

From: [redacted]
Sent: 20 January 2021 15:47
To: Minister for Trade, Innovation and Public Finance
Cc: First Minister; Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Fair Work and Culture; Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Tourism; Minister for Business, Fair Work and Skills; Gillespie G (Gary); Halliday R (Roger); Chikwama C (Cornilius); McDonald L (Lisa); [redacted]; [redacted]; [redacted]; [redacted]; Quinlan K (Kevin); Aitken R (Reuben); [redacted]; [redacted]; [redacted]; Higgins K (Kate)
Subject: Ministerial Submission - Update on 2019 Global Connections Survey - For information

Minister for Trade, Innovation and Public Finance,

Please find attached a submission on the 2019 Global Connections Survey which was delayed from last summer and is now planned to launch in the coming weeks.

Many thanks,

[redacted]

From: Gillespie G (Gary)
Sent: 20 January 2021 13:12
To: [redacted]
Cc: Chikwama C (Cornilius) ; [redacted]
Subject: RE: Global Connections Survey 2019 - Your Input Requested

Thanks [redacted]

I am happy with this.

Gary

*Dr Gary Gillespie
Chief Economist
Scottish Government
[redacted]*

From: [redacted]
Sent: 20 January 2021 11:28
To: Gillespie G (Gary)
Cc: Chikwama C (Cornilius); [redacted]
Subject: RE: Global Connections Survey 2019 - Your Input Requested

Hi Gary,

I've drafted the attached submission to Ministers on our plans to launch the delayed Global Connections Survey. I've also drafted the invite letter to businesses which is included as an annex to the submission.

Let me know if you're happy with these documents. I plan to send this to Ministers tomorrow.

Thanks for your help.

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: 13 January 2021 17:42
To: Gillespie G (Gary)
Cc: Chikwama C (Cornilius); [redacted]
Subject: RE: Global Connections Survey 2019 - Your Input Requested

Gary – thanks.

Cornilius and I also discussed yesterday and I'm happy with the next steps. On the [redacted] point, they no longer have any involvement in the survey as they stopped funding it a few years ago. But as one of the key users of the data, we have let them know about the delay and will keep them up to speed on the new planned publication date.

On your point about collecting 2019 and 2020 data, we did consider this and I can see why this is an option worth exploring. However there are some potential issues in doing so. Firstly, it would mean a longer survey which may put some respondents off. We know that [redacted] received feedback on this when they tried to do something similar.

It would also mean we would have to make changes to the online system we use for data collection (ProcXed) which will mean further delays to our planned timeline. We would also have to wait before we could publish the 2020 figures as we don't yet have the 2020 data for the other data sources we use (ie ONS data).

Thanks for your support on this.

[redacted]

From: Gillespie G (Gary)
Sent: 12 January 2021 17:32
To: [redacted]
Cc: Chikwama C (Cornilius) ; [redacted]
Subject: RE: Global Connections Survey 2019 - Your Input Requested

[redacted]

Thanks, I spoke to Cornilius about this yesterday which was really helpful. We agreed that we should proceed broadly as planned. Let Ministers' know that is our intention as this is an important publication but we will ensure we minimise impact on business. I think Cornilius was going to check with [redacted] also and we would tweak letter that goes with survey.

If slippage on timing we need to watch pre-election period for surveys.

The risks for me were more handling and perception for the business sector given the pressures of EU exit and Covid and that we are asking about 2019.

One thought/question – is there anyway we could ask for 2019 and 2020 data in the one questionnaire? Would allow some more time and we could do two years in one publication and keep the timeseries going.

Gary

From: [redacted]
Sent: 11 January 2021 09:14
To: Gillespie G (Gary)
Cc: Chikwama C (Cornilius); [redacted]
Subject: Global Connections Survey 2019 - Your Input Requested

Gary,

Hope you had a good festive break.

Cornilius has advised that we run past you our plans for 2019 Global Connections Survey (GCS). As you may be aware, the survey is now completed using an online system (ProcXed) with an initial invite letter sent by post to around 6,500 companies.

