

Examine the development of Secondary economic activities in a Peripheral Irish region that you have studied

(30 marks)

The North and West (N&W) region is an underdeveloped area and can often be seen as the opposite of core regions. It is remote and the potential to develop these area has been inhibited by factors such as a poor transport infrastructure, low population density and outmigration. However while the region lacks diversity, with a higher percentage of people employed in unskilled work compared to the national average, there has been success in the manufacturing sector. This has come about due to a number of factors such as our low corporation tax rate of 12.5%, the young educated workforce, the fact that we are English speaking nation as well as the numerous programmes which national organisations like the Industrial Development Authority (IDA) carry out to promote the region.

One such success story is the progress made by the Medical Industry in the N&W region, for example Merit Medical in Galway. This MedTech company has been attracted to Galway for a number of reasons. The National Standards Authority (NSAI), for example is globally recognised which means that if an American company gains recognition for its products through this process in Galway, it can then export its products globally without any more 'red-tape' within this context. The IDA, with the aid of the Irish Government have also created a number of 'centres of excellence' in the N&W region to provide incentives for companies in this sector to locate here. Another reason relates to the population (1.1 million), of which 40% are under the age of 25 (ie. high percentage are graduates). With this in mind, Merit Medical Ireland Ltd. Was set up in Galway in 1994, employing 380 people, where the National University of Ireland (NUI) provide an excellent source of labour. Merit Medical, which produces medical devices such as guide wires and catheter devices, can now access the EU and Asian markets for this American company. The coastal location of Galway also allows the importation of raw material (Plastics from Salt Lake City USA, Steel from the UK) for Merit which N6, connecting to the N4 in the GDA region, is an excellent conduit to Dublin Port for exporting finished products also.