



Media Release

Association for Savings and Investment South Africa (ASISA)

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Assets managed by SA life insurers exceed R5 trillion for the first time

Buoyed by strong stock market performance, assets managed by South Africa's long-term insurance industry exceeded R5 trillion for the first time in 2025. Life insurers that are members of the Association for Savings and Investment South Africa (ASISA) concluded 2025 with R5.2 trillion in assets under management.

The ASISA long-term insurance statistics released today show that members managed 46.2 million risk and savings policies on behalf of policyholders at the end of December 2025. The number of in-force policies increased by 4% over the 12 months from 44.4 million at the end of December 2024.

Life insurers paid claims and benefits worth R626 billion in 2025 following tragic life events such as death or disability, and significant life-stage changes such as retirement. These payments included claims against life, disability, critical illness and income protection policies, as well as underwritten pension fund benefits, annuity payments to pensioners and endowment policy benefits.

Gareth Friedlander, a member of the ASISA Life and Risk Board Committee, says the long-term insurance industry remains financially strong. ASISA statistics show that collectively, life insurers held R380.5 billion in reserves at the end of December 2025, against the Prudential Authority's Solvency Capital Requirement (SCR) of R222.9 billion, resulting in a healthy average SCR cover ratio of 1.71 (or 1.71 times the legal requirement).

Friedlander explains that the SCR is calibrated under the Solvency Assessment and Management (SAM) regulatory framework to ensure that insurers can meet their obligations to policyholders should a 1-in-200-year risk event occur. "When insurers exceed the required SCR, it means that they have enough capital to survive an event even more catastrophic than the 1-in-200-year risk event."

According to Friedlander, individual life insurers set their SCR cover ratio targets annually, depending on their risk appetites, strategies and business models. "When life insurers aggressively pursue capital efficiency by deploying resources to increase their return on capital, they tend to target SCR cover ratios towards the lower end of their risk appetite ranges."

The life industry in numbers: 2021 to 2025

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Assets held	R3.7 trillion	R3.7 trillion	R4.1 trillion	R4.5 trillion	R5.2 trillion
Liabilities	R3.4 trillion	R3.4 trillion	R3.7 trillion	R4.2 trillion	R4.9 trillion
Capital available to cover SCR	R351 billion	R347 billion	R366 billion	R381 billion	R380 billion
SCR ratio	1.96	1.96	2.07	1.99	1.71
Claims & benefits paid	R608 billion	R578 billion	R599 billion	R639 billion	R626 billion
Number of in-force policies	43.9 million	44.0 million	43.8 million	44.4 million	46.6 million

Risk policies

In 2025, consumers bought 10.8 million new individual recurring premium risk policies, of which 6.2 million were funeral policies, 1.9 million were credit life policies, and 2.7 million were life, disability, critical illness and income protection policies. This represents a modest 3.8% increase in new recurring premium risk business from 2024, when 10.4 million new policies were taken out.

Friedlander says that, unfortunately, risk policy lapses are on the rise again after declining for three consecutive years. In 2025, some 8.7 million risk policies lapsed, compared with 8.2 million in 2024, 8.3 million in 2023, and 8.3 million in 2022. A lapse occurs when the policyholder stops paying premiums on a risk policy, resulting in no fund value.

“Policy lapses are always concerning. Unless lapsed policies are replaced with new policies, lapses widen South Africa’s sizeable insurance gap, leaving more families financially vulnerable should their breadwinner die or become disabled.”

The 2025 ASISA Life and Disability Insurance Gap Study, published towards the end of last year, showed that South Africa’s 16.1 million formally employed income earners collectively had enough life and disability insurance cover at the end of December 2024 to provide only 39% of the income needed by their families in the event of death or disability.

Savings policies

The take-up of new individual recurring premium savings policies (endowments and retirement annuities) slowed by 5.5% from 568 586 in 2024 to 537 203 in 2025.

On the upside, says Friedlander, the declining trend in policy surrenders continued in 2025. Policy surrenders occur when policyholders stop paying premiums and withdraw the fund value before maturity.



Policyholders surrendered 458 848 recurring premium savings policies in 2025, compared to 521 736 in 2024, 563 326 in 2023, and 585 265 in 2022.

New single premium savings policies, on the other hand, increased by 5.1% from 207 744 in 2024 to 218 276 in 2025.

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Issued on behalf of:

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Association for Savings and Investment South Africa (ASISA)

ASISA represents the majority of South Africa's asset managers, collective investment scheme management companies, linked investment service providers, multi-managers, and life insurance companies.