

PLFS Changes from January 2027

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Why in News?

The National Statistics Office (NSO) has proposed changes to the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) schedule, sampling design and estimation procedure from January 2027.

Periodic Labour Force Survey



(PLFS)



Feature	Details
 Conducted by	National Statistics Office (NSO)
 Ministry	Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)
 Launched	2017
 Primary objective	To measure key employment and unemployment indicators
 Major indicators	Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR), Worker Population Ratio (WPR), Unemployment Rate (UR)
 Latest major sampling redesign	January 2025
 Proposed changes	January 2027

- **Aim** - To improve the coverage of digital platform workers, update the sampling frame and capture unpaid work more comprehensively.

Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) - The proportion of the population that is part of the labour force, including both employed individuals and those unemployed but actively seeking or available for work.

Worker Population Ratio (WPR) - The proportion of the population that is currently employed.

Unemployment Rate (UR) - The proportion of the labour force that is unemployed.

Major Changes in PLFS from January 2027

- **Establishment of a distinct sampling stratum for digital platform workers**
 - Findings from PLFS 2026 demonstrated that the existing sampling arrangement was insufficient to adequately capture digital platform workers.
 - A new Second Stage Stratum (SSS) specifically targeting digital platform work will be implemented.
 - Digital platform workers constitute a subset of gig workers who perform tasks via digital platforms.

Parameter	Proposed arrangement
Rural areas	Four SSSs
Urban areas	Five SSSs
Households surveyed	14 households per selected First Stage Unit (FSU)
Identification	Additional binary question in Block 5 of Schedule 0.0PL
Coverage	Both rural and urban households

- **Revision of the sampling frame** - New samples for Panel 6 (2027-2028) will be selected using a revised sampling frame.
- The revised frame will incorporate the following considerations:
 - Modifications identified in the updated Urban Frame Survey.
 - Processes of urbanisation and de-urbanisation.
 - Creation, division, or merger of districts and other administrative units.
 - Subsequent updates to the rural Census 2011 sampling frame.
 - Enhancements to sample allocation and stratification informed by experience from Panel 5.
- **Transition period for the initial three months**
 - From January to March 2027, the sample will comprise FSUs drawn from both the Panel 5 frame and the updated Panel 6 frame.
 - Monthly bulletins will report pooled estimates derived from both sampling frames.
 - Relative Standard Error (RSE) estimates will be omitted during this three-month period.
- **Enhancement of unpaid activity measurement** - Schedule 10.4 will incorporate new questions to collect information on the following areas:
 - Own-use production of goods.
 - Unpaid household activities.
 - Unpaid caregiving activities.
 - Volunteer work.
 - Unpaid trainee work.
- **Scope of coverage:**
 - Rural and urban areas.
 - Individuals aged 15 years and above.
 - Applicable to the first visit only.
- **Significance of the Proposed Changes**
- **Enhanced gig economy data** - Improved measurement of digital platform work, which constitutes an increasingly significant segment of the labour market.

- **Support for evidence-based policymaking** - Provision of more reliable employment estimates to inform government planning.
- **Recognition of unpaid work** - Improved statistical visibility of caregiving, household production, and volunteer activities.
- **Improved urban representation** - Updated sampling methodologies can more accurately reflect changes in urbanisation and administrative boundaries.
- **Continuity of estimates** - Implementation of a transitional sampling arrangement is intended to prevent disruption in regular statistical releases.

Reference

[PIB | PLFS Changes from January 2027](#)

