



MONTHLY BULLETIN OF PERIODIC LABOUR FORCE SURVEY (PLFS)

LFPR and WPR remained broadly unchanged

Urban UR and overall Female UR improved

Posted On: 16 MAR 2026 4:00PM by PIB Delhi

Snapshot:

- **Overall LFPR for persons (15+ years) remained steady at 55.9% in February 2026, unchanged from January.**
- **Female LFPR (15+ years) saw a modest rise to 35.3% in February 2026, up from 35.1% in January.**
- **Overall WPR for persons (15+ years) exhibited broad stability at 53.2% in February 2026.**
- **Female WPR (15+ years) increased to 33.4% in February 2026, improving from 33.1% in January.**
- **Urban UR (15+ years) improved to 6.6% in February 2026, down from 7.0% in January; Rural UR remained unchanged at 4.2%.**
- **Female UR (15+ years) declined across both sectors, falling to 5.1% in February 2026 from 5.6% in January.**
- **February 2026 marked a strong recovery for the urban job market with more women working and unemployment rates dropping sharply across both rural and urban sectors.**

A. Introduction

The Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) conducted by NSO, MoSPI, is the primary source of data on activity participation and employment and 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 the country.

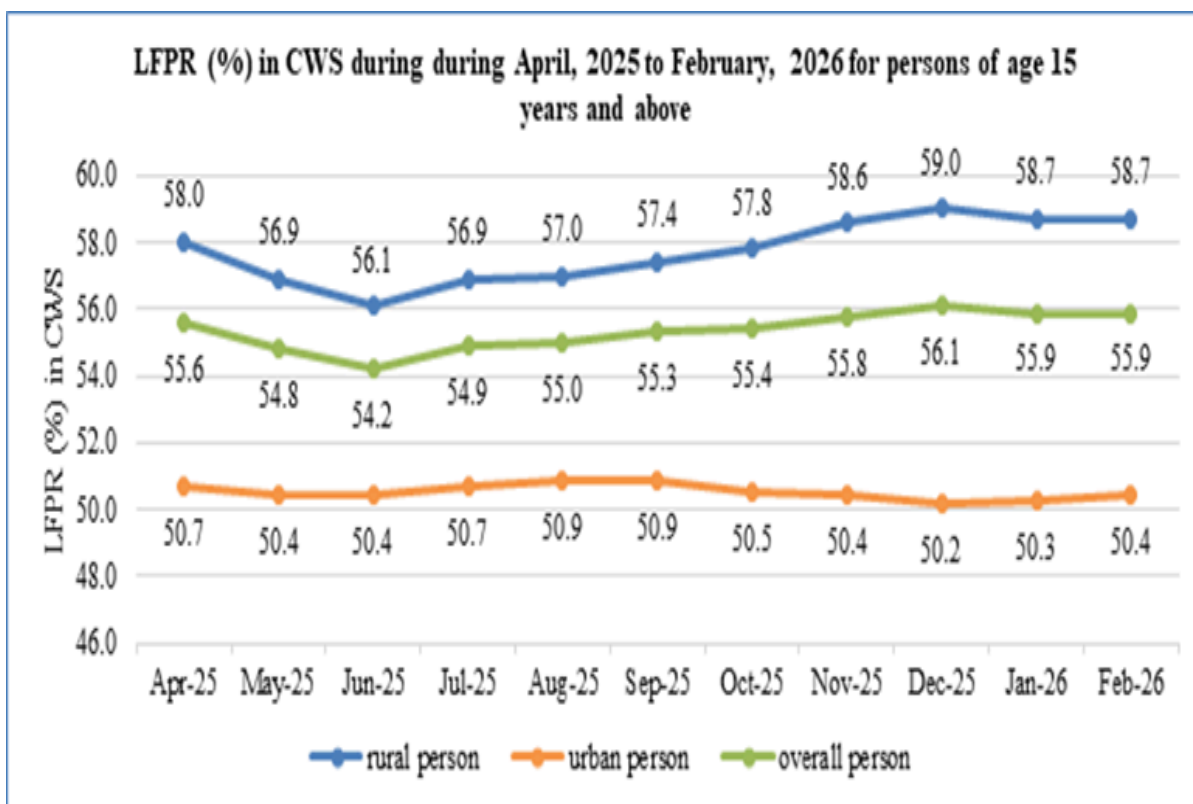
Monthly results of PLFS are released in the form of Monthly Bulletins. It presents estimates of key labour market indicators *viz.* Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR), Worker Population Ratio (WPR) and Unemployment Rate (UR) at the all-India level following the Current Weekly Status (CWS) approach.

