

Female LFPR maintains upward momentum Unemployment Rate declines Overall WPR rises Self-employment grew modestly

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- The overall Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) for persons aged 15 years and above increased to 55.8% during October–December 2025, compared to 55.1% in the previous quarter.
- Female LFPR (15 years and above) recorded a notable rise to 34.9% in October–December 2025, up from 33.7% during July–September 2025.
- The Worker Population Ratio (WPR) for persons aged 15 years and above improved from 52.2% in July–September 2025 to 53.1% in October–December 2025.
- The Rural WPR for persons aged 15 years and above continued to show a steady upward trend across both genders during April–June 2025 to October–December 2025.
- The Unemployment Rate (UR) for persons aged 15 years and above declined across both rural and urban sectors.
- The share of self-employed workers in rural areas increased to 63.2% during October–December 2025, compared to 62.8% in the last quarter.
- The agriculture sector continued to dominate rural employment, accounting for 58.5% of employed persons aged 15 years and above during October–December 2025, up from 57.7% in July–September 2025.

A. Introduction

The Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) conducted by NSO, MoSPI, is the primary source of data on activity participation and employment-unemployment conditions of the population. The PLFS survey methodology has been modified from January, 2025 to provide monthly and quarterly estimates of labour force indicators for both rural and urban India under the CWS framework.

Considering the need to generate high-frequency labour force indicators with wider coverage, the sampling methodology of the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) was revamped from January, 2025. The redesigned PLFS aims to achieve the following objectives:

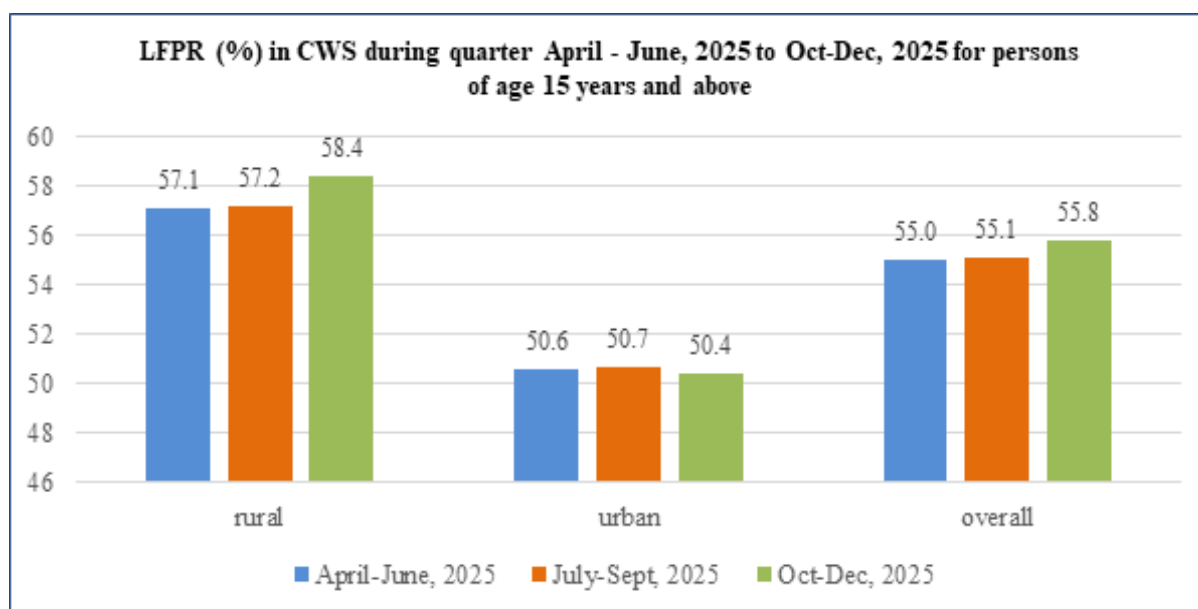
- To generate key employment and unemployment indicators – namely Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR), Worker Population Ratio (WPR) and Unemployment Rate (UR) – every month for both rural and urban areas at the all-India level under the Current Weekly Status (CWS).
- To extend the Quarterly PLFS results to rural areas, thereby producing quarterly estimates of labour market indicators for both rural and urban India under the CWS framework.
- To provide annual estimates of key employment and unemployment indicators in both Usual Status (ps+ss) and Current Weekly Status (CWS) for rural as well as urban areas.

