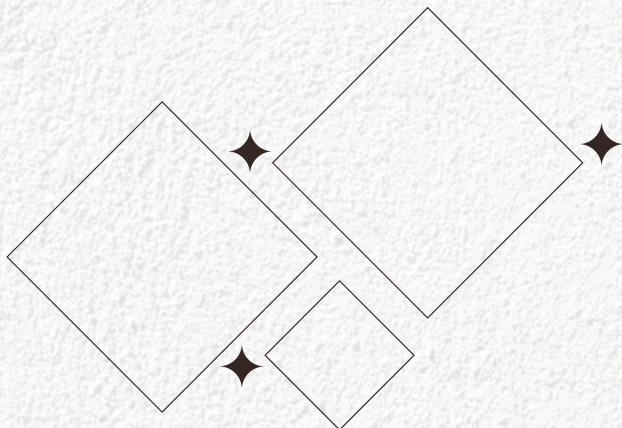


अनिगमित क्षेत्र के उद्यमों का तिमाही बुलेटिन  
**QUARTERLY BULLETIN OF  
 UNINCORPORATED SECTOR  
 ENTERPRISES**

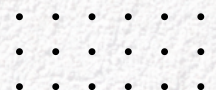


(क्यू.बी.यू.एस.ई.)  
**(QBUSE)**

जनवरी 2026 – मार्च 2026  
 January 2026 – March 2026



भारत सरकार  
**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**  
 सांख्यिकी और कार्यक्रम कार्यान्वयन मंत्रालय  
**MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME  
 IMPLEMENTATION**  
 राष्ट्रीय सांख्यिकी कार्यालय  
**NATIONAL STATISTICS OFFICE**



## INTRODUCTION

Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises (ASUSE), conducted by National Statistics Office (NSO) serves as the principal source of data on the unincorporated non-agricultural sector of the Indian economy. The enterprises in this sector, ranging from small-scale manufacturers and service providers to trading establishments, constitute a significant portion of the economy. These enterprises are pivotal in generating employment, fostering entrepreneurship and contributing to the nation's gross domestic product (GDP). ASUSE is conducted with the primary objective of systematically collecting information on operational, financial, and structural characteristics of these unincorporated units. The survey results serve as essential inputs for policymakers in both the government and private sector, guiding informed decision-making and strategic planning.

The first comprehensive survey of ASUSE was conducted in 2021–22 (April 2021 to March 2022). Up to ASUSE 2023–24 (October 2023 to September 2024), estimates for the sector were compiled and disseminated on an annual basis through factsheets and detailed reports. Beginning with ASUSE 2025 (January to December 2025), the NSO has introduced quarterly bulletins, providing more frequent insights alongside the annual estimates, consistent with earlier practice. This enhancement has been enabled by a revised sampling design and a substantial increase in sample size,

facilitating the generation of both quarterly and annual estimates.

The latest survey, **ASUSE 2026 (January – December 2026)**, has been launched with a design and objectives broadly aligned with those of ASUSE 2025. However, its survey methodology has been substantially refined through the adoption of updated, internationally comparable classifications and inclusion of more policy-oriented questions, including those pertaining to ICT usage.


Release of **Quarterly Bulletin on Unincorporated Sector Enterprises (QBUSE)** is an initiative by NSO to enhance the availability of high-frequency data keeping in view the critical role of the unincorporated sector in the Indian economy. This initiative marks a significant step forward in the NSO's commitment to modernizing its statistical infrastructure and enhancing data-driven decision-making by offering more timely and actionable insights into this dynamic segment of Indian economy.

This bulletin is the quarterly edition of the ASUSE and presents key findings based on data collected during the quarter, **January–March 2026**. A brief overview of the survey's coverage, core concepts, data collection methodology, and a note for data users is provided in the **Endnote**.

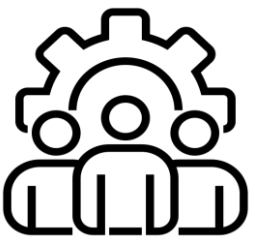
## KEY INDICATORS FROM QUARTERLY ESTIMATES

Quarterly estimates of key aggregate indicators, such as, number of establishments, number of workers along with their growth over same quarter last year, percentage of hired-worker establishments, percentage distribution of different categories of workers, etc. are provided in Table 1.

