



PRESS NOTE

ON

PERIODIC LABOUR FORCE SURVEY (PLFS)

MONTHLY BULLETIN

October, 2026

NATIONAL STATISTICS OFFICE

MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

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NATIONAL STATISTICS OFFICE

Kartika 25, 1948 (saka)
16th November, 2026

PRESS NOTE

Female labour force and workforce participation increased

Urban UR declined

Snapshot:

- **Overall LFPR (15+ years) increased to 55.7% in October, 2026, a rise of 0.3 percentage points year-on-year.**
- **Rural LFPR (15+ years) improved to 58.4% in October, 2026, gaining 0.4 percentage points over the past month and 0.6 percentage points over the year.**
- **Overall female LFPR (15+ years) recorded an increase of 0.8 percentage points year-on-year to 35.0% in October, 2026.**
- **Overall WPR (15+ years) improved by 0.5 percentage points year-on-year to 53.0%.**
- **Female WPR (15+ years) recorded at 33.3% an increase of 0.5 percentage points over last month.**
- **Overall UR (15+ years) decreased to 4.9% in October, 2026, 0.3 percentage points lower than a year earlier.**
- **Overall female UR fell by 0.4 percentage points year-on-year to 5.0%, with rural female UR dropping to 3.8%, its lowest level recorded during 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 Status[1] (CWS) approach.

[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.

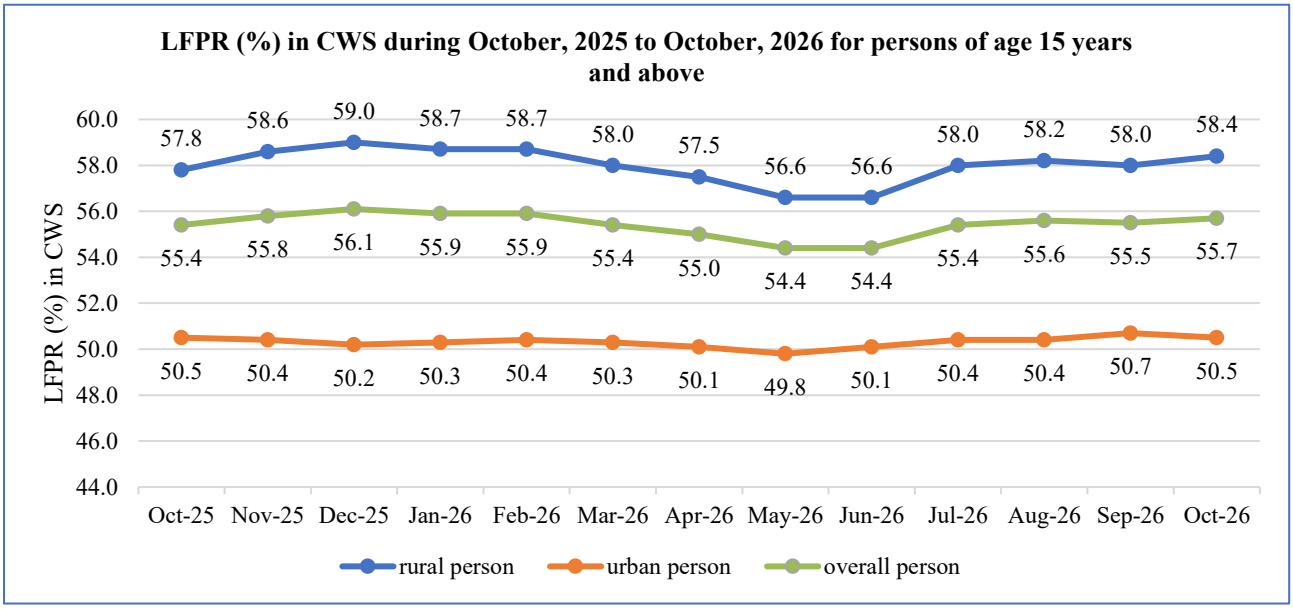
The Monthly Bulletins for April, 2025 to September, 2026 have already been released. The present Monthly Bulletin for October, 2026 is the nineteenth in the series.

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

- ***Rural areas lead the improvement in labour force participation:***

The overall Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) for persons aged 15 years and above improved marginally to 55.7% in October, 2026, compared to 55.5% in September, 2026. In rural areas, LFPR increased from 58.0% to 58.4% over the month, while the urban LFPR stood at 50.5% in October, 2026 against 50.7% in September, 2026.

On a year-on-year basis, the overall LFPR improved by 0.3 percentage points, increasing from 55.4% in October, 2025 to 55.7% in October, 2026. During the same period, rural areas recorded a gain of 0.6 percentage points, with rural LFPR increasing from 57.8% to 58.4%, while urban LFPR remained unchanged at 50.5%.

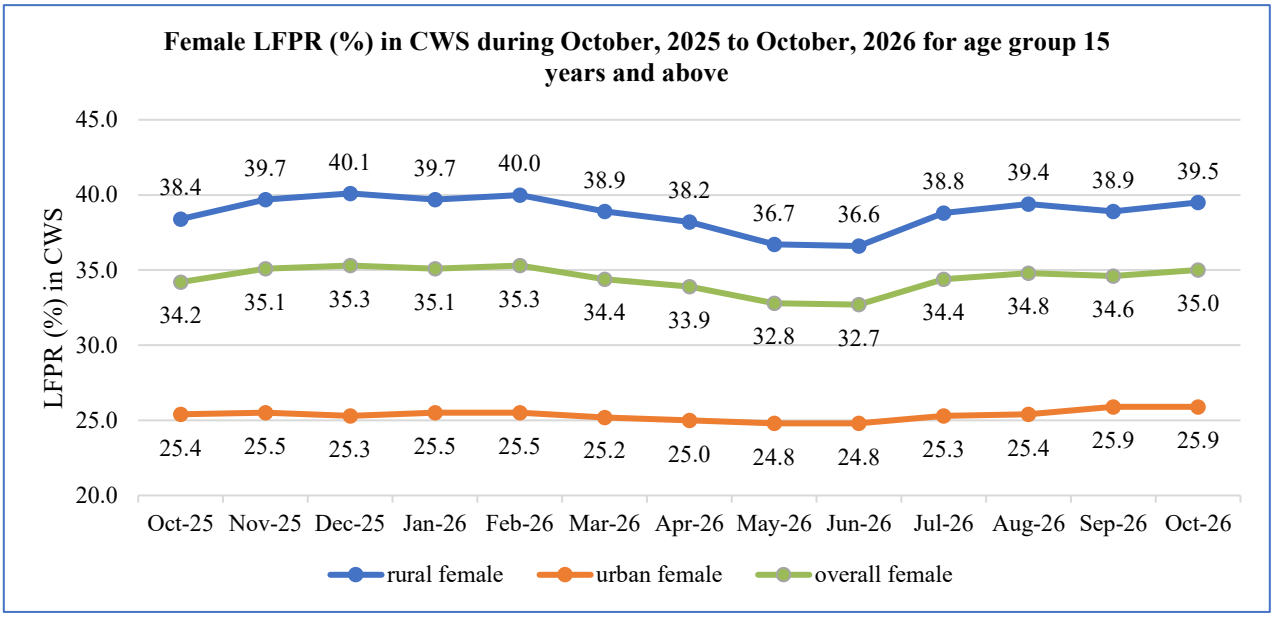


Overall LFPR reached 55.7% in October, 2026, showing an improvement over both the preceding month and the corresponding month a year earlier.

- ***Overall Female Labour Force Participation increased:***

Overall female LFPR improved to 35.0% in October, 2026 from 34.6% in September, 2026, making its highest level since February, 2026. Rural female LFPR rose by 0.6 percentage points over the month and reached 39.5% in October, 2026. However, female LFPR in urban areas remained stable at 25.9%.

Over the year, the overall female LFPR increased by 0.8 percentage points, from 34.2% in October, 2025 to 35.0% in October, 2026. Rural female LFPR gained 1.1 percentage points, rising from 38.4% to 39.5% and urban female LFPR gained 0.5 percentage points, from 25.4% to 25.9% during the same period.



