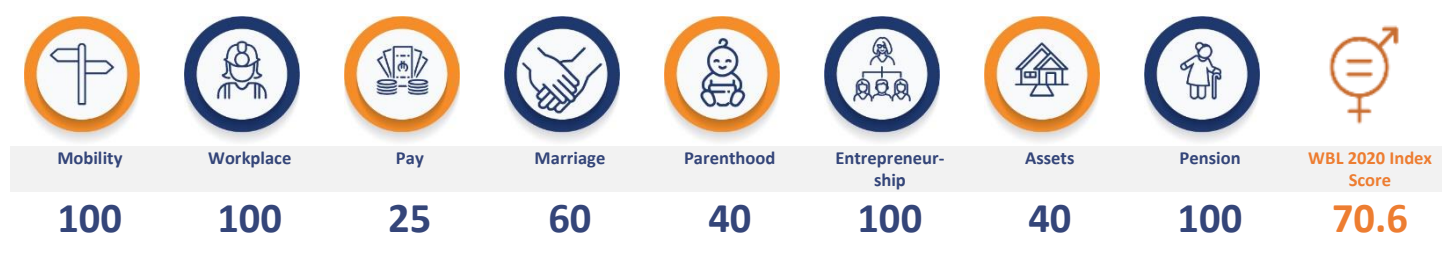


Saudi Arabia

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 (Riyadh). Different rules may apply in other jurisdictions so local legislation should be reviewed. Based on this approach, **Saudi Arabia scores 70.6 out of 100**. The overall score for Saudi Arabia is higher than the regional average observed across the Middle East & North Africa (49.6).

Saudi Arabia - 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, constraints on women’s starting and running a business, and laws affecting the size of a women’s pension, Saudi Arabia gets a perfect score.

Areas for Improvement

However, when it comes to laws affecting women’s pay, constraints related to marriage, laws affecting women’s work after having children, and gender differences in property and inheritance, Saudi Arabia could consider reforms to improve legal equality for women.

For example, one of the lowest scores for Saudi Arabia is on the indicator related to laws affecting women’s pay (the WBL2020 Pay Indicator). To improve on the Pay Indicator, Saudi Arabia may wish to consider 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)

Mobility: Saudi Arabia made going places easier for women by removing restrictions on obtaining a passport and traveling abroad. New legal amendments also equalized a woman’s right to choose where to live and leave the marital home.

Workplace: Saudi Arabia enacted legislation and criminal penalties for sexual harassment in employment. It also prohibited gender discrimination in employment.

Marriage: Saudi Arabia began allowing women to be head of household and removed the legal obligation for a married woman to obey her husband.

Parenthood: Saudi Arabia prohibited the dismissal of pregnant workers.

Entrepreneurship: Saudi Arabia made access to credit easier for women by prohibiting gender-based discrimination in access to financial services.

Pension: Saudi Arabia equalized the age (60 years) at which men and women can retire with full pension benefits. It also mandated a retirement age of 60 years for both women and men.



	QUESTION	ANSWER	LEGAL BASIS
Mobility	Can a woman choose where to live in the same way as a man?	Yes	Civil Status Law, Art. 30
	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	Travel Document Law, Arts. 2-4; Passport application procedures
	Can a woman travel outside the country in the same way as a man?	Yes	Travel Document Law, Art. 4; Updated Procedures for Obtaining a Travel Permit
Workplace	Can a woman get a job in the same way as a man?	Yes	Guidelines for Employing Women in the Private Sector, Art. 1/1(3)
	Does the law prohibit discrimination in employment based on gender?	Yes	Labor code, Art. 3
	Is there legislation on sexual harassment in employment?	Yes	Anti-Harassment Crime Law, Arts. 1, 5 and 6
	Are there criminal penalties or civil remedies for sexual harassment in employment?	Yes	<i>Criminal:</i> Anti-Harassment Crime Law, Arts. 1, 5 and 6 <i>Civil:</i> No applicable provisions could be located
Pay	Does the law mandate equal remuneration for work of equal value?	Yes	Ministerial Order No. 2370/1 of 18 September 2010
	Can women work the same night hours as men?	No	Labor Law, Art. 150; Ministerial Decree No. 215739 of August 7th, 2019, Art. 3
	Can women work in jobs dangerous in the same way as men?	No	Jobs deemed hazardous: Labor Law, Art. 149 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?	No	Mining: Labor Law, Art. 149; Ministerial Decree No. 1/2834 of 2/10/2006, Art. 1 Construction: No restrictions could be located Factories: No restrictions could be located Agriculture: No restrictions could be located Energy: Labor Law, Art. 149; Ministerial Decree No. 1/2834 of 2/10/2006, Art. 1 Water: Labor Law, Art. 149; Ministerial Decree No. 1/2834 of 2/10/2006, Art. 1 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	Civil Status Law, Art. 91
	Is there legislation specifically addressing domestic violence?	Yes	Law on the Protection from Harm, Art. 1
	Can a woman obtain a judgment of divorce in the same way as a man?	No	Basic Law of Governance, Arts. 7 and 23
Parenthood	Does a woman have the same rights to remarry as a man?	No	Basic Law of Governance, Arts. 7 and 23
	Is paid leave of at least 14 weeks available to mothers?	No	Labor Law, Art. 151
	Does the government pay 100% of maternity leave benefits?	No	Labor Law, Art. 151
	Is there paid paternity leave?	Yes	Labor Law, Art. 113
	Is there paid parental leave?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	Is dismissal of pregnant workers prohibited?	Yes	Labor Law, Art. 155
Entrepren.	Does the law prohibit discrimination in access to credit based on gender?	Yes	Banking Consumer Protection Principles, 19.6; Finance Companies Consumer Protection Principles, 12.3
	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	Basic Law of Governance, Arts. 7 and 23
	Do sons and daughters have equal rights to inherit assets from their parents?	No	Basic Law of Governance, Arts. 7 and 23
	Do female and male surviving spouses have equal rights to inherit assets?	No	Basic Law of Governance, Arts. 7 and 23
	Does the law grant spouses equal administrative authority over assets during marriage?	Yes	Basic Law of Governance, Arts. 7 and 23
	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?	Yes	Women: Labor Law, Art. 74 (4); Social Insurance Law, Art. 38 (1) Men: Labor Law, Art. 74 (4); Social Insurance Law, Art. 38 (1)
	Are the ages at which men and women can retire with partial pension benefits equal?	Yes	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: Labor Law, Art. 74 (4); Social Insurance Law, Art. 38 (1) Men: Labor Law, Art. 74 (4); Social Insurance Law, Art. 38 (1)
	Are periods of absence due to child care accounted for in pension benefits?	Yes	Implementation Regulations of the Registration and Contribution, Art. 21 (4); Labor Law, Art. 151