

NAHB's Associate Members in 2021

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Special Study for Housing Economics
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The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) has conducted an annual census of its members every year since 2008. The census is divided into builder and associate members. Associate members are involved in a wide range of support industries and professions including, among others, trade contractors, manufacturers, retailers/distributors, designers, and architects. This article updates an [earlier study](#) on associate members with results from the latest NAHB census, conducted at the end of 2021. At that time NAHB had roughly 65,000 associate members, accounting for approximately 66 percent of NAHB's 110,000 members (the remainder being NAHB's builder members, who were covered in the [August Special Study](#)).

Characteristics of NAHB's associate members in 2021 include the following:

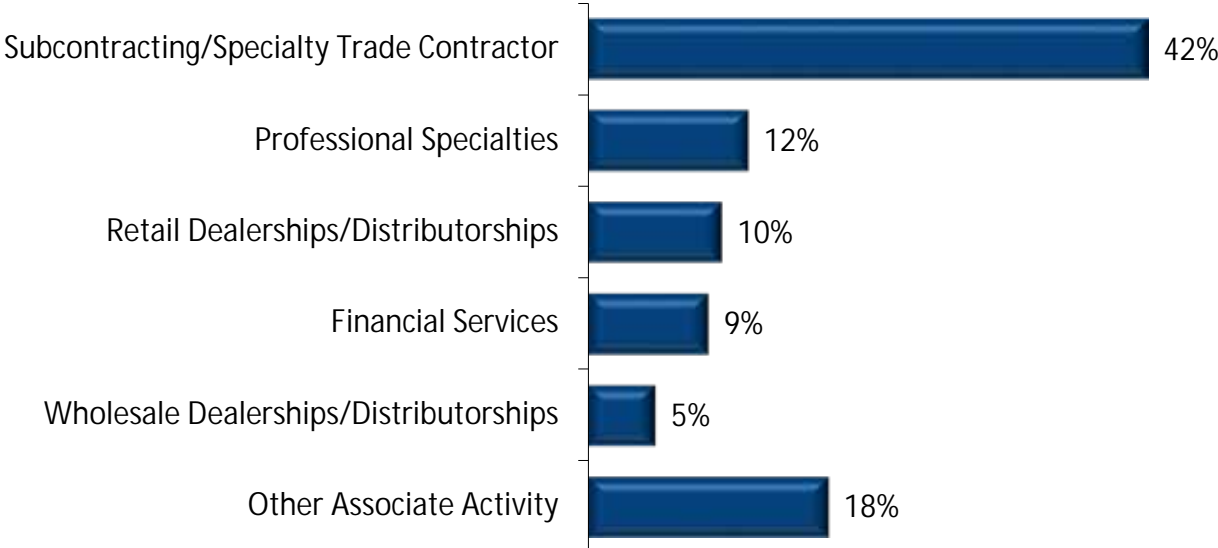
- Among the major categories of associates, the largest share (42 percent) are special trade contracts/subcontractors.
- Median gross revenue in 2021 was \$2.9 million, up substantially from \$2.4 million in 2020.
- Thirty-seven percent say they contribute in some way to the development of green/sustainable homes.
- The share of NAHB associate members who are female has increased for five consecutive years, reaching a high of 25 percent in 2021.

The next sections describe these results in more detail, including how they have evolved over time, as well as showing results on associate members' demographics and educational attainment. At the end of the exposition, there is a series of profiles showing basic statistics for each of the major categories of NAHB's associate members.

Associates' Business Activity

The NAHB census asks associate members to identify one of 42 specialties as the primary activity of their business. These detailed specialties are grouped into 6 broader categories. Among these broader categories, 42 percent of associate members identified themselves as subcontractors/specialty trade contractors, 12 percent have a professional specialty business (architecture, engineering, marketing, accounting, legal, etc.), 10 percent are retail dealers/distributors, 9 percent provide financial services, and 5 percent are wholesale dealers/distributors. The remaining 18 percent listed some "other associate" activity as their primary business (fig 1.).

