



For Release: Wednesday, February 12, 2020

20-174-ATL

SOUTHEAST INFORMATION OFFICE: Atlanta, Ga.

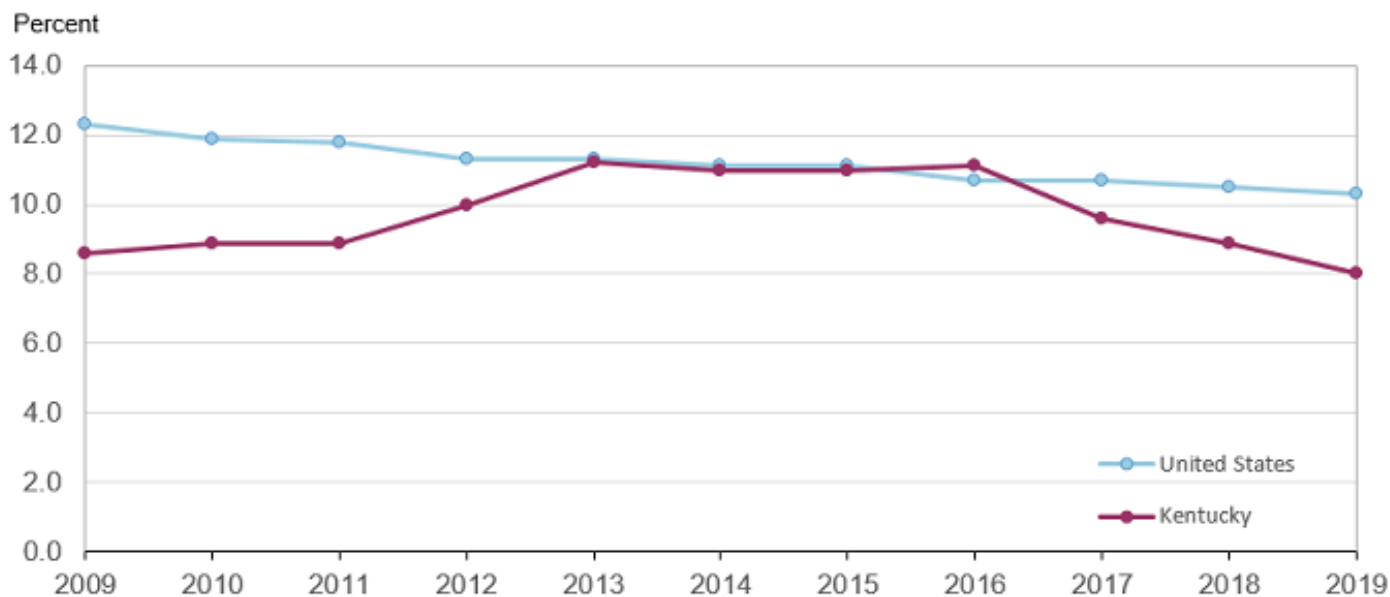
Technical information: (404) 893-4222 BLSInfoAtlanta@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/southeast

Media contact: (404) 893-4220

Union Members in Kentucky – 2019

In 2019, union members accounted for 8.0 percent of wage and salary workers in Kentucky, compared with 8.9 percent in 2018, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin noted that the union membership rate for the state was at its peak in 1989, when it averaged 14.8 percent, and at its series low in 2019. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A](#).) Nationwide, union members accounted for 10.3 percent of employed wage and salary workers in 2019, down by 0.2 percentage point from 2018. Since 1989, when comparable state data became available, union membership rates in Kentucky have been below the U.S. average with the exception of one year.

Chart 1. Members of unions as a percent of employed in the United States and Kentucky, 2009–2019



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Kentucky had 144,000 union members in 2019. In addition to these members, another 25,000 wage and salary workers in Kentucky 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, 14.6 million wage and salary workers were union members in 2019 and 1.8 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 Kentucky, annual averages, 2009–2019 (numbers in thousands)

Year	Total employed	Members of unions ⁽¹⁾		Represented by unions ⁽²⁾	
		Total	Percent of employed	Total	Percent of employed
2009	1,657	142	8.6	173	10.5
2010	1,642	147	8.9	166	10.1
2011	1,678	150	8.9	173	10.3
2012	1,742	174	10.0	198	11.4
2013	1,735	194	11.2	226	13.0
2014	1,714	189	11.0	219	12.8
2015	1,705	187	11.0	207	12.1
2016	1,710	190	11.1	228	13.4
2017	1,810	174	9.6	232	12.8
2018	1,812	161	8.9	207	11.4
2019	1,786	144	8.0	169	9.5

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.

In 2019, 28 states and the District of Columbia had union membership rates below that of the U.S. average, 10.3 percent, while 21 states had rates above it and 1 state had the same rate. (See [table 1](#).) Eight states had union membership rates below 5.0 percent in 2019. South Carolina and North Carolina had the lowest rates (2.2 percent and 2.3 percent, respectively). The next lowest rates were in Texas and Virginia (4.0 percent each). Two states had union membership rates over 20.0 percent in 2019: Hawaii (23.5 percent) and New York (21.0 percent). (See [chart 2](#).)

