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Statistical release

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Statistics of civil cases for debt (Preliminary)

June 2015

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Key results for June 2015

Table A – Key figures for the month of June 2015

Actual estimates	June 2015	% change between June 2014 and June 2015	% change between April – June 2014 and April – June 2015
Number of civil summonses issued for debt	57 766	-15,9	-14,3
Number of civil judgements recorded for debt	25 336	-8,5	-7,5
Value of civil judgements recorded for debt (R million)	405,1	23,8	13,0

The number of civil summonses issued for debt

The total number of civil summonses issued for debt decreased by 14,3% in the second quarter of 2015 compared with the second quarter of 2014. A year-on-year decrease of 15,9% was recorded between June 2014 and June 2015 – see Tables A, 4 and 6.

The largest negative contributions to the 14,3% decrease were civil summonses relating to:

- money lent (contributing -5,4 percentage points);
- services (contributing -4,5 percentage points); and
- promissory notes (contributing -2,8 percentage points) – see Table 5.

The number of civil judgements recorded for debt

The total number of civil judgements recorded for debt decreased by 7,5% in the second quarter of 2015 compared with the second quarter of 2014. A decrease of 8,5% was recorded between June 2014 and June 2015 – see Tables A, 4 and 6.

The largest negative contributions to the 7,5% decrease were civil judgements relating to:

- services (contributing -3,4 percentage points);
- ‘other’ debts (contributing -2,7 percentage points); and
- goods sold (contributing -1,1 percentage points) – see Table 5.

The value of civil judgements recorded for debt

The total value of civil judgements recorded for debt was 13,0% higher in the second quarter of 2015 compared with the second quarter of 2014. A year-on-year increase of 23,8% was recorded in June 2015 – see Tables A, 4 and 6.

The largest positive contributions to the 13,0% increase were the value of judgements relating to:

- money lent (contributing 6,2 percentage points);
- ‘other’ debts (contributing 3,4 percentage points);
- promissory notes (contributing 1,9 percentage points); and
- services (contributing 1,8 percentage points) – see Table 5.

In June 2015, 25 336 civil judgements for debt amounting to R405,1 million were recorded. The largest contributors to the total value of judgements were:

- money lent (R115,9 million or 28,6%);
- ‘other’ debts (R110,6 million or 27,3%); and
- services (R73,4 million or 18,1%) – see Tables 2 and 3.

