

A World Bank Group Flagship Report

14TH EDITION

Doing Business 2017

Equal Opportunity for All

Economy Profile 2017

Azerbaijan



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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 Azerbaijan. 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>.

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 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.

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.

ECONOMY OVERVIEW

Region: Europe & Central Asia

Income category: Upper middle income

Population: 9,651,349

GNI per capita (US\$): 6,560

DB2017 rank: 65

DB2016 rank: 61*

Change in rank: -4

DB 2017 DTF: 67.99

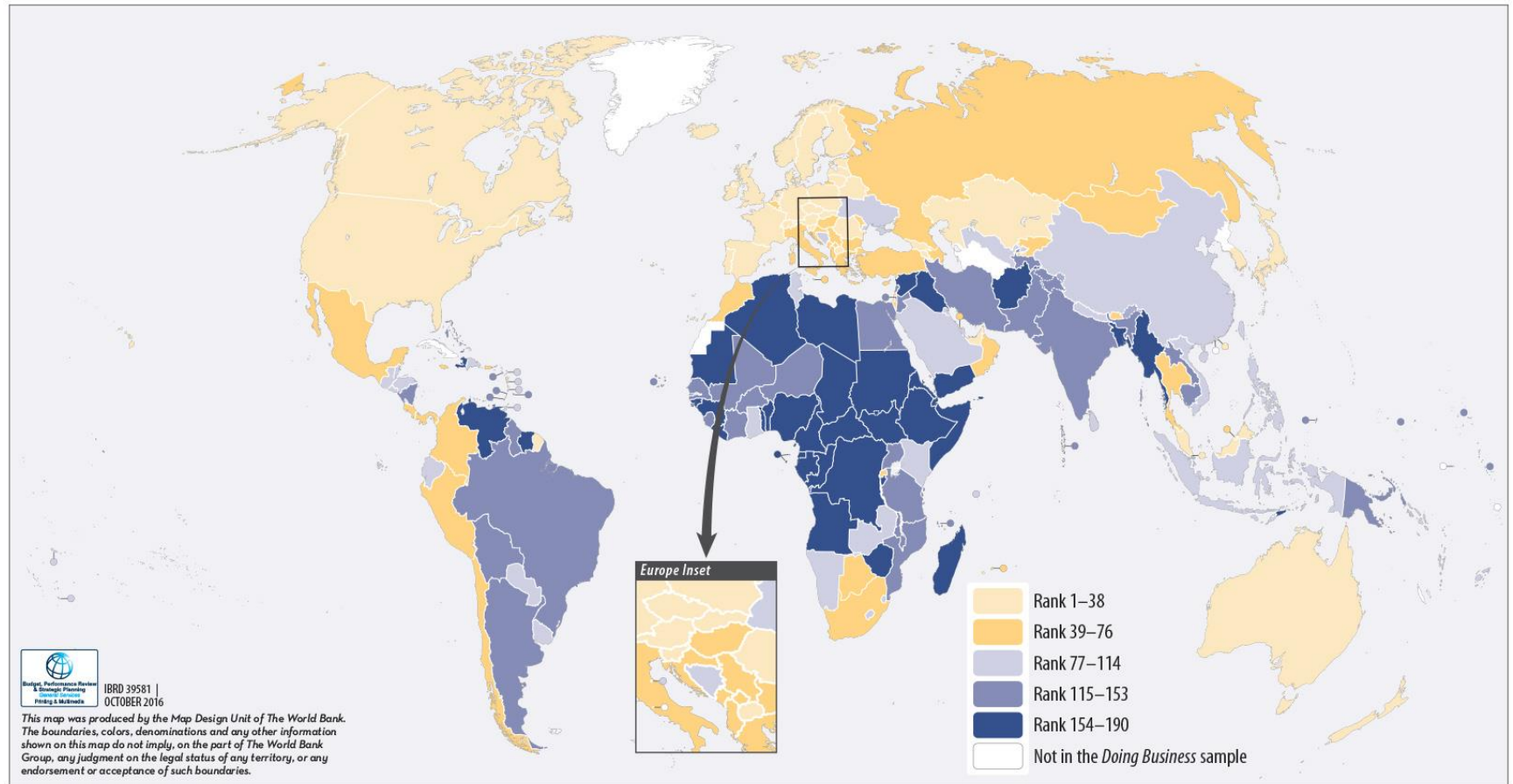
DB 2016 DTF: 67.84

Change in DTF: 0.15

* DB2016 ranking shown is not last year's published ranking but a comparable ranking for DB2016 that captures the effects of such factors as data revisions and the changes in methodology. See the data notes starting on page 114 of the *Doing Business 2017* report for sources and definitions.

THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

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



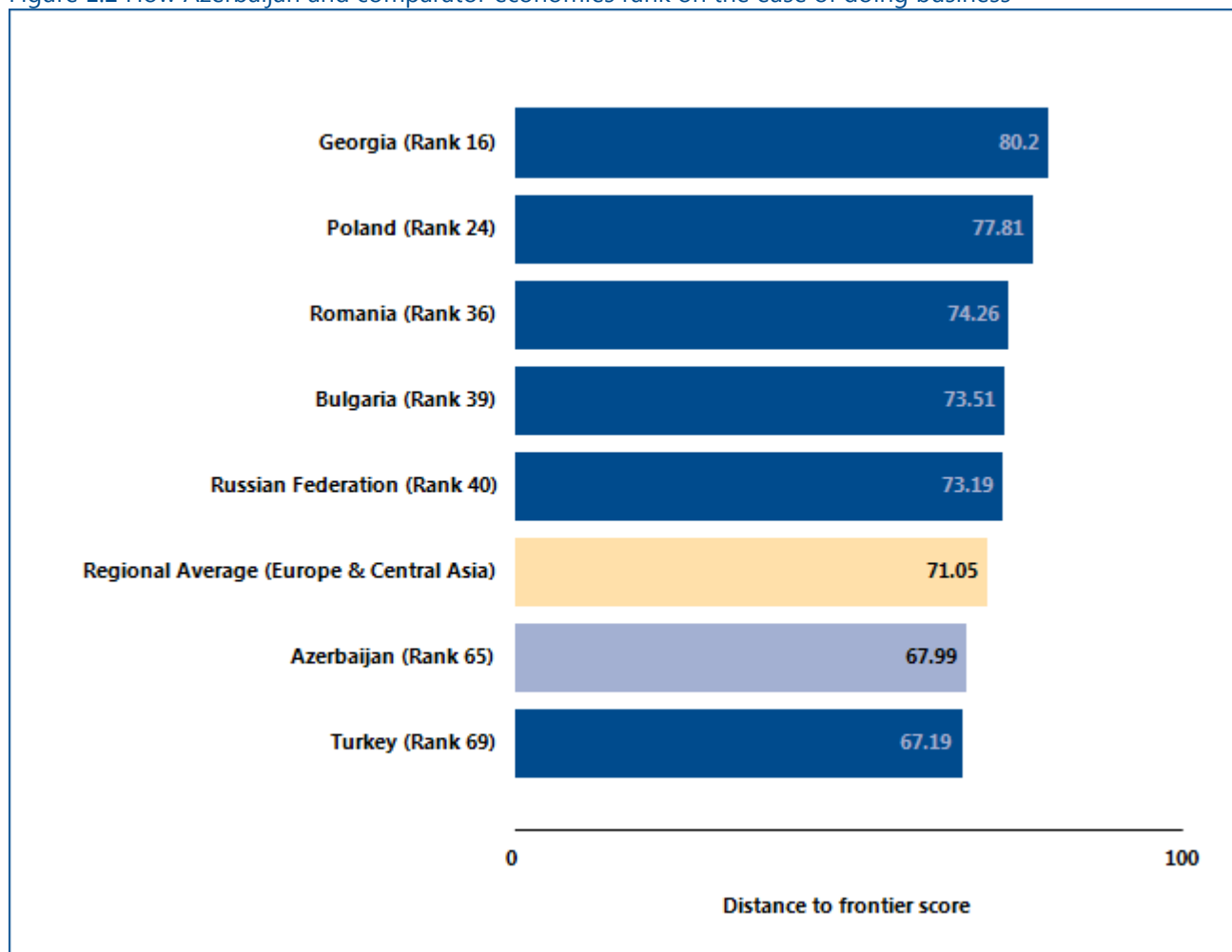
Source: Doing Business database.

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 relative to comparator economies and relative to the

regional average (figure 1.2). The economy's rankings (figure 1.3) and distance to frontier scores (figure 1.4) on the topics included in the ease of doing business ranking provide another perspective.

Figure 1.2 How Azerbaijan and comparator economies rank on the ease of doing business



Note: The rankings are benchmarked to June 2016 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 - Azerbaijan
 (Scale: Rank 190 center, Rank 1 outer edge)

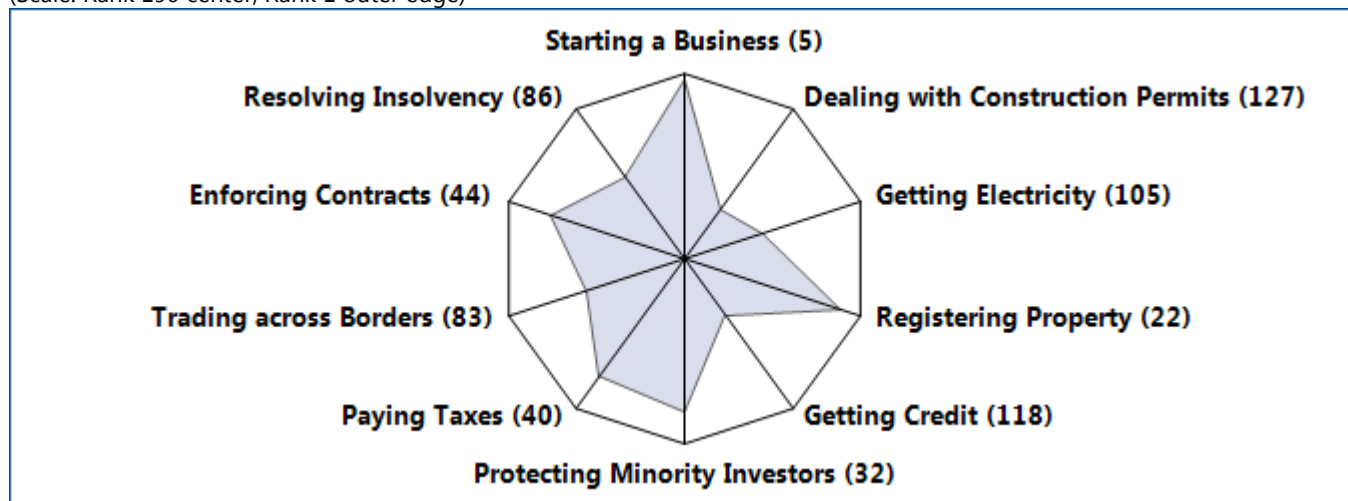
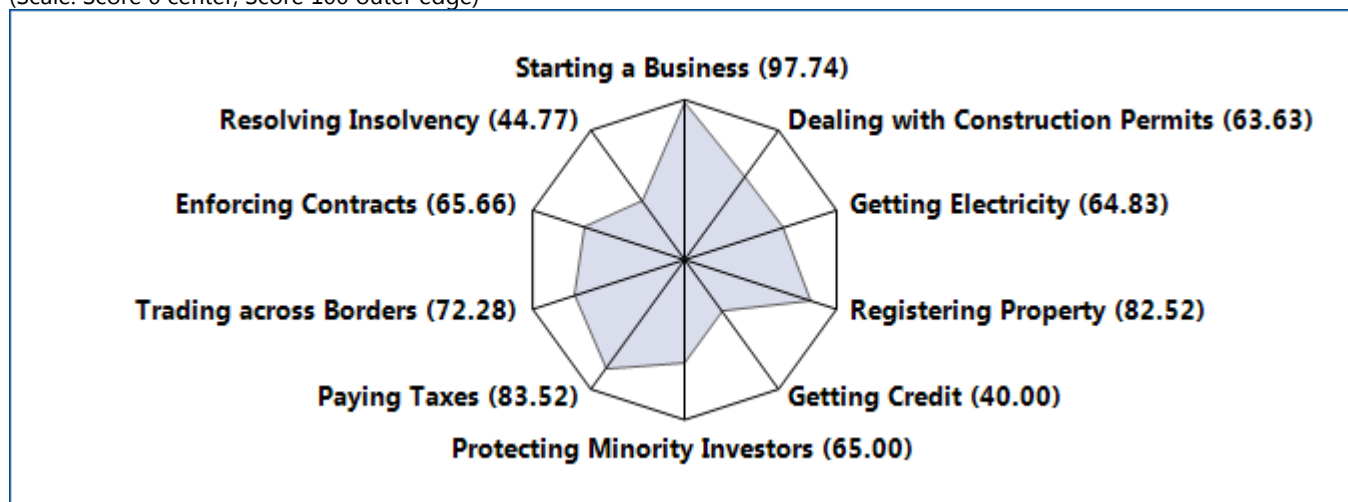


Figure 1.4 Distance to frontier scores on *Doing Business* topics - Azerbaijan
 (Scale: Score 0 center, Score 100 outer edge)



Source: *Doing Business* database.

Note: The rankings are benchmarked to June 2016 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.

THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

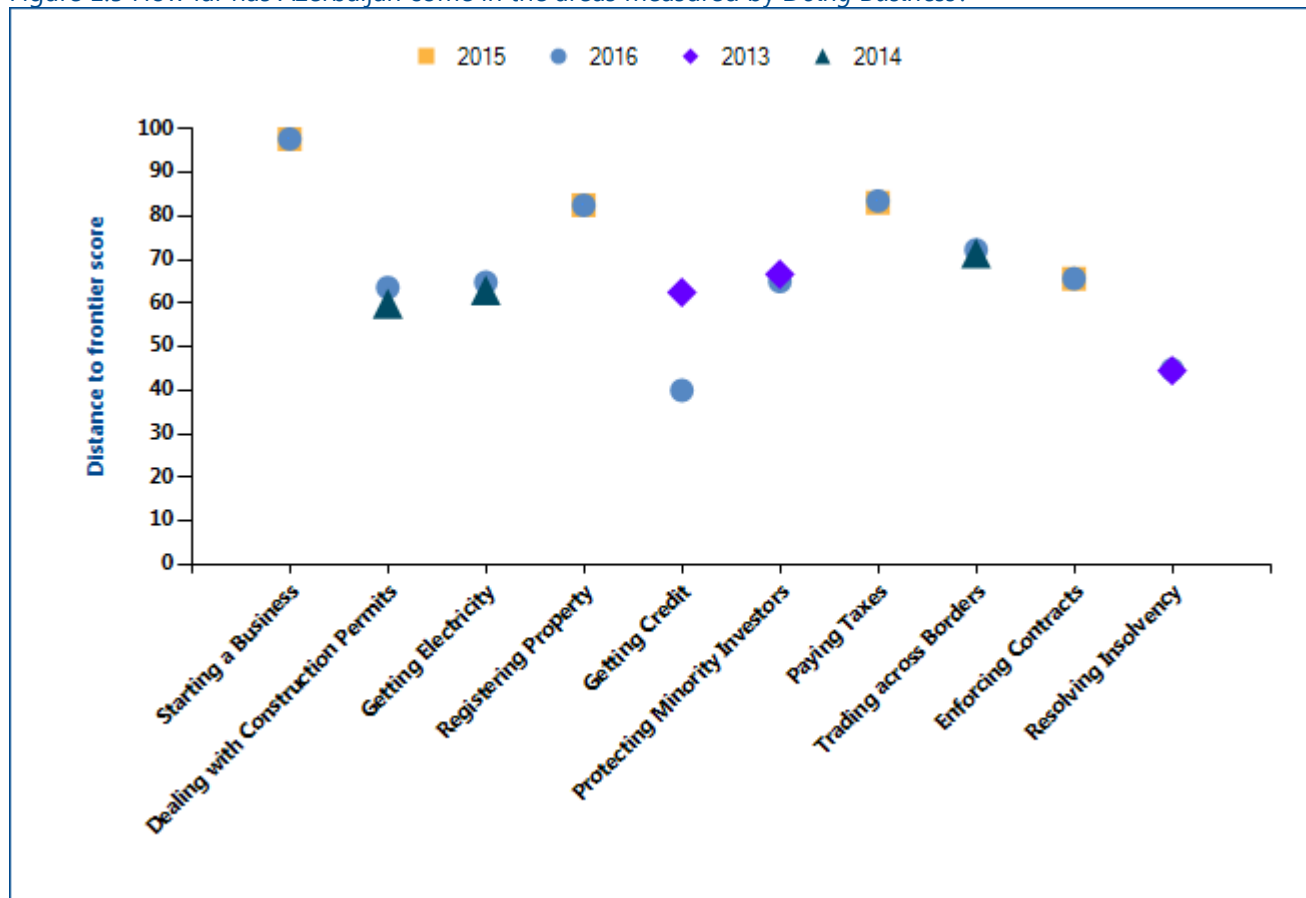
Just as the overall ranking on the ease of doing business tells only part of the story, so do changes in that ranking. Yearly movements in rankings can provide some indication of changes in an economy’s regulatory environment for firms, but they are always relative.

Moreover, year-to-year changes in the overall rankings do not reflect how the business regulatory environment in an economy has changed over time—or how it has changed in different areas. To aid in assessing such changes,

Doing Business introduced the distance to frontier score. This measure shows how far on average an economy is from the best performance achieved by any economy on each *Doing Business* indicator.

Comparing the measure for an economy at 2 points in time allows users to assess how much the economy’s regulatory environment as measured by *Doing Business* has changed over time—how far it has moved toward (or away from) the most efficient practices and strongest regulations in areas covered by *Doing Business* (figure 1.5).

Figure 1.5 How far has Azerbaijan come in the areas measured by *Doing Business*?



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. Getting credit, protecting minority investors and resolving insolvency had methodology changes in 2014 and thus are only comparable to 2013. Dealing with construction permits, getting electricity and trading across borders had methodology changes in 2015 and thus are only comparable to 2014. Starting a business, registering property, paying taxes and enforcing contracts had methodology changes in 2016 and thus are only comparable to 2015. 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. Source: *Doing Business* database.

THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

The absolute values of the indicators tell another part of the story (table 1.1). The indicators, on their own or in comparison with the indicators of a good practice economy or those of comparator economies in the region, may reveal bottlenecks reflected in large numbers of procedures, long delays or high costs. Or they 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. Comparison of the economy's indicators today with those in the previous year may show where substantial bottlenecks persist—and where they are diminishing.

Table 1.1 Summary of *Doing Business* indicators for Azerbaijan

Indicator	Azerbaijan DB2017	Azerbaijan DB2016	Bulgaria DB2017	Georgia DB2017	Poland DB2017	Romania DB2017	Russian Federation DB2017	Turkey DB2017	Best performer globally DB2017
Starting a Business (Rank)	5	5	82	8	107	62	26	79	1 (New Zealand)
Starting a Business (DTF Score)	97.74	97.75	86.82	96.13	84.22	89.48	93.57	86.98	99.96 (New Zealand)
Procedure – Men (number)	2.0	2.0	6.0	3.0	4.0	6.0	3.7	7.0	1.0 (New Zealand)
Time – Men (days)	3.0	3.0	23.0	3.0	37.0	12.0	9.8	6.5	0.5 (New Zealand)
Cost – Men (% of income per capita)	1.3	1.2	1.3	2.4	12.1	2.0	1.0	16.4	0.0 (Slovenia)
Procedure – Women (number)	2.0	2.0	6.0	3.0	4.0	6.0	3.7	7.0	1.0 (New Zealand)
Time – Women (days)	3.0	3.0	23.0	3.0	37.0	12.0	9.8	6.5	0.5 (New Zealand)
Cost – Women (% of income per capita)	1.3	1.2	1.3	2.4	12.1	2.0	1.0	16.4	0.0 (Slovenia)
Paid-in min. capital (% of income per capita)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.9	0.6	0.0	10.2	0.0 (127 Economies*)
Dealing with Construction Permits	127	121	48	8	46	95	115	102	1 (New Zealand)

Indicator	Azerbaijan DB2017	Azerbaijan DB2016	Bulgaria DB2017	Georgia DB2017	Poland DB2017	Romania DB2017	Russian Federation DB2017	Turkey DB2017	Best performer globally DB2017
(Rank)									
Dealing with Construction Permits (DTF Score)	63.63	64.13	75.06	82.84	75.15	68.67	65.86	67.86	87.40 (New Zealand)
Procedures (number)	18.0	18.0	16.0	7.0	12.0	20.0	13.7	18.0	7.0 (4 Economies*)
Time (days)	203.0	203.0	105.0	48.0	153.0	171.0	239.3	103.0	28.0 (Korea, Rep.)
Cost (% of warehouse value)	4.5	4.1	3.9	0.2	0.3	2.0	1.4	3.5	0.1 (Trinidad and Tobago)
Building quality control index (0-15)	12.0	12.0	13.0	7.0	10.0	13.0	10.0	9.5	15.0 (Luxembourg*)
Getting Electricity (Rank)	105	104	104	39	46	134	30	58	1 (Korea, Rep.)
Getting Electricity (DTF Score)	64.83	64.10	64.97	82.73	81.35	56.48	84.37	79.66	99.88 (Korea, Rep.)
Procedures (number)	7.0	7.0	6.0	4.0	4.0	8.0	3.0	4.0	3.0 (15 Economies*)
Time (days)	69.0	77.0	130.0	71.0	122.0	182.0	160.5	63.0	18.0 (Korea, Rep.*)
Cost (% of income per capita)	150.4	103.6	318.3	354.0	19.0	561.1	44.1	617.3	0.0 (Japan)
Reliability of supply and transparency of tariff index (0-8)	4.0	4.0	5.0	6.0	7.0	7.0	8.0	5.0	8.0 (26 Economies*)
Registering Property (Rank)	22	21	60	3	38	57	9	54	1 (New Zealand)
Registering Property (DTF Score)	82.52	82.55	70.19	92.85	76.49	71.11	90.55	73.01	94.46 (New Zealand)
Procedures (number)	3.0	3.0	8.0	1.0	6.0	7.0	3.0	7.0	1.0 (4 Economies*)

Indicator	Azerbaijan DB2017	Azerbaijan DB2016	Bulgaria DB2017	Georgia DB2017	Poland DB2017	Romania DB2017	Russian Federation DB2017	Turkey DB2017	Best performer globally DB2017
Time (days)	8.5	8.5	11.0	1.0	33.0	21.0	15.0	7.0	1.0 (3 Economies*)
Cost (% of property value)	0.2	0.2	2.9	0.0	0.3	1.4	0.2	4.0	0.0 (Saudi Arabia)
Quality of the land administration index (0-30)	15.5	15.5	19.0	21.5	19.5	16.0	26.0	21.5	29.0 (Singapore)
Getting Credit (Rank)	118	109	32	7	20	7	44	82	1 (New Zealand)
Getting Credit (DTF Score)	40.00	40.00	70.00	85.00	75.00	85.00	65.00	50.00	100.00 (New Zealand)
Strength of legal rights index (0-12)	2.0	2.0	9.0	9.0	7.0	10.0	6.0	3.0	12.0 (3 Economies*)
Depth of credit information index (0-8)	6.0	6.0	5.0	8.0	8.0	7.0	7.0	7.0	8.0 (30 Economies*)
Credit registry coverage (% of adults)	36.4	33.6	66.9	0.0	0.0	16.8	0.0	76.6	100.0 (3 Economies*)
Credit bureau coverage (% of adults)	0.0	0.0	0.0	88.6	92.5	51.1	77.2	0.0	100.0 (23 Economies*)
Protecting Minority Investors (Rank)	32	30	13	7	42	53	53	22	1 (New Zealand*)
Protecting Minority Investors (DTF Score)	65.00	65.00	73.33	76.67	63.33	60.00	60.00	70.00	83.33 (New Zealand*)
Strength of minority investor protection index (0-10)	6.5	6.5	7.3	7.7	6.3	6.0	6.0	7.0	8.3 (New Zealand*)
Extent of conflict of interest regulation index (0-10)	7.7	7.7	6.7	7.7	6.0	6.0	5.0	6.7	9.3 (New Zealand*)
Extent of shareholder governance index (0-	5.3	5.3	8.0	7.7	6.7	6.0	7.0	7.3	8.3 (Norway)

Indicator	Azerbaijan DB2017	Azerbaijan DB2016	Bulgaria DB2017	Georgia DB2017	Poland DB2017	Romania DB2017	Russian Federation DB2017	Turkey DB2017	Best performer globally DB2017
10)									
Paying Taxes (Rank)	40	41	83	22	47	50	45	128	1 (United Arab Emirates)
Paying Taxes (DTF Score)	83.52	83.08	72.81	87.43	82.73	81.64	82.96	60.83	99.44 (United Arab Emirates)
Payments (number per year)	6.0	7.0	14.0	5.0	7.0	14.0	7.0	11.0	3.0 (Hong Kong SAR, China*)
Time (hours per year)	195.0	195.0	453.0	270.0	271.0	161.0	168.0	216.5	55.0 (Luxembourg)
Total tax rate (% of profit)	39.8	39.8	27.0	16.4	40.4	38.4	47.4	41.1	26.1 (32 Economies*)
Postfiling index (0-100)	81.0	81.0	73.3	87.2	92.2	79.6	87.6	3.9	98.5 (Estonia)
Trading across Borders (Rank)	83	85	21	54	1	1	140	70	1 (10 Economies*)
Trading across Borders (DTF Score)	72.28	71.48	97.41	85.15	100.00	100.00	57.96	79.71	100.00 (10 Economies*)
Time to export: Border compliance (hours)	29	34	4	14	0	0	96	16	0 (18 Economies*)
Cost to export: Border compliance (USD)	214	214	55	383	0	0	765	376	0 (18 Economies*)
Time to export: Documentary compliance (hours)	33	35	2	2	1	1	25	5	1 (25 Economies*)
Cost to export: Documentary compliance (USD)	300	300	52	35	0	0	92	87	0 (19 Economies*)
Time to import: Border compliance (hours)	30	32	1	15	0	0	96	41	0 (25 Economies*)

Indicator	Azerbaijan DB2017	Azerbaijan DB2016	Bulgaria DB2017	Georgia DB2017	Poland DB2017	Romania DB2017	Russian Federation DB2017	Turkey DB2017	Best performer globally DB2017
Cost to import: Border compliance (USD)	423	423	0	396	0	0	1125	655	0 (28 Economies*)
Time to import: Documentary compliance (hours)	38	41	1	2	1	1	43	11	1 (29 Economies*)
Cost to import: Documentary compliance (USD)	200	200	0	189	0	0	153	142	0 (30 Economies*)
Enforcing Contracts (Rank)	44	43	49	16	55	26	12	33	1 (Korea, Rep.)
Enforcing Contracts (DTF Score)	65.66	65.66	65.09	73.21	63.44	71.08	74.96	68.87	84.15 (Korea, Rep.)
Time (days)	277.0	277.0	564.0	285.0	685.0	512.0	337.0	580.0	164.0 (Singapore)
Cost (% of claim)	18.5	18.5	23.8	29.9	19.4	28.9	16.5	24.9	9.0 (Iceland)
Quality of judicial processes index (0-18)	5.5	5.5	10.5	12.0	10.5	14.0	11.0	13.0	15.5 (Australia)
Resolving Insolvency (Rank)	86	82	48	106	27	49	51	126	1 (Finland)
Resolving Insolvency (DTF Score)	44.77	44.68	59.38	40.02	76.37	59.16	56.69	34.98	93.89 (Finland)
Recovery rate (cents on the dollar)	39.6	39.5	34.9	39.5	60.6	34.4	38.6	18.5	92.9 (Norway)
Time (years)	1.5	1.5	3.3	2.0	3.0	3.3	2.0	4.5	0.4 (22 Economies*)
Cost (% of estate)	12.0	12.0	9.0	10.0	15.0	10.5	9.0	14.5	1.0 (22 Economies*)
Strength of insolvency framework index (0-16)	7.5	7.5	13.0	6.0	14.0	13.0	11.5	8.0	15.0 (6 Economies*)

Source: Doing Business database.

Note: DB2016 rankings shown are not last year's published rankings but comparable rankings for DB2016 that capture the effects of such factors as data revisions and changes to the methodology. 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. 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” 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. * 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>).

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 records all procedures officially required, or commonly done in practice, for an entrepreneur to start up and formally operate an industrial or commercial business, as well as the time and cost to complete these procedures and the paid-in minimum capital requirement. These procedures include obtaining all necessary licenses and permits and completing any required notifications, verifications or inscriptions for the company and employees with relevant authorities. 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, several assumptions about the business and the procedures are used. It is assumed that any required information is readily available and that the entrepreneur will pay no bribes. Assumptions about 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.
- Operates in the economy's largest business city. For 11 economies the data are also collected for the second largest business city.

