

A World Bank Group Flagship Report

14TH EDITION

Doing Business 2017

Equal Opportunity for All

Regional Profile 2017

Middle East and North Africa (MENA)



Comparing Business Regulation
for Domestic Firms in **190** Economies

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1818 H Street NW, Washington DC 20433
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INTRODUCTION

Doing Business sheds light on how easy or difficult it is for a local entrepreneur to open and run a small to medium-size business when complying with relevant regulations. It measures and tracks changes in regulations affecting 11 areas in the life cycle of a business: starting a business, dealing with construction permits, getting electricity, registering property, getting credit, protecting minority investors, paying taxes, trading across borders, enforcing contracts, resolving insolvency and labor market regulation. *Doing Business 2017* presents the data for the labor market regulation indicators in an annex. The report does not present rankings of economies on labor market regulation indicators or include the topic in the aggregate distance to frontier score or ranking on the ease of doing business.

In a series of annual reports *Doing Business* presents quantitative indicators on business regulations and the protection of property rights that can be compared across 190 economies, from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe, over time. The data set covers 48 economies in Sub-Saharan Africa, 32 in Latin America and the Caribbean, 25 in East Asia and the Pacific, 25 in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 20 in the Middle East and North Africa and 8 in South Asia, as well as 32 OECD high-income economies. The indicators are used to analyze economic outcomes and identify what reforms have worked, where and why.

This economy profile presents the *Doing Business* indicators for Afghanistan. To allow useful comparison, it

also provides data for other selected economies (comparator economies) for each indicator. The data in this report are current as of June 1, 2016 (except for the paying taxes indicators, which cover the period January–December 2015).

The *Doing Business* methodology has limitations. Other areas important to business—such as an economy’s proximity to large markets, the quality of its infrastructure services (other than those related to trading across borders and getting electricity), the security of property from theft and looting, the transparency of government procurement, macroeconomic conditions or the underlying strength of institutions—are not directly studied by *Doing Business*. The indicators refer to a specific type of business, generally a local limited liability company operating in the largest business city. Because standard assumptions are used in the data collection, comparisons and benchmarks are valid across economies. The data not only highlight the extent of obstacles to doing business; they also help identify the source of those obstacles, supporting policy makers in designing regulatory reform.

More information is available in the full report. *Doing Business 2017* presents the indicators, analyzes their relationship with economic outcomes and presents business regulatory reforms. The data, along with information on ordering *Doing Business 2017*, are available on the *Doing Business* website at <http://www.doingbusiness.org>.

THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

CHANGES IN *DOING BUSINESS* 2017

As part of a three-year update in methodology, *Doing Business 2017* expands further by adding postfiling processes to the paying taxes indicator, including a gender component in three of the indicators and developing a new pilot indicator on selling to the government. Also, for the first time this year *Doing Business* collects data on Somalia, bringing the total number of economies covered to 190.

The paying taxes indicator is expanded this year to include postfiling processes – those processes that occur after a firm complies with its regular tax obligations. These include tax refunds, tax audits and tax appeals. In particular, *Doing Business* measures the time it takes to get a value added tax (VAT) refund, deal with a simple mistake on a corporate tax return that can potentially trigger an audit and good practices with administrative appeals process.

This year's *Doing Business* report presents a gender dimension in four of the indicator sets: starting a business, registering property, enforcing contracts and labor market regulation. Three of these areas are included in the distance to frontier score and in the ease of doing business ranking, while the fourth—labor market regulation—is not.

Doing Business has traditionally assumed that the entrepreneurs or workers discussed in the case studies were men. This was incomplete by not reflecting correctly the *Doing Business* processes as applied to women—which in some economies may be different from the processes applied to men. Starting this year, *Doing Business* measures the starting a business process for two case scenarios: one where all entrepreneurs are men and one where all entrepreneurs are women. In economies where the processes are more onerous if the entrepreneur is a woman, *Doing Business* now counts the extra procedures applied to roughly half of the population that is female (for example, obtaining a husband's consent or gender-specific requirements for opening a personal bank account when starting a business). Within the registering property indicators, a gender component has been added to the quality of land administration index. This component measures women's ability to use, own, and transfer property according to the law. Finally, within the enforcing contracts indicator set, economies will be scored on having equal evidentiary weight of women's testimony in court.

Also for the first time this year *Doing Business* collects data on Somalia, bringing the total number of economies covered to 190.

For more details on the changes, see the "Old and new factors covered in *Doing Business*" section in the Overview chapter starting on page 1 of the *Doing Business 2017* report. For more details on the data and methodology, please see the "Data Notes" chapter starting on page 114 of the *Doing Business 2017* report. For more details on the distance to frontier metric, please see the "Distance to frontier and ease of doing business ranking" chapter in this profile.

THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

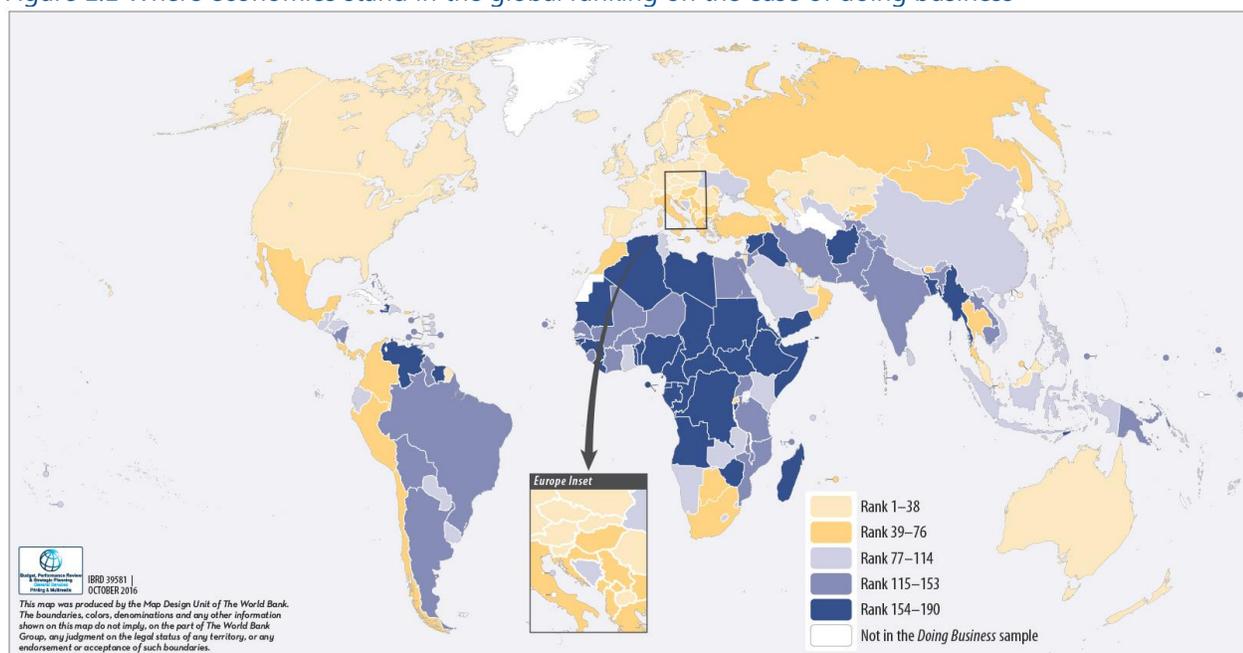
For policy makers trying to improve their economy's regulatory environment for business, a good place to start is to find out how it compares with the regulatory environment in other economies. Doing Business provides an aggregate ranking on the ease of doing business based on indicator sets that measure and benchmark regulations applying to domestic small to medium-size businesses through their life cycle. Economies are ranked from 1 to 190 by the ease of doing business ranking. Doing Business presents results for 2 aggregate measures: the distance to frontier score and the ease of doing business ranking. The ranking of economies is determined by sorting the aggregate distance to frontier scores, rounded to two decimals. An economy's distance to frontier score is indicated on a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 represents the worst performance and 100 the frontier. (See the chapter on the distance to frontier and ease of doing business).

The 10 topics included in the ranking in *Doing Business* 2017: starting a business, dealing with construction

permits, getting electricity, registering property, getting credit, protecting minority investors, paying taxes, trading across borders, enforcing contracts and resolving insolvency. The labor market regulation indicators are not included in this year's aggregate ease of doing business ranking, but the data are presented in the economy profile.

The ease of doing business ranking compares economies with one another; the distance to frontier score benchmarks economies with respect to regulatory best practice, showing the absolute distance to the best performance on each Doing Business indicator. When compared across years, the distance to frontier score shows how much the regulatory environment for local entrepreneurs in an economy has changed over time in absolute terms, while the ease of doing business ranking can show only how much the regulatory environment has changed relative to that in other economies.

Figure 1.1 Where economies stand in the global ranking on the ease of doing business

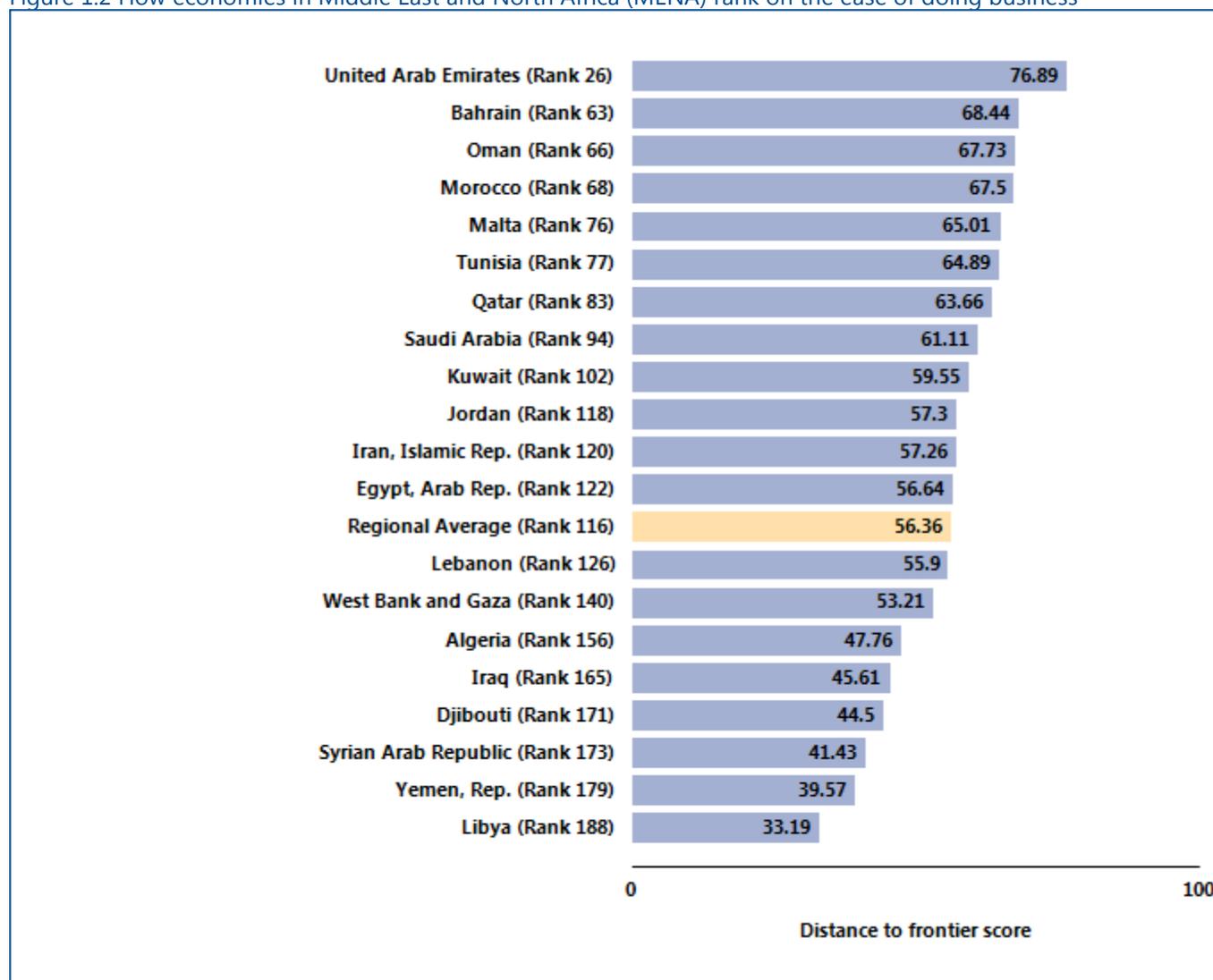


Source: *Doing Business* database.

THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

For policy makers, knowing where their economy stands in the aggregate ranking on the ease of doing business is useful. Also useful is to know how it ranks compared with other economies in the region and compared with the regional average (figure 1.2). Another perspective is provided by the regional average rankings on the topics included in the ease of doing business ranking (figure 1.3) and the distance to frontier scores (figures 1.4 and 1.5).

Figure 1.2 How economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) rank on the ease of doing business



Note: The rankings are benchmarked to June 2015 and based on the average of each economy's distance to frontier (DTF) scores for the 10 topics included in this year's aggregate ranking. The distance to frontier score benchmarks economies with respect to regulatory practice, showing the absolute distance to the best performance in each *Doing Business* indicator. An economy's distance to frontier score is indicated on a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 represents the worst performance and 100 the frontier. For the economies for which the data cover 2 cities, scores are a population-weighted average for the 2 cities.

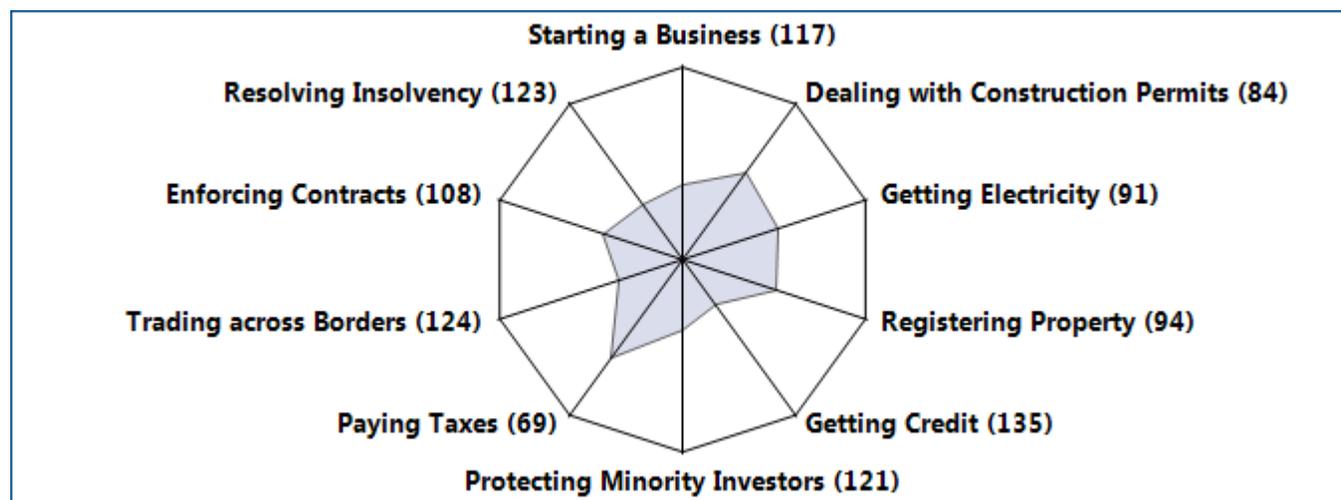
Source: *Doing Business* database.

THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Figure 1.3 Rankings on *Doing Business* topics - Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

(Scale: Rank 190 center, Rank 1 outer edge)

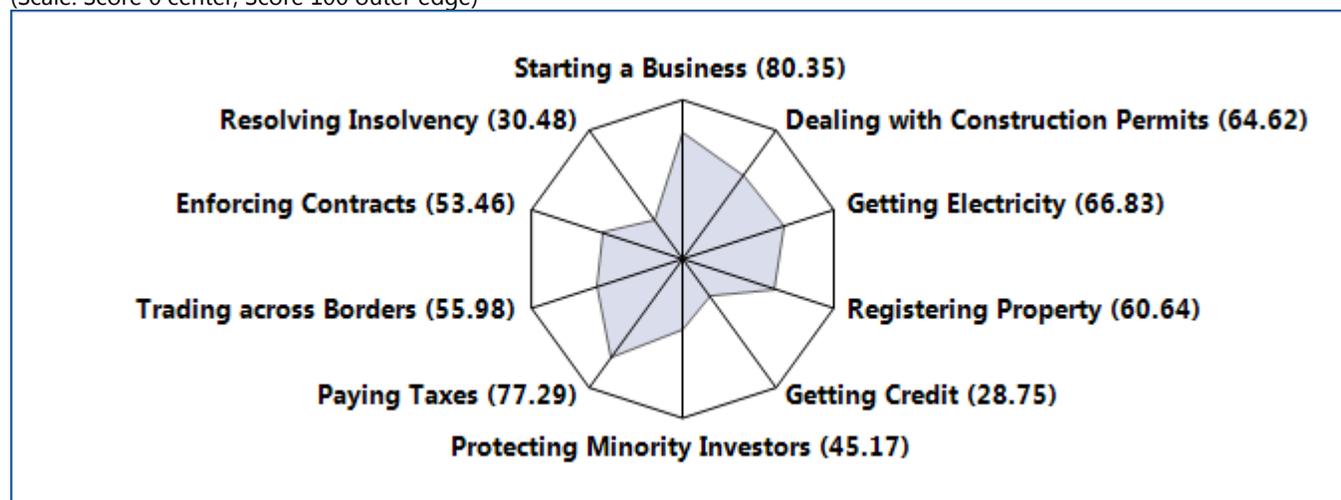
Regional average ranking



Source: *Doing Business* database.

Figure 1.4 Distance to frontier scores on *Doing Business* topics - Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

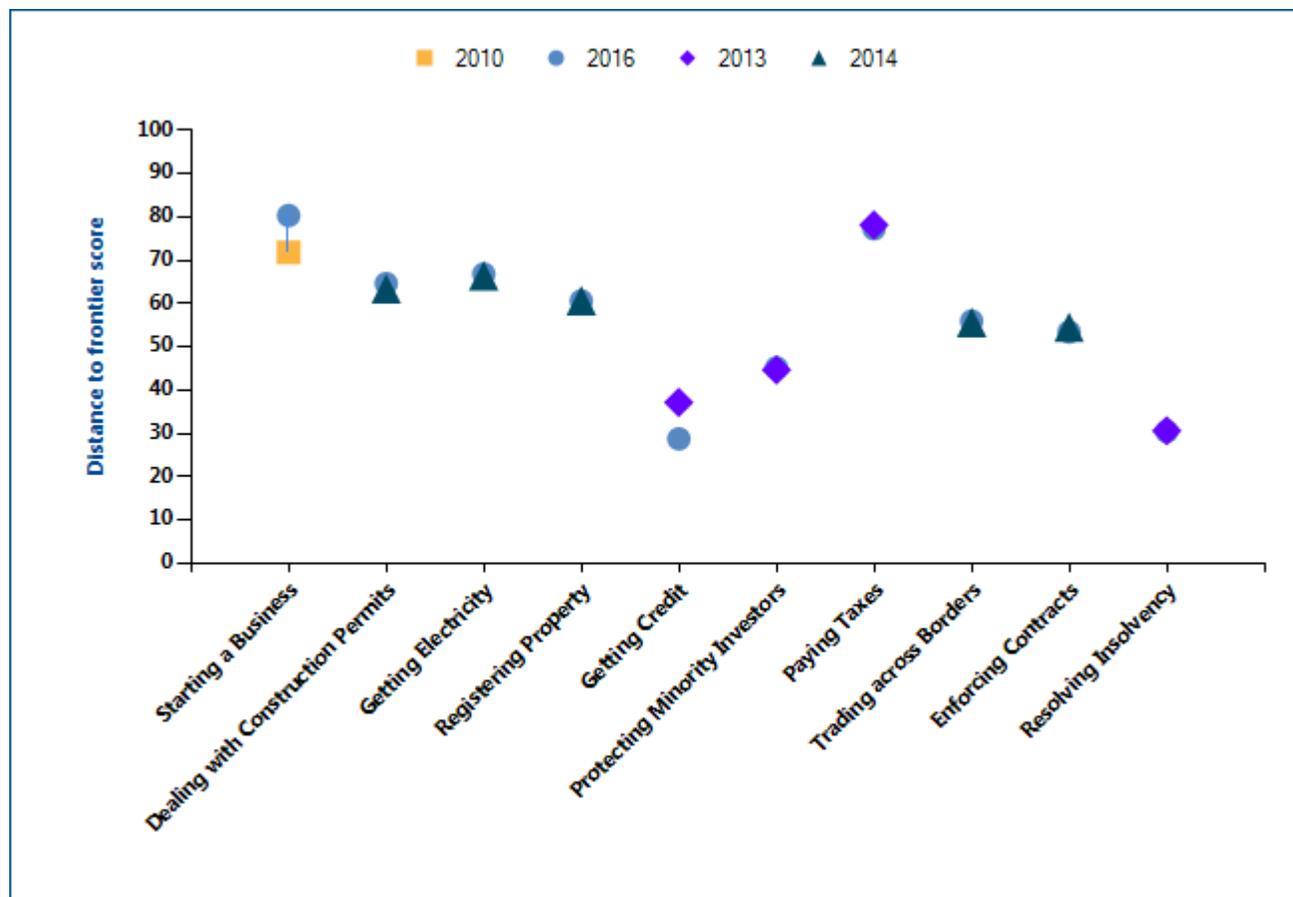
(Scale: Score 0 center, Score 100 outer edge)



Note: The rankings are benchmarked to June 2015 and based on the average of each economy's distance to frontier (DTF) scores for the 10 topics included in this year's aggregate ranking. The distance to frontier score benchmarks economies with respect to regulatory practice, showing the absolute distance to the best performance in each *Doing Business* indicator. An economy's distance to frontier score is indicated on a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 represents the worst performance and 100 the frontier. For the economies for which the data cover 2 cities, scores are a population-weighted average for the 2 cities.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

Figure 1.5 How far has Middle East and North Africa (MENA) come in the areas measured by *Doing Business*?



Source: *Doing Business* database.

Note: The distance to frontier score shows how far on average an economy is from the best performance achieved by any economy on each *Doing Business* indicator. Starting a business is comparable to 2010. Getting credit, protecting minority investors, paying taxes and resolving insolvency had methodology changes in 2014 and thus are only comparable to 2013. Dealing with construction permits, registering property, trading across borders, enforcing contracts and getting electricity had methodology changes in 2015 and thus are only comparable to 2014. The measure is normalized to range between 0 and 100, with 100 representing the best performance (the frontier). See the data notes starting on page 114 of the *Doing Business 2017* report for more details on the distance to frontier score.

THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Just as the overall ranking on the ease of doing business tells only part of the story, so do changes in that ranking. Yearly movements in rankings can provide some indication of changes in an economy's regulatory environment for firms, but they are always relative. An economy's ranking might change because of developments in other economies. An economy that implemented business regulation reforms may fail to rise in the rankings (or may even drop) if it is passed by others whose business regulation reforms had a more significant impact as measured by *Doing Business*.

The absolute values of the indicators tell another part of the story (table 1.1). Policy makers can learn much by comparing the indicators for their economy with those for the lowest- and highest-scoring economies in the region as well as those for the best performers globally. These comparisons may reveal unexpected strengths in an area of business regulation—such as a regulatory process that can be completed with a small number of procedures in a few days and at a low cost.

Table 1.1 Summary of *Doing Business* indicators for Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

Indicator	Lowest regional performance	Best regional performance	Regional average	Best global performance
Starting a Business (rank)	173 (Kuwait)	32 (Oman)	116.85	1 (New Zealand)
Starting a Business (DTF Score)	66.77 (Kuwait)	92.85 (Oman)	80.35	99.96 (New Zealand)
Procedure – Men (number)	12.0 (Algeria)	4.0 (United Arab Emirates)	7.8	1.0 (New Zealand)
Time – Men (days)	61.0 (Kuwait)	6.0 (Oman)	20.1	0.5 (New Zealand)
Cost – Men (% of income per capita)	167.0 (Djibouti)	1.1 (Iran, Islamic Rep.)	26.3	0.0 (Slovenia)
Procedure – Women (number)	15.0 (Saudi Arabia)	4.0 (Morocco)	8.6	1.0 (New Zealand)
Time – Women (days)	62.0 (Kuwait)	7.0 (Oman)	20.9	0.5 (New Zealand)
Cost – Women (% of income per capita)	167.0 (Djibouti)	1.1 (Iran, Islamic Rep.)	26.3	0.0 (Slovenia)
Paid-in min. capital (% of income per capita)	106.0 (Syrian Arab Republic)	0.0 (Djibouti)	11.2	0.0 (127 Economies*)
Dealing with Construction Permits (rank)	157 (West Bank and Gaza)	4 (United Arab Emirates)	83.75	1 (New Zealand)
Dealing with Construction Permits (DTF Score)	55.98 (West Bank and Gaza)	86.15 (United Arab Emirates)	64.62	87.40 (New Zealand)
Procedures (number)	23.0 (Kuwait)	9.0 (Bahrain)	15.1	7.0 (4 Economies*)
Time (days)	244.0 (Lebanon)	49.0 (United Arab)	129.5	28.0 (Korea, Rep.)

Indicator	Lowest regional performance	Best regional performance	Regional average	Best global performance
		Emirates)		
Cost (% of warehouse value)	14.5 (West Bank and Gaza)	0.3 (Iraq)	3.3	0.1 (Trinidad and Tobago)
Building quality control index (0-15)	5.5 (Iraq)	13.0 (Lebanon)	9.9	15.0 (Luxembourg*)
Getting Electricity (rank)	172 (Djibouti)	4 (United Arab Emirates)	90.90	1 (Korea, Rep.)
Getting Electricity (DTF Score)	39.49 (Djibouti)	98.84 (United Arab Emirates)	66.83	99.88 (Korea, Rep.)
Procedures (number)	8.0 (Kuwait)	3.0 (United Arab Emirates)	5.0	3.0 (15 Economies*)
Time (days)	180.0 (Algeria)	28.0 (United Arab Emirates)	81.7	18.0 (Korea, Rep.*)
Cost (% of income per capita)	6,386.8 (Djibouti)	10.8 (Qatar)	771.8	0.0 (Japan)
Reliability of supply and transparency of tariff index (0-8)	0.0 (Syrian Arab Republic)	8.0 (United Arab Emirates)	4.2	8.0 (26 Economies*)
Registering Property (rank)	168 (Djibouti)	11 (United Arab Emirates)	93.90	1 (New Zealand)
Registering Property (DTF Score)	41.34 (Djibouti)	90.04 (United Arab Emirates)	60.64	94.46 (New Zealand)
Procedures (number)	10.0 (Algeria)	2.0 (Bahrain)	5.7	1.0 (4 Economies*)
Time (days)	60.0 (Egypt, Arab Rep.)	1.5 (United Arab Emirates)	30.5	1.0 (3 Economies*)
Cost (% of property value)	27.9 (Syrian Arab Republic)	0.0 (Saudi Arabia)	5.9	0.0 (Saudi Arabia)
Quality of the land administration index (0-30)	3.0 (Djibouti)	24.5 (Qatar)	12.5	29.0 (Singapore)
Getting Credit (rank)	185 (Jordan)	82 (Egypt, Arab Rep.)	134.80	1 (New Zealand)
Getting Credit (DTF Score)	0.00 (Jordan)	50.00 (Egypt, Arab Rep.)	28.75	100.00 (New Zealand)
Strength of legal rights index (0-12)	0.0 (Yemen, Rep.)	3.0 (Tunisia)	1.4	12.0 (3 Economies*)
Depth of credit information index (0-8)	0.0 (Yemen, Rep.)	8.0 (Bahrain)	4.4	8.0 (30 Economies*)
Credit registry	0.0 (Saudi Arabia)	53.6 (Malta)	13.5	100.0 (3 Economies*)

Indicator	Lowest regional performance	Best regional performance	Regional average	Best global performance
coverage (% of adults)				
Credit bureau coverage (% of adults)	0.0 (Oman)	53.8 (United Arab Emirates)	12.8	100.0 (23 Economies*)
Protecting Minority Investors (rank)	185 (Libya)	9 (United Arab Emirates)	121.10	1 (New Zealand*)
Protecting Minority Investors (DTF Score)	25.00 (Libya)	75.00 (United Arab Emirates)	45.17	83.33 (New Zealand*)
Strength of minority investor protection index (0-10)	2.5 (Libya)	7.5 (United Arab Emirates)	4.5	8.3 (New Zealand*)
Extent of conflict of interest regulation index (0-10)	2.0 (Qatar)	7.7 (United Arab Emirates)	4.7	9.3 (New Zealand*)
Extent of shareholder governance index (0-10)	2.0 (Libya)	7.3 (Malta)	4.3	8.3 (Norway)
Paying Taxes (rank)	164 (Libya)	1 (Qatar)	69.45	1 (United Arab Emirates)
Paying Taxes (DTF Score)	54.77 (Libya)	99.44 (Qatar)	77.29	99.44 (United Arab Emirates)
Payments (number per year)	44.0 (Yemen, Rep.)	3.0 (Saudi Arabia)	17.8	3.0 (Hong Kong SAR, China*)
Time (hours per year)	889.0 (Libya)	12.0 (United Arab Emirates)	208.2	55.0 (Luxembourg)
Total tax rate (% of profit)	65.5 (Algeria)	15.3 (West Bank and Gaza)	32.3	26.1 (32 Economies*)
Postfiling index (0-100)			65.7	98.5 (Estonia)
Trading across Borders (rank)	179 (Iraq)	40 (Malta)	124.20	1 (10 Economies*)
Trading across Borders (DTF Score)	23.51 (Iraq)	91.01 (Malta)	55.98	100.00 (10 Economies*)
Time to export: Border compliance (hours)	118 (Algeria)	19 (Morocco)	64	0 (18 Economies*)
Cost to export: Border compliance (USD)	1,113 (Syrian Arab Republic)	47 (Bahrain)	460	0 (18 Economies*)
Time to export: Documentary compliance (hours)	504 (Iraq)	2 (Jordan)	77	1 (25 Economies*)
Cost to export: Documentary	1,800 (Iraq)	16 (Jordan)	261	0 (19 Economies*)

Indicator	Lowest regional performance	Best regional performance	Regional average	Best global performance
compliance (USD)				
Time to import: Border compliance (hours)	327 (Algeria)	2 (Malta)	121	0 (25 Economies*)
Cost to import: Border compliance (USD)	1,209 (Djibouti)	0 (West Bank and Gaza)	555	0 (28 Economies*)
Time to import: Documentary compliance (hours)	270 (Iran, Islamic Rep.)	1 (Malta)	101	1 (29 Economies*)
Cost to import: Documentary compliance (USD)	1,000 (Egypt, Arab Rep.)	0 (Malta)	305	0 (30 Economies*)
Enforcing Contracts (rank)	184 (Djibouti)	25 (United Arab Emirates)	107.50	1 (Korea, Rep.)
Enforcing Contracts (DTF Score)	28.39 (Djibouti)	71.14 (United Arab Emirates)	53.46	84.15 (Korea, Rep.)
Time (days)	1,225.0 (Djibouti)	495.0 (United Arab Emirates)	653.3	164.0 (Singapore)
Cost (% of claim)	35.9 (Malta)	13.5 (Oman)	25.0	9.0 (Iceland)
Quality of judicial processes index (0-18)	2.0 (Iraq)	12.0 (United Arab Emirates)	5.8	15.5 (Australia)
Resolving Insolvency (rank)	161 (Syrian Arab Republic)	58 (Tunisia)	123.35	1 (Finland)
Resolving Insolvency (DTF Score)	22.44 (Syrian Arab Republic)	54.53 (Tunisia)	30.48	93.89 (Finland)
Recovery rate (cents on the dollar)	12.7 (Syrian Arab Republic)	52.0 (Tunisia)	26.0	92.9 (Norway)
Time (years)	4.5 (Iran, Islamic Rep.)	1.3 (Tunisia)	3.0	0.4 (22 Economies*)
Cost (% of estate)	22.0 (Egypt, Arab Rep.)	3.5 (Oman)	13.8	1.0 (22 Economies*)
Strength of insolvency framework index (0-16)	4.0 (Lebanon)	9.0 (Djibouti)	5.3	15.0 (6 Economies*)

* Two or more economies share the top ranking on this indicator. A number shown in place of an economy's name indicates the number of economies that share the top ranking on the indicator. For a list of these economies, see the *Doing Business* website (<http://www.doingbusiness.org>).

Note: The global best performer on time for paying taxes is defined as the lowest time recorded among all economies in the DB2017 sample that levy the 3 major taxes: profit tax, labor taxes and mandatory contributions, and VAT or sales tax.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

STARTING A BUSINESS

Formal registration of companies has many immediate benefits for the companies and for business owners and employees. Legal entities can outlive their founders. Resources are pooled as several shareholders join forces to start a company. Formally registered companies have access to services and institutions from courts to banks as well as to new markets. And their employees can benefit from protections provided by the law. An additional benefit comes with limited liability companies. These limit the financial liability of company owners to their investments, so personal assets of the owners are not put at risk. Where governments make registration easy, more entrepreneurs start businesses in the formal sector, creating more good jobs and generating more revenue for the government.

What do the indicators cover?

Doing Business measures the ease of starting a business in an economy by recording all procedures officially required or commonly done in practice by an entrepreneur to start up and formally operate an industrial or commercial business—as well as the time and cost required to complete these procedures. It also records the paid-in minimum capital that companies must deposit before registration (or within 3 months). The ranking of economies on the ease of starting a business is determined by sorting their distance to frontier scores for starting a business. These scores are the simple average of the distance to frontier scores for each of the component indicators.

To make the data comparable across economies, *Doing Business* uses several assumptions about the business and the procedures. It assumes that all information is readily available to the entrepreneur and that there has been no prior contact with officials. It also assumes that the entrepreneur will pay no bribes. And it assumes that the business:

- Is a limited liability company (or its legal equivalent). If there is more than one type of limited liability company in the economy, the limited liability form most common among domestic firms is chosen. Information on the most common form is obtained from incorporation lawyers or the statistical office.

WHAT THE STARTING A BUSINESS

INDICATORS MEASURE

Procedures to legally start and operate a company (number)

- Preregistration (for example, name verification or reservation, notarization)
- Registration in the economy's largest business city¹
- Postregistration (for example, social security registration, company seal)
- Obtaining approval from spouse to start a business, to leave the home to register the company or open a bank account.
- Obtaining any gender specific document for company registration and operation, national identification card or opening a bank account.

Time required to complete each procedure (calendar days)

- Does not include time spent gathering information
- Each procedure starts on a separate day (2 procedures cannot start on the same day). Procedures that can be fully completed online are recorded as ½ day.
- Procedure completed once final document is received
- No prior contact with officials

Cost required to complete each procedure (% of income per capita)

- Official costs only, no bribes
- No professional fees unless services required by law

Paid-in minimum capital (% of income per capita)

- Deposited in a bank or with a notary before registration (or within 3 months)
- Has at least 10 and up to 50 employees one month after the commencement of operations, all of them domestic nationals..
- Has a turnover of at least 100 times income per

- Operates in the economy's largest business city. For 11 economies the data are also collected for the second largest business city.
- The size of the entire office space is approximately 929 square meters (10,000 square feet).
- Does not qualify for investment incentives or any special benefits.

capita. Has a company deed 10 pages long.

The owners:

- Have reached the legal age of majority and are capable of making decisions as an adult. If there is no legal age of majority, they are assumed to be 30 years old.
- Are sane, competent, in good health and have no criminal record.
- Are married, the marriage is monogamous and registered with the authorities.
- Where the answer differs according to the legal system applicable to the woman or man in question (as may be the case in economies where there is legal plurality), the answer used will be the one that applies to the majority of the population

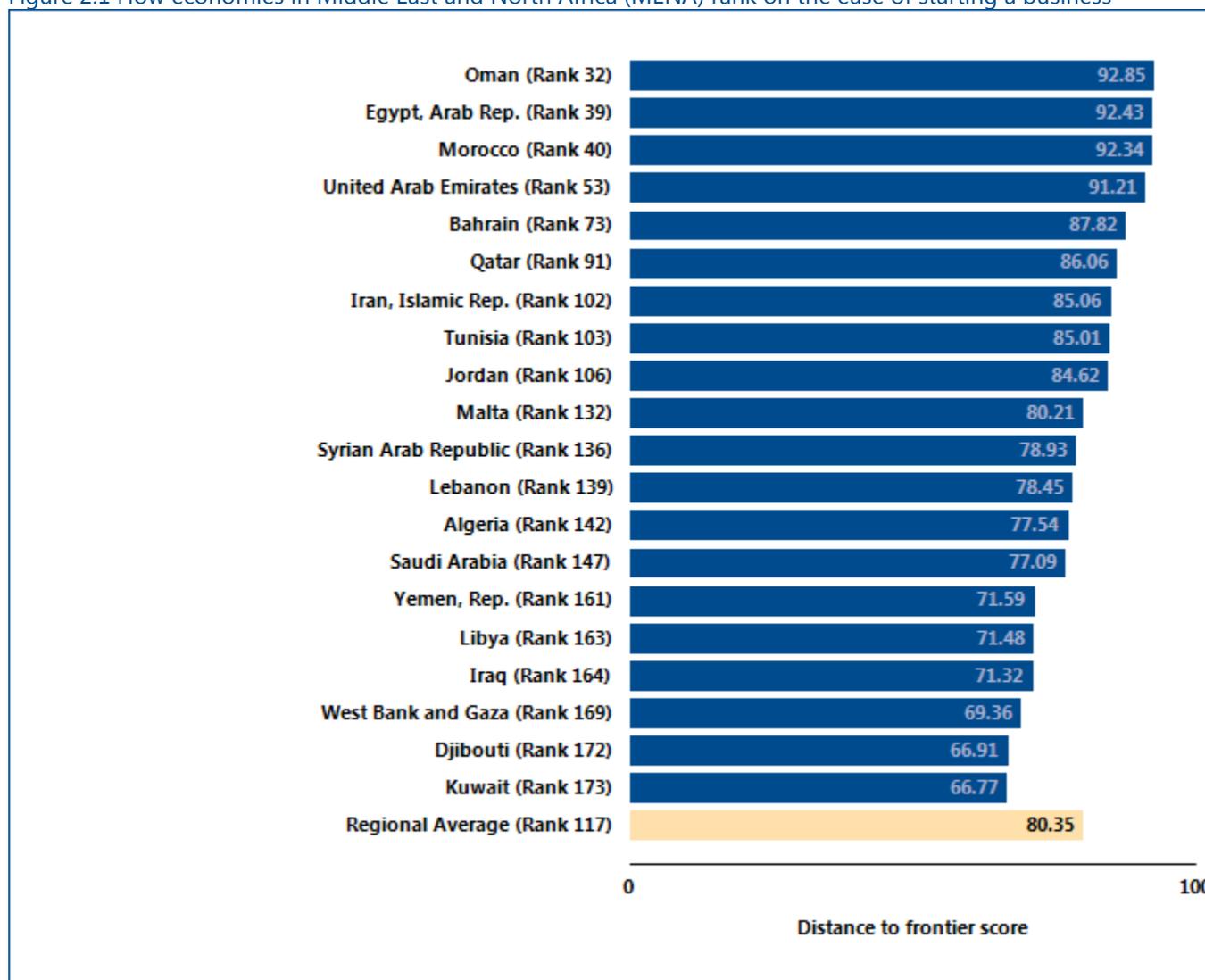
STARTING A BUSINESS

Where do the region's economies stand today?

How easy is it for entrepreneurs in economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) to start a business? The global rankings of these economies on the ease of

starting a business suggest an answer (figure 2.1). The average ranking of the region and comparator regions provide a useful benchmark.

Figure 2.1 How economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) rank on the ease of starting a business



Source: Doing Business database.

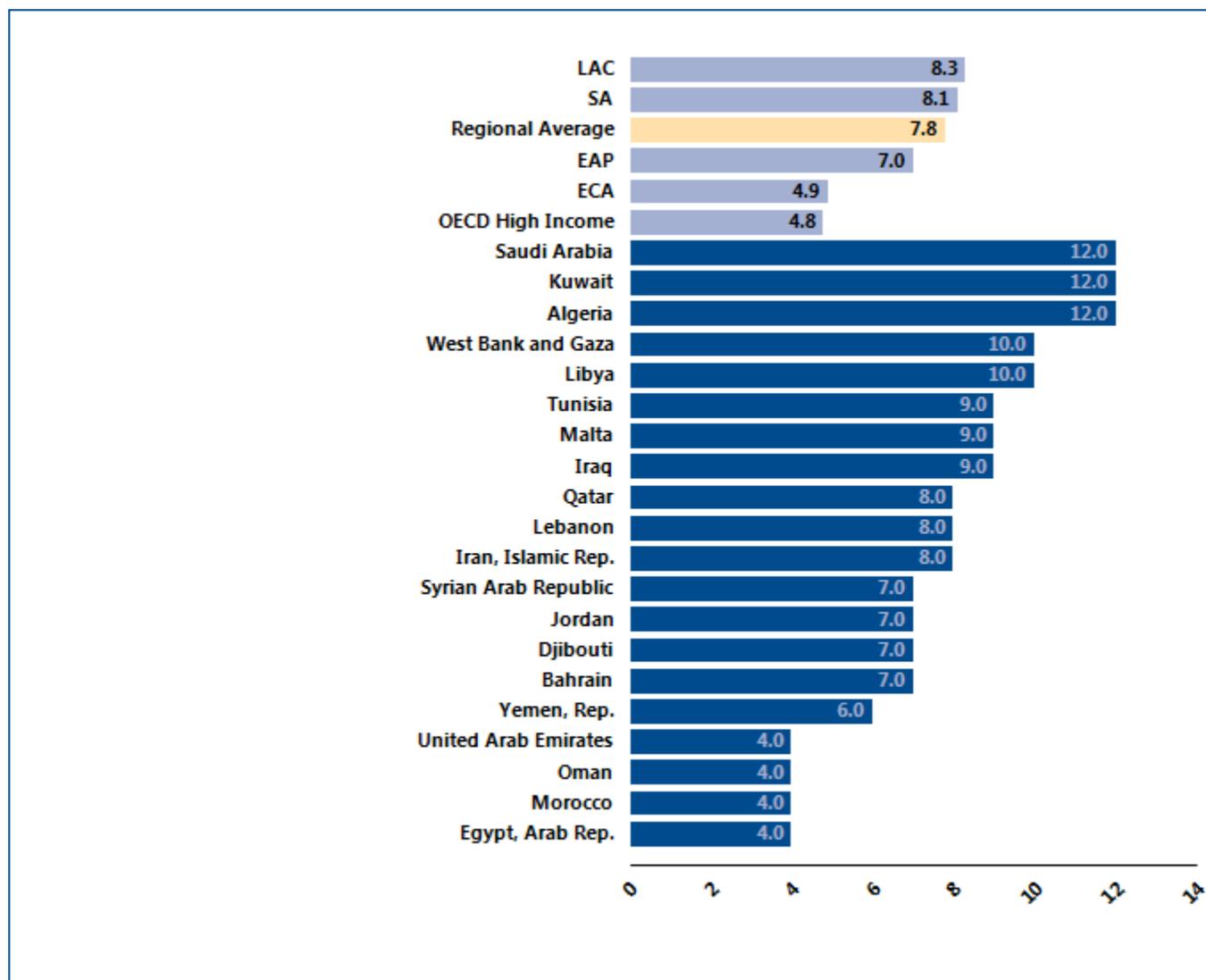
STARTING A BUSINESS

The indicators underlying the rankings may be more revealing. Data collected by *Doing Business* show what it takes to start a business in each economy in the region: the number of procedures, the time, the cost

and the paid-in minimum capital requirement (figure 2.2). Comparing these indicators across the region and with averages both for the region and for comparator regions can provide useful insights.

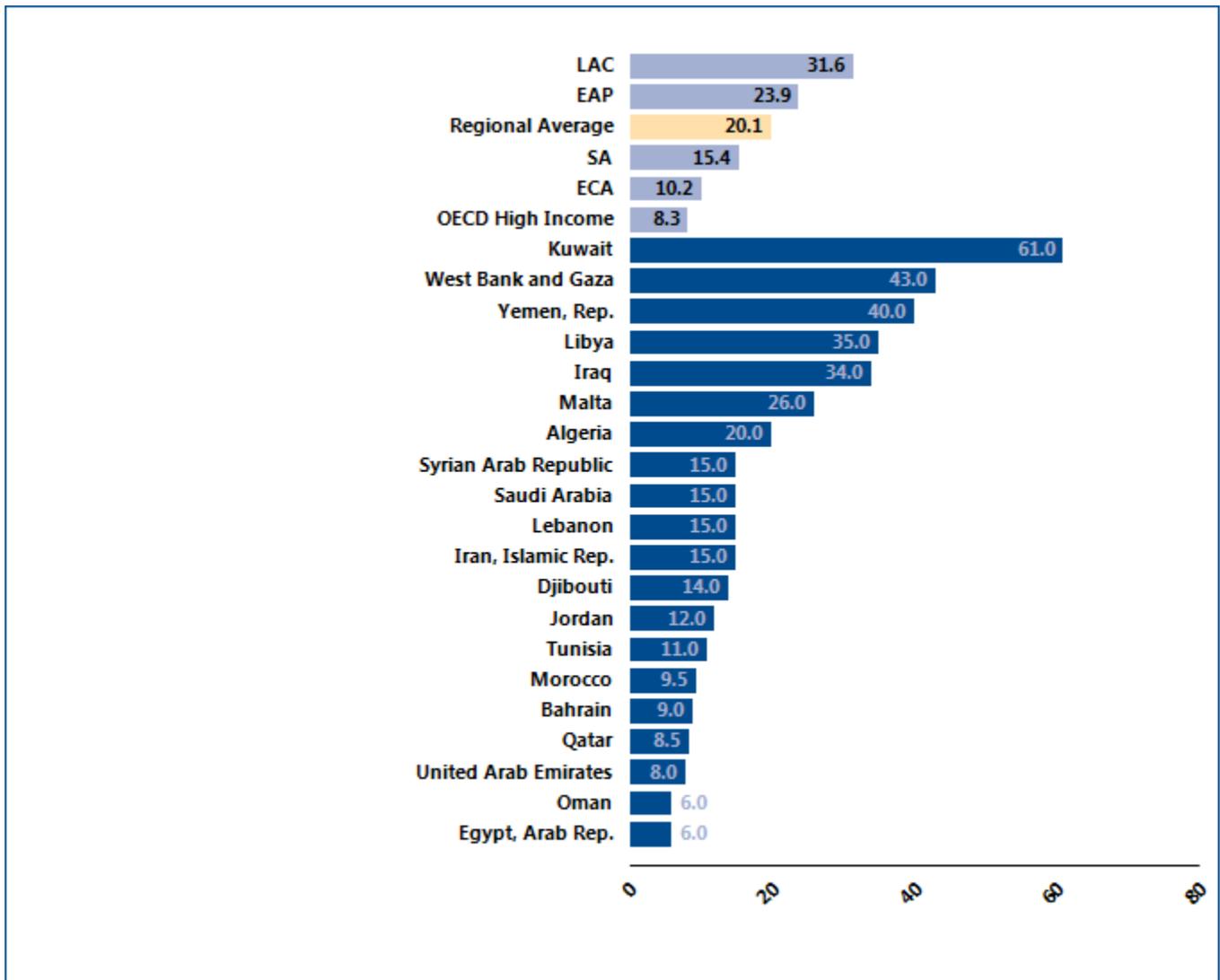
Figure 2.2 What it takes to start a business in economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

Procedures (number)



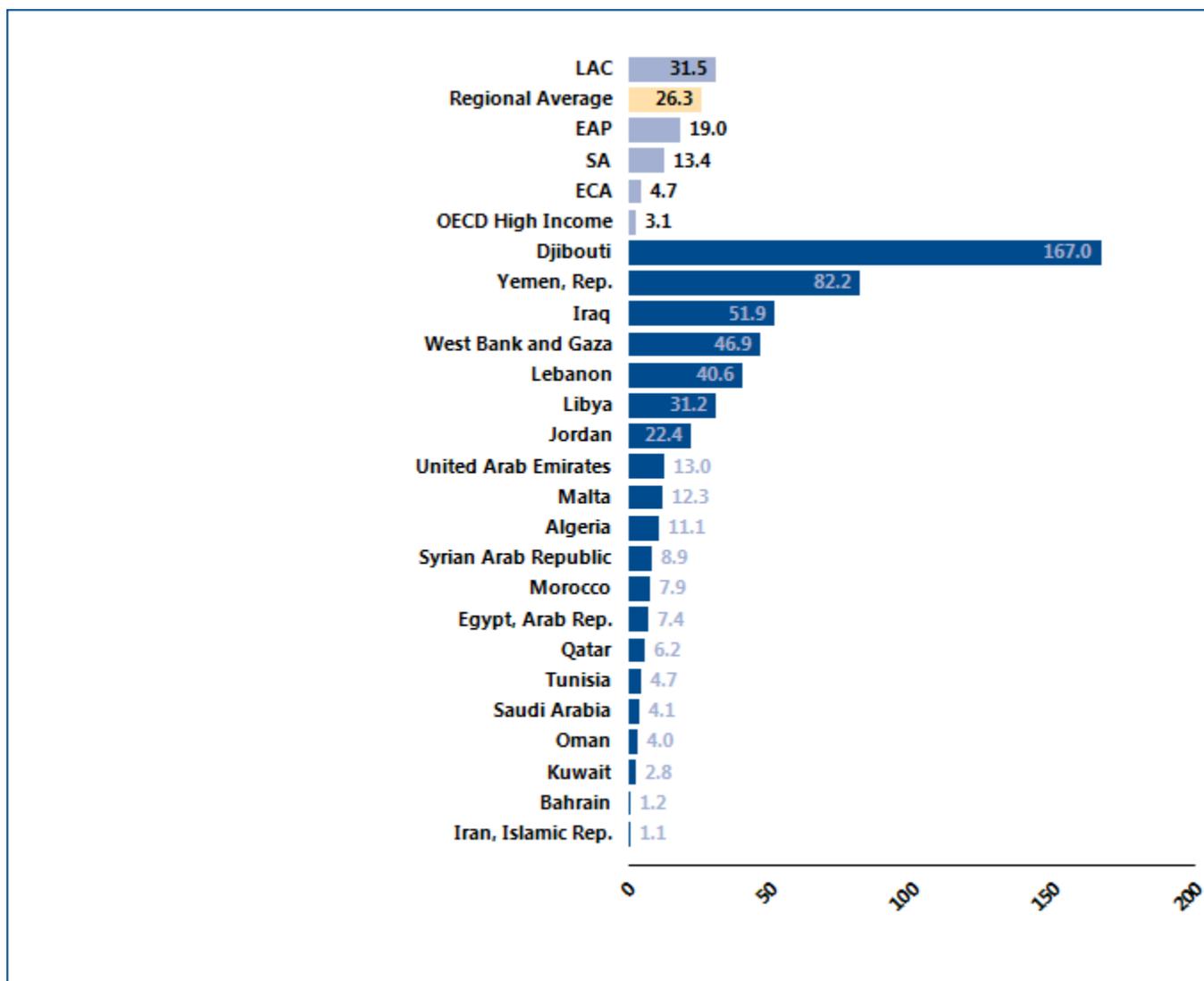
STARTING A BUSINESS

Time (days)



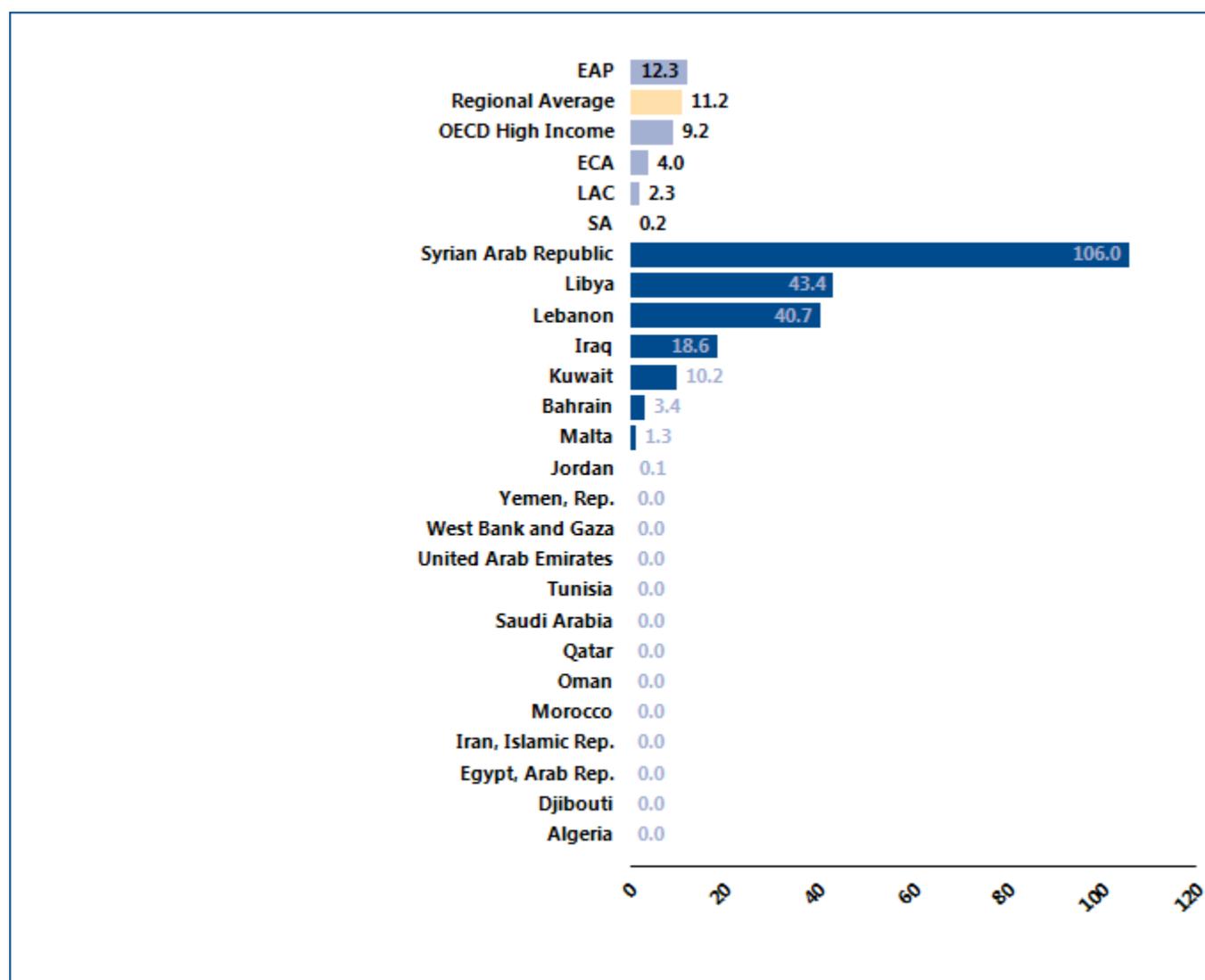
STARTING A BUSINESS

Cost (% of income per capita)



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Paid-in minimum capital (% of income per capita)



Source: Doing Business database.

