

Trends in Female Labour Force Participation

ANDHRA PRADESH



This series of state factsheets highlights key aspects of women's employment across states, drawing on secondary data from the National Statistical Office's Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS). The analysis incorporates the latest calendar year-based PLFS data (January–December, 2025), along with the earlier calendar year data for 2022, 2023, and 2024 to capture recent trends in women's employment. It is important to note that recent PLFS estimates are affected by revisions in survey methodology and sampling design introduced from January 2025, including expanded sample coverage and changes in stratification and rotational sampling. While these revisions improve representativeness and reliability, caution is required when comparing trends across pre- and post-revision periods.

Introduction

Andhra Pradesh, traditionally an agriculture-based economy is increasingly transitioning toward manufacturing and services. Cities like Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada, and Tirupati have emerged as important hubs for sectors such including pharmaceuticals, textiles, fisheries, and information technology. The state's economy has grown steadily over the past decade, with its overall size more than doubling in that period.¹ Yet agriculture continues to be the backbone of livelihoods for a large part of the population, particularly in rural areas. Most farmers in Andhra Pradesh cultivate small plots of land, depend heavily on rainfall, and remain vulnerable to fluctuations in agricultural productivity.²

Different parts of the state face distinct development challenges. The coastal belt, Rayalaseema, and north Andhra each have their unique economic conditions, and the benefits of growth have not been distributed evenly across these regions. Despite economic growth, women in Andhra Pradesh remain concentrated in agriculture and informal employment. Limited access to regular salaried jobs, productive assets, skills, and formal employment opportunities continues to constrain women's economic participation. These challenges are often more pronounced for women from Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities and those residing in rural areas.

This factsheet analyses trends in female labour force participation in Andhra Pradesh between 2022 and 2025 using data from the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS). It examines changes in labour force participation and employment rates, employment status, sectoral and occupational distribution, job quality, and the barriers that continue to influence women's participation in the labour market.



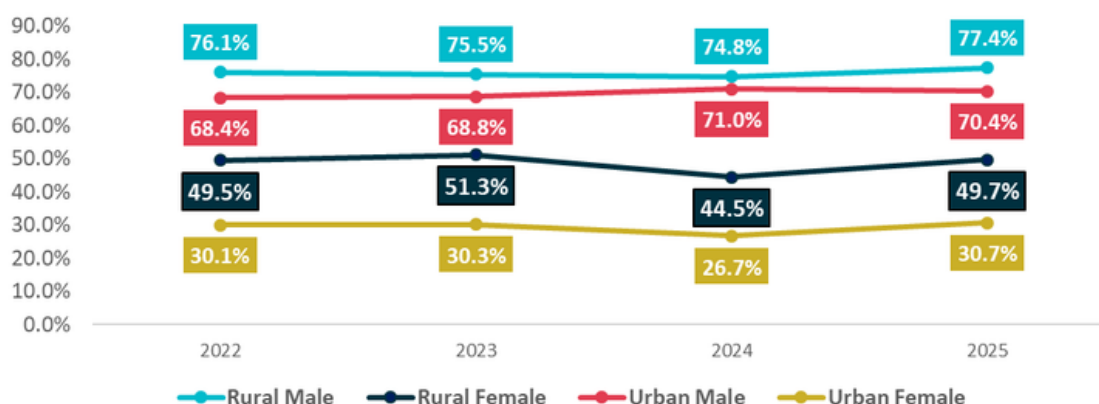
Trends in Female Workforce and Labour Force Participation Rates

- The Worker Population Ratio (WPR) in Andhra Pradesh highlights persistent gender and rural–urban disparities. Rural female WPR remained relatively high, fluctuating between 44.5% and 51.3% and reaching 49.7% in 2025, while rural male WPR remained consistently above 74.0%, increasing to 77.4% in 2025.
- In urban areas, female WPR remained largely stagnant at around 30.0%, whereas urban male WPR fluctuated between 68.4% and 71.0%. Overall, women's employment rates were substantially lower than those of men, particularly in urban areas.

¹ Economic Growth and GSDP Government of Andhra Pradesh (2024). Andhra Pradesh Economic Survey 2023–24. Planning Department, Government of Andhra Pradesh. Available at: <https://planning.ap.gov.in>

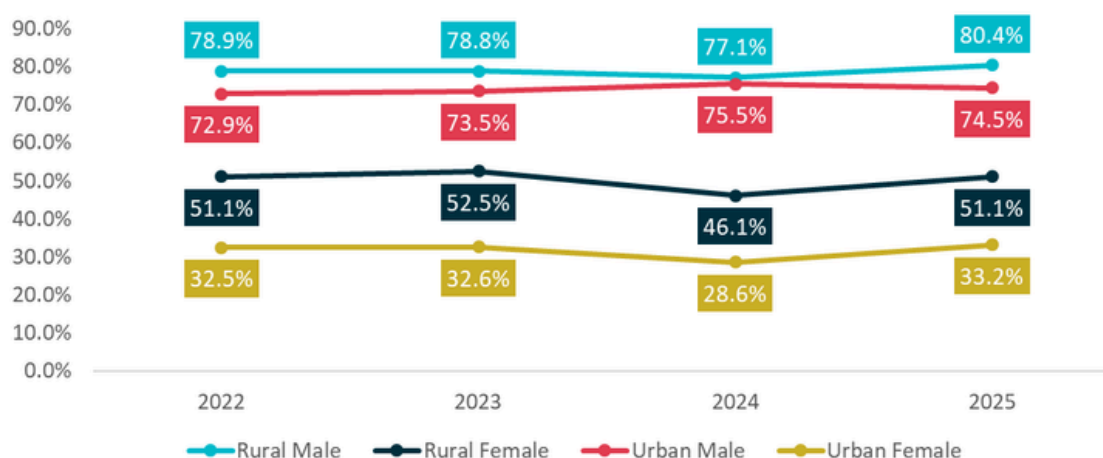
² Rawal, V., & Mahesh, M. (2023). Agrarian Structure in India: Evidence from the Agriculture Census and NSSO Surveys. Society for Social and Economic Research, New Delhi.

Figure 1: Trends in WPR (15 Years and Above)



- Labour Force Participation Rates (LFPR) in Andhra Pradesh remained consistently higher than the national average for women, particularly in rural areas. Rural female LFPR fluctuated between 46.1% and 52.5%, returning to 51.1% in 2025, while rural male LFPR remained high throughout the period, reaching 80.4% in 2025.
- In urban areas, female LFPR remained relatively stable at around 32.0-33.0%, despite a temporary decline in 2024, and remained above the national urban female average. Urban male LFPR increased modestly from 72.9% in 2022 to 74.5% in 2025, broadly following the national trend.

