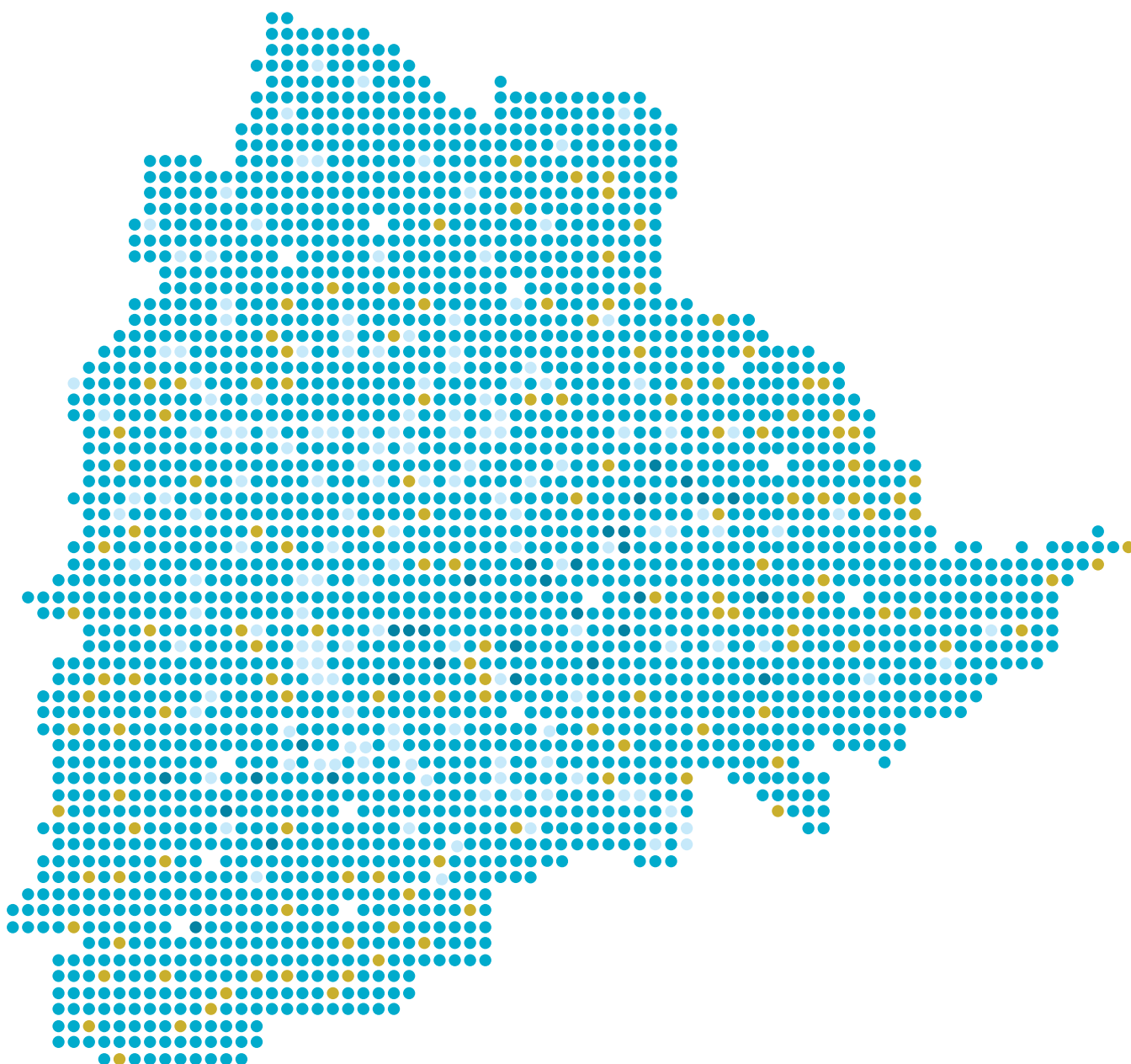


## TREND IN FEMALE LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION IN TELANGANA



This factsheet highlights important aspects of the status of women's employment in Telangana. The factsheets use secondary data provided by the National Sample Surveys' Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), 2017-18 to 2023-24







