

# INSIGHTS



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SC Department of Employment and Workforce

Business Intelligence Department

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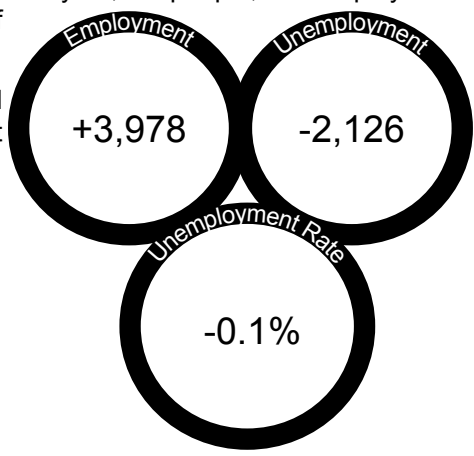
## Employment Increases to Record Level, Unemployment Rate Falls

South Carolina's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate dropped in April to 4.3 percent from 4.4 percent in March, while the number of people working in the state marked another record high.

The number of employed people increased by 3,978 to 2,233,160. The number of unemployed people dropped 2,126 in April to 101,513, and the state's labor force increased by 1,852 to a total of 2,334,673.

In the last 12 months, the labor force has grown by 37,733 people, and employment gains totaled 55,856. The level of unemployment decreased by 18,123.

Nationally, the unemployment rate edged lower to 4.4 percent in April from 4.5 percent in March.



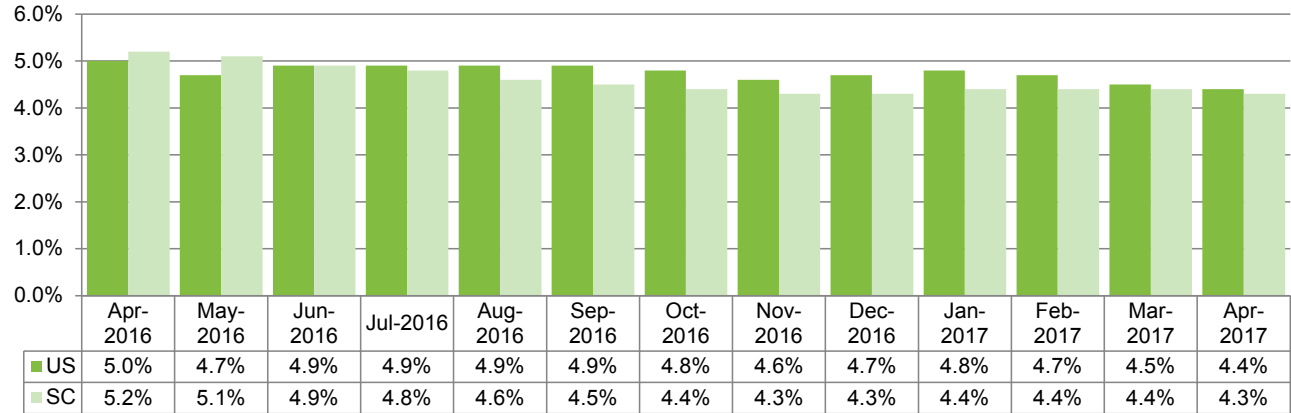
[View the S.C. Employment Situation Report](#)

## Economic Indicators

April - Seasonally Adjusted (SA)

	United States	SC
Labor Force	160,213,000	2,334,673
Employed	153,156,000	2,233,160
Unemployed	7,056,000	101,513
Unemp. Rate	4.4%	4.3%

South Carolina vs U.S. Unemployment Rate  
April 2016 - April 2017



*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 2016 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](#).