GCS 2019 Delay

In normal circumstances, the initial survey letter would be issued in June with survey fieldwork, including reminder letters and other follow-ups, lasting until around October. However we chose not to issue our survey last year due to the following factors:

- Impact of Covid – businesses were dealing with lockdown and the impacts of Covid and we did not want to burden them further.
- Brexit – businesses were under pressure to prepare for the end of the EU Transition Period and we didn't want to divert effort from this.
- Survey fatigue – businesses were continuing to receive the usual ONS surveys plus other Private Sector business surveys. The ONS also introduced a new rolling Business Impact of COVID-19 Survey (BICS) with some

companies being surveyed every 2 weeks. As a result we were reluctant to add to the survey burden

Given the GCS is a voluntary survey and each year brings challenges in encouraging participation, it was felt that these factors would have resulted in an even lower response rate than usual. We also had other work pressures within the branch related to Covid and Brexit work, as well as depleted resources which compounded our reasons for delaying the survey.

However we are aware that there is a limit to how long we can delay the survey to allow us to capture the 2019 data and of course, how important it is to collect the 2019 data. This will ensure consistency in our time series and provide us with a pre-Covid baseline for future analysis and assessment of Covid impacts on exports.

Our Plans for the 2019 GCS and Publication

The plan is therefore to issue the survey invites over the next few weeks but working to a shorter overall timescale. Further details of this plan and its timescales are set out below. Depending on the response rate, we are considering no further follow ups with companies due to the obvious pressures many will be facing. As we have all the other data sources in place, this should allow us to publish the final Export Statistics Scotland (ESS) statistics by mid-April this year.

We intend to work to the following timetable.

Month	Week commencing	Publication Stage
January	18 th Jan	Survey invitation letters issued
	25 th Jan	
February	1 st Feb	
	8 th Feb	
	15 th Feb	Deadline for survey responses
	22 nd Feb	QA survey responses and seek any clarification from businesses
March		
	1 st Mar	Data processing and QA
	8 th Mar	
	15 th Mar	
	22 nd Mar	Final checks on data and drafting of publication
	29 th Mar	
April	5 th Apr	Produce tables and other outputs
	12 th Apr	ESS 2019 publication

This timetable is a scaled down version of the one we normally work to. As mentioned above, we usually open our survey in June and publish at the end of January – an 8 month process. This means the planned timetable is ambitious as we are attempting to do this in around 4 months instead. We would normally account for at least 8 weeks in total for survey responses (rather than just 4) as we would do various follow-up letters. However, our methodology and processes mean that if we do receive any late responses, in the weeks immediately after the 4 week period, we will still be able to include these in our data. So, if some companies need longer than

the 4 weeks to complete the survey, we have some flexibility and should be able to accommodate. We normally have a longer period for QA work and data processing but have introduced more automation in our processes to mitigate this. We also plan to scale back on the commentary in line with other Statistics publications.

Risks

While there is concern that the new lockdown measures mean January is not an ideal time to be contacting businesses, if we don't issue the survey now, the risk is that with this new lockdown potentially lasting a few months, we are well into 2021 before we survey our businesses. This will obviously then further delay publication of ESS. We also have the forthcoming election to consider as we would rather not publish during the purdah period. There is also a risk that the longer we delay the survey, the greater the chance of businesses that were exporting in 2019 are no longer operating and therefore not able to respond.

