

# Bahrain

*Women, Business and the Law 2020* presents an index covering 190 economies and structured around the life cycle of a working woman. In total, 35 questions are scored across the 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 46.3 out of 100**. The overall score for Bahrain is lower than the regional average observed across the Middle East & North Africa (49.6).

## Bahrain - Scores for Women, Business and the Law 2020



### Relative Strengths

Bahrain does not attain a perfect score on any of the WBL2020 indicators. There is room for improvement across all eight indicators.

### Areas for Improvement

However, when it comes to constraints on freedom of movement, laws affecting women's decisions to work, laws affecting women's pay, constraints related to marriage, laws affecting women's work after having children, constraints on women's starting and running a business, gender differences in property and inheritance, and laws affecting the size of a women's pension, Bahrain could consider reforms to improve legal equality for women.

For example, one of the lowest scores for Bahrain is on the indicator related to laws affecting women's pay (the WBL2020 Pay Indicator). To improve on the Pay Indicator, Bahrain may wish to consider mandating equal remuneration for work of equal value, allowing women to work the same night hours as men, allowing women to work in jobs deemed dangerous in the same way as men, and allowing women to work in all the same industries as men.

### Recent Reforms (2018-2019)

Workplace: Bahrain improved the protection of women at work by adopting legislation and criminal penalties for sexual harassment.

Marriage: Bahrain began allowing women to be head of household.

	QUESTION	ANSWER	LEGAL BASIS
Mobility	Can a woman choose where to live in the same way as a man?	No	Family Law No. 19 of 2017, Arts. 54 and 59
	Can a woman travel outside her home in the same way as a man?	No	Family Law No. 19 of 2017, Art. 54
	Can a woman apply for a passport in the same way as a man?	Yes	Law No. 21 of 2015, amending Passport Law No. 11 of 1975; 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 of 2017, Art. 56
	Does the law prohibit discrimination in employment based on gender?	Yes	Labor Law, Art. 29
	Is there legislation on sexual harassment in employment?	Yes	Law Decree No. 59 of 2018 amending some provisions of Labor Code No. 36 of 2012, Art. 2 (192 bis)
	Are there criminal penalties or civil remedies for sexual harassment in employment?	Yes	<i>Criminal:</i> Law Decree No. 59 of 2018 amending some provisions of Labor Code No. 36 of 2012, 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?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	Can women work the same night hours as men?	No	Labor Law, Art. 30
	Can women work in jobs dangerous in the same way as men?	No	Jobs deemed hazardous: No restrictions could be located Jobs deemed arduous: Ministerial Order No. 32 of 2013, Art. 1(3) Jobs deemed morally inappropriate: No restrictions could be located
	Are women able to work in the same industries as men?	No	Mining: Ministerial Order No. 32 of 2013, Art. 1 Construction: Ministerial Order No. 32 of 2013, Art. 1; Ministerial Order No. 16 of 2013 Factories: Ministerial Order No. 32 of 2013, Art. 1 Agriculture: No restrictions could be located Energy: Ministerial Order No. 32 of 2013, Art. 1; Ministerial Order No. 16 of 2013, Art. 1 Water: No restrictions could be located Transportation: No restrictions could be located Other: Labor Law, Article 31
Marriage	Is there no legal provision that requires a married woman to obey her husband?	No	Family Law No. 19 of 2017, Art. 40(a)
	Can a woman be head of household in the same way as a man?	Yes	Family Law No. 19 of 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 of 2017, Art. 83
	Does a woman have the same rights to remarry as a man?	No	Family Law No. 19 of 2007, Arts. 85-87
Parenthood	Is paid leave of at least 14 weeks available to mothers?	No	Labor Law, Art. 32
	Does the government pay 100% of maternity leave benefits?	No	Labor Law, Art. 32
	Is there paid paternity leave?	Yes	Labor Law, Art. 63(b)
	Is there paid parental leave?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	Is dismissal of pregnant workers prohibited?	Yes	Labor Law, Arts. 33 and 104
Entrepre.	Does the law prohibit discrimination in access to credit based on gender?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	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 man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
Assets	Do men and women have equal ownership rights to immovable property?	Yes	Constitution of the Kingdom of Bahrain, Art. 9 (c)
	Do sons and daughters have equal rights to inherit assets from their parents?	No	Constitution of the Kingdom of Bahrain 2002, Art. 5 (d)
	Do female and male surviving spouses have equal rights to inherit assets?	No	Constitution of the Kingdom of Bahrain 2002, Art. 5(d)
	Does the law grant spouses equal administrative authority over assets during marriage?	Yes	Family Law No. 19 of 2017, Art. 39
	Does the law provide for the valuation of nonmonetary contributions?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Pension	Are the ages at which men and women can retire with full pension benefits equal?	No	Women: Social Insurance Law, Art. 34 Men: Social Insurance Law, Art. 34
	Are the ages at which men and women can retire with partial pension benefits equal?	Yes	Women: Social Insurance Law, Art. 34 Men: Social Insurance Law, Art. 34
	Are the mandatory retirement ages for men and women equal?	Yes	Women: Labor Law, Art. 115 Men: Labor Law, Art. 115
	Are periods of absence due to child care accounted for in pension benefits?	No	No applicable provisions could be located