




**Women, Business and the Law (WBL)** is a World Bank Group flagship initiative providing comparable data on laws and policies impacting women’s economic participation to drive jobs, productivity, and economic growth. Economies with higher WBL scores tend to have higher female labor force participation rates, more women business owners and managers, and narrower gender wage gaps.

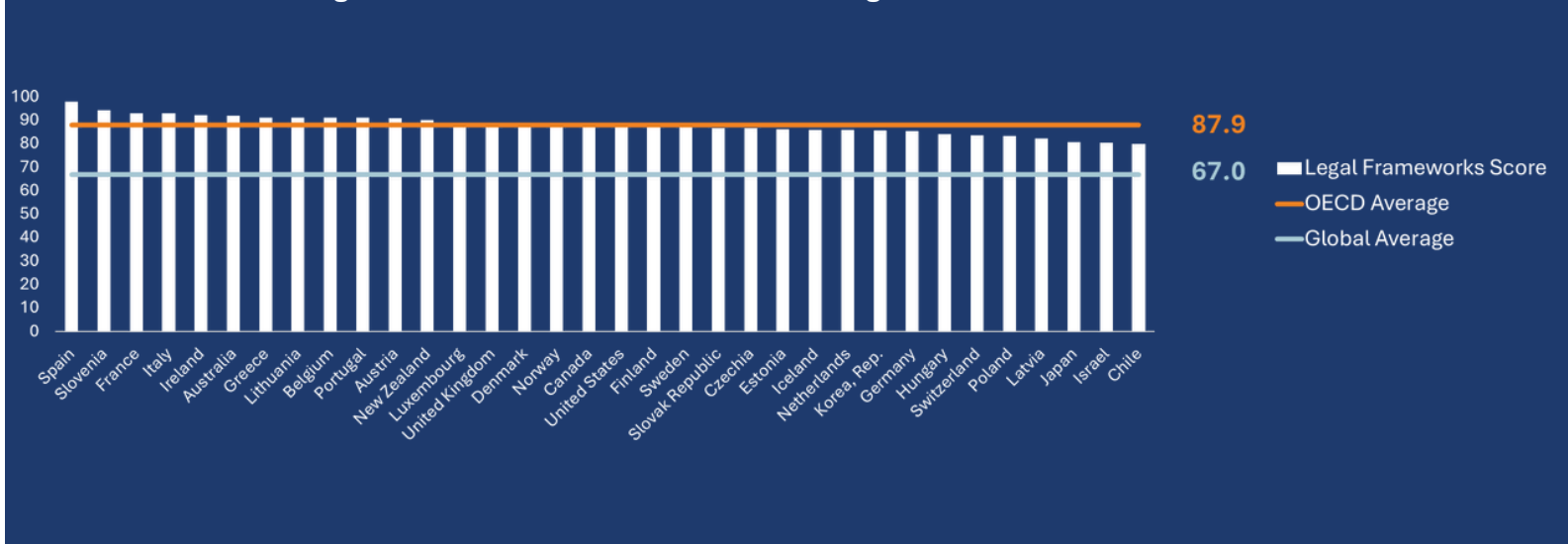
Women in the OECD High-Income region have more than three quarters (87.9%) of the economic rights afforded to men. Only about three quarters (73.1%) of the mechanisms are in place to support the implementation of laws. Experts in the region perceive that women’s economic rights are enforced at slightly more than three quarters (75.9%) of their full potential.

## Reform Highlights from October 2023 to October 2025

-  **18 economies in the OECD High-Income region have enacted reforms to provide women with greater access to economic opportunities.**
-  In July 2024, **Netherlands** enacted legislation on sexual harassment in public places, including criminal penalties for such conduct.
-  In May 2024, **Japan** enacted legislation allowing employees to request flexibility regarding time and place of work.

[Click here for a full list of reforms](#)

