

Union Membership Data and Trends

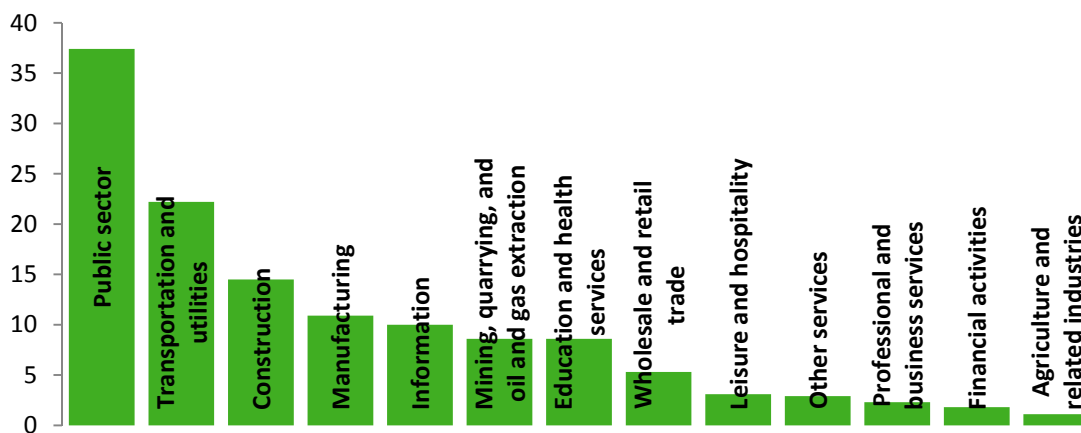
Earnings

Data from the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)ⁱ allow comparison of median wages earned by union members and non-members in the U.S. In 2009 union members in most industries earned higher wages than their non-union counterparts, although the data show some industries in which non-union members earn higher wages than union members. The BLS notes the difference reflects a variety of influences including coverage by a collective bargaining agreement, variations in the distributions of union members and non-union employees by occupation, industry, firm size, or geographic region. In 2009 the median weekly wage for union members in manufacturing industries was \$767, equaling 105% of the non-union wage.

Union Membership by Industry in the U.S.

In 2009 7.9 million public sector employees belonged to a union, compared with 7.4 million union workers in the private sector. The union membership rate for public sector workers (37.4 percent) was more than five times the rate for private industry workers (7.2 percent). Private sector industries with high unionization rates included transportation and utilities (22.2 percent), and construction (14.5 percent). The rate for manufacturing was 10.9%. See chart below for details.

U.S. Union Members Percent of Workers by Industry, 2009



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, bureau of labor statistics; 2009 Union Member Summary, table 3.

Union Membership by State

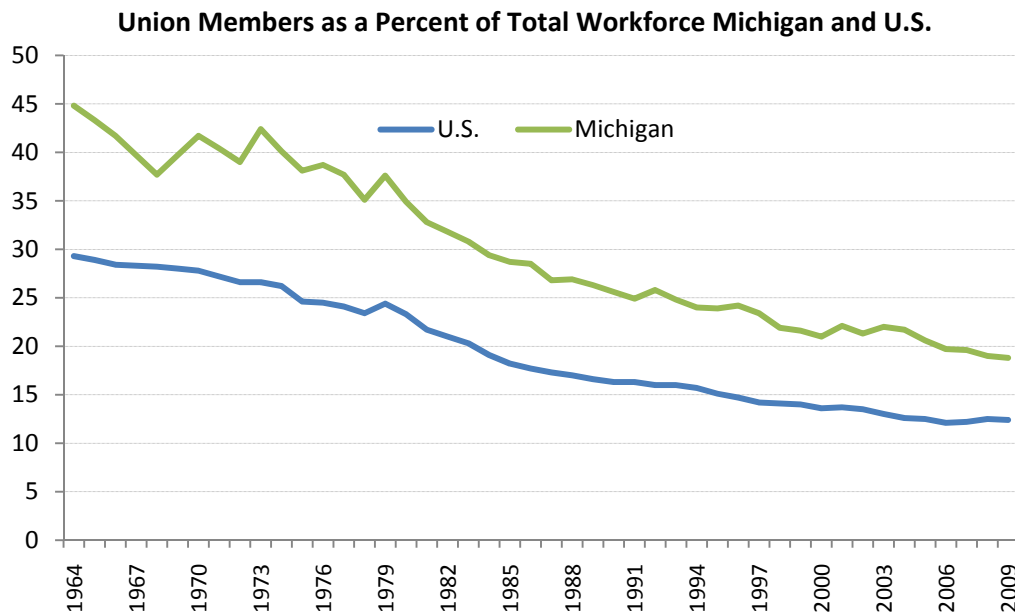
Michigan ranked 6th in total number of union members in 2009, behind California, New York, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. The distribution of union workers nationally is illustrated in the map below. From 1989-2009, Michigan lost 303,000 union workers, a greater loss than any other state. Fourteen states gained union members over that period, including six states with “right-to-work” laws (Arizona, Florida, Nevada, South Carolina, Texas, and Utah)ⁱⁱ.