STARTING A BUSINESS

What are the changes over time?

Economies around the world have taken steps making it easier to start a business—streamlining procedures by setting up a one-stop shop, making procedures simpler or faster by introducing technology, and reducing or eliminating minimum capital requirements. Many have undertaken business registration reforms in stages—and often as part of a larger regulatory reform program. Among the benefits have been greater firm satisfaction

and savings and more registered businesses, financial resources and job opportunities.

What business registration reforms has *Doing Business* recorded in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) (table 2.1)?

Table 2.1 How have economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) made starting a business easier—or not? By *Doing Business* report year DB2011 to DB2017

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by guaranteeing by law borrowers' right to inspect their own data.
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made exporting easier by improving infrastructure and streamlining procedures at the King Fahad Causeway.
DB2017	<i>Iraq</i>	Iraq made dealing with construction permits easier by allowing the simultaneous processing of utility clearances and building permit applications.
DB2017	<i>Iraq</i>	The Ministry of Electricity made getting electricity faster by enforcing tighter deadlines on electricity connections.
DB2017	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made exporting and importing easier by streamlining customs clearance processes, advancing the use of a single window and improving infrastructure at the Aqaba customs and port.
DB2017	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made exporting and importing easier by improving and expanding the services offered by the national single window.
DB2017	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made paying taxes less costly by increasing the depreciation rates for some fixed assets.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made enforcing contracts easier by adopting a new code of civil procedure.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia increased the length of the notice period for redundancy dismissals.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta improved access to credit information by launching a new credit registry.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	In Morocco the credit bureau began to provide credit scores.
DB2017	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia strengthened credit reporting by starting to distribute historical credit information and credit information from a telecommunications company.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened minority investor protections by clarifying ownership and control structures and by requiring greater corporate transparency.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar weakened minority investor protections by decreasing the rights of shareholders in major decisions, by diminishing ownership and control structures, by reducing requirements for approval of related-party transactions and their disclosure to the board of directors, and by limiting the liability of interested directors and board of directors in the event of prejudicial related-party transactions.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia strengthened minority investor protections by strengthening ownership and control structures of companies and by increasing corporate transparency requirements.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made registering property easier by streamlining the property registration process.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made registering property easier by increasing the transparency at its land registry.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made registering property more complex by requiring a security clearance prior to transferring the property.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made starting a business more difficult by increasing the time for company registration and more costly by increasing fees for post-registration procedures.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made starting a business easier by reducing the time to notarize a company's article of association.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business easier by abolishing the paid-in minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies.
DB2017	<i>Oman</i>	Oman made starting a business easier by removing the requirement to pay the minimum capital within three months of incorporation and streamlining the registration of employees.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made the process of starting a business easier by introducing an online platform to reserve the company name and reducing registration fees.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta simplified the process of starting a business by reducing the time needed to register a company.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made trading across borders easier by further developing its single window system and thus reducing border compliance time for importing.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the time for border and documentary compliance by introducing a new online single window/one-stop service that allows for fast electronic clearance of goods.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made paying taxes more difficult by introducing a more complex income tax return.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made paying taxes more costly by replacing the capital gains tax with a property transfer tax, increasing the maximum social security contribution paid by employers.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made dealing with construction permits easier by implementing risk-based inspections and merging the final inspection into the process of obtaining a completion certificate.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates reduced the duration of a single fixed-term contract from 48 to 24 month.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates reduced the time required to obtain a new electricity connection by implementing a new program with strict deadlines for reviewing applications, carrying out inspections and meter installations. The United Arab Emirates also introduced compensation for power outages.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened minority investor protections by increasing shareholder rights and role in major corporate decisions, clarifying ownership and control structures, and requiring greater corporate transparency.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made registering property easier by increasing the transparency at its land registry.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made it easier to start a business by streamlining name reservation and articles of association notarization and merging registration procedures with the Ministry of Human Resources and General Pensions and Social Security Authority.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt made starting a business easier by merging procedures at the one-stop shop by introducing a follow-up unit in charge of liaising with the tax and labor authority on behalf of the company.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt made trading across borders more difficult by making the process of obtaining and processing documents more complex and by imposing a cap on foreign exchange deposits and withdrawals for imports.
DB2017	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the time required to register by requiring companies to submit the original documents online and in person.
DB2017	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made exporting and importing easier by introducing customs e-links and electronic exchange of information among various agencies.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made dealing with construction permits indicator faster by reducing the time to obtain a construction permit.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made getting electricity more transparent by publishing electricity tariffs on the websites of the utility and the energy regulator.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made starting a business easier by eliminating the minimum capital requirement for business incorporation.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made paying taxes less costly by decreasing the tax on professional activities rate. The introduction of advanced accounting systems also made paying taxes easier.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt strengthened minority investor protections by increasing shareholder rights and role in major corporate decisions and by clarifying ownership and control structures.
DB2016	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt strengthened minority investor protections by barring subsidiaries from acquiring shares issued by their parent company.
DB2016	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made dealing with construction permits easier by eliminating the legal requirement to provide a certified copy of a property title when applying for a building permit.
DB2016	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made starting a business easier by eliminating the requirement to obtain managers' criminal records.
DB2016	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made getting electricity easier by reducing the time needed to provide a connection cost estimate.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made dealing with construction permits easier by streamlining the process for obtaining the civil defense approval.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	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 allowing litigants to file and track motions online.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened minority investor protections by barring a subsidiary from acquiring shares in its parent company and by requiring that a potential acquirer, upon reaching 50% or more of the capital of a company, make a purchase offer to all shareholders.
DB2016	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon made transferring property more complex by increasing the time required for property registration.
DB2016	<i>Malta</i>	The utility in Malta reduced the time required for getting an

DB year	Economy	Reform
		electricity connection by improving its supervision of trenching works.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	The utility in Morocco reduced the time required for getting an electricity connection by providing fee estimates more quickly.
DB2016	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved the regulation of outages by beginning to record data for the annual system average interruption duration index (SAIDI) and system average interruption frequency index (SAIFI).
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made dealing with construction permits more difficult by requiring architects to submit the building permit request online, along with supporting documents, and to follow up with a hard-copy submission. On the other hand, Morocco reduced the time required to obtain an urban certificate.
DB2016	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made dealing with construction permits easier by streamlining the process for obtaining the civil defense permit and for submitting the stamped concrete casting permit to the municipality.
DB2016	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made paying taxes less costly for companies by reducing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made paying taxes easier for companies by improving the electronic platform for filing and paying corporate income tax, VAT and labor taxes. On the other hand, Morocco increased the rate of the social charge paid by employers.
DB2016	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made the transfer of a property more expensive by introducing the new property transfer tax.
DB2016	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made property transfers faster by introducing a new computerized system at the land registry.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made property transfers faster by establishing electronic communication links between different tax authorities.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by eliminating the need to file a declaration of business incorporation with the Ministry of Labor.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	1) Morocco implemented an unemployment insurance scheme. 2) Morocco increased the minimum wage increased from 12.24 to 12.85 DH/hour as of July 1, 2014, according to decree n° 2.14.343 of June 2014, published in the official bulletin 5292.
DB2016	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the time for border compliance for both exporting and importing by transferring cargo operations

DB year	Economy	Reform
		from Sultan Qaboos Port to Sohar Port.
DB2016	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar reduced the time for border compliance for importing by reducing the number of days of free storage at the port and thus the time required for port handling.
DB2016	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia reduced border compliance time for both exporting and importing by improving the efficiency of its state-owned port handling company and investing in port infrastructure at the port of Rades.
DB2016	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	The credit registry in West Bank and Gaza began to distribute credit data from retailers and utility companies.
DB2015	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made paying taxes less costly for companies by reducing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2015	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made paying taxes easier for companies by introducing the option to make either 1 or 4 advance payments of corporate income tax.
DB2015	<i>Malta</i>	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.
DB2015	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made trading across borders easier by reducing the number of export documents required.
DB2015	<i>Tunisia</i>	In Tunisia trading across borders became more difficult because of a deterioration in port infrastructure (for example, in loading and unloading equipment) and inadequate terminal space.
DB2015	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	In the Republic of Yemen trading across borders became more difficult as a result of inefficient port operation.
DB2015	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made registering property easier by reducing the registration fee.
DB2015	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made dealing with construction permits less time-consuming by streamlining the review process for building permits.
DB2015	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by approving the credit bureau's collection of data on firms.
DB2015	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made getting electricity easier by eliminating the need for customers to obtain an excavation permit for electricity connection works.
DB2015	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made starting a business easier by streamlining the name reservation and company registration procedures.
DB2015	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made trading across borders easier by improving infrastructure at the port of Aqaba.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	In the United Arab Emirates the credit bureau improved access to credit information by starting to exchange credit information with a utility.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	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.
DB2015	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made trading across borders easier by upgrading infrastructure at the port of Algiers.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made transferring property easier by introducing new service centers and a standard contract for property transactions.
DB2015	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the commercial license fee.
DB2015	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	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.
DB2014	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt made paying taxes more costly for companies by increasing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made getting electricity easier by eliminating the requirement for site inspections and reducing the time required to provide new connections.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened investor protections by introducing greater disclosure requirements for related-party transactions in the annual report and to the stock exchange and by making it possible to sue directors when such transactions harm the company.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made transferring property easier by increasing the operating hours of the land registry and reducing transfer fees.
DB2014	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait strengthened investor protections by making it possible for minority shareholders to request the appointment of an auditor to review the company's activities.
DB2014	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti strengthened its secured transactions system by

DB year	Economy	Reform
		adopting a new commercial code, which broadens the range of movable assets that can be used as collateral.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by starting to collect payment information from retailers.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made starting a business more expensive by increasing the cost of the business registration certificate.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain reduced the maximum cumulative duration of fixed-term contracts, made third-party notification mandatory for redundancy dismissals and increased paid annual leave.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made resolving insolvency easier through its new commercial code, which allows an insolvent debtor to file for preventive settlement, legal redress or liquidation and sets out clear rules on the steps and procedures for each of the alternatives available.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made starting a business easier by simplifying the company name search and by eliminating the minimum capital requirement as well as the requirement to publish a notice of commencement of activities.
DB2014	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made dealing with construction permits less costly by significantly reducing the building permit fees.
DB2014	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made paying taxes easier for companies by eliminating certain requirements associated with the corporate income tax return.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made paying taxes easier for companies by increasing the use of the electronic filing and payment system for social security contributions.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made transferring property easier by reducing the time required to register a deed of transfer at the tax authority.
DB2014	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made starting a business less costly by eliminating the paid-in minimum capital requirement.
DB2014	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made starting a business more difficult by increasing the cost of company registration.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by reducing the company registration fees.
DB2014	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza introduced a minimum wage.
DB2014	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	
DB2013	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made starting a business more difficult by requiring company founders to obtain a criminal record clearance to register a new company.
DB2013	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran strengthened investor protections by requiring greater immediate disclosure of

DB year	Economy	Reform
		related-party transactions.
DB2013	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by eliminating the minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies.
DB2013	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar reduced the time to export and import by introducing a new online portal allowing electronic submission of customs declarations for clearance at the Doha seaport.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made enforcing contracts easier by expanding the computerization of its courts and introducing an electronic filing system.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made getting electricity more expensive by increasing the connection fees.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made starting a business easier by eliminating the requirement for a company to prepare a name board in English and Arabic after having received clearance on the use of office premises.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made paying taxes easier for companies by establishing an online filing and payment system for social security contributions.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	In the United Arab Emirates the Dubai Electricity and Water Authority made getting electricity easier by introducing an electronic "one window, one step" application process allowing customers to submit and track their applications online and reducing the time for processing the applications.
DB2013	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the maximum number of working days per week and increased the paid annual leave applicable for employees with one year of service.
DB2013	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made transferring property more costly by increasing the property transfer fee.
DB2013	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made registering property more costly by increasing property registration fees.
DB2013	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza improved access to credit information by guaranteeing borrowers' right to inspect their personal data.
DB2013	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria improved access to credit information by establishing an online system for data exchange between all banks and microfinance institutions and the central bank's credit registry.
DB2013	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved access to credit information by guaranteeing borrowers' right to inspect their personal data.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made paying taxes easier for companies by introducing online filing and payment systems for social security contributions.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2013	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria improved access to credit information by eliminating the minimum threshold for loans to be included in the database.
DB2012	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria improved its credit information system by guaranteeing by law the right of borrowers to inspect their personal data.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar improved its credit information system by starting to distribute historical data and eliminating the minimum threshold for loans included in the database.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved its credit information system by launching the Bank Credit and Statistical Bureau System, which collects historical information on performing and nonperforming loans for both firms and individuals.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened investor protections by allowing minority shareholders to obtain any nonconfidential corporate document during trial.
DB2012	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates improved its credit information system through a new law allowing the establishment of a federal credit bureau under the supervision of the central bank.
DB2012	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon made getting electricity less costly by reducing the application fees and security deposit for a new connection.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco eased the administrative burden of paying taxes for firms by enhancing electronic filing and payment of the corporate income tax and value added tax.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	Oman enacted a new income tax law that redefined the scope of taxation.
DB2012	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	The Republic of Yemen enacted a new tax law that reduced the general corporate tax rate from 35% to 20% and abolished all tax exemptions except those granted under the investment law for investment projects.
DB2012	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made starting a business easier by merging the requirements to file company documents with the Department for Economic Development, to obtain a trade license and to register with the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made dealing with construction permits more difficult by increasing the time and cost to process building permits.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made dealing with construction permits easier by opening a one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	Yemen made starting a business more difficult due to the suspension of registration services at the one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made starting a business easier by bringing together representatives from the Department of Zakat and

DB year	Economy	Reform
		Income Tax and the General Organization of Social Insurance at the Unified Center to register new companies with their agencies.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	The one-stop shop in Oman introduced online company registration and sped up the process to register a business from 7 days to 3 days.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business easier by combining commercial registration and registration with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry at the one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made trading across borders faster by introducing X-ray scanners for risk management systems.
DB2012	<i>Iraq</i>	In Iraq starting a business became more expensive because of an increase in the cost to obtain a name reservation certificate and in the cost for lawyers to draft articles of association.
DB2012	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement from 1,000 Jordanian dinars to 1 dinar, of which only half must be deposited before company registration.
DB2012	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made dealing with construction permits costlier by increasing the fees for inspections and the building permit and adding a new inspection in the preconstruction phase.
DB2012	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made trading across borders faster by developing a new container terminal.
DB2011	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made registering property more burdensome by increasing the fees at the Survey and Land Registration Bureau.
DB2011	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made it easier to trade by building a modern new port, improving the electronic data interchange system and introducing risk-based inspections.
DB2011	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon increased the cost of starting a business.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran eased business start-up by installing a web portal allowing entrepreneurs to search for and reserve a unique company name.
DB2011	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon improved its credit information system by allowing banks online access to the public credit registry's reports.
DB2011	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan improved its credit information system by setting up a regulatory framework for establishing a private credit bureau as well as lowering the threshold for loans to be reported to the public credit registry.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The establishment of a new private credit bureau improved access to credit information.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made enforcing contracts easier and faster by introducing electronic filing of some documents, text message notification and an electronic case management system.
DB2011	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan abolished certain taxes and made it possible to file income and sales tax returns electronically.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria eliminated the severance payment obligation but increased the notice period applicable in case of redundancy dismissals. Implemented a 100% pay premium for weekly holiday work and decreased the total term limit of fixed-term contracts.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made dealing with construction permits easier for the second year in a row by introducing a new, streamlined process.
DB2011	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business more difficult by adding a procedure to register for taxes and obtain a company seal.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria eased business start-up by reducing the minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies by two-thirds. It also decentralized approval of the company memorandum.
DB2011	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made starting a business more difficult by increasing the lawyers' fees that must be paid for incorporation.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia speeded up the insolvency process by providing earlier access to amicable settlements and putting time limits on the settlements to encourage creditors to participate.
DB2011	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates enhanced access to credit by setting up a legal framework for the operation of the private credit bureau and requiring that financial institutions share credit information.
DB2011	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates streamlined document preparation and reduced the time to trade with the launch of Dubai Customs' comprehensive new customs system, Mirsal 2.
DB2011	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait increased the number of days of paid annual leave and increased the notice period applicable in case of redundancy dismissals.
DB2011	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia introduced the use of electronic systems for payment of corporate income tax and value added tax.
DB2011	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	More efficient processes at Palestinian customs made trading easier in the West Bank.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia reduced the time to import by launching a new container terminal at the Jeddah Islamic Port.
DB2011	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia upgraded its electronic data interchange system for imports and exports, speeding up the assembly of import

DB year	Economy	Reform
		documents.
DB2011	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened investor protections by requiring greater disclosure in companies' annual reports.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria enhanced access to credit by eliminating the minimum threshold for loans included in the database, which expanded the coverage of individuals and firms to 2.8% of the adult population.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	An amendment to Saudi Arabia's commercial lien law enhanced access to credit by making secured lending more flexible and allowing out-of-court enforcement in case of default.
DB2011	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt reduced the cost to start a business.
DB2011	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt made trading easier by introducing an electronic system for submitting export and import documents.

Note: For information on reforms in earlier years (back to DB2005), see the *Doing Business* reports for these years, available at <http://www.doingbusiness.org>.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

DEALING WITH CONSTRUCTION PERMITS

Regulation of construction is critical to protect the public. But it needs to be efficient, to avoid excessive constraints on a sector that plays an important part in every economy. Where complying with building regulations is excessively costly in time and money, many builders opt out. They may pay bribes to pass inspections or simply build illegally, leading to hazardous construction that puts public safety at risk. Where compliance is simple, straightforward and inexpensive, everyone is better off.

What do the indicators cover?

Doing Business records all procedures required for a business in the construction industry to build a warehouse along with the time and cost to complete each procedure. In addition, this year Doing Business introduces a new measure, the building quality control index, evaluating the quality of building regulations, the strength of quality control and safety mechanisms, liability and insurance regimes, and professional certification requirements.

The ranking of economies on the ease of dealing with construction permits is determined by sorting their distance to frontier scores for dealing with construction permits. These scores are the simple average of the distance to frontier scores for each of the component indicators.

To make the data comparable across economies, several assumptions about the construction company, the warehouse project and the utility connections are used.

Assumptions about the construction company

The construction company (BuildCo):

- Is a limited liability company (or its legal equivalent).
- Operates in the economy's largest business city. For 11 economies the data are also collected for the second largest business city.
- Is 100% domestically and privately owned
- Has five owners, none of whom is a legal entity..
- Is fully licensed and insured to carry out construction projects, such as building

WHAT THE DEALING WITH CONSTRUCTION PERMITS INDICATORS MEASURE

Procedures to legally build a warehouse (number)

Submitting all relevant documents and obtaining all necessary clearances, licenses, permits and certificates

Submitting all required notifications and receiving all necessary inspections

Obtaining utility connections for water and sewerage

Registering and selling the warehouse after its completion

Time required to complete each procedure (calendar days)

Does not include time spent gathering information

Each procedure starts on a separate day. Procedures that can be fully completed online are recorded as ½ day

Procedure considered completed once final document is received

No prior contact with officials

Cost required to complete each procedure (% of warehouse value)

Official costs only, no bribes

Building quality control index (0-15)

Sum of the scores of six component indices:

Quality of building regulations (0-2)

Quality control before construction (0-1)

Quality control during construction (0-3)

Quality control after construction (0-3)

Liability and insurance regimes (0-2)

Professional certifications (0-4)

-
-
-

warehouses.

- The construction company (BuildCo) (*continued*):
- Has 60 builders and other employees, all of them nationals with the technical expertise and professional experience necessary to obtain construction permits and approvals.
- Has a licensed architect and a licensed engineer, both registered with the local association of architects or engineers. BuildCo is not assumed to have any other employees who are technical or licensed experts, such as geological or topographical experts.
- Has paid all taxes and taken out all necessary insurance applicable to its general business activity (for example, accidental insurance for construction workers and third-person liability).
- Owns the land on which the warehouse will be built and will sell the warehouse upon its completion.
- Is valued at 50 times income per capita.
- Assumptions about the warehouse
- The warehouse:
 - Will be used for general storage activities, such as storage of books or stationery. The warehouse will not be used for any goods requiring special conditions, such as food, chemicals or pharmaceuticals.
 - Will have two stories, both above ground, with a total constructed area of approximately 1,300.6 square meters (14,000 square feet). Each floor will be 3 meters (9 feet, 10 inches) high.
 - Will have road access and be located in the periurban area of the economy's largest business city (that is, on the fringes of the city but still within its official limits). For 11 economies the data are also collected for the second largest business city.
 - Will not be located in a special economic or industrial zone. Will be located on a land plot of approximately 929 square meters (10,000 square feet) that is 100% owned by BuildCo and is accurately registered in the cadastre and land registry.
- Will be a new construction (there was no previous construction on the land), with no trees, natural water sources, natural reserves or historical monuments of any kind on the plot.
- Will have complete architectural and technical plans prepared by a licensed architect. If preparation of the plans requires such steps as obtaining further documentation or getting prior approvals from external agencies, these are counted as procedures.
- Will include all technical equipment required to be fully operational.
- Will take 30 weeks to construct (excluding all delays due to administrative and regulatory requirements).
- Assumptions about the utility connections
- The water and sewerage connections:
 - Will be 150 meters (492 feet) from the existing water source and sewer tap. If there is no water delivery infrastructure in the economy, a borehole will be dug. If there is no sewerage infrastructure, a septic tank in the smallest size available will be installed or built.
- Will not require water for fire protection reasons; a fire extinguishing system (dry system) will be used instead. If a wet fire protection system is required by law, it is assumed that the water demand specified below also covers the water needed for fire protection.
- Will have an average water use of 662 liters (175 gallons) a day and an average wastewater flow of 568 liters (150 gallons) a day. Will have a peak water use of 1,325 liters (350 gallons) a day and a peak wastewater flow of 1,136 liters (300 gallons) a day.
- Will have a constant level of water demand and wastewater flow throughout the year.
- Will be 1 inch in diameter for the water connection and 4 inches in diameter for the sewerage connection.

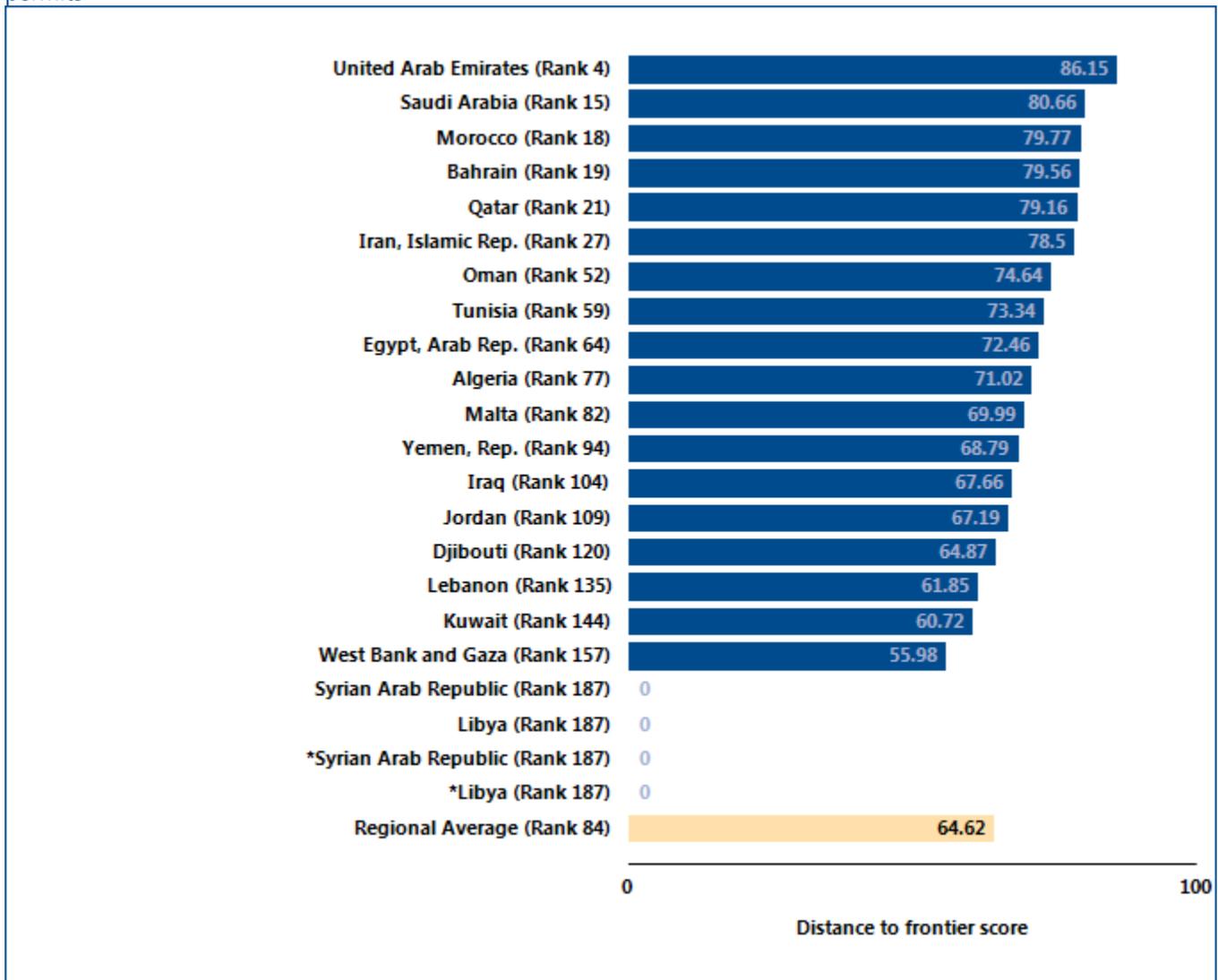
DEALING WITH CONSTRUCTION PERMITS

Where do the region’s economies stand today?

How easy it is for entrepreneurs in economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) to legally build a warehouse? The global rankings of these economies on

the ease of dealing with construction permits suggest an answer (figure 3.1). The average ranking of the region and comparator regions provide a useful benchmark.

Figure 3.1 How economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) rank on the ease of dealing with construction permits



Source: Doing Business database.

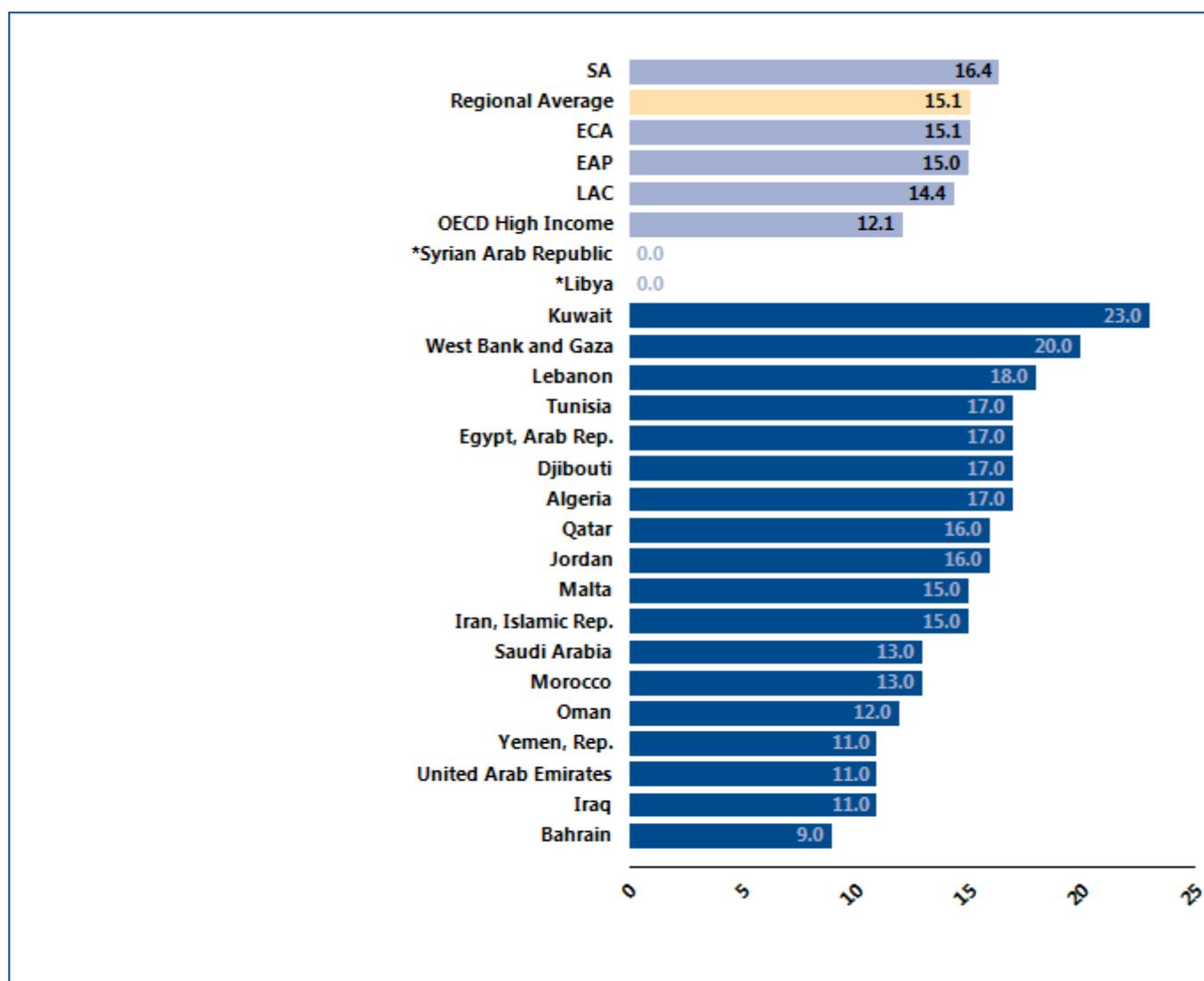
DEALING WITH CONSTRUCTION PERMITS

The indicators underlying the rankings may be more revealing. Data collected by *Doing Business* show what it takes to comply with formalities to build a warehouse in each economy in the region: the number of procedures,

the time and the cost (figure 3.2). Comparing these indicators across the region and with averages both for the region and for comparator regions can provide useful insights.

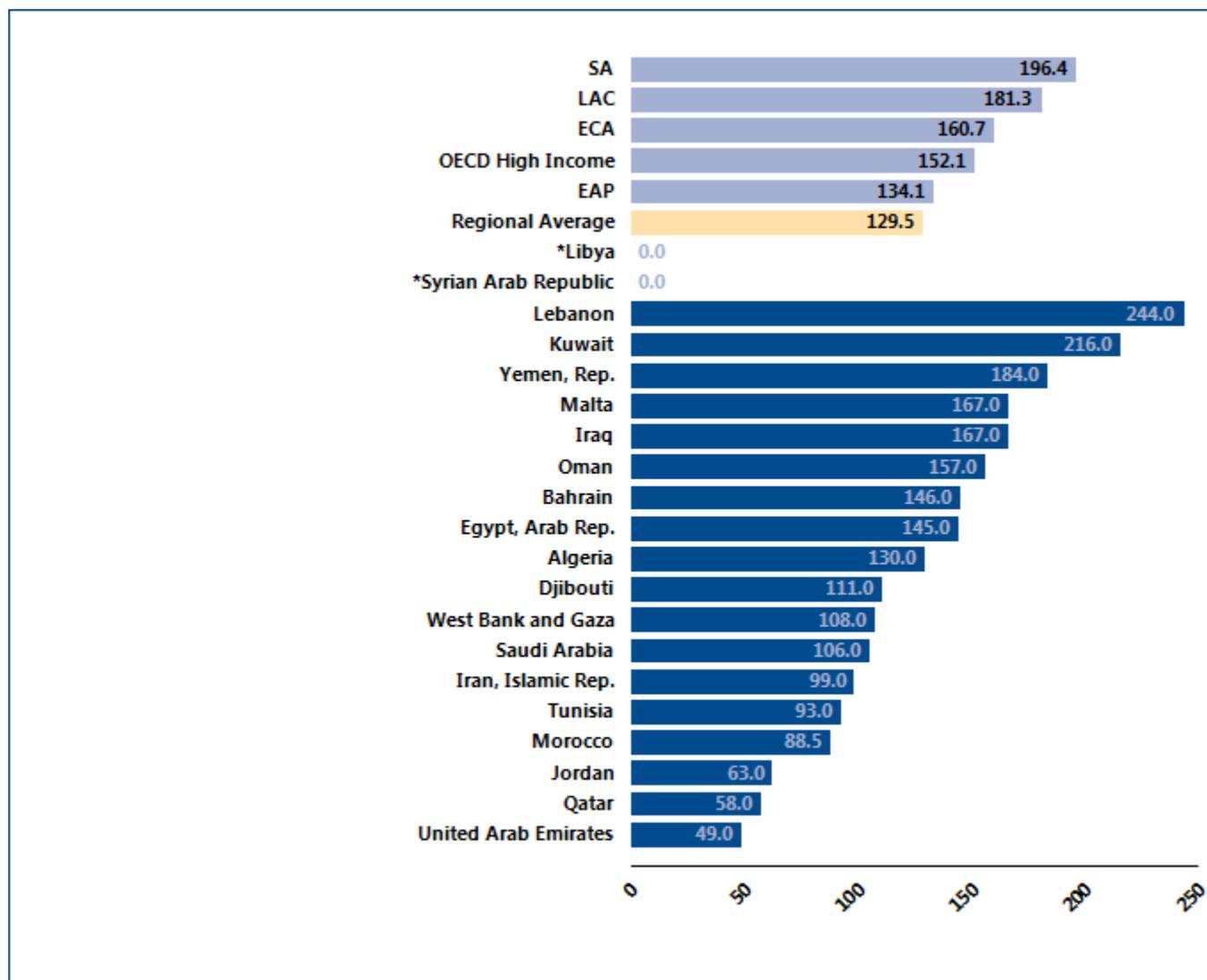
Figure 3.2 What it takes to comply with formalities to build a warehouse in economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

Procedures (number)



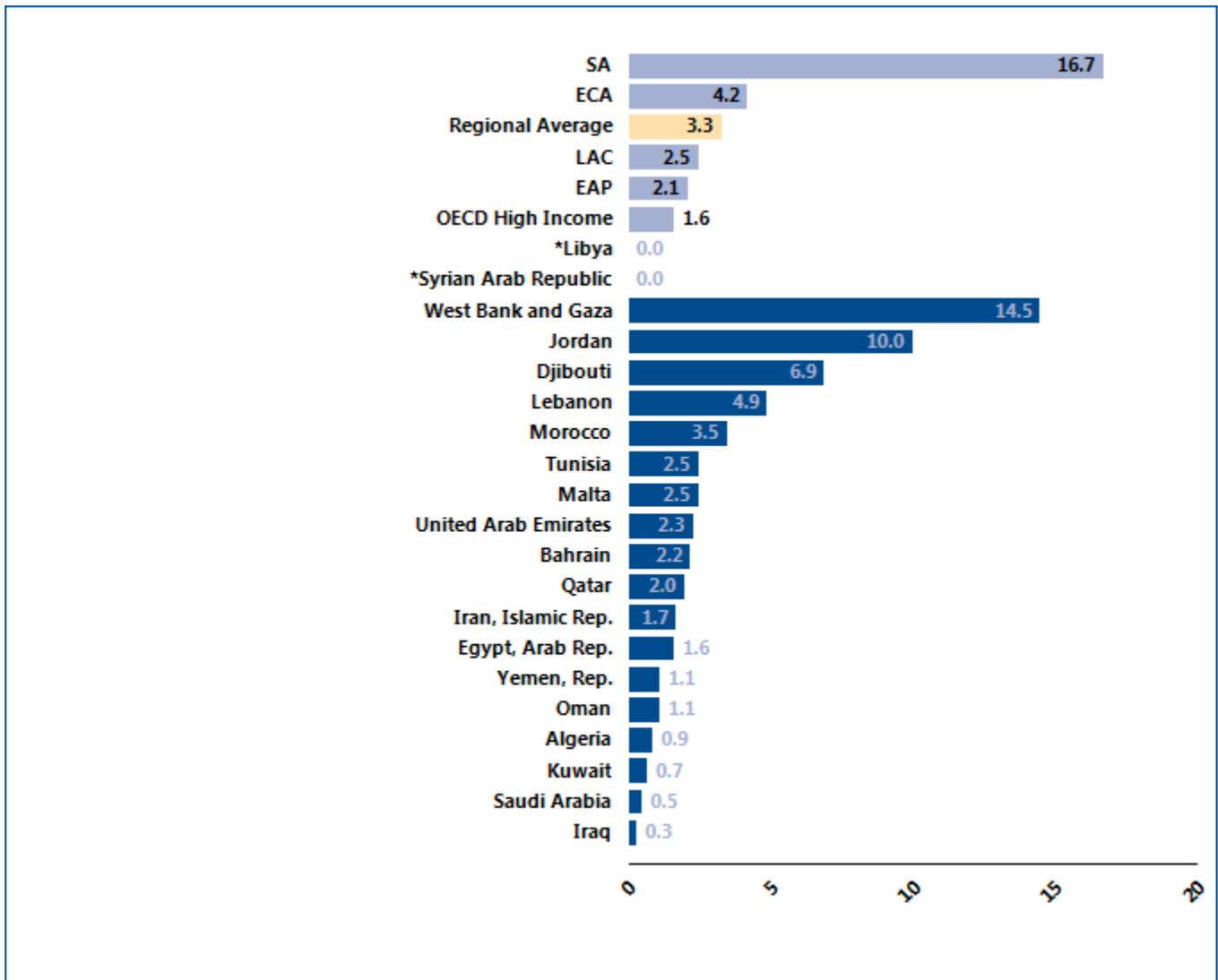
DEALING WITH CONSTRUCTION PERMITS

Time (days)



DEALING WITH CONSTRUCTION PERMITS

Cost (% of warehouse value)

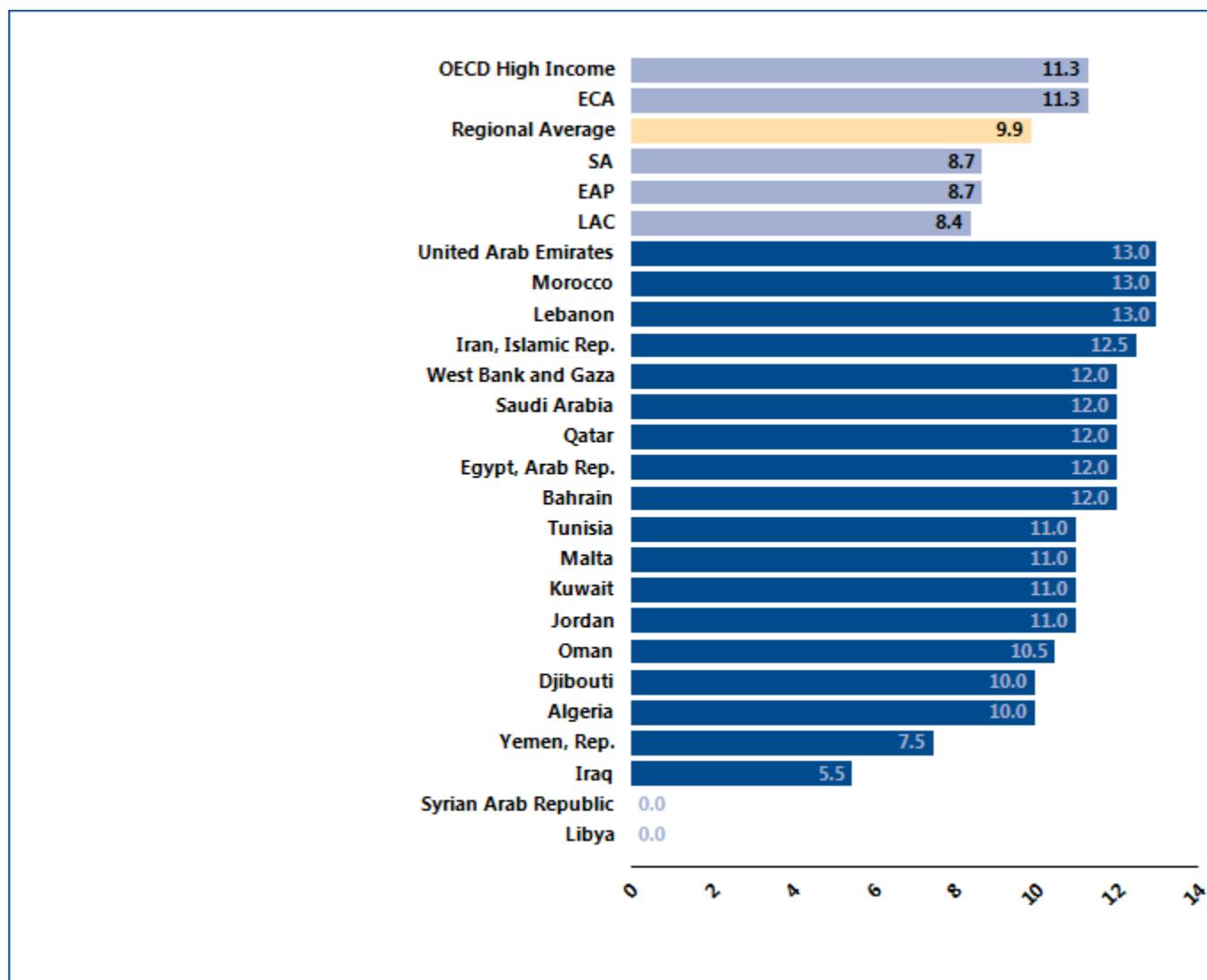


* Indicates a “no practice” mark. If an economy has no laws or regulations covering a specific area—for example, insolvency—it receives a “no practice” mark. Similarly, an economy receives a “no practice” or “not possible” mark if regulation exists but is never used in practice or if a competing regulation prohibits such practice. Either way, a “no practice” mark puts the economy at the bottom of the ranking on the relevant indicator.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

DEALING WITH CONSTRUCTION PERMITS

Building Quality Control Index (0-15)



* Indicates a “no practice” mark. If an economy has no laws or regulations covering a specific area—for example, insolvency—it receives a “no practice” mark. Similarly, an economy receives a “no practice” or “not possible” mark if regulation exists but is never used in practice or if a competing regulation prohibits such practice. Either way, a “no practice” mark puts the economy at the bottom of the ranking on the relevant indicator.

Note: The index ranges from 0 to 15, with higher values indicating better quality control and safety mechanisms in the construction permitting system. The indicator is based on the same case study assumptions as the measures of efficiency.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

DEALING WITH CONSTRUCTION PERMITS

What are the changes over time?

Smart regulation ensures that standards are met while making compliance easy and accessible to all. Coherent and transparent rules, efficient processes and adequate allocation of resources are especially important in sectors where safety is at stake. Construction is one of them. In an effort to ensure building safety while keeping

compliance costs reasonable, governments around the world have worked on consolidating permitting requirements. What construction permitting reforms has *Doing Business* recorded in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) (table 3.1)?

Table 3.1 How have economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) made dealing with construction permits easier—or not?

By *Doing Business* report year DB2011 to DB2017

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by guaranteeing by law borrowers' right to inspect their own data.
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made exporting easier by improving infrastructure and streamlining procedures at the King Fahad Causeway.
DB2017	<i>Iraq</i>	Iraq made dealing with construction permits easier by allowing the simultaneous processing of utility clearances and building permit applications.
DB2017	<i>Iraq</i>	The Ministry of Electricity made getting electricity faster by enforcing tighter deadlines on electricity connections.
DB2017	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made exporting and importing easier by streamlining customs clearance processes, advancing the use of a single window and improving infrastructure at the Aqaba customs and port.
DB2017	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made exporting and importing easier by improving and expanding the services offered by the national single window.
DB2017	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made paying taxes less costly by increasing the depreciation rates for some fixed assets.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made enforcing contracts easier by adopting a new code of civil procedure.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia increased the length of the notice period for redundancy dismissals.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta improved access to credit information by launching a new credit registry.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	In Morocco the credit bureau began to provide credit scores.
DB2017	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia strengthened credit reporting by starting to distribute historical credit information and credit information from a telecommunications company.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened minority investor protections by clarifying ownership and control structures and by requiring greater corporate transparency.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar weakened minority investor protections by decreasing the rights of shareholders in major decisions, by diminishing ownership and control structures, by reducing requirements for approval of related-party transactions and their disclosure to the board of directors, and by limiting the liability of interested directors and board of directors in the event of prejudicial related-party transactions.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia strengthened minority investor protections by strengthening ownership and control structures of companies and by increasing corporate transparency requirements.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made registering property easier by streamlining the property registration process.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made registering property easier by increasing the transparency at its land registry.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made registering property more complex by requiring a security clearance prior to transferring the property.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made starting a business more difficult by increasing the time for company registration and more costly by increasing fees for post-registration procedures.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made starting a business easier by reducing the time to notarize a company's article of association.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business easier by abolishing the paid-in minimum capital requirement for limited liability

DB year	Economy	Reform
		companies.
DB2017	<i>Oman</i>	Oman made starting a business easier by removing the requirement to pay the minimum capital within three months of incorporation and streamlining the registration of employees.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made the process of starting a business easier by introducing an online platform to reserve the company name and reducing registration fees.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta simplified the process of starting a business by reducing the time needed to register a company.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made trading across borders easier by further developing its single window system and thus reducing border compliance time for importing.
DB2017	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the time for border and documentary compliance by introducing a new online single window/one-stop service that allows for fast electronic clearance of goods.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made paying taxes more difficult by introducing a more complex income tax return.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made paying taxes more costly by replacing the capital gains tax with a property transfer tax, increasing the maximum social security contribution paid by employers.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made dealing with construction permits easier by implementing risk-based inspections and merging the final inspection into the process of obtaining a completion certificate.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates reduced the duration of a single fixed-term contract from 48 to 24 month.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates reduced the time required to obtain a new electricity connection by implementing a new program with strict deadlines for reviewing applications, carrying out inspections and meter installations. The United Arab Emirates also introduced compensation for power outages.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened minority investor protections by increasing shareholder rights and role in major corporate decisions, clarifying ownership and control structures, and requiring greater corporate transparency.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made registering property easier by increasing the transparency at its land registry.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made it easier to start a business by streamlining name reservation and articles of association notarization and merging registration procedures with the Ministry of Human Resources and General Pensions and Social Security Authority.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt made starting a business easier by merging procedures at the one-stop shop by introducing a follow-up unit in charge of liaising with the tax and labor authority on behalf of the company.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt made trading across borders more difficult by making the process of obtaining and processing documents more complex and by imposing a cap on foreign exchange deposits and withdrawals for imports.
DB2017	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the time required to register by requiring companies to submit the original documents online and in person.
DB2017	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made exporting and importing easier by introducing customs e-links and electronic exchange of information among various agencies.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made dealing with construction permits indicator faster by reducing the time to obtain a construction permit.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made getting electricity more transparent by publishing electricity tariffs on the websites of the utility and the energy regulator.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made starting a business easier by eliminating the minimum capital requirement for business incorporation.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made paying taxes less costly by decreasing the tax on professional activities rate. The introduction of advanced accounting systems also made paying taxes easier.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt strengthened minority investor

DB year	Economy	Reform
		protections by increasing shareholder rights and role in major corporate decisions and by clarifying ownership and control structures.
DB2016	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt strengthened minority investor protections by barring subsidiaries from acquiring shares issued by their parent company.
DB2016	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made dealing with construction permits easier by eliminating the legal requirement to provide a certified copy of a property title when applying for a building permit.
DB2016	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made starting a business easier by eliminating the requirement to obtain managers' criminal records.
DB2016	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made getting electricity easier by reducing the time needed to provide a connection cost estimate.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made dealing with construction permits easier by streamlining the process for obtaining the civil defense approval.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	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 allowing litigants to file and track motions online.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened minority investor protections by barring a subsidiary from acquiring shares in its parent company and by requiring that a potential acquirer, upon reaching 50% or more of the capital of a company, make a purchase offer to all shareholders.
DB2016	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon made transferring property more complex by increasing the time required for property registration.
DB2016	<i>Malta</i>	The utility in Malta reduced the time required for getting an electricity connection by improving its supervision of trenching works.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	The utility in Morocco reduced the time required for getting

DB year	Economy	Reform
		an electricity connection by providing fee estimates more quickly.
DB2016	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved the regulation of outages by beginning to record data for the annual system average interruption duration index (SAIDI) and system average interruption frequency index (SAIFI).
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made dealing with construction permits more difficult by requiring architects to submit the building permit request online, along with supporting documents, and to follow up with a hard-copy submission. On the other hand, Morocco reduced the time required to obtain an urban certificate.
DB2016	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made dealing with construction permits easier by streamlining the process for obtaining the civil defense permit and for submitting the stamped concrete casting permit to the municipality.
DB2016	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made paying taxes less costly for companies by reducing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made paying taxes easier for companies by improving the electronic platform for filing and paying corporate income tax, VAT and labor taxes. On the other hand, Morocco increased the rate of the social charge paid by employers.
DB2016	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made the transfer of a property more expensive by introducing the new property transfer tax.
DB2016	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made property transfers faster by introducing a new computerized system at the land registry.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made property transfers faster by establishing electronic communication links between different tax authorities.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by eliminating the need to file a declaration of business incorporation with the Ministry of Labor.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	1) Morocco implemented an unemployment insurance scheme. 2) Morocco increased the minimum wage increased from

DB year	Economy	Reform
		12.24 to 12.85 DH/hour as of July 1, 2014, according to decree n° 2.14.343 of June 2014, published in the official bulletin 5292.
DB2016	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the time for border compliance for both exporting and importing by transferring cargo operations from Sultan Qaboos Port to Sohar Port.
DB2016	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar reduced the time for border compliance for importing by reducing the number of days of free storage at the port and thus the time required for port handling.
DB2016	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia reduced border compliance time for both exporting and importing by improving the efficiency of its state-owned port handling company and investing in port infrastructure at the port of Rades.
DB2016	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	The credit registry in West Bank and Gaza began to distribute credit data from retailers and utility companies.
DB2015	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made paying taxes less costly for companies by reducing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2015	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made paying taxes easier for companies by introducing the option to make either 1 or 4 advance payments of corporate income tax.
DB2015	<i>Malta</i>	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.
DB2015	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made trading across borders easier by reducing the number of export documents required.
DB2015	<i>Tunisia</i>	In Tunisia trading across borders became more difficult because of a deterioration in port infrastructure (for example, in loading and unloading equipment) and inadequate terminal space.
DB2015	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	In the Republic of Yemen trading across borders became more difficult as a result of inefficient port operation.
DB2015	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made registering property easier by reducing the registration fee.
DB2015	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made dealing with construction permits less time-

DB year	Economy	Reform
		consuming by streamlining the review process for building permits.
DB2015	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by approving the credit bureau's collection of data on firms.
DB2015	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made getting electricity easier by eliminating the need for customers to obtain an excavation permit for electricity connection works.
DB2015	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made starting a business easier by streamlining the name reservation and company registration procedures.
DB2015	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made trading across borders easier by improving infrastructure at the port of Aqaba.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	In the United Arab Emirates the credit bureau improved access to credit information by starting to exchange credit information with a utility.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	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.
DB2015	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made trading across borders easier by upgrading infrastructure at the port of Algiers.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made transferring property easier by introducing new service centers and a standard contract for property transactions.
DB2015	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the commercial license fee.
DB2015	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	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

