

# INSIGHTS

4.4%  
March  
Unemployment Rate

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S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce

Business Intelligence Department

## At A Glance

Employment, businesses' payrolls set new records in March.....1

U.S. Unemployment Rate Steady in March 2018, S.C. Rate Ranked 32nd Lowest.....2

March Unemployment Rate by County.....2

South Carolina Nonfarm Employment Trends for March - Seasonally Adjusted.....3

Employment Changes by County.....4

S.C. Employment Status and Trend Index Remains Steady in March 2018.....5

Agriculture: Alive and Prospering.....6

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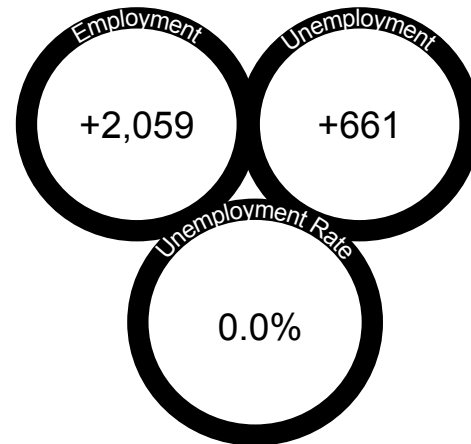
## Employment, businesses' payrolls set new records in March

The number of individuals working across the state continued to climb, setting a new record as businesses continued to grow payrolls to new highs in March.

During the month, the state's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate remained at 4.4 percent as 2,059 people found work, raising the number of employed to an all-time high of 2,225,456. The state's labor force also edged up by 2,720 people to a level of 2,327,532, while the number of unemployed increased by 661 to 102,076 people.

Since March 2017, the labor force has grown by 21,012 people, and employment gains totaled 18,810. The level of unemployed people increased by 2,202.

Nationally, the unemployment rate was unchanged for the sixth consecutive month, remaining at 4.1 percent.

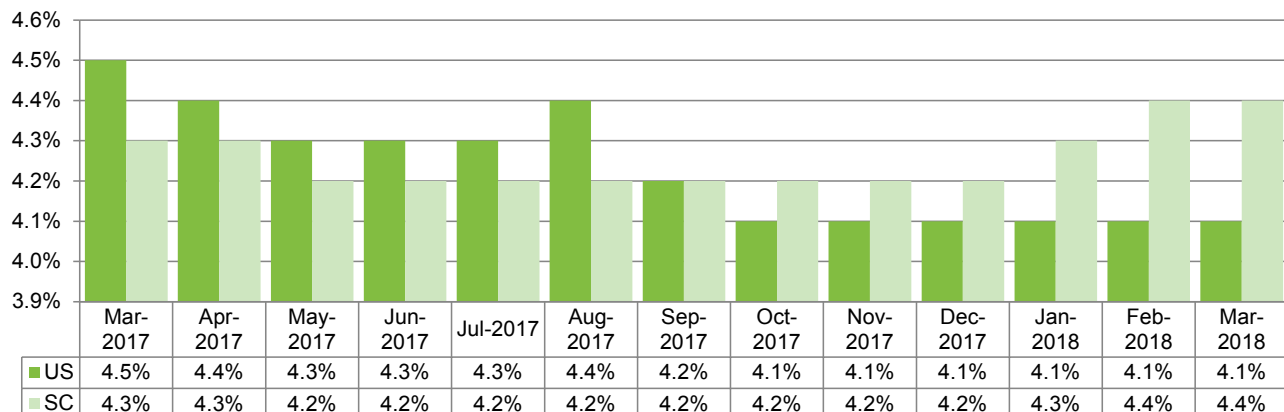


## Economic Indicators

March 2018 - Seasonally Adjusted (SA)

	United States	S.C.
Labor Force	161,763,000	2,327,532
Employed	155,178,000	2,225,456
Unemployed	6,585,000	102,076
Unemp. Rate	4.1%	4.4%

South Carolina vs U.S. Unemployment Rate  
March 2017 - March 2018



*Insights* is prepared in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. The current month's estimates are preliminary, while all previous data are subject to revision. All estimates are projected from a first quarter 2017 benchmark. To subscribe to *Insights*, please email [bidcustomerservice@dew.sc.gov](mailto:bidcustomerservice@dew.sc.gov) or to provide feedback please click on the [BID Customer Feedback Form](#).

