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Introduction

This report is an executive summary of the key workplace and labor findings from the Empire State Poll (ESP) 2004, 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 2004 marks the second 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.

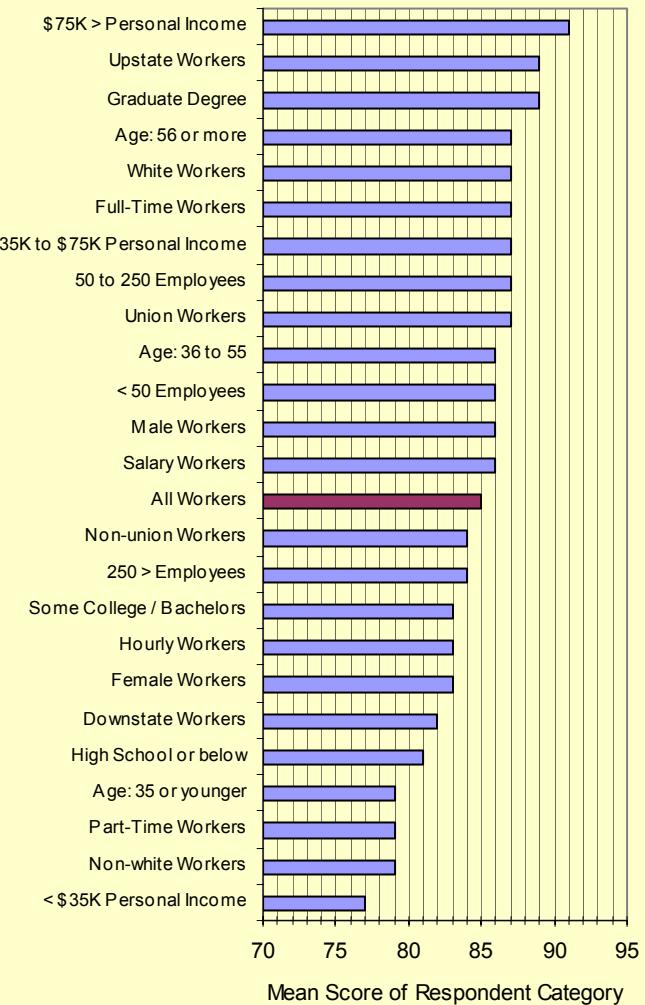
The poll was conducted between February 3 and April 21, 2004 and consists of 820 interviews with residents from both upstate and downstate New York. The response rate was 25.7% and cooperation rate 56.5% according to AAPOR standards. "Downstate" was defined as New York, Rockland, Kings, Richmond, Westchester, Suffolk, Queens, Nassau, and Bronx counties, with the remaining counties of the state defined as "upstate." All results presented in this report have been weighted based on geography (upstate vs. downstate) to account for population distribution and are representative of other key demographic criteria (i.e. gender, race, income). The margin of error for reported statewide results is plus or minus 3.5 percentage points. For more detail on the background of the ESP 2004 and how the data were collected, see additional information available at www.sri.cornell.edu.

Job Security & Satisfaction

The ESP 2004 asked employed New Yorkers about their job satisfaction, 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 ESP 2003, the ESP 2004 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 2004 was 85% compared to 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 that earn over \$75K per year, live in upstate NY, and/or have a graduate degree. The least secure workers in NYS earn less than \$35K per year, are not white, work part-time, and/or are 35 years old or younger.

Chart 1 Reported Mean Likelihood of Keeping Job by Category of Worker



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 responses by region, for all of NYS, and compared with the ESP 2003.

Table 1 Reported Layoffs: % of employed respondents reporting layoffs in 2003 and 2004

Number of Layoffs	Upstate 2004	Downstate 2004	NYS 2004	NYS 2003
No Layoffs	73	68	70	64
1-10	18	21	20	23
11-50	6	7	7	7
51 or More	4	4	4	6

The results suggest that the number of reported layoffs in 2004 decreased compared to 2003. Furthermore, in 2003 only 58% of downstate respondents reported no layoffs at their place of employment compared to 68% in 2004. In contrast, the number of upstate respondents reporting no layoffs in 2003 compared to 2004 remained constant (72% vs. 73%). These findings are consistent with upstate workers perceiving a higher level of job security than downstate workers.

