

Account the impact two of the following three factors have had on the development of primary economic activities in a European region (not Ireland) that you have studied

- Climate
- Relief
- Soil

**(30 marks)**

In this answer I will discuss the development of primary economic activities in the Paris Basin region of France. The Paris Basin has a highly developed primary sector, based on the climate and soils provided in the area. Food processing industries can be found across the region as a result of the fertile region providing a wide variety of agricultural produce.

The climate of the Paris Basin is varied which allows a wide range of crops, as well as farming types, to develop. To the west of the region, close to the coastline, the area is influenced by a maritime climate. Proximity to the sea means that the temperature range is small, with cool summers (16 °) and mild winters (5 °). This is because, like with Ireland's coastal climate, the sea takes a prolonged period of time to warm up over the summer. The sea then carries this warmth into September – November, and winds which blow in from the sea can therefore keep the coastal temperatures higher than would be expected (5 °) in the winter. This environment is beneficial to agricultural produce as the growing season is prolonged. Rainfall is also not excessive to lead to leaching, at 800mm per year. Inland, to the east, the climate changes to a continental climate, where being away from the influence of the sea, temperatures can drop to 2° in the winter, but climb to 19° in the summer. In Central Paris Basin the region is called 'transitional' – between the two climate described. The entire Paris Basin therefore benefits from a wide range of climatic types which, when combined with the various soil types, allows a very productive agricultural sector.

In relation to soil, during the Caledonian folding period, 450 million years ago, the Paris Basin experienced folding from the South, creating a large syncline (dip) in this region. This exposed a number of rock types which was beneficial to farming as it allowed a wide variety of soils where arable, pastoral and mixed farming could all take place within this core region. As the region is a highly productive farming region, with 7 different 'Pays', each with different agricultural produce, this resulted in a variety of raw materials such as wine, wheat and milk for the food processing industry. Industries providing fertiliser and equipment have developed across the region as the farms in the region are very large and mechanised. An example of one such 'Pay' is the Ile de France Pay, lying at the centre of the Paris basin, which is covered with fertile limon soils. With farms averaging over 400 hectares, this region has become known as the 'bread basket of France'. Other regions influenced by soil types are the Brie region (clay) which benefits pastoral farming and cheese production, as well as the Valois region where the underlying chalk provides a perfect environment for Champagne.

With a large population within the region (22 million people), the region boasts an educated, skilled workforce as well as market for this agricultural produce to allow this economic sector to continue to develop.