

## Census of Population and Housing 2012 North Western Province

Indicator		Unit	North Western Province	Kurunegala District	Puttalam District
Total Population		Number	2,380,861	1,618,465	762,396
By Sex	Male	Number	1,146,172	777,201	368,971
	Female	Number	1,234,689	841,264	393,425
By Sector	By Urban	Percent	97,294	30,342	66,952
	Rural	Percent	2,274,400	1,580,556	693,844
	Estate	Percent	9,167	7,567	1,600
Ethnic Groups	Sinhalese	Percent	85.7	91.4	73.6
	Tamil	Percent	3.0	1.3	6.6
	Sri Lanka Moor	Percent	11.0	7.1	19.4
	Other	Percent	0.3	0.2	0.5
	By Religious Groups	Buddhist	Percent	74.0	88.5
	Hindu	Percent	1.8	0.9	3.8
	Islam	Percent	11.3	7.3	19.7
	Roman Catholic	Percent	11.9	2.7	31.5
	Other	Percent	1.0	0.6	1.8
By Education Status	No schooling	Percent	3.2	3.1	3.3
	Passed primary	Percent	24.9	23.3	28.4
	Passed secondary	Percent	42.2	41.1	44.7
	Passed G.C.E. O/L or equivalent	Percent	16.0	17.1	13.7
	Passed G.C.E. A/L or equivalent	Percent	11.4	12.8	8.4
	Degree or above	Percent	2.2	2.6	1.5
By Economic status	Total Active	Number	915,112	630,145	284,967
	Male Active	Number	653,100	444,842	208,258
	Female Active	Number	262,012	185,303	76,709
	Total Inactive	Number	861,392	593,177	268,215
	Male Inactive	Number	187,725	132,827	54,898
	Female Inactive	Number	673,667	460,350	213,317
Literacy		Rate	96.3	96.5	95.8
(Computer Literacy )		Rate	20.5	21.1	19.0

# Census of Population and Housing 2012

## North Western Province

### 1.0 Introduction

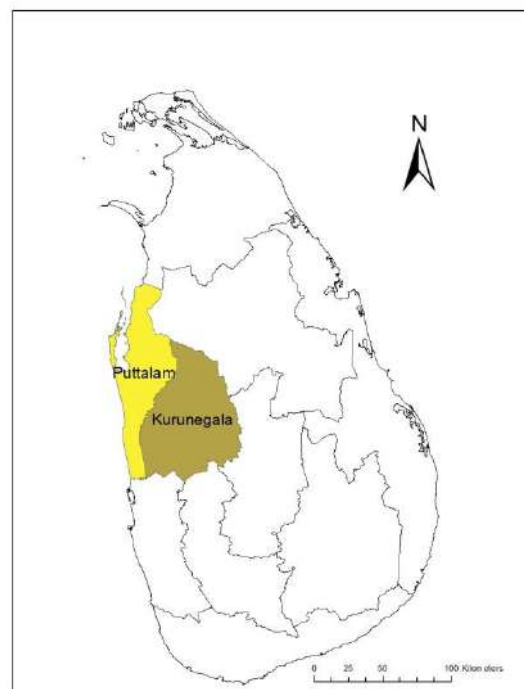
The Department of Census and Statistics was successfully conducted 14<sup>th</sup> consecutive Population and Housing Census in Sri Lanka on 20<sup>th</sup> March, 2012. Enumeration stage of this Census comprised of two rounds. During the first round, performed from 27<sup>th</sup> February to 19<sup>th</sup> March 2012, data were collected from persons according to their places of usual residence. In the second round, data collected in the first round was updated taking into account events such as births, deaths or changes of usual residence between the date of data collection and the **Census date**, declared as 20<sup>th</sup> March 2012. These updates were done, based on the **Census Moment** which was **declared** as mid night of 19<sup>th</sup> March 2012. Enumeration of homeless people, who do not have a usual place of residence, was carried out during the mid-night of 19<sup>th</sup> March 2012.

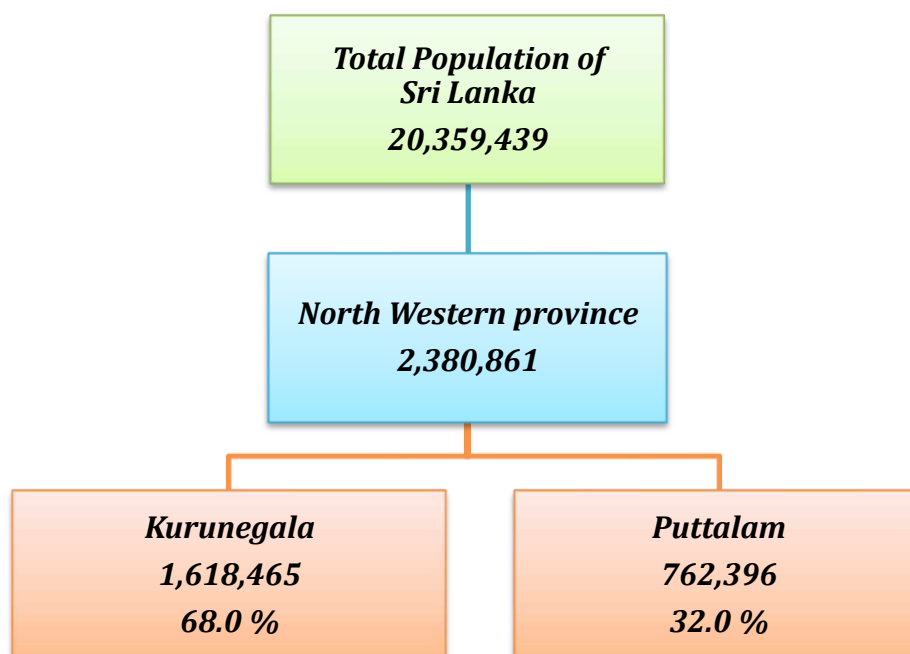
According to the data dissemination plan of the Census, province level reports will be published with district level information. In addition district level, DS division level and GN level data will be

