

Computer Literacy Statistics – 2015 (Annual)

Department of Census and Statistics

Sri Lanka

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The birth of the Information Age which is also known as Computer Age, is associated with the Digital Revolution, just as the Industrial Revolution marked the birth of the Industrial Age. The Digital and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) revolutions are twin revolutions. The rapid developments in ICT have greatly contributed in enhancing human living standards worldwide. The advanced capability of this technology facilitates with extremely efficient collaboration and access to correct, consistent and effective information, which is fundamental to manage the quality in total. In developed world, most of the key economically effective environments are increasingly ICT dominant.

Timely and accurate information on use of ICT itself is essential for justification and proper direction of the Government efforts, private sector investments, to study the changing pattern of the demand for internet services and for continuous progress monitoring on ICT achievements. For this computer literacy data, can contribute immensely to an understanding of the demand and supply of skills in the global, knowledge based economy. Also statistics on the availability of a computer/laptop in households and usage of internet and email can be used to assess digital divide.

To cater the relevant data need the Department of Census and Statistics (DCS) has conducted several surveys on computer literacy in Sri Lanka. The surveys were conducted in 2004, 2006/07, 2009 and from 2014 onward a survey module is attached to Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey. From 2014 onward two separate bulletins are published on Computer Literacy. This bulletin reveals the major findings of the survey conducted in the year 2015. For the analysis of the computer literacy survey a nationally distributed sample of 25,000 households and persons of aged 5 – 69 years were enumerated. Other than the indicators published in first six month bulletin, some district level information are published in this annual bulletin. In this bulletin some minor changes could be observed in computer literacy estimates of the year 2014 (compared to previously published 2014 annual bulletin) due to the reweighting of Labour Force Survey data (<http://www.statistics.gov.lk/samplesurvey/Re-weightingLFS.pdf>) done in 2016.

Household computer ownership

If a desktop or laptop is available at a household then that household is considered as a computer owned household. The Table 1 shows the percentage distribution of computer owned households by Sector/ Province. In 2015, at least one computer is available in 24 percent of households of the country. That is about one out of every four households owns either a desktop or a laptop computer. This percentage is 41.5 percent in Urban sector and Rural and Estate sector show 22.0 percent and 4.5 percent respectively. The highest availability is in Western province (38.5%) while the lowest availability is reported from Uva (12.5%).

Table 1: Percentage of computer owned households by sector, province and Survey year

Sector/ Province	Desktop (%)					Desktop or Laptop (%)		
	2004	2006/07	2009	2014	2015	2009	2014	2015
Sri Lanka	3.8	8.2	10.6	15.7	14.9	11.4	22.2	24.4
Urban	10.5	17.8	23.6	23.6	21.9	26.3	37.3	41.5
Rural	3.1	6.9	9.2	14.7	14.1	9.8	20.0	22.0
Estate	0.3	1.1	3.1	3.7	3.0	3.3	4.8	4.5
Province								
Western	8.4	16.4	19.0	23.3	22.7	20.7	34.1	38.5
Central	3.3	6.7	9.7	16.7	15.0	10.4	21.9	22.7
Southern	2.2	4.9	6.6	15.0	12.6	7.2	20.1	20.3
Northern	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	11.1	8.8	N.A.	20.1	20.3
Eastern	1.2	3.7	5.8	8.9	8.1	5.9	13.5	13.8
North-western	3.1	4.8	6.9	13.5	12.9	7.1	19.2	21.1
North-central	1.4	2.7	6.1	9.3	11.1	6.8	12.7	17.9
Uva	0.4	2.7	4.6	8.0	8.8	4.9	9.9	12.5
Sabaragamuwa	2.0	3.3	7.3	13.6	13.3	7.5	16.9	18.2

N.A. - not available

households have acquired the first computer during the last five years (2011 – 2015) and in last five years the Rural sector shows a higher recent acquisition (61.1%) than the Urban sector (47.1%).

Table 2: Computer owned households (percentage) by the year of first acquisition of a computer

Sector	Total	Before 2001	2001-2005	2005-2010	2011-2015
Sri Lanka	100.0	5.6	7.8	29.3	57.3
Urban	100.0	10.1	11.3	31.5	47.1
Rural *	100.0	4.0	6.4	28.5	61.1

*Including Estate sector

Map1: Household computer ownership (percentage) - 2015

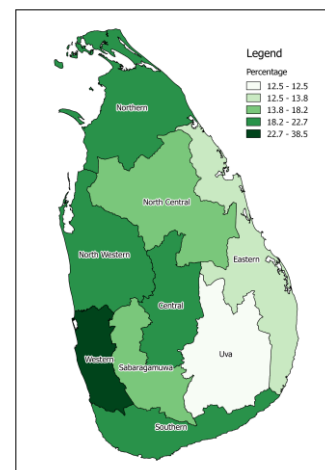


Table 2 shows the year of acquisition of the first computer to the household. It was revealed that about 57.3 percent of the