DB year	Economy	Reform
		exchange.
DB2014	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt made paying taxes more costly for companies by increasing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made getting electricity easier by eliminating the requirement for site inspections and reducing the time required to provide new connections.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened investor protections by introducing greater disclosure requirements for related-party transactions in the annual report and to the stock exchange and by making it possible to sue directors when such transactions harm the company.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made transferring property easier by increasing the operating hours of the land registry and reducing transfer fees.
DB2014	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait strengthened investor protections by making it possible for minority shareholders to request the appointment of an auditor to review the company's activities.
DB2014	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti strengthened its secured transactions system by adopting a new commercial code, which broadens the range of movable assets that can be used as collateral.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by starting to collect payment information from retailers.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made starting a business more expensive by increasing the cost of the business registration certificate.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain reduced the maximum cumulative duration of fixed-term contracts, made third-party notification mandatory for redundancy dismissals and increased paid annual leave.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made resolving insolvency easier through its new commercial code, which allows an insolvent debtor to file for preventive settlement, legal redress or liquidation and sets out clear rules on the steps and procedures for each of the alternatives available.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made starting a business easier by simplifying the company name search and by eliminating the minimum capital requirement as well as the requirement to publish a notice of commencement of activities.
DB2014	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made dealing with construction permits less costly by significantly reducing the building permit fees.
DB2014	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made paying taxes easier for companies by eliminating certain requirements associated with the corporate income tax return.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made paying taxes easier for companies by increasing the use of the electronic filing and payment system for social security contributions.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made transferring property easier by reducing the time required to register a deed of transfer at the tax authority.
DB2014	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made starting a business less costly by eliminating the paid-in minimum capital requirement.
DB2014	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made starting a business more difficult by increasing the cost of company registration.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by reducing the company registration fees.
DB2014	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza introduced a minimum wage.
DB2014	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	
DB2013	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made starting a business more difficult by requiring company founders to obtain a criminal record clearance to register a new company.
DB2013	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran strengthened investor protections by requiring greater immediate disclosure of related-party transactions.
DB2013	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by eliminating the minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies.
DB2013	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar reduced the time to export and import by introducing a new online portal allowing electronic submission of customs declarations for clearance at the Doha seaport.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made enforcing contracts easier by expanding the computerization of its courts and introducing an electronic filing system.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made getting electricity more expensive by increasing the connection fees.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made starting a business easier by eliminating the requirement for a company to prepare a name board in English and Arabic after having received clearance on the use of office premises.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made paying taxes easier for companies by establishing an online filing and payment system for social security contributions.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	In the United Arab Emirates the Dubai Electricity and Water Authority made getting electricity easier by introducing an electronic "one window, one step" application process allowing customers to submit and track their applications online and reducing the time for processing the applications.
DB2013	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the maximum number of working days per week and increased the paid annual leave applicable for employees with one year of service.
DB2013	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made transferring property more costly by increasing the property transfer fee.
DB2013	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made registering property more costly by increasing property registration fees.
DB2013	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza improved access to credit information by guaranteeing borrowers' right to inspect their personal data.
DB2013	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria improved access to credit information by establishing an online system for data exchange between all banks and microfinance institutions and the central bank's credit registry.
DB2013	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved access to credit information by guaranteeing borrowers' right to inspect their personal data.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made paying taxes easier for companies by introducing online filing and payment systems for social security contributions.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2013	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria improved access to credit information by eliminating the minimum threshold for loans to be included in the database.
DB2012	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria improved its credit information system by guaranteeing by law the right of borrowers to inspect their personal data.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar improved its credit information system by starting to distribute historical data and eliminating the minimum threshold for loans included in the database.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved its credit information system by launching the Bank Credit and Statistical Bureau System, which collects historical information on performing and nonperforming loans for both firms and individuals.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened investor protections by allowing minority shareholders to obtain any nonconfidential corporate document during trial.
DB2012	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates improved its credit information system through a new law allowing the establishment of a federal credit bureau under the supervision of the central bank.
DB2012	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon made getting electricity less costly by reducing the application fees and security deposit for a new connection.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco eased the administrative burden of paying taxes for firms by enhancing electronic filing and payment of the corporate income tax and value added tax.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	Oman enacted a new income tax law that redefined the scope of taxation.
DB2012	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	The Republic of Yemen enacted a new tax law that reduced the general corporate tax rate from 35% to 20% and abolished all tax exemptions except those granted under the investment law for investment projects.
DB2012	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made starting a business easier by merging the requirements to file company documents with the Department for Economic Development, to obtain a trade license and to register with the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made dealing with construction permits more difficult by increasing the time and cost to process building permits.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made dealing with construction permits easier by opening a one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	Yemen made starting a business more difficult due to the suspension of registration services at the one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made starting a business easier by bringing together representatives from the Department of Zakat and Income Tax and the General Organization of Social Insurance at the Unified Center to register new companies with their agencies.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	The one-stop shop in Oman introduced online company registration and sped up the process to register a business from 7 days to 3 days.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business easier by combining commercial registration and registration with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry at the one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made trading across borders faster by introducing X-ray scanners for risk management systems.
DB2012	<i>Iraq</i>	In Iraq starting a business became more expensive because of an increase in the cost to obtain a name reservation certificate and in the cost for lawyers to draft articles of association.
DB2012	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement from 1,000 Jordanian dinars to 1 dinar, of which only half must be deposited before company registration.
DB2012	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made dealing with construction permits costlier by increasing the fees for inspections and the building permit and adding a new inspection in the preconstruction phase.
DB2012	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made trading across borders faster by developing a new container terminal.
DB2011	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made registering property more burdensome by increasing the fees at the Survey and Land Registration Bureau.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2011	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made it easier to trade by building a modern new port, improving the electronic data interchange system and introducing risk-based inspections.
DB2011	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon increased the cost of starting a business.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran eased business start-up by installing a web portal allowing entrepreneurs to search for and reserve a unique company name.
DB2011	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon improved its credit information system by allowing banks online access to the public credit registry's reports.
DB2011	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan improved its credit information system by setting up a regulatory framework for establishing a private credit bureau as well as lowering the threshold for loans to be reported to the public credit registry.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The establishment of a new private credit bureau improved access to credit information.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made enforcing contracts easier and faster by introducing electronic filing of some documents, text message notification and an electronic case management system.
DB2011	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan abolished certain taxes and made it possible to file income and sales tax returns electronically.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria eliminated the severance payment obligation but increased the notice period applicable in case of redundancy dismissals. Implemented a 100% pay premium for weekly holiday work and decreased the total term limit of fixed-term contracts.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made dealing with construction permits easier for the second year in a row by introducing a new, streamlined process.
DB2011	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business more difficult by adding a procedure to register for taxes and obtain a company seal.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria eased business start-up by reducing the minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies by two-thirds. It also decentralized approval of the company memorandum.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2011	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made starting a business more difficult by increasing the lawyers' fees that must be paid for incorporation.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia speeded up the insolvency process by providing earlier access to amicable settlements and putting time limits on the settlements to encourage creditors to participate.
DB2011	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates enhanced access to credit by setting up a legal framework for the operation of the private credit bureau and requiring that financial institutions share credit information.
DB2011	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates streamlined document preparation and reduced the time to trade with the launch of Dubai Customs' comprehensive new customs system, Mirsal 2.
DB2011	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait increased the number of days of paid annual leave and increased the notice period applicable in case of redundancy dismissals.
DB2011	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia introduced the use of electronic systems for payment of corporate income tax and value added tax.
DB2011	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	More efficient processes at Palestinian customs made trading easier in the West Bank.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia reduced the time to import by launching a new container terminal at the Jeddah Islamic Port.
DB2011	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia upgraded its electronic data interchange system for imports and exports, speeding up the assembly of import documents.
DB2011	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened investor protections by requiring greater disclosure in companies' annual reports.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria enhanced access to credit by eliminating the minimum threshold for loans included in the database, which expanded the coverage of individuals and firms to 2.8% of the adult population.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	An amendment to Saudi Arabia's commercial lien law enhanced access to credit by making secured lending more flexible and allowing out-of-court enforcement in case of default.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2011	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt reduced the cost to start a business.
DB2011	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt made trading easier by introducing an electronic system for submitting export and import documents.

Note: For information on reforms in earlier years (back to DB2005), see the *Doing Business* reports for these years, available at <http://www.doingbusiness.org>.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

GETTING ELECTRICITY

Access to reliable and affordable electricity is vital for businesses. To counter weak electricity supply, many firms in developing economies have to rely on self-supply, often at a prohibitively high cost. Whether electricity is reliably available or not, the first step for a customer is always to gain access by obtaining a connection.

What do the indicators cover?

Doing Business records all procedures required for a local business to obtain a permanent electricity connection and supply for a standardized warehouse, as well as the time and cost to complete them. These procedures include applications and contracts with electricity utilities, clearances from other agencies and the external and final connection works. In addition, this year Doing Business adds two new measures: the reliability of supply and transparency of tariffs index (included in the aggregate distance to frontier score and ranking on the ease of doing business) and the price of electricity (omitted from these aggregate measures). The ranking of economies on the ease of getting electricity is determined by sorting their distance to frontier scores for getting electricity. These scores are the simple average of the distance to frontier scores for each of the component indicators. To make the data comparable across economies, several assumptions are used.

Assumptions about the warehouse

The warehouse:

- Is owned by a local entrepreneur.
- Is located in the economy's largest business city. For 11 economies the data are also collected for the second largest business city.
- Is located in an area where similar warehouses are typically located. In this area a new electricity connection is not eligible for a special investment promotion regime (offering special subsidization or faster service, for example).
- It is located in an area with no physical constraints. For example, the property is not near a railway.
- Is a new construction and is being connected to electricity for the first time.

WHAT THE GETTING ELECTRICITY

INDICATORS MEASURE

Procedures to obtain an electricity connection (number)

- Submitting all relevant documents and obtaining all necessary clearances and permits
- Completing all required notifications and receiving all necessary inspections
- Obtaining external installation works and possibly purchasing material for these works
- Concluding any necessary supply contract and obtaining final supply

Time required to complete each procedure (calendar days)

- Is at least 1 calendar day
- Each procedure starts on a separate day
- Does not include time spent gathering information
- Reflects the time spent in practice, with little follow-up and no prior contact with officials

Cost required to complete each procedure (% of income per capita)

- Official costs only, no bribes
- Excludes value added tax

The reliability of supply and transparency of tariffs index

- Sum of the scores of six component indices:
 - Duration and frequency of outages
 - Tools to monitor power outages
 - Tools to restore power supply
 - Regulatory monitoring of utilities' performance
 - Financial deterrents aimed at limiting outages
 - Transparency and accessibility of tariffs

Price of electricity (cents per kilowatt-hour)*

Price based on monthly bill for commercial warehouse in case study

**Price of electricity is not included in the calculation of distance to frontier nor ease of doing business ranking*

The warehouse (*continued*):

- Has two stories, both above ground, with a total surface area of approximately 1,300.6 square meters (14,000 square feet). The plot of land on which it is built is 929 square meters (10,000 square feet).
- Is used for storage of goods.

Assumptions about the electricity connection

The electricity connection:

- Is a permanent one.
- Is a three-phase, four-wire Y connection with a subscribed capacity of 140-kilo-volt-ampere (kVA) with a power factor of 1, when 1 kVA = 1 kilowatt (kW)
- Has a length of 150 meters. The connection is to either the low- or medium-voltage distribution network and is either overhead or underground, whichever is more common in the area where the warehouse is located. Requires works that involve the crossing of a 10-meter road (such as by excavation or overhead lines) but are all carried out on public land. There is no crossing of other owners' private property because the warehouse has access to a road.
- Includes only a negligible length in the customer's private domain.
- Does not require work to install the internal wiring of the warehouse. This has already been completed up to and including the customer's service panel or switchboard and the meter base.

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Assumptions about the monthly consumption

- It is assumed that the warehouse operates 30 days a month from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (8 hours a day), with equipment utilized at 80% of capacity on average and that there are no electricity cuts (assumed for simplicity reasons).
- The monthly energy consumption is 26,880 kilowatt-hours (kWh); hourly consumption is 112 kWh.
- If multiple electricity suppliers exist, the warehouse is served by the cheapest supplier.
- Tariffs effective in March of the current year are used for calculation of the price of electricity for the warehouse. Although March has 31 days, for calculation purposes only 30 days are used.

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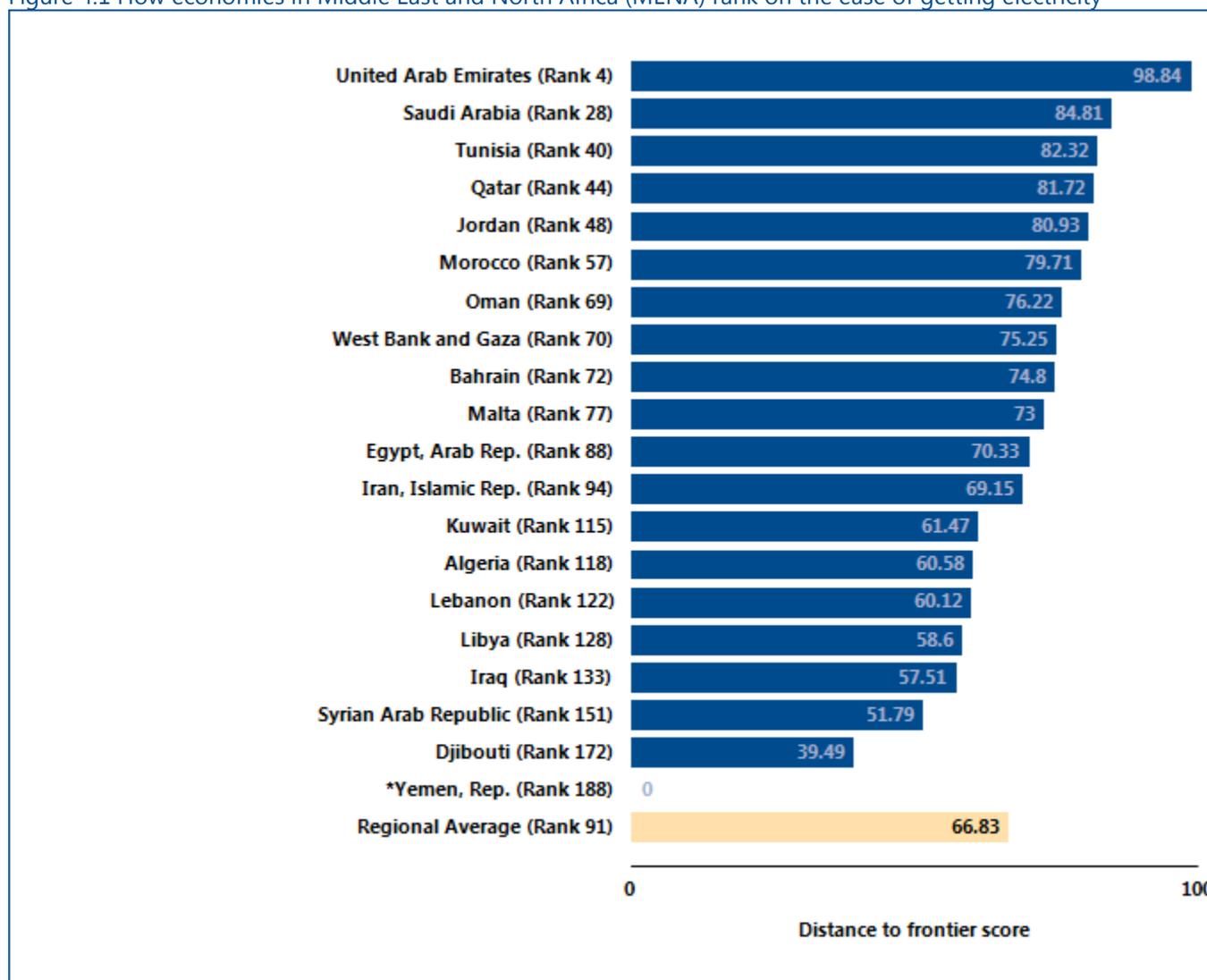
GETTING ELECTRICITY

Where do the region’s economies stand today?

How easy is it for entrepreneurs in economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) to connect a warehouse to electricity? The global rankings of these economies on the ease of getting electricity suggest an answer (figure

4.1). The average ranking of the region and comparator regions provide a useful benchmark.

Figure 4.1 How economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) rank on the ease of getting electricity



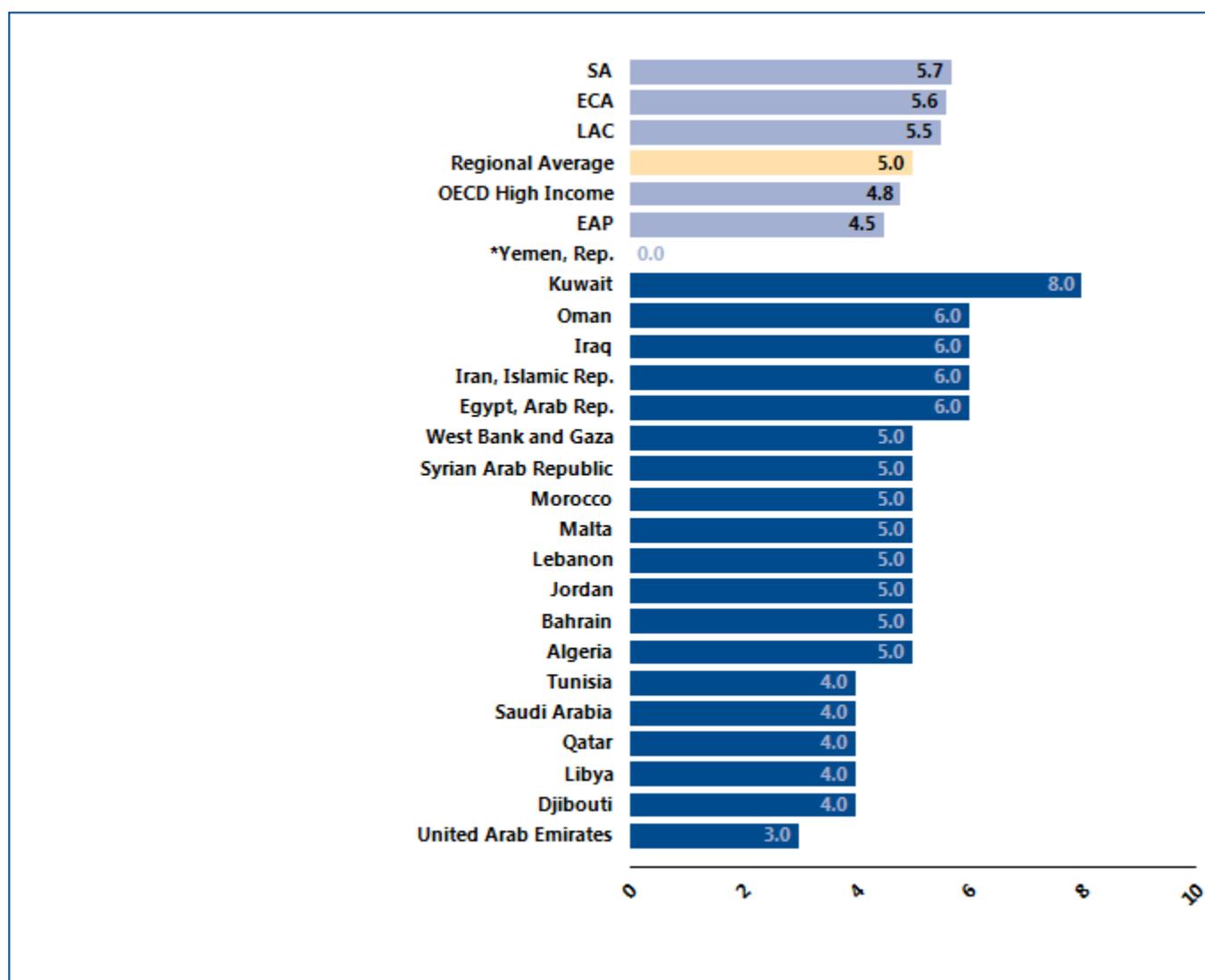
Source: Doing Business database.

GETTING ELECTRICITY

The indicators underlying the rankings may be more revealing. Data collected by *Doing Business* show what it takes to get a new electricity connection in each economy in the region: the number of procedures, the

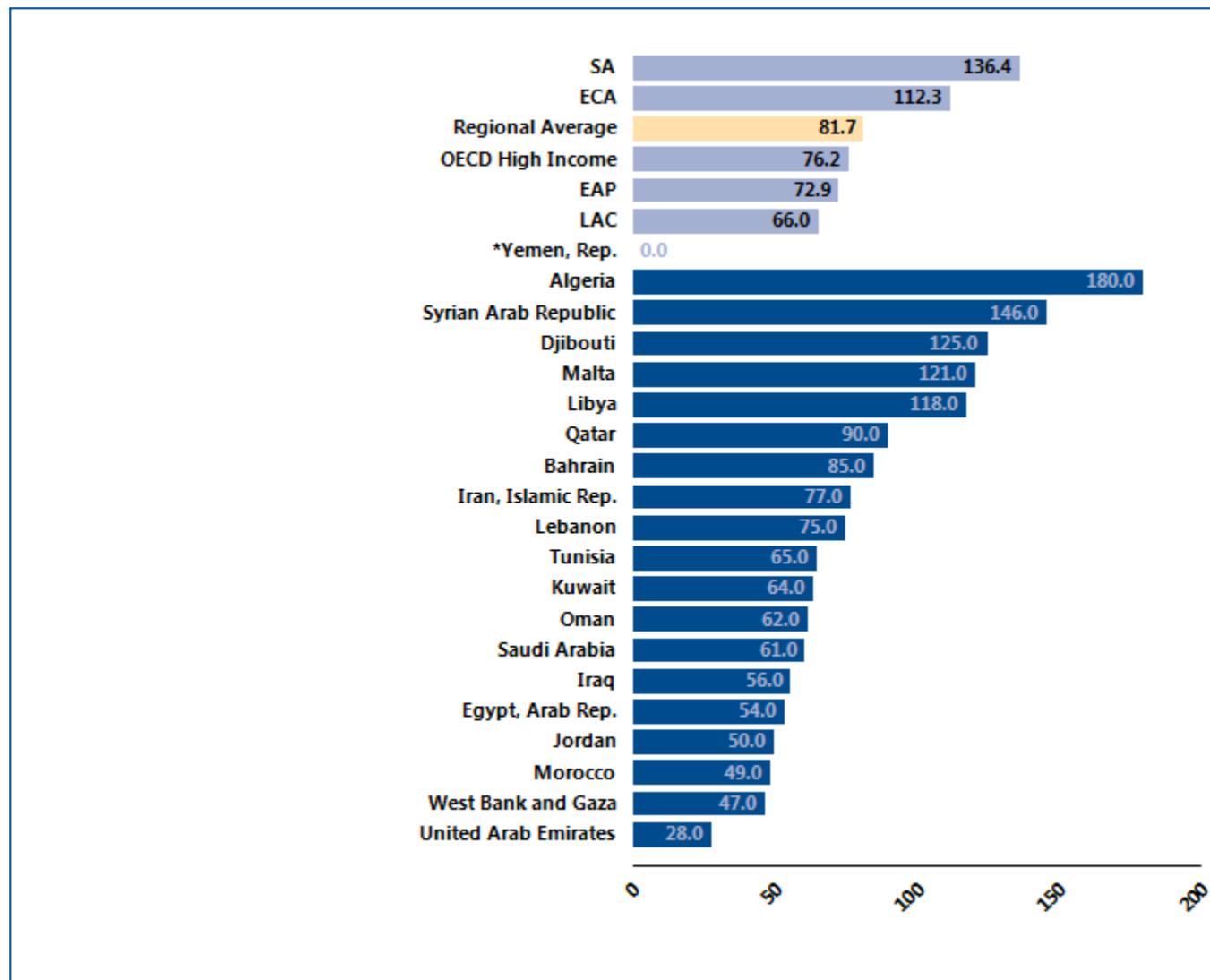
time and the cost (figure 4.2). Comparing these indicators across the region and with averages both for the region and for comparator regions can provide useful insights.

Figure 4.2 What it takes to get an electricity connection in economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA)
Procedures (number)



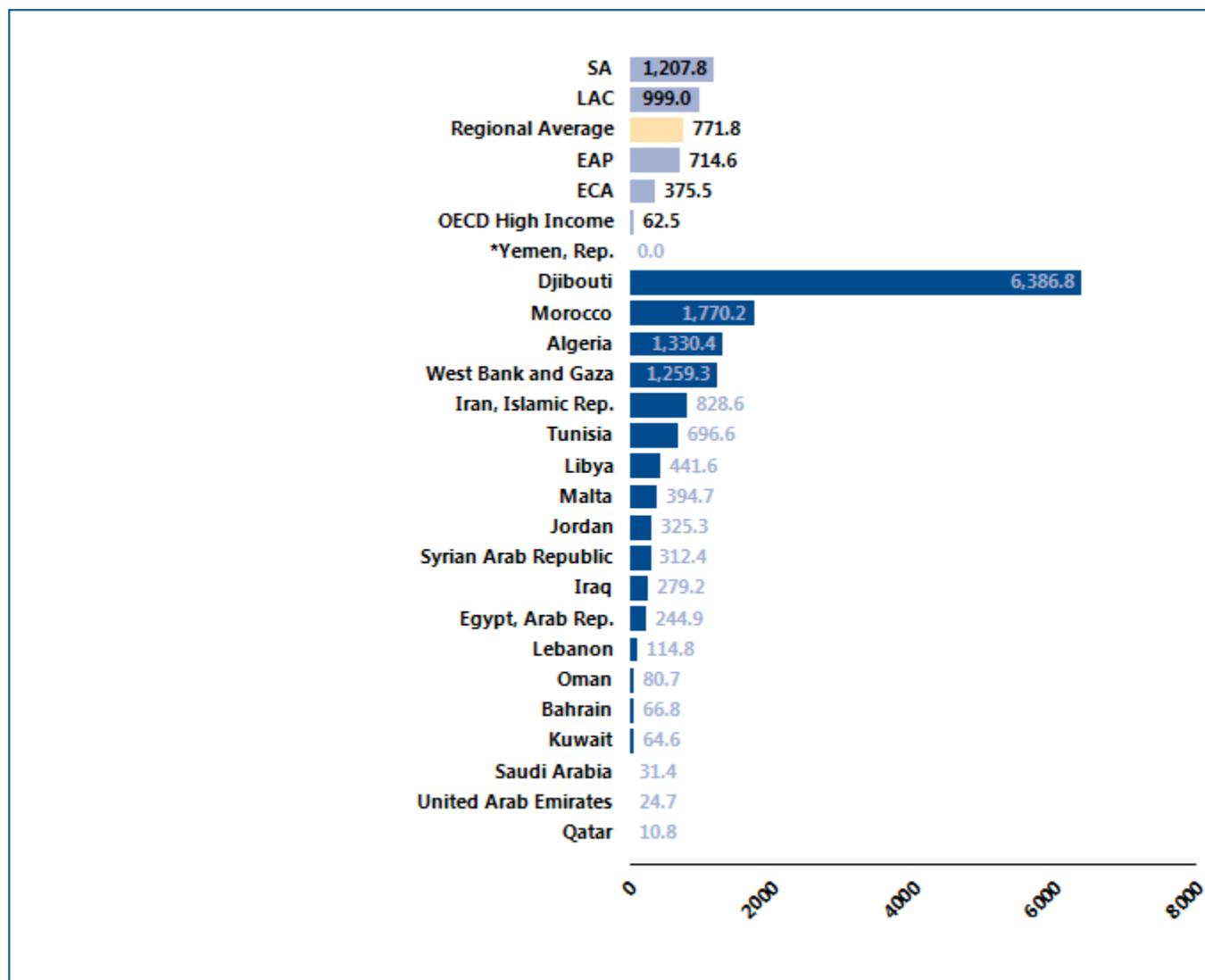
GETTING ELECTRICITY

Time (days)



GETTING ELECTRICITY

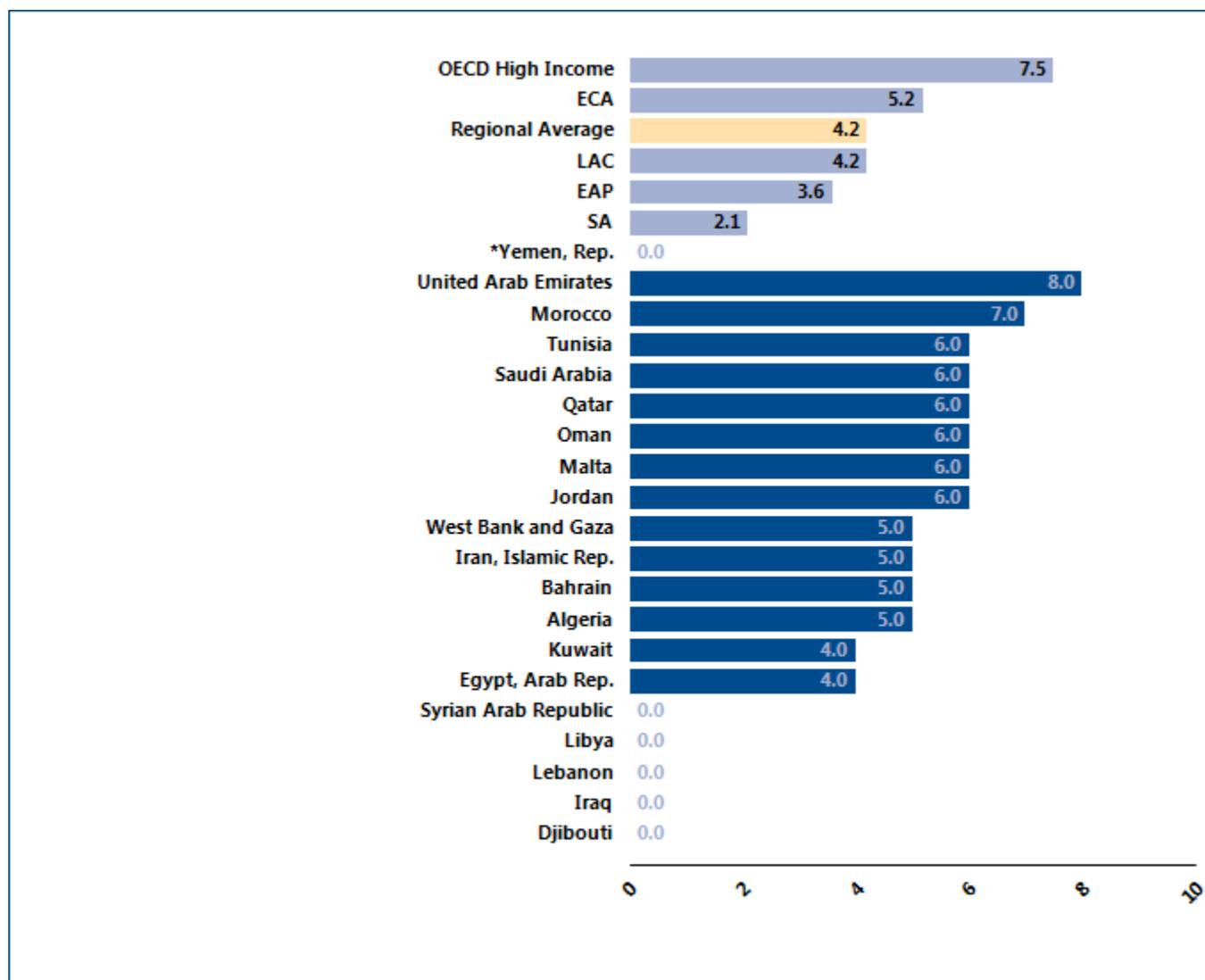
Cost (% of income per capita)



Source: Doing Business database.

GETTING ELECTRICITY

Reliability of supply and transparency of tariff index (0-8)



Source: *Doing Business* database.

Note: The index ranges from 0 to 8, with higher values indicating greater reliability of electricity supply and greater transparency of tariffs.

GETTING ELECTRICITY

What are the changes over time?

Obtaining an electricity connection is essential to enable a business to conduct its most basic operations. In many economies the connection process is complicated by the multiple laws and regulations involved—covering service quality, general safety, technical standards, procurement practices and internal wiring installations. In an effort to

ensure safety in the connection process while keeping connection costs reasonable, governments around the world have worked to consolidate requirements for obtaining an electricity connection. What reforms in getting electricity has *Doing Business* recorded in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) (table 4.1)?

Table 4.1 How have economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) made getting electricity easier—or not? By *Doing Business* report year DB2011 to DB2017

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by guaranteeing by law borrowers' right to inspect their own data.
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made exporting easier by improving infrastructure and streamlining procedures at the King Fahad Causeway.
DB2017	<i>Iraq</i>	Iraq made dealing with construction permits easier by allowing the simultaneous processing of utility clearances and building permit applications.
DB2017	<i>Iraq</i>	The Ministry of Electricity made getting electricity faster by enforcing tighter deadlines on electricity connections.
DB2017	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made exporting and importing easier by streamlining customs clearance processes, advancing the use of a single window and improving infrastructure at the Aqaba customs and port.
DB2017	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made exporting and importing easier by improving and expanding the services offered by the national single window.
DB2017	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made paying taxes less costly by increasing the depreciation rates for some fixed assets.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made enforcing contracts easier by adopting a new code of civil procedure.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia increased the length of the notice period for redundancy dismissals.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta improved access to credit information by launching a new credit registry.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	In Morocco the credit bureau began to provide credit scores.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia strengthened credit reporting by starting to distribute historical credit information and credit information from a telecommunications company.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened minority investor protections by clarifying ownership and control structures and by requiring greater corporate transparency.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar weakened minority investor protections by decreasing the rights of shareholders in major decisions, by diminishing ownership and control structures, by reducing requirements for approval of related-party transactions and their disclosure to the board of directors, and by limiting the liability of interested directors and board of directors in the event of prejudicial related-party transactions.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia strengthened minority investor protections by strengthening ownership and control structures of companies and by increasing corporate transparency requirements.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made registering property easier by streamlining the property registration process.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made registering property easier by increasing the transparency at its land registry.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made registering property more complex by requiring a security clearance prior to transferring the property.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made starting a business more difficult by increasing the time for company registration and more costly by increasing fees for post-registration procedures.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made starting a business easier by reducing the time to notarize a company's article of association.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business easier by abolishing the paid-in minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies.
DB2017	<i>Oman</i>	Oman made starting a business easier by removing the requirement to pay the minimum capital within three months of incorporation and streamlining the registration of employees.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made the process of starting a business easier by introducing an online platform to reserve the company name and reducing registration fees.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta simplified the process of starting a business by reducing the time needed to register a company.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made trading across borders easier by further developing its single window system and thus reducing border compliance time for importing.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the time for border and documentary compliance by introducing a new online single window/one-stop service that allows for fast electronic clearance of goods.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made paying taxes more difficult by introducing a more complex income tax return.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made paying taxes more costly by replacing the capital gains tax with a property transfer tax, increasing the maximum social security contribution paid by employers.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made dealing with construction permits easier by implementing risk-based inspections and merging the final inspection into the process of obtaining a completion certificate.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates reduced the duration of a single fixed-term contract from 48 to 24 month.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates reduced the time required to obtain a new electricity connection by implementing a new program with strict deadlines for reviewing applications, carrying out inspections and meter installations. The United Arab Emirates also introduced compensation for power outages.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened minority investor protections by increasing shareholder rights and role in major corporate decisions, clarifying ownership and control structures, and requiring greater corporate transparency.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made registering property easier by increasing the transparency at its land registry.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made it easier to start a business by streamlining name reservation and articles of association notarization and merging registration procedures with the Ministry of Human Resources and General Pensions and Social Security Authority.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt made starting a business easier by merging procedures at the one-stop shop by introducing a follow-up unit in charge of liaising with the tax and labor authority on behalf of the company.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt made trading across borders more difficult by making the process of obtaining and processing documents more complex and by imposing a cap on foreign exchange deposits and withdrawals for imports.
DB2017	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the time required to register by requiring companies to submit the original documents online and in person.
DB2017	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made exporting and importing easier by introducing customs e-links and electronic exchange of information

DB year	Economy	Reform
		among various agencies.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made dealing with construction permits indicator faster by reducing the time to obtain a construction permit.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made getting electricity more transparent by publishing electricity tariffs on the websites of the utility and the energy regulator.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made starting a business easier by eliminating the minimum capital requirement for business incorporation.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made paying taxes less costly by decreasing the tax on professional activities rate. The introduction of advanced accounting systems also made paying taxes easier.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt strengthened minority investor protections by increasing shareholder rights and role in major corporate decisions and by clarifying ownership and control structures.
DB2016	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt strengthened minority investor protections by barring subsidiaries from acquiring shares issued by their parent company.
DB2016	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made dealing with construction permits easier by eliminating the legal requirement to provide a certified copy of a property title when applying for a building permit.
DB2016	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made starting a business easier by eliminating the requirement to obtain managers' criminal records.
DB2016	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made getting electricity easier by reducing the time needed to provide a connection cost estimate.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made dealing with construction permits easier by streamlining the process for obtaining the civil defense approval.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	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 allowing litigants to file and track motions online.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened minority investor protections by barring a subsidiary from acquiring shares in its parent company and by requiring that a potential acquirer, upon reaching 50% or more of the capital of a company, make a purchase offer to all shareholders.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2016	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon made transferring property more complex by increasing the time required for property registration.
DB2016	<i>Malta</i>	The utility in Malta reduced the time required for getting an electricity connection by improving its supervision of trenching works.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	The utility in Morocco reduced the time required for getting an electricity connection by providing fee estimates more quickly.
DB2016	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved the regulation of outages by beginning to record data for the annual system average interruption duration index (SAIDI) and system average interruption frequency index (SAIFI).
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made dealing with construction permits more difficult by requiring architects to submit the building permit request online, along with supporting documents, and to follow up with a hard-copy submission. On the other hand, Morocco reduced the time required to obtain an urban certificate.
DB2016	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made dealing with construction permits easier by streamlining the process for obtaining the civil defense permit and for submitting the stamped concrete casting permit to the municipality.
DB2016	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made paying taxes less costly for companies by reducing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made paying taxes easier for companies by improving the electronic platform for filing and paying corporate income tax, VAT and labor taxes. On the other hand, Morocco increased the rate of the social charge paid by employers.
DB2016	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made the transfer of a property more expensive by introducing the new property transfer tax.
DB2016	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made property transfers faster by introducing a new computerized system at the land registry.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made property transfers faster by establishing electronic communication links between different tax authorities.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by eliminating the need to file a declaration of business incorporation with the Ministry of Labor.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	1) Morocco implemented an unemployment insurance scheme. 2) Morocco increased the minimum wage increased from 12.24 to 12.85 DH/hour as of July 1, 2014, according to

DB year	Economy	Reform
		decree n° 2.14.343 of June 2014, published in the official bulletin 5292.
DB2016	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the time for border compliance for both exporting and importing by transferring cargo operations from Sultan Qaboos Port to Sohar Port.
DB2016	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar reduced the time for border compliance for importing by reducing the number of days of free storage at the port and thus the time required for port handling.
DB2016	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia reduced border compliance time for both exporting and importing by improving the efficiency of its state-owned port handling company and investing in port infrastructure at the port of Rades.
DB2016	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	The credit registry in West Bank and Gaza began to distribute credit data from retailers and utility companies.
DB2015	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made paying taxes less costly for companies by reducing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2015	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made paying taxes easier for companies by introducing the option to make either 1 or 4 advance payments of corporate income tax.
DB2015	<i>Malta</i>	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.
DB2015	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made trading across borders easier by reducing the number of export documents required.
DB2015	<i>Tunisia</i>	In Tunisia trading across borders became more difficult because of a deterioration in port infrastructure (for example, in loading and unloading equipment) and inadequate terminal space.
DB2015	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	In the Republic of Yemen trading across borders became more difficult as a result of inefficient port operation.
DB2015	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made registering property easier by reducing the registration fee.
DB2015	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made dealing with construction permits less time-consuming by streamlining the review process for building permits.
DB2015	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by approving the credit bureau's collection of data on firms.
DB2015	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made getting electricity easier by eliminating the need for customers to obtain an excavation permit for electricity connection works.
DB2015	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made starting a business easier

DB year	Economy	Reform
		by streamlining the name reservation and company registration procedures.
DB2015	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made trading across borders easier by improving infrastructure at the port of Aqaba.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	In the United Arab Emirates the credit bureau improved access to credit information by starting to exchange credit information with a utility.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	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.
DB2015	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made trading across borders easier by upgrading infrastructure at the port of Algiers.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made transferring property easier by introducing new service centers and a standard contract for property transactions.
DB2015	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the commercial license fee.
DB2015	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	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.
DB2014	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt made paying taxes more costly for companies by increasing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made getting electricity easier by eliminating the requirement for site inspections and reducing the time required to provide new connections.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened investor protections by introducing greater disclosure requirements for related-party transactions in the annual report and to the stock exchange and by making it possible to sue directors when such transactions harm the company.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made transferring property easier by increasing the operating hours of the land registry and reducing transfer fees.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2014	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait strengthened investor protections by making it possible for minority shareholders to request the appointment of an auditor to review the company's activities.
DB2014	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti strengthened its secured transactions system by adopting a new commercial code, which broadens the range of movable assets that can be used as collateral.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by starting to collect payment information from retailers.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made starting a business more expensive by increasing the cost of the business registration certificate.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain reduced the maximum cumulative duration of fixed-term contracts, made third-party notification mandatory for redundancy dismissals and increased paid annual leave.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made resolving insolvency easier through its new commercial code, which allows an insolvent debtor to file for preventive settlement, legal redress or liquidation and sets out clear rules on the steps and procedures for each of the alternatives available.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made starting a business easier by simplifying the company name search and by eliminating the minimum capital requirement as well as the requirement to publish a notice of commencement of activities.
DB2014	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made dealing with construction permits less costly by significantly reducing the building permit fees.
DB2014	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made paying taxes easier for companies by eliminating certain requirements associated with the corporate income tax return.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made paying taxes easier for companies by increasing the use of the electronic filing and payment system for social security contributions.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made transferring property easier by reducing the time required to register a deed of transfer at the tax authority.
DB2014	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made starting a business less costly by eliminating the paid-in minimum capital requirement.
DB2014	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made starting a business more difficult by increasing the cost of company registration.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by reducing the company registration fees.
DB2014	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza introduced a minimum wage.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2014	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	
DB2013	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made starting a business more difficult by requiring company founders to obtain a criminal record clearance to register a new company.
DB2013	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran strengthened investor protections by requiring greater immediate disclosure of related-party transactions.
DB2013	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by eliminating the minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies.
DB2013	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar reduced the time to export and import by introducing a new online portal allowing electronic submission of customs declarations for clearance at the Doha seaport.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made enforcing contracts easier by expanding the computerization of its courts and introducing an electronic filing system.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made getting electricity more expensive by increasing the connection fees.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made starting a business easier by eliminating the requirement for a company to prepare a name board in English and Arabic after having received clearance on the use of office premises.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made paying taxes easier for companies by establishing an online filing and payment system for social security contributions.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	In the United Arab Emirates the Dubai Electricity and Water Authority made getting electricity easier by introducing an electronic "one window, one step" application process allowing customers to submit and track their applications online and reducing the time for processing the applications.
DB2013	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the maximum number of working days per week and increased the paid annual leave applicable for employees with one year of service.
DB2013	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made transferring property more costly by increasing the property transfer fee.
DB2013	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made registering property more costly by increasing property registration fees.
DB2013	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza improved access to credit information by guaranteeing borrowers' right to inspect their personal data.
DB2013	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria improved access to credit information by establishing an online system for data exchange between all banks and microfinance institutions and the central bank's credit

DB year	Economy	Reform
		registry.
DB2013	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved access to credit information by guaranteeing borrowers' right to inspect their personal data.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made paying taxes easier for companies by introducing online filing and payment systems for social security contributions.
DB2013	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria improved access to credit information by eliminating the minimum threshold for loans to be included in the database.
DB2012	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria improved its credit information system by guaranteeing by law the right of borrowers to inspect their personal data.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar improved its credit information system by starting to distribute historical data and eliminating the minimum threshold for loans included in the database.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved its credit information system by launching the Bank Credit and Statistical Bureau System, which collects historical information on performing and nonperforming loans for both firms and individuals.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened investor protections by allowing minority shareholders to obtain any nonconfidential corporate document during trial.
DB2012	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates improved its credit information system through a new law allowing the establishment of a federal credit bureau under the supervision of the central bank.
DB2012	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon made getting electricity less costly by reducing the application fees and security deposit for a new connection.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco eased the administrative burden of paying taxes for firms by enhancing electronic filing and payment of the corporate income tax and value added tax.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	Oman enacted a new income tax law that redefined the scope of taxation.
DB2012	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	The Republic of Yemen enacted a new tax law that reduced the general corporate tax rate from 35% to 20% and abolished all tax exemptions except those granted under the investment law for investment projects.
DB2012	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made starting a business easier by merging the requirements to file company documents with the Department for Economic Development, to obtain a trade license and to register with the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made dealing with construction permits more difficult by increasing the time and cost to process building permits.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made dealing with construction permits easier by opening a one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	Yemen made starting a business more difficult due to the suspension of registration services at the one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made starting a business easier by bringing together representatives from the Department of Zakat and Income Tax and the General Organization of Social Insurance at the Unified Center to register new companies with their agencies.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	The one-stop shop in Oman introduced online company registration and sped up the process to register a business from 7 days to 3 days.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business easier by combining commercial registration and registration with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry at the one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made trading across borders faster by introducing X-ray scanners for risk management systems.
DB2012	<i>Iraq</i>	In Iraq starting a business became more expensive because of an increase in the cost to obtain a name reservation certificate and in the cost for lawyers to draft articles of association.
DB2012	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement from 1,000 Jordanian dinars to 1 dinar, of which only half must be deposited before company registration.
DB2012	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made dealing with construction permits costlier by increasing the fees for inspections and the building permit and adding a new inspection in the preconstruction phase.
DB2012	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made trading across borders faster by developing a new container terminal.
DB2011	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made registering property more burdensome by increasing the fees at the Survey and Land Registration Bureau.
DB2011	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made it easier to trade by building a modern new port, improving the electronic data interchange system and introducing risk-based inspections.
DB2011	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon increased the cost of starting a business.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran eased business start-up by installing a web portal allowing entrepreneurs to search for and reserve a unique company name.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2011	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon improved its credit information system by allowing banks online access to the public credit registry's reports.
DB2011	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan improved its credit information system by setting up a regulatory framework for establishing a private credit bureau as well as lowering the threshold for loans to be reported to the public credit registry.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The establishment of a new private credit bureau improved access to credit information.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made enforcing contracts easier and faster by introducing electronic filing of some documents, text message notification and an electronic case management system.
DB2011	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan abolished certain taxes and made it possible to file income and sales tax returns electronically.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria eliminated the severance payment obligation but increased the notice period applicable in case of redundancy dismissals. Implemented a 100% pay premium for weekly holiday work and decreased the total term limit of fixed-term contracts.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made dealing with construction permits easier for the second year in a row by introducing a new, streamlined process.
DB2011	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business more difficult by adding a procedure to register for taxes and obtain a company seal.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria eased business start-up by reducing the minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies by two-thirds. It also decentralized approval of the company memorandum.
DB2011	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made starting a business more difficult by increasing the lawyers' fees that must be paid for incorporation.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia speeded up the insolvency process by providing earlier access to amicable settlements and putting time limits on the settlements to encourage creditors to participate.
DB2011	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates enhanced access to credit by setting up a legal framework for the operation of the private credit bureau and requiring that financial institutions share credit information.
DB2011	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates streamlined document preparation and reduced the time to trade with the launch of Dubai Customs' comprehensive new customs system, Mirsal 2.
DB2011	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait increased the number of days of paid annual leave and increased the notice period applicable in case of

DB year	Economy	Reform
		redundancy dismissals.
DB2011	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia introduced the use of electronic systems for payment of corporate income tax and value added tax.
DB2011	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	More efficient processes at Palestinian customs made trading easier in the West Bank.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia reduced the time to import by launching a new container terminal at the Jeddah Islamic Port.
DB2011	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia upgraded its electronic data interchange system for imports and exports, speeding up the assembly of import documents.
DB2011	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened investor protections by requiring greater disclosure in companies' annual reports.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria enhanced access to credit by eliminating the minimum threshold for loans included in the database, which expanded the coverage of individuals and firms to 2.8% of the adult population.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	An amendment to Saudi Arabia's commercial lien law enhanced access to credit by making secured lending more flexible and allowing out-of-court enforcement in case of default.
DB2011	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt reduced the cost to start a business.
DB2011	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt made trading easier by introducing an electronic system for submitting export and import documents.

Source: Doing Business database.

REGISTERING PROPERTY

Ensuring formal property rights is fundamental. Effective administration of land is part of that. If formal property transfer is too costly or complicated, formal titles might go informal again. And where property is informal or poorly administered, it has little chance of being accepted as collateral for loans—limiting access to finance.

What do the indicators cover?

Doing Business records the full sequence of procedures necessary for a business to purchase property from another business and transfer the property title to the buyer's name. The transaction is considered complete when it is opposable to third parties and when the buyer can use the property, use it as collateral for a bank loan or resell it. In addition, this year *Doing Business* adds a new measure to the set of registering property indicators, an index of the quality of the land administration system in each economy. The ranking of economies on the ease of registering property is determined by sorting their distance to frontier scores for registering property. These scores are the simple average of the distance to frontier scores for each of the component indicators. To make the data comparable across economies, several assumptions about the parties to the transaction, the property and the procedures are used.

The parties (buyer and seller):

- Are limited liability companies (or the legal equivalent).¹
- Are located in the periurban area of the economy's largest business city. For 11 economies the data are also collected for the second largest business city
- Are 100% domestically and privately owned
- Have 50 employees each, all of whom are nationals
 - Perform general commercial activities.

WHAT THE REGISTERING PROPERTY INDICATORS MEASURE

Procedures to legally transfer title on immovable property (number)

Preregistration (for example, checking for liens, notarizing sales agreement, paying property transfer taxes)

Registration in the economy's largest business city²

Postregistration (for example, filing title with the municipality)

Time required to complete each procedure (calendar days)

Does not include time spent gathering information

Each procedure starts on a separate day. Procedures that can be fully completed online are recorded as ½ day.

Procedure considered completed once final document is received

No prior contact with officials

Cost required to complete each procedure (% of property value)

Official costs only, no bribes

No value added or capital gains taxes included

Quality of land administration index (0-30)

- Is located in a periurban commercial zone, and no rezoning is required.
- Has no mortgages attached, has been under the same ownership for the past 10 years.
- Consists of land and a building. The land area is 557.4 square meters (6,000 square feet). A two-story warehouse of 929 square meters (10,000 square feet) is located on the land. The warehouse is 10 years old, is in good condition and complies with all safety standards, building codes and other legal requirements. It has no heating system. The property of land and building will be transferred in its entirety

¹ For the 11 economies with a population of more than 100 million, data for a second city have been added.

The property (fully owned by the seller):

- Has a value of 50 times income per capita. The sale price equals the value and entire property will be transferred.
- Is fully owned by the seller
- Is registered in the land registry or cada-stre, or both, and is free of title disputes.
- Will not be subject to renovations or additional building following the purchase.
- Has no trees, natural water sources, natural reserves or historical monuments of any kind.
- Will not be used for special purposes, and no special permits, such as for residential use, industrial plants, waste storage or certain types of agricultural activities, are required.
- Has no occupants, and no other party holds a legal interest in it.
- .

