

Hispanic Workers in Construction Occupations

Hispanic¹ workers play a large role in the construction industry, particularly among production (blue-collar) occupations (*see* page 11). From 2000 to 2007, when the construction industry was expanding, Hispanic workers filled about 78% of new construction jobs in production.² Even though Hispanic employment in construction shrank during the economic downturn, Hispanic workers still held 30% of blue-collar construction jobs in 2010 (*see* page 17).

In 2010, about 90% of Hispanic workers had a job in production occupations, compared to 68% of non-Hispanic workers. While 7% of Hispanic workers were employed in managerial or professional occupations, 24% of non-Hispanic workers were in such occupations (chart 18a). Broken down by detailed occupational categories, about 26% of Hispanic workers were employed as construction laborers (chart 18b) compared to 13% of all construction workers (*see* page 11). Within some construction occupations, more than half of workers were of Hispanic origin, such as drywall installers (58%) and concrete workers (55%; chart 18c).

Many Hispanic workers in construction are new immigrants. In 2010, 40% of Hispanic construction workers reported that they entered the U.S. in the last decade. In some low-skilled occupations, the proportion of new immigrants is even higher.

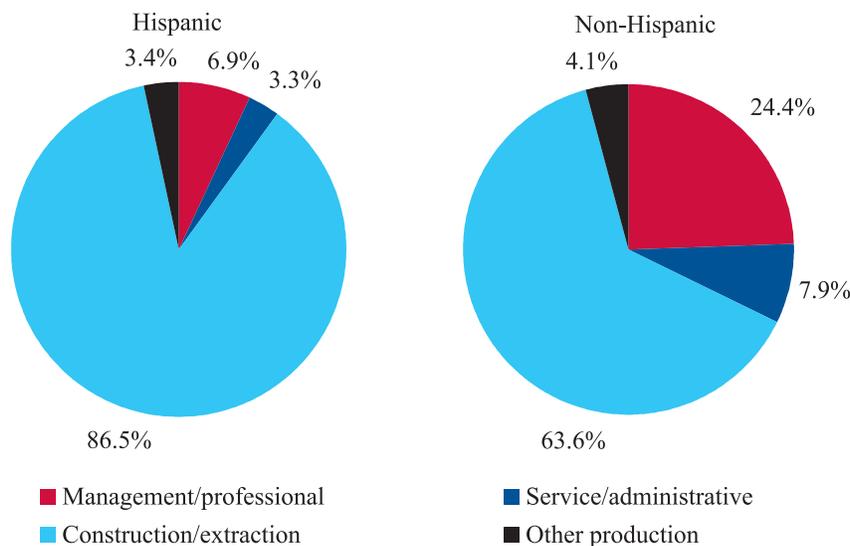
For example, 46% of Hispanic construction laborers came to the U.S. during the same period. In addition, about 45% of Hispanic immigrant workers reported that they cannot speak English very well, and 25% reported they cannot speak English at all.²

Hispanic construction workers are less likely to be unionized. In 2010, only 7% of Hispanic workers in construction were union members, compared to 18% among non-Hispanic construction workers (chart 18d). Since union members tend to have higher wages and benefits, nonunionized Hispanic workers were more likely to report lower wages and less likely to have health insurance, pension, and other benefits than their unionized counterparts (*see* pages 26-28).

Female Hispanic workers are underrepresented in construction. In 2010, less than 4% of Hispanic construction workers were female, while women workers accounted for 9% of construction employment as a whole (*see* page 20). In addition, Hispanic construction workers were less likely to hold a government job compared with non-Hispanic workers (2% vs. 6%).²

In general, Hispanic construction workers are also younger (*see* page 15), are less educated (*see* page 30), receive less training (*see* page 31), earn lower wages (*see* page 26), and are more likely to suffer from fatal injuries at worksites than non-Hispanic construction workers (*see* page 41).

