

News

United States
Department
of Labor



Bureau of Labor Statistics

Chicago, Ill. 60604

General Information: (312) 353-1880
Media Contact: Paul LaPorte
(312) 353-1138

For Immediate Release:
Monday, March 24, 2008

www.bls.gov/ro5

UNION MEMBERSHIP IN MICHIGAN, 2007

In 2007, 19.5 percent of wage and salary workers in Michigan were union members compared with 19.6 percent in 2006, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Jay A. Mousa noted that the State's 2007 union membership rate was the lowest recorded in the 19 years of the data series. At its peak in 1989, 26.0 percent of all workers in Michigan belonged to a union. (See table A.)

Nationally, union members accounted for 12.1 percent of employed wage and salary workers in 2007, essentially unchanged from 12.0 percent in 2006. The union membership rate for the U.S. has declined from a high of 20.1 percent in 1983, the first year for which comparable national union data were available. Michigan was 1 of 20 states that had union membership rates above the U.S. average in 2007.

In Michigan, 819,000 wage and salary workers were union members in 2007. An additional 46,000 workers were represented by a union on their main job or were covered by an employee association or contract while not being union members themselves. Nationwide, nearly 15.7 million wage and salary workers were union members in 2007, while another 1.6 million were represented by a union on their main job but not union members themselves.

In 2007, 30 states and the District of Columbia had union membership rates below that of the U.S. average, 12.1 percent, while 20 states had higher rates. (See table 1.) Relative to 2006, 27 states registered lower union membership rates, 20 states recorded higher membership rates, and 3 states and the District of Columbia had no changes in their rates.

Within the East North Central division (which includes Michigan), four of the five states had union membership rates above the national average in 2007. Joining Michigan with a higher rate were Illinois, Ohio, and Wisconsin. Indiana had a union membership rate slightly less than the U.S. average. In two other divisions, the Middle Atlantic and the Pacific, all of the states reported union membership rates above that for the United States. In contrast, the states in the East South Central and West South Central divisions all had union membership rates that were below the national average. (See chart 1.)

Five states reported union membership rates below 5.0 percent in 2007. North Carolina posted the lowest rate (3.0 percent), followed by Virginia (3.7 percent), South Carolina (4.1 percent), Georgia (4.4 percent), and Texas (4.7 percent). Four states had union membership rates over 20.0 percent in 2007—New York (25.2 percent), Alaska (23.8 percent), Hawaii (23.4 percent), and Washington (20.2 percent).

Nearly half (7.8 million) of the 15.7 million union members in the United States lived in six states (California, 2.5 million; New York, 2.1 million; Illinois, 0.8 million; Michigan, 0.8 million; Pennsylvania, 0.8 million; and New Jersey, 0.7 million), though these six accounted for only about one-third of wage and salary employment nationwide.

Statewide union membership levels depend on both the union membership rates and the employment levels. Michigan had over 75 percent more union members than Texas, despite having 5.7 million fewer wage and salary workers. Similarly, Tennessee and Hawaii had comparable numbers of union members even though Tennessee’s wage and salary employment level was more than four and one-half times that of Hawaii.

Table A. Union affiliation of employed wage and salary workers in Michigan, annual averages, 1989-2007

(Numbers in thousands)

