

# CASTE-BASED ENROLMENT IN INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

INSIGHTS FROM THE ALL-INDIA SURVEY  
ON HIGHER EDUCATION (AISHE)

## **Acknowledgement**

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## ***Importance of This Report***

This study provides a critical and detailed longitudinal analysis of the progress toward equity in India's higher education system, tracing the significant shifts in the social composition of student enrolment from 2010-11 to 2022-23. By leveraging comprehensive, official data, it meticulously documents the remarkable expansion of access for Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and Other Backward Classes (OBCs), not only within government institutions but also across private and professional courses. The report's robust evidence, which highlights both the substantial gains for historically marginalized groups and the concurrent stagnation and decline in General Category enrolment, provides an indispensable empirical foundation. Consequently, this analysis is poised to form the essential basis for future evidence-based policy decisions on affirmative action, compelling a necessary re-evaluation of these policies to ensure they remain balanced, fair, and effective in the face of India's rapidly evolving educational and social landscape.

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## Abstract

This study analyses the evolution of equity in India's higher education landscape over a thirteen-year period from 2010-11 to 2022-23. It specifically investigates the trends in participation of students from Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) relative to the General Category. The central research objective is to assess the progress of broad basing, the systematic expansion of access to erstwhile underrepresented groups across the higher education system. The analysis encompasses an examination of aggregate enrolment growth, institutional expansion, and a granular assessment of enrolment patterns segmented by institution type (government versus private), state and discipline. By delineating these historical trends, this report projects future enrolment patterns, providing an evidence-based perspective on the ongoing efforts to democratise higher education in India.

The analysis is grounded in secondary data from official government publications. The primary data sources are the annual All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) reports, published by the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Government of India. The reports for the period 2012-12 to 2021-22 can be accessed at <https://aishe.gov.in/aishe-final-report/>. The reports for 2010-11 and 2011-12 can be accessed at [https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload\\_files/mhrd/files/statistics/AISHE201011\\_0.pdf](https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/statistics/AISHE201011_0.pdf) and [https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload\\_files/mhrd/files/statistics-new/AISHE2011-12.pdf](https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/statistics-new/AISHE2011-12.pdf) respectively.

To ensure the most current analysis, this report also incorporates provisional data from AISHE 2022-23, as referenced in three key parliamentary documents:

1. The 370th Parliamentary Panel Report (titled "Implementation of Article 15(5) of the Indian Constitution regarding Special Provision for Reservation to SCs/STs and OBCs in Educational Institutions including Private Educational Institutions").
2. The government's Reply to Part (A) of Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 169, answered on 21 July 2025.
3. The government's REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 145, answered on 10 March 2025.

## Executive Summary

The Department of Higher Education under the Ministry of Education, Government of India has been conducting a comprehensive and exhaustive study of the higher education scenario in India since 2010-11 and the report of the study is published under the title “All-India Survey on Higher Education” (henceforth “AISHE”). *“The All-India Survey on Higher Education is the main source of comprehensive statistics on the higher education scenario in the country”*. In 2022-23, the AISHE, covered 60,380 higher education institutions and a student population of 4.38 crores. It is a comprehensive data source on the status of the higher education in India, allowing reliable time-series analysis of enrolment trends across social groups, institutions, programmes/courses and states. Over the past thirteen years, the AISHE data reveal significant shifts in the social composition of higher education enrolment in the country. These shifts are notable because they carry implications for understanding patterns of social mobility.

Between 2010-11 and 2022-23, enrolment of Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and Other Backward Classes (OBC), particularly the OBCs has expanded sharply. The combined share of SC/ST/OBCs in overall higher education enrolment increased from 43.1% in 2010-11 to 60.8% in 2022-2023, indicating a distinct transition in the social composition of students in India’s higher education. In absolute terms, the enrolment numbers of SC/ST/OBC students exceeded those of the General Category (including Economically Weaker Sections - EWS) by more than 95 lakhs in 2022-2023, indicating a 55% higher enrolment of SC/ST/OBC students as compared to the General Category. Between 2010-11 and 2022-23, SC/ST/OBC enrolment increased by 1.48 crores or 125%, whereas that of the General Category (including EWS) grew by 15 lakhs or around 9.5%. This sharp contrast underscores the extent of upward educational mobility among historically marginalised social groups.

The enrolment growth of SC/ST/OBC is not limited to government institutions. Data show that SC/ST/OBC representation has increased considerably in private institutions as well. While their share in the total enrolment is 62.2% in government institutions, it is 60% in private institutions. The growth trend in the share of SC, ST, and OBCs is broad-based and extends to professional and technical courses like B. Tech, B.E, M. Tech MBA, MBBS and MD programmes reflecting their overall growth trend. Moreover, this increase in SC, ST and OBC enrolment has occurred without any change in the total statutory reservation percentage for SC, ST and OBCs, which has remained at 50% since 2010-11 for central government and most state government higher education institutions. Evidently, there are significant gains not only through reservations but also through success in open competition, where students from SC, ST, and OBC groups have acquired competitive skills to secure seats along with the General Category. Such gains are consistent across states confirming that the trend is broad-based and not region-specific. Within the disadvantaged categories, OBCs experience the maximum enrolment growth, although SCs and STs register marked improvements.

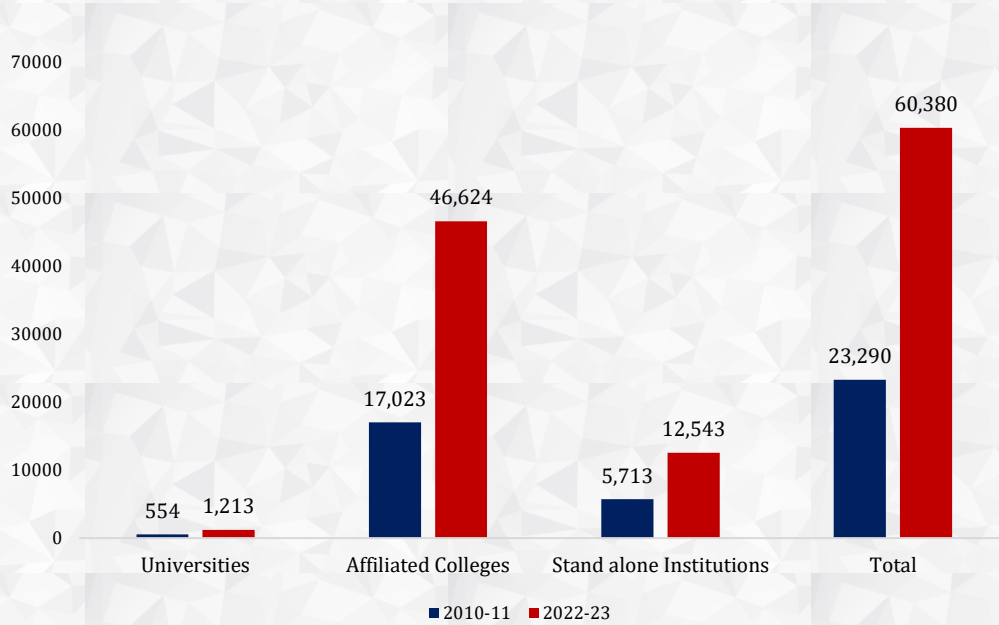
Projections suggest that at current rates of growth, SC/ST/OBC students will comprise more than two-thirds of India's total enrolment in higher education by 2027 -2028 and could exceed three-fourths of total enrolment by 2035-2036. In several states, this threshold has already been crossed, as SC/ST/OBCs outnumber the General Category students by a ratio of more than 2:1 in 16 states and union territories and by more than 3:1 in 8 states and union territories. Between 2010-11 and 2021-22, among the institutions covered, the enrolment of Muslims increased by 203% from 6.97 lakhs to 21.1 lakhs and that of other minorities increased by 166% from 3.4 lakhs to 9.1 lakhs. The total minority enrolment increased by 191% from 10.4 lakhs to 30.1 lakhs.

From a sociological perspective, these trends underline a process of caste-to-class mobility, where groups historically excluded from educational and economic opportunities are now gaining significant traction. The rise in educational enrolment of SC/ST/OBCs reflects broader processes of social transformation, access to resources, and the capacity to compete on equal terms. From the sociology of education perspective, the growing SC/ST/OBC enrolment signals that education operates as a crucial instrument of social transformation and mobility in India. The promising rise in SC/ST/OBC enrolment indicates a vital shift from caste-based exclusion to processes of upward social mobility and social inclusion. Furthermore, the increase is not limited to reserved quotas but extends to the non-reserved seats, indicating that caste hierarchies are being reconfigured into class-based competition. The fact that many students from disadvantaged backgrounds are securing a significant share of admissions to higher education seats over and above the reservation quota through open competition and also in private institutions illustrates that education has substantially narrowed down caste-based gaps and promoted merit-based competition. This aligns with the phenomenon of caste-to-class mobility where education, economic change, and state policy offset structural disadvantages.

