

INSIGHTS



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SC Department of Employment and Workforce

Business Intelligence Department

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Economic Indicators

April - Seasonally Adjusted (SA)

	United States	SC
Labor Force	158,924,000	2,316,224
Employed	151,004,000	2,181,923
Unemployed	7,920,000	134,301
Unemp. Rate	5.0%	5.8%

Employment Growth Remains Steady

The state's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for April increased from 5.7 percent in March to 5.8 percent as people continued to enter the labor force. The number of individuals working in South Carolina increased during the month by 7,268 to a record level of 2,181,925 people.

The number of unemployed increased by approximately 3,000 over the month to nearly 134,300 people. The labor force rose by 10,245 to 2,316,225 people.

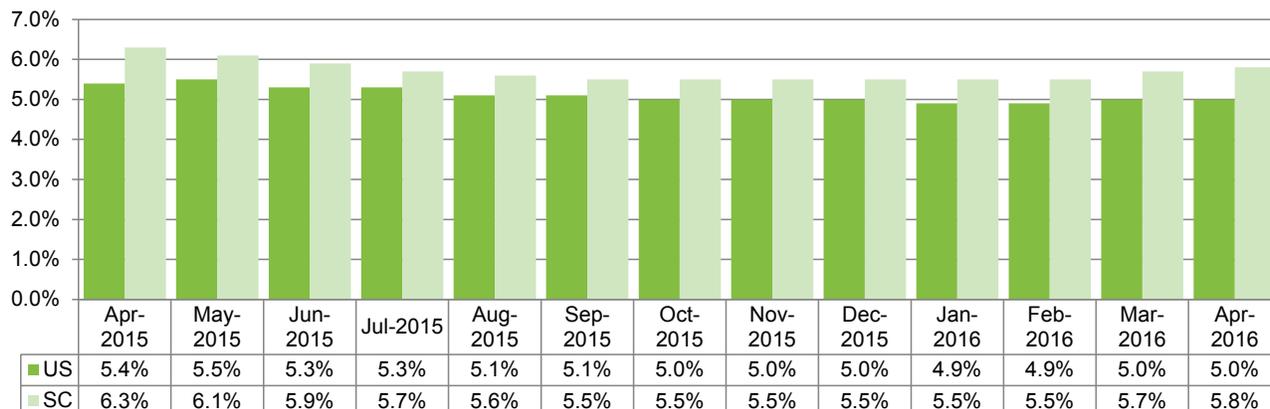
Over the past year, employment increased by 72,450 people.

Since April 2015, the level of unemployed people has decreased by 6,635, and the labor force has grown by 65,810 people.

The number of people working in South Carolina continues to grow, as industries decide to expand or open new facilities in South Carolina.



South Carolina vs US Unemployment Rate
April 2015 - April 2016



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 2015 benchmark. To subscribe to *Insights*, please email bidcustomerservice@dew.sc.gov or to provide feedback please click on the [BID Customer Feedback Form](#).

South Carolina Ranked 9th Highest in April

Unemployment rates were lower in April in five states, higher in four states, and stable in 41 states and the District of Columbia.

In total, 19 states had unemployment rates lower than the U.S. figure of 5.0 percent, 10 states and the District of Columbia had higher rates, and 21 states had rates that were not appreciably different from that of the nation.

Alaska and Illinois had the highest rates at 6.6 percent each. South Dakota and New Hampshire had the lowest jobless rates in April, 2.5 percent and 2.6 percent, respectively.

In April, South Carolina ranked 9th highest out of the 50 states and District of Columbia.