TELANGANA





## Introduction

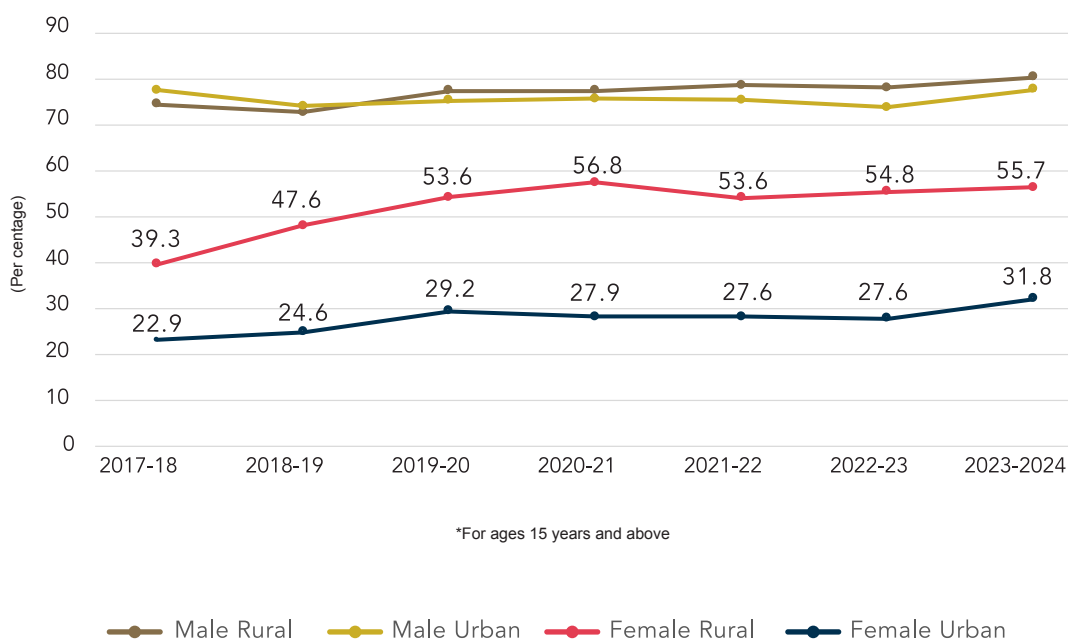
Telangana has rapidly grown into an emerging industrial powerhouse, with its GSDP increasing by 196.9 per cent from Rs 5.05 lakh crore in 2014-15 to Rs 15.01 lakh crore in 2023-24.<sup>1</sup> The service sector accounted for 66.8 per cent of the state's GSVA in 2023-24.<sup>2</sup> As per 2024-25, Telangana's industrial sector, which contributed Rs 2,77,270 crore to the state's Gross State Value Added (GSVA), had 23.06 per cent female workers compared to 22.55 per cent male workers "marking a milestone in gender parity".<sup>3</sup> This is the result of targeted policy interventions promoting women's participation in industries and entrepreneurship.

Despite this, agriculture remains a significant employer, with 45.8 per cent of the population engaged in agriculture and allied sectors, contributing 15.4 per cent to the GSDP. Additionally, in the service sector, which accounts for 66.3 per cent of the overall economic output, only 23.9 per cent of the total workforce is female compared to 41.5 per cent of the male workforce. Most women are employed in the agriculture sector, while men are primarily employed in more productive sectors such as services. This factsheet analyses the evolving patterns of female labour force participation in Telangana from 2017-18 to 2023-24, highlighting sectoral trends, occupational segregation and barriers to join the workforce.

## Trends in Female Labour Force Participation Rates

- Since 2018-19, the rural FLFPR has shown a steady increase- rising from 47.6 per cent to 55.7 per cent by 2023-24. These rates rose to an all-time high of 56.8 per cent in 2020-21 before gradually declining. There is a difference of at least 9 per cent between Telangana's rural FLFPR and the national average (46.5 per cent), indicating that FLFPR in Telangana is significantly higher than in India. In contrast, the rural male LFPR has remained relatively stable, increasing from 71.9 per cent in 2018-19 to 79.5 per cent, showing an upward trend in recent years.
- In urban region, the FLFPR has steadily improved from 22.9 per cent in 2017-18 to 31.8 per cent in 2023-24, reflecting a growing engagement of women in urban labour markets. This is also higher than the national urban average at 26.0 per cent. The LFPR for men in urban areas has remained largely stable, with minor fluctuations from 76.7 per cent in 2017-18 to 76.9 per cent in 2023-24.

