











# 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>		
Does the law address child marriage?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Does the law address sexual harassment?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Does the law address domestic violence?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Does the law address femicide?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
<b>Mobility</b>		
Can a woman choose where to live in the same way as a man?	No	Marriage Act, Schedule 2
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 travel outside her home in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
Do a woman and a man have equal rights to confer citizenship on 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 explicitly prohibit discrimination in recruitment based on marital status, parental status, and age?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Does the law prohibit discrimination in employment based on gender?	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 a job deemed dangerous in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
Can a woman work in an industrial job in the same way as a man?	Yes	No restrictions could be located
<b>Marriage</b>		
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 be "head of household" or "head of family" in the same way as a man?	No	Marriage Act, Schedule 2
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 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 the provision of center-based childcare services?	Yes	Education Act No. 9 of 2014, Secs. 3 and 17
Does the law establish any form of support for families for childcare services?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Does the law establish any form of support for nonstate childcare providers?	No	No applicable provisions could be located
Does the law establish quality standards for the provision of center-based childcare services?	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 for 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 a woman and a man 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?	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 a woman and a man can retire with full pension benefits the same?	Yes	Employment Act, Sec. 54; Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act No. 1 of 2020, Schedule Minor Amendments, 2B
Are the ages at which a woman and a man can retire with partial pension benefits the same?	Yes	No applicable provisions could be located
Is the mandatory retirement age for a woman and a man the same?	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 special procedures in place for cases of sexual harassment?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Is a government entity responsible for monitoring and implementing national services, plans and programs addressing violence against women?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Is an annual budgetary allocation devoted to violence against women risk mitigation, prevention, and response programs?	No	Insufficient evidence located
<b>Mobility</b>		
Are passport application processes the same for a woman and a man?	Yes	Passport application form; Passport application procedures
Are the application processes for official identity documents the same for a woman and a man?	Yes	ID application procedures
Does a current policy or plan explicitly consider the specific mobility needs of women in public transportation?	No	Insufficient evidence located
<b>Workplace</b>		
Does a specialized body receive complaints about gender discrimination in employment?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Has the government published guidelines on nondiscrimination based on gender in recruitment?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Has the government published guidelines on flexible work arrangements?	No	Insufficient evidence located
<b>Pay</b>		

Are pay transparency measures or enforcement mechanisms in place to address the pay gap?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Have sex-disaggregated data on employment in different industries or sectors been published?	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
Have 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 nonstate childcare providers?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Has the government published any reports on the quality of childcare services?	No	Insufficient evidence located
<b>Entrepreneurship</b>		
Have sex-disaggregated data on business activities, entrepreneurship, or women-owned businesses been published?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Are government-led programs supporting female entrepreneurs providing access to finance and training, coaching, or business development?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Does a current national government plan or strategy focus on women's access to financial services?	Yes	Vanuatu National Financial Inclusion Strategy (2018-2023)
<b>Assets</b>		
Are mechanisms or incentives in place to encourage women to register immovable property (including joint titling)?	Yes	Land Leases Act, Sec. 75
Are awareness measures in place to improve women's access to information about marital and inheritance rights?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Have anonymized sex-disaggregated data on property ownership been published?	No	Insufficient evidence located
<b>Pension</b>		
Are incentives in place to increase women's retirement benefits?	No	Insufficient evidence located
Is a procedure in place for pension beneficiaries to challenge the decisions of the competent authority regarding their benefits?	No	Insufficient evidence located