

# Alister Jack responds to November 2020 Labour Market Statistics

Press release

Scottish Secretary responds to November 2020 Labour Market Statistics for Scotland



Responding to today's [10 November 2020] Labour Market Statistics, Scottish Secretary Alister Jack said:

Despite the apparent stability in today's figures for Scotland, we know there will be further challenges to come over the winter months.

The UK Government continues to take unprecedented action to support jobs. Last week the Chancellor extended the UK Government furlough and self-employed support schemes, alongside an additional £1 billion in Barnett Consequentials for the Scottish Government.

For those looking for work, we are also investing billions as part of our Plan for Jobs, including the recruitment of hundreds of work coaches across Scotland and our £2 billion Kickstart job scheme for young people.

From the start of the pandemic UK Government support has been a lifeline for many Scottish people and businesses, demonstrating the strength of the Union in these difficult times.

## **Background points**

- Many of our communities are living under newly-tightened, temporary restrictions. The UK Government furlough scheme, paying 80 per cent of wages, will run UK-wide until the end of March. The self-employed support scheme has also been extended to the end of March and will increase from 55% to 80% of average profits – up to £7,500.

- More than 76,000 businesses in Scotland have benefitted from UK Government loan schemes, worth more than £9.4 billion. Scotland's hospitality and tourism businesses are benefitting from a VAT cut which will run till March 2021.
- In total, the Scottish Government has been allocated an additional £8.2 billion from the UK Government since March 2020. This is on top of the block grant and in addition to direct UK Government support to people and businesses in Scotland.
- The UK Government is investing billions to help people back into work, including through our £2 billion Kickstart scheme to get young people into jobs. Extra help from work coaches in Jobcentres is helping unemployed people of all ages back into work by focusing on skills.
- The UK Government has provided extra funding for the welfare safety net to help those unable to access other forms of support. These temporary welfare measures include a £20 per week increase for everyone on Universal Credit.

## Analysis

Scotland's key indicators seem to be in a stable position, however, the claimant count rate is now at 7.7% (Oct). This is up from 4.0% pre-lockdown but marginally down from September (-0.1%). We have seen from last month's furlough figures that over 242,600 employments are paused and around 137,000 self-employed people in Scotland received UK Government support. Scotland unemployment rate at 4.5% is now below that of the UK overall at 4.8%.

The UK overall experienced a somewhat accelerating decrease in employment (-164,000 and its rate fell by 0.6%) over the last three months and over the same period unemployment increased at a faster pace too, with an increase of 243,000 (+0.7%). Over the year, the UK's employment is now down (-247,000).

Published 10 November 2020

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## [Notes on neighbourhood planning: edition 25](#)

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## [73rd World Health Assembly: UK statement to Committee A](#)

The UK greatly values the World Health Organisation and the crucial leadership role it plays at this difficult time.

To reflect this support our Prime Minister announced at UNGA that the UK will be contributing £340 million in core voluntary contributions over the next 4 years. Of which 30% will be conditional on WHO's delivery of the reforms needed to strengthen its essential global coordination role, including on pandemic preparedness and response.

The UK's increase in flexible funding therefore reflects our belief that WHO should have the funds required to be the modern, agile and inclusive organisation that we need it to be, and reflects that we recognise there is more to be done to achieve this.

We also recognise WHO's leadership in establishing the Emergencies Programme in its current form, following reforms in 2016, which have allowed them to lead swift responses to an increasing number of crises.

As Member States, we now have a unique opportunity to build on this success and, through our current collective focus, accelerate further reform. We have all learned lessons during the COVID-19 pandemic about how we might strengthen national and global capabilities. This also applies to WHO. The IOAC's report is timely. While it rightfully recognises WHO's leadership on COVID-19, its examples demonstrate that there is yet more to do if WHO's emergencies programme is to be fit for the challenges we face in 2020 and beyond. We stand ready to roll up our sleeves and work with you.