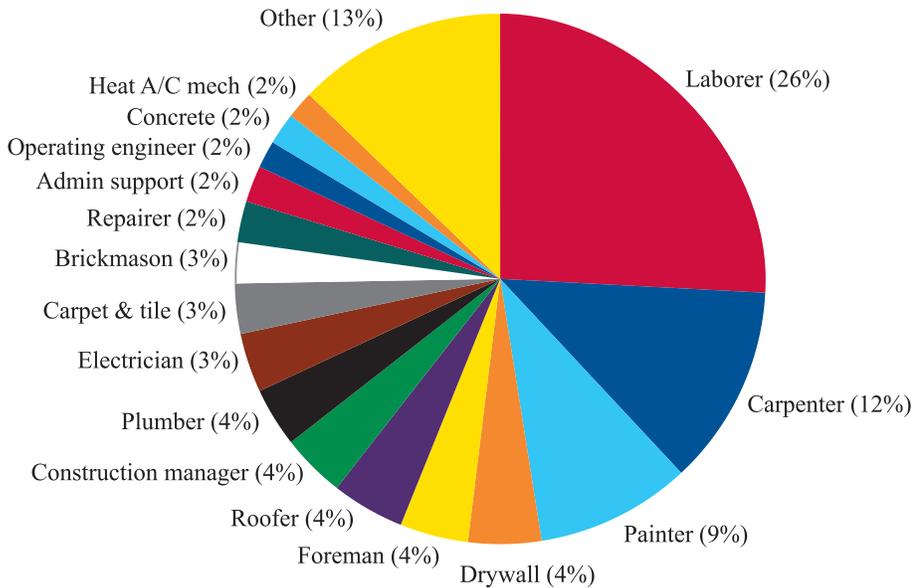
18a. Occupational distribution in construction, by Hispanic ethnicity, 2010
(All employment)



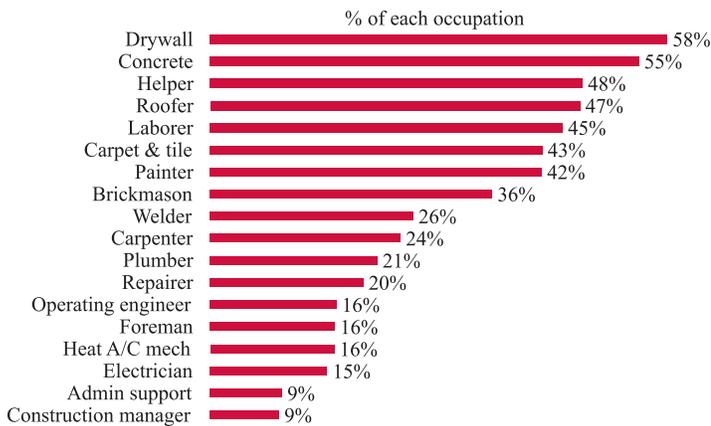
1. Hispanic refers to any individual whose origin is Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, South or Central American, Chicano, or other Latin American. Hispanics can be any race (*see racial minorities* in Glossary and page 19). The term *Latino* is used in place of *Hispanic* in many publications. However, to maintain consistency, *Hispanic* is used throughout this chart book, as it is used by the U.S. Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

2. Numbers cited in the text were from the American Community Survey. Calculations by CPWR Data Center.

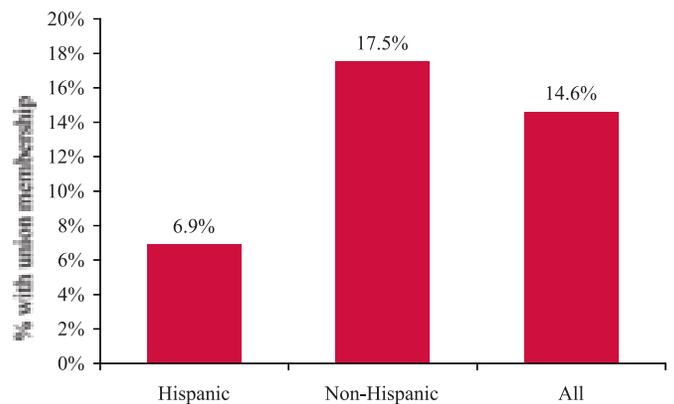
18b. Distribution of Hispanic workers among construction occupations, 2008-2010 average (All employment)



18c. Hispanic workers as a percentage of selected construction occupations, 2008-2010 average (All employment)



18d. Union membership among construction workers, by Hispanic ethnicity, 2010 (Wage-and-salary workers)



Note: All charts - Total of 2.2 million Hispanic construction workers (all types of employment) in 2010 (see page 17).
 Charts 18a and 18b - Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.
 Charts 18b and 18c - Data are averaged over three years to get statistically valid numbers. Concrete worker = Cement mason, Cement finisher, and Terrazzo workers (see page 11).

Source: Charts 18a and 18d - U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010 Current Population Survey. Calculations by CPWR Data Center.
 Charts 18b and 18c - U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008-2010 Current Population Survey. Calculations by CPWR Data Center.