



stats sa

Department:
Statistics South Africa
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Private Bag X44, Pretoria, 0001, South Africa, ISibalo House, Koch Street, Salvokop, Pretoria, 0002
www.statssa.gov.za, info@statssa.gov.za, Tel +27 12 310 8911

STATISTICAL RELEASE

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Statistics of civil cases for debt (Preliminary)

June 2022

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This release provides an analysis of revisions. If you have any questions or comments, please send these to Joyce Essel-Mensah, JoyceE@statssa.gov.za

ENQUIRIES:
Joyce Essel-Mensah
Tel: 082 888 2374

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July 2022

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Key results for June 2022

Table A – Key figures for the month of June 2022

Actual estimates	June 2022	% change between June 2021 and June 2022	% change between April – June 2021 and April – June 2022
Number of civil summonses issued for debt	42 564	9,0	4,3
Number of civil judgements recorded for debt	11 856	0,7	-8,6
Value of civil judgements recorded for debt (R million)	285,5	-1,1	-5,5

The number of civil summonses issued for debt

The total number of civil summonses issued for debt increased by 4,3% in the second quarter of 2022 compared with the second quarter of 2021.

The main contributors to the 4,3% increase in civil summonses issued were:

- 'other' debts (contributing 1,9 percentage points);
- goods sold (contributing 1,7 percentage points); and
- money lent (contributing 1,0 percentage point) – see Table 5.

The number of civil judgements recorded for debt

The total number of civil judgements recorded for debt decreased by 8,6% in the second quarter of 2022 compared with the second quarter of 2021.

The largest contributors to the 8,6% decrease were civil judgements relating to:

- services (contributing -6,7 percentage points); and
- 'other' debts (contributing -4,5 percentage points) – see Table 5.

The value of civil judgements recorded for debt

The total value of civil judgements recorded for debt decreased by 5,5% in the second quarter of 2022 compared with the second quarter 2021.

The largest contributors to the 5,5% decrease were civil judgements relating to:

- 'other' debts (contributing -4,1 percentage points);
- goods sold (contributing -2,0 percentage points); and
- services (contributing -1,5 percentage points) – see Table 5.

In June 2022, 11 856 civil judgements for debt amounting to R285,5 million were recorded. The largest contributors to the total value of judgements were:

- money lent (R85,8 million or 30,1%);
- services (R57,9 million or 20,3%); and
- 'other' debts (R43,9 million or 15,4%) – see Tables 2 and 3.