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 or commonly used in practice

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

Deposited in a bank or with a notary before registration (or within 3 months)

- The size of the entire office space is approximately 929 square meters (10,000 square feet).

- Is 100% domestically owned and has five owners, none of whom is a legal entity.
- Has start-up capital of 10 times income per capita
- Performs general industrial or commercial activities, such as the production or sale to the public of products or services. The business does not perform foreign trade activities and does not handle products subject to a special tax regime, for example, liquor or tobacco. It is not using heavily polluting production processes.
- Leases the commercial plant or offices and is not a proprietor of real estate.
- The amount of the annual lease for the office space is equivalent to 1 times income per capita.

- Does not qualify for investment incentives or any special benefits.
- 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 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.

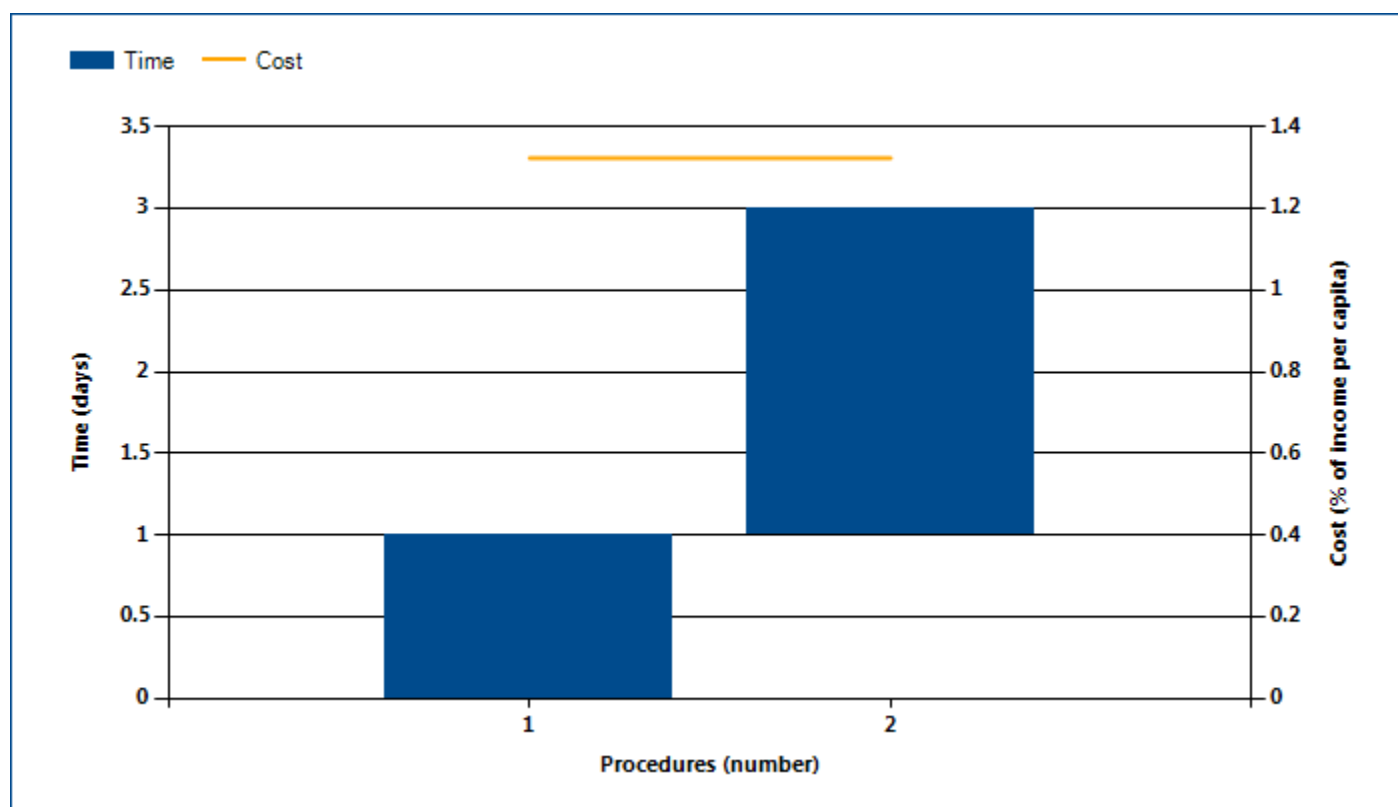
STARTING A BUSINESS

Where does the economy stand today?

What does it take to start a business in Azerbaijan? According to data collected by *Doing Business*, starting a business there requires 2.0 procedures, takes 3.0 days, costs 1.3% of income per capita for men, and requires 2.0 procedures, takes 3.0 days, costs 1.3% of income per capita for women. A requirement of paid-in minimum capital of 0.0% of income per capita (figure 2.1) is legally

mandatory for both men and women. Most indicator sets refer to a case scenario in the largest business city of an economy, except for 11 economies for which the data are a population-weighted average of the 2 largest business cities. See the chapter on distance to frontier and ease of doing business ranking at the end of this profile for more details.

Figure 2.1 What it takes to start a business in Azerbaijan
Paid-in minimum capital (% of income per capita): 0.0



Source: *Doing Business* database.

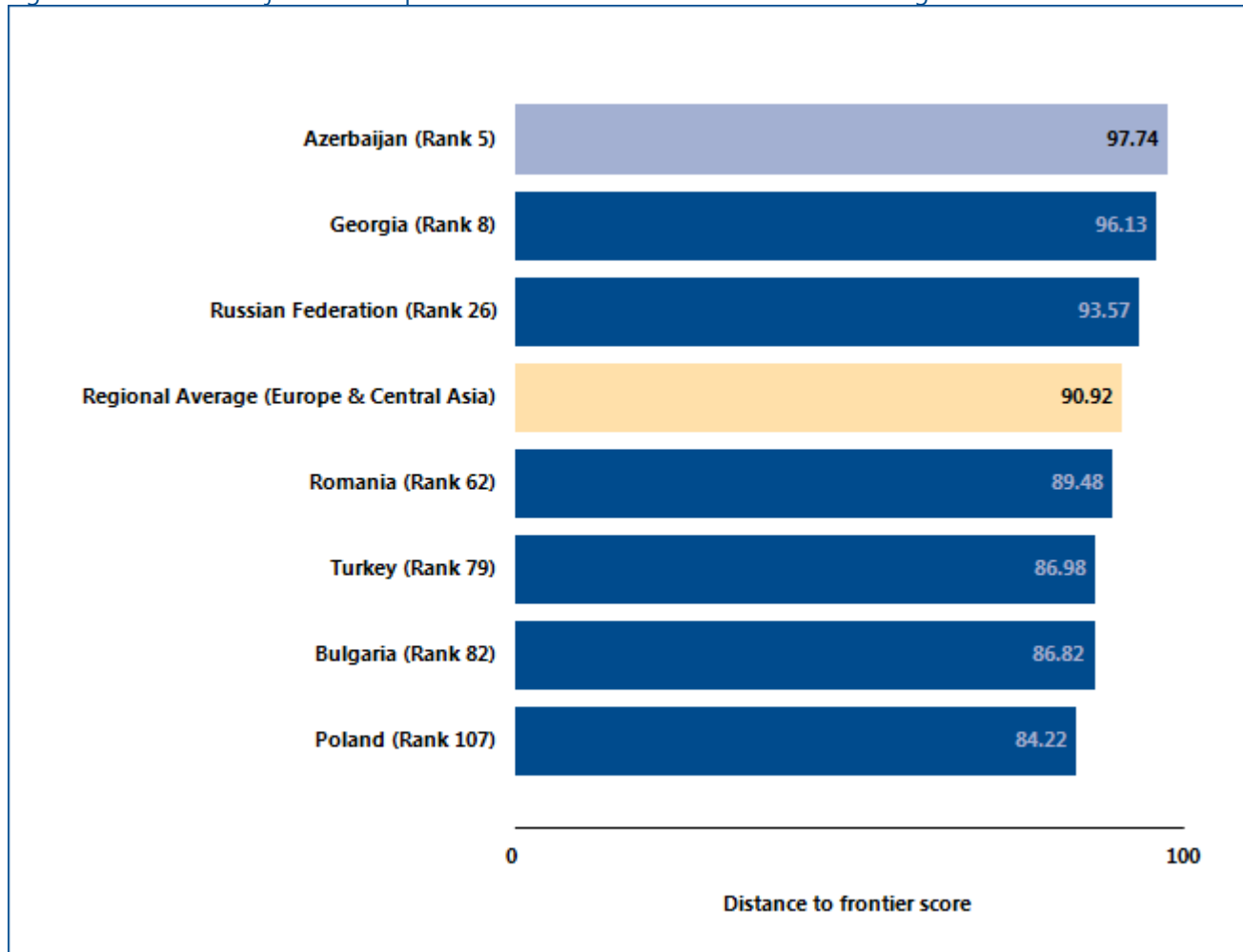
Note: Time shown in the figure above may not reflect simultaneity of procedures. Online procedures account for 0.5 days in the total time calculation. For more information on the methodology of the starting a business indicators, see the *Doing Business* website (<http://www.doingbusiness.org>). For details on the procedures reflected here, see the summary at the end of this chapter. Procedures in light blue for married women only.

STARTING A BUSINESS

Globally, Azerbaijan stands at 5 in the ranking of 190 economies on the ease of starting a business (figure 2.2). The rankings for comparator economies and the regional

average ranking provide other useful information for assessing how easy it is for an entrepreneur in Azerbaijan to start a business.

Figure 2.2 How Azerbaijan and comparator economies rank on the ease of starting a business



Source: Doing Business database.

STARTING A BUSINESS

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

they often are 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 Azerbaijan (table 2.1)?

Table 2.1 How has Azerbaijan made starting a business easier—or not?
By *Doing Business* report year from DB2011 to DB2017

DB year	Reform
DB2014	Azerbaijan made starting a business easier by introducing free online registration services and eliminating preregistration formalities.
DB2015	Azerbaijan made starting a business easier by reducing the time to obtain an electronic signature for online tax registration.
DB2016	Azerbaijan made starting a business easier by abolishing the requirement to use a corporate seal.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

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>.

STARTING A BUSINESS

What are the details?

Underlying the indicators shown in this chapter for Azerbaijan is a set of specific procedures—the bureaucratic and legal steps that an entrepreneur must complete to incorporate and register a new firm. These are identified by *Doing Business* through collaboration with relevant local professionals and the study of laws, regulations and publicly available information on business entry in that economy. Following is a detailed summary of those procedures, along with the associated time and cost. These procedures are those that apply to a company matching the standard assumptions (the “standardized company”) used by *Doing Business* in collecting the data (see the section in this chapter on what the indicators measure).

STANDARDIZED COMPANY

Legal form: Limited Liability Company (LLC)

Paid-in minimum capital requirement: AZN 0

City: Baku

Start-up Capital: 10 times GNI per capita

Table 2.2 Summary of time, cost and procedures for starting a business in Azerbaijan

No.	Procedure	Time to complete	Cost to complete
1	<p>Obtain electronic signature for online registration</p> <p>An electronic signature is a pre-requisite to online registration. An electronic signature is issued by Ministry of Taxes Certificate Services and Ministry of Information Technology. Starting from January 2014, it takes 1 day to get an e-signature.</p> <p><i>Agency: The Ministry of Communications and Information Technologies</i></p>	1 day	AZN 72
2	<p>Complete online registration; obtain TIN number and register for VAT</p> <p>Online registration is available as of December 2011 (Article 5-1. has been added to the Law of Azerbaijan Republic "On state registration of legal entities and state registry.") Online registration has been exempted from state fee and is completely free (Article 20-1.3 of the Law of Azerbaijan Republic "On State Fee").</p> <p>According to the amendments of the Law "On state registration and state registry of legal entities" dated November 28, 2014 for e-registration, only charter has to be attached to the electronic application. Application is made through the Ministry of Tax's web page. The time limit for online registration is 1 day. A hard copy can also be obtained from the Tax Office. Having a registration number is sufficient to start operation.</p> <p>Documents required for paper registration include the following: -Standard application form</p>	2 days	no charge

No.	Procedure	Time to complete	Cost to complete
	<p>-Founding documents – the charter of the entity approved by the founder or his/her legal representative, minutes of the foundation meeting;</p> <p>-Resolution of establishment</p> <p>-If the founder is an individual – copy of his/her identity card (notarization of the signature is optional);</p> <p>-A document confirming the legal address of the entity (if leased it needs to be notarized, cost 2 AZN + 0.20 AZN if it is done in ASAN).</p> <p><i>Agency: One Stop Shop, Ministry of Taxes</i></p>		

* Takes place simultaneously with another procedure.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

Note: Online procedures account for 0.5 days in the total time calculation.

Procedures in light blue for married women only.

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, the building quality control index evaluates 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 warehouses.
- Has 60 builders and other employees, all of them nationals with the technical expertise and

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—though procedures that can be fully completed online are an exception to this rule

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)

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.

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.

- Is valued at 50 times income per capita.
- 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.

