

Social Institutions and Gender Index

West Bank and Gaza Strip

SIGI Country Profile

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Social institutions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

The state of gender equality in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

The SIGI 2023 profile for the West Bank and Gaza Strip provides a comprehensive overview of the state of gender equality in the country, as measured by the OECD's Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI). The fifth edition of the SIGI, released in 2023, assesses 140 countries based on the level of gender-based discrimination in their social institutions. These discriminatory social institutions encompass both formal and informal laws, as well as social norms and practices that restrict women's and girls' access to rights, justice, empowerment opportunities and resources, thereby undermining their agency and authority.

Figure 1. SIGI and dimension scores for the West Bank and Gaza Strip, 2023



Note: Scores range from 0 to 100, with 0 indicating no discrimination and 100 indicating absolute discrimination. The MENA region covers Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, the West Bank and Gaza Strip and Yemen.

Source: OECD (2023), "Social Institutions and Gender Index (Edition 2023)", *OECD International Development Statistics* (database), <https://doi.org/10.1787/33beb96e-en>.

In 2023, the West Bank and Gaza Strip obtained a SIGI score of 51 denoting very high levels of discrimination, compared to an average score of 56 in the MENA region, denoting very high levels of

discrimination, and a world average score of 29 (Figure 1).¹ The country obtained a score of 80 in the “Discrimination in the family” dimension, followed by “Restricted access to productive and financial resources” (42), “Restricted civil liberties” (40) and “Restricted physical integrity” (35).

Legislative framework in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

The legal system is based on a combination of British, Jordanian, Egyptian, Ottoman and Palestinian laws. Article 4 of the Basic Law – which functions as a temporary constitution – stipulates that the principles of Islamic Sharia are the major source of legislation, and that Islam is the official religion. Religious courts deal with all matters that fall under the jurisdiction of Sharia while administrative courts regulate administrative disputes and claims. While a patchwork of presidential decrees applies in the West Bank, Hamas, which is the *de facto* governing authority in the Gaza strip since 2007, passed their own laws in the Gaza Strip. In relation to personal status matters (e.g., marriage, divorce, child custody and inheritance), distinct personal status laws apply to Muslims and non-Muslim communities² For Muslims, two main codified laws apply: in the West Bank, the Personal Status Law of 1976, which corresponds to the Jordanian Personal Status Law No. 61/1976, applies; in the Gaza Strip, the Family Rights Law of 1954, based on the 1917 Ottoman Law and adopted by Gaza Strip’s then-Egyptian Administrator by Order No. 303/1954, applies. In the absence of codified laws, the rules of the Hanafi jurisprudence (*fiqh*) apply both in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.³

The Basic Law recognises and prohibits multiple and intersectional discrimination, namely on the basis of race, sex, colour, religion, political views or disability – an essential provision to enhance gender equality from a legal perspective. Moreover, the Palestinian Authority unilaterally ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)⁴ by presidential decree in 2009 and does not hold any reservations.

Gender-disaggregated, gender-relevant and intersectional data and indicators are essential to better identify policy areas that have strong linkages with gender. In the West Bank and Gaza Strip, there are no applicable legal provisions regulating the production and dissemination of gender statistics.

Positive highlights and significant challenges since the fourth edition of the SIGI

Positive highlights

The law grants women and men the same rights to own and use land and non-land assets as well as financial services. However, informal laws often undermine women’s access to land and non-land assets in practice. The legal framework on citizenship rights and nationality grants men and women, regardless of their marital status, the same rights to acquire, retain and change nationality and to confer it to their children or foreign spouse.

¹ Levels of discrimination in the SIGI and its dimensions are assessed based on scores as follow: very low [0-20]; low [20-30]; medium [30-40]; high [40-50]; and very high [50-100].

² UNDP, UN Women, UNFPA and ESCWA (2018), “Palestine Country Assessment”, *Gender Justice & The Law*, United Nations Development Programme, New York, <https://www.unescwa.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/palestine-adjusted.pdf>.

³ Musawah (2018), *Thematic report on Muslim Family Law and Muslim women’s rights in Palestine*, Musawah: For Equality in the Family, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, <https://www.musawah.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Palestine-Thematic-Report-2017-CEDAW70.pdf>.

⁴ United Nations (1979), *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*, United Nations, New York, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-elimination-all-forms-discrimination-against-women>.

! Significant challenges

Discriminatory social institutions undermine women's and girls' rights and opportunities in most spheres of their lives. The Personal Status Law contains discriminatory provisions that restrict women's rights to be legal guardians of their children, to file for divorce, and to inherit on equal grounds as men. Women's bodily integrity and reproductive rights are also limited. Abortion is criminalised and illegal under all circumstances even if the pregnant women's life is at risk. Moreover, there is no comprehensive law that would address all forms of violence against women, and domestic violence is not criminalised under any existing legal framework. Discriminatory legal provisions also limit women's economic opportunities. For instance, women are not allowed to enter certain professions or work the same night hours as men. Attitudes according to which men make better leaders in the economic and political spheres are widespread.

Summary of results for the West Bank and Gaza Strip

Discrimination in the family	Unit	Value
Laws on child marriage	Score	50
Girl child marriage rate ¹	%	7.9
Boy child marriage rate ¹	%	1.1
Laws on household responsibilities	Score	75
Share of the population that agrees or strongly agrees that “if a woman earns more than her husband, it is a problem”	%	42.3
Share of the population that agrees or strongly agrees that “when a mother works for pay, the children will suffer”	%	82.1
Female-to-male ratio of time spent on unpaid care and domestic work	Ratio	6.7
Number of hours spent by men on unpaid care and domestic work in a 24-hour period	Hours	0.7
Number of hours spent by women on unpaid care and domestic work in a 24-hour period	Hours	4.8
Laws on divorce	Score	100
Laws on inheritance	Score	100
Restricted physical integrity	Unit	Value
Laws on violence against women	Score	75
Share of women who consider a husband to be justified in hitting or beating his wife under certain circumstances	%	15.7
Lifetime intimate-partner violence rate ²	%	21.2
12-month intimate-partner violence rate ²	%	17.1
Laws on female genital mutilation	%	25
Share of the female population who has heard about female genital mutilation and think the practice should continue	%	-
Prevalence of female genital mutilation (% of women aged 15-49 years who have undergone FGM)	%	-
Boy-to-girl ratio at birth (natural = 105) ³	Ratio	104.8
Laws on reproductive autonomy	Score	100
Unmet needs for family planning ⁴	%	10.5
Restricted access to productive and financial resources	Unit	Value
Laws on land assets	Score	25
Share of women among landowners	%	-
Laws on non-land assets	Score	25
Share of women among house owners	%	-
Laws on financial assets	Score	25
Share of women among bank account owners	%	39.1
Laws on workplace rights	Score	100
Share of the population declaring that “when jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women”	%	66.2
Share of the population declaring that “men make better business executives than women do”	%	63.2
Share of women among managers	%	21.6
Share of firms with a woman as top manager	%	0.9
Restricted civil liberties	Unit	Value
Laws on citizenship rights	Score	0
Laws on political voice	Score	25
Share of the population declaring that “men make better political leaders than women do”	%	80.8
Share of women in Parliament (lower chamber)	%	12.9
Laws on freedom of movement	Score	75
Share of women among those who declare not feeling safe walking alone at night in the city or area where they live	%	62.6
Laws on access to justice	Score	75
Share of women among those who declare not having confidence in the judicial system and courts of their country	%	45.3

Note: Scores of legal variables range from 0 to 100, with 0 indicating no discrimination and 100 indicating absolute discrimination.