Earlier PLFS Quarterly Bulletins released up to December, 2024, presented labour market indicators only for urban areas. The Bulletin for April – June, 2025 marked the first in the series to provide estimates for both rural and urban areas and the current Bulletin for October – December, 2025 is the third in the series. In this Quarterly Bulletin, *efforts have been made to provide estimates of the number of workers in absolute terms.*

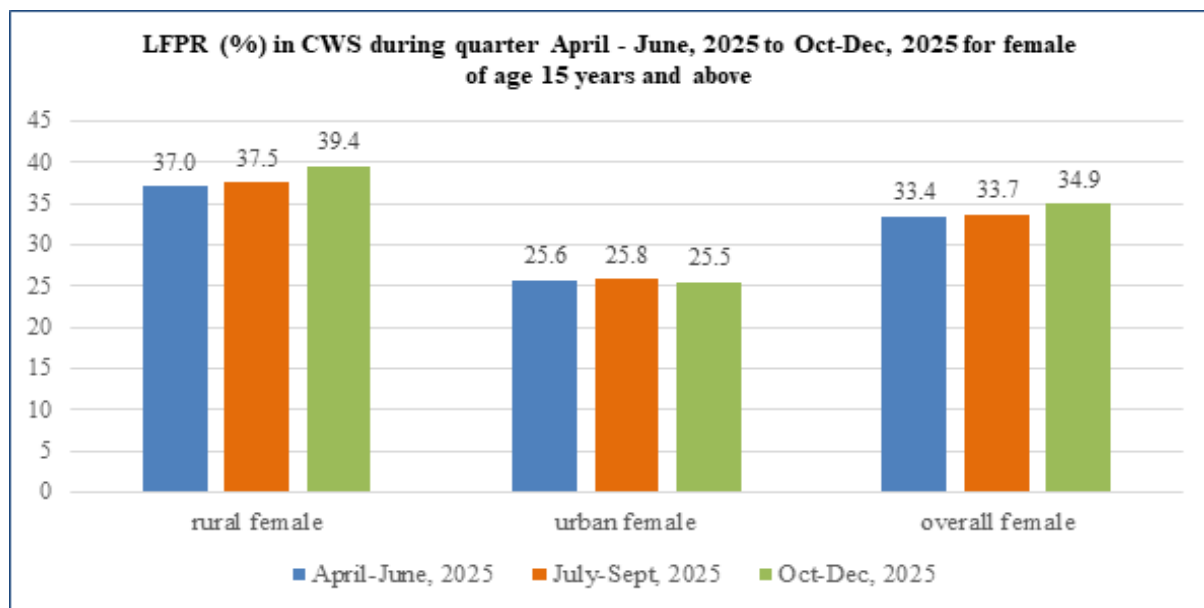
This Quarterly Bulletin presents estimates of key labour force indicators—Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR), Worker Population Ratio (WPR), Unemployment Rate (UR), and *the distribution of workers by broad employment status and industry of work – in the Current Weekly Status (CWS), separately for rural and urban areas at the all-India level.* In addition, *state-level estimates of LFPR, WPR, and UR in CWS are also provided for selected States.*

Key findings for persons of age 15 years and above following CWS:

- ***Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) witnessed modest increase:*** The overall LFPR among persons of age 15 years and above witnessed an increase to 55.8% during October-December, 2025, compared to 55.1% in the previous quarter. In rural areas, LFPR for persons of age 15 years and above increased to 58.4% in the present quarter from 57.2% observed during July-September, 2025. Urban LFPR for the same age group remained broadly steady during the period April-June, 2025 to October-December, 2025.



