

## Atlantic City Employment Continues to Decline Says Stockton's South Jersey Economic Review

***For Immediate Release; [view full report here](#)***

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**Galloway, N.J.** – The South Jersey Economic Review, a biannual [report](#) released today in conjunction with the [William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy](#) at Stockton University, reports that total employment in the Atlantic City metropolitan area is declining with additional job losses coming this fall with the closure of the fifth Atlantic City casino, the Taj Mahal.

“Since the first quarter of 2014—which saw the closure of Atlantic Club in January, the first of the four casino closings that year—employment in the casino hotels industry has declined by 5,400 jobs, a 20 percent decline,” the report stated. Most recently, total employment in the metropolitan area declined 0.3 percent (350 jobs) year-over-year through the first half of 2016.

Oliver Cooke, associate professor of Economics at Stockton, is the founder and editor of the South Jersey Economic Review, which has provided in-depth analyses of the regional economy's healthcare, construction, retail trade and gaming industries for more than a decade.

“Atlantic City's economy continues to struggle under the weight of the ongoing restructuring taking place in its gaming industry and the related spillover effects on the local economy including Atlantic City's fiscal health. While most current gaming operators have benefited (in market share terms) from the industry's recent consolidation, the report finds that the restructuring process remains incomplete,” said Cooke.

In the first six months of 2016, 2,400 jobs were lost in construction, accommodations and local government. During this time, job gains were recorded in the metropolitan area's retail trade (+600), education and health services (+600), and restaurants and bars (+900) sectors.

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The metropolitan area's labor force continues to decline, a fact that has kept its official headline unemployment rate relatively low. Since the second quarter of 2013, the local labor force has declined by 13,000, a 9.4 percent contraction.

The future of Atlantic City's gaming industry will be affected by whether or not voters approve November's planned referendum that calls for casino expansion in northern New Jersey. Approval could cost the local gaming industry another two or three casino closures according to some analysts the report said.

Atlantic City's economic struggles continue to weigh heavily on its real estate sector. Single-family home prices fell 3.6 percent year-over-year during the first six months of this year, according to Freddie Mac's Home Price Index.

Looking at the surrounding area, the report noted that Ocean City's economy added 2,700 jobs year-over-year and Vineland-Bridgeton added 300 during the first half of 2016.

View the South Jersey Economic Review [here](#).

**Note to media/not for publication:** To arrange an interview with the report's author, Oliver Cooke, please contact Susan Allen at 609-652-4790 or [susan.allen@stockton.edu](mailto:susan.allen@stockton.edu).

**About the Hughes Center:** The William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at Stockton University serves as a catalyst for research, analysis and innovative policy solutions on the economic, social and cultural issues facing New Jersey, and promotes the civic life of New Jersey through engagement, education and research. The Center is named for William J. Hughes, whose distinguished career includes service in the U.S. House of Representatives, Ambassador to Panama and as a Distinguished Visiting Professor at Stockton. The Hughes Center can be found on [Facebook](#) and can be followed on Twitter at [@hughescenter](#).

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