

Safety and Health of Hispanic Construction Workers

Sue Dong & Jim Platner
CPWR-The Center for Construction Research and Training

The CERN Meeting
December 7
Silver Spring, MD

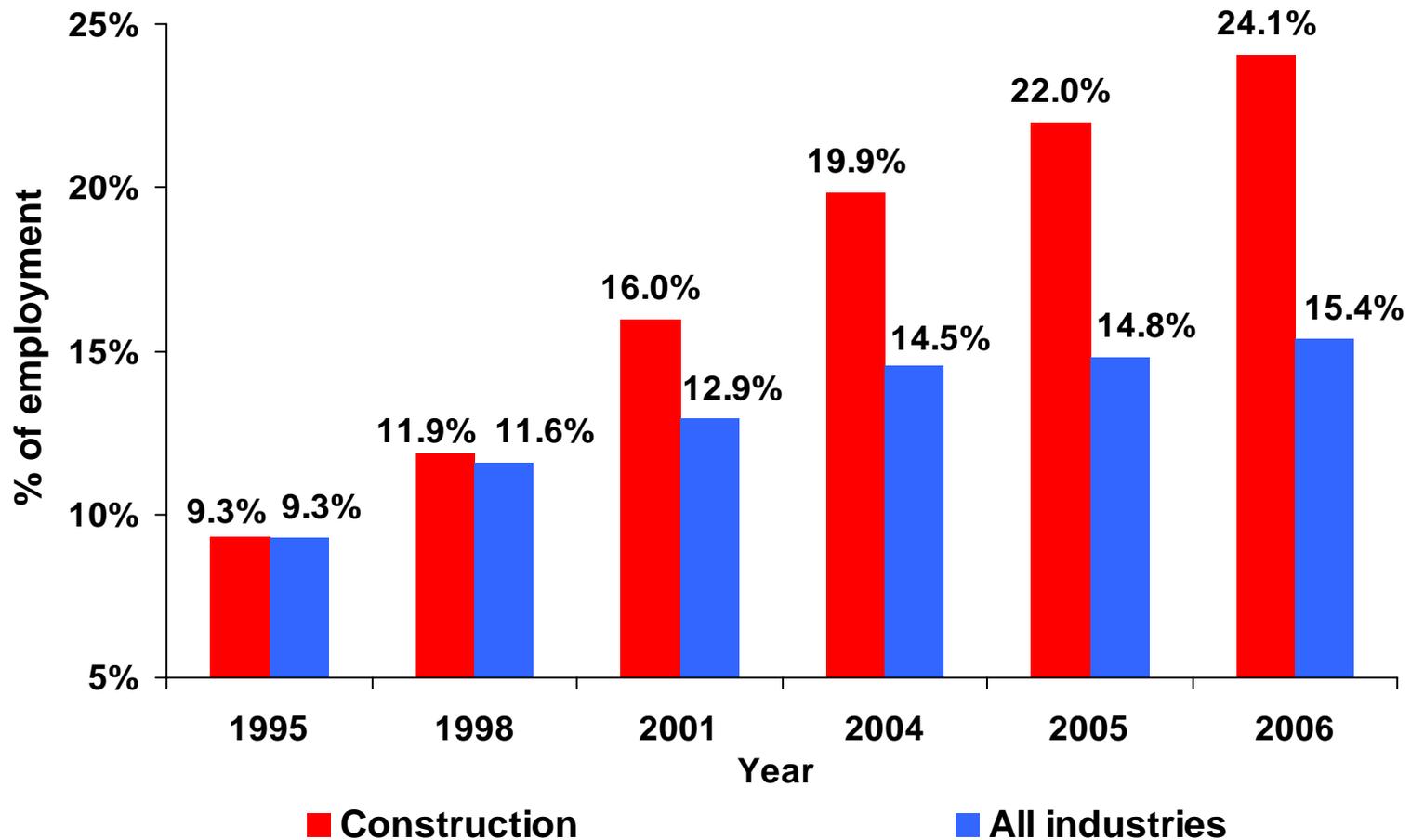
Overview

- I. Magnitude & trends**
- II. Demographics & employment**
- III. Safety & health**

I. Growing Immigrant Workforce in Construction

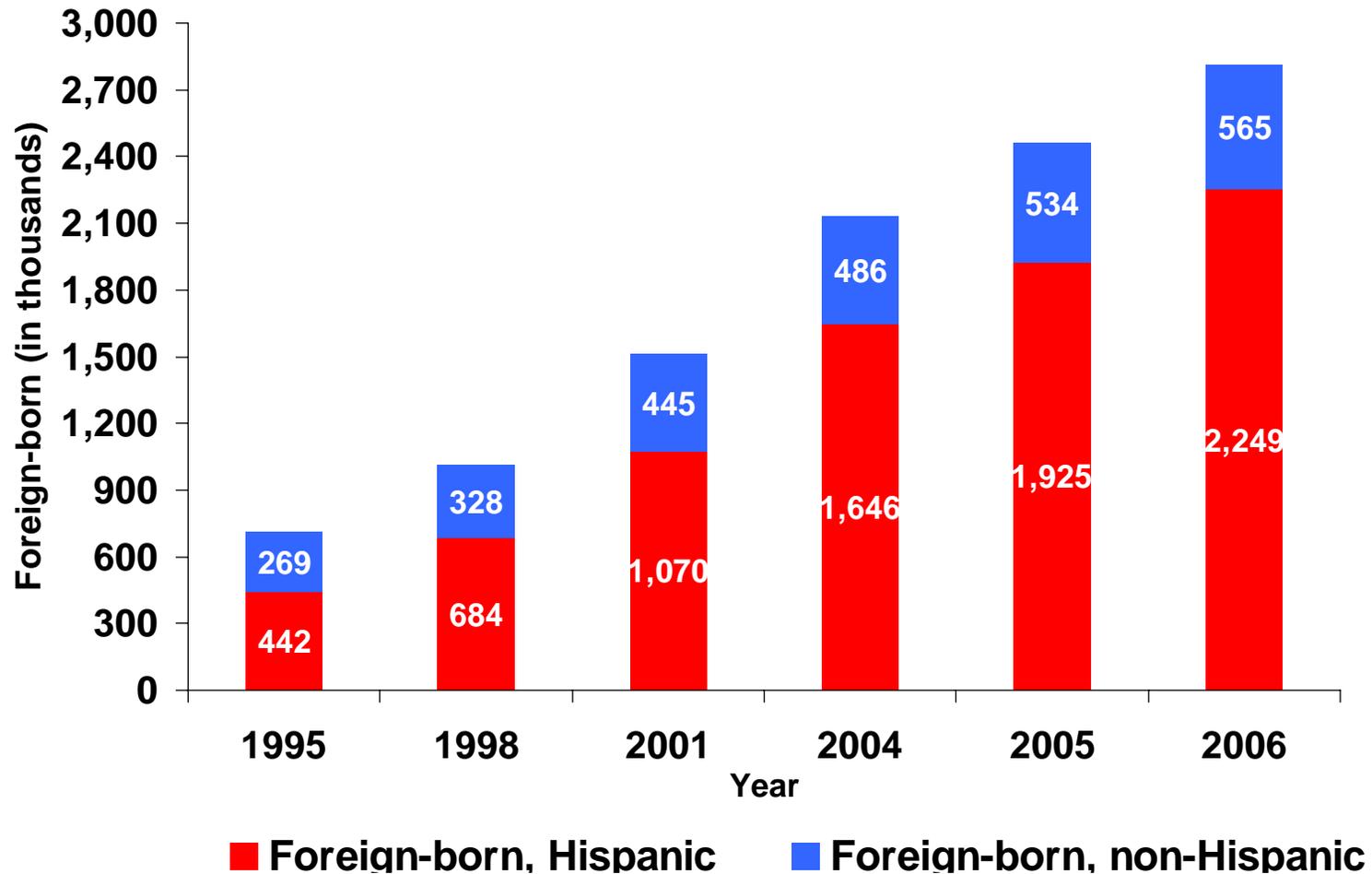
- Immigrant employment in construction **quadrupled** in the last decade (while the overall construction workforce increased 54%)
- **24%** of construction workers were foreign-born in 2006
- **31%** of immigrant workers entered the U.S. in recent 6 years
- **84%** of immigrant construction workers were born in Mexico or other Latin American countries
- **60%** of the foreign-born Hispanic workers cannot speak English very well

