

Japan

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 (Tokyo). Different rules may apply in other jurisdictions so local legislation should be reviewed. Based on this approach, **Japan scores 78.8 out of 100**. The overall score for Japan is lower 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.

Japan - Scores for Women, Business and the Law 2023



Relative Strengths

When it comes to constraints on freedom of movement, laws affecting women's work after having children, gender differences in property and inheritance, and laws affecting the size of a woman's pension, Japan gets a perfect score.

Areas for Improvement

However, when it comes to laws affecting women's decisions to work, laws affecting women's pay, constraints related to marriage, and constraints on women starting and running a business, Japan could consider reforms to improve legal equality for women.

For example, one of the lowest scores for Japan is on the indicator measuring laws affecting women's pay (the WBL2023 Pay indicator). To improve on the Pay indicator, Japan may wish to consider mandating equal remuneration for work of equal value, allowing women to work in jobs deemed dangerous in the same way as men, and allowing women to work in an industrial job in the same way as men.

Recent Reforms

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



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



	QUESTION	ANSWER	LEGAL BASIS
Mobility	Can a woman choose where to live in the same way as a man?	Yes	Civil Code, Art. 725
	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 Act, Arts. 3 and 5; Passport application procedures
	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	Act on Securing, Etc. of Equal Opportunity and Treatment between Men and Women in Employment, Arts. 5 and 6
	Is there legislation on sexual harassment in employment?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	Are there criminal penalties or civil remedies for sexual harassment in employment?	No	<i>Criminal:</i> No applicable provisions could be located <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 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?	No	Labor Standards Act, Art. 64-3(2)
	Can a woman work in an industrial job in the same way as a man?	No	Labor Standards Act, Art. 64-2
Marriage	Is the law free of legal provisions that require a married woman to obey her husband?	Yes	Civil Code, Arts. 2 and 752
	Can a woman be head of household in the same way as a man?	Yes	Basic Resident Registration Law, Arts. 6 and 7
	Is there legislation specifically addressing domestic violence?	Yes	Act on the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims
	Can a woman obtain a judgment of divorce in the same way as a man?	Yes	Civil Code, Arts. 763-770
Parenthood	Does a woman have the same rights to remarry as a man?	No	Civil Code, Art. 733
	Is paid leave of at least 14 weeks available to mothers?	Yes	Labor Standards Act, Art. 65
	Does the government pay 100% of maternity leave benefits?	Yes	Health Insurance Act, Art. 102
	Is paid leave available to fathers?	Yes	Child Care and Family Care Leave Act, Art. 9-2
	Is there paid parental leave?	Yes	Child Care and Family Care Leave Act, Art. 5(1); Employment Insurance Act, Art. 61-4
Entrepreneurship	Is dismissal of pregnant workers prohibited?	Yes	Act on Securing, Etc. of Equal Opportunity and Treatment between Men and Women in Employment, Art. 9
	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	Civil Code, Arts. 2-4 and 521
	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 a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
	Do men and women have equal ownership rights to immovable property?	Yes	Civil Code, Arts. 206, 762 and 768
	Do sons and daughters have equal rights to inherit assets from their parents?	Yes	Civil Code, Arts. 2 and 887(1)
	Do female and male surviving spouses have equal rights to inherit assets?	Yes	Civil Code, Arts. 2 and 890
	Does the law grant spouses equal administrative authority over assets during marriage?	Yes	Civil Code, Arts. 758(2) and 762
	Does the law provide for the valuation of nonmonetary contributions?	Yes	Civil Code, Art. 768(3)
Pension	Is the age at which men and women can retire with full pension benefits the same?	Yes	Employees Pension Insurance Act, Art. 42; National Pension Act, Art. 26
	Is the age at which men and women can retire with partial pension benefits the same?	Yes	National Pension Act, Art. 9-2; Employees Pension Insurance Act, Supplementary Provisions Art. 7-3
	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	Employees Pension Insurance Act; National Pension Act