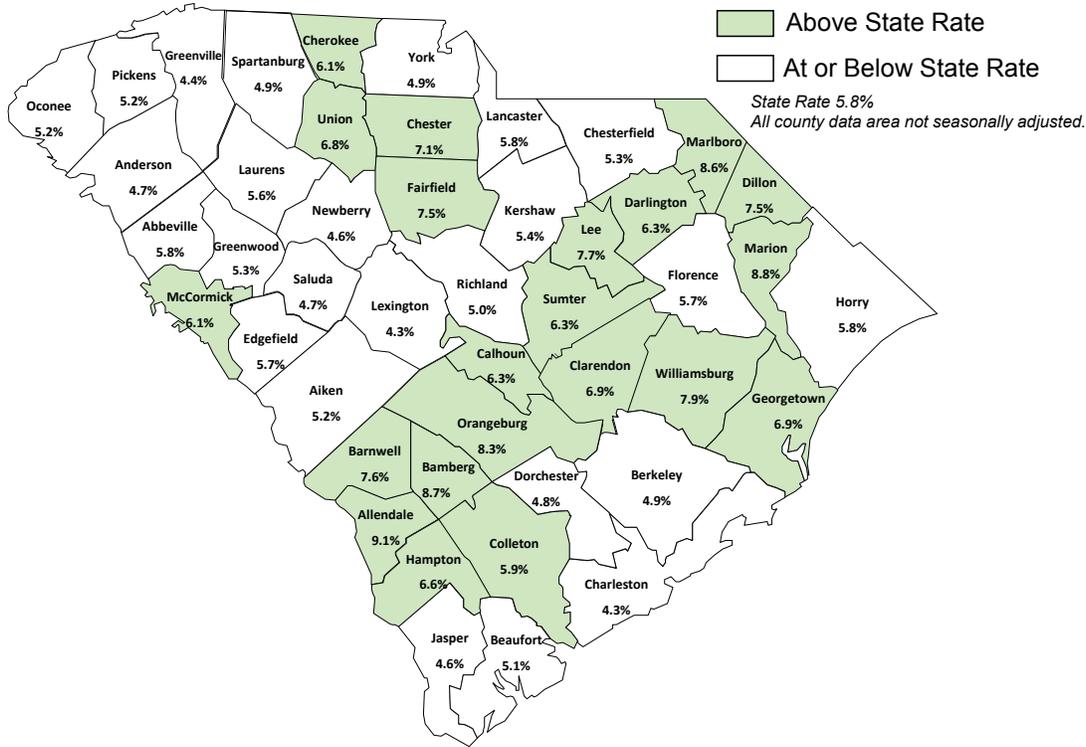
Nationally, April's unemployment rate was unchanged at 5.0 percent.

April Unemployment Rate by County

Not seasonally adjusted, county unemployment rates decreased across the state in 45 of 46 counties during April. Rates ranged from 9.1 percent in Allendale County to 4.3 percent in Charleston and Lexington counties. Over the past year, rates have declined in 45 counties with Calhoun County remaining flat.

From March to April 2016, employment gains were noted in 39 counties. Horry County saw the largest increase in employment (+3,778) as the coastal areas continued preparation for the spring and summer vacationers. Aiken (+1,077) and Charleston (+901) counties also marked healthy employment increases.

Over the year, Greenville (+6,324), Richland (+5,645), Charleston (+5,304) and Spartanburg (+4,532) counties continue to lead the state's employment growth.



