

#1 in Memphis metro, #1 in Tennessee — ALEX Intelligence 2026

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ALEX Intelligence 2026: Income Gap Between Arriving and Departing Households

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## THE DATA

# 22.8%

### Income Gap Between Arriving and Departing Households (2023)

Memphis has the largest income gap between incoming and outgoing households in Tennessee.

This 22.8% gap means that, on average, households moving into the Memphis metro earn significantly less than those leaving it. This pattern suggests a net transfer of lower-income households into the region, driven by affordability, job availability, or relocation from higher-cost areas. The data, drawn from IRS county-to-county migration flows, reflects a structural shift in demographic and economic composition.

Source: U.S. Internal Revenue Service, Statistics of Income Migration Data, county-to-county inflows, 2022-23 · ALEX Intelligence computation

<https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-10-10-memphis-mig-agi-gap>



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# 01

## Affordability Fuels a New Demographic Engine

The income gap is not a sign of decline, but of strategic migration. Lower-income households are moving into Memphis in search of opportunity, drawn by lower living costs, expanding manufacturing jobs, and proximity to logistics hubs. This trend strengthens the local labor pool and supports small business growth, creating a self-reinforcing cycle of economic inclusion.

The influx is not random — it's a targeted migration toward opportunity. As long as job creation keeps pace with population growth, this demographic shift can stabilize and even improve housing demand over time.

# 02

## Wealth Retention Risk in a Growing Market

While Memphis gains population, it loses higher-income households to more expensive regions — a net outflow of capital and purchasing power. This dynamic threatens long-term wealth retention in the metro, as the highest-earning residents depart, taking equity and investment capacity with them.

Over time, this could limit the ability of local institutions to fund public services, infrastructure, and affordable housing programs. The city's future economic health depends on its ability to retain high-earning professionals and reinvest in the communities that attract new residents.



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