



## Uberisation in the UK

The roots of the process go back to the 1980s and Margaret Thatcher's assault on unions. When New Labour came to power in 1997, it introduced some important protective measures, such as the national minimum wage and tax credits, but maintained the Tory anti-union laws and reinforced the drive towards a more flexible labour market. By the early 2000s, there had been created an "hourglass" labour market, divided between badly paid "McJobs" at one end and generously rewarded "MacJobs" at the other, with "middling" jobs squeezed.

As trade union membership fell from 13.2m in 1979 to a record low of 6.2m in 2016, those who most need union protection are least likely to be unionised. It is like a return to the labour relations of the early 20th century. The expansion of insecure, poorly paid jobs in a flexible labour market without the protection of trade unions has been a major driver of the cost of living crisis.

The policies have created an insecure labour market under the guise of a flexible one. There is a need to ensure union protection of the lowest paid, least secure workers, and to expand the work of unions.

## Quiet Quitting

This refers to doing the minimum requirements of one's job and putting in no more time or effort than absolutely necessary. The worker doesn't actually leave their position and continues to collect a salary. In the early 2020s, it emerged as a much-publicized trend in the US and elsewhere. However, some observers have questioned how common it actually is—and whether it's even a new phenomenon.



## The Great Resignation

The Great Resignation, also known as the Big Quit and the Great Reshuffle, is an ongoing economic trend in which employees have voluntarily resigned from their jobs *en masse*, beginning in early 2021 in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Among the most cited reasons for resigning include wage stagnation amid rising cost of living, limited opportunities for career advancement, hostile work environments, lack of benefits, inflexible remote-work policies, and long-lasting job dissatisfaction. Most likely to quit have been workers in hospitality, healthcare, and education.

Some economists have described the Great Resignation as akin to a general strike, especially with regards to retail workers.

The term "Great Resignation" was coined by Anthony Klotz, a professor of management at University College London's School of Management, in May 2021, when he predicted a sustained mass exodus. In response, businesses have increased the rate of automation, creating a boom in robotics and artificial intelligence. Furthermore, while workers might feel empowered by being able to quit as soon as they see fit, they may struggle to climb up the career ladder because of their lack of experience and professional connections. Klotz later predicted the plateauing of the quit rate in 2023, and the end of the Great Resignation.

## Gig Economy

[gig i-'kā-nā-mē]

A segment of the service economy based on flexible, temporary, or freelance jobs, often involving connecting clients and customers through an online platform.



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## Good for workers or for business?

The gig economy is a warning about the intricacies of integrating technology with our society.

For those that love the gig economy, it provides freedom to choose how they earn, when they work, and how much time they spend on their own interests. For those that rely on it, the need to constantly search for work with no guaranteed income and no legal framework from which to protest against unfair treatment, it is a nightmare.

Perhaps instead of replacing full-time employment with these fleeting roles, we should think about making full-time employment more flexible itself, allowing full employees the freedom to work when and where they like without the risk of going hungry or homeless.





