GCRO DATA BRIEF

QUALITY OF LIFE SURVEY 6 (2020/21)
OVERVIEW REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2021

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Quality of Life 6 (2020/21) Survey: Overview Report

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Date: September 2021

Type of output: Data Brief

Research theme: Understanding Quality of Life

DOI: 10.36634/2021.db.1

Cover Image: Simon Wolfson

Published by the Gauteng City-Region Observatory (GCRO), a partnership of the University of Johannesburg, the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, the Gauteng Provincial Government and organised local government in Gauteng (SALGA).

Suggested citation: de Kadt, J., Hamann, C., Mkhize, S.P., & Parker, A. (Eds.). (2021). *Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21): Overview Report*. Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory (GCRO).

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Foreword from the GCRO Executive Director

I was entrusted by the Board of the GCRO with the position of Executive Director (ED) on 1 June 2021. By the end of May 2021, under the very able stewardship of my predecessor, Dr Rob Moore, the fieldwork for the Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21) had already been completed. As the incoming ED, I was enjoined to participate in the analysis of the data and make my contribution to the overall narrative emerging from analysis. My involvement has been very much at the tail end.

The GCRO's Quality of Life Survey (QoL) is one of the largest and longest running social surveys in South Africa. It is conducted biennially, through face-to-face interviews – with a sample size of 13 616 in its current iteration. It stands up to scrutiny in terms of methodological rigour, with careful attention being paid to questionnaire development, fieldwork back-checking and feedback, sampling and weighting.

I have had the distinct pleasure of participating in every launch of the QoL Survey since its inception in 2009, initially as an official in the City of Johannesburg and then over the last ten years in the Gauteng Provincial Government. It has always been an extremely useful and insightful resource for strategic planning and for developing new policy pathways for officials and elected representatives alike. Moreover, it has been used by politicians across the political spectrum as a source of credible data, and has similarly been utilised by a very wide range of local and international researchers interested in the dynamics of the Gauteng City-Region.

There is no doubt that 2020 and 2021 will go down in the history of the world as an extraordinary period. The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic led to severe disruptions to normal economic activity and social interaction. The fieldwork for the survey took place from October 2020 to May 2021. This means that data collection was conducted in the aftermath of the initial extremely stringent lockdown period and the first peak in COVID-19 infections in June/July 2020, and continued through much of the second peak in COVID-19 infections in December 2020/January 2021. COVID-19 protocols were meticulously adhered to throughout data collection, protecting the well-being of both respondents and fieldwork team members. Nonetheless, COVID-19 compounded the pre-existing challenges faced by fieldworkers in overcoming high levels of reticence to secure appropriate sampled interviews with a representative sample of the adult residents of Gauteng.

The results of the survey reflect the mood of a city-region confronted by a new, uncertain and challenging social and economic reality brought about by the pandemic. Some of the salient findings of the survey are as follows:

- COVID-19 and associated lockdowns have hit hard, and have forced households to adapt and respond. The economic impacts of the pandemic are extreme, with many respondents reporting reduction in salaries and working hours, as well as job losses. Grants and social support have provided some crucial protection to the most vulnerable. However, in general, the most advantaged have been least affected, while Black African and lower to middle income households have been hit hardest.

- We see evidence for substantial, and growing, psycho-social distress. Levels of violence and crime are high, and health has worsened. However, there is also evidence for strengthening social fabric, particularly at local levels, and even growing tolerance. Nonetheless, positive shifts are not evenly distributed.

- We still see relative stability in delivery of many basic services, and relatively high satisfaction with government response to COVID-19. But many residents feel let down, even abandoned, by government. Government satisfaction has been deeply, negatively affected.

- The GCRO Quality of Life Index (QoL Index) highlights an overall decrease in well-being since 2017/18 across almost all dimensions. QoL Index scores were pulled down most substantially by the dimensions of governance and socio-economic status. While scores have fallen for all population groups, Black Africans are the only population group whose scores have fallen below 2013/14 levels.

At the time of writing – early August 2021 – we are discerning a significant downturn in the COVID-19 infection rate in Gauteng, which signals the end of a particularly virulent wave of the pandemic induced by the Delta variant. Moreover, in early July, we witnessed social unrest in the form of violence, looting and arson in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng on a scale not previously witnessed. These seminal events took place following the completion of data collection, and so their impact is not reflected in survey results. However, we are conscious that they will have further impacted the experiences, perceptions and beliefs of Gauteng residents.

The QoL Survey is a complex and challenging task, comprising our GCRO staff, our survey contractor GeoSpace International and its army of dedicated fieldworkers, and our external advisors – Prof. Paul Fatti, Dr Ariane Neethling, Prof. Mark Orkin, Dr Benjamin Roberts and Mr Niel Roux. The entire project was superbly managed by Dr Julia de Kadt, very ably assisted by Sthembiso Pollen Mkhize, Christian Hamann, Yashena Naidoo, Melinda Swift, Ruth Mohamed, Graeme Götz and Dr Alexandra Parker. Indeed, all GCRO staff members have been involved in bringing the QoL Survey to fruition. It has been an outstanding team effort.

The GCRO is very happy to release the sixth GCRO Quality of Life Survey. As has been the case in all previous surveys, the data will be freely available and we will continue to use this rich repository to enhance our understanding of the socio-economic, psycho-social and governance dynamics of our city-region.

This endeavour would not have been possible without the guidance of our Board of Directors, comprising the representatives of our partner organisations, namely, the Gauteng Provincial Government, the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, the University of Johannesburg and organised local government in Gauteng (SALGA – Gauteng). The generous financial support of our partners plus the financial contributions made for the survey from the Johannesburg, Tshwane and Ekurhuleni metros, are deeply appreciated.

Rashid Seedat

Executive Director

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND


Sello Dhlabo

1. Introduction

By: Julia de Kadt, Christian Hamann, Sthembiso Pollen Mkhize and Alexandra Parker

The sixth iteration of the Quality of Life Survey (QoL 2020/21) marks a notable achievement for the Gauteng City-Region Observatory (GCRO), its service providers and partners. The final dataset records the lived experiences of 13 616 of Gauteng's residents, collected by a team of dedicated fieldworkers during the profoundly challenging period of late 2020 and early 2021. This Report provides a brief overview of survey context and methodology, followed by key findings across a range of thematic areas. It also signals our commitment to ensuring that the results of our survey are accessible and widely shared, and can contribute to the recovery of the Gauteng province from one of the most painful periods in recent history.

When the COVID-19 pandemic first hit South Africa, data collected two years before the pandemic helped us understand the risks of an unforeseen event. We compiled two vulnerability indices based on Quality of Life Survey V (2017/18) data: one on the risk of transmission and the other on the potential impact of lockdown conditions. We hoped that our analysis would help inform governmental response to the pandemic in Gauteng. It created a platform for engaging with researchers across the country, and we believe it helped inform public perceptions of risk. More recently, this work has contributed to shaping the vaccine roll out. We are able to do this with the Quality of Life Survey (QoL) data because it is longitudinally comparable, regularly collected, can be mapped at spatially granular levels and is broad in the range of topics that it covers.

Since the completion of data collection for QoL 2020/21, the province has experienced a third and particularly devastating wave of COVID-19 infections, and more recently the emergence of civil unrest. In this context, we are again reminded of the incredible value of the QoL datasets, collected every two years since 2009, in understanding and responding to the unexpected. Not only does the QoL 2020/21 data provides understanding of the lives of Gauteng residents during late 2020 and early 2021, but alongside the results of previous survey iterations, it allows us to see trends and changes over time.

When we launched the fifth iteration of the survey, Quality of Life Survey V (2017/18), in November 2018, the findings showed that the Gauteng City-Region (GCR) was already struggling with a range of challenges to multidimensional well-being. There was profound inequality, especially with regards to overall quality of life, and evidence of a weak economy unable to sustain all residents equally. There were persistent concerns about safety and crime, and signs of a very violent society: crime levels were higher in our 2017/18 data than in any previous survey iteration. Nonetheless, there were some positive signs too. The provision of basic services was stable and meeting the demands of a growing population. Satisfaction with government of all levels was low but increasing. In addition, the findings showed some softening of social attitudes and growing tolerance towards vulnerable groups such as foreign migrants and the LGBTQ+ community.

This was the context in which the COVID-19 pandemic arrived. As we have seen from other studies, the pandemic has had a profound impact on the lives of South Africans. A large part of the focus of this report is to use QoL 2020/21 data to further understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, with the particular benefit that we are able to compare many current findings to those from previous survey iterations. While we cannot demonstrate causality, our longitudinal data enables us to assess where shifts in responses have coincided with the arrival of the pandemic, and where they are a continuation of trends pre-dating the pandemic. Our report contributes to a deeper and more nuanced understanding of how life in Gauteng continues to change, providing crucial information to support efforts to recover and rebuild following an exceptionally difficult period in South African history.

Overview of key findings from the Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21)

The impact of COVID-19 on households and daily life has been substantial and Gauteng residents have had to adapt to the pandemic in many ways. Almost 3% of households had at least one member who was diagnosed with a COVID-19 infection, while just over 2% were unable to access COVID-19 testing when they needed it. To protect themselves from COVID-19, most households (92%) avoided public spaces and gatherings and 89% of households bought alcohol-based sanitiser. A smaller proportion of households have changed how they buy groceries or their mode of transport, but the data reveals that patterns of travel have nonetheless shifted substantially. Respondents are less likely than in the past to report that the purpose of their most frequent trip is for work, work-seeking or education, while they are more report that shopping is the purpose of their most frequent trip. Duration of travel fell notably, with respondents more likely to report that their most frequent trip took less than 15 minutes.

A substantial proportion of households with children kept children away from school even when they were allowed to return, with poorer households more likely to do so. Of those households keeping children away from school, 63% did not have access to a working computer and 80% did not have internet in their home, constraining the potential for remote learning. This highlights that the impact of COVID-19 on children's education extends well beyond school closures, and is likely to have been greater for households and children already at a disadvantage. Since March 2020, women are much more likely than men to have experienced an increase in caregiving demands for children or other family members.

The economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have been considerable, in some cases exacerbating existing conditions. One in five respondents had their salaries or working hours reduced since March 2020, and one in ten respondents lost a job. However, there is also evidence that grants and social support have provided some crucial protection to the most vulnerable. A third of households reported that one or more household members applied for the COVID-19 Social Relief of Distress (SRD) grant, with two thirds of applying households receiving the grant. Nonetheless, economic inequalities remain very high. White respondents and those in higher income groups have been relatively better shielded from negative economic impacts of the pandemic. Black Africans and the lowest income groups have been more heavily impacted.

Our historical data shows that since 2013/14, the proportion of respondents who live below the average poverty line in Gauteng has steadily declined over time. However, in QoL 2020/21, it increased significantly, rising to 36% of respondents. Adult hunger has also increased: one in four households now report adults having skipped a meal in the last year. Food insecurity is high, affecting over half of households in Gauteng. Challenges are greatest for larger households, and Black African and Coloured population groups. Food insecurity is linked to many aspects of well-being, and these patterns reflect the persistence and severity of the inequalities in South African society.

Respondents are also, unsurprisingly, reporting greater health challenges than in the past. The proportion of respondents reporting that their health is poor or very poor has increased, most notably among Black African respondents and women. The proportion of respondents at high risk of depression has also increased. Additionally, those experiencing unemployment, those who missed debt repayments, those with very low household income, and those experiencing food insecurity are all notably more likely to be at high risk of depression than the general population. Two thirds of respondents (66%) rely on the public healthcare system, continuing a trend of gradual increase since 2015/16. Reliance on the public healthcare sector is highest among Black Africans and in historically disadvantaged areas. Users of the public healthcare sector are substantially more likely to report having struggled to access healthcare since March 2020 than those using the private sector, and are also substantially more likely to be dissatisfied with healthcare services they use. It is evident that Gauteng's growing health challenges are disproportionately impacting more vulnerable members of society.

The QoL 2020/21 Survey included a new module of questions about experiences of violence, and the results are devastating. Eleven percent of respondents experienced childhood sexual abuse, while 65% experienced childhood physical abuse in the form of beatings. Adult physical trauma due to violence in the past year was reported by 16% of respondents. Males aged 18–24 were particularly vulnerable: 31% reported physical trauma in the past year. One in every ten respondents was threatened with or hurt by a knife or gun in the past year. A total of 1.6% of respondents reported having been raped in the past year. This figure is likely to be an underestimate but is still 20-fold greater than the 2019/20 police statistics would suggest (South African Police Services, 2020). Just over 5% of females experienced physical or sexual violence from a partner in the past year, more than three times the proportion of males (1.5%).

Despite these grave findings, there is some evidence of improved community relations and trust in Gauteng. Levels of community trust have increased substantially since 2017/18, continuing an upward trend from 2015/16. Although increasing slowly over time, levels of community trust remain relatively low for Black African and Coloured respondents. By contrast, levels of community trust rose dramatically among Indian/Asian and White respondents. Relative to 2017/18, respondents are also less likely to believe that Black and White people will never trust each other. While this belief fell for all population groups, the change was again most striking among White and Indian/Asian respondents. Attitudes towards 'gays and lesbians', as well as 'foreigners', have continued to soften over time, with large increases in those who strongly disagree that violence towards members of these groups is acceptable.

Another positive finding is that despite the challenges of COVID-19, participation in organised social activities and participatory governance over the past year has increased very slightly relative to 2017/18. Participation in social activities increased most substantially among individuals reporting extremely low household incomes, suggesting that these activities might be providing an element of support for Gauteng's poor during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is heartening to see that Gauteng residents continue to be actively engaged in democratic processes and local governance.

Overall, access to basic services in Gauteng has remained stable and very high over time, with the exception of refuse removal, which has declined somewhat in recent years. Satisfaction with basic services has fallen slightly relative to 2017/18, but satisfaction with other services such as roads, streetlights, cost of municipal services, and safety and security services has declined substantially.

Two thirds of respondents are satisfied with the way in which the government responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, satisfaction with all spheres of government has declined considerably since 2017/18. The proportion of respondents satisfied with national government fell from 43% to 33%, while satisfaction with provincial government fell from 44% to 29%. The proportion of respondents satisfied with local government is lowest of all, at 26%, down from an already low 29% in 2017/18. Respondents feel that government is doing worst in terms of job creation and keeping government free from corruption. Digging deeper, there is a strong correlation between negative attitudes towards corruption and lower levels of satisfaction with government. Respondents who have been directly affected by COVID-19 also have a lower level of satisfaction with the provincial government.

All of these findings contribute to a general decrease in the Quality of Life Index (QoL Index) score for residents of Gauteng, reversing a trend of steady increase since 2013/14. The QoL Index is calculated by combining responses to 33 survey questions into seven dimensions, and then combining these into a single score out of 100. This provides a single, user friendly measure of multi-dimensional well-being. The QoL Index score fell to 61 in 2020/21, from 64 in 2017/18. This decrease in the QoL Index score is driven by a particularly sharp decline in the government satisfaction dimension, along with smaller decreases in the socio-economic status, life satisfaction, health and participation dimensions. There are small increases in the dimensions of services and safety. On average, Black Africans continue to have the lowest QoL Index scores of all population groups, and are the only group to have seen their scores decline below 2013/14 levels. In addition, for the first time since 2013/14, the QoL Index score for females is lower than for males. This supports other indications that the well-being of females has been more severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic than that of males.

This concludes a brief summary of the main findings of the Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21). Each of these insights is elaborated and illustrated further in the 12 sections of this report: The impact of COVID-19; Transport; Poverty, inequality and social mobility; Hunger and food security; Experiences of violence and safety; Health; Community and social attitudes; Migration and moving home; Basic service access and satisfaction; Environment and extreme events; Governance; and Quality of Life and well-being. Our survey has given people a voice, and our results reflect the deep and cross-cutting challenges residents face at this moment in time. Many people feel unheard and uncared for, during an incredibly difficult time. There is a real urgency to engage with, and respond to, these findings.

Background to the Gauteng City-Region Observatory and the Quality of Life Surveys

The Gauteng City-Region Observatory (GCRO) is a partnership between the Gauteng Provincial Government (GPG), the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), the University of Johannesburg (UJ) and organised local government (South African Local Government Association – SALGA) in Gauteng. Established in 2009, the GCRO works to build the knowledge base that the government, business, labour, civil society and residents all need to make the Gauteng City-Region (GCR) competitive, spatially integrated, environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive. The GCRO works closely with a range of other stakeholders and partners – including municipal governments, other higher education institutions, research councils, research centres and councils, and information-exchange and learning networks – within the GCR, nationally and internationally. The GCRO receives core funding from the GPG, project-specific funding from partners and funding agencies, and in-kind support from both Wits and UJ. Academic independence is protected by the GCRO's location within Wits, a strong constitution, and an engaged Board chaired alternately by representatives of Wits and UJ. The research conducted by the GCRO provides a basis for benchmarking, provides policy analysis and support, undertakes applied research, and presents critically reflective academic work.

Since its establishment in 2009, the GCRO has conducted a large-scale, province-wide randomly sampled survey of adult residents every two years. These surveys, the Quality of Life (QoL) Surveys, have become the GCRO's flagship project and one of South Africa's largest and longest-running social surveys. The surveys provide regularly updated insights into socio-economic circumstances, levels of satisfaction with services and government, socio-political perspectives, psycho-social attitudes and other related characteristics of adult residents of the GCR. The maintenance of a consistent core set of questions across survey iterations provides an understanding of change over time. This enables the survey to serve as a tracking and diagnostic tool, providing a rich information resource for policy-makers and those members of the public wanting to observe where progress has been made and where concerns remain. The QoL surveys are recognised for their high-quality data, while the ward-representative sample design allows for analysis at a range of geographical levels – particularly valuable in the context of a very diverse and unequal province. The QoL Surveys have become an invaluable resource for all levels of government and are widely used by academics and students in South Africa and abroad.

On completion of the fifth iteration of the QoL Survey in late 2018, the GCRO embarked on a ten-year technical review. This rigorous review was externally chaired by Prof. Mark Orkin, former Statistician General and CEO of the Human Sciences Research Council. Through a landscaping exercise, literature review, and a series of workshops and engagements with survey experts, all aspects of the survey design and implementation were interrogated. An additional process explored the dissemination of survey data and results. The review findings emphasised the enormous value of the QoL Surveys to multiple stakeholders and audiences, and provided a series of recommendations to strengthen survey implementation and ensure sustainability into the future. These recommendations have been adopted and have substantially strengthened the planning and implementation of QoL 2020/21.

Overview of the Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21) implementation

Preparation for the data collection began a year in advance. GeoSpace International was appointed as the data collection service provider in early 2020, following a rigorous open-tender process facilitated by Wits. The survey was funded by the GCRO's core grant, supplemented by additional contributions from the GPG Office of the Premier, the City of Johannesburg, the City of Ekurhuleni and the City of Tshwane. The study was approved by the Wits Human Research Ethics Committee (non-medical) and the questionnaire and sample design were finalised in early 2020.

The QoL 2020/21 questionnaire went through various phases of testing and refinement before finalisation. The main, interviewer-administered core focused on various themes, including basic services, transport, health, COVID-19, community and more, while a confidential self-completed component focused on more sensitive content such as income and experiences of violence. The questionnaire included 214 questions and was translated from English into eight additional languages to ensure consistent collection of data among a diverse population. The mean duration of the fieldworker-administered interview was 35 minutes, and three minutes for the self-completed component.

The QoL 2020/21 Survey collected data from adults in their place of residence across all of Gauteng. A minimum of 20 interviews was completed in each ward, while a minimum sample of 600 interviews per municipality was required to ensure relatively precise municipal-level estimates. Within each ward, interviews were clustered within randomly sampled Enumeration Areas (EAs). Within each sampled EA, visiting points were randomly selected from all residential dwelling units in the GeoTerraImage Building Based Land Use dataset. These points were used by fieldworkers to locate the households that were invited to participate. The GCRO was responsible for the implementation of sampling, under the guidance of Prof. Paul Fatti and Prof. Mark Orkin.

In February 2020, it became clear that the emergent COVID-19 pandemic would pose substantial challenges for in-person data collection. Consequently, the initiation of data collection, originally planned for April 2020, was put on hold. During this time, the GCRO developed and added a COVID-specific module to the questionnaire, finalised all aspects of sampling and questionnaire translation, digitisation and testing, and developed comprehensive COVID-19 protocols. Following the relaxation of lockdown regulations, and the review and approval of COVID-19 protocols both internally and through the Wits Human Research Ethics Committee, the training of fieldworkers began in September 2020. The team of highly skilled and dedicated fieldworkers received extensive training and opportunities to practise using the electronic survey tools, the questionnaire, and COVID-19 protocols for fieldwork. This ensured efficient data collection and boosted confidence in the data that was collected.

Full-scale data collection began on 26 October 2020 and continued through to 27 May 2021. Despite various accessibility and weather challenges, data collection proceeded relatively smoothly and remained within the planned timelines for the project. All fieldwork was conducted under strict COVID-19 protocols, which included twice-daily screening, personal protective equipment and protocols to ensure interviews were well-ventilated. To the best of our knowledge, these measures ensured that there was no transmission of COVID-19 due to the implementation of this project.

Extensive quality control processes were designed to ensure confidence in the survey results while also protecting the timely and smooth implementation of data collection and finalisation. These were implemented by both GeoSpace International and the GCRO during all phases of data collection. Only interviews that were deemed valid and had passed all quality checks were included in the final dataset, resulting in a dataset that we are confident is robust and of high quality. Finally, the dataset was weighted against current population estimates to ensure that it represents the populations at the municipal and provincial levels and mitigates the inevitable biases that result from data collection.

The balance of this Introduction provides further detail regarding key aspects of the survey's methodology and implementation, as well as the composition of the final sample. Further details regarding data collection and methodology are available in the series of technical reports accompanying the dataset. These include the Sample Design Report (Hamann and de Kadt, 2021), the Field Report (GeoSpace International, 2021), the Data Report (Mkhize, de Kadt and Hamann, 2021) and the Weighting Report (Neethling, 2021). Subsequent sections of this report then present our key findings.

Sample design

The QoL 2020/21 sample design used wards as the primary sampling unit to ensure that the final dataset would cover all 529 wards within Gauteng province, and that it would be representative at ward level. Ward-level sample size was determined at the municipal level, as illustrated in Table 1.1 below, and was kept at 20 interviews or higher. In metropolitan municipalities, and in municipalities with smaller numbers of wards, the ward-level sample size was higher. As indicated above, a minimum sample of 600 interviews per municipality was required. Within each ward, interviews were clustered at the EA level. EAs were randomly sampled using a probability proportional to size approach, with sampling probability determined by a count of residential dwelling units.

Once the overall distribution of interviews across wards and EAs was determined, the GCRO prepared the interview visiting points, which were randomly pre-selected from all residential dwelling units in the GeoTerraImage Building Based Land Use dataset. In addition, three substitution visiting points were drawn for each primary visiting point to ensure that, when necessary, substitutions could be made in a controlled fashion.

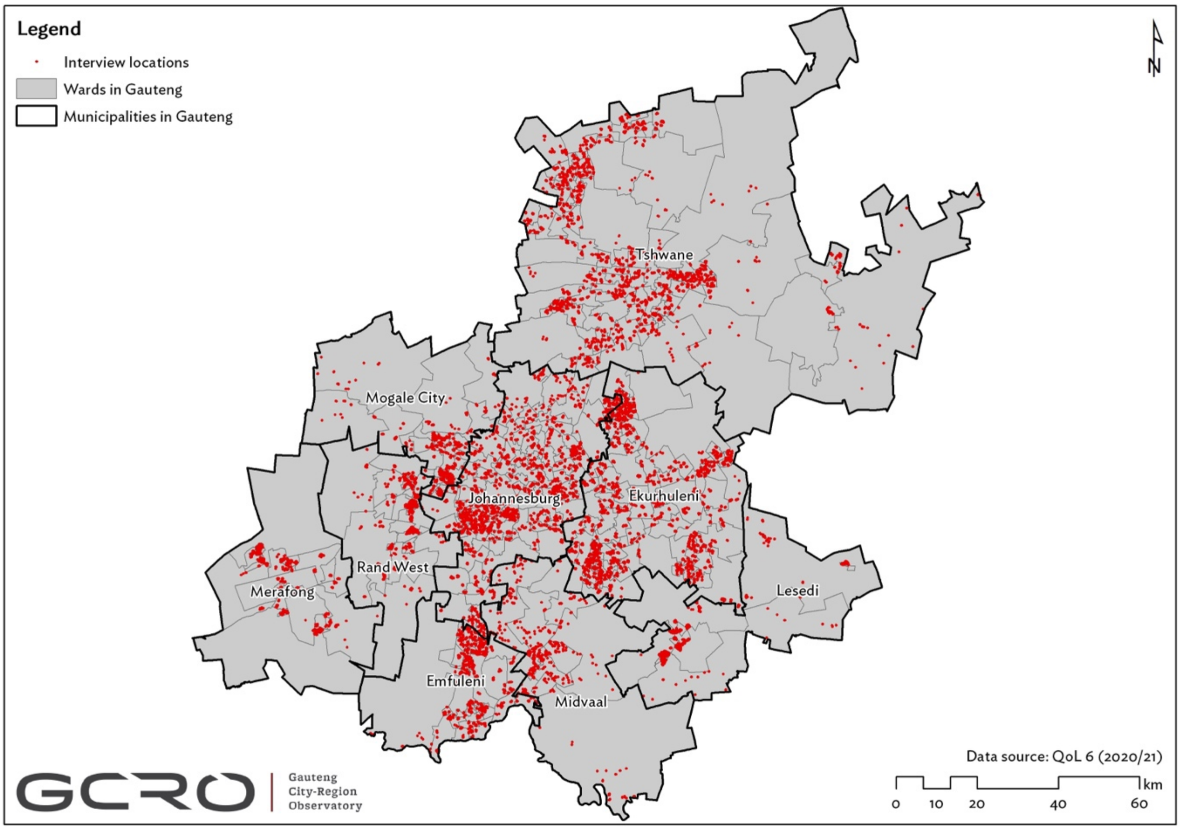
Table 1.1: QoL 6 (2020/21) sample design and distribution of attained sample

Municipality	Wards	EAs per ward	Ward-level target	Municipal-level target	Attained sample
City of Johannesburg	135	6	26	3 508	3 545
City of Tshwane	107	6	26	2 782	2 810
City of Ekurhuleni	112	6	26	2 912	2 963
Emfuleni	45	5	20	900	907
Lesedi	13	8	48	624	647
Merafong	28	5	22 (one with 21)	615	631
Midvaal	15	8	40	600	606
Mogale City	39	5	20	780	792
Rand West	35	5	20	700	715
GAUTENG	529	--	--	13 421	13 616

The in-field sampling protocol required field team members to visit each primary visiting point. Where visiting points were at a multi-unit dwelling (such as a hostel, block of flats, gated community or house with backyard dwellings), in-field random sampling determined at which dwelling unit interviews were conducted. Controlled substitution of dwelling units was permitted if the initially sampled dwelling unit was inaccessible or residents refused to participate. Once access to a particular dwelling unit was obtained, all resident adults (aged 18 and above) were listed, and the respondent was randomly selected from this list, and invited to participate in the survey. In-field sampling protocols were developed by the GCRO in consultation with GeoSpace International and were implemented by the fieldworkers, who used digital data collection devices (tablets). The in-field random selection of dwelling units and respondents was done using the M.App Enterprise data collection management system.

The final attained sample size (n=13 616) was slightly higher than the targeted sample size, and all municipal-level targets were exceeded (see Table 1.1). At the ward level, interview targets were met or exceeded in almost all instances, with the exception of a small number of particularly challenging wards where 95% of the target was attained. The achievement of this sample size and distribution, particularly in the context of COVID-19, is commendable, and is illustrated in Figure 1.1 below.

Figure 1.1: Distribution of the 13 616 attained QoL 6 (2020/21) interviews across Gauteng province

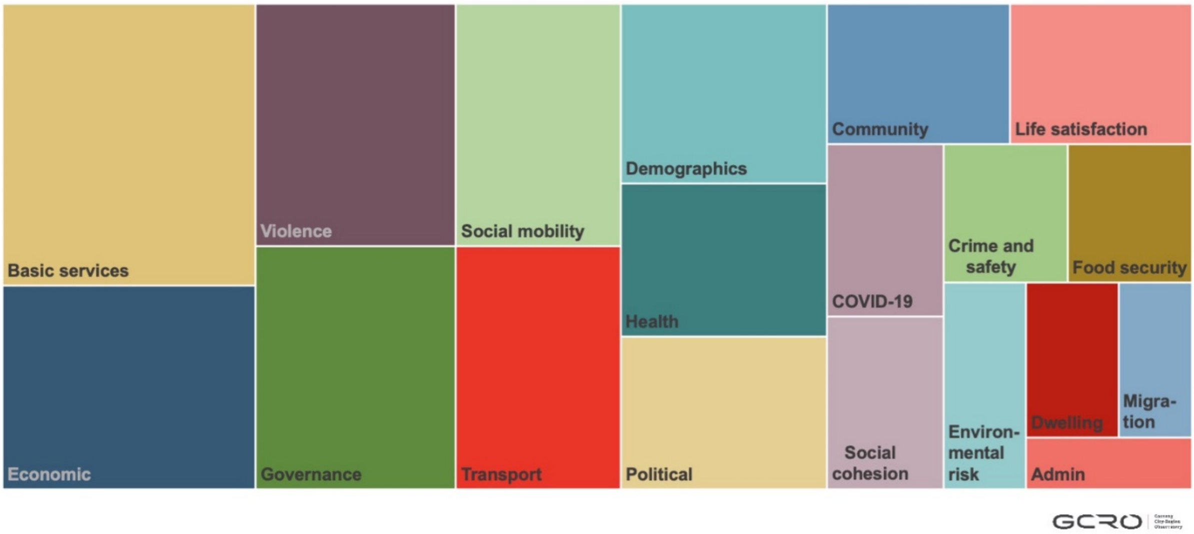


Questionnaire

The QoL 2020/21 questionnaire was designed to minimise respondent burden and interview length while retaining essential core content and allowing for the inclusion of additional questions in areas of particular analytical or public interest. Substantive new content was introduced in the areas of governance, social mobility, experiences of violence, and COVID-19. Pre-existing focus areas such as environmental vulnerability and hunger and food security benefitted from the inclusion of some new content. The resulting questionnaire included slightly over 200 questions distributed across thematic areas, as illustrated in Figure 1.2 below.

The draft questionnaire was shared with partners and stakeholders for input, prior to an iterative process of behind-the-glass piloting and questionnaire refinement. This ensured that the questionnaire was correctly and easily understood by participants from a range of backgrounds and that questions could be answered without undue difficulty or distress. The questionnaire was also translated from English into eight additional languages: Afrikaans, isiXhosa, isiZulu, Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, Tshivenda and Xitsonga. All translations were carefully reviewed by the GCRO and GeoSpace International before finalisation.

Figure 1.2: Thematic composition of questions in the QoL 6 (2020/21) questionnaire



The questionnaire was digitised using the [Kobo Toolbox application](). Fieldworkers conducted face-to-face interviews and used a tablet to record responses directly into Kobo Toolbox. Particularly sensitive questions – such as those relating to experiences of violence, income and gender identity – were placed in a separate section at the end of the questionnaire and were self-completed by the respondent on the tablet. Fieldworkers were not able to access these responses unless they were requested by the participant to assist in completing this section. Completion of this section was optional, and 87% of respondents were willing to participate. The mean duration of the fieldworker-administered interview was 35 minutes, and three minutes for the self-completed component.

Training and in-field pilot

In order to ensure high-quality data collection and full adherence to ethical requirements and COVID-19 protocols, all field team members participated in a minimum of five full days of in-person training. GeoSpace International facilitated the training, with contributions from the GCRO team, who were present throughout. Given the inclusion of sensitive violence-related content in the questionnaire, a dedicated training module was developed by Dr Abigail Hatcher to provide fieldworkers with applicable skills to facilitate the completion of these sensitive questions when necessary. The field team also received extensive training with regard to COVID-19 protocols.

An in-field pilot (conducted in early October 2020) provided a useful opportunity to test and refine all aspects of data collection and training. Thereafter, the full fieldwork team was trained, and full-scale data collection began at the end of October 2020. Two rounds of refresher training were also provided in order to limit any inconsistency during the data collection period.

Data collection

Full-scale data collection began on 26 October 2020 and continued through to 27 May 2021. Data collection proceeded relatively consistently throughout this period, with no unplanned interruptions. A brief scheduled break in data collection took place over late December 2020 and early January 2021. The pace of data collection slowed slightly during early 2021 as the COVID-19 second wave increased refusals, and more stringent COVID-19 protocols made access to some areas more challenging. A period of heavy rain throughout Gauteng posed additional logistical challenges and further slowed fieldwork progress. The majority of data collection was completed by 31 March 2021, with April and May largely dedicated to interview mop-up in more challenging areas. Throughout the data collection period, the GCRO and GeoSpace International met on a weekly basis to ensure that any challenges could be rapidly identified and resolved.

Ensuring the safety and well-being of our survey participants, as well as our data collection team, was a key priority in the implementation of QoL 2020/21. For this reason, extensive COVID-19 protocols were developed and stringently implemented in the field. These included twice-daily screening and temperature checks of all field team members, consistent use of surgical masks and face shields, as well as use of sanitiser as appropriate. Team meetings were held outdoors, and teams travelling together in a vehicle were required to ensure ventilation. Fieldworkers conducted interviews outdoors whenever possible, and emphasis was placed on ensuring good ventilation if interviews had to take place indoors. All participants were offered sanitiser prior to the interview and were provided with surgical masks if necessary. Data collection devices were sanitised prior to handing them over to participants to do the self-completed section.

During the second wave, from early January 2021 through to early March 2021, COVID-19 protocols were further strengthened to ensure safety. Fieldworkers were provided with KN-95 masks and were prohibited from conducting interviews in dwellings with poor ventilation. While these restrictions were essential, they did impact fieldwork progress, particularly in hostels, some informal settlements, and inner-city areas with large and poorly ventilated blocks of flats. Fortunately, the COVID-19 protocols appear to have been extremely effective. Only one field worker tested positive for COVID-19 throughout the data period, and to the best of our knowledge, there has not been any transmission of COVID-19 due to the implementation of this project. The fieldworker who tested positive for COVID-19 was not in contact with the field team or survey participants and completed self-isolation for a period of two weeks before returning to fieldwork.

Further technical detail on data collection and COVID-19 protocols is available in the Field Report (GeoSpace International, 2021).

Quality control

The quality control processes for QoL 2020/21 were designed to ensure confidence in the survey results while also protecting the timely and smooth implementation of data collection and finalisation. To this end, the prevention of data quality challenges was prioritised through careful recruitment of fieldworkers, high-quality training, and close and supportive in-field management. A second priority was the early identification and management of any emergent challenges. Through this strategy, we have implemented an extremely stringent quality control process without the need to reject large numbers of surveys. This in turn has been beneficial for fieldworker morale, substantially reducing fieldworker drop-out rates.

Quality control made use of multiple methods, and ensured the quality of sampling and interview administration as well as of the data itself. Spatial checks using GIS data were used to ensure interviews were conducted at the appropriate, pre-selected visiting points, or at appropriate substitution points when necessary. Automated checks were run on all incoming data, ensuring rapid identification of any challenges with sampling, questionnaire administration or data quality. This was supplemented by additional ad-hoc data checks. Telephonic callbacks and in-field revisits were used to resolve data queries. In addition, random telephonic callbacks were made to approximately 25% of respondents throughout the data collection period.

Interviews were only deemed valid and included in the final analytical dataset if they passed all quality checks, and if any issues identified had been appropriately rectified.

Weighting and sample composition

Due to the relatively flat ward-level sample size, and the inevitable biases resulting from data collection, the QoL 2020/21 Survey data required weighting to ensure that it is representative of the population at the municipal and provincial levels. The weights for QoL 2020/21 were calculated by a weighting specialist, Dr Ariane Neethling, in close consultation with the GCRO. Weights were calculated to ensure that each ward is represented proportionally to its adult population in municipal and provincial analyses, and to bring the sample into alignment with population group and gender distributions at the municipal level. As the most recent official ward-level population estimates date back to Census 2011, and municipal estimates to Community Survey 2016, contemporary population estimates were sourced from GeoTerraImage and used as the basis for the calculation of weights. Further detail on weighting methodology and implementation is available in the Weighting Report (Neethling, 2021).

The impact of the weights on aspects of sample distribution is illustrated in Tables 1.2 and 1.3 below. All results presented in this report have been calculated using the weighted dataset and can therefore be considered broadly representative of the adult population of each municipality and the province as a whole.

Table 1.2: Municipal sample distribution for unweighted and weighted QoL 6 (2020/21) data

Municipality	Sample size (unweighted)	Percentage of sample (unweighted)	Percentage of sample (weighted)
City of Johannesburg	3 545	26.0%	38.4%
City of Tshwane	2 810	20.6%	24.1%
City of Ekurhuleni	2 963	21.8%	25.4%
Emfuleni	907	6.7%	4.6%
Lesedi	647	4.8%	0.7%
Merafong	631	4.6%	1.6%
Midvaal	606	4.5%	0.7%
Mogale City	792	5.8%	2.5%
Rand West	715	5.3%	2.0%
GAUTENG	13 616	100%	100%

Table 1.3: Sample composition by sex and population group for Gauteng province in the unweighted and weighted QoL 6 (2020/21) data

		Black African	Coloured	Indian/Asian	White	Other	Total
Unweighted	Male	37.2%	1.2%	0.8%	7.2%	0.1%	46.6%
	Female	43.1%	1.5%	0.7%	8.1%	0.0%	53.4%
	Total	80.3%	2.8%	1.5%	15.3%	0.1%	100%
Weighted	Male	40.5%	1.5%	1.6%	6.3%	0.1%	49.9%
	Female	40.0%	1.7%	1.5%	6.8%	0.1%	50.1%
	Total	80.4%	3.2%	3.1%	13.1%	0.2%	100%

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Introduction

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Suggested citation:
De Kadt, J., Hamann, C., Mkhize, S. P., & Parker, A. (2021). Introduction. In J. de Kadt, C. Hamann, S.P. Mkhize & A. Parker (Eds.), *Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21): Overview Report* (Section 1). Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.

KEY FINDINGS

Thato Mabaso

2. *The impact of COVID-19*

By: Alexandra Parker, Graeme Götz, Christian Hamann and Gillian Maree

Highlights

- By the completion of QoL 6 (2020/21) fieldwork in May 2021, 2.7% of respondents reported COVID-19 infections within their households and 2.2% of respondents reported not being able to access COVID-19 testing when they needed it.

- In response to the pandemic, 92% of households avoided public spaces and gatherings and 89% of households bought alcohol-based sanitiser. A smaller proportion of households changed their mode of transport (25%) or how they buy groceries (35%).

- Thirty-nine percent of households with children kept children away from school when they were allowed to return and of those households, 63% did not have access to a working computer and 80% did not have internet access, constraining the potential for learning at home. In addition, these households keeping children away from school were more likely to be poor. As a result, the impact on children's education may be greater for households already at a disadvantage and extends beyond school closures.

- Women have disproportionately borne the additional responsibility for looking after children and family members since March 2020.

- The economic impact of the pandemic has been widespread. Almost a third of respondents who were working prior to March 2020 subsequently had their salaries or working hours reduced, and one in five lost a job.

- COVID-19 has had deep socio-economic impacts, but these impacts vary by population group, sex and income group. In general terms, it seems that White respondents and those from higher income groups have been relatively better shielded from the negative impacts. Black Africans and the lowest income groups have been heavily impacted, although it is also clear that some social and economic support has provided a degree of protection to the most vulnerable.

- At least one adult in a third of all households applied for the COVID-19 Social Relief of Distress (SRD) grant. Two thirds of applying households received at least one SRD grant.

- Two thirds of respondents (62%) are satisfied with the way in which the government responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. This is substantially higher than satisfaction with national government in general. Satisfaction with the government's pandemic response changed during data collection and was at its lowest during the height of the second wave.

Introduction

Data collection for the Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21) was due to begin at the same time that South Africa went into a national lockdown. Although this delayed fieldwork for six months, it allowed for a set of questions to be included in the survey that asked how COVID-19 may have impacted households or shifted perceptions. This section provides an overview of the results from these new questions and is a summary of the detailed analysis contained in the GCRO Data Brief *Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Gauteng City-Region: Findings from the GCRO's Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21)* (Maree et al., 2021).

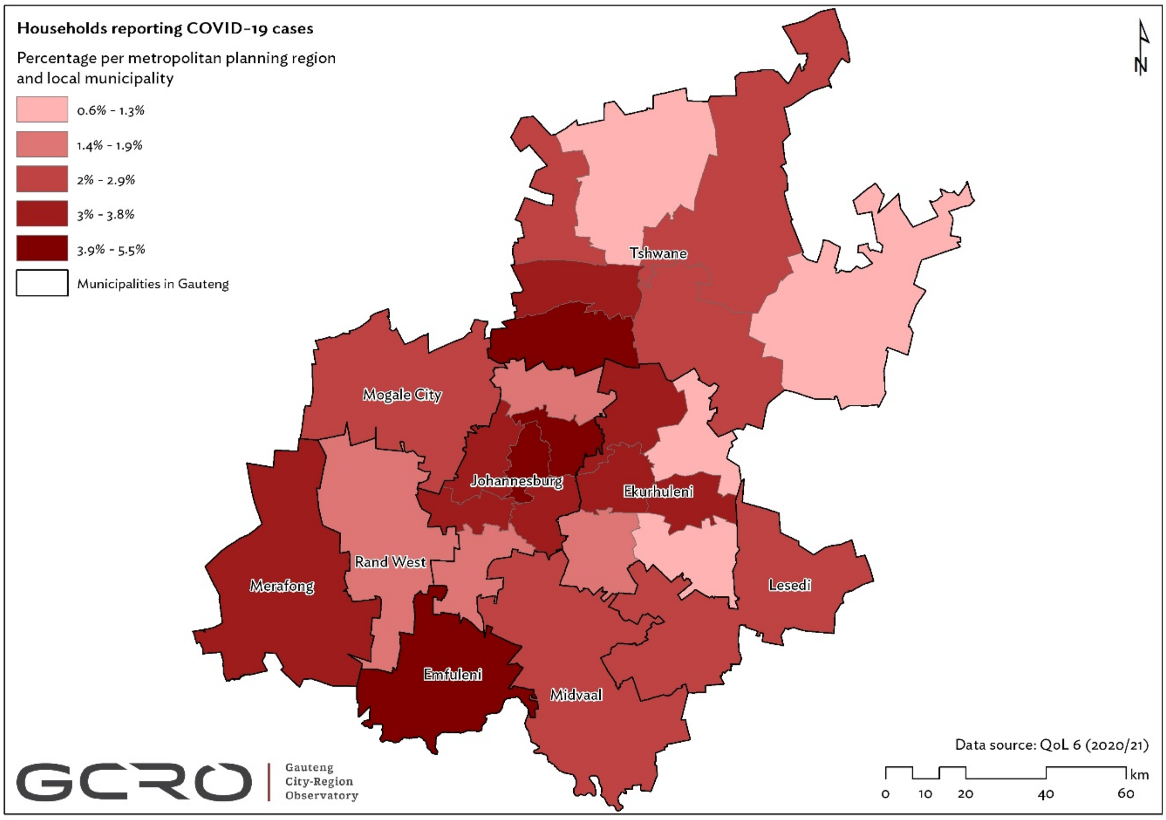
COVID-19 in households

QoL 2020/21 was conducted between October 2020 and May 2021, covering the second wave but excluding the third wave. Respondents to QoL 2020/21 were asked if any COVID-19 infections had been diagnosed in their households, and 2.7% reported a COVID-19 infection. The question in QoL 2020/21 provides an indication of confirmed COVID-19 infections in households but did not ask for further details on who was diagnosed or how. It is possible that different members of a household tested positive for COVID-19 at different times. It is also possible that the same respondents who reported COVID-19 in the household may have been denied testing at another time.

Using the Statistics South Africa (StatsSA) 2020 mid-year population and household size estimates, the QoL 2020/21 data can be extrapolated to approximately 424 702 infections (StatsSA, 2020). Official statistics for COVID-19 cases on 27 May 2021 when fieldwork was completed was 450 377, indicating that QoL 2020/21 figures aligned with official positive test numbers (IBM Research, 2021).

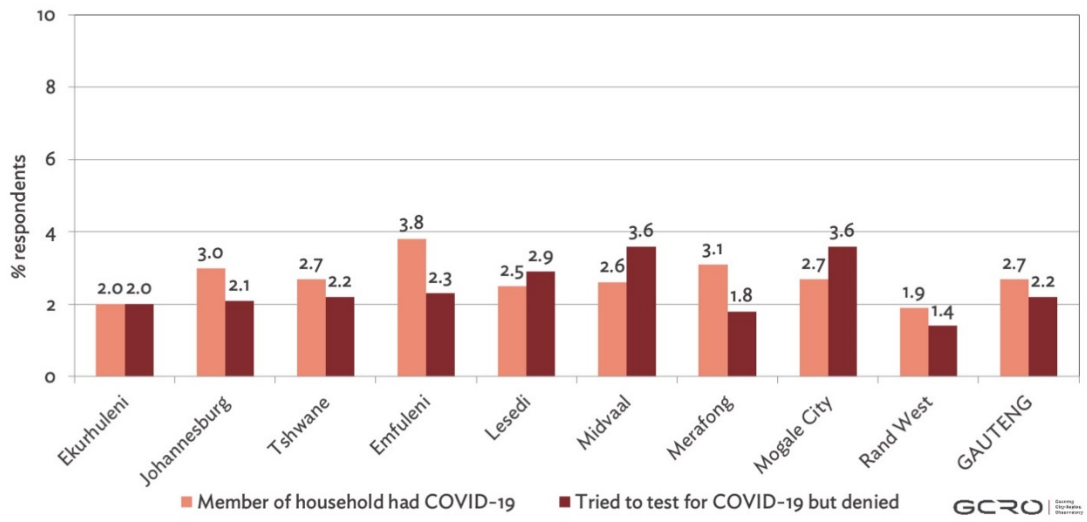
There is spatial variation where households reported COVID-19, with higher than average proportions in Emfuleni (3.8%), Merafong (3.1%) and Johannesburg (3.0%) (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1: Map of Gauteng showing the percentage of respondents reporting COVID-19 in their households, by metropolitan planning region and local municipality. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



There is evidence in QoL 2020/21 that those who reported having COVID-19 in their household do not represent the full extent of how the pandemic has spread in Gauteng: respondents were asked whether they had tried to test for COVID-19 since March 2020 and had been refused. An average of 2.2% of respondents sought testing but were denied. The proportion of those reporting COVID-19 in their household, and those saying they were refused a test, varies by municipality (Figure 2.2). In some municipalities of the province, the proportion of respondents saying they were refused testing is higher than the proportion who say that their household had experienced confirmed COVID-19. Respondents in Lesedi, Midvaal and Mogale City were more likely to report having tried to test for COVID-19 and being refused than they were to have reported COVID-19 in their households.

