Editorial

This October, 2017 issue of PIPS Parliamentary Research Digest focuses on the recent preliminary results of the National Census 2017, which has yet again sent the alarm bells ringing the enormous impact the increased population on key provisions and amenities for the citizens. Ever since the last census was conducted (1998), Pakistan's population has increased from 132,362,279 to 207,774,520, recording an increase of 57 percent.

A detailed write up tries to record key implications of enhanced population that are multi-faceted and it is bound to affect economic and social daily life of every Pakistani. Absorbing infographics on population, a paper on Pakistan’s strategy to eradicate polio and a piece of evolution and development of the Legislative Assembly of Gilgit Baltistan is also part of this issue. We are really encouraged by the wholesome response and words of appreciation we receive from Honourable Members of Parliament and civil society for the PIPS Research Digest that now has a circulation of 2000 spread all over the country.

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PAKISTAN POPULATION CENSUS – 2017
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Total Population of Pakistan from 1998 – 2017

Province Wise Population of Pakistan from 1998 – 2017

Average Annual Growth Rates from 1998 – 2017

A Comparison of Male, Female and Transgender Population of Pakistan – Census 2017

Source: Pakistan Bureau of Statistics – Population Census 2017
ANALYSIS

National Census 2017-Salient Features and Implications

Census provides the basis for any future planning for people of a country. Hence access to complete and reliable data is imperative for addressing variety of socio-economic challenges in the country such as adequate health facilities, universal access to education, transport facilities and opportunities of employment etc. Recently, the long demanded census has been conducted in Pakistan after 19 years. The latest census results are of utmost importance because these will form the basis of development for policy makers and planners who will be able to evaluate the demographic trends and translate them into effective strategies and plans. The policy makers would be able to review existing priorities and policies through the available and reliable data set.

Population Census 2017 Results – Salient Features

The latest census results show that Pakistan has moved up in the ladder from 6th most populous country of the world to 5th position. The Population of Pakistan has increased by 146.6% since Census-1981 and there is 57% overall increase in population as compared to 1998. Urban population has shown an increasing trend with 36.38% of the population living in urban areas. Average annual growth rate of Pakistan over the period of 1998-2017 is 2.4% with a population size of around 208 million.

Table 1 shows total average annual growth rate in Pakistan as well as provinces and territories. According to census results a decline in population growth rate has been observed at national level, Punjab and Sindh while increase has been observed in provinces of Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA.

Table 1: Total population and average annual growth rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administrative Unit</th>
<th>Total Population 1998 (mill.)</th>
<th>Total Population 2017 (mill.)</th>
<th>Average Annual Growth Rate 1998-2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>132.35</td>
<td>207.77</td>
<td>2.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>73.62</td>
<td>110.01</td>
<td>2.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sindh</td>
<td>30.44</td>
<td>47.89</td>
<td>2.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balochistan</td>
<td>6.57</td>
<td>12.34</td>
<td>3.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KPK</td>
<td>17.74</td>
<td>30.52</td>
<td>2.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FATA</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>2.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>2.00</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Provisional Summary Results of 6th Population and Housing Census-2017, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics

Socio-economic Implications of Population Growth: Challenges and Opportunities

A. Education

Studies reveal that population growth above 2% halts development. Countries can accommodate population growth up to a point. If we look around the world, many countries have managed to raise average income despite the rapidly growing population. For developing countries with rapidly growing population, the goal extends beyond accommodation i.e. improvement in people’s life. But rapid increase

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1. This paper is a joint effort of PIPS Research team comprising Muhammad Rashid Mafzool Zaka (Director R&IT), Ms. Tehseen Khalid (Senior Research Officer), Ms. Zonia Baltistani, Ms. Samra Minhaj and Ms. Nayab Abeer, (Young Parliamentary Subject Experts, PIPS). It attempts to analyze Population Census 2017 data and estimates impact of population growth on Socio-economic situation of Pakistan.
in population often results in less progress with ultimate outcome as failure in improving living standards and provision of basic life necessities.\(^2\)

**Challenges**

The sixth census is likely to have significant political, financial and social implications in terms of defining new delimitations of electoral constituencies, resource distribution and development. Such population explosion can pose challenges to the socioeconomic stability of a developing country like us with such a low human development index (HDI). Pakistan is ranked at 147\(^{th}\) out of 188 countries on HDI.\(^3\) A new UN report released recently says Pakistan is over 50 years behind in its primary and over 60 years behind in its secondary education targets.\(^4\) Pakistan is struggling with its large out-of-school population including 5.6 million children out of primary schools – the most absolute number of children out of school anywhere in the world.\(^5\) It ranks as the second largest country with such large number of children out of school.\(^6\) The literacy rate in Pakistan has dropped by 2% to 58% from 60% in 2016-17 with male population around 70% and females about 50%. There is also rural-urban disparity with regards to education. The urban areas of the country have 74% literate population. In contrast, the literacy rate in rural areas is 49%.\(^7\) This depicts that the Census 2017 will have to play a very dynamic role in enabling the policy makers to construct large scale education related polices for the growing population.

There is also a wide gulf between school completion rate and education attainment between rich and poor, urban and rural; between boys and girls. Poor rural males have literacy rate of 64 per cent, but their female counterparts pale in comparison with 14 per cent.\(^8\) What is more worrying is that the statistics cover up huge regional disparities. For example, in parts of the country, and for certain groups, literacy rates are amongst the lowest in the world, let alone the region. The rate for adult women in rural Kohistan for instance is 1 to 2%. In Balochistan, up to 70% of children aged 5 to 16 are not in school, and this goes up to over 80% for girls. Then there are the pockets of excellence – the literacy rate in Islamabad is 96%. Net enrolment in Abbotabad district is 87%.\(^9\)

The number of resources being allocated to education is very low, with Pakistan committing only 11.3 per cent of total government expenditure to the sector as opposed to the recommended minimum benchmark of 15 per cent.\(^10\) Consequently, schools’ infrastructure remains unsatisfactory. As reported by the National Education Management Information System (NEMIS), 40 percent of public sector primary schools were operating without electricity, 28 percent did not have toilets, 25 percent were without boundary walls and 29 percent had no access to drinking water. While 7 percent schools did not have any

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\(^2\) The consequences of rapid population growth, [https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/5967/9780195204605_ch05.pdf?sequence=6](https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/5967/9780195204605_ch05.pdf?sequence=6)


\(^7\) Government of Pakistan, Pakistan Economic Survey 2016-17.

\(^8\) Ibid.


building and 43 percent had unsatisfactory buildings. A growing population, as revealed by the census, puts a double burden on the government. Firstly, the government will have to cover the already existing gap in the provision of education. Secondly, it will also have to make room for the growing population. This not only means that old school buildings, systems and curriculum will have to be upgraded, but also new school buildings will also have to be constructed.

Way Forward

- **Free Education for All**: Free, equitable, and quality primary and secondary education for all, boys and girls remains a luxury in Pakistan and the growing population will make this reality graver in the future, if the standard along with the incidence of education is not increased. A growing population fundamentally reveals increasing competition in the field of education. Pakistan can face doubling or tripling of school-age-population by the end of this century. Its implications are very clear. More school-age-children require more spending on education, even if the objective of the government is only to maintain education standards and enrollment rates. We will have to generate more national savings if we want to improve educations standards quantitatively and qualitatively. On the other hand, curtailing other investments such as transport, energy, food, housing etc. would also enable us to achieve our goals. If we are unwilling to make such sacrifices, the growing number of children would be excluded.

