

Bulgaria

WBL 2.0 legal frameworks score	WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks score	WBL 2.0 expert opinions score
82.5	65.8	90.6

Women, Business and the Law 2024 (WBL 2024) identifies barriers for women's economic empowerment in three areas: women's legal rights, policy instruments designed to support the implementation of these rights, and how these rights are realized in practice. For that purpose, three new *Women, Business and the Law 2.0* indexes are presented for ten indicators: (1) legal frameworks, (2) supportive frameworks, and (3) expert opinions. For the WBL 2.0 legal frameworks index, 40 questions are scored across the ten indicators for 190 economies. For the WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks index, 30 questions are scored across the ten indicators for 190 economies. Overall economy level legal and supportive frameworks scores are then calculated by taking the average of each indicator, with 100 representing the highest possible score. The WBL 2.0 expert opinions index is created for a total of 164 economies. Expert opinion scores are not available for 26 economies due to an insufficient number of responses received from those economies during data collection. Individual responses at the economy level for 15 expert opinions questions across the ten indicators are scored by taking the median value of all responses per question. The economy level expert opinions index is equal to the simple unweighted average of the ten indicator scores.

For Bulgaria, data refer to the legal frameworks, supportive frameworks, and expert opinions that are applicable to the main business city (Sofia). The scores for Bulgaria are shown in the table below.

Women, Business and the Law 2024 2.0 indicator scores

										
WBL 2.0	Safety	Mobility	Workplace	Pay	Marriage	Parenthood	Childcare	Entrepreneurship	Assets	Pension
Legal frameworks score	75.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	75.0	50.0	100.0	25.0
Supportive frameworks score	0.0	66.7	66.7	100.0	100.0	66.7	75.0	66.7	66.7	50.0
Expert opinions score	75.0	100.0	93.8	75.0	100.0	100.0	62.5	100.0	100.0	100.0

In summary, the **WBL 2.0 legal frameworks score** for Bulgaria (82.5 out of 100.0) is higher than the global average (64.2) and higher than the Europe & Central Asia regional average (77.0). 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 and laws affecting women's property and inheritance, Bulgaria obtains a perfect score (100.0 out of 100.0). As an example, one of the lowest scores for Bulgaria is on the indicator measuring laws affecting the size of a woman's pension. To improve on the Pension indicator, Bulgaria 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 equalizing the mandatory retirement age for men and women.

The **WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks score** for Bulgaria (65.8 out of 100.0) is higher than the global average (39.5) and higher than the Europe & Central Asia regional average (51.3). When it comes to supportive frameworks affecting women's pay and supportive frameworks related to marriage, Bulgaria obtains a perfect score (100.0 out of 100.0). As an example,

one of the lowest scores for Bulgaria is on the indicator measuring supportive frameworks affecting women's safety. To improve on the Safety indicator, Bulgaria may wish to consider developing comprehensive mechanisms to address violence against women, putting in place special procedures for cases of sexual harassment, designating a government entity responsible for the monitoring and implementation of national services, plans and programmes addressing violence against women, providing an annual budgetary allocation towards violence against women risk mitigation and prevention and response programs.

The **WBL 2.0 expert opinions score** for Bulgaria (90.6 out of 100.0) is higher than the global average (65.7) and higher than the Europe & Central Asia regional average (75.2). When it comes to expert opinions on freedom of movement, expert opinions on marriage, expert opinions on women's work after having children, expert opinions on women starting and running a business, expert opinions on women's property and inheritance and expert opinions on women's pensions, Bulgaria obtains a perfect score (100.0 out of 100.0). As an example, one of the lowest scores for Bulgaria is on the indicator measuring expert opinions on childcare.