Figure 1 – Civil summonses issued for debt

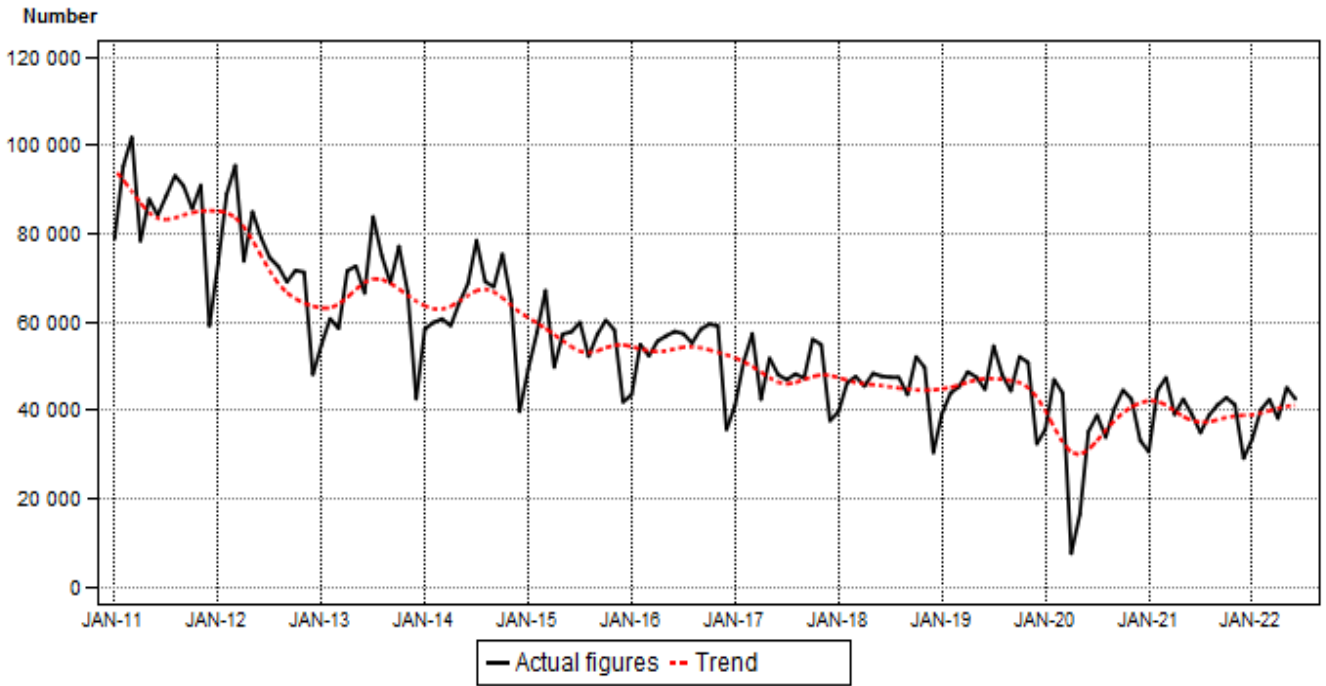
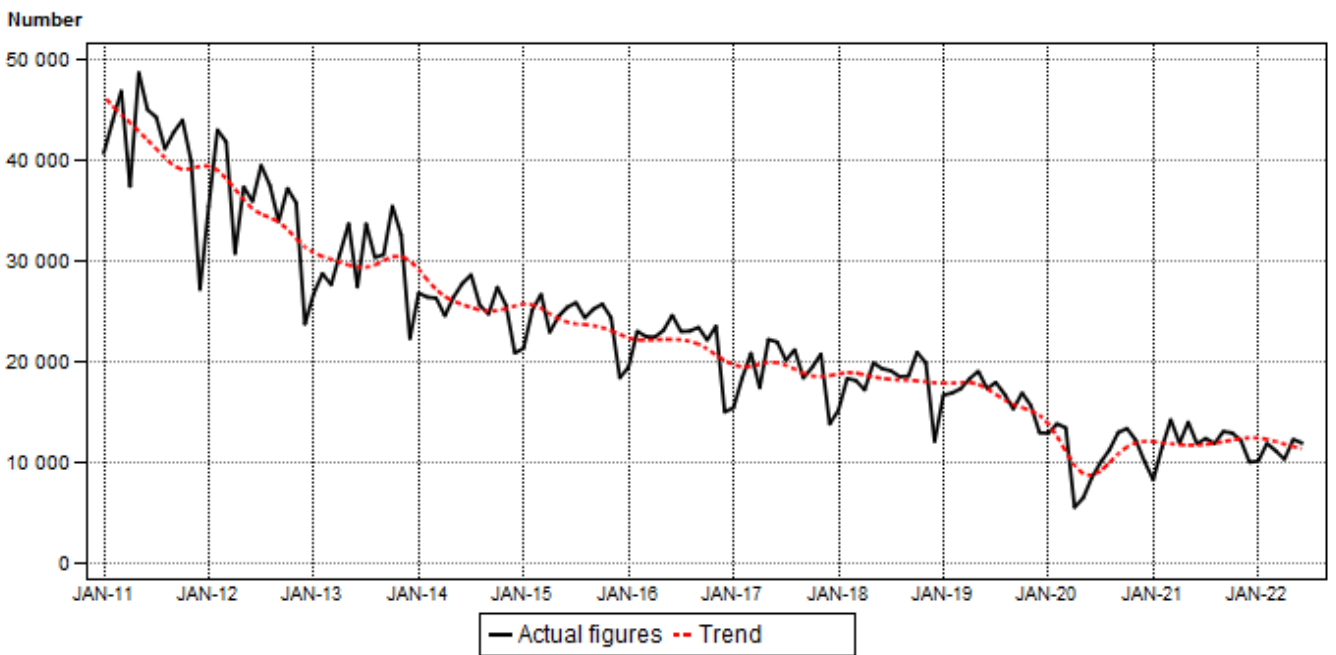


