

7.1.3. Discrimination in personal status matters

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The Lebanese Constitution guarantees equality; however, Article 9 authorises each religious community to apply its own personal status laws in matters such as marriage, divorce, and custody.⁵⁵⁴ As a result, 15 separate religion-based personal status codes are in force as of March 2025, producing substantial inconsistencies in the rights of women depending on religious affiliation.⁵⁵⁵ In the absence of a unified civil code, jurisdiction lies exclusively with religious courts.⁵⁵⁶ For more information on personal status law, see section [3.1.1 Personal Status Law](#).

Discriminatory provisions are embedded across confessional codes.⁵⁵⁷ While men are generally required to be 18 years old to marry, all sects permit the marriage of girls under 18.⁵⁵⁸ Women are deprived of equality in marriage and divorce⁵⁵⁹ and are typically excluded from guardianship of children following divorce, with the Armenian Orthodox community constituting the only exception. Custody rights for mothers are narrowly circumscribed,⁵⁶⁰ including various age requirements of the children.⁵⁶¹ The nationality law further institutionalises discrimination by granting Lebanese men, but not women, the ability to confer nationality to their children and foreign spouses.⁵⁶² Women's rights organisations continued to advocate for a unified personal status law and for reforms guaranteeing equal rights in custody, marriage, divorce, and nationality.⁵⁶³

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