Figure 1: Percentage of Desktop or Laptop computer owned households by Sector and survey year

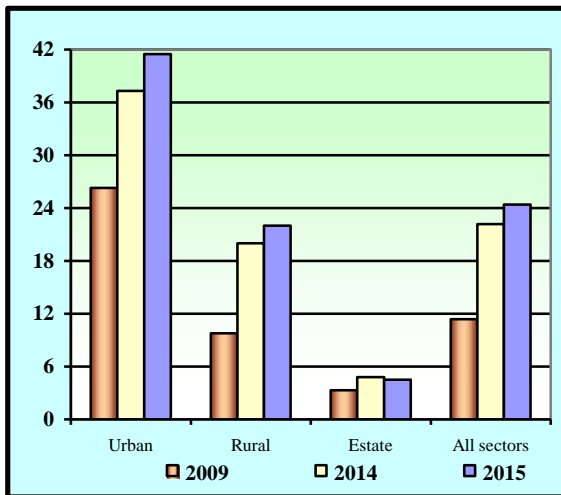
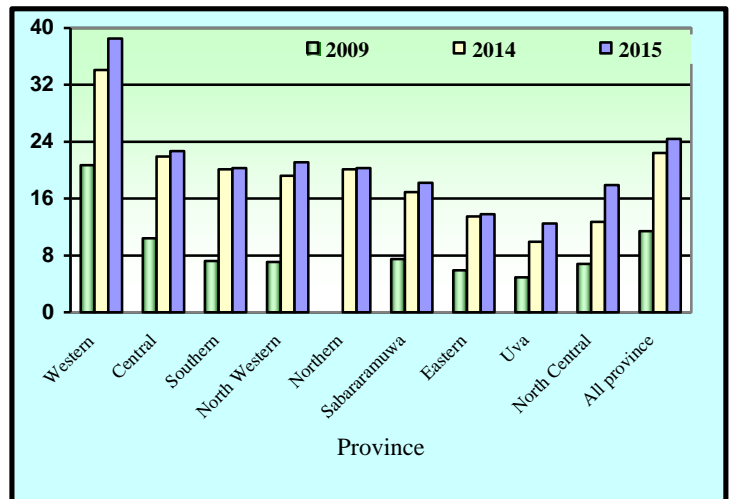


Figure 2: Percentage of Desktop or Laptop computer owned households by province and survey year



Computer literacy

Definition for Computer literacy: A person (aged 5-69) is considered as a computer literate person if he/she could use computer on his/her own. For example, even if a 5 years old child can play a computer game then he/she is considered as a computer literate person.

Definition for computer literacy rate: Computer Literate population expressed as a percentage to the total population, (aged 5 – 69 years) within the respective domain.

Table 3: Computer literacy rate by sector, province and survey year

Sector/Province	Computer literacy rate (%)			
	2006/07	2009	2014	2015
Sri Lanka	16.1	20.3	24.9	27.1
Sector				
Urban	25.1	31.1	36.1	39.2
Rural	15.1	19.3	23.4	25.5
Estate	4.3	8.4	7.0	9.0
Province				
Western	23.2	27.7	35.6	38.4
Central	14.8	18	23.4	25.9
Southern	15.6	19.8	24.8	27.3
Northern	N.A.	N.A.	16.8	19.4
Eastern	11.4	12.9	14.4	13.2
North Western	12.6	16.5	23.3	25.3
North Central	8.9	14.1	16.6	21.7
Uva	9.9	14.7	15.6	17.8
Sabaragamuwa	12.3	19.1	21.7	22.1

N.A. - not available

Percentage of Computer Literate population (Computer Literacy) over the survey periods has been gradually increasing. Overall Computer Literacy reported in 2015 for Sri Lanka is 27.1 percent. The survey results show an increase of 11 percentage points from 2006/07 to 2015.

The Urban sector shows the highest computer literacy rate (39.2%) among residential sectors. Computer literacy rate for Rural and Estate are 25.5 percent and 9.0 percent respectively. Among the provinces the highest level of computer literacy is reported from the Western province (38.4%) while the lowest percentage is reported from Eastern province. Computer literacy by district level shows the existing differences among districts and further shows the prevailing digital divide (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Computer literacy rate by district - 2015

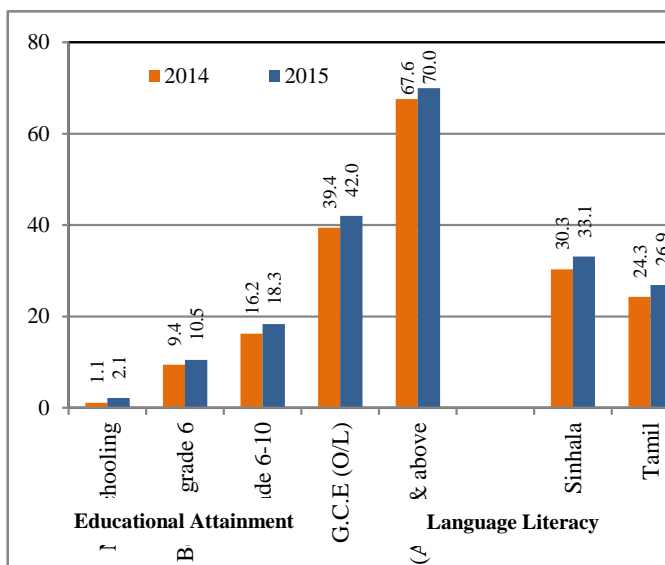
District	Literacy Rate	District	Literacy Rate
All Island	27.1	Mulativu	10.0
Colombo	45.3	Kilinochchi	17.4
Gampaha	34.2	Batticaloa	15.0
Kalutara	33.7	Ampara	12.6
Kandy	31.7	Trincomalee	11.8
Matale	27.5	Kurunegala	25.4
Nuwara Eliya	13.8	Puttalam	25.2
Galle	27.1	Anuradhapura	22.8
Matara	28.6	Polonnaruwa	19.2
Hambantota	26.0	Badulla	16.4
Jaffna	21.1	Monaragala	20.2
Mannar	11.2	Ratnapura	21.5
Vavunia	24.9	Kegalle	22.8

Table 4: Computer literacy rate by Gender, Age, Level of education, and Language literacy -2014 & 2015

Gender, Age group, Educational attainment and Language literacy	Computer literacy rate (%)	
	2014	2015
Sri Lanka	24.9	27.1
By Sex		
Male	26.6	29.1
Female	23.3	25.3
By Age group(years)		
5 - 9	12.4	14.4
10 - 14	35.8	39.8
15 - 19	54.3	58.7
20 - 24	49.6	53.8
25 - 29	40.6	43.5
30 - 34	29.3	31.3
35 - 39	23.1	25.0
40 - 49	15.3	17.2
50 - 59	9.6	10.5
60 - 69	5.2	6.1
By Educational attainment		
No schooling	1.1	2.1
Below grade 6	9.4	10.5
Grade 6-10	16.2	18.3
G.C.E (O/L)	39.4	42.0
G.C.E. (A/L) or above	67.6	70.0
By Language literacy		
Sinhala	30.3	33.1
Tamil	24.3	26.9
English	67.3	69.5

As given in Table 4 the Computer literacy among male (29.1%) is higher than that of female (25.3%) in 2015. Young youths (aged 15 – 19 years) show the highest computer literacy rate (58.7%) among all other age groups. The computer literacy has increased over the period and this is true for all disaggregated levels in Table 4.

Figure 4: Distribution of computer literacy rate by Educational attainment and Language literacy – 2014 & 2015



The survey results reveal that higher the level of education higher is the computer literacy. The group with A/L or above level of education shows the highest computer literacy rate (70.0%). Also computer literacy is higher among those who are literate in English language (69.5%).

Table 5: Computer literacy among employed population aware about computers (aged 15 – 69 years) by Occupation – 2014 & 2015

Occupation group	Computer literacy (%)	
	2014	2015
Sri Lanka	51.0	52.0
Managers, Senior Officials and Legislators	72.6	70.8
Professionals	81.0	83.9
Technicians and Associate Professionals	80.7	82.9
Clerks and Clerical support workers	88.5	88.7
Services and Sales workers	46.3	50.9
Skilled Agricultural, Forestry and Fishery workers	20.0	18.1
Craft and Related Trades workers	36.1	36.6
Plant and Machine operators and Assemblers	34.0	38.7
Elementary occupations	22.7	22.4
Armed Forces Occupations & unidentified occupations	68.6	60.9

Computer literacy among the employed population who are aware of computer in Sri Lanka is around 52 % in 2015 and the positions such as Senior officials and Managers (70.8%), Professionals (83.9%), Technical and Associate professionals (82.9%) and Clerks and Clerical support workers (88.7%) have higher computer literacy. Also, even among the individuals engage in elementary occupations 22 percent are computer literate.

