



An Experimental Statistics Publication for Scotland

ECONOMY AND LABOUR MARKET

GDP Monthly Estimate, Scotland

March 2023

31 May 2023

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) statistics measure the output of the economy in Scotland. These monthly estimates are designated as experimental official statistics, meaning they are still in development but have been released to enable their use at an early stage.

All results are seasonally adjusted and presented in real terms (adjusted to remove inflation), and relate to Scotland's onshore economy (which does not include offshore oil and gas extraction).

Main Findings

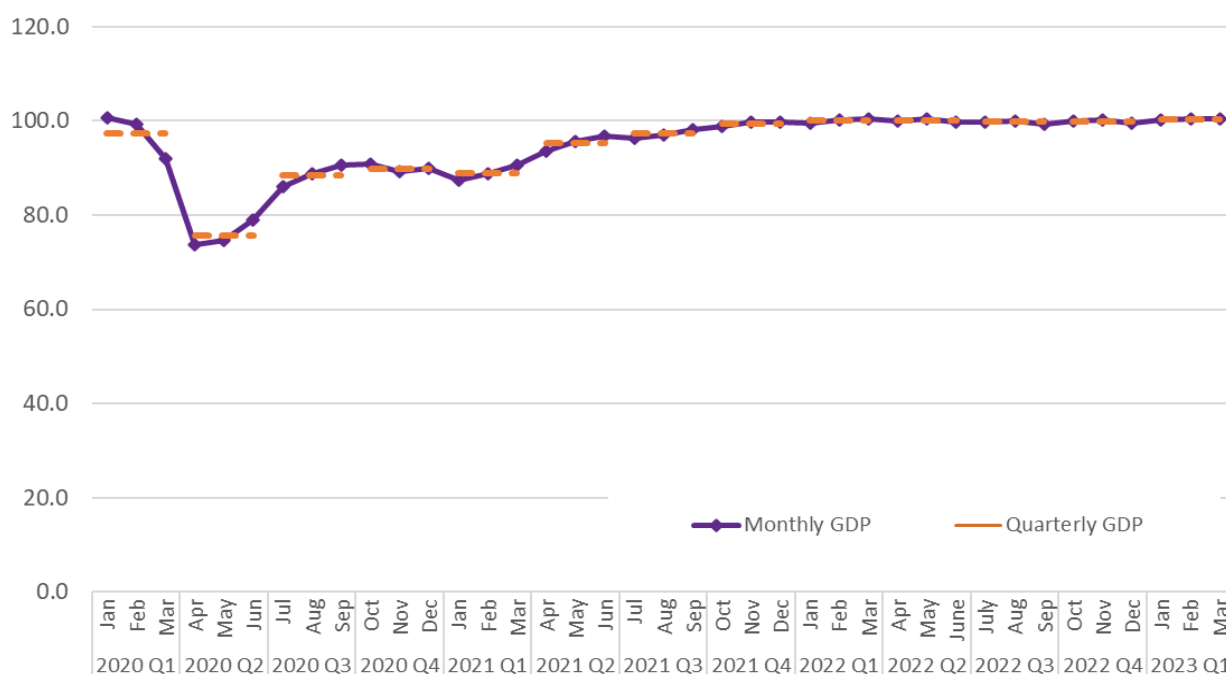
- Scotland's onshore GDP is estimated to have remained flat (0.0% change) in March. This follows growth of 0.3% in February (revised up from 0.2%) and a growth of 0.5% in January (revised down from 0.7%).
- Output in the services sector, which accounts for around three quarters of the economy, is estimated to have contracted by 0.1% in March. At the broad level, output in consumer facing services grew by 0.5%, while health, education and public services output contracted by 0.2%.
- In the three months to March, GDP is estimated to have grown by 0.4% compared to the previous three month period. This is an improvement compared to the growth of 0.2% in 2022 Quarter 4 (October to December). Further information on quarterly GDP can be found in the [First Estimate of GDP for 2023 Quarter 1](#).



Quarterly and monthly results

Monthly and quarterly GDP, January 2020 to March 2023

Chained volume measure, 2019 = 100



Notes: (1) Users are advised to be mindful that the axis on this chart does not start at zero.

Monthly GDP is much more volatile than quarterly GDP. The chart shows that monthly GDP has seen quite large rises and falls since the start of 2022, but underlying growth has remained broadly flat around the level it was in 2019 (100 on the y axis).

Scotland's onshore GDP is estimated to have remained flat (0.0% change) in March. This follows growth of 0.3% in February (revised up from 0.2%) and a growth of 0.5% in January (revised down from 0.7%). Monthly GDP is now 1.2% above the pre-pandemic level in February 2020.

There was anecdotal evidence, reported on monthly business survey returns, to suggest that industrial action in March 2023 had an impact on different industries of varying degrees. These included the civil service, the education sector (teachers and university lecturers) and the rail network. This is further supported by the [Business Insights and Conditions Survey \(BICS\)](#), which stated that 6.7% of businesses in Scotland in March reported being affected by industrial action (following 12.9% in February and 15.2% in January).

