

## Exercise 7.8. – Ways of participating in democracy

<b>Educational objective</b>	The students relate different forms of political participation to human rights.
<b>Resources</b>	List of possible forms of political participation.

### Procedure

1. Each student writes a list of all the ways and activities by which he or she thinks people can participate in democratic decision-making processes.
2. The students form groups of four. They compare their lists, discuss them and try to agree on one list of ways of participating.
3. The groups compare their list of ways of participation with the one on the handout.

### Extension

The students could explore the following questions:

1. Do you believe that any or all of the above forms of political participation are human rights? Should all of them be protected by the law? Explain why or why not.
2. In what way can you participate in democracy in your country? Are there any ways of taking part that are not open to you? Explain.
3. Should laws also protect the right not to participate? Explain.

## Materials

### Student handout

Participation may take many forms including:

- reading about issues and leaders
- writing about issues and leaders
- debating issues
- working in the community in support of a particular cause or in protest against government action
- forming or joining political parties or other community or grass-roots organisations
- attending political or community meetings
- becoming a leader of a political party, a labour organisation or community organisation
- voting in elections
- campaigning for those standing for office
- standing for office and serving if elected
- paying taxes
- lobbying
- serving in the military
- using existing legal channels such as contacting government officials, taking cases to court, etc.
- protesting through demonstrations, boycotts, strikes, etc.