The AISHE data also reveal a stagnation and recent decline in General Category enrolment, despite a marked increase in the number of institutions and overall enrolment, spread across states. In the two years between 2020 to 2021, and 2022 to 2023 alone, General Category (including EWS) enrolment fell by nearly 11 lakh students, while the overall enrolment increased by 4.13 crores to 4.38 crores. The fall in General Category enrolment in absolute terms even with increasing number of institutions is observed in 23 of the 36 states/UTs. The relative decline of the General Category indicates challenges of demographic transition and possible underrepresentation in the years ahead. It signals a shifting balance, where the traditional role of education in empowering individuals is giving rise to new patterns of exclusion. This stagnation and recent decline in General Category enrolment, raise questions about how caste and class will continue to influence in shaping access to equal opportunity. Together, these shifts call for a careful revisitation and re-evaluation of India's affirmative action policies in higher education with special attention to questions of balance, fairness, and the evolving dynamics of DEI.

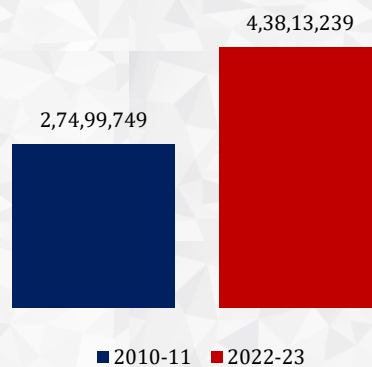
## Institutions

AISHE covers universities, affiliated colleges and stand-alone institutions in government and private sector. Between 2010-11 and 2022-23, the number of institutions covered in AISHE has increased from 23,290 to 60,380. During the same period, the number of students enrolled in higher education increased from 2.75 crores to 4.38 crores.



**Figure 1: No. of Higher Education Institutes Covered in AISHE between 2010-11 and 2022-23**

**Source:** (1) Page iii, AISHE Report 2010-11, (2) AISHE 2022-23 (provisional) as referred to in In Reply to Part (A) of Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 169 for Answer on 21.07.25



**Figure 2: No. of Students Enrolled in Higher Education Institutions**

**Source:** (1) Table 6 of AISHE Report 2010-11, (2) Table 1 of AISHE Report 2022-23 (provisional) as referred to in the 370<sup>th</sup> Parliamentary Panel Report

## **Public vs. Private Institutions**

In 2021-22 (the latest year for which breakup is available), out of 1168 universities registered, 685 are government-managed (central government. 240, state government. 445), 10 are private deemed (aided) and 473 are private (unaided). Government universities contribute 73.7% of total enrolment, while private universities account for 26.3% of total enrolment. Out of 42,825 responding colleges, 21.5% are government colleges, 13.2% are private (aided) and 65.3% are private (un-aided). Government colleges contribute 34.8% of total enrolment. private (aided) colleges constituting 13.3% of total colleges account for 20.6% enrolment, whereas the 65.2% private (unaided) colleges account for 44.6% of total enrolment. (*Source: Key Results, AISHE Report 2021-22*).

## **Methodology for Analysis**

Overall enrolment data of SC, ST, and OBCs have been taken directly from the AISHE reports and the 370<sup>th</sup> Parliamentary Panel Report. Enrolment data of General Category has been obtained by deducting the enrolment of SC, ST, and OBCs from the overall enrolment. EWS reservation that provides reservation for Economically Weaker Sections was implemented in 2019. In this report, EWS data have been directly taken from the AISHE reports. AISHE reports provide data of Muslims and other Minority Groups separately. Muslims and Other Minorities could belong to the SC/ST/OBC or General Category. AISHE reports do not provide the break-up of minorities enrolled under different categories. Analysis regarding the enrolment of Muslims and Other Minorities have been performed separately. AISHE reports also provide enrolment data on Persons with Disability – PWD, with relevant analysis.

## Findings

### 1. SC/ST/OBC Students Outnumber General Category by a Wide Margin in Higher Education Enrolment

In 2022-23, the overall student enrolment in higher education in India was about 4.38 crores (4,38,13,239). Out of this, 67.87 lakhs (67,87,443) belong to Scheduled Castes (SC), 28.25 lakhs (28,24,751) belong to Scheduled Tribes (ST), 1.70 crores (1,70,44,020) belong to Other Backward Classes, and 1.72 crores (1,71,57,025) belong to General Category including EWS. In 2022-23, total student enrolment for SC, ST, and OBC categories reached 2.67 crores. This figure surpasses General Category enrolment by 95 lakh students, representing a 55% lead.

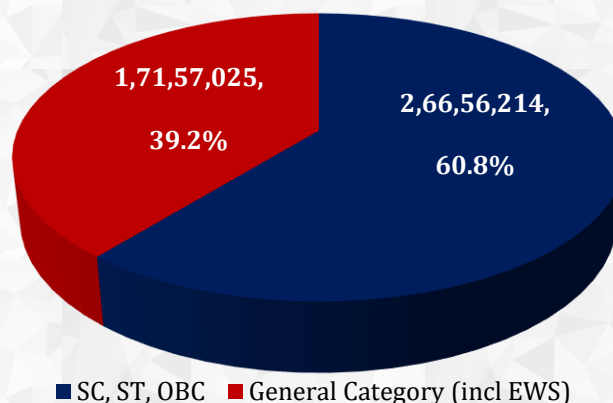


Figure 3: Students Enrolled in Higher Education in 2022-23

Source: AISHE data for 2022-23 (provisional) as referred to in Table 1 of the 370th Parliamentary Panel Report

### 2. Transcending the Quota: Paradigm Shift in SC/ST/OBC Enrolment in Indian Higher Education

Analysis of the data from AISHE reports brings out the fact that the shares of social groups in higher education have undergone a significant change in the last decade. Between 2010-11 and 2022-23, the share of SC/ST/OBCs has increased from 43.2% to 60.8%, while that of the General Category (including EWS) has reduced from 56.8% to 39.2%

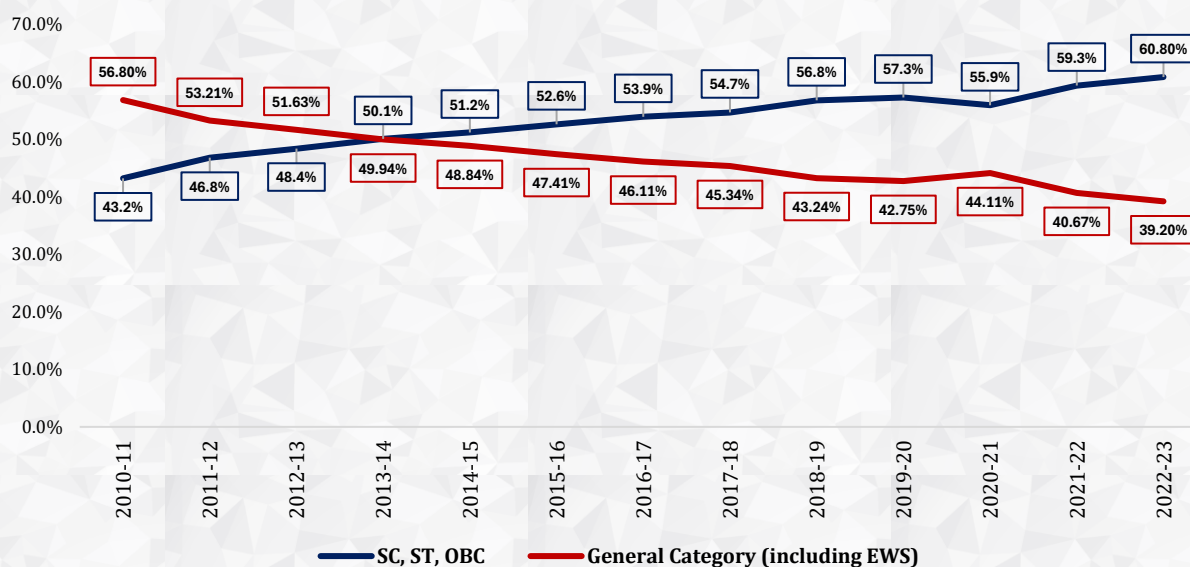
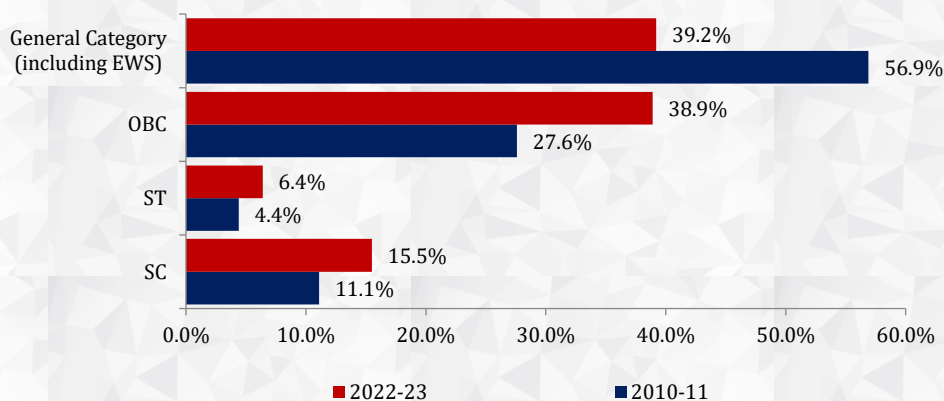


