

Computer Literacy Statistics – 2018 (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 and therefore, investing on ICT developments in the 21st century has become a compulsory requirement for a country to survive.

Timely and accurate information on 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 that exist between demographic and geographic groups provides more insight for the scattering of ICT facilities.

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 in 2004, 2006/07, 2009, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and latest is in 2018. This bulletin exposes the major findings of the first six months starting from January to June in 2018. More detailed report will be available with the full year dataset. For the current analysis of the computer literacy survey a nationally distributed sample of 12,880 households with persons aged 5 – 69 years were enumerated.

Household computer ownership

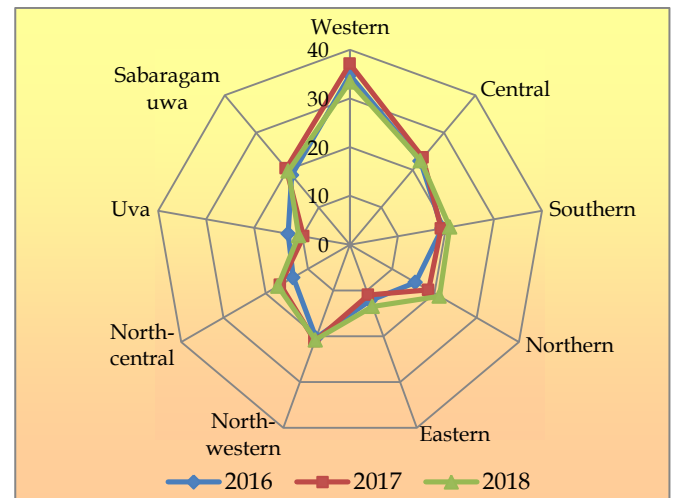
If a desktop or laptop is available at a household then that household is considered as a computer owned household. The Table 1 shows the percentage distribution of computer owned households by Sector/ Province levels. In 1st half of 2018, at least one computer is available in 22.9% of households in the country. That is more than one out of every five households owns either a desktop or a laptop computer. This percentage is 39.5% in Urban Sector. The Rural and Estate Sectors show 20.3% and 4.9% respectively. The highest availability is in the Western province (33.4%) while the lowest availability is reported from the Uva province (10.7%).

Table 1: Percentage of computer owned households by Sector and Province - 2016 to 2018 (during 1st six months)

Sector/ Province	Desktop (%)			Desktop or Laptop (%)		
	2016	2017	2018	2016	2017	2018
Sri Lanka	13.1	12.5	10.5	22.5	23.5	22.9
Urban	19.6	19.9	15.5	35.3	39.9	39.5
Rural	12.2	11.5	9.9	20.7	21.0	20.3
Estate	5.0	3.5	2.2	6.4	5.1	4.9
Province						
Western	19.6	19.5	14.6	34.8	37.1	33.4
Central	13.9	11.6	11.8	22.4	23.3	22.5
Southern	11.9	10.0	9.5	19.2	19.0	20.8
Northern	6.9	5.9	7.9	15.5	18.6	21.2
Eastern	6.0	6.2	5.7	12.2	11.0	13.5
North-western	10.0	11.5	9.5	20.4	21.1	20.8
North-central	8.9	9.2	7.8	13.5	16.5	17.1
Uva	9.2	6.8	5.1	12.9	9.7	10.7
Sabaragamuwa	12.9	13.1	10.8	18.6	20.4	19.7

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

Figure 1: Percentage of Desktop or Laptop computer owned households by Province (during 1st 6 months)



The percentage of households with a computer has decreased in 2018 compared to 2017.

