



Women, Business and the Law 2024: Deep-Dive in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Mapping legal and policy gaps in the
Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
and Republika Srpska

Women, Business and the Law global report and deep-dive studies: What are the differences?

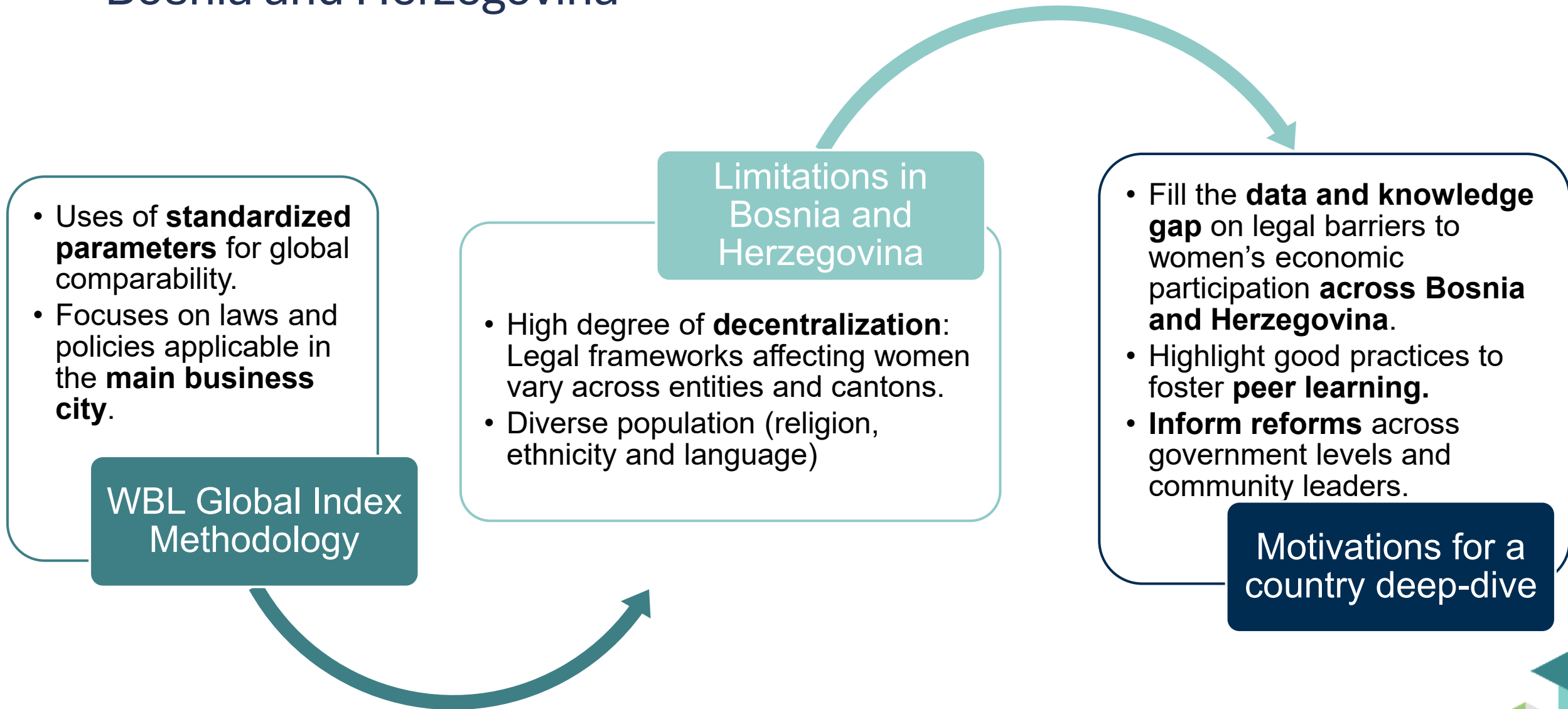
- **WBG flagship report**
- **Main business city used as a proxy**
- **International good practices across 190 economies**
- **Globally comparable dataset**
- **Data focused on codified law**

Global
Report

Deep-dive
Studies

- **Demand driven**
- **Go beyond the main business city:** capture diverse realities across the country
- **Capture barriers under all applicable legal regimes** (federal, state/province, religious, and customary)
- **Tailored reform recommendations** for all levels of government and relevant community leaders
- **Opportunity to examine sector-specific or thematic legal barriers** relevant to the country context

Motivations for a *Women, Business and the Law* deep-dive in Bosnia and Herzegovina



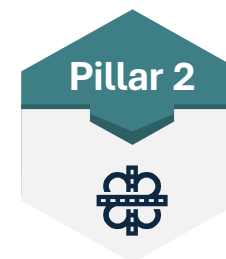
Scope of the *Women Business and the Law* deep dive in Bosnia and Herzegovina



Pillar 1

LEGAL FRAMEWORKS

Assesses the extent to which laws on the books enable or keep women from accessing, staying, and growing in the workforce and starting businesses.



Pillar 2

SUPPORTIVE FRAMEWORKS

Assesses the degree to which policies and institutions support legal implementation.

