SPECIAL RELEASE

Basic Literacy for Women and Men in Guimaras: 2024 FLEMMS

Date of Release: July 30, 2025
Reference No. 25PSA-0679-SR77

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) led the 2024 Functional Literacy, Education, and Mass Media Survey (FLEMMS) conducted in October 2024. The survey aims to provide a quantitative framework that will serve as a basis for policy formulation to improve the literacy and education status of the population.
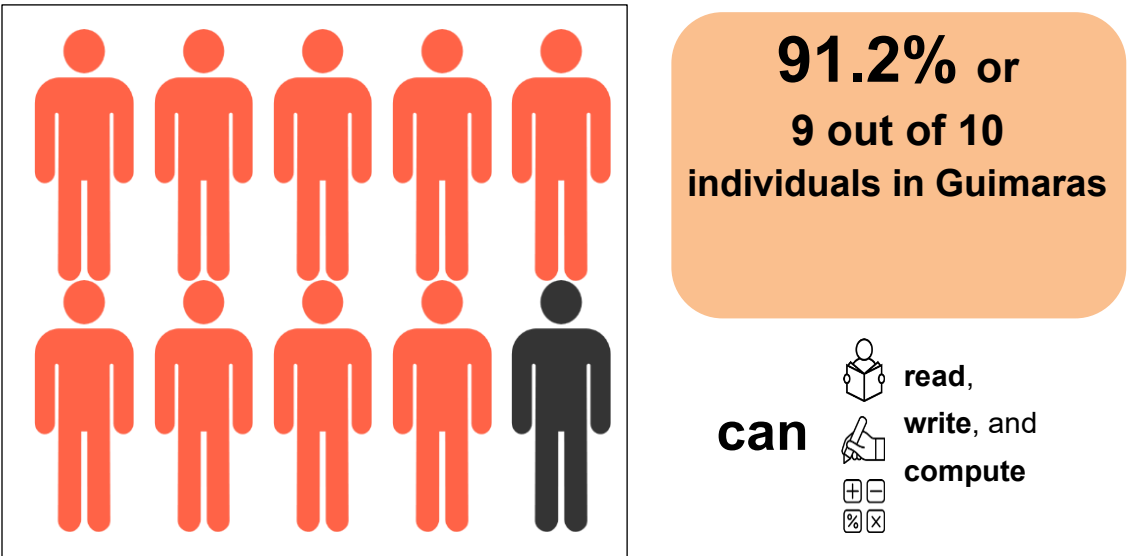
The 2024 FLEMMS adopted the revised operational definition and methodology in estimating basic and functional literacy in the Philippines as approved by the PSA Board through Resolution No. 13, series of 2024.

Basic literacy is defined as the ability of a person to read and write a simple message in any language or dialect with understanding, and compute or perform basic mathematical operations.

Basic literacy rate is computed for individuals five (5) years old and over, while functional literacy rate is for individuals 10 to 64 years old.
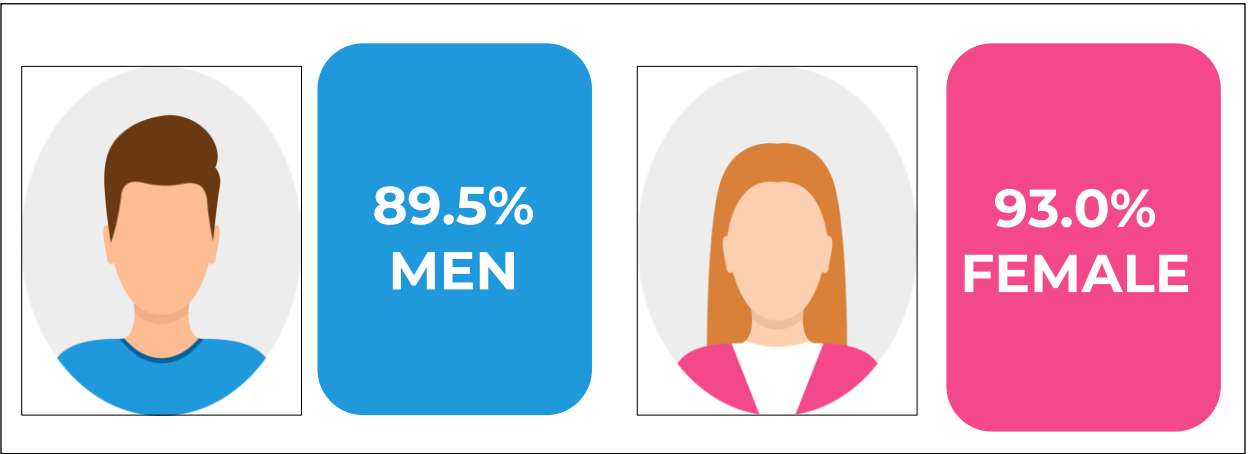
Basic Literacy: Higher Rate Among Females