| Year | Total Employed | Members of unions ¹ | | Represented by unions ² | |
|------|----------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| | | Total | Percent of employed | Total | Percent of employed |
| 1989 | 3,896 | 1,013 | 26.0 | 1,082 | 27.8 |
| 1990 | 3,852 | 974 | 25.3 | 1,039 | 27.0 |
| 1991 | 3,766 | 927 | 24.6 | 981 | 26.1 |
| 1992 | 3,837 | 977 | 25.5 | 1,031 | 26.9 |
| 1993 | 3,966 | 968 | 24.4 | 1,022 | 25.8 |
| 1994 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 1995 | 4,001 | 947 | 23.7 | 1,006 | 25.1 |
| 1996 | 4,106 | 983 | 24.0 | 1,042 | 25.4 |
| 1997 | 4,190 | 969 | 23.1 | 1,024 | 24.4 |
| 1998 | 4,409 | 954 | 21.6 | 996 | 22.6 |
| 1999 | 4,490 | 963 | 21.5 | 1,009 | 22.5 |
| 2000 | 4,513 | 938 | 20.8 | 985 | 21.8 |
| 2001 | 4,488 | 975 | 21.7 | 1,016 | 22.6 |
| 2002 | 4,335 | 911 | 21.0 | 947 | 21.8 |
| 2003 | 4,188 | 919 | 21.9 | 968 | 23.1 |
| 2004 | 4,305 | 930 | 21.6 | 966 | 22.4 |
| 2005 | 4,288 | 880 | 20.5 | 916 | 21.4 |
| 2006 | 4,299 | 842 | 19.6 | 879 | 20.4 |
| 2007 | 4,193 | 819 | 19.5 | 865 | 20.6 |

¹ Data refer to members of a labor union or an employee association similar to a union.

² Data refer to members of a labor union or an employee association similar to a union, as well as workers who report no union affiliation but whose jobs are covered by a union or an employee association contract.

n/a – Not available.

NOTE: Data refer to the sole or principal job of full- and part-time workers. Excluded are all self-employed workers regardless of whether or not their businesses are incorporated.

Technical Note

The estimates in this release are obtained from the Current Population Survey (CPS), which provides the basic information on the labor force, employment, and unemployment. The survey is conducted monthly for the Bureau of Labor Statistics by the U.S. Census Bureau from a scientifically selected sample of about 60,000 households nationwide. The union membership data are tabulated from one-quarter of the CPS monthly sample and are limited to wage and salary workers. All self-employed workers are excluded.

Union membership data, particularly levels, for each year are not strictly comparable with data for earlier years because of the introduction of revised population controls used in the CPS. The effect of the revised population controls on the union membership estimates is unknown. However, the effect of the new controls in 2007 on the monthly CPS estimates for the U.S. was to increase the December 2006 employment level by 153,000 and the unemployment level by 10,000. The updated controls had little or no effect on unemployment rates and other ratios, such as union membership rates. For additional information, see "Adjustments to Household Survey Population Estimates in January 2007" in the February 2007 issue of *Employment and Earnings*, available on the Internet at www.bls.gov/cps/cps07adj.pdf.

For personal assistance or further information on union membership, as well as other Bureau programs, contact the Chicago Information Office at 312-353-1880 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET. Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-692-5200, TDD message referral phone number: 1-800-877-8339.

Reliability of the estimates

Statistics based on the CPS are subject to both sampling and nonsampling error. When a sample, rather than the entire population, is surveyed, there is a chance that the sample estimates may differ from the "true" population values they represent. The exact difference, or sampling error, varies depending upon the particular sample selected, and this variability is measured by the standard error of the estimate. There is about a 90-percent chance, or level of confidence, that an estimate based on a sample will differ by no more than 1.6 standard errors from the "true" population value because of sampling error.

The CPS data also are affected by nonsampling error. Nonsampling error can occur for many reasons, including the failure to sample a segment of the population, inability to obtain information for all respondents in the sample, inability or unwillingness of respondents to provide correct information, and errors made in the collection or processing of the data.

For a full discussion of the reliability of data from the CPS and information on estimating standard errors, see the "Explanatory Notes and Estimates of Error" section of *Employment and Earnings*.

Definitions

The principal definitions used in this release are described briefly below.

Union members. Members of a labor union or an employee association similar to a union.

Represented by unions. Union members, as well as workers who have no union affiliation but whose jobs are covered by a union or an employee association contract.

Wage and salary workers. Workers who receive wages, salaries, commissions, tips, payment in kind, or piece rates. The group includes employees in both the private and public sectors, but for the purposes of the union membership and earnings series, excludes all self-employed persons, regardless of whether or not their businesses are incorporated.

