# Polity & Governance · GS - II

**How can India reconcile the principle of population-based representation with the need to protect federal equity during delimitation?**

| EXAM YEAR | PAPER | SUBJECT |
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| MARKS | WORD LIMIT |
|---|---|
| 15 | ~250 words |

## Answer Hint

**Delimitation, democratic representation, population stabilisation, federal equity, regional disparities, cooperative federalism, constitutional consensus**

## Model Answer

Delimitation seeks to ensure fair representation by adjusting electoral constituencies according to demographic changes. However, in India, differences in population growth among States have made delimitation a sensitive federal issue.

**The central dilemma**

States with higher population growth may seek greater parliamentary representation under the principle of population-based representation. Conversely, States that have achieved population stabilisation may fear losing their relative political influence despite their developmental achievements.

**Balancing the competing principles**

1. **Equitable representation:** Constituency sizes should reflect demographic realities while ensuring meaningful representation of citizens.

2. **Federal safeguards:** Changes in the relative representation of States should consider regional balance and the constitutional position of the States.

3. **Transparent criteria:** The delimitation process should use publicly available demographic data and clearly defined principles.

4. **Political consultation:** An institutional dialogue involving the Union, States and political parties can help build consensus.

5. **Balanced development:** Population stabilisation, education, healthcare and human development achievements should inform discussions on representational fairness.

**Conclusion**

Delimitation should not become a contest between regions. A constitutionally sound, transparent and consultative framework can protect democratic equality while preserving the spirit of cooperative federalism.