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THE CONSTRUCTION
ASSOCIATION

February 2025

Take this job and shovel—please!

Contractors beg for construction workers

Ken Simonson

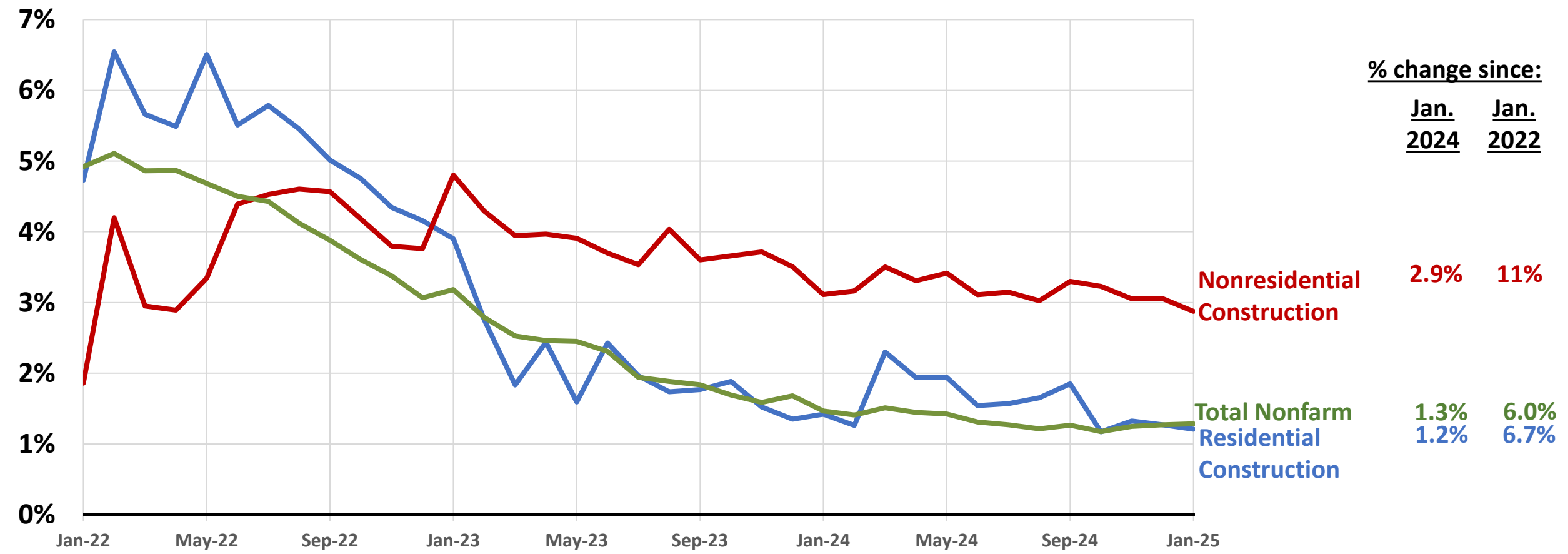
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Is there a problem? Construction employment has outpaced other sectors

Year-over-year change, Jan. 2022-Jan. 2025, seasonally adjusted



Source: BLS current employment statistics, <https://www.bls.gov/ces/>



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Construction employment is increasing in most states

38 states & DC **up** & 10 states **down**, & 2 unchanged Dec. 2023-Dec. 2024 (U.S.: 2.4%)

