SC Department of Employment and Workforce

NEWS RELEASE

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South Carolina's Employment Situation
December 2011

Unemployment rate lowest in three years; Employment at highest in 2011

The state's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate fell to 9.5 percent in December 2011, a 0.4 percentage point drop from November's 9.9 percent rate. This marks the fourth consecutive monthly rate drop and is down 1.6 percent from 2011's high of 11.1 percent in August.

It is the lowest rate since December 2008 when unemployment stood at 9.2 percent. The national unemployment rate saw a decrease from 8.7 percent in November to 8.5 percent in December.

The labor force declined 3,227 from November to December while the number of employed grew by 4,307, and the number of unemployed fell by 7,534. This is the highest number of employed and the lowest number of unemployed during 2011. The labor force level was 2,162,094 in December.

Nonfarm payroll employment dropped 3,800 from November to December but is up 17,800 from a year ago.

There were healthy month-to-month increases in Trade, Transportation and Utilities (+1,500) and Manufacturing (+1,200). Manufacturing has increased 11,600 from last year. The growth in Trade, Transportation and Utilities was mainly from Retail Trade, with Durable Goods primarily driving the gain in Manufacturing. Leisure and Hospitality reported a loss (-3,500), and Government reflected a decrease (-2,800) since November.

The number of online job ads in South Carolina, as reported by the Conference Board's Help Wanted Online Index, had a small increase of about 500 (to 45,900) from November to December. Nationally, there was an upswing in ads posted (+93,800) in December. Online ads in the state were about 4,300 higher than December 2010. The number of jobseekers per job opening was 4.7 in December, down from 5.1 in November.

"We are excited to see unemployment continue its steady decline in South Carolina," said SC Department of Employment and Workforce Executive Director Abraham J. Turner. "This is good news for South Carolinians, but there is still much work to be done as we continue to bring unemployment down. We encourage both businesses and job seekers to take advantage of the free services DEW offers through the SC Works centers across the state and online at www.scworks.org. At this website, citizens can search for openings in their communities and upload their resumes. Additionally, employers can search for qualified candidates."

Please note that, due to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' annual benchmarking and revision process, employment and labor force data for January 2012 will not be published until mid-March 2012.

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NONFARM EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
Statewide
December 2011

Jobs by Industry	December 2011	November 2011	December 2010	November 2011 to December 2011		December 2010 to December 2011	
				# Change	% Change	# Change	% Change
Total Nonfarm Employment	1,834,700	1,838,500	1,816,900	-3,800	-0.21%	17,800	0.98%
Natural Resources and Mining	4,100	4,100	4,000	0	0.00%	100	2.50%
Construction	76,100	75,900	78,900	200	0.26%	-2,800	-3.55%
Manufacturing	221,200	220,000	209,600	1,200	0.55%	11,600	5.53%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	359,300	357,800	353,300	1,500	0.42%	6,000	1.70%
Information	26,000	26,000	25,500	0	0.00%	500	1.96%
Financial Activities	97,200	97,500	97,500	-300	-0.31%	-300	-0.31%
Professional and Business Services	224,200	225,000	225,500	-800	-0.36%	-1,300	-0.58%
Education and Health Services	218,800	219,200	216,300	-400	-0.18%	2,500	1.16%
Leisure and Hospitality	204,500	208,000	197,800	-3,500	-1.68%	6,700	3.39%
Government	334,300	337,100	340,500	-2,800	-0.83%	-6,200	-1.82%

Note: Not Seasonally Adjusted

NONFARM EMPLOYMENT

South Carolina & Metropolitan Areas (Not Seasonally Adjusted)
December 2011

INDUSTRY TITLE	December 2011	November 2011	December 2010	November 2011 to December 2011		December 2010 to December 2011	
				# Change	% Change	# Change	% Change
Statewide	1,834,700	1,838,500	1,816,900	-3,800	-0.21%	17,800	0.98%
Anderson MSA	60,100	60,200	60,400	-100	-0.17%	-300	-0.50%
Charleston/North Charleston MSA	290,400	289,900	285,600	500	0.17%	4,800	1.68%
Columbia MSA	348,500	351,700	343,700	-3,200	-0.91%	4,800	1.40%
Florence MSA	83,600	84,000	83,100	-400	-0.48%	500	0.60%
Greenville MSA	301,700	301,100	298,400	600	0.20%	3,300	1.11%
Myrtle Beach/Conway/N. Myrtle Beach MSA	113,300	116,200	110,600	-2,900	-2.50%	2,700	2.44%
Spartanburg MSA	120,000	120,500	119,500	-500	-0.41%	500	0.42%
Sumter MSA	37,500	36,900	37,000	600	1.63%	500	1.35%

Note: Employment estimates have been rounded to the nearest hundred. Sum of detail may not equal totals due to rounding or the exclusion of certain industries from publication. All data are subject to revision.

