

Statistics of civil cases for debt (Preliminary): June 2006

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Key figures for the month of June 2006

	June 2006	% change between June 2005 and June 2006	% change between April 2005 to June 2005 and April 2006 to June 2006
Actual estimates			
Number of civil summonses issued for debt	126 389	11,7	5,2
Number of civil judgements recorded for debt	73 028	-8,1	-5,0
Value of civil judgements recorded for debt (R million)	573,7	11,8	2,8

Key findings as at the end of June 2006

The number of civil summonses issued for debt increases

The total number of civil summonses issued for debt for the three months ended June 2006 increased by 5,2% compared with the three months ended June 2005.

In addition, the total number of civil summonses issued for debt for the three months ended June 2005 decreased by 0,2% compared with the three months ended June 2004.

The major contributors to the increase of 5,2% in civil summonses issued for debt for the three months ended June 2006 compared with the three months ended June 2005, were 'other' debts (+4,3 percentage points) and civil summonses issued in respect of money lent (+4,1 percentage points). There was, however, a decrease of 3,9 percentage points with regard to civil summonses of 'other services' (see Table 6 column 2 page 10).

The total number of civil summonses issued for debt for June 2006 increased by 11,7% compared with June 2005.

The number of civil judgements recorded for debt decreases

The total number of civil judgements recorded for debt for the three months ended June 2006 decreased by 5,0% compared with the three months ended June 2005.

In addition, the total number of civil judgements recorded for debt for the three months ended June 2005 decreased by 1,1% compared with the three months ended June 2004.

The major contributors to the decrease of 5,0% in the number of civil judgements recorded for debt for the three months ended June 2006 compared with the three months ended June 2005, were civil judgements in respect of 'other services' (-3,9 percentage points) and promissory notes and others (-1,6 percentage points). However, this decrease was partially counteracted by an increase in 'other' debts (+2,0 percentage points) (see Table 6 column 3 page 10).

The total number of civil judgements recorded for debt for June 2006 decreased by 8,1% compared with June 2005.

The value of civil judgements recorded for debt increases

The total value of civil judgements recorded for debt for the three months ended June 2006 increased by 2,8% compared with the three months ended June 2005.

In addition, the total value of civil judgements recorded for debt for the three months ended June 2005 decreased by 6,6% compared with the three months ended June 2004.

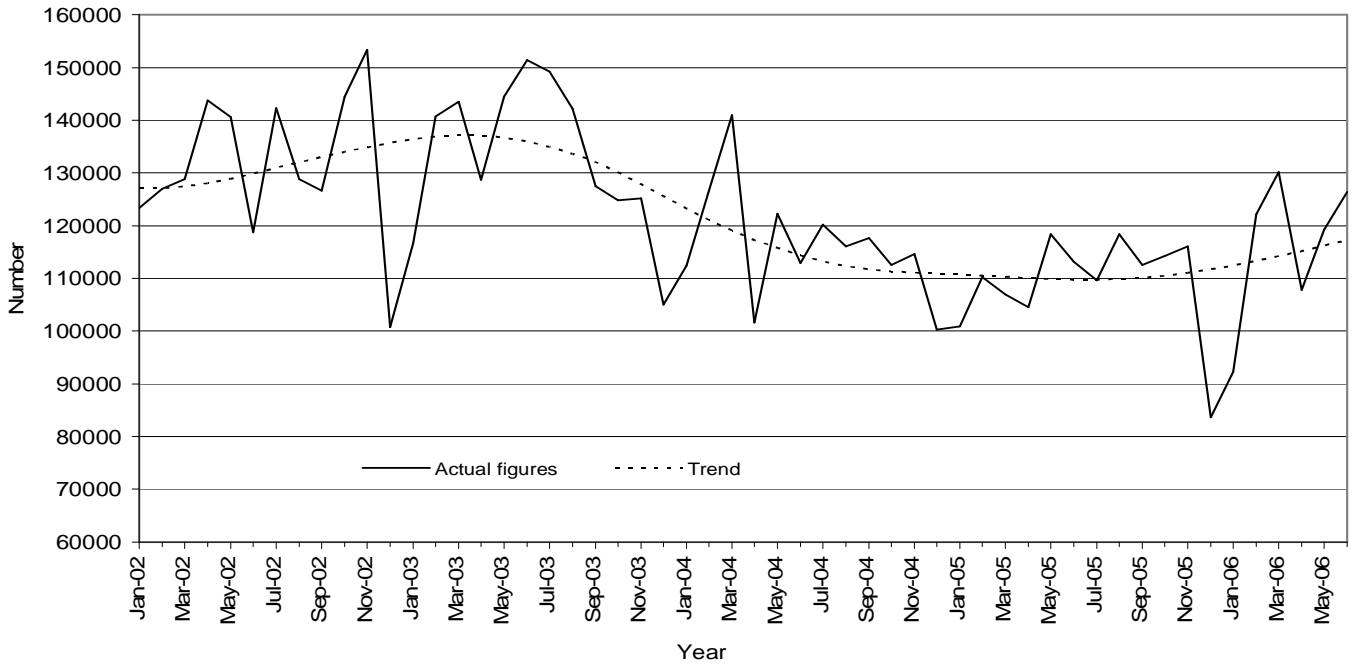
The major contributor to the increase of 2,8% in the value of civil judgements recorded for the three months ended June 2006 compared with the three months ended June 2005, were civil judgements recorded in respect of 'other' debts (+4,0 percentage points). However, this increase was partially counteracted by a decrease in judgements recorded for promissory notes and others (-2,3 percentage points) (see Table 6 column 4 page 10).