Figure 2.2: Percentage of respondents reporting confirmed COVID-19 in their households, and respondents who tried to test for COVID-19 but were denied, by municipality. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Comparing the percentages of those who said they had COVID-19 in their household and those who tried to test but were denied, by population group and monthly household income, raises concerns. Indian/Asian and White households were more likely to report having COVID-19 in their households (both at 5%) and the least likely to have been refused a test (1% and 2%, respectively). By contrast, Black African respondents were the least likely to say that they or a household member had COVID-19 (2%) and 2% reported that they had been refused a COVID-19 test. Coloured households were the most likely to report having tried to test and being refused (3%).

This trend is also noticeable when the two indicators are compared by income group. A striking 11% of the wealthiest respondents (with monthly household incomes from R51 201 and up) had confirmed COVID-19 in their households. This is compared to some 1% in the lowest income groups. By contrast, a mere 0.8% of those in the highest income group tried to test for COVID-19 but were refused, compared to 2.4% for those with monthly household incomes from R1 to R800.

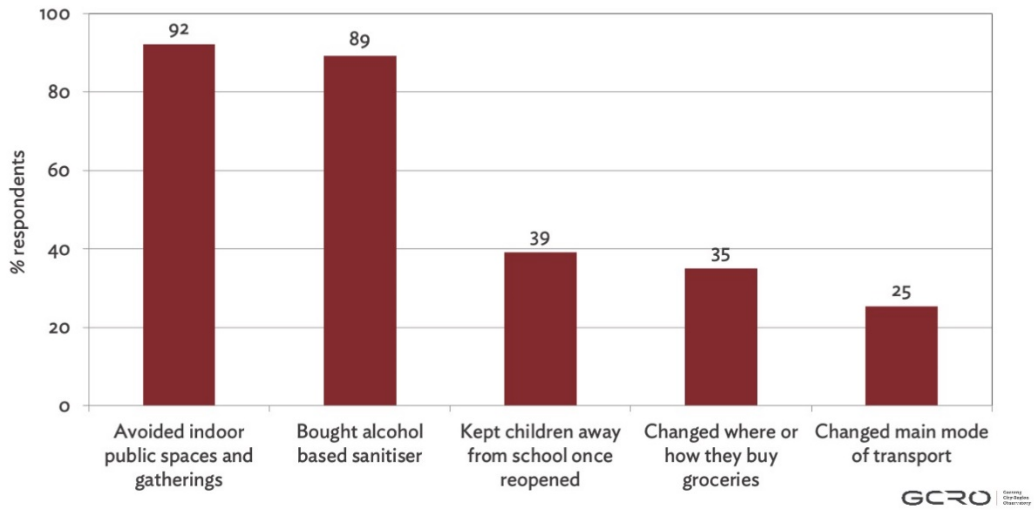
It is possible that lower reported rates of COVID-19 in some households may reflect concerns over stigmatisation, along with other possible reasons on which we do not have data. However, the population group and income differences in those saying they tried to test for COVID but were refused suggests that the more significant reason was uneven access to quality healthcare and testing. Official COVID-19 statistics in South Africa reflect those who have managed to access formal healthcare and testing facilities. QoL 2020/21 data suggests that many households struggled to access testing, and the high numbers of excess deaths show that the virus is affecting many more people than officially reported (SAMRC, 2021). Please see Maree et al. (2021) for more exploration of these issues.

Household responses to COVID-19

Households responded to the COVID-19 pandemic in numerous ways and in some ways more than others (see Figure 2.3). Nine out of ten respondents avoided indoor public spaces and public gatherings such as shops, malls or spaces of worship. Similarly, nine out of ten respondents bought alcohol-based sanitisers. A third of households changed where or how their household buys groceries and only one in four changed their main mode of transport (more detail on transport is provided in Section 3 of this report).

A notable 39% of households with children kept their children away from school when they were allowed to return. This varied between municipalities and was as high as 48% in Johannesburg and as low as 12% in Merafong. Respondents from lower income groups were more likely to keep children away from school once they were able to return. Of those households with children who kept children home from school when they were allowed to return, 63% did not have access to a working computer and 80% did not have internet in the home. This would have severely constrained options for children's learning at home, although it should be noted that families and schools have adapted in different ways to learning and teaching in the pandemic. The data suggests even deeper impacts on the opportunities for learning of children in poorer households than just the impact of school closures.

Figure 2.3: Percentage of respondent behaviour changes or household responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Impacts of the pandemic on households

Many of the sections of this report discuss the very serious impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on almost every aspect of well-being in the Gauteng City-Region. Here we give an indication of some of the measured impacts on socio-economic circumstances and on health and well-being.

Economic impacts

To understand some of the economic impacts of the pandemic, we asked respondents whether, since March 2020, they had lost a job, had their salary or working hours reduced, permanently closed a business, or had been evicted from their home.

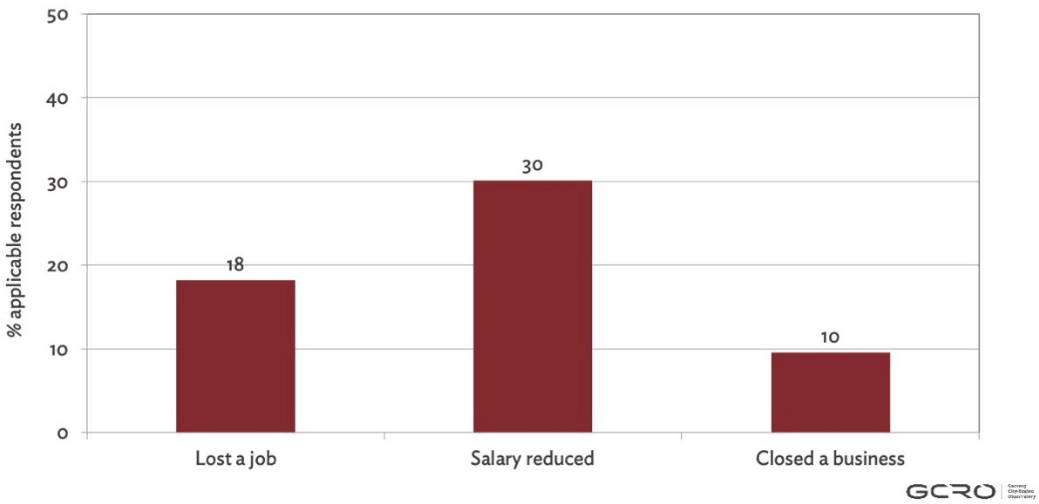
Only 0.4% of respondents said they had been evicted from their homes since March 2020. Although this figure is hearteningly low, we do not have data to directly compare whether it is lower or higher than pre-pandemic levels (3.5% of respondents in the QoL 2017/18 Survey reported that they had previously experienced eviction, but the question was not restricted to a specific time period). In comparison, the impacts on jobs, businesses, and salaries and working hours have been much more significant.

Almost one fifth of respondents (18%) who previously had work say they lost a job since March 2020 (Figure 2.4). This is not to suggest that these respondents all stayed without work. Of those who lost a job since March 2020, a third (34%) indicate that they are now currently working. But of those who lost a job and who are *not* currently employed, 87% say they are unemployed and looking for work.

Patterns of job loss vary considerably by population group, although all population groups were impacted. Some 12% of White respondents lost a job, compared to 19% for Black Africans, 20% for Coloureds and 20% for Indian/Asians. There is also a strong association between job loss and monthly household incomes, but the line of causation is not easy to determine. Thirty percent of those in the lowest income group lost a job, compared to 6% in the highest income group, but it is not clear whether this means that the poorest households disproportionately suffered from COVID-related job losses, or that job losses drove many who were previously in higher income groups into poverty. While the latter may seem to be a more logical conclusion, the larger impact on Black African, Coloured and Indian/Asian respondents, compared with Whites, may suggest that wealthier households were relatively more shielded from job losses.

Interestingly, there were no marked differences between male and female respondents saying that they had lost a job.

Figure 2.4: Percentage of applicable respondents who suffered economic impacts since March 2020. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



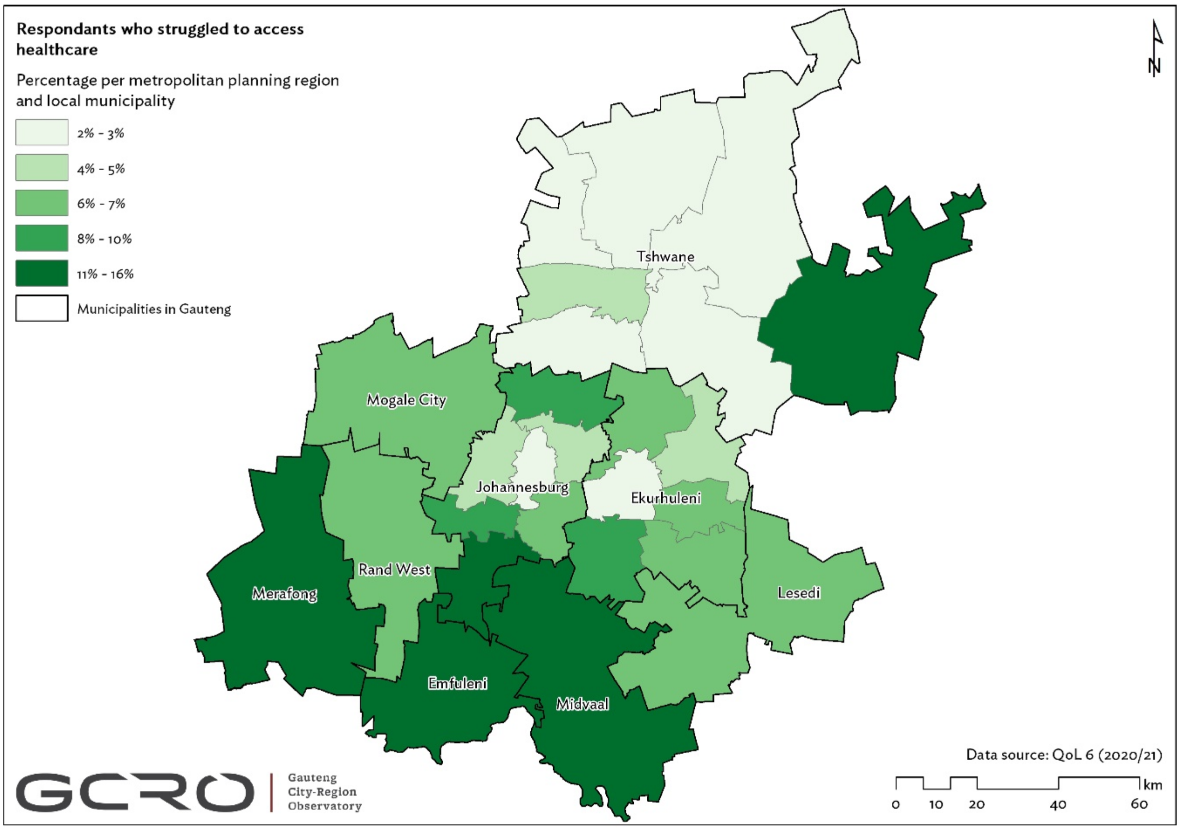
One in ten of respondents who had owned a business prior to March 2020 saw their businesses forced to close in the pandemic. Again the figures differmarkedly by population group. Only 5% of White respondents say their businesses closed permanently, compared to 10% of Black Africans and 16% of Indians/Asians. Eleven percent of respondents in the lowest two monthly household monthly income groups (R1–R800 and R801–R3 200) permanently closed their businesses, compared to just 4% in the highest income group. However, it cannot be said definitively whether this correlation is because business closures forced households into poverty, or whether more survivalist businesses at the lower end of the economic spectrum providing more meagre revenues to their owners suffered a disproportionate impact. Again, the impact of business closures does not vary substantially by sex.

An extraordinary one third of respondents (30%) who were working say that their salary and working hours were reduced since March 2020. Interestingly, the proportion of respondents who experienced a reduction in work hours and salary varies minimally by population group or income group, although it is slightly higher for Whites at 34% than it is for Black Africans and Indians/Asians at 29%. This could indicate that White respondents may have been relatively more protected from employment losses than Black African and Indian/Asian respondents, but instead saw working hours and salaries reduced while jobs were preserved. Thirty-two percent of men saw reduced hours or pay, compared with 28% for women.

Health and well-being

Since March 2020, 7% of respondents struggled to access healthcare. This varies substantially spatially, where in some metropolitan planning regions and local municipalities more than 13% of respondents have struggled to access healthcare (Figure 2.5). Respondents in the south of Gauteng, Merafong and the far east of Tshwane were most likely to struggle to access healthcare. Respondents centrally located in the metros were the least likely to struggle to access healthcare.

Figure 2.5: Map of Gauteng showing percentage of respondents who struggled to access healthcare, by metropolitan planning region and local municipality. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



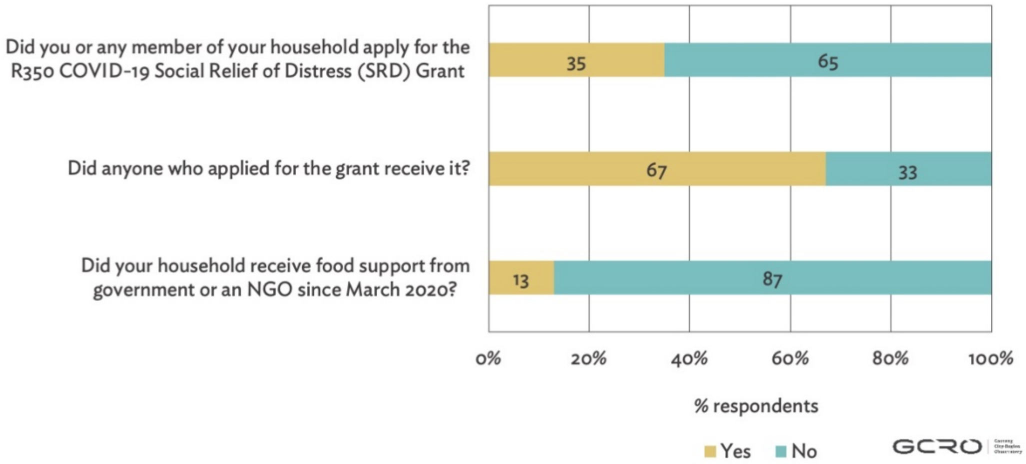
Those respondents who struggled to access healthcare since March 2020 were more likely to suffer from poor or very poor health status (22% compared to 12% of those who did not struggle to access healthcare). Almost one in four respondents (23%) who struggled to access healthcare are at high risk of depression compared to 13% of those who had no problem accessing healthcare (see Section 7 of this report for more detail on health and risk of depression).

Social relief during the COVID-19 pandemic

Social relief has been a very important safety net during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially for marginalised groups in society. In Gauteng, adults in 35% of households applied for the COVID-19 Social Relief of Distress (SRD) grant that the government introduced in May 2020 and 67% of those who applied received the grant (Figure 2.6). Black African respondents (40%) and Coloured respondents (46%) were more likely to report that they or a household member applied for the SRD grant, while only 17% of Indians/Asians and 7% of White respondents said that they or a household member applied for the SRD grant. Of households where adults applied for the grant, the proportion receiving the SRD grant was more evenly distributed on the basis of the respondent's population group: 68% of Black African respondents reported someone receiving the grant, compared to 62% of Coloured, 60% of Indians/Asian and 55% of White respondents.

In addition to the distribution of grants, 13% of respondents indicated that they had received food support from the government or an NGO since March 2020 (Figure 2.6). Black African and Coloured respondents were most likely to report that their households received food support. These are also the two population groups in Gauteng who are the most likely to skip meals and be food insecure (see Figure 5.6 in Section 5 of this report on hunger and food insecurity). Food support was also directed towards larger households in Gauteng.

Figure 2.6: Percentage of respondents who received social relief during the COVID-19 pandemic. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



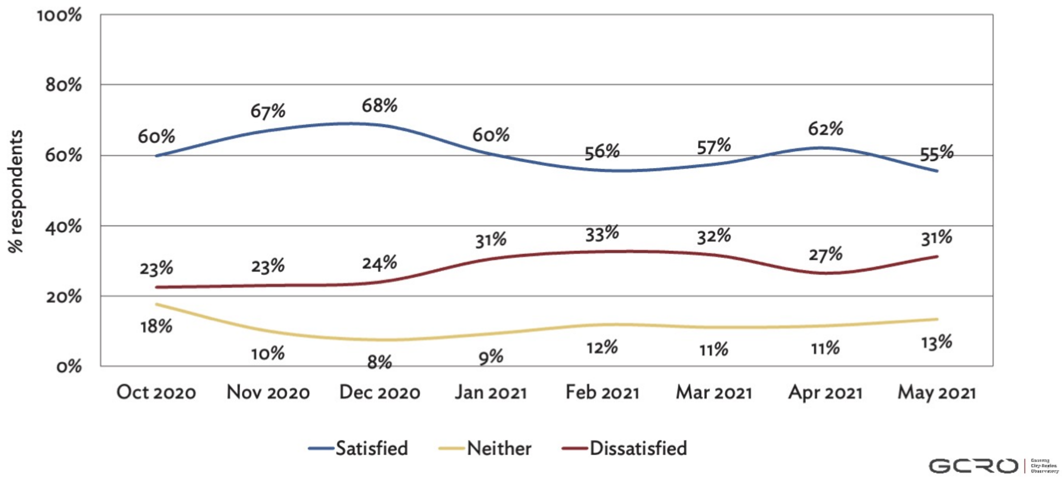
Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Satisfaction with the way in which the government responded to the COVID-19 pandemic

Sixty-two percent of respondents are either satisfied or very satisfied with the way in which the government has responded to the COVID-19 pandemic, and 27% of respondents are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. This level of satisfaction is much higher than satisfaction with the national government – only 33% of respondents are satisfied with the national government.

However, satisfaction with the way in which the government responded to the COVID-19 pandemic varied over the data collection period, while satisfaction with the national government has remained more consistent during data collection. Levels of satisfaction with COVID-19 response correlate with the increase and decrease in COVID-19 infections. At the start of data collection (October 2020), 60% of respondents were satisfied, 23% of respondents were dissatisfied and 18% of respondents responded with 'neither' (Figure 2.7). Thereafter, the proportion of 'neither' responses remained stable while satisfaction and dissatisfaction mirrored each other. Satisfaction increased in November and December 2020 but decreased substantially when the second wave was at its peak (January and February 2021). When the intensity of the second wave subsided, satisfaction also increased, only to decrease again in May 2021.

Figure 2.7: Percentage of respondents satisfied with the way in which the government responded to the COVID-19 pandemic, over the duration of fieldwork. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

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The impact of COVID-19

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Suggested citation:
Parker, A., Götz, G., Hamann, C., & Maree, G. (2021). The impact of COVID-19. In J. de Kadt, C. Hamann, S.P. Mkhize & A. Parker (Eds.), *Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21): Overview Report* (Section 2). Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.

Related GCRO outputs:
Maree, G. et al. (2021). *Effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Gauteng City-Region: Findings from the GCRO's Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21)*. GCRO Data Brief No. 11. Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.

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3. Transport

By: Christina Culwick Fatti

Highlights

- The Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21) data shows some significant changes to transport patterns as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey, conducted from October 2020 to May 2021, shows a drop in the percentage of people travelling to work, to look for work and to places of study, compared to previous surveys. There has been a significant increase in the percentage of respondents citing shopping as the most frequent trip purpose, from 29% (2017/18) to 44% (2020/21).
- There has been a major shift in mobility patterns, where people's most frequent trips are now more likely to be short trips (less than 15 minutes) and are less likely to be longer than 30 minutes compared to previous surveys.
- For the first time, the survey asked questions around perceived safety of public transport. Although people generally feel safe waiting for and using public transport, nearly one in four respondents who use public transport feels either a bit or very unsafe.
- A new question in the QoL 2020/21 Survey reveals that although the use of e-hailing increases with increasing income, some 14% of respondents in the lowest income group make use of these services at least twice a year, and for some much more regularly.

Introduction

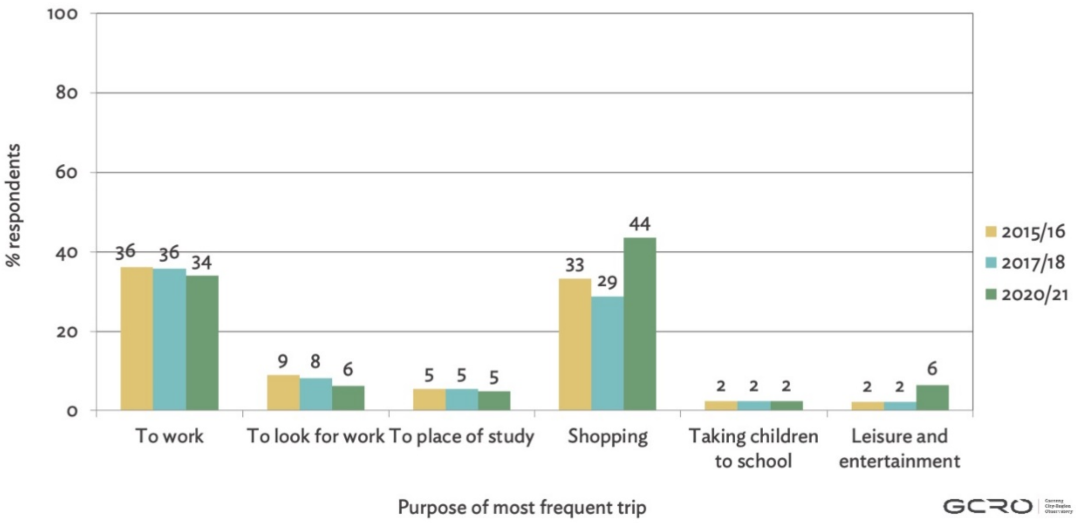
Mobility patterns have shifted since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. These changes have resulted from, inter alia, lockdown regulations, shifting work arrangements and a suppressed economy. The GCRO's Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21) shows how these patterns have changed in people's most frequent trips. This section also reflects on access to and perceived safety of public transport, and the use of e-hailing among Gauteng residents.

Most frequent trips

In the QoL 2020/21 Survey, trips to the shops were the most common reason for respondents' trip-making, comprising nearly half (44%) of most frequent trips – a 15 percentage point increase from 2017/18 (29%) (Figure 3.1). This indicates a significant shift from 2017/18, where commuting to work was the dominant purpose of people's most frequent trip. Compared to the previous two surveys, there has been a drop in the percentage of respondents travelling to work, to look for work and to places of study. These findings are most likely a result of the changed mobility patterns due to the pandemic.

These changes reflect the relative proportions of the purposes of trip-making; however, the results do not provide insights into how people's travel has changed overall. For example, it is possible that respondents travel to shops as frequently in the pre-pandemic surveys but since travel to work and to look for work has decreased, the percentage of those citing shopping as the purpose of their most frequent trip has increased.

Figure 3.1: Percentage of respondents reporting purpose of most frequent trip over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18) and GCRO QoL IV (2015/16).



Shopping trips, as respondents' most frequent trip, have become more local with nearly half (48%) of respondents taking less than 15 minutes to reach the shops (Figure 3.2). There has been a corresponding drop in trips to the shops taking longer than 15 minutes. Commuting time has reduced since previous years, with 57% reaching work in less than 30 minutes (Figure 3.3). This could be due to a number of reasons such as respondents travelling shorter distances and reduced traffic.

Figure 3.2: For respondents whose most frequent trip is for shopping, reported travel time over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18) and GCRO QoL IV (2015/16).

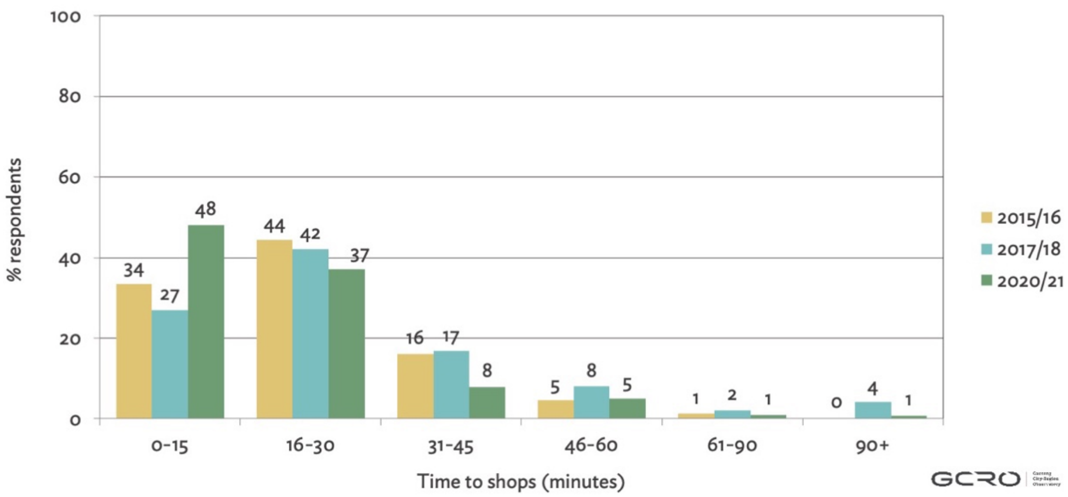
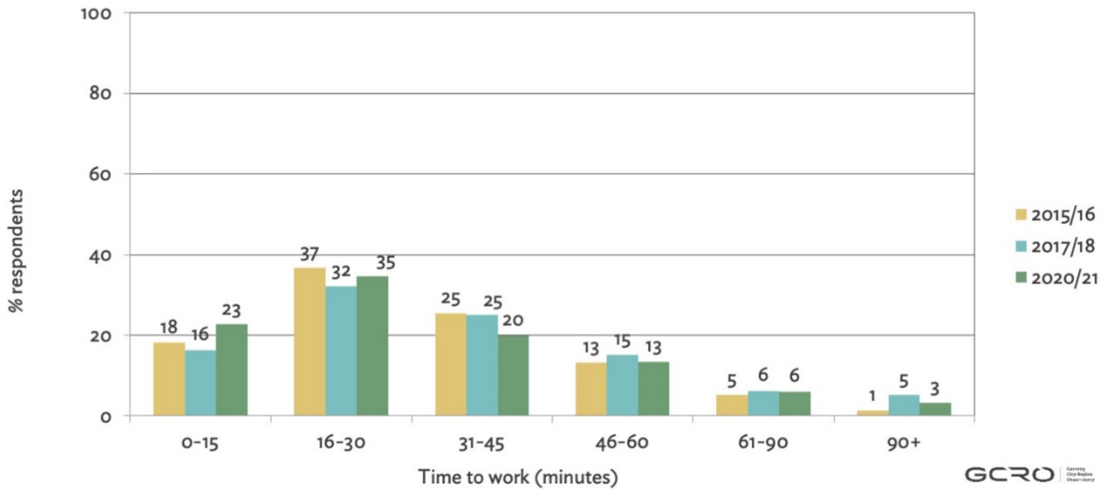


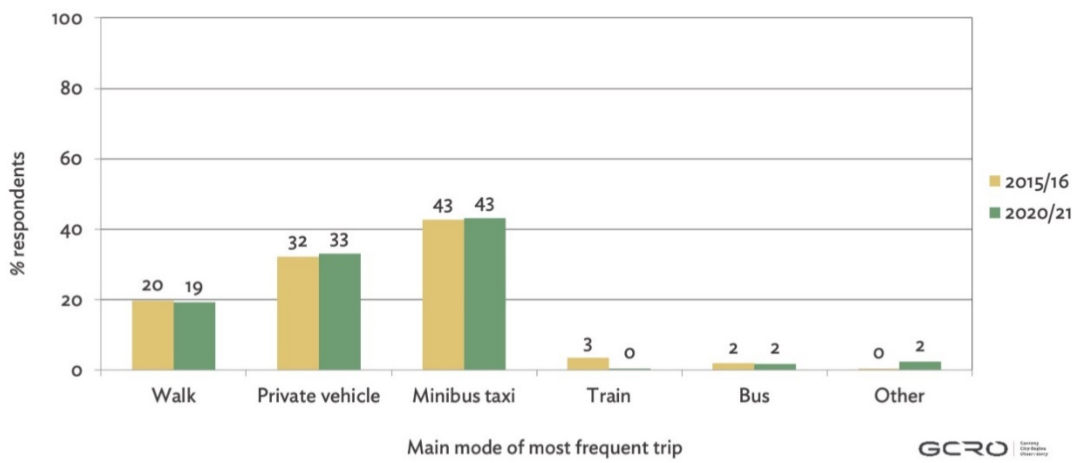
Figure 3.3: For respondents whose most frequent trip is to work, reported travel time over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18) and GCRO QoL IV (2015/16).



Private vehicles and minibus taxis remain the primary modes of transport for most frequent trips in Gauteng (33% and 43% respectively), followed by walking (19%). Despite one in four people reporting that they had changed their mode of transport to mitigate COVID-19 risk, there have only been marginal shifts across the main transport modes since 2015/16 (see Section 2 of this report on the impact of COVID-19). This might be due to changes being temporary rather than permanent.

Figure 3.4 shows that there has been a notable decrease in the percentage of people using trains as their main mode, dropping from 3% in 2015/16 to virtually zero (0.4%) in 2020/21. This could be attributed to a modal shift resulting from train closures during lockdown level 5 together with the extent of train infrastructure vandalism in 2020 and 2021. In other parts of the world, the pandemic has spurred a growth in cycling. This trend has not been evident in South Africa, likely because of the barriers to cycling as a mode of transport, including long distances and unsafe conditions.

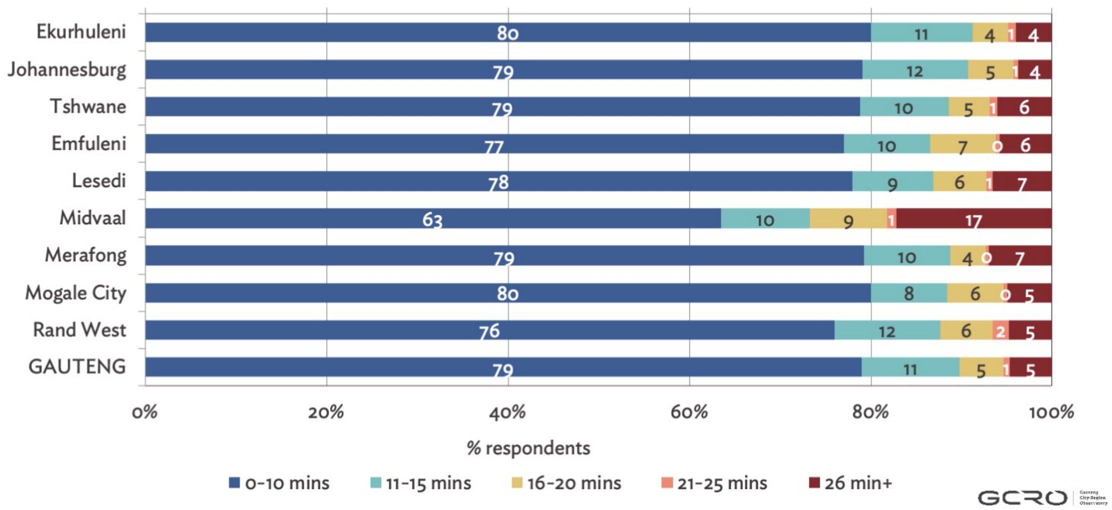
Figure 3.4: Main mode of transport used in the most frequent trip, over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21) and GCRO QoL IV (2015/16).



Public transport access and perceived safety

The vast majority of Gauteng respondents (79%) reported that they live within a ten-minute walk of a public transport access point (e.g. bus station, taxi route). Figure 3.5 shows that these results are fairly consistent across municipalities in the province. These figures have remained relatively stable over time; however, there has been an encouraging drop in the proportion of respondents who walk more than 25 minutes to reach public transport (from 9% in 2017/18 to 5% in 2020/21). Access to public transport in Midvaal is significantly worse than in other municipalities, with only 63% of respondents reporting to be within a ten-minute walk of public transport, and some 17% living more than 25 minutes away. These results for Midvaal were also noted in the 2017/18 Survey, and reflect the rural, dispersed nature of this local municipality.

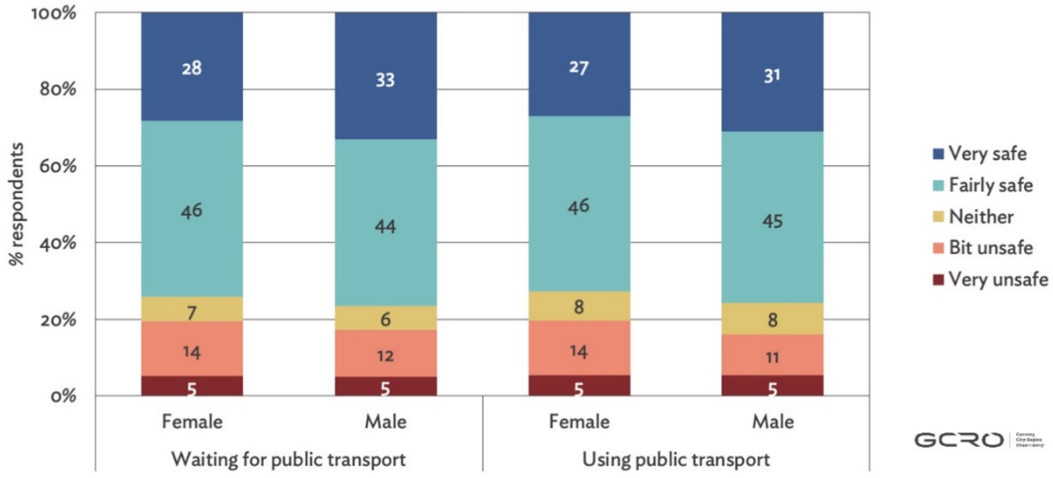
Figure 3.5: Walking time to nearest public transport access point, by municipality and overall. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

QoL 2020/21 included a new question asking public transport users how safe they feel while waiting for and using public transport. Overall, of those who use public transport, the majority reported that they feel safe while waiting for and using public transport (75% and 74% respectively). However, nearly one in five people feels unsafe waiting for and using public transport (18% for both). This highlights that there is still work to be done to improve public transport safety. There is a small difference in perceived safety between men and women, where women are slightly more likely than men to feel a bit unsafe waiting for and using public transport (Figure 3.6). Women are also less likely to feel very safe.

Figure 3.6: Male and female public transport users' perceived level of safety while waiting for and using public transport. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).

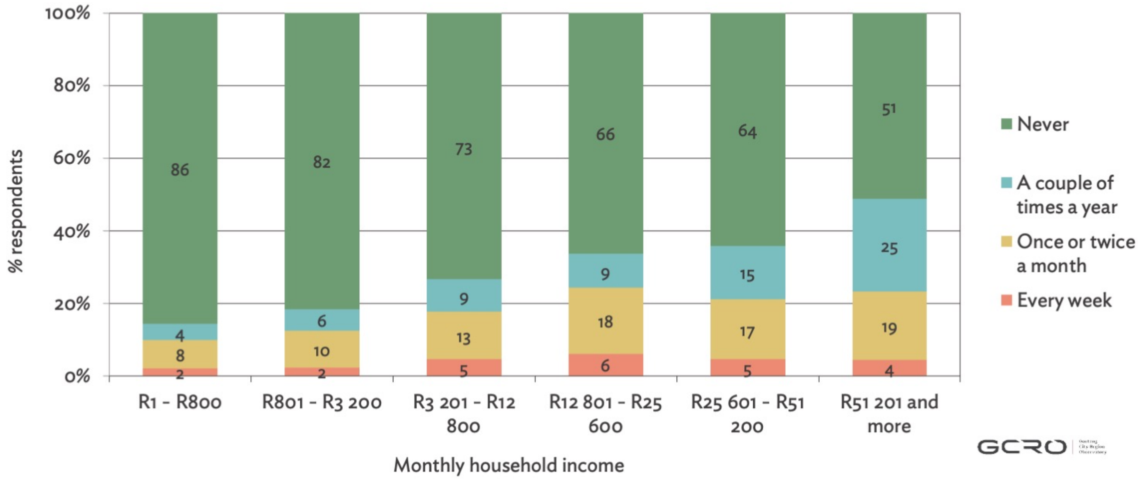


Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

e-Hailing

Some 24% of QoL 2020/21 respondents indicated that they make use of e-hailing services (Figure 3.7). The survey highlights that the use of e-hailing taxis is correlated with income, where usage increases with income. Interestingly, although these services can be more costly than other types of public transport, the fact that some 14% of people in the lowest income group (R1–R800 per month) make use of e-hailing, and in some cases on a regular basis, demonstrates that it is not exclusively a high-end transport option.

Figure 3.7: For each income group, percentage of respondents reporting frequency of use of e-hailing taxis. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

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Transport

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Suggested citation:
Culwick Fatti, C. (2021). Transport. In J. de Kadt, C. Hamann, S.P. Mkhize & A. Parker (Eds.), *Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21): Overview Report* (Section 3). Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.

Related GCRO outputs:
Culwick, C., & Katumba, S. (2016). Youth and transport in the Gauteng City-Region. GCRO Vignette No. 30. Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.
Trangoš, G., Culwick, C., & Katumba, S. (2015). Transforming transport in the Gauteng City-Region. GCRO Map of the Month, October 2015. Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.

4. Poverty, inequality and social mobility

By: Christian Hamann, Graeme Götz, Mamokete Matjomane and Darlington Mushongera

Highlights

- The proportion of respondents who live below the average poverty line in Gauteng has steadily declined over time. However, in the Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21), it increased significantly to 36% of respondents living below the average poverty line.
- A lack of jobs and a lack of education feature significantly in the perceived reasons why people live in poverty. A good education is viewed as most important in giving people the best opportunities in life.
- Results from QoL 2020/21 confirm the persistent trend that employment (defined here as having worked in the last seven days) is the highest for White respondents (54%), followed by Indian/Asian (39%), Black African (37%) and Coloured respondents (36%).
- Inequality between income groups remains significant.
- While the poor have clearly been significantly impacted by the social and economic crisis of the COVID-19 period, there is also evidence to suggest that middle-class respondents have been knocked back, some into poverty.

Introduction

This section analyses trends and circumstances related to the socio-economic status of QoL respondents. The section draws out findings related to poverty, inequality and social mobility in order to understand how socio-economic status is changing and what the differential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic might have been on respondents in Gauteng. The evidence suggests that socio-economic status has declined for the lower and middle classes while wealthy respondents have been relatively better shielded from negative socio-economic impacts. Any recovery from this situation will require significant government assistance and might take a considerable amount of time.

Poverty and inequality

Poverty and inequality are perennial concerns in South Africa, more so when circumstances (such as the COVID-19 pandemic) risk deepening them. The proportion of adult respondents who live below the average poverty line in Gauteng has steadily declined over time. However, in QoL 2020/21, it increased significantly to 36% (Table 4.1). The calculations in Table 4.1 use total monthly household income divided by the number of adults in the household[1] to derive an estimate of the per capita income. This is then compared to the average poverty line for Gauteng in the given survey year.

[1] Household configurations vary significantly, especially between dwelling types (e.g. hostels versus townhouses), so these estimates provide an overview of a poverty trend that could be further nuanced.

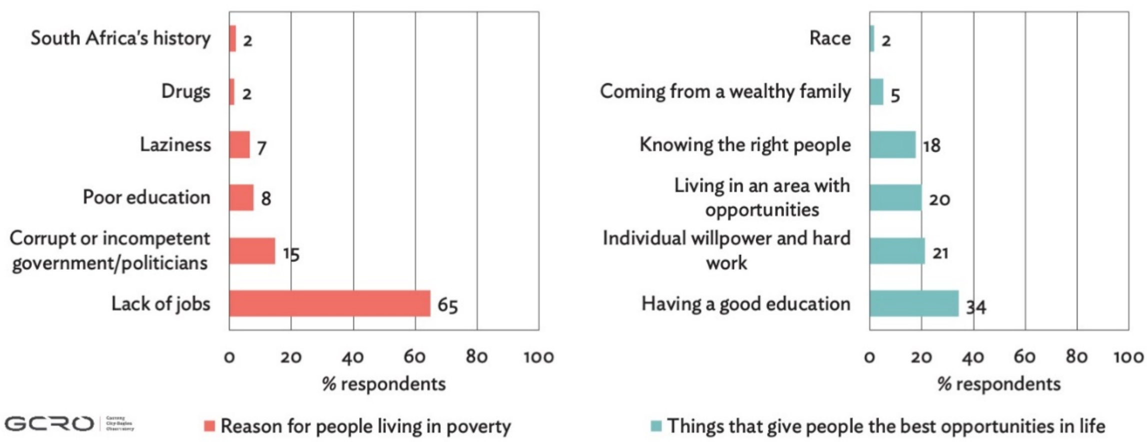
Table 4.1: Percentage of respondents living below the poverty line, over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18), GCRO QoL IV (2015/16) and GCRO QoL III (2013/14).

Gauteng average poverty line		Percentage of respondents below the poverty line			
Year	Rand per capita per month	QoL III (2013/14)	QoL IV (2015/16)	QoL V (2017/18)	QoL 6 (2020/21)
2013	R861	35%			
2015	R953		30%		
2017	R1 065			24%	
2020	R1 193				36%

Note: The Gauteng average poverty line is an average of the South African Upper Bound Poverty Line, the South African Lower Bound Poverty Line, the South African Food Poverty Line, and the UNISA BMR Minimum Living Levels.

There are many reasons why people live in poverty and these reasons are context specific. In some instances, the reason for poverty could be a national or global economic downturn or the result of an environmental disaster, while in other instances it could be due to long-term structural inequality or low economic growth and poor governance. Respondents in QoL 2020/21 provided a sense of why they think people live in poverty as well as the things they think will give people the best opportunities in life (Figure 4.1). Two thirds of respondents feel that a lack of jobs is the main reason that people live in poverty, followed by corruption (15%), poor education (8%) and laziness (7%). Respondents indicate that a good education (34%) is very important for giving people the best opportunities in life, followed by individual willpower (21%), living in areas with opportunities (20%) and knowing the right people (18%). It is telling that employment and education (two related factors) feature in both sets of responses, indicating possible areas for intervention in order to improve social mobility. These concerns should be proactively addressed to prevent desperate attempts (like protests) by residents trying to improve their lives.

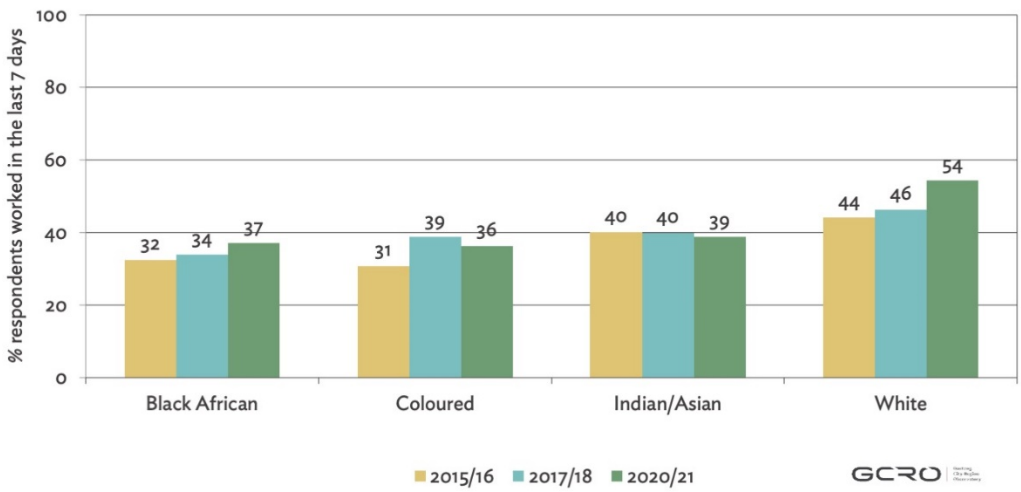
Figure 4.1: Percentage of respondents providing various reasons for people living in poverty, and identifying the things that give people the best opportunities in life. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



As shown above, employment is an important factor that is perceived to keep people out of poverty or shield them from negative socio-economic impacts. However, employment is not distributed evenly across population groups and therefore negative socio-economic impacts are not expected to be distributed evenly in society.

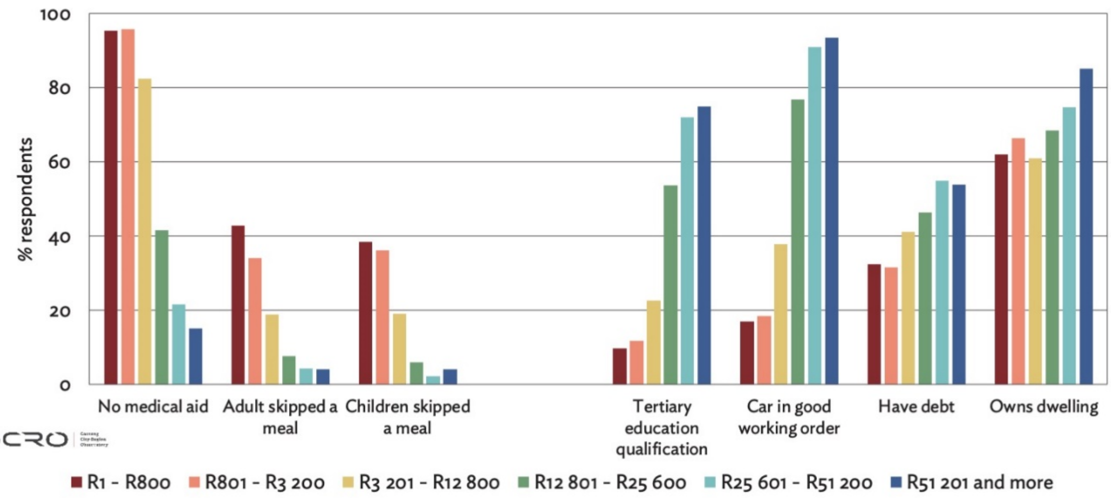
In QoL 2020/21, employment status is derived from a question that asked respondents whether they worked in the seven days before the interview. The results in Figure 4.2 reveal that employment on this measure is the highest for White respondents (54%), followed by Indian/Asian (39%), Black African (37%) and Coloured respondents (36%). This measure of employment also varies over time between these population groups. There has been a consistent increase in the proportion of people who worked in the last seven days between 2015/16 and 2020/21 for both Black African and White respondents. Even though the proportional increase has been much greater for White respondents (increasing from 44% to 54%) than for Black African respondents (increasing from 32% to 37%), the comparative population group sizes suggest that a substantial number of Black African respondents have gained some form of employment. In QoL 2020/21, there has been a slight decrease in the proportion of respondents who worked in the last seven days for Indian/Asian and Coloured respondents, relative to QoL 2017/18 and QoL 2015/16.

Figure 4.2: Percentage of respondents who worked in the last seven days, by population group and survey iteration. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18) and GCRO QoL IV (2015/16).



