



QUICK TAKES • Women in U.S. Management, 1950-present

CHALLENGES COUNTING WOMEN IN MANAGEMENT

The Bureau of Labor Statistics, part of the Department of Labor, has counted women involved in all levels of management since the 1950s. After every release of the decennial census, the Bureau of Labor Statistics incorporates the major changes and revisions to the population controls that have been developed by the U.S. Census. Because of these changes and recategorization of occupations, labor force data over many decades is not strictly comparable.*

HOW THESE NUMBERS CAN BE USED

To accurately use the data below, direct comparisons can only be made within a category. Looking at the two charts on this page, one could compare the percentages of women in management occupations for 1950, 1960, 1970, and 1980 to each other, but one could not then compare any of those numbers to the numbers on the second chart.

GROUPING OF WOMEN IN MANAGEMENT POSITIONS

The earliest data we could track down about women in management positions is from 1950.

The numbers from all charts below indicate **what percentage of all workers in the named occupation were women**. For example, in the subsequent chart, 13.8% of all managerial-administrative, except farm, positions were held by women in 1950.

Official Dept. of Labor Category	1950	1960	1970	1980
Managerial-administrative, except farm ¹	13.8	14.4	16.6	26.1

In the 1980s, the grouping became called “Managerial and professional specialty.”

Official Dept. of Labor Category	1990	1995	2000	2001	2002
Managerial and professional specialty ³	45.2	48.0	49.8	50.0	50.5

Most recently, between 2002 and 2003, the occupation again became recategorized and called “Management, professional, and related occupations.”

Official Dept. of Labor Category	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Management, professional, and related occupations ⁴	50.5	50.3	50.6	50.6	50.6

WOMEN CORPORATE OFFICERS

The earliest data that exists for women in the uppermost management positions is from 1995 when Catalyst conducted its first Catalyst Census of Women Corporate Officers. Even today, Catalyst is the only source for a number count of women corporate officers. (For this data, look at our Quick Take: Women in Management or to the Metrics section of www.catalyst.org.)

**Note: Look at the following web sites for more information about creating comparability in the Current Population Series: <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpspopsm.pdf> <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpscomp.pdf>*

Sources

1. *For 1950, 1960, 1970:* Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Labor Force Statistics: Table 11. Employment of women in selected occupations, 1950, 1960, 1970, 1979." *For 1980:* Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Labor Force Statistics derived from the Current Population Survey – A Databook, September 1982," Bulletin 2096.
2. U.S. Department of Labor, "Employment and Earnings, Annual Supplement Issues, September 1963, vol. 10, no. 3."
3. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Employed civilians by detailed occupation, sex, race, and Hispanic origin."
4. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Employed persons by detailed occupation, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity" (various years).

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