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Unionization Trends in Ohio and the U.S.

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This report summarizes historical and recent data reflecting trends in union membership and National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) union representation elections, both nationally and in Ohio. These data demonstrate that across the U.S. and in Ohio, union membership has been steadily declining for more than 20 years. In addition, there has been a dramatic shift in union workers from the private sector into the public sector, and the level of new union organizing activity has slowed considerably. These trends suggest that, for most private sector workers, unions today have a minimal impact on wages and working conditions and that any negative economic effects of unionization on private sector employers have been moderated.

Summary of Unionization Trends in the U.S. and Ohio

Union Membership Rates Decline Nationally and in Ohio

Since the 1970s Unionization rates for the U.S. have been steadily declining. In 1983, the first year for which comparable data are available, 20.1 percent of all U.S. workers belonged to a union¹, and there were 17.7 million union workers². By 2009³ the percentage of U.S. workers belonging to a union had dropped by nearly half to 12.3 percent, and the total number of union workers had declined to just over 15 million. By geographic region, unionization rates are highest in the Mid-Atlantic and Pacific states and lowest in the East South Central and West South Central states⁴. Among all the states New York ranks number one with the highest union membership rate at 25.2 percent, and North Carolina ranks lowest at 3.1 percent.

Ohio's unionization rates follow the national trend. Over the last 20 years, Ohio has seen a substantial drop in overall union membership, as well as a dramatic shift in unionization from the private sector, and particularly private sector manufacturing, to the public sector. In 1989⁵, 987,000 Ohio workers belonged to a union. By 2009 this figure had fallen more than 30 percent (302,000) to 685,000, of which just 8.9 percent of private sector workers were union members.

¹ This report looks at union membership as a percent of all U.S. wage and salary workers ages 16 and over. The data are from the monthly Current Population Survey (CPS) which is conducted by the Census Bureau for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Barry T. Hirsch and David A. Macpherson, *Union Membership and Earnings Data Book: Compilations from the Current Population Survey*, Bureau of National Affairs, (2010).

² *Union Members Summary 2009*, BLS, (2010).

³ 2009 data is the most recent data available from the CPS.

⁴ The Census Bureau divides the U.S. into nine geographic divisions: Pacific, Mountain, West North Central, East North Central, Middle Atlantic, South Atlantic, West South Central, East South Central, and New England. Data are reported based on these nine divisions.

⁵ 1989 was the first year for which comparable state data are available from the BLS.

In 2009, 14.2 percent of all Ohio workers were union members, just above the national average of 12.3 percent, but significantly below the top ten most unionized states.

Ohio's Unionization Rates Compared to Other Midwestern and Surrounding States

Comparing Ohio's overall unionization rate of 14.2 percent to rates in eight other Midwestern and surrounding states⁶, Ohio ranked 5th. In 2009, Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania all had rates above 14.2 percent. West Virginia, Indiana, and Kentucky had rates below. Ohio also ranked 5th at 8.9 percent for private sector only unionization. Michigan, Illinois, West Virginia and Pennsylvania all had rates above 8.9 percent. Private sector rates for Wisconsin, Indiana, and Kentucky were below 8.9 percent. For private sector manufacturing, Ohio ranked 4th at 16 percent.

Examining the five-year period, from 2004 to 2009, overall unionization rates declined in six of these eight states, including Ohio. Overall rates held steady in Pennsylvania, and rose slightly in Illinois. For private sector only, unionization rates fell in all eight states, with the greatest declines in Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin. All eight states also experienced a drop in unionization rates for workers in private manufacturing. Michigan and Ohio saw the most dramatic declines at -12.5 and -6.1 percent respectively.

The Majority of Union Members Work for the Government

Over the last 30 years, the U.S. has experienced a dramatic shift in the number of union workers from the private sector to the public sector, with union workers moving out of the manufacturing industry into the public sector at a pace faster than the overall workforce.⁷ For the first time in American history in 2009 a majority of union members were government workers rather than private sector employees. In 2009, 37.4 percent of union members worked in government, compared to 7.2 percent who worked in the private sector, the lowest percentage of private sector workers since 1900, according to labor historians⁸. Following this nationwide trend, union workers in Ohio's public sector also easily outnumber those in the private sector. In 2009, 44 percent of Ohio's public sector workers were union members, compared to 8.9 percent of private sector workers who belonged to a union.⁹

⁶ These eight states include: Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

⁷ Mayer, *Union Membership Trends in the United States*, U.S. Congressional Research Service, (2004).

⁸ *Greenhouse, Most Union Members are Working for the Government*, New York Times, January, 23, 2010.

⁹ Hirsch and Macpherson (2010), Table 5a. p. 34.

Mean Weekly Earnings of Union Members

Among full-time workers, in 2009 union members had mean weekly earnings of \$988 whereas workers who were not represented by unions had mean weekly earnings of \$828.¹⁰ In 2009, mean weekly earnings for Ohio union workers were \$854, and \$704 for non-union workers.¹¹

Union Workers are Older, More Educated, and More Racially Diverse

Since 1983 unionization has risen among older workers and fallen sharply among younger workers. In 2009, union membership was highest among workers 55 to 64 years-old and lowest among workers 16 to 24 years-old.¹² In the early 1980s less-educated workers were more likely to be unionized. However, by 2009 workers with less than a high school education were the least likely to be unionized. Among major race and ethnicity groups, in 2009 African American workers were more likely to be union members than workers who were White, Asian, or Latino. Since 1983 the union membership rate for White workers has fallen most dramatically from 22.2 percent in 1983 to 12.1 percent in 2009.¹³ Although the union membership rate for men (13.3 percent) remains higher than for women (11.3 percent), over the last two decades, the number of female union members has steadily increased.¹⁴ And if current trends continue, woman may soon makeup the majority of the union workforce.¹⁵

Union Representation Elections Decline Nationally and in Ohio

Mirroring the drop in overall unionization rates, union representation elections are also on the decline, both nationally and in Ohio. Data from the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) show that over the last decade representation elections have fallen by 50 percent nationwide and over 60 percent in Ohio. From 1999 to 2009 the total number of representation elections across all states declined from 3,185 to 1,604.¹⁶ In 1999, Ohio had 203 representation elections and by 2009 this number had dropped to 64. With 64 union representation elections in 2009, Ohio ranked 7th among all states¹⁷. New York ranked first with 214 cases, and North Dakota

¹⁰ Mean weekly earnings apply to a worker's principal job and include "usual" pay for overtime, commissions, and tips, but do not include bonuses and non-wage benefits such as health insurance, and pensions.

¹¹ Hirsch and Macpherson (2010), Table 5a. Mean weekly earnings are expressed in 2009 dollars.

¹² Hirsch and Macpherson (2010), Table 3a.

¹³ Schmitt and Warner, *The Changing Face of Labor 1983-2008*, (2009), p.8.; Hirsch and Macpherson (2010).

