

Florida migration boom fades as rising costs push residents out

At the same time Florida's pandemic-era sunshine rush slowed to a trickle, affordability concerns pushed working-age residents to relocate.

Why it matters: That's the sobering state of play detailed in a recent Wall Street Journal article digging into the Sunshine State's changing migration patterns.

- "The changing affordability situation has led to a shrinking supply of working-age newcomers, who are key to filling jobs and stoking demand for housing, retail and services," the piece says.
- "Florida depends heavily on such sectors, as it lacks big industries that generate an abundance of high-paying jobs."
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The big picture: International migration — once a major source of population growth — plummeted in most U.S. counties amid President Trump's enforcement crackdown.

- The number of people moving to Florida from other states has also dropped off, with hurricanes, return-to-office mandates and skyrocketing home insurance premiums spooking potential new residents.
- And deaths have outnumbered births in Florida since 2020, a deficit that's forecasted to hit 50,000 by 2035.

What they're saying: "The collapse in domestic migration is a direct threat to jobs and paychecks for the state's current residents," demographer Eric Finnigan told the Journal.

- "It's also a potential hit to home values and those with their wealth tied up in home equity," said Finnigan, the vice president of demographics research at John Burns Research & Consulting.

Meanwhile, inflation and high housing costs combined with stagnant wages have pushed middle-class Floridians to move out of state, per the Journal article.

Zoom in: In Miami-Dade County, 54% of households were unable to afford basic necessities in 2025 — up from 51% in 2023, according to the United Way.

- An explosion of luxury offerings across Miami — and the influx of billionaire home buyers — spells a deepening wealth gap.

In some parts of Florida, the shift goes beyond slower growth.

Stunning stat: Miami-Dade is estimated to have lost about 10,000 residents between July 2024 and 2025 — the third highest number of any U.S. county, according to recent Census data.

Yes, but: Most Florida counties still experienced population growth, with St. Johns (3.9%), Hendry (3.5%), Marion (3.4%) and Osceola (3.4%) leading the pack.

- Ocala saw the highest percentage increase of residents of any U.S. metro area during the same period. Lakeland-Winter Haven and Punta Gorda were among the top 10.

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