

Press Release

For immediate release

29 September 2014



Media Contact: Mienke Steytler Tel: 011-482-7221 ext 2003 Email: Mienke@sairr.org.za

South Africa on brink of an e-revolution – IRR report

The IRR has today released a report* tracking the ‘communications revolution’ that has swept across South Africa over the past decade.

The report found that access to electronic communications devices and infrastructure and the use of electric communications had increased far faster than the delivery of any other type of basic service.

The report found for example that:

- The number of cellphone subscriptions in South Africa grew from 8.3 million in 2000 to over 68 million in 2012 or by 720%.
- The number of internet users in South Africa has increased from 5.4/100 000 people in 2000 to 41/100 000 in 2012.
- The number of adults using the internet for banking had almost quadrupled between 2007 and 2013.
- There had been an almost six-fold increase in the number of people doing their shopping online.

The report found that the rise in cellular and mobile electric communications had seen a decline in the number of fixed line telephone connections as well as the number of post office private boxes.

However, the report also found that broadband internet speed and costs in South Africa were very uncompetitive compared to a number of other economies. For example, broadband speed in South Africa was roughly a quarter of that in the United States but cost almost ten times as much.

IRR spokesperson Mienke Steytler said that, “e-communications policy must be directed at cutting costs and increasing broadband speed. The trend of the past decade suggests that if this were to occur South Africa would be standing on the brink of an e-revolution that would see massive increases in the number of people using the internet to do their shopping, banking, watching television, and reading newspapers and magazines”.

*The report is contained in the September 2014 edition of the IRR’s *Fast Facts* publication.

Ends