Figure 1 – Civil summonses issued for debt

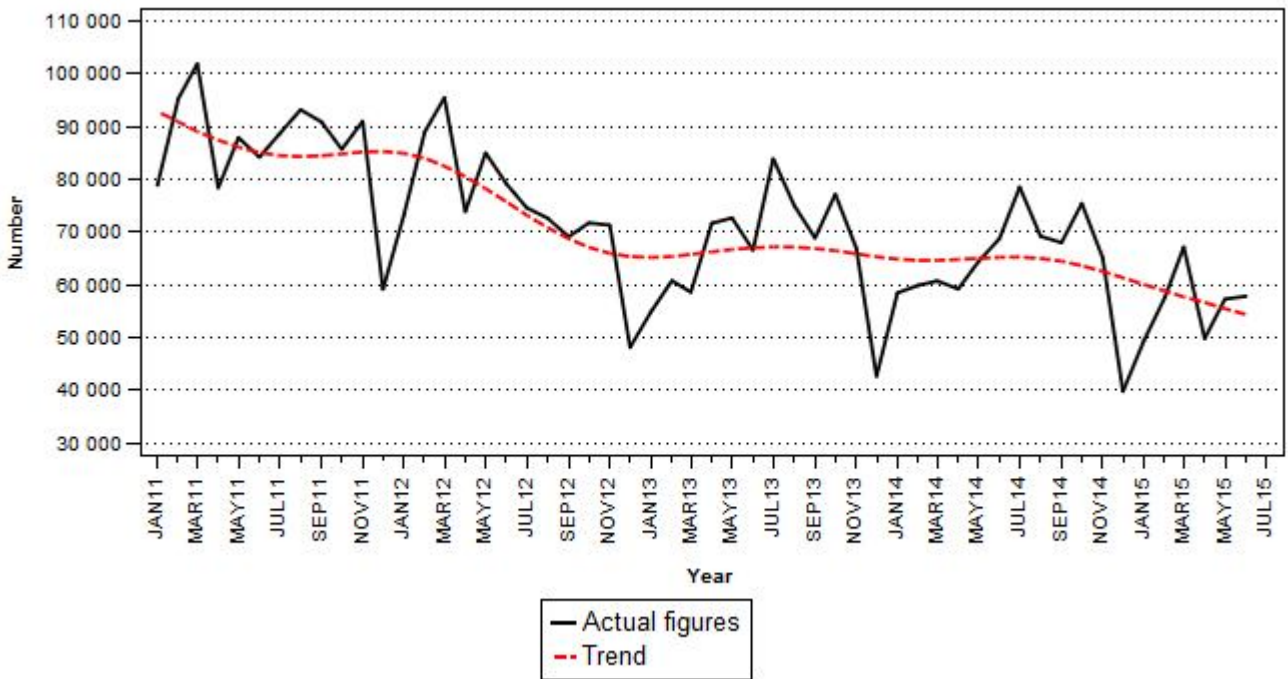
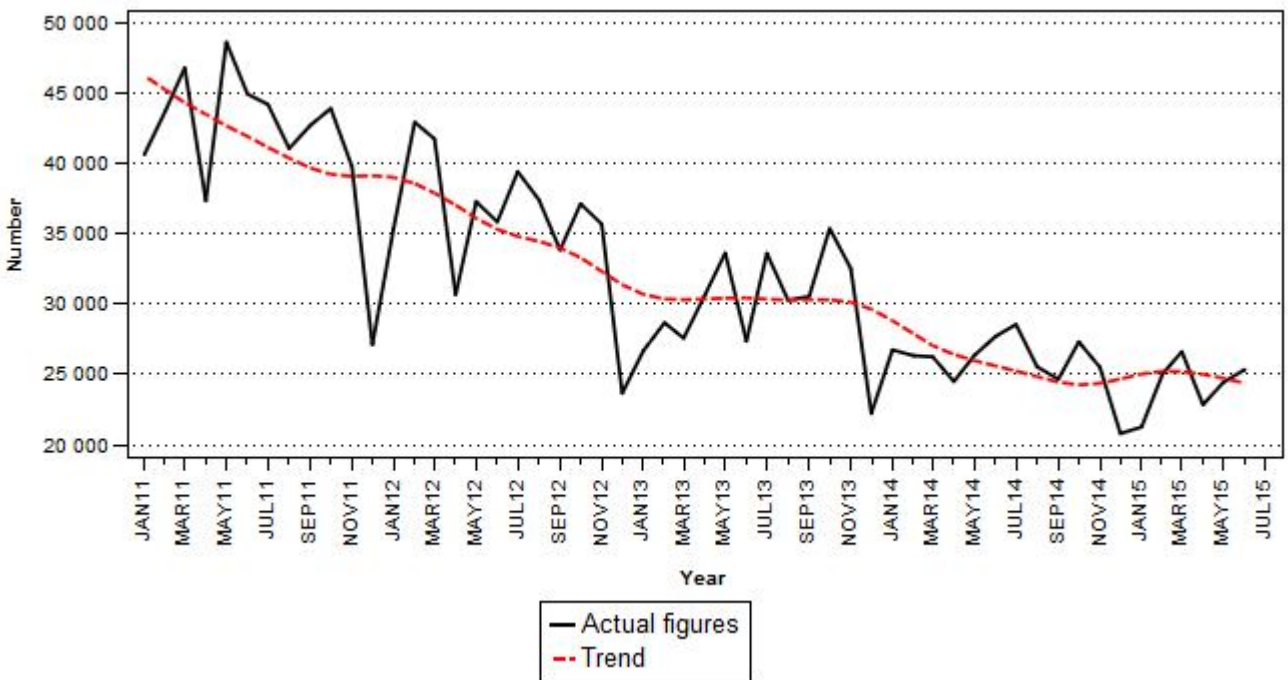