Growing immigrant workforce, construction vs. all industries, 1995-2006



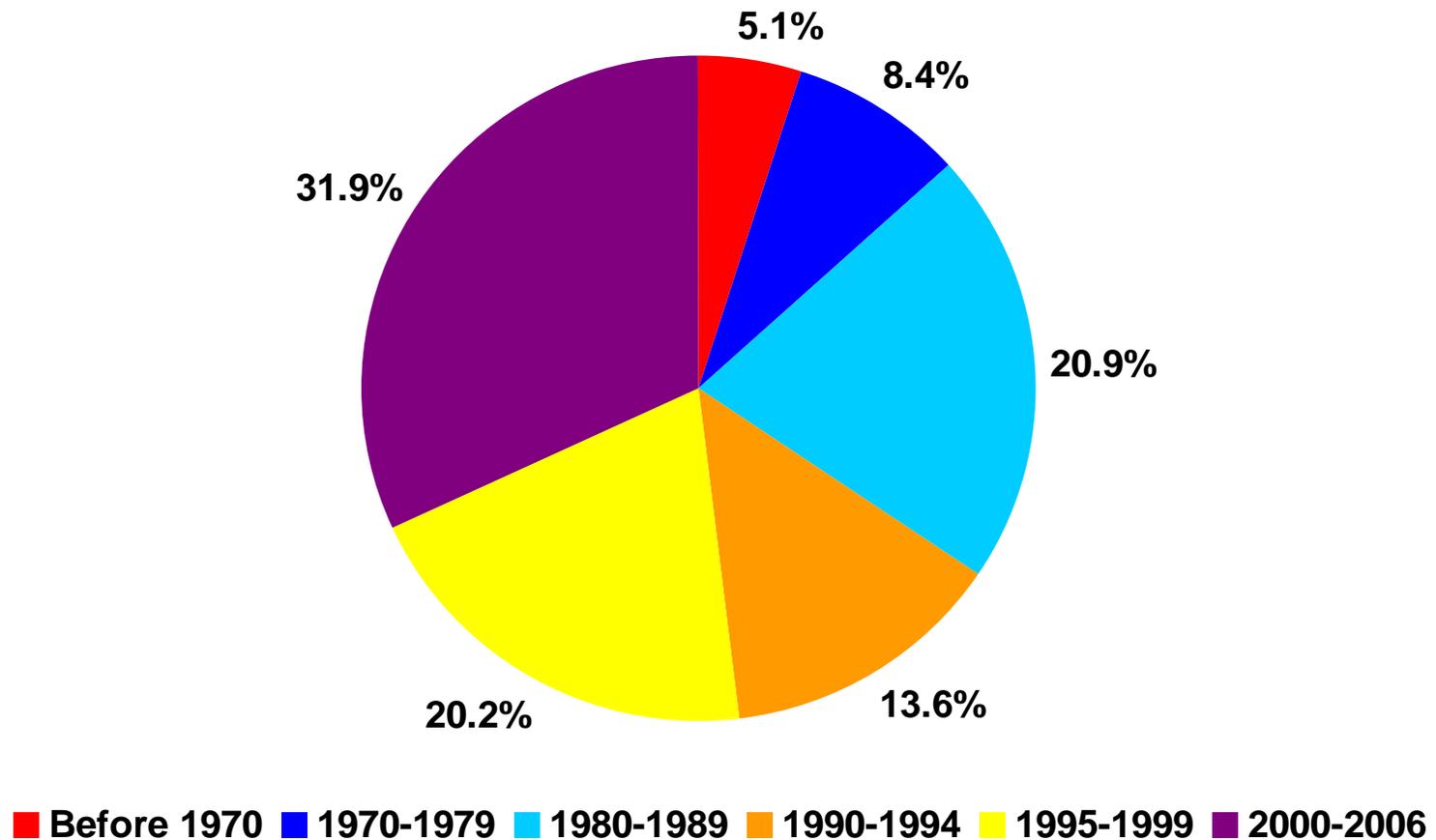
Source: The US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

Number of foreign-born workers in construction, 1995-2006



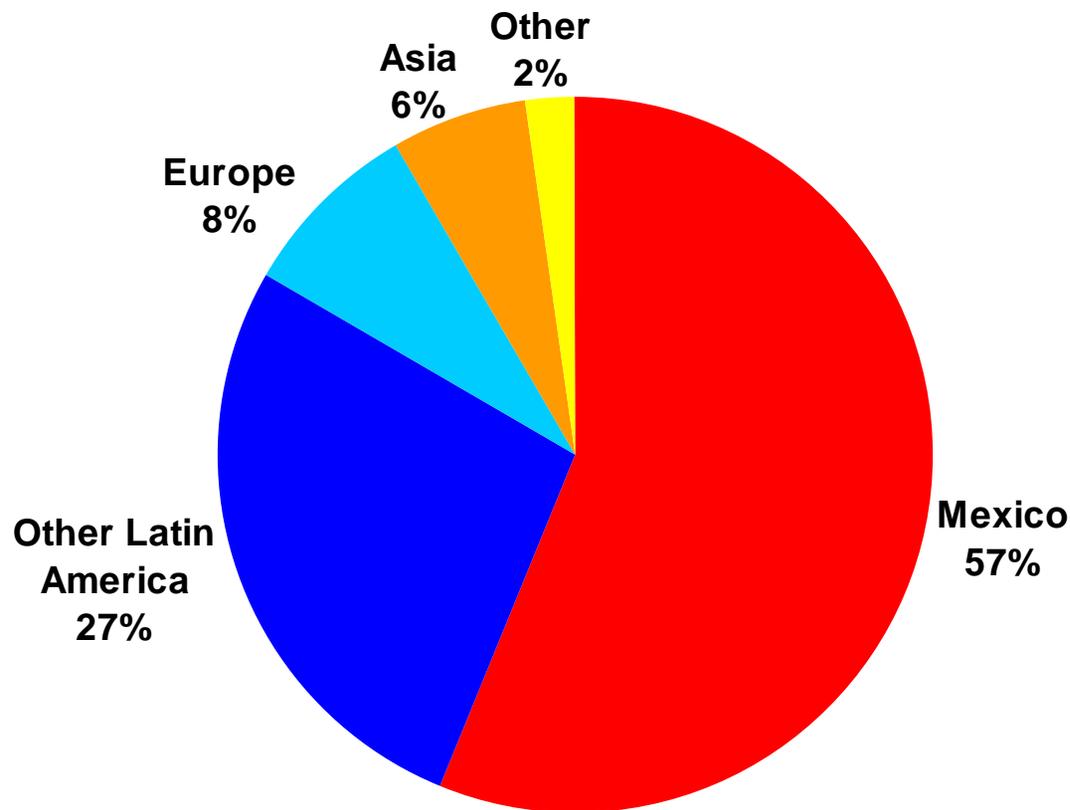
Source: The US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

Year of entry into the United States among immigrant construction workers, 2006



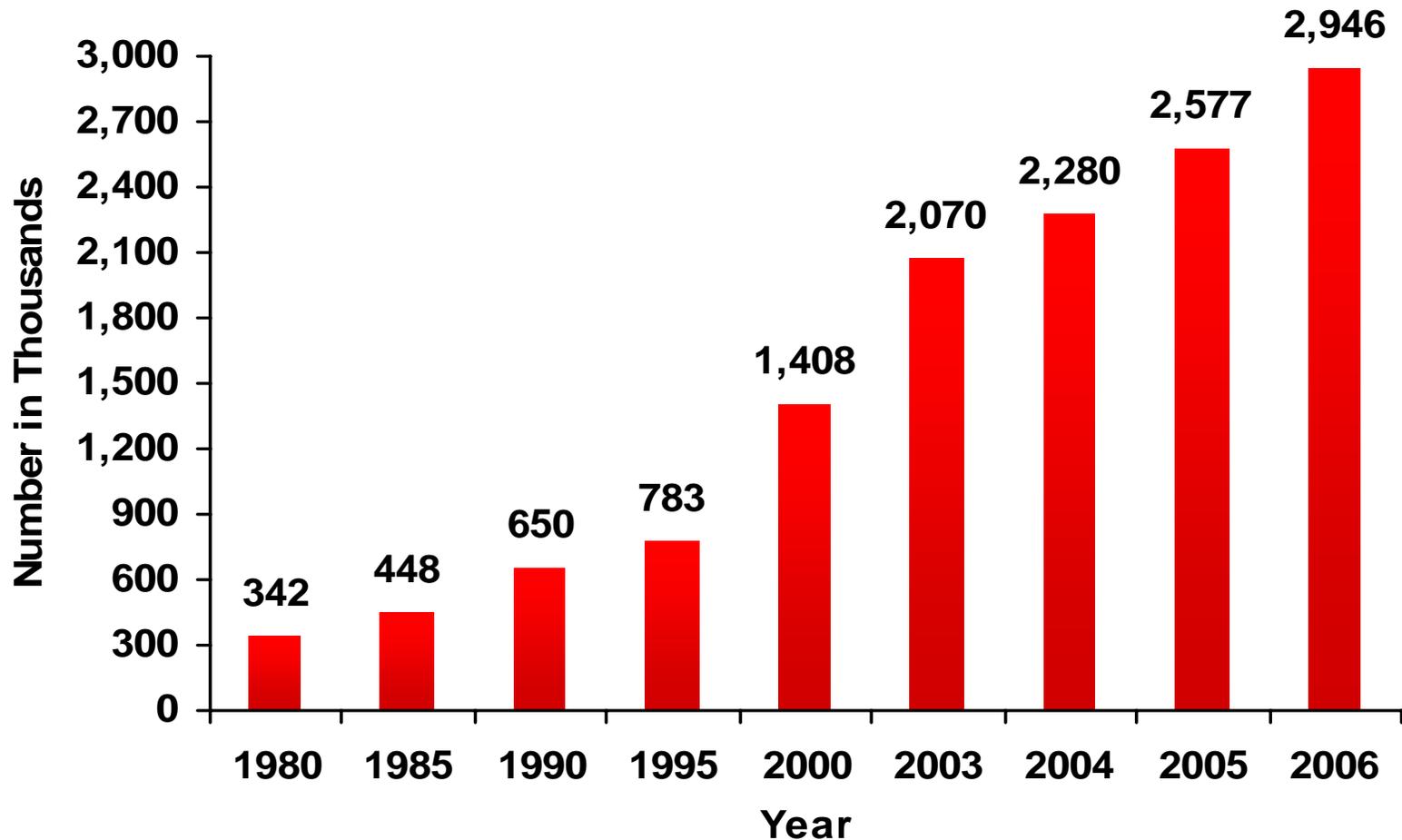
Source: The US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2006

