

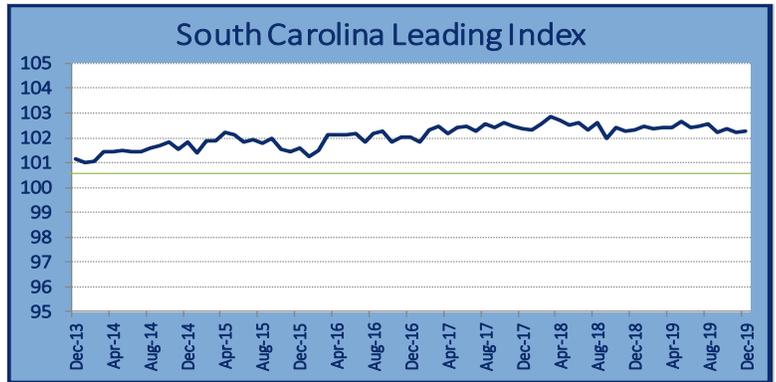


South Carolina
Department of Commerce
Just right for business.

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

The South Carolina Leading Index (SCLI) rose 0.05 points last month, ending with a value (following revisions) of 102.25.

Most SCLI metrics improved in December. The lone negative, unemployment claims, were 23.8 percent higher. The number of issued housing permits increased 3.1 percent month-over-month and valuation for the permits rose 5.3 percent. The average weekly manufacturing hours rose 1.2 percent. The Dow Jones Composite Average was up 2.7 percent.



Source: S.C. Department of Commerce

The Conference Board's national Leading Economic Index declined in December (following revisions) to 111.2. This weakening resulted from higher unemployment claims and reduced housing permits. Index readings over 100 forecast expansion of the economy, but current numbers suggest deceleration.

- Brandon Wilkerson

KEY S.C. INDICATORS

Income

+0.9% **State Personal Income**
increased to \$234.2 billion in the 3rd quarter of 2019.
U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

+0.1% **S.C. Stock Index**
rose 0.11 points in December, closing at 181.44 for the month.
Bloomberg

Real Estate

+3.5% **Median Home Sales Price**
rose \$7,530 from the prior month to \$222,430 for December.
South Carolina Association of Realtors

+3.1% **Residential Building Permits**
fell by 75 permits from the prior month to 2,509 in December.
U.S. Census Bureau

Employment

0.0% **Nonfarm Employment**
fell by 500 net non-seasonally adjusted jobs from the prior month.
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

+0.1% **Labor Force**
increased by 2,229 to 2,384,934, seasonally-adjusted, in December.
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

+1.2% **Manufacturing Weekly Hours**
rose 0.5 hours from the prior month, following revisions, to 43.3 hours in Dec.
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

+3.2% **Available Online Job Postings**
decreased by 2,200 positions in December to a seasonally-adjusted 70,400 job postings.
The Conference Board Help Wanted Online Index

-0.1% **Unemployment Rate**
improved to 2.3 percent, seasonally-adjusted, in Dec.
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

About S.C. Commerce's Research Division

The Research Division is a highly-skilled, multidisciplinary team of professionals that collects, examines and disseminates data to support economic development in South Carolina. The division furnishes information to companies considering an investment in the state and produces rigorous analysis for stakeholders of all kinds.

Those who wish to receive S.C. Commerce's monthly Economic Outlook can e-mail bwilkerson@SCcommerce.com.

