



NEWS RELEASE



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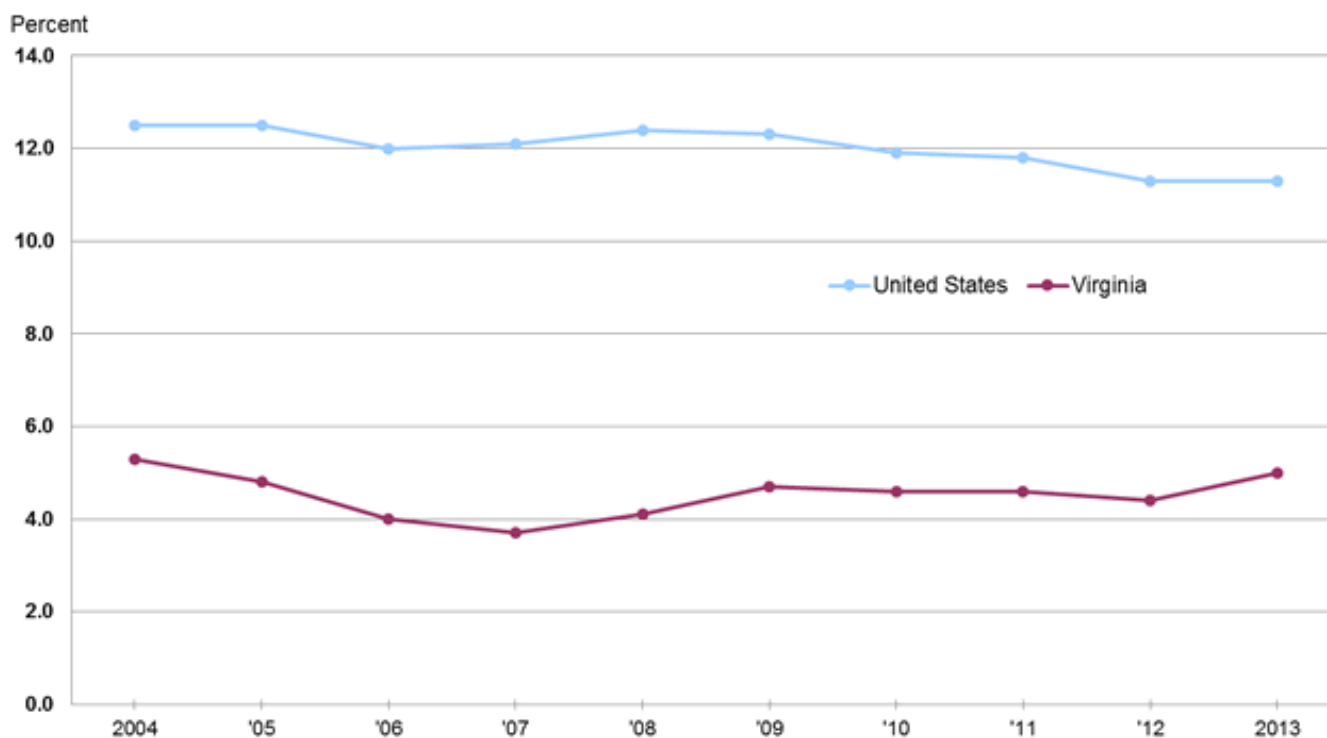
Technical information: (215) 597-3282 • BLSInfoPhiladelphia@bls.gov • /ro3

Media contact: (215) 861-5600 • BLSMediaPhiladelphia@bls.gov

Union Membership in Virginia – 2013

In 2013, union members accounted for 5.0 percent of wage and salary workers in the Commonwealth of Virginia, compared with 4.9 percent in 2012, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Sheila Watkins, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that in 1989, the first year for which state data are available, the union membership rate for the Commonwealth was 9.1 percent before reaching a high of 9.3 percent in 1992. Since then, Virginia's union membership rate has generally declined and remained lower than that for the United States. Nationally, union members accounted for 11.3 percent of employed wage and salary workers, unchanged from 2012. (See [chart 1](#).)

Chart 1. Members of unions as a percentage of the employed in the United States and the Commonwealth of Virginia, 2004-2013



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Virginia had 180,000 wage and salary workers who were union members in 2013. In addition to these

members, another 49,000 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 14.5 million wage and salary workers were union members in 2013 and about 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 Virginia, annual averages 2004-2013

Year	Total employed	Members of unions ⁽¹⁾		Represented by unions ⁽²⁾	
		Total	Percent of employed	Total	Percent of employed
Footnotes: (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 employee association contract.					
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.					

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In 2013, 20 states had union membership rates above the U.S. average, of which 9 had rates above 15.0 percent. Of the nine states with the highest rates, two were located in the Midwest, three in the Northeast, and the remaining four bordered the Pacific Ocean. (See [chart 2.](#)) New York had the highest rate at 24.4 percent, followed by Alaska (23.1 percent) and Hawaii (22.1 percent).

Thirty states and the District of Columbia had union membership rates below the national average of 11.3 percent in 2013. Nine of these states had union membership rates below 5.0 percent with North Carolina having the lowest, 3.0 percent. The next-lowest rates were recorded in Arkansas (3.5 percent), Mississippi and South Carolina (3.7 percent each), and Utah (3.9 percent).

