



Doing Business 2015 Fact Sheet: Middle East and North Africa

- Eleven of 20 economies in the Middle East and North Africa implemented at least one regulatory reform making it easier to do business in the year from June 1, 2013, to June 1, 2014—15 reforms in total.
- Since 2005, 90 percent of the economies in the region have implemented business regulatory reforms in the areas measured by *Doing Business*. Together, the 20 economies recorded 197 reforms making it easier to do business. The **Arab Republic of Egypt** implemented the largest number of reforms in the region during this period, with 24, followed by the **United Arab Emirates** with 20 and **Morocco** and **Saudi Arabia** with 19 each.
- The **United Arab Emirates** has the region's highest ranking on the ease of doing business, at 22 among 189 economies worldwide. It is also among the 10 top improvers worldwide in this year's report.

Summary of 2013/14 *Doing Business* Reforms in the Middle East and North Africa¹

Algeria

Algeria made trading across borders easier by upgrading infrastructure at the port of Algiers.

Areas of business regulatory reform: Trading across borders

DB2015 ease of doing business rank: 154

DB2014 back-calculated ease of doing business rank: 147

DB2015 distance to frontier score: 50.7

DB2014 back-calculated distance to frontier score: 50.4; improvement: 0.3

Bahrain

Bahrain made registering property easier by reducing the registration fee. And it improved access to credit information by approving the credit bureau's collection of data on firms.

Areas of business regulatory reform: Registering property, Getting credit (credit information)

DB2015 ease of doing business rank: 53

DB2014 back-calculated ease of doing business rank: 53

DB2015 distance to frontier score: 69.0

DB2014 back-calculated distance to frontier score: 68.0; improvement: 1.0

Djibouti

Djibouti made dealing with construction permits less time-consuming by streamlining the review process for building permits.

Areas of business regulatory reform: Dealing with construction permits

DB2015 ease of doing business rank: 155

DB2014 back-calculated ease of doing business rank: 154

¹ The *DB2014 ease of doing business rank* may differ from the one published in the *Doing Business 2014* report. The rank is adjusted to take into account the recent changes implemented by *Doing Business* in the calculation of the ranking, now based on the distance to frontier score; the inclusion of data for a second city in the 11 economies with a population of more than 100 million; the changes in methodology for different indicator sets; and any revisions in the data due to corrections.

The distance to frontier score shows the distance of each economy to the "frontier"—which represents the best performance observed on each of the *Doing Business* indicators. The measure is normalized to range between 0 and 100, with 100 representing the frontier. The difference between the scores shown for DB2015 (2014) and DB2014 (2013) may differ from the size of the improvement reported because of rounding.

DB2015 distance to frontier score: 50.5
DB2014 back-calculated distance to frontier score: 49.4; improvement: 1.1

Egypt, Arab Rep.

The Arab Republic of Egypt strengthened minority investor protections by introducing additional requirements for approval of related-party transactions and greater requirements for disclosure of such transactions to the stock exchange.

Areas of business regulatory reform: Protecting minority investors

DB2015 ease of doing business rank: 112
DB2014 back-calculated ease of doing business rank: 113
DB2015 distance to frontier score: 59.5
DB2014 back-calculated distance to frontier score: 59.2; improvement: 0.4

Iran, Islamic Rep.

The Islamic Republic of Iran made starting a business easier by streamlining the name reservation and company registration procedures. And it made getting electricity easier by eliminating the need for customers to obtain an excavation permit for electricity connection works.

Areas of business regulatory reform: Starting a business, Getting electricity

DB2015 ease of doing business rank: 130
DB2014 back-calculated ease of doing business rank: 132
DB2015 distance to frontier score: 56.5
DB2014 back-calculated distance to frontier score: 55.5; improvement: 1.0

Iraq

DB2015 ease of doing business rank: 156
DB2014 back-calculated ease of doing business rank: 146
DB2015 distance to frontier score: 50.4
DB2014 back-calculated distance to frontier score: 50.8; improvement: -0.4

Jordan

Jordan made trading across borders easier by improving infrastructure at the port of Aqaba.

Areas of business regulatory reform: Trading across borders

DB2015 ease of doing business rank: 117
DB2014 back-calculated ease of doing business rank: 116
DB2015 distance to frontier score: 58.4
DB2014 back-calculated distance to frontier score: 58.3; improvement: 0.1

Kuwait

Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the commercial license fee.

Areas of business regulatory reform: Starting a business (making it more difficult)

DB2015 ease of doing business rank: 86
DB2014 back-calculated ease of doing business rank: 79
DB2015 distance to frontier score: 63.1
DB2014 back-calculated distance to frontier score: 63.1; improvement: 0.1

Lebanon

DB2015 ease of doing business rank: 104
DB2014 back-calculated ease of doing business rank: 102
DB2015 distance to frontier score: 60.6
DB2014 back-calculated distance to frontier score: 60.6; improvement: 0.0

Libya

DB2015 ease of doing business rank: 188
DB2014 back-calculated ease of doing business rank: 188

DB2015 distance to frontier score: 33.4
DB2014 back-calculated distance to frontier score: 33.4; improvement: 0.0

Malta

Malta made starting a business easier by creating an electronic link between the Registrar of Companies and the Inland Revenue Department to facilitate issuance of a tax identification number.