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 2: Computer literacy rate by sector and province – 2016 & 2017 (during 1st 6 months)

Sector/Province	Computer literacy rate (%)	
	2017	2018
Sri Lanka	28.3	27.5
Sector		
Urban	41.1	38.4
Rural	26.5	25.9
Estate	9.5	11.1
Province		
Western	38.6	36.1
Central	30.2	29.1
Southern	29.1	30.8
Northern	15.1	17.7
Eastern	13.7	14.1
North Western	28.3	28.3
North Central	20.9	22.1
Uva	15.5	15.0
Sabaragamuwa	26.8	23.5

N.A. - not available

Overall Computer Literacy reported in 1st half of 2018 for Sri Lanka is 27.5%. The survey results show an decrease of 0.8 percentage points from 2017 (1st half) to 2018 (1st half).

The Urban sector shows the highest computer literacy rate (38.4%) among residential sectors. Computer literacy rate for Rural and Estate sectors are 25.9% and 11.1% respectively. Among the provinces the highest level of computer literacy is reported from the Western province (36.1%) while the lowest percentage is reported from the Eastern province. The computer literacy rate among districts show variations ranging from 8.6% (Kilinochchi) to 42.6% (Colombo) and shows the still prevailing digital divide (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1: Computer literacy rate by district – 2018 (during 1st 6 months)

District	Literacy Rate	District	Literacy Rate
All Island	27.5	Mulativu	12.5
Colombo	42.6	Kilinochchi	8.6
Gampaha	32.9	Batticaloa	12.5
Kalutara	30.0	Ampara	16.3
Kandy	34.8	Trincomalee	12.3
Matale	30.9	Kurunegala	29.1
Nuwara Eliya	17.4	Puttalam	26.8
Galle	30.2	Anuradhapura	24.2
Matara	34.1	Polonnaruwa	17.7
Hambantota	27.6	Badulla	14.8
Jaffna	19.1	Monaragala	15.3
Mannar	11.6	Ratnapura	21.0
Vavunia	25.7	Kegalle	26.8

Table 3: Computer literacy rate by Gender, Age, Level of education, and Language literacy - 2017 & 2018 (during 1st 6 months)

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

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

As given in Table 3 the Computer literacy among male (29.7%) is higher than that of female (25.4%) in 1st half of 2017. Young youths (aged 15 – 19 years) show the highest computer literacy rate (56.6%) among all other age groups. Age 60 years and above groups show low computer literacy rates.

The survey results reveal that higher the level of education has higher the computer literacy. The group with A/L or above level of education shows the highest computer literacy rate (70.2%). Also computer literacy is higher among those who are literate in English language (67.6%).

Figure 2: Distribution of computer literacy rate by Educational attainment and Language literacy – 2016 & 2017 (during 1st 6 months)

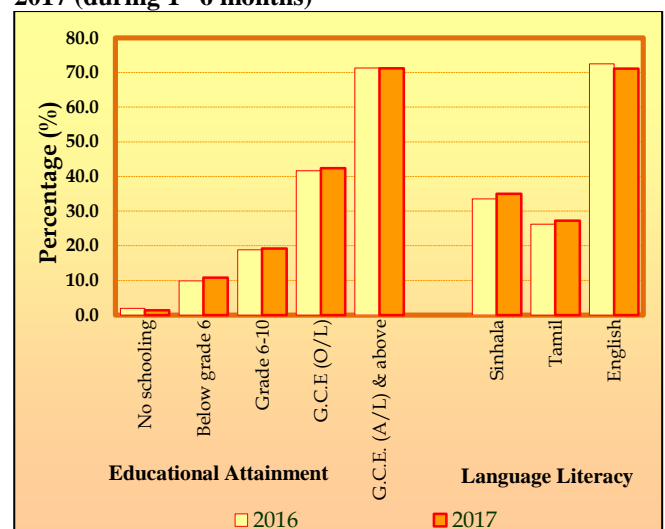


Table 4: Computer literacy among computer aware employed population (aged 15 – 69 years) by Occupation – 2017 & 2018 (during 1st 6 months)