Figure 2 – Civil judgements recorded for debt



Risenga Maluleke
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			
		2021	Jun-21	1/ May-22	1/ Jun-22	2021	Jun-21	1/ May-22	1/ Jun-22
Cases recorded	Actual figures	494 845	40 518	46 934	44 153	436 556	35 582	40 446	37 487
	Seasonally adjusted		38 471	43 836	41 662		33 436	37 001	34 860
Civil summonses for debt	Goods sold - Open account	22 874	1 727	2 722	2 503	15 198	1 180	1 699	1 503
	Goods sold - Instalment sale transactions	15 644	1 476	1 482	1 541	13 175	1 245	1 278	1 252
	Services - Professional	48 261	3 539	5 225	4 918	41 729	3 009	4 068	3 848
	Services - Other	71 257	6 679	6 670	6 409	60 342	5 520	5 712	5 528
	Rent	27 753	2 249	2 345	2 572	21 361	1 795	1 641	1 759
	Money lent	116 700	10 093	10 666	10 128	108 854	9 421	10 180	9 374
	Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgements of debt	59 140	4 511	4 369	4 526	56 487	4 218	4 076	4 167
	Other debts	109 473	8 788	11 645	9 967	99 171	7 954	10 408	8 782
	Total - Actual figures	471 102	39 062	45 124	42 564	416 317	34 342	39 062	36 213
Total - Seasonally adjusted		36 535	44 133	40 135		32 285	37 999	34 494	

1/ Preliminary.

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

	Item	Total				Private Persons			
		2021	Jun-21	1/ May-22	1/ Jun-22	2021	Jun-21	1/ May-22	1/ Jun-22
Number of civil judgements	Goods sold - Open account	9 723	739	716	595	6 559	550	479	415
	Goods sold - Instalment sale transactions	5 635	513	605	591	4 762	441	453	425
	Services - Professional	23 496	1 769	1 992	1 898	20 923	1 552	1 716	1 620
	Services - Other	26 540	2 319	2 133	2 117	23 612	2 085	1 785	1 831
	Rent	12 335	888	1 147	996	9 900	687	854	767
	Money lent	31 574	2 924	2 846	3 048	28 531	2 612	2 522	2 583
	Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgements of debt	10 081	800	1 034	949	9 211	727	791	821
	Other debts	23 940	1 819	1 725	1 662	21 607	1 619	1 436	1 351
	Total - Actual figures	143 324	11 771	12 198	11 856	125 105	10 273	10 036	9 813
	Total - Seasonally adjusted		10 833	11 130	11 248		9 490	9 237	9 142

1/ Preliminary.

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

	Item	Total				Private Persons			
		2021	Jun-21	1/ May-22	1/ Jun-22	2021	Jun-21	1/ May-22	1/ Jun-22
Value of civil judgements	Goods sold - Open account	220 750	18 207	14 661	13 376	103 048	7 276	7 317	5 867
	Goods sold - Instalment sale transactions	204 306	23 233	17 897	17 811	171 819	21 069	14 604	13 872
	Services - Professional	224 848	17 147	22 113	17 768	176 770	13 199	16 889	14 594
	Services - Other	483 619	41 283	35 218	40 158	400 129	33 688	29 102	34 412
	Rent	398 259	23 493	48 151	34 273	295 650	14 300	34 318	27 078
	Money lent	983 153	85 547	89 440	85 813	918 510	80 634	84 444	79 908
	Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgements of debt	383 004	30 515	34 728	32 412	340 792	27 936	29 088	29 002
	Other debts	669 111	49 188	49 185	43 932	554 372	41 131	39 175	32 806
	Total - Actual figures	3 567 050	288 613	311 393	285 543	2 961 090	239 233	254 937	237 539
	Total - Seasonally adjusted		301 777	311 116	294 248		242 346	254 428	237 452

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 2021 and the second quarter of 2022

Actual estimates	Actual estimates Apr – Jun 2021	Actual estimates Apr – Jun 2022	% change between Apr – Jun 2021 and Apr – Jun 2022	Difference between Apr – Jun 2021 and Apr – Jun 2022
Number of civil summonses issued for debt	120 600	125 789	4,3	5 189
Number of civil judgements recorded for debt	37 523	34 289	-8,6	-3 234
Value of civil judgements recorded for debt (R million)	885,4	836,6	-5,5	-48,8

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 2021 and the second quarter of 2022 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	1,4	-1,0	-1,5
Goods sold - Instalment sale transactions	0,3	1,0	-0,5
Services - Professional	2,0	-4,6	0,0
Services - Other	-1,2	-2,1	-1,5
Rent	-0,3	-0,3	1,4
Money lent	1,0	0,9	0,0
Promissory notes, bills, R/D cheques, credit cards and other acknowledgements of debt	-0,7	2,0	0,7
Other debts	1,9	-4,5	-4,1
Total	4,3	-8,6	-5,5