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
LOCAL AREA UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS BY COUNTY, MSA, AND STATE
(NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED)

AREA		December 2011 LABOR FORCE	EMPLOY-MENT	UNEMPLOYMENT LEVEL	RATE (%)	November 2011 LABOR FORCE	EMPLOY-MENT	UNEMPLOYMENT LEVEL	RATE (%)	December 2010 LABOR FORCE	EMPLOY-MENT	UNEMPLOYMENT LEVEL	RATE (%)
Marion County	↑	12,201	10,015	2,186	17.9	12,157	10,040	2,117	17.4	12,433	9,874	2,559	20.6
Allendale County	↑	3,317	2,743	574	17.3	3,292	2,730	562	17.1	3,300	2,705	595	18.0
Marlboro County	↑	11,527	9,538	1,989	17.3	11,426	9,528	1,898	16.6	11,654	9,466	2,188	18.8
Union County	↑	11,138	9,413	1,725	15.5	11,117	9,427	1,690	15.2	11,339	9,334	2,005	17.7
Barnwell County	↑	8,578	7,266	1,312	15.3	8,522	7,271	1,251	14.7	8,674	7,242	1,432	16.5
Chester County	↑	14,346	12,180	2,166	15.1	14,212	12,197	2,015	14.2	14,705	12,094	2,611	17.8
Bamberg County	↓	6,317	5,407	910	14.4	6,367	5,408	959	15.1	6,331	5,363	968	15.3
Dillon County	↑	13,566	11,634	1,932	14.2	13,463	11,622	1,841	13.7	13,674	11,509	2,165	15.8
Orangeburg County	↓	40,218	34,511	5,707	14.2	40,965	34,553	6,412	15.7	40,323	34,182	6,141	15.2
Clarendon County	↑	12,858	11,076	1,782	13.9	12,772	11,021	1,751	13.7	12,923	10,932	1,991	15.4
McCormick County	↑	3,260	2,809	451	13.8	3,258	2,814	444	13.6	3,312	2,800	512	15.5
Williamsburg County	↑	16,031	13,867	2,164	13.5	15,919	13,873	2,046	12.9	15,950	13,688	2,262	14.2
Lancaster County	↑	29,791	25,812	3,979	13.4	29,706	25,863	3,843	12.9	30,385	25,656	4,729	15.6
Cherokee County	↑	24,405	21,251	3,154	12.9	24,269	21,299	2,970	12.2	24,572	21,088	3,484	14.2
Chesterfield County	↑	18,436	16,084	2,352	12.8	18,363	16,081	2,282	12.4	18,722	15,941	2,781	14.9
Lee County	↑	8,246	7,210	1,036	12.6	8,208	7,192	1,016	12.4	8,199	7,088	1,111	13.6
Fairfield County	↑	10,839	9,489	1,350	12.5	10,755	9,598	1,157	10.8	10,799	9,335	1,464	13.6
Hampton County	↑	7,889	6,905	984	12.5	7,862	6,890	972	12.4	7,971	6,838	1,133	14.2
York County	↑	111,490	97,752	13,738	12.3	111,349	98,124	13,225	11.9	114,702	97,107	17,595	15.3
Colleton County	↑	17,495	15,365	2,130	12.2	17,366	15,351	2,015	11.6	17,550	15,197	2,353	13.4
Horry County	↑	128,153	113,274	14,879	11.6	129,878	116,432	13,446	10.4	127,221	110,610	16,611	13.1
Calhoun County	↓	6,688	5,963	725	10.8	6,997	6,032	965	13.8	6,652	5,867	785	11.8
Darlington County	↑	30,584	27,297	3,287	10.7	30,629	27,444	3,185	10.4	30,716	27,000	3,716	12.1
Abbeville County	↓	10,663	9,550	1,113	10.4	10,710	9,555	1,155	10.8	10,795	9,491	1,304	12.1
Georgetown County	↑	29,979	26,855	3,124	10.4	29,891	26,980	2,911	9.7	30,285	26,544	3,741	12.4
