

**FIFTH POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS  
OF PAKISTAN 1998, CENSUS PROCEDURES**

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**BY**

**MR. JAVID AKRAM  
CHIEF CENSUS COMMISSIONER**

**POPULATION CENSUS ORGANIZATION  
STATISTICS DIVISION  
GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN  
ISLAMABAD**

The Fifth Population and Housing Census of Pakistan has been conducted in March, 1998. It was initially planned to be undertaken in March, 1991 but could not be held as scheduled due to various reasons mainly due to apprehensions about its accuracy as the houselisting operation carried out in November - December, 1990 showed inconsistent population trends in some areas which were not easily explainable in terms of normal demographic behaviour. Such inconsistencies if repeated in the main census, could have caused imbalance by increasing the shares of certain areas at the cost of others. As such demands were also made by other areas for ensuring the census accuracy so that their rights are not jeopardized.

2. It would be appropriate to mention here that Pakistan is administratively divided into four provinces and special territories which have distinct parochial, linguistic and ethnic features. This situation is some-time exploited by certain vested population groups for exaggerating the census figures in view of the fact that census figures under the constitution of Pakistan serves as basis for determination of seats to the National Assembly and distribution of funds to Provinces. Determination of recruitment quota for all civil posts in the Federal Government are also made on the same basis. Therefore these linkages with the constitutional provisions and administrative arrangements provide real source of attraction for exaggerating the census figures which were causing problems for the census.

3. It would also be of interest to mention here that Provincial Governments role in the census operations is very vital, as the field staff involved in the census operation is drawn mostly from Provincial Governments Departments. The Deputy Commissioners carry the major responsibility for carrying out the census operation in their districts as they are notified as Census District Officer under the Census Ordinance, 1959. The role of Population Census Organization is predominantly planning, coordination and providing of logistical back up support while the Provincial Governments are required to execute the field operation by gearing up the District Administration to have an objective and accurate counting exercise, for conducting a reliable census.

4. To cope with the situation, it was decided to engage Armed Forces/ Civil Armed Forces in aid of civil administration for 100 percent support at all levels to ensure that census is conducted in fair, free and transparent manner and its credibility is achieved. The Armed Forces established a close liaison with the civil set up at all levels by establishing census support centres at Province,

Division, District, Tehsil and lower level. As such the Population Census Organization has undertaken the census with a commitment to give the nation a correct and reliable census. In this direction all preparatory arrangements determination of census methodology, preparation of maps, updating of area lists, printing of manual of instructions, appointment of field staff and their training were completed according to schedule.

5. Arrangements were made to carry out census under close supervision of civil as well as Armed Forces personnel. Therefore census coordination committees were formed at Provincial level with Chief Secretary of the respective Province as its head. The other functionaries of the Provincial Governments Departments alongwith a representative of Armed Forces functionaries as its members to monitor/steer the census activities in the Province. Similar census coordination committees were also formed at Divisional/District levels headed by the Commissioners/Deputy Commissioners. Special vigilance teams were also set up at district level to ensure effective supervision and checking on the spot of enumeration work and to attend complaints from census staff or respondents and the general public at large. Census control rooms were set up at census district level to receive complaints from any individuals and to take prompt remedial measures. These control rooms remained in operation 24 hours during the enumeration period.

6. For the census purposes the entire country was divided into a four tier census areas, the smallest being the " Census Block " which consist of around 1000 to 1500 population. The next higher order units are the Census Circles, Census Charges and Census Districts, in rural areas a Census District generally correspond to an administrative district, excluding Metropolitan/Municipal Corporations and Cantonments which are treated as independent urban census districts. A census charge is a *Qanungo/Supervisory Tapadar Circle* and a census circle is a *Patwar/Tapadar Circle* and a census block is a village or part of a village depending on the population size.

7. All those urban areas which are not census districts have been treated as census charges. These are further divided into census circles and census blocks having clear cut identifiable boundaries. The census charge in urban areas treated as independent census districts consists of approximately 50,000 population while the census circle consists of around 10,000 population.

8. All the four types of census areas were assigned unique codes. Each census block had a nine digit code, in these nine digits, the first three represent census district, the fourth and fifth digit represented census charge, the sixth and seventh digit represented census circle and eight and ninth digit represents census block.

9. At the time of data processing a 12 digit parallel code is developed i.e., the first digit represent Province, second Administrative Division, third Administrative District, fourth *Tehsil/Taulka*, fifth Urban/Rural, sixth and seventh Census Charges, eight and ninth Census Circle and the last three digits Census Blocks.

10. Another important aspect of emphasis had been the effective training. The time for training was enhanced, Moreover, audio-visual equipment introduced for having uniform training procedures. In this regard video films prepared and shown to field staff. Besides motivational aspects were enhanced as re-remuneration to census field staff was also raised significantly. This process was repeated several times in view of the fixation of census dates at different occasions after 1991. Similarly for quality field work, the size of the census block which is the lowest census area was also reduced to 150 to 200 households for effective field work and supervision. The delimitation was again updated to adjust to latest changes.