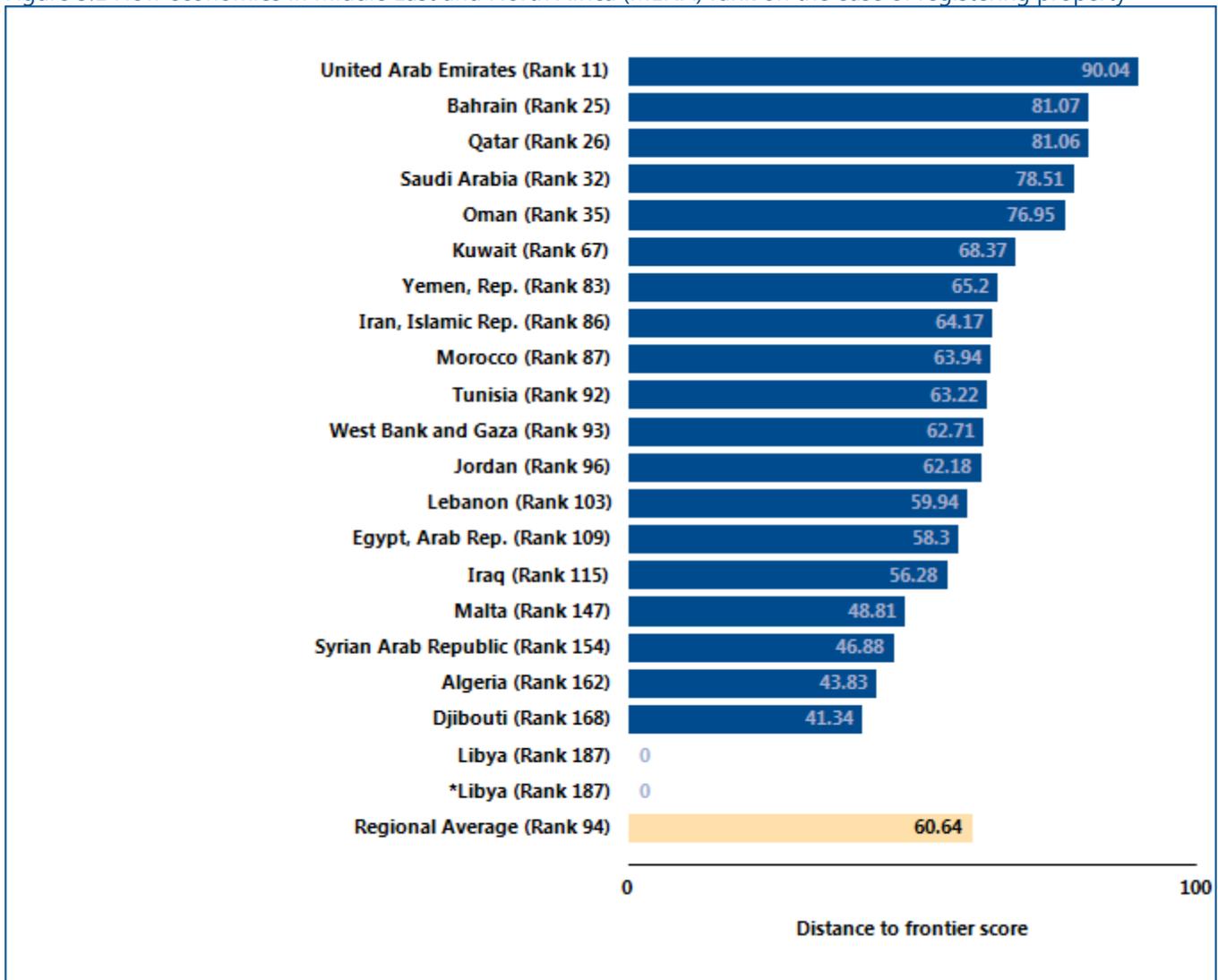
REGISTERING PROPERTY

Where do the region’s economies stand today?

How easy is it for entrepreneurs in economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) to transfer property? The global rankings of these economies on the ease of

registering property suggest an answer (figure 5.1). The average ranking of the region and comparator regions provide a useful benchmark.

Figure 5.1 How economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) rank on the ease of registering property



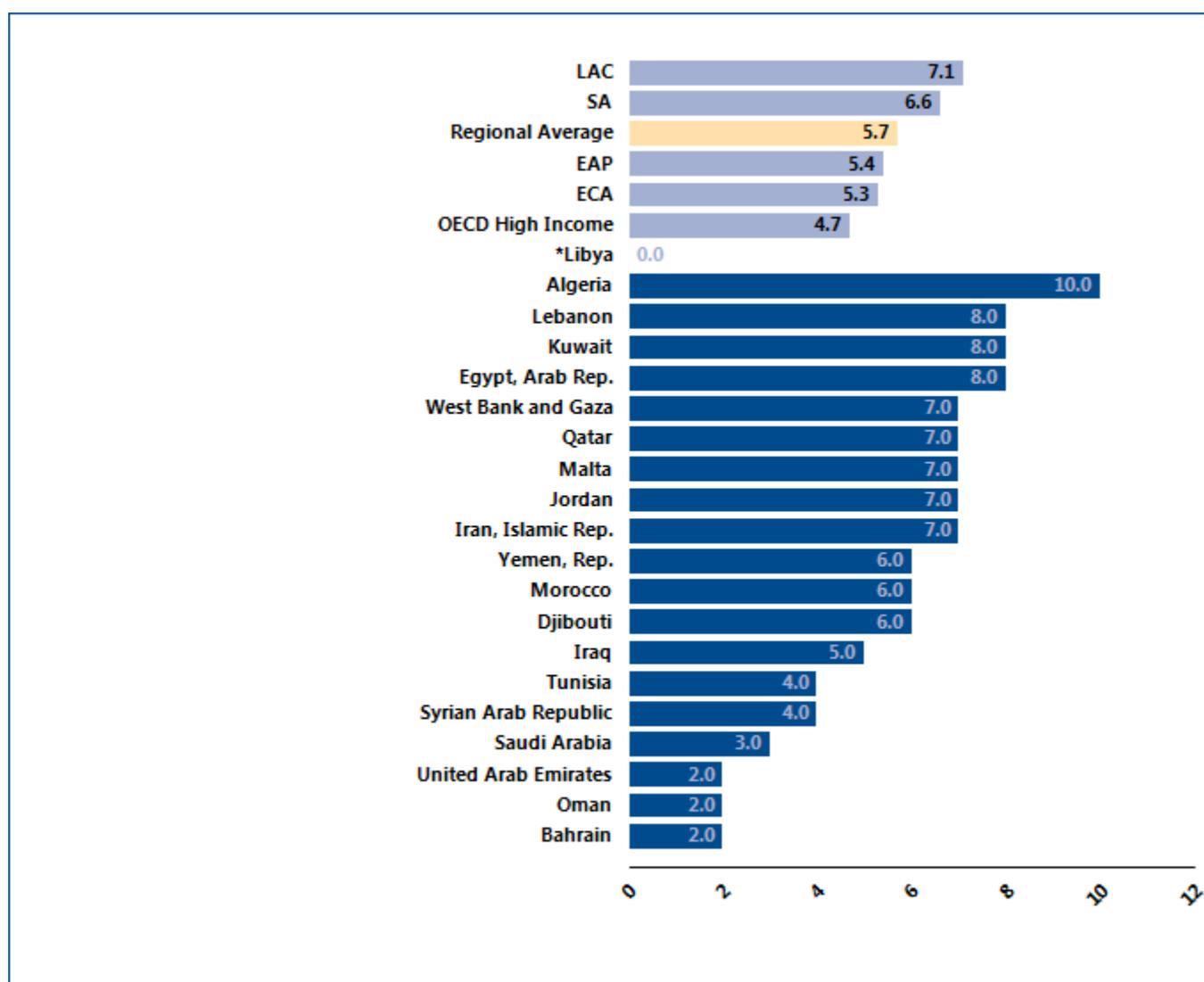
Source: Doing Business database.

REGISTERING PROPERTY

The indicators underlying the rankings may be more revealing. Data collected by *Doing Business* show what it takes to complete a property transfer in each economy in the region: the number of procedures, the

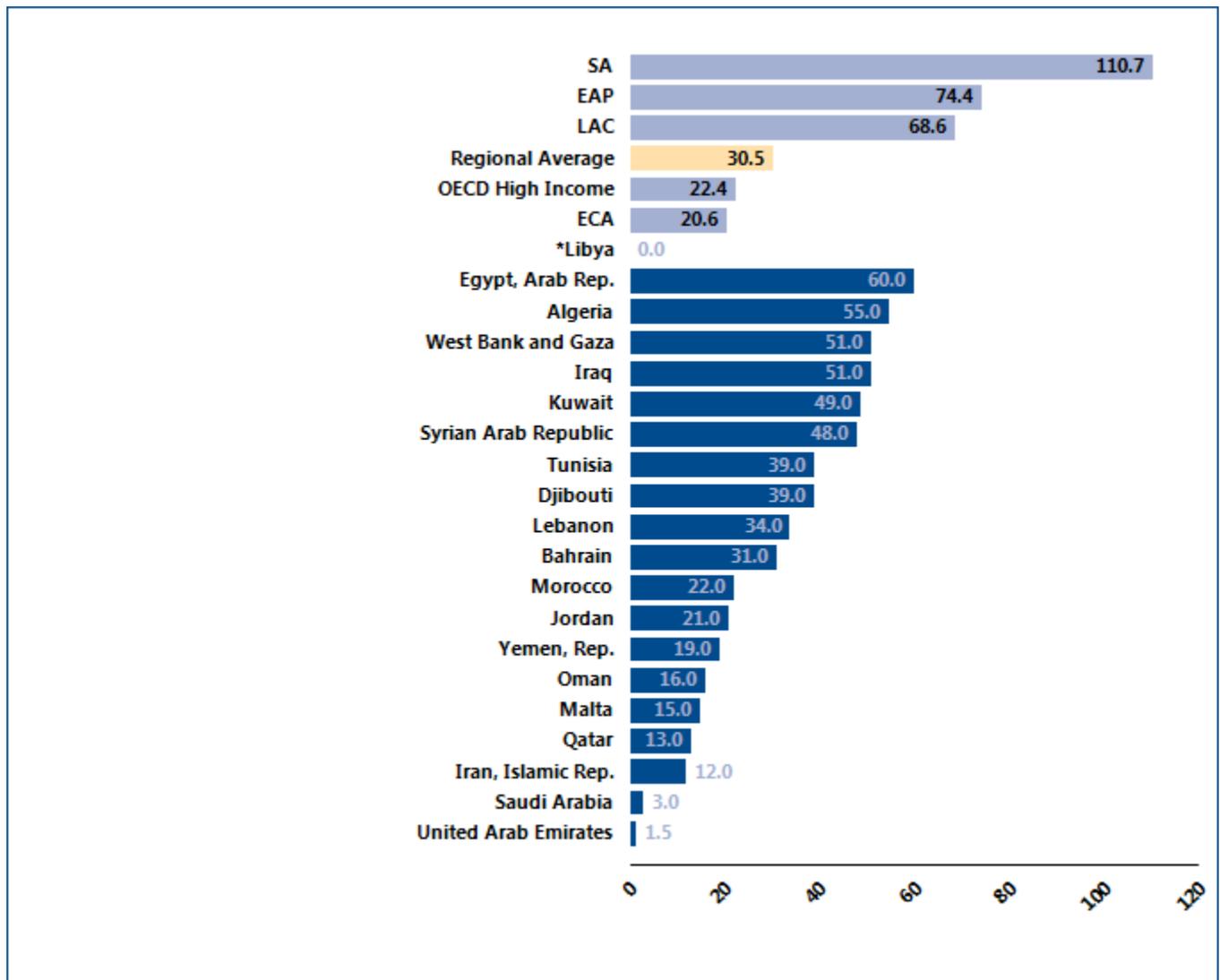
time and the cost (figure 5.2). Comparing these indicators across the region and with averages both for the region and for comparator regions can provide useful insights.

Figure 5.2 What it takes to register property in economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA)
Procedures (number)



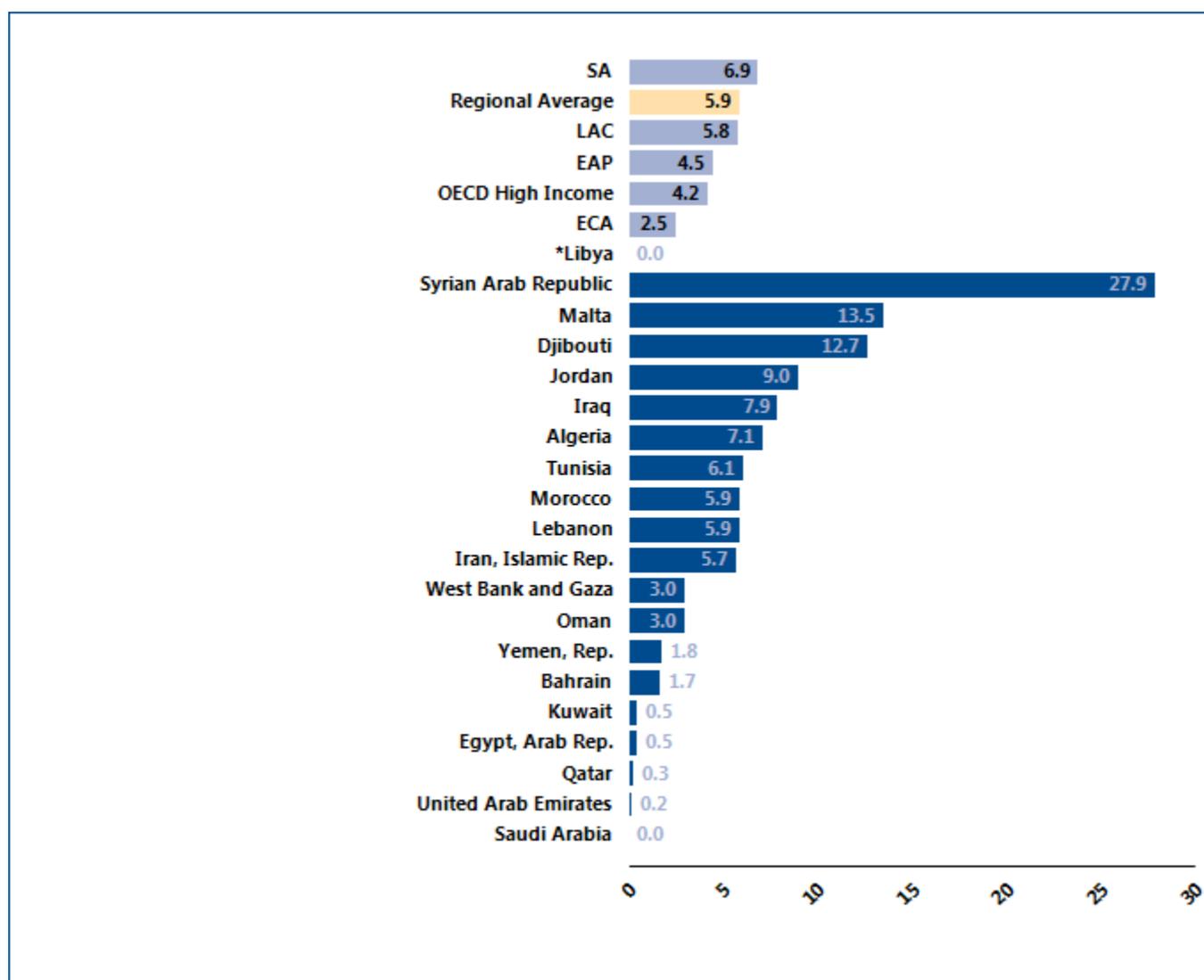
REGISTERING PROPERTY

Time (days)



REGISTERING PROPERTY

Cost (% of property value)

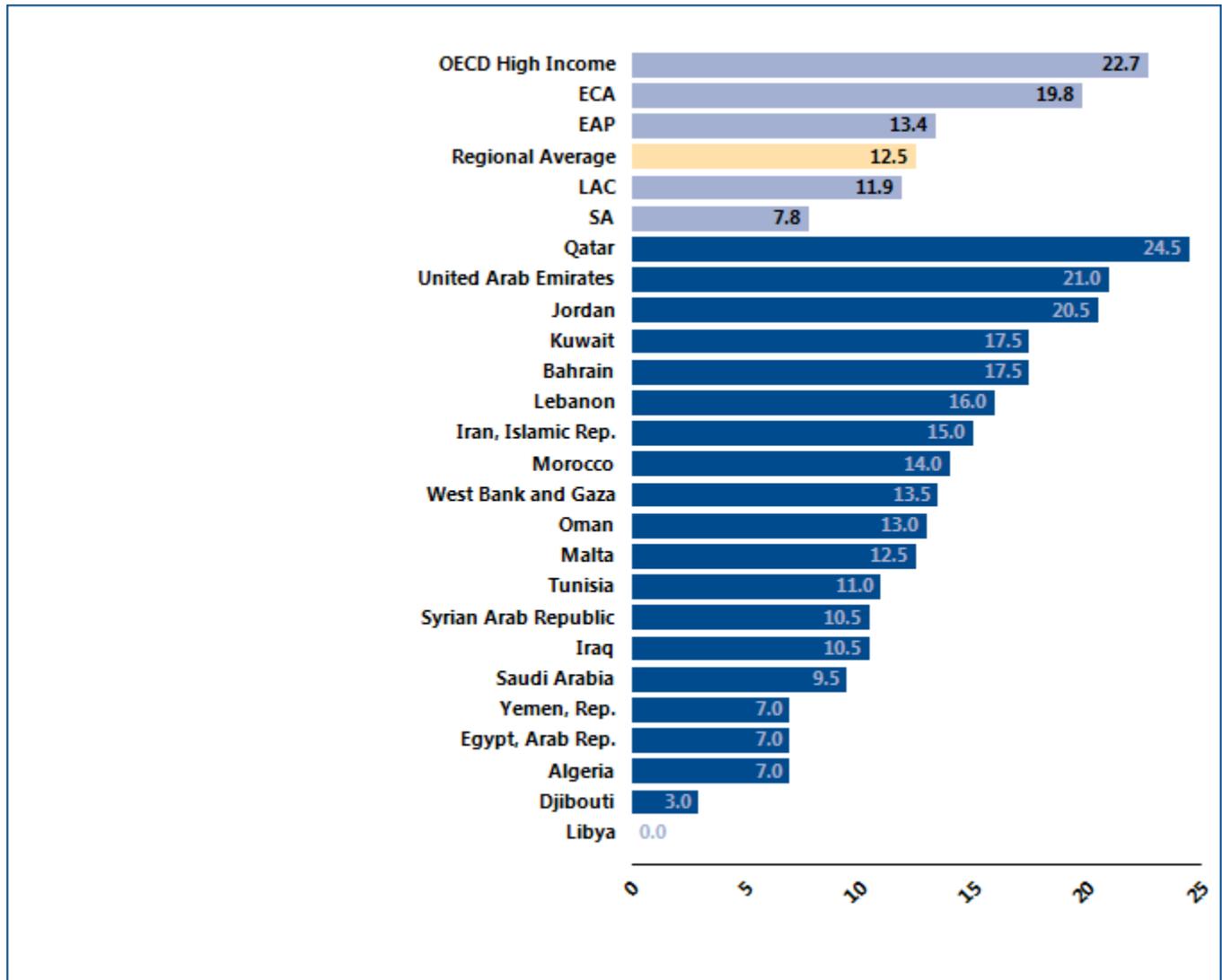


* Indicates a “no practice” mark. If an economy has no laws or regulations covering a specific area—for example, insolvency—it receives a “no practice” mark. Similarly, an economy receives a “no practice” or “not possible” mark if regulation exists but is never used in practice or if a competing regulation prohibits such practice. Either way, a “no practice” mark puts the economy at the bottom of the ranking on the relevant indicator.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

REGISTERING PROPERTY

Quality of Land Administration Index (0-30)



* Indicates a “no practice” mark. If an economy has no laws or regulations covering a specific area—for example, insolvency—it receives a “no practice” mark. Similarly, an economy receives a “no practice” or “not possible” mark if regulation exists but is never used in practice or if a competing regulation prohibits such practice. Either way, a “no practice” mark puts the economy at the bottom of the ranking on the relevant indicator.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

Note: The index ranges from 0 to 30, with higher values indicating better quality of the land administration system.

REGISTERING PROPERTY

What are the changes over time?

Economies worldwide have been making it easier for entrepreneurs to register and transfer property—such as by computerizing land registries, introducing time limits for procedures and setting low fixed fees. Many have cut the time required substantially—enabling

buyers to use or mortgage their property earlier. What property registration reforms has *Doing Business* recorded in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) (table 5.1)?

Table 5.1 How have economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) made registering property easier—or not? By *Doing Business* report year DB2011 to DB2017

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by guaranteeing by law borrowers' right to inspect their own data.
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made exporting easier by improving infrastructure and streamlining procedures at the King Fahad Causeway.
DB2017	<i>Iraq</i>	Iraq made dealing with construction permits easier by allowing the simultaneous processing of utility clearances and building permit applications.
DB2017	<i>Iraq</i>	The Ministry of Electricity made getting electricity faster by enforcing tighter deadlines on electricity connections.
DB2017	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made exporting and importing easier by streamlining customs clearance processes, advancing the use of a single window and improving infrastructure at the Aqaba customs and port.
DB2017	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made exporting and importing easier by improving and expanding the services offered by the national single window.
DB2017	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made paying taxes less costly by increasing the depreciation rates for some fixed assets.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made enforcing contracts easier by adopting a new

DB year	Economy	Reform
		code of civil procedure.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia increased the length of the notice period for redundancy dismissals.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta improved access to credit information by launching a new credit registry.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	In Morocco the credit bureau began to provide credit scores.
DB2017	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia strengthened credit reporting by starting to distribute historical credit information and credit information from a telecommunications company.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened minority investor protections by clarifying ownership and control structures and by requiring greater corporate transparency.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar weakened minority investor protections by decreasing the rights of shareholders in major decisions, by diminishing ownership and control structures, by reducing requirements for approval of related-party transactions and their disclosure to the board of directors, and by limiting the liability of interested directors and board of directors in the event of prejudicial related-party transactions.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia strengthened minority investor protections by strengthening ownership and control structures of companies and by increasing corporate transparency requirements.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made registering property easier by streamlining the property registration process.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made registering property easier by increasing the transparency at its land registry.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made registering property more complex by requiring a security clearance prior to transferring the property.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made starting a business more difficult by increasing the time for company registration and more costly by increasing fees for post-registration procedures.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made starting a business easier by reducing the time to notarize a company's article of association.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business easier by abolishing the paid-in minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies.
DB2017	<i>Oman</i>	Oman made starting a business easier by removing the requirement to pay the minimum capital within three months of incorporation and streamlining the registration of employees.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made the process of starting a business easier by introducing an online platform to reserve the company name and reducing registration fees.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta simplified the process of starting a business by reducing the time needed to register a company.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made trading across borders easier by further developing its single window system and thus reducing border compliance time for importing.
DB2017	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the time for border and documentary compliance by introducing a new online single window/one-stop service that allows for fast electronic clearance of goods.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made paying taxes more difficult by introducing a more complex income tax return.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made paying taxes more costly by replacing the capital gains tax with a property transfer tax, increasing the maximum social security contribution paid by employers.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made dealing with construction permits easier by implementing risk-based inspections and merging the final inspection into the process of obtaining a completion certificate.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates reduced the duration of a single fixed-term contract from 48 to 24 month.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates reduced the time required to obtain a new electricity connection by implementing a new program with strict deadlines for reviewing applications, carrying out inspections and meter installations. The United Arab Emirates also introduced compensation for power outages.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened minority investor protections by increasing shareholder rights and role in major corporate decisions, clarifying ownership and control structures, and requiring greater corporate transparency.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made registering property easier by increasing the transparency at its land registry.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made it easier to start a business by streamlining name reservation and articles of association notarization and merging registration procedures with the Ministry of Human Resources and General Pensions and Social Security Authority.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt made starting a business easier by merging procedures at the one-stop shop by introducing a follow-up unit in charge of liaising with the tax and labor authority on behalf of the company.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt made trading across borders more difficult by making the process of obtaining and processing documents more complex and by imposing a cap on foreign exchange deposits and withdrawals for imports.
DB2017	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the time required to register by requiring companies to submit the original documents online and in person.
DB2017	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made exporting and importing easier by introducing customs e-links and electronic exchange of information among various agencies.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made dealing with construction permits indicator faster by reducing the time to obtain a construction permit.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made getting electricity more transparent by publishing electricity tariffs on the websites of the utility and the energy regulator.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made starting a business easier by eliminating the minimum capital requirement for business incorporation.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made paying taxes less costly by decreasing the tax on professional activities rate. The introduction of advanced accounting systems also made paying taxes easier.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt strengthened minority investor protections by increasing shareholder rights and role in major corporate decisions and by clarifying ownership and control structures.
DB2016	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt strengthened minority investor protections by barring subsidiaries from acquiring shares issued by their parent company.
DB2016	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made dealing with construction permits easier by eliminating the legal requirement to provide a certified copy of a property title when applying for a building permit.
DB2016	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made starting a business easier by eliminating the requirement to obtain managers' criminal records.
DB2016	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made getting electricity easier by reducing the time needed to provide a connection cost estimate.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made dealing with construction permits easier by streamlining the process for obtaining the civil defense approval.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	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 allowing

DB year	Economy	Reform
		litigants to file and track motions online.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened minority investor protections by barring a subsidiary from acquiring shares in its parent company and by requiring that a potential acquirer, upon reaching 50% or more of the capital of a company, make a purchase offer to all shareholders.
DB2016	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon made transferring property more complex by increasing the time required for property registration.
DB2016	<i>Malta</i>	The utility in Malta reduced the time required for getting an electricity connection by improving its supervision of trenching works.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	The utility in Morocco reduced the time required for getting an electricity connection by providing fee estimates more quickly.
DB2016	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved the regulation of outages by beginning to record data for the annual system average interruption duration index (SAIDI) and system average interruption frequency index (SAIFI).
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made dealing with construction permits more difficult by requiring architects to submit the building permit request online, along with supporting documents, and to follow up with a hard-copy submission. On the other hand, Morocco reduced the time required to obtain an urban certificate.
DB2016	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made dealing with construction permits easier by streamlining the process for obtaining the civil defense permit and for submitting the stamped concrete casting permit to the municipality.
DB2016	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made paying taxes less costly for companies by reducing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made paying taxes easier for companies by improving the electronic platform for filing and paying

DB year	Economy	Reform
		corporate income tax, VAT and labor taxes. On the other hand, Morocco increased the rate of the social charge paid by employers.
DB2016	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made the transfer of a property more expensive by introducing the new property transfer tax.
DB2016	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made property transfers faster by introducing a new computerized system at the land registry.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made property transfers faster by establishing electronic communication links between different tax authorities.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by eliminating the need to file a declaration of business incorporation with the Ministry of Labor.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	1) Morocco implemented an unemployment insurance scheme. 2) Morocco increased the minimum wage increased from 12.24 to 12.85 DH/hour as of July 1, 2014, according to decree n° 2.14.343 of June 2014, published in the official bulletin 5292.
DB2016	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the time for border compliance for both exporting and importing by transferring cargo operations from Sultan Qaboos Port to Sohar Port.
DB2016	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar reduced the time for border compliance for importing by reducing the number of days of free storage at the port and thus the time required for port handling.
DB2016	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia reduced border compliance time for both exporting and importing by improving the efficiency of its state-owned port handling company and investing in port infrastructure at the port of Rades.
DB2016	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	The credit registry in West Bank and Gaza began to distribute credit data from retailers and utility companies.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2015	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made paying taxes less costly for companies by reducing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2015	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made paying taxes easier for companies by introducing the option to make either 1 or 4 advance payments of corporate income tax.
DB2015	<i>Malta</i>	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.
DB2015	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made trading across borders easier by reducing the number of export documents required.
DB2015	<i>Tunisia</i>	In Tunisia trading across borders became more difficult because of a deterioration in port infrastructure (for example, in loading and unloading equipment) and inadequate terminal space.
DB2015	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	In the Republic of Yemen trading across borders became more difficult as a result of inefficient port operation.
DB2015	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made registering property easier by reducing the registration fee.
DB2015	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made dealing with construction permits less time-consuming by streamlining the review process for building permits.
DB2015	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by approving the credit bureau's collection of data on firms.
DB2015	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made getting electricity easier by eliminating the need for customers to obtain an excavation permit for electricity connection works.
DB2015	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made starting a business easier by streamlining the name reservation and company registration procedures.
DB2015	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made trading across borders easier by improving

DB year	Economy	Reform
		infrastructure at the port of Aqaba.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	In the United Arab Emirates the credit bureau improved access to credit information by starting to exchange credit information with a utility.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	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.
DB2015	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made trading across borders easier by upgrading infrastructure at the port of Algiers.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made transferring property easier by introducing new service centers and a standard contract for property transactions.
DB2015	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the commercial license fee.
DB2015	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	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.
DB2014	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt made paying taxes more costly for companies by increasing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made getting electricity easier by eliminating the requirement for site inspections and reducing the time required to provide new connections.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened investor protections by introducing greater disclosure requirements for related-party transactions in the annual report and to the stock exchange and by making it possible to sue directors when such transactions harm the company.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made transferring property easier by increasing the operating hours of the land registry and reducing transfer fees.
DB2014	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait strengthened investor protections by making it possible for minority shareholders to request the appointment of an auditor to review the company's activities.
DB2014	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti strengthened its secured transactions system by adopting a new commercial code, which broadens the range of movable assets that can be used as collateral.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by starting to collect payment information from retailers.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made starting a business more expensive by increasing the cost of the business registration certificate.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain reduced the maximum cumulative duration of fixed-term contracts, made third-party notification mandatory for redundancy dismissals and increased paid annual leave.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made resolving insolvency easier through its new commercial code, which allows an insolvent debtor to file for preventive settlement, legal redress or liquidation and sets out clear rules on the steps and procedures for each of the alternatives available.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made starting a business easier by simplifying the company name search and by eliminating the minimum capital requirement as well as the requirement to publish a notice of commencement of activities.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2014	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made dealing with construction permits less costly by significantly reducing the building permit fees.
DB2014	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made paying taxes easier for companies by eliminating certain requirements associated with the corporate income tax return.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made paying taxes easier for companies by increasing the use of the electronic filing and payment system for social security contributions.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made transferring property easier by reducing the time required to register a deed of transfer at the tax authority.
DB2014	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made starting a business less costly by eliminating the paid-in minimum capital requirement.
DB2014	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made starting a business more difficult by increasing the cost of company registration.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by reducing the company registration fees.
DB2014	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza introduced a minimum wage.
DB2014	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	
DB2013	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made starting a business more difficult by requiring company founders to obtain a criminal record clearance to register a new company.
DB2013	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran strengthened investor protections by requiring greater immediate disclosure of related-party transactions.
DB2013	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by eliminating the minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies.
DB2013	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar reduced the time to export and import by introducing a new online portal allowing electronic submission of customs declarations for clearance at the Doha seaport.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made enforcing contracts easier by expanding the computerization of its courts and introducing an electronic filing system.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made getting electricity more expensive by increasing the connection fees.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made starting a business easier by eliminating the requirement for a company to prepare a name board in English and Arabic after having received clearance on the use of office premises.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made paying taxes easier for companies by establishing an online filing and payment system for social security contributions.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	In the United Arab Emirates the Dubai Electricity and Water Authority made getting electricity easier by introducing an electronic "one window, one step" application process allowing customers to submit and track their applications online and reducing the time for processing the applications.
DB2013	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the maximum number of working days per week and increased the paid annual leave applicable for employees with one year of service.
DB2013	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made transferring property more costly by increasing the property transfer fee.
DB2013	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made registering property more costly by increasing property registration fees.
DB2013	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza improved access to credit information by guaranteeing borrowers' right to inspect their personal data.
DB2013	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria improved access to credit information by establishing an online system for data exchange between all banks and microfinance institutions and the central bank's credit registry.
DB2013	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved access to credit information by guaranteeing

DB year	Economy	Reform
		borrowers' right to inspect their personal data.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made paying taxes easier for companies by introducing online filing and payment systems for social security contributions.
DB2013	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria improved access to credit information by eliminating the minimum threshold for loans to be included in the database.
DB2012	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria improved its credit information system by guaranteeing by law the right of borrowers to inspect their personal data.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar improved its credit information system by starting to distribute historical data and eliminating the minimum threshold for loans included in the database.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved its credit information system by launching the Bank Credit and Statistical Bureau System, which collects historical information on performing and nonperforming loans for both firms and individuals.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened investor protections by allowing minority shareholders to obtain any nonconfidential corporate document during trial.
DB2012	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates improved its credit information system through a new law allowing the establishment of a federal credit bureau under the supervision of the central bank.
DB2012	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon made getting electricity less costly by reducing the application fees and security deposit for a new connection.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco eased the administrative burden of paying taxes for firms by enhancing electronic filing and payment of the corporate income tax and value added tax.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	Oman enacted a new income tax law that redefined the scope of taxation.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2012	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	The Republic of Yemen enacted a new tax law that reduced the general corporate tax rate from 35% to 20% and abolished all tax exemptions except those granted under the investment law for investment projects.
DB2012	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made starting a business easier by merging the requirements to file company documents with the Department for Economic Development, to obtain a trade license and to register with the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made dealing with construction permits more difficult by increasing the time and cost to process building permits.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made dealing with construction permits easier by opening a one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	Yemen made starting a business more difficult due to the suspension of registration services at the one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made starting a business easier by bringing together representatives from the Department of Zakat and Income Tax and the General Organization of Social Insurance at the Unified Center to register new companies with their agencies.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	The one-stop shop in Oman introduced online company registration and sped up the process to register a business from 7 days to 3 days.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business easier by combining commercial registration and registration with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry at the one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made trading across borders faster by introducing X-ray scanners for risk management systems.
DB2012	<i>Iraq</i>	In Iraq starting a business became more expensive because of an increase in the cost to obtain a name reservation certificate and in the cost for lawyers to draft articles of association.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2012	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement from 1,000 Jordanian dinars to 1 dinar, of which only half must be deposited before company registration.
DB2012	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made dealing with construction permits costlier by increasing the fees for inspections and the building permit and adding a new inspection in the preconstruction phase.
DB2012	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made trading across borders faster by developing a new container terminal.
DB2011	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made registering property more burdensome by increasing the fees at the Survey and Land Registration Bureau.
DB2011	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made it easier to trade by building a modern new port, improving the electronic data interchange system and introducing risk-based inspections.
DB2011	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon increased the cost of starting a business.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran eased business start-up by installing a web portal allowing entrepreneurs to search for and reserve a unique company name.
DB2011	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon improved its credit information system by allowing banks online access to the public credit registry's reports.
DB2011	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan improved its credit information system by setting up a regulatory framework for establishing a private credit bureau as well as lowering the threshold for loans to be reported to the public credit registry.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The establishment of a new private credit bureau improved access to credit information.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made enforcing contracts easier and faster by introducing electronic filing of some documents, text message notification and an electronic case management system.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2011	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan abolished certain taxes and made it possible to file income and sales tax returns electronically.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria eliminated the severance payment obligation but increased the notice period applicable in case of redundancy dismissals. Implemented a 100% pay premium for weekly holiday work and decreased the total term limit of fixed-term contracts.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made dealing with construction permits easier for the second year in a row by introducing a new, streamlined process.
DB2011	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business more difficult by adding a procedure to register for taxes and obtain a company seal.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria eased business start-up by reducing the minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies by two-thirds. It also decentralized approval of the company memorandum.
DB2011	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made starting a business more difficult by increasing the lawyers' fees that must be paid for incorporation.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia speeded up the insolvency process by providing earlier access to amicable settlements and putting time limits on the settlements to encourage creditors to participate.
DB2011	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates enhanced access to credit by setting up a legal framework for the operation of the private credit bureau and requiring that financial institutions share credit information.
DB2011	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates streamlined document preparation and reduced the time to trade with the launch of Dubai Customs' comprehensive new customs system, Mirsal 2.
DB2011	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait increased the number of days of paid annual leave and increased the notice period applicable in case of redundancy dismissals.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2011	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia introduced the use of electronic systems for payment of corporate income tax and value added tax.
DB2011	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	More efficient processes at Palestinian customs made trading easier in the West Bank.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia reduced the time to import by launching a new container terminal at the Jeddah Islamic Port.
DB2011	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia upgraded its electronic data interchange system for imports and exports, speeding up the assembly of import documents.
DB2011	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened investor protections by requiring greater disclosure in companies' annual reports.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria enhanced access to credit by eliminating the minimum threshold for loans included in the database, which expanded the coverage of individuals and firms to 2.8% of the adult population.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	An amendment to Saudi Arabia's commercial lien law enhanced access to credit by making secured lending more flexible and allowing out-of-court enforcement in case of default.
DB2011	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt reduced the cost to start a business.
DB2011	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt made trading easier by introducing an electronic system for submitting export and import documents.

Note: For information on reforms in earlier years (back to DB2005), see the *Doing Business* reports for these years, available at <http://www.doingbusiness.org>.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

GETTING CREDIT

Two types of frameworks can facilitate access to credit and improve its allocation: credit information systems and borrowers and lenders in collateral and bankruptcy laws. Credit information systems enable lenders' rights to view a potential borrower's financial history (positive or negative)—valuable information to consider when assessing risk. And they permit borrowers to establish a good credit history that will allow easier access to credit. Sound collateral laws enable businesses to use their assets, especially movable property, as security to generate capital—while strong creditors' rights have been associated with higher ratios of private sector credit to GDP.

What do the indicators cover?

Doing Business assesses the sharing of credit information and the legal rights of borrowers and lenders with respect to secured transactions through 2 sets of indicators. The depth of credit information index measures rules and practices affecting the coverage, scope and accessibility of credit information available through a credit registry or a credit bureau. The strength of legal rights index measures whether certain features that facilitate lending exist within the applicable collateral and bankruptcy laws. *Doing Business* uses two case scenarios, Case A and Case B, to determine the scope of the secured transactions system, involving a secured borrower and a secured lender and examining legal restrictions on the use of movable collateral (for more details on each case, see the Data Notes section of the *Doing Business 2017* report). These scenarios assume that the borrower:

- Is a private limited liability company.
- Has its headquarters and only base of operations in the largest business city. For the 11 economies with a population of more than 100 million, data for a second city have been added.

WHAT THE GETTING CREDIT INDICATORS MEASURE

Strength of legal rights index (0–12)

Rights of borrowers and lenders through collateral laws

Protection of secured creditors' rights through bankruptcy laws

Depth of credit information index (0–8)

Scope and accessibility of credit information distributed by credit bureaus and credit registries

Credit bureau coverage (% of adults)

Number of individuals and firms listed in largest credit bureau as percentage of adult population

Credit registry coverage (% of adults)

Number of individuals and firms listed in credit registry as percentage of adult population

- Has up to 50 employees.
- Is 100% domestically owned, as is the lender.
- The ranking of economies on the ease of getting credit is determined by sorting their distance to frontier scores for getting credit. These scores are the distance to frontier score for the strength of legal rights index and the depth of credit information index.

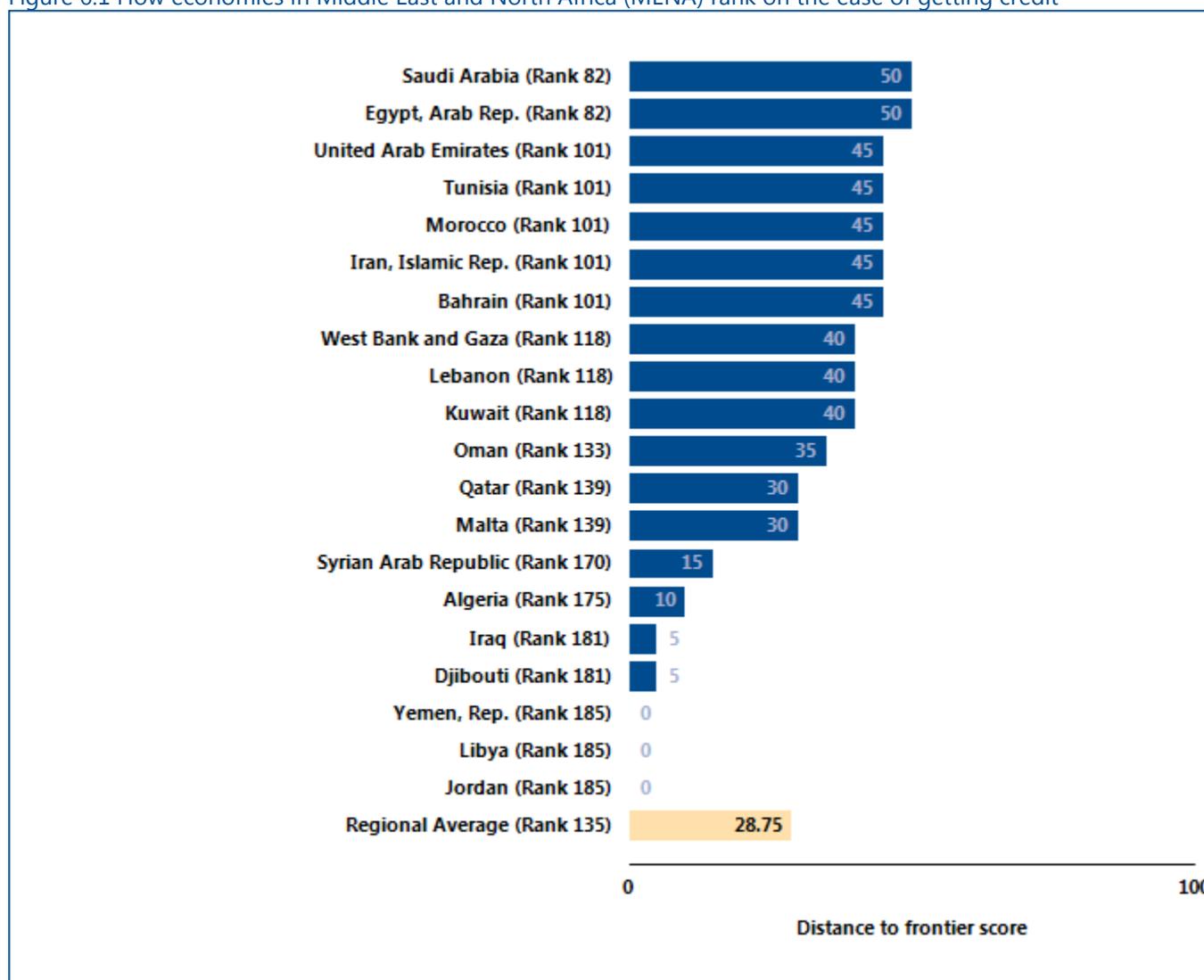
GETTING CREDIT

Where do the region's economies stand today?

How well do the credit information systems and collateral and bankruptcy laws in economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) facilitate access to credit? The global rankings of these economies on the ease of

getting credit suggest an answer (figure 6.1). The average ranking of the region and comparator regions provide a useful benchmark.

Figure 6.1 How economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) rank on the ease of getting credit



Source: Doing Business database.

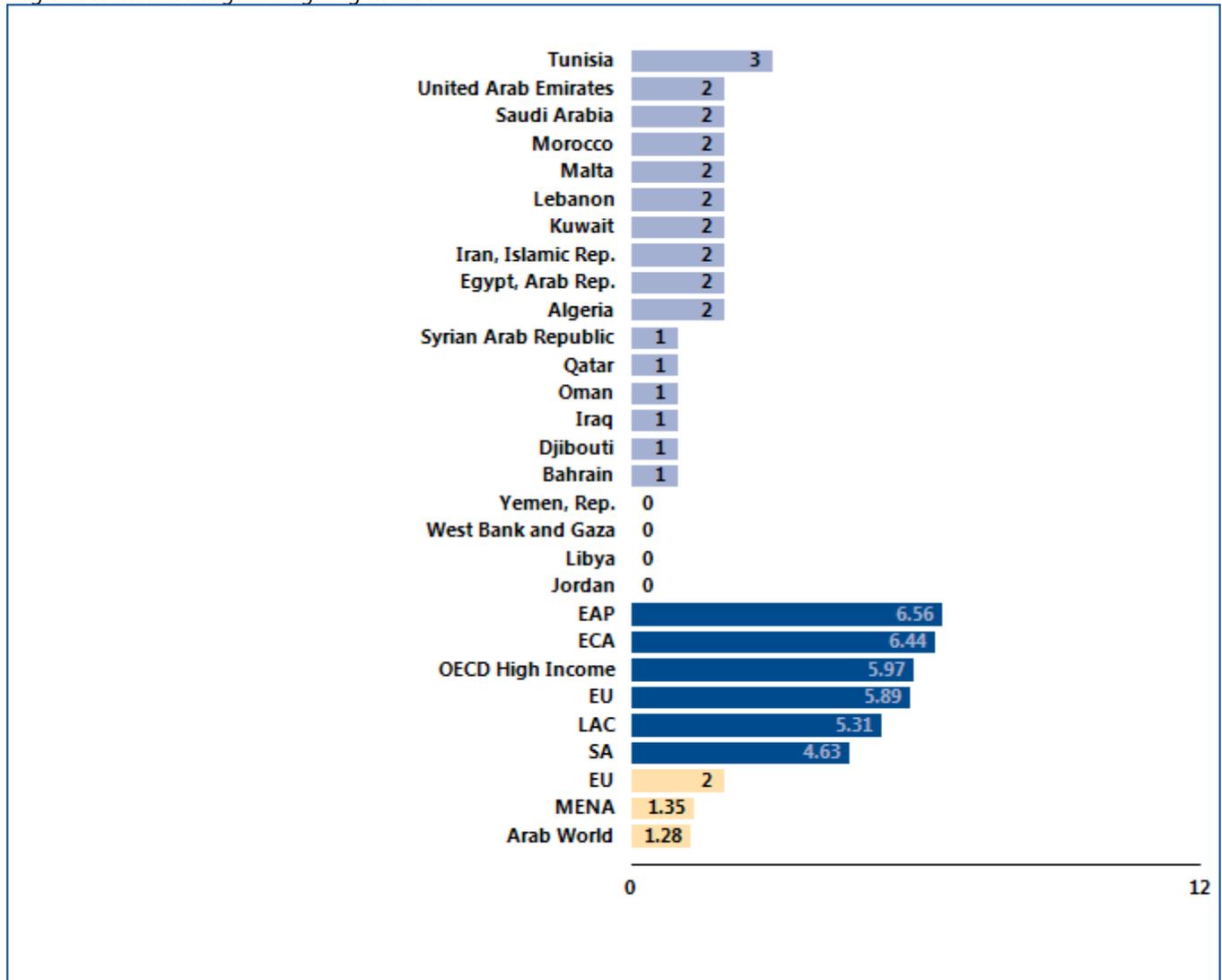
GETTING CREDIT

Another way to assess how well regulations and institutions support lending and borrowing in the region is to see where the region stands in the distribution of scores across regions. Figure 6.2 highlights the score on

the strength of legal rights index for Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and comparators on the strength of legal rights index. Figure 6.3 shows the same thing for the depth of credit information index.

Figure 6.2 How strong are legal rights for borrowers and lenders?

Region scores on strength of legal rights index

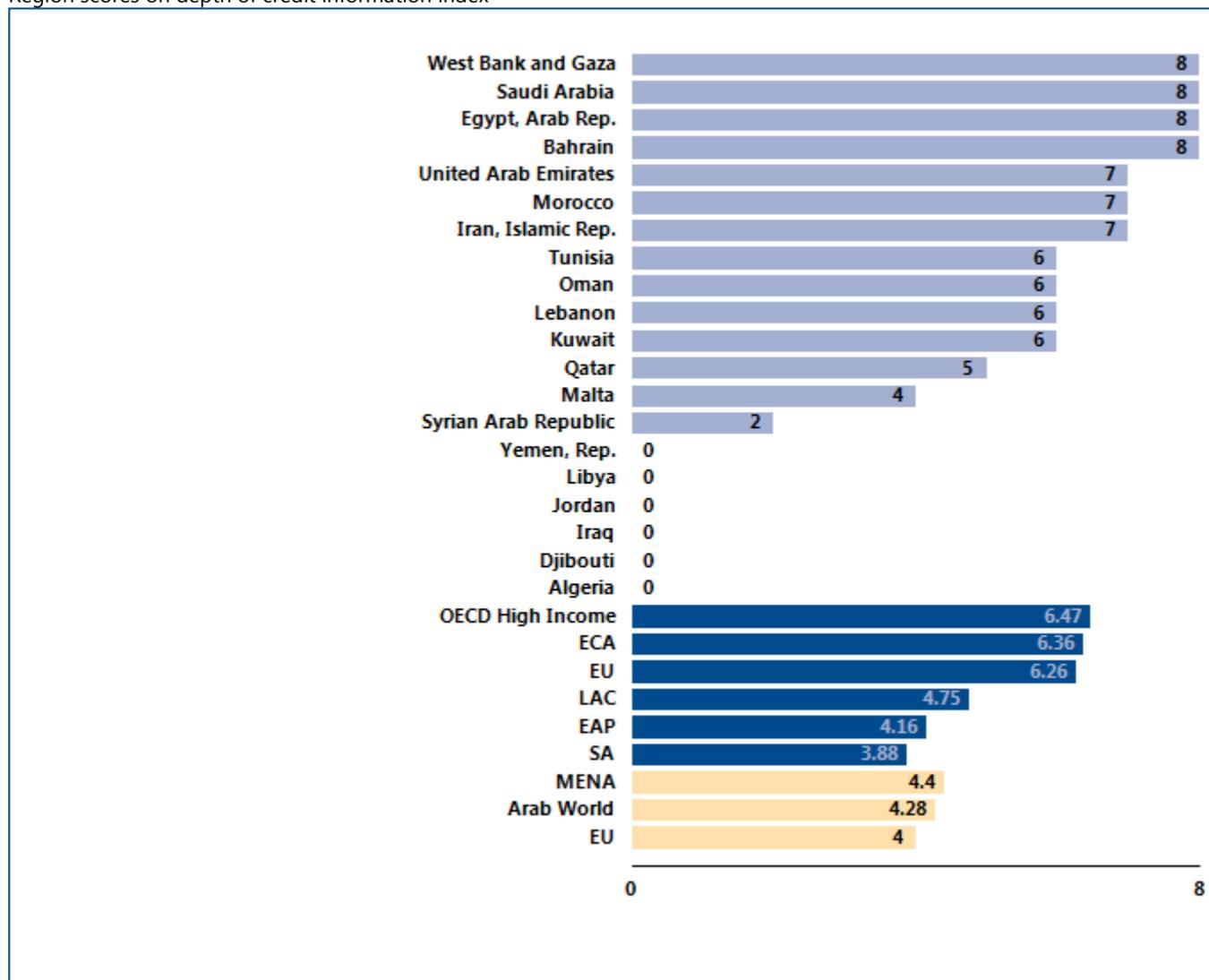


Note: Higher scores indicate that collateral and bankruptcy laws are better designed to facilitate access to credit.

Source: Doing Business database.

Figure 6.3 How much credit information is shared—and how widely?

Region scores on depth of credit information index



Note: Higher scores indicate the availability of more credit information, from either a credit registry or a credit bureau, to facilitate lending decisions. If the credit bureau or registry is not operational or covers less than 5% of the adult population, the total score on the depth of credit information index is 0.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

GETTING CREDIT

What are the changes over time?

When economies strengthen the legal rights of lenders and borrowers under collateral and bankruptcy laws, and increase the scope, coverage and accessibility of credit

information, they can increase entrepreneurs' access to credit. What credit reforms has *Doing Business* recorded in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) (table 6.1)?

