

Past-paper walk-through

Challenges to Sovereignty ■ 4.9

eXercise

Questions in this set

- 2025 Set 1 Q1
- 2025 Set 2 Q3
- 2023 Set 2 Q1

Reading the mark scheme

- **B1** a mark that stands on its own – the point is either made or not.
- **M1** a *method* mark: the right approach, even if the number is wrong.
- **A1** an *answer* mark, and it usually needs its M mark first.
- **C1** a working mark on the way to the answer.
- **//** separates answers the examiner accepts equally.
- **ecf** = error carried forward: a later part is marked on your own earlier answer.
- **owtte** = “or words to that effect” – the wording need not match.

Question 1

2025 Set 1 ■ Q1

The European Union (EU) and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) are supranational organizations composed of independent member states.

- (a) Define the concept of an independent state.
- (b) Describe one purpose of supranational organizations.
- (c) Describe one global outcome of an increase in international trade.
- (d) Explain how deindustrialization has affected the economy of core countries.
- (e) Explain why international boundaries on land or at sea may lead to disputes over resources.
- (f) Explain how supranational organizations such as the EU or ASEAN may challenge the sovereignty of member states.

Question 1

(g) Explain how advances in communication technologies may affect state sovereignty.
4 Japan Population Pyramid, 2021 Source: United States Census Bureau International Database

Solution 1

(a)

Mark scheme

- - The primary building block of the world political map.
- - A sovereign country, sovereign state, or a political entity with its own independent government (governs itself autonomously and is not controlled by any other external power).
- - A country with control over its own territory or laws, and/or a country that is recognized by other states.

Solution 1

(b) Mark scheme

- - To address transnational or environmental challenges, and/or to create economies of scale, trade agreements, and/or military alliances.
- - To align member states (countries) that have a common interest or objective (e.g., administrative, economic, environmental, military, strategic, peace, security).
- - To create free trade zones, cartels, lending agencies, and/or research institutions.
- - To reduce the operational cost of governance, regulation, tariffs, business operations, currency exchange, banking fees and/or legal expenses.
- - To increase regional or organizational economic power, productivity (e.g., gross national product), and/or size of the available labor force.

Solution 1

(c) Mark scheme

- - An increase in international trade allows countries to use comparative advantage and/or complementarity to specialize in the production of goods and/or services.
- - Increase in globalization, free trade, trade agreements, interdependence, supranational organizations, and/or rising levels of international development.
- - Outsourcing of jobs from countries with higher labor costs to countries with lower labor costs and/or increased competition between countries.
- - Deindustrialization in more developed/core countries or regions.
- - Improved or expanded infrastructure (e.g., port facilities, warehouses, roads, transportation networks).

Solution 1

- - Increased pollution, use of natural resources, and/or environmental impacts.
- - New manufacturing zones, free trade zones, special economic zones, and/or export processing zones.
- - Changes in the economic sectors of national economies and/or changes in methods of production.
- - Increased potential for supply chain problems (e.g., halted production, delayed shipment, tariffs, trade restrictions, labor shortages, quality control issues, technological integration, sustainability pressures, cost increases).
- - Wider access to more diverse goods, services, technology, media, and/or ideas.
- - Lower production costs and/or prices for consumers.

Solution 1

(d) Mark scheme

- - Economies have shifted away from manufacturing toward services and technology as the main sources of economic production.
- - The loss of manufacturing businesses and/or jobs resulted in widespread unemployment, economic decline, and/or less business investment.
- - Deindustrialization has contributed to an international division of labor and/or an economic sector shift in which core countries have higher-paying jobs.
- - Outsourcing, offshoring, and/or economic restructuring have led to a decline in jobs in core countries and an increase in jobs in newly industrialized countries (developing countries, semiperiphery).

Solution 1

- - Core countries and/or cities have developed strategies designed to attract new businesses to replace those lost from deindustrialization (e.g., lower taxes for businesses that relocate).

