Census of Population and Housing
2012
Key Findings

Department of Census and Statistics
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Preface

Department of Census and Statistics provides accurate statistics for decision making and policy planning. Decennial Population and Housing Census play a vital role in this regard. The 14th Census of Population and Housing which was conducted in 2012 was a great achievement for all Sri Lankans as it covered the entire country after 31 years.

Population and Housing Census results disseminate in stages and the latest information are released in the official website of the Department of Census and Statistics. Publications are available at the sales counter of the Department.

This publication was released in parallel to the seminar on Key Findings of Population and Housing Census 2012 conduct in December 2014. This publication provides a comprehensive analysis of selected important topics with several Demographic Indicators. The publication was prepared by the staff of the Population Census and Demography Division of the Department of Census and Statistics and experts on the field of Demography.

Conducting a Population and Housing Census is a complex activity which spends large human resources and cost. Therefore it is the responsibility of all data users to utilize the Census information for better planning and uplift the lives of Sri Lankans.

D.C.A. Gunawardena
Director General
Department of Census and Statistics
12.12.2014

Message from UNFPA Representative....

As the Representative of UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund in Sri Lanka, it is with great pleasure we extend our support to the dissemination of key findings of the 2012 Population and Housing Census.

UNFPA, as an agency of the United Nations, helps to ensure that every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled – this is our mission.

A Population Census is the primary source of information about the number and characteristics of the population. In most countries, around the world, the Population Census remains the most important procedure of systematically acquiring and recording information about the members of a country's population; and it forms the basis for the generation of basic but fundamental data needed for development planning and tracking progress towards national and international development goals.

Moreover, a Population Census provides an important part of the foundation for good governance, decentralization and development. Census data and information support policy making and planning across a broad range of sectors and provide the basis for evidence-based policy dialogue.

The 2012 Population and Housing Census is an important milestone in Sri Lanka's recent history because after a lapse of 31 years, findings from a Census covering the entire country are now available. This comes at an important time when the country is rapidly transforming in its developmental path. Thus, these key Census findings, which provide a good understand of the population characteristics and dynamics are crucial in helping to make the right investments and policy decisions in enabling the country to be the "Unstoppable Sri Lanka" it envisions to be.

UNFPA is proud to have supported the 2012 Census process and look forward to continue our support in integrating demographic dimensions into policy planning and budgeting so that policymakers become better informed, country's development is promoted and people's rights and needs are met.

Mr. Alain Sibenaler
UNFPA Representative
Sri Lanka

Message from the Director General...

Department of Census and Statistics (DCS) successfully conducted 14th Census of Population and Housing (CPH) in 2012. This is a land mark in the history of Censuses as it covers the entire island after 31 years. Therefore the information collected in this Census is most important to all data users. The CPH is the primary data source for information at lowest level of administration. Information from CPH plays an important role in formulating various policies and programs, evaluating development projects and used by many policy planners and researchers.

CPH is the largest statistical undertaking in any country. Therefore, releasing results involved extensive checking and data processing activities. Dissemination of data takes place in different stages. Three basic reports were released using enumerator's summaries in 2012. To expedite the releasing results another report was published in 2014 with more information using a 5 percent sample. Final Census report and province level reports are planning to release soon.

This publication was prepared by staff of Population Census and Demography Division of the DCS and experts in Demography out side DCS to disseminate key findings of Census 2012. Topics covered in this publication are population size, growth and distribution, marriage and fertility, education, literacy, internal migration, population temporarily living abroad and functional difficulties of the population. Some important characteristics of housing also included in this publication. In addition, a section on challenges, issues and policy implications arising from the findings is included at the end of this publication in order to pay special attention of policy makers to uplift the lives of Sri Lankans.

It is expected that the key findings contained in this publication will be utilized by the policy makers to make effective decisions to further improve the living standards of the people of Sri Lanka.

I thank UNFPA for all the support given in conducting Population Census in Sri Lanka and this seminar. Further I pay my gratitude to all DCS and other officers at different levels and to citizens of Sri Lanka.

D.C.A. Gunawardena
Director General
Department of Census and Statistics

Message from Additional Director General ....

The process of nation building is incomplete without planning for the well being and prosperity of the citizens. For the planning process to be responsive to the aspirations of the people, it should entail the integration of demographic data. This is because the people are both the agents and beneficiaries of the development process.

Censuses are the main source of data for a broad range of demographic and socio-economic statistics in any country and provide vital information about housing conditions and access to basic facilities such as water and electricity.

This is one of the very reasons that the Department of Census and Statistics conducts the Census of Population and Housing irrespective of high cost. It is an established practice to conduct a Census of Population and Housing once in every 10 years in Sri Lanka, as per international standards. The latest round of the Census was conducted in March 2012.

Series of reports have already been released based on the data collected during the last Census. Analysis of Census data under different themes was carried out both by the staff of the DCS and experts outside the DCS including eminent professors of local universities and research institutions. Summaries of findings of those studies are presented in this publication under thematic reports of demographic characteristics. These topics elaborate in detail how the selected demographic conditions of our country have changed over the past few decades and this information particularly will be useful for our government to plan programmes and projects in order to fulfill the aspirations of our people. Census data helps in justifiable fund allocations in various social strata and brings about holistic development of the country.

There is an urgent need for much more advocacy about the value of a Census. Advocacy should target parliamentarians, policy-makers and other key stakeholders, such as civil society and private sector representatives, placing emphasis on the image building for the Census as an important source of quality information, and the many potential uses of Census data, especially in relation to national poverty reduction strategies, as well as for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

This publication can be considered as an advocacy tool and it will enable Head of the Departments, academicians and other data users to generate information which is specific to their own needs. I hope that all will benefit optimally from the findings given in this publication.

I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all those contributed to conduct of the Census of Population and Housing – 2012 successfully. All assistances given by the UNFPA for dissemination of Population and Housing Census data are very much appreciated.

Dr. Amara Satharasinghe
Additional Director General
Department of Census and Statistics

Message from the Director …….

The primary responsibility of the Department of Census and Statistics is to collect, analyze and disseminate information of Census, surveys and administrative data for policy makers, planners and other users. Conducting a Population and Housing Census of a country is no mean statistical undertaking and the Department has successfully completed the 14th Population and Housing Census in 2012 covering, after a lapse of three decades, the entire country as its gamut.

Census information reflects the diversity of the population surveyed and the characteristics of its housing at a predetermined point in time. Such characteristics may vary widely due to various socio-economic influences that pervade over different sections of the population. Census data should manifest valuable indicators to facilitate its users to make meaningful decisions. Thus, this publication provides a number of key indicators under different demographic and housing topics for concerned users.

Therefore, we wish that the findings contained in this publication will project the true picture of the situation thereby helping the users to make effective and sound decisions in the particular area of concern paving the way for further improvement in the social and economic standards of the people of Sri Lanka.

This publication is the result of a conscientious and collective effort by many officers of this department and officers in the administrative network of the country, right from the planning stage to data collection stage and to the point of interpretation of the census results, and I take this opportunity to acknowledge their valuable contributions. The support given by the UNFPA also should be specially acknowledged.

Mrs. I.R. Bandara
Director
Population Census and Demography Division
Department of Census and Statistics

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction

A Census of Population and Housing is the most extensive statistical undertaking in any country. Normally, Censuses are conducted in countries in every 10 years. Department of Census and Statistics conducted 14th decennial Census in Sri Lanka covering the entire country in 2012 after 31 years.

History and landmarks of the Census

- Sri Lanka has a long history of Census taking; started in 1871, 143 years ago. It was the first Population Census conducted among South Asian Countries.
- Censuses are usually conducted in Sri Lanka once in 10 years and continued regularly until 1931; 1941 Census was postponed to 1946 due to Second World War. The next one was conducted in 1953 followed by 1963. The tradition of conducting Censuses in years ending '1' was re-established in 1971 and the next Census was carried out in 1981.
- Census could not be implemented in 1991 and Census 2001 which was conducted after 20 years was confined to only 18 out of 25 districts in the country due to the civil disturbances prevailed in the Northern and Eastern provinces at that time.
- Census which was counducted in 2012 was very important to the entire nation as it covered the entire country after 31 years.

Importance of a Census

- Census is the only source of social, economic and demographic information on **each and every** individual of the country and on housing characteristics at a given point of time.
- Census information is the basis for all national and sub-national level development plans and policy formulations. These data are used to monitor the progress of development programs implemented at smallest administrative units in the country and used to compare population indicators locally and globally.
- Census information can be used to conduct various policy oriented research studies such as population projections, population distribution, urban planning, migration trends, economic activities, education and extensively used in preparing development indicators.
- Census information is used for various administrative purposes such as delineating electoral boundaries, providing facilities for local administration and redefining urban areas.
- Census frame of households is used for Agriculture and Industrial Censuses as well as intercensal sample surveys.

Main stages of a Census

The planning and organization activities related to 14th Census were commenced in year 2008. There are three main stages in the Census taking.

1. **Mapping stage** – Preparation of the maps at Grama Niladhari division level and demarcation of Census blocks which is the smallest enumeration area was completed in year 2010.

2. **Listing stage** – Listing of the buildings at the Census block level based on the maps was completed in year 2011.

3. **Enumeration stage** – Enumeration stage comprised of two rounds. First round was the data collection stage which was carried out from 27th February to 19th March 2012 and the second round was the revision of data collected during the first round taking into account any births, deaths or changes of residence between the first round and the Census day, which was 20th March 2012. Altogether 80,000 temporary appointed enumerators were deployed throughout the country.

Method of enumeration

- In all the previous Censuses conducted from 1871 to 2001, enumeration was based on De - facto method (person is enumerated at the place where he/she is present at the Census night irrespective of the place of usual residence).

- This procedure created many operational problems such as mobilizing large number of enumerators to count people outdoors within few hours at the Census night. In addition, the most of users need usually resident population for policy planning purposes.

- Using local expertise and international best practices De-jure method based on usual residence was used in 2012. Usual residence is defined as 'A place where a person has been living continuously for more than six months, or expects to stay for more than 6 months continuously, at the time of Census'.

- This is very important improvement in the Census history of Sri Lanka.

Other major improvements of the Census 2012

- Data capture method used in previous Censuses was the manual system of key-to-disk procedure which demands significant resources and caused considerable delays. Census 2012 adopted image based form processing technology such as OMR/ICR through scanning the questionnaire.

- e - Census technology was introduced for the first time in Census 2012 to collect information from selected households in Colombo Municipal Council on experimental basis. Various security measures were taken to safeguard the confidentiality of the on-line transmission of data.

- In previous Censuses, occupation and industry data of the respondents were coded manually which was very time consuming and error prone. In Census 2012, software has been developed to assist the coders in finding the most suitable code which improves the efficiency of coding.

Main topics covered

Population (29 questions)

- Demographic characteristics (age, sex, marital status etc.)
- Internal migration
- Functional difficulties
- Education / vocational qualifications
- Fertility
- Persons temporarily living abroad

Household (11 questions)

- Principal source of drinking water
- Principal type of lighting
- Toilet facilities
- Communication facilities
- Access to internet

Housing units (8 questions)

- Type of structure
- Construction material of walls, floor and roof
- Year of construction

Dissemination of Census results

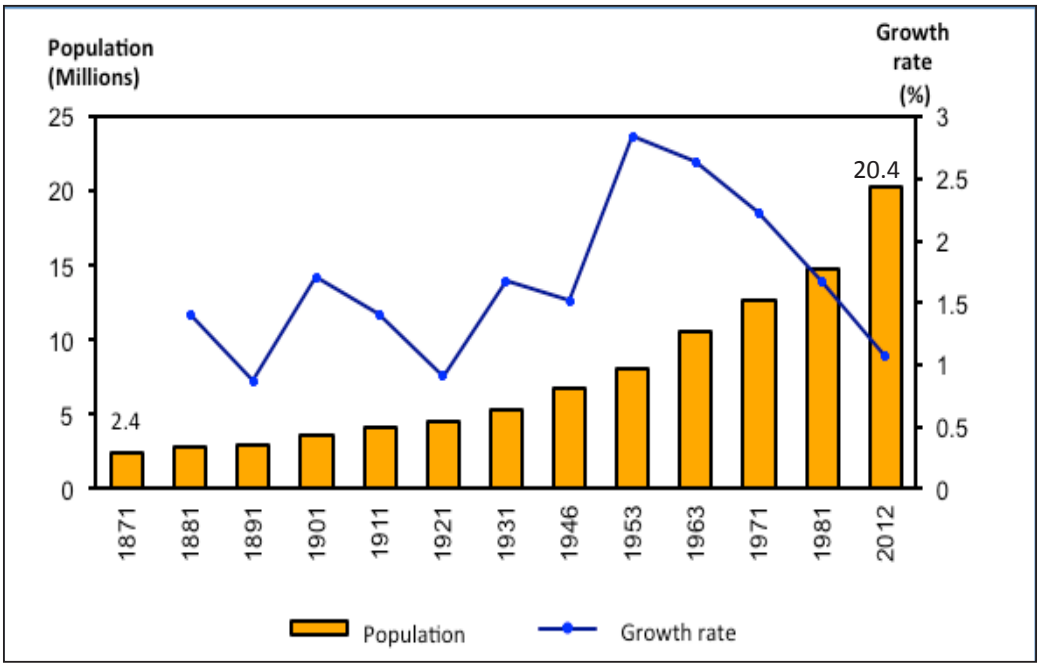
Taking a Census in a country entails extensive data collection and processing activity. Hence releasing Census information takes time due to the series of activities involved in the process. Therefore, releasing of Census results were done in stages as metioned below.

- First report on preliminary results based on enumerator's summaries was released in April 2012.
- Another two reports based on the enumerator's summaries on characteristics of 'Population' and 'Housing' by Divisional Secretary level were released in October 2012.
- Next report was published in March 2014 based on a 5 percent sample of the final Census data.
- Seminar on disseminating major findings of the 14th Census is the next step before finalizing the Final Census Report.
- Provincinal level Publications and Final Census Report on Population and Housing will be released soon.

POPULATION SIZE, GROWTH AND DISTRIBUTION

Population size and growth

Figure 1 : Population size and growth 1871-2012

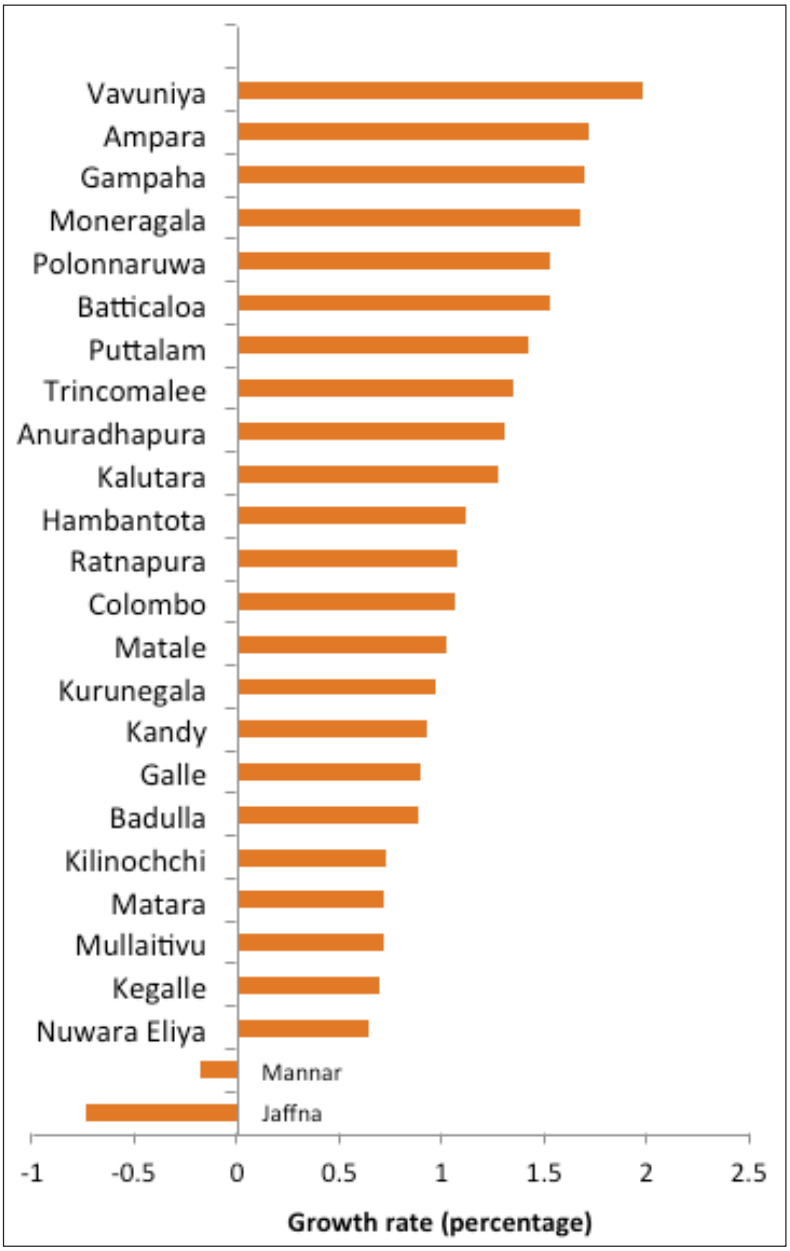


- Total population of Sri Lanka in 2012 is 20,359,439. Population gradually increases over the years and 2012 value shows more than 8 fold increase since 1871.

- Population growth rates show very clear decline since 1953 and remains at average annual growth rate of 1.1 percent during 1981-2012.

- These changes occurred as a result of Demographic Transition from changing patterns of births and deaths over the years. Up to around 1946 both the birth rates and the death rates are high so the growth rates remain below 1.7 percent. Immediately after 1946, death rates started to decline rapidly. As a result, growth rates recorded values well above 2 percent. After 1960 birth rates too started to decline arresting the higher growth; Sri Lanka is still cruising through this stage with further scope of declining fertility in future.

Figure 2 : Intercensal population growth of districts 1981, 2012

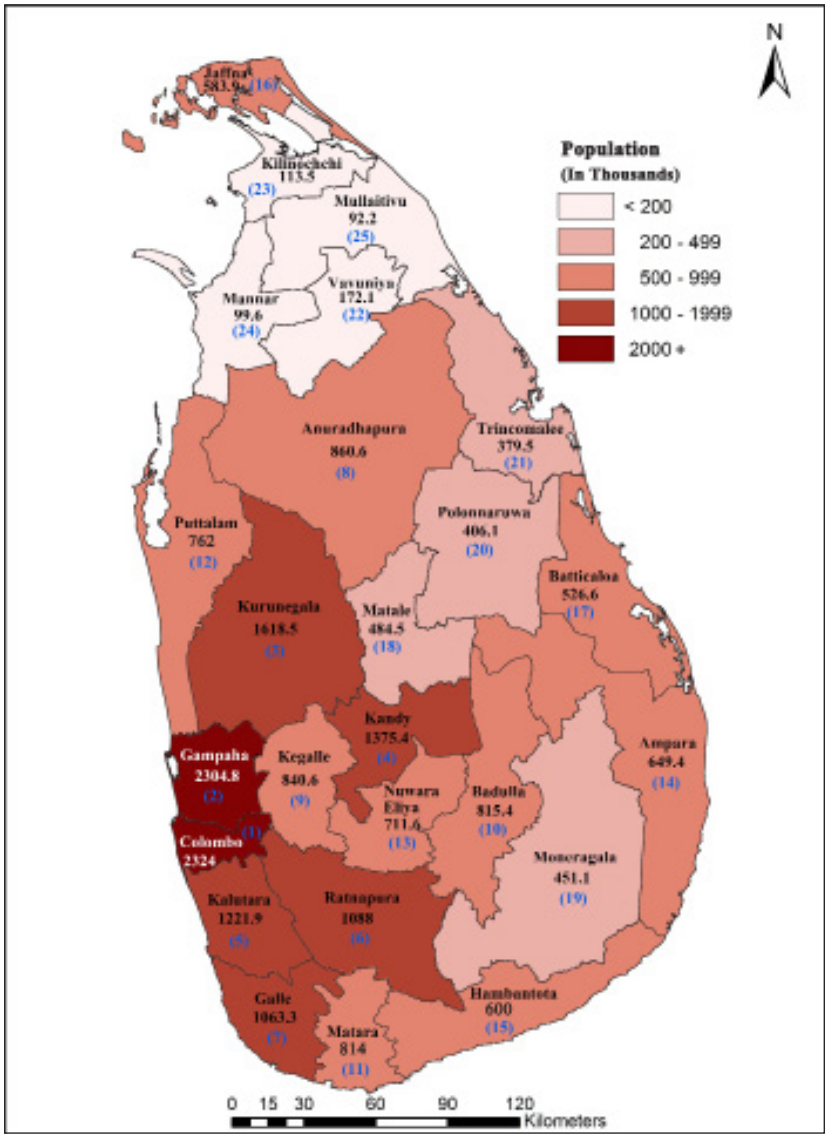


- The national average annual growth rate of 1.1 percent during 1981-2012 marks a significant spatial variation within the country. It ranges from 2.0 to (- 0.7) percent.
- Population growth rate is highest for Vavuniya district (2.0 percent). Some in-migrants to Vavuniya during the conflict period have opted to settle down permanently which may be a reason for this high growth.
- Growth is high in Ampara, Gampaha and Moneragala districts as well (1.7 percent).
- Growth is lowest for Nuwara Eliya district (0.6 percent). Outmigration to other areas probably in search of employment could be a possible reason. Growth is also low for Matara (0.8 percent), Mullaitivu, Killinochchi, and Kegalle districts as well (0.7 percent).

- Negative growth rates recorded for Jaffna (-0.7 percent) and Mannar (-0.2) districts due to outmigration during conflict period.

Population distribution and density

Figure 3 : Population distribution by district - 2012

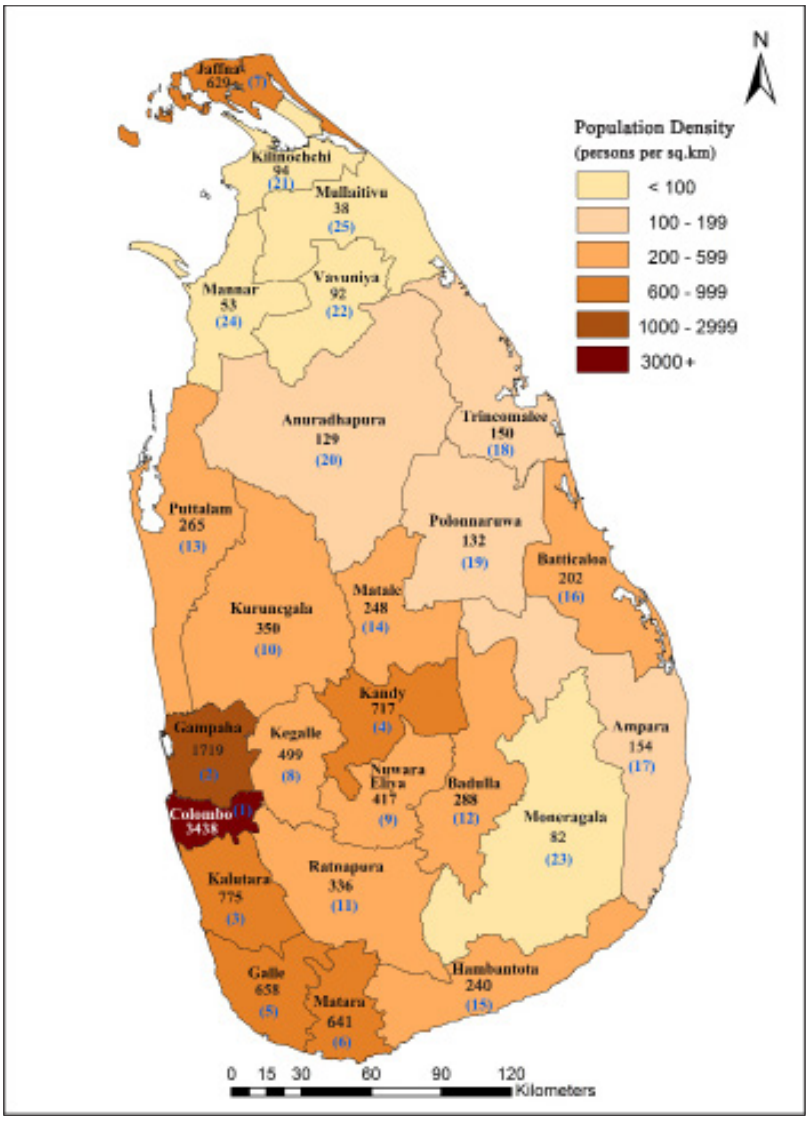


Note : Figures with in paranthesis indicates the rank

- Colombo district has the largest population (2.3 million, 11.4 percent) followed closely by Gampaha District (2.3 million, 11.3 percent).
- Kurunegala, Kandy, Kalutara, Ratnapura and Galle districts have populations greater than 1 million.
- These seven districts account for more than half (54.0 percent) of the total population with less than one quarter(23.9 percent) of total land area.
- Mullaitivu, Mannar, Killinochchi, Vavuniya districts of northern province continue to record the low populations; In fact, Mullaitivu and Mannar districts have populations less than 100,000 each.