Table 6.1 How have economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) made getting credit easier—or not? By *Doing Business* report year DB2011 to DB2017

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by guaranteeing by law borrowers' right to inspect their own data.
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made exporting easier by improving infrastructure and streamlining procedures at the King Fahad Causeway.
DB2017	<i>Iraq</i>	Iraq made dealing with construction permits easier by allowing the simultaneous processing of utility clearances and building permit applications.
DB2017	<i>Iraq</i>	The Ministry of Electricity made getting electricity faster by enforcing tighter deadlines on electricity connections.
DB2017	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made exporting and importing easier by streamlining customs clearance processes, advancing the use of a single window and improving infrastructure at the Aqaba customs and port.
DB2017	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made exporting and importing easier by improving and expanding the services offered by the national single window.
DB2017	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made paying taxes less costly by increasing the depreciation rates for some fixed assets.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made enforcing contracts easier by adopting a new code of civil procedure.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia increased the length of the notice period for redundancy dismissals.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta improved access to credit information by launching a new credit registry.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	In Morocco the credit bureau began to provide credit scores.
DB2017	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia strengthened credit reporting by starting to distribute historical credit information and credit information from a telecommunications company.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened minority investor protections by clarifying ownership and control structures and by requiring greater corporate transparency.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar weakened minority investor protections by decreasing the rights of shareholders in major decisions, by diminishing ownership and control structures, by reducing requirements for approval of related-party transactions and their disclosure to the board of directors, and by limiting the liability of interested directors and board of directors in the event of prejudicial related-party transactions.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia strengthened minority investor protections by strengthening ownership and control structures of companies and by increasing corporate transparency requirements.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made registering property easier by streamlining the property registration process.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made registering property easier by increasing the transparency at its land registry.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made registering property more complex by requiring a security clearance prior to transferring the property.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made starting a business more difficult by increasing the time for company registration and more costly by increasing fees for post-registration procedures.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made starting a business easier by reducing the time to notarize a company's article of association.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business easier by abolishing the paid-in minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies.
DB2017	<i>Oman</i>	Oman made starting a business easier by removing the requirement to pay the minimum capital within three months

DB year	Economy	Reform
		of incorporation and streamlining the registration of employees.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made the process of starting a business easier by introducing an online platform to reserve the company name and reducing registration fees.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta simplified the process of starting a business by reducing the time needed to register a company.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made trading across borders easier by further developing its single window system and thus reducing border compliance time for importing.
DB2017	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the time for border and documentary compliance by introducing a new online single window/one-stop service that allows for fast electronic clearance of goods.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made paying taxes more difficult by introducing a more complex income tax return.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made paying taxes more costly by replacing the capital gains tax with a property transfer tax, increasing the maximum social security contribution paid by employers.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made dealing with construction permits easier by implementing risk-based inspections and merging the final inspection into the process of obtaining a completion certificate.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates reduced the duration of a single fixed-term contract from 48 to 24 month.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates reduced the time required to obtain a new electricity connection by implementing a new program with strict deadlines for reviewing applications, carrying out inspections and meter installations. The United Arab Emirates also introduced compensation for power outages.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened minority investor protections by increasing shareholder rights and role in major corporate decisions, clarifying ownership and control structures, and requiring greater corporate transparency.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made registering property easier by increasing the transparency at its land registry.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made it easier to start a business by streamlining name reservation and articles of association notarization and merging registration procedures with the Ministry of Human Resources and General Pensions and Social Security Authority.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt made starting a business easier by merging procedures at the one-stop shop by introducing a follow-up unit in charge of liaising with the tax and labor authority on behalf of the company.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt made trading across borders more difficult by making the process of obtaining and processing documents more complex and by imposing a cap on foreign exchange deposits and withdrawals for imports.
DB2017	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the time required to register by requiring companies to submit the original documents online and in person.
DB2017	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made exporting and importing easier by introducing customs e-links and electronic exchange of information among various agencies.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made dealing with construction permits indicator faster by reducing the time to obtain a construction permit.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made getting electricity more transparent by publishing electricity tariffs on the websites of the utility and the energy regulator.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made starting a business easier by eliminating the minimum capital requirement for business incorporation.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made paying taxes less costly by decreasing the tax on professional activities rate. The introduction of advanced accounting systems also made paying taxes easier.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt strengthened minority investor protections by increasing shareholder rights and role in major corporate decisions and by clarifying ownership and control structures.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2016	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt strengthened minority investor protections by barring subsidiaries from acquiring shares issued by their parent company.
DB2016	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made dealing with construction permits easier by eliminating the legal requirement to provide a certified copy of a property title when applying for a building permit.
DB2016	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made starting a business easier by eliminating the requirement to obtain managers' criminal records.
DB2016	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made getting electricity easier by reducing the time needed to provide a connection cost estimate.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made dealing with construction permits easier by streamlining the process for obtaining the civil defense approval.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	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 allowing litigants to file and track motions online.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened minority investor protections by barring a subsidiary from acquiring shares in its parent company and by requiring that a potential acquirer, upon reaching 50% or more of the capital of a company, make a purchase offer to all shareholders.
DB2016	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon made transferring property more complex by increasing the time required for property registration.
DB2016	<i>Malta</i>	The utility in Malta reduced the time required for getting an electricity connection by improving its supervision of trenching works.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	The utility in Morocco reduced the time required for getting an electricity connection by providing fee estimates more quickly.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2016	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved the regulation of outages by beginning to record data for the annual system average interruption duration index (SAIDI) and system average interruption frequency index (SAIFI).
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made dealing with construction permits more difficult by requiring architects to submit the building permit request online, along with supporting documents, and to follow up with a hard-copy submission. On the other hand, Morocco reduced the time required to obtain an urban certificate.
DB2016	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made dealing with construction permits easier by streamlining the process for obtaining the civil defense permit and for submitting the stamped concrete casting permit to the municipality.
DB2016	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made paying taxes less costly for companies by reducing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made paying taxes easier for companies by improving the electronic platform for filing and paying corporate income tax, VAT and labor taxes. On the other hand, Morocco increased the rate of the social charge paid by employers.
DB2016	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made the transfer of a property more expensive by introducing the new property transfer tax.
DB2016	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made property transfers faster by introducing a new computerized system at the land registry.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made property transfers faster by establishing electronic communication links between different tax authorities.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by eliminating the need to file a declaration of business incorporation with the Ministry of Labor.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	1) Morocco implemented an unemployment insurance scheme. 2) Morocco increased the minimum wage increased from 12.24 to 12.85 DH/hour as of July 1, 2014, according to decree n° 2.14.343 of June 2014, published in the official

DB year	Economy	Reform
		bulletin 5292.
DB2016	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the time for border compliance for both exporting and importing by transferring cargo operations from Sultan Qaboos Port to Sohar Port.
DB2016	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar reduced the time for border compliance for importing by reducing the number of days of free storage at the port and thus the time required for port handling.
DB2016	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia reduced border compliance time for both exporting and importing by improving the efficiency of its state-owned port handling company and investing in port infrastructure at the port of Rades.
DB2016	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	The credit registry in West Bank and Gaza began to distribute credit data from retailers and utility companies.
DB2015	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made paying taxes less costly for companies by reducing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2015	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made paying taxes easier for companies by introducing the option to make either 1 or 4 advance payments of corporate income tax.
DB2015	<i>Malta</i>	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.
DB2015	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made trading across borders easier by reducing the number of export documents required.
DB2015	<i>Tunisia</i>	In Tunisia trading across borders became more difficult because of a deterioration in port infrastructure (for example, in loading and unloading equipment) and inadequate terminal space.
DB2015	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	In the Republic of Yemen trading across borders became more difficult as a result of inefficient port operation.
DB2015	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made registering property easier by reducing the registration fee.
DB2015	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made dealing with construction permits less time-consuming by streamlining the review process for building

DB year	Economy	Reform
		permits.
DB2015	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by approving the credit bureau's collection of data on firms.
DB2015	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made getting electricity easier by eliminating the need for customers to obtain an excavation permit for electricity connection works.
DB2015	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made starting a business easier by streamlining the name reservation and company registration procedures.
DB2015	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made trading across borders easier by improving infrastructure at the port of Aqaba.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	In the United Arab Emirates the credit bureau improved access to credit information by starting to exchange credit information with a utility.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	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.
DB2015	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made trading across borders easier by upgrading infrastructure at the port of Algiers.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made transferring property easier by introducing new service centers and a standard contract for property transactions.
DB2015	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the commercial license fee.
DB2015	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	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

DB year	Economy	Reform
		exchange.
DB2014	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt made paying taxes more costly for companies by increasing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made getting electricity easier by eliminating the requirement for site inspections and reducing the time required to provide new connections.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened investor protections by introducing greater disclosure requirements for related-party transactions in the annual report and to the stock exchange and by making it possible to sue directors when such transactions harm the company.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made transferring property easier by increasing the operating hours of the land registry and reducing transfer fees.
DB2014	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait strengthened investor protections by making it possible for minority shareholders to request the appointment of an auditor to review the company's activities.
DB2014	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti strengthened its secured transactions system by adopting a new commercial code, which broadens the range of movable assets that can be used as collateral.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by starting to collect payment information from retailers.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made starting a business more expensive by increasing the cost of the business registration certificate.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain reduced the maximum cumulative duration of fixed-term contracts, made third-party notification mandatory for redundancy dismissals and increased paid annual leave.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made resolving insolvency easier through its new commercial code, which allows an insolvent debtor to file for preventive settlement, legal redress or liquidation and sets out clear rules on the steps and procedures for each of the alternatives available.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made starting a business easier by simplifying the company name search and by eliminating the minimum capital requirement as well as the requirement to publish a notice of commencement of activities.
DB2014	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made dealing with construction permits less costly by significantly reducing the building permit fees.
DB2014	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made paying taxes easier for companies by eliminating certain requirements associated with the corporate income tax return.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made paying taxes easier for companies by increasing the use of the electronic filing and payment system for social security contributions.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made transferring property easier by reducing the time required to register a deed of transfer at the tax authority.
DB2014	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made starting a business less costly by eliminating the paid-in minimum capital requirement.
DB2014	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made starting a business more difficult by increasing the cost of company registration.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by reducing the company registration fees.
DB2014	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza introduced a minimum wage.
DB2014	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	
DB2013	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made starting a business more difficult by requiring company founders to obtain a criminal record clearance to register a new company.
DB2013	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran strengthened investor protections by requiring greater immediate disclosure of related-party transactions.
DB2013	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by eliminating the minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies.
DB2013	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar reduced the time to export and import by introducing a new online portal allowing electronic submission of customs

DB year	Economy	Reform
		declarations for clearance at the Doha seaport.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made enforcing contracts easier by expanding the computerization of its courts and introducing an electronic filing system.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made getting electricity more expensive by increasing the connection fees.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made starting a business easier by eliminating the requirement for a company to prepare a name board in English and Arabic after having received clearance on the use of office premises.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made paying taxes easier for companies by establishing an online filing and payment system for social security contributions.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	In the United Arab Emirates the Dubai Electricity and Water Authority made getting electricity easier by introducing an electronic "one window, one step" application process allowing customers to submit and track their applications online and reducing the time for processing the applications.
DB2013	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the maximum number of working days per week and increased the paid annual leave applicable for employees with one year of service.
DB2013	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made transferring property more costly by increasing the property transfer fee.
DB2013	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made registering property more costly by increasing property registration fees.
DB2013	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza improved access to credit information by guaranteeing borrowers' right to inspect their personal data.
DB2013	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria improved access to credit information by establishing an online system for data exchange between all banks and microfinance institutions and the central bank's credit registry.
DB2013	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved access to credit information by guaranteeing borrowers' right to inspect their personal data.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made paying taxes easier for companies by introducing online filing and payment systems for social security contributions.
DB2013	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria improved access to credit information by eliminating the minimum threshold for loans to be included in the database.
DB2012	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria improved its credit information system by guaranteeing by law the right of borrowers to inspect their personal data.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar improved its credit information system by starting to distribute historical data and eliminating the minimum threshold for loans included in the database.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved its credit information system by launching the Bank Credit and Statistical Bureau System, which collects historical information on performing and nonperforming loans for both firms and individuals.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened investor protections by allowing minority shareholders to obtain any nonconfidential corporate document during trial.
DB2012	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates improved its credit information system through a new law allowing the establishment of a federal credit bureau under the supervision of the central bank.
DB2012	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon made getting electricity less costly by reducing the application fees and security deposit for a new connection.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco eased the administrative burden of paying taxes for firms by enhancing electronic filing and payment of the corporate income tax and value added tax.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	Oman enacted a new income tax law that redefined the scope of taxation.
DB2012	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	The Republic of Yemen enacted a new tax law that reduced the general corporate tax rate from 35% to 20% and abolished all tax exemptions except those granted under the investment law for investment projects.
DB2012	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made starting a business easier by merging the requirements to file company documents with

DB year	Economy	Reform
		the Department for Economic Development, to obtain a trade license and to register with the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made dealing with construction permits more difficult by increasing the time and cost to process building permits.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made dealing with construction permits easier by opening a one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	Yemen made starting a business more difficult due to the suspension of registration services at the one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made starting a business easier by bringing together representatives from the Department of Zakat and Income Tax and the General Organization of Social Insurance at the Unified Center to register new companies with their agencies.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	The one-stop shop in Oman introduced online company registration and sped up the process to register a business from 7 days to 3 days.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business easier by combining commercial registration and registration with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry at the one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made trading across borders faster by introducing X-ray scanners for risk management systems.
DB2012	<i>Iraq</i>	In Iraq starting a business became more expensive because of an increase in the cost to obtain a name reservation certificate and in the cost for lawyers to draft articles of association.
DB2012	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement from 1,000 Jordanian dinars to 1 dinar, of which only half must be deposited before company registration.
DB2012	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made dealing with construction permits costlier by increasing the fees for inspections and the building permit and adding a new inspection in the preconstruction phase.
DB2012	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made trading across borders faster by developing a new container terminal.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2011	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made registering property more burdensome by increasing the fees at the Survey and Land Registration Bureau.
DB2011	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made it easier to trade by building a modern new port, improving the electronic data interchange system and introducing risk-based inspections.
DB2011	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon increased the cost of starting a business.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran eased business start-up by installing a web portal allowing entrepreneurs to search for and reserve a unique company name.
DB2011	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon improved its credit information system by allowing banks online access to the public credit registry's reports.
DB2011	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan improved its credit information system by setting up a regulatory framework for establishing a private credit bureau as well as lowering the threshold for loans to be reported to the public credit registry.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The establishment of a new private credit bureau improved access to credit information.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made enforcing contracts easier and faster by introducing electronic filing of some documents, text message notification and an electronic case management system.
DB2011	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan abolished certain taxes and made it possible to file income and sales tax returns electronically.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria eliminated the severance payment obligation but increased the notice period applicable in case of redundancy dismissals. Implemented a 100% pay premium for weekly holiday work and decreased the total term limit of fixed-term contracts.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made dealing with construction permits easier for the second year in a row by introducing a new, streamlined process.
DB2011	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business more difficult by adding a procedure to register for taxes and obtain a company seal.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria eased business start-up by reducing the minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies by two-thirds. It also decentralized approval of the company memorandum.
DB2011	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made starting a business more difficult by increasing the lawyers' fees that must be paid for incorporation.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia speeded up the insolvency process by providing earlier access to amicable settlements and putting time limits on the settlements to encourage creditors to participate.
DB2011	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates enhanced access to credit by setting up a legal framework for the operation of the private credit bureau and requiring that financial institutions share credit information.
DB2011	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates streamlined document preparation and reduced the time to trade with the launch of Dubai Customs' comprehensive new customs system, Mirsal 2.
DB2011	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait increased the number of days of paid annual leave and increased the notice period applicable in case of redundancy dismissals.
DB2011	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia introduced the use of electronic systems for payment of corporate income tax and value added tax.
DB2011	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	More efficient processes at Palestinian customs made trading easier in the West Bank.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia reduced the time to import by launching a new container terminal at the Jeddah Islamic Port.
DB2011	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia upgraded its electronic data interchange system for imports and exports, speeding up the assembly of import documents.
DB2011	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened investor protections by requiring greater disclosure in companies' annual reports.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria enhanced access to credit by eliminating the minimum threshold for loans included in the database, which expanded the coverage of individuals and firms to 2.8% of the adult population.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	An amendment to Saudi Arabia's commercial lien law enhanced access to credit by making secured lending more flexible and allowing out-of-court enforcement in case of default.
DB2011	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt reduced the cost to start a business.
DB2011	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt made trading easier by introducing an electronic system for submitting export and import documents.

Note: For information on reforms in earlier years (back to DB2005), see the *Doing Business* reports for these years, available at <http://www.doingbusiness.org>.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

PROTECTING MINORITY INVESTORS

Protecting minority investors matters for the ability of companies to raise the capital they need to grow, innovate, diversify and compete. Effective regulations define related-party transactions precisely, promote clear and efficient disclosure requirements, require shareholder participation in major decisions of the company and set detailed standards of accountability for company insiders.

What do the indicators cover?

Doing Business measures the protection of minority investors from conflicts of interest through one set of indicators and shareholders' rights in corporate governance through another. The ranking of economies on the strength of minority investor protections is determined by sorting their distance to frontier scores for protecting minority investors. These scores are the simple average of the distance to frontier scores for the extent of conflict of interest regulation index and the extent of shareholder governance index. To make the data comparable across economies, a case study uses several assumptions about the business and the transaction.

The business (Buyer):

- Is a publicly traded corporation listed on the economy's most important stock exchange. If the number of publicly traded companies listed on that exchange is less than 10, or if there is no stock exchange in the economy, it is assumed that Buyer is a large private company with multiple shareholders.
- Has a board of directors and a chief executive officer (CEO) who may legally act on behalf of Buyer where permitted, even if this is not specifically required by law.
- Has a supervisory board (applicable to economies with a two-tier board system) on which 60% of the shareholder-elected members have been appointed by Mr. James, who is Buyer's controlling shareholder and a member of Buyer's board of directors.
- Has not adopted any bylaws or articles of association that differ from default minimum standards and does not follow any nonmandatory codes, principles,

WHAT THE PROTECTING MINORITY INVESTORS INDICATORS MEASURE

Extent of disclosure index (0–10)

Review and approval requirements for related-party transactions ; Disclosure requirements for related-party transactions

Extent of director liability index (0–10)

Ability of minority shareholders to sue and hold interested directors liable for prejudicial related-party transactions; Available legal remedies (damages, disgorgement of profits, fines, imprisonment, rescission of the transaction)

Ease of shareholder suits index (0–10)

Access to internal corporate documents; Evidence obtainable during trial and allocation of legal expenses

Extent of conflict of interest regulation index (0–10)

Simple average of the extent of disclosure, extent of director liability and ease of shareholder indices

Extent of shareholder rights index (0-10)

Shareholders' rights and role in major corporate decisions

Extent of ownership and control index (0-10)

Governance safeguards protecting shareholders from undue board control and entrenchment

Extent of corporate transparency index (0-10)

Corporate transparency on ownership stakes, compensation, audits and financial prospects

Extent of shareholder governance index (0–10)

Simple average of the extent of shareholders rights, extent of ownership and control and extent of corporate transparency indices

Strength of investor protection index (0–10)

Simple average of the extent of conflict of interest regulation and extent of shareholder governance indices

recommendations or guidelines relating to corporate governance.

- Is a manufacturing company with its own distribution network

The transaction involves the following details:

- Mr. James owns 60% of Buyer and elected two directors to Buyer's five-member board.
- Mr. James also owns 90% of Seller, a company that operates a chain of retail hardware stores. Seller recently closed a large number of its stores.
- Mr. James proposes that Buyer purchase Seller's unused fleet of trucks to expand Buyer's distribution of its food products, a proposal to which Buyer agrees. The price is equal to 10% of Buyer's assets and is higher than the market value.
- The proposed transaction is part of the company's ordinary course of business and is not outside the authority of the company.
- Buyer enters into the transaction. All required approvals are obtained, and all required disclosures made (that is, the transaction is not fraudulent).
- The transaction causes damages to Buyer. Shareholders sue Mr. James and the other parties that approved the transaction. .

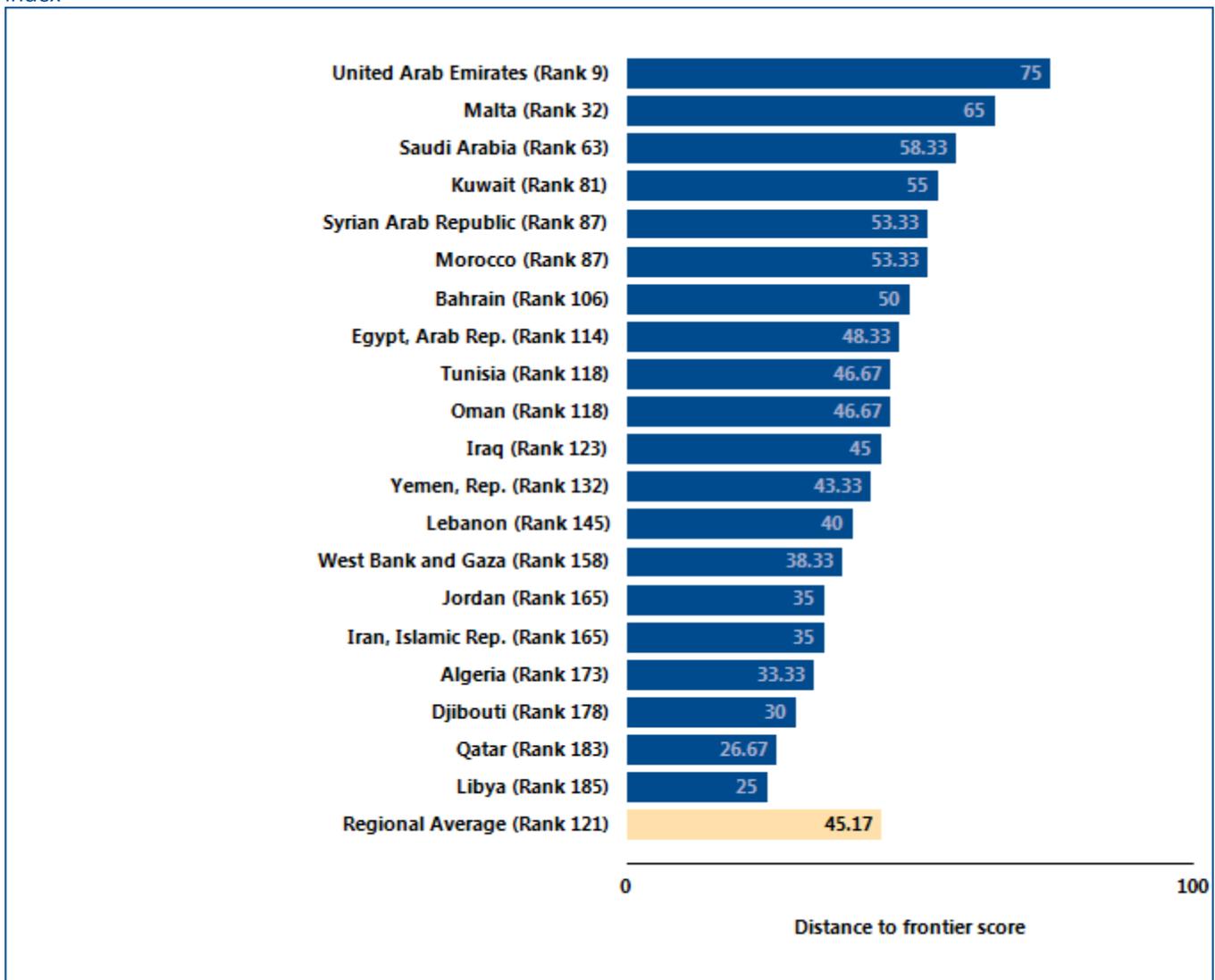
PROTECTING MINORITY INVESTORS

Where do the region’s economies stand today?

How strong are investor protections against self-dealing in economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA)? The global rankings of these economies on the strength of investor protection index suggest an answer (figure 7.1). While the indicator does not measure all aspects

related to the protection of minority investors, a higher ranking does indicate that an economy’s regulations offer stronger investor protections against self-dealing in the areas measured.

Figure 7.1 How economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) rank on the strength of investor protection index



Source: Doing Business database.

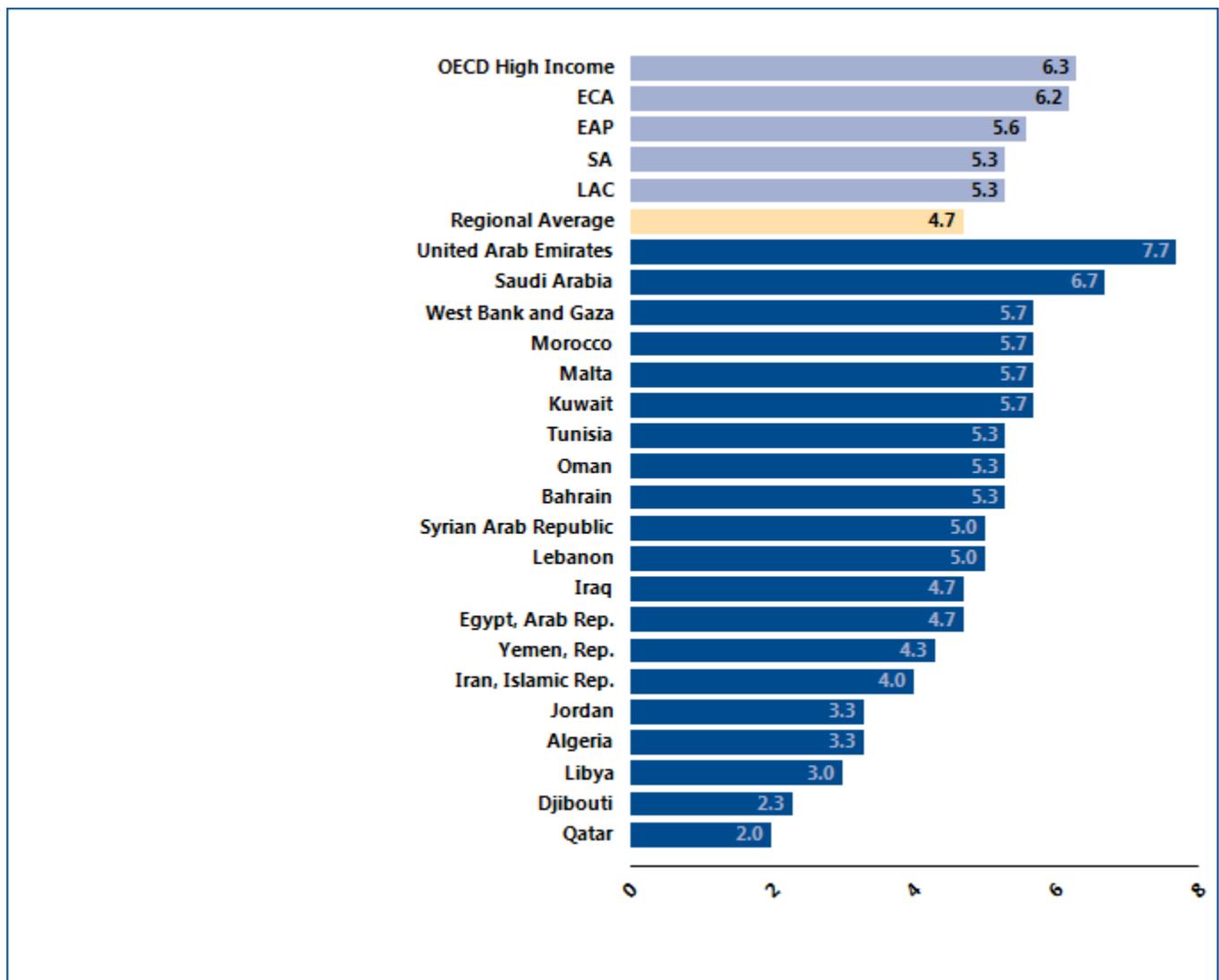
PROTECTING MINORITY INVESTORS

The strength of minority investor protection index is the average of the extent of conflict of interest regulation index and the extent of shareholder governance index. The index ranges from 0 to 10, rounded to the nearest decimal place, with higher values indicating stronger minority investor protections. Figures 7.2 and 7.3

highlight the scores on the various minority investor protection indices for Middle East and North Africa (MENA). Comparing the scores across the region and with averages both for the region and for comparator regions can provide useful insights.

Figure 7.2 How extensive are conflict of interest regulations?

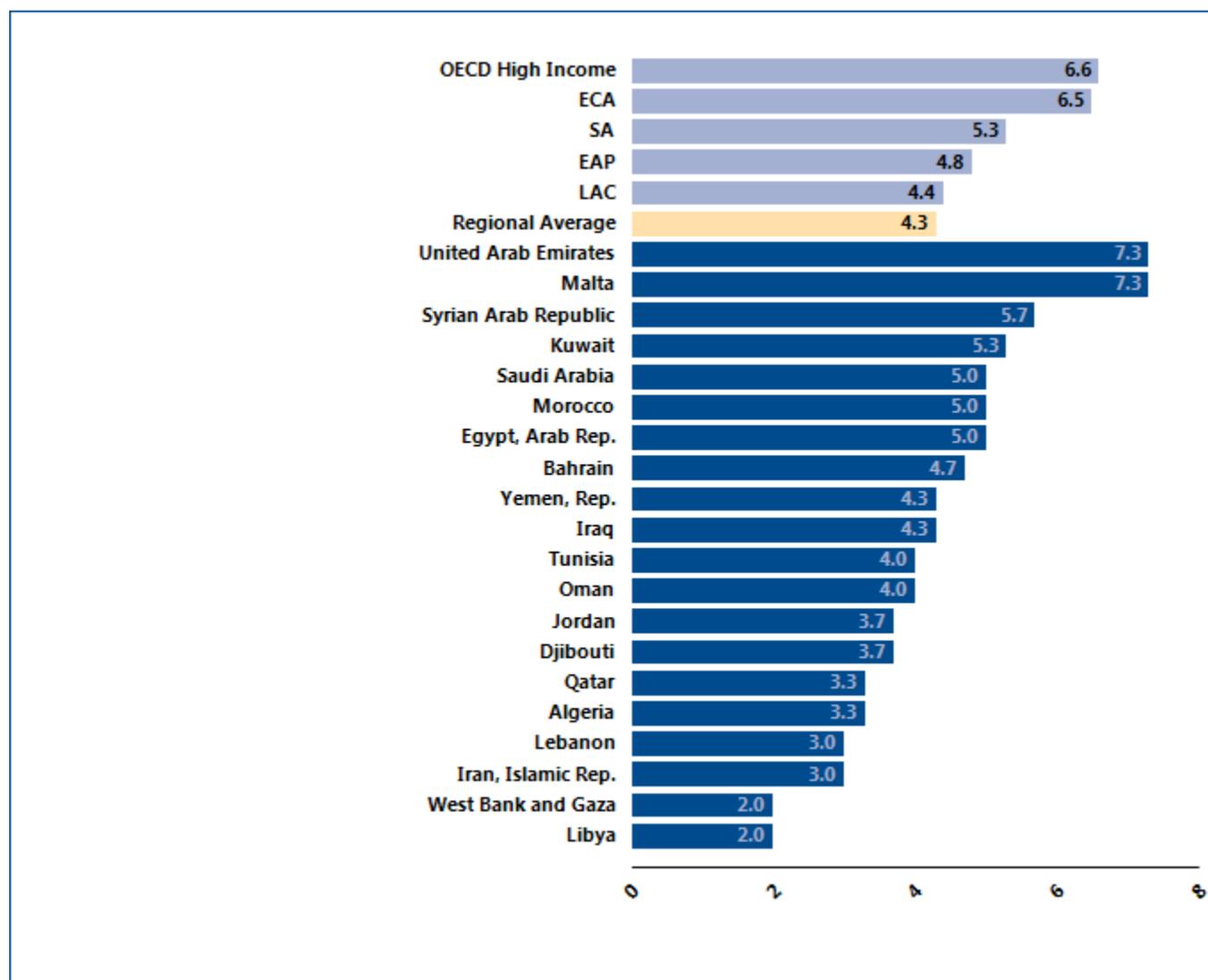
Extent of conflict of interest regulation index (0-10)



Note: Higher values indicate stronger regulation of conflicts of interest.

Source: Doing Business database.

Figure 7.3 How extensive is shareholder governance?

Extent of shareholder governance index (0-10)

Note: Higher scores indicate stronger rights of shareholders in corporate governance.

Source: Doing Business database.

PROTECTING MINORITY INVESTORS

What are the changes over time?

Economies with the strongest protections of minority investors from self-dealing require detailed disclosure and define clear duties for directors. They also have well-functioning courts and up-to-date procedural rules that give minority shareholders the means to prove their case and obtain a judgment within a reasonable time. So

reforms to strengthen minority investor protections may move ahead on different fronts—such as through new or amended company laws, securities regulations or revisions to court procedures. What minority investor protection reforms has *Doing Business* recorded in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) (table 7.1)?

Table 7.1 How have economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) strengthened minority investor protections—or not? By *Doing Business* report year DB2011 to DB2017

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by guaranteeing by law borrowers' right to inspect their own data.
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made exporting easier by improving infrastructure and streamlining procedures at the King Fahad Causeway.
DB2017	<i>Iraq</i>	Iraq made dealing with construction permits easier by allowing the simultaneous processing of utility clearances and building permit applications.
DB2017	<i>Iraq</i>	The Ministry of Electricity made getting electricity faster by enforcing tighter deadlines on electricity connections.
DB2017	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made exporting and importing easier by streamlining customs clearance processes, advancing the use of a single window and improving infrastructure at the Aqaba customs and port.
DB2017	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made exporting and importing easier by improving and expanding the services offered by the national single window.
DB2017	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made paying taxes less costly by increasing the depreciation rates for some fixed assets.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made enforcing contracts easier by adopting a new code of civil procedure.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia increased the length of the notice period for redundancy dismissals.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta improved access to credit information by launching a new credit registry.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	In Morocco the credit bureau began to provide credit scores.
DB2017	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia strengthened credit reporting by starting to distribute historical credit information and credit information from a telecommunications company.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened minority investor protections by clarifying ownership and control structures and by requiring greater corporate transparency.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar weakened minority investor protections by decreasing the rights of shareholders in major decisions, by diminishing ownership and control structures, by reducing requirements for approval of related-party transactions and their disclosure to the board of directors, and by limiting the liability of interested directors and board of directors in the event of prejudicial related-party transactions.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia strengthened minority investor protections by strengthening ownership and control structures of companies and by increasing corporate transparency requirements.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made registering property easier by streamlining the property registration process.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made registering property easier by increasing the transparency at its land registry.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made registering property more complex by requiring a security clearance prior to transferring the property.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made starting a business more difficult by increasing the time for company registration and more costly by increasing fees for post-registration procedures.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made starting a business easier by reducing the time to notarize a company's article of association.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business easier by abolishing the paid-in minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies.
DB2017	<i>Oman</i>	Oman made starting a business easier by removing the requirement to pay the minimum capital within three months of incorporation and streamlining the registration of employees.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made the process of starting a business easier by introducing an online platform to reserve the company name and reducing registration fees.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta simplified the process of starting a business by reducing the time needed to register a company.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made trading across borders easier by further developing its single window system and thus reducing border compliance time for importing.
DB2017	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the time for border and documentary compliance by introducing a new online single window/one-stop service that allows for fast electronic clearance of goods.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made paying taxes more difficult by introducing a more complex income tax return.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made paying taxes more costly by replacing the capital gains tax with a property transfer tax, increasing the maximum social security contribution paid by employers.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made dealing with construction permits easier by implementing risk-based inspections and merging the final inspection into the process of obtaining a completion certificate.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates reduced the duration of a single fixed-term contract from 48 to 24 month.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates reduced the time required to obtain a new electricity connection by implementing a new

DB year	Economy	Reform
		program with strict deadlines for reviewing applications, carrying out inspections and meter installations. The United Arab Emirates also introduced compensation for power outages.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened minority investor protections by increasing shareholder rights and role in major corporate decisions, clarifying ownership and control structures, and requiring greater corporate transparency.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made registering property easier by increasing the transparency at its land registry.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made it easier to start a business by streamlining name reservation and articles of association notarization and merging registration procedures with the Ministry of Human Resources and General Pensions and Social Security Authority.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt made starting a business easier by merging procedures at the one-stop shop by introducing a follow-up unit in charge of liaising with the tax and labor authority on behalf of the company.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt made trading across borders more difficult by making the process of obtaining and processing documents more complex and by imposing a cap on foreign exchange deposits and withdrawals for imports.
DB2017	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the time required to register by requiring companies to submit the original documents online and in person.
DB2017	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made exporting and importing easier by introducing customs e-links and electronic exchange of information among various agencies.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made dealing with construction permits indicator faster by reducing the time to obtain a construction permit.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made getting electricity more transparent by publishing electricity tariffs on the websites of the utility and the energy regulator.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made starting a business easier by eliminating the minimum capital requirement for business incorporation.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made paying taxes less costly by decreasing the tax on professional activities rate. The introduction of advanced accounting systems also made paying taxes easier.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt strengthened minority investor protections by increasing shareholder rights and role in major corporate decisions and by clarifying ownership and control structures.
DB2016	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt strengthened minority investor protections by barring subsidiaries from acquiring shares issued by their parent company.
DB2016	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made dealing with construction permits easier by eliminating the legal requirement to provide a certified copy of a property title when applying for a building permit.
DB2016	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made starting a business easier by eliminating the requirement to obtain managers' criminal records.
DB2016	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made getting electricity easier by reducing the time needed to provide a connection cost estimate.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made dealing with construction permits easier by streamlining the process for obtaining the civil defense approval.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	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 allowing litigants to file and track motions online.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened minority investor protections by barring a subsidiary from acquiring shares in its parent company and by requiring that a potential acquirer, upon reaching 50% or more of the capital of a company, make a purchase offer to all shareholders.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2016	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon made transferring property more complex by increasing the time required for property registration.
DB2016	<i>Malta</i>	The utility in Malta reduced the time required for getting an electricity connection by improving its supervision of trenching works.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	The utility in Morocco reduced the time required for getting an electricity connection by providing fee estimates more quickly.
DB2016	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved the regulation of outages by beginning to record data for the annual system average interruption duration index (SAIDI) and system average interruption frequency index (SAIFI).
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made dealing with construction permits more difficult by requiring architects to submit the building permit request online, along with supporting documents, and to follow up with a hard-copy submission. On the other hand, Morocco reduced the time required to obtain an urban certificate.
DB2016	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made dealing with construction permits easier by streamlining the process for obtaining the civil defense permit and for submitting the stamped concrete casting permit to the municipality.
DB2016	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made paying taxes less costly for companies by reducing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made paying taxes easier for companies by improving the electronic platform for filing and paying corporate income tax, VAT and labor taxes. On the other hand, Morocco increased the rate of the social charge paid by employers.
DB2016	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made the transfer of a property more expensive by introducing the new property transfer tax.
DB2016	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made property transfers faster by introducing a new computerized system at the land registry.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made property transfers faster by establishing electronic communication links between different tax authorities.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by eliminating the need to file a declaration of business incorporation with the Ministry of Labor.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	1) Morocco implemented an unemployment insurance scheme. 2) Morocco increased the minimum wage increased from 12.24 to 12.85 DH/hour as of July 1, 2014, according to decree n° 2.14.343 of June 2014, published in the official bulletin 5292.
DB2016	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the time for border compliance for both exporting and importing by transferring cargo operations from Sultan Qaboos Port to Sohar Port.
DB2016	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar reduced the time for border compliance for importing by reducing the number of days of free storage at the port and thus the time required for port handling.
DB2016	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia reduced border compliance time for both exporting and importing by improving the efficiency of its state-owned port handling company and investing in port infrastructure at the port of Rades.
DB2016	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	The credit registry in West Bank and Gaza began to distribute credit data from retailers and utility companies.
DB2015	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made paying taxes less costly for companies by reducing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2015	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made paying taxes easier for companies by introducing the option to make either 1 or 4 advance payments of corporate income tax.
DB2015	<i>Malta</i>	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.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2015	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made trading across borders easier by reducing the number of export documents required.
DB2015	<i>Tunisia</i>	In Tunisia trading across borders became more difficult because of a deterioration in port infrastructure (for example, in loading and unloading equipment) and inadequate terminal space.
DB2015	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	In the Republic of Yemen trading across borders became more difficult as a result of inefficient port operation.
DB2015	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made registering property easier by reducing the registration fee.
DB2015	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made dealing with construction permits less time-consuming by streamlining the review process for building permits.
DB2015	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by approving the credit bureau's collection of data on firms.
DB2015	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made getting electricity easier by eliminating the need for customers to obtain an excavation permit for electricity connection works.
DB2015	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made starting a business easier by streamlining the name reservation and company registration procedures.
DB2015	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made trading across borders easier by improving infrastructure at the port of Aqaba.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	In the United Arab Emirates the credit bureau improved access to credit information by starting to exchange credit information with a utility.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	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

DB year	Economy	Reform
		transaction and request a rescission of the transaction if it should prove to be unfair.
DB2015	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made trading across borders easier by upgrading infrastructure at the port of Algiers.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made transferring property easier by introducing new service centers and a standard contract for property transactions.
DB2015	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the commercial license fee.
DB2015	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	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.
DB2014	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt made paying taxes more costly for companies by increasing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made getting electricity easier by eliminating the requirement for site inspections and reducing the time required to provide new connections.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened investor protections by introducing greater disclosure requirements for related-party transactions in the annual report and to the stock exchange and by making it possible to sue directors when such transactions harm the company.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made transferring property easier by increasing the operating hours of the land registry and reducing transfer fees.
DB2014	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait strengthened investor protections by making it possible for minority shareholders to request the appointment of an auditor to review the company's activities.
DB2014	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti strengthened its secured transactions system by adopting a new commercial code, which broadens the range

DB year	Economy	Reform
		of movable assets that can be used as collateral.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by starting to collect payment information from retailers.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made starting a business more expensive by increasing the cost of the business registration certificate.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain reduced the maximum cumulative duration of fixed-term contracts, made third-party notification mandatory for redundancy dismissals and increased paid annual leave.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made resolving insolvency easier through its new commercial code, which allows an insolvent debtor to file for preventive settlement, legal redress or liquidation and sets out clear rules on the steps and procedures for each of the alternatives available.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made starting a business easier by simplifying the company name search and by eliminating the minimum capital requirement as well as the requirement to publish a notice of commencement of activities.
DB2014	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made dealing with construction permits less costly by significantly reducing the building permit fees.
DB2014	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made paying taxes easier for companies by eliminating certain requirements associated with the corporate income tax return.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made paying taxes easier for companies by increasing the use of the electronic filing and payment system for social security contributions.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made transferring property easier by reducing the time required to register a deed of transfer at the tax authority.
DB2014	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made starting a business less costly by eliminating the paid-in minimum capital requirement.
DB2014	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made starting a business more difficult by increasing the cost of company registration.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by reducing the company registration fees.
DB2014	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza introduced a minimum wage.
DB2014	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	
DB2013	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made starting a business more difficult by requiring company founders to obtain a criminal record clearance to register a new company.
DB2013	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran strengthened investor protections by requiring greater immediate disclosure of related-party transactions.
DB2013	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by eliminating the minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies.
DB2013	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar reduced the time to export and import by introducing a new online portal allowing electronic submission of customs declarations for clearance at the Doha seaport.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made enforcing contracts easier by expanding the computerization of its courts and introducing an electronic filing system.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made getting electricity more expensive by increasing the connection fees.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made starting a business easier by eliminating the requirement for a company to prepare a name board in English and Arabic after having received clearance on the use of office premises.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made paying taxes easier for companies by establishing an online filing and payment system for social security contributions.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	In the United Arab Emirates the Dubai Electricity and Water Authority made getting electricity easier by introducing an electronic "one window, one step" application process allowing customers to submit and track their applications online and reducing the time for processing the applications.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2013	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the maximum number of working days per week and increased the paid annual leave applicable for employees with one year of service.
DB2013	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made transferring property more costly by increasing the property transfer fee.
DB2013	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made registering property more costly by increasing property registration fees.
DB2013	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza improved access to credit information by guaranteeing borrowers' right to inspect their personal data.
DB2013	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria improved access to credit information by establishing an online system for data exchange between all banks and microfinance institutions and the central bank's credit registry.
DB2013	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved access to credit information by guaranteeing borrowers' right to inspect their personal data.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made paying taxes easier for companies by introducing online filing and payment systems for social security contributions.
DB2013	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria improved access to credit information by eliminating the minimum threshold for loans to be included in the database.
DB2012	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria improved its credit information system by guaranteeing by law the right of borrowers to inspect their personal data.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar improved its credit information system by starting to distribute historical data and eliminating the minimum threshold for loans included in the database.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved its credit information system by launching the Bank Credit and Statistical Bureau System, which collects historical information on performing and nonperforming loans for both firms and individuals.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened investor protections by allowing minority shareholders to obtain any nonconfidential

DB year	Economy	Reform
		corporate document during trial.
DB2012	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates improved its credit information system through a new law allowing the establishment of a federal credit bureau under the supervision of the central bank.
DB2012	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon made getting electricity less costly by reducing the application fees and security deposit for a new connection.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco eased the administrative burden of paying taxes for firms by enhancing electronic filing and payment of the corporate income tax and value added tax.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	Oman enacted a new income tax law that redefined the scope of taxation.
DB2012	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	The Republic of Yemen enacted a new tax law that reduced the general corporate tax rate from 35% to 20% and abolished all tax exemptions except those granted under the investment law for investment projects.
DB2012	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made starting a business easier by merging the requirements to file company documents with the Department for Economic Development, to obtain a trade license and to register with the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made dealing with construction permits more difficult by increasing the time and cost to process building permits.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made dealing with construction permits easier by opening a one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	Yemen made starting a business more difficult due to the suspension of registration services at the one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made starting a business easier by bringing together representatives from the Department of Zakat and Income Tax and the General Organization of Social Insurance at the Unified Center to register new companies with their agencies.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	The one-stop shop in Oman introduced online company registration and sped up the process to register a business

DB year	Economy	Reform
		from 7 days to 3 days.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business easier by combining commercial registration and registration with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry at the one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made trading across borders faster by introducing X-ray scanners for risk management systems.
DB2012	<i>Iraq</i>	In Iraq starting a business became more expensive because of an increase in the cost to obtain a name reservation certificate and in the cost for lawyers to draft articles of association.
DB2012	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement from 1,000 Jordanian dinars to 1 dinar, of which only half must be deposited before company registration.
DB2012	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made dealing with construction permits costlier by increasing the fees for inspections and the building permit and adding a new inspection in the preconstruction phase.
DB2012	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made trading across borders faster by developing a new container terminal.
DB2011	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made registering property more burdensome by increasing the fees at the Survey and Land Registration Bureau.
DB2011	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made it easier to trade by building a modern new port, improving the electronic data interchange system and introducing risk-based inspections.
DB2011	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon increased the cost of starting a business.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran eased business start-up by installing a web portal allowing entrepreneurs to search for and reserve a unique company name.
DB2011	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon improved its credit information system by allowing banks online access to the public credit registry's reports.
DB2011	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan improved its credit information system by setting up a regulatory framework for establishing a private credit bureau

DB year	Economy	Reform
		as well as lowering the threshold for loans to be reported to the public credit registry.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The establishment of a new private credit bureau improved access to credit information.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made enforcing contracts easier and faster by introducing electronic filing of some documents, text message notification and an electronic case management system.
DB2011	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan abolished certain taxes and made it possible to file income and sales tax returns electronically.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria eliminated the severance payment obligation but increased the notice period applicable in case of redundancy dismissals. Implemented a 100% pay premium for weekly holiday work and decreased the total term limit of fixed-term contracts.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made dealing with construction permits easier for the second year in a row by introducing a new, streamlined process.
DB2011	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business more difficult by adding a procedure to register for taxes and obtain a company seal.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria eased business start-up by reducing the minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies by two-thirds. It also decentralized approval of the company memorandum.
DB2011	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made starting a business more difficult by increasing the lawyers' fees that must be paid for incorporation.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia speeded up the insolvency process by providing earlier access to amicable settlements and putting time limits on the settlements to encourage creditors to participate.
DB2011	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates enhanced access to credit by setting up a legal framework for the operation of the private credit bureau and requiring that financial institutions share credit information.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2011	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates streamlined document preparation and reduced the time to trade with the launch of Dubai Customs' comprehensive new customs system, Mirsal 2.
DB2011	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait increased the number of days of paid annual leave and increased the notice period applicable in case of redundancy dismissals.
DB2011	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia introduced the use of electronic systems for payment of corporate income tax and value added tax.
DB2011	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	More efficient processes at Palestinian customs made trading easier in the West Bank.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia reduced the time to import by launching a new container terminal at the Jeddah Islamic Port.
DB2011	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia upgraded its electronic data interchange system for imports and exports, speeding up the assembly of import documents.
DB2011	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened investor protections by requiring greater disclosure in companies' annual reports.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria enhanced access to credit by eliminating the minimum threshold for loans included in the database, which expanded the coverage of individuals and firms to 2.8% of the adult population.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	An amendment to Saudi Arabia's commercial lien law enhanced access to credit by making secured lending more flexible and allowing out-of-court enforcement in case of default.
DB2011	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt reduced the cost to start a business.
DB2011	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt made trading easier by introducing an electronic system for submitting export and import documents.

Note: For information on reforms in earlier years (back to DB2005), see the *Doing Business* reports for these years, available at <http://www.doingbusiness.org>.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

PAYING TAXES

Taxes are essential. The level of tax rates needs to be carefully chosen—and needless complexity in tax rules avoided. Firms in economies that rank better on the ease of paying taxes in the *Doing Business* study tend to perceive both tax rates and tax administration as less of an obstacle to business according to the World Bank Enterprise Survey research.

What do the indicators cover?

Using a case scenario, *Doing Business* records the taxes and mandatory contributions that a medium-size company must pay in a given year as well as measures of the administrative burden of paying taxes and contributions and dealing with postfiling processes. This case scenario uses a set of financial statements and assumptions about transactions made over the year. Information is also compiled on the frequency of filing and payments, time taken to comply with tax laws, time taken to comply with the requirements of postfiling processes and time waiting for these processes to be completed. The ranking of economies on the ease of paying taxes is determined by sorting their distance to frontier scores on the ease of paying taxes. These scores are the simple average of the distance to frontier scores for each of the four component indicators – number of tax payments, time, total tax rate and postfiling index – with a threshold and a nonlinear transformation applied to one of the component indicators, the total tax rate². If both VAT (or GST) and corporate income tax apply, the postfiling index is the simple average of the distance to frontier scores for each of the four components: the time to comply with a VAT or GST refund, the time to obtain a VAT or GST refund, the time to comply with a corporate income tax audit and the time to complete a corporate income tax audit. If only VAT (or GST) or corporate income applies, the postfiling index is the simple average of the scores for only the two components pertaining to the applicable tax. If neither VAT (or GST) nor corporate income tax applies, the postfiling index is not included in the ranking of the ease of paying taxes.

WHAT THE PAYING TAXES INDICATORS MEASURE

Tax payments for a manufacturing company in 2014 (number per year adjusted for electronic and joint filing and payment)

Total number of taxes and contributions paid, including consumption taxes (value added tax, sales tax or goods and service tax)

Method and frequency of filing and payment

Time required to comply with 3 major taxes (hours per year)

Collecting information and computing the tax payable

Completing tax return forms, filing with proper agencies

Arranging payment or withholding

Preparing separate tax accounting books, if required

Total tax rate (% of profit before all taxes)

Profit or corporate income tax

Social contributions and labor taxes paid by the employer

Property and property transfer taxes

Dividend, capital gains and financial transactions taxes

Waste collection, vehicle, road and other taxes

Postfiling Index

The time to comply with a VAT or GST refund

The time to receive a VAT or GST refund

The time to comply with a corporate income tax audit

The time to complete a corporate income tax audit

-
-
-

² The nonlinear distance to frontier for the total tax rate is equal to the distance to frontier for the total tax rate to the power of 0.8. The threshold is defined as the total tax rate at the 15th percentile of the overall distribution for all years included in the analysis up to and including *Doing Business 2015*, which is 26.1%. All economies with a total tax rate below this threshold receive the same score as the economy at the threshold.

- Taxes and mandatory contributions include corporate income tax, turnover tax and all labor taxes and contributions paid by the company. A range of standard deductions and exemptions are also recorded.

All financial statement variables are proportional to 2012 income per capita. To make the data comparable across economies, several assumptions are used.

- TaxpayerCo is a medium-size business that started operations on January 1, 2014.
- The business starts from the same financial position in each economy. All the taxes and mandatory contributions paid during the second year of operation are recorded.
- Taxes and mandatory contributions are measured at all levels of government.

Assumptions about the VAT refund process:

- In June 2015, TaxpayerCo. makes a large capital purchase: one additional machine for manufacturing pots.
- The value of the machine is 65 times income per capita of the economy.
- Sales are equally spread per month (that is, 1,050 times income per capita divided by 12).
- Cost of goods sold are equally expensed per month (that is, 875 times income per capita divided by 12).
- The seller of the machinery is registered for VAT or general sales tax (GST).
- Excess input VAT incurred in June will be fully recovered after four consecutive months if the VAT or GST rate is the same for inputs, sales and the machine and the tax reporting period is every month.

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Assumptions about the corporate income tax audit process:

- An error in the calculation of the income tax liability (for example, use of incorrect tax depreciation rates, or incorrectly treating an expense as tax deductible) leads to an incorrect income tax return and consequently an underpayment of corporate income tax.
- TaxpayerCo. discovered the error and voluntarily notified the tax authority of the error in the corporate income tax return.

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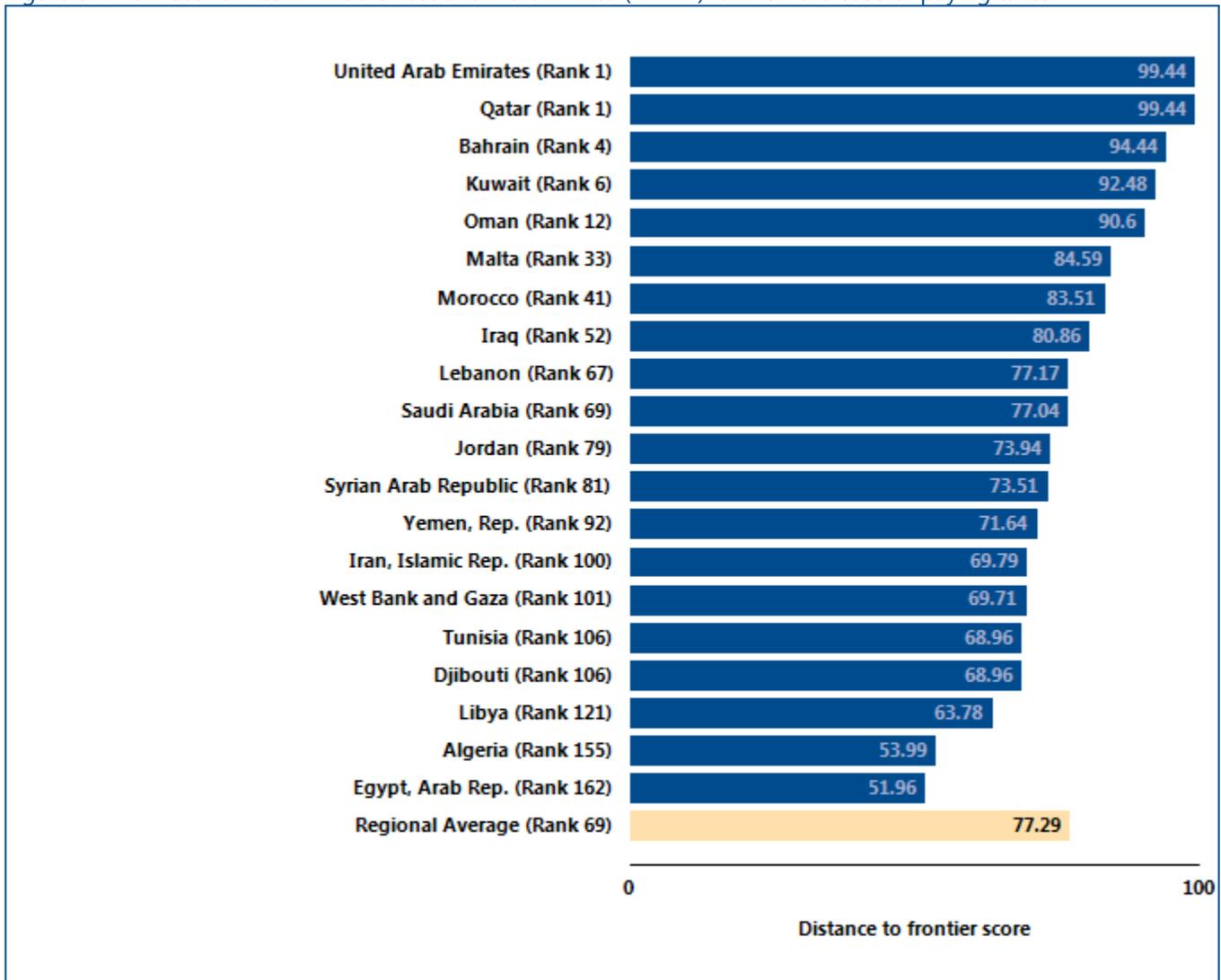
PAYING TAXES

Where do the region’s economies stand today?

