

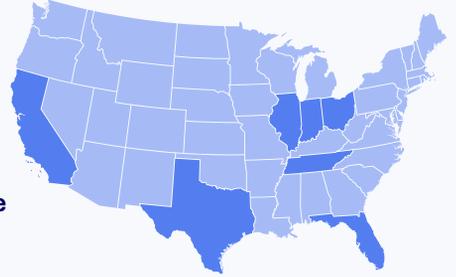
RESEARCH SUMMARY

# Kentucky Talent Attraction Initiative

In 2025 (Q3), Development Counsellors International was contracted by the Kentucky Legislative Research Commission to conduct a comprehensive research study of talent in seven, out-of-state markets, in-state talent and students in Kentucky and Kentucky-based Human Resource executives. **The objective was to understand perceptions of the Commonwealth as a place to live and work and to understand the barriers to attracting and retaining key talent audiences.**

## Target Talent Markets

- California
- Florida
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Ohio
- Tennessee
- Texas



The target talent markets were identified as "best bet" markets based on an analysis of in- and out-migration patterns, industry and occupation concentrations, visitor arrival and flight data, as well as other relevant labor force and demographic data sets provided by public and private sources.

EXTERNAL TALENT

## Top Factors in Relocation Decisions

When evaluating a relocation, talent prioritizes the following career and lifestyle factors to make their decision.

### Top Career Factors

- Salaries relative to the cost of living
- Culture of good work-life balance
- Job opportunity matching skillset
- Advancement opportunities
- Access to benefits

### Top Lifestyle Factors

- Cost of living
- Overall quality of life
- Housing cost
- Safety/crime rates
- Quality healthcare

## External Perceptions of Kentucky as a Place to...



### Kentucky's Strengths:

- Outdoor recreational opportunities
- Cost of living
- Housing cost and availability
- Welcoming/friendly population
- Overall quality of life

### Kentucky's Perception Gaps:

- Job opportunities matching skill sets
- Depth/breadth of job opportunities
- Industries outside of spirits, tourism and agriculture

# Kentucky

As A Place To Live



## Willingness to Relocate

Familiarity increases the likelihood of considering a relocation to Kentucky. Alumni and those who have strong familiarity with the state offer the greatest opportunity for conversion.

**49%** would relocate to KY if offered a job matching their skills and salary

**76%** among those familiar with Kentucky AND wanting to relocate

### INTERNAL TALENT

## Key Findings:

**47%** Of KY residents want to leave within the next 2 years

**67%** Of those who want to leave say it's likely they will

## Internal Talent Perceptions of KY as a Place to...



## Kentucky Students

**96%** Would stay in Kentucky after graduation if offered a full-time position

### Why They Would Stay

Proximity to family	69%
KY is home	46%
Cost of living	46%

### Why They Would Leave

**72%** Concerned with finding a job in their field

## HR Executives

**72%** Plan to expand staff in next two years

### Top Recruitment Challenges

- Competition with other employers
- Salary/wages relative to other locations
- Finding talent with required skills in-state

### Most difficult positions to fill

- VP/Executive
- Director
- Manager

### Tools HR Executives Need:

