

Urban observatories and the governance of city-regions

XII Metropolis World Congress

Wednesday June 21st 10:30 AM to 11.15 AM

Palais des Congrès – Hub

UCL City Leadership Lab / UCL STEaPP

Gauteng City Region Observatory

About us



UCL Department of Science, Technology, Engineering and Public Policy (STePP) explores how scientific and engineering expertise can meaningfully engage with public decision making and policy processes to tackle pressing global issues and improve public wellbeing.



ABOUT US

RESEARCH

EDUCATION

PUBLICATIONS

PARTNERS

CONTACT US

About us



The **UCL City Leadership Laboratory** brings together world-class academic scholarship, public authorities, international organisations, the private sector and local SMEs to create a unique environment for urban experimentation, research, teaching and – most importantly – action.

The Lab builds on three years of projects, grants and activities of the City Leadership Initiative. A joint effort of the World Bank Group and United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), with funding from the UK Government's Economic and Social Research (ESRC) and Engineering and Physical Sciences (EPSRC) Research Councils. Over the past three years the Lab employed over 30 researchers across more than 12 projects and 20 policy and impact oriented partnerships with key urban and international stakeholders like the World Health Organisation, ARUP, C40 Cities and the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

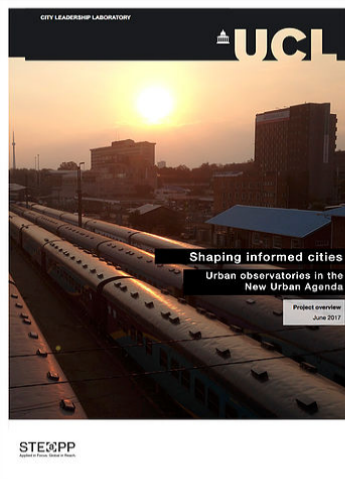
Whilst the main goal of the Lab is to tackle globally relevant city challenges, the projects undertaken are practically oriented and often locally focused. This distinct endeavour for applied inquiry reflects the Lab's desire to meet and unravel constraints on leadership, with a view to re-imagining city leadership for the 21st century. See 'Focus Areas' for information on our work with key urban stakeholders.

The Lab is based within UCL's policy-focused Department of Science, Technology, Engineering and Public Policy (UCL STEaPP) and has links across UCL's network of urban research and practice.

Learn more about STEaPP [here](#).



URBAN OBSERVATORIES



Project outline

Urban Observatories
[read more here](#)

Project Team



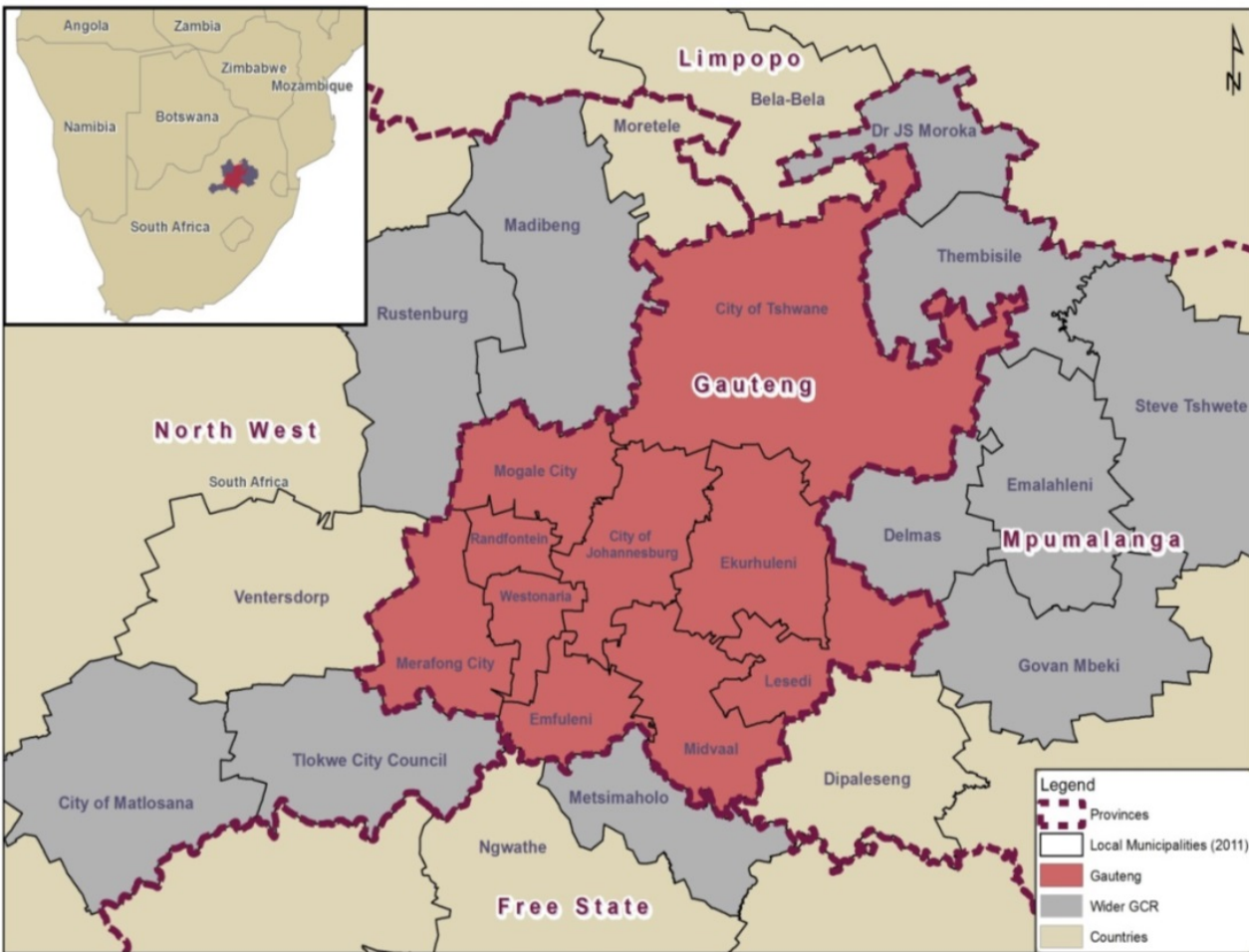
Urban observatories can play critical roles in decision-making, providing research and analysis relevant to addressing pressing urban issues, such as those flagged in UN-Habitat's New Urban Agenda. This work aims to catalogue and analyse activities of a diverse range of existing observatories with a view to understanding factors for effectiveness in different operating settings. While urban observatories are catalogued through activities such as the UN-Habitat Global Urban Observatory (GUO), there is little centralised detailed information globally regarding the way in which these observatories operate.