What is the administrative burden of complying with taxes in economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA)—and how much do firms pay in taxes? The global rankings of these economies on the ease of

paying taxes offer useful information for assessing the tax compliance burden for businesses (figure 8.1). The average ranking of the region provides a useful benchmark.

Figure 8.1 How economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) rank on the ease of paying taxes



Note: All economies with a total tax rate below the threshold of 26.1% applied in DB2015, receive the same distance to frontier score for the total tax rate (a distance to frontier score of 100 for the total tax rate) for the purpose of calculating the ranking on the ease of paying taxes.

Source: Doing Business database.

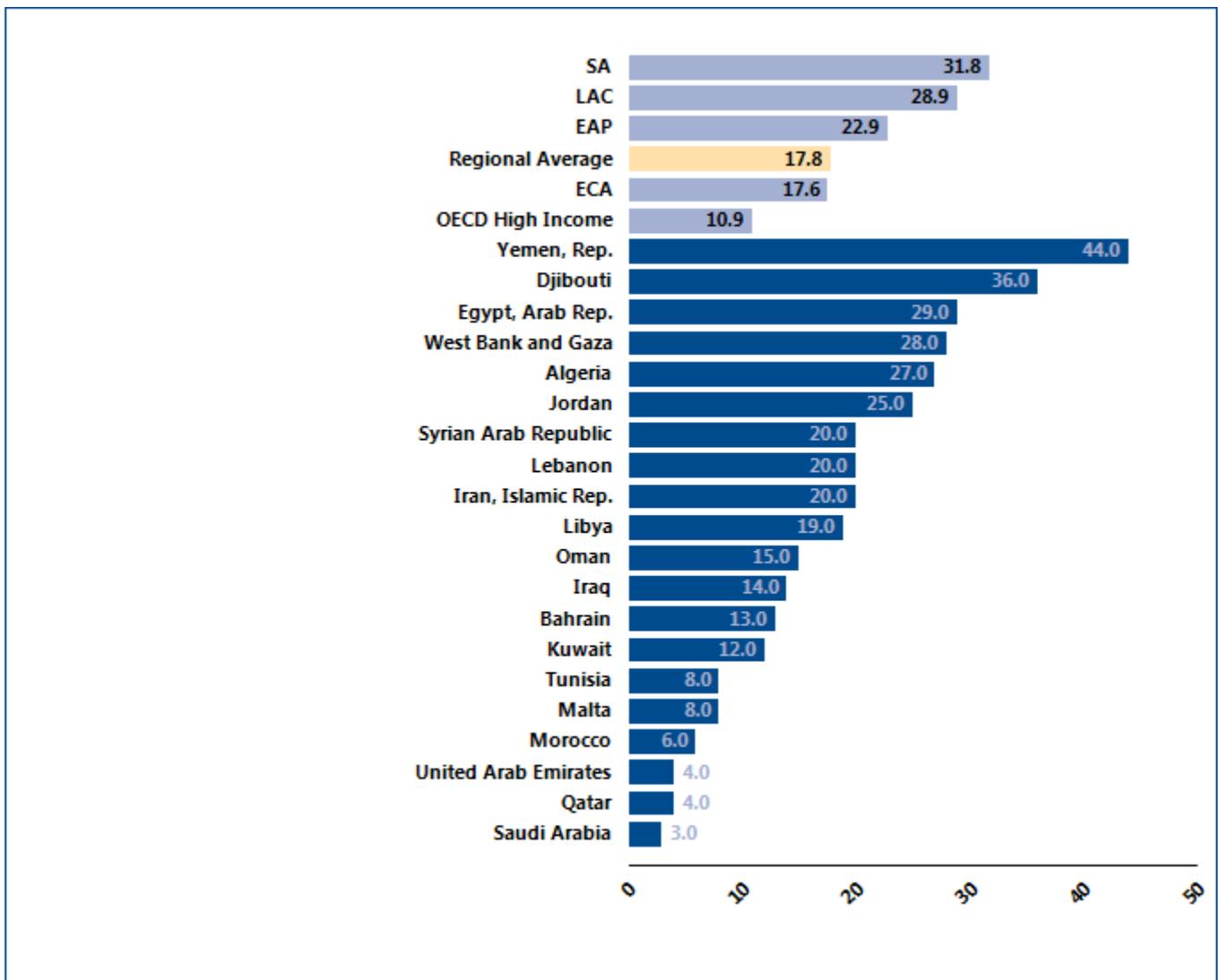
PAYING TAXES

The indicators underlying the rankings may be more revealing. Data collected by *Doing Business* show what it takes to comply with tax regulations in each economy in the region—the number of payments per year and the time required to prepare, and file and pay taxes the 3

major taxes (corporate income tax, VAT or sales tax and labor taxes and mandatory contributions)—as well as the total tax rate (figure 8.2). Comparing these indicators across the region and with averages both for the region and for comparator regions can provide useful insights.

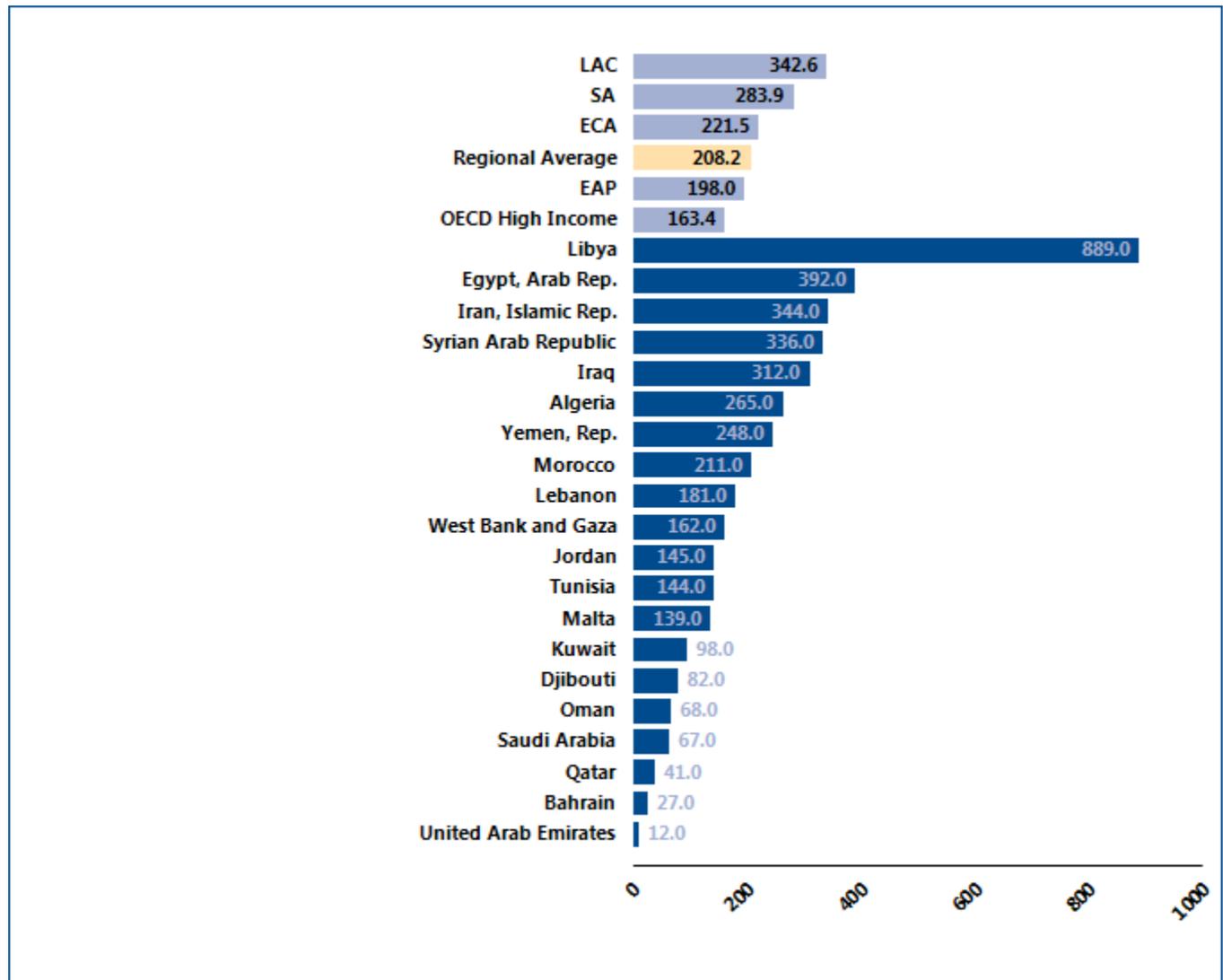
Figure 8.2 How easy is it to pay taxes in economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA)—and what are the total tax rates?

Payments (number per year)



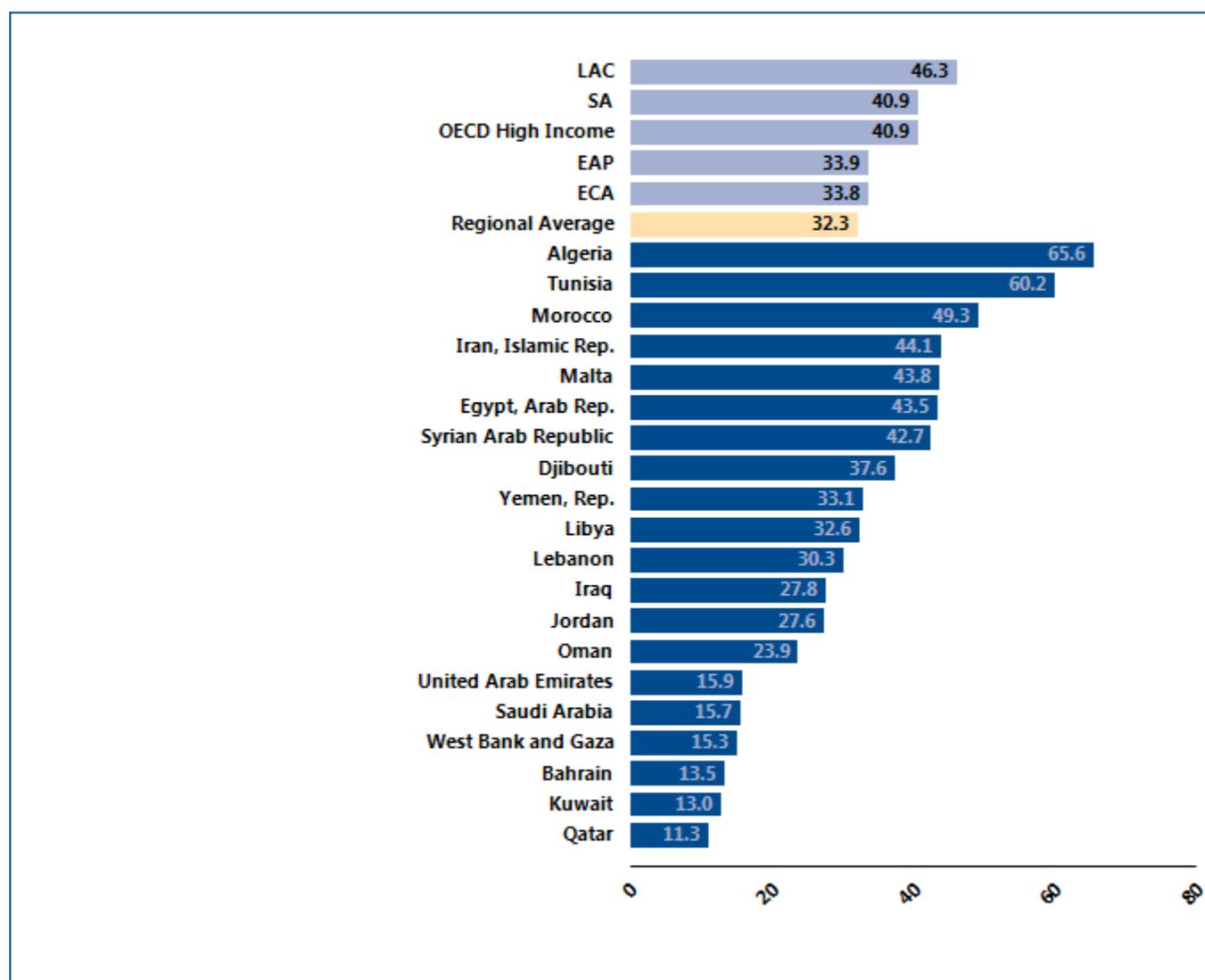
PAYING TAXES

Time (hours per year)



PAYING TAXES

Total tax rate (% of profit)



Source: Doing Business database.

PAYING TAXES

Postfiling Index (DTF)

Source: Doing Business database.

PAYING TAXES

What are the changes over time?

Economies around the world have made paying taxes faster and easier for businesses—such as by consolidating filings, reducing the frequency of payments or offering electronic filing and payment. Many have lowered tax rates. Changes have brought

concrete results. Some economies simplifying compliance with tax obligations and reducing rates have seen tax revenue rise. What tax reforms has *Doing Business* recorded in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) (table 8.1)?

Table 8.1 How have economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) made paying taxes easier—or not?
By *Doing Business* report year DB2011 to DB2017

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by guaranteeing by law borrowers' right to inspect their own data.
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made exporting easier by improving infrastructure and streamlining procedures at the King Fahad Causeway.
DB2017	<i>Iraq</i>	Iraq made dealing with construction permits easier by allowing the simultaneous processing of utility clearances and building permit applications.
DB2017	<i>Iraq</i>	The Ministry of Electricity made getting electricity faster by enforcing tighter deadlines on electricity connections.
DB2017	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made exporting and importing easier by streamlining customs clearance processes, advancing the use of a single window and improving infrastructure at the Aqaba customs and port.
DB2017	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made exporting and importing easier by improving and expanding the services offered by the national single window.
DB2017	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made paying taxes less costly by increasing the depreciation rates for some fixed assets.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made enforcing contracts easier by adopting a new

DB year	Economy	Reform
		code of civil procedure.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia increased the length of the notice period for redundancy dismissals.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta improved access to credit information by launching a new credit registry.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	In Morocco the credit bureau began to provide credit scores.
DB2017	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia strengthened credit reporting by starting to distribute historical credit information and credit information from a telecommunications company.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened minority investor protections by clarifying ownership and control structures and by requiring greater corporate transparency.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar weakened minority investor protections by decreasing the rights of shareholders in major decisions, by diminishing ownership and control structures, by reducing requirements for approval of related-party transactions and their disclosure to the board of directors, and by limiting the liability of interested directors and board of directors in the event of prejudicial related-party transactions.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia strengthened minority investor protections by strengthening ownership and control structures of companies and by increasing corporate transparency requirements.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made registering property easier by streamlining the property registration process.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made registering property easier by increasing the transparency at its land registry.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made registering property more complex by requiring a security clearance prior to transferring the property.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made starting a business more difficult by increasing the time for company registration and more costly by increasing fees for post-registration procedures.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made starting a business easier by reducing the time to notarize a company's article of association.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business easier by abolishing the paid-in minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies.
DB2017	<i>Oman</i>	Oman made starting a business easier by removing the requirement to pay the minimum capital within three months of incorporation and streamlining the registration of employees.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made the process of starting a business easier by introducing an online platform to reserve the company name and reducing registration fees.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta simplified the process of starting a business by reducing the time needed to register a company.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made trading across borders easier by further developing its single window system and thus reducing border compliance time for importing.
DB2017	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the time for border and documentary compliance by introducing a new online single window/one-stop service that allows for fast electronic clearance of goods.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made paying taxes more difficult by introducing a more complex income tax return.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made paying taxes more costly by replacing the capital gains tax with a property transfer tax, increasing the maximum social security contribution paid by employers.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made dealing with construction permits easier by implementing risk-based inspections and merging the final inspection into the process of obtaining a completion certificate.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates reduced the duration of a single fixed-term contract from 48 to 24 month.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates reduced the time required to obtain a new electricity connection by implementing a new program with strict deadlines for reviewing applications, carrying out inspections and meter installations. The United Arab Emirates also introduced compensation for power outages.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened minority investor protections by increasing shareholder rights and role in major corporate decisions, clarifying ownership and control structures, and requiring greater corporate transparency.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made registering property easier by increasing the transparency at its land registry.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made it easier to start a business by streamlining name reservation and articles of association notarization and merging registration procedures with the Ministry of Human Resources and General Pensions and Social Security Authority.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt made starting a business easier by merging procedures at the one-stop shop by introducing a follow-up unit in charge of liaising with the tax and labor authority on behalf of the company.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt made trading across borders more difficult by making the process of obtaining and processing documents more complex and by imposing a cap on foreign exchange deposits and withdrawals for imports.
DB2017	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the time required to register by requiring companies to submit the original documents online and in person.
DB2017	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made exporting and importing easier by introducing customs e-links and electronic exchange of information among various agencies.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made dealing with construction permits indicator faster by reducing the time to obtain a construction permit.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made getting electricity more transparent by

DB year	Economy	Reform
		publishing electricity tariffs on the websites of the utility and the energy regulator.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made starting a business easier by eliminating the minimum capital requirement for business incorporation.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made paying taxes less costly by decreasing the tax on professional activities rate. The introduction of advanced accounting systems also made paying taxes easier.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt strengthened minority investor protections by increasing shareholder rights and role in major corporate decisions and by clarifying ownership and control structures.
DB2016	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt strengthened minority investor protections by barring subsidiaries from acquiring shares issued by their parent company.
DB2016	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made dealing with construction permits easier by eliminating the legal requirement to provide a certified copy of a property title when applying for a building permit.
DB2016	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made starting a business easier by eliminating the requirement to obtain managers' criminal records.
DB2016	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made getting electricity easier by reducing the time needed to provide a connection cost estimate.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made dealing with construction permits easier by streamlining the process for obtaining the civil defense approval.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	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 allowing litigants to file and track motions online.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened minority investor protections by barring a subsidiary from acquiring shares in its parent company and by requiring that a potential acquirer, upon reaching 50% or more of the capital of a company, make a purchase offer to all shareholders.
DB2016	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon made transferring property more complex by increasing the time required for property registration.
DB2016	<i>Malta</i>	The utility in Malta reduced the time required for getting an electricity connection by improving its supervision of trenching works.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	The utility in Morocco reduced the time required for getting an electricity connection by providing fee estimates more quickly.
DB2016	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved the regulation of outages by beginning to record data for the annual system average interruption duration index (SAIDI) and system average interruption frequency index (SAIFI).
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made dealing with construction permits more difficult by requiring architects to submit the building permit request online, along with supporting documents, and to follow up with a hard-copy submission. On the other hand, Morocco reduced the time required to obtain an urban certificate.
DB2016	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made dealing with construction permits easier by streamlining the process for obtaining the civil defense permit and for submitting the stamped concrete casting permit to the municipality.
DB2016	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made paying taxes less costly for companies by reducing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made paying taxes easier for companies by improving the electronic platform for filing and paying corporate income tax, VAT and labor taxes. On the other hand, Morocco increased the rate of the social charge paid by employers.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2016	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made the transfer of a property more expensive by introducing the new property transfer tax.
DB2016	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made property transfers faster by introducing a new computerized system at the land registry.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made property transfers faster by establishing electronic communication links between different tax authorities.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by eliminating the need to file a declaration of business incorporation with the Ministry of Labor.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	1) Morocco implemented an unemployment insurance scheme. 2) Morocco increased the minimum wage increased from 12.24 to 12.85 DH/hour as of July 1, 2014, according to decree n° 2.14.343 of June 2014, published in the official bulletin 5292.
DB2016	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the time for border compliance for both exporting and importing by transferring cargo operations from Sultan Qaboos Port to Sohar Port.
DB2016	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar reduced the time for border compliance for importing by reducing the number of days of free storage at the port and thus the time required for port handling.
DB2016	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia reduced border compliance time for both exporting and importing by improving the efficiency of its state-owned port handling company and investing in port infrastructure at the port of Rades.
DB2016	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	The credit registry in West Bank and Gaza began to distribute credit data from retailers and utility companies.
DB2015	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made paying taxes less costly for companies by reducing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2015	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made paying taxes easier for companies by introducing the option to make either 1 or 4 advance

DB year	Economy	Reform
		payments of corporate income tax.
DB2015	<i>Malta</i>	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.
DB2015	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made trading across borders easier by reducing the number of export documents required.
DB2015	<i>Tunisia</i>	In Tunisia trading across borders became more difficult because of a deterioration in port infrastructure (for example, in loading and unloading equipment) and inadequate terminal space.
DB2015	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	In the Republic of Yemen trading across borders became more difficult as a result of inefficient port operation.
DB2015	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made registering property easier by reducing the registration fee.
DB2015	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made dealing with construction permits less time-consuming by streamlining the review process for building permits.
DB2015	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by approving the credit bureau's collection of data on firms.
DB2015	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made getting electricity easier by eliminating the need for customers to obtain an excavation permit for electricity connection works.
DB2015	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made starting a business easier by streamlining the name reservation and company registration procedures.
DB2015	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made trading across borders easier by improving infrastructure at the port of Aqaba.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	In the United Arab Emirates the credit bureau improved access to credit information by starting to exchange credit information with a utility.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	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.
DB2015	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made trading across borders easier by upgrading infrastructure at the port of Algiers.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made transferring property easier by introducing new service centers and a standard contract for property transactions.
DB2015	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the commercial license fee.
DB2015	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	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.
DB2014	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt made paying taxes more costly for companies by increasing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made getting electricity easier by eliminating the requirement for site inspections and reducing the time required to provide new connections.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened investor protections by introducing greater disclosure requirements for related-party transactions in the annual report and to the stock exchange and by making it possible to sue directors when such transactions harm the company.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made transferring property easier by increasing the operating hours of the land registry and

DB year	Economy	Reform
		reducing transfer fees.
DB2014	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait strengthened investor protections by making it possible for minority shareholders to request the appointment of an auditor to review the company's activities.
DB2014	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti strengthened its secured transactions system by adopting a new commercial code, which broadens the range of movable assets that can be used as collateral.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by starting to collect payment information from retailers.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made starting a business more expensive by increasing the cost of the business registration certificate.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain reduced the maximum cumulative duration of fixed-term contracts, made third-party notification mandatory for redundancy dismissals and increased paid annual leave.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made resolving insolvency easier through its new commercial code, which allows an insolvent debtor to file for preventive settlement, legal redress or liquidation and sets out clear rules on the steps and procedures for each of the alternatives available.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made starting a business easier by simplifying the company name search and by eliminating the minimum capital requirement as well as the requirement to publish a notice of commencement of activities.
DB2014	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made dealing with construction permits less costly by significantly reducing the building permit fees.
DB2014	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made paying taxes easier for companies by eliminating certain requirements associated with the corporate income tax return.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made paying taxes easier for companies by increasing the use of the electronic filing and payment system

DB year	Economy	Reform
		for social security contributions.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made transferring property easier by reducing the time required to register a deed of transfer at the tax authority.
DB2014	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made starting a business less costly by eliminating the paid-in minimum capital requirement.
DB2014	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made starting a business more difficult by increasing the cost of company registration.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by reducing the company registration fees.
DB2014	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza introduced a minimum wage.
DB2014	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	
DB2013	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made starting a business more difficult by requiring company founders to obtain a criminal record clearance to register a new company.
DB2013	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran strengthened investor protections by requiring greater immediate disclosure of related-party transactions.
DB2013	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by eliminating the minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies.
DB2013	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar reduced the time to export and import by introducing a new online portal allowing electronic submission of customs declarations for clearance at the Doha seaport.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made enforcing contracts easier by expanding the computerization of its courts and introducing an electronic filing system.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made getting electricity more expensive by increasing the connection fees.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made starting a business easier by eliminating the requirement for a company to prepare a name board in English and Arabic after having received

DB year	Economy	Reform
		clearance on the use of office premises.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made paying taxes easier for companies by establishing an online filing and payment system for social security contributions.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	In the United Arab Emirates the Dubai Electricity and Water Authority made getting electricity easier by introducing an electronic "one window, one step" application process allowing customers to submit and track their applications online and reducing the time for processing the applications.
DB2013	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the maximum number of working days per week and increased the paid annual leave applicable for employees with one year of service.
DB2013	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made transferring property more costly by increasing the property transfer fee.
DB2013	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made registering property more costly by increasing property registration fees.
DB2013	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza improved access to credit information by guaranteeing borrowers' right to inspect their personal data.
DB2013	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria improved access to credit information by establishing an online system for data exchange between all banks and microfinance institutions and the central bank's credit registry.
DB2013	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved access to credit information by guaranteeing borrowers' right to inspect their personal data.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made paying taxes easier for companies by introducing online filing and payment systems for social security contributions.
DB2013	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria improved access to credit information by eliminating the minimum threshold for loans to be included in the database.
DB2012	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria improved its credit information system by guaranteeing by law the right of borrowers to inspect their

DB year	Economy	Reform
		personal data.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar improved its credit information system by starting to distribute historical data and eliminating the minimum threshold for loans included in the database.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved its credit information system by launching the Bank Credit and Statistical Bureau System, which collects historical information on performing and nonperforming loans for both firms and individuals.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened investor protections by allowing minority shareholders to obtain any nonconfidential corporate document during trial.
DB2012	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates improved its credit information system through a new law allowing the establishment of a federal credit bureau under the supervision of the central bank.
DB2012	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon made getting electricity less costly by reducing the application fees and security deposit for a new connection.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco eased the administrative burden of paying taxes for firms by enhancing electronic filing and payment of the corporate income tax and value added tax.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	Oman enacted a new income tax law that redefined the scope of taxation.
DB2012	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	The Republic of Yemen enacted a new tax law that reduced the general corporate tax rate from 35% to 20% and abolished all tax exemptions except those granted under the investment law for investment projects.
DB2012	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made starting a business easier by merging the requirements to file company documents with the Department for Economic Development, to obtain a trade license and to register with the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made dealing with construction permits more difficult by increasing the time and cost to process building permits.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made dealing with construction permits easier by opening a one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	Yemen made starting a business more difficult due to the suspension of registration services at the one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made starting a business easier by bringing together representatives from the Department of Zakat and Income Tax and the General Organization of Social Insurance at the Unified Center to register new companies with their agencies.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	The one-stop shop in Oman introduced online company registration and sped up the process to register a business from 7 days to 3 days.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business easier by combining commercial registration and registration with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry at the one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made trading across borders faster by introducing X-ray scanners for risk management systems.
DB2012	<i>Iraq</i>	In Iraq starting a business became more expensive because of an increase in the cost to obtain a name reservation certificate and in the cost for lawyers to draft articles of association.
DB2012	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement from 1,000 Jordanian dinars to 1 dinar, of which only half must be deposited before company registration.
DB2012	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made dealing with construction permits costlier by increasing the fees for inspections and the building permit and adding a new inspection in the preconstruction phase.
DB2012	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made trading across borders faster by developing a new container terminal.
DB2011	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made registering property more burdensome by increasing the fees at the Survey and Land Registration Bureau.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2011	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made it easier to trade by building a modern new port, improving the electronic data interchange system and introducing risk-based inspections.
DB2011	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon increased the cost of starting a business.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran eased business start-up by installing a web portal allowing entrepreneurs to search for and reserve a unique company name.
DB2011	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon improved its credit information system by allowing banks online access to the public credit registry's reports.
DB2011	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan improved its credit information system by setting up a regulatory framework for establishing a private credit bureau as well as lowering the threshold for loans to be reported to the public credit registry.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The establishment of a new private credit bureau improved access to credit information.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made enforcing contracts easier and faster by introducing electronic filing of some documents, text message notification and an electronic case management system.
DB2011	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan abolished certain taxes and made it possible to file income and sales tax returns electronically.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria eliminated the severance payment obligation but increased the notice period applicable in case of redundancy dismissals. Implemented a 100% pay premium for weekly holiday work and decreased the total term limit of fixed-term contracts.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made dealing with construction permits easier for the second year in a row by introducing a new, streamlined process.
DB2011	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business more difficult by adding a procedure to register for taxes and obtain a company seal.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria eased business start-up by reducing the minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies by two-

DB year	Economy	Reform
		thirds. It also decentralized approval of the company memorandum.
DB2011	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made starting a business more difficult by increasing the lawyers' fees that must be paid for incorporation.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia speeded up the insolvency process by providing earlier access to amicable settlements and putting time limits on the settlements to encourage creditors to participate.
DB2011	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates enhanced access to credit by setting up a legal framework for the operation of the private credit bureau and requiring that financial institutions share credit information.
DB2011	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates streamlined document preparation and reduced the time to trade with the launch of Dubai Customs' comprehensive new customs system, Mirsal 2.
DB2011	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait increased the number of days of paid annual leave and increased the notice period applicable in case of redundancy dismissals.
DB2011	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia introduced the use of electronic systems for payment of corporate income tax and value added tax.
DB2011	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	More efficient processes at Palestinian customs made trading easier in the West Bank.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia reduced the time to import by launching a new container terminal at the Jeddah Islamic Port.
DB2011	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia upgraded its electronic data interchange system for imports and exports, speeding up the assembly of import documents.
DB2011	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened investor protections by requiring greater disclosure in companies' annual reports.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria enhanced access to credit by eliminating the minimum threshold for loans included in the database, which expanded the coverage of individuals and firms to 2.8% of the adult

DB year	Economy	Reform
		population.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	An amendment to Saudi Arabia's commercial lien law enhanced access to credit by making secured lending more flexible and allowing out-of-court enforcement in case of default.
DB2011	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt reduced the cost to start a business.
DB2011	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt made trading easier by introducing an electronic system for submitting export and import documents.

Note: For information on reforms in earlier years (back to DB2006), see the *Doing Business* reports for these years, available at <http://www.doingbusiness.org>.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

TRADING ACROSS BORDERS

In today's globalized world, making trade between economies easier is increasingly important for business. Excessive document requirements, burdensome customs procedures, inefficient port operations and inadequate infrastructure all lead to extra costs and delays for exporters and importers, stifling trade potential.

What do the indicators cover?

Doing Business records the time and cost associated with the logistical process of exporting and importing goods. Under the new methodology introduced this year, *Doing Business* measures the time and cost (excluding tariffs) associated with three sets of procedures—documentary compliance, border compliance and domestic transport—within the overall process of exporting or importing a shipment of goods. The ranking of economies on the ease of trading across borders is determined by sorting their distance to frontier scores for trading across borders. These scores are the simple average of the distance to frontier scores for the time and cost for documentary compliance and border compliance to export and import.

To make the data comparable across economies, a few assumptions are made about the traded goods and the transactions:

Time

- Time is measured in hours, and 1 day is 24 hours (for example, 22 days are recorded as $22 \times 24 = 528$ hours). If customs clearance takes 7.5 hours, the data are recorded as is. Alternatively, suppose that documents are submitted to a customs agency at 8:00 a.m., are processed overnight and can be picked up at 8:00 a.m. the next day. In this case the time for customs clearance would be recorded as 24 hours because the actual procedure took 24 hours.

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WHAT THE TRADING ACROSS BORDERS

INDICATORS MEASURE FOR IMPORT & EXPORT

Documentary compliance – cost (US\$) & time (hours)

Obtain, prepare and submit documents:

- During transport, clearance, inspections and port or border handling in origin economy
- Required by origin, transit and destination economies

Covers all documents by law and in practice

Border compliance – cost (US\$) & time (hours)

Customs clearance and inspections

Inspections by other agencies

Port or border handling

Obtaining, preparing and submitting documents during clearance, inspections and port or border handling

Domestic transport*

Loading and unloading of shipment

Transport between warehouse and terminal/port

Transport between terminal/port and border

Obtaining, preparing and submitting documents during domestic transport

Traffic delays and road police checks while shipment is en route

* Although *Doing Business* collects and publishes data on the time and cost for domestic transport, it does not use these data in calculating the distance to frontier score for trading across borders or the ranking on the ease of trading across borders.

Cost

- Insurance cost and informal payments for which no receipt is issued are excluded from the costs recorded. Costs are reported in U.S. dollars. Contributors are asked to convert local currency into U.S. dollars based on the exchange rate prevailing on the day they answer the questionnaire.

Assumptions of the case study

- For each of the 190 economies covered by *Doing Business*, it is assumed that a shipment travels from a warehouse in the largest business city of the exporting economy to a warehouse in the largest business city of the importing economy. For 11 economies the data are also collected, under the same case study assumptions, for the second largest business city.
- The import and export case studies assume different traded products. It is assumed that each economy imports a standardized shipment of 15 metric tons of containerized auto parts (HS 8708) from its natural import partner—the economy from which it imports the largest value (price times quantity) of auto parts. It is assumed that each economy exports the product of its comparative advantage (defined by the largest export value) to its natural export partner—the economy that is the largest purchaser of this product. Precious metal and gems, live animals and pharmaceuticals are excluded from the list of possible export products, however, and the second largest product category is considered as needed.
- A shipment is a unit of trade. Export shipments do not necessarily need to be containerized, while import shipments of auto parts are assumed to be containerized.
- Shipping cost based on weight is assumed to be greater than shipping cost based on volume.
- If government fees are determined by the value of the shipment, the value is assumed to be \$50,000.
- The product is new, not secondhand or used merchandise.
- The exporting firm is responsible for hiring and paying for a freight forwarder or customs broker (or both) and pays for all costs related to international shipping, domestic transport, clearance and mandatory inspections by customs and other government agencies, port or border handling, documentary compliance fees and the like for exports. The importing firm is responsible for the above costs for imports.
- The mode of transport is the one most widely used for the chosen export or import product and the trading partner, as is the seaport, airport or land border crossing.
- All electronic submissions of information requested by any government agency in connection with the shipment are considered to be documents obtained, prepared and submitted during the export or import process.
- A port or border is defined as a place (seaport, airport or land border crossing) where merchandise can enter or leave an economy.
- Government agencies considered relevant are agencies such as customs, port authorities, road police, border guards, standardization agencies, ministries or departments of agriculture or industry, national security agencies and any other government authorities.

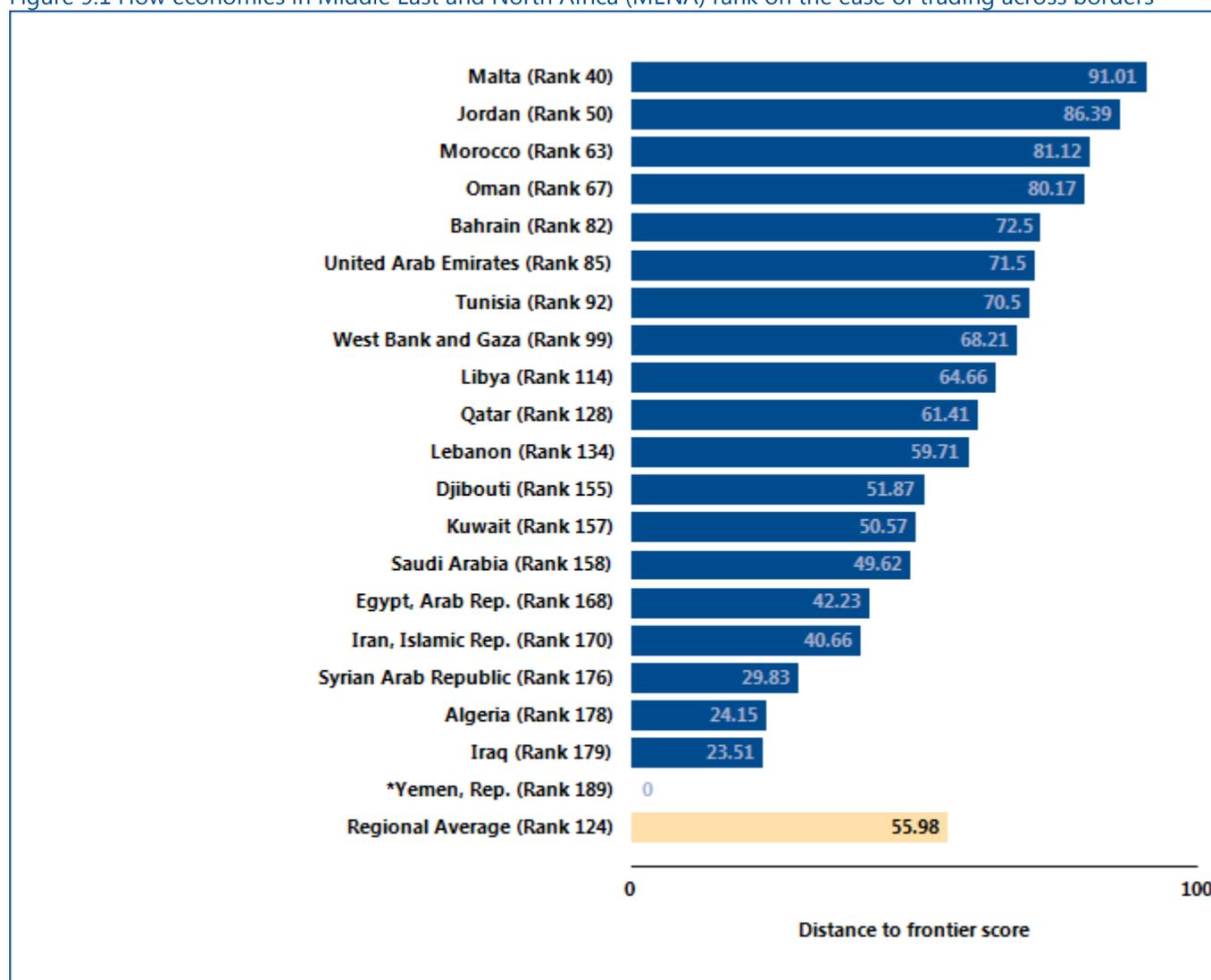
TRADING ACROSS BORDERS

Where do the region's economies stand today?

How easy it is for businesses in economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) to export and import goods? The global rankings of these economies on the ease of

trading across borders suggest an answer (figure 9.1). The average ranking of the region and comparator regions provide a useful benchmark.

Figure 9.1 How economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) rank on the ease of trading across borders



Source: Doing Business database.

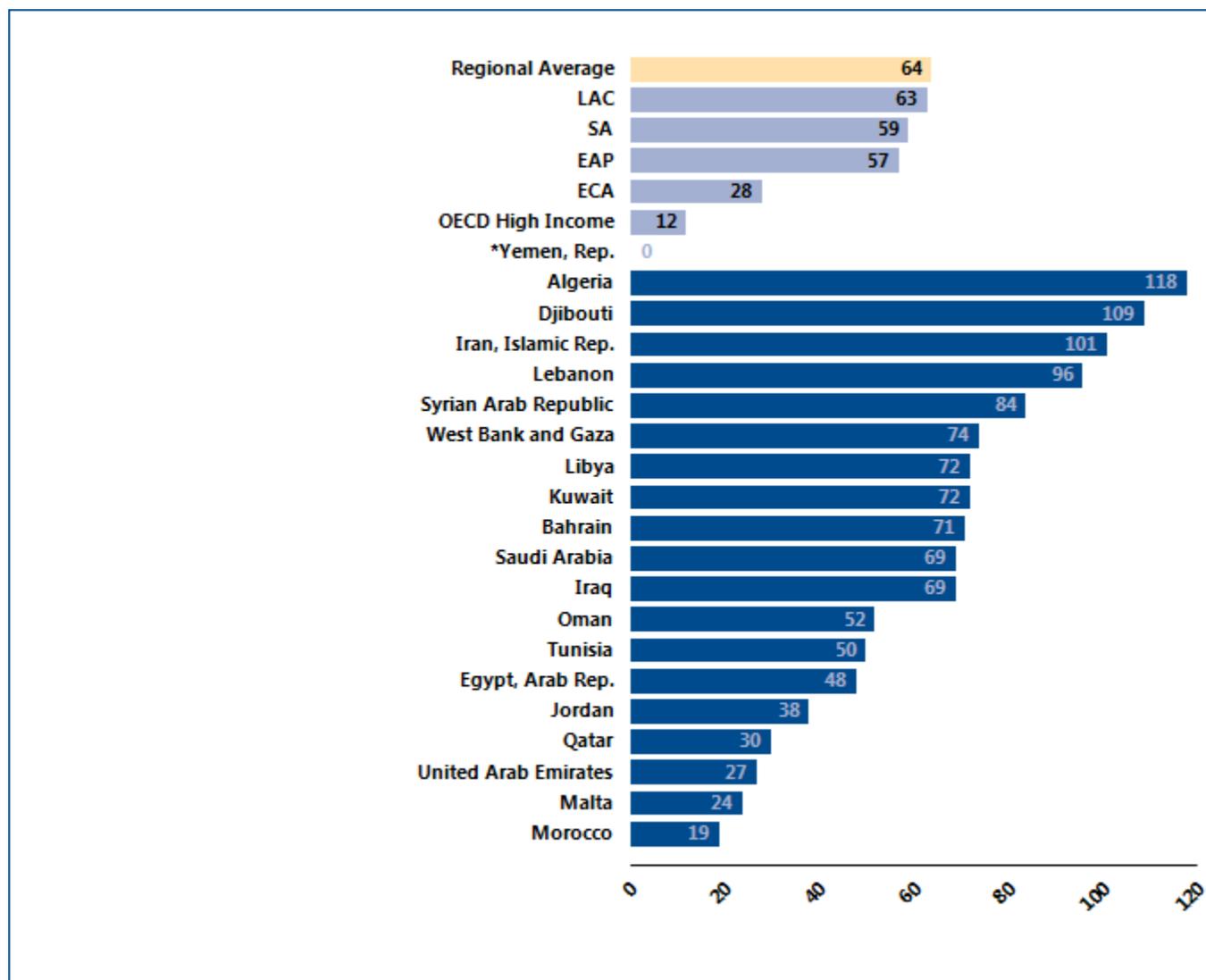
TRADING ACROSS BORDERS

The indicators reported here are for trading a shipment of goods by the most widely used mode of transport (whether sea, land, air or some combination of these). The information on the time and cost to complete export

and import is collected from local freight forwarders, customs brokers and traders. Comparing these indicators across the region and with averages both for the region and for comparator regions can provide useful insights.

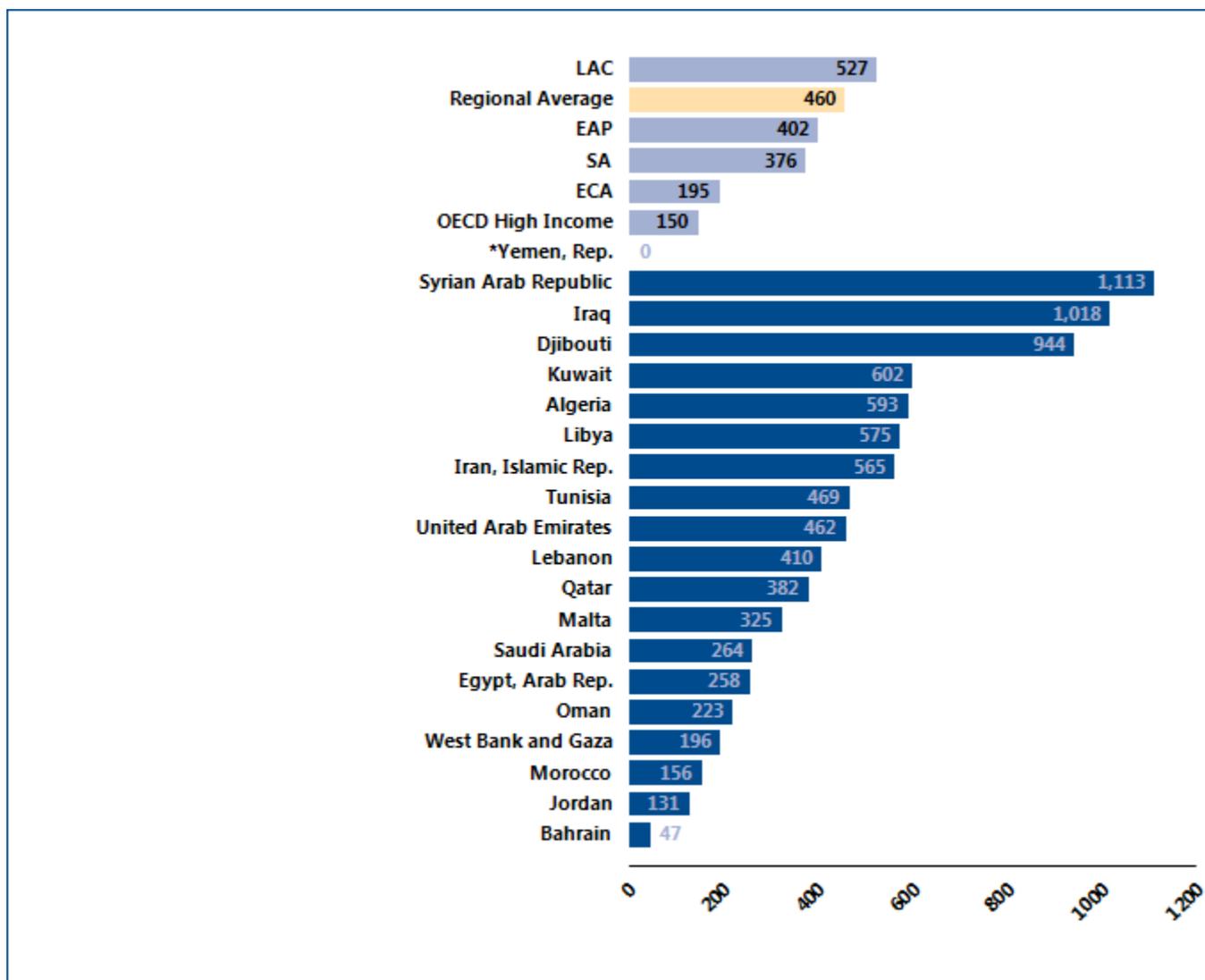
Figure 9.2 What it takes to trade across borders in economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

Time to export: Border compliance (hours)



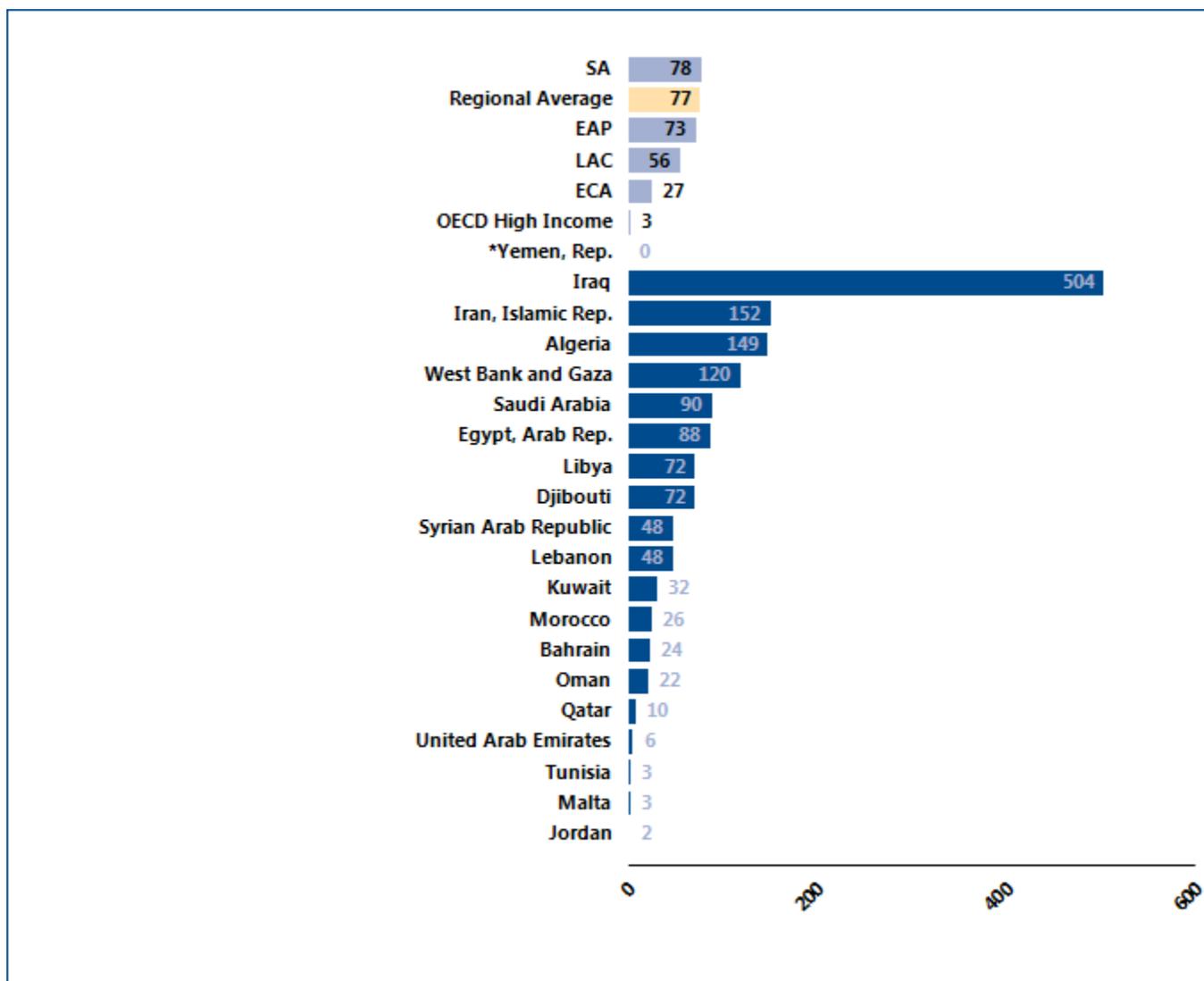
TRADING ACROSS BORDERS

Cost to export: Border compliance (USD)



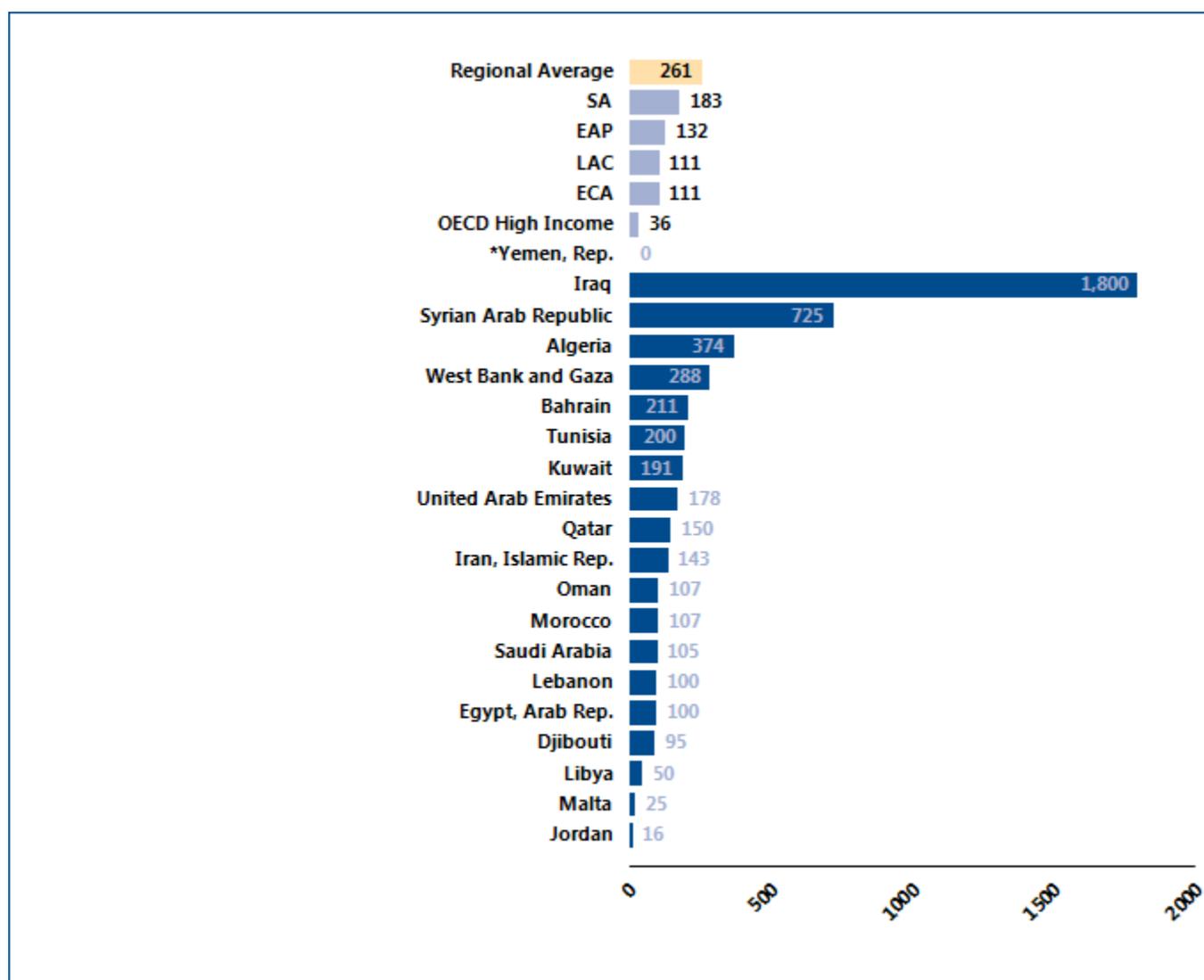
TRADING ACROSS BORDERS

Time to export: Documentary compliance (hours)



