



THE
KAHLIL GIBRAN CHAIR
FOR VALUES & PEACE



MENA Region

- 1) MENA Gender Analysis
- 2) Statistics from MENA Region

● May Rihani, University of Maryland, 2018 ●
مي الريحاني، جامعة ماريلاند



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MENA REGION

1) MENA Gender Analysis:

Impediments and Progress Toward Equitable Participation by Women in Social, Economic and Political Life in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

- May Rihani, University of Maryland, 2018
مي الريحاني، جامعة ماريلاند

Overview

نظرة عامة



436 million people

(World Bank, 2016)



20-22 Countries, 3 subregions

157

years to close overall gender gap in MENA region, with current rates of progress.

The region's best-performing countries this year are **Tunisia**, the **United Arab Emirates** and **Bahrain**, having closed between 65% and 63% of their overall gender gaps. The lower end of the regional table is made up of **Syria** and **Yemen**, having closed 57% and 52% of their gender gap, respectively.

Regional Ranking

الترتيب الإقليمي

117	Tunisia ↑↑
120	UAE ↑
126	Bahrain ↑↑
127	Algeria ↓↓
129	Kuwait ↓
130	Qatar ↓↓
134	Egypt ↓
135	Jordan ↓
136	Morocco ↓
137	Lebanon ↓
138	Saudi Arabia ↑
142	Syria →
144	Yemen →

Women in the Labor Force

المرأة في القوى العاملة

Women in the Middle East and North Africa region have achieved impressive gains in a number of social indices, but still have the world's lowest rates of labor force participation.

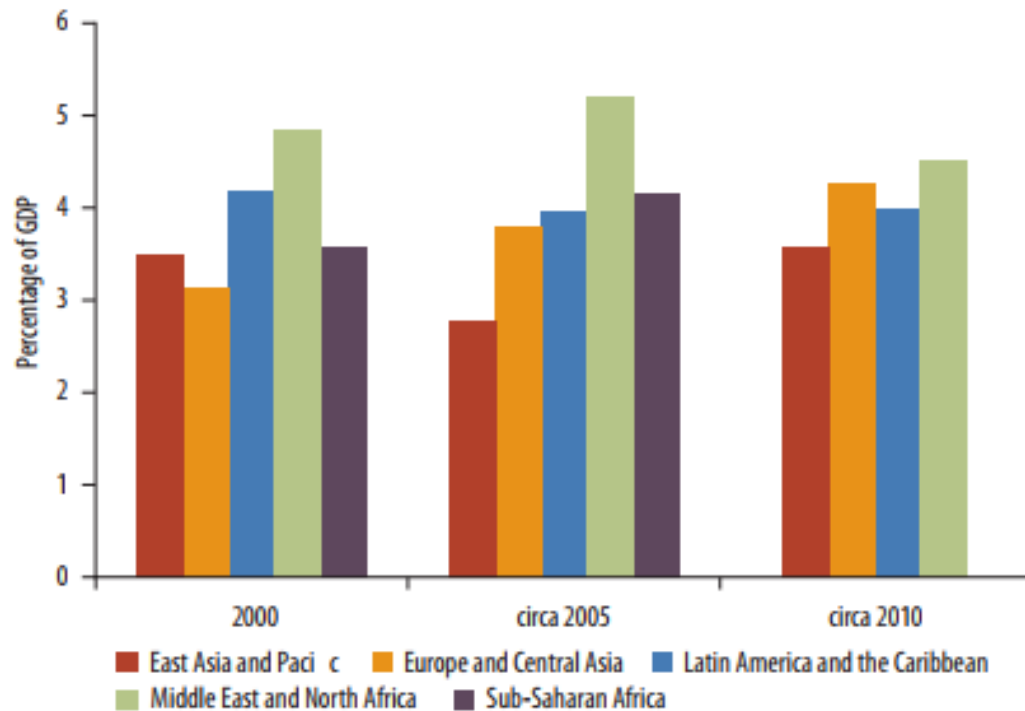
Source: World Economic Forum, *Global Gender Gap Report*, 2015

1

in 4 women in the Middle East and North Africa are employed or looking for work.

