Global Gender Gap Index 2024

Why in news?

The recent 2024 edition of the Global Gender Gap Index places India at 129 out of the 146 countries it surveyed.

What is the basis of Global Gender Gap Index?

- **Launch** – This index was first introduced ***in 2006***.
- It is released by the ***World Economic Forum (WEF***).
- **Components** – It is a combination of four different sub-indices namely
  - Economic participation and opportunity
  - Educational attainment
  - Health and survival
  - Political empowerment
- **Index** – It lies between 0 and 1, with *1 denoting complete parity*.
- **Objectives** – It aims to track changes in gender gaps both over time and across countries.
- This index focuses on gender gaps, that is, the focus is on the position of women relative to men (gender equality), rather than to their absolute position.
- **Coverage** – It measures the index for *146 countries* in its 2024 report.

What are the key findings of the report?

- **Overall gender gap** – It is *closed at 68.5% in 2024*, a slight 0.1% point improvement from the previous year.
- About *97% of the economies have closed more than 60%* of their gap, when compared to 85% in 2006.
- **Health and survival gap** – It has closed by 96%.
- **Educational attainment gap** – It has closed by 94.9%
- **Economic participation gap** – It has closed by 60.5%.
- **Political empowerment gap** – It has closed by 22.5%.
- **Gender parity** – While ***no country has achieved*** gender parity yet, explore the top 10 most gender-equal countries in the world in 2024.
- It will take ***131 years to reach full parity*** between women and men, which translates into five generations, until the year 2158, beyond the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target.
- **Country-wise rankings** – *Iceland maintains its number 1* rank (93.5%), and is also the only economy to have closed over 90% of its gender gap.
- It is followed by Finland, Norway, New Zealand, and Sweden in the top five.
- *Sudan was ranked last* on the index.
- **Regional rankings** – *Europe leads* the 2024 regional gender gap rankings, having

closed 75% of its gap in 2024.
- The *Middle East and North Africa rank last* among all regions.

Southern Asia ranks seventh among eight global regions, with a gender parity score of 63.7% and an improvement of 3.9% points since 2006, with Bangladesh, for the first time in the region, having achieved a double-digit rank of 99.

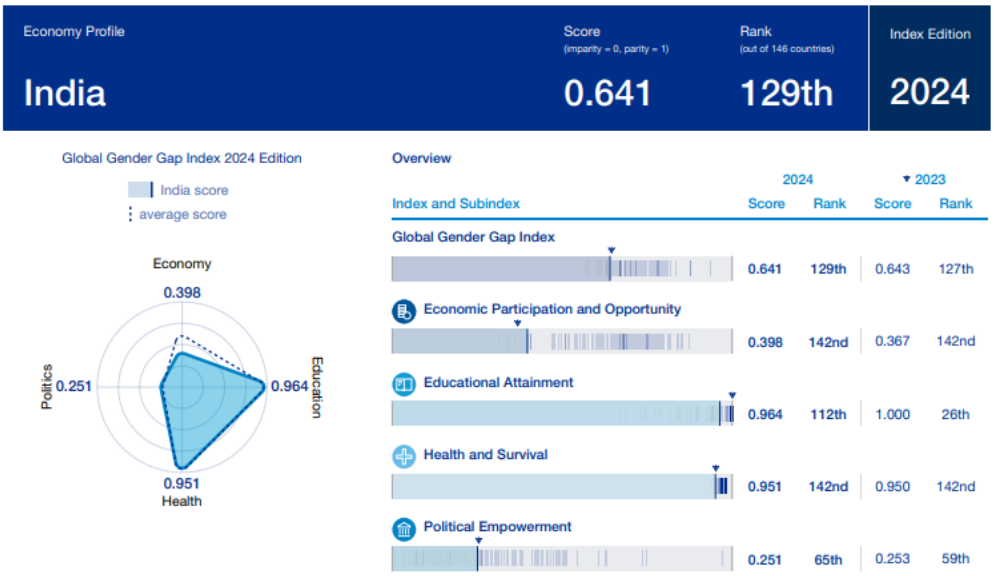
Where does India stand in gender gap?

- With a population of over 1.4 billion, India has closed 64.1% of its gender gap in 2024.
- Its overall rank of 129th is marginally *lower than 2023's (127)*, ***ahead of only the Maldives and Pakistan.***

South Asian nations on Global Gender Gap Index 2024

Country	Rank (Domestic)	Rank (Global)
Bangladesh	1	99
Nepal	2	117
Sri Lanka	3	122
Bhutan	4	124
India	5	129
Maldives	6	132
Pakistan	7	145

- **Concerns** – This slight regression in rankings is mainly the result of small declines in Educational Attainment and Political Empowerment.
- **Improvement** – Economic participation and opportunity for women have seen a slight improvement.
- **Political Empowerment** – India scores within the top-10 on the head-of-state indicator (40.7%).
- India's scores for women's representation at the federal level, in ministerial positions (6.9%) and in parliament (17.2%), remain relatively low.
- **Parity in Educational Attainment** – Updated figures in Educational Attainment bring India's *parity levels slightly down* from prior scores.
- While the *shares of women are high* in primary, secondary and tertiary education enrolments, they have *only been modestly increasing*, and the *gap between men and women's literacy rate is 17.2% wide*, leaving India ranked 124th on this indicator.
- **Health and Survival Score** – 95.1% of the male-female gap has been closed which places at 142nd position in the health rankings.
- **Labour force participation** – While there is an improvement since 2021 it is very low in absolute terms, and is lower than the 2012 score.



What lies ahead for India?

- While India's economic parity score has trended upwards for the past four editions, it would need a further 6.2% points to match its 2012 score of 46%.
- This can be achieved through bridging gender gaps in estimated
    - Earned income
    - Women's role in legislative, senior officials, and management roles Labour-force participation rate
    - Professional and technical workers

References

1. The Indian Express| India's status in Gender parity
2. WEF| Global Gender Gap Index 2024

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