

Scottish Secretary comments on Scotland's January GDP Estimates

Press release

Scottish Secretary Alister Jack's response to the gross domestic product (GDP) for Scotland falling 2.3% in January according to statistics announced today.



Scottish Secretary Alister Jack said:

Today's figures reflect the challenges facing our economy.

The UK Government has helped all parts of the UK throughout the pandemic, and will lead our economic recovery as we build back better.

We have supported the jobs of nearly a million people in Scotland, provided the Scottish Government with more than £14 billion in additional funding, and business loans and VAT cuts are giving assistance to those in the hardest-hit sectors. The success of the UK Government-funded vaccine programme is paving a way for a brighter future after Covid-19.

The UK Government is investing directly in local economies throughout Scotland through city deals and a new package of UK-wide investment programmes. Our Plan for Jobs will help create new jobs and help people get back into work.

At this time, we need to be focussed entirely on ending the pandemic and driving our economic recovery. To contemplate another independence referendum, as the Scottish Government wants, is simply a distraction.

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 with eligibility extended to 600,000. So far these schemes have supported more than 930,000 jobs in Scotland.
- More than 90,000 businesses in Scotland have been supported from UK Government business loans worth £3.4 billion.
- 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 has provided billions in extra funding for the welfare system for those unable to access other forms of support. This includes £20 Universal Credit uplift which has also been extended until the end of September 2021.
- This support is on top of more than £14 billion in additional funding for the Scottish Government since the start of the pandemic.
- These measures are on top of direct UK Government investment in Scotland's jobs and economy, including £1.5 billion in growth deals across Scotland and our new Levelling Up, Community Renewal and Community Ownership Funds.
- The UK Government also continues to provide the bulk of Covid testing in Scotland and is supplying vaccines for people in all parts of the UK.

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