Boulder County — #1 of 10: Net Migration in Households



# Boulder County's migration loss leads Colorado

Ranking by IRS data, 2022-23

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THE DATA

# 965

**Net Migration in Households (2023)**

Boulder County lost 965 households to migration between 2022 and 2023.

This figure represents a net outflow of households, meaning more people left than arrived. The magnitude is not just a statistical blip — it is the largest such loss among all Colorado counties with measurable bidirectional flows, indicating sustained population erosion. This trend reflects deeper structural challenges in affordability, housing supply, and livability for middle- and lower-income residents.



Photo: Tony Webster · CC BY 2.0 · Wikimedia Commons

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/2026-11-06-boulder-mig-net-total

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# Affordability is a migration filter

This has long-term implications: shrinking labor pools, reduced demand for middle-income housing, and a feedback loop where fewer residents mean less economic dynamism, which in turn drives more exits. The outflow is not a sign of decline, but of a self-reinforcing system where the very traits that attract high-income professionals — innovation, culture, climate — are now the ones pushing them away.

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## The migration loss is structural, not cyclical

This suggests that Boulder is losing its competitive edge in attracting new residents despite strong employment in tech, education, and research. The city's investment in sustainability and transit may be valuable, but it is not enough to offset the cost of entry. The data implies that the future of Boulder's real estate depends not on attracting more people, but on retaining those already here — a shift from growth to stewardship.

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