2
PILLARS

10
TOPICS



Safety



Mobility



Work



Pay



Marriage



Parenthood



Childcare



Entrepreneurship



Assets



Pension

2
AUTONOMOUS
ENTITIES

2
CITIES

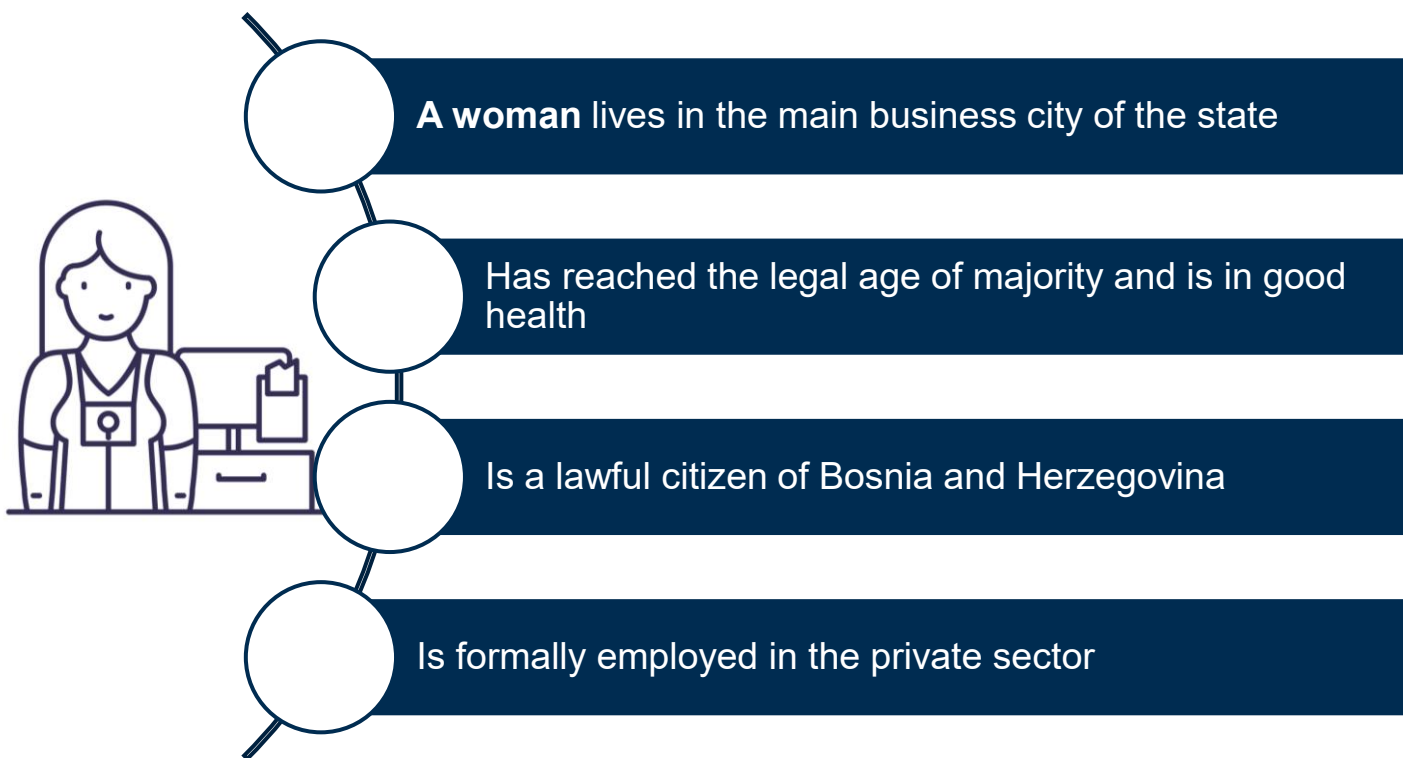
Federation of Bosnia and
Herzegovina (FBiH)
Sarajevo

Republika Srpska (RS)
Banja Luka

Methodology of the *Women Business and the Law* deep-dive study in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The study applies the *Women, Business and the Law* 2024 methodology to collect subnational data in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

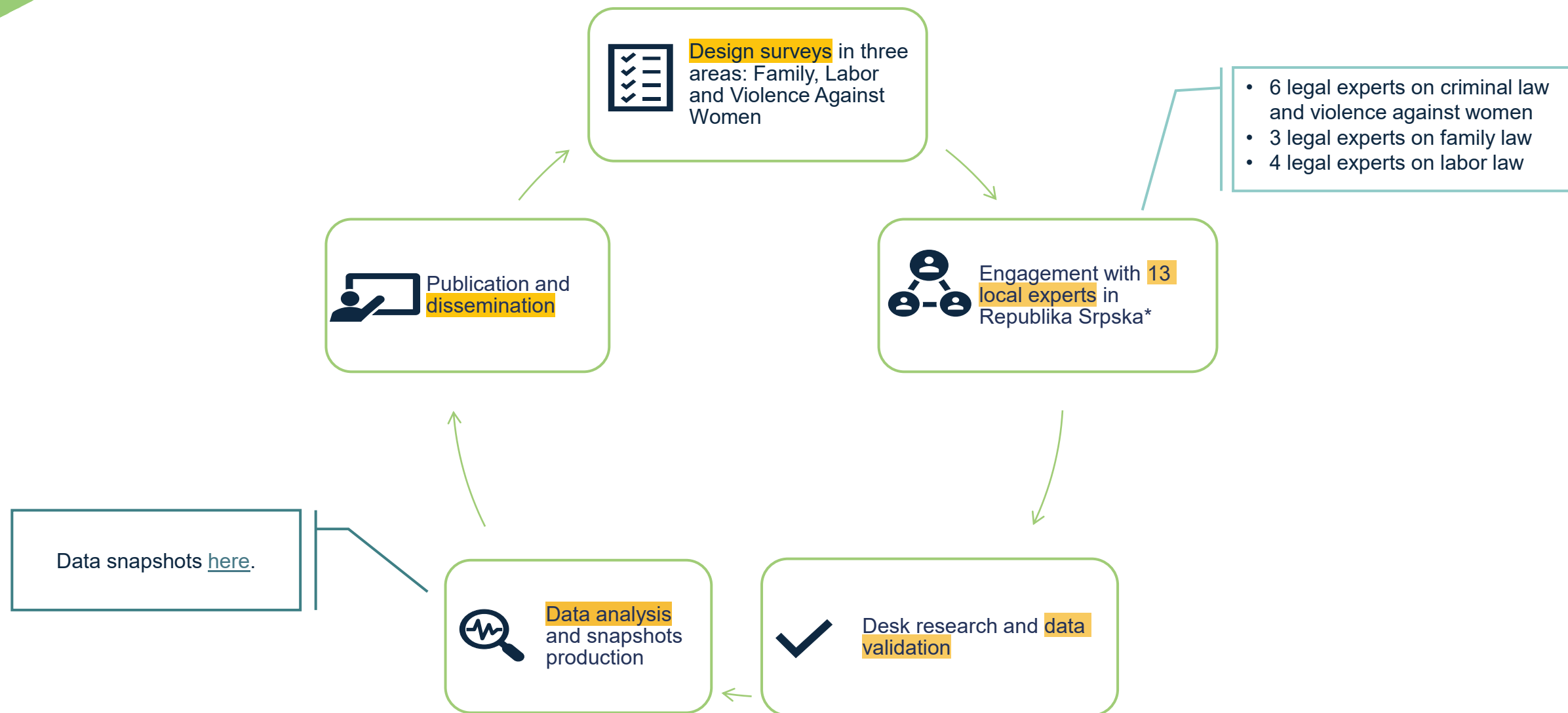
General parameters for data collection (assumptions)



Data measure laws and policies

- ✓ Applicable to the **private sector** (excluding public service rules).
- ✓ In force as of **October 1st, 2023**.

