



# Gallup Pakistan Welfare Index Report

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Gallup Pakistan Analysis of the 7th Population  
Census of Pakistan 2023



## PRESS RELEASE

### Gallup Pakistan Analysis of the 7th Population Census of Pakistan 2023

Regional Disparities plague Pakistan's recent growth trajectory: Islamabad holds the highest welfare index score of 819 out of 900 while Kohlu and Sujawal are at the bottom with 269 –

### **Gallup Pakistan Welfare Index Report based on Population Census 2023**

*Islamabad, April 16th, 2025*

Gallup Pakistan, as part of its Big Data Analysis initiative, is looking at Gallup Pakistan Welfare Index Report, a composite index designed using various indicators available in the latest Population Census 2023.

The broader Big Data Analysis Initiative series' main aim is to provide data. Implications of these data points for development sector as well as wider socio-political ramifications is something we would like to trigger in relevant circles.

Main messages emerging from this report:

1. The report highlights a stark geographic divide in welfare, with districts closer to Islamabad showing significantly higher scores, while those farther away—particularly in Balochistan and western KP—lag considerably behind.
2. Punjab and Islamabad dominate the country's welfare rankings. Of the top 10 most endowed districts, nine are from Punjab or Islamabad, with Karachi being the only exception.
3. Even within Punjab, a North-South divide persists. North and Central Punjab outperform the national average, while South Punjab's indicators align more closely with less-developed regions.
4. These disparities raise serious concerns about the sustainability of Pakistan's growth. Uneven access to the benefits of development may deepen social and political tensions, particularly in areas like Balochistan and KP.

# Gallup Pakistan Welfare Index Report

Gallup Pakistan Analysis of the 7th Population Census of Pakistan 2023

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## Districts with the Lowest Welfare Index

The welfare index for the bottom 10 districts ranges from **269 to 321** - at the bottom of the list are Kohlu and Sujawal, both scoring the lowest welfare index of **269**.

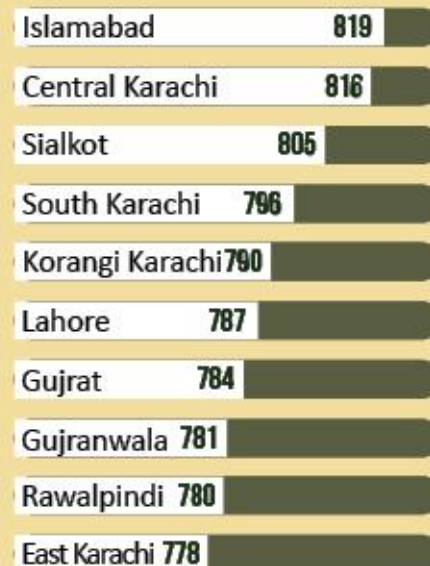


Washuk and Dera Bugti (**288**), Kolai Palas Kohistan (**292**) and Kohistan Upper (**294**) follow in the list of bottom 10 districts.



## Districts with the Highest Welfare Index

The top 10 districts have welfare scores ranging from 778 to 819 – these districts are located in Punjab, Islamabad, and Sindh (Karachi).



Islamabad holds the highest welfare index at **819**, followed by Central Karachi (**816**), Sialkot (**805**), South Karachi (**796**) and Korangi Karachi (**790**).



## Key Findings

1. At the national level, the average Gallup Welfare Index score is **610 out of 900**.
2. The top 10 districts have welfare scores ranging from 778 to 819 – these districts are located in Punjab, Islamabad, and Sindh (Karachi).
3. Islamabad holds the highest welfare index at 819, followed by Central Karachi (816), Sialkot (805), South Karachi (796) and Korangi Karachi (790).
4. The welfare index for the bottom 10 districts ranges from 269 to 321 - at the bottom of the list are Kohlu and Sujawal, both scoring the lowest welfare index of 269.
5. Washuk and Dera Bugti (288), Kolai Palas Kohistan (292) and Kohistan Upper (294) follow in the list of bottom 10 districts.