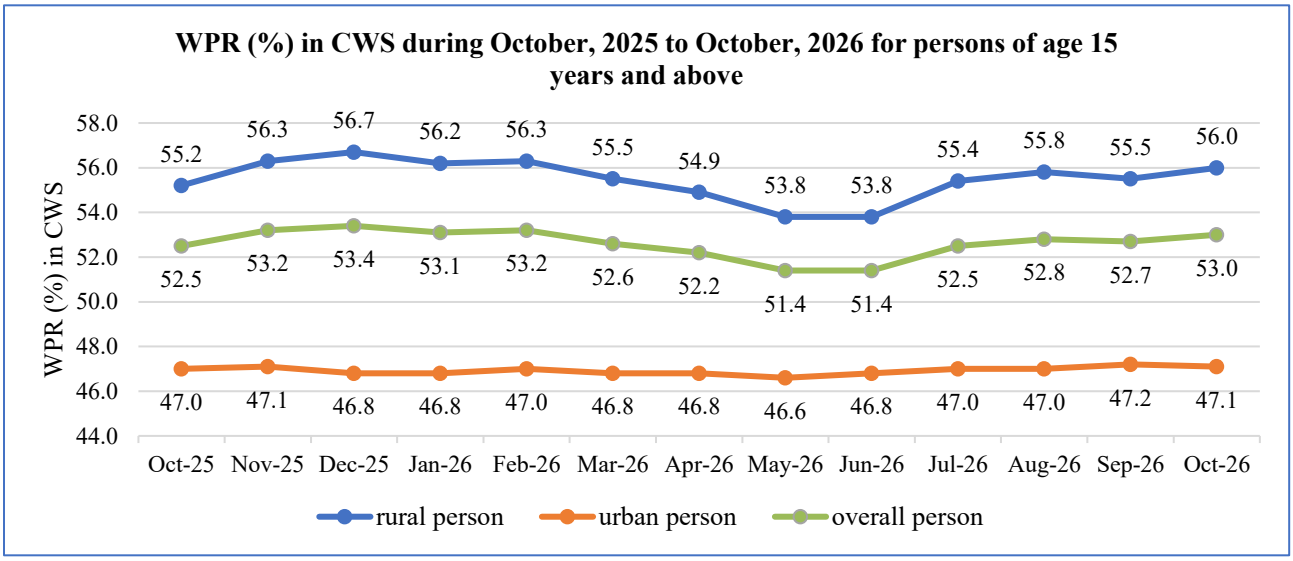
Female LFPR increased in both rural and urban areas on a year-on-year basis, reaching 39.5% and 25.9%, respectively, in October, 2026.

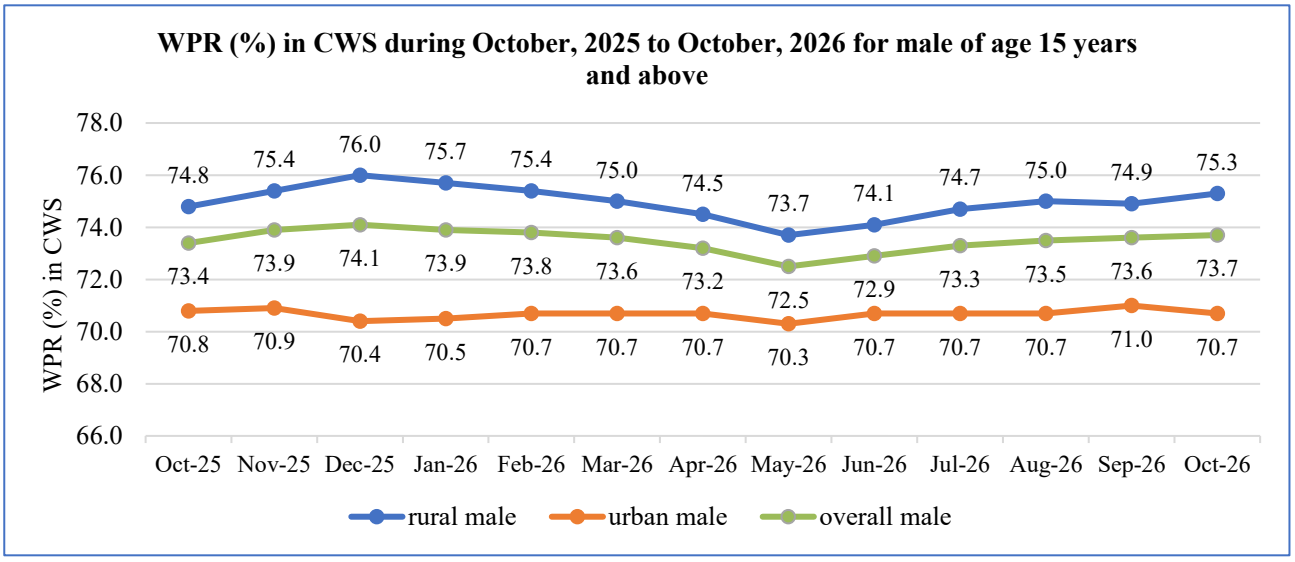
- ***Workforce participation witnessed improvement:***