Figure 4: Share in Higher Education (2010-11 to 2022-23)

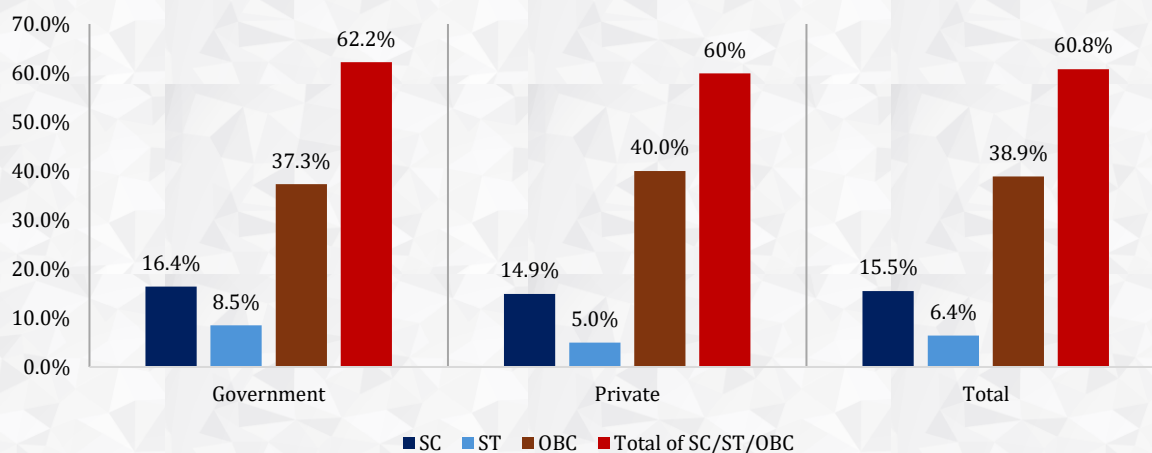
**Source: (1)** SC/ST/OBC data for the period 2010-11 has been obtained from Table 14 of the AISHE Report of 2010-11. It is also mentioned on page 18, section 2.2.5 of the same report. **(2)** SC/ST/OBC data for the period 2011-12 to 2021-22 has been obtained from Table 45 of annual AISHE reports, **(3)** SC/ST/OBC data for 2022-23 has been obtained from AISHE data for 2022-23 (provisional) as referred to in Table 1 of the 370th Parliamentary Panel Report, **(4)** EWS data for 2020-21 and 2021-22 has been taken from Table 46 of AISHE reports. Disaggregated data for EWS enrolment for 2022-23 is not available at the time of publication of this report, **(5)** In 2021-22, out of the 39.2% enrolment in General Category numbers, EWS constituted 1.5%, and by deduction, the General Category through open competition stood at 37.7%



**Figure 5: Change in Student Enrollment by Category between 2010-11 and 2022-23**

**Source:** (1) SC/ST/OBC data for the period 2010-11 has been obtained from Table 14 of the AISHE Report of 2010-11. It is also mentioned in page 18, section 2.2.5 of the same report, (2) SC/ST/OBC data for 2022-23 has been obtained from AISHE data for 2022-23 (provisional) as referred to in Table 1 of the 370th Parliamentary Panel Report.

The enrolment of SC/ST/OBC students is at similar levels in both government and private institutions. While in government colleges, the share of SC/ST/OBCs is at 62.2%, their share in private institutions is 60%. The share of OBCs in overall enrolment is higher at 40% in private institutions compared to 37.3% in government institutions.



**Figure 6: Share of SC/ST/OBCs in Government and Private Institutions in 2022-23**

**Source:** AISHE data for 2022-23 (provisional) as referred to in Table 1 of 370th Parliamentary Panel Report.

The reservation for SC/ST/OBCs in central government institutions and in most states is capped at 50%. After 2010-11, there has been no major increase in the reservation quota for SC/ST/OBCs. EWS reservation was introduced in 2019 but this was for economically weaker sections within the General Category and does not apply to SC/ST/OBCs. Certain states like Bihar, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Chhattisgarh attempted to increase the reservation beyond 50% for SC/ST/OBCs but these efforts were either struck down by the courts or remain in litigation. They do not make a noticeable change to the overall quantum of 50% reservation at the national level.

The fact that the aggregate enrolment of SC/ST/OBC students in private institutions —where reservation is often not mandated—is nearly equal to that in government institutions indicates a pivotal shift. This suggests that a substantial number of students from these categories are securing admission through open competition. This trend is underscored by the significant increase in their overall share from 43.1% in 2011-12 to 60.8% in 2022-23, surpassing the General Category. The data, therefore, points towards a paradigm shift wherein upward mobility and enhanced competitive capabilities are enabling students from reserved categories to increasingly secure admissions on general merit, far exceeding the seats obtained through the reserved quota.

### 3. SC/ST/OBC Enrolment Growth Far Outpaces General Category

Between 2010-11 and 2022-23, overall enrolment in India’s higher education grew by 59.3% (1.48 crores) from 2.75 crores to 4.38 crores. Amid this growth, enrolment of SC/ST/OBCs has increased by 125.2% from 1.18 crores to 2.67 crores while that of General Category (including EWS) increased by just 9.5% (15 lakhs) from 1.57 crores to 1.72 crores, indicating a large disparity in their growth as compared to SC/ST/OBCs.

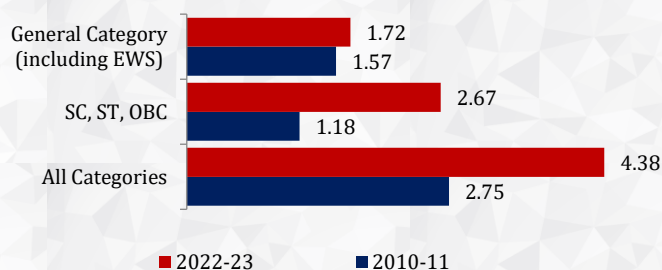


Figure 7: Social Category-wise Growth in Student Enrolment (in crores)

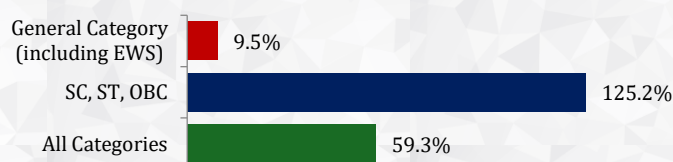


Figure 8: Social Category Wise Growth in Student Enrolment (%)

**Source:** (1) SC/ST/OBC data for the period from 2010-11 has been obtained from Table 14 of the AISHE Report 2011, (2) SC/ST/OBC data for 2022-23 has been obtained from AISHE data for 2022-23 (provisional) as referred to in Table 1 of the 370th Parliamentary Panel Report.

#### 4. Growth in OBC Enrolment Is Highest in Absolute Terms and ST Enrolment Is Highest in Percentage Terms

Disaggregated analysis of SC/ST/OBCs shows that enrolment of OBCs has grown the highest in absolute terms by 94 lakhs while that of STs has been highest in percentage terms, increasing by 134% between 2010-11 and 2022-23.

