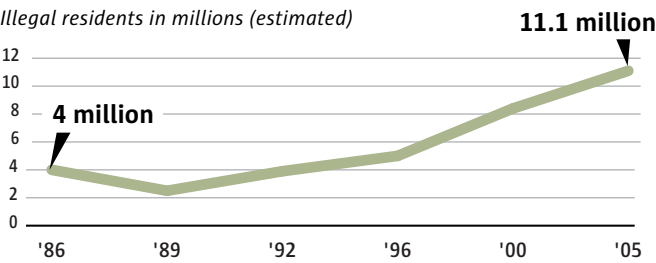


Latino workers, many of them illegal immigrants, are key force in construction industry

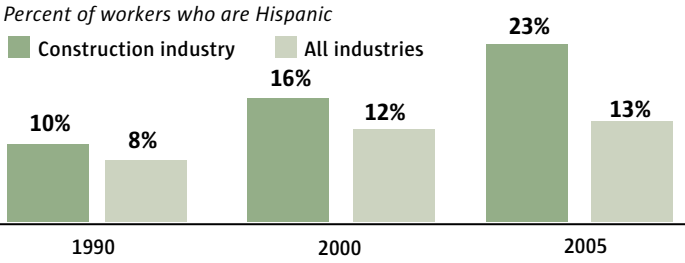
Number of illegal immigrants in U.S.

In 1986, Congress passed the Immigration Reform and Control Act, which granted amnesty to several million illegal immigrants. As housing construction took off nationwide in the early 1990s, millions migrated from hubs like California to jobs in booming cities around the nation. While there are no firm numbers, an estimated 250,000 settled in Washington state.



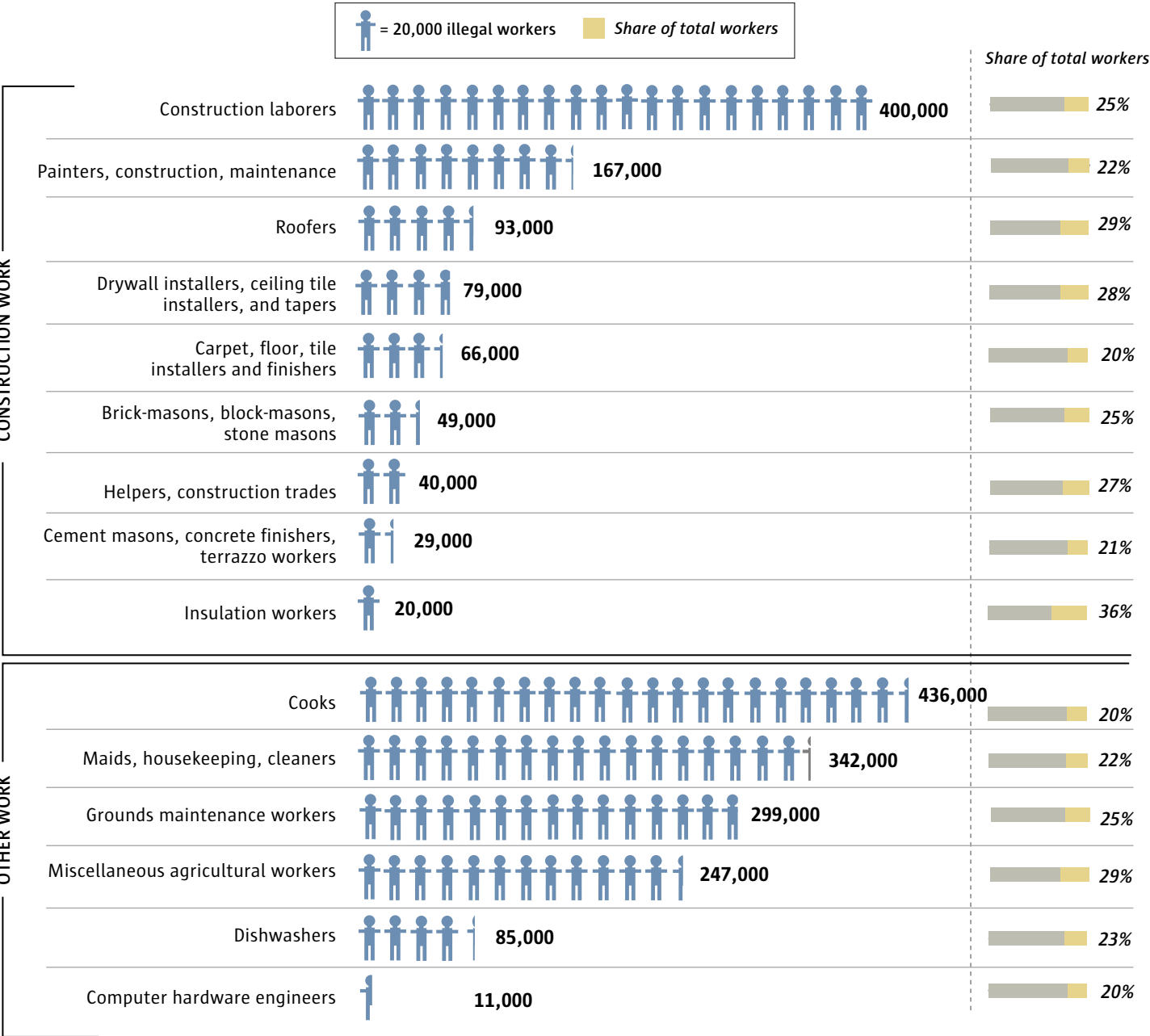
Construction industry depends on Hispanic workers

The construction industry depends more on Hispanic workers now than it did 15 years ago, federal statistics show. In 1990, one out of 10 workers employed in the construction industry was of Hispanic origin (including both legal and illegal immigrants and U.S. citizens). By 2005, that ratio was nearly one in four.



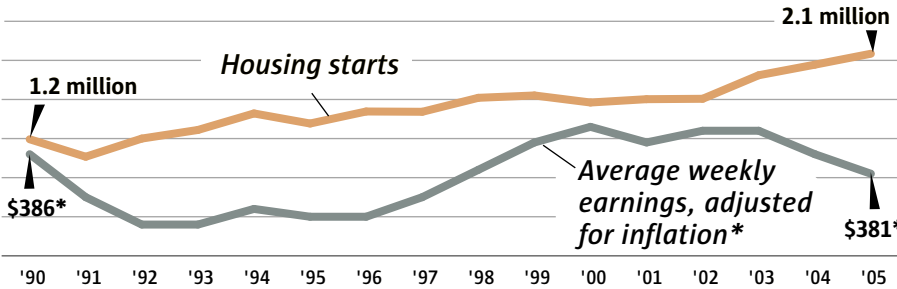
Illegal workers' share of selected occupations

Using census data, the Pew Hispanic Center, a nonpartisan research group in Washington, D.C., determined that the construction industry employs the most illegal residents — one of every seven construction workers — of any major industry.



Construction wages decline even during housing boom

The average weekly wage of construction workers, after adjusting for inflation, is now about what it was 15 years ago, when labor unions were stronger and before a new wave of illegal immigration.



*Wages are stated in 1982 dollars.
Sources: Pew Hispanic Center, National Association of Home Builders, Bureau of Labor Statistics