

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 111
TO BE ANSWERED ON 29TH JANUARY, 2026**

FEMALE PARTICIPATION AND WORKPLACE FACILITIES

111. DR. K. LAXMAN :

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

- (a) whether Government has examined barriers affecting female labour force participation in urban and rural areas;**
- (b) the steps taken to improve workplace safety, crèche facilities and flexible working arrangements;**
- (c) whether any incentives are being provided to employers to recruit and retain women in manufacturing and services; and**
- (d) the progress made by States in implementing maternity benefit provisions and inspections under existing labour laws?**

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d): The official data on Employment and Unemployment is collected through Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), which is conducted by Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) since 2017-18.

As per the latest available Annual PLFS reports, the estimated Labour Force Participation rate (LFPR) on usual status for female of age 15 years and above has increased from 23.3% in 2017-18 to 41.7% in 2023-24. Further, the female LFPR has increased from 24.6% to 47.6% and from 20.4% to 28.0% in rural and urban areas respectively during the same period.

Employment generation coupled with improving employability is the priority of the Government. Government is implementing various schemes to boost the female Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR). The details of various employment generation schemes/programmes being implemented by the Government may be seen at https://dge.gov.in/dge/schemes_programmes .

In order to encourage employment of women, the four Labour Codes - the Code on Wages, 2019, the Industrial Relations Code, 2020, the Code on Social Security, 2020 and the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 have been implemented with effect from 21st November 2025, rationalizing 29 erstwhile labour laws.

These labour codes have various provisions to promote female labour force participation such as :-

- (i) Proportionate representation of women in Grievance Redressal Committee to ensure their voices are included in workplace dispute resolutions.**
- (ii) Up to 26 weeks of paid maternity leave, along with 12 weeks for adoptive and commissioning mothers and allowing remote work after maternity leave where feasible.**
- (iii) Prohibition of gender-based discrimination in matters of wages and conditions of employment for the same or similar work.**
- (iv) Promoting creche facilities for children below the age of six to help working mothers balance work and family life.**

Further, the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 has allowed women to be employed in all establishments for all types of work and may also be employed with their consent before 6 a.m. and beyond 7 p.m. subject to condition relating to safety, holidays and working hours. The Code also provides that adequate safeguards are to be provided by establishments before engaging women in any hazardous or dangerous processes.

With a view to ensure safety of women at workplace, the Ministry of Women and Child Development has put in place an electronic platform “SHe-Box portal” duly encompassing various provisions of ‘the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013’ (SH Act).

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.

Government has also adopted a multi-pronged approach on a life-cycle continuum basis to address the issue of educational, social, economic and political empowerment of women. As a result, India is witnessing a rapid transition from women's-development to women led development with the vision of a new India where women are leading the way for fast paced and sustainable national development.

The Government has also made enabling provisions in the Companies Act, 2013, mandating companies to have at least one-woman Director.

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

In addition, the 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.