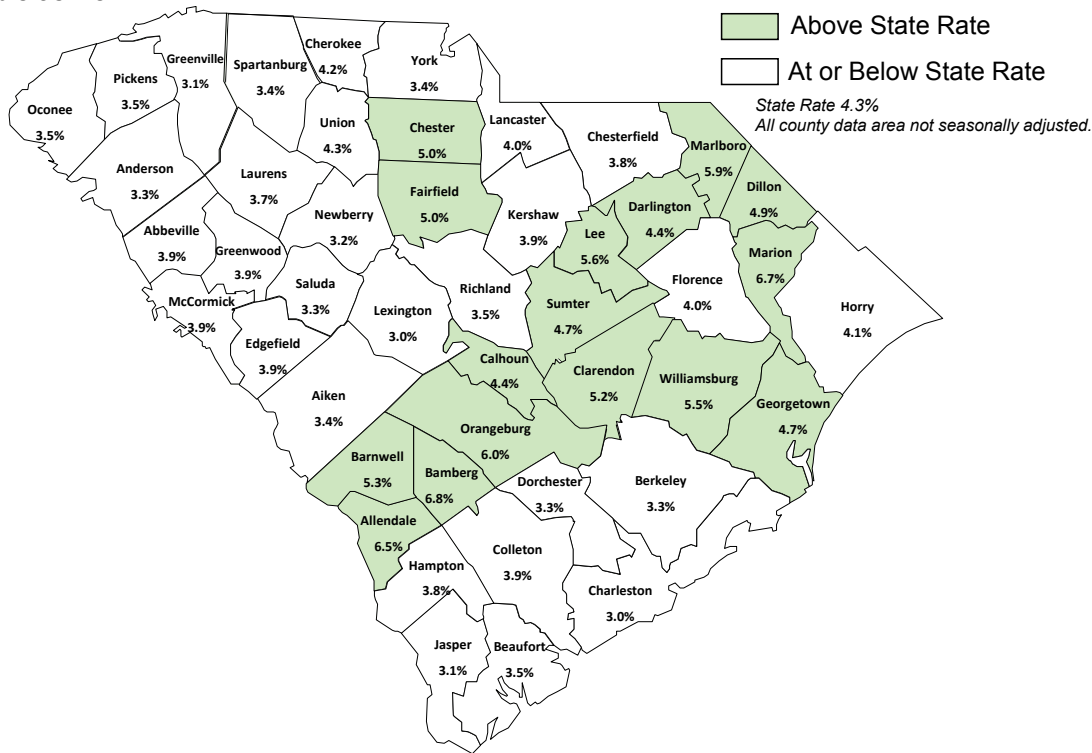
## South Carolina Ranked 24th Highest of 50 States and D.C. in April

Unemployment rates were lower in April in 10 states, higher in one state, and stable in 39 states and the District of Columbia, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Nineteen states had jobless rate decreases from a year earlier, and 31 states and the District had little or no change. In April, South Carolina ranked 24th highest out of 51 states.

Nonfarm payroll employment increased in nine states in April 2017, decreased in one, and was essentially unchanged in 40 states and the District of Columbia. Over the year, 28 states added nonfarm payroll jobs, one state lost jobs, and 21 states and the District were essentially unchanged. The largest job gains occurred in Texas (+258,900), California (+236,700), and Florida (+215,400). The largest percentage gain occurred in Nevada (+3.6 percent), followed by Utah (+3.3 percent) and Florida, Georgia, and Idaho (+2.6 percent each). Alaska had the only over-the-year decline in employment (-7,200, or -2.1 percent).

### April Unemployment Rate by County

Not seasonally adjusted, county unemployment rates were lower across the state during April with the exception of Lee County, which experienced no change. Overall, county unemployment rates ranged from 6.8 percent in Bamberg County to 3.0 percent in Charleston and Lexington counties. Since April of 2016, estimated employment levels in South Carolina counties, as a whole, have increased by nearly 46,940 people. Looking at the labor force levels (employed + unemployed people seeking work) in the counties over the year, Horry County has marked a nearly 4,160 labor force increase. Charleston County's labor force has increased by an estimate of 3,420 people. Spartanburg County has marked labor force growth in excess of 3,100 people as well.