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 2021, 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 2021	Actual estimates June 2022	% change between June 2021 and June 2022	Difference between June 2021 and June 2022
Number of civil summonses issued for debt	39 062	42 564	9,0	3 502
Number of civil judgements recorded for debt	11 771	11 856	0,7	85
Value of civil judgements recorded for debt (R million)	288,6	285,5	-1,1	-3,1

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
2021	Jun	8 917	2 973	558	3 027	5 963	2 033	12 140	1 688	1 763	39 062
	Jul	7 021	2 710	725	2 667	4 851	1 756	11 580	1 938	1 659	34 907
	Aug	9 222	1 918	779	3 297	5 385	1 749	12 599	2 199	1 745	38 893
	Sep	8 362	3 041	515	3 309	5 313	2 086	14 337	2 486	1 778	41 227
	Oct	8 313	2 860	521	3 564	6 284	1 985	15 268	2 211	1 818	42 824
	Nov	8 764	3 032	457	3 955	5 186	1 540	13 875	2 671	1 740	41 220
	Dec	7 279	2 554	349	2 615	3 495	1 659	7 954	1 721	1 467	29 093
2022	Jan	6 524	2 508	460	2 604	4 803	1 539	11 160	2 178	1 684	33 460
	Feb	8 115	2 993	466	3 399	6 799	1 888	12 214	2 545	1 682	40 101
	Mar	8 213	3 083	517	2 919	7 633	2 342	13 658	2 301	1 766	42 432
	Apr	7 778	3 309	505	2 681	5 755	1 695	12 341	2 391	1 646	38 101
	May	8 361	3 659	472	3 308	8 286	2 126	13 324	3 621	1 967	45 124
	Jun	7 937	3 400	620	3 089	7 282	2 072	13 279	3 098	1 787	42 564

1/ Latest three 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
2021	Jun	2 422	1 673	164	2 105	1 651	349	1 654	594	1 159	11 771
	Jul	2 143	1 032	257	2 250	1 957	541	1 995	889	1 244	12 308
	Aug	2 066	659	266	1 931	1 620	682	2 640	694	1 243	11 801
	Sep	2 617	937	267	2 064	1 825	716	2 660	620	1 278	12 984
	Oct	2 673	1 020	254	2 256	1 712	648	2 536	517	1 243	12 859
	Nov	2 892	1 425	175	2 125	1 119	483	2 001	617	1 302	12 139
	Dec	2 158	1 013	99	1 483	1 249	553	1 613	663	1 122	9 953
2022	Jan	1 676	1 288	129	1 726	1 687	340	1 550	557	1 085	10 038
	Feb	2 868	1 257	175	1 851	1 348	597	1 814	678	1 221	11 809
	Mar	2 005	766	246	2 036	1 302	637	1 965	916	1 205	11 078
	Apr	2 126	760	100	2 157	1 179	352	1 774	672	1 115	10 235
	May	2 632	1 033	186	2 271	1 400	600	1 840	1 008	1 228	12 198
	Jun	2 489	1 273	284	2 087	1 313	624	1 992	588	1 206	11 856

1/ Latest three 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
2021	Jun	64 074	31 007	3 379	31 247	47 121	8 090	71 969	18 327	13 399	288 613
	Jul	61 900	20 111	4 549	26 797	52 527	10 779	65 016	21 488	13 432	276 599
	Aug	68 741	14 303	4 178	27 880	43 039	12 579	97 814	54 980	12 531	336 045
	Sep	75 269	23 317	4 371	28 592	66 193	13 703	115 558	13 361	16 500	356 864
	Oct	88 759	21 153	3 878	27 577	54 364	13 249	87 711	21 486	11 833	330 010
	Nov	94 672	25 820	5 568	27 259	42 919	7 696	80 047	16 686	11 791	312 458
	Dec	79 821	22 018	1 755	21 170	46 803	11 989	63 471	14 607	8 063	269 697
2022	Jan	48 137	20 494	3 439	28 982	45 395	5 377	70 829	11 212	5 947	239 812
	Feb	86 699	26 031	3 286	26 090	65 365	8 740	65 794	14 494	10 383	306 882
	Mar	51 204	16 296	3 691	26 573	49 998	9 640	69 635	19 668	10 786	257 491
	Apr	59 314	15 686	1 636	27 155	46 933	5 011	66 041	11 872	5 996	239 644
	May	98 217	21 145	2 973	29 239	50 136	8 996	71 388	20 450	8 849	311 393
	Jun	75 873	27 652	3 195	27 253	45 780	9 992	73 827	12 915	9 056	285 543

1/ Latest three months are preliminary.

