

# **GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TOWARDS THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN IN 2022-23**



February 1, 2022

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF BUDGET 2022-23

	Budget Estimate (in Cr.)		% Change in allocation in FY 2022-23 over FY 2021-22
	2021-2022	2022-23	
<b>Total budget on Children</b>	85,714	92,737	<b>8%</b>
<b>% Budget on Children</b>	<b>2.46%</b>	<b>2.35%</b>	
Ministry of Human Resource and Development	53,603	59,819	<b>12%</b>
Ministry of Women and Child Development	20,401	18,859	<b>-8%</b>
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare	3,722	3,499	<b>-6%</b>
Ministry of Minority Affairs	2,514	2,544	<b>1%</b>
Ministry of Tribal Affairs	1,818	2,419	<b>33%</b>
Ministry Social Justice and Empowerment	2,051	3,993	<b>95%</b>
Ministry of Labour and Employment	120	30	<b>-75%</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>1,483</b>	<b>1,574</b>	<b>6%</b>

## 1. Introduction

The Union Budget gives us an opportunity to look at how the Government prioritises the welfare of children. It is an important tool to assess whether the allocations made under different ministries and/or different programmes cater to the needs of those who are the future of our country and ensure their protection. *A quick analysis of the budget allocated within the Union budget for the welfare of children in the Financial Year (FY) 2022-23 is presented in this report.*

The analysis of union budget allocations has been done in light of the statutory, legal and other policy commitments towards children that have a direct impact on their quality of life and the opportunities available to them. It brings to light the sincerity of policy-makers in prioritising an enabling resource environment for—often overlooked – children.

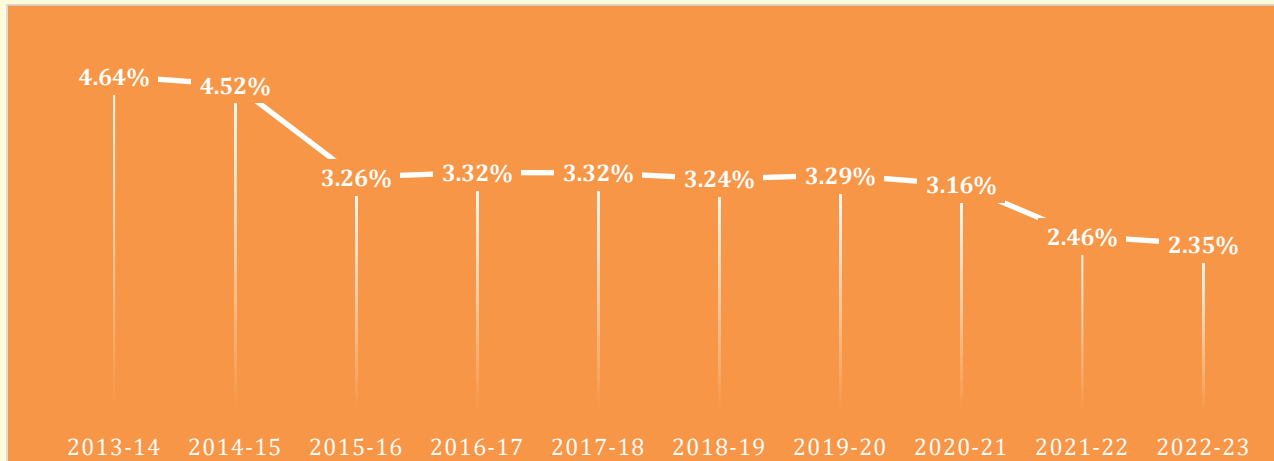
## 2. Data Sources

Till FY 2016-17 the budget allocation for the *welfare of children was presented in Statement 22 reflecting* provisions for expenditure on schemes that are meant substantially for the welfare of children. These provisions indicate education outlays, provisions for the girl child, health, provisions for child protection etc. However, *2017-18 onwards the same was presented under Statement-12*. Besides these, *Budget at a Glance sheet was also used in this report.*

## 3. Union Budget Trends For Welfare of Children In Last 10 Years

Despite the need and demand to focus on child protection issues the budget allocation for children has been inconsistent over the years and showing a declining trend. The trend of Union Budget allocated made for the welfare of children suggests that the percentage of budget allocation to the total Union Budget for the welfare of children was substantially high during FY 2013-14. However, since FY 2014-15, it started to decline and remained almost constant between FY 2015-16 and FY 2019-20. In 2020-21 the percentage share declined marginally. However, the budget presented for the FY 2021-22 revealed a drastic cut in allocation for welfare of children as the percentage of budget allocation to the total Union Budget. The budget continued to maintain the declining trend in FY 2022-23.