Figure 1. Ratio of Basic Literacy Rate of Population in Guimaras: 5 Years Old and Over

91.2% or
9 out of 10
individuals in Guimaras

can **read,**
write, and
compute

Source: Philippine Statistics Authority, 2024 Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey

The 2024 Functional Literacy, Education, and Mass Media Survey (FLEMMS) recorded a basic literacy rate of 91.2 percent in Guimaras. This means that approximately 9 out of every 10 individuals aged five years and over in the province can read, write with understanding, and compute. This corresponds to an estimated 159,000 individuals who are basically literate out of the total 175,000 persons in this age group. The remaining 8.8 percent, or around 16,000 individuals, were not classified as basically literate. The data on basic literacy are derived from self-reported responses from individuals regarding their ability to perform these tasks.

Figure 2. Gender distribution of Basic Literacy Rate of Population in Guimaras: 5 Years Old and Over (in percent)

Source: Philippine Statistics Authority, 2024 Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey

Disaggregating by sex, females posted a basic literacy rate of 93.0 percent, while males recorded 89.5 percent.

In terms of population counts, this equates to around 79,000 basically literate females out of 85,000, and 80,000 males out of 90,000. The difference between the two groups was 3.5 percentage points, favoring females.
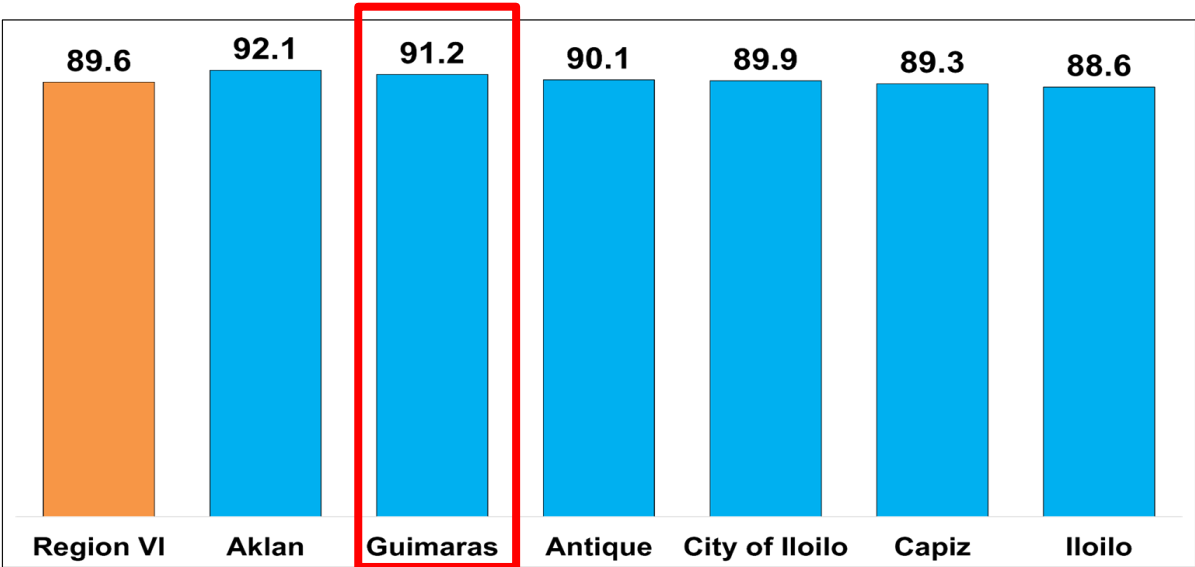
Guimaras' overall basic literacy rate in 2024 was recorded at 91.2 percent, ranking second among the five provinces and one highly urbanized city in Region VI (Western Visayas). The highest rate in the region was observed in Aklan, which reported a basic literacy rate of 92.1 percent, followed closely by Guimaras. These two provinces were the only areas in the region that surpassed the national average of 90.0 percent and the regional average of 89.6 percent.