2009 Union Members by State, in thousands



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, bureau of labor statistics; 2009 Union Member Summary, table 5.

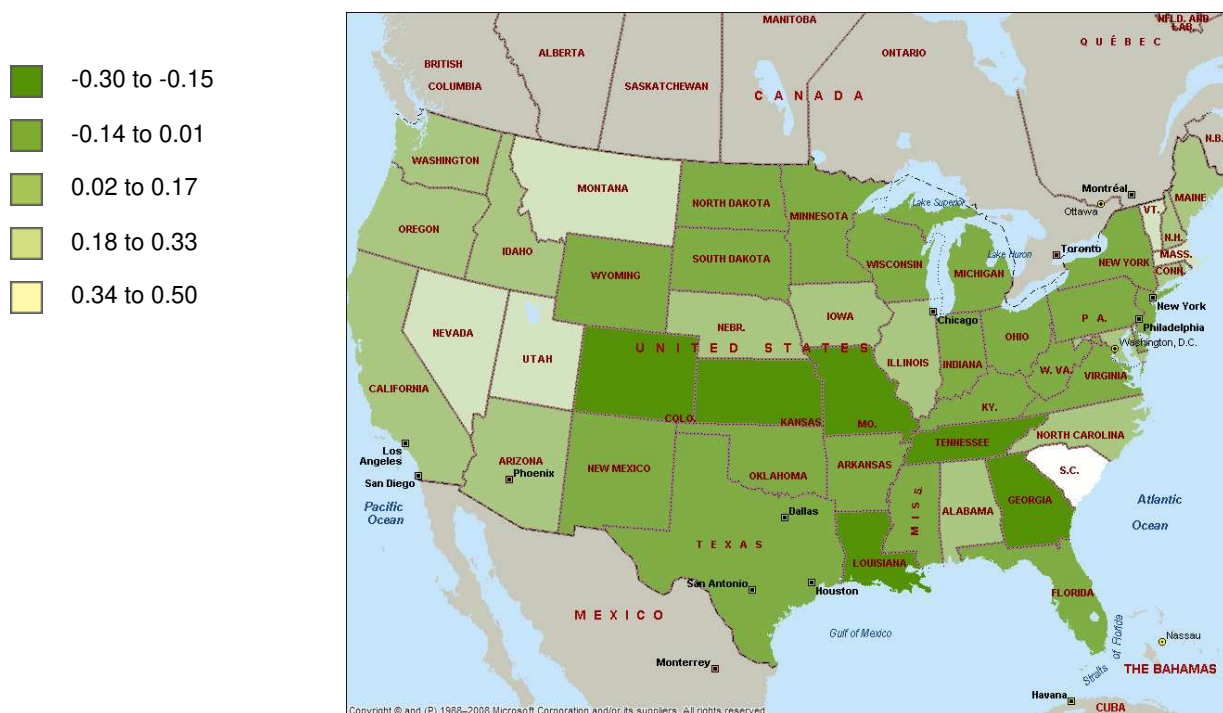
18.8% of Michigan workers were union members in 2009, compared to 12.3% nationallyⁱⁱⁱ. Michigan had the 6th highest union membership rate in the nation, behind New York, Hawaii, Alaska, Washington and New Jersey. Union membership as a percentage of the workforce in Michigan has declined by more than half since the mid-1960s^{iv}.



Source: Barry T. Hirsch, David A. Macpherson, and Wayne G. Vroman, "Estimates of Union Density by State," *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 124, No. 7, July 2001, pp. 51-55. (accompanying data online at www.unionstats.com). © 2009 by Barry T. Hirsch, David A. Macpherson, and Wayne G. Vroman

From 2004-2009, the U.S. rate declined by just 1.6%; Michigan's rate declined by 13% over the period. The rate increased in 23 states, including 10 states with "right-to-work" laws (Alabama, Arizona, Idaho, Iowa, Nebraska, Nevada, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas and Utah).^v The national picture is shown on the map below.

2004-2009 Percent Change in Union Members as Percent of Workforce



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, bureau of labor statistics; 2009 Union Member Summary, table 5.

ⁱ Table 3. Union affiliation of employed wage and salary workers by occupation and industry, US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics; retrieved September 20, 2010, <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/union2.t03.htm>

ⁱⁱ Based on states identified as Right to Work states by the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation, <http://www.nrtw.org/rtws.htm>.

Table 5. Union affiliation of employed wage and salary workers by state, US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics; retrieved September 20, 2010, <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/union2.t05.htm>

iv Barry T. Hirsch, David A. Macpherson, and Wayne G. Vroman, "Estimates of Union Density by State," *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 124, No. 7, July 2001, pp. 51-55. (accompanying data online at www.unionstats.com). © 2009 by Barry T. Hirsch, David A. Macpherson, and Wayne G. Vroman

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