











# Vanuatu

WBL 2.0 legal frameworks score	WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks score	WBL 2.0 expert opinions score
<b>42.5</b>	<b>16.7</b>	<b>N/A</b>

*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 Vanuatu due to an insufficient number of responses received from this economy during data collection.

For Vanuatu, data refer to the legal frameworks and supportive frameworks that are applicable to the main business city (Port Vila). The scores for Vanuatu 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	0.0	75.0	25.0	50.0	75.0	0.0	25.0	50.0	50.0	75.0
Supportive frameworks score	0.0	66.7	0.0	0.0	33.3	0.0	0.0	33.3	33.3	0.0
Expert opinions score	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

In summary, the **WBL 2.0 legal frameworks score** for Vanuatu (42.5 out of 100.0) is lower than the global average (64.2) and lower than the East Asia & Pacific regional average (57.8). Vanuatu does not attain a perfect score on any of the WBL 2.0 legal frameworks indicators. There is room for improvement across all ten indicators. As an example, one of the lowest scores for Vanuatu is on the indicator measuring laws affecting women's safety. To improve on the Safety indicator, Vanuatu may wish to consider putting in place legislation on domestic violence, introducing legislation on femicide, adopting comprehensive legislation on sexual harassment and introducing legislation on child marriage.

The **WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks score** for Vanuatu (16.7 out of 100.0) is lower than the global average (39.5) and lower than the East Asia & Pacific regional average (33.9). Vanuatu does not attain a perfect score on any of the WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks indicators. There is room for improvement across all ten indicators. As an example, one of the lowest scores for Vanuatu is on the indicator measuring supportive frameworks affecting women's safety. To improve on the Safety indicator, Vanuatu 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.

## WBL 2.0 legal frameworks data

QUESTION	ANSWER	LEGAL BASIS
<b>Safety</b>		
Is there legislation on domestic violence?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Is there legislation on femicide?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Is there comprehensive legislation on sexual harassment?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Is there legislation on child marriage?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
<b>Mobility</b>		
Can a woman travel internationally in the same way as a man?	Yes	Passports Act, Art. 4(1); Validity and Application for Passports (Amendment) Order, Art. 11
Can a woman choose where to live in the same way as a man?	No	Marriage Act, Schedule 2
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	Constitution, Arts. 9 and 11; Citizenship Act, Art. 10
<b>Workplace</b>		
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?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Does the law prohibit discrimination in recruitment based on marital status, parental status, and age?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Does the law allow employees to request flexible work?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
<b>Pay</b>		
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?	No	Employment Act, Sec. 35
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
<b>Marriage</b>		
Can a woman be "head of household" or "head of family" in the same way as a man?	No	Marriage Act, Schedule 2
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 obtain a judgment of divorce in the same way as a man?	Yes	The Matrimonial Causes Act, Sec. 5
Does a woman have the same rights to remarry as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
<b>Parenthood</b>		
Is paid leave of at least 14 weeks available to mothers?	No	Employment Act, Sec. 36
Are leave benefits for mothers paid solely by the government?	No	Employment Act, Sec. 36(2)
Is there paid leave available to fathers?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Is dismissal of pregnant workers prohibited?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
<b>Childcare</b>		
Does the law establish provision of childcare services in center-based settings?	Yes	Education Act No. 9 of 2014, Secs. 3 and 17
Does the law establish any form of support to families for childcare services?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Does the law establish any form of support to non-state childcare providers?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Does the law establish quality standards for the provision of childcare services in center-based settings?	No	No applicable provisions could be located

<b>Entrepreneurship</b>		
Can a woman undertake entrepreneurial activities in the same way as a man?	Yes	Companies Act, Arts. 6-18
Does the law prohibit discrimination in access to credit based on gender?	Yes	Penal Code, Sec. 150
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
<b>Assets</b>		
Do men and women have equal administrative power and ownership rights to immovable property, including land?	No	Constitution, Art. 73
Do sons and daughters have equal rights to inherit assets from their parents?	Yes	Interstates' Estates Act, Part. IV
Do male and female surviving spouses have equal rights to inherit assets?	Yes	Interstates' Estates Act, Sec.1
Does the law provide for the valuation of nonmonetary contributions?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
<b>Pension</b>		
Are the ages at which men and women can retire with full pension benefits equal?	Yes	Employment Act, Sec. 54; Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act No. 1 of 2020, Schedule Minor Amendments, 2B
Are the ages at which men and women can retire with partial pension benefits equal?	Yes	No applicable provisions could be located
Is the mandatory retirement age for men and women equal?	Yes	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

## WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks data

QUESTION	ANSWER	SOURCE
<b>Safety</b>		
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
<b>Mobility</b>		
Are passport application processes the same for women and men?	Yes	Passport application form; 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
<b>Workplace</b>		
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?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Is there a specialized body that receives complaints about gender discrimination in employment?	No	Insufficient evidence located



<b>Pay</b>		
Are there pay transparency measures or enforcement mechanisms to address the gender pay gap?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Is sex-disaggregated data on employment in different industries or sectors published at least on an annual basis?	No	Insufficient evidence located
<b>Marriage</b>		
Is there a fast-track process or procedure for family law disputes?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Are there specialized family courts?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Is legal aid available for family law disputes?	Yes	Public Solicitor's Office
<b>Parenthood</b>		
Is it possible to apply for maternity benefits through a single government application process?	No	Insufficient evidence located
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?	No	Insufficient evidence located
<b>Childcare</b>		
Is there a publicly available registry or database of childcare providers?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Is there a clearly outlined application procedure to request financial support from the government for childcare services by parents?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Is there a clearly outlined application procedure to request financial support from the government for childcare services by non-state childcare providers?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Has the government published any reports on quality of childcare services within the last 3 years?	No	Insufficient evidence located
<b>Entrepreneurship</b>		
Is sex-disaggregated data on business activities, entrepreneurship, or women-owned businesses published on a regular basis?	No	Insufficient evidence located
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	Vanuatu National Financial Inclusion Strategy (2018-2023)
<b>Assets</b>		
Are there mechanisms or incentives to encourage women to register immovable property?	Yes	Land Leases Act, Sec. 75
Are there awareness measures in place to improve women's access to information about marital and inheritance rights?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Is anonymized sex-disaggregated data on property ownership published on a regular basis?	No	Insufficient evidence located
<b>Pension</b>		
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?	No	Insufficient evidence located

