

What are the ranking trends?

- The **United Arab Emirates** (UAE), ranked 21 in the *Doing Business* report, is the highest ranked economy in the Middle East and North Africa region, followed by **Bahrain** (66) and **Morocco** (69).
- Amid continued political instability, **Libya** (185), **Syria** (174), and **Yemen** (186) are the lowest ranked economies in the region.
- Other large economies in the region and their rankings include **Algeria** (166), **Egypt** (128), **Iran** (124), **Saudi Arabia** (92) and **Tunisia** (88).
- The region's economies perform best in the areas of Paying Taxes (with an average rank of 83), Dealing with Construction Permits (92), Registering Property (93) and Getting Electricity (94). For example, an average of 18 payments is required per year to comply with legal tax obligations in the region, compared to a global average of 24.
- The region underperforms in the areas of Getting Credit (130), Resolving Insolvency (125) and Trading Across Borders (121). For example, when trading across borders, complying with export documentary requirements costs USD 243.6 on average in the region, compared to an average of USD 35.4 in OECD high-income economies.

What are the reform trends?

- 65% of economies reformed in at least one of the areas measured by *Doing Business*. A total of 29 reforms, making it easier to do business, were implemented in 13 of the region's 20 economies in the past year, compared to 37 reforms implemented by 15 economies in the previous year.
- The largest number of reforms was implemented in the areas of Getting Credit (with 7 reforms) and Starting a Business (6).
- **Djibouti** made the list of global top 10 improvers. Over the past 12 months, the economy has implemented a total of five reforms and moved up in the global ranking by 10 positions.
- **Saudi Arabia** led the region in terms of the number of reforms implemented, with six in the past year, while **the United Arab Emirates** was also among the notable reformers, with four reforms.
- Examples of reforms include:
 - **Djibouti** made starting a business less costly by exempting new companies from professional license fees and reducing fees to register a business.
 - **Saudi Arabia** strengthened minority investor protections by increasing shareholder rights and role in major decisions, clarifying ownership and control structures, requiring greater corporate transparency and regulating the disclosure of transactions with interested parties.

What are the highlights of the past 15 years?

- Since the start of *Doing Business*, the region carried out a total of 292 reforms.
- **United Arab Emirates**, with 33 reforms, carried out the highest number of reforms, followed by **Morocco** (31) and **Saudi Arabia** (30).
- Starting a Business, with 67 reforms, was the leading indicator for regional reforms, followed by Getting Credit and Trading across Borders with 50 and 44 reforms respectively.
 - Fifteen years ago, it took over 43.5 days on average to start a business in the region; now it takes 17 days.

Rankings Data for the Middle East and North Africa

Economy	Rank (1–190)	Distance to frontier score (0–100)		# of Reforms	
	DB2018	DB2017	DB2018	DB2017	DB2018
Algeria	166	46.72	46.71	4	0
Bahrain	66	68.12	68.13	3	0
Djibouti	154	45.59	49.58	0	5
Egypt, Arab Rep.	128	56.12	56.22	2	1
Iran, Islamic Rep.	124	56.22	56.48	1	1
Iraq	168	44.39	44.87	2	2
Jordan	103	58.20	60.58	2	1
Kuwait	96	59.71	61.23	1	2
Lebanon	133	54.77	54.67	0	0
Libya	185	33.18	33.21	0	0
Malta	84	64.29	64.72	2	1
Morocco	69	67.94	67.91	5	2
Oman	71	67.12	67.20	2	1
Qatar	83	64.25	64.86	2	2
Saudi Arabia	92	59.58	62.50	2	6
Syrian Arab Republic	174	41.47	41.55	1	0
Tunisia	88	63.78	63.58	1	0
United Arab Emirates	21	76.86	78.73	5	4
West Bank and Gaza	114	54.88	58.68	0	1
Yemen, Rep.	186	32.94	33.00	0	0

Source: *Doing Business* database.

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