provided through softcopies in CD's. This publication presents population information of North Western province, which consist of two districts namely Kurunegala and Puttalam .

A brief review of population distribution, demographic characteristics, educational attainment and economic activities of North Western province is presented here followed by detailed statistical tables.

**Figure 1: Location of North Western province**





## 2.0 Population distribution

Twelve percent (or 2,380,861) of Sri Lankan population lived in North Western province. In Kurunegala district 85 percent of it's population live in the same district since birth. However, in Puttalam district, that figure is 79 percent.

Out of the total population of this province, 1,618,465 (68.0%) belongs to Kurunegala district. Puttalam district population is 762,396 (32.0%). Population density (or number of persons per square km) of the province is 317. Population density of Kurunegala district (350) is higher than Puttalam district (265).

### 2.1 Population distribution by DS division

There are 30 DS divisions in Kurunegala district and 16 DS divisions in Puttalam

district. The highest and the lowest population in Kurunegala district is reported from Pannala DS division (124,225) and Kotavehera DS division (21,263) respectively. In Puttalam district the highest and the lowest population is reported from Kalpitiya DS division (86,405) and Nawagaththegama DS division (14,483). Figure 2 and Figure 3 present population distribution by DS division in Kurunegala and Puttalam districts.

### 2.2 Population distribution by sector

Majority of population in North Western province live in rural sector. Percentage distribution of population by sector is given in Table 1. According to the Table 1 percentage of urban sector population in Puttalam district is higher than that of Kurunegala district. In Kurunegala district

Figure 2 : Kurunegala District Population Distribution by DS Division

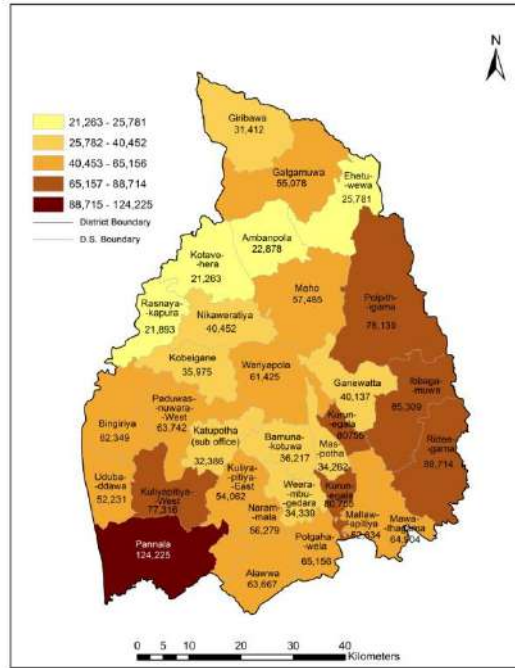
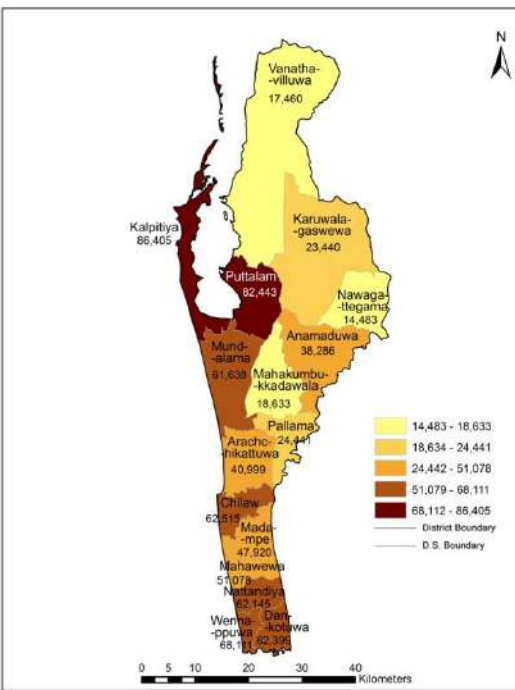


Figure 3 : Puttalam District Population Distribution by DS Division



Percentages of population in urban and estate sectors are 1.9 and 0.5 of Kurunegala district total population while

in Puttalam district urban sector population is 8.8 percent of Puttalam district total population.

**Table 1 : Percentage distribution of population by sector**

	Population	Total	Sector		
			Urban	Rural	Estate
Sri Lanka	20,359,439	100.0	18.2	77.4	4.4
North Western	2,380,861	100.0	4.1	95.5	0.4
Kurunegala	1,618,465	100.0	1.9	97.7	0.5
Puttalam	762,396	100.0	8.8	91.0	0.2

### 2.3 Population distribution by Municipal and Urban councils

Areas of Municipal councils and Urban councils are defined as urban areas in Sri Lanka. Municipal council population in Kurunegala district is 24,833 and there are no Municipal council areas in Puttalam district. There are one urban

council (Kuliyapitiya) in Kurunegala district and two urban councils in Puttalam district (Puttalam and Chilaw). Population in Kuliyapitiya, Puttalam and Chilaw urban council areas are 5,509, 45,511 and 21,441 respectively.

## 3.0 Demographic characteristics of population

### 3.1 Population distribution by sex

Out of the total population of North Western province, 1,146,172 (or 48.1%) are males and 1,234,689 (or 51.9%) are

females. Table 2 presents percentage distribution of population by sector and sex.

### 3.2 Sex ratio

Sex ratio is defined as the number of males per 100 females. Census 2012 reports that there are 94 males for every 100 females in Sri Lanka.

According to the data Puttalam district sex ratio (94) is higher than that ratio in Kurunegala district (92).

**Table 2 : Percentage distribution of population by sector and sex**

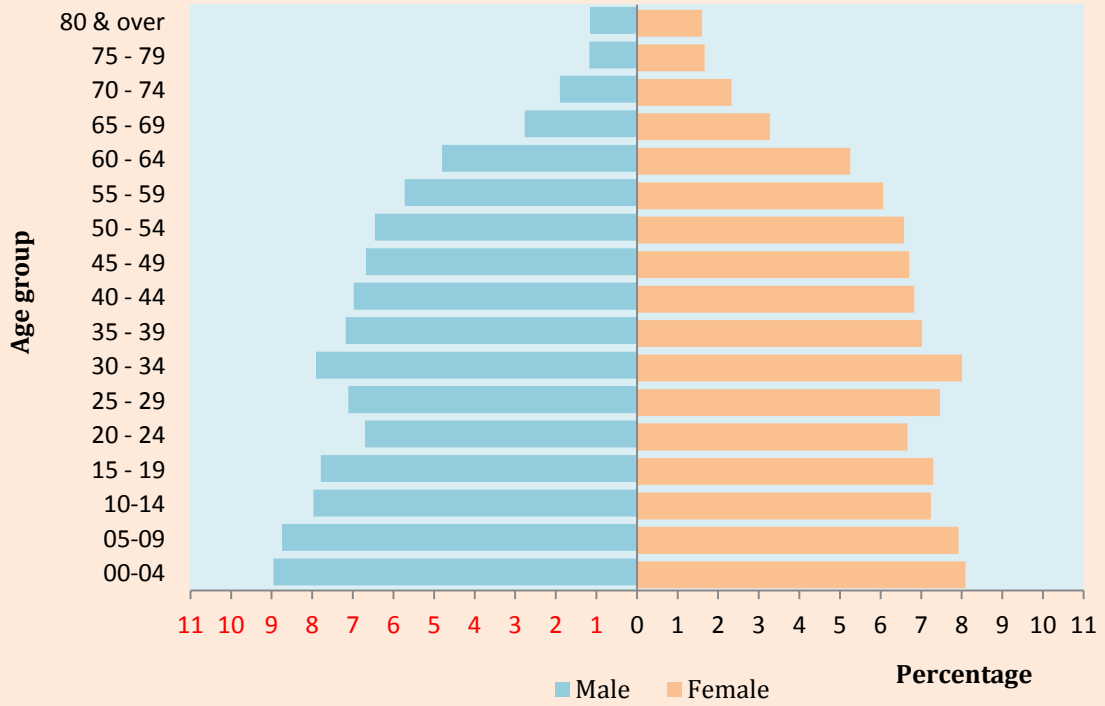
	Population	Total	Sector		
			Urban	Rural	Estate
<b>Male</b>					
Sri Lanka	9,856,634	100.0	18.3	77.3	4.4
North Western	1,146,172	100.0	4.1	95.5	0.4
Kurunegala	777,201	100.0	1.9	97.6	0.5
Puttalam	368,971	100.0	8.7	91.1	0.2
<b>Female</b>					
Sri Lanka	10,502,805	100.0	18.1	77.4	4.5
North Western	1,234,689	100.0	4.1	95.5	0.4
Kurunegala	841,264	100.0	1.9	97.7	0.5
Puttalam	393,425	100.0	8.8	91.0	0.2

### 3.3 Population by age group and sex

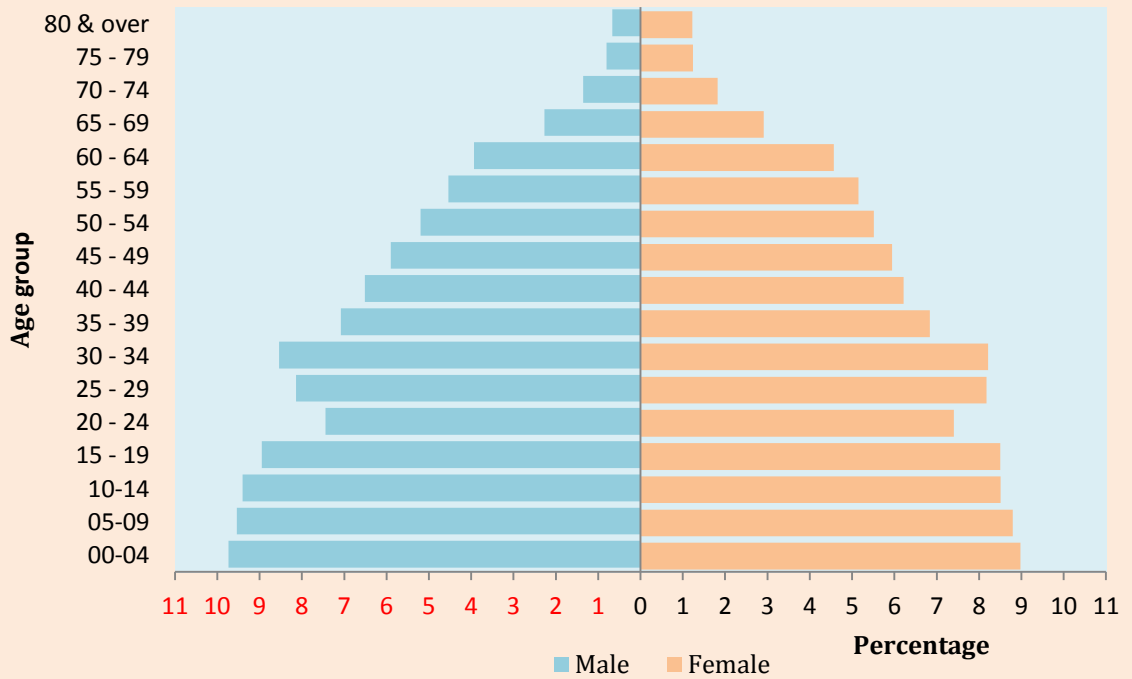
Age-sex composition of a population describes the patterns of the distribution of a population in a different age-sex categories. Age-sex distribution reflects important demographic composition of sub populations such as child population, elderly population and working population.

Figure 4 and Figure 5 show age-sex pyramids for Kurunegala and Puttalam district respectively. According to the figure 4 and 5, the highest population is seen in 0-4 age group and the lowest population is seen in 80 and over age group for both sexes in both districts .

**Figure 4: Age- sex distribution of population in Kurunegala district**



**Figure 5: Age- sex distribution of population in Puttalam district**



### 3.4 Population distribution by ethnicity

Majority of population in North Western province is Sinhalese (85.7%). The second highest ethnic group is Sri Lanka Moor (11.0%) followed by Tamils (3.0 %) and other ethnic groups namely

Burgher, Malay, Sri Lanka Chetty and Bharatha which form 0.3 percent. Table 3 presents ethnic distribution in two districts.

**Table 3: Percentage distribution of population by ethnic group**

	Population	Total	Ethnic group			
			Sinhalese	Tamil	Sri Lanka Moor	Other
Sri Lanka	20,359,439	100.0	74.9	15.3	9.3	0.5
North Western	2,380,861	100.0	85.7	3.0	11.0	0.3
Kurunegala	1,618,465	100.0	91.4	1.3	7.1	0.2
Puttalam	762,396	100.0	73.6	6.6	19.4	0.5

Total Sinhalese population in Sri Lanka is 15,250,081 and total Tamil population and Sri Lanka Moor population are 3,108,770 and 1,892,638 respectively. Among the total Sinhalese population in

Sri Lanka 13.4 percent live in North Western province. As well as among the Tamil population 2.3 percent and among the Sri Lankan Moor population 13.9 percent live in North Western province.

### 3.5 Population distribution by religion

According to the Table 4, majority of North Western province population is Buddhist (74.0%) followed by Hindus (1.8%), Islam (11.3%) and Roman Catholic (11.9%) and Other religions (1.0%). Data shows that Islam and Roman Catholic population (19.7% and 31.5%) in Puttalam district which has long coastal areas are significantly higher than Kurunegala district. Percentages of

Islamic and Roman Catholic population in Kurunegala district are 7.3 percent and 2.7 percent.

Among the total Buddhist population in Sri Lanka 12.3 percent lives in North Western province. Out of total Hindus, total Islam population and total Roman Catholic population, 1.7 percent, 13.7 percent and 22.5 percent live in North Western province.