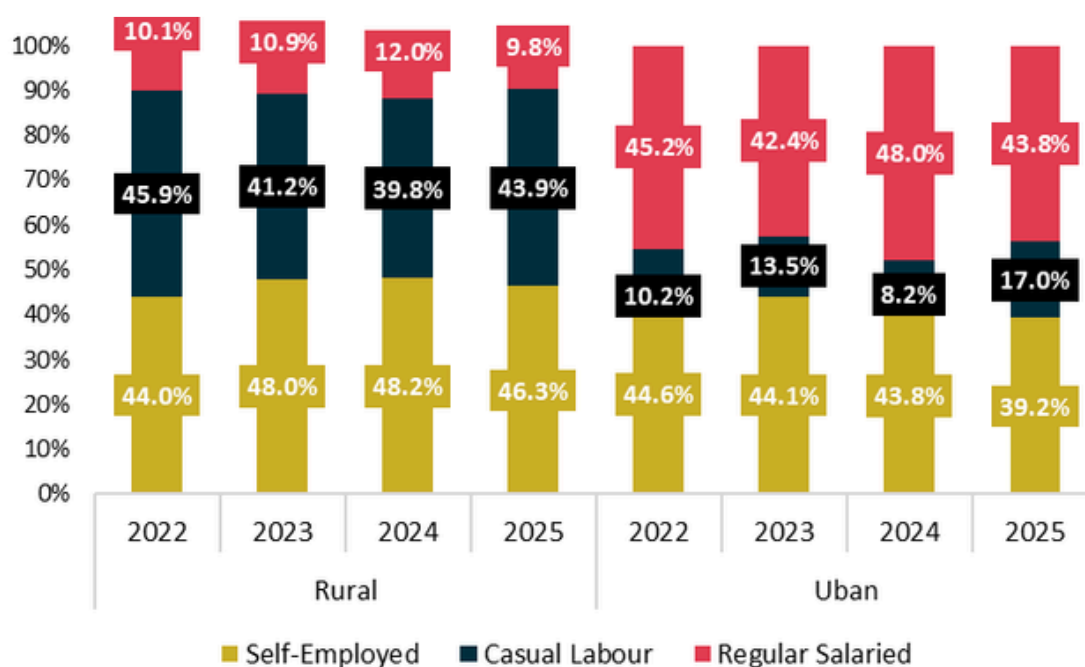
Figure 2: Trends in FLFPR (15 Years and Above)



A: Composition of Female Workforce

- Self-employment among women in rural Andhra Pradesh increased from 44.0% in 2022 to 46.3% in 2025, although it remained substantially lower than the national average, where over 70.0% of rural women workers are self-employed. In urban areas, self-employment declined steadily from 44.6% to 39.2% over the same period, contrasting with the relatively stable national trend.
- Casual labour constitutes an unusually large share of women's employment in rural Andhra Pradesh, increasing from 39.8% in 2022 to 45.9% in 2025, in contrast to the declining national trend. In urban areas, the share of casual labour rose sharply from 8.2% in 2024 to 17.0% in 2025, indicating growing informality in women's employment.
- Regular salaried employment remains the dominant form of work for urban women in Andhra Pradesh, accounting for 43.8% of employment in 2025 despite fluctuations over the period. Compared to the national pattern, Andhra Pradesh exhibits a stronger concentration of urban women in salaried work and a lower reliance on self-employment.

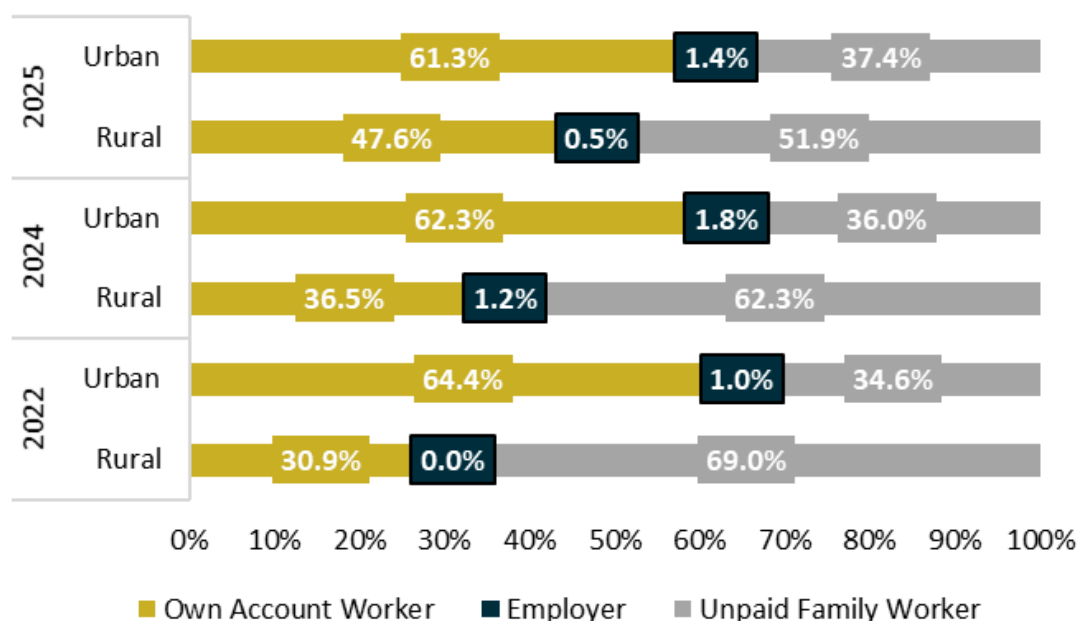
Figure 3: Type of Employment



- Among self-employed women, the share of own-account workers increased in rural areas from 30.9% in 2022 to 47.6% in 2025, while remaining the dominant category in urban areas at 61.3% in 2025.
- The share of unpaid family workers declined substantially in rural areas from 69.0% to 51.9%, indicating reduced dependence on unpaid labour. In contrast, the urban share increased slightly from 34.6% to 37.4%.

- Women working as employers accounted for a very small share of self-employment in both rural and urban areas, at 0.5% and 1.4% respectively in 2025.
- Overall, Andhra Pradesh mirrors the national trend of a shift from unpaid family work towards own-account work in rural areas, although urban areas show a modest increase in unpaid family labour, contrary to the national pattern.

Figure 4: Distribution among Self-Employed Women



B: Distribution of Women Workers by Broad Industry Divisions

- Agriculture, forestry and fishing remained the dominant source of employment for rural women in Andhra Pradesh, accounting for 67.0% of employment in 2025.
- Retail trade emerged as the second-largest employer, with its share increasing from 4.0% in 2022 to 7.0% in 2025, while employment in civil engineering rose from 4.0% to 6.0%, indicating growing absorption of women into construction activities.
- The share of women engaged in wearing apparel manufacturing remained stable at around 6.0% throughout the period.
- Urban women's employment in Andhra Pradesh is relatively more diversified than in rural areas. Retail trade remained the largest employer, accounting for 16.0% of employment in 2025, while the share engaged in crop and animal production increased from 12.0% in 2022 to 15.0% in 2025 despite a temporary decline in 2024.
- Employment in wearing apparel manufacturing, education, and domestic services rose between 2022 and 2024 before moderating slightly in 2025, reflecting a broader spread of women's employment across sectors rather than a dominance of agriculture.

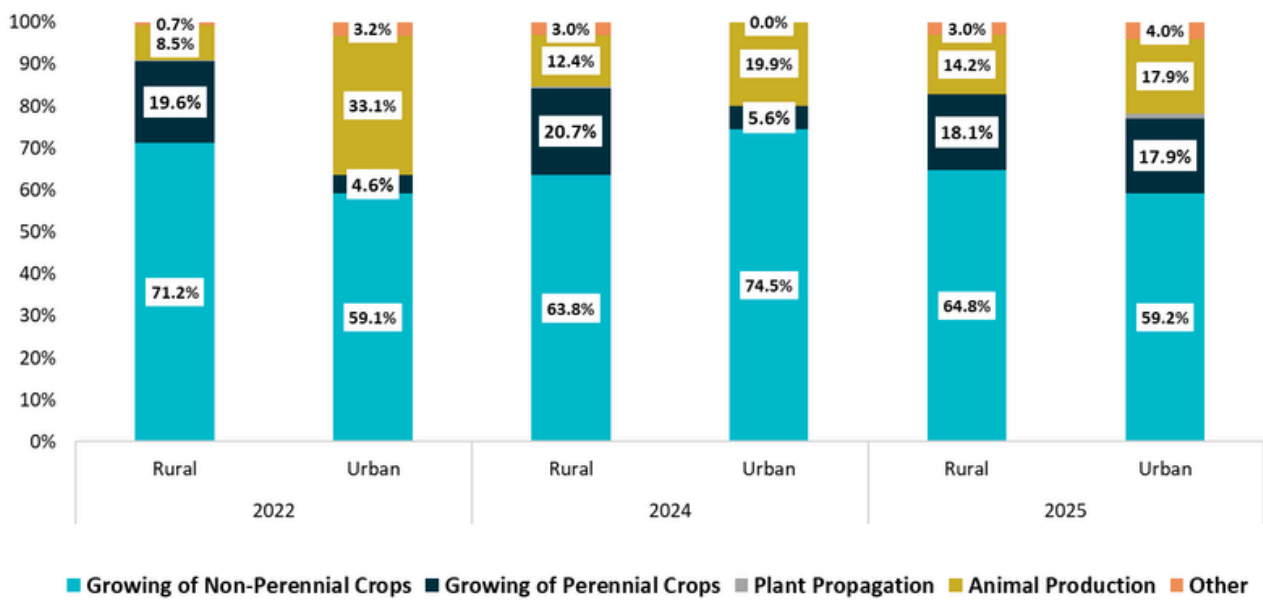
Table 1: Distribution of Women Workers by Broad Industry Divisions

Broad Industry (NIC 2)	Rural		Urban	
	2022	2025	2022	2025
Crop and Animal Production, Hunting and Related Service Activities	69.0%	67.0%	12.0%	15.0%
Manufacture of Wearing Apparel	6.0%	6.0%	12.0%	11.0%
Civil Engineering	4.0%	6.0%	-	-
Retail Trade, Except of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	4.0%	7.0%	14.0%	16.0%
Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security	3.0%	1.0%	6.0%	3.0%
Education	2.0%	3.0%	10.0%	10.0%
Manufacture of Textiles	2.0%	1.0%	4.0%	2.0%
Human Health Activities	1.0%	1.0%	7.0%	4.0%
Construction of Buildings	1.0%	2.0%	2.0%	4.0%
Computer Programming, Consultancy and Related Activities	1.0%	-	3.0%	2.0%
Food and Beverage Service Activities	-	1.0%	6.0%	5.0%
Activities of Households as Employers of Domestic Personnel	-	-	5.0%	7.0%
Manufacture of Food Products	-	1.0%	2.0%	3.0%
Other Personal Service Activities	-	1.0%	-	3.0%
Financial Service Activities, Except Insurance and Pension Funding	-	-	-	2.0%
Undifferentiated Goods-Producing Activities of Private Households for own	-	-	6.0%	-
Other Manufacturing	-	-	-	2.0%
Others	7.0%	3.0%	11.0%	10.0%

C: Distribution of women workers within Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing

- The sub-sector of growing of non-perennial crops overwhelmingly dominates rural women's distribution, accounting for nearly 70.6% (2022), declining to 64.4% in 2025 of women within the broader industry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing. The animal production sub-sector indicates a growing engagement of rural women in livestock-related livelihoods ranging from 8.5% in 2022 to 12.4% in 2024 increasing further to 14.2% in 2025.
- Urban women's share in growing non-perennial crops rose from 59.1% in 2022 to 74.5% in 2024, before settling at 59.2% in 2025, indicating year-on-year fluctuation in urban agricultural engagement.
- The urban women's share in the growth of perennial crops recorded at 4.6% in 2022, 5.6% in 2024, rising to 17.9% in 2025. The sharp rise in urban share in 2025 is notable and may reflect horticulture expansion near peri-urban areas. Urban women's share in the animal production is notably higher, as compared to rural women (33.1% in 2022), though it declined to 17.9% by 2025.
- The sub-sectors of plant propagation, mixed farming, silviculture and other forestry activities, logging, gathering of non-wood forest products, fishing and aquaculture have negligible representation across all three years, reflecting the limited integration of rural and urban women into these value chains.

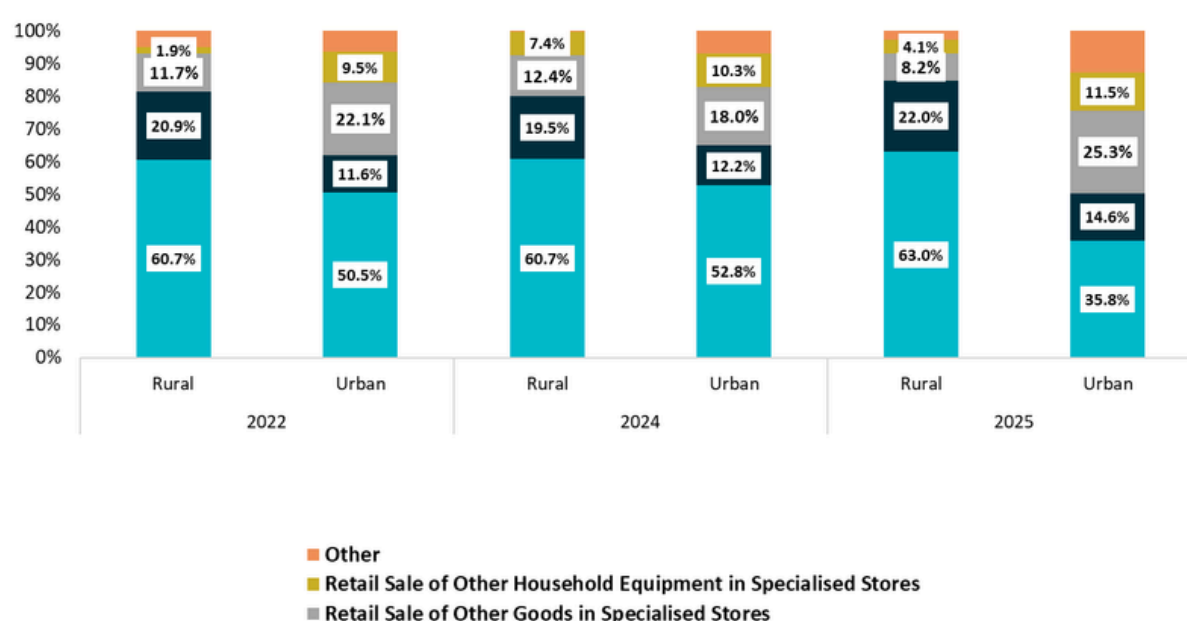
Figure 5: Distribution of Women Workers within Agriculture and Allied Activities



D. Distribution of women workers within Retail Trade, Except of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles

- Among rural women engaged in retail trade, retail sale of food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores remained the dominant activity, increasing from 60.7% in 2024 to 63.0% in 2025. Retail sale in non-specialised stores also rose slightly over the period, while the share engaged in other specialised retail activities declined.
- Among urban women, the share engaged in retail sale of food, beverages and tobacco in specialised stores fell sharply to 35.8% in 2025, suggesting diversification within retail activities. Participation in non-specialised stores increased steadily, while the share in other specialised retail activities rose to 25.3% in 2025 after earlier declines.
- Retail activities through stalls, markets, and non-store channels remained relatively small, although non-store retail gained importance among urban women, increasing from 2.4% in 2022 to 6.9% in 2025.

