



Global Gender Gap Report 2025

For Prelims: [Global Gender Gap Report 2025](#), [WEF](#), [Global Gender Gap Index](#), [Gender Parity](#), [Local Governance](#)

For Mains: [Issues of Gender Inequality](#) in Different Sectors, Key Factors Related to Gender Inequality, Measures To be Taken to Gender Parity.

[Source: TH](#)

Why in News?

India ranked **131st out of 148 countries** in the [Global Gender Gap Report 2025](#) by the [World Economic Forum](#), down from **129th in 2024**, with a **gender parity score of 64.1%**,

- The report comprehensively evaluated gender parity across 148 countries.

What is the Global Gender Gap Index?

- **About:** Published annually since **2006**, it is the **longest-standing global index** for **assessing gender equality**, measuring **countries' progress in closing gender gaps** across **4 key dimensions**:
 - **Economic Participation and Opportunity**
 - **Educational Attainment**
 - **Health & Survival**
 - **Political Empowerment**
- **Rating Mechanism:** Each dimension is scored on a scale from **0 to 1**, where **1 represents full gender parity** and **0 denotes complete inequality**.
 - The index aims to act as a **strategic benchmarking tool**, enabling countries to assess and compare gender disparities.
- **Objectives:** To act as a **guiding tool for tracking progress on gender gaps in health, education, economy, and politics**.
 - This annual benchmark helps stakeholders in each country **set priorities suited to their specific economic, political, and cultural contexts**.

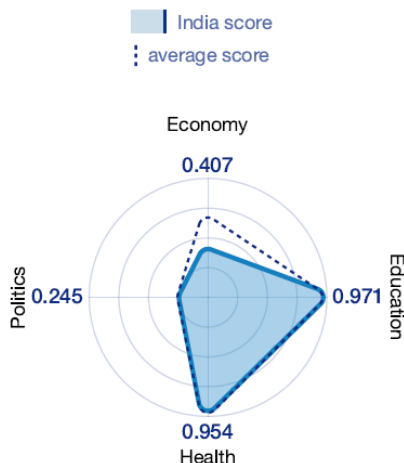
What are the Key Findings of the Global Gender Gap Report 2025?

- **India Performance:**
 - In subindices, India shows gains in **Economic Participation** (40.7%) with improvement in income parity from **28.6% to 29.9%**, and **Educational Attainment** at a high **97.1%**, indicating near-parity in literacy and tertiary education enrolment.
 - **Health and Survival** improved with **better sex ratio and life expectancy**. However, **Political Empowerment** fell by **0.6 points**, with women's representation in Parliament down from **14.7% to 13.8%** and ministerial representation

fell from **6.5% to 5.6%**.

Economy Profile	Score (impairty = 0, parity = 1)	Rank (out of 148 countries)	Index Edition
India	0.644	131st	2025

Global Gender Gap Index 2025 Edition



Overview

Index and Subindex	2025		▼ 2024	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
Global Gender Gap Index	0.644	131st	0.641	129th
Economic Participation and Opportunity	0.407	144th	0.398	142nd
Educational Attainment	0.971	110th	0.964	112th
Health and Survival	0.954	143rd	0.951	142nd
Political Empowerment	0.245	69th	0.251	65th

- **South Asia's Performance:** **Bhutan (119), Nepal (125), and Sri Lanka (130)** ranked better than India.
 - **Bangladesh** is the region's top performer, rising **75 places to 24th globally**, driven by gains in **political empowerment** and **Pakistan** remains the lowest globally, ranked **148th**.
- **Global Trends: Top 5 countries** in Global Gender Gap Index 2025 were **Iceland** (for the 16th consecutive year), **Finland, Norway, UK and New Zealand**.
 - The **global gender gap** has closed by **68.8%**, marking the **strongest post Covid-19-pandemic progress**, yet **full parity is still 123 years away** at the current rate.

What are the Key Strides of India in Bridging the Gender Gap?

- **Policy and Legislative Reforms:** India has enacted **progressive policies**, including the [Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam \(2023\)](#), **reserving seats for women** in legislatures, boosting gender-sensitive governance.
- **Education and Skill Development:** Programs like [Beti Bachao Beti Padhao](#) and [Vigyan Jyoti](#) have improved girls' access to education, especially in [STEM](#).
 - Female [Gross Enrolment Ratio \(GER\)](#) in higher education **rose from 42.5% (2017-18) to 46.3% (2022-23)**.
- **Economic Participation:** Female **labor force participation increased from 23.3% (2017-18) to 41.7% (2023-24)**. Schemes like [Stand-Up India](#) and [Mahila e-Haat](#) promote women entrepreneurship.
- **Shifting Social Norms:** Changing **societal attitudes and gender-neutral portrayals** in media have enabled **greater acceptance of women in leadership and non-traditional roles**.
- **Financial Inclusion:** Over **28 crore women** have [Jan Dhan accounts](#), enhancing **autonomy**. Schemes like [PMJDY](#) and Stand-Up India **support financial independence and entrepreneurship**.
- **Health and Reproductive Rights:** Initiatives like [PM Matru Vandana Yojana](#) and [National Health Mission \(NHM\)](#) have **improved maternal care**.