WBL 2.0 legal frameworks data

QUESTION	ANSWER	LEGAL BASIS
Safety		
Is there legislation on domestic violence?	Yes	Protection Against Domestic Violence Act, Art. 2(1) and Ch. 2; Criminal Code, Arts. 93(31), 116(par. 6, item 6a), 131(par. 1, item 5a), 142(par. 2, item 5a), 142a(4), 143(3), 144a(3) and 152
Is there legislation on femicide?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Is there comprehensive legislation on sexual harassment?	Yes	Protection Against Discrimination Act, Arts. 5, 17, 29 and 74; Criminal Code, Art. 144a
Is there legislation on child marriage?	Yes	Family Code, Arts. 6(1), 46(1)(1) and 47(1)(1); Criminal Code, Art. 176
Mobility		
Can a woman travel internationally in the same way as a man?	Yes	Act for Bulgarian Identification Documents, Arts. 41 and 43-44; Family Code, Arts. 2, 13 and 14
Can a woman choose where to live in the same way as a man?	Yes	Family Code, Arts. 2, 13 and 14
Can a woman travel outside her home in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
Do women and men have equal rights to confer citizenship to their spouses and their children?	Yes	Bulgarian Citizenship Act, Arts. 5, 8, 9 and 12
Workplace		
Can a woman get a job in the same way as a man?	Yes	Family Code, Arts. 13, 14 and 16
Does the law prohibit discrimination in employment based on gender?	Yes	Labor Code, Art. 8
Does the law prohibit discrimination in recruitment based on marital status, parental status, and age?	Yes	Protection Against Discrimination Act, Art. 4; Labor Code, Art. 8(3)
Does the law allow employees to request flexible work?	Yes	Labor Code, Arts. 139 and 107
Pay		
Does the law mandate equal remuneration for work of equal value?	Yes	Labor Code, Art. 243; Protection Against Discrimination Act, Art. 14
Can a woman work at night 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
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 be "head of household" or "head of family" in the same way as a man?	Yes	Family Code, Arts. 2, 13 and 14

Is the law free of legal provisions that require a married woman to obey her husband?	Yes	Family Code, Arts. 2, 13 and 14
Can a woman obtain a judgment of divorce in the same way as a man?	Yes	Family Code, Arts. 49-51
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?	Yes	Labor Code, Arts. 163 and 164
Are leave benefits for mothers paid solely by the government?	Yes	Social Insurance Code, Art. 2
Is there paid leave available to fathers?	Yes	Labor Code, Art. 163(8)
Is dismissal of pregnant workers prohibited?	Yes	Labor Code, Art. 333
Childcare		
Does the law establish provision of childcare services in center-based settings?	Yes	Health Act, Arts. 118-119; Pre-school and School Education Act, Arts. 24(3) and 35; Ordinance No. 26 of 18 November 2008 on the Structure and Activity of Nurseries and Children's Kitchens and Health Requirements, Art. 1; Rules of the Capital Municipal Council on Admission of Children in Municipal Independent Nurseries on the Territory of the Capital Municipality
Does the law establish any form of support to families for childcare services?	Yes	Health Act, Arts. 119(5-8); Decree No. 144 of 28 July 2023
Does the law establish any form of support to non-state childcare providers?	Yes	Regulation on Financing of Institutions in the Pre-school and School Education System, Arts. 1(4) and 3b; Law on Preschool and School Education, Arts. 24(3) and 57(3)
Does the law establish quality standards for the provision of childcare services in center-based settings?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Entrepreneurship		
Can a woman undertake entrepreneurial activities in the same way as a man?	Yes	Family Code, Arts. 2, 13 and 14; Commerce Act, Arts. 111-119; Commercial Register and the Register of Non-Profit Legal Entities Act, Arts. 13-14
Does the law prohibit discrimination in access to credit based on gender?	Yes	Protection Against Discrimination Act, Arts. 4(1) and 37(1)
Does the law prescribe a gender quota on corporate boards?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Does the law include gender-sensitive procurement provisions for public procurement processes?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Assets		
Do men and women have equal administrative power and ownership rights to immovable property, including land?	Yes	Family Code, Art. 24; Agricultural Land Ownership and Use Act, Art. 3; Property Act, Art. 2
Do sons and daughters have equal rights to inherit assets from their parents?	Yes	Inheritance Act, Art. 5
Do male and female surviving spouses have equal rights to inherit assets?	Yes	Inheritance Act, Art. 9
Does the law provide for the valuation of nonmonetary contributions?	Yes	Family Code, Arts. 21(2) and 30
Pension		
Are the ages at which men and women can retire with full pension benefits equal?	No	Social Insurance Code, Art. 68
Are the ages at which men and women can retire with partial pension benefits equal?	No	Social Insurance Code, Art. 68a
Is the mandatory retirement age for men and women equal?	No	Labor Code, Art. 328
Are periods of absence due to childcare accounted for in pension benefits?	Yes	Social Insurance Code, Arts. 9(2)

WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks data

QUESTION

ANSWER SOURCE



Safety

Has the government developed comprehensive mechanisms to address violence against women?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Are there special procedures for cases of sexual harassment?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Is there a government entity responsible for the monitoring and implementation of national services, plans and programmes addressing violence against women?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Is there an annual budgetary allocation towards violence against women risk mitigation, prevention and response programs?	No	Insufficient evidence located

Mobility

Are passport application processes the same for women and men?	Yes	Passport application procedures
Are the application processes for official identity documents the same for women and men?	Yes	ID application procedures
Is there a current policy or plan that explicitly considers the specific mobility needs of women in public transportation?	No	Insufficient evidence located

Workplace

Has the government published guidelines on non-discrimination based on gender in recruitment?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Has the government published guidelines on flexible work arrangements?	Yes	General Labor Inspectorate: What rights and obligations do employees and employers have when working remotely/at home?
Is there a specialized body that receives complaints about gender discrimination in employment?	Yes	Law on Protection against Discrimination, Arts. 40 and 47

Pay

Are there pay transparency measures or enforcement mechanisms to address the gender pay gap?	Yes	Regulation on the Structure and Organization of the Working Salary, Art. 22
Is sex-disaggregated data on employment in different industries or sectors published at least on an annual basis?	Yes	Bulgaria National Statistical Institute: Employed by Professional Status and Sex survey

Marriage

Is there a fast-track process or procedure for family law disputes?	Yes	Code of Civil Procedure, Arts. 323 and 330
Are there specialized family courts?	Yes	Matrimonial Division in Sofia City Court
Is legal aid available for family law disputes?	Yes	National Legal Aid Bureau

Parenthood

Is it possible to apply for maternity benefits through a single government application process?	Yes	Social Insurance Code, Arts. 40a and 48b
Are incentives in place to encourage fathers to take paternity leave on the birth of a child?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Has sex-disaggregated data on unpaid care work been published?	Yes	National Statistical Institute: Reconciliation between work and family life – Ad hoc module to the labour force survey in 2010

Childcare

Is there a publicly available registry or database of childcare providers?	Yes	Information System of Sofia Municipality for the Service of Childcare Facilities, Preparatory Groups and First Grade in Schools; National Statistical Institute of the Republic of Bulgaria
Is there a clearly outlined application procedure to request financial support from the government for childcare services by parents?	Yes	Decree of the Council of Ministers No. 231 of 1 August 2022, Arts. 3, 7, 10 and Appendix 1; Amendment to Decree No. 231 of 2022
Is there a clearly outlined application procedure to request financial support from the government for childcare services by non-state childcare providers?	Yes	Regulation on Financing of Institutions in the Pre-school and School Education System, Ch. 10
Has the government published any reports on quality of childcare services within the last 3 years?	No	Insufficient evidence located