- **Budget Allocation and Quality of Education**: Pakistan spends 2.5% of its GDP on education. Although allocation to education have been increased over the past years but it still needs to be improved as increasing spending is directly linked with improvement in education standards and quality, teachers to student ratio, increasing number of schools etc. Studies reveal that budgetary downgrading coupled with slow economic growth has reduced the quality of education in many countries. Developing countries have very limited scope to reduce education quality any further. Spending on quality education is reflected in student achievement. The quality gap between high income and low income countries is obvious. For instance, Malawi spends less than $2 a year on classroom material for each child at primary school as compared to $300 per student in developed countries. This difference in quality of education not only affects student success but also economy of a country.

- **Family Planning and Education**: In time population planning can ease the pressure on the education system. In case of failure in planning the number of children of primary schools would double or triple by the end of the century. Less rapidly growing population can contribute to more national savings which can be used to improve school quality. For example, the number of primary school children would have been one third in 1980 if the Korea’s fertility rate remained at its 1960s level. If we apply actual cost per student ($300), a single year gives saving of $600 million, which is about 1 percent of Korea’s GDP. Although Pakistan was the first country in Asia, which started its family planning program, yet it has now the fifth largest population of the world which reflects the slow progress of this program in the country. The Total Fertility Rate (TFR) in Pakistan has declined from 5.4 children per women to 3.2 per women. Yet it is highest among South Asian region except Afghanistan.

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13 https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/5967/9780195204605_ch05.pdf?sequence=6
population growth in the country, the spending per pupil can be doubled over the years. Low population growth can account for improved school quality, increased teacher to student ratio and improved facilities for children and unlike Korea, saving per year can contribute to country’s economy.

- **Educating the Disabled Persons:** Also growing population depicts a growing number of people with special needs. The concept of safe spaces which provide non-violent, inclusive, and effective learning environments with facilities for children, disabled people, and gender sensitive people do not largely exist even in the most urbanized spaces of the country. Equal access to education and vocational training is not available for all including disable persons, children, and indigenous people. This is a massive concern in today’s day and age where acceptance, inclusivity and mainstreaming marginalized groups have become simultaneous with development.

- **Education as a part of Sustainable Development Agenda:** Pakistan has expressed its commitment to promote education and literacy in the country by education policies at domestic level and getting involved into international commitments on education. Pakistan’s commitment to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has significantly increased the relevance of Census 2017 with education. Experts suggest that lack of census data on education created difficulties in preparing and implementing education policy. Hence the Census data can significantly aid Pakistan in achieving the goals related to education and literacy.

- **Implementation of National Education Policy:** There is a need for implementation of national education policy and vision 2030 education goals. An analysis of education policy suggests that at the policy level there are several admirable ideas, but practically there are some shortcomings as well. The data sets presented by the Census 2017 can be used as baselines for the monitoring and evaluation of the implementations of these policies.

- **Availability of Provincial Data:** Since education was also made a provincial subject after the 18th Amendment, the availability of these data sets on a provincial level will enable to the provinces to perform better and improve the standard of their education, both infrastructure and curriculum, in accordance with the specific demands as highlighted by the Census 2017.

- **Inclusivity of Marginalized Groups:** The Census 2017 brings with it a great opportunity for Pakistan to adopt a more inclusive, sensitive and diverse educational strategy. The policies should be revised on the grounds of inclusivity, involving the transgender population as well as other marginalized groups and people with special needs and disabilities. The mainstream involvement of these groups in the educational processes will not only enrich the lives of this section but will also enrich the educational experiences of other sections of the population.

- **Training the Teachers:** A growing population fundamentally reveals increasing competition in the field of education. Apart from well-established institutes, it also demands a greater number of well trained teachers who can disseminate quality education. Hence, great focus will have to be given to the teachers’ training and education.

The massive increase in the population and the gap in the provision of education highlights that the reforms required in the education system of Pakistan cannot be done by the government alone, public-private participation and a mix of formal as well as informal education can pull out majority of the country’s population from illiteracy.
B. Urbanization

Urbanization refers to the practice of industrialization and economic growth coming together to urbanize rural areas. It is defined as the process in which a large number of people are concentrated permanently in areas, relatively smaller in size, forming towns and cities. Historically, the process of urbanization has been linked to various other significant social and economic transformations which have led to increased life expectancy and geographic mobility as well as lowered fertility rates. On the other hand, unplanned and rapid urbanization poses a great threat to sustainable development when the crucial infrastructure is not established in time or when the accompanying policies are not implemented to guarantee that the benefits of the urban life are shared by all equally.

Pakistan is the fastest growing urbanizing country in South Asia\textsuperscript{15} with a share of urban population rising from 17 percent in 1951 to 36.38 percent in 2016. Projections suggest that in the next decade and a half, more than half of the country’s population will be residing in urban areas. The chief factor for Pakistan’s rapid urbanization is natural population growth. The country's population size is growing at a rate of several percentage points a year - one of the fastest rates in Asia. Other than that, growth in urban population is occurring due to massive rural to urban migrations. Many Pakistanis are abandoning the rural areas to seek livelihood in the cities. This group also includes the fishermen and the farmers whose means of earning a livelihood have been compromised by the shortage of water – a menace which will surely confront us on a massive level in the future due to climatic changes, drought and desertification. Many others are headed towards the city as they believe urban centers provide better quality education, healthcare and other basic services. These rural to urban migrations alone do not explain the rapidly growing population in the urban centers of Pakistan. Another factor is the natural increase in the population of Pakistan on the whole. The natural population increase in Pakistan is also very steep considering the country’s high demographic growth rate. The average population growth rate is 2.40 percent each year (2.07 percent in 2015) and if the current average fertility rate (4 children per woman) prevails, then Pakistan's population which stands at 207 million at the moment will hike up to a massive 300 million by the year 2030. One can draw from this data that by the year 2025, the gap between the urban and the rural population in Pakistan is expected to have been narrowed considerably.

Implications of an increasing Urban Population

Urbanization offers various potential economic benefits. Most of all, it has the capacity to help revive Pakistan’s struggling economy. The small and medium sized industries in Pakistan host 85 percent of the country’s nonagricultural jobs and are predominantly urban based. This illustrates the fact that cities are now the locus of employment opportunities in Pakistan.\textsuperscript{16}

Furthermore, the most competitive and competent institutions in the educational system of Pakistan are urban based. The graduates from these urban institutes are pouring into the dynamic and high growth industries of Pakistan, which are also predominantly headquartered in urban centers.

Unfortunately, urbanization also brings forth major economic challenges, a lot of which are already at play today. The first is the rising population in cities and the massive demand for urban employment


which overwhelms an already stressed and restricted job market. Furthermore, the rapidly swelling populations in the cities is compromising the capacity and capability of the government to provide sufficient basic services which include electricity, housing, healthcare and clean water; even though most Pakistanis are migrating to the cities primarily to obtain these basic services. Presently, the cities in Pakistan are suffering from a severe housing deficit of around 3 million units and nearly half of the urban population in Pakistan lives in slums; unclean water takes the life of 30,000 Karachiites every year and power shortages in the city go up to 20 hours a day.\(^{17}\) Some theorists contend that the public sector doesn’t possess the capacity to perform as the provider for urban services and argue that the private sector should be outsourced for this job.\(^{18}\)

Lastly, urbanization causes us to assess the neglect of the agricultural sector in Pakistan; an integral sector which has remained dominant since independence and is responsible for employing 43.5 percent of Pakistan’s total workforce.\(^{19}\) The growth of the urban economy raises various troubling questions. In what manner will the agriculture lobbies in Pakistan react to the urban growth policies, especially if they are perceived as a threat to the dominant agricultural status quo? If the agricultural labors lose their jobs, how and in what sector will they be absorbed, given the overall constraints in the country’s labor economy? If influxes of agricultural laborers come towards the urban centers, how will the government accommodate them in cities which are already deficient of energy, housing and water? The fate of both the rural and urban areas hangs by a thread.