¹ % of girls/boys aged 15-19 years who have been or are still married, divorced, widowed or in an informal union.

² % of ever-partnered women and girls who have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a current or former intimate partner during their lifetime/over the previous 12 months. Population base for lifetime IPV: 15-49 years. Population base for 12-month IPV: 15 years and older.

³ A natural boy-to-girl sex ratio at birth is generally estimated to be below 105. A ratio exceeding 105 implies the existence of more boys aged 0-4 than one would expect, indicating a potential phenomenon of son preference resulting in the systemic elimination of new-born girls.

⁴ % of married or in-union women of reproductive age who want to either stop or delay childbearing but are not using any contraception method.

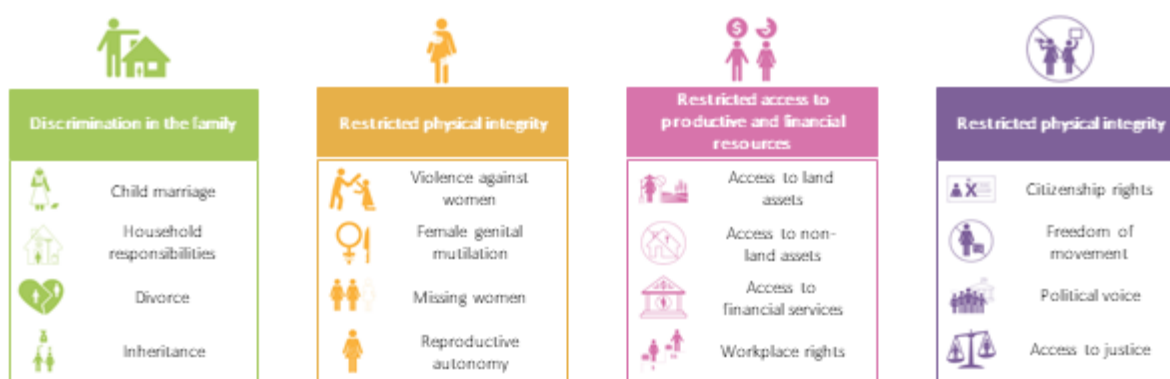
Source: OECD Development Centre/OECD (2023), “Gender, Institutions and Development Database”, <https://doi.org/10.1787/7b0af638-en>.

Results across the SIGI's four dimensions

The SIGI measures gender-based discrimination across four dimensions covering the major socio-economic areas that affect women and girls throughout their lifetime:



- The **“Discrimination in the family”** dimension captures social institutions that limit women’s decision-making power and weaken their status in the household and the family.
- The **“Restricted physical integrity”** dimension captures social institutions that increase women’s and girls’ vulnerability to multiple forms of violence and limit their control over their reproductive autonomy.
- The **“Restricted access to productive and financial resources”** dimension captures social institutions that limit women’s economic opportunities and rights.
- The **“Restricted civil liberties”** dimension captures social institutions restricting women’s access to, and participation and voice in, the public and political spheres.

Figure 2. Conceptual framework of the fifth edition of the SIGI



Each dimension builds on four indicators which, in turn, build on one to three variables depending on data availability (Figure 2). This section features the results by dimension, examining the pertinent social norms, practices and legal frameworks for each indicator.

The legal information collected through the *SIGI 2023 Legal Survey* covers both formal and codified laws, as well as informal laws. The information is assessed based on whether the law protects women’s rights or not, and is icon-coded as follows:

-  : The legal framework protects women’s rights.
-  : The legal framework does not fully protect women’s rights.

There is no universal agreement on what informal laws refer to, given contextual differences across time and place, as well as distinct disciplinary or theoretical approaches. In the context of the SIGI, informal laws (customary, traditional or religious laws/rules) describe mechanisms that operate outside the formal legal system of state-based laws. Informal laws vary from one community to another and are generally uncodified and unwritten. In some cases, informal laws may reflect unequal power dynamics within a given community and discriminatory social norms, with adverse consequences on women and girls and other vulnerable groups. Informal laws are unsteady and have been adapted over time in response to external factors.

For example, customary laws are laws that are embodied in customs, rules or traditions and accepted by members of the community as binding but remain adaptable, dynamic and flexible.⁵ The CEDAW General Recommendation No. 33 also recognises indigenous laws.⁶ These are similar to customary laws but are often given a distinct identity in recognition of the specific international standards related to the rights and protections of indigenous peoples and their justice systems. Informal religious laws may refer to norms that are derived from interpretations of codified religious texts and/or longstanding traditions.

⁵ United Nations (2018), "Module 1: The Theory and Practice of Women's Access to Justice Programming", *A Practitioner's Toolkit on Women's Access to Justice Programming*, UN Women, UNDP, UNDOC and OHCHR, New York, Vienna and Geneva, https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Publications/PractitionerToolkit/WA2J_Module1.pdf.

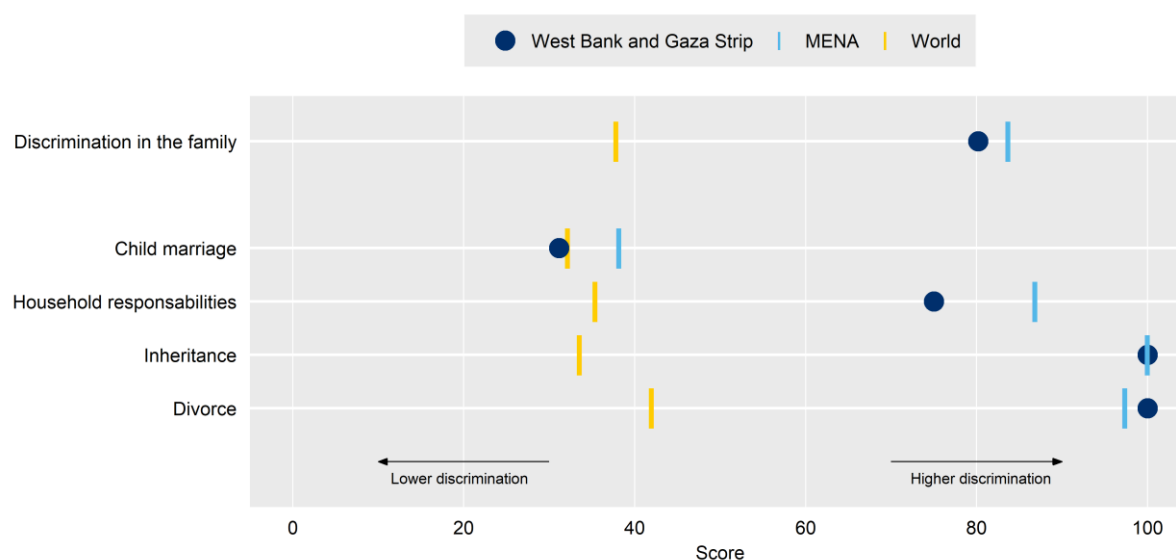
⁶ UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (2015), "General recommendation No. 33 on women's access to justice", *CEDAW/C/GC/33*, United Nations, New York, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/807253>.