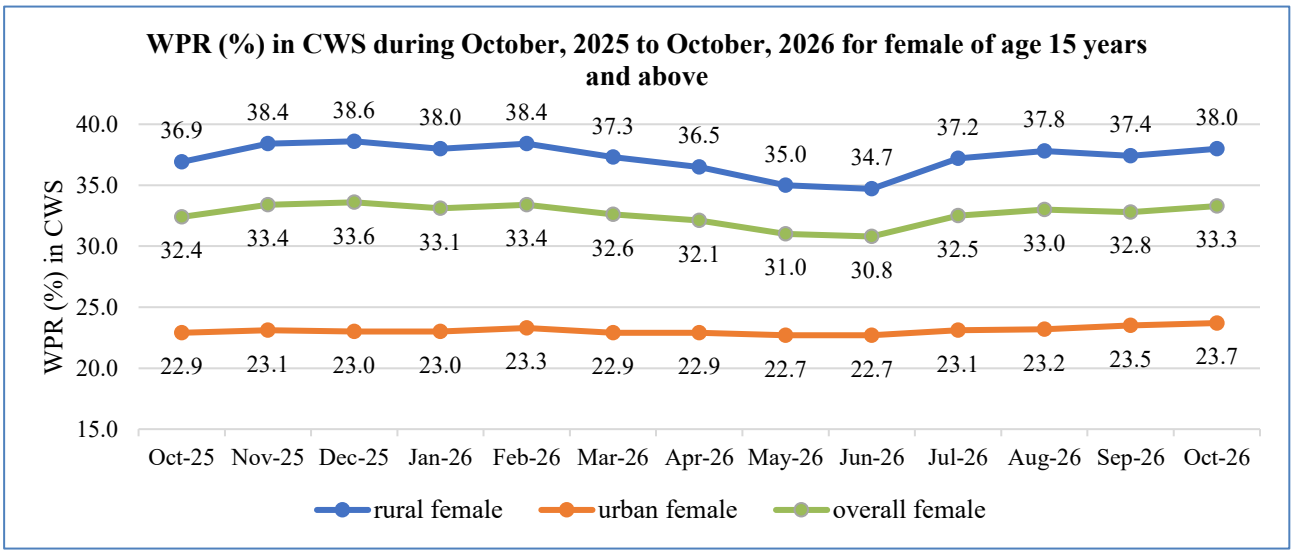
Overall WPR increased to 53.0% in October, 2026 from 52.7% in September, 2026, reaching its highest level since February, 2026. Rural WPR increased by 0.5 percentage points over the previous month to 56.0% in October, 2026, whereas urban WPR remained broadly stable at 47.1%.

Among male, WPR remained largely unchanged at 73.7% in October, 2026, against 73.6% in September, 2026. In rural areas, male WPR rose to 75.3% from 74.9% during the same period. Female WPR recorded a more notable month-on-month improvement, increasing from 32.8% in September, 2026 to 33.3% in October, 2026. This was supported by increase in both rural and urban areas, with female WPR rising from 37.4% to 38.0% in rural areas and from 23.5% to 23.7% in urban areas.

On a year-on-year basis, overall WPR expanded from 52.5% in October, 2025 to 53.0% in October, 2026, marking a 0.5 percentage point improvement. Rural WPR recorded an increase of 0.8 percentage points, from 55.2% to 56.0% in October, 2026 compared to the previous year, while urban WPR remained broadly stable at 47.1% in October, 2026 compared to 47.0% a year back.