Source: World Bank, Main Report: MENA Development report, 2013

Public Expenditure on Education, 2000–10



Source: UNESCO 2000–10.

Why do Arab women not participate in the workforce, especially given that girls in Arab countries enjoy educational parity with boys?



Employment التوظيف

13

MENA countries out of 18 globally have closed less than 50% of the gap for Economic Participation and Opportunity subindex.

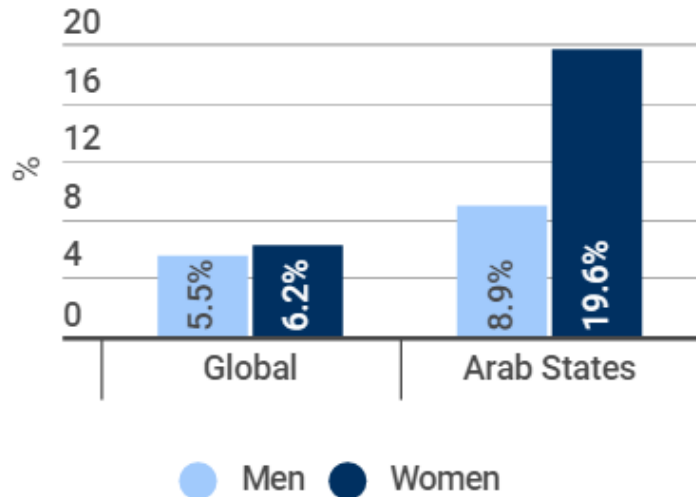
Source: World Economic forum, Global Gender Gap Report, 2017.



Women are less represented in senior positions and tend to earn lower salaries.

Source: CAWTAR, Women in Public Life, Gender Law and Policy in MENA, 2014

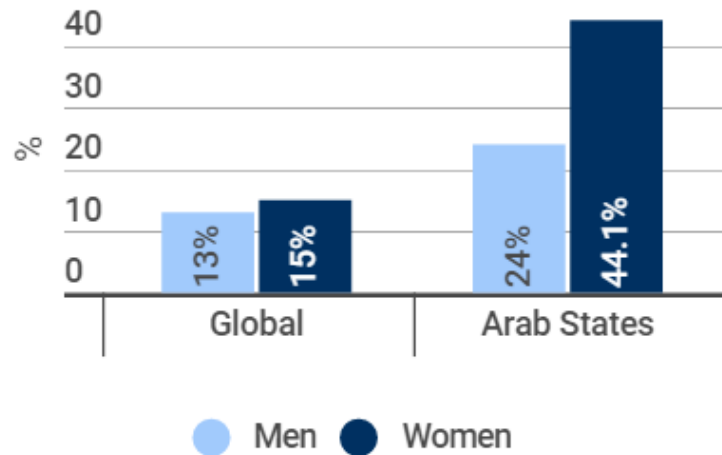
Unemployment Rates, 2016



Source: International Labour Organization, ILOSTAT database, 2017

Youth Unemployment Rates, 2016

(Ages 15-24)