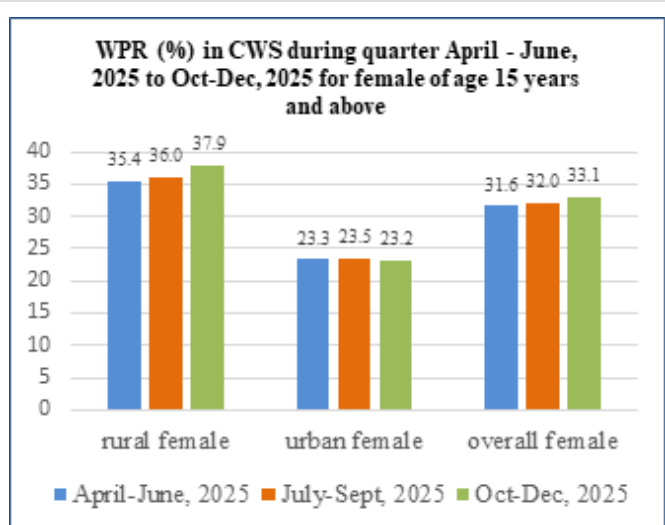
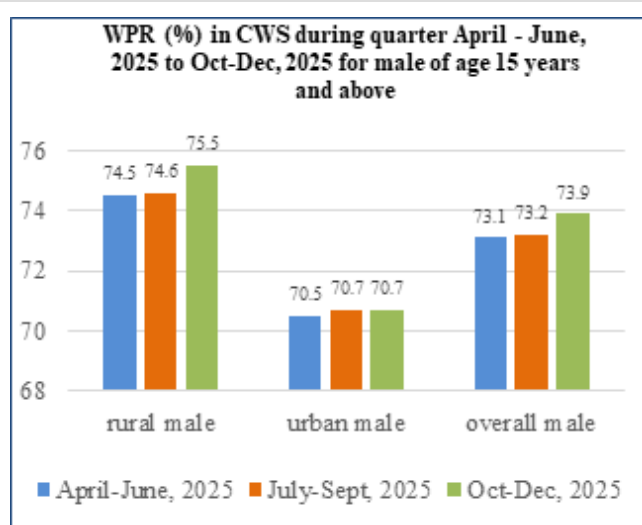
- ***Female LFPR showed increasing trend:*** The overall LFPR of female aged 15 years and above showed upward trend, increased to 34.9% in October-December, 2025 from 33.7% in the previous quarter, driven by increase in female LFPR in rural areas from 37.5% in the quarter July-September, 2025 to 39.4% in October-December, 2025. However, female LFPR in urban areas remained stable.