This research project will catalogue existing urban observatories, and create an up-to-date database of their partners, output types and methodologies employed. Through development of case studies and dissemination of research findings this project aims to form an ongoing consultative and support network around the community of interest.

This project is conducted in collaboration with the **Gauteng City-Region Observatory** (GCRO), a research agency that exists as a collaboration between two local universities and the Gauteng Provincial Government, South Africa

The Gauteng City-Region (GCR)

Context

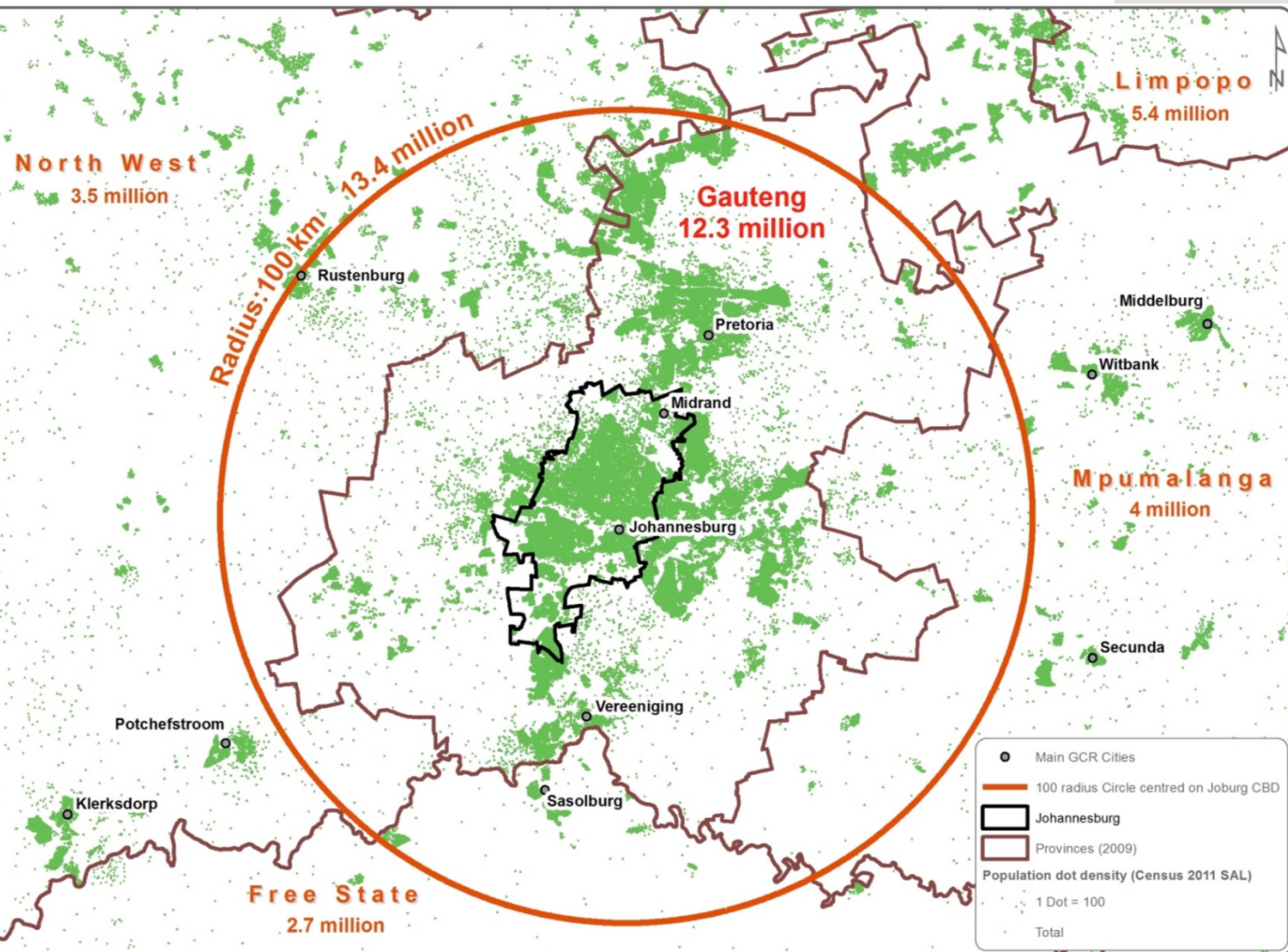


An actually existing urban reality, with dynamics (spatial, economic, social, environmental, etc.) that need to be understood

- Cluster of cities, towns and urban nodes – including cities of Johannesburg and Pretoria – make up the economic heartland of South Africa.
- At the core is Gauteng province:
 - 2% of national land area
 - Most urbanised, but only roughly 20% urban

The Gauteng City-Region (GCR)