There are also risks to sending the invitation letters in the next few weeks, as set out below, alongside how we intend to mitigate them:

Risk	Mitigation
Low engagement by businesses due to other pressures related to Covid and Brexit impact	Provide businesses with enough time to respond and try to allow some flexibility with this. Ensure companies who usually respond are included in the sample. Make it as easy as possible for companies to respond by offering PDF and Excel versions of the survey.
Survey fatigue as businesses have received a number of other Government surveys recently.	We will reduce the amount of follow-up activity that we usually carry out although this may reduce the overall response rate.
Overall low response rate	We don't tend to obtain a great response rate anyway for the GCS as it's not a mandatory survey. However our methodology means this is only one of a number of sources used to produce the ESS data each year. We also used grossing / estimation to help fill some of the gaps. One of our other sources is the International Trade in Services (ITIS) Survey and the data will benefit from the boost we paid for last year which means we have data on an extra 500 businesses in Scotland.
Criticism or complaints from industry or specific businesses.	Work with Comms and Policy colleagues to develop strong lines on the importance of the survey and how the data is used.
Respondents want to use the survey to tell us about the impact of Covid on their business.	As we are collecting 2019 export data, we will not be asking any Covid related questions in this GCS. However companies will have the option to provide their views on Covid impacts using the comments box.

I would welcome your confirmation that you are content for us to proceed as above, and your steer on whether we should put a submission to Ministers.

Note also that ONS continue to survey businesses during this period with their ongoing BICS.

Many thanks,

[redacted]

Minister for Trade, Innovation and Public Finance

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT'S 2019 GLOBAL CONNECTIONS SURVEY

Purpose

1. To update on the 2019 Global Connections Survey (GCS) which was delayed from last summer and is now planned to launch in the coming weeks. This survey is one of the main sources used in the Export Statistics Scotland (ESS) publication.

Priority

2. **Routine.** This is for information only and no action is required.

Background

3. The GCS is issued on an annual basis to around 6,500 businesses in Scotland to collect annual export data. This data is combined with other official and administrative sources to produce the ESS publication. ESS provides official estimates of Scotland's exports of goods and services by sector and covers both international and rest of the UK exports. The statistics:
 - helps us understand trading patterns of Scottish businesses and provide sector level analysis;
 - provide a consistent time series of data on trade patterns going back to 2002;
 - provides us with an important data source for monitoring and understanding the impacts of our trade policies and economic shocks like the Coronavirus on Scotland's trade;
 - provides us with relevant data for future trade policy analysis.
4. The ESS is usually published at the end of January each year but the 2019 publication has been delayed.
5. This submission sets out the reasons for delaying the 2019 GCS last year. It also provides an update on our plans to launch this survey over the coming weeks and the overall plans for publishing ESS 2019 by Summer 2021. A copy of the letter which will be sent to businesses inviting them to participate in the survey is contained in [annex A](#).

Delay to the GCS 2019

6. In normal circumstances, the initial letter inviting business to take part in the GCS would be issued in June with survey fieldwork, including reminder letters and other follow-ups, lasting until around October. However officials made a decision to delay the survey last year:
 - after recognising that businesses were dealing with the impacts of the virus and the lockdown. The GCS would put an undue burden on businesses at a time when many of them were dealing with significant challenges;

- to allow businesses to focus on preparing for the end of the EU Exit Transition Period;
 - to minimise risk of survey fatigue as businesses were continuing to receive the usual ONS surveys and a number of other surveys had been launched by business organisations and others following the start of the pandemic. The ONS introduced a new rolling two weekly Business Impact of COVID-19 Survey (BICS).
7. The GCS is a voluntary survey and each year brings challenges in encouraging participation. Officials judged that these factors could drastically lower the response rate compared to normal times. We also had to focus on other urgent work pressures on Covid and EU Exit preparedness.
 8. We are, however, aware that there is a limit to how long we can delay the survey to allow us to capture the 2019 data and, of course, how important it is to collect this data. The plan is therefore to issue the survey invites over the coming weeks but working to a shorter overall timescale. A copy of the letter which will be sent to businesses inviting them to participate in the survey is contained in [annex A](#).
 9. Depending on the response rate, we are considering no further follow ups with companies due to the obvious pressures many will still be facing. As we have the other relevant data sources in place, this should allow us to publish the final ESS statistics by summer 2021. We can provide a more definite publication date when this is known.

