

Coronavirus: More testing is 'essential'

The Scottish Greens say the lack of testing strategy is hampering Covid-19 response.

Alison Johnstone MSP is making this call following analysis that shows while Scotland is faring better than England in terms of rolling out testing, it's amongst the worst performing when compared to European Union countries. Scotland is in 19th place out of the 25 EU countries that publish testing data.

It also follows comments yesterday from Allan Wilson, President of the Institute of Biomedical Science who told BBC Scotland's The Nine programme that Scotland is, "missing a testing strategy," and that as a result "We are in the rather bizarre situation where we could be doing more testing than we are doing at the moment. We've got the capacity in some labs, but the demand isn't there because the strategy is focusing on just symptomatic key workers, their families and symptomatic patients in hospital."

Ms Johnstone said: "The Scottish Government must explain exactly why it doesn't have an adequate testing strategy in place and tell us when it will. It is remarkable that having increased testing capacity, the Health Secretary hasn't been able to put in place a strategy that uses that capacity.

"Our analysis shows that Scotland is testing far fewer people per head than most EU countries. The Czech Republic are testing twice as many people as us, and Germany three times as many.

“It’s clear that we urgently need a strategy in place to test, trace and isolate. It’s simply not good enough that such a plan hasn’t been forthcoming, and Ministers must produce one urgently.”



Alison Johnstone MSP with Patrick Harvie, Scottish Greens
Parliamentary Co-Leaders