



# Architecture Billings Index (ABI)

March 2021

The Architecture Billings Index (ABI) is a diffusion index derived from the monthly Work-on-the-Boards survey, conducted by the AIA Economics & Market Research Group. The ABI serves as a leading economic indicator that leads nonresidential construction activity by approximately 9–12 months. The survey panel asks participants whether their billings increased, decreased, or stayed the same in the month that just ended. According to the proportion of respondents choosing each option, a score is generated, which represents an index value for each month. An index score of 50 represents no change in firm billings from the previous month, a score above 50 indicates an increase in firm billings from the previous month, and a score below 50 indicates a decline in firm billings from the previous month.

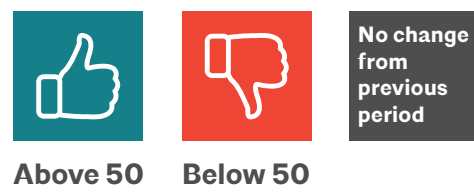
\*All graphs represent data from March 2020–March 2021.

## ABI

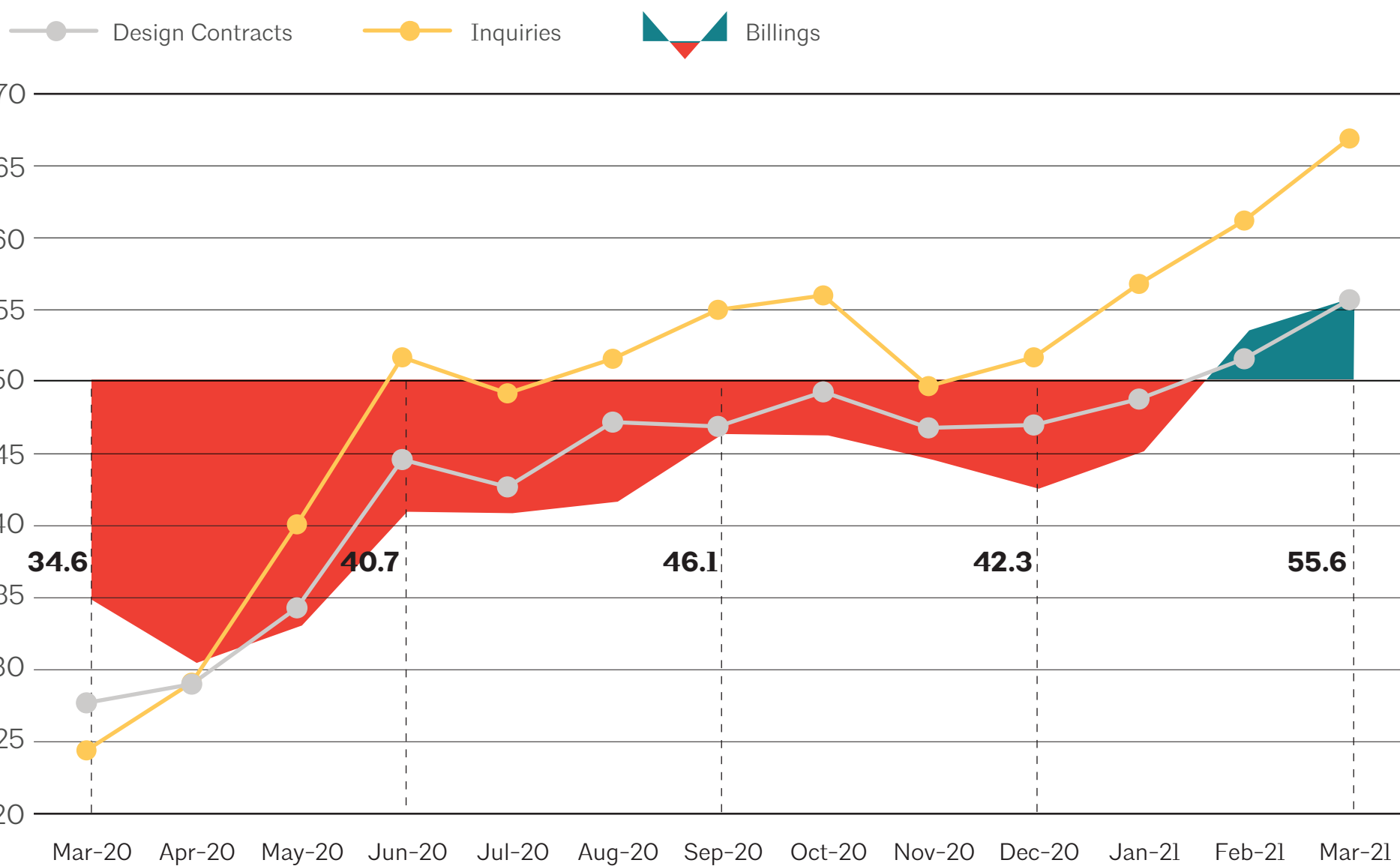
National      Regional      Sector      Practice

