

**MEDIA RELEASE** (*EMBARGOED until 12:00 Tuesday, 22 October 2024*)

## **LAUNCH OF GCRO'S QUALITY OF LIFE 7 (2023/24) SURVEY**

The Gauteng City-Region Observatory (GCRO) will release the results of its seventh Quality of Life Survey – QoL 7 (2023/24) at an event to be attended by Gauteng Premier Panyaza Lesufi on Tuesday, 22 October 2024.

**Date: Tuesday, 22 October 2024**

**Time: 10:00 – 13:00**

**Venue: Radisson Blu Gautrain Hotel, Sandton**

**The presentation of results will be followed by a panel discussion and then an opportunity for the media to engage GCRO staff, panellists and the Premier of Gauteng**

A key finding from the survey is that the **Quality of Life Index**, which combines 33 indicators from across the survey to provide an overall multi-dimensional measure of wellbeing, has dropped over two successive surveys, in QoL 6 (2020/21) and again in QoL 7 (2023/24), to its lowest level ever. The Index measures development progress across seven dimensions of health, safety, life satisfaction, socio-economic status, services, government satisfaction and participation.

The survey also shows that **poverty rates** have improved from their peak during the pandemic, but remain above pre-COVID levels. A quarter of households (23%) are living below the 'lower bound poverty line', which is an income of R1 058 per person per month in 2023 prices. Under COVID it had spiked to a third (33%) of all households. However, the **recovery is partial** because the proportion of people in poverty remains higher than during the pre-pandemic survey done in 2017/18 (18%).

Other findings are:

- Well over four fifths of respondents (85%) said that it was harder for people like them to find work than it would have been five years ago
- A quarter of respondents said that an adult in their household had **skipped a meal** in the past year because there was not enough money to pay for food
- Two thirds of households make use of **public health facilities**, and satisfaction with public health facilities is at 57% compared to 98% for those using private healthcare services
- Around 15%, up from 14% and 12% in previous surveys, are at high **risk of depression**
- Just over a fifth of households (21%) reported having been **victim of crime**
- Over four consecutive surveys there has been a significant increase in the percentage of households reporting that they feel unsafe walking in the areas at night, from 38% (2015/16), to 47% (2017/18), 49% (2020/21) and 57% (2023/24)
- Racialised inequality continues to be exemplified by African and Coloured people with lower incomes having proportionally less access to medical aid, adults and children skipping meals, and have greater difficulty in saving money
- Satisfaction with **basic services** have declined dramatically over the years. From 2013/14 to 2023/24 we see a drop in satisfaction for **water** (84% to 75%); **sewerage**

(78% to 61%); **rubbish removal** (80% to 64%); **energy** (78% to 42%); **local roads** (61% to 37%); and **street lights** (59% to 29%)

Rashid Seedat, the Executive Director of the GCRO said: “Despite our hopes, the new data tells us we’re not doing well. The last Quality of Life Survey, QoL 6, was done in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic that showed society to be in deep distress. The pattern has not shifted fundamentally as households in Gauteng remain under severe pressure and face multiple stressors.”

“The reason that development outcomes in the province have been compromised is that Gauteng, like many places in the world, has had to manage a succession of shocks and crises. The COVID-19 pandemic arrived in a society already struggling with low economic growth, acute unemployment levels and weakened governance capacity.”

In these circumstances, we have observed that households cope with adversity in a variety of ways:

- Social protection has been enhanced over the years. 32% of all households stated they received the **R350 SRD grant**, up from 23% during the height of the pandemic
- The percentage of respondents saying that someone in the household receives a **social grant increased** from 30% in 2011 to 50% in 2023/24
- Even though 85% believe that it is harder to find a job, 54% say that **formal employment** brings money to the household, compared to 41% in 2011
- Almost half (48%) of all households in 2023/24 affirmed that children in their household benefit from a **school feeding scheme**. The proportion benefitting has steadily increased over time from 28% in 2017/18 and 44% in 2020/21

According to Seedat, “Gauteng households are facing a poly-crisis of poverty and unemployment, disruptions to basic services, insecurity as a result of crime and violence, poor physical and mental health outcomes, difficulties with daily mobility and extreme environmental events. Perhaps unsurprisingly the survey found that satisfaction with all spheres of government has been severely affected”.

- **Dissatisfaction with all spheres of government** increased dramatically from 2009 to 2023/24, from 25% to 66%, 29% to 63% and 39% to 65% for national, provincial and local government respectively
- 68% of households now say that they **do not trust the current leaders of government** compared to 54% in 2020/21
- All but one of the **metro and local municipalities have experienced a precipitous decline** in satisfaction with an aggregate of just 22%

GCRO has conducted Quality of Life surveys every two to three years since 2009. The current dataset records the lived experiences of 13 795 of Gauteng’s residents, with respondents randomly sampled in every ward of the province. Data for the survey was collected by a team of dedicated fieldworkers from 28 August 2023 to 16 April 2024.

“It is important to note the timing of when the data was collected,” Seedat emphasised. “The finalisation of fieldwork preceded the national and provincial elections at the end of May, and the formation of the Government of National Unity and Government of Provincial Unity in Gauteng. So the results can’t be taken as views on how well the new administrations are doing.”

**Ends**

## **About the Gauteng City-Region Observatory (GCRO)**

The GCRO is a research institute that helps to build the knowledge base that government, business, labour, civil society and residents all need to make the Gauteng City-Region competitive, spatially integrated, environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive. The GCRO collects data and benchmarks the city-region; provides policy analysis and support; undertakes applied research; publishes critically reflective academic work; and participates in international conferences and exhibitions. GCRO is a partnership between the Gauteng Provincial Government, the University of Johannesburg, the University of the Witwatersrand (Johannesburg), and organised local government in Gauteng (SALGA-Gauteng).

**To arrange interviews with selected GCRO researchers, please email, call or WhatsApp:**

### **LEBOGANG LECHUBA**

Senior Communications Officer

Gauteng City Region Observatory (GCRO)

E-mail: [lebogang.lechuba@gcro.ac.za](mailto:lebogang.lechuba@gcro.ac.za)

Mobile: 082 572 6635

**Click the following link to access the full media pack online, which contains the following:**

[FAQ Sheet](#)

[Advance media briefing version of QoL 7 \(2023/24\) launch presentation](#)

[QoL 7 \(2023/24\) selected charts](#)

[Overview report of QoL 7 \(2023/24\)](#)

[QoL 7 \(2023/24\) Data Briefs on various specific topics](#)

[QoL 2023/24 Survey Stock Images](#) (please credit photographer Tshepiso Seleke)

[Researcher bios](#)

[Researchers by survey topic](#)

[Photos of researchers](#)