

Belgium

Women, Business and the Law 2023 (WBL2023) 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 (Brussels). Different rules may apply in other jurisdictions so local legislation should be reviewed. Based on this approach, **Belgium scores 100 out of 100**. The overall score for Belgium is higher than the regional average observed across OECD high-income economies (95.3). Within the OECD high-income region, there are 14 economies that score 100 out of 100.

Belgium - Scores for *Women, Business and the Law 2023*

								
Mobility	Workplace	Pay	Marriage	Parenthood	Entrepreneurship	Assets	Pension	WBL 2023 Index Score
100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Relative Strengths

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 starting and running a business, gender differences in property and inheritance, and laws affecting the size of a woman's pension, Belgium gets a perfect score.

Areas for Improvement

Belgium attains a perfect score on all of the WBL2023 indicators.

Recent Reforms

No reforms were observed during the past year (October 2nd, 2021 – October 1st, 2022).



Further data details for Belgium are available at:
<https://wbl.worldbank.org/en/data/exploreeconomies/belgium/2023>



	QUESTION	ANSWER	LEGAL BASIS
Mobility	Can a woman choose where to live in the same way as a man?	Yes	Code civil, Arts. 213 et 214
	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	Arrêté ministériel du 19 avril 2014 concernant la délivrance de passeports, Art. 2; Procédures de demande de passeport
	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	Code civil, Art. 216
	Does the law prohibit discrimination in employment based on gender?	Yes	Loi du 10 Mai 2007, Arts. 3 et 6
	Is there legislation on sexual harassment in employment?	Yes	Loi du 4 août 1996, Arts. 32bis et 32ter; Code Pénal social, Arts. 101 et 119
	Are there criminal penalties or civil remedies for sexual harassment in employment?	Yes	<i>Criminal</i> : Loi du 4 août 1996, Art. 80; Code Pénal social, Arts. 101 et 119 <i>Civil</i> : Loi du 4 août 1996, Art. 32decies
Pay	Does the law mandate equal remuneration for work of equal value?	Yes	Convention Collective de Travail No. 25, Art. 1
	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 the law free of legal provisions that require a married woman to obey her husband?	Yes	Code civil, Art. 213
	Can a woman be head of household in the same way as a man?	Yes	Code civil, Art. 213
	Is there legislation specifically addressing domestic violence?	Yes	Loi du 28 janvier 2003; Loi du 15 mai 2012
	Can a woman obtain a judgment of divorce in the same way as a man?	Yes	Code civil, Art. 230
Parenthood	Does a woman have the same rights to remarry as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Is paid leave of at least 14 weeks available to mothers?	Yes	Loi sur le Travail, Art. 39
	Does the government pay 100% of maternity leave benefits?	Yes	Arrêté Royal Portant Exécution de la Loi Relative à l'Assurance Obligatoire Soins de Santé et Indemnités, Titre III
	Is paid leave available to fathers?	Yes	Loi relative aux contrats de travail, Art. 30 (2)
	Is there paid parental leave?	Yes	Arrêté Royal Relatif à l'Introduction d'un Droit au Congé Parental dans le Cadre d'une Interruption de la Carrière Professionnelle, Art. 2
Entrepreneurship	Is dismissal of pregnant workers prohibited?	Yes	Loi sur le Travail, Art. 40
	Does the law prohibit discrimination in access to credit based on gender?	Yes	Loi du 10 mai 2007 tendant à lutter contre la discrimination entre les femmes et les hommes, Arts. 5, 6(1)(1) et (8)
	Can a woman sign a contract in the same way as a man?	Yes	Code civil, Arts. 212 and 1124
	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	Code civil, Art. 218
	Do men and women have equal ownership rights to immovable property?	Yes	Code civil, Arts. 2.3.16-2.3.39
	Do sons and daughters have equal rights to inherit assets from their parents?	Yes	Code civil, Arts. 4.10 and 4.16
	Do female and male surviving spouses have equal rights to inherit assets?	Yes	Code civil, Arts. 4.10 and 4.17-4.20
	Does the law grant spouses equal administrative authority over assets during marriage?	Yes	Code civil, Arts. 2.3.29-2.3.32
Pension	Does the law provide for the valuation of nonmonetary contributions?	Yes	Code civil, Arts. 2.3.16-2.3.25
	Is the age at which men and women can retire with full pension benefits the same?	Yes	Arrêté Royal du 23 décembre 1996, Art. 2
	Is the age at which men and women can retire with partial pension benefits the same?	Yes	Arrêté Royal du 23 décembre 1996, Art. 4
	Is the mandatory retirement age for men and women the same?	Yes	No applicable provisions could be located
	Are periods of absence due to childcare accounted for in pension benefits?	Yes	Arrêté Royal du 23 décembre 1996, Art. 4(2)

