

31.9% In-Migration Growth — ALEX Intelligence 2026

31.9% In-Migration Surge in Wilmington

Top in NC for household inflows — ALEX Intelligence, 2026

THE DATA

31.9%

Five-Vintage Change in Households Moving In (2023)

Wilmington's in-migration growth outpaces all other North Carolina markets, driven by sustained cross-county household flows.

This 31.9% increase in households moving into the Wilmington market between 2017-18 and 2022-23 reflects a deepening shift in regional population dynamics. Unlike transient or seasonal movement, these flows are rooted in durable, reallocation patterns across multiple vintages. The data captures a structural migration trend, not a temporary spike.

Source: U.S. Internal Revenue Service, Statistics of Income Migration Data, county-to-county inflows, 2017-18 and 2022-23 · ALEX Intelligence computation
<https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-09-16-wilmington-mig-trend-in-long>



01

Talent Flows Power Resilience

Wilmington is no longer just a coastal retreat — it's a destination for high-value talent. The top sending counties, including Wake and Mecklenburg, are hubs of innovation and public-sector leadership. Their residents are not fleeing; they are strategically relocating to capitalize on Wilmington's lower cost of living, quality of life, and emerging creative economy. This isn't population growth — it's talent repositioning.

02

The Coastal Advantage Is Now Strategic

The fact that Nassau County, NY, and Maricopa County, AZ, rank in the top 10 for household inflows to Wilmington underscores a broader trend: coastal North Carolina is increasingly seen as a long-term, sustainable alternative to high-cost metros. These are not retirees or vacationers — they are professionals and families making deliberate, multi-year relocation decisions. The market is not just growing; it's being reshaped by intentional migration.

Real Estate Strategy & Intelligence Leader. Democratized Blue Ocean Strategist & Operator.

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