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## SA STUDENTS LESS LIKELY TO EMIGRATE AFTER STUDIES – SURVEY

*11 May 2015:* A quarterly survey conducted among South African professional students has revealed that 58% of respondents plan to stay in the country for work purposes once they have obtained their degree compared with just 45% in the previous quarter.

The 2015 first quarter PPS Student Confidence Index (SCI) was conducted with approximately 180 students in their fourth year or above studying at a university or university of technology towards a profession specific degree, such as engineering, medicine, law or accounting.

According to Motshabi Nomvethé, Product Specialist at PPS, the positive results of the survey show that students are becoming increasingly optimistic about their future in the country. “We welcome the results of this survey, as it is vital that graduates, particularly those who are studying towards a scarce skill, are retained in the country to ensure the necessary professional skills are available to the public.”

The SCI also revealed that 60% of respondents believe that finding employment is more important than obtaining a degree, up 7 percentage points on the previous quarter.

It is clear that finding a relevant job opportunity in the country remains a priority for students, says Nomvethé. “A good way for students to get their foot in the door is through an internship. Sacrificing a salary at the beginning of one’s career could lead to a far greater chance of becoming a permanent employee of the company if one works hard, shows dedication and creative thinking.”

The student respondents revealed some encouraging answers when it came to investments, says Nico Coetzee, Executive Business Development and Marketing at PPS Investments.

When students were asked at what age they think they should start investing for retirement, 48% said between the ages of 18-24 years, 46% said between 25-34 years, while only 5% said between 35-44 years and 1% said 45 years or older.

Coetzee says it is promising that so many young people understand the importance of investing their money for retirement. “Many people live well into their eighties or nineties, yet the official retirement age in South Africa is actually in one’s sixties, so it is crucial that people start saving as soon as possible. The more they save and the longer the duration, the greater the reward when their investment reaches maturity.”

When students were asked how they would prefer to invest, 55% said through an adviser while 45% said directly with an investment business or other product provider.

Coetzee says it is motivating to see that such a large proportion of students understand the importance of obtaining financial advice prior to making any investment decisions. Just like we would always seek professional advice when it comes to our health, legal affairs or construction, we should approach our personal finances, which are a significant part of our everyday lives, with the same level of attention and thought.”