Data collection and validation



* Data for the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Sarajevo) was collected as part of the WBL 2024 report.

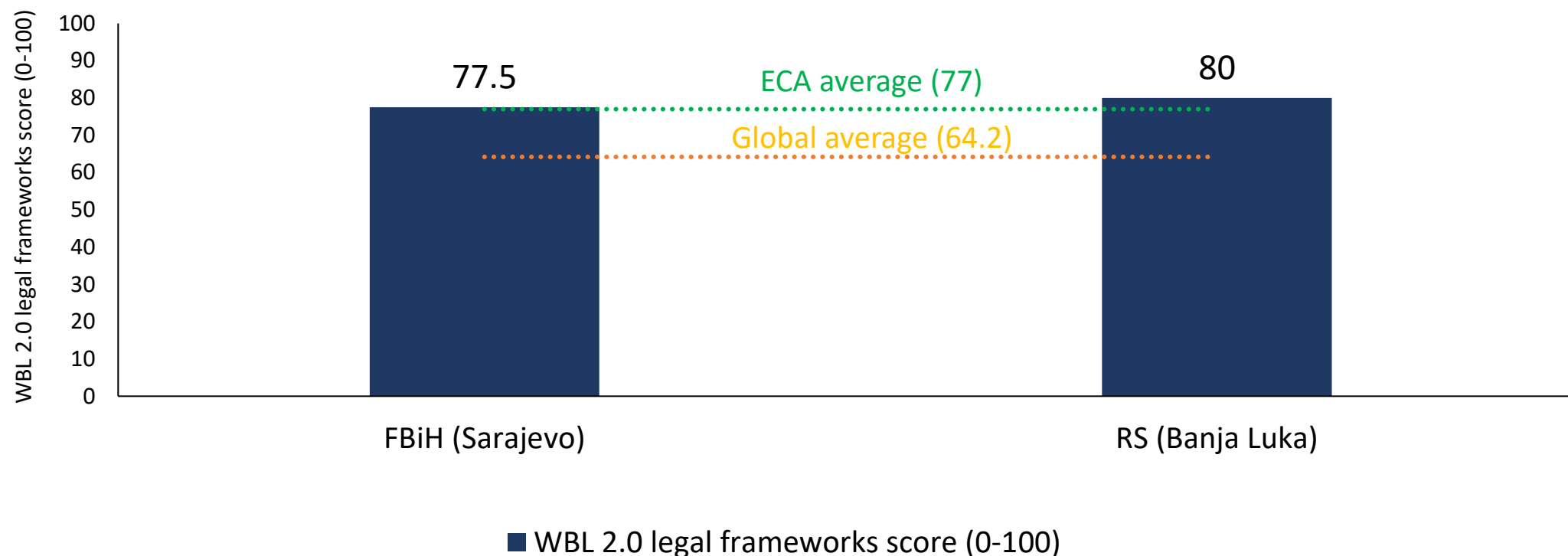
Deep-Dive in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Key Findings



WBL 2.0 legal frameworks score: Bosnia and Herzegovina

Republika Srpska (Banja Luka) scores higher on the WBL 2.0 legal frameworks than the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Sarajevo) on average

WBL 2.0 legal frameworks score (0-100) for two constituent entities of BiH



Source: *Women, Business and the Law*.

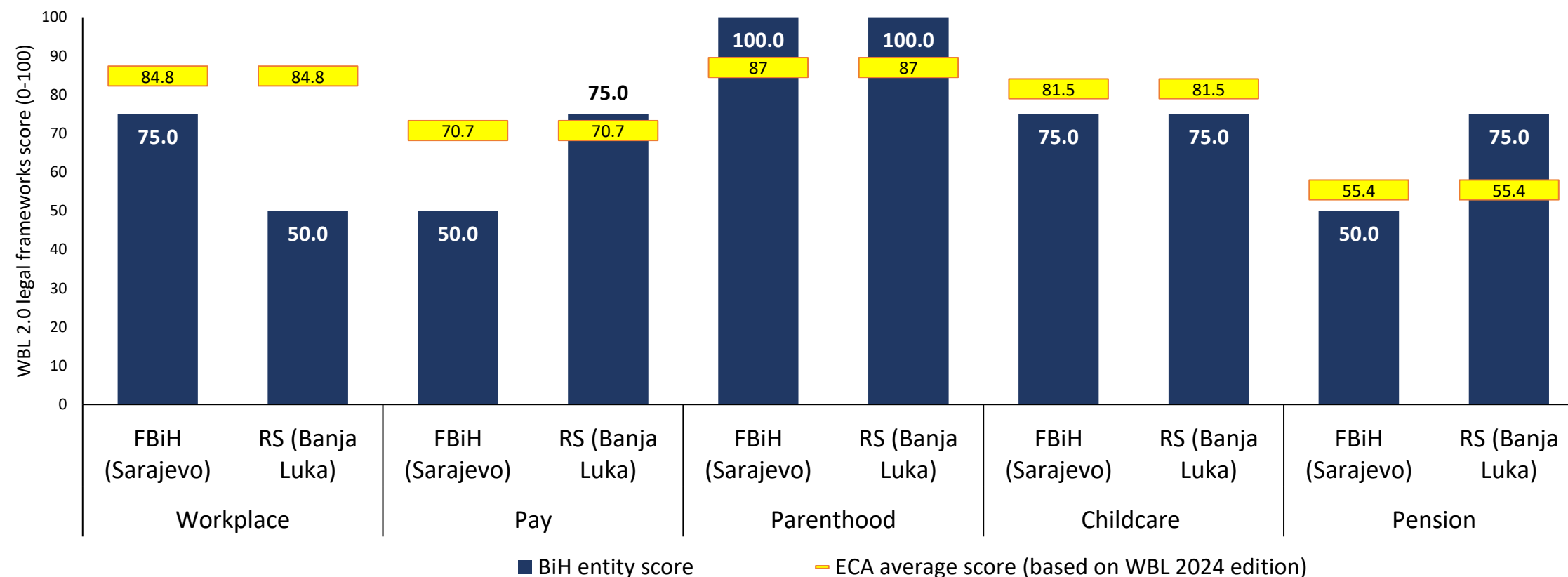
Note: The averages are reported based on WBL 2024 global report edition. Europe and Central Asia includes 23 economies.

FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS= Republika Srpska.

WBL 2.0 legal frameworks scores by indicator and constituent entity of BiH

Variation at the aggregate level exists in the legislation governing labor, employment and pension matters

WBL 2.0 legal frameworks score (0-100), by indicator and constituent entity



Source: *Women, Business and the Law*.

Note: FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS= Republika Srpska.

Workplace Legal Frameworks: Lack of legal protection in recruitment in RS; legal gaps in supporting work-life balance in both entities

Does the law...?

Workplace	FBiH (Sarajevo)	RS (Banja Luka)
Allow a woman to get a job in the same way as a man?	✓	✓
Prohibit discrimination in employment based on gender?	✓	✓
Prohibit discrimination in recruitment based on marital status, parental status, and age?	✓	✗
Allow employees to request flexible work?	✗	✗

Source: *Women, Business and the Law*.

FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS=Republika Srpska.

Pay Legal Frameworks: Women cannot work in mines in FBiH; and legal discrimination to work at night in both entities

Does the law...?

Pay	FBiH (Sarajevo)	RS (Banja Luka)
Mandate equal remuneration for work of equal value?	✓	✓
Allow a woman to work at night in the same way as a man?	✗*	✗*
Allow a woman to work in an industrial job in the same way as a man?	✗**	✓
Allow a woman to work in a job deemed dangerous in the same way as a man?	✓	✓

*Prohibition of night work for mothers with a child under the age of 2

** Women cannot work in underground jobs (mines) in the same way as men in FBiH.

Source: Women, Business and the Law.

FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS=Republika Srpska.

Parenthood Legal Frameworks: Favorable legal frameworks related to women's work during and after pregnancy in both entities

Does the law provide for ...?

Parenthood	FBiH (Sarajevo)	RS (Banja Luka)
Paid leave of at least 14 weeks available to mothers?	✓	✓
<i>How many days of paid maternity leave?</i>	365*	365**
<i>How many days of paid shared parental leave?</i>	0	0
<i>How many days of paid parental leave are reserved for the mother?</i>	0	0
Leave benefits for mothers paid solely by the government?	✓	✓
Paid leave available to fathers?	✓	✓
<i>How many days of paid paternity leave?</i>	9	7
<i>How many days of paid parental leave are reserved for the father?</i>	0	0
Prohibition of dismissal of pregnant workers?	✓	✓

* **Potential variations across cantons in FBiH.** In **Sarajevo Canton**, women receive 60% of their average salary.

** **Women receive 100% of their average salary in Republika Srpska.**

Source: Women, Business and the Law.

FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS=Republika Srpska.

Childcare Legal Frameworks: Lack of financial support for nonstate childcare providers in both entities

Does the law establish...?

Childcare	FBiH (Sarajevo) *	RS (Banja Luka)
Provision of childcare services in center-based settings?	✓	✓
Any form of support to families for childcare services?	✓	✓
Any form of support to non-state childcare providers?	✗	✗
Quality standards for the provision of center-based childcare services?	✓	✓

Source: Women, Business and the Law.

FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS=Republika Srpska.

* Potential variations across cantons in FBiH.

Pension Legal Frameworks: Remaining legal gaps affecting the size of women's old-age pension in both entities

Does the law provide for ...?

Pension	FBiH (Sarajevo)	RS (Banja Luka)
Equal ages at which men and women can retire with full pension benefits?	✓	✓
Equal ages at which men and women can retire with partial pension benefits?	✗	✓
<i>What is the age for men?</i>	63	N/A*
<i>What is the age for women?</i>	58	N/A*
Equal mandatory retirement age for men and women?	✓	✓
Periods of absence due to childcare to be accounted for in pension benefits?	✗	✗

* Republika Srpska legislation does not establish a specific age at which partial pension benefits can be claimed

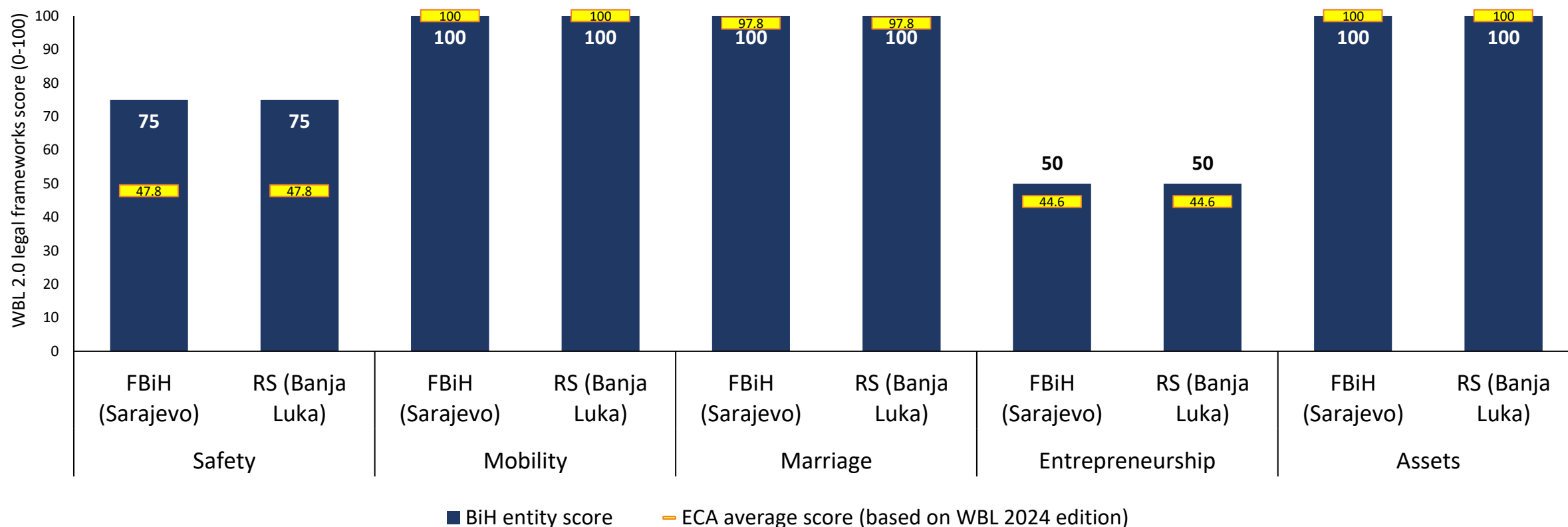
Source: Women, Business and the Law.

FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS=Republika Srpska.

WBL 2.0 legal frameworks scores by indicator and constituent entity of BiH

No variation at the aggregate level when it comes to legal provisions governing women's safety, family matters, and entrepreneurship

WBL 2.0 legal frameworks score (0-100), by indicator and constituent entity



Source: *Women, Business and the Law*.

FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS=Republika Srpska.

Mobility Legal Frameworks: Equal rights regarding agency and freedom of movement in both entities

Can a woman...?

Mobility	FBiH (Sarajevo)	RS (Banja Luka)
Travel internationally in the same way as a man?	✓	✓
Choose where to live in the same way as a man?	✓	✓
Travel outside her home in the same way as a man?	✓	✓
Confer citizenship on her spouse and children in the same way as a man?	✓	✓

Source: *Women, Business and the Law*.
FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS=Republika Srpska.

Safety Legal Frameworks: Legal gaps exist when it comes to laws governing sexual harassment and femicide in both entities

Does the law address the following forms of violence...?

Safety	FBiH (Sarajevo)	RS (Banja Luka)
All four forms of domestic violence (physical, sexual, psychological, financial)?	✓	✓
Femicide?	✗*	✗
Sexual harassment		
In <i>employment</i> ?	✓	✓
In <i>education</i> ?	✓	✓
In <i>public places</i> ?	✗	✗
Cyberharassment	✗	✓
Child marriage?	✓	✓

* Femicide was integrated in the Criminal Code of FBiH on July 23, 2025 (in force)

Source: Women, Business and the Law.

FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS=Republika Srpska.

Marriage Legal Frameworks: Equal rights in marriage and divorce in both entities

Does the law...?

Marriage	FBiH (Sarajevo)	RS (Banja Luka)
Allow a woman to be “head of household” or “head of family” in the same way as a man?	✓	✓
Is free of legal provisions that require a married woman to obey her husband?	✓	✓
Allow a woman to obtain a judgment of divorce in the same way as a man?	✓	✓
Grant woman the same rights to remarry as a man?	✓	✓

Source: *Women, Business and the Law*.
FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS=Republika Srpska.

Entrepreneurship Legal Frameworks: Lack of laws fostering women's participation on corporate boards and public procurement in both entities

Does the law ...?

Entrepreneurship	FBiH (Sarajevo)	RS (Banja Luka)
Allow a woman to undertake entrepreneurial activities in the same way as a man?	✓	✓
Prohibit discrimination in access to credit based on gender?	✓	✓
Prescribe a gender quota on corporate boards?	✗	✗
Include gender-sensitive procurement provisions for public procurement processes?	✗	✗

Source: *Women, Business and the Law*.

FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS=Republika Srpska.

Assets Legal Frameworks: Equal rights in both constituencies when it comes to property and inheritance

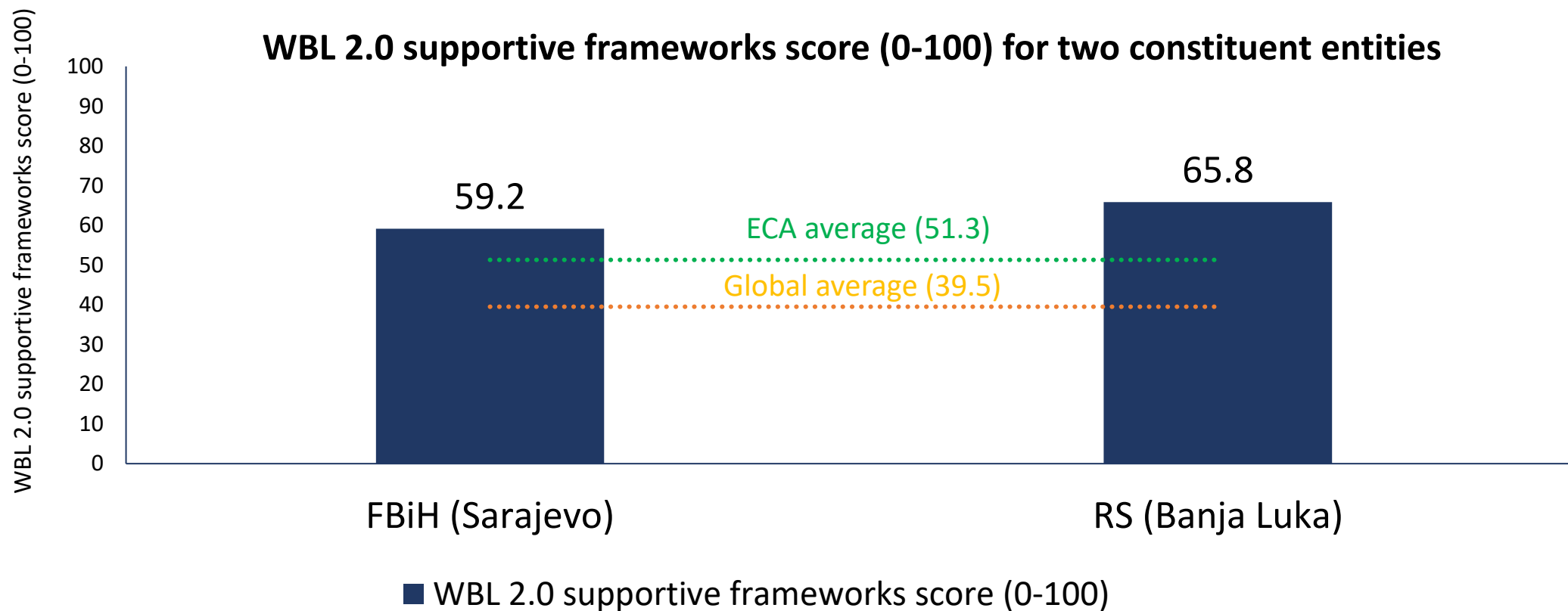
Does the law provide for ...?

Assets	FBiH (Sarajevo)	RS (Banja Luka)
Women and men with equal administrative power and ownership rights to immovable property, including land	✓	✓
Sons and daughters with equal rights to inherit assets from their parents?	✓	✓
Male and female surviving spouses with equal rights to inherit assets?	✓	✓
The valuation of nonmonetary contributions?	✓	✓

Source: *Women, Business and the Law*.
FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS=Republika Srpska.

WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks score: Bosnia and Herzegovina

RS (Banja Luka) scores higher on the WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks than FBiH on average



Source: *Women, Business and the Law*.

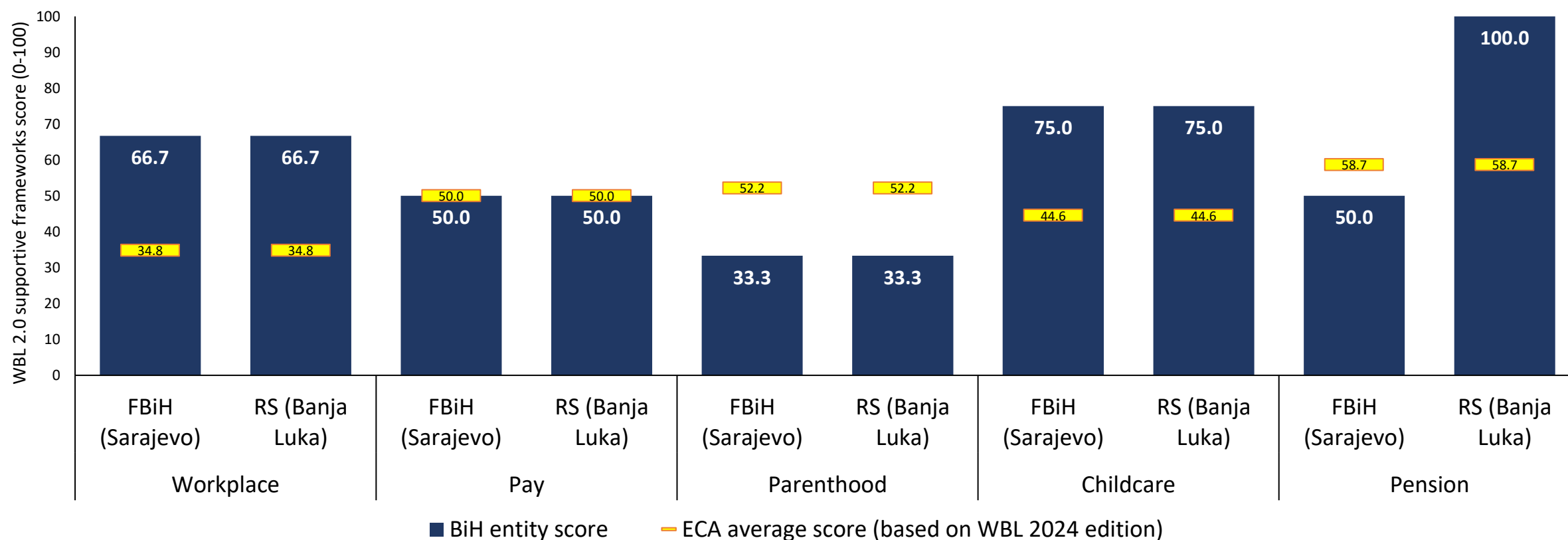
Note: The averages are reported based on WBL 2024 global report edition. Europe and Central Asia includes 23 economies.

FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS=Republika Srpska.

WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks score by indicator and constituent entity of BiH

Supportive frameworks for proper implementation of laws could further be enhanced across the board in both entities when it comes to labor and employment matters

WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks score (0-100), by indicator and constituent entity



Source: Women, Business and the Law.

FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS=Republika Srpska.

Workplace Supportive Frameworks: Lack of policy resources published by the government on nondiscrimination in both entities

Has the government ... ?

Workplace	FBiH (Sarajevo)	RS (Banja Luka)
Published guidelines on nondiscrimination based on gender in recruitment?	✗	✗
Published guidelines on flexible work arrangements?	✓	✓
Put in place a specialized body receiving complaints about gender discrimination in employment?	✓	✓

Source: *Women, Business and the Law*.

FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS=Republika Srpska.

Pay Supportive Frameworks: Remaining policy gaps in supporting the implementation of equal pay legislation in both entities

Has the government ... ?

Pay	FBiH (Sarajevo)	RS (Banja Luka)
Put in place pay transparency measures or enforcement mechanisms to address the gender pay gap?	✗	✗
Published sex-disaggregated data on employment in different industries or sectors?*	✓	✓

* Sex-disaggregated data collected and published both at the state (BiH) and entity level (RS and FBiH).

Source: Women, Business and the Law.

FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS=Republika Srpska.

Parenthood Supportive Frameworks: Policy gaps pertaining to women's ability to work after having children remain in both entities

Has the government ...?

Parenthood	FBiH (Sarajevo)	RS (Banja Luka)
Put in place a single government application process to apply for maternity benefits ?	✓*	✓
Put in place incentives to encourage fathers to take paternity leave upon the birth of a child?	✗	✗
Published sex-disaggregated data on unpaid care work?	✗	✗

* Potential variations across cantons in FBiH.

Source: Women, Business and the Law.

FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS=Republika Srpska.

Childcare Supportive Frameworks: Lack of financial support for nonstate childcare providers in both entities

Has the government ...?

Childcare	FBiH (Sarajevo) **	RS (Banja Luka)
Published a registry or database of childcare providers?	✓	✓
Put in place a clearly outlined application procedure to request financial support from the government for childcare services by parents ?	✓	✓
Put in place a clearly outlined application procedure to request financial support from the government for childcare services by nonstate childcare providers ?*	✗	✗
Published any reports on quality of childcare services?	✓	✓

* No support to non-state childcare providers provided in the law in the first place in both constituencies, therefore, no procedures.

** Potential variations across cantons in FBiH.

Source: Women, Business and the Law.

FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS=Republika Srpska.

Pension Supportive Frameworks: No incentives to increase women's retirement benefits in FBiH, but dedicated procedures to challenge benefit decisions in place in both entities.

