



सत्यमेव जयते



PRESS NOTE

ON

PERIODIC LABOUR FORCE SURVEY (PLFS)

MONTHLY BULLETIN

May, 2026

NATIONAL STATISTICS OFFICE

MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA



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25 ज्येष्ठ, शक संवत् 1948
15th June, 2026

PRESS NOTE

LFPR for urban female maintains stability

Urban WPR broadly stable

Urban UR falls to one-year low

Snapshot:

- Overall LFPR (15+ years) recorded as 54.4% in May, 2026, compared to 55.0% in April, 2026 and 54.8% in May, 2025.
- Female LFPR in urban areas largely stable compared to the previous month.
- Overall WPR (15+ years) stood at 51.4% May, 2026, compared to 52.2% in April, 2026 and 51.7% in May, 2025.
- Urban WPR (15+ years) broadly stable at 46.6% compared to the previous month.
- Overall UR (15+ years) in urban areas declined to 6.4% in May, 2026 while Female UR (15+ years) in urban areas declined to 8.2% in May, 2026.
- UR for urban male (15+ years) stood at 5.9%, maintaining the same level of April, 2026.

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 Status¹ (CWS) approach.

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

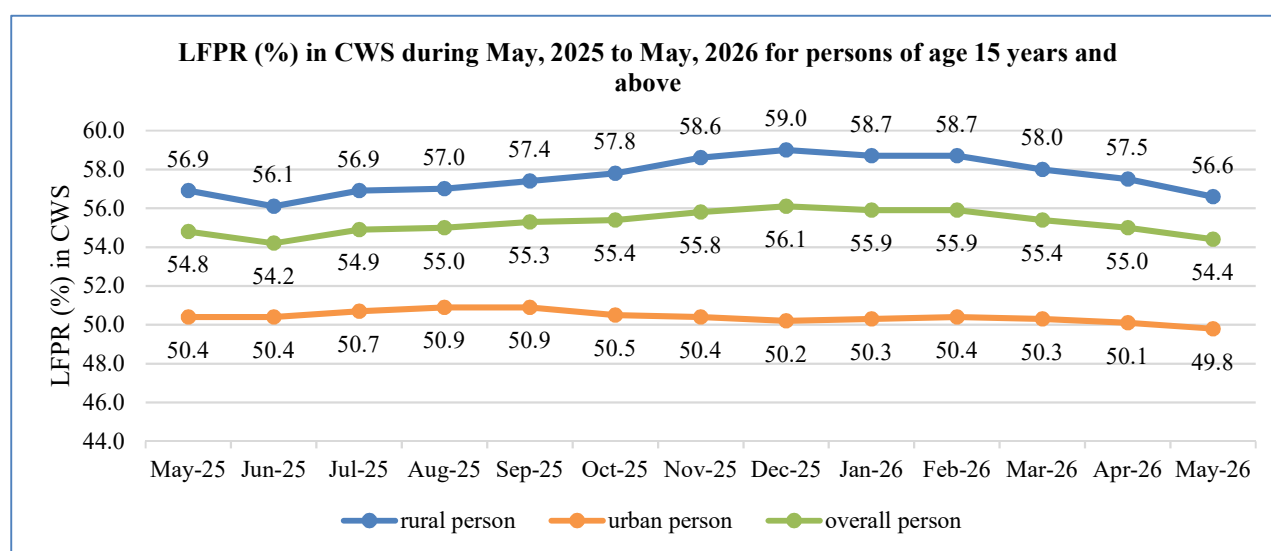
¹ The activity status of a person is determined on the basis of the activities pursued by the person during the specified reference period. The activity status determined on the basis of a reference period of last 7 days preceding the date of survey is known as the Current Weekly Status (CWS) of the person.

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

- ***Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) moderates marginally:***

The Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) for persons aged 15 years and above was reported as 54.4% in May, 2026, compared to 54.8% in May, 2025. In rural and urban areas, LFPR was recorded at 56.6% and 49.8%, respectively.