Birth-place among immigrant construction workers, 2006



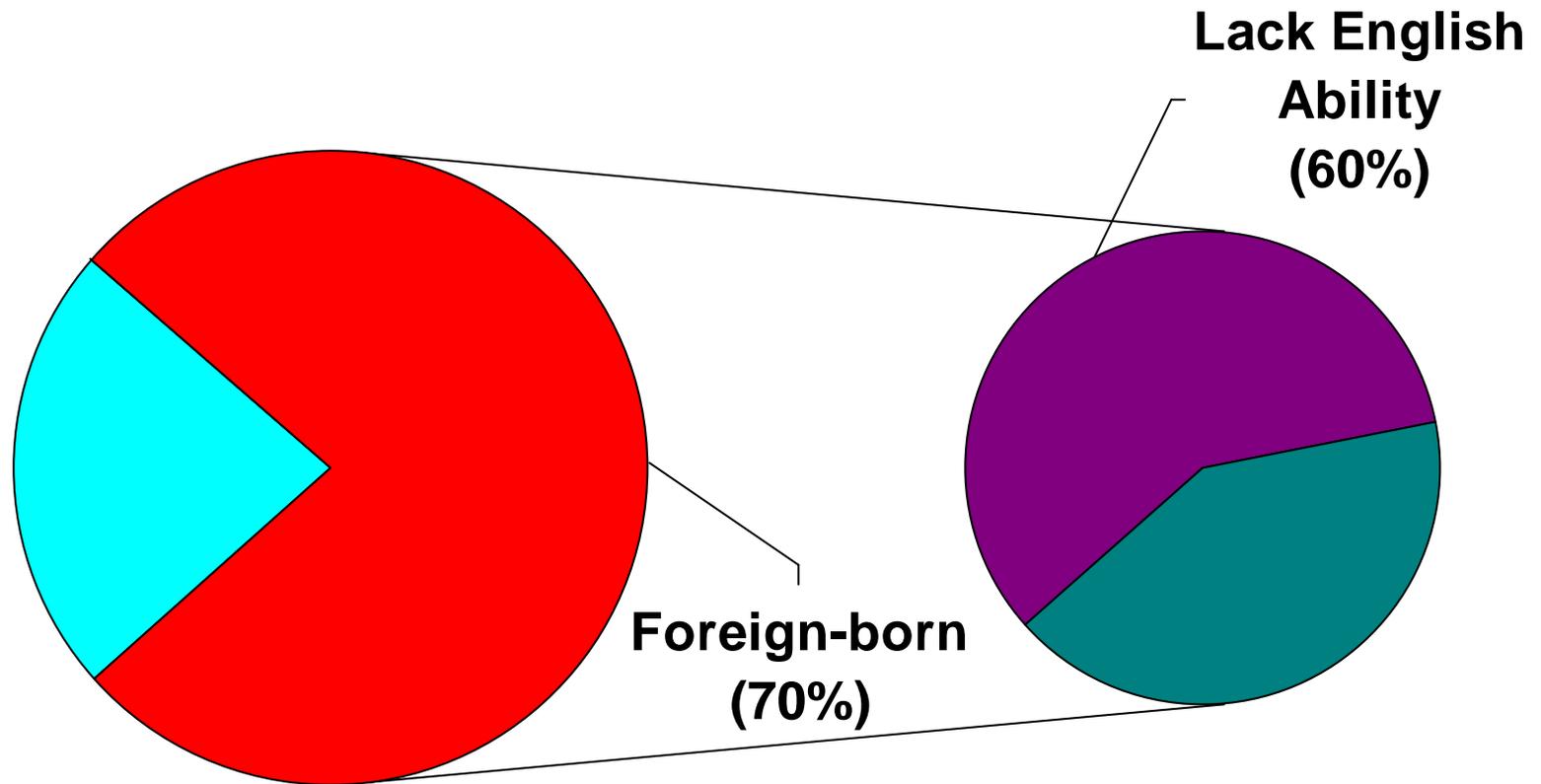
Source: The US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2006

Growing Hispanic employment in construction



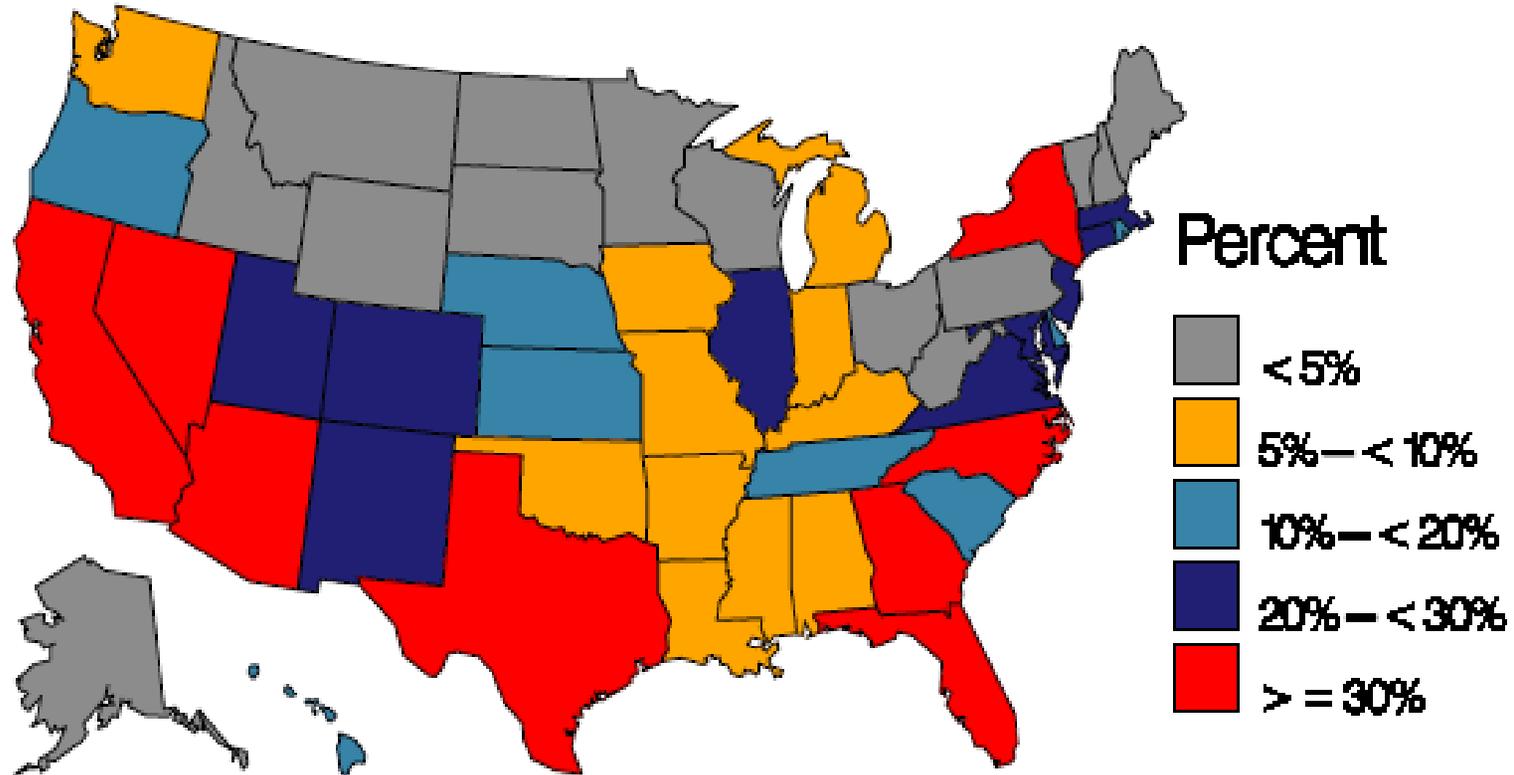
Source: The US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