The Monthly Bulletins for April, 2025 to January, 2026 have already been released. The present Monthly Bulletin for February, 2026 is the eleventh in the series.

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

- ***Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) remained unchanged:***

The overall LFPR among persons of age 15 years and above was estimated at 55.9% in February, 2026, the same as recorded in January, 2026. In rural areas, the LFPR stood at 58.7% in February, 2026. The urban LFPR was estimated at 50.4% in February, 2026, showing a marginal increase from 50.3% recorded in January, 2026.

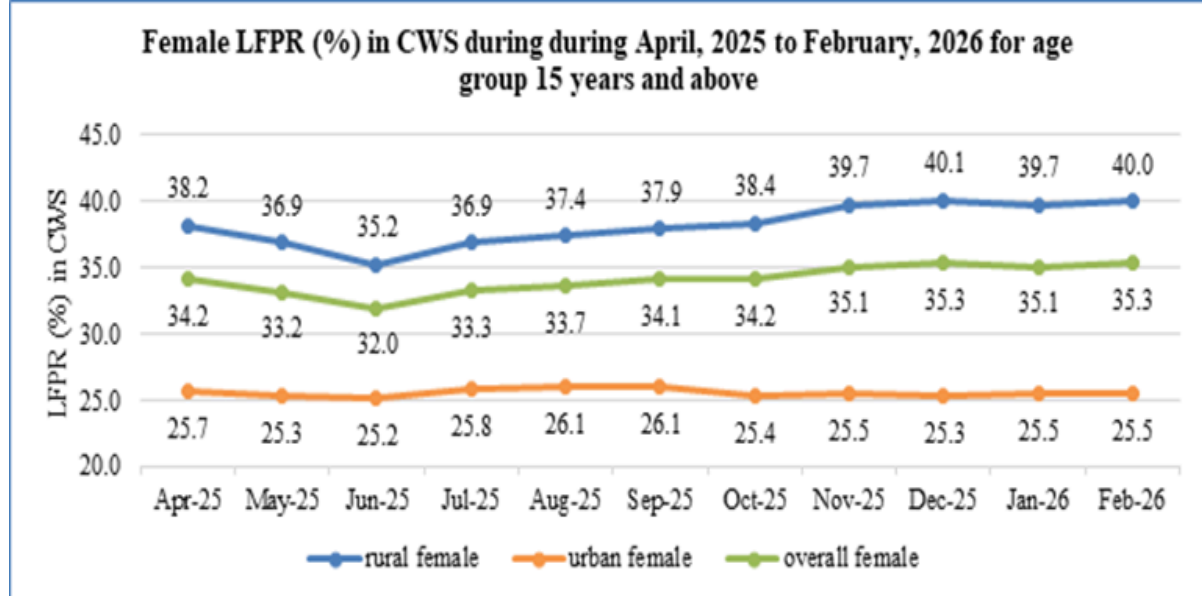


