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UK productivity falls

Brexit is not the only challenge facing the UK, according to Ian Brinkley, acting chief economist at the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

He said: "Unless more is done to tackle the nation's low productivity, people's wages and living standards will continue to fall and the UK will be ill-equipped to compete once we do leave the EU."

However, other economists said productivity - which is output divided by hours spent producing it - has partly fallen because there are record numbers of people in work.

"We shouldn't forget that the decline in productivity is the flip-side of what we could call the remarkable success of the UK labour market," Dr Thijs van Rens, professor of economics at Warwick University, told the BBC.

The ONS said its figures also indicated "striking" differences between the City of London and other parts of the UK.

In 2015, output per hour worked in London's financial and insurance industries was about seven times higher than in the lowest productivity regional industries, it said.