

Statistical release

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Statistics of civil cases for debt (Preliminary)

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Key results for June 2011

Table A – Key figures for the month of June 2011

Actual estimates	June 2011	% change between June 2010 and June 2011	% change between April to June 2010 and April to June 2011
Number of civil summonses issued for debt	85 745	-21,0	-24,7
Number of civil judgements recorded for debt	45 128	-27,3	-28,0
Value of civil judgements recorded for debt (R million)	478,9	-17,8	-17,9

The number of civil summonses issued for debt

The second quarter of 2011 reflected a 24,7% decrease in the total number of civil summonses issued for debt compared with the second quarter of 2010. A year-on-year decrease of 21,0% was recorded in June 2011 (see Table A and Tables 5 and 7).

The major contributors to the 24,7% decrease were:

- the money lent category (contributing -9,5 percentage points);
- the goods sold category (contributing -5,2 percentage points); and
- the 'other debts' category (contributing -4,9 percentage points) (see Table 6).

The number of civil judgements recorded for debt

The total number of civil judgements recorded for debt for the second quarter of 2011 decreased by 28,0% compared with the second quarter of 2010. A year-on-year decrease of 27,3% was recorded in June 2011 (see Table A and Tables 5 and 7).

The main drivers behind the 28,0% decrease were civil judgements relating to:

- the money lent category (contributing -14,3 percentage points);
- the services category (contributing -5,1 percentage points); and
- the promissory notes and other acknowledgements of debt category (contributing -5,0 percentage points) (see Table 6).

The value of civil judgements recorded for debt

There was a 17,9% decrease in the total value of civil judgements recorded for debt for the second quarter of 2011 compared with the second quarter of 2010. A year-on-year decrease of 17,8% was recorded in June 2011 (see Table A and Tables 5 and 7).

The major contributors to the 17,9% decrease were the money lent category (contributing -5,7 percentage points) and the goods sold category (contributing -3,4 percentage points) (see Table 6).

During June 2011, 45 128 civil judgements for debt amounting to R478,9 million were recorded. The largest contributors to the R478,9 million were:

- money lent (R146,1 million or 30,5%);
- 'other debts' (R91,0 million or 19,0%);
- services (R82,3 million or 17,2%); and
- goods sold (R74,3 million or 15,5%) (see Tables 3 and 4).