Overall LFPR remained unchanged at 55.9% in February, 2026

- ***Female labour force participation shows marginal improvement:***

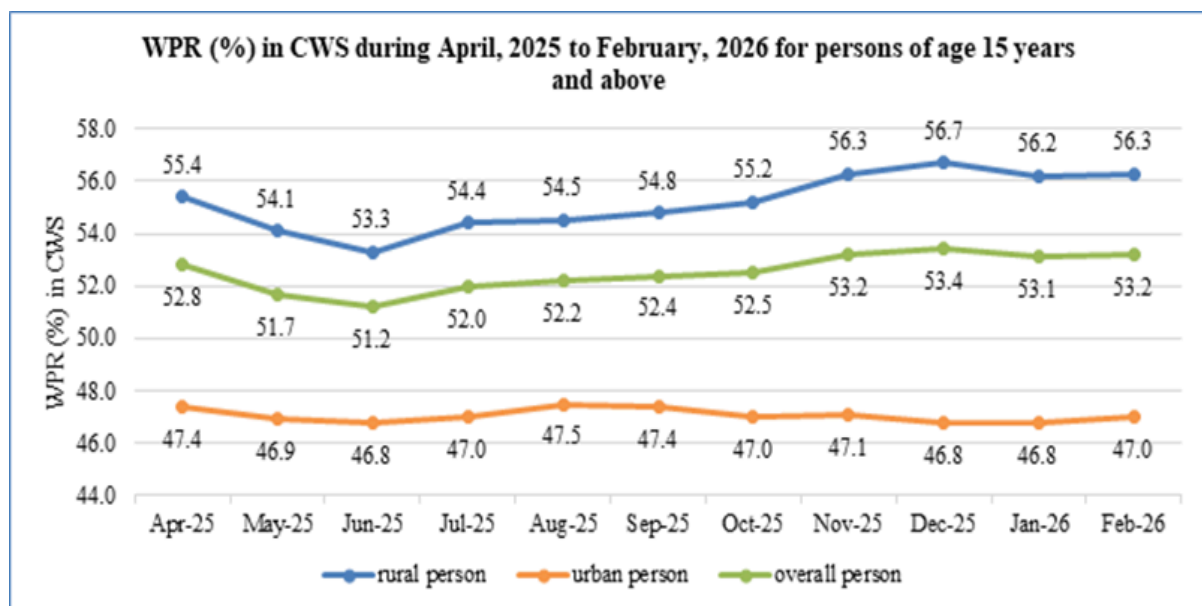
The overall female LFPR in the age group 15 years and above increased marginally from 35.1% in January, 2026 to 35.3% in February, 2026. In rural areas, the female LFPR rose from 39.7% in January, 2026 to 40.0% in February, 2026, indicating an improvement in rural female participation, whereas, the urban female LFPR remained unchanged at 25.5% during the same period.

Rural Female labour force participation witnessed a modest rise in February, 2026

