



SUMMARIES OF WOMEN, BUSINESS AND THE LAW REFORMS

In the two-year period from May 1, 2015 through June 1, 2017, *Women, Business and the Law* recorded 87 regulatory reforms towards gender equality in employment and entrepreneurial activity in scored areas, with 65 economies implementing at least one reform moving towards gender equality.

- + Reform increasing gender parity
- Reform neutral to gender parity
- ✗ Reform decreasing gender parity

Afghanistan

- + **Protecting women from violence**
Afghanistan now prohibits sexual harassment in employment and education. It also established criminal penalties and civil remedies for sexual harassment in employment.

Albania

- + **Getting a job**
Albania introduced 3 days of paid paternity leave. The new labor code also mandates equal remuneration for men and women who do work of equal value.
- + **Providing incentives to work**
Albania's new labor code also guarantees that after maternity leave, employees can return to their job or to an equivalent job on terms that are no less favorable than before the leave.

Algeria

- + **Protecting women from violence**
Algeria criminalized domestic violence, including physical, psychological and economic violence.

Angola

- ✗ **Getting a job**
Angola increased the number of legal restrictions on women's work.
- + **Building credit**
Additionally, Angola now prohibits discrimination by creditors in financial transactions based on gender.

Azerbaijan

- + **Getting a job**
Azerbaijan is gradually increasing and equalizing the ages at which men and women can retire and receive pension benefits.

Bahrain

- + **Protecting women from violence**
Bahrain introduced its first domestic violence law, which protects spouses and family members and covers physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence.

Bangladesh

- ✗ **Getting a job**
Bangladesh now prohibits women from carrying, lifting or removing weighty goods and instruments. It also establishes different weight-lifting thresholds for men and women.

Bhutan

- + **Providing incentives to work**
Bhutan increased the maximum amount of educational expenses that can be deducted from income taxes.
- + **Building credit**
Bhutan improved access to credit information by distributing positive and negative payment data from utility companies.

Bolivia

- + **Building credit**
Bolivia enhanced access to credit information by starting to report data from utility companies.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- + **Getting a job**
Bosnia and Herzegovina eliminated several restrictions on women's employment, including in jobs deemed arduous, jobs deemed hazardous and underwater work. It also eliminated the possibility for men and women to retire early and receive partial pension benefits, which was previously unequal.
- + **Going to court**
Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted the Law on Free Legal Aid in 2016 to provide legal assistance in civil procedures.

Botswana

+ Building credit

Botswana improved access to credit information by beginning to distribute data from utility companies, including positive and negative data.

Brunei Darussalam

+ Building credit

Brunei Darussalam improved access to credit information by distributing data from two utility companies.

Bulgaria

+ ✘ Getting a job

Bulgaria removed all restrictions on women's employment. It is also gradually increasing and equalizing the ages at which men and women can retire with full pension benefits.

However, the ages at which men and women can retire with partial pension benefits are now unequal.

Burundi

+ Protecting women from violence

Burundi introduced civil remedies for sexual harassment in employment.

Cameroon

+ Protecting women from violence

Cameroon adopted a new criminal code that covers sexual harassment in employment and education, and established criminal penalties for sexual harassment.

Chad

+ Protecting women from violence

Chad adopted a new criminal code that aggravates penalties for domestic violence and criminalizes sexual harassment in employment.

China

+ Getting a job

China introduced 3 days of paid paternity leave. It also now entitles all women—regardless of age—to 128 days of paid maternity leave. Previously, women younger than age 25 were entitled to 98 days of maternity leave, whereas women older than age 25 were entitled to 128 days.

+ Building credit

China improved access to credit information by reporting payment histories from utility companies, including positive and negative data.

Colombia

+ Getting a job

Colombia increased paid maternity leave from 98 to 126 days. It also removed restrictions on women's employment in mining and jobs deemed hazardous and arduous.

Congo, Dem. Rep.

+ Accessing institutions

The Democratic Republic of Congo reformed its family code to allow married women to sign a contract, get a job, open a bank account and register a business in the same way as married men. It also removed the obligation for a married woman to obey her husband and allows spouses to choose the marital home mutually.

+ Getting a job

The Democratic Republic of Congo lifted restrictions on women's ability to work at night in public or private industrial establishments. It also now mandates nondiscrimination based on gender in various aspects of employment, including hiring and promotions.

+ Building credit

The Democratic Republic of Congo now prohibits discrimination based on gender in access to credit.

Côte d'Ivoire

+ Providing incentives to work

Côte d'Ivoire made primary school compulsory for all children ages 6–16 years.

+ Going to court

Côte d'Ivoire also established a small claims procedure in 2015, and raised the maximum amount for small claims in 2017.

Dominican Republic

+ Getting a job

The Dominican Republic increased the length of paid maternity leave from 84 to 98 days.

Ecuador

+ Using property

Ecuador equalized men's and women's property rights by repealing the provision favoring husbands' decisions in cases of disagreement between spouses when administering assets during marriage.

✘ Going to court

A new code of civil procedure eliminated small claims procedures in Ecuador.

El Salvador

+ Getting a job

El Salvador increased the length of paid maternity leave from 84 to 112 days.

Ethiopia

+ Going to court

Ethiopia now requires the Attorney General to provide free legal aid services to women and others who lack the financial capacity to institute civil actions in federal court.

Fiji

✘ Building credit

The credit bureau in Fiji suspended operations and no longer reports data from utilities and retailers, therefore decreasing access to credit.

Guinea

+ Building credit

Guinea prohibited discrimination based on gender and marital status when accessing goods and services, including financial services.

+ Protecting women from violence

Guinea criminalized sexual harassment, including in the workplace.

Guyana

+ Building credit

Guyana improved access to credit information by expanding the credit bureau's coverage so that it now covers more than 5% of the population. It reports data from utility companies and retailers.

Honduras

○ Using property

Partial community is now the default marital property regime in Honduras. Both spouses must agree when administering property during marriage.

Hungary

✘ Going to court

Hungary eliminated small claims courts and procedures; ordinary procedures now apply in the lowest courts.

Iceland

+ Building credit

Iceland enhanced access to credit information by starting to report data from utility companies. It also prohibited discrimination based on gender when accessing goods and services, including financial services.

India

+ ✘ Getting a job

India increased the length of paid maternity leave from 84 to 182 days.

But as employers pay the full cost of maternity leave, the cost of hiring women of childbearing age has increased from the employer's perspective.

Indonesia

+ Going to court

Indonesia established a small claims procedure in 2015.

Iran, Islamic Rep.

+ Building credit

The Islamic Republic of Iran improved access to credit information by reporting data on credit payments from an automobile retailer.

Iraq

+ Accessing institutions

Iraq enacted a new passport law in 2015 that introduces electronic passports. The application process is now the same for men and women and does not require women to bring a guardian.

+ ✘ Getting a job

Iraq increased the length of paid maternity leave from 72 to 98 days. Further, its new labor code prohibits discrimination based on gender in various aspects of employment, including hiring and dismissal.

However, the new labor code allows employers to terminate employees' contracts when they reach the retirement age, which is unequal for men and women.

+ Providing incentives to work

Iraq now guarantees workers returning from maternity leave the same position or a similar position with the same wage.

+ Protecting women from violence

Iraq enacted a new labor code that specifically addresses and criminalizes sexual harassment in employment.

Ireland

+ Getting a job

Ireland introduced 10 days of paid paternity leave.

Israel

+ Getting a job

Israel increased the length of paid maternity leave from 98 to 105 days, and now allows the mother to transfer one week of maternity leave to the father.

Italy

+ Getting a job

Italy increased paid paternity leave from 1 to 2 days.

Kenya

+ Going to court

Kenya's new Legal Aid Act provides legal aid services in civil matters.

+ Building credit

Kenya improved access to credit information by distributing data from two utility companies that report positive and negative payment information.

+ Protecting women from violence

Kenya enacted its first domestic violence law, which protects family members, spouses and former spouses and partners (including non-cohabiting partners) from physical, sexual, psychological and economic abuse.

Kiribati

- + **Getting a job**
Kiribati's new labor code lifted all restrictions on women's employment, including restrictions on working at night and in mining.
- + **Providing incentives to work**
It also guarantees employees returning from maternity leave the same or an equivalent position.

Kosovo

- + **Going to court**
Kosovo established an anti-discrimination commission that allows women to submit complaints of discrimination to an Ombudsperson.
- + **Building credit**
Kosovo also enacted a new nondiscrimination law in 2015, which introduced marital status as a category protected from discrimination when accessing credit.

Latvia

- + **Building credit**
Latvia improved access to credit information by launching a private credit bureau. It reports payment data from utility companies and retailers.

Lesotho

- + **Building credit**
Lesotho expanded the credit bureau's coverage to include more than 5% of the population. The bureau reports data from both utility companies and retailers.

Liberia

- + **Getting a job**
Liberia increased the length of paid maternity leave from 90 to 98 days. Further, the new labor code mandates equal remuneration for work of equal value, as well as prohibits discrimination based on gender in various aspects of employment, including hiring, promotions and dismissal.
- + **Providing incentives to work**
Liberia's new labor code also guarantees employees returning from maternity leave an equivalent position.

Lithuania

- + **Protecting women from violence**
Lithuania prohibited sexual harassment in education and established civil remedies for sexual harassment in the workplace.

Luxembourg

- + **Getting a job**
Luxembourg increased the percentage of wages received during parental leave from 77% to 100%.

Macedonia, FYR

- + **Building credit**
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia improved access to credit information by beginning to distribute data from retailers, including positive and negative data.

Malawi

- + **Building credit**
Malawi improved access to credit information by establishing a new credit bureau that reports data collected from utility companies.

Malaysia

- + **Protecting women from violence**
Malaysia now allows victims of sexual harassment to seek civil remedies.

Maldives

- + **Building credit**
Maldives prohibited discrimination based on gender and marital status when accessing financial services.

Marshall Islands

- + **Going to court**
Established in 2015, the Human Rights Committee of the Marshall Islands receives complaints of discrimination based on gender.

Mauritius

- + **Getting a job**
Mauritius increased the length of maternity leave from 84 to 98 days.

Moldova

- + **Getting a job**
Moldova introduced 10 days of paid paternity leave. It is also gradually increasing and equalizing the ages at which men and women can retire and receive full pension benefits.

Mongolia

- + **Getting a job**
Mongolia is gradually increasing and equalizing the ages at which men and women can retire and receive pension benefits.

Namibia

- + **Building credit**
Namibia enhanced access to credit information by starting to report data from utility companies.

New Zealand

- + **Getting a job**
New Zealand replaced maternity leave with parental leave and increased it from 112 to 126 days.

Nigeria

+ Building credit

Nigeria improved access to credit information by beginning to distribute data from utility companies, including positive and negative data.

Panama

+ Getting a job

Panama introduced 3 days of paid paternity leave.

Paraguay

+ Getting a job

Paraguay increased the length of paid maternity leave from 63 to 98 days and the percentage of wages received during maternity leave from 50% to 75%. It also increased the length of paid paternity leave from 2 to 10 days.

Peru

+ Getting a job

Peru increased the length of paid maternity leave from 90 to 98 days.

Poland

+ ✘ Getting a job

Poland replaced 42 days of paid maternity leave with paid parental leave. It also eliminated all restrictions on women's employment.

However, it reversed a 2012 law that was gradually increasing and equalizing the retirement ages for men and women. Now, the retirement age is set to be lowered back to 60 years for women and 65 for men.

Portugal

+ Getting a job

Portugal increased the length of paid paternity leave from 20 to 25 days.

Rwanda

+ Accessing institutions

Rwanda granted both spouses equal rights to choose the marital home. It also removed the provision designating the husband as "head of household."

+ Getting a job

Rwanda increased the percentage of wages received during maternity leave from 60% to 100%. Additionally, the employer and government now share the cost of maternity benefits, whereas previously the employer was solely responsible.

Senegal

+ Accessing institutions

Senegal enacted a new national identity card law in 2016, introducing biometric cards. The application process is now equal for men and women.

Seychelles

+ Getting a job

The Seychelles introduced 5 days of paid paternity leave.

Singapore

+ Getting a job

Singapore increased the length of paid paternity leave from 5 to 10 days.

Slovak Republic

+ Getting a job

The Slovak Republic increased the percentage of wages received during maternity leave from 65% to 75%.

Slovenia

+ Protecting women from violence

Slovenia prohibited sexual harassment in education.

South Africa

+ Getting a job

South Africa increased the percentage of wages received during maternity leave from 60% to 66%.

Spain

+ Getting a job

Spain increased the length of paid paternity leave from 15 to 30 days.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines

+ ✘ Getting a job

St. Vincent and the Grenadines increased the percentage of wages received during maternity leave from 75% to 87%.

But as employers pay for maternity leave, the cost of hiring women of childbearing age has increased from the employer's perspective.

Sweden

+ Getting a job

Sweden increased the allocation of parental leave for mothers and fathers from 60 to 90 days.

Taiwan, China

+ Providing incentives to work

Taiwan, China's legislation on early childhood education now applies to children ages two and older. Previously, children ages four and older were covered.

+ Building credit

Taiwan, China enhanced access to credit information by starting to report data from retailers, including positive and negative data.

Tajikistan

+ Getting a job

Tajikistan abolished the general restriction on women's ability to work at night.

Tanzania

- + **Providing incentives to work**
Tanzania made primary education free and compulsory.
- + **Going to court**
The Legal Aid Act of 2017 mandates legal aid for indigent persons in civil proceedings in Tanzania.
- + **Building credit**
Tanzania improved access to credit information by distributing data from retailers.

Timor-Leste

- + **Getting a job**
Timor-Leste introduced a social security system that provides maternity benefits.

Tunisia

- + **Building credit**
Tunisia strengthened credit reporting by distributing payment information from a telecommunications company.

Turkey

- + **Getting a job**
Turkey introduced part-time work options for parents until their child's compulsory schooling begins. It also prohibited discrimination based on gender in several aspects of employment, such as promotions.
- + **Going to court**
Turkey's 2016 law establishing the Human Rights and Equality Institution allows victims to submit complaints about gender discrimination.

Vietnam

- + **Getting a job**
Vietnam introduced 5 days of paid paternity leave provided by the government.

West Bank and Gaza

- + **Getting a job**
West Bank and Gaza introduced a social security system that provides maternity benefits and increased the length of paid maternity leave from 70 to 84 days.
- + **Providing incentives to work**
In 2017, West Bank and Gaza passed a new education law mandating the government to provide one year of free and compulsory public preschool.

Zambia

- + **Getting a job**
Zambia's Gender Equity and Equality Act now prohibits gender discrimination in various aspects of employment. It also mandates equal remuneration for work of equal value.
- + **Going to court**
The Gender Equity and Equality Act also established the Gender Equality Commission in Zambia.
- + **Building credit**
Zambia now prohibits discrimination based on gender and marital status in access to credit.
- + **Protecting women from violence**
Zambia established civil remedies for sexual harassment in employment.