

**UNIT I**

**DEMOCRATIC VALUES**

**Freedom of Expression, Citizen Participation in Governance:**

**Freedom of Expression**

Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers.

Freedom of speech is the right to articulate opinions and ideas without interference, retaliation or punishment from the government.

**The principle of freedom of expression**

All people should be afforded equal opportunities to receive, seek and impart information by any means of communication without any discrimination for reasons of race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinions, national or social origin, economic status, birth or any other social condition.

You have the freedom to express yourself online and to access information and the opinions and expressions of others. This includes political speech, views on religion, opinions and expressions that are favorably received or regarded as inoffensive, but also those that may offend, shock or disturb others.

**The role of freedom of expression**

Democratic value: Freedom of speech is the bulwark of democratic Government. This freedom is essential for the proper functioning of the democratic process as it allows people to criticize the government in a democracy, freedom of speech and expression open up channels of free discussion of issues.

**Benefits of freedom of expression**

Freedom of expression is necessary to discover truth and make social progress. Any great and lasting advance in society – from racial equality to the possibility of self-government – depends on the discovery of truth. And free expression is how we can test and learn the truth

Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.

### **Limitations of freedom of expression**

In situations like these, the state can lawfully restrict or punish expressions that cause harm. Examples of this are violations of private life, defamation, hate speech, obscenity, pornography, public order, national security, classified information, trade secrets or copyright violations.

### **Five freedoms of expression.**

The five freedoms it protects: speech, religion, press, assembly, and the right to petition the government. Together, these five guaranteed freedoms make the people of the United States of America the freest in the world.

## **Citizen Participation in Governance**

Citizen Participation is the active involvement of citizens in the legislative decision-making process allowing them to contribute to decisions that may have an impact on their lives.

### **The role of citizen participation in ensuring good governance:**

Citizen participation is a key element of a good governance system. It provides private individuals and groups the opportunity to inform, influence, monitor and evaluate public decisions, processes, and actions.

### **The principles of citizen participation:**

Methods of citizen participation outlined in these guidelines rely on principles of good practice to ensure their quality: purpose, accountability, transparency, inclusiveness and accessibility, integrity, privacy, information, resources, and evaluation.

### **Methods of citizen participation:**

There are different forms of citizen participation, including voting, referendums, municipality or community assembly, public presentations, public exhibitions and public discussions. These forms of participation might be called traditional methods.

### **How to increase citizen participation in government?**

Increased participation often begins with education. Many citizens don't get involved because they don't know where or how to get started. Building a knowledge and understanding of how their local government operates is often the first building block to creating more engaged citizens.