Foreign-born and English ability among Hispanic construction workers, 2006



Source: The US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2006

Percentage of workers who were foreign-born in construction, by state, 2006

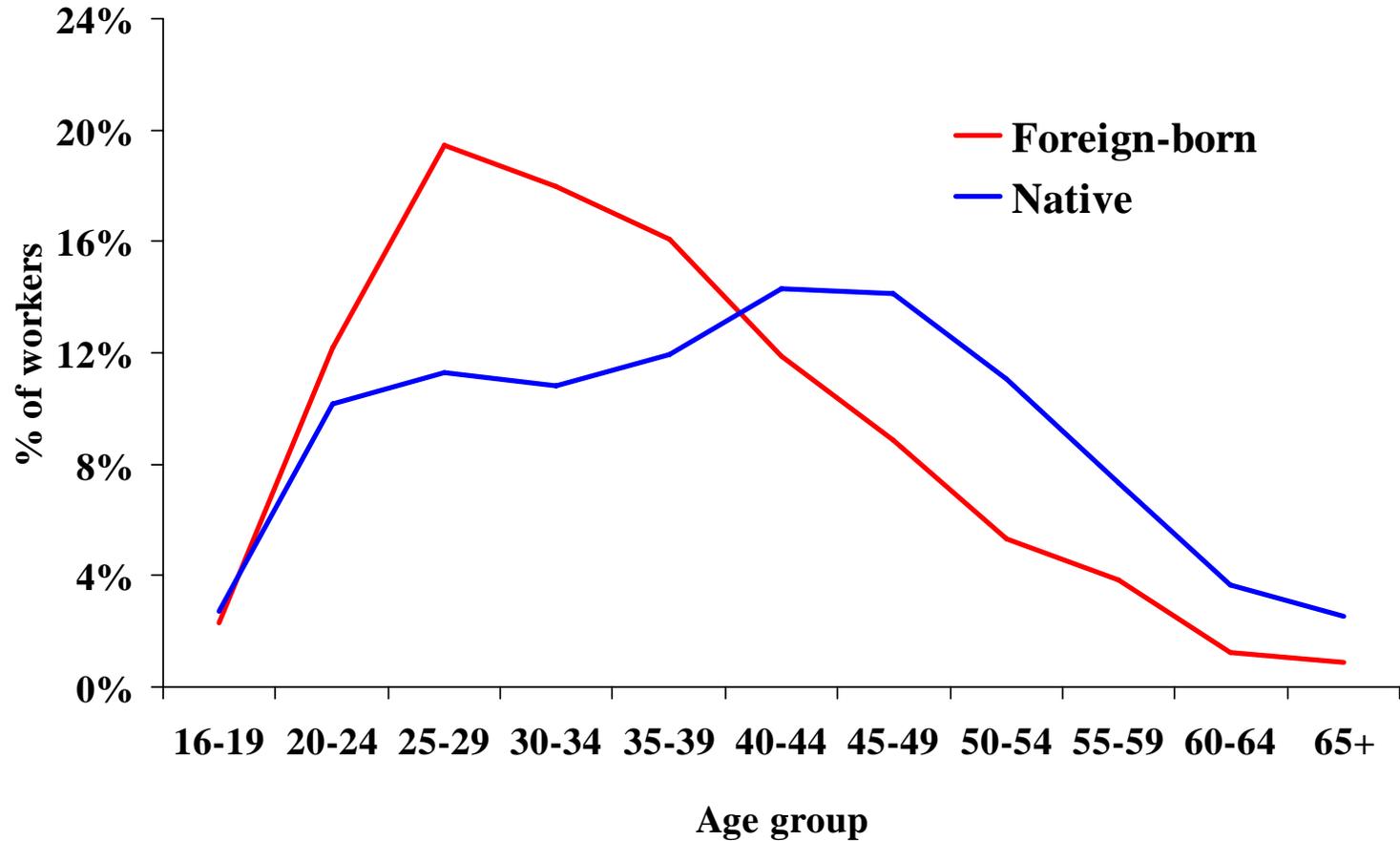


Source: The US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2006

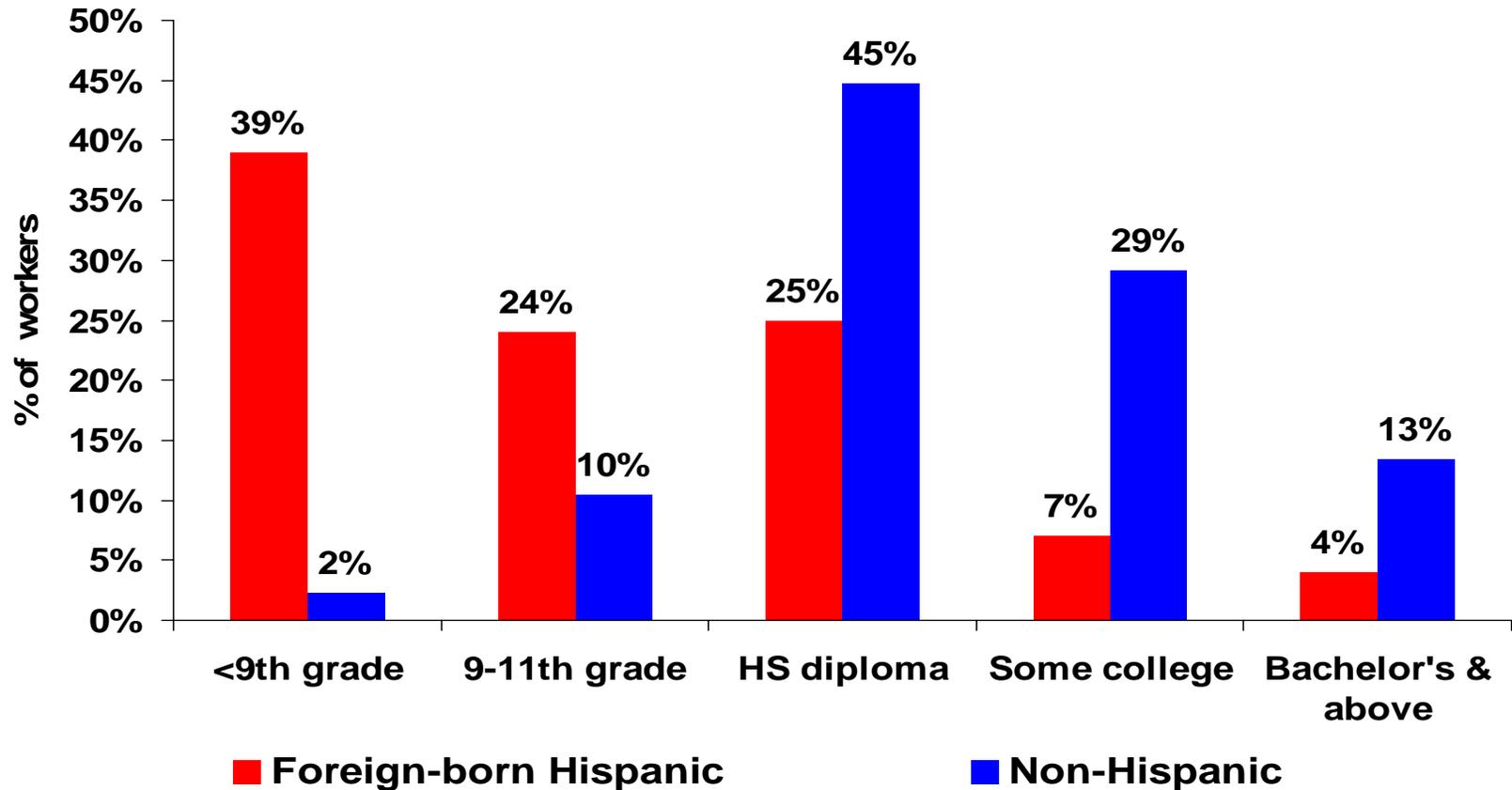
II. Demographics & Employment

- Immigrant construction workers are **6** years younger than native workers on average
- **63%** of Hispanic immigrant workers had less than a high school education (**39%** had less than 9-years of education)
- Most immigrant construction workers are employed in lower-skill occupations
- Hispanic workers lag far behind non-Hispanic workers in wage, health insurance, and pension enrollment
- Union construction workers have a great advantage in earnings and benefits, but only **7%** of foreign-born workers are unionized

Age distribution among construction workers, 2006

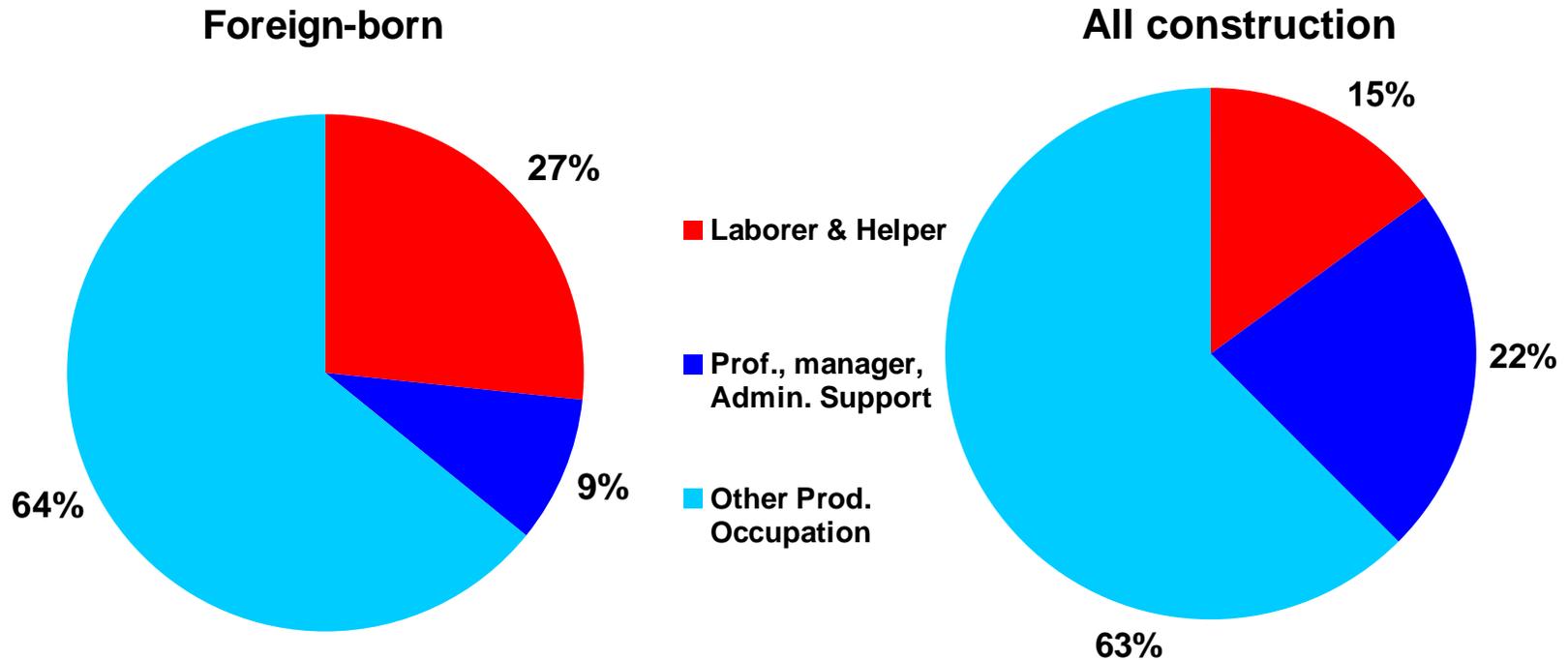


Educational attainment among construction workers, 2006



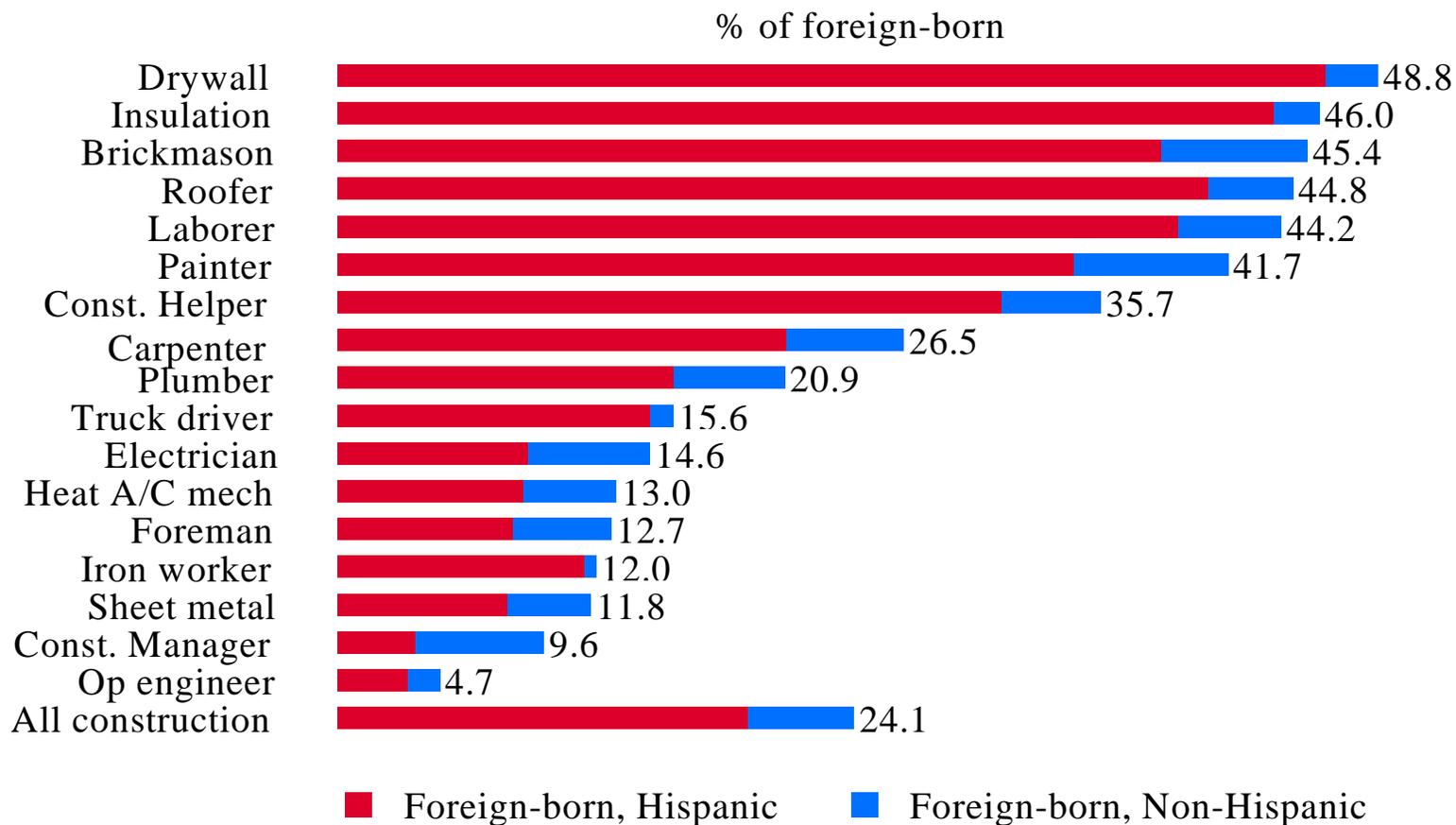
Source: The US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

Occupational distribution in construction, foreign-born vs. all construction, 2006

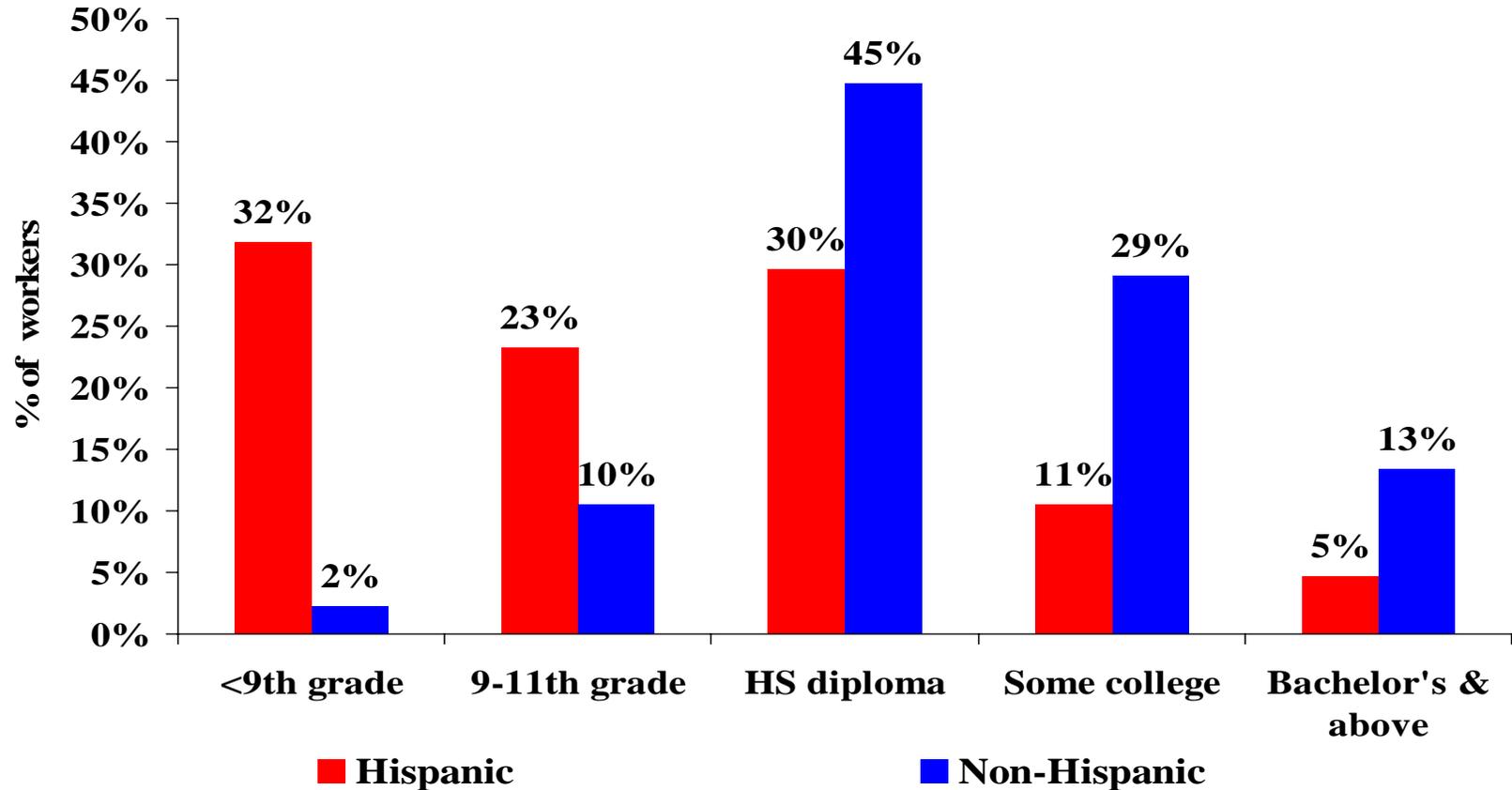


Source: The US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

Percentage as foreign-born workers, selected construction occupations, 2006

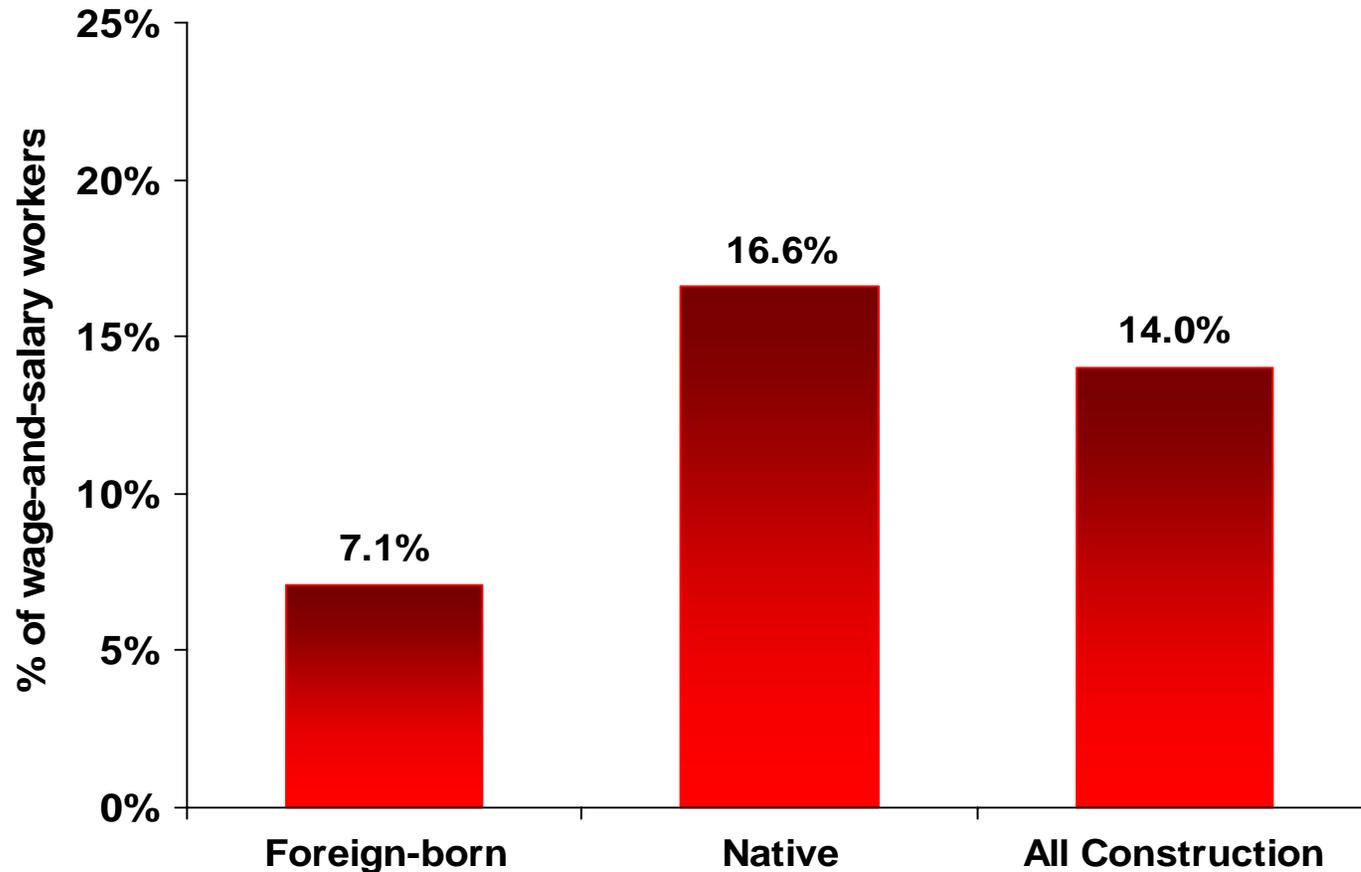


Educational attainment among construction workers, 2006



Source: The US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

Unionization among construction workers, 2006



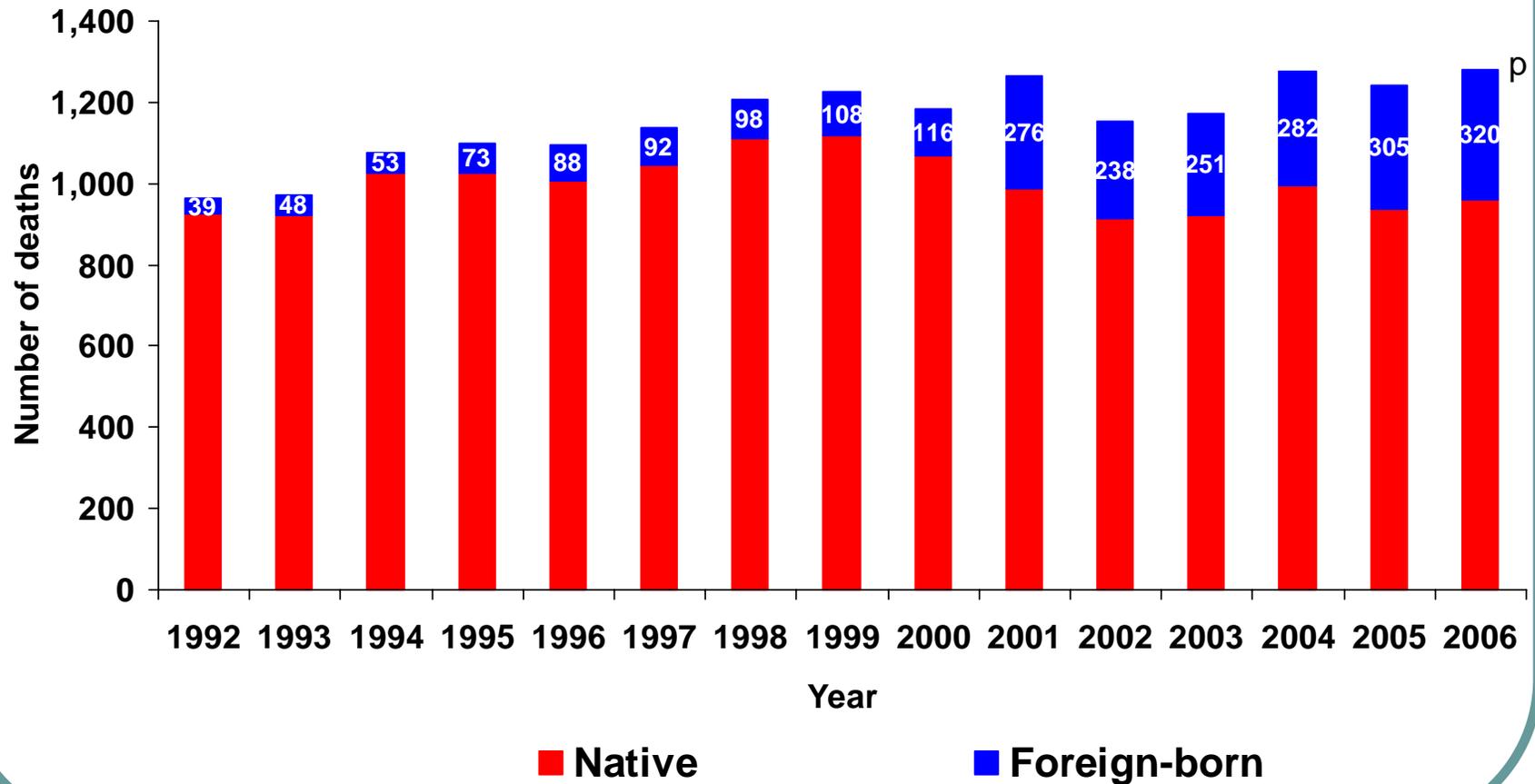
Source: The US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