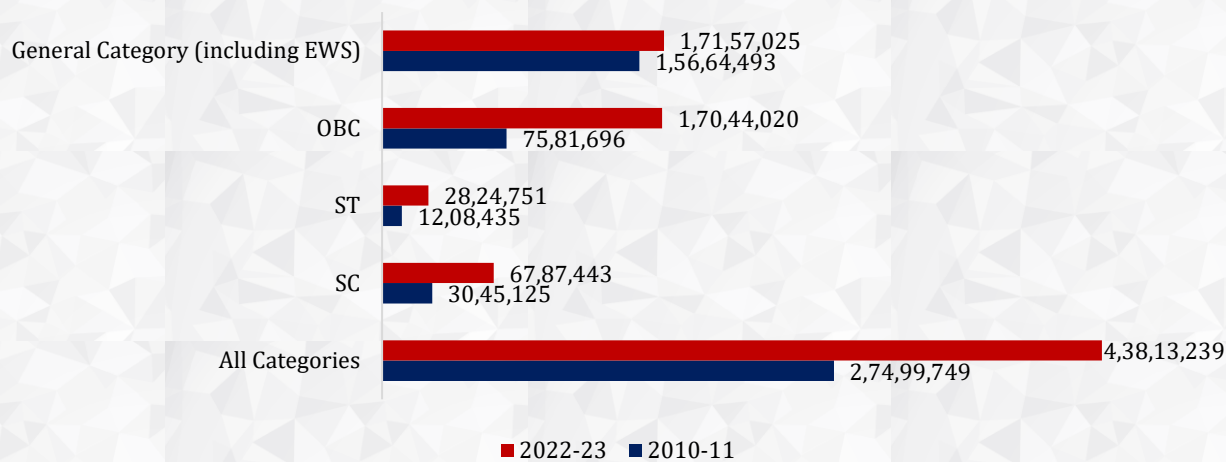


Figure 9: Disaggregated Social Category-wise Growth in Enrolment between 2010-11 and 2022-23 (in Nos)

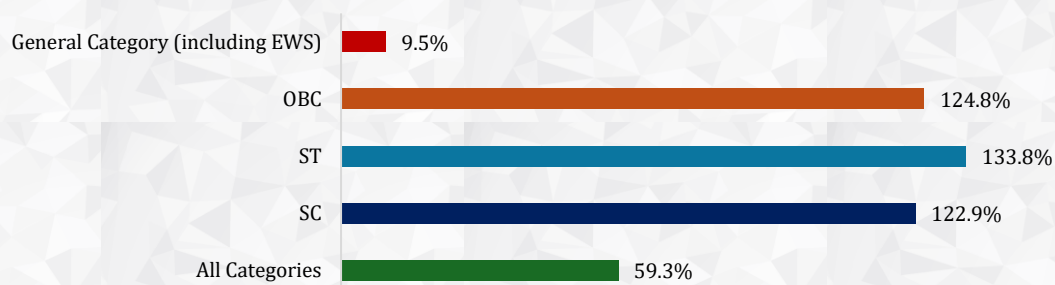
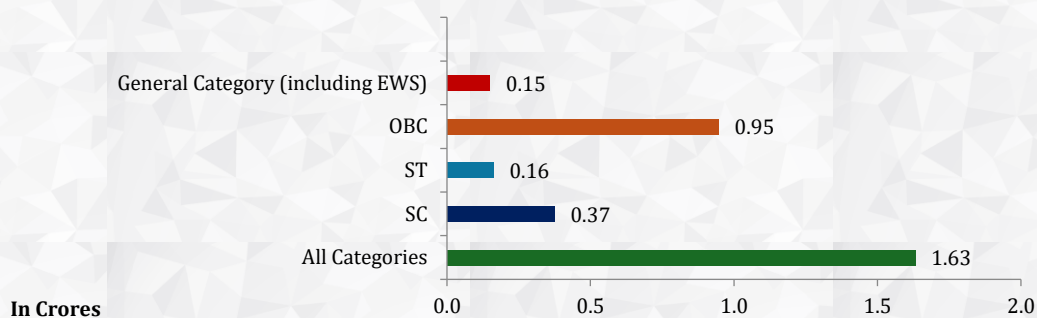


Figure 10: Disaggregated Social Category-wise Growth in Enrolment between 2010-11 and 2022-23 (in %)

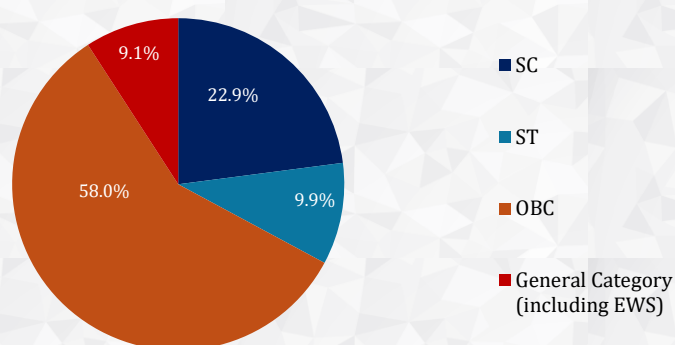
**Source: (1)** SC/ST/OBC data for the period 2010-11 has been obtained from Table 14 of the AISHE Report 2011, **(2)** SC/ST/OBC data for 2022-23 has been obtained from AISHE data for 2022-23 (provisional) as referred to in Table 1 of the 370th Parliamentary Panel Report.

## 5. Share in Enrolment Growth between 2010-11 and 2022-23

Enrolment in higher education has grown by 1.63 crores between 2010-11 and 2022-23 (from 2.75 crores to 4.38 crores). This could be attributed to the combination of factors such as the establishment of new institutions, increase in the participation of existing institutions in AISHE, increase in the number of seats for existing courses and launching of new courses. Students from SC/ST/OBCs garnered 91% (1.49 crores out of 1.63 crores) of the growth in enrolment during this period and, of this, OBCs garnered 58% of the growth.



**Figure 11: Share of different Social Groups in the Enrolment Growth between 2010-11 and 2022-23 (crores)**



**Figure 12: Share of different Social Groups in the Enrolment Growth between 2010-11 and 2022-23 (in %)**

**Source: (1)** Overall enrolment and SC/ST/OBC data for the period 2010-11 has been obtained from Table 14 of the AISHE Report 2011. It is also mentioned in page 18, section 2.2.5 of the same report, **(2)** Overall enrolment and SC/ST/OBC data for 2022-23 has been obtained from AISHE data for 2022-23 (provisional) as referred to in Table 1 of the 370th Parliamentary Panel Report.

## 6. Increased Share of SC/ST/OBC Enrolment Is Observed across the States

The increasing share of SC/ST/OBCs in enrolment for higher education is observed across the states, and in 17 states, their combined share is two-thirds or higher, and in 8 states, it has crossed three-fourths of the total enrolment in higher education (*Highlighted in yellow in Table-1*). In these states, the SC/ST/OBC enrolment outnumber the General Category by ratios of 2:1 and 3:1, respectively. This not only comprises North-eastern and certain small states with large tribal population but also includes some of the bigger states including Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Telangana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar.

S. No	State/Union Territory	Combined Enrolment of SC, ST and OBC in %		Enrolment of General Category in %	
		2010-11	2021-22	2010-11	2021-22
1	A & N Islands	17.0%	33.0%	83.0%	67.0%
2	Andhra Pradesh	56.6%	67.9%	43.4%	32.1%
3	Arunachal Pradesh	57.4%	79.2%	42.6%	20.8%
4	Assam	39.7%	53.8%	60.3%	46.2%
5	Bihar	41.3%	65.8%	58.7%	34.2%
6	Chandigarh	10.1%	26.3%	89.9%	73.7%
7	Chhattisgarh	50.2%	77.6%	49.8%	22.4%
32	D & N Haveli and Daman & Diu	31.5%	36.4%	68.5%	63.6%
8	Delhi	11.9%	31.1%	88.1%	68.9%
9	Goa	16.4%	26.3%	83.6%	73.7%
10	Gujarat	32.7%	53.5%	67.3%	46.5%
11	Haryana	30.3%	40.2%	69.7%	59.8%
12	Himachal Pradesh	26.2%	40.7%	73.8%	59.3%
13	Jammu and Kashmir	9.7%	21.1%	90.3%	78.9%
14	Jharkhand	45.0%	69.4%	55.0%	30.6%
15	Karnataka	53.4%	68.5%	46.6%	31.5%
16	Kerala	37.4%	48.5%	62.6%	51.5%
17	Ladakh		96.7%		3.3%
18	Lakshadweep		100%		0.0%
19	Madhya Pradesh	44.7%	66.2%	55.3%	33.8%
20	Maharashtra	38.9%	47.4%	61.1%	52.6%
21	Manipur	74.5%	72.7%	25.5%	27.3%
22	Meghalaya	75.4%	84.5%	24.6%	15.5%
23	Mizoram	97.0%	97.5%	3.0%	2.5%
24	Nagaland	68.4%	93.0%	31.6%	7.0%
25	Odisha	30.9%	55.5%	69.1%	44.5%
26	Puducherry	74.6%	68.8%	25.4%	31.2%
27	Punjab	15.8%	36.7%	84.2%	63.3%
28	Rajasthan	49.6%	72.6%	50.4%	27.4%
29	Sikkim	34.6%	61.8%	65.4%	38.2%
30	Tamil Nadu	64.6%	83.0%	35.4%	17.0%
31	Telangana		70.8%		29.2%
33	Tripura	34.5%	61.6%	65.5%	38.4%
34	Uttar Pradesh	46.7%	61.4%	53.3%	38.6%
35	Uttarakhand	25.5%	36.2%	74.5%	63.8%
36	West Bengal	19.9%	40.2%	80.1%	59.8%

### Source:

- 1) Data for 2010-11 has been obtained from Table 14 of the AISHE report,
- 2) Data for 2021-22 has been obtained from Table 45 of the Annual AISHE Reports,
- 3) State-wise details for 2022-23 are not available,
- 4) Data for Ladakh was not available for 2011-12 as the Union Territory of Ladakh was formed in 2019,
- 5) Data for Telangana for 2011-12 was not available as the state was formed in 2014,
- 6) For 2010-11, the AISHE report provides enrolment data for Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, while for 2021-22, the combined figure has been given for these two regions.