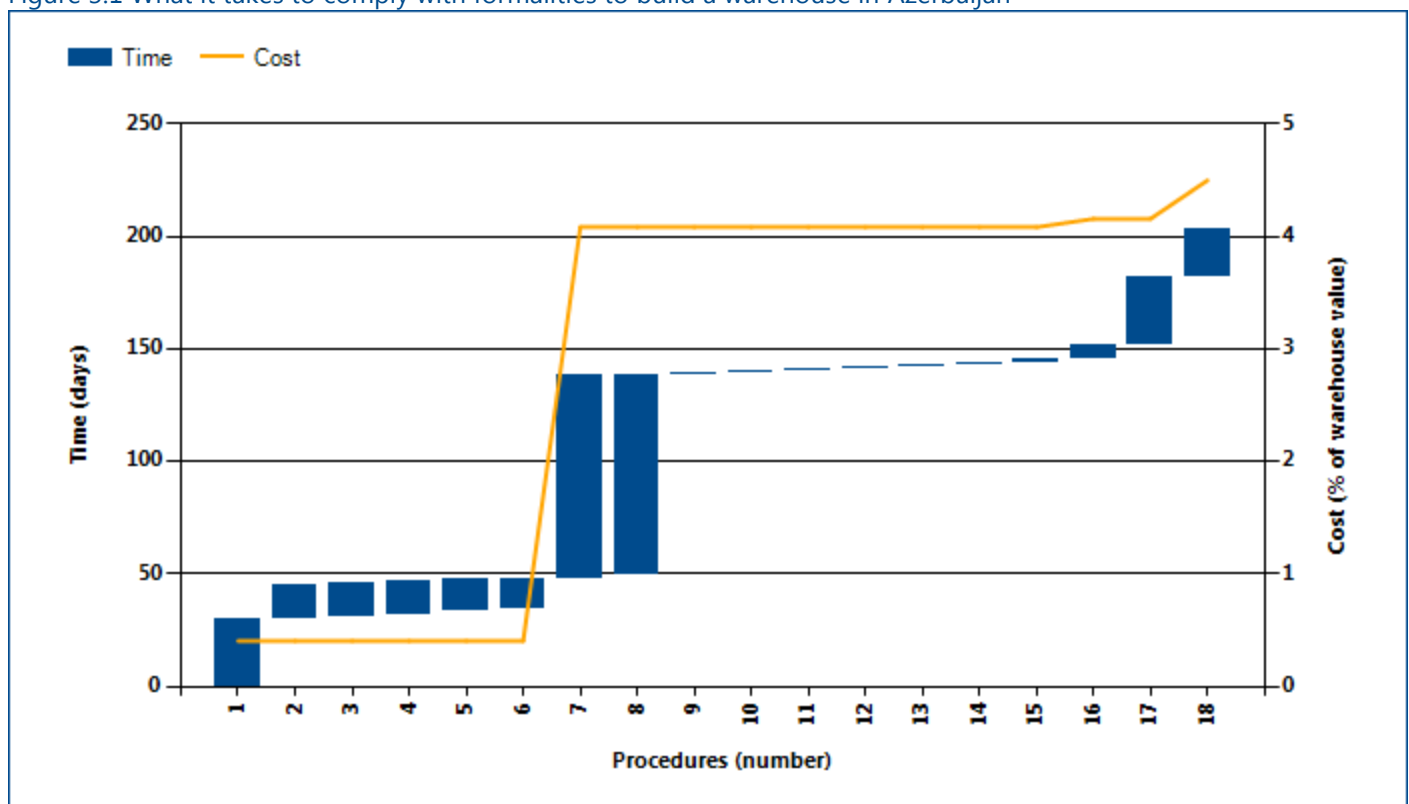
DEALING WITH CONSTRUCTION PERMITS

Where does the economy stand today?

What does it take to comply with the formalities to build a warehouse in Azerbaijan? According to data collected by *Doing Business*, dealing with construction permits there requires 18.0 procedures, takes 203.0 days and costs 4.5% of the warehouse value (figure 3.1). Most indicator sets refer to a case scenario in the largest

business city of an economy, except for 11 economies for which the data are a population-weighted average of the 2 largest business cities. See the chapter on distance to frontier and ease of doing business ranking at the end of this profile for more details.

Figure 3.1 What it takes to comply with formalities to build a warehouse in Azerbaijan



Source: *Doing Business* database.

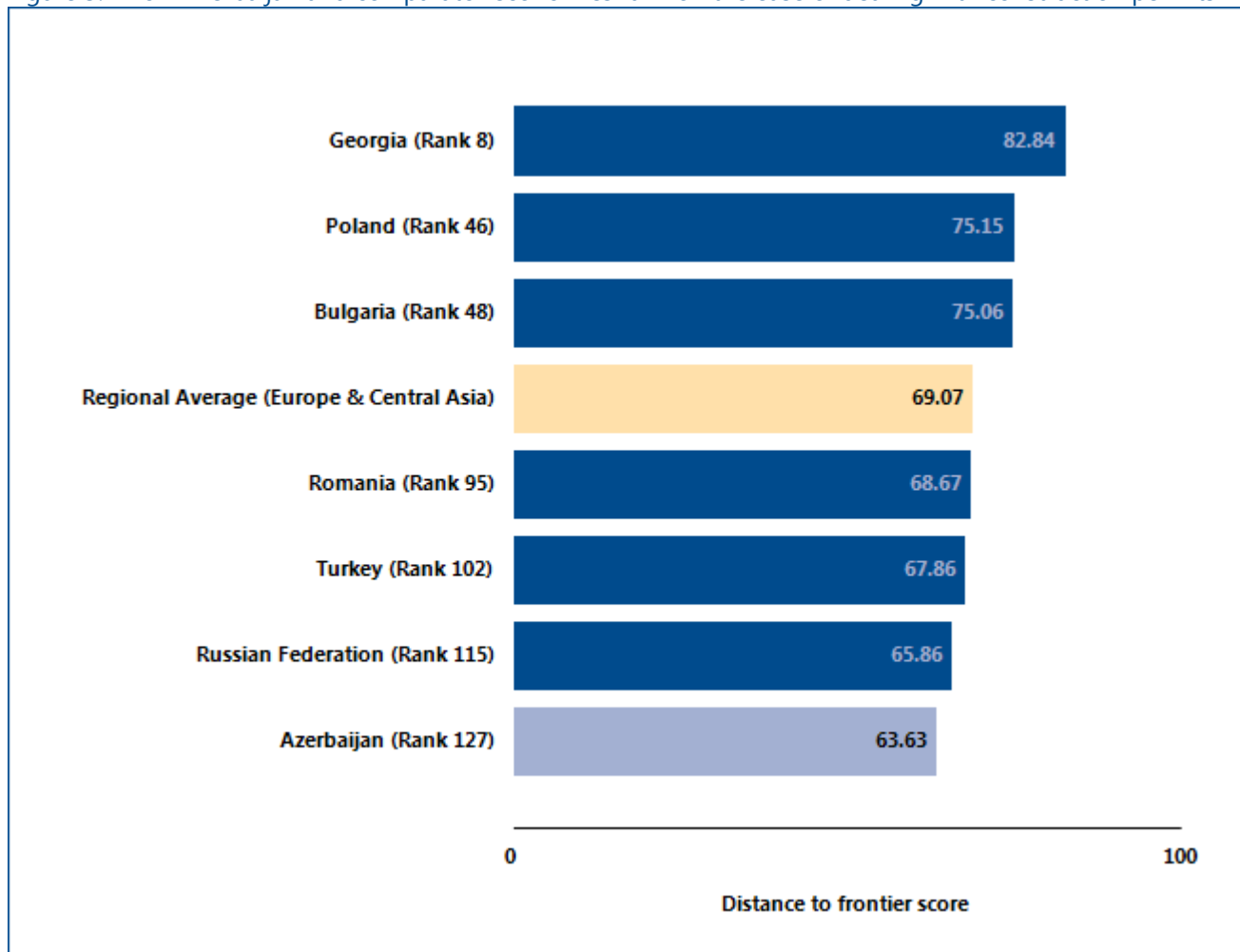
Note: Time shown in the figure above may not reflect simultaneity of procedures. Online procedures account for 0.5 days in the total time calculation. For more information on the methodology of the dealing with construction permits indicators, see the *Doing Business* website (<http://www.doingbusiness.org>). For details on the procedures reflected here, see the summary at the end of this chapter.

DEALING WITH CONSTRUCTION PERMITS

Globally, Azerbaijan stands at 127 in the ranking of 190 economies on the ease of dealing with construction permits (figure 3.2). The rankings for comparator economies and the regional average ranking provide

other useful information for assessing how easy it is for an entrepreneur in Azerbaijan to legally build a warehouse.

Figure 3.2 How Azerbaijan and comparator economies rank on the ease of dealing with construction permits



Source: Doing Business database.

DEALING WITH CONSTRUCTION PERMITS

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 Azerbaijan (table 3.1)?

Table 3.1 How has Azerbaijan made dealing with construction permits easier—or not?
By *Doing Business* report year from DB2011 to DB2017

DB year	Reform
DB2014	Azerbaijan adopted a new construction code that streamlined procedures relating to the issuance of building permits and established official time limits for some procedures.
DB2016	Azerbaijan made dealing with construction permits easier by establishing a one-stop shop for issuing preapprovals for project documentation.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

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>.

DEALING WITH CONSTRUCTION PERMITS

What are the details?

The indicators reported here for Azerbaijan are based on a set of specific procedures—the steps that a company must complete to legally build a warehouse—identified by *Doing Business* through information collected from experts in construction licensing, including architects, civil engineers, construction lawyers, construction firms, utility service providers and public officials who deal with building regulations. These procedures are those that apply to a company and structure matching the standard assumptions used by *Doing Business* in collecting the data (see the section in this chapter on what the indicators cover).

BUILDING A WAREHOUSE

Estimated value of warehouse : **AZN 271,906**

City : **Baku**

The procedures, along with the associated time and cost, are summarized below.

Table 3.2 Summary of time, cost and procedures for dealing with construction permits in Azerbaijan

No.	Procedure	Time to complete	Cost to complete
1	<p>Apply and obtain the allotment of land for construction from the Baku City Executive Authority</p> <p>An application is required for the allotment of land for the construction only if that land is already owned by a builder. A preliminary permit for the project is granted and eligibility of the land plot for construction is determined.</p> <p>The application for the allotment of land must include the following information, as applicable to BuildCo:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architectural peculiarities of the planned construction. • Scope and terms of the planned construction. • Dimensions of the land. • Land ownership documents. <p>Note that these informational requirements are based on the assumption that the land is already legally owned by and registered in BuildCo’s name.</p> <p>The application must also include an attestation to BuildCo’s legal status and to its land plot ownership -- the “certificate of state registration.”</p> <p><i>Agency: Baku City Executive Authority</i></p>	30 days	AZN 1,100
2	<p>Obtain engineering-geological opinion from the Ministry of Emergencies</p> <p>The engineering/geological opinion is a prerequisite for preparing the project design and for submitting the project for approval. This can be done in parallel with obtaining technical conditions.</p> <p><i>Agency: Ministry for Emergency Situations</i></p>	15 days	no charge

No.	Procedure	Time to complete	Cost to complete
* 3	<p>Obtain technical conditions from the Baku City Sanitation and Epidemiology Center</p> <p>Technical conditions from the Baku City Sanitation and Epidemiology Center are required for the preparation of the project.</p> <p>According to the new Building Code, the Baku city executive authority will have to obtain all technical conditions and approvals on behalf of BuildCo. However, in practice building companies obtain the technical conditions directly from the issuing authorities.</p> <p><i>Agency: Baku City Sanitation and Epidemiology Center</i></p>	15 days	no charge
* 4	<p>Obtain technical conditions from the State Fire Control Service of the Ministry for Emergency Situations (MES)</p> <p>Under the law "On Fire Safety" and according to other norms of Azerbaijan, the authorities (taking into account prohibitions and limitations) shall grant a permit and, if necessary, present specific guidelines for the construction design and implementation phases. A fire inspection must be carried out.</p> <p>According to the new Building Code, the Baku city executive authority will have to obtain all technical conditions and approvals on behalf of BuildCo. However, in practice building companies obtain the technical conditions and project approvals directly from the issuing authorities.</p> <p><i>Agency: Fire Department (Ministry for Emergency Situations)</i></p>	15 days	no charge
* 5	<p>Obtain technical conditions from the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources</p> <p>According to the law "On Environmental Protection", a permit shall be granted and the conditions adjusted to meet environmental protection regulations, land reclamation, rehabilitation and efficient use of natural resources, improvement of territories, and enhancement of the environment.</p> <p>According to the new Building Code, the Baku city executive authority will have to obtain all technical conditions and approvals on behalf of BuildCo. However, in practice building companies obtain the technical conditions and project approvals directly from the issuing authorities.</p> <p><i>Agency: Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources</i></p>	15 days	no charge

No.	Procedure	Time to complete	Cost to complete
* 6	<p>Obtain technical conditions from the water and sewage authority (Azersu OJSC)</p> <p>Under the law "On Water Supply and Waste Waters", the water and sewage authority will grant a permit and issue guidelines for the construction design and implementation phases. In doing so, the authorities must consider prohibitions and limitations for the water system and wastes. Connection to the main lines is permitted after construction is done.</p> <p>According to the new Building Code, the Baku city executive authority will have to obtain all technical conditions and approvals on behalf of BuildCo. However, in practice building companies obtain the technical conditions and project approvals directly from the issuing authorities.</p> <p><i>Agency: Azersu OJSC</i></p>	10 days	no charge
7	<p>Obtain building permit from the Department of Architecture and City Building of the Baku City Executive Authority</p> <p>The building permit passport application includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An evaluation of the construction work. BuildCo inquires with different local executive authorities and supply and supervisory organizations to assess their opinions and conclusions. • Architectural and planning instructions, including information on land surface, existing buildings, plants, communication and utilities lines, scope of the project, and other construction specifications. • The drawing of the land plot, indicating adjacent streets and crossroads. The drawing must be extracted from the city's General Plan and from the district's Development Plan. • The locations and directions of the engineering communication lines (utilities and the like), indicating their marking and placement on existing buildings, streets, crossroads, and so forth • A topographic plan of the land plot <p>BuildCo gets the building permit together with a mark for construction (i.e. signing board with all the relevant information about construction: the name of the construction company, the duration of construction, the area of construction, etc) which will be placed at the site to inform the neighbors and public about the construction.</p> <p><i>Agency: Baku City Executive Authority (Department of Architecture and City Building)</i></p>	90 days	AZN 10,000

No.	Procedure	Time to complete	Cost to complete
* 8	<p>Submit the project documentation to the single-window for a comprehensive project expertise</p> <p>The project documentation is submitted to the Single Window for approval from various agencies. The Single Window was established in order to streamline evaluation of construction projects in accordance with the requirements of "Rules on Examination of construction projects" based on the President's Decree dated November 17, 2014. 6 services relevant to the evaluation of the construction projects are represented under the Ministry of Emergency Situation Single Window for Construction Permitting: State Examination Head Office, State Fire Control Service, Mining Control State Agency, Engineering Geological Center, Ministry of Ecology and Natural resources, Ecological safety service and Ministry of Public Health Hygiene and Epidemiology Center.</p> <p><i>Agency: Single window for construction permitting at the Ministry of Emergency Situations</i></p>	30 days	no charge
9	<p>Receive inspection of foundation works</p> <p>According to the Article 96.2.1 of the Building Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the competent state bodies have to conduct supervision of construction. State supervision of construction is carried out in the order stipulated in the "Rules of state supervision of construction", approved by Presidential Decree of November 17, 2014, № 349". The inspections are conducted in all major phases of the construction and inspection results are recorded in the Registry of State Supervision in Construction.</p> <p><i>Agency: Chief Agency for Construction Supervision and Safety</i></p>	1 day	no charge
10	<p>Receive inspection of structural works</p> <p>According to the Article 96.2.1 of the Building Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the competent state bodies have to conduct supervision of construction. State supervision of construction is carried out in the order stipulated in the "Rules of state supervision of construction", approved by Presidential Decree of November 17, 2014, № 349". The inspections are conducted in all major phases of the construction and inspection results are recorded in the Registry of State Supervision in Construction.</p> <p><i>Agency: Chief Agency for Construction Supervision and Safety</i></p>	1 day	no charge
11	<p>Receive inspection of plumbing works</p> <p>According to the Article 96.2.1 of the Building Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the competent state bodies have to conduct supervision of construction. State supervision of</p>	1 day	no charge

