

- Digital literacy far ahead of computer literacy
- Western Province leads, followed by South; worst performer East
- Clerks and clerical workers most proficient at 89%
- 46.5% of males digital literate, compared to 38.7% of women
- Email use declines by 1%

SRI Lanka has seen a 2% growth in its digital literacy, which has

✓ Digital literacy reaches 42.4% in SL

grown to 42.4% in 2018 when compared with the previous year, the latest data from the Census and Statistics Department showed yesterday, with the Western Province leading the way but other provinces performing at below average levels.

The growth patterns was revealed in the Department of Census and Statistics' annual

report of computer literacy (2018) released on Wednesday.

According to the report, digital literacy stood at 42.4% compared to 29% for computer literacy for the year 2018. However, computer literacy has only recorded marginal growth, with 0.4% increase in 2018 compared to 28.6% 2017.

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✓ Digital...

The report surveys both computer literacy and digital literacy of Sri Lankans each year, and point to the Western Province leading the island in both computer and digital literacy, with 40% of the population considered computer literate. The Southern Province came held second position with 30% with the Eastern Province ranked lowest with 14.8%.

For the purpose of the survey, the Department has defined computer and digital literacy as whether a person could use a computer on his or her own, and if a person could use a computer, laptop, tablet or smartphone on his or her own, respectively. Age variation for this criteria is listed as between years 5 to 69.

Clerks and clerical support workers recorded a computer literacy of 89.9% according to the survey, leading in the employed population as an occupation group. Managers, senior officials and legislators, professionals and technicians and associate professionals followed behind with individual rank of 63.2%, 70.2% and 87.4% respectively.

The use of email has declined 1%, according to the survey, pointing to a drop in usage by Sri Lankans with more people acquiring smartphones and digital devices.

The parity between males and females in computer literacy seems to widen when digital literacy is considered. According to the report, 31.0% of males are computer literate, while 46.5% are digital literate. However, only 27.2% females are computer literate, while 38.7% are digital literate; a 3.8% and 7.8% gap, respectively.

More than half of Sri Lanka's unemployed population are computer literate, with 63.7% recorded as computer literate. The survey results reveal that the higher the level of education, the higher the computer literacy. The group of those educated up to Advanced Level or above shows the highest computer literacy rate (71.6%). The survey points to language as an enabler, with those competent in English 69.8% achieving computer literacy, with Sinhala and Tamil listed as 36.1% and 29.8% respectively.