### National

Billings growth accelerates at architecture firms in March



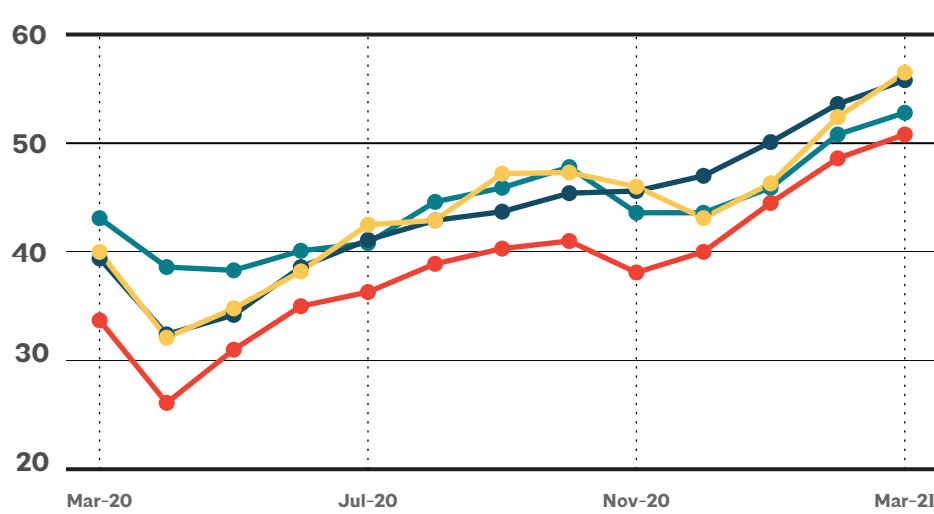
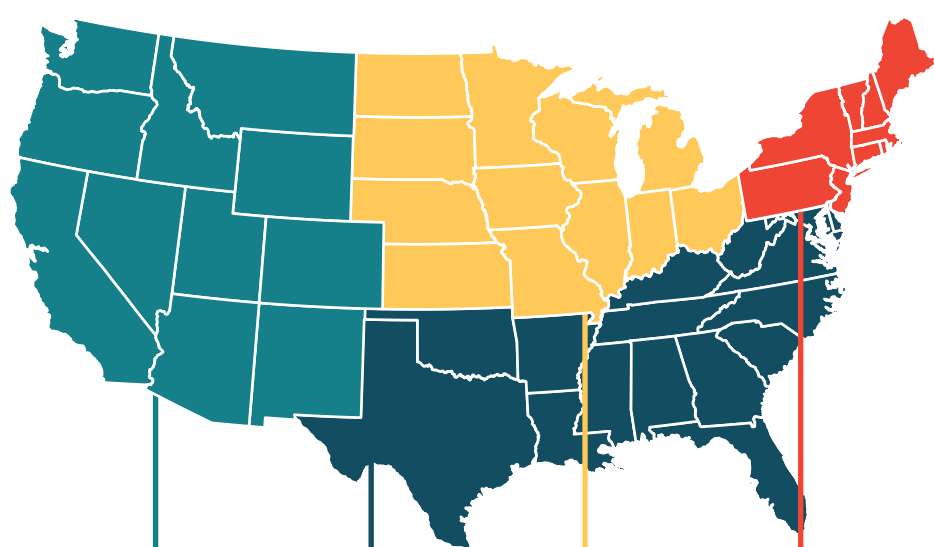
Graphs represent data from March 2020–March 2021.