**Table1: Estimates of key aggregate indicators with confidence limits<sup>#</sup>**

NUMBER OF ESTABLISHMENTS ('00)			
	Rural	Urban	All-India
	<b>January 2026 – March 2026 (quarterly)</b>		
	4,93,698 ± 24,772	4,22,774 ± 11,850	9,16,472 ± 26,765
	<b>January 2025 – March 2025 (quarterly)</b>		
	4,09,858 ± 23,618	3,75,509 ± 19,430	7,85,367 ± 30,632
	<b>Y-o-Y<sup>@</sup> growth (%)</b>		
	20.46	12.59	16.69
	<b>January, 2025 – December, 2025 (annual)</b>		
	4,24,139 ± 14,215	3,68,327 ± 8,663	7,92,465 ± 16,620

Parameter	January 2025 – March 2025			January 2026 – March 2026		
	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total
percentage of proprietary and partnership ** establishments	93.06	97.94	95.39	99.03	98.85	98.95
percentage of hired worker establishments	7.19	21.51	14.04	7.14	21.02	13.54
percentage of market establishments	99.51	99.59	99.55	99.52	99.53	99.52

NUMBER OF WORKERS ('00)			
	Rural	Urban	All-India
	<b>January 2026 – March 2026 (quarterly)</b>		
	7,26,206 ± 34,018	7,90,849 ± 33,016	15,17,055 ± 47,278
	<b>January 2025 – March 2025 (quarterly)</b>		
	5,96,959 ± 35,218	7,16,420 ± 58,695	13,13,380 ± 68,474
	<b>Y-o-Y<sup>@</sup> growth (%)</b>		
	21.65	10.39	15.51
	<b>January, 2025 – December, 2025 (annual)</b>		
	6,00,104 ± 21,642	6,80,415 ± 21,738	12,80,518 ± 30,620

<sup>#</sup>: The confidence limits are at a 95% level of significance

<sup>@</sup>: Year-on-Year

\*\* Please refer to “Note to User” section of the Endnote for details of change in treatment of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in type of ownership in ASUSE 2026.

Parameter	January 2025 – March 2025			January 2026 – March 2026		
	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total
<b>% share of different types of workers</b>						
Working owner	65.44	52.32	58.29	68.85	53.73	60.97
Hired worker	17.56	34.60	26.86	14.60	34.11	24.77
Others (including unpaid family members)	17.00	13.08	14.85	16.55	12.16	14.26

Estimated number of establishments, workers and percentage share of categories of workers for the quarters Jan-Mar 2025 and Jan-Mar 2026 are represented in Figures 1, 2 and 3 respectively.

### Insights from Table 1

- The estimated number of establishments in January–March 2026 stood at 9.16 crore, compared to 7.85 crore in January–March 2025, indicating a significant year-on-year (y-o-y) growth of 16.69%.
- The sector employed an estimated 15.17 crore persons during January–March 2026, up from 13.13 crore in the same quarter last year. This demonstrates a healthy labour market growth in the sector which is a major source of employment for variety of skilled or unskilled people across different socio-economic background.
- The proportion of establishments employing hired workers in the unincorporated non-agricultural sector was recorded at 13.54% in January–March 2026 with percentage of workers hired on fairly regular basis was estimated to be 24.77%.
- Working owners, however, continued to account for the largest share in composition of workers, with their proportion rising from 58.29% in the January–March 2025 quarter to 60.97% in the January–March 2026 quarter.
- While expansion remained broad-based across sectors, the rural sector outpaced the urban sector in terms of growth. The rural sector witnessed more than 20% year-on-year growth in both establishments and workforce in comparison to same quarter last year (Jan-Mar 2025), reinforcing the pivotal role of unincorporated enterprises in driving rural economic activity.

### Box 1: Confidence Interval for the Quarterly Estimates

The confidence interval is defined as an interval that covers the true value of a population parameter with a certain probability. For key indicators, the sampling error of an estimate is often expressed as a confidence interval, since this is the most rigorous and clear way of demonstrating sampling variability.