## How is the Gallup Pakistan Welfare Index Constructed ?

The welfare score is a composite index developed using nine key indicators that collectively offer a multidimensional snapshot of household and population well-being in Pakistan. These indicators are grounded in data from the 7th Population and Housing Census of Pakistan (2023) and are each normalized to a scale of 0 to 100. Together, they yield a cumulative score out of a maximum of 900, offering an overarching measure of welfare across regions.

The nine parameters used to calculate the welfare score are as follows:

1. Attended School – Represents the percentage of individuals who have ever attended school.
2. Literacy – Reflects the proportion of the population that is able to read and write.
3. Primary Enrolment – Indicates the share of children enrolled in primary school.
4. Functional Ability – Captures data on individuals without reported disabilities, as a proxy for health and physical functioning.
5. Electricity Access – Measures the proportion of households with access to electricity.
6. Less Firewood Usage – Highlights the reliance on cleaner energy sources by capturing the inverse of households using firewood for cooking.
7. No Kacha Houses – Assesses housing quality, with higher scores for areas having fewer temporary or mud houses.
8. Toilet Facility – Evaluates sanitation access by counting households with in-house toilet facilities.
9. Kitchen Facility – Reflects access to basic infrastructure through the presence of a dedicated kitchen space in the household.

Each of these indicators touches on a critical aspect of welfare, ranging from education and health to infrastructure and housing. The inclusion of both individual and household-level parameters enables a more holistic understanding of well-being, beyond traditional income or poverty measures.



Source: 7<sup>th</sup> Population Census of Pakistan 2023, visualization by Gallup Pakistan  
<https://galluppakistan.digitalanalytics.com/>

Pakistan's total population, as recorded in the 2023 census, stands at approximately 241 million people across 38 million households. At the national level, the average welfare score is **610 out of 900**, suggesting that while many households have access to key welfare-related services and infrastructure, substantial gaps remain in achieving universal standards.

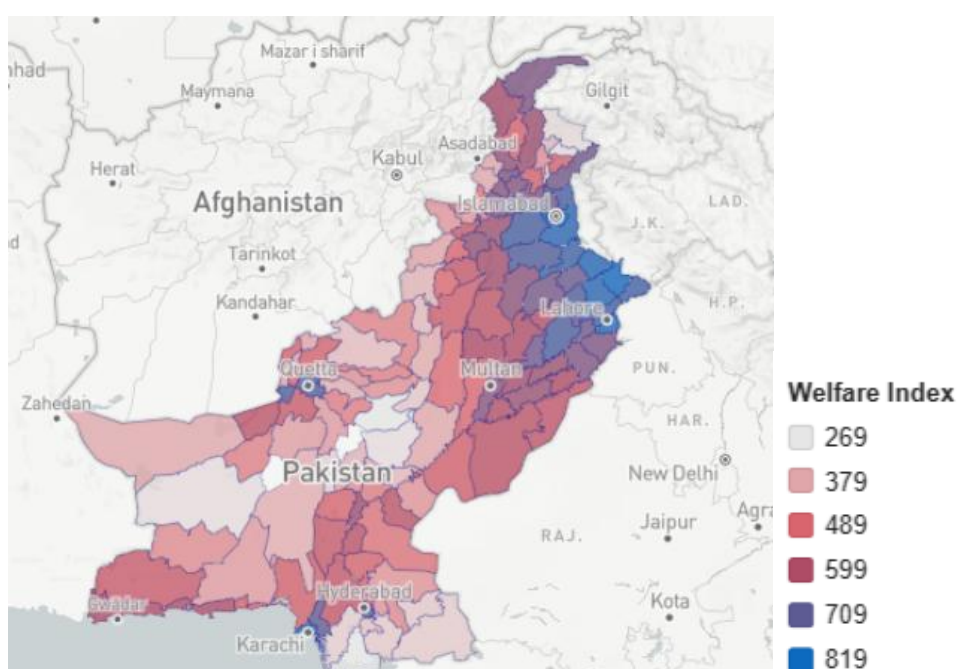
A score of 610 indicates that, on average, most regions are performing moderately well on several indicators—particularly those related to infrastructure like electricity and toilet access—but there are likely disparities in areas such as educational attainment, health, or housing quality. The data hints at uneven development, with some indicators pulling the national average down more significantly than others.