Analysis of revisions

Introduction

Preliminary monthly numbers of civil judgements recorded for debt are published approximately seven weeks after the reference month, e.g. preliminary numbers of civil judgements recorded for debt for June are published around mid-August. The preliminary values are revised over the following three months, using additional information received from respondents.

Note that seasonally adjusted values are revised monthly.

Analysis

Revisions may be analysed in terms of several dimensions, namely numbers and/or rand values and/or growth rates (e.g. month-on-month percentage changes, year-on-year percentage changes); seasonally adjusted and/or unadjusted data; totals and/or components; preliminary estimate compared with first revision and/or latest available revision; and various combinations of these options.

This analysis is confined to the following:

- Total number of civil judgements recorded for debt, year-on-year growth rate, unadjusted.
- Preliminary growth rates are compared with the latest available revised growth rates, where the preliminary growth rate refers to the first year-on-year growth rate published for the month in question.
- Time period: January 2012 to May 2022.

Figure 3 shows the preliminary and revised growth rates (line chart, left vertical axis) and the difference between them (bar chart, right vertical axis, where difference = revised - preliminary).

Table 10 provides key results relating to revisions.

Figure 3 – Civil judgements recorded for debt year-on-year growth rates: preliminary and revised

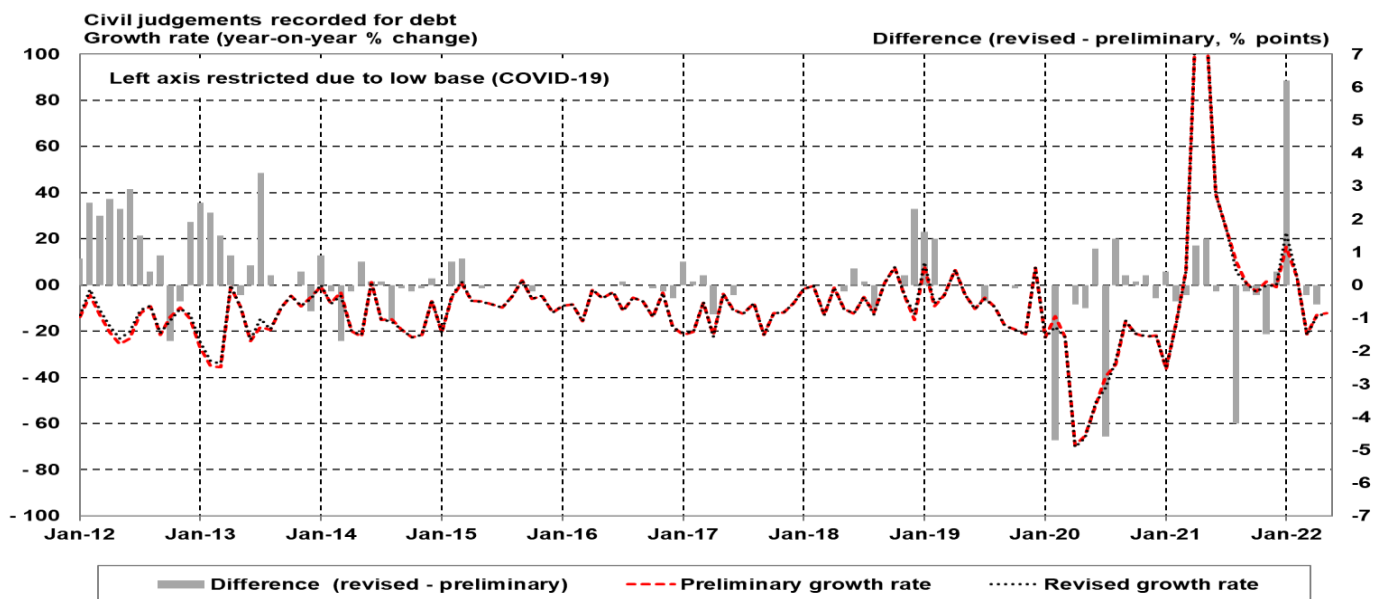


Table 10 – Civil judgements recorded for debt year-on-year growth rates: preliminary and revised

