

Women and Men in India 2025 Report, Key Findings, Challenges

May 1, 2026 • vajiramandravi.com



Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has released the 27th edition of its publication titled **“Women and Men in India 2025: Selected Indicators and Data”** at the National Deliberative Summit on “Data for Development”, on 29th April 2026 at Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

Key Findings of the Women and Men in India 2025 Report

The **Women and Men in India 2025 Report** provides a comprehensive, evidence-based overview of gender-related trends across population, health, education, employment, and decision-making. It compiles gender-disaggregated data from multiple ministries, departments, and organisations.

Population:

- The **average annual exponential population growth rate** in India follows an inverted U- shaped trajectory, implying that population growth accelerated in the decades after independence, reached its peak during the 1971-1981 decade, steadily declining thereafter.

- The slowing growth rate signals the onset of a demographic dividend phase, which over time, may lead towards population ageing.
- The **sex ratio** at birth has increased at the all-India level, indicating improved survival of women and girls reaching from 904 in 2017-19 to 917 in 2021-23.
- As of 2023, **highest sex ratio** is in northeastern states of Arunachal Pradesh, where women outnumber men with a sex ratio of 1085, followed by Nagaland (1007), followed by Goa (973). The worst performing are Jharkhand (899) and Bihar (900).

Health:

- The **Total Fertility Rate** in urban areas has shown a decline between 2019 to 2023.
- **Maternal Mortality Ratio** has shown a steady and significant decline over the years, with the maternal mortality ratio reducing from 254 to 88 from 2004-06 to 2021-23
- **Infant mortality rates** have declined consistently for both girls and boys between 2008 and 2023.
- Across rural and urban areas, the **mean age at marriage** for women has shown a steady increase from 2021 onwards.
- **Female sterilization** emerges as the most commonly adopted method of family planning among currently married women aged 15-49, accounting for 37.9 percent of total usage.
- Mizoram emerges as the most affected state with respect to **HIV infections** for both male and female together, recording a prevalence rate of 1.02 and 0.77 respectively, whereas Kerala report the lowest prevalence, at 0.01 for males and 0.01 for females.
- **Tuberculosis** cases are observed to be more prevalent among the male population compared to females.

Education:

- **Literacy rates** have improved for both genders across urban and rural areas.
- **Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)** at Higher Education has improved from 28.5 to 30.2 for females and 28.3 to 28.9 for males between 2021-22 and 2022-23.
- **Gender parity** has been achieved across all levels of school education from Primary to Higher Secondary level.
- The **dropout rates** for both girls and boys have decreased from the year 2022-23 to 2024-25 under NEP Structure.
- As of 2022-23, the **Mean Year of Schooling (MYS)** in formal education, in India is 8.4 for 15 years and above, while the female MYS is 7.4, making it 1.9 years lesser than male MYS.
- Thirty out of Thirty-six States/Union Territories have **Gender Parity Index** of 1.00 and above.
- More females study Arts, Sciences, Social Sciences and Medical Sciences as compared to males. Whereas, more males study Engineering & Technology, IT & Computers, Management and Law as compared to females.

Participation in Economy:

- Rural females have seen the highest increase in **Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR)**, going from 37.5 to 45.9 during the period 2022 to 2025.

- In year 2025, the **Worker Population Ratio (WPR)** for ages 15 and above is 76.6 for males and 38.8 for females. For both genders, the WPR is higher in rural areas compared to urban areas.
- As of 2025, there is a greater concentration of women workers in agriculture in rural areas, with nearly three-fourths (72.7 per cent) of rural female workers engaged in this sector. In contrast, in urban areas, women workers are more concentrated in manufacturing activities.
- **Unemployment** remains most pronounced among the youth population aged 15–29 years, with its severity being particularly high in urban areas.
- Average time spent in a day by males on **unpaid activities** has increased between 2019 and 2024, whereas average time spent in a day by female on paid activities increased in the same period.
- The average time spent by men on **unpaid domestic services** is 88 minutes while women spent 289 minutes.

Participation in Decision Making:

- As of 2025, women constitute 13.65 per cent of **Members of Parliament**, and 9.86 per cent hold ministerial portfolios.
- Women account for 49.75 per cent of elected **Panchayat representatives** where 16 States report more than 50 per cent women's representation in **Panchayati Raj Institutions**.
- **Representation of women in PRIs** is the highest in Assam (60.1%), followed by Dadar & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu (56.93%), and Chhattisgarh (56.5%)
- The gender gap in percentage of Male and Female Electors **Voting** has progressively narrowed, with female turnout surpassing male turnout in the 2019 and 2024 General Election.
- Of the 1,122 approved **judicial positions**, only 118 are held by women, accounting for just 14.30% of the judiciary. In the Supreme Court, women constitute merely 3.03% of the permanent strength of 33 judges
- The **defence sector**, including the army and navy, has seen a rise in the number of women serving from 2020 and 2025.
- There has been a 73.80% **increase in Men engaged in managerial positions** between 2017 and 2025, whereas there has been a 102.54% increase in Women engaged in managerial positions during the same time period
- **Women's participation in household decision-making has seen a marked improvement**, as, at least 16 out of 28 States and 6 out of 8 Union Territories report more than 90 per cent of women participating in household decision-making as of 2019-21.

Violence against Women and other challenges:

- **Crimes Against Women** constitute 7.18% of total crimes committed in year 2023.
- **West Bengal** reported the highest share (19.24 %), of reported Crimes Against Women to total crimes within state.
- **Cybercrime** against women has expanded rapidly with the growth of ICTs and digital platforms. Registered cases increased from 4,242 in 2017 to 19,510 in 2023, with cyber pornography and cyber stalking/bullying most frequently reported; Karnataka (7,002) recorded the highest number of cases, followed by Maharashtra (2,502) and Uttarakhand (1,463).
- A noted decline is observed between 2015-16 to 2019-21 in **Child Marriage**.

- The number of **suicides** has increased for men, women, and transgender persons from 2018 to 2023.

Key Challenges

- Persistent son preference affecting sex ratio at birth
- Low female workforce participation in urban areas
- Dominance of informal and unpaid work among women
- Gender wage gap and limited asset ownership
- Underrepresentation in top political and corporate leadership
- Heavy burden of unpaid care work

Way Forward

- Strengthen enforcement of laws against gender discrimination and sex-selective practices
- Promote creation of quality and formal employment opportunities for women
- Enhance skill development, digital inclusion, and access to entrepreneurship
- Provide institutional support systems such as childcare and social security
- Encourage greater representation of women in leadership and governance roles
- Improve collection and utilisation of gender-disaggregated data for targeted policy design

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/women-and-men-in-india-2025-report/>

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