

Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP)

Introduction

The directive principles of State policy in part 4 of the Indian Constitution are the guidelines for the government to ensure social, economic, political justice aimed at establishing a welfare state. These are guidelines given to the state - meaning the central government, state government and all authorities - on how to govern the country in a way that promotes the welfare, justice, dignity and equality of all citizens. The Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP) are enshrined in **Part IV (Articles 36–51)** of the Indian Constitution. They are **borrowed from the Irish Constitution**. Unlike Fundamental Rights, DPSPs are **non-justiciable** — they cannot be enforced in a court of law. However, they are **fundamental in governance** and it is the duty of the State to apply them while making laws.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar called them "**novel features**" of the Indian Constitution. They represent the **socio-economic goals** the Indian State aims to achieve — often described as the "**Instrument of Instructions**" to the government.

Article 36 – Definition of "State" (same as in Part III)

Article 37 – DPSPs are non-justiciable but fundamental in governance

Article 38 – State to secure social order for welfare of people; reduce inequalities

Article 39 – State policy to focus on:

- Equal right to livelihood (men & women)
- Equal pay for equal work
- Prevention of concentration of wealth
- Protection of children from exploitation

Article 39A – Free legal aid to ensure justice is not denied due to poverty (*42nd Amendment, 1976*)

Article 40 – Organisation of Village Panchayats (Gram Swaraj)

Article 41 – Right to work, education, and public assistance (unemployment, old age, sickness, disability)

Article 42 – Just and humane conditions of work and Maternity relief

Article 43 – Living wage and decent standard of life for workers; promotion of cottage industries and cooperative societies

Article 43A – Worker participation in management of industries (*42nd Amendment, 1976*)

Article 43B – Promotion of cooperative societies (*97th Amendment, 2011*)

Article 44 – Uniform Civil Code for all citizens

Article 45 – Early childhood care and education for children below 6 years

Article 46 – Promotion of educational and economic interests of SC, ST, and weaker sections

Article 47 – Raise level of nutrition and standard of living; prohibit intoxicating drinks and drugs

Article 48 – Promote modern agriculture and animal husbandry; prohibit slaughter of cows and milch cattle

Article 48A – Protection and improvement of environment; safeguard forests and wildlife (*42nd Amendment, 1976*)

Article 49 – Protection of monuments and places of national importance

Article 50 – Separation of Judiciary from Executive in public services

Article 51 – Promotion of international peace and security; respect for international law; settlement of disputes by arbitration

Significance of DPSPs

Despite criticism, DPSPs are extremely significant because:

1. They serve as a **guide to legislators and administrators**
2. They act as a **yardstick to judge** the performance of the government
3. They aim to establish a **Welfare State** (as opposed to a Police State)
4. They embody the **Gandhian, socialist, and liberal** vision for India
5. They complement Fundamental Rights — together they form the "**conscience of the Constitution**"

Conclusion

The Directive Principles of State Policy represent the **positive obligations** of the State towards its citizens. While Fundamental Rights protect citizens from state excesses, DPSPs direct the state towards **social justice, economic equality, and national progress**. As the Supreme Court held in the **Minerva Mills Case (1980)**, the true

strength of the Indian Constitution lies in the **harmonious relationship** between Part III and Part IV. Together, they reflect the **founding fathers' vision** of India as a **Sovereign, Socialist, Secular, Democratic Republic**.