Discrimination in the family

The West Bank and Gaza Strip exhibits very high levels of discrimination within the family with a score of 80, compared to a world average of 38 and an average score of 84 in the MENA region – based on countries for which scores could be calculated.

In this dimension, women and girls in the West Bank and Gaza Strip experience the highest levels of discrimination in the “Inheritance” and “Divorce” indicators with scores of 100 for both, followed by “Household responsibilities” with a score of 75. The lowest levels of discrimination are found in the “Child marriage” indicator with a score of 31, still denoting medium levels of discrimination.

Figure 3. Discrimination in the family scores for the West Bank and Gaza Strip, 2023



Note: Scores range from 0 to 100, with 0 indicating no discrimination and 100 indicating absolute discrimination. The MENA region covers Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, the West Bank and Gaza Strip and Yemen.

Source: OECD (2023), “Social Institutions and Gender Index (Edition 2023)”, *OECD International Development Statistics* (database), <https://doi.org/10.1787/33beb96e-en>.

Child marriage

Practices related to child marriage

Child marriage remains a concern in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, primarily affecting girls. In 2023, 8% of girls aged 15-19 were or are still married, divorced, widowed or in an informal union, compared to 1% of boys. In addition, 13% of women aged 20-24 were married or in a union before the age of 18,⁷ compared to a world average of 26% and an average of 17% in the MENA region – based on countries for which data are available.

Legal frameworks concerning child marriage

⁷ This indicator corresponds to SDG indicator 5.3.1

Decree Law No. 21 of 2019⁸ amends all existing legislations governing personal status matters regarding the minimum legal age of marriage. Articles 1-4 of the Decree Law No. 21 of 2019 establish 18 years as the minimum legal age that applies to all men and women. Article 2 stipulates that a supreme judge or head of religious groups can authorise exceptions to the minimum legal age, thus allowing children below 18 to get married.

Question	Answer	Assessment
What is the legal age of marriage for men?	18	✓
What is the legal age of marriage for women?	18	✓
Are there legal exceptions to the legal age of marriage that allow women and men under the legal age of marriage to marry with the consent of parent and/or legal guardian?	No	✓
Are there legal exceptions to the legal age of marriage that allow women and men under the legal age of marriage to marry with the consent of judge or court?	Yes	!
Are there legal exceptions to the legal age of marriage that allow women and men under the legal age of marriage to marry with the consent of another person or institution?	Yes	!
Does the legal age of marriage apply to all groups of women?	Yes	✓
Are there informal laws (customary, traditional or religious laws/rules) that allow or encourage the early marriage of girls?	Yes	!

Note: Cut-off date for the legal data is 31 August 2022.

Source: OECD Development Centre/OECD (2023), *SIGI 2023 Legal Survey*, <https://oe.cd/sigi-dashboard>.

Household responsibilities

Practices and social norms related to household responsibilities

In the West Bank and Gaza Strip, domestic responsibilities disproportionately fall on women's shoulders. On average, women dedicate 4.8 hours per day to unpaid care and domestic tasks – such as caring for household members, preparing food and cleaning – compared to 0.7 hour for men. This translates into women dedicating 6.7 times more time on unpaid care and domestic work than men.⁹ In comparison, the world average ratio is 2.6 and the average ratio for the MENA region is 5.9 – based on countries for which data are available.

These differences are rooted in discriminatory social norms that confine women to the household. In the West Bank and Gaza Strip, 42% of the population thinks that if a woman earns more than her husband, it is almost certain to cause problems. Moreover, 82% of the population agrees that children will suffer if the mother has a paid job outside the home, compared to a world average of 56% and an average of 70% in the MENA region. Likewise, 67% of the population thinks that being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay.

Legal frameworks concerning household responsibilities

Both in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the father is the legal guardian of the children whereas the mother has the priority right to child custody. Articles 10-13, 154, 161 and 162 of the Personal Status Law¹⁰ regulate guardianship and child custody in the West Bank, and Article 118 of the Family Rights Law¹¹ regulate child custody rights in the Gaza Strip, with slight differences regarding the children's age that

⁸ Palestinian Authority (2019), "Decree-Law No. 21 of 2019 amending the legislation governing personal status regarding determining the age of marriage".

⁹ This indicator corresponds to SDG indicator 5.4.1

¹⁰ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (1976), "Personal Status Law of 1976 corresponding to the Jordanian Personal Status Law No. 61/1976", *Official Gazette No. 2668 of 12/01/1976* (republished in *Official Gazette No. 4149 of 16/09/1996*).

¹¹ Egyptian Governor General (1954), "Order No. 303 on Family Rights". The Family Rights Law, which applies in the Gaza Strip is based on the 1917 Ottoman Law and was enacted in 1954 by Gaza Strip's then-Egyptian Administrator by Order No. 303.

determines until when mothers are entitled to child custody.¹² Distinct personal status laws regulate legal guardianship and child custody rights of non-Muslim communities.

Question	Answer	Assessment
Does the law provide women with the same rights as men to be “head of household” or “head of family”?	n.a.	n.a.
Does the law provide women with the same rights as men to be the legal guardians of their children during marriage?	No	!
Does the law provide women with the same rights as men to be legal guardians of their children in informal unions?	No	!
Regarding women’s legal rights to be recognised as head of household or head of family, does the law apply to all groups of women?	Yes	✓
Are there informal laws (customary, traditional or religious laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities between men and women when it comes to being recognised as the head of household?	Yes	!
Are there informal laws (customary, traditional or religious laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities between men and women when it comes to being the legal guardians of their children?	Yes	!
Are there informal laws (customary, traditional or religious laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities between men and women when it comes to the choice of where to live?	Yes	!

Note: Cut-off date for the legal data is 31 August 2022. The law in the West Bank and Gaza Strip does not refer to the “head of household” or “head of family”.

Source: OECD Development Centre/OECD (2023), *SIGI 2023 Legal Survey*, <https://oe.cd/sigi-dashboard>.

Divorce

Legal frameworks concerning divorce

In relation to personal status matters, including divorce, distinct personal status laws apply to Muslims and non-Muslim communities.¹³ Articles 54, 55 and 56 of the Orthodox Personal Status Law¹⁴ provides for different circumstances upon which a man or a wife could annul a marriage. Article 63 stipulates that the person who did not initiate the divorce obtains child custody. In case the divorce was initiated by both parties, Articles 61-66 establish that the mother has the priority right to child custody, but the father is responsible for financial maintenance of the child. The law further establishes upon which grounds a mother may lose her right to custody. The Personal Status Law¹⁵ which applies to Muslims in the West Bank stipulates under Articles 83-128 that a Muslim man can unilaterally divorce his wife (*talaq*), whereas a Muslim woman’s options are more restricted. She can request a judicial divorce under limited circumstances defined by the law or resort to *khul’* where she is granted a divorce in exchange for a financial compensation paid to her spouse – provided that he agrees. Articles 154-166 of the Personal Status Law of 1976 govern child custody. Following divorce, a Muslim mother keeps the priority right to child custody until the children reach the age limit defined by the law. However, if a Muslim woman remarries, she loses custody of her children.