- **Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR)** dropped from **174 (2013-15)** to **97 (2018-20)**, indicating **better health outcomes for women**.

What are the Major Challenges Contributing to the Gender Gap in India?

- **Low Female Labor Force Participation:** India's **Female Labour Force Participation Rate** is just **41.7%** (PLFS 2023-24), with most women in **informal and undervalued roles**, especially in agriculture.
 - **Patriarchal norms, unsafe workplaces, and lack of childcare support** continue to restrict women's access to formal, secure employment.
- **Education and Literacy Disparities:** Female literacy stands at **around 65% vs 82%** for males (Census 2011), a **17% point gap**.
 - Nearly **40% of girls aged 15-18** are out of school, with **23 million** dropping out due to **menstruation-related stigma and lack of facilities**. The **Education Parity Index** declined to **0.964** in 2024, reversing earlier progress.
- **Economic Participation and Wage Inequality:** Women spend **nearly 289 minutes/day** on unpaid domestic work, **3 times more** than men and earn only **around 73%** of male wages on average, with **lower parity in sectors like tech (as low as 60%)**.
 - The **Economic Survey 2022-23** estimated the value of women's unpaid care work at **Rs 22.7 lakh crore**, roughly **7.5% of India's GDP**.
 - Despite its massive economic contribution, this work remains invisible in labour statistics, undervaluing women's time and restricting their participation in paid employment.
 - Also, only **17% of Chief-roles** and **20%** of board positions in corporate India are held by women.
- **Implementation Gaps in Schemes:** While multiple government schemes target gender equity, **poor awareness, weak last-mile delivery, and lack of gender-sensitive monitoring** hinder their real impact, especially in **rural and marginalised populations**.

What are the Key Initiatives of Government of India to Reduce Gender Gap?

- **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao**
- **Mahila Shakti Kendra**
- **Mahila Police Volunteers**
- **Rashtriya Mahila Kosh**
- **Political Reservation:** The government has reserved 33% of the seats in **Panchayati Raj Institutions** for women.
 - The Constitution (**106th Amendment) Act, 2023**, has also reserved one-third of all seats for women in **Lok Sabha**, State legislative assemblies, and the Legislative Assembly of the National Capital Territory of Delhi, including those reserved for SCs and STs.
- **Female Entrepreneurship:** To promote female entrepreneurship, the Government has initiated Programmes like **Stand-Up India** and **Mahila-e-Haat** (an online marketing platform to support women entrepreneurs/**SHGs/NGOs**), Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Programme (ESSDP).

What Measures can India Adopt to Strengthen Gender Parity in India?

- **Strengthening Enforcement of Protection Laws:** Strengthen enforcement of gender-related laws (e.g., **POCSO, Domestic Violence Act**), and expand the reach of **One-Stop Centres** and **Nirbhaya Fund** to support survivors of violence and abuse.
- **Enhancing Economic Inclusion:** There is a need to boost female labour force participation **through workplace reforms (crèches, maternity benefits, hiring incentives)**,

while **recognizing unpaid care work** through **time-use surveys and social security coverage** for domestic workers.

- **Education, Skilling and Digital Access:** Ensure **girls' retention in school** via **scholarships and menstrual hygiene support**.
 - **Promote participation in STEM** and **vocational training** under **Digital India** and **Skill India** and bridge the digital gender divide through **PMGDISHA** and **mobile access** in Aspirational Districts.
- **Health, Nutrition & Safety Infrastructure:** **Expand reproductive and maternal healthcare** via **NHM**, **combat malnutrition** under **POSHAN Abhiyaan**, and ensure **gender-responsive infrastructure**- safe transport, street lighting, CCTV, and women's help desks, to **improve mobility and public safety**.
- **Inclusive Governance & Data-Driven Policy:** Empower **grassroots leadership** by **building capacities of elected women representatives** in **PRIs**.
 - Strengthen **gender budgeting**, activate **Gender Budget Cells** across ministries, and ensure **regular collection of sex-disaggregated data** for targeted policy interventions.

Drishti Mains Question:

Critically examine India's declining rank in the Global Gender Gap Index 2025. Identify key challenges and suggest measures to promote gender parity.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims:

Q. Which of the following gives 'Global Gender Gap Index' ranking to the countries of the world? (2017)

- (a) World Economic Forum
- (b) UN Human Rights Council
- (c) UN Women
- (d) World Health Organization

Ans: (a)

Mains:

Q. Discuss the desirability of greater representation to women in the higher judiciary to ensure diversity, equity and inclusiveness. (2021)