



Alabama: Exports, Jobs, and Foreign Investment September 2012

Exports Support Jobs for Alabama's Workers

Export-supported jobs linked to manufacturing account for an estimated 7.4 percent of Alabama's total private-sector employment. Nearly one-quarter (23.1 percent) of all manufacturing workers in Alabama depend on exports for their jobs (2009 data latest available).

Exports Sustain Thousands of Alabama Businesses

A total of 2,710 companies exported from Alabama locations in 2009. Of those, 2,214 (82 percent) were small and medium-sized enterprises with fewer than 500 employees.

Small and medium-sized firms generated nearly one-quarter (23 percent) of Alabama's total exports of merchandise in 2009.

Foreign Investment Creates Jobs in Alabama

In 2009, foreign-controlled companies employed 77,500 Alabama workers. Major sources of foreign investment in Alabama in 2009 included Japan, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Canada.

Foreign investment in Alabama was responsible for 5.0 percent of the state's total private-industry employment in 2009.

Alabama Depends on World Markets

Alabama's export shipments of merchandise in 2011 totaled \$17.9 billion.

The state's largest market was Canada. Alabama posted merchandise exports of \$3.3 billion to Canada in 2011, 18.4 percent of the state's total merchandise exports. Canada was followed by China (\$2.3 billion), Germany (\$2 billion), Mexico (\$1.7 billion), and Japan (\$716 million).

The state's largest merchandise export category is transportation equipment, which accounted for \$6.1 billion of Alabama's total merchandise exports in 2011. Other top merchandise exports are chemicals (\$2.3 billion), minerals and ores (\$2.2 billion), machinery (\$1.2 billion), and primary metal manufactures (\$1.1 billion).

Alabama's Metropolitan Exports

In 2011, the following metropolitan areas in Alabama recorded merchandise exports: Birmingham-Hoover (\$2.4 billion), Mobile (\$1.7 billion), Montgomery (\$1.6 billion), Huntsville (\$1.3 billion), Decatur (\$709 million), Auburn-Opelika (\$387 million), Florence-Muscle Shoals (\$287 million), Dothan (\$241 million), Anniston-Oxford (\$225 million), and Gadsden (\$26.6 million). Tuscaloosa was also likely a major metropolitan exporter for Alabama in 2011; however an export value total is not available due to federal disclosure regulations.