Inequality remains significant in Gauteng, and is reflected not only in income, but also in household circumstances such as access to various assets, access to medical aid, household members skipping meals, education and dwelling ownership (Figure 4.3). For most of these variables, the difference in access between low income households and high income households is significant. Respondents in households with lower income are less likely to have medical aid, secure access to meals for adults and kids, tertiary education qualifications, a car in good working order, debt and ownership of their dwelling. The opposite is true for respondents in households with higher income (Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3: Percentage of respondents, by income group, experiencing various household circumstances and access to assets. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Changes in socio-economic status over survey iterations

Changes in socio-economic status between 2017/18 and 2020/21 have the potential to provide a valuable indication of the relative impact of the change in socio-economic status and the relative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. In this subsection, we analyse changes over time in income groups for variables such as debt, debt repayment and access to medical aid (Table 4.2). QoL 2020/21 sees a set of unusual shifts, as illustrated in Table 4.2, and these are not easily categorised as either positive or negative.

There has been a decline in the proportion of respondents in the middle income groups with a working computer in their home, and an increase in the proportion of respondents in the lowest income group with a computer, from 16% to 20%. There have been dramatic declines in the proportion of households in the middle classes with a car, and a considerable increase in the proportion of those in the lowest monthly income groups (R1–R800 and R801–R3 200) with a car. Likewise, the proportion of respondents in the middle and upper income groups with a tertiary education qualification has decreased markedly, and the proportion of those in the two lowest income groups with post-matric qualifications has increased. It is not feasible to imagine that in the current context the lowest income groups have seen a dramatic improvement in assets and education. Rather, the data is most probably showing that households who previously had (and still have) access to these assets and capabilities that typically align with being in middle income groups have been pushed down into lower income groups.

The proportion of respondents with debt increased from 35% in 2017/18 to 36% in 2020/21. This increase is spread relatively evenly across income groups. However, the proportion of respondents with debt who missed a repayment increased from 44% in 2017/18 to 54% in 2020/21 and lower income households are much more likely to have missed a repayment than higher income households. Some 74% of indebted respondents with household incomes less than R800 missed a debt repayment, while only 17% of indebted respondents with household incomes more than R51 201 missed a debt repayment.

Compared to QoL 2017/18, a smaller proportion of respondents in poor households in 2020/21 had adults who skipped a meal in the year before the interview, while a slightly larger proportion of respondents in relatively wealthy households had adults who skipped a meal. This suggests that food support has shielded poorer households while middle-class and some wealthier households have been faced with food-security challenges that were previously uncommon to them.

The proportion of respondents without medical aid increased for all income groups, but the eight percentage point increase for respondents with household incomes from R25 601 to R51 200 was the biggest change, although it was from a very low starting point (from 13% in 2017/18 up to 21% in 202/21). This suggests that respondents from all income groups are no longer able to afford medical aid.

Table 4.2: Percentage of respondents, by income group, experiencing a range of socio-economic changes, over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21) and GCRO QoL V (2017/18).

	Personal computer			Car			Tertiary education		
	2017/18	2020/21		2017/18	2020/21		2017/18	2020/21	
R1 - R800	16%	20%	↗	13%	17%	↗	9%	10%	↗
R801 - R3 200	20%	19%	↘	16%	18%	↗	8%	12%	↗
R3 201 - R12 800	41%	37%	↘	36%	38%	↗	23%	23%	
R12 801 - R25 600	75%	73%	↘	80%	77%	↘	61%	54%	↘
R25 601 - R51 200	90%	91%	↗	94%	91%	↘	78%	72%	↘
R51 201 and more	92%	94%	↗	93%	93%		83%	75%	↘

	Missed debt repayment			Adult skipped a meal			No medical aid		
	2017/18	2020/21		2017/18	2020/21		2017/18	2020/21	
R1 - R800	62%	74%	↗	46%	43%	↘	88%	95%	↗
R801 - R3 200	60%	68%	↗	35%	34%	↘	89%	96%	↗
R3 201 - R12 800	46%	58%	↗	18%	19%	↗	78%	82%	↗
R12 801 - R25 600	29%	39%	↗	6%	8%	↗	35%	42%	↗
R25 601 - R51 200	27%	30%	↗	2%	4%	↗	13%	21%	↗
R51 201 and more	22%	17%	↘	3%	4%	↗	10%	15%	↗

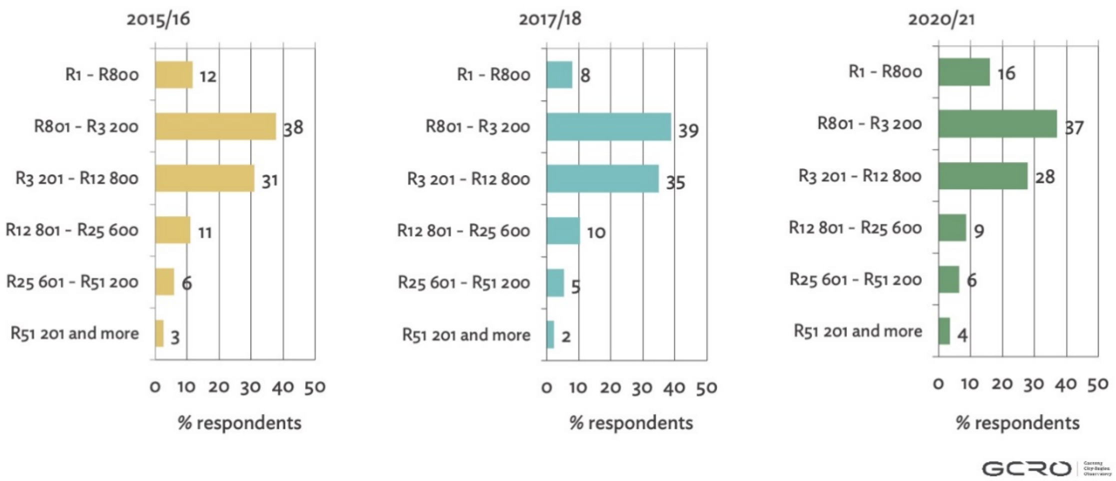
Note: An increase in this table does not necessarily signal a positive change, nor does a decrease necessarily signal a negative change. The changes should be interpreted in the broader context of the questions, as discussed above.

Social mobility

As discussed above, and in the COVID-19 data brief (Maree et al., 2021), on a basket of indicators reflecting the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 it seems that impacts have been greater on lower income groups. However, it is not immediately obvious whether the COVID-19 period has most negatively impacted households *already in poverty*, or whether it has impacted across income groups to drive many households down into poverty. This subsection tries to understand the extent to which the COVID-19 period has interrupted long-term processes of social mobility – the mechanisms by which people move out of poverty, and up the social and economic ladder.

Figure 4.4 provides a preliminary indication of the proportional splits in respondents' stated monthly household income over time. From 2015/16 to 2017/18, there appeared to be a proportional growth from 38% to 39% in the R801–R3 200 income group and from 31% to 35% in the R3 201–R12 800 income group. In turn, there was a corresponding reduction in the lowest income group, dropping four percentage points from 12% to 8%. However, there has been a dramatic reversal of these trends between 2017/18 and 2020/21. QoL 2020/21 results show declines in both the working poor and lower middle-class income groups of R801–R3 200 and R3 201–R12 800, with 39% to 37% and 35% to 28% respectively. These declines have not been matched by proportional gains in higher income groups. Rather, there has been a dramatic increase in the proportion of respondents in the lowest income group of R1–R800, increasing from 8% in 2017/18 to 16% in 2020/21.

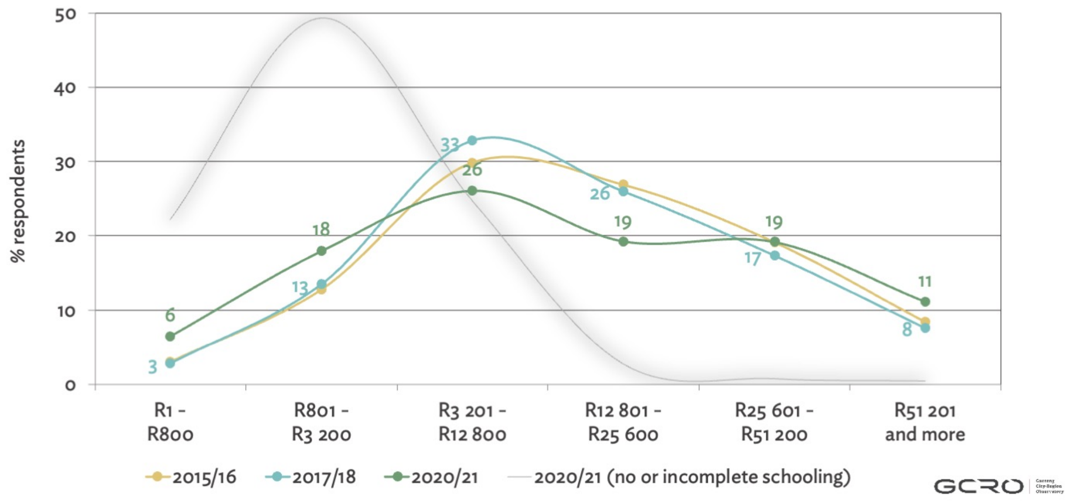
Figure 4.4: Proportion of respondents with stated monthly household incomes, over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18) and GCRO QoL IV (2015/16).



To further test how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted households across income groups, we examined how respondents who we would typically expect to have higher incomes have fared since the last QoL Survey. Of course, QoL is not a panel survey that tracks the changing fortunes of the same respondents over time. However, QoL and other data sources have historically shown a clear relationship between the level of monthly household income and key capabilities such as the level of education (Joseph et al., 2017; Hamann, 2016). Indicatively, in 2017/18, just 0.9% of respondents with no education or incomplete schooling had monthly household incomes of R25 601 or more. By contrast, 25% of respondents with higher degrees had monthly household incomes of R25 601 or more.

Figure 4.5 shows the distribution of income between different income groups for those with tertiary education for 2015/16, 2017/18 and 2020/21. The graph also shows, for reference, the income distribution for those with no education or incomplete schooling in 2020/21. It is immediately clear how the sub-sample of respondents with higher degrees are generally more likely to be in the middle and upper income groups than those with no or little education. However, the proportion of respondents with higher degrees in the middle income groups has declined between 2017/18 and 2020/21, while those in the lowest and highest income groups have increased. Various explanations for this are possible, such as a large number of new graduates from university unable to find jobs in a poor economic climate. However, the greater proportion of those with higher degrees in income groups much lower than would typically be expected is most likely indicative of households that previously clung tenuously to the middle rungs of the class ladder now being knocked down into poverty.

Figure 4.5: Distribution of respondents with tertiary education across monthly household income groups over survey iterations, and distribution of those with incomplete schooling in 2020/21. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18) and GCRO IV (2015/16).



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Joseph, K., Siteleki, M., Götz, G. & Cheruiyot. K. (2017). *The 1%*. GCRO Vignette No. 33, October 2017. Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.

Poverty, inequality and social mobility

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Suggested citation:
Hamann, C., Götz, G., Matjomane, M., & Mushongera, D. (2021). Poverty, inequality and social mobility. In J. de Kadt, C. Hamann, S.P. Mkhize & A. Parker (Eds.), *Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21): Overview Report* (Section 4). Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.

Related GCRO outputs:

Hamann, C., & Cheruiyot, K. (2017). *Differentiating household income growth in Gauteng 2001–2011*. GCRO Map of the Month, October 2017. Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.

Joseph, K., Siteleki, M., Götz, G., & Cheruiyot, K. (2017). *The 1%*. GCRO Vignette No. 33. Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.

Mushongera, D., Tseng, D., Kwenda, P., Benhura, M., Zikhali, P., & Ngwenya, P. (2018). *Poverty and inequality in the Gauteng City-Region*. GCRO Research Report No. 9. Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.

Zikhali, P., Mushongera, D., & Katumba, S. (2018). *Multidimensional poverty in the GCR (2015/16 data)*. GCRO Map of the Month, June 2018. Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.

5. Hunger and food security

By: Gillian Maree

Highlights

- One in four respondents (25%) report that an adult in their household has skipped a meal in the past year because there was not enough money to pay for food. This continues a trend of increasing reports of skipped meals since 2013/14.
- One in five households with children (20%) report children skipping meals in the last year. This is one percentage point lower than in 2017/18 (21%), but substantially higher than the 11% reported in 2013/14.
- On a more positive note, 44% of households with children report that children are benefitting from a school feeding scheme. This is a significant increase from 29% in 2015/16.
- The large majority of households in Gauteng rely on meat, dairy and eggs for their protein. Less than 5% of households report primarily consuming only vegetarian proteins. While poorer households consume cheaper proteins like frozen chicken portions and eggs, wealthier households have greater diversity in their protein choices.
- Over half of households in Gauteng (52%) experienced some level of food insecurity during the past year. One in five households (18%) are severely food insecure, measured by skipped meals, inability to purchase food within walking distance, and inadequate spending on groceries to buy a basic nutritious basket of food.
- Food insecurity is linked to well-being and reflects many of the inequalities in South African society. Black African and Coloured respondents are more likely to live in households experiencing the highest levels of food insecurity, and females are proportionally more likely to be living in food insecure households than males.

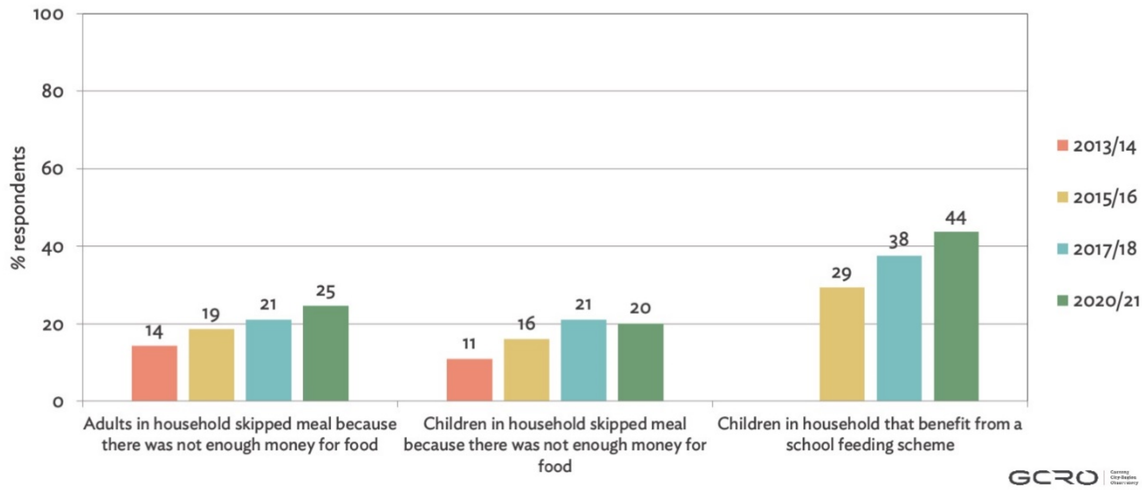
Hunger

Since 2013/14, the Quality of Life (QoL) Survey have asked respondents whether adults and children in the household have skipped meals in the past year. The need for food is linked to fundamental human rights, health and a sense of self-worth (May et al., 2020). Reporting on hunger is subjective and highly emotive, and responses to questions about skipped meals may not be the most reliable indicator of hunger. Despite this challenge, our data reveals substantial, and growing, difficulty in accessing adequate food over time.

In the Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21), one in four households (25%) have adults who have skipped a meal in the last year because there was not enough money for food. Figure 5.1 shows that the proportion of households in which an adult skipped a meal in the last year increased from 14% in 2013/14 to 25% in 2020/21. This is a marked increase in adult hunger over a relatively short time.

In 2020/21, one in five households with children (20%) reported a child skipping a meal in the past year (Figure 5.1). This is a one percentage point decrease from 21% in 2017/18. However, it is substantially higher than the figure of 11% in 2013/14. This level of child hunger is a serious concern because of the crucial role adequate food and nutrition play in child health and development.

Figure 5.1: Percentage of respondents living in households where adults have skipped a meal in the past year, and for those living in households with children, the percentage where children have skipped meals or benefit from a school feeding scheme, over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18), GCRO QoL IV (2015/16) and GCRO QoL III (2013/14).



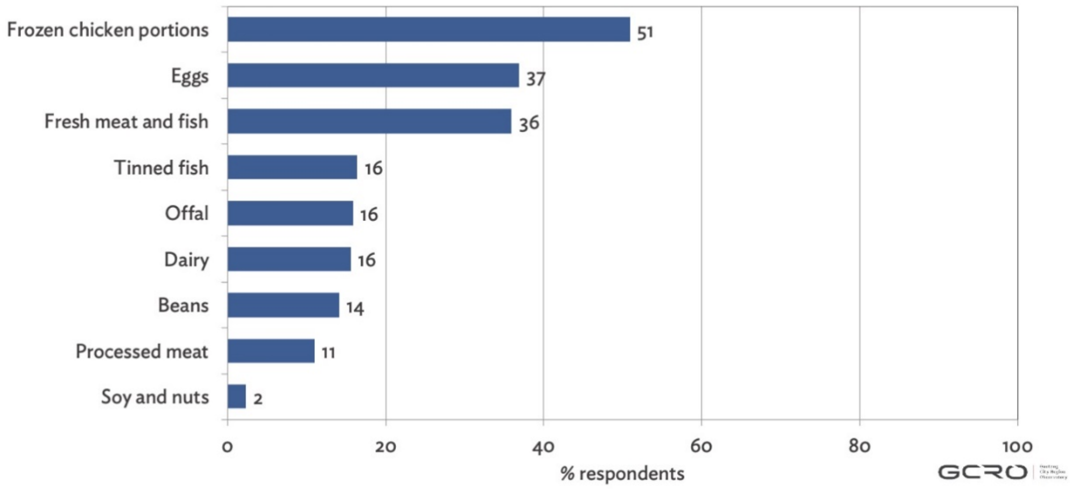
Access for children to school feeding schemes has increased substantially relative to previous survey iterations. In 2020/21, 44% of households with children benefitted from school feeding schemes, up from 38% in 2017/18, and 29% in 2015/16 (Figure 5.1). This is despite school feeding schemes being closed during initial lockdown levels in 2020. This is an extremely positive finding, as these programmes can be an important source of nutrition for children, alleviate short-term hunger, improve learning capacity and serve as an incentive to keep children, and particularly girls, in school (May et al., 2020).

Most frequently consumed proteins

QoL 2020/21 asked respondents which two proteins are eaten most frequently by household members. The survey did not ask about all food groups or the quantities of each protein consumed, but it still allows some analysis of nutrition preferences and access across Gauteng.

Respondents were most likely to report the consumption of frozen chicken pieces (selected by 51% of all respondents). Eggs (37%) and fresh meat and fish (36%) were also frequently reported. Soy and nuts were selected by only 2% of respondents, notably lower than any other option. The data highlights the extent to which residents of Gauteng rely primarily on meat for their protein.

Figure 5.2: Percentage of respondents selecting each form of protein as commonly consumed in their household. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).

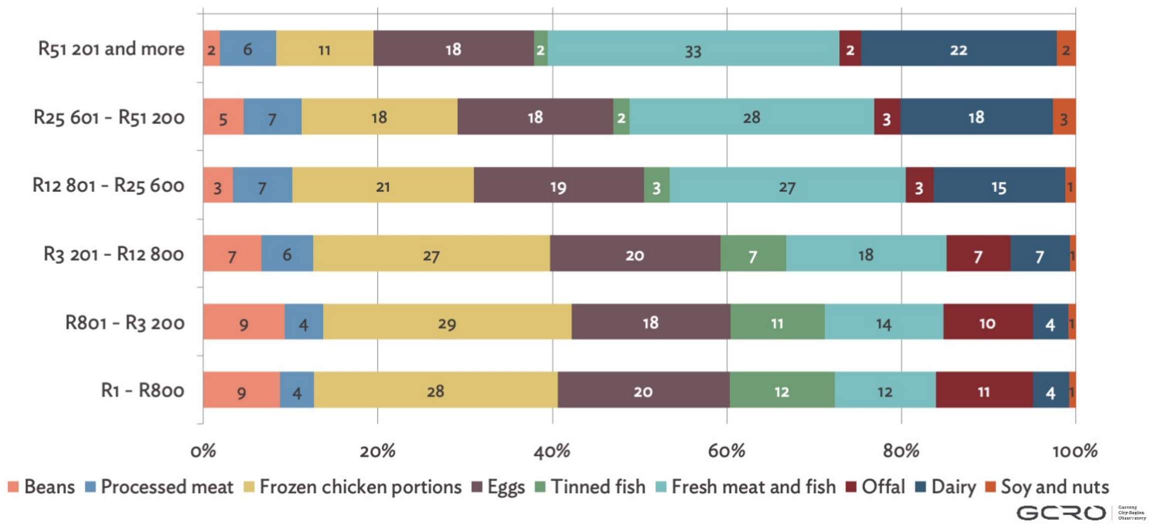


Note: As each respondent selected two options, figures do not add up to 100%.

In order to provide a rough measure of the proportion of various protein sources in the overall diet, we combined the two selections made by each respondent, assuming each contributed 50% of the household protein consumption. While this is not a perfect measure, it enables us to understand at a high level how protein sources vary across the sample. Less than 5% of households selected only vegetarian proteins (beans, eggs, dairy, and soy and nuts). As some of these households are likely to also consume meat occasionally, this suggests that less than 5% of households in Gauteng are vegetarian. Only 0.3% of respondents selected only proteins that can be considered as vegan (beans, soya and nuts).

Figure 5.3 shows that there is a clear relationship between household income and the types of protein most frequently consumed. Households with total income below the minimum wage (R3 200 or lower per month) are most likely to consume frozen chicken portions and eggs, if they can afford these. Protein choices in higher income households' diets are dominated by fresh meat and dairy products that would typically have a higher nutritional value. However, it is worth noting that as household incomes rise, there is also an increase in the consumption of processed meats, which have limited nutritional value and can contribute to poor health. Additional data would be necessary to assess the extent of this impact on health, and also to assess whether poorer households are consuming adequate amounts of protein.

Figure 5.3: Approximate proportion of protein consumption, by income group. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



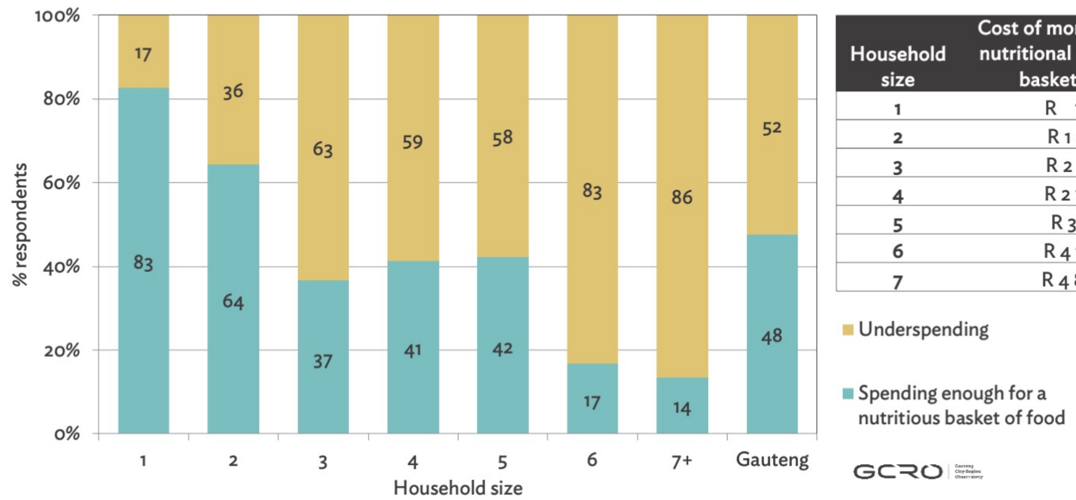
Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Unequal access to a nutritious basket of food

In urban areas, almost all household food is purchased, and food is a significant component of household expenditure. Respondents were asked how much their household spends on food per month, and this information, combined with household size, was used to assess whether the household was able to access a basic nutritious food basket. The cost of a basic nutritious food basket was obtained from the Household Affordability Index using December 2020 prices for South Africa and interpolated for household size (PMBEJD, 2020). The cost estimates, presented in Figure 5.4, provide a useful benchmark for nutritional access in households.

Over half of households in Gauteng (52%) do not spend enough on food to secure a basic basket of nutritious food (Figure 5.4). Larger households are significantly less likely to be able to buy a basic nutritious food basket: only 14% of households with seven or more people spend enough on groceries to do so. While some households may obtain food from other sources, like vegetable gardens or community schemes, obtaining food through these programmes is unlikely to be an adequate sustainable solution.

Figure 5.4: Percentage of respondents reporting adequate grocery household expenditure for a basic nutritional food basket given household size, overall and by household size. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21) and PMBEJD (2020) December 2020 prices.



Household size	Cost of monthly nutritional food basket
1	R 729.25
2	R 1 418.39
3	R 2 107.53
4	R 2 779.10
5	R 3 512.15
6	R 4 174.94
7	R 4 855.30

Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Food insecurity

Food security is defined as all people at all times having enough food for an active, healthy life (FAO, 1983). This includes access to food that is nutritious and safe; and an assured ability to procure and acquire food of good quality in a socially acceptable way.

Combining information from four of the food-related questions asked in QoL 2020/21 provides an index of food security. The four measures feeding into the index are:

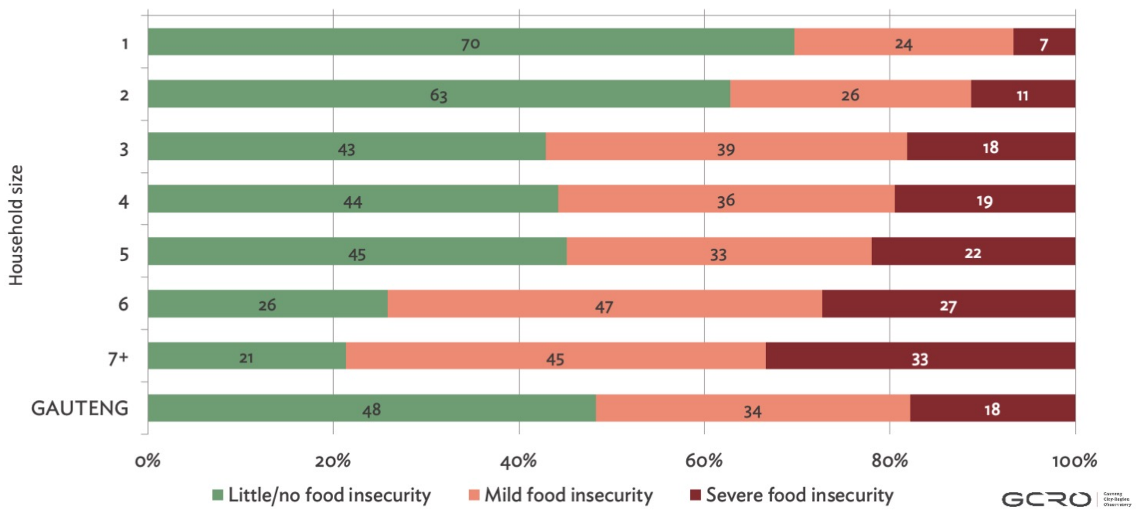
1. inadequate household expenditure on groceries, given the cost of a basic nutritious food basket for a household of that size;
2. no access to a place to purchase food within a 15-minute walking distance;
3. adult household member having skipped a meal due to lack of money for food in the past year; and
4. for households with children, a child having skipped a meal in the past year due to lack of money for food.

The index is scored out of four for households with children, and three for those without. Households meeting three or four of the criteria are considered severely food insecure. Households meeting two of the criteria are considered as experiencing mild food insecurity. Households meeting one or none of the criteria are categorised as experiencing little or no food insecurity.

More than half of households in Gauteng (52%) experience mild or severe self-reported food insecurity. Nearly one in five households (18%) report severe food insecurity, where households do not spend enough on groceries for a basic nutritional basket of food, have experienced adults and/or children skipping meals and are not able to buy food within walking distance of home.

Levels of food insecurity are closely linked to household income, with the poorest households having the highest levels of food insecurity due to high levels of hunger and an inability to afford a basic nutritious food basket. Figure 5.5 shows that larger households are also more likely to be food insecure. A third of households with seven or more members are severely food insecure (33%), and a further 45% are mildly food insecure. Single person households are least likely to report food insecurity, but nonetheless almost a third (31%) do experience mild or severe food insecurity.

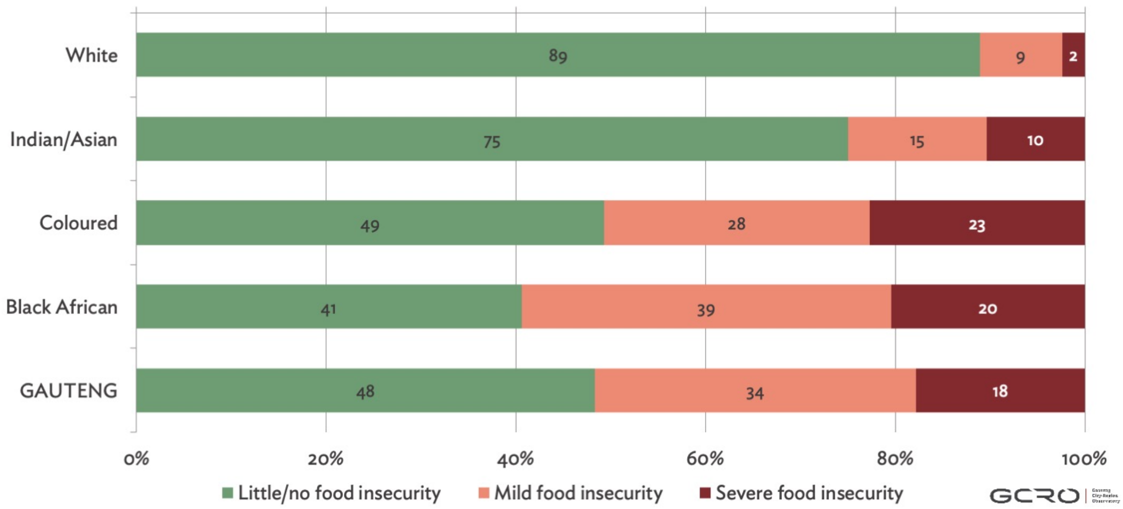
Figure 5.5: Percentage of respondents living in households experiencing food insecurity, by household size. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Levels of food insecurity also vary by population group. Black African households are most likely to experience severe food insecurity (Figure 5.6). The large majority of White households report little or no food insecurity (89%), and only 2% report severe food insecurity.

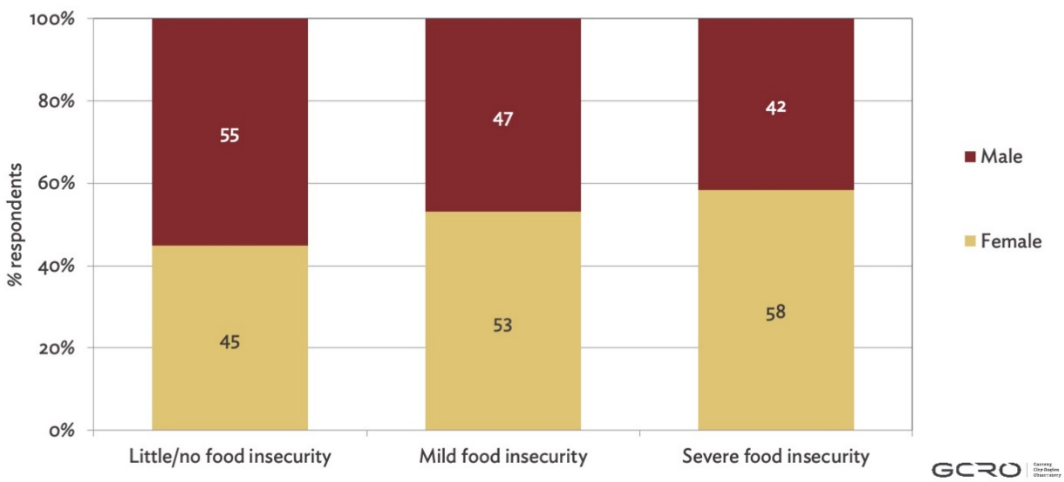
Figure 5.6: Percentage of respondents living in households experiencing food insecurity, by population group. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Female respondents were more likely than males to live in a household reporting food insecurity. Figure 5.7 shows that while females represent 50% of QoL respondents, they account for 53% of households experiencing mild food insecurity, and 58% of those experiencing severe food insecurity.

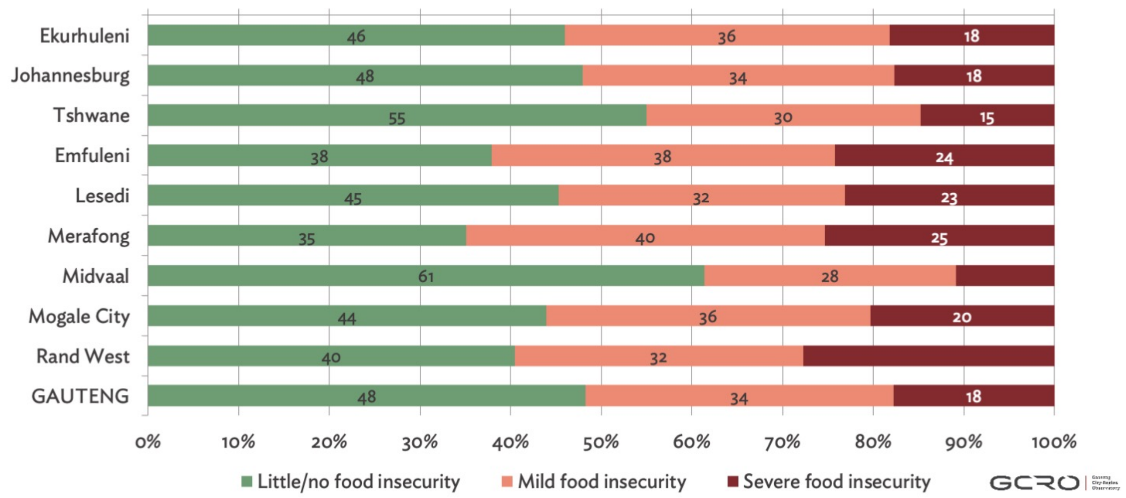
Figure 5.7: Percentage of respondents living in households experiencing food insecurity, by sex. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Levels of food insecurity differ by municipality across Gauteng. Households in Merafong (65%), Emfuleni (62%) and Rand West (60%) are most likely to experience some food insecurity. Midvaal has the lowest proportion of food insecure households (39%). Midvaal and the City of Tshwane are the only municipalities where less than half of households experience food insecurity.

Figure 5.8: Percentage of respondents living in households experiencing food insecurity, by municipality. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).

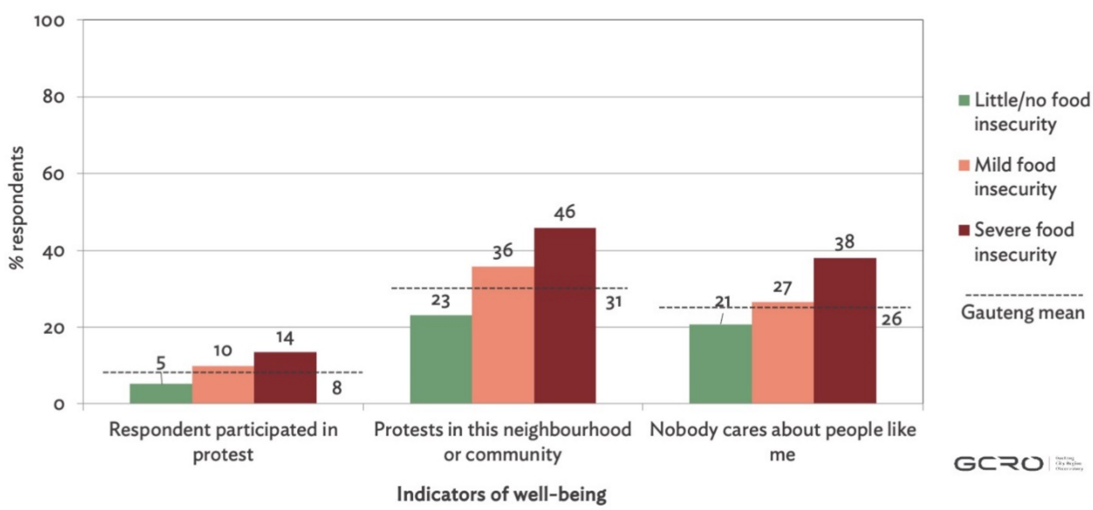


Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

QoL 2020/21 data also demonstrates that there is a strong connection between food insecurity and poorer overall quality of life (see Section 13 of this report for more detail on quality of life). Respondents living in households that have severe food security have significantly lower average Quality of Life Index scores (55 out of 100) than those with little to no food insecurity (65 out of 100). Similarly, respondents living in households with food insecurity are more likely to be at risk of depression (see Section 7 on health for more detail).

There is also a strong relationship between hunger and socio-political distress (Figure 5.9). Respondents in severely food insecure households are nearly twice as likely to feel that nobody cares about people like them (38%) when compared to those in food secure households (21%). Respondents in severely food insecure households are three times more likely to participate in a protest (14%) compared to those living in food secure households (5%). Similarly, respondents in severely food insecure households are twice as likely to report having experienced protests in their neighbourhoods or communities (46%) when compared to those living in food secure households (23%).

Figure 5.9: Percentage of respondents reporting protest participation, protest in their neighbourhood, and feeling that nobody cares about people like them, by level of food insecurity in their household. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



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Hunger and food insecurity

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Suggested citation:
Maree, G. (2021). Hunger and food insecurity. In J. de Kadt, C. Hamann, S.P. Mkhize & A. Parker (Eds.), *Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21): Overview Report* (Section 5). Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.

6. Experiences of violence and safety

By: Abigail Hatcher, Julia de Kadt, Sthembiso Pollen Mkhize and Alexandra Parker

Highlights

- A high proportion of respondents reported exposure to childhood abuse. Eleven percent experienced childhood sexual abuse, while 65% experienced childhood physical abuse in the form of beating. Females were more likely than males to have experienced sexual abuse in childhood.
- Physical trauma during the past year was reported by 16% of respondents. Young males were particularly vulnerable, with 31% of males aged 18–24 reporting physical trauma in the past year. One in ten respondents (10%) was threatened with or hurt by a knife or gun in the past year.
- The survey provides new data on rape in Gauteng, with 1.6% of respondents reporting having been raped in the past year. It is likely that this figure is an underestimate, but it remains substantially higher than would be expected based on 2019/20 police statistics on reported rape in Gauteng.
- Just over 5% of females experienced physical or sexual violence from a partner in the past year, more than three times the proportion of male respondents who reported intimate partner violence.
- The proportion of respondents who reported being a victim of crime in the past year has fallen to 19%, from 23% in 2017/18. Despite this, perceived safety outside the home has been deteriorating since 2015/16.

Introduction

South Africa struggles with high levels of crime, gender-based violence and child abuse. One in five women have experienced gender-based violence in their lifetime (StatsSA, 2018). More than 12% of children experience sexual abuse, while 18% experience physical abuse (Ward et al., 2018).

In this context, the Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21) introduced a series of voluntary, self-completed questions about experiences of violence during childhood, and over the past year (i.e. the year prior to the interview of the respondent). This enables QoL 2020/21 to provide essential new adult population-based estimates of exposure to childhood abuse, past-year physical violence and rape, and intimate partner violence in Gauteng. These findings provide baseline data against which to assess the impact of the Gender-based Violence and Femicide National Strategic Plan (The Presidency of the Republic of South Africa, 2018), and the interventions of civil society, in the coming years.

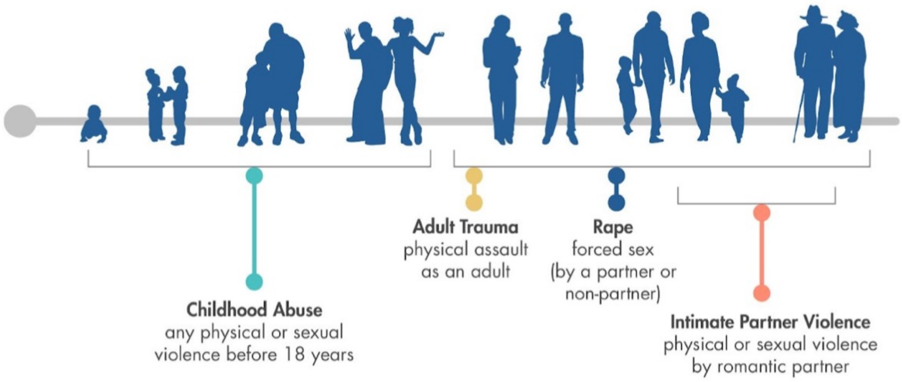
In addition to this new content, we also asked participants a suite of questions about their perceptions of crime and safety during the standard interviewer-administered survey. These questions have been included in all previous iterations of the QoL Survey and allow for exploration of change over time.

Experiences of violence

Forms of violence assessed

The QoL 2020/21 Survey asked adult respondents about their exposure to physical and sexual abuse during childhood, along with their exposure over the past year to various forms of physical violence and rape. These forms of violence are illustrated in Figure 6.1, and the definitions used are detailed below.

Figure 6.1: Typology of violence assessed in the GCRO QoL Survey 6 (2020/21)



To assess exposure to childhood physical abuse, respondents were asked about whether they had been beaten with a belt, stick, or other hard object, at home or at school, before the age of 18. To assess exposure to childhood sexual abuse, they were asked whether they had been molested (forced touching of genitals) or raped (forced sex or sex under threat), also before the age of 18.

To measure adult physical trauma over the past year, respondents were asked whether they had been: (i) hit or beaten; (ii) kicked, pushed, dragged, shoved, choked or burnt; or (iii) had been threatened with a knife or gun, or had one used on them.

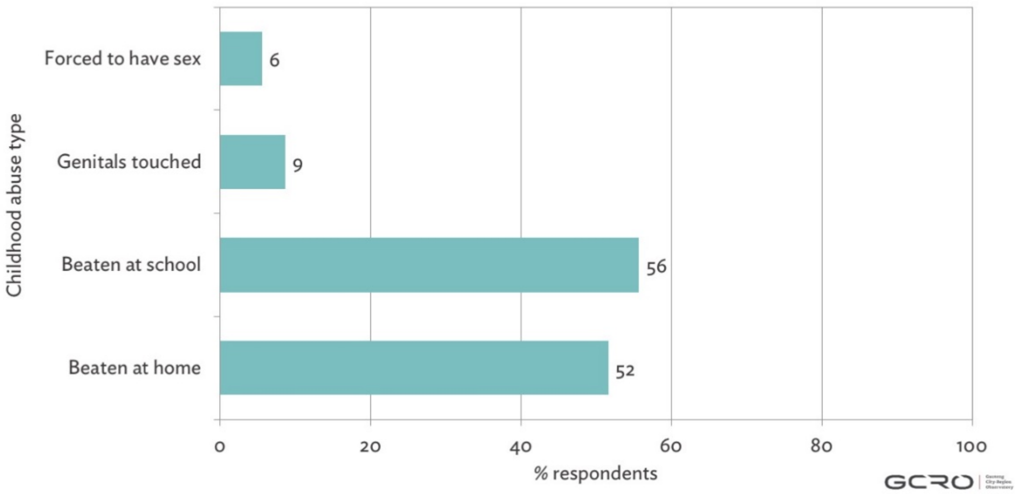
Rape during the past year was measured as forced sex, or sex taking place under conditions of threat. We note that due to the inclusion of sex under threat of harm, our definition of rape is marginally broader than in some studies which only consider sex that is physically forced. Finally, intimate partner violence was defined as experiencing adult physical trauma or rape perpetrated by a current or former partner.

This self-completed section was completed by 11 766 individuals, or 86% of all survey respondents. Amongst those who did complete the section, a small number chose a 'prefer not to answer' option for one or more questions within the section. All results presented in this section are calculated as a percentage of respondents who answered any particular question.

Violence in childhood

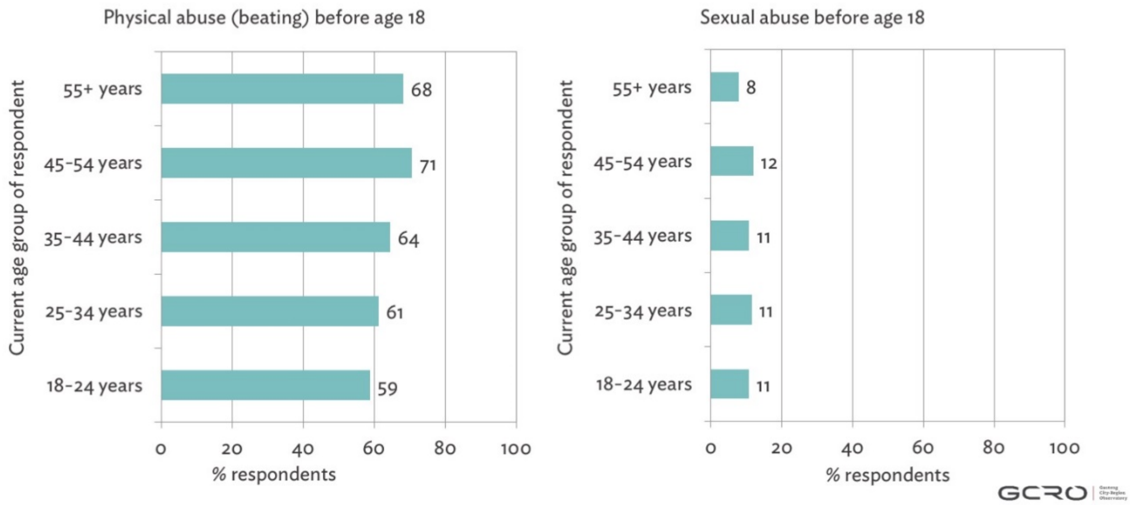
Sexual abuse during childhood was reported by 11% of respondents, and physical abuse in the form of beating by 65% of respondents. Rates of experience of different forms of abuse are detailed in Figure 6.2 below. Nine percent of respondents reported molestation, while 6% reported rape. Fifty-six percent of respondents reported having been beaten at school, and 52% at home.

Figure 6.2: Percentage of respondents reporting various forms of sexual and physical abuse during childhood. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



We anticipated that younger respondents would be less likely to report physical abuse during childhood due to increasingly stringent legislation prohibiting corporal punishment in South Africa. This was borne out in the data, as evident in Figure 6.3. However, the limited extent of this difference suggests that while physical childhood abuse may be declining, change is slow. By contrast, there is no decrease in the percentage of younger respondents reporting sexual abuse relative to older respondents (Figure 6.3). This is of concern, as it suggests that important national structures like the Children's Act (No. 38 of 2005) may not have been able to provide protection against childhood sexual abuse. No methodologically comparable data is available on childhood abuse.[2]

Figure 6.3: Percentage of respondents reporting childhood abuse, by age at time of interview. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).

