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## Union members in 2007: a visual essay

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Union membership data are eagerly anticipated each year by labor unions, economic researchers, business managers, and reporters. These annual average data from the Current Population Survey (CPS) have been available since 1983. The CPS is a survey of about 60,000 households that provides data on employment and unemployment among the Nation's civilian noninstitutional population age 16 and older. Additional data on union membership are available on the Internet at [www.bls.gov/cps/lfcharacteristics.htm#union](http://www.bls.gov/cps/lfcharacteristics.htm#union).

The term "union members" refers to members of a labor union or an employee association similar to a union. Nonunion employees are not members of a union, nor are they represented by a union on their job.

Data in this essay are limited to employed wage and salary workers. Union members who are temporarily absent from work because of strikes are included in the data. However, dues-paying union members who are unemployed or out of the labor force (such as those who are retired) are excluded.

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This excerpt is from an article published in the October 2008 issue of the *Monthly Labor Review*. The full text of the article is available in Adobe Acrobat's Portable Document Format (PDF). See [How to view a PDF file](#) for more information.

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