Over half of the 14.5 million union members in the U.S. lived in just seven states (California, 2.4 million; New York, 2.0 million; Illinois, 0.9 million; Pennsylvania, 0.7 million; and Michigan, New Jersey, and Ohio, 0.6 million each), though these states accounted for only about 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, Virginia had about half as many union members as Minnesota, despite having over 1,000,000 more wage and salary employees. Conversely, North Carolina and Hawaii had comparable numbers of union members (117,000 and 121,000, respectively), though North Carolina's wage and salary employment (3.9 million) was more than seven times that of Hawaii (549,000).

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.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (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, 2012-2013 (Numbers in thousands)

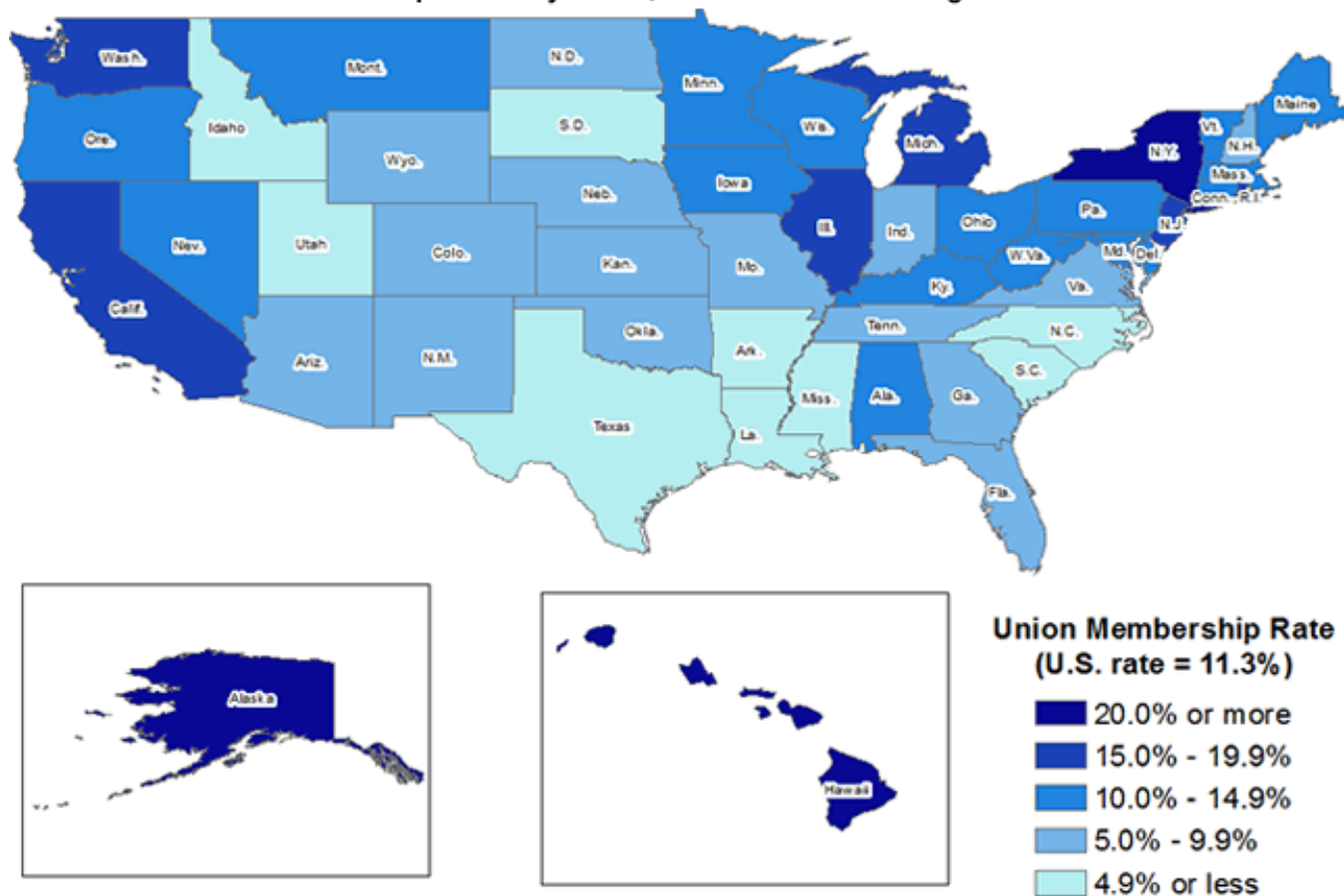
State	2012					2013				
	Total employed	Members of unions ⁽¹⁾		Represented by unions ⁽²⁾		Total employed	Members of unions ⁽¹⁾		Represented by unions ⁽²⁾	
		Total	Percent of employed	Total	Percent of employed		Total	Percent of employed	Total	Percent of employed
Footnotes: (1) Data refer to members of a labor union or an employee association similar to a union. (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.										

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Chart 2. Union membership rates by state, 2013 annual averages



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.