Description	Value / outcome	Comment
Average year-on-year growth rate over the whole period	Preliminary: -9,58% Revised: -9,39%	The average of revised growth rates is slightly higher than the average of preliminary growth rates
Mean revision	0,19 of a percentage point	This is the average of the revisions
Mean absolute revision	0,66 of a percentage point	Average of the revisions, but based on the absolute value of each revision (positives and negatives do not cancel each other)
Largest upward revision	6,2 percentage points	Preliminary 16,5% was revised up to 22,7% (January 2022)
Largest downward revision	-4,7 percentage points	Preliminary -13,5% was revised down to -18,2% (February 2020)
Range for all revisions	-4,7 to 6,2 percentage points	
Range within which 90% of the revisions lie	-1,4 to 2,4 percentage points	This may be regarded as the normal range for revisions, with revisions outside this range being outliers
Number of upward revisions	45 (or 36,0% of the total observations)	
Number of downward revisions	36 (or 28,8% of the total observations)	
Number of zero revisions	44 (or 35,2% of the total observations)	
Is the mean revision (0,19) significantly different from zero?	No	This indicates that there is no bias in the preliminary estimate; see Note 1 below.
Standard deviation of the revisions	1,26 percentage points	Standard deviation is a measure of dispersion about the mean – see the row below
Percentage of revisions that lie within one standard deviation of the mean	84,0%	This is the percentage of revisions that lie between -1,07 and 1,45 percentage points; the higher the percentage, the lower is the dispersion about the mean; see too Figure 4 below

Note 1: Is the mean revision significantly different from zero?

The formula for the test statistic is as follows:

$$test\ statistic = \frac{\bar{R}}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{1}{n(n-1)}\right) \left(\sum_{t=1}^n \hat{\epsilon}_t^2 + \frac{3}{4} \sum_{t=2}^n \hat{\epsilon}_t \hat{\epsilon}_{t-1} + \frac{2}{3} \sum_{t=3}^n \hat{\epsilon}_t \hat{\epsilon}_{t-2}\right)}}$$

where

n = number of observations

\bar{R} = mean revision

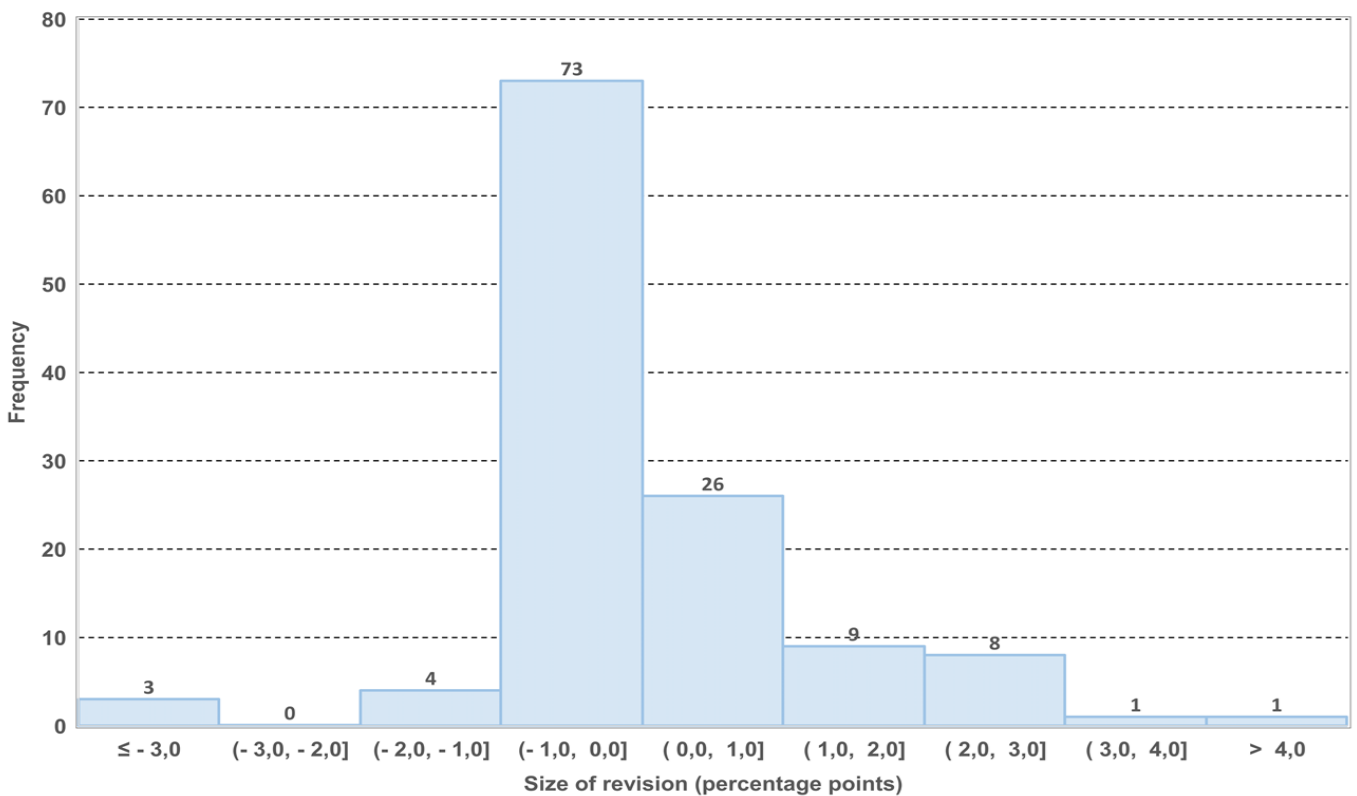
$\hat{\epsilon}_t = R_t - \bar{R}$, with R_t = revision in period t

