

COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW
of the Situation of Women and Girls in the Russian Federation

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and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995)*

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* This English version was prepared by UN-Women. It has not been officially validated by the submitting Government and is provided solely for informational purposes. To access the full report, please refer to the original submission.

Section 1. Key messages

Current situation in the Russian Federation

According to the Federal State Statistics Service, at the beginning of 2024, 146.2 million people lived in the Russian Federation, of whom 78.2 million were women. This is more than half of the country's population.

Russian women are distinguished by a high level of education and economic activity. More than half of the citizens with higher education are women (55 per cent). Women make up a significant proportion of highly qualified researchers (28.3 per cent of doctorate holders and 43.4 per cent of doctoral candidates). In 2022, 48.5 per cent of the total employed population were women.

Since 2023, women who have given birth during their studies at educational institutions under contracts for paid educational services were classified as citizens with a priority right to switch from paid education to free education.

About 30 per cent of small and medium-sized businesses are led by women. The highest representation of women entrepreneurs is found in the social and educational services sectors. The proportion of women's entrepreneurship in the social sector reaches 90 per cent and 58 per cent in the service sector. Women are implementing projects in the areas of preschool and additional education, culture, and the provision of social and other socially useful services.

Women make up 40 per cent of the self-employed population. The practice of applying state social assistance on the basis of a social contract is expanding to support self-employed citizens. The number of concluded social contracts grew more than fourfold (in 2021–2023 more than 803.2 thousand social contracts were concluded). As a matter of priority, the state social assistance on the basis of a social contract is provided to families with children. Since 2020, the programme of social contracts has been carried out with co-financing from the federal budget.

Most women are focused on full-time employment, combining career with family responsibilities and raising children.

In order to increase women's competitiveness in the labour market and to create conditions to combine the family responsibilities of raising children with work, women with pre-school children are given the opportunity to undergo vocational training.

Since 2020, the categories of women who have access to vocational training and are given the opportunity to receive additional vocational education have been expanded.

Training opportunities are available not only to women who are on a childcare leave until their child reaches the age of three, but also to women who are not formally employed and have preschool-aged children. Training is carried out in professions and jobs in accordance with the needs of the labour market or in accordance with the requirements of a particular employer and guaranteed employment.

However, some difficulties remain in reconciling family and work responsibilities for women. According to surveys by the Federal State Statistics Service, working women spend 2–2.5 times more time on housekeeping than men.

In the context of a high level of education and employment, the wage gap between women and men on average in the economy remains almost unchanged and at a high level (28 per cent). However, the wage gap between women and men is explained by the fact that there is a higher proportion of women employed in lower-wage sectors of the economy. The availability of services for the supervision and care of preschool children has been significantly increased to create conditions for parents to combine career and family responsibilities.

The availability of services of state and municipal preschool educational organizations for children aged two months to seven years is guaranteed in practice. At present, more and more attention is being paid to fostering corporate culture that supports employed women with children and to creating conditions for equal professional opportunities for women and men.

To support working parents, Federal Law No. 620-FZ dated 19 December 2023 on Amendments to Article 13 of the Federal Law On State Benefits to Citizens with Children and Article 11 of the Federal Law On Mandatory Social Insurance in Case of Temporary Disability and in Connection with Maternity and Federal Law No. 614-FZ dated 19 December 2023 on Amendments to Article 256 of the Labour Code of the Russian Federation were adopted, providing for the preservation of the right to a monthly childcare allowance if a person on childcare leave returns to work (service) before the child reaches the age of one and a half years – including on a part-time, work-from-home or remote basis, in accordance with the legislation of the Russian Federation – or if, during the period of the leave, the individual works for another employer or continues their education.

These measures strengthen women's economic independence and confidence that having a child will not lead to poverty and will not force women to choose between 'family and children' or 'work and career'.