

MEDIA RELEASE **StatsSA: PSA welcomes GDP increase**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA) welcomes the announcement by Stats SA that South Africa's gross domestic product (GDP) increased by 1.2% in the fourth quarter of 2021, with the hope that it heralds an economic turning point.

The PSA, representing more than 235 000 public-sector employees, however, pointed out that despite the improvement in the wake of COVID-19 devastation, growth has not normalised the pre-unrest levels of 1.7%. The PSA is, however, optimistic that the trend will continue with economic recovery above what economists predict to bring about much-needed economic stability and increased employment. Urgent attention should also be given to capacitate critical departments such as the SA Police Service, Correctional Service, Home Affairs, and the Department of Health to ensure establishments that can answer to increased service-delivery needs.

The PSA further expresses the hope that this growth will assist in addressing the public purse to capacitate state departments and institutions. Additional funding will assist to ease the burden on a skeletal and struggling public servant staff establishment. The PSA remains confident that parties to the Public Service Coordinating Bargaining Council will engage constructively to find an acceptable real wage increase for deserving public servants.

The PSA calls on the Minister of Finance to ensure that budgetary provisions for the *Public Service Wage Bill* are revised to also allow for public servants, as contributors to the economy, to be afforded real wage increases and assist with the sustained growth of the economy. In addition, efforts to root out corruption and recover lost funds should be intensified to ensure that small gains in economic growth are not simply wiped out by continued looting of state coffers and over-burdened tax payers' money.

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