

WEST INFORMATION OFFICE
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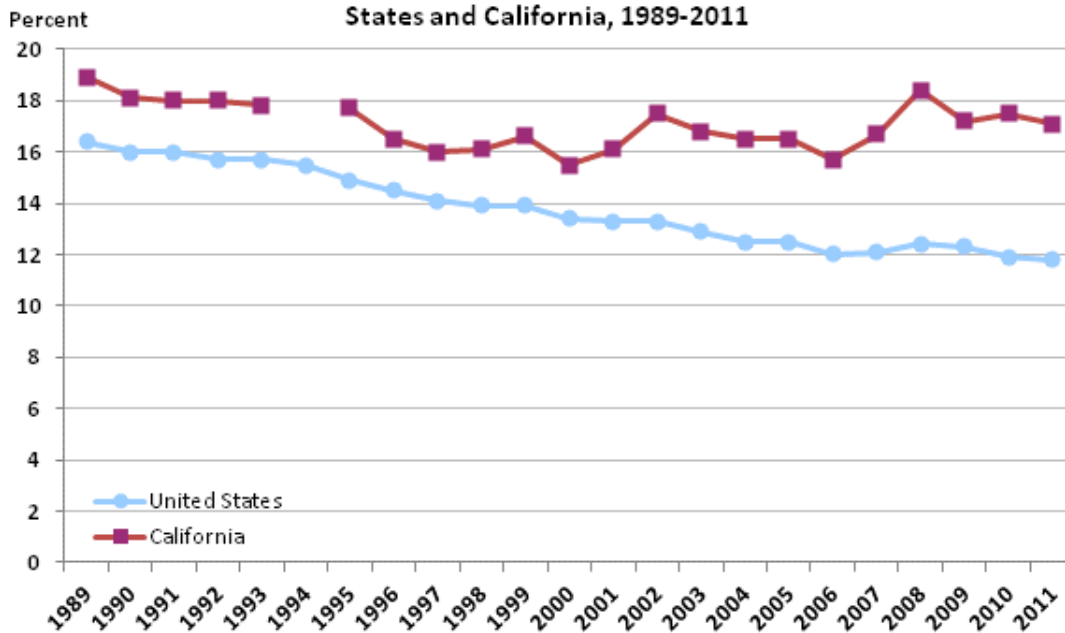
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UNION MEMBERSHIP IN CALIFORNIA – 2011

In 2011, the number of workers belonging to a union was 2,379,000 in California, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Richard J. Holden noted that union members accounted for 17.1 percent of wage and salary workers in California in 2011 compared with 17.5 percent reported in 2010. (See chart 1.) At its peak in 1989 (the first year for which comparable state data were available), California’s union membership rate was 18.9 percent. Nationally, union members accounted for 11.8 percent of employed wage and salary workers in 2011 and 11.9 percent in 2010.

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



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

In addition to the 2,379,000 wage and salary workers in California who were union members in 2011, another 153,000 workers were represented by a union on their main job or covered by an employee association or contract while not being union members themselves. (See table A.) Nationwide, 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 California, 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	11,826	2,239	18.9	2,584	21.9
1990	12,526	2,268	18.1	2,624	21.0
1991	12,116	2,185	18.0	2,503	20.7
1992	12,077	2,169	18.0	2,520	20.9
1993	12,018	2,139	17.8	2,415	20.1
1994	-	-	-	-	-
1995	12,320	2,176	17.7	2,463	20.0
1996	12,461	2,061	16.5	2,340	18.8
1997	12,878	2,067	16.0	2,321	18.0
1998	13,338	2,154	16.1	2,408	18.1
1999	13,811	2,286	16.6	2,527	18.3
2000	14,148	2,195	15.5	2,466	17.4
2001	14,188	2,287	16.1	2,515	17.7
2002	13,955	2,444	17.5	2,619	18.8
2003	14,350	2,414	16.8	2,647	18.4
2004	14,414	2,385	16.5	2,588	18.0
2005	14,687	2,424	16.5	2,610	17.8
2006	14,501	2,273	15.7	2,444	16.9
2007	14,856	2,474	16.7	2,650	17.8
2008	14,889	2,740	18.4	2,909	19.5
2009	14,297	2,453	17.2	2,622	18.3
2010	13,892	2,431	17.5	2,578	18.6
2011	13,931	2,379	17.1	2,532	18.2

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.