No.	Procedure	Time to complete	Cost to complete
	<p>construction is carried out in the order stipulated in the "Rules of state supervision of construction", approved by Presidential Decree of November 17, 2014, № 349". The inspections are conducted in all major phases of the construction and inspection results are recorded in the Registry of State Supervision in Construction.</p> <p><i>Agency: Chief Agency for Construction Supervision and Safety</i></p>		
12	<p>Receive inspection of roofing works</p> <p>According to the Article 96.2.1 of the Building Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the competent state bodies have to conduct supervision of construction. State supervision of construction is carried out in the order stipulated in the "Rules of state supervision of construction", approved by Presidential Decree of November 17, 2014, № 349. The inspections are conducted in all major phases of the construction and inspection results are recorded in the Registry of State Supervision in Construction.</p> <p><i>Agency: Chief Agency for Construction Supervision and Safety</i></p>	1 day	no charge
13	<p>Receive examination from Labor Inspection and other state authorities during construction works</p> <p>All examinations, except for tax, may be carried out only with the participation of a representative from the Azerbaijan Republic Ministry of Economic Development. Pursuant to the Labor Code and its implementing rules and regulations, the state labor authorities may examine the workplace and labor protection and technical security policies. A report is issued with the examination results.</p> <p><i>Agency: Ministry of Economic Development</i></p>	1 day	no charge
* 14	<p>Receive inspection from Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources</p> <p>If environmental standards were not in full compliance during construction, the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources could inspect the site. An act or statement is issued with the examination results. This procedure involves facilitation fees.</p> <p><i>Agency: Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources</i></p>	1 day	no charge
15	<p>Receive inspection from State Fire Control Service of the Ministry of Emergency Situations</p> <p>Fire inspections could be conducted to check if fire prevention measures are in order. A report is issued with the examination results.</p>	1 day	no charge

No.	Procedure	Time to complete	Cost to complete
	<p><i>Agency: Ministry for Emergency Situations (Chief Agency of Supervision on Safety at Construction)</i></p>		
16	<p>Obtain water and sewage connection</p> <p>Connecting to the water supply and sewage systems is done in accordance with the "Rules of issuing of technical specifications and connection of consumers to the water supply and sewage", approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of Azerbaijan Republic dated August 13, 2014, № 275.</p> <p>The fee to obtain a water and sewage connection is AZN 2.00 multiplied by the water volume to be delivered in 24 hours (based on the connected pipe's diameter). In this case, it is assumed that 100 cubic meters can be delivered in 24 hours.</p> <p><i>Agency: AzerSu (State Water Agency)</i></p>	7 days	AZN 200
17	<p>Request and obtain occupancy permit</p> <p>After BuildCo completes construction, a commission will examine the building quality and determine the feasibility of putting the building into operation. The commission consists of representatives from the state control authorities, especially the Architecture and City Building Department, and representatives of organizations for ecology, energy, sanitation, supply, and fire inspection.</p> <p><i>Agency: State control authorities: Architecture and City Building Department and ecology, energy, sanitation, fire inspection, and supply organizations</i></p>	30 days	no charge
18	<p>Register building with Real Estate Registry</p> <p>This procedure is governed by the Civil Code of the Azerbaijan Republic and the Law of the Azerbaijan Republic on State Registry of Real Estate. Attached to the application must be the documents defining the company status, construction documents, and a copy of the act or the statement on the operation license. Relevant fees must also be paid. The State Registry of Real Estate registers the building (warehouse) within 20 days and provides the company with a private property right certificate. BuildCo will obtain the complete property right (ownership, order, and use) over the building (warehouse) from the date the certificate is registered.</p> <p><i>Agency: Real Estate Registry</i></p>	21 days	AZN 930

* Takes place simultaneously with another procedure.

Source: Doing Business database.

Note: Online procedures account for 0.5 days in the total time calculation.

DEALING WITH CONSTRUCTION PERMITS

Building Quality Control Index

The building quality control index is the sum of the scores on the quality of building regulations, quality control before construction, quality control during construction, quality control after construction, liability and insurance regimes, and professional certifications indices.

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.

Table 3.3 Summary of quality control and safety mechanisms in Azerbaijan

	Answer	Score
Building quality control index (0-15)		12.0
Quality of building regulations index (0-2)		2.0
How accessible are building laws and regulations in your economy? (0-1)	Available online; Free of charge; In official gazette.	1.0
Which requirements for obtaining a building permit are clearly specified in the building regulations or on any accessible website, brochure or pamphlet? (0-1)	List of required documents; Fees to be paid; Required preapprovals.	1.0
Quality control before construction index (0-1)		1.0
Which third-party entities are required by law to verify that the building plans are in compliance with existing building regulations? (0-1)	Licensed architect; Licensed engineer.	1.0
Quality control during construction index (0-3)		2.0
What types of inspections (if any) are required by law to be carried out during construction? (0-2)	Inspections by in-house engineer; Inspections at various phases.	1.0
Do legally mandated inspections occur in practice during construction? (0-1)	Mandatory inspections are always done in practice.	1.0
Quality control after construction index (0-3)		3.0
Is there a final inspection required by law to verify that the building was built in accordance with the approved plans and regulations? (0-2)	Yes, final inspection is done by government agency; Yes, in-house engineer submits report for final inspection.	2.0
Do legally mandated final inspections occur in practice? (0-1)	Final inspection always occurs in practice.	1.0
Liability and insurance regimes index (0-2)		0.0
Which parties (if any) are held liable by law for structural flaws or problems in the building once it is in use (Latent Defect Liability or Decennial Liability)? (0-1)	No party is held liable under the law.	0.0

	Answer	Score
Which parties (if any) are required by law to obtain an insurance policy to cover possible structural flaws or problems in the building once it is in use (Latent Defect Liability Insurance or Decennial Insurance)? (0-1)	No party is required by law to obtain insurance	0.0
Professional certifications index (0-4)		4.0
What are the qualification requirements for the professional responsible for verifying that the architectural plans or drawings are in compliance with existing building regulations? (0-2)	Minimum number of years of experience; University degree in architecture or engineering; Passing a certification exam.	2.0
What are the qualification requirements for the professional who supervises the construction on the ground? (0-2)	Minimum number of years of experience; University degree in engineering, construction or construction management; Passing a certification exam.	2.0

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, *Doing Business* also 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).
- 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.

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.

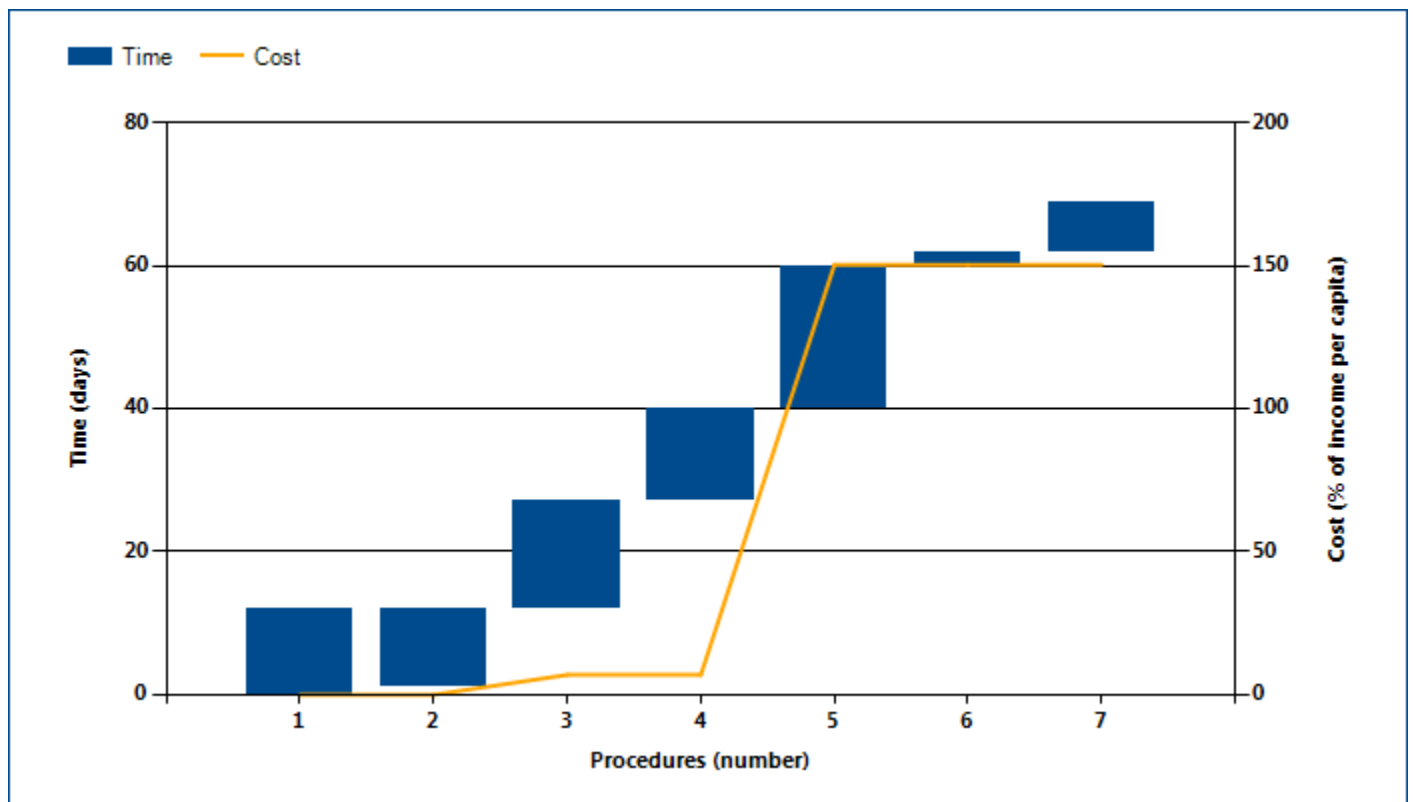
GETTING ELECTRICITY

Where does the economy stand today?

What does it take to obtain a new electricity connection in Azerbaijan? According to data collected by *Doing Business*, getting electricity there requires 7.0 procedures, takes 69.0 days and costs 150.4% of income per capita (figure 4.1).

Most indicator sets refer to a case scenario in the largest business city of an economy, except for 11 economies for which the data are a population-weighted average of the 2 largest business cities. See the chapter on distance to frontier and ease of doing business ranking at the end of this profile for more details.

Figure 4.1 What it takes to obtain an electricity connection in Azerbaijan



Source: *Doing Business* database.

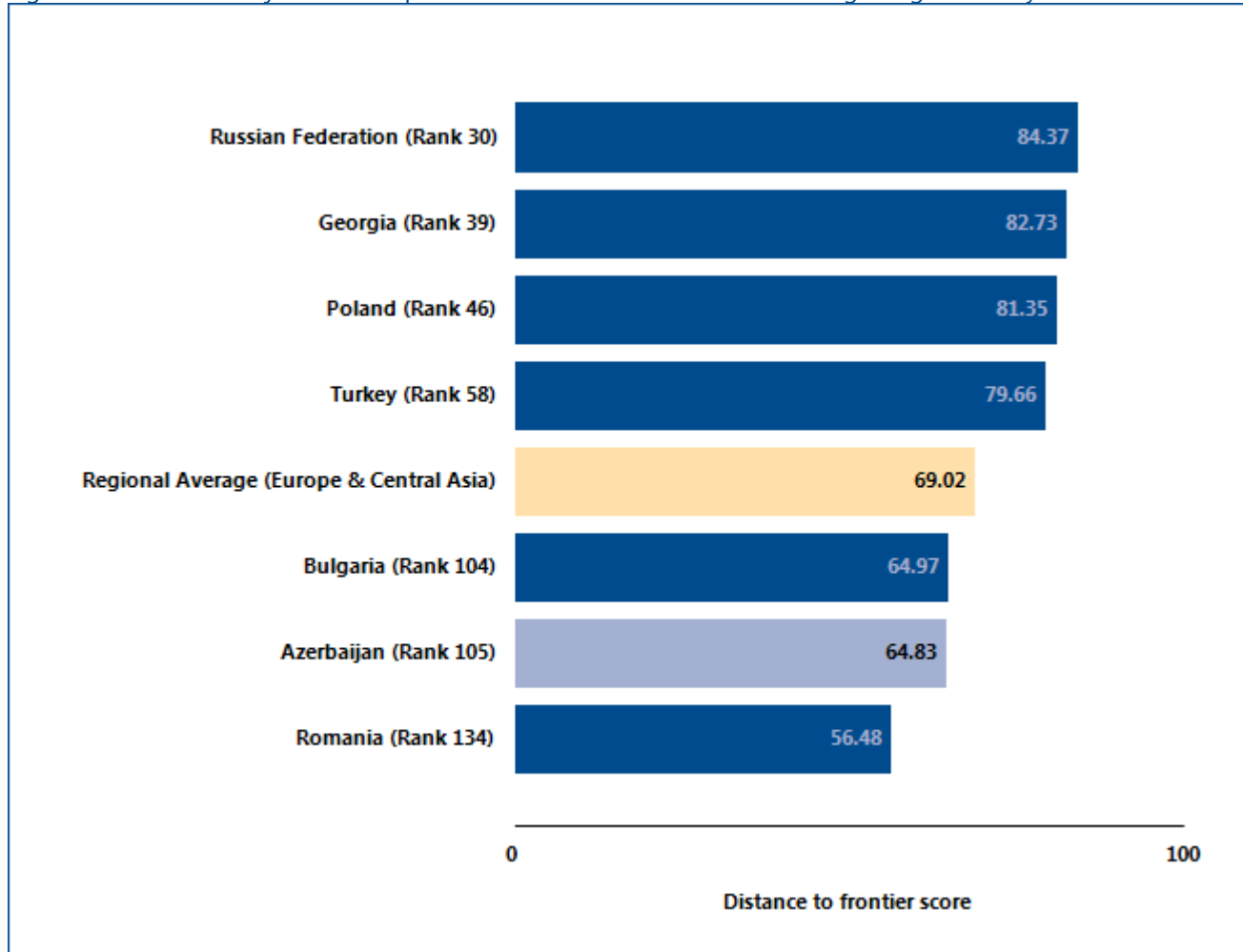
Note: Time shown in the figure above may not reflect simultaneity of procedures. For more information on the methodology of the getting electricity indicators, see the *Doing Business* website (<http://www.doingbusiness.org>). For details on the procedures reflected here, see the summary at the end of this chapter.

