

SOUTHEAST INFORMATION OFFICE  
Atlanta, Ga.

For release: Tuesday, March 27, 2012

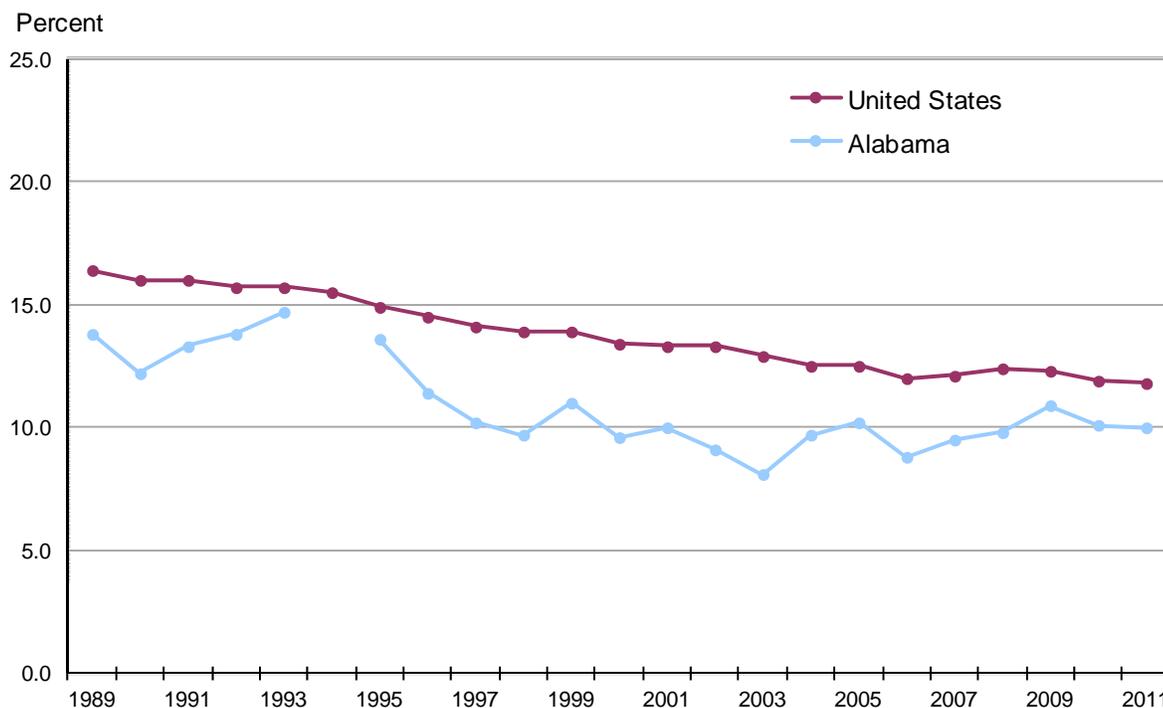
12-551-ATL

Technical Information: (404) 893-4222 • BLSInfoAtlanta@BLS.GOV • [www.bls.gov/ro4](http://www.bls.gov/ro4)  
Media Contact: (404) 893-4220

### UNION MEMBERSHIP IN ALABAMA – 2011

In 2011, union members accounted for 10.0 percent of wage and salary workers in Alabama, compared with 10.1 percent in 2010, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that at its peak in 1993, the union membership rate for the state was 14.7 percent before reaching a low of 8.1 percent in 2003. (See chart 1 and table A.) Nationwide, union members accounted for 11.8 percent of employed wage and salary workers in 2011, little changed from 11.9 percent a year ago. The union membership rate in Alabama has been below the national rate since 1989 when the state series began.

**Chart 1. Members of unions as a percent of employed, Alabama and the United States, 1989-2011**



Note: State data are not available for 1994.  
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Alabama had 178,000 union members in 2011. In addition to these members, another 15,000 wage and salary workers in Alabama were represented by a union on their main job or covered by an employee association or contract while not union members themselves. (See table A.) Nationwide, 14.8 million wage and salary workers were union members in 2011 and 1.5 million wage and salary workers were not affiliated with a union but had jobs covered by a union contract.

**Table A. Union affiliation of employed wage and salary workers in Alabama, annual averages, 1989-2011 (numbers in thousands)**

Year	Total employed	Members of unions [1]		Represented by unions [2]	
		Total	Percent of employed	Total	Percent of employed
1989	1,605	221	13.8	253	15.7
1990	1,585	194	12.2	229	14.4
1991	1,605	213	13.3	249	15.5
1992	1,632	225	13.8	264	16.2
1993	1,657	243	14.7	281	17.0
1994	-	-	-	-	-
1995	1,726	236	13.6	256	14.9
1996	1,762	201	11.4	226	12.8
1997	1,812	184	10.2	212	11.7
1998	1,854	180	9.7	218	11.8
1999	1,833	201	11.0	225	12.3
2000	1,848	178	9.6	195	10.5
2001	1,790	180	10.0	202	11.3
2002	1,758	160	9.1	186	10.6
2003	1,822	147	8.1	172	9.5
2004	1,861	181	9.7	213	11.5
2005	1,909	195	10.2	223	11.7
2006	1,930	170	8.8	194	10.0
2007	1,895	180	9.5	201	10.6
2008	1,858	181	9.8	199	10.7
2009	1,763	191	10.9	212	12.0
2010	1,809	183	10.1	203	11.2
2011	1,781	178	10.0	193	10.8

[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.

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.

In 2011, 21 states had union membership rates above the U.S. average, of which 12 had rates above 15 percent. (See table 1.) Of the 12 states with the highest rates, 4 were located in the Northeast, 3 in the Midwest, and the remaining 5 bordered the Pacific Ocean. (See chart 2.) New York had the highest rate (24.1 percent), followed by Alaska (22.1 percent), Hawaii (21.5 percent), and Washington (19.0 percent). In fact, New York has had the highest membership rate in the nation for 15 of the past 17 years.

Twenty-nine states and the District of Columbia had union membership rates below the national average of 11.8 percent in 2011. Seven of these states, all in the South, had union membership rates below 5.0 percent, with North Carolina having the lowest, 2.9 percent. The next lowest rates were recorded in

South Carolina (3.4 percent), Georgia (3.9 percent), Arkansas (4.2 percent), Louisiana (4.5 percent), and Tennessee and Virginia (4.6 percent each).

Over half of the 14.8 million union members in the United States lived in just seven states (California, 2.4 million; New York, 1.9 million; Illinois, 0.9 million; Pennsylvania, 0.8 million; Michigan, 0.7 million; and New Jersey and Ohio, 0.6 million each), though these states accounted for only one-third of wage and salary employment nationally.

State union membership levels depend on both the union membership rate and the employment level. For example, despite having 64,000 more employees than Louisiana, Alabama had more than twice as many union members. North Carolina and Hawaii had comparable numbers of union members (105,000 and 113,000, respectively), though North Carolina's wage and salary employment level (3.6 million) was nearly seven times that of Hawaii (525,000).

### **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. These updated controls have little or no effect on unemployment rates and other ratios, such as union membership rates. For technical documentation and related information, including reliability of the CPS estimates, see [www.bls.gov/cps/documentation.htm](http://www.bls.gov/cps/documentation.htm).

For personal assistance or further information on union membership, as well as other Bureau data, contact the Southeast Information Office at 404-893-4222 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET. Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200, Federal Relay Service: 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, 2010-2011 annual averages**

(Numbers in thousands)

State	2010					2011				
	Total employed	Members of unions <sup>1</sup>		Represented by unions <sup>2</sup>		Total employed	Members of unions <sup>1</sup>		Represented by unions <sup>2</sup>	
		Total	Percent of employed	Total	Percent of employed		Total	Percent of employed	Total	Percent of employed
Alabama	1,809	183	10.1	203	11.2	1,781	178	10.0	193	10.8
Alaska	295	68	22.9	73	24.8	306	68	22.1	73	23.7
Arizona	2,507	161	6.4	203	8.1	2,493	149	6.0	183	7.3
Arkansas	1,082	44	4.0	59	5.4	1,116	47	4.2	57	5.1
California	13,892	2,431	17.5	2,578	18.6	13,931	2,379	17.1	2,532	18.2
Colorado	2,130	140	6.6	171	8.0	2,186	179	8.2	203	9.3
Connecticut	1,549	258	16.7	270	17.4	1,542	259	16.8	272	17.7
Delaware	352	40	11.4	44	12.5	370	39	10.5	42	11.2
District of Columbia	287	26	9.0	30	10.5	281	23	8.3	28	9.9
Florida	7,033	392	5.6	488	6.9	7,283	460	6.3	557	7.6
Georgia	3,792	153	4.0	191	5.0	3,876	153	3.9	185	4.8
Hawaii	511	111	21.8	120	23.5	525	113	21.5	118	22.5
Idaho	584	42	7.1	50	8.6	594	31	5.1	36	6.1
Illinois	5,434	844	15.5	891	16.4	5,408	876	16.2	929	17.2
Indiana	2,554	279	10.9	313	12.2	2,681	302	11.3	333	12.4
Iowa	1,393	158	11.4	192	13.8	1,386	155	11.2	187	13.5
Kansas	1,222	84	6.8	111	9.1	1,268	97	7.6	128	10.1
Kentucky	1,642	147	8.9	166	10.1	1,678	150	8.9	173	10.3
Louisiana	1,742	76	4.3	96	5.5	1,717	77	4.5	91	5.3
Maine	543	63	11.6	71	13.0	554	63	11.3	74	13.4
Maryland	2,558	296	11.6	329	12.9	2,549	316	12.4	348	13.7
Massachusetts	2,866	415	14.5	446	15.6	2,882	422	14.6	445	15.4
Michigan	3,806	627	16.5	659	17.3	3,838	671	17.5	703	18.3
Minnesota	2,468	385	15.6	397	16.1	2,461	371	15.1	390	15.8
Mississippi	1,037	46	4.5	58	5.6	1,081	54	5.0	73	6.8
Missouri	2,469	244	9.9	274	11.1	2,531	275	10.9	316	12.5
Montana	364	46	12.7	52	14.4	377	49	13.0	55	14.6
Nebraska	813	75	9.3	96	11.8	828	65	7.9	83	10.0
Nevada	1,012	151	15.0	170	16.8	1,050	154	14.6	175	16.6
New Hampshire	622	63	10.2	73	11.7	617	68	11.1	77	12.5
New Jersey	3,734	637	17.1	660	17.7	3,816	615	16.1	641	16.8
New Mexico	750	55	7.3	72	9.7	726	49	6.8	65	9.0
New York	8,078	1,959	24.2	2,099	26.0	7,920	1,906	24.1	2,068	26.1
North Carolina	3,686	117	3.2	180	4.9	3,589	105	2.9	149	4.1
North Dakota	313	23	7.4	28	9.1	318	20	6.3	27	8.6
Ohio	4,787	655	13.7	702	14.7	4,813	647	13.4	706	14.7
Oklahoma	1,418	77	5.5	99	6.9	1,458	94	6.4	113	7.7
Oregon	1,515	245	16.2	268	17.7	1,574	270	17.1	286	18.1
Pennsylvania	5,224	770	14.7	831	15.9	5,348	779	14.6	846	15.8
Rhode Island	456	75	16.4	79	17.4	453	79	17.4	81	17.9
South Carolina	1,713	80	4.6	107	6.2	1,726	59	3.4	86	5.0
South Dakota	357	20	5.6	24	6.6	359	18	5.1	23	6.5
Tennessee	2,477	115	4.7	142	5.8	2,504	115	4.6	139	5.6
Texas	10,025	545	5.4	677	6.7	10,214	534	5.2	643	6.3
Utah	1,144	75	6.5	96	8.4	1,150	67	5.8	82	7.1
Vermont	289	34	11.8	40	13.6	290	35	12.0	39	13.5
Virginia	3,473	161	4.6	196	5.7	3,550	163	4.6	198	5.6
Washington	2,837	552	19.4	605	21.3	2,727	517	19.0	557	20.4
West Virginia	677	100	14.8	111	16.5	672	93	13.8	102	15.2
Wisconsin	2,508	355	14.2	380	15.1	2,538	339	13.3	358	14.1
Wyoming	246	18	7.4	21	8.4	250	18	7.2	21	8.4

<sup>1</sup> Data refer to members of a labor union or an employee association similar to a union.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

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.