**Table 4: Percentage distribution of population by religion**

	Population	Total	Religion				
			Buddhist	Hindu	Islam	Roman Catholic	Other
Sri Lanka	20,359,439	100.0	70.1	12.6	9.7	6.2	1.4
North Western	2,380,861	100.0	74.0	1.8	11.3	11.9	1.0
Kurunegala	1,618,465	100.0	88.5	0.9	7.3	2.7	0.6
Puttalam	762,396	100.0	43.2	3.8	19.7	31.5	1.8

**Table 5: Percentage distribution of population (aged 15 years and above) by sex and marital status**

	Population aged 15 years and above	Total	Marital Status				
			Never married	Married	Widowed	Divorced	Separated
<b>Both Sexes</b>							
Sri Lanka	15,227,773	100.0	25.8	67.8	5.2	0.3	0.9
North Western	1,776,504	100.0	23.1	69.3	5.9	0.4	1.4
Kurunegala	1,223,322	100.0	22.9	69.5	6.0	0.4	1.3
Puttalam	553,182	100.0	23.5	68.7	5.9	0.3	1.6
<b>Male</b>							
Sri Lanka	7,266,234	100.0	30.0	67.7	1.3	0.2	0.7
North Western	840,825	100.0	27.5	69.7	1.3	0.3	1.2
Kurunegala	577,669	100.0	27.1	70.1	1.3	0.3	1.2
Puttalam	263,156	100.0	28.2	68.9	1.3	0.2	1.3
<b>Female</b>							
Sri Lanka	7,961,539	100.0	22.0	67.8	8.7	0.3	1.1
North Western	935,679	100.0	19.1	68.9	10.1	0.4	1.5
Kurunegala	645,653	100.0	19.1	69.0	10.1	0.4	1.4
Puttalam	290,026	100.0	19.2	68.6	10.1	0.4	1.8

### **3.6 Population distribution by marital status**

Marital status is another important demographic characteristic of a population. Table 5 shows that 69.3 percent of 15 years and above population is married and almost 23.1 percent is never married in North Western province. Male percentage of never married population is higher than

females. However, widowed and divorced population is higher among females than males. Considerable percentage of widowed female is recorded from North Western province (10.1%) and percentage of widowed females is seven times higher than percentage of widowed males.

### **4.0 Educational attainment**

Through the Census 2012, information on the highest educational attainment, the highest professional/vocational qualifications were collected from persons who were aged 5 years and above. Information on involvement in any educational activity during 30 days prior to the date of Census was collected from population aged 3 years and above. Purpose of having these data is to collect information on current involvement of educational activity of a person. In addition, information on ability to speak, read and write in Sinhala, Tamil and English languages and ability to use computers were also collected from those who were aged 10 years and above.

In North Western province percentages of passed primary (including those who

are studying in grade 1 at the time of the Census), passed secondary, passed G.C.E.O/L or equivalent, passed G.C.E. A/L or equivalent and degree or above are 24.9, 42.2, 16.0, 11.4 and 2.2 percent respectively. These figures show that majority of the population completed education up to secondary level. Those who have completed the highest education level which is degree and above (2.2%) is significantly low in North Western province. 3.2 percent of the population in North Western province reported that they have never attended in a school. However, not attended to a school is higher among old aged population.

#### **4.1 Language ability**

Information on ability of speaking, reading and writing of population aged

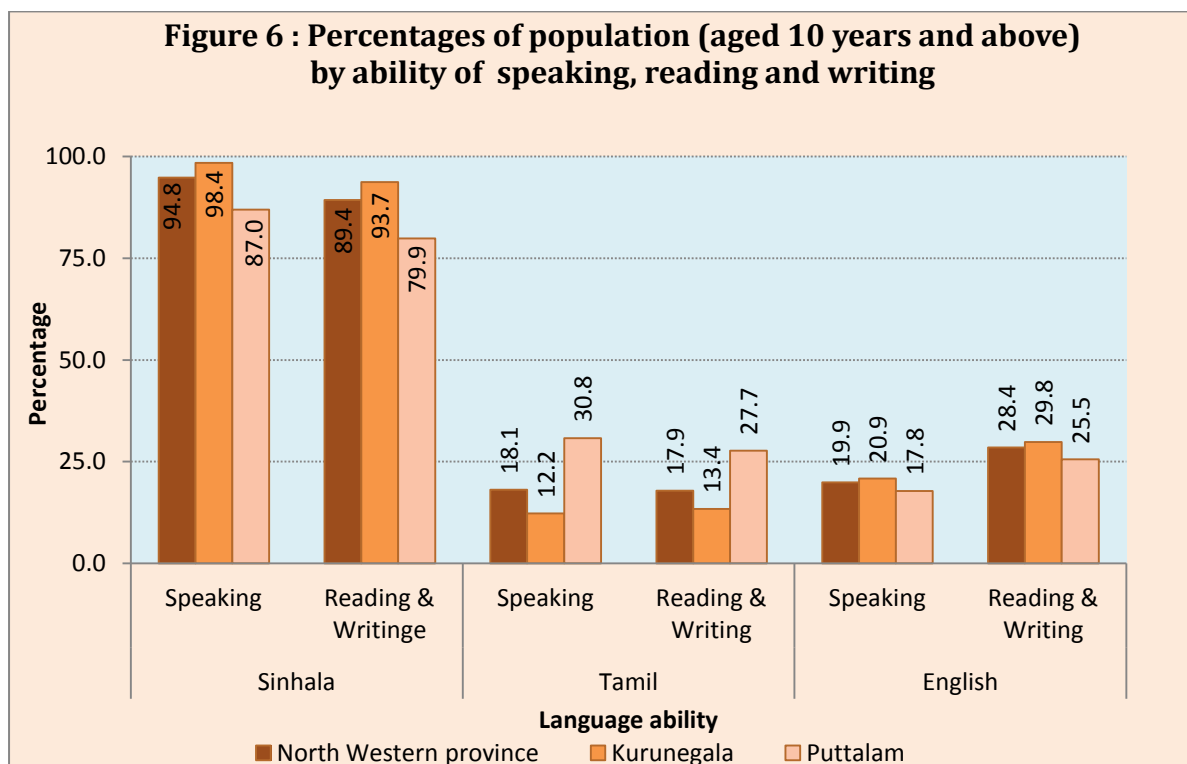
10 years and above was collected in the Census 2012. According to the data 94.8 percent of people speak Sinhala while 89.4 percent can read and write Sinhala in North Western province. Figure 6

