

# Computer Literacy Statistics – 2019 (First six months)

## 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.

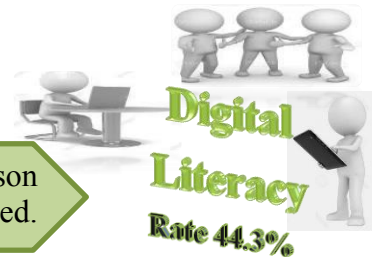
To cater the relevant data needs the Department of Census and Statistics (DCS) has conducted several surveys on computer literacy in Sri Lanka. The surveys were conducted in 2004, 2006/07, 2009 and from 2014 onward a survey module is attached to Sri Lanka Labour Force Survey. From 2014 onward two separate bulletins are published on Computer Literacy. This bulletin reveals the major findings of the survey conducted in January to June in 2019. For the analysis of the computer literacy survey a nationally distributed sample of 12,880 households and persons of aged 5 – 69 years were enumerated.

## Highlights



More than one out of four person (aged 5-69) computer literated.

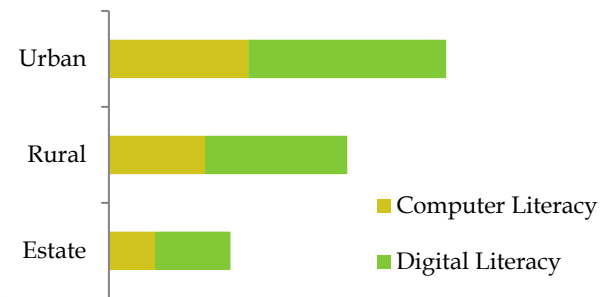
More than two out of five person (aged 5-69) digital literated.



22.2% of households owned desktop or laptop computer.



Urban sector shows more literated on both computer and digital literacy.



Computer literacy and Digital literacy by Sector

## 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.

## Digital literacy

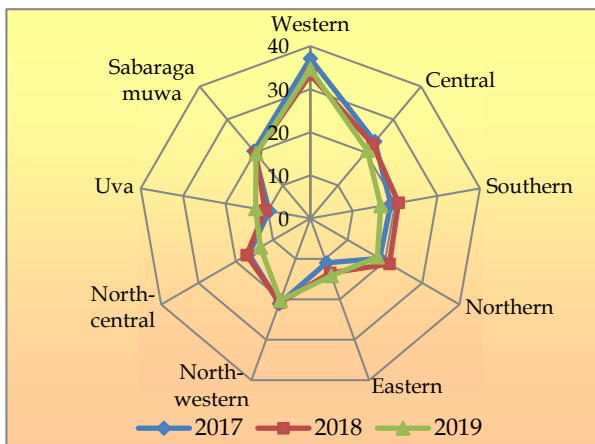
**Definition for Digital literacy:** A person (aged 5-69) is considered as a digital literate person if he/she could use computer, laptop, tablet or smartphone on his/her own.

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

## Household computer ownership

If a desktop or laptop is available at a household then that household is considered as a computer owned household. Table 1 shows the percentage distribution of computer owned households by Sector and Province. In 2019, at least one computer is available in 22.2 percent of households in the country. That is about one out of every five households owns either a desktop or a laptop computer. This percentage is 38.3 in Urban sector and Rural and Estate sector show 19.9 percent and 3.8 percent respectively. When the provinces are considered the highest availability is in the Western province (34.7%) while the lowest availability is reported from the Uva (12.9%).

**Figure 1: Percentage of Desktop or Laptop computer owned households by Province (during 1<sup>st</sup> six months)**



Percentage of availability of desktop or laptop computer at a household vary between 22% - 24% between 2017 to 2019 period.

**Table 1: Percentage of computer owned households by sector, province and Survey year (during 1<sup>st</sup> six months)**

Sector/ Province	Desktop (%)			Desktop or Laptop (%)		
	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	12.5	10.5	8.8	23.5	22.9	22.2
Urban	19.9	15.5	14.4	39.9	39.5	38.3
Rural	11.5	9.9	8.1	21.0	20.3	19.9
Estate	3.5	2.2	0.9	5.1	4.9	3.8
<b>Province</b>						
Western	19.5	14.6	12.6	37.1	33.4	34.7
Central	11.6	11.8	9.3	23.3	22.5	20.6
Southern	10.0	9.5	7.3	19.0	20.8	16.6
Northern	5.9	7.9	7.5	18.6	21.2	18.0
Eastern	6.2	5.7	7.0	11.0	13.5	14.2
North-western	11.5	9.5	7.3	21.1	20.8	20.3
North-central	9.2	7.8	4.4	16.5	17.1	13.4
Uva	6.8	5.1	3.7	9.7	10.7	12.9
Sabaragamuwa	13.1	10.8	10.0	20.4	19.7	19.6

These figures are to be treated with caution as the corresponding CV (Coefficient of variation) values are high.

## Computer Literacy and Digital Literacy

**Table 2: Computer literacy rate by sector, province and survey year (during 1<sup>st</sup> six months)**

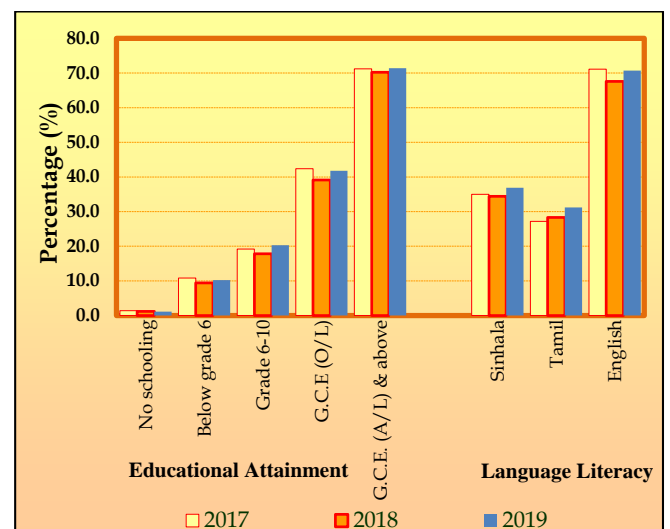
Sector/Province	Computer literacy rate (%)		
	2017	2018	2019
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	28.3	27.5	30.1
<b>Sector</b>			
Urban	41.1	38.4	41.5
Rural	26.5	25.9	28.6
Estate	9.5	11.1	13.7
<b>Province</b>			
Western	38.6	36.1	43.4
Central	30.2	29.1	28.6
Southern	29.1	30.8	29.5
Northern	15.1	17.7	19.6
Eastern	13.7	14.1	16.0
North Western	28.3	28.3	29.3
North Central	20.9	22.1	20.7
Uva	15.5	15.0	20.8
Sabaragamuwa	26.8	23.5	25.2

Percentage of Computer Literate population (Computer Literacy) over the survey periods has been gradually increasing. Overall Computer Literacy reported in 2019 for Sri Lanka is 30.1 percent.

The survey results show an increase of 1.8 percentage points from 2017 to 2019. Urban sector shows the highest computer literacy rate (41.5%) among residential sectors. Computer literacy rate for Rural and Estate sectors are 28.6 percent and 13.7 percent respectively.

Among the provinces the highest level of computer literacy is reported from the Western province (43.4%). The lowest computer literacy is reported from the Eastern province (16.0%).

**Figure 2: Distribution of computer literacy rate by Educational attainment and Language literacy – 2017, 2018 & 2019 (during 1<sup>st</sup> six months)**



As given in Table 3 the Computer literacy among males (32.1%) is higher than that of females (28.3%) in 2019. Young youths (aged 15 – 19 years) show the highest computer literacy rate (63.8%) among all other age groups.

The survey results reveal that higher the level of education higher the computer literacy. The group with A/L or above level of education shows the highest computer literacy rate (71.4%). Also computer literacy is higher among those who are literate in English language (70.7%).

**Table 3: Computer literacy rate by Gender, Age, Level of education, and Language literacy - 2017, 2018 & 2019 (during 1<sup>st</sup> six months)**

Gender, Age group, Educational attainment and Language literacy	Computer literacy rate (%)		
	2017	2018	2019
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	<b>28.3</b>	<b>27.5</b>	<b>30.1</b>
<b>By Sex</b>			
Male	30.7	29.7	32.1
Female	26.1	25.4	28.3
<b>By Age group(years)</b>			
5 - 9	14.8	11.2	14.3
10 - 14	41.7	37.4	40.4
15 - 19	60.7	56.6	63.8
20 - 24	55.1	56.2	58.0
25 - 29	45.8	46.9	51.5
30 - 34	33.4	33.9	40.0
35 - 39	25.1	26.5	28.9
40 - 49	19.9	20.1	20.9
50 - 59	11.0	11.3	12.1
60 - 69	6.3	5.7	6.2
<b>By Educational attainment</b>			
No schooling	1.4	1.2	1.1
Below grade 6	10.8	9.4	10.2
Grade 6-10	19.2	17.8	20.3
G.C.E (O/L)	42.4	39.1	41.8
G.C.E. (A/L) and above	71.2	70.2	71.4
<b>By Language literacy</b>			
Sinhala	35.0	34.4	36.9
Tamil	27.2	28.3	31.2
English	71.1	67.6	70.7

These figures are to be treated with caution as the corresponding CV (Coefficient of variation) values are high.