## 7. Increase in Share of SC/ST/OBC Enrolment Is High in Certain States

While the SC, ST, and OBC enrolment has increased across all the states between 2010-11 and 2021-22, the increase has been particularly high in certain states.

- **Chhattisgarh:** The share of SC/ST/OBCs in total enrolment increased by 27.4% from 50.2% to 77.6%.

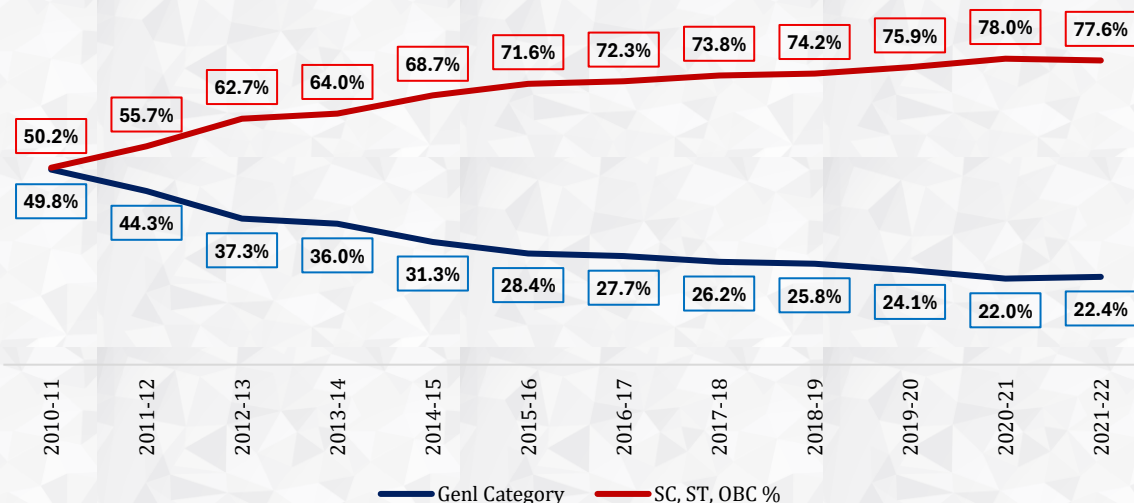


Figure 13: Share of SC/ST/OBCs in total enrollment between 2010-11 and 2021-22 in Chhattisgarh

- **Jharkhand:** The share of SC/ST/OBCs in total enrolment increased by 24.2% from 45% to 69.2%.

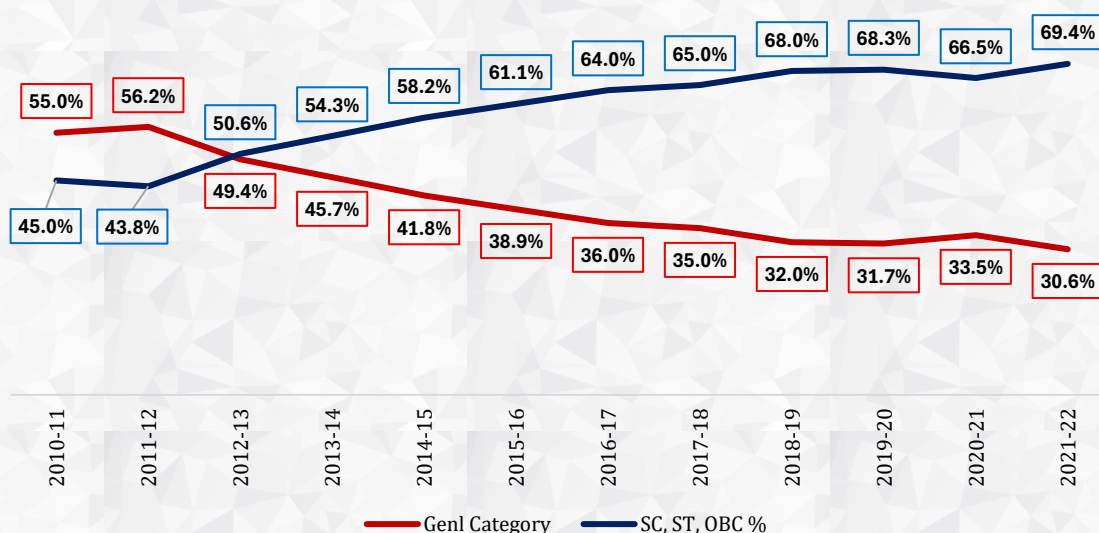


Figure 14: Share of SC/ST/OBCs in total enrollment between 2010-11 and 2021-22 in Jharkhand

- **Madhya Pradesh:** The share of SC/ST/OBCs in total enrolment increased by 21.2% from 45% to 66.2%.

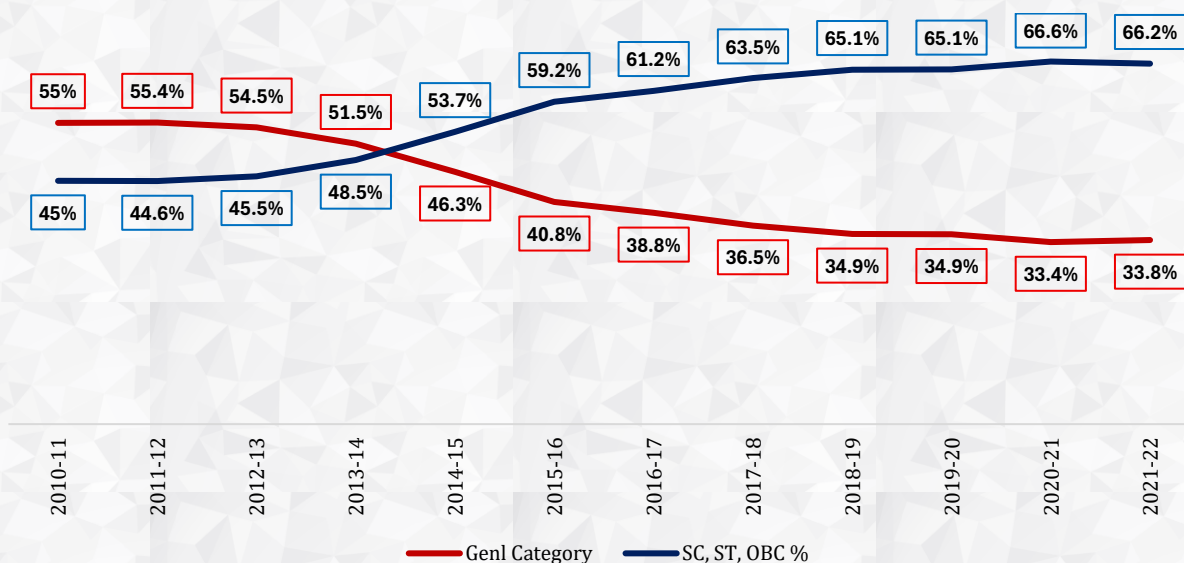


Figure 15: Share of SC/ST/OBCs in total enrollment between 2010-11 and 2021-22 in Madhya Pradesh

- **Odisha:** The share of SC/ST/OBCs in total enrolment increased by 24.5% from 31% to 55.5%.