### Regional

Business conditions improve in all regions of the country, even the hard-hit Northeast

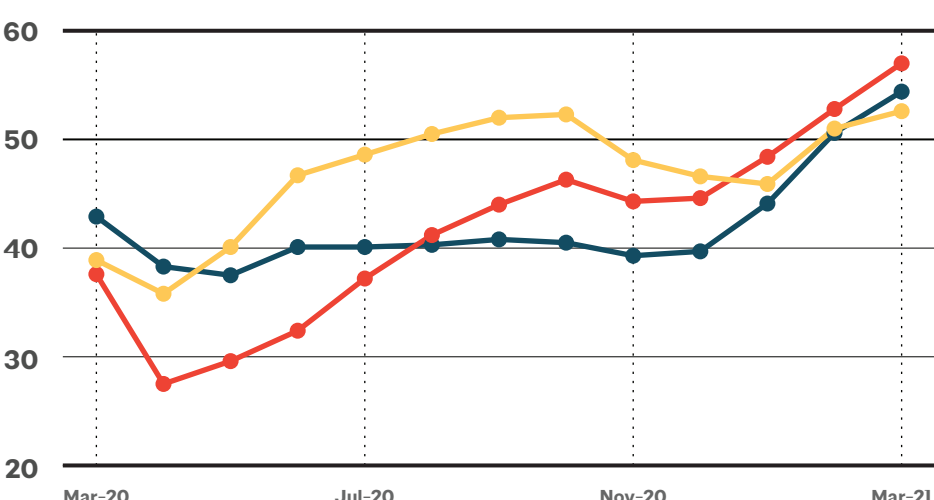
Graphs represent data from March 2020–March 2021 across the four regions. 50 represents the diffusion center. A score of 50 equals no change from the previous month. Above 50 shows increase; Below 50 shows decrease. 3-month moving average.



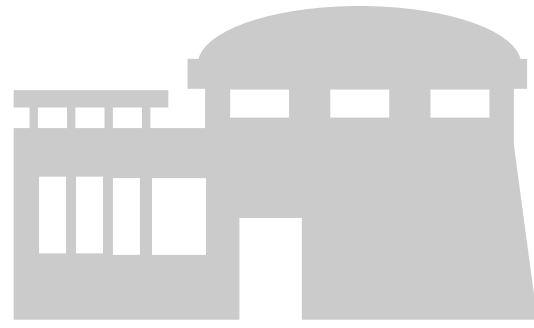
### Sector

Firms with a commercial/industrial specialization continue to see a strong rebound in billings

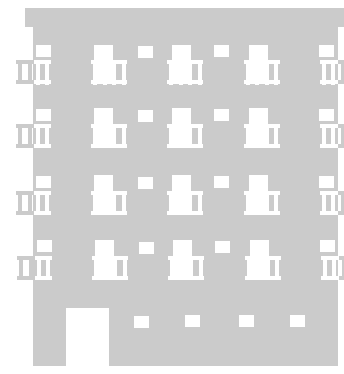
Graphs represent data from March 2020–March 2021 across the three sectors. 50 represents the diffusion center. A score of 50 equals no change from the previous month. Above 50 shows increase; Below 50 shows decrease. 3-month moving average.