New Mexico	6.7
Alaska	6.6
District of Columbia	5.9
Louisiana	5.8
Alabama	5.4
Kentucky	5.1
Arizona	5.0
Georgia	5.0
Mississippi	5.0
Ohio	5.0
Texas	5.0
Connecticut	4.9
Pennsylvania	4.9
California	4.8
West Virginia	4.8
Illinois	4.7
Michigan	4.7
Nevada	4.7
North Carolina	4.7
Tennessee	4.7
Delaware	4.6
Washington	4.6
Florida	4.5
<u>United States</u>	<u>4.4</u>
Maryland	4.3
New York	4.3
Oklahoma	4.3
Rhode Island	4.3
<u>South Carolina</u>	<u>4.3</u>
Wyoming	4.3
New Jersey	4.1
Massachusetts	3.9
Missouri	3.9
Minnesota	3.8
Montana	3.8
Virginia	3.8
Kansas	3.7
Oregon	3.7
Indiana	3.6
Arkansas	3.5
Idaho	3.4
Wisconsin	3.2
Iowa	3.1
Utah	3.1
Vermont	3.1
Maine	3.0
Nebraska	3.0
New Hampshire	2.8
South Dakota	2.8
Hawaii	2.7
North Dakota	2.7
Colorado	2.3

April 2017

Highest County Unemployment Rates		Lowest County Unemployment Rates	
Bamberg	6.8%	Charleston	3.0%
Marion	6.7%	Lexington	3.0%
Allendale	6.5%	Greenville	3.1%
Orangeburg	6.0%	Jasper	3.1%
Marlboro	5.9%	Newberry	3.2%

April 2017

Economic Indicators Average Hours & Earnings		
	United States (SA)	SC (Unadj.)
Manufacturing		
Avg. Weekly Earning	\$1,081.40	\$808.15
Avg. Weekly Hours	40.7	41.7
Avg. Weekly Wage	\$26.57	\$19.38

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

April seasonally adjusted, nonfarm payrolls increased by 1,700 over the month to a level of 2,076,100.

Leisure and Hospitality led the industry growth with an increase of 2,000. Additional gains were seen in Government (+900); Construction (+700); Financial Activities (+500); Other Services (+500); and Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (+400).

April's seasonally adjusted, nonfarm employment decreases occurred in Professional and Business Services (-1,400); Education and Health Services (-1,100); Manufacturing (-600); and Information (-200).

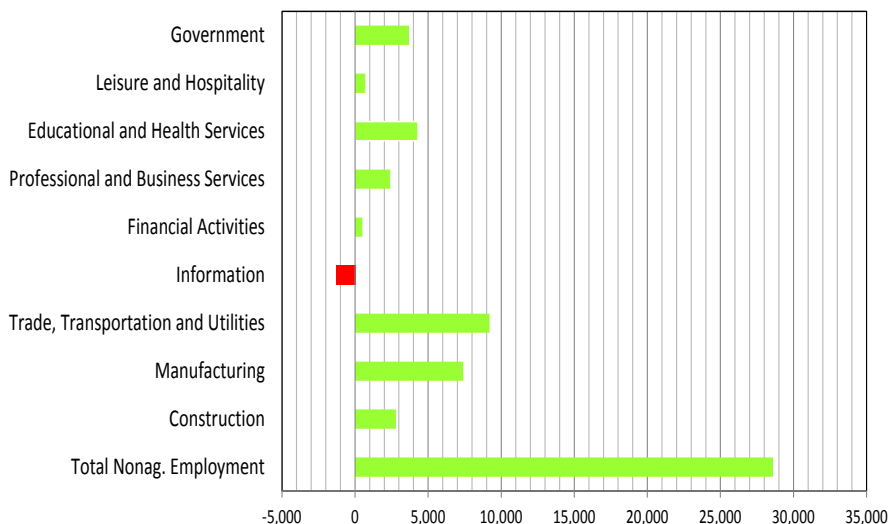
The over-the-year growth in nonfarm employment was 28,600. Increases were seen in Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (+9,200); Manufacturing (+7,400); Education and Health Services (+4,300); Government (+3,400); Construction (+2,800); Professional and Business Services (+2,400); Leisure and Hospitality (+700); and Financial Activities (+500).

Decreases were reported in Information (-1,300) and Other Services (-1,000).