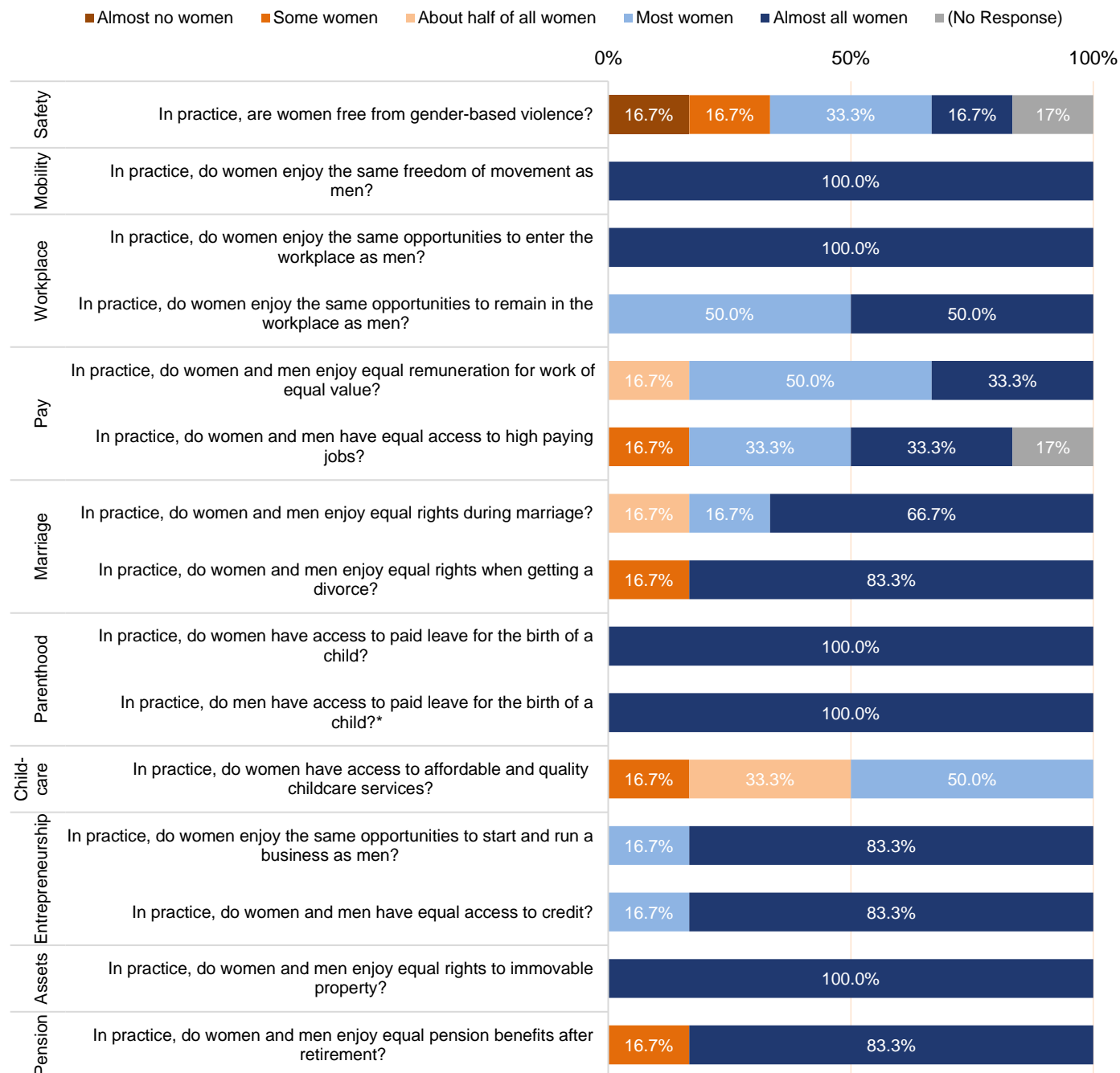
Entrepreneurship



Is sex-disaggregated data on business activities, entrepreneurship, or women-owned businesses published on a regular basis?	Yes	Ministry of Labor and Social Policy
Are there government-led programs that provide support to female entrepreneurs such as access to finance or regarding agency and empowerment?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Is there a current national government plan or strategy with a focus on women's access to financial services?	Yes	National Strategy for Financial Literacy of the Republic of Bulgaria (2021-2025)
Assets		
Are there mechanisms or incentives to encourage women to register immovable property?	Yes	Cadastre and Property Register Act, Art 61(1); Property Act, Art. 30; Family Code, Art. 19
Are there awareness measures in place to improve women's access to information about marital and inheritance rights?	Yes	National action plan for the promotion of equality between women and men for the period 2023-2024
Is anonymized sex-disaggregated data on property ownership published on a regular basis?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Pension		
Are there incentives in place to increase women's retirement benefits?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Is there a procedure in place for pension beneficiaries to challenge the decisions of the competent authority regarding their benefits?	Yes	Social Insurance Code, Arts. 117-119



WBL 2.0 distribution of expert opinion responses



*Note: The response options for the second Parenthood question above are formatted as almost no men, some men, about half of all men, most men, almost all men.