Women and Political Participation

المرأة والمشاركة السياسية

Top 5 factors that deter men and women from entering politics

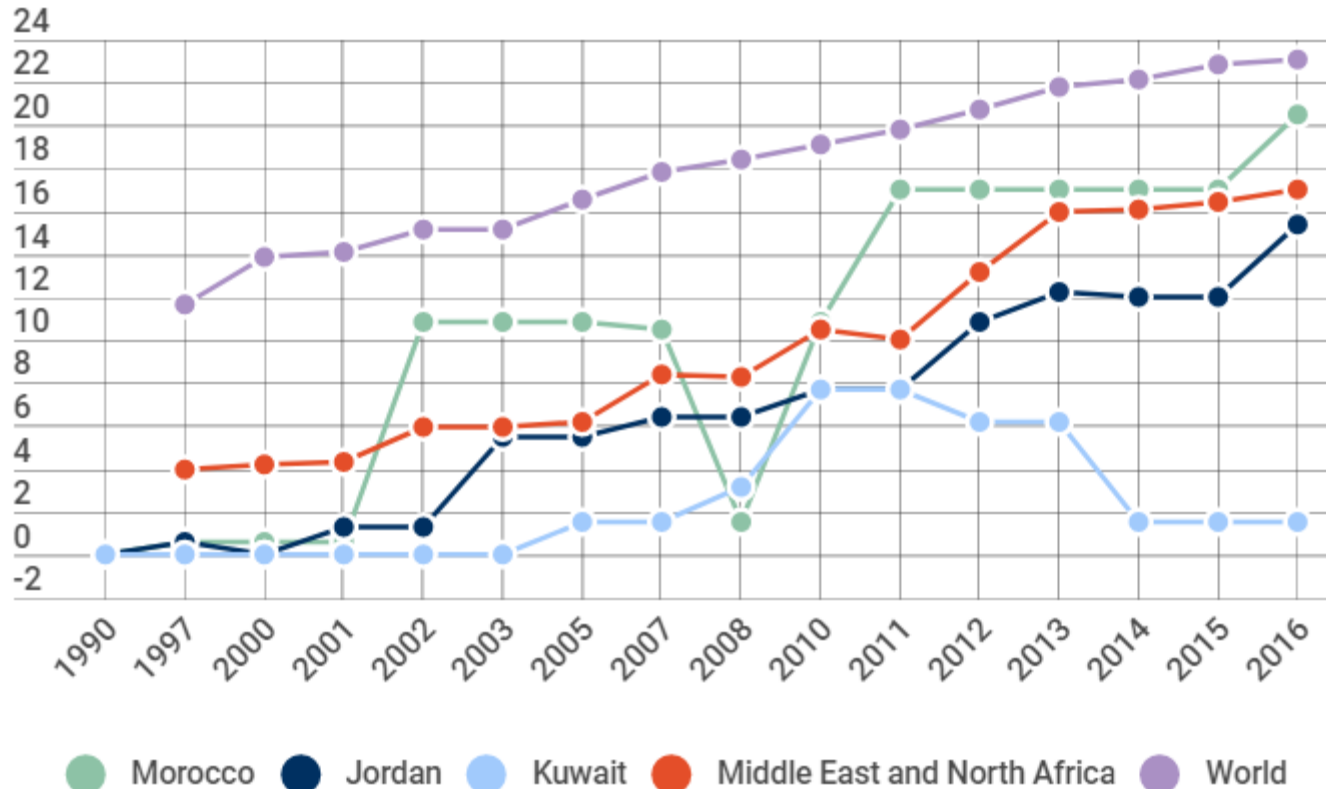
Deterrents for women	Deterrents for men
Domestic responsibilities	Lack of support from the electorate
Prevailing cultural attitudes regarding the roles of women in society	Lack of finance
Lack of support from family	Lack of support of political parties
Lack of confidence	Lack of experience in “representative functions”: public speaking, constituency relations
Lack of finance	Lack of confidence

Source: IPU, Equality in Politics: A survey of Women and Men in Politics, 2008



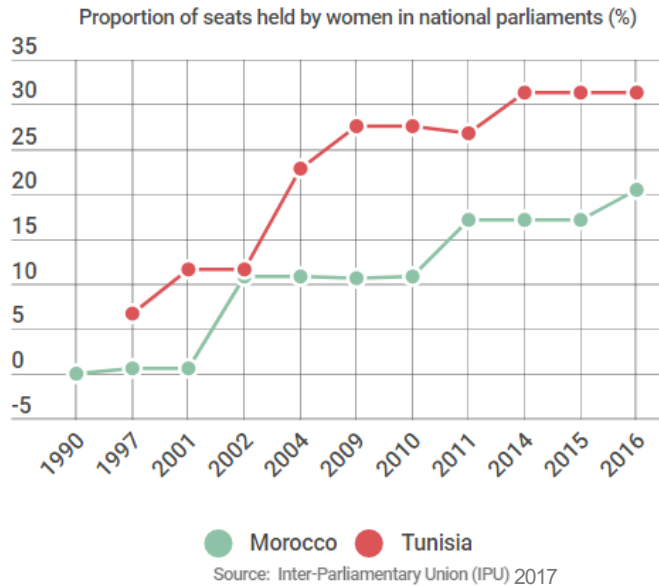
Morocco, Jordan and Kuwait: A Regional and Global Comparison

Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments (%)



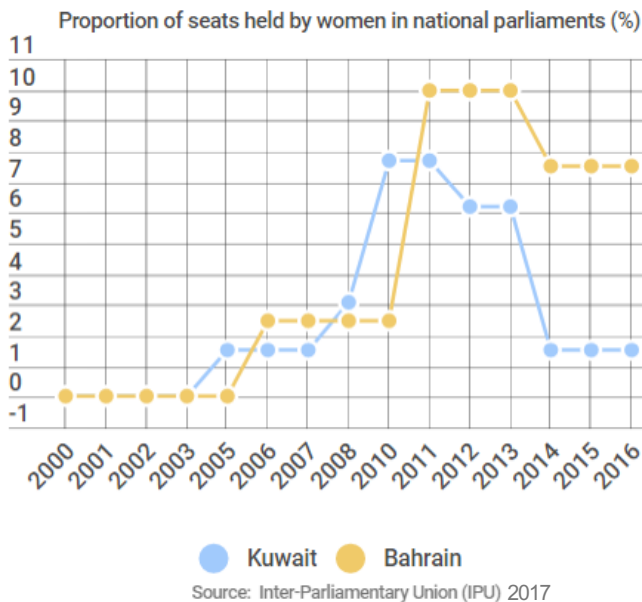
Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) (ipu.org) 2017

المغرب Morocco



- In 2002, an informal 'honorary agreement' reserved 30 seats in parliament for women.
- In 2004, the *Mudawanna* Reform led to the inaction of the family law.
- In 2008, a quota reform for local governments was instigated.
- In 2011, quota provision was passed into law, and the number of reserved seats for women increased from 30 to 60 seats (395 total seats, 60/395 or 15%).

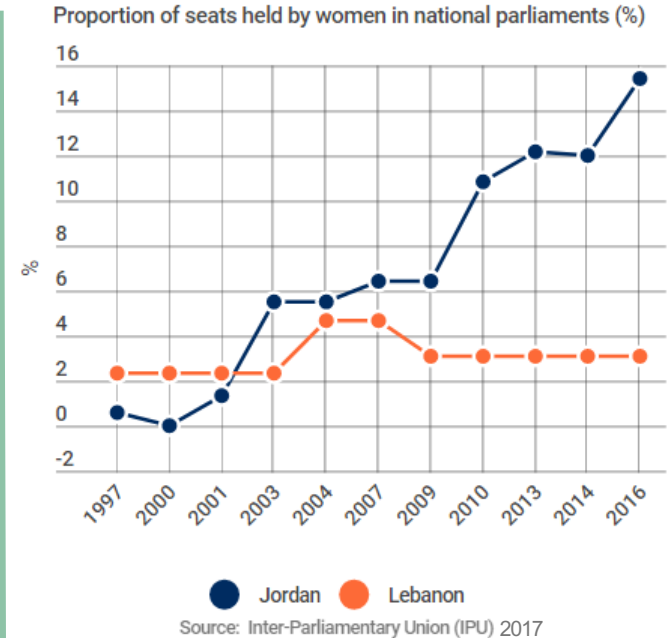
الكويت Kuwait



- Kuwaiti women gained the right to vote and stand for election as recently as 2005, which was also the year a woman was first appointed to parliament.
- In 2010, 5 out of 65 seats (7.7% of the seats) in the lower house of parliament .
- Women are not permitted to serve as judges in the courts. They are allowed to hold positions as investigative judges and to work as lawyers. 20% of the members of the Kuwait Bar Association are women.