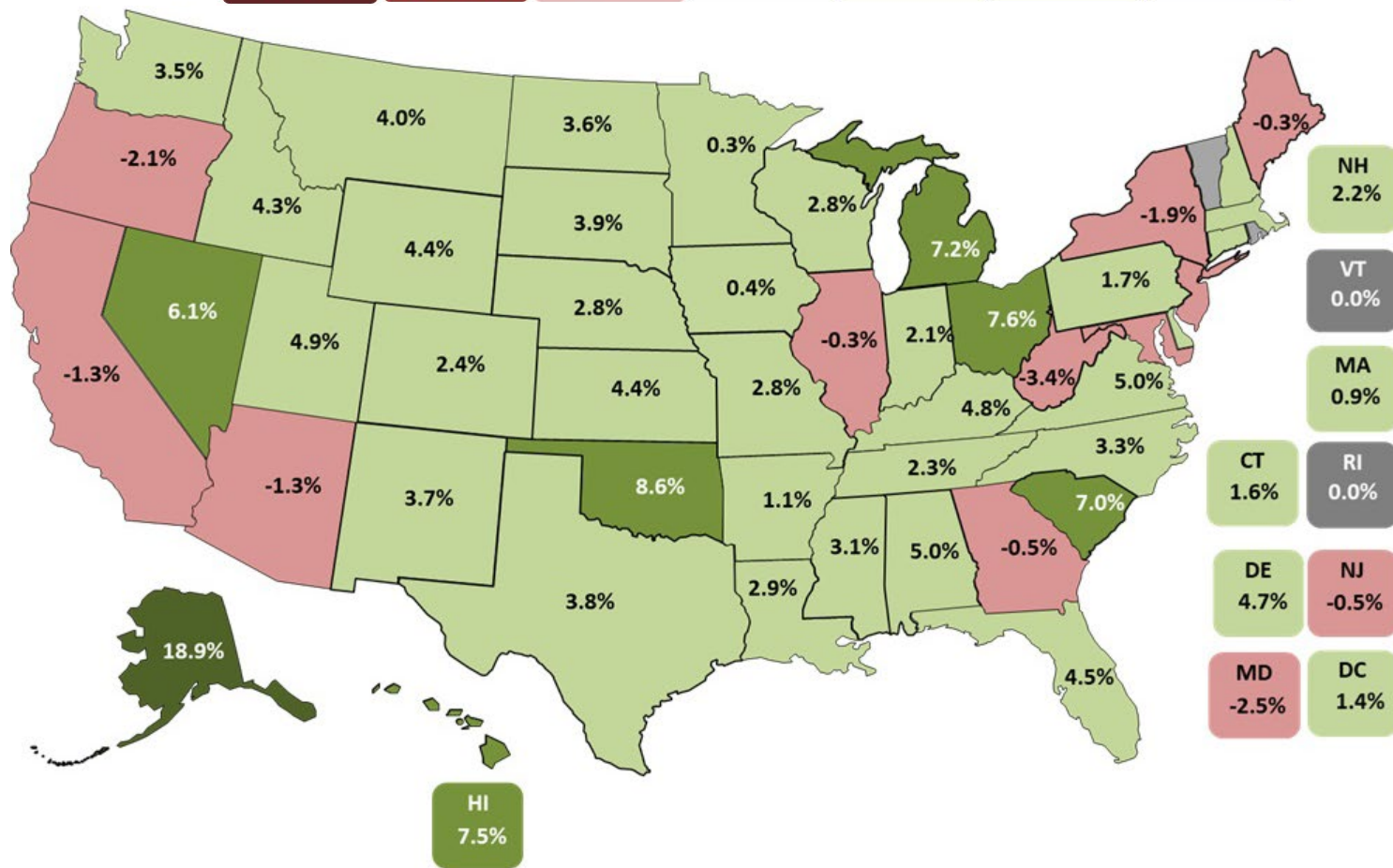


Top 5

AK	19%
OK	8.6%
OH	7.6%
HI	7.5%
MI	7.2%

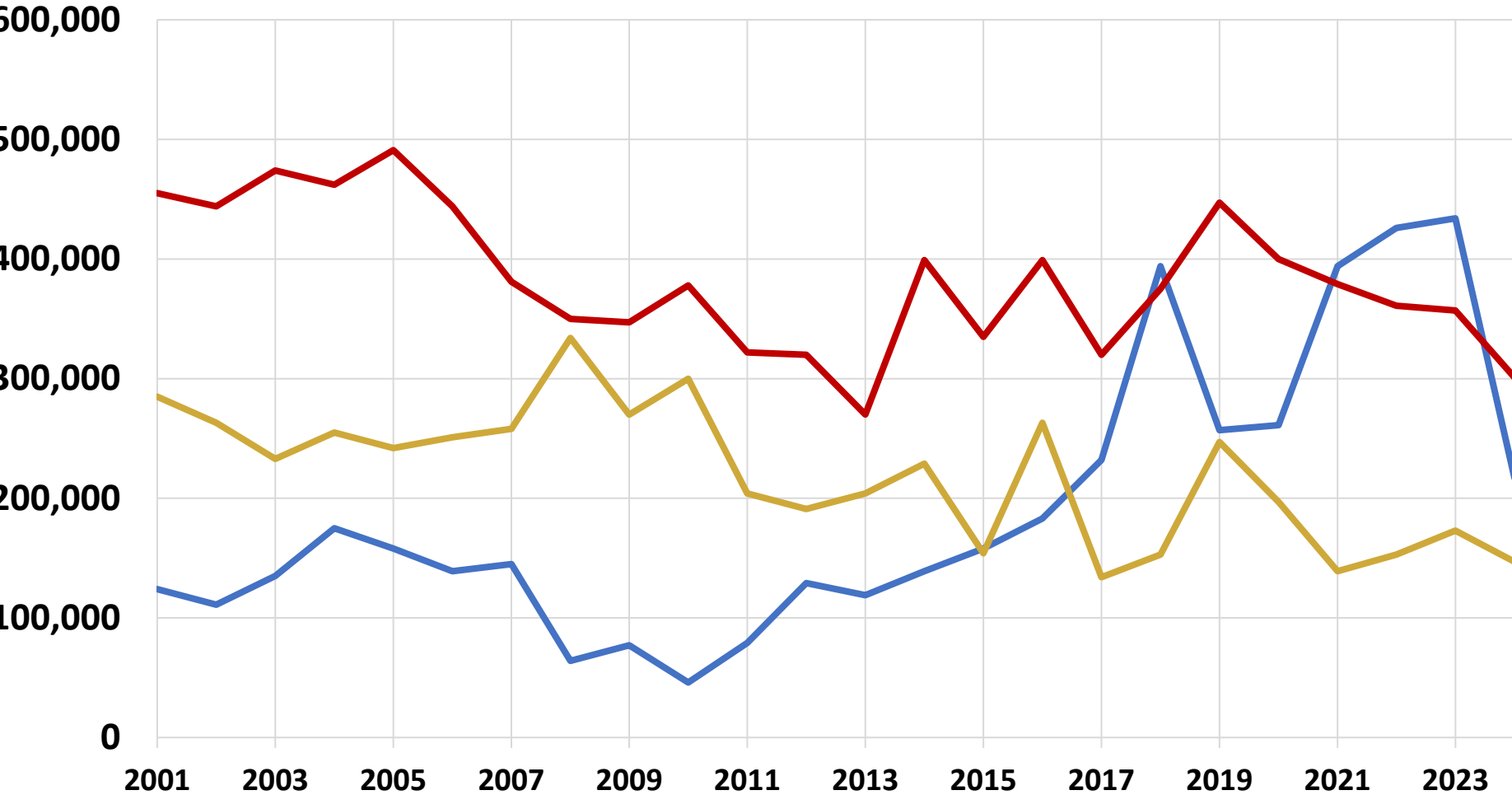
Bottom 5

WV	-3.4%
MD	-2.5%
OR	-2.1%
NY	-1.9%
AZ	-1.3%