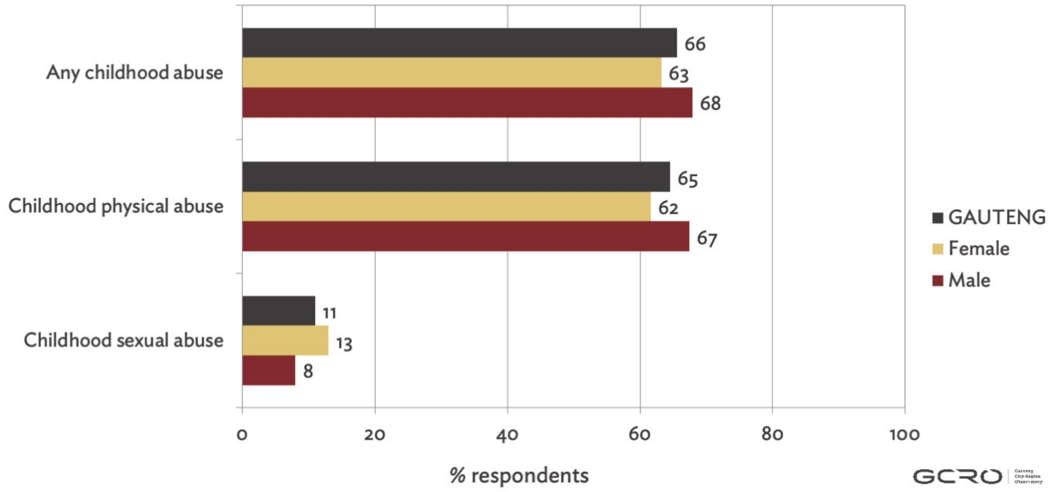


We also find clear evidence that reported exposure to childhood sexual abuse varies by the sex of the respondent, with 13% of females reporting sexual abuse, compared to 8% of males (Figure 6.4). By contrast,

[2] Two recent studies in Mpumalanga provide some insight into childhood abuse but have a different methodology which may yield different estimates (Treves-Kagan et al., 2021; Kobayashi et al., 2020).

male respondents are more likely to report childhood physical abuse, although levels are high for both sexes: 68% of males reported physical abuse, compared to 62% of females. As a result, males are more likely to have experienced childhood abuse in any form (68%) than females (63%).

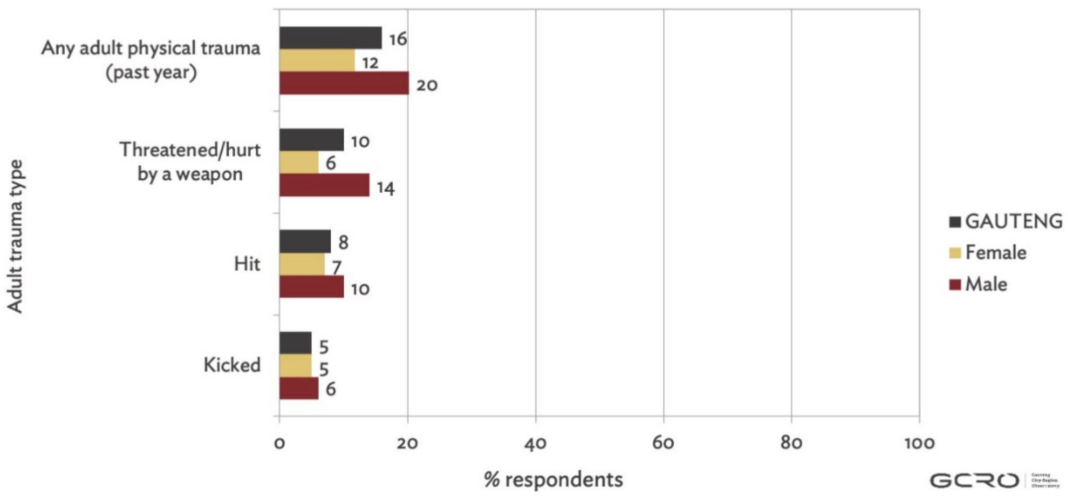
Figure 6.4: Percentage of respondents reporting sexual, physical, or any form of childhood abuse, by sex. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Adult physical trauma

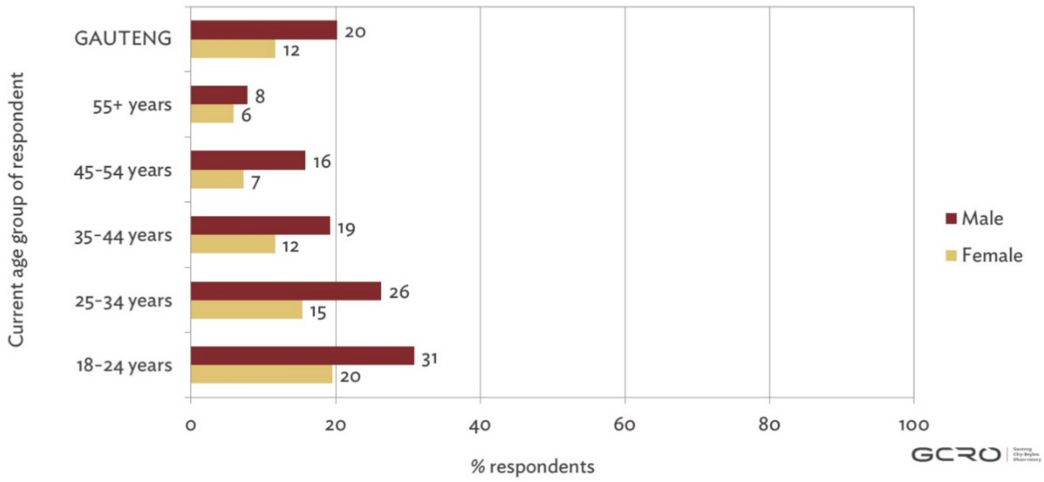
Overall, 16% of respondents reported experiencing adult physical trauma over the past year – that is one in six people. This is deeply concerning and highlights the extent to which adults in Gauteng are exposed to violence. Levels of exposure vary by form of trauma, and by respondent sex, as evident in Figure 6.5 below. Males are significantly more likely to have experienced any physical trauma in the past year (20%), compared to 12% of females. The most commonly reported form of trauma is being threatened or hurt with a knife or gun. This was reported by 10% of respondents, broken down into 14% of males and 6% of females. Eight percent of respondents reported being hit or beaten, while 5% reported being kicked or more severely harmed.

Figure 6.5: Percentage of respondents reporting adult trauma during the past year. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



A trend of lower experience of past-year adult trauma with increasing age was seen for both males and females (Figure 6.6). Younger males (18–24 years) were at particularly high risk of past-year trauma (31%), followed by 26% of those aged 25–34 years. While younger females were at lower risk than younger males, exposure is still high: 20% of females aged 18–24 years and 15% of females aged 25–34 years reported experiencing physical trauma in the past year.

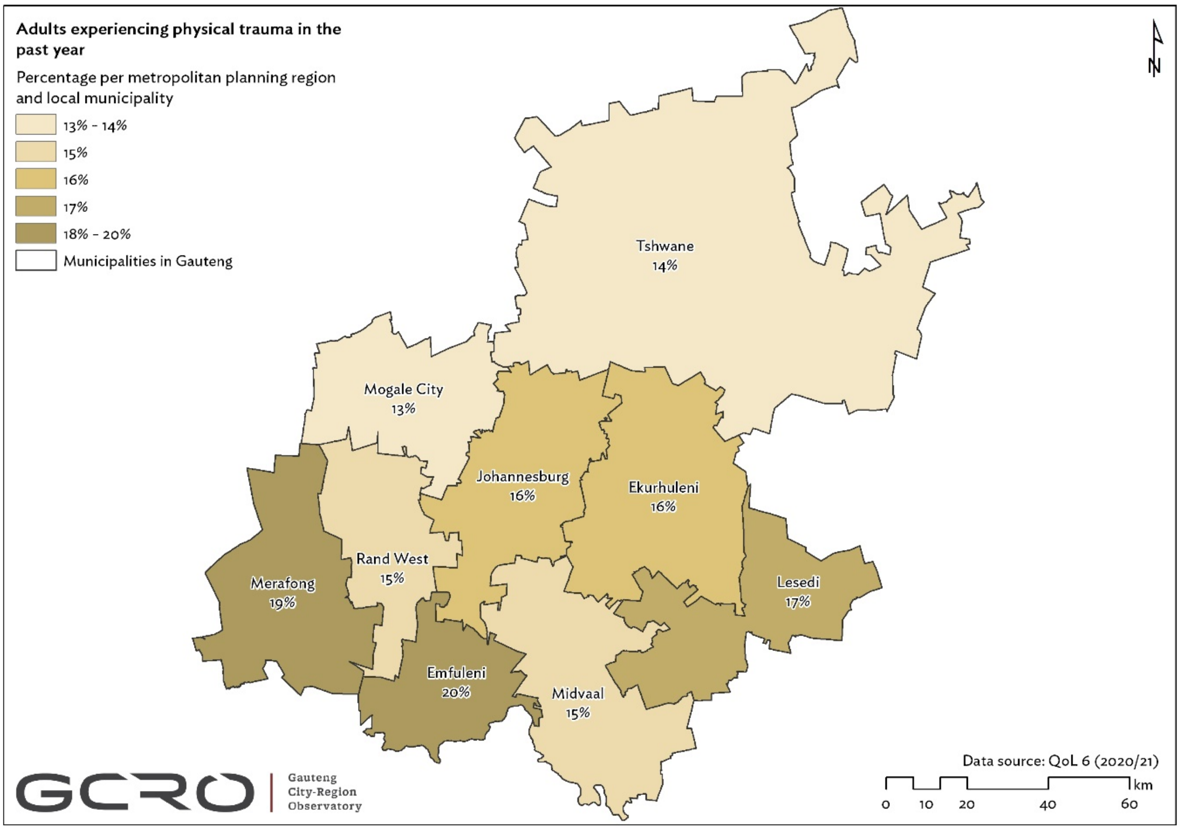
Figure 6.6: Percentage of respondents reporting adult trauma in the past year, by sex and age. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Experience of adult trauma also varies notably by both population group and income group. By population group, exposure was lowest among White respondents, with 6% reporting adult trauma. Exposure was highest among Coloured and Black African respondents, with 17% reporting adult trauma in the past year. In terms of household income, respondents living in households with a monthly income of R25 601 or more were least likely to have experienced physical trauma over the past year (9%). Risk of exposure increases as household income falls, and is highest for those living in households with monthly incomes of R1–R800 (22%) and R801–R3 200 (19%).

Figure 6.7 below demonstrates spatial variations across municipalities in exposure to adult trauma. Levels are lowest in Mogale City (13%) and Tshwane (14%), and highest in Merafong (19%) and Emfuleni (20%). Several of these municipalities include rapidly growing peri-urban settlements, which hold promises of employment, but in which residents have limited access to health and social services, and struggle to secure necessities such as electricity, water and sewerage. These structural inequalities contribute to the spatial variation of violence in Gauteng.

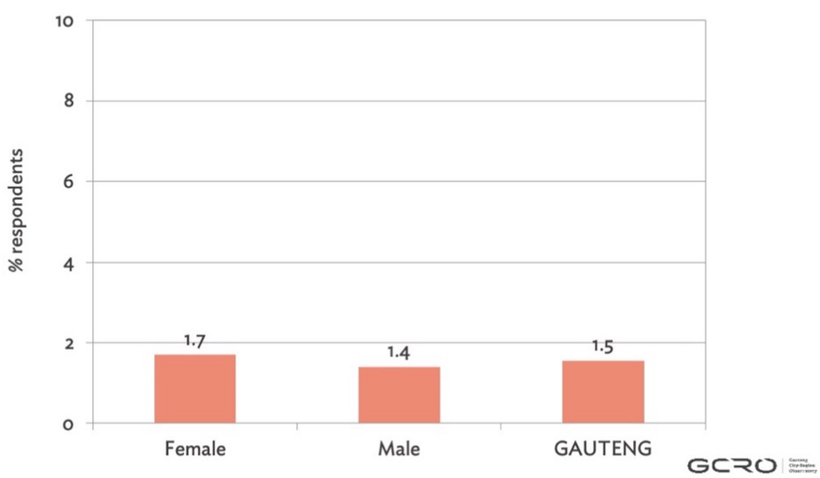
Figure 6.7: Map of Gauteng showing the percentage of respondents reporting experiencing physical adult trauma in the past year, by municipality. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Adult rape

A total of 1.5% of respondents, and 1.7% of female respondents, reported having been raped in the past year, whether by a partner or a non-partner (Figure 6.8). This figure is more than 20-fold higher than the most recent Gauteng province rape statistics from 2019/2020 police statistics, from which we extrapolated a figure of 0.069% of the Gauteng population reporting past-year rape (South African Police Service, 2020). However, the proportion of our female respondents reporting rape is still substantially lower than that obtained in a 2011 Gauteng household survey focused entirely on gender-based violence (Machisa et al., 2011). This suggests that our figure may well be an underestimate.

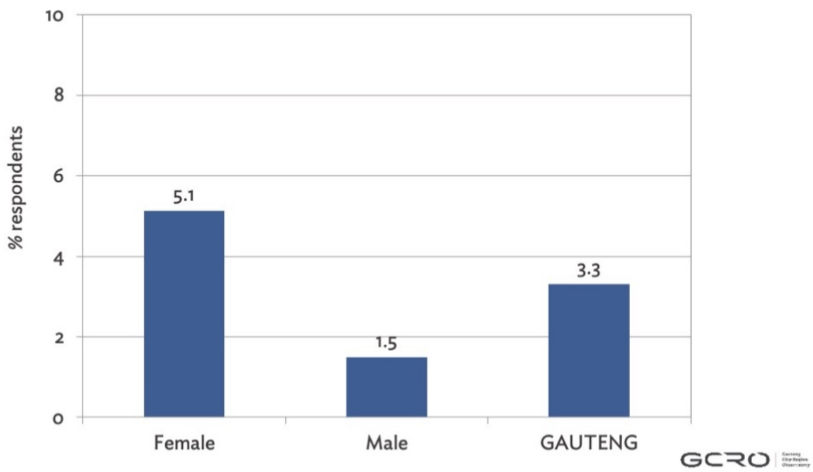
Figure 6.8: Percentage of respondents reporting rape during the past year, by sex. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Intimate partner violence

Overall, 3.3% of respondents reported experiencing intimate partner violence during the past year. Just over 5% of females reported past-year exposure to intimate partner violence, which is more than three times higher than exposure amongst males (1.5%).

Figure 6.9: Percentage of respondents reporting experiencing intimate partner violence (IPV) in the past year, by sex. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).

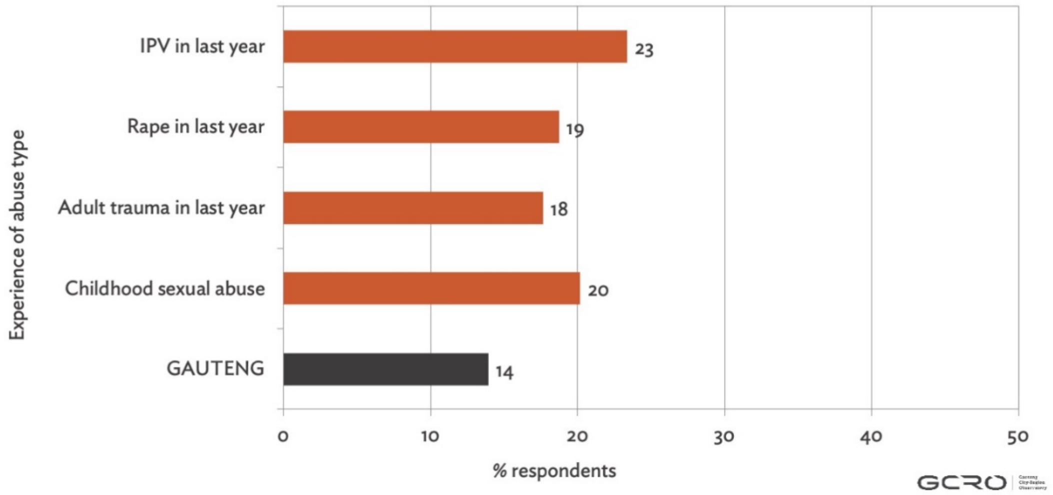


Again, population-based estimates of intimate partner violence in South Africa are lacking, making QoL 2021 data an important contribution to current efforts to understand intimate partner violence in South Africa. Our estimate is lower than a non-governmental report of a population-based survey in Gauteng which found 13.2% of women were exposed to past-year physical intimate partner violence (Machisa et al., 2011). This is largely due to the differences in method between general survey results and studies dedicated to violence (Ellsberg et al., 2001).

Relationship between mental health and experiences of violence

QoL 2020/21 results suggest a strong relationship between experiencing various forms of violence, and being at high risk of probable depression, as measured by the PHQ-2 score (Kroenke et al., 2003) (see Section 7 on health for more information on this measure). In the QoL 2020/21 survey, 14% of respondents in Gauteng met the criteria for being at high risk of depression. Individuals who experienced various forms of abuse are all notably more likely to be at high risk of depression, with almost a quarter of those reporting past-year intimate partner violence (23%) at high risk (Figure 6.10). While our data does not give insight into the reasons for this relationship between exposure to violence and high risk of depression, these figures highlight the psycho-social complexities around violence.

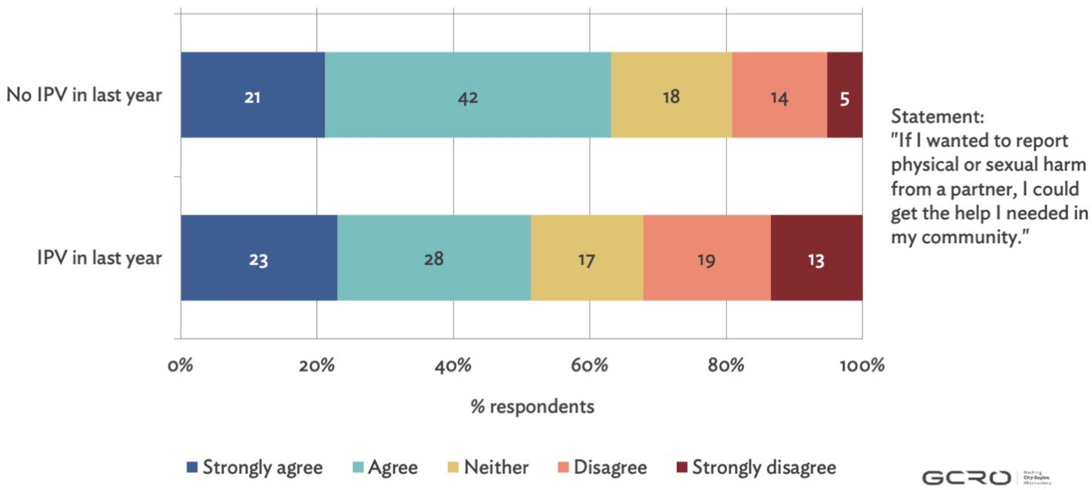
Figure 6.10: Percentage of respondents reporting various forms of violence, including intimate partner violence (IPV), who are at high risk of probable depression, compared to the figure for the sample as a whole. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Perceptions of support for people experiencing intimate partner violence

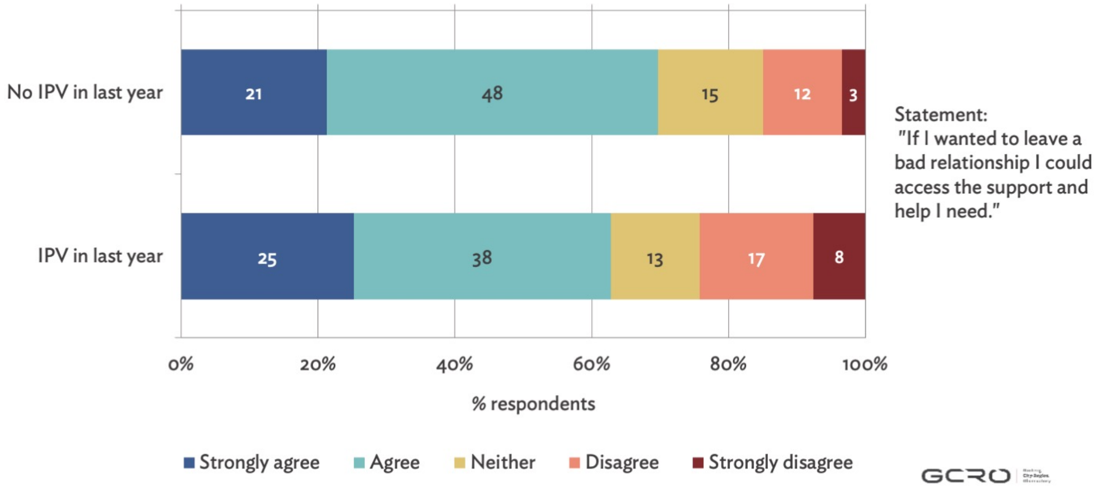
We asked respondents about whether they felt that they would be able to access support in reporting a violent partner, or in leaving a violent relationship. For both questions, those who had experienced intimate partner violence during the past year were substantially more likely to feel that they would not receive appropriate support. Just under one third (32%) of those who reported past-year intimate partner violence felt that they would not be able to get support in reporting a partner, compared to 19% of those who did not report this form of violence (Figure 6.11). Similarly, one quarter of those who had experienced intimate partner violence felt that they would not be able to access support to leave a violent partner, compared to 15% of those who had not experienced intimate partner violence (Figure 6.12).

Figure 6.11: Respondent perceptions of their ability to report intimate partner violence (IPV), by whether the respondent had experienced IPV during the past year. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Figure 6.12: Respondent perceptions of their ability to access support to leave a violent relationship, by whether the respondent had experienced intimate partner violence (IPV) during the past year. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

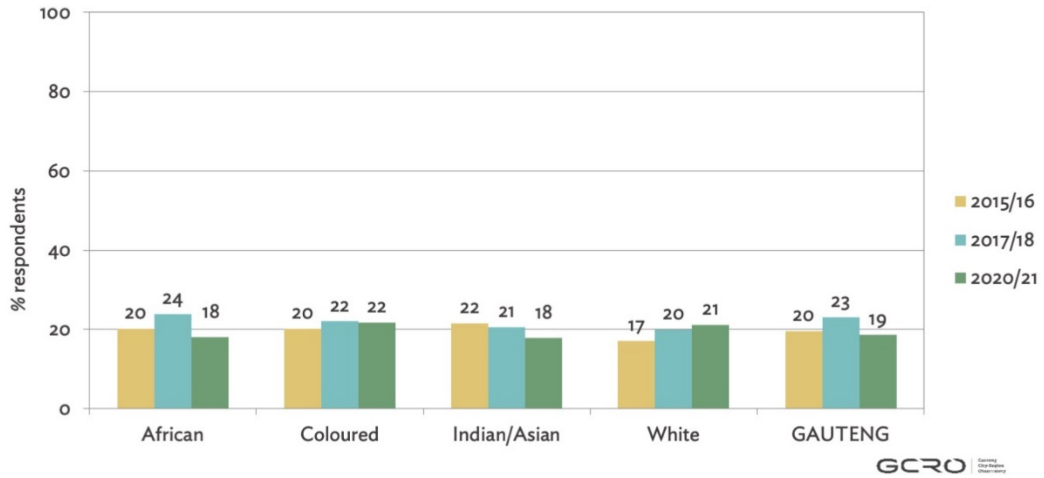
Experiences of crime and safety

The results presented in this section are drawn from the main, interviewer-administered questionnaire. Consequently, they are based on responses from the full sample of 13 616 respondents. Respondents were not provided with a definition of crime, and responses are likely to reflect a diversity of types of crime, including some experiences of physical violence. Although respondents were not specifically asked about safety from crime, the safety questions followed directly after those on crime, meaning that they were likely to have been answered from this perspective.

Experiences of crime

Respondents stating that they had been a victim of crime in the past year decreased from 23% in 2017/18 to 19% in 2020/21, falling below the 2015/16 figure of 20% (Figure 6.13). Experiences of crime have decreased for all population groups except for White respondents, who were one percentage point more likely to have experienced crime relative to 2017/18. Male respondents (20%) were three percentage points more likely to report being a victim of crime than females (17%).

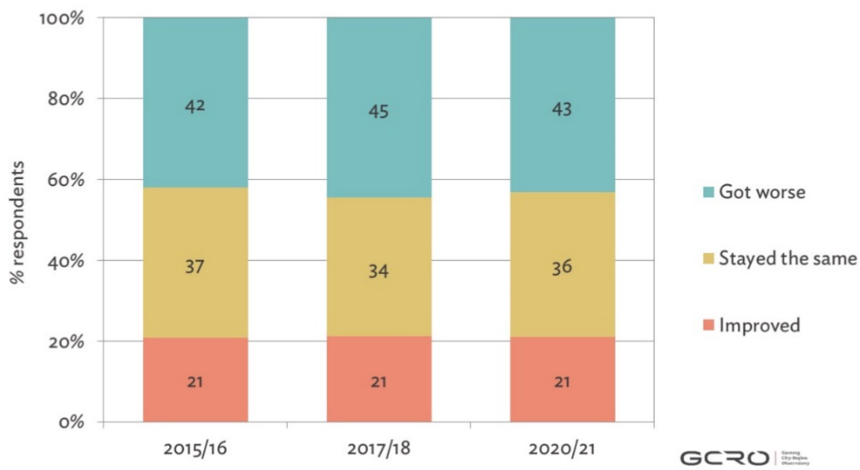
Figure 6.13: Percentage of respondents reporting that they had been a victim of crime in the past year, by population group and survey iteration. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18) and GCRO QoL IV (2015/16).



Perceptions of crime and safety

Perceptions of the crime situation have changed marginally since 2017/18. The percentage of respondents who feel that the crime situation is worsening decreased by two percentage points, from 45% in 2017/18 to 43% in 2020/21 (Figure 6.14). A consistent figure of 21% of respondents have felt that the crime situation is improving in all three survey iterations illustrated below. Female respondents were more likely to indicate that they felt crime was worsening (45%) when compared to males (41%).

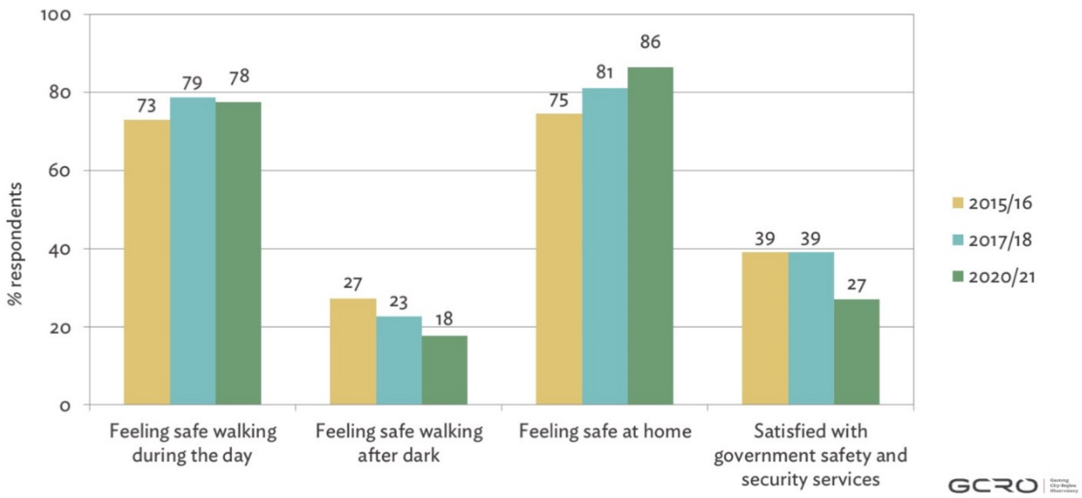
Figure 6.14: Respondent perceptions of whether crime is getting worse, staying the same, or improving, over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18) and GCRO QoL IV (2015/16).



Respondents are asked about how safe they feel while walking around their area during the day, after dark, and when at home. Figure 6.15 illustrates perceptions of safety from 2015/16 through to 2020/21. In all survey iterations, respondents have been most likely to feel safe at home. The percentage of respondents who feel safe at home has also increased over time, from 75% in 2015/16, to 86% in 2020/21. The increase between 2017/18 and 2020/21 may relate to people spending more time at home since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Relative to 2017/18, there has been a small decrease in the percentage of respondents feeling safe while walking in their area during the day. Relatively few respondents feel safe walking around their area after dark (18%). The percentage feeling safe walking after dark has consistently decreased over time. Female respondents are less likely to feel safe while walking in the day (73%) or after dark (16%), when compared to males (83% and 21% respectively).

Figure 6.15: Percentage of respondents who feel safe or fairly safe in different situations, over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18) and GCRO QoL IV (2015/16).



Increasing concerns about safety outside the home are likely to be connected to decreasing satisfaction with government-provided safety and security services where people live. Despite the overall decrease in experiences of crime, satisfaction with government-provided safety and security services has seen a substantial decrease in 2020/21, to 27%, from a 39% in both the 2015/16 and 2017/18 surveys (see also Section 10 of this report).

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Experiences of violence and safety

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Suggested citation:
Hatcher, A.M., de Kadt, J., Mkhize, S.P., & Parker, A. (2021). Experiences of violence and safety. In J. de Kadt, C. Hamann, S.P. Mkhize & A. Parker (Eds.), *Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21): Overview Report* (Section 6). Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.

Related GCRO outputs:
Mosselson, A., Siteleki, M., & Ballard, R. (2017). *Quality of Life Survey IV: Crime and perceptions of safety in Gauteng*. GCRO Data Brief No. 9. Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.

7. Health

By: Sthembiso Pollen Mkhize, Julia de Kadt, Yashena Naidoo and Alexandra Parker

Highlights

- Two thirds of respondents (66%) rely on the public healthcare system, continuing a trend of gradual increase since 2015/16. Reliance on the public healthcare sector is highest among Black Africans (75%) and in historically disadvantaged areas.
- The percentage of public healthcare system users who are satisfied with these services has fallen to 55% in 2020/21, down from 57% in 2017/18 and 66% in 2015/16. Satisfaction with private healthcare services has remained largely constant over time, at above 90%.
- The proportion of respondents reporting that their health is poor or very poor has increased to 12% in 2020/21, up by five percentage points since 2017/18. Black African respondents (13%) and women (15%) are particularly likely to report poor health.
- In the QoL 2020/21 data, 14% of respondents are at high risk of depression. This is an increase from 12% in 2017/18. Respondents experiencing unemployment, missed debt repayments, and living in households with very low income and experiencing food insecurity are more likely to be at high risk of depression than the general population.
- Gauteng's growing health challenges are disproportionately impacting more vulnerable members of society. A multisectoral approach to addressing these challenges is urgently required.

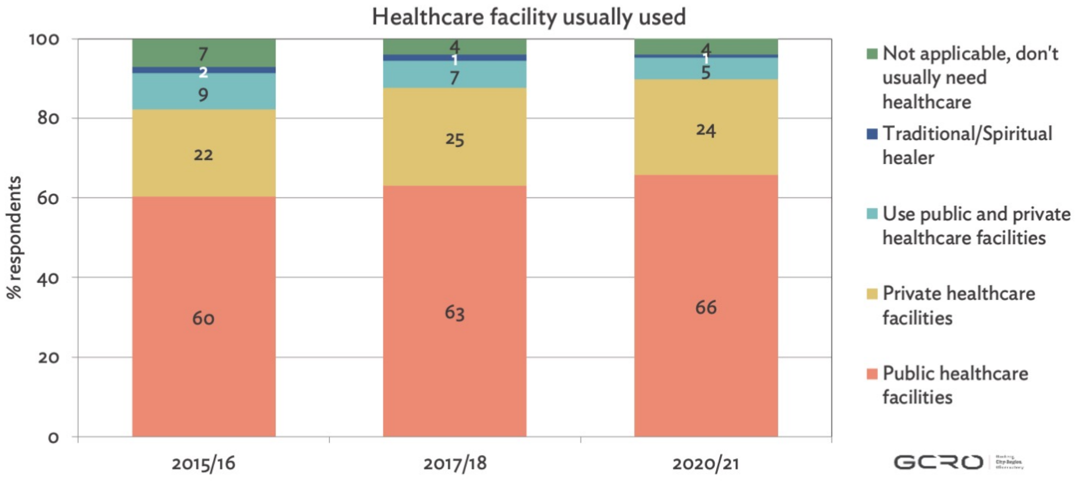
Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted persistent inequalities and gaps in Gauteng's healthcare system. While the Constitution of South Africa guarantees the right to access healthcare services, in a deeply unequal society, the ability to access quality healthcare varies. Although a well-resourced private healthcare system serves the relatively small proportion of Gauteng's population who can afford to pay, an under-resourced public healthcare sector provides care to the majority. The public healthcare system, already struggling with capacity constraints and relatively high levels of user dissatisfaction, has borne much of the additional burden of healthcare needs imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. This section examines the Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21) findings on access to and satisfaction with healthcare services, self-reported health status, and mental health. Shifts in patterns identified in earlier iterations of the QoL Surveys are also explored. The results presented here highlight growing health challenges, disproportionately affecting more vulnerable members of society. The strong relationship between health and socio-economic difficulties highlights the need for a multisectoral and holistic approach to improving health and well-being in the province.

Healthcare services: access and use

QoL 2020/21 results reflect a continuing trend since 2015/16 of gradually increasing reliance on the public healthcare sector (Figure 7.1). In 2020/21, 66% of respondents rely on the public sector, up from 63% in 2017/18 and 60% in 2015/16. The move towards the public healthcare sector appears to result from a decrease in use of either the private healthcare sector alone, or the public and private sectors together. Consistent with previous survey iterations, 1% of QoL 2020/21 respondents report using traditional or spiritual healers, while a further 4% indicate that they do not usually use healthcare services. The gradual increase in reliance on the public healthcare sector over time highlights the crucial and growing role of this sector in the well-being of Gauteng's population. Ensuring that the public healthcare system is able to function optimally, through adequate resourcing and skilled management, remains a priority.

Figure 7.1: Percentage of respondents who report usually using each type of healthcare facilities, over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18) and GCRO QoL IV (2015/16).

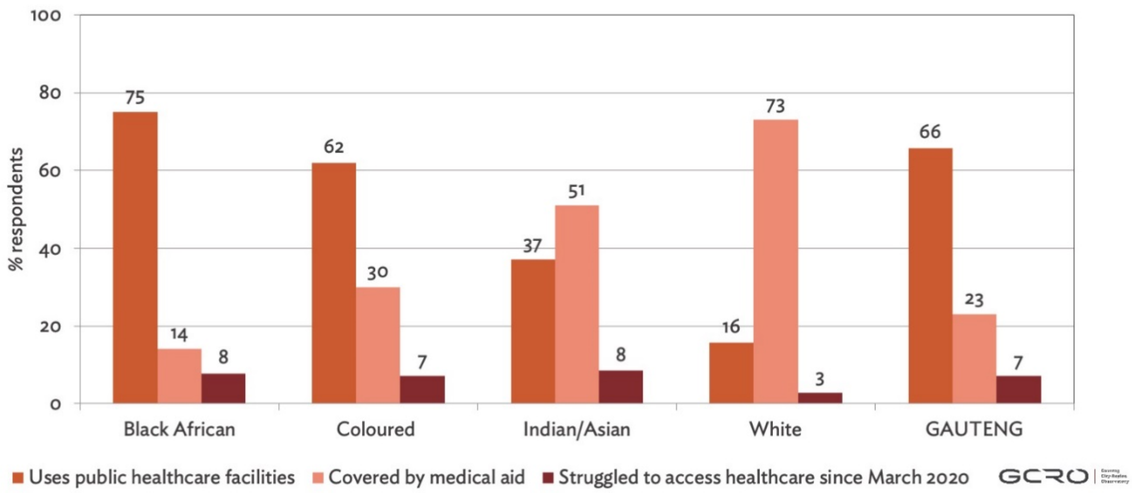


Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

QoL 2020/21 results highlight that population group differences in healthcare service use and access remain dramatic, and persistent. Figure 7.2 below demonstrates that 75% of Black African respondents rely on the public healthcare sector, compared to 62% for Coloured respondents, 37% for Indian/Asian respondents, and 16% for White respondents. Black African respondents are the least likely to have medical aid (14%), while 73% of White respondents do.

Most respondents (93%) report that they have not struggled to access healthcare since March 2020. However, the 7% of respondents who struggled to access healthcare remains a concern. These respondents are more likely to report poor or very poor health status and to be at a risk of probable depression, compared to the population as a whole (see Section 2 on COVID-19 impact). Access difficulties also varied by population group, with 8% of both Black African and Indian/Asian respondents having struggled to access healthcare, compared to 3% of White respondents. This is likely to relate to variable reliance on the public healthcare sector by population group, as 9% of users of public healthcare services had struggled to access care, compared to 2% of private healthcare users.

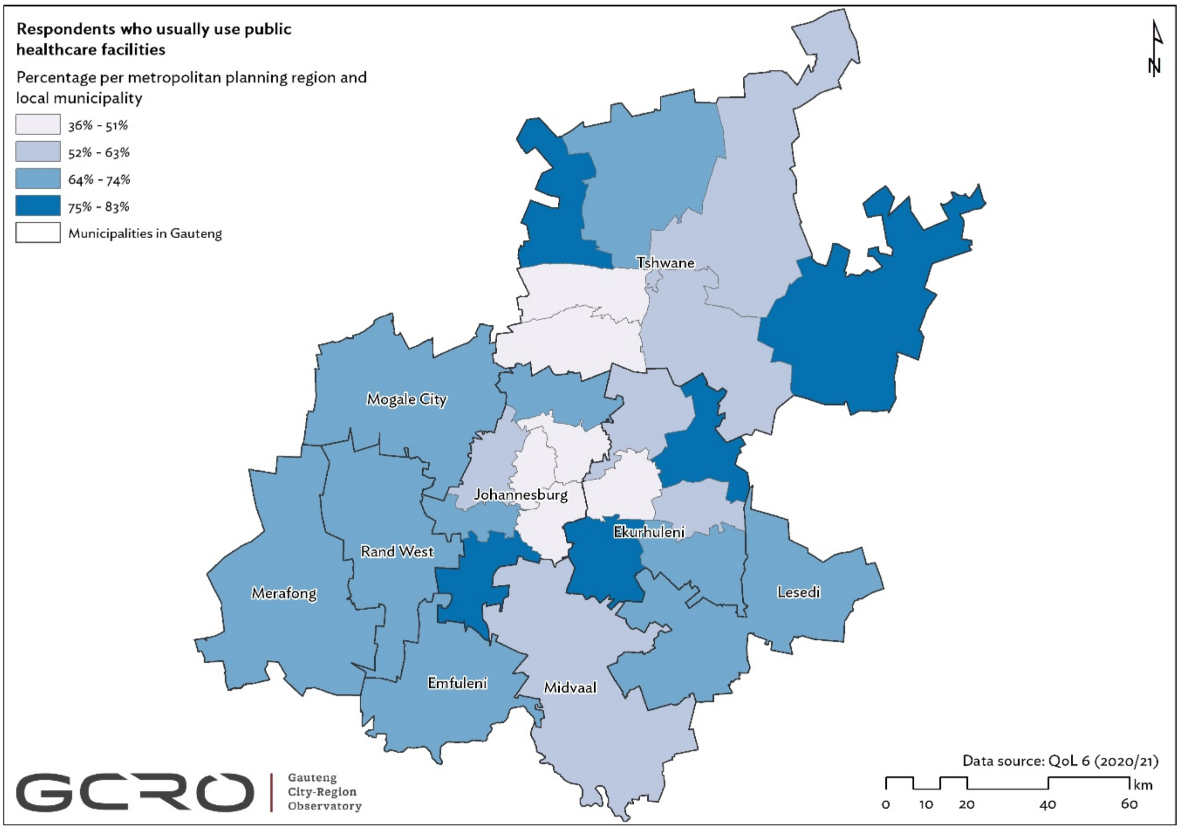
Figure 7.2: Percentage of respondents reliant on public healthcare services, not covered by medical aid, and who struggled to access healthcare since March 2020, by population group. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



The percentage of respondents using public healthcare services varies notably at the local municipality and metropolitan planning region level (Figure 7.3). At the municipal level, Merafong has the highest percentage of respondents usually using public healthcare facilities (70%), followed by Emfuleni and Ekurhuleni with 69%, and Rand West with 68%. The percentage of respondents using public healthcare facilities is lowest in Midvaal (54%). Tshwane has the second lowest percentage, at 63%. Figure 7.3 highlights substantial variation within the Metropolitan municipalities, when broken down by regions.

The regions where public healthcare use is low (the light blue areas on the map) include those in central Ekurhuleni (including Germiston and Kempton Park), the central and eastern regions of Johannesburg (including Bryanston and Sandton), and regions in southern Tshwane (including Centurion and Waterkloof). These areas are all relatively central and home to higher income households with access to medical aid for private healthcare. The areas where the use of public healthcare is high (the dark blue areas on the map) include those in the south and north-east of Ekurhuleni (including Daveyton and Katlehong), those in the south of Johannesburg (including Lenasia and Sebokeng) and regions in the east and north-west of Tshwane (including Bronkhorstspruit and Soshanguve). These regions are home to many low income households in large townships of Gauteng.

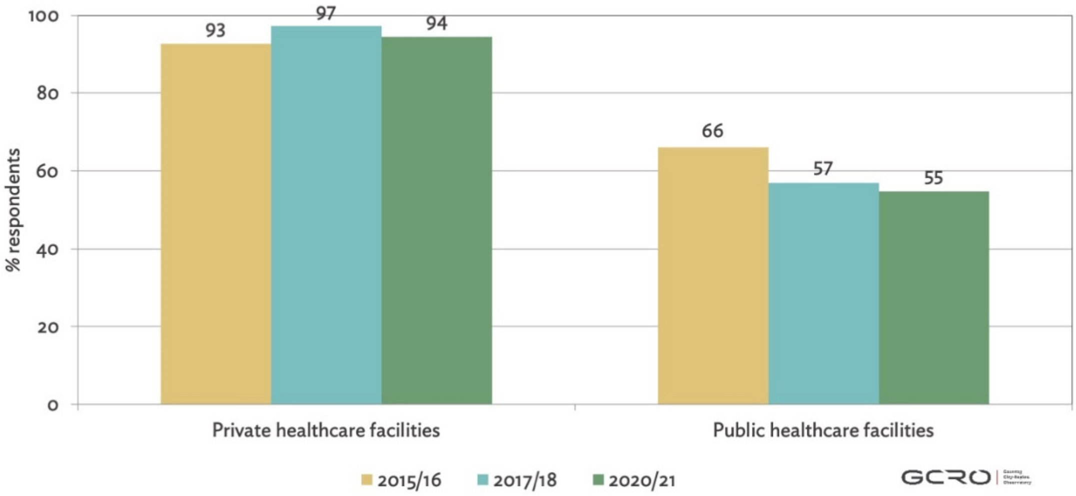
Figure 7.3: Map of Gauteng showing percentage of respondents that usually use public healthcare facilities, by metropolitan planning region and local municipality. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Satisfaction with healthcare services used

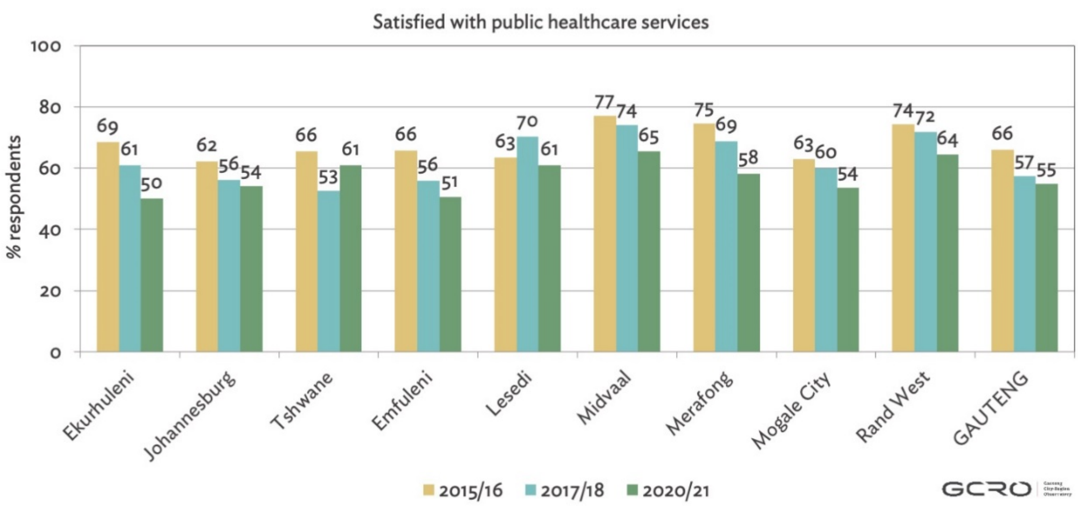
QoL 2020/21 respondents were asked about their satisfaction with the healthcare services they usually use. We refer to those who responded with either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' as satisfied in the content below. As illustrated in Figure 7.4, levels of satisfaction are dramatically different for users of the private healthcare system (94% satisfied) and the public healthcare system (55% satisfied). Levels of satisfaction with private healthcare have been relatively constant over time, with more than 90% of users satisfied in each survey iteration since 2015/16. By contrast, satisfaction with public healthcare has fallen notably over time, from 66% in 2015/16 to 57% in 2017/18, and 55% in 2020/21. The growing level of dissatisfaction with public healthcare services is deeply concerning, as it is likely to be a reflection, at least in part, of poor service delivery, potentially exacerbated by the pressures of COVID-19. Furthermore, regular negative experiences with healthcare services will negatively impact appropriate care-seeking behaviours.

Figure 7.4: Percentage of users of private and public healthcare services who are satisfied with the healthcare services they use, over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18) and GCRO QoL IV (2015/16).



Satisfaction with public healthcare facilities also varies by municipality (Figure 7.5). With the exception of Tshwane, satisfaction with public healthcare services has declined over time for all municipalities. While satisfaction in Johannesburg fell by two percentage points, from 56% in 2017/18 to 54% in 2020/21, satisfaction in all other municipalities fell by five percentage points or more. In both Ekurhuleni and Merafong, satisfaction fell by 11 percentage points since 2017/18. By contrast, Tshwane experienced an eight percentage point increase in satisfaction, from 53% in 2017/18, to 61% in 2020/21. In the Cities of Johannesburg and Ekurhuleni, along with Emfuleni and Mogale City, satisfaction levels are below the Gauteng average of 55%.

Figure 7.5: Percentage of public healthcare service users who are satisfied with these services, by municipality and survey iteration. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18) and GCRO QoL IV (2015/16).