#### 4.2 Literacy rate

Literacy rate is a key indicator to measure the level of reading and writing ability of persons in a country. The definition of literate person is given as *“If a person can both read and write a short statement with understanding is*

shows the percentages of speaking, reading and writing abilities of population aged 10 years and above for both districts.

*considered as literate”*. According to the results shown in the Table 6 literacy rate of the population aged 10 years and above in North Western province stands at 96.3 percent. The corresponding rate for males and females are 97.0 and 95.6 percent respectively.



**Table 6: Percentages of literate population (aged 10 years and above) by sex**

	Population aged 10 years and above	Sex		
		Both sexes	Male	Female
Sri Lanka	16,867,825	95.7	96.9	94.6

North Western	1,967,530	96.3	97.0	95.6
Kurunegala	1,346,174	96.5	97.4	95.7
Puttalam	621,356	95.8	96.3	95.3

### 4.3 Computer literacy by sex

According to the Table 7, computer literacy of the population aged 10 years and above in North Western province stands at 20.5 percent. The

corresponding percentages for males and females are 22.8 and 18.3 percent respectively.

**Table 7: Percentages of population able to use computer (Aged 10 years and above) by sex**

	Population aged 10 years and above	Sex		
		Both sexes	Male	Female
Sri Lanka	16,867,825	24.2	26.5	22.1
North Western	1,967,530	20.5	22.8	18.3
Kurunegala	1,346,174	21.1	23.4	19.1
Puttalam	621,356	19.0	21.7	16.6

### 5.0 Economic activities

Economic activities that people engaged for their livelihood are very important characteristic in a population. Census 2012 gathered information on economic status of population aged 15 years and

above considering 52 weeks prior to the Census date. Therefore, the indicators reflect usual economic status of the population rather than current economic status.

#### 5.1 Economically active population

Economically active population or the labour force comprised of employed and unemployed persons. According to the data 51.5 percent of aged 15 years and above population is economically active in this province. Both districts

Kurunegala and Puttalam also reported 51.5 percent of economically active from the total 15 years and above population. Table 8 present percentages of economically active population by sector and sex.

## 5.2 Employed and unemployed population

Total employed and unemployed population in North Western province is 866,292 and 48,820 respectively. In Kurunegala district total employed population is reported as 595,155 while that figure is 271,137 in Puttalam

district. Among the employed population, 14.7 percent is engaged in government sector employment in this province. Table 9 present percentages of employed population by sector of employment and sex.

