

Recession less severe in Scotland?

New figures from the UK Government show the recession in Scotland was less severe than across the rest of the UK. Scotland also spent less time in recession in 2008 and 2009 than the UK as a whole.

These figures were welcomed by the SNP who warned that the recovery from recession could be seriously undermined by the Tory – Lib Dem cuts introduced to pay off Labour's debts.

Continuing the work of the Scottish Government to create and protect jobs, provide training places and invest in public infrastructure is a key part of ensuring economic growth a spokesperson for Finance Secretary John Swinney said:

"Scotland went into recession a quarter later than the United Kingdom economy, and the rate of decline over the whole period was marginally less north of the Border than it was across the UK. While Scotland's recession may have been very slightly shallower than the UK as a whole on these revised figures, clearly there is always a lagging effect in the economy, and we face significant challenges in building a strong and sustained recovery.

"Key sectors held up better in Scotland – such as in the production, hospitality and transport sectors – while given the nature of the recession, financial and business services were more adversely affected north of the Border.

"Overall, our Economic Recovery Plan is supporting some 15,000 jobs in Scotland, and we have supported key successes which will deliver long-term as well as short-term benefit – such as SSE's Centre of Engineering Excellence for Renewable Energy in Glasgow – which last week signed a strategic agreement with Mitsubishi, expected to create up to 1,000 new jobs over five years. Our investment in a new generation of council houses is important both in supporting employment and meeting social

need, and we have exceeded our target and delivered over 20,200 modern apprenticeship places.

“These are all important interventions – but in order to deal with the macro-economic situation that Scotland faces along with other nations across the world, by definition Scotland needs the same macro-economic powers as these other nations have.

“It is clearer than ever that the Scottish Government and Parliament need economic and financial powers as the only alternative path to an unprecedented budget consolidation process imposed by Westminster, so that we have the necessary tools to boost growth and revenues in the Scottish economy, and invest in quality public services.

“That is the nature and urgency of the debate in Scotland – and why the centre of gravity in Scottish politics continues to shift towards independence.