¹⁴ Hirsch and Macpherson (2010), Table 3a.

¹⁵ Schmitt and Warner, (2009), p.4.

¹⁶ Data compiled across all states from NLRB Annual Reports 1999 -2009, Table 15a.

¹⁷ See Table 11 p.28.

ranked last with just one election. Comparing Ohio's total number of elections to totals in eight other Midwestern and surrounding states¹⁸, over the past decade Ohio has consistently ranked 3rd or 4th, trading the middle rank with Michigan.¹⁹ In 2009 Illinois ranked highest with 110 elections, and West Virginia ranked lowest with 22 elections.

Over the past decade, the union win ratio across all states has ranged from 50 to 64 percent.²⁰ In 2009, unions won 1,022 elections out of a total of 1,604 nationwide²¹. When a union files for a representation election in Ohio, there is about a 50/50 chance of union certification. In 1999, unions won 102 out of 203 (50%) elections and in 2009, 34 out of 64 (53%) elections.²² Of all union representation cases filed in Ohio from 2000-2010, only 12.6 percent of these resulted in a union win in the manufacturing sub-sector. Looking at the percentage of union wins across eight Midwestern and surrounding states, in 2009 five states had union win ratios greater than Ohio.²³ Michigan had the highest percentage of union wins at 65 percent and Wisconsin had the lowest at 45 percent.

¹⁸ These states include: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia.

¹⁹ See Table 12 p.29.

²⁰ Data compiled across all states from NLRB Annual Reports 1999 -2009, Table 15a.

²¹ NLRB Annual Reports 1999 and 2009, Table 15a.

²² Data compiled for Ohio from NLRB Annual Reports 1999-2009, Table 15a.

²³ See Table 12 p.29.

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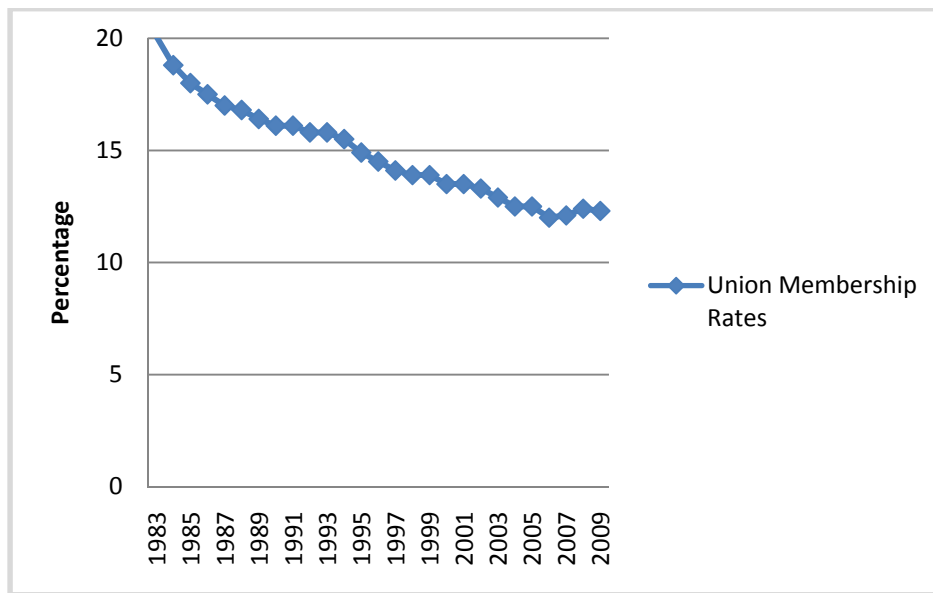
The National Perspective

Since the 1970s Union Membership in the U.S. has Steadily Declined

For over 30 years the U.S. has seen a steady decline in the overall percentage of union members.²⁴ In 1983, the first year for which comparable union data are available 17.7 million or 20.1 percent of all employed wage and salary workers were union members. Most recent data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)²⁵ show that by 2009 the number of wage and salary workers belonging to unions had declined by more than 13 percent to 15.3 million and the average nationwide union membership rate had dropped to 12.3 percent.²⁶

See **Chart 1** below.

Chart 1: U.S. Union Membership, 1983-2009



Source: Hirsch and Macpherson (2010)

²⁴ Hirsch and Macpherson, (2010).

²⁵ 2009 Monthly Current Population Survey (CPS).

²⁶ *Union Members Summary 2009*, BLS, (2010).

Six States Account for the Largest Numbers of Union Members

In 2009, more than half of the country's 15.3 million union members lived in just six states. California ranked number one with 2.5 million union members followed by New York, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Michigan and New Jersey. See **Table 1**.

Although these states account for the largest numbers of union members, because union workers are not distributed across the U.S in the same proportion as the overall workforce, union workers in these six states still only accounted for one-third of total wage and salary employment nationally. In addition, about 1.6 million workers who were covered by union contracts in 2009 chose not to become union members; government employees comprised nearly half of these 1.6 million workers.²⁷

Table 1. States with the Most Union Members, 2009

State	Numbers (millions)
California	2.5
New York	2.0
Illinois	1.0
Pennsylvania	.8
Michigan	.7
New Jersey	.7

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2010)

In 2009, more than half of all states (29) and the District of Columbia had union membership rates below the U.S. average of 12.3 percent. Twenty states had rates higher, and one state had the same rate.²⁸ See **Table 2** below.

²⁷ *Union Members Summary 2009*, BLS, (2010), p. 2.

²⁸ Hirsch and Macpherson (2010) Table 4a.

Table 2: Ranking of States by Percentage of Union Membership 2009

State	% Union Membership	Rank
New York	25.2	1
Hawaii	23.5	2
Alaska	22.3	3
Washington	20.2	4
New Jersey	19.3	5
Michigan	18.8	6
Rhode Island	17.9	7
Illinois	17.5	8
Connecticut	17.3	9
California	17.2	10
Oregon	17	11
Massachusetts	16.6	12
Nevada	15.7	13
Wisconsin	15.2	14
Minnesota	15.1	15
Pennsylvania	15	16
Ohio	14.2	17
Montana	13.9	18
West Virginia	13.9	19
Maryland	12.6	20
Vermont	12.3	21
Delaware	11.9	22
Maine	11.7	23
Iowa	11.1	24
Alabama	10.9	25
New Hampshire	10.8	26
Indiana	10.6	27
District of Columbia	10.4	28
Missouri	9.4	29
Nebraska	9.2	30
Kentucky	8.6	31
Wyoming	7.7	32
Colorado	7	33
Utah	6.9	34
North Dakota	6.8	35

Table 2: Ranking of States by Percentage of Union Membership 2009 (cont.)

