

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2559**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10.08.2026

CONCERN OVER COMPARABILITY OF SURVEY BY PLFS WITH NSSO

2559. DR. V. SIVADASAN:

Will the Minister of STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware of concerns expressed by economists and researchers regarding the comparability of the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) estimates with the earlier Employment-Unemployment Surveys conducted by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO);
- (b) the reasons for the methodological changes introduced in the PLFS;
- (c) whether Government has undertaken any study to ensure comparability of employment data across different survey methodologies; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION; MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE [RAO INDERJIT SINGH]

(a) to (d): The Employment-Unemployment Surveys (EUS) previously conducted by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) were the principal source of labour market statistics in the country till 2011-12. In view of the growing need for more frequent and timely labour market indicators, and based on the recommendations of the National Statistical Commission (NSC), MoSPI introduced the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) in 2017 after due deliberations by expert committees constituted for developing the survey methodology and sample design.

PLFS introduced methodological improvements over the earlier EUS, including a rotational panel sampling design for urban areas, Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) with in-built validation checks, collection of information on hours worked, and changes in the sampling design and schedule of enquiry to generate periodic labour force estimates. Further, from January 2025, the survey design has been strengthened to provide monthly estimates at the all-India level and quarterly estimates for both rural and urban areas, in addition to annual estimates.

The concepts and definitions relating to employment, unemployment and labour force participation adopted in PLFS continue to remain consistent with those followed in the earlier EUS and are based on the recommendations of the Committee of Experts on Unemployment Estimates (Dantwala Committee) as well as the relevant international standards adopted by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS). Accordingly, the PLFS continues to support analysis of long-term labour market trends.

Further, while disseminating the PLFS results through the Annual Reports, Quarterly Bulletins and Monthly Bulletins, MoSPI has advised users to exercise appropriate caution while making direct comparisons between PLFS and the earlier EUS estimates, as differences in survey design and methodology may influence the estimates.

MoSPI continuously engages with economists, researchers, subject-matter experts and other stakeholders, and the feedback received is considered while improving survey methodology, sampling design, questionnaire design, data collection and dissemination practices to enhance the quality, reliability and relevance of labour market statistics.

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