

Doing Business 2016
Fact Sheet: OECD High-Income Economies

What are the ranking trends?

- OECD high-income economies have an average ranking on the ease of doing business of 25, higher than any other region.
- Eight OECD high-income economies rank among the top 10 economies globally on the ease of doing business, a regional high. These economies are **New Zealand**, **Denmark**, the **Republic of Korea**, the **United Kingdom**, the **United States**, **Sweden**, **Norway**, and **Finland**.
- **New Zealand** has the highest ranking in the group, at number 2 worldwide. And **New Zealand** has a number 1 ranking globally in the areas of Starting a Business, Registering Property, Getting Credit, and Protecting Minority Investors.
- Other large economies in the group and their rankings are **France** (27), **Germany** (15), **Italy** (45), **Japan** (34), and **Spain** (33).
- The highest average rankings of OECD high-income economies are in the areas of Resolving Insolvency (23) and Trading across Borders (25). *Doing Business* finds that OECD high-income economies have robust insolvency systems that inhibit the premature liquidation of sustainable businesses. And thanks to the facilitation of cross-border trade by the customs union of the European Union, 14 OECD high-income economies have a number 1 ranking in Trading across Borders.

What are the reform trends?

- Nineteen of 32 OECD high-income economies (59 percent) implemented at least one reform making it easier to do business in the past year, 23 in total. This is lower than the annual average of 34 reforms over the past 5 years.
- The area with the largest number of reforms was Paying Taxes (9), followed by Starting a Business (6). OECD high-income economies recorded more reforms in Paying Taxes than any other region. Most introduced or enhanced electronic filing and payment systems or reduced the tax burden for businesses
- **Norway**, **Poland**, the **Slovak Republic**, and **Spain** implemented the most reforms in the group, with 2 each. Some details of these reforms:
 - **Norway** made starting a business easier by offering online government registration and online bank account registration. And it made paying taxes less costly for companies by reducing the corporate income tax rate.
 - **Poland** made paying taxes easier for companies by introducing an electronic system for filing and paying value added tax (VAT) and transport tax. In addition, the utility in Poland reduced delays in processing applications for new electricity connections.
 - The **Slovak Republic** simplified the process of starting a business by introducing court registration at the one-stop shop. In addition, it made paying taxes easier for companies by introducing an electronic filing and payment system for VAT and by reducing the corporate income tax rate.
 - **Spain** strengthened minority investor protections by requiring that major sales of company assets be subject to shareholder approval. In addition, Spain made paying taxes less costly—and made it easier by modernizing the online system for filing VAT returns.
- **Italy** made the largest improvement globally in the area of Enforcing Contracts—by introducing a mandatory electronic filing system for court users, simplifying the rules for electronic service of process, and automating the enforcement process.

Rankings Data for OECD High-Income Economies

Economy	Rank (1–189)		Distance to frontier score (0–100)		Reforms	
	DB2015	DB2016	DB2015	DB2016	DB2015	DB2016
Australia	12	13	80.09	80.08	0	0
Austria	20	21	78.36	78.38	1	0
Belgium	41	43	72.39	72.50	0	1
Canada	13	14	79.90	80.07	0	0
Chile	48	48	70.86	71.49	0	1
Czech Republic	33	36	73.86	73.95	3	0
Denmark	3	3	84.26	84.40	1	1
Estonia	16	16	79.27	79.49	0	1
Finland	10	10	80.95	81.05	0	1
France	27	27	75.54	75.96	1	1
Germany	15	15	79.64	79.87	0	1
Greece	58	60	68.30	68.38	3	1
Hungary	40	42	72.45	72.57	2	0
Iceland	18	19	78.89	78.93	1	0
Ireland	19	17	78.85	79.15	3	1
Israel	50	53	70.59	70.56	0	0
Italy	44	45	71.71	72.07	1	1
Japan	30	34	74.72	74.72	0	0
Korea, Rep.	4	4	83.91	83.88	2	0
Luxembourg	57	61	68.32	68.31	0	0
Netherlands	25	28	76.02	75.94	0	0
New Zealand	2	2	86.75	86.79	1	1
Norway	8	9	81.53	81.61	1	2
Poland	28	25	75.38	76.45	3	2
Portugal	23	23	77.43	77.57	2	1
Slovak Republic	29	29	74.74	75.62	2	2
Slovenia	35	29	73.69	75.62	1	0
Spain	34	33	73.78	74.86	4	2
Sweden	9	8	81.40	81.72	1	1
Switzerland	26	26	75.95	76.04	3	1
United Kingdom	6	6	82.18	82.46	2	1
United States	7	7	82.15	82.15	1	0

Source: *Doing Business* database.

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