the Midlands — #1 of 10: Five-Vintage Change in Households Moving In

Columbia Leads SC in In-Migration Growth

Source: ALEX Intelligence · Published November 10, 2026

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THE DATA

8.3%

Five-Vintage Change in Households Moving In (2023)

Columbia’s in-migration growth between 2017–18 and 2022–23 is the highest in South Carolina.

This 8.3% increase in households moving into the Midlands reflects a structural shift in regional mobility. The data, drawn from IRS county-to-county inflows, shows that Columbia is no longer just a regional hub — it’s becoming the primary destination for out-of-state and inter-county relocations within the state. The surge is not driven by the Upstate or coastal areas, but by inland counties with strong economic anchors.



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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/2026-11-10-columbia-sc-mig-trend-in-long

01

The Midlands is becoming a migration core

Columbia’s 8.3% five-vintage increase in in-migration is the highest in South Carolina, with Mecklenburg County, NC, leading as the top sending county. This indicates that Columbia is no longer a secondary destination — it’s now the central node in a growing regional migration network. The shift suggests that the Midlands is developing a self-sustaining demographic momentum, drawing not just from within the state but from adjacent states as well.

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02

Migration patterns reveal new economic gravity

The fact that Mecklenburg County, NC, is the top sending county — ahead of even Charleston and the Upstate — shows that Columbia's appeal is now transcending traditional regional boundaries. This is not just about affordability or climate; it's about economic opportunity, institutional stability, and quality of life. The Midlands is becoming a magnet for professionals, especially those relocating from high-cost, high-tax areas. This migration surge is a leading indicator of long-term housing demand and infrastructure investment.

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