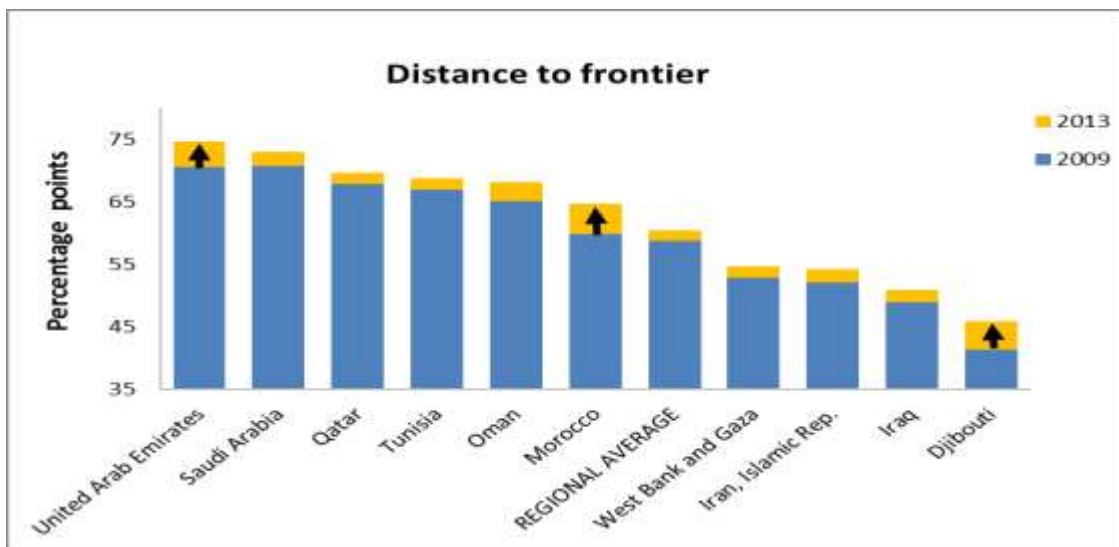


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**Doing Business 2014 Fact Sheet: Middle East and North Africa**

- Eight of 20 economies in the Middle East and North Africa implemented at least one regulatory reform making it easier to do business in the year from June 2, 2012, to June 1, 2013—14 reforms in total.
- Since 2005, 95 percent of the economies in the region have implemented business regulatory reforms in the areas measured by *Doing Business*. Together, the 20 economies recorded 182 reforms. The **Arab Republic of Egypt** implemented the most number of reforms in the region with 23 reforms during this period, followed by **Saudi Arabia** with 19 and **Morocco** with 18.
- **Djibouti** is among the global top 10 improvers this year—the economies making the biggest improvement in business regulation over the past year. Djibouti implemented regulatory reforms in the areas of starting a business, getting credit, and resolving insolvency.
- The **United Arab Emirates** has the region’s highest ranking on the ease of doing business, at 23 out of 189 economies.
- Due to security concerns in the **Syrian Arab Republic**, transporting goods from Damascus to the seaport has become much more expensive and time consuming: inland transport between the warehouse and the port takes about seven days now compared with two days previously, and it costs \$1,100 compared with \$450 before. Legally building new construction is impossible in the country since the government is no longer issuing construction permits.
- Data were collected for the first time this year for **Libya**. The country’s ranking on the ease of doing business is 187 out of 189.



*Note:* The distance to frontier measure shows how far on average an economy is at a point in time from the best performance achieved by any economy on each *Doing Business* indicator since 2003 or the first year in which data for the indicator were collected. The measure is normalized to range between 0 and 100, with 100 representing the best performance (the frontier). The regional averages exclude Libya and Malta, which were added to the *Doing Business* sample after 2009. The figure shows individual scores only for the 10 economies with the biggest improvements in the region; the arrows indicate those making the largest advances toward the frontier.

*Source:* *Doing Business* database.

## Summary of 2012/13 *Doing Business* Reforms in the Middle East and North Africa<sup>1</sup>

### Algeria

*DB2014 ease of doing business rank:* 153

*Distance to frontier in 2013 (percentage points):* 52.6 (in 2012: 52.9; improvement: -0.3)

### Bahrain

Bahrain improved access to credit information by starting to collect payment information from retailers. On the other hand, it made starting a business more expensive by increasing the cost of the business registration certificate.

*Areas of business regulatory reform:* Getting credit (credit information), Starting a business (making it more difficult)

*DB2014 ease of doing business rank:* 46

*Distance to frontier in 2013 (percentage points):* 70.4 (in 2012: 69.6; improvement: 0.8)

### Djibouti

Djibouti made starting a business easier by simplifying registration formalities and eliminating the minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies. And it strengthened its secured transactions system by adopting a new commercial code, which broadens the range of movable assets that can be used as collateral. In addition, 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.

*Areas of business regulatory reform:* Starting a business, Getting credit (legal rights), Resolving insolvency

*DB2014 ease of doing business rank:* 160

*Distance to frontier in 2013 (percentage points):* 45.8 (in 2012: 42.1; improvement: 3.7)

### Egypt, Arab Rep.

The Arab Republic of Egypt made paying taxes more costly for companies by increasing the corporate income tax rate.