Figure 2 – Civil judgements recorded for debt



PJ Lehohla
Statistician-General

Detailed results: Tables

Table 1 – Number of civil cases recorded and summonses issued for debt: Total and private persons

Item		Total				Private Persons			
		2014	Jun-14	1/ May-15	1/ Jun-15	2014	Jun-14	1/ May-15	1/ Jun-15
Cases recorded	Actual figures	838 926	74 444	63 080	63 679	738 542	64 851	52 339	55 084
	Seasonally adjusted		71 340	59 950	60 797		61 616	49 801	52 068
Civil summonses for debt	Goods sold - Open account	53 702	4 570	4 127	4 285	41 998	3 493	3 160	3 041
	Goods sold - Instalment sale transactions	26 973	1 910	1 992	1 753	21 678	1 511	1 636	1 336
	Services - Professional	93 548	7 898	6 713	7 694	83 216	7 152	5 641	6 721
	Services - Other	124 116	11 939	9 644	9 875	107 931	10 478	7 575	8 196
	Rent	39 481	2 813	2 338	2 376	32 456	2 322	1 788	1 820
	Money lent	199 369	18 440	13 536	13 246	189 974	17 789	12 526	12 311
	Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgements of debt	98 753	9 597	7 816	8 498	91 037	9 164	7 474	8 005
	Other debts	130 908	11 518	11 070	10 039	117 735	10 526	10 057	9 185
	Total - Actual figures	766 850	68 685	57 236	57 766	686 025	62 435	49 857	50 615
	Total - Seasonally adjusted		66 397	54 733	55 633		59 878	47 462	48 451

1/ Preliminary.

Table 2 – Number of civil default and consent judgements for debt: Total and private persons

Item		Total				Private Persons			
		2014	Jun-14	1/ May-15	1/ Jun-15	2014	Jun-14	1/ May-15	1/ Jun-15
Number of civil judgements	Goods sold - Open account	21 883	1 878	1 599	1 580	16 688	1 452	1 187	1 153
	Goods sold - Instalment sale transactions	7 381	619	631	523	5 580	499	492	386
	Services - Professional	53 262	4 757	4 196	4 447	47 696	4 385	3 459	3 854
	Services - Other	47 316	4 610	3 548	4 166	41 425	4 155	3 144	3 649
	Rent	17 543	1 772	1 307	1 425	14 406	1 546	1 084	1 192
	Money lent	75 586	6 333	6 345	6 264	70 978	6 048	5 876	5 822
	Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgements of debt	27 335	2 220	2 322	2 441	23 145	1 896	1 989	2 167
	Other debts	59 879	5 509	4 491	4 490	55 630	5 193	4 149	4 106
	Total - Actual figures	310 185	27 698	24 439	25 336	275 548	25 174	21 380	22 329
	Total - Seasonally adjusted		26 390	23 613	24 143		23 972	21 235	21 229

1/ Preliminary.

Table 3 – Value of civil default and consent judgements for debt: Total and private persons (R'000)

Item		Total				Private Persons			
		2014	Jun-14	1/ May-15	1/ Jun-15	2014	Jun-14	1/ May-15	1/ Jun-15
Value of civil judgements	Goods sold - Open account	289 100	23 869	25 315	22 164	166 780	14 452	15 426	10 597
	Goods sold - Instalment sale transactions	89 599	6 682	9 019	6 416	75 311	6 043	8 081	5 245
	Services - Professional	268 653	21 038	21 107	24 353	234 985	18 872	16 902	19 962
	Services - Other	470 117	38 690	42 704	49 074	375 093	32 426	36 473	37 167
	Rent	277 582	24 797	21 316	22 387	201 587	18 545	15 581	16 253
	Money lent	1 085 532	86 821	107 061	115 868	1 002 428	76 339	96 497	109 842
	Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgements of debt	418 697	29 849	36 093	54 203	349 493	24 040	32 044	37 754
	Other debts	1 201 729	95 402	99 379	110 586	779 107	69 745	58 089	63 063
	Total - Actual figures	4 101 009	327 148	361 994	405 051	3 184 784	260 462	279 093	299 883
	Total - Seasonally adjusted		313 876	346 338	390 918		250 610	253 609	290 201

1/ Preliminary.