The total value of civil judgements recorded for debt for June 2006 increased by 11,8% compared with June 2005.

During June 2006, 73 028 civil judgements for debt, amounting to R573,7 million, were recorded. The largest contributors to the R573,7 million were civil judgements relating to money lent (R189,9 million or 33,1%) and 'other' debts (R164,3 million or 28,6%) (see Table 4 page 9).

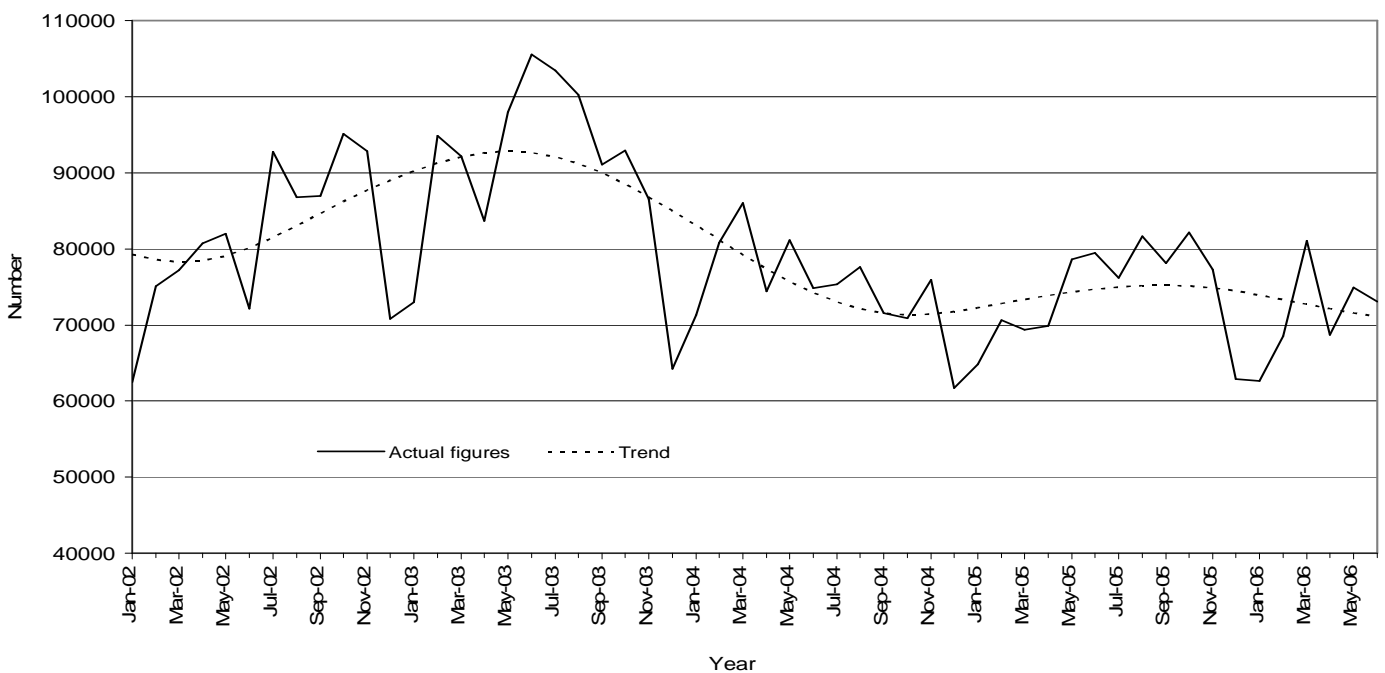
Figures 1 and 2 outline the number of civil summonses issued and civil judgements recorded for debt from 2002 to 2006 respectively. In figure 1 since March 2002 the trend estimates for the total number of civil summonses issued for debt showed an increasing trend until April 2003. The trend started decreasing from June 2003 until September 2004 but levelled off until October 2005. The trend has been rising since November 2005.