Figure 1 – Civil summonses issued for debt

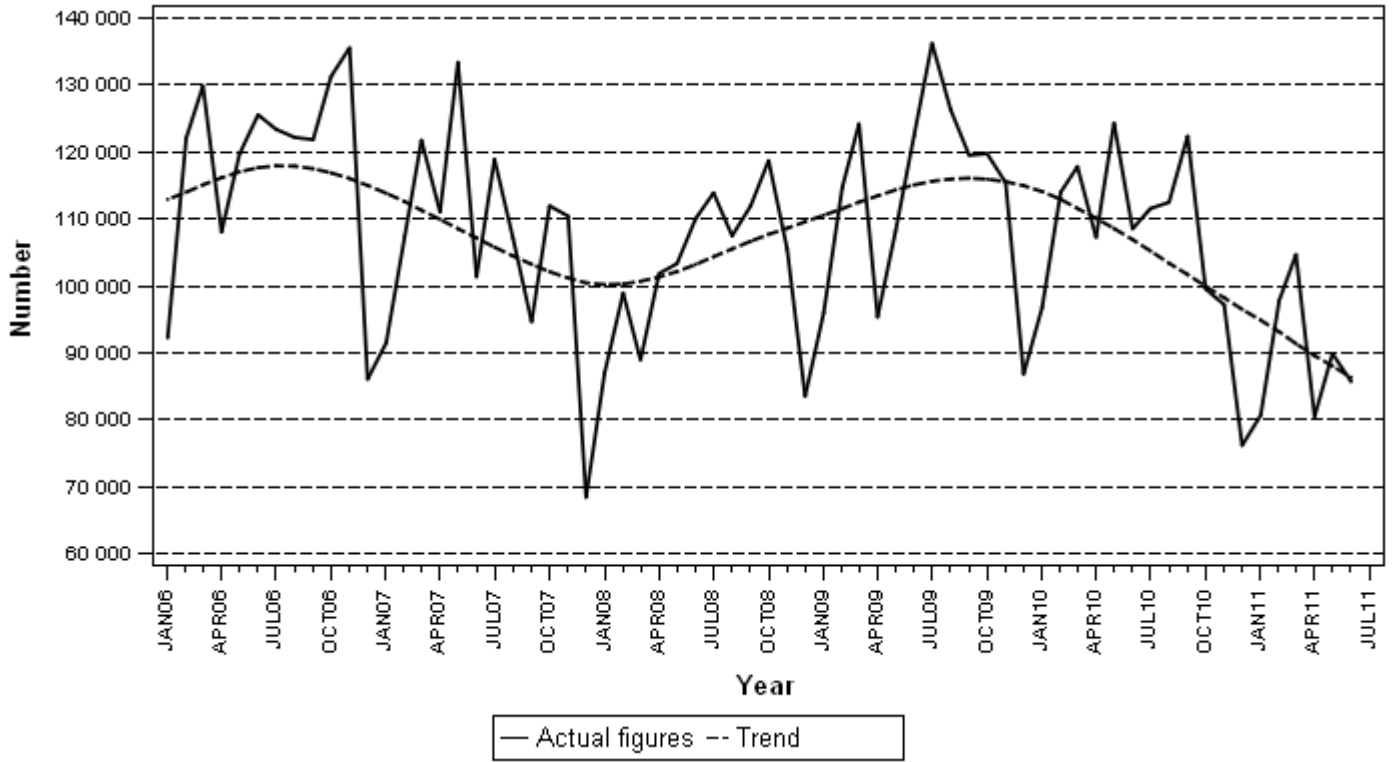
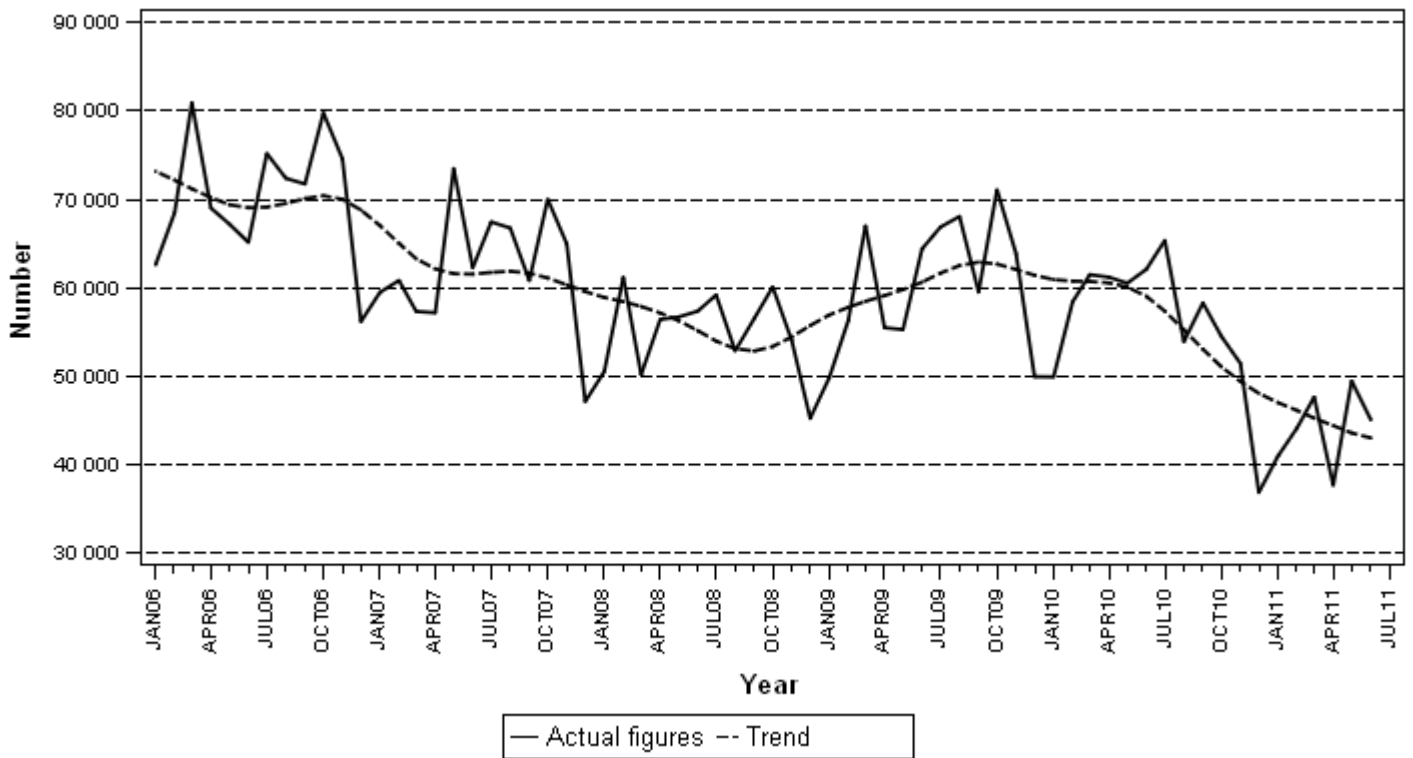


Figure 2 – Civil judgements recorded for debt



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Statistician-General

Detailed results: Tables

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			
	2010	2010	1/ 2011		2010	2010	1/ 2011	
		June	May	June		June	May	June
1. Cases recorded								
1.1 Actual figures	1 469 321	124 006	107 830	103 779	1 299 023	109 110	97 678	89 160
1.2 Seasonally adjusted		118 451	102 600	99 419		106 380	92 343	87 224
2. Civil summonses for debt								
2.1 Goods sold								
2.1.1 Open account	108 884	9 954	5 995	5 875	87 313	8 012	4 485	4 502
2.1.2 Instalment sale transactions	31 736	2 461	1 513	1 723	27 418	2 077	1 237	1 490
2.2 Services								
2.2.1 Professional	147 619	13 353	9 690	9 671	128 120	11 971	8 495	8 679
2.2.2 Other	165 477	14 636	18 637	15 538	140 491	12 361	16 986	13 883
2.3 Rent	52 683	4 379	3 599	3 605	43 261	3 323	3 028	2 912
2.4 Money lent	314 868	24 155	15 563	16 512	298 470	22 904	14 584	15 386
2.5 Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgements of debt	230 272	16 518	19 359	17 071	214 984	15 233	18 323	15 832
2.6 Other debts	236 788	23 095	15 552	15 750	190 156	18 505	13 903	14 172
2.7 Total								
2.7.1 Actual figures	1 288 327	108 551	89 908	85 745	1 130 213	94 386	81 041	76 856
2.7.2 Seasonally adjusted		104 702	86 978	82 979		92 077	78 153	75 212