Table 4 – Percentage change in the total number of civil summonses and judgements and the value of judgements recorded between the second quarter of 2014 and the second quarter of 2015

Actual estimates	Actual estimates Apr – Jun 2014	Actual estimates Apr – Jun 2015	% change between Apr – Jun 2014 and Apr – Jun 2015	Difference between Apr – Jun 2014 and Apr – Jun 2015
Number of civil summonses issued for debt	192 195	164 748	-14,3	-27 447
Number of civil judgements recorded for debt	78 536	72 616	-7,5	-5 920
Value of civil judgements recorded for debt (R million)	964,3	1 089,2	13,0	124,9

Table 5 – Contribution of the different kinds of debt to the change in total number of civil summonses and judgements and the value of judgements recorded between the second quarter of 2014 and the second quarter of 2015 1/

Item	Contribution (% points) to the % change in the total		
	Civil summonses for debt	Number of civil judgements	Value of civil judgements
Goods sold - Open account	-0,7	-1,1	-0,7
Goods sold - Instalment sale transactions	0,0	0,0	0,3
Services - Professional	-1,4	-1,2	0,3
Services - Other	-3,1	-2,2	1,5
Rent	-0,8	-0,4	0,1
Money lent	-5,4	0,1	6,2
Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgements of debt	-2,8	0,0	1,9
Other debts	0,0	-2,7	3,4
Total	-14,3	-7,5	13,0

1/ The contribution (percentage points) is calculated by multiplying the three-monthly percentage change of each kind of debt by the percentage contribution to the total during April to June 2014, divided by 100. Due to rounding off, contributions might not add up to the total.

Table 6 – Percentage change in the total number of civil summonses and judgements and the value of judgements recorded between the current month and the corresponding month of the previous year

Actual estimates	Actual estimates June 2014	Actual estimates June 2015	% change between June 2014 and June 2015	Difference between June 2014 and June 2015
Number of civil summonses issued for debt	68 685	57 766	-15,9	-10 919
Number of civil judgements recorded for debt	27 698	25 336	-8,5	-2 362
Value of civil judgements recorded for debt (R million)	327,1	405,1	23,8	78,0

Table 7 – Number of civil summonses issued for debt by province

Period 1/		Western Cape	Eastern Cape	Northern Cape	Free State	KwaZulu-Natal	North West	Gauteng	Mpumalanga	Limpopo	South Africa
2014	Jun	13 090	5 587	1 276	4 254	9 564	3 357	25 994	3 107	2 456	68 685
	Jul	12 853	6 730	1 505	4 864	10 610	3 691	32 249	3 514	2 462	78 478
	Aug	8 714	6 089	1 282	3 903	10 645	3 754	28 346	3 988	2 419	69 140
	Sep	12 079	5 130	976	4 000	10 359	3 230	26 895	3 052	2 228	67 949
	Oct	11 293	6 285	1 250	5 372	11 448	4 725	29 319	3 402	2 287	75 381
	Nov	9 614	5 420	845	4 071	9 974	3 968	25 024	3 739	2 390	65 045
	Dec	7 799	2 266	420	2 578	7 701	3 329	12 097	1 533	1 996	39 719
2015	Jan	7 140	4 573	836	3 513	8 559	2 831	17 487	2 363	2 032	49 334
	Feb	8 706	5 058	854	4 090	8 512	3 285	21 552	3 182	2 315	57 554
	Mar	11 105	5 267	758	3 774	9 790	3 322	26 436	3 976	2 681	67 109
	Apr	8 783	3 847	695	3 207	8 538	2 618	16 889	2 989	2 180	49 746
	May	11 421	4 303	723	3 844	8 002	3 810	19 956	2 972	2 205	57 236
	Jun	10 617	5 205	959	3 314	10 012	2 839	18 966	3 471	2 383	57 766

1/ Latest two months are preliminary.