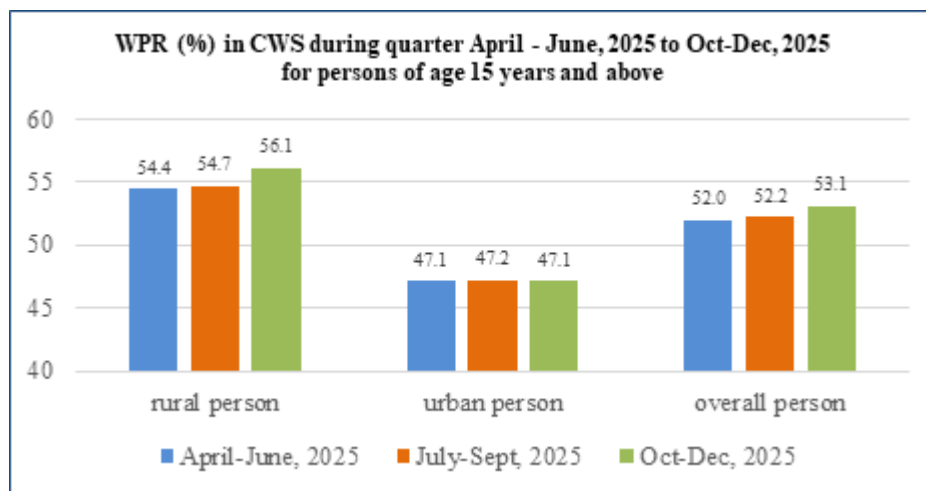


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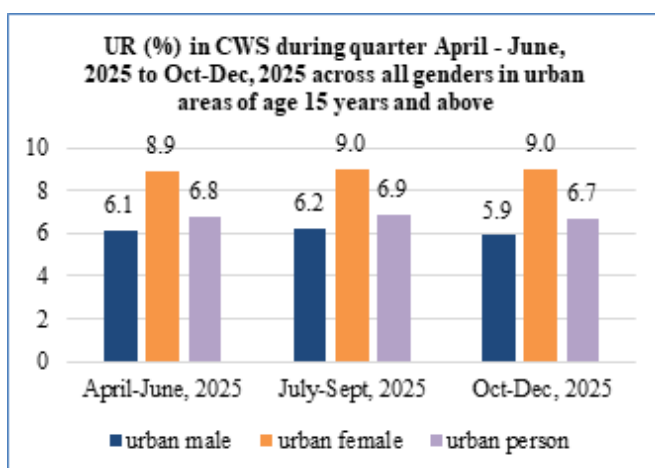
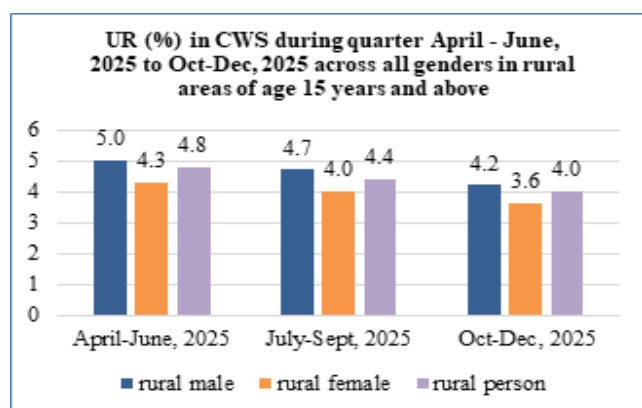
- **Rise in workforce:** The overall Worker Population Ratio (WPR) for persons of age 15 years and above rose to 53.1% in October-December, 2025 as compared to 52.2% in July-September, 2025 mainly driven by the increased workforce participation of persons in rural areas. The overall WPR of female aged 15 years and above continued to improve during the quarter October-December, 2025 as compared to last two quarters, reflecting a positive shift in women's engagement in the workforce.

The overall WPR of age 15 years and above rose to 53.1% in October-December, 2025 from 52.2% observed in the previous quarter.