State	% Union Membership	Rank
New Mexico	6.7	36
Arizona	6.5	37
Idaho	6.3	38
Kansas	6.2	39
Florida	5.8	40
Louisiana	5.8	41
Oklahoma	5.7	42
South Dakota	5.5	43
Tennessee	5.1	44
Texas	5.1	45
Mississippi	4.8	46
Virginia	4.7	47
Georgia	4.6	48
South Carolina	4.5	49
Arkansas	4.2	50
North Carolina	3.1	51

Source: Hirsch and Macpherson (2010)

The Most and Least Unionized States, Based on Percentage of Union Membership

In 2009, the 10 most unionized states, based on percentage of union membership, were New York, Hawaii, Alaska, Washington, New Jersey, Michigan, Rhode Island, Illinois, Connecticut, and California. New York topped the list with the highest union density at 25.2 percent. The 10 least unionized states were North Carolina, Arkansas, South Carolina, Georgia, Virginia, Mississippi, Tennessee, Texas, South Dakota, and Oklahoma. North Carolina reported the lowest rate at 3.1 percent.²⁹ See **Table 3** below.

²⁹ Hirsch and Macpherson (2010), Table 4a.

Table 3. Top Ten Most and Least Unionized States, 2009

Most Unionized	% Union Membership	Least Unionized	% Union Membership
New York	25.2	North Carolina	3.1
Hawaii	23.5	Arkansas	4.2
Alaska	22.3	South Carolina	4.5
Washington	20.2	Georgia	4.6
New Jersey	19.3	Virginia	4.7
Michigan	18.8	Mississippi	4.8
Rhode Island	17.9	Tennessee	5.1
Illinois	17.5	Texas	5.1
Connecticut	17.3	South Dakota	5.5
California	17.2	Oklahoma	5.7

Source: Hirsch and Macpherson (2010)

Union Membership Most Concentrated in the Mid-Atlantic and Pacific States

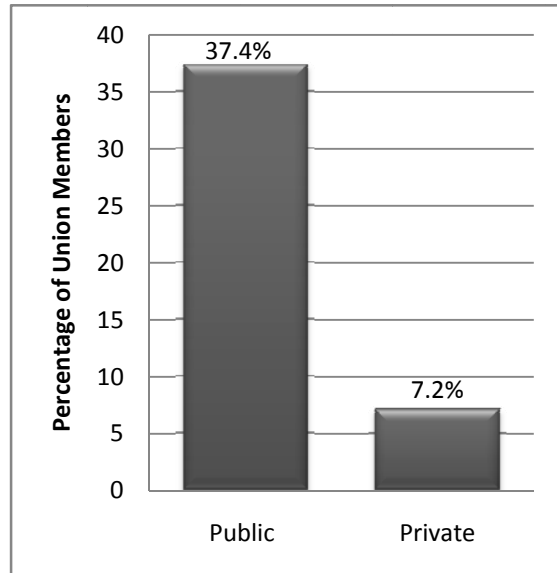
By geographic region, unionization rates are highest in the Mid-Atlantic and Pacific states. The U.S. Census Bureau divides the U.S. into nine divisions.³⁰ See **Chart 2** below. Looking at 2009 unionization rates in these nine divisions, all states in the Middle Atlantic (Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey) and Pacific (Alaska, Washington, Hawaii, Oregon, and California) divisions reported rates above the 12.3 percent national average, and all states in the East South Central (Tennessee, Kentucky, Alabama, and Mississippi) and West South Central (Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Arkansas) divisions reported rates below the national average.

³⁰ The nine divisions used by the U.S. Census Bureau include: Middle Atlantic: Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey; Pacific: Alaska, Washington, Hawaii, Oregon, and California; East South Central: Tennessee, Kentucky, Alabama, and Mississippi; West South Central: Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Arkansas; East North Central: Wisconsin, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, and Illinois; Mountain: Colorado, Arizona, Idaho, Montana, Utah, Nevada, Wyoming, New Mexico; New England: Massachusetts, Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Rhode Island; South Atlantic: Maryland, Delaware, Georgia, District of Columbia, Florida, North Carolina, Virginia, South Carolina, and West Virginia; West North Central: Minnesota, Kansas, South Dakota, Missouri, North Dakota, Nebraska, and Iowa.

workers in the private sector.³² From 2008 to 2009 the number of private sector union workers shrank by 800,000, from 8.2 million to 7.4 million, and in 2009 the union membership rate for public sector employees was 37.4 percent, substantially higher than the 7.2 percent rate for private sector workers.³³ See **Chart 3**.

**Chart 3. U.S. Union Membership
Public and Private Sectors, 2009**

In 2009, local government workers, including teachers, police officers, and fire fighters, had the highest unionization rate at 43.3 percent. The private sector industries with the highest unionization rates were transportation and utilities, telecommunications, and construction. Industries with the lowest unionization rates were agriculture and financial activities.³⁴



Source: Hirsch and Macpherson (2010)

Unionization in the Manufacturing Sector

The decline in private sector union membership is most dramatic in the manufacturing industry. Although the manufacturing sector was historically far more unionized than other U.S. industries, since the mid-2000s private manufacturing has been less unionized than the overall economy. In 2009 only 10.9 percent of manufacturing workers were unionized compared to 30.3 percent in 1983. See **Chart 4** below. This decline among unionized manufacturing workers has been more rapid than the decline in manufacturing in the overall economy.³⁵

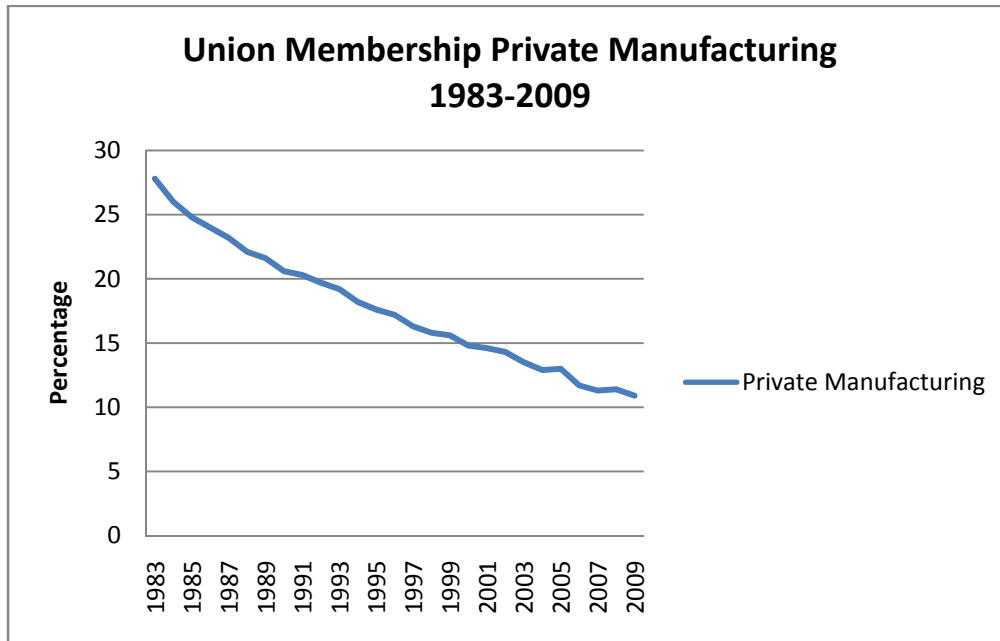
³² *Union Members Summary 2009*, BLS, (2010).

