

# Bahrain

*Women, Business and the Law 2021* 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 55.6 out of 100**. The overall score for Bahrain is higher than the regional average observed across the Middle East & North Africa (51.5). Within the Middle East & North Africa region, the maximum score observed is 88.8 (Malta).

## Bahrain - Scores for Women, Business and the Law 2021



### Relative Strengths

When it comes to constraints on women's starting and running a business, Bahrain 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, gender differences in property and inheritance, and laws affecting the size of a woman'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 WBL2021 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 at night in the same way as men, and allowing women to work in an industrial job in the same way as men.

### Recent Reforms

Bahrain eliminated restrictions on women's employment in arduous jobs, explicitly accounted for periods of absence due to child care in pension benefits, and made access to credit easier for women by prohibiting gender-based discrimination in financial services.



Further data details for Bahrain are available at:  
<https://wbl.worldbank.org/en/data/exploreconomies/bahrain/2021>

	QUESTION	ANSWER	LEGAL BASIS
Mobility	Can a woman choose where to live in the same way as a man?	No	Family Law No. 19/2017, Arts. 54 and 59
	Can a woman travel outside her home in the same way as a man?	No	Family Law No. 19/2017, Art. 54
	Can a woman apply for a passport in the same way as a man?	Yes	Passport Law No. 11/1975, as amended by Law No. 21/2005, Art. 3
Workplace	Can a woman travel outside the country in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Can a woman get a job in the same way as a man?	No	Family Law No. 19/2017, 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	Decree Law No. 59 amending Labor Code, Art. 2(192 bis)
Pay	Are there criminal penalties or civil remedies for sexual harassment in employment?	Yes	<i>Criminal:</i> Decree Law No. 59 amending Labor Code, Art. 2(192 bis) <i>Civil:</i> No applicable provisions could be located
	Does the law mandate equal remuneration for work of equal value?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	Can a woman work at night in the same way as a man?	No	Labor Law, Art. 30
	Can a woman work in a job deemed dangerous in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
Marriage	Can a woman work in an industrial job in the same way as a man?	No	Labor Law, Article 31
	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. 19/2017, Art. 40(a)
	Is there legislation specifically addressing domestic violence?	Yes	Law on Protection from Domestic Violence
Parenthood	Can a woman obtain a judgment of divorce in the same way as a man?	No	Family Law No. 19/2017, Art. 83
	Does a woman have the same rights to remarry as a man?	No	Family Law No. 19/2017, Arts. 85-87 and 117-122
	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
Entrepreneur.	Is paid leave available to fathers?	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
	Does the law prohibit discrimination in access to credit based on gender?	Yes	Central Bank of Bahrain Directive No. OG/293/2020
Assets	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
	Do men and women have equal ownership rights to immovable property?	Yes	Family Law No. 19/2017, Art. 39; The Civil Law No. 19/2001, Art. 769
	Do sons and daughters have equal rights to inherit assets from their parents?	No	The Constitution of the Kingdom of Bahrain, Art. 5(d); Civil Law No. 19/2001, Art. 909
Pension	Do female and male surviving spouses have equal rights to inherit assets?	No	The Constitution of the Kingdom of Bahrain, Art. 5(d); Civil Law No. 19/2001, Art. 909
	Does the law grant spouses equal administrative authority over assets during marriage?	Yes	Family Law No. 19/2017, Art. 39
	Does the law provide for the valuation of nonmonetary contributions?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	Is the age at which men and women can retire with full pension benefits the same?	No	Women: Social Insurance Law, Art. 34 Men: Social Insurance Law, Art. 34
Pension	Is the age at which men and women can retire with partial pension benefits the same?	Yes	Women: Social Insurance Law, Art. 34 Men: Social Insurance Law, Art. 34
	Is the mandatory retirement age for men and women the same?	Yes	Women: Labor Law, Art. 115 Men: Labor Law, Art. 115
	Are periods of absence due to child care accounted for in pension benefits?	Yes	Social Insurance Organization Decision No. (1) of 2020, Art. 1; Labour Law, Part V