

# Oman



1. **Constitution?** Yes (Basic Law). Latest version: November 6, 1996. Affirms gender equality? Yes.<sup>1</sup>

2. **Nationality law:** gender discrimination? Yes.<sup>2</sup>

3. **International resolutions:**

a) CEDAW: No.<sup>3</sup>

b) ILO Conventions:

i) Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100), 1951: No.<sup>4</sup>

ii) Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111), 1958: No.<sup>5</sup>

4. **Legal system:**

a) Women's participation:

i) Right to raise cases? ndf.

ii) Work as lawyers? ndf.

iii) Judges? ndf.

iv) Number of women judges: ndf.

b) Are there civic laws that apply only to men or women? Yes.<sup>6</sup>

c) Family law:

i) Uncodified, religious.<sup>7</sup>

ii) Recent change? ndf.

5. **Political rights:**

i) Right to vote? No.<sup>8</sup>

ii) To stand for election (national and municipal levels)? No.<sup>9</sup>

iii) Number of women in parliament? There are 2 in the Majlis Al-Shura (Consultative Council), and 5 in the State Council.<sup>10</sup>

iv) Women in the cabinet? None.<sup>11</sup>

6. **The state:**

a) Employment in the state apparatus? Yes.<sup>12</sup>

i) In which sectors? The civil administration, armed forces, police. Approximately 20% of civil servants are women.<sup>13</sup>

ii) Heads of government departments? Yes.<sup>14</sup>

iii) Section(s) of government concerned with women's issues: the Ministry of Social Affairs, Labor and Vocational Training.<sup>15</sup>

7. **Gender monitoring and action:**

a) National Council of Women? ndf.<sup>16</sup>

b) National Plan of Action (post-Beijing)? Yes.<sup>17</sup>

c) NGOs that monitor women's situation? Yes.<sup>18</sup>

8. **Education:**

a) Adult female/male literacy rates: 61.6/80.1%.<sup>19</sup>

b) Female/male gross enrolment ratios: primary level 72/77%; secondary level 67/68%;<sup>20</sup> tertiary level: ndf.

c) Distribution of m/f in the teaching profession: 52% of primary school teachers and 505 secondary school teachers were women in 2002.<sup>21</sup>

9. **The economy:**

a) Female economic activity rate: 19.2%.<sup>22</sup>

b) Economic rights:

i) To ownership of property? Yes.<sup>23</sup>

ii) To own and manage businesses? ndf.

iii) To open bank accounts and take loans in their own name? No.<sup>24</sup>

iv) To receive social security and pensions in their own names? ndf.

c) Percentage of female-headed households: ndf.

10. **Health:**

a) Vital statistics:

i) Life expectancy (f/m): 72.6/69.7%.<sup>25</sup>

ii) Average age of women at first marriage: ndf.

iii) Mortality rate in childbirth: 14 per 100, 000 births (1985-99).<sup>26</sup>

b) Reproductive rights:

i) Is contraception legal? Yes.<sup>27</sup>

ii) Is abortion legal? Yes, in limited cases.<sup>28</sup>

c) Female genital mutilation? Yes.<sup>29</sup>

d) Employment in the modern health sector: Women work as physicians and nurses.<sup>30</sup>

11. **Culture:**

a. Do women work in the media – print journalism? Radio? TV? ndf.

b. Do women perform in public (as actors, musicians, etc)? ndf.

## ENDNOTES

1. Article 17: [http://www.oefre.unibe.ch/law/icl/mu00000\\_.html](http://www.oefre.unibe.ch/law/icl/mu00000_.html)

2. <http://www.hri.ca/fortherecord2001/vol3/omantb.htm>

3. <http://www.womenstreaty.org/facts.htm>

4. Center of Arab Women for Training and Research. (2001). *Arab Women's Development Report. Globalization and Gender: Economic Participation of Arab Women*. Tunisia: CAWTAR. p 195.

5. Ibid., p 195.

6. To obtain a passport and leave the country, a woman must have authorization from her husband, father, or nearest male relative. However, a woman having a national identity card (which also must be authorized by a male relative) may travel to certain Gulf Cooperation Council countries without a passport: <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2002/18285.htm>

7. <http://www.law.emory.edu/IFL/index2.html>

8. Women have the right to vote for the Consultative Council: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/followup/beijing+5stat/statments/oman8.htm> & Center of Arab Women for Training and Research. (2001). *Arab Women's Development Report. Globalization and Gender: Economic Participation of Arab Women*. Tunisia: CAWTAR. p 194.

9. Ibid. Also see <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/followup/beijing+5stat/statments/oman8.htm>

10. Center of Arab Women for Training and Research. (2001). *Arab Women's Development Report. Globalization and Gender: Economic Participation of Arab Women*. Tunisia: CAWTAR. p. 194.

11. <http://www.gulf-news.com/Articles/news.asp?ArticleID=43140>

12. <http://www.omanet.com/english/government/ministers.asp?cat=gov>

13. <http://www.rop.gov.om/searchresult.asp>

14. <http://www.undp-pogar.org/countries/oman/gender.html> & <http://www.internationalspecialreports.com/middleeast/99/oman/18.html>

14. Ibid. The first Omani woman ambassador was appointed in September 1999.

15. The ministry provides support for women's affairs through support and funding of the Oman Women's Association (OWA) and local community development centers: <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2001/nea/8286.htm>

16. <http://www.undp-pogar.org/countries/oman/gender.html>

17. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/confer/beijing/national/omannap.htm>

18. The Coordination Committee for Women's Voluntary Work. <http://www.newsbriefsoman.info/features/omanwomen.htm>

19. United Nations Development Programme (2002). *Human Development Report: Deepening Democracy in a Fragmented World*. New York: Oxford University Press.

20. <http://genderstats.worldbank.org> (check "Summary Gender Profiles")

21. Ibid.

22. United Nations Development Programme (2002). *Human Development Report: Deepening Democracy in a Fragmented World*. New York: Oxford University Press.

23. <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2001/nea/8286.htm>

24. <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2001/nea/8286.htm>

25. United Nations Development Programme (2002). *Human Development Report: Deepening Democracy in a Fragmented World*. New York: Oxford University Press.

26. United Nations Development Programme (2002). *Human Development Report: Deepening Democracy in a Fragmented World*. New York: Oxford University Press.

27. [http://www.overpopulation.com/faq/Population\\_Control/contraception/near\\_east.html](http://www.overpopulation.com/faq/Population_Control/contraception/near_east.html)

28. Only if it is to save the life of the mother or preserve her health: <http://www.pregnantpause.org/lex/world02.htm>

29. FGM is practised by a few communities in the interior. The number of cases is small and declining annually: <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2001/nea/8286.htm>

30. <http://www.undp-pogar.org/countries/oman/gender.html>

# Palestine



The boundaries of the eventual state of Palestine have not yet been determined. On view here is the map of 1948 Palestine/Israel, the West Bank and Gaza on the eve of the 1967 war.

1. **Constitution?** Draft Basic Law. Affirms gender equality? Still under negotiation.<sup>1</sup>
2. **Nationality law:** gender discrimination? ndf.
3. **International resolutions:**<sup>2</sup>
  - [a] CEDAW: No.<sup>3</sup>
  - [b] ILO Conventions:
    - i) Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100), 1951:
    - ii) Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111), 1958)
4. **Legal system:**<sup>4</sup>
  - a) Women's participation:
    - i) Right to raise cases? Yes.<sup>5</sup>
    - ii) Work as lawyers? Yes.<sup>6</sup>

- iii) Judges? Yes.<sup>7</sup>
  - iv) Percentage of women judges: 3.13% of judges in the West Bank and 5.56% of judges in Gaza were women in 1997.<sup>8</sup>
- b) Are there civic laws that apply only to women? As in Jordan and Egypt.
- c) Family law: religious-based in all areas.<sup>9</sup>
5. **Political rights:**
  - i) Right to vote? Yes.<sup>10</sup>
  - ii) Stand for election (national and municipal levels)? Yes.
  - iii) Percentage of women in parliament (Legislative Council): 5.7%.<sup>11</sup>
  - iv) Women in the cabinet? None.
6. **The state:**
  - a) Employment in the state apparatus? Yes.<sup>12</sup>
    - i) In which sectors? The civil service, social services, police.<sup>13</sup>
    - ii) Heads of government departments? Yes.<sup>14</sup>
    - iii) Section(s) of government concerned with women's issues: Yes, see above.<sup>15</sup>
7. **Gender monitoring and action:**
  - a) National Council of Women? No.<sup>16</sup>
  - b) National Plan of Action (post-Beijing)? No.<sup>17</sup>
  - c) NGOs that monitor women's affairs? Yes.<sup>18</sup>
8. **Education:**
  - a) Adult female/male literacy rates: 86.4/95.7%.<sup>19</sup>
  - b) Female/male gross enrollment ratios: primary level 96.6/95.1%; secondary level 64.0/56.1%; tertiary level 23.8/24.7%.<sup>20</sup>
  - c) Distribution of m/f in the teaching profession: 17,452 teachers at schools and 569 teachers at higher education institutions were women.<sup>21</sup>
9. **The economy:**
  - a) Female economic activity rate: 10.4%.<sup>22</sup>
  - b) Economic rights:
    - i) To ownership of property? Yes.<sup>23</sup>
    - ii) To own and manage businesses? Yes.<sup>24</sup>
    - iii) To open bank accounts and take loans in their own name? ndf.
    - iv) To receive social security and pensions in their own names? ndf.