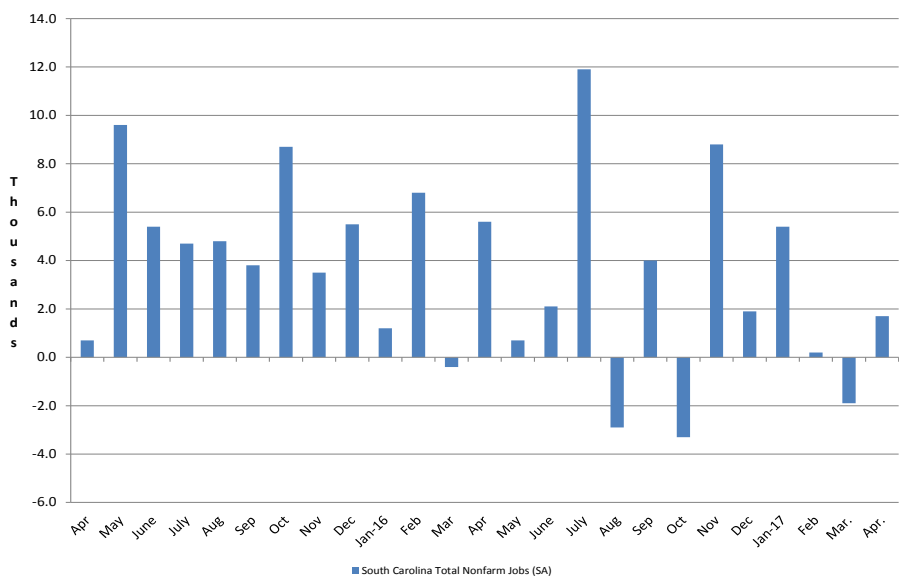
Metropolitan Statistical Areas' seasonally adjusted, total nonfarm payroll employment saw over-the-month increases. A notable increase was seen in Myrtle Beach (+2,300). Additional growth occurred in Columbia (+800), Spartanburg (+800), Florence (+700), and Sumter (+100). Decreases occurred in Charleston (-2,000) followed by Greenville (-600).

Over the year, growth occurred in nearly every Metropolitan Statistical Area's seasonally adjusted payroll. The most prominent increases were reported in Charleston (+7,900) and Myrtle Beach (+7,200).

South Carolina Job Changes by Industry  
April 2016 - April 2017 (SA)



SC Total Nonfarm Jobs  
2015 - 2017



### Economic Indicators (Apr. 2017) Top Job Growth by MSA (SA)

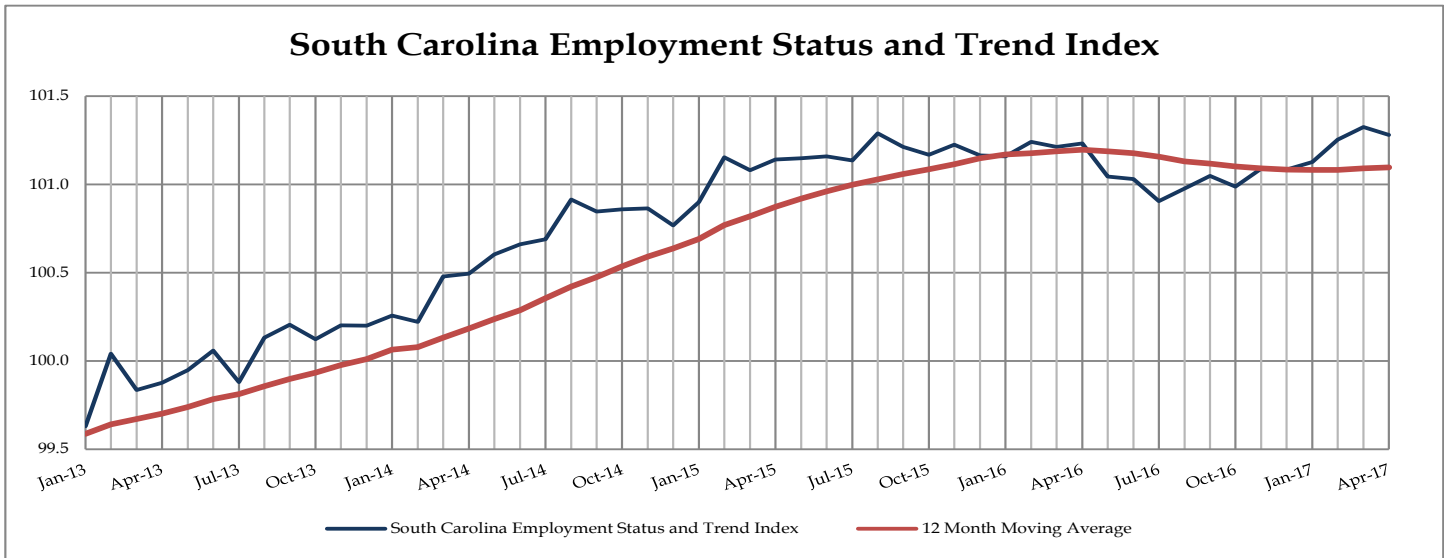
MSA	Over Month % Change	Over Year % Change
Florence MSA	0.78%	2.52%
Sumter MSA	0.26%	-0.26%
Columbia MSA	0.20%	0.84%
Charleston MSA	-0.57%	2.29%