Table 1. Union affiliation of employed wage and salary workers by state

(Numbers in thousands)

| State | 2006 | | | | | 2007 | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| | Total employed | Members of unions ¹ | | Represented by unions ² | | Total employed | Members of unions ¹ | | Represented by unions ² | |
| | | Total | Percent of employed | Total | Percent of employed | | Total | Percent of employed | Total | Percent of employed |
| Alabama | 1,930 | 170 | 8.8 | 194 | 10.0 | 1,895 | 180 | 9.5 | 201 | 10.6 |
| Alaska | 280 | 62 | 22.2 | 67 | 23.8 | 284 | 68 | 23.8 | 70 | 24.7 |
| Arizona | 2,584 | 197 | 7.6 | 250 | 9.7 | 2,619 | 230 | 8.8 | 255 | 9.7 |
| Arkansas | 1,130 | 58 | 5.1 | 67 | 6.0 | 1,154 | 62 | 5.4 | 75 | 6.5 |
| California | 14,501 | 2,273 | 15.7 | 2,444 | 16.9 | 14,856 | 2,474 | 16.7 | 2,650 | 17.8 |
| Colorado | 2,154 | 165 | 7.7 | 186 | 8.6 | 2,204 | 191 | 8.7 | 202 | 9.2 |
| Connecticut | 1,591 | 247 | 15.6 | 263 | 16.5 | 1,617 | 253 | 15.6 | 269 | 16.6 |
| Delaware | 396 | 43 | 10.8 | 45 | 11.4 | 396 | 47 | 12.0 | 50 | 12.8 |
| District of Columbia | 246 | 25 | 10.3 | 30 | 12.2 | 278 | 29 | 10.3 | 38 | 13.6 |
| Florida | 7,676 | 397 | 5.2 | 497 | 6.5 | 7,741 | 455 | 5.9 | 562 | 7.3 |
| Georgia | 3,974 | 176 | 4.4 | 230 | 5.8 | 4,181 | 186 | 4.4 | 226 | 5.4 |
| Hawaii | 562 | 139 | 24.7 | 146 | 25.9 | 556 | 130 | 23.4 | 135 | 24.2 |
| Idaho | 620 | 37 | 6.0 | 45 | 7.2 | 635 | 33 | 5.3 | 41 | 6.4 |
| Illinois | 5,684 | 931 | 16.4 | 979 | 17.2 | 5,802 | 842 | 14.5 | 884 | 15.2 |
| Indiana | 2,787 | 334 | 12.0 | 362 | 13.0 | 2,779 | 333 | 12.0 | 359 | 12.9 |
| Iowa | 1,424 | 161 | 11.3 | 199 | 14.0 | 1,417 | 149 | 10.5 | 185 | 13.1 |
| Kansas | 1,236 | 99 | 8.0 | 115 | 9.3 | 1,274 | 89 | 7.0 | 110 | 8.7 |
| Kentucky | 1,752 | 172 | 9.8 | 196 | 11.2 | 1,734 | 157 | 9.1 | 192 | 11.1 |
| Louisiana | 1,676 | 107 | 6.4 | 121 | 7.2 | 1,670 | 94 | 5.6 | 108 | 6.5 |
| Maine | 584 | 69 | 11.9 | 79 | 13.5 | 574 | 67 | 11.7 | 79 | 13.8 |
| Maryland | 2,614 | 342 | 13.1 | 386 | 14.8 | 2,598 | 335 | 12.9 | 376 | 14.5 |
| Massachusetts | 2,859 | 414 | 14.5 | 438 | 15.3 | 2,882 | 379 | 13.2 | 402 | 14.0 |
| Michigan | 4,299 | 842 | 19.6 | 879 | 20.4 | 4,193 | 819 | 19.5 | 865 | 20.6 |
| Minnesota | 2,479 | 395 | 16.0 | 416 | 16.8 | 2,460 | 400 | 16.3 | 419 | 17.0 |
| Mississippi | 1,065 | 60 | 5.6 | 78 | 7.3 | 1,068 | 72 | 6.7 | 95 | 8.9 |
| Missouri | 2,610 | 284 | 10.9 | 310 | 11.9 | 2,585 | 275 | 10.7 | 308 | 11.9 |
