

Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP) - Indian Polity Notes

Articles 36-51 under Part-IV of Indian Constitution deal with Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP). They are borrowed from the Constitution of Ireland, which had copied it from the Spanish Constitution. This article will solely discuss the Directive Principles of State Policy, its importance in the Indian Constitution and the history of its conflict with Fundamental Rights. This topic is important for UPSC Mains GS-II and also for political science optional papers and aspirants can also download the DPSP notes.

What are the Directive Principles of State Policy?

The Sapru Committee in 1945 suggested two categories of individual rights. One being justiciable and the other being non-justiciable rights. The justiciable rights, as we know, are the Fundamental rights, whereas the non-justiciable ones are the Directive Principles of State Policy.

DPSP are ideals which are meant to be kept in mind by the state when it formulates policies and enacts laws. There are various definitions to Directive Principles of State which are given below:

- They are an ‘instrument of instructions’ which are enumerated in the Government of India Act, 1935.
- They seek to establish economic and social democracy in the country.
- DPSPs are ideals which are not legally enforceable by the courts for their violation.

Directive Principles of State Policy – Classification

Indian Constitution has not originally classified DPSPs but on the basis of their content and direction, they are usually classified into three types-

- **Socialistic Principles,**
- **Gandhian Principles** and,
- **Liberal-Intellectual Principles.**

The details of the three types of DPSPs are given below:

DPSP – Socialistic Principles

Definition: They are the principles that aim at providing social and economic justice and set the path towards the welfare state. Under various articles, they direct the state to:

Article 38	Promote the welfare of the people by securing a social order through justice—social, economic and political—and to minimise inequalities in income, status, facilities and opportunities
Article 39	Secure citizens:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to adequate means of livelihood for all citizens • Equitable distribution of material resources of the community for the common good • Prevention of concentration of wealth and means of production • Equal pay for equal work for men and women • Preservation of the health and strength of workers and children against forcible abuse • Opportunities for the healthy development of children
Article 39A	Promote equal justice and free legal aid to the poor
Article 41	<p>In cases of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement, secure citizens:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to work • Right to education • Right to public assistance,
Article 42	Make provision for just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief
Article 43	Secure a living wage, a decent standard of living and social and cultural opportunities for all workers
Article 43A	Take steps to secure the participation of workers in the management of industries
Article 47	Raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living of people and to improve public health

DPSP – Gandhian Principles

Definition: These principles are based on Gandhian ideology used to represent the programme of reconstruction enunciated by Gandhi during the national movement. Under various articles, they direct the state to:

Article 40	Organise village panchayats and endow them with necessary powers and authority to enable them to function as units of self-government
Article 43	Promote cottage industries on an individual or co-operation basis in rural areas

Article 43B	Promote voluntary formation, autonomous functioning, democratic control and professional management of co-operative societies
Article 46	Promote the educational and economic interests of SCs, STs, and other weaker sections of the society and to protect them from social injustice and exploitation
Article 47	Prohibit the consumption of intoxicating drinks and drugs which are injurious to health
Article 48	Prohibit the slaughter of cows, calves and other milch and draught cattle and to improve their breeds

DPSP – Liberal-Intellectual Principles

Definition: These principles reflect the ideology of liberalism. Under various articles, they direct the state to:

Article 44	Secure for all citizens a uniform civil code throughout the country
Article 45	Provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years
Article 48	Organise agriculture and animal husbandry on modern and scientific lines
Article 49	Protect monuments, places and objects of artistic or historic interest which are declared to be of national importance
Article 50	Separate the judiciary from the executive in the public services of the State
Article 51	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote international peace and security and maintain just and honourable relations between nations Foster respect for international law and treaty obligations Encourage settlement of international disputes by arbitration

Directive Principles of State Policy's notes about its classification is important for [UPSC 2021](#) and aspirants should learn these with articles mentioned.

What are the new DPSPs added by the 42nd Amendment Act, 1976?

42nd Amendment Act, 1976 added four new Directive Principles in the list:

S.No	Article	New DPSPs
1	Article 39	To secure opportunities for the healthy development of children
2	Article 39A	To promote equal justice and to provide free legal aid to the poor
3	Article 43A	To take steps to secure the participation of workers in the management of industries
4	Article 48A	To protect and improve the environment and to safeguard forests and wildlife

Facts about Directive Principles of State Policy:

1. A new DPSP under **Article 38** was added by the 44th Amendment Act of 1978, which requires the State to minimise inequalities in income, status, facilities and opportunities.
2. The 86th Amendment Act of 2002 changed the subject-matter of **Article 45** and made elementary education a fundamental right under **Article 21A**. The amended directive requires the State to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years.
3. A new DPSP under **Article 43B** was added by the 97th Amendment Act of 2011 relating to co-operative societies. It requires the state to promote voluntary formation, autonomous functioning, democratic control and professional management of co-operative societies.
4. The Indian Constitution under **Article 37** makes it clear that 'DPSPs are fundamental in the governance of the country and it shall be the duty of the state to apply these principles in making laws.'

Criticism of Directive Principles of State Policy

As a point of debate, the following reasons are stated for the criticism of Directive Principles of State Policy:

1. It has no legal force
2. It is illogically arranged
3. It is conservative in nature
4. It may produce constitutional conflict between centre and state

What is the conflict between Fundamental Rights and DPSPs?

With the help of four court cases given below, candidates can understand the relationship between Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of State Policy:

Champakam Dorairajan Case (1951)

Supreme Court ruled that in any case of conflict between Fundamental Rights and DPSPs, the provisions of the former would prevail. DPSPs were regarded to run as a subsidiary to Fundamental Rights. SC also ruled that Parliament can amend Fundamental Rights through constitutional amendment act to implement DPSPs.

