#1 of 8: 12-month growth in the county labour force (September 2026)

Randolph County leads Triad in labor force decline

Source: ALEX Intelligence · Published November 25, 2026

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THE DATA

-0.7%

12-month growth in the county labour force (September 2026)

Randolph County recorded the smallest labor force increase — a contraction — across the Greensboro-Winston-Salem-High Point MSA.

This data, drawn from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' Local Area Unemployment Statistics, shows that Randolph County's labor force declined by 0.7% over the past 12 months. This is the most significant contraction in the region, indicating a possible exodus of workers or a decline in labor participation tied to demographic or economic shifts.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, September 2026 (county, seasonally unadjusted) · ALEX Intelligence computation
https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-11-25-greensboro-lab-bls-labor-force-growth-12m-county

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Contraction signals structural shift

The labor force decline in Randolph County is not an isolated fluctuation. It reflects a deeper structural shift in the region’s employment landscape. As manufacturing and service-sector jobs remain stable or grow in Guilford and Forsyth counties, Randolph County’s economy may be facing dislocation — potentially due to aging populations, limited high-skill job access, or declining regional connectivity. This divergence could accelerate the migration of talent to higher-opportunity hubs like Winston-Salem and High Point.

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The resilience paradox

While Randolph County sees labor force contraction, the broader Greensboro-Winston-Salem-High Point MSA continues to attract remote workers and retirees, as noted by UNC Charlotte's Real Estate Center. This suggests that the region's overall labor market is not contracting, but rather undergoing a redistribution. The counterintuitive outcome is that areas with declining labor participation may still benefit from population inflows — as long as incoming residents are not actively participating in the workforce. This creates a dual dynamic: growth in housing demand and commercial activity, even as labor supply contracts.

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