Context

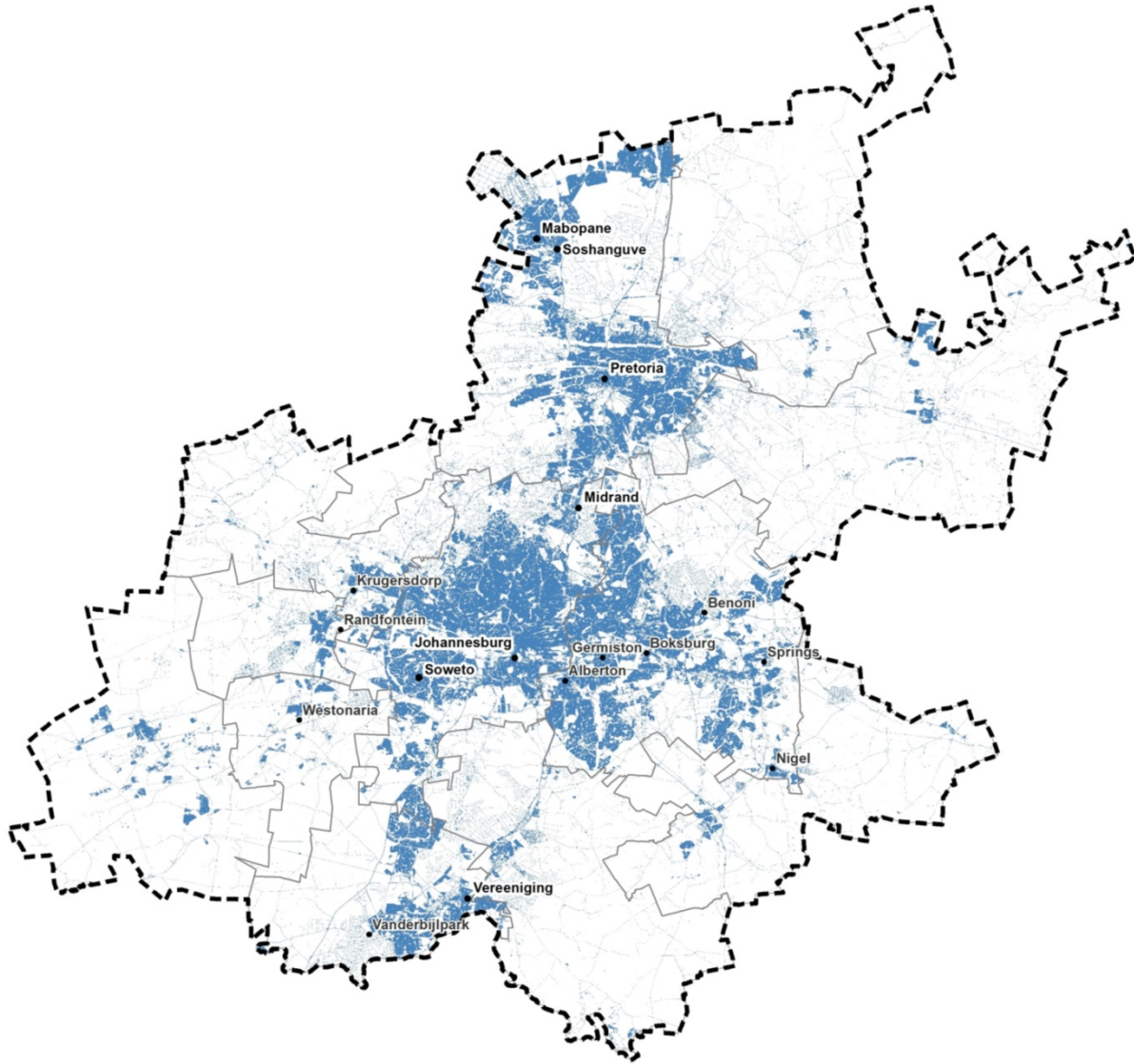


- Most densely populated province of SA, (estimated 13.5mil people (StasSA 2016))
- Holds roughly a quarter of the South African population and a third of the national economy
- 13,4 million people within 100km radius of the centre of Johannesburg
- 17 million people within 175km

Understanding the GCR as what happens in and outside of (artificial) provincial boundaries

The Gauteng City-Region (GCR)

Context



A ‘political project’ to govern the GCR better through improved intergovernmental co-ordination

- Find the right institutional expressions of the idea of a city-region
- Given the city-region’s challenges and opportunities, shape the right government agenda

The Gauteng City-Region (GCR)

Context



GCRO helps to build the knowledge base that government, business, labour, civil society and residents all need to shape appropriate strategies that will advance a competitive, integrated, sustainable and inclusive Gauteng City-Region.

- GCRO is an institutional collaboration between:
 - University of Johannesburg (UJ),
 - University of the Witwatersrand (Wits),
 - Gauteng Provincial Government, and
 - Organised local government in Gauteng
- GCRO Board comprises 2 academics from each university, and 2 reps each from provincial and local government (8 in all)
- Funded with a core grant from the Gauteng Premier's Office, with UJ and Wits contributing an additional 50% in-kind support
- Launched September 2008
- A high-level Research Advisory Committee guides our work

GCRO as a research partnership

The Gauteng City-Region Observatory

Quality of Life Survey 2013 launch

The largest ever social attitudes survey in Gauteng



Specific roles

- On-request policy support work
- Government – academia portal
- Data, data infrastructure
- Medium to longer-term applied research (on request of self-initiated)
- Academic contributions
- Partnership and network building

Open access via GCRO website

The Gauteng City-Region Observatory – key outputs



www.gcro.ac.za

Research Themes

Sustainability Transitions

Government and other institutions in the Gauteng City-Region (GCR) are under pressure to provide infrastructure to meet the needs of a growing population and economy. Historically infrastructure requirements have been met at the expense of environmental systems due to the limited emphasis on sustainable development. That said, this situation is changing as stakeholders – guided by an array of national, provincial and local strategies – are increasingly being required to take into account principles of sustainability. For these strategies to be fully operationalised however, a fundamental paradigm shift is required in the way that resources and natural assets such as water are perceived and included in the planning and development of infrastructure and services. This project area considers the shift that is required to create a more sustainable and equitable city-region through focusing on gaining a better understanding of the demand and consumption of natural resources; impacts of development on society and the environment; alternative approaches for planning and managing infrastructure and service provision through



Interactive websites

The Gauteng City-Region Observatory – key outputs

THE GCRO BAROMETER 2014

Change since ...
(Choose baseline year)

2002 2007 2011

The GCRO Barometer depicts developmental progress in the Gauteng City-Region in a single interactive graphic, using 30 indicators across 10 key sectors. It serves as a tracking and diagnostic tool to inform policy makers and the public on where development progress is being made, and areas of concern. The Barometer shows progress against three base years (2002, 2007 and 2011) in the last year for which data could be collected across all indicators, 2012. The base year is represented by the red circle, and the length of the line reflects the extent of progress on a standardised index.

