

Gallup Pakistan Analysis of
Economic Census 2024

Share of Establishments by Province



PRESS RELEASE

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Punjab Hosts Over 60% of Pakistan's Establishments – Regional Imbalances Persist

Islamabad, September 12th, 2025

Gallup Pakistan, as part of its Big Data Analysis initiative, presents the second release in its series on the Economic Census 2023/24, conducted by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). This release highlights the provincial distribution of Pakistan's 7.14 million economic establishments, underscoring both economic concentration and regional disparities.

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 [Global Burden of Disease dataset](#), which provides a variety of health-related 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."*

What data points this current edition covers:

The Economic Census provides, for the first time, a detailed provincial breakdown of all establishments. This distribution is crucial for policymakers and researchers to understand regional economic strengths, disparities, and opportunities.

Gallup Pakistan analysis of Pakistan Economic Census 2024

Punjab Hosts Over 60% of Pakistan's Establishments – Regional Imbalances Persist

PUNJAB:



**4.36 million
Establishments**

Punjab hosts 4.36 million establishments, accounting for **61.1%** of the national total, against **52%** of Pakistan's population. Density stands at ~32 establishments per 1,000 people. Punjab is the most diversified economy, balancing trade, manufacturing, and services.

KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA:



**1 million
Establishments**

KP has 1.00 million establishments (**14%**) for **17%** of the population, at a density of ~23 per 1,000. It is heavily reliant on retail shops and household-driven businesses.

SINDH:



**1.39 million
Establishments**

Sindh contains 1.39 million establishments (**19.4%**) with **23%** of the national population. Its density is ~27 per 1,000 people. Sindh is a commercial hub, with strong trade and industry presence.

BALUCHISTAN:



**303,000
Establishments**

Balochistan's 303k establishments (**4.2%**) are well below its **6%** population share, with just ~18 per 1,000. Economic activity is narrow, concentrated in agriculture-linked and retail units.

ICT, though small in absolute numbers (**86k, 1.2%**), has the highest density at ~43 per 1,000 people, well above its **1%** share of population. It is strongly service-oriented, with education, health, and financial institutions dominating.

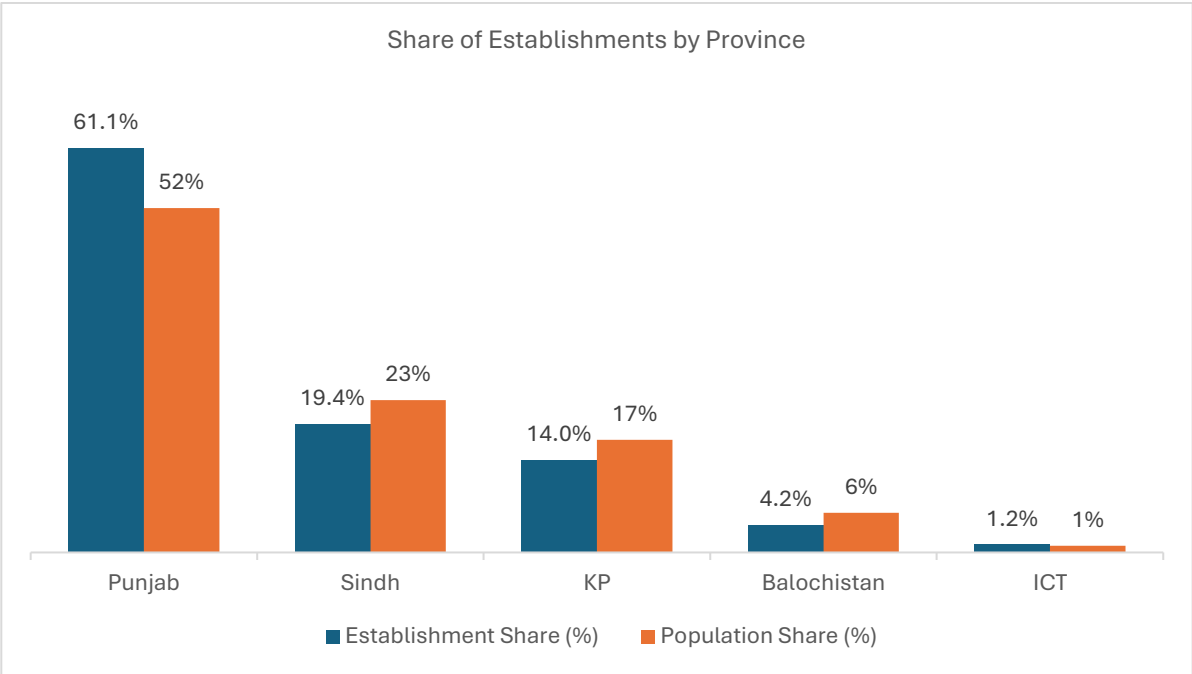
Key Findings:

1. Punjab hosts 4.36 million establishments, accounting for 61.1% of the national total, against 52% of Pakistan's population. Density stands at ~32 establishments per 1,000 people. Punjab is the most diversified economy, balancing trade, manufacturing, and services.
2. Sindh contains 1.39 million establishments (19.4%) with 23% of the national population. Its density is ~27 per 1,000 people. Sindh is a commercial hub, with strong trade and industry presence.
3. KP has 1.00 million establishments (14%) for 17% of the population, at a density of ~23 per 1,000. It is heavily reliant on retail shops and household-driven businesses.
4. Balochistan's 303k establishments (4.2%) are well below its 6% population share, with just ~18 per 1,000. Economic activity is narrow, concentrated in agriculture-linked and retail units.
5. ICT, though small in absolute numbers (86k, 1.2%), has the highest density at ~43 per 1,000 people, well above its 1% share of population. It is strongly service-oriented, with education, health, and financial institutions dominating.

1. Share of Establishments by Province

Punjab’s Establishment Share Exceeds Its Population Weight, While KP and Balochistan Lag Behind

Punjab dominates Pakistan’s business landscape with over 60% of all establishments, reflecting both its population size and economic centrality. This concentration highlights Punjab’s role as the country’s industrial and agricultural powerhouse, where trade, manufacturing, and services converge. Sindh, with nearly one-fifth of establishments, benefits heavily from Karachi’s role as Pakistan’s financial and commercial hub. KP, though smaller in absolute terms, contributes a significant 14% — showing the growing importance of small-scale retail and services in the province. In stark contrast, Balochistan accounts for just 4.2%, underscoring persistent structural underdevelopment despite its large geographic size. ICT, with only 1.2%, is small in scale but strategically significant as a service and governance center.



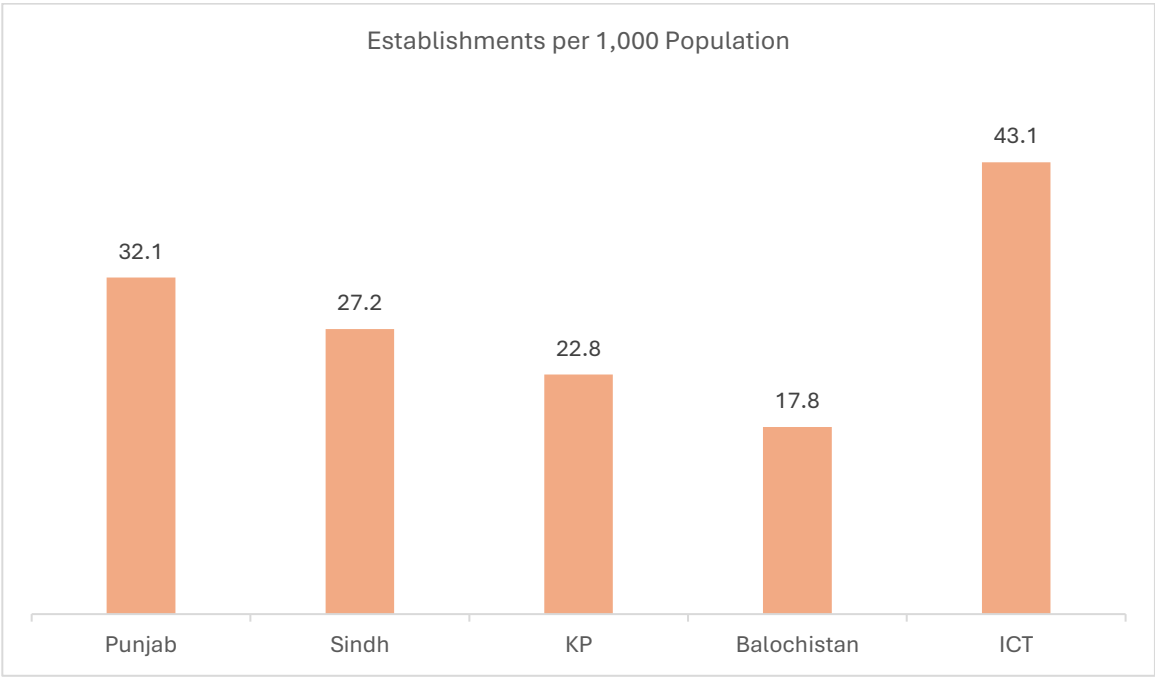
Source: Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Economic Census 2024 – Main Findings Report