Solution 1

(e)

Mark scheme

- - Boundaries may be contested due to more than one country or company claiming ownership over a resource.
- - Countries may disagree with international agreements that define the rights and responsibilities of countries (e.g., United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea [UNCLOS]).
- - Political boundaries may be superimposed over resource areas claimed by different countries.
- - Corporations, indigenous groups, and/or local communities may have competing claims to resources.

Solution 1

(f)

Mark scheme

- - Supranational organizations implement international laws or policies that may result in limitations on the economic or political actions of individual member states.
- - Supranational organizations may require participation in military alliances or impose changes in regional governance (e.g., border policies, currencies, trade regulations, environmental regulations, labor regulations, taxes, judicial systems) that replace or supersede existing systems of national government in member states.

Solution 1

(g) Mark scheme

- - Advances in technology may affect state sovereignty by facilitating devolution, supranationalism, and/or democratization efforts that change the structure of the state or its system of governance.
- - Advances in technology may affect state sovereignty by allowing people, social movements, and/or organizations (e.g., other governments, corporations) to communicate faster or more effectively, or to a larger audience, about political issues and/or social justice, leading to changes in law, government policy, strengthening of the state, and/or the devolution of the state.

Solution 1

- - Advances in technology may affect state sovereignty by increasing the ability of a supranational organization to monitor what is occurring in member states (e.g., upholding agreements and enforcing regulations).

Question 3

2025 Set 2 ■ Q3

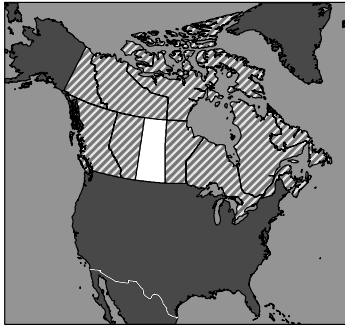
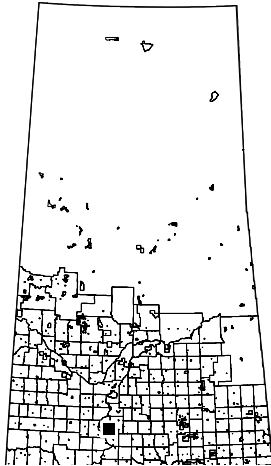
The two maps show political boundaries in Saskatchewan, Canada, and in Finland. Both Finland and Saskatchewan are home to populations of indigenous peoples with a significant amount of political autonomy. Finland is a member state of the European Union.

- (a)** Identify the scale of analysis used for Finland's political divisions in Map 2.
- (b)** Define geometric boundaries as shown in Map 1.
- (c)** Describe one function of internal boundaries.
- (d)** Explain how the spatial organization of a country such as Canada is affected by a federal system of governance.
- (e)** Explain how the supranational organization shown in Map 2 may limit the actions of Finland as a member state.

Question 3

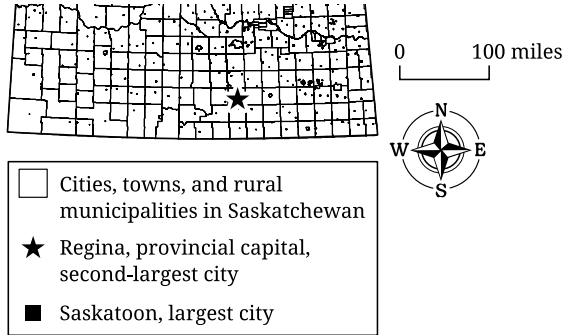
- (f) Describe one characteristic of a cultural landscape that may reflect cultural beliefs and identities.
- (g) Explain how communication technologies may affect the cultural patterns of indigenous languages.

