

# Bhutan

*Women, Business and the Law 2022 (WBL2022)* presents an index covering 190 economies and structured around the life cycle of a working woman. In total, 35 questions are scored across 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 (63.7). Within the South Asia region, the maximum score observed is 80.6 (Nepal).

## Bhutan - Scores for Women, Business and the Law 2022



## 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 starting and running a business, gender differences in property and inheritance, and laws affecting the size of a woman'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 measuring laws affecting the size of a woman's pension (the WBL2022 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

No reforms were observed during the past year (October 2nd, 2020 – October 1st, 2021).



Further data details for Bhutan are available at:  
<https://wbl.worldbank.org/en/data/exploreconomies/bhutan/2022>



	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, Secs. 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 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	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, Arts. 5-7
	Does a woman have the same rights to remarry as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
Parenthood	Is paid leave of at least 14 weeks available to mothers?	No	Regulations on Working Conditions 2012, Regulation: Leave, Ch. 5, Sec. 46
	Does the government pay 100% of maternity leave benefits?	No	Regulations on Working Conditions 2012, Regulation: Leave, Ch. 5, Sec. 46
	Is paid leave available to fathers?	Yes	Regulations on Working Conditions 2012, Regulation: Leave, Ch. 6, Secs. 57 and 58
	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)
Entrepreneurship	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, Art. 228(g)
	Can a woman open a bank account in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
Assets	Do men and women have equal ownership rights to immovable property?	Yes	Inheritance Act, Arts. GA 6-3 and GA 6-12
	Do sons and daughters have equal rights to inherit assets from their parents?	Yes	Inheritance Act, Arts. GA 8-11, 8-13, 8-18 and 8-20
	Do female and male surviving spouses have equal rights to inherit assets?	Yes	Inheritance Act, Arts. GA 8-11, 8-13, 8-18 and 8-20
	Does the law grant spouses equal administrative authority over assets during marriage?	Yes	Inheritance Act, Arts. GA 6-12 and GA 6-13
	Does the law provide for the valuation of nonmonetary contributions?	No	Inheritance Act, Arts. GA 6-3, GA 6-13 and GA 6-15
Pension	Is the age at which men and women can retire with full pension benefits the same?	No	Women: No applicable provisions could be located. Men: No applicable provisions could be located
	Is the age at which men and women can retire with partial pension benefits the same?	No	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 childcare accounted for in pension benefits?	No	No applicable provisions could be located