

Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) Annual Report, 2025

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Introduction

The Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2025 Annual Report, released by India's Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) in March 2026, delivers comprehensive labor market data for the calendar year January to December 2025. This edition marks a pivotal shift: the survey adopted a revamped methodology from January 2025, transitioning from the July-June agricultural cycle to a January-December calendar year for global alignment, while expanding to enable monthly rural-urban estimates and quarterly nationwide reporting in Current Weekly Status (CWS). With a significantly larger sample—22,594 First Stage Units (FSUs: 12,441 rural villages, 10,153 urban blocks), 270,472 households, and 11.48 million persons surveyed (6.56 million rural, 4.92 million urban)—it enhances precision, excluding only inaccessible Andaman & Nicobar villages.

Methodology Changes

Key innovations address high-frequency data needs. The rotational panel now visits each household four times over consecutive months (first visit: Schedule 10.4 FV; subsequent: 10.4 RV), ensuring 75% overlap month-to-month and 50% quarter-to-quarter for both sectors—unlike prior urban-only revisits. Sampling shifted to district-based strata (plus NSS regions where needed), Simple Random Sampling (SRS) per month, and Census 2011 frames updated for urbanization, boosting household coverage 2.65-fold to ~272,000 annually. Schedule updates added vocational training details, land possession, household incomes (e.g., rentals, pensions), and education items like secondary attendance for primary-level persons. Usual status (ps+ss, ~365 days) and CWS (7 days) remain core, but 2025 estimates aren't strictly comparable to pre-2025 due to these shifts.

Core Indicators (Usual Status, All Ages)

India's Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) is 44.9% (rural: 46.6%; urban: 41.3%), with males at 59.1% and females at 30.7%—reflecting persistent gender gaps. Worker Population Ratio (WPR) follows at 43.5% (rural: 45.4%; urban: 39.3%), males 57.2%, females 29.8%. Unemployment Rate (UR) is low at 3.1% (rural: 2.4%; urban: 4.8%), but urban females face 6.4% vs. rural males' 2.6%. For ages 15+, LFPR rises to 59.3%, WPR to 57.4%, UR steady at 3.1%; youth (15-29) UR hits 9.9% (females 18.9%).

Category (Usual Status, All Ages)	Rural Male	Rural Female	Rural Total	Urban Male	Urban Female	Urban Total	National Total
LFPR (%)	58.8	34.6	46.6	59.7	22.2	41.3	44.9
WPR (%)	57.2	33.8	45.4	57.2	20.7	39.3	43.5
UR (%)	2.6	2.1	2.4	4.2	6.4	4.8	3.1

Trends Over Years (Usual Status, Ages 15+)

Improvements persist: LFPR for persons rose from 56.1% (2022) to 59.3% (2025); WPR from 54.1% to 57.4%; UR fell from 3.6% to 3.1%. Rural female WPR climbed from 36.7% (2022) to 44.9% (2025), though urban lags.

Year	LFPR Persons (%)	WPR Persons (%)	UR Persons (%)
2025	59.3	57.4	3.1
2024	59.6	57.7	3.2
2023	59.8	58.0	3.1
2022	56.1	54.1	3.6

CWS Indicators

CWS shows slightly lower LFPR (42.2%), WPR (40.0%), higher UR (5.3%)—typical for shorter reference periods. Trends mirror usual status: WPR up from 36.5% (2022) to 40.0% (2025).

Employment Quality

Self-employment prevails rurally (males 57.4%, females 70.7%) vs. urban salaried (males 46.5%, females 50.9%; casual: urban males 13.1%). Non-agri regular wage workers: 58% without contracts, 47% ineligible for paid leave, 54% lacking social security. Educated (secondary+) UR: 6.5% (urban 7.2%).

Social and Demographic Breakdowns

Scheduled Tribes lead WPR (51.4%) and lowest UR (2.1%), SC at 44.1% WPR (UR 3.3%), OBC 42.8% (3.0%), others 41.3% (3.7%). Female ST WPR tops at ~44.5%. Religious data (all-India usual status): Hindus WPR 44.0%, Muslims 39.5%; UR similar across. Youth NEET: 25% (females 42.2%). Vocational training: ~5% for 15-29, mostly employed.

Social Group (Usual Status, Persons)	LFPR (%)	WPR (%)	UR (%)
ST	52.5	51.4	2.1
SC	45.6	44.1	3.3
OBC	44.1	42.8	3.0
Others	42.9	41.3	3.7

Workforce Estimates and Implications

~616 million workers in usual status (rural 367 million, urban 200 million), with formal sector ~10% of non-agri jobs. Rising female rural participation and declining UR signal recovery, but urban female

gaps, youth unemployment, and informal dominance pose challenges. The expanded design positions PLFS for robust policy tracking amid India's push for high-frequency labor data

Read More: [Periodic Labour Force Survey \(PLFS\) Annual Report, 2025](#)

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