

# Union membership rockets 120k in pandemic: worker organisation more relevant than ever



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GMB, Britain's general union, has said that the rise in union membership during the pandemic shows that modern, campaigning unions are more relevant than ever.



Union membership in the UK rose by 118,000 in 2020, [according to the new estimates from BEIS](#). This was the fourth year in a row when union membership has risen.

“ Employers need to understand that isn't just a short-term reaction to the pandemic. Workers are increasingly demanding fair pay and fair contracts, and they are organising to get it.

### Warren Kenny, GMB Acting General Secretary

The rise in union membership since 2015 is the [largest sustained increase since the 1970s](#).

GMB yesterday announced a [groundbreaking recognition agreement with Uber](#), which means that GMB is able to represent up to 70,000 Uber drivers in the UK.

### Warren Kenny, GMB Acting General Secretary, said:

“The pandemic has unleashed severe attacks on jobs and employment conditions, as unscrupulous employers use fire and rehire tactics to try and drive down standards.

“GMB is fighting back through organising and building workplace power. Our ground-breaking recognition agreement with Uber provides a blueprint for digital organising and is proof unions are more relevant than ever across the economy.

“ BREAKING NEWS:

Uber formally recognise GMB.

It's official, GMB is the union for Uber drivers. [pic.twitter.com/Be46VINLSU](https://pic.twitter.com/Be46VINLSU)

— GMB Union (@GMB\_union) [May 26, 2021](#)

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“Workers are increasingly demanding fair pay and fair contracts, and they are organising to get it.



“The world of work is changing and employers need to change with it.”

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## Member requiring help?

Click to contact your local GMB Region

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