Figure 1: Trend in LFPR from PLFS 2017-18 to 2023-24





## Distribution of Women Workers by Status of Employment

- In rural Telangana, the share of self-employed women has seen a notable increase, from 54.8 per cent in 2017-18 to 61.9 per cent in 2023-24. This rise in self-employment has been accompanied by a sharp decline in casual employment among women, which fell from 39.3 per cent to 30.7 per cent over the same period. The proportion of regular salaried women workers has remained relatively low, showing a slight increase from 5.8 per cent to 7.5 per cent between 2017-18 and 2023-24. Compared to national trends, the share of self-employment remains much lower (national average is at 73.4 per cent) while the share of women engaged in casual employment is much higher than the national average of 18.7 per cent.
- In urban Telangana, self-employment among women rose modestly from 31.4 per cent in 2017-18 to 38.8 per cent in 2023-24. The share of regular salaried women also increased slightly from 50.8 per cent to 52.7 per cent. Casual employment experienced a sharp decline, from 17.8 per cent to just 8.6 per cent over the same period. This composition aligns with the national urban share.

**Figure 2:** Women Workforce Distribution across Type of Employment

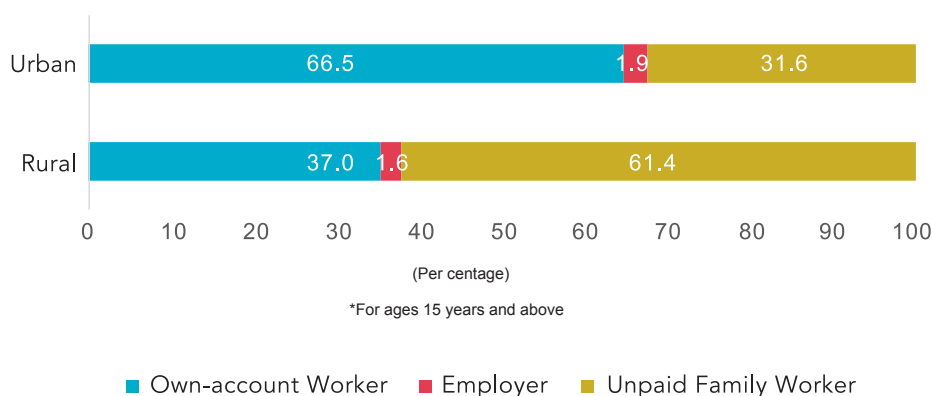


- In rural areas of the state, 61.4 per cent of self-employed women are unpaid family workers, while 37 per cent are own-account workers, and just 1.6 per cent are employers. This indicates that the majority of rural self-employed women remain engaged in non-remunerative family-based work. This aligns with the national trends, where unpaid family labour continues to dominate women's self-employment. However, the values are higher than the national average, indicating the intensity of the issue is more pronounced in Telangana.



- In urban areas, 66.5 per cent of self-employed women are own-account workers, while 31.6 per cent are unpaid family workers. There is a slightly stronger presence of autonomous female workers in urban areas. However, the share of employers remains quite low at 1.9 per cent. To support women entrepreneurs, Telangana has initiated multiple schemes and infrastructure projects.
- Notably, the Telangana State Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (TSIIC), in collaboration with the FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO), has developed exclusive industrial parks for women entrepreneurs, such as the FLO-TSIIC Women's Industrial Park at Sultanpur. Spread over 50 acres, this park houses 25 women-owned and operated units across diverse sectors, including packaging, organic handloom apparel, food processing, and medical devices.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, the Telangana State Innovation Cell (TSIC) fosters grassroots innovations by providing a platform for women-led start-ups and innovators. Established in 2017 under the State Innovation Policy, TSIC acts as the nodal agency promoting innovation and entrepreneurship across Telangana, offering incubation, mentoring, and funding support to women entrepreneurs.<sup>5</sup>