III. Safety and Health

- 25% of work-related deaths were foreign-born workers in 2006; of which 84% were Hispanics
- Deaths among Hispanic construction workers increased from 108 in 1992 to 354 in 2006, and the death rate for Hispanics is consistently higher (14%-80%) than non-Hispanics
- Work-related medical conditions from injuries for Hispanic workers were 53% higher than non-Hispanics*

Note: 2006 data are preliminary

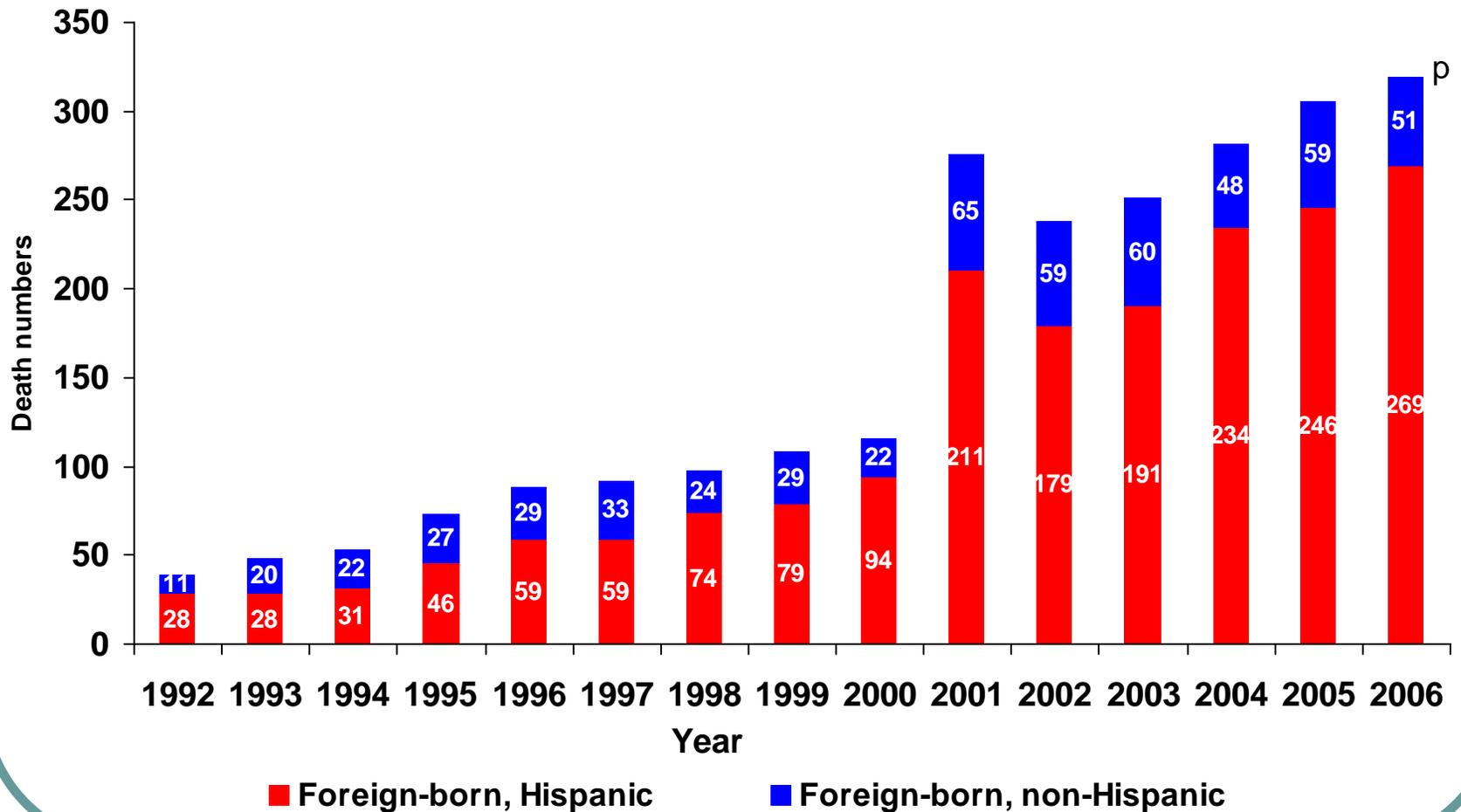
Work-related deaths among construction workers, 1992-2006



P=preliminary (2006 data)

Source: The US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries

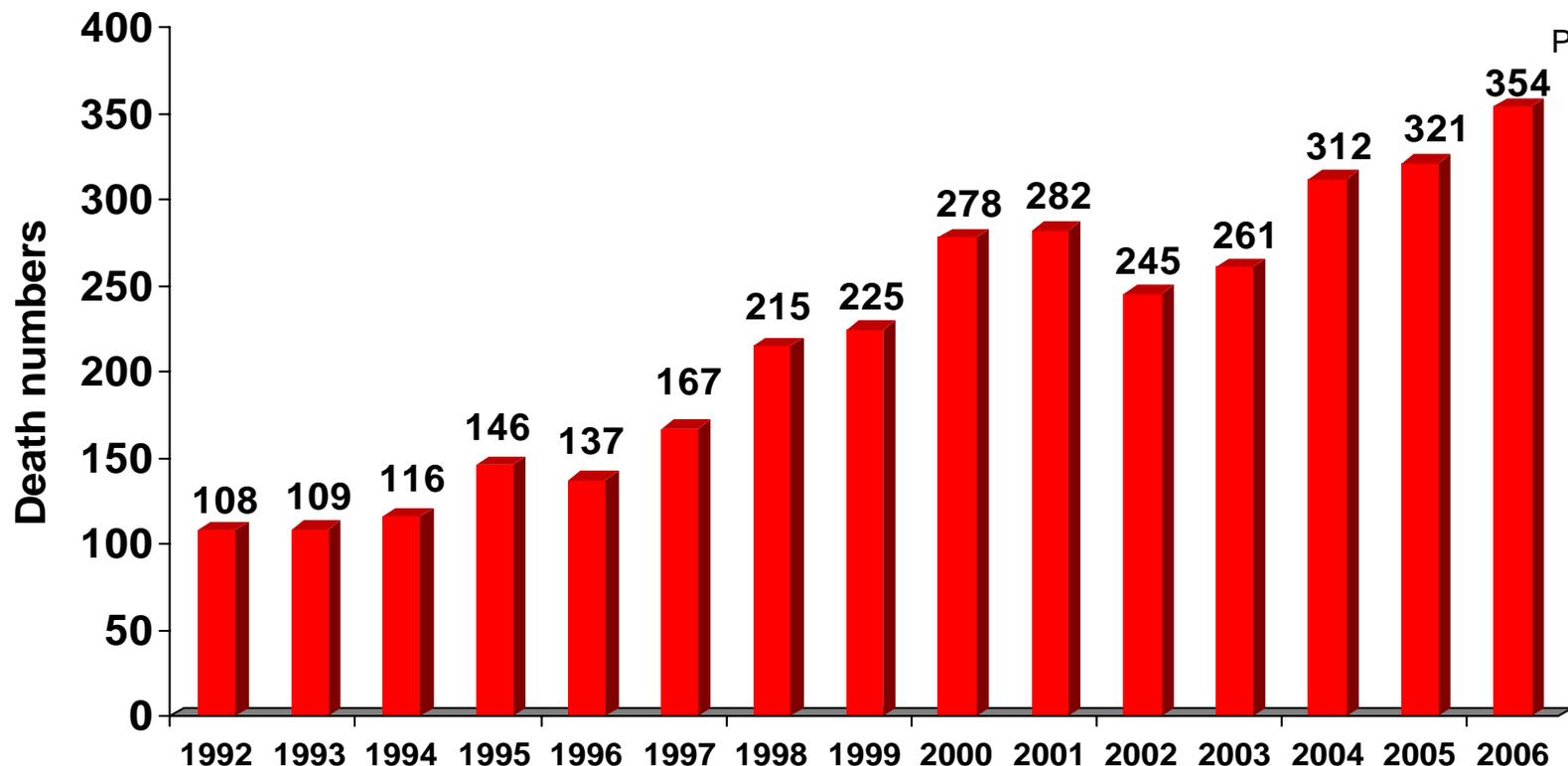
Work-related deaths among foreign-born construction workers, 1992-2006