## U.S. Unemployment Rate Steady in March 2018, S.C. Rate Ranked 32nd Lowest

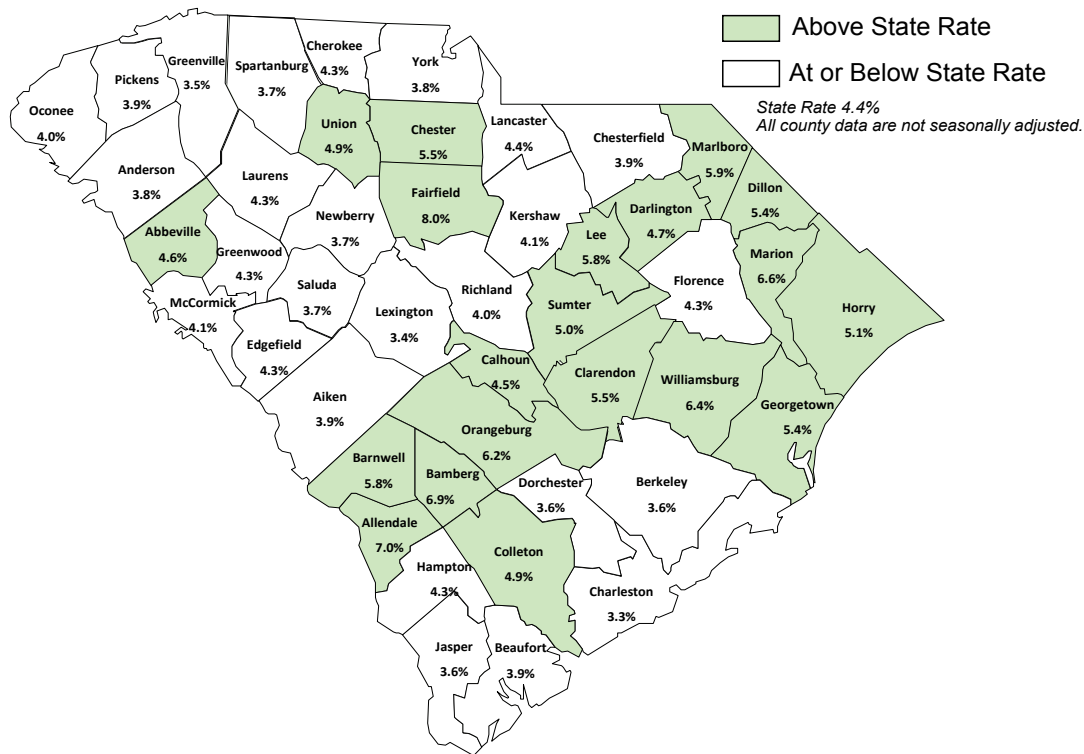
Unemployment rates were lower in March in four states, higher in one state, and stable in 45 states and the District of Columbia. Seventeen states had jobless rate decreases from a year earlier, and 33 states and the District of Columbia had little or no change. The national unemployment rate was unchanged from February at 4.1 percent, while South Carolina's unemployment rate was 4.4 percent, ranking 32nd lowest of 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Two states had over-the-month increases in nonfarm payroll employment in March 2018: Texas (+32,000, or +0.3 percent) and Utah (+6,300, or +0.4 percent). Twenty-four states had over-the-year increases in nonfarm payroll employment in March. The largest job gains occurred in California (+321,000), Texas (+294,100), and Florida (+173,100). The largest percentage gains occurred in Idaho and Utah (+3.3 percent each), followed by Nevada (+2.9 percent).

### March Unemployment Rate by County

Not seasonally adjusted, county unemployment rates declined across the state in March as the not seasonally adjusted, statewide unemployment rate continued to fall. Overall, county unemployment rates ranged from 8.0 percent in Fairfield County to 3.3 percent in Charleston County. Fairfield County unemployment levels continue to be influenced by the July, 2017 closure of the V. C. Summer nuclear construction site.

Seasonal hiring in the coastal areas of Charleston and Horry counties led the over-the-month growth. Additionally, strong growth was noted in the midland and upstate counties as well.



