

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1061
TO BE ANSWERED ON 13TH FEBRUARY, 2025**

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE FORMAL WORKFORCE

1061. SHRI SATNAM SINGH SANDHU:

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of steps implemented to promote women's participation in the formal workforce;**
- (b) the steps taken to support women in the country through skill development and vocational training schemes to enhance their employability;**
- (c) the steps taken to ensure equal pay for equal work for women workers in the country's agricultural and industrial sectors; and**
- (d) the measures taken to address the issue of women's underrepresentation in leadership roles and decision-making positions in the workforce in the country?**

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT
(SUSHRI SHOBHA KARANDLAJE)**

(a) to (d): The official data source on Employment and Unemployment is Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) which is conducted by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) since 2017-18. The survey period is July to June every year.

As per the latest available Annual PLFS reports, the estimated Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) on usual status for females of age 15 years and above increased from 23.3% in 2017-18 to 41.7% in 2023-24.

Employment generation coupled with improving employability is the priority of the Government. Government is implementing various schemes to boost women's participation in the labour force and quality of their employment, like Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY), Stand-UP India Scheme, Startup India, Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP), Women in Science and Engineering- KIRAN (WISE-KIRAN), SERB-POWER (Promoting Opportunities for Women in Exploratory Research), Mission Shakti, Namu Drone Didi and Lakhpati Didi, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY), Rural Self Employment and Training Institutes (RSETIs), Deen Dayal Antodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM), Production Linked Incentive, etc. The details of various employment generation schemes/ programmes being implemented by the Government of India may be seen at https://dge.gov.in/dge/schemes_programmes.

A number of protective provisions have been incorporated in the labour laws for equal opportunity and congenial work environment for women workers. The Code on Social Security, 2020 has the provisions for enhancement in paid maternity leave from 12 weeks to 26 weeks, provision for mandatory crèche facility in the establishments having 50 or more employees, permitting women workers in the night shifts with adequate safety measures, etc.

The Code on Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSH), 2020 has the provisions for the employment of women in the aboveground mines including opencast workings has been allowed between 7 pm and 6 am, and in below ground working between 6 am and 7 pm in technical, supervisory and managerial work where continuous presence may not be required.

To enhance the employability of female workers, the Government is providing training to them through a network of Women Industrial Training institutes, National Vocational Training Institutes and Regional Vocational Training Institutes.

The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 provides for payment of equal remuneration to men and women workers for the same work or work of similar nature without any discrimination.

Government is implementing Skill India Mission (SIM) to deliver skill, re-skill and up-skill training through an extensive network of skill development centres/ schools/ colleges /institutes etc. under various schemes, viz. Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS), National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS) and Craftsmen Training Scheme (CTS) through Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs). The SIM aims at enabling youth of India including women to get future ready, equipped with industry relevant skills.

In addition, Ministry of Labour and Employment in January, 2024 issued an “Advisory for Employers to Promote Women Workforce Participation”. This advisory inter-alia mentions the need for balance between employment and care responsibilities for both men and women including family friendly measures such as paternity leave, parental leave, family emergency leave and flexible working arrangements.

Further, the Union Budget (2024-25) announced setting up of working women hostels in collaboration with industry, and establishing crèches, for increasing participation of women in the workforce.

Union Budget 2025-26 has also announced a new scheme for 5 lakh women/Scheduled Castes/ Scheduled Tribes first-time entrepreneurs which will provide term loans up to Rs. 2 crore during the next 5 years.
