

# THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

## CONSTRUCTION-WORKER SHORTAGE WORSENS IN JUNE

*Number of open construction jobs increased to a seasonally adjusted 225,000 in June from 163,000 in May*

By Laura Kusisto  
August 8, 2017

A shortage of construction labor that has squeezed property developers across the U.S. got worse in June after showing [signs of improvement](#) a month earlier.

The number of open construction jobs increased to a seasonally adjusted 225,000 in June from 163,000 in May, according to the Labor Department.

That is the most open jobs since September 2016 and significantly more than the 171,000 open jobs reported a year ago, according to Robert Dietz, chief economist at the National Association of Home Builders.

Job openings as a percentage of total employment increased to 3.2 percent in June from 2.3 percent a month earlier, according to the Labor Department.

The [number of open construction jobs](#), a measure that can be volatile from month to month, has increased throughout the economic expansion but more recently has shown signs of leveling off.

The lack of available workers has been a critical issue for the housing market, delaying the construction of new homes and causing a supply shortage that is forcing prices higher. Many workers left the industry during the recession and have never returned and young people appear reluctant to pursue careers in construction. A [boom in remodeling](#) also has put a strain on the availability of workers.

[U.S. housing starts rose 8.3 percent in June](#) from the previous month, but the pace of construction in the previous few months was sluggish.