Source: UNICEF, MENA Gender Equality Profile: Kuwait, 2011

الأردن Jordan



- In 2003, a quota provision reserved 6 seats for women in the national parliament. In 2010, the number of seats was raised to 12. Following the 2010 election, 13 seats (out of 120) in parliament (مجلس النواب) are occupied by women, 12 through the quota regulation and one by competitive election.
- A report by the Jordanian Embassy in Washington, D.C., highlights that the parliamentary elections of January 2013 saw an increase in the number of women running for elections of 16.7% of all candidates (121 female candidates).
- The report also states that there is a quota of 25% of the seats for women in municipal councils, and that two of Jordan's political parties are led by women.

Source: UNICEF, MENA Gender Equality Profile: Jordan, 2011

Women and Social Issues

المرأة والقضايا الاجتماعية



Early Marriage

18

legal age of marriage for girls and boys in **Morocco** (post *Moudawana*) and **Jordan**, with exceptions.

Source: World Bank, *Women, Business and the Law*, 2016

16%

% of young women aged 20-24 were married before the age of 18 in **Morocco**.

Source: DHS, *Ministère de la Santé/Maroc, ORC Macro, and Ligue des États Arabes. 2005. Enquête sur la Population et la Santé Familiale (EPSF) 2003-2004.*

32

births per 1,000 women aged 15-19 in **Morocco**, 2006-2015

Source: UNFPA, *State of World Population*, 2017

15, 17

legal age of marriage for girls and boys, respectively, in **Kuwait**. Exceptions are not granted.

Source: World Bank, *Women, Business and the Law*, 2016

1%, 10%, 22%

% of women married by age of 15, 18, 20 in **Jordan** in **2007**.

Source: Department of Statistics (Jordan), *Jordan Population and Family Health Survey*, 2007

26

births per 1,000 women aged 15-19 in **Jordan**, 2006-2015

Source: UNFPA, *State of World Population*, 2017



Child marriage is the cause of obstetric, physical, and psychological diseases and disorders in women and also affects the health of their children.

Source: Giving What We Can, *Child Marriage: Causes, Effects and Interventions Report*, 2014



The early marriage of girls derails both educational and career opportunities.

Source: Girls Not Brides, *The Role of Parliamentarians in Ending Child Marriage*, 2016

34.1%

of child brides have **physically weak children**.

8.9%

have **handicapped and disabled children**.

40.4%

have suffered from **gynecological diseases**.

20.2%

have had **psychological disorders**.

Source: Giving What We Can, *Child Marriage: Causes, Effects and Interventions Report*, 2014

Encouraging Positive Change

نحو تغيير إيجابي

Arab societies tend to be more responsive to social traditions than to law, experience suggests that change can be achieved through **the legal system**.

”

“...in the Islamic world, basic rights in family law constitute a major dimension of gender equality and good family practices.”

Dr. Mounira Charrad, *Family Law Reforms in the Arab World: Tunisia and Morocco*, 2012



The 2014 *Women in Public Life: Gender, Law, and Policy in the Middle East and North Africa* OECD and CAWTAR report, made the following recommendations for increasing the role of women as leaders in the Arab World:

- **Establish measures** such as quotas (voluntary or legislative) to **improve the representation of women** in parliaments and the political executive; **adopt measures** to strengthen equal access of women and men to public office.
- **Advance** the use of **leadership development programs** to strengthen women's leadership.
- **Adopt policies** for greater work-life balance and for greater “women-friendliness” of legislatures, including instituting **gender-sensitive parliamentary practices** and procedures.
- **Support** the establishment of **cross-party women's caucuses** to provide support networks for women in legislatures and **encourage peer cooperation**.
- **Take active steps to prevent**, identify and address **political harassment** and violence experienced by women when in public office.
- **Take steps to** strengthen women's access to high-level **executive posts** by creating an enabling environment and institutional mechanisms that **provide support** and access to female leaders, including networking among female leaders.

Sources

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Thank you