

#6 of 8 South Carolina metros — ALEX Intelligence, 2026

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Columbia leads in labour force growth — ALEX Intelligence, 2026

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THE DATA

2.9%

12-month growth in the metropolitan labour force (August 2026)

Columbia ranks #6 among South Carolina metros in labour force expansion, signaling strong job market momentum.

This 2.9% year-over-year growth in the metropolitan labour force reflects sustained employment gains across education, healthcare, and government sectors in the Midlands. The figure, drawn from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, indicates that new workers are entering the regional economy faster than in most other South Carolina metro areas, reinforcing demand for housing and rental units.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics and Current Employment Statistics, August 2026 (seasonally unadjusted, metropolitan) • ALEX Intelligence computation

<https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-10-09-columbia-sc-lab-bls-labor-force-growth-12m-msa>



01

Labour force growth drives housing demand

Columbia's 2.9% labour force expansion suggests a rising pool of income-earning households, directly increasing demand for both owner-occupied homes and rental properties. This trend is especially potent in the Midlands, where affordability remains a competitive advantage. As new jobs attract workers from neighboring counties and states, the local real estate market benefits from organic, in-migration-driven demand rather than speculative capital flows.



02

Affordability as a strategic moat

Despite strong labour force growth, Columbia's home price appreciation remains moderate compared to higher-growth metros like Myrtle Beach or Greenville. This disconnect—robust job creation without proportionate price spikes—suggests that the Midlands is leveraging its affordability as a defensive moat against overheating. The market is attracting talent without triggering a supply crunch, preserving long-term stability and accessibility for first-time buyers and mid-income households.

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