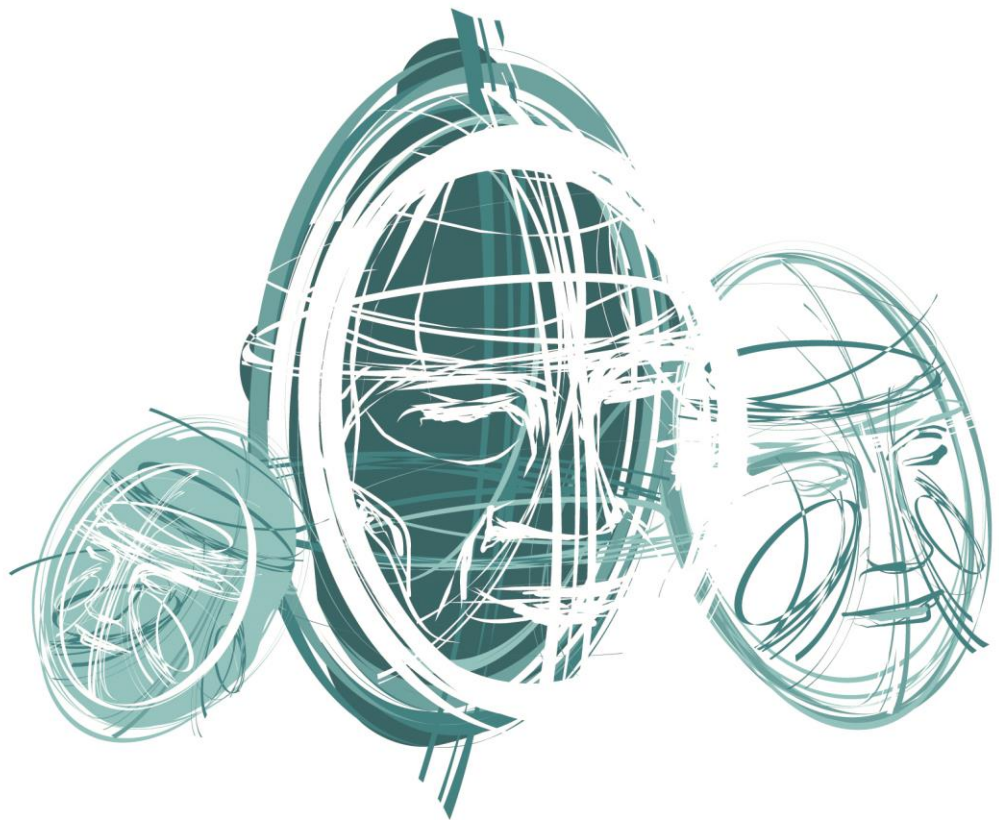


Living Conditions Survey 2014/15



Frequently Asked Questions [FAQ's]



The South Africa I know, the home I understand

Frequently Asked Questions

Statistics S.A.

Who is Statistics SA?

Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) is a government agency mandated under the Statistics Act (6 of 1999) to collect information from the South African public.

What type of information does Stats SA collect?

Stats SA is responsible for producing economic and social statistics through data collected from households, businesses and administrative sources. These statistics relate to things like employment; poverty manufacturing and production; health and vital statistics as well as population statistics.

Why are statistics collected?

Statistics enables institutions such as government, business and other organisations to make informed decisions in terms of planning, monitoring and assessment of policies and programmes.

Living Conditions Survey (LCS)

What is the Living Conditions Survey (LCS)?

The primary purpose of the survey is to contribute to the understanding of poverty in South Africa by measuring poverty in multiple dimensions, and to provide data for monitoring levels of poverty over time. Therefore, the findings of the survey will identify and profile poverty in SA.

What will the survey deliver?

The aim of LCS is to provide data contributing to better understanding poverty in South Africa, and to provide data for monitoring poverty over time.

Who is required to participate in this survey?

All households in the sampled dwelling units identified by Stats SA.

What is a household?

A household is defined as a person, or group of persons, who usually spend four nights on average in a common dwelling unit. They provide and share food and other essentials for living - **they live together and share resources as a unit**. Other explanatory phrases can be “eating from the same pot” and “cooking and eating together”.

What is required from household members?