Construction firms have trimmed job openings, hires but also layoffs

December 2001-December 2024, seasonally adjusted

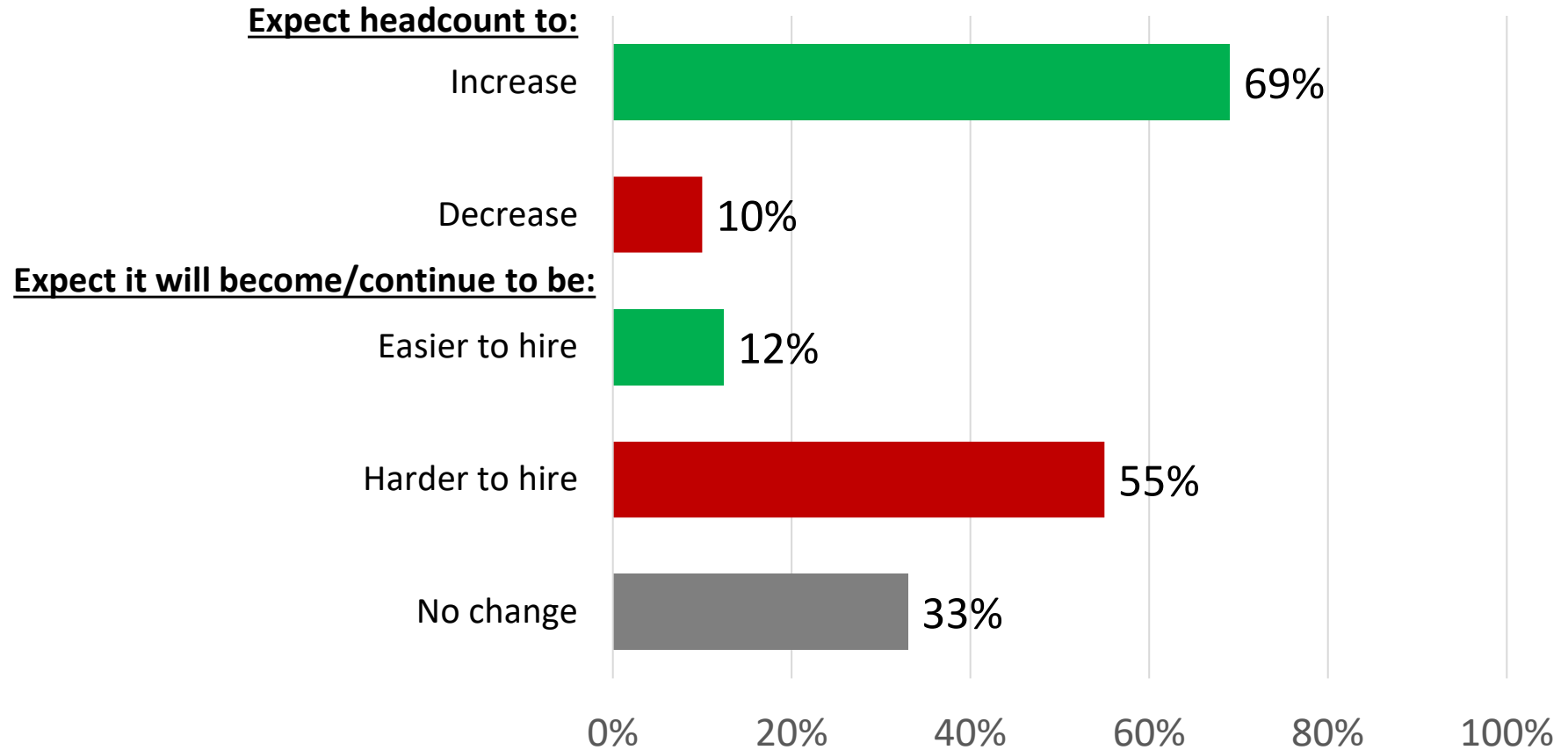


	<u>December 2024</u>	<u>12-mo change</u>	
		<u>#:</u>	<u>%:</u>
Hires	301,000	-56,000	-16%
Job openings	217,000	-217,000	-50%
Layoffs	147,000	-26,000	-15%

Contractors expect their headcount will increase, BUT hiring hourly craft workers will be as hard or harder than in 2024

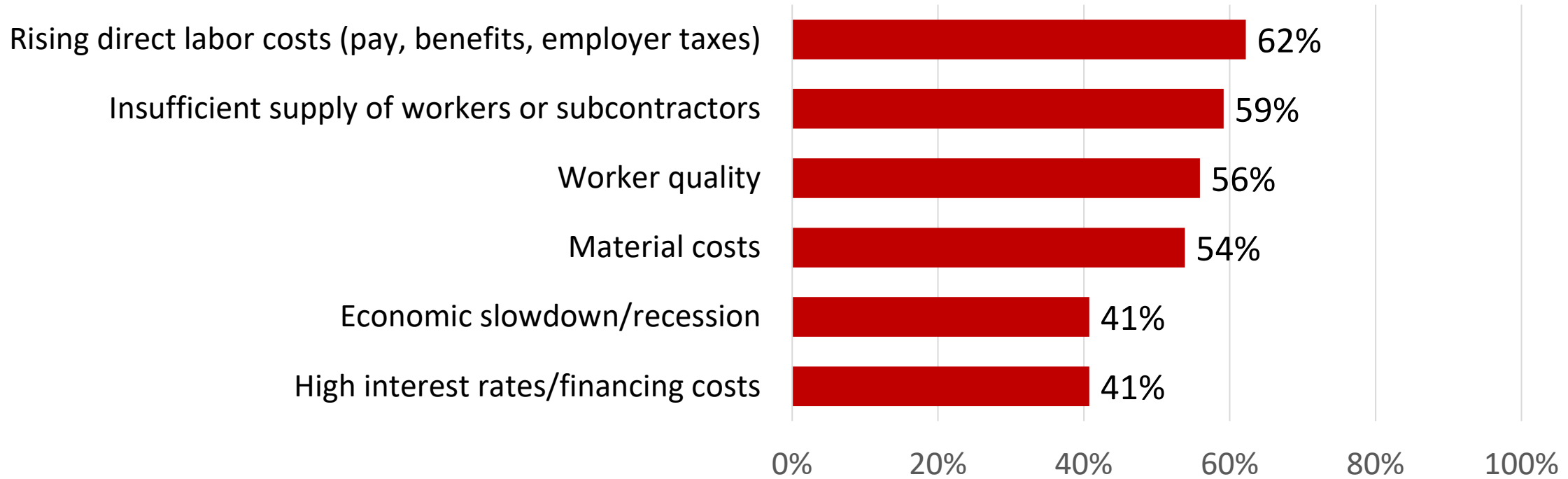


% of respondents who:



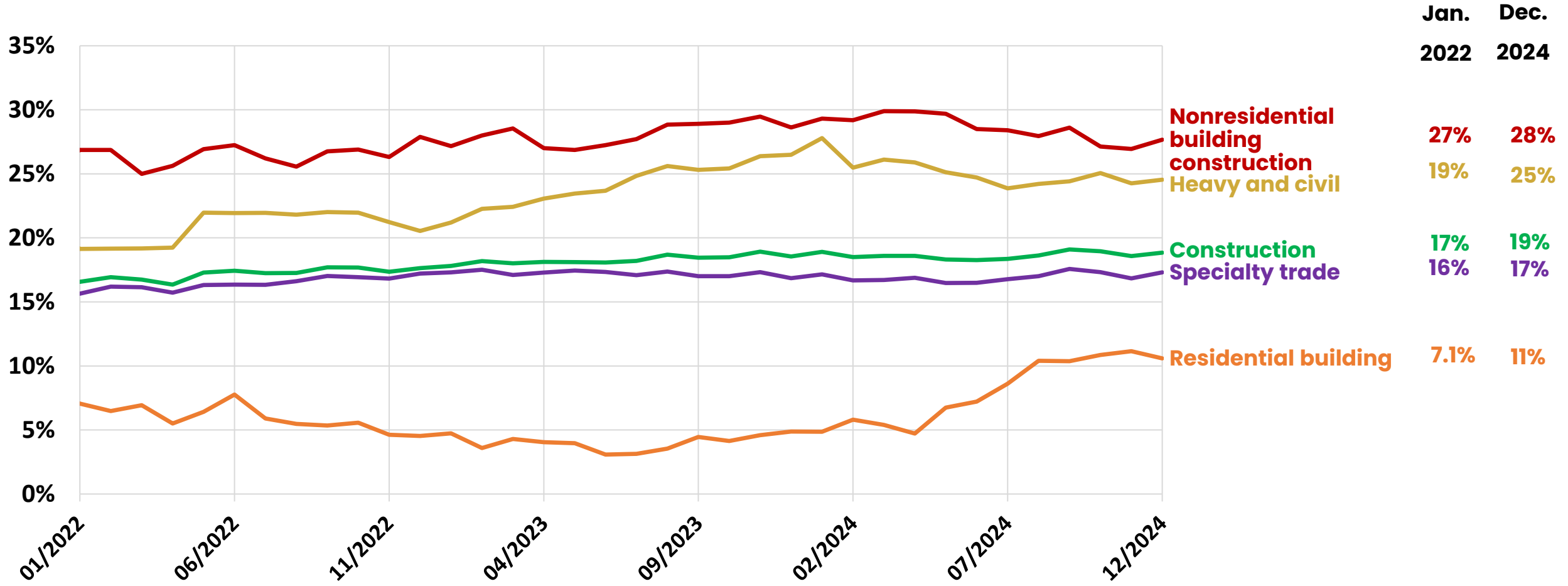
Labor issues are the most frequently listed concerns for 2025

% of respondents who listed as a major concern:



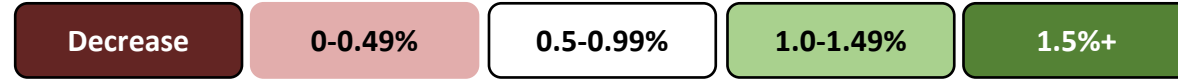
Construction wage 'premium' relative to private sector is rising