WPR (%) in CWS during October, 2025 to October, 2026 for persons of age 15 years and above
WPR (%) in CWS
58.0
56.0
54.0
52.0
50.0
48.0
46.0
44.0
55.2 56.3 56.7 56.2 56.3 55.5 54.9 53.8 53.8 55.4 55.8 55.5 56.0
52.5 53.2 53.4 53.1 53.2 52.6 52.2 51.4 51.4 52.5 52.8 52.7 53.0
47.0 47.1 46.8 46.8 47.0 46.8 46.8 46.6 46.8 47.0 47.0 47.2 47.1
Oct-25 Nov-25 Dec-25 Jan-26 Feb-26 Mar-26 Apr-26 May-26 Jun-26 Jul-26 Aug-26 Sep-26 Oct-26
rural person
urban person
overall person


WPR (%) in CWS during October, 2025 to October, 2026 for male of age 15 years and above
WPR (%) in CWS
78.0
76.0
74.0
72.0
70.0
68.0
66.0
74.8 75.4 76.0 75.7 75.4 75.0 74.5 73.7 74.1 74.7 75.0 74.9 75.3
73.4 73.9 74.1 73.9 73.8 73.6 73.2 72.5 72.9 73.3 73.5 73.6 73.7
70.8 70.9 70.4 70.5 70.7 70.7 70.7 70.3 70.7 70.7 70.7 71.0 70.7
Oct-25 Nov-25 Dec-25 Jan-26 Feb-26 Mar-26 Apr-26 May-26 Jun-26 Jul-26 Aug-26 Sep-26 Oct-26
rural male
urban male
overall male

