

Economists demand more from Sunak - today's letter in T...

Published: January 13, 2026, 2:04 am

I was a [signatory to this letter in The Times](#) today:

SUNAK'S RESPONSE

Sir, As economists, academics and directors of research organisations, we are writing to insist that the government goes significantly further in its economic response to the Covid-19 crisis. We welcome the support for the employed, but the self-employed have been left out in the cold. They must be supported immediately: existing institutions such as HMRC should be used to deploy funds to this group.

Further, the chancellor's job retention scheme must mandate against any layoffs with immediate effect. There is a risk that many firms will let staff go in the days ahead. In order to receive wage subsidies firms **must** keep all staff on payroll.

Finally, the universal credit system will be unable to cope with all of the newly unemployed or underemployed. All means-testing must be removed to speed up the claims process.

Economic collapses become increasingly difficult to arrest if they are allowed to continue unabated. There is a real risk that this recession could turn into a depression. The government must move decisively to get cash into the hands of households and firms before the economic dominoes start to fall.

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