**Has the government
put in place...?**

Pension	FBiH (Sarajevo)	RS (Banja Luka)
Incentives to increase women's retirement benefits?	✗	✓ *
A procedure for pension beneficiaries to challenge the decisions of the competent authority regarding their benefits?	✓	✓

* Tax deduction for contributions to voluntary pension insurance in Republika Srpska

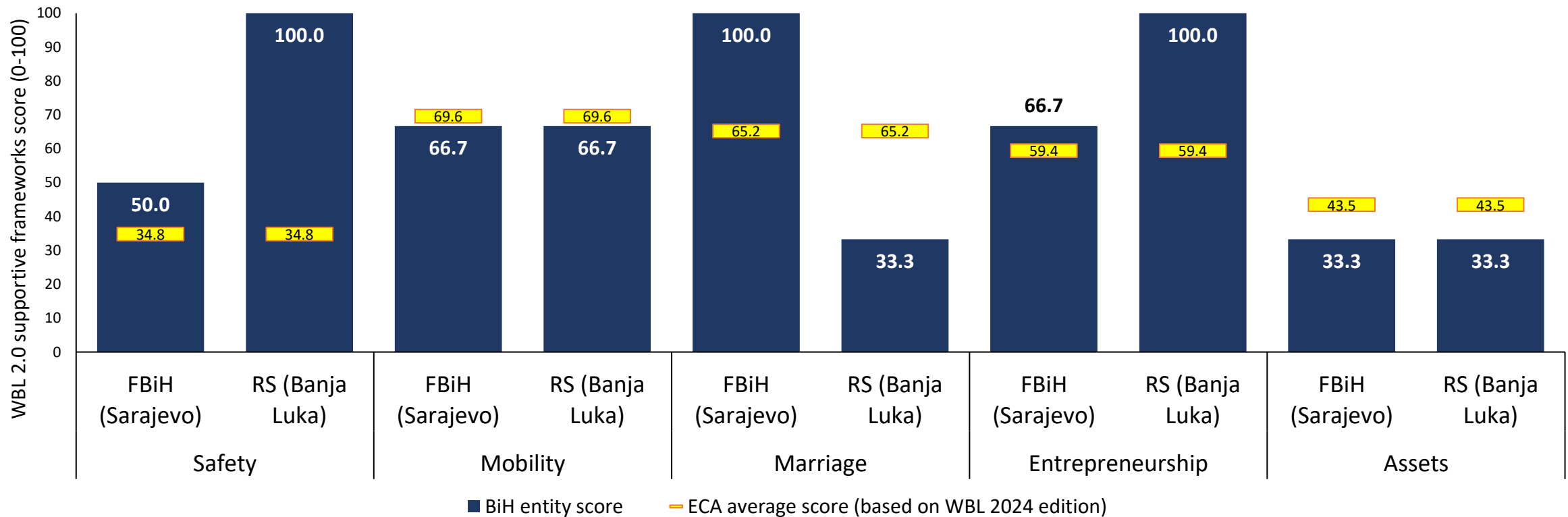
Source: *Women, Business and the Law*.

FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS=Republika Srpska.

WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks score by indicator and constituent entity of BiH

RS (Banja Luka) scores higher than FBiH (Sarajevo) when it comes to supportive frameworks for proper implementation of laws governing women's safety and entrepreneurship

WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks score (0-100), by indicator and constituent entity



Source: Women, Business and the Law.

FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS=Republika Srpska.

Mobility Supportive Frameworks: Gender-sensitive public transportation policies are absent in both entities

Mobility	FBiH (Sarajevo)	RS (Banja Luka)
Are passport application processes the same for a woman and a man?	✓	✓
Are the application processes for official identity documents the same for a woman and a man?	✓	✓
Is there a current policy or plan that explicitly considers the specific mobility needs of women in public transportation?	✗*	✗

* Potential variations across cantons in FBiH.

Source: Women, Business and the Law.

FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS=Republika Srpska.

Safety Supportive Frameworks: Remaining policy gaps to support the implementation of gender-based violence legislation in FBiH

Has the government put in place... ?

Safety	FBiH (Sarajevo)	RS (Banja Luka)
Comprehensive mechanisms to address violence against women?	✓*	✓
Special procedures for cases of sexual harassment?	✓	✓
An entity responsible for monitoring and implementing national services, plans, and programs addressing violence against women?	✗	✓
An annual budgetary allocation devoted to violence against women risk mitigation, prevention, and response programs?	✗	✓

* Potential variations across cantons in FBiH.

Source: Women, Business and the Law.

FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS=Republika Srpska.

Marriage Supportive Frameworks: Remaining policy gaps to support the implementation of equal rights in marriage and divorce in RS

Has the government put in place... ?

Marriage	FBiH (Sarajevo)	RS (Banja Luka)
A fast-track process or procedure for family law disputes?	✓ *	✗
Specialized family courts?	✓ **	✗
Legal aid available for family law disputes?	✓ **	✓

* Expedited court proceedings for matrimonial disputes in FBiH (main hearing to be held within 15 days from the date of the receipt of the request by the court)

** Potential variations across cantons in FBiH.

Source: Women, Business and the Law.

FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS=Republika Srpska.

Entrepreneurship Supportive Frameworks: No strategy to facilitate women's access to financial services in FBiH

Has the government ...?

Entrepreneurship	FBiH (Sarajevo)	RS (Banja Luka)
Published sex-disaggregated data on business activities, entrepreneurship, or women-owned businesses?*	✓	✓
Put in place programs that provide support to female entrepreneurs such as access to finance or regarding agency and empowerment?	✓***	✓
Adopted a plan or strategy with a focus on women's access to financial services?	✗	✓**

* Only Republika Srpska Institute of Statistics published sex-disaggregated data at the entity-level (RS). FBiH scores a "Yes" based on data collected by the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina (state level).

**Republika Srpska adopted the Strategy for the Development of Women's Entrepreneurship in Republika Srpska 2019-2023

*** **Potential variations across cantons in FBiH.**

Source: *Women, Business and the Law*.

FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS=Republika Srpska.

Assets Supportive Frameworks: Remaining policy gaps to support women in property ownership and registration in both entities

Has the government ...?

Assets	FBiH (Sarajevo)	RS (Banja Luka)
Adopted policies to encourage women to register immovable property (including joint titling)?*	✓	✓
Put in place awareness measures in place to improve women's access to information about marital and inheritance rights?	✗**	✗
Published anonymized sex-disaggregated data on property ownership?	✗	✗

* Joint matrimonial property must be registered in the names of both spouses in both entities. In addition, the law of FBiH provides a right for a spouse to request a correction in the Land Register to reflect co-ownership of matrimonial property.