Areas of business regulatory reform: Starting a business

DB2015 ease of doing business rank: 94
DB2014 back-calculated ease of doing business rank: 90
DB2015 distance to frontier score: 62.1
DB2014 back-calculated distance to frontier score: 61.9; improvement: 0.2

Morocco

Morocco made trading across borders easier by reducing the number of export documents required.

Areas of business regulatory reform: Trading across borders

DB2015 ease of doing business rank: 71
DB2014 back-calculated ease of doing business rank: 68
DB2015 distance to frontier score: 65.1
DB2014 back-calculated distance to frontier score: 64.4; improvement: 0.6

Oman

DB2015 ease of doing business rank: 66
DB2014 back-calculated ease of doing business rank: 60
DB2015 distance to frontier score: 66.4
DB2014 back-calculated distance to frontier score: 66.4; improvement: 0.0

Qatar

DB2015 ease of doing business rank: 50
DB2014 back-calculated ease of doing business rank: 45
DB2015 distance to frontier score: 70.0
DB2014 back-calculated distance to frontier score: 69.9; improvement: 0.1

Saudi Arabia

DB2015 ease of doing business rank: 49
DB2014 back-calculated ease of doing business rank: 44
DB2015 distance to frontier score: 70.0
DB2014 back-calculated distance to frontier score: 70.0; improvement: 0.0

Syrian Arab Republic

DB2015 ease of doing business rank: 175
DB2014 back-calculated ease of doing business rank: 165
DB2015 distance to frontier score: 46.5
DB2014 back-calculated distance to frontier score: 46.9; improvement: -0.4

Tunisia

Tunisia made paying taxes less costly for companies by reducing the corporate income tax rate. On the other hand, trading across borders became more difficult because of a deterioration in port infrastructure (for example, in loading and unloading equipment) and inadequate terminal space.

Areas of business regulatory reform: Paying taxes, Trading across borders (making it more difficult)

DB2015 ease of doing business rank: 60
DB2014 back-calculated ease of doing business rank: 56
DB2015 distance to frontier score: 67.4
DB2014 back-calculated distance to frontier score: 67.5; improvement: -0.1

United Arab Emirates

The United Arab Emirates made transferring property easier by introducing new service centers and a standard contract for property transactions. And the credit bureau improved access to credit information by starting to exchange credit information with a utility. In addition, the United Arab Emirates strengthened minority investor protections by introducing additional approval requirements for related-party transactions and greater requirements for disclosure of such transactions to the stock exchange; by introducing a requirement that interested directors be held liable in a related-party transaction that is unfair or constitutes a conflict of interest; and by making it possible for shareholders to inspect the documents pertaining to a related-party transaction, appoint auditors to inspect the transaction, and request a rescission of the transaction if it should prove to be unfair.

Areas of business regulatory reform: Registering property, Getting credit (credit information), Protecting minority investors

DB2015 ease of doing business rank: 22

DB2014 back-calculated ease of doing business rank: 25

DB2015 distance to frontier score: 76.8

DB2014 back-calculated distance to frontier score: 75.1; improvement: 1.7

West Bank and Gaza

West Bank and Gaza made paying taxes easier for companies by introducing the option to make either one or four advance payments of corporate income tax.

Areas of business regulatory reform: Paying taxes

DB2015 ease of doing business rank: 143

DB2014 back-calculated ease of doing business rank: 139

DB2015 distance to frontier score: 53.6

DB2014 back-calculated distance to frontier score: 53.0; improvement: 0.6

Yemen, Rep.

In the Republic of Yemen, trading across borders became more difficult as a result of inefficient port operation.

Areas of business regulatory reform: Trading across borders (making it more difficult)

DB2015 ease of doing business rank: 137

DB2014 back-calculated ease of doing business rank: 135

DB2015 distance to frontier score: 54.8

DB2014 back-calculated distance to frontier score: 54.9; improvement: -0.1

About the Doing Business report series

The annual World Bank Group flagship *Doing Business* report analyzes regulations that apply to an economy's businesses during their life cycle, including start-up and operations, trading across borders, paying taxes, and resolving insolvency. The aggregate ease of doing business rankings are based on the distance to frontier scores for 10 topics and cover 189 economies. *Doing Business* does not measure all aspects of the business environment that matter to firms and investors. For example, it does not measure the quality of fiscal management, other aspects of macroeconomic stability, the level of skills in the labor force, or the resilience of financial systems. Its findings have stimulated policy debates worldwide and enabled a growing body of research on how firm-level regulation relates to economic outcomes across economies. Each year the report team works to improve the methodology and to enhance their data collection, analysis and output. The project has benefited from feedback from many stakeholders over the years. With a key goal to provide an objective basis for understanding and improving the local regulatory environment for business around the world, the project goes through rigorous reviews to ensure its quality and effectiveness. This year's report marks the 12th edition of the global *Doing Business* report series. For more information about the *Doing Business* reports, please visit doingbusiness.org and join us on [doingbusiness.org/Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/doingbusiness.org).

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