

Bahrain

Women, Business and the Law 2024 (WBL2024) presents an index covering 190 economies and structured around the life cycle of a working woman. In total, 35 questions are scored across eight indicators. Overall scores are then calculated by taking the average of each indicator, with 100 representing the highest possible score. Data refer to the laws and regulations that are applicable to the main business city (Manama). Different rules may apply in other jurisdictions so local legislation should be reviewed. Based on this approach, **Bahrain scores 68.1 out of 100.0**. The overall score for Bahrain is higher than the regional average observed across the Middle East and North Africa (54.7). Within the Middle East and North Africa region, the maximum score observed is 91.3 (Malta).

Bahrain - Scores for Women, Business and the Law 2024



Relative Strengths

When it comes to laws affecting women's pay, constraints on women starting and running a business, and laws affecting the size of a woman's pension, Bahrain gets a perfect score.

Areas for Improvement

When it comes to constraints on freedom of movement, laws affecting women's decisions to work, constraints related to marriage, laws affecting women's work after having children, and gender differences in property and inheritance, Bahrain could consider reforms to improve legal equality for women.

For example, one of the lowest scores for Bahrain is on the indicator measuring constraints related to marriage (the WBL2024 Marriage indicator). To improve on the Marriage indicator, Bahrain may wish to consider no longer requiring a married woman to obey her husband, allowing women to obtain a divorce in the same way as men, and giving women the same rights to remarry as men.

Recent Reforms

No reforms were observed during the past year (October 2nd, 2022 – October 1st, 2023).



Further data details for Bahrain are available at:
<https://wbl.worldbank.org/en/data/exploreconomies/bahrain/2024>



	QUESTION	ANSWER	LEGAL BASIS
Mobility	Can a woman choose where to live in the same way as a man?	No	Family Law No. 19/2017, Arts. 54 and 59
	Can a woman travel outside her home in the same way as a man?	No	Family Law No. 19/2017, Art. 54
	Can a woman apply for a passport in the same way as a man?	Yes	Passport Law No. 11/1975, as amended by Law No. 21/2005, Art. 3; Passport Application Form
	Can a woman travel outside the country in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
Workplace	Can a woman get a job in the same way as a man?	No	Family Law No. 19/2017, Art. 56
	Does the law prohibit discrimination in employment based on gender?	Yes	Labor Code, Art. 29
	Is there legislation on sexual harassment in employment?	Yes	Decree Law No. 59 amending Labor Code, Art. 2(192 bis)
	Are there criminal penalties or civil remedies for sexual harassment in employment?	Yes	<i>Criminal:</i> Decree Law No. 59 amending Labor Code, Art. 2(192 bis) <i>Civil:</i> No applicable provisions could be located
Pay	Does the law mandate equal remuneration for work of equal value?	Yes	Labor Code, Art. 39; Decree-Law No. 16/2021
	Can a woman work at night in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Can a woman work in a job deemed dangerous in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Can a woman work in an industrial job in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
Marriage	Is the law free of legal provisions that require a married woman to obey her husband?	No	Family Law No. 19/2017, Art. 40(a)
	Can a woman be head of household in the same way as a man?	Yes	Family Law No. 19/2017, Art. 40(a)
	Is there legislation specifically addressing domestic violence?	Yes	Law No. 17 of 2015 on Protection from Domestic Violence
	Can a woman obtain a judgment of divorce in the same way as a man?	No	Family Law No. 19/2017, Art. 83
	Does a woman have the same rights to remarry as a man?	No	Family Law No. 19/2017, Arts. 85-87 and 117-122
Parenthood	Is paid leave of at least 14 weeks available to mothers?	No	Labor Code, Art. 32
	Does the government pay 100% of maternity leave benefits?	No	Labor Code, Art. 32
	Is paid leave available to fathers?	Yes	Labor Code, Art. 63(b)
	Is there paid parental leave?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	Is dismissal of pregnant workers prohibited?	Yes	Labor Code, Arts. 33 and 104
	Does the law prohibit discrimination in access to credit based on gender?	Yes	Central Bank of Bahrain's Directive No. OG/293/2020
Entrepreneurship	Can a woman sign a contract in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Can a woman register a business in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Can a woman open a bank account in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
Assets	Do men and women have equal ownership rights to immovable property?	Yes	Family Law No. 19/2017, Art. 39; Civil Law No. 19/2001, Art. 769
	Do sons and daughters have equal rights to inherit assets from their parents?	No	Constitution of Bahrain of 2002, Art. 5(d); Civil Law No. 19/2001, Art. 909
	Do female and male surviving spouses have equal rights to inherit assets?	No	Constitution of Bahrain of 2002, Art. 5(d); Civil Law No. 19/2001, Art. 909
	Does the law grant spouses equal administrative authority over assets during marriage?	Yes	Family Law No. 19/2017, Art. 39
	Does the law provide for the valuation of nonmonetary contributions?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	Is the age at which men and women can retire with full pension benefits the same?	Yes	Social Insurance Law, Art. 34; Law No. 14/2022, Art. 1
Pension	Is the age at which men and women can retire with partial pension benefits the same?	Yes	Social Insurance Law, Art. 34; Law No. 14/2022, Art. 1
	Is the mandatory retirement age for men and women the same?	Yes	Labor Code, Art. 115
	Are periods of absence due to childcare accounted for in pension benefits?	Yes	Social Insurance Organization Decision No. (1) of 2020, Art. 1; Labour Code, Part V