**Figure 3:** Distribution of Self-Employed Women

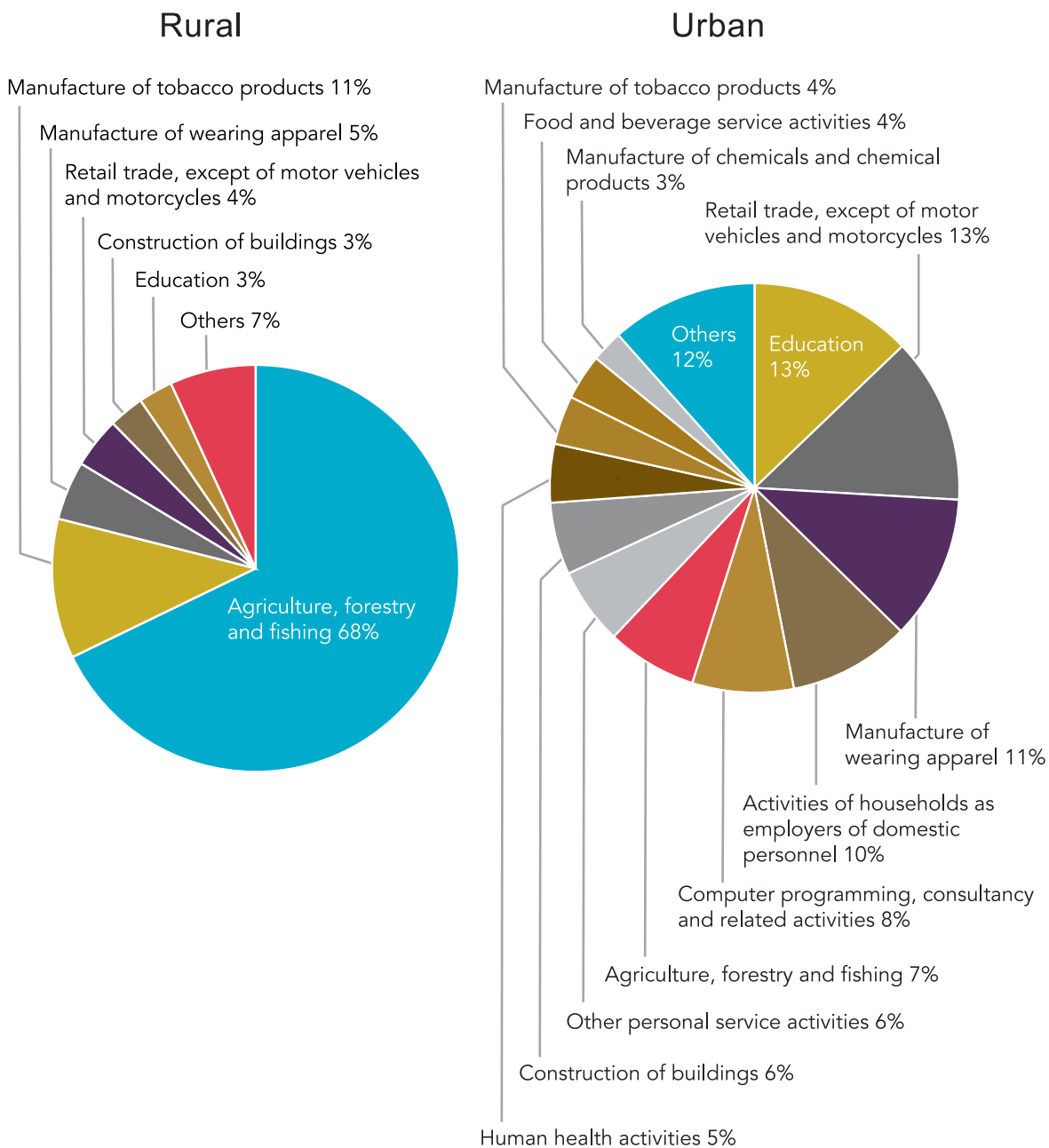


## Distribution of Women Workers by Broad Industry Divisions

- In the rural female workforce of the state, 67.8 per cent are employed in agriculture and allied activities, followed by the manufacturing of tobacco products (11.1 per cent) and the manufacturing of wearing apparel (4.6 per cent).
- In urban areas, 13.1 per cent of the female workforce is employed in Retail Trade, which contrasts with the national composition that majorly constitutes Agriculture. Followed by retail trade, the urban women workforce composition includes education (12.8 per cent) and manufacturing of wearing apparel (11.4 per cent).



Figure 4: Distribution of Women Workers by Broad Industry Divisions



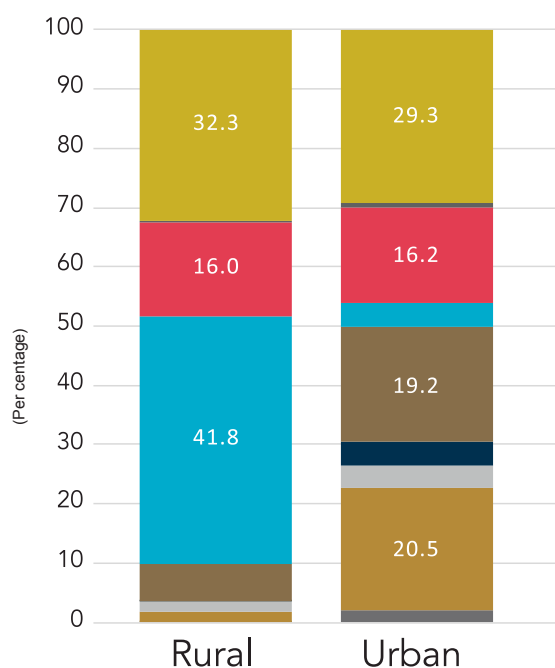
\*For ages 15 years and above

## Distribution of Women Workers by Occupation Types

- In rural areas, the primary occupation for women workers is Skilled Agricultural and Fishery Work, accounting for 41.8 per cent, followed by Elementary Occupations at 32.2 per cent. These two categories together constitute nearly three-quarters of rural women's employment, reflecting the agrarian base of rural livelihoods and the persistence of low-skilled, labour-intensive roles.
- In urban areas, the largest share of women workers is in the Elementary occupations at 29.3 per cent, closely followed by Professionals (29.3 per cent) and Service Workers and Shop & Market Sales Workers (19.2 per cent).