**Table 5: Computer literacy among unemployed population (aged 15 – 69 years) by age group – 2017, 2018 & 2019 (during 1<sup>st</sup> six months)**

Age group (years)	Percentage of computer literate population among unemployment (%)		
	2017	2018	2019
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	<b>55.6</b>	<b>62.5</b>	<b>60.9</b>
15 - 19	54.7	47.2	53.4
20 - 24	68.1	70.8	75.2
25 - 29	64.2	74.0	69.6
30 - 39	36.8	55.3	53.2
40 - 69	27.1	31.2	24.3

These figures are to be treated with caution as the corresponding CV (Coefficient of variation) values are high.

Among the unemployed, aged (20-24) group shows highest computer literate population percentage (75.2%) in 2019. Results reveal that among unemployed many have at least some ICT skills. Even among the group aged 40-69 every one out of four is computer literate (24.3%) in 2019.

**Table 4: Computer literacy among computer aware employed population (aged 15 – 69 years) by Occupation group – 2017, 2018 & 2019 (during 1<sup>st</sup> six months)**

Occupation group	Computer literacy rate (%)		
	2017	2018	2019
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	<b>62.1</b>	<b>61.7</b>	<b>63.7</b>
Managers, Senior Officials and Legislators	73.1	67.6	73.5
Professionals	87.5	85.8	87.1
Technicians and Associate Professionals	86.8	83.3	85.2
Clerks and Clerical support workers	90.0	89.4	90.7
Services and Sales workers	57.4	60.6	50.9
Skilled Agricultural, Forestry and Fishery workers	22.8	18.7	21.4
Craft and Related Trades workers	40.4	40.7	37.3
Plant and Machine operators and Assemblers	46.3	42.3	42.8
Elementary occupations	25.9	25.3	28.1
Armed Forces Occupations & unidentified occupations	75.4	74.0	86.7

These figures are to be treated with caution as the corresponding CV (Coefficient of variation) values are high.

Computer literacy among the employed population who are aware of computer in Sri Lanka is around 63.7 % in 2019. The positions such as Senior officials and Managers (73.5%), Professionals (87.1%), Technical and Associate professionals (85.2%), Clerks and Clerical support workers (90.7%) have higher computer literacy rates. Also, even among the individuals engage in elementary occupations 28.1 percent are computer literate.

**Table 6: Computer literacy rate and Digital literacy rate by Gender, Sector and Age groups – 2019 (during 1<sup>st</sup> six months)**

Gender, Sector, Age group	Computer Literacy	Digital Literacy
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	<b>30.1</b>	<b>44.3</b>
<b>By Sex</b>		
Male	32.1	48.0
Female	28.3	41.1
<b>Sector</b>		
Urban	41.5	58.9
Rural	28.6	42.4
Estate	13.7	22.5
<b>By Age group(years)</b>		
5 - 9	14.3	27.2
10 - 14	40.4	52.4
15 - 19	63.8	76.6
20 - 24	58.0	77.9
25 - 29	51.5	71.1
30 - 34	40.0	60.9
35 - 39	28.9	50.9
40 - 49	20.9	37.5
50 - 59	12.1	21.2
60 - 69	6.2	11.3

When the digital literacy is considered 44.3% (aged 5 -69) has digital literacy. Digital literacy is higher than computer literacy for all disaggregated levels, showing the drift from Personal Computer to Smartphones/Tablets.

## Source of computer training

Table 7 shows that the majority of those who are computer literate have received training from School/University or Private institutions. The training received through Government training centres are comparatively low.

**Table 7: Percentage distribution of Computer literate household population (aged 5 – 69 years) by sources of receiving computer knowledge\* and sector – 2019 (during 1<sup>st</sup> six months)**

Source of receiving computer knowledge	Total (%)	Residential sector (%)		
		Urban	Rural	Estate
Private training course	21.9	24.3	21.4	11.6
School/University	53.4	56.5	52.2	60.7
Govt. training centres	6.1	5.9	6.2	3.1
Employment activities	19.6	28.6	17.2	6.9
Work place	12.7	16.8	11.6	5.5
Family members	27.6	28.9	27.4	15.0
Friends/ Relatives	24.0	20.1	25.3	23.4
Self	35.3	41.1	34.0	13.3
Other	3.8	3.9	3.9	1.2

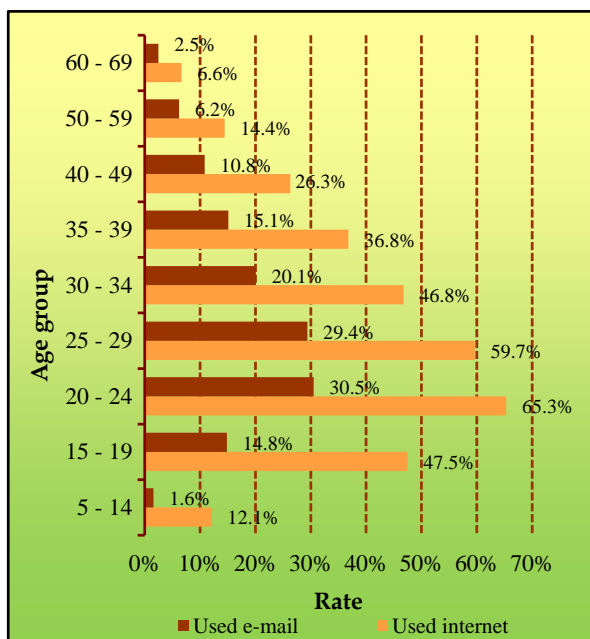
\* Multiple choice answers

■ These figures are to be treated with caution as the corresponding CV (Coefficient of variation) values are high.

## Internet and E-mail use

The Table 8 depicts that 29.0 percent of the population aged 5 to 69 years use the internet facility at least once during twelve months in 2019. The survey results further reveal that in the Urban sector, where the facilities are largely available, shows the highest usage of both e-mail and internet compared to other two sectors.

**Figure 3: Percentage distribution of Internet and E-mail using household population (aged 5 – 69 years) by age group – 2019 (during 1<sup>st</sup> six months)**



The Table 8 and Figure 3 show that persons in age group 20 - 24 indicate a higher internet and email usage compared to the persons in other age groups.

**Table 8: Percentage distribution of Internet and E-mail using household population (aged 5 – 69 years) by Sex, Sector and Age group – 2017, 2018 & 2019 (during 1<sup>st</sup> six months)**

Gender, Sector, Age group (years)	Household Population (aged 5-69)					
	Internet (%)			E-mail (%)		
	2017	2018	2019	2017	2018	2019
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	21.3	25.5	29.0	11.0	9.8	11.5
<b>By Sex</b>						
Male	25.0	30.1	33.0	13.0	12.0	13.5
Female	17.9	21.2	25.4	9.2	7.8	9.7
<b>By Sector</b>						
Urban	37.5	40.6	45.5	21.6	19.7	21.7
Rural	18.6	23.0	26.5	9.0	7.9	9.8
Estate	4.5	9.3	11.1	2.8	3.8	2.8
<b>By Age Groups</b>						
5 - 14	8.9	9.5	12.1	2.1	1.2	1.6
15 - 19	36.1	39.8	47.5	15.6	11.0	14.8
20 - 24	51.9	61.1	65.3	29.2	26.4	30.5
25 - 29	46.2	54.7	59.7	25.8	24.1	29.4
30 - 34	33.8	42.5	46.8	18.7	17.8	20.1
35 - 39	25.3	32.1	36.8	13.5	12.8	15.1
40 - 49	17.8	23.2	26.3	9.9	9.8	10.8
50 - 59	9.1	12.4	14.4	5.7	5.3	6.2
60 - 69	4.9	5.4	6.6	3.0	2.8	2.5

The survey results reveal that 11.5 percent of the household population aged 5 – 69 years have used E-mail facility at least once during the last 12 months period.

**Table 9: Percentage distribution of device use to connect to internet/ email household population\* (aged 5 – 69 years) by Sex, Sector and Age group – 2019 (during 1<sup>st</sup> six months)**

Gender, Sector, Age group	Desktop/ Laptop	Smartphone	Tablet computer	Mobile phone
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	25.0	70.9	2.2	1.9
<b>By Sex</b>				
Male	13.5	38.5	1.1	1.0
Female	11.5	32.4	1.0	0.9
<b>By Sector</b>				
Urban	8.2	19.5	0.5	0.3
Rural	16.7	50.2	1.6	1.6
Estate	0.1	1.2	0.0	0.0
<b>By Age group (years)</b>				
5 - 9	0.4	1.5	0.1	0.0
10 - 14	1.4	3.8	0.2	0.0
15 - 19	3.5	10.2	0.2	0.3
20 - 24	3.9	12.0	0.3	0.3
25 - 29	3.6	10.4	0.4	0.3
30 - 34	2.8	8.7	0.4	0.2
35 - 39	2.6	7.8	0.2	0.2
40 - 49	3.7	10.0	0.3	0.2
50 - 59	2.2	5.0	0.1	0.2
60 - 69	0.8	1.7	0.1	0.1

\* Multiple choice answers

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