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### Introduction

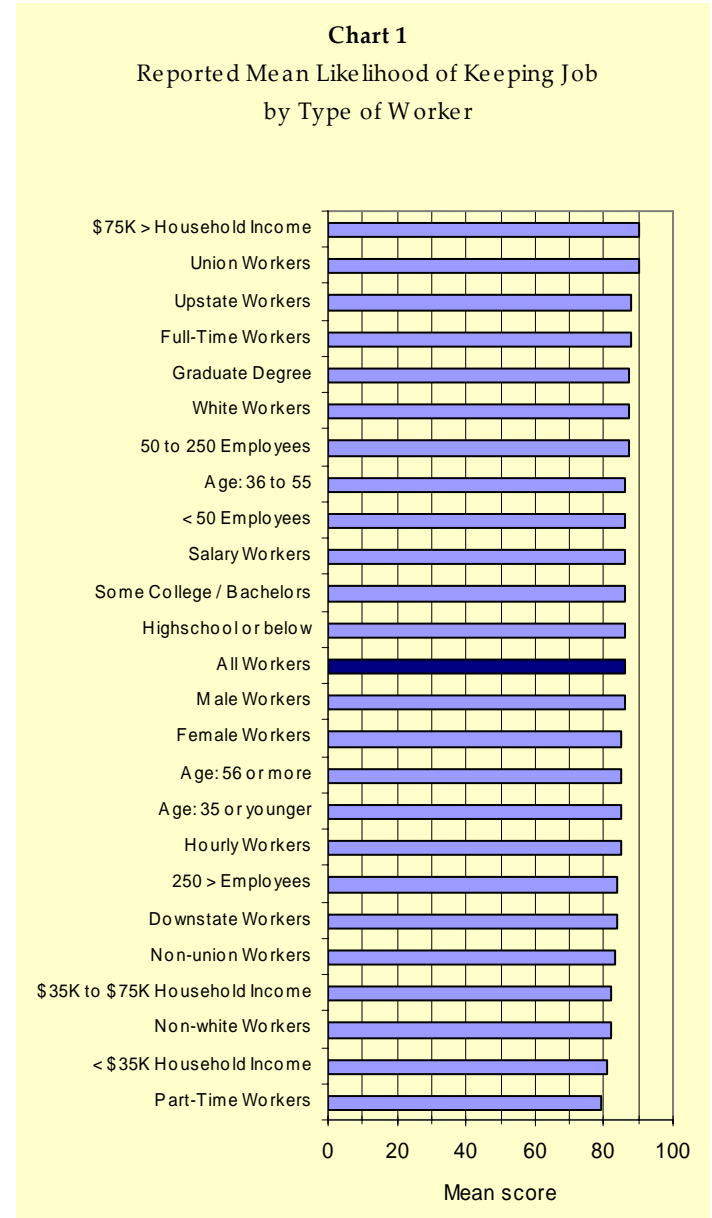
This report is an executive summary of the key workplace and labor findings from the Empire State Poll (ESP) 2005, a general survey of New York State residents who are at least 18 years of age. The School of Industrial and Labor Relations (ILR) Survey Research Institute (SRI) conducted the poll. The ESP 2005 marks the third poll of an ongoing annual survey series that will probe residents' views on a wide-range of issues. The primary goal of the ESP is to provide a yearly portrait of New York that includes snapshot of social, economic, political, and workplace trends.

This ballot of the Empire State Poll was conducted between February 7 and February 26, 2005 and consists of 802 interviews with residents from both upstate and downstate New York using a listed household sample. "Downstate" is defined as New York, Rockland, Kings, Richmond, Westchester, Suffolk, Queens, Nassau, and Bronx counties, with the remaining counties of the state defined as "upstate." The response rate was 27.4% according to AAPOR standards. All results presented in this report have been weighted based on geography (upstate vs. downstate) to account for population distribution and are otherwise representative of other key demographic criteria (gender, race, income, employment). The margin of error for reported statewide results is plus or minus 3.5 percentage points.