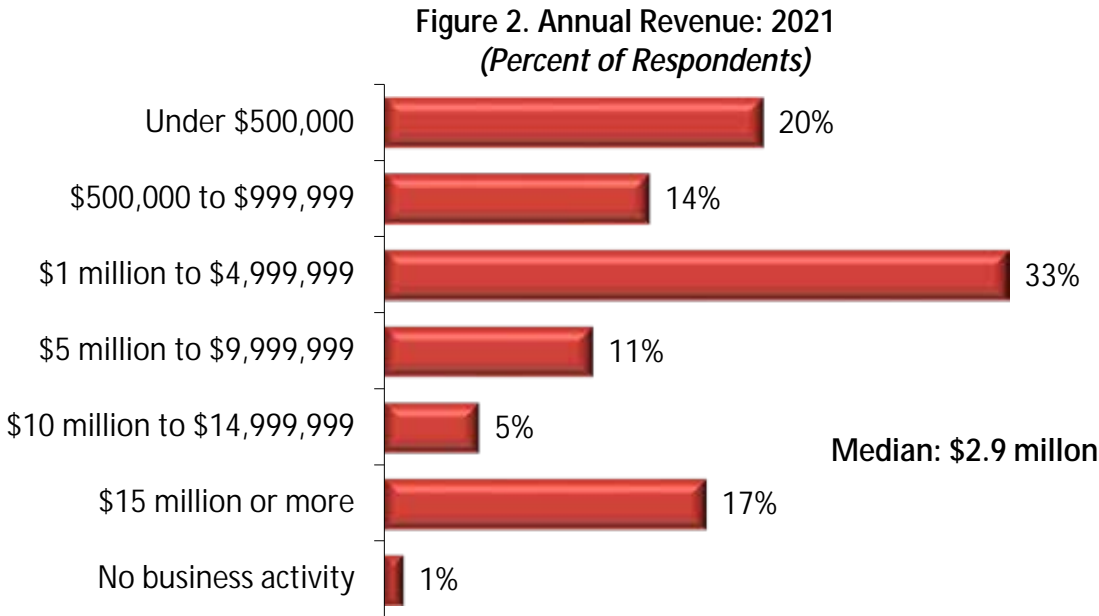
Figure 1. Primary Business Activity During 2021
(Percent of Respondents)



The share of associate members who identified primarily as subcontractors/specialty trade contractors dropped from 45 percent in 2020 to 42 percent in 2021, while the shares involved with both retail and wholesale dealerships/distributorships edged down one point to 10 and 5 percent, respectively. On the other hand, the share of associates primarily involved in financial services rose one point to 9 percent. The associate shares primarily involved in professional specialties and other associate activities remained unchanged from 2020 to 2021

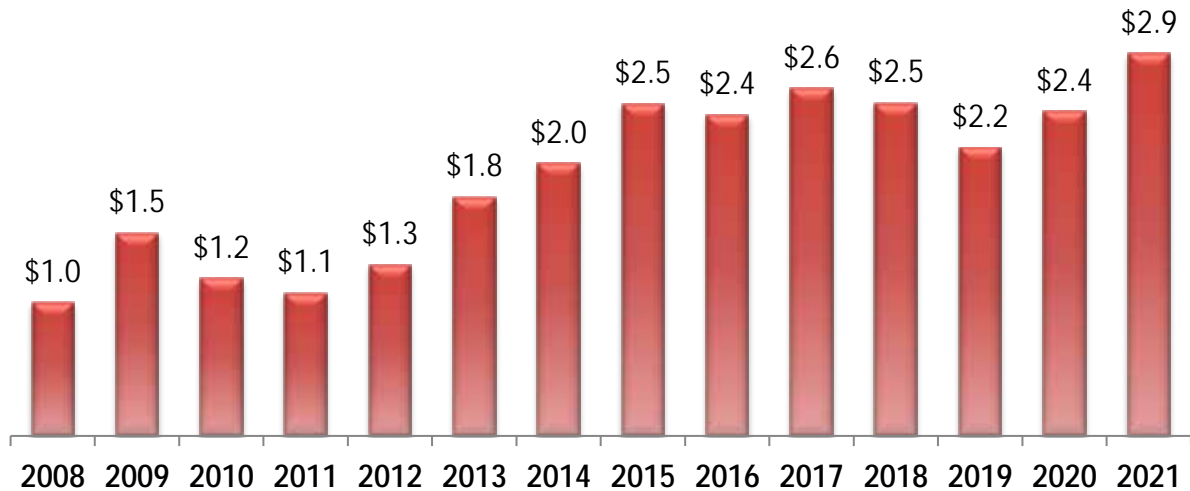
Dollar Volume of Business

The median dollar volume for associate members increased substantially between 2020 and 2021, from \$2.4 to \$2.9 million. One-fifth of associate members reported a 2021 dollar volume of less than \$500,000, 14 percent reported between \$500,000 and \$999,999, 33 percent between \$1.0 million and \$4.9 million, 11 percent between \$5.0 million and \$9.9 million, 5 percent between \$10.0 million and \$14.9 million, and 17 percent reported their dollar volume in 2020 at \$15.0 million or more (fig. 2). One percent reported no business activity at all in 2021.



