

# Growth For Jobs: What is it and what does it mean for the Western Cape?

The Western Cape Government WCG this week launched its Growth For Jobs (G4J) strategy, a groundbreaking initiative aimed at addressing the pressing concerns of South Africa's declining economic growth rates and escalating unemployment.



Source: [Pexels](#)

Driving the project are Premier Alan Winde, Provincial Minister of Finance and Economic Opportunities, Mireille Wenger, and Provincial Minister of Infrastructure, Tertuis Simmers.

The plan aims to uplift the provincial job growth rate dramatically and, in the face of uncertain national economic trends, charts a distinct path for the Western Cape's economic progress. At the core of this bold plan is the understanding that it is the private sector that creates jobs, while the role of the WCG is to enable this by making it as easy as possible to do business in the province.

This will be done by ensuring that the private sector has access to the energy, water, infrastructure, skills, and technology they need to grow and succeed.

The vision set out in the strategy is of a provincial economy that achieves break-out economic growth, resulting in sufficient employment and opportunity and an economy that is sustainable, resilient, diverse, inclusive and thriving – generating

confidence, hope and prosperity for all.

The G4J strategy sets an ambitious target of building a trillion-rand jobs-rich, inclusive, sustainable, diverse, and resilient provincial economy that is growing at 4-6% per year in real terms by 2035. This has the potential to create more than 600,000 jobs.

"The Western Cape is endowed with a wealth of resources and people. The aim is to unlock massive potential through this ambitious strategy. We have proven that despite adversity, together we can still endure and succeed. G4J will provide us with renewed vigour and guidance to achieve break-out economic growth," said Winde at the briefing.

## A collaborative vision for prosperity

Wenger added, "The fact is that we need to drastically boost economic growth to generate sufficient employment that can pull people out of poverty. What sets G4J apart is that it has been worked on with the private sector, by which we mean formal and informal, including township economies, because ultimately, our goal is to enable and rapidly grow the economy.

"The strategy takes cognisance of the rural and urban dimensions in its approach with a clear spatial lens, with an aim to connect people in our towns, cities and rural communities to economic opportunities. It also takes a much longer view, going all the way up to 2035, and our plan of action involves the whole of government," continued Wenger.



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Katja Hamilton 1 Jul 2022









Simmers said: "Investment in infrastructure allows the Western Cape Government to create an environment that enables jobs and economic opportunities. The Western Cape Infrastructure Framework 2050 (WCIF2050) is the overarching guideline that will ensure infrastructure becomes the catalyst in the growth of jobs creation.

"Furthermore, we will look to strengthen public and private partnerships so that the Western Cape becomes the economic hub in South Africa. This is a courageous plan, much-needed given the sluggish economic growth South Africa has been languishing in for far too long. Through this strategy the Western Cape aims to lead the way for our residents, especially the most vulnerable, to prosper through seeking out economic opportunities that lift them out of poverty."

## Paving the path to economic resilience

The strategy is based on seven priority focus areas (PFAs), each with a strategic goal in mind: driving growth opportunities through investment; stimulating market growth through exports and domestic markets; energy resilience and transition to net zero carbon; water security and resilience; technology and innovation; infrastructure and connected economy; improved access to economic opportunities and employability.

“   | The Western Cape Government is working tirelessly to enable job-creation. We are also filling in where national government has failed by focusing on safety efforts and eliminating rolling blackouts in the province. [pic.twitter.com/t3qkiPa00q](https://pic.twitter.com/t3qkiPa00q)— Premier Alan Winde    (@alanwinde) [June 12, 2023](#)”

To this end, by 2035 private-sector investment will be 20% of regional GDP (translating to R200bn); the value of Western Cape exports of goods and services (inclusive of tourism) will triple; and there will be reduced reliance of energy from Eskom of between 1800–5700 MW. This is estimated to attract between R21.6bn and R68.4bn in related investment.

Also, double the amount of water will be available for secondary and tertiary economic sectors (primarily from non-productive use) and will honour existing allocations to agriculture. Furthermore, by 2035, research and development expenditure will increase by 300% in real terms, reaching R35bn and venture-capital deals will total R20bn.

## Empowering the citizens of the Western Cape

The Western Cape economy will have the infrastructure required to support and enable a R1tn economy and public sector capital investment in the Western Cape will be 10% of regional GDP.

All citizens who want to be economically active will have improved access to economic opportunities and employability through at least one pathway, with pathways comprising improved employability assets (knowledge, skills, experience, and/or competencies), career management skills, workplace-ready capabilities and skills, and economic opportunities that are more accessible to communities, and entrepreneurship.

The plan is guided by founding principles, first agreed to in a strategic framework. These include:

- **An open market economy** that makes it possible for an open opportunity society that is aimed at improving competitiveness and productivity.
- **Horizontal enablement** that places the government as an enabler of the economy offering support to the private sector to ensure growth and opportunities.
- **Equality of opportunity** will see a state that facilitates economic opportunity for citizens and expands choice and the independence of residents.
- **Redress** through active economic participation that pulls more people into the economy, stimulating competition, improving skills and productivity, raising investment, and reducing poverty.
- **Partnerships** should be nurtured with the various spheres of government and the private sector to increase the speed and scale of change.
- **Innovation** to ensure new ideas are embraced and to push the boundaries of the Western Cape's constitutional mandate to enable private-sector-led growth and job creation in tourism, trade, and industrial policy.
- **Agility and flexibility** in how the government pursues break-out growth.
- **Sustainability** entails growth being decoupled from wasteful resource usage and fossil-fuel dependency.
- **Data-led decision-making** in making sound decisions. This requires a data management and reporting capability that pulls together and utilises the excellent data that the province already has.
- **Responsiveness** to impactful opportunities which sees that the government is responsive to all private-sector-led opportunities, while being selective about which support levers are deployed based on the extent of private-sector involvement.

The premier remarked, "While unemployment in the Western Cape is lower compared to the rest of the country, we must acknowledge we still have a long road ahead of us. Intolerably high levels of poverty and unemployment, caused by years of maladministration, neglect and corruption at a national level, will continue to pose considerable challenges.

"But I have all the confidence in G4J. This strategy provides us with a clear, brave blueprint for what our government and our partners need to do over the next 12 years. We are all on the same page, aiming to pour considerable resources into seeing G4J succeed in its mission to boost our economic growth and create more jobs.

"This strategy belongs to all the citizens of the Western Cape. Businesses big and small, entrepreneurs and civil society are all a part of G4J. Working together to create employment is the driving force behind this initiative."

He concluded, "All our citizens want to prosper. Equipped with G4J, we will be able to offer opportunity and hope."

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