



NAHB > **Industry Issues** (<https://www.nahb.org/advocacy/industry-issues>) > **Labor and Employment** (<https://www.nahb.org/advocacy/industry-issues/labor-and-employment>) > **Immigration Reform is Key to Building a Skilled Workforce**

Immigration Reform is Key to Building a Skilled Workforce

Workforce Development

Reforms to the immigration system are an important component in workforce development, because the immigrant workforce plays a critical role in meeting the nation's housing needs. In fact, immigrants account for **31% of all workers** (<https://eyeonhousing.org/2024/11/immigrant-share-in-construction-sets-new-record/>), in construction trades, according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

And while the need for safe and secure borders is paramount, NAHB believes that mass deportation is not the answer because any shock to the labor force would have an adverse impact on housing costs and supply. Ensuring a consistent, reliable influx of new workers is important in an industry that is continuing to grow and is sorely needed to help ease the nation's housing affordability crisis. In recent years, Congress has consistently increased the limit for H-2B worker visas due to overwhelming demand, but even the increased number of available visas may satisfy only half of the total demand for H-2B workers.

Even as we encourage America's youth to consider careers in the building trades, we must also pursue immigration policies that complement ongoing vocational training

efforts and help fill labor gaps to ensure that the nation has a workforce that can meet its housing construction needs.

Related: See a breakdown by trade of the share of immigrants and labor shortages in the construction workforce (<https://www.nahb.org/advocacy/industry-issues/labor-and-employment/immigration-reform-is-key-to-building-a-skilled-workforce/concentration-of-immigration-in-construction-trades>).

The Housing Industry's Labor Shortage

America will need 2.2 million new skilled construction workers over the next three years to reduce the nation's housing deficit — a shortfall NAHB estimates to total 1.5 million homes.

There are currently 8.3 million payroll construction workers in the U.S. Of those, 3.4 million work in residential construction.

Government data show there is a shortage of anywhere between 200,000 to 400,000 workers in the construction industry and that lack of skilled labor slows down the pace of construction, drives up labor costs, and ultimately leads to higher home prices.

Learn more about the **industry's labor shortage**

(<https://www.nahb.org/blog/2024/10/hbi-construction-labor-report-fall-2024>).

Related: See a U.S. geographical breakdown of the share of immigrants in the construction workforce. (<https://www.nahb.org/advocacy/industry-issues/labor-and-employment/immigration-reform-is-key-to-building-a-skilled-workforce/geographic-concentration-of-immigrants-in-construction>)

We value your privacy
The NAHB website uses cookies. We do this to provide a personalized experience, improve our content, and monitor the site performance. By clicking **Accept** you consent to NAHB's use of cookies in accordance with its [Privacy Policy](https://www.nahb.org/privacy-policy) (<https://www.nahb.org/privacy-policy>).

Policy Recommendations

To enact immigration reform that secures America's borders without raising housing costs and curbing the nation's housing supply, policymakers need to:

- Protect the nation's borders.
- Ensure that employers continue to be responsible only for verifying the identity and work authorization of their direct employees – and NOT the employees of their subcontractors.
- Replace the statutory cap for H-2B worker visas under the Immigration and Nationality Act, and create a new temporary worker visa, with a limit driven by market demand and not arbitrarily set by the federal government.
- Create new pathways to temporary or permanent residency or citizenship for those workers who are already in the U.S. and contributing key benefits to the economy. The home building industry risks an exacerbated skills gap if long-term workers with unique technical expertise are not given the opportunity to continue providing vital contributions to increase America's housing supply.

Read NAHB's full policy, **Comprehensive Reform of Immigration Laws**

(<https://www.nahb.org/advocacy/nahb-policies/general-government-and-economic-policy/comprehensive-immigration-reform>).

We value your privacy

Temporary Guest Worker Program

The NAHB website uses cookies. We do this to provide a personalized experience, improve our content, and monitor the site performance. By clicking **Accept** you consent to NAHB's use of cookies in accordance with its [Privacy Policy](#).

[Policy \(https://www.nahb.org/privacy-policy\)](https://www.nahb.org/privacy-policy)

Learn more (<https://www.nahb.org/advocacy/industry-issues/labor-and-employment/h-2b-temporary-guest-worker-program>)

(<https://www.nahb.org/nahb-community/leadership-and-committees>).

Leadership and Committees

Resources for Senior Officers, the Leadership Council, Transitional Board, State Reps, NACs and committees.

Access resources

(<https://www.nahb.org/nahb-community/leadership-and-committees>)

(<https://www.nahb.org/nahb-community/councils>).

Councils

Providing members the opportunity to network and develop policies that benefit their areas of interest.

About councils

(<https://www.nahb.org/nahb-community/councils>)

(<https://www.nahb.org/education-and-events/meetings>).

We value your privacy

Meetings The NAHB website uses cookies. We do this to provide a personalized experience, improve our content, and monitor the site performance. By clicking **Accept** you consent to NAHB's use of cookies in accordance with its [Privacy Policy](https://www.nahb.org/privacy-policy).

[Policy \(https://www.nahb.org/privacy-policy\)](https://www.nahb.org/privacy-policy).

Explore upcoming NAHB meetings and events.

Access events

(<https://www.nahb.org/education-and-events/meetings>)

We value your privacy

The NAHB website uses cookies. We do this to provide a personalized experience, improve our content, and monitor the site performance. By clicking **Accept** you consent to NAHB's use of cookies in accordance with its [Privacy Policy](https://www.nahb.org/privacy-policy) (<https://www.nahb.org/privacy-policy>).