Hawaii	2.1
New Hampshire	2.6
North Dakota	2.6
Maine	2.7
Iowa	2.8
Nebraska	2.8
Vermont	2.8
Idaho	2.9
Wisconsin	2.9
Colorado	3.0
Utah	3.1
Indiana	3.2
Minnesota	3.2
Kansas	3.4
South Dakota	3.4
Tennessee	3.4
Virginia	3.4
Massachusetts	3.5
Missouri	3.6
Alabama	3.8
Arkansas	3.8
Florida	3.9
Wyoming	3.9
Kentucky	4.0
Oklahoma	4.0
Texas	4.0
Montana	4.1
Oregon	4.1
<a href="#">United States</a>	<a href="#">4.1</a>
California	4.3
Delaware	4.3
Maryland	4.3
Georgia	4.4
Louisiana	4.4
Ohio	4.4
<a href="#">South Carolina</a>	<a href="#">4.4</a>
Connecticut	4.5
Mississippi	4.5
North Carolina	4.5
Rhode Island	4.5
Illinois	4.6
New Jersey	4.6
New York	4.6
Michigan	4.7
Pennsylvania	4.8
Washington	4.8
Arizona	4.9
Nevada	4.9
West Virginia	5.4
District of Columbia	5.6
New Mexico	5.6
Alaska	7.3

March 2018

Highest County Unemployment Rates		Lowest County Unemployment Rates	
Fairfield	8.0%	Charleston	3.3%
Allendale	7.0%	Lexington	3.4%
Bamberg	6.9%	Greenville	3.5%
Marion	6.6%	Berkeley	3.6%
Williamsburg	6.4%	Dorchester	3.6%

March 2018

Economic Indicators Average Hours & Earnings		
	United States (SA)	S.C. (Unadj.)
Manufacturing		
Avg. Weekly Earning	\$1,098.57	\$934.82
Avg. Weekly Hours	39.2	44.5
Avg. Weekly Wage	\$26.86	\$18.76

### South Carolina Nonfarm Employment Trends for March - Seasonally Adjusted

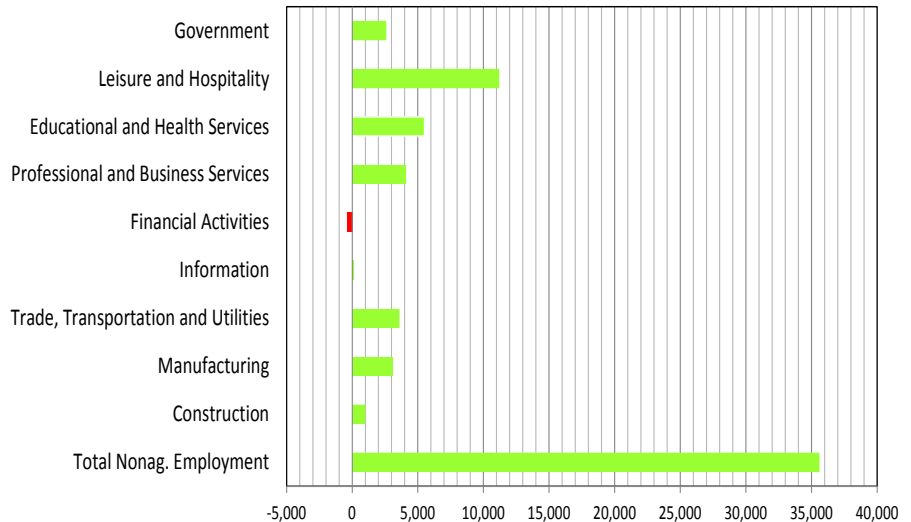
In March 2018 seasonally adjusted, nonfarm payrolls increased by 1,400 over the month to a record level of 2,122,800. The increase in employment was primarily due to growth in Leisure and Hospitality (+1,900); Professional and Business Services (+1,300); Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (+700); Educational and Health Services (+700); and Information (+200). The industries reporting declines during the same period were Manufacturing (-1,700); Construction (-800); Financial Activities (-500); Other Services (-400); and Government (-100).