³³ Hirsch and Macpherson (2010) Table 3a.

³⁴ *Union Members Summary 2009*, BLS, (2010).

³⁵ Schmitt and Warner (2009), p.14.

Chart 4: U.S. Union Membership Private Sector Manufacturing 1983-2009



Source: Hirsch and Macpherson (2010).

Mean Weekly Earnings of Union Workers

In 2009, among full-time workers, union members had mean weekly earnings of \$988 whereas workers who were not represented by unions had mean weekly earnings of \$828.³⁶ In 1999 union members had mean weekly earnings of \$951 compared to \$751 for nonunion workers.³⁷ In addition to coverage by a collective bargaining agreement, a number of factors can influence worker earnings. The data relied on for this report do not control for all factors.³⁸

³⁶ Mean weekly earnings apply to a worker’s principal job and include “usual” pay for overtime, commissions, and tips, but do not include bonuses and non-wage benefits such as health insurance, and pensions; Hirsch and Macpherson (2010), Table 5a. report earnings data as mean weekly earnings. BLS uses *median* weekly earnings. In 2009, median weekly earnings for union members were \$908 and \$710 for non union members.

³⁷ Hirsch and Macpherson (2010), Table 5c. Mean weekly earnings are expressed in 2009 dollars.

³⁸ Hirsch and Macpherson (2010).

The Current Makeup of the Unionized Workforce

Today union workers are older, more educated, more racially diverse, and more likely to be female than in the 1980s. Since 1983 unionization has risen among older workers and fallen sharply among younger workers. In 2009, union membership was highest among workers 55 to 64 years-old (15.1 percent) and lowest among workers 16 to 24 years-old (4.7 percent).³⁹ In 1983, the share of unionized workers 16-24 years-old was considerably higher at 11.1 percent.⁴⁰

In the early 1980s less-educated workers were more likely to be unionized. However, by 2009 workers with less than a high school education were the least likely to be unionized. Of all workers who were union members in 2009, over 14 percent (14.3 percent) reported 16 or more years of schooling.⁴¹ The unionization rate for workers with less than a high school degree fell to 6.9 percent, compared to 18.3 percent in 1983.⁴²

Among major race and ethnicity groups, in 2009 African American workers were more likely to be union members than workers who were White, Asian, or Latino. African American men had the highest union membership rate (15.4) and Latino women the lowest rate (9.7). The union membership rate for White workers has fallen most dramatically from 22.2 percent in 1983 to 12.1 percent in 2009. Between 1983 and 2009 the group that experienced the sharpest drop in union membership is African American men. In 1983, 35.9 percent of union members were African American men. By 2009 this rate had dropped to 15.4 percent, a decline of more than 20 percent.⁴³

Although the union membership rate for men (13.3 percent) remains higher than for women (11.3 percent), over the last two decades, the total number of female union members has steadily increased.⁴⁴ And if current trends continue, women may soon make up the majority of the union workforce.⁴⁵

³⁹ Hirsch and Macpherson (2010) Table 3a.

⁴⁰ Schmitt and Warner, (2009) pp. 4-13. 1983 demographic data; Hirsch and Macpherson, (2010) Table 3a. 2009 demographic data.

⁴¹ Hirsch and Macpherson, (2010) Table 3a.

⁴² Schmitt and Warner, (2009), p. 13; Hirsch and Macpherson (2010) Table 3a.

⁴³ Schmitt and Warner, (2009) pp.8-9.

⁴⁴ Hirsch and Macpherson, (2010), Table 3a.

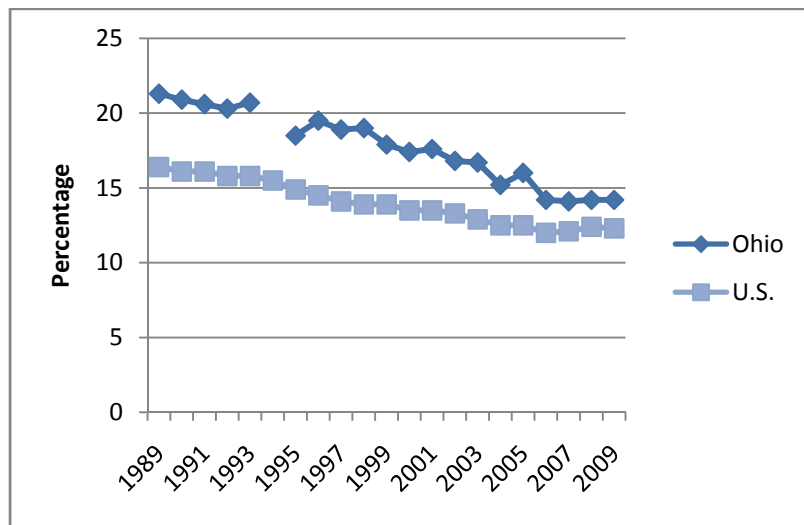
⁴⁵ Schmitt and Warner, (2009), p.4.

Union Membership in Ohio

Ohio's Unionization Rates follow the National Trend

Ohio's unionization rates follow the national trend. Compared to 20 years ago Ohio's union membership rates have fallen more than 7 percent, a more rapid decline than the overall U.S. rates. From 1989⁴⁶ to 2009 the percentage of all unionized workers in the U.S. declined by 4.1 percent, from 16.4 percent to 12.3 percent. Over the same 20-year period, Ohio's rate declined by 7.1 percent, from 21.3 percent to 14.2 percent. See **Chart 5** below. In 1989, 987,000 Ohio workers belonged to a union. By 2009 this figure had dropped by more than 30 percent (302,000) to 685,000.⁴⁷

Chart 5. Ohio's Union Membership 1989-2009



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics (Ohio data for 1994 are not available)

In 2009, 14.2 percent of all workers in Ohio were union members. This figure represents a drop of 4.8 percentage points compared to 2008 and puts Ohio just above the U.S. average of 12.3 percent, but significantly below the top ten most unionized states (11 percentage points below top ranked New York).

⁴⁶ 1989 was the first year comparable state data were available through the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

⁴⁷ *Union Membership in Ohio, 2009*, BLS (2010).