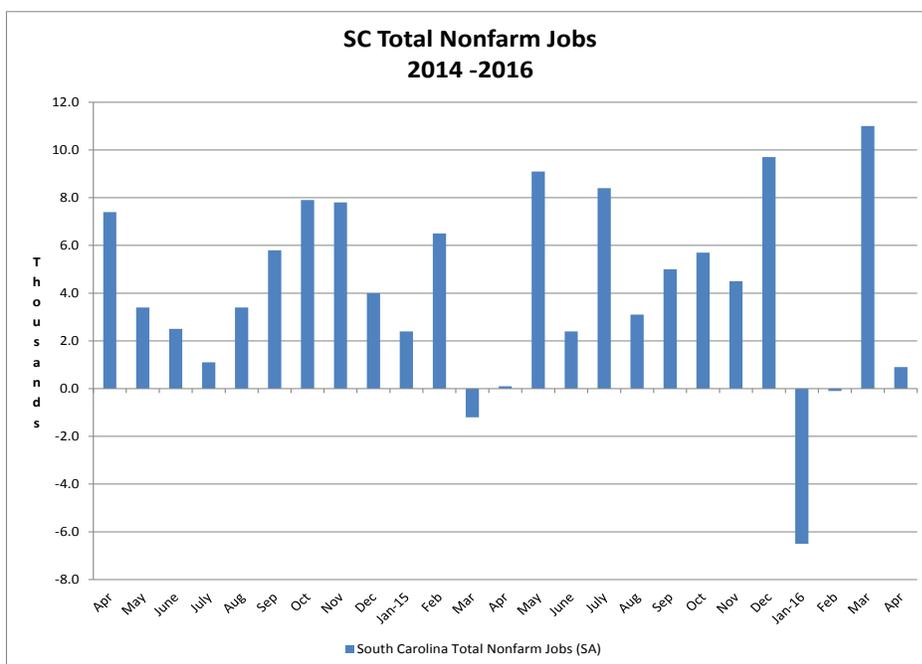
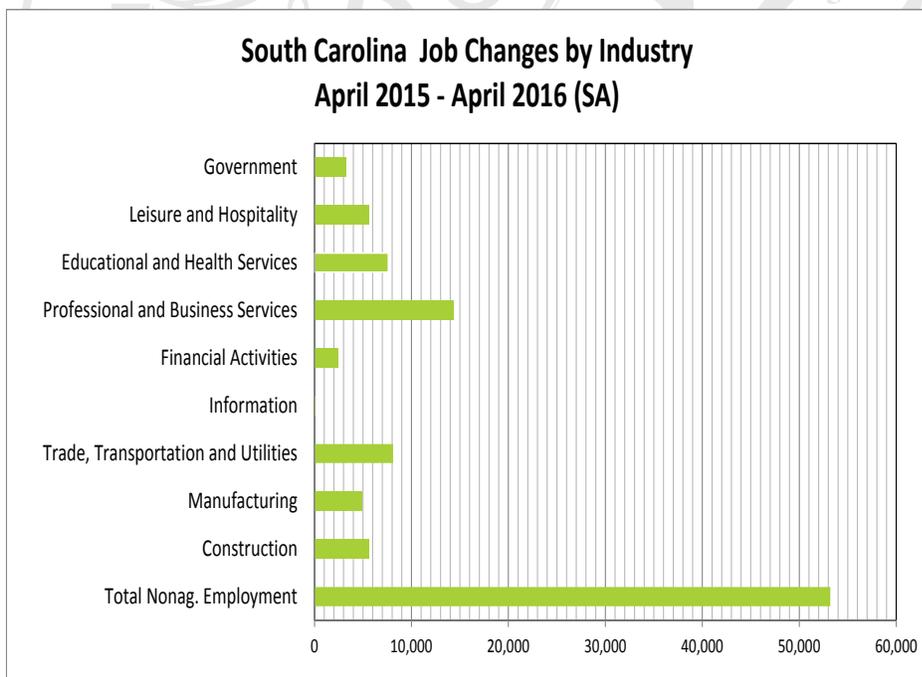
South Carolina Nonfarm Employment Trends for April - Seasonally Adjusted

Seasonally adjusted, nonfarm payrolls in April increased by 900 over March to a record level of 2,040,500. Financial Activities (+1,900) led the increases, followed by Manufacturing (+1,600); Leisure and Hospitality (+1,200); and Professional and Business Services (+1,000). Growth also was seen in the Government (+200) and Information (+100) sectors. Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (-2,000); Other Services (-1,400); Construction (-900); and Education and Health Services (-800) experienced downturns.

Compared to April 2015, seasonally adjusted, nonfarm jobs were up 53,200. Industries showing job growth were Professional and Business Services (+14,300); Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (+8,100); Education and Health Services (+7,600); Leisure and Hospitality (+5,600); and Construction (+5,600). Increases were also felt in Manufacturing (+4,900); Government (+3,200); Financial Activities (+2,400); Other Services (+1,200); and Information (+100).