### Job Security & Layoffs

The ESP 2005 asked employed New Yorkers about their perceived job security and whether their employer had laid-off any workers in the last 12 months. Job security is an important topic for New Yorkers considering the continuing economic challenges facing New York State. Similar to the previous surveys, the ESP 2005 asked employed New Yorkers to evaluate their perceived likelihood of keeping their current job for the next year on a scale of 0 to 100%. The average score for all respondents to the ESP 2005 was 86% compared to 85% in 2004 and 82% in 2003. Looking beyond the statewide average, variances in perceived security between differing work and demographic contexts were examined. Chart 1 provides the reported mean likelihood of respondents' keeping their jobs across different types of workers.

As Chart 1 illustrates, the most secure workers are those from households with over \$75K income per year, are a member of a union, live in upstate NY, work full-time, and/or have a graduate degree. The least secure workers in NYS live in households with income less than \$75K per year, are not white, and/or work part-time.



A second indicator of job security within NYS is whether ESP respondents said there had been layoffs at their place of employment in the last 12 months. Table 1 summarizes the 2005 responses by region, for all of NYS, and compared with the ESP 2004 and ESP 2003.

**Table 1** Reported Layoffs

% of employed respondents reporting number of layoffs

Number of Layoffs	Upstate 2005	Downstate 2005	NYS 2005	NYS 2004	NYS 2003
None	81	75	77	70	64
1-10	12	17	15	20	23
11-50	5	4	4	7	7
51 or more	3	4	4	4	6

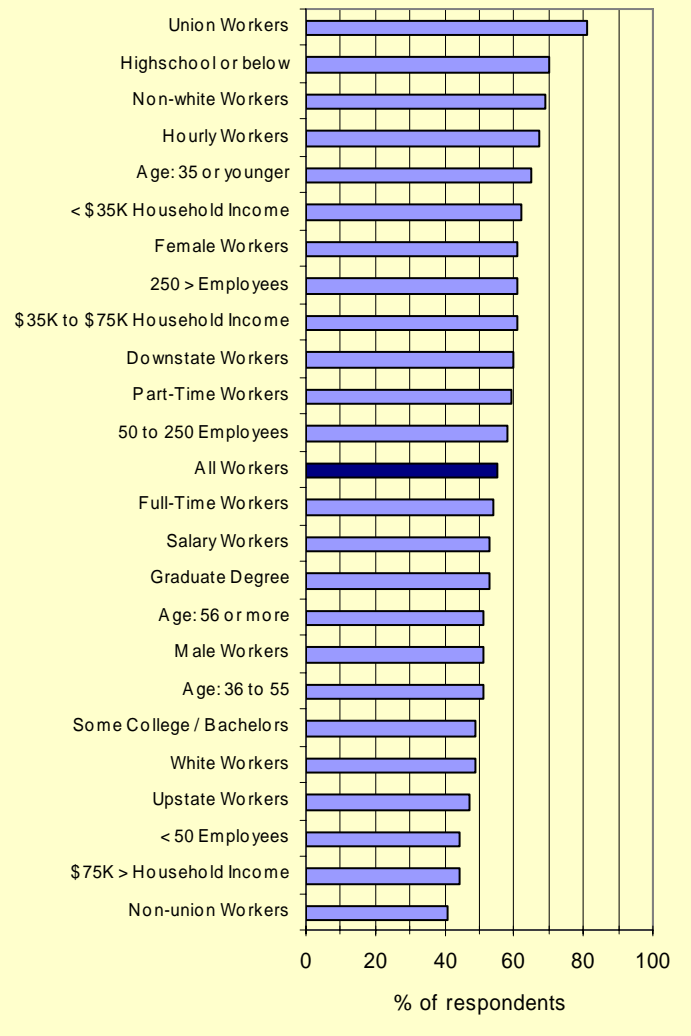
The results suggest an overall decrease in the number of layoffs over the past three years. Three quarters of downstate respondents reported that there have been no layoffs at their place of employment in 2005 compared to 70% in 2004, and only 64% in 2003. Although in 2003 and 2004 the number of upstate respondents reporting no layoffs at their place of employment remained constant (72% vs. 73% respectively), there was an increase in 2005, with 81% reporting no layoffs. These findings are consistent with upstate workers perceiving a higher level of job security.

### Likelihood to Join a Union in NYS

New York has one of the highest levels of union density in the nation, with approximately 25% of all workers within the state a member of a labor union. This is mirrored in the ESP 2005, with 31% of employed respondents belonging to a labor union. The ESP 2005 asked all workers, regardless of whether they currently belonged to a union or not, how likely they would be to join a union if given the option. Overall, 55% of employed respondents to the ESP 2005 said they would likely join a union if provided the option. This is 30 points higher than current union membership density within New York State and 2 points higher than reported on the ESP 2004 (53%) and 9 points higher than reported on the ESP 2003 (46%).

Chart 2 gives the percentage of respondents across different categories of workers who stated they would be somewhat or very likely to join a union. New York workers who have only a high school diploma or less, are not white, are paid hourly, are 35 years old or younger, live in households with less than \$75K income a year, are female, and/or work at locations with more than 250 employees, are most likely to join a union (60% or more). In contrast, the workers least likely to desire to join a union live in households that earn more than \$75K a year, work at a location with less than 50 employees, live upstate, are white, and/or attended some college or earned a bachelors degree (less than 50%).

**Chart 2**  
Likely to Join a Union  
by Type of Worker



### Hours Worked in NYS

Overtime and the number of weekly hours employees work has become a focus of a policy debate over the past two years. In response to the political discussion on the issue, the ESP 2005 queried New York workers on the total number of hours they work at their primary job. Table 3 summarizes the results.

**Table 3** Weekly hours worked in NYS  
% of employed respondents that work:

Response	≤20hrs wk	21-40hrs wk	41-60hrs wk	≥61hrs wk
Upstate	26	45	28	1
Downstate	25	44	27	4
NYS	26	44	27	3

## Workplace Benefits

The availability of job benefits is an important concern for all workers. The ESP 2005 asked New York workers whether six differing types of job benefits were available to them through their employer. Table 4 provides the percentage of employed respondents with access to each type of benefit through their employer.

**Table 4** Availability of Benefits  
% of employed respondents who have the following job benefits available to them:

Type of Worker	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
All Workers	79	54	19	71	79	27
Upstate Workers	83	56	18	77	81	28
Downstate Workers	77	52	19	68	78	27
Union Workers	88	46	20	84	85	28
Non-union Workers	74	58	18	64	75	27
Male Workers	79	52	16	71	79	27
Female Workers	79	56	21	72	79	28
White Workers	80	53	17	73	78	24
Non-white Workers	75	55	22	67	81	35
Full-time Workers	88	53	19	78	88	30
Part-time Workers	43	64	21	45	47	16
Salary Workers	90	51	21	82	90	29
Hourly Workers	74	52	18	66	74	26
<\$35K HH Income	58	53	17	46	61	19
\$35K -\$75K HH Income	84	54	19	73	84	33
\$75K > HH Income	86	53	22	85	84	25

"I" Health Insurance; "II" Flex Time; "III" Child Care Center/ Subsidies; "IV" 401K/Pension; "V" Paid Time Off; "VI" Time off Volunteering

Based on the above table, the most commonly available benefits for all workers in NYS are *health insurance* (79%), *paid time off* (79%), and *401K/pension plans* (71%). An employer-provided *child-care center or subsidy* (19%) and *paid or unpaid time-off for volunteering* (27%) are the least common benefits. The overall trend from the ESP 2004 is that the employers are offering fewer benefits. The availability of health insurance to lower household income groups has gone down from 2004, with only 58% of those who earn \$35,000 or less having health insurance in 2005 compared to 70% in 2004. Union and salary workers are the

employee categories with the highest reported benefit availability across all six types of benefits, although again, the level of benefits available has declined since 2004. As would be expected, part-time and hourly-wage workers have the least access to benefits compared to other types of workers.

## For More Information

If you are interested in directly accessing data from the Empire State Poll, have questions regarding the methodology, or wish to discuss other services provided by the ILR Survey Research Institute, please contact the SRI representative listed below or go to [www.sri.cornell.edu](http://www.sri.cornell.edu).

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## Citing Results from the ESP

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