The median dollar volume associates reported for 2021 (\$2.9 million) is a record high in the 14-year history of this series. The median fluctuated between \$1.0 million and \$1.7 million from 2008 to 2013, then between \$2.0 million and \$2.6 million from 2014 to 2020, before jumping by 18 percent to \$2.9 million in 2021 (fig. 3).

Figure 3. Median Annual Revenue: HISTORY
(Millions of dollars)

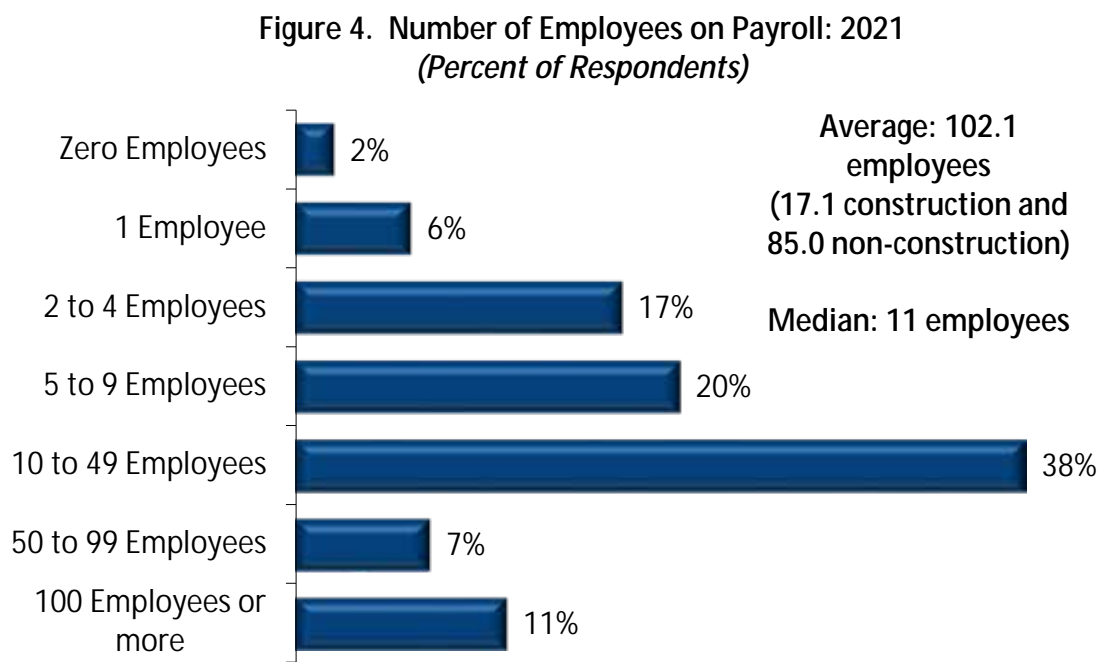


Median dollar volume of business varies considerably across primary activities. For example, associates in financial service companies reported a median of \$12.6 million in 2021 revenue, compared to \$1.1 million among professional specialty members, \$2.0 million among subcontractor/specialty trade contractors, \$3.0 million among those in 'other' associate activities, \$4.6 million among retail dealerships/distributorships, and \$10.3 million among wholesale dealerships/distributorships.

There is also a positive correlation between an associate's tenure as an NAHB member and his/her company's median revenue: \$2.0 million for companies whose associate has been a member for 1 to 4 years, compared to \$2.5 million for companies whose associate has been a member for 5 to 9 years, and \$3.1 million for companies whose associate has been an NAHB member for 10 or more years. Median dollar volume of business also varies considerably across the primary activities. For example, associates in wholesale dealerships/distributorships reported a median of \$10.0 million in 2020 revenue, compared to \$0.9 million for professional specialty members, \$1.6 million for subcontractor/specialty trade contractor members, \$2.8 million for members involved in some other associate activity, \$4.1 million for retail dealership/distributorship members, and \$5.8 million for financial services members.