The year-on-year comparison shows that the overall LFPR in May, 2026 declined by 0.4 percentage points. Rural and urban LFPR also registered a decline of 0.3 and 0.6 percentage points, respectively, over the same period.

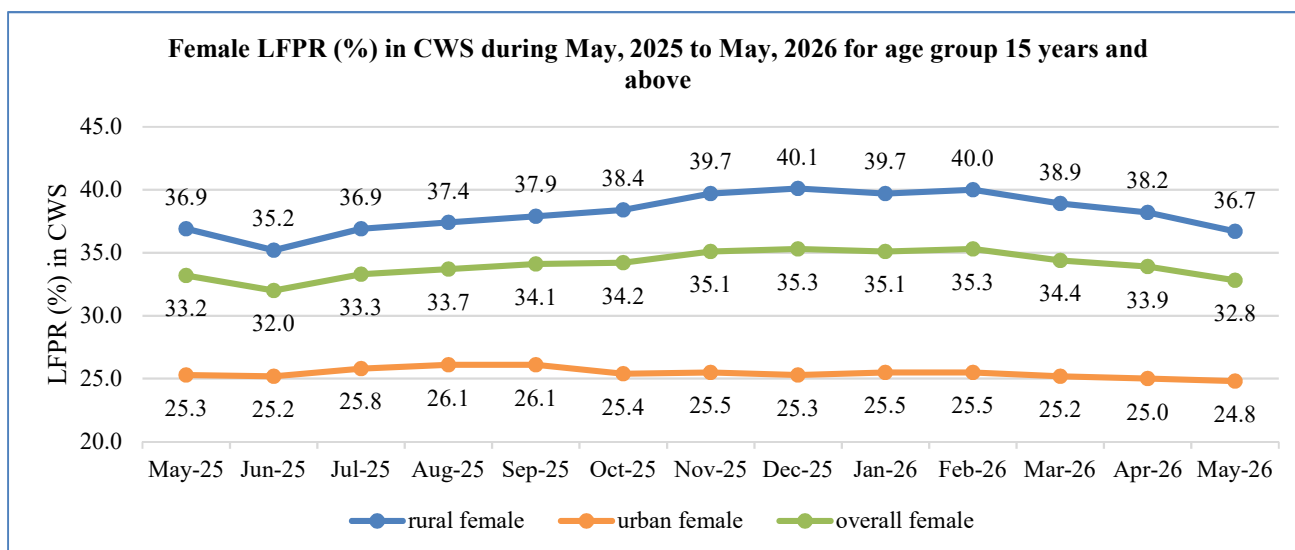


In May, 2026, LFPR stood at 54.4% against 54.8% in May, 2025

- ***Female labour force participation broadly stable in urban areas:***

Female Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) for age 15 years and above stood at 32.8% in May, 2026. In rural areas, female LFPR was recorded at 36.7%, whereas it remained almost at the same level at 24.8% in urban areas compared to the previous month.