Punjab has a significantly larger share of establishments than its population share, highlighting economic concentration. Sindh’s share is roughly aligned with its population. KP and Balochistan underperform, with fewer establishments relative to population size. ICT outperforms, with establishments outpacing its population share.

2. Establishments per 1,000 Population

ICT Has the Highest Establishment Density at 43 per 1,000 People — Balochistan the Lowest at 18

Looking beyond absolute numbers, establishment density per population tells a sharper story. ICT far outpaces all provinces with ~43 establishments per 1,000 residents — a reflection of its urbanized, service-heavy economy concentrated in education, finance, and governance. Punjab and Sindh maintain higher-than-average densities, showing that their dominance is not just due to size but also economic vibrancy. KP, at 23 per 1,000, lags modestly, pointing to the limits of smallholder and household-run units to keep pace with population growth. Balochistan is the weakest performer, with only ~18 establishments per 1,000, highlighting a stark gap in economic opportunities per capita and reinforcing the province’s vulnerability to underdevelopment and informality.

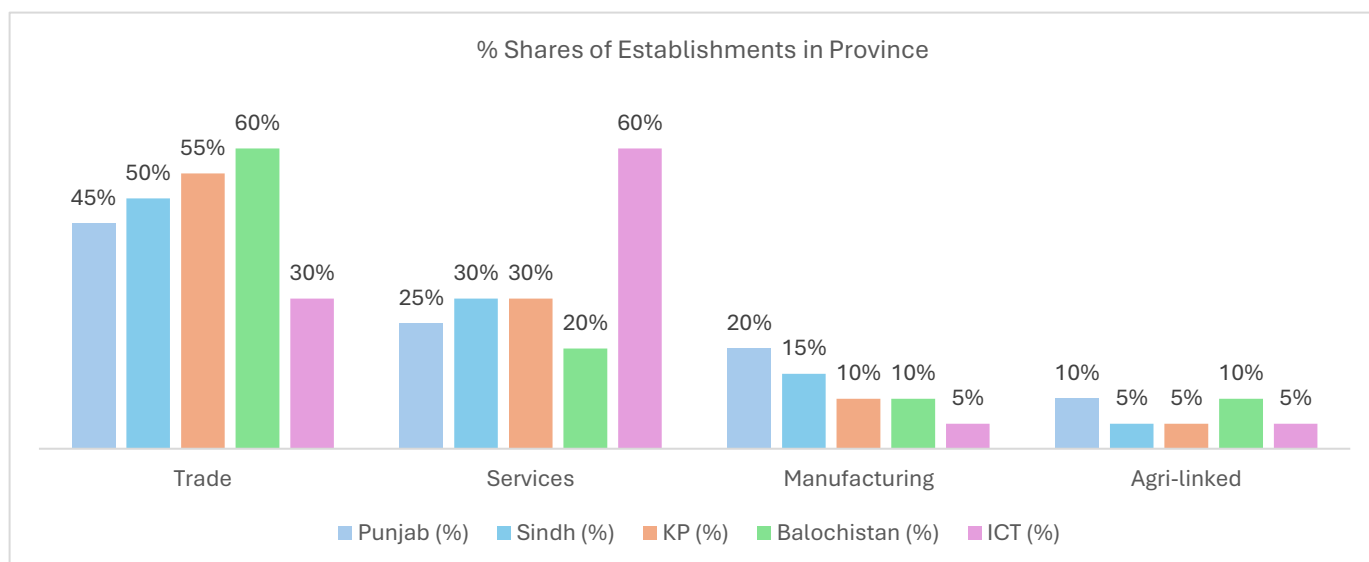


Source: Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Economic Census 2024 (Main Findings Report)

3. Sectoral Profile by Province

Punjab Diversified; Sindh Commercial; KP Household-Driven; Balochistan Narrow; ICT Service-Oriented

Each province reveals a distinct economic fingerprint. Punjab is the most diversified, balancing trade, manufacturing, and services — reinforcing its status as the country’s industrial engine. Sindh stands out for its dual profile: Karachi’s wholesale trade and industrial clusters drive the provincial economy, making it Pakistan’s commercial capital. KP leans heavily on retail shops and micro household activities, reflecting both resilience and structural limitations. Balochistan’s establishments are concentrated in agriculture and retail, with minimal industrial or service diversification — highlighting constraints in infrastructure and investment. ICT, though the smallest unit in absolute terms, is highly service-intensive, with education, health, financial services, and governance institutions forming its backbone.



Source: Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Economic Census 2024 (Main Findings Report)

4. Implications

The provincial distribution paints a picture of deep structural imbalances. Punjab and Sindh not only dominate in size but also in density and diversification, making them the twin engines of Pakistan’s economy. KP contributes meaningfully in numbers but remains heavily reliant on retail and informal activity. Balochistan’s marginal share exposes systemic neglect and underinvestment in its economic potential. ICT, while small, is evidence of how urbanization and services can create dense clusters of economic activity. Without targeted policies, these disparities will continue to widen, leaving large parts of Pakistan’s geography underutilized in the national economy.