'Premium'=average hourly earnings for production & nonsupervisory employees in construction compared to private sector, Jan 2022-Dec 2024, seasonally adjusted



Population change by state, July 2023–July 2024

U.S.: 0.98%; 84% was from net immigration, 16% from natural increase (births-deaths)

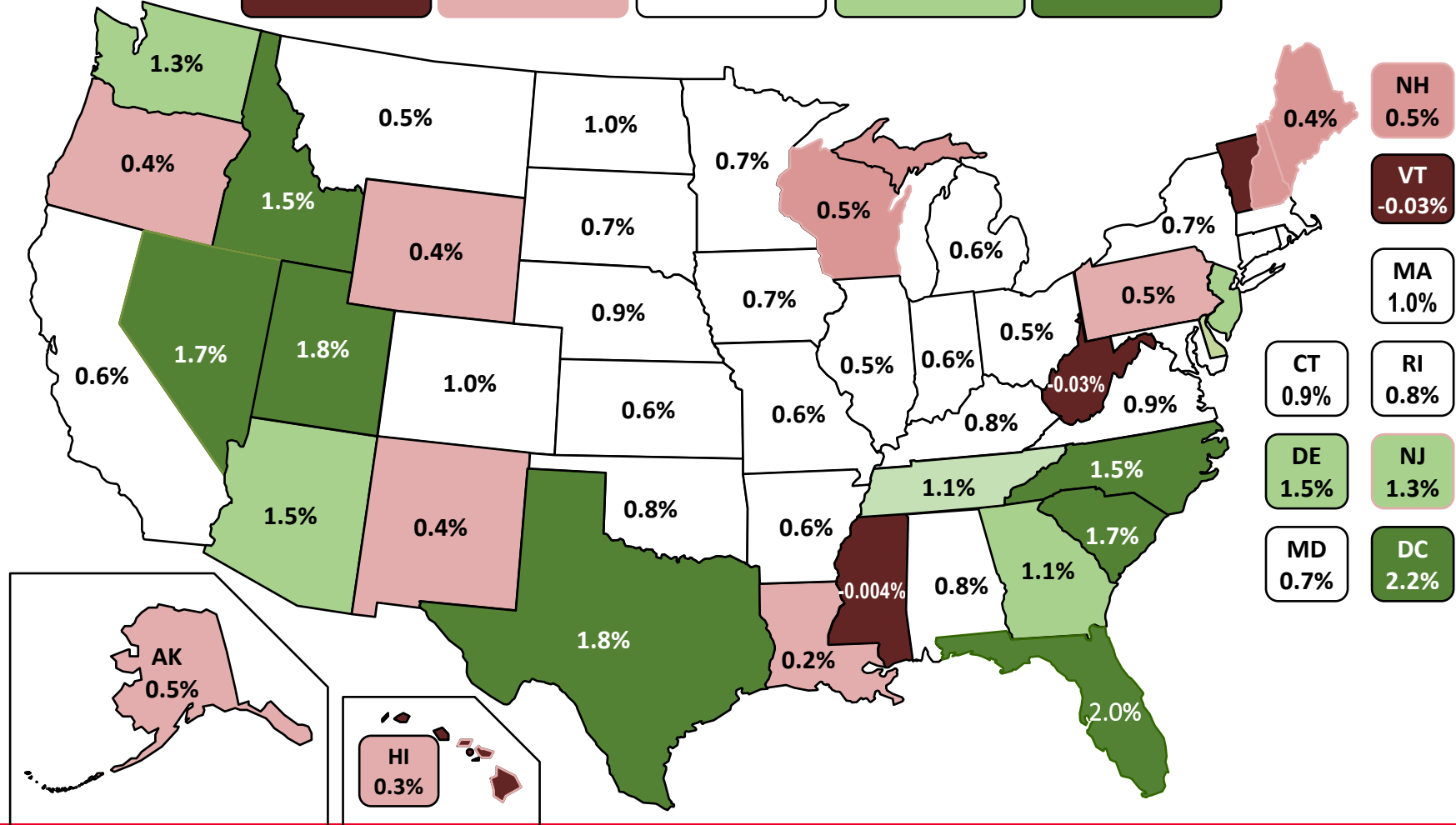


Top 6

DC	2.2%
FL	2.0%
TX, UT	1.8%
SC, NV	1.7%

Bottom 5

WV, VT	-0.3%
MS	-0.004%
LA	0.2%
HI	0.3%

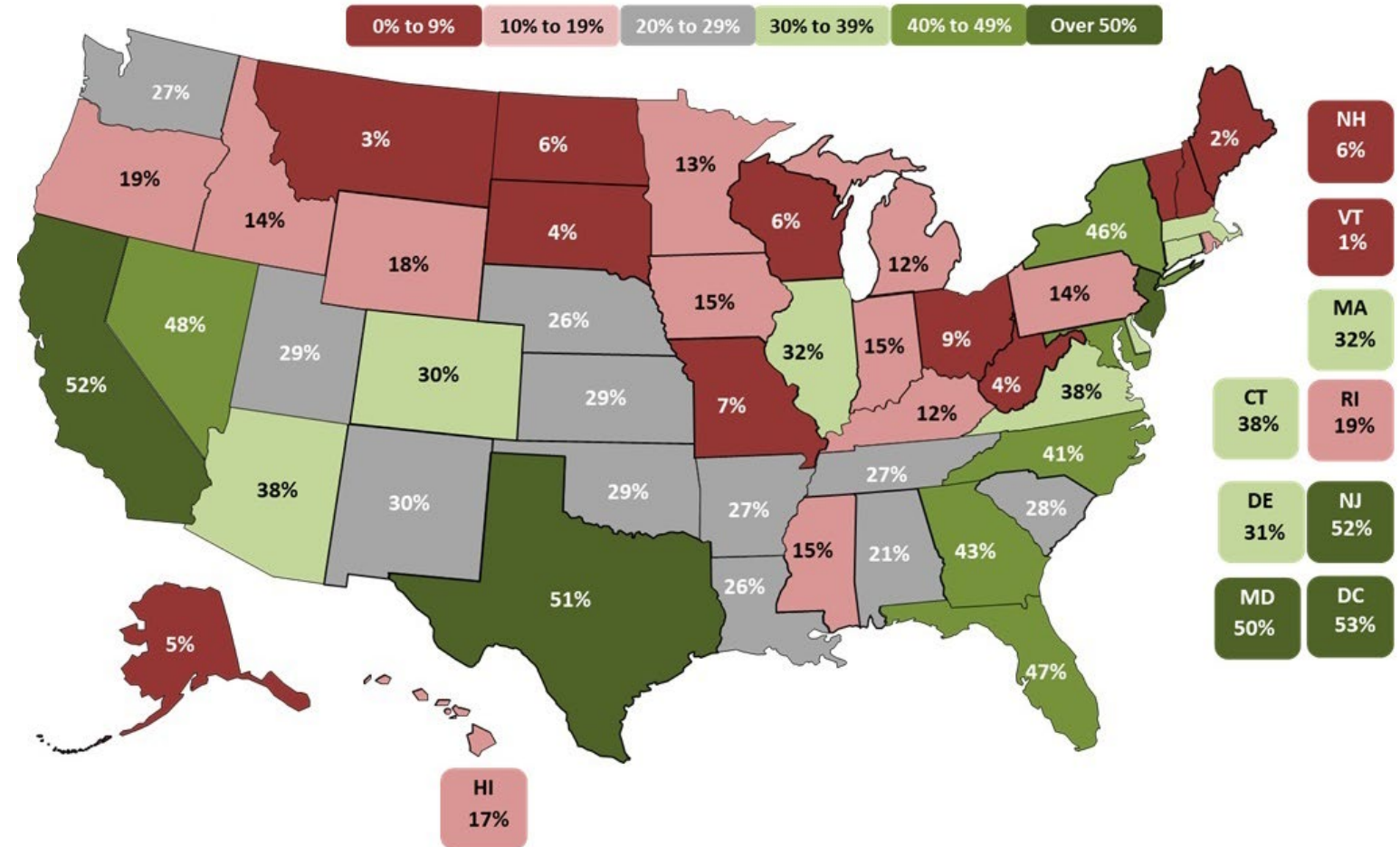


Big worry: what will happen to immigrants in construction trades?