Figure 5: Occupational Classification of Women Workers



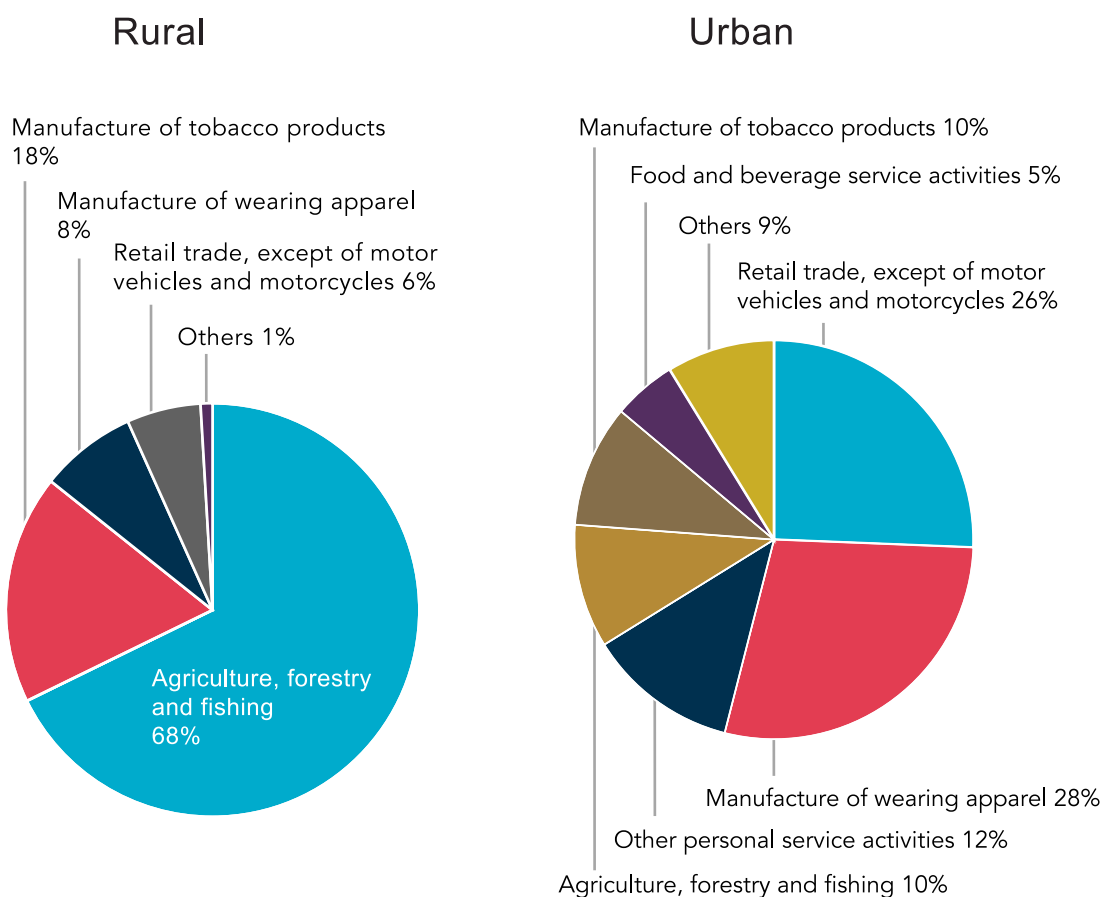
- Legislators, Senior Officials and Managers
- Technicians and Associate Professionals
- Service Workers and Shop & Market Sales Workers
- Craft and related Trades Workers
- Elementary Occupations
- Professionals
- Clerks
- Skilled Agricultural and Fishery Workers
- Plant and Machine Operators and Assemblers

## Distribution of Self-employed Women Workers by Broad Industry Types

- In rural Telangana, 67.6 per cent of self-employed women are engaged in agriculture, forestry and fishing activities. This is followed by manufacturing of tobacco products (17.9 per cent).
- In urban Telangana, self-employed women are primarily engaged in two types of occupations: the manufacturing of wearing apparel (28.3 per cent), and retail trade (25.6 per cent). This contrasts with national trends where majority women in urban areas are engaged in Agriculture.