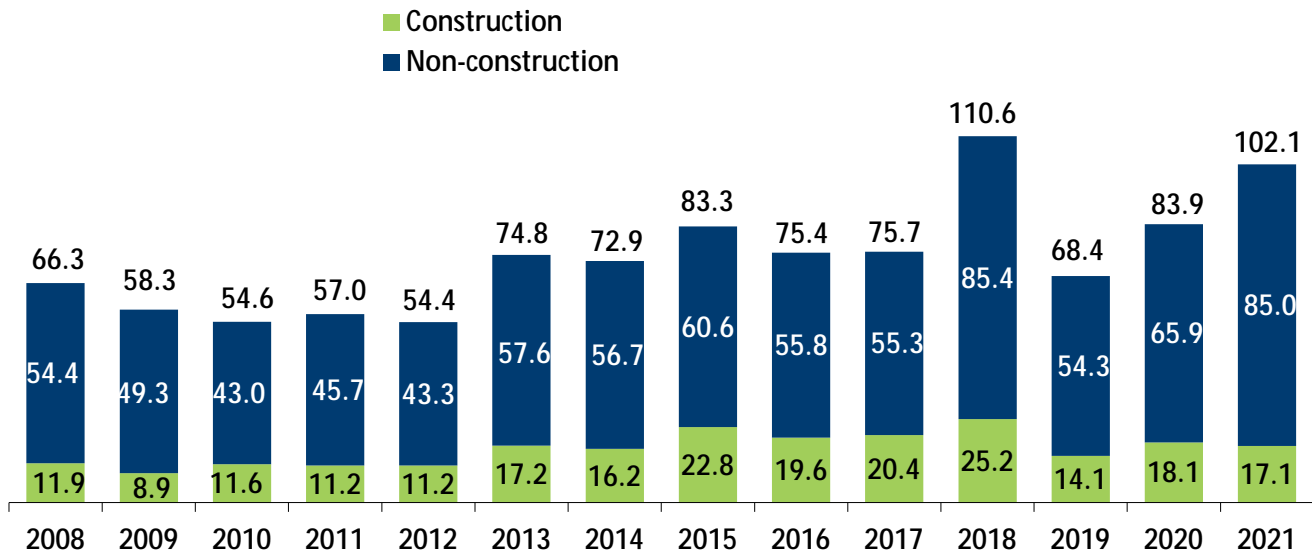
Employees

Associate members reported that their companies carried an average of 102.1 employees on their payrolls in 2021, of which 17.1 were construction employees and 85.0 were non-construction employees. The median number of employees on payroll was 11. While only 2 percent of associate members reported having no employees on payroll, 6 percent reported 1 employee, 17 percent reported 2 to 4 employees, 20 percent reported 5 to 9 employees, 38 percent reported 10 to 49, 7 percent reported 50 to 99, and 11 percent reported 100 or more employees on their payroll in 2020 (fig. 4).



The average 102.1 employees on associates' payrolls in 2021 is the second highest reading in the 14-year history of the series. The highest average (110.6 employees reported in 2018), however, now looks like an anomaly. In 2008, associates carried an average of 66.3 employees. For the next four years (2009 to 2012), the average dropped and ranged from 54 to 58 employees. Payrolls then grew, and except for 2018, the average hovered between 68 and 84 employees from 2013 to 2020. Associates' average number of employees in 2021 (102.1) was 22 percent higher than in 2020 (83.9), with all of the increase coming from non-construction employees, whose average number rose from 65.9 to 85.0 (fig. 5).

Figure 5. Average Number of Employees on Payroll: HISTORY

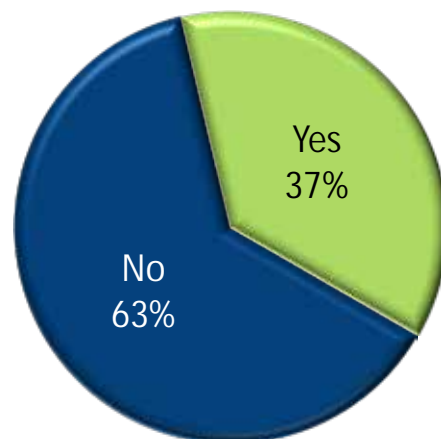


While the average number of employees has fluctuated substantially from year to year, the median has been stable 10 or 11 since 2015, indicating that the average is skewed upwards by a relatively small number of associate members with very large payrolls. Because of this, the median may better represent the typical associate member’s business for many purposes.

Contribution to the Development of Green/Sustainable Homes

The NAHB census asked associate members if their companies contribute in any way to the development of green or sustainable homes. Thirty-seven percent of associates indicated that their companies contributed to green/sustainable homes in 2021, while the remaining 63 percent indicated that their companies did not (fig. 6).

Figure 6. Does Your Company in Any Way Contribute to the Development of Green/Sustainable Homes?
(Percent of Respondents)



The share of associate members reporting that their companies contribute to the development of green/sustainable homes varies significantly by primary activity. For example, 59 percent of associates in wholesale dealerships/distributorships report their companies contribute, compared to only 19 percent in financial services and 36 percent in subcontracting/specialty trade contracting.