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

Year and month		Cape Peninsula	Port Elizabeth	East London	Kimberley	Pietermaritzburg	Durban	Johannesburg	East Rand	West Rand	Pretoria	Vereeniging, Vanderbijlpark and Meyerton	Bloemfontein
2009	Year Total	134 632	43 416	18 080	8 026	21 618	91 171	260 137	54 501	38 110	152 361	24 302	40 531
	January	8 015	2 649	1 179	469	1 851	7 973	22 543	3 233	2 629	8 470	1 539	4 856
	February	10 123	4 177	1 516	647	2 069	7 669	19 618	7 236	2 819	11 258	3 699	3 991
	March	11 883	3 920	1 648	686	2 312	6 898	24 373	5 272	2 753	11 882	1 540	5 900
	April	11 127	3 180	1 802	413	1 944	7 668	19 616	4 276	2 849	10 033	1 066	6 000
	May	13 037	3 004	2 074	618	2 179	8 162	20 002	4 536	3 295	20 265	1 001	6 500
	June	13 991	3 375	1 325	360	2 148	8 055	17 263	4 381	2 841	12 186	881	6 000
	July	10 630	2 756	1 779	467	1 911	8 085	22 212	5 041	2 659	10 005	1 658	5 435
	August	10 970	2 904	1 205	353	759	7 540	22 301	4 559	3 114	10 765	1 574	6 200
	September	9 700	3 093	345	316	2 883	7 289	27 645	4 516	3 276	13 402	924	6 800
	October	6 673	2 689	939	465	2 019	7 278	16 794	4 676	3 102	12 802	1 759	5 925
	November	6 983	3 340	1 081	351	1 594	7 022	19 021	3 961	2 618	11 105	1 159	4 012
	December	4 934	2 049	930	101	1 167	7 143	24 746	2 679	2 033	6 421	542	2 640
2010	Year Total	118 066	37 136	15 823	5 246	22 836	90 782	256 134	54 366	33 988	138 594	17 342	64 259
1/ 2011	January	4 253	2 019	876	293	1 493	6 512	22 549	3 222	2 516	8 018	934	3 585
	February	5 379	3 184	1 197	344	1 805	6 343	28 740	4 472	3 473	9 927	1 563	2 946
	March	6 907	4 548	1 301	419	826	6 034	24 728	4 818	2 831	8 569	1 405	4 354
	April	5 317	3 823	1 423	290	1 581	6 031	19 902	3 398	2 711	7 212	1 016	4 428
	May	5 999	6 607	1 430	351	1 469	6 728	20 293	3 590	2 599	9 172	1 098	4 520
	June	7 480	5 207	975	374	1 325	5 738	17 514	3 829	2 459	8 132	1 368	3 855

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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			
	2010	2010	1/ 2011		2010	2010	1/ 2011	
		June	May	June		June	May	June
1. Judgements								
1.1 Goods sold								
1.1.1 Open account	67 065	6 260	8 592	5 008	57 366	5 515	7 746	4 124
1.1.2 Instalment sale transactions	12 394	1 096	802	906	10 259	890	638	721
1.2 Services								
1.2.1 Professional	86 597	7 571	5 813	6 682	77 977	6 853	5 232	6 232
1.2.2 Other	77 202	6 269	4 893	4 844	68 837	5 554	4 400	4 185
1.3 Rent	29 007	3 849	2 360	2 186	23 848	3 344	2 108	1 657
1.4 Money lent	244 032	20 983	14 744	14 174	236 581	20 582	14 292	13 743
1.5 Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgements of debt	72 356	9 151	5 076	4 189	65 192	8 577	3 981	3 677
1.6 Other debts	85 559	6 918	7 208	7 139	76 954	6 273	6 316	6 377
1.7 Total								
1.7.1 Actual figures	674 212	62 097	49 488	45 128	617 014	57 588	44 713	40 716
1.7.2 Seasonally adjusted		58 860	49 188	42 618		54 285	44 210	38 235

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Table 4 – Value of civil default and consent judgements for debt according to business enterprises and private persons (R'000)

Item	Business enterprises and private persons				Private Persons			
	2010	2010	1/ 2011		2010	2010	1/ 2011	
		June	May	June		June	May	June
1. Judgements								
1.1 Goods sold								
1.1.1 Open account	613 287	56 823	51 858	52 137	394 335	38 875	31 528	31 992
1.1.2 Instalment sale transactions	354 943	30 852	22 554	22 164	274 906	22 606	17 100	18 075
1.2 Services								
1.2.1 Professional	351 311	32 343	25 757	29 864	281 299	24 166	20 475	26 395
1.2.2 Other	716 644	58 893	50 515	52 481	572 184	44 176	36 346	36 409
1.3 Rent	448 323	43 527	29 578	40 260	298 711	28 793	18 621	20 594
1.4 Money lent	2 202 708	209 067	161 040	146 084	2 059 059	195 407	149 355	138 276
1.5 Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgements of debt	792 214	64 977	38 436	44 847	646 469	57 188	28 701	36 877
1.6 Other debts	1 098 153	86 282	87 665	91 045	843 748	64 177	65 709	57 116
1.7 Total								
1.7.1 Actual figures	6 577 583	582 764	467 403	478 882	5 370 711	475 388	367 835	365 734
1.7.2 Seasonally adjusted		540 124	483 447	443 234		440 193	380 132	337 914