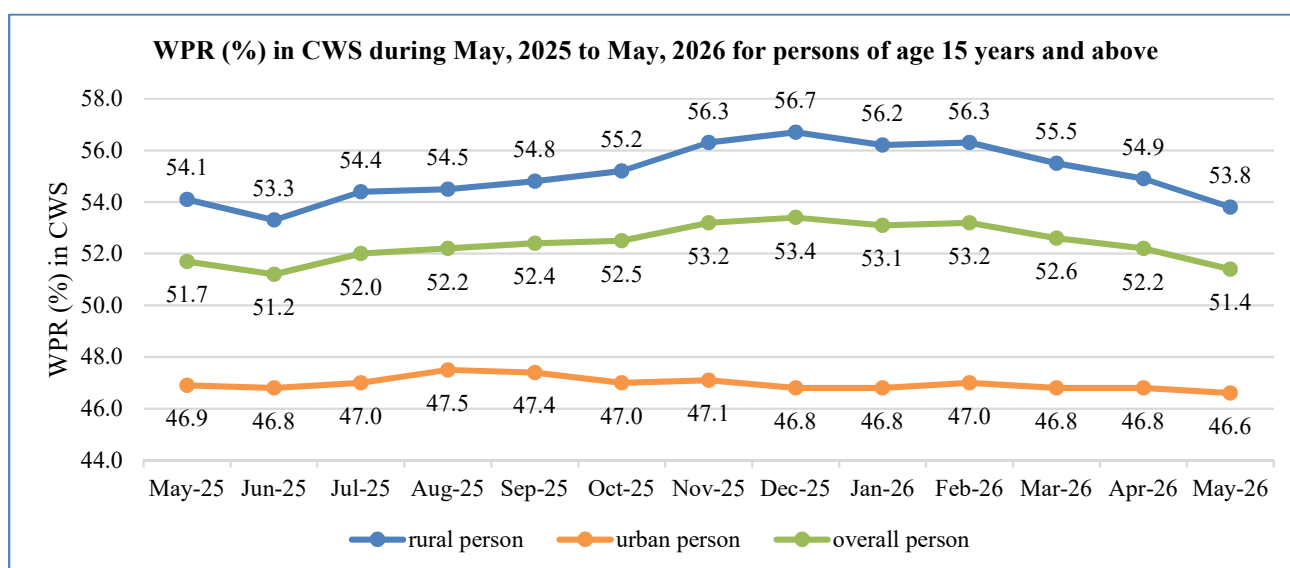
Compared to May, 2025, the overall female LFPR declined marginally by 0.4 percentage points, from 33.2% to 32.8% in May, 2026. Rural female LFPR remained broadly unchanged, whereas LFPR for urban female recorded a decline of 0.5 percentage points over the year.



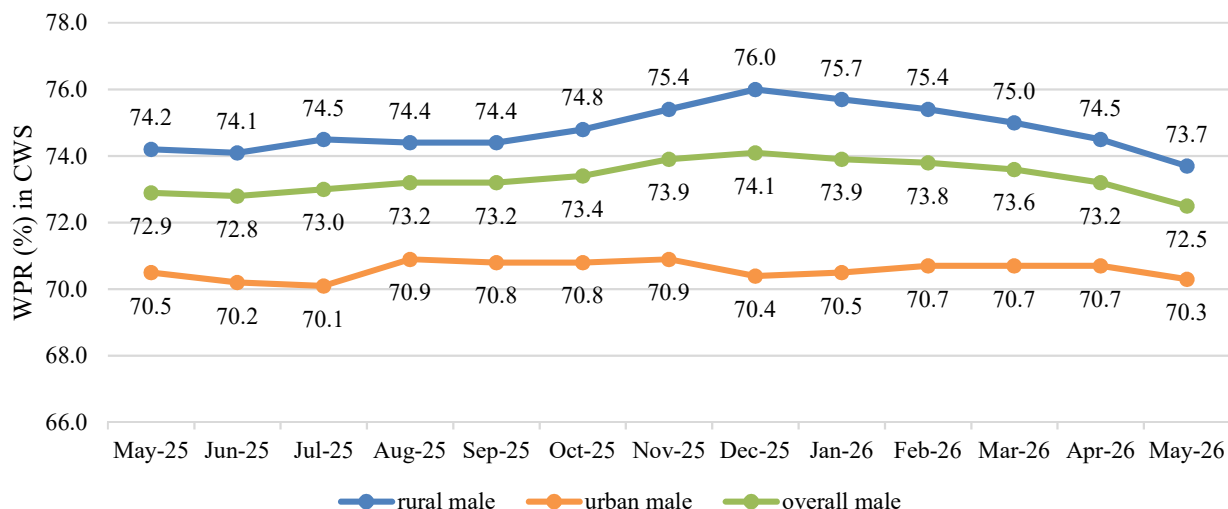
Female labour force participation in urban areas maintained its stability compared to the previous month