Seasonally adjusted, total nonfarm payroll employment in the state's Metropolitan Statistical Areas added employment from March to April in Columbia (+500), followed by Sumter (+100). Florence remained the same, and Charleston (-300) saw a slight dip in employment.

Every Metropolitan Statistical Area saw seasonally adjusted, payroll employment growth compared to April 2015. Noticeable growth was reported in Columbia (+10,000) and Charleston (+8,000) with additional growth in Florence (+1,500) and Sumter (+1,100).



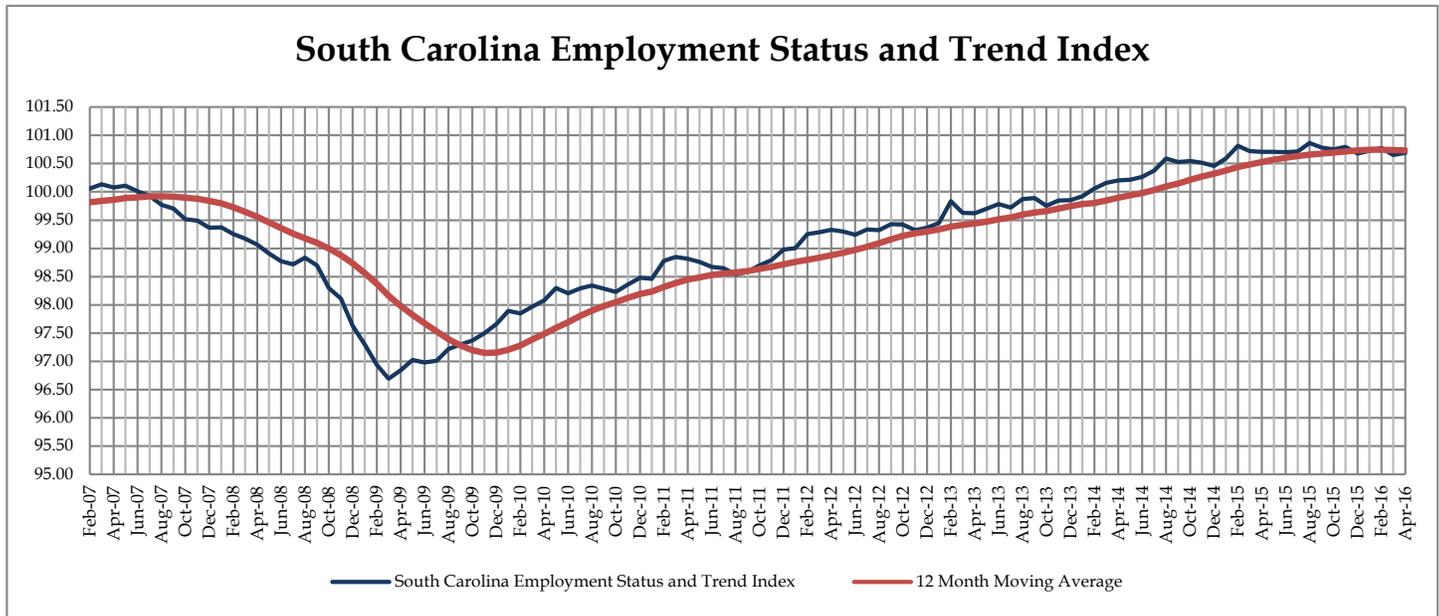
MSA	Over Month % Change	Over Year % Change
Sumter MSA	0.25%	2.85%
Columbia MSA	0.13%	2.42%
Florence MSA	0.00%	1.74%
Charleston MSA	-0.09%	2.68%

To see the monthly not seasonally adjusted data series, go to www.SCWorkforceInfo.com (Employment and Wage Data section)