- Gini concentration ratio can be used to measure the inequality of the population distribution across the districts. It varies between 0, which reflects complete equality among districts and 1, which indicates complete inequality. The current value is 0.49 which indicates that medium level of unequal distribution of population over the districts. The corresponding figure for 1981 was 0.52. Therefore during 1981-2012 the unequal distribution has slightly improved.

Figure 4 : Population density by district - 2012



Note : Figures with in paranthesis indicates the rank

- Population density is defined as the average number of persons living in an area of one square kilometre. Population density of Sri Lanka is 325 persons per square kilometre which shows an increase of 41 percent from 230 persons per square kilometre since 1981.

- Wide variation of population density exists among districts. It ranges from 38 persons per square kilometre in Mullaitivu (little above one tenth of the national figure) to 3438 persons per square kilometre in Colombo (more than tenfold of national figure).

- In addition to Colombo district, adjoining Gampaha (1719), Kalutara (775) in the Western province, coastal districts of Galle(658) and Matara (641) in the Southern province, Kandy (717) in Central province and Jaffna (629) in Northern province have high population densities.

- Districts in the Northern (except Jaffna), Eastern (except Batticaloa) and North Central provinces and Moneragala in Uva province have relatively low population densities of less than 200.

Urbanization

- The degree of urbanization is considered as an indicator of economic development of a country and living standards of the people. Proper urban management is vital for bringing out the desired results.

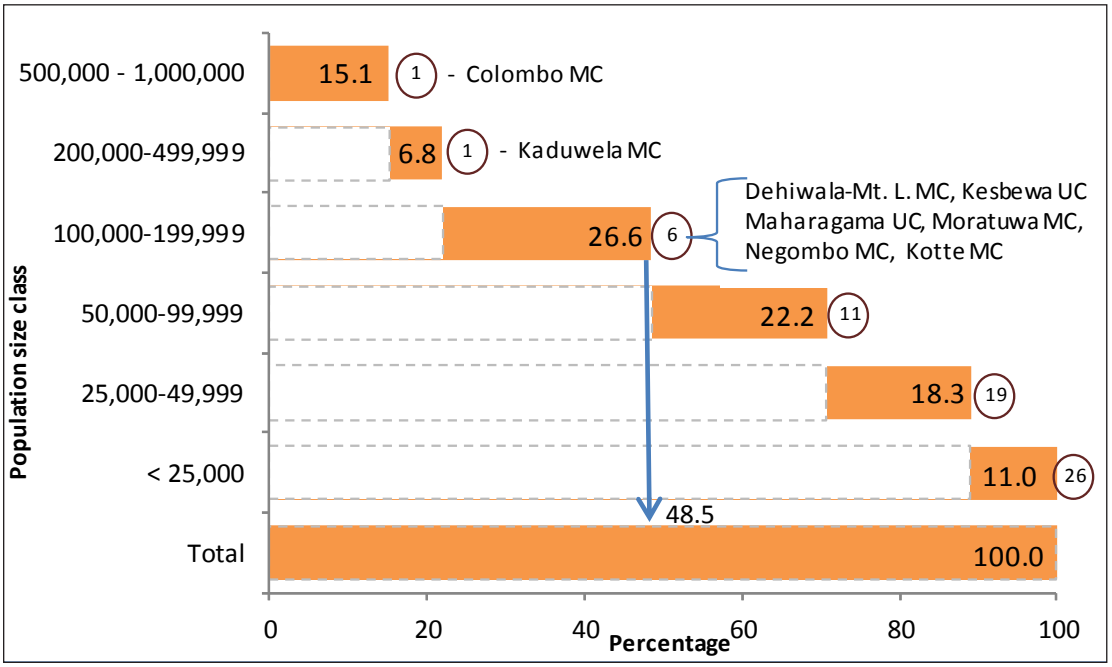
- The degree of urbanization depends upon its definition. Areas coming under all Municipal Councils (MC) and Urban Councils (UC) are currently considered as urban sector in Sri Lanka. Prior to 1987, Town Councils were also included in the definition of urban areas. With the setting up of Provincial Councils in 1987, these Town Councils were absorbed into Pradeshiya Sabhas which fall into the rural sector since then. Although some areas were upgraded to UC's or MC's in recent times, many towns lost their urban status. This leads to underestimation of the degree of urbanization and comparison becomes difficult over the years.

- Therefore it is important to introduce a realistic definition of urban areas taking into account of the characteristics of the population rather than based on pure administrative considerations.

- According to the current definition the level of urbanization of Sri Lanka in 2012 is 18.2 percent. It would have been much higher if the definitional issues were resolved.

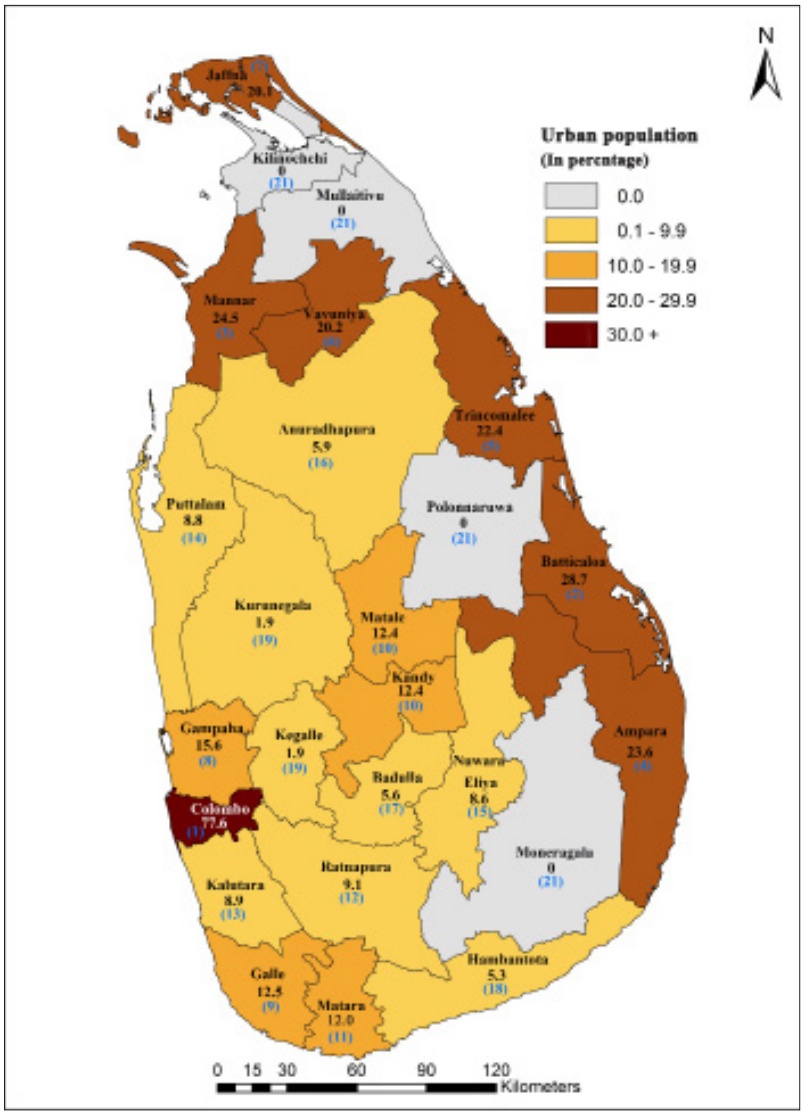
- Total number of MC's and UC's in the country is 64.

Figure 5 : Size class distribution of cities - 2012



- Colombo MC accounts for 15 percent of the total population in urban areas.
- The largest eight cities (Colombo, Kaduwela, Dehiwala-Mt Lavinia, Moratuwa, Negombo, Kotte MC's and Kesbewa, Maharagama UC's) constitute nearly 50 percent of the urban population in Sri Lanka. It is to be noted that all these areas are in Western province; in fact seven in Colombo district and one in Gampaha district. The main urban clusters in Sri Lanka is in and around Colombo district.
- The balance 56 cities of which 26 are very small cities with population below 25,000.
- This implies the uneven distribution of the urbanization.

Figure 6 : Urbanization by district - 2012



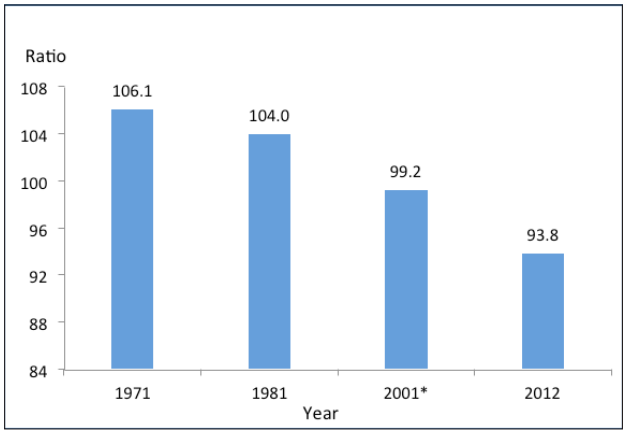
Note : Figures with in paranthesis indicates the rank

- In Colombo district, three out of four people (77.6 percent) live in urban areas.
- Batticaloa (28.7 percent), Ampara (23.6 percent), Trincomalee (22.4 percent) districts in Eastern province and Mannar (24.5 percent), Vavuniya (20.2 percent), Jaffna (20.1 percent) districts in Northern province record urbanization levels with more than national average.
- Polonnaruwa, Moneragala, Mullaitivu and Killinochchi districts have no urban areas.

AGE - SEX STRUCTURE

Sex Composition

Figure 7 : Sex ratio 1971 - 2012

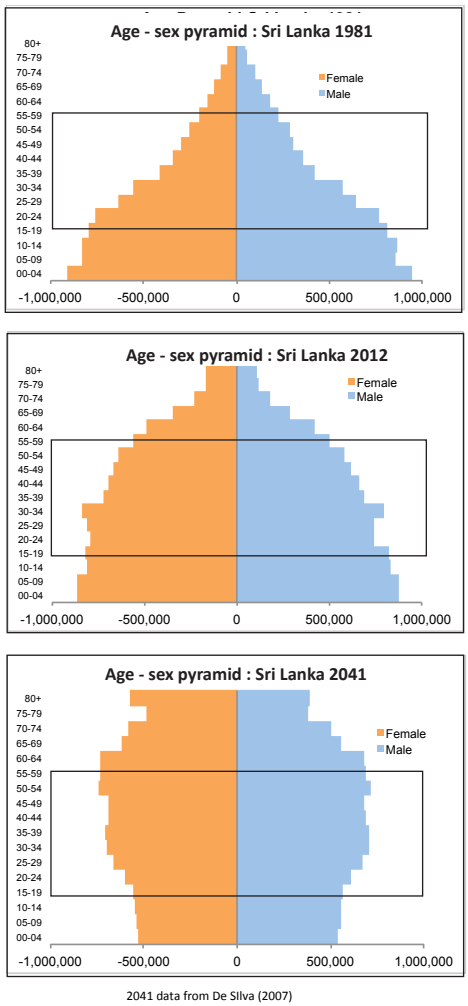


* 18 Districts only

- In Sri Lankan population females outnumbered males by 646,000 in 2012.
- Sex ratio has declined over the Census years and remains at 93.8 in 2012.
- Decline is mainly attributed to higher life expectancy of females compared to males.

Age composition

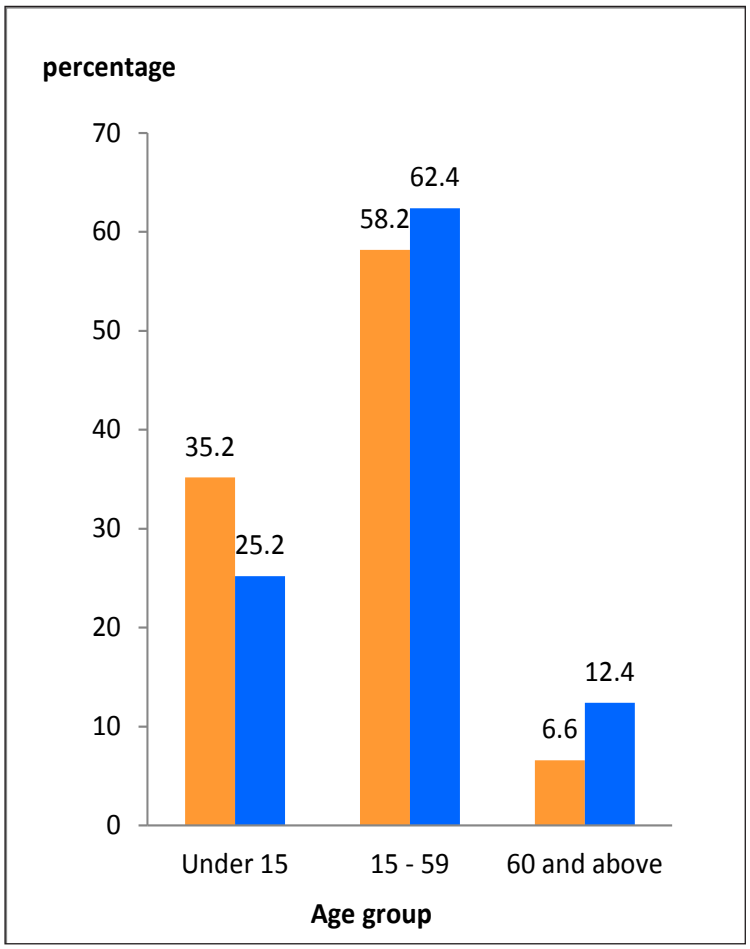
Figure 8 : Age - sex distribution 1981, 2012, 2041



2041 data from De Silva (2007)

- Age pyramid for different years shows the changes in the age composition as a result of changing births, deaths and migration patterns of the population. In 1981, broad base represented fairly large number of children in the population.
- By 2012, working age population has increased further in relation to the child population.
- By 2041, the structure is far different with a growing number of elderly population and shifting shape of the pyramid to 'barrel' type.

Figure 9 : Population by broad age group 1981, 2012



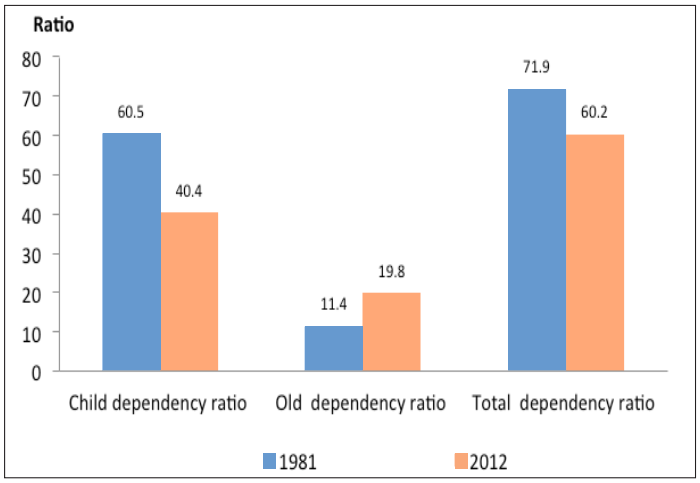
- Age structure can be divided into three broad age groups; children (<15 years), working age (15-59 years) and elderly (60 years and above). Such an age structure has major implications on socio-economic development of the country.

- Percentage of child population in 2012 is 25.2 percent and shows a significant decline from 35.2 percent in 1981. Percentage of elderly population is 12.4 percent in 2012 which has doubled from 6.6 percent in 1981. Working age population, on the other hand, is 62.4 percent in 2012 and shows an increase from 58.2 in 1981.

- Growth of working age population while child population falling and maintaining elderly population within manageable limits is conducive to economic development (Demographic dividend).

- Demographic dividend is the accelerated economic growth that may result from smaller growth of young dependent population in relation to the working age population. With fewer people to support, country has a window of opportunity for rapid economic growth if the appropriate economic and social policies are in place. When ageing dominates, share of the working age population declines and demographic dividend will become negative. So demographic dividend is transitory. Sri Lanka is currently undergoing the demographic dividend and expected to last about 40 years from early 1990's to early 2030's.

Figure 10 : Dependency ratios 1981, 2012

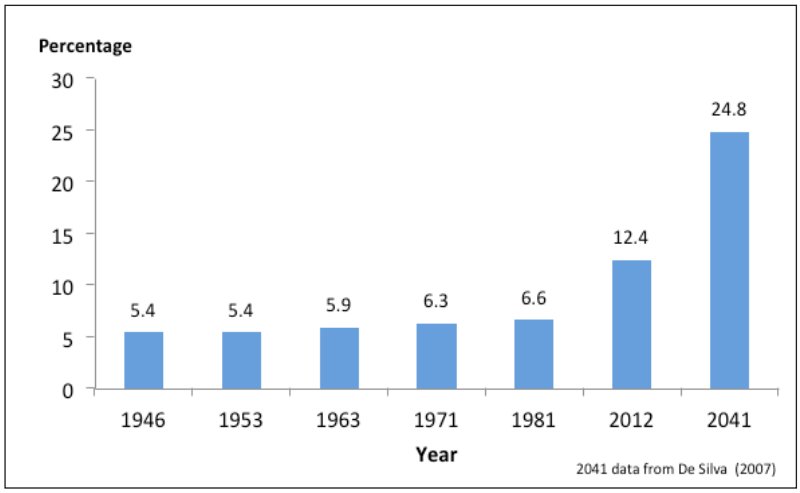


- Dependency ratios explain the age structure relationships between broad age groups as a single measure.
- Total dependency ratio provides the number of dependents (both children <15 years and elderly 60 years and above) per 100 persons in the working ages. Child and elderly dependency ratios give the number of children and elders per 100 persons in the working ages respectively.

- There are 60 dependent children and elders for every 100 persons in the working ages in 2012. Out of 60 dependents 40 are children and 20 are elders. It is seen that child dependents have decreased from 61 to 40 during 1981-2012 due to decrease in child population. Concurrently, old dependents have increased from 11 to 20 as a result of increase in aged population. The net result is the decrease in total dependents from 72 to 60 which is a 16 percent decline during 1981-2012.

Ageing

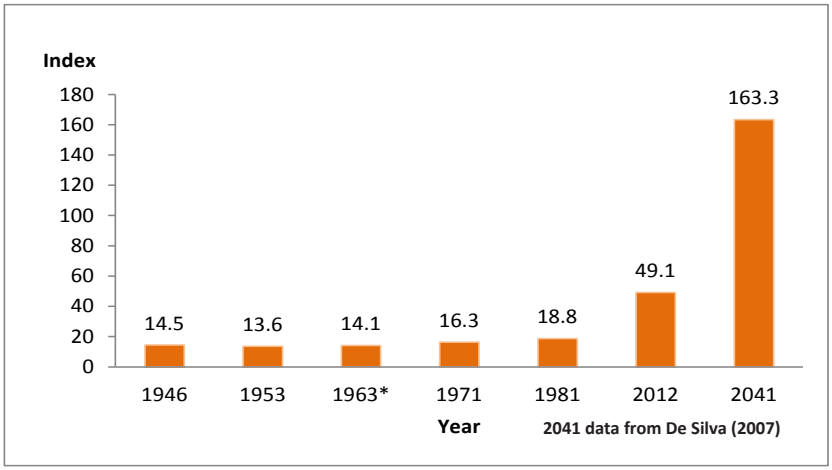
Figure 11 : Ageing population 1946-2041



- The population above age 60 is 2.5 million in 2012 and it is 12.4 percent of the total population. The percentage of aged population remains between 5 - 7 percent during 35 year period 1946-1981 and ageing process gathered momentum since 1980's.

- Percentage of elderly population has doubled from 6.6 percent in 1981 to 12.4 percent in 2012. It is projected to double again from the current level in 2041 and reach the level of 24.8 percent. By 2041, every one out of four will be an elderly person.
- Increasing trend of ageing has resulted due to declining fertility levels and pronounced gains in life expectancies.

Figure 12 : Index of ageing 1946-2041

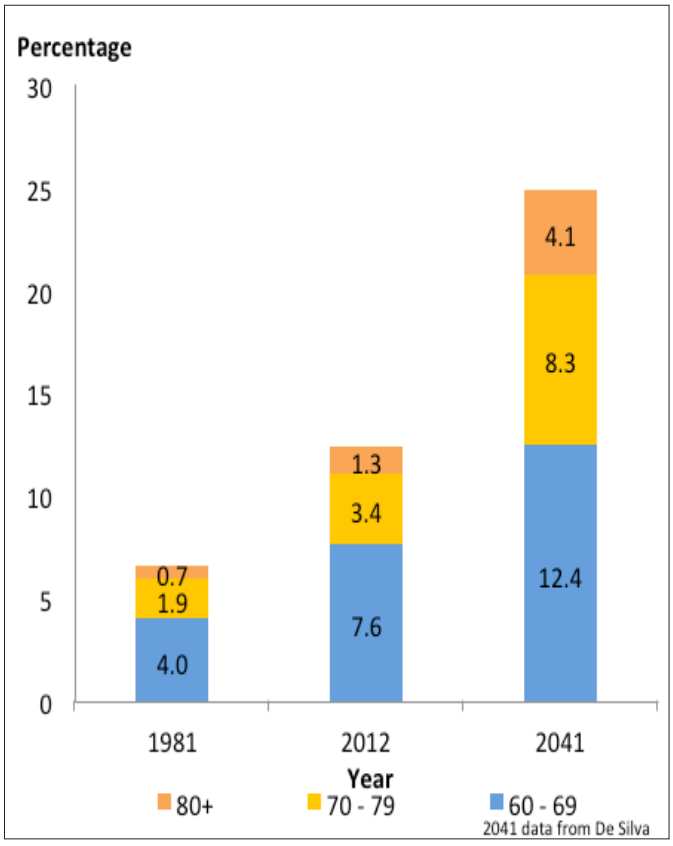


- Index of ageing is an indicator used to measure structural shift of aged population in relation to child population. It gives the number of aged persons of 60 years and above per 100 children under age 15.

- In 2012, there are 49 elderly persons per 100 children under age 15. This is more than twofold increase from 19 in 1981. It is projected to increase to 163, more than three times during 2012-2041 implying the rapid ageing process.

- So greater proportions of elderly population are replacing the child population which leads to increase the index of ageing. This is more prominent after 1980's.

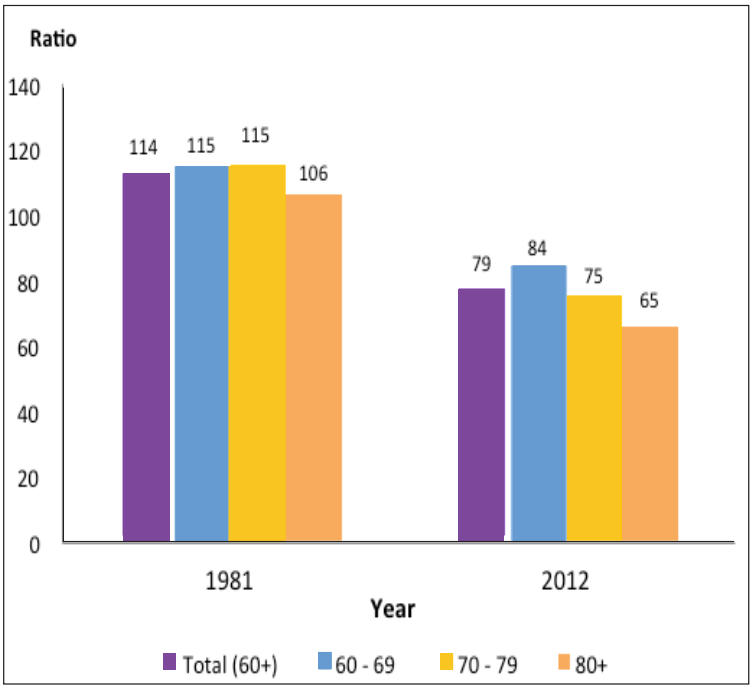
Figure 13 : Ageing by age groups 60 years and above 1981, 2012, 2041



- In 2012, 7.6 percent of the total population (or 61 percent of aged population) is in the 60-69 age group and 1.3 percent (or 11 percent of aged population) is in very old category of 80+. Oldest old category will expected to increase to 4.1 percent of total population (or 17 percent of aged population) in 2041.

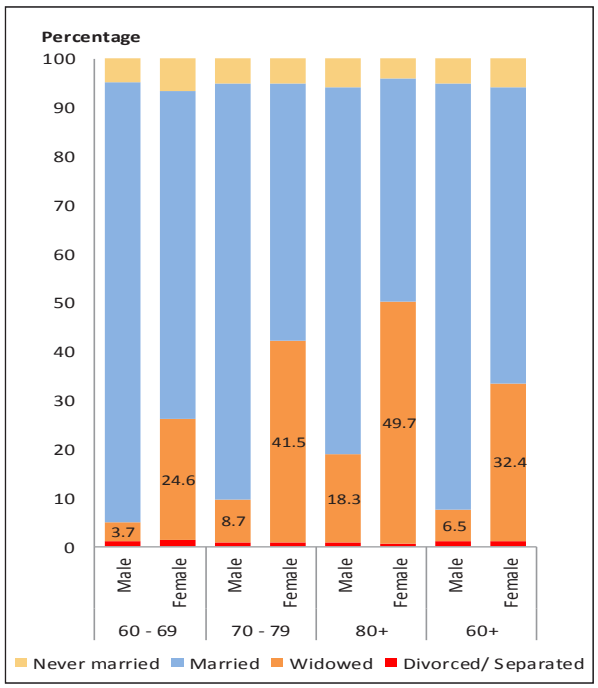
- Increasing share of very old people is a main feature of ageing in Sri Lanka.

