



THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION: A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

January 2025



INTRODUCTION

The global construction recognizes the need for greater gender diversity. Countries are increasingly encouraging women to join the sector to address critical challenges such as labor shortages, innovation stagnation, and a lack of diverse perspectives in leadership. The inclusion of women not only fills workforce gaps but also brings new approaches to problem-solving, teamwork, and project execution, benefiting the industry's long-term growth and sustainability.

Increasing the number of women on building sites improves efficiency, the working environment and attention to health and safety. It can also lead to a shift in culture where damaging and unproductive practices such as heavy drinking are less prevalent.

 <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12147-020-09257-0>

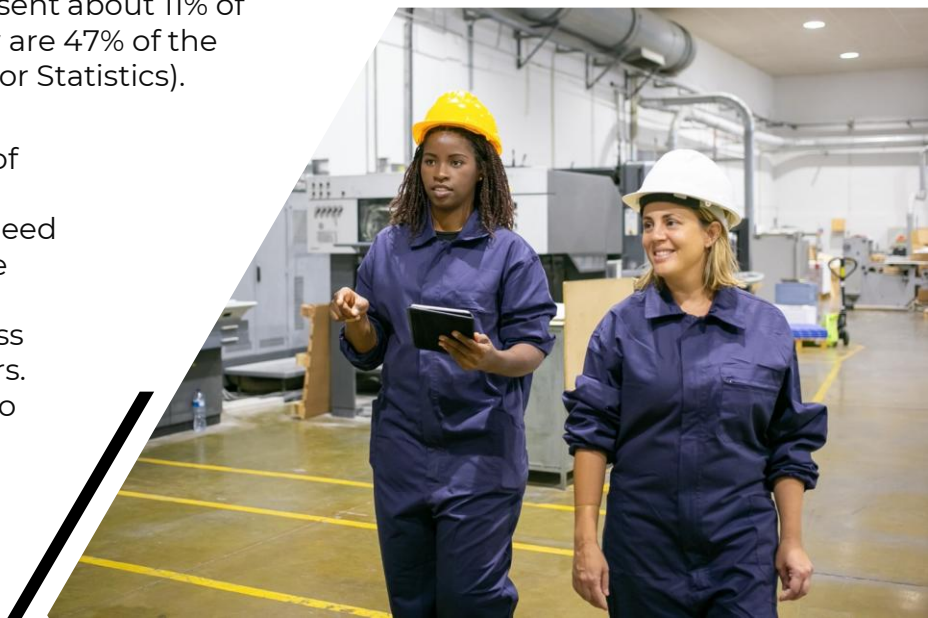
Achieving gender parity in construction would mean equal representation across all levels—skilled trades, project management, leadership, and decision-making roles. Such parity promises enhanced productivity, safety, and financial outcomes. For instance, companies with diverse teams have reported stronger performance and profitability.

Construction companies with more women in executive line roles than staff roles experienced above-average financial performance compared to companies that didn't. When 30% or more of executive-level positions were filled by women, those companies had a 48% likelihood of outperforming their least diverse competitors.

 <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-andinclusion/diversity-wins-how-inclusion-matters>

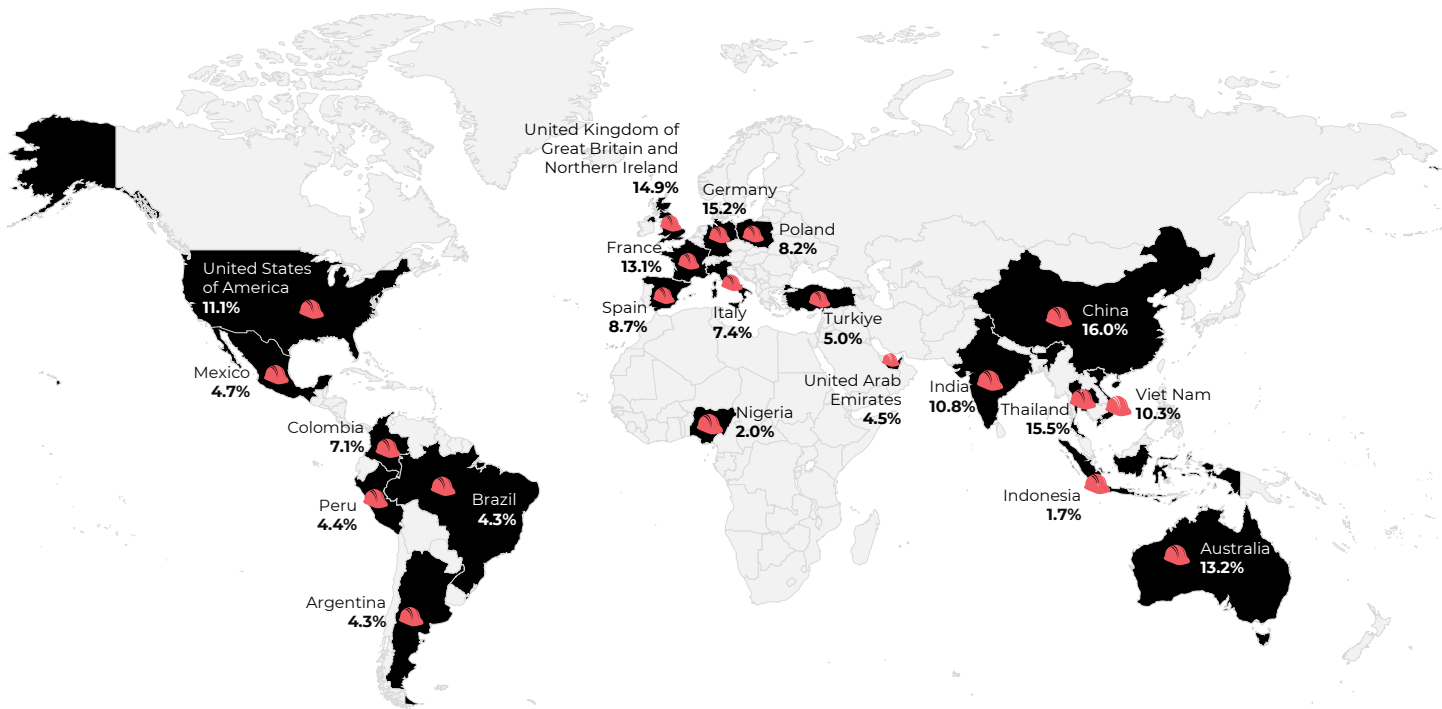
Despite growing awareness, progress has been gradual. In the United States in 2022, women represent about 11% of construction workers, even though they are 47% of the overall U.S. workforce (US Bureau of Labor Statistics).