The share of associate members who report their companies contribute to the development of sustainable/green homes is also positively related to the company's dollar volume of business. The share who contribute ranges from 29 percent of associates at companies with a dollar volume of less than \$500,000, to 50 percent among those with a dollar volume of \$15 million or more.

Age, Gender, Race and Ethnicity

The median age of NAHB associate members in 2021 was 57 years. Less than 0.5 percent were under 25, 4 percent were 25 to 34 years old, 14 percent were 35 to 44, 26 percent were 45 to 54, 36 percent were 55 to 64, and 21 percent were 65 or older (fig. 7). Although the median age of NAHB's associate members was stable between 2020 and 2021, it has generally tended to drift upward over time. The median age was 50 in 2008, 52 or 53 between 2009 and 2011, 54 between 2012 and 2015, 55 or 56 between 2015 and 2019, and rose to 57 in 2020 and 2021 (fig. 8).

Figure 7. Age of Associate Members: 2021
(Percent of Respondents)

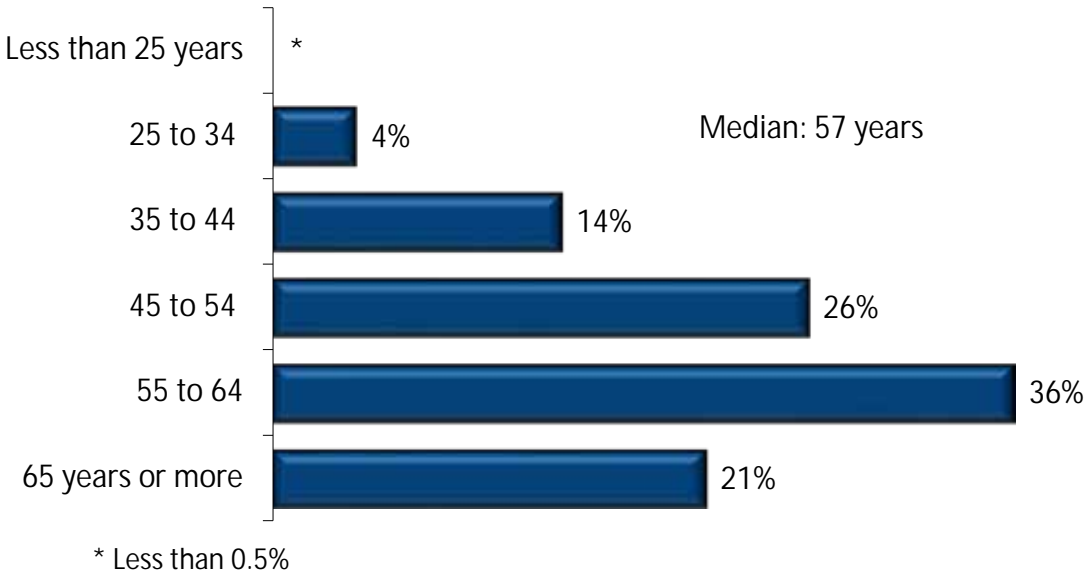
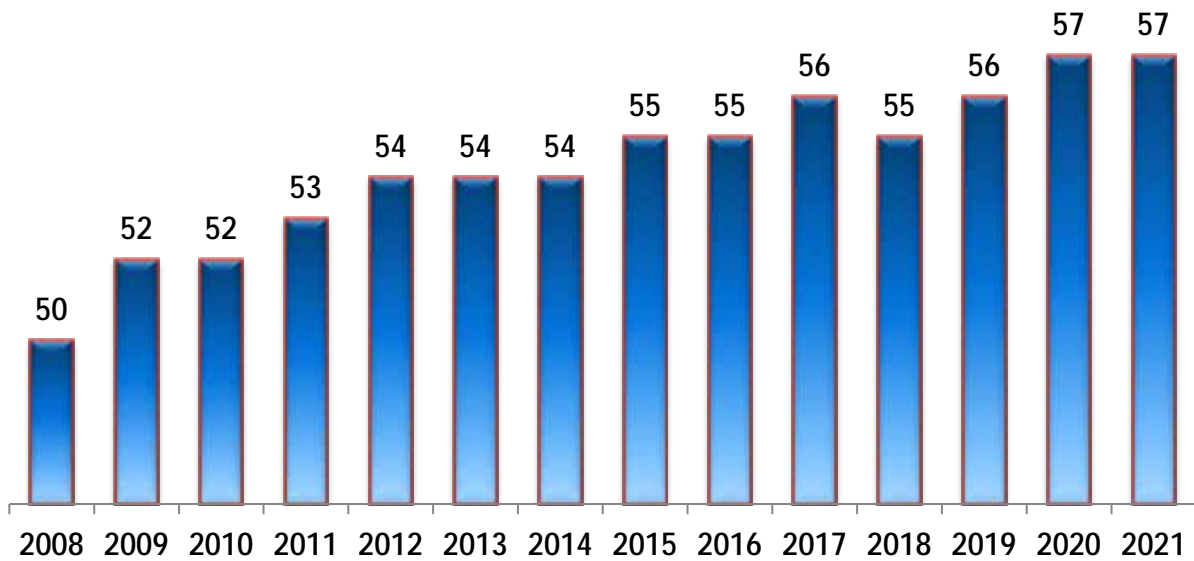
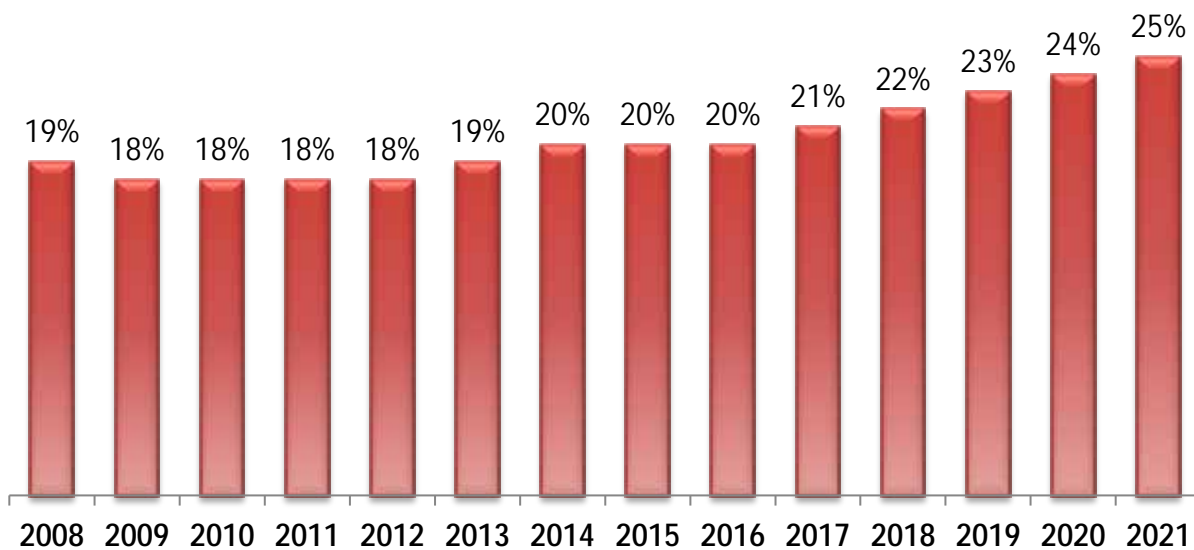


