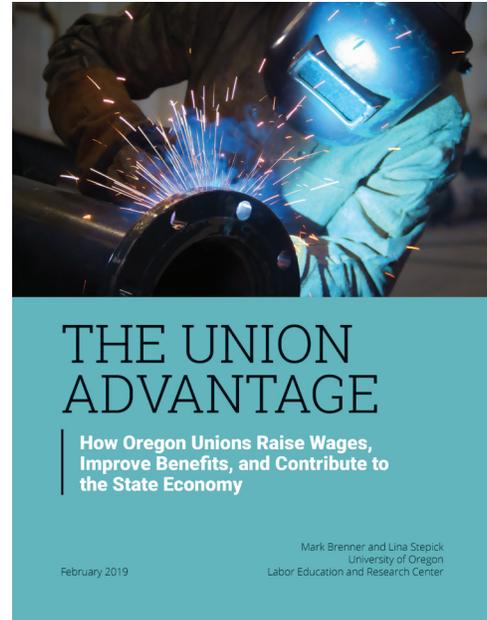


Research Summary

The Union Advantage: How Oregon Unions Raise Wages, Improve Benefits, and Contribute to the State Economy is a new report from the University of Oregon Labor Education and Research Center. This report, authored by LERC faculty members Mark Brenner and Lina Stepick, provides the first empirical assessment of the impact of unions on living standards for workers in Oregon.

- Both national and state-level data show that unions raise wages, improve health and pension benefits, reduce overall income inequality, and significantly decrease racial and gender inequalities. Unions also make it much less likely that workers will need to rely on public benefits such as food stamps or welfare.
- Statistical analysis reveals that, all other things being equal, Oregon workers covered by a union contract earn 11% more than non-union workers, are 17.5% more likely to get health insurance through their job, and are 41% more likely to have an employer-provided retirement plan. Union members are 35.3% less likely to have a family member enrolled in a public safety net program, and 33.8% less likely to come from a low-income family.
- Being covered by a union contract adds an average of \$4,701 per year to each worker's annual income. Overall, unions increased the income of working Oregonians by a total of almost \$1.4 billion in 2017.



Estimated Union Effects (with Statistical Controls)

Wages (Percent change)

Hourly Wage 11.0%

Benefits (Percent change in likelihood)

Has Employer-Provided Health Insurance 17.5%

Has Employer-Provided Pension or Other Retirement Plan 41.0%

Public Safety Net Programs (Percent change in likelihood)

Family Member Enrolled in a Public Safety Net Program -35.3%

Family Member Enrolled in Medicaid -14.4%

Low-Income Status (Percent Change in Likelihood)

Low-Income Family -33.8%

See report for estimation methods and methodology.

Impact on wages

- Oregon workers covered by a union contract earn 15.2% more, on average, than non-union workers.
- The impact of unions on wages is even stronger for women and workers of color:
 - ❑ Women working under a union contract earn an average of 23.4% more than women who don't have a union.
 - ❑ Average wages are 15.9% higher for workers of color covered by a union contract compared to workers of color in non-union workplaces.
- As a result, unionization reduces inequality between men and women and between workers of color and white workers:
 - ❑ The gap between average pay for men and women is 18.7% in non-union workplaces, but only 5.3% in unionized workplaces.
 - ❑ The gap between white workers and workers of color is 26.1% in non-unionized workplaces, but 23.1% in unionized workplaces.
- Using statistical analysis to control for factors such as education, industry, and location, we estimate that, all other things being equal, Oregon workers with a union contract earn 11% more, on average, than workers without a union.
- We estimate that having a union contract adds an average of \$4,701 per year to each worker's annual income.
- Overall, unions increased the earnings of Oregon workers by \$1.4 billion dollars in 2017.

Impact on health and pension benefits

- Unions also significantly improve workers' health and pension benefits. Oregon workers with union contracts are 17.5% more likely to have employer-provided health benefits, all else equal, than non-union workers. Statewide, unions have increased the number of Oregonians with employer-provided health insurance by more than 30,000.
- Union workers in Oregon are also 41% more likely to have employer-provided pensions than their non-union counterparts, all else equal. In total, unions have boosted the number of Oregonians with employer-provided retirement plans by over 70,000.

Impact on poverty and on use of public assistance

- Having a union contract lowers the likelihood of Oregonians being low income by 33.8%, all other things being equal. Having a union contract also makes Oregon workers much less likely to need public assistance. Union families in Oregon are 35.3% less likely to rely on public safety net programs like the Earned Income Tax Credit or the Women, Infants, and Children program than non-union families, and union families are 14.4% less likely to rely on Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program than non-union families, all else being equal.

Union Impact on Earnings in Oregon, 2017

Total Average Employment	1,883,407
Workers Covered by Union Contract	295,695
Average Additional Annual Earnings per Worker as a Result of Union Coverage	\$4,701
Total Additional Earnings as a Result of Union Coverage	\$1,390,208,231

See report for estimation methods and methodology.