Antique came in third, with a basic literacy rate of 90.1 percent, also above the national average. Capiz followed with a rate of 89.3 percent, slightly below both the national and regional averages. Iloilo Province reported a basic literacy rate of 88.6 percent,

which was the lowest among the provinces, while the City of Iloilo, the region's lone highly urbanized city, recorded 89.9 percent, nearly equal to the national average but just below the regional average.

The results indicate that while most areas in Region VI have literacy rates approaching or exceeding 90 percent, Guimaras maintains one of the most consistent and high-performing literacy levels, trailing only slightly behind Aklan. The provincial performance rankings highlight the need for continuous improvement efforts in provinces such as Iloilo and Capiz to close the remaining gaps.

Figure 3. Basic Literacy Rate of Population 5 Years Old and Over by HUC/ Province, Western Visayas: 2024 (in percent)
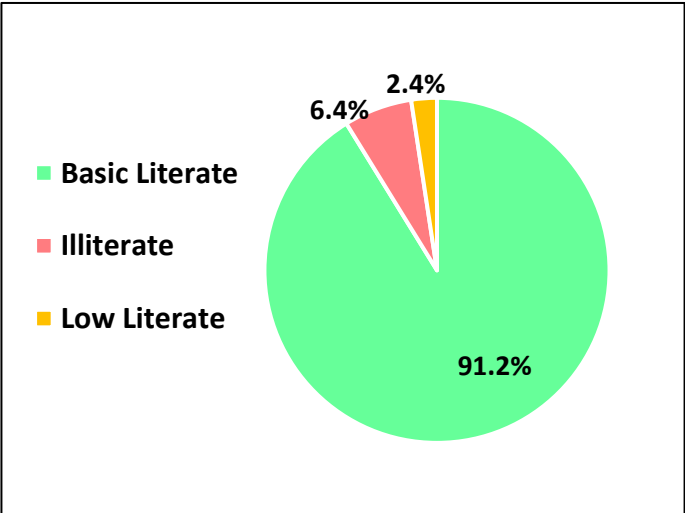

Source: Philippine Statistics Authority, 2024 Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey

Understanding Illiteracy and Low Literacy Among Women and Men in Guimaras

Literacy in Guimaras has been previously established to be high, with 9 out of 10 individuals aged 5 years and over classified as basically literate. However, it remains essential to examine the remaining portion of the population who fall under the illiterate and low literate categories to better understand the province's overall literacy profile and areas needing attention.

In 2024, 6.4 percent of Guimarasnons aged five years and over were illiterate, corresponding to an estimated 11,000 individuals who could neither read nor write.

Figure 4. Distribution of Basic Literate, Illiterate, and Low Literate of Population in Guimaras, 5 Years Old and Over: 2024 (in percent)

Source: Philippine Statistics Authority, 2024 Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey

When disaggregated by sex:

- 7.5 percent of males were illiterate (around 7,000 men), while
- 5.2 percent of females fell under the same category (around 4,000 women).

