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OECD Economies Most Business-Friendly, with New Zealand in the Lead

Washington, D.C., October 29, 2013—A new World Bank Group report finds that high-income economies in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) continue to lead the world in providing business-friendly environments for local entrepreneurs.

Doing Business 2014: Understanding Regulations for Small and Medium-Size Enterprises ranks 189 economies on the ease of doing business. Six of the top 10 are OECD economies: New Zealand, the United States, Denmark, the Republic of Korea, Norway, and the United Kingdom. OECD economies also continue to take steps to improve business regulations, with more than half implementing at least one regulatory reform in the past year.

New Zealand, the highest-ranked OECD economy, has made sustained efforts to improve its business climate. The report finds that in the past year New Zealand made it easier to enforce contracts by implementing an electronic case management system—improving the recording of court cases, lowering costs, and shortening resolution times.

“OECD economies on average have managed to create a regulatory system that facilitates interactions in the marketplace and protects important public interests without unnecessarily hindering the development of the private sector,” said Augusto Lopez-Claros, Director, Global Indicators and Analysis, World Bank Group. “Their stronger institutions and lower transactions costs provide an appropriate point of reference for other economies. In fact, we see countries increasingly seeking to narrow the gap with OECD practices, notably in Europe and Central Asia.”

The report highlights three OECD economies—Australia, France, and the Republic of Korea—as case studies. It explores Australia’s efforts to privatize its risk-based inspection system for construction, France’s strengthening of its technical control agencies for construction inspections, and the Republic of Korea’s initiatives to improve the e-court experience.

Poland, a relatively new OECD member and a top improver in last year’s *Doing Business 2013*, continues to improve its business climate—and is at 45 in this year’s global ranking. In the past year the government eliminated the requirement to register a new firm with multiple government bodies and simplified construction permitting.

In addition to the global rankings, every year *Doing Business* reports the economies that have improved the most on the indicators since the previous year. The 10 economies topping that list this year are (in order of improvement) Ukraine, Rwanda, the Russian Federation, the Philippines, Kosovo, Djibouti, Côte d’Ivoire, Burundi, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Guatemala. Yet challenges persist: five of this year’s top improvers—Burundi, Côte d’Ivoire, Djibouti, the Philippines, and Ukraine—are still in the bottom half of the global ranking on the ease of doing business.

About the *Doing Business* report series

The joint World Bank and IFC 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 10 indicators 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. This year's report marks the 11th edition of the global *Doing Business* report series and covers 189 economies. For more information about the *Doing Business* reports, please visit doingbusiness.org and join us on doingbusiness.org/Facebook.

About the World Bank Group

The World Bank Group is one of the world's largest sources of funding and knowledge for developing countries. It comprises five closely associated institutions: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Development Association (IDA), which together form the World Bank; the International Finance Corporation (IFC); the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA); and the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID). Each institution plays a distinct role in the mission to fight poverty and improve living standards for people in the developing world. For more information, please visit www.worldbank.org, www.miga.org, and www.ifc.org.

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