Employment Changes by County
February 2016 through April 2016

County	Employment			Net Change From	
	Apr 2016	Mar 2016	Feb 2016	Mar '16 - Apr '16	Feb '16 - Mar '16
Abbeville	10,030	9,957	9,800	73	157
Aiken	71,288	70,211	69,588	1,077	623
Allendale	2,521	2,463	2,418	58	45
Anderson	85,653	85,786	85,027	-133	759
Bamberg	5,030	4,945	4,854	85	91
Barnwell	7,943	7,844	7,720	99	124
Beaufort	69,839	69,020	67,739	819	1,281
Berkeley	90,299	90,111	89,117	188	994
Calhoun	6,641	6,614	6,550	27	64
Charleston	193,110	192,209	190,197	901	2,012
Cherokee	22,538	22,439	22,110	99	329
Chester	12,860	12,806	12,657	54	149
Chesterfield	20,681	20,438	20,122	243	316
Clarendon	12,463	12,270	12,087	193	183
Colleton	16,282	16,084	15,856	198	228
Darlington	28,368	28,430	28,011	-62	419
Dillon	11,893	11,715	11,517	178	198
Dorchester	69,966	69,777	69,012	189	765
Edgefield	10,289	10,067	9,983	222	84
Fairfield	9,602	9,593	9,498	9	95
Florence	62,506	62,763	61,868	-257	895
Georgetown	24,336	23,908	23,423	428	485
Greenville	234,320	234,814	232,735	-494	2,079
Greenwood	30,242	30,017	29,522	225	495
Hampton	7,811	7,654	7,513	157	141
Horry	132,130	128,352	123,857	3,778	4,495
Jasper	11,537	11,318	11,133	219	185
Kershaw	27,888	27,870	27,594	18	276
Lancaster	34,727	34,574	34,179	153	395
Laurens	29,189	29,170	28,918	19	252
Lee	6,081	6,023	5,938	58	85
Lexington	140,942	141,051	139,656	-109	1,395
McCormick	3,330	3,290	3,243	40	47
Marion	11,999	11,848	11,613	151	235
Marlboro	8,971	8,882	8,721	89	161
Newberry	18,407	18,154	17,870	253	284
Oconee	33,650	33,365	32,863	285	502
Orangeburg	34,112	33,721	33,161	391	560
Pickens	54,043	54,115	53,646	-72	469
Richland	191,253	192,020	190,069	-767	1,951
Saluda	8,531	8,379	8,297	152	82
Spartanburg	135,353	135,642	134,859	-289	783
Sumter	42,767	42,688	42,394	79	294
Union	11,105	11,118	11,057	-13	61
Williamsburg	12,102	11,980	11,780	122	200
York	122,015	121,622	120,240	393	1,382

South Carolina Employment Status and Trend Index Flattens



For the month of April, the South Carolina Employment Status and Trend Index (SCESTI) remained essentially flat, edging slightly higher in April to 100.69 from March's revised 100.65 figure. Since December, when the value was 100.67, the SCESTI has remained roughly close to that figure. The relative flatness of the index this month reflects underlying components which moved in various directions in April. Also from the end of last year, the index has fallen below its 12-month moving average four of the past five months, a sign of continued uncertainty in the employment growth situation in the following three to six months.

While the Bureau of Labor Statistic's Weekly Manufacturing Hours data showed hours holding steady at 40.7 hours per week in April, the other factors moved in opposing directions. The Conference Board's Consumer Confidence Index fell 1.9 points from March but was approximately equal with its value 12 months ago. Initial claims for Unemployment Insurance rose from a March average of 2,125 per week to an April average of 2,631 per week. The number of available job openings posted online, via the Conference Board's Help Wanted Online data, showed an increase of 800 monthly jobs, up from 63,000 total jobs in March but down from 67,000 in April of 2015. Finally, the Conference Board's own Employment Trends Index increased rapidly in April, rising 1.85 points over March's value.