Figure 8. Median Age of Associate Members: HISTORY
(Percent of Respondents)



One-fourth of NAHB's associate members in the 2021 Member Census are women, the highest the female percentage has been since the revival of the Census in 2008. The female share stayed constant at 18 from 2009 through 2012, edged up to 19 percent in 2013, then to 20 percent from 2014 through 2016. It has since increased by one percentage point a year for five consecutive years (fig. 9).

Figure 9. Female Share of Associate Members: HISTORY
(Percent of Respondents)

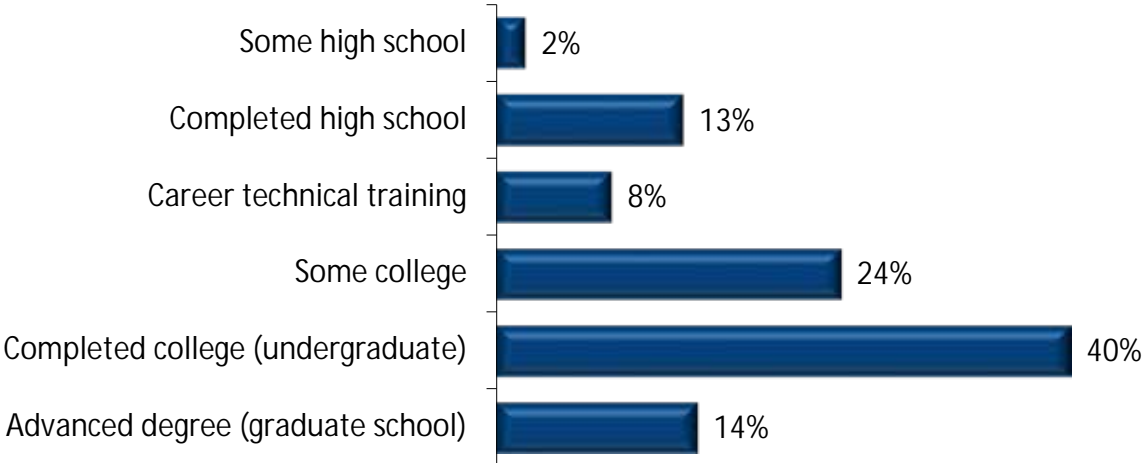


As has been true in the past, a majority of NAHB’s associate members identify themselves as white. Ninety-five percent of associates indicated they were white alone, compared to 1 percent for Black or African-American alone and less than half a percent each for American Indian or Alaska Native alone and Pacific Islander alone. Two percent of associates are of some other race and one percent are of two or more races. These racial categories follow the classification scheme implemented by the U.S. Census Bureau in the 2000 Census (after a long process of soliciting input from stakeholders). In terms of ethnicity, only 4 percent of associates identified themselves as being of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin.

Education

Fourteen percent of NAHB’s associate members have an advanced degree (graduate school), while 40 percent have completed college, 24 percent have some college education, 8 percent have career technical training, 13 percent have completed high school, and 2 percent only have some high school education (fig. 10).

Figure 10. Education Level of Associate Members: 2020
(Percent of Respondents)



The educational background of NAHB associate members has not changed significantly over time. Since the inception of this Census in 2008, half or more of associate members have reported having a higher-education degree (either undergraduate or graduate).

Following is a series of profiles: one for each of the major categories of NAHB’s associate members.

PROFILES BY MAJOR ASSOCIATE MEMBER TYPE

Subcontracting/Specialty Trade Contractors in 2021

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Number of members	49,382	44,351	42,070	34,574	30,974	32,160	28,802	32,441	33,795	31,639
	2018	2019	2020	2021						
	32,148	34,293	33,528	30,325						

Company Profile

1. Primary business activities covered are: Carpentry work, Electrical work, Masonry, Stone work, Tile setting and Plastering, Landscaping, Plumbing, Heating and Air Conditioning, Roofing, Siding and Sheet Metal Work, Painting and Paper Hanging, Floor laying and other Floor work, Concrete work, Excavation work, Insulation work, Drywall Installation, Security Systems, Home Technology, and Other Subcontracting.

2. No. of employees on payroll (*Median*):

Construction Employees:	7
Non-construction Employees:	2
Total:	11

(Seven percent have 50 to 99 employees and 5 percent have 100 employees or more.)

3. Dollar volume of company's business activity (*Median*): **\$2,040,267**

(Six percent had \$15 million or more in business activity.)

4. Share of dollar volume derived from residential construction (*Median*): **63%**

5. Contribute to the development of green/sustainable homes: **36%**

Member Profile

1. No. of years as a member of NAHB (*Median*): **10 years**

2. Age (*Median*): **56 years**

3. Gender: Male: 81% Female: 19%

4. Race/Ethnicity: White: 95% Hispanic: 5%

5. Education: 36% have college/advanced degree
26% have some college education

Professional Specialty Members in 2021

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Number of members	18,242	19,609	12,652	10,789	10,754	10,502	10,744	10,265	10,261	9,512
	2018	2019	2020	2021						
	10,286	10,212	9,097	8,639						

Company Profile

1. **Primary business activities covered are:** Accounting, Architecture, Engineering, Planning or Designing, Legal Services, Computer Products and Services, Marketing, Advertising or Public Relations, and Land Surveyor.

2. **No. of employees on payroll (Median):**

Construction Employees:	0
Non-construction Employees:	7
Total:	8

(Nine percent have 50 to 99 employees and 8 percent have 100 employees or more.)

3. **Dollar volume of company's business activity (Median):** \$1,131,582

(Nine percent had \$15 million or more in business activity.)

4. **Share of dollar volume derived from residential construction (Median):** 42%

5. **Contribute to the development of green/sustainable homes:** 39%

Member Profile

1. **No. of years as a member of NAHB (Median):** 10 years

2. **Age (Median):** 57 years

3. **Gender:** Male: 70% Female: 30%

4. **Race/Ethnicity:** White: 96% Hispanic: 4%

5. **Education:** 79% have college/advanced degree
15% have some college education

Retail Dealership/Distributors in 2021

Number of members	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
	18,776	13,009	11,014	9,182	8,939	9,090	8,719	9,782	8,790	8,308
	2018	2019	2020	2021						
	8,721	8,485	8,160	7,092						

Company Profile

1. **Primary business activities covered are:** Retail Appliances, Retail Building Materials/Lumber, Retail Floor Coverings, Retail Paint/Wall Coverings and Other Retail Dealerships.