- c) Percentage of female-headed households: 11.2%.<sup>25</sup>
10. **Health:**
  - a) Vital statistics:
    - i) Life expectancy (f/m): 73.8/70.7 (2003)<sup>26</sup>
    - ii) Average age of women at first marriage: 20.1 years (2003)<sup>27</sup>
    - iii) Mortality rate in childbirth: ndf.
  - b) Reproductive rights:
    - i) Is contraception legal? Yes.<sup>28</sup>
    - ii) Is abortion legal? No.<sup>29</sup>

- c) Female genital mutilation? No.<sup>30</sup>
- d) Employment in the modern health sector? In 2002 the number of registered female doctors in the Doctor's Union was 571 and the number of registered nurses at the Nursing Union 2562.<sup>31</sup>
11. **Culture:**
  - a. Do women work in the media – print journalism? Radio? TV? Yes.<sup>32</sup>
  - b. Do women perform in public (as actors, musicians, etc)? Yes.<sup>33</sup>

## ENDNOTES

1. The 1-year model women's parliament (1998) -- organized by a coalition of women's NGOs -- has raised reforms in family and personal status law to the National Authority: <http://www.law.emory.edu/IFL/index2.html>
2. "Not yet having gained formal recognition as a state Palestine is not yet able to ratify international human rights instruments": <http://www.law.emory.edu/IFL/index2.html>
3. See endnote 2. But the Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counseling participates with other Arab women's groups in a project to extend CEDAW, "The Exclusion of Women in the Arab World from Effective Protection of International Human Rights Law": <http://www.wclac.org/units.html>
4. Until the Oslo Accords, the West Bank was ruled by Jordanian law, Gaza by Egyptian law, East Jerusalem by Israeli law. Since Oslo, unification of the legal systems of the West Bank and Gaza has been on the agenda of the Palestinian Authority: <http://www.law.emory.edu/IFL/index2.html>
5. Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (1998) *Women and Men In Palestine: Trends and Statistics*, Ramallah: PCBS.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid., p 178.
8. Ibid., p 178.
9. As with the general legal system, so with Family and Personal Status Law. Muslim Palestinians in the West Bank follow Jordanian PSL, in Gaza Egyptian PSL; in East Jerusalem, they choose between the Jordanian or Israeli shari'a courts. However, since 1994, some new regulations have been issued by the Palestinian Qadi al-Quda: Palestine/Palestinian Territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip: <http://www.law.emory.edu/IFL/index2.html> See also "Islamic Family Law and the Transition to Palestinian Statehood: Constraints and Opportunities for Legal Reform": [www.law.emory.edu/IFL/cases/Palestine.htm](http://www.law.emory.edu/IFL/cases/Palestine.htm)
10. Women voted and stood as candidates in the elections for the Legislative Council in 1996. There were 25 women candidates, five of whom were elected, among them Hanan Ashrawi. A woman, Samiha al-Khalil, also competed in the presidential elections of the same year.
11. [www.europarl.eu.int/meetdocs/delegations/](http://www.europarl.eu.int/meetdocs/delegations/)
12. Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (1998) *Women and Men In Palestine: Trends and Statistics*, Ramallah: PCBS.
13. Ibid.
14. A woman, Zahira Kamal, heads the Gender Department in the National Authority's Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation.
15. See endnote 14.
16. Palestinian delegations participated in the UN Decade for Women conferences, though not as representing a state.
17. The General Union of Palestinian Women held a conference in Jerusalem in August 1994, and formulated their proposals for a constitution that would embody full gender equality: <http://www.gupw.net/publications/publications.html>
18. Eg. the Women's Studies Program at Birzeit University; the Women's Action Technical Committees (WATC); the Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counseling.
19. PCBS (2003) *Labour Force Survey Database: 2002*, Ramallah: PCBS (unpublished data).
20. PCBS (2002) *Education Census 2001/2002 Database - Ministry of Education and Higher Education*, Ramallah: PCBS (unpublished data).
21. Ibid.
22. PCBS (2003) *Labour Force Survey: Annual Report: 2002*, Ramallah: PCBS.
23. PCBS (1999) *Ownership and Access to Resources Survey*, Ramallah: PCBS.
24. Ibid.
25. PCBS (2003) *Labour Force Survey Database: 2002*, Ramallah: PCBS (unpublished data).
26. PCBS (1999) *Population in the Palestinian Territory, 1997-2025*, Ramallah: PCBS (unpublished data).
27. PCBS (2003) *Database of Marriages and Divorces in the Palestinian Territory*, Ramallah: PCBS (unpublished data).
28. In 1996, 65.7% of married women used contraceptive methods: PCBS (1998), *Women and Men In Palestine: Trends and Statistics*, Ramallah: PCBS.
29. Abortion is illegal, but permitted in certain health circumstances: PCBS (2000) *Health Survey - 2000: Main Findings*, and PCBS (2003), *Health Database - 2002* (unpublished data).
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. In 1994, women made up 29% of the total 41 employees in radio stations and TV channels in the West Bank; and 17.4% of the total 133 employees in Gaza. No statistics with regard to print media: PCBS (1998), *Women and Men In Palestine: Trends and Statistics*, Ramallah: PCBS.
33. Ibid.