AQA A-LEVEL ECONOMICS · 7136

ECONOMICS



EXAM QUESTION PACK

3.2.1.4 USES OF NATIONAL INCOME DATA

SCORE	PERCENTAGE
/195	%

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1. Since 1992, the UK has had a floating exchange rate, and between August and December 2019, the pound sterling rose by around 10%. In the recent past, several nations, such as Japan, Switzerland and China, have actively intervened to influence the value of their currencies.

Evaluate the possible impact on the cost of living **and** the standard of living in the UK of a sustained rise in the value of the pound sterling against other currencies, such as the euro and the US dollar.

[25 marks]

2. Sustained economic growth can often benefit a country's living standards through higher income per head. In the UK from 2001 to 2007, the annual average growth in real income per head was +3%.
For 2008 and 2009, it was −3%.

Discuss the view that the main reason for a country wanting to achieve sustained economic growth is to bring about an increase in private sector consumption.

[25 marks]

3. The global economic slowdown in recent years saw UK unemployment, as measured by the claimant count, rise from 870 000 in 2004 to 1.5 million in 2009.

To what extent would a significant fall in the exchange rate of the pound sterling achieve a sustained reduction in unemployment in the UK?

[25 marks]

4. The global economic slowdown in recent years saw UK unemployment, as measured by the claimant count, rise from 870 000 in 2004 to 1.5 million in 2009.

As unemployment rises, explain **two** possible economic problems which might affect individuals in the UK **and two** possible economic problems which might affect the UK economy as a whole.

[15 marks]

5. **The Global Context Extract B** (line 27) states: 'One of the benefits of economic success can be a higher standard of living.'

Explain the term 'a higher standard of living' **and** analyse **two** factors which can be considered in any assessment of a country's standard of living.

[9 marks]

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6.

THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

Extract C: Where does tax go in the UK?

In the UK, from November 2014, HM Revenue & Customs will begin sending 24 million working people the first Annual Tax Summary, showing how their money is being spent by the state, in order to make taxation more transparent. For example, someone on a salary of £30 000 will see that £1663 of their money is spent on welfare, with £1280 going to health, £892 going to education, £822 going to the state pension and £475 going on national debt interest. Ministers believed that showing exactly where taxpayers' money goes could make voters more receptive to controversial Government changes to the benefits system.

However, the tax summaries have been heavily criticised in that they may make individuals more inclined to support political parties which favour lower taxes, without considering the wider picture of what state spending provides. The breakdown does not make clear that most of the welfare budget goes to pensioners, the sick and disabled people. The Treasury originally planned to show just 3% went towards unemployment benefits while much larger amounts went to children and families, elderly people and those unable to work, but this has been left off the tax summaries.

A Labour Party spokesperson said: 'This government's record on tax is giving millionaires a huge tax cut while everyone else pays more.' She added: 'Families and pensioners are paying more in higher VAT, but that tax isn't included in these tax summaries and independent figures from the Institute of Fiscal Studies show that, by next year, families will be £974 a year worse off because of tax and benefit changes since 2010.'

Source: news reports, 2014

7.

The formation of single markets by countries in various parts of the world, including within Europe, has shown that much is to be gained from increased economic cooperation.

Evaluate the possible economic costs and benefits to an EU member state, such as the UK, of being part of the EU single market.

[25 marks]

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8.

THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

Extract B: A decade of change, challenge and opportunity

This year, ten years will have passed since the downfall of Saddam Hussein in Iraq. Over these years the Middle East and North African countries (MENA) have continued to witness economic and political instability, culminating in the recent so-called 'Arab Spring' uprisings in countries such as Egypt, Libya and Syria.

The *Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)* distinguishes two groups within the MENA region. The resource-rich economies, such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Dubai, are recognised as being different from those seen as resource-deficient, such as Egypt and Jordan. For both groups, however, and despite the political problems for some, the OECD is optimistic about future growth.

The OECD argues that, as the global economy recovers, demand for goods and services from European and emerging markets in particular will encourage development of MENA's manufacturing and service sectors. Just as the UK, for example, enjoys a comparative advantage in financial services, some MENA economies are now developing attractively priced manufactured goods. Tourism is also ripe for further development.

However, although the OECD points to economic progress having been made, recent years have highlighted challenges which need to be faced in the MENA economies if there is to be further progress. Improvements in labour productivity and hence competitiveness are essential for increased trade with the rest of the world. More foreign investment in infrastructure and manufacturing plant is desperately needed, with advanced countries such as the UK having a role to play here. Unemployment remains persistently high in some MENA countries, as does inflation.

Jordan is beginning to show what can be done to bring about a more successful economy. Through productivity improvements, it is now one of the most competitive MENA countries. This has helped it to negotiate a number of significant free trade agreements, including those with the EU and the US. Exports have brought increased economic growth to Jordan, as has domestic investment.

One of the benefits of economic success can be a higher standard of living. The Human Development Index (HDI) allows international comparisons of living standards. The Arab states of the Middle East have seen an improvement in the index from 0.444 in 1980 to 0.641 in 2011. The latter figure can be compared with 0.862 for the UK.

Income per head, access to healthcare and education, life expectancy, the quality of the environment and a fair distribution of income are key factors in any assessment of living standards. The UK and other developed countries need to remember that higher living standards can mean bigger markets for goods and services.

In many of the MENA economies, there is still much to be done to achieve sustained economic success. But, where Jordan leads, others will begin to follow. To do so would see a significant strengthening of MENA's economic importance in the global economy.

Source: news reports, 2012

9.

In March 2011, the UK Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) forecast that the budget deficit would fall from 7.9% of GDP in the financial year 2011-2012 to 1.5% in 2015-2016.

Explain the term 'living standards' **and** analyse how cuts in government spending to lower the budget deficit might affect living standards in the UK.

[15 marks]

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10. **The Global Context Extract C** (lines 9–11) states: 'However, the tax summaries have been heavily criticised in that they may make individuals more inclined to support political parties which favour lower taxes, without considering the wider picture of what state spending provides.'

Using the data and your knowledge of economics, to what extent do you agree that cuts to direct taxation would benefit growth **and** living standards in the UK?
Justify your answer.

[25 marks]

11. The economies of Mexico, Indonesia, Nigeria and Turkey (MINT) have all been identified as the next main emerging market economies with high rates of growth. However, there are warnings that what goes up will eventually come down.

Evaluate the view that living standards must be rising in economies which are experiencing economic growth.

[25 marks]

12. Which one of the following is generally not used to establish the quality of life in a country?

A GDP per capita figures ⬭

B Balance of payments figures ⬭

C Life expectancy ⬭

D Literacy rates ⬭

[1 mark]

13. Explain why the data in **Extract A (Figure 1)** show that living standards in India have improved.

[4 marks]

14. A country has a Human Development Index of 0.91. This country is most likely to have

A a high dependence on its primary sector. ⬭

B a low level of life expectancy. ⬭

C rapid population growth. ⬭

D relatively low levels of illiteracy. ⬭

[1 mark]

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