

Britain is the world's fifth-largest economy again after overtaking India despite being in the grip of deep recession during coronavirus pandemic

- League table produced by Centre for Economic and Business Research (CEBR)
- UK is set to push further ahead of seventh-placed France in decade after Brexit
- Climb back up league table is despite fall in GDP in first half of 2020 of 21.2%

By [HARRY HOWARD FOR MAILONLINE](#)

PUBLISHED: 09:36, 26 December 2020 | **UPDATED:** 12:26, 26 December 2020

Britain has become the world's fifth-largest economy once again, despite suffering a deep recession as a result of the **coronavirus** pandemic.

According to the annual league table produced by the Centre for Economic and Business Research (CEBR), the UK has leapfrogged India and is set to push further ahead of seventh-placed **France** in the decade after **Brexit**.

Britain had fallen behind India to be the sixth-largest economy last year but the Asian nation has been pushed back below the UK in dollar terms following a deep recession related to the coronavirus pandemic and a steep fall in the rupee.

The UK's climb back up the league table is despite a cumulative fall in GDP in the first half of 2020 of 21.2 per cent as the first national **lockdown** - imposed in March - hammered the economy.

The leading CEBR also forecast that China would overtake America as the biggest economy in the world in 2028, five years earlier than expected.

Britain is expected to have suffered the deepest recession of all leading G7 nations this year.

The domestic independent forecaster, the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR), predicts an annual average growth rate of 3.4 per cent.

Top ten economies by size in 2020

1. United States

2. China
3. Japan
4. Germany
5. United Kingdom
6. India
7. France
8. Italy
9. Canada
10. Korea

Source: **Centre for Economic and Business Research**

However, the CEBR is more optimistic, saying the annual growth rate will be an average of 4 per cent until 2025.

From 2026 to 2030, the body says the growth rate will be 1.8 per cent annually.

By 2035, UK GDP in dollars is forecast to be 23 per cent more than traditional economic rival France.

But the CEBR does also predict that the UK will be once again overtaken by India in the economic league tables in 2024, meaning it will slip back to sixth place overall.

Douglas Williams, the deputy chairman of the CEBR, suggested Britain's digital sector would flourish in the coming years.

'People often forget that the UK's largest economic sector is digital and creative,' he said.

'We have a huge competitive advantage in this tech-based sector which the pandemic has kicked forward.

'Most of this is pretty Brexit-proof provided the UK continues to attract talented people.'

The UK's current unemployment rate - 4.8 per cent of the workforce - compares favourably with the EU average of 8.4 per cent.

The CEBR added that 'despite Brexit', the UK continues to be 'one of the better performers in Europe'.