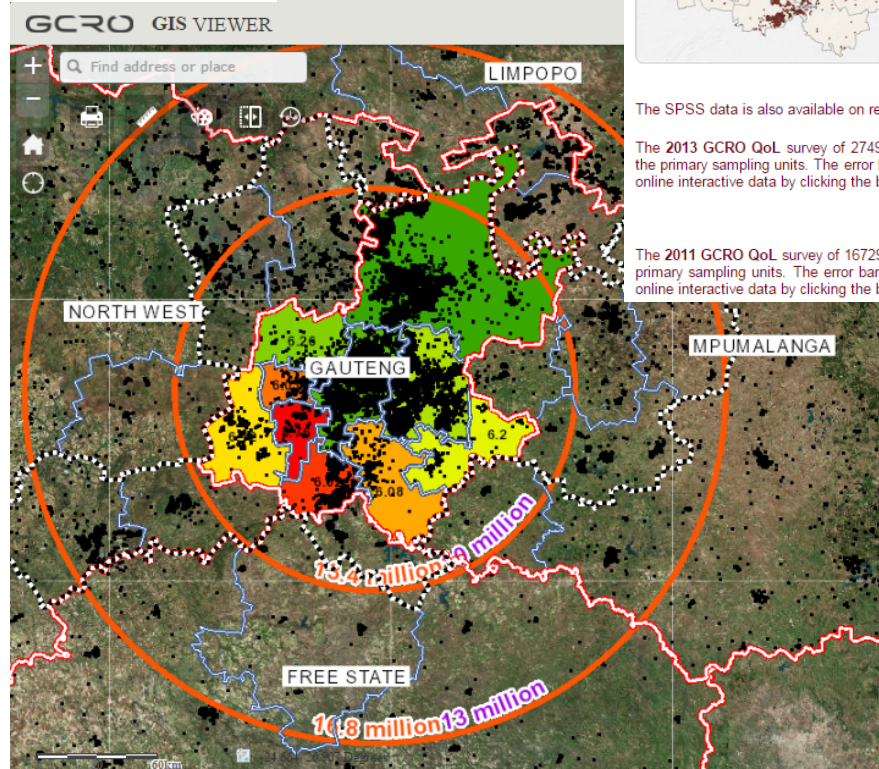
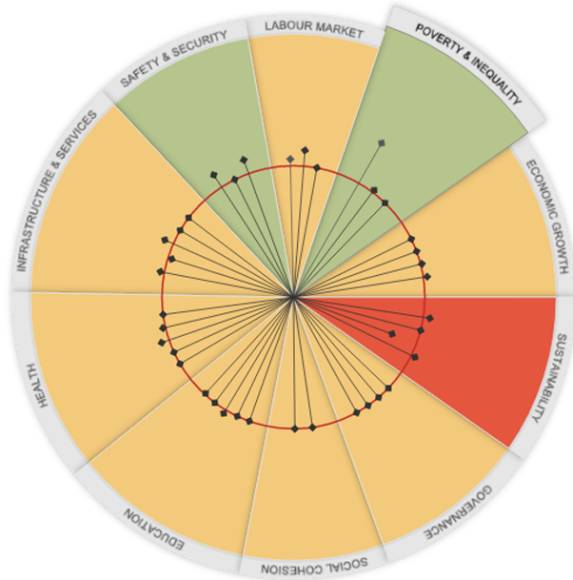
Viewing instructions

GDI Coefficient Human Development Index Poverty Rate

Poverty rate

Information Trend line **Download PDF**

Indicator: Poverty rate (2012): 1.7%
Measure: Rate (%)
Definition: Poverty rate is the percentage of the population living below the international poverty line of \$2.00 day.
Data Sources: Global Insight
<http://www.globalinsight.co.za/>



GCRO Gauteng City-Region Observatory

UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

Quality of Life (QoL) Survey Viewer

Welcome to the GCRO Quality of Life (QoL) survey viewer

2013 QoL Survey points

Local Municipalities

In 2009, GCRO commissioned its first 'Quality of Life' survey, in order to analyse the quality of life of citizens, identify key areas and groups needing intervention and support, and provide an holistic assessment of life in the Gauteng City-region – not just looking at Gross Domestic Product, or Value Add, or similar economic measures, but including the values and attitudes of citizens, their levels of social capital, alienation, anomie, and so on. The survey, because of both the sample size and breadth, and quality of analysis, had a considerable impact on government's work, as well as enjoying significant media coverage. A second QoL survey was completed in 2011, with a third survey - critical in that three points in time will permit the GCRO to undertake trend analysis with a degree of confidence - completed in 2013.

The GCRO QoL viewer has been developed to provide easy online access to the survey data. Most of the variables are selectable, with an option to crosstab by local municipal boundaries or a few other demographic variables. The results are presented as tables and/or graphs and may be printed or downloaded. In all cases, GCRO must be appropriately referenced, e.g. GCRO 2013 Quality of Life survey.

The SPSS data is also available on request from the GCRO for research/non-financial gain purposes (info@gcro.ac.za).

The 2013 GCRO QoL survey of 27490 respondents covers the entire province of Gauteng with the 2011 local election wards utilised as the primary sampling units. The error bar is 0.6%. For more information, please access the [2013 Quality of Life project page](#) or access the online interactive data by clicking the button (Access: 2013 QoL Survey Viewer) below.

Access: 2013 QoL Survey Viewer

The 2011 GCRO QoL survey of 16729 respondents covers the entire province of Gauteng with the 2011 local election wards utilised as the primary sampling units. The error bar is 0.7%. For more information, please access the [2011 Quality of Life project page](#) or access the online interactive data by clicking the button (Access: 2011 QoL Survey Viewer) below.