5. Policy Implementations

- Balanced regional development: Incentivize SMEs in KP and Balochistan.
- Infrastructure: Expand energy and transport access in underserved provinces.
- SEZs: Establish industrial zones in KP and Balochistan to diversify growth.
- Human capital: Invest in vocational training for ICT, KP, and Balochistan.
- Data-driven planning: Leverage the geo-coded Business Register to monitor regional development.

About the Economic Census

The **Economic Census** is Pakistan's most comprehensive and authoritative statistical exercise on business and enterprise activity. Conducted by the **Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS)**, it provides policymakers, researchers, and the public with a detailed snapshot of the structure of economic establishments across the country. The Census records information directly from enterprises and institutions, covering critical aspects such as establishment type, sectoral classification, workforce size, and location.

The 2023/24 Economic Census marks the country's **first integrated enumeration of economic activity**, conducted alongside the 7th Population and Housing Census. By merging these efforts, PBS not only achieved significant cost savings but also created Pakistan's first geo-coded **Business Register** — a foundational dataset for understanding enterprise dynamics nationwide.

This inaugural round represents an important milestone in Pakistan's statistical history. It incorporates methodological innovations such as **digital data collection, GIS-based mapping, and geo-tagging of establishments**, resulting in more reliable and timely results. The Census thus provides insights not only into the size and distribution of enterprises but also into the emerging challenges and opportunities facing Pakistan's economy — from the dominance of small-scale units to regional disparities in business activity and the rise of service-oriented enterprises.

Ultimately, the Economic Census stands as the **foundation for enterprise statistics in Pakistan**. Its findings guide ministries, provincial departments, and regulators in designing SME policies, industrial strategies, and regional development initiatives. They also serve as a valuable reference for academics, investors, and development partners seeking to understand Pakistan's business landscape. By documenting both continuity and change in enterprise structure, sectoral composition, and regional distribution, the Census underscores the vital role of establishments in the country's economic and social development.



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.

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