Question	Answer	Assessment
Do women and men have the same rights to initiate/file for a divorce?	No	!
Can women and men finalise a divorce or annulment with the same requirements?	No	!
Do women and men have the same rights to child custody following a divorce?	No	!
Regarding divorce, does the law apply to all groups of women?	No	!
Are there informal laws (customary, traditional or religious laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities between men and women when it comes to initiating divorce?	Yes	!

¹² Musawah (2018), *Thematic Report On Muslim Family Law And Muslim Women’s Rights In Palestine*, Musawah: For Equality in the Family, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, <https://www.musawah.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Palestine-Thematic-Report-2017-CEDAW70.pdf>.

¹³ UNDP, UN Women, UNFPA and ESCWA (2018), “Palestine Country Assessment”, *Gender Justice & The Law*, United Nations Development Programme, New York, <https://www.unescwa.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/palestine-adjusted.pdf>.

¹⁴ Palestinian Authority (2000), “Palestinian Personal Status Law of the Syriac Orthodox”.

¹⁵ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (1976), “Personal Status Law of 1976 corresponding to the Jordanian Personal Status Law No. 61/1976”, *Official Gazette No. 2668 of 12/01/1976* (republished in *Official Gazette No. 4149 of 16/09/1996*).

Question	Answer	Assessment
Are there informal laws (customary, traditional or religious laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities between men and women when it comes to being the legal guardians of their children after divorce?	Yes	!

Note: Cut-off date for the legal data is 31 August 2022.

Source: OECD Development Centre/OECD (2023), *SIGI 2023 Legal Survey*, <https://oe.cd/sigi-dashboard>.

Inheritance

Legal frameworks concerning inheritance rights

Inheritance of the Muslim population living in the West Bank is governed by the Personal Status Law¹⁶ and the Law of Inheritance of 1923,¹⁷ as amended in 1944,¹⁸ which codifies principles of Sharia. The Muslim population living in the Gaza Strip is subject to the Family Rights Law of 1954.¹⁹ All laws applicable to Muslims follow the principles of Islamic Sharia, whereby female heirs are entitled to half of the inheritance share of male heirs. For instance, Articles 180-182 of the Personal Status Law of 1976 establish that a surviving widower receives one half of the estate (or one quarter if there are surviving children), whereas a surviving widow receives one quarter of the estate (or one eighth if there are surviving children). Inheritance of non-Muslim denominations are governed by their own religious personal status laws.

Question	Answer	Assessment
Do daughters and sons have the same rights to inherit?	No	!
Do female and male surviving spouses have the same rights to inherit?	No	!
Regarding inheritance rights of daughters, does the law apply to all groups of women?	No	!
Regarding inheritance rights of female surviving spouses, does the law apply to all groups of women?	Yes	✓
Are there informal laws (customary, traditional or religious laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities between sons and daughters when it comes to inheritance?	Yes	!
Are there informal laws (customary, traditional or religious laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities between male and female surviving spouses when it comes to inheritance?	Yes	!

Note: Cut-off date for the legal data is 31 August 2022.

Source: OECD Development Centre/OECD (2023), *SIGI 2023 Legal Survey*, <https://oe.cd/sigi-dashboard>.

¹⁶ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (1976), "Personal Status Law of 1976 corresponding to the Jordanian Personal Status Law No. 61/1976", *Official Gazette No. 2668 of 12/01/1976* (republished in *Official Gazette No. 4149 of 16/09/1996*).

¹⁷ British Mandate over Palestine (1923), "Law of Inheritance (Chapter 135)".

¹⁸ British Mandate over Palestine (1944), "Law No. 19 of 1944".

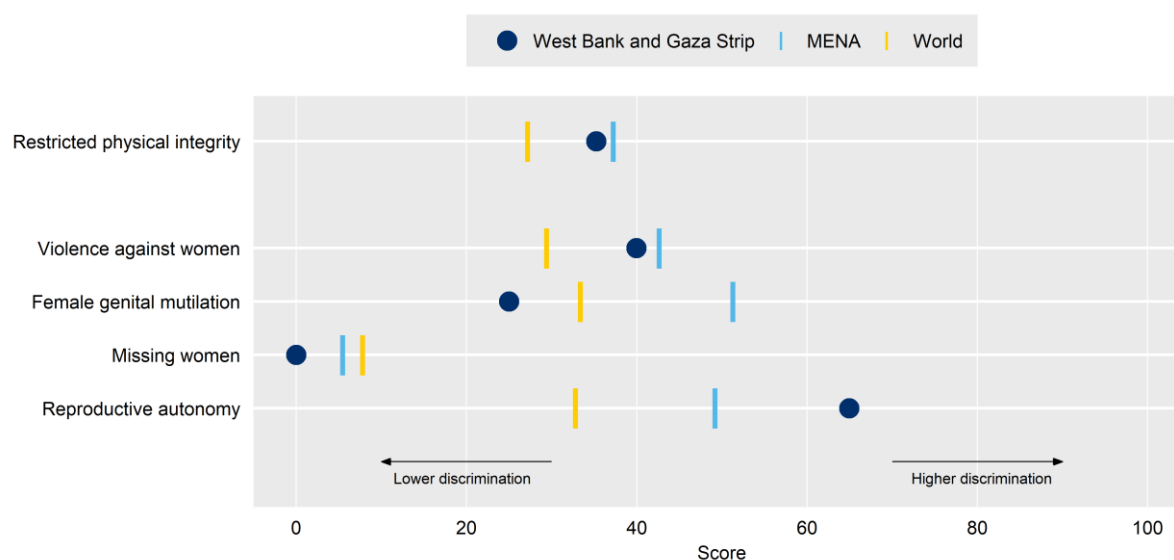
¹⁹ Egyptian Governor General (1954), "Order No. 303 on Family Rights". The Family Rights Law, which applies in the Gaza Strip is based on the 1917 Ottoman Law and was enacted in 1954 by Gaza Strip's then-Egyptian Administrator by Order No. 303.

Restricted physical integrity

The West Bank and Gaza Strip exhibits medium levels of discrimination within the family with a score of 35, compared to a world average of 27 and an average score of 37 in the MENA region – based on countries for which scores could be calculated.

In this dimension, women and girls in the West Bank and Gaza Strip experience the highest levels of discrimination in the “Reproductive autonomy” indicator with a score of 65, followed by “Violence against women” and “Female genital mutilation” with scores of 40 and 25, respectively. No discrimination is found in the “Missing women” indicator with a score of 0.

Figure 4. Restricted physical integrity scores for the West Bank and Gaza Strip, 2023



Note: Scores range from 0 to 100, with 0 indicating no discrimination and 100 indicating absolute discrimination. The MENA region covers Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, the West Bank and Gaza Strip and Yemen.

Source: OECD (2023), “Social Institutions and Gender Index (Edition 2023)”, *OECD International Development Statistics* (database), <https://doi.org/10.1787/33beb96e-en>.

Violence against women

Practices and social norms related to violence against women

Violence against women remains a major concern in the West Bank and Gaza. In 2023, 21% of women aged 15-49 have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a current or former partner at least once during their lifetime, and 17% of women aged more than 15 have experienced such violence at least once over the last 12 months.²⁰

These levels of intimate-partner violence are rooted in its widespread social acceptance. In 2023, 16% of women aged 15-49 think that it is justified for a husband to hit or beat his wife under certain circumstances, such as burning the food, arguing with the spouse, going out without telling him, neglecting the children,

²⁰ This indicator corresponds to SDG indicator 5.2.1

or refusing to have sex. In comparison, 30% of women holds these discriminatory attitudes worldwide, as well as across the MENA region – based on countries for which data are available.