Result: Parliament made the First Amendment Act (1951), the Fourth Amendment Act (1955) and the Seventeenth Amendment Act (1964) to implement some of the Directives.

Golaknath Case (1967)

Supreme Court ruled that Parliament cannot amend Fundamental Rights to implement Directive Principles of State Policy.

Result: Parliament enacted the 24th Amendment Act 1971 & 25th Amendment Act 1971 declaring that it has the power to abridge or take away any of the Fundamental Rights by enacting Constitutional Amendment Acts. 25th Amendment Act inserted a new Article 31C containing two provisions:

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- No law which seeks to implement the socialistic Directive Principles specified in Article 39 (b)22 and (c)23 shall be void on the ground of contravention of the Fundamental Rights conferred by Article 14 (equality before law and equal protection of laws), Article 19 (protection of six rights in respect of speech, assembly, movement, etc) or Article 31 (right to property).
- No law containing a declaration for giving effect to such policy shall be questioned in any court on the ground that it does not give effect to such a policy.

Kesavananda Bharti Case (1973)

Supreme Court ruled out the second provision of Article 31C added by the 25th Amendment Act during Golaknath Case of 1967. It termed the provision 'unconstitutional.' However, it held the first provision of Article 31C constitutional and valid.

Result: Through the 42nd amendment act, Parliament extended the scope of the first provision of Article 31C. It accorded the position of legal primacy and supremacy to the Directive Principles over the Fundamental Rights conferred by Articles 14, 19 and 31.

Minerva Mills Case (1980)

Supreme Court held the extension of Article 31C made by the 42nd amendment act unconstitutional and invalid. It made DPSP subordinate to Fundamental Rights. Supreme Court also held that **'the Indian Constitution is founded on the bedrock of the balance between the Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles.'**

Supreme Court's rulings following the case were:

- Fundamental Rights and DPSPs constitute the core of the commitment to social revolution.
- The harmony and balance between Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of State Policy is an **essential feature of the basic structure** of the Constitution.
- The goals set out by the Directive Principles have to be achieved without the abrogation of the means provided by the Fundamental Rights.

Conclusion: Today, Fundamental Rights enjoy supremacy over the Directive Principles. Yet, Directive Principles can be implemented. The Parliament can amend the Fundamental Rights for implementing the Directive Principles, so long as the amendment does not damage or destroy the basic structure of the Constitution.

Directive Principles of State Policy – Facts relevant for UPSC Prelims

The table below mentions a few specific points about DPSPs that aspirants can take help from, for UPSC prelims:

DPSP for UPSC Prelims	
What is its full form?	Directive Principles of State Policy
From which country is it borrowed?	Ireland (Which had copied it from Spanish Constitution)
How many articles are under DPSP?	Article 36-51 belong to DPSP
Which part in Indian Constitution deals with DPSP?	Part-IV belongs to DPSP
How many types of DPSPs are there?	There are three types: 1. Socialist 2. Gandhian 3. Liberal-Intellectual
Have Directive Principles ever amended?	Yes, the 42 nd Amendment Act, 44 th Amendment Act, and 86 th Amendment Act have added/deleted a few DPSPs.
Are DPSPs justiciable?	No, DPSPs are non-justiciable in nature.
Are DPSPs sub-ordinate to Fundamental Rights?	There is a balance between both. Fundamental Rights can be amended to implement Directive Principles until it does not harm the basic structure of the Constitution.
Who described DPSP as 'novel feature' of Constitution?	Dr B.R. Ambedkar
From where do Indian DPSPs find their motivation?	Irish Home Rule Movement
What are the recent developments in favour of DPSPs?	There are various such acts enacted to enforce DPSP. They are: · Prevention of Atrocities Act (In favour of Article 46) · Minimum Wages Act (In favour of Article 43) · Consumer Protection Act · Equal Remuneration Act (In favour of Article 39)

Multiple Choice Question

Consider the following Statements

1. Through the 42nd amendment act, Parliament extended the scope of the first provision of Article 31C. It accorded the position of legal primacy and supremacy to the Directive Principles over the Fundamental Rights conferred by Articles 14, 19 and 31.
2. Fundamental Rights can be amended to implement Directive Principles until it does not harm the basic structure of the Constitution.
3. Part 3 of the Constitution of India contains the Fundamental Rights guaranteed to the citizens of India. Articles 12-35 of the Constitution of India deals with Fundamental Rights.
4. Political Democracy is established in India with the help of Fundamental Rights given in the Constitution of India whereas Economic and Social Democracy is established with the help of Directive Principles of State Policy.

Choose the correct answer from the below-given options

- A) Only statements 3 and 4 are true.
- B) All the above-given statements are true.
- C) Only statements 2, 3 and 4 are true.
- D) Only statements 1, 3 and 4 are true.

Answer: B

Frequently Asked Questions about Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP)

What are the four categories of Directive Principles of State Policy?

Directive Principles of State Policy have been grouped into four categories. These are: (1) the economic and social principles, (2) the Gandhian principles, (3) Principles and Policies relating to international peace and security and (4) miscellaneous.

What are the principles of DPSP?

The expression “Justice- social, economic, political” is sought to be achieved through DPSPs. DPSPs are incorporated to attain the ultimate ideals of preamble i.e. Justice, Liberty, Equality and fraternity. Moreover, it also embodies the idea of the welfare state which India was deprived of under colonial rule