

# South Africans prolific internet users says study

By [Juliet Gillies](#)

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South Africans spend a reported whopping 10.46 hours per day (Japan reports 1.26 hours) on the Internet putting the country significantly ahead of the worldwide average.



Source: © William Fortunato [pexels](#)

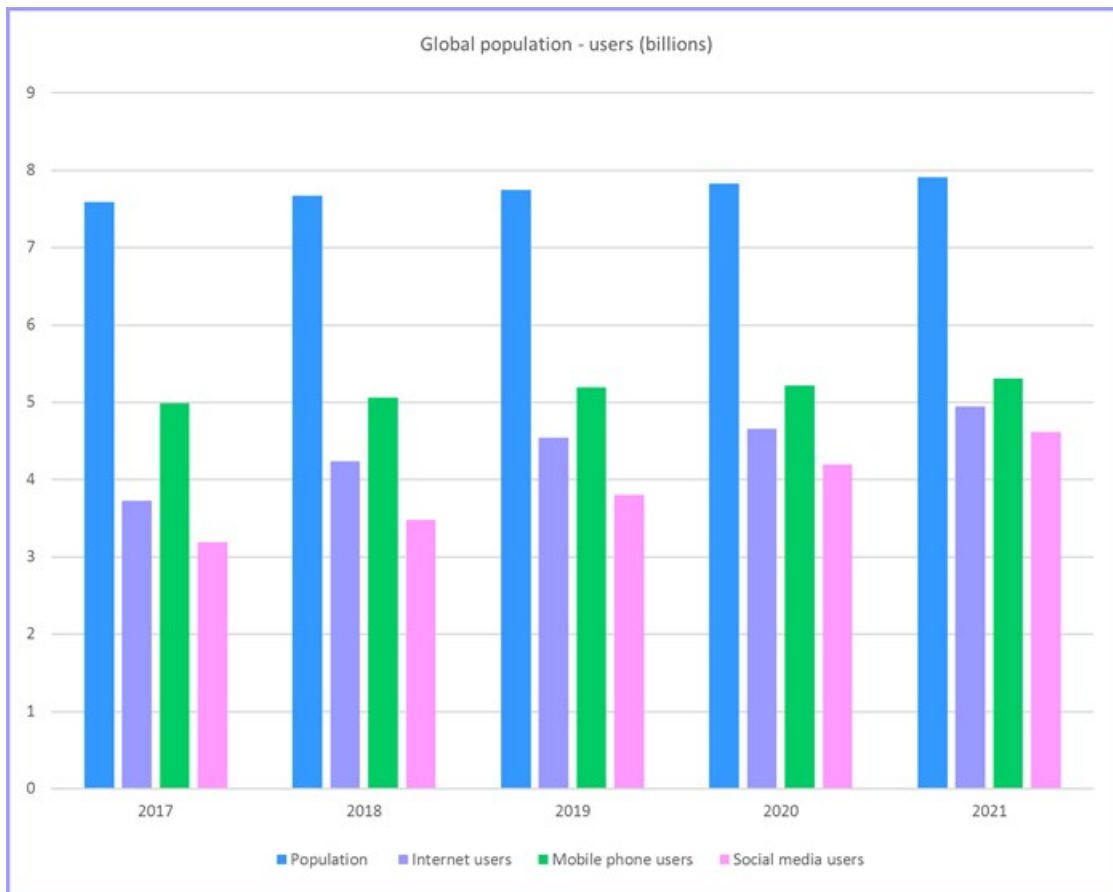
Time spent per day on media use by internet users aged 16-64 is a key dataset and worldwide this number continues to climb. This year it is at six hours and 58 minutes worldwide - up one percent, year-on-year (Y-o-Y).

However, this is well down on 2016's Y-o-Y +4.4% and on 2019's Y-o-Y +4%.

This is according to the annual data on the [Digital 2022 Global Overview Report](#) published in partnership between [We Are Social](#) and [Hootsuite](#) and there's plenty to get our heads around.

## Continued growth in key metrics

- The key global data that reflects the continued growth in many key metrics, along with the growing world population. Here's how we're growing in some of the key areas.
- The world's population has grown to 7.91 billion, having gained 80 million people from its one percent Y-o-Y growth.
- Men outnumber women in a 50.4% / 49.6% split.
- It's a relatively young population, with a median age of 31.4, but there are enormous variations between countries. In Africa, the median age is much younger: South Africa – 28.1; Morocco – 30.2; Egypt – 24.8; Ghana – 21.8; Kenya – 20.7; and Nigeria - 18.2.
- The world is still slowly becoming more urban than rural – up from 56.4% at end 2020 to 57% at end 2021.
- We're also definitely a literate species and continue to slowly creep upwards – 86.7% in 2021, up from 86.5% in 2020 (of those aged 15+).
- Along with literacy, technology and urbanisation comes connectivity, and the internet user penetration of the global population continues to increase: up from 4.66 billion (59.5%) in 2020 to 4.95 billion (62.5%) in 2021, having gained 192 million in 2021 with +4% Y-o-Y growth. The absolute number is well up on the 2017 figure of 3.73 billion.



## Closer to universal accessibility

According to Simon Kemp of Kepios, “The number of people around the world who don’t use the Internet has just fallen below the three billion mark. This momentous milestone means that we’re edging ever closer to universal accessibility... with the global user figure tantalisingly closer to five billion.”

However, there are big differences in adoption rates (as a percentage of population) per country. Denmark, Iceland, UAE and South Korea are at 99% but then North Korea is at 0.1%, and, overall, the growth continues to slow and is well down on the +11.7% gain made in 2011.

This is understandable, as many countries have already reached the realistic saturation point - 94% of total population in Western Europe and Northern Europe - so most of their future growth will come from new population. It is a different story in Africa, where the penetration ranges from 24% in Central Africa to 66% in Southern Africa. So there’s still plenty of room for growth in internet penetration on the continent.

*There is wide variety in Africa:*

- Morocco -84.7%
  - Egypt – 71.9%
  - South Africa – 68.2%
  - Ghana – 53%
  - Nigeria – 51%
  - Kenya – 42%
  - DRC – 17.6%
  - Burundi – 14.6%
  - Niger – 14.5%Somalia – 13.7%
  - South Sudan – 10.9%
  - Comoros - 8.5%
  - Eritrea – 8%
- 
- CAR – 7.1%

## Mobile phone users up

Mobile phone users are up from 5.22 billion (66.6%) in 2020 to 5.31 billion (67.1%) in 2021. The Y-o-Y growth was +95 million or +1.7%. (Social media is a huge subject on its own, so it is not included here.)

## ABOUT JULIET GILLIES

Freelance Writer and Editor at Write Skills, Juliet edits for corporates, government entities, authors, publishers, researchers, academics and scholars, and writes articles, textbook content, training manuals and poetry.

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