Legal frameworks concerning violence against women

The West Bank and Gaza Strip does not have a dedicated law addressing all forms of violence against women. Different forms of violence against women (such as domestic violence or sexual violence) are covered in separate or general pieces of legislation. Under the existing legislations, domestic violence is not criminalized. Article 292 of Jordan’s Penal Code,²¹ which applies in the West Bank, criminalises rape when committed against a woman’s will. The definition of rape does not extend to marital rape. In the Gaza Strip, Article 152 of the Criminal Code of 1936 criminalises rape but does not extend to marital rape.²² In 2011, a presidential decree was enacted to amend the respective Penal Codes applicable in the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip in order to repeal or amend the articles that provided for reduced penalties in the case of “honour crimes.” While the decree was never applied in the Gaza Strip, the Penal Code applicable in the West Bank still contains provisions (Articles 99 and 100) that the court could use to justify reduced penalties, although their use has been restricted by Law No. 5 of 2018.²³

Question	Answer	Assessment
Is there a law specifically addressing violence against women?	No	!
If there is a specific law addressing violence against women, are there specific provisions for investigation, prosecution and punishment of the perpetrator?	n.a.	n.a.
If there is a specific law addressing violence against women, are there specific provisions for protection and support services for victims/survivors?	n.a.	n.a.
Does the law include reduced penalties in case of so-called “honour crimes”?	Yes	!
Domestic violence		
Is domestic violence a criminal offence?	No	!
Does domestic violence legislation cover physical abuse?	No	!
Does domestic violence legislation cover sexual abuse?	No	!
Does domestic violence legislation cover psychological abuse?	No	!
Does domestic violence legislation cover economic abuse?	No	!
Are there any exceptions included in informal laws (traditional, religious, and/or customary rules/laws) that reduce penalties for domestic violence?	Yes	!
Rape		
Is rape a criminal offence?	Yes	✓
Is the legal definition of rape based on lack of consent?	Yes	✓
If the legal definition of rape is based on lack of consent, does this require proof of physical force?	No	✓
If the legal definition of rape is based on lack of consent, does this require proof of penetration?	Yes	!
Does the legal definition of rape include marital rape?	No	!
Does the law permit the reduction or removal of legal punishment if the perpetrator marries the victim?	No	✓
Sexual harassment		
Does the law prohibit sexual harassment?	Yes	✓
Does the law on sexual harassment include criminal penalties?	Yes	✓
Do legal protections from sexual harassment apply in the workplace?	No	!
Do legal protections from sexual harassment apply in educational establishments?	No	!
Do legal protections from sexual harassment apply in public spaces?	Yes	✓
Do legal protections from sexual harassment apply online / on the internet?	Yes	✓

Note: Cut-off date for the legal data is 31 August 2022.

²¹ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (1960), “Penal Code for the year 1960”.

²² UNDP, UN Women, UNFPA and ESCWA (2018), “Palestine Country Assessment”, *Gender Justice & The Law*, United Nations Development Programme, New York, <https://www.unescwa.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/palestine-adjusted.pdf>.

²³ UNDP, UN Women, UNFPA and ESCWA (2018), “Palestine Country Assessment”, *Gender Justice & The Law*, United Nations Development Programme, New York, <https://www.unescwa.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/palestine-adjusted.pdf>.

Source: OECD Development Centre/OECD (2023), *SIGI 2023 Legal Survey*, <https://oe.cd/sigi-dashboard>.

Female genital mutilation

Practices and social norms related to female genital mutilation and cutting (FGM/C)

Female genital mutilation and cutting (FGM/C) is traditionally concentrated in a limited number of countries that have been well-identified and documented by international organisations at the forefront of the fight against this harmful practice. Yet, evidence highlights that FGM/C takes place across all regions, among indigenous and/or diaspora communities originating from countries where FGM/C is known to be common. In some contexts, girls are taken across national borders to undergo FGM/C in a country where the legislation against the practice is either non-existent or less strict.²⁴

There are no available data in the West Bank and Gaza Strip that are comparable to other countries on practices and social norms related to female genital mutilation and cutting.

Legal frameworks concerning female genital mutilation and cutting (FGM/C)

In the West Bank, Article 335 of Jordan's Penal Code²⁵ allows to prosecute acts of FGM/C on broad grounds, namely under acts of bodily injury. In the Gaza Strip, Article 235 of the Criminal Code of 1936²⁶ allows to prosecute acts of FGM/C on broad grounds, namely under acts of bodily injury. Neither in the West Bank nor the Gaza Strip does the law criminalise FGM/C on narrow grounds.

Question	Answer	Assessment
Does the law criminalise FGM/C on broad or narrow grounds?	Yes	✓
Does the law criminalise FGM/C on narrow grounds only?	No	!
Are there informal laws (customary, traditional or religious laws) that allow or encourage FGM/C?	No	✓
Does the law take precedence over informal laws (customary, traditional or religious laws) that allow, condone or prescribe FGM?	n.a.	n.a.

Note: The SIGI methodology assesses laws on FGM/C according to two scenarios: (1) criminalisation on narrow grounds includes laws that contain criminal penalties for acts of “female genital mutilation”, “permanent altering/removal of external genitalia”, “female circumcision”, “excision”, “infibulation” and “genital mutilation”; (2) criminalisation on broad grounds includes “mutilation”, “harming of a person’s organs”, “serious bodily injury” and “bodily injury/hurt/assault.” The presence of informal laws that allow or encourage FGM/C is proxied by the existence of nationally representative data on FGM/C or the existence of indirect estimates (usually used in countries where FGM/C is mainly practiced by diaspora communities), small-scale studies, or anecdotal evidence and media reports as reported by Equality Now, the End FGM European Network and the US End FGM/C Network in 2020.

Source: OECD Development Centre/OECD (2023), *SIGI 2023 Legal Survey*, <https://oe.cd/sigi-dashboard>, and Equality Now, End FGM European Network and US End FGM/C Network (2020), *Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting: A Call For A Global Response*, <https://www.equalitynow.org/resource/female-genital-mutilation-cutting-a-call-for-a-global-response/>.

Missing women

Practices related to missing women

The “Missing women” indicator captures whether there are any existing imbalances in the natural sex ratio between girls and boys aged 0-4 due to pre- and postnatal gender-biased sex selection. These imbalances can result from sex-selective abortions, female infanticide, and/or inadequate healthcare and nutrition for

²⁴ Equality Now, End FGM European Network and US End FGM/C Network (2020), *Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting: A Call For A Global Response*, <https://www.equalitynow.org/resource/female-genital-mutilation-cutting-a-call-for-a-global-response/>.

²⁵ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (1960), “Penal Code for the year 1960”.

²⁶ British Mandate over Palestine (1936), “Palestinian Criminal Code No. 37 of 1936”, *Palestine Gazette No. 633, 28 September 1936*.

girls. A natural boy-to-girl sex ratio at birth is generally estimated to be below 105. A ratio exceeding 105 implies the existence of more boys aged 0-4 than one would expect, indicating a potential phenomenon of son preference resulting in the systemic elimination of new-born girls.