Table 6: Computer literacy among unemployed population (aged 15 – 69 years) by age group – 2014 & 2015

Age group (years)	Computer literate population	
	Literate (%)	
	2014	2015
Sri Lanka	69.5	72.6
15 - 19	66.3	58.2
20 - 24	76.0	80.7
25 - 29	74.5	78.9
30 - 39	63.9	62.5
40 - 69	36.9	54.5

Among the unemployed, aged (20-24) group shows highest computer literate percentage (80.7%). Annual survey results reveal that among unemployed many have at least some ICT skills. Even among the group aged 40-69 every one out of two are computer literate (54.5%) in 2015.

Source of computer training

Table 7 shows that the majority of those who are computer literate have received training from Private institutions or School/University. The training received through Government training centres are comparatively low (5.6%), however in the Estate sector this percentage is about 6.8% and higher than other two sectors.

Table 7: Percentage distribution of Computer literate household population (aged 5 – 69 years) by sources of receiving computer knowledge* and sector – 2015

Source of computer training multiple	Total (%)	Residential sector (%)		
		Urban	Rural	Estate
Private training course	29.9	28.8	30.0	41.1
School/University	42.9	42.0	42.9	55.9
Govt. training centres	5.6	4.2	6.1	6.8
Employment activities	15.7	20.4	14.4	5.6
Work place	7.5	11.2	6.4	1.8
Family members	26.5	28.4	26.0	17.9
Friends/ Relatives	20.4	20.8	20.2	24.1
Self	23.4	29.7	21.6	11.3
Other	3.5	3.9	3.4	5.0

* Multiple choice answers

Internet and E-mail use

The Table 8 depicts that 12.1 percent of the population aged 5 to 69 years uses the internet facility at least once during twelve months in 2015. The survey results further reveal that urban sector, where the facilities are largely available, shows the highest usage of both e-mail and internet among the other sectors.

Table 8: Percentage distribution of Internet and E-mail using household population (aged 5 – 69 years) by District – 2014 & 2015

District	Household Population (age 5-69)			
	Internet (%)		E-mail (%)	
	2014	2015	2014	2015
Sri Lanka	10.4	12.1	8.2	8.9
Colombo	24.1	28.1	20.6	21.9
Gampaha	16.8	18.7	13.4	13.4
Kalutara	11.9	14.9	9.5	11.6
Kandy	10.1	11.7	8.1	9.7
Matale	4.6	8.2	3.8	5.8
Nuwara Eliya	5.3	4.4	4.1	3.8
Galle	8.0	10.5	6.3	6.9
Matara	8.2	8.3	5.9	6.3
Hambantota	5.8	5.9	3.9	3.7
Jaffna	13.8	15.8	9.1	10.1
Mannar	7.7	9.1	6.3	7.2
Vavunia	16.7	16.3	5.6	6.6
Mulativu	3.3	4.7	2.5	3.7
Kilinochchi	8.3	7.0	5.6	6.4
Batticaloa	7.2	9.9	5.3	7.2
Ampara	6.4	6.5	4.9	4.5
Trincomalee	6.4	5.6	5.0	5.1
Kurunegala	8.2	9.3	6.1	6.3
Puttalam	9.3	13.3	6.7	8.1
Anuradhapura	5.4	7.4	3.6	4.4
Polonnaruwa	5.3	4.7	4.2	3.6
Badulla	3.5	3.5	3.3	3.4
Monaragala	3.8	4.9	2.9	4.3
Ratnapura	4.8	5.9	3.8	4.7
Kegalle	5.7	7.0	4.6	5.0

Different usage patterns of internet usage can be observed among districts (Table 8). In 2015 Colombo district shows the highest percentage (28.1%) of population using internet while Badulla district shows the lowest percentage (3.5%).

The survey results reveal that 8.9 percent of the household population aged 5 – 69 years has used E-mail facility at least once during the last 12 months period. Highest e-mail usage is reported from the Colombo district (21.9%). The lowest e-mail usage among the districts has reported from the Badulla district (3.4%).

Table 9: Percentage distribution of Internet and E-mail using household population (aged 5 – 69 years) by age group – 2014 & 2015

Age group (years)	Household Population (age5-69)			
	Internet (%)		E-mail (%)	
	2014	2015	2014	2015
Sri Lanka	10.4	12.1	8.2	8.9
5 - 14	3.6	4.3	1.9	1.8
15 - 19	17.7	19.9	12.2	12.5
20 - 24	25.7	28.5	20.7	22.8
25 - 29	21.0	26.3	17.8	21.0
30 - 34	15.3	17.5	12.8	14.2
35 - 39	12.2	14.3	10.4	11.3
40 - 49	8.3	10.1	7.1	7.8
50 - 59	5.6	6.4	4.4	4.8
60 - 69	2.9	3.6	2.1	2.5

The Table 9 and Figure 5 show that persons in age 20 - 24 group show higher internet and email use compared to other age groups.

Figure 5: Percentage distribution of Internet and E-mail using household population (aged 5 – 69 years) by age group – 2015

