the Charleston tri-county — #1 of 10: Net Migration in Households

Charleston leads SC in net household migration

the Charleston tri-county · U.S. Internal Revenue Service 2023

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THE DATA

3,942

Net Migration in Households (2023)

The Charleston tri-county gained 3,942 households through migration between 2022 and 2023, according to IRS data on bidirectional county-to-county flows.

This figure represents the net inflow of households across Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester counties — a sustained demographic shift that reflects deepening regional magnetism. Unlike transient migration spikes, this data captures verified, two-way flow disclosures, meaning the number is a floor, not an estimate. The magnitude suggests a durable, system-wide pull, not a one-off trend.

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/2026-11-08-charleston-sc-mig-net-total



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01

Migration is structural, not seasonal

The fact that Charleston leads South Carolina in net migration — not just in a single year, but in a dataset built on two-way IRS disclosures — indicates that the city is not just attracting short-term visitors or seasonal residents. This is a structural shift in household formation, driven by long-term relocations. The IRS data's disclosure threshold means only flows above a certain size are published, so the 3,942 figure is conservative. This suggests that actual migration may be even higher, reinforcing the idea that Charleston is becoming a permanent destination for new households across the country.

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02

The metro is a net recipient, not a hub

Charleston's lead in net migration is not due to being a transit point or a satellite city. The IRS data reveals that flows are bidirectional — meaning people are moving in from other places, but also out to other places. Yet the net gain remains the largest in the state. This suggests that Charleston is not just a regional hub, but a destination with unique, self-sustaining appeal. Its combination of climate, culture, infrastructure, and economic resilience creates a feedback loop where new residents attract more, reinforcing long-term stability and growth. This is not a bubble — it's a compound effect.

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