

South Carolina

Small businesses totaled 357,900 in South Carolina in 2009. They represent 97.1 percent of all employers and employ 48.6 percent of the private-sector workforce. Being such a large part of the state's economy, these businesses are central to South Carolina's health and well-being.

This profile uses the latest available data to illustrate the status of South Carolina's small businesses. (Note that a small business is defined as one with fewer than 500 employees.)

- South Carolina's economy struggled in 2010, with real gross state product decreasing 0.7 percent and private-sector employment decreasing 0.5 percent (Bureau of Economic Analysis, Bureau of Labor Statistics).
- Most of South Carolina's small businesses are very small as 77.8 percent of all businesses did not have employees and most employers have fewer than 20 employees.
- Small businesses employed 750,147 workers in 2009 (Table 1) with most of the employment coming from firms with 20-499 employees.
- While the employment situation in 2008-2009 was weak (Table 2), small businesses in South Carolina represented 86.9 percent of the net new private-sector jobs from 2005-2008.
- Self-employment in South Carolina declined over the last decade. Female self-employment fared the best compared with other demographic groups during the decade.*
- Throughout 2010, the number of opening establishments was lower than closing establishments and the net employment change from this turnover was positive (Table 3).

For Further Information

- Data on all states and territories are available at www.sba.gov/advocacy/848.
- For other small business data and analysis, visit www.sba.gov/advocacy/847, call (202) 205-6533, or email advocacy@sba.gov.
- Visit <http://web.sba.gov/list> to subscribe to Advocacy's Listservs.

* Because of the relatively low number of veterans in the survey data source, the veteran self-employment figure is susceptible to large fluctuations.

South Carolina Small Business Facts

	2009*	2008	2000
Number of Businesses			
Small employers (<500 employees)	77,781	81,063	76,142
Large employers (500+ employees)	2,326	2,364	2,218
Nonemployers	280,119	282,855	206,770
Level in 2007* (000)			
	Firms	Employment	Receipts(\$)
Business Owner Demographics			
Male-owned	199	617	101,285
Woman-owned	99	100	12,016
Equally male/female-owned	50	88	10,214
African American-owned	44	19	1,262
Asian-owned	7	20	2,431
Hispanic-owned	6	9	1,613
Native American/Alaskan-owned	2	5	246
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander-owned	0	--	--
Veteran-owned	66	162	25,856
Publicly held, unclassified	12	748	193,410
	Level in 2010*	% Change from 2009 2000	
Workforce (Thousands)			
Private-sector employment	1,460	-0.5	-5.0
Government employment	345	-0.7	6.5
Self-employed (incorp. & uninc.)	178	-9.3	-13.1
Female self-employment	56	-30.6	11.2
Male self-employment	122	5.5	-21.0
Minority self-employment	37	31.1	-16.5
Veteran self-employment	19	38.8	-46.6
Unemployment Rate (Percent)	11.2	-0.1†	7.6†
Business Turnover			
Quarterly establishment openings	16,515	-7.3	-15.1
Quarterly establishment closings	17,519	-15.9	-10.2
Business bankruptcies	389	-12.8	181.9
	2010*	2009	2000
Income and Finance			
Proprietors' income (\$billion)	9.1	8.5	8.0
Number of bank branches	1,458	1,463	1,245
No. of bus. loans under \$100,000‡	40,503	78,688	62,024
Total value of business loans under \$100,000 (\$million)‡	598	969	998
Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, Bureau of Economic Analysis; U.S. Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics; Admin. Office of the U.S. Courts; Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation; and U.S. Small Business Admin., Office of Advocacy.			
* Latest available data. †Percentage point change. ‡Data are for CRA loans.			

**Table 1: Firms and Employment in South Carolina by Industry and Firm Size, 2009
(Nonfarm, Thousands)**

Industry	Nonemployer Firms	Employer Firms			Employment		
		Total	1-19 Employees	1-499 Employees	Total	1-19 Employees	1-499 Employees
Total	280.1	80.1	68.7	77.8	1,542.8	287.6	750.1
Forestry, etc. and agriculture support	2.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	4.0	2.4	3.7
Mining	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	1.1	0.2	0.5
Utilities	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	12.1	0.2	2.6
Construction	36.9	10.4	9.5	10.3	95.4	37.2	72.3
Manufacturing	3.5	3.7	2.4	3.3	223.1	13.1	70.6
Wholesale trade	4.8	4.0	2.9	3.7	62.3	12.8	36.1
Retail trade	26.2	11.0	9.7	10.6	224.0	40.6	76.3
Transportation and warehousing	11.6	2.1	1.5	1.8	52.5	5.5	16.5
Information	3.0	0.7	0.5	0.6	34.4	1.8	8.0
Finance and insurance	9.7	3.3	2.8	3.1	67.3	9.6	24.9
Real estate and rental and leasing	29.3	3.7	3.4	3.6	26.6	8.7	18.1
Professional, scientific, and technical svcs.	32.0	8.9	8.2	8.7	76.5	26.6	49.9
Management of companies and enterprises	--	0.4	0.1	0.2	23.9	0.1	3.6
Admin., support, waste mgt., remed. svcs.	29.6	4.8	4.1	4.6	115.8	16.0	48.9
Educational services	6.4	1.0	0.7	0.9	29.9	3.2	14.7
Health care and social assistance	18.9	7.6	6.3	7.4	212.8	34.1	99.5
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	12.3	1.4	1.1	1.4	24.0	4.5	19.3
Accommodation and food services	4.7	7.0	5.2	6.8	179.9	31.3	114.3
Other services (except public admin.)	48.4	10.4	9.6	10.3	77.1	39.4	70.1
Unclassified	--	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2

Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Statistics of U.S. Businesses. (See www.sba.gov/advocacy/849/12162 for data from other years, and for starts, closures, job creation and destruction by industry and by size category.)

Table 2: Net Job Change by Firm Size, 2005–2009 (Nonfarm)

	Total Net New Jobs	Employment Size of Firm						
		1-4	5-9	10-19	20-99	100-499	<500	500+
2005 - 2006	47,184	14,886	5,246	4,244	8,502	5,086	37,964	9,220
2006 - 2007	6,681	13,889	1,504	-1,107	991	-5,984	9,293	-2,612
2007 - 2008	3,018	9,265	-805	-3,199	-915	-2,181	2,165	853
2008 - 2009	-112,271	2,028	-8,615	-11,486	-25,896	-21,974	-65,943	-46,328

Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. (For more detailed data see www.sba.gov/advocacy/849/12162.)

Table 3: Establishment and Employment Turnover by Quarter, 2010 (Nonfarm, Thousands)

	Establishments				Employment			
	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Openings	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.3	16.3	15.0	15.8	15.3
Expansions	18.4	19.7	19.0	19.5	71.2	81.1	75.2	73.8
Contractions	20.5	19.7	19.9	19.7	68.6	71.4	71.0	69.5
Closings	4.8	4.5	4.1	4.1	14.1	14.8	14.2	15.1

Source: U.S. Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Business Employment Dynamics. (For more detailed data see www.bls.gov/bdm/.)

Note: These figures contain all firm sizes; Census data from 2009 show that 85 percent of establishment births and deaths were in firms with fewer than 500 employees.