| Montana | 397 | 48 | 12.2 | 52 | 13.1 | 399 | 54 | 13.5 | 62 | 15.6 |
| Nebraska | 831 | 66 | 7.9 | 79 | 9.5 | 836 | 65 | 7.8 | 81 | 9.7 |
| Nevada | 1,124 | 167 | 14.8 | 191 | 17.0 | 1,177 | 182 | 15.4 | 208 | 17.7 |
| New Hampshire | 620 | 63 | 10.1 | 70 | 11.3 | 631 | 61 | 9.7 | 70 | 11.2 |
| New Jersey | 3,827 | 770 | 20.1 | 825 | 21.6 | 3,897 | 748 | 19.2 | 802 | 20.6 |
| New Mexico | 796 | 62 | 7.8 | 92 | 11.5 | 800 | 62 | 7.7 | 91 | 11.4 |
| New York | 8,115 | 1,981 | 24.4 | 2,060 | 25.4 | 8,150 | 2,055 | 25.2 | 2,146 | 26.3 |
| North Carolina | 3,810 | 126 | 3.3 | 155 | 4.1 | 3,771 | 114 | 3.0 | 147 | 3.9 |
| North Dakota | 300 | 20 | 6.8 | 24 | 8.0 | 303 | 19 | 6.4 | 23 | 7.6 |
| Ohio | 5,170 | 734 | 14.2 | 801 | 15.5 | 5,187 | 730 | 14.1 | 797 | 15.4 |
| Oklahoma | 1,453 | 93 | 6.4 | 112 | 7.7 | 1,456 | 103 | 7.1 | 124 | 8.5 |
| Oregon | 1,527 | 211 | 13.8 | 225 | 14.7 | 1,582 | 227 | 14.3 | 243 | 15.4 |
| Pennsylvania | 5,457 | 745 | 13.6 | 802 | 14.7 | 5,496 | 830 | 15.1 | 910 | 16.6 |
| Rhode Island | 498 | 76 | 15.3 | 79 | 16.0 | 497 | 75 | 15.0 | 78 | 15.8 |
| South Carolina | 1,775 | 59 | 3.3 | 74 | 4.2 | 1,873 | 78 | 4.1 | 111 | 5.9 |
| South Dakota | 351 | 21 | 5.9 | 25 | 7.2 | 354 | 23 | 6.5 | 27 | 7.7 |
| Tennessee | 2,550 | 153 | 6.0 | 174 | 6.8 | 2,596 | 138 | 5.3 | 166 | 6.4 |
| Texas | 9,751 | 476 | 4.9 | 576 | 5.9 | 9,899 | 463 | 4.7 | 566 | 5.7 |
| Utah | 1,121 | 61 | 5.4 | 69 | 6.1 | 1,153 | 67 | 5.8 | 78 | 6.8 |
| Vermont | 305 | 34 | 11.0 | 39 | 12.9 | 288 | 30 | 10.4 | 35 | 12.2 |
| Virginia | 3,446 | 139 | 4.0 | 179 | 5.2 | 3,502 | 129 | 3.7 | 167 | 4.8 |
| Washington | 2,772 | 549 | 19.8 | 583 | 21.0 | 2,874 | 579 | 20.2 | 616 | 21.4 |
| West Virginia | 710 | 101 | 14.2 | 110 | 15.5 | 724 | 97 | 13.3 | 107 | 14.7 |
| Wisconsin | 2,587 | 386 | 14.9 | 415 | 16.1 | 2,631 | 376 | 14.3 | 405 | 15.4 |
| Wyoming | 235 | 19 | 8.3 | 24 | 10.0 | 239 | 19 | 7.9 | 22 | 9.4 |

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² Data refer to members of a labor union or an employee association similar to a union as well as workers who report no union affiliation but whose jobs are covered by a union or an employee association contract.

NOTE: Data refer to the sole or principal job of full- and part-time wage and salary workers. Excluded are all self-employed workers regardless of whether or not their businesses are incorporated. Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.

Chart 1. Union Membership rates by state, 2007 annual averages

(U.S. rate = 12.1 percent)