GETTING ELECTRICITY

Globally, Azerbaijan stands at 105 in the ranking of 190 economies on the ease of getting electricity (figure 4.2). The rankings for comparator economies and the regional

average ranking provide another perspective in assessing how easy it is for an entrepreneur in Azerbaijan to connect a warehouse to electricity.

Figure 4.2 How Azerbaijan and comparator economies rank on the ease of getting electricity



Source: Doing Business database.

GETTING ELECTRICITY

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 Azerbaijan (table 4.1)?

Table 4.1 How has Azerbaijan made getting electricity easier—or not?
By *Doing Business* report year from DB2011 to DB2017

DB year	Reform
DB2017	Azerbaijan streamlined the process of obtaining a new electricity connection by introducing an electronic capacity/availability of connection map, which reduced the time needed to determine new customer connection points.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

GETTING ELECTRICITY

What are the details?

The indicators reported here for Azerbaijan are based on a set of specific procedures—the steps that an entrepreneur must complete to get a warehouse connected to electricity by the local distribution utility—identified by *Doing Business*. Data are collected from the distribution utility, then completed and verified by electricity regulatory agencies and independent professionals such as electrical engineers, electrical contractors and construction companies. The electricity distribution utility surveyed is the one serving the area (or areas) in which warehouses are located. If there is a choice of distribution utilities, the one serving the largest number of customers is selected.

The procedures are those that apply to a warehouse and electricity connection matching the standard assumptions used by *Doing Business* in collecting the data (see the section in this chapter on what the indicators cover). The procedures, along with the associated time and cost, are summarized below.

OBTAINING AN ELECTRICITY CONNECTION*

Name of utility:	Azerishiq OJSC
Price of electricity (US cents per kWh):	5.9
City:	Baku

*Price is calculated as a monthly consumption of 26,880 kWh for business customers, based on a standardized case study adopted by the getting electricity methodology. *Doing Business* measures the price of electricity but does not include these data when calculating the distance to frontier score for getting electricity or the ranking on the ease of getting electricity.

Table 4.2 Summary of time, cost and procedures for getting electricity in Azerbaijan

No.	Procedure	Time to complete	Cost to complete
1	<p>Submit application to Azerishiq OJSC</p> <p>The customer submits application for a new electricity connection to Azerishiq OJSC. The following documents must also be submitted in paper format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • copy of state registration certificate of legal entity; • copy of document proving the right of ownership or use of a facility and a land plot where the facility is situated; • the permit of local executive power authority on the construction of a facility; • break down of the power load required; <p>Agency: Azerishiq OJSC</p>	12 calendar days	AZN 0
* 2	<p>Receive site inspection by Azerishiq OJSC for preparing technical conditions</p> <p>A network engineer from Baku Electric Shabaka will visit the site to determine the arrangements for an optimal connection and aid the preparation of technical conditions. It is required that someone from the applicant's party is present at the site during the inspection.</p>	1 calendar day	AZN 0

No.	Procedure	Time to complete	Cost to complete
	<i>Agency: Azerishiq OJSC</i>		
3	<p>Await completion and approval of design of external connection</p> <p>The customer hires a project planning organization to design the external electrical connection plans based on the technical conditions issued by Azerishiq OJSC. a. The fee for the design varies depending on the project. The project design firm obtains all the approval from Azerishiq OJSC.</p> <p><i>Agency: Project planning organization</i></p>	15 calendar days	AZN 377.33
4	<p>Obtain excavation permit</p> <p>Depending on the connection contract or agreement either the utility or the electrical contractor obtains an excavation permit. In addition and depending on where the road is, it might be required to get other permits from the municipality (if in the center of the city), communal services, gas, water, etc.</p> <p><i>Agency: Ministry of Transport</i></p>	13 calendar days	AZN 0
5	<p>Await completion of external works</p> <p>The customer has a choice of hiring a licensed electrical installation organization or signing a contract with the utility to carry out the external connection works.</p> <p><i>Agency: Azerishiq OJSC/Electrical contractor</i></p>	20 calendar days	AZN 7,802
6	<p>Receive external and internal inspections and obtain operation permit</p> <p>After the completion of the external connection works there is a final inspection by Energonadzor (State Energy Inspectorate) which issues an operation permit. Energonadzor checks the compliance of the installation with the technical conditions.</p> <p><i>Agency: Energonadzor (State Energy Inspectorate)</i></p>	2 calendar days	AZN 0

No.	Procedure	Time to complete	Cost to complete
7	<p>Conclude supply contract with Azerishiq OJSC and await final connection</p> <p>The customer must submit the operation permit to the utility and concludes a supply contract. Once this is completed, the customer is connected to the electrical network and the electricity starts flowing.</p> <p><i>Agency: Azerishiq OJSC</i></p>	7 calendar days	AZN 0

* Takes place simultaneously with previous procedure.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

GETTING ELECTRICITY

Reliability of supply and transparency of tariffs index

The reliability of supply and transparency of tariffs index encompasses quantitative data on the duration and frequency of power outages as well as qualitative information on the mechanisms put in place by the utility for monitoring power outages and restoring power supply, the reporting relationship between the utility and the regulator for power outages, the transparency and accessibility of tariffs and whether the utility faces a financial deterrent aimed at limiting outages (such as a requirement to compensate customers or pay fines when outages exceed a certain cap).

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

Doing Business uses the system average interruption duration index (SAIDI) and the system average interruption frequency index (SAIFI) to measure the duration and frequency of power outages in the largest business city of each economy (for 11 economies the data are also collected for the second largest business city). SAIDI is the average total duration of outages over the course of a year for each customer served, while SAIFI is the average number of service interruptions experienced by a customer in a year. Annual data (covering the calendar year) are collected from distribution utility companies and national regulators on SAIDI and SAIFI. Both SAIDI and SAIFI estimates include load shedding.

Table 4.3 Reliability of Supply and Transparency of Tariff Index in Azerbaijan

	Answer	Score
Reliability of supply and transparency of tariff index (0-8)		4.0
Total duration and frequency of outages per customer a year (0-3)		2.0
System average interruption duration index (SAIDI)	0.97	
System average interruption frequency index (SAIFI)	1.69	
Mechanisms for monitoring outages (0-1)		1.0
Does the distribution utility use automated tools to monitor outages?	Yes	
Mechanisms for restoring service (0-1)		1.0
Does the distribution utility use automated tools to restore service?	Yes	
Regulatory monitoring (0-1)		0.0
Does a regulator—that is, an entity separate from the utility—monitor the utility's performance on reliability of supply?	No	
Financial deterrents aimed at limiting outages (0-1)		0.0
Does the utility either pay compensation to customers or face fines by the regulator (or both) if outages exceed a certain cap?	No	
Communication of tariffs and tariff changes (0-1)		0.0
Are effective tariffs available online?	Yes	
Link to the website, if available online	http://www.tariffc	

	Answer	Score
	ouncil.gov.az/?/az/content/70/	
Are customers notified of a change in tariff ahead of the billing cycle?	No	

	Answer
Price of electricity (US cents per kWh)	5.9

Source: *Doing Business* database.

Note: If data on power outages is not collected or if the SAIFI index or SAIDI index are above the threshold of 100, the economy is not eligible to obtain a score in the Reliability of Supply and Transparency of Tariff Index. If SAIDI and SAIFI are 12 (equivalent to an outage of one hour each month) or below, a score of 1 is assigned. If SAIDI and SAIFI are 4 (equivalent to an outage of one hour each quarter) or below, 1 additional point is assigned. Finally, if SAIDI and SAIFI are 1 (equivalent to an outage of one hour per year) or below, 1 more point is assigned. *Doing Business* measures the price of electricity but does not include these data when calculating the distance to frontier score for getting electricity or the ranking on the ease of getting electricity. The price of electricity is measured in cents per kilowatt-hour. On the basis of the assumptions about monthly consumption, a monthly bill for a commercial warehouse in the largest business city of the economy is computed for the month of March. As noted, the warehouse uses electricity 30 days a month, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., so different tariff schedules may apply if a time-of-use tariff is available.

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, *Doing Business* also measures 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, 100% domestically and privately owned and perform general commercial activities in the economy's largest business city.
- Have 50 employees each, all of whom are nationals.

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 registered in the land registry or cadastre, or both, and is free of title disputes.
- Is located in a periurban commercial zone, and no rezoning is required.

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 city

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—though procedures that can be fully completed online are an exception to this rule

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)

- Has no mortgages attached, has been under the same ownership for the past 10 years.
- Consists of 557.4 square meters (6,000 square feet) of land and a 10-year-old, 2-story warehouse of 929 square meters (10,000 square feet). The warehouse is in good condition and complies with all safety standards, building codes and legal requirements. There is no heating system.

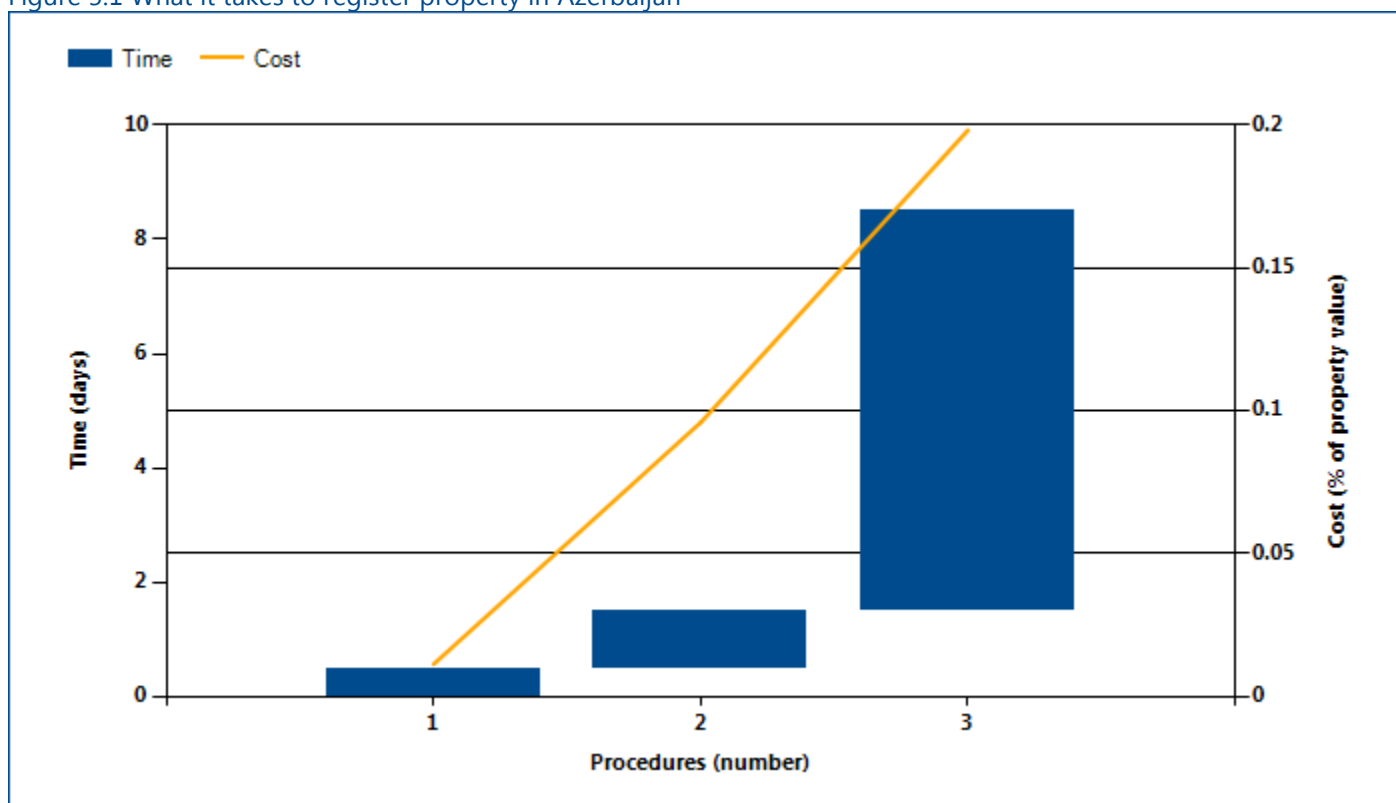
REGISTERING PROPERTY

Where does the economy stand today?

What does it take to complete a property transfer in Azerbaijan? According to data collected by *Doing Business*, registering property there requires 3.0 procedures, takes 8.5 days and costs 0.2% of the property value (figure 5.1). The score on the quality of land administration index is 15.5

Most indicator sets refer to a case scenario in the largest business city of an economy, except for 11 economies for which the data are a population-weighted average of the 2 largest business cities. See the chapter on distance to frontier and ease of doing business ranking at the end of this profile for more details.

Figure 5.1 What it takes to register property in Azerbaijan



Source: *Doing Business* database.

