

Press release: 23 June 2012
GCRO 2011 'Quality of Life' Survey

Quality of Life in Gauteng

"Gauteng has fared extremely well during the last two years of global economic recession, and overall quality of life has risen very slightly to 6,25 (out of 10) for the province as a whole", according to Prof David Everatt, the Executive Director of the Gauteng City-Region Observatory, speaking on the release of the GCRO's 2011 'Quality of Life' survey results. "The driver has been government delivery – particularly in meeting basic needs and a perception among respondents that crime levels have dropped – but the scores were pulled down by growing cynicism about politicians, concerns about corruption, massive levels of unemployment, and on-going psycho-social challenges such as racism, xenophobia, conservative attitudes to gender equality and the like," said Everatt.

The GCRO is a partnership between the University of Johannesburg, the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, the Gauteng Provincial Government and organized local government in Gauteng. The GCRO's bi-annual 'Quality of Life' survey tracks economic, political, socio-economic and other dynamics of the Gauteng city-region (GCR) – which includes the whole of Gauteng and key outliers (such as Rustenburg and Sasolburg). This key region contributes 43% to national GDP and is the beating heart of the national and regional economy.

The Gauteng City-Region Observatory (GCRO) has just completed its second 'Quality of Life' survey, with a massive sample of almost 17 000 respondents. This follows the first survey in 2009, and thus allows some sense of change over time. Quality of Life itself – calculated using 52 variables covering everything from security to headspace, health to employment, values to community participation, shows a small but important increase in the mean (the average score) from 6,24 in 2009 to 6,25 in 2011.

The survey covered a wide range of issues, including access to and satisfaction with services, the economy, migration, mobility, transport, employment, education, values and attitudes, green behavior and sustainability, decent work and many other issues. More reports will emerge from GCRO over the next few months dealing with these and other issues.

For example, only two-thirds of respondents were born in Gauteng – and of the 'migrant' population making up the remainder, the vast majority are from other parts of South Africa. The need to re-think social stereotypes of 'foreigners' is obvious in a city-region of migrants. On the less positive side, 55% of respondents believe that abortion should be outlawed under all circumstances (including for example if the mother of child's life is in danger), while racist attitudes towards and between black, white, Indian and coloured respondents are clear.

The following GCRO staff are available to give further information on the areas covered in the survey that are listed under their names.

Prof David Everatt (011 717 7289, 0834559466 david.everatt@gcro.ac.za)

- Values, attitudes and psycho-social (headspace) issues
- General 'Quality of Life' index, poverty
- Overview

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- Migration & xenophobia
- Attitudes to women/gender-based violence
- Education levels

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- Household green behaviour with respect to waste recycling

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- Infrastructure delivery and the sustainability thereof, specifically relating to water and waste services

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- Housing and service delivery
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- Satisfaction with services
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- Transport