This report explores the global efforts of twenty countries with the largest construction workforce to address the need to increase the number of women in the construction industry. This includes analyzing policies, programs, and success stories while addressing ongoing barriers. By understanding what works, we aim to accelerate progress and inspire action across the sector.



01. KEY INSIGHTS

Global Representation of Women in Construction



The average representation of women in the construction workforce globally is **8.69 %**, which indicates significant underrepresentation.



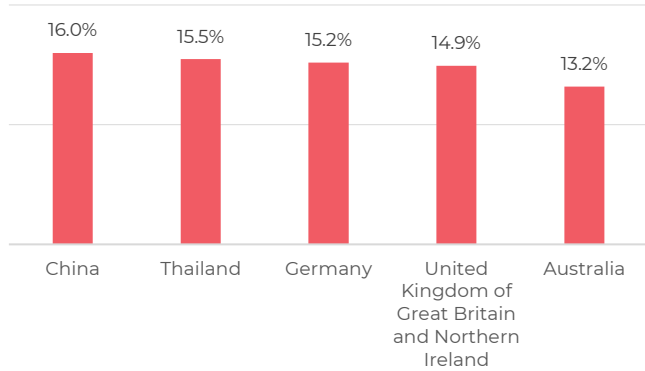
Top Performers:

- **China:** 16.00%
 - **India:** 10.75%
- These countries lead efforts through robust initiatives targeting workforce diversity.

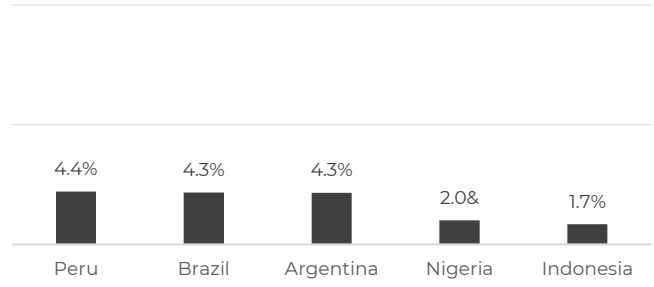
Lowest Performers:

- **Indonesia:** 1.68%
 - **Brazil:** 4.33%
- Cultural and structural barriers remain key challenges in these nations.

Top 5 countries by the percentage of women in the construction workforce



Bottom 5 countries by the percentage of women in the construction workforce



02.

NOTABLE OUTREACH EFFORTS

Some countries have implemented remarkable programs to address this gap:



India:

Union Ministry of Women and Child Development launched programs in February 2024 focusing on training women in skilled construction trades.



United States:

The Department of Commerce introduced CHIPS for Women in May 2024, aimed at increasing female participation in infrastructure projects.



Australia:

NSW Australia investing A\$20 MM to attract women

These initiatives reflect a growing recognition of the economic and cultural benefits of diversity.

03.

CHALLENGES

Despite progress, several barriers persist:



Cultural Norms:

Deeply ingrained perceptions about construction being a "male-dominated" industry limit female participation.



Structural Barriers:

Lack of access to training, mentorship, and workplace support reduces retention rates..



Uneven Progress:

Countries with fewer resources or entrenched societal norms struggle to implement effective policies.

03.

RECOMMENDATIONS



Policy Support: Governments should explore establishing regulations mandating equal opportunities in hiring and training.



Awareness Campaigns: Changing societal perceptions through education and public campaigns is crucial.



Industry Collaboration: Partnerships between construction companies and education/training institutions can create clear pathways for women to enter and thrive in the sector.



Workplace Improvements: Flexible hours, childcare facilities, and anti-harassment policies can create supportive environments for women.



CONCLUSION

The path to achieving gender parity in the construction industry is challenging but essential. As countries implement innovative strategies to attract, train, and support women in construction, the industry stands to gain a more resilient and skilled workforce, enhanced innovation, and stronger economic outcomes. Progress has been uneven, with some nations demonstrating significant advancements while others struggle to overcome deeply ingrained cultural and structural barriers. However, the collective commitment to equity signals a hopeful trajectory. By learning from successful initiatives and addressing persistent challenges, the construction sector can build a more inclusive future, ensuring that women have equal opportunities to shape and lead in this vital field.

**FOR MORE
INFORMATION
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