Figure 1 - Civil summonses issued for debt



In figure 2 since April 2002 the trend estimates for civil judgements recorded for debt showed an increasing trend until June 2003. The trend has decreased since July 2003 until October 2004 but since November 2004 it has increased slightly until September 2005 and levelled off since then.

Figure 2 - Civil judgements recorded for debt



**PJ Lehohla
Statistician-General**

Notes

Forthcoming issue	Issue	Expected release date
	July 2006	21 September 2006
Purpose of the survey	The survey of Civil Cases for Debt covers a sample of magistrates' offices in South Africa, excluding the former Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei (TBVC states). This survey collects information regarding civil cases recorded, civil summonses issued and civil judgements recorded in order to provide users with information on the extent of unpaid debt in South Africa. The results of the survey are used by the private and public sectors as an indicator of economic performance.	
Response rate	The response rate for June 2006 was 88,1%.	

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Table 1 - Number of civil cases recorded and summonses issued for debt according to business enterprises and private persons

Item	Business enterprises and private persons				Private persons			
	2005	2005	2006	2006	2005	2005	2006	2006
		Jun.	May	1/ Jun.		Jun.	May	1/ Jun.
1. Cases recorded								
1.1 Actual figures	1 514 116	130 923	136 689	141 699	1 373 027	111 837	123 352	126 203
1.2 Seasonally adjusted		127 040	131 309	138 091		111 306	118 610	126 301
2. Civil summonses for debt								
2.1 Goods sold								
2.1.1 Open account	159 679	13 109	14 440	15 050	138 886	11 207	12 451	12 837
2.1.2 Instalment sale transactions	51 566	5 207	2 514	3 134	46 903	4 713	2 083	2 577
2.2 Services								
2.2.1 Professional	152 858	13 254	12 218	11 828	133 286	11 467	10 526	9 895
2.2.2 Other	229 019	20 700	16 833	18 839	208 046	17 476	15 051	16 889
2.3 Rent	49 151	3 900	4 311	5 274	39 785	2 969	3 304	3 851
2.3.1 Money lent	296 341	27 295	29 450	36 410	277 400	20 915	28 263	33 947
2.3.2 Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgements of debt	128 403	10 604	15 090	11 089	118 238	9 704	13 427	9 393
2.6 Other debts	241 952	19 111	24 407	24 765	215 513	16 626	21 707	22 025
2.7 Total								
2.7.1 Actual figures	1 308 969	113 180	119 263	126 389	1 178 057	95 077	106 812	111 414
2.7.2 Seasonally adjusted		107 969	113 271	121 214		93 968	101 765	110 787

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Table 2 - Number of civil cases recorded according to selected magistrates' offices