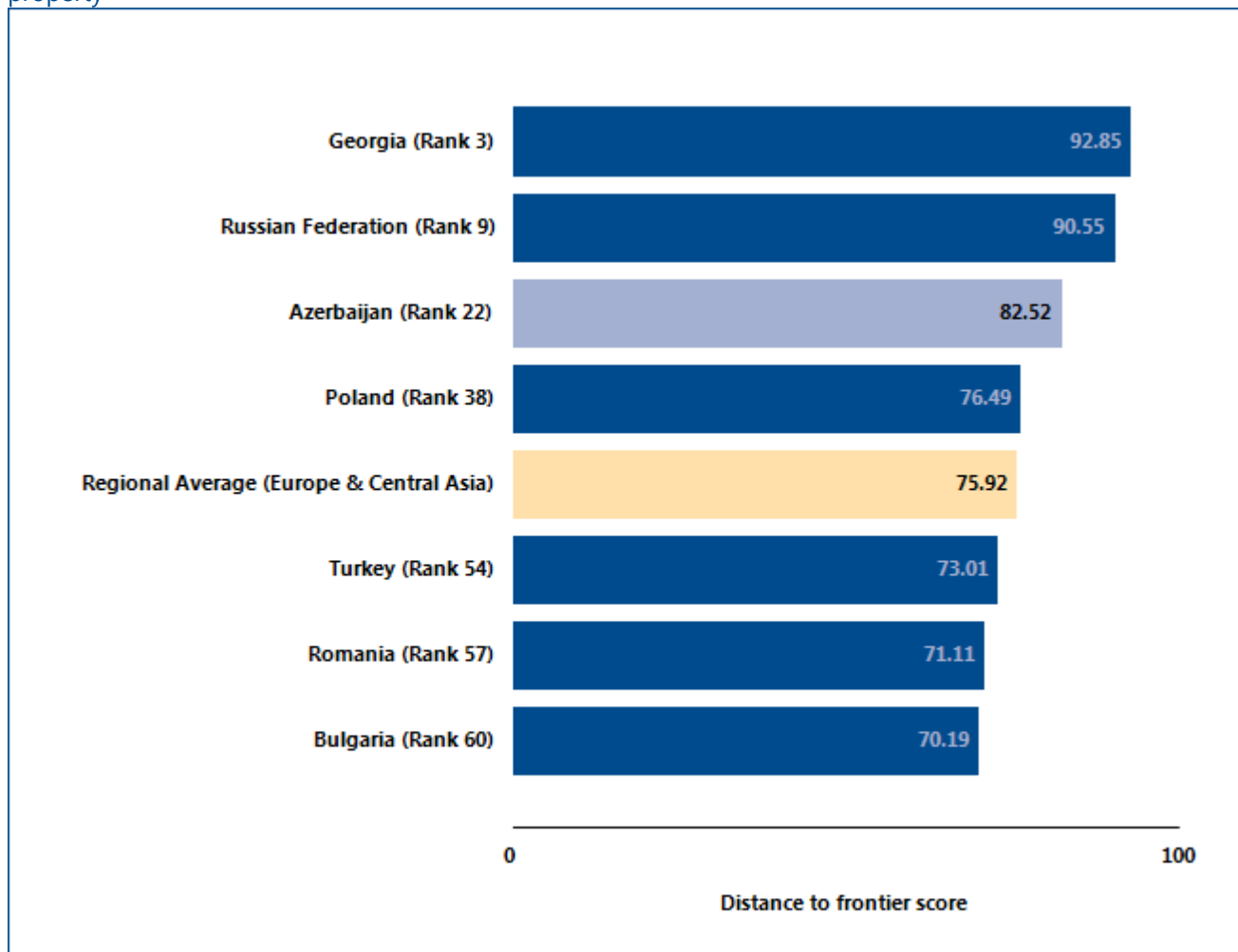
Note: Time shown in the figure above may not reflect simultaneity of procedures. Online procedures account for 0.5 days in the total time calculation. For more information on the methodology of the registering property indicators, see the *Doing Business* website (<http://www.doingbusiness.org>). For details on the procedures reflected here, see the summary at the end of this chapter.

REGISTERING PROPERTY

Globally, Azerbaijan stands at 22 in the ranking of 190 economies on the ease of registering property (figure 5.2). The rankings for comparator economies and the

regional average ranking provide other useful information for assessing how easy it is for an entrepreneur in Azerbaijan to transfer property.

Figure 5.2 How Azerbaijan and comparator economies rank on the ease of registering property



Source: Doing Business database.

REGISTERING PROPERTY

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 Azerbaijan (table 5.1)?

Table 5.1 How has Azerbaijan made registering property easier—or not?
By *Doing Business* report year from DB2011 to DB2017

DB year	Reform
DB2015	Azerbaijan made transferring property easier by introducing an online procedure for obtaining the nonencumbrance certificate.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

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>.

REGISTERING PROPERTY

What are the details?

The indicators reported here are based on a set of specific procedures—the steps that a buyer and seller must complete to transfer the property to the buyer’s name—identified by *Doing Business* through information collected from local property lawyers, notaries and property registries. These procedures are those that apply to a transaction matching the standard assumptions used by *Doing Business* in collecting the data (see the section in this chapter on what the indicators cover). The procedures, along with the associated time and cost, are summarized below.

STANDARD PROPERTY TRANSFER	
Property value:	AZN 271,906
City:	Baku

Table 5.2 Summary of time, cost and procedures for registering property in Azerbaijan

No.	Procedure	Time to complete	Cost to complete
1	<p>Verification of title and obtaining non-encumbrance certificate</p> <p>According to the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On introduction of changes into the Civil Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan" and the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On introduction of changes into the Law on the State Registry of Real estate" (both dated December 27, 2013) starting from March 3, 2014, notaries in Azerbaijan are now responsible for checking against encumbrances. Notaries now have an access to the database of SSRRE under SCPI and can get information about encumbrances on real estate and issue non-encumbrance certificates online.</p> <p>The new online service provided by the State Property Committee is available at www.e-emdk.gov.az. The cost of online procedure is AZN 31.</p> <p>Territorial offices of SSRRE under SCPI provide this services to applicants via electronic system connected with electronic system of notaries. "</p> <p><i>Agency: Notary</i></p>	Less than a day (online procedure)	AZN 31
2	<p>Notarization of sale-purchase agreement</p> <p>Under the law, the sale-purchase agreement and the transfer and acceptance act duly signed by both parties must be notarized. In order to get the agreement notarized the seller must provide evidence of his title to the property, i.e. registration certificates . In addition to the above, both the seller and the buyer must provide the notary public with other documents certifying their powers to enter into the sale-purchase agreement (e.g. corporate documents, powers of attorney). There is no</p>	1 day	AZN 200 (notary fee) + AZN 30 (official serves fee)

No.	Procedure	Time to complete	Cost to complete
	<p>legal requirement for the agreement to be prepared by a lawyer. Accordingly, the parties are free to prepare the agreement themselves. The stamp duty is paid to the notary, which in turn he shall transfer to the Treasury within two banking days since the date of receipt of the duty. However, in practice the stamp duty can be paid at a commercial bank. If the parties pay at the bank, receipt of payment should be submitted.</p> <p>The documentation shall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sale-purchase agreement and transfer and acceptance act • Registration certificates • Seller's cadastral package of documents • Corporate documents of the parties (e.g. charters, foundation agreements, powers of attorney) • Technical passport of the property (according to Article 144.2 of the Civil Code, amended by the law of the Republic of Azerbaijan No. 201-IVQD dated September 30, 2011 "On Making Amendments to the Civil Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan", the notary certifies the agreement, which transfers immovable property in accordance with the technical specifications of such immovable property as recorded in the Real Estate State Registrar Service) • Deposit slip (the buyer presents the deposit slip from the bank, confirming that the funds were properly deposited before notary notarizes the transfer agreement. After the completion of transaction, the notary write a cheque payable to the seller to be presented to the bank to collect the purchase price for the property) <p><i>Agency: State Notary</i></p>		
<p>3</p>	<p>The buyer applies to the state register service to register property</p> <p>Registration of the land as well as the property takes place simultaneously at the State Committee on Property Issues of the Republic of Azerbaijan.</p> <p>In accordance with Resolution of Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan No. 266 dated 31 July 2014, the electronic service on "receipt of applications and documents for issuance of technical documents (passport and plan) regarding real estate registered in state registry of real estate at the discretion of owner" added to the list of electronic services provided by State Registry Service of Real Estate.</p> <p>Collegium of State Committee on Property Issues approved on 18 November 2014 the administrative regulation on receipt of applications and documents for issue of technical documents (passport and plan) regarding real estate registered in state registry of real estate at the discretion of owner. On basis of these documents, it has become possible to apply for technical documents (passport and plan) via online procedure.</p> <p><i>Agency: Real Estate State Register Service under State Committee on Property Issues</i></p>	<p>20 days (regular Procedure), 14 days (faster Procedure) or 7 days (fastest expedited Procedure)</p>	<p>AZN 277.88, whereas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AZN 159.48 payable for the registration of a title transfer for the warehouse of 929 square meters of the total area; - AZN 18.4 payable for the registration of a title transfer for the land of 557.4 square meters of the total land area; - AZN state duty for technical passport; - AZN 30 state

No.	Procedure	Time to complete	Cost to complete
			duty for an extract; - AZN 20 official service fee

* Takes place simultaneously with another procedure.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

Note: Online procedures account for 0.5 days in the total time calculation.

REGISTERING PROPERTY

Quality of land administration

The quality of land administration index is the sum of the scores on the reliability of infrastructure, transparency of information, geographic coverage, land dispute resolution and equal access to property rights indices.

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

If private sector entities were unable to register property transfers in an economy between June 2015 and June 2016, the economy receives a “no practice” mark on the procedures, time and cost indicators. A “no practice” economy receives a score of 0 on the quality of land administration index even if its legal framework includes provisions related to land administration.

Table 5.3 Summary of quality of land administration in Azerbaijan

	Answer	Score
Quality of the land administration index (0-30)		15.5
Reliability of infrastructure index (0-8)		6.0
What is the institution in charge of immovable property registration?	Baku City Territorial Office of SSRRE under SCPI	
In what format are the majority of title or deed records kept in the largest business city—in a paper format or in a computerized format (scanned or fully digital)?	Computer/Scanned	1.0
Is there an electronic database for checking for encumbrances (liens, mortgages, restrictions and the like)?	Yes	1.0
In what format are the majority of maps of land plots kept in the largest business city—in a paper format or in a computerized format (scanned or fully digital)?	Computer/Scanned	1.0
Is there an electronic database for recording boundaries, checking plans and providing cadastral information (geographic information system)?	Yes	1.0
Is the information recorded by the immovable property registration agency and the cadastral or mapping agency kept in a single database, in different but linked databases or in separate databases?	Different databases but linked	1.0
Do the immovable property registration agency and cadastral or mapping agency use the same identification number for properties?	Yes	1.0
Transparency of information index (0–6)		3.0
Who is able to obtain information on land ownership at the agency in charge of immovable property registration in the largest business city?	Only intermediaries and interested parties	0.0

	Answer	Score
Is the list of documents that are required to complete any type of property transaction made publicly available—and if so, how?	Yes, online	0.5
Link for online access:	http://e-emdk.gov.az/home/instructions	
Is the applicable fee schedule for any property transaction at the agency in charge of immovable property registration in the largest business city made publicly available—and if so, how?	Yes, online	0.5
Link for online access:	http://www.e-emdk.gov.az/Home/Tariff2	
Does the agency in charge of immovable property registration commit to delivering a legally binding document that proves property ownership within a specific time frame—and if so, how does it communicate the service standard?	Yes, online	0.5
Link for online access:	http://www.e-emdk.gov.az/Home/Reqlament	
Is there a specific and separate mechanism for filing complaints about a problem that occurred at the agency in charge of immovable property registration?	No	0.0
Are there publicly available official statistics tracking the number of transactions at the immovable property registration agency?	Yes	0.5
Number of property transfers in the largest business city in 2015:	258406	
Who is able to consult maps of land plots in the largest business city?	Only intermediaries and interested parties	0.0
Is the applicable fee schedule for accessing maps of land plots made publicly available—and if so, how?	Yes, online	0.5
Link for online access:	http://e-emdk.gov.az/Home/Customs , and http://e-emdk.gov.az/Home/Tariff	
Does the cadastral or mapping agency commit to delivering an updated map within a specific time frame—and if so, how does it communicate the service standard?	Yes, online	0.5

	Answer	Score
Link for online access:	http://www.e-emdk.gov.az/Home/Reqlament	
Is there a specific and separate mechanism for filing complaints about a problem that occurred at the cadastral or mapping agency?	No	0.0
Geographic coverage index (0–8)		0.0
Are all privately held land plots in the economy formally registered at the immovable property registry?	No	0.0
Are all privately held land plots in the largest business city formally registered at the immovable property registry?	No	0.0
Are all privately held land plots in the economy mapped?	No	0.0
Are all privately held land plots in the largest business city mapped?	No	0.0
Land dispute resolution index (0–8)		6.5
Does the law require that all property sale transactions be registered at the immovable property registry to make them opposable to third parties?	Yes	1.5
Is the system of immovable property registration subject to a state or private guarantee?	Yes	0.5
Is there a specific compensation mechanism to cover for losses incurred by parties who engaged in good faith in a property transaction based on erroneous information certified by the immovable property registry?	No	0.0
Does the legal system require a control of legality of the documents necessary for a property transaction (e.g., checking the compliance of contracts with requirements of the law)?	Yes	0.5
If yes, who is responsible for checking the legality of the documents?	Notary.	
Does the legal system require verification of the identity of the parties to a property transaction?	Yes	0.5
If yes, who is responsible for verifying the identity of the parties?	Notary.	
Is there a national database to verify the accuracy of identity documents?	No	0.0
For a standard land dispute between two local businesses over tenure rights of a property worth 50 times gross national income (GNI) per capita and located in the largest business city, what court would be in charge of the case in the first instance?	Baku Administrative-Economic Court No1 or No2 (depending on territorial)	

	Answer	Score
	jurisdiction)	
How long does it take on average to obtain a decision from the first-instance court for such a case (without appeal)?	Less than a year	3.0
Are there any statistics on the number of land disputes in the first instance?	Yes	0.5
Number of land disputes in the largest business city in 2015:	The territorial offices of SSRRE were involved approximately in 6,000 immovable property disputes in 2015.	
Equal access to property rights index (-2–0)		0.0
Do unmarried men and unmarried women have equal ownership rights to property?	Yes	0.0
Do married men and married women have equal ownership rights to property?	Yes	0.0

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 to view and consider a potential borrower's financial history (positive or negative) when assessing risk and they allow borrowers to establish a good credit history that will facilitate their 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 domestic 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.