Over half of the 14.6 million union members in the U.S. lived in just seven states (California, 2.5 million; New York, 1.7 million; Illinois, 0.8 million; Pennsylvania, 0.7 million; and New Jersey, Ohio, and Washington, 0.6 million each), though these states accounted for only about one-third of wage and salary employment nationally.

Technical Note

The estimates in this release are obtained from the Current Population Survey (CPS), which provides 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 eligible households. 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.

Beginning in January of each year, data reflect revised population controls used in the CPS. Additional information about population controls is available on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/cps/documentation.htm#pop.

Information about the reliability of data from the CPS and guidance on estimating standard errors is available at www.bls.gov/cps/documentation.htm#reliability.

Definitions

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

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

Union membership rate. Data refer to the proportion of total wage and salary workers who are union members.

Represented by unions. 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.

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. Union membership and earnings data exclude all self-employed workers, both those with incorporated businesses as well as those with unincorporated businesses.

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.

Table 1. Union affiliation of employed wage and salary workers by state, 2018-2019 annual averages (numbers in thousands)

State	2018					2019				
	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	1,950	180	9.2	196	10.1	2,041	173	8.5	199	9.8
Alaska	299	55	18.5	60	20.0	282	48	17.1	53	18.7
Arizona	2,943	156	5.3	191	6.5	3,028	174	5.7	214	7.1
Arkansas	1,176	56	4.8	62	5.3	1,200	62	5.2	71	5.9
California	16,399	2,405	14.7	2,587	15.8	16,485	2,504	15.2	2,726	16.5
Colorado	2,564	281	11.0	307	12.0	2,631	237	9.0	259	9.8
Connecticut	1,677	268	16.0	280	16.7	1,680	244	14.5	269	16.0
Delaware	434	45	10.3	47	10.8	432	38	8.7	43	9.9
District of Columbia	354	35	9.9	41	11.6	361	34	9.3	37	10.2
Florida	8,702	484	5.6	588	6.8	8,827	551	6.2	667	7.6
Georgia	4,466	201	4.5	249	5.6	4,422	180	4.1	223	5.0
Hawaii	601	139	23.1	146	24.3	574	135	23.5	147	25.5
Idaho	733	34	4.7	41	5.6	764	37	4.9	46	6.0
Illinois	5,694	786	13.8	839	14.7	5,658	771	13.6	832	14.7
Indiana	3,049	269	8.8	283	9.3	3,007	249	8.3	296	9.8
Iowa	1,461	113	7.7	129	8.8	1,543	97	6.3	122	7.9
Kansas	1,283	90	7.0	129	10.1	1,280	112	8.7	130	10.1
Kentucky	1,812	161	8.9	207	11.4	1,786	144	8.0	169	9.5
Louisiana	1,785	89	5.0	104	5.8	1,784	94	5.3	108	6.1
Maine	573	74	12.9	85	14.8	588	69	11.8	81	13.7
Maryland	2,784	307	11.0	336	12.1	2,912	330	11.3	371	12.8
Massachusetts	3,397	464	13.7	493	14.5	3,397	406	12.0	449	13.2
Michigan	4,320	625	14.5	663	15.4	4,323	589	13.6	648	15.0
Minnesota	2,634	395	15.0	421	16.0	2,662	364	13.7	381	14.3
Mississippi	1,121	58	5.1	80	7.1	1,105	70	6.3	93	8.4
Missouri	2,675	251	9.4	283	10.6	2,661	297	11.1	333	12.5
Montana	427	50	11.8	60	14.0	437	46	10.5	52	12.0
Nebraska	882	59	6.6	71	8.0	894	75	8.4	86	9.6
Nevada	1,376	191	13.9	216	15.7	1,379	201	14.6	222	16.1
New Hampshire	664	68	10.2	77	11.6	677	69	10.3	79	11.6
New Jersey	3,935	587	14.9	639	16.2	4,094	642	15.7	712	17.4
New Mexico	812	56	6.8	67	8.2	813	58	7.1	72	8.8
New York	8,404	1,872	22.3	2,027	24.1	8,253	1,732	21.0	1,877	22.7
North Carolina	4,331	118	2.7	174	4.0	4,396	102	2.3	150	3.4
North Dakota	343	18	5.2	23	6.7	356	21	6.0	27	7.5
Ohio	5,054	639	12.6	722	14.3	5,127	610	11.9	673	13.1
Oklahoma	1,583	90	5.7	117	7.4	1,554	96	6.2	123	7.9
Oregon	1,738	242	13.9	256	14.7	1,772	255	14.4	277	15.7
Pennsylvania	5,575	701	12.6	748	13.4	5,642	676	12.0	740	13.1
Rhode Island	479	83	17.4	89	18.5	475	83	17.4	90	19.0
South Carolina	2,016	55	2.7	72	3.6	2,140	47	2.2	59	2.7
South Dakota	387	22	5.6	28	7.1	395	22	5.6	26	6.7
Tennessee	2,816	155	5.5	179	6.4	2,947	135	4.6	162	5.5
Texas	11,989	512	4.3	653	5.4	12,334	497	4.0	642	5.2
Utah	1,343	56	4.1	76	5.7	1,409	62	4.4	83	5.9
Vermont	291	31	10.5	34	11.6	290	33	11.2	35	12.0
Virginia	3,875	168	4.3	213	5.5	3,881	156	4.0	201	5.2
Washington	3,270	649	19.8	671	20.5	3,393	638	18.8	684	20.2
West Virginia	684	68	10.0	74	10.8	704	72	10.2	78	11.1
Wisconsin	2,700	219	8.1	233	8.6	2,698	218	8.1	245	9.1
Wyoming	235	15	6.5	18	7.7	243	18	7.3	21	8.7