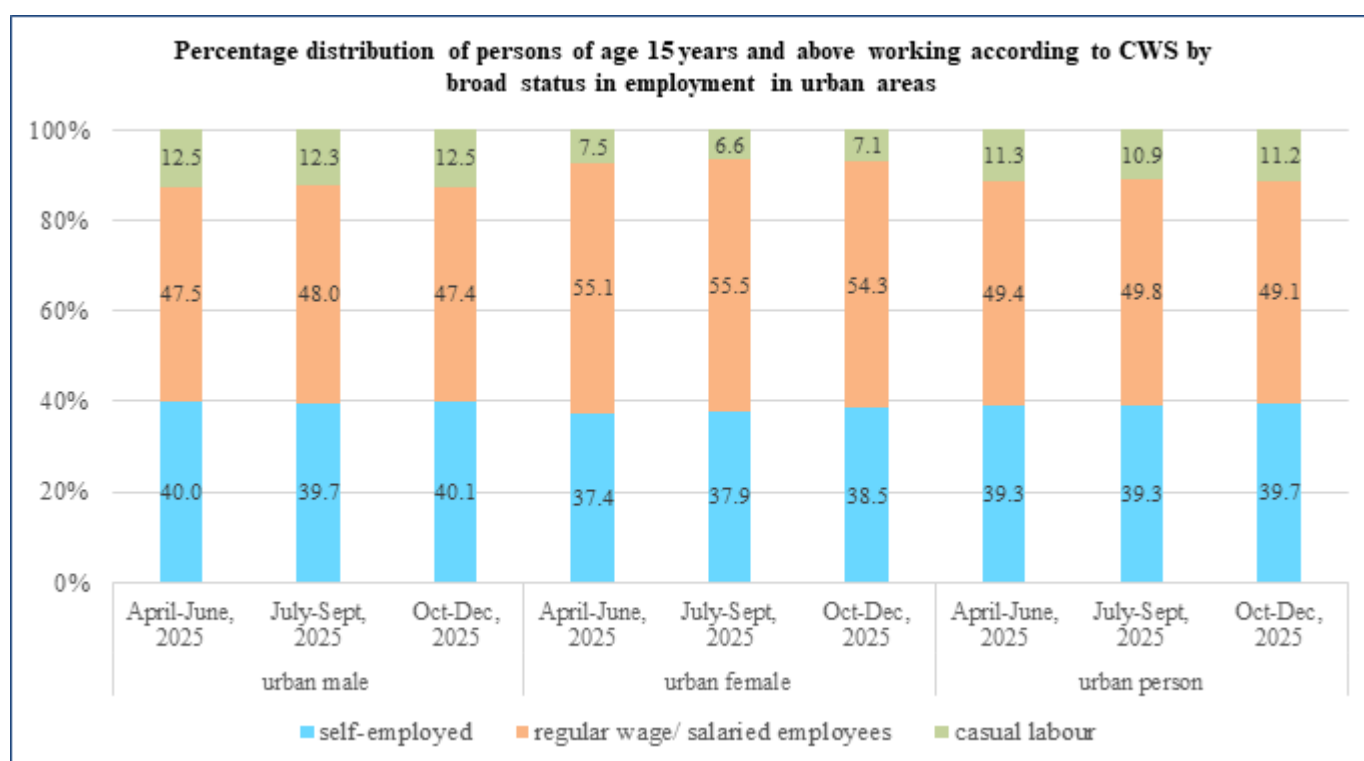
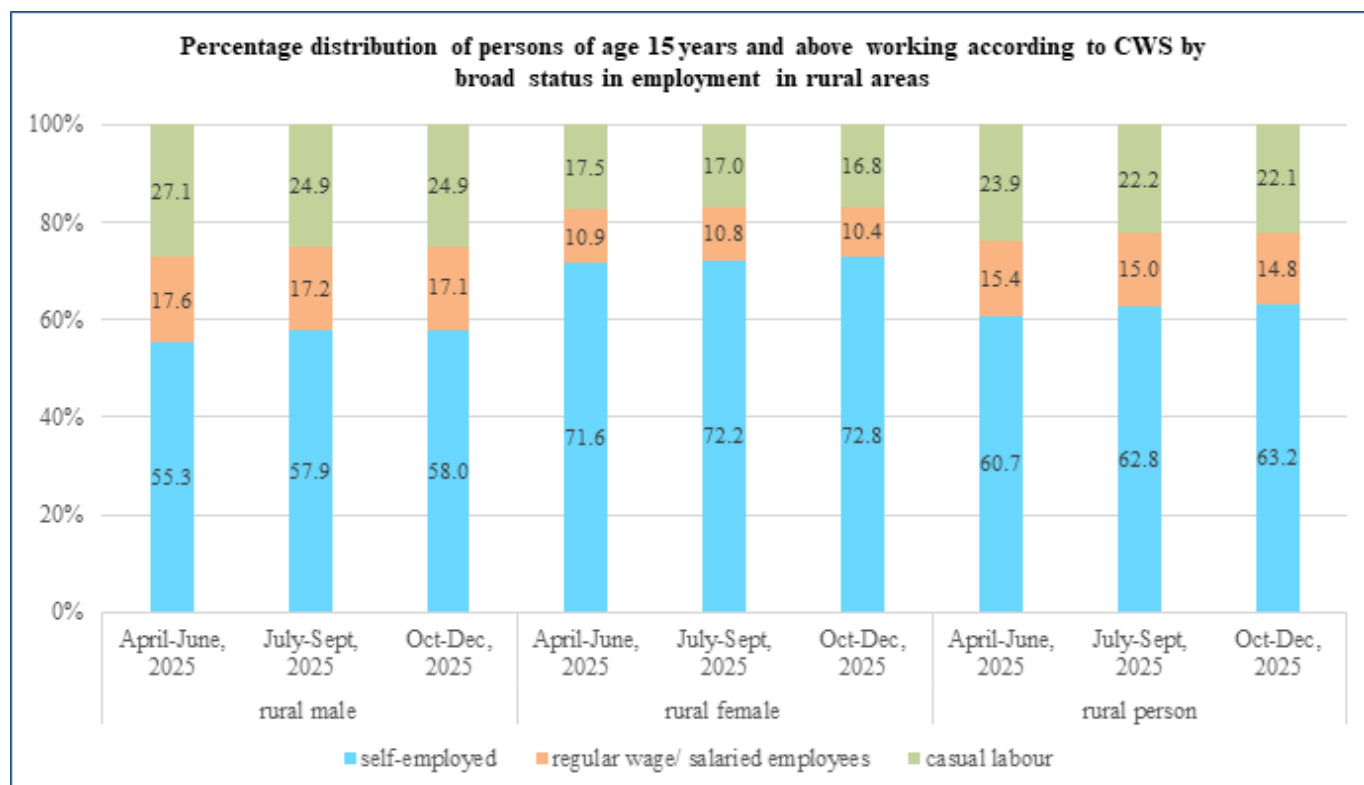


- Unemployment Rate (UR) declines:** The UR among persons aged 15 years and above in rural areas declined to 4.0% in October-December, 2025 from 4.4% in the previous quarter, driven by reduction in UR for both rural male and female. The urban unemployment rate for persons of age 15 years and above decreased to 6.7% as compared to 6.9% reported in the previous quarter, driven by a decline in urban male UR from 6.2% during July-September, 2025 to 5.9% in the current quarter.



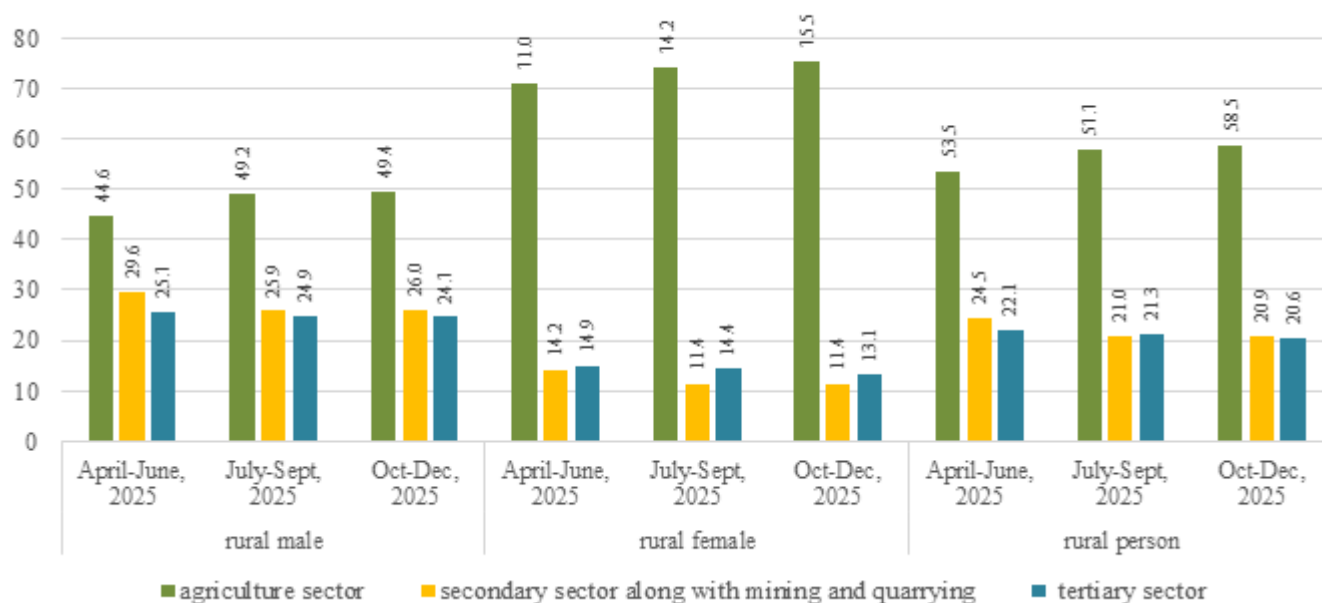
Both rural and urban UR among persons aged 15 years and above declined during October-December, 2025.