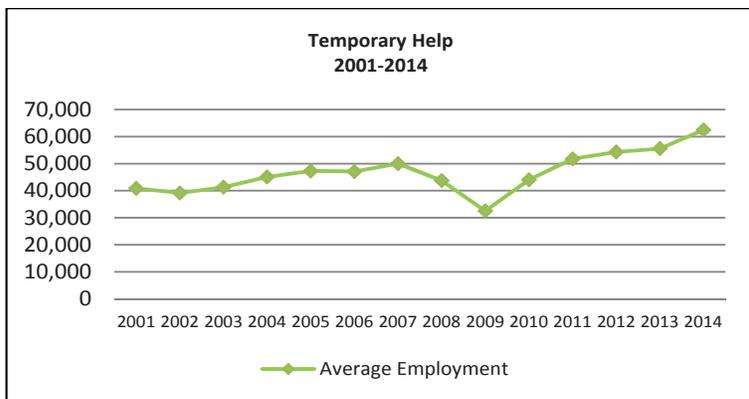
Compared to April of 2015, the SCESTI is only 0.02 points below the year-ago value of 100.71. From a year-over-year perspective, the index has exhibited a period of relative non-movement since March of 2015, when the value was 100.72. The majority of fluctuations since that time have been relatively small, exhibiting overall flatness in the index.

The Temporary Help Industry

The Temporary Help industry is comprised of establishments primarily engaged in supplying workers to clients' businesses for limited periods of time to supplement the client's workforce. The individuals provided are employees of the temporary help establishment. However, these establishments do not provide direct supervision of their employees at the clients' worksites.

Employment Trends

Temporary Help is a large part of South Carolina's employment. During 2001-2014, the average employment ranged from 40,900 – 62,500 workers; accounting for an average growth of 21,590. From 2007 to 2009, the Temporary Help industry saw a drop of more than 18,000 workers. Since 2009, more than 29,900 workers have been added since the recessionary period.



Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW)

Leading Indicator

Employment in Temporary Help is typically seen as a leading economic indicator because employers tend to cut temporary workers before they cut regular staff in attempts to control costs. They will also add temporary workers before adding regular staff in case a recovery from a downward business cycle doesn't hold. Our current recovery might not follow previous patterns because industries using temporary workers may not follow previous recovery patterns; this was seen in the recent recession as businesses used furloughs and hour cuts in addition to layoffs.

In looking at the past decade, data shows that Temporary Help is a good indicator of the state of the labor force, as drops in employment line up directly with recessionary periods and rises in temporary help precede gains in employment. However, there was a large decline of 117

temporary companies from 2006-2007 that did not match up with the increase in employment during the same year. The decline in companies could be due to consolidation or mergers and acquisitions of companies; another possibility is companies leaving the industry due to heavy competition and increase of satellite offices from larger firms.

Temporary Help has made a huge comeback reaching all-time highs and has experienced the quickest turnaround due to demand for workers in other industries in the state. Increases in Temporary Help are a positive indicator of employment; however, it is hard to tell if the contract work turns into a permanent position or if the work was just temporary and was discontinued as employment levels drop.

Outlook

As the numbers of workers join the labor force in South Carolina, major manufacturers are investing heavily in the state and will acquire many of their workers through staffing agencies. According to S.C. Department of Commerce, an important point to consider when analyzing employment growth or decline in manufacturing is the rise of temporary and contract employment as a staffing model for many manufacturers. Between 2001 and 2010, employment through staffing firms has increased more than 5 percent to 49,500 as average weekly wages also increased to \$213 during the same period in South Carolina.

Firms have needs for employees and are turning to flexible methods of employment such as contract workers and temporary help to address the future risk at hand. Bearing that in mind, temporary help and contract worker levels have been at an all-time high as companies rely upon temporary help in time of transition. Many companies are reducing hours, laying-off workers or switching to temporary help or contract workers to avoid the extra costs of the new regulations of the Affordable Care Act. Temporary Help is poised to take off with companies potentially restructuring to avoid regulations.