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**  
February 2017 through April 2017

County	Employment			Net Change From	
	Apr 2017	Mar 2017	Feb 2017	Mar '17 - Apr '17	Feb '17 - Mar '17
Abbeville	9,897	9,972	9,923	-75	49
Aiken	73,656	72,261	71,926	1,395	335
Allendale	2,468	2,465	2,460	3	5
Anderson	86,447	86,612	86,034	-165	578
Bamberg	4,849	4,862	4,843	-13	19
Barnwell	7,911	7,910	7,871	1	39
Beaufort	70,622	69,557	68,540	1,065	1,017
Berkeley	93,975	94,342	93,297	-367	1,045
Calhoun	6,621	6,603	6,578	18	25
Charleston	200,163	200,728	198,915	-565	1,813
Cherokee	22,565	22,745	22,574	-180	171
Chester	13,123	13,125	12,993	-2	132
Chesterfield	21,207	21,254	21,154	-47	100
Clarendon	12,210	12,228	12,215	-18	13
Colleton	16,416	16,479	16,418	-63	61
Darlington	29,116	28,998	28,675	118	323
Dillon	12,190	12,199	12,145	-9	54
Dorchester	73,064	73,327	72,542	-263	785
Edgefield	10,520	10,290	10,274	230	16
Fairfield	9,550	9,540	9,490	10	50
Florence	64,122	63,957	63,261	165	696
Georgetown	24,455	24,265	24,029	190	236
Greenville	238,654	239,179	237,527	-525	1,652
Greenwood	30,065	30,282	30,103	-217	179
Hampton	7,883	7,831	7,778	52	53
Horry	138,621	131,972	127,364	6,649	4,608
Jasper	11,631	11,430	11,340	201	90
Kershaw	28,211	28,186	28,034	25	152
Lancaster	36,612	36,617	36,275	-5	342
Laurens	29,192	29,215	29,054	-23	161
Lee	6,165	6,163	6,131	2	32
Lexington	143,555	143,556	142,735	-1	821
McCormick	3,278	3,282	3,272	-4	10
Marion	11,933	11,846	11,708	87	138
Marlboro	8,609	8,669	8,619	-60	50
Newberry	18,401	18,408	18,339	-7	69
Oconee	33,221	33,392	33,231	-171	161
Orangeburg	32,908	33,055	32,920	-147	135
Pickens	54,570	54,676	54,336	-106	340
Richland	194,920	195,235	193,804	-315	1,431
Saluda	8,574	8,483	8,487	91	-4
Spartanburg	139,701	140,176	138,811	-475	1,365
Sumter	42,136	42,244	42,223	-108	21
Union	11,268	11,301	11,198	-33	103
Williamsburg	11,853	11,896	11,829	-43	67
York	127,562	127,675	126,451	-113	1,224

## South Carolina Employment Status and Trend Index Falls



The S.C. Employment Status and Trend Index (SCESTI), an aggregate of five labor-market indicators, fell for the first time in 2017, declining from 101.32 in March to 101.28 in April. Despite the decrease, the Index remained above its 12-month moving average, which rose a hundredth of a point to 101.10 in April.