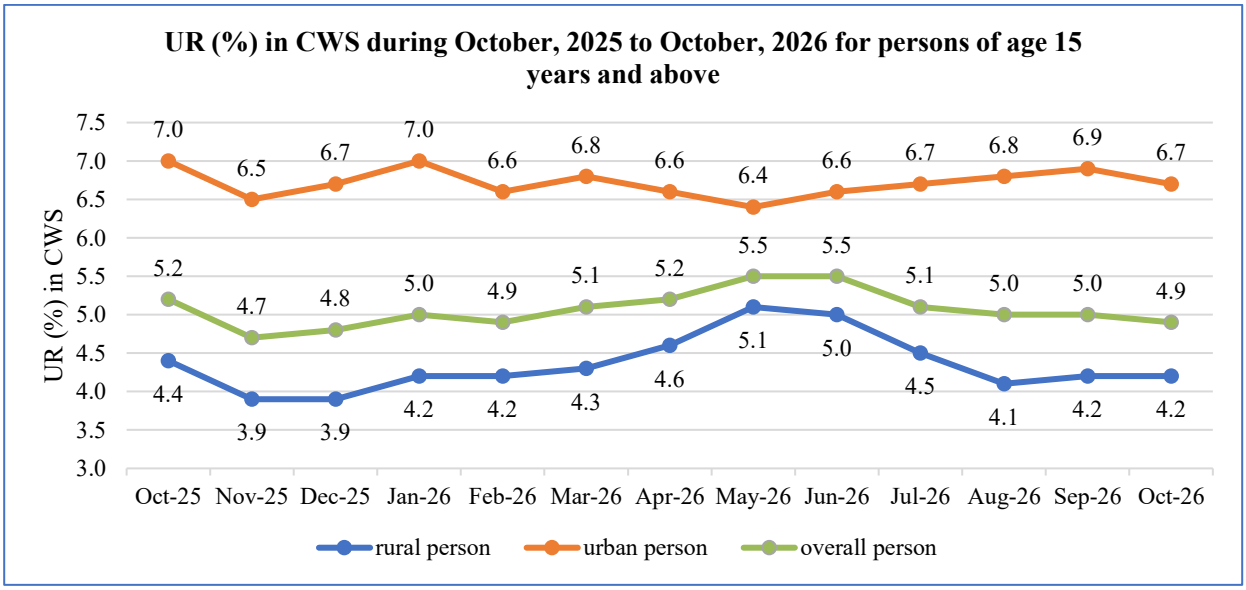

WPR (%) in CWS during October, 2025 to October, 2026 for female of age 15 years and above
WPR (%) in CWS
40.0
35.0
30.0
25.0
20.0
15.0
36.9 38.4 38.6 38.0 38.4 37.3 36.5 35.0 34.7 37.2 37.8 37.4 38.0
32.4 33.4 33.6 33.1 33.4 32.6 32.1 31.0 30.8 32.5 33.0 32.8 33.3
22.9 23.1 23.0 23.0 23.3 22.9 22.9 22.7 22.7 23.1 23.2 23.5 23.7
Oct-25 Nov-25 Dec-25 Jan-26 Feb-26 Mar-26 Apr-26 May-26 Jun-26 Jul-26 Aug-26 Sep-26 Oct-26
rural female
urban female
overall female

Overall female WPR increased by 0.9 percentage points year-on-year to 33.3% in October, 2026, with increases recorded in both rural and urban areas.

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

The overall Unemployment Rate (UR) among persons aged 15 years and above decreased to 4.9% in October, 2026, from 5.0% in September, 2026. Compared with the previous month, rural UR remained steady at 4.2%, while urban UR declined by 0.2 percentage points, from 6.9% to 6.7% in October, 2026.

Compared with the corresponding month of 2025, the overall UR declined by 0.3 percentage points, from 5.2% to 4.9% in October, 2026. During the same period, rural UR declined by 0.2 percentage points, from 4.4% to 4.2% and urban UR declined by 0.3 percentage points, from 7.0% to 6.7%.



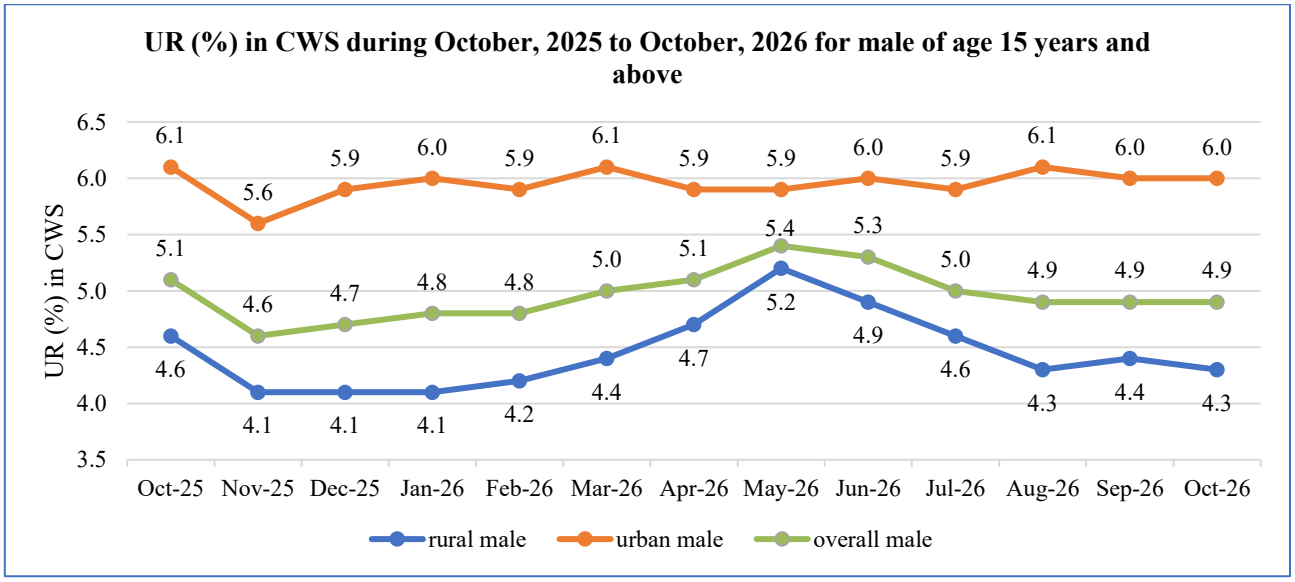
Overall UR stood at 4.9% in October, 2026, lower by 0.3 percentage points compared to a year earlier.