In the West Bank and Gaza, the “missing women” phenomenon is not an issue. The boy-to-girl sex ratio for children aged 0-4 is estimated at 104.8, which means that there are approximately 104.8 boys aged 0-4 for 100 girls of the same age, which is in line with a natural sex ratio at birth.

Reproductive autonomy

Practices related to women’s reproductive autonomy

Unmet needs for family planning are calculated as the proportion of women of reproductive age (15-49 years), married or in union, who wish to interrupt or delay childbearing but do not use any method of contraception.

In the West Bank and Gaza, the gap between women’s reproductive intentions and their contraceptive behaviour exists, with 11% of women aged 15-49 who declare having an unmet need for family planning, compared to a world average of 12% and an average of 13% in the MENA region – based on countries for which data are available.

Legal frameworks concerning women’s reproductive autonomy

Women’s reproductive autonomy can be restricted by laws that prohibit the access to safe and legal abortion under essential circumstances (in cases of rape, incest, threats to the life or health of the pregnant woman and severe foetal impairment).²⁷ Evidence shows that the share of unsafe abortions is higher in countries with restrictive abortion laws. Unsafe abortions are a leading but preventable cause of maternal mortality and millions of girls and women are hospitalised every year following complications of unsafe abortion procedures.²⁸

Articles 321-325 of Jordan’s Penal Code²⁹ criminalises and prohibits abortion in the West Bank. In the Gaza Strip, Articles 175-177 of the Criminal Code of 1936 also prohibit abortion under any circumstances.³⁰

Question	Answer	Assessment
Is abortion illegal under any circumstances?	Yes	!
Is abortion legally permitted in cases where: it is essential to save the woman’s life?	No	!
Is abortion legally permitted in cases where: it is essential to preserve the physical health of the woman?	No	!
Is abortion legally permitted in cases where: it is essential to preserve the mental health of the woman?	No	!
Is abortion legally permitted in cases where: pregnancy is the result of rape or statutory rape?	No	!
Is abortion legally permitted in cases where: pregnancy is the result of incest?	No	!
Is abortion legally permitted in cases where: social and economic reasons do not allow the mother to sustain a pregnancy?	No	!
Is abortion legally permitted in cases where: foetal impairment?	No	!
Does a woman require the approval of a medical practitioner to seek a legal abortion?	n.a.	n.a.
Does the law require the approval of the father of the foetus to seek a legal abortion?	n.a.	n.a.
Is there any national plan or policy that provide universal access to family planning services?	Yes	✓

²⁷ CEDAW (2022), *Access to safe and legal abortion: Urgent call for United States to adhere to women’s rights convention*, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2022/07/access-safe-and-legal-abortion-urgent-call-united-states-adhere-womens-rights>.

²⁸ UNFPA (2022), *State of World Population 2022: Seeing the Unseen - The Case for Action in the Neglected Crisis of Unintended Pregnancy*, UNFPA, Geneva, <https://doi.org/10.18356/9789210015004>.

²⁹ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (1960), “Penal Code for the year 1960”.

³⁰ UNDP, UN Women, UNFPA and ESCWA (2018), “Palestine Country Assessment”, *Gender Justice & The Law*, United Nations Development Programme, New York, <https://www.unescwa.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/palestine-adjusted.pdf>.

Question	Answer	Assessment
Is there any law or national policy that provide free or subsidised access to contraception?	No	!
Does the national school curricula include mandatory and comprehensive sexuality education?	No	!

Note: Cut-off date for the legal data is 31 August 2022.

Source: OECD Development Centre/OECD (2023), *SIGI 2023 Legal Survey*, <https://oe.cd/sigi-dashboard>.

Restricted access to productive and financial resources

The West Bank and Gaza Strip exhibits high levels of discrimination within the family with a score of 42, compared to a world average of 27 and an average score of 39 in the MENA region – based on countries for which scores could be calculated.

In this dimension, women and girls in Syria experience the highest levels of discrimination in the “Workplace rights” indicator with a score of 81, followed by the “Access to land assets” and “Access to non-land assets” indicators, with a score of 25 for both. The lowest levels of discrimination in this dimension are found in the “Access to financial services” indicator with a score of 23.

Figure 5. Restricted access to productive and financial resources scores for the West Bank and Gaza Strip, 2023



Note: Scores range from 0 to 100, with 0 indicating no discrimination and 100 indicating absolute discrimination. The MENA region covers Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, the West Bank and Gaza Strip and Yemen.

Source: OECD (2023), “Social Institutions and Gender Index (Edition 2023)”, *OECD International Development Statistics* (database), <https://doi.org/10.1787/33beb96e-en>.

Access to land assets

Practices related to women’s access to secure land assets

In the West Bank and Gaza Strip, there are no available data that are comparable to other countries on practices related to access to land assets.

Legal frameworks concerning women’s access to land assets

Question	Answer	Assessment
Does the law provide married women with the same rights as married men to own land?	Yes	✓
Does the law provide married women with the same rights as married men to use land?	Yes	✓
Does the law provide unmarried women with the same rights as unmarried men to own land?	Yes	✓
Does the law provide unmarried women with the same rights as unmarried men to use land?	Yes	✓

Question	Answer	Assessment
Regarding land, does the law apply to all groups of women?	Yes	✓
Are there informal laws (customary, religious or traditional laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities between men and women when it comes to the ownership or use of land assets?	Yes	!

Note: Cut-off date for the legal data is 31 August 2022.

Source: OECD Development Centre/OECD (2023), *SIGI 2023 Legal Survey*, <https://oe.cd/sigi-dashboard>.

Access to non-land assets

Practices related to women's secure access to non-land assets

In the West Bank and Gaza Strip, there are no available data that are comparable to other countries on practices related to access to non-land assets.

Legal frameworks concerning women's access to non-land assets

Question	Answer	Assessment
Does the law provide married women with the same rights as married men to own property and other non-land assets?	Yes	✓
Does the law provide married women with the same rights as married men to use property and other non-land assets?	Yes	✓
Does the law provide unmarried women with the same rights as unmarried men to own property and other non-land assets?	Yes	✓
Does the law provide unmarried women with the same rights as unmarried men to use property and other non-land assets?	Yes	✓
Regarding property and other non-land assets, does the law apply to all groups of women?	Yes	✓
Are there informal laws (customary, religious or traditional laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities between men and women when it comes to the ownership or use of non-land assets?	Yes	!

Note: Cut-off date for the legal data is 31 August 2022.

Source: OECD Development Centre/OECD (2023), *SIGI 2023 Legal Survey*, <https://oe.cd/sigi-dashboard>.

Access to financial services

Practices related to women's access to formal financial services

Gender imbalances in terms of access to financial services remain an issue in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and the overall access of the population is low. In 2023, 26% of women have a bank account at a financial institution, compared to 41% of men. This translates into women accounting for 39% of bank account holders. In comparison, at the global level, 67% of women have a bank account, compared to 72% of men. Across the MENA region, on average, 40% of women have a bank account, compared to 54% of men, translating into women accounting for only 39% of bank account holders.