Figure 14 : Sex ratio of aged population 1981, 2012



- There are 289,000 more females than males in the aged population 60 years and above in 2012. The sex ratio or the number of males per 100 females in the total aged population is only 79 compared to 94 in the total population. Sex ratio gradually reduces from 84 in 60-69 age group to 65 in 80+ age group.
- Sex ratios of aged population drastically reduced during 1981-2012.
- Life expectancy of women is greater than that of men. Hence women represent majority of the older population.

Figure 15 : Marital status of aged population- 2012

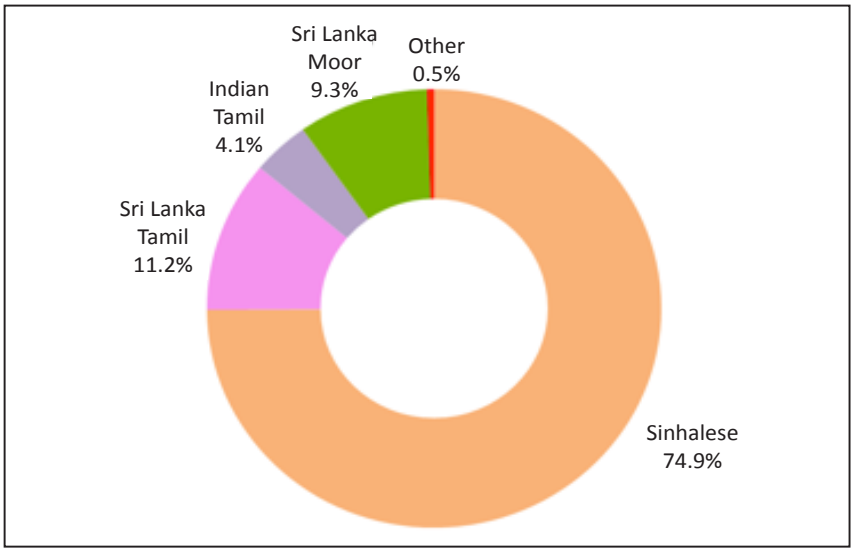


- Marital status of aged population is important as it affects the older persons in terms of determining living arrangements, maintaining well being and good health and getting support from others.
- One in five (20.9 percent) aged persons 60 years or above are widowed. The proportion of widows among the elderly is 5 times higher than widowers. The gap between male and female percentage of widowhood generally increases as age advances.
- More likelihood of a woman to become a widow at older age could be due to multiple factors such as the higher life expectancy of women and higher age at marriage of men compared to women.
- Social isolation of women without the support of a husband is a growing concern to the society.

ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS COMPOSITION

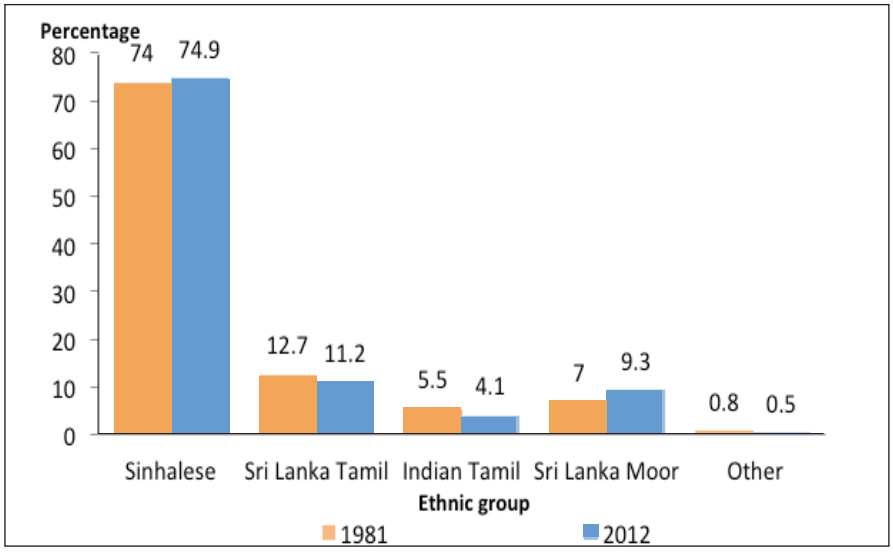
Ethnic composition

Figure 16 : Ethnic composition - 2012



- In Sri Lanka, 74.9 percent or three fourth of the total population is comprised of Sinhalese, 11.2 percent - Sri Lanka Tamils, 9.3 percent - Sri Lanka Moors, 4.1 percent - Indian Tamils and 0.5 percent - Other.

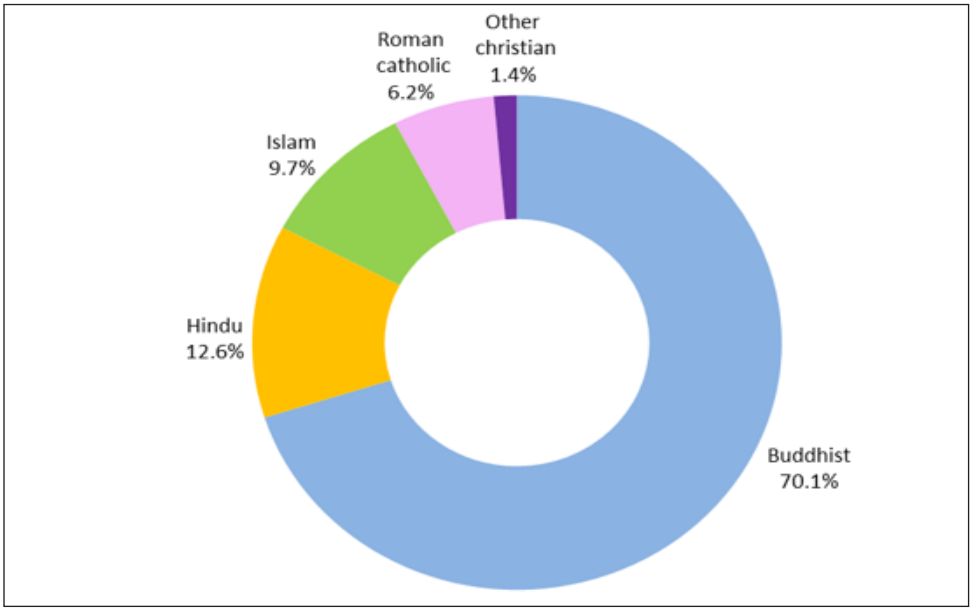
Figure 17 : Ethnic composition 1981, 2012



- During 1981-2012 period Sinhalese increased by 0.9 percentage points and Moors increased by 2.3 percentage points. On the other hand, Sri Lanka Tamils decreased by 1.5 percentage points and Indian Tamils decreased by 1.4 percentage points.

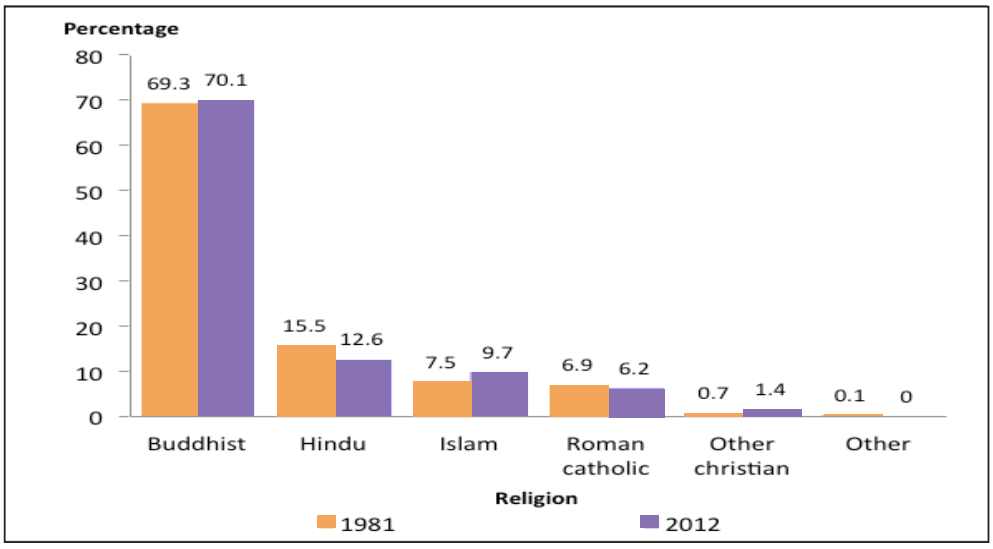
Religious composition

Figure 18 : Religious Composition - 2012



- In Sri Lanka 70.1 percent are Buddhists, 12.6 percent - Hindus, 9.7 percent - Islam, 6.2 percent - Roman Catholics and 1.4 percent - Other Christian.

Figure 19 : Religious composition 1981, 2012



- During 1981-2012 period Buddhists increased by 0.8 percentage points, Islam increased by 2.2 percentage points while Hindus and Roman Catholics decreased by 2.9 and 0.7 percentage points respectively.

MARITAL STATUS

Marital status

Figure 20 : Percentage distribution of male population of 15 years and above by marital status - 2012

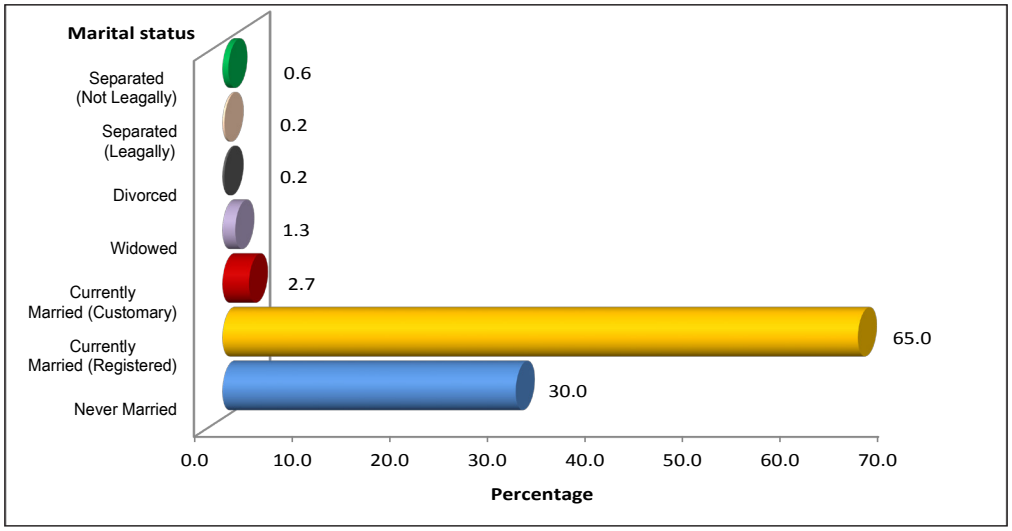
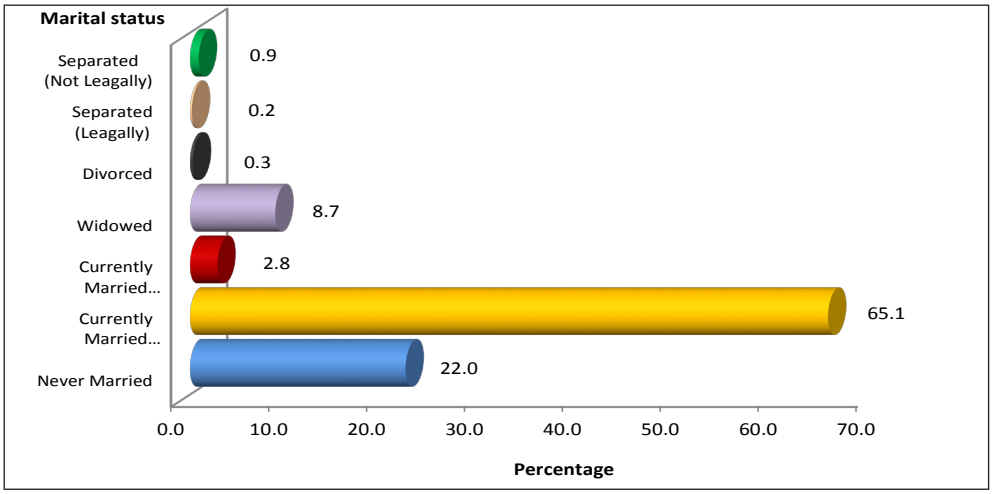
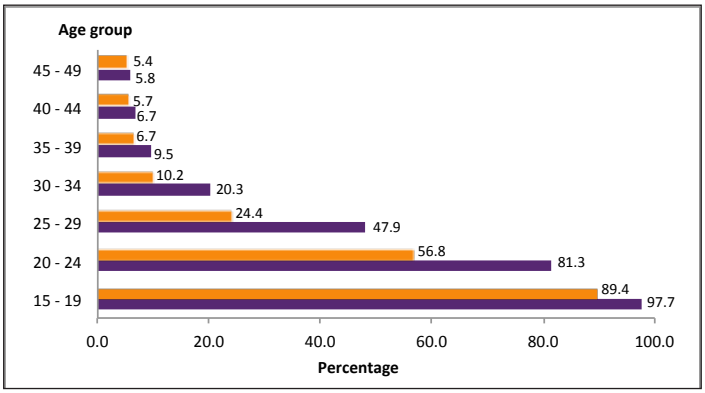


Figure 21 : Percentage distribution of female population of 15 years and above by marital status - 2012



- Among males of 15 years and above, 30 percent is never married; the corresponding figure for females is only 22 percent.
- Of the 68 percent of males who are currently married, a small percentage of 2.7 percent is married by customary method.
- The percentage of currently married females and the percentage of customary married females are same as for males.
- Only about 1 percent fall into divorced/separated category; however the occurrence of divorce/ separation is on rise in Sri Lanka.
- A significantly higher percentage of females (8.7 percent) are widowed than the males (1.3 percent).

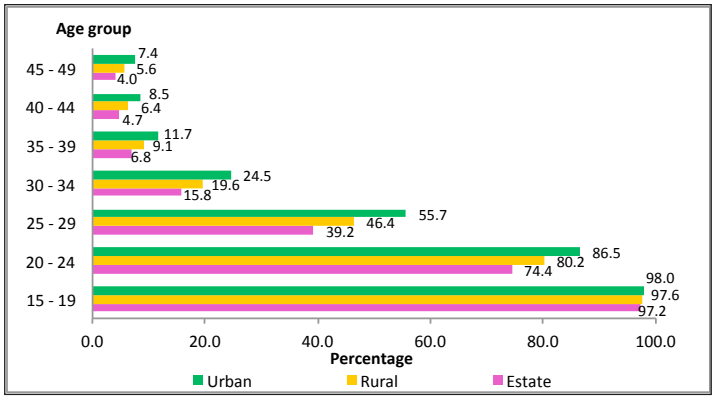
Figure 22 : Percentages of never married population by age and sex - 2012



- In each age group, generally the percentage of never married is higher among males, than among females.
- Never married percentage in the 15-19 age group is 98 percent for males, while the corresponding figure for females is almost ten points lower than males.

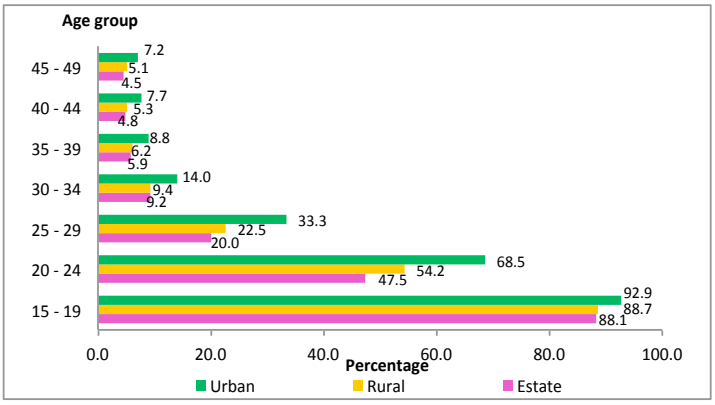
- Within the broad age group of 20-34, the never married percentage of males is much higher than females; for instance in 30-34 age group, 20 percent of males never married while the figure is only 10 percent for females.
- At the end of reproductive age (45-49 years of age) 6 percent and 5 percent of males and females respectively are never married.

Figure 23 : Percentages of never married male population by age and sector - 2012



- No significant difference exists among never married percentage of male population of 15-19 years by their sectors of residence (urban, rural and estate).
- However the corresponding percentages vary among the females of the same age group (15-19). Urban sector females reported the higest.
- Among both sexes, the percentage of never married in each age group is significantly higher in the urban sector; lowest in the estate sector. This pattern is clearly noticeable among the 20-24 and 25-29 age groups, particularly among females.

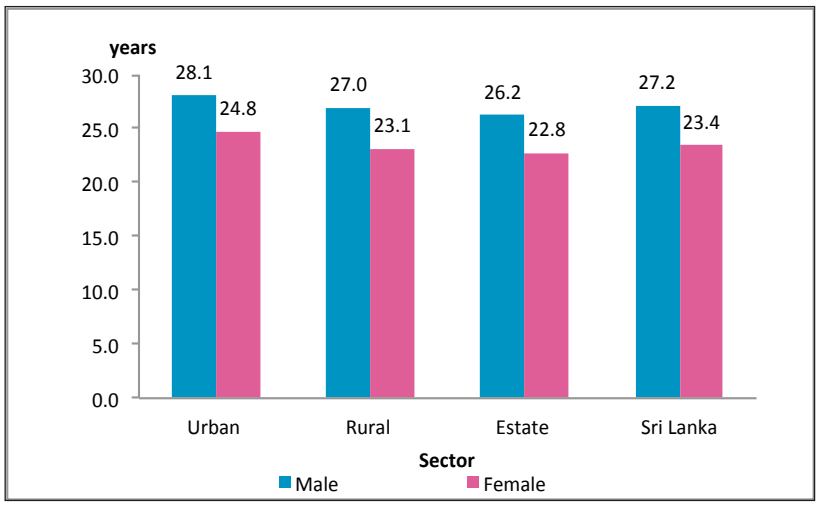
Figure 24 : Percentages of never married female population by age and sector - 2012



- 68 percent of urban females of 20-24 age group is never married, while the corresponding figure for estate sector is 47 percent only.
- At the end of reproductive period (45-49 years of age), a higher percentage of urban males and females are found as never married compared to their rural and estate counterparts.

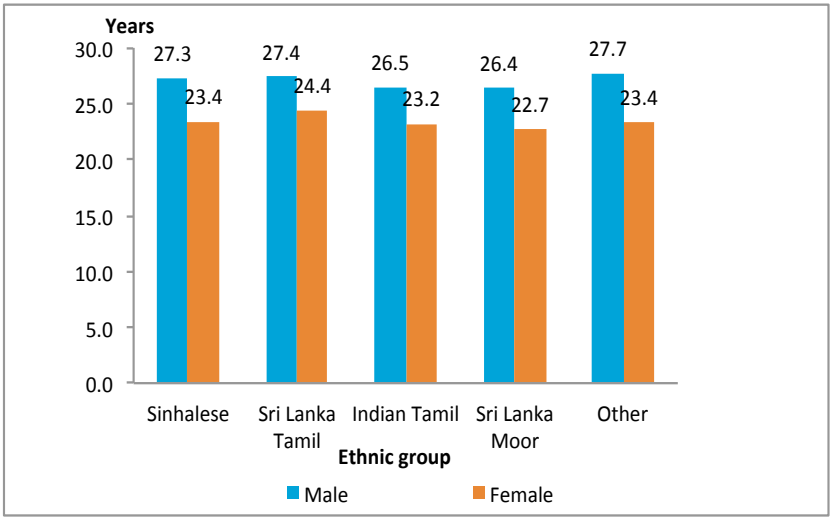
Mean age at marriage

Figure 25 : Singulate mean age at marriage by sex and sector - 2012



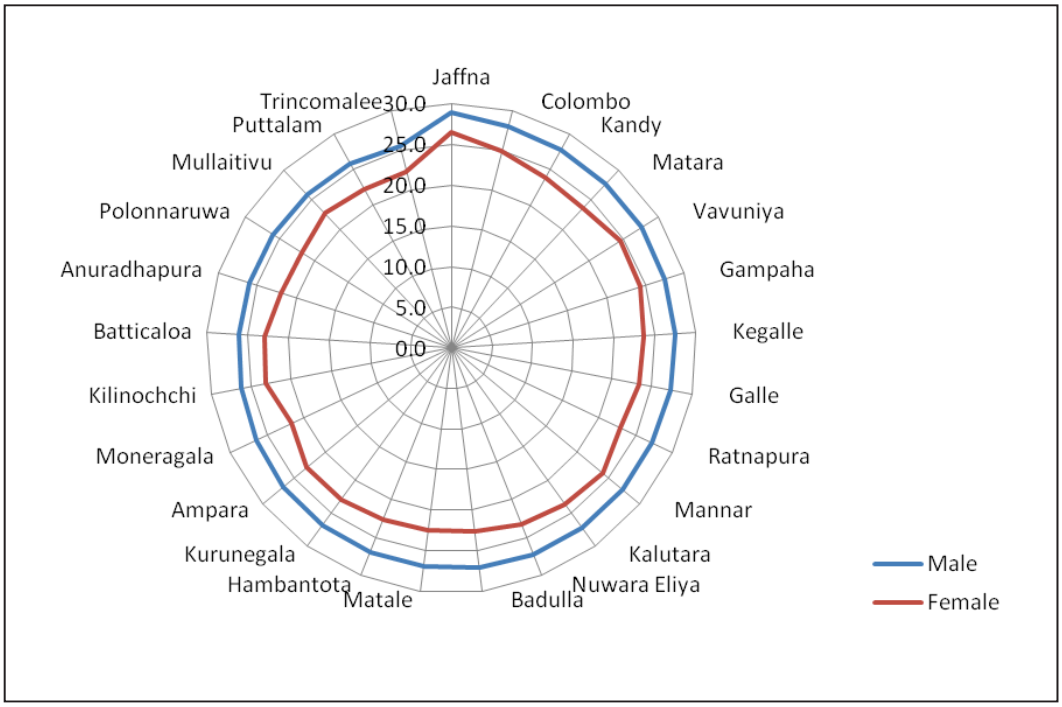
- As per 2012 population census, the mean ages at marriage of males and females are estimated as 27.2 years and 23.4 years respectively.
- Thus, on average, the difference of male and female mean age at marriage in 2012 stands at 3.8 years . Husband is on average 4 years older than his spouse at the time of marriage.
- Of the three sectors, urban males (28.1 years) reports the highest mean age at marriage, while the lowest figure is reported from among the estate males (26.2 years).
- The lowest gender difference in the mean age at marriage is observed in the urban sector of Sri Lanka, while the highest gender difference mean age at marriage is found in the rural sector.

Figure 26 : Singulate mean age at marriage by ethnic group and sex - 2012



- Of the four major ethnic groups in Sri Lanka, the highest mean age at marriage of female is observed from the Sri Lanka Tamil population (24.4 years) followed by the Sinhalese (23.4 years).
- The lowest mean age at marriage of males is attributed to the Sri Lanka Moor group (26.4 years).
- Among females, the Sri Lanka Moor report the lowest (22.7 years) mean age at marriage in 2012.
- The highest sex difference in mean age at marriage is attributed to the Sinhalese population, i.e. husband is, on average, almost 4 years older than his spouse.

Figure 27 : Singulate mean age at marriage by sex and district – 2012



- In 2012, the highest mean age at marriage of males is reported from the districts of Jaffna, Colombo, Kandy and Matara.
- The lowest mean age at marriage of males is observed from the districts of Trincomalee, Puttalam, Mullaitivu and Polonnaruwa.
- The mean age at marriage of females is highest in Jaffna, followed by Colombo, Vavuniya and Gampaha.
- The lowest mean age at marriage of females is noticed from Moneragala, followed by Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura and Puttalam.
- The sex difference in the mean age at marriage is the lowest in Jaffna, where husband is nearly 2 ½ years older than the wife.
- The highest sex difference in the mean age at marriage reported from Moneragala, where husband is almost 5 years older than the wife.

Table 1 : Trends in singulate mean age at marriage by sex 1971 – 2012

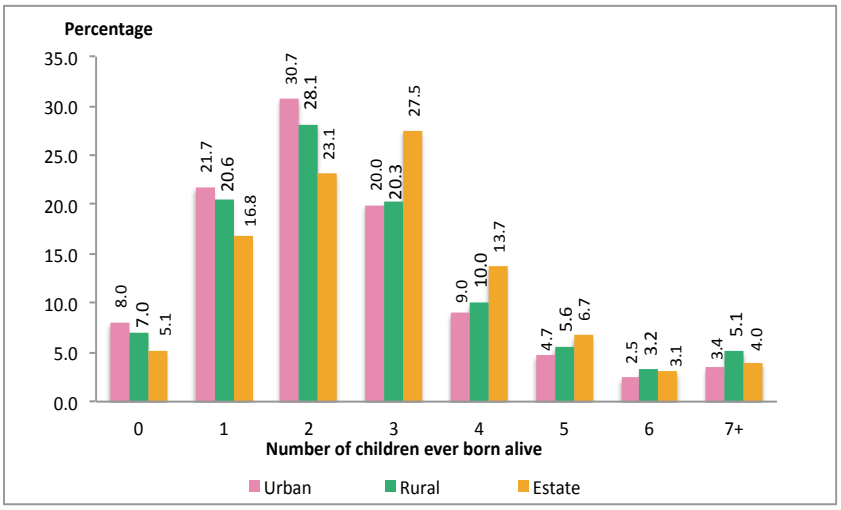
Year	Source	Male (years)	Female (years)	Difference (years)
1971	Census	28.0	23.5	4.5
1975	WFS	28.2	25.1	3.1
1981	Census	27.9	24.4	3.5
1987	DHS	-	24.8	-
1993	DHS	-	25.5	-
1994	Demographic Survey	28.3	24.7	3.6
2000	DHS	-	24.6	-
2001	Census	27.6	23.8	3.8
2006-07	DHS	-	23.5	-
2012	Census	27.2	23.4	3.8

- By 1971, Sri Lankan females on the average were marrying at 23.5 years of age.
- The increase of mean age at marriage of females continued; it rose from 23.5 years in 1971 to 25.5 years in 1993.
- Although the increase is very significant for females, the mean age at marriage of males has increased marginally from 28 years in 1971 to 28.3 years in 1994.
- Delayed marriage in Sri Lanka appears to be linked to economic hardships and to the high unemployment, in a relatively well educated population, with rising expectations, where financing the priority needs of dowry and housing were increasingly problematic up to mid 1990s'.
- Nevertheless, from the early 1990s, the mean age at marriage of males and females in Sri Lanka started to decline gradually and stood at 27.2 years for males and 23.4 years for females in 2012.
- It is noteworthy that the mean age of 23.5 years at marriage among females, reported in the 2006-2007 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), is almost similar to the corresponding figure in 1971.
- The relaxation of the marriage squeeze with a more balanced sex ratio at the turn of the present century and the decline in male unemployment rate due to mass labour migration are some key factors that have contributed to the decline of the mean age at marriage.
- Increased male and female employment opportunities allow more youth to accumulate money for dowry and other marriage related expenses at younger ages than their older cohorts. Another factor may be the remittances from migrant labour.
- Changing attitudes to late marriages and government's curbs on abortion services too may have contributed to the decline in male and female mean age at marriage in Sri Lanka.

FERTILITY

Children ever born

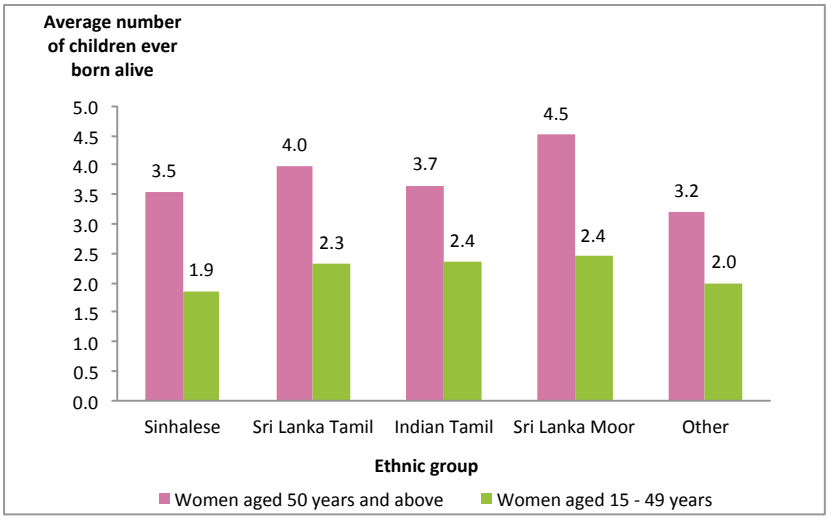
Figure 28 : Average number of children ever born alive to ever married women by sector – 2012



- The highest percentage of ever married women of 15 years and above in 2012 is reported having given birth to 2 children, while, a smaller percentage is reported having given 7+ births during their lifetime.

- Nearly 7percent of the ever married women of aged 15 and above have reported that they have had no live birth. The corresponding percentage is highest among the urban residents.
- Of the different residential sectors, the highest percentage of estate women (27.5 percent) had 3 live births, while highest percentage of urban women (30.7 percent) had 2 children.
- The overall pattern depicted from the Figure 28 is that the highest percentage of urban women tends to have lesser number of children (up to 2 children), while estate women dominate in the higher parities, that is 3 and above live births.
- However this overall pattern disappears at the parity 6 and 7+ categories in which presumably older rural women reported of having more live births than their urban and estate counterparts.

Figure 29 : Average number of children ever born alive to ever married women aged 50 years and above and aged 15 - 49 years by ethnic group – 2012

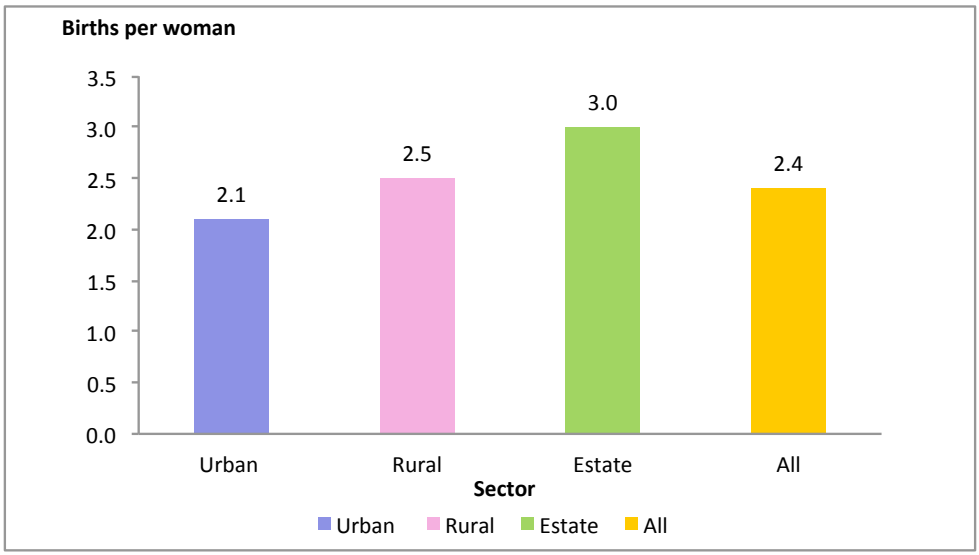


- The comparison of these two ever married women categories demonstrates the past and present fertility by ethnicity as reported in 2012.

- In each ethnic group, the number of children ever born alive for women of 50 years and above is significantly higher than the women aged 15-49.
- Among the ever married women in the reproductive age, the Sri Lanka Moor represent the highest fertility (2.4 live births and 4.5 live births) for both younger (15-49 years) and older (50 years) categories of women.
- On the other hand, ever married Sinhalese women report only 1.9 live births and 3.5 live births for the above two categories of ever married women respectively.
- In 2012, of the ever married women in reproductive age (15-49 years), the least number of children ever born is reported among the Sinhalese women, compared to other ethnic groups.

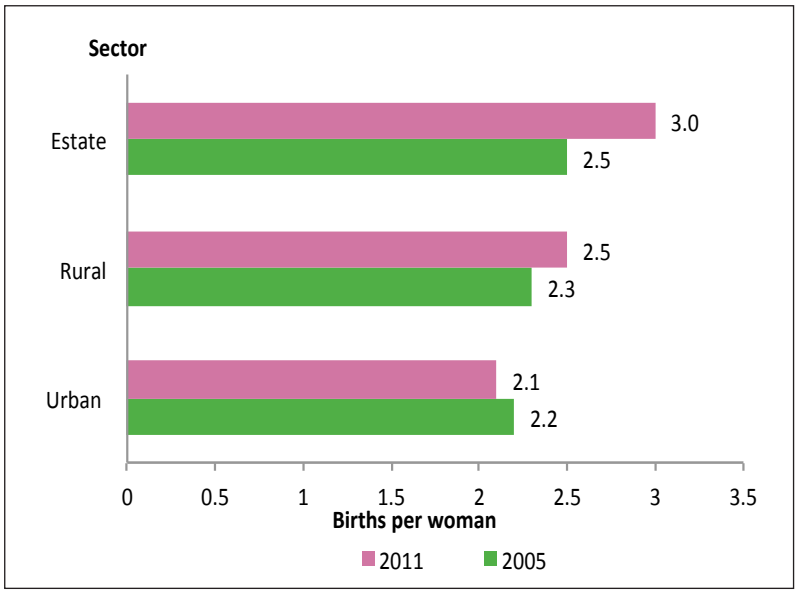
Fertility rates

Figure 30 : Total fertility rate by sector - 2011



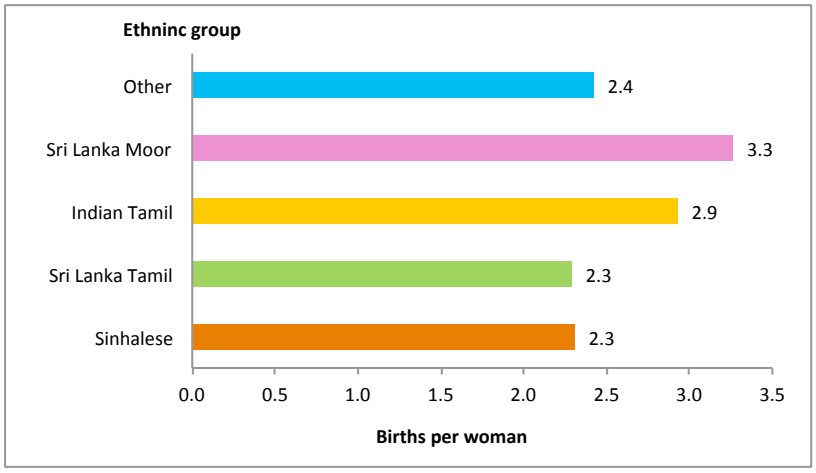
- Recent changes in ASFRs in Sri Lanka further support the contention that the fertility levels of Sri Lanka, have been increasing during the recent past.
- The total fertility rate (TFR) which computed by using the ASFRs, summarize the fertility experience of Sri Lankan women into a single indicator. TFR measures average number of children born to a woman during her entire reproductive period.
- As per 2012 census data, TFR value estimated is 2.4 live births per woman in 2011.
- The estate sector women reported the highest TFR (3.0) while urban women the lowest (2.1).
- Interestingly, only the urban women are at the replacement fertility, while women in the other sectors demonstrate significantly higher level.

Figure 31 : Change in total fertility rate by sector 2005, 2011



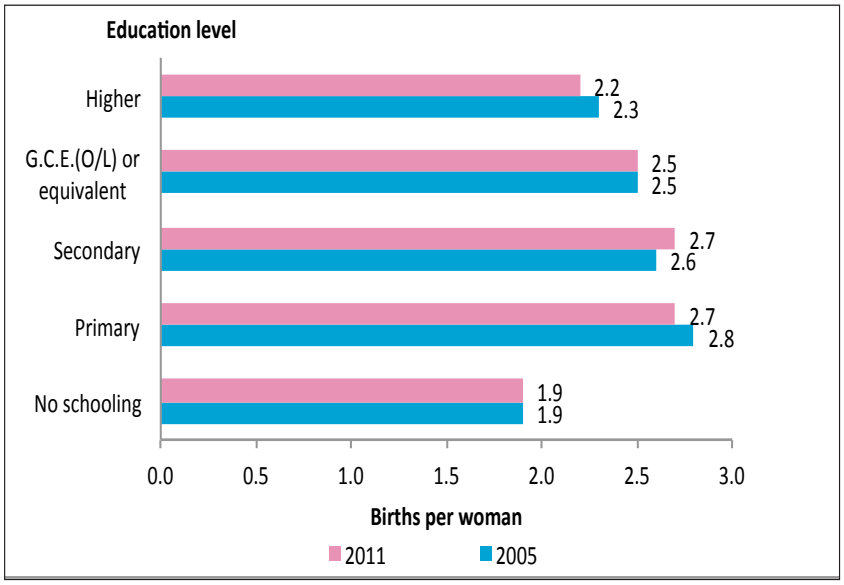
- Once the changes in TFR of different residence sectors are analyzed from 2005 to 2011, the estate sector demonstrates the highest increase, on average, a half a child increase.
- Although the TFR value of the rural (Figure 31) women also increased from 2.3 to 2.5 over the same period the increase is not significant as of estate women.
- Interestingly among the urban women during the same period there is a marginal decrease of TFR values from 2.2 to 2.1. However, this trend was not strong enough to off-set the national TFR value.

Figure 32 : Total fertility rate by ethnic group – 2011



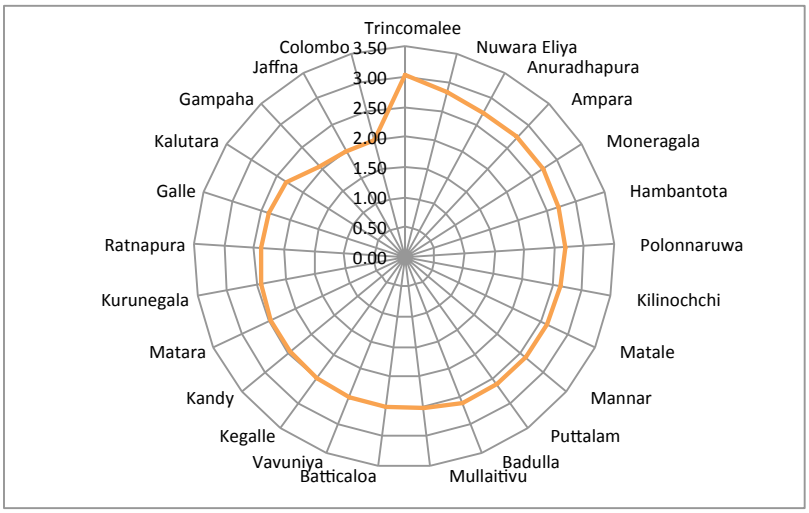
- Among the different ethnic groups in the country, Sri Lanka Moor reports the highest total fertility rate (TFR) of 3.3 live births in 2011.
- Both Sinhalese and Sri Lanka Tamils in 2011 reported the lowest TFR in Sri Lanka with a value of 2.3 live births, which is in general one child lower than the corresponding value of the Sri Lanka Moor group.
- Interestingly, the TFR value of Indian Tamils is at 2.9, which is only lower to the corresponding value of the Sri Lanka Moor.
- In 2011 the other category, which primarily comprise of ethnic groups such as Burgher, Malay and Sri Lanka Chetty reported TFR of 2.4 live births.

Figure 33 : Change in total fertility rate by level of education of females 2005, 2011



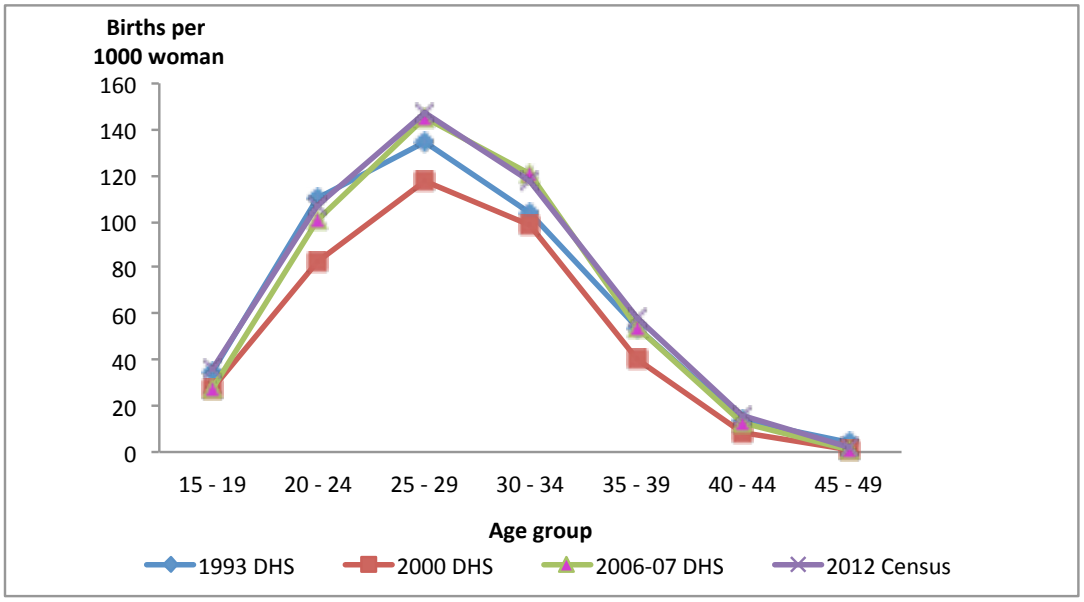
- Of the five educational categories, the highest TFR is reported by the women with primary or secondary level education in 2011, while the least is reported by women with no schooling.
- In 2005, women with primary education reported the highest TFR of 2.8 live births, which is well above the replacement.
- Fertility has increased from 2.6 to 2.7 among the woman with secondary level education during 2005 and 2011.
- In contrast to the educated categories, women with no education reported fertility levels below the replacement levels in both time periods which is interesting.

Figure 34 : Total fertility rate by district - 2011



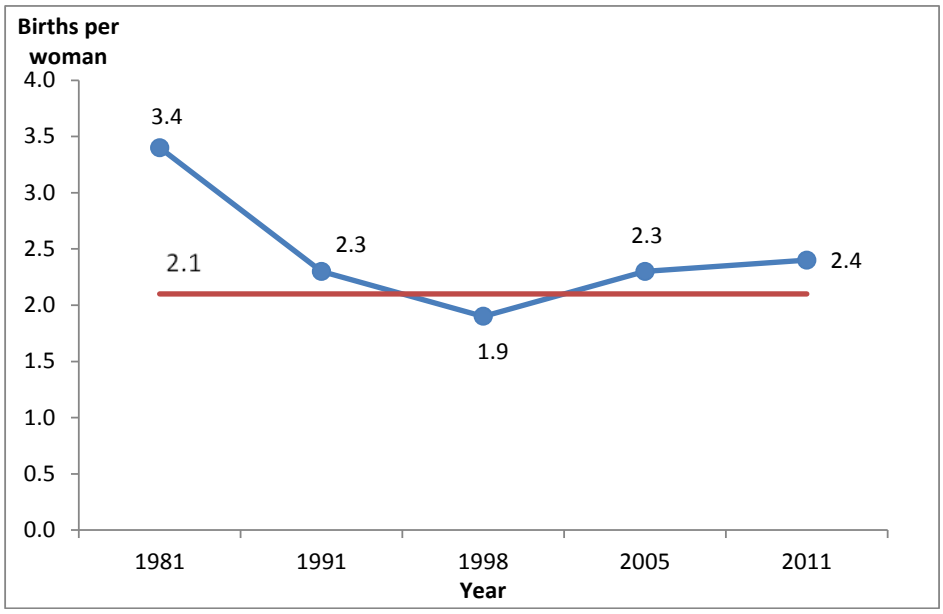
- Of the 25 administrative districts in Sri Lanka the highest TFR value in 2011 is reported by the women in Trincomalee district. It is important to note that the lowest mean age at marriage of males has been reported from the same district. The female age at marriage also lower in this district compared to the national average.
- In general, the districts which are least developed such as Nuwara Eliya, Anuradhapura, Ampara and Moneragala, all reported higher TFR values compared to the rest.
- As generally expected the lowest value of TFR is demonstrated by women from the district of Colombo.
- In general, the districts which are economically advanced (Colombo, Jaffna, Gampaha) reported TFR values below the replacement level (TFR of 2.1). The rest of the districts are above the replacement level.

Figure 35 : Trends in age specific fertility rates (ASFRs)



- The age patterns of fertility indicate the tempo of childbearing, the age at which women begin to reproduce, the age at which they cease childbearing and any change in the pattern of childbearing over time.
- Age specific fertility rates had declined significantly between 1993 and 2000. It is not only the older women but also the younger ones, experienced a remarkable decline in fertility during that period.
- With the dawn of the new century, the age pattern of fertility of all ages, except for 45-49 age group, changed significantly, demonstrating a sudden unexpected increase. The ASFR's for 25-39 age group in the 2006-07 DHS were even higher than the corresponding values reported in the DHS 1993.
- Although fertility had increased, the age group in which peak fertility occurred in Sri Lanka had not changed, and the age pattern of fertility had remained unchanged.
- During the period of 2000 and 2006-07, the increase of the teenage fertility rate (15-19 age group) in Sri Lanka reported as 3.7 percent. Despite this reporting the latest Census data indicate a significant jump of teenage fertility which is 12 percent over the period of 2006-07 and 2012 Census.
- Even though the teenage fertility had declined in most of the developing countries, Sri Lanka's fertility transition is on the opposite direction.

Figure 36 : Total fertility rate 1981 - 2011



- Since 1960s, the TFR has started to decline in Sri Lanka, and by 1981 it has reached the value of 3.4 live births per woman.

- However, by 1994, the country had experienced the crucial stage of replacement fertility (TFR of 2.1).

- Sri Lanka will be the only country in the South Asian region to achieve the level of replacement fertility before the end of last century, and ahead of the targeted time frame.

- Sri Lanka, after bottoming out at 1.9 in 1998, the TFR has been rising ever since, reached 2.3 and 2.4 live births in 2005 and 2011 respectively.

- Owing to a multiplicity of reasons the new demographic trend has emerged in Sri Lanka; increasing fertility from below to well above the replacement. Whether this increase will continue for a long period, or will start to decline towards the replacement level again need to be investigated.

- The Government in its population policy statement issued in 1991, set for the first time a more quantitative target of achieving replacement fertility, a TFR of 2.1, to be achieved by the year 2000.
- Thus the development of appropriate population and reproductive health policy for well-being of the Sri Lankan population seem warranted.

LITERACY

Language Literacy

- Overall literacy rate of Sri Lanka stands at 95.7 percent.
- The highest literacy rate is reported from Gampaha district while the lowest literacy rate is reported from Batticaloa district.

Figure 37: Literacy rate by sex and district - 2012

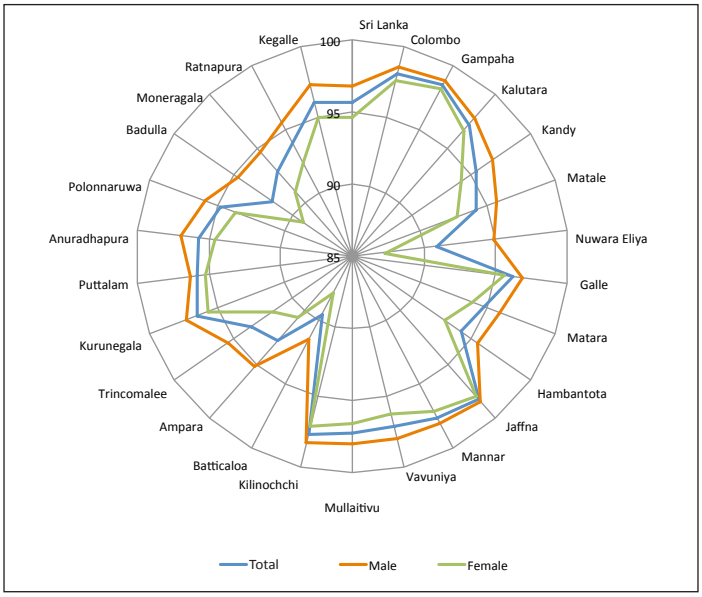
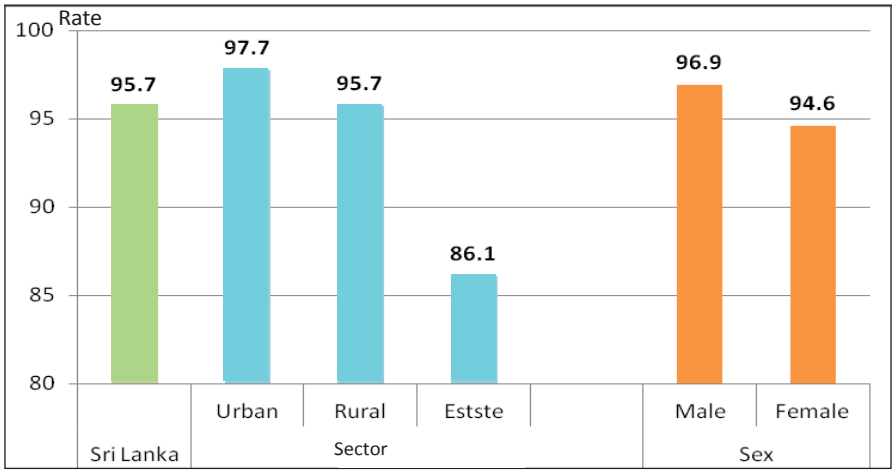
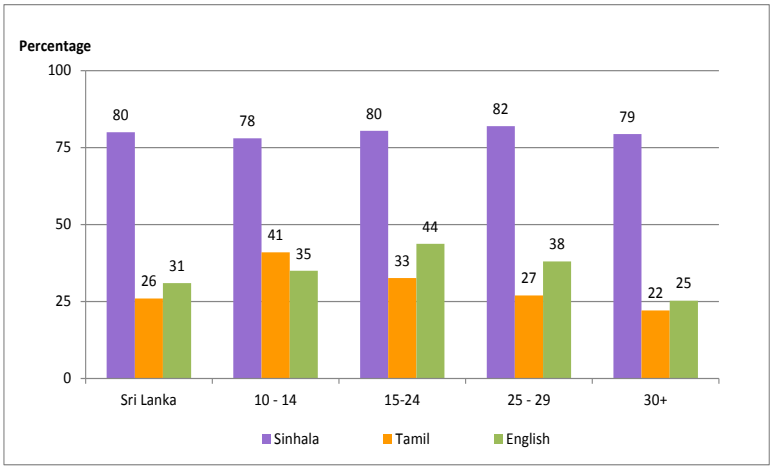


Figure 38 : Literacy rate by sector and sex - 2012



- Compared to urban sector (97.7 percent) and rural sector (95.7 percent), literacy rate of estate sector (86.1 percent) is still lagging behined.
- Males (96.9 percent) are more literate than females (94.6 percent). Literacy rate of estate sector female is 80.9 percent.