Another major challenge is security. With so many people in cities struggling to access basic services, and many unable to do so, the implications for stability are considerable. None of this is reassuring for a country with so many security problems to start with.

**Way Forward**

The census offers a great opportunity for policy makers and planners to educate themselves and update their knowledge on the pressing issues of the growing urban population. The census 2017 presents what has changed in the country since 1998 with proper data about urbanization, inter-provincial and intra-provincial migration, unemployment, literacy rate etc. Complete and accurate census information is vital for addressing variety of social challenges such as inadequate health facilities, water shortages, lack of quality education etc.

**• Revamping the City Zoning Laws:** As with its other challenges, Pakistan must take absolute ownership over its urbanization process. Islamabad has started giving the issue some attention; in 2011, the Planning Commission published a report in which it suggested a new paradigm of economic growth, focusing mainly on urbanization. A chapter in the report, “creative cities,” urges the government to revamp the city zoning laws, allowing more high rises and mixed use buildings. The Planning Commission argues that these changes can generate increased housing


units while opening up spaces for shops, markets and schools, enhancing the supply of services and also increasing commercial activities. One major step is for city authorities to cut down on the speculative practices that lead large amounts of precious urban real estate to be seized by profit-minded industrialists. This deprives people of the space and land needed to build homes.

- **Control Rent Hiking:** The Government must take immediate steps to control rent hiking in major cities allowing more affordable housing. The private sector must get involved by providing capital, technological know-how, and perhaps even builders to ensure that more homes are built, and quickly.

- **Urban Transport Planning:** There are relatively few civil servants in cities that have a background in, or knowledge of, urban transport planning. In fact, few universities even offer courses in this field. Once you have people who know the extent of the problem and how to deal with it, the situation should start to improve. The current Pakistani government is already doing this, with plans to introduce new fleets of public buses and metro rail systems in some places. What is important, however, is that these new systems be affordable for the poor, and safe for commuters - especially women.

- **Creation of Urbanization Policy:** Policy planners must recognize the complex nature of urbanization in Pakistan and the dire need for the creation of an urbanization policy in Pakistan. It not only involves megacities like Karachi, but also medium sized cities as well as large towns. It also includes the surrounding peri-urban areas of the larger cities. Each is a different dimension to Pakistan’s urbanization and will require a different response. Some argue that given the multitude of immediate problems that Pakistan is facing, from polio to dysfunctional schools and corruption, it isn’t the right time to focus on a demographic transition. Yet the potential cost of ignoring this challenge is blatant: swarming cities overflowing with unemployed and homeless people, withered by scarcity of natural resources and struggling to keep the angry residents under control.

**C. Health:**

Better health is central to human happiness and well-being. It also makes an important contribution to economic progress, as healthy populations live longer, are more productive, and save more. For Pakistan, this important aspect has remained a neglected one to a great extent.

**Challenges**

The infant mortality rate in Pakistan is 66 per 1,000 births, compared to 38 in India and eight in Sri Lanka. Life expectancy in Pakistan for women is 67 years, as compared to 73 in Bangladesh and 78 in Thailand. The maternal mortality rate in Pakistan is 170 per 100,000 live births, in contrast to 30 in Sri Lanka and 20 in Thailand. Despite this, Pakistan’s health expenditure is a mere 0.9 percent of its total GDP. Only two countries, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Bangladesh, have a lower ratio of GDP to health spending.

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22 Kugelman. *Urbanization in Pakistan.*
The results of the Census 2017 reveal an exponential growth in Pakistan’s population. It becomes imperative that these figures are effectively translated in policy. Pakistan faces a number of challenges with respect to healthcare and now policy makers have the capacity to manage these issues based on a census oriented approach.

In Pakistan, Communicable diseases, maternal health issues and under-nutrition dominate and constitute about half of the health crisis. Pakistan has one of the highest prevalence of under-weight children in South Asia. Similarly stunting, micro nutrient deficiencies and low birth weight babies contribute to already high level of mortality in mothers and children. Non-Communicable Diseases along with Injuries and Mental health issues now constitute other half of the crisis, causing far more disabilities and premature deaths among an economically productive adult age group. Moreover, Poverty, low literacy, unemployment, gender discrimination, and huge treatment gap have led to an invisible burden of mental health problems in the society. 24

The population explosion has rendered the crisis worse, with the census revealing an increase of 57% population maintaining Pakistan’s position as the 5th most populous country in the world. Moreover, 36.38 percent of the population lives in Urban areas while the rest is concentrated in the rural areas. This increases the inequalities in access to quality healthcare. The gains are uneven across different service areas as out of pocket expenditure is still around 70% despite having network of (primary, secondary and tertiary) health care system in place.

Health system faces challenges of vertical service delivery structures and low performance accountability within the government, creating efficiency and quality issues. Largely unregulated for quality care and pricing, there is also duplication of services by the private sector. This will most likely grow as a large population indicates a growing demand for healthcare and medication. This means there are chances of enhanced risk of faulty and low quality substandard medicine being sold to the masses as well as fake medical practitioners such as hakeem’s. The overall health sector also faces an imbalance in the number, skill mix and deployment of health workforce, and inadequate resource allocation across different levels of health care i.e. primary, secondary and tertiary. However, these challenges can be tackled by proper planning and execution. Given below are some of the measures which can be adopted at policy and practice level by stakeholders in order to tackle the issue of rapid population growth.

**Way Forward**

- **Increasing Health Budget Allocation:** Pakistan spends US$ 37 per capita on health which is lower than the WHO’s prescribed level of per capita US$ 44. The lack of resources being allocated to healthcare must be tackled with as much haste as possible.

- **Building More Hospitals:** The 2016 Economic Survey of Pakistan revealed Pakistan as having 1,167 hospitals, 5,695 dispensaries, 5,464 basic health units and 733 maternity and child health centres. In 2016, the number of doctors has increased to 184,711 and 4,500 doctors, 450 dentists, 3,500 nurses and 4,450 paramedics had completed their academic courses. Population per doctor in 2015-2016 was at 1,038 and population per bed in 2015-2016 was at 1,613.25 These figures and ratios need to be improved in accordance with the latest population growth trajectories, especially when it comes to number of available health facilities and doctor to patient ratio.


• **Community Health Workers:** Pakistan has a mixed health system, which includes government infrastructure, parastatal health system, private sector, civil society and philanthropic contributors. A major strength of government’s health care system in Pakistan is an outreach primary health care, delivered at the community level by 100,000 Lady Health Workers (LHWs) and community midwives (CMWs), and other community based workers who have earned success and trust in the communities. This is perhaps the most longstanding and widely run as well as accepted health programmes of our country. The growing population demands that the role of these community health workers becomes more dynamic, diverse and specialized. The seats of LHWs must be increased in order to meet the demand of growing population. Addition of Male Mobilizers could be effective because they can advocate males about family planning and other relevant issues more comfortably than women. With the already established rapport of these Community Health Workers the government can achieve much more than providing basic health care. Education about communicable diseases, post-natal care, nutritious food intake and general hygiene and cleanliness are all areas which can be targeted along with many others.