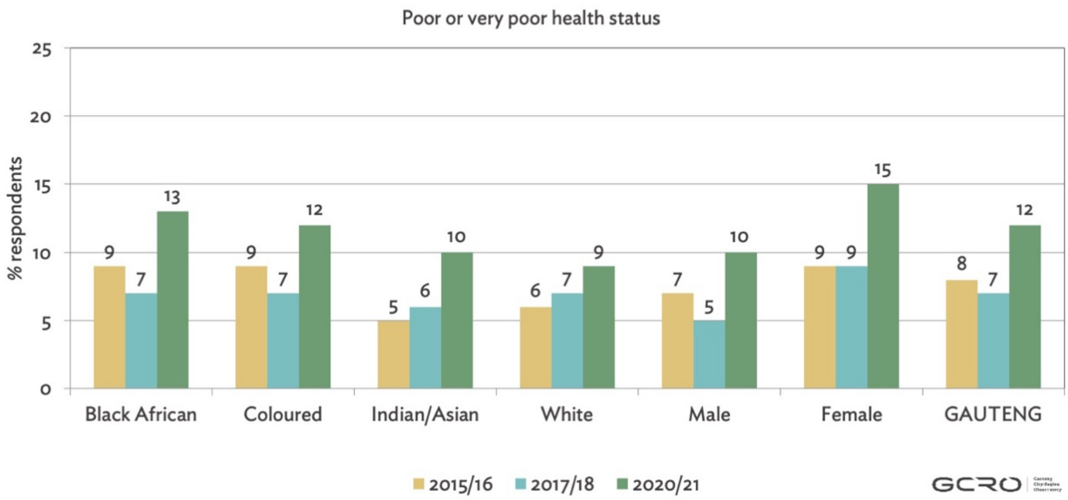
Self-reported health status

Respondents were asked to report whether their current health status was excellent, good, poor or very poor. In 2020/21, 12% of respondents reported poor or very poor health (Figure 7.6). This is an increase of five percentage points, from 7% in 2017/18. By contrast, there was a one percentage point decrease between 2015/16 and 2017/18. This suggests that the more recent increase in poor and very poor health status is related, at least in part, to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The increase in poor or very poor health status occurred across all population groups, and also affected both males and females. However, Black African respondents experienced the most substantial increase in reported poor health status of all population groups, increasing by six percentage points from 7% in 2017/18 to 13% in 2020/21. They are also more likely than members of any other population group to report poor health. By contrast, while 7% of White respondents also reported poor health status in 2017/18, there was only a two percentage point increase to 9% in 2020/21. White respondents were also less likely to report poor health status than members of any other population group.

Women were substantially more likely to report poor health status in 2017/18 (9%) when compared to men (5%). While both sexes experienced an increase from 2017/18 to 2020/21, the increase was greater for females (six percentage points) than males (five percentage points). This means that in 2020/21, a full 15% of female respondents report that their health status is poor or very poor. The timing of this disproportionate shift in responses amongst females suggest that the COVID-19 pandemic may have had a stronger negative impact on the overall health status of women than of men.

Figure 7.6: Percentage of respondents reporting poor or very poor health status over survey iterations, by population group and sex. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18) and GCRO QoL IV (2015/16).



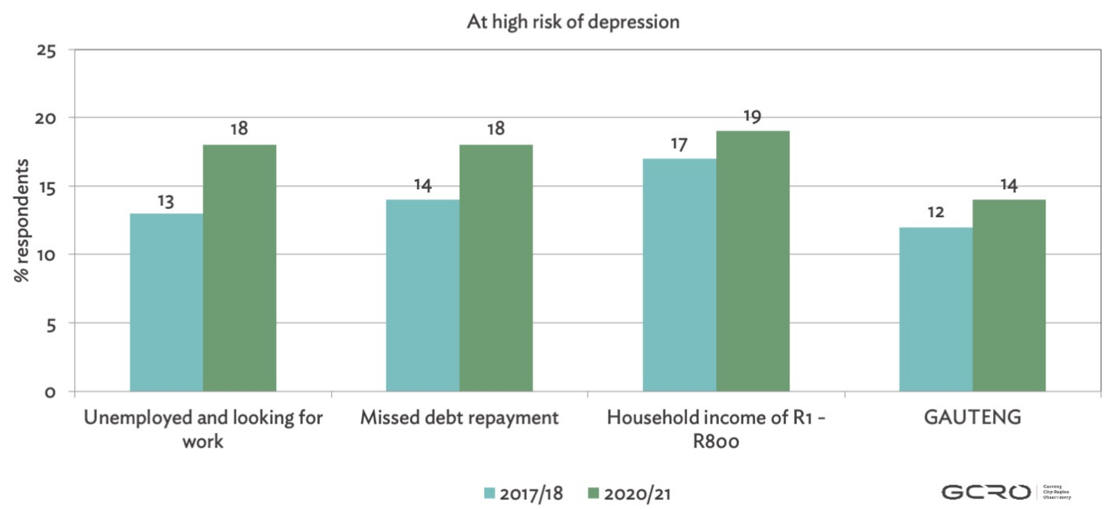
Mental health

The PHQ-2 score is a brief screening tool used to assess risk of depression, and previously validated for use in South Africa (Hunt et al., 2021; Bhana et al., 2015). It generates a score, ranging from zero to six, based on responses to two questions – '*Over the past two weeks, how many days have you been bothered by little interest or pleasure in doing things?*' and '*Over the past two weeks, how many days have you been bothered by feeling down, depressed or hopeless?*' (Kroenke et al., 2003). Individuals who score three or above are at a high risk of suffering from depression.

In 2020/21, 14% of QoL respondents are at high risk of depression. This is a two percentage point increase from 2017/18. While these figures are striking, we do note that Hunt et al. (2021) found that, using the same tool, 29% of respondents in NIDS-CRAM Wave 5 (April–May 2021) were at high risk of depression. Reasons for the lower figures obtained in the QoL 2020/21 Survey merit further exploration.

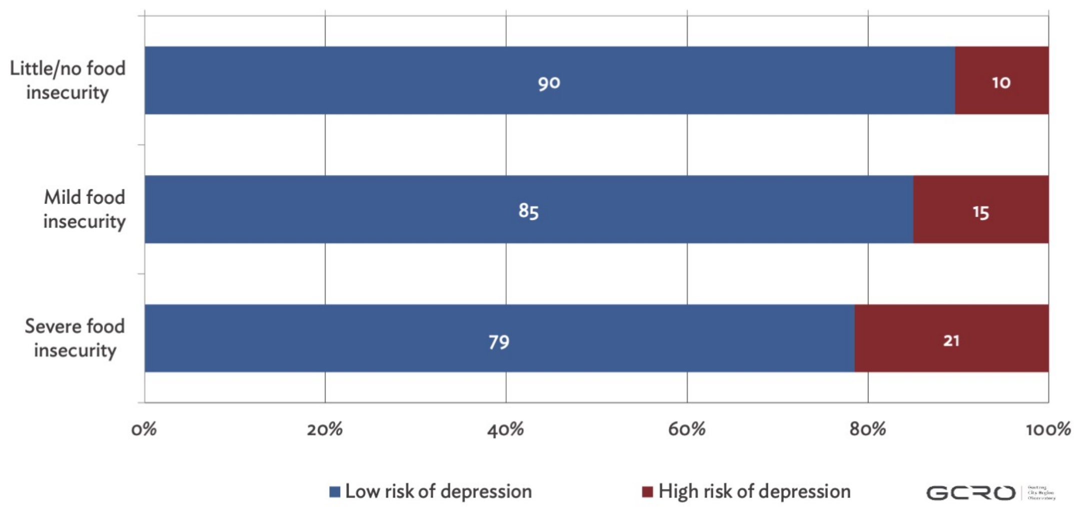
QoL 2020/21 data revealed a strong relationship between various indicators of socio-economic stress, and higher risk of depression. Figure 7.7 below illustrates how the percentage of respondents at high risk of depression varies when comparing the sample as a whole to those experiencing unemployment, inability to pay debt, and extremely low household income (R1–R800 per month), for both 2017/18 and 2020/21. Respondents experiencing these challenges are consistently at more likely to be at high risk of depression, when compared to the sample as a whole. While 2020/21 rates are higher for all groups, the relative increase between 2017/18 and 2020/21 rates is notably greater for those who are unemployed and those with missed debt payments.

Figure 7.7: Percentage of respondents experiencing various forms of socio-economic stress who are at high risk of depression, compared to the provincial average, in 2017/18 and 2020/21. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21) and GCRO QoL V (2017/18).



In addition, those experiencing severe food insecurity (see Section 5 of this report for more details) are more than twice as likely to be at high risk of depression when compared to those experiencing little or no food insecurity, as illustrated in Figure 7.8. This is consistent with evidence demonstrating a relationship between food insecurity and increased risk of depression across ten different countries (Pourmotabbed et al., 2020).

Figure 7.8: Percentage of respondents falling into each food insecurity category who are at low and high risk of depression. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

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Health

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Suggested citation:
Mkhize, S.P., de Kadt, J., Naidoo, Y., & Parker, A. (2021). Health. In J. de Kadt, C. Hamann, S.P. Mkhize & A. Parker (Eds.), *Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21): Overview Report* (Section 7). Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.

Related GCRO outputs:
Mapukata, S. (2019). *Feeling depressed or hopeless in Gauteng*. GCRO Map of the Month, October 2019. Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.
Hamann, C., & de Kadt, J. (2019). *The use of public services in Gauteng*. GCRO Map of the Month, March 2019. Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.
Hamann, C., de Kadt, J., & Siteleki, M. (2018). *Quality of Life Survey IV (2015/16): Health*. GCRO Data Brief No. 9. Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.

8. Community and social attitudes

By: Julia de Kadt, Anthea Dallimore, Sthembiso Pollen Mkhize, Samkelisiwe Khanyile and Alexandra Parker

Highlights

- QoL 6 (2020/21) shows that levels of community trust have increased substantially since 2017/18, continuing an upward trend from 2015/16. Despite an increase, community trust levels remain relatively low for Black African and Coloured respondents.
- A third of respondents (31%) indicate that crime is the biggest problem in their community, with a further quarter (24%) selecting unemployment. Concern over basic services and their maintenance has increased relative to 2017/18, while concern about drug or alcohol abuse has decreased.
- Participation in organised social activities and participatory governance processes has increased very slightly relative to 2017/18, despite lockdown regulations limiting in-person gatherings for much of 2020. Participation in social activities increased most substantially among individuals reporting extremely low household incomes, suggesting that these activities might have provided an element of support for Gauteng's poor during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- One in three respondents (32%) feel they cannot influence community developments, one in four (26%) feel that nobody cares about them and just less than one in five (17%) feel that they don't belong where they live. More than half of Gauteng respondents experience at least one of these negative feelings, which is a concerning finding.
- Attitudes towards 'gays and lesbians' and 'foreigners' have continued to soften over time. The 2020/21 results show large increases since 2017/18 in those strongly disagreeing that it is acceptable to be violent to members of these groups.
- The proportion of respondents who agree that Black and White people will never trust each other has decreased by four percentage points since 2017/18. While levels dropped for all population groups, the most striking decreases were among White and Indian/Asian respondents.

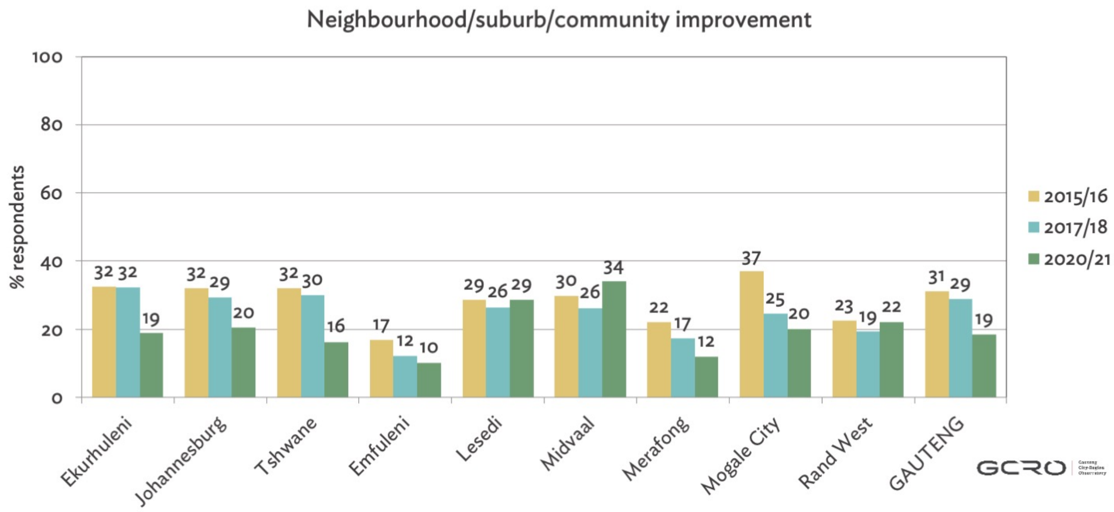
Introduction

Data collection for the Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21) took place before the devastating third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic and the civil unrest of July 2021. Our results therefore speak to how residents of Gauteng felt about their neighbourhoods and communities, their engagement and connections with others, and their social attitudes and beliefs in advance of these events. Our findings present a mixed picture, with some indicators providing hope, while others flag areas of concern. Concerns about crime and unemployment, and widespread feelings of powerlessness, not being cared for, and not belonging, suggest that many residents of Gauteng feel somewhat abandoned, in part by government. The positive findings on community trust, social and civic engagement, and growing tolerance highlight the ways that people have coped in this context. They help to deepen our understanding of the society in which the recent civil unrest broke out, but can also contribute to understanding how social fabric can best be strengthened.

Attitudes towards neighbourhood and community

QoL 6 (2020/21) provides a number of insights into neighbourhood and community satisfaction and trust. The proportion of respondents in 2020/21 who feel that their neighbourhood, suburb or community is improving has fallen substantially since 2017/18, continuing a downward trend evident since 2015/16. However, as illustrated in Figure 8.1, perceptions vary substantially at the municipal level. Declines are particularly large in the three metropolitan municipalities, with Ekurhuleni and Tshwane falling by 14 percentage points, and Johannesburg by nine. In general, these results are consistent with the decrease in satisfaction with basic services, and perceptions of decreased safety (see Section 10 on basic services, and Section 6 on safety). However, there are also some positive trends. In both Lesedi and Rand West, there has been a small improvement relative to 2017/18. In Midvaal, 35% of respondents believe their neighbourhood is improving – an eight percentage point increase from 2017/18. This is the only municipality in which the 2020/21 figure exceeds that from 2015/16.

Figure 8.1: Percentage of respondents who feel their neighbourhood has improved in the past 12 months, by municipality and survey iteration. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18) and GCRO QoL IV (2015/16).

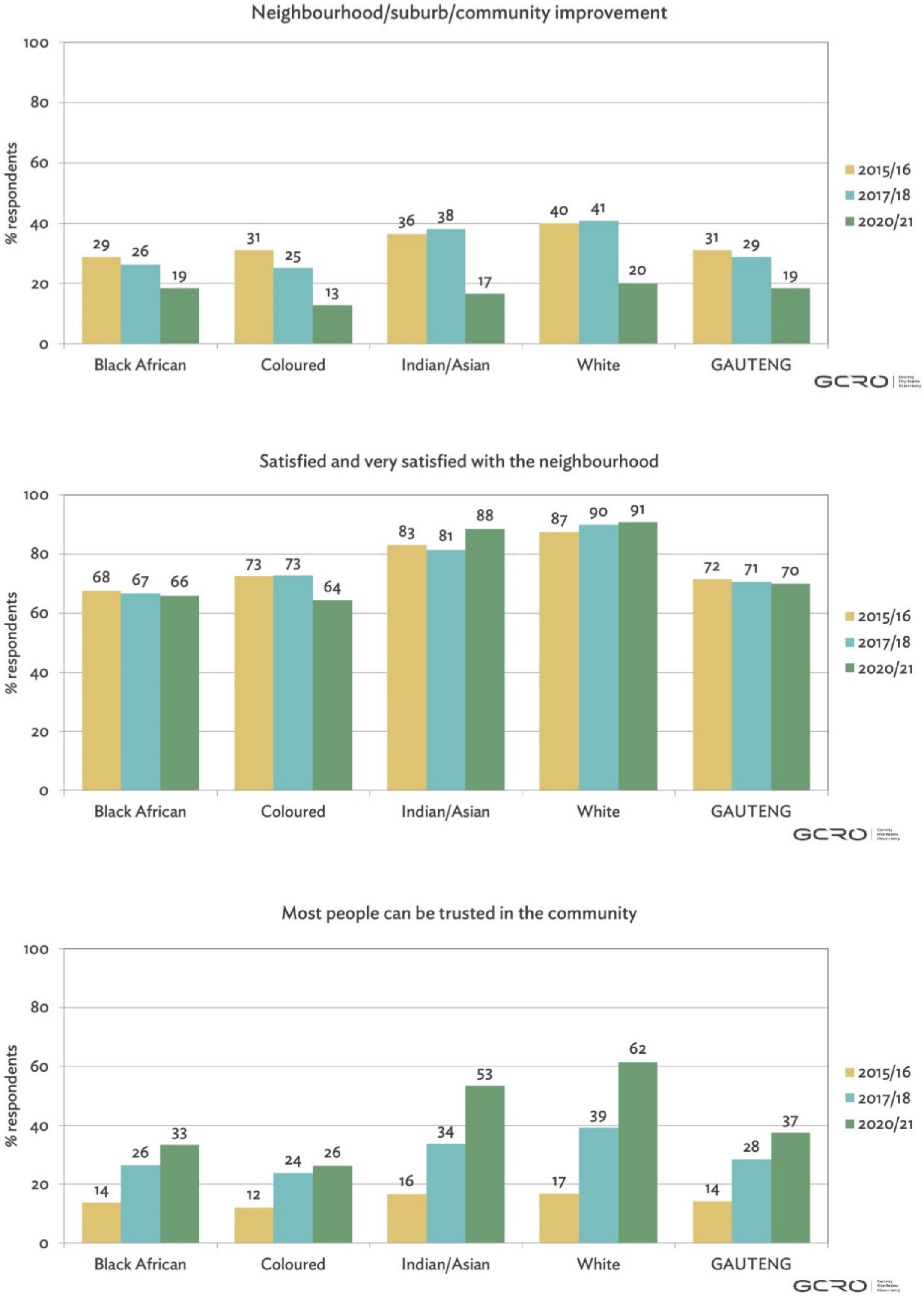


Breaking down responses about neighbourhood improvement, neighbourhood satisfaction and community trust by population group reveals some interesting variations. Perceived neighbourhood or community improvement has been declining for Black African and Coloured respondents since 2015/16 (Figure 8.2). By contrast, the proportion of Indian/Asian and White respondents perceiving neighbourhood improvement grew slightly between 2015/16 and 2017/18, but dropped substantially in 2020/21.

At the provincial level, there has been a very gradual decline in neighbourhood satisfaction over time (also illustrated in Figure 8.2). However, White and Indian/Asian respondents, who already reported very high levels of neighbourhood satisfaction in 2017/18, were marginally more likely to be satisfied in 2020/21. By contrast, for Black African and Coloured respondents, satisfaction decreased from an already markedly lower base. The decrease for Coloured respondents is particularly stark: satisfaction fell by nine percentage points since 2017/18, to 64% in 2020/21. This is the lowest level of satisfaction for any population group since 2015/16.

Trust in the people living in the neighbourhood or community plays an important role in how safe people feel, and in their general well-being. Trust in neighbours or community members has increased from 28% in 2017/18, to 37% in 2020/21 (Figure 8.2). This continues an upward trend from 2015/16 and suggests that the hardships since March 2020 have not harmed community trust and may have even contributed to strengthening it. While levels of trust have increased for all population groups, the increases, from already substantially higher bases, are greatest for Indian/Asian and White respondents. By contrast, Black African and Coloured respondents experienced a smaller increase, from a lower base.

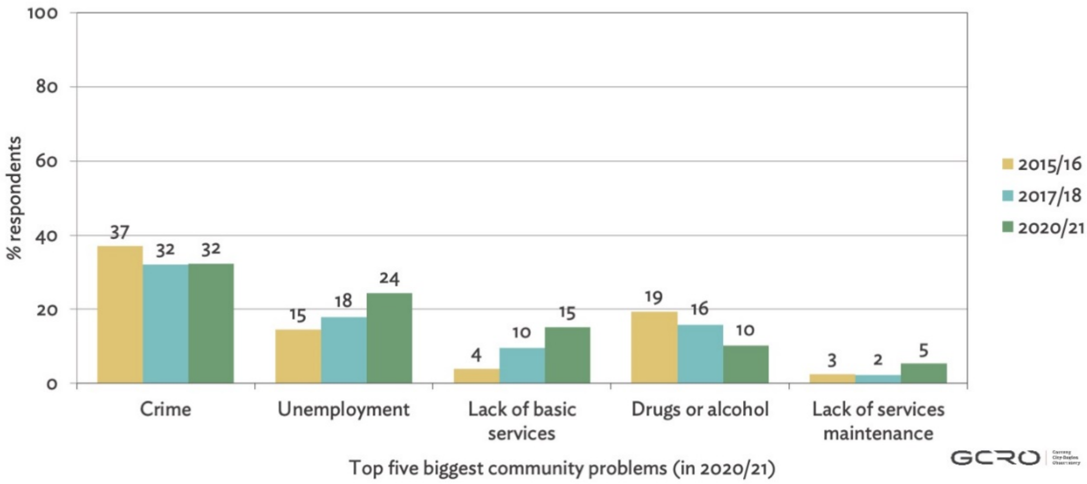
Figure 8.2: Percentage of respondents who believe their neighbourhood is improving, who are satisfied with the neighbourhood they live in, and who believe most people in their neighbourhood can be trusted, by population group and survey iteration. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18) and GCRO QoL IV (2015/16).



Respondents were asked about the biggest problem facing their neighbourhood or community and Figure 8.3 shows the top five biggest perceived problems in 2020/21. As was the case in 2017/18, 32% of QoL 2020/21 respondents indicated crime was the biggest problem facing their neighbourhood or community. However, in a continuing trend from 2015/16, the proportion selecting unemployment has increased from 18% in 2017/18, to

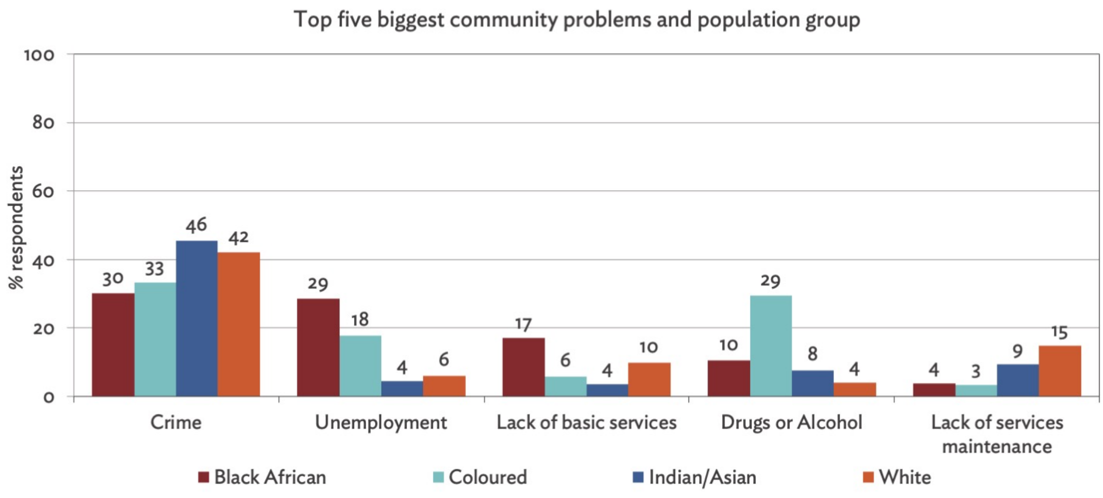
24% in 2020/21. Concern over delivery and maintenance of basic services has grown, while concern over drug or alcohol abuse has fallen.

Figure 8.3: Percentage of respondents selecting each of the five most frequently selected biggest neighbourhood or community problem, over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18) and GCRO QoL IV (2015/16).



Responses vary notably by population group (Figure 8.4) and income. For Indian/Asian and White respondents, crime is by far the biggest problem facing their neighbourhoods or communities. One in three (30%) Black African respondents identify crime as the biggest problem and another third (29%) identify unemployment. Almost one in five (17%) of Black Africans identify a lack of basic services as the biggest problem. A third of Coloured respondents identify crime (33%) and another one in three identify drugs or alcohol (29%) as the biggest problem facing their community, although this has decreased from 36% in 2017/18. Respondents with higher household incomes are also more likely to identify crime as the biggest problem in their community, and less likely to identify unemployment. Respondents from low income households are more likely to identify unemployment and lack of basic services as their biggest problems.

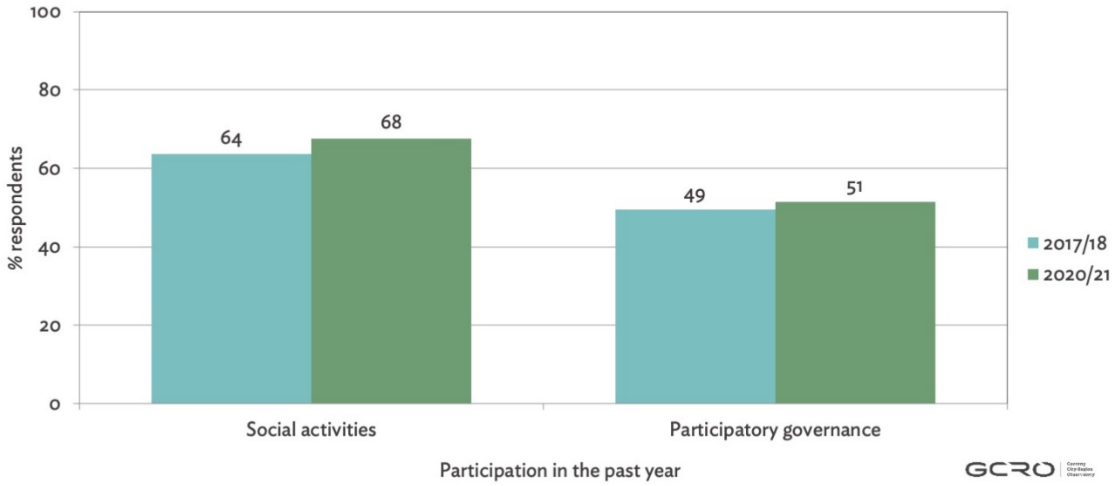
Figure 8.4: Percentage of respondents selecting each of the five most frequently selected biggest neighbourhood or community problem in 2020/21, by population group. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Social activities and participatory governance

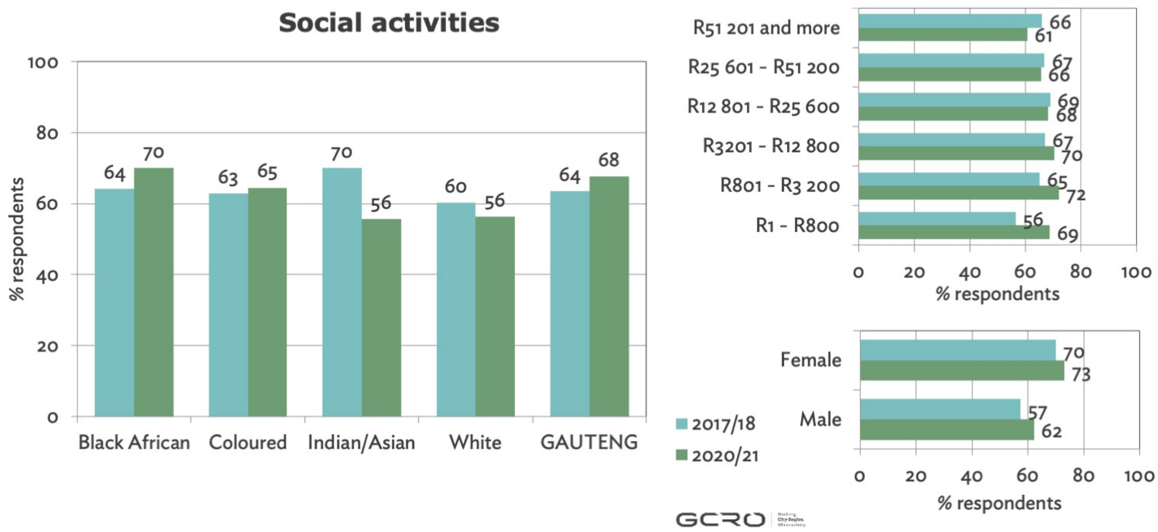
Gauteng residents are actively engaged in social activities and participatory governance. Social activities include church or religious groups or events, sports or social clubs, and stokvels and burial societies. Participatory governance includes activities such as ward meetings, community policing forums, and integrated development planning meetings. The proportion of respondents reporting participation, over the past year, in organised social activities and in participatory governance saw a marginal increase since 2017/18, despite the fact that during the pandemic there were substantial restrictions on gatherings (Figure 8.5). Respondents with no internet in their home were more likely to report participation than those without, particularly in participatory governance. This suggests that many of these activities did not shift to online platforms during the pandemic but continued nonetheless. These figures indicate that Gauteng respondents have made an effort to remain socially connected, and to participate in governance, despite the constraints and challenges imposed by the pandemic.

Figure 8.5: Percentage of respondents participating in organised social activities or participatory governance in the past year, for 2017/18 and 2020/21. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21) and GCRO QoL V (2017/18).



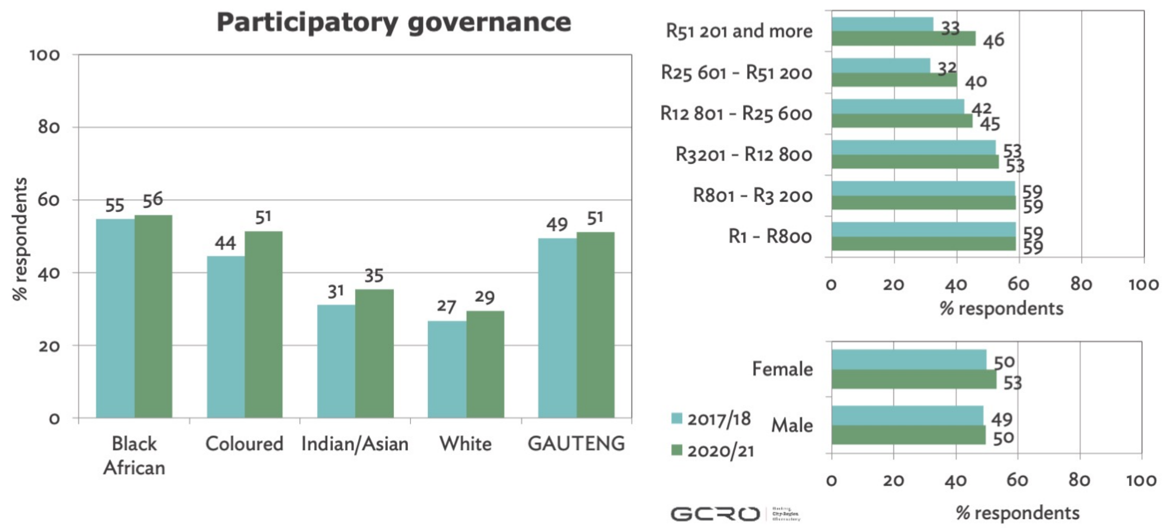
However, these shifts are not consistent across all population groups. Since 2017/18, social participation has increased for Black African and Coloured respondents but decreased for White and Indian/Asian respondents (Figure 8.6). Female respondents are much more likely to participate in social activities than male respondents, at both points in time. Social participation increased slightly for both groups in 2020/21. Respondents in lower income households were slightly more likely to participate in social activities than the more affluent. Participation levels for those in the lowest monthly household income group (R1–R800) increased most substantially, by 13 percentage points. This suggests that social activities may have played a meaningful support role for Gauteng's poorest during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 8.6: Percentage of respondents participating in organised social activities in the past year, by population group, monthly household income and sex, for 2017/18 and 2020/21. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21) and GCRO QoL V (2017/18).



The proportion of respondents participating in participatory governance is lower than those participating in social activities, but at just over half of Gauteng respondents (51%), it is indicative of active and engaged democratic participation in governance processes. Levels of participation in participatory governance increased for all population groups relative to 2017/18 but vary quite markedly between groups (Figure 8.7). Black Africans were the most likely to report participation in participatory governance in 2020/21, at 56%. By contrast, less than a third of White respondents (29%) did so. Engagement in participatory governance is highest amongst respondents with lower incomes, and their levels of engagement have not changed since 2017/18. By contrast, while those with the highest incomes were less likely to participate, their levels of participation in 2020/21 are notably higher than in 2017/18. Both male and female respondents have increased their participatory governance activities in the past year, although the increase was greater for female respondents at three percentage points. The increase in participatory governance, despite the difficulties of lockdown conditions, indicates that many of Gauteng's respondents are eager to participate in shaping local governance.

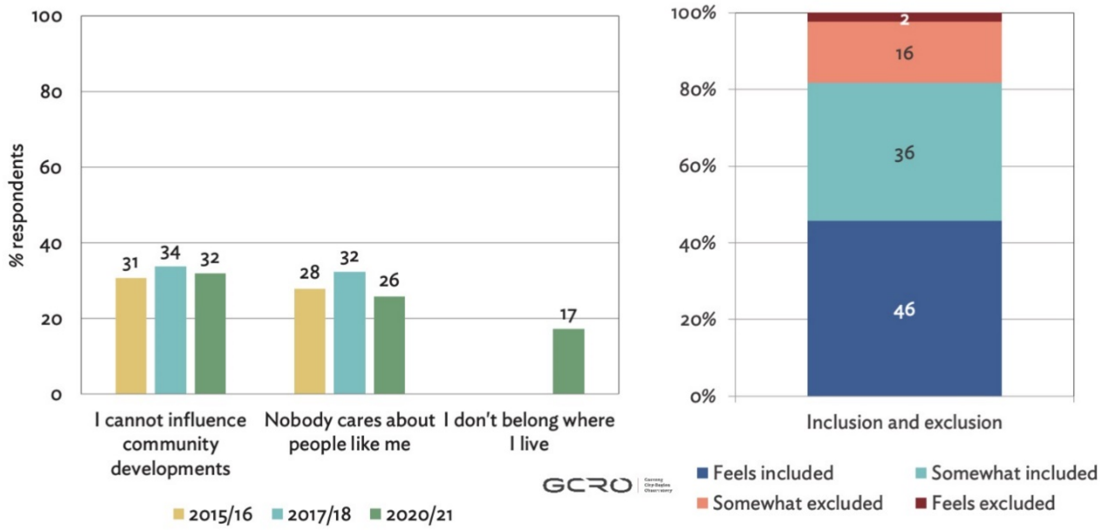
Figure 8.7: Percentage of respondents engaging in participatory governance in the past year, by population group, income and sex, for 2017/18 and 2020/21. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21) and GCRO QoL V (2017/18).



Inclusion, exclusion and discrimination

A number of our survey questions tap into feelings of exclusion. These include whether respondents feel that they cannot influence community development, that nobody cares about people like them, and that they do not belong in the area where they live. One in three (32%) respondents feel they cannot influence community developments, one in four (26%) feel that nobody cares about them, and just fewer than one in five (17%) feel that they don't belong in the area where they live (Figure 8.8). We generated an exclusion index based on responses to these questions. Those who reported all of these feelings are categorised as 'excluded' (only 2%); those who reported two are 'somewhat excluded' (16%); those reporting only one are 'somewhat included' (36%), and those reporting none are 'included'. Over half of Gauteng residents (54%) expressed at least one of these feelings.

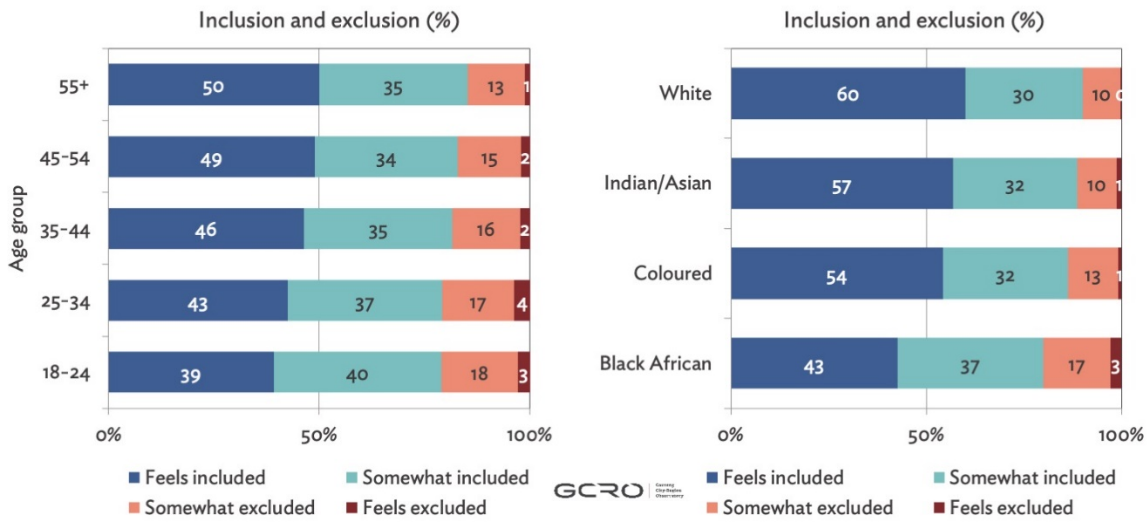
Figure 8.8: Percentage of respondents who feel that they cannot influence community developments, nobody cares about people like them, and they don't belong, along with the percentage of respondents falling into each category of the exclusion index. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18) and GCRO QoL IV (2015/16).



Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Levels of inclusion and exclusion, as defined by this index, vary by age, population group, income and education. Younger respondents and Black African respondents are more likely to be categorised as excluded or somewhat excluded (Figure 8.9). This is also the case for respondents from households with lower incomes and those with limited formal education. There are no significant differences between the sexes on feelings of exclusion and inclusion. Respondents who are categorised as somewhat or very excluded are more likely to be at high risk of depression (19% of each group), when compared to those who feel somewhat or very included (15% and 11% respectively).

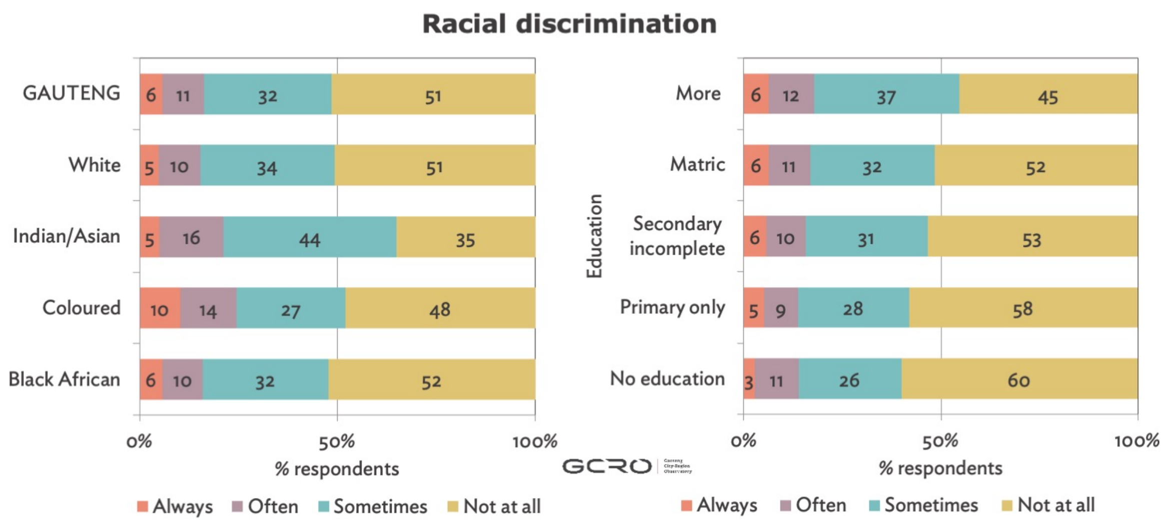
Figure 8.9: Percentage of respondents falling into each exclusion index category, by age and population group. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Respondents were also asked about their experiences with racial discrimination. Just over half of Gauteng respondents (51%) report not experiencing any racial discrimination. However, 32% report experiencing some racial discrimination, 11% report frequent racial discrimination, and 6% report constant discrimination (Figure 8.10). These are concerning figures. Experiences of racism vary by population group and education level. One in ten Coloured respondents reports always experiencing racial discrimination – the highest of all population groups. Indian/Asian respondents are markedly less likely than other groups to report not experiencing any racial discrimination. The similarity of the responses provided by White and Black African respondents are quite striking. Interestingly, respondents with the lowest levels of formal education are least likely to report experiencing any racial discrimination, while those with higher levels of education are most likely to do so.

Figure 8.10: Percentage of respondents reporting frequency of racial discrimination, by population group and highest level of formal education. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).

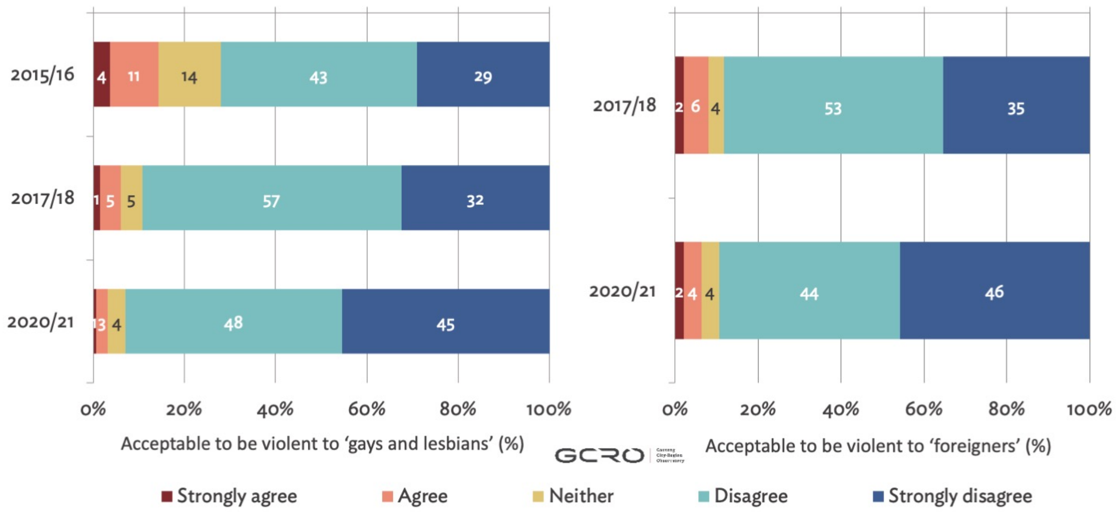


Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Social attitudes

This section explores respondent beliefs on the acceptability of violence, interracial trust, and their optimism regarding South Africa's future. Respondents were asked whether they agreed that it is acceptable to be violent to 'gays and lesbians' or to 'foreigners'. Over time, decreasing proportions of respondents have indicated that violence towards these groups is acceptable, which is an encouraging signal of growing tolerance. A particularly positive aspect of the 2020/21 results is the substantial increase in the proportion of respondents who strongly disagree with these forms of violence – in both cases an increase of more than ten percentage points.

Figure 8.11: Respondent beliefs on the acceptability of violence towards 'gays and lesbians' and 'foreigners'. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18) and GCRO QoL IV (2015/16).



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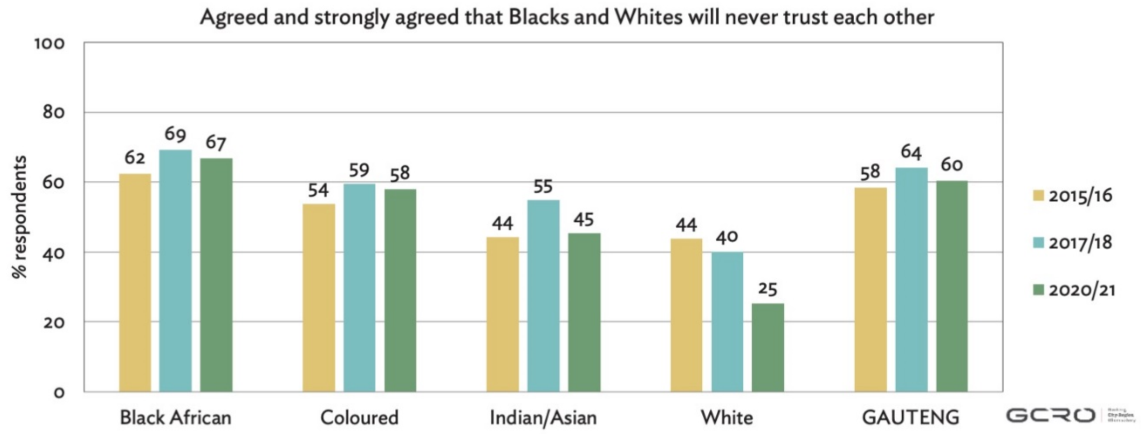
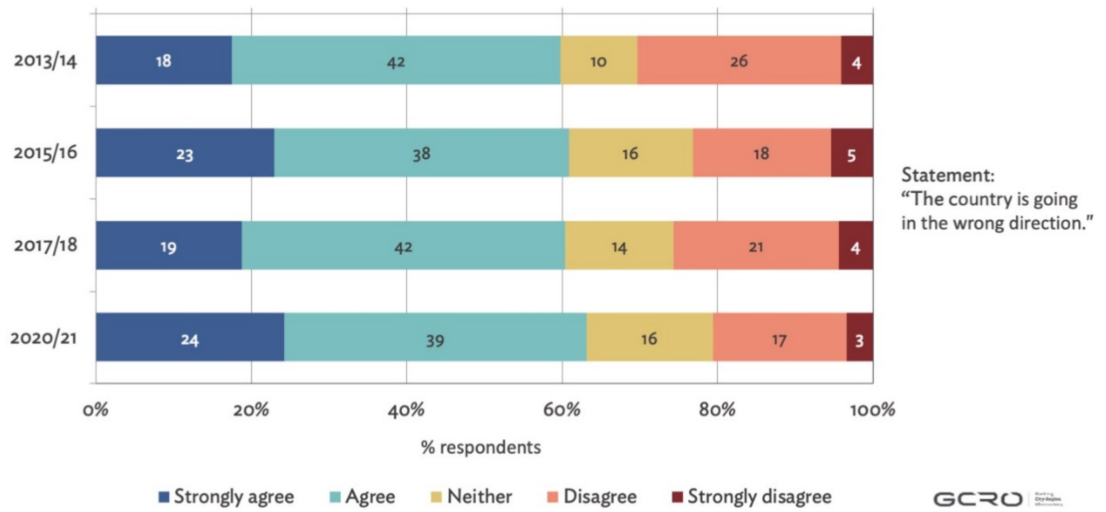
Sentiment around interracial trust also appears to have improved. The proportion of respondents who agree or strongly agree with the statement 'Blacks and Whites will never trust each other', has decreased by four percentage points since 2017/18 (Figure 8.12). While agreement with the statement has fallen for all population groups, the level of agreement varies substantially by population group. Two thirds of Black Africans (67%) feel that Black and White people will never trust each other, compared with only one in four White respondents (25%). The proportion of White respondents agreeing with the statement has seen a particularly substantial decrease over time, with a 15 percentage point drop since 2017/18. This suggests that there has been some improvement in interracial relations since 2017/18, but that this has primarily been felt by White and Indian/Asian respondents.

Figure 8.12: Percentage of respondents agreeing that Blacks and Whites will never trust each other, by population group and survey iteration. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18) and GCRO QoL IV (2015/16).



