



Pakistan



Background The Indus Valley civilization, one of the oldest in the world and dating back at least 5,000 years, spread over much of modern-day Pakistan. During the second millennium B.C., remnants of this culture fused with the migrating Indo-Aryan peoples. The area underwent successive invasions in subsequent centuries from the Persians, Greeks, Scythians, Arabs (who brought Islam), Afghans, and Turks. The Mughal Empire flourished in the 16th and 17th centuries; the British came to dominate the region in the 18th century. The partition in 1947 of British India into the Muslim state of Pakistan (with West and East sections) and largely Hindu India created lasting tension between the two countries. They have fought two wars and a limited conflict -- in 1947-48, 1965, and 1999 respectively -- over the Kashmir territory, a dispute that continues to this day. A third war in 1971 -- in which India assisted an indigenous movement reacting to Bengali marginalization in Pakistani politics -- resulted in East Pakistan becoming the separate nation of Bangladesh.

In response to Indian nuclear weapons testing, Pakistan conducted its own tests in 1998. Pakistan has been engaged in a decades-long armed conflict with militant groups, including the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and other militant networks that target government institutions and civilians.

Capital name: Islamabad

Government type federal parliamentary republic

Area
total : 796,095 sq km
land: 770,875 sq km
water: 25,220 sq km

Climate mostly hot, dry desert; temperate in northwest; arctic in north

Natural resources arable land, extensive natural gas reserves, limited petroleum, poor quality coal, iron ore, copper, salt, limestone

Population total: 252,363,571 (2024 est.)

Population growth rate 1.86% (2024 est.)

Ethnic groups Punjabi 44.7%, Pashtun (Pathan) 15.4%, Sindhi 14.1%, Saraiki 8.4%, Muhajirs 7.6%, Baloch 3.6%, other 6.3%

Religions Muslim 96.4%, Hindu 1.6%, Christian 1.4%; less than 1%: scheduled castes, Qadiani/Ahmadi, other, Sikh. (2020 est.)

Languages Punjabi 38.8%, Pashto (alternate name, Pashtu) 18.2%, Sindhi 14.6%, Saraiki (a Punjabi variant) 12.2%, Urdu 7.1%, Balochi 3%, Hindko 2.4%, Brahui 1.2%, other 2.4%

Executive branch	chief of state: President Asif Ali ZARDARI (since 10 March 2024) head of government: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz SHARIF (since 3 March 2024)
Legislative branch	legislature name: Parliament (Majlis-E-Shoora)
Diplomatic representation in the US	chief of mission: Ambassador Rizwan Saeed SHEIKH (since 18 September 2024)
Diplomatic representation from the US	chief of mission: Ambassador (vacant); Chargé d'Affaires Natalie A. BAKER (since January 2025)
Economic overview	lower middle-income South Asian economy; extremely high debt; endemic corruption; regional disputes with India and Afghanistan hinder investment; falling inflation, IMF relief programs, and strong agricultural output slowly contributing to economic recovery
Real GDP (purchasing power parity)	\$1.39 trillion (2024 est.) \$1.346 trillion (2023 est.) \$1.347 trillion (2022 est.)
Real GDP per capita	\$5,500 (2024 est.) \$5,400 (2023 est.) \$5,500 (2022 est.)
Exports	\$40.219 billion (2024 est.) \$36.215 billion (2023 est.) \$38.967 billion (2022 est.)
Exports - partners	USA 14%, UAE 10%, China 9%, Germany 7%, UK 6% (2023)
Exports - commodities	garments, fabric, refined petroleum, rice, cotton fabric (2023)
Imports	\$66.844 billion (2024 est.) \$58.069 billion (2023 est.) \$76.594 billion (2022 est.)
Imports - partners	China 25%, Qatar 11%, UAE 9%, Saudi Arabia 8%, Indonesia 6% (2023)
Imports - commodities	natural gas, refined petroleum, crude petroleum, palm oil, plastics (2023)

Population Pyramid