Occupation group	Computer literacy (%)	
	2017	2018
Sri Lanka	62.1	61.7
Managers, Senior Officials and Legislators	73.1	67.6
Professionals	87.5	85.8
Technicians and Associate Professionals	86.8	83.3
Clerks and Clerical support workers	90.0	89.4
Services and Sales workers	57.4	60.6
Skilled Agricultural, Forestry and Fishery workers	22.8	18.7
Craft and Related Trades workers	40.4	40.7
Plant and Machine operators and Assemblers	46.3	42.3
Elementary occupations	25.9	25.3
Armed Forces Occupations & unidentified occupations	75.4	74.0

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 61.7% in 1st half of 2018 and the positions such as Managers, Senior Officials and Legislators (67.6%), Professionals (85.8%), Technical and Associate professionals (83.3%) and Clerks and Clerical support workers (89.4%) have higher computer literacy rates. Also, even among the individuals engage in elementary occupations 25.3 percent are computer literate.

Table 5: Computer literacy among unemployed population (aged 15 – 69 years) by age group – 2017 & 2018 (during 1st 6 months)

Age group (years)	Percentage of computer literate population among unemployment (%)	
	2017	2018
Sri Lanka	55.6	62.5
15 - 19	54.7	47.2
20 - 24	68.1	70.8
25 - 29	64.2	74.0
30 - 39	36.8	55.3
40 - 69	27.1	31.2

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

Among the unemployed, aged (25-29) group shows highest computer literate population (74.0%). The survey results reveal that among unemployed, many of them have at least some ICT skills.

Digital literacy

Definition for Digital literacy: A person (aged 5-69) is considered as a digital literate person if he/she could use computer, lap top, 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.

Table 6: Computer literacy rate and Digital literacy rate by Gender, Sector and Age groups – 2018 (during 1st 6 months)

Gender, Sector, Age group	Computer Literacy	Digital Literacy
Sri Lanka	27.5	40.3
By Sex		
Male	29.7	44.5
Female	25.4	36.4
Sector		
Urban	38.4	53.9
Rural	25.9	38.4
Estate	11.1	18.7
By Age group (years)		
5 - 9	11.2	21.4
10 - 14	37.4	47.7
15 - 19	56.6	70.4
20 - 24	56.2	75.3
25 - 29	46.9	67.3
30 - 34	33.9	54.7
35 - 39	26.5	45.1
40 - 49	20.1	34.1
50 - 59	11.3	19.2
60 - 69	5.7	8.9

When the digital literacy is considered two out of every five (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 the source of receiving computer training. The majority of those who are computer literate have received training from School/University. The training received through Government training centres are comparatively low (5.8%).

Table 7: Percentage distribution of Computer literate household population (aged 5 – 69 years) by sources of receiving computer knowledge* and sector – 2018(during 1st 6 months)

Source of computer training multiple	Total (%)	Residential sector (%)		
		Urban	Rural	Estate
Private training course	24.6	27.4	23.7	24.2
School/University	50.5	50.2	50.4	57.3
Govt. training centres	5.8	5.7	6.0	1.8
Employment activities	19.0	28.7	16.1	6.9
Work place	11.3	16.4	9.8	4.2
Family members	26.2	29.9	25.5	7.6
Friends/ Relatives	23.5	21.2	24.4	14.3
Self	33.4	36.6	32.8	14.5
Other	3.0	1.7	3.5	0.7

* 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 21.3 percent of the population aged 5 to 69 years use the internet facility at least once during the last 12 months. 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.