1/ Preliminary.

Table 5 – Percentage change in the total number of civil summonses, judgements and the value of judgements recorded between the second quarter of 2011 and the second quarter of 2010

Actual estimates	Actual estimates April to June 2010	Actual estimates April to June 2011	% change between April to June 2010 and April to June 2011	Difference between April to June 2010 and April to June 2011
Number of summonses for debt	340 150	256 167	-24,7	-83 983
Number of judgements for debt	183 833	132 338	-28,0	-51 495
Value of judgements for debt (R million)	1 618,6	1 328,1	-17,9	-290,5

Table 6 – Contribution of the different kinds of debts to the change in total number of civil summonses, judgements and the value of judgements recorded between the second quarter of 2011 and the second quarter of 2010 1/

Item	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	-4,2	-0,7	-1,7
– Instalment sale transactions	-1,0	-0,5	-1,7
Services			
– Professional	-4,0	-2,8	-0,7
– Other	1,5	-2,3	-1,6
Rent	-1,0	-0,9	-2,5
Money lent	-9,5	-14,3	-5,7
Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgements of debt	-1,6	-5,0	-1,8
Other debts	-4,9	-1,5	-2,2
Total	-24,7	-28,0	-17,9

1/ The contribution (percentage points) is calculated by multiplying the three-monthly percentage change of each kind of debt with the percentage contribution to the total number or value of cases recorded during April to June 2010, divided by 100. Figures have been rounded off.

Table 7 – Percentage change in the total number of civil summonses, judgements and the value of judgements recorded between the current month and the corresponding month of the previous year

Actual estimates	Actual estimates June 2010	Actual estimates June 2011	% change between June 2010 and June 2011	Difference between June 2010 and June 2011
Number of summonses for debt	108 551	85 745	-21,0	-22 806
Number of judgements for debt	62 097	45 128	-27,3	-16 969
Value of judgements for debt (R million)	582,8	478,9	-17,8	-103,9

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, ejection orders and other non-debt cases are excluded.
Purpose of the survey	3	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.
Scope of the survey	4	This survey covers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	5	The statistical unit for collection of information is a magistrate's office. Magistrates' offices include the small claims courts. 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 for debt. The smallest magistrates' offices are not used in the sample. A sample of 151 magistrates' offices was drawn using the number of civil cases recorded as measure of size.
Survey methodology and design	6	The survey is conducted by mail, fax and telephone each month from 151 magistrates' offices.
Response rate	7	The preliminary response rate for the civil cases for debt survey for June 2011 was 88,7%. Improved response rate for May 2011 was 90,1%.
Trend cycle	8	Smoothed seasonally adjusted and trend estimates are generated using the X-11 Seasonal Adjustment Programme.
Publications	9	Users may also wish to refer to the following publications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bulletin of Statistics</i> issued quarterly. • <i>SA Statistics</i> issued annually.
Unpublished statistics	10	In some cases Stats SA can also make available statistics which are not published. The statistics can be made available as computer printouts or electronic versions. Generally a charge is made for providing unpublished statistics.
Symbols and abbreviations	11	R/D Refer to Drawer 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 debt he owes without defending the action. This usually happens before the debtor signs a binding contract, e.g. 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 salaries, 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, hospital services etc.
Promissory note	Promissory note is a written undertaking, signed by a person or party, 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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