South Carolina Employment

Non-Seasonally Adjusted Wage and Salary Employment

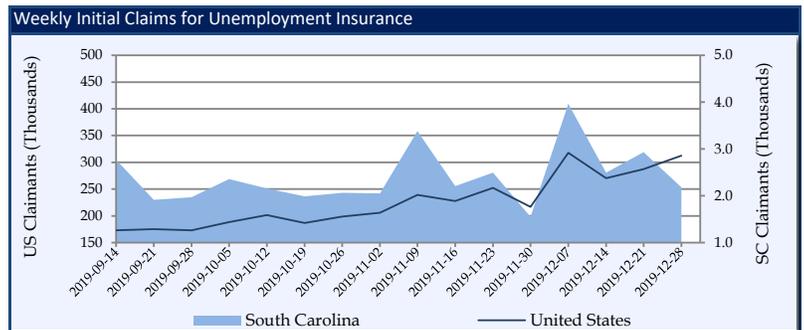
South Carolina's total non-seasonally adjusted nonfarm employment fell by 500 net jobs to 2,203,200 in December, a 0.02 percent decrease from revised December numbers and 1.4 percent higher than one year ago. Few sectors reported job gains for the month, with Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (+5,400); Construction (+1,300); and Information (+200) being the exceptions. Net losses in other sectors included Leisure and Hospitality (-2,300); Professional and Business Services (-2,200); Education and Health Services (-1,300); Other Services (-900); Manufacturing (-500); and Finance (-200). The Natural Resources and Mining and Government sectors were unchanged from the prior month. Compared to one year ago, the state economy added 30,100 nonfarm jobs.

Industry Sector	December 2019	Previous Month	Previous Year	% Change Month Ago	% Change Year Ago
Goods Producing	365,500	364,700	356,300	0.22%	2.58%
Natural Resources and Mining	4,600	4,600	4,400	0.00%	4.55%
Construction	104,500	103,200	100,700	1.26%	3.77%
Manufacturing	256,400	256,900	251,200	-0.19%	2.07%
Service Providing	1,837,700	1,839,000	1,816,800	-0.07%	1.15%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	427,900	422,500	421,400	1.28%	1.54%
Information	27,400	27,200	28,400	0.74%	-3.52%
Finance	104,200	104,400	103,400	-0.19%	0.77%
Professional and Business Services	297,900	300,100	300,800	-0.73%	-0.96%
Educational and Health Services	260,500	261,800	257,000	-0.50%	1.36%
Leisure and Hospitality	261,800	264,100	255,200	-0.87%	2.59%
Other Services	76,700	77,600	75,600	-1.16%	1.46%
Total Private	1,821,900	1,822,400	1,798,100	-0.03%	1.32%
Government	381,300	381,300	375,000	0.00%	1.68%
Total Nonfarm	2,203,200	2,203,700	2,173,100	-0.02%	1.39%

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Weekly Unemployment Claims

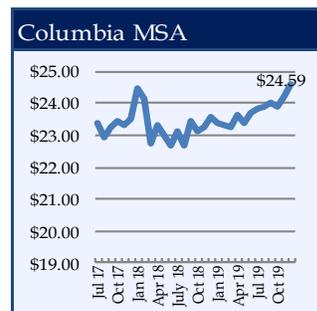
The average number of initial reported claims for unemployment insurance in the state increased in November. The average for the month was 2,893 weekly initial claims, up 23.8 percent month-over-month but down 7.3 percent compared to one year ago.



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Average Hourly Earnings

These charts present the average hourly earnings of all employees in private industry, based on a monthly national survey of businesses. The data are not seasonally adjusted.



Source: US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

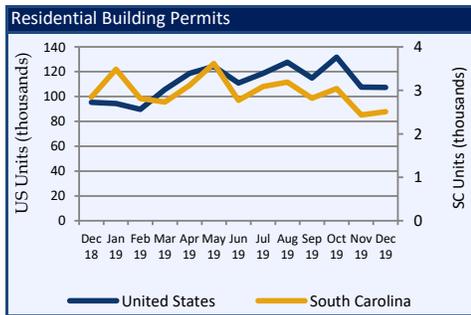
Real Estate & Business Activity

In December, the number of building permits issued in South Carolina for new residential construction rose 3.1 percent to 2,509. This figure was down 11.7 percent from one year ago. Valuation for the permits rose 5.3 percent month-over-month but was 5.1 percent higher than one year ago. Total closings were up 8.9 percent compared to November, while the median sales price rose 3.5 percent. Foreclosure activity fell 16.5 percent from December 2018. Among the top six MSAs, total closings rose in all but Florence and Spartanburg, with Greenville reporting the largest gain at 17.5 percent. Median sales price rose in all six MSAs, led by Florence at +9.3 percent.

