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Figures released today by the Scottish Government have shown that Scotland's productivity (output per hour worked) has dropped to its lowest level in more than eight years.

The Labour Productivity Statistics for the July-September 2017 Quarter show that Scotland's trend based productivity has dropped to its lowest level since the fourth quarter of 2009.

On an annual basis, productivity declined 3.2 per cent in the year to end-September 2017. In the last quarter alone, from July to September 2017, productivity is estimated to have dropped 0.7 per cent.

These figures demonstrate again that the SNP has failed to reach one of their main economic 'Purpose Targets'.

The target, originally set in 2007, was to rank in the top quarter of OECD countries for productivity by 2017.

Scotland is currently approximately 16th among OECD countries regarding productivity, well below the top quarter.

Scottish Conservative shadow economy secretary Dean Lockhart said:

"Improving productivity (output per hour worked), is the key driver to overall economic success in the long-term and has a direct impact on real wages and living standards.

"Productivity under the SNP has now declined to its lowest level in Scotland for eight years and is well-below levels in the rest of the UK.

"The SNP has control over the enterprise and economic development powers that can positively change productivity in Scotland.

"Instead of improving productivity however, the SNP has decided to make Scotland the highest-taxed part of the UK and to increase the tax burden on business.

"It is no wonder that Scotland's economy under the SNP is facing the weakest period of growth for 60 years."