• **Urban WPR largely unchanged:**

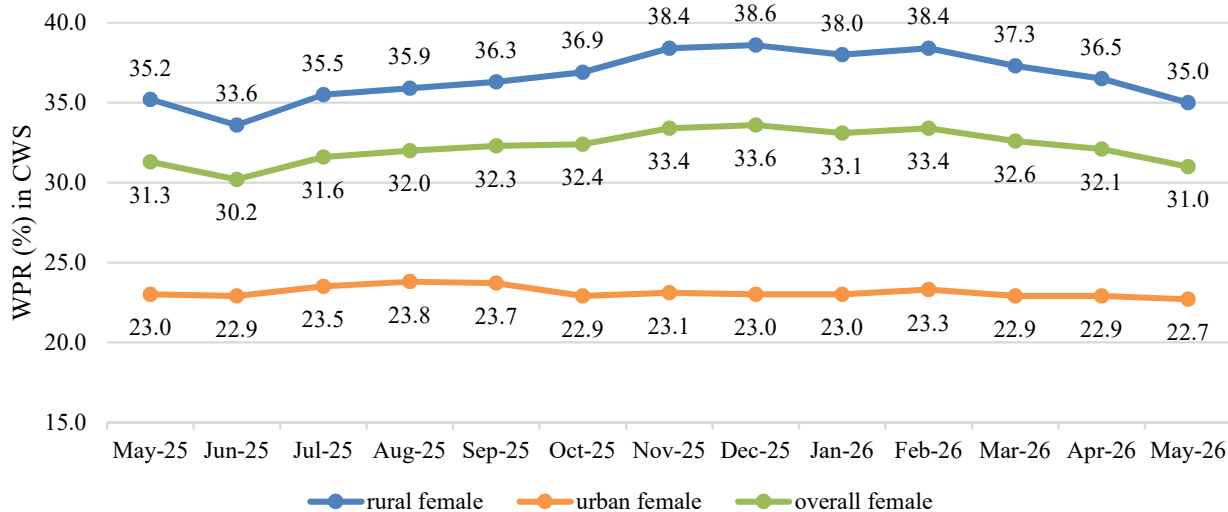
The Worker Population Ratio (WPR) for persons aged 15 years and above recorded a marginal decline of 0.3 percentage points in both rural and urban sectors between May, 2025 and May, 2026. The overall WPR was estimated at 51.4% in May, 2026, compared to 52.2% in April, 2026 and 51.7% in May, 2025. In rural areas, WPR stood at 53.8% in May, 2026, compared to 54.9% in April, 2026. WPR in urban areas was estimated at 46.6% in May, 2026 against 46.8% in April, 2026.



WPR (%) in CWS during May, 2025 to May, 2026 for male of age 15 years and above



WPR (%) in CWS during May, 2025 to May, 2026 for female of age 15 years and above