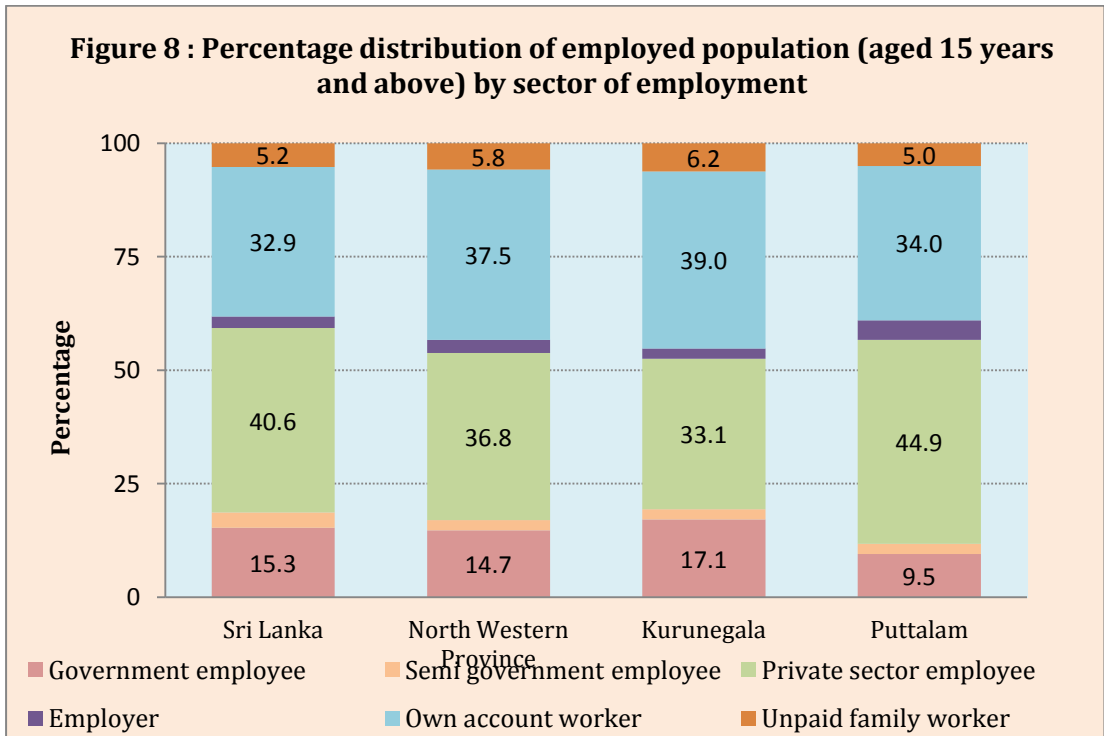
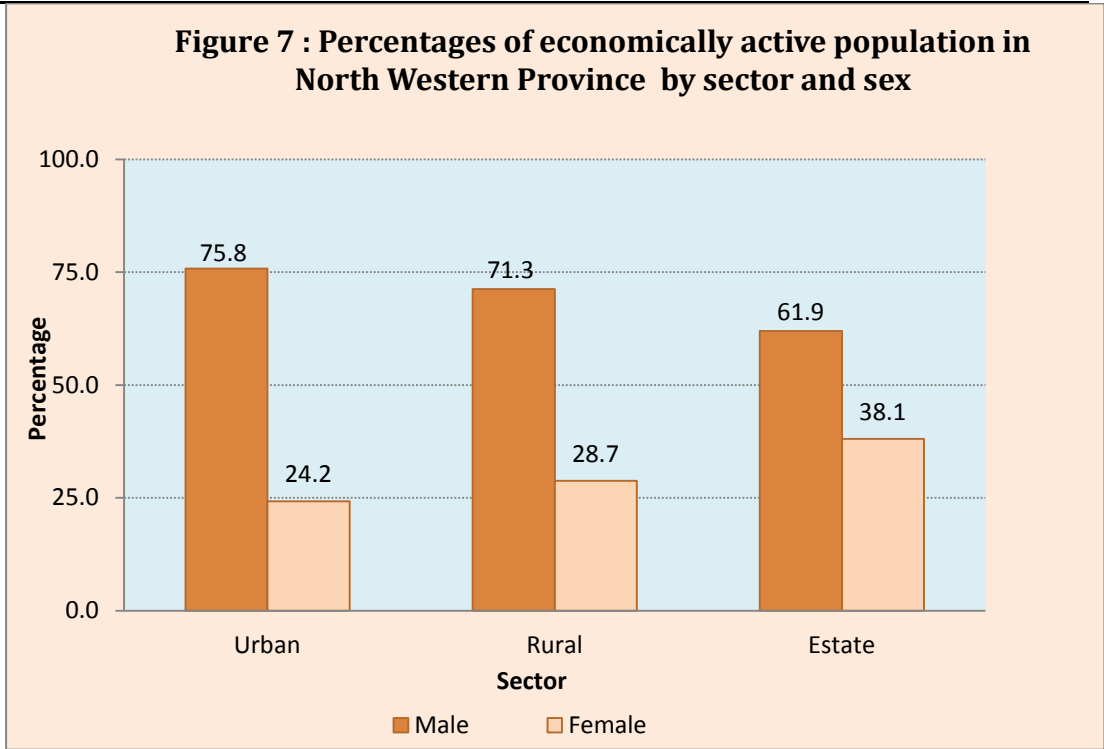
**Table 8: Percentages of economically active population (aged 15 years and above) by sector and sex**