	Month	Current	Previous Year	% Change Year Ago	2019 YTD	2018 YTD	% Change YTD
Closings	December	7,021	6,294	11.6%	91,140	87,600	4.0%
Median Sales Price*	December	\$222.4	\$207.0	7.5%	\$215.0	\$200.0	7.5%
Foreclosures	December	1,201	1,439	-16.5%	16,771	18,803	-10.8%
Residential Building Permits -Total	December	2,509	2,843	-11.7%	35,618	36,155	-1.5%
Residential Building Permits -Valuation*	December	\$579,260	\$551,401	5.1%	\$7,599,112	\$7,762,279	-2.1%

* Thousands of US dollars. Foreclosures estimated. Source: S.C. Association of Realtors, RealtyTrac, U.S. Census.

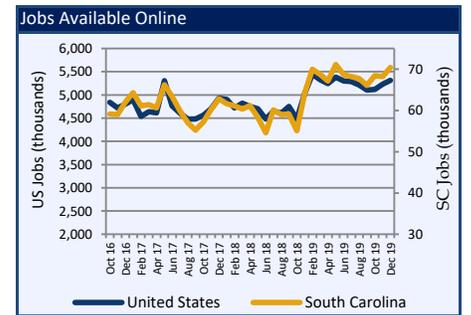
Business Activity



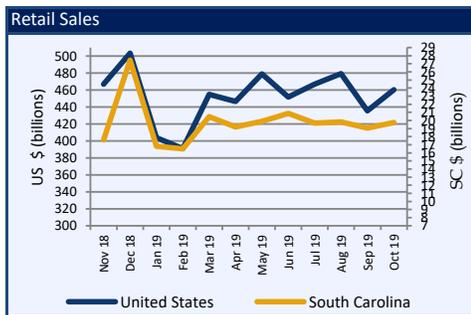
Source: U.S. Census



Source: U.S. Department of Labor



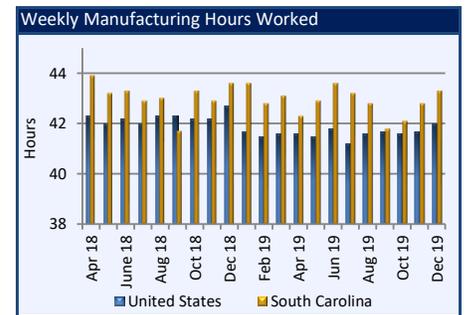
Source: The Conference Board Help Wanted Online Index



