

USAF's HISTORY WITH WOMEN

As of Dec. 5 2016, more than a fifth of all of the Air Force's officers are women—the highest percentage in USAF's history.

We've been covering female demographics in the Air Force since the 1950s, when women made up just a little more than one percent of the force. Here, we give you a look at the last six decades of progress as women have gradually become a larger portion of USAF's serving airmen. The biggest jump came in the 1970s, and numbers have consistently been in the 19 percent to 20 percent range in recent years.

Today, there are fewer women in USAF (60,677) than there were in 1996 (64,176). But there's less of everyone else, too. According to the Air Force's most recent data, the Active Duty force itself is down to 312,275 service members (that's almost a fifth fewer than the 1996 force). So women clock in at 19.43 percent of the Active Duty force, or almost three percentage points higher than they did 20 years ago.

Since 2000, the number of female officers has continued to climb, but the number of women in the larger enlisted force has slightly declined.

Here's some other interesting facts:

- Women made up the largest percentage of Active Duty members in 2006: 19.91 percent, or 68,600 out of 344,529 members.
- There were more women in USAF in 2004 than in any other year in the last 20 years: 73,035, when they made up 19.61 percent of the force.

At right, we've charted the Active Duty from the 1950s to 2016, broken down by officer and enlisted forces.

We've charted our findings, broken down by total:

From the 1950s

- Percentage of women in the Active Duty force
- Percentage of women officers
- Percentage of women in enlisted force