Year or month	Cape Peninsula	Port Elizabeth	East-London	Kimberley	Pietermaritzburg	Durban	Johannesburg	East Rand	West Rand	Pretoria	Vereeniging and Vanderbijlpark	Bloemfontein
2004	143 146	81 408	37 375	13 044	19 321	121 484	169 721	87 621	51 872	128 803	25 498	55 835
2005	165 535	69 776	38 487	9 248	20 091	77 468	156 641	58 486	58 984	138 300	27 437	59 361
2005 - J	11 896	6 551	2 247	545	1 578	10 239	14 059	3 943	4 003	9 006	2 093	4 441
F	14 772	6 551	3 172	895	1 781	9 815	11 918	5 120	5 274	12 240	2 592	4 182
M	11 976	5 099	2 889	632	1 439	5 740	13 198	4 899	4 666	10 904	2 980	4 604
A	13 600	4 474	2 504	801	1 526	3 230	13 299	5 143	3 967	14 042	2 991	4 808
M	12 386	7 915	3 151	997	2 268	5 435	14 706	6 654	5 028	12 756	1 832	4 884
J	15 193	6 117	3 350	721	1 636	4 921	12 201	4 335	5 686	12 114	1 794	5 073
J	13 402	4 474	3 240	873	1 894	4 921	12 726	4 973	5 567	11 494	2 127	5 083
A	18 630	5 573	2 941	861	2 220	7 311	14 095	4 914	5 759	11 839	3 311	5 249
S	15 391	5 612	3 517	911	1 539	7 311	13 090	5 117	4 851	12 216	1 112	5 371
O	14 575	7 432	3 951	871	1 433	6 397	13 889	4 751	4 479	11 456	1 901	5 291
N	16 106	6 489	4 009	740	1 410	6 397	11 730	5 502	5 731	12 428	2 469	5 214
D	7 608	3 489	3 516	401	1 367	5 751	11 730	3 135	3 973	7 805	2 235	5 161
2006 - J	10 205	5 091	4 446	209	1 171	5 751	6 505	4 097	4 441	10 867	2 437	5 120
F	11 387	7 860	5 785	756	1 751	5 751	13 143	4 652	7 231	12 266	2 492	5 117
M	14 010	8 082	6 013	732	1 742	6 285	14 398	5 761	6 259	14 272	2 994	4 789
A	11 657	5 239	4 285	311	1 290	6 364	12 046	5 658	4 454	8 127	3 028	4 789
M	13 981	5 393	2 620	741	1 893	4 925	15 758	5 585	5 489	11 299	3 200	4 789
1/ J	13 359	6 628	5 688	555	1 254	4 925	16 849	5 486	4 411	10 018	5 307	5 244

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Table 3 - Number of civil default and consent judgements for debt according to business enterprises and private persons

Item	Business enterprises and private persons				Private persons			
	2005	2005	2006	2006	2005	2005	2006	2006
		Jun.	May	1/ Jun.		Jun.	May	1/ Jun.
1. Judgements								
1.1 Goods sold								
1.1.1 Open account	114 109	9 601	9 771	9 794	104 472	8 744	8 843	8 871
1.1.2 Instalment sale transactions	16 620	1 474	752	861	14 927	1 303	665	701
1.2 Services								
1.2.1 Professional	83 017	8 061	7 044	6 672	77 613	7 557	6 236	5 831
1.2.2 Other	122 987	12 002	8 615	8 095	115 538	11 361	7 950	7 531
1.3 Rent	29 088	2 027	2 007	1 966	22 870	1 677	1 659	1 636
1.4 Money lent	309 063	26 457	27 958	27 591	304 434	25 977	27 406	26 567
1.5 Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgements of debt	82 229	8 225	6 641	6 133	77 741	7 972	6 274	5 789
1.6 Other debts	134 032	11 650	12 117	11 916	121 147	10 264	11 057	10 950
1.7 Total								
1.7.1 Actual figures	891 145	79 497	74 905	73 028	838 742	74 855	70 090	67 876
1.7.2 Seasonally adjusted		76 028	70 775	70 150		71 964	66 033	65 438