Note that if the test statistic shows that the mean revision (MR) is significantly different from zero, then there is bias in the preliminary estimates. Bias in a series suggests there is scope to enhance the compilation of that series in an attempt to remove or minimise the bias. $MR > 0$ (statistically significant) implies under-estimation of the preliminary estimates. $MR < 0$ (statistically significant) implies over-estimation of the preliminary estimates.

In this case the test statistic is 1,51, which lies below the critical value of 1,98, indicating that the MR is not significantly different from zero at a 95% confidence interval. Accordingly, no bias is detected in the preliminary estimates.

Figure 4 shows the revisions in terms of a histogram. There were 73 revisions between -1,0 and 0,0 (-1,0 < revision ≤ 0,0) and 26 revisions between 0,0 and 1,0 (0,0 < revision ≤ 1,0). 89,6% of revisions lay between -2,0 and 2,0 percentage points.

Figure 4 – Civil judgements recorded for debt year-on-year growth rates: histogram of revisions



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. 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 email, 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 2022 was 79,3%. The improved collection rate for May 2022 was 82,3%.
Seasonal adjustment	8	Seasonally adjusted estimates of all categories are generated each month, using the X-12 Seasonal Adjustment Program developed by the United States Census Bureau. Seasonal adjustment is a means of removing the estimated effects of normal seasonal variation from the series so that the effects of other influences on the series can be more clearly recognised. Seasonal adjustment does not aim to remove irregular or non-seasonal influences, which may be present in any particular month. Influences that are volatile or unsystematic can still make it difficult to interpret the movement of the series even after adjustment for seasonal variations. Therefore, the month-to-month movements of seasonally adjusted estimates may not be reliable indicators of trend behaviour. The X-12-ARIMA procedure for civil cases for debt is described in more detail on the Stats SA website: Click to download seasonal adjustment for civil cases for debt February 2022.
Trend cycle	9	The trend is the long-term pattern or movement of a time series. The X-12-ARIMA Seasonal Adjustment Program is used for smoothing seasonally adjusted estimates to estimate the underlying trend cycle.
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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A large range of data is available via online services. For more detail about our electronic services, contact Stats SA's user information service at (012) 310 8600.

You can visit us on the internet at: www.statssa.gov.za

Technical enquiries

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| Onica Mushwana | Telephone number: 073 554 1183
Email address: onicama@statssa.gov.za |
| Joyce Essel-Mensah | Telephone number: 082 888 2374
Email address: JoyceE@statssa.gov.za |

General enquiries

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| User information services | Telephone number: (012) 310 8600
Email address: info@statssa.gov.za |
| Orders/subscription services | Telephone number: (012) 310 8619
Email address: millies@statssa.gov.za |
| Postal address | Private Bag X44, Pretoria, 0001 |

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