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

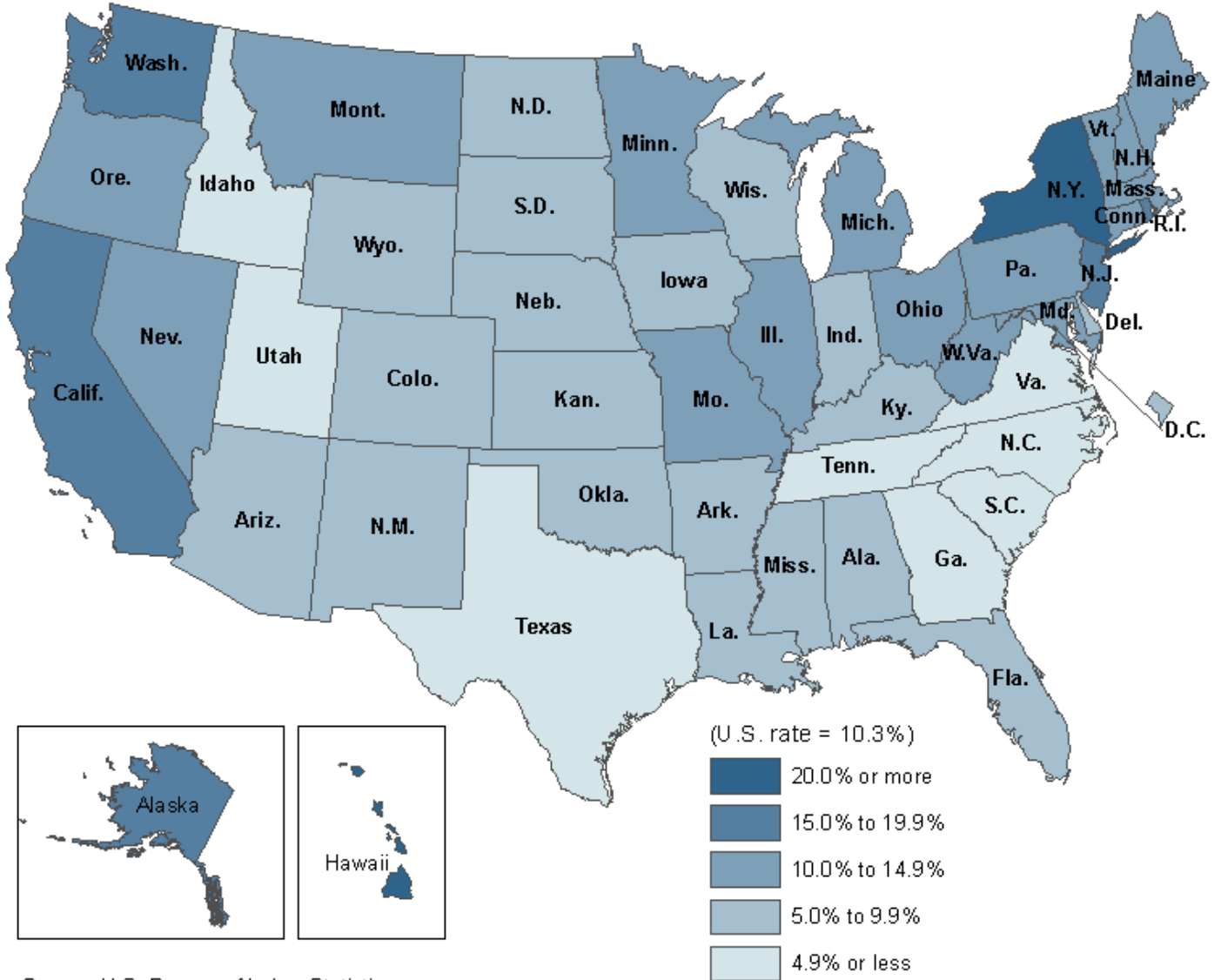
Footnotes

(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.

Chart 2. Union membership rates by state, 2019 annual averages



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.