- Not available

NOTE: Data refer to the sole or principal job of full-and part-time workers. All self-employed workers are excluded, both these with incorporated businesses as well as those with unincorporated businesses. 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, 11.8 percent, 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, 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 2.3 million fewer wage and salary employees statewide, New York had over four times as many union members as Texas. 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.

For personal assistance or further information on union membership, as well as other Bureau data, contact the West Information Office at (415) 625-2270. 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, 2010-2011 annual averages

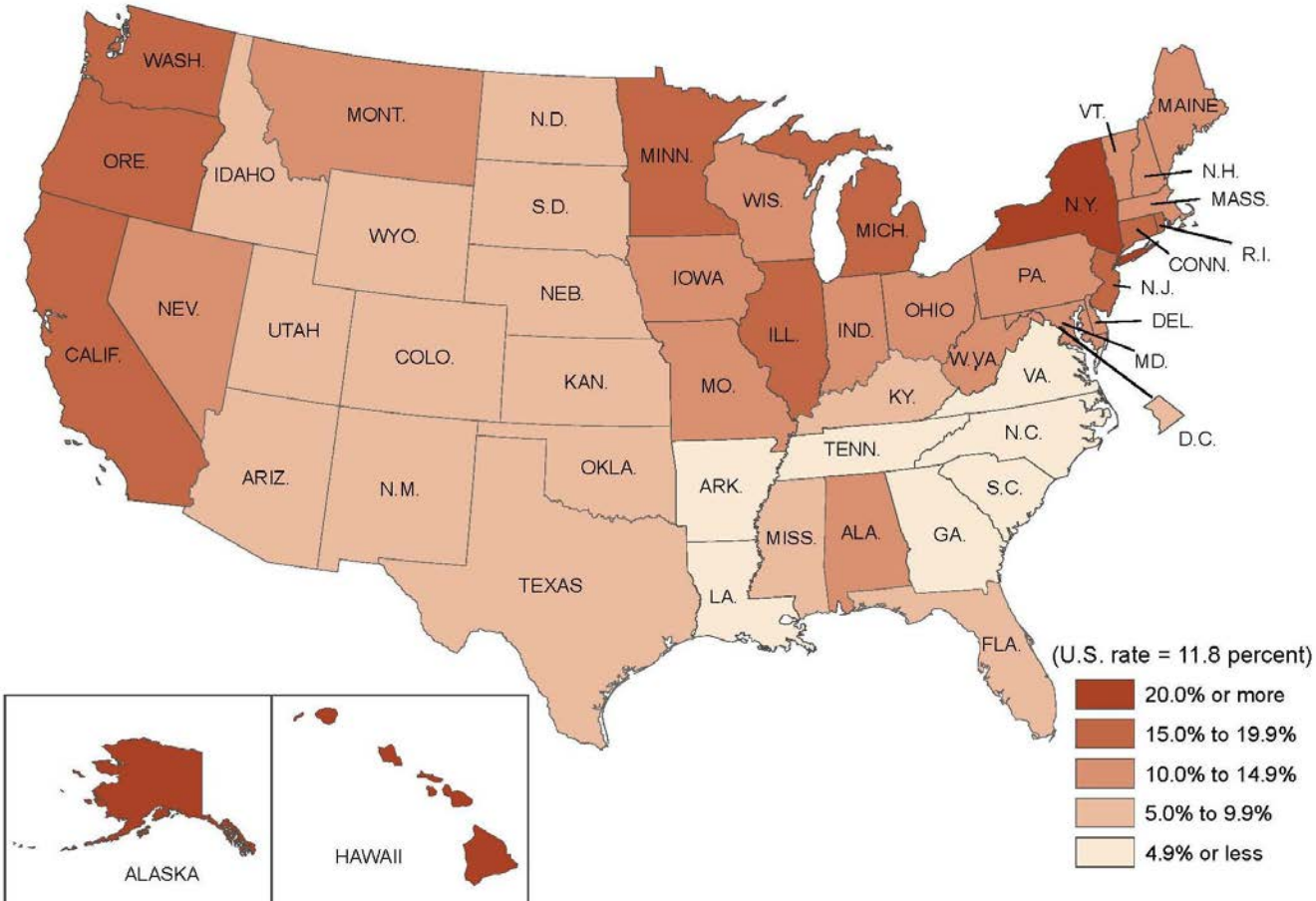
(Numbers in thousands)

State	2010					2011				
	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	1,809	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

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Chart 2. Union membership rates by state, 2011 annual averages



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics