



SC Leading Index Ticks Upward in September

The South Carolina Leading Index (SCLI) gained 0.11 points last month, ending with a value of 102.26. Positive results in most areas, including a decrease in average initial claims for unemployment insurance (down 9.7 percent from last month) and a rising stock market (the Dow Jones Composite Average rose 0.4 percent), were slightly offset by a decrease in the number and value of housing units in September. The Conference Board's national Leading Economic Index increased 0.2 percent, entirely making up the losses of August.

- Brandon Wilkerson

South Carolina Leading Index



Source: South Carolina Department of Commerce

Mixed Results for South Carolina Real Estate

The median sales price for a single-family home in South Carolina maintained pace in September, rising 0.1 percent to \$185,000. Closings stumbled for the month, falling 4.8 percent to 7,055, but remained higher than one year ago by 5.5 percent. Foreclosure activity rose a small increment, up 1.5 percent month-over-month, but was down 13.6 percent compared to September 2015. For the six largest MSAs, closings were up almost across the board, with Charleston (+13.5 percent) and Myrtle Beach (+11.0 percent) leading the way. Only the Florence MSA saw a drop in closings (-0.5%). Each of the MSAs reported increased median sales prices. Florence, where prices rose 12.8 percent, was the most dramatically changed.

The Research Division at the South Carolina Department of Commerce is a highly-skilled, multidisciplinary team of professionals dedicated to the economic development of South Carolina and the collection, examination, and dissemination of information to support that mission. The Research Division publishes reports and analyses for stakeholders statewide, and furnishes information for companies considering an investment in South Carolina. If you would like to receive Commerce's monthly Economic Outlook, e-mail bwilkerson@SCcommerce.com.

KEY S.C. INDICATORS

Income

+0.9%

State Personal Income

increased to \$194.2 billion in the second quarter of 2016.

U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

+2.3%

South Carolina Stock Index

rose 2.66 points in September, closing at 117.66 on the last trading day of the month.

Bloomberg

Employment

+0.5%

Nonfarm Employment

increased by 9,200 net non-seasonally adjusted jobs from the prior month.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

-1.0%

Labor Force

decreased by 21,030 to 2,297,294, seasonally-adjusted, in September.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

-0.2%

Unemployment Rate

decreased to 4.9 percent, seasonally-adjusted, for September.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

2.9%

Manufacturing Weekly Hours

increased by 1.2 hours to 42.5 hours in September from the prior month (revised).

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

-1.4%

Available Online Job Postings

decreased by 800 positions in September to a seasonally-adjusted 58,100 job postings.

The Conference Board Help Wanted Online Index

Real Estate

+0.1%

Single-Family Home Sales Price

increased by \$200 to \$185,000 in September.

South Carolina Association of Realtors

-8.9%

Residential Building Permits

decreased by 269 permits from the previous month to 2,759 issued in September.

U.S. Census Bureau



South Carolina Employment

Non-Seasonally Adjusted Wage and Salary Employment

South Carolina's total non-seasonally adjusted, nonfarm employment rose by 9,200 net jobs to 2,068,100 in September, a 0.5 percent increase from August, and 2.6 percent higher than one year ago. The Government sector added a net 12,300 jobs, leading all other sectors. The Education and Health Services sector added

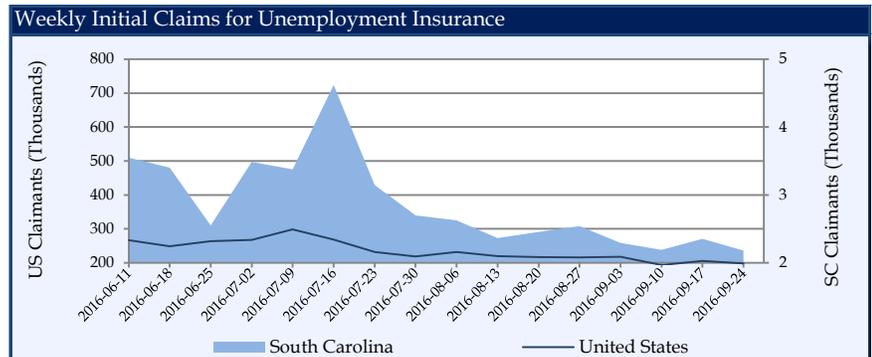
3,500 net jobs and Professional and Business Services netted 3,300 jobs for the month. Other sectors with gains included Manufacturing (+1,500) and Natural Resources and Mining (+100). The Leisure and Hospitality sector, continuing its cycle out of the peak tourism months, reported the biggest loss (-8,500). Compared to one year ago, the state economy added 52,000 net nonfarm jobs.

Industry Sector	September 2016	Previous Month	Previous Year	% Change Month Ago	% Change Year Ago
Goods Producing	335,300	335,100	328,600	0.06	2.04
Natural Resources and Mining	4,300	4,200	4,000	2.38	7.50
Construction	89,900	91,300	87,900	-1.53	2.28
Manufacturing	241,100	239,600	236,700	0.63	1.86
Service Providing	1,732,800	1,723,800	1,687,500	0.52	2.68
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	391,300	392,800	385,300	-0.38	1.56
Information	26,200	26,500	26,900	-1.13	-2.60
Finance	100,400	101,400	97,500	-0.99	2.97
Professional and Business Services	281,000	277,700	263,900	1.19	6.48
Educational and Health Services	248,300	244,800	236,400	1.43	5.03
Leisure and Hospitality	244,300	252,800	241,800	-3.36	1.03
Other Services	75,400	74,200	73,600	1.62	2.45
Total Private	1,702,200	1,705,300	1,654,000	-0.18	2.91
Government	365,900	353,600	362,100	3.48	1.05
Total Nonfarm	2,068,100	2,058,900	2,016,100	0.45	2.58

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

Weekly Unemployment Claims

The number of initial claims for unemployment insurance in the state dropped significantly in September. The average for the month was 2,254 weekly initial claims, down 9.7 percent versus August, and down 13.4 percent compared to one year ago. The top six MSAs were largely positive, with claims for Columbia reduced by an impressive 31.5 percent. Only the Myrtle Beach MSA, which reported a 23.8 percent increase, had more claims than in August.



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



South Carolina Real Estate

In September, the number of building permits issued in South Carolina for new residential construction fell 8.9 percent to 2,759. This figure was 21.4 percent lower than that of September 2015. Valuation for the permits fell 9.0 percent over the prior month. Total closings for September dropped 4.8 percent, but median sales price was up 0.1 percent. Both metrics, however, had improved by more than 5.0 percent compared to the same point in 2015. Foreclosure activity increased 1.5 percent month-over-month, but had dropped 13.6 percent from one year ago.

	Month	Current	Previous Year	% Change Year Ago	2016 YTD	2015 YTD	% Change YTD
Closings	September	7,055	6,688	5.5%	61,234	57,288	6.9%
Median Sales Price*	September	\$185.0	\$174.8	5.8%	\$180.0	\$171.5	5.0%
Foreclosures	September	2,052	2,376	-13.6%	19,293	20,206	-4.5%
Residential Building Permits -Total	September	2,759	3,084	-10.5%	24,264	24,150	0.5%
Residential Building Permits -Valuation*	September	\$555,557	\$567,655	-2.1%	\$4,849,041	\$4,723,675	2.7%

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

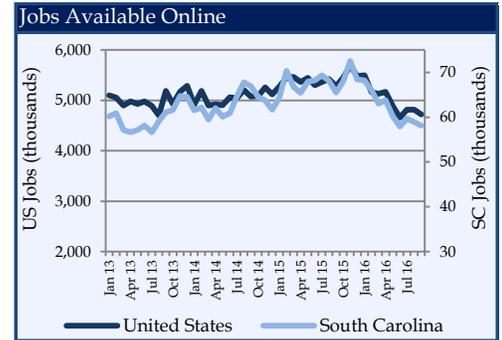
Business Activity



Source: U.S. Census



Source: U.S. Department of Labor



Source: The Conference Board Help Wanted Online Index



Source: South Carolina Department of Revenue



*Represents publicly-traded companies headquartered in SC.

Source: Bloomberg

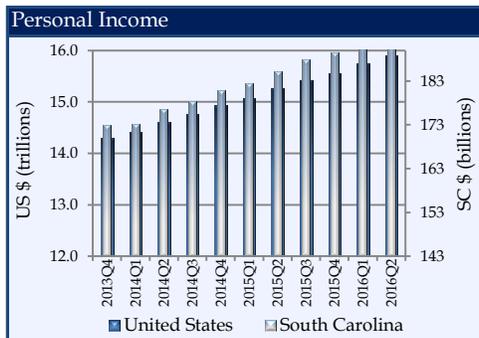


Source: U.S. Department of Labor

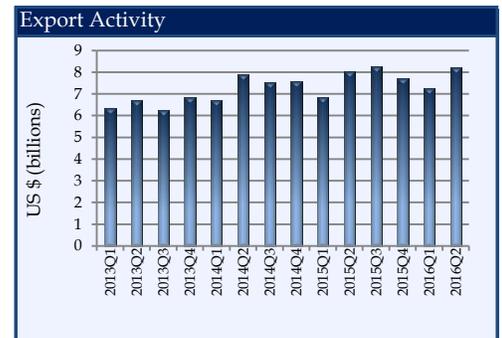
Income and Output



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



Source: U.S. Census



Source: Foreign Trade Division, U.S. Census



South Carolina Regional Update

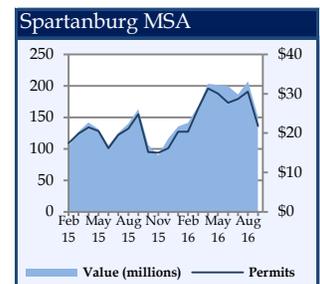
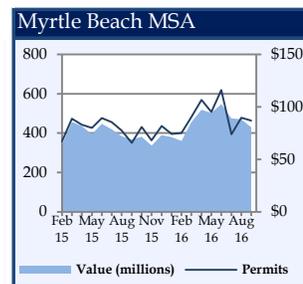
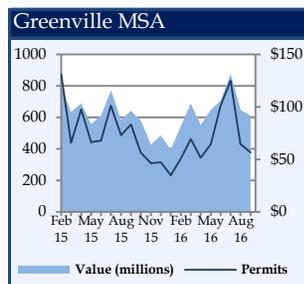
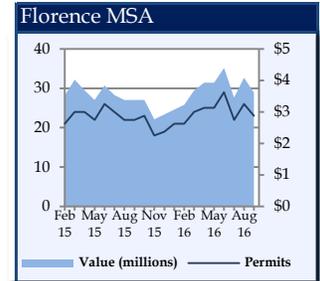
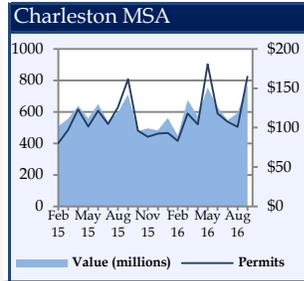
The South Carolina Regional Update provides a snapshot of the most recent economic figures for the six largest Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) in the state.

Home Sales

MSA	Indicator	Sep 15	Sep 16
Charleston	Sales Volume	1,459	1,600
	Median Price (000's)	\$234	\$244
Columbia	Sales Volume	979	1,067
	Median Price (000's)	\$150	\$163
Florence	Sales Volume	185	204
	Median Price (000's)	\$129	\$139
Greenville	Sales Volume	1,077	1,145
	Median Price (000's)	\$170	\$188
Myrtle Beach	Sales Volume	1,131	1,042
	Median Price (000's)	\$169	\$170
Spartanburg	Sales Volume	356	414
	Median Price (000's)	\$135	\$151
South Carolina	Sales Volume	6,688	7,055
	Median Price (000's)	\$174.8	\$185.0

Source: S.C. Association of Realtors.

Building Permits



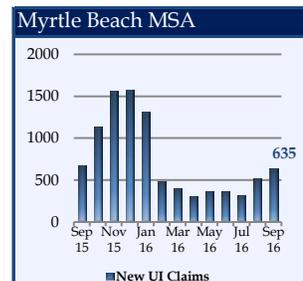
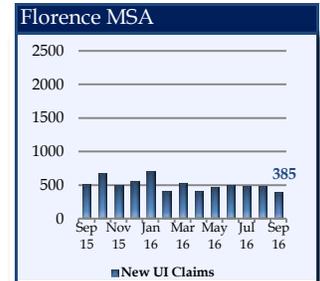
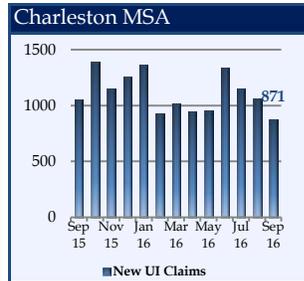
Source: U.S. Census

Employment

MSA	Indicator	Aug 16	Sep 16
Charleston	Employment (000's)	356.5	356.9
	Unemployment Rate	4.7	4.2
Columbia	Employment (000's)	384.6	385.6
	Unemployment Rate	5.2	4.7
Florence	Employment (000's)	90.5	89.9
	Unemployment Rate	6.1	5.5
Greenville	Employment (000's)	401.2	402.1
	Unemployment Rate	5.0	4.4
Myrtle Beach	Employment (000's)	185.1	179.2
	Unemployment Rate	5.5	5.3
Spartanburg	Employment (000's)	144.8	145.9
	Unemployment Rate	5.4	4.7
South Carolina	Employment (000's)	2,181.2	2,185.9
	Unemployment Rate	5.1	4.9

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (MSA figures not seasonally adjusted)

Unemployment Insurance Claims



Source: SCDOC analysis of SCDEW data

Average Weekly Earnings of Employees in Private Industry, September 2016



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics, October 2016