The outcomes of the IPPR, IHR and IOAC reviews are therefore crucial in setting the direction that we will collectively follow to achieve these aims and we look forward to concrete recommendations on – the Intermediate Public Health Alert, significantly improving IHR compliance, sustainable organisational funding, expanded surveillance of zoonoses and greater coordinated action at the animal-human health interface through a stronger role for WHO within the tripartite.

We welcome the circulation of the source of the virus terms of reference. The UK has been clear that having this shared understanding of the origins of this virus is key to improving our response to it. And therefore, that this investigation should be prioritised and we expect the investigation and its outcomes to be grounded in robust science.

In addition, effective vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics are central to the global response. The UK is strongly committed to ensuring equitable access to vaccines, including for the poorest countries. The UK support for COVAX includes a contribution of up to £571 million of which £500 million will directly support vaccines for developing countries, and we encourage others who have not yet done so, to step up their support.

Thank you

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## [International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes \(ICSID\) panels: UK appointments announced](#)

Press release

Department for International Trade (DIT) announces new appointments to the ICSID panel of arbitrators and panel of conciliators.



Following a highly competitive [process in March 2020](#), DIT is pleased to announce that the UK has appointed to each panel as follows:

Panel of arbitrators:

- Sir Daniel Bethlehem, KCMG, QC
- Sir Christopher Greenwood, GBE, CMG, QC
- Christopher Harris, QC
- Wendy J Miles, QC

Panel of conciliators:

- Ian S Forrester, QC, LL.D
- Christopher Harris, QC
- Professor Jan Kleinheisterkamp

- Wendy J. Miles, QC

The appointed panellists will serve renewable terms of 6 years, after which they may continue in office until a successor is designated.

This was the UK's first open competition for appointments to these panels.

DIT expresses its sincere thanks to the UK's departing panellists – Sir Franklin Berman, Sir David Edward, Sir Sydney Lipworth, Mr Francis Neate – for their work and contributions.

ICSID is an international arbitration institution for the settlement of disputes arising between states and foreign investors. It is part of the World Bank Group.

The panel lists may be used by the parties to a dispute, or where the parties are unable to agree on a nominee.

The panel of arbitrators is also used for appointment to ad hoc committees.

The procedural framework for arbitration, conciliation and fact-finding proceedings is provided by the [ICSID Convention](#) and the [ICSID Additional Facility](#). This framework is supplemented by detailed regulations and rules.

Arbitrators and conciliators on ICSID tribunals and commissions will work in accordance with those rules, with administrative support from the ICSID secretariat.

Read more about the [ICSID, the panel of arbitrators and the panel of conciliators](#).

Any queries about these appointments should be sent to [icsidappointments@trade.gov.uk](mailto:icsidappointments@trade.gov.uk).

Published 10 November 2020

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## [UK expels Belarusian diplomats in clear message to Lukashenko's regime](#)

Press release

Two Belarusian diplomats have been expelled from the UK today in response to the unjustified expulsion of two British diplomats from Belarus earlier this week.



Belarus announced they were expelling the British representatives after their legitimate observation of protests in Minsk on Sunday. The Foreign Secretary and Defence Secretary have spoken out against their unacceptable treatment, which runs counter to the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

Today's announcement that two Belarusian diplomats will be expelled from the UK is therefore a proportionate and appropriate response.

Belarusian Ambassador Maxim Yermalovich was summoned to the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office this afternoon to be informed of the UK Government's decision. During the summons, the UK Government reiterated that the only way forward is for fresh elections to be held and for those responsible for violence against demonstrators to be held to account.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

We have sent a clear message today to Lukashenko's regime that their unjustified expulsion of British diplomats has consequences. The UK will continue to hold the Belarusian authorities to account for the rigged election in August and their ongoing use of violence to suppress the Belarusian people.

The UK has already responded robustly to the torture and mistreatment of hundreds of peaceful protestors in custody by imposing landmark sanctions on Lukashenko and senior figures in the Belarusian Government under the UK's new human rights sanctions regime.

Published 10 November 2020