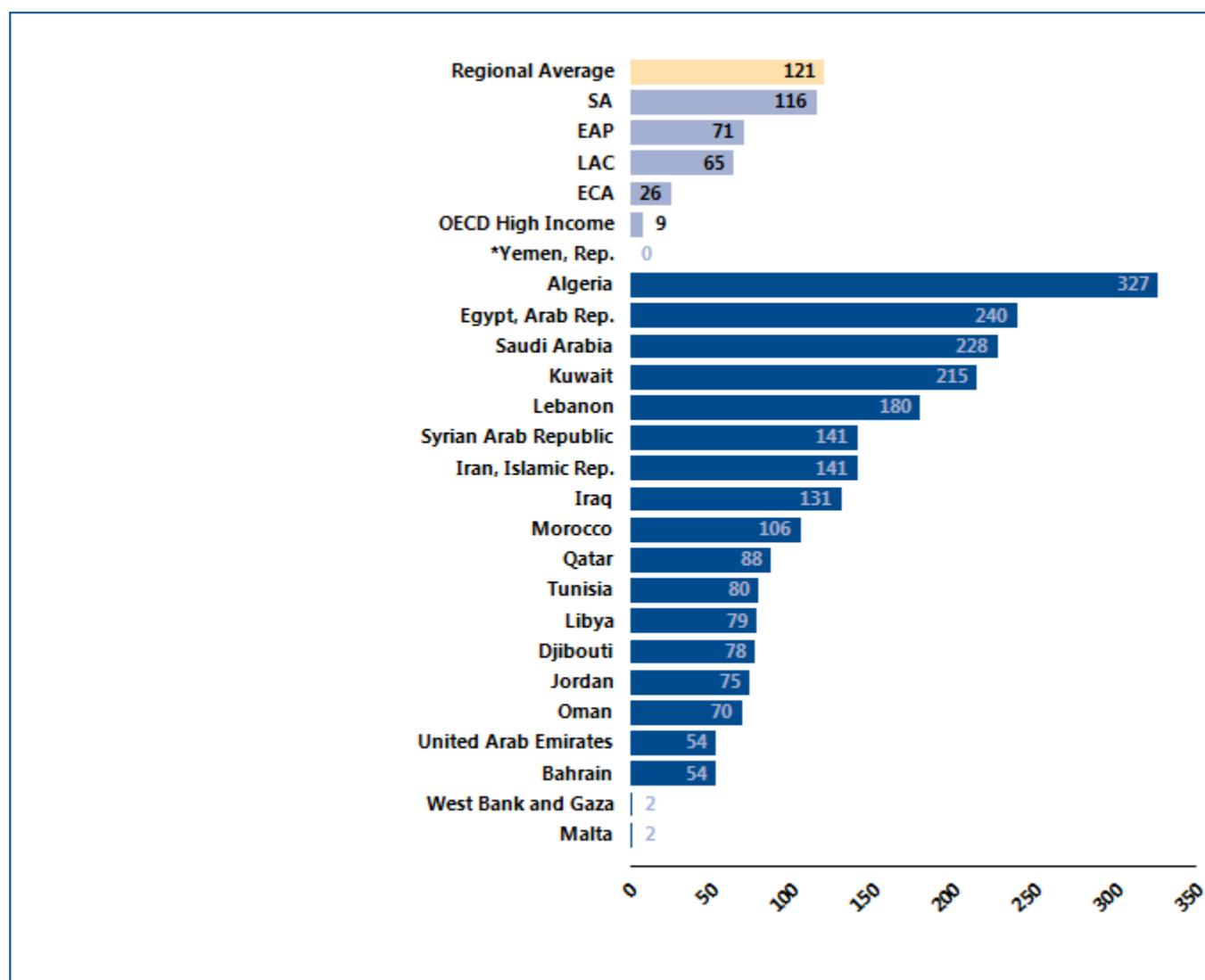
TRADING ACROSS BORDERS

Cost to export: Documentary compliance (USD)



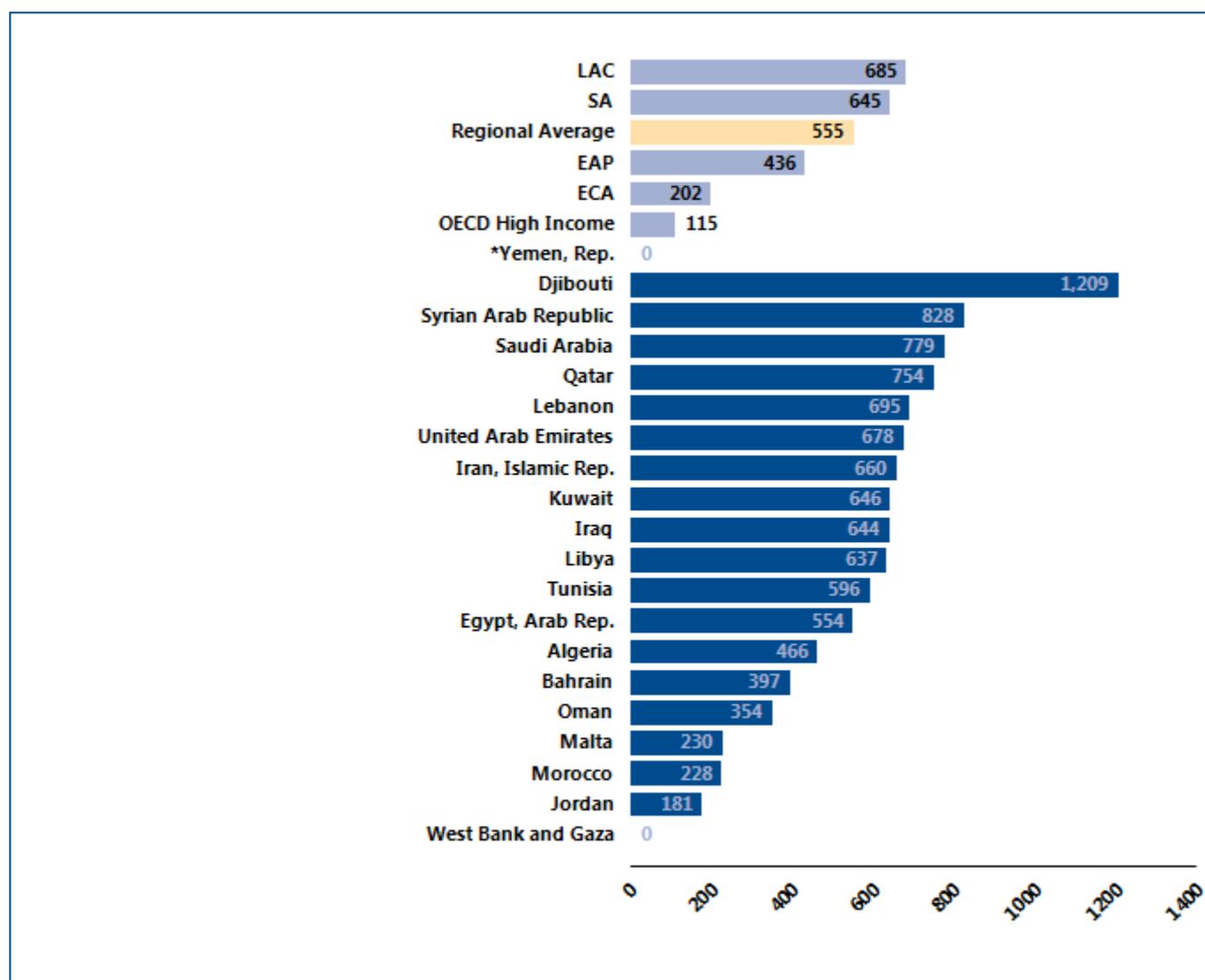
TRADING ACROSS BORDERS

Time to import: Border compliance (hours)



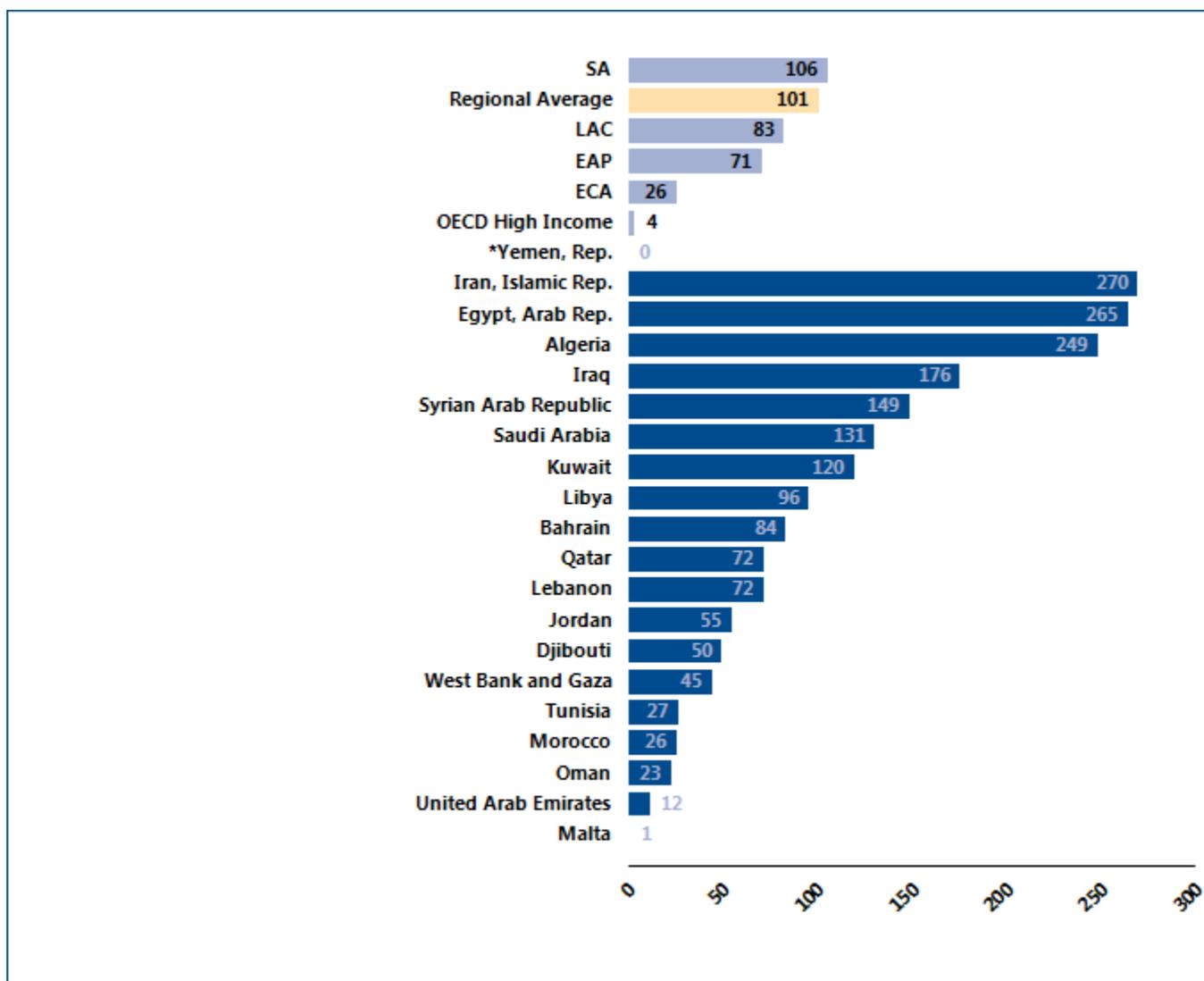
TRADING ACROSS BORDERS

Cost to import: Border compliance (USD)



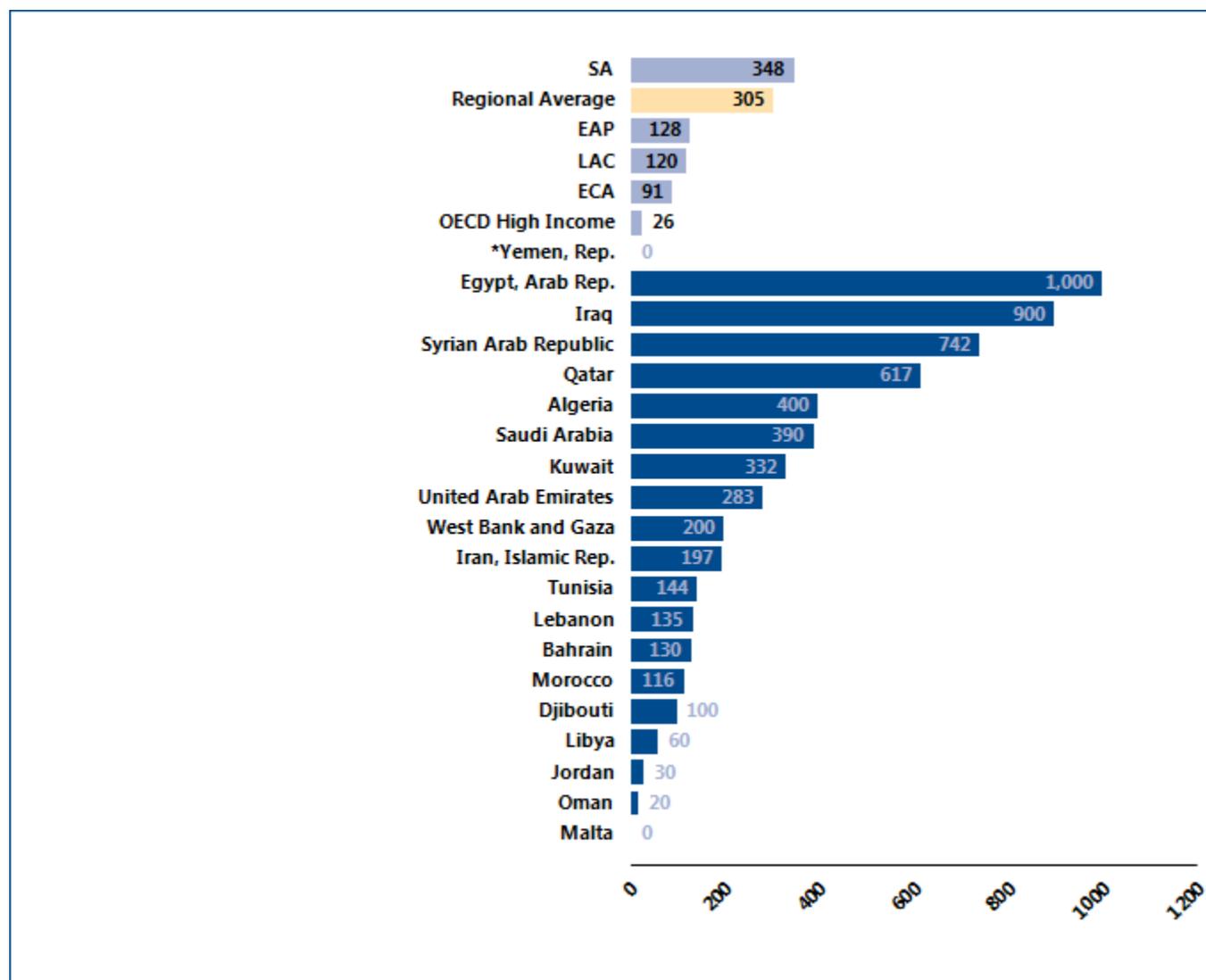
TRADING ACROSS BORDERS

Time to import: Documentary compliance (hours)



TRADING ACROSS BORDERS

Cost to import: Documentary compliance (USD)



Source: Doing Business database.

TRADING ACROSS BORDERS

What are the changes over time?

In economies around the world, trading across borders as measured by *Doing Business* has become faster and easier over the years. Governments have introduced tools to facilitate trade—including single windows, risk-based inspections and electronic data interchange

systems. These changes help improve their trading environment and boost firms' international competitiveness. What trade reforms has *Doing Business* recorded in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) (table 9.1)?

Table 9.1 How have economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) made trading across borders easier—or not?

By *Doing Business* report year DB2011 to DB2017

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by guaranteeing by law borrowers' right to inspect their own data.
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made exporting easier by improving infrastructure and streamlining procedures at the King Fahad Causeway.
DB2017	<i>Iraq</i>	Iraq made dealing with construction permits easier by allowing the simultaneous processing of utility clearances and building permit applications.
DB2017	<i>Iraq</i>	The Ministry of Electricity made getting electricity faster by enforcing tighter deadlines on electricity connections.
DB2017	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made exporting and importing easier by streamlining customs clearance processes, advancing the use of a single window and improving infrastructure at the Aqaba customs and port.
DB2017	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made exporting and importing easier by improving and expanding the services offered by the national single window.
DB2017	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made paying taxes less costly by increasing the depreciation rates for some fixed assets.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made enforcing contracts easier by adopting a new code of civil procedure.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia increased the length of the notice period for redundancy dismissals.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta improved access to credit information by launching a new credit registry.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	In Morocco the credit bureau began to provide credit scores.
DB2017	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia strengthened credit reporting by starting to distribute historical credit information and credit information from a telecommunications company.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened minority investor protections by clarifying ownership and control structures and by requiring greater corporate transparency.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar weakened minority investor protections by decreasing the rights of shareholders in major decisions, by diminishing ownership and control structures, by reducing requirements for approval of related-party transactions and their disclosure to the board of directors, and by limiting the liability of interested directors and board of directors in the event of prejudicial related-party transactions.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia strengthened minority investor protections by strengthening ownership and control structures of companies and by increasing corporate transparency requirements.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made registering property easier by streamlining the property registration process.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made registering property easier by increasing the transparency at its land registry.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made registering property more complex by requiring a security clearance prior to transferring the property.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made starting a business more difficult by increasing the time for company registration and more costly by increasing

DB year	Economy	Reform
		fees for post-registration procedures.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made starting a business easier by reducing the time to notarize a company's article of association.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business easier by abolishing the paid-in minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies.
DB2017	<i>Oman</i>	Oman made starting a business easier by removing the requirement to pay the minimum capital within three months of incorporation and streamlining the registration of employees.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made the process of starting a business easier by introducing an online platform to reserve the company name and reducing registration fees.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta simplified the process of starting a business by reducing the time needed to register a company.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made trading across borders easier by further developing its single window system and thus reducing border compliance time for importing.
DB2017	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the time for border and documentary compliance by introducing a new online single window/one-stop service that allows for fast electronic clearance of goods.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made paying taxes more difficult by introducing a more complex income tax return.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made paying taxes more costly by replacing the capital gains tax with a property transfer tax, increasing the maximum social security contribution paid by employers.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made dealing with construction permits easier by implementing risk-based inspections and merging the final inspection into the process of obtaining a completion certificate.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates reduced the duration of a single fixed-term contract from 48 to 24 month.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates reduced the time required to obtain a new electricity connection by implementing a new program with strict deadlines for reviewing applications, carrying out inspections and meter installations. The United Arab Emirates also introduced compensation for power outages.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened minority investor protections by increasing shareholder rights and role in major corporate decisions, clarifying ownership and control structures, and requiring greater corporate transparency.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made registering property easier by increasing the transparency at its land registry.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made it easier to start a business by streamlining name reservation and articles of association notarization and merging registration procedures with the Ministry of Human Resources and General Pensions and Social Security Authority.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt made starting a business easier by merging procedures at the one-stop shop by introducing a follow-up unit in charge of liaising with the tax and labor authority on behalf of the company.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt made trading across borders more difficult by making the process of obtaining and processing documents more complex and by imposing a cap on foreign exchange deposits and withdrawals for imports.
DB2017	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the time required to register by requiring companies to submit the original documents online and in person.
DB2017	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made exporting and importing easier by introducing customs e-links and electronic exchange of information among various agencies.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made dealing with construction permits indicator faster by reducing the time to obtain a construction permit.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made getting electricity more transparent by publishing electricity tariffs on the websites of the utility and the energy regulator.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made starting a business easier by eliminating the minimum capital requirement for business incorporation.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made paying taxes less costly by decreasing the tax on professional activities rate. The introduction of advanced accounting systems also made paying taxes easier.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt strengthened minority investor protections by increasing shareholder rights and role in major corporate decisions and by clarifying ownership and control structures.
DB2016	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt strengthened minority investor protections by barring subsidiaries from acquiring shares issued by their parent company.
DB2016	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made dealing with construction permits easier by eliminating the legal requirement to provide a certified copy of a property title when applying for a building permit.
DB2016	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made starting a business easier by eliminating the requirement to obtain managers' criminal records.
DB2016	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made getting electricity easier by reducing the time needed to provide a connection cost estimate.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made dealing with construction permits easier by streamlining the process for obtaining the civil defense approval.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made enforcing contracts easier by

DB year	Economy	Reform
		implementing electronic service of process, by introducing a new case management office within the competent court and by further developing the "Smart Petitions" service allowing litigants to file and track motions online.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened minority investor protections by barring a subsidiary from acquiring shares in its parent company and by requiring that a potential acquirer, upon reaching 50% or more of the capital of a company, make a purchase offer to all shareholders.
DB2016	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon made transferring property more complex by increasing the time required for property registration.
DB2016	<i>Malta</i>	The utility in Malta reduced the time required for getting an electricity connection by improving its supervision of trenching works.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	The utility in Morocco reduced the time required for getting an electricity connection by providing fee estimates more quickly.
DB2016	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved the regulation of outages by beginning to record data for the annual system average interruption duration index (SAIDI) and system average interruption frequency index (SAIFI).
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made dealing with construction permits more difficult by requiring architects to submit the building permit request online, along with supporting documents, and to follow up with a hard-copy submission. On the other hand, Morocco reduced the time required to obtain an urban certificate.
DB2016	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made dealing with construction permits easier by streamlining the process for obtaining the civil defense permit and for submitting the stamped concrete casting permit to the municipality.
DB2016	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made paying taxes less costly for companies by

DB year	Economy	Reform
		reducing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made paying taxes easier for companies by improving the electronic platform for filing and paying corporate income tax, VAT and labor taxes. On the other hand, Morocco increased the rate of the social charge paid by employers.
DB2016	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made the transfer of a property more expensive by introducing the new property transfer tax.
DB2016	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made property transfers faster by introducing a new computerized system at the land registry.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made property transfers faster by establishing electronic communication links between different tax authorities.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by eliminating the need to file a declaration of business incorporation with the Ministry of Labor.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	1) Morocco implemented an unemployment insurance scheme. 2) Morocco increased the minimum wage increased from 12.24 to 12.85 DH/hour as of July 1, 2014, according to decree n° 2.14.343 of June 2014, published in the official bulletin 5292.
DB2016	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the time for border compliance for both exporting and importing by transferring cargo operations from Sultan Qaboos Port to Sohar Port.
DB2016	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar reduced the time for border compliance for importing by reducing the number of days of free storage at the port and thus the time required for port handling.
DB2016	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia reduced border compliance time for both exporting and importing by improving the efficiency of its state-owned port handling company and investing in port infrastructure at

DB year	Economy	Reform
		the port of Rades.
DB2016	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	The credit registry in West Bank and Gaza began to distribute credit data from retailers and utility companies.
DB2015	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made paying taxes less costly for companies by reducing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2015	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made paying taxes easier for companies by introducing the option to make either 1 or 4 advance payments of corporate income tax.
DB2015	<i>Malta</i>	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.
DB2015	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made trading across borders easier by reducing the number of export documents required.
DB2015	<i>Tunisia</i>	In Tunisia trading across borders became more difficult because of a deterioration in port infrastructure (for example, in loading and unloading equipment) and inadequate terminal space.
DB2015	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	In the Republic of Yemen trading across borders became more difficult as a result of inefficient port operation.
DB2015	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made registering property easier by reducing the registration fee.
DB2015	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made dealing with construction permits less time-consuming by streamlining the review process for building permits.
DB2015	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by approving the credit bureau's collection of data on firms.
DB2015	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made getting electricity easier by eliminating the need for customers to obtain an excavation permit for electricity connection works.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2015	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made starting a business easier by streamlining the name reservation and company registration procedures.
DB2015	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made trading across borders easier by improving infrastructure at the port of Aqaba.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	In the United Arab Emirates the credit bureau improved access to credit information by starting to exchange credit information with a utility.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	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.
DB2015	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made trading across borders easier by upgrading infrastructure at the port of Algiers.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made transferring property easier by introducing new service centers and a standard contract for property transactions.
DB2015	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the commercial license fee.
DB2015	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	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.
DB2014	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt made paying taxes more costly for companies by increasing the corporate income tax rate.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made getting electricity easier by eliminating the requirement for site inspections and reducing the time required to provide new connections.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened investor protections by introducing greater disclosure requirements for related-party transactions in the annual report and to the stock exchange and by making it possible to sue directors when such transactions harm the company.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made transferring property easier by increasing the operating hours of the land registry and reducing transfer fees.
DB2014	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait strengthened investor protections by making it possible for minority shareholders to request the appointment of an auditor to review the company's activities.
DB2014	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti strengthened its secured transactions system by adopting a new commercial code, which broadens the range of movable assets that can be used as collateral.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by starting to collect payment information from retailers.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made starting a business more expensive by increasing the cost of the business registration certificate.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain reduced the maximum cumulative duration of fixed-term contracts, made third-party notification mandatory for redundancy dismissals and increased paid annual leave.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made resolving insolvency easier through its new commercial code, which allows an insolvent debtor to file for preventive settlement, legal redress or liquidation and sets out clear rules on the steps and procedures for each of the alternatives available.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made starting a business easier by simplifying the

DB year	Economy	Reform
		company name search and by eliminating the minimum capital requirement as well as the requirement to publish a notice of commencement of activities.
DB2014	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made dealing with construction permits less costly by significantly reducing the building permit fees.
DB2014	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made paying taxes easier for companies by eliminating certain requirements associated with the corporate income tax return.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made paying taxes easier for companies by increasing the use of the electronic filing and payment system for social security contributions.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made transferring property easier by reducing the time required to register a deed of transfer at the tax authority.
DB2014	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made starting a business less costly by eliminating the paid-in minimum capital requirement.
DB2014	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made starting a business more difficult by increasing the cost of company registration.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by reducing the company registration fees.
DB2014	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza introduced a minimum wage.
DB2014	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	
DB2013	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made starting a business more difficult by requiring company founders to obtain a criminal record clearance to register a new company.
DB2013	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran strengthened investor protections by requiring greater immediate disclosure of related-party transactions.
DB2013	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by eliminating the minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2013	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar reduced the time to export and import by introducing a new online portal allowing electronic submission of customs declarations for clearance at the Doha seaport.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made enforcing contracts easier by expanding the computerization of its courts and introducing an electronic filing system.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made getting electricity more expensive by increasing the connection fees.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made starting a business easier by eliminating the requirement for a company to prepare a name board in English and Arabic after having received clearance on the use of office premises.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made paying taxes easier for companies by establishing an online filing and payment system for social security contributions.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	In the United Arab Emirates the Dubai Electricity and Water Authority made getting electricity easier by introducing an electronic "one window, one step" application process allowing customers to submit and track their applications online and reducing the time for processing the applications.
DB2013	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the maximum number of working days per week and increased the paid annual leave applicable for employees with one year of service.
DB2013	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made transferring property more costly by increasing the property transfer fee.
DB2013	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made registering property more costly by increasing property registration fees.
DB2013	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza improved access to credit information by guaranteeing borrowers' right to inspect their personal data.
DB2013	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria improved access to credit information by establishing an online system for data exchange between all banks and

DB year	Economy	Reform
		microfinance institutions and the central bank's credit registry.
DB2013	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved access to credit information by guaranteeing borrowers' right to inspect their personal data.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made paying taxes easier for companies by introducing online filing and payment systems for social security contributions.
DB2013	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria improved access to credit information by eliminating the minimum threshold for loans to be included in the database.
DB2012	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria improved its credit information system by guaranteeing by law the right of borrowers to inspect their personal data.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar improved its credit information system by starting to distribute historical data and eliminating the minimum threshold for loans included in the database.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved its credit information system by launching the Bank Credit and Statistical Bureau System, which collects historical information on performing and nonperforming loans for both firms and individuals.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened investor protections by allowing minority shareholders to obtain any nonconfidential corporate document during trial.
DB2012	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates improved its credit information system through a new law allowing the establishment of a federal credit bureau under the supervision of the central bank.
DB2012	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon made getting electricity less costly by reducing the application fees and security deposit for a new connection.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco eased the administrative burden of paying taxes for firms by enhancing electronic filing and payment of the corporate income tax and value added tax.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	Oman enacted a new income tax law that redefined the scope of taxation.
DB2012	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	The Republic of Yemen enacted a new tax law that reduced the general corporate tax rate from 35% to 20% and abolished all tax exemptions except those granted under the investment law for investment projects.
DB2012	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made starting a business easier by merging the requirements to file company documents with the Department for Economic Development, to obtain a trade license and to register with the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made dealing with construction permits more difficult by increasing the time and cost to process building permits.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made dealing with construction permits easier by opening a one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	Yemen made starting a business more difficult due to the suspension of registration services at the one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made starting a business easier by bringing together representatives from the Department of Zakat and Income Tax and the General Organization of Social Insurance at the Unified Center to register new companies with their agencies.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	The one-stop shop in Oman introduced online company registration and sped up the process to register a business from 7 days to 3 days.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business easier by combining commercial registration and registration with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry at the one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made trading across borders faster by introducing X-ray scanners for risk management systems.
DB2012	<i>Iraq</i>	In Iraq starting a business became more expensive because of an increase in the cost to obtain a name reservation

DB year	Economy	Reform
		certificate and in the cost for lawyers to draft articles of association.
DB2012	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement from 1,000 Jordanian dinars to 1 dinar, of which only half must be deposited before company registration.
DB2012	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made dealing with construction permits costlier by increasing the fees for inspections and the building permit and adding a new inspection in the preconstruction phase.
DB2012	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made trading across borders faster by developing a new container terminal.
DB2011	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made registering property more burdensome by increasing the fees at the Survey and Land Registration Bureau.
DB2011	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made it easier to trade by building a modern new port, improving the electronic data interchange system and introducing risk-based inspections.
DB2011	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon increased the cost of starting a business.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran eased business start-up by installing a web portal allowing entrepreneurs to search for and reserve a unique company name.
DB2011	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon improved its credit information system by allowing banks online access to the public credit registry's reports.
DB2011	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan improved its credit information system by setting up a regulatory framework for establishing a private credit bureau as well as lowering the threshold for loans to be reported to the public credit registry.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The establishment of a new private credit bureau improved access to credit information.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made enforcing contracts easier and faster by introducing electronic filing of some

DB year	Economy	Reform
		documents, text message notification and an electronic case management system.
DB2011	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan abolished certain taxes and made it possible to file income and sales tax returns electronically.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria eliminated the severance payment obligation but increased the notice period applicable in case of redundancy dismissals. Implemented a 100% pay premium for weekly holiday work and decreased the total term limit of fixed-term contracts.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made dealing with construction permits easier for the second year in a row by introducing a new, streamlined process.
DB2011	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business more difficult by adding a procedure to register for taxes and obtain a company seal.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria eased business start-up by reducing the minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies by two-thirds. It also decentralized approval of the company memorandum.
DB2011	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made starting a business more difficult by increasing the lawyers' fees that must be paid for incorporation.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia speeded up the insolvency process by providing earlier access to amicable settlements and putting time limits on the settlements to encourage creditors to participate.
DB2011	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates enhanced access to credit by setting up a legal framework for the operation of the private credit bureau and requiring that financial institutions share credit information.
DB2011	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates streamlined document preparation and reduced the time to trade with the launch of Dubai Customs' comprehensive new customs system, Mirsal 2.
DB2011	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait increased the number of days of paid annual leave

DB year	Economy	Reform
		and increased the notice period applicable in case of redundancy dismissals.
DB2011	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia introduced the use of electronic systems for payment of corporate income tax and value added tax.
DB2011	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	More efficient processes at Palestinian customs made trading easier in the West Bank.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia reduced the time to import by launching a new container terminal at the Jeddah Islamic Port.
DB2011	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia upgraded its electronic data interchange system for imports and exports, speeding up the assembly of import documents.
DB2011	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened investor protections by requiring greater disclosure in companies' annual reports.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria enhanced access to credit by eliminating the minimum threshold for loans included in the database, which expanded the coverage of individuals and firms to 2.8% of the adult population.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	An amendment to Saudi Arabia's commercial lien law enhanced access to credit by making secured lending more flexible and allowing out-of-court enforcement in case of default.
DB2011	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt reduced the cost to start a business.
DB2011	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt made trading easier by introducing an electronic system for submitting export and import documents.

Note: For information on reforms in earlier years (back to DB2005), see the *Doing Business* reports for these years, available at <http://www.doingbusiness.org>.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

ENFORCING CONTRACTS

Effective commercial dispute resolution has many benefits. Courts are essential for entrepreneurs because they interpret the rules of the market and protect economic rights. Efficient and transparent courts encourage new business relationships because businesses know they can rely on the courts if a new customer fails to pay. Speedy trials are essential for small enterprises, which may lack the resources to stay in business while awaiting the outcome of a long court dispute.

What do the indicators cover?

Doing Business measures the time and cost for resolving a standardized commercial dispute through a local first-instance court. In addition, this year it introduces a new measure, the quality of judicial processes index, evaluating whether each economy has adopted a series of good practices that promote quality and efficiency in the court system. This new index replaces the indicator on procedures, which was eliminated this year. The ranking of economies on the ease of enforcing contracts is determined by sorting their distance to frontier scores. These scores are the simple average of the distance to frontier scores for each of the component indicators

The dispute in the case study involves the breach of a sales contract between 2 domestic businesses. The case study assumes that the court hears an expert on the quality of the goods in dispute. This distinguishes the case from simple debt enforcement. To make the data comparable across economies, *Doing Business* uses several assumptions about the case:

- The value of the claim is equal to 200% of the economy's income per capita or \$5,000, whichever is greater.
- The dispute concerns a lawful transaction between two businesses (Seller and Buyer), both located in the economy's largest business city. For 11 economies the data are also collected for the second largest business city.
- Seller (the plaintiff) sues Buyer (the defendant) to recover the amount under the sales agreement. The dispute is brought before the court located in the economy's largest business city with jurisdiction over commercial cases worth 200%

WHAT THE ENFORCING CONTRACTS

INDICATORS MEASURE

Time required to enforce a contract through the courts (calendar days)

- Time to file and serve the case
- Time for trial and to obtain the judgment
- Time to enforce the judgment

Cost required to enforce a contract through the courts (% of claim)

- Attorney fees
- Court fees
- Enforcement fees

Quality of judicial processes index (0-18)

- Court structure and proceedings (0-5)
- Case management (0-6)
- Court automation (0-4)
- Alternative dispute resolution (0-3)

of income per capita or \$5,000, whichever is greater. As noted, for 11 economies the data are also collected for the second largest business city.

- At the outset of the dispute, Seller decides to attach Buyer's movable assets (for example, office equipment and vehicles) because Seller fears that Buyer may hide its assets or otherwise become insolvent.
- The claim is disputed on the merits because of Buyer's allegation that the quality of the goods was not adequate. Because the court cannot decide the case on the basis of documentary evidence or legal title alone, an expert opinion is given on the quality of the goods. If it is standard practice in the economy for each party to call its own expert witness, the parties each call one expert witness. If it is standard practice for the judge to appoint an independent expert, the judge does so. In this case the judge does not allow opposing expert testimony.
- Following the expert opinion, the judge decides that the goods delivered by Seller were of adequate quality and that Buyer must pay the contract price. The judge thus renders a final judgment that is 100% in favor of Seller.
- Buyer does not appeal the judgment. Seller decides to start enforcing the judgment as soon as the time allocated by law for appeal lapses.
- Seller takes all required steps for prompt enforcement of the judgment. The money is successfully collected through a public sale of Buyer's movable assets (for example, office equipment and vehicles).

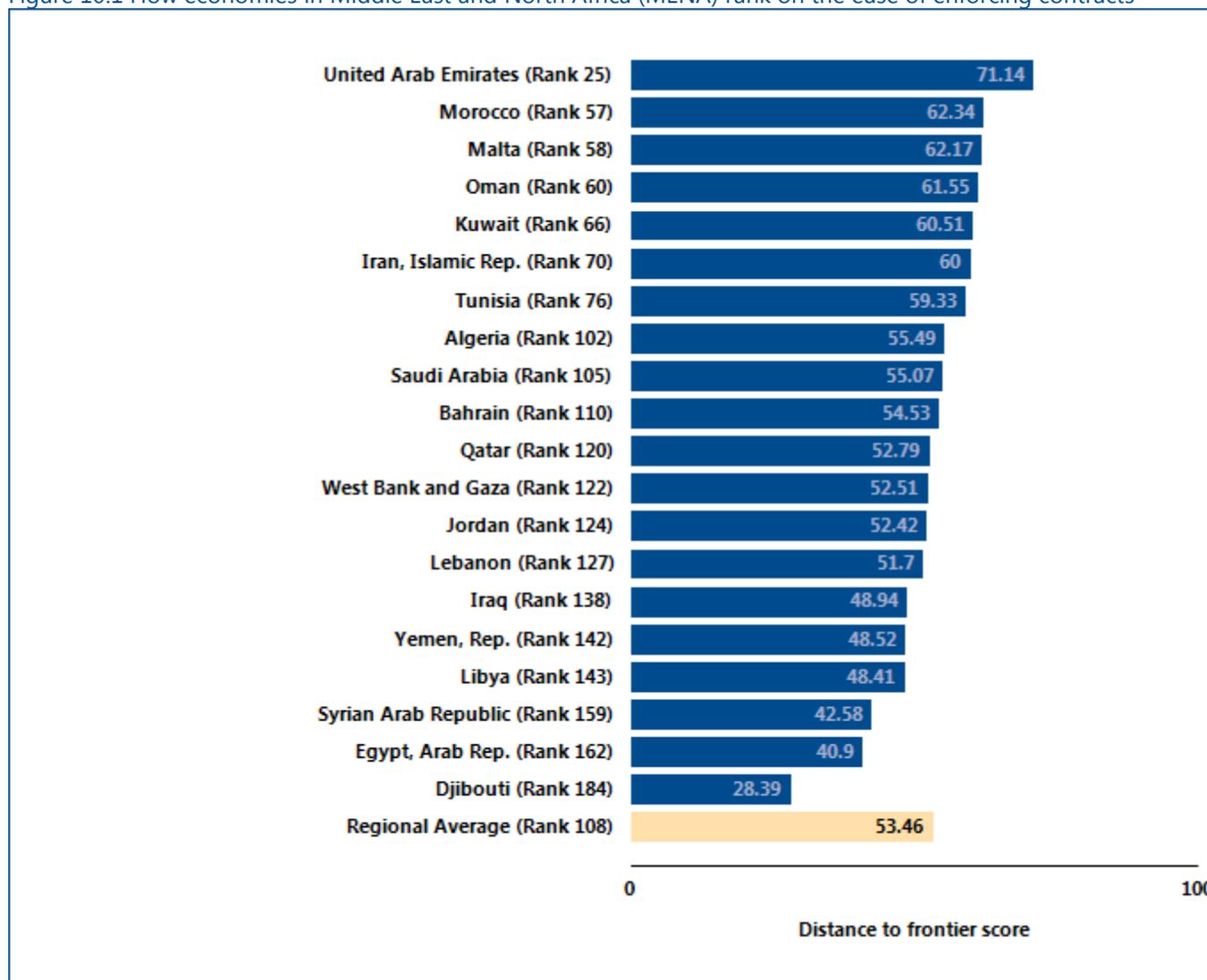
ENFORCING CONTRACTS

Where do the region’s economies stand today?

How efficient is the process of resolving a commercial dispute through the courts in economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA)? The global rankings of these

economies on the ease of enforcing contracts suggest an answer (figure 10.1). The average ranking of the region and comparator regions provide a useful benchmark.

Figure 10.1 How economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) rank on the ease of enforcing contracts



Source: Doing Business database.

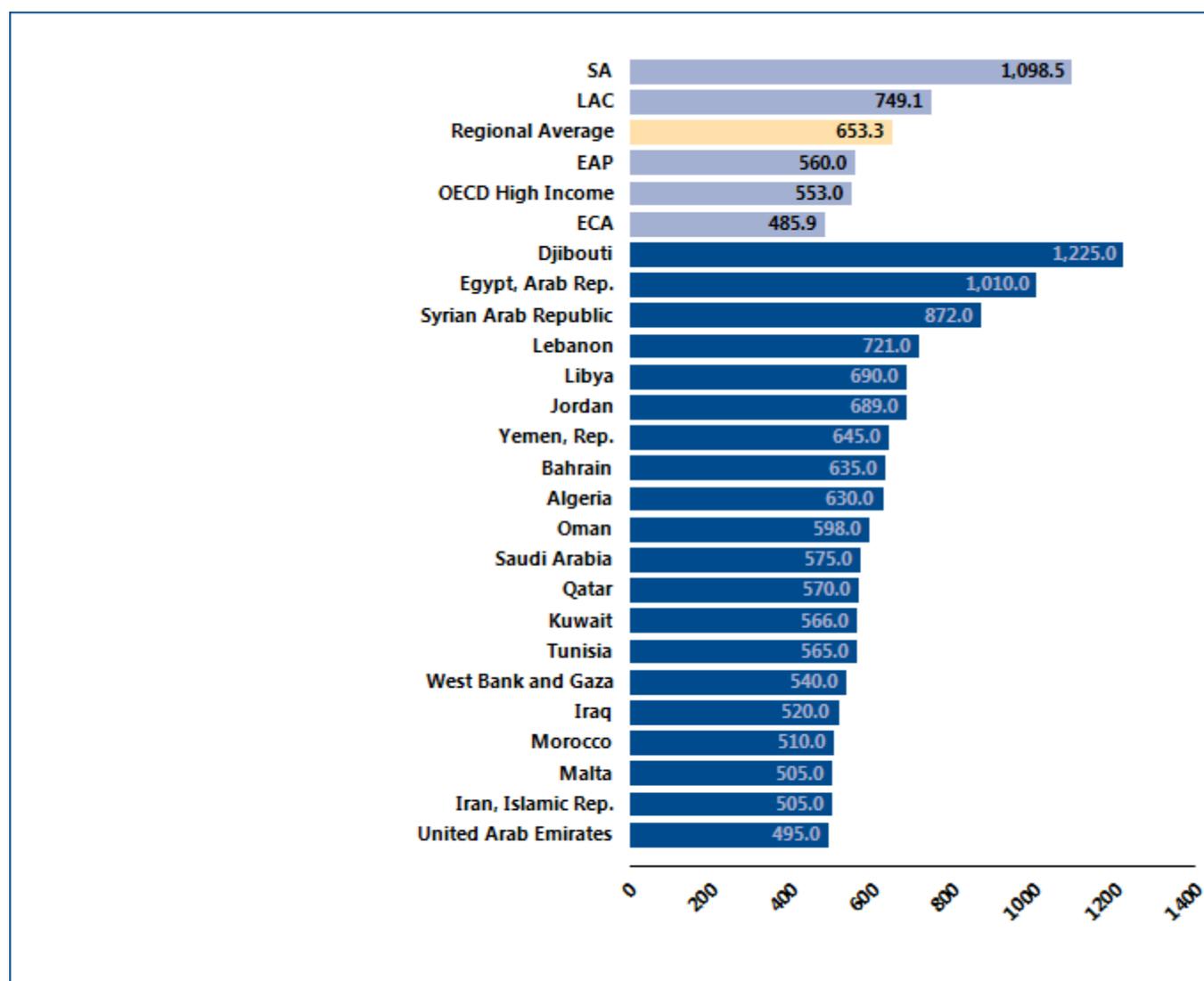
ENFORCING CONTRACTS

The indicators underlying the rankings may also be revealing. Data collected by *Doing Business* show what it takes to enforce a contract through the courts in each economy in the region: the time, the cost and quality of

judicial processes index (figure 10.2). Comparing these indicators across the region and with averages both for the region and for comparator regions can provide useful insights.

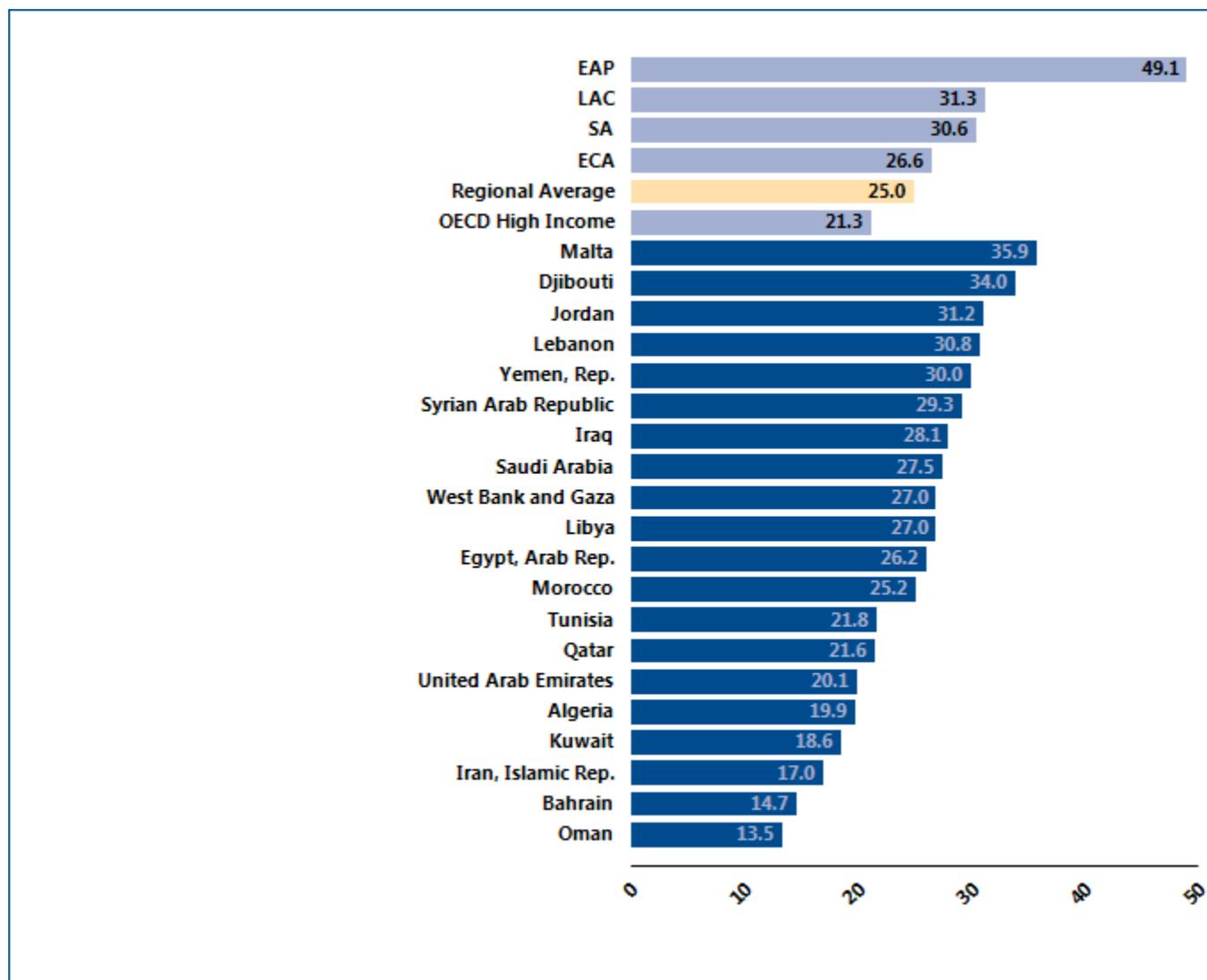
Figure 10.2 What it takes to enforce a contract through the courts in economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

Time (days)



ENFORCING CONTRACTS

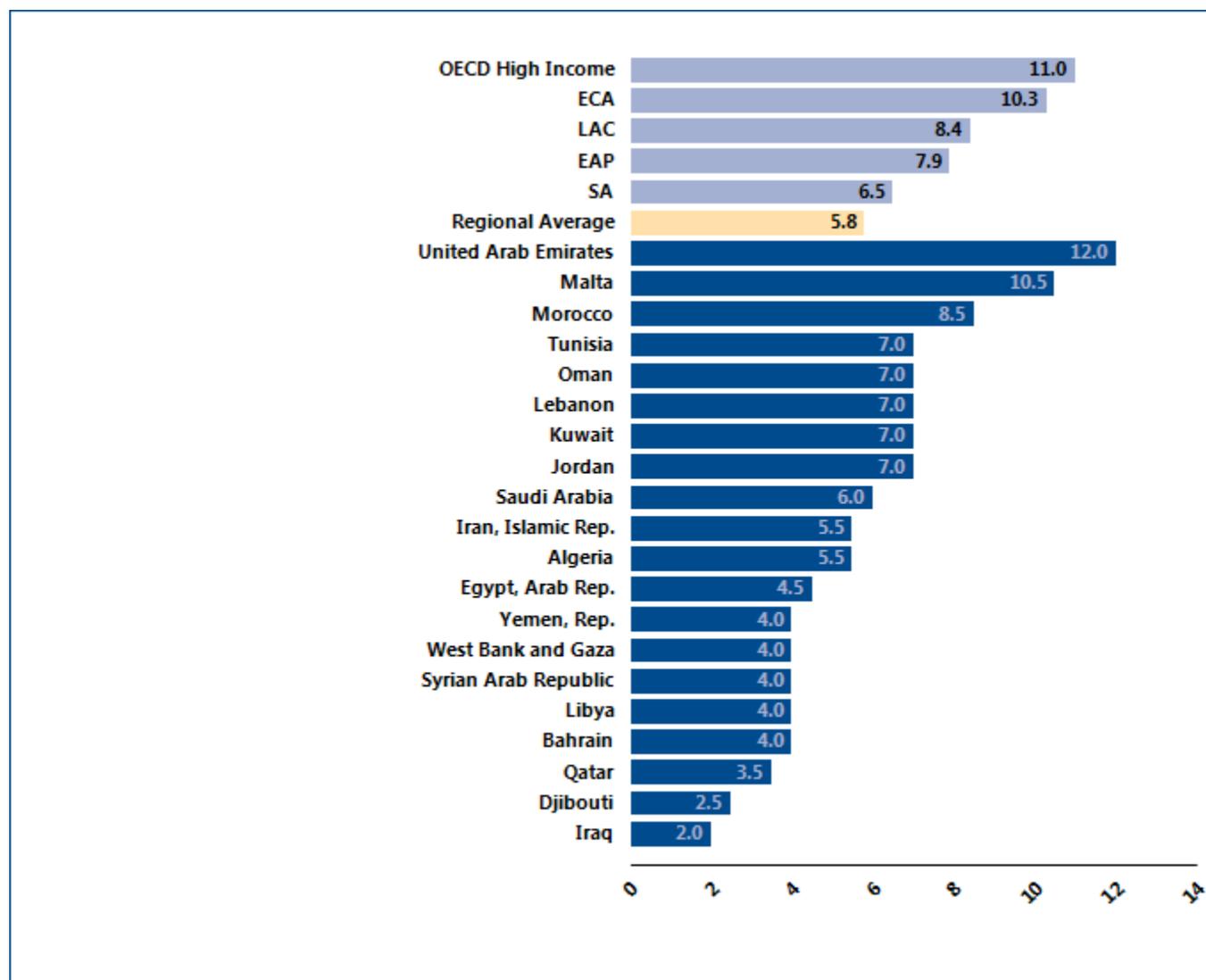
Cost (% of claim)



Source: Doing Business database.