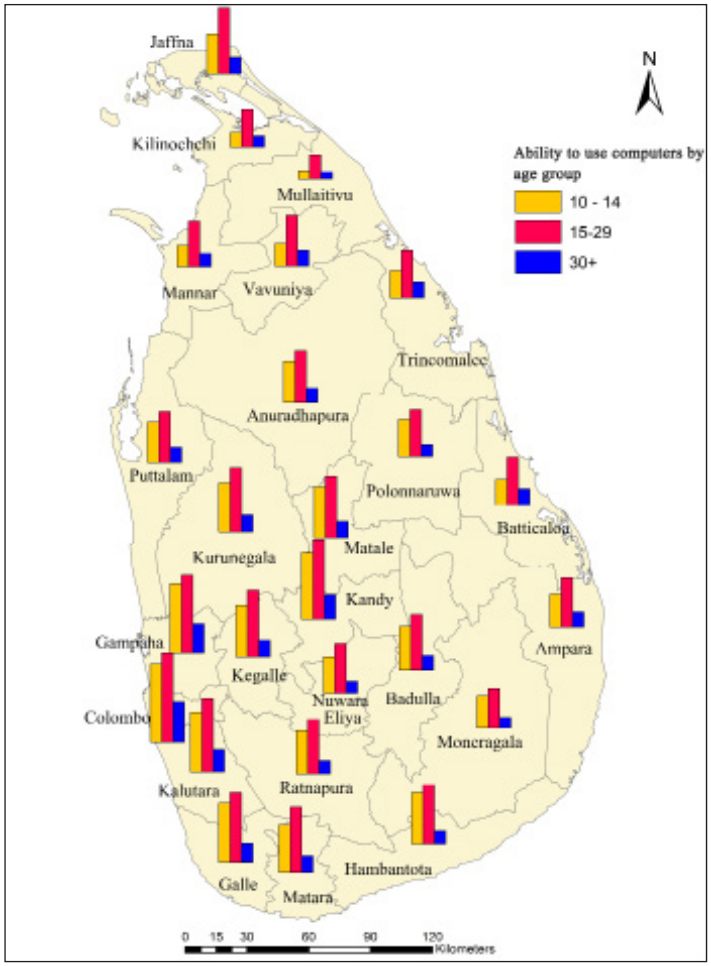
Figure 39: Literacy in languages by sex and age group - 2012



- Literacy in Sinhala language is highest among Sri Lankans (80 percent) followed by English literacy (31 percent) and Tamil literacy (26 percent).
- Literacy in English language is high among youth (43.7 percent) in the age group of 15-24 years.
- Literacy in Tamil language is high among children (35 percent) in the age group of 10-14 years.

Computer Literacy

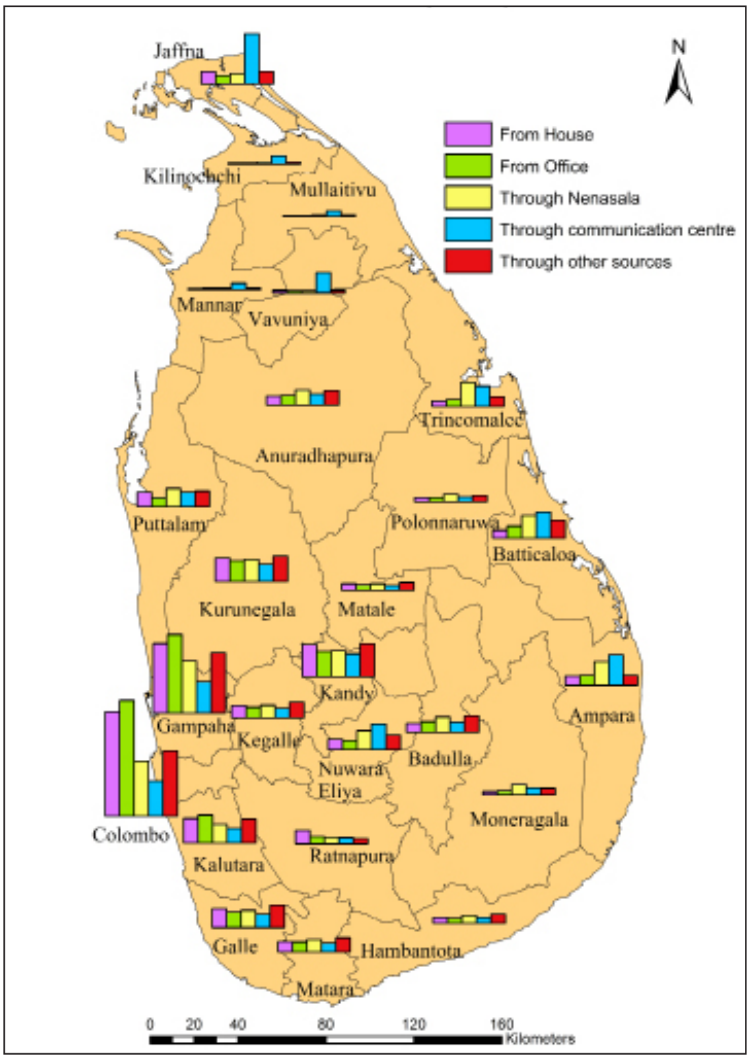
Figure 40 : Ability to use computer by age group and district - 2012



- The percentage of ability to use a computer is 24.2. Among the three sectors urban, rural and estate, percentage of ability to use a computer is 36.8, 22.1 and 8.8 respectively.
- Ability to use a computer among males (26.5 percent) is higher than females (22.1 percent).
- Ability to use a computer is high among youths in the age group 15-29 followed by children in the age group 10–14.
- Ability to use a computer for population aged 30 years and over is very low in majority of districts except Colombo, Gampaha and Kandy.

Access to internet

Figure 41 : Place of access to Internet by district - 2012



- Access to internet facility from home in Sri Lanka is reported as 10.9 percent of households.
- The percentage is high among households in urban sector (23.4 percent).
- Households in estate sector access internet mainly from communication centers (7.7 percent)
- Access to internet from “Nanasala” centers which is implemented by the government to increase the accessibility to internet, is high among urban sector households compared to households in other two sectors.
- The percentage of households with access to internet through home is high in Colombo district (25.6 percent) followed by Gampaha (16.1 percent), Kandy (13.1 percent), Jaffna (12.5 percent) and Kalutara (11.3 percent).
- Majority of households in Northern and Eastern provinces access internet through communication centers.

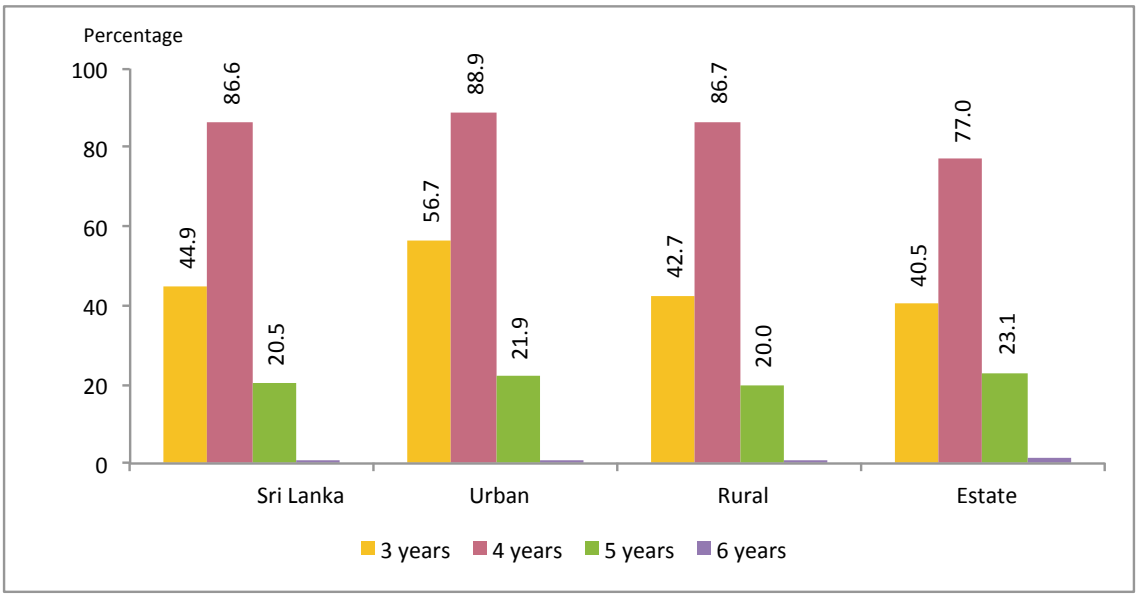
EDUCATION

Pre- school attendance of children

- Usually in Sri Lanka, a child attends a pre-school once he/she completes 3 years of age. Census data reveals that nearly 45 percent of children aged 3 years are attending pre-school.

- Over 85 percent of children aged 4 years attend a pre-school in Sri Lanka. However, the corresponding value is 77 percent in estate sector, which is the lowest, compared to other two sectors.

Figure 42 : Percentages of pre school attendance by age and sector - 2012



School attendance of children

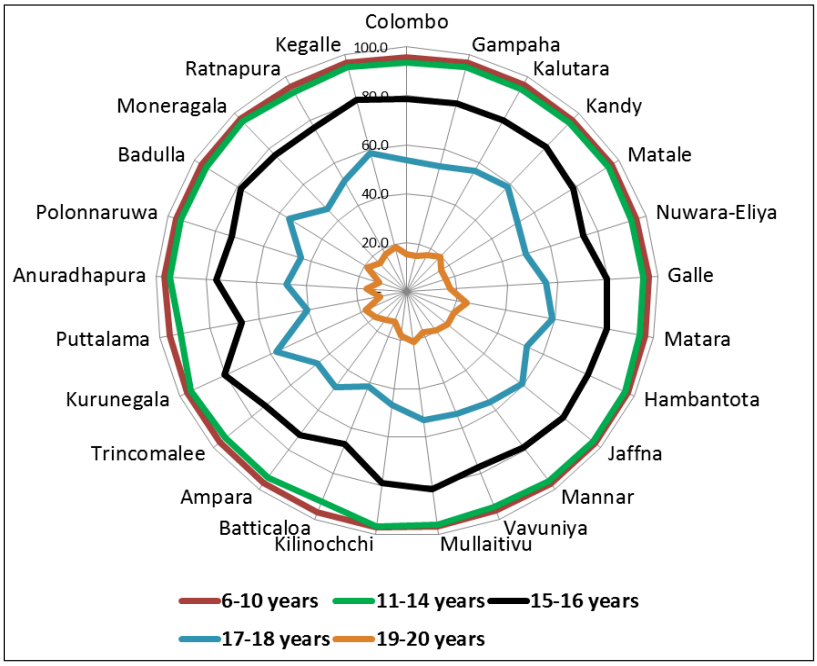
- Majority of children in age groups 6-10 years and 11- 14 years are attending a school. However, children in the estate sector reported the lowest percentage. Since age group 5-14 years is declared as compulsory age for schooling, further attention is needed to improve school attendance levels in estate sector.

- Percentages of attending a school in age group 5 years is 75 percent in Sri Lanka. In addition 96 and 94 percent of children in age groups 6-10 and 11-14 years attending a school respectively.

- For other age groups such as 15-16 and 17-18 attending a school is reported as less than 80 percent. Percentage of attending a school in Estate sector stands behind the other two sectors. Special attention should be given to the age groups 15-16 years and 17-18 years as percentages of attending in a school has decreased in these age groups.

- Further, results shows that in age group 15-16 years, a noticeable decrease could be seen in Nuwara Eliya, Puttalam and Batticaloa districts. Following graph shows district wise variation of percentage of children attending in a school.

Figure 43 : Percentages of school attendance by age group and district - 2012



Education attainment of population aged 25 years and above

- Percentages of passed grade 1-5, passed grade 6-10, passed G.C.E.O/L or equivalent, passed G.C.E. A/L or equivalent and degree or above is 18.4, 39.6, 19.1, 14.3, and 3.9 percent respectively. These figures show that majority of the population completed education level up to grade 6-10

- When considering the education attainment of population 25 years and above, 4.7 percent had no school education. This percentage is almost double for females (Males 3.0 percent, Females 6.1 percent).

Figure 44 : Level of education of population aged 25 years and above by sex - 2012

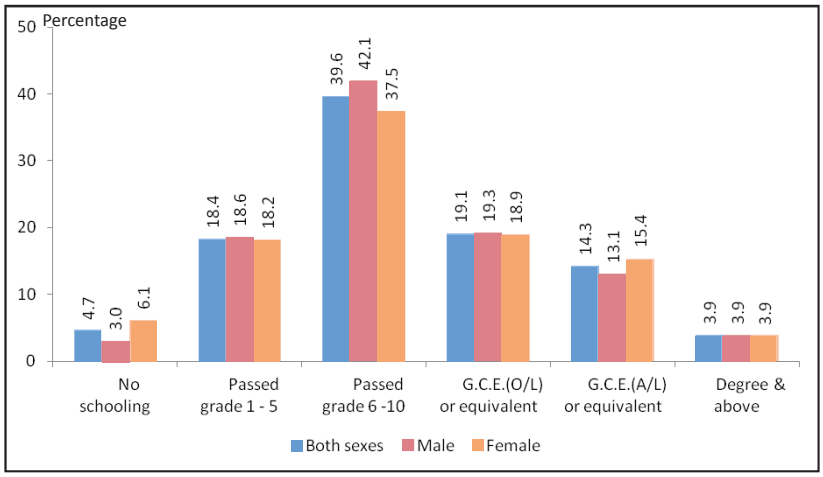
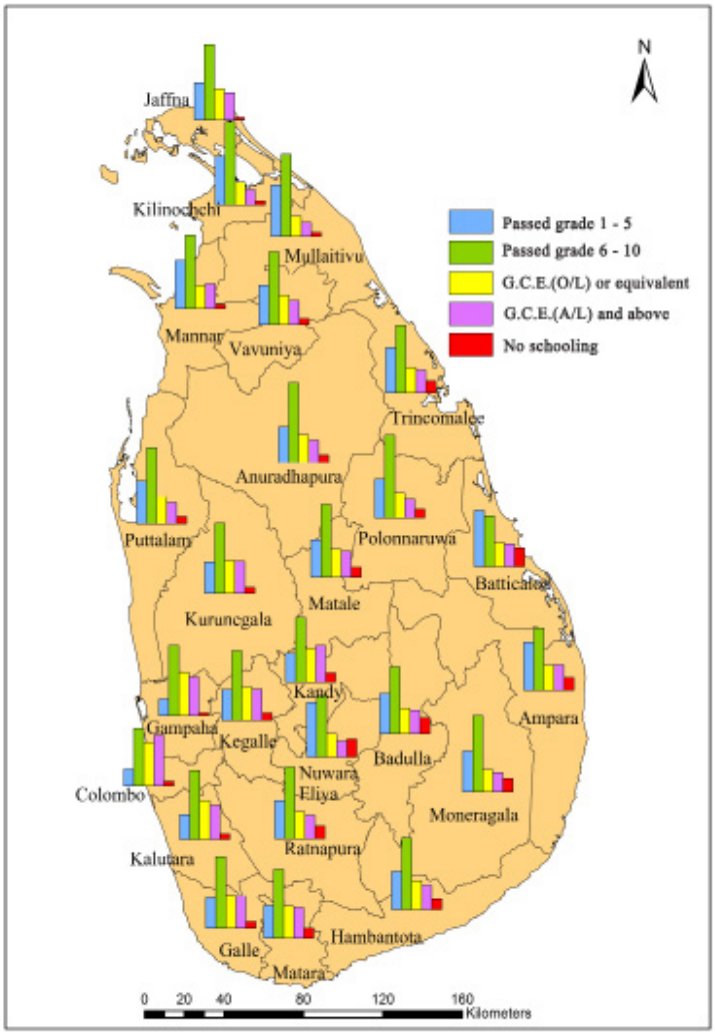


Figure 45 : Level of education of population aged 25 years and above by district - 2012



- Education attainment of the population who are 25 years and above by district depicted that in almost all districts the majority of the population passed the education level up to grade 6-10.

- The percentage of population passed G.C.E. O/L and above is high in Colombo, Gampaha, Kalutara and Jaffna districts compared to other districts in the country.

- In almost all district, there is a small percentage of population who did not have any school education at all. The percentages are high in Batticaloa (10.9 percent) and Nuwara Eliya (10.2 percent) districts.

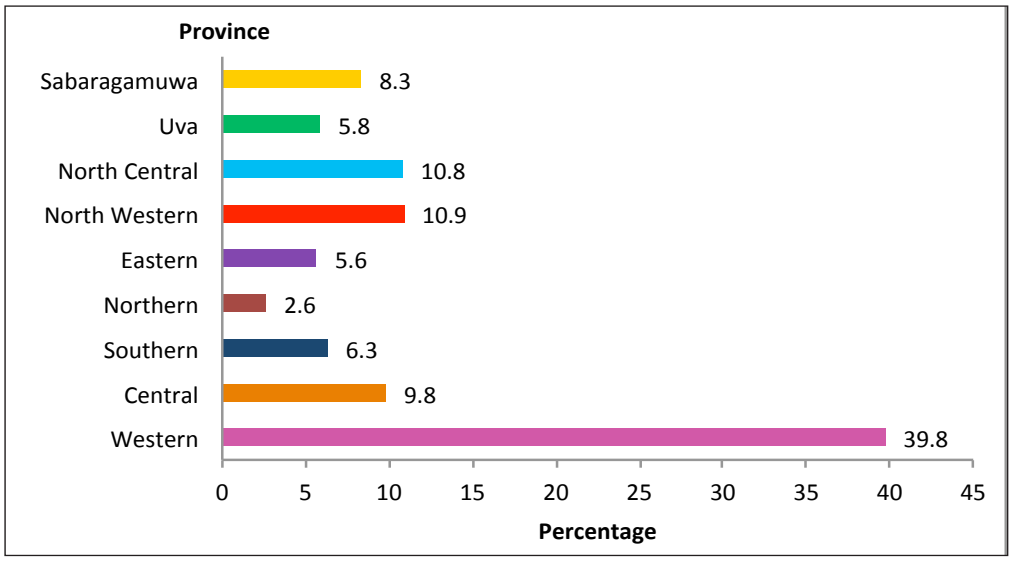
MIGRATION

Internal migration in Sri Lanka

- This analysis on internal migration in Sri Lanka mainly uses data collected by the Population and Housing census 2012 on individual's province/ district of usual residence and province/district of previous residence.
- In Sri Lanka, internal migration has made a significant contribution in unequal distribution of population across the districts for many decades.
- The direction, pattern, volume and streams of migration have been influenced by a number of socio-economic and political factors.
- In 2012 Population and Housing Census reported that there were about 2.7 million people (13.4 percent of total population) were identified as inter-provincial migrants.
- About 4.0 million people (20 percent of total population) were identified as inter-district migrants or one in every five persons in Sri Lanka had changed their district of residence at least one time.
- Three patterns of internal migration are presented here, such as in-migration, out-migration and net - migration.

In - migration patterns of Sri Lanka by province

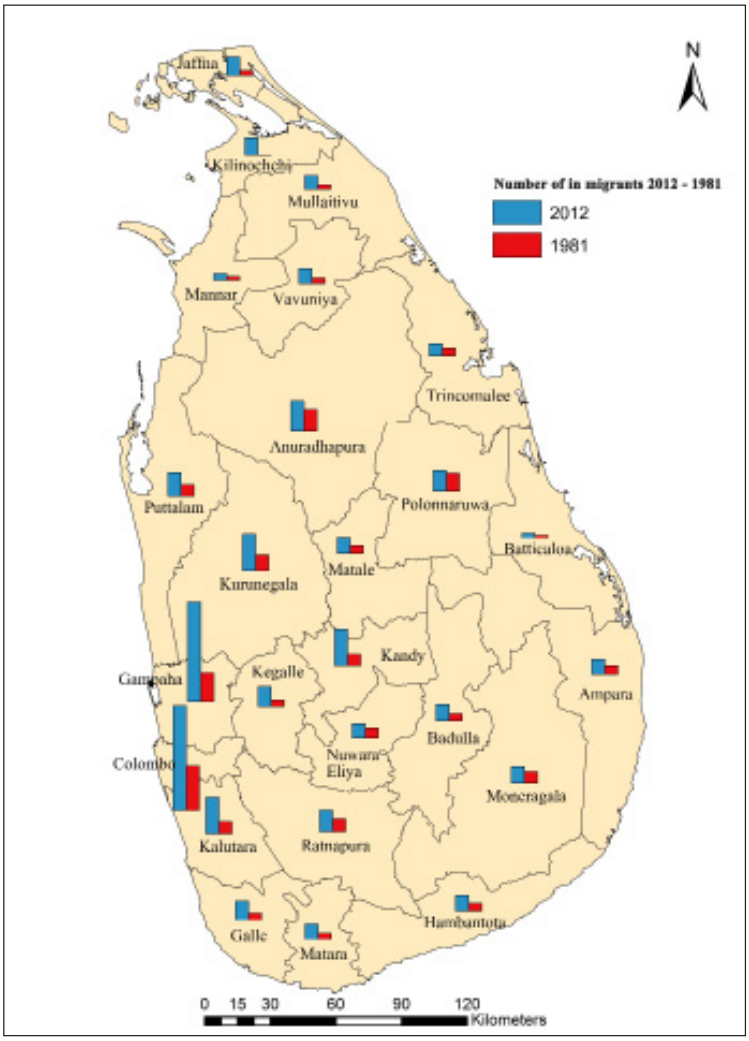
Figure 46 : Percentage distribution of in-migrants by province - 2012



- The highest percent of in-migrants had been observed in the Western Province which has the smallest land area among all provinces (Figure 46).
- The Western Province had received about 40 percent of total in-migrants from other provinces.
- The second and third highest percent of in-migrants had reported from North Western and North Central provinces respectively (10.9 and 10.8 percent).

In - migration patterns of Sri Lanka by district

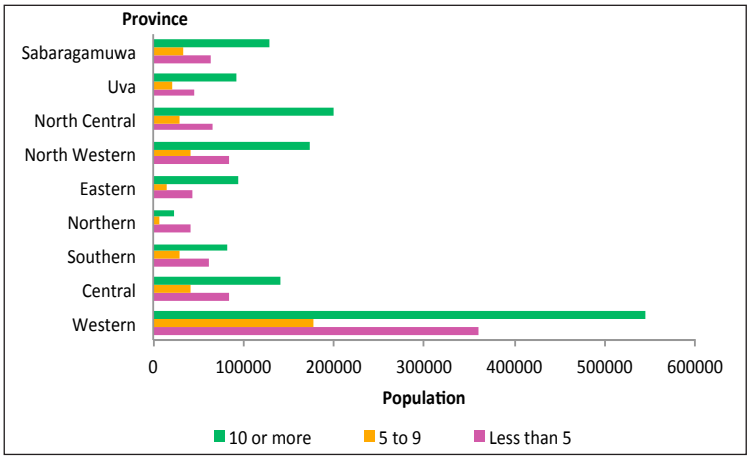
Figure 47 : In-migration patterns by district 1981, 2012



- Colombo had become a largest volume of migrant receiving district in the country. There were 641,922 in-migrants (16.2 percent out of the total in-migrants).
- The second highest migrants living district was Gampaha and it had reported 613,070 in-migrants .
- Districts such as Kalutara, Kandy and Kurunegala had also received more than 200,000 in-migrants each in 2012 Population Census.
- All other districts had shown a slight increase of their volume of in-migrants in 2012 compared to 1981 (Figure 47).

