

We welcome you to the 18th edition of our Quarterly Dossier on the "FUTURE OF JOBS IN INDIA." It presents a careful selection of news, op-eds, and reports on key developments in the employment segment of the Indian economy.

As we move into a New Year, it is imperative to reflect upon the harsh realities that the COVID-19 pandemic has unfolded on labour welfare. While we have started witnessing the third wave triggered by the Omicron variant, India is hoping to bounce back from earlier scars because of the first two waves of this pandemic. The Indian economy cannot take another employment crisis that occurred due to supply-side shocks during the first wave of the pandemic and subsequent lockdowns.

As a response, the Indian policymakers are revisiting the fundamentals of labour welfare, employment equity, and quality through the lenses of reforms. The implementation of four new labour codes on wages, social security, occupational safety, and industrial relations at the beginning of 2022 will be a step towards a labour-inclusive economy. This is imperative to stop the job crisis from spiraling into a social crisis. Labour should be involved not just as a cost component but as "human capital".

Thus, reconstructing an equitable job market for a resilient labour force is an essential investment for the building blocks of our economy. Several organisations across the globe are undertaking reforms that are sustainable and labour welfare-oriented. This should enable systemic changes, leading to better working conditions, social security, and benefits for the workers; in short, a more balanced and equitable formation of "human capital". One of the key challenges is to focus on skills development, the absence of which is a significant source of inequality.



Jobs and Welfare

1. Why is employee well-being important at work?

Jonathan Passmore | Financial Times | December 21, 2021



The pandemic has led us to self-reflect on all aspects of our well-being as workers. Job motivation is directly linked to incentivising workers based on their ability and potential. A few key areas that employers need to focus on are adding value to the life of workers, building competence for workers, and empowering their growth. Any employer-employee setting will benefit from workers' skill development initiatives, which will help them move forward in their growth story.

<https://tinyurl.com/2p9yezsx>

2. Not all green jobs are safe and clean

Sarah O'Connor | Financial Times | October 26, 2021

In the effort to have clean energy technology, the demand for metals like lithium, copper, cobalt, and nickel will be



high. This will directly impact workers who have to mine them and the countries which have the reserves of these metals. The promised concept of 'green jobs' must include all jobs. Another example is the 'recycling industry', which can be hazardous, low-paid, and insecure. There is plenty to be gained from the transition to a low-carbon economy, but it would be a mistake to assume green jobs will be good jobs.

<https://tinyurl.com/d6u6f896>

3. Income inequality in India declined

Puja Mehra | Mint | December 31, 2021



With the income of the richest falling and the poor showing resilience despite the meagre government relief during the pandemic, Income inequality in India unexpectedly shrank. This was the finding of a working paper by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER). The paper observed a sharp spike in extreme poverty during the lockdowns. However, the richest suffered more income losses. The paper is debated worthy while indicating that income inequality may fall when a growth shock hits the modern sectors more than the traditional ones.

<https://tinyurl.com/2p9xkf9j>

4. Employers to eliminate motherhood penalty

Amar Patnaik | Mint | October 06, 2021

Due to entrenched notions of patriarchy, it is still common in India for women to be treated inferior to men. In 2020, India had the lowest female labour force participation rate amongst



South Asian nations. Women who are mothers are discriminated against more than those who are not mothers. They are less likely to be hired and promoted than others and this is termed as the 'motherhood penalty.' The pandemic has worsened the gender divide, with women- especially mothers- being more impacted than men. Reorienting workplace norms to make them more gender-equal is essential to combat the motherhood penalty.

<https://tinyurl.com/34kj22vu>

Sectoral Snapshot

5. Are E-commerce companies creating 'good' jobs?

TN Hari | Business Journal | October 17, 2021

Delivery executives in India, for long, have silently been fighting many battles. Against uncertain income, a low base pay, and an algorithm they say pushes them to ride for hundreds of kms a day in return for disproportionately low cash. And amid rising fuel costs, a raging pandemic, and no social security benefits, the money left in their hand at the end of each month is on a steady decline.



<https://tinyurl.com/hsyhtmwu>

6. Gig workers want Bot bosses called to account

Madhumita Murgia | Financial Times | December 15, 2021



Computers are making wrong decisions and addressing complaints about the workers in the gig economy. While there is little redress when the computer makes a wrong decision, the companies do not even share the algorithm of access and complaint redressal mechanism. European data protection laws mandate the drivers to know whether and how they have been subjected to automated decision-making. The goal is to draw attention for all the economies to attract AI policies in the worker market for their welfare. The gig workers and lower classes are the most affected because of their vulnerability.

<https://tinyurl.com/2f4undk5>

7. Worst fashion wage theft

Annie Kelly | The Guardian | December 16, 2021



Karnataka is India's major clothing production hub with supply chains to UK brands. Over 400,000 garment workers have not been paid the state legal minimum wage since April 2020, causing the 'worst fashion theft' ever to hit the industry. This theft amounts to approximately £41mn. Payment of minimum wage is pretty much the lowest bar on a brand's responsibility towards its workforce. In September 2020, the Karnataka High Court ruled the proclamation of suspending minimum wage by the Labour Ministry was illegal and the minimum wage, including all arrears, must be paid to workers regardless of any other court proceedings.

<https://tinyurl.com/5n78ypz9>

8. How Companies Evade Law & Responsibility

Radhika Chitkara & Deepika Tandon | The Quint | December 23, 2021

Companies are flouting responsibilities and evading labour laws. Since the workers are considered



and treated as freelancers, they are shirking their liabilities towards the gig-workers. The model is based on hiring many gig workers and workers matching the fluctuating demand for services. The high supply would mean more competition among the workers, letting the exploitation through employers and low price of the services.

<https://tinyurl.com/2p96h4f7>

Skills Development

9. India's new employment policy for young adults

Vidya Mahambare, Sowmya Dhanaraj & Sankalp Sharma | Mint | November 15, 2021



According to India's Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) data, less than 10 percent of the young adults (aged 20-29 years) in Haryana, Punjab, and Tamil Nadu work on farms and less than two percent in Kerala. With the new labour codes coming into force, it is imperative that the government focus and enable productive jobs creation among young adults through its schemes and policies. India must reap the benefits of its demographic dividend.

<https://tinyurl.com/v43cw27s>

10. Govt project to upskill Nagaland artisans

The Print | December 28, 2021

A pilot project to upskill and enhance the productivity among the local 4000 cane and



bamboo artisans and weavers has been launched under the Recognition of Prior Learning component of the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana. The idea is to build infrastructure and create the right synergies for the country's youth. The project is a step towards prioritised skill development among workers in India.

<https://tinyurl.com/28y3hay5>

11. Bihar approves modernisation of 149 ITIs

The Print | December 28, 2021



A project in collaboration with Tata Technologies worth over Rs. 4,606 crores have been approved. It will aid in modernising and upgrading state-owned industrial training institutes to centres of excellence. All 149 government ITIs across the state will come under collaboration preview. The first phase of modernisation will happen by March 2022. This will help develop institutions providing for skill development which acts as one of the main components in good and better jobs, more so preparing the workforce for a better quality job.

<https://tinyurl.com/2p9xb469>

12. India looks to broad-base AI workforce

Darlington Jose Hector | Money Control | December 30, 2021

The fourth industrial development will require the country to reskill and upskill its workforce. As we move towards a digital world,



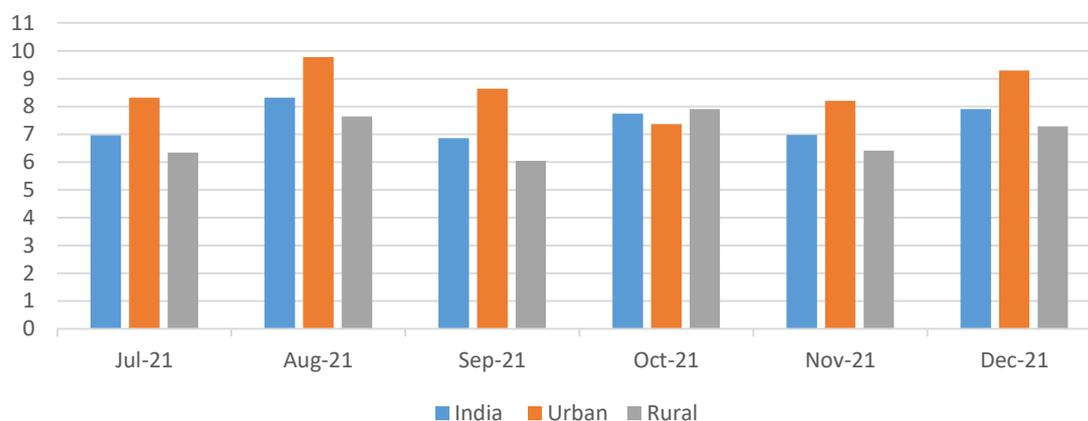
economies must create an educational ecosystem equipped to harness artificial intelligence and other technological advancements that come along. The World Economic Forum (WEF) estimated that around 54 percent of the workforce in the Information Technology (IT) sector would require reskilling to race the AI learning and technology.

<https://tinyurl.com/48c3nvne>

Data Watch

- 1. Unemployment Rate:** The unemployment rate is the number of unemployed persons as a percentage of the total number of persons in the labour force.¹

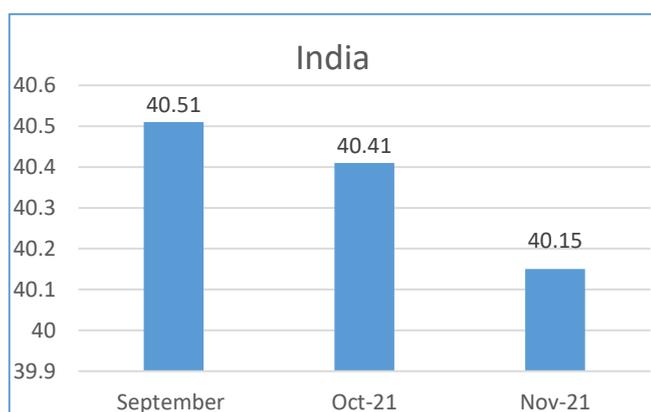
Monthly Unemployment Rate (%)



Source: [Unemployment Rate](#)

- 2. Labour participation rate:** The labour force participation rate is the number of persons in the labour force as a percentage of the working-age population. The labour force is the sum of the number of persons employed and the number of persons unemployed.²

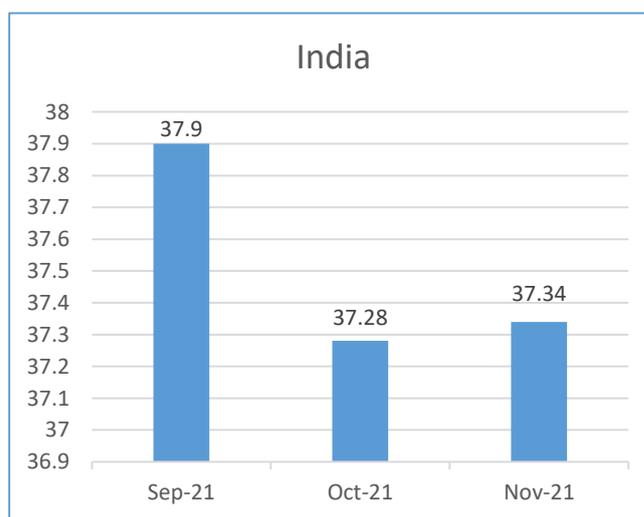
Monthly Labour Participation Rate (%)



Source: [Why the Drop in India's Labour Participation Rate Can't Be Ignored by Policymakers](#)

- 3. Employment Rate:** Employment rate is defined as a measure of the extent to which available labour resources (people available to work) are being used.³

Monthly Employment Rate (%)



Source: [Employment data disappoints in November](#)

*Note: The data for December 2021 remains unavailable for the Labour Participation rate. and Employment rate.

¹ [Indicator Description: Unemployment rate - ILOSTAT - International Labour Organisation](#)

² [Indicator description: Labour force participation rate - ILOSTAT](#)

³ [Employment rate - OECD Data](#)

This Dossier was researched, written, and compiled by Tanya Goyal and Neelanjana Sharma of CUTS International.

You can find links to previous editions of the dossier below: <https://tinyurl.com/yckrarn2>