Legal frameworks concerning women's access to financial services

Question	Answer	Assessment
Does the law provide women with the same rights as men to open a bank account at a formal financial institution?	Yes	✓
Does the law require married women to obtain the signature and authority of their husband to open a bank account at a formal financial institution?	No	✓
Does the law provide women with the same rights as men to obtain credit?	Yes	✓
Regarding access to formal financial services, does the law apply to all groups of women (regardless of race, ethnicity caste, etc.)?	Yes	✓
Are there informal laws (customary, religious, or traditional laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities between men and women when it comes to opening a bank account?	Yes	!

Question	Answer	Assessment
Are there informal laws (customary, religious, or traditional laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities between men and women when it comes to obtaining credit?	No	✓

Note: Cut-off date for the legal data is 31 August 2022.

Source: OECD Development Centre/OECD (2023), *SIGI 2023 Legal Survey*, <https://oe.cd/sigi-dashboard>.

Workplace rights

Practices and social norms related to women's workplace rights

Women remain largely excluded from positions with decision-making power in the economic sphere. Women only account for 22% of employees in a managerial position,³¹ compared to a world average of 25% and an average of 14% in the MENA region – based on countries for which data are available. Only 1% of companies in the country are headed by women.

These gender gaps are upheld by discriminatory social norms that establish men as the main breadwinners and more fit to hold leadership positions. In the West Bank and Gaza Strip, 63% of the population believes that men make better business executives than women, compared to a world average of 42% and an average of 60% in the MENA region. Likewise, 66% of the population agrees that when jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women. In comparison, 45% of the population holds these discriminatory attitudes worldwide, and 73% of the people across the MENA region – based on countries for which data are available.

Legal frameworks concerning women's workplace rights

Article 100 of the Labour Law³² prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex but no provision is made to guarantee equal pay for work of equal value. Article 101 restricts women's employability in certain professions and their rights to work at night. Specifically, women are not allowed to carry out dangerous or hard work as specified by the Minister and cannot work at night except for those professions defined by the Minister.

Question	Answer	Assessment
Does the law prohibit discrimination in employment on the basis of sex?	Yes	✓
Does the law mandate equal remuneration for work of equal value?	No	!
Does the law prohibit women from entering certain professions?	Yes	!
Does the law allow women to work the same night hours as men?	No	!
Does the law mandate paid maternity leave?	Yes	✓
Does the law mandate paid paternity leave?	No	!
Does the law mandate paid parental leave?	No	!
Does the law require women to have permission from their husband or legal guardian to take a paid job?	Yes	!
Does the law require women to have permission from their husband or legal guardian to register a business?	No	✓
Regarding women's legal right to take a paid job or work and/or register a business, does the law apply to all groups of women (regardless of race, ethnicity caste, etc.)?	Yes	✓
Are there informal laws (customary, religious, or traditional laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities between men and women when it comes to entering certain professions?	Yes	!
Are there informal laws (customary, religious, or traditional laws/rules) that require women to have the permission from their husband or legal guardian to take a paid job?	Yes	!
Are there informal laws (customary, religious, or traditional laws/rules) that require women to have the permission from their husband or legal guardian to register a business?	No	✓

Note: Cut-off date for the legal data is 31 August 2022.

³¹ This indicator corresponds to SDG indicator 5.2.2

³² Palestinian Authority (2000), "Labour Law No. 7 of 2000".

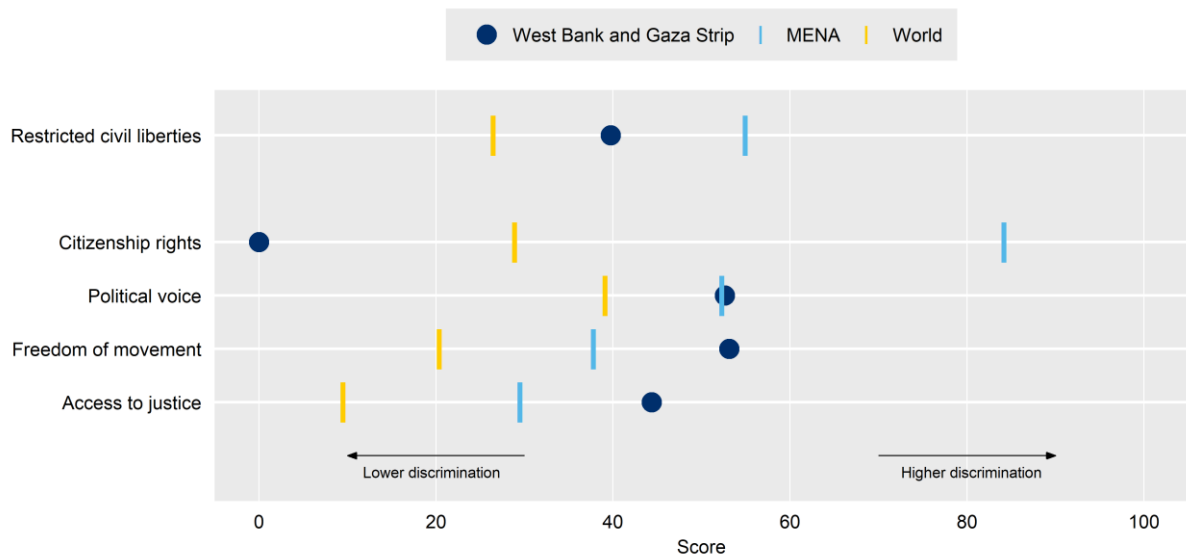
Source: OECD Development Centre/OECD (2023), *SIGI 2023 Legal Survey*, <https://oe.cd/sigi-dashboard>.

Restricted civil liberties

The West Bank and Gaza Strip exhibits medium levels of discrimination within the family with a score of 40, compared to a world average of 26 and an average score of 55 in the MENA region – based on countries for which scores could be calculated.

In this dimension, women and girls in the West Bank and Gaza Strip experience the highest levels of discrimination in the “Political voice” and “Freedom of movement” indicators with scores of 53 for both, followed by the “Access to justice” indicator with a score of 44. No discrimination is found in the “Citizenship rights” indicator with a score of 0.

Figure 6. Restricted civil liberties scores for the West Bank and Gaza Strip, 2023



Note: Scores range from 0 to 100, with 0 indicating no discrimination and 100 indicating absolute discrimination. The MENA region covers Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, the West Bank and Gaza Strip and Yemen.

Source: OECD (2023), “Social Institutions and Gender Index (Edition 2023)”, *OECD International Development Statistics* (database), <https://doi.org/10.1787/33beb96e-en>.

Citizenship rights

Legal frameworks concerning women’s citizenship rights

Question	Answer	Assessment
Does the law provide married women with the same rights as married men to acquire nationality?	Yes	✓
Does the law provide unmarried women with the same rights as unmarried men to acquire nationality?	Yes	✓
Does the law provide married women with the same rights as married men to change their nationality?	Yes	✓
Does the law provide unmarried women with the same rights as unmarried men to change their nationality?	Yes	✓
Does the law provide married women with the same rights as married men to retain their nationality?	Yes	✓
Does the law provide unmarried women with the same rights as unmarried men to retain their nationality?	Yes	✓
Does the law provide married women with the same rights as married men to confer nationality to their spouse?	Yes	✓
Does the law provide married women with the same rights as married men to confer nationality to their children?	Yes	✓
Does the law provide unmarried women with the same rights as unmarried men to confer nationality to their children?	Yes	✓
Regarding women’s nationality rights, does the law apply to all groups of women (regardless of race, caste, ethnicity, etc.)?	Yes	✓

Question	Answer	Assessment
Are there informal laws (customary, traditional, or religious laws) that create different rights or abilities between men and women when it comes to acquiring, changing, or retaining their nationality?	No	✓
Are there informal laws (customary, traditional, or religious laws) that create different rights or abilities between men and women when it comes to conferring nationality to their spouse and/or children?	No	✓

Note: Cut-off date for the legal data is 31 August 2022.