Question 3



-  Saskatchewan
-  Other Canadian provinces and territories
-  Other countries

Question 3



Source: Statistics Canada

Question 3

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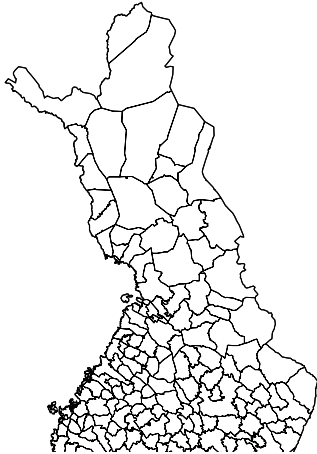
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AP HUMAN GEOGRAPHY 2025 ▪ **FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

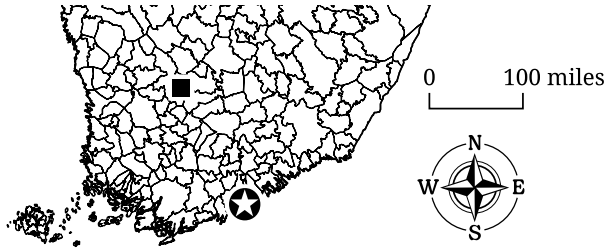
Map 2: Political Divisions in Finland

Question 3



- Finland
- Other European Union countries
- Other countries

Question 3



Solution 3

(a)

Mark scheme

- - Local scale (e.g., city, town, rural municipality) or subnational scale.

Solution 3

(b)

Mark scheme

- - Border lines on a map (two-dimensional plane) that are straight, angled, and/or curved to form a geometric shape (e.g., straight line, square, rectangle, circle, other polygons).
- - A boundary or border drawn based on lines of latitude and longitude, a grid system, and/or a township and range system (baselines and meridians).
- - Boundary lines drawn without regard to the physical or cultural landscape.

Solution 3

(c) Mark scheme

- - Internal boundaries define the limits of sovereignty or government control between one subnational region and another.
- - Internal boundaries delimit or unify different types of subnational regions (e.g., voting districts, states, provinces, territories, special administrative regions, autonomous zones).
- - Internal boundaries can unify or separate distinct ethnic, cultural, or national groups.

Solution 3

- - Internal boundaries can delineate, divide, or fragment zones of public infrastructure and/or local government (e.g., water districts, school districts, voting districts).
- - Internal boundaries can reflect, preserve, or reduce cultural, linguistic, or historical identities.
- - Internal boundaries can prevent, resolve, or exacerbate conflicts.
- - Internal boundaries can facilitate or hinder the collection or analysis of data.
- - Internal boundaries can facilitate or hinder the management, protection, or distribution of natural resources or ecosystems.

Solution 3

(d) Mark scheme

- - Federal systems of governance affect the spatial organization of a country by creating locally based, dispersed power centers (e.g., subnational state or provincial capitals).
- - Countries with a federal system of governance are typically organized into subnational units (e.g., autonomous regions, semiautonomous regions) and/or have regional capitals that may help reduce centrifugal forces and/or limit ethnic separatism.
- - Federal systems tend to divide large amounts of land area into subnational divisions that may be difficult to govern from a centralized or single capital.

Solution 3

- - Federal systems tend to divide multicultural countries into subnational divisions based on cultural differences (e.g., ethnic, religious, and/or linguistic diversity) that may be difficult to govern from a centralized or single capital.

Solution 3

(e) Mark scheme

- - The EU may enact international laws or policies that limit the economic actions of Finland or other member states (e.g., reducing or eliminating trade barriers, introducing a common currency, regulating industry).
- - The EU may implement international laws or policies that limit the political actions of Finland or other member states (e.g., requiring common border policies, observing elections, sharing a common foreign policy).
- - By joining the EU, Finland has agreed to allow the EU government to make laws and regulations on behalf of Finland and the other member states.

Solution 3

(f) Mark scheme

- - Art, music, toponyms, clothing, architecture, and/or evidence of sequent occupancy may indicate elements of a culture or cultures.
- - Religion, language, social institutions, and/or systems of governance may be based on a culture or cultures.
- - Land use, land survey patterns, agriculture, resource use (e.g., hunting, fishing, crafts), and/or trade may indicate the practices of a culture or cultures.
- - Foods, social interactions, holidays, and/or festivals are based on or have elements of a culture or cultures.