## Regional Disparities and Geographic Trends

When visualized geographically, the distribution of welfare scores reveals a striking spatial inequality. The highest scores are concentrated in the northern half of the country, especially in Islamabad and districts across northern and central Punjab, where composite scores exceed 700 out of 900. This suggests higher literacy rates, better school attendance, wider electricity coverage, and more robust household infrastructure in these areas.

In contrast, the lowest welfare scores—below 400—are found in Balochistan and the western parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). These figures point to significant deprivation across multiple dimensions, including limited access to formal education, poor infrastructure, and inadequate housing conditions. The rugged terrain, lower population density, and historical underinvestment in these provinces likely contribute to their lower scores.

This regional variation underscores the importance of location as a determinant of welfare in Pakistan. It also highlights the need for targeted policy interventions that address the specific needs of lagging districts—especially in terms of access to basic services such as education, clean energy, sanitation, and disability support.



Source: 7<sup>th</sup> Population Census of Pakistan 2023, visualization by Gallup Pakistan  
<https://galluppakistandigitalanalytics.com/>

## Implications for Policy and Development Planning

The welfare score provides valuable insights for both government and development stakeholders seeking to allocate resources efficiently and equitably. It serves as an evidence-

based tool to identify areas requiring urgent attention and allows for monitoring progress over time.

Key takeaways include:

- **Education and Literacy:** Continued investment in educational infrastructure, teacher training, and school access is essential, particularly in provinces with low school attendance and literacy rates.
- **Housing and Sanitation:** Programs aimed at improving housing quality and expanding access to in-home sanitation facilities can uplift welfare scores rapidly.
- **Energy Access and Sustainability:** Reducing dependence on firewood through the promotion of cleaner energy solutions not only improves welfare outcomes but also contributes to environmental sustainability.

## Districts with the Highest Welfare Index

The top 10 districts have welfare scores ranging from 778 to 819, indicating strong performance across multiple indicators of human and household well-being. These districts are located in Punjab, Islamabad, and Sindh (Karachi), reinforcing earlier observations that northern and urbanized regions tend to outperform others in terms of welfare outcomes. The consistency across many indicators, particularly infrastructure-related ones, suggests a correlation between urban development and higher welfare.

| District        | Welfare Index | Attended School | Literacy | Primary Enrolment | Functional Ability | Electricity Access | Less Firewood Usage | No Kacha Houses | Toilet Facility | Kitchen Facility |
|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|----------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Islamabad       | 819           | 97              | 98       | 93                | 58                 | 92                 | 88                  | 99              | 99              | 95               |
| Central Karachi | 816           | 90              | 97       | 78                | 59                 | 93                 | 100                 | 100             | 100             | 99               |
| Sialkot         | 805           | 99              | 90       | 99                | 60                 | 93                 | 84                  | 98              | 97              | 85               |
| South Karachi   | 796           | 84              | 90       | 72                | 61                 | 92                 | 99                  | 100             | 100             | 98               |
| Korangi Karachi | 790           | 78              | 92       | 60                | 68                 | 93                 | 100                 | 99              | 99              | 100              |
| Lahore          | 787           | 88              | 92       | 77                | 58                 | 89                 | 95                  | 99              | 98              | 91               |
| Gujrat          | 784           | 97              | 94       | 93                | 50                 | 89                 | 75                  | 99              | 97              | 90               |
| Gujranwala      | 781           | 91              | 88       | 83                | 59                 | 93                 | 88                  | 99              | 98              | 81               |
| Rawalpindi      | 780           | 95              | 97       | 89                | 40                 | 86                 | 81                  | 99              | 98              | 95               |
| East Karachi    | 778           | 81              | 92       | 69                | 58                 | 86                 | 97                  | 98              | 98              | 98               |

Source: 7<sup>th</sup> Population Census of Pakistan 2023, analysis by Gallup Pakistan

<https://galluppakistandigitalanalytics.com/>

Islamabad holds the highest welfare index at 819, demonstrating well-rounded development across all indicators. Literacy (98) and school attendance (97) are both high, and access to infrastructure is impressive, with electricity coverage at 92 and alternatives to firewood at 88. However, functional ability is relatively low (58), which may be due to reporting standards or demographic composition (e.g., aging population or more accurate reporting of disability).