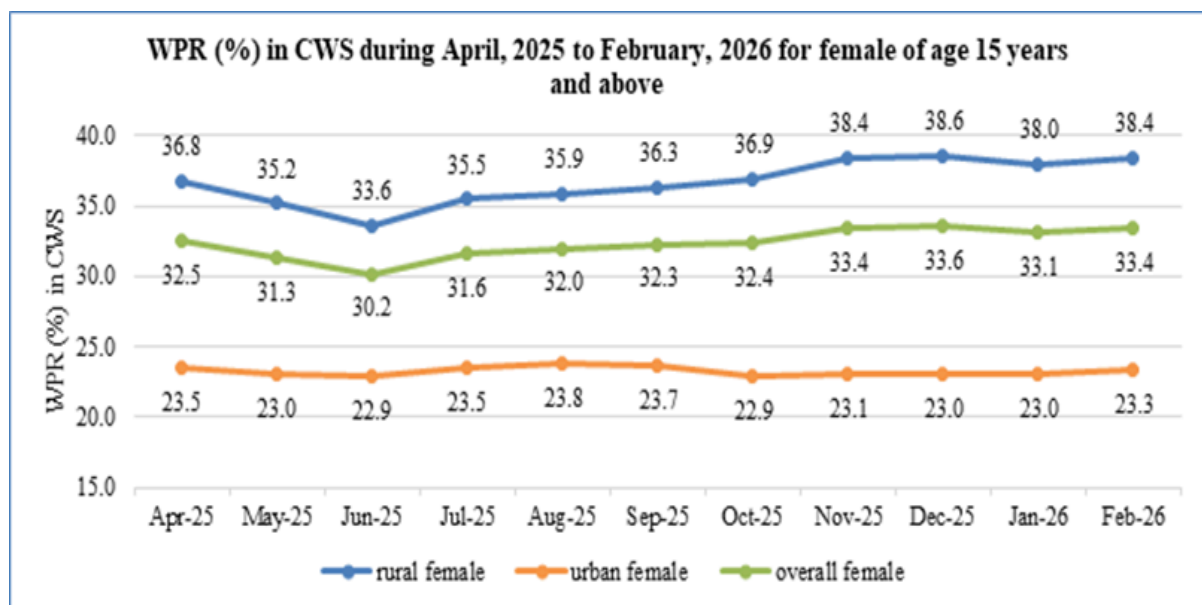
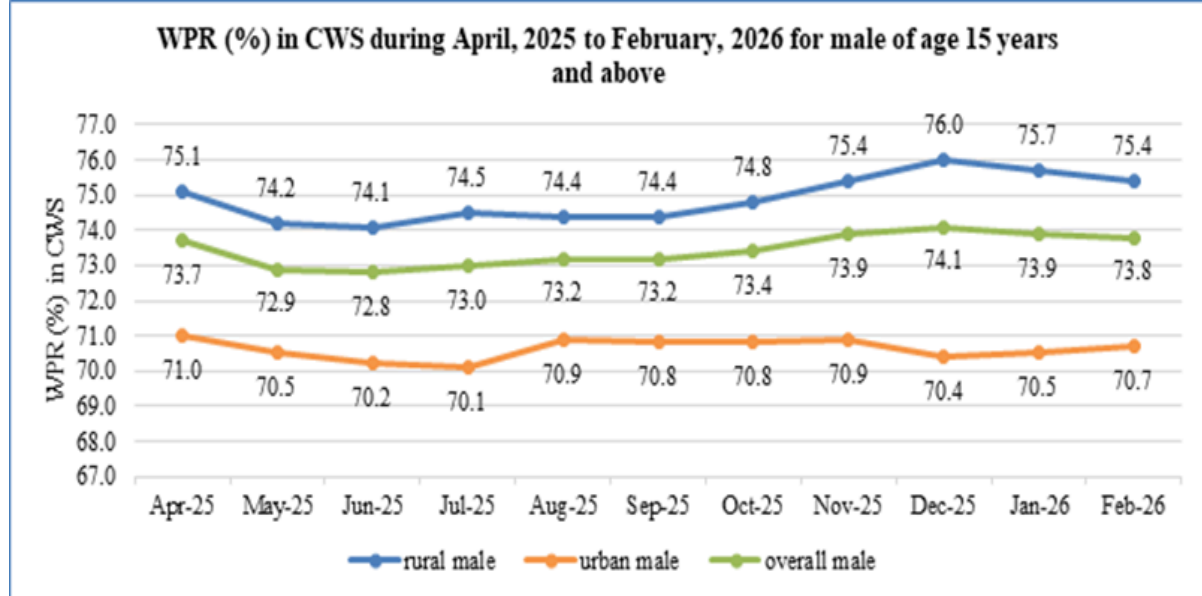


- WPR levels remained broadly stable:**

The Worker Population Ratio (WPR) in the age group 15 years and above remained broadly stable in both rural and urban areas in February, 2026. The overall WPR was estimated at 53.2% in February, 2026, in comparison to 53.1% in January, 2026. In rural areas, WPR stood at 56.3% in February, 2026. Similarly, the urban WPR observed as 47.0% in February, 2026, compared with 46.8% in January 2026.



- Improvement in Female WPR:** In the age group of 15 years and above, the female WPR improved to 53.4% in February 2026 from 53.1% in January 2026. This is due to improvement in both rural female (from 58.0% to 58.4%) and urban female (from 23.0% to 23.3%) during this period.