11. The census enumeration was completed in seventeen days from 2nd to 18th March, 1998 i.e. the structure numbering and house listing was carried out from 2nd to 4th March, 1998 followed by door to door enumeration from 5th to 17th March, 1998. The non-contact homeless, etc. population was covered on the last day i.e. 18th March, 1998. Two types of forms small (OMR) Form-2 and Long Form 2-A were used to collect information in the main census. OMR forms printed in USA were used for big count covering 92.5 percent areas and its data entry is being carried out on OMR machine OPSCAN-21 after appropriate editing. Whereas long form printed locally was used for 7.5 percent sample areas. These forms will also be processed through OMR machines after necessary manual editing and coding.

12. Moreover various improvements/innovations were carried out over the previous censuses practice. For the first time, for better coverage, *mauza* maps were prepared showing settlements alongwith number of houses for all rural areas. Similarly OMR (Optical Mark Reader) machine has been introduced after

appropriate experimentation. It is hoped that the data entry time will be sufficiently slashed in comparison to the traditional key to diskette method. This process would also avoid errors introduced in the key to diskette operation. Besides evaluation exercises for bench mark data were carried out in certain parts of the country for counter check of census figures.

13. For data dissemination, appropriate tabulation plans have been prepared, keeping in view the general demands of data users and traditional practice. The tabulation as soon as available will be published at National, Provincial and District Level. Advance sample tabulation on important variables on Literacy and Education; Labour Force, etc., are also planned to be provided to the users. Besides data is also planned to be supplied in summary tapes to different national and other agencies as requested. Provision for special tabulations has also been made for specific users. Data will be supplied widely in the country to Government, Semi-Government Offices, Research Organization, Universities, etc.

14. As a part of the census evaluation plan for fifth census, a post enumeration survey will be carried out by Federal Bureau of Statistics shortly in each district. The survey aims at estimating coverage and content errors at national and provincial level by urban and rural residence and also to point out main limitations of the census data, for data users. The size of the sample will be 0.6 of the total blocks. Matching of information from the Post Evaluation Survey and the Big Count will be made and special analysis of the Post Evaluation Survey results will be published.

15. Besides the simple analysis of census data as already spelt out above the Population Census Organization has already planned to publish special monograph series on important topics such as Population Profile or Pakistan, Fertility and Mortality, Economically Active Population, Migration and Urbanization etc. These publications will contain detailed analysis on various population characteristics, population distribution, fertility/ mortality estimation and its trends, fertility/mortality differentials, impact of various socio- economic aspects, on fertility/mortality. The data on other sources on these topics shall also be presented for comparison purpose in these reports.

16. The provisional results have been compiled by processing the summary sheets received from the field. Each enumerator completed the sheet after enumeration of his assigned census block. These sheets were designed to

record the basic information at block level, i.e., the total number of households and population by sex. The total population at national and provincial level showing the average annual growth rate and proportion of population in each province/area in 1998 and previous census is given in the following table:

Area	Population (000)		Annual Growth Rate		Population Proportion	
	1981	1998	1981	1998	1981	1998
PAKISTAN	84254	130580	3.06	2.61	100.0	100.0
N.W.F.P.	11061	17555	3.32	2.75	13.1	13.4
F.A.T.A.	2199	3138	- 1.47	2.11	2.6	2.4
PUNJAB	47292	72585	2.74	2.55	56.1	55.6
SINDH	19029	29991	3.56	2.71	22.6	23.0
BALUCHISTAN	4332	6511	7.09	2.42	5.1	5.0
ISLAMABAD	340	799	4.34	5.15	0.4	0.6

*Source : Population Census Office*

17. The total population of Pakistan according to these provisional results is 130.580 million which shows an overall percentage increase of 54.98 over the last census held in 1981 showing an average growth rate of 2.61 as against 3.06 observed during 1972-81. There is a welcome decline in the rate of population growth in all areas except Islamabad which has shown an understandable increase due to in-migration of population since becoming the capital of Pakistan. The growth rate of FATA which was negative in 1981 census due to improved enumeration methodology has also increased showing a trend similar to other provinces.

18. The proportion of population in each province show only slight variation as compared to 1981 proportions. NWFP, Sindh and Islamabad Capital Territory have slightly gained from 13.1 to 13.4 percent, 22.6 to 23.0 percent and 0.4 to 0.6 percent respectively. While it has declined marginally for Punjab from 56.1 to 55.6 percent, and for FATA from 2.6 to 2.4 percent. Balochistan has also shown nominal decline from 5.1 to 5.0 percent. These slight variations could be attributed to a number of factors like varying degree of in or out migration and comparative qualitative aspect of each census.

19. The population distribution among provinces and its urban/ rural break-down emerged during 1998 census is more or less in line with the previous trends. It may be emphasized here that 1998 census was undertaken with the active support of the Armed Forces which not only provided security cover but also ensured proper checks and thorough supervision of the whole operation in a scientific and systematic manner.