Central Karachi follows closely with a welfare index of 816. Although primary enrolment is low at 78, it scores very high in infrastructure, achieving a perfect 100 in kacha-free housing, toilet facilities, and kitchen facilities. This highlights a trend common in Karachi districts—strong infrastructure but some educational and health-related gaps.

Sialkot ranks third with a welfare score of 805, marked by near-perfect scores in education indicators—99 in school attendance and primary enrolment, and 90 in literacy. However, functional ability (60) shows room for improvement. Sialkot's performance demonstrates the benefits of educational investment in mid-sized industrial cities.

South Karachi has a score of 796, showing similar patterns to Central Karachi: relatively lower primary enrolment (72) and functional ability (61), but excellent access to household facilities—scoring 100 on the housing quality and toilet facility access, with an impress 98 in kitchen access metrics.

Korangi Karachi also scores 790, with some variation across indicators. Primary enrolment is lower (60), but this is offset by exceptional infrastructure, including 99 on the kacha housing index and toilet facility, and 100 on no firewood usage. Functional ability (68) is higher than many other top districts.

Lahore, with a welfare score of 787, presents a relatively balanced profile. Educational indicators are moderate (scoring 88 in school attendance, 92 in literacy, 77 in enrolment), but infrastructure indicators are consistently strong: 95–98 across cooking fuel, sanitation, and housing. Functional ability (58) remains on the lower side.

Gujrat (score 784) excels in education: 97 attendance, 94 literacy, 93 enrolment, though functional ability is 50, suggesting possible underinvestment in health-related facilities. The use of firewood is higher (25) compared to some other districts.

Gujranwala, scoring 781, mirrors Gujrat in many ways—high education levels, decent electricity access (93), and slightly lower scores in no firewood usage (81), the second lowest among the top 10 after Gujrat. This may reflect energy constraints in densely populated urban neighborhoods.

Rawalpindi, with a welfare index of 780, has strong education scores (95 in attendance, 97 in literacy, 89 in enrolment) and generally strong infrastructure, though less firewood usage is slightly lower (81). Functional ability (40) is the lowest among the top 10 districts.

East Karachi, with a score of 778, rounds out the list. Although primary enrolment (69) is among the lowest in the top 10, the district scores very high in household infrastructure: 98 across the final three indicators. This reinforces the trend seen across Karachi's districts—good basic infrastructure, but mixed education and health indicators.

## Districts with Lowest Welfare Index

| District             | Welfare Index | Attended School | Literacy | Primary Enrolment | Functional Ability | Electricity Access | Less Firewood Usage | No Kacha Houses | Toilet Facility | Kitchen Facility |
|----------------------|---------------|-----------------|----------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Kohlu                | 269           | 62              | 66       | 63                | 37                 | 18                 | 2                   | 4               | 9               | 9                |
| Sujawal              | 269           | 13              | 16       | 16                | 72                 | 27                 | 22                  | 24              | 42              | 38               |
| Washuk               | 288           | 19              | 8        | 26                | 72                 | 24                 | 16                  | 7               | 47              | 69               |
| Dera Bugti           | 288           | 15              | 12       | 18                | 94                 | 31                 | 36                  | 24              | 30              | 28               |
| Kolai Palas Kohistan | 292           | 1               | 4        | 0                 | 81                 | 11                 | 26                  | 33              | 65              | 72               |
| Kohistan Upper       | 294           | 5               | 5        | 6                 | 66                 | 16                 | 20                  | 58              | 54              | 64               |
| Jhal Magsi           | 309           | 25              | 20       | 32                | 68                 | 39                 | 20                  | 18              | 57              | 31               |
| Thatta               | 313           | 12              | 16       | 9                 | 64                 | 39                 | 24                  | 44              | 44              | 61               |
| Tharparkar           | 315           | 32              | 29       | 34                | 68                 | 16                 | 14                  | 29              | 32              | 61               |
| Badin                | 321           | 32              | 30       | 30                | 73                 | 37                 | 21                  | 30              | 39              | 29               |

Source: 7<sup>th</sup> Population Census of Pakistan 2023, analysis by Gallup Pakistan

<https://galluppakistandigitalanalytics.com/>

The lowest-performing districts show alarmingly low outcomes across almost all welfare indicators—especially in education, access to infrastructure, and basic household amenities. The welfare index ranges from 269 (Kohlu, Sujawal) to 321 (Badin), all significantly below

the national composite score of 610. These districts suffer from poor access to electricity, sanitation, education, and clean cooking fuels, which cumulatively result in significantly depressed welfare scores.

At the bottom of the list are Kohlu and Sujawal, both scoring the lowest welfare index of 269. Kohlu demonstrates relatively better educational indicators among its peers, with scores of 62 in the attended school and a 66 in the literacy metrics. However, these modest education statistics are overshadowed by a near-total lack of basic services. Access to electricity scores only 18, and just 2 in cleaner alternatives to firewood for cooking. Sanitation and housing conditions are equally dire, with scores of only 4 in kacha-free housing and 9 in having toilet or kitchen facilities.

Sujawal tells a different yet equally concerning story. It is one of the worst-performing districts in terms of education, scoring just 13 in school attendance and 16 in literacy and primary enrolment. Despite a relatively high functional ability score of 72, access to essential facilities remains dismal. The district scores only 24 in kacha-free housing, and just 22 in less firewood usage.

Washuk, with a welfare score of 288, exhibits one of the lowest literacy scores in the country at just 8 points. School attendance stands at 19, and electricity access is limited to 24. While toilet facilities metric is scored at 47 and kitchen access at 69—figures that are high compared to other districts on this list—these are not enough to offset the deep gaps in education and energy access.

Dera Bugti also has a welfare score of 288 and slightly higher educational outcomes than Washuk, scoring 18 in primary enrolment and 12 in literacy. It is notable for having the highest functional ability score among all bottom ten districts at 94. However, electricity access scores remain low at 31, and sanitation indicators are equally bleak, with toilet facility access scoring only 30. The functional ability figure might reflect a healthier demographic profile or differences in how disability is reported, but it does little to mitigate the impact of poor infrastructure.

Kolai Palas Kohistan, with a welfare index of 292, is particularly alarming when it comes to education. The district has the lowest literacy score of all, at just 1 point, scoring only 4 in school attendance. Nevertheless, it scores surprisingly high in functional ability (81), and more than 50 toilet and kitchen facility access. This discrepancy suggests that while health-related functioning may be relatively preserved, broader developmental indicators remain severely compromised.

Kohistan Upper, with a welfare index of 294, reflects a similar trend of extreme educational deprivation, with scores of only 5 in literacy and school attendance. Though somewhat better than its counterparts in housing and sanitation—with scores of 58 in kacha-free houses and 64 toilet access—the overall development picture remains bleak. The data indicates that even minimal educational opportunities are lacking, which has long-term implications for intergenerational poverty.

Jhal Magsi, scoring 309, appears to be slightly better off in relative terms. Education outcomes are still low, with 25 in school attendance and 20 in literacy. However, sanitation and infrastructure access are marginally better. Electricity reaches 37, and toilet facilities receives

a score of 57. These figures position Jhal Magsi as a district in transition—still underdeveloped but with potential for improvement if interventions are effectively targeted

Thatta, with a welfare index of 313, exhibits poor outcomes across all domains. Education levels are low, with 12 points in school attendance and 16 in literacy. Infrastructure indicators are also weak; only 39 points for electricity, and 44 for toilet facilities. However, households with kitchen facilities receive a score of 61, suggesting some progress in domestic infrastructure.

Tharparkar, at 315, is notable for showing somewhat better educational outcomes compared to others in this cohort, scoring 32 in school attendance, 29 in literacy, and 34 in enrolment. Nevertheless, other indicators such as clean cooking fuel usage (14) and sanitation (32) remain extremely poor. These figures reflect the compounded challenges of desert geography, poverty, and limited infrastructure investment.