Table 8 – Number of civil default and consent judgements for debt by province

Period 1/		Western Cape	Eastern Cape	Northern Cape	Free State	KwaZulu-Natal	North West	Gauteng	Mpumalanga	Limpopo	South Africa
2014	Jun	5 315	4 102	766	3 401	3 595	1 518	5 413	1 628	1 960	27 698
	Jul	5 529	3 913	631	3 607	3 685	1 515	5 884	1 743	2 044	28 551
	Aug	4 491	3 117	721	2 783	3 699	1 281	6 266	1 228	1 946	25 532
	Sep	4 662	2 946	684	2 342	4 051	1 300	5 535	1 368	1 765	24 653
	Oct	4 828	3 861	691	3 413	3 795	1 815	5 578	1 572	1 757	27 310
	Nov	3 879	3 860	509	2 925	3 669	1 440	5 915	1 497	1 808	25 502
	Dec	3 339	2 104	225	2 342	3 333	1 131	5 350	1 264	1 697	20 785
2015	Jan	2 852	2 905	321	2 882	3 409	1 205	4 214	1 666	1 801	21 255
	Feb	3 567	3 949	412	2 689	3 559	1 607	5 806	1 591	1 870	25 050
	Mar	4 342	3 578	486	2 653	3 874	1 641	6 259	1 696	2 082	26 611
	Apr	3 287	2 714	500	2 704	3 527	1 241	5 595	1 410	1 864	22 842
	May	3 267	2 943	368	3 475	3 070	1 523	6 300	1 596	1 897	24 439
	Jun	3 869	3 987	407	2 758	3 691	1 631	5 480	1 605	1 908	25 336

1/ Latest two months are preliminary.

Table 9 – Value of civil default and consent judgements for debt by province (R'000)

Period 1/		Western Cape	Eastern Cape	Northern Cape	Free State	KwaZulu-Natal	North West	Gauteng	Mpumalanga	Limpopo	South Africa
2014	Jun	91 053	43 723	5 073	32 985	34 968	12 856	72 497	21 943	12 050	327 148
	Jul	84 131	52 402	4 934	33 840	34 975	14 670	79 929	33 696	11 747	350 324
	Aug	56 977	41 055	5 043	27 985	38 151	14 280	97 007	19 280	11 649	311 427
	Sep	68 262	47 878	6 171	37 095	36 823	12 234	83 259	33 117	8 587	333 426
	Oct	73 833	41 426	8 712	48 906	43 394	20 149	87 208	44 660	8 676	376 964
	Nov	81 253	53 761	4 067	40 578	38 954	15 472	91 607	38 341	8 577	372 610
	Dec	57 430	26 458	1 736	39 417	34 484	12 296	92 523	23 160	7 748	295 252
2015	Jan	35 749	39 694	4 390	32 879	37 581	12 314	71 538	28 996	9 362	272 503
	Feb	60 494	62 150	3 894	41 807	39 312	23 497	87 033	35 345	9 539	363 071
	Mar	121 088	58 993	3 709	31 817	45 096	21 926	106 877	23 272	12 546	425 324
	Apr	62 810	47 176	4 018	28 057	39 357	11 619	88 888	28 653	11 625	322 203
	May	74 314	44 532	3 974	48 534	33 327	16 938	100 285	28 835	11 255	361 994
	Jun	81 962	57 301	2 859	26 175	46 373	21 593	91 115	56 095	21 578	405 051

1/ Latest two months are preliminary.

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.
Purpose of the survey	3	The survey of civil cases for debt covers a sample of magistrates' offices in South Africa. 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 are included in the monthly survey of civil cases for debt. The monthly survey of 203 magistrates' courts represents approximately 98% of all cases in South Africa.
Survey methodology and design	6	The survey is conducted by mail, fax and telephone each month from 203 magistrates' offices.
Collection rate	7	The preliminary collection rate for the civil cases for debt survey for June 2015 was 86,7%. The improved collection rate for May 2015 was 87,7%.
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>South African Statistics</i> issued annually.
Unpublished statistics	10	In some cases Stats SA can also make available statistics which are not published.
Symbols and abbreviations	11	R/D Refer to Drawer Stats SA Statistics South Africa * 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.
Cases recorded	Includes civil debt and non-debt cases recorded.
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.
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 debt such as salaries and wages, medical fund debt, sponsored debt, class and tuition debt, tax, assessment rates and property 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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