Household members are required to:

- Nominate one person to supply the information required. This person, normally referred to as the main respondent, must:
 - Be knowledgeable about what happens in the household
 - Be available for 4 weekly visits with the LCS survey officer
 - Be able to keep a weekly diary of household expenditure
 - Answer questions completely and accurately (as far as possible)

- All other members of the household must:
 - Answer some of the questions asked by the survey officer as it relates to them
 - Participate in a measuring and weighing exercise
 - Assist the main respondent in recording daily expenditure
 - Provide accurate answers to questions

How much time will be required to conduct the interviews?

Depending on the particular household, an interview can range from between 30 minutes to 1 hour.

LCS Survey Instruments (Questionnaire & Diary)

How is the LCS structured?

The following instruments will be used to collect information:

1. Household Questionnaire

This is a booklet of questions to be administered to respondents during the course of the survey period. It reflects households' acquisitions of semi durable and durable items (and other household information) during the 12 months prior to the survey period. The household questionnaire is divided into 4 modules based on projected duration of completing the data collection process which are sub-divided into 24 sections.

Appointments will be made by the survey officer to meet with you over the survey period.

2. Weekly diaries

These are booklets that are left with the responding household. They are used for recording households' daily acquisitions (purchases and gifts) during the survey period. Respondents are required to do these recordings on the day of the actual acquisition.

To facilitate the households' recordings and to improve data quality the diaries are divided into three forms:

- Form 1 – to record all households' acquisitions on non-durable (food items, etc.), semi-durable (furniture, preserved goods and clothing) and durable items (vehicles and household appliances).
- Form 2 – to record acquisitions on prepared meals and other items that the household members acquire and consume while away from home (easily forgotten items) such as crisps, cool drinks, sweets, etc.
- Form 3 – to record payments on services.

This forced separation of particular types of acquisitions have the aim of focusing respondents on recording these types of expenditures as they were found to be under-reported on in previous surveys.

To further improve the quality of recorded data, the diaries will contain a checklist, included at the beginning of the questionnaire, of important items utilised by households and a list of items included at the end of the questionnaire allowing the survey officer to verify that nothing has been omitted. A verification section is found at the end of the questionnaire.

Finally, in order to ensure the completeness of the reporting, a personal diary will be given to household members. This is a pocket-sized booklet within which literate household members can record acquisitions while away from home. At the end of each week, the booklets must be handed to the survey officer in a sealed envelope (this is to ensure confidentiality to allow household members to accurately record acquisitions, even those they would not want other household members to know about) or to the survey officer who will then transfer the recorded information into the households' weekly diary.

3. Summary questionnaire and Classification of Individual Consumption according to Purpose (COICOP) code lists

The main purpose of the summary questionnaire is to assist survey officers to calculate the household's total consumption and expenditure for the survey period. This is done through transferring information from diaries to the summary questionnaire and therefore ascertaining that the household has reported a reasonable distribution of acquired goods and services. Furthermore, the summary questionnaire will serve as a code list when assigning codes for the classification of individual consumption according to purpose (COICOP) to the reported acquired items and in ensuring that high quality item descriptions are recorded.

The summary questionnaire has two purposes; to serve as a code list for giving the items recorded in the diaries a COICOP code, and to provide the survey officer with a summary overview. Thereby the survey officer can judge whether the acquisition patterns are consistent over the survey period and, if not, probe for completeness.

4. The Master Sample

The sample of dwelling units for the Living Conditions Survey 2014/15 will be drawn from a Master Sample that is based on information collected during the 2001 Population Census. In preparation for the 2001 census, the country was divided into 87,787 geographical areas called enumeration areas (EAs). For the Master Sample,

methodologists chose a sample of 3,080 Primary Sampling Units (PSUs). EAs that contained 25 to 99 households were combined to form Primary Sampling Units (PSUs). Each PSU can be made up of one to four enumeration areas.

The sample is designed in such a way that it is representative at the provincial level and within province at the metro/non-metro level. Within the metro areas the sample is further distributed by settlement type. The four main settlement types are: urban, informal, farm and traditional. This means that within a metropolitan area the sample is designed to be representative of the different settlement types within that metro.

Interviews

When and how often will I have to meet with the survey officer?

Four weekly interviews will be scheduled at a time which is convenient to the main respondent and other household members (where required). If you require more frequent visits by the survey officer to assist you with the completion of the diary this can be arranged with the survey officer.

What happens if I cannot make an appointment?

The survey officer will call the respondent (where contact details are available) a day or two in advance as well as on the day of the interview to confirm the appointment. The respondent can then confirm the appointment with the survey officer or re-schedule if required. It is however important that weekly appointments are honoured by both the respondent and the survey officer. Missing appointments would mean that it would be necessary to schedule a longer interview for the next session.