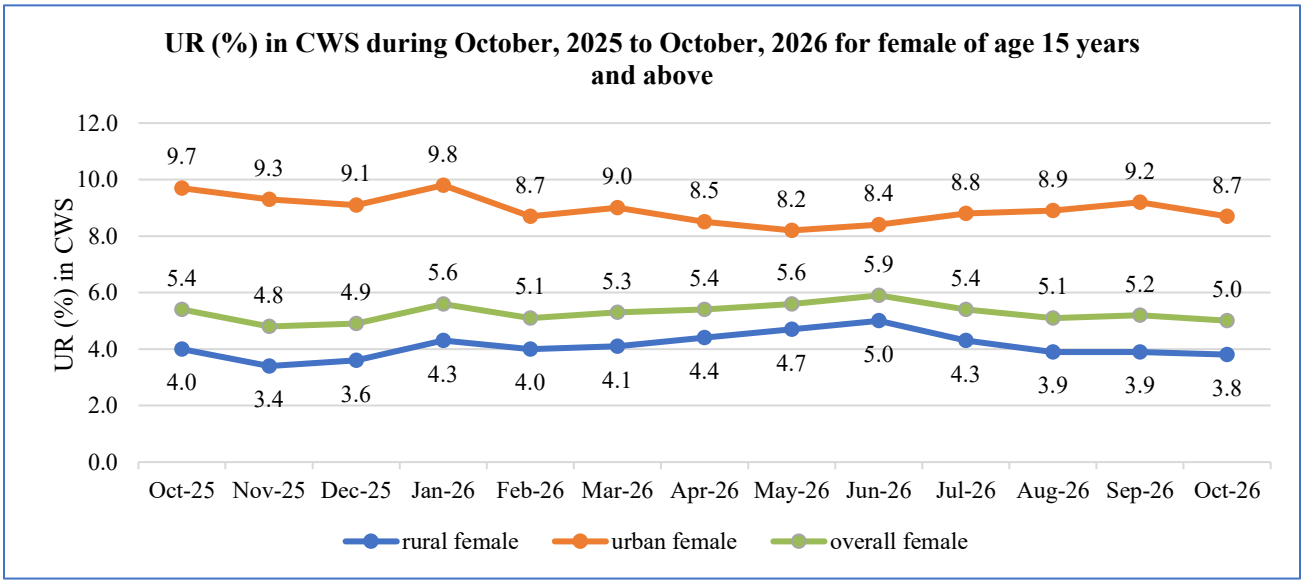
- ***Female UR declined:***

The overall and urban male UR among persons aged 15 years and above remained unchanged at 4.9% and 6.0%, respectively, in October, 2026, as in the previous month. Over the last month, rural male UR stood at 4.3% in October, 2026 from 4.4% in September, 2026. Among female, the overall UR declined to 5.0% in October, 2026, compared with 5.2% in September, 2026.

Rural female UR estimated at 3.8 % in October, 2026, against 3.9% in the previous month while urban female UR recorded at 8.7% in October, 2026, against 9.2% in the previous month.

On a year-on-year basis, the overall male UR declined by 0.2 percentage points, from 5.1% in October, 2025 to 4.9% in October, 2026. The improvement was more pronounced in rural areas, where male UR fell by 0.3 percentage points, from 4.6% to 4.3%, while urban male UR remained broadly stable at 6.0% in October, 2026. Overall female UR decreased by 0.4 percentage points to 5.0% from 5.4% in the previous year. UR for rural female declined by 0.2 percentage points from 4.0% in October, 2025 to 3.8% in October, 2026. In urban areas, female UR fell by 1.0% points to 8.7% in October, 2026 from 9.7% observed in the previous year.





Female UR declined in both rural and urban areas, while rural female UR recorded its lowest level of 2026 at 3.8%.

At the all-India level, the monthly estimates are based on information collected from a total number of 3,70,475 persons surveyed.

persons surveyed in rural areas	persons surveyed in urban areas
2,11,474	1,59,001

The Monthly Bulletin for October, 2026 is available on the Ministry's website (https://www.mospi.gov.in).	**Scan QR code to access MoSPI Publications/ Reports**

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