Gauteng as a village of 100 people



CONTEXT



NEIGHBOURHOOD



POLITICAL VIEWS



HEADSPACE



LIFE



PEOPLE LIKE YOU

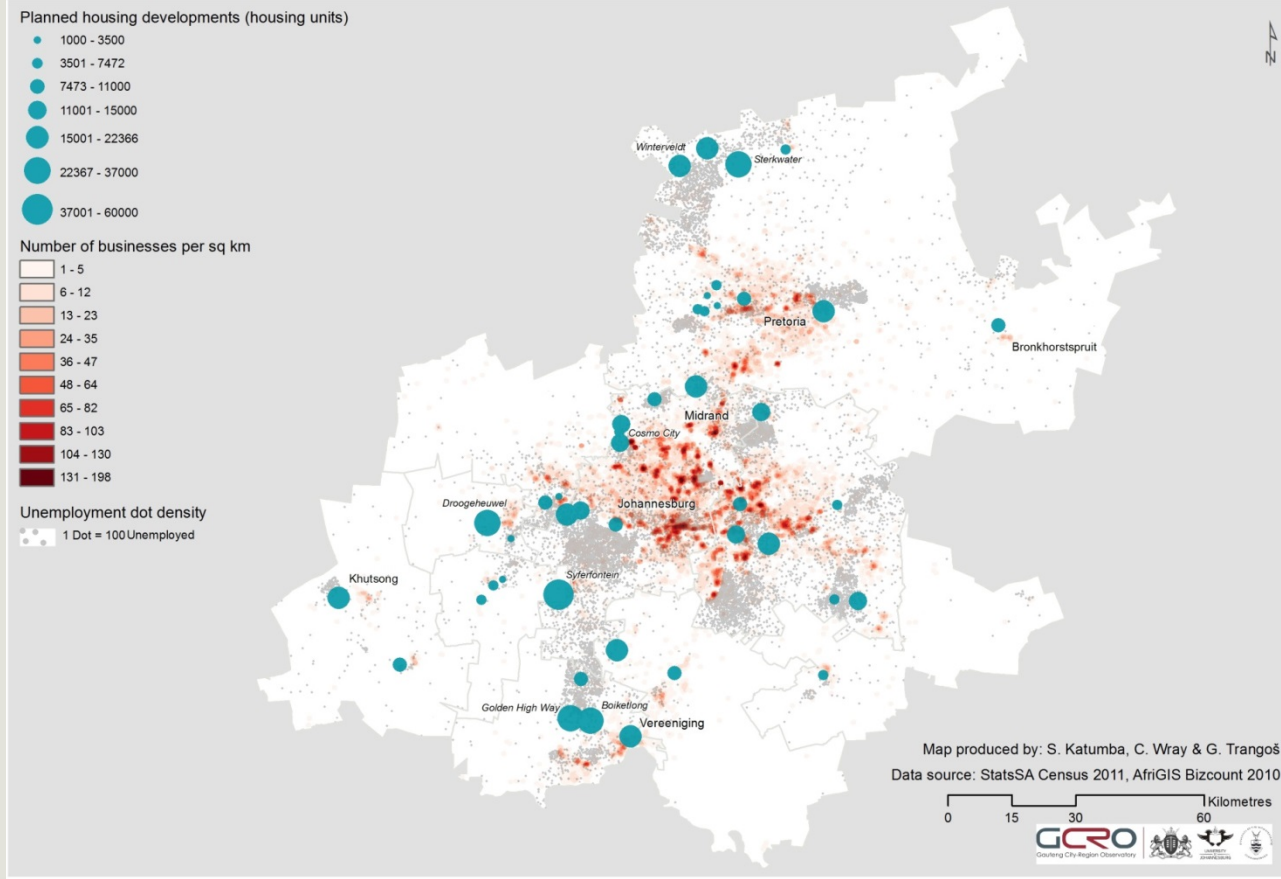
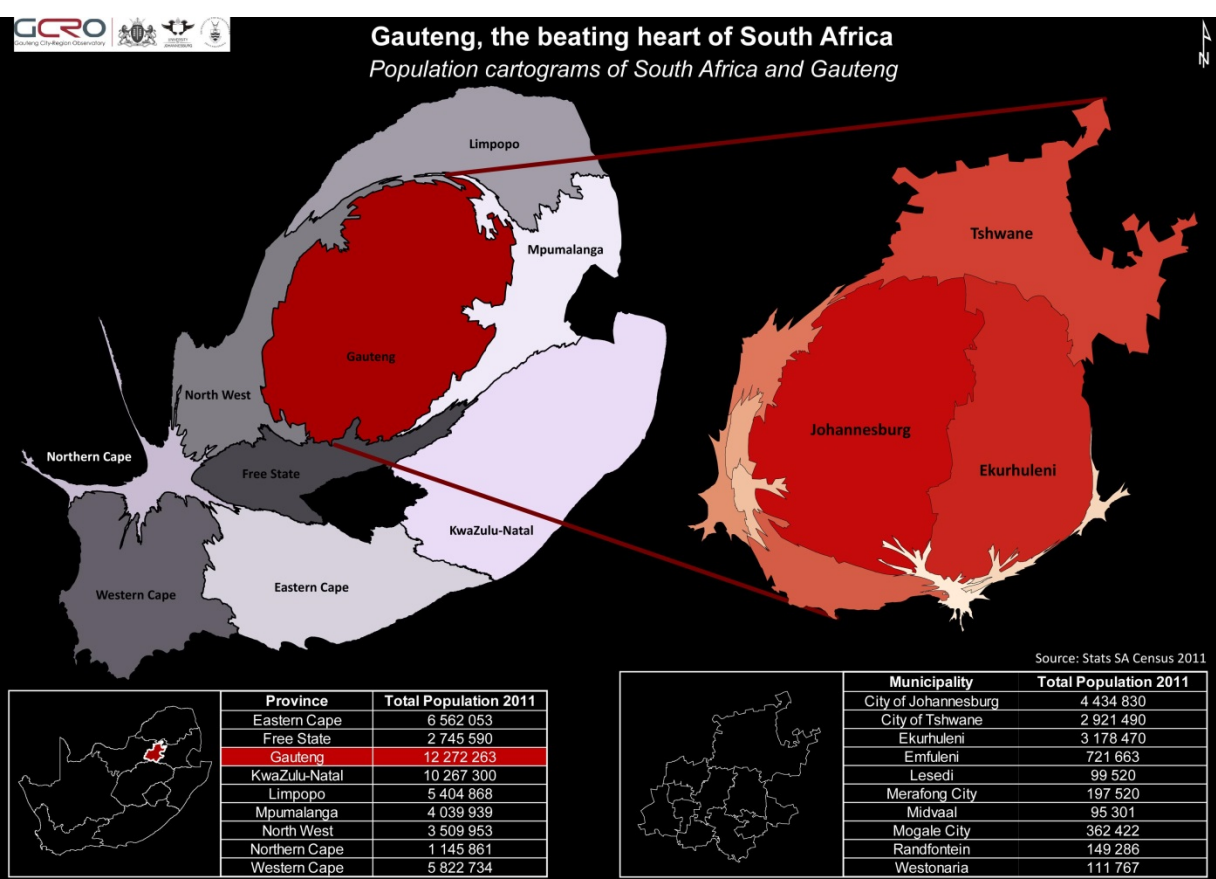


What Is the Most Important Reason Why You Live in Your Suburb?



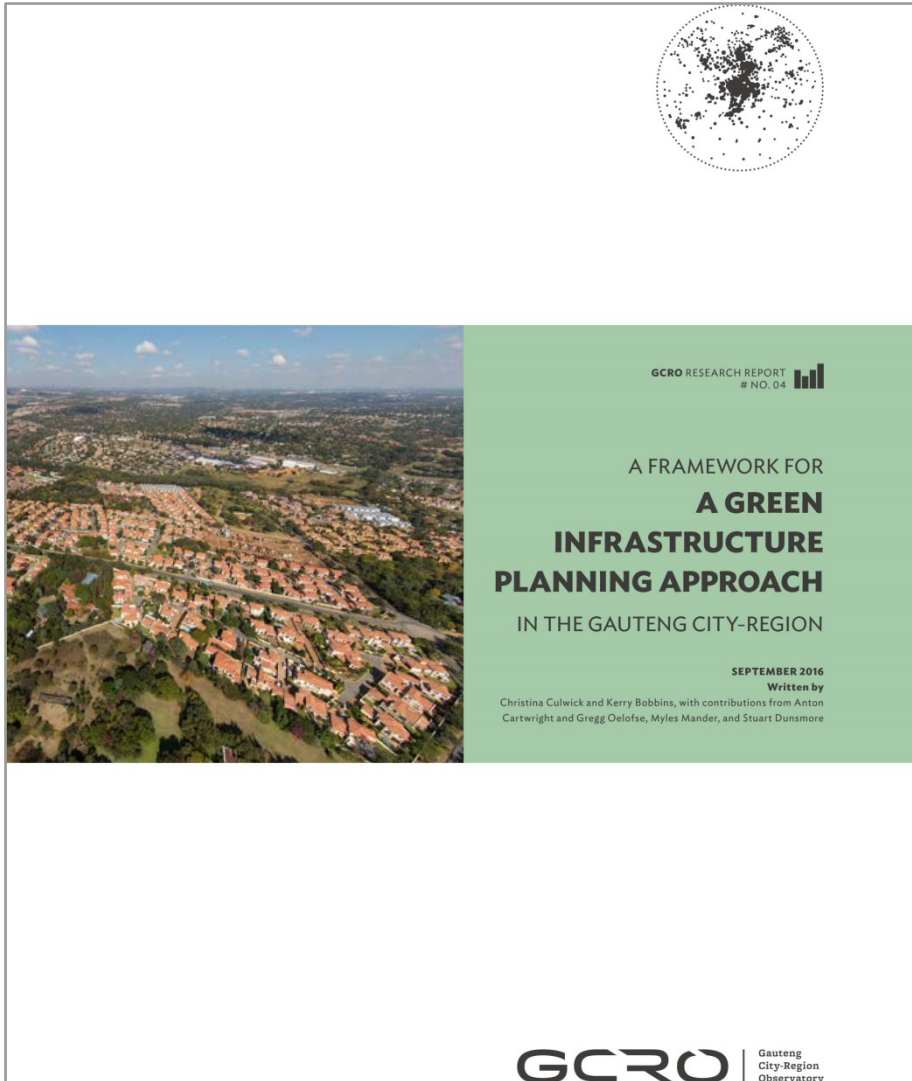
Maps of the month

The Gauteng City-Region Observatory – key outputs



Research reports

The Gauteng City-Region Observatory – key outputs



Edited by Chris Wray and Graeme Gotz
Chapter contributions by Christo Venter, Willem Badenhorst,
Guy Trangoš and Christina Culwick

Other publications

The Gauteng City-Region Observatory – key outputs

10
OCCASIONAL PAPER

Acid Mine Drainage and its Governance in the Gauteng City-Region

Researched and written
for the GCRO by
Kerry Bobbins

May 2015



www.witspress.co.za



As the dynamo of South Africa's economy, Johannesburg commands a central position in the nation's imagination, and scholars worldwide monitor the city as an example of urbanity in the global South.

In this richly illustrated study, a mix of respected academics, urban planners and policymakers offer compelling overviews of the rapid and complex spatial developments that have occurred in Johannesburg since the end of apartheid, along with tantalising glimpses into life on the streets and behind the high walls of this diverse city. Varied contributions offer detailed empirical analyses of the economic, social and political processes shaping Johannesburg and the wider Gauteng region, while the character of specific neighbourhoods and social identities are also explored.

The book begins with a series of full-colour maps that illustrate some of the macro spatial trends. The first section provides an analysis of these trends and the factors that have influenced them. The second section explores the shaping of the city at district and suburban level, revealing the peculiarity of processes and shifts that are not easily detected at the macro level. A series of short vignettes in the third section focus on the micro-level interweaving of place and identity.

With empirical data supported by new datasets, this book is an essential reference for urban geographers, sociologists, social anthropologists, urban planners and anyone seeking deeper insight into the key forces shaping this vibrant metropolis.

Johannesburg draws a lot of attention for its universality and distinctiveness. This volume, produced by scholars and practitioners at the top of their game, brings together a multi-disciplinary analysis that employs both classic methodologies and modern investigative technologies. It makes a remarkable contribution, positioning the city as a strong contender for a 'Johannesburg School' in urban studies.

JO BEALL, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND SOCIETY, BRITISH COUNCIL, UK

This magnificent book brings together a fascinating array of scholarly contributions to understanding the emergence of a global city-region. The contributors offer a carefully balanced account that weaves together a political economic approach with cultural analysis, and a broad panoptic view with microscopic detail. This book is essential for anyone interested in making sense of Johannesburg as an aspiring world-class city.

MARTIN MURRAY, TAUBMAN COLLEGE OF URBAN PLANNING, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN, USA

This book captures the infinite complexity and possibilities of the city through an ability to seamlessly theorise, visualise, demonstrate, critique, propose, evoke, juxtapose, insinuate, dazzle, and more. Luxuriate in this exceptional siren song for the city.

EDGAR PIETERSE, AFRICAN CENTRE FOR CITIES, UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA



CHANGING SPACE, CHANGING CITY JOHANNESBURG AFTER APARTHEID

EDITED BY
PHILIP HARRISON
GRAEME GOTZ
ALISON TODDES
CHRIS WRAY



CHANGING SPACE, CHANGING CITY JOHANNESBURG AFTER APARTHEID

EDITED BY
PHILIP HARRISON
GRAEME GOTZ
ALISON TODDES
CHRIS WRAY

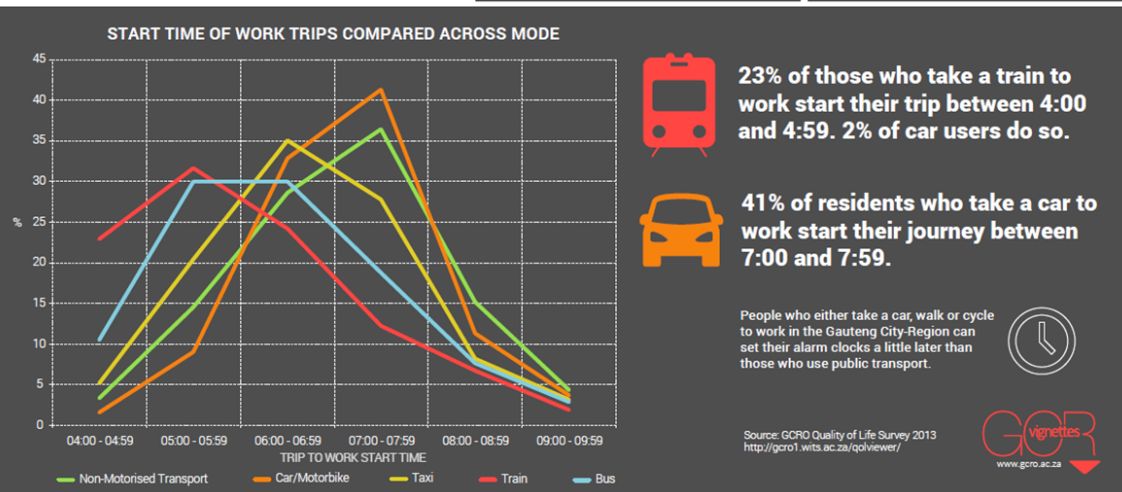
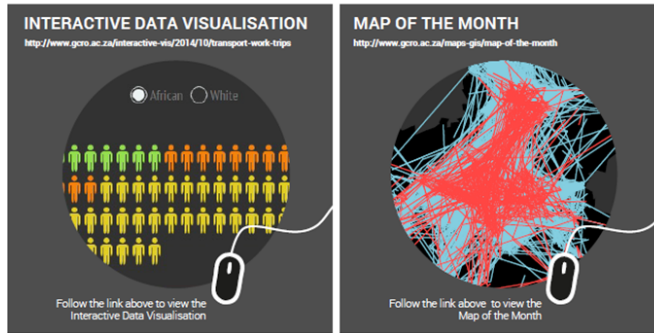
Interactive visualisations and Vignettes

The Gauteng City-Region Observatory – key outputs

22 Getting to work in the GCR

October is 'transport month'. A transport month urges us to confront the many challenges still faced in moving around the vast and sprawling Gauteng City-Region, but also to recognise significant improvements to mobility being achieved through spatial restructuring and new transport infrastructure.

This month, GCRO is disseminating three linked outputs – this vignette, a map of the month, and for the first time (for the GCRO), an interactive visualisation. All three look at the issue of how GCR residents get to work in the morning, where they go, and how long it takes them. Comparing the to-work trips of whites and Africans, these outputs together present a fascinating picture of ongoing transport disparities and surprising new socio-economic trends in the city-region.



Making a life in informal dwellings in Gauteng

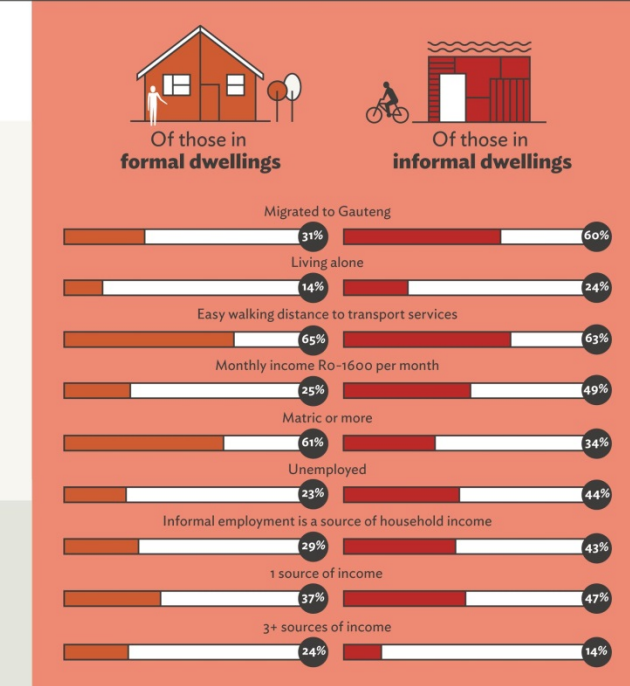
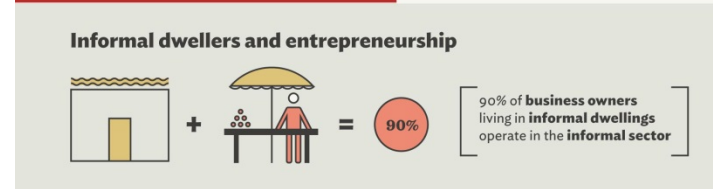
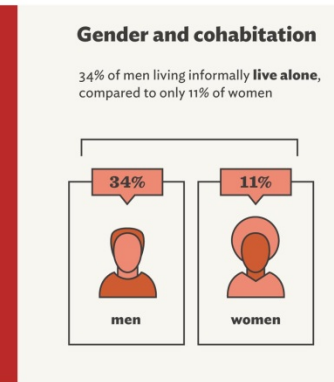
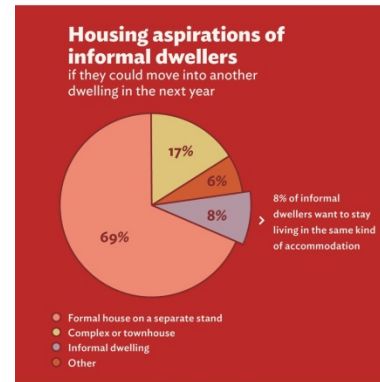
Although migrants into Gauteng hope for improved services and economic opportunities, some 18% of Gauteng residents live in informal dwellings (StatsSA 2016). People living informally are more likely to be under 35 years and to live alone than those living in formal accommodation. Not only are they unable to secure adequate accommodation; they also struggle to penetrate the formal job market, and are more likely to be unemployed. Government grants help to sustain livelihoods for informal dwellers, but most make a living through provisional means, temporary work, or the informal sector.

Related GCRO research themes:
 Changing Social Fabric
 New Regional Economies

Credits
 Christina Culwick and Hannah Dawson (Oxford University)
 Contact: christina.culwick@gcro.ac.za
 Source: GCRO's 2015 Quality of Life survey

Informal dwellings include:

- Backyard shacks in formal housing settlements
- Free standing shacks in informal settlements



Academic citizenship

The Gauteng City-Region Observatory – key outputs

60

Maps of the Month produced by the GCRO

90

+ academic journal articles, book chapters and conference proceedings published by the GCRO

240

+ presentations made by GCRO staff at academic forums, government meetings and other events

10000

+ unique users visited the GCRO website in the last 12 months

2016

Vogel C., Scott D., Culwick C. E. & Sutherland C. (2016). 'Environmental problem-solving in South Africa: harnessing creative imaginaries to address 'wicked' challenges and opportunities'. *South African Geographical Journal*. 98(3), 515-530.

Abrahams, C. (forthcoming 2016). 'Making the nation twenty years after democracy', in K. Lefko-Everatt, K. and Govender, R. (eds) *Twenty Years of reconciliation, A Review of the South African Reconciliation Barometer, Institute for Justice and Reconciliation* (in press)

Abrahams, C. (forthcoming, 2016). 'South Africa 20 years after democracy: solidarity missing'. European Institute of the Mediterranean, Barcelona, special issue publication *Arab Transitions in Comparative Perspective* (in press)

Ballard, R. (forthcoming 2016). 'Development and governance'. Submitted to Douglas Richardson, Noel Castree, Michael F. Goodchild, Audrey L. Kobayashi, Weidong Liu Richard Marston (eds.) *The International Encyclopaedia of Geography: People, the Earth, Environment, and Technology*. London: Wiley-Blackwell (in press)

Chikozho, C. & Mapedza, E. (forthcoming 2016). 'Free-market economics and developmental statism as political paradigms: implications for water governance theory and practice in developing countries'. In Karar, E. (ed), *Freshwater Governance for the 21st Century*. Springer International Publishing (in press)

Khanyile, N. (2016). 'Digital platform for mining activity data'. *PositionIT*, July 2016, 46-47.

Chikozho, C. (2016). 'The disjuncture between economic growth, poverty reduction and social inclusion in South Africa'. In *Inclusive Growth and Development Issues in Eastern and Southern Africa*. OSSREA / McMillan Publishers.

Culwick, C. and Patel, Z. (2016). 'United and divided responses to complex urban issues: insights on the value of a transdisciplinary approach to flooding risk'. *Area*. Online first, DOI: 10.1111/area.12282, June 2016

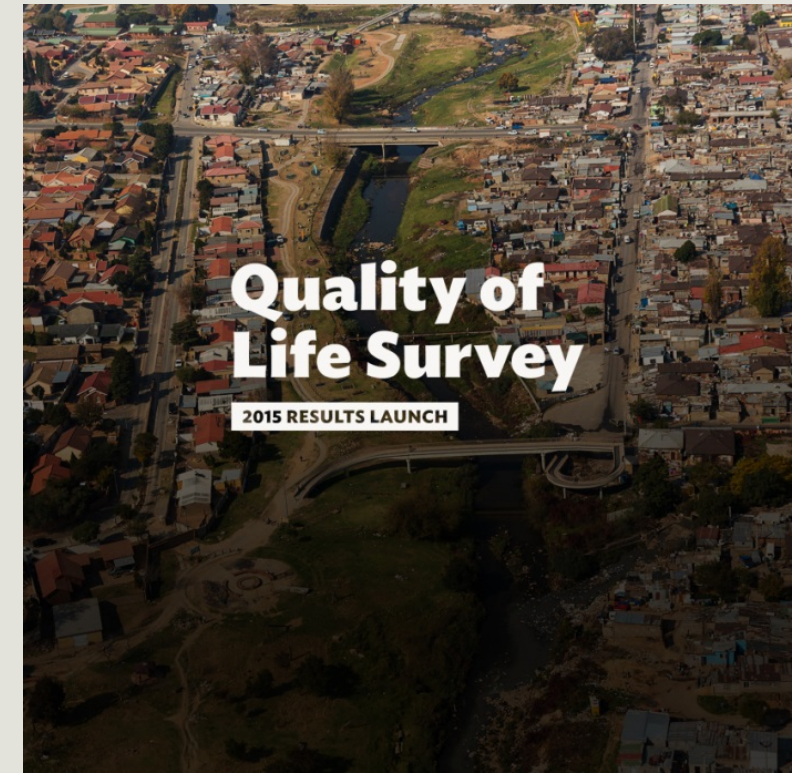
Mosselson, A. (2016). "'Joburg has its own momentum": towards a vernacular theorisation of urban change'. *Urban Studies*. Online first DOI: 10.1177/0042098016634609, March 2016

Mahomed, F. and Trangoš, G. (forthcoming 2016). 'An exploration of public attitudes towards LGBTI rights in the Gauteng City-Region of South Africa'. *Journal of Homosexuality*. Online first DOI: 10.1080/00918369.2016.1157999, February 2016

Innovative research methodologies

The Gauteng City-Region Observatory

- Biennial Quality of life survey
- Ethnographies of the state
- CityLabs
- Indicators and benchmarking
- Spatial statistics modelling
- Surveys
- Mobile app-based mobility mapping
- Photo essays
- ...



Question 1: Structure and methodology

Understanding and sharing approaches and practices

Question 2: Networking and learning

Highlighting existing and future opportunities for networking and collaboration

Question 3: Going forward

Future activities... and missing pieces

Contact us

Christina Culwick
GCRO

christina.culwick@gcro.ac.za
www.gcro.ac.za
[@GCR_Observatory](https://twitter.com/GCR_Observatory)

Carla-Leanne Washbourne
UCL City Leadership Lab

c.washbourne@ucl.ac.uk
www.cityleadership.net
[@CityLeadersLab](https://twitter.com/CityLeadersLab)

<https://www.cityleadership.net/urban-observatories>