Handling

10. There has already been one media enquiry as the Scottish Conservatives have criticised Scottish Ministers for withholding the export statistics. The following lines have been cleared to refute this:
 - “The timing and content of the Export Statistics Scotland publication is determined independently of ministers.
 - “The Global Connections Survey that is used to collect data for the Export Statistics publication was postponed over the summer to give businesses the opportunity to focus on responding to the unprecedented challenges posed by both the Covid-19 pandemic and EU exit.
 - “Businesses will be invited to submit data for the 2019 report soon, with the aim of publishing this by the summer. In the meantime, the ‘Business Impact of Coronavirus Survey’ has provided close to real-time data to monitor recent trade patterns since the start of the pandemic.”
11. We have also updated the forthcoming publications page on the Scottish Government website with the reasons for the delay in the ESS 2019 publication.

Conclusion

12. The Minister is invited to note these plans for launching the 2019 Global Connections Survey and the expected timescale for publishing Export Statistics Scotland 2019 figures.

[redacted]

OCEA: Economic Statistics

[redacted]

20 January 2021

Copy List:	For Action	For Comments	For Information		
			Portfolio Interest	Constit Interest	General Awareness
First Minister					X
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Fair Work and Culture			X		
Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Tourism			X		
Minister for Business, Fair Work and Skills			X		

Gary Gillespie, OCEA, Chief Economist
 Roger Halliday, Chief Statistician
 Cornilius Chikwama, OCEA, Deputy Director
 Lisa McDonald, OCEA, Deputy Director
 [redacted]
 [redacted]
 [redacted]
 [redacted]
 Kevin Quinlan, DITI, Director of Trade & Investment
 Reuben Aitken, DITI, Deputy Director
 [redacted]
 [redacted]
 [redacted]
 [redacted]
 Kate Higgins, Special Adviser

1. ANNEX A – COPY OF THE 2019 GCS INVITE LETTER

Help us develop policies to grow Scotland's international trade

Dear Contact,

I am writing to kindly invite you to participate in the **Scottish Government's 2019 Scottish Global Connections Survey (GCS)**. The GCS is the only official trade survey of Scottish businesses, and it helps us to measure key indicators on the state of Scotland's trade and it informs policy decisions to grow our international trade.

We appreciate 2020 was incredibly challenging for businesses due to the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic and the measures put in place to limit the spread of the virus. Many businesses would have also been working hard to prepare for the end of the EU Exit transition period. In recognising these challenges and pressures faced by businesses, we made the decision to delay the 2019 survey from last summer.

However it's important that we now collect this data to help us understand trading patterns of Scottish businesses in 2019. The data will also provide us an important baseline for understanding the impacts of the Coronavirus on trade patterns and data for future trade policy analysis. Ultimately, this data allows us to identify opportunities to develop policies that help more Scottish businesses to export more goods and services to more markets.

You can access the survey by typing the following address (including the 'https' part) into your web browser:

<https://procxed.scotxed.net/GC>

You will be asked to enter your username and password, which are below.

Username: XXXX

Password: XXXX

After logging into the system, you should hit the edit button to start completing your survey. Once completed you should use 'save and submit' option to send the completed return.

Your response is appreciated by XXXX. If you require an extension to this deadline please contact us. If you have any issues accessing the survey, need the survey in a different format, or require help to complete it, please refer to the further information below or contact the Trade Statistics team by emailing exports.statistics@gov.scot. Alternatively you can contact them on 0300 244 0330.

Yours faithfully,



GARY GILLESPIE
Chief Economist

The Global Connections Survey - Further Information

Completing the survey

The best person to complete this survey is likely to be the Finance Director or Financial Controller at your organisation; if this is not you, please pass this on to the most appropriate

individual. Guidance notes and further information is available here:
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/global-connections-survey-2019/>

Other ways to complete the survey

To complete the survey using this online system please go to the following website:
<https://procxed.scotxed.net/GC>

It's important you type the full address exactly as it appears above.

You do not need to complete the survey in one go as you can save what you have entered using the 'save' option and go back using the log-in details above. Once you have provided all the information that you are able to, you should use the 'save and submit' option to send your completed return to us.