The proportion of respondents who agree or strongly agree with the statement 'The country is going in the wrong direction' has hovered around the 60% mark since 2013/14. However, in 2020/21, this figure has increased by three points compared to 2017/18. Responses again vary by population group. More than three quarters (76%) of Coloured respondents agreed with this statement, as did 72% of White respondents. Black African and Indian/Asian respondents were relatively more optimistic. The proportion of those who disagree or strongly disagree with the statement, and are consequently feeling most hopeful about the future of South Africa, is at an all-time low since 2013/14, at only 20%. This is deeply concerning as we contemplate the journey of recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and the July 2021 civil unrest.

Figure 8.13: Respondent perceptions on whether the country is going in the wrong direction, over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18), GCRO QoL IV (2015/16) and GCRO QoL III (2013/14).



Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

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Community and social attitudes

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Suggested citation:
de Kadt, J., Dallimore, A., Mkhize, S.P., Khanyile, S., & Parker, A. (2021). Community and social attitudes. In J. de Kadt, C. Hamann, S.P. Mkhize & A. Parker (Eds.), *Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21): Overview Report* (Section 8). Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.

Related GCRO outputs:
Abrahams, C. (2014). *Social attitudes in the GCR*. GCRO Vignette No. 21. Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.
Abrahams, C., Bobbins, K., & Trangoš, G. (2015). *Social isolation in the GCR*. GCRO Vignette No. 23. Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.
Ballard, R., & Hamann, C. (2018). *Quality of Life Survey IV (2015/16): Social cohesion*. GCRO Data Brief No. 8. Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.
Everatt, D. (2011). *Participation, civil society and religiosity*. GCRO Vignette No. 4. Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.
Mushongera, D., & Khanyile, S. (2019). *Participation in Integrated Development Planning*. GCRO Map of the Month, November 2019. Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.

9. Migration and moving home

By: Richard Ballard, Samkelisiwe Khanyile, Mamokete Matjomane, Thembani Mkhize and Yashena Naidoo

Highlights

- Of the 13 616 adults interviewed in the Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21), 45% were born outside of Gauteng.
- Over one third of all respondents (36%) were born elsewhere in South Africa and moved to Gauteng at some point in their lives. The single largest proportion of migrants were born in Limpopo province (11%).
- Nine percent of all respondents were born in other countries. The most significant country of birth was Zimbabwe, where 3% of the respondents were born.
- Most migrants from other provinces or other countries have been living in the Gauteng province for more than a decade.
- Respondents that were born in other countries were more likely than those born in South Africa to have started a business or to work in the informal economy.
- Only 30% of respondents are living in the neighbourhood they were born in. Respondents born in Gauteng were most likely to have moved to a different neighbourhood for family or housing option reasons. Those born outside of Gauteng were more likely to have moved to a neighbourhood for work reasons.

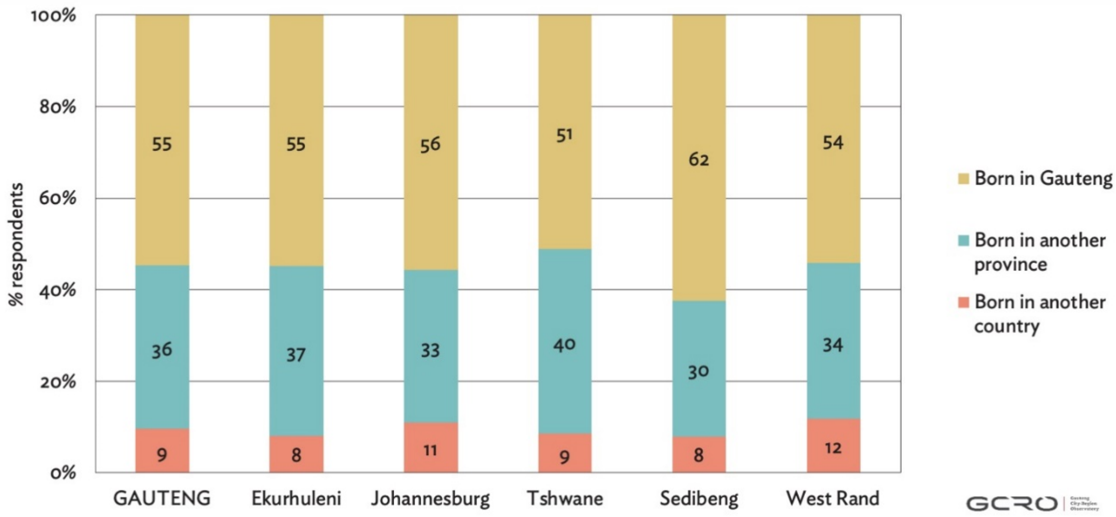
Introduction

Following previous surveys in the series, the Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21) asks respondents about their place of birth and, if they were not born in Gauteng, when they moved to the province. This allows us to analyse whether there are differences between Gauteng-born residents, those born outside the province and those born outside the country, for example with respect to demographic characteristics, employment and entrepreneurship. QoL 2020/21 has also included a series of questions that have not been asked for several iterations of the survey, on smaller-scale mobility into neighbourhoods and between municipalities. This is extremely rich data that will be analysed over some years, although several preliminary results are presented here.

Proportion of respondents born outside the province

Respondents were asked whether they were born in Gauteng, another province, or another country. Overall, as shown in Figure 9.1, 55% of respondents were born in Gauteng, 36% were born in another province, and the remaining 9% were born in another country. Interestingly, according to the Statistics South Africa (StatsSA) 2016 Community Survey, half of all cross-border migrants living in South Africa live in Gauteng (StatsSA, 2016a). It is not unusual for large cities to have significant foreign-born populations. At 9%, Gauteng's foreign-born population is relatively low compared to other major urban hubs. For example, 46% of Toronto's population is foreign born and 39% of Sydney's population is foreign born (Migration Data Portal, 2021).

Figure 9.1: Percentage of respondents born in Gauteng, another province and another country, overall and by metropolitan and district municipality. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



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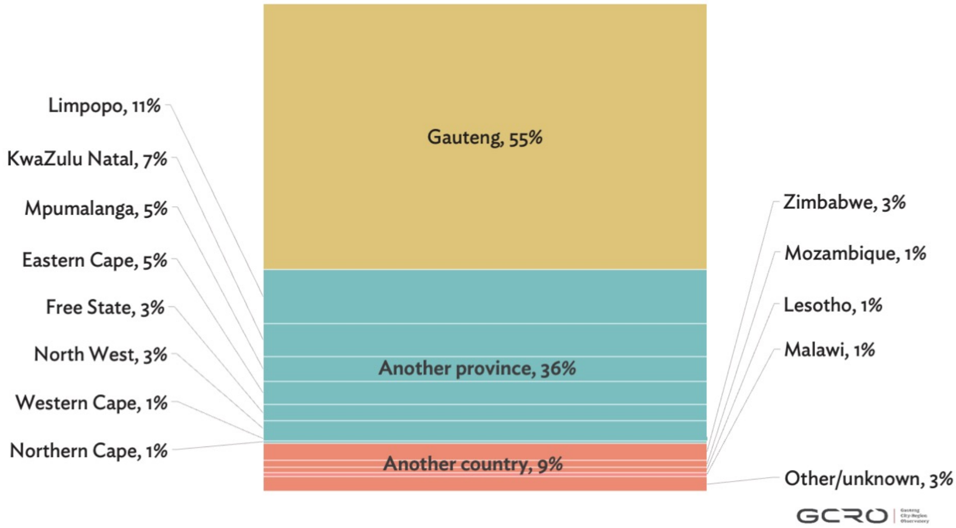
The proportion of migrants varies across the three metropolitan municipalities and two district municipalities. Ekurhuleni, Tshwane and West Rand have higher proportions of migrants than the provincial average. In Ekurhuleni and Tshwane, this is driven by higher proportions of migrants born elsewhere in South Africa, while their proportions of international migrants are relatively low. West Rand has the highest percentage of foreign migrants (12%), followed by Johannesburg (11%). Sedibeng has the lowest proportion of migrants in the province.

The survey offers further specificity on the birth province or country of Gauteng residents. Figure 9.2 shows that Limpopo was the most significant sending province, with 11% of respondents born there. This was followed by KwaZulu-Natal (7%), the Eastern Cape (5%) and Mpumalanga (5%). For information on flows between provinces over specific periods of time, see StatsSA (2020).

Regarding those born outside of South Africa, the most significant sending country was Zimbabwe, where 3% of respondents were born. Mozambique, Lesotho and Malawi were each reported as the place of birth by 1% of respondents.

Figure 9.2: Birth places of respondents, highlighting the percentage of respondents born in the most significant sending provinces and countries. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

The most recent official data on the birthplace of Gauteng residents comes from the 2016 StatsSA Community Survey (StatsSA, 2016a). However, results are not directly comparable as the Community Survey provides information on all Gauteng residents, including children, while the QoL 2020/21 estimates are based only on individuals aged 18 and above. Consequently, it is unsurprising that the Community Survey finds a higher proportion of Gauteng residents born in Gauteng, as children resident in Gauteng are more likely to have been born in the province. The Community Survey data shows a substantially different rank order of sending provinces, but there is more consistency in terms of sending countries. Differences may be attributable in part to variances in sample composition and aspects of methodology between the two surveys but may also reflect an element of change over time. The forthcoming 2021 Census will provide a more definitive picture of the composition of the province.

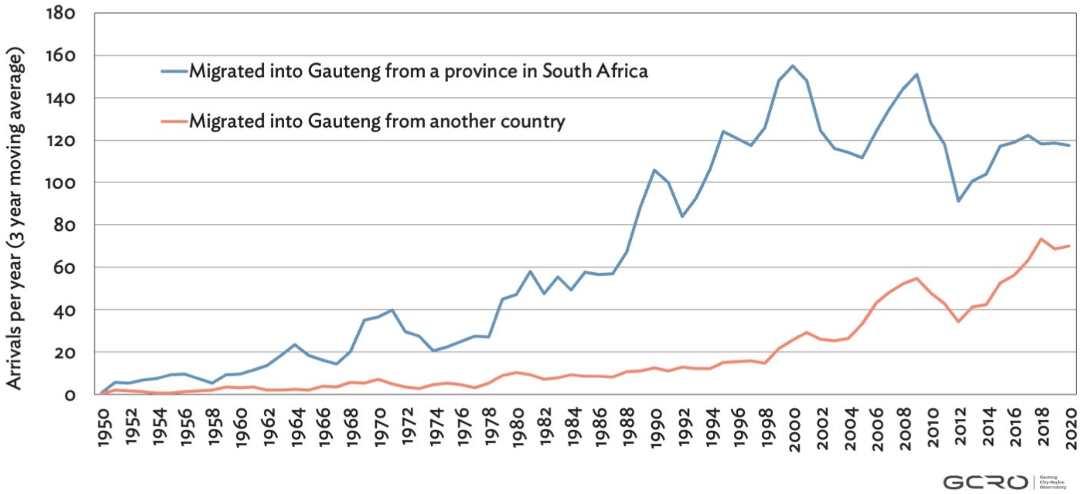
Timing of arrival of migrants to Gauteng

In QoL 2020/21, respondents born outside of Gauteng were asked to provide the year in which they arrived in Gauteng. Figure 9.3 provides the weighted count of respondents arriving in Gauteng over time, using a weighted three-year average. The arrival of migrants born in other South African provinces is shown in blue, while the arrival of migrants born outside of South Africa is shown in red.

Because the QoL Survey only interviews people who are resident in Gauteng, the data does not include migrants who moved to Gauteng in a particular year but have since left or died. Consequently, we cannot definitively say how net migration rates are changing. What we can note, however, is that for current Gauteng residents born in other provinces, there are notable peaks in arrival in 2000 and 2009, and a smaller peak in 2017. Similarly, there are dips in arrivals in 2005 and 2012. The modal year remains some time ago – 2000. For migrants born in other countries, there are similar peaks and troughs over time. The dip in arrival of migrants during the early 2000s and around 2009 may be related to the economic downturns experienced at these times.

Figure 9.3 shows a reduction of the gap between migrants born in other provinces and migrants born in other countries amongst more recent arrivals. More than one out of every three migrants to the province who arrived in 2020 was born in another country while two out of every three were born in other provinces within South Africa. By contrast, only one out of every ten migrants to the province who arrived in 1998 was born outside South Africa while nine out of ten migrants arriving in 1998 were born in other provinces within South Africa.

Figure 9.3: Number of respondents (weighted) born in other provinces and other countries arriving in Gauteng, over time. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



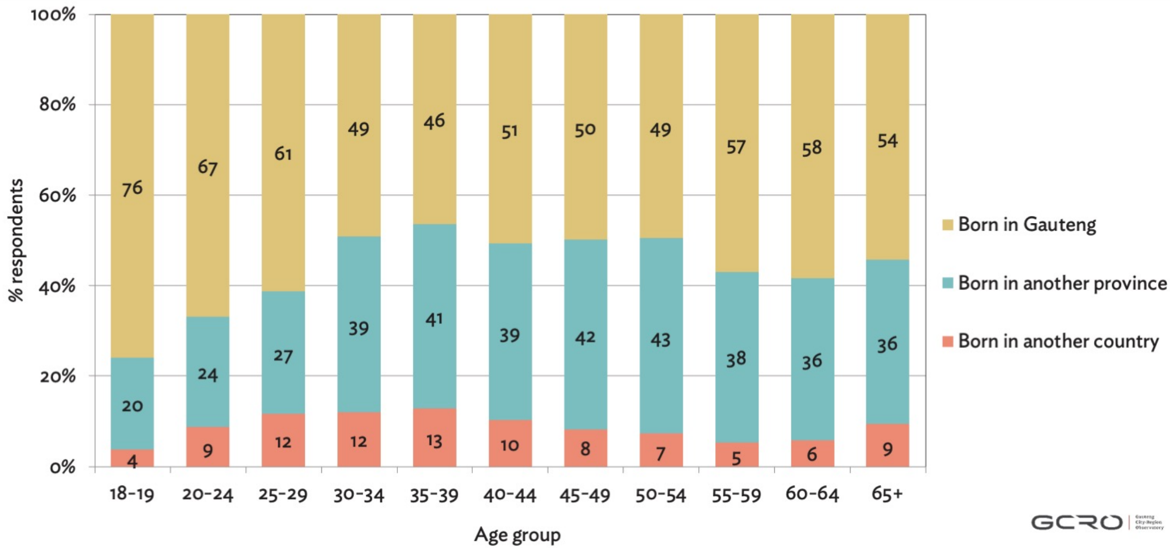
Note: Respondents that migrated into Gauteng before 1950 were not included due to very small numbers.

Age of migrants living in Gauteng

Most respondents who were born outside the province have lived in the province for a long time – the large majority for over ten years. Over three quarters (77%) of respondents who were born in another province moved to Gauteng before 2011, as did 59% of those who were born in another country.

The average age of QoL 2020/21 respondents born in another province is 44 years, and 41 years for those born in another country. These figures are fairly similar to the average age of respondents born in Gauteng, which is 42 years. However, Figure 9.4 highlights that the distribution of migrants and those born in Gauteng is not consistent across all age categories. Those born in Gauteng make up particularly high proportions of the youngest age categories, constituting 76% of those aged 18–19, 67% of those aged 20–24, and 61% of those aged 25–29 – in all instances well above the 55% of the sample as a whole. By extension, proportions of migrants in these age groups are relatively low. By contrast, among respondents aged between 30 and 39, the proportion of migrants is substantially higher, increasing to slightly over 50% of respondents. The proportion of migrants then drops again to approximately 50% among respondents aged 50–54, although the proportion of respondents in this age group born in South Africa still remains below the 55% sample total. Among respondents aged 55 or above, the proportion born in Gauteng again increases.

Figure 9.4: Percentage of respondents born in Gauteng, in another province, or in another country, by age. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



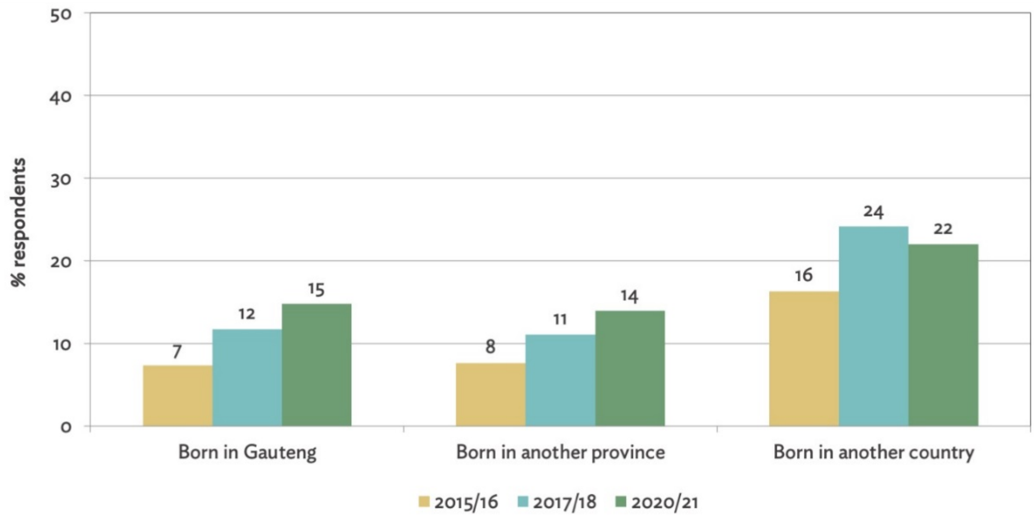
Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Migrant business ownership and employment

In 2020/21, 15% of respondents born in Gauteng report that they currently own a business that they had started. The percentage of those born in other provinces was slightly lower, at 14%. By contrast, a notably higher proportion (22%) of those born in another country report that they own a business. Figure 9.5 provides the proportion of business ownership within each migration category. However, when looking at all respondents who report owning a business in 2020/21, the very large majority of them (86%) were born in South Africa. Those born outside of South Africa accounted for only 14% of business owners interviewed.

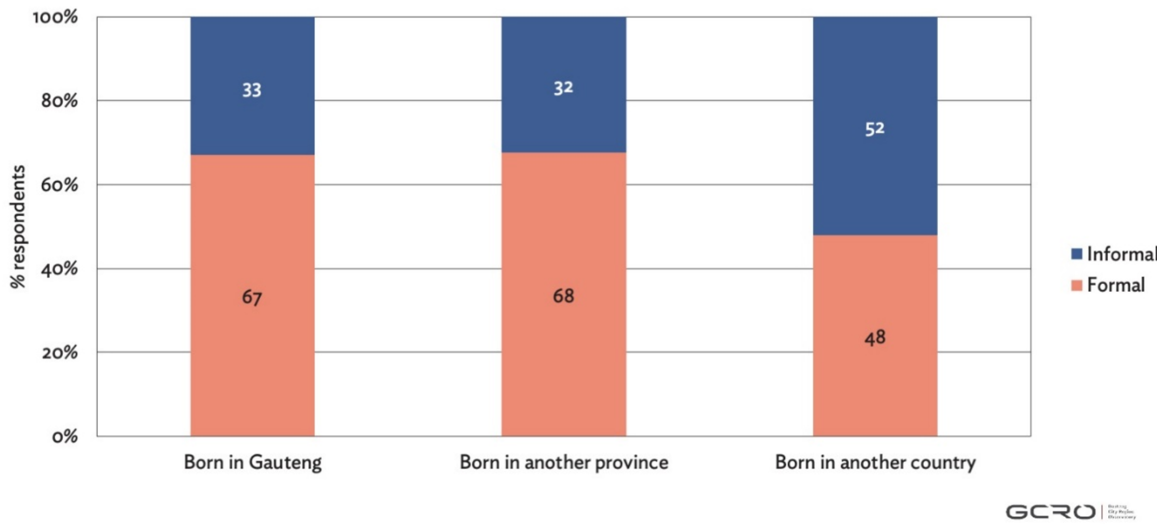
We are able to compare the 2020/21 results to those collected in previous survey iterations. As evident in Figure 9.5, there has been a consistent increase since 2015/16 in the percentage of those born in Gauteng or in another province reporting that they currently own a business. The proportion of those born in other countries who reported owning a business increased at the highest rate of all groups between 2015/16 (16%) and 2017/18 (24%) – an eight percentage point increase. However, unlike respondents born within South Africa, between 2017/18 and 2020/21, there has been a small decrease (two percentage points) in business ownership among those born in other countries.

Figure 9.5: Percentage of respondents reporting that they currently own a business, by migration status and survey iteration. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18) and GCRO QoL (2015/16).



Respondents who reported working during the seven days before their interview were asked whether they worked in the formal or informal sector. Almost two thirds (65%) reported working in the formal sector, with the balance working in the informal sector. Just over two thirds of those born in Gauteng (67%) and in other provinces (68%) work in the formal sector, with less than a third working in the informal sector (Figure 9.6). By contrast, more than half (52%) of those born in other countries work in the informal sector.

Figure 9.6: Percentage of employed respondents working in the formal and informal sectors, by migration status. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Relocations at smaller scales within Gauteng

The survey asks respondents how long they have lived in their current neighbourhood. The responses illustrate a relatively high degree of stability in where people stay within Gauteng. Almost a third (31%) of respondents have always lived in their current neighbourhood, and a further 42% have lived in their current neighbourhood for more than ten years (Figure 9.7). Meanwhile, 27% of the respondents had been living in their current neighbourhood for ten years or less.

Figure 9.7: Percentage of respondents having lived in their current neighbourhood for various durations. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).

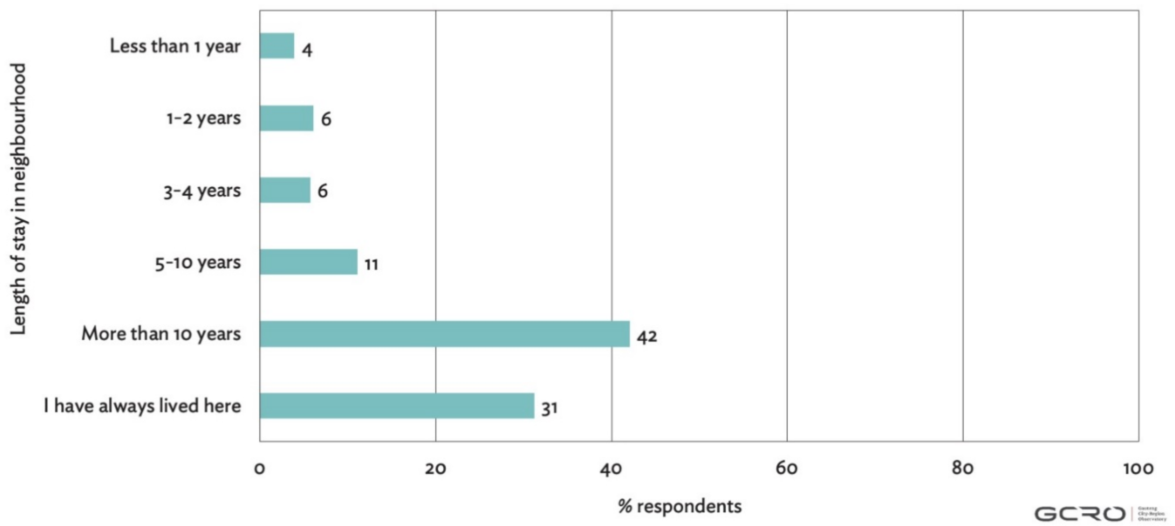
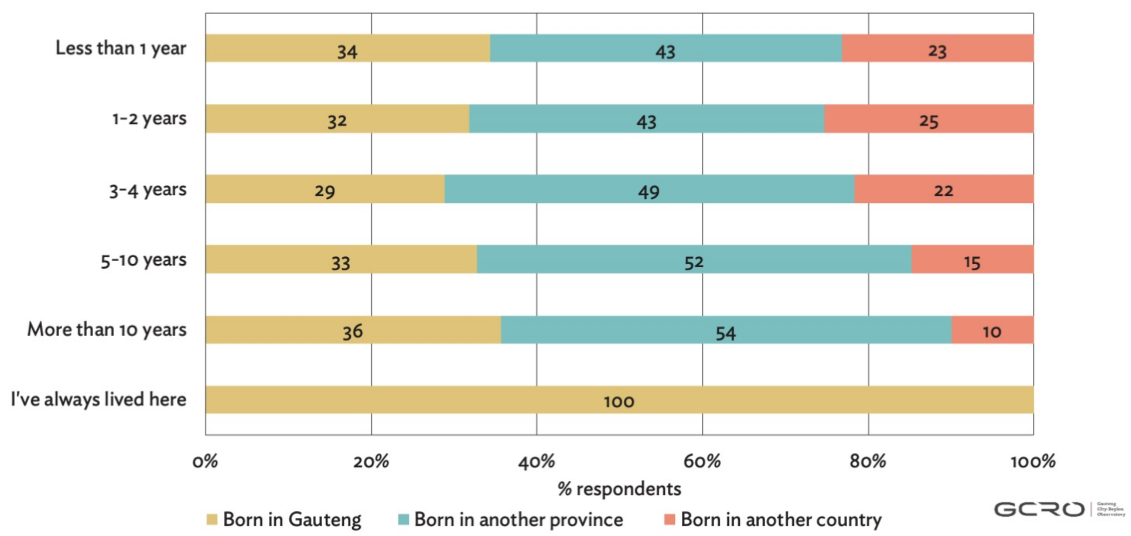


Figure 9.8 illustrates the relationship between duration of stay in a neighbourhood and migration status. By definition, all respondents reporting that they had always lived in their neighbourhood were born in Gauteng. Migrants born in another province comprised about half of respondents who had stayed in their neighbourhood for more than ten years (54%), 5–10 years (52%), or 3–4 years (49%). They made up a smaller proportion of those arriving in the neighbourhood 1–2 years ago (43%) and less than one year ago (43%). By contrast, migrants born outside of South Africa were most well represented as having moved into their neighbourhood more recently.

Figure 9.8: Percentage of respondents reporting staying in their neighbourhood for a particular duration who were born in Gauteng, in another province, or in another country. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).

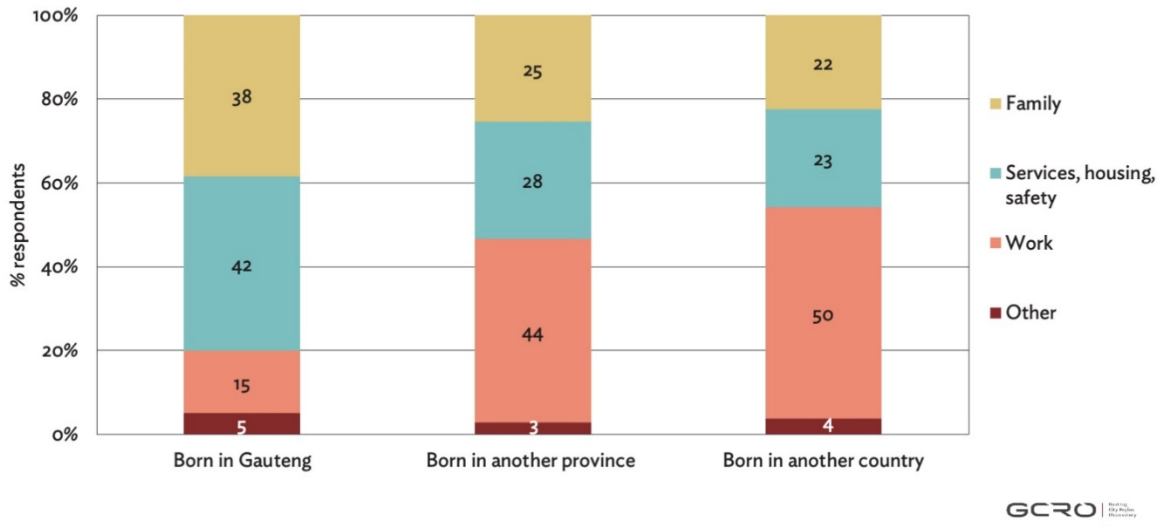


Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Those respondents who had moved into their neighbourhood at some point were asked about their main reason for moving to their current neighbourhood. The most frequently selected reasons were to join family or people they knew (22%), to look for work (19%), for better housing options (19%) or to be close to work (15%).

When responses to this question are disaggregated by migration status, there are some marked variations between groups (Figure 9.9). Respondents born in Gauteng are most likely to have moved to join family or friends, or to access better housing. By contrast, those born outside of Gauteng were most likely to have moved for reasons related to work.

Figure 9.9: Main reason for moving to the current neighbourhood, of respondents who reported moving, by migration status. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

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Migration and moving home

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Suggested citation:
Ballard, R., Khanyile, S., Matjomane, M., Mkhize, T., & Naidoo, Y. (2021). Migration and moving home. In J. de Kadt, C. Hamann, S.P. Mkhize & A. Parker (Eds.), *Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21): Overview Report* (Section 9). Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.

Related GCRO outputs:

Peberdy, S. (2017). *Competition or cooperation? South African and migrant entrepreneurs in Johannesburg*. GCRO Occasional Paper No. 2. Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.
Peberdy, S. (2016). *International migrants in Johannesburg's informal economy*. GCRO Occasional Paper No. 1. Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.
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10. Basic service access and satisfaction

By: Anthea Dallimore, Christian Hamann and Gillian Maree

Highlights

- Overall, access to basic services in Gauteng has remained stable and very high over time, with the exception of refuse removal. The proportion of respondents saying they have waste removed from their homes at least once a week has declined somewhat in recent years.
- Respondents' perception of access to clean water is relatively low in all municipalities. On average, this perception is lower than access to other basic services and similar to satisfaction with other basic services.
- Eight percent of respondents generate some of their own electricity, either for daily use or during load shedding, and 8% of all other households are planning to start generating some of their own electricity in the next 12 months.
- Satisfaction with various services, specifically refuse removal, is very low in Emfuleni. The challenges in Emfuleni warrant significant attention.
- The low levels of satisfaction with safety and security services provided by government (an average of only 27% satisfied) are of concern and should be regarded as a priority for improvement.

Introduction

Access to and satisfaction with a range of basic services and urban amenities play an important role in the everyday lives of residents and make important contributions to overall quality of life and perceptions about living in Gauteng. The Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21) provides insight into trends in household access to water, sanitation, refuse removal and energy sources. It also gives an indication of perceptions of water quality, experiences of service interruptions, and satisfaction with basic services as well as roads, streetlights, safety services, and the cost and billing of municipal services. In this section, we present an overview of current levels of access to and satisfaction with these various services, in comparison to trend data provided by previous QoL surveys. We then explore variations in service access and satisfaction at the municipal level.

Basic services

Basic services include water, electricity, sanitation and refuse removal. The following definitions of basic services are used here: 'Piped water' refers to access to piped water in the dwelling or yard; 'Adequate sanitation' refers to access to a flush toilet (either connected to the sewerage system or a septic tank), a chemical toilet or a ventilated pit latrine; 'Electricity for lighting' refers to households using electricity as their main source of energy for lighting; and 'Refuse removed once a week' refers to households that have their refuse collected from their house at least once a week. Access to and satisfaction with these basic services are important indicators for government. Overall, access to basic services in Gauteng has remained stable and very high over time, with the exception of weekly refuse removal, where the proportion of respondents saying they have their refuse removed at least once a week has declined in recent years (Figure 10.1).

Figure 10.1: Percentage of respondents reporting access to key basic services in Gauteng, over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18), GCRO QoL IV (2015/16), GCRO QoL III (2013/14) and GCRO QoL II (2011).

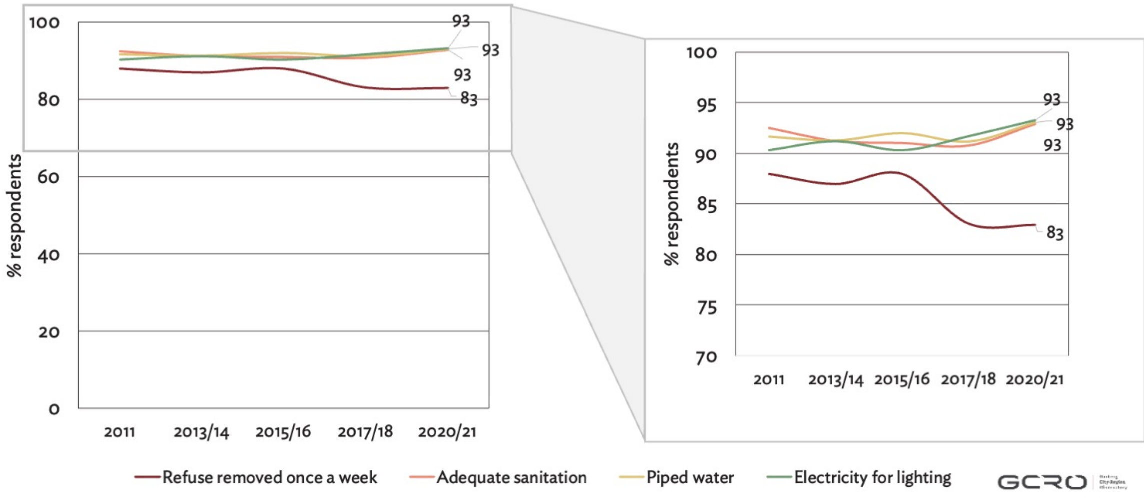
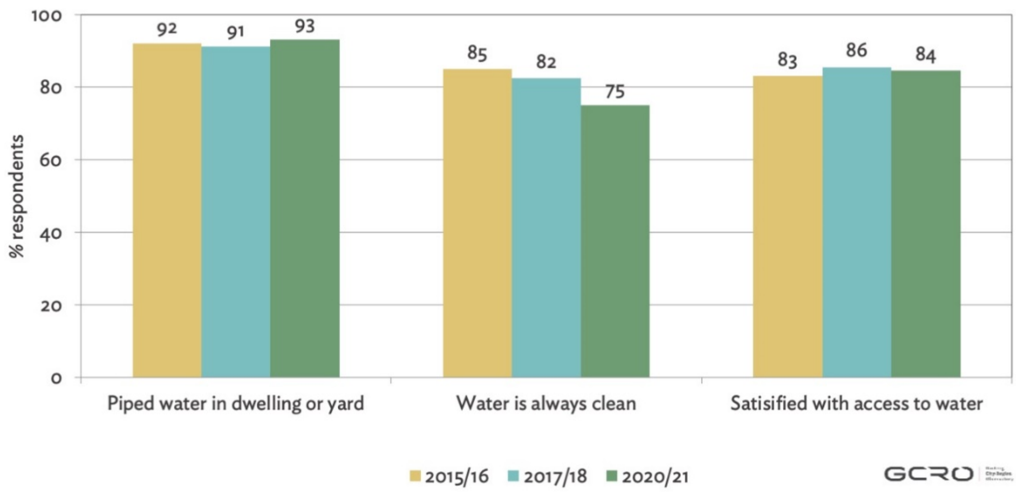


Figure 10.2 looks at access to piped water, perceptions of water quality, as well as satisfaction with water sources. Ninety-three percent of households report access to piped water in their dwelling or in the yard. This is a two percentage point improvement from 2017/18. There is a notable drop in the proportion of respondents stating that their water is always clean, from 82% in 2017/18 to 75% in 2020/21. Table 10.2, below, illustrates relative consistency in the proportion of respondents who believe their water is always clean at the municipal level in 2020/21. Despite the decrease in perceived cleanliness of water over time, 84% of respondents in 2020/21 are satisfied with their water sources, only marginally down from 86% in 2017/18.

Figure 10.2: Percentage of respondents with piped water into their dwelling or yard, always clean water and satisfied with access to water, over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18) and GCRO QoL IV (2015/16).



Access to electricity is very good (Table 10.1) and most households in Gauteng remain reliant on municipal electricity supplies. Ninety-three percent of respondents have some form of electricity and most of these respondents have a metered connection (this includes pre-paid and post-paid connections). Respondents are less likely to use electricity for cooking than they are to use electricity for lighting. This is both because electricity for lighting is relatively inexpensive compared to electricity for cooking, and also because gas and paraffin provide alternative methods for cooking whereas the alternatives for lighting are much more limited.

Despite high levels access to electricity, only 68% of respondents are satisfied with the energy sources they have access to. One factor that might influence satisfaction is the frequency of electricity interruptions. Almost a quarter of respondents (22%) say they experience electricity interruptions every week. Of this group, only 57% are satisfied with the energy sources they have access to. A far smaller proportion of respondents, only 6%, never experience electricity interruptions. This group expresses much higher satisfaction, with 91% of these respondents satisfied with their energy sources.

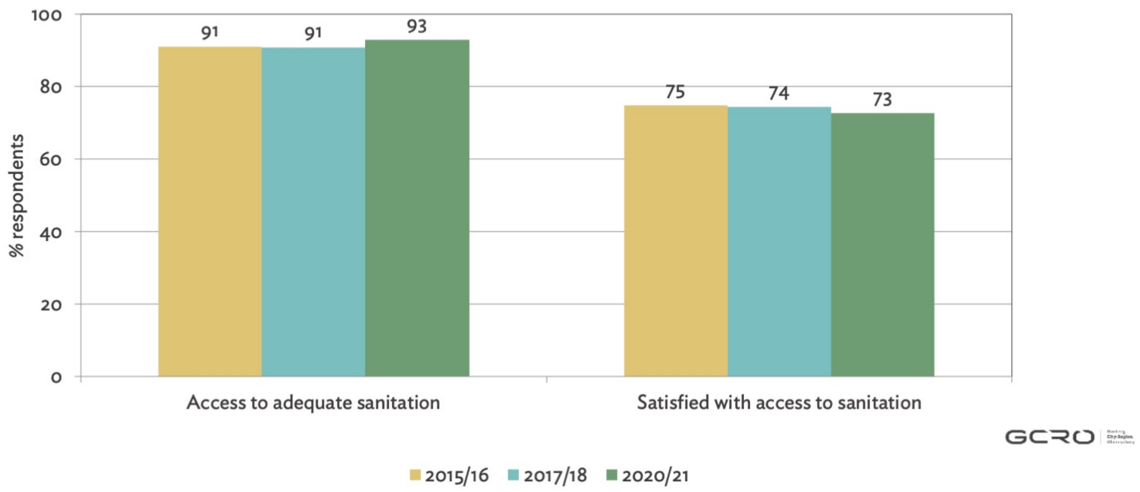
Various challenges with electricity supply and reliability mean that 8% of respondents generate some or all of their own electricity, either for daily use or during load shedding (Table 10.1). About 1% of these households also have plans to generate more of their own electricity. Higher income households are much more likely to generate some of their own electricity than lower income households. Of households not currently generating any electricity, 8% are planning to start generating some of their own electricity in the next 12 months.

Table 10.1: Access to and use of electricity, satisfaction with energy, experiences of electricity interruptions, and current and planned electricity generation. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).

Type of service	Percentage in QoL 6 2020/21
Households with some form of electricity	93%
Metered electricity connection (of those who know)	92%
Electricity is used for cooking	82%
Electricity is used for lighting	93%
Satisfied with energy sources	68%
Households who experience electricity interruptions every week	22%
Households generating some of their own electricity	8%
Households who are not currently generating any electricity, but are planning to start generating some of their own electricity in the next 12 months	8%

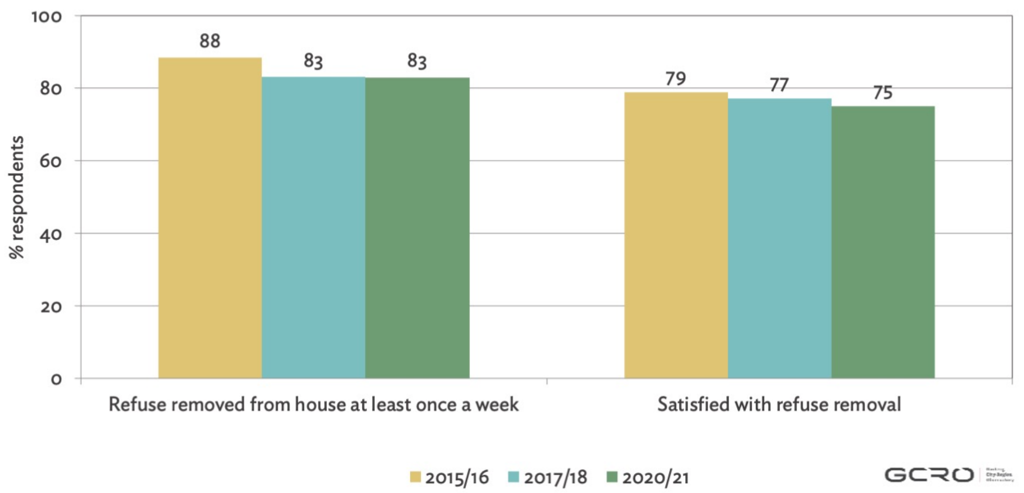
Figure 10.3 shows that in 2020/21, 93% of households report access to adequate sanitation, defined as either a flush toilet, a chemical toilet, or a pit latrine with a ventilation pipe. This is a small increase from 91% in 2017/18. Despite high levels of access to adequate sanitation, only 73% of respondents are satisfied with the sewerage services they use, a slight decline from 74% in 2017/18. This is influenced by the type of toilet facility that respondents have – 82% of respondents with a flush toilet (either connected to the sewerage system or a septic tank) are satisfied with the sewerage services, compared to only 9% of respondents without access to a flush toilet.

Figure 10.3: Percentage of respondents with adequate sanitation and satisfied with access to sanitation, over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18) and GCRO QoL IV (2015/16).



It is the responsibility of municipalities to provide a basic and efficient level of waste management to all communities in order to prevent waste build-up from becoming an aesthetic problem and a serious health risk (CSIR, 2000). In 2020/21, 83% of households have their refuse removed once a week from their house – the same as the proportion in 2017/18, but lower than the 88% in 2015/16 (Figure 10.4). This is also lower than other measures of basic service access presented here. It is recognised that part of the reason that access to weekly refuse removal is lower than access to other basic services might be explained by the fact that weekly waste removal is often challenging in both informal settlements and less densely settled areas, and may also not be necessary in all areas. Nonetheless, the long-term trend of decline in access to weekly waste removal, and the sharp, recent decline in municipalities like Emfuleni (as shown in Figure 10.4), are of concern. This requires careful attention because it can negatively impact the health and well-being of residents and the environment. As shown in Figure 10.4, 75% of respondents are satisfied with refuse removal services in 2020/21, down slightly from 77% in 2017/18. Levels of access and satisfaction vary significantly between municipalities, as discussed in more detail below.

Figure 10.4: Percentage of respondents with refuse removed once a week and satisfied with access to refuse removal, over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18) and GCRO QoL IV (2015/16).



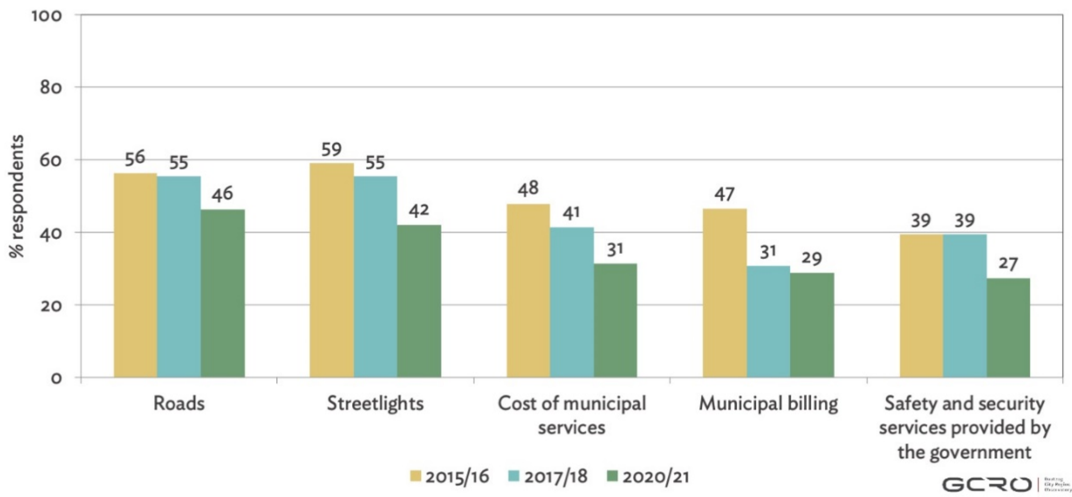
Other services

Figure 10.5 indicates overall levels of satisfaction for a variety of other municipal services and functions – satisfaction with roads, streetlights, the cost of municipal services, the municipal billing systems as well as the safety and security services provided by government. In each of these areas, there has been a decline in satisfaction.

According to results from QoL 2020/21, 46% of respondents are satisfied with the roads in their area and 42% of respondents are satisfied with the streetlights where they live. Both these indicators declined from 55% in 2017/18.

Thirty-one percent of 2020/21 respondents are satisfied with the cost of municipal services – a notable decrease from the 41% who were satisfied in 2017/18. Relatedly, only 29% of respondents in 2020/21 are satisfied with the way they are billed for municipal services. Municipalities might not be able to do much about perceptions of the cost of municipal services, but it does have an impact on overall satisfaction with government. Customer service is one area where improvement can be considered. Finally, in Figure 10.5, only 27% of respondents in 2020/21 are satisfied with the safety and security services provided by government where they live. This metric is not only the lowest in this selection of services, but also saw one of the biggest decreases of all, declining from 39% of respondents being satisfied in 2017/18. It is very important for all levels of government to consider how the safety and security services provided by the government can be improved.

Figure 10.5: Percentage of respondents satisfied with roads, streetlights, cost of municipal services, municipal billing, and state-provided safety and security services, over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18) and GCRO QoL IV (2015/16).



Basic service access and satisfaction by municipality in Gauteng

Table 10.2 provides an overview of the variations of access to and satisfaction with basic services by municipality. Colours are used to visually represent the degree of access and satisfaction relative to other measures in the table (green is relatively high and red is relatively low). Access to basic services (Table 10.2) is generally very high in the metropolitan municipalities (Ekurhuleni, Johannesburg and Tshwane). Johannesburg has the highest proportion of households with piped water in their dwelling or yard, at 95%, and Midvaal, at 79%, has the lowest proportion. However, it is clear that perceptions about water cleanliness are relatively low across all municipalities – all are highlighted in a shade of yellow.

Ekurhuleni has the highest proportion of households that use electricity for lighting, at 95%, and Midvaal has the lowest proportion at 83%. On access to adequate sanitation, the highest level of access is shared between

Ekurhuleni and Johannesburg, both at 96%. Rand West has the lowest proportion of households with adequate sanitation, at 83%.

Table 10.2: Percentage of respondents within each municipality with access to and satisfied with basic services. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).