Four of the five underlying labor-market components moved in a negative direction in April, while one increased. The Conference Board's Consumer Confidence Index fell by 4.6 points from March's value of 124.9 to 120.3 in April. The Conference Board's Help Wanted Online data, which tracks the number of available job openings posted online, declined by 800 in April to 60,600 from 61,400 in March. The Bureau of Labor Statistic's Weekly Manufacturing Hours data showed production hours decreasing to a preliminary 41.4 hours per week in April over its March revised level of 41.6. Initial claims for Unemployment Insurance rose from a March average of 2,050 per week to an April average of 2,276 per week. The Conference Board's Employment Trends Index grew in April to 132.64 points from a March revised value of 131.58.

SCESTI has increased from its year-ago value of 101.23 in April 2016. With the Index remaining well above its 12-month moving average, a positive employment trend over the next several months is expected.

## Labor Underutilization

Six alternative measures of labor underutilization are available on a monthly basis from the Current Population Survey (CPS) for the United States as a whole. They are published in the Bureau of Labor Statistics' monthly Employment Situation national news release in Table 15. The official concept of unemployment (as measured in the Current Population Survey by U-3 in the U-1 to U-6 range of alternatives) includes all jobless persons who are available to take a job and have actively sought work in the past four weeks. The other measures are provided to data users and analysts who want more narrowly (U-1 and U-2) or broadly (U-4 through U-6) defined measures.

BLS updates the alternative measures data for states on a four-quarter, moving-average basis. The use of four-quarter averages increases the reliability of the Current Population Survey estimates, which are based on relatively small sample sizes at the state level, and eliminates seasonality. Due to the inclusion of lagged quarters, the state alternative measures may not fully reflect the current status of the labor market. The six state measures are based on the same definitions as those published for the United States:

- U-1, persons unemployed 15 weeks or longer, as a percent of the civilian labor force;
- U-2, job losers and people who completed temporary jobs, as a percent of the civilian labor force;
- U-3, total unemployed, as a percent of the civilian labor force (this is the definition used for the official unemployment rate);
- U-4, total unemployed plus discouraged workers, as a percent of the civilian labor force plus discouraged workers;
- U-5, total unemployed, plus discouraged workers, plus all other marginally attached workers, as a percent of the civilian labor force plus all marginally attached workers; and
- U-6, total unemployed, plus all marginally attached workers, plus total employed part time for economic reasons, as a percent of the civilian labor force plus all marginally attached workers.

Definitions for the economic characteristics underlying the three broader measures of labor underutilization are worth mentioning. Discouraged workers (U-4, U-5, and U-6 measures) are people who are not in the labor force, want and are available for work, and had looked for a job sometime in the prior 12 months. They are not counted as unemployed because they had not searched for work in the prior four weeks, for the specific reason that they believed no jobs were available for them. The marginally attached (U-5 and U-6 measures) is a group that includes discouraged workers. The criteria for the marginally attached are the same as for discouraged workers, with the exception that any reason could have been cited for the lack of job search in the prior four weeks. People employed part time for economic reasons (U-6 measure) are those working less than 35 hours per week who want to work full time, are available to do so, and gave an economic reason (their hours had been cut back or they were unable to find a full-time job) for working part time. These individuals are sometimes referred to as involuntary part-time workers.

Generally, all six measures of labor underutilization move together over time, including across business cycles. Similarly, states that have low unemployment rates tend to have low values for the other five measures; the reverse is true for states with high unemployment rates. Note that the unemployment rates (U-3) are derived directly from the CPS, because this is the only source of data for the various components of the other five measures. As a result, these U-3 measures may differ from the official state unemployment rates for the same period. These rates can be viewed on the Bureau of Labor Statistics website at <https://www.bls.gov/lau/stalt.htm>.

The official state rates are developed from statistical models that greatly improve the reliability of the topside labor force and unemployment estimates. Those models, developed by the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program, incorporate Current Population Survey estimates, as well as input data from other sources. They can be viewed at <https://www.bls.gov/web/laus/ststdsadata.txt>. This site also contains historical data and additional measures, such as labor force participation rates; the official unemployment rate for states; and the employment-to-population ratios for states going back to year 1976.