An exceptionally wet March 2023 (the sixth wettest March since 1836), as seen in the [Met Office's Monthly climate summary \(PDF, 5.9MB\)](#), may have also played a part in reducing output for some industries. This was described as a reason for the decline in [retail sales in March 2023 data](#). Anecdotal evidence was also provided in industries such as food and beverage service activities, sports and recreation activities and some of the service industries

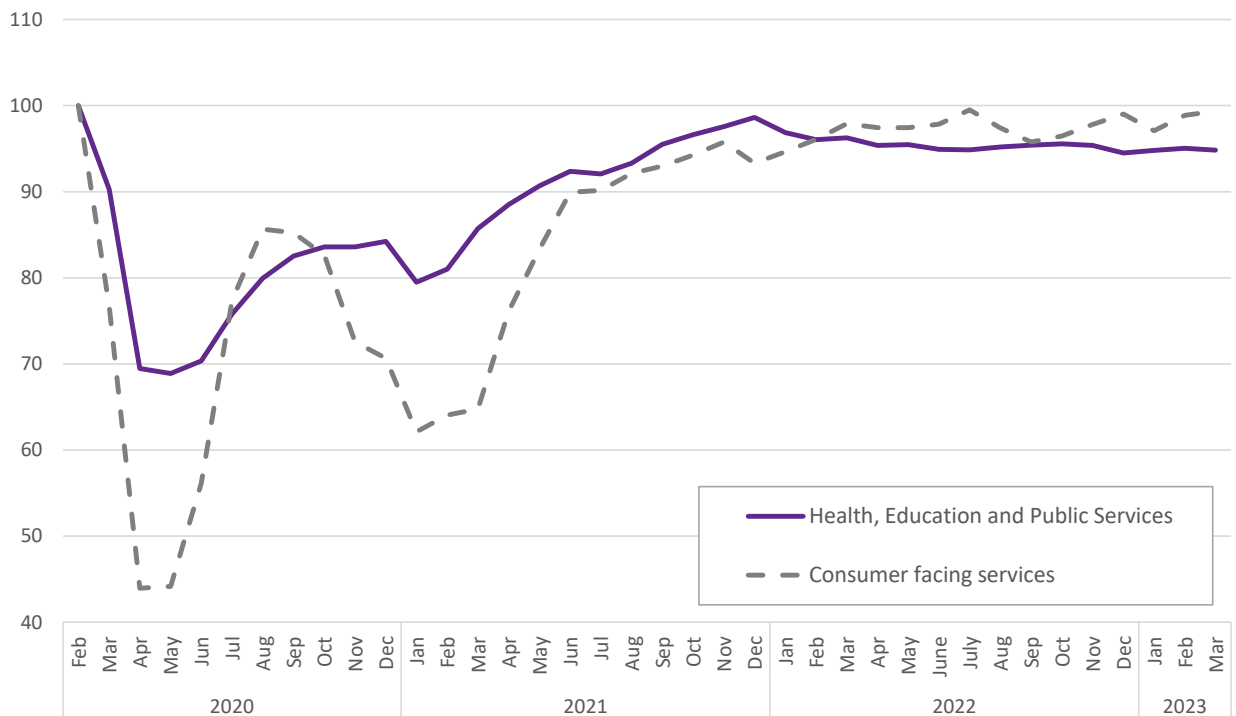
associated with the construction industry, for example, rental and leasing of plant and machinery and wholesalers of construction products.

For the three months to March, GDP is estimated to have increased by 0.4% compared to the previous three month period. This is an increase from the rate in 2022 Quarter 4 (October to December).

Industry Results

Monthly GDP by consumer facing services and public services, February 2020 to March 2023

Chained volume measure, Feb 2020 =100



Notes:

- (1) Consumer facing services include SIC groups 45, 47, 49.1, 55, 56, 75, 79, 92-97
- (2) Users are advised to be mindful that the axis on this chart does not start at zero.

Output in the services sector, which accounts for around three quarters of the economy, is estimated to have contracted by 0.1% in March. At the broad level, output in consumer facing services grew by 0.5%, while health, education and public services output contracted by 0.2%.

Since the start of 2022 Health, Education and Public Services have been fairly flat, while Consumer Facing Services have been much more volatile month-on-month.

Revisions

Estimates in this release are consistent with the GDP Quarterly First Release for 2023 Q1 also published on 31 May 2023. There are no revisions to quarterly growth rates (3 month on 3 month growth at March, June, September, December) relative to the February GDP release. The monthly path within each quarter is open for revision throughout time, but results are constrained to the previous estimates at the quarterly level.

An Experimental Statistics Publication for Scotland

Experimental statistics are a subset of newly developed or innovative official statistics undergoing evaluation. They are published to involve users and stakeholders in the assessment of their suitability and quality at an early stage. The Office for Statistics Regulation publishes guidance on experimental statistics [here](#).

The Scottish Government is developing these estimates on an ongoing basis, and is grateful to the ONS, BEIS, and other departments and businesses which have assisted in the identification or delivery of earlier data sources which enable the timely production of monthly GDP. We welcome any feedback on the development of these statistics, using the contact details below.

Correspondence and enquiries

For enquiries about this publication, please contact:

Carrie Graham,
National Accounts Unit,
Office of the Chief Economic Adviser
e-mail: carrie.graham@gov.scot
or economic.statistics@gov.scot

For general enquiries about Scottish Government statistics please contact:

Office of the Chief Statistician, Telephone: 0131 244 0442,
e-mail: statistics.enquiries@gov.scot

Complaints and suggestions

If you are not satisfied with our service or have any comments or suggestions, please write to the Chief Statistician, St Andrew's House, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG, Telephone: (0131) 244 0302, e-mail statistics.enquiries@gov.scot.

If you would like to be consulted about statistical collections or receive notification of publications, please register your interest at www.gov.scot/scotstat

Details of forthcoming publications can be found at www.gov.scot/statistics

Crown Copyright

You may use or re-use this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence.

See: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/