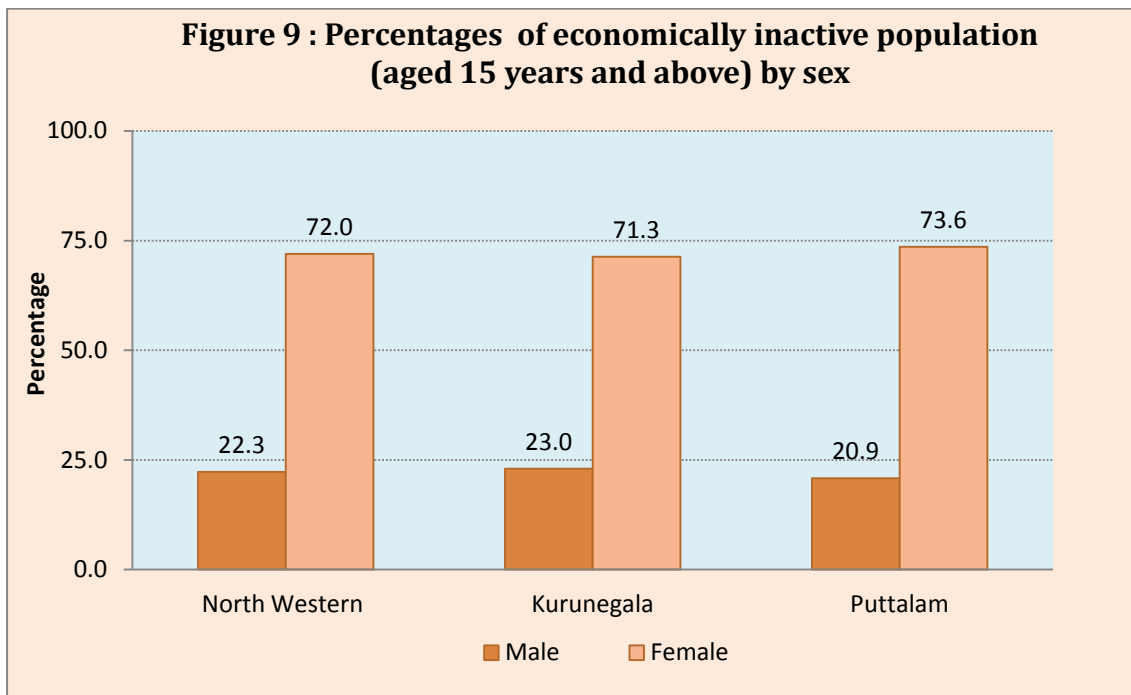
	Economically active Population aged 15 years and above	Both sexes	Sex	
			Male	Female
<b>Sri Lanka</b>				
Total	7,857,370	100.0	69.9	30.1
Urban	1,416,955	100.0	69.8	30.2
Rural	6,048,095	100.0	70.8	29.2
Estate	392,320	100.0	55.7	44.3
<b>North Western</b>				
Total	915,112	100.0	71.4	28.6
Urban	32,501	100.0	75.8	24.2
Rural	878,338	100.0	71.3	28.7
Estate	4,273	100.0	61.9	38.1
<b>Kurunegala</b>				
Total	630,145	100.0	70.6	29.4
Urban	11,688	100.0	68.4	31.6
Rural	614,987	100.0	70.7	29.3
Estate	3,470	100.0	61.9	38.1
<b>Puttalam</b>				
Total	284,967	100.0	73.1	26.9
Urban	20,813	100.0	80.0	20.0
Rural	263,351	100.0	72.6	27.4
Estate	803	100.0	62.0	38.0

**Table 9: Percentages of employed population  
(aged 15 years and above) by sector of employment and sex**

	Employed Population	Total	Sex	
			Male	Female
<b>Sri Lanka</b>				
Total	7,335,432	100.0	70.8	29.2
Government employee	1,122,734	100.0	64.4	35.6
Semi government employee	244,989	100.0	62.0	38.0
Private sector employee	2,980,361	100.0	70.5	29.5
Employer	190,680	100.0	86.2	13.8
Own account worker	2,414,258	100.0	79.8	20.2
Unpaid family worker	382,410	100.0	31.9	68.1
<b>North Western</b>				
Total	866,292	100.0	72.1	27.9
Government employee	127,438	100.0	64.8	35.2
Semi government employee	19,942	100.0	63.4	36.6
Private sector employee	318,890	100.0	72.1	27.9
Employer	25,073	100.0	88.4	11.6
Own account worker	324,491	100.0	80.3	19.7
Unpaid family worker	50,458	100.0	33.5	66.5
<b>Kurunegala</b>				
Total	595,155	100.0	71.4	28.6
Government employee	101,795	100.0	65.1	34.9
Semi government employee	13,594	100.0	61.9	38.1
Private sector employee	197,085	100.0	69.6	30.4
Employer	13,483	100.0	87.2	12.8
Own account worker	232,267	100.0	81.1	18.9
Unpaid family worker	36,931	100.0	35.2	64.8
<b>Puttalam</b>				
Total	271,137	100.0	73.6	26.4
Government employee	25,643	100.0	63.7	36.3
Semi government employee	6,348	100.0	66.5	33.5
Private sector employee	121,805	100.0	76.1	23.9

Employer	11,590	100.0	89.7	10.3
Own account worker	92,224	100.0	78.0	22.0
Unpaid family worker	13,527	100.0	29.1	70.9





### 5.3 Economically inactive population

Students, those who are engaged in household work, income recipient/pensioners, unable to work, unpaid social worker, children not attending school and other non-economic activities are considered as economically inactive population. According to Census 2012, economically inactive population in North Western province is reported as 48.5 percent. The corresponding figures

for males and females reported as 22.3 percent and 72.0 percent respectively. Figure 9 shows the percentages of economically inactive population (aged 15 years and above) by sex. According to the figure 9, it is clearly seen that, a higher percentage of economically inactive population is females in North Western province as well as two districts Kurunegala and Puttalam.