

Doing Business 2016
Fact Sheet: Middle East and North Africa

What are the ranking trends?

- Economies in the Middle East and North Africa have an average ranking on the ease of doing business of 114.
- The **United Arab Emirates** has the region's highest ranking (31), followed by **Bahrain** (65) and **Qatar** (68).
- Other large economies in the region and their rankings are **Morocco** (75), **Saudi Arabia** (82), and **Tunisia** (74).
- Amid political instability, **Libya** (188), the **Syrian Arab Republic** (175), and the **Republic of Yemen** (170) rank in the bottom 20 on the ease of doing business.
- The **United Arab Emirates** is among the global leaders in Dealing with Construction Permits and Getting Electricity, ranking in the top 5 in both areas.
- The region's economies perform well on average in Dealing with Construction Permits and Getting Electricity. Completing the formalities to build a warehouse takes 140 days on average in the region, compared with a global average of 160 days.
- The Middle East and North Africa has room to improve in Getting Credit, where it has a lower average ranking than any other region. Obstacles also remain in business incorporation: starting a business costs 26% of income per capita on average, compared with 3% on average in OECD high-income economies.

What are the reform trends?

- Eleven of 20 economies in the Middle East and North Africa (55 percent) implemented at least one reform making it easier to do business in the past year, 21 in total—more than the region's annual average of 16 reforms over the past 5 years.
- The area with the largest number of reforms implemented by the region's economies was Getting Electricity (4), followed by Starting a Business, Dealing with Construction Permits, and Trading across Borders (3 each). No reforms were recorded in the area of Resolving Insolvency.
- **Morocco** and the **United Arab Emirates** continued to lead the region in reforms improving business regulation, with 4 each. **Algeria**, **Oman**, **Tunisia**, and **West Bank and Gaza** were the other economies in the region recording multiple reforms. Some details of the reforms:
 - **Morocco** made starting a business easier by eliminating the need to file a declaration of business incorporation with the Ministry of Labor. And it made registering property easier by establishing electronic communication links between different tax authorities.
 - The **United Arab Emirates** made enforcing contracts easier by implementing electronic service of process, by introducing a new case management office within the competent court, and by further developing the "Smart Petitions" service, which allows litigants to file and track motions online.
 - **Oman** made the biggest improvement globally in the area of Getting Electricity, by enhancing its tracking of the duration and frequency of power outages.
- **Saudi Arabia** was the top improver in Registering Property, thanks to the introduction of a new computerized system at the land registry.

Rankings Data for the Middle East and North Africa

Economy	Rank (1–189)		Distance to frontier score (0–100)		Reforms	
	DB2015	DB2016	DB2015	DB2016	DB2015	DB2016
Algeria	161	163	45.40	45.72	1	2
Bahrain	61	65	66.79	66.81	2	0
Djibouti	169	171	43.94	44.25	1	0
Egypt, Arab Rep.	126	131	54.19	54.43	1	1
Iran, Islamic Rep.	119	118	56.74	57.44	2	0
Iraq	160	161	46.08	46.06	0	0
Jordan	107	113	57.81	57.84	1	0
Kuwait	100	101	59.77	60.17	0	1
Lebanon	121	123	56.50	56.39	0	0
Libya	188	188	31.99	31.77	0	0
Malta	76	80	63.69	63.70	1	1
Morocco	80	75	63.47	64.51	1	4
Oman	77	70	63.67	65.40	0	2
Qatar	65	68	65.82	65.97	0	1
Saudi Arabia	84	82	62.69	63.17	0	1
Syrian Arab Republic	173	175	41.61	42.56	0	0
Tunisia	75	74	64.12	64.88	1	2
United Arab Emirates	32	31	74.33	75.10	3	4
West Bank and Gaza	127	129	53.71	54.83	1	2
Yemen, Rep.	165	170	44.53	44.54	0	0

Source: *Doing Business* database.

Note: The rankings are based on the average of each economy's distance to frontier scores for the 10 topics included in this year's aggregate ranking. This measure shows how close each economy is to global best practices in business regulation. A higher score indicates a more efficient business environment and stronger legal institutions. The scores for both *Doing Business 2015* and *Doing Business 2016* are based on the new methodology.