Table 1. Levels of Literacy for Population 10 to 64 Years Old by Sex, Province, and Highly Urbanized Cities (HUCs), Western Visayas: 2024

Region / Province / HUCs	Level of Literacy											
	Illiterate (Cannot read, and write)						Low Literate (Can read and write only)					
	Both Sexes		Male		Female		Both Sexes		Male		Female	
	No. ('000)	Rate (%)	No. ('000)	Rate (%)	No. ('000)	Rate (%)	No. ('000)	Rate (%)	No. ('000)	Rate (%)	No. ('000)	Rate (%)
Region VI (Western Visayas)	315	7.0r	182	8.1	133	6.0	151	3.4	81	3.6	70	3.2
Aklan	28	5.0	17	6.0	11	4.0	16	2.9		3.1	7	2.6
Antique	43	7.7	24	8.2	20	7.2	12	2.2		2.6	5	1.9
Capiz	60	7.8	38	9.9	21	5.6	23	3.0	12	3.1	11	2.9
Guimaras	11	6.4	7	7.5	4	5.2	4	2.4		3.0	2	1.8
Iloilo (Excluding City of Iloilo)	147	7.5	84	8.5	63	6.5	77	3.9	41	4.2	35	3.7
City of Iloilo	25	5.8	12	5.7	13	5.9	19	4.3		4.0	10	4.5

Source: Philippine Statistics Authority, 2024 Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey

This pattern shows that illiteracy is more prevalent among men in Guimaras, with a 2.3 percentage point gap between the sexes. The male illiteracy rate is higher than the provincial average, while the female rate is below both the provincial and regional averages.

In addition to the illiterate population, 2.4 percent of individuals in Guimaras were considered low literate—those who can read and write but lack comprehension and numerical skills. This is approximately 4,000 individuals.

By sex:

- 3.0 percent of males in Guimaras were low literate, while
- 1.8 percent of females fell under this classification.

This indicates that males were also more likely than females to fall into the low-literacy category. The data suggest that women not only achieve literacy more often but also reach higher levels of comprehension and computational ability compared to men in the province.

When compared to other provinces in Western Visayas, Guimaras performs better than most in reducing both illiteracy and low literacy rates. In terms of overall illiteracy, Guimaras' rate of 6.4 percent was lower than those recorded in Capiz (7.8 percent), Antique (7.7 percent), and Iloilo Province (7.5 percent), indicating better literacy outcomes. It was, however, slightly higher than Aklan, which posted the lowest illiteracy rate in the region at 5.0 percent, and the City of Iloilo, which recorded 5.8 percent.

The male illiteracy rate in Guimaras (7.5 percent) was lower than that of Capiz, where 9.9 percent of males were classified as illiterate, but higher than Aklan (6.0 percent) and the City of Iloilo (5.7 percent). This places Guimaras in the mid-range among provinces in terms of male illiteracy.

On the other hand, Guimaras' female illiteracy rate of 5.2 percent was among the lowest in the region, outperforming Antique (7.2 percent), Capiz (5.6 percent), and Iloilo Province (6.5 percent). Only Aklan and the City of Iloilo reported slightly better female illiteracy outcomes.

In terms of low literacy, Guimaras' overall rate of 2.4 percent was among the lowest in Region VI. It performed better than Iloilo Province (3.9 percent), the City of Iloilo (4.3 percent), and Capiz (3.0 percent), reflecting strong literacy comprehension and numerical skills among its population.

Moreover, Guimaras' male low literacy rate of 3.0 percent was marginally lower than Capiz (3.1 percent) and slightly higher than Antique (2.6 percent). Meanwhile, the female low literacy rate in Guimaras was just 1.8 percent, placing the province among the best-performing areas in terms of minimizing literacy gaps among women.

These regional comparisons reinforce the consistent pattern seen in Guimaras where women tend to achieve better literacy outcomes than men. While the province has succeeded in maintaining low levels of illiteracy and low literacy overall, these findings emphasize the need to strengthen literacy support programs for men, particularly in underserved areas, to further close the gender gap and sustain Guimaras' strong literacy standing in Western Visayas.

Working-Age Population (10 to 64 Years Old): Females sustain higher literacy

Results from the 2024 FLEMMS also show that Guimaras reported the highest basic literacy rate among working-age individuals (10 to 64 years old) across the six provinces and one highly urbanized city in Western Visayas.