Municipality	Piped water in the dwelling or yard	Always clean water	Use electricity for lighting	Access to adequate sanitation	Refuse removed once a week	Satisfied with access to water	Satisfied with energy sources	Satisfied with sanitation services	Satisfied with access to refuse removal
Ekurhuleni	93%	73%	95%	96%	91%	89%	74%	79%	82%
Johannesburg	95%	79%	94%	96%	89%	87%	64%	74%	82%
Tshwane	91%	72%	93%	86%	78%	78%	69%	69%	68%
Emfuleni	94%	73%	88%	95%	26%	74%	56%	59%	20%
Lesedi	94%	74%	94%	95%	84%	92%	73%	84%	82%
Midvaal	79%	79%	83%	88%	81%	84%	66%	73%	80%
Merafong	86%	73%	92%	84%	70%	78%	65%	51%	55%
Mogale City	87%	68%	90%	90%	82%	84%	75%	72%	79%
Rand West	86%	74%	84%	83%	68%	80%	67%	56%	64%
GAUTENG	93%	75%	93%	93%	83%	84%	68%	73%	75%

Ekurhuleni has the highest proportion of households who have their refuse removed once a week, at 91%. Compared to the other metropolitan municipalities, access to weekly refuse removal is somewhat lower in Tshwane, at 78%. Within Tshwane, the proportion of households with access to weekly refuse removal varies considerably (Figure 10.6). In the north-eastern parts of Tshwane (mostly rural areas, including Bronkhorstspruit and Ekangala), about 68% of households have access to weekly refuse removal. By contrast, in the south of Tshwane (around Centurion), 95% of households have access to weekly refuse removal. Only 26% of respondents in Emfuleni have access to weekly refuse removal – the lowest of all municipalities. Access to weekly refuse removal in Emfuleni has declined precipitously over the last two QoL Surveys, from 80% with weekly refuse removal in 2015/16, to the already concerning 57% in 2017/18, and now still further. This clearly represents a failure of the service in the municipality and should be addressed. One of the impacts is that 32% of respondents in Emfuleni revert to throwing their refuse in the street or veld (open field), which is both a health and an environmental risk.

Figure 10.6: Map of Gauteng showing percentage of respondents whose refuse is removed once a week, by metropolitan planning region and local municipality. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).

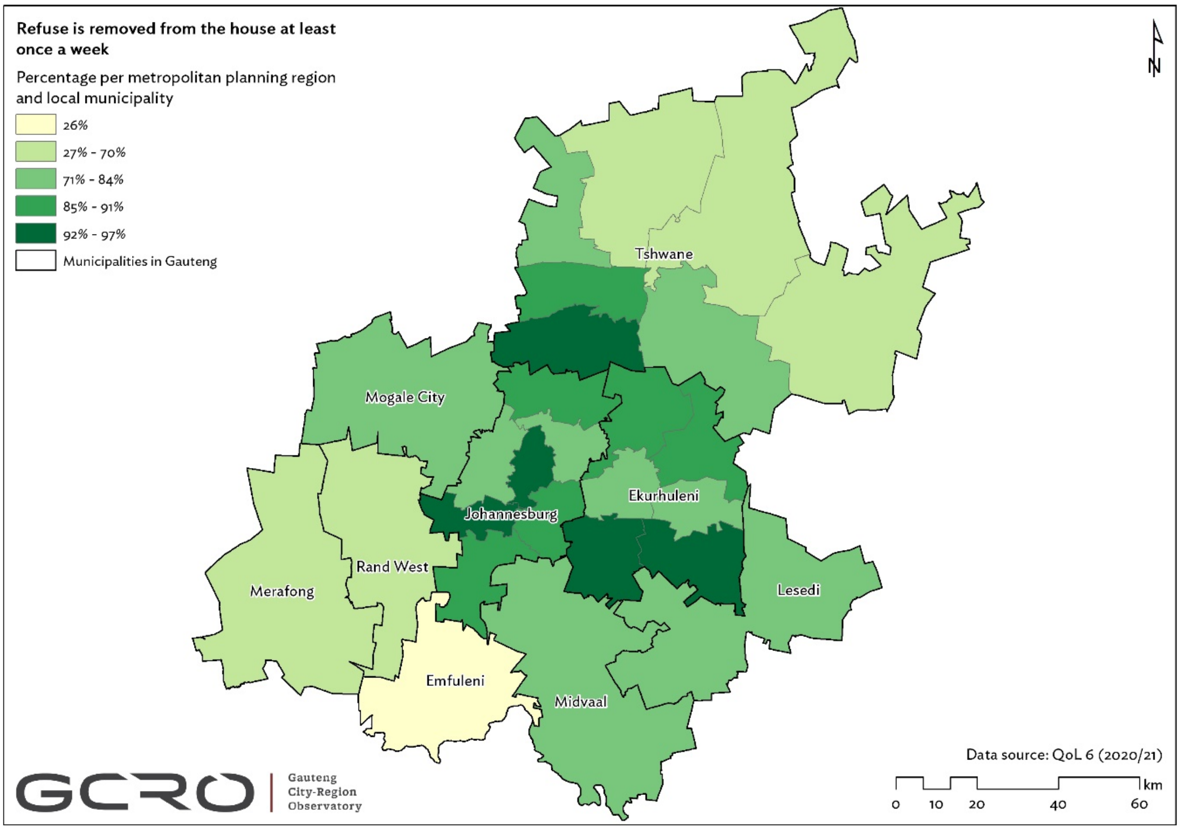


Table 10.2 shows that satisfaction with these basic services is consistently lower than the levels of access, with the sole exception of water in Midvaal, where the percentage of respondents satisfied with this service is higher than the percentage reporting access to piped water in the dwelling or yard. Satisfaction with water is relatively high in all municipalities – Lesedi scores the highest (92%) and Emfuleni scores the lowest (74%). Satisfaction with energy sources is somewhat lower on average and does not vary as much across the municipalities – Mogale City scores the highest (75%) and Emfuleni scores the lowest (56%).

Satisfaction with sanitation services is also high in Lesedi (84%) relative to other municipalities, while it is very low in Merafong (51%). Satisfaction with refuse removal varies greatly between municipalities. Emfuleni has by far the lowest level of satisfaction, with only 20% of respondents who are satisfied or very satisfied with the service. Satisfaction with refuse removal is also much lower in Tshwane (68%) than in Ekurhuleni and Johannesburg (both 82%).

Table 10.3 (below) provides an overview of the variations in the level of satisfaction with a number of other services and functions, by municipality. Once again, colours are used to represent the degrees of satisfaction relative to all the other measures in the tables, with green representing comparatively higher satisfaction, and red relatively lower satisfaction.

Satisfaction with this range of other services and municipal functions is low across all the municipalities in Gauteng. This is clear from the provincial averages, where for example only 46% of respondents are satisfied with the roads, and a mere 27% of respondents are satisfied with the safety and security services provided by government. However, satisfaction with some of these services is dramatically lower in some municipalities. In Emfuleni, only 11% of respondents are satisfied with their roads, compared to 60% of respondents in Lesedi. Mogale City and Johannesburg have the highest levels of satisfaction with streetlights, at 50% and 48%

respectively. Merafong has the lowest satisfaction with streetlights, at 17%, followed closely by Emfuleni, at 18%.

Satisfaction with the cost of municipal services also varies considerably between municipalities, for example, ranging from 38% in Ekurhuleni, to 15% in Emfuleni and 16% in Merafong. Satisfaction with the way that respondents are billed for municipal services is even lower. Emfuleni and Merafong have the lowest scores, with 15% and 16% respectively. The best performing municipality in this regard is Ekurhuleni, with 35% of respondents who are satisfied, followed by Midvaal, with 34%.

Satisfaction with the safety and security services provided by government is a concern in all municipalities. Ekurhuleni has the lowest level of satisfaction with safety and security services provided by government (22%). It is startling that Lesedi has the highest level of satisfaction with safety services at just 37%. Improvements to the quality of safety and security services provided by the government should be a priority for all parts of government in Gauteng.

Satisfaction with roads, streetlights, the cost and billing of municipal services, and safety measures are all very low in Emfuleni, indicating that the challenges in this municipality warrant significant attention.

Table 10.3: Percentage of respondents, per municipality, satisfied with roads, streetlights, cost of municipal services, municipal billing, and state-provided safety and security services. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).

Municipality	Satisfied with roads	Satisfied with streetlights	Satisfied with cost of municipal services	Satisfied with municipal billing system	Satisfied with safety and security services provided by government
Ekurhuleni	51%	45%	38%	35%	22%
Johannesburg	50%	48%	32%	29%	27%
Tshwane	43%	37%	28%	27%	33%
Emfuleni	11%	18%	15%	15%	24%
Lesedi	60%	43%	29%	27%	37%
Midvaal	50%	28%	35%	34%	34%
Merafong	27%	17%	16%	16%	30%
Mogale City	55%	50%	31%	27%	31%
Rand West	40%	38%	20%	19%	28%
GAUTENG	46%	42%	31%	29%	27%

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Basic service access and satisfaction

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Suggested citation:
Dallimore, A., Hamann, C., & Maree, G. (2021). Basic services and satisfaction. In J. de Kadt, C. Hamann, S.P. Mkhize & A. Parker (Eds.), *Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21): Overview Report* (Section 10). Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.

Related GCRO outputs:
Culwick, C. (2018). *Government services 1: Inadequate access to services*. GCRO Vignette No. 34. Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.
Culwick, C. (2018). *Government services 2: Best rated services per municipality*. GCRO Vignette No. 35. Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.
Culwick, C. (2018). *Quality of Life IV Survey (2015/16): City Benchmarking Report* GCRO Occasional Paper No. 12. Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.

11. Environment and extreme events

By: Gillian Maree

Highlights

- A third of all QoL 6 (2020/21) respondents say that environmental factors have harmed them or their families.
- Lightning storms, heat and hail storms are the most common environmental and weather-related extreme events reported by respondents in Gauteng.
- A fifth of respondents who experienced an extreme event also experienced injury or damage to households.
- Informal dwellings are more likely to be damaged by extreme events than formal dwellings.
- A significant proportion of households report that either the environment or extreme events have caused them harm. Whether these impacts are personal (e.g. illness from pollution) or physical damage to a property (e.g. due to a fire or flood), these events carry significant cost burdens to households.

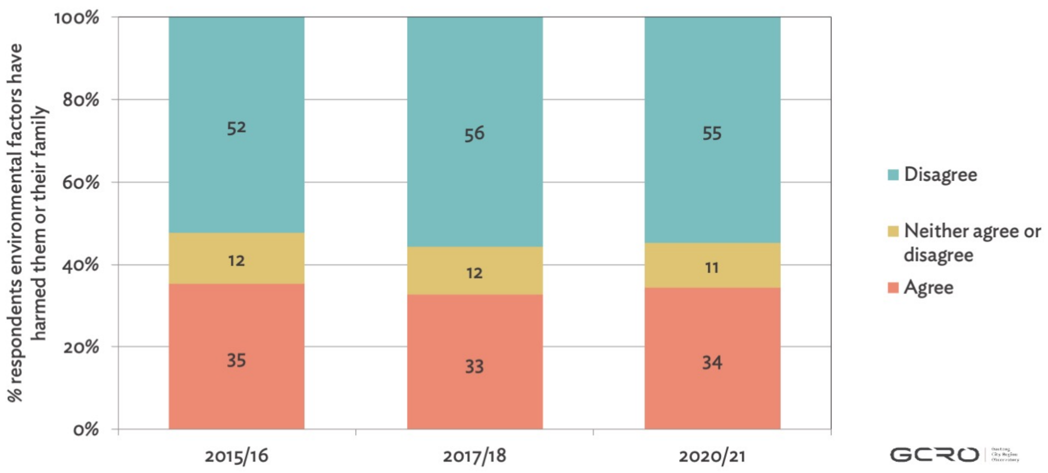
Introduction

People's quality of life and their livelihoods are linked to the quality of the environment around them and their ability to shield themselves from negative impacts. This section explores questions in the Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21) around perceptions of water security and environmental factors that have caused harm to respondents, and a new set of questions related to disasters and weather-related events.

Perceptions of the environment

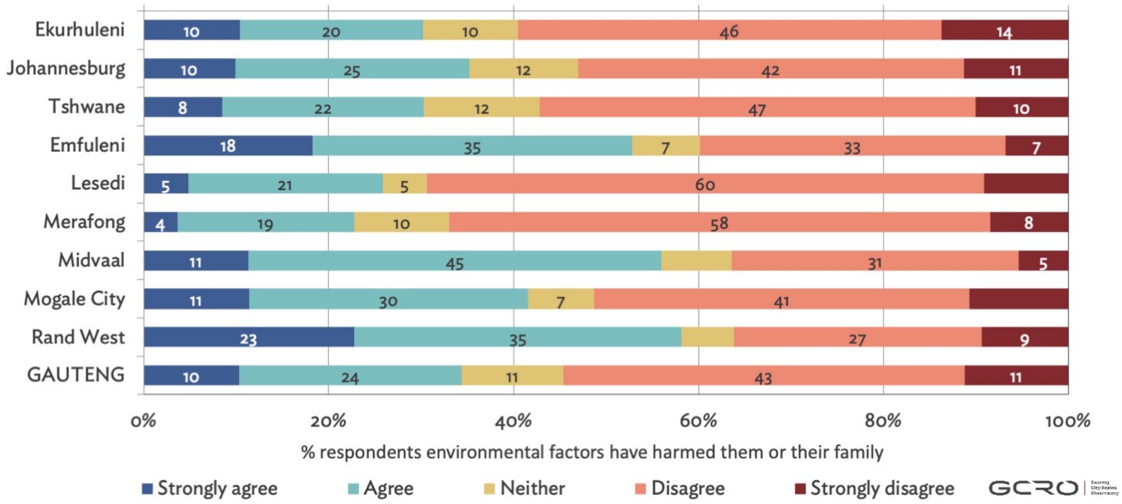
Respondents were asked about how they experience their environments. A third (34%) of respondents say that they or their families have been harmed by environmental factors, like air and water pollution or dumping sites. This has been consistent through the last three iterations of QoL (Figure 11.1). There are, however, substantial differences between municipalities (Figure 11.2). Respondents in Rand West (58%), Midvaal (56%), Emfuleni (53%) and Mogale City (41%) are the most likely to say that they or their families have been harmed by environmental factors (Figure 11.2). Respondents in Merafong (23%), Lesedi (26%), Ekurhuleni and Tshwane (both 30%) are the least likely to report the same.

Figure 11.1: Perceptions of respondents about whether environmental factors, like air and water pollution or dumping sites, have harmed them or their families, over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), QoL V (2017/18) and QoL IV (2015/16).



Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

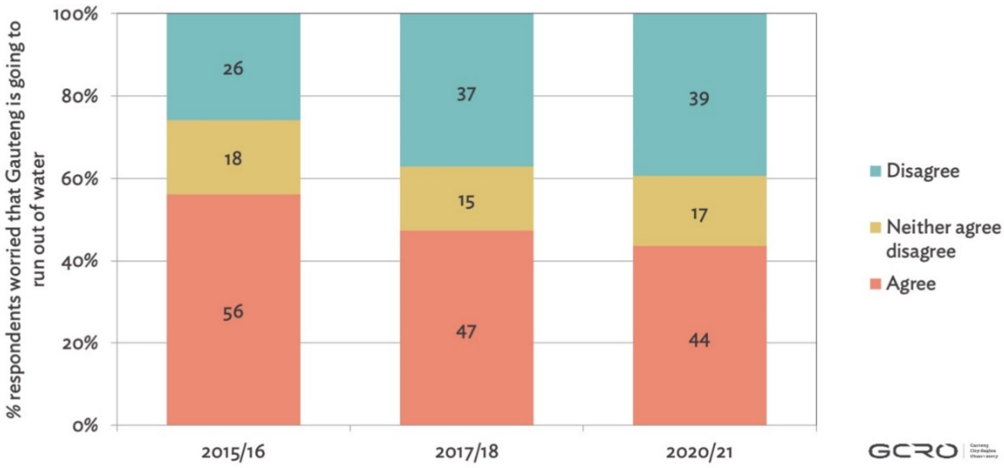
Figure 11.2: Perceptions of respondents about whether environmental factors have caused harm to them or their families, by municipality. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Over time, there has been increasing confidence in water supply to Gauteng. Even though QoL 2017/18 was conducted at the height of the Day Zero crisis in Cape Town, respondents expressed greater confidence in water security for the Gauteng City-Region than in 2015/16 (Figure 11.3). In QoL 2020/21, 44% of respondents believed Gauteng is going to run out of water, three percentage points less than in 2017/18.

Figure 11.3: Percentage of respondents who agree or disagree that Gauteng is going to run out of water, over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), QoL V (2017/18) and QoL IV (2015/16).



Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

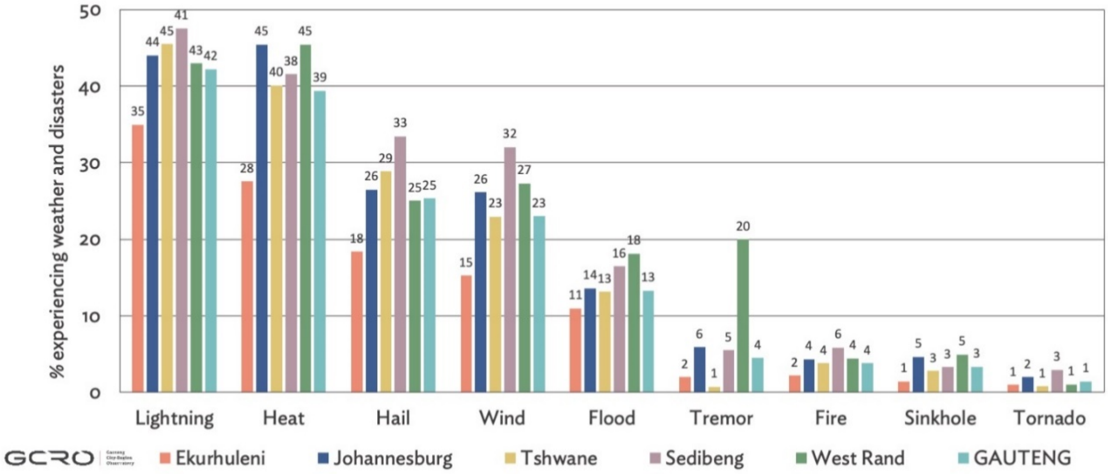
Household experiences with extreme events

In this iteration of QoL, respondents were asked about extreme events that they or their household experienced, and whether those events caused any damage or injury. Respondents were asked about flooding, tremors, fire, heat, wind, lightning, hail, tornados and sinkholes. Most of these extreme events are weather related, but others can also be caused or influenced by human actions, for example fires, sinkholes and tremors. In total, 60% of respondents reported experiencing one or more of these extreme event.

In 2020/21, the most commonly reported events in Gauteng are lightning storms (42% of households), heat (39%), hail storms (25%), severe wind (23%) and flooding (13%). However, there are important differences between the most frequently experienced events in different municipalities (Figure 11.4). Respondents in West Rand are significantly more likely to experience tremors than any other municipality: tremors affect 20% of households there compared to a provincial average of 4%. Respondents in West Rand are also the most likely to report flooding events. Respondents in Sedibeng are the most likely to report fires, which can either be natural events or caused by human behaviour. Sinkholes are most likely to be reported in West Rand and Johannesburg.

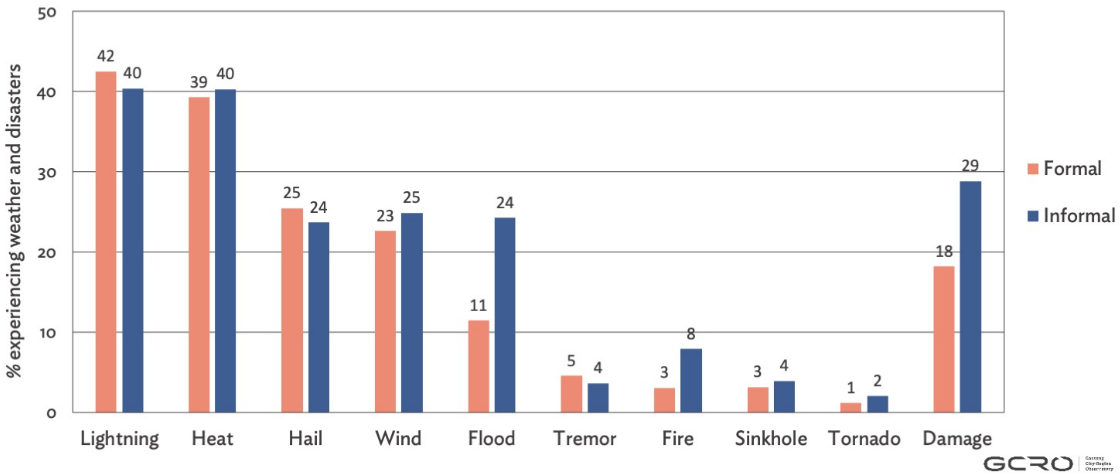
Results from this survey point to many households already experiencing impacts from extreme weather and human-induced events. Climate change is likely to increase the number of extreme weather events and disasters that occur in Gauteng. Climate modelling for Gauteng predicts that temperatures will rise higher than global averages and storm events may become more severe (GDARD, 2020). Climate change increases the likelihood of extreme events occurring, and the data points to particular areas and challenges in future-proofing our cities and households.

Figure 11.4: Percentage of respondents whose households have been affected by extreme natural events, by metropolitan and district municipality. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Many formal dwellings are built to withstand natural events and protect occupants from their effects. In contrast, Figure 11.5 shows that respondents who live in informal dwellings are far more likely to experience injury or damage from an extreme natural event. They are more than twice as likely to experience flooding when compared to those in formal dwellings, and nearly three times more likely to experience fires.

Figure 11.5: Percentage of respondents in formal and informal dwellings whose households have been affected by extreme events and disasters. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



One in five respondents (20%) that experienced extreme events in Gauteng say that those events caused damage or injury to the respondent or their household. This does differ across municipalities with the highest levels reported in Lesedi, where one in four households experiencing extreme events reported damage or injury (24%). The percentage of households experiencing extreme events that report damage or injury from these events is higher than the Gauteng average in Ekurhuleni (23%), Tshwane (22%) and Midvaal (21%). Respondents affected by extreme events in Merafong and Mogale City (16%) report the lowest level of damage or injury.

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Environment and extreme events

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Suggested citation:
Maree, G. (2021). Environment and extreme events. In J. de Kadt, C. Hamann, S.P. Mkhize & A. Parker (Eds.), *Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21): Overview Report* (Section 11). Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.

Related GCRO outputs:
Culwick, C., Khanyile, S., & Maree, G. (2018). *Mapping vulnerability in Gauteng*. GCRO Map of the Month, March 2018. Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.

12. Government performance and satisfaction with government

By: Darlington Mushongera, Graeme Götz, Samkelisiwe Khanyile, Thembani Mkhize and Ngaka Mosiane

Highlights

- Various government programmes have been introduced to provide some relief to the most vulnerable during the COVID-19 pandemic. Respondents appear generally happy with government response to COVID-19: 62% say they are satisfied with government's response. In addition, household service delivery has remained high and even improved in some areas, although COVID-19 has clearly impacted service operations where there were pre-existing weaknesses in service delivery capacity.
- However, following a trend seen in previous QoL Surveys, satisfaction with government's response to COVID-19 and with many (though not all) services has not carried through into satisfaction with government performance as a whole. Satisfaction with all spheres of government has declined considerably since 2017/18. Provincial government has seen the largest decline in satisfaction, dropping 15 percentage points from 44% satisfied in 2017/18, to 29% satisfied in 2020/21. This reversed a trend towards higher levels of satisfaction with provincial government, especially relative to national, between 2013/14 and 2017/18.
- Job creation and keeping government free from corruption are the main issues that respondents felt government is doing the worst at.
- Most respondents say that different aspects of corruption were not acceptable, and there is a clear correlation between beliefs in the unacceptability of corruption and lower levels of satisfaction with government. Those who identified corruption as the main thing that government is doing the worst at, and those who flagged corruption as the key reason that people still live in poverty, have lower levels of satisfaction with provincial government than other respondents.
- Using a basket of indicators to determine whether households have been directly impacted by COVID-19 (whether they have had COVID-19 or sought COVID-19 testing, or whether they lost a job, closed a business, or had salary or working hours reduced), it is clear that those who have been directly affected by COVID-19 have a lower level of satisfaction with provincial government than those who have not been affected.
- Interestingly, whether a household received some form of COVID-19-related relief from government did not seem to significantly improve their satisfaction with government.
- Respondents who say that they are satisfied with government's response to COVID-19, 37% say they are satisfied with provincial government, compared to a much lower 16% amongst those who are dissatisfied with government's response.

Introduction

This section of the report reflects on various dimensions of satisfaction with government, a key point of focus in all Quality of Life Surveys. It does not cover systematically every aspect of government operations (such as service delivery or communications), satisfaction with service performance, or other dimensions of 'governance' such as community involvement in consultative and participatory structures. Some of these matters are explored in other sections of this report, for example Section 10 on basic service access and satisfaction. These considerations are only dealt with here to the extent that they are relevant to understanding residents' perceptions of government and attitudes towards its performance.

Government performance

The Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21) provides evidence that government has made considerable effort to provide some level of household support to those impacted most severely by the negative economic effects of restrictions required to curb the pandemic. A third (35%) of all respondents say that they or a member of their household applied for the special R350 COVID-19 Social Relief of Distress (SRD) grant. Of these, two thirds (67%) were awarded the SRD grant, meaning that just under a quarter of all respondents' households (23%) received support under this scheme.

QoL 2020/21 did not ask specifically whether people had benefitted from the Unemployment Insurance Fund administered Temporary Employer/Employee Relief Scheme. However it did ask whether households had received any food support from either government or an NGO since March 2020. Thirteen percent of all respondents say they received food support.

In overall terms, respondents indicate that they are satisfied with government's response to COVID-19. Sixteen percent are very satisfied and 46% are satisfied, translating into 62% satisfied overall.

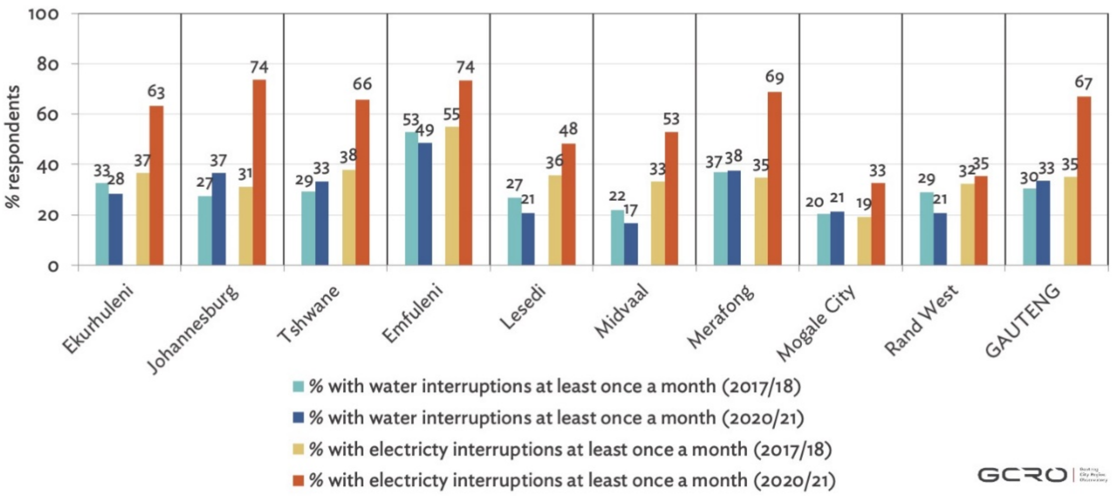
It also needs to be acknowledged that government has continued to meet new household service connection expectations arising from in-migration, natural population growth and new household formation. Statistics South Africa (StatsSA, 2020) estimates that the number of Gauteng households grew by 11% – from 4 923 108 to 5 460 269 – between mid-2018 and mid-2021. This is over 500 000 new households in three years. Yet the percentage of households with access to key basic services stayed at above 90%, and in fact appears to have *increased* to 93%, respectively, for those with piped water in their dwellings or on their stands, for those with electricity for lighting, and for those with adequate sanitation (counted as a flush toilet connected to the sewerage system or a septic tank, chemical toilet, or ventilated improved pit latrine). Some 88% of households have flush toilets, steady from QoL 2017/18. The proportion of households with refuse removed weekly lagged at 83% but did not decline from the previous survey. (See Section 10 on basic service access and satisfaction for more detail.)

This is not to suggest that service standards have been consistently maintained in all parts of Gauteng, or that all aspects of service delivery show a high level of performance. Services which do not relate to capital infrastructure investment, but rather to the efficiency of operations, were likely to be more susceptible to the impacts of COVID-19 disruptions. Weekly refuse removal provides a good example. Weekly refuse removal has declined somewhat in Tshwane, Lesedi, Merafong, Rand West, and declined significantly in Emfuleni (see Section 10 of this report for more detail). This suggests that COVID-19 may have exacerbated existing weaknesses in capability.

A similar picture can be seen in Figure 12.1, which shows the percentage of respondents who experienced water and electricity interruptions at least once a month, comparing 2017/18 and 2020/21 results. A few municipalities, Ekurhuleni, Lesedi, Midvaal and Rand West, have seen improvements in a lower percentage of respondents reporting monthly, or even more frequent, water interruptions. Emfuleni presents an unusual case, with much higher reported interruptions than other municipalities, but with a slight improvement since 2017/18. All other municipalities saw declines on this measure.

All municipalities saw an increase in the percentage of respondents with electricity interruptions at least once a month, with the average for Gauteng almost doubling from 35% to 67%. This is undoubtedly due to an increase in load shedding over the survey period, but interestingly there is considerable variation across municipalities which can only be accounted for in terms of differences in municipal capacity to keep their part of the electricity grid from failing. Notably, Emfuleni increased from 55% reporting monthly or more frequent interruptions to 74% in 2020/21.

Figure 12.1: Percentage of respondents experiencing water and electricity interruptions at least once a month, in 2017/18 and 2020/21, by municipality. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21) and GCRO QoL V (2017/8).



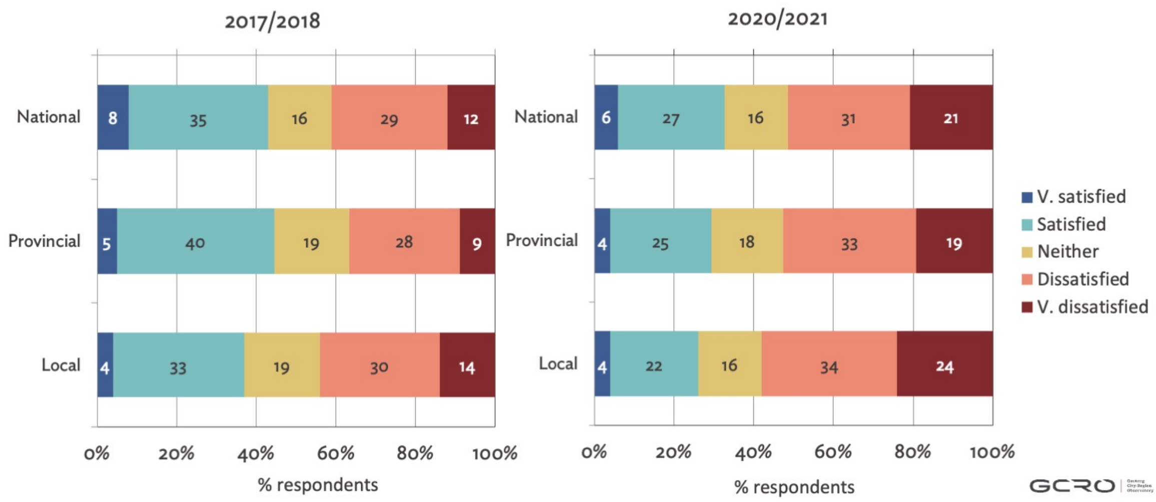
In sum, respondents appear generally happy with government-initiated programmes that have provided some relief to the most vulnerable in response to COVID-19. At the same time, household service delivery has remained high and even improved in some areas. However, COVID-19 has clearly impacted service operations where there were pre-existing weaknesses in capacity.

That said, in considering respondents' satisfaction with the performance of the government *as a whole*, more is at stake than simply how well government is actually performing on delivery, or satisfaction with that delivery. One of the more intriguing insights provided by successive QoL Surveys is that there is a wide disjuncture between levels of service delivery and service satisfaction on one hand, and overall levels of satisfaction with government on the other. In the current period, this disjuncture appears to have widened. A possible explanation is that as respondents have been battered by the socio-economic and psycho-social impacts of the COVID-19 crisis, they have looked to government in all spheres to take more care of them, and instead had their trust and confidence in government's ability to do so badly shaken.

Satisfaction with different spheres over time

There has been a marked decline in the level of satisfaction with all spheres of government since QoL 2017/18. In 2017/18, 43% of respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with the national government, 45% with the provincial government and 37% with the local government. The proportion of those that were *very* satisfied was very small across all spheres – 8% for national, 5% percent for provincial and 4% for local. In the current QoL 2020/21, the proportion of those that were very satisfied or satisfied with the national government fell to 33%, while those very satisfied or satisfied with provincial and local government fell to 29% and 26% respectively. There has been a slight increase of two percentage points for those that are *very* satisfied with local government, but the proportion is very small. On the other hand, the proportion of those that are *very* dissatisfied has expanded across all spheres, as shown in Figure 12.2 below.

Figure 12.2: Respondent satisfaction with government across spheres, 2017/18 vs 2020/21. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21) and GCRO QoL V (2017/18).



Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

The fall in satisfaction with the provincial government, by 16 percentage points, was the largest of any of the three spheres. This is noteworthy given that satisfaction with the provincial government had been increasing, relative to national, over several QoL iterations to 2017/18. The alleged mishandling of issues related to COVID-19 as well as corruption around the procurement of personal protection equipment was highly publicised in the media in 2020. It is possible that this has dramatically influenced public opinion of provincial government in the current survey. Perceptions of corruption, and their impact on satisfaction with provincial government, are discussed in more detail below.

Satisfaction with local government as a whole tends to be lower than national or provincial government in every QoL Survey. However, it is important to understand municipal-level differences in this overall picture. Figure 12.3 shows changes in the levels of satisfaction with local government in each municipality since 2011, and Figure 12.4 maps the current levels of dissatisfaction by metropolitan planning region and local municipality.

Figure 12.3 makes it clear that there have been some fluctuations in local government satisfaction levels across municipalities over the years. For example, the proportion of respondents satisfied with local government in Mogale City increased consistently up to 2015/16, then fell. By contrast, the percentage of those satisfied dropped in Lesedi and Merafong until 2015/16, then increased in 2017/18. However, it is notable that satisfaction with local government has declined significantly in most municipalities between 2017/18 and 2020/21, with the notable exception of Midvaal. Those who are satisfied in Midvaal have increased to 56%, double that in the three metropolitan municipalities of Johannesburg, Ekurhuleni and Tshwane. As illustrated in Figure 12.4, almost all municipalities saw more than 50% of respondents dissatisfied, increasing to some 70% in Rand West and in Emfuleni. For instance, in Merafong dissatisfaction with local government increased from 45% in 2017/18 to 72% in 2020/21, while in Rand West it increased from 50% to 69%. Again the exception was Midvaal, with 33% of respondents dissatisfied.

Nowhere has the decline in satisfaction levels been more palpable than in Emfuleni. In 2020/21, only 9% of respondents were satisfied with local government in Emfuleni, a fall of 14% percentage points from 23% in 2017/18. Dissatisfaction with local government is highest in Emfuleni at 86%, having increased by 22 percentage points from 64% in 2017/18.

It is worth noting that the proportion of respondents satisfied with local government had been trending upwards in the metropolitan municipalities of Johannesburg and Ekurhuleni, with Ekurhuleni in particular seeing a steady improvement. Tshwane, most likely affected by swings in leadership due to coalition politics, presents a more mixed picture over time. Satisfaction in Johannesburg, which saw a switch from a Democratic Alliance / Economic Freedom Fighters alliance back to African National Congress (ANC) control between QoL 2017/18 and 2020/21, fell from 38% satisfied to 27%. However, Ekurhuleni, which has had a stable ANC-led government over the years, saw a larger drop from 43% to 27%, suggesting that COVID-related contextual factors, rather than just changing affinity with the political parties in power, has had a major impact on local government satisfaction.

Figure 12.3: Percentage of respondents satisfied with local government, by municipality, over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18), GCRO QoL IV (2015/16), GCRO QoL III (2013/14) and GCRO QoL II (2011).

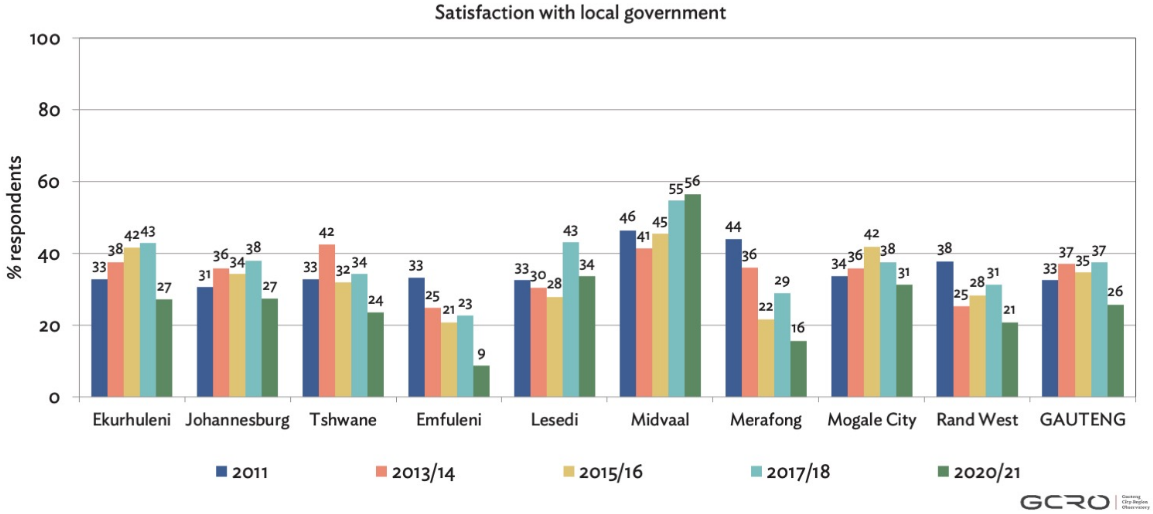
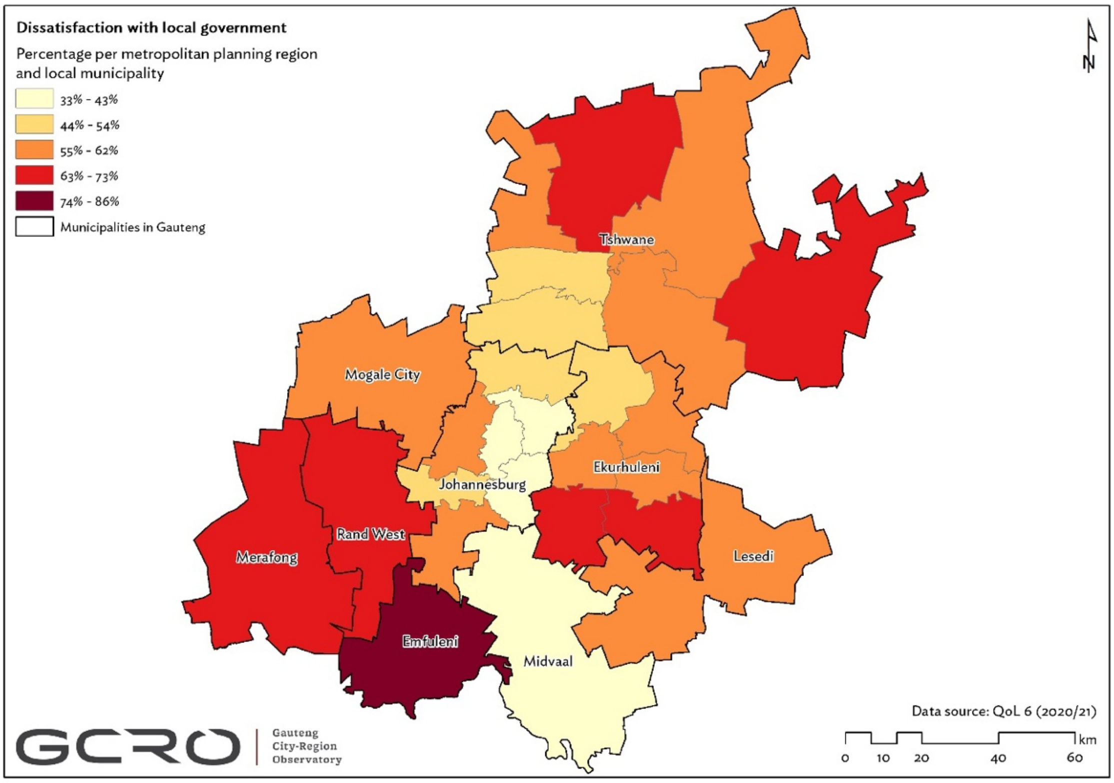


Figure 12.4: Map of Gauteng showing percentage of respondents dissatisfied with local government, by metropolitan planning region and local municipality. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).

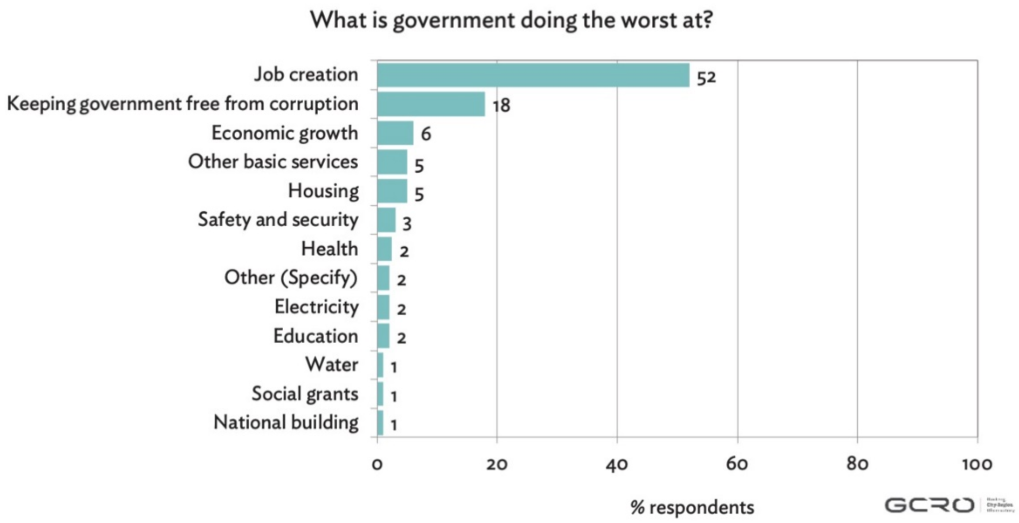


Digging deeper: perceptions of how well government is working

To understand in more depth the low and declining levels of satisfaction with government, we looked at the results for a number of questions that focus on how government works and how well it works. These include: perceptions of what government is doing the worst at; which sphere of government is doing the most to improve quality of life; whether respondents think public officials uphold the principles of Batho Pele; and whether or not the country is going in the wrong direction.

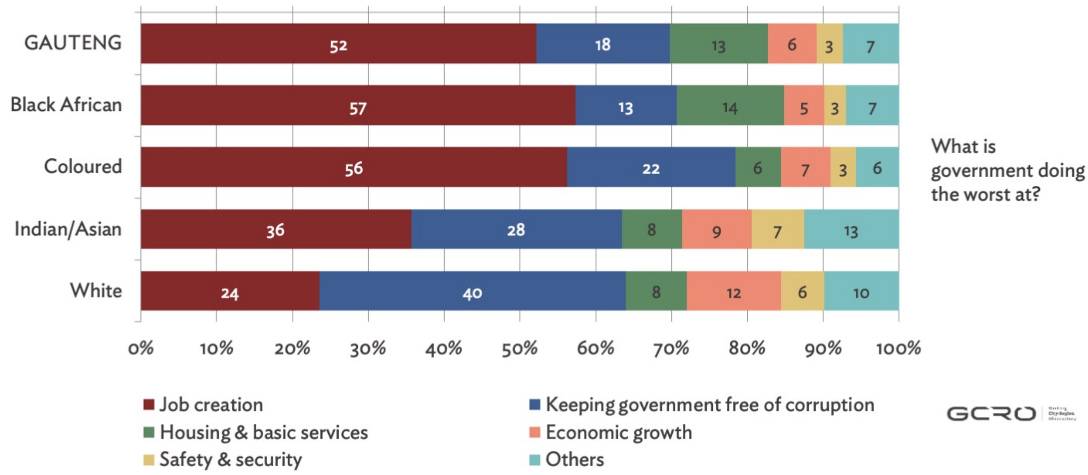
For the first time in a QoL Survey, respondents were explicitly asked about the things they thought government was doing the worst at. As shown in Figure 12.5 below, two areas stand out as key concerns for respondents: job creation and keeping the government free of corruption. Fifty-two percent of respondents say government is doing the worst at job creation, while 18% think that government is failing to rid itself of corruption. Other weaknesses such as growing the economy (6% say government is doing the worst at this), basic services (5%), housing (5%), and safety and security (3%) are among the other issues highlighted by respondents, followed by a range of less frequently mentioned issues.

Figure 12.5: Respondent perceptions on what government is doing the worst at. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Impressions of what government is not doing well at vary markedly by population group, as shown in Figure 12.6. While job creation and keeping government free of corruption are key issues for all, Black African and Coloured respondents are more likely to be concerned about job creation, at 57% and 56% respectively, whereas White respondents are less likely to be concerned about job creation (24%) but are more concerned about corruption (40%). Compared to other population groups, a larger proportion of White respondents (12%) think that the government is doing the worst at growing the economy.

Figure 12.6: Respondent perceptions on what government is doing the worst at, by population group. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).

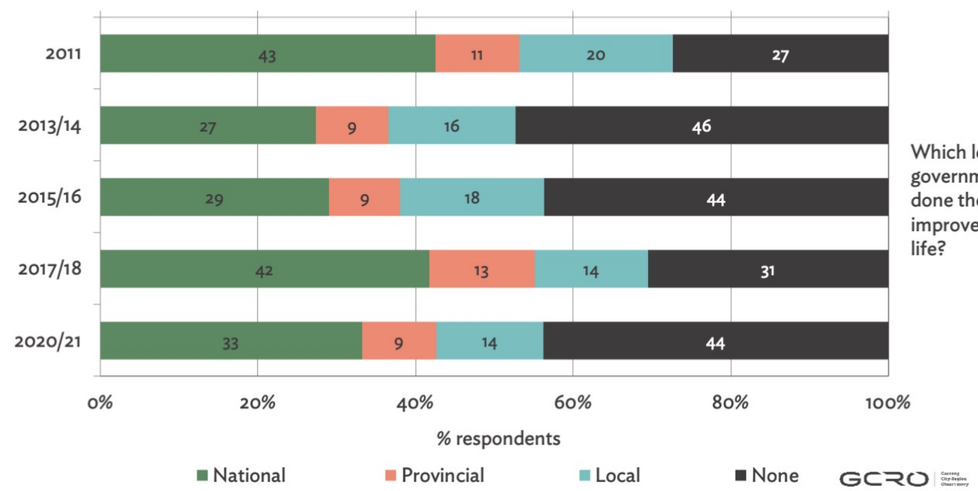


Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

In every QoL Survey since 2009, respondents were asked to say which sphere of government – national, provincial or local – is doing the most to improve their quality of life. The question also gave respondents the option to say 'none of them'. Consistently across all QoL Surveys, respondents have identified national government as the sphere that is doing the most to improve quality of life. In 2017/18, the proportion in favour of national government rose to 42%, from 29% in 2015/16. This increase in 2017/18 coincided with the nomination of Cyril Ramaphosa as the President of South Africa, an event that may have boosted confidence in national government. However, in 2020/21, the perception that national government is doing the most to improve quality of life has declined by nine percentage points to 33%.