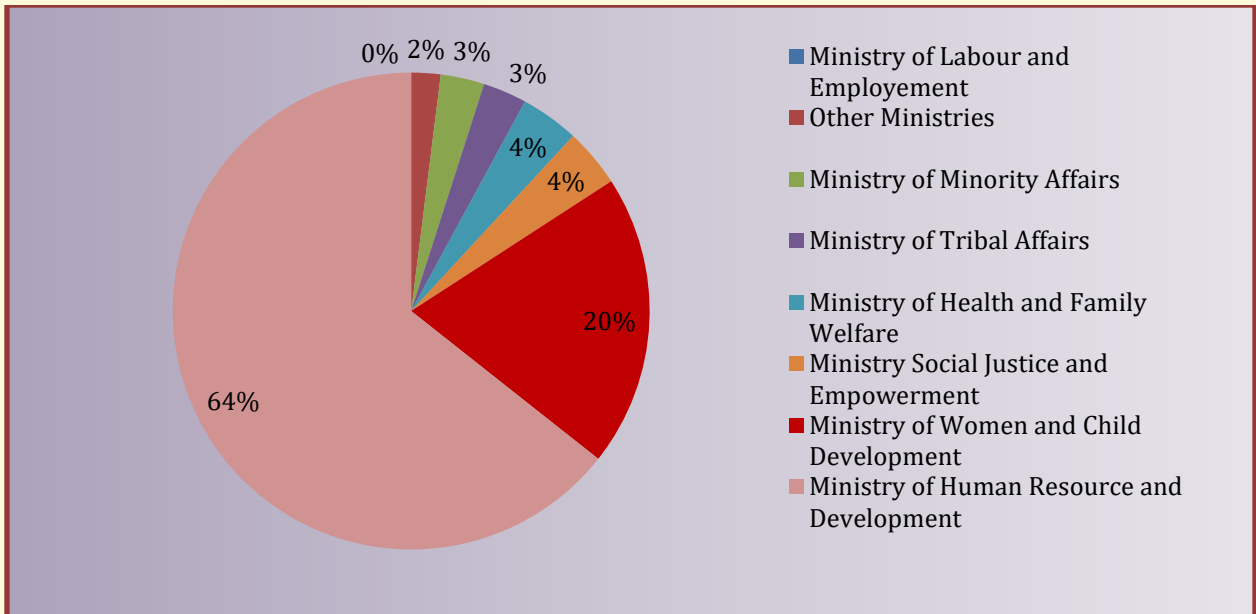
**Figure 1 Percentage share for welfare of children in the Union budget for the last 10 years**



## Salient Features

- The percentage share of the Union budget allocated for the welfare of children during the FY 2022-23 reduced to 2.35% from 2.46% in 2021-22. This is the lowest share of the union budget allocated for the welfare of children since the inception of the Child Budget Statement in 2008.
- In absolute terms, the total budget allocation for the welfare of children has increased by 8%, from INR 85,714 Cr in FY 2021-22 to INR 92,737 Cr. in FY 2022-23. If corrected for inflation, this increase will get reduced.
- It is disheartening to know that while Govt. of India claims that country's economy is recovering and the gross GST collections in January 2022 recorded the highest since the inception of GST, scant attention is paid to the welfare of children. The GST collected in one month, i.e. January'22, was INR 1,40,986 Cr, while the total budget allocated towards the welfare of children for the entire 2022-23 is only INR 92,737 Cr.
- Distribution of the total budget allocated for the welfare of children by different ministries indicates that 64% has been allocated for Education, followed by Child Protection (20%). The budget is allocated for Ministries of Social Justice and Empowerment (4%) and Tribal Affairs (3%).

- **Figure 2 Share of different ministries within union budget of 2022-23 for welfare of children**



- The budget allocated to the Department of School Education, Ministry of Education, has increased by 12%, from INR 53,603 Cr. in FY 2021-22 to INR 59,819 Cr. in FY 2022-23. Allocation to Samarga Shiksha (INR 37,383 Cr.), the flagship programme of the Ministry, has also increased by an impressive 20%, but the decline in allocation to PM Poshan Shakti, the erstwhile National Programme of Mid-Day Meals in Schools, is disturbing. The closure of the Education Scheme for Madrasas and Minorities and 67% decline in PM Innovative Learning Programme (DHURV) are surprised to see the least.
- The budget allocation for the Ministry of Women and Child Development has further reduced by 8%, from INR 20,401 Cr in FY 2020-21 to INR 18,859 Cr in FY 2022-23. On the back of a 20% decline in budget allocation in the previous year (INR 25,516 Cr in FY 2019-20 to INR 20401 in 2020-21), it is disappointing to see the least.
- Allocation for Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0 scheme (integrated nutrition support programme) has also declined by 11%, from INR 19,413 Cr in FY 2021-22 to 17,224 Cr in FY 2022-23, while Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao Abhiyan continues withdrawn. The only saving grace is a massive

64% increase in the budget allocation for Mission Vatsalaya (Child Protection and Child Welfare Services).

