

International Day of Women Judges

The Amman Center for Human Rights Studies (ACHRS) joins the international community, judicial actors, and human rights defenders in recognizing International Day of Women Judges, reaffirming our shared commitment to advancing gender equality and strengthening justice systems worldwide. This day highlights the important role women play in the judiciary and draws attention to the persistent barriers that continue to limit their full and equal participation in judicial institutions.

ACHRS recognizes the significance of this Day due to its close ties to our [priorities](#), particularly advancing women's rights, promoting gender equality, and ensuring women's equal participation in public institutions, including the judiciary. Building inclusive institutions includes that women are ensured equal opportunities to advance within judicial systems.

Women are still underrepresented in judicial leadership positions worldwide. According to figures from the United Nations, women made up over 40% of judges globally in 2017, which is a considerable rise over earlier decades but still falls short of full parity. However, the proportion of women in management or high-ranking roles declines significantly as one advances in their career. Women make up just around 25% of court presidents worldwide and about 41% of judges in national supreme courts, indicating that men continue to hold a disproportionate number of leadership positions in judicial systems.

Across the Arab region, progress has been uneven but notable. [Studies by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia](#) indicate that women represent on average around 14% of judges across Arab states. The figures vary widely between countries as some have made important advances. In Tunisia and Lebanon, women make up close to half of judges in certain courts. In Morocco, women represent roughly one quarter of the judiciary. In Jordan, women account for approximately 20 to 22% of judges, reflecting gradual but meaningful progress in the country's legal institutions.

Jordan's progress is particularly significant given the relatively recent entry of women into the judiciary. The country appointed its first female judge, Taghreed Hikmat, in 1996. Her appointment marked an important milestone and helped open the door for greater participation of women in the justice sector.

Despite their greater participation in public life, women are still disproportionately underrepresented in positions of decision-making in many of the region's nations. While males

still hold the majority of leadership roles in higher courts, they are more frequently appointed to lesser or specialized courts. Women's advancement in judicial systems is still hampered by institutional procedures that inhibit promotion, gender stereotypes, and restricted access to leadership networks.

Promoting women's participation in the judiciary is closely linked to international human rights commitments, particularly the [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women](#). Ensuring equal access to judicial positions strengthens democratic institutions and helps justice systems better reflect the experiences and perspectives of all members of society.

An inclusive approach must also recognize intersectional barriers. In professional settings, women with disabilities may encounter extra obstacles such as restricted workplace accommodations, inadequate infrastructure, and social stigma, which can limit their access to leadership positions, career progression, and legal education.

Acknowledging the International Day of Women Judges involves more than just honoring the accomplishments of women who have overcome obstacles in the legal field. Additionally, it is a chance to promote reforms that create accessible, inclusive, and representational judicial systems. Governments, judicial councils, and civil society organizations should establish inclusive workplaces that support women from varied backgrounds, encourage gender-sensitive recruitment, and increase mentorship opportunities for women in the legal profession.

The work of the ACHRS aligns with these goals. Through its commitment to promoting gender equality, strengthening democratic institutions, and advancing inclusive human rights frameworks across the Arab region, ACHRS advocates for greater representation of women in decision-making positions, including within judicial systems.

Read more about the International Day of Women Judges [here](#).