Ohio's Unionization Rates Compared to All States

Comparing Ohio's union density across all states, in 2009 Ohio ranked 17th out of all 50 states and the District of Columbia. See **Table 2** above. This represents a substantial change from just five years ago when the Ohio ranked 14th out of all states.⁴⁸ For private sector only, in 2009 Ohio came in 12th at 8.9 percent out of all states and the District of Columbia. Hawaii ranked first at 14.7 percent and North Carolina ranked 51st at 1.5 percent.⁴⁹ See **Table 4** below. Looking only at private manufacturing, Ohio was ranked 8th at 16 percent. Washington had the highest percentage of union members in private manufacturing at 25 percent and South Carolina the lowest at 2.4 percent. See **Table 5** below.

Table 4. Percentage Union Membership by State, Private Sector 2009

State	% Union Membership	Rank
Alabama	6	26
Alaska	10.3	8
Arizona	3.6	39
Arkansas	2.8	44
California	9.5	10
Colorado	4.5	31
Connecticut	8.5	16
Delaware	5.8	27
D.C.	6.5	24
Florida	2	50
Georgia	2.8	45
Hawaii	14.7	1
Idaho	3.2	40
Illinois	10.9	6
Indiana	7.6	20
Iowa	6.9	22
Kansas	4	37
Kentucky	6.8	23
Louisiana	3.7	38
Maine	5.1	30
Maryland	7.3	21

⁴⁸ Hirsch and Macpherson, (2010) Table 4b.

⁴⁹ Hirsch and Macpherson, (2010) Table 4a.

Table 4. Percentage Union Membership by State, Private Sector 2009 (cont.)

State	% Union Membership	Rank
Massachusetts	8.8	14
Michigan	12.2	5
Minnesota	8.5	17
Mississippi	4.4	33
Missouri	8	19
Montana	6.5	25
Nebraska	4.2	36
Nevada	12.7	3
New Hampshire	4.5	32
New Jersey	10.5	7
New Mexico	3.1	41
New York	14	2
North Carolina	1.5	51
North Dakota	4.3	34
Ohio	8.9	12
Oklahoma	2.7	48
Oregon	8.9	13
Pennsylvania	9.4	11
Rhode Island	8.8	15
South Carolina	2.8	46
South Dakota	3	43
Tennessee	2.8	47
Texas	3.1	42
Utah	4.3	35
Vermont	5.3	28
Virginia	2.6	49
Washington	12.6	4
West Virginia	10.3	9
Wisconsin	8.3	18
Wyoming	5.2	29

Source: Hirsch and Macpherson (2010)

Table 5. Percentage Union Membership by State, Private Manufacturing, 2009

State	% Union Membership	Rank
Alabama	13.7	15
Alaska	6.9	34
Arizona	3.4	45
Arkansas	7.1	32
California	8.1	29
Colorado	7.4	31
Connecticut	10.2	24
Delaware	10.6	23
District of Columbia	0	51
Florida	2.5	49
Georgia	3.2	46
Hawaii	15.6	11
Idaho	4.9	42
Illinois	15.6	12
Indiana	14.5	14
Iowa	16.7	6
Kansas	12.9	16
Kentucky	12.5	19
Louisiana	12.8	17
Maine	17.8	4
Maryland	12.8	18
Massachusetts	8.9	27
Michigan	17.9	3
Minnesota	8.4	28
Mississippi	11.4	21
Missouri	15.8	10
Montana	15.9	9
Nebraska	9.4	25
Nevada	10.7	22
New Hampshire	4.7	43
New Jersey	7.7	30
New Mexico	2.6	48
New York	16.5	7
North Carolina	3	47
North Dakota	6.9	35
Ohio	16	8
Oklahoma	5.8	40

Table 5. Percentage Union Membership by State, Private Manufacturing, 2009 (cont.)

State	% Union Membership	Rank
Oregon	12.2	20
Pennsylvania	15.3	13
Rhode Island	6.1	38
South Carolina	2.4	50
South Dakota	5.5	41
Tennessee	6.3	37
Texas	7	33
Utah	6.4	36
Vermont	6.1	39
Virginia	9.2	26
Washington	25	1
West Virginia	20.6	2
Wisconsin	17.4	5
Wyoming	3.8	44

Source: Hirsch and Macpherson (2010)

Ohio's Unionization Rates Compared to Other Midwestern and Surrounding States

Comparing Ohio's overall unionization rate in 2009 (14.2%) to seven other Midwestern and surrounding states⁵⁰, Ohio ranked 5th, at the eight-state average of 14.2 percent. See **Table 6** below. In 2009, Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania all had rates above 14.2 percent. West Virginia, Indiana, and Kentucky all had rates below.

**Table 6. Percentage Union Membership
Eight State Comparison for All Workers, 2009**

	% Membership
Michigan	18.8
Illinois	17.5
Wisconsin	15.2
Pennsylvania	15.0
Ohio	14.2 (the average of all 8 states)
West Virginia	13.9
Indiana	10.6
Kentucky	8.6

Source: Hirsch and Macpherson (2010)

For private sector only, Ohio also ranked 5th at 8.9 percent (below the eight-state average of 9.3 percent). See **Table 7** below. Michigan, Illinois, West Virginia and Pennsylvania all had rates above Ohio's 8.9 percent. Private sector rates for Wisconsin, Indiana, and Kentucky were all below 8.9 percent.

**Table 7. Percentage Union Membership
Eight State Comparison for Private Sector Workers, 2009**

	% Membership
Michigan	12.2
Illinois	10.9
West Virginia	10.3
Pennsylvania	9.4
Ohio	8.9 (slightly lower than the eight-state average of 9.3)
Wisconsin	8.3
Indiana	7.6
Kentucky	6.8

Source: Hirsch and Macpherson (2010)

⁵⁰ These states include: Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

Looking only at private sector manufacturing, Ohio ranked 4th at 16 percent, slightly lower than the eight-state average of 16.2 percent. See **Table 8** below. West Virginia, Michigan and Wisconsin all had rates above 16 percent. Illinois, Pennsylvania, Indiana, and Kentucky had rates below 16 percent.

**Table 8. Percentage Union Membership
Eight-State Comparison for Private Manufacturing**

	% Membership
West Virginia	20.6
Michigan	17.9
Wisconsin	17.4
Ohio	16.0 (slightly lower than the eight-state average of 16.2)
Illinois	15.6
Pennsylvania	15.3
Indiana	14.
Kentucky	12.5

Source: Hirsch and Macpherson (2010)

Examining the change in unionization rates over the last five years, from 2004 to 2009, overall unionization rates declined in six of the eight states, including Ohio, remained the same in one (Pennsylvania), and rose slightly in one (Illinois). Ohio's overall unionization rate fell by one percent from 2004 to 2009. See **Table 9** below.

Private sector only unionization rates fell in all eight states, with the greatest declines in Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin. All eight states also experienced a drop in unionization rates for workers in private manufacturing. Michigan and Ohio saw the most dramatic declines at -12.5 and -6.1 respectively.