Source: OECD Development Centre/OECD (2023), *SIGI 2023 Legal Survey*, <https://oe.cd/sigi-dashboard>.

Freedom of movement

Practices related to women's freedom of movement

Freedom of movement is recognised as a human right and mobility is essential in everyday life, for instance to reach the workplace or healthcare facilities. In the West Bank and Gaza Strip, women feel more unsafe than men, and a large part of the overall population feels that way. Across the country, 41% of women declare not feeling safe walking alone at night in the city or in the area where they live, compared to 25% of men. This translates into women accounting for 63% of those who do not feel safe walking alone at night.

Legal frameworks concerning women's freedom of movement

Beyond the challenge of ensuring that everyone feels safe enough to move around in public spaces, laws must guarantee women and men the same rights to obtain identification documents and to travel by themselves within and outside of their country.

In the West Bank, Article 69 of the Personal Status Law³³ requires a married woman to travel and move with her spouse anywhere he chooses. Under the same article, a woman can be deemed disobedient when she leaves the house without a legitimate reason. In such case, she could lose her right to spousal maintenance (*nafaqa*).³⁴ In the Gaza Strip, Article 66 of the Family Rights Law³⁵ establishes similar provisions. In addition, Christian personal status laws also include the “obedience for spousal maintenance” framework that can restrict married women’s mobility.³⁶

Question	Answer	Assessment
Does the government provide national identity cards?	Yes	✓
Can a married woman apply for a national identity card in the same way as a married man? (in terms of rights and procedures)	Yes	✓
Can an unmarried woman apply for a national identity card in the same way as an unmarried man? (in terms of rights and procedures)	Yes	✓
Can a married woman apply for a passport in the same way as a married man (in terms of rights and procedures)?	Yes	✓
Can an unmarried woman apply for a passport in the same way as an unmarried man (in terms of rights and procedures)?	Yes	✓
Regarding identity cards and/or passports, does the law apply to all groups of women (regardless of race, caste, ethnicity, etc.)?	Yes	✓

³³ Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (1976), “Personal Status Law of 1976 corresponding to the Jordanian Personal Status Law No. 61/1976”, *Official Gazette No. 2668 of 12/01/1976* (republished in *Official Gazette No. 4149 of 16/09/1996*).

³⁴ Human Rights Watch (2023), *Trapped: How Male Guardianship Policies Restrict Women’s Travel and Mobility in the Middle East and North Africa*, Human Rights Watch, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2023/07/18/trapped/how-male-guardianship-policies-restrict-womens-travel-and-mobility-middle>.

³⁵ Egyptian Governor General (1954), “Order No. 303 on Family Rights”. The Family Rights Law, which applies in the Gaza Strip is based on the 1917 Ottoman Law and was enacted in 1954 by Gaza Strip’s then-Egyptian Administrator by Order No. 303.

³⁶ Human Rights Watch (2023), *Trapped: How Male Guardianship Policies Restrict Women’s Travel and Mobility in the Middle East and North Africa*, Human Rights Watch, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2023/07/18/trapped/how-male-guardianship-policies-restrict-womens-travel-and-mobility-middle>.

Question	Answer	Assessment
Does the law provide married women with the same rights as married men to travel outside the country?	No	!
Does the law provide married women with the same rights as married men to travel outside their homes?	No	!
Are there informal laws (customary, religious, or traditional laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities between men and women when it comes to applying for identity cards or passports?	No	✓

Note: Cut-off date for the legal data is 31 August 2022.

Source: OECD Development Centre/OECD (2023), *SIGI 2023 Legal Survey*, <https://oe.cd/sigi-dashboard>.

Political voice

Practices and social norms related to women's political voice

Women's political representation in the country is very low, with women accounting for only 13% of the members of parliament in 2023, compared to a world average of 27% and an average of 17% in the MENA region.

Discriminatory attitudes that exclude women from positions of power in the political sphere are widespread, with 81% of the country's population declaring that men make better political leaders than women.

Legal frameworks concerning women's political voice

Question	Answer	Assessment
Does the law provide women with the same rights as men to vote?	Yes	✓
Does the law provide women with the same rights as men to hold public and political office in the legislative branch?	Yes	✓
Does the law provide women with the same rights as men to hold public and political office in the executive branch?	Yes	✓
Does the law provide women with the same rights as men to hold public office in the judiciary branch?	Yes	✓
Do constitutional/legislated gender quotas exist to promote women's political representation at the national level?	Yes	✓
Do constitutional/legislated gender quotas exist to promote women's political representation at the local level?	Yes	✓
Does the law provide for special measures other than quotas to promote women's political representation at the national level?	No	!
Does the law provide for special measures other than quotas to promote women's political representation at the local level?	No	!
Are there informal laws (customary, religious or traditional laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities between men and women when it comes to voting?	Yes	!
Are there informal laws (customary, religious or traditional laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities between men and women when it comes to holding public office?	Yes	!

Note: Cut-off date for the legal data is 31 August 2022.

Source: OECD Development Centre/OECD (2023), *SIGI 2023 Legal Survey*, <https://oe.cd/sigi-dashboard>.

Access to justice

Practices related to women's access to justice

In the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, 54% of women do not trust the judicial system and courts, compared to 62% of men. This translates into women accounting for 45% of those who do not trust the country's judicial system.

Legal frameworks concerning women's access to justice

The Sharia courts and ecclesiastical courts have the authority to rule on cases involving personal status matters. In Sharia courts, the testimony of a man is equivalent to that of two women. One woman by herself cannot act as a witness.³⁷

Question	Answer	Assessment
Does the law provide women with the same rights as men to sue?	Yes	✓
Does a woman's testimony carry the same evidentiary weight as a man's in the civil courts?	Yes	✓
Does a woman's testimony carry the same evidentiary weight as a man's in the criminal courts?	Yes	✓
Does a woman's testimony carry the same evidentiary weight as a man's in the family courts?	No	!
Does a woman's testimony carry the same evidentiary weight as a man's in the tribunals?	Yes	✓
Are there informal laws (customary, religious or traditional laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities between men and women when it comes suing someone?	No	✓
Are there informal laws (customary, religious or traditional laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities between men and women when it comes to providing testimony in court?	Yes	!
Are there informal laws (customary, religious or traditional laws/rules) that create different rights or abilities between men and women when it comes to being judges, advocates or other court officers?	No	✓

Note: Cut-off date for the legal data is 31 August 2022.

Source: OECD Development Centre/OECD (2023), *SIGI 2023 Legal Survey*, <https://oe.cd/sigi-dashboard>.

³⁷ United Nations (2017), "Initial reports of the State of Palestine", *CEDAW/C/PSE/1*, United Nations, <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/women-convention-state-of-palestine-initial-periodic-report-to-cedaw/>.