

More than 420,000 retail jobs lost



More than 420,000 traditional retail jobs have been lost since 2010, sparking fears that the high street may be in 'terminal decline'.

New GMB analysis shows that 420,242 traditional retail jobs have gone - a decline of 28.4% - since the Conservatives took power.

The figures emerge as the last Wilko stores close their doors for the final time, costing 12,500 workers their jobs after the much-loved chain collapsed.

GMB will today [Monday] tell Labour Party Conference in Liverpool that more retail jobs will be lost unless economic reforms are made.

Delegates are due to debate a GMB motion which calls for the UK's 'archaic' system of business rates to be replaced, alongside better protections for workers who are made redundant.



The union also wants tougher sentences when retail workers experience violence and other abuse.

The final hundred Wilko stores closed yesterday marking the end of the 93-year-old chain's operations. The taxpayer is expected to pick up the more than £25 million cost of making Wilko workers redundant.

Estimated brick and mortar retail jobs by nation and region

Nation / region	2010	2023	Change (n)	Change (%)
East Midlands	103,723	84,542	-19,181	-18.5
London	168,190	123,753	-44,437	-26.4
North East	69,276	50,249	-19,027	-27.5
Northern Ireland	43,492	40,617	-2,875	-6.6
Scotland	153,550	88,072	-65,478	-42.6
South East	205,337	135,579	-69,758	-34.0
South West	113,790	88,294	-25,496	-22.4
Wales	78,368	49,207	-29,161	-37.2
West Midlands	134,920	89,534	-45,386	-33.6
Yorkshire and Humberside	125,814	77,600	-48,214	-38.3
United Kingdom	1,482,229	1,061,987	-420,242	-28.4

Andy Prendergast, GMB National Secretary, said:

“High street retail is at the heart of our communities, but customers and workers are denied a fair deal.

“These shocking figures are a wakeup call that Wilko was not the first, and it will not be the last.

“Better support for communities and workers who face redundancy is urgently needed.



“That’s why GMB is calling on the Labour Party to enact its pledge to replace the business rates system, strengthen redundancy rights, and establish minimum ownership requirements for critical national retailers.

“Otherwise, the high street faces terminal decline.”

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