Legal Frameworks Index Scores for OECD High Income - WBL 2026 Index



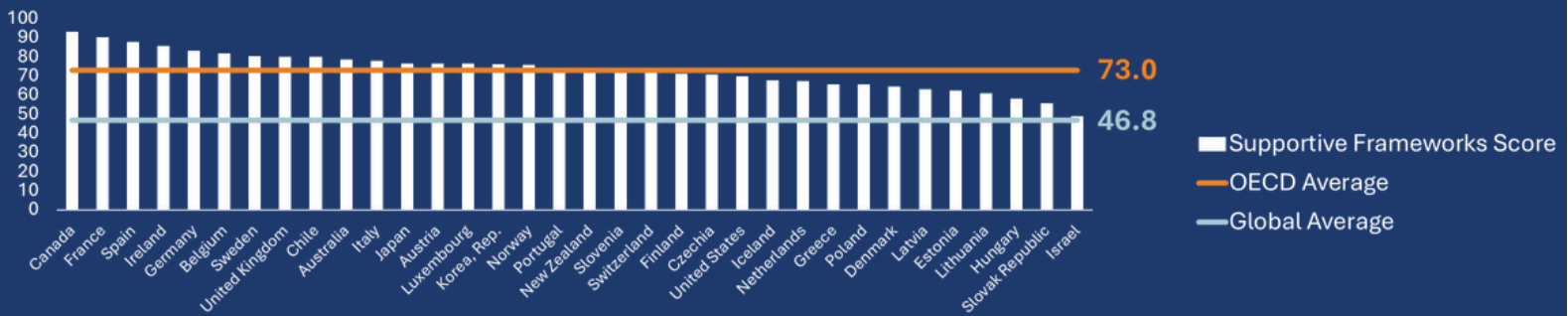
## Legal Frameworks: Measuring equal rights and explicit restrictions on women’s work and entrepreneurship

- Across the region, all economies perform above the global average, indicating relatively strong legal frameworks promoting women’s access to economic opportunities.
- The **Mobility** and **Assets** topics perform well with average regional scores of 100.0 and 99.3, respectively.
- The **Safety** and **Entrepreneurship** topics show the most room for improvement with average regional scores of 43.8 and 70.6, respectively, indicating persistent gaps in laws protecting women from violence and supporting female entrepreneurship. To close such gaps, economies could introduce laws addressing femicide and supporting female entrepreneurship.

## Good Practice Legal and Policy Frameworks

- **Lithuania** is among seven regional economies that have prescribed a minimum representation of women on corporate boards.
- **New Zealand** has enacted the Tax Act (Budget Measures) of 2024 which allows direct tax relief for caregivers who incur approved childcare expenses.

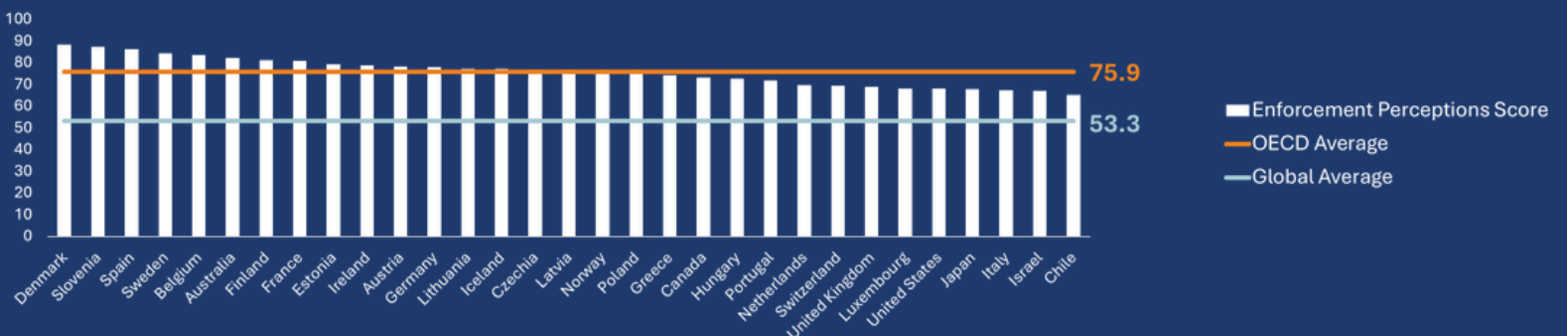
## Supportive Frameworks Index Scores for OECD High Income - WBL 2026 Index



### Supportive Frameworks: Examining policy instruments designed to support the implementation of laws

- Across the region, policies and institutions to implement equal opportunity laws are strongest in **Canada** and **France**. Most room for improvement remains in the **Slovak Republic** and **Israel**.
- The **Mobility** and **Pension** topics perform relatively well with average regional scores of 82.7, respectively.
- The **Asset** topic shows the most room for improvement with an average regional score of 42.7, indicating gaps in policies and institutions needed to support women in property ownership and registration. To close such gaps, economies could adopt policies needed to support women’s property ownership and registration.

## Enforcement Perceptions Index Scores for OECD High Income - WBL 2026 Index



### Enforcement Perceptions: Evaluating expert views of how well public authorities enforce laws in practice

- **Denmark** is the highest scoring economy (88.6%), suggesting that laws protecting women’s economic rights are enforced more than half of the time. Lowest enforcement levels are perceived in **New Zealand** and the **Slovak Republic**.
- Across the region, experts assess the enforcement of women’s rights to **Safety** at only 27.0% of their full potential.