The province recorded a basic literacy rate of 95.1 percent, equivalent to approximately 136,000 individuals who can read, write with understanding, and perform basic numerical operations. This rate was higher than the regional average of 92.8 percent.

When classified by sex, females in Guimaras recorded a basic literacy rate of 97.6 percent, while males posted a lower rate of 92.8 percent. This shows a difference of 4.8 percentage points in favor of females among the working-age population in the province.

In comparison with other areas in Region VI, Guimaras recorded the highest female basic literacy rate at 97.6 percent. This was followed by Aklan (95.5%), Antique (95.4%), and Capiz (95.2%). Iloilo Province and the City of Iloilo reported 93.4 percent and 93.5 percent, respectively.

For males, Guimaras posted a basic literacy rate of 92.8 percent, higher than Capiz (90.2%) and Iloilo Province (90.4%), and slightly lower than Aklan (93.0%) and the City of Iloilo (92.7%).

Among all provinces and the highly urbanized city in the region, Guimaras was the only area to exceed the 95 percent basic literacy rate for the working-age population. The data also show that across Region VI, females consistently posted higher literacy rates than males.

These figures provide sex-disaggregated insights into the literacy levels of the economically active age group in Guimaras and place the province ahead of its regional counterparts in terms of working-age literacy performance.

Table 2. Basic Literacy for Population 10 to 64 Years Old by Sex, Province, and Highly Urbanized Cities (HUCs), Western Visayas: 2024

Province / HUCs	Basically Literate (Can read and write with understanding, and can compute)					
	Both Sexes		Male		Female	
	Number ('000)	Rate (%)	Number ('000)	Rate (%)	Number ('000)	Rate (%)
Region VI (Western Visayas)	3,363ʳ	92.8	1,697ʳ	91.3	1,666	94.4
Aklan	433	94.2	220	93.0	214	95.5
Antique	422	93.9	216	92.5	207	95.4
Capiz	582	92.7	290	90.2	292	95.2
Guimaras	136	95.1	69	92.8	67	97.6
Iloilo (Excluding City of Iloilo)	1,451	91.9	735	90.4	716	93.4
City of Iloilo	338	93.1	167	92.7	171	93.5

Source: Philippine Statistics Authority, 2024 Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey

Definition of Terms

Basic Literacy: The ability of a person to read and write a simple message with understanding in any language or dialect, and to compute or perform basic mathematical operations.

Basic Literacy Rate: The proportion of individuals aged five (5) years old and over who are classified as basically literate.

Low Literacy: Refers to individuals who can read and write but lack comprehension and/or numerical skills necessary for full functional literacy.

Illiteracy / Illiterate: Individuals who cannot read and write in any language or dialect.

Working-Age Population: Defined in the context of literacy measurement as individuals aged 10 to 64 years old, the age group used computing functional literacy in FLEMMS.
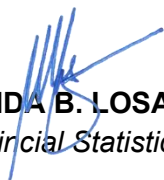
FLEMMS (Functional Literacy, Education, and Mass Media Survey): A nationwide household-based survey conducted by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) to collect data on literacy, educational attainment, and exposure to mass media, intended for planning and policymaking in education and literacy development.

Sex-Disaggregated Data: Statistical data that are separated by sex (male and female) to allow comparative analysis between the genders, often used to identify gender gaps and design targeted interventions.

PSA Board Resolution No. 13, Series of 2024: The resolution that approved the revised definitions and methodologies used in the 2024 FLEMMS for determining basic and functional literacy in the Philippines.

Region VI (Western Visayas): A geographic and administrative region in the Philippines comprising six provinces and one highly urbanized city, used as the basis for regional comparisons in the report.

Highly Urbanized City (HUC): A city in the Philippines with a minimum population of 200,000 inhabitants and an annual income of at least ₱50 million, independent from the province. In this context, Iloilo City is the HUC compared with the provinces.

NELIDA B. LOSARE
Provincial Statistics Officer