From March 2017 to March 2018, South Carolina's economy added 35,600 seasonally adjusted, nonfarm jobs with noticeable gains in Leisure and Hospitality (+11,200); Education and Health Services (+5,500); Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (+5,300); Professional and Business Services (+4,100); Manufacturing (+3,100); Other Services (+3,000); Government (+2,600); Construction (+1,000); and Information (+100). The only industry recording a decline during this period was in Financial Activities (-400).

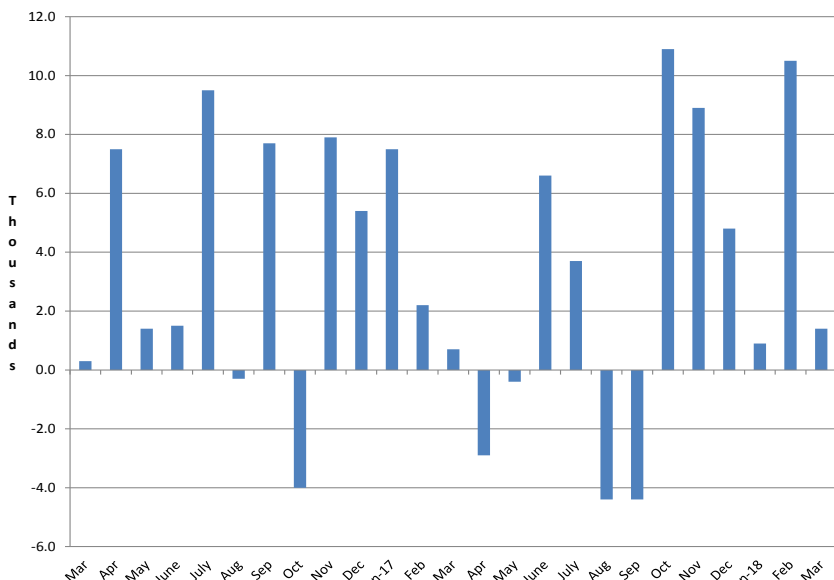
For the Metropolitan Statistical Areas, seasonally adjusted, total nonfarm payrolls' job growth was in Greenville (+1,500); Charleston (+900), Columbia (+800); Florence (+400); and Hilton Head Bluffton Beaufort (+200). Over-the-month reported decreases were in Spartanburg (-600); Myrtle Beach (-500); and Sumter (-100), respectively.

Over-the-year, the Metropolitan Statistical Areas saw a surge in seasonally adjusted payroll. Notable employment gains were seen in Greenville (+8,600); Charleston (+5,100); and Myrtle Beach (+4,300). Notable employment decreases were in Columbia (-1,000); and Sumter (-100).

**South Carolina Job Changes by Industry  
March 2017 - March 2018 (SA)**



**S.C. Total Nonfarm Jobs  
2016 - 2018**



**Economic Indicators (Mar. 2018)**

Top Job Growth by MSA (SA)

MSA	Over Month % Change	Over Year % Change
Florence MSA	0.45%	0.91%
Greenville MSA	0.35%	2.08%
Charleston MSA	0.25%	1.45%
Columbia MSA	0.20%	-0.25%

