

# Scottish Secretary Alister Jack responds to June 2021 GDP

News story

Our main aim is to build back better and stronger from the pandemic, says the Secretary of State for Scotland.



Scottish Secretary Alister Jack said:

While today's figures show some resilience, we still face challenges. A strong, sustainable recovery remains our priority.

The UK Government put unprecedented measures in place from the very beginning of the pandemic to protect lives and livelihoods. That's included supporting the jobs of nearly a million people in Scotland through furlough and with unprecedented financial help for the self-employed. More than 90,000 businesses have benefited from business loans and VAT cuts have kept firms in the hardest hit sectors afloat.

We've provided the Scottish Government with more than £14.5 billion in additional funding, £1.5 billion has been invested in growth deals across Scotland and our new Levelling Up and Community Renewal Funds will benefit communities right across the UK.

In driving our economy into recovery, our Plan for Jobs will help more people get back into work and the success of the UK Government-funded vaccine programme is paving the way for us to build back better and stronger.

## **Background:**

- The UK Government's furlough scheme has been extended until the end of September 2021, paying up to 80 percent of wages. The self-employed

support scheme has also been extended to the end of September 2021. The furlough scheme in Scotland supported cumulative more than 900,000 jobs alone.

- More than 100,000 businesses in Scotland have been supported from UK Government business loans worth £4 billion.
- The UK Government has provided billions in extra funding for the welfare system for those unable to access other forms of support.
- This direct support is on top of the additional £14.5 billion provided to the Government since the start of the pandemic.
- The UK Government is investing billions to help people of all ages back into work, including our £2 billion Kickstart scheme for young people, sector work programmes and recruitment of thousands of additional Work Coaches.
- The UK Government continues to provide the bulk of Covid testing in Scotland and has moved quickly to buy vaccines, securing more than 500 million doses from seven vaccine developers for distribution across all parts of the UK. The UK Government is providing all covid testing in Scotland outside of the NHS.

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