

Exercise walk-through

4.9

Challenges to Sovereignty

AP Human Geography

Devolution, autonomy and independence

Devolution transfers or disperses power to subnational units. Broad AP usage also includes fragmentation that can end in state disintegration.

autonomy is a degree of self-government. It can satisfy regional demands within a state; it is not automatically independence.

Explain the actors, demands and state response. Do not predict that every difference in ethnicity, geography or income produces the same outcome.

Devolutionary factors and mechanisms

Factor	Possible mechanism
Physical separation	Distance or barriers can make central services less accessible and strengthen demands for regional authority.
Unequal development	Perceived exclusion from investment can encourage autonomy demands.
Ethnic separatism / irredentism	A group seeks separation, or a movement seeks territory in another state on national-identity grounds.
Coercion and violence	Ethnic cleansing forcibly removes a group from an area; terrorism uses violence or threats for political purposes. Both can destabilise authority, with different mechanisms.

Border administration and devolution



US–Mexico border fence

An international fence is not direct evidence of regional devolution.

The image illustrates boundary administration. To establish devolution, identify which powers moved from the centre to a regional institution.

A hard border and an autonomous region are different kinds of evidence.

International organisations and sovereignty

supranational organisations coordinate above the state scale. The AP framework includes the EU, UN, NATO, ASEAN, African Union and Arctic Council, although their legal powers differ.

Cooperation can address environmental problems, trade and security while common commitments constrain national choices.

UN General Assembly recommendations are not identical to binding Security Council decisions or EU rules in transferred policy areas. Check the organisation and rule.

Common river standard: attempt

Original agreement: several states adopt a shared river-pollution standard and joint monitoring.

Explain one benefit and one constraint on national decisions. Identify evidence needed to assess actual compliance.

Then explain how communication technology could help either the joint institution or an opposition movement.

Exercises 2.1-2.2

2.1 Define a supranational organization and give one example.

[2]

2.2 Explain how joining a supranational body can reduce a state's sovereignty.

[2]

Exercises 2.1-2.2

2.1 Define a supranational organization and give one example. [2]

2.1

- an alliance of states pooling power for common goals; e.g. the UN or the EU
-

2.2 Explain how joining a supranational body can reduce a state's sovereignty. [2]

2.2

- the state must follow shared rules/decisions; it gives up some independent control in return for benefits

Exercise 2.3 (a)

2.3 A state faces a strong regional independence movement and also belongs to a trade union of states.

(a) Name the challenge to sovereignty from below.

[1]

Exercise 2.3 (a)

2.3 A state faces a strong regional independence movement and also belongs to a trade union of states.

(a) Name the challenge to sovereignty from below.

[1]

(a)

- devolution / separatism

Exercise 2.3 (b)

2.3 A state faces a strong regional independence movement and also belongs to a trade union of states.

(b) Name the challenge from above.

[1]

Exercise 2.3 (b)

2.3 A state faces a strong regional independence movement and also belongs to a trade union of states.

(b) Name the challenge from above.

[1]

(b)

- supranationalism

Exercises 3.1-3.2

3.1 The United Nations is best described as a

[1]

☐

- A unitary state
- B supranational organization
- C stateless nation
- D relict boundary

3.2 A country accepting a trade bloc's shared regulations has traded some sovereignty for

[1]

☐

- A isolation
- B economic benefits
- C a relict boundary
- D higher fertility

Exercises 3.1-3.2

3.1 The United Nations is best described as a

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- A unitary state
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3.1 B

- a body of many states cooperating = supranational organization

3.2 A country accepting a trade bloc's shared regulations has traded some sovereignty for

[1]

☐

- A isolation
- B economic benefits
- C a relict boundary
- D higher fertility

3.2 B

- states pool sovereignty to gain trade/economic benefits

Exercise 3.3 (a)

3.3 A trade bloc sets rules its members must all follow.

(a) Explain one benefit a member gains.

[1]

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(a)

- access to a large open market / shared security

Exercise 3.3 (b)

3.3 A trade bloc sets rules its members must all follow.

(b) Explain one cost to its sovereignty.

[1]

Exercise 3.3 (b)

3.3 A trade bloc sets rules its members must all follow.

(b) Explain one cost to its sovereignty.

[1]

(b)

- it must follow common rules it did not set alone