- While responding to one of the questions in Lok Sabha, the Ministry of Women and Development on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2021 replied that there was no proposal to sanction special funds to States for the infrastructural development of Anganwadi. However, while acknowledging the importance of child health and nutrition in today's budget speech, the Minister of Finance has announced the up-gradation of two lakh Anganwadi for providing better facilities to women and children, whereas no earmarked budget allocation has been made for this. Such proposals may sound fantastic, but the results are likely to be poor and disappointing.
- With the world facing a health emergency, the need for greater attention to health care infrastructure got highlighted once again. Despite this, the budget allocation for the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has been decreased by 6% over last year's budgetary allocation, i.e. (from INR 3,722 Cr in FY 2021-22 to INR 3,499 Cr in FY 2022-23).
- The budget allocated under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment for the welfare of children has been on a constant increase since the last five years. It has further increased by 95% over FY 2021-22 (From INR 2,051 Cr in FY 2021-22 to INR 3,993 Cr in FY 2022-23).
- Pre-Matric Scholarship for SCs has been decreased by 31% for the FY 2022-23 over the previous year (from INR 725 Cr in FY 2022-22 to INR 500 Cr in FY 2022-23), whereas the Post-Matric Scholarship for SCs increased by 296%, from INR 686 Cr in FY 2021-22 to INR 2,717 Cr in FY 2022-23. While it is commendable that allocation for the Post-Matric Scholarship for SCs has increased substantially, the cut in Pre-Matric Scholarship for SCs is worrisome. Children from marginalised communities for whom this scheme is meant will suffer. Therefore, the cut needs to be restored immediately.
- To enable states to provide supplementary education to children who have lost almost two years of formal education, the 'one class-one TV channel' programme of PM eVIDYA will be expanded from 12 to 200 TV channels in regional languages for classes 1-12. However, considering the fact that

many SCERTs are already conducting classes through TV channels and Doordarshan is carrying out regular classes for secondary and senior secondary students, it is not clear as to how will it be different. Besides, where is the allocation to create high quality e-content?

- Budget allocation for the Ministry of Minority Affairs has witnessed a marginal increase of one percent in FY 2022-23 over FY 2021-22. Allocation for the Merit-cum-Means based Scholarship of the Ministry has increased by 12%, from INR 325 Cr in FY 2021-22 to INR 365 Cr in FY 2022-23, while that for Post Matric Scholarship by 10% (from INR 468 in FY 2021-22 to 515 in FY 2022-23). Unfortunately, Grants-in-Aid to Maulana Azad Education Foundation, which has continuously been promoting education among educational backward minorities through grants-in-aid to NGOs and scholarships to girl students, has almost stopped.
- An analysis of recent years' data indicates a continuous reduction in the budget allocation made for the implementation of the 'National Child Labour Project (NCLP)'. While the allocation reduced from INR 160 Cr in FY 2017-18 to INR 100 Cr in FY 2019-20, it has now reduced by a massive 75%, from INR 120 Cr in FY 2021-22 to merely INR 30 Cr in FY 2022-23. This will make the functioning of 88 operational NCLP districts (out of 324 sanctioned NCLP districts) virtually impossible.
- In 2020, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment launched the *Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan* in 272 most affected districts under the *Scheme for Prevention of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse*. A National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction (NAPDDR) for 2018-2025 has also been prepared for the same. However, budget allocation for NAPDDR stands at INR 16 Cr for FY 2022-23. This is a 20% decrease from the allocation made in the previous FY.
- The welfare of tribal children continues to be a priority as there is an impressive 33% increase in budget allocation for welfare of children under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, from INR 1,818 Cr in FY 2020-21 to INR 2,419 Cr in FY 2022-23. Allocation for Eklayva Model Residential School (EMRS), which increased by 8% during the previous budget, has got a massive boost with a 41% increase, from INR 1418 in FY 2020-21 to INR 2000 in FY 2022-23.

- It was also announced today that a Digital University would be established to provide access to students across the country for world-class quality universal education with a personalised learning experience at their doorsteps. While streamlining the online education for school-going children whose learning was disrupted for the last two years due to the pandemic is a challenge, the establishment of Digital University appears to be a distant dream. Instead of bringing new concepts to the table, the Govt. of India must focus on ensuring basic and quality education to the children.