In - migration by province and duration of residence

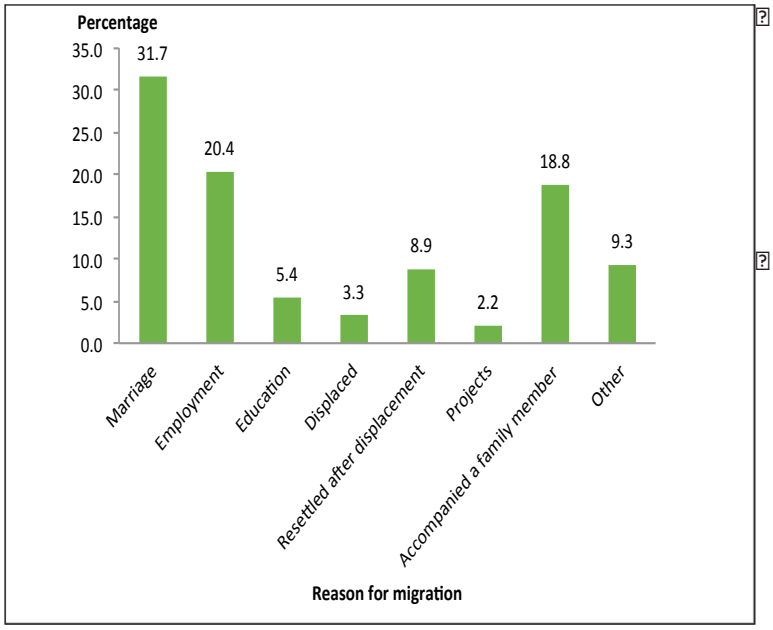
Figure 48 : In-migrant population by province of usual residence and duration of residence - 2012



- One in every four persons living in the Western Province is a migrant.
- The Western Province with the highest volume of in-migrants (1,083, 185) and has a significant volume of all types of migrants such as, long-term migrants (10 or more years), medium term migrants (5 -9 years) and short-term migrants (less than 5 years) compared to all other provinces (Figure 48)
- A significant volume of short term in - migration had been observed in the Northern province.
- The second, third and fourth highest volume of long-term in - migration had also been observed from the North Central, North Western and Central provinces respectively.

Reasons for inter district migration

Figure 49 : Percentage distibution of in - migrants by reasons for inter-district migration - 2012

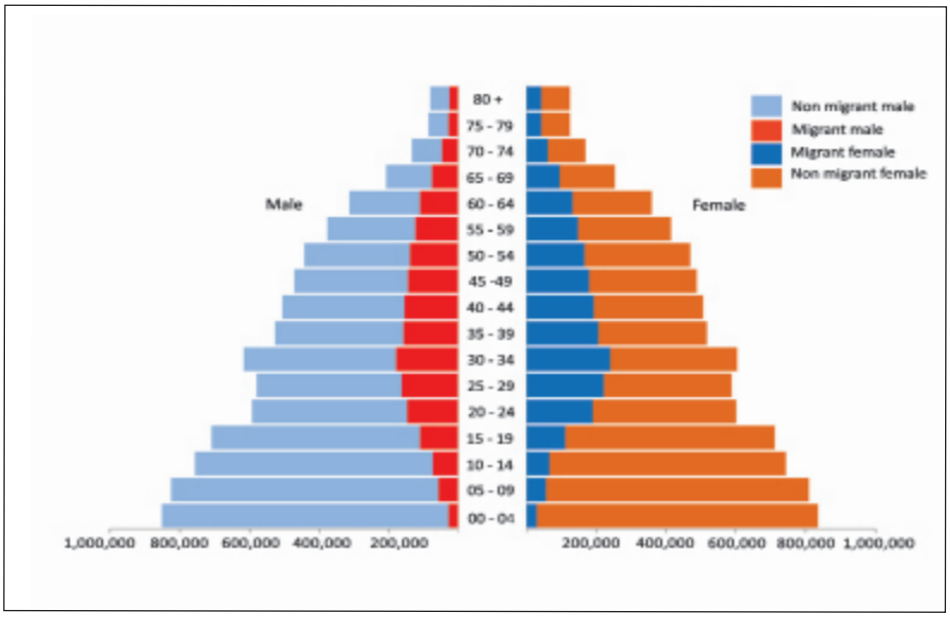


- Reasons for inter-district migration are given in Figure 49. It is noted that approximately one in every three migrants had been changed their district of usual residence due to marriage.
- One in every five migrants have been changed their district of usual residence due to employment related reasons. Districts such as Colombo, Gampaha and Batticaloa indicated high percentage of employment related migration (43 percent, 31 percent and 22 percent respectively).
- Approximately one fifth (19 percent) of migrants have changed their district of usual residence due to accompanying by a family member.

- Only 5.4 percent total internal migrants have changed their district of usual residence due to education related reasons. Migration to Batticaloa Kandy, Colombo and Matara districts show significant percent of its total migrants (14 percent, 11 percent, 11 percent and 8 percent respectively) due to education related reasons.
- Migration to districts such as Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu, Jaffna, Mannar and Trincomalee occurred mainly due to displacement or resettlement after displacement.
- Development project related migration has been observed in Ampara, Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura, Moneragala and Hambantota districts.

Migrant and non - migrant population by age and sex

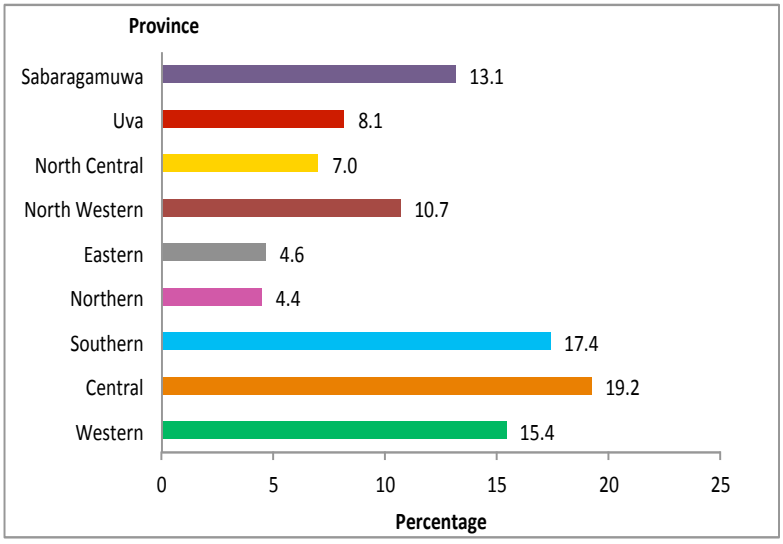
Figure 50 : Age-sex distribution of migrant and non-migrant population - 2012



- The age-sex distribution of the non-migrant population and migrant population for 2012 have shown in the pyramid (Figure 50).
- It is clearly shown that there is a relatively small proportion of children and school going population (less than 19 years), among the migrant population for both sexes when compared to the non-migrant population.
- Sri Lanka's age distribution of migrant population shows dominance of working age groups especially in age groups 25-29, 30-34 and 35-39.
- Females in almost all age groups (except age groups below 19 years) are more migratory than males.

Out - migration patterns by province

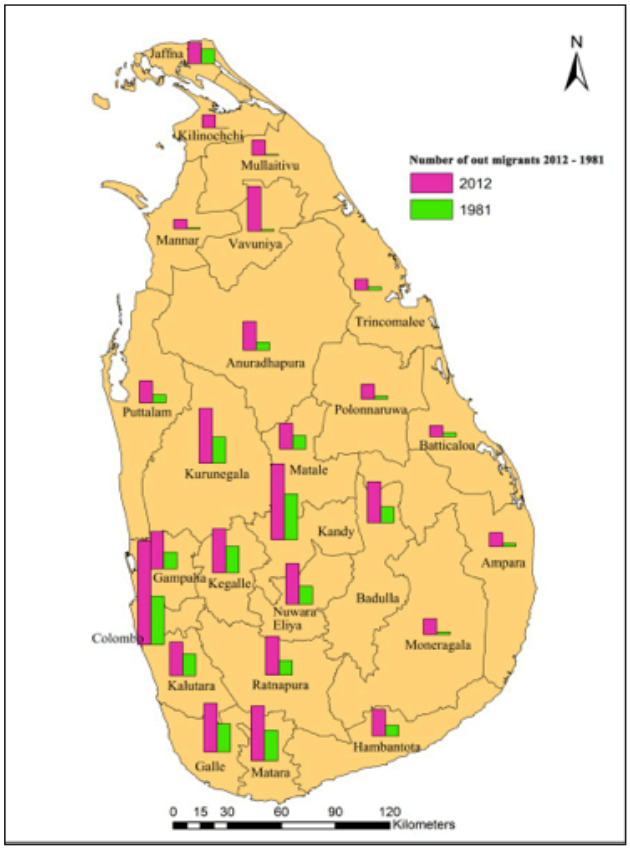
Figure 51 : Percentage distribution of out-migrants by province - 2012



- The highest percent of out-migration (19.2 percent of the total out-migrants) had been reported from the Central province.
- The second, third and fourth highest had been reported from the Southern province (17.4 percent) , Western province (15.4 percent) and Sabaragamuwa province (13.1 percent) respectively.
- A significant percent of out - migration (10.7 percent) had also been reported from the North Western province.

Out - migration patterns by district

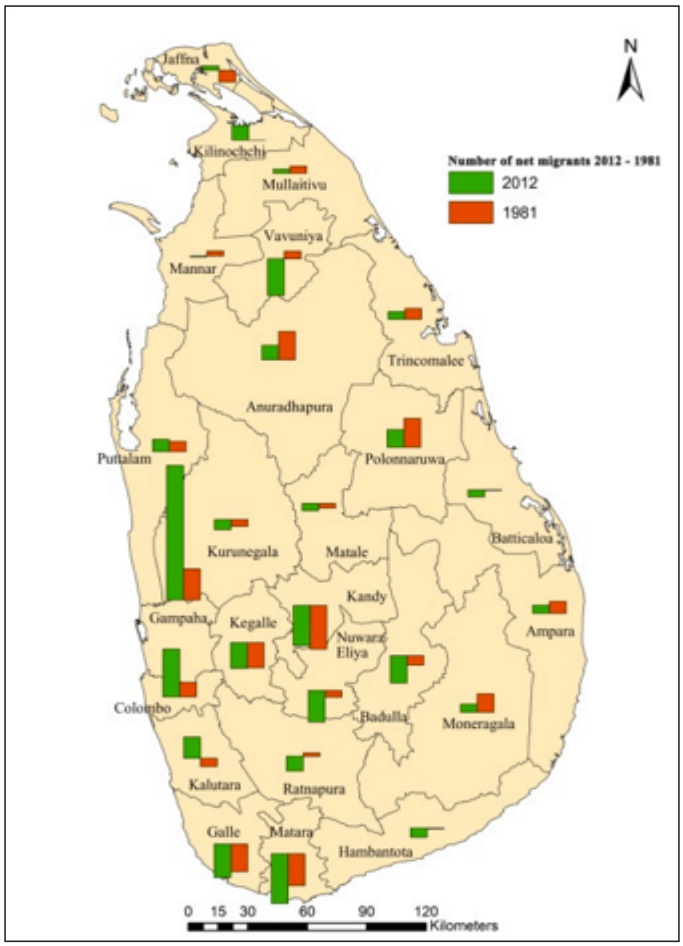
Figure 52 : Out-migration patterns by district 1981, 2012



- The volume of out-migration in 1981 and 2012 by districts is shown in the Figure 52. it is evident that the districts such as Colombo, Vavuniya, Kandy, Badulla, Matara, Ratnapura and Nuwara Eliya still remain as a large volume of migrant sending areas.
- A significant out-migration can also be observed from traditional settlement districts of Kurunagala and Anuradhapura in 2012.

Net - migration patterns by district

Figure 53 : Net-migration patterns by district 1981, 2012



- Net-migration indicates the difference between in and out-migration. It can be positive (in-migrants) or negative (out-migrants).
- Figure 53 is noted that all three districts of Western province show a significant increasing trend in positive net-migration during the period 1981 to 2012.
- Colombo and Gampaha districts have been the most popular migration destinations in Sri Lanka during this period.
- The dry zone districts such as Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa and Moneragala indicated high positive net-migration in 1981, but it had decreased in 2012.
- Districts such as Nuwara Eliya, Badlla and Matara indicated very high negative net-migration in 2012 compare to 1981.

Net - migration rates

Table 2 : Net-migration rates by district 1981, 2012

District	1981	2012	District	1981	2012
Colombo	28.4	67.1	Mullaitivu	318.8	143.9
Gampaha	74.0	190.2	Batticaloa	-4.8	-44.3
Kalutara	-32.4	56.6	Ampara	101.0	40.0
Kandy	-138.4	-95.4	Trincomalee	141.1	65.8
Matale	-41.6	-48.8	Kurunegala	-18.6	-20.6
Nuwara Eliya	-37.1	-144.2	Puttalam	67.6	52.2
Galle	-111.7	-102.5	Anuradhapura	160.8	54.7
Matara	-161.2	-198.7	Polonnaruwa	371.6	142.5
Hambantota	-4.6	-50.0	Badulla	-49.6	-109.2
Jaffna	-53.4	24.0	Monaragala	221.9	58.2
Mannar	150.9	-36.1	Ratnapura	14.6	-44.2
Vavuniya	263.5	-697.7	Kegalle	-121.6	-100.1

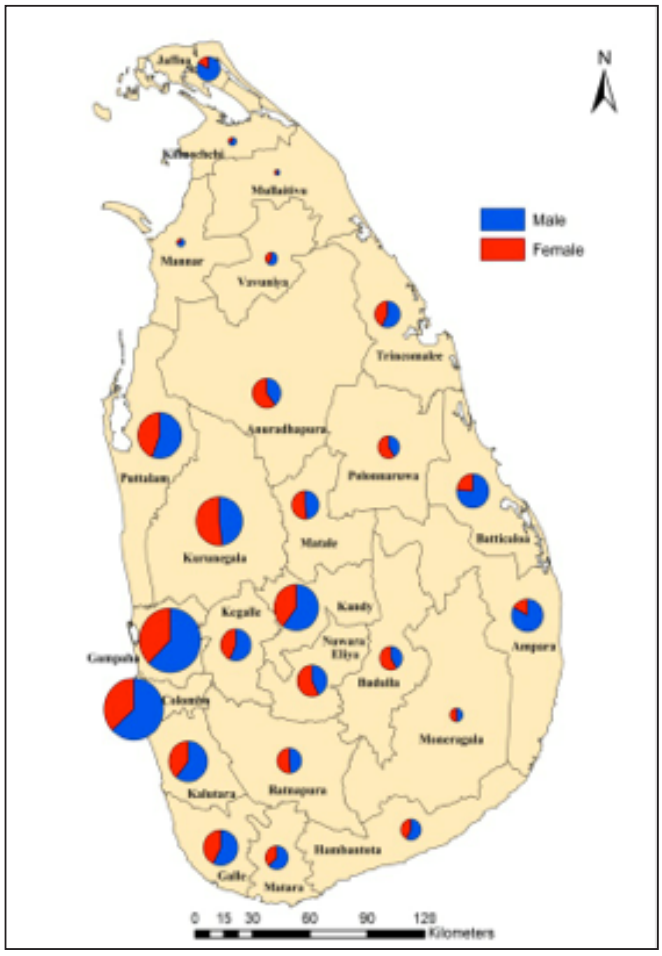
Net-migration rate = Number of net-migrants per 1000 of usual residence population.

Note : Kilinochchi district was created after 1981, therefore not included in this table for comparisons.

- The highest rate of negative net migration in 2012 was reported from Vavunia (-697.7) and second highest from Matara district (-198.7). Nuwara Eliya, Badulla, Galle and Kegalle also recorded high negative net-migration rates (-144.2, -109.2, -102.5 and -100.1 respectively).
- The Districts such as, Nuwara - Eliya, Badulla and Hambantota districts show an increasing trend of negative net-migration during the period 1981 to 2012 (Table 2).
- Districts such as Polonnaruwa, Moneragala, and Anuradhapura which reported as high positive net-migrant districts in 1981, but have shown a decreasing trend of positive net-migration in 2012.
- Vavuniya, Mannar, and Ratnapura districts which showed as positive net migrant districts in 1981 have become negative net-migrant districts in 2012.
- Though Kalutara and Jaffna districts reported as negative net-migrant districts in 1981 both have become positive net-migrant districts in 2012.

Population temporarily living abroad

Figure 54 : Population temporarily living abroad by district and sex - 2012



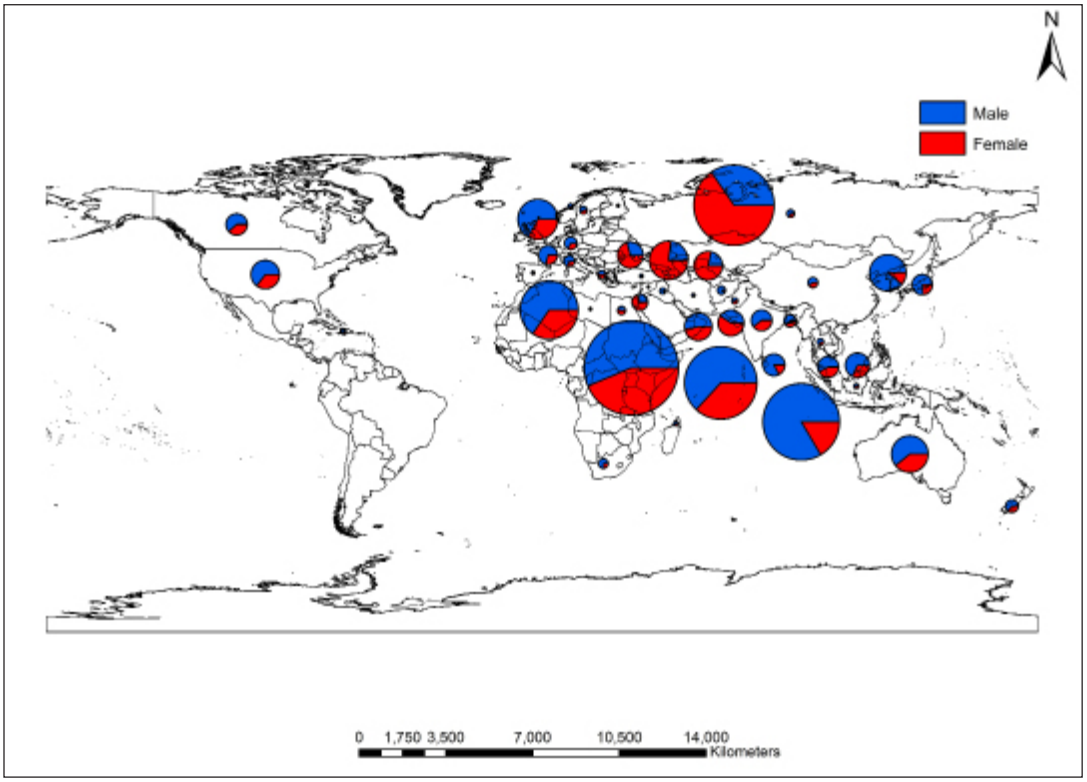
- The population temporarily living abroad (more than six months) are concerned, 59 percent were male and 41 percent were female in 2012, which indicated that more males are temporarily living abroad than females by 2012

- Approximately 72 percent of the total females who are temporarily living abroad had originated from 9 districts of the country. They are namely, Gampaha (13.5 percent), Colombo (12.2 percent), Kurunegala (10.7 percent), Puttalam (8.1 percent), Kandy (7.4 percent), Kalutara (5.6 percent), Nuwara Eliya (4.8 percent), Galle (4.7 percent) and Anuradhapura (4.5 percent).

- Approximately three fourths of the total males who are temporarily living abroad (74.0 percent) had also been originated from 9 districts of the country. They are namely, Gampaha((15. 8 percent), Colombo (14.8 percent), Kandy (7.9 percent), Puttalam (7.2 percent), Kurunegala (7.0 percent), Kalutara (6.0 percent), Ampara (5.5 percent), Batticaloa (5.4 percent), and Galle (4.5 percent)

Population temporarily living abroad by country of destination

Figure 55 : Sri Lankan population temporarily living abroad by country of destination - 2012



- Few Middle Eastern countries had become popular destination for Sri Lankan temporary labour migrants namely Saudi Arabia, Kuwait , UAE, Qatar, Lebanon ,Jordan , Oman and Bahrain.
- Approximately 67 percent of the total Sri Lankans temporarily living abroad have migrated to Middle Eastern countries.
- Seventy two percent of total females and 63 percent of total males who are living abroad temporarily were absorbed by Middle Eastern countries (Figure 55).

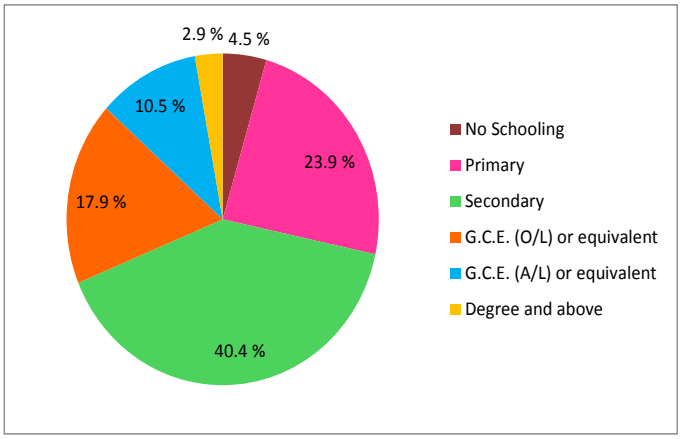
Population temporarily living abroad by province of usual residence

- More than one third of the total population who are temporarily living abroad (34.4 percent) have reported from districts of Western province and the second and the third highest percentages have reported from the North Western province (16.1 percent) and Central province (14.1 percent) respectively.
- Eastern province accounted for 11.0 percent while the Southern province accounted for 8.2 percent of the total population temporarily living abroad.
- Sabaragamuwa, North Central, and Northern provinces reported 6.0 percent, 5.0 percent and 3.3 percent of total population temporarily living abroad respectively.

Households' characteristics of population temporarily living abroad

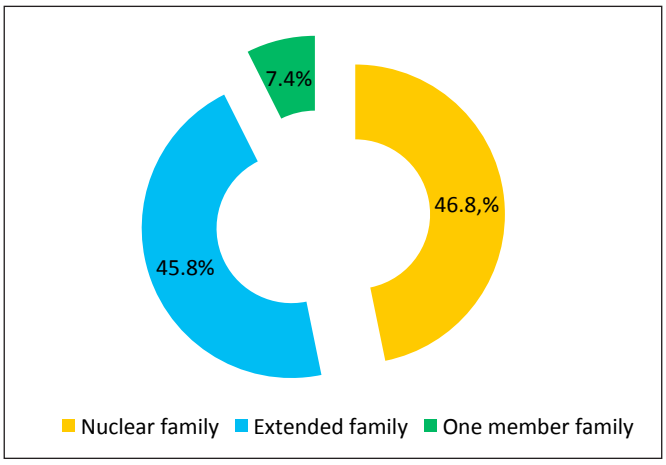
- Data shows that one in every eleven households having at least one member temporarily living abroad by 2012.

Figure 56 : Percentage of households with at least one person temporarily living abroad by educational attainment of the household head - 2012



- More than two thirds of population temporarily living abroad originated from households where their heads of households had educational attainment below G.C.E. O/L

Figure 57 : Percentage of households with at least one person living abroad by family structure - 2012



- Population temporarily living abroad have been reported in almost similar percentages from both nuclear and extended households (47 percent and 46 percent respectively).

Reasons for temporarily living abroad

- Eighty five percent of total population temporarily living abroad have gone abroad for employment and 60 percent out of them were males while 40 percent were females.
- Only about 7 percent of total population temporarily living abroad have gone abroad for education and 64 percent out of them were males while 36 percent were females.
- Ninety four percent of total population temporarily living abroad were between ages 18-59.

FUNCTIONAL DIFFICULTIES

Characteristics of persons with functional difficulties

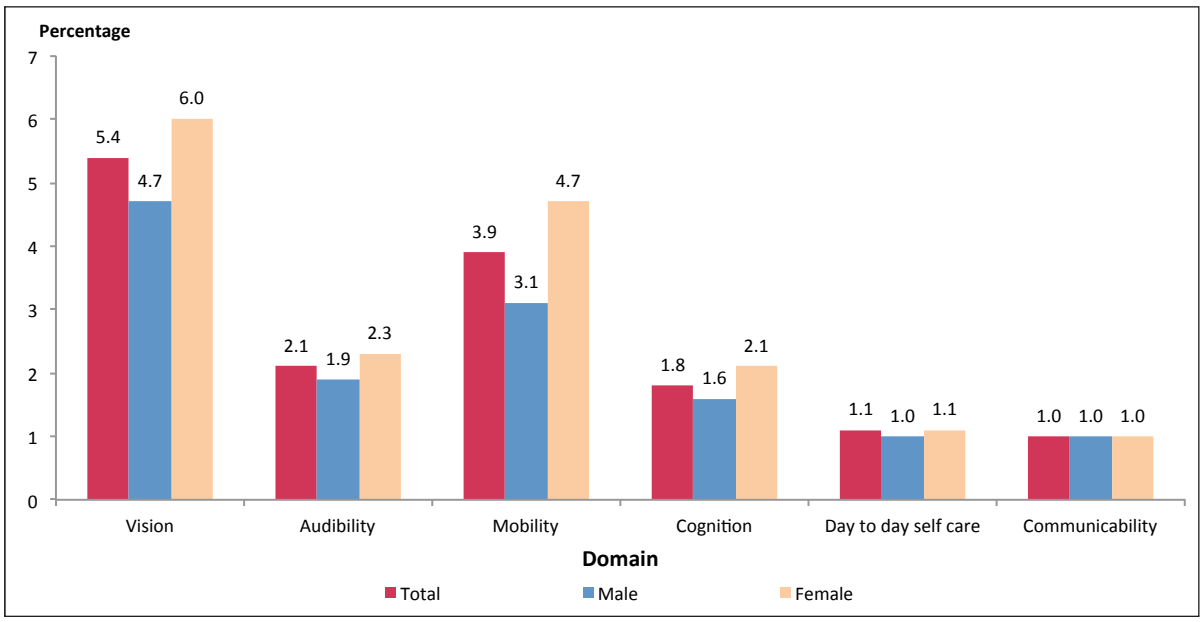
- The term 'functional difficulty' is used here as it denotes a state of difficulty which is not only refer to an impairment in the permanent sense but yet a physical or mental difficulty that is encountered in day to day functions.

