

Belgium

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 (Brussels). Different rules may apply in other jurisdictions so local legislation should be reviewed. Based on this approach, **Belgium scores 100 out of 100**. The overall score for Belgium is higher than the regional average observed across High income (OECD) countries (94.7).

Belgium - Scores for Women, Business and the Law 2020



Relative Strengths

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, Belgium gets a perfect score.

Areas for Improvement

Belgium attains a perfect score on all of the WBL2020 indicators.

Recent Reforms (2018-2019)

No reforms impacting the WBL2020 indicators have been observed during the past two years.

	QUESTION	ANSWER	LEGAL BASIS
Mobility	Can a woman choose where to live in the same way as a man?	Yes	Code Civil, Arts. 213 et 214
	Can a woman travel outside her home in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Can a woman apply for a passport in the same way as a man?	Yes	Arrêté Ministériel du 19 Avril 2014 Concernant la Délivrance de Passeports, Art. 2; Passport application procedures
	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?	Yes	Code Civil, Art. 216
	Does the law prohibit discrimination in employment based on gender?	Yes	Loi du 1 Mai 2007, Arts. 3 et 6
	Is there legislation on sexual harassment in employment?	Yes	Loi du 4 août 1996, Arts. 32bis et 32ter; Code Penal Social, Arts. 101 et 119
	Are there criminal penalties or civil remedies for sexual harassment in employment?	Yes	<i>Criminal</i> : Loi du 4 août 1996, Art. 80; Code Penal Social, Arts. 101 et 119 <i>Civil</i> : Loi du 4 août 1996, Art. 32decies
Pay	Does the law mandate equal remuneration for work of equal value?	Yes	Convention Collective de Travail No. 25, Art. 1
	Can women work the same night hours as men?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Can women work in jobs dangerous in the same way as men?	Yes	Jobs deemed hazardous: No restrictions could be located Jobs deemed arduous: No restrictions could be located Jobs deemed morally inappropriate: No restrictions could be located
	Are women able to work in the same industries as men?	Yes	Mining: No restrictions could be located Construction: No restrictions could be located Factories: No restrictions could be located Agriculture: No restrictions could be located Energy: No restrictions could be located Water: No restrictions could be located Transportation: No restrictions could be located Other: No restrictions could be located
Marriage	Is there no legal provision that requires a married woman to obey her husband?	Yes	Civil Code, Art. 213
	Can a woman be head of household in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Is there legislation specifically addressing domestic violence?	Yes	Loi du 28 janvier 2003; Loi du 15 mai 2012
	Can a woman obtain a judgment of divorce in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Does a woman have the same rights to remarry as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
Parenthood	Is paid leave of at least 14 weeks available to mothers?	Yes	Loi sur le Travail, Art. 39
	Does the government pay 100% of maternity leave benefits?	Yes	Arrêté Royal Portant Exécution de la Loi Relative à l'Assurance Obligatoire Soins de Santé et Indemnités, Titre III
	Is there paid paternity leave?	Yes	Loi Relative aux Contrats de Travail, Art. 3(2)
	Is there paid parental leave?	Yes	No applicable provisions could be located
	Is dismissal of pregnant workers prohibited?	Yes	Loi sur le Travail, Art. 40
Entrepre.	Does the law prohibit discrimination in access to credit based on gender?	Yes	Loi du 10 Mai 2007 Tendant à Lutter Contre la Discrimination Entre les Femmes et les Hommes, Arts. 5, 6(1)(1) et (8)
	Can a woman sign a contract in the same way as a man?	Yes	Code Civil, Arts. 214 et 1124
	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	Code Civil, Art. 218
Assets	Do men and women have equal ownership rights to immovable property?	Yes	Code Civil, Arts. 1398-1426
	Do sons and daughters have equal rights to inherit assets from their parents?	Yes	Code Civil, Arts. 731 et 745
	Do female and male surviving spouses have equal rights to inherit assets?	Yes	Code Civil, Arts. 731 et 745 bis-745 septies
	Does the law grant spouses equal administrative authority over assets during marriage?	Yes	Code Civil, Arts. 1415-1418
	Does the law provide for the valuation of nonmonetary contributions?	Yes	Code Civil, Arts. 1398-1408
Pension	Are the ages at which men and women can retire with full pension benefits equal?	Yes	Women: Arrêté Royal du 23 décembre 1996, Art. 2 Men: Arrêté Royal du 23 décembre 1996, Art. 2;
	Are the ages at which men and women can retire with partial pension benefits equal?	Yes	Women: Arrêté Royal du 23 décembre 1996, Art. 4 Men: Arrêté Royal du 23 décembre 1996, Art. 4
	Are the mandatory retirement ages for men and women equal?	Yes	Women: No applicable provisions could be located Men: No applicable provisions could be located
	Are periods of absence due to child care accounted for in pension benefits?	Yes	Arrêté Royal du 23 décembre 1996