- Self-employment experienced rise in both rural and urban areas:** Self-employed persons of age 15 years and above in rural areas increased to 63.2% during October- December, 2025, up from 62.8% recorded in the previous quarter July-September, 2025. In urban areas, self-employed persons of the same age group were reported as 39.7% during October-December, 2025 compared to 39.3% during July-September, 2025.

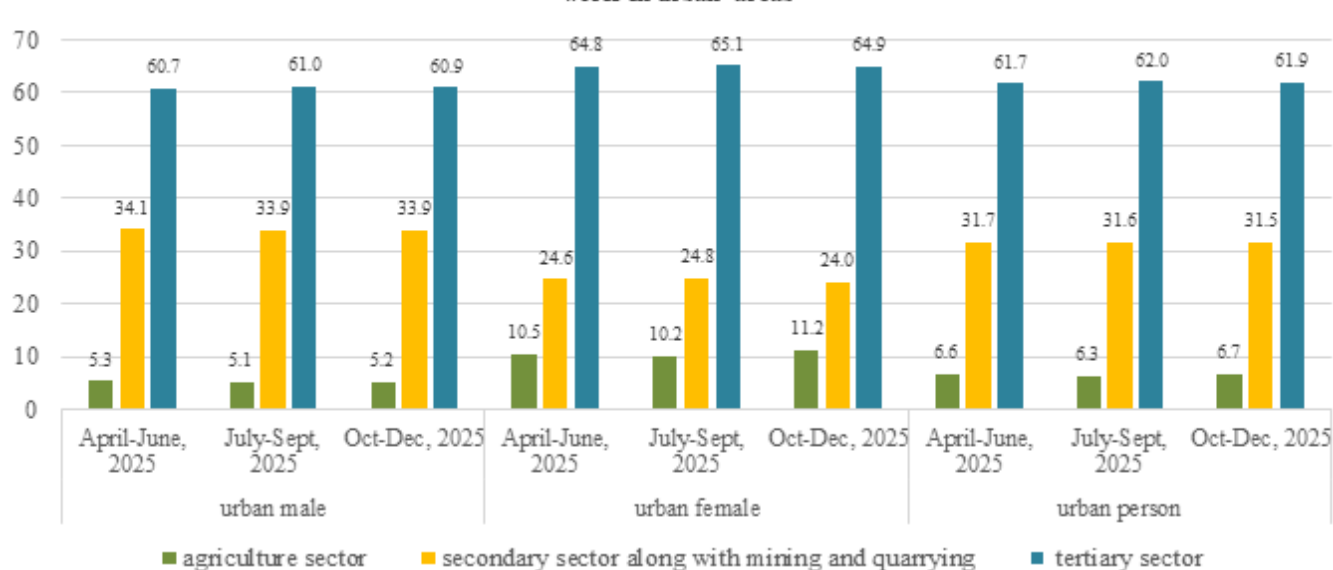


- Concentration of rural workforce in primary sector and urban workforce in tertiary sector:** Rural areas maintained the similar pattern, with the majority of workers engaged in the agriculture sector, accounting for 58.5% during October-December, 2025, up from 57.7% in the previous quarter. In the urban areas, the tertiary sector remained stable, engaging 61.9% of workers during October-December, 2025.

Percentage distribution of workers of age 15 years and above in CWS by broad industry of work in rural areas



Percentage distribution of workers of age 15 years and above in CWS by broad industry of work in urban areas



Using the projected population figures of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), the absolute number of workers aged 15 years and above has been estimated. During the quarter July–September 2025, an average of 56.2 crore persons were employed in the country, comprising 39.6 crore males and 16.6 crore females. This increased to 57.4 crore during October–December 2025, of which 40.2 crore were males and 17.2 crore were females.

At the all-India level, the quarterly estimates are based on information collected from a total of 5,61,108 persons surveyed.

persons surveyed in rural areas

3,21,040

persons surveyed in urban areas

2,40,068

The Quarterly Bulletin for the quarter October–December, 2025 is available on the website of the Ministry (<https://www.mospi.gov.in>).

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