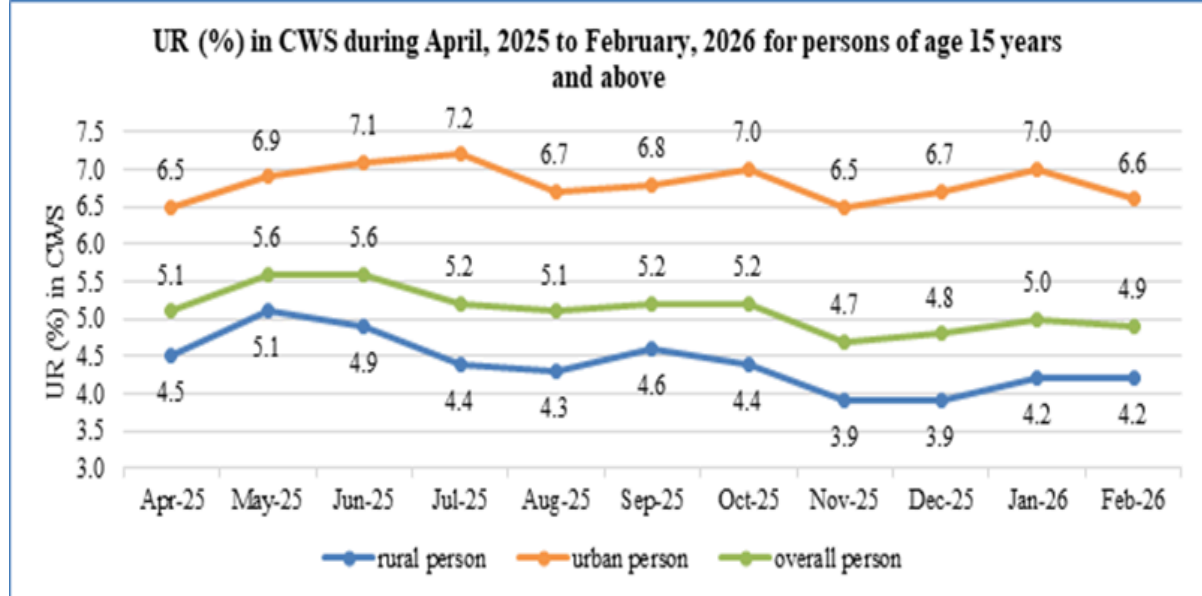


The overall female workforce recorded a modest rise in February, 2026 and stood at 33.4%

- **Urban Unemployment Rate (UR) declined:**

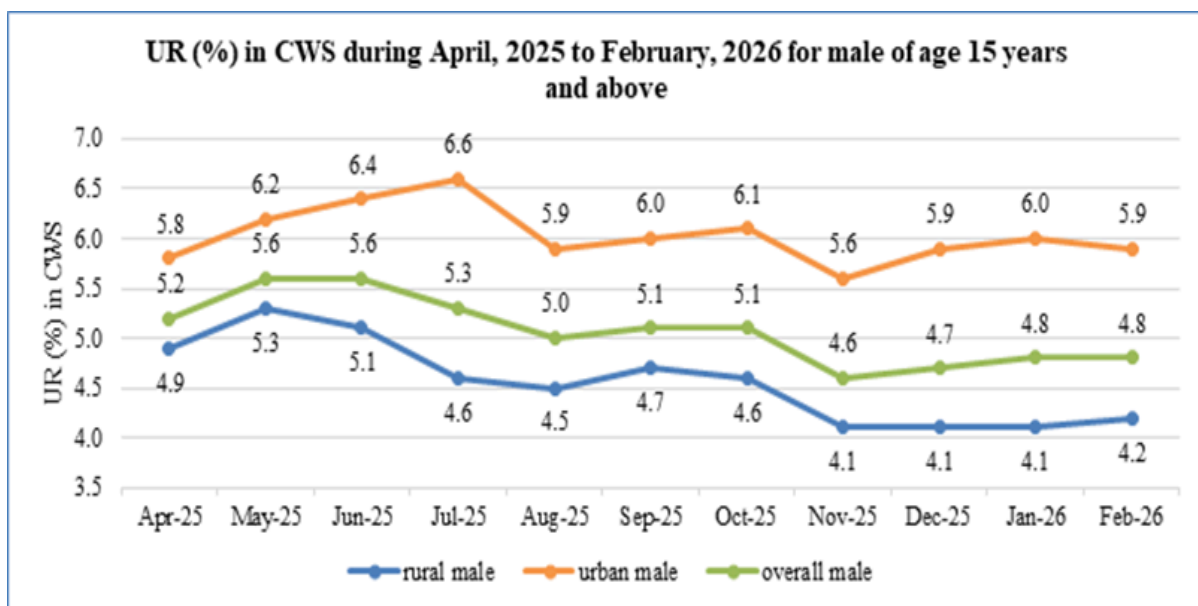
After an increase in January, 2026, the urban unemployment rate (UR) among persons aged 15 years and above declined to 6.6% in February, 2026, falling below the December 2025 level (6.7%). However, the rural UR remained unchanged at 4.2%, the same level as observed in January, 2026. The overall UR was estimated at 4.9% in February, 2026, marginally lower than 5.0% recorded in January, 2026.

