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Statistical release

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Statistics of civil cases for debt (Preliminary)

June 2016

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Key results for June 2016

Table A – Key figures for the month of June 2016

Actual estimates	June 2016	% change between June 2015 and June 2016	% change between April – June 2015 and April – June 2016
Number of civil summonses issued for debt	57 852	0,1	3,4
Number of civil judgements recorded for debt	24 525	-3,2	-3,7
Value of civil judgements recorded for debt (R million)	345,0	-14,8	-7,7

The number of civil summonses issued for debt

The total number of civil summonses issued for debt increased by 3,4% in the second quarter of 2016 compared with the second quarter of 2015.

The largest positive contributions to the 3,4% increase were civil summonses relating to:

- services (contributing 2,0 percentage points);
- rent (contributing 0,8 of a percentage point); and
- money lent (contributing 0,6 of a percentage point) – see Tables 4 and 5.

The number of civil judgements recorded for debt

The total number of civil judgements recorded for debt decreased by 3,7% in the second quarter of 2016 compared with the second quarter of 2015.

The largest negative contributions to the 3,7% decrease were civil judgements relating to:

- money lent (contributing -3,6 percentage points); and
- promissory notes (contributing -1,9 percentage points) – see Tables 4 and 5.

The value of civil judgements recorded for debt

The total value of civil judgements recorded for debt decreased by 7,7% in the second quarter of 2016 compared with the second quarter of 2015.

The largest negative contributions to the 7,7% decrease were the value of judgements relating to:

- 'other' debts (contributing -4,0 percentage points);
- money lent (contributing -2,8 percentage points); and
- promissory notes (contributing -1,0 percentage point) – see Tables 4 and 5.

In June 2016, 24 525 civil judgements for debt amounting to R345,0 million were recorded. The largest contributors to the total value of judgements were:

- money lent (R92,0 million or 26,7%);
- 'other' debts (R88,9 million or 25,8%); and
- services (R70,9 million or 20,5%) – see Tables 2 and 3.

