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CIVIL ENGINEERING ACADEMY PODCAST

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CEA 105 - A DIVE INTO THE 2021 ASCE INFRASTRUCTURE REPORT CARD

The 2021 edition of the [ASCE Infrastructure Report Card](#) is out! It brings light to the current conditions of America's infrastructure by assessing different individual categories, from bridges to hazardous waste. As a civil engineer working in one of these fields, you should probably check this out in order to learn about the country's challenges and future opportunities.

The key takeaway from this year's report is that the efforts America has been making are finally paying off. For the first time in 20 years, the country's infrastructure grade is out of the D range and into the C range. For those in the committee behind the report, America's overall infrastructure scores a C-minus.

However, each individual category can score lower or higher than that. For example, Transit scores a D-minus, while Rail scores a B. However, as the report mentions, the infrastructure as a whole is a system of combined smaller

systems. Therefore, taking all the individual grades into account, the overall score is the one mentioned above.

Based on these scores, ASCE goes on to try to estimate the financial investment needed in each infrastructure category to earn a grade of B, which is the grade the country should aim at. According to the report, if investments in infrastructure remain low, this will cause a loss of 3 million jobs and \$10 trillion in gross domestic product by 2039.

In addition to pointing out the problems and the severity of each of them, the report also recommends some actions that can be taken in order to increase the grades. The primary thing is to have bold leadership in action. They want strong leaders, decisive action, and a clear vision for the nation's infrastructure. The second and third ones are more investment dollars and resilience, respectively. According to the

report, investments in infrastructure should increase by 1% (totaling 3.5% of the US GDP), and the nation should look for ways to build structures that can withstand, or quickly recover from, natural and man-made hazards.

Since infrastructure is key to a well-functioning society, civil engineers and future civil engineers alike can expect a lot of future opportunities. Those categories doing poorly will immediately receive more funding in order to increase their grades, and this means more jobs available.

Therefore, check out the report and look at your category's grade for your state, or any other category you may want to go into. This will give you a good idea of the path your area of expertise may be heading towards, and how you can build a successful career in it.

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