In addition to perceived job security and layoffs, all employed respondents to the ESP 2004 were also asked their level of overall job satisfaction. Table 2 summarizes the results for upstate and downstate respondents, all New Yorkers, and provides the 2003 results for comparison. Compared to 2003, job satisfaction among NYS workers has remained relatively constant more than three fourths of employed respondents expressing satisfaction with their jobs.

Table 2 Job Satisfaction: % of respondents satisfied or dissatisfied with current employment

Response	Upstate 2004	Downstate 2004	NYS 2004	NYS 2003
Satisfied	84	75	79	76
Dissatisfied	9	18	14	14
Neutral	7	7	7	10

However, there are important regional differences between upstate and downstate workers, with substantially more upstate workers (84%) satisfied with their jobs compared to downstate workers (75%). In addition, twice as many downstate respondents (18%) as upstate respondents (9%) expressed dissatisfaction with their job.

One-Stop Employment Centers in NYS

The New York State Labor Department has created 81 employment offices across NYS that provide “one-stop shopping” for employment-related needs for both job seekers and employers. Respondents to the ESP 2004 were asked whether they were aware of these employment centers and how likely there were to use their services. Table 3 summarizes the results for both employed and unemployed respondents, split between upstate and downstate residents.

Table 3 One-Stop Employment Centers: % of employed and unemployed respondents reporting awareness and use

Response	Upstate	Downstate	NYS
<i>Awareness of Center</i>			
Employed	44	24	32
Unemployed	47	30	33
<i>Likely to Use Center</i>			
Employed	37	42	40
Unemployed	67	64	64

The awareness of one-stop employment centers within NYS varies regionally, with almost twice as many employed upstate respondents (44%) aware of this employment resource as compared to only 24% of downstate respondents. Statewide, only about a third of employed and unemployed respondents were aware of the employment centers. However, forty percent of employed respondents and two-thirds of unemployed respondents said they were likely to use, or had already used, the one-stop employment centers. These results suggest there is a gap between awareness of this employment resource and potential use by New York Residents, especially on a regional basis.

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 2004, with 29% of employed respondents belonging to a labor union. The ESP 2004 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, 53% of employed respondents to the ESP 2004 said they would likely join a union if provided the option. This is nearly 30 points higher than current union membership density within New York State and 7 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 at locations with 50 to 250 employees, who are 35 years old or younger, earn less than \$35K a year, have only a high school diploma or less, are not white, and/or live downstate are most likely to desire to join a union (60% or more). In contrast, the workers least likely to desire to join a union live upstate, earn more than \$75K a year, are between 36 and 55 years old, are white, have a graduate degree, and/or work at a location with less than 50 employees.