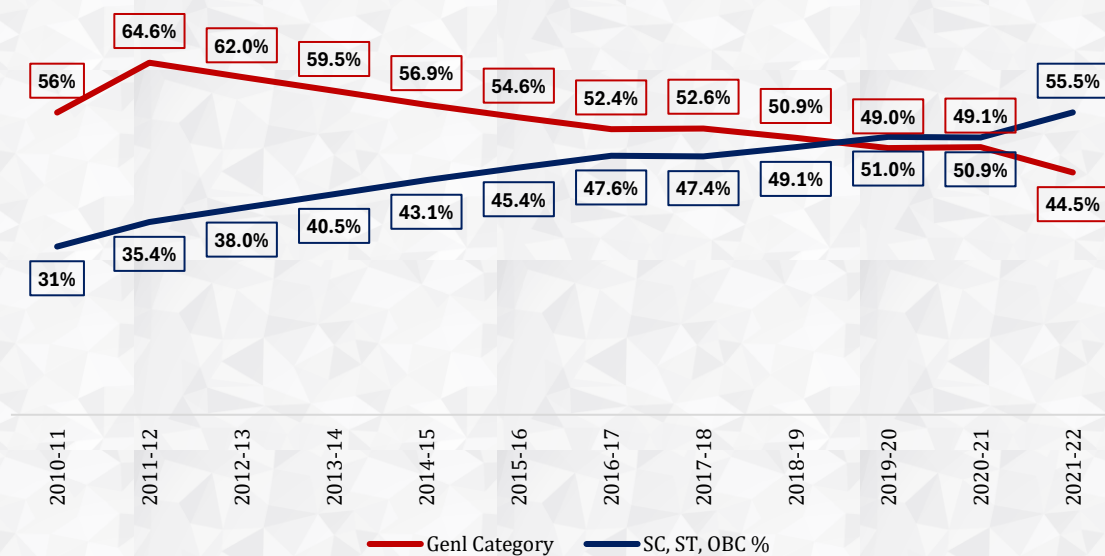


Figure 16: Share of SC/ST/OBCs in total enrollment between 2010-11 and 2021-22 in Odisha

- **Bihar:** The share of SC/ST/OBCs in total enrolment increased by 24.5% from 41.3% to 65.8%.

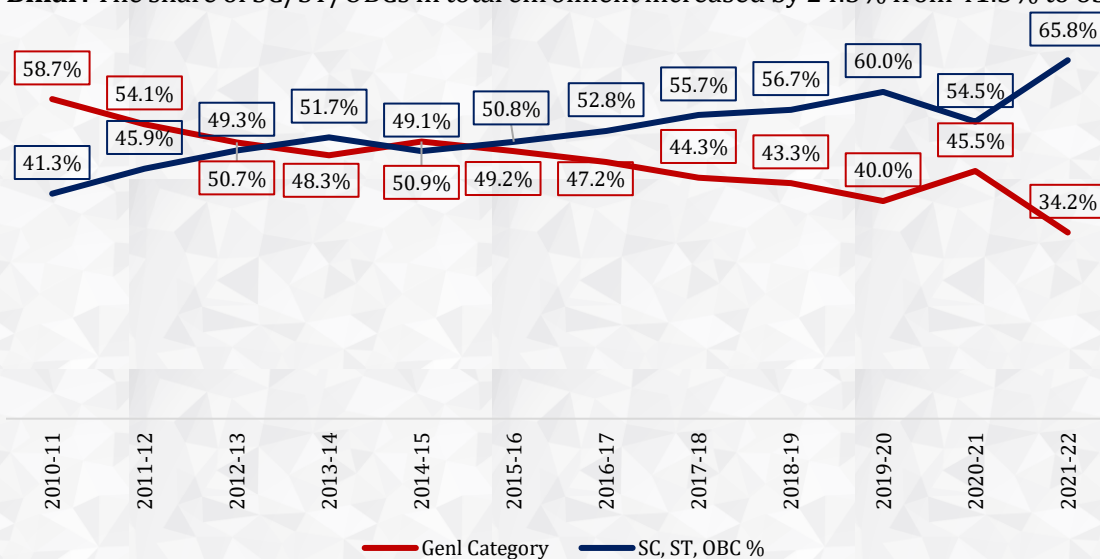


Figure 17: Share of SC/ST/OBCs in total enrollment between 2010-11 and 2021-22 in Bihar

- **Rajasthan:** The share of SC/ST/OBCs in total enrolment increased by 23% from 49.6% to 72.6%.

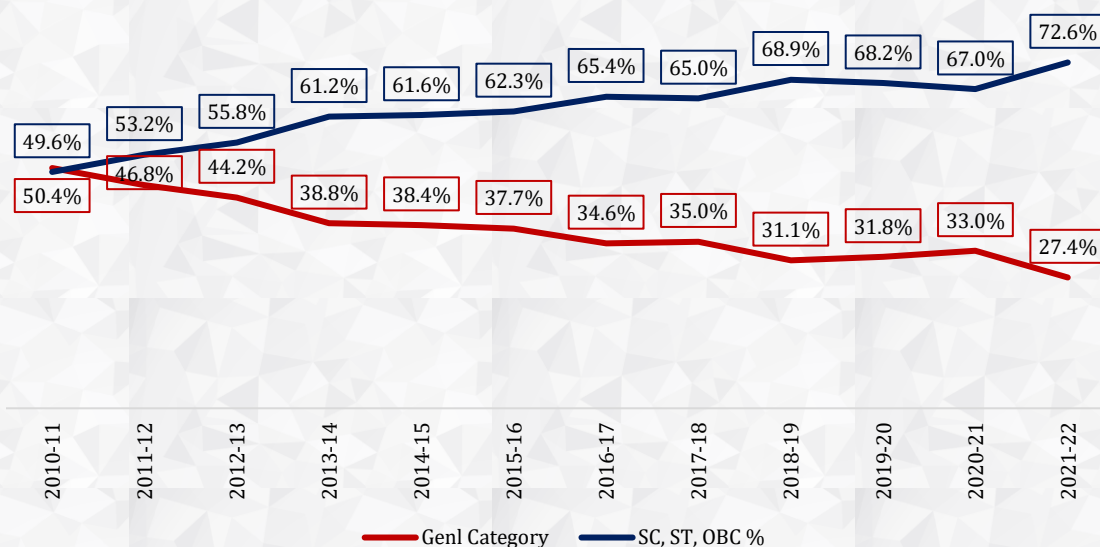


Figure 18: Share of SC/ST/OBCs in total enrollment between 2010-11 and 2021-22 in Rajasthan

- **Punjab:** The share of SC/ST/OBCs in total enrolment increased by 20.9% from 15.8% to 36.7%.

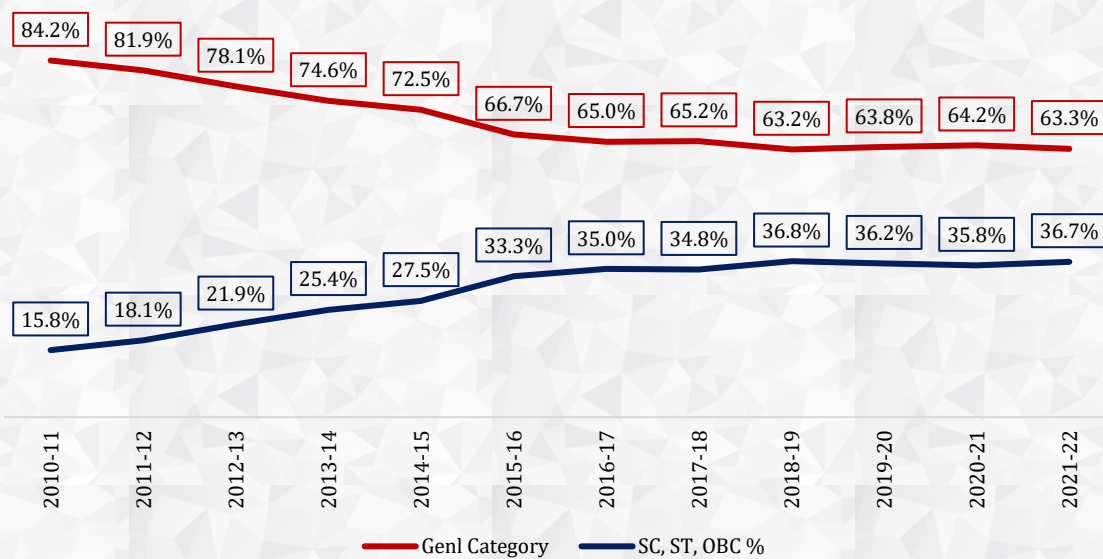


Figure 19: Share of SC/ST/OBCs in total enrollment between 2010-11 and 2021-22 in Punjab

- **West Bengal:** The share of SC/ST/OBCs in total enrolment increased by 20.2% from 20% to 40.2%.

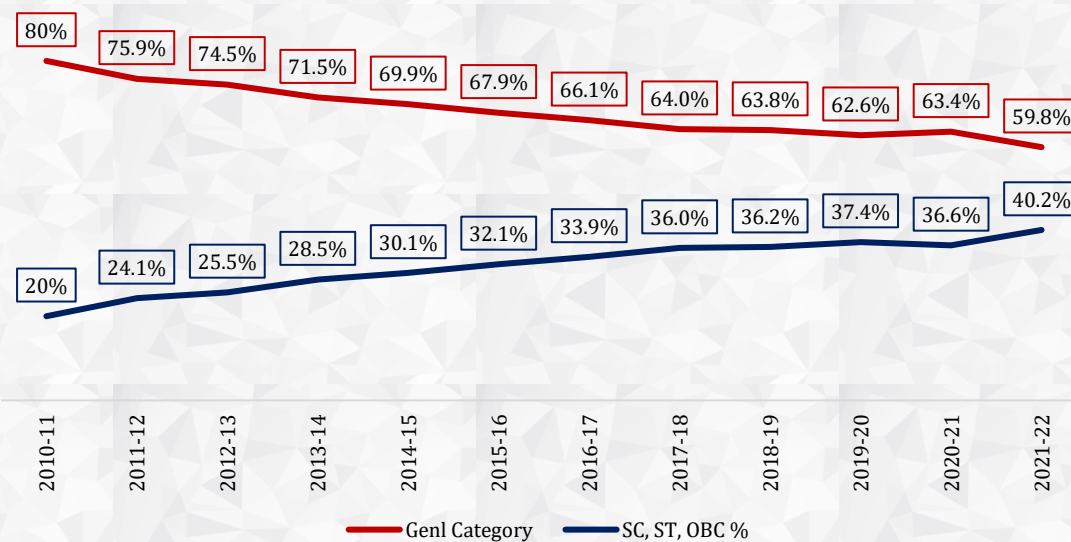
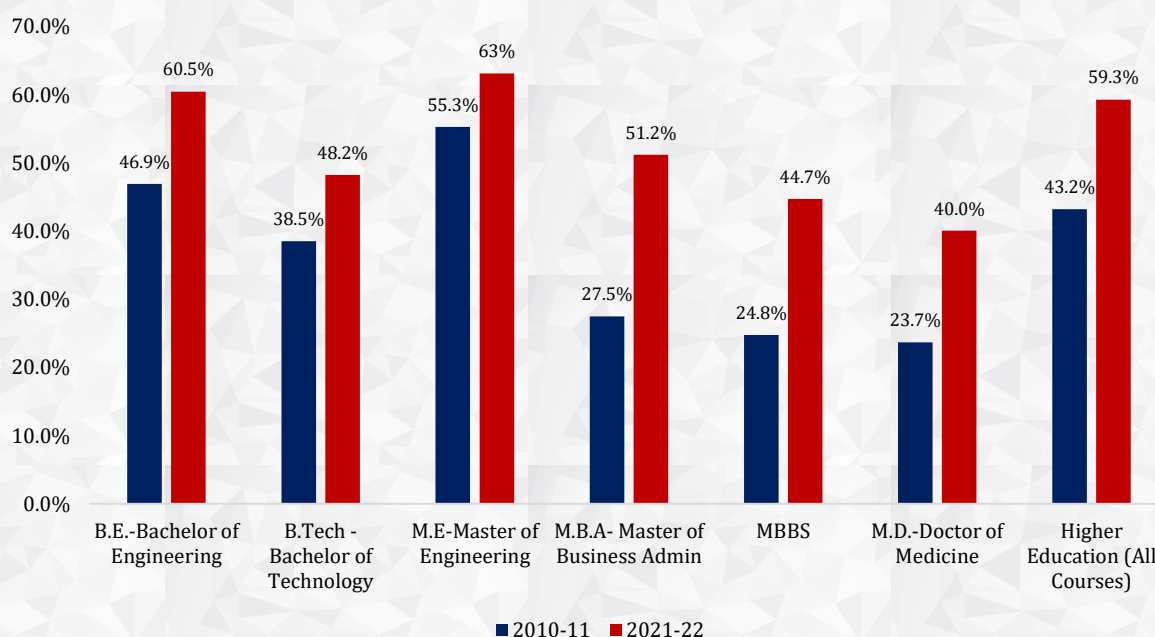


Figure 20: Share of SC/ST/OBCs in total enrollment between 2010-11 and 2021-22 in West Bengal

## 8. Enrolment in Professional and Advanced Courses

The trend of increase in the enrolment of SC/ST/OBCs is broad-based across courses. Among the professional courses, SC/ST/OBCs' share has increased the most in MBA, MBBS and MD courses.



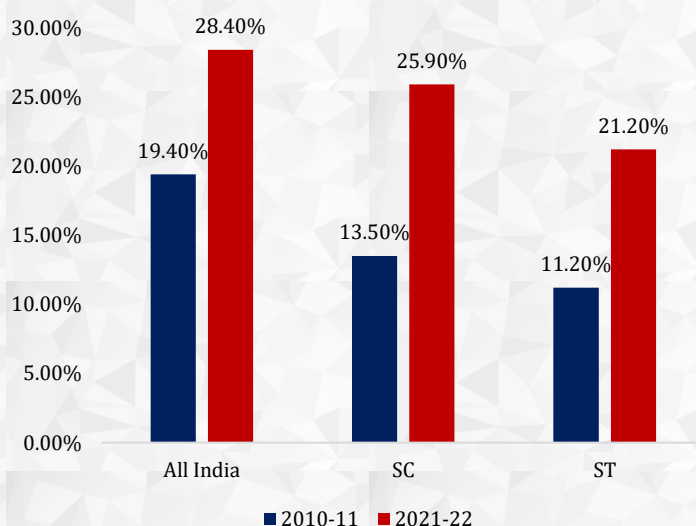
**Figure 21: Share of SC/ST/OBC in Select Professional and Advanced Courses**

**Source:** Table 11 of Annual AISHE Reports

**\*Note:** Course wise data for 2022-23 is not available

## 9. Gross Enrolment Ratio

Between 2010-11 and 2021-22, the overall gross enrolment ratio (GER) increased by 9.0% from 19.4 to 28.4%. While the overall GER increased by 9%, the increase in GER for SC and ST students was 12.4% and 10%, respectively. The gap between the overall GER and GER for SC students reduced from 5.9% in 2010-11 to 2.5% in 2021-22; for STs, it has reduced from 8.2% to 7.2%. Overall, GER increased to 29.5% in 2022-23 but Social category-wise break-up is not available at the time of publication of this report.



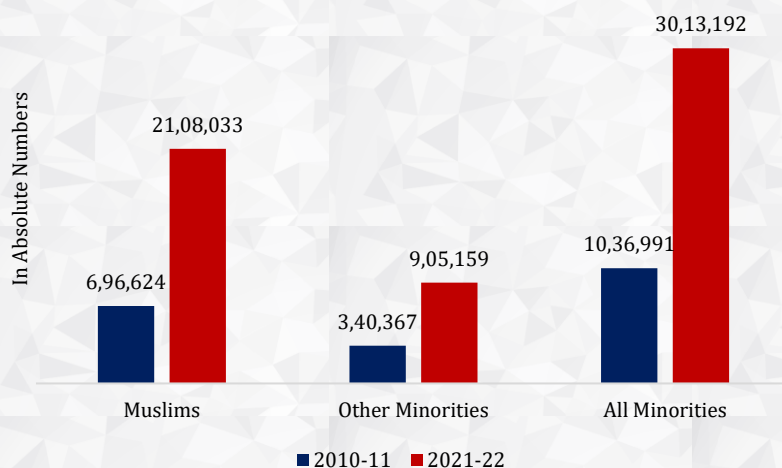
**Figure 22: Overall Gross Enrolment Ration between 2010-11 and 2021-22**

**Source:** (1) Table 19 of the AISHE report 2010-11 and 2021-22, (2) GER for 2022-23 was obtained from the government's **Reply to Part (A) of Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 2599**, answered on 18 December 2025.

**\*Note:** GER for other social groups is not provided in the AISHE report.

## 10. Minority Enrolment

AISHE reports do not mention whether all the minority institutions are covered in the study, even though in these institutions, minority enrolment would be significantly higher than in public and non-minority institutions. Between 2010-11 and 2021-22, among the institutions covered, the enrolment of Muslims increased by 203% from 6.97 lakhs to 21.1 lakhs, and that of other minorities increased by 166% from 3.4 lakhs to 9.1 lakhs. The total minority enrolment among the institutions covered increased by 191% from 10.4 lakhs to 30.1 lakhs.



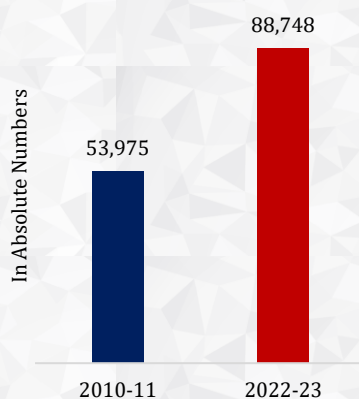
**Figure 23: Minority Enrolment in Higher Education between 2010-11 and 2021-22**

**Source:** (1) Table 15 of the AISHE report for 2010-11, (2) Table 46 of the Annual AISHE reports for 2021-22

**\*Note:** Enrolment data for Muslims and Other Minorities for 2022-23 are not available.

## 11. Enrolment of Persons with Disability

Between 2010-11 and 2021-22, the enrolment of PWD increased by 64.4% from 53,975 to 88,748.