Figure 1 – Civil summonses issued for debt

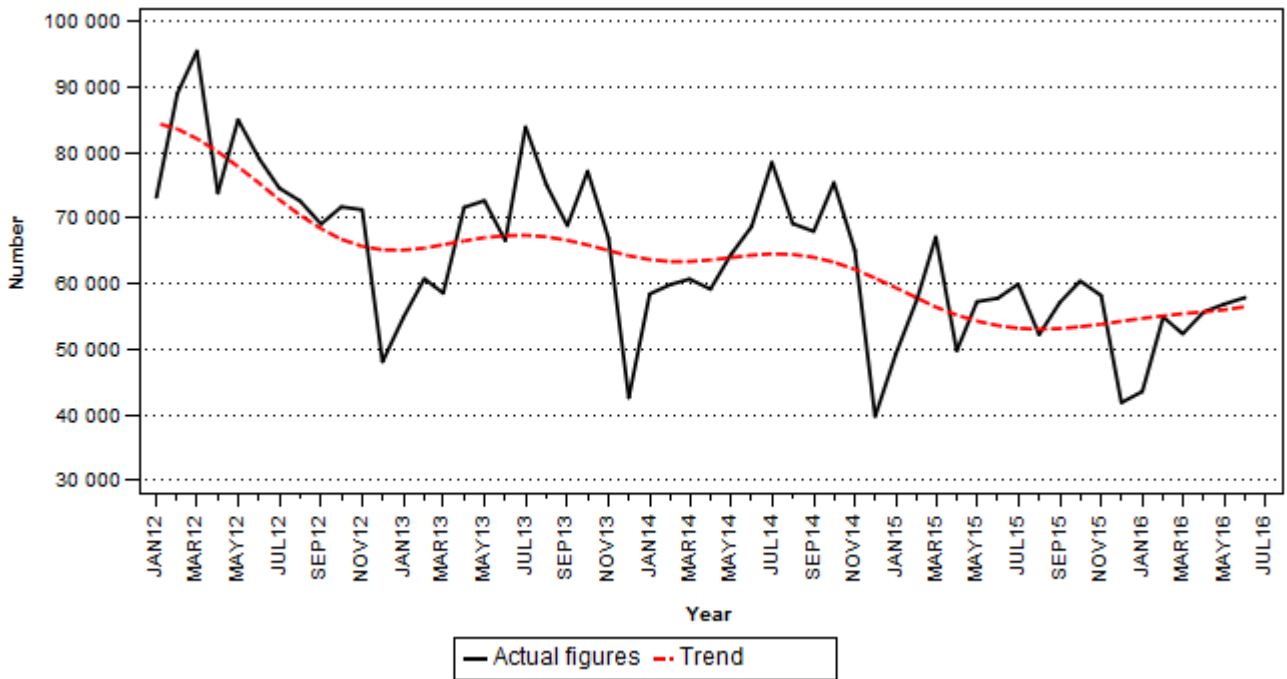
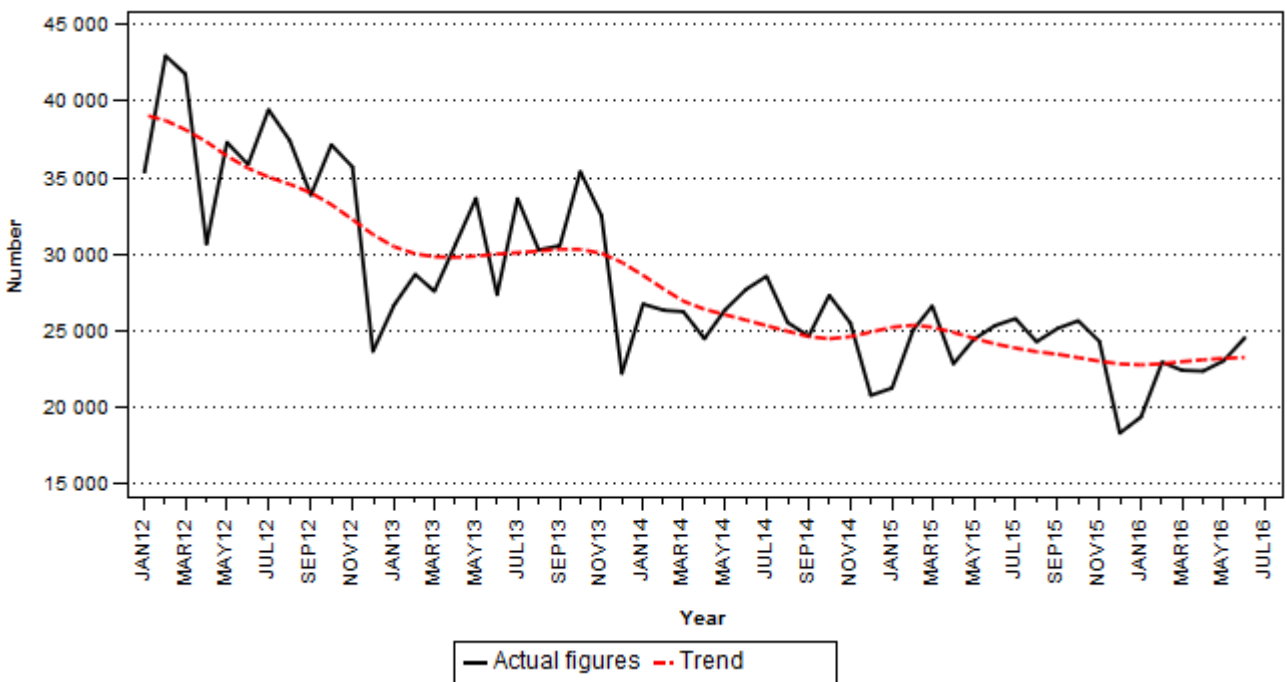


Figure 2 – Civil judgements recorded for debt



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			
		2015	Jun-15	1/ May-16	1/ Jun-16	2015	Jun-15	1/ May-16	1/ Jun-16
Cases recorded	Actual figures	733 514	63 679	61 246	62 939	623 802	55 084	51 615	54 698
	Seasonally adjusted		60 500	59 000	59 579		51 877	50 156	51 361
Civil summonses for debt	Goods sold - Open account	43 664	4 285	3 786	3 943	32 616	3 041	2 948	3 101
	Goods sold - Instalment sale transactions	23 011	1 753	1 778	2 216	18 234	1 336	1 380	1 715
	Services - Professional	84 964	7 694	8 216	7 083	73 636	6 721	7 188	6 096
	Services - Other	110 042	9 875	9 820	9 377	90 635	8 196	8 281	7 939
	Rent	29 255	2 376	2 689	3 018	22 558	1 820	2 139	2 447
	Money lent	164 531	13 246	13 631	14 008	153 342	12 311	12 987	13 303
	Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgements of debt	89 682	8 498	7 055	8 153	83 701	8 005	6 546	7 538
	Other debts	123 254	10 039	9 871	10 054	111 399	9 185	8 548	8 817
	Total - Actual figures	668 403	57 766	56 846	57 852	586 121	50 615	50 017	50 956
	Total - Seasonally adjusted		55 329	54 962	55 207		48 105	48 055	48 258

1/ Preliminary.

