

United Arab Emirates

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 (Dubai). Different rules may apply in other jurisdictions so local legislation should be reviewed. Based on this approach, **United Arab Emirates scores 82.5 out of 100**. The overall score for United Arab Emirates 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).

United Arab Emirates - Scores for Women, Business and the Law 2021



Relative Strengths

When it comes to constraints on freedom of movement, laws affecting women's decisions to work, laws affecting women's pay, constraints on women's starting and running a business, and laws affecting the size of a woman's pension, United Arab Emirates gets a perfect score.

Areas for Improvement

However, when it comes to constraints related to marriage, laws affecting women's work after having children, 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 gender differences in property and inheritance (the WBL2021 Assets Indicator). To improve on the Assets Indicator, United Arab Emirates may wish to consider equalizing inheritance rights for sons and daughters, equalizing inheritance rights for male and female surviving spouses, and recognizing the value of nonmonetary contributions.

Recent Reforms

The United Arab Emirates allowed a woman to get a job without permission from her husband. Women are now allowed to choose where to live and travel abroad in the same way as men. The United Arab Emirates also allowed a married woman to leave the home without her husband's permission. A married woman is no longer required to obey her husband. The United Arab Emirates introduced 5 days of paid parental leave as an individual entitlement for each parent. Fathers now have paid leave to care for their newborn babies. Finally, the United Arab Emirates mandated equal remuneration for men and women who perform work of equal value.



Further data details for United Arab Emirates are available at:
<https://wbl.worldbank.org/en/data/exploreeconomies/ united-arab-emirates/2021>

	QUESTION	ANSWER	LEGAL BASIS
Mobility	Can a woman choose where to live in the same way as a man?	Yes	Personal Status Law No. 28/2005, as amended by Federal Decree No. 5/2020, Art. 71
	Can a woman travel outside her home in the same way as a man?	Yes	Personal Status Law No. 28/2005, as amended by Federal Decree No. 5/2020, Arts. 71 and 72
	Can a woman apply for a passport in the same way as a man?	Yes	Federal Decree Law No. 16/2017, Art. 4
	Can a woman travel outside the country in the same way as a man?	Yes	Personal Status Law No. 28/2005, as amended by Federal Decree No. 5/2020, Art. 71(4)
Workplace	Can a woman get a job in the same way as a man?	Yes	Personal Status Law No. 28/2005, as amended by Federal Decree No. 5/2020, 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	Penal Code, Art. 359 bis
	Are there criminal penalties or civil remedies for sexual harassment in employment?	Yes	<i>Criminal:</i> Penal Code, Art. 359 bis <i>Civil:</i> No applicable provisions could be located
Pay	Does the law mandate equal remuneration for work of equal value?	Yes	Federal Labor Law, Art. 32
	Can a woman work at night in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Can a woman work in a job deemed dangerous in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Can a woman work in an industrial job in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
Marriage	Is there no legal provision that requires a married woman to obey her husband?	Yes	Personal Status Law No. 28/2005, as amended by Federal Decree No. 5/2020, 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
	Can a woman obtain a judgment of divorce in the same way as a man?	No	Personal Status Law No. 28/2005, as amended by Federal Decree No. 5/2020, Arts. 110-135
Parenthood	Does a woman have the same rights to remarry as a man?	No	Personal Status Law No. 28/2005, Arts. 136-141
	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 paid leave available to fathers?	Yes	See parental leave
	Is there paid parental leave?	Yes	Federal Decree Law No. 6 of 2020, Art. 74
Entrepren.	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?	Yes	Central Bank of the UAE Notice No. CBUAE/BSD2019/3457
	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. 28/2005, Arts. 55(4) and 62(1)
	Do sons and daughters have equal rights to inherit assets from their parents?	No	Personal Status Law, Arts. 321-335
	Do female and male surviving spouses have equal rights to inherit assets?	No	Personal Status Law, Arts. 322-324
	Does the law grant spouses equal administrative authority over assets during marriage?	Yes	Personal Status Law No. 28/2005, Art. 62(1)
Pension	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?	Yes	Women: Law No. 7 of 1999, Arts. 1 and 16 Men: Law No. 7 of 1999, Arts. 1 and 16
	Is the age at which men and women can retire with partial pension benefits the same?	Yes	Women: No applicable provisions could be located Men: No applicable provisions could be located
	Is the mandatory retirement age for men and women the same?	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 No. 7 of 1999, Art. 3