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Table 4 - Value of civil default and consent judgements for debt according to business enterprises and private persons

Item	Business enterprises and private persons				Private persons			
	2005	2005	2006	2006	2005	2005	2006	2006
		1/ Jun.	May	Jun.		Jun.	Jun.	May
	R'000							
1. Judgements								
1.1 Goods sold								
1.1.1 Open account	661 352	51 933	75 397	58 947	540 967	42 258	62 663	46 888
1.1.2 Instalment sale transactions	273 731	21 196	27 104	16 925	227 774	16 937	23 377	12 913
1.2 Services								
1.2.1 Professional	258 691	23 709	34 597	19 120	219 341	19 753	30 947	15 030
1.2.2 Other	601 147	51 534	52 642	51 477	507 366	46 516	43 563	39 755
1.3 Rent	217 608	16 248	18 920	16 555	155 938	11 431	14 201	11 327
1.4 Money lent	2 152 458	168 047	186 822	189 893	2 028 303	151 570	170 999	175 018
1.5 Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgements of debt	822 425	72 762	52 369	56 539	729 677	68 069	45 262	43 414
1.6 Other debts	1 663 448	107 948	119 800	164 277	1 281 651	80 302	89 508	109 982
1.7 Total								
1.7.1 Actual figures	6 650 860	513 377	567 651	573 733	5 691 017	436 836	480 520	454 327
1.7.2 Seasonally adjusted		532 187	594 679	596 889		461 785	489 211	481 492

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Table 5 - Percentage change in the total number and value of debts recorded between the current quarter and the corresponding quarter of the previous year.

	Actual estimates April 2005 to June 2005	Actual estimates April 2006 to June 2006	% change between April 2005 to June 2005 and April 2006 to June 2006	Difference between April 2005 to June 2005 and April 2006 to June 2006
Number of summonses for debt	336 048	353 470	5,2%	17 422
Number of judgements for debt	227 990	216 632	-5,0%	-11 358
Value of judgements for debt (R million)	1 606,8	1 652,6	2,8%	48,8

Table 6 - Contribution of the different kinds of debts to the total number and value of debts recorded for the current quarter and the corresponding quarter of the previous year.

Different kinds of debts	Contribution percentage points to the percentage change in the total number of summonses for debt	Contribution percentage points to the percentage change in the total number of civil judgements for debt	Contribution percentage points to the percentage change in the total value of civil judgements for debt
Goods sold			
Open account	1,1	-0,2	0,9
Instalment sale transactions	-1,2	-0,6	-0,3
Professional services	-1,5	-1,2	0,4
Other services	-3,9	-3,9	0,6
Rent	0,7	0,0	-0,2
Money lent	4,1	0,5	-0,3
Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgement of debt	1,6	-1,6	-2,3
Other debts	4,3	2,0	4,0
Total	5,2	-5,0	2,8

The contribution (percentage points) is calculated by multiplying the quarterly percentage change of each kind of debt with the percentage contribution to the total number or value of cases recorded during April 2005 to June 2005, divided by 100.

Table 7 - Percentage change in the total number and value of debts recorded between the current month and the corresponding month of the previous year.

	Actual estimates June 2005	Actual estimates June 2006	% change between June 2005 and June 2006	Difference between June 2005 and June 2006
Number of summonses for debt	113 180	126 389	11,7%	13 209
Number of judgements for debt	79 497	73 028	-8,1%	-6 469
Value of judgements for debt (R million)	513,4	573,7	11,8%	60,3