We also offer the option of completing this survey by PDF or Excel which can then be emailed to exports.statistics@gov.scot. Further information on this is available on the website below:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/global-connections-survey-2019/>

Uses for this information

The analysis from the information you provided last year is included in the National Statistics publication, Export Statistics Scotland¹ and is also used to monitor the National Indicator on 'International Exporting'². This data also supported the Scottish Government's export growth plan, A Trading Nation³. Continuing to collect this survey data will allow us to update the analysis, monitor the actions from this and continue to inform Scotland's international trade policy. The survey data is also one of the key sources for Scotland's export data which can be explored using our Export Performance Monitor.

All the information you provide will be kept strictly confidential by the Scottish Government and the partner organisations with whom we may share your responses (Scottish Development International, Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and the Office for National Statistics). Specific company details and any data where it may be possible to identify an individual company will not be published.

Contact details

For further queries, email exports.statistics@gov.scot and we will get back to you as soon as possible. As the majority of Scottish Government staff continue to work from home in line with current guidance, this is the best way to contact us. However if you wish to call please do so on 0300 244 0330. If no one is available, you will have the option to leave a message and someone will get back to you as soon as possible.

¹ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/export-stats-scotland-2018/>

² <https://nationalperformance.gov.scot/measuring-progress/national-indicator-performance>

³ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotland-a-trading-nation/>

From: [redacted]
Sent: 18 January 2021 09:35
To: [redacted]
Subject: RE: Forthcoming Publications - dates for January 2021 collection

Thanks [redacted]. This is for the Export Statistics Scotland 2019 publication.

Could you put

'The Global Connections Survey which is used to collect relevant export data was delayed to give businesses the opportunity to focus on the impact of Covid-19 and to prepare for EU exit.'

Thanks,

[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: 18 January 2021 09:24
To: [redacted]
Subject: RE: Forthcoming Publications - dates for January 2021 collection

Hi [redacted],

I am thanks, hope you're well too! Yep, I can add a reason for date change for you, which publication would you like this added to? Could you please also send on the reason for delay that you would like to appear on the calendar?

Best wishes,
[redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: 17 January 2021 18:43
To: [redacted]
Subject: RE: Forthcoming Publications - dates for January 2021 collection

Hi [redacted],

Hope you're well. I wasn't aware we could add a reason for the publication delay in the forthcoming publications as this didn't seem to be an option in the ProcXed system.

Is this something you can add for me?

Thanks,

[redacted]

From: [redacted]

Sent: 17 January 2021 15:35

To: Ivan.McKee2@parliament.scot; Minister for Trade, Innovation and Public Finance

Cc: Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Fair Work and Culture; Chikwama C (Cornilius) [redacted]; [redacted]; [redacted]; [redacted]; OCEA COVID-19 Analysis Hub; Gillespie G (Gary); Halliday R (Roger); [redacted]; [redacted]; News Desk ;[redacted]; Communications Economy; DL for Economy Covid-19 Hub Communications; McCaig C (Callum); McAllan M (Màiri) (Special Adviser)

Subject: RE: MEDIA - Sun newspaper on delayed export statistics - for Minister's clearance pls

With thanks to the Minister, and for others' records, he has cleared the line as drafted.

Issuing now.

From: [redacted]

Sent: 17 January 2021 14:54

To: 'Ivan.McKee2@parliament.scot' ; Minister for Trade, Innovation and Public Finance

Cc: Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Fair Work and Culture ; Chikwama C (Cornilius) ; [redacted] ; [redacted]; [redacted]; [redacted]; OCEA COVID-19 Analysis Hub ; Gillespie G (Gary) ; Halliday R (Roger) ; [redacted]; [redacted]; News Desk ; [redacted]; Communications Economy ; DL for Economy Covid-19 Hub Communications ; McCaig C (Callum) ; McAllan M (Màiri) (Special Adviser)

Subject: MEDIA - Sun newspaper on delayed export statistics - for Minister's clearance pls

Importance: High

Minister for Trade I&PF, Private Office,

Cc Cab Sec Economy FWC

The *Scottish Sun* newspaper has requested information from the SG – and a response to Tory criticisms – about the delay in publication of annual export stats for 2019.

