

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;

MEC for Finance & e-Government, Barbara Creecy and Executive Mayors;

Chairperson of the GCRO Board & Wits University Deputy Vice Chancellor, Prof Vilakazi;

Acting Vice Chancellor & Executive Dean of Engineering and the Built Environment at UJ, Prof Mashao;

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

Senior officials from provincial and local government;

Academics and members of the media:

I am very glad to join the official release of the 5th Edition of the Gauteng City Region Observatory (GCRO) Quality of Life Survey. This survey coincides with the 10th Anniversary of the GCRO, a research institute that has made a profound impact in understanding the pulse, the mood, the attitudes of the people of Gauteng and what they think about the work of government and key issues of concern to them.

It has already been explained that 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 to help us deal with the challenges of transformative and sustainable urbanism.

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 invested 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.

The GCRO QoL has received acclaim from Metropolis, the World Association of Major cities and urban regions. Through the Quality of Life Survey, both the country and the world has come to understand what we are doing in this urban conurbation called the Gauteng City Region, to build a liveable, sustainable and inclusive urban ecosystem.

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 and so-called Coloureds is still significantly lower than that of Whites and Indians. This reflects the high levels of inequality that continues to plague our province. We need to act swiftly and decisively to reverse this.

There is a marked increase in residents' satisfaction with all spheres of government, and that provincial government is better rated than national and local government - 45% of respondents are satisfied with the provincial government compared to 39% in the 2016 Survey.

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 now

become 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 perceptions of service delivery decline in Emfuleni and Tshwane. The provincial government has already intervened through Section 139 in Emfuleni - finances and service delivery will get better. National government is also involved.

In the coming weeks, I will meet with the Mayors of some of the affected municipalities to work out a common recovery plan. We can only tackle the challenges of service delivery and socioeconomic development in the Gauteng City Region together. Let us not allow politics to stand in the way of serving the citizens of our country.

In previous surveys, unemployment and jobs have remained in the top three main concerns of Gauteng residents over the past five surveys, together with housing and corruption. Crime and drugs, together with unemployment have displaced housing and corruption as the top three concerns of Gauteng residents. As government does better in some areas, new concerns emerge.

Infrastructure and dwellings always receive the highest level of rating from citizens in Gauteng in all five surveys, while dissatisfaction is high on crime and healthcare.

Dissatisfaction with government is something that requires close scrutiny so that it can be addressed. It is important to observe that 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. We need a fresh start in crime prevention that is informed by the results of this 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 are being taken 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 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 is a major problem everywhere 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.