Table 8: Percentage distribution of Internet and E-mail using household population (aged 5 – 69 years) by District – 2016 & 2017 (during 1st 6 months)

District	Household Population (age 5-69) Using			
	Internet (%)		E-mail (%)	
	2017	2018	2017	2018
Sri Lanka	21.3	25.5	11.0	9.8
Colombo	44.6	44.9	26.3	20.4
Gampaha	27.2	30.2	15.1	13.2
Kalutara	21.3	29.3	9.6	8.4
Kandy	24.8	27.1	12.4	11.7
Matale	16.7	17.5	8.4	6.3
Nuwara Eliya	7.6	13.0	5.2	8.5
Galle	21.3	24.8	11.7	10.5
Matara	15.7	27.7	4.9	9.4
Hambantota	13.3	15.3	7.4	3.9
Jaffna	25.7	34.0	11.4	9.4
Mannar	17.3	26.2	6.7	16.5
Vavunia	30.7	37.9	6.6	8.9
Mulativu	10.7	17.1	5.5	4.7
Kilinochchi	10.5	18.8	4.0	5.5
Batticaloa	15.6	23.6	7.4	9.8
Ampara	16.2	24.8	10.4	8.1
Trincomalee	13.2	15.7	9.5	9.4
Kurunegala	20.3	22.1	9.5	6.2
Puttalam	26.0	35.0	6.2	6.4
Anuradhapura	12.2	22.4	5.4	6.2
Polonnaruwa	10.9	11.0	3.9	4.9
Badulla	4.9	10.1	5.2	6.2
Monaragala	5.6	13.3	2.6	3.7
Ratnapura	15.4	13.5	8.0	5.4
Kegalle	16.4	19.2	8.5	8.8

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

Different patterns of internet usage can be observed among districts (Table 8). In 1st half of 2018 Colombo district shows the highest percentage (44.9%) of population using internet while Badulla district shows the lowest percentage (10.1%).

The survey results reveal that 9.8 percent of the household population aged 5 – 69 years have used E-mail facility at least once during the last 12 months period. The highest e-mail usage is reported from the Colombo district (20.4%). The lowest e-mail usage among the districts has reported from the Monaragala district (3.7%).

Table 9: Percentage distribution of Internet and E-mail using household population (aged 5 – 69 years) by age group – 2017 & 2018 (during 1st 6 months)

Age group (years)	Household Population (age 5-69)			
	Internet (%)		E-mail (%)	
	2017	2018	2017	2018
Sri Lanka	21.3	25.5	11.0	9.8
5 - 14	8.9	9.5	2.1	1.2
15 - 19	36.1	39.8	15.6	11.0
20 - 24	51.9	61.1	29.2	26.4
25 - 29	46.2	54.7	25.8	24.1
30 - 34	33.8	42.5	18.7	17.8
35 - 39	25.3	32.1	13.5	12.8
40 - 49	17.8	23.2	9.9	9.8
50 - 59	9.1	12.4	5.7	5.3
60 - 69	4.9	5.4	3.0	2.8

The Table 9 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 10: Percentage distribution of device use to connect to internet/ email household population* (aged 5 – 69 years) by Sex, Sector and Age group – 2018 (during 1st 6 months)

Gender, Sector, Age group	Desktop/ Laptop	Smartphone	Tablet computer	Mobile phone
Sri Lanka	27.1	67.5	3.0	2.4
By Sex				
Male	27.3	67.5	2.9	2.3
Female	26.9	67.5	3.2	2.4
Sector				
Urban	31.5	62.8	3.8	1.8
Rural	25.6	69.1	2.7	2.6
Estate	6.9	87.8	3.2	2.1
By Age group (years)				
5 - 9	27.0	67.7	5.3	0.0
10 - 14	28.6	65.3	4.5	1.7
15 - 19	26.9	68.0	3.1	2.1
20 - 24	24.3	71.2	1.8	2.6
25 - 29	25.5	68.6	2.7	3.1
30 - 34	24.9	69.9	2.9	2.3
35 - 39	24.9	69.7	2.5	2.9
40 - 49	29.3	64.9	3.7	2.0
50 - 59	34.8	59.6	3.9	1.7
60 - 69	39.2	54.4	4.2	2.2

* Multiple choice answers

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

Figure 3: Percentage distribution of Internet and E-mail using household population (aged 5 – 69 years) by age group – 2018 (during 1st 6 months)

