

## Delimitation Commission - UPSC Polity Notes

The Delimitation Commission is an important topic for the polity and governance segments of the [UPSC syllabus](#). In this article, you can read all about the concept of delimitation as well as the role and functions of the Delimitation Commission. The topic is also significant from the point of view of [UPSC current affairs](#).

### Delimitation Meaning

Delimitation is the process of fixing limits or boundaries of territorial constituencies in a country to represent changes in population.

- As a result of the delimitation process, the number of seats allocated to different states in the [Lok Sabha](#) and the total number seats in a Legislative Assembly of a state can also alter.
- The redrawing of boundaries is based on a recent census.
- The body that does the delimitation exercise is called the Delimitation Commission.

### Why is delimitation of constituencies done?

Delimitation is conducted for the following reasons:

1. To have equal representation for equal segments of a population.
2. To have a fair division of geographical areas so that no political party has an undue advantage over the others.
3. To adhere to the principle: “**One Vote One Value**”.

### How is delimitation done?

- After every census, the Parliament will enact a Delimitation Act, as per Article 82.
- As per Article 170, the states also get classified into territorial constituencies after every census, according to the said Act.
- Once the Act is enacted, the Central Government sets up a Delimitation Commission.
- The Commission then exercises the delimitation.

### Delimitation Commission

The Delimitation Commission is a high-level body set up by an act of the Parliament.

- It is appointed by the country’s President.
- It works in tandem with the [Election Commission of India](#).
- **Delimitation Commission Members:**
  - A retired judge of the Supreme Court
  - The Chief Election Commissioner
  - State Election Commissioners (of the respective states)

### Functions of Delimitation Commission

The Delimitation Commission is a high power body whose orders have the force of law. Its orders cannot be questioned in a court of law. The copies of the orders are laid before the Lok Sabha and the legislative assemblies concerned, but no change is permitted in them.

- The Delimitation Commission has to determine the number and boundaries of constituencies in such a manner that the population of all seats is the same, as far as possible practically.
- The Commission also identifies the seats to be reserved for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes communities, in areas where their population is significant.
- If the members of the Commission have differing opinions, then the decision of the majority will be taken into consideration.
- The Commission releases draft proposals to the public through the Gazette of India and the official gazettes of states, and also in regional language newspapers.
- It also conducts public sittings wherein the public's opinion is heard through written or oral representations.
- If found appropriate, changes are made to the draft proposal.
- The final order is published in the Gazettes and comes into effect by a date specified by the President.

## Delimitation Commissions in the Past

The first delimitation exercise was conducted by the Indian President (with the help of the Election Commission) in 1950-51. The Delimitation Commission Act was enacted in 1952.

There have been four Delimitation Commissions:

1. 1952
2. 1963
3. 1972
4. 2002

There were no such commissions after the census in 1991 and 1981.

## Delimitation Problems

Because of the delimitation process, states that have not achieved any significant strides in reducing their population could end up with larger numbers of seats in the Parliament. In 2008, delimitation was based on the census of 2001, however, the total number of seats in the Parliament and the Legislative Assemblies fixed as per the census of 1971 was not changed. Another problem is that the Constitution has put a cap on the maximum number of seats in the Lok Sabha to 550 and Rajya Sabha to 250. So, because of delimitation, an increasing number of populations are being represented by a single representative.

An amendment has postponed the lifting up of the cap on the maximum seats in the parliament to the year 2026, on the grounds that a uniform growth rate of population would be achieved by 2026 throughout India.