Solution 3

- - Attitudes towards ethnicity or gender (e.g., the role of women in the workforce) may help shape the use of space in a given society.

Solution 3

(g) Mark scheme

- - Communication technologies (e.g., the Internet) may encourage members of indigenous communities to adopt more commonly used languages (e.g., English), resulting in indigenous language loss.
- - Language loss may occur due to cultural convergence, which is accelerated by the use of communication technologies.
- - Communication technologies may increase the availability of indigenous language resources (e.g., via websites, apps, social media), resulting in language preservation.

Solution 3

- - Communication technologies may be used to increase awareness of indigenous identity issues, which may result in language preservation.
- - Limited access or cultural resistance (e.g., reliance on oral tradition) to communication technologies can restrict or prevent significant changes in the cultural patterns of indigenous languages.

Question 1

2023 Set 2 ■ Q1

AP[®] Human Geography 2023 Free-Response Questions

HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

SECTION II

Time—1 hour and 15 minutes

3 Questions

Directions: You have 1 hour and 15 minutes to answer all three of the following questions. It is recommended that you spend approximately one-third of your time (25 minutes) on each question. It is suggested that you take up to 5 minutes of this time to plan and outline each answer. You may plan your answers in this orange booklet, but no credit will be given for anything written in this booklet. **You will only earn credit for what you write in the separate Free Response booklet.**

Question 1

Question 1

1. Political geographers analyze territoriality and sovereignty at a variety of scales, including regional, state, substate regional, and local.
 - A. Define the concept of territoriality in terms of political geography.
 - B. Describe the concept of sovereignty as it relates to the state.
 - C. Compare ONE difference in territorial organization between the governments of unitary states and the governments of federal states.
 - D. Recently, the United Kingdom decided to withdraw from the European Union. Explain ONE possible reason why sovereignty would play a role in the United Kingdom's decision to withdraw from the European Union.
 - E. During the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union, some people in Scotland proposed independence from the United Kingdom. Explain ONE possible reason why territoriality would play a role in the devolution of a state.
 - F. Local governments often divide cities into representative electoral districts. Explain how the process of redrawing district boundary lines may affect election results within a city.

Question 1

- G. Explain why neighboring local governments may face challenges in providing transportation services to residents of a rapidly growing metropolitan area.

Begin your response to this question at the top of a new page in the separate Free Response booklet and fill in the appropriate circle at the top of each page to indicate the question number.

Question 1

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GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

Solution 1

(a)

Mark scheme

- - Territoriality is the connection of people, their culture, and their economic systems to where they live (can apply to multiple scales).
- - Territoriality is the process by which a set of political units with fixed distinct boundaries are created, expanded, annexed, and/or defended.
- - Territoriality is the process by which a land area (or land and water) is established under a jurisdiction (e.g., an established or recognized system of governance, or administrative control).

Solution 1

(b) Mark scheme

- - Sovereign states have the right to control what is inside their borders without interference from outside states and entities.
- - Sovereign states are recognized by the international community and other foreign entities.
- - Sovereign states have the right to defend their borders against invasion by other states.
- - Sovereign states have the right to close the borders to immigration.
- - Sovereign states have the right to regulate international trade.

Solution 1

- - Sovereign states have the right to establish their own government by establishing a constitution and/or system of political representation.
- - Sovereign states have the right to enact laws or policies (e.g., the criminal justice code, civil legal code, land ownership system, and/or natural resource management system).
- - Sovereign states have the right to establish alliances and recognize foreign states or entities, and/or establish diplomatic relations and embassies in other countries.
- - Sovereign states have the right to establish policies (e.g., taxation, appropriations).