• **Improving Health System at Provincial Level:** The delivery of quality health care services is a provincial responsibility. The census provides an excellent opportunity to all provinces to initiate priority actions emanating from the demographic details of health in their given areas. The census will highlight not only the provincial needs but also the expectations of the masses and what should be done as a priority in the field of healthcare.

• **Refinement and Implementation of Public Health Laws:** While population growth offers a future with productive population contributing to the betterment of the country, it also increases the risk of more people being affected by diseases and health crisis. Hence, public health laws become an important aspect to control such risks. The government must strictly impose laws related to smoking, drug safety, organ donation and transplant, safe blood transfusion, environmental protection, and food safety. Quality control and transparency must be maintained at all government hospitals and dispensaries.

• **Family Planning and Birth Control Awareness:** Role of Parliament to develop a National Narrative focusing on “family planning and well-being of child,” rather than birth control: Members of Parliament are public representatives who have wide outreach and following within party and big constituencies. They can engage local and national civil society, media at large, religious leaders, icons and role models as well as the platform of National parliament and provincial assemblies to revive a National Pakistani narrative emphasizing the intense need to plan families for sustainable well-being of coming generation and providing necessities of healthy and happy life including nutrition, health, quality education and employment in the longer run to make them productive citizens of the society.

**D. Employment**

The significant increase in Pakistan’s population is going to have a substantial impact on country’s employment statistics. According to the census, Karachi and Lahore are the most densely populated cities of Pakistan; Karachi at 14.91 million, followed by Lahore at 11.13 million.26 These cities are also the major hubs for employment which attract people from all over the country. Moreover, the census shows a growing trend in urbanization. The population in urban areas has been witnessing an increase from 32.52% in 1998 to 36.38% in 2017.27 In terms of employment, the young population from all across

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Pakistan is shifting to major urban centers, as these urbanized areas are the places where major employment opportunities exist which have bright future prospects for them.28

Challenges

- **The Unemployment Challenge:** As per the size of its labor force, Pakistan is the 10th largest country in the world.29 With a total labor force of 60.09 Million, Pakistan can utilize this manpower to gain sustainable economic development.30 However, as per Labor Force Survey 2014-15, the unemployment rate in Pakistan is 6.0% and total unemployed people are 3.58 Million.31 The survey also shows that total number of employed people is 56.52 Million. With the population of 207.77 Million as determined by the population Census in 2017, the population-employment ratio gives an alarmingly low figure. This high rate of unemployment is mainly due to two reasons; first is rural urban migration which is due to increasing urban population whereas job opportunities are not increasing accordingly. Secondly the industrial development has not yet reached to the position to absorb high level of working population. With its underdeveloped industry and scarce amount of resources, increasing population has put more pressure on Pakistan. The unemployed sector of population naturally becomes a liability for the employed population and the gap needs to be closed between them.

- **Lack of productive employment opportunities:** The creation of “full and productive employment and decent work for all” is a major challenge in Pakistan.32 According to Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the unemployment rate is 5.9% for the year 2014-15.33 Moreover, the employment-to-population ratio is 49.9% as per 2012-13.34 This ratio indicates that more than half of the population remains unemployed which itself is an alarming figure. Now, with the 57% increase in population, the issue of providing productive employment opportunities has magnified manifold.

- **Low number of jobs available for youth:** Over 3.5 million fresh graduates are entering the job market every year; whereas, according to the Vision 2020, government will create 1.5 million jobs per annum.35 This shows the widening of gap between the number of graduates and jobs available for them in the market. With the tremendous increase in population, this gap can grow even bigger, leading to an increased rate of unemployment in the country.

- **Brain Drain:** The story of Pakistan’s manpower migration is commonly known. The best and the brightest Pakistanis have been looking outwards for decades. These include young students as well as highly skilled professionals ranging from scientists to surgeons and physicians to

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engineers and software developers. Such migration of a country’s manpower is categorized as brain drain. In a survey conducted in Pakistan, Gallup found that more than two-thirds of Pakistan’s adult population aspires to leave the country for work with half of them leaving for good.\(^{36}\) The figure comes in sharp contrast with Gallup’s 1984 study that found only 17% Pakistanis wanting employment abroad. Over the past three decades, the discontent level for livelihood within adult population soared by 50%.\(^{37}\) As the country’s population reaches above 207 million and development lies in the hands of these skilled professionals, it is crucial to devise strategies in order to reduce or perhaps reverse this brain drain in favor of Pakistan. The optimum situation would be skilled professionals returning to Pakistan with valuable foreign experience and significant savings.

- **Quality of employment**: Looking at existing population and employment challenges, it is more the quality of employment that gives cause for concern. The 38.5 percent of the employed working “excessive hours” (50 hours or more) combined with the large proportion of people with no formal education (43.6 percent in 2010-2011) can be associated with high vulnerability, low productivity levels and poor remuneration in wide parts of the country’s labor market.\(^{38}\) The limited number of decent or quality jobs combined with a rapid growing labor force in Pakistan might become problematic especially for people who lack, skills, social networks and know-how, to market themselves as potential valuable wage and salaried workers. They could be left behind, joining the growing number of people who are forced to accept work under inferior conditions, or move into the informal economy.

- **The Gender Challenge**: It is apparent that Pakistan faces a special gender challenge with regard to equal employment opportunity. As per 2017 census, 48% population of Pakistan is female, which definitely requires equal representation in the employment sector. The persisting gender gap needs to be closed in order to fully utilize Pakistan’s labor potential. The gender gap issue as a cross cutting theme needs to be strengthened in policies, in order to improve the situation for women in the labor market with regard to labor market access and quality of jobs.

**Way Forward**

- **Entrepreneurship**: According to a research report by UNDP, every year Pakistan needs more than 1.5 million jobs for the youth entering the work age.\(^{39}\) Failing to provide adequate jobs to the growing number of fresh graduates, the government is burdened with unemployment especially at present when the census reveals 2.4% annual growth rate which means addition of more unemployed people. One way to curb this unemployment tragedy is to encourage young people towards entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship can be a highly rewarding experience, but young entrepreneurs need proper guidance and a platform to convert their raw business idea into a profitable business. For this purpose, various incubation and acceleration centers need to be established across the country to facilitate youth in this regard. Initiatives such as youth business loan schemes can help young people to contribute towards economy in an efficient and effective manner. Creation of such opportunities for unemployed youth can revitalize economy in addition to creating employment opportunities, reducing poverty and providing economic growth.


linkages/services to the corporate sector. The growth of Small businesses and their access to formal finance is imperative for development of economy.

- **Innovation**: In today’s fast paced business environment, innovation has become a key determinant of the economic growth and development. Keeping in mind the population growth rate of 57%, innovative strategies and policies need to be devised to meet the needs of 207.77 million people of Pakistan. It is important to promote innovative mindset and a culture of entrepreneurship to transform flourishing population into a demographic dividend.

- **Growing Labor Force**: Between 1999-2000 and 2010-2011 high population growth and rising labor force participation accounted for an increasing labor force at an average annual growth rate of 3.8 percent. As the latest census shows, the labor force has increased manifold. This growing labor force is an asset for Pakistan’s labor market, and if effectively utilized it could contribute significantly to economic development in the country.

- **Inclusive Development**: As per Census 2017, men are 51% of the total population; women are 48.76% while transgenders form 0.24%. Moreover, Pakistan also houses people from a number of minorities. Sustainable development cannot be ensured unless all citizens of Pakistan are involved in the development programs on equal basis. All growth activities should be all inclusive in nature so as to ensure no segment of the population is left economically challenged and all receive the benefits to growth equally. Rising female labor force participation is a good example in this regard.