Figure 6: Distribution of Self-employed Women Workforce by Broad Industry Types



\*For ages 15 years and above

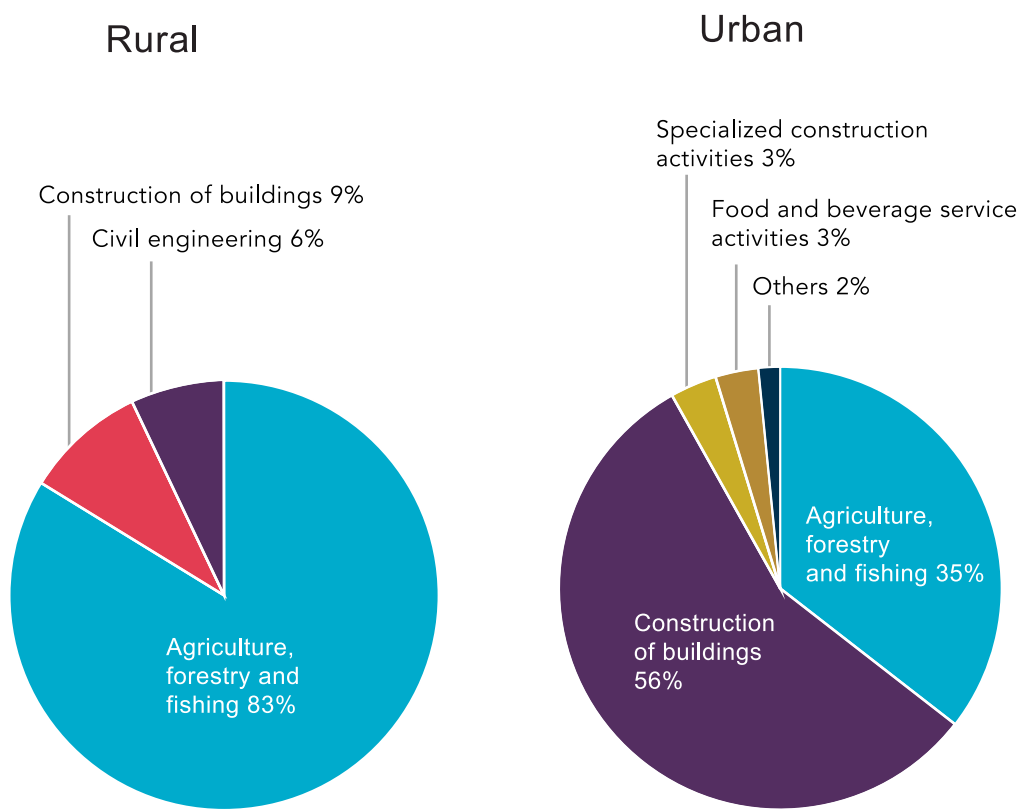
## Distribution of Casual Women Workers by Broad Industry Types

- Following the national trend, in the rural region of the state, 83.7 per cent of the casual female workforce is employed in agriculture, followed by construction of buildings, which accounts for 9.1 per cent.
- In the urban region, nearly 56.3 per cent of the casual female workforce is employed in the construction of buildings, followed by agriculture (35.5 per cent). This is opposite of trends, where agriculture constitutes the majority share, followed by construction of buildings.