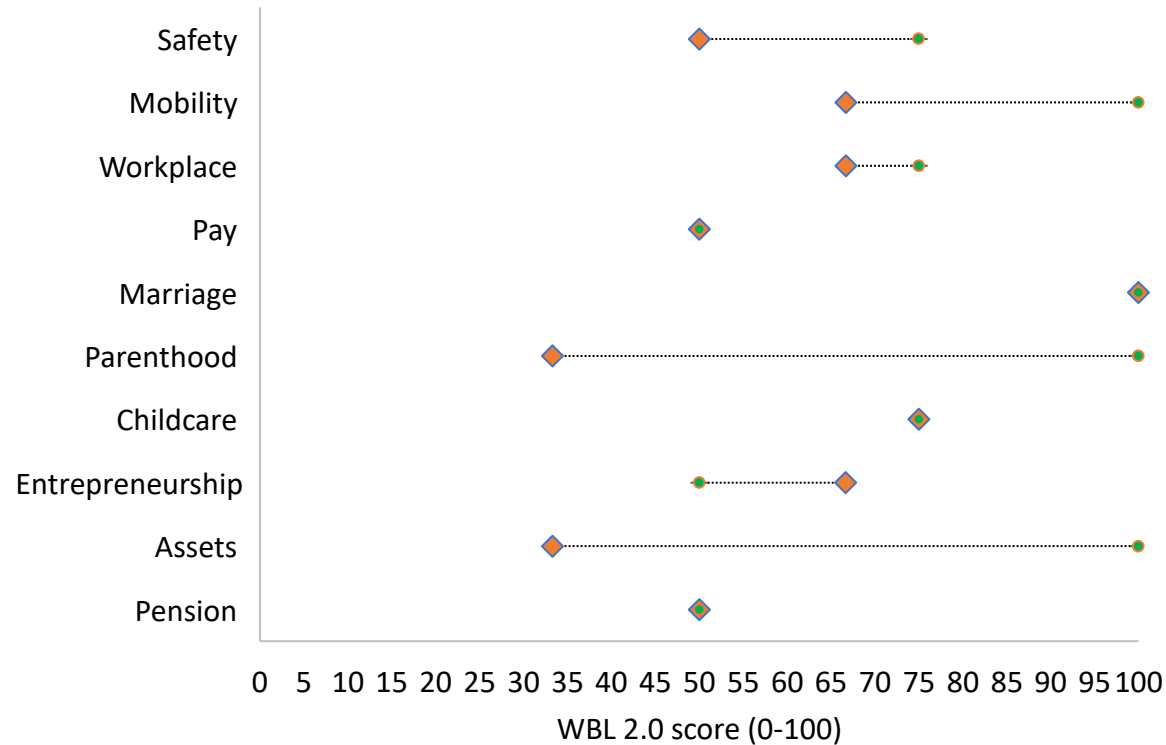
** **Potential variations across cantons in FBiH.**

Source: *Women, Business and the Law*.

FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS=Republika Srpska.

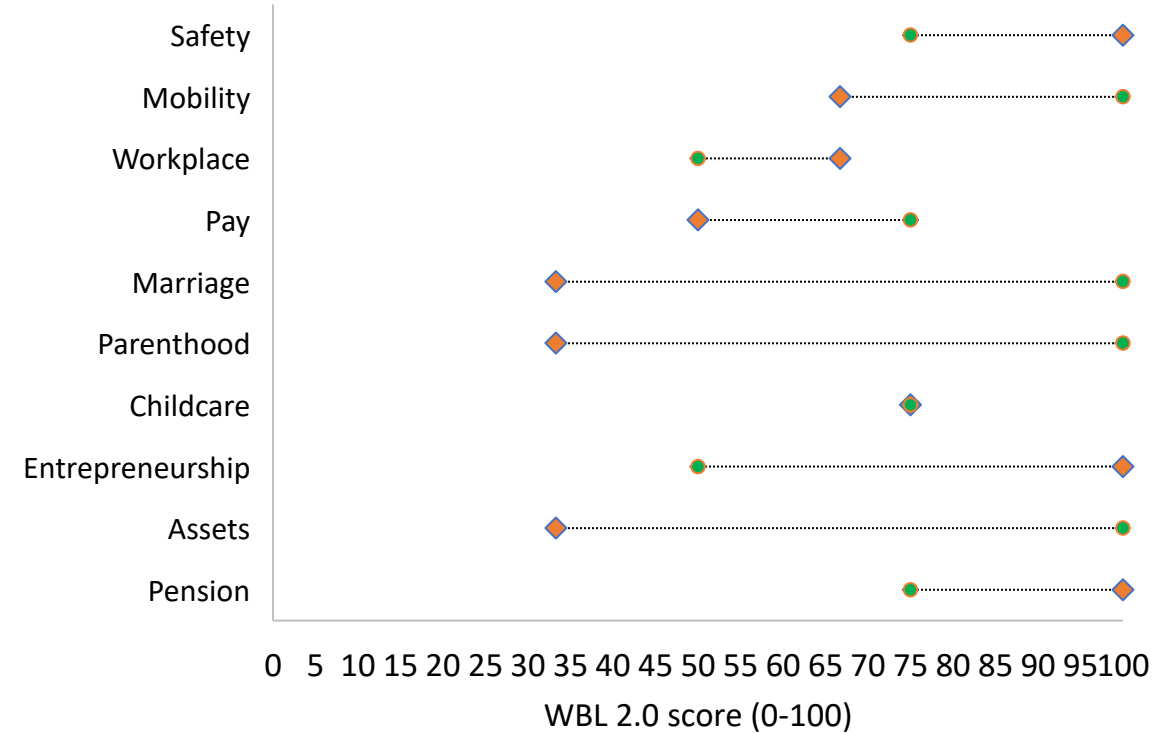
The gap of more than 65 points between the laws and the frameworks supporting their implementation is the highest in the Parenthood and Assets indicators in both entities

Differences between WBL 2.0 legal and supportive frameworks in the FBiH



◆ WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks score (0-100)
● WBL 2.0 legal frameworks score (0-100)

Differences between WBL 2.0 legal and supportive frameworks in the RS



◆ WBL 2.0 supportive frameworks score (0-100)
● WBL 2.0 legal frameworks score (0-100)

Source: *Women, Business and the Law*.

FBiH=Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. RS=Republika Srpska.



WBL.WORLDBANK.ORG