Figure 6: Distribution of Women Workers within Retail Trade (Except of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycle)



E. Distribution of Self-Employed Women Workers by Industry

- Among self-employed rural women, agriculture remained the dominant activity, accounting for around two-thirds of employment throughout the period. At the same time, the share engaged in retail trade increased steadily from 8.0% in 2022 to 13.0% in 2025, while wearing apparel manufacturing remained relatively stable at around 12.0–14.0%. Together, these trends indicate a gradual expansion of non-farm self-employment opportunities for rural women.

Table 2: Distribution of Self-Employed Women by Broad Industry Types

NIC (2-Digit)	Rural		Urban	
	2022	2025	2022	2025
Crop and animal production, hunting and related service activities	69.0%	66.0%	14.0%	12.0%
Retail Trade, Except of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	8.0%	13.0%	25.0%	29.0%
Manufacture of Wearing Apparel	13.0%	12.0%	25.0%	26.0%
Manufacture of Textiles	3.0%	1.0%	7.0%	2.0%
Manufacture of Food Products	-	-	3.0%	3.0%
Food and Beverage Service Activities	2.0%	2.0%	9.0%	9.0%
Undifferentiated Goods-Producing Activities of Private Households for Own Use		-	7.0%	2.0%
Fishing and Aquaculture	-	1.0%	-	-
Education	-	-	2.0%	-
Manufacture of Radio, Television and Communication Equipment and Apparatus	-	-	2.0%	-
Wholesale Trade, Except of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	-	-	-	2.0%
Other Manufacturing	-	-	-	3.0%
Other Personal Service Activities	2.0%	2.0%	-	5.0%
Others	3.0%	3.0%	6.0%	9.0%

- Among urban self-employed women, retail trade remained the largest source of employment, with its share increasing from 25.0% in 2022 to 29.0% in 2025. The share engaged in wearing apparel manufacturing remained substantial, rising marginally from 25.0% to 26.0% over the same period despite fluctuations in between.
- In contrast, the share engaged in crop and animal production declined from 14.0% in 2022 to 12.0% in 2025, indicating a gradual shift towards non-farm self-employment activities. In the remaining categories share of urban self-employed women ranged from 2.0-9.0 percent across the years with fluctuation.

F. Distribution of Casual Women Workers by Broad Industry Types

- Among rural casual women workers, crop and animal production remained the dominant source of employment, although its share declined from 85.0% in 2022 to 79.0% in 2025.
- In contrast, employment in civil engineering increased from 8.0% to 15.0% over the same period, with the combined share of women engaged in construction activities rising from 11.0% to 19.0%, indicating a gradual shift towards construction-related casual work.

Figure 7a: Distribution of Casual Women Workers by Broad Industry Types (Rural)

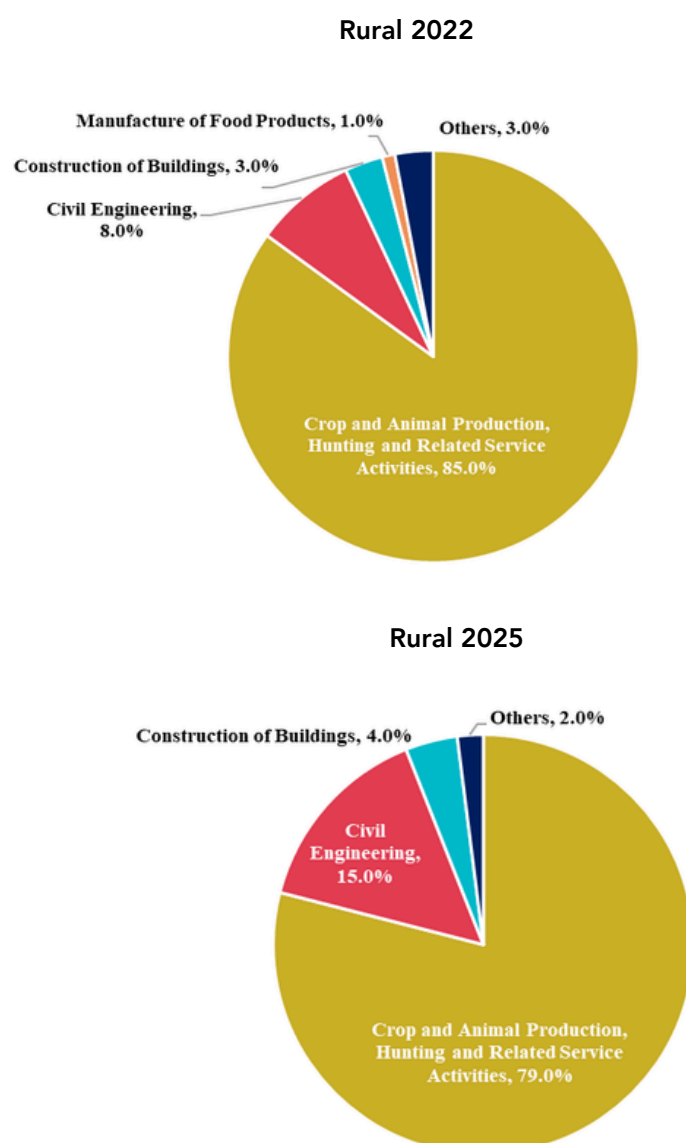
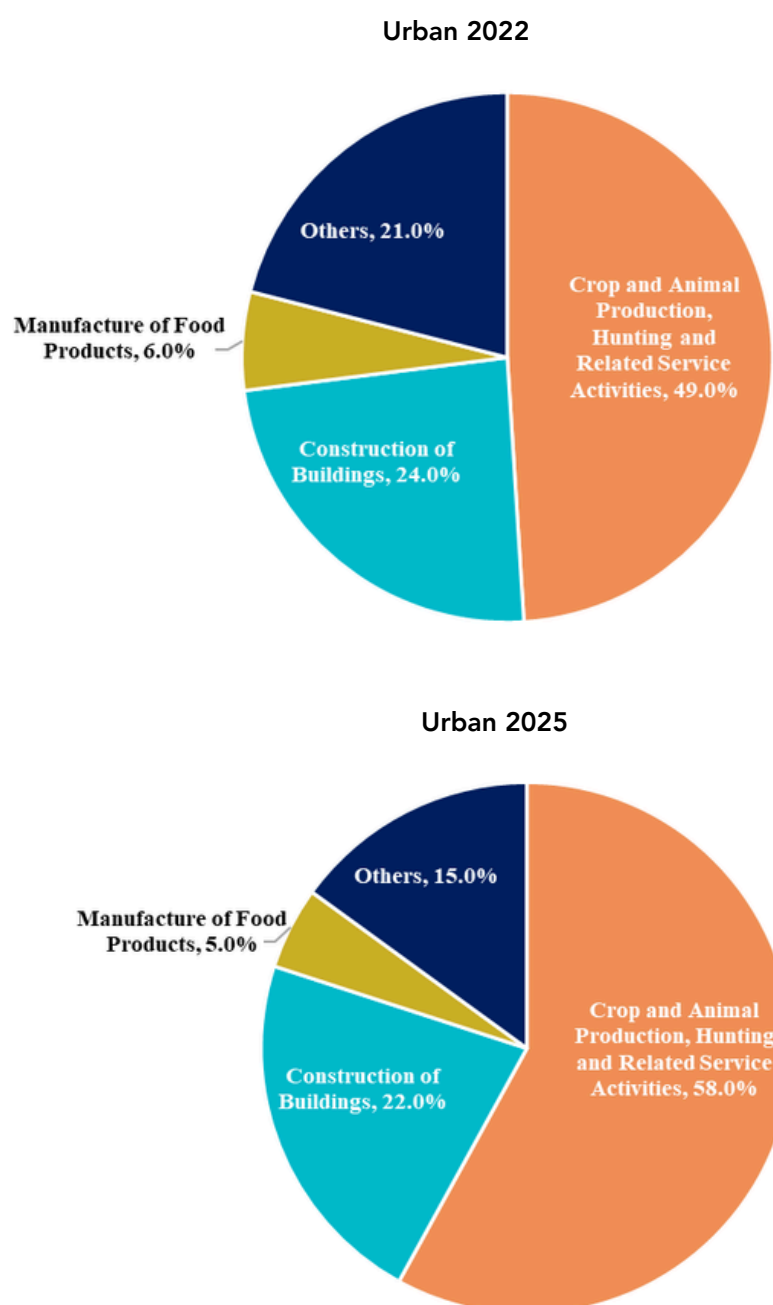


