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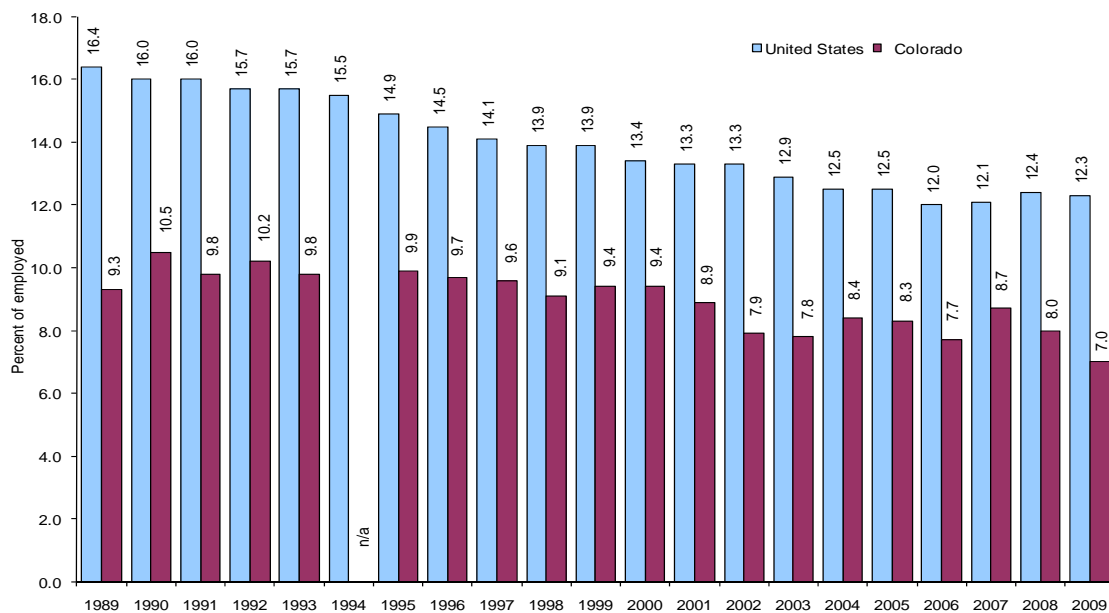
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UNION MEMBERSHIP IN COLORADO – 2009

In 2009, the number of workers in Colorado belonging to a union was 153,000, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that union members accounted for 7.0 percent of wage and salary workers in Colorado in 2009, compared with 8.0 percent in 2008. At its peak in 1990, union membership for the State was 10.5 percent.

Nationally, the number of workers belonging to a union declined by 771,000 to 15,327,000 in 2009, largely reflecting the overall drop in employment due to the recession. Union members accounted for 12.3 percent of employed wage and salary workers, essentially unchanged from 12.4 percent a year earlier. In 1983, the first year for which comparable national union data were available, the union membership rate was 20.1 percent. Since 1989, when state data were first available for comparison, Colorado’s union membership rate has been below the U.S. average every year. (See chart 1.)

Chart 1. Members of unions as a percent of employed in the United States and Colorado, 1989-2009



In addition to Colorado's 153,000 wage and salary workers who were union members in 2009, another 28,000 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. (See table A.) Nationwide, about 15.3 million wage and salary workers were union members in 2009 and about 1.6 million wage and salary workers were represented by a union on their main job but not union members themselves.

Table A. Union affiliation of employed wage and salary workers in Colorado, annual averages, 1989-2009 (Numbers in thousands)

| Year | Total employed | Members of unions ¹ | | Represented by unions ² | |
|------|----------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| | | Total | Percent of employed | Total | Percent of employed |
| 1989 | 1,395 | 129 | 9.3 | 158 | 11.3 |
| 1990 | 1,473 | 154 | 10.5 | 177 | 12.0 |
| 1991 | 1,480 | 145 | 9.8 | 174 | 11.7 |
| 1992 | 1,478 | 150 | 10.2 | 177 | 11.9 |
| 1993 | 1,559 | 153 | 9.8 | 178 | 11.4 |
| 1994 | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| 1995 | 1,725 | 170 | 9.9 | 208 | 12.0 |
| 1996 | 1,722 | 167 | 9.7 | 185 | 10.8 |
| 1997 | 1,814 | 174 | 9.6 | 201 | 11.1 |
| 1998 | 1,887 | 171 | 9.1 | 189 | 10.0 |
| 1999 | 1,927 | 181 | 9.4 | 199 | 10.4 |
| 2000 | 1,984 | 187 | 9.4 | 209 | 10.6 |
| 2001 | 2,000 | 179 | 8.9 | 207 | 10.3 |
| 2002 | 1,996 | 157 | 7.9 | 180 | 9.0 |
| 2003 | 2,007 | 156 | 7.8 | 180 | 9.0 |
| 2004 | 2,050 | 172 | 8.4 | 191 | 9.3 |
| 2005 | 2,052 | 170 | 8.3 | 193 | 9.4 |
| 2006 | 2,154 | 165 | 7.7 | 186 | 8.6 |
| 2007 | 2,204 | 191 | 8.7 | 202 | 9.2 |
| 2008 | 2,254 | 181 | 8.0 | 208 | 9.2 |
| 2009 | 2,175 | 153 | 7.0 | 181 | 8.3 |

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 are not members but whose jobs are covered by a union or 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. Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.

