



7.2.5. Housing and living conditions

According to the 2023 Population & Housing Census, 94.2 % of the houses in Karachi Division were qualified as brick-build *pacca* houses.[2126](#) The DVIP report stated that Karachi South district had the lowest number of mud and sheet-build *katcha* or *semi-pacca* houses[2127](#) with 2.6 %, in contrast to Malir district, with 8.7 %.[2128](#) Furthermore the 2023 Population & Housing Census noted that 63.6 % of the households had access to drinking water inside the house.[2129](#) Around 2.7 million out of 3.4 million (79.9 %) households had a separate washroom, while 92 000 households (2.7 %) had no washroom. 81.2 % of households were equipped with a 'separate toilet', but 1.3 % of households did not have a toilet at all.[2130](#) Approximately 21 % of households had only one room.[2131](#) The percentage of households with only one room varied among the Karachi districts between 16.3 % (Karachi East) and 32.8 % (Malir).[2132](#) In each of Karachi's districts, 80 % or more households used electricity as a source of lightening.[2133](#)

Several articles described the impact of Karachi's population growth on the city's resources[2134](#) and access to affordable housing, which in particular affected low- and middle-income groups.[2135](#) 60 % of Karachi's residents lived in *katchi abadis* (informal settlements).[2136](#) In November 2024, the Public Accounts Committee of the Sindh Assembly declared that 582 *katchi abadis* (informal settlement) existed in Karachi.[2137](#)

The overcrowded living conditions in unsafe constructions have led to incidents of collapsing roofs and buildings.[2138](#) In May 2025, the Sindh government announced that Orangi Town, the largest informal settlement in Karachi, had been regularised and was no longer classified as *katchi abadis*, alongside a planned investment of 7 billion Pakistani rupees [approximately EUR 21.2 million] for its development.[2139](#)

According to a study on water and sanitation in informal settlements in Karachi, conducted in 2023,[2140](#) *katchi abadis* were characterised by poor or no access to piped water and sanitation. However, access to water and sanitation varied a lot among the settlements.[2141](#) All settlements had a high disease burden based on waterborne infections.[2142](#) Furthermore, informal settlements were reportedly more vulnerable to climate hazards such as flooding[2143](#) and heatwaves.[2144](#) Karachi's water infrastructure was outdated and in need of repair;[2145](#) some sources described the situation as a water 'crisis'[2146](#) or 'acute water shortage'.[2147](#) The city held a water deficit as the demand for water was at 1 200 million gallons (approximately 4.5 billion litres) daily as of December 2025, but received only 650 million gallons (approximately 2.4 billion litres) from the river Indus and Hub Dam.[2148](#) The governmental organisation Karachi Water and Sewerage Board is responsible for the allocation of water in the city.[2149](#) However,

due to lacking water pipes and water theft, many residents could not rely on the public system but depended on private water tankers.[2150](#) The access to water varied among the districts. In some areas of the Shah Faisal Colony, water was accessible for one or two hours every three days, in most other Karachi settlements water did not arrive for six months or more.[2151](#)

- [2126](#)

Pakistan, PBS, 7th Population & Housing Census 2023 – Detailed Results, Table 20 – Sindh, Province Wise, n.d., [url](#)

- [2127](#)

For a more detailed explanation of *pacca*, *semi pacca* and *katcha* see section 7.1.5. Housing and living conditions.

- [2128](#)

Population Council, District Vulnerability Index for Pakistan (DVIP): Harnessing Multisectoral Data to Inform Equitable Policy and Climate Action, October 2025, [url](#), p. 59

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Pakistan, PBS, 7th Population & Housing Census 2023 – Detailed Results, Table 23 – Sindh, Province Wise, n.d., [url](#)

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Pakistan, PBS, 7th Population & Housing Census – 2023 – Provincial Census Report Sindh, n.d., [url](#), pp. 104-105

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Ebrahim, Z.T., Unseen and unheard: Women in Karachi's *katchi abadis* remain outside discussion on climate change, Heinrich Böll Stiftung, 27 January 2025, [url](#)

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Shakir, M. and Sarfaraz, S., The urban squeeze: How unregulated housing densification is destroying Karachi's neighbourhoods, Dawn, 30 May 2025, [url](#)

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Khan, H.F., Why do some informal settlements fare better than others? A mixed-methods analysis of water and sanitation inequities across informal settlements, 19 February 2025, [url](#), pp. 11-12, 14

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ACAPS, Pakistan: Key crisis to watch, 12 June 2025, [url](#), p. 9

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Khan, N. and Dilawar, I., As Karachi heats up, class and access divide city into a 'climate apartheid', Arab News, 5 July 2025, [url](#); Toheed, M., Heat Inequality: A big challenge for Karachi, Geo News, 30 May 2024, [url](#)

- [2145](#)

Hashmi, M.S., Growing Water Scarcity and Climate Change in Pakistan: An Analysis of Urban Resilience and Water Infrastructure of Karachi, 6 March 2025, [url](#), p. 1475

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Express Tribune (The), Two decades on, Karachi still waiting for K-IV water supply, 16 December 2025, [url](#)

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