Figure 7B: Distribution of Casual Women Workers by Broad Industry Types (Urban)



- Urban casual women workers were primarily engaged in crop and animal production, although the share fluctuated over the period, reaching 58.0% in 2025. Employment in construction of buildings rose from 24.0% in 2022 to 31.0% in 2024 before declining to 22.0% in 2025, while engagement in food product manufacturing remained relatively stable at 5.0-7.0% throughout the period.

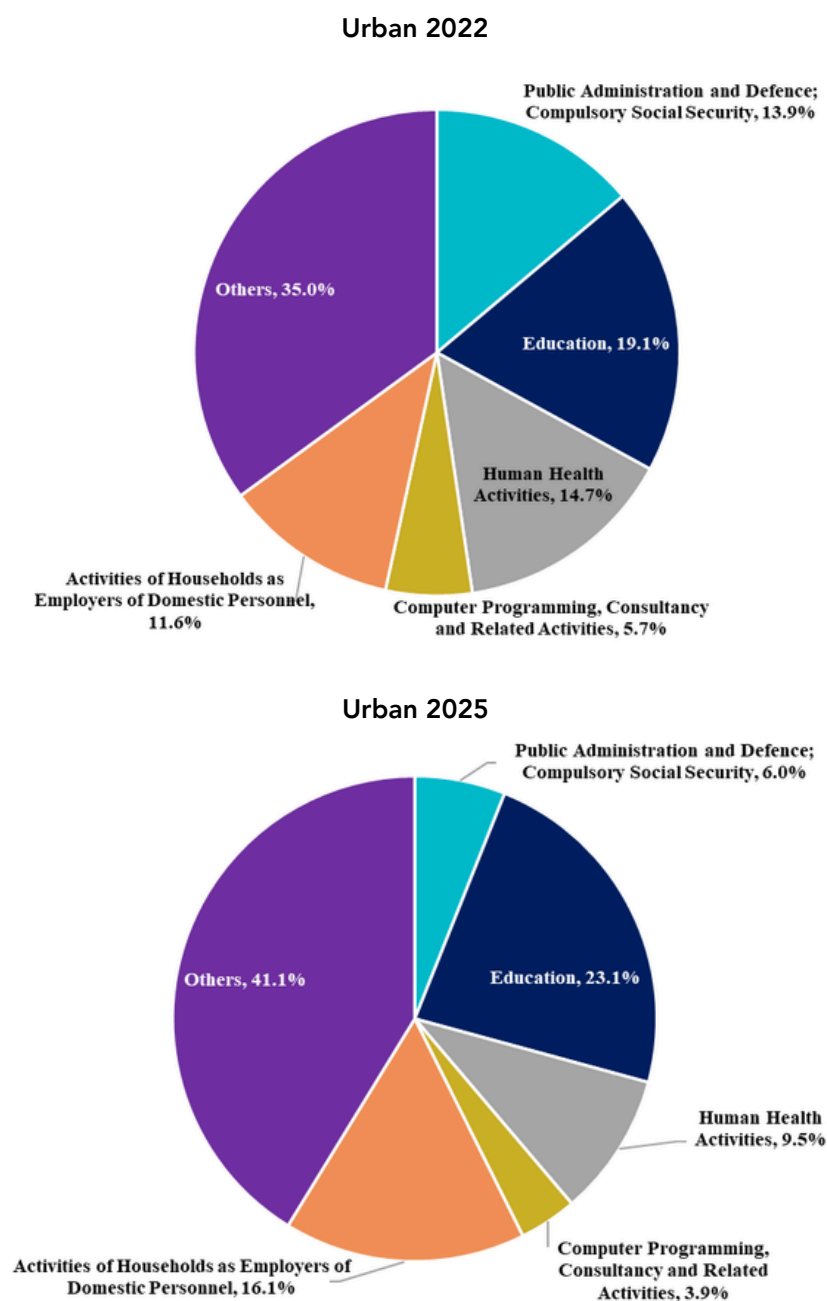
G. Distribution of Regular Salaried Women Workers by Industry³

- Education remained the largest employer of urban regular salaried women, with its share increasing from 19.0% in 2022 to 23.1% in 2025. Domestic work also accounted for a significant share, reaching 16.1% in 2025 despite fluctuations over the period, while employment in human health activities declined overall from 14.7% to 9.5%.

³ The sectoral disaggregation of regular salaried employment is presented for urban areas only. The share of regular salaried workers among rural women remains very small making industry-level disaggregation statistically unreliable and analytically less meaningful.

- Retail trade gained importance, with its share rising from 5.7% to 9.4%, indicating growing absorption of women into organised retail. In contrast, employment in computer programming and related activities declined from 5.7% to 3.9%, suggesting a reduced presence of women in the IT sector.

Figure 8: Distribution of Urban Regular Salaried Women Workers by Broad Industry Types



H. Distribution of Women Workers by Occupation Types

- Rural women's employment remained heavily concentrated in elementary occupations and skilled agricultural and fishery work, which together accounted for nearly four-fifths of employment in 2025. While elementary occupations declined slightly from 48.4% in 2022 to 46.7% in 2025, the share of skilled agricultural workers increased from 29.8% to 31.8%.

- Urban women exhibited a more diverse occupational profile, although elementary occupations remained the largest category, increasing from 23.7% in 2022 to 32.6% in 2025. The share of service workers and sales workers also rose from 20.3% to 23.7%, while craft workers remained relatively stable at around 15.0%. In contrast, the share of women employed as professionals declined from 16.5% to 11.7%, highlighting persistent barriers to higher-skilled occupations.

Table 3: Distribution of Women Worker by Occupation Types

Industry	Rural		Urban	
	2022	2025	2022	2025
Legislators, Senior Officials and Managers	3.2%	0.5%	9.1%	1.8%
Professionals	2.6%	2.1%	16.5%	11.7%
Technicians and Associate Professionals	1.9%	1.3%	4.3%	3.1%
Clerks	1.8%	0.6%	4.3%	5.4%
Service Workers and Shop & Market Sales Workers	4.8%	9.1%	20.3%	23.7%
Skilled Agricultural and Fishery Workers	29.8%	31.8%	6.6%	5.2%
Craft and Related Trades Workers	7.1%	7.5%	14.7%	15.5%
Plant and Machine Operators and Assemblers	0.2%	0.4%	0.5%	0.9%
Elementary Occupations	48.5%	46.7%	23.7%	32.6%

I. Condition of Work in Regular Employment

- Employment quality remains a concern, particularly in urban areas, where the share of women without a written job contract increased from 58.8% in 2022 to 65.7% in 2025, indicating growing informality despite improvements in social security coverage. At the same time, there is a decline in rural areas as women with no job contract decrease from 66.3% to 63.9% in the same time period.

Figure 9: Social Security Benefits

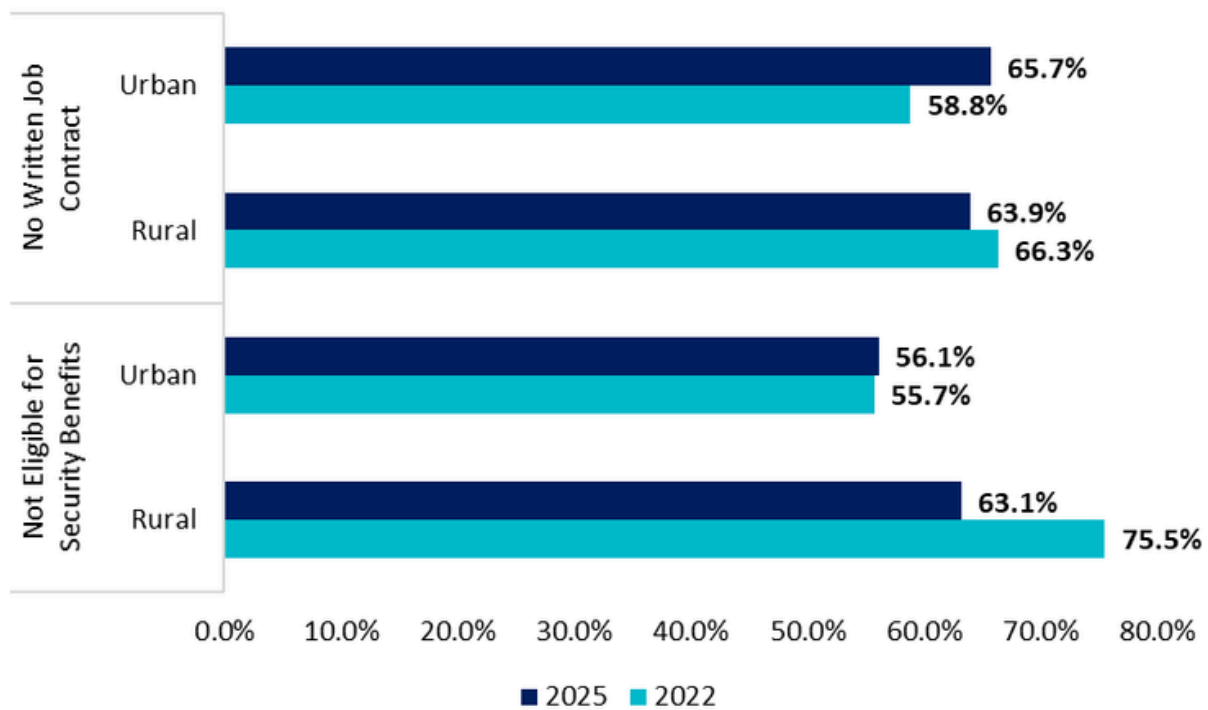
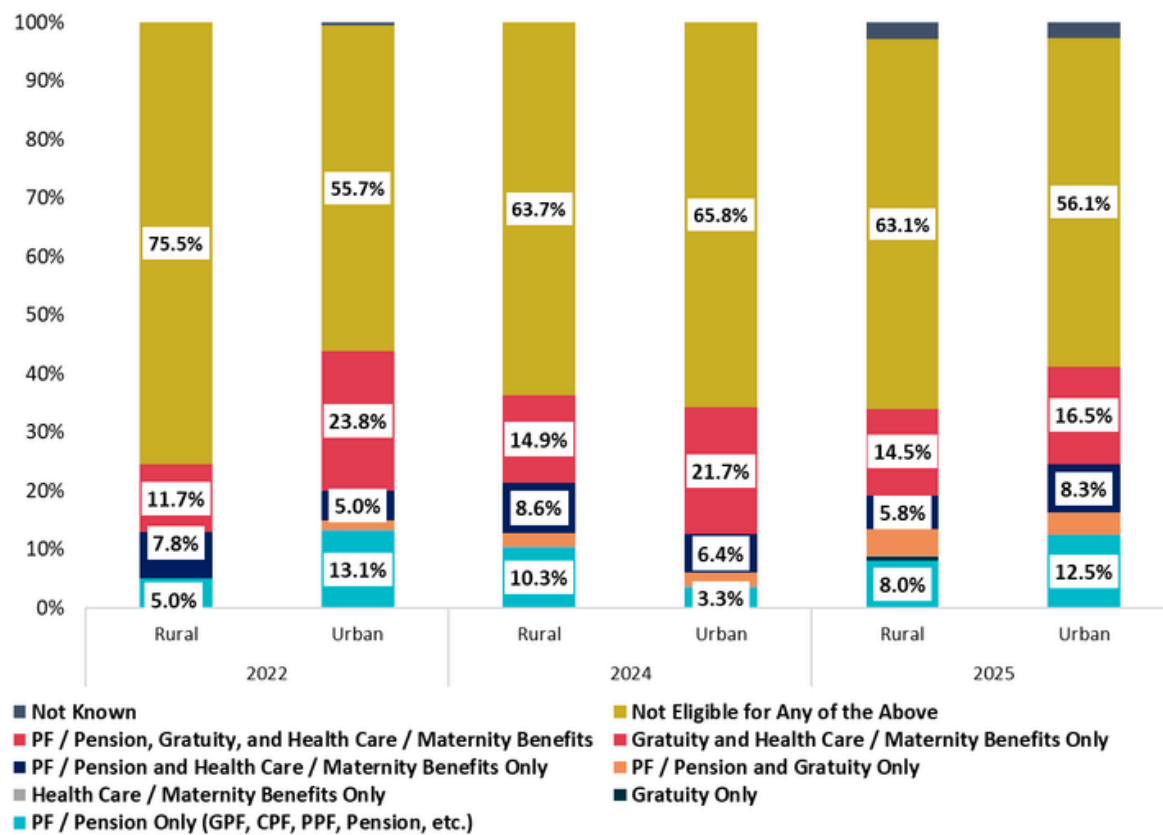