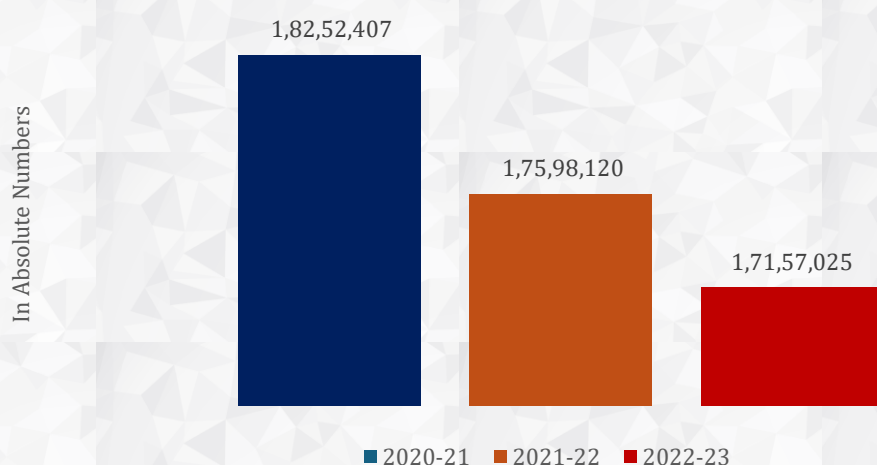
**Figure 24: Enrolment of PWD (2010-11 to 2022-23)**

**Source:** (1) Table 15 of the AISHE report for 2010-11, (2) Table 46 of the Annual AISHE reports for 2021-22

**\*Note:** PWD data for 2022-23 are not available.

## 12. Stagnation and Recent Regression in General Category Enrolment

During the thirteen-year period from 2010-11 to 2022-23 covered in this analysis, SC/ST/OBC enrolment increased by 1.48 crores (or 125%). For the period between 2010-11 and 2021-22, the enrolment of Muslims and Other Minorities increased by 191% from 10.4 lakhs to 30.1 lakhs. The enrolment of the General Category (including EWS) grew by just 15 lakhs or 9.5%. After 2020-21, there has been a decline in the enrolment of General Category even in absolute terms. Between 2020-21 and 2022-23, while the overall enrolment in higher education increased by around 24.5 lakhs from 4.14 crores to 4.38 crores, the enrolment of General Category students reduced by 11 lakhs from 1.83 crores to 1.72 crores, indicating a drop by 6%.



**Figure 25: General Category (including EWS) Enrolment between 2020-21 to 2022-23**

**Source:** (1) Data for the period from 2020-21 to 2021-22 has been obtained from Table 45 of the annual AISHE reports by deducting SC/ST/OBC enrolment from overall enrolment, (2) Data for 2022-23 has been obtained from AISHE data for 2022-23 (provisional) as referred to in Table 1 of the 370<sup>th</sup> Parliamentary Panel Report by deducting SC/ST/OBC enrolment from overall enrolment.

### 13. Recent Regression of General Category in Absolute Numbers in 23 States or Union Territories

Between 2020-21 and 2021-22, General Category enrolment has reduced in absolute numbers in 23 of the 36 states and union territories.

Sr. No	State or Union Territory	General Category (including EWS) Enrolment		Change between 2020-21 and 2021-22	
		2020-21	2021-22	in Value	in %
1	Lakshadweep	234	0	-234	-100%
2	Ladakh	233	148	-85	-36%
3	Nagaland	5,212	3,605	-1607	-31%
4	Manipur	50,625	35,594	-15,031	-30%
5	Tamil Nadu	7,94,549	5,61,978	-2,32,571	-29%
6	Meghalaya	19,566	14,905	-4,661	-24%
7	Bihar	10,73,651	8,96,723	-1,76,928	-16%
8	Telangana	5,55,430	4,65,812	-89,618	-16%
9	Andhra Pradesh	7,12,663	6,20,159	-92,504	-13%
10	Karnataka	8,74,665	7,67,926	-1,06,739	-12%
11	Uttarakhand	4,05,817	3,61,959	-43,858	-11%
12	Arunachal Pradesh	14,914	13,511	-1403	-9%
13	Sikkim	14,215	12,894	-1321	-9%
14	Assam	3,44,560	3,13,054	-31,506	-9%
15	Rajasthan	8,03,663	7,38,037	-65,626	-8%
16	Tripura	41,313	38,608	-2,705	-7%
17	Uttar Pradesh	28,25,433	26,91,648	-1,33,785	-5%
18	A & N Islands	7,987	7,656	-331	-4%
19	Delhi	8,20,559	7,89,660	-30,899	-4%
20	Maharashtra	24,95,471	24,09,207	-86,264	-3%
21	Odisha	4,94,579	4,77,738	-16,841	-3%
22	Jammu & Kashmir	3,25,366	3,15,831	-9,535	-3%
23	Chandigarh	82,805	81,759	-1046	-1%

**Source:**

- 1) Data for the period from 2020-21 and 2021-22 has been obtained from Table 45 of the annual AISHE reports by deducting SC/ST/OBC enrolment from overall enrolment
- 2) State-wise data for 2022-23 is not available at the time of publication of this report

Notably in Tamil Nadu, the General Category enrolment has been decreasing for several years. Their enrolment decreased by 34% from 8.52 lakhs to 5.62 lakhs between 2010-11 and 2021-22.

Year	General Category Enrolment (including EWS) in Higher Education (in value)
2010-11	8,51,839
2011-12	8,61,658
2012-13	8,98,604
2013-14	8,80,688
2014-15	9,20,473
2015-16	8,22,863
2016-17	7,98,255
2017-18	6,77,944
2018-19	6,28,464
2019-20	7,286,74
2020-21	7,94,549
2021-22	5,61,978

**Source**

- 1) Data for period from 2010-11 has been obtained from Table 14 of the annual AISHE reports by deducting SC/ST/OBC enrolment from overall enrolment.
- 2) Data for the period between 2011-12 and 2021-22 has been obtained from Table 45 of the annual AISHE reports by deducting SC/ST/OBC enrolment from overall enrolment.

## Conclusion

The enrolment of SC/ST/OBCs in higher education has increased consistently year on year between 2010-11 and 2022-23 at an average rate of 1.6% per year. With the given trend, they can be expected to cross two-thirds of the total enrolment in higher education by 2027-28 and three-quarters of the total enrolment by 2035-36. While the overall share of SC/ST/OBC enrolment has been increasing significantly, it is imperative to study the distribution of higher education opportunities within SC/ST/OBCs. There are 1208 castes identified as Scheduled Castes<sup>1</sup>, 730 castes identified as Scheduled Tribes<sup>2</sup> and 2600 castes identified as Other Backward Classes<sup>3</sup>(OBCs) in 2018<sup>3</sup>.

The Government of India constituted the Justice Rohini Commission in 2017. The commission was assigned to investigate the conditions of socially and educationally backward classes and propose steps for their improvement. It had to examine the extent to which there was inequality in the distribution of benefits within reservations and work out criteria and parameters by which sub-categorisation within OBCs can be done. In 2018, the commission analysed more than 130,000 government jobs and admissions to government educational institutes that had the OBC quota.

The commission found that 97% of the reserved jobs and seats had gone to 25% of OBC sub-castes, and only 10 OBC communities had taken 25% of the reserved central jobs and institutional seats. As many as 983 or 37% of the 2,600 communities under the OBC category had zero representation in jobs and institutes, and only 2.68% of the reservation had been used by 994 castes.

Similarly, the findings of this study on enrolment in higher education show that it is highly likely that several castes from the reserved categories have advanced on social, educational and economic parameters and hence the affirmative action should be tailored according to this changed scenario.

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<sup>1</sup>SC Castes <https://socialjustice.gov.in/common/76664>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1887716>

<sup>3</sup>[https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/rohini-commission-decoded-understanding-sub-categorisation-of-obcs-123102600760\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/rohini-commission-decoded-understanding-sub-categorisation-of-obcs-123102600760_1.html)



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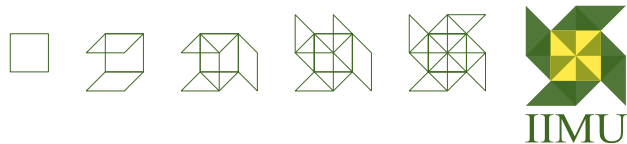
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