In 2009, 29 states and the District of Columbia had union membership rates below that of the U.S. average, 12.3 percent, while 20 states had higher rates, and 1 state had the same rate. (See table 1.) All states in the Middle Atlantic and Pacific divisions reported union membership rates about the national average, and all states in the East South Central and West South Central divisions had rates below the national average. (See chart 2.) Union membership rates rose over the year in 24 states, decreased in 21 states (including Colorado) and the District of Columbia, and were unchanged in 5 states.

Six states had union membership rates below 5.0 percent in 2009. North Carolina posted the lowest rate (3.1 percent), followed by Arkansas (4.2 percent), South Carolina (4.5 percent), Georgia (4.6 percent), Virginia (4.7 percent), and Mississippi (4.8 percent). Four states had union membership rates over 20.0

percent in 2009—New York (25.2 percent), Hawaii (23.5 percent), Alaska (22.3 percent) and Washington (20.2 percent).

State union membership levels depend on both the union membership rate and employment level. About half of the 15.3 million union members in the U.S. lived in just 6 states (California, 2.5 million; New York, 2.0 million; Illinois, 1.0 million; Pennsylvania, 0.8 million; and Michigan and New Jersey, 0.7 million each), though these states accounted for only one-third of wage and salary employment nationally.

Texas (the second largest state in terms of the number of wage and salary workers) had one-fourth as many union members as New York (the third largest), despite having 1.9 million more wage and salary employees. Similarly, Colorado and Iowa had comparable numbers of union members (153,000 and 156,000, respectively), though Colorado's wage and salary employment level (2,175,000) was more than 1.5 times that of Iowa (1,398,000).

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 national sample of about 60,000 households. The union membership and earnings 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 for levels, are not strictly comparable with data for earlier years because of the introduction of updated population controls used in the CPS. For technical documentation and related information, including reliability of the CPS estimates, see www.bls.gov/cps/documentation.htm.

For personal assistance or further information on union membership, as well as other Bureau data, contact the Mountain-Plains Information Office at 816-285-7000 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. CT. Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200, TDD message referral phone number: 1-800-877-8339.

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, 2008-2009

| State | 2008 | | | | | 2009 | | | | |
|----------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| | 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 | 1,858 | 181 | 9.8 | 199 | 10.7 | 1,763 | 191 | 10.9 | 212 | 12.0 |
| Alaska | 289 | 68 | 23.5 | 71 | 24.7 | 293 | 65 | 22.3 | 69 | 23.6 |
| Arizona | 2,579 | 227 | 8.8 | 254 | 9.8 | 2,471 | 162 | 6.5 | 194 | 7.9 |
| Arkansas | 1,158 | 68 | 5.9 | 85 | 7.3 | 1,103 | 47 | 4.2 | 55 | 5.0 |
| California | 14,889 | 2,740 | 18.4 | 2,909 | 19.5 | 14,297 | 2,453 | 17.2 | 2,622 | 18.3 |
| Colorado | 2,254 | 181 | 8.0 | 208 | 9.2 | 2,175 | 153 | 7.0 | 181 | 8.3 |
| Connecticut | 1,625 | 275 | 16.9 | 291 | 17.9 | 1,538 | 265 | 17.3 | 282 | 18.4 |
| Delaware | 391 | 52 | 13.4 | 57 | 14.7 | 367 | 44 | 11.9 | 47 | 12.8 |
| District of Columbia | 288 | 35 | 12.2 | 41 | 14.3 | 276 | 29 | 10.4 | 35 | 12.5 |
| Florida | 7,573 | 482 | 6.4 | 601 | 7.9 | 7,097 | 411 | 5.8 | 489 | 6.9 |
| Georgia | 4,084 | 151 | 3.7 | 189 | 4.6 | 3,869 | 177 | 4.6 | 226 | 5.9 |
| Hawaii | 562 | 136 | 24.3 | 143 | 25.5 | 526 | 123 | 23.5 | 128 | 24.3 |
| Idaho | 602 | 42 | 7.1 | 48 | 8.0 | 577 | 36 | 6.3 | 46 | 7.9 |
| Illinois | 5,662 | 939 | 16.6 | 993 | 17.5 | 5,435 | 951 | 17.5 | 997 | 18.3 |
| Indiana | 2,811 | 349 | 12.4 | 386 | 13.7 | 2,612 | 277 | 10.6 | 319 | 12.2 |
| Iowa | 1,437 | 153 | 10.6 | 187 | 13.0 | 1,398 | 156 | 11.1 | 185 | 13.3 |
| Kansas | 1,273 | 89 | 7.0 | 111 | 8.7 | 1,249 | 77 | 6.2 | 104 | 8.4 |
| Kentucky | 1,703 | 146 | 8.6 | 163 | 9.6 | 1,657 | 142 | 8.6 | 173 | 10.5 |
| Louisiana | 1,724 | 80 | 4.6 | 97 | 5.6 | 1,704 | 99 | 5.8 | 110 | 6.5 |
| Maine | 574 | 71 | 12.3 | 84 | 14.7 | 543 | 63 | 11.7 | 74 | 13.7 |
| Maryland | 2,610 | 329 | 12.6 | 380 | 14.5 | 2,555 | 323 | 12.6 | 366 | 14.3 |
| Massachusetts | 2,909 | 458 | 15.7 | 491 | 16.9 | 2,864 | 476 | 16.6 | 516 | 18.0 |
| Michigan | 4,089 | 771 | 18.8 | 801 | 19.6 | 3,785 | 710 | 18.8 | 752 | 19.9 |
| Minnesota | 2,430 | 392 | 16.1 | 412 | 17.0 | 2,400 | 362 | 15.1 | 377 | 15.7 |
| Mississippi | 1,089 | 57 | 5.3 | 79 | 7.3 | 1,029 | 49 | 4.8 | 66 | 6.4 |
| Missouri | 2,543 | 285 | 11.2 | 327 | 12.8 | 2,481 | 234 | 9.4 | 264 | 10.6 |
| Montana | 389 | 47 | 12.2 | 61 | 15.7 | 374 | 52 | 13.9 | 68 | 18.1 |
| Nebraska | 840 | 70 | 8.3 | 90 | 10.7 | 823 | 76 | 9.2 | 94 | 11.4 |
| Nevada | 1,192 | 199 | 16.7 | 217 | 18.2 | 1,097 | 173 | 15.7 | 188 | 17.2 |
| New Hampshire | 635 | 67 | 10.6 | 79 | 12.4 | 616 | 67 | 10.8 | 76 | 12.3 |
| New Jersey | 3,843 | 703 | 18.3 | 731 | 19.0 | 3,734 | 721 | 19.3 | 742 | 19.9 |
| New Mexico | 807 | 58 | 7.2 | 94 | 11.6 | 759 | 51 | 6.7 | 77 | 10.2 |
| New York | 8,165 | 2,029 | 24.9 | 2,170 | 26.6 | 8,021 | 2,019 | 25.2 | 2,182 | 27.2 |
| North Carolina | 3,799 | 132 | 3.5 | 189 | 5.0 | 3,707 | 115 | 3.1 | 162 | 4.4 |
| North Dakota | 308 | 19 | 6.1 | 25 | 8.2 | 301 | 21 | 6.8 | 30 | 9.8 |
| Ohio | 5,046 | 716 | 14.2 | 783 | 15.5 | 4,827 | 685 | 14.2 | 742 | 15.4 |
| Oklahoma | 1,529 | 102 | 6.6 | 127 | 8.3 | 1,456 | 83 | 5.7 | 107 | 7.3 |
| Oregon | 1,566 | 259 | 16.6 | 272 | 17.4 | 1,471 | 250 | 17.0 | 272 | 18.5 |
| Pennsylvania | 5,504 | 847 | 15.4 | 899 | 16.3 | 5,220 | 782 | 15.0 | 844 | 16.2 |
| Rhode Island | 471 | 78 | 16.5 | 82 | 17.4 | 444 | 80 | 17.9 | 83 | 18.7 |
| South Carolina | 1,792 | 70 | 3.9 | 105 | 5.8 | 1,672 | 75 | 4.5 | 91 | 5.4 |
| South Dakota | 369 | 18 | 5.0 | 24 | 6.4 | 357 | 20 | 5.5 | 24 | 6.6 |
| Tennessee | 2,534 | 139 | 5.5 | 166 | 6.6 | 2,387 | 121 | 5.1 | 156 | 6.6 |
| Texas | 9,991 | 449 | 4.5 | 559 | 5.6 | 9,920 | 508 | 5.1 | 615 | 6.2 |
| Utah | 1,178 | 68 | 5.8 | 84 | 7.1 | 1,136 | 79 | 6.9 | 90 | 8.0 |
| Vermont | 284 | 29 | 10.4 | 36 | 12.8 | 285 | 35 | 12.3 | 40 | 14.1 |
| Virginia | 3,597 | 146 | 4.1 | 178 | 5.0 | 3,503 | 166 | 4.7 | 191 | 5.4 |
| Washington | 2,912 | 578 | 19.8 | 626 | 21.5 | 2,847 | 574 | 20.2 | 612 | 21.5 |
| West Virginia | 736 | 101 | 13.8 | 112 | 15.3 | 699 | 97 | 13.9 | 108 | 15.4 |
| Wisconsin | 2,642 | 396 | 15.0 | 422 | 16.0 | 2,528 | 385 | 15.2 | 400 | 15.8 |
| Wyoming | 241 | 19 | 7.7 | 21 | 8.9 | 239 | 18 | 7.7 | 20 | 8.3 |

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² Data refer to both union members and 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. All self-employed workers are excluded, both those with incorporated businesses as well as those with unincorporated businesses. Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.

Chart 2. Union membership rates by state, 2009 annual averages

(U.S. rate = 12.3 percent)