I am worried that I will not be able to complete the questions by myself. Who will be able to help me?

All you need to do is to answer the questions that the trained survey officer will ask you.

If you find it difficult to enter items into the diary, the survey officer can assist you in doing so. You would, however, need to collect all receipts of your expenses, and keep a written record of where no receipts were issued or when you were not able to keep receipts. You will also need to keep record of all items utilised for own consumption by measuring and weighing the items and making a note of these items.

Participation in the LCS

Why have I been selected to participate in this survey?

Participation in the LCS is not based on selecting “people”. Your dwelling unit/home has been scientifically selected to participate. Stats SA does not draw samples using “actual names of people” to participate. Instead we need to get a good representation of the whole country.

I'm afraid that I will not have any good answers for the survey. How am I supposed to answer your questions?

It is not important what education you have or how much you know about other things. The questions in this survey ask about the situation in your specific household. You are the expert on that. There are no good or bad answers - we just want you to provide truthful answers to the questions asked by the survey officer.

How many people will participate in the survey?

The survey will be conducted in roughly 32 000 selected dwelling units countrywide over a twelve month period.

The following table outlines the number of Primary Sampling Units that will be covered:

Province	Total PSUs
Western Cape	380
Eastern Cape	361
Northern Cape	180
Free State	262
KwaZulu-Natal	462
North West	266
Gauteng	539
Mpumalanga	288
Limpopo	322
RSA	3 060

On average, 10 dwelling units (DUs) will be selected in each Primary Sampling unit (PSUs). All the households residing at the selected DUs will be interviewed.

When will the survey take place?

Field operations for the LCS 2014/15 will commence in October 2014 and are scheduled to end in September 2015. Survey officers will schedule one weekly visit for four weeks with the respondents during the survey period.

Why do I need to participate if there are so many other people around here that can do it?

Your dwelling unit has been scientifically selected and we cannot replace this with another dwelling unit as this will have an impact on the scientific process according to which statistics are collected. It will mean that your house would not be enumerated, reducing the sample and ultimately affecting the response rates causing incomplete or inaccurate data collected.

Confidentiality of information

How do I know that you will not give my information to other people who will also participate in the survey?

Stats SA employees are legally bound by contract to never disclose any information gathered during the course of duty, to anyone who is not authorised by Stats SA. The obligation on Stats SA employees to maintain confidentiality of information is also provided for in Section 17 of the Statistics Act No. 6 of 1999. The Stats Act makes provision for legal steps to be taken against any Stats SA official who breaches the confidentiality clause (Section 18).

How do I know that you will not pass my name or information on to the South African Revenue Services or any other government organisation?

All information gathered is for statistical use only and will be presented in aggregated format – that means, as numbers and tables. There is no way in which any of your information can be traced back to you, because the data is fed into a computer in **coded** form, which makes the tracing of information to an individual impossible.

Then why do you ask for my name and surname on the questionnaire?

Your name and surname is *only* used to make questionnaire completion easier. This information is not fed into the computer.

I am still not convinced that my information will not be used unlawfully.

In accordance with the *Statistics Act (Act No. 6 of 1999)*, data about individuals must be treated as *strictly confidential* and information will thus under no circumstances be furnished to any other person or organisation. It is therefore illegal to give any information received from you to anybody who is not directly involved in the survey. A fine of up to R10 000 or imprisonment for up to six months is the penalty for a Stats SA official who is found guilty of communicating any information collected under the Statistics Act to an unauthorized person.

What can you do if I don't want to participate in the Survey?

Since the information is of national importance, you are obliged to participate under **Section 16** of the **Statistics Act**.

LCS Field staff

I do not trust strangers on my premises. How will I be able to verify that the person who knocks on my door is actually a Stats SA official?

All LCS field staff – publicity officers and co-ordinators; survey officers; district survey co-ordinators and checkers – should identify themselves by presenting an identity card issued by Stats SA. This will contain the photograph, name and ID number of the staff member. In addition, all field staff will be wearing Stats SA branded clothing (bibs and caps), which will make them easily identifiable.

Is there any way that I will be able to verify whether the staff member does work for Stats SA?

Yes, you may call the Provincial Field Operations Manager for your province on the number/s provided on the publicity pamphlet. They will have the details of all staff members, vehicle registration numbers, and also the areas in which the staff member is supposed to be working.

Any complaints regarding the conduct of LCS field staff can be reported to the Provincial Field Operations Manager at any time.