

India's rank improved marginally to 129th in Human Development Index report 2019: United Nations

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According to the Human Development Report (HDR), 2019, by United Nations, entitled "Beyond income, beyond averages, beyond today: inequalities in human development in the 21st Century," just as the gap in basic living standards is narrowing for millions of people, the necessities to thrive have evolved. A new generation of inequalities is opening up, around education and around technology and climate change - two seismic shifts that, unchecked, could trigger a 'new great divergence' in society of the kind not seen since the Industrial Revolution.

The HDI is a summary measure for assessing long-term progress in three basic dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, access to knowledge and a decent standard of living. In the Human Development Index, Norway, Switzerland and Ireland held the top three ranks out of 189 countries. India's rank improved marginally to 129th in HDI 2019 from 130th in the previous year.

Rank	Country	Human Development Index (Value)	Life Expectancy at birth (years)	Expected years of schooling (years)	Gross national Income per capita (PPP \$)
1	Norway	0.95	82.3	18.1	68059
2	Switzerland	0.946	83.6	16.2	59375
3	Ireland	0.942	82.1	18.8	55660
4	Germany	0.939	81.2	17.1	46946

5	Hong Kong, China	0.939	84.7	16.5	60221
6	Australia	0.938	83.3	22.1	44097
7	Iceland	0.938	82.9	19.2	47566
8	Sweden	0.937	82.7	18.8	47955
9	Singapore	0.935	83.5	16.3	83793
10	Netherlands	0.933	82.1	18.0	50013
129	India	0.647	69.4	12.3	6829*

Source: PHD Research Bureau, PHDCCI compiled from UN Human Development Report 2019. Note: * Data pertains to 2011

Further, the report analyses inequality in three steps: beyond income, beyond averages, and beyond today. But the problem of inequality is not beyond solutions, it says, proposing a battery of policy options to tackle it.

Thinking beyond income- The 2019 Human Development Index (HDI) and its sister index, the 2019 Inequality-Adjusted Human Development Index, set out that the unequal distribution of education, health and living standards stymied countries' progress. By these measures, 20 per cent of human development progress was lost through inequalities in 2018. The report, therefore, recommends policies that look at but also go beyond income, including: Early childhood and lifelong investment; Productivity; and Public spending and fair taxation.

Looking beyond averages- Averages often hide what is really going on in society, says the HDR, and while they can be helpful in telling a larger story, much more detailed information is needed to create policies to tackle inequality effectively. This is true in tackling the multiple dimensions of poverty, in meeting the needs of those being left furthest behind such as people with disabilities, and in promoting gender equality and empowerment.

Planning beyond today- Looking beyond today, the report asks how inequality may change in future, looking particularly at two seismic shifts that will shape life up to the 22nd century: The climate crisis and Technological transformation.

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