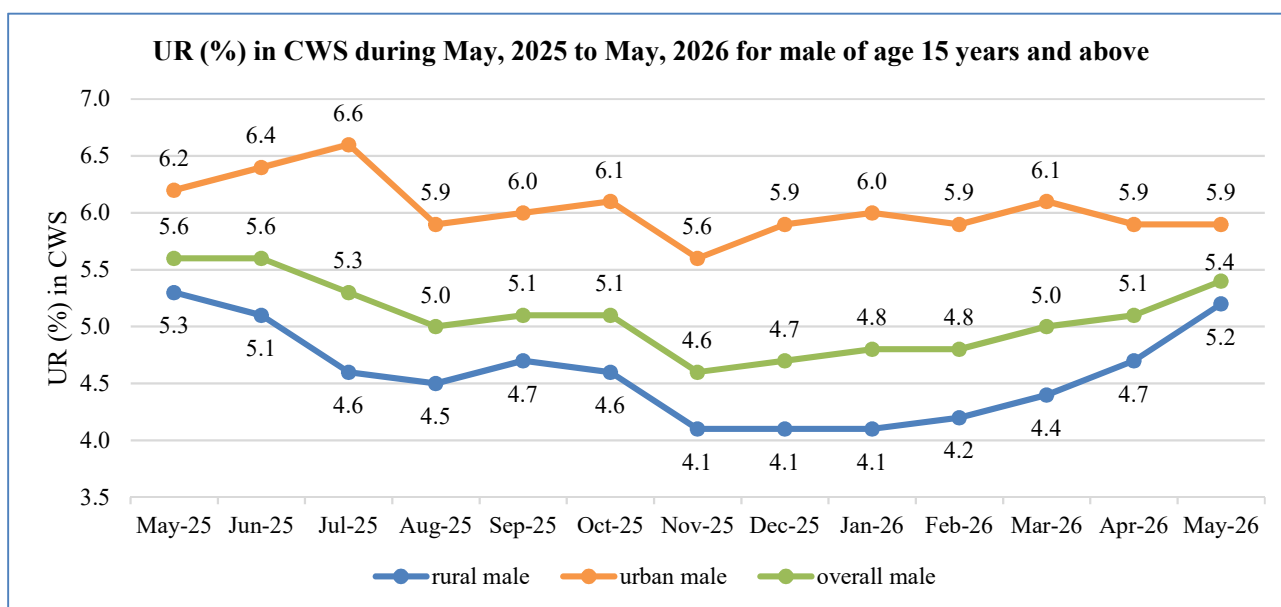
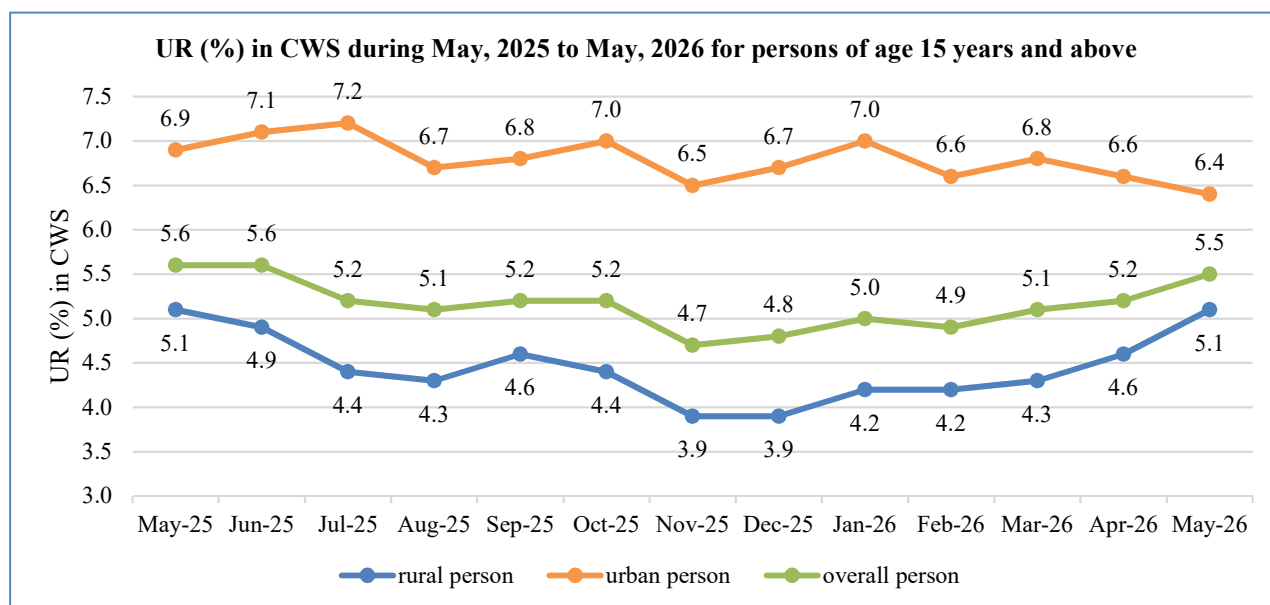


