

Scotland halfway to recession under the SNP

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Scotland's economy contracted over the last quarter, meaning the country is now on the path to recession under the SNP.

Statistics released today showed a 0.2 per cent dip in the fourth quarter of 2016.

If that performance is mirrored in the first three months of 2017, Scotland will officially be in recession.

In contrast, the rest of the UK's economy grew by 0.7 per cent in the final quarter of last year.

It comes as First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has been accused of neglecting the day job by touring the US to talk about Scotland's place in the world, and predicting separation from the UK in years to come.

Today's figures also revealed that Scottish GDP per person contracted by 0.3 per cent during October, November and December, while production and construction were the main sectors to struggle.

The statistics do not take into account revenues from North Sea oil.

Scottish Conservative shadow finance secretary Murdo Fraser said:

"These are deeply worrying figures which show that Scotland under the SNP is now on the brink of a recession.

"Nicola Sturgeon's Scottish Government must take responsibility for this mess.

"She has made Scotland the highest-taxed part of the UK and created more instability and uncertainty with her threat of a second referendum.

"Now we see the real-life impact of her mismanagement.

"These figures also smash the SNP's claim that Brexit is to blame for a slowdown.

"If that was the case, why is the rest of the UK powering ahead, while Scotland comes to a standstill?

"More than ever, Scotland needs a First Minister in charge who gets back to her desk, ends her obsession with a second referendum, and focuses on her day job.

“Scotland’s economy is facing a crisis. We need a Scottish Government in charge, not a campaign for independence.”

Notes to editors:

For more on the figures, visit:

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0051/00516361.pdf>