- **Knowledge and Skills Development**: Knowledge and skills can be seen as driving forces of economic growth and social development, since higher levels of educational attainment push productivity, increase levels of entrepreneurship and therefore improve the economic context of decent work. Skills are the most important determinants of a country’s capacity to compete in world markets and to make use of technological advances. Technical and vocational Education and training is therefore a prerequisite to access and establish decent work. With the increase in population, a great opportunity lies in the shape of development of skilled labor force to improve the quality of country’s manpower.

- **Attracting Foreign Investment**: It is important to harbor a peaceful environment and a stable political and social setting in order to strengthen the business community and attract investment. Investments will lead to the creation of more jobs, consequently helping the government tackle the unemployment rate in the growing population of Pakistan.

Taking all the above mentioned factors into account, it becomes clear that Pakistan features a vast and untapped labor potential. Particularly, women and youth do not have equal chances to participate in the labor market. To adequately meet the needs of its growing population, the utilization of the labor potential and promotion of decent work agenda in Pakistan is the key to sustainable growth and poverty reduction. Pakistan’s economic growth and development could benefit if everyone out of the 207.77 million people could have access to decent work in the future.

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E. Transport

According to a Gallup Survey on Transport infrastructure in Pakistan (2015), the most common factor contributing to the transport problem in developing countries is rapid population growth resulting in increased urbanization that subsequently translates into travel demand. While on one side demand for travel is escalating, the supply of transport infrastructure and services remains inadequate. Resultantly, existing facilities are over capacitated. According to Census 2017, Pakistan's population has increased from 132.36 to 207.77 million recording an increase of 57 percent. This increase in population draws the attention of the concerned authorities to the improvement of infrastructure and public transport facilities in Pakistan. The transportation system of the country is not sufficient to accommodate the country’s population and this has caused great inconvenience to citizens since the beginning of times. Better infrastructure and transportation system need to be planned in-line with the needs of ever-growing population of Pakistan.

Population Growth and its Impact on Transport

Globally modern transport and fast communication system is changing every aspect of human life at a very fast pace. We cannot deny the fact that currently the way of life is changing faster than ever before, mainly due to improvement and advancement in the transport and communication means. A well-performing transport infrastructure is vital for a country’s development. Investment in a country’s infrastructure directly affects economic growth as producers find the best markets for their goods, reducing transportation time and cost, and generating employment opportunities.

Challenges

- **Better Transportation Infrastructure to meet Population Needs**: The remarkable increase in Pakistan’s population is going to cause an increase in transportation problems of the growing number of people. More the people, more difficult it is to accommodate them. According to the census, Karachi and Lahore are the most densely populated cities of Pakistan; Karachi at 14.91 million, followed by Lahore at 11.13 million. These cities along with other major cities of the country face the biggest transportation problems.

- **Traffic andCongestion**: With the increasing population the problem of traffic control has become very acute in almost all the big cities in Pakistan. The increase in traffic has also increased the number of traffic accidents and roads are becoming dangerous day by day. Traffic problems in Pakistan are increasing with every passing day, especially in big cities like Karachi, Lahore, Faisalabad, Rawalpindi, Gujranwala, Peshawar, Multan, Hyderabad, Islamabad and Quetta.

- **Environmental Degradation**: A major challenge posed by our transportation system, which is mainly dependent on road traffic, is the hazards to our environment. The environmental impact of transport is significant because it is a major user of energy and burns most of the world's petroleum. This creates air pollution, including nitrous oxides and particulates. It’s a significant contributor to global warming through emission of carbon dioxide. Therefore, increasing population is posing an ever-increasing threat to the environment as well.

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Urban Transport Problem: The Census 2017 illustrate a growing trend in urbanization. The population in urban areas has been witnessing an increase from 32.52% in 1998 to 36.38% in 2017. Like all other developing and emerging economies, Pakistan's urban transport problem is one of the pressing issues of the time that needs to be assessed and evaluated. With growing road congestion resulting from an increase in number of privately owned automobiles, urban transport problem is aggravating day by day.

Public versus Private Transport Vehicles: The importance of public transport over private vehicles cannot be denied. With the increase in population, the number of privately owned vehicles has also increased. This adds to the problems of heavy traffic along with increased air and noise pollution. According to a Gallup survey (2015), the number of private transport vehicles increased by 327%; whereas, the number of public transport vehicles increased by 167% over the last 15 years, therefore showing an increasing difference between number of public and private vehicles.

Way Forward

- Population Planning: Over population is a problem and will remain a problem in future until addressed. Transport system is critical for economies, not only on a monetary level but also socially and environmentally. Proper and consistent measures are required to combat this issue.

- Better Public Transport System: With the increased manpower in Pakistan, we should advance towards the development of a better public transport system including a mix of all transportation modes including subways, metro buses and railways. A good public transport system can prove to be useful in overcoming the transport crisis. A research suggests that a city spends less on transport that develops its public transport infrastructure. A good public transport system also provides social benefits as well by saving time and space.

- Road Transport: Road transport is the backbone of Pakistan's transport system. The estimated length of roads in Pakistan is over 263,356 kilometers spread all over the country. However, neglect of other modes of transportation in favor of improvement of the road infrastructure has been a prevalent problem in the country’s transportation sector. With the tremendous increase in population, authorities should focus on the development of other transportation means along with the road system to accommodate the increasing population effectively.

- Congestion Tax in Peak Hours: Some countries have implemented congestion tax, where motorists are charged tolls to enter into the city. In peak hours charges are very high and depend on the type of vehicle as well. Stockholm has a similar congestion tax. But tourists are exempt from this tax. Singapore is probably the first nation to have adopted a user pays scheme, which initially started as a city entry toll, and has now evolved into an automated toll system. Singapore is the most expensive city to own a personal car. Traffic congestion and its management are becoming big challenges as the time passes. Increase in population puts extra burden on already congested roads. There is dire need to build infrastructure but cities have no room for that due to overcrowding.
existing infrastructure and buildings. Congestion taxes and user pays systems can be a band aid solution at best, with such charges being unfair on people with lower incomes. The only possible way to deal with these problems is investment in public transport and encouragement of people to use it regularly as well as discouraging private transport.

- **Bicycle Friendly Cities**: Plan bicycle friendly cities and try to counter urban sprawl. All of these solutions require long range planning and investment, however most governments are reluctant to take long term high cost measures.  

- **Rail Networks**: These are extremely critical part of economies of countries especially those while large population. Metropolitan and freight trains can not only shift the burden of traffic but also provide good means to move food, goods and other items. This places a responsibility on planning authorities to find out solution to this problem by looking at other countries who have managed transport problem with interesting solutions.

- **Air Travel Networks**: It is important to build airports outside on peripheries of cities to avoid traffic jams. For cleaner environment advanced, cleaner and more efficient jet engines combined with models that carry more people may be incorporated in the existing network. Each airport and city needs to make economic and environmental decisions about what its priorities are, and in conjunction with local governments and communities find solutions that best fit, such as expansion, extending of hours and extra airports. Expanding and improving technology may also play a role with the advent of cleaner and more efficient jet engines combined with models that can carry more people per liter of fuel burnt will also help to alleviate not only environmental problems but also overpopulation problems.

- **The role of CPEC**: Government of Pakistan is trying its best with limited resources, to enhance and modernize roads, railways, air services and all kinds of communication links. To establish a modern society at par with other regional countries, CPEC can play an important role in this direction and would be transformational for Pakistan’s economy which would dovetail perfectly with China’s strategy of developing its inland and western regions. This can ultimately increase in trade, investment and financial flows, with the help of improvement and linkages through road, rail and communication. CPEC will provide an integrating platform for peace and prosperity to the region through enhancement in the competitiveness of the economics of the regional countries. A better transport system will also help local businesses. The delivery time will also reduce significantly, resulting in the growth of local businesses.

- **Satellite Cities**: Government can also reduce the impact of overpopulation by investing on infrastructure and establishing satellite cities so that population is not concentrated in one area especially Lahore and Karachi. These are smaller cities close to a large city or a metropolitan area. This approach will reduce burden of bigger cities. But this requires long term financial investment.

- **Establishing Residential Districts along Public Transport Corridors**: Government should start to embrace sustainable medium to high density residential and business districts along public transport corridors. This will not only decrease reliance on motor vehicles but also reduce traffic congestion, pollution and emissions. This will also have a positive impact on health and productivity of workplaces and with this businesses will improve by the reduction in travel time.  

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51 Ibid.
F. Water and Climate Change

One of the consequences of overpopulation is that it puts pressure on the available water resource of the region. According to Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR), Pakistan will observe water scarcity by 2025. As the population of Pakistan is growing at rapid scale, the demand of fresh water has also increased resulting in reduction of Per capita water availability from 5000 to 1100 m³ during 1952–200652 and it is expected to be reduced to 800 m³ by 202553 whereas water scarcity develops below 1000m³ per capita. Keeping in view that Pakistan’s GDP is largely based on agriculture; this issue of water scarcity might cause tremendous loss to Pakistan’s Economy. Similarly human population growth is a major contributor to global warming as more fossil fuels are harvested, processed and distributed releasing further emissions of CO₂ into the atmosphere. Population, global warming and consumption patterns are inextricably linked in their collective global environmental impact. As developing countries’ contribution to global emissions grows, population size and growth rates will become significant factors in magnifying the impacts of global warming and ultimately worsening the impacts of Climate Change on counties such as Pakistan.

Population and Environment Relationship

Research has found that the two major drivers of humanity’s ecological footprint are population and consumption. For most of our existence the human population has grown very slowly, kept in check by disease, climate fluctuations and other social factors. It took until 1804 for it to reach 1 billion people. Since then, continuing improvements in nutrition, medicine and technology have seen our population increase rapidly. The impact of humans on the environment takes two major forms:

i. consumption of resources such as land, food, water, air, fossil fuels and minerals
ii. waste products as a result of consumption such as air and water pollutants, toxic materials and greenhouse gases

A number of theories in the field of population and environment state that population is one of a number of variables that affect the environment and that rapid population growth simply aggravates other conditions such as bad governance, civil conflict, wars, polluting technologies, or distortionary policies. These include the intermediate (or mediating) variable theory54 or the holistic approach55 in which population’s impact on the environment is mediated by social organization, technology, culture, consumption, and values56

Population growth and distribution have significant roles to play in the sustainability of the world’s vast resources. Not only the number of people, but also the lifestyle, consumption patterns, and regions people inhabit and use directly affect the environment. The relationship between population growth and environmental degradation may appear to be rather direct. More people demand more resources and generate more waste. Some of the most important challenges that are faced due to overpopulation are:

52 Jetly, R. Pakistan in Regional and Global Politics; Taylor & Francis: New Delhi, India, 2012
54 Jolly CL. Four theories of population change and the environment. Popul Environ. 1994;16(1):61–90
i. **Food production**: to meet the ever increasing demand of food is the most basic challenge and the most important Population and Environmental crises. Population growth exerts pressure on existing food resources thereby developing food insecurity. According to Food Security Assessment Survey (FSA), 2016, 18% of the population in Pakistan is undernourished. Similarly Pakistan ranks 78th out of 109 countries on Global Food Security Index.57

ii. **Water Resource Management**: Population growth and distribution are linked to the availability of freshwater and the sustainability of renewable water resources. The demand for water has grown significantly not only because of population growth, but also because of an increase in the uses of water for households, agriculture, and industrial production. Currently, Pakistan is also facing water shortage issue which is mediated by water pollution and lack of efficient water resource management.

iii. **Energy**: The vast majority of energy comes from the burning of fossil fuels (oil, natural gas, and coal). The increased use of fossil fuels due to population growth has a negative effect on the health of the environment in terms of air and water pollution. Air pollution from greater coal use and vehicle exhaust leads to acid rain, which is damaging to forests, lakes, and streams. Rising fossil fuel use also means a greater build-up of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, higher greenhouse gas emissions, and global warming. Even though Pakistan has been ranked 137th with only 0.47 percent of global GHG emissions but it experiences drastic climate change effects owing to its climatic conditions and geographical location.

iv. **Situation of Water Shortage in Pakistan**: Pakistan is heavily dependent on Indus River System for agriculture and other purposes. Annual rainfall is about 240mm which recharges the Indus river system and the ground water aquifer.58 The approximate flow of Indus River and its tributaries is 138 million acre feet (MAF).59 Scarcity of fresh water is becoming a major threat to sustainable development. In terms of potential impacts water crisis is one of the major global problems.60 Pakistan is among the list of regions with moderate to severe water shortage. Ground water resource of Pakistan is depleting with 120 million of population facing various levels of water scarcity, 80% of which lies in the Indus basin.61 Rapid population, urbanization, agricultural activities all together have contributed to the lowering of water table. 83% of the total groundwater is being pumped from the aquifers.62 Pakistan ranks 10th among top 10 countries with greatest numbers of people living without access to clean and safe water.63 Demand for fresh water is continuously increasing but the supply of fresh water is not continuous because of lack of precipitation and efficient water management techniques. It is estimated that in 2035 per capita availability of water will reduce to 1000m$^3$.64

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Way Forward

i. **Monitoring Equipment:** Pakistan only has one satellite monitor to gauge climate change and air quality. We can explore international support to set up more of these monitors that will help us identify precisely how and to what extent industrial wastes in India is causing adverse air quality in bordering cities of Pakistan. We can then claim compensation for climate degradation from India and world at large.

ii. **Climate Change Research Centers in every district of Pakistan:** These centers will provide platform for the collaboration of faculty, postdocs, students and professional staff to carry out detailed Research to explore the causes and impacts of climate change, improving predictive models to project future climate conditions, and pursuing novel ideas for mitigation and adaptation.

iii. **Pollution Control:** Pollution of land, water and air must be controlled to ensure protection of the Environmental resources (Air, Water, Minerals, and Forests etc.) and safeguarding of human health. This involves completely terminating the pollution sources whether they are from industries, vehicles or households and shifting to sustainable options

iv. **Enforcement of Environmental laws:** The effective enforcement of environmental laws and regulations is crucial for proper environmental management therefore Pakistan Environmental Protection Act 1997 must be enforced to ensure protection, conservation, rehabilitation and improvement of the environment, for the prevention and control of pollution, and promotion of sustainable development and to ensure justice by penalizing the ones who transgress the law.

v. **By-laws to make mandatory sewerage tanks in buildings:** Law making by provincial assemblies to include building of sewerage tanks in mandatory by laws for construction of every new building will help save under and on ground clean reservoirs of water.

vi. **Controlled Urban Migration:** Development mustn’t be centered in one location rather it should disperse to allow least developed areas to progress as well. In this way urban migration can be minimized and pollution load can be reduced.