Table 9. Eight-State Comparison of Membership Rates, 2004 to 2009

	% Membership 2004			% Membership 2009			Change from 2004 to 2009		
	All workers	Private Sector	Manufacturing	All workers	Private Sector	Manufacturing	All Workers	Private Sector	Manufacturing
Indiana	11.4	9	18.1	10.6	7.6	14.5	-0.8	-1.4	-3.6
Illinois	16.8	12.1	17	17.5	10.9	15.6	0.7	-1.2	-1.4
kentucky	9.6	7.5	15	8.6	6.8	12.5	-1	-0.7	-2.5
Michigan	21.6	15.9	30.4	18.8	12.2	17.9	-2.8	-3.7	-12.5
Ohio	15.2	10.5	22.1	14.2	8.9	16	-1	-1.6	-6.1
Pennsylvania	15	9.7	19.2	15	9.4	15.3	0	-0.3	-3.9
West Virginia	14.2	10.5	21.1	13.9	10.3	20.6	-0.3	-0.2	-0.5
Wisconsin	16	10.4	18	15.2	8.3	17.4	-0.8	-2.1	-0.6

Mean Weekly Earnings of Ohio Union Members

In 2009, mean weekly earnings⁵¹ for Ohio union workers were \$854, and \$704 for non-union workers⁵². In six out of the eight states mean weekly earnings for union workers were higher than in Ohio. Kentucky was the only state where mean weekly earnings were lower. See **Table 10** below.

Comparing the mean weekly earnings of union workers across these same eight states, from 2004 to 2009, earnings declined in Ohio and five other states, increased in two states (Illinois and Wisconsin), and remained unchanged in one state (Pennsylvania). For Ohio's union workers, mean weekly earnings declined by \$70, whereas earnings for Ohio's non-union workers declined by \$31.

⁵¹ Mean weekly earnings apply to a worker's principal job and include "usual" pay for overtime, commissions, and tips, but do not include bonuses and non-wage benefits such as health insurance, and pensions.

⁵² Hirsch and Macpherson, (2010) Table 5a.

Table 10. Eight-State Comparison Mean Weekly Earnings in 2009 Dollars, 2004 to 2009

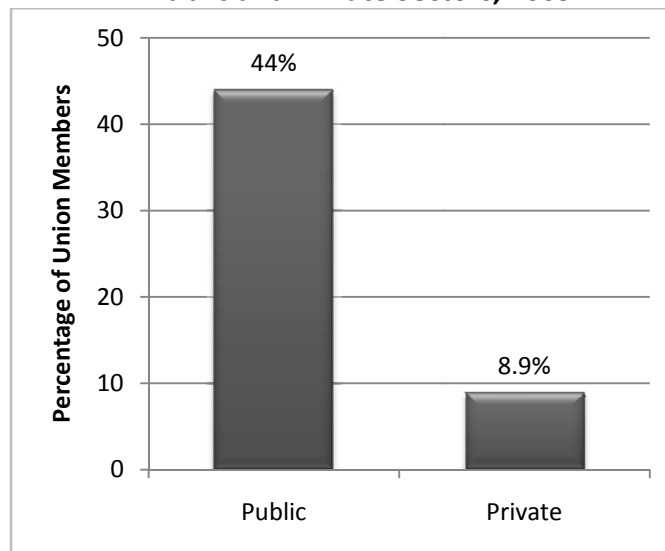
	2004 Wk. Earnings			2009 Wk. Earnings			Change 2004 to 2009		
	Union	Non-Union	Difference	Union	Non-Union	Difference	Union	Non-Union	Difference
Indiana	\$1,024	\$819	\$205	\$871	\$700	\$171	-\$153	-\$119	-\$34
Illinois	\$888	\$715	\$173	\$932	\$860	\$72	\$44	\$145	-\$101
kentucky	\$870	\$691	\$179	\$787	\$680	\$107	-\$83	-\$11	-\$72
Michigan	\$1,009	\$828	\$181	\$907	\$785	\$122	-\$102	-\$43	-\$59
Ohio	\$924	\$735	\$189	\$854	\$704	\$150	-\$70	-\$31	\$39
Pennsylvania	\$894	\$777	\$117	\$894	\$808	\$86	\$0	\$31	-\$31
West Virginia	\$963	\$609	\$354	\$950	\$703	\$247	-\$13	\$94	-\$107
Wisconsin	\$874	\$729	\$145	\$889	\$742	\$147	\$15	\$13	\$2

Source: Hirsch and Macpherson (2010)

The Largest Percentage of Ohio’s Union Members Work in the Public Sector

Following the national trend, union workers in Ohio’s public sector easily outnumber those in the private sector. In 2009, 44 percent of Ohio’s public sector workers were union members, compared to 8.9 percent of all private sector workers who belonged to a union.⁵³

Chart 6. Ohio Union Membership Rates In Public and Private Sectors, 2009



Source: Hirsch and Macpherson (2010)

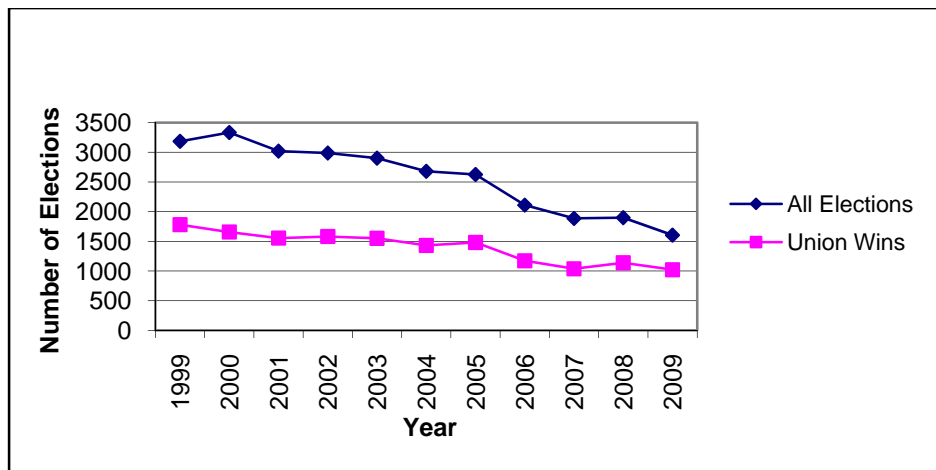
⁵³ Hirsch and Macpherson (2010), Table 5a.

Union Representation Elections

Union Representation Elections Decline Nationally and in Ohio

National Labor Relations Board (NLRB)⁵⁴ data on representation elections⁵⁵ can also provide insight into unionization both nationally and in Ohio. From 1999 to 2009 the total number of representation elections held across all states declined by 50 percent, from 3,185 in 1999 to 1,604 in 2009.⁵⁶ Over the same time period, the union win ratio across all states has ranged from 50 to 64 percent. In 2009, unions won 1,022 elections out of a total of 1,604 (64%).⁵⁷ See **Chart 7** below.