Figure 7: Distribution of Casual Women Workers by Broad Industry Types

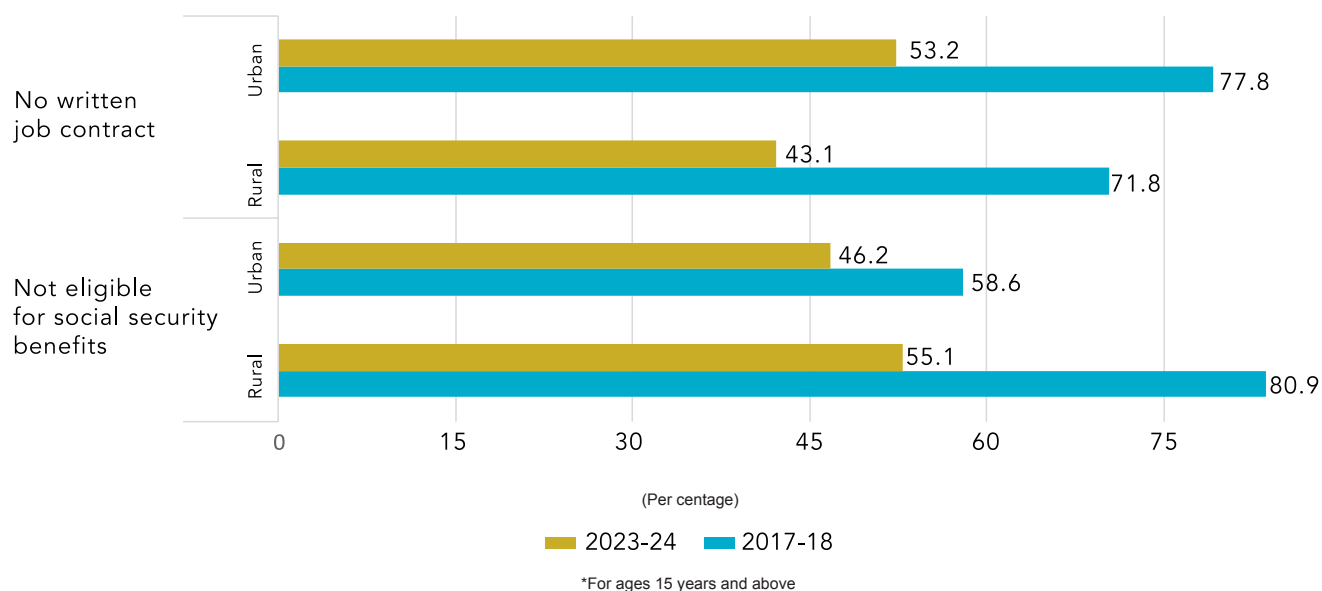


\*For ages 15 years and above

## Condition of Work in Regular Employment

- Between 2017-18 and 2023-24, access to social and job security among regularly salaried women has remained limited, especially in rural areas. The proportion of women without a written job contract declined from 71.8 per cent to 43.1 per cent in rural areas, and from 77.8 per cent to 53.2 per cent in urban areas.
- Similarly, the share of women not eligible for social security benefits fell from 80.9 per cent to 55.1 per cent in rural areas, and from 58.6 per cent to 46.2 per cent in urban areas. Though these figures indicate progress, they also reveal that over half of rural women remain excluded from social protection, underlining persistent vulnerabilities.
- Notably, the rise in job security (through written contracts) in rural areas is much higher than in urban areas, which deviates from the broader national trend of improving job formalisation. This suggests that targeted interventions may be necessary in urban Telangana to enhance contractual security for women workers.

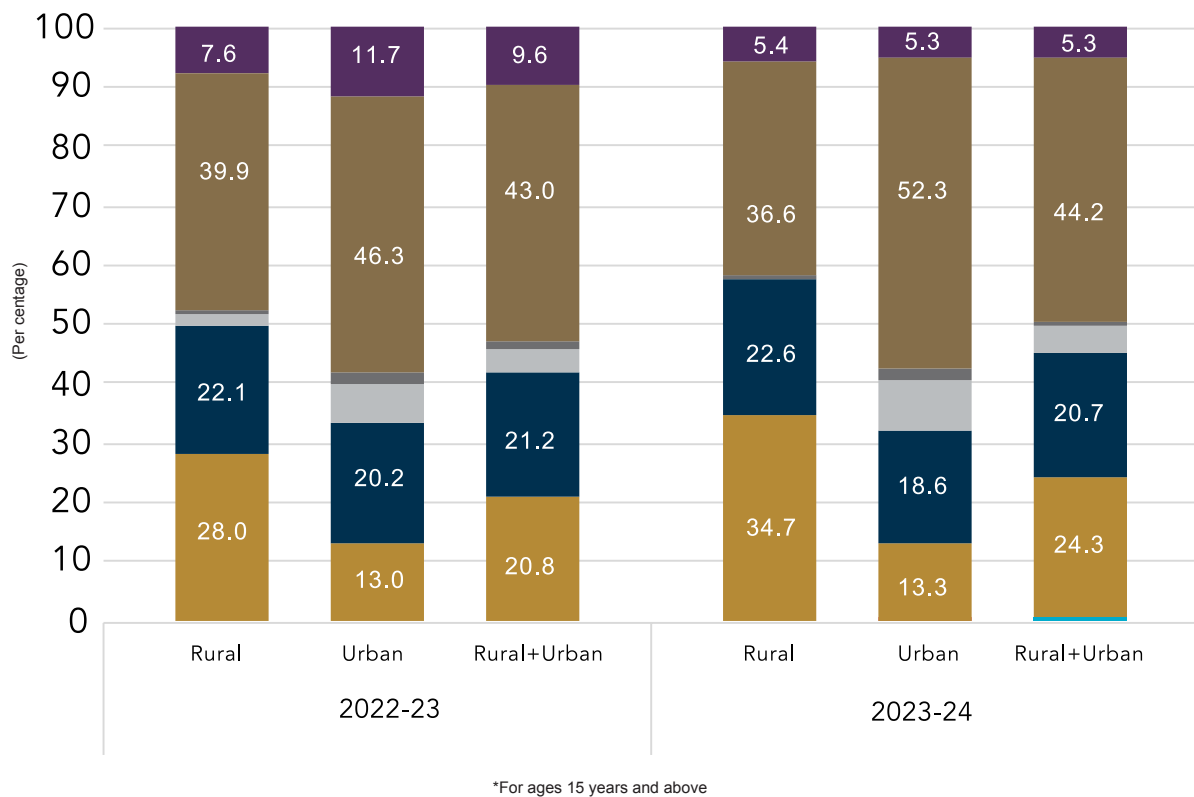
Figure 8: Presence of Social Security and Job Contracts-For Regular Salaried Women



