the tasting tours of the vineyards. Ultimately, aiding in the growth of the tourism industry. A cool temperate oceanic climate is experienced In the West of the Paris Basin. Therefore, the West of the region experiences mild winters of 5 degrees and cool summers of 8 degrees, this paired with the annual rainfall of 800mm promotes a great grass growing season. This allows for well developed pastoral farming in places such as Normandy. Which is home to the famous Brie cheese that is exported globally. The clay soil found in places such as the wet champagne area retain the moisture after the rainfall. This paired with the high temperatures are important for the production of locally grown market gardening produce and crops such as wheat. That feed the nearby metropolitan area of paris with a population of 12 million while keeping transport cost low for farmers. The warm temperature and little rainfall allows efficient mechanised farming throughout the year, which helps to maintains productiveness of the well developed agriculture sector.

The Mezzogiorno in the North of Italy is a peripheral region. It experiences a mediterranean climate which has greatly hindered its development of the primary activity of farming. It has a two season climate, the summers are hot and dry with temperatures on 20-28 degrees celsius. It also experiences the effects of the high pressure system called Azores high which brings long spells of dry and calm conditions with intense heat. The summer turns into a period of drought as a result, which makes productive farming difficult in this region. Drought resistant olives and vines are often planted in the hills of the Apennine mountains. However, the hot, dry Sirocco winds that blow from the Sahara desert, severely damage these crops, and fruit such as lemons that may also be grown. The intense drought also hinders grass growth and discourages the rearing of cattle and Dairy farming. The Land is given over to less profitable goat, sheep and buffalo farming. Even though a small amount of convectional rain falls in the summer months. it is more of a nuisance towards farming. As the moisture quickly evaporates from the hot ground, cools, condenses and falls as torrential showers. These showers lead to gully erosion, flash flooding and landslides which often destroy growing crops.

In winter, temperatures are milder, around 9 degrees celsius. Wheat is grown during this time. However the harvest is not very profitable as it only grown during one season. It is also difficult to farm within this season, as soil cover is thin allowing rainfall to be quickly absorbed by limestone, the backbone rock of the region. Consequently, there lack of moisture within the soil makes plant growth difficult.