Women, Business and the Law 2014 Fact Sheet: Middle East and North Africa

The Middle East and North Africa had the second highest proportion of legal restrictions on women in 1960 as measured by Women, Business and the Law’s historical analysis—and the highest proportion today.

Citizenship laws remain unequal for men and women: in just over two-thirds of the economies measured, married women cannot pass citizenship to their children in the same way as their husbands. This is the case in: the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates, and West Bank and Gaza.

The report documents limited reforms over the past two years. This may be connected to civil unrest in the region.

In Algeria the credit registry eliminated the minimum loan amount for inclusion and now includes information from microfinance institutions.

In the Arab Republic of Egypt private credit registries now include information from microfinance institutions.

About the Women, Business and the Law Report series:
Women, Business and the Law measures how laws, regulations and institutions differentiate between women and men in ways that may affect women’s incentives or capacity to work or to set up and run a business. It analyzes legal differences on the basis of gender in 143 economies, covering six areas: gaining access to institutions, using property, getting a job, providing incentives to work, building credit, and going to court. The project provides a clear picture of gender gaps based on legal differences in each economy, but it does not capture the full extent of the gender gap, nor does it indicate the relative importance of each aspect covered. This year’s report was published by Bloomsbury Publishing. For more information, please visit: wbl.worldbank.org. Join us on Facebook: wbl.worldbank.org/Facebook

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