Chart 7. U.S. Union Representation Elections and Union Wins, 1999-2009



⁵⁴ The National Labor Relations Board is an independent federal agency created by Congress to administer the basic law governing relations between labor unions and businesses engaged in interstate commerce. The NLRB has two principle functions: (1) to determine and implement the free choice of employees as to whether they wish to be represented by a union; and (2) to prevent and remedy unlawful acts (unfair labor practices) by unions, employers, or both.

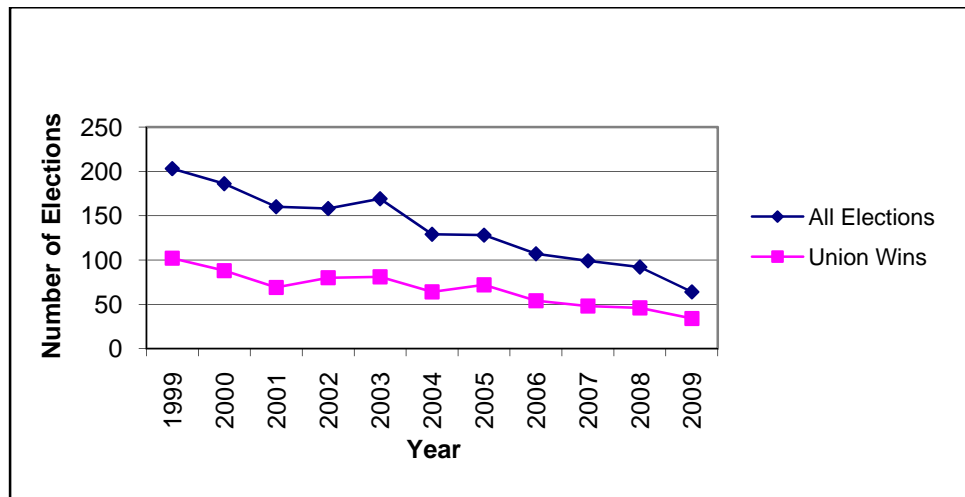
⁵⁵ Representation elections are conducted to determine the collective bargaining wishes of employees; an employee selects or rejects a union to represent him or her in collective bargaining. If 50% plus one worker vote in favor of a union, the workers win the right to bargain collectively.

⁵⁶ Data compiled across all states from NLRB Annual Reports 1999 -2009, Table 15a.

⁵⁷ NLRB Annual Reports 1999 and 2009, Table 15a.

Examining the total number of representation elections held in Ohio, as well as election outcomes, also reveals a steady downward trend in union organizing activity over the past decade. See **Chart 8** below. In 1999, 203 representation elections were held in Ohio, and by 2009 this number had dropped over 60 percent to 64.⁵⁸

Chart 8. Ohio Union Representation Elections and Union Wins, 1999-2009



Source: NLRB Annual Reports, 1999-2009

With 64 union representation elections in 2009, Ohio ranked 7th among all states. New York ranked first with 214 cases, and California ranked 2nd with 165. Illinois, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Washington followed with 110, 99, 85, and 72 cases respectively. Massachusetts with 63 cases and Michigan with 62 cases closely followed Ohio. North Dakota ranked last with just one election in 2009. Florida and Texas, both large right-to-work states, each had just 30 percent fewer cases than Ohio, 44 and 43 respectively. See **Table 11** below.

⁵⁸ NLRB Annual Reports 1999 and 2009, Table 15a.

Table 11. NLRB Representation Elections and Union Wins by State, 2009

State	All Elections	Union Wins	% Wins
Alabama	11	6	54.55%
Alaska	13	9	69.23%
Arizona	9	7	77.78%
Arkansas	10	3	30.00%
California	165	112	67.88%
Colorado	13	13	100.00%
Connecticut	39	31	79.49%
Delaware	7	5	71.43%
District of Columbia	27	24	88.89%
Florida	44	26	59.09%
Georgia	20	14	70.00%
Hawaii	16	11	68.75%
Idaho	6	5	83.33%
Illinois	110	70	63.64%
Indiana	28	14	50.00%
Iowa	18	6	33.33%
Kansas	13	10	76.92%
Kentucky	14	9	64.29%
Louisiana	19	14	73.68%
Maine	3	2	66.67%
Maryland	25	16	64.00%
Massachusetts	63	42	66.67%
Michigan	62	40	64.52%
Minnesota	35	16	45.71%
Mississippi	11	10	90.91%
Missouri	41	22	53.66%
Montana	9	3	33.33%
Nebraska	5	5	100.00%
Nevada	19	15	78.95%
New Hampshire	6	6	100.00%
New Jersey	99	57	57.58%
New Mexico	7	5	71.43%
New York	214	131	61.21%
North Carolina	15	8	53.33%
North Dakota	1	1	100.00%
Ohio	64	34	53.13%
Oklahoma	9	7	77.78%
Oregon	38	24	63.16%
Pennsylvania	85	53	62.35%
Rhode Island	13	10	76.92%
South Carolina	9	7	77.78%
South Dakota	4	2	50.00%
Tennessee	15	9	60.00%
Texas	43	31	72.09%

Table 11. NLRB Representation Elections and Union Wins by State, 2009 (cont.)

State	All Elections	Union Wins	% Wins
Utah	6	4	66.67%
Vermont	5	3	60.00%
Virginia	13	10	76.92%
Washington	72	45	62.50%
West Virginia	7	4	57.14%
Wisconsin	22	10	45.45%
Wyoming	2	1	50.00%

Source: Data compiled from NLRB Annual Report 2009

Over the last decade the average union win ratio for Ohio has held steady. When a union files for a representation election in Ohio, there is about a 50/50 chance of union certification. In 1999, unions won 102 out of 203 (50%) elections and in 2009 34 out of 64 (53%).⁵⁹

A State Comparison of Total Elections Held and Election Wins

Comparing Ohio's total number of elections to totals in seven other Midwestern and surrounding states⁶⁰, over the past decade Ohio has consistently ranked 3rd or 4th, trading the middle rank with Michigan. In 2009 Illinois ranked highest with 110, and Pennsylvania ranked second with 85, nearly 20 more than Ohio. See **Table 12** below. Looking at the percentage of union wins across these eight states, in 2009 five states had union win ratios greater than Ohio. Only Indiana and Wisconsin had lower union win ratios. Michigan had the highest percentage of union wins at 65 percent.

⁵⁹ Data compiled for Ohio from NLRB Annual Reports 1999-2009, Table 15a.