vii. **Shifting to Renewable Energy Resources:** Consumption of fossil fuels results in various types of air, water and land pollution directly or indirectly. Therefore renewable energy sources must be used that are eco-friendly such as solar energy, wind energy, geothermal energy.

viii. **Awareness Campaigns:** It is a common believe among masses that we have plenty of water and we will not run out of it but this assumption is wrong. Every resource is depleted when used beyond its capacity or when not used sustainably. People must be informed about the safe and sustainable use of water. Awareness campaign must be organized to let people know the importance of water and how to conserve it at individual level.
ANALYSIS

Addressing the Challenge of Polio in Pakistan

Since the last outbreak of wild poliovirus in 2014 where we saw 306 cases in one-year, enormous progress has been made. Our National Emergency Action Plan for Polio Eradication is clearly delivering results – to clear the polio reservoirs, respond aggressively to any outbreak and maintain high population immunity elsewhere. There are no magic solutions, just extraordinary hard work with a focus on the basis of vaccination to ensure success by our heroic Sehat Muhafiz vaccinators at the doorstep and inside every home. The impact of this transformation on the virus has been devastating.

Through the establishment of Emergency Operation Centres at the National and Provincial levels, we have brought together the governments in partnership as “one team under one roof.” This approach is paying dividends. We are close to delivering a polio-free Pakistan. An accountability and performance management system that starts with the Prime Minister and all Chief Ministers has kindled positive change in reaching all children across Pakistan delivering a deadly blow to polio virus.

Five polio cases have been reported this year; that shows, we still have the virus in Pakistan. The Programme is working hard to address this remaining risk. With the nine campaigns planned in the next 9 months and the focus on immediate response to any sign of transmission in previously polio-free districts, I think we are on the brink of history.

Pakistan has witnessed a 98 percent reduction in polio cases since 2014; with 306 reported cases in 2014, 54 in 2015, 20 in 2016 and 5 in 2017. 250,000 vaccinators and 2,226 social mobilizers are performing their duty across the country vaccinating children on the move. Since September 2016, 17.5 million children have been vaccinated at 390 Permanent Transit Points set up across the country and district border including various important transit points such as highways, railway stations and bus stops. Since then, Pakistan has achieved a 95 percent rate of vaccine acceptance, which is an achievement in itself.

Stopping transmission of the poliovirus in a country of 215 million people with diverse population, belonging to different socio-economic groups is a difficult endeavor. An all-encompassing approach is also driving change – from the President, to the Prime Minister, to our Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, to the man and woman on the street, all are equally animated to achieve this cherished goal where everyone is involved today. That is why we can now confidently say, “Polio eradication in Pakistan is inevitable.”

These efforts are bringing Pakistan one step closer each day to achieving the third goal of the Sustainable Development Goals, which promises to “ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.” Since becoming party to the SDGs, Pakistan has shown its full commitment. Pakistan is not shying away from accepting where it lacks and is doing its best in filling the existing gaps to ensure that the future is polio free. Healthy lives and well-being for all is the fundamental priority of the Government.

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PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY

Development of Democratic System in Gilgit-Baltistan

Mr. Ashiq Hussain (DS)
and Mr. Shahzad Ali (YPA),
Legislative Assembly of Gilgit Baltistan

Historical Background

The existing region of Gilgit-Baltistan spread over 72,496 square kilometers. Since ages, it was ruled by independent rulers called Mirs and Rajas who had their own customary laws. Gulab Singh and his two brothers joined the services of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh in 1810, the then Sikh ruler of Lahore who captured Kashmir in 1817. In 1822, Maharaja Ranjeet Singh appointed Gulab Singh as Raja of Jammu.

After the death of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh in 1839, his son Duleep Singh succeeded him in 1843. The Sikh Forces fought a war against East India Company in 1845 but lost because the sympathies of Raja Gulab Singh were with the Company Forces despite being in the service of Sikh Government. The Sikh forces arrested British officers during the war but Raja Gulab Singh released them honorably without any conditions. After the defeat of Sikh Government, the East India Company Government demanded Rs.10 million from Sikh Government of Lahore in lieu of war compensation. Lengthy negotiations through mediators were held and consequently on 9th March 1846, an agreement was reached upon between the Sikh Government of Lahore and British Company Government.

After the emergence of Pakistan on the world map, the status quo of Gilgit-Baltistan continued until 26th October 1947, when the Maharaja sent his Indian Forces to crush the Independence Movement in Kashmir. The Maharaja’s decision of seeking help from India prompted a fully-fledged rebellion in Gilgit spearheaded by Gilgit Scouts and predominantly local Muslim population. Under the chivalrous leadership of Colonel Hassan Khan, Captain Babar Khan and Captain Shah Khan of 6th Kashmir Regiment, the Gilgit Scouts arrested Brigadier Ghansara Singh and liberated Gilgit on 1st November 1947.

A provisional Government consisting of the leaders of the victorious forces was established which remained in place until the power was transferred to the first Pakistani Political Agent Sardar Muhammad Alam in Gilgit on 16th November 1947. Later on Skardu was also liberated with the help of Chitral Scouts on 14th August 1948.

From 1947 to 1970, the region of Gilgit-Baltistan remained outside the pale of the laws of Pakistan as during this period, Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR) was the supreme law of the region. During this period, the administrative head of the Gilgit-Baltistan Agency was the Resident, a Political Agent at Gilgit with an additional political agent under the control of a Resident stationed at Rawalpindi. The first noteworthy step towards the democratization of the region came in the form of Northern Areas Advisory Council Order 1971, promulgated by the Federal Government.

A Glimpse of the Democratic Journey of Gilgit-Baltistan

Gilgit-Baltistan, spread over an area of 28,000 sq. miles, making it bigger than seven independent states, is a unique and beautiful region in terms of its geographical, economic, cultural, political and touristic peculiarities. Since ages, the area had been run under Jagirdari system in which several different principalities of various sizes were in place. The rulers of these principalities reigned in a harsh way as to keep their subjects entangled in the chains of poverty and ignorance. When Independence Movement started in sub-continent, a coterminous revolution for independence also started in the Gilgit-Baltistan region. Thus, soon after the independence of Pakistan, this region achieved independence by fighting a war against the Dogra rulers. Since then, the region has been affiliated with Pakistan and the democratic process started to evolve.
Following is the timeline of the region’s tread on the path of democratic governance since 1947:

1st November, 1947: Gilgit-Baltistan achieves independence from the brutal rule of British and Sikh and becomes an independent state on the map of the world.

16th November, 1947: After remaining for 16 days as an independent state as the Islamic Republic of Gilgit, the region acceded to Pakistan without any preconditions and formally became a de facto part of Pakistan.

12th October, 1956: The first step towards the democratization of the Gilgit-Baltistan came when the Federal Government introduced the Village Aid in the region. The Village Aid Program aimed at developing the villages by constructing streets, canals, tube wells and water ponds. In addition, the program also focused on the issues of health and education.

1st January, 1961: For the first time the Federal Government extended the system of Basic Democracies to Gilgit-Baltistan. Through this governance program the representatives of the area were involved as stakeholders to expedite the process of development of the region.

10th November, 1968: A small democratic institution was established by the name of Advisory Council. The primary, and the only, function of this Advisory Council was to hold consultation with the Federal Government for resolving various issues and problems of the area.

16th September, 1971: Until 1968 the region was being run under a draconian law called Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR). On 10th November 1968 the FCR was abolished and with that came the demise of Agency system from Gilgit-Baltistan, and for the first time in the region’s history two administrative districts, Gilgit and Baltistan, were established.