*Areas of business regulatory reform:* Paying taxes (making it more difficult)

*DB2014 ease of doing business rank:* 128

*Distance to frontier in 2013 (percentage points):* 56.3 (in 2012: 56.2; improvement: 0.1)

### Iran, Islamic Rep.

*DB2014 ease of doing business rank:* 152

*Distance to frontier in 2013 (percentage points):* 54.1 (in 2012: 54.1; improvement: 0.0)

### Iraq

*DB2014 ease of doing business rank:* 151

*Distance to frontier in 2013 (percentage points):* 50.7 (in 2012: 50.1; improvement: 0.7)

### Jordan

*DB2014 ease of doing business rank:* 119

*Distance to frontier in 2013 (percentage points):* 59.8 (in 2012: 59.7; improvement: 0.1)

### Kuwait

Kuwait strengthened investor protections by making it possible for minority shareholders to request the appointment of an auditor to review the company's activities. On the other hand, it made starting a business more difficult by increasing the minimum capital requirement.

*Areas of business regulatory reform:* Protecting investors, Starting a business (making it more difficult)

*DB2014 ease of doing business rank:* 104

*Distance to frontier in 2013 (percentage points):* 60.7 (in 2012: 60.4; improvement: 0.3)

### Lebanon

*DB2014 ease of doing business rank:* 111

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<sup>1</sup> The difference between the distance to frontier scores shown for 2012 and 2013 may differ from the size of the improvement reported because of rounding.

*Distance to frontier in 2013 (percentage points): 61.8 (in 2012: 62.1; improvement: -0.3)*

### **Libya**

*DB2014 ease of doing business rank: 187*

*Distance to frontier in 2013 (percentage points): 33.8 (in 2012: 33.4; improvement: 0.4)*

### **Malta**

Malta made dealing with construction permits less costly by significantly reducing the building permit fees.

*Areas of business regulatory reform: Dealing with construction permits DB2014 ease of doing business rank: 103*

### **Morocco**

Morocco made starting a business easier by reducing the company registration fees. And it made transferring property easier by reducing the time required to register a deed of transfer at the tax authority. In addition, Morocco made paying taxes easier for companies by increasing the use of the electronic filing and payment system for social security contributions.

*Areas of business regulatory reform: Starting a business, Registering property, Paying taxes*

*DB2014 ease of doing business rank: 87*

*Distance to frontier in 2013 (percentage points): 64.6 (in 2012: 63.2; improvement: 1.4)*

### **Oman**

*DB2014 ease of doing business rank: 47*

*Distance to frontier in 2013 (percentage points): 68.1 (in 2012: 68.0; improvement: 0.1)*

### **Qatar**

Qatar made paying taxes easier for companies by eliminating certain requirements associated with the corporate income tax return.

*Areas of business regulatory reform: Paying taxes*

*DB2014 ease of doing business rank: 48*

*Distance to frontier in 2013 (percentage points): 69.6 (in 2012: 69.6; improvement: 0.0)*

### **Saudi Arabia**

*DB2014 ease of doing business rank: 26*

*Distance to frontier in 2013 (percentage points): 72.8 (in 2012: 72.9; improvement: -0.1)*

### **Syrian Arab Republic**

*DB2014 ease of doing business rank: 165*

*Distance to frontier in 2013 (percentage points): 45.7 (in 2012: 52.2; improvement: -6.6)*

### **Tunisia**

Tunisia made starting a business more difficult by increasing the cost of company registration.

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

*DB2014 ease of doing business rank: 51*

*Distance to frontier in 2013 (percentage points): 68.7 (in 2012: 68.6; improvement: 0.1)*

### **United Arab Emirates**

The United Arab Emirates made getting electricity easier by eliminating the requirement for site inspections and reducing the time required to provide new connections. It made transferring property easier by increasing the operating hours of the land registry and reducing transfer fees. And it 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.

*Areas of business regulatory reform: Getting electricity, Registering property, Protecting investors*

*DB2014 ease of doing business rank: 23*

*Distance to frontier in 2013 (percentage points): 74.6 (in 2012: 72.4; improvement: 2.2)*

#### **West Bank and Gaza**

West Bank and Gaza made starting a business less costly by eliminating the paid-in minimum capital requirement.

*Areas of business regulatory reform: Starting a business*

*DB2014 ease of doing business rank: 138*

*Distance to frontier in 2013 (percentage points): 54.6 (in 2012: 53.1; improvement: 1.5)*

#### **Yemen, Rep.**

*DB2014 ease of doing business rank: 133*

*Distance to frontier in 2013 (percentage points): 56.3 (in 2012: 56.1; improvement: 0.3)*

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#### **About the *Doing Business* report series**

The joint World Bank and IFC flagship *Doing Business* report analyzes regulations that apply to an economy's businesses during their life cycle, including start-up and operations, trading across borders, paying taxes, and resolving insolvency. The aggregate ease of doing business rankings are based on 10 indicators and cover 189 economies. *Doing Business* does not measure all aspects of the business environment that matter to firms and investors. For example, it does not measure the quality of fiscal management, other aspects of macroeconomic stability, the level of skills in the labor force, or the resilience of financial systems. Its findings have stimulated policy debates worldwide and enabled a growing body of research on how firm-level regulation relates to economic outcomes across economies. This year's report marks the 11<sup>th</sup> edition of the global *Doing Business* report series and covers 189 economies. For more information about the *Doing Business* reports, please visit [doingbusiness.org](http://doingbusiness.org) and join us on [doingbusiness.org/Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/doingbusiness.org).

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