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<http://www.constructiondive.com/news/nycs-construction-industry-employed-more-than-140k-in-2016/446012/>

**BRIEF**

## NYC's construction industry employed more than 140K in 2016



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### Dive Brief:

- The [New York Building Congress](#), after an analysis of New York State Department of Labor data, is reporting that there was an average of 146,200 New York city construction workers in 2016, an increase of 5% from 2015 and the highest employment figure in 40 years of recordkeeping.
- Construction workers in New York City also saw a 5.4% increase in wages last year, which is the largest gain since 2007 when wages rose an average of 6.4%.
- The NYBC said that the city's construction workforce has increased 30% in the last five years, largely due to office and residential construction, and predicted that the number of total workers would reach 147,800 workers by the end of 2017.

### Dive Insight:

Last year, the NYBC reported that the city's high level of building activity led to a [7% increase](#) in construction employment in 2015. That figure also represented a 40-year high at the time. New York City construction

workers also earned a 3% average uptick in wages, which, at the end of 2015, were at the highest level since 2008.

The data, however, fell short of last year's NYBC prediction that the workforce would increase to 147,100 by the end of 2016. While the NYBC doesn't offer up an explanation for the disparity, it could be a result of the persistent skilled worker shortage that contractors around the country have reported. Even with a fairly steady source of union labor in New York City, an uptick in high-profile projects such as the [\\$1.6 billion Moynihan Train Hall](#) renovation and expansion is no doubt stressing the workforce.

Plumbers and electricians once again took the lion's share of 2016 jobs — 93,000 (66.42%). The NYBC also noted that wages are catching up to job growth.

Along with high wages and a growing workforce, New York City, according to a Turner & Townsend report, has the [world's highest construction costs](#). The group's 2017 International Construction Market Survey found that it cost almost \$354 per square foot to build in the city last year and that the industry as a whole spent \$43 billion. Turner & Townsend said that rising costs were partially due to high wages of up to \$100 per hour.

An [Arcadis report](#) from earlier this year also found that New York City construction costs are on the rise but pointed to lack of buildable space as the main reason. The company said that the cost of building in New York City is 50% higher than in the average U.S. city and 20% higher than in other hot metros like Los Angeles, Boston and Seattle.