- Information on individuals with physical and mental functional difficulties was collected during the Census 2012 on 6 domains, namely Vision, Audibility, Mobility, Cognition, Day-to-day self-care and Communicability.

- However, in the case of very young children it would be premature to identify certain functional limitations as functional difficulties. Therefore, considering the need to be objectively accurate, results in this section provides information for persons 5 years and above.

- Out of the total population aged 5 years and above (18,615,577) who reported at least one difficulty in any domain out of the six domains was 1,617,924 or (8.7 percent). Of this, 43 percent were males and 57 were females.

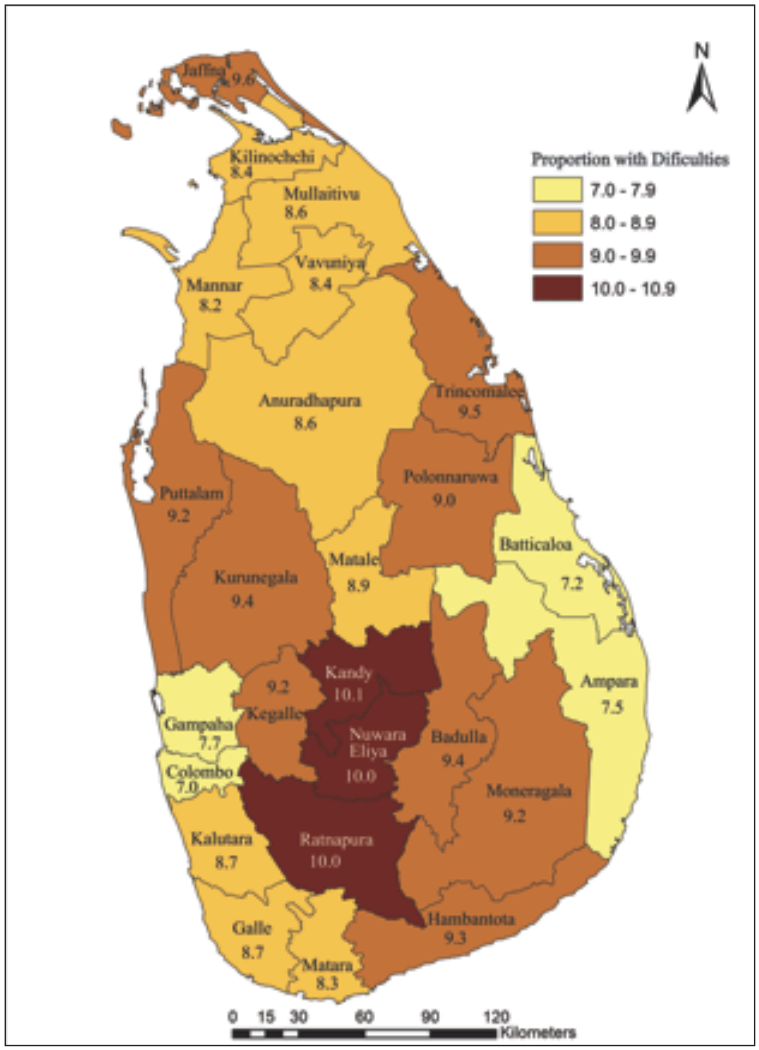
Figure 58: Percentages of population with functional difficulties by domain and sex - 2012



- Percentage of the population aged 5 years and above suffering from difficulties in, Vision, Audibility, Mobility, Cognition, Day-to-day self-care and Communicability are reported as 5.4, 2.1, 3.9, 1.8, 1.1 and 1.0 percent respectively (Figure 58).

Functional difficulty status by district

Figure 59 : Precentages of population with functional difficulties by district - 2012

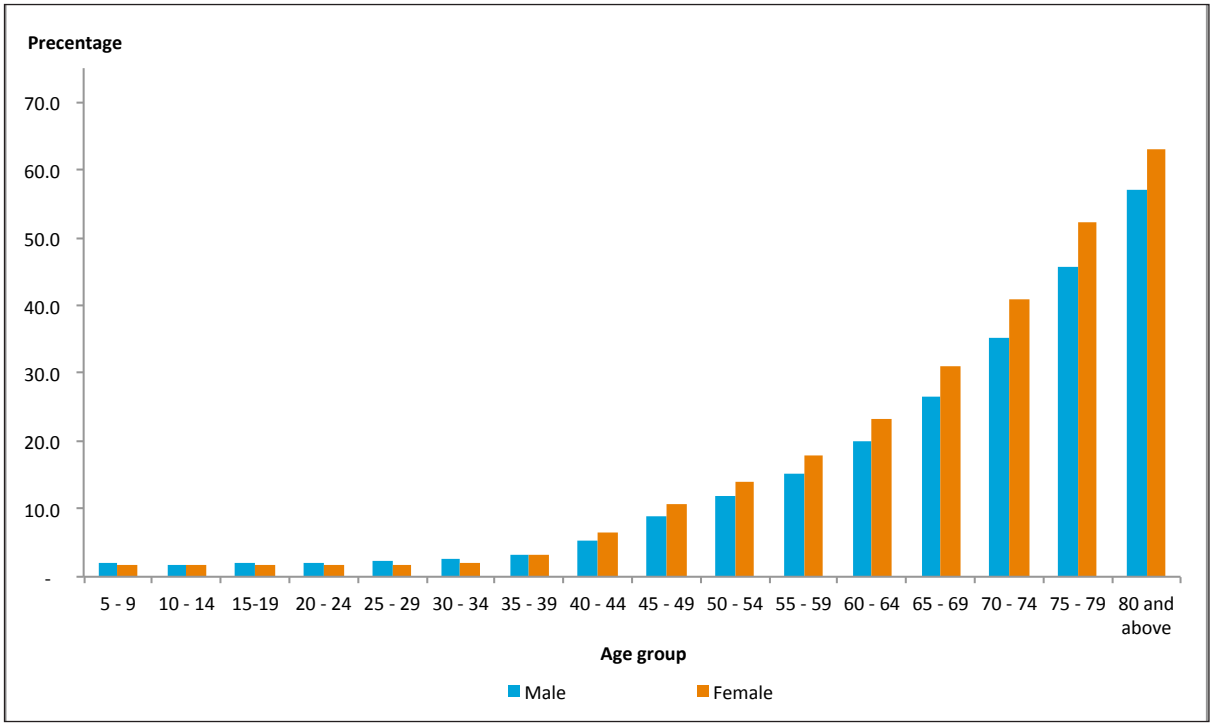


- The highest percentage of population with difficulties is reported from Kandy district at 10.1 percent followed by Nuwara Eliya at 10.0 percent and Ratnapura 10.0 percent. The lowest percentage of population with functional difficulties have been reported from the Colombo district (7.0 percent) followed by Batticaloa 7.2 percent. Figure 59 shows the distribution of population with difficulties by district clearly.

Functional difficulty status by age

- Percentage of population with functional difficulties increases with the advancement in age. Thus, steps should be taken to minimize the fucntional difficulties among aged population.

Figure 60: Percentages of Population with functional difficulties by age group and sex - 2012



Functional difficulty status by economic status

- Generally people engage themselves in some form economic activity even though they have either physical or mental difficulties. Nearly 29 percent of the population with functional difficulties, aged 15 years and above mentioned that they are economically active despite their impairment at least in one domain out of the six domains.

- The balance 71 percent declared that they are economically inactive. Majority of the population with functional difficulties, are reported as economically inactive as they are unable to work due to old age.

HOUSING

Background

- Census of Population and Housing is the primary source of obtaining information on the housing stock in the country. During the Census 2012, all buildings were listed under three categories namely housing units, collective living quarters (ex: boarding houses, hostels, prisons, elderly homes etc.) and non-housing units (Ex: officers, garages, shops etc). Even though, people live in all these types of buildings, housing characteristics were collected only from occupied housing units.

- In Census 2012, information on housing was collected under two headings namely **Housing unit information** *and* **Household information**.

- A housing unit is a place of dwelling of human beings, separated from other places of dwelling by a wall or other means and having a separate entrance. There can be more than one housing unit in one building unit.

- There can be one or more **households** within one **housing unit**. *T*he cooking arrangement is the basic factor which determines the household. A household may be a one **person household** or a **multi person household**. One person household is a household where a person lives alone and arrange his/her own food. A multi person household is one in which a group of two or more persons live together and have common arrangements for the provision of food.

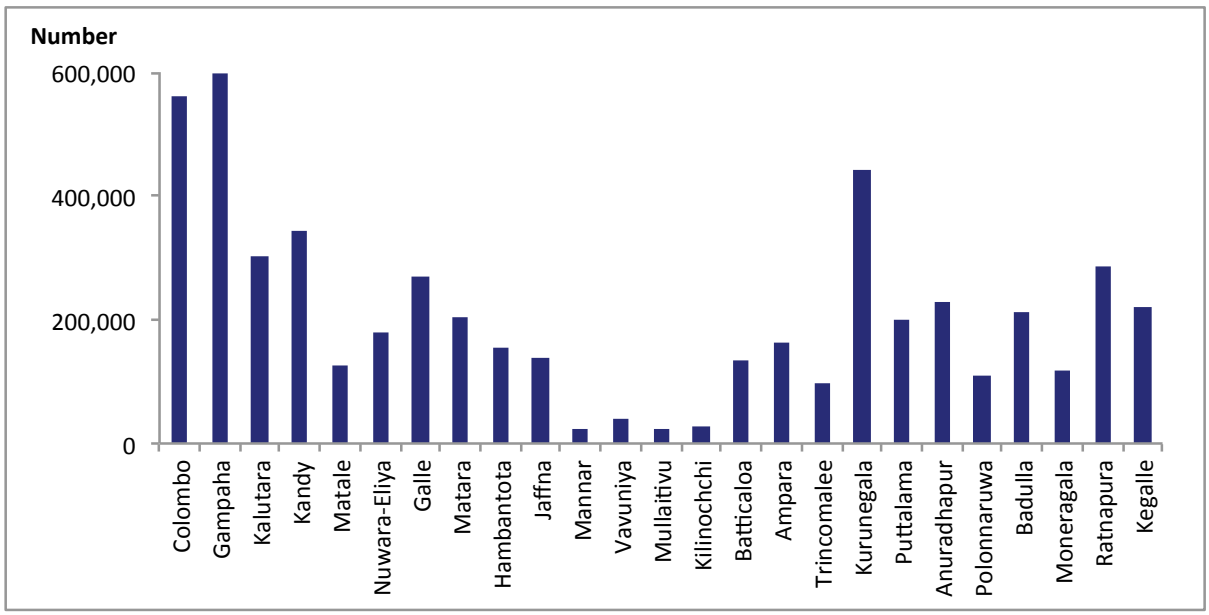
Housing Stock

Table 3: Occupied building units - 2012

Occupied housing units	Collective living quarters	Non-housing units
5,207,740	52,284	7,135

- According to Census 2012, the total number of occupied building units in the country inhabited by people for living is reported as 5,267,159.

Figure 61: Number of occupied housing units by district - 2012



- The highest number of occupied housing units was reported from Gampaha district followed by Colombo and Kurunegala districts.

Housing structure

Table 4: Percentage distribution of occupied housing units by type of housing structure - 2012

Type of housing structure	Number	Percentage
Total occupied housing units	5,207,740	100
Single house - single storied	4,416,584	84.8
Single house - two storied	376,764	7.2
Single house - more than two storied	27,654	0.5
Attached house/Annex	51,424	1.0
Flat	32,127	0.6
Condominium/Luxury apartment	4,179	0.1
Twin house	36,512	0.7
Row house/Line room	185,131	3.6
Hut/Shanty	77,365	1.5

- Majority (84.8 percent) of the housing units in the country are reported as single storied housing units, followed by 7.2 percent two storied single housing units and 1.5 percent huts/shanties. During the Census enumeration it was also revealed that 3.6 percent of the housing units are row house/line room mostly used as dwellings by estate residents. Other types of housing units, such as, more than two storied single houses, flats, condominiums and twin houses have reported very low percentages.

- Among the housing units in Nuwara Eliya 31.2 percent are reported as row house/line rooms. The highest percentages of hut/shanties are reported from Mullaitivu district (44.5 percent) followed by Kilinochchi district (24.4 percent).

Households

- Number of households reported stood at 5,264,282 which exceeded the number of occupied housing units by 56,542. This means that there could be one or more households in one housing unit. Majority (99 percent) of the housing units has only one household.

- According to the Census the average household size is 3.8 members per household and this average varies depending on the residential sector. In the urban sector the average household size is 3.9 members while in the rural sector the average is 3.7 and in the estate sector it is 4.0 members per household.

Tenure

Table 5: Percentage distribution of households in occupied housing units by type of tenure - 2012

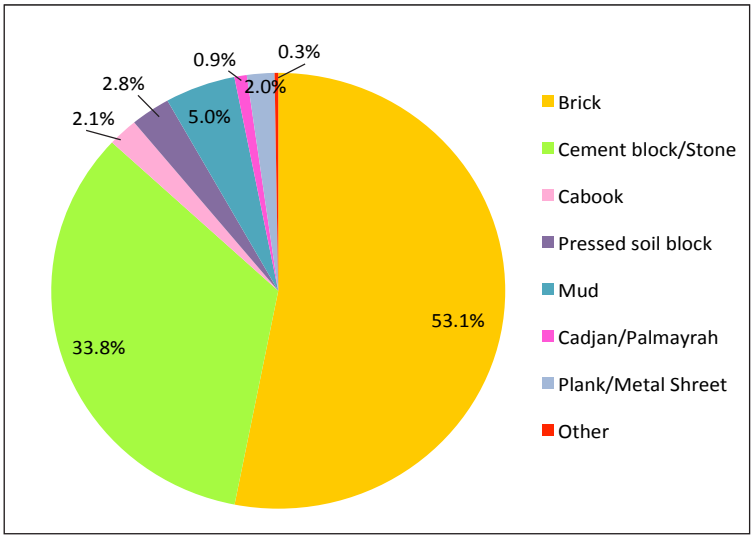
Type of tenure	Number	Percentage
Total households	5,264,282	100
Owned by a household member	4,365,190	82.9
Rent/ Lease- government owned	116,871	2.2
Rent/ Lease- privately owned	330,410	6.3
Occupied free of rent	328,346	6.2
Encroached	68,650	1.3
Other	54,815	1.0

- Majority of households are owned by a household member.

Occupied housing units by principal material of walls

- In the construction of walls, majority of the housing units (53.1 percent) have used bricks as the raw material while cement blocks have been used in 33.8 percent of the housing units. Mud has been used for the same purpose in 5 percent of the housing units.

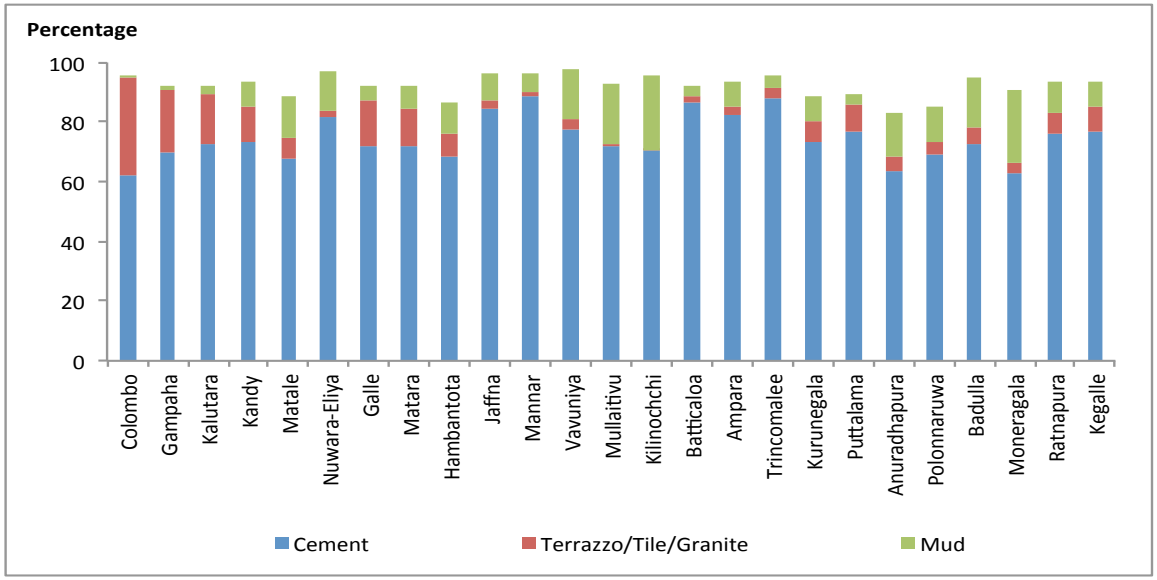
Figure 62: Percentage distribution of occupied housing units by principal material of walls - 2012



Occupied housing units by principal material of floor

- Cement is the material used to pave the floor in majority of the housing units (72.5 percent) followed by terrazzo/tile/granite (12.2 percent). Mud also has been used as the material in 7.5 percent of the housing units.

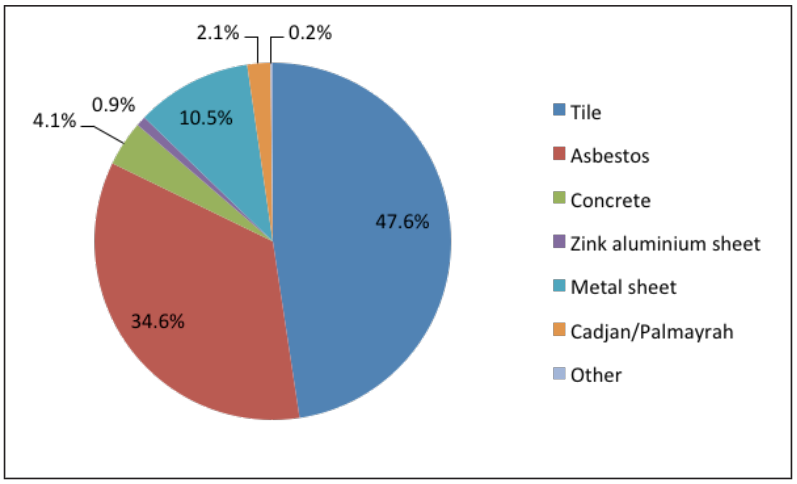
Figure 63: Percentages of occupied housing units by principal material of floor and district - 2012



- In all districts, majority of housing units have used cement to pave the floor. However, as considerable percentage of housing units in Kilinochchi (24.8 percent), Monaragala (24.6 percent) and Badulla (17.1 percent) districts have used mud to pave the floor. On the other hand in districts belonging to Western province namely, Colombo (33.4 percent), Gampaha (20.7 percent) and Kalutara (16.8 percent) a considerable percentage of housing units have used terrazzo/tile/granite material, a comparatively expensive method of paving houses, suggesting a higher living standard against other districts.

Occupied housing units by principal material of roof

Figure 64: Percentage distribution of occupied housing units by principal material of roof - 2012



- Roofing tile is the material used to cover the roofs in majority of the housing units (47.6 percent) followed by asbestos (34.6 percent) and metal sheet (10.5 percent). Thus roofing tile and asbestos are the popular materials for majority of housing units for roof cover. Majority used tiles as they are more suitable for the warm climatic condition of the country.

Re-classification of occupied housing units by type of construction materials

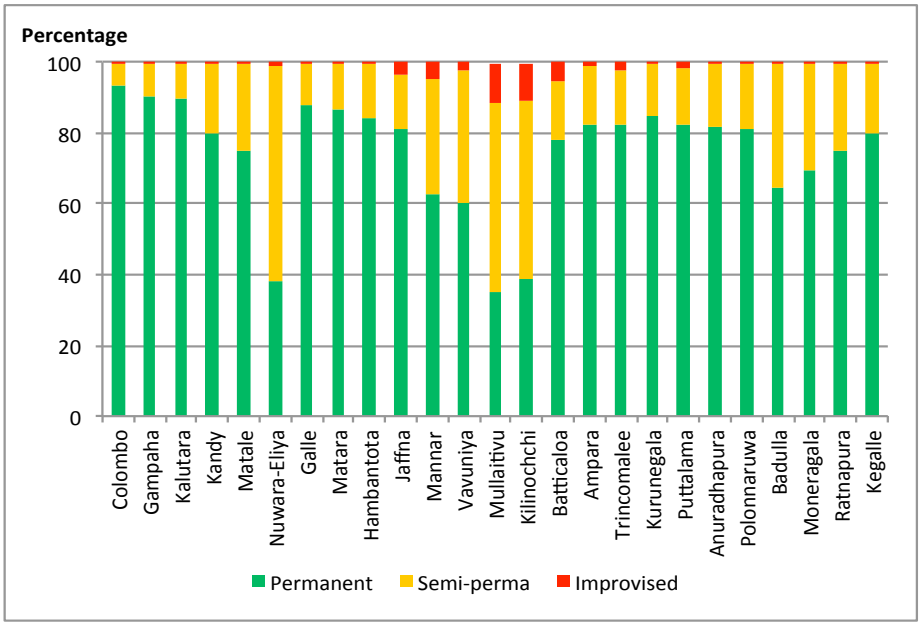
All occupied housing units are sub divided in to four categories namely ***Permanent, Semi-permanent, Improvised and unclassified***. This classification is made according to the following criteria.

Type of Housing Unit	Principle materials of construction		
	Wall	Floor	Roof
Permanent	Brick	Cement	Tile
	Cement block/Stone	Terrazzo/Tile/Granite	Asbestos
	Cabook	Wood	Concrete
	Pressed soil bricks	Concrete	Zink Aluminum sheet
Semi-permanent	Mud	Any material	Any material
Improvised	Cadjan/Palmyrah	Mud	Metal sheet
	Plank/Metal sheet	Sand	Cadjan/Palmyrah/Straw
Not classified	Other	Other	Other

- Of the total occupied housing units (5,207,740), 81.9 percent of the units are constructed using permanent materials followed by 17.2 percent constructed using semi-permanent material and the balance 0.9 percent constructed using improvised material.

- Colombo (93.6 percent) and Mullativu (35.0 percent) districts reported the highest and the lowest percent of housing units which used permanent material for construction. Further, highest percentage (60.7 percent) of housing units in Nuwara Eliya district are constructed using semi-permanent material followed by Mulllativu (53.8 percent) and Kilinochchi (50.8 percent) districts (Figure 65).

Figure 65: Percentage distribution of occupied housing units by type of construction material and district - 2012



Ages of the occupied housing units

Table 6: Percentage distribution of housing units by the year of construction - 2012

Year of construction	Number	Percentage
Total	5,207,740	100.0
2011	323,194	6.2
2010	236,190	4.5
2009	210,782	4.0
2008	205,037	3.9
2007	206,425	4.0
2006	210,202	4.0
2005	256,804	4.9
2004 – 2000	819,104	15.7
1999 – 1995	581,580	11.2
1994 – 1990	477,621	9.2
1989 – 1980	620,287	11.9
1979 or before	1,060,514	20.4

- Year of construction is important to measure the age of a housing unit. Census results show that 2.5 million housing units or 47.2 percent of the present housing stock has been completed after the year 2000. In year 2011 alone 323,194 housing units have been constructed (Table 6).

Households by source of drinking water

- Protected well, piped born water (main line), tube well and bottled water are considered as safe drinking water sources. The Census recorded that the protected well within the premises stands at 31.4 percent while protected well outside premises stands at 14.7 percent as the source of obtaining drinking water for the households. Availability of piped born water (main line) as the main sources of drinking water is recorded for 31.4 percent of the households (Figure 66).

