

### General Information

**Child marriage** occurs when one or both spouses are below the age of 18. While boys can be affected, the practice predominantly impacts girls. It is often referred to as "early and forced" marriage because the girls, given their young age, can rarely make a free and informed decision about their marriage partner, the timing or the implications of this binding commitment. An element of coercion may be involved because their families may pressure or force the girls into marriage. Strong social and cultural norms also drive the practice despite legislation in place.

**Legal Age at Marriage (2010)**

Without / with parental consent or approval by pertinent authority	Female 16 / NA	Male 18 / NA
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Current Law in Place  
Child Marriages Restraint Act (1929), Article 2 (a)

Notes: "NA" stands for "not available".

### DEMOGRAPHICS

Total Population (000)	173,593 (UNPD, 2010)
Population under 18 (%)	42 (UNPD, 2010)
Life expectancy at birth (Years)	67 (UNPD, 2010)
Adolescent birth rate (Per 1,000 women)	51.1 (DHS, 2006-2007)
CPR (15-19) (%)	6.7 (DHS, 2006-2007)
UNR (15-19) (%)	20.2 (DHS, 2006-2007)
PDS* (15-19) (%)	24.9 (DHS, 2006-2007)
Net enrolment in secondary, female (%)	29 (SOWC, 2007-2010)

\*PDS (Percentage of demand satisfied) = CPR/(UNR + CPR)\*100

### Child Marriage by Sub-National Regions

Percent of 20-24 year old females married by the age of 18

**National Average**  
**24%**



Source: DHS, 2007

**Child marriage prevalence rates in Pakistan is relatively high.** On average, almost one out of four girls will be married before their 18th birthday. In 2007, about 24% of the the women aged 20-24 were married/in union before age 18.

**While child marriage is very common in Pakistan, prevalence is highest in Sindh (33%),** followed by North West Frontier Province (29%), Balochistan (22%), and Punjab (20%).

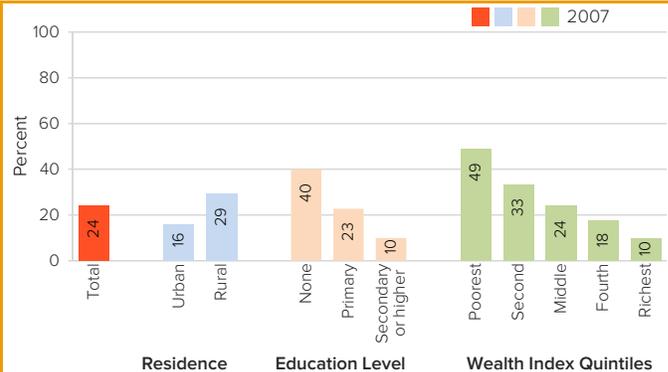
Once girls in Pakistan are married, only a few of them (6.7%) are using contraception in spite of their needs to space their childbearing time. Of them, 24.9% have their demand for contraception satisfied.

### Background Characteristics - Which Girls are Affected?

**Child marriage occurs more frequently among girls who are the least educated, poorest and living in rural areas.** In 2007, women aged 20-24 and living in rural areas (29%) were more likely to be married/in union before age 18 than their urban counterparts (16%).

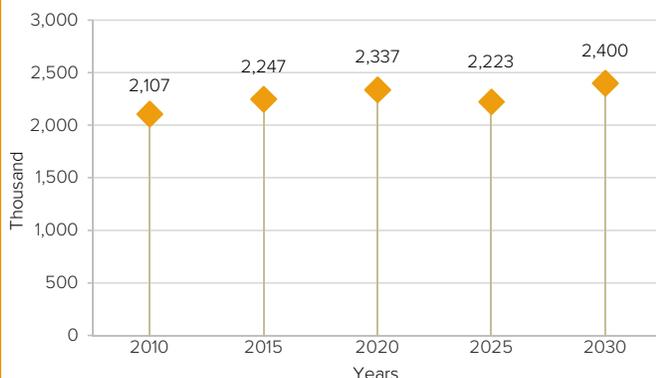
**Education is highly associated with the prevalence of child marriage in Pakistan.** In 2007, 40% of women aged 20-24 with no education and 23% with primary education were married or in union at age 18, compared to only 10% of women with secondary education or higher.

**Household wealth influences the prevalence of child marriage among all wealth quintiles.** Girls from the poorest 20% of the households were almost 5 times as likely to be married/in union before age 18 than girls from the richest 20% of the households.



Source: DHS

### Future Child Brides: Projections for the Next Two Decades



Source: UNFPA

**Urgent action is needed to take solutions to scale and prevent the thousands of girls in Pakistan today from being married in the next decade(s).** In 2010, 2,107,000 women aged 20-24 were married/in union before age 18. **If present trends continue, 2,400,000 of the young girls born between 2005 and 2010 will be married/in union before age 18 by 2030.**

**Ending child marriage** requires strategies for girls' empowerment, social and cultural norms change, legal reform, and policy action. Proven solutions involve girls' schooling (especially lower secondary) and programmes that offer life skills, literacy, health information and services, and social support. Married girls especially need access to sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning and maternal health services.

## Indicator Definitions

<b>Total Population (000)</b> ?	Estimates produced by the United Nations Population Division based on population projections.
<b>Population under 18 (000)</b> ?	Estimates produced by the United Nations Population Division based on population projections.
<b>Life expectancy at birth (Years)</b> ?	Number of years newborn children would live if subject to the mortality risks prevailing for the cross section of population at the time of their birth.
<b>Adolescent birth rate (Per 1,000 women)</b> ?	The adolescent birth rate measures the annual number of births to women 15 to 19 years of age per 1,000 women in that age group. It represents the risk of childbearing among adolescent women 15 to 19 years of age. It is also referred to as the age-specific fertility rate for women aged 15-19.
<b>Adolescent Contraceptive Prevalence Rate, CPR (15-19) (%)</b> ?	Percentage of women 15-19 years old married or in union currently using contraception.
<b>Adolescent Unmet need for Contraception Rate, UNR (15-19) (%)</b> ?	Percentage of women 15-19 years old married or in union currently with unmet need for contraception. They expressed a desire to control their fertility but were not using contraception.
<b>Adolescent Percentage of Demand Satisfied, PDS (15-19) (%)</b> ?	Percentage of the total demand for contraception that is satisfied and is obtained as : $PDS = CPR / (UNR + CPR)$ .
<b>Net enrolment in secondary, female (%)</b> ?	Number of girls enrolled in secondary school who are of official secondary school age, expressed as a percentage of the total number of girls of official secondary school age.
<b>Child Marriage (%)</b> ?	Child marriage is presented here as the percentage and number of women 20-24 that marry/in-union before reaching age 18.

## Abbreviations

<b>DHS</b> ?	Demographic and Health Surveys
<b>SOWC</b> ?	The State of the World's Children reports, produced by the United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UNFPA</b> ?	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UNPD</b> ?	United Nations Population Division
<b>UNSD</b> ?	United Nations Statistics Division
<b>MICS</b> ?	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey