



NEW SURVEY PROVIDES KEY INSIGHT INTO CONFIDENCE LEVELS AMONGST SA'S GRADUATE PROFESSIONALS

PPS, the specialist South African financial services provider to graduate professionals, today released the results of a new survey, which tracks confidence levels of more than 4 000 of South Africa's graduate professionals on a variety of issues.

As part of the survey, respondents, who had an average age of 43, were asked a number of questions to assess their confidence levels on issues such as emigration, crime, healthcare, investment markets and opportunities available to them in their chosen professions.

According to Gerhard Joubert, Head of Group Marketing and Stakeholder Relations at PPS, the survey will be conducted on a quarterly basis to measure changes in confidence levels amongst graduate professionals on these issues. "Understanding the mindset of graduate professionals on these key topics is crucial, as it is these individuals who in many ways are the driving force behind the development of the economy."

RESULTS

The 2011 first quarter results reveal that the majority of graduate professionals surveyed remain confident about remaining in South Africa with an average confidence level of 84% being recorded.

Joubert says he believes this result is extremely positive. "Graduate professionals occupy key occupations such as accountancy, engineering, medicine and law, many of which have a skills shortage, so it is very significant to see these people are confident of remaining in South Africa."

He says a number of factors may have contributed to the result, including South Africa's economy weathering the global financial crisis, its inclusion in the BRIC group of nations, the

relatively stable political climate, opportunities available to graduate professionals due to skills shortages and the successful hosting of the World Cup.

“The current turmoil that is also taking place in a number of European countries in light of the sovereign debt crises may also have shown some South Africans that were considering a move that the grass is not always greener.”

When asked about the opportunities available to practitioners working within their specific profession over the next 12 months, the survey revealed an overall confidence level of 77%.

Joubert says that while the index shows the majority of South African professionals remain confident on issues within their control; this is not the case on other external factors such as crime, healthcare, education and unemployment.

The survey also revealed several areas of concern among graduate professionals. Respondents displayed a worrying 45% confidence level that the crime situation will improve over the next five years. Unemployment is also a massive concern with confidence levels only marginally higher at 46%.

Confidence in the future of the healthcare system over the next five years and the standard of education over the same time period both scored a confidence level of 50%.

“We continue to suffer from an acute skills shortage in South Africa, particularly amongst a number of skilled professions such as medicine, accountancy and engineering. It is important that the concerns of all South Africans, not just graduate professionals, are taken into account and efforts are made to deal with these issues to keep our current skills and to attract expats back to the country,” says Joubert.