

Pakistan

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 (Karachi). Different rules may apply in other jurisdictions so local legislation should be reviewed. Based on this approach, **Pakistan scores 58.8 out of 100**. The overall score for Pakistan is lower than the regional average observed across South Asia (63.7). Within the South Asia region, the maximum score observed is 80.6 (Nepal).

Pakistan - Scores for Women, Business and the Law 2023



Relative Strengths

When it comes to laws affecting women's decisions to work, Pakistan gets a perfect score.

Areas for Improvement

However, when it comes to constraints on freedom of movement, 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, Pakistan could consider reforms to improve legal equality for women.

For example, one of the lowest scores for Pakistan is on the indicator measuring laws affecting women's work after having children (the WBL2023 Parenthood indicator). To improve on the Parenthood indicator, Pakistan may wish to consider making the government administer 100% of maternity leave benefits, making paid leave available to fathers, making paid parental leave available, and prohibiting the dismissal of pregnant workers.

Recent Reforms

During the past year (October 2nd, 2021 to October 1st, 2022), Pakistan allowed women to register a business in the same way as men.



Further data details for Pakistan are available at:
<https://wbl.worldbank.org/en/data/exploreconomies/pakistan/2023>



	QUESTION	ANSWER	LEGAL BASIS
Mobility	Can a woman choose where to live in the same way as a man?	Yes	West Pakistan Family Court Rules 1965, Rule 6
	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?	No	The Passport Rules of 1974, Sec. 4; 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	The Sindh Terms of Employment (Standing Orders) Act 2015, Sec. 11
	Is there legislation on sexual harassment in employment?	Yes	Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010; Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace (Amendment) Act, 2022; Penal Code, Sec. 509(ii)
Pay	Are there criminal penalties or civil remedies for sexual harassment in employment?	Yes	<i>Criminal:</i> Penal Code, Sec. 509(ii) <i>Civil:</i> Protection Against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2010, Sec. 4(4)(ii)(e) and (8)
	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?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
Marriage	Can a woman work in an industrial job in the same way as a man?	No	Mines Act, Sec. 23C; Sindh Factories Act, Secs. 31(2) and 36
	Is the law free of legal provisions that require 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 and Protection) Act, 2013
	Can a woman obtain a judgment of divorce in the same way as a man?	No	Muslim Family Law Ordinance, Arts. 7 and 8; Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act, Art. 2
Parenthood	Does a woman have the same rights to remarry as a man?	No	Muslim Family Law Ordinance, Arts. 6 and 7
	Is paid leave of at least 14 weeks available to mothers?	Yes	The Sindh Maternity Benefits Act, Sec. 3, 5 and 7
	Does the government pay 100% of maternity leave benefits?	No	The Sindh Maternity Benefits Act, Sec. 7; Sindh Employees' Social Security Act, 2016, Sec. 37
	Is paid leave available to fathers?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	Is there paid parental leave?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Entrepreneurship	Is dismissal of pregnant workers prohibited?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
	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?	Yes	Act No XXXVII of 2021, amending the Companies Act of 2017, Arts. 7 and 8
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	Married Women's Property Act of 1874, Art. 2; Muslim Family Law Ordinance
	Do sons and daughters have equal rights to inherit assets from their parents?	No	Muslim Personal Law (Sharia), Art. 2
	Do female and male surviving spouses have equal rights to inherit assets?	No	Muslim Personal Law (Sharia), Art. 2
	Does the law grant spouses equal administrative authority over assets during marriage?	Yes	Married Women's Property Act of 1874, Art. 2; Muslim Family Law Ordinance
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?	No	Sindh Employees Old Age Benefits Act 2014, Secs. 26 and 55
	Is the age at which men and women can retire with partial pension benefits the same?	No	Sindh Employees Old Age Benefits Act 2014, Sec. 27 and 55
	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	Sindh Employees Old Age Benefits Act 2014, Sec. 30	