

India Slips to 131st in Global Gender Gap Index 2025: Progress and Challenges

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Global Gender Gap Index Latest News

- The World Economic Forum has recently published the Global Gender Gap Report 2025.

Introduction

- India has slipped to the **131st position out of 148 countries** in the **World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index 2025**, a fall of two places compared to its 129th rank in 2024.
- Released on June 12, 2025, the index places India among the lowest-ranked countries in South Asia in terms of gender parity.
- With a parity score of 64.1%, the report highlights both marginal improvements in certain sectors and a persistent lag in political empowerment.

Understanding the Global Gender Gap Index

- The Global Gender Gap Index assesses countries based on four key dimensions:
 - **Economic Participation and Opportunity**
 - **Educational Attainment**
 - **Health and Survival**
 - **Political Empowerment**
- The index measures the extent of gender-based disparities and tracks progress in closing these gaps over time.

India's Performance Across Key Dimensions

- **Economic Participation and Opportunity**
 - India's most notable improvement came in this domain, with a 0.9 percentage point rise in its subindex score to reach 40.7%.
 - Although the labour force participation rate remained stagnant at 45.9%, parity in estimated earned income rose from 28.6% to 29.9%.
 - This indicates gradual progress, though the gender gap in actual income levels continues to be significant.
- **Educational Attainment**
 - In the education domain, India achieved near parity, scoring 97.1%. The improvement stems from increased female literacy rates and better enrolment in tertiary education.
 - This shows that while access to education has widened, translating this into workforce representation remains a challenge.
- **Health and Survival**
 - India's score in this area also improved due to better parity in sex ratio at birth and healthy life expectancy.
 - However, the gains must be viewed in light of an overall decline in life expectancy for both men and women, making the parity somewhat nominal in nature.
- **Political Empowerment**
 - The most worrying decline was observed in political empowerment. Female representation in Parliament fell from 14.7% in 2024 to 13.8% in 2025.
 - The share of women in ministerial roles also declined from 6.5% to 5.6%.
 - This marks the second consecutive year of decline and pulls India further from its peak of 30% in 2019.

Regional Comparison and Global Leaders

- India's position stands out starkly in the South Asian context. Bangladesh made remarkable gains, rising 75 positions to reach 24th globally.
- Nepal (125), Bhutan (119), and Sri Lanka (130) also ranked above India. Only Maldives (138) and Pakistan (148) scored lower.
- Globally, Iceland retained its top position for the 16th consecutive year, followed by Finland, Norway, the UK, and New Zealand.

Global Gender Parity Trends

- The 2025 report marks the strongest annual improvement in gender parity since the COVID-19 pandemic, with the global gap closing to 68.8%.
- Despite this, the report estimates that at the current rate, full global parity is still 123 years away.
- Women comprise 41.2% of the global workforce but hold only 28.8% of leadership positions, underscoring a critical gap in decision-making roles.

Implications for India's Growth and Policy

- The Global Gender Gap Index is not merely a social yardstick, it has strong economic implications.
- World Economic Forum emphasized that countries making strides toward gender parity are better positioned for resilient and inclusive economic growth.
- India's stagnant or regressive performance in key areas, particularly political representation, signals a need for stronger institutional efforts and gender-sensitive policymaking.

Source : TH

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