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1. Background
2. WBL 2023 Key Global and Regional (OECD High Income) Findings
3. Deep Dive – Key Findings of Japan
4. 53 Years of Women’s Rights in Japan
5. What’s Next
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Meet Almagul

LEGAL EQUALITY AND WOMEN’S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

- Scoring proposed
- Expert discussions
- Data collected in 190 economies
- 50-year panel dataset introduced
- Two new areas introduced
- Annual update of data
- Index introduced
- Engagement with users
- First annual update of data
- Annual update of data
- Data trends from 53 years of reforms
The eight *Women, Business and the Law* indicators

- **Mobility**: Examines constraints on freedom of movement
- **Workplace**: Analyzes laws affecting women’s decisions to work
- **Pay**: Measures laws and regulations affecting women’s pay
- **Marriage**: Assesses legal constraints related to marriage
- **Parenthood**: Examines laws affecting women’s work after having children
- **Assets**: Considers gender differences in property and inheritance
- **Entrepreneurship**: Analyzes constraints on women’s starting and running businesses
- **Pension**: Assesses laws affecting the size of a woman’s pension
With greater equality of opportunity, more women work and start businesses.

Gender equality:

- More women working
- Higher wages
- More businesses
- Stronger economy
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GLOBALLY, WOMEN HAVE JUST 3/4 OF THE LEGAL RIGHTS AFFORDED TO MEN

The global average score is 77.1 out of 100

Nearly 2.4 billion women out of working age still do not have the same legal rights as men
THIS YEAR, JUST 14 ECONOMIES SCORE 100
THE LARGEST GAPS ARE IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA AND IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA
More than half of all reforms captured were implemented in Sub-Saharan Africa region by seven economies.
THE PATTERN AMONG REGIONS HAS CHANGED

Improvements in Women, Business and the Law average scores over the last five years, by region

a. Average WBL score, 2018 and 2023

b. Changes in average WBL score, 2018–23

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>WBL 2018 Score</th>
<th>WBL 2023 Score</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High income: OECD</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>95.3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe &amp; Central Asia</td>
<td>82.4</td>
<td>84.4</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America &amp; Caribbean</td>
<td>80.9</td>
<td>82.4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>68.4</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asia &amp; Pacific</td>
<td>70.3</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asia</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East &amp; North Africa</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>53.2</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Changes compared with WBL 2018 score:

- Middle East & North Africa: 9.0
- Sub-Saharan Africa: 4.2
- South Asia: 4.2
- East Asia & Pacific: 2.3
- Europe & Central Asia: 2.0
- Latin America & Caribbean: 1.9
- High income: OECD: 1.1
The Netherlands introduced paid parental leave.

CHALLENGES REMAIN IN THE PAY AND PENSION INDICATORS

Out of 34 economies in OECD High-income region:

- **6 economies** do not mandate equal remuneration for work of equal value.
- **In 4 economies** a woman cannot work in an industrial job in the same way as a man.
- **In 8 economies** the age at which men and women can retire with full pension benefits is different.
- **In 18 economies** periods of absence due to childcare are not accounted for in pension benefits.

WBL 2023 indicator averages, OECD high income

- Mobility: 100.0
- Workplace: 97.8
- Pay: 90.4
- Marriage: 96.5
- Parenthood: 94.7
- Entrepreneurship: 96.3
- Assets: 98.8
- Pension: 88.2

Global average
No reform identified in Japan in the past year.
### PERFORMANCE BY INDICATORS (2023)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Japan</th>
<th>Regional average</th>
<th>Global average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>88.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>97.8</td>
<td>81.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>90.4</td>
<td>70.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>96.5</td>
<td>80.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenthood</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>56.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>96.3</td>
<td>85.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assets</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>98.8</td>
<td>81.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pension</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>88.2</td>
<td>73.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WBL Score</td>
<td>50.6</td>
<td>95.3</td>
<td>77.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Removing restrictions on women’s mobility enables more women to join the labor force and open their own businesses.

Source: Women, Business and the Law

34 countries prevent women from choosing where to live in the same way as men
Thanks to the Barbados Employment Sexual Harassment (Prevention) Act 2017, every employer must have a clear written policy against sexual harassment.

Source: Nation News

43 countries still do not have legislation on sexual harassment in employment.
WORKPLACE: MEASURING LAWS AFFECTING WOMEN’S DECISION TO WORK

Is there legislation that specifically addresses sexual harassment in employment/workplace?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>147</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Is there legislation and redress measures (criminal penalties or civil remedies) for sexual harassment in employment/workplace?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>139</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PORTUGAL

*Labor Code, Art. 29*

“The practice of harassment is prohibited. Sexual harassment represents unwanted sexual behavior, in a verbal, non-verbal or physical form, with the purpose or effect of disrupting or dignity, or create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or destabilizing environment”

SLOVENIA

*Employment Relations Act, Arts. 7 and 47*

“unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct or conduct of a sexual nature with the effect or intent to affect the dignity of a person, especially when creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, shameful or offensive environment”
PAY: MEASURING LAWS AND REGULATIONS AFFECTING WOMEN’S PAY

Equal pay

Night work

Dangerous: arduous

Industries: mining; water
FRANCE

• Code du Travail, Art. L3221-2
• “Every employer shall ensure, for the same work or for work of equal value, equal remuneration for women and men.”

JAPAN

• Labor Standard Act, Art. 4
• “An employer shall not engage in discriminatory treatment of a women as compared to a man with respect to wages by reason of the worker being a woman (...).”
Does a woman have the same rights to remarry as a man?

68 economies still restrict women’s ability to remarry

Six economies introduced six reforms on family leave policies in the past year:

- Costa Rica
- The Netherlands
- Malta
- China
- Mongolia
- Malawi
**FINLAND**

*Act on Equality between Men and Women, Sec. 8e*

“The conduct of a supplier of goods or services shall be deemed to be discrimination prohibited by this Act if a person is placed at a disadvantage on the basis of sex in the provision of publicly available goods and services in the public or private sector or is otherwise treated in the manner referred to in section 7.”

**UNITED STATES**

*Equal Credit Opportunity Act, Art. 1691(a)(1)*

“It shall be unlawful for any creditor to discriminate against any applicant concerning any aspect of a credit transaction based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex or marital status, or age (provided the applicant has the capacity to contract).”
EMERGING TRENDS IN NATIONAL FINANCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGIES THAT SUPPORT WOMEN’S ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Women’s access to credit and sex-disaggregated data reporting in National Financial Inclusion Strategies

Economies that do not have a NFIS

- 138

NFIS that highlight women’s financial inclusion

- 44

NFIS that do not highlight women’s financial inclusion

- 8

Only 10 of the 44 address the need to increase women's access to credit

Only 13 of the 44 call for the collection of sex-disaggregated data
ASSETS: INEQUALITIES IN PROPERTY RIGHTS ARE SLOW TO BE REFORMED

WBL Indicator Score (Average)


Workplace  Mobility  Pay  Marriage  Parenthood  Entrepreneurship  Assets  Pension
The average pension age gap is 4 years.
With the current pace of reforms, how many years would it take to achieve legal gender equality globally?

https://www.menti.com/bl6g417jge41
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EACH REGION HAS MADE PROGRESS OVER THE PAST 53 YEARS

WBL Index (2023) progress over time

Visit wbl.worldbank.org to access: Datasets | Data visualization tools | Economy snapshots | Regional profiles | Economy summaries | Reforms database
53 YEARS OF WOMEN’S RIGHTS IN JAPAN

1974 Prohibition of gender discrimination in employment
1986 Increase in the duration of paid maternity leave to at least 14 weeks
1992 Periods of absence due to childcare are now accounted for in the calculation of pension benefits
1996 Introduction of paid paternity leave
1999 Legislation protecting women from domestic violence
2002 Introduction of paid parental leave
2011

WBL Index Score

1971

WBL 1971 62.5

WBL 2023 78.8
UNPACKING REFORM EFFORTS: MAIN TAKEAWAYS FOR OECD HIGH INCOME ECONOMIES

*Women, Business and the Law* score has improved by about two-thirds as a result of more than 2,000 reforms expanding women’s legal rights.

Only 14 economies have reached legal gender parity in 2022. Progress has been uneven across regions and over time.

Progress across the areas measured has been uneven, with most reforms in Workplace and Parenthood.

The *Women, Business and the Law* average score for OECD high income economies has improved by **72.5%** thanks to **490** reforms expanding women’s legal rights.

All 14 economies that score 100 on the WBL Index are OECD high income economies.

Most reforms in the OECD region have been in the Workplace and Parenthood indicators; least in Mobility and Asset indicators.
UNPACKING REFORM EFFORTS: MAIN TAKEAWAYS FOR OECD HIGH INCOME ECONOMIES

Number of women’s rights reforms implemented, by decade and region

Number of reforms implemented by OECD high income economies, by decade

- East Asia and Pacific
- Europe and Central Asia
- Latin America and the Caribbean
- Middle East and North Africa
- OECD high income
- South Asia
- Sub-Saharan Africa
Economies historically with larger legal gender gaps are catching up, especially since 2000.

The catch-up effect has been happening across indicators, but the pace of progress has been uneven.

Economies with the highest growth rates in OECD include Luxembourg, New Zealand, and Iceland.

Globally, reforms in the Pay indicator happened after reforms in the Workplace indicator.
DRIVERS OF LEGAL REFORMS: RESEARCH AND DATA

- International legal mandates
- Technical assistance
- Civil society activism
- Multi-stakeholder coalitions
- Research and data

Kenya → 2015 Protection Against Domestic Violence Act

Egypt → 2021 Central Bank of Egypt Circular

United Arab Emirates → 2020 reforms of Personal Status Law
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WHAT’S NEXT?

WBL 2023
Research on childcare, implementation, safety, and other areas

WBL 2024
Publication of new data on childcare, disability, implementation, and safety

WBL 2025
Incorporation of new indicators into WBL index and report

Visit wbl.worldbank.org to access:

- Economy snapshots
- Regional profiles
- Reforms database
- Historic overview: 1971 - 2023
Learn more and take action at wbl.worldbank.org

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