

### What are the ranking trends?

- **China** is among this year's top 10 improvers, gaining more than 30 positions. It is now among the top 50 economies for the first time, at rank 46.
- **Malaysia** made a notable improvement by regaining its place in the world's top 20 economies, moving up nine places to 15th rank.
- Of the region's 25 economies, two are among the world's top 10 ranked economies – **Singapore** (in 2nd place) and **Hong Kong SAR, China**, which moves up one spot to 4th place.
- The region's lowest ranked economies are **Myanmar** (171) and **Timor-Leste** (178)
- Other large economies in the region and their rankings are **Indonesia** (73), the **Philippines** (124), **Thailand** (27) and **Vietnam** (69).
- Economies in the East Asia and Pacific region perform well in the areas of Dealing with Construction Permits (with an average rank of 79), Getting Electricity (also 79), and Getting Credit (80). For example, in the region, completing all the formalities to obtain electricity for a newly built warehouse takes on average 65 days and costs 625% of the per capita income, compared to 86 days and 1229% globally.
- Important challenges remain in the areas of Starting a Business (average rank of 99), Trading across Borders (101) and Enforcing Contracts (104), although there is wide variation between economies in the region. Starting a new business takes one and a half days and costs 0.4% of income per capita in **Singapore** (ranked 3 globally in Starting a Business). However, it takes 174 days in **Lao PDR** (ranked 180 in Starting a Business) and it costs 47% of income per capita in **Cambodia** (185).

### What are the reform trends?<sup>1</sup>

- A total of 43 reforms were implemented by 16 of the region's 25 economies in the past year. For the third consecutive year, the region has more than 40 reforms.
  - **China** has the second highest number of reforms per economy in *Doing Business 2019*, with 7 reforms.
  - **China** made dealing with construction permits less cumbersome by streamlining the process of obtaining a building permit, and also made getting electricity easier in Beijing and Shanghai by expanding network capacity so that all connections of power loads of 160kW or less are now made directly to the low voltage network and free of charge.
  - **Malaysia**, implemented six reforms and made starting a business easier by introducing an online registration system for the goods and service tax. It also made property transfer simpler by implementing an online single window platform to carry out property searches.
  - **Thailand** made paying taxes easier by enhancing its online platform for calculating and filing corporate income tax.
  - Other countries with multiple reforms are **Indonesia** (3), the **Philippines** (3) and **Vietnam** (3).

### Noteworthy items:

- Changes in this year's report include renaming of the distance-to-frontier measurement to ease of doing business score, to better reflect its main purpose of measuring absolute progress towards best practices (without any change in the actual calculation).
- There are no changes to the methodology this year or to the calculation of the Doing Business Score, which underpins the Doing Business rankings.
- This year, Doing Business includes four case studies that focus on the benefits of:

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<sup>1</sup> Reform count regional averages exclude Australia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, and New Zealand, which are classified as OECD high-income economies.

- mandatory and annual training of both public officials and users of business and land registries;
- training for customs clearance officials and brokers;
- robust regulatory framework governing the electricity sector and accrediting the electrician profession;
- training and specialization of judges.

### Rankings Data for East Asia and Pacific

Economy	Rank (1–190)	Ease of doing business score (0–100)		# Reforms	
	DB2019	DB2018	DB2019	DB2018	DB2019
Brunei Darussalam	55	70.18	72.03	8	3
Cambodia	138	54.39	54.80	0	1
China	46	65.00	73.64	2	7
Fiji	101	61.11	61.15	0	0
Hong Kong SAR, China	4	84.18	84.22	1	1
Indonesia	73	66.54	67.96	7	3
Kiribati	158	48.74	49.07	0	0
Lao PDR	154	51.15	51.26	0	1
Malaysia	15	78.03	80.60	2	6
Marshall Islands	150	51.61	51.62	0	0
Micronesia, Fed. Sts.	160	48.99	48.99	0	0
Mongolia	74	67.47	67.74	1	1
Myanmar	171	44.21	44.72	2	2
Palau	133	55.58	55.59	1	0
Papua New Guinea	108	58.93	60.12	0	3
Philippines	124	56.32	57.68	2	3
Samoa	90	63.76	63.77	1	0
Singapore	2	84.97	85.24	2	2
Solomon Islands	115	58.84	59.17	0	0
Taiwan, China	13	80.66	80.90	2	2
Thailand	27	77.39	78.45	8	4
Timor-Leste	178	39.89	41.60	0	1
Tonga	91	63.56	63.59	0	0
Vanuatu	94	63.08	62.87	0	0
Vietnam	69	66.77	68.36	5	3

Source: *Doing Business* database.

Note: The rankings are based on the average of each economy's ease of doing business 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.