Chart 2: Percentage of Respondents Likely To Join a Union by Category of Worker

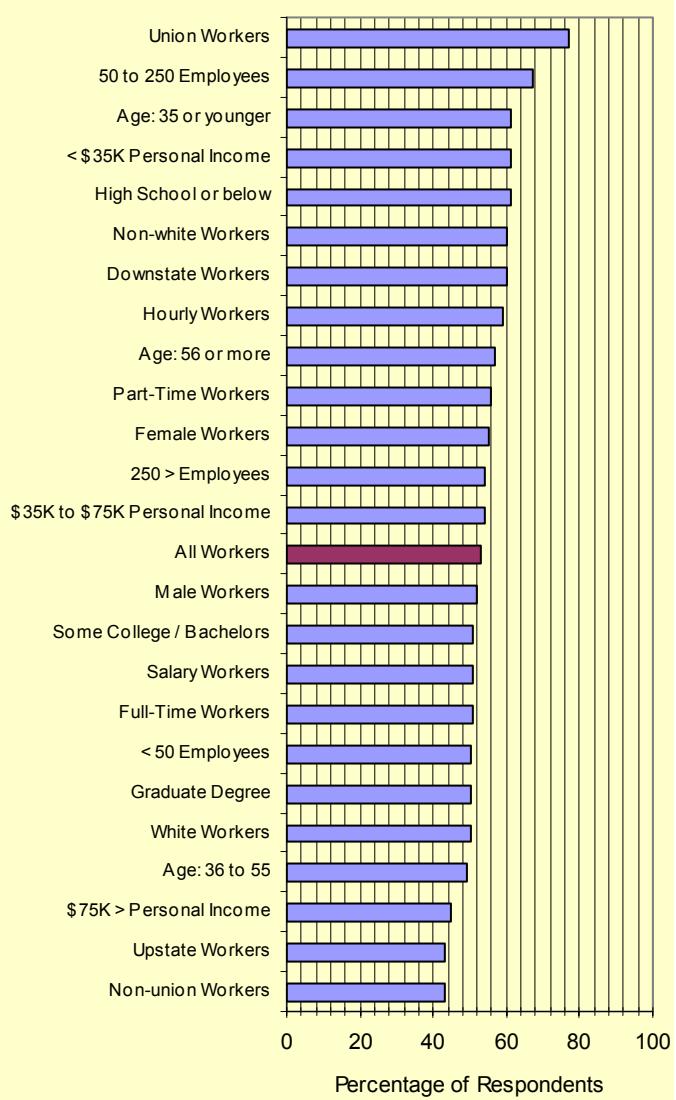
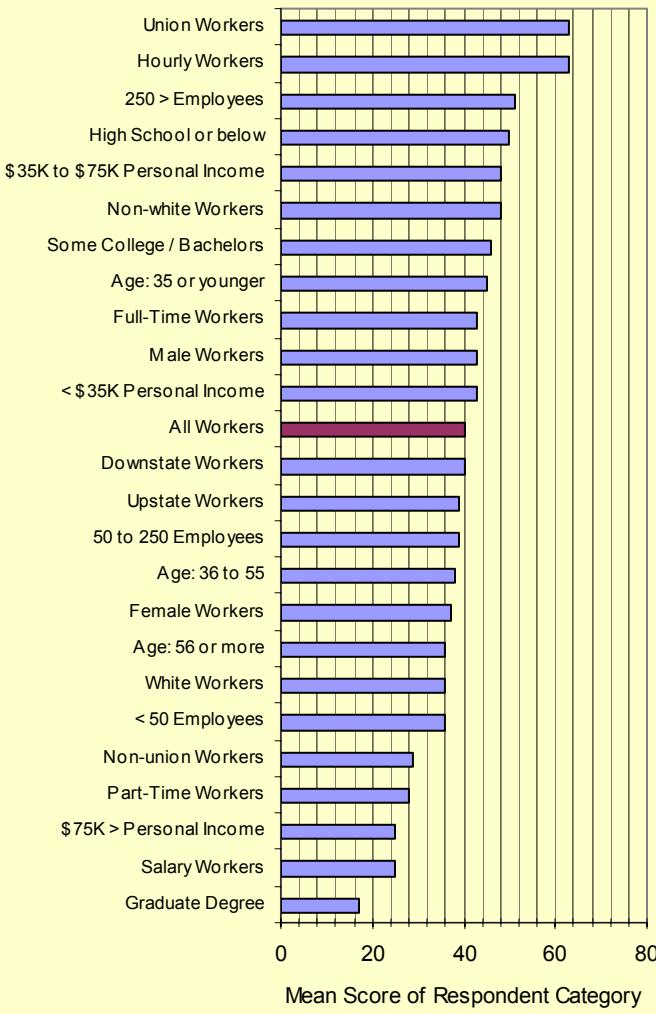


Table 4 Weekly hours worked in NYS: Percentage of employed respondents that work

Response	<20hrs wk	21-40hrs wk	41-60hrs wk	≥61hrs wk
Primary Job	13	58	25	4
Secondary Job(s)	65	13	21	2

The ESP 2004 also asked NYS workers whether they were eligible for overtime pay. Of the total employed respondents to the ESP, 40% replied they were eligible for overtime compensation. However, across different types of workers that percentage significantly varied. Chart 3 below provides the percentage of workers eligible for overtime pay by key demographics.