The proportion of respondents that think provincial government is doing the most to improve quality of life increased from 9% in 2015/16 to 13% in 2017/18. It has also fallen in 2020/21, albeit by only four percentage points to 9%, compared to national government's nine percentage point drop. In 2020/21, 44% of respondents feel that none of the spheres is doing the most to improve quality of life. This was a significant increase from the 31% in 2017/18, as shown in Figure 12.7 below.

Figure 12.7: Respondent perceptions on which level of government is doing the most to improve quality of life, over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18), GCRO QoL IV (2015/16), GCRO QoL III (2013/14) and GCRO QoL II (2011).



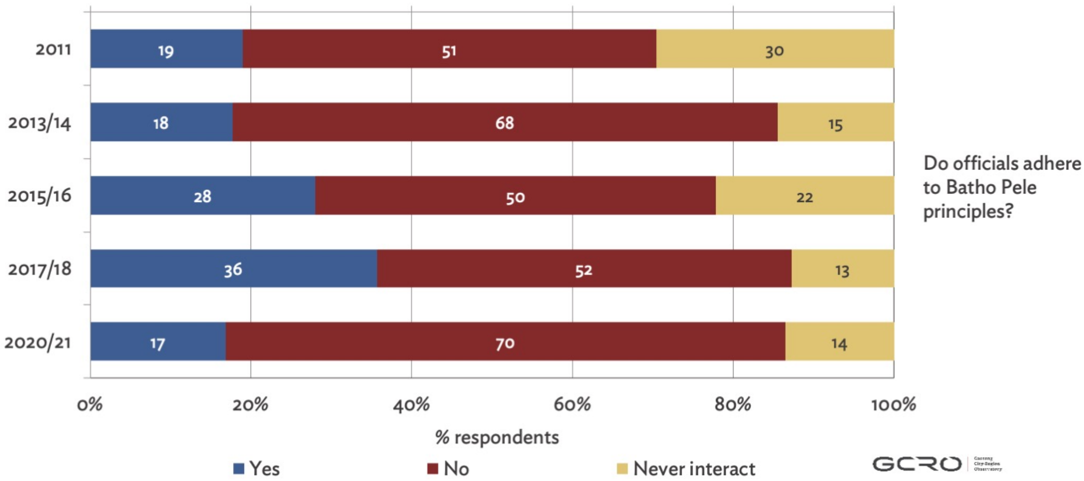
Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Respondents were also asked to express their opinion on how well government officials work among themselves and how they relate to the public. Fifty-five percent of the respondents do not think that government officials work well with each other, and 51% feel that government does not include people in decision-making processes. Fifty-four percent of respondents in Gauteng say that they do not trust or strongly distrust the current leaders of government.

As shown in Figure 12.8 below, the proportion of respondents saying that officials uphold the principles of Batho Pele ('putting people first') has been very low over the years. Although there was a heartening increase from 18% in 2013/14 to 36% in 2017/18, 2020/21 saw a huge drop of 19 percentage points to 17%. A much larger proportion of respondents (70% in 2020/21) do not think that government officials adhere to the principles, up from 52% in 2017/18.

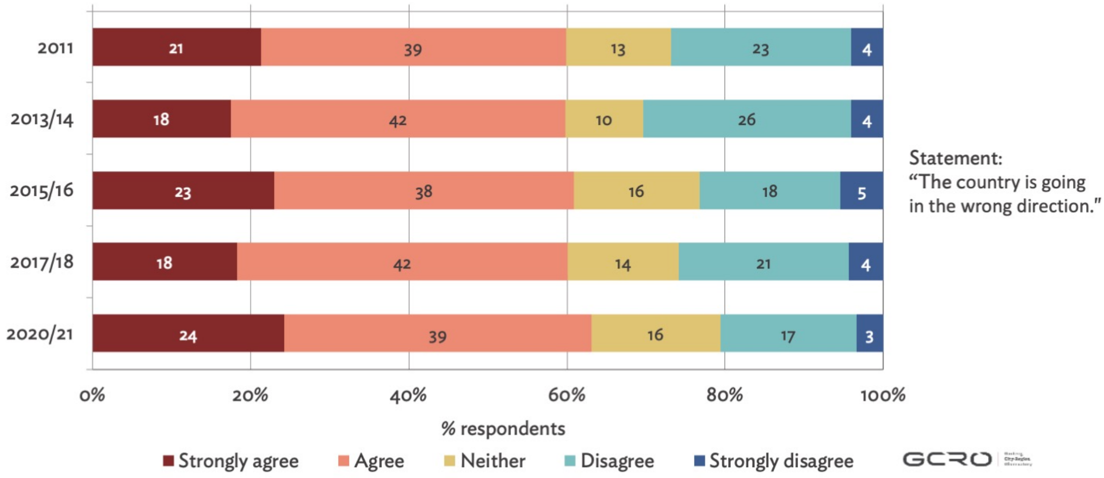
Lastly, we considered respondents' perceptions on whether or not the country is going in the wrong direction, as shown in Figure 12.9 below. The proportion of those who agree or strongly agree that the country is going in the wrong direction has been consistently high since 2011, hovering around 60%. In 2020/21, a total of 63% of respondents agree or strongly agree that the country is going in the wrong direction while only 20% of respondents disagree or strongly disagree with the statement.

Figure 12.8: Respondent opinions on whether government officials are working according to Batho Pele principles, over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18), GCRO QoL IV (2015/16), GCRO QoL III (2013/14) and GCRO QoL II (2011).



Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Figure 12.9: Percentage of respondents who believe the country is going in the wrong direction, over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18), GCRO QoL IV (2015/16), GCRO QoL III (2013/14) and GCRO QoL II (2011).

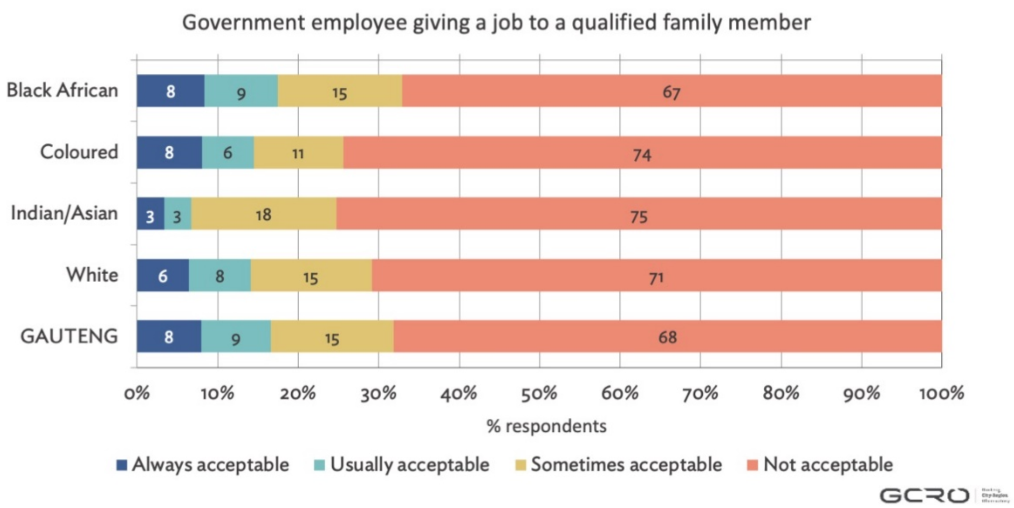


Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Perceptions of corruption and how it impacts government satisfaction

Corruption is a key governance issue, and, in turn, public perceptions of corruption shape how satisfied residents are with government. QoL Surveys have previously asked for respondents' opinions on corruption, but QoL 2020/21 saw an expanded bank of questions on various aspects of corruption, notably three questions on whether respondents saw as acceptable: (i) a government official giving a job to a qualified family member; (ii) paying some money to speed up a service such as a driver's licence or an ID; and (iii) paying some money to a traffic officer to make a traffic offence go away. In each case, a very large proportion of respondents say that the practices are unacceptable. Sixty-eight percent say it is unacceptable for a government official to give a job to a qualified family member; 86% say it is unacceptable to pay money to speed up a government service; and 88% say it is unacceptable to pay a bribe to a traffic officer. Indicatively, Figure 12.10 shows respondents' perceptions of whether it is acceptable to give a job to a qualified family member, by population group. It is clear that there are only small differences across the population groups.

Figure 12.10: Respondent perceptions, by population group, on the acceptability of a government employee giving a job to a qualified family member. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



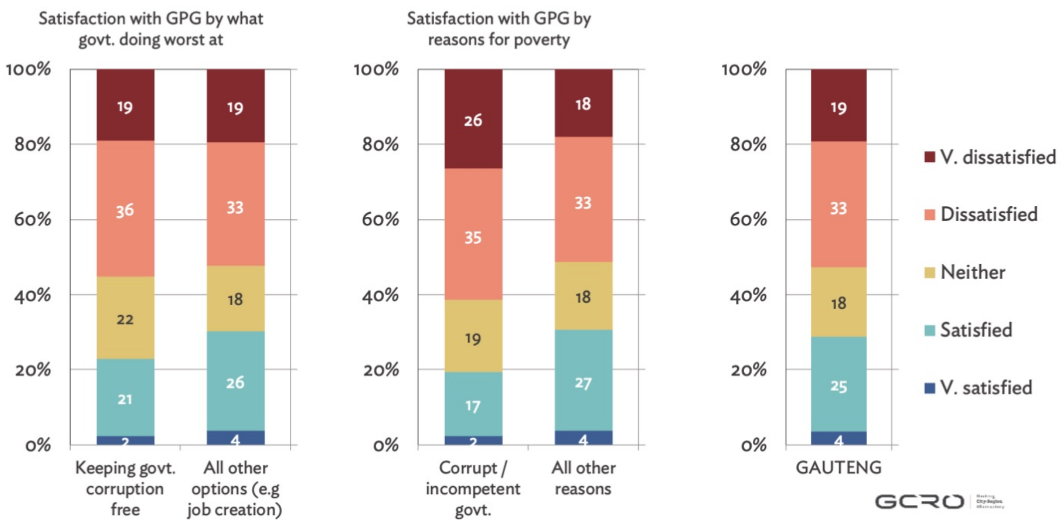
Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Whether respondents think corruption is acceptable or unacceptable has an impact on the extent to which they are satisfied with government. Using the variable graphed in Figure 12.10 and satisfaction with provincial government as an example, of those who say that it is always, usually or sometimes acceptable for a government official to give a job to a qualified family member, 50% are dissatisfied with provincial government. By contrast, of those who say it is not acceptable, 54% are dissatisfied.

Two other questions in the QoL 2020/21 Survey provide evidence that perceptions of corruption impact upon satisfaction with government (Figure 12.11). As noted above, we asked respondents what they thought the government was doing worst at: while the largest proportion, at 52%, say job creation, a sizable 18% think that the government is doing the worst at keeping itself free of corruption. Those respondents who think the government is doing the worst at managing corruption are less likely to be satisfied with the Gauteng Provincial Government than those pointing to other concerns – only 23% are satisfied and 56% are dissatisfied. This compares to 31% satisfied and 52% dissatisfied amongst all those highlighting other weaknesses.

We also asked respondents to identify from a range of factors what they believed to be the main reason that people live in poverty. Sixty-five percent of respondents pointed to a lack of jobs, but a notable 15% identified corrupt or incompetent government officials / politicians (other reasons include a lack of education, South Africa's history, and laziness). Of those who identified corruption and incompetence as the main reason for poverty, only 20% were satisfied or very satisfied with provincial government, and 62% were dissatisfied. By comparison, for all other respondents giving any other reasons such as the lack of jobs, 31% are satisfied with provincial government, and 51% are dissatisfied.

Figure 12.11: Respondent satisfaction with provincial government (GPG), by what respondents say government is doing the worst at, and reasons given for why people live in poverty. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

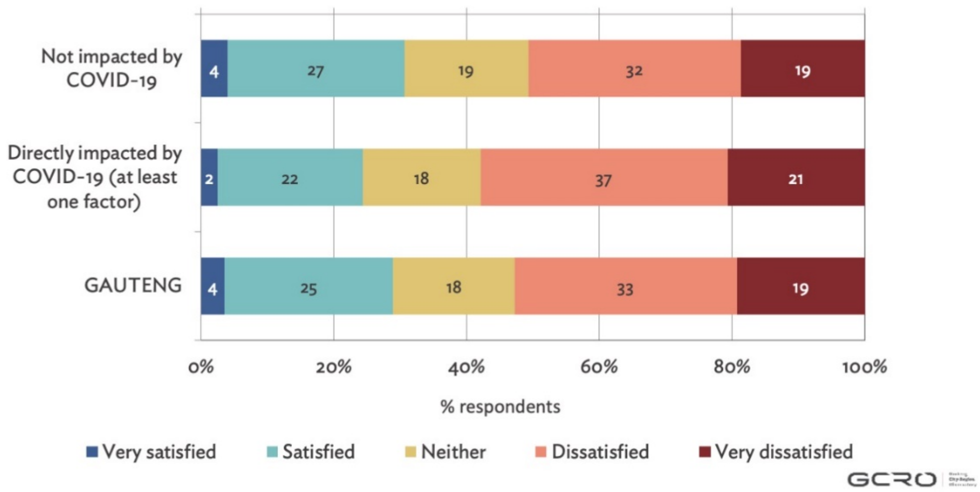
Impacts of COVID-19 and satisfaction with provincial government

It is clear that various dimensions of the COVID-19 pandemic have had a deep impact on the health, socio-economic circumstances and psycho-social attitudes of Gauteng residents. However, can it be said that those who have been more deeply affected have a more negative perception of government? Conversely, is there evidence that those who have received some measure of household support during the COVID-19 period, and those who are more satisfied with the government's response to COVID-19, are more likely to be satisfied with the government generally?

To unpack the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on government satisfaction, we combined five measures that could be considered as more direct impacts of COVID-19 into a single variable. As discussed throughout this report, COVID-19 has had many indirect and less visible impacts in almost every part of life, but the survey asked explicitly whether: (i) the respondent or a member of their household has had COVID-19 in the last year; (ii) whether the respondent tried to test for COVID-19 but was refused; and also whether they have either (iii) lost a job, (iv) had their salary or working hours reduced, or (v) had to permanently close a business since March 2020. If respondents were affected by any of these, they were counted as 'directly impacted' for the purpose of this analysis. Thirty percent of respondents have been impacted by at least one of these factors, and 7% by more than one.

Of all those who were directly impacted in some way, 24% are satisfied with provincial government and 58% are dissatisfied (Figure 12.12). By contrast, of all those *not* directly impacted on any of the five indicators, 31% are satisfied and 51% are dissatisfied. The results are similar for national government: of those directly impacted by COVID-19, 29% are satisfied; of those not impacted, 34% are satisfied. The differences were considerably smaller for the local government: 25% of respondents who were directly impacted were satisfied, compared to 26% of respondents who were not impacted.

Figure 12.12: Respondent satisfaction with provincial government, by whether or not they have been 'directly impacted' by COVID-19. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Interestingly, whether a household received some form of support from government did not seem to correlate significantly with higher satisfaction with the provincial government (Figure 12.13). Of all those who did not apply for the COVID-19 R350 special Social Relief of Distress (SRD) grant, 30% are satisfied with the provincial government. This dropped to 25% satisfied for those who tried to apply for the grant but did not receive it. However, of those who did apply and *did receive* the grant, only 29% are satisfied with the provincial government, no higher than the provincial average. Indeed, a greater proportion of those who received the grant are dissatisfied with provincial government, at 56%, than those who did not apply, at 50%, or the provincial average, at 52%.

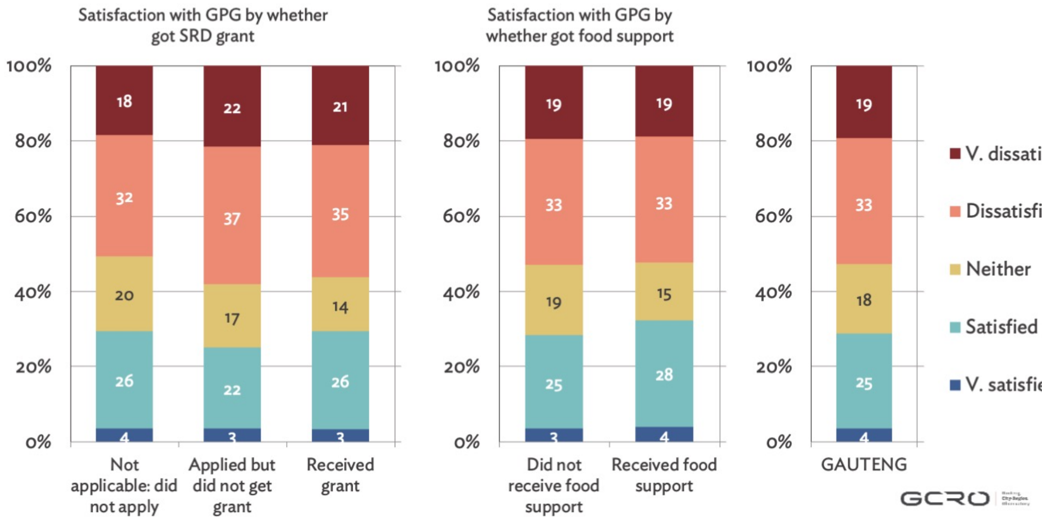
Whether respondents received the COVID-19 SRD grant or not seemed to make less of a difference to satisfaction with national government. Of those who received the grant, 33% of respondents are satisfied with national government, compared to 31% who applied for the grant but did not receive it.

Those who received some kind of food support from either government or an NGO over the last year are slightly more satisfied with provincial government, at 32%, than those who did not receive food support at 28%.

Of those who received food support, 37% were satisfied with national government compared to 32% of those who did not receive food support. However, getting food support seemed to do nothing to endear respondents to local government: 25% of those who received support were satisfied with local government, compared to 26% satisfied for those who received none.

A much larger difference in satisfaction with the provincial government can be discerned between those who say they are satisfied with government's response to COVID-19, and those who are dissatisfied. Thirty-seven percent of those who are satisfied with government's response to COVID-19 are satisfied with provincial government generally, compared to a much lower 15% of respondents amongst those who are dissatisfied with government's response to COVID-19.

Figure 12.13: Respondent satisfaction with provincial government (GPG), by whether or not the respondent's household received COVID-19-related support. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Which aspect of government's response to COVID-19 drives higher levels of satisfaction is unfortunately not clear from the data. For example, there is no difference between the level of satisfaction with provincial government of those who say they are satisfied with the way government provided information about the way COVID-19 was spreading in their area, versus those who are not. In both groups, 29% of respondents were satisfied with provincial government.

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Government performance and satisfaction with government

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Suggested citation:
Mushongera, D., Götz, G., Khanyile, S., Mkhize, T., & Mosiane, N. (2021). Government performance and satisfaction with government. In J. de Kadt, C. Hamann, S.P. Mkhize & A. Parker (Eds.), *Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21): Overview Report* (Section 12). Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.

Related GCRO outputs:

Culwick, C. (2018). *Government services 2 – Best rated services per municipality*. GCRO Vignette No. 35. Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.
Götz, G., Khanyile, S., & Katumba, S. (2016). *Voting patterns in the 2016 local government elections*. GCRO Map of the Month, December 2016. Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.
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13. Quality of life and well-being

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Highlights

- The QoL Survey 6 (2020/21) reveals that there has been a decrease in overall well-being since the last time the survey was run. This is evidenced by growing dissatisfaction with life as a whole over time, and a drop in QoL Index scores across the board between the 2017/18 and 2020/21 Surveys.
- The decrease in QoL Index scores was driven by a particularly sharp decline in the government satisfaction dimension, along with smaller decreases in the socio-economic status, life satisfaction and health dimensions.
- On average, Black African respondents continue to have the lowest QoL Index scores of all population groups. While QoL Index scores have fallen for all population groups, Black African respondents are the only group to have seen their scores decline below 2013/14 levels.
- For the first time since 2013/14, the mean QoL Index score for female respondents is lower than for males. The particular decrease experienced by females relative to 2017/18 supports other indications that females have been more severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic than males.

Introduction

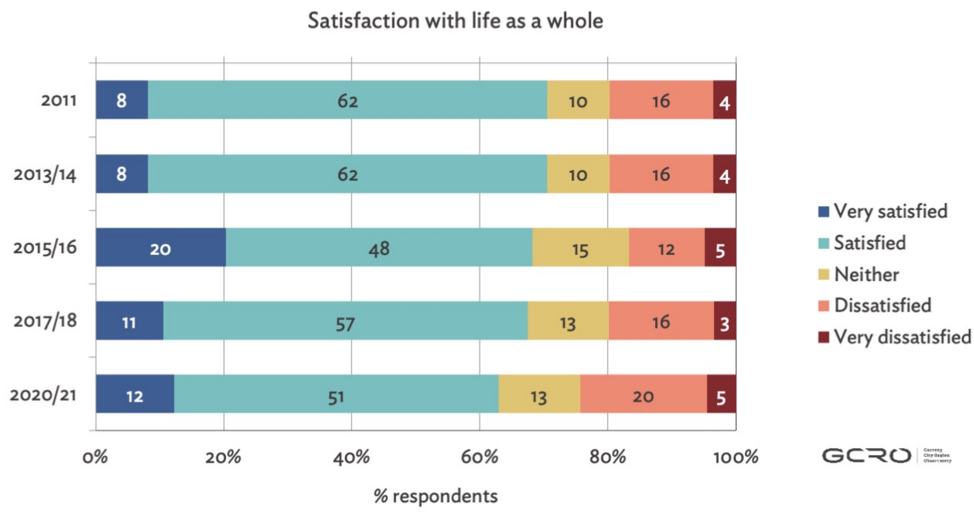
The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted lives and livelihoods across the world. The Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21) – and in particular the QoL Index, which combines 33 survey questions to give a multidimensional sense of overall well-being – provides a valuable opportunity to understand the overall impact of the pandemic on Gauteng residents. This section gives an overview of life satisfaction and the QoL Index, showing differences over time and between different demographic groups.

Satisfaction with life as a whole

In every QoL Survey, respondents have been asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they are with their life as a whole. Responses to this question provide a subjective measure of individual well-being. Figure 13.1 shows a trend of increasing dissatisfaction over time with life as a whole. The most recent survey has both the highest levels of dissatisfaction (very dissatisfied and dissatisfied combined) and lowest satisfaction (very satisfied and satisfied combined) recorded since 2013/14. One in four people in Gauteng are dissatisfied with their life as a whole. Of particular concern is the deterioration between the 2017/18 and 2020/21 Surveys, with satisfaction dropping by six percentage points. Although these results are suggestive of the negative impact of COVID-19 on people's perceived quality of life over the last year, it is notable that dissatisfaction has consistently increased since 2015/16.

Satisfaction with life as a whole is strongly correlated with income and population group. Satisfaction increases with increasing household income. Satisfaction persistently reflects the legacy of apartheid policies: in 2020/21, 88% of White respondents reported that they are satisfied with their life as a whole, compared to just 58% of Black African respondents.

Figure 13.1: Respondent satisfaction with life as a whole, over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18), GCRO QoL IV (2015/16), GCRO QoL III (2013/14) and GCRO QoL II (2011).



Note: Figures in this chart may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

Quality of Life Index

The GCRO's QoL Index combines responses to 33 survey questions, grouped into seven dimensions, using weights generated by the data, to provide a single score out of 100 representing *overall* quality of life. The QoL Index is guided by an understanding that quality of life is multidimensional, reflecting both material and subjective factors. The selected survey variables, the way they have been grouped into dimensions, and how they are weighted when combined into a single score, are all based on the results of extensive analysis of the data from QoL V (2017/18), QoL IV (2014/15), and QoL III (2013/14).[3]

Figure 13.2 below provides an overview of the seven dimensions included in the QoL Index, and their aggregation into a single score. The seven dimensions are: Services, Socio-economic status, Government satisfaction, Life satisfaction, Health, Safety and Participation. The scores for these individual dimensions are combined to give an overall QoL Index score out of 100, where quality of life increases with increasing scores.[4] Figure 13.3 illustrates the variables which feed into each dimension of the Index.

[3] As part of the Quality of Life ten-year review process, the previously used QoL Index (scored out of ten) was substantially refined. All index scores presented here, including those for previous survey iterations, use the refined methodology. Although the results of the previous and refined QoL indices are broadly similar, scores calculated using the refined approach are not directly comparable with the Index scores reported in previous outputs. Please contact the GCRO if you require further information.

[4] Further methodological details regarding the index development and calculation are available in [Naidoo and de Kadt (2021)](#).

Figure 13.2: Diagram of the seven dimensions of the Quality of Life Index. The size of each dimension indicates its relative weight in the final QoL Index score.

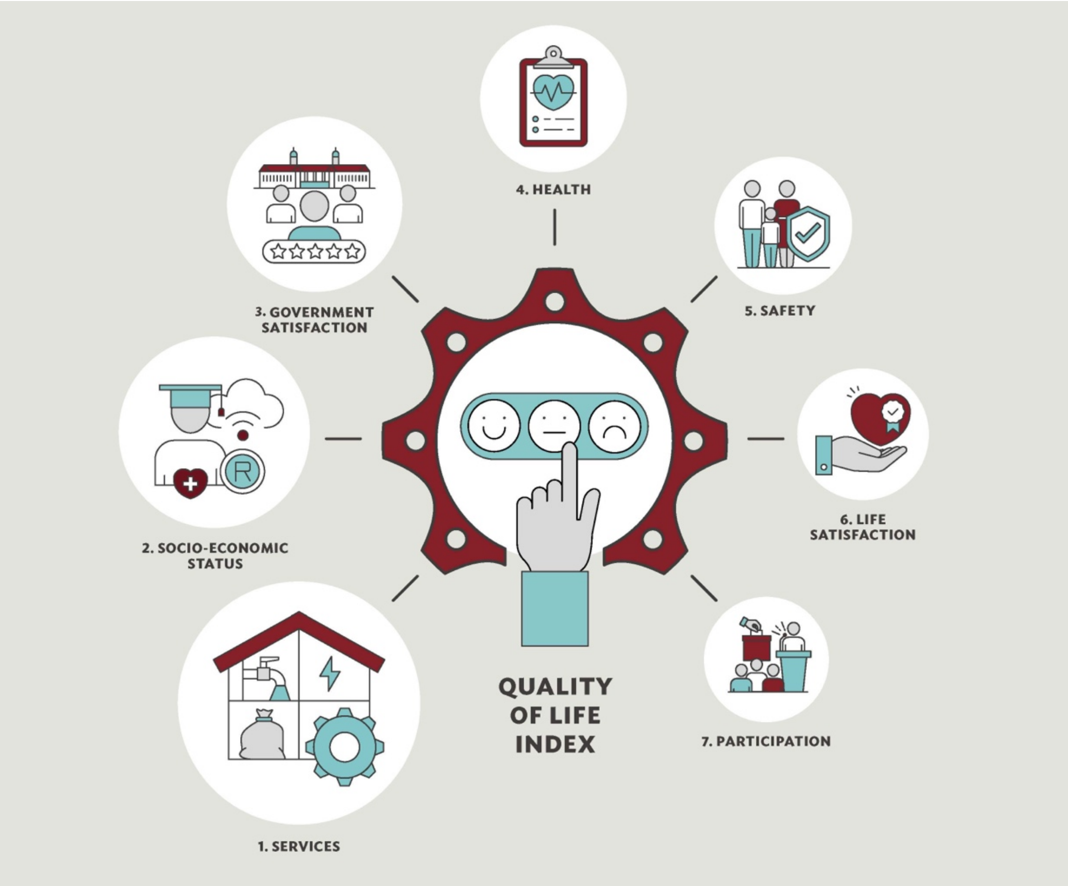
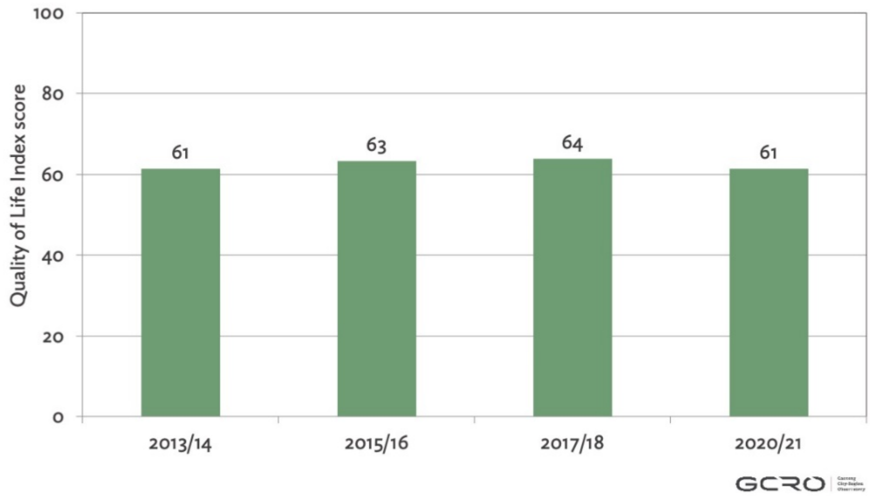


Figure 13.3: Variables comprising each dimension of the QoL Index

Overall Quality of Life Index scores over time

In any composite index derived from a large number of variables, with responses from a large number of respondents, scores typically shift by only very small degrees over time or between groups. Consequently, shifts of only one or two points reflect quite substantial changes in overall quality of life. It is therefore very significant that the QoL Index score for 2020/21 is notably lower than in 2017/18, falling from 64 to 61. As is evident in Figure 13.4 below, this is a return to 2013/14 levels and reverses the gradual upward trend of QoL Index scores over time.

Figure 13.4: Average Quality of Life Index score for Gauteng respondents, over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18), QoL IV (2015/16) and QoL III (2013/14).

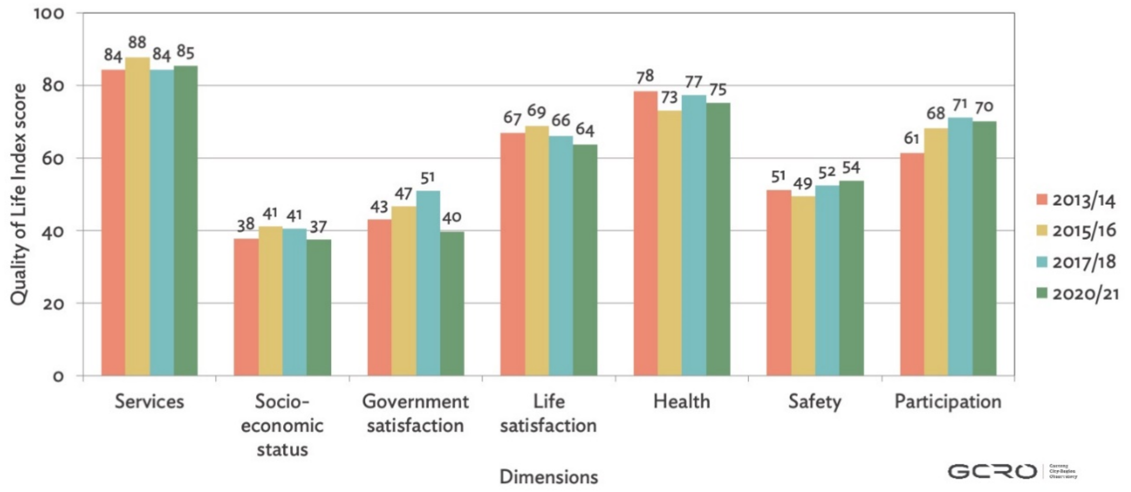


Quality of Life Index dimensions

To better understand the decrease in the QoL Index for 2020/21, it is helpful to look at how the scores for each of the seven index dimensions have shifted over time. Figure 13.5 illustrates these changes. While scores have fallen in most dimensions, there is a slight increase in the Services and Safety dimensions. The improvement in Safety is driven by a decrease in the proportion of respondents reporting that they were a victim of crime in the past year, likely as a result of various aspects of COVID-19 lockdown regulations (see Section 6 for more detail). Scores for the Services and Participation dimensions have changed only slightly – Services improving by one point and Participation dropping by one. The consistency in both social and political participation is unexpected, given the restrictions on gatherings during the various lockdown periods since March 2021. It suggests that people have found ways to maintain involvement in activities important to them (see Section 8 of this report for more detail).

The most striking decrease is in the Government satisfaction dimension, falling from 51 in 2017/18 to 40 in 2020/21. The score rose steadily between 2013/14 and 2017/18, but the 2020/21 score (40) is lower than even that for 2013/14. The scores for the Socio-economic status, Life satisfaction and Health dimensions have also all fallen relative to 2017/18, and in all instances are also now below 2013/14 scores. This pattern of decline across most dimensions is indicative of the extensive and multidimensional stress that Gauteng residents have experienced during this period of COVID-19, as is detailed across many sections of this report.

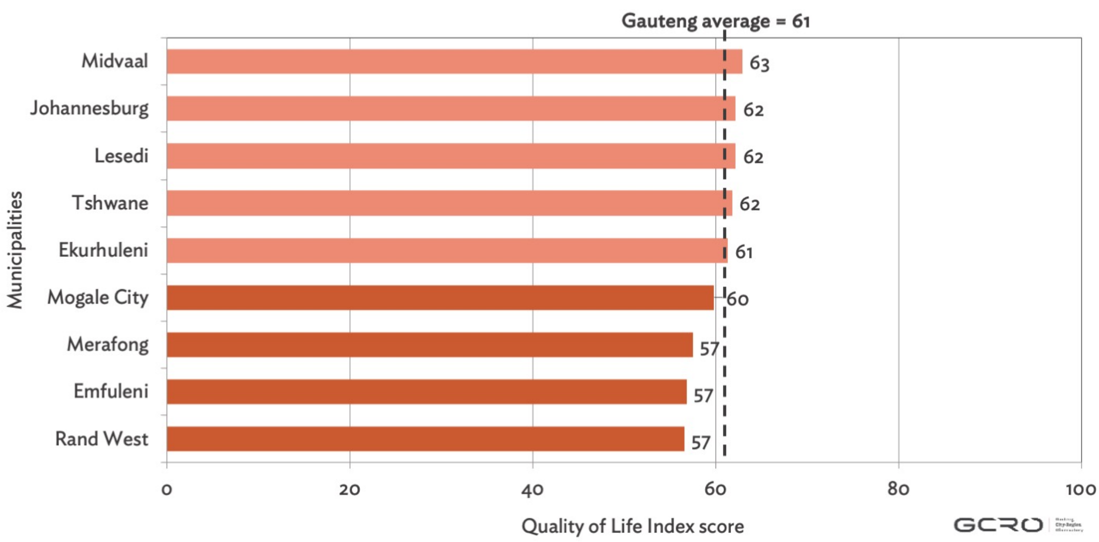
Figure 13.5: Gauteng average Quality of Life Index dimension scores, over survey iterations. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18), GCRO QoL IV (2015/16), GCRO QoL III (2013/14).



Quality of Life Index across municipalities

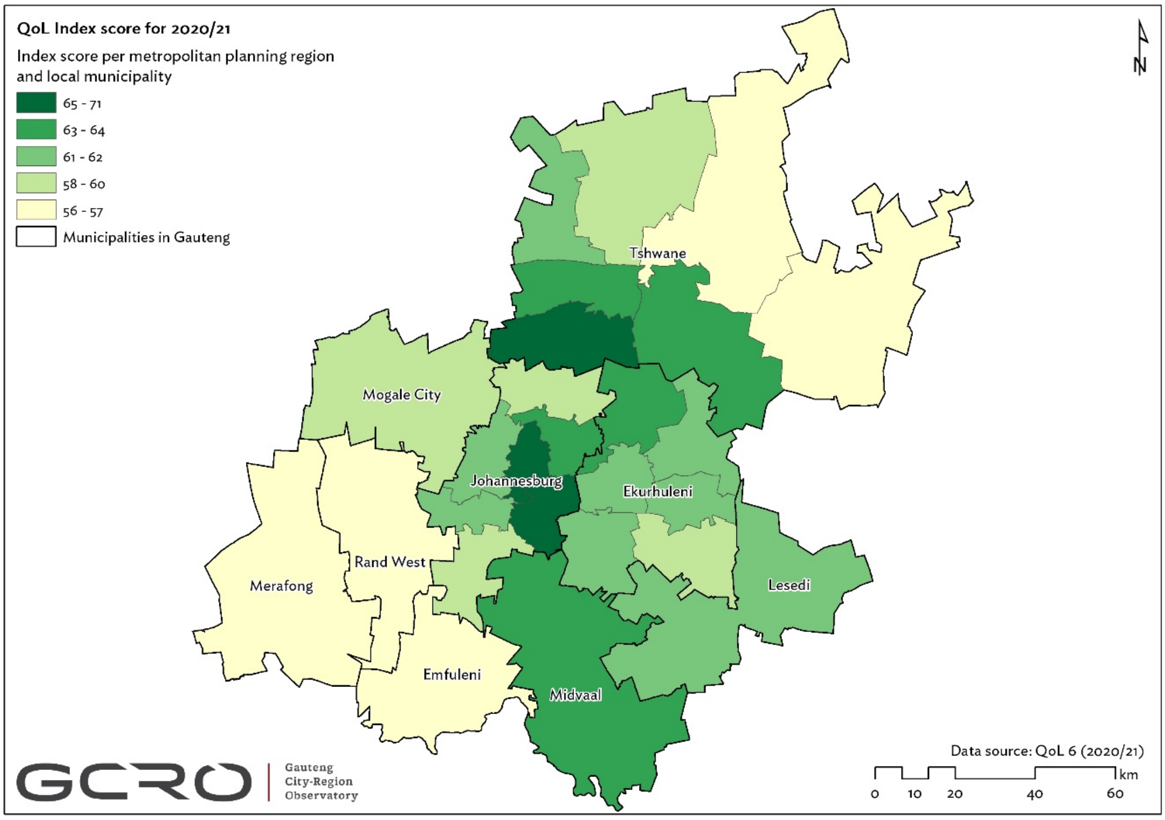
QoL 2020/21 reveals that Midvaal has the highest multidimensional quality of life of all municipalities in Gauteng, followed by Johannesburg and Lesedi (Figure 13.6). All metros in the province have higher QoL Index scores than the provincial average, whereas all local municipalities in the West Rand District Municipality fall below the provincial average.

Figure 13.6: Municipal average Quality of Life Index scores. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Mapping QoL Index results across metropolitan municipality planning regions, as in Figure 13.7 below, highlights that despite relatively high average metropolitan scores, there is extensive spatial variation within the metros. While the variations in Ekurhuleni are somewhat limited, the different scores across planning regions in Johannesburg and Tshwane are particularly stark. Tshwane holds the planning region with the lowest score in the province (56), while it also has the planning region with the second highest score (68). Scores in Johannesburg range from 59 to 71, with the upper end being the highest in the province.

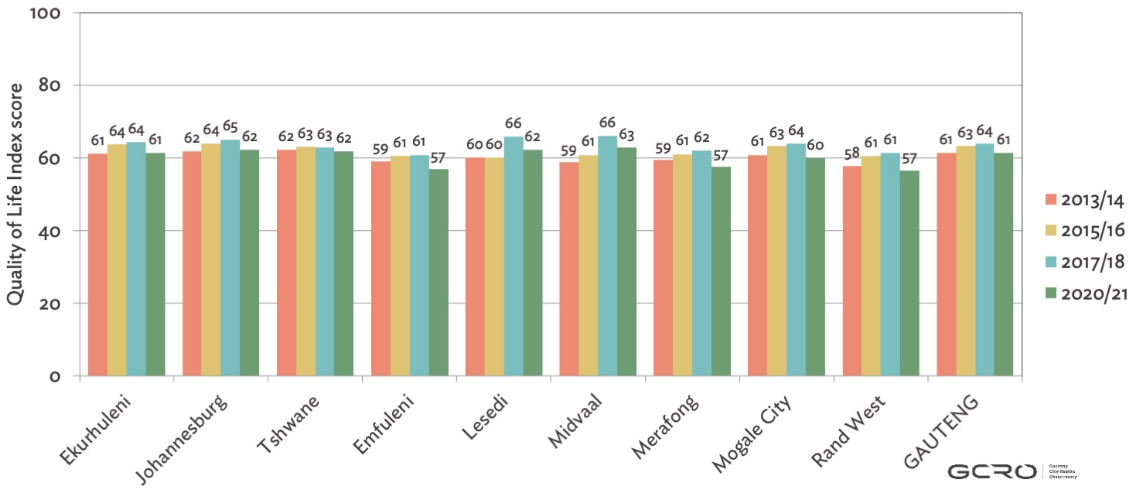
Figure 13.7: Map of Gauteng showing average Quality of Life Index score, by metropolitan planning region and local municipality. Data source: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21).



Quality of Life Index across municipalities over time

Figure 13.8 shows that every municipality in the province experienced a drop in QoL Index scores relative to 2017/18. Rand West, Emfuleni, Lesedi, Merafong and Mogale City all saw large four-point drops in their quality of life scores between 2017/18 and 2020/21. While both Lesedi and Midvaal experienced a decline from 2017/18 to 2020/21, they are the only two municipalities whose 2020/21 scores are higher than their 2015/16 scores, each by two points. Tshwane's QoL Index score has been the most consistent over time and experienced the smallest drop relative to 2017/18. However, it is also the only municipality in the province where quality of life has deteriorated consistently (albeit slightly) since 2015/16.

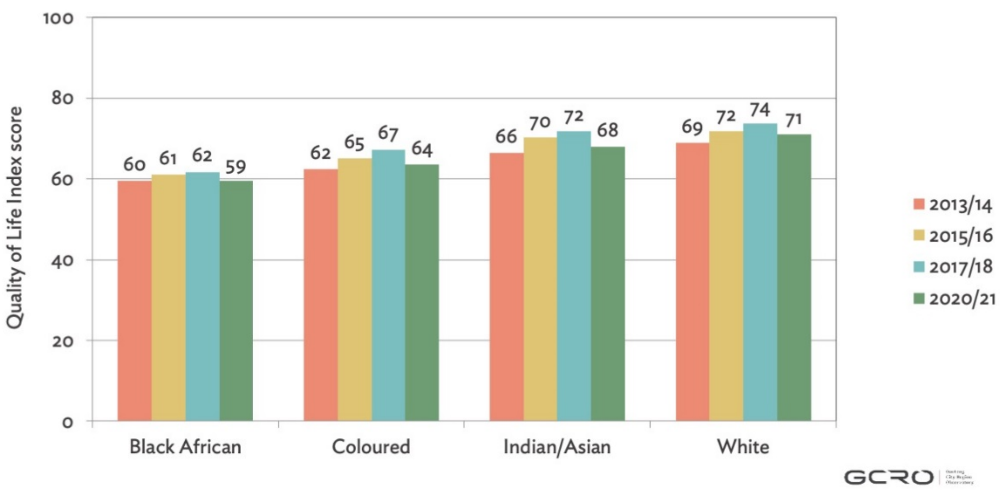
Figure 13.8: Average Quality of Life Index scores, by municipality and survey iteration. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18), QoL IV (2015/16) and QoL III (2013/14).



Quality of Life Index by population group and sex

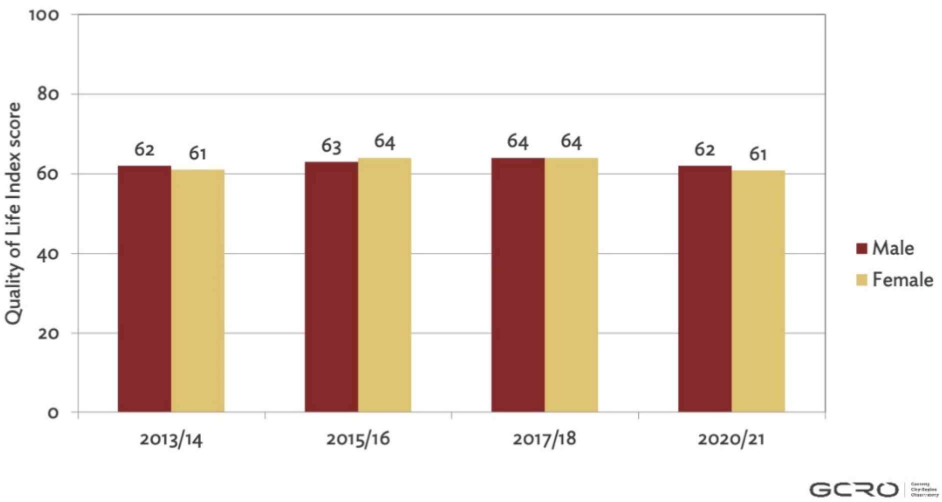
The QoL Index also varies by demographics. Historically, Black African respondents have had the lowest QoL Index score and this iteration of the survey sees no exception (Figure 13.9). Black African respondents have an Index score of 59, the only population group below the average of 61 for all respondents. White respondents have the highest mean QoL Index score at 71, substantially above the Gauteng average. For Black African respondents, the 2020/21 QoL Index score has dropped below the 2013/14 scpre. In comparison, the QoL Index scores for the other population groups have also decreased but are still higher than their scores in 2013/14. This suggests that the COVID-19 pandemic may have affected Black African respondents more than other population groups. Black African respondents have a notably lower mean score in the Socio-economic status dimension (31) than other population groups – the mean for Coloured respondents is 43, for Indian/Asian respondents 59, and for White respondents 73. The mean score for Black African respondents on the Services dimension (83) is also notably lower than for other population groups.

Figure 13.8: Average Quality of Life Index scores, by population group and survey iteration. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18), GCRO QoL IV (2015/16) and GCRO QoL III (2013/14).



The difference in QoL Index scores between the sexes is very small – there is only a one point difference in 2020/21 (Figure 13.9) – but it is statistically significant. Since 2017/18, quality of life has dropped more for female respondents than male respondents, suggesting that in overall terms the COVID-19 pandemic has affected women more than men. In 2017/18, there was no difference in QoL scores between male and female respondents, but in 2015/16, female respondents had a statistically significant higher QoL Index score. This was driven by a higher score in the Services dimension. Over time, male respondents have had higher scores in the Health and Safety dimensions while female respondents have had consistently higher scores in the Life satisfaction and Participation dimensions.

Figure 13.9: Average Quality of Life Index scores, by sex and survey iteration. Data sources: GCRO QoL 6 (2020/21), GCRO QoL V (2017/18), QoL IV (2015/16) and QoL III (2013/14).



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Quality of life and well-being

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Suggested citation:
Culwick Fatti, C., de Kadt, J., Naidoo, Y., & Parker, A. (2021). Quality of life and well-being. In J. de Kadt, C. Hamann, S.P. Mkhize & A. Parker (Eds.), *Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21): Overview Report* (Section 13). Johannesburg: Gauteng City-Region Observatory.

Related GCRO outputs:

Naidoo, Y. (2021). The Quality of Life Index 2020/21, interactive visualisation. [This will be available from: https://www.gcro.ac.za/research/project/detail/quality-life-survey-vi-202021/].

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