

United Arab Emirates

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 (Dubai). Different rules may apply in other jurisdictions so local legislation should be reviewed. Based on this approach, **United Arab Emirates scores 56.3 out of 100**. The overall score for United Arab Emirates is higher than the regional average observed across the Middle East & North Africa (49.6).

United Arab Emirates - Scores for Women, Business and the Law 2020



Relative Strengths

When it comes to laws affecting the size of a women's pension, United Arab Emirates gets a perfect score.

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, and gender differences in property and inheritance, United Arab Emirates could consider reforms to improve legal equality for women.

For example, one of the lowest scores for United Arab Emirates is on the indicator related to laws affecting women's work after having children (the WBL2020 Parenthood Indicator). To improve on the Parenthood Indicator, United Arab Emirates may wish to consider making paid leave of at least 14 weeks available to mothers, making the government administer 100% of maternity leave benefits, making paid leave available to fathers, and making paid parental leave available.

Recent Reforms (2018-2019)

Mobility: The United Arab Emirates made international travel easier for women by allowing a married woman to apply for a passport without the written consent of her husband.

Workplace: The United Arab Emirates improved the protection of women at work by prohibiting discrimination based on gender in employment. It also adopted legislation and criminal penalties for sexual harassment in employment.

Pay: The United Arab Emirates lifted restrictions on women's ability to work at night and in jobs deemed dangerous. It also eliminated restrictions on women's employment in the mining, manufacturing, agriculture and energy industries.

Marriage: The United Arab Emirates began allowing women to be head of household and adopted legislation protecting women from domestic violence.

Parenthood: The United Arab Emirates prohibited the dismissal of pregnant workers.

	QUESTION	ANSWER	LEGAL BASIS
Mobility	Can a woman choose where to live in the same way as a man?	No	Personal Status Law No. 28 of 2005, as amended by Federal Decree No. 8 of 2019, Art. 71(1-2)
	Can a woman travel outside her home in the same way as a man?	No	Personal Status Law No. 28 of 2005, as amended by Federal Decree No. 8 of 2019, Art. 72
	Can a woman apply for a passport in the same way as a man?	Yes	Federal Decree Law No. 16 of 2017
	Can a woman travel outside the country in the same way as a man?	No	Personal Status Law No. 28 of 2005, as amended by Federal Decree No. 8 of 2019, Art. 71(4)
Workplace	Can a woman get a job in the same way as a man?	No	Personal Status Law No. 28 of 2005, as amended by Federal Decree No. 8 of 2019, Art. 72
	Does the law prohibit discrimination in employment based on gender?	Yes	Federal Law No. 11 of 2019 Amending Certain Provisions of Federal Law No. 2 of 2015, on Combating Discrimination and Hatred
	Is there legislation on sexual harassment in employment?	Yes	Federal Criminal Law N. 3 of 1987, Art. 395 bis
	Are there criminal penalties or civil remedies for sexual harassment in employment?	Yes	<i>Criminal:</i> Federal Criminal Law N. 3 of 1987, Art. 395 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?	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?	No	Personal Status Law, as amended by Federal Decree No. 8 of 2019, Art. 56
	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	Federal Domestic Violence Law N. 10 of 2019
	Can a woman obtain a judgment of divorce in the same way as a man?	No	Personal Status Law No. 28 of 2005, as amended by Federal Decree No. 8 of 2019, Arts. 100, 106 and 120
Parenthood	Does a woman have the same rights to remarry as a man?	No	Personal Status Law No. 28 of 2005, as amended by Federal Decree No. 8 of 2019, Arts. 136 and 139
	Is paid leave of at least 14 weeks available to mothers?	No	U.A.E. Labor Law, Federal Law No. 8 of 1980, Art. 30
	Does the government pay 100% of maternity leave benefits?	No	U.A.E. Labor Law, Federal Law No. 8 of 1980, Art. 30
	Is there paid paternity leave?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	Is there paid parental leave?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Entrepre.	Is dismissal of pregnant workers prohibited?	Yes	Federal Decree Law No. 6 of 2019 Amending Some Provisions Of Federal Labour Law No. 8 of 1980, Art. 30bis
	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
Assets	Can a woman open a bank account in the same way as man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Do men and women have equal ownership rights to immovable property?	Yes	Personal Status Law no. 28, Arts. 55(4) and 62(1)
	Do sons and daughters have equal rights to inherit assets from their parents?	No	Personal Status Law No. 28 of 2005, Arts. 321-328
	Do female and male surviving spouses have equal rights to inherit assets?	No	Personal Status Law No. 28 of 2005, Art. 322-324
	Does the law grant spouses equal administrative authority over assets during marriage?	Yes	Personal Status Law No. 28 of 2005, Arts. 2, 55(4) and 62(1)
Pension	Does the law provide for the valuation of nonmonetary contributions?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	Are the ages at which men and women can retire with full pension benefits equal?	Yes	Women: Law on Pensions and Social Security of 16 February 1999 (No. 7 of 1999), Arts. 1 and 16 Men: Law on Pensions and Social Security of 16 February 1999 (No. 7 of 1999), Arts. 1 and 16
	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: 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	Law on Pensions and Social Security of 16 February 1999 (No. 7 of 1999)