

India and the Global Gender Gap report 2024

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Gender parity may be climbing upwards worldwide with the global gender gap standing at 68.5% closed in 2024, but the glacial pace of change — it was 68.4% in 2023 — is a grim statistic. At this rate, it will take 134 years to reach full parity, the Global Gender Gap report released by the World Economic Forum (WEF) last week pointed out, “roughly five generations beyond the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target”. Iceland maintains its number 1 rank (93.5%), and is also the only economy to have closed over 90% of its gender gap. India has slipped two places to 129 out of 146 countries. Last year, it was ranked 127, after having jumped eight places from 135 in 2022. India has closed 64.1% of its gender gap in 2024, the report noted, leaving policy-makers with a huge window of opportunity to do better. The “slight regression,” according to the report, is mainly due to “small declines” in the spheres of education and political empowerment. With a population of over 140 crore, even two steps back mean staggering numbers. Though India, it pointed out, had shown a slight improvement in economic participation and opportunity for the last few years, it would need 6.2 percentage points more to match its 2012 score of 46%.

One way of achieving the objective will be through bridging gender gaps in, say, the labour force participation rate (45.9%). To do that, a slew of measures must be in place, from ensuring that girls do not drop out of higher education, providing them job skills, ensuring safety at the workplace, and helping them keep a job after marriage by sharing responsibility for chores at home. In education, the gap between men and women’s literacy rate is

About Global Gender Gap Report 2024:

1. The Global Gender Gap Report 2024 is published by the World Economic Forum.
2. It assesses gender parity across four key dimensions: Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, and Political Empowerment.
3. It is the longest-standing index tracking the progress of numerous countries’ efforts towards closing these gaps over time since its inception in 2006.

Key findings of the report:

1. The global gender gap score for all 146 countries included in this edition stands at 68.5%.
2. Among the 101 countries continuously covered since 2006, the gap has also improved by +0.1 points to reach 68.6%.
3. Despite progress, no country has achieved full gender parity. However, 97% of economies included in this edition have closed more than 60% of their gender gap (compared to 85% in 2006).