⁶⁰ These states include: Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

Table 12. Eight-State Comparison of Elections Held and Union Wins, 2009

2009 Elections and Union Wins			
State	# Elections Held	# Union Wins	% Union Wins
Illinois	110	70	64%
Indiana	28	14	50%
Kentucky	14	9	64%
Michigan	62	40	65%
Ohio	64	34	53%
Pennsylvania	85	53	62%
West Virginia	7	4	57%
Wisconsin	22	10	45%

Source: NLRB Annual Report 2009.

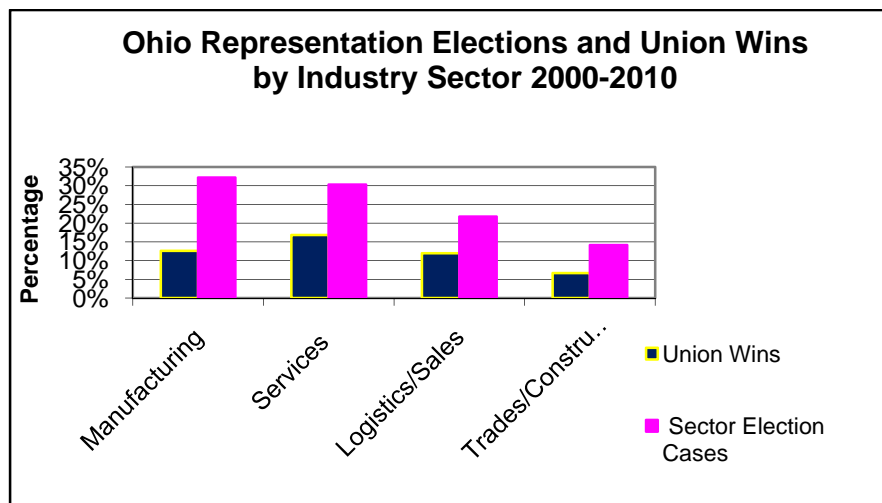
Ohio Representation Elections by Industry Sector

A decade’s worth of Ohio representation election data from the NLRB also provide an opportunity to consider unionization efforts by sub-sectors of the economy. These data reveal the relative degree of union success in each sub-sector. Representation cases filed with the NLRB are given an industry code when entered into the NLRB database. For purposes of this report, the cases have been grouped by code into four sub-sectors of Ohio’s economy— Services, Manufacturing, Logistics & Sales, and Trades & Construction. The Service sub-sector includes a variety of businesses providing health, medical, social, and safety services. Manufacturing is a broad sub-sector covering all forms of industrial production from chemical, metal, paper and plastic materials to fabrication of consumer products. Logistics & Sales is the sub-sector of the economy representing transportation, warehousing, wholesalers and retailers. Trades & Construction covers apprentice trades such as plumbing, electrical, carpentry and masonry, as well as building contractors and utilities.

The Manufacturing sub-sector represents about one third of all union representation election cases filed in Ohio. The Service sub-sector represents a second third; and combined, Trades & Construction and Logistics & Sales make up the final third. From 2000-2010, unions were more successful in winning elections in sub-sectors other than Manufacturing. On average, unions won 57 percent of their cases in the Service sub-sector, 55 percent in Logistics & Sales,

46 percent in Trades & Construction, and only 39.5 percent of cases in Manufacturing.⁶¹ Of all union representation cases filed in Ohio from 2000-2010, only 12.6 percent of the cases resulted in a union win in the Manufacturing sub-sector. **Chart 9** below shows representation cases and union wins by industry sub-sector, as percentages of all Ohio representation cases in the past decade.

Chart 9. Ohio Representation Election Cases and Union Wins by Industry Sector, 2000-2010



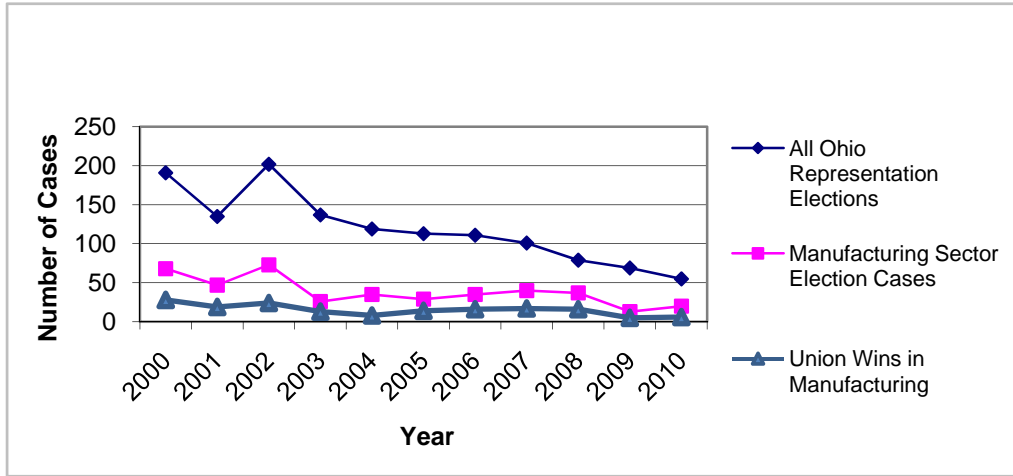
Source: Compiled from NLRB case data, 2000-2010

As the total number of union representation elections has decreased across the country and in Ohio, election cases in manufacturing have also declined. See **Chart 10** below. In 2000, there were 68 representation elections in the manufacturing sector of Ohio’s economy. Twenty-eight of these cases resulted in a union win and 40 resulted in no representation. By 2010, the number of election cases in Ohio’s manufacturing sector had dropped by more than two-thirds. In 2010, there were only 20 representation elections in the manufacturing sector. Six cases resulted in a union win, and in the other 14 cases no representative was selected⁶².

⁶¹ Compiled from NLRB case data, 2000-2010.

⁶² Compiled from NLRB case data, 2000-2010.

Chart 10. Ohio Representation Elections, Manufacturing Sector Elections and Union Wins, 2000-2010



Source: Compiled from NLRB case data, 2000-2010

Conclusion

Both nationally and in Ohio, union membership has been steadily declining for more than 20 years; there has been a dramatic shift in union workers from the private sector into the public sector; and the level of new organizing activity has slowed considerably. These trends have led to a subsequent decline in the overall power of unions. For most U.S. private sector workers, unions today have minimal impact on wages and working conditions. And although the actual impact of unionization on private sector employers may have been significant during the 1970s, the trends described in this report clearly suggest that in recent decades any negative economic effects of unionization have been moderated. Unionization is just one of many variables that can influence a firm’s competitive advantage, and based on the data relied on in this report, it may no longer be one of the most important. Factors such as the availability of skilled labor, transportation facilities that create a robust supply chain, and profitable markets, are likely far more important determinants of competitive advantage.⁶³

⁶³ Karakaya and Canel (1998).

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