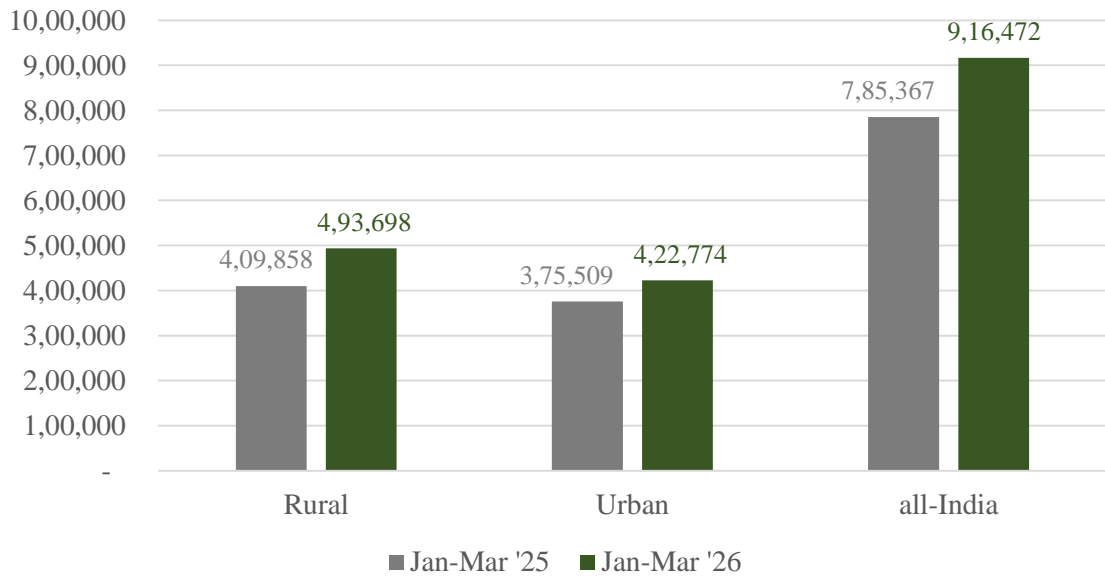
While interpreting quarterly estimates, it's important to note that the quarterly sample size is considerably smaller than the annual sample. Although the sampling design has been modified and the sample size significantly increased from ASUSE 2025 compared to previous annual ASUSE surveys to support reliable quarterly estimates, the estimates of major indicators are expressed along with confidence intervals and relative standard errors (RSE). This offers a greater clarity on the precision of the estimates.

A 95% confidence interval, as suggested by various statistical literature and also, followed globally by various NSOs has been given along with point estimates in Table 1.

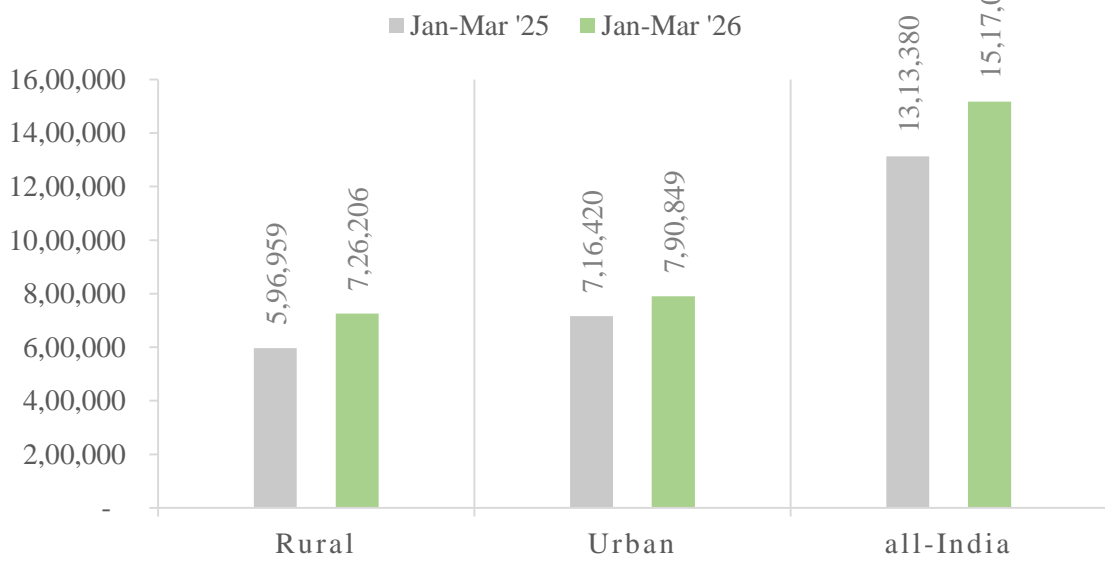
Specifically, the 95% CI of an estimate with its RSE expressed in % may be presented as:

$$\text{estimate} * [1 \pm 1.96 * \text{RSE} / 100]$$

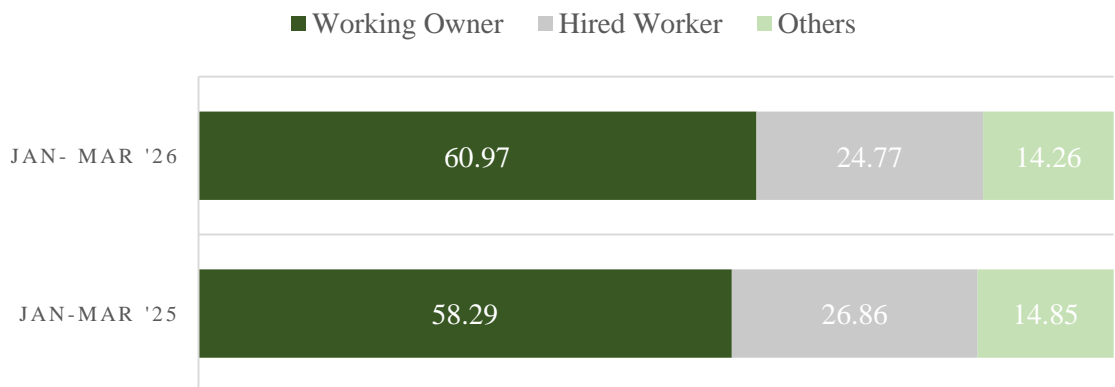
**Fig 1: Estimated Number of Establishments ('00)**



**Fig 2: Estimated Number Of Workers ('00)**



**Fig 3: Percentage Share of Categories of Worker**



## TREND AT BROAD ACTIVITY CATEGORY LEVEL

The estimates of key aggregate indicators at Broad Activity Category Level (BAC) i.e. manufacturing, trade and other services, for the quarter Jan-Mar 2026 are presented in Table 2. In this table, ‘M’, ‘T’ and ‘S’ respectively stand for manufacturing, trade and other services. It is important to mention that ASUSE also covers

unincorporated establishments involved in electric power generation, transmission and distribution, which are very few in number and hence, are not tabulated separately. The percentage share of the BACs to the number of establishments and number of workers are shown in Figure 4 and Figure 5 respectively.

**Table 2: Key estimates at BAC level (all India)**

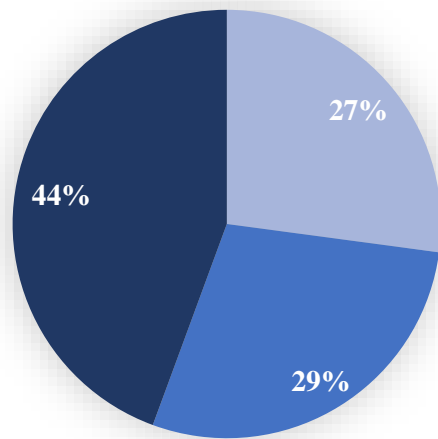
Parameter	January 2025 – March 2025			January 2026 – March 2026		
	M	T	S	M	T	S
No of establishments (in '00)	2,16,608	2,42,888	3,25,869	2,48,493	2,61,203	4,06,764
percentage of proprietary and partnership establishments**	99.99	99.78	89.06	100.00	99.87	97.71
percentage of hired worker establishments	11.32	18.26	12.69	11.87	14.65	13.86
percentage of market establishments	100.00	100.00	98.91	100.00	100.00	98.93
No of workers (in '00)	3,68,744	4,40,028	5,04,602	4,05,617	4,49,747	6,61,672
<b>% share of different types of workers</b>						
Working owner	59.18	55.64	59.94	61.61	58.41	62.32
Hired worker	27.09	21.96	30.95	26.80	18.55	27.75
Others (including unpaid family members)	13.73	22.40	9.11	11.59	23.04	9.93

\*\* Please refer to “Note to User” section of the Endnote for details of change in treatment of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in type of ownership in ASUSE 2026.

### Insights from Table 2

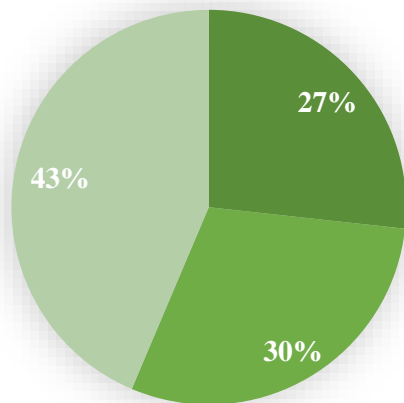
- Table 2 presenting key broad activity category-wise (Manufacturing, Trade, and Other Services) indicators for the quarters January- March from ASUSE 2025 and ASUSE 2026, highlights distinct patterns in establishment numbers and workforce composition across sectors.
- ‘Other Services’ sector has continued to account for the largest share of both establishments and workers, followed by Trade and Manufacturing.
- Accounting for the bulk of the increase in establishments and workers, the ‘Other Services’ sector has remained the main engine of growth followed by manufacturing.
- Proportion of establishments engaging hired worker has observed y-o-y growth for both manufacturing and other services sector while a dip has been observed in the trading sector.
- With the highest share of both hired workers and working owners, the ‘Other Services’ sector reflects its dual importance of employment and entrepreneurship.

**Fig 4: Percentage Share of Establishments among Broad Activity Categories (Jan- Mar '26)**



■ Manufacturing ■ Trade ■ Other Services

**Fig 5: Percentage Share of Workers among Broad Activity Categories (Jan- Mar '26)**



■ Manufacturing ■ Trade ■ Other Services

**Fig 6: Percentage Of Hired Worker Establishments (Jan-Mar '26)**



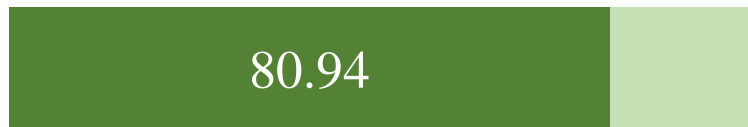
## OPERATIONAL INDICATORS

Operational Indicators like percentage of establishments using internet or using digital mode of financial transaction, percentage of establishments registered under some Act/Authority are important metrics for measuring the digitalization and registration coverage of the unincorporated sector.



**Female workers** accounted for over **29%** of total employment in the quarter January – March 2026

**Percentage of Establishments using internet (Jan-Mar '26)**



**Percentage of Establishments using online financial services including UPI/mobile wallets/POS device for making or receiving payments (Jan-Mar '26)**



Digitization in the unincorporated non-agricultural sector has been driven by the increasing adoption of **Internet** usage and **Digital Financial Transactions** among establishments.

Percentage of establishments **registered** under at least one act/authority has been observed to be **41.37%** in January, 2026 – March, 2026.



## SAMPLE SIZE

Table 3: The number of FSUs and number of establishments surveyed during Jan-Mar 2026:

Quarter	Number of FSU surveyed*			Number of establishments surveyed*		
	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total
January 2026 – March 2026	2408	3590	5998	74824	98021	172845

\*Selected FSUs of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep, Ladakh and rural areas of Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland are not considered for this quarterly bulletin, as sub-round restrictions were not imposed in these areas while conducting field-work, due to arduous field conditions

## RELIABILITY OF THE ESTIMATES

The reliability of the estimates presented in this bulletin is estimated through RSE (Relative Standard Error). The RSE (in percent) estimated for number of establishments and workers are presented below for reference.

Table 4: Table of RSE (%):

Quarter	RSE of Estimated Number of Establishments			RSE of Estimated Number of Workers		
	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total
January 2026 – March 2026	2.56	1.43	1.49	2.39	2.13	1.59
<b>For Broad activity Categories (Rural + Urban)</b>						
	Manufacturing	Trade	Other Services	Manufacturing	Trade	Other Services
January 2026 – March 2026	3.10	3.69	1.69	3.61	3.26	2.05

## ENDNOTE

### COVERAGE OF ASUSE:

**Geographically**, ASUSE covers the rural and urban areas of whole of India (except some of the villages in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, which are difficult to access).

**Sector-wise**, this survey captures unincorporated non-agricultural establishments belonging to three sectors viz., Manufacturing, Trade and Other Services.

**Ownership-wise**, unincorporated non-agricultural establishments pertaining to proprietorship, partnership (excluding Limited Liability Partnerships), co-operatives, societies/trusts etc. have been covered in ASUSE.

### Key Concept and Definitions

**Enterprise:** An institutional unit in its capacity as a producer of goods and services is known as an enterprise. An enterprise is an economic transactor with autonomy in respect of financial and investment decision-making, as well as authority and responsibility for allocating resources for the production of goods and services. It may be engaged in one or more economic activities at one or more locations. It may be noted that unincorporated enterprises owned by households, all of whose output is intended for final consumption or gross fixed capital formation by those households is outside the coverage of the definition of enterprises used in this survey.

**Establishment:** An establishment is an enterprise or part of an enterprise that is situated in a single location and in which either only a single productive activity is carried out or in which the principal productive activity accounts for the most of the value added. The enterprise and the establishment are the same for single-establishment firms. The unit of enquiry of the ASUSE is an Establishment and not the Enterprise.

**Non-agricultural establishment:** All establishments covered under Sections 'B' to 'V' of NIC-2025 are "non-agricultural establishments". However, for the purpose of this survey Sections 'C' to 'T' of NIC-2025 have been considered.

**Unincorporated non-agricultural establishments:** Non-agricultural establishments which are not incorporated (i.e., neither registered under Companies Act, 1956 nor under Companies Act, 2013).

**Manufacturing Establishment:** A manufacturing establishment is a unit engaged in the physical or chemical transformation of materials, substances or components into new products. It also covers units working for other concerns on materials supplied by them. This also includes those units which are primarily engaged in providing manufacturing services such as maintenance and repair of industrial, commercial and similar machinery and equipment.

**Trading Establishment:** A trading establishment is a unit engaged in trade. Trade is defined to be an act of purchase of goods and their disposal by way of sale without any intermediate physical transformation of the goods. The activities of intermediaries who do not actually purchase or sell goods but only arrange their purchase and sale and earn remuneration by way of brokerage and commission are also treated as trade.

**Other Service Establishment:** A servicing establishment or service sector establishment is engaged in activities carried out for the benefit of a consuming unit. Such consuming units could be individuals or other institutional units. Activities of service establishments typically results in changes in the condition of consuming units when such activities are realized by the consuming unit on demand. Some examples of changes that a producer of service brings about in the condition of consumers of service are:

a) Changes in the condition of consumer's goods: the producer works directly on goods owned by the consumer by transporting, cleaning, repairing or otherwise transforming them;

b) Changes in the physical condition of persons: the producer transports the persons, provides them with accommodation, provides them with medical or surgical treatments, improves their appearance etc.;

c) Changes in the mental condition of persons: the producer provides education, information, advice, entertainment or similar services;

d) Changes in the general economic state of the institutional unit itself: the producer provides insurance, financial intermediation, protection, guarantees, etc.

**Proprietary establishment:** When an individual is the sole owner of an establishment, it is called a proprietary establishment.

**Partnership establishment:** Partnership is defined as the 'relation between persons who have agreed to share the profits of a business carried out by all or any one of them acting for all'. There may be two or more owners, belonging to the same or different households, on a partnership basis, with or without formal agreement (where there is a tacit understanding about the distribution of profits among the so-called partners).

**Market establishment:** Market establishment is one which provides most of its produced goods and/or services at an economically significant price.

**Worker:** Worker is defined as persons working within the premises of the establishment who are in the payroll of the establishment as well as the working owners and unpaid family members who help in the entrepreneurial activity. The helpers, apprentices, interns engaged by the establishment are also treated as worker. The worker may serve the establishment in any capacity - primary or supervisory.

**Hired Worker Establishment (HWE):** An establishment which has employed at least one hired worker on a fairly regular basis<sup>1</sup> is termed as hired worker establishment.

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<sup>1</sup>"fairly regular basis" means the major part of the period when operation(s) of an establishment are carried out during a reference period.

## DATA COLLECTION MECHANISM IN ASUSE



ASUSE is conducted on the basis of area frame and establishments have been listed in the selected FSUs of both rural and urban sector and from the listed establishments in the FSUs, requisite number of establishments were surveyed as per the sampling design. Mostly, data were collected from the selected establishments through oral enquiry pertaining to the 'monthly' reference period barring a few big establishments, which had provided annual data from their audited Books of Accounts. The data for the survey were collected in Tablet using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI).