This postponement was publicised in the regular 'Forthcoming Publications' spreadsheet published on the SG website, though with no reason listed.

Officials have advised that this decision was to allow businesses to focus on covid and Brexit challenges, rather than asking them to complete the Global Business Survey upon which the official publication *Export Statistics* is based.

A submission is in preparation to go to Ministers this coming week, on the impending launch of the survey for 2019.

With thx, I would be grateful if you can pls indicate if the Minister is content for us to deploy the response below or if he would like any amends.

[redacted]

A Scottish Government spokesperson

"The timing and content of the *Export Statistics Scotland* publication is determined independently of ministers.

“The Global Connections Survey that is used to collect relevant data for the *Export Statistics* publication was postponed over the summer to give businesses the opportunity to focus on responding to the unprecedented challenge posed by both the Covid-19 pandemic and EU exit.

“Businesses will be invited to submit data for the 2019 report soon, with the aim of publishing this by the summer. In the meantime, the ‘Business Impact of Coronavirus Survey’ has provided close to real-time data to monitor recent trade patterns since the start of the pandemic.”

Background:

This annual *Export Statistics Scotland* publication has been designated by the independent UK Statistics Authority as a National Statistics publication for Scotland, which means that it is produced independently of Scottish Ministers and complies with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

The ‘Business Impact of Coronavirus’ publication is delivered by the Office of National Statistics working with devolved administrations.

[redacted] | Duty News Team Leader, Scottish Government | [redacted]

----- Updates from Scottish Government [@ScotGov](#) -----

From: [redacted]

Sent: 17 January 2021 13:28

To: Chikwama C (Cornilius); [redacted]; [redacted]; [redacted]; [redacted]; OCEA COVID-19 Analysis Hub

Cc: Gillespie G (Gary); Halliday R (Roger); [redacted]; [redacted]; [redacted]; News Desk; [redacted]; Communications Economy; DL for Economy Covid-19 Hub Communications;

Subject: RE: MEDIA - Sun newspaper on delayed export statistics - for analyst input pls

Many thanks Cornilius,

I've weaved some of that into suggested comment and background, and have gone with 'officials' rather than analysts/economists.

With thanks, I'd be grateful if you can pls let me know if you are content or if any final amends are needed before I seek Spad clearance.

Also, I presume this would be for the Economy Secretary, rather than Finance to clear – though I might Copy in her and the Constitution Secretary, given Tories connecting the publication to the 'cost of independence' debate.

Thx,

[redacted]

From: Chikwama C (Cornilius)

Sent: 17 January 2021 12:55

To: [redacted]; [redacted]; [redacted]; [redacted]; [redacted]; [redacted]; OCEA COVID-19 Analysis Hub

Cc: Gillespie G (Gary) ; Halliday R (Roger) ; [redacted] ; [redacted] ; News Desk ; [redacted] ; Communications Economy ; DL for Economy Covid-19 Hub Communications

Subject: RE: MEDIA - Sun newspaper on delayed export statistics - for analyst input pls

[redacted]

See below some additional stuff

From: Chikwama C (Cornilius)

Sent: 17 January 2021 12:28

To: [redacted]; [redacted]; [redacted]; [redacted]; [redacted]; COVID-19 Analysis Hub

Cc: Gillespie G (Gary); Halliday R (Roger); [redacted]; [redacted]; News Desk; [redacted]; Communications Economy; DL for Economy Covid-19 Hub Communications

Subject: RE: MEDIA - Sun newspaper on delayed export statistics - for analyst input pls

Importance: High

Hi [redacted]

See below, where we are regarding the delayed export statistics.