Figure 1: Average Hourly Wages (2017 Dollars), Union and Non-Union

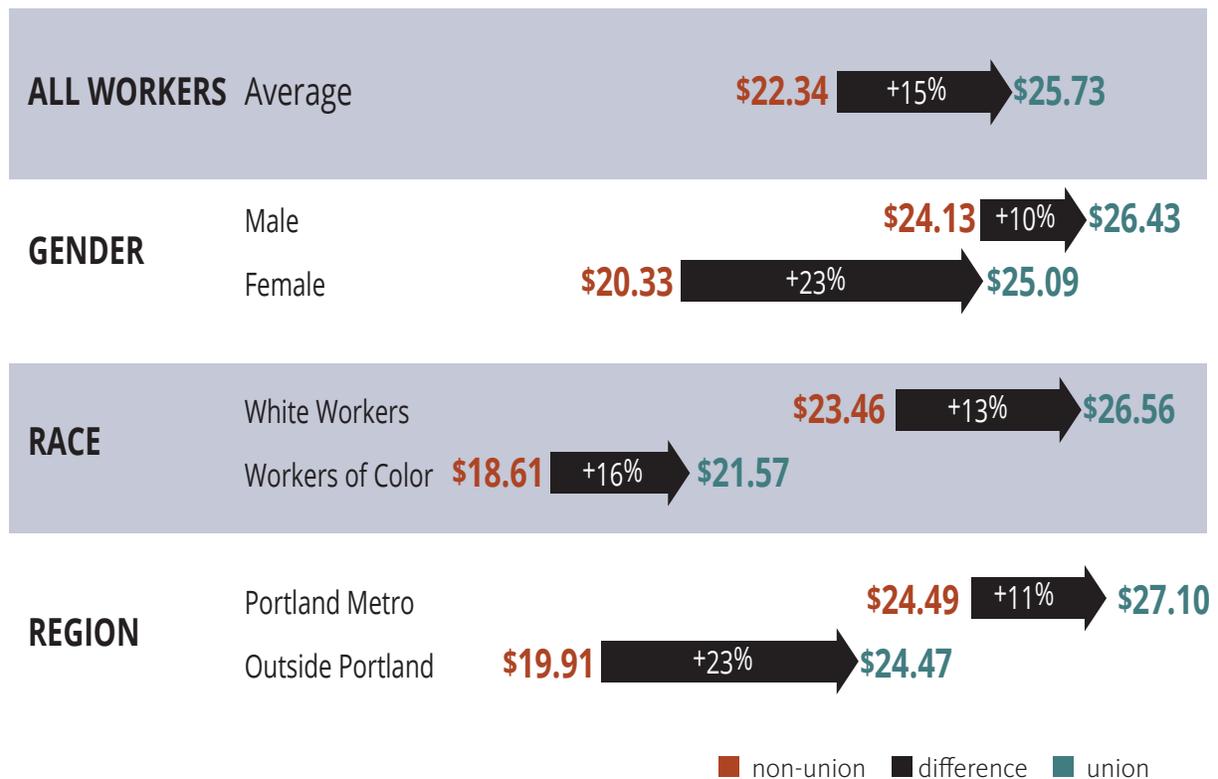
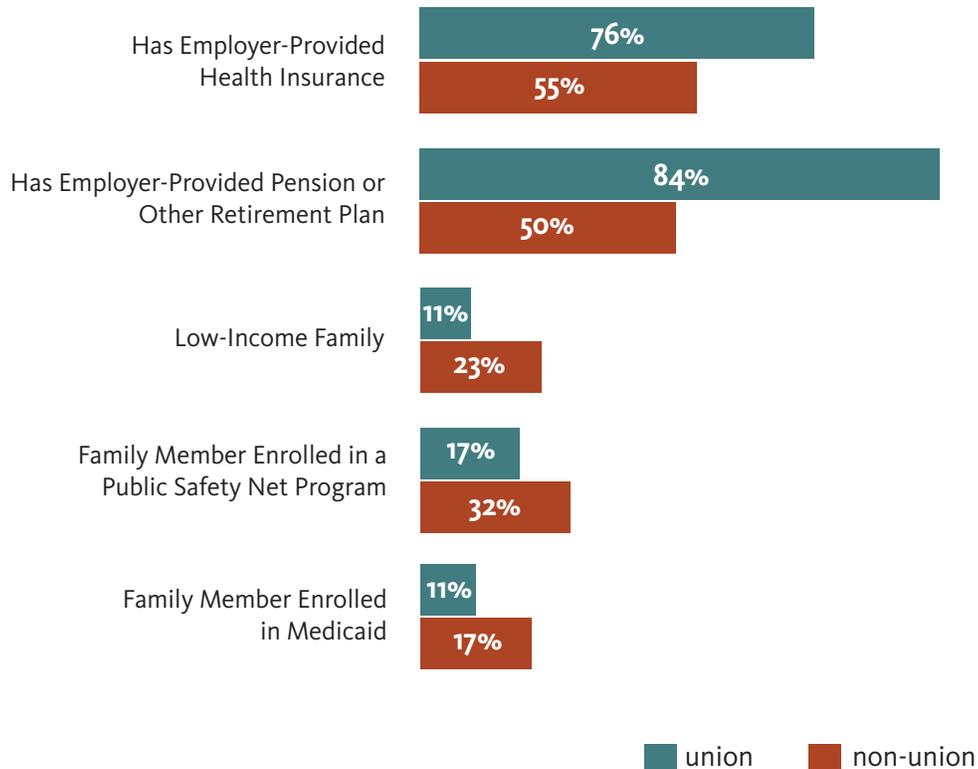


Figure 2: **Employer Provided Benefits, Low-Income Status, Public Safety Net Program Utilization, by Union Status**



ABOUT LERC

Since its inception in 1977, the Labor Education and Research Center at the University of Oregon has been dedicated to supporting a strong, inclusive union movement in Oregon. By integrating education, research, and public service, the Labor Education and Research Center helps ensure that workers have the skills and support that they need to participate meaningfully in their workplaces and communities. We work with labor unions, policy makers, university academics, community, and civic organizations throughout the Pacific Northwest to ensure that workers have a strong voice in shaping the programs and policies that affect their lives.



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