ENFORCING CONTRACTS

Quality of Judicial Processes Index (0-18)



Source: *Doing Business* database.

Note: Higher values indicate more efficient judicial processes.

ENFORCING CONTRACTS

What are the changes over time?

Economies in all regions have improved contract enforcement in recent years. A judiciary can be improved in different ways. Higher-income economies tend to look for ways to enhance efficiency by introducing new technology. Lower-income economies often work on reducing backlogs by introducing periodic reviews to

clear inactive cases from the docket and by making procedures faster. What reforms making it easier (or more difficult) to enforce contracts has *Doing Business* recorded in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) (table 10.1)?

Table 10.1 How have economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) made enforcing contracts easier—or not?

By *Doing Business* report year DB2011 to DB2017

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by guaranteeing by law borrowers' right to inspect their own data.
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made exporting easier by improving infrastructure and streamlining procedures at the King Fahad Causeway.
DB2017	<i>Iraq</i>	Iraq made dealing with construction permits easier by allowing the simultaneous processing of utility clearances and building permit applications.
DB2017	<i>Iraq</i>	The Ministry of Electricity made getting electricity faster by enforcing tighter deadlines on electricity connections.
DB2017	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made exporting and importing easier by streamlining customs clearance processes, advancing the use of a single window and improving infrastructure at the Aqaba customs and port.
DB2017	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made exporting and importing easier by improving and expanding the services offered by the national single window.
DB2017	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made paying taxes less costly by increasing the depreciation rates for some fixed assets.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made enforcing contracts easier by adopting a new code of civil procedure.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia increased the length of the notice period for redundancy dismissals.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta improved access to credit information by launching a new credit registry.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	In Morocco the credit bureau began to provide credit scores.
DB2017	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia strengthened credit reporting by starting to distribute historical credit information and credit information from a telecommunications company.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened minority investor protections by clarifying ownership and control structures and by requiring greater corporate transparency.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar weakened minority investor protections by decreasing the rights of shareholders in major decisions, by diminishing ownership and control structures, by reducing requirements for approval of related-party transactions and their disclosure to the board of directors, and by limiting the liability of interested directors and board of directors in the event of prejudicial related-party transactions.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia strengthened minority investor protections by strengthening ownership and control structures of companies and by increasing corporate transparency requirements.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made registering property easier by streamlining the property registration process.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made registering property easier by increasing the transparency at its land registry.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made registering property more complex by requiring a security clearance prior to transferring the property.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made starting a business more difficult by increasing the time for company registration and more costly by increasing fees for post-registration procedures.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made starting a business easier by reducing the time to notarize a company's article of association.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business easier by abolishing the paid-in minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies.
DB2017	<i>Oman</i>	Oman made starting a business easier by removing the requirement to pay the minimum capital within three months of incorporation and streamlining the registration of employees.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made the process of starting a business easier by introducing an online platform to reserve the company name

DB year	Economy	Reform
		and reducing registration fees.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta simplified the process of starting a business by reducing the time needed to register a company.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made trading across borders easier by further developing its single window system and thus reducing border compliance time for importing.
DB2017	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the time for border and documentary compliance by introducing a new online single window/one-stop service that allows for fast electronic clearance of goods.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made paying taxes more difficult by introducing a more complex income tax return.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made paying taxes more costly by replacing the capital gains tax with a property transfer tax, increasing the maximum social security contribution paid by employers.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made dealing with construction permits easier by implementing risk-based inspections and merging the final inspection into the process of obtaining a completion certificate.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates reduced the duration of a single fixed-term contract from 48 to 24 month.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates reduced the time required to obtain a new electricity connection by implementing a new program with strict deadlines for reviewing applications, carrying out inspections and meter installations. The United Arab Emirates also introduced compensation for power outages.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened minority investor protections by increasing shareholder rights and role in major corporate decisions, clarifying ownership and control structures, and requiring greater corporate transparency.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made registering property easier by increasing the transparency at its land registry.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made it easier to start a business by streamlining name reservation and articles of association notarization and merging registration procedures with the Ministry of Human Resources and General Pensions and Social Security Authority.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt made starting a business easier by merging procedures at the one-stop shop by introducing a follow-up unit in charge of liaising with the tax and labor authority on behalf of the company.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt made trading across borders more difficult by making the process of obtaining and processing documents more complex and by imposing a cap on foreign exchange deposits and withdrawals for imports.
DB2017	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the time required to register by requiring companies to submit the original documents online and in person.
DB2017	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made exporting and importing easier by introducing customs e-links and electronic exchange of information among various agencies.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made dealing with construction permits indicator faster by reducing the time to obtain a construction permit.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made getting electricity more transparent by publishing electricity tariffs on the websites of the utility and the energy regulator.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made starting a business easier by eliminating the minimum capital requirement for business incorporation.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made paying taxes less costly by decreasing the tax on professional activities rate. The introduction of advanced accounting systems also made paying taxes easier.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt strengthened minority investor protections by increasing shareholder rights and role in major corporate decisions and by clarifying ownership and control structures.
DB2016	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt strengthened minority investor protections by barring subsidiaries from acquiring shares issued by their parent company.
DB2016	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made dealing with construction permits easier by eliminating the legal requirement to provide a certified copy of a property title when applying for a building permit.
DB2016	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made starting a business easier by eliminating the requirement to obtain managers' criminal records.
DB2016	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made getting electricity easier by

DB year	Economy	Reform
		reducing the time needed to provide a connection cost estimate.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made dealing with construction permits easier by streamlining the process for obtaining the civil defense approval.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	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 allowing litigants to file and track motions online.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened minority investor protections by barring a subsidiary from acquiring shares in its parent company and by requiring that a potential acquirer, upon reaching 50% or more of the capital of a company, make a purchase offer to all shareholders.
DB2016	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon made transferring property more complex by increasing the time required for property registration.
DB2016	<i>Malta</i>	The utility in Malta reduced the time required for getting an electricity connection by improving its supervision of trenching works.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	The utility in Morocco reduced the time required for getting an electricity connection by providing fee estimates more quickly.
DB2016	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved the regulation of outages by beginning to record data for the annual system average interruption duration index (SAIDI) and system average interruption frequency index (SAIFI).
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made dealing with construction permits more difficult by requiring architects to submit the building permit request online, along with supporting documents, and to follow up with a hard-copy submission. On the other hand, Morocco reduced the time required to obtain an urban certificate.
DB2016	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made dealing with construction permits easier by streamlining the process for obtaining the civil defense permit and for submitting the stamped concrete casting permit to the municipality.
DB2016	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made paying taxes less costly for companies by reducing the corporate income tax rate.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made paying taxes easier for companies by improving the electronic platform for filing and paying corporate income tax, VAT and labor taxes. On the other hand, Morocco increased the rate of the social charge paid by employers.
DB2016	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made the transfer of a property more expensive by introducing the new property transfer tax.
DB2016	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made property transfers faster by introducing a new computerized system at the land registry.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made property transfers faster by establishing electronic communication links between different tax authorities.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by eliminating the need to file a declaration of business incorporation with the Ministry of Labor.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	1) Morocco implemented an unemployment insurance scheme. 2) Morocco increased the minimum wage increased from 12.24 to 12.85 DH/hour as of July 1, 2014, according to decree n° 2.14.343 of June 2014, published in the official bulletin 5292.
DB2016	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the time for border compliance for both exporting and importing by transferring cargo operations from Sultan Qaboos Port to Sohar Port.
DB2016	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar reduced the time for border compliance for importing by reducing the number of days of free storage at the port and thus the time required for port handling.
DB2016	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia reduced border compliance time for both exporting and importing by improving the efficiency of its state-owned port handling company and investing in port infrastructure at the port of Rades.
DB2016	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	The credit registry in West Bank and Gaza began to distribute credit data from retailers and utility companies.
DB2015	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made paying taxes less costly for companies by reducing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2015	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made paying taxes easier for companies by introducing the option to make either 1 or 4 advance payments of corporate income tax.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2015	<i>Malta</i>	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.
DB2015	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made trading across borders easier by reducing the number of export documents required.
DB2015	<i>Tunisia</i>	In Tunisia trading across borders became more difficult because of a deterioration in port infrastructure (for example, in loading and unloading equipment) and inadequate terminal space.
DB2015	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	In the Republic of Yemen trading across borders became more difficult as a result of inefficient port operation.
DB2015	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made registering property easier by reducing the registration fee.
DB2015	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made dealing with construction permits less time-consuming by streamlining the review process for building permits.
DB2015	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by approving the credit bureau's collection of data on firms.
DB2015	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made getting electricity easier by eliminating the need for customers to obtain an excavation permit for electricity connection works.
DB2015	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made starting a business easier by streamlining the name reservation and company registration procedures.
DB2015	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made trading across borders easier by improving infrastructure at the port of Aqaba.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	In the United Arab Emirates the credit bureau improved access to credit information by starting to exchange credit information with a utility.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	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

DB year	Economy	Reform
		should prove to be unfair.
DB2015	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made trading across borders easier by upgrading infrastructure at the port of Algiers.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made transferring property easier by introducing new service centers and a standard contract for property transactions.
DB2015	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the commercial license fee.
DB2015	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	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.
DB2014	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt made paying taxes more costly for companies by increasing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made getting electricity easier by eliminating the requirement for site inspections and reducing the time required to provide new connections.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened investor protections by introducing greater disclosure requirements for related-party transactions in the annual report and to the stock exchange and by making it possible to sue directors when such transactions harm the company.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made transferring property easier by increasing the operating hours of the land registry and reducing transfer fees.
DB2014	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait strengthened investor protections by making it possible for minority shareholders to request the appointment of an auditor to review the company's activities.
DB2014	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti strengthened its secured transactions system by adopting a new commercial code, which broadens the range of movable assets that can be used as collateral.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by starting to collect payment information from retailers.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made starting a business more expensive by increasing the cost of the business registration certificate.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain reduced the maximum cumulative duration of fixed-term contracts, made third-party notification mandatory for redundancy dismissals and increased paid annual leave.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made resolving insolvency easier through its new commercial code, which allows an insolvent debtor to file for preventive settlement, legal redress or liquidation and sets out clear rules on the steps and procedures for each of the alternatives available.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made starting a business easier by simplifying the company name search and by eliminating the minimum capital requirement as well as the requirement to publish a notice of commencement of activities.
DB2014	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made dealing with construction permits less costly by significantly reducing the building permit fees.
DB2014	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made paying taxes easier for companies by eliminating certain requirements associated with the corporate income tax return.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made paying taxes easier for companies by increasing the use of the electronic filing and payment system for social security contributions.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made transferring property easier by reducing the time required to register a deed of transfer at the tax authority.
DB2014	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made starting a business less costly by eliminating the paid-in minimum capital requirement.
DB2014	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made starting a business more difficult by increasing the cost of company registration.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by reducing the company registration fees.
DB2014	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza introduced a minimum wage.
DB2014	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	
DB2013	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made starting a business more difficult by requiring company founders to obtain a criminal record clearance to register a new company.
DB2013	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran strengthened investor protections by requiring greater immediate disclosure of related-party transactions.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2013	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by eliminating the minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies.
DB2013	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar reduced the time to export and import by introducing a new online portal allowing electronic submission of customs declarations for clearance at the Doha seaport.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made enforcing contracts easier by expanding the computerization of its courts and introducing an electronic filing system.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made getting electricity more expensive by increasing the connection fees.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made starting a business easier by eliminating the requirement for a company to prepare a name board in English and Arabic after having received clearance on the use of office premises.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made paying taxes easier for companies by establishing an online filing and payment system for social security contributions.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	In the United Arab Emirates the Dubai Electricity and Water Authority made getting electricity easier by introducing an electronic "one window, one step" application process allowing customers to submit and track their applications online and reducing the time for processing the applications.
DB2013	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the maximum number of working days per week and increased the paid annual leave applicable for employees with one year of service.
DB2013	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made transferring property more costly by increasing the property transfer fee.
DB2013	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made registering property more costly by increasing property registration fees.
DB2013	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza improved access to credit information by guaranteeing borrowers' right to inspect their personal data.
DB2013	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria improved access to credit information by establishing an online system for data exchange between all banks and microfinance institutions and the central bank's credit registry.
DB2013	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved access to credit information by guaranteeing borrowers' right to inspect their personal data.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made paying taxes easier for companies by

DB year	Economy	Reform
		introducing online filing and payment systems for social security contributions.
DB2013	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria improved access to credit information by eliminating the minimum threshold for loans to be included in the database.
DB2012	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria improved its credit information system by guaranteeing by law the right of borrowers to inspect their personal data.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar improved its credit information system by starting to distribute historical data and eliminating the minimum threshold for loans included in the database.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved its credit information system by launching the Bank Credit and Statistical Bureau System, which collects historical information on performing and nonperforming loans for both firms and individuals.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened investor protections by allowing minority shareholders to obtain any nonconfidential corporate document during trial.
DB2012	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates improved its credit information system through a new law allowing the establishment of a federal credit bureau under the supervision of the central bank.
DB2012	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon made getting electricity less costly by reducing the application fees and security deposit for a new connection.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco eased the administrative burden of paying taxes for firms by enhancing electronic filing and payment of the corporate income tax and value added tax.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	Oman enacted a new income tax law that redefined the scope of taxation.
DB2012	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	The Republic of Yemen enacted a new tax law that reduced the general corporate tax rate from 35% to 20% and abolished all tax exemptions except those granted under the investment law for investment projects.
DB2012	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made starting a business easier by merging the requirements to file company documents with the Department for Economic Development, to obtain a trade license and to register with the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made dealing with construction permits more difficult by increasing the time and cost to process building permits.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made dealing with construction permits easier by opening a one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	Yemen made starting a business more difficult due to the suspension of registration services at the one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made starting a business easier by bringing together representatives from the Department of Zakat and Income Tax and the General Organization of Social Insurance at the Unified Center to register new companies with their agencies.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	The one-stop shop in Oman introduced online company registration and sped up the process to register a business from 7 days to 3 days.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business easier by combining commercial registration and registration with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry at the one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made trading across borders faster by introducing X-ray scanners for risk management systems.
DB2012	<i>Iraq</i>	In Iraq starting a business became more expensive because of an increase in the cost to obtain a name reservation certificate and in the cost for lawyers to draft articles of association.
DB2012	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement from 1,000 Jordanian dinars to 1 dinar, of which only half must be deposited before company registration.
DB2012	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made dealing with construction permits costlier by increasing the fees for inspections and the building permit and adding a new inspection in the preconstruction phase.
DB2012	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made trading across borders faster by developing a new container terminal.
DB2011	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made registering property more burdensome by increasing the fees at the Survey and Land Registration Bureau.
DB2011	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made it easier to trade by building a modern new port, improving the electronic data interchange system and introducing risk-based inspections.
DB2011	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon increased the cost of starting a business.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran eased business start-up by installing a web portal allowing entrepreneurs to search for

DB year	Economy	Reform
		and reserve a unique company name.
DB2011	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon improved its credit information system by allowing banks online access to the public credit registry's reports.
DB2011	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan improved its credit information system by setting up a regulatory framework for establishing a private credit bureau as well as lowering the threshold for loans to be reported to the public credit registry.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The establishment of a new private credit bureau improved access to credit information.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made enforcing contracts easier and faster by introducing electronic filing of some documents, text message notification and an electronic case management system.
DB2011	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan abolished certain taxes and made it possible to file income and sales tax returns electronically.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria eliminated the severance payment obligation but increased the notice period applicable in case of redundancy dismissals. Implemented a 100% pay premium for weekly holiday work and decreased the total term limit of fixed-term contracts.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made dealing with construction permits easier for the second year in a row by introducing a new, streamlined process.
DB2011	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business more difficult by adding a procedure to register for taxes and obtain a company seal.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria eased business start-up by reducing the minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies by two-thirds. It also decentralized approval of the company memorandum.
DB2011	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made starting a business more difficult by increasing the lawyers' fees that must be paid for incorporation.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia speeded up the insolvency process by providing earlier access to amicable settlements and putting time limits on the settlements to encourage creditors to participate.
DB2011	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates enhanced access to credit by setting up a legal framework for the operation of the private credit bureau and requiring that financial institutions share credit information.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2011	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates streamlined document preparation and reduced the time to trade with the launch of Dubai Customs' comprehensive new customs system, Mirsal 2.
DB2011	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait increased the number of days of paid annual leave and increased the notice period applicable in case of redundancy dismissals.
DB2011	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia introduced the use of electronic systems for payment of corporate income tax and value added tax.
DB2011	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	More efficient processes at Palestinian customs made trading easier in the West Bank.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia reduced the time to import by launching a new container terminal at the Jeddah Islamic Port.
DB2011	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia upgraded its electronic data interchange system for imports and exports, speeding up the assembly of import documents.
DB2011	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened investor protections by requiring greater disclosure in companies' annual reports.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria enhanced access to credit by eliminating the minimum threshold for loans included in the database, which expanded the coverage of individuals and firms to 2.8% of the adult population.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	An amendment to Saudi Arabia's commercial lien law enhanced access to credit by making secured lending more flexible and allowing out-of-court enforcement in case of default.
DB2011	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt reduced the cost to start a business.
DB2011	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt made trading easier by introducing an electronic system for submitting export and import documents.

Note: For information on reforms in earlier years (back to DB2005), see the *Doing Business* reports for these years, available at <http://www.doingbusiness.org>.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

RESOLVING INSOLVENCY

A robust bankruptcy system functions as a filter, ensuring the survival of economically efficient companies and reallocating the resources of inefficient ones. Fast and cheap insolvency proceedings result in the speedy return of businesses to normal operation and increase returns to creditors. By clarifying the expectations of creditors and debtors about the outcome of insolvency proceedings, well-functioning insolvency systems can facilitate access to finance, save more viable businesses and sustainably grow the economy.

What do the indicators cover?

Doing Business studies the time, cost and outcome of insolvency proceedings involving domestic legal entities. These variables are used to calculate the recovery rate, which is recorded as cents on the dollar recovered by secured creditors through reorganization, liquidation or debt enforcement (foreclosure or receivership) proceedings. To determine the present value of the amount recovered by creditors, *Doing Business* uses the lending rates from the International Monetary Fund, supplemented with data from central banks and the Economist Intelligence Unit.

In addition, *Doing Business* evaluates the adequacy and integrity of the existing legal framework applicable to liquidation and reorganization proceedings through the strength of insolvency framework index. The index tests whether economies adopted internationally accepted good practices in four areas: commencement of proceedings, management of debtor's assets, reorganization proceedings and creditor participation.

The ranking of economies on the ease of resolving insolvency is determined by sorting their distance to frontier scores for resolving insolvency. These scores are the simple average of the distance to frontier scores for the recovery rate and the strength of insolvency framework index. The Resolving Insolvency indicator does not measure insolvency proceedings of individuals and financial institutions. The data are derived from questionnaire responses by local insolvency practitioners and verified through a study of laws and regulations as well as public information on bankruptcy systems

WHAT THE RESOLVING INSOLVENCY INDICATORS MEASURE

Time required to recover debt (years)

Measured in calendar years

Appeals and requests for extension are included

Cost required to recover debt (% of debtor's estate)

Measured as percentage of estate value

Court fees

Fees of insolvency administrators

Lawyers' fees

Assessors' and auctioneers' fees

Other related fees

Outcome

Whether business continues operating as a going concern or business assets are sold piecemeal

Recovery rate for creditors

Measures the cents on the dollar recovered by secured creditors

Outcome for the business (survival or not) determines the maximum value that can be recovered

Official costs of the insolvency proceedings are deducted

Depreciation of furniture is taken into account

Present value of debt recovered

Strength of insolvency framework index (0-16)

Sum of the scores of four component indices:

Commencement of proceedings index (0-3)

Management of debtor's assets index (0-6)

Reorganization proceedings index (0-3)

Creditor participation index (0-4)

. A robust bankruptcy system functions as a filter, ensuring the survival of economically efficient companies and reallocating the resources of inefficient ones. Fast and cheap insolvency proceedings result in the speedy return of businesses to normal operation and increase returns to creditors. By clarifying the expectations of creditors and debtors about the outcome of insolvency proceedings, well-functioning insolvency systems can facilitate access to finance, save more viable businesses and sustainably grow the economy.

What do the indicators cover?

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To make the data on the time, cost and outcome comparable across economies, several assumptions about the business and the case are used:

- A hotel located in the largest city (or cities) has 201 employees and 50 suppliers. The hotel experiences financial difficulties.
- The value of the hotel is 100% of the income per capita or the equivalent in local currency of USD 200,000, whichever is greater.
- The hotel has a loan from a domestic bank, secured by a mortgage over the hotel's real estate. The hotel cannot pay back the loan, but makes enough money to operate otherwise.

In addition, *Doing Business* evaluates the adequacy and integrity of the existing legal framework applicable to liquidation and reorganization proceedings through the strength of insolvency framework index. The index tests whether economies adopted internationally accepted good practices in four areas: commencement of proceedings, management of debtor's assets, reorganization proceedings and creditor participation.

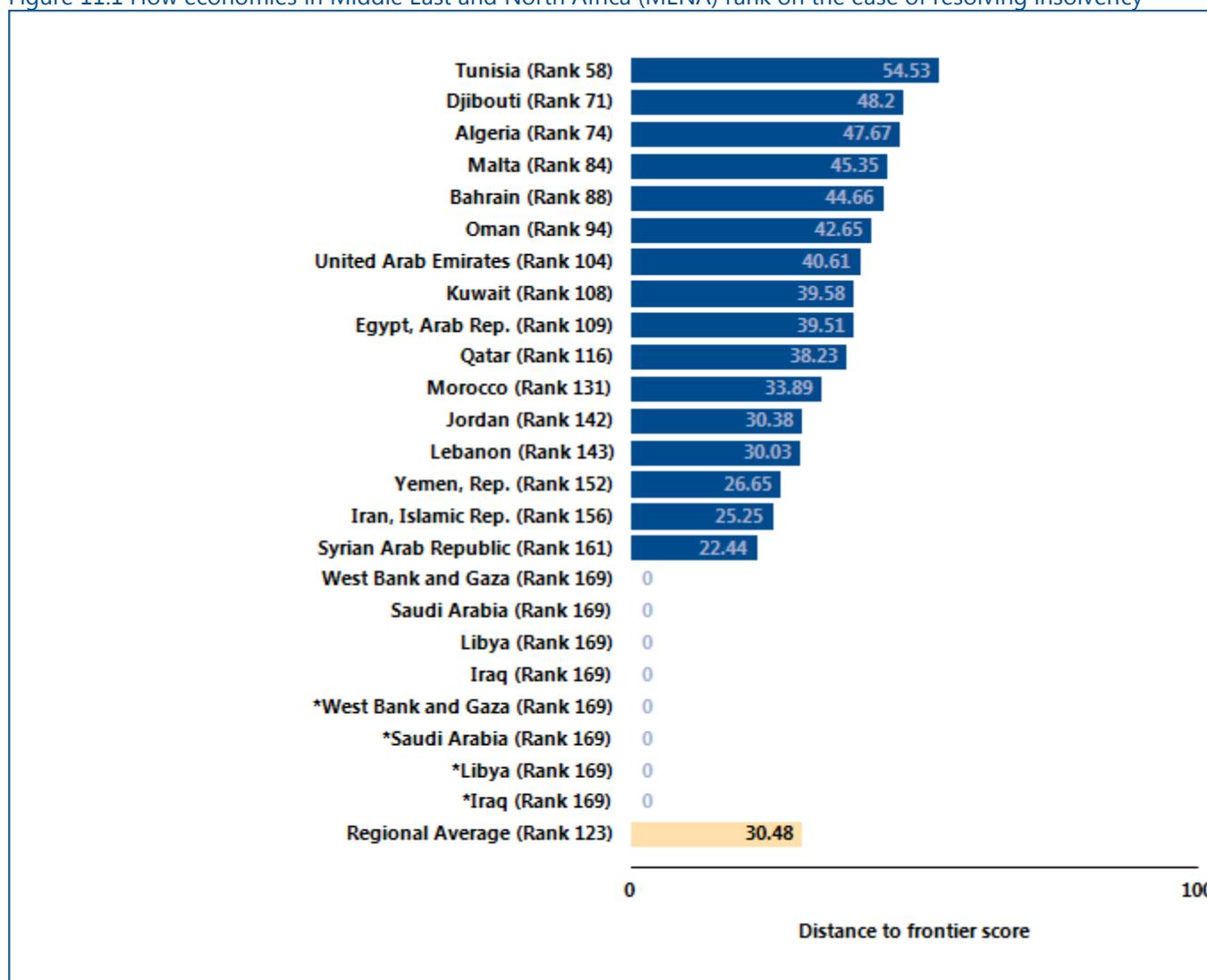
RESOLVING INSOLVENCY

Where do the region's economies stand today?

How efficient are insolvency proceedings in economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA)? The global rankings of these economies on the ease of resolving insolvency suggest an answer (figure 11.1). The average ranking of the region and comparator regions provide a

useful benchmark for assessing the efficiency of insolvency proceedings. Speed, low costs and continuation of viable businesses characterize the top-performing economies.

Figure 11.1 How economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) rank on the ease of resolving insolvency



Source: Doing Business database.

RESOLVING INSOLVENCY

The indicators underlying the rankings may be more revealing. Data collected by *Doing Business* show the average recovery rate and the average strength of insolvency framework index (figure 11.2). Comparing

these indicators across the region and with averages both for the region and for comparator regions can provide useful insights.

Figure 11.2 How efficient is the insolvency process in economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Recovery Rate (0–100)

Source: *Doing Business* database.

Total Strength of Insolvency Framework index (0-16)

Source: *Doing Business* database.

* Indicates a “no practice” mark. See the data notes for details. If an economy has no laws or regulations covering a specific area—for example, insolvency—it receives a “no practice” mark. Similarly, an economy receives a “no practice” or “not possible” mark if regulation exists but is never used in practice or if a competing regulation prohibits such practice. Either way, a “no practice” mark puts the economy at the bottom of the ranking on the relevant indicator.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

Note: Higher values indicate insolvency legislation that is better designed for rehabilitating viable firms and liquidating nonviable ones.

RESOLVING INSOLVENCY

What are the changes over time?

A well-balanced bankruptcy system distinguishes companies that are financially distressed but economically viable from inefficient companies that should be liquidated. But in some insolvency systems even viable businesses are liquidated. This is starting to

change. Many recent reforms of bankruptcy laws have been aimed at helping more of the viable businesses survive. What insolvency reforms has *Doing Business* recorded in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) (table 11.1)?

Table 11.1 How have economies in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) made resolving insolvency easier—or not?

By *Doing Business* report year DB2011 to DB2017

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by guaranteeing by law borrowers' right to inspect their own data.
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2017	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made exporting easier by improving infrastructure and streamlining procedures at the King Fahad Causeway.
DB2017	<i>Iraq</i>	Iraq made dealing with construction permits easier by allowing the simultaneous processing of utility clearances and building permit applications.
DB2017	<i>Iraq</i>	The Ministry of Electricity made getting electricity faster by enforcing tighter deadlines on electricity connections.
DB2017	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made exporting and importing easier by streamlining customs clearance processes, advancing the use of a single window and improving infrastructure at the Aqaba customs and port.
DB2017	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made exporting and importing easier by improving and expanding the services offered by the national single window.
DB2017	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made paying taxes less costly by increasing the depreciation rates for some fixed assets.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made enforcing contracts easier by adopting a new code of civil procedure.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia increased the length of the notice period for redundancy dismissals.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta improved access to credit information by launching a new credit registry.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	In Morocco the credit bureau began to provide credit scores.
DB2017	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia strengthened credit reporting by starting to distribute historical credit information and credit information from a telecommunications company.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened minority investor protections by clarifying ownership and control structures and by requiring greater corporate transparency.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar weakened minority investor protections by decreasing the rights of shareholders in major decisions, by diminishing ownership and control structures, by reducing requirements for approval of related-party transactions and their disclosure to the board of directors, and by limiting the liability of interested directors and board of directors in the event of prejudicial related-party transactions.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia strengthened minority investor protections by strengthening ownership and control structures of companies and by increasing corporate transparency requirements.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made registering property easier by streamlining the property registration process.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made registering property easier by increasing the transparency at its land registry.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made registering property more complex by requiring a security clearance prior to transferring the property.
DB2017	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria made starting a business more difficult by increasing the time for company registration and more costly by increasing fees for post-registration procedures.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made starting a business easier by reducing the time to notarize a company's article of association.
DB2017	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business easier by abolishing the paid-in minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies.
DB2017	<i>Oman</i>	Oman made starting a business easier by removing the requirement to pay the minimum capital within three months of incorporation and streamlining the registration of employees.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made the process of starting a business easier by introducing an online platform to reserve the company name and reducing registration fees.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta simplified the process of starting a business by reducing the time needed to register a company.
DB2017	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made trading across borders easier by further developing its single window system and thus reducing border compliance time for importing.
DB2017	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the time for border and documentary compliance by introducing a new online single window/one-stop service that allows for fast electronic clearance of goods.
DB2017	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made paying taxes more difficult by introducing a more complex income tax return.
DB2017	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made paying taxes more costly by replacing the capital gains tax with a property transfer tax, increasing the maximum social security contribution paid by employers.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made dealing with construction permits easier by implementing risk-based inspections and merging the final inspection into the process of obtaining a completion certificate.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates reduced the duration of a single fixed-term contract from 48 to 24 month.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates reduced the time required to obtain a new electricity connection by implementing a new program with strict deadlines for reviewing applications, carrying out inspections and meter installations. The United Arab Emirates also introduced compensation for power outages.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened minority investor protections by increasing shareholder rights and role in major corporate decisions, clarifying ownership and control structures, and requiring greater corporate transparency.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made registering property easier by increasing the transparency at its land registry.
DB2017	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made it easier to start a business by streamlining name reservation and articles of association notarization and merging registration procedures with the Ministry of Human Resources and General Pensions and Social Security Authority.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt made starting a business easier by merging procedures at the one-stop shop by introducing a follow-up unit in charge of liaising with the tax

DB year	Economy	Reform
		and labor authority on behalf of the company.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt made trading across borders more difficult by making the process of obtaining and processing documents more complex and by imposing a cap on foreign exchange deposits and withdrawals for imports.
DB2017	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the time required to register by requiring companies to submit the original documents online and in person.
DB2017	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made exporting and importing easier by introducing customs e-links and electronic exchange of information among various agencies.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made dealing with construction permits indicator faster by reducing the time to obtain a construction permit.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made getting electricity more transparent by publishing electricity tariffs on the websites of the utility and the energy regulator.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made starting a business easier by eliminating the minimum capital requirement for business incorporation.
DB2017	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made paying taxes less costly by decreasing the tax on professional activities rate. The introduction of advanced accounting systems also made paying taxes easier.
DB2017	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt strengthened minority investor protections by increasing shareholder rights and role in major corporate decisions and by clarifying ownership and control structures.
DB2016	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	The Arab Republic of Egypt strengthened minority investor protections by barring subsidiaries from acquiring shares issued by their parent company.
DB2016	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made dealing with construction permits easier by eliminating the legal requirement to provide a certified copy of a property title when applying for a building permit.
DB2016	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made starting a business easier by eliminating the requirement to obtain managers' criminal records.
DB2016	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made getting electricity easier by reducing the time needed to provide a connection cost estimate.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made dealing with construction permits easier by streamlining the process for obtaining the civil defense approval.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	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 allowing litigants to file and track motions online.
DB2016	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened minority investor protections by barring a subsidiary from acquiring shares in its parent company and by requiring that a potential acquirer, upon reaching 50% or more of the capital of a company, make a purchase offer to all shareholders.
DB2016	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon made transferring property more complex by increasing the time required for property registration.
DB2016	<i>Malta</i>	The utility in Malta reduced the time required for getting an electricity connection by improving its supervision of trenching works.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	The utility in Morocco reduced the time required for getting an electricity connection by providing fee estimates more quickly.
DB2016	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved the regulation of outages by beginning to record data for the annual system average interruption duration index (SAIDI) and system average interruption frequency index (SAIFI).
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made dealing with construction permits more difficult by requiring architects to submit the building permit request online, along with supporting documents, and to follow up with a hard-copy submission. On the other hand, Morocco reduced the time required to obtain an urban certificate.
DB2016	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made dealing with construction permits easier by streamlining the process for obtaining the civil defense permit and for submitting the stamped concrete casting permit to the municipality.
DB2016	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made paying taxes less costly for companies by reducing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made paying taxes easier for companies by improving the electronic platform for filing and paying corporate income tax, VAT and labor taxes. On the other

DB year	Economy	Reform
		hand, Morocco increased the rate of the social charge paid by employers.
DB2016	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made the transfer of a property more expensive by introducing the new property transfer tax.
DB2016	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made property transfers faster by introducing a new computerized system at the land registry.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made property transfers faster by establishing electronic communication links between different tax authorities.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by eliminating the need to file a declaration of business incorporation with the Ministry of Labor.
DB2016	<i>Morocco</i>	1) Morocco implemented an unemployment insurance scheme. 2) Morocco increased the minimum wage increased from 12.24 to 12.85 DH/hour as of July 1, 2014, according to decree n° 2.14.343 of June 2014, published in the official bulletin 5292.
DB2016	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the time for border compliance for both exporting and importing by transferring cargo operations from Sultan Qaboos Port to Sohar Port.
DB2016	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar reduced the time for border compliance for importing by reducing the number of days of free storage at the port and thus the time required for port handling.
DB2016	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia reduced border compliance time for both exporting and importing by improving the efficiency of its state-owned port handling company and investing in port infrastructure at the port of Rades.
DB2016	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	The credit registry in West Bank and Gaza began to distribute credit data from retailers and utility companies.
DB2015	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made paying taxes less costly for companies by reducing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2015	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made paying taxes easier for companies by introducing the option to make either 1 or 4 advance payments of corporate income tax.
DB2015	<i>Malta</i>	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.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2015	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made trading across borders easier by reducing the number of export documents required.
DB2015	<i>Tunisia</i>	In Tunisia trading across borders became more difficult because of a deterioration in port infrastructure (for example, in loading and unloading equipment) and inadequate terminal space.
DB2015	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	In the Republic of Yemen trading across borders became more difficult as a result of inefficient port operation.
DB2015	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made registering property easier by reducing the registration fee.
DB2015	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made dealing with construction permits less time-consuming by streamlining the review process for building permits.
DB2015	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by approving the credit bureau's collection of data on firms.
DB2015	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made getting electricity easier by eliminating the need for customers to obtain an excavation permit for electricity connection works.
DB2015	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made starting a business easier by streamlining the name reservation and company registration procedures.
DB2015	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made trading across borders easier by improving infrastructure at the port of Aqaba.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	In the United Arab Emirates the credit bureau improved access to credit information by starting to exchange credit information with a utility.
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	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.
DB2015	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria made trading across borders easier by upgrading infrastructure at the port of Algiers.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2015	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made transferring property easier by introducing new service centers and a standard contract for property transactions.
DB2015	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the commercial license fee.
DB2015	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	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.
DB2014	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt made paying taxes more costly for companies by increasing the corporate income tax rate.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made getting electricity easier by eliminating the requirement for site inspections and reducing the time required to provide new connections.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates strengthened investor protections by introducing greater disclosure requirements for related-party transactions in the annual report and to the stock exchange and by making it possible to sue directors when such transactions harm the company.
DB2014	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made transferring property easier by increasing the operating hours of the land registry and reducing transfer fees.
DB2014	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait strengthened investor protections by making it possible for minority shareholders to request the appointment of an auditor to review the company's activities.
DB2014	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait made starting a business more difficult by increasing the minimum capital requirement.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti strengthened its secured transactions system by adopting a new commercial code, which broadens the range of movable assets that can be used as collateral.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain improved access to credit information by starting to collect payment information from retailers.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made starting a business more expensive by increasing the cost of the business registration certificate.
DB2014	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain reduced the maximum cumulative duration of fixed-term contracts, made third-party notification mandatory for redundancy dismissals and increased paid annual leave.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made resolving insolvency easier through its new

DB year	Economy	Reform
		commercial code, which allows an insolvent debtor to file for preventive settlement, legal redress or liquidation and sets out clear rules on the steps and procedures for each of the alternatives available.
DB2014	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made starting a business easier by simplifying the company name search and by eliminating the minimum capital requirement as well as the requirement to publish a notice of commencement of activities.
DB2014	<i>Malta</i>	Malta made dealing with construction permits less costly by significantly reducing the building permit fees.
DB2014	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made paying taxes easier for companies by eliminating certain requirements associated with the corporate income tax return.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made paying taxes easier for companies by increasing the use of the electronic filing and payment system for social security contributions.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made transferring property easier by reducing the time required to register a deed of transfer at the tax authority.
DB2014	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made starting a business less costly by eliminating the paid-in minimum capital requirement.
DB2014	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia made starting a business more difficult by increasing the cost of company registration.
DB2014	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by reducing the company registration fees.
DB2014	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza introduced a minimum wage.
DB2014	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	
DB2013	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made starting a business more difficult by requiring company founders to obtain a criminal record clearance to register a new company.
DB2013	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran strengthened investor protections by requiring greater immediate disclosure of related-party transactions.
DB2013	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made starting a business easier by eliminating the minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies.
DB2013	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar reduced the time to export and import by introducing a new online portal allowing electronic submission of customs

DB year	Economy	Reform
		declarations for clearance at the Doha seaport.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made enforcing contracts easier by expanding the computerization of its courts and introducing an electronic filing system.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made getting electricity more expensive by increasing the connection fees.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made starting a business easier by eliminating the requirement for a company to prepare a name board in English and Arabic after having received clearance on the use of office premises.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made paying taxes easier for companies by establishing an online filing and payment system for social security contributions.
DB2013	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	In the United Arab Emirates the Dubai Electricity and Water Authority made getting electricity easier by introducing an electronic "one window, one step" application process allowing customers to submit and track their applications online and reducing the time for processing the applications.
DB2013	<i>Oman</i>	Oman reduced the maximum number of working days per week and increased the paid annual leave applicable for employees with one year of service.
DB2013	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made transferring property more costly by increasing the property transfer fee.
DB2013	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made registering property more costly by increasing property registration fees.
DB2013	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza improved access to credit information by guaranteeing borrowers' right to inspect their personal data.
DB2013	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria improved access to credit information by establishing an online system for data exchange between all banks and microfinance institutions and the central bank's credit registry.
DB2013	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved access to credit information by guaranteeing borrowers' right to inspect their personal data.
DB2013	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made paying taxes easier for companies by introducing online filing and payment systems for social security contributions.
DB2013	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria improved access to credit information by eliminating the minimum threshold for loans to be included in the

DB year	Economy	Reform
		database.
DB2012	<i>Algeria</i>	Algeria improved its credit information system by guaranteeing by law the right of borrowers to inspect their personal data.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar improved its credit information system by starting to distribute historical data and eliminating the minimum threshold for loans included in the database.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	Oman improved its credit information system by launching the Bank Credit and Statistical Bureau System, which collects historical information on performing and nonperforming loans for both firms and individuals.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened investor protections by allowing minority shareholders to obtain any nonconfidential corporate document during trial.
DB2012	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates improved its credit information system through a new law allowing the establishment of a federal credit bureau under the supervision of the central bank.
DB2012	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon made getting electricity less costly by reducing the application fees and security deposit for a new connection.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco eased the administrative burden of paying taxes for firms by enhancing electronic filing and payment of the corporate income tax and value added tax.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	Oman enacted a new income tax law that redefined the scope of taxation.
DB2012	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	The Republic of Yemen enacted a new tax law that reduced the general corporate tax rate from 35% to 20% and abolished all tax exemptions except those granted under the investment law for investment projects.
DB2012	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates made starting a business easier by merging the requirements to file company documents with the Department for Economic Development, to obtain a trade license and to register with the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made dealing with construction permits more difficult by increasing the time and cost to process building permits.
DB2012	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco made dealing with construction permits easier by opening a one-stop shop.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2012	<i>Yemen, Rep.</i>	Yemen made starting a business more difficult due to the suspension of registration services at the one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made starting a business easier by bringing together representatives from the Department of Zakat and Income Tax and the General Organization of Social Insurance at the Unified Center to register new companies with their agencies.
DB2012	<i>Oman</i>	The one-stop shop in Oman introduced online company registration and sped up the process to register a business from 7 days to 3 days.
DB2012	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business easier by combining commercial registration and registration with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry at the one-stop shop.
DB2012	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made trading across borders faster by introducing X-ray scanners for risk management systems.
DB2012	<i>Iraq</i>	In Iraq starting a business became more expensive because of an increase in the cost to obtain a name reservation certificate and in the cost for lawyers to draft articles of association.
DB2012	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan made starting a business easier by reducing the minimum capital requirement from 1,000 Jordanian dinars to 1 dinar, of which only half must be deposited before company registration.
DB2012	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made dealing with construction permits costlier by increasing the fees for inspections and the building permit and adding a new inspection in the preconstruction phase.
DB2012	<i>Djibouti</i>	Djibouti made trading across borders faster by developing a new container terminal.
DB2011	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made registering property more burdensome by increasing the fees at the Survey and Land Registration Bureau.
DB2011	<i>Bahrain</i>	Bahrain made it easier to trade by building a modern new port, improving the electronic data interchange system and introducing risk-based inspections.
DB2011	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon increased the cost of starting a business.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran eased business start-up by installing a web portal allowing entrepreneurs to search for and reserve a unique company name.

DB year	Economy	Reform
DB2011	<i>Lebanon</i>	Lebanon improved its credit information system by allowing banks online access to the public credit registry's reports.
DB2011	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan improved its credit information system by setting up a regulatory framework for establishing a private credit bureau as well as lowering the threshold for loans to be reported to the public credit registry.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The establishment of a new private credit bureau improved access to credit information.
DB2011	<i>Iran, Islamic Rep.</i>	The Islamic Republic of Iran made enforcing contracts easier and faster by introducing electronic filing of some documents, text message notification and an electronic case management system.
DB2011	<i>Jordan</i>	Jordan abolished certain taxes and made it possible to file income and sales tax returns electronically.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria eliminated the severance payment obligation but increased the notice period applicable in case of redundancy dismissals. Implemented a 100% pay premium for weekly holiday work and decreased the total term limit of fixed-term contracts.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia made dealing with construction permits easier for the second year in a row by introducing a new, streamlined process.
DB2011	<i>Qatar</i>	Qatar made starting a business more difficult by adding a procedure to register for taxes and obtain a company seal.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria eased business start-up by reducing the minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies by two-thirds. It also decentralized approval of the company memorandum.
DB2011	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	West Bank and Gaza made starting a business more difficult by increasing the lawyers' fees that must be paid for incorporation.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia speeded up the insolvency process by providing earlier access to amicable settlements and putting time limits on the settlements to encourage creditors to participate.
DB2011	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates enhanced access to credit by setting up a legal framework for the operation of the private credit bureau and requiring that financial institutions share credit information.
DB2011	<i>United Arab Emirates</i>	The United Arab Emirates streamlined document preparation and reduced the time to trade with the launch of Dubai

DB year	Economy	Reform
		Customs' comprehensive new customs system, Mirsal 2.
DB2011	<i>Kuwait</i>	Kuwait increased the number of days of paid annual leave and increased the notice period applicable in case of redundancy dismissals.
DB2011	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia introduced the use of electronic systems for payment of corporate income tax and value added tax.
DB2011	<i>West Bank and Gaza</i>	More efficient processes at Palestinian customs made trading easier in the West Bank.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	Saudi Arabia reduced the time to import by launching a new container terminal at the Jeddah Islamic Port.
DB2011	<i>Tunisia</i>	Tunisia upgraded its electronic data interchange system for imports and exports, speeding up the assembly of import documents.
DB2011	<i>Morocco</i>	Morocco strengthened investor protections by requiring greater disclosure in companies' annual reports.
DB2011	<i>Syrian Arab Republic</i>	Syria enhanced access to credit by eliminating the minimum threshold for loans included in the database, which expanded the coverage of individuals and firms to 2.8% of the adult population.
DB2011	<i>Saudi Arabia</i>	An amendment to Saudi Arabia's commercial lien law enhanced access to credit by making secured lending more flexible and allowing out-of-court enforcement in case of default.
DB2011	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt reduced the cost to start a business.
DB2011	<i>Egypt, Arab Rep.</i>	Egypt made trading easier by introducing an electronic system for submitting export and import documents.

Note: For information on reforms in earlier years (back to DB2005), see the *Doing Business* reports for these years, available at <http://www.doingbusiness.org>.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

DISTANCE TO FRONTIER AND EASE OF DOING BUSINESS RANKING

Doing Business presents results for two aggregate measures: the distance to frontier score and the ease of doing business ranking, which is based on the distance to frontier score. The ease of doing business ranking compares economies with one another; the distance to frontier score benchmarks economies with respect to regulatory best practice, showing the absolute distance to the best performance on each *Doing Business* indicator. When compared across years, the distance to frontier score shows how much the regulatory environment for local entrepreneurs in an economy has changed over time in absolute terms, while the ease of doing business ranking can show only how much the regulatory environment has changed relative to that in other economies.

Distance to Frontier

The distance to frontier score captures the gap between an economy's performance and a measure of best practice across the entire sample of 36 indicators for 10 *Doing Business* topics (the labor market regulation indicators are excluded). For starting a business, for example, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and New Zealand have the smallest number of procedures required (1), and New Zealand the shortest time to fulfill them (0.5 days). Slovenia has the lowest cost (0.0), and Australia, Colombia and 103 other economies have no paid-in minimum capital requirement (table 14.1 in the *Doing Business 2017* report).

Calculation of the distance to frontier score

Calculating the distance to frontier score for each economy involves two main steps. In the first step individual component indicators are normalized to a common unit where each of the 36 component indicators y (except for the total tax rate) is rescaled using the linear transformation $(\text{worst} - y)/(\text{worst} - \text{frontier})$. In this formulation the frontier represents the best performance on the indicator across all economies since 2005 or the third year in which data for the indicator were collected. Both the best performance and the worst performance are established every five years based on the *Doing Business* data for the year in which they are established, and remain at that level for the five years regardless of any changes in data in interim years. Thus an economy may set the frontier for an indicator

even though it is no longer at the frontier in a subsequent year.

For scores such as those on the strength of legal rights index or the quality of land administration index, the frontier is set at the highest possible value. For the total tax rate, consistent with the use of a threshold in calculating the rankings on this indicator, the frontier is defined as the total tax rate at the 15th percentile of the overall distribution for all years included in the analysis up to and including *Doing Business 2015*. For the time to pay taxes the frontier is defined as the lowest time recorded among all economies that levy the three major taxes: profit tax, labor taxes and mandatory contributions, and value added tax (VAT) or sales tax. For the different times to trade across borders, the frontier is defined as 1 hour even though in many economies the time is less than that.

In the same formulation, to mitigate the effects of extreme outliers in the distributions of the rescaled data for most component indicators (very few economies need 700 days to complete the procedures to start a business, but many need 9 days), the worst performance is calculated after the removal of outliers. The definition of outliers is based on the distribution for each component indicator. To simplify the process two rules were defined: the 95th percentile is used for the indicators with the most dispersed distributions (including minimum capital, number of payments to pay taxes, and the time and cost indicators), and the 99th percentile is used for number of procedures. No outlier is removed for component indicators bound by definition or construction, including legal index scores (such as the depth of credit information index, extent of conflict of interest regulation index and strength of insolvency framework index) and the recovery rate (figure 14.1).

In the second step for calculating the distance to frontier score, the scores obtained for individual indicators for each economy are aggregated through simple averaging into one distance to frontier score, first for each topic and then across all 10 topics: starting a business, dealing with construction permits, getting electricity, registering property, getting credit, protecting minority investors, paying taxes, trading across borders, enforcing contracts and resolving insolvency. More complex aggregation methods—such as principal components and unobserved components—yield a ranking nearly

identical to the simple average used by *Doing Business*³. Thus *Doing Business* uses the simplest method: weighting all topics equally and, within each topic, giving equal weight to each of the topic components⁴.

An economy's distance to frontier score is indicated on a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 represents the worst performance and 100 the frontier. All distance to frontier calculations are based on a maximum of five decimals. However, indicator ranking calculations and the ease of doing business ranking calculations are based on two decimals.

The difference between an economy's distance to frontier score in any previous year and its score in 2015 illustrates the extent to which the economy has closed the gap to the regulatory frontier over time. And in any given year the score measures how far an economy is from the best performance at that time.

Treatment of the total tax rate

The total tax rate component of the paying taxes indicator set enters the distance to frontier calculation in a different way than any other indicator. The distance to frontier score obtained for the total tax rate is transformed in a nonlinear fashion before it enters the distance to frontier score for paying taxes. As a result of the nonlinear transformation, an increase in the total tax rate has a smaller impact on the distance to frontier score for the total tax rate—and therefore on the distance to frontier score for paying taxes—for economies with a below-average total tax rate than it would have had before this approach was adopted in *Doing Business 2015* (line B is smaller than line A in figure 14.2 of the *Doing Business 2017* report). And for economies with an extreme total tax rate (a rate that is very high relative to the average), an increase has a greater impact on both these distance to frontier scores

than it would have had before (line D is bigger than line C in figure 14.2 of the *Doing Business 2017* report).

The nonlinear transformation is not based on any economic theory of an "optimal tax rate" that minimizes distortions or maximizes efficiency in an economy's overall tax system. Instead, it is mainly empirical in nature. The nonlinear transformation along with the threshold reduces the bias in the indicator toward economies that do not need to levy significant taxes on companies like the *Doing Business* standardized case study company because they raise public revenue in other ways—for example, through taxes on foreign companies, through taxes on sectors other than manufacturing or from natural resources (all of which are outside the scope of the methodology). In addition, it acknowledges the need of economies to collect taxes from firms.

Calculation of scores for economies with 2 cities covered

For each of the 11 economies in which *Doing Business* collects data for the second largest business city as well as the largest one, the distance to frontier score is calculated as the population-weighted average of the distance to frontier scores for these two cities (table 13.1). This is done for the aggregate score, the scores for each topic and the scores for all the component indicators for each topic.

³ See Djankov, Manraj and others (2005). Principal components and unobserved components methods yield a ranking nearly identical to that from the simple average method because both these methods assign roughly equal weights to the topics, since the pairwise correlations among indicators do not differ much. An alternative to the simple average method is to give different weights to the topics, depending on which are considered of more or less importance in the context of a specific economy.

⁴ For getting credit, indicators are weighted proportionally, according to their contribution to the total score, with a weight of 60% assigned to the strength of legal rights index and 40% to the depth of credit information index. Indicators for all other topics are assigned equal weights

Table 13.1 Weights used in calculating the distance to frontier scores for economies with 2 cities covered

Economy	City	Weight (%)
Bangladesh	Dhaka	78
	Chittagong	22
Brazil	São Paulo	61
	Rio de Janeiro	39
China	Shanghai	55
	Beijing	45
India	Mumbai	47
	Delhi	53
Indonesia	Jakarta	78
	Surabaya	22
Japan	Tokyo	65
	Osaka	35
Mexico	Mexico City	83
	Monterrey	17
Nigeria	Lagos	77
	Kano	23
Pakistan	Karachi	65
	Lahore	35
Russian Federation	Moscow	70
	St. Petersburg	30
United States	New York	60
	Los Angeles	40

Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, World Urbanization Prospects, 2014 Revision. <http://esa.un.org/unpd/wup/CD-ROM/Default.aspx>.

Economies that improved the most across 3 or more *Doing Business* topics in 2014/15

Doing Business 2017 uses a simple method to calculate which economies improved the ease of doing business the most. First, it selects the economies that in 2014/15

implemented regulatory reforms making it easier to do business in 3 or more of the 10 topics included in this year's aggregate distance to frontier score. Changes making it more difficult to do business are subtracted from the total number of those making it easier to do business. Twenty-four economies meet this criterion: Armenia; Azerbaijan; Benin; Costa Rica; Côte d'Ivoire; Cyprus; Hong Kong SAR, China; Indonesia; Jamaica; Kazakhstan; Kenya; Lithuania; Madagascar; Mauritania; Morocco; Romania; the Russian Federation; Rwanda; Senegal; Togo; Uganda; the United Arab Emirates; Uzbekistan; and Vietnam. Second, *Doing Business* sorts these economies on the increase in their distance to frontier score from the previous year using comparable data.

Selecting the economies that implemented regulatory reforms in at least three topics and had the biggest improvements in their distance to frontier scores is intended to highlight economies with ongoing, broad-based reform programs. The improvement in the distance to frontier score is used to identify the top improvers because this allows a focus on the absolute improvement—in contrast with the relative improvement shown by a change in rankings—that economies have made in their regulatory environment for business.

Ease of *Doing Business* ranking

The ease of doing business ranking ranges from 1 to 190. The ranking of economies is determined by sorting the aggregate distance to frontier scores, rounded to 2 decimals.

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Doing Business 2017 is the 14th in a series of annual reports investigating the regulations that enhance business activity and those that constrain it. The report provides quantitative indicators covering 11 areas of the business environment in 190 economies. The goal of the *Doing Business* series is to provide objective data for use by governments in designing sound business regulatory policies and to encourage research on the important dimensions of the regulatory environment for firms.



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