It's true that the trade statistics for 2019 are delayed. This is because we have not collected the relevant data from businesses. The Global Connections Survey which we use to collect relevant data was delayed over the summer to give businesses the opportunity to focus on responding to the challenges they face given the impact of the pandemic and also to prepare for EU exit. In the meantime, the Business Impact of Coronavirus that is delivered by the Office of National Statistics working with devolved administrations has provided close to real-time data to monitor recent trade patterns since the start of the pandemic.

We recognise however that we cannot delay the data collection for 2019 any further. As such, we are working to launch the survey in the next few weeks. Letters inviting businesses to submit data will be sent out soon, with the aim of publishing the relevant data before summer 2021.

Cornilius

From: [redacted]

Sent: 17 January 2021 08:25

To: [redacted]; [redacted]; [redacted]; [redacted]

Cc: Gillespie G (Gary); Halliday R (Roger); [redacted] [redacted]

News Desk; [redacted]; Communications Economy; DL for Economy Covid-19 Hub Communications

Subject: MEDIA - Sun newspaper on delayed export statistics - for analyst input pls

Good morning [redacted], colleagues,

Please see query needing response today (*Sunday*) for the *Scottish Sun* newspaper, re our reported delay in publication of annual export stats for 2019 – where no reason for a delay is included in the forthcoming publications spreadsheet.

I've suggested how we might begin the response but, as well as your views on that this morning please, it would be helpful to understand why they are down as delayed in the spreadsheet and also whether there is an indicative timescale for this.

Ideally, we should include these details in our response.

Many thx,

[redacted]

A Scottish Government spokesperson

“This assertion is wholly wrong since the timing and content of this publication is determined independently of ministers by professional statisticians.

“<>

Background:

This annual *Export Statistics Scotland* publication has been designated by the independent UK Statistics Authority as a National Statistics publication for Scotland, signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

[Redacted] | Justice & Safer Communities Comms, Scottish Government | [redacted]

- Updates on Twitter [@ScotGovJustice](#) | Covid-19 updates at www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/

Hi again - and this is the other Sunday-for-Monday story.

It's to do with the delay to the annual export statistics for unclear reasons. They usually come out in January. The most recent publications schedule states they are "delayed" but it's not clear for how long. Under the "Reason for Change" box it just states "not applicable".

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/official-statistics-forthcoming-publications/>

A bit of draft copy

SNP ministers were last night accused of delaying politically explosive figures on Scotland's trade with the rest of the UK ahead of the Holyrood elections.

Export statistics have been published at the end of January in recent years.

The “publication date” for the export stats in the Scottish Government’s publications schedule for latest simply says “delayed”.

Scottish Conservative finance spokesman Murdo Fraser said: “Every year these figures show how vastly more important the UK market is to Scotland than anywhere else.

“It seems the nationalists are now trying to hide and delay this publication so they don’t have to explain why they want to tear Scotland apart from its most important trading partner for jobs and businesses.”

That should be the last you hear from me on media queries unless anything major happens! Much appreciated.

Thanks,

Dan

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Dan Vevers
Political Reporter @ The Scottish Sun

From: [redacted]
Sent: 07 January 2021 12:10
To: [redacted] @scotlandoffice.gov.uk; Exports Statistics
Cc: [redacted] @scotlandoffice.gov.uk
Subject: RE: Export Statistics Scotland - next publication?

Hi [redacted],

Thanks for getting in touch. The publication of Export Statistics Scotland 2019 has been delayed. We don't currently have a firm date for the publication as we are trying to work through the current circumstances and establish which date would be feasible.

Happy to provide you with more detail on our publication date once this is available. We will also update the Forthcoming Publications page on the website once we have more information - [Official statistics: forthcoming publications - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

Many thanks,

[redacted]

From: [redacted](SO)
Sent: 06 January 2021 12:08
To: Exports Statistics
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: Export Statistics Scotland - next publication?

Hello

Can I ask on what date the next Export Statistics Scotland will be published?



[redacted]
Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland - Campaigns and Digital
[redacted] | M: [redacted]
[@UKGovScotland](https://twitter.com/UKGovScotland) | [facebook.com/ukgovscotland](https://www.facebook.com/ukgovscotland)