Figure 66: Percentage distribution of households by main source of drinking water - 2012

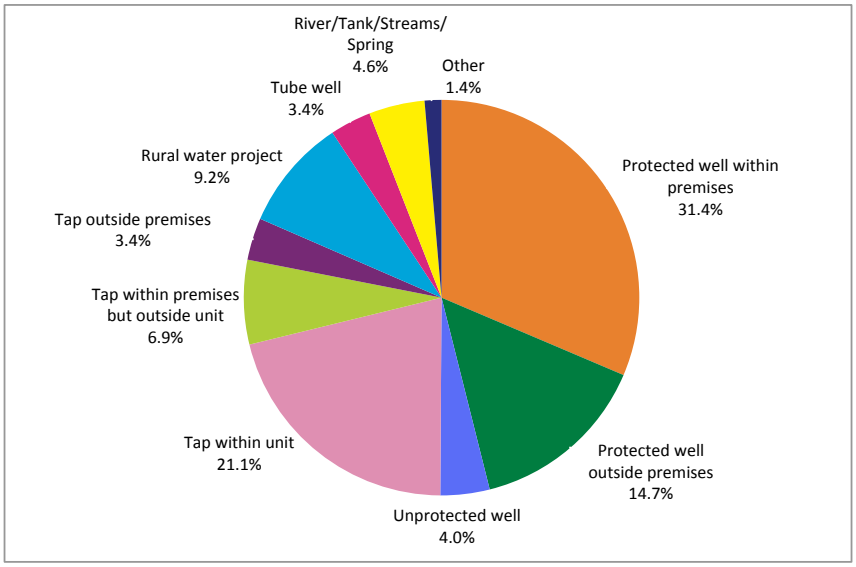
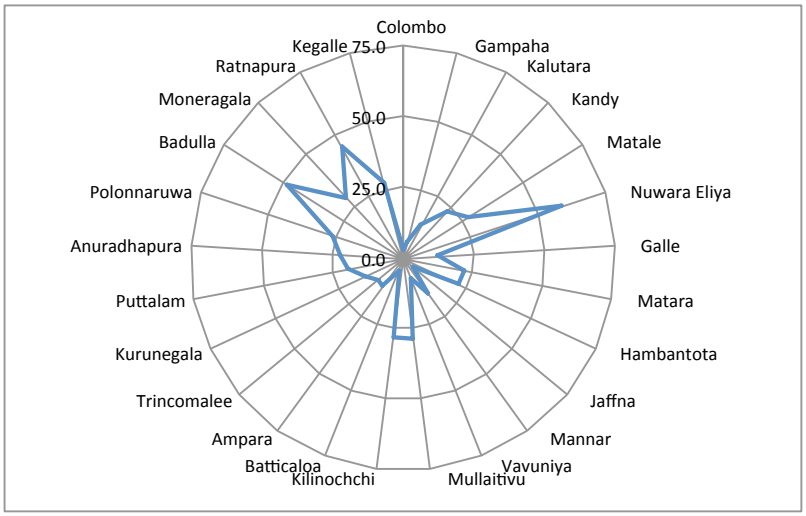


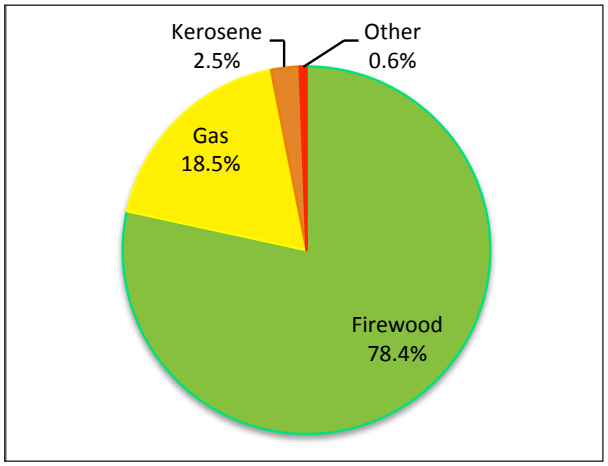
Figure 67: Percentages of households using unsafe drinking water by district - 2012



- Out of the households in Nuwara Eliya district 33.2 percent of households used water from the river, tank, or streams which are considered unsafe sources of water for drinking purposes (Figure 67).

Households by type of cooking fuel

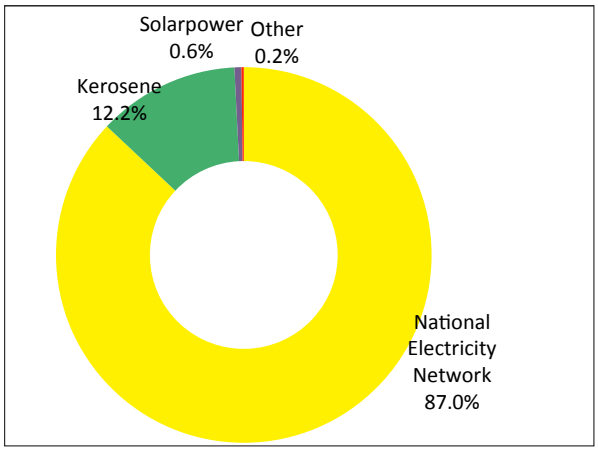
Figure 68: Percentage distribution of households by use of cooking fuel - 2012



- Majority of households (78.4 percent) use firewood as the principal source of cooking fuel followed by gas (18.5 percent). Most of the households in Colombo district (60.5 percent) use gas for cooking.

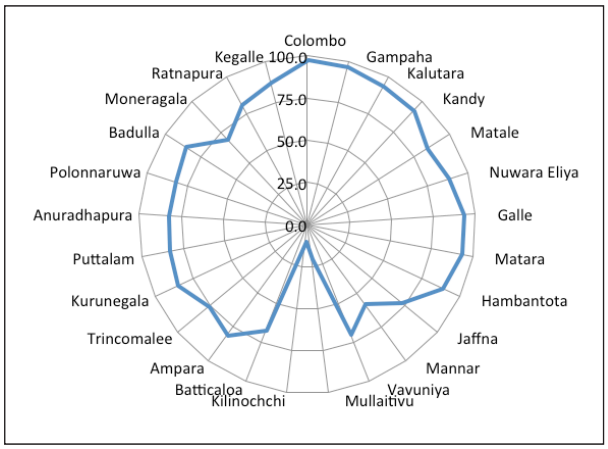
Households by source of lighting

Figure 69 : Percentage distribution of households by main sources of lighting - 2012



- Electricity, Kerosene and Solar power are the sources of lighting used in the country. Majority of the households (87 percent) use electricity from national grid for lighting followed by kerosene (12.2 percent). Approximately 0.6 percent of the households used solar power for lighting (Figure 69).

Figure 70 : Percentages of households using electricity (National grid) for lighting by district - 2012



- Figure 70 shows that 97.7 percent of all households in Colombo district use electricity from national grid while in Killinochchi district national grid electricity is available only for less than 10 percent of households.

- Principal source of lighting in Killinochchi (78.9 percent) and Mullativu (72.8 percent) districts are reported as kerosene. Further solar power is used by 11.1 percent of households in Killinochchi district.

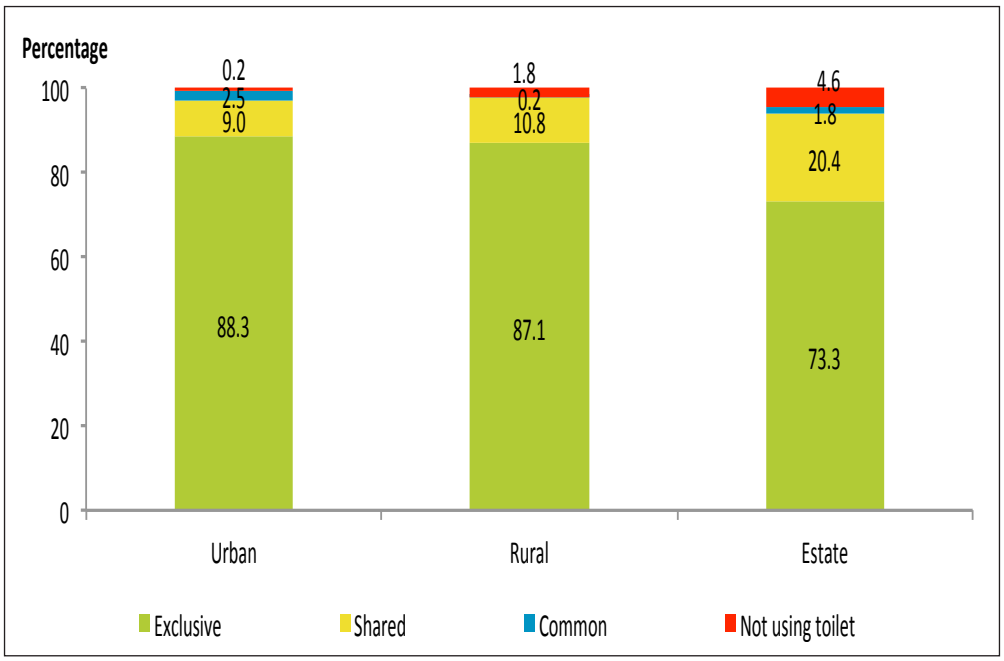
Households by sanitary facility

- Water sealed toilets are the safest sanitary facility available in the country. Majority of households (76 percent) use water sealed toilets exclusively for the household followed by 10 percent of households that share water seal toilets with another household.

- The percentages of households using water sealed (sewer tank) and pour flush toilets are 4.6 percent and 2.1 percent respectively. Direct pit is the method used by 2.6 percent of the households in the country.

- Nearly 1.7 percent of households do not use any type of toilets. Highest percentages of households not having a toilet facility is reported from Kilinochchi (21.9 percent) followed by Mullaitivu (20.6 percent) and Batticaloa (12.5 percent) districts.

Figure 71: Percentage distribution of households using sanitary facilities by residential sector - 2012

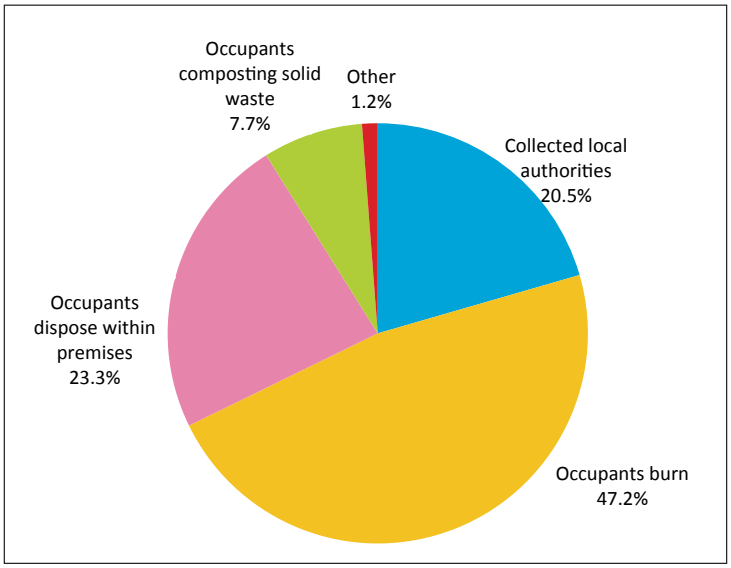


- More than 85 percent of households in the urban and rural sectors have toilets for their exclusive use. Even in the estate sector 73 percent of households have a toilet for exclusive use.

Households by solid waste disposal

- Burning (47.2 percent) is the main mode of solid waste disposal. Figure 72 shows that 23.3 percent of households dispose solid waste within the premises and 7.7 percent of households composting solid waste. **However, quite unacceptably 11.7 percent of households in Nuwara Eliya district reported that they dispose solid waste into road, river, canal or forest**.

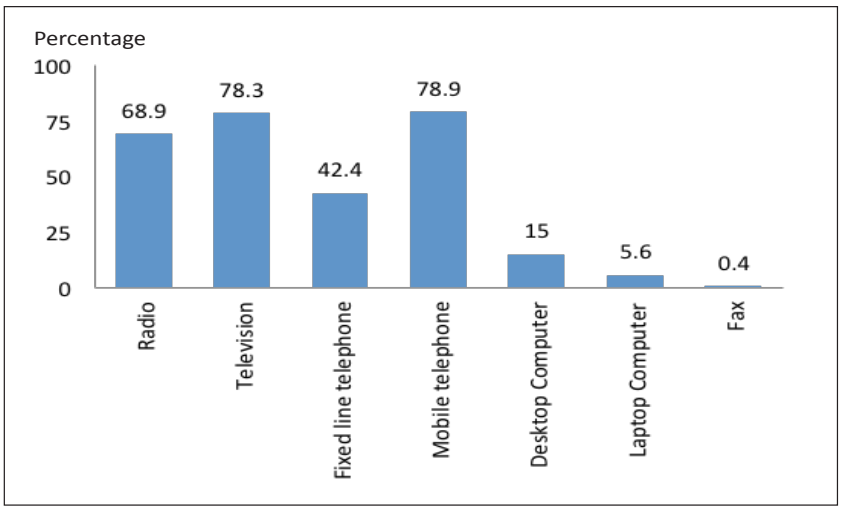
Figure 72 : Percentage distribution of households by principal method of solid waste disposal - 2012



- Local authorities play a vital role in the removal of solid waste (20.5 percent) and especially their service, being the sole source of disposal in the urban areas, is relied upon by the residents. The methods and efficiency of solid waste disposal is as important as any other facility discussed here as it helps maintain the environment. Removal of the solid waste through local authorities is the main, mode of solid waste disposal in Colombo district (68.8 percent). Nearly 41.1 percent of households in Ampara district and 40 percent of households in Batticaloa district are also reported that they dispose waste through the help of local othority.

Availability of communication facilities

Figure 73: Percentages of households by the availability of communication facilities - 2012



- Overall percentages of households having Radio, TV, fixed telephone line, mobile phones, desktop computer, laptop computer and fax machine are reported as 68.9, 78.3,42.4,78.9,15.0,5.6 and 0.4 percent respectively.

- It should be noted that the percentage of households having television in Killinochchi district is only 14.0 percent which was the lowest compared to other districts (Figure 74).
- Availability of communication equipment as well as computers is high in Colombo district compared to other districts in the country. (Figures 75 and 76).

Figure 74: Percentages of availability of television and radio by district - 2012

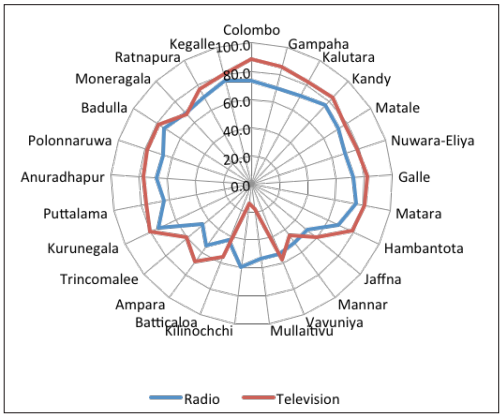


Figure 75: Percentages of availability of telephones by district - 2012

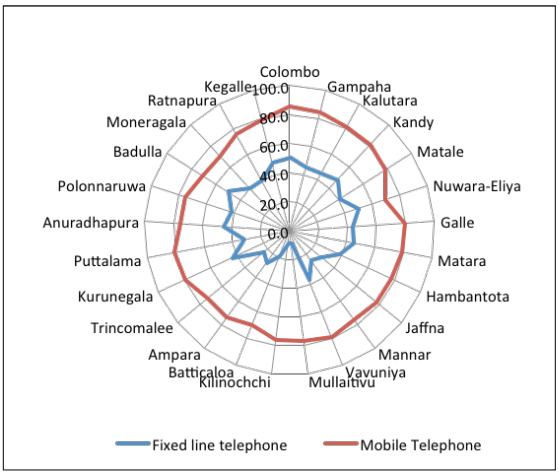
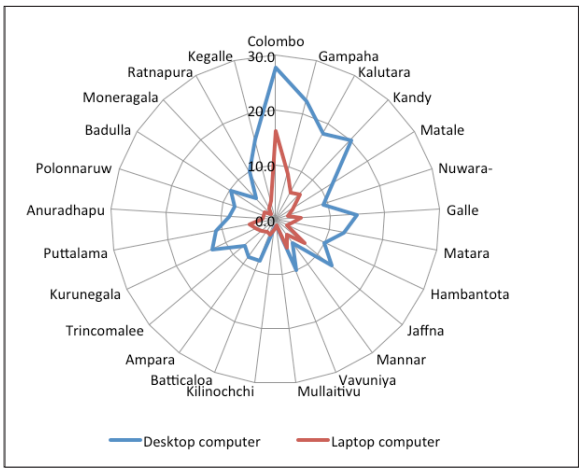


Figure 76: Percentages of availability of computers by district - 2012



CHALLENGES, ISSUES AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Urbanization

The level of urbanization in Sri Lanka is underestimated due to inadequate definition of urban areas. Areas coming under all Municipal Councils (MC) and Urban Councils (UC) are currently considered as urban sector in Sri Lanka. Some towns lost the urban status due to changes in the definition; further there are areas outside MC's and UC's which have urban outlook but still classified as rural. Therefore it is important to introduce a realistic definition of urban areas taking into account the characteristics of the population rather than based on administrative considerations alone.

Western province dominates the urbanization in Sri Lanka. Even if the definitional issues are resolved, it is probable that major share explains by that province. Majority of people attract to the Western Province as most of the health and education facilities as well as commercial centers, administrative and service centers are located in urban localities of that province. Government has clearly indicated in its major policies to have vibrant and well linked network of cities throughout the country by developing strategic emerging cities and providing urban infrastructure facilities to rural communities while developing existing main cities. Implementation of such policies should be further strengthened with special attention to urban planning and developing healthy cities in order to eliminate the domination of urbanization in specified clusters.

Marriage and fertility

Further decline in average age at marriage could have a significant impact on female participation in labour markets. The other major implication of the change in the timing of marriage is the rise of fertility in Sri Lanka, which at present remains well above the replacement level. Consequently increasing incidence of teen marriages and fertility also expected in the present demographic environment.

The Government in its population and reproductive health policy statement issued in 1991, set for the first time a more quantitative target of achieving replacement fertility, a TFR of 2.1 two be achieved by the year 2000. Thus the development of appropriate population and reproductive health policy for well-being of the Sri Lankan population seem waranted.

Census 2012 reported that the fertility has slightly increased in the country. Average number of children born to educated women has decreased compared to other women indicates that there are problems in child caring for educated working women. Therefore facilities such as flexi hours, working from home should be provided in order to minimize the interference to child caring.

Ageing

Sri Lanka is a fast ageing population in South Asia and expected to increase the momentum further in coming decades. Rapid ageing has significant social and economic implications. Gradual erosion of the traditional family support base for elders due to modern life styles, social isolation of elderly women as a result of having more widows than widowers are some of social implications of growing concern. Aged people are more vulnerable to both physical and mental functional difficulties which demands more resources from family system and society.

Ageing affects the supply of labour with implications for labour productivity. Rising demands for medical services and social security systems for aged population are associated with higher expenditure on government as well as on families who are looking after their elders. This will be offset, at least partly, by the decline in public expenditure of children. On the positive side, older persons who have accumulated wealth transfer such wealth to their children who take care of them, increasing the capital formation.

In this context, many issues related to care, development, advocacy and rights of the elderly have been addressed by various well documented existing policies, programmes and strategies of the government. While continuing the implementation of these policies, the following areas are highlighted for attention.

- Improvements of health care systems for aged population, particularly establishing geriatric care units
- Strengthening the family support system by providing incentives to those who look after their parents and by educating them on their obligations
- Promote longer work lives and improve employability of aged workers
- Developing the opportunities for aged population to improve the skills through lifelong learning and serve the community
- Paying special attention to aged widowed women , particularly those who are living alone and isolated in the society
- Concentrated attention is needed in supporting aged people with functional difficulties.

Reaping the Demographic Dividend

Sri Lanka is currently undergoing the period of demographic dividend which is expected to last till around 2030's. During this period labour force will grow while the child population further declines and elderly people remain in manageable limits. This situation is conducive for economic growth of the country if proper policies are in place. Sri Lanka is successful in this context as evidenced by very low overall unemployment rates, declining the poverty levels and steady improvements in per capita income. Government has successfully achieved these targets by introducing suitable policies, programmes and strategies. However, the following areas are highlighted for further investments in demographic dividend

- Arresting the relatively higher youth unemployment rates by providing better employment opportunities

- Developing skills further through education, vocational training, IT and language proficiency
- Improving the female labour force participation rates which is nearly half of that of males
- Improving the productivity of the labour force

Education

Illiteracy among estate females

Even though the national literacy rate is high in Sri Lanka there are significant regional disparities. Estate sector females are the most illiterate sub population group in Sri Lanka. Therefore special attention should be needed to improve the level of education of females in estate sector.

Computer literacy

Computer literacy is high among youth in Sri Lanka compared to older population. In order to use this knowledge gainfully for the development programs in Sri Lanka, the existing manual driven time consuming systems should be replaced gradually by incorporating new technology. This factor has been already identified and emplemented in many institutions. In order to minimize the regional inequality on computer literacy, usability of computers in local languages and improvement of multi linguistic abilities of the population should be enhanced.

Pre-school education

Pre-school education is very important social need in the present Sri Lankan society. Current pre-school education system is not properly regulated throughout the country. Therefore standard guidelines and strengthening of the existing mechanism to monitor the pre-school education system should be implemented. Special attention should be given to child protection and safety aspects as majority of children under 5 years of age will be attending in pre-schools in next decade. Further attention should be given to establish quality pre-schools, trained teachers and facilities.

School education and drop outs

Census information revealed that children in Batticaloa and Puttalam leave school after completing 17 years of age compared to other districts. Therefore special attention should be given to children to reach at least up to A/L standard. Nearly one quarter of Sri Lankans aged 25 years or more have studied up to grade 9 or 10. Therefore special attention should be given to increase the average education attainment in the country by expanding the opportunities to children.

Internal Migration

The Western Province which comprises the capital of Sri Lanka has many economic activities such as industrial zones, commercial centers, other administrative and service centers, and offer urban facilities. It is noted that a large volume of in-migrants to the Western Province recieved from the Southern, Central, Sabaragamuwa and North Western Provinces. Of all nine provinces of the country the Western Province considered to be most urbanized and attractive for many internal migrants. Hence, the Province has still been receiving a large number of net migrants and all districts Colombo, Gampaha and Kalutara have become popular migrant destinations. Consequently these districts show the highest population density in 2012. Therefore, special policies and programmes should be introduced to reduce the continuous in-migration flows to this Province in order to reduce population congestions related issues.

High net out migration rates reported in 2012 from districts of Central, Southern, Western, and Sabaragamuwa. It also reveals that a large volume of people are pushed from their place of origin districts to the districts of Western Province due to poor infrastructure, unemployment, poverty, low agricultural productivity, scarcity of lands for agriculture and low incomes etc. prevail at their origin. Therefore, provincial level planners should focus more on infrastructure and industrial development, enhancing agricultural productivity in order to get maximum use of their physical and human resources available at provincial level for development which would also lead to cease their employment related out ward migration.

Population temporarily living abroad

The Middle Eastern countries continued to receive the highest percentages of labour migrants from Sri Lanka. Latest Population Census also reveals that the majority of people who are living abroad temporarily had migrated for employments. About 72 percent of total female and 63 percent of total male emigrants were absorbed by a number of Middle Eastern countries such as Saudi Arabia, UAE, Kuwait, Qatar, Lebanon, Oman, Bahrain and Jordan. Therefore, future foreign employment promotion programmes of the state should focus more on non-Middle Eastern destinations for Sri Lankan labour migrants.

Sri Lankan population temporarily living abroad which comprised of youth with sizable proportion for education and employment will cause social and economic disadvantages to the country as well as left-behind family members. Especially, female emigration causes, issues of providing care for children and elderly. Thus effective programmes should be implemented to overcome these sensitive issues. Special attention need to be given to the districts where more female labour migrant originated in order to reduce negative consequences on left-behind family members.

Consequent to skilled labour migration from Sri Lanka to foreign labour market has created a vacuum in skilled labour categories in local labour market which may lead to shortage of skilled manpower in Sri Lanka.

Physical and mental difficulties

Nearly 8.7 percent of population aged 5 years or more reported that they have some sort of functional difficulty at least in one of the domains such as vision, hearing, walking, day to day self-care, remembering and concentration and communication. Special attention should be given to environment barriers and provide facilities such as disability friendly access to buildings and transport facilities to minimize the inconveniences of the people with difficulties.

Housing

Housing, as shelter, is one of the main basic human needs. The conditions of housing reflect the social status of people living in them. The type, size, quality, available facilities, location are very important factors, which determines the living conditions of the people.

Majority of houses in the country are single houses, which are owned by a member of the household. Although the housing conditions have improved in the country to a considerable extent, the housing for low income families is still a concern, for which the government has given highest priority. The government is in the process of implementing a number of large scale housing projects to provide better housing for those living in shanties and improvised houses. Many people who were living in such houses , especially in the Colombo city, have been provided with more decent houses, closer to places where they were living, so that their livelihood activities will not get disturbed. Awareness programmes on proper maintenance of the houses provided to such families, under these major housing projects, and how to live in harmony with the neighbors, may also be needed, for effective implementation such projects.

Development of effective garbage disposal systems throughout the country is essential to minimize the possible health related problems, such as dengue and other environment related health hazards.

Size of the houses may need to be considered carefully before constructing houses, as the maintenance, as well as the cost of lighting and other required facilities to larger houses could be high. Construction of eco-friendly housing and other buildings, which would minimize the damage to the environment and requirement of electricity for lighting, may need to be given high priority and serious consideration. The regional variations in the supply of electricity from the national grid, to fulfill the requirements of lighting and other needs may also have to be minimized, so that people in all regions will be able benefit from the available services.

It is important to take all necessary measures for the protection of water resources, from over exploitation and pollution, while meeting the requirements for drinking, sanitation, energy, agriculture and other uses. Urgent measures may be needed to prevent water pollution due to industrial waste and excessive use of harmful chemicals in agriculture. Scarce water resources need to be properly managed and protected for the benefit of all, especially the future generations.

Although the country has attained almost 90 percent improved sanitation, which is defined as having water seal type toilets, for exclusive use of the household, still there are regional disparities, which need urgent attention. Many of the health issues are related to unhealthy sanitation and environmental pollution.

At present access to internet facilities show wide regional variations. As such, action need to be taken to minimize such variations, as knowledge as well as easy access to internet, is essential to enhance the exposure of people, especially the youth, in all the region of the country.

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