

## Macro Roundup Article

**Headline:** [Unions, Wages and Hours](#)

**Article Link:** <https://www.nber.org/papers/w32471>

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**Tweet:** The private sector union weekly earnings premium reflects a 10% higher hourly wage and 5% more working hours, reflecting trade unions' role in "ensuring workers receive the paid hours they desire." @D\_Blanchflower @AlexanderBryson

**Summary:** The regression-adjusted difference between union members' and non-members' hourly earnings has been falling since the Great Recession. The union differential in weekly wages has been more stable. Although it fell by around 5 log points during COVID, it remains 15 log points [roughly 15 ppt]. This weekly earnings differential arises from a higher hourly wage of around 10 log points and longer working hours (5 log points). [Chart 3 above, which includes only the private sector; as the authors note, "The monotonic decline since the late 1970s is driven by decline in the private sector, whereas density has remained relatively stable in the public sector"]. A recent literature indicates that many workers wish to work more hours than their employer offers them. What is perhaps most striking is the [apparent] role unions play in raising hours. It is a [putative] role that has not emerged clearly from the earlier literature but is important for the welfare of workers whose consumption is dependent not only on hourly wages, but the [number of] paid hours of work.

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**Primary Topic:** Wages/Income

**Topics:** Academic paper, Database, Wages/Income, Workforce

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