

1.6 million furlough cliff edge risks killing recovery before it even starts



GMB has called for urgent talks with the Government and employers to avoid mass lay-offs when the Job Retention Scheme ends after 30 September.

At least 1.6 million workers were still furloughed at the end of [July, according to official figures published today.](#)



The industry with the highest proportion of furloughed workers was aviation. More than half (51 per cent) of aviation workers were furloughed in July, or 29,700 people.

GMB called for an urgent summit to avoid a 'cliff-edge' drop in support, and for support packages for the sectors most at risk.

Gary Smith, GMB General Secretary, said:

"GMB has safeguarded jobs through agreements - but the reality is we face an economic cliff-edge which risks killing the recovery before it even starts."

"With 1.6 million workers still on furlough, Ministers, unions and employers must come together and agree a successor package to avoid the devastation of mass redundancies.

"There needs to be a package of support for harder hit industries such as aviation, which continues to be directly affected by travel restrictions set by the Government.

"These are viable jobs, and the cost of supporting them in the short-term is much less than the long-term costs of unemployment.

"We can't go back to business as usual. Boris Johnson and Rishi Sunak must act now or be remembered for casting thousands onto the scrapheap."

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