

# New Social Contract for Recovery and Resilience Union Wins March 2020

## TUC United Kingdom

- Wage subsidy / social dialogue – following intensive discussions with the TUC and business groups, the Finance Minister (Chancellor) announced the ‘coronavirus job retention scheme’: **the government pays 80% of the wages of workers** who would otherwise be laid off because of the pandemic – up to a cap of £2,500 a month.
- Wage subsidy / social dialogue – the TUC called for a similar scheme to support the self-employed, publishing a new report the following week and continuing urgent discussions with the Finance Ministry (Treasury), including a roundtable with unions representing self-employed workers. Shortly after, the ‘self-employment income support scheme’ was announced, covering 80% of the incomes of lower-paid self-employed workers. At the end of June 2020, **9.3m workers’ wages were being paid through the job retention scheme**. A further **2.6m people had received support through the self-employed income support scheme**.
- Social dialogue – the TUC and unions remained **in dialogue with the government** throughout the job retention scheme, and significant improvements were made to its operation.
- Social protection – the TUC exposed three problems with sick pay: people have to wait three days to qualify, two million people are excluded because they do not earn enough, and at £96 per week it is a fifth of weekly earnings. In March 2020, the government announced that **people self-isolating due to Covid-19 would receive sick pay from day one**.
- Social dialogue / health and safety – the TUC **won improvements to the government’s ‘return to work’ guidance**, including a direction for employers to consult unions and workers. Unions were represented across sectorial task forces set up to develop guidance on safe working practices.