Commercial/Industrial: 57.0



Institutional: 54.4

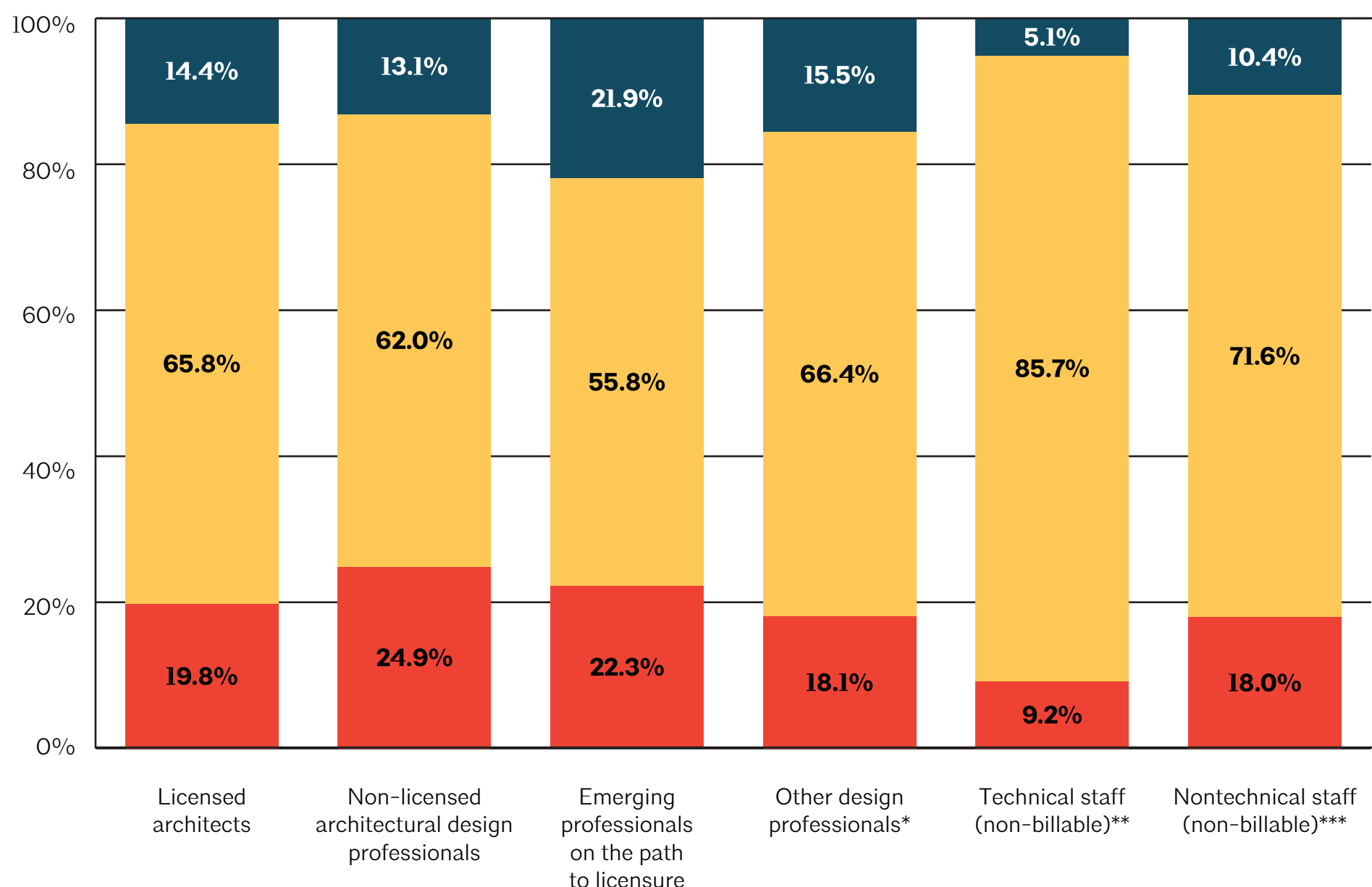
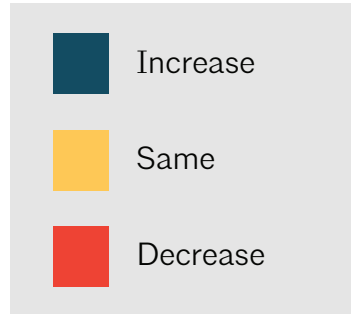


Residential: 52.6

### Practice

Net decline in positions lost due to the pandemic highest for non-licensed architectural design and nontechnical staff positions

units: % of firms reporting given change in head count at their firm since January 2020 by position category



\*e.g., interior designers, engineers  
 \*\*e.g., CAD manager, IT manager  
 \*\*\*e.g., marketing, bookkeeper, HR