To see the monthly not seasonally adjusted data series, go to

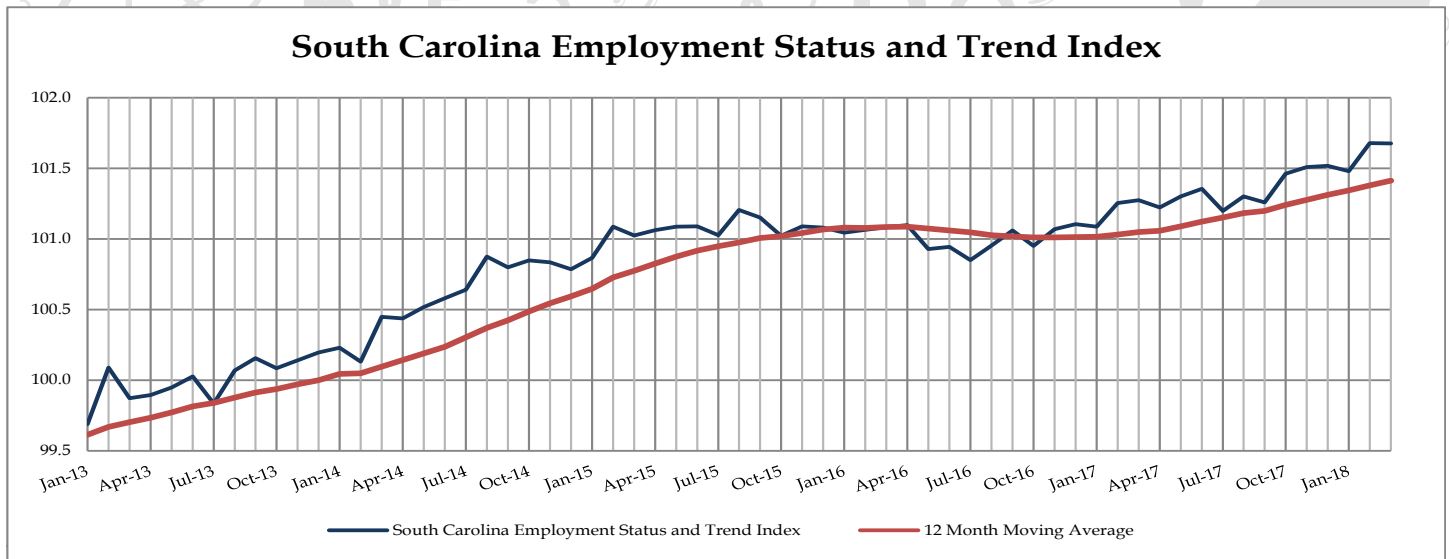
[www.SCWorkforceInfo.com](http://www.SCWorkforceInfo.com)

(Employment and Wage Data section)

**Employment Changes by County**  
**January 2018 through March 2018**

County	Employment			Net Change From	
	Mar 2018	Feb 2018	Jan 2018	Feb '18 - Mar '18	Jan '18 - Feb '18
Abbeville	9,787	9,747	9,591	40	156
Aiken	72,702	72,693	72,381	9	312
Allendale	2,592	2,617	2,609	-25	8
Anderson	86,988	86,400	85,885	588	515
Bamberg	4,868	4,892	4,853	-24	39
Barnwell	7,743	7,747	7,670	-4	77
Beaufort	71,288	70,225	69,472	1,063	753
Berkeley	95,110	94,281	93,051	829	1,230
Calhoun	6,465	6,476	6,413	-11	63
Charleston	198,657	197,281	194,511	1,376	2,770
Cherokee	23,485	23,407	23,059	78	348
Chester	12,926	12,842	12,795	84	47
Chesterfield	20,983	20,988	20,773	-5	215
Clarendon	11,839	11,904	11,824	-65	80
Colleton	16,378	16,370	16,136	8	234
Darlington	28,498	28,335	28,117	163	218
Dillon	12,067	12,120	12,041	-53	79
Dorchester	71,715	71,126	70,203	589	923
Edgefield	10,220	10,278	10,259	-58	19
Fairfield	9,275	9,268	9,171	7	97
Florence	63,091	62,579	61,876	512	703
Georgetown	24,519	24,454	24,143	65	311
Greenville	241,210	239,463	237,981	1,747	1,482
Greenwood	29,895	29,795	29,393	100	402
Hampton	7,936	7,953	7,920	-17	33
Horry	134,541	131,594	129,134	2,947	2,460
Jasper	11,808	11,703	11,544	105	159
Kershaw	27,725	27,697	27,399	28	298
Lancaster	37,769	37,521	37,330	248	191
Laurens	29,158	29,014	28,853	144	161
Lee	6,066	6,078	6,044	-12	34
Lexington	142,233	141,885	140,178	348	1,707
McCormick	3,293	3,288	3,241	5	47
Marion	11,747	11,694	11,560	53	134
Marlboro	8,875	8,859	8,751	16	108
Newberry	17,835	17,933	17,815	-98	118
Oconee	33,504	33,450	33,066	54	384
Orangeburg	33,113	33,131	32,723	-18	408
Pickens	54,934	54,561	54,189	373	372
Richland	191,297	190,332	187,890	965	2,442
Saluda	8,398	8,521	8,522	-123	-1
Spartanburg	142,014	142,045	140,224	-31	1,821
Sumter	41,813	41,777	41,746	36	31
Union	11,255	11,263	11,115	-8	148
Williamsburg	11,877	11,877	11,753	0	124
York	129,826	128,810	128,008	1,016	802

S. C. Employment Status and Trend Index Remains Steady in March 2018



S.C. Employment Status and Trend Index (SCESTI), an aggregate of five labor-market indicators, did not change in March 2018, remaining at its revised February value of 101.68. The Index continued above its 12-month moving average, which rose to 101.41 for the month from 101.38 in February.

