



7.2.2. Employment (formal and informal)

The Pakistan Labour Force Survey (LFS) 2024-2025 reported that the unemployment rate for Sindh province was at 5.3 %, with a higher rate among women (8.7 %) than men (4.6 %).[2099](#) Out of 17.5 million employed people in Sindh, 13.5 million (77 %) worked in the informal sector, while 4 million (23 %) people were in a formal sector employment. Furthermore, 32 % of youth in Sindh aged 15-24 were 'not in employment, education or training' (NEET), with the rate for females (51.6 %) higher than for males (14.7 %).[2100](#) At Karachi Division level, the 2023 Population & Housing Census, which uses a different definition of 'employment'[2101](#) and is based on a different reference period to the LFS, reported that out of 15.4 million working-age population (aged ten and above), approximately 6 million were employed and 950 000 unemployed. Of the 4.4 million paid employees 87 % were male, 13 % female.[2102](#) Furthermore, 3.4 million (67.1 %) of the age group 15-24 were neither employed nor in education in the urban areas of Karachi Division.[2103](#)

In July 2025, the government of Sindh set a new minimum wage at 40 000 Pakistani rupees [approximately EUR 121.2] per month for unskilled workers.[2104](#) The monthly minimum wage for semi-skilled workers was set at 41 380 Pakistani rupees [approximately EUR 125.3], for skilled workers at 49 628 Pakistani rupees [approximately EUR 150.3], and for highly qualified workers, the minimum wage was set at 51 745 Pakistani rupees [approximately EUR 156.7].[2105](#) According to the WFP, the daily wage for non-qualified labour was 1 478 Pakistani rupees [approximately EUR 4.5] as of February 2026.[2106](#) According to the Economic Survey 2024-25 of the Pakistani Ministry of Finance, between July 2024 and March 2025, the daily wage of an unskilled labourer working in construction was 1 430.09 Pakistani rupees [approximately EUR 4.3] per workday.[2107](#)

According to a 2025 report on labour conditions in textile factories in Faisalabad and Karachi, [2108](#) the estimated monthly living wage in Pakistan varied between 47 416 Pakistani rupees [approximately EUR 143.6] and 75 321 Pakistani rupees [approximately EUR 228.1], while the legal minimum wage at the time of research (up to November 2024) was 37 000 Pakistani rupees [approximately EUR 112.1] and the average wage reported by the interviewed workers was 25 000 Pakistani rupees [approximately EUR 75.7]. A Karachi-based union leader reported that only an estimated five out of 100 factories complied with minimum wage laws. The study also found a gender pay gap, as female workers often received lower pay than male workers for the same numbers of working hours and the same tasks.[2109](#)

For another report on the working conditions at export-oriented garment manufacturers in Karachi and Lahore, published in 2025,[2110](#) 66 workers were interviewed in Karachi, of whom the majority declared that they worked between 57 and 70 hours a week, exceeding the legal limit of 56 hours.[2111](#)

- [2099](#)

Pakistan, PBS, Pakistan Labour Force Survey 2024-2025, September 2025, [url](#), p. 105

- [2100](#)

Pakistan, PBS, Pakistan Labour Force Survey 2024-2025, September 2025, [url](#), pp. 54, 101-102

- [2101](#)

For example, employment is defined by the LFS as ‘all persons ten years of age and over who worked at least one hour during the reference period [past week] and were either “paid employed” or “self-employed”’ (Pakistan, PBS, Pakistan Labour Force Survey 2024-2025, September 2025, [url](#), pp. VI-VII), whereas the 2023 Census defines it as ‘an activity in which an individual works regularly [reference: past one year] for another person and gets remunerated in return’ (Pakistan, PBS, 7th Population & Housing Census – 2023 – National Census Report, August 2024, [url](#), p. 157).

- [2102](#)

Pakistan, PBS, 7th Population & Housing Census 2023 – Detailed Results, Table 14 – Sindh, Province Wise, n.d., [url](#)

- [2103](#)

Pakistan, PBS, 7th Population & Housing Census 2023 – Dashboard, n.d., [url](#). Set filters to Karachi Division, accessed on 17 February 2026

- [2104](#)

Pakistan, DG Labour Government of Sindh, The Sindh Minimum Wages Board convened a meeting today, 24th July 2025, n.d., [url](#); Dawn, Sindh fixes Rs40,000 as minimum wage, 8 July 2025, [url](#)

- [2105](#)

Pakistan, Government of Sindh Labour & H.R. Department, Notification, 28 July 2025, [url](#); Pakistan, DG Labour Government of Sindh, The Sindh Minimum Wages Board convened a meeting today, 24th July 2025, n.d., [url](#)

- [2106](#)

WFP, Data Visualized, Pakistan-Prices, Commodities in the selected Market(s), last updated February 2026, [url](#). Set filters to Karachi/ Wage

- [2107](#)

Pakistan, Ministry of Finance, Pakistan Economic Survey 2024-25, n.d., [url](#), p. 147

- [2108](#)

For the report, 12 in-depth interviews and eight focus group discussions were conducted with factory workers in Faisalabad and Karachi in January-June 2023 and November 2024. Swedwatch and Awaz

- [2109](#)

Swedwatch and Awaz

- [2110](#)

For the report interviews with 124 workers in Lahore and Karachi took place, of which 66 were workers in Karachi, between January and October 2024. Arisa, Overworked and Underpaid: Excessive hours, wage theft and poor working conditions in Pakistan's garment export factories, July 2025, [url](#), pp. 6-7

- [2111](#)

Arisa, Overworked and Underpaid: Excessive hours, wage theft and poor working conditions in Pakistan's garment export factories, July 2025, [url](#), pp. 27, 29