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

Item		Total				Private Persons			
		2015	Jun-15	1/ May-16	1/ Jun-16	2015	Jun-15	1/ May-16	1/ Jun-16
Number of civil judgements	Goods sold - Open account	18 545	1 580	1 609	1 566	13 804	1 153	1 207	1 206
	Goods sold - Instalment sale transactions	7 426	523	537	770	5 752	386	449	682
	Services - Professional	50 913	* 4 448	4 035	4 124	44 324	3 854	3 570	3 724
	Services - Other	42 221	4 166	4 002	4 380	35 776	3 649	3 525	3 778
	Rent	17 851	1 425	1 494	1 639	14 517	1 192	1 243	1 372
	Money lent	69 713	6 264	5 071	5 631	63 786	5 822	4 588	5 174
	Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgements of debt	27 604	* 2 440	2 244	1 969	23 763	2 167	1 902	1 718
	Other debts	54 764	4 490	4 042	4 446	50 056	4 106	3 564	3 972
	Total - Actual figures	289 037	25 336	23 034	24 525	251 778	22 329	20 048	21 626
	Total - Seasonally adjusted		24 046	22 914	23 204		20 962	19 997	20 180

1/ Preliminary.

* Revised.

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

Item		Total				Private Persons			
		2015	Jun-15	1/ May-16	1/ Jun-16	2015	Jun-15	1/ May-16	1/ Jun-16
Value of civil judgements	Goods sold - Open account	275 495	22 164	19 499	26 973	157 824	10 597	10 499	14 232
	Goods sold - Instalment sale transactions	104 326	6 416	8 998	7 145	89 527	5 245	8 154	6 291
	Services - Professional	285 325	* 35 981	21 205	21 481	230 346	19 962	17 940	17 842
	Services - Other	521 021	49 074	50 279	49 370	400 078	37 167	40 641	39 314
	Rent	304 315	22 387	25 452	27 175	213 394	16 253	19 553	18 510
	Money lent	1 172 061	115 868	99 312	91 955	1 052 905	109 842	90 972	83 793
	Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgements of debt	506 174	* 42 575	42 688	32 020	422 857	37 754	34 121	26 487
	Other debts	1 229 098	110 586	76 088	88 870	841 493	63 063	51 531	68 055
	Total - Actual figures	4 397 815	405 051	343 521	344 989	3 408 424	299 883	273 411	274 524
	Total - Seasonally adjusted		390 661	340 498	334 100		288 624	262 353	265 561

1/ Preliminary.

* Revised.

Table 4 – Percentage change in the total number of civil summonses and judgements and the value of judgements recorded between the second quarter of 2015 and the second quarter of 2016

Actual estimates	Actual estimates April to June 2015	Actual estimates April to June 2016	% change between April – June 2015 and April – June 2016	Difference between April – June 2015 and April – June 2016
Number of civil summonses issued for debt	164 748	170 365	3,4	5 617
Number of civil judgements recorded for debt	72 617	69 924	-3,7	-2 693
Value of civil judgements recorded for debt (R million)	1 089,2	1 005,8	-7,7	-83,4

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 2015 and the second quarter of 2016 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	-0,3	0,0	0,0
Goods sold - Instalment sale transactions	0,2	0,5	0,1
Services - Professional	1,1	-0,6	-1,5
Services - Other	0,9	1,3	1,0
Rent	0,8	0,2	0,5
Money lent	0,6	-3,6	-2,8
Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgements of debt	0,4	-1,9	-1,0
Other debts	-0,3	0,5	-4,0
Total	3,4	-3,7	-7,7

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 2015, 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 2015	Actual estimates June 2016	% change between June 2015 and June 2016	Difference between June 2015 and June 2016
Number of civil summonses issued for debt	57 766	57 852	0,1	86
Number of civil judgements recorded for debt	25 336	24 525	-3,2	-811
Value of civil judgements recorded for debt (R million)	405,1	345,0	-14,8	-60,1

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
2015	Jun	10 617	5 205	959	3 314	10 012	2 839	18 966	3 471	2 383	57 766
	Jul	10 353	5 406	843	4 302	9 882	2 618	20 210	3 699	2 594	59 907
	Aug	9 021	4 586	763	4 330	8 050	2 635	17 535	3 023	2 266	52 209
	Sep	9 108	4 882	727	4 195	9 065	3 373	20 049	3 418	2 327	57 144
	Oct	10 180	5 430	750	4 361	9 651	3 471	20 896	3 209	2 438	60 386
	Nov	10 506	4 398	735	4 880	8 794	2 864	20 261	3 513	2 220	58 171
	Dec	7 353	2 826	682	3 151	8 094	2 115	14 235	1 740	1 645	41 841
2016	Jan	7 050	3 004	577	3 678	6 501	2 232	15 769	2 833	1 881	43 525
	Feb	10 083	4 413	656	4 331	8 300	2 514	19 548	2 732	2 309	54 886
	Mar	9 812	4 316	773	4 062	8 978	2 948	16 805	2 785	1 849	52 328
	Apr	9 217	4 721	1 041	4 192	8 481	3 458	19 974	2 474	2 109	55 667
	May	10 618	4 456	1 096	4 731	8 957	3 228	18 601	2 911	2 248	56 846
	Jun	11 126	4 543	907	4 100	9 376	3 005	20 179	2 466	2 150	57 852

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
2015	Jun	3 869	3 987	407	2 758	3 691	1 631	5 480	1 605	1 908	25 336
	Jul	4 603	3 318	445	2 627	3 921	1 455	6 032	1 542	1 845	25 788
	Aug	4 109	2 620	438	2 855	3 284	1 234	6 246	1 667	1 832	24 285
	Sep	3 830	2 832	488	2 871	4 416	1 324	6 062	1 381	1 950	25 154
	Oct	4 264	3 220	412	3 056	3 892	1 010	6 541	1 785	1 467	25 647
	Nov	4 163	2 966	458	2 600	4 106	1 027	5 938	1 580	1 468	24 306
	Dec	3 147	1 454	306	2 030	3 031	1 003	5 053	1 059	1 241	18 324
2016	Jan	2 773	1 950	344	1 869	4 108	885	4 417	1 627	1 396	19 369
	Feb	4 763	2 760	442	2 247	3 341	932	5 594	1 490	1 378	22 947
	Mar	4 108	2 604	319	2 653	3 720	1 380	4 994	1 284	1 356	22 418
	Apr	3 521	2 501	422	2 642	3 913	1 626	4 901	1 482	1 357	22 365
	May	5 054	2 516	396	2 474	3 955	1 275	4 774	1 376	1 214	23 034
	Jun	4 089	3 796	458	3 288	3 867	1 557	4 842	1 163	1 465	24 525

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
2015	Jun	81 962	57 301	2 859	26 175	46 373	21 593	91 115	56 095	21 578	405 051
	Jul	86 915	49 682	4 954	30 311	46 133	19 282	104 086	68 679	13 939	423 981
	Aug	95 531	39 286	4 036	33 695	35 588	15 174	105 061	38 913	14 162	381 446
	Sep	53 835	54 304	6 480	28 910	51 247	16 280	105 994	42 981	17 924	377 955
	Oct	76 353	52 076	3 667	35 954	45 980	14 400	104 905	37 194	13 860	384 389
	Nov	71 399	47 573	4 916	35 697	55 776	14 894	100 029	41 485	10 641	382 410
	Dec	61 750	25 351	2 698	24 175	36 816	13 727	104 642	19 770	8 559	297 488
2016	Jan	46 639	34 713	2 485	24 477	35 414	11 661	72 696	37 228	11 414	276 727
	Feb	80 249	48 557	9 865	26 294	35 541	13 735	96 530	37 966	12 237	360 974
	Mar	73 597	51 422	3 985	35 333	45 669	12 418	96 545	29 566	13 435	361 970
	Apr	60 953	37 659	4 941	32 688	42 409	14 659	84 791	30 406	8 823	317 329
	May	69 161	48 619	3 479	31 696	49 649	13 814	88 538	30 278	8 287	343 521
	Jun	58 989	50 694	3 018	33 334	49 813	12 863	81 022	42 028	13 228	344 989

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 2016 was 86,2%. The collection rate for May 2016 was 84,7%.
Trend cycle	8	Smoothed seasonally adjusted and trend estimates are generated using the X-11 Seasonal Adjustment Programme.
Unpublished statistics	9	In some cases Stats SA can also make available statistics which are not published.
Symbols and abbreviations	10	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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