## Reasons for Not Being in the Labour Force

- In rural Telangana, the proportion of women citing childcare and domestic responsibilities as the primary barrier to labour force participation remained largely unchanged, decreasing slightly from 39.9 per cent in 2022-23 to 36.6 per cent in 2023-24. In urban areas, however, this share rose marginally from 46.3 per cent to 52.3 per cent, indicating a growing burden of care-related responsibilities on urban women.
- The share of women reporting “want to continue education” as their main reason for being out of the labour force remained fairly stable, rising slightly from 22.1 per cent to 22.6 per cent in rural areas, and declining from 20.2 per cent to 18.6 per cent in urban areas.
- Notably, health and age-related constraints in rural areas rose from 28.0 per cent to 34.7 per cent, making it the most cited barrier in 2023-24. In urban areas, this figure dropped only marginally from 13.3 per cent to 13.0 per cent, suggesting a possible growing vulnerability among rural women. These rural estimates are higher than the all-India average, where only 16.1 per cent in rural areas cite “health/age-related constraints” as their reason for not being in the labour force. Urban estimates for Telangana and India are broadly comparable.

Figure 9: Reason For Not Being in the Labour Force



- Did not have the request train/qualification/age for work
- Health/age related reason
- Social reasons
- Child care/personal commitments in home making
- Non availability of work a convenient location
- Want to continue study
- Finacially well-off
- Others

## Conclusion

Telangana presents a complex landscape with regard to women's employment, showcasing both notable advancements and ongoing structural challenges. The state has consistently surpassed the national average in Female Labour Force Participation Rates, especially rural estimates. This suggests a more favourable environment for rural women's work, possibly influenced by the diversification of economic activities beyond agriculture. However, the quality of employment remains a concern. While self-employment among rural women increased, a large share continues to work as unpaid family labour, exceeding the national average and indicating limited autonomy and control over income. Telangana also deviates from national trends in industry composition. Unlike the national urban profile where agriculture remains dominant, urban Telangana women are more concentrated in retail trade, education, and apparel manufacturing. There have been improvements in the prevalence of written job contracts and access to social security among regular salaried women, particularly in rural areas. Yet, a majority still lack formal employment benefits. Moreover, care responsibilities and health-related constraints continue to be significant barriers to women's participation in the workforce. As Telangana continues its rapid economic growth, ensuring that this momentum translates into equitable and sustainable opportunities for women, it will be essential for inclusive development.



## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> <https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tehrangana/2025/Feb/18/in-10-years-tehranganas-gdp-increased-by-1969-per-cent>
- <sup>2</sup> [https://ecostat.tehrangana.gov.in/PDF/PUBLICATIONS/TS\\_Economy\\_PE2023-24.pdf](https://ecostat.tehrangana.gov.in/PDF/PUBLICATIONS/TS_Economy_PE2023-24.pdf)
- <sup>3</sup> <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hyderabad/tehrangana-achieves-milestone-in-gender-parity-with-higher-female-workforce-in-industrial-sector/articleshow/119226533.cms>
- <sup>4</sup> <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hyderabad/in-a-first-in-india-state-gets-industrial-park-wholly-owned-by-womenpreneurs/articleshow/90087761.cms>
- <sup>5</sup> [https://www.startupindia.gov.in/srf-2022/reports1/Telangana\\_State\\_Report\\_10-05-2022\(1\).pdf](https://www.startupindia.gov.in/srf-2022/reports1/Telangana_State_Report_10-05-2022(1).pdf)





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