Chart 3 Percentage of Workers Eligible for Overtime Pay by Category of Worker



Hours Worked & Overtime in NYS

Overtime and the number of weekly hours employees work has become a focus of a policy debate over the past year. In response to the political discussion on the issue, the ESP 2004 queried 505 New York workers on how many different jobs they worked, their total number of working hours, their eligibility for overtime, and their average number of overtime hours.

A large majority of employed respondents only work one job (88%), while another 10% have two or more jobs and only 2% of employed respondents replied that they had 3 or more jobs. Employed respondents were also asked how many hours they typically worked a week for their primary job, and for those with more than one job, how many hours they worked across all other jobs. Table 4 summarizes the results.

As Chart 3 suggests, changes to the overtime eligibility rules may not affect all workers equally. Union members, hourly workers, workers with only a high school degree or less, middle income workers, non-white workers, and/or younger workers are all more likely to be eligible for overtime pay than other classes of workers.

Workplace Benefits

The availability of job benefits is an important concern for all workers. The ESP 2004 asked New York workers whether six differing types of job benefits were available to them through their employer. Table 5 provides the percentage of employed respondents with access to each type of benefit through their employer.

Table 5 Availability of Benefits: Percentage of workers who have the following job benefits available to them

Type of Worker	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
All Workers	82	58	21	77	81	32
Upstate Workers	81	57	17	79	84	36
Downstate Workers	83	58	24	76	80	31
Union Workers	94	50	20	90	92	39
Non-union Workers	77	61	21	72	76	30
Male Workers	84	58	21	79	82	37
Female Workers	80	58	20	75	81	28
White Workers	81	62	19	78	80	33
Non-white Workers	84	56	26	76	83	31
Full-time Workers	92	57	22	85	90	36
Part-time Workers	55	72	21	55	56	24
Salary Workers	95	56	25	90	93	36
Hourly Workers	80	57	20	77	84	32
≤\$35K Personal Income	70	60	20	61	71	27
\$35K - \$75K Personal Income	93	53	19	89	89	33
\$75K > Personal Income	86	64	24	88	88	43

"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* (82%), *paid time off* (81%), and *401K/pension plans* (77%). An employer-provided *child-care center or subsidy* (21%) and *paid or unpaid time-off for volunteering* (32%) are the least common benefits. Union and salary workers are the employee categories with the highest reported benefit availability across all six types of benefits. As would be expected, part-time and hourly-wage workers have the least access to benefits compared to other types of workers.

Guest Worker Program

In Spring 2004, President Bush proposed revising the labor rules for both legal and illegal immigrants within the United States to create a new guest-worker program. The ESP 2004 asked New Yorkers how much they supported this initiative by President Bush. Table 6 summarizes the results.

Table 6 Guest-Worker Program: % of respondents favoring or opposing proposed guest worker program

Response	Upstate 2004	Downstate 2004	NYS	National*
Favor	24	45	37	37
Oppose	52	33	40	57
Neutral/Not Sure	25	22	23	3

*From 1/14/2004 Gallup Poll. Response range slightly differs from ESP.

New Yorkers appear evenly split on whether to support or oppose a new guest-worker program for foreign workers. However, there are substantial regional differences between upstate and downstate New York, with a plurality of downstate residents (45%) supporting such a program and a majority of upstate residents (52%) opposing it.

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.

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Citing Results from the ESP

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