

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* houses2127 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 resources2134 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more vulnerable to climate hazards such as flooding2143 and heatwaves.2144 Karachi's water infrastructure was outdated and in need of repair;2145 some sources described the situation as a water 'crisis'2146 or 'acute water shortage'.2147 The city held a water deficit as the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

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

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