

**\*SPEECH BY PREMIER DAVID MAKHURA ON THE OCCASION OF THE RELEASE OF THE GAUTENG CITY REGION OBSERVATORY 2018 QUALITY OF LIFE SURVEY. UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG\***

13 November 2018

Deputy Minister of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Hon. Andries Nel;

Members of the Executive Council and Executive Mayors;

Vice Chancellors and Deputy Vice Chancellors;

Executive Director of the Gauteng City Region Observatory, Prof Rob Moore and the team of researchers for the Quality of Life Survey;

The Director General and Senior officials from government;

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am very glad to join the official release of the 5th Edition of the Gauteng City Region Observatory (GCRO) Quality of Life Survey.

The GCRO is a research partnership between the Universities of Witwatersrand and Johannesburg, the Gauteng provincial government and municipalities. It conducts research that help to inform policy-making and evidenced-based governance across the Gauteng City Region.

Universities are part of the Gauteng innovation ecosystem we are building. UJ and Wits form part of the Johannesburg innovation hub which stretches from Auckland Park to Braamfontein. Another innovation park includes University of Pretoria, CSIR and Gauteng Innovation Hub in Tshwane. The future is innovation and the fourth industrial revolution, at the centre of which is human capital development.

Gauteng Provincial Government has investment money into the appointment of two Chairs - Chair in Inclusive Economies at UJ and Chair in Trade & Investment at Wits. We want top class academics to lead the kind of research that helps us to transform and develop our society.

Every two years, the GCRO conducts a QoL survey. The 1st Survey was conducted in 2009. For almost a decade, the GCRO has used the Quality of Life Survey to track perceptions and mega trends on social, economic and governance issues across the Gauteng City Region.

Specifically, the Survey has become one of the most comprehensive and reliable instruments to measure citizens' satisfaction and perceptions on governance, service delivery, socio-economic development and the quality of life among the people of Gauteng.

This Survey has established itself as an important barometer to measure the pulse of the citizens and their social attitudes on all issues.

Accordingly, the Gauteng City Region Observatory's Quality of Life Survey has earned pride of place as an indispensable tool for evidence-based governance and decision-making.

As the Premier of Gauteng, I have the rare honour to witness the release of three of the five Quality of Life Surveys conducted by the GCRO – the 3rd Survey released in 2014; the 4th Survey released in 2016 and this 5th survey being released today.

Consequently, I have been tracking developments and changes of citizens' perceptions and attitude on various issues over time.

I would like to highlight the following trends from the 2017/18 survey:

The quality of life index shows sustained improvement in the quality of life and increase in levels of satisfaction with national, provincial and local government. Measured as a whole through a 'Quality of Life Index' made up of 58 different variables, overall quality of life in Gauteng has increased from 6.02 in 2011 to 6.30.

The quality of life for Africans is still significantly lower than that of white South Africans. This reflects the high levels of inequality that continues to plague our province. We need to act swiftly and decisively to reverse this.

There have been significant increases in residents' satisfaction with all spheres of government since the last survey was done. For instance with regards to the provincial government; 45% of respondents are satisfied with the provincial government compared to 39% in the 2016 Survey.

Satisfaction with provincial government has recovered close to the peak of 2009 elections. This is remarkable, given the fact that we are going through a period of rapid in-migration in the midst of an economic downturn. I'm quite pleased with the results. I commend the MECs and the Mayors for the hard-work to improve the quality of life of our citizens.

Across various services, Midvaal Local Municipality has been doing very well as the best performing municipality, while Ekurhuleni Metro has seen steady improvements to the point where it is now the best performing metro. Of all our Metro's the Survey shows that the City of Ekurhuleni is doing well. The City of Johannesburg has registered marginal improvements in many areas, while the City of Tshwane appears to be struggling in many areas. Satisfaction levels in Ekurhuleni are at 43%, Johannesburg 38% and Tshwane 34%.

I commend Mayor Bongani Baloyi and Mayor Mzwandile Masina for their good work.

I also commend the Mayors of Lesedi municipality, Johannesburg Metro and Mogale City for their great efforts in ensuring that their municipalities do well in various areas of service delivery, although they are generally outperformed by Midvaal and Ekurhuleni.

I am deeply concerned by the trend that shows service delivery decline and regression in Tshwane, Emfuleni, Merafong and Rand West municipalities. We have already intervened through Section 139 in Emfuleni - finances and service delivery will get better. The other municipalities also need support. In the coming weeks, I will meet with the Mayors of the affected municipalities to work out a common recovery plan. We can only tackle the challenges of service delivery and socio-economic development in the Gauteng City Region together. Let us not allow politics to stand on the way to serving the citizens of our country.

In all surveys, unemployment and jobs have remained in the top three main concerns of Gauteng residents over the past five surveys, together with housing, crime and corruption.

Infrastructure always receives a positive rating and highest level of satisfaction from citizens in Gauteng in all five surveys, while dissatisfaction is high on crime and healthcare.

Dissatisfaction with local government is rising in Emfuleni and Tshwane, while it is much lower in Midvaal and Ekurhuleni.

Crime is now the number one concern, followed by unemployment and drug abuse. Whereas a great deal of work is being done at national, provincial and city level to deal with investment and economic recovery as well as housing delivery, a lot more needs to be done to address crime and drugs. We need a fresh start in crime prevention.

I am keenly awaiting high calibre reinforcement of the Gauteng SAPS from the Minister and National Commissioner. We need to show progress in the next survey.

I have also noted that public confidence in the public health system has taken a knock. The recent National Health Summit has agreed on urgent steps to restore the health of the public healthcare system. We need universities to play their full role in this recovery plan.

I have also taken note of the views on the e-tolls. This is an issue of public concern to many Gauteng residents. You can see that there are also different views. My views have not changed. I still think e-tolls should not have a future in Gauteng – urban tolling has not worked anywhere in the world.

I take this opportunity to commend the team of researchers at the GCRO under the leadership of Dr Graeme Kotz. They make us proud by producing a highly regarded survey which has earned respect in national and global forums dealing with urban governance and quality of life in global city regions and cities. Well done to all of you.

I also thank our communities for cooperating with the GCRO in the process of conducting the Survey. Thank you!