13th January, 1972: A third administrative district was established, in addition to the existing districts of Gilgit and Baltistan. The newly formed third district was comprised of the areas of Chilas, Darel, Tangir and Astore.

27th October, 1974: Two new districts of Ghizer and Ghanche were established which took the number of districts to five. The addition of districts expedited the process of development of the area.

10th November, 1979: The Government renamed the region as Northern Areas by abolishing its former name Gilgit-Baltistan. New reforms were introduced in these areas. Ghizer and Ghanche, the two districts established in 1974, were annulled and the areas comprising these districts were merged in the districts of Gilgit and Baltistan. A new democratic body with the name of “Northern Areas Advisory Council” was formed which included 16 elected representatives from the whole of Northern Areas. For the first time, the Local Government Order was introduced in the Area. Under the Local Government Order, elections on the basis of adult franchise were held for 3 District Councils, 3 Municipal Committees and 105 Union Councils. It is noteworthy to mention that all these reforms were approved by the then Prime Minister, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, but were implemented later on due to the unceremonious end of his rule.

4th November, 1988: The two districts of Ghizer and Ghanche which were abolished earlier were restored and the general elections were announced.

12th October, 1991: The caretaker Government of Prime Minister Moeen Qureshi announced several political and judicial reforms for Northern Areas. Notably, as a result of new constituency delimitation, the number of seats for Northern Areas Advisory Council were increased from 16 to 24. Expressing its
displeasure and concerns on the new constituency delimitation, some sectarian factions boycotted the general elections. Due to the boycott of elections by the major part of the population the elections proved to be quite unsuccessful. Under these reforms, for the first time, the political control of federal minister for Kashmir Affairs and Northern Areas was passed to Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive. The Deputy Chief Executive was to be elected from amongst the members of Northern Areas Advisory Council who would choose five advisors to assist him in dispensation of his duties.

24th October, 1994: Once again the Government announced political and administrative reforms for the Area. Under these new reforms, for the first time the elections were held on party basis in Northern Areas. As a result of this election, the Tehreek-e-Jaffarya Pakistan emerged as the strongest party with majority of seats in the House (24 members). In addition, the reforms also provided for two special seats for women in the Northern Areas Council for the first time.

12th November, 1999: The scope of the Northern Areas Council was enhanced and given the status of Northern Areas Legislative Council. The post of the Speaker of the council was introduced and the number of special seats for women was increased from 2 to 5. The general elections were held under these reforms.

25th October, 2004: The federal government amended the Legal Framework Order (LFO) of 1994 and changed the status of Northern Areas Legislative Council to Northern Areas Legislative Assembly. The Assembly was given the power to legislate on 49 subjects. However, the number of special seats for women was reduced from 5 to 3 while additional 5 seats for technocrats were introduced.

Gilgit-Baltistan Self-Governance and Empowerment Order: A Milestone in GB’s Democratic Development

On 12th November 2009, the Federal Government led by the Pakistan Peoples’ Party, in line with its tradition, announced the Gilgit-Baltistan Self-Governance and Empowerment Order, 2009. Through this reform package, the area was not only given immense powers but also given back its traditional name of Gilgit-Baltistan. The Governance Order is the very first of its kind and serves as a watershed moment in the democratic journey of Gilgit-Baltistan. The elected representatives were empowered to legislate on 61 subjects and the office of Chief Minister was introduced who would be an elected representative of the people of the area. The Governance Order of 2009 provided for a Legislative Assembly comprised of a total of 33 members out of which 24 are to be elected through direct vote, 6 seats are reserved for women and 3 seats for technocrats.

In addition, like the upper house of Parliament, Gilgit-Baltistan Council was established which comprises of 12 members headed by the Prime Minister of Pakistan as its Chairman. Out of the total 12 members, 6 are to be elected by the Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly and the remaining 6 are to be appointed by the Prime Minister. The Governor of Gilgit-Baltistan is the Deputy Chairman of the Council. This is a unique democratic setup in its own right.
Elections 2015 and the Current Legislative Assembly

The 12th elections for the Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly were held on 8th June, 2015 in which the PML-N emerged as the leading party. The PML-N formed its Government led by Chief Minister, Hafiz Hafeez ur Rehman.

Political Parties’ Positions in GB Elections 2015

Following is the overall picture of the strength of different political parties as a result of the elections of Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly in June 2015.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Party</th>
<th>General Seats</th>
<th>Women Seats</th>
<th>Technocrats</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>22</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td><strong>33</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Speaker of GBLA

Mr. Fida Muhammad Nashad is the 4th elected Speaker of the GB Legislative Assembly. He was unanimously elected as Speaker of the Assembly on 24th June 2015. He is a seasoned and veteran politician of Gilgit-Baltistan. Earlier, Mr. Fida Nashad had served as Deputy Chief Executive of Northern Areas. He is affiliated with PML-N and enjoys immense respect in the party.
Deputy Speaker GBLA

Mr. Jaffarullah is the 5th elected deputy speaker of the GB Legislative Assembly. He was unanimously elected as Deputy Speaker of the Assembly on 24th June, 2015. Mr. Jaffarullah was elected to the Assembly from GBLA-1 for the first time. As the Deputy Speaker of the Assembly, he has shown considerable interest in legislative business and committees.

Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan

Hafiz Hafeez-ur-Rehman is the Leader of the House in Legislative Assembly of Gilgit Baltistan and the Chief Minister of Gilgit Baltistan. He is 2nd elected Chief Minister of Gilgit Baltistan and assumed office on 16th June, 2015 after being elected as Chief Minister unopposed. Mr. Hafeez-ur-Rehman has been elected to the legislative assembly from GBLA-2 Gilgit-2. He is affiliated with Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz and he is the provincial president PML-N Gilgit Baltistan.

Standing Committees in GB Legislative Assembly

Currently there are 11 Standing Committees functioning in the GB Legislative Assembly. Following are the committees and the departments against which the committees are in place:

1. Standing Committee on Law Reforms and Control on Subordinate Legislation and Implementation of Government Assurances
2. Public Accounts Committee
3. Standing Committee on Works, Water & Power and Planning & Development
4. Standing Committee on Education and Health
5. Standing Committee on LG &RD ,Forest, Tourism, Women & Development, Youth Affairs and Culture
6. Standing Committee on Excise & Taxation, Zakat, Usher, Cooperative, Minerals, Industries, Labor and Commerce
7. Standing Committee on Finance, Food, and Agriculture

Since the unconditional accession of Gilgit-Baltistan to Pakistan in 1947, the Government of Pakistan has been introducing several gradual reforms aiming at democratizing Gilgit-Baltistan. Though the people of Gilgit-Baltistan appreciate the democratic reforms introduced by several Governments of Pakistan, their longstanding desire to become a constitutional part of Pakistan has not yet seen the light of the day. It has been a persistent demand of the patriotic people of Gilgit-Baltistan that they should have representation in the National Assembly and Senate of Pakistan. In line with the wishes of the people of the Area, the current and two previous Legislative Assemblies have passed unanimous resolutions demanding constitutional rights for Gilgit-Baltistan.
PAKISTAN POPULATION CENSUS – 2017

Population of Major Cities of Pakistan – Census 2017

Urbanization Trends in Pakistan from 1998 – 2017

Province Wise Percentage of Urban Share in Pakistan – Census 2017

Source: Pakistan Bureau of Statistics – Population Census 2017
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