## SAMPLING SCHEME



The survey has been conducted following a multi-stage stratified sampling scheme, where first stage units (FSUs) are census villages in rural area (except for rural Kerala, where Panchayat wards have been taken as FSUs) and UFS (Urban Frame Survey) blocks in urban areas. The ultimate stage units (USUs) are establishments for both the sectors. In the case of large FSUs, one intermediate stage of sampling has been done in the form of hamlet groups in rural and sub-blocks in urban.

Since ASUSE 2025, the sampling design of the survey has been suitably modified to enable quarterly selection of sample units. Also, by making districts within a state as basic stratum, this sampling strategy has provision for generation of district-level annual estimates by the states participating in the survey. This enhancement facilitates the generation of quarterly estimates, in addition to the annual results.

In ASUSE 2026, instead of purposive selection of one hamlet group/sub-block having highest number of hired worker establishments, two hamlet groups/sub-blocks having highest and next highest number of hired worker establishments are selected purposively to form segment 1. In addition, one hamlet group/sub-block is selected randomly in ASUSE 2026 to form segment 2 whereas two were selected in previous ASUSE. Thus, total number of hamlet groups/sub-blocks selected in ASUSE 2026 is same as in earlier ASUSE.

In ASUSE 2026 RSE (%) of any indicator is calculated at FSU  $\times$  SSS level using Simple Random sampling with replacement (SRSWR) whereas in ASUSE 2025 it was calculated at FSU level using SRSWR.

## NOTE FOR USERS



The estimates presented in this quarterly bulletin pertain specifically to the unincorporated non-agricultural sector for the reference quarter under consideration. Although sampling design has been modified to enable generation of quarterly estimates using an area frame, the quarterly sample size is significantly less than the annual sample size. Accordingly, users may interpret quarterly movements with caution, considering potential sampling variability and short-term fluctuations in activity levels. It is important to note that ASUSE covers only a part of the non-agricultural economy, namely, the unincorporated segment of the establishments in manufacturing, trade and services (excluding construction) and, hence, the trends observed in the quarterly results of the unincorporated sector as presented in QBUSE, may not directly align with the corresponding quarterly GDP estimates which covers the entire economy. Where relevant, the estimates presented in the Quarterly Bulletin are accompanied by confidence intervals to enable informed interpretation of the estimates.

As part of the continuous effort to keep the survey relevant and responsive to stakeholder requirements, a few changes have been introduced in ASUSE 2026. The ICT block of the ASUSE questionnaire has been comprehensively redesigned with more policy-oriented questions to better capture the extent and nature of ICT usage in the sector. Further, NIC-2025 (based on International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC) Revision 5, endorsed by United Nations Statistical Commission) has been adopted for ASUSE 2026 in place of NIC-2008, which was used in earlier rounds of ASUSE for classifying establishments as per their economic activity. Due to this, some activities like maintenance and repair of motor vehicles and maintenance and repair of motor cycles, mopeds, scooters and three wheelers that were considered under trade in NIC 2008 are now being considered under service sector (NIC 2025) and accordingly, all such establishments engaged in these activities are now counted in “other services” in ASUSE 2026. Also, for the first time, an internationally recognized product classification developed by United Nations Statistics Division has been used in ASUSE 2026 to classify the goods and services. Another important feature of this revision pertains to the classification of ownership. From ASUSE 2026 onwards, establishments engaged in monetary intermediation activities by Self Help Groups (SHGs) are being classified under partnership ownership (comprising members from different households) as SHG is not considered as a separate form of ownership. In earlier rounds up to ASUSE 2025, such activities were recorded under a distinct SHG ownership category. However, such activities of SHGs are continued to be covered in ASUSE 2026 through appropriate NIC code. There is no change in the overall coverage of ASUSE.

Accordingly, users may interpret quarterly movements with caution, considering potential sampling variability and short-term fluctuations in activity levels and changes in classification of economic activity, product (goods and services) and ownership type and questionnaire.

The results of the quarters January–March 2025, April–June 2025 and July–September 2025 were released in the form of quarterly bulletins. The results of October – December 2025 were included as Quarterly Insights in the Factsheet of ASUSE 2025. The present bulletin contains the results of the quarter January–March 2026.

**Other publications of ASUSE, including the quarterly bulletins and factsheet of ASUSE 2025 are available on the website of the Ministry (<https://www.mospi.gov.in>)**

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