Solution 1

(c) Mark scheme

- - Unitary states tend to have a more top-down form of governance, while federal states have more locally based power centers.
- - Unitary states have a single government that expresses power over the entire territory, whereas federal states divide power among regional governments that control a limited portion of territory.
- - Unitary states have a centralized system of administration (e.g., law enforcement, natural resource management, infrastructure development), whereas federal states have more dispersed power centers.

Solution 1

- - Unitary states tend to have a single system of territorial control, whereas federal states may have multiple types of internal territorial systems based upon each region's culture (e.g., different land survey systems, differing legal systems, different ethnicities).

Solution 1

(d) Mark scheme

- - The United Kingdom (UK) left the European Union (EU) because its leaders believed the UK had surrendered too much sovereignty to the supranational government of the EU.
- - The free movement of people among the EU member states had increased immigration to the UK resulting in political pressure to limit immigration to the UK, in opposition to existing EU policies.
- - The leaders of the UK believed they could form more advantageous trade agreements by working independently from the EU.

Solution 1

- - The UK participated in the EU economic policies but never joined the eurozone, maintaining its own currency, the British pound, as a symbol of British identity, and/or source of economic stability or superiority in value as compared to the euro.
- - The UK is physically separated from Europe, with a long history of world trade and a strong sense of itself as a world power, and this translated into a weaker sense of being part of/belonging to the EU.

Solution 1

(e) Mark scheme

- - People in one region within a state have a connection to the land of the ethnic group, culture, and/or regional identity and believe that they should have autonomy over the region or the right to secede from the state.
- - People in one region within a state believe that the leaders in the government or people in other parts of the country (e.g., core or capital) do not respect the people of the region's long history of culture and attachment to the land.
- - People in one region within a state believe that the economic policies of the state favor a majority group or another group in power at the expense of their region.

Solution 1

- - Many Scots believe that Scotland should have control of foreign policy and defense agreements.
- - Many Scots believe that Scotland is both its own country and a part of Europe (or the European Union) at the same time.
- - Many Scots believe that trade agreements among EU members will be better for the economy of Scotland if it rejoins the EU.
- - Many political leaders desire Scottish independence so that Scotland may have an economy and/or monetary system separate from the rest of the UK.
- - Some in Scotland desire an independent state (separate from England, Wales, and Northern Ireland) that still has the British monarch as the titular head of state.

Solution 1

(f) Mark scheme

- - Redrawing district boundaries may shift the balance of political power among or favor certain political parties, candidates, and/or representative groups (intentionally or unintentionally).
- - If the boundaries are drawn in a manner that divides a voting group among several districts, the power of the group is diminished (cracking to decrease power).
- - If the boundaries are drawn such that a voting group is concentrated in one district, its political power is increased (packing to increase power) or favors a group that has a higher voter turnout (stacking to increase power).

Solution 1

- - If the boundaries are drawn in such a way that a voting group is so overwhelmingly concentrated in one district, then the group may lose the ability to influence power in any surrounding area (packing to decrease power).
- - Districts are often redrawn as population changes over time and new lines may create new districts that are different than before, which may mean voters recently added to these districts may be less familiar with issues and candidates in these districts.

Solution 1

(g) Mark scheme

- - Local governments that are fragmented, divided, and/or dispersed may find it difficult to agree on transportation services and/or projects.
- - Local governments may be completely independent of each other and may not have an official regional or metropolitan forum or interface in which to interact and/or plan for transportation needs.
- - Local governments may compete for transportation funding resources from state, province, national, federal, or supranational government sources and may see neighboring governments as opponents and/or competitors for resources.

Solution 1

- - Local competitiveness (e.g., local pride, rivalries, or racial, ethnic, and/or economic differences) between neighboring communities may hinder effective cooperation between local governments on transportation planning.
- - Disparities in wealth between neighboring local governments dealing with a high volume of commuters coming from other local governments may not have the resources needed to meet the demand for transit infrastructure and/or services.
- - Suburban sprawl and the establishment of separate municipalities on the edge of the metropolitan area may increase demand, pressure, and/or traffic flow through communities closer to the city center and/or along major transit corridors.