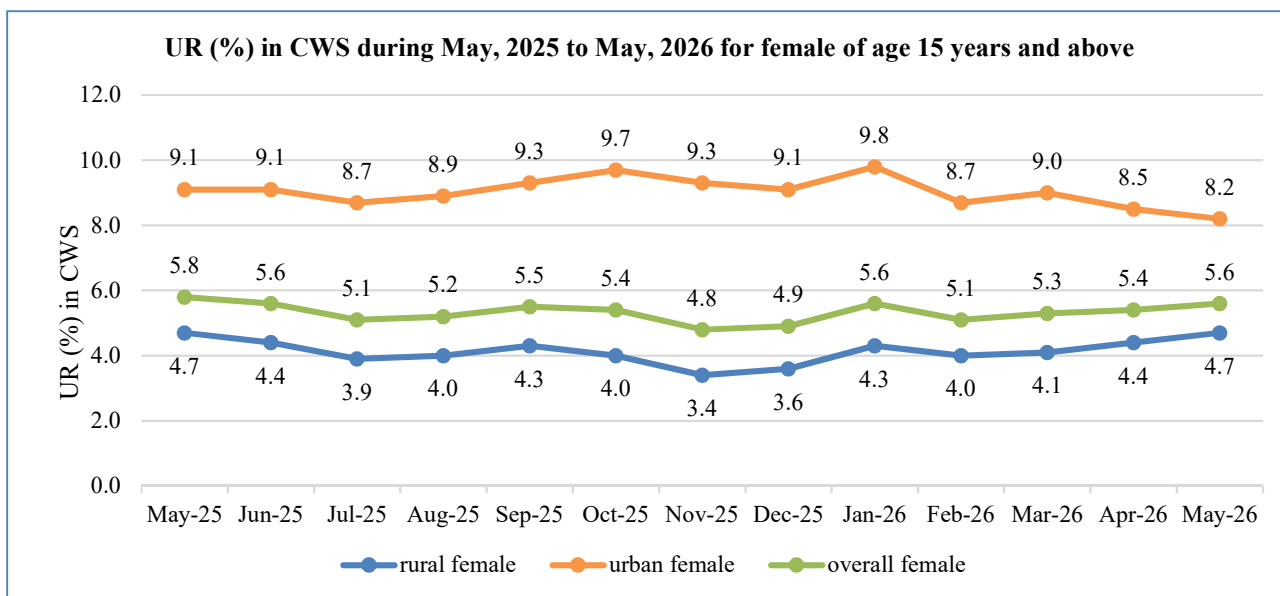
Urban WPR stood largely stable at 46.6% in May, 2026

- **Unemployment Rate (UR) exhibited a mixed pattern across sectors:**

In May, 2026, the rural UR increased marginally to 5.1% from 4.6% in April, 2026, while the urban UR eased to 6.4% from 6.6% during the same period. The overall UR was estimated at 5.5% in May, 2026.

Compared with May, 2025, the urban UR declined from 6.9% to 6.4%, marking a reduction of 0.5 percentage points in May, 2026. The overall UR remained stable, while the rural UR maintained the same level of 5.1% over the same period.





Urban UR recorded its lowest level since May, 2025

The moderation in LFPR and WPR with an increase in UR indicates a softening of labour market conditions during the period. While labour force participation declined marginally, employment opportunities contracted at a faster pace, leading to a rise in the proportion of unemployed persons within the labour force. The decline in labour market indicators may be linked to a seasonal moderation in economic activity during May 2026.

At the all-India level, the monthly estimates are based on information collected from a total number of 3,73,887 persons surveyed.

<p>persons surveyed in rural areas 2,13,294</p>	<p>persons surveyed in urban areas 1,60,593</p>
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<p>The Monthly Bulletin for May, 2026 is available on the Ministry's website (https://www.mospi.gov.in).</p>	<p>Scan QR code to access MoSPI Publications/ Reports</p>
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