Note: P= preliminary (2006 data)

Source: The US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries

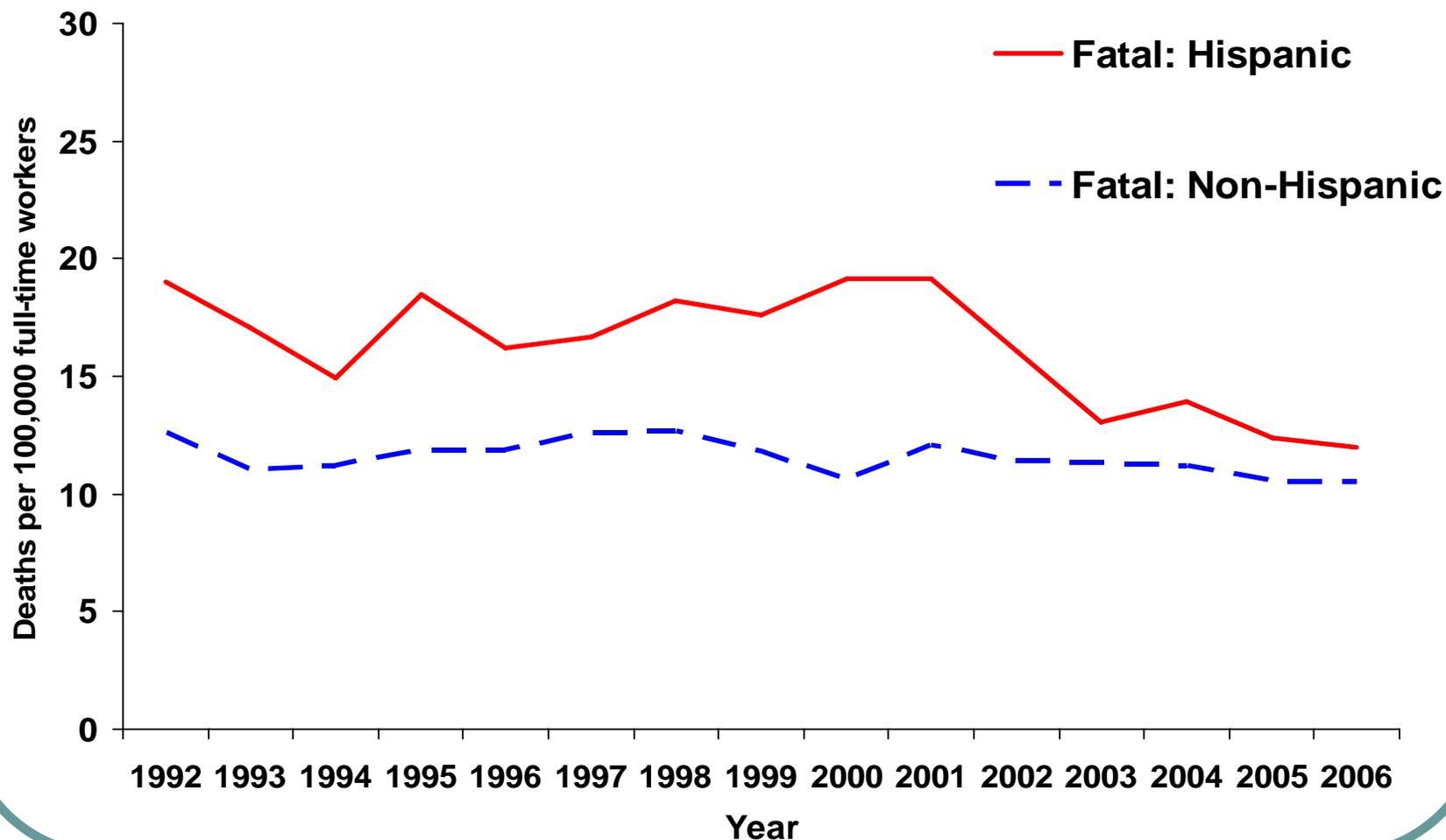
Fatal occupational injuries among Hispanic construction workers, 1992-2006



Note: P=preliminary

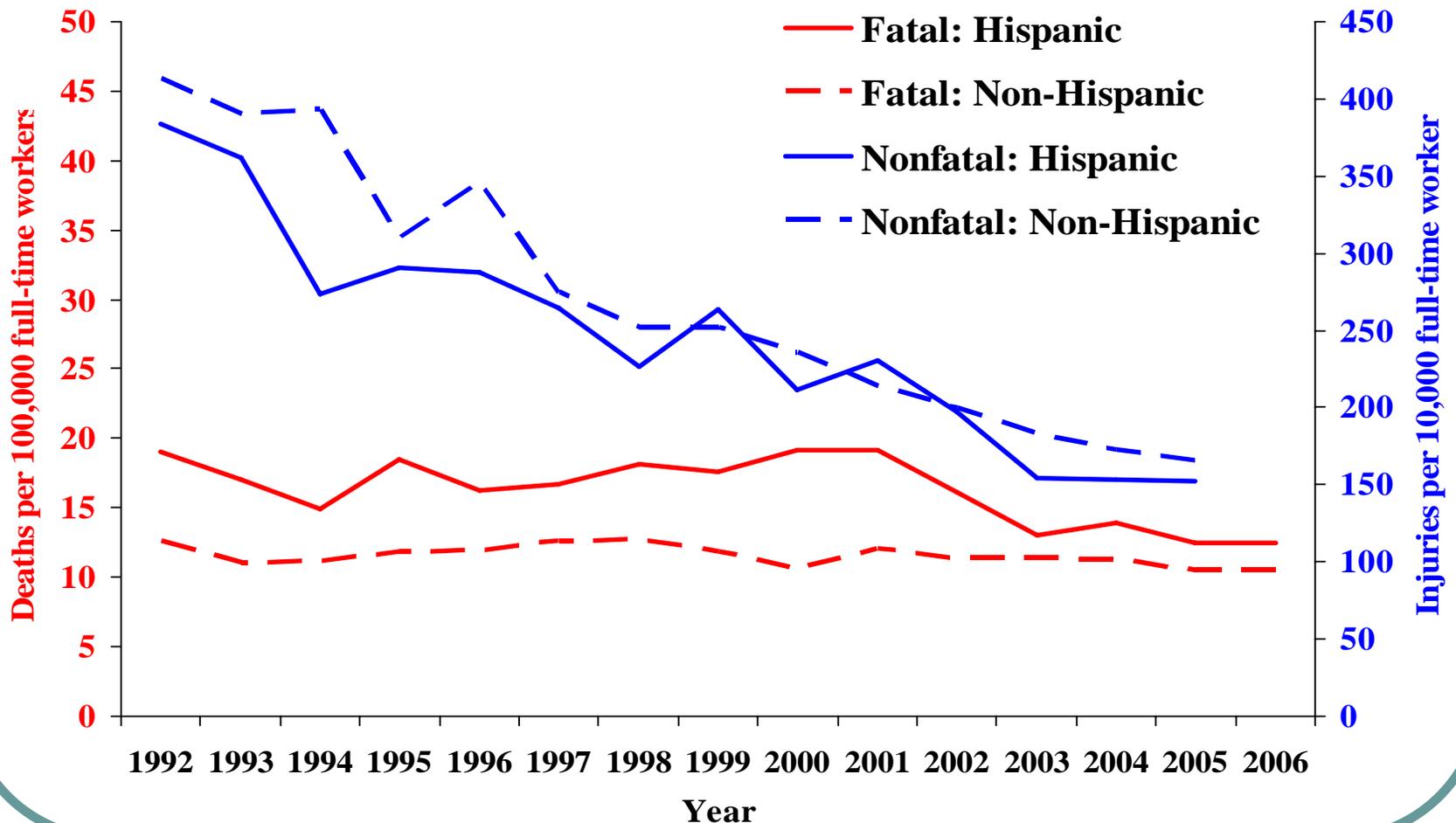
Source: The US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries

Rates of fatal injuries in construction, Hispanic vs. non-Hispanic, 1992-2006



Sources: BLS, 1) Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, 2) Current Population Survey

Rates of fatal and nonfatal injuries in construction, Hispanic vs. non-Hispanic, 1992-2006



Sources: BLS, 1) Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, 2) Current Population Survey, 3) Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses

Policy Considerations

- Increased movement of construction labor is inevitable
- Currently, it is resulting in lowering labor standards and creating risk at worksites
- It is urgent to protect the prevailing labor standards in nations with high standards

Thank you!



CPWR  **THE CENTER FOR CONSTRUCTION
RESEARCH AND TRAINING**

**8484 Georgia Ave. Suite 1000
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Phone: (301) 495-8500
Fax: (301) 578-8572
<http://www.cpwr.com>**

a world leader in improving the safety and health of construction workers