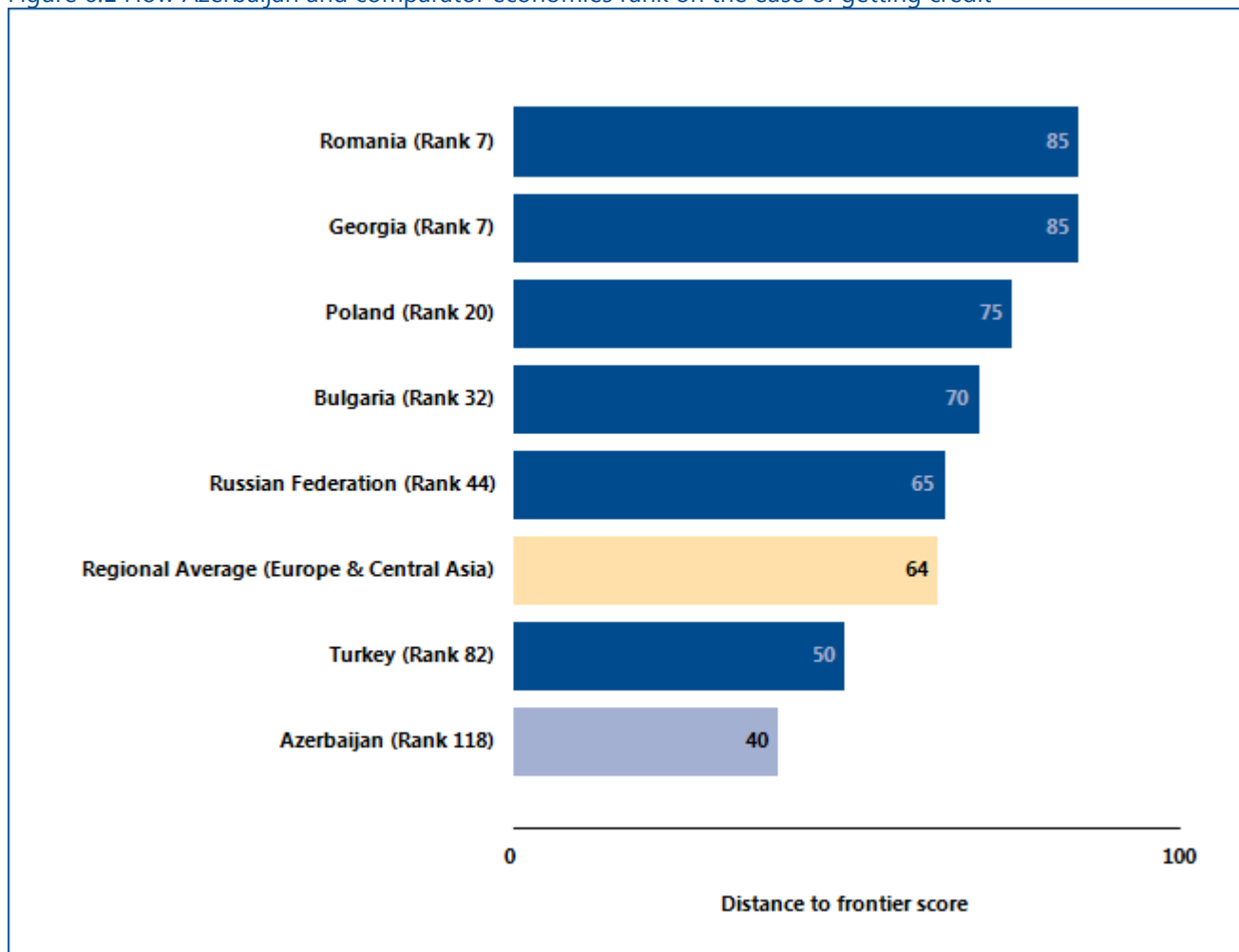
GETTING CREDIT

Where does the economy stand today?

How well do the credit information system and collateral and bankruptcy laws in Azerbaijan facilitate access to credit? The economy has a score of 6.0 on the depth of credit information index and a score of 2.0 on the strength of legal rights index (see the summary of scoring at the end of this chapter for details). Higher scores indicate more credit information and stronger legal rights for borrowers and lenders.

Globally, Azerbaijan stands at 118 in the ranking of 190 economies on the ease of getting credit (figure 6.1). The rankings for comparator economies provide other useful information for assessing how well regulations and institutions in Azerbaijan support lending and borrowing.

Figure 6.1 How Azerbaijan and comparator economies rank on the ease of getting credit



Source: Doing Business database.

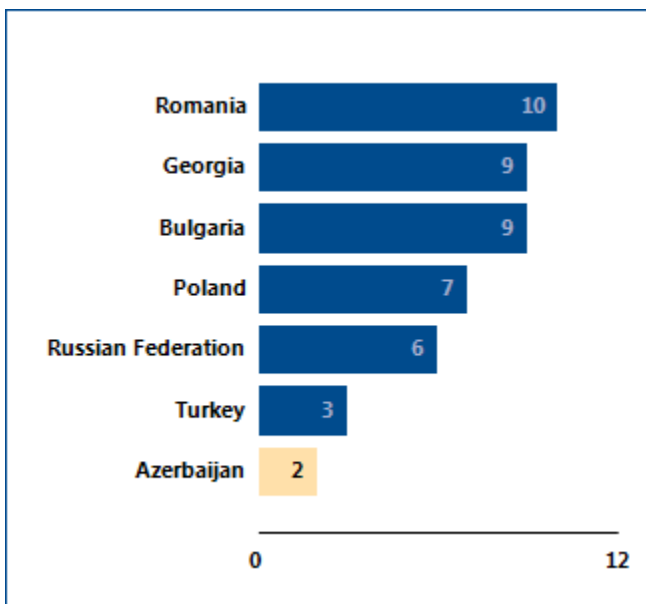
GETTING CREDIT

One way to put an economy’s score on the getting credit indicators into context is to see where the economy stands in the distribution of scores across economies. Figure 6.2 highlights the score on the strength of legal

rights index for Azerbaijan and shows the scores for comparator economies as well as the regional average score. Figure 6.3 shows the same for the depth of credit information index.

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

Economy scores on strength of legal rights index

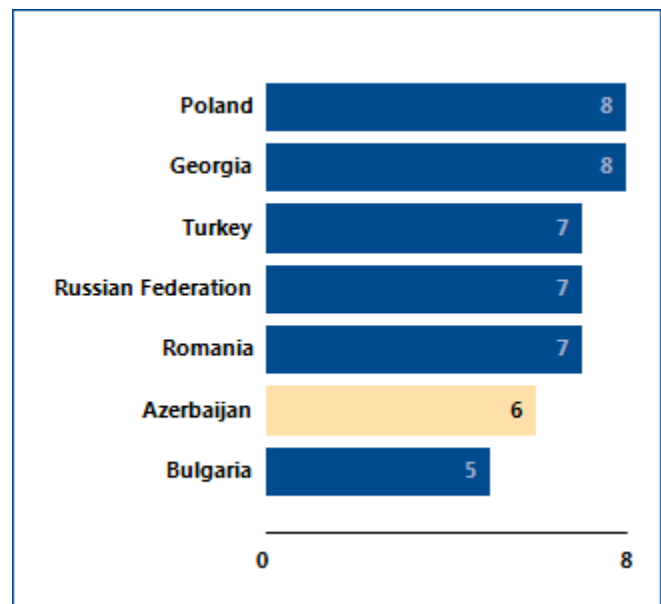


Source: Doing Business database.

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

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

Economy scores on depth of credit information index



Source: Doing Business database.

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.

GETTING CREDIT

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 Azerbaijan (table 6.1)?

Table 6.1 How has Azerbaijan made getting credit easier—or not?
By *Doing Business* report year from DB2011 to DB2017

DB year	Reform
DB2011	Azerbaijan improved access to credit by establishing an online platform allowing financial institutions to provide information to, and retrieve it from, the public credit registry.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

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>.

GETTING CREDIT

What are the details?

The getting credit indicators reported here for Azerbaijan are based on detailed information collected in that economy. The data on credit information sharing are collected through a survey of a credit registry and/or credit bureau (if one exists). To construct the depth of credit information index, a score of 1 is assigned for each of 8 features of the credit registry or credit bureau (see summary of scoring below).

The data on the legal rights of borrowers and lenders are gathered through a survey of financial lawyers and verified through analysis of laws and regulations as well as public sources of information on collateral and bankruptcy laws. For the strength of legal rights index, a score of 1 is assigned for each of 10 aspects related to legal rights in collateral law and 2 aspects in bankruptcy law.

Strength of legal rights index (0–12)	Index score: 2.0
Does an integrated or unified legal framework for secured transactions that extends to the creation, publicity and enforcement of functional equivalents to security interests in movable assets exist in the economy?	0
Does the law allow businesses to grant a non possessory security right in a single category of movable assets, without requiring a specific description of collateral?	0
Does the law allow businesses to grant a non possessory security right in substantially all of its assets, without requiring a specific description of collateral?	0
May a security right extend to future or after-acquired assets, and may it extend automatically to the products, proceeds or replacements of the original assets?	0
Is a general description of debts and obligations permitted in collateral agreements; can all types of debts and obligations be secured between parties; and can the collateral agreement include a maximum amount for which the assets are encumbered?	0
Is a collateral registry in operation for both incorporated and non-incorporated entities, that is unified geographically and by asset type, with an electronic database indexed by debtor's name?	0
Does a notice-based collateral registry exist in which all functional equivalents can be registered?	0
Does a modern collateral registry exist in which registrations, amendments, cancellations and searches can be performed online by any interested third party?	0
Are secured creditors paid first (i.e. before tax claims and employee claims) when a debtor defaults outside an insolvency procedure?	1
Are secured creditors paid first (i.e. before tax claims and employee claims) when a business is liquidated?	1
Are secured creditors subject to an automatic stay on enforcement when a debtor enters a court-supervised reorganization procedure? Does the law protect secured creditors' rights by providing clear grounds for relief from the stay and/or sets a time limit for it?	0
Does the law allow parties to agree on out of court enforcement at the time a security interest is created? Does the law allow the secured creditor to sell the collateral through public auction and private tender, as well as, for the secured creditor to keep the asset in satisfaction of the debt?	0

Depth of credit information index (0–8)	Credit bureau	Credit registry	Index score: 6.0
Are data on both firms and individuals distributed?	No	Yes	1
Are both positive and negative credit data distributed?	No	Yes	1
Are data from retailers or utility companies - in addition to data from banks and financial institutions - distributed?	No	No	0
Are at least 2 years of historical data distributed? (Credit bureaus and registries that erase data on defaults as soon as they are repaid or distribute negative information more than 10 years after defaults are repaid receive a score of 0 for this component.)	No	Yes	1
Are data on loan amounts below 1% of income per capita distributed?	No	Yes	1
By law, do borrowers have the right to access their data in the credit bureau or credit registry?	No	Yes	1
Can banks and financial institutions access borrowers' credit information online (for example, through an online platform, a system-to-system connection or both)?	No	Yes	1
Are bureau or registry credit scores offered as a value-added service to help banks and financial institutions assess the creditworthiness of borrowers?	No	No	0

Note: An economy receives a score of 1 if there is a "yes" to either bureau or registry. 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.

Coverage	Credit bureau	Credit registry
Number of individuals	0	2,510,416
Number of firms	0	35,308
Total	0	2,545,724
Total percentage of adult population	0.0	36.4

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, recommendations or guidelines

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 minority investor protection index (0–10)

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

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

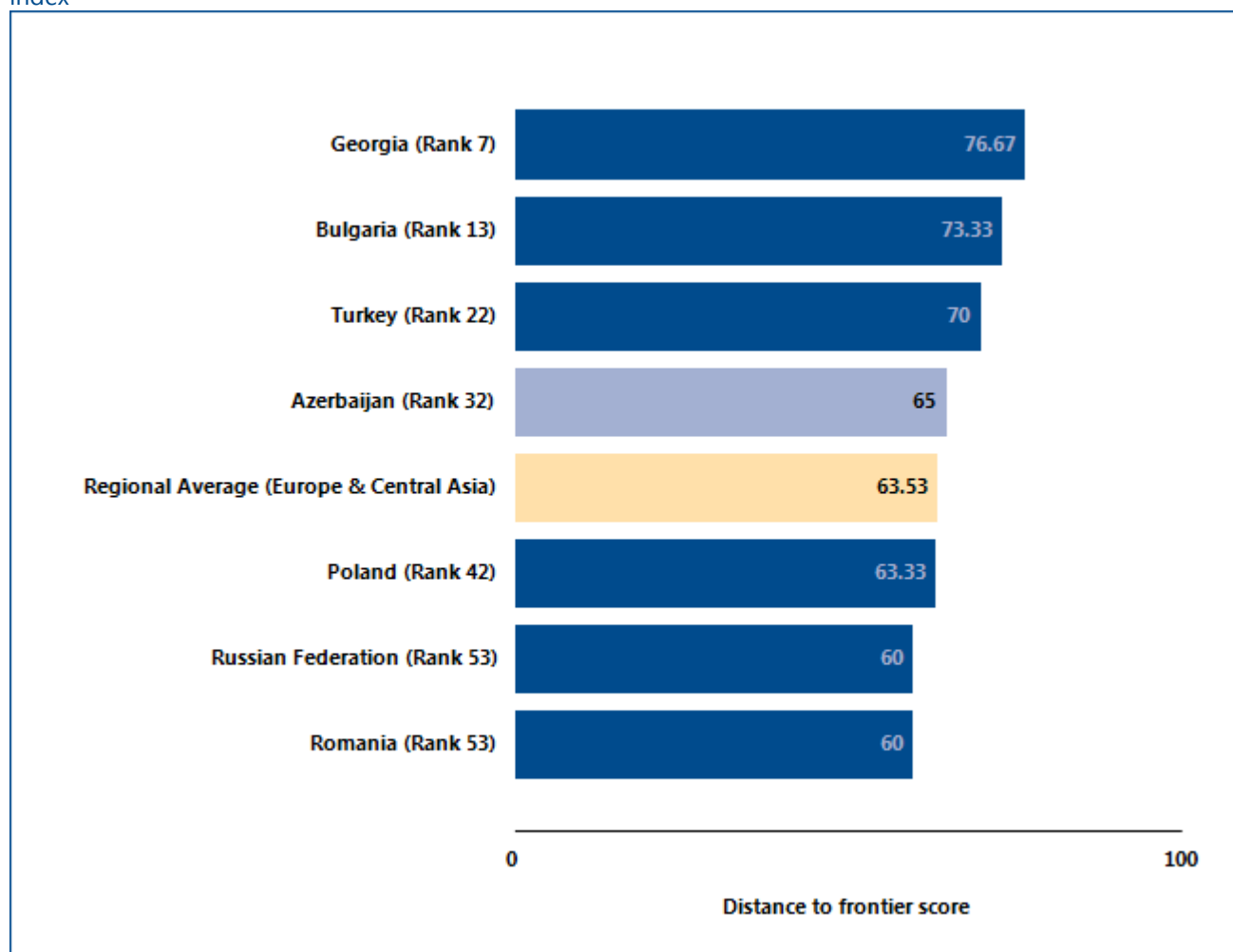
Where does the economy stand today?

How strong are minority investor protections against self-dealing in Azerbaijan? The economy has a score of 6.5 on the strength of minority investor protection index, with a higher score indicating stronger protections.

Globally, Azerbaijan stands at 32 in the ranking of 190 economies on the strength of minority investor

protection index (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 minority investor protections against self-dealing in the areas measured.

Figure 7.1 How Azerbaijan and comparator economies perform on the strength of minority investor protection index