Source: South Carolina Department of Revenue

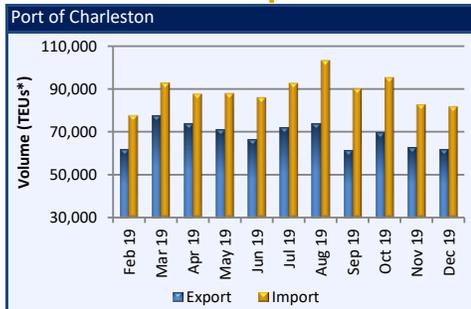


Source: Bloomberg



Source: U.S. Department of Labor

Income and Output



*Twenty-Foot Equivalent Units. Source: SC Ports Authority



Source: U.S. Census



Source: Foreign Trade Division, U.S. Census

Regional Updates

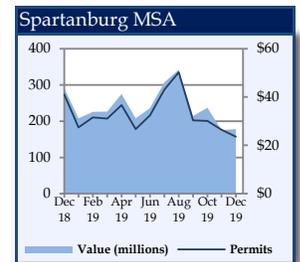
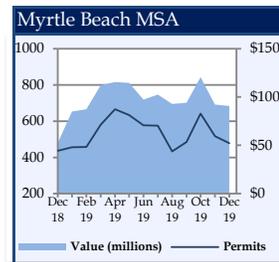
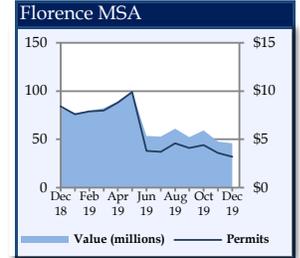
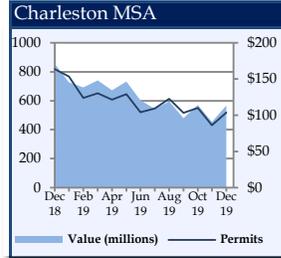
The South Carolina Regional Update provides a snapshot of the most recent economic figures for the six largest Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) in the state.

Home Sales

MSA	Indicator	Dec 18	Dec 19
Charleston	Sales Volume	1,397	1,655
	Median Price (000's)	\$268	\$270
Columbia	Sales Volume	1,013	1,003
	Median Price (000's)	\$177	\$190
Florence	Sales Volume	149	175
	Median Price (000's)	\$145	\$153
Greenville	Sales Volume	992	1,184
	Median Price (000's)	\$209	\$217
Myrtle Beach	Sales Volume	1,025	1,208
	Median Price (000's)	\$195	\$209
Spartanburg	Sales Volume	412	396
	Median Price (000's)	\$166	\$190
South Carolina	Sales Volume	6,294	7,021
	Median Price (000's)	\$207.0	\$222.4

Source: S.C. Association of Realtors.

Building Permits



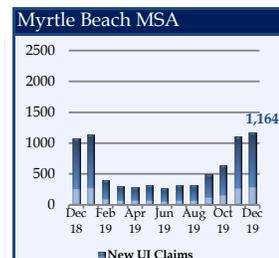
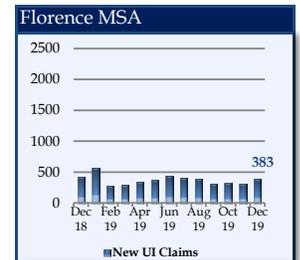
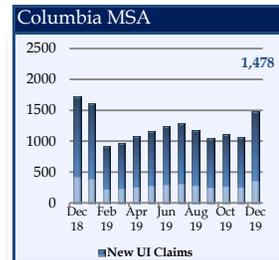
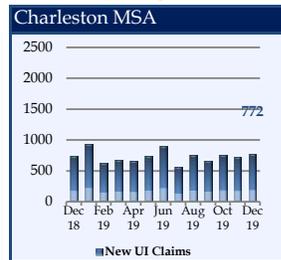
Source: U.S. Census

Employment

MSA	Indicator	Nov 19	Dec 19
Charleston	Employment (000's)	382.6	383.4
	Unemployment Rate	1.8	2.0
Columbia	Employment (000's)	394.5	394.2
	Unemployment Rate	2.0	2.2
Florence	Employment (000's)	95.0	94.9
	Unemployment Rate	2.3	2.5
Greenville	Employment (000's)	422.3	422.1
	Unemployment Rate	2.0	2.1
Myrtle Beach	Employment (000's)	197.6	195.0
	Unemployment Rate	3.0	3.5
Spartanburg	Employment (000's)	161.1	161.1
	Unemployment Rate	2.0	2.1
South Carolina	Employment (000's)	2,324.7	2,329.6
	Unemployment Rate	2.4	2.3

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (unadjusted MSA figures)

Unemployment Insurance Claims



Source: SCDOC analysis of SCDEW data

Projected Population Growth by MSA (2019 to 2024)



Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online