2. **No. of employees on payroll (*Median*):**

Construction Employees:	0
Non-construction Employees:	9
Total:	12

(Nine percent have 50 to 99 employees and 12 percent have 100 employees or more.)

3. **Dollar volume of company's business activity (*Median*):** \$4,555,599

(Twenty-seven percent had \$15 million or more in business activity.)

4. **Share of dollar volume derived from residential construction (*Median*):** 59%

5. **Contribute to the development of green/sustainable homes:** 45%

Member Profile

1. **No. of years as a member of NAHB (*Median*):** 10 years

2. **Age (*Median*):** 58 years

3. **Gender:** Male: 75% Female: 25%

4. **Race/Ethnicity:** White: 99% Hispanic: 2%

5. **Education:** 52% have college/advanced degree
30% have some college education

Financial Services Members in 2021

Number of members	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
	11,974	11,197	8,340	6,492	7,508	8,426	8,710	8,492	7,714	7,180
	2018	2019	2020	2021						
	7,941	6,402	5,887	6,475						

Company Profile

1. **Primary business activities covered are:** Commercial Banking/Thrift Institution, Mortgage Banking and Insurance or Title Company.

2. **No. of employees on payroll (*Median*):**

Construction Employees:	0
Non-construction Employees:	24
Total:	24

(Six percent have 50 to 99 employees and 32 percent have 100 employees or more.)

3. **Dollar volume of company's business activity (*Median*):** \$12,626,540

(Forty-six percent had \$15 million or more in business activity.)

4. **Share of dollar volume derived from residential construction (*Median*):** 10%

5. **Contribute to the development of green/sustainable homes:** 19%

Member Profile

1. **No. of years as a member of NAHB (*Median*):** 10 years

2. **Age (*Median*):** 57 years

3. **Gender:** Male: 68% Female: 32%

4. **Race/Ethnicity:** White: 97% Hispanic: 2%

5. **Education:** 73% have college/advanced degree
23% have some college education

Wholesale Dealerships/Distributors in 2021

Number of members	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
	5,676	6,734	5,453	4,300	4,759	4,384	4,644	4,466	3,889	3,685
	2018	2019	2020	2021						
3,828	3,467	4,298	3,908							

Company Profile

1. **Primary business activities covered are:** Wholesale Appliances, Wholesale Building Materials/Lumber, Wholesale Floor Coverings, Wholesale Paint/Wall Coverings and Other Wholesale Dealerships.

2. **No. of employees on payroll (*Median*):**

Construction Employees:	0
Non-construction Employees:	20
Total:	22

(Fourteen percent have 50 to 99 employees and 18 percent have 100 employees or more.)

3. **Dollar volume of company's business activity (*Median*):** \$10,314,542

(Forty-one percent had \$15 million or more in business activity.)

4. **Share of dollar volume derived from residential construction (*Median*):** 59%

5. **Contribute to the development of green/sustainable homes:** 59%

Member Profile

1. **No. of years as a member of NAHB (*Median*):** 10 years

2. **Age (*Median*):** 58 years

3. **Gender:** Male: 82% Female: 18%

4. **Race/Ethnicity:** White: 96% Hispanic: 2%

5. **Education:** 54% have college/advanced degree
33% have some college education

Other Associate Activity Members in 2021

Number of members	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
	40,153	16,980	18,353	14,410	17,240	18,011	19,054	15,591	16,115	16,295
	2018	2019	2020	2021						
16,146	16,290	13,103	12,805							

Company Profile

1. **Primary business activities covered are:** Manufacturing, Property Management, Real Estate, Utilities, Industry Consultant, Trade Association/Non-Profit, and Other Associate Activities

2. **No. of employees on payroll (Median):**

Construction Employees:	0
Non-construction Employees:	5
Total:	10

(Six percent have 50 to 99 employees and 16 percent have 100 employees or more.)

3. **Dollar volume of company's business activity (Median):** \$2,990,471

(Twenty-three percent had \$15 million or more in business activity.)

4. **Share of dollar volume derived from residential construction (Median):** 25%

5. **Contribute to the development of green/sustainable homes:** 39%

Member Profile

1. **No. of years as a member of NAHB (Median):** 7 years

2. **Age (Median):** 57 years

3. **Gender:** Male: 63% Female: 37%

4. **Race/Ethnicity:** White: 93% Hispanic: 4%

5. **Education:** 67% have college/advanced degree
22% have some college education