Figure 10: Extent and Composition of Social Security Coverage among Women in Regular Employment (2022-2025)

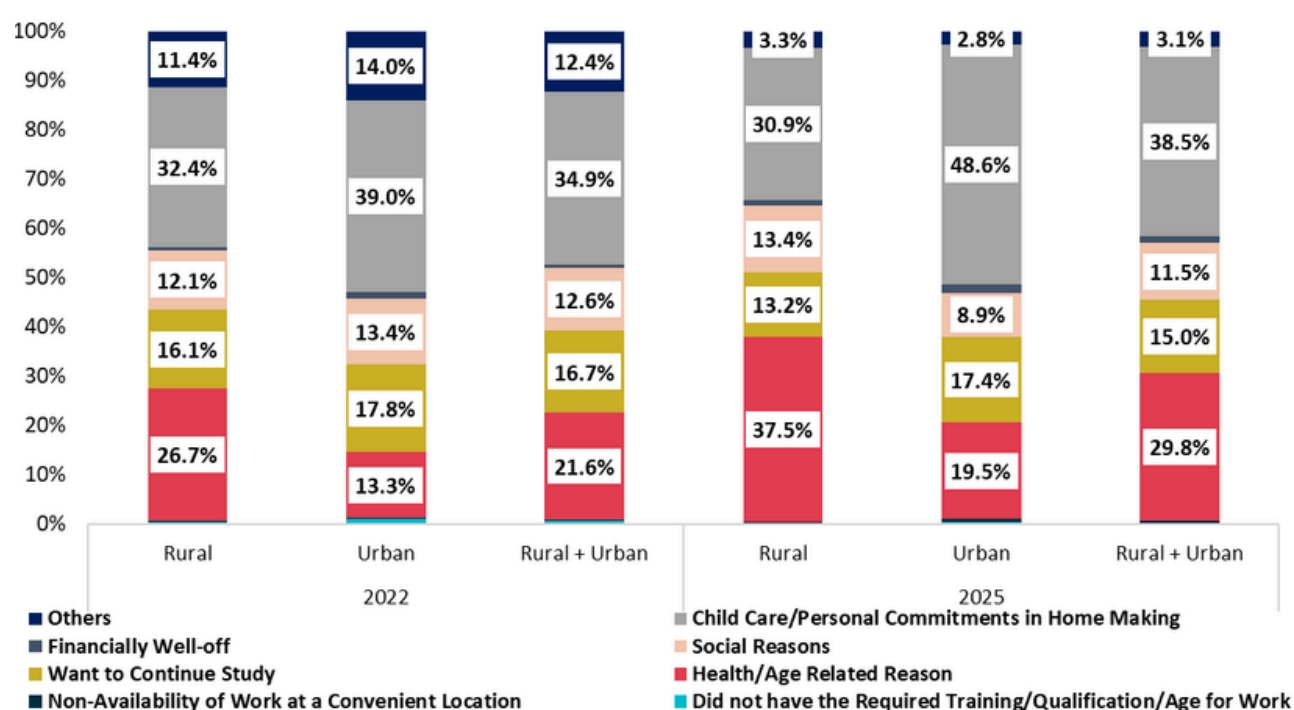


- A large share of women workers in Andhra Pradesh remained excluded from social security benefits, although coverage improved over time. In 2025, 63.1% of rural and 56.1% of urban women workers had no access to any major social security benefit, down from 75.5% and 65.8% respectively in 2022. Access to comprehensive benefits such as PF/pension, gratuity, and health or maternity benefits remained limited, covering only 14.5% of rural and 16.5% of urban women workers in 2025.

J: Reasons for Not Being in the Labour Force

- Childcare and domestic responsibilities remained the primary reason for women staying out of the labour force in Andhra Pradesh. Among urban women, the share citing these responsibilities increased from 39.0% in 2022 to 48.6% in 2025, while social reasons declined from 13.4% to 8.9%. In rural areas, care responsibilities remained stable at around 31.0-32.0%, but health- and age-related constraints increased significantly from 26.7% to 37.5% over the same period.

Figure 11: Reason for Not Being in The Labourforce



Conclusion

Overall, the findings present a mixed picture of women's employment in Andhra Pradesh. While female labour force participation and work participation recovered in 2025 after a dip in 2024, women continue to be concentrated in agriculture, self-employment, casual work, and elementary occupations. A notable positive trend is the shift among rural self-employed women from unpaid family work towards own-account work, indicating greater autonomy in livelihoods. Education has emerged as an important source of regular salaried employment, particularly for rural women, while urban women continue to benefit from a relatively more diversified employment structure.

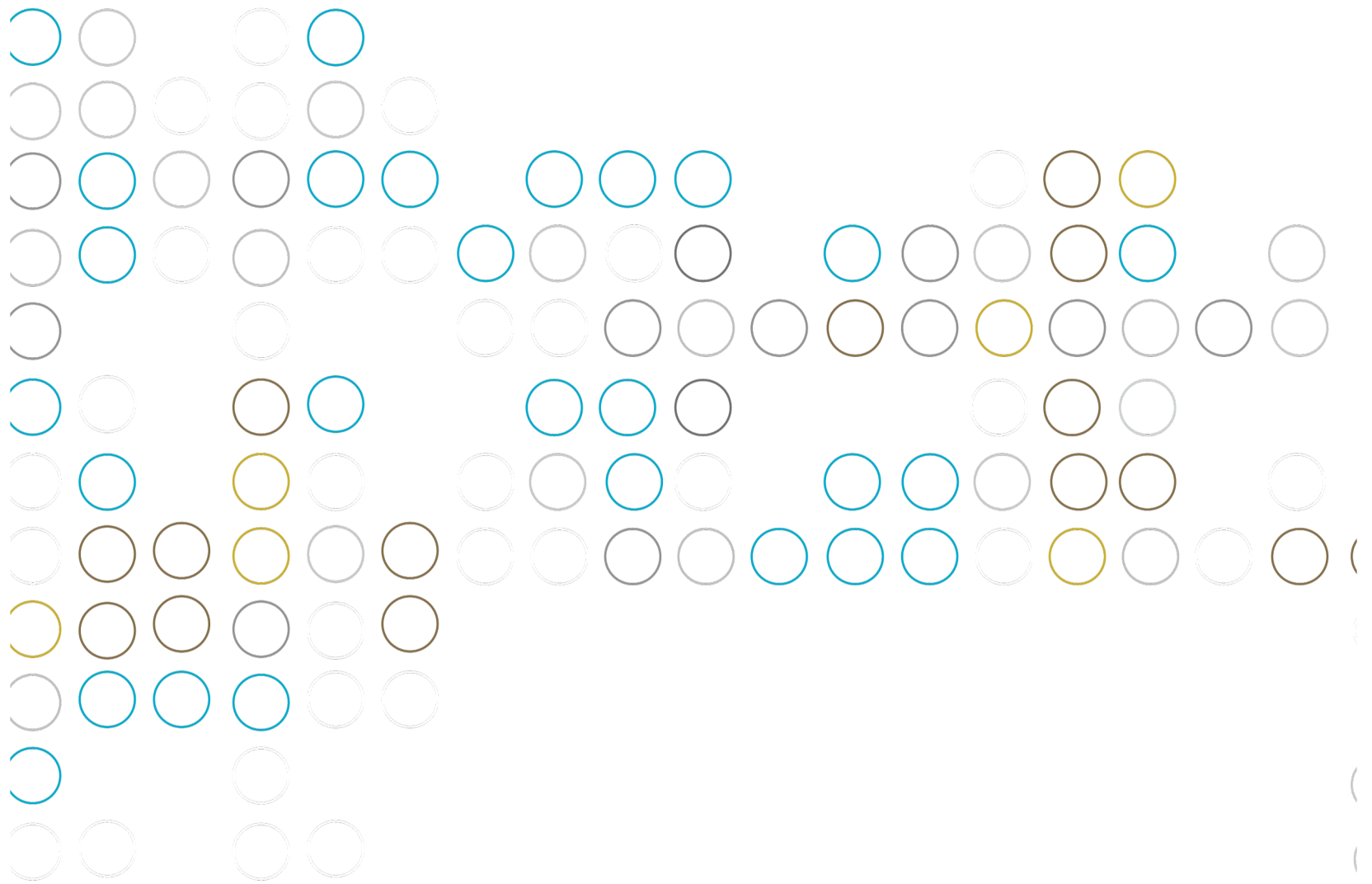
The decline in social barriers reported by urban women also suggests some easing of constraints around women's mobility and labour market participation. These trends coincide with a range of state-level initiatives aimed at strengthening women's economic participation. Programmes such as YSR Cheyutha⁴, which provides financial assistance to women from disadvantaged communities for livelihood generation, the APSRTC Free Bus Scheme⁵, which reduces mobility constraints, and the state's broader women entrepreneurship initiatives may have contributed to improvements in women's labour force participation and self-employment. More recently, the "Super Six"⁶ welfare commitments seek to strengthen household welfare through support for women, youth, farmers, and families

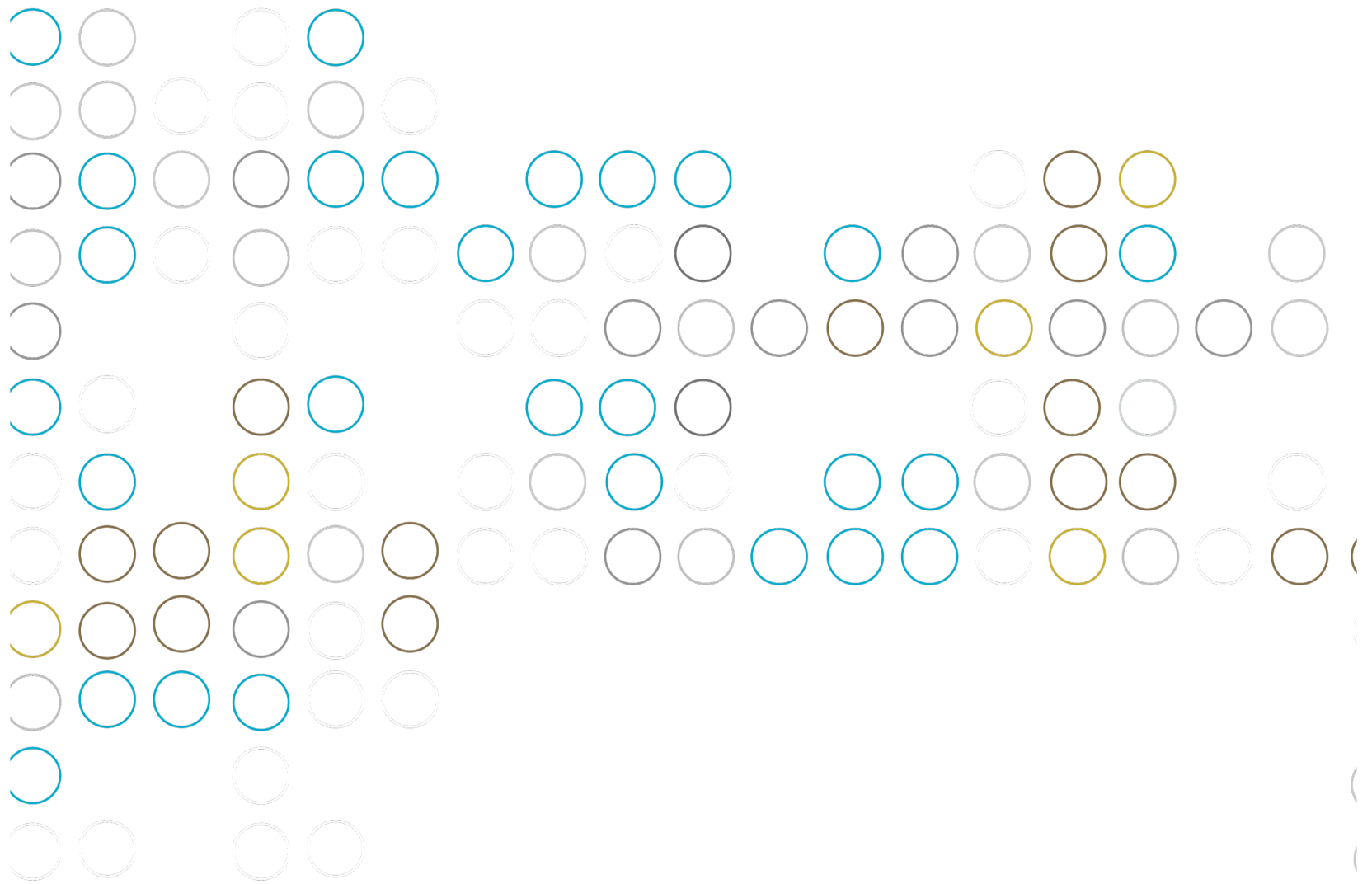
However, several structural challenges persist. The share of women in professional and managerial occupations has declined, while urban casual employment has increased, pointing towards concerns around job quality. Health and age-related constraints have become a growing barrier for rural women, whereas childcare and domestic responsibilities continue to keep nearly half of urban women out of the workforce. Social security coverage remains limited, with a majority of salaried women workers still lacking access to employment benefits, highlighting the continued prevalence of informality even within salaried work. Going forward, sustained progress will depend on addressing both the demand-side and supply-side barriers including the quality of employment, expansion of care infrastructure, addressing health-related barriers, increasing social security coverage, and thus creating pathways into more secure and higher-skilled forms of work for women in Andhra Pradesh.

⁴ Government of Andhra Pradesh. YSR Cheyutha: About the scheme. <http://103.210.74.212:8081/YSRCheyutha/About.aspx>

⁵ Govtschemes.in. (n.d.). Andhra Pradesh free bus travel scheme. <https://www.govtschemes.in/andhra-pradesh-free-bus-travel-scheme>

⁶ The Hindu Bureau. (2026, February 23). AP government committed to social equity and welfare, says Naidu. The Hindu. <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/andhra-pradesh/ap-government-committed-to-social-equity-and-welfare-says-naidu/article70667274.ece>





This factsheet has been prepared by Arpita Paul and reviewed by Bidisha Mondal

© Copyright IWWAGE- LEAD at Krea University (IFMR), 2026



IWWAGE – An Initiative of LEAD at Krea University

Block M-6, Second Floor, Kharera, Hauz Khas, Delhi - 110016

+91-11-49403983 | www.iwwage.org