Explanatory notes

- Introduction**
- 1 Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) conducts a monthly sample survey of civil cases recorded and civil summonses for debt issued in South Africa. This information is obtained from selected magistrates' offices.
 - 2 Except for cases recorded, all other information relates to debt cases only, therefore claims for damages, ejectment orders and other non-debt cases are excluded.
- Scope of the survey**
- 3 This survey covers -
 - number of civil cases recorded;
 - number of civil summonses issued for debt;
 - number of civil judgements recorded for debt; and
 - value of civil judgements recorded for debt.
- Statistical unit**
- 4 The statistical unit for collection of information is a magistrates' office. Magistrates' offices include the small claims courts.
 - 5 The largest magistrates' offices in South Africa, which account for approximately 95% of all the civil cases in South Africa, are included in the monthly survey of civil cases recorded and civil summonses for debt issued. The smallest magistrates' offices are not used in the sample. A sample of 151 magistrates' offices is drawn using only the number of civil cases recorded as the measure of size.
- Survey methodology and design**
- 6 The survey is conducted by mail each month from approximately 151 magistrates' offices.
- Trend cycle**
- 7 Smoothed seasonally adjusted and trend estimates are generated using the X-11 Seasonal Adjustment Programme.
- Publications**
- 8 Users may also wish to refer to the following publications:
 - *Bulletin of Statistics* issued quarterly.
 - *SA Statistics* issued annually.

Unpublished statistics

- 9 In some cases Stats SA can also make available statistics which are not included in standard publications. The statistics can be made available in one or more of the following ways: computer printout, CD or diskette. Generally a charge is made for providing unpublished statistics.

Symbols and abbreviations

- 10 R/D Refer to Drawer
 CD Compact Disc
 Stats SA Statistics South Africa
 TBVC Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda, Ciskei.
 * Revised figures

Glossary

Acknowledgement of debt	Acknowledgement of debt is a statement by a person/debtor in which he admits that he owes money to an individual or a company or a bank.
Bills	Bills are statements of charges for services rendered or for amounts owed.
Civil judgements	Civil judgements are decisions taken in a civil matter or a dispute between two people or parties.
Civil summonses	Civil summonses are notices to appear before the court of law where a dispute between two parties or people has to be heard, i.e. not for a criminal offence.
Consent judgements	Consent judgements refer to where a debtor agrees to subject himself/herself to obey or accept a judgement of a court against him for a debt he owes without defending the action. This usually happens before the debtor signs a binding contract, e.g. a loan agreement.
Default judgements	Default judgements refer to where the court gives a judgement or a ruling against the defendant who is not present in court and was previously given a notice that was ignored, i.e. a judgement was given against a party or an individual while not present in court.
Instalment sale transaction	Instalment sale transaction relates to where a person buys goods on credit and pays for them in instalments, e.g. every week or month, until he/she settles the debt.
Litigants	Litigants are people who take part in court proceedings, usually against each other, like a debtor and a creditor.
Litigants referred	Litigants referred relates to a case where the parties have been referred to another instance/court.
Open account transaction	Open account transactions are revolving credit, i.e. where an account does not have a final payment date and a person can always take more goods and keep paying as long as he has credit.
Other services	“Other services” refers to municipal services (except outstanding assessment rates), plumbers, builders, mechanics, panel-beaters and electricians.
Other debts	“Other debts” refers to all other kinds of outstanding debts such as salaries and wages, outstanding medical fund debts, outstanding sponsored debts, outstanding class and tuition debt, outstanding income and sales, tax, outstanding assessment rates, outstanding money in respect of television maintenance contracts and outstanding money in respect of flat levies.

Plaintiff	Plaintiff is a person/party in a civil case who asks the court for judgement against another person.
Professional services	Professional services refer to medical doctors/dentists, advocates/attorneys, auditors/ accountants, architects, engineers and hospital services.
Promissory note	Promissory note is a written note, signed by one person, in which he promises to pay money to another person or to the bearer of such a note on a specific date or on demand.
Reference month	Reference month refers to one calendar month.
Refer to drawer (R/D) cheques	R/D cheques refer to dishonoured cheques. The drawer is the owner of the cheque. When a person issues a cheque and there is no money in the cheque account, the bank will refuse to pay the bearer. The cheque will be referred back to the drawer.

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(012) 310 4883/4885/8018 (library)

Fax number: (012) 310 8332 (technical enquiries)

Email: juan-pierret@statssa.gov.za (technical enquiries)
info@statssa.gov.za (user information services)
distribution@statssa.gov.za (orders)

Postal address: Private Bag X44, Pretoria, 0001

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