Share of construction trade workers that are foreign born by state, 2023

Alabama/AL	21%	Missouri/MO	7%
Alaska/AK	5%	Montana/MT	3%
Arizona/AZ	38%	Nebraska/NE	26%
Arkansas/AR	27%	Nevada/NV	48%
California/CA	52%	New Hampshire/NH	6%
Colorado/CO	30%	New Jersey/NJ	52%
Connecticut/CT	38%	New Mexico/NM	30%
Delaware/DE	31%	New York/NY	46%
District of Columbia/DC	53%	North Carolina/NC	41%
Florida/FL	47%	North Dakota/ND	6%
Georgia/GA	43%	Ohio/OH	9%
Hawaii/HI	17%	Oklahoma/OK	29%
Idaho/ID	14%	Oregon/OR	19%
Illinois/IL	32%	Pennsylvania/PA	14%
Indiana/IN	15%	Rhode Island/RI	19%
Iowa/IA	15%	South Carolina/SC	28%
Kansas/KS	29%	South Dakota/SD	4%
Kentucky/KY	12%	Tennessee/TN	27%
Louisiana/LA	26%	Texas/TX	51%
Maine/ME	2%	Utah/UT	29%
Maryland/MD	50%	Vermont/VT	1%
Massachusetts/MA	32%	Virginia/VA	38%
Michigan/MI	12%	Washington/WA	27%
Minnesota/MN	13%	West Virginia/WV	4%
Mississippi/MS	15%	Wisconsin/WI	6%
		Wyoming/WY	18%



AGC economic resources

(email ken.simonson@agc.org)

- *Data DIGest*: weekly email summary of construction economic news ([subscribe](https://marketplace.agc.org/Store/ItemDetail?iProductCode=4401&OrderLineId=901649fd-c733-4103-93e0-a251778cd084): <https://marketplace.agc.org/Store/ItemDetail?iProductCode=4401&OrderLineId=901649fd-c733-4103-93e0-a251778cd084>)
- AGC [Tariff Resource Center](http://www.agc.org/tariff-resources-contractors) for Contractors: www.agc.org/tariff-resources-contractors
- AGC/Sage 2025 Outlook [Survey](http://www.agc.org/2025-construction-hiring-and-business-outlook): www.agc.org/2025-construction-hiring-and-business-outlook
- State and metro data, [fact sheets](http://www.agc.org/learn/construction-data): www.agc.org/learn/construction-data
- Monthly [press releases](http://www.agc.org/newsroom): construction spending; producer price indexes; national, state, metro employment with rankings: www.agc.org/newsroom
- Construction impact model: www.agc.org/agc-construction-impact-model
- ConsensusDocs [Price Escalation Resource Center](http://www.consensusdocs.org/price-escalation-clause/): www.consensusdocs.org/price-escalation-clause/



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PPI for inputs rises in April but dips over 12 months; pay in construction tops U.S. median by 18%

Prices show mixed trends in April

The producer price index (PPI) for material and service inputs to new nonresidential construction rose 0.5% from March to April but declined 1.1% year-over-year (y/y), according to Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data posted on Thursday.

[Read more](#)

Construction pay tops U.S. median by 18%

"Half of payroll workers in construction earn more than \$54,540," 18% more than the U.S. median wage of \$46,310, "and the top 25% make at least \$77,030," 4.5% higher than the U.S. top quartile base of \$73,460, the National Association of Home Builders reported on Tuesday, based on its analysis of May 2022 Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics posted by BLS...

[Read more](#)

Child counts decline in 35 states

In a trend with implications for school and other construction, "Thirty-five states have fewer children than they did five years ago, a situation caused by declining birth rates nationwide, but also by young families migrating across state borders in search of cheaper housing," Stateline reported on Thursday...

[Read more](#)

Results from RICS-AACE construction survey

Firms reporting declining profit margins outnumbered firms reporting rising margins by 27 percentage points (a net balance reading of -27%) in the first quarter (Q1) 2023 RICS-AACE USA Construction Monitor, covering 60 responses between March 8 and April 21 and posted by RICS on Monday...

[Read more](#)

AGC Highway safety survey closes tonight

Highway contractors are invited to complete AGC's annual highway work zone safety survey by tonight, May 12. Responses will be kept confidential.

[Read more](#)

Census of Construction reminder

The Census Bureau reminded firms in all industries, "The due date for responding to the 2022 Economic Census has passed, but it's not too late to respond..."

[Read more](#)

