

Press Release

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Media Contact: Kerwin Lebone

Tel: 011-482-7221 ext.2013

Email: klebone@sairr.org.za

Most household internet access occurs via mobile phones

Less than a fifth of households would have access to the Internet if there was no access through mobile phones. As it is, more than a third of households have access to the Internet. This is according to the latest *South Africa Survey*, published by the South African Institute of Race Relations (IRR) in Johannesburg recently.

The *Survey* is the annual yearbook on all social, economic, and political aspects of South Africa that the IRR has been publishing since 1946.

Some 35% of 14.5 million households had access to the Internet in 2011. The proportions of households that used the Internet from home, mobile phones, work, and elsewhere were 9%, 16%, 5%, and 6% respectively.

The information was sourced by the IRR from the 2011 census published in 2013 by Statistics South Africa.

The trend of higher internet access through mobile phones was replicated across all provinces except in the Western Cape, where the highest proportion of households had internet access from their homes.

‘Access to the Internet through mobile phones is not of the best quality and is very limited in that some functions, such as downloads of large documents, cannot be performed optimally,’ said Kerwin Lebone of the IRR research department.

Mr Lebone said this showed that, owing to relatively prohibitive South African internet costs, optimal use of the Internet was still the preserve of mainly well-off households.

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