Urban Unemployment Rate (UR) declined to 6.6% in February, 2026



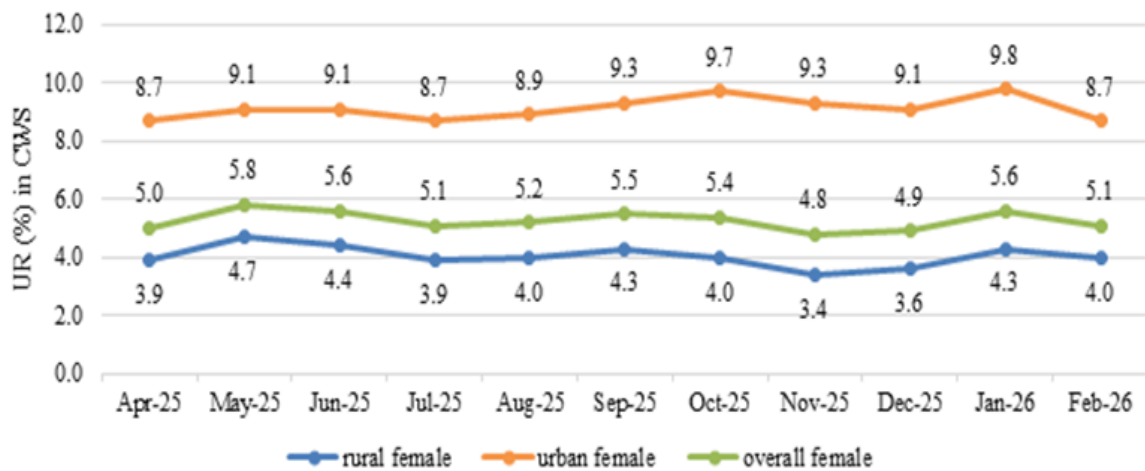
• **Female UR improves:**

In February, 2026, the overall unemployment rate (UR) among female aged 15 years and above declined to 5.1%, compared to 5.6% in January, 2026. Decline was observed in both rural and urban areas. The urban female UR decreased from 9.8% in January, 2026 to 8.7% in February, 2026, while the rural female UR declined from 4.3% to 4.0% during the same period. However, the overall male UR remained stable at 4.8%.



Overall female Unemployment Rate (UR) recorded a fall to 5.1% in February, 2026

UR (%) in CWS during April, 2025 to February, 2026 for female of age 15 years and above



At the all-India level, the monthly estimates are based on information collected from a total number of 3,74,879 persons surveyed.

persons surveyed in rural areas

2,13,679

persons surveyed in urban areas

1,61,200

The Monthly Bulletin for the month February, 2026 is available on the website of the Ministry (<https://www.mospi.gov.in>).

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