Two of the five underlying labor-market components moved in a positive direction in March. Initial claims for Unemployment Insurance fell from a February average of 2,173 per week to a March average of 2,024 per week. The Conference Board’s Employment Trends Index grew in March to 107.72 points from a February value of 107.31. The Bureau of Labor Statistic’s Weekly Manufacturing Hours data showed production hours decreasing to a preliminary 44.5 hours per week in March over its February level of 44.6. The Conference Board’s Consumer Confidence Index fell by 2.3 points from February’s value of 130.0 to 127.7 in March. The Conference Board’s Help Wanted Online data, which tracks the number of available job openings posted online, fell by 711 in March to 60,341 from 61,052 in February.

SCESTI is well ahead of its year-ago figure of 101.27 in March of 2017. With the Index remaining above the 12-month moving average, SCESTI indicates a positive employment trend over the next several months.



## Agriculture: Alive and Prospering

Agriculture is the science or occupation of cultivating land and rearing crops and livestock; farming; husbandry. (Dictionary.com) Today, society still identifies this sector as strictly farming and raising livestock. However, this path is not the only one that agriculture aligns with anymore. There is a vast world of opportunity and expansion within the agriculture sector. Agribusiness is a branch of agriculture that not only looks at the farming aspect but also the agriculturally related businesses that supply farm inputs, such as farm machinery and seed supply. It also describes businesses that are involved in the marketing of farm products, such as warehouses, wholesalers, processors, retailers and more. Some careers revealed some surprising but lucrative incomes.

**Farm and Ranch Managers** - Plan, direct, or coordinate the management or operation of farms, ranches, greenhouses, aquacultural operations, nurseries, timber tracts or other agricultural establishments. May hire, train or supervise farm workers or contract for services to carry out the day-to-day activities of the managed operation. May engage in or supervise planting, cultivating, harvesting, financial or marketing activities. (South Carolina Annual: \$84,010)

**Veterinarians** - Diagnose, treat or research diseases and injuries of animals. This includes veterinarians who conduct research and development, inspect livestock or care for pets and companion animals. (South Carolina Annual: \$98,460)

**Food Scientists and Technologists** - Use chemistry, microbiology, engineering and other sciences to study the principles underlying the processing and deterioration of foods; analyze food content to determine levels of vitamins, fat, sugar and protein; discover new food sources; research ways to make processed foods safe, palatable and healthful; and apply food science knowledge to determine best ways to process, package, preserve, store and distribute food. (South Carolina Annual: \$69,490)

**Agricultural Inspectors** - Inspect agricultural commodities, processing equipment and facilities, and fish and logging operations, to ensure compliance with regulations and laws governing health, quality and safety. (South Carolina Annual: \$39,570)

**Buyers and Purchasing Agents, Farm Products** - Purchase farm products either for further processing or resale, including tree farm contractors, grain brokers and market operators, grain buyers and tobacco buyers. (South Carolina Annual: \$69,490)

**Loan Officers** - Evaluate, authorize or recommend approval of commercial, real estate or credit loans. Advise borrowers on financial status and payment methods, including mortgage loan officers and agents, collection analysts, loan servicing officers and loan underwriters. (South Carolina Annual: \$69,490) Two careers also worth mentioning is the County Extension Agent (Nationally: \$49,490) and the Soil and Plant Scientists (Nationally: \$62,300). Both assist the farmer with advice and growing good crops. (O\*Net, <https://www.onetonline.org>)

While our views continue to be biased when speaking about agriculture, important strides have been made in changing the perception about agriculture. Technological advances continue to enhance food production and livestock breeding, proving that agriculture is not just about your average farm anymore.

**SOURCE:** U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2016 Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates, [https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_sc.htm](https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_sc.htm)