Greenwood County	↑	29,990	26,872	3,118	10.4	29,985	26,905	3,080	10.3	30,244	26,724	3,520	11.6
Sumter County	–	45,233	40,553	4,680	10.3	44,756	40,140	4,616	10.3	45,199	39,919	5,280	11.7
Florence County	↑	63,438	57,103	6,335	10.0	63,514	57,408	6,106	9.6	63,706	56,481	7,225	11.3
Edgefield County	↑	10,979	9,931	1,048	9.5	10,960	10,002	958	8.7	11,097	10,072	1,025	9.2
Newberry County	↑	18,103	16,402	1,701	9.4	18,055	16,391	1,664	9.2	18,192	16,237	1,955	10.7
Spartanburg County	↑	134,293	121,752	12,541	9.3	134,670	122,369	12,301	9.1	135,186	120,750	14,436	10.7
Oconee County	↑	30,513	27,700	2,813	9.2	30,439	27,712	2,727	9.0	30,895	27,483	3,412	11.0
Berkeley County	↑	81,638	74,277	7,361	9.0	81,526	74,342	7,184	8.8	80,743	72,865	7,878	9.8
Laurens County	↑	31,822	28,981	2,841	8.9	31,801	29,001	2,800	8.8	32,109	28,596	3,513	10.9
Anderson County	↓	84,084	76,659	7,425	8.8	84,431	76,824	7,607	9.0	85,335	76,491	8,844	10.4
Aiken County	↑	75,408	68,975	6,433	8.5	75,538	69,469	6,069	8.0	76,308	69,948	6,360	8.3
Kershaw County	–	29,511	26,989	2,522	8.5	29,836	27,299	2,537	8.5	29,491	26,552	2,939	10.0
Jasper County	↓	10,234	9,372	862	8.4	10,256	9,387	869	8.5	10,326	9,333	993	9.6
Richland County	↑	179,747	164,907	14,840	8.3	181,332	166,800	14,532	8.0	178,865	162,235	16,630	9.3
Pickens County	↑	56,941	52,250	4,691	8.2	56,822	52,287	4,535	8.0	56,863	51,557	5,306	9.3
Saluda County	↑	8,912	8,196	716	8.0	8,996	8,290	706	7.8	8,885	8,063	822	9.3
Dorchester County	↑	64,546	59,456	5,090	7.9	64,500	59,508	4,992	7.7	64,130	58,326	5,804	9.1
Beaufort County	–	64,233	59,415	4,818	7.5	64,342	59,514	4,828	7.5	64,785	59,172	5,613	8.7
Charleston County	–	175,934	162,914	13,020	7.4	176,086	163,056	13,030	7.4	174,976	159,818	15,158	8.7
Greenville County	–	222,701	206,267	16,434	7.4	222,830	206,410	16,420	7.4	223,126	203,529	19,597	8.8
Lexington County	↑	132,838	123,556	9,282	7.0	134,207	124,975	9,232	6.9	132,221	121,554	10,667	8.1
Charleston MSA	↑	322,117	296,646	25,471	7.9	322,112	296,905	25,207	7.8	319,849	291,009	28,840	9.0
Columbia MSA	↑	368,534	339,100	29,434	8.0	372,122	342,993	29,129	7.8	366,913	333,605	33,308	9.1
Florence MSA	↑	94,022	84,400	9,622	10.2	94,143	84,852	9,291	9.9	94,422	83,481	10,941	11.6
Greenville MSA	↑	311,465	287,499	23,966	7.7	311,453	287,698	23,755	7.6	312,098	283,682	28,416	9.1
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED													
South Carolina	↓	2,162,094	1,955,626	206,468	9.5	2,165,321	1,951,319	214,002	9.9	2,164,091	1,928,109	235,982	10.9

Current month's estimates are preliminary.

Counties are sorted by current month's unemployment rate in descending order.

↑ Unemployment Rate Up
↓ Unemployment Rate Down
– Unemployment Rate =