

Bhutan

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 (Thimphu). Different rules may apply in other jurisdictions so local legislation should be reviewed. Based on this approach, **Bhutan scores 71.9 out of 100**. The overall score for Bhutan is higher than the regional average observed across South Asia (62.4).

Bhutan - 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, and laws affecting women’s pay, Bhutan gets a perfect score.

Areas for Improvement

However, when it comes to 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, Bhutan could consider reforms to improve legal equality for women.

For example, one of the lowest scores for Bhutan is on the indicator related to laws affecting the size of a women’s pension (the WBL2020 Pension Indicator). To improve on the Pension Indicator, Bhutan may wish to consider equalizing the ages at which men and women can retire with full pension benefits, equalizing the ages at which men and women can retire with partial pension benefits, and accounting for periods of absence from work due to childcare in pension benefits.

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	No restrictions could be located
	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	Passport application procedures; 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?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Does the law prohibit discrimination in employment based on gender?	Yes	Labor and Employment Act 2007, Secs. 11-13 and 237
	Is there legislation on sexual harassment in employment?	Yes	Labor and Employment Act of Bhutan 2007, Sec. 16-19
	Are there criminal penalties or civil remedies for sexual harassment in employment?	Yes	<i>Criminal:</i> Labor and Employment Act of Bhutan 2007, Sec. 20 <i>Civil:</i> No applicable provisions could be located
Pay	Does the law mandate equal remuneration for work of equal value?	Yes	Labor and Employment Act 2007, Sec. 13
	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	No applicable provisions could be located
	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	Domestic Violence Prevention Act of Bhutan 2013
	Can a woman obtain a judgment of divorce in the same way as a man?	No	Marriage Act of Bhutan, Art. 5-7
Parenthood	Does a woman have the same rights to remarry as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Is paid leave of at least 14 weeks available to mothers?	No	Regulations on Working Conditions 2012, Regulation: Leave, Ch. 5
	Does the government pay 100% of maternity leave benefits?	No	Regulations on Working Conditions 2012, Regulation: Leave, Ch. 5
	Is there paid paternity leave?	Yes	Regulations on Working Conditions 2012, Regulation: Leave, Ch. 6; Labor and Employment Act 2007, Sec. 106(e)
	Is there paid parental leave?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	Is dismissal of pregnant workers prohibited?	Yes	Labor and Employment Act 2007, Sec. 85(c)
Entrepren.	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?	No	Companies Act of 2016, Art. 228(g)
	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	Inheritance Act of Bhutan of 1980, Arts. GA 6-3 and GA-12
	Do sons and daughters have equal rights to inherit assets from their parents?	Yes	Inheritance Act of Bhutan of 1980, Arts. GA 8-11, 8-13, 8-18- 8-20
	Do female and male surviving spouses have equal rights to inherit assets?	Yes	Inheritance Act of Bhutan of 1980, Arts. GA 8-11, 8-13, 8-18- 8-20
	Does the law grant spouses equal administrative authority over assets during marriage?	Yes	Inheritance Act of Bhutan of 1980, Arts. GA-6-12 and GA 6-13
	Does the law provide for the valuation of nonmonetary contributions?	No	Inheritance Act of Bhutan of 1980, Arts. GA 6-3, GA 6-13 and GA 6-15
Pension	Are the ages at which men and women can retire with full pension benefits equal?	No	Women: No applicable provisions could be located Men: No applicable provisions could be located
	Are the ages at which men and women can retire with partial pension benefits equal?	No	Women: No applicable provisions could be located Men: No applicable provisions could be located
	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?	No	No applicable provisions could be located