Finally, Badin, with the highest welfare index among this group at 321, demonstrates relatively balanced—though still subpar—indicators. Educational attainment remains low, with literacy and enrolment metrics scoring 30 each, but the district performs somewhat better in terms of electricity access (37), sanitation (39), and housing (30). Although still part of the bottom ten, Badin stands out for outperforming the worst-ranked districts across multiple indicators, hinting at uneven development within the same geographical region.

Across the board, the most glaring and consistent deficit is in education. Several districts report literacy and school attendance scores in the single digits, such as Kolai Palas Kohistan (1 in literacy) and Kohistan Upper (5). These figures suggest an almost complete lack of formal education infrastructure in some areas, likely driven by geographical remoteness, inadequate public services, and cultural barriers. Electricity access is similarly poor, often scored below 40, with districts like Kolai Palas (11) and Kohlu (18) among the worst. Sanitation, cooking fuel, and kitchen access are all extremely limited, pointing to poor housing conditions and systemic neglect in service delivery.

Interestingly, many of these districts report relatively high functional ability scores, often above 65. Dera Bugti, for instance, stands at 94, and Kolai Palas at 81. This discrepancy could reflect a demographic composition skewed toward younger, able-bodied individuals or potential inconsistencies in disability reporting. Regardless, it highlights the disconnect between physical ability and access to essential services.

These ten districts represent the most urgent need for development intervention in Pakistan. Their consistent underperformance across nearly every welfare indicator underscores the structural inequalities that exist between urban and rural regions, particularly those in the peripheries of national policymaking. The data demands a strategic, locally contextualized response—especially in sectors such as education, energy access, and sanitation—to uplift the millions of people living in these deprived regions. Addressing these gaps is not only a moral imperative but also essential for achieving inclusive and sustainable national development.

The Welfare Score offers a valuable lens through which to assess the quality of life across Pakistan's diverse regions. While districts like Islamabad, Central Karachi, and Sialkot showcase strong performance across multiple indicators—particularly in education and infrastructure—others such as Kohlu, Sujawal, and Kolai Palas Kohistan reflect deep-rooted developmental challenges. The findings underscore the urgent need for targeted interventions

in education, sanitation, energy access, and housing, especially in the most deprived areas. By prioritizing investments based on localized welfare data, policymakers and development stakeholders can ensure that future growth is both inclusive and sustainable, bridging the persistent geographic and social divides that continue to shape Pakistan's development landscape.

## What is the Big Data Analysis Series by Gallup?

Gallup Pakistan's Big Data series was started by Bilal I Gilani, Executive Director of Gallup Pakistan. Bilal explains the rationale of the series: *"The usual complaint from academics and policy makers is that Pakistan does not have data availability. Our experience negates that. Pakistan has lots of data, but it is not available in a usable form and not widely accessible. At Gallup we plan to bridge this gap in terms of accessibility and use of data. The Gallup Big Data series has earlier worked with data sets such as [PSLM](#), [Labour Force Survey](#), and [Economic Survey reports](#) as well as [National Census Reports](#) and [Election Commission Data sets](#). The current series is using the [7th Population Census of Pakistan 2023 dashboard](#), which provides a variety of demographic statistics. We hope that these series are useful, and we welcome both feedback as well as possible collaborations as we create a public good in the form of useful data sets in Pakistan."*

## Wish to Contribute to Gallup Big Data Analysis?

Gallup Pakistan is looking for collaboration with researchers to expand the Big Data Analysis project. If you have any ideas, please write to Bilal I Gilani, Project Director, Big Data Analysis at Gallup Pakistan.

## Wish to know more about the 7th Population Census of Pakistan 2023?

The Gallup Pakistan 7th Population Census of Pakistan 2023 Dashboard presents an in-depth district and tehsil level analysis of demographic and housing data, covering key factors such as population distribution, age breakdowns, urbanization trends, household structures, literacy and living conditions across various regions.

You can find more information on the 7th Population Census of Pakistan at:

<https://www.galluppakistandigitalanalytics.com/>

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