



EDUCATION INTO STATE LIST - GS II MAINS

Q. Do you think 'Education' needs to be placed back in the state list at the present context? Give your argument (15 marks, 250 words)

News: *Should education be brought back to the State list?*

What's in the news?

- The NEET-UG exam has been embroiled in controversies over the award of grace marks, allegation of paper leaks and other irregularities.
- The government also cancelled the UGC-NET exam after it was held, while the CSIR-NET and NEET-PG exams have been postponed.

Status of Education – Historical Background:

Early Phase - Education in Provincial List:

- The Government of India Act, 1935 during the British rule created a federal structure for the first time in our polity.
- The legislative subjects were distributed between the federal legislature (present day Union) and provinces (present day States).
- Education, as an important public good, was kept under the provincial list.

After Independence:

- After independence, the trend set by the GoI Act 1935 was continued and education was part of the 'State list' under the distribution of powers.

Recommendation of Swaran Singh Committee:

- During the Emergency, the Congress party constituted the Swaran Singh Committee to provide recommendations for amendments to the Constitution.
- One of the recommendations of this committee was to place 'education' in the concurrent list in order to evolve all-India policies on the subject.

42nd Constitutional Amendment and Status of Education:

- The 42nd constitutional amendment (1976) by shifting 'education' from the State list to the concurrent list.
- No detailed rationale was provided for this change.

Attempt to Bring Back Education in State List:

- The Janata Party government led by Morarji Desai passed the 44th constitutional amendment (1978) to reverse many of the controversial changes made through the 42nd amendment.
- One of these amendments that was passed in the Lok Sabha but not in the Rajya Sabha was to bring back 'education' to the State list.



- Since then, education remains in the concurrent list of the Constitution.

Prevailing International Practices:

- In the United States, educational standards and standardized tests are set by state and local governments, while federal oversight focuses on financial aid and key educational policies.
- Canada delegates education entirely to its provinces.
- In Germany, educational legislative authority resides with its states (Länder).
- South Africa has national departments for school and higher education, with provinces implementing national policies and addressing local educational needs.

Arguments for Restoring 'Education' to State List	Arguments against Restoring 'Education' to State List
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recent Issues with Centralisation - Events like NEET controversies highlight that centralized control does not eliminate problems, challenging assumptions about governance efficacy. ● Autonomy and Tailored Policies - States argue for autonomy to tailor educational policies to local needs, especially concerning syllabus, testing, and admissions for professional courses. ● One size fits all approach cannot work - Considering the vast diversity of the country, a 'one size fits all' approach is neither feasible nor desirable. ● Financial Distribution – A significant amount of education expenditure is borne by the states, suggesting a need for productive discussion towards moving 'education' back to the State list. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Uniform Education Policy - Advocates argue for a unified approach to education across the country to improve standards and ensure consistency. ● Synergy Between Centre and States - Central coordination is seen as beneficial for aligning national goals with state-level implementation. ● Corruption and Lack of Professionalism - Critics cite concerns about inefficiencies and ethical issues within state-level management of education.



- According to the Ministry of Education's 2022 report on education spending, out of the total ₹6.25 lakh crore spent by education departments in 2020-21, the Centre contributed 15%, and the States contributed 85%.
- When including all other departments' spending on education and training, the breakdown shifts to 24% by the Centre and 76% by the States.

Way Forward:

- **Hybrid Model** - Experts suggest maintaining central oversight for regulatory frameworks like medical and technical education while devolving policymaking autonomy to states.
- **Collaborative Governance** - Emphasis must be given on productive dialogue between central and state authorities to achieve balanced educational reforms and efficient resource allocation.

