

Professor Sir Ian Diamond | National Statistician

Peredur Owen Griffiths MS
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

21 October 2024

Dear Mr Griffiths,

Thank you for your letter of 4 October related to quarterly growth data for Wales.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) made the decision to pause the publication of our Quarterly Regional GDP (QRGDP) publication due to concerns raised by users regarding the quality and volatility of the estimates. This was announced on 7 July 2023¹, after the last publication and estimates were released on 18 May 2023².

Before announcing the pause to the QRGDP publication, the ONS discussed the issue with the Welsh Government, as well as other stakeholders. Recognising the potential data gap caused by pausing QRGDP, we agreed to continue with the production and delivery of the Welsh Short-Term Indicators (WSTI) to provide quarterly data for Wales. WSTI and QRGDP differ in terms of source data, the coverage (QRGDP also covers English regions) and the constraining process (where QRGDP is constrained to Annual Regional Accounts and Quarterly National Accounts) to ensure consistency.

These estimates had previously been funded entirely by the Welsh Government, but we agreed to fund the production and analysis of these estimates, with Welsh Government funding the data collection element, from 2023 Q2 delivery onwards. WSTI has continued to be delivered on a quarterly basis during the pause of QRGDP and is published on the Welsh Government website³.

In the meantime, the ONS have been working with the independent Economic Centre of Excellence (ESCoE) to review the methods for QRGDP and how these data are aligned to national estimates. This review is nearing completion, and we will consider its findings with a plan to bring back QRGDP as soon as is feasible. The ONS will keep this Committee, as well as other stakeholders, updated during this time to provide details on progress and time scales as they become clearer.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Sir Ian Diamond

¹<https://www.ons.gov.uk/news/statementsandletters/pausingofquarterlyregionalgdpestimates>

²<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/grossdomesticproductgdp/bulletins/gdpukregionsandcountries/julytoseptember2022>

³ [Short-term output indicators | GOV.WALES](#)