

## [DIFC Courts: Achievements in Gender Equality](#)



**DIFC Courts** highlight the achievements made in regards to gender equality. Since its inception nearly ten years ago, DIFC Courts was the first **court** in the **UAE** to appoint a female **judge**, Malaysia's Tan Seri Dato Siti Norma Yaakob, who served from 2008 to 2013 until her retirement. At DIFC Courts, women currently make up 80% of the **Registry** team, up from 60% the year before. According to Amna Al Owais, Chief Executive & Registrar of DIFC Courts, "This is a pure coincidence, when we conducted our interviews we wanted the best people on board, and the right fit for the role was usually a woman."

Other top executive posts held by women: Chief Operating Officer Reem Al Shihhe, Nour Hineidi Kirk, Deputy Registrar, and Natasha Bakirci, Senior Assistant Registrar as well as our DIFC Courts judge Ms. Judith Prakash from Malaysia. This underscores the DIFC **Courts'** commitment to increase female participation in the highest echelons of the country's judicial sector.

On Amna's appointment, **Mark Beer, OBE, co-Chief Executive and Registrar General of the DIFC Courts**, said: *"I have had the privilege of working alongside Amna for nine years, during which time she has played an integral role in securing the DIFC Courts' status as one of the leading commercial courts in the world. Amna is a wonderful example of Emirati women excelling in the judicial sector, with her well-deserved elevation to the very top echelons of our organisation a source of great personal pride."*

At the moment, **30% of the UAE cabinet seats are currently held by women, that is 9 out of 32 members.**

### **What about the rest of the world?**

To give some global perspective, some feel that in the United States the number of females in the courts is under-represented. According to [Gavel Gap study](#), "Women are half the population - but less than a third of state judges....women have entered law schools and the legal profession in large numbers for the last forty years, but are under-represented in state courts."

And the picture is not much different in the United Kingdom. In an article written by the [Guardian newspaper](#), "The proportion of female judges in the UK is among the lowest in Europe. The [Council of Europe reports](#) that the England & Wales figure is 30%, the proportion in Scotland is 24%, while the Europe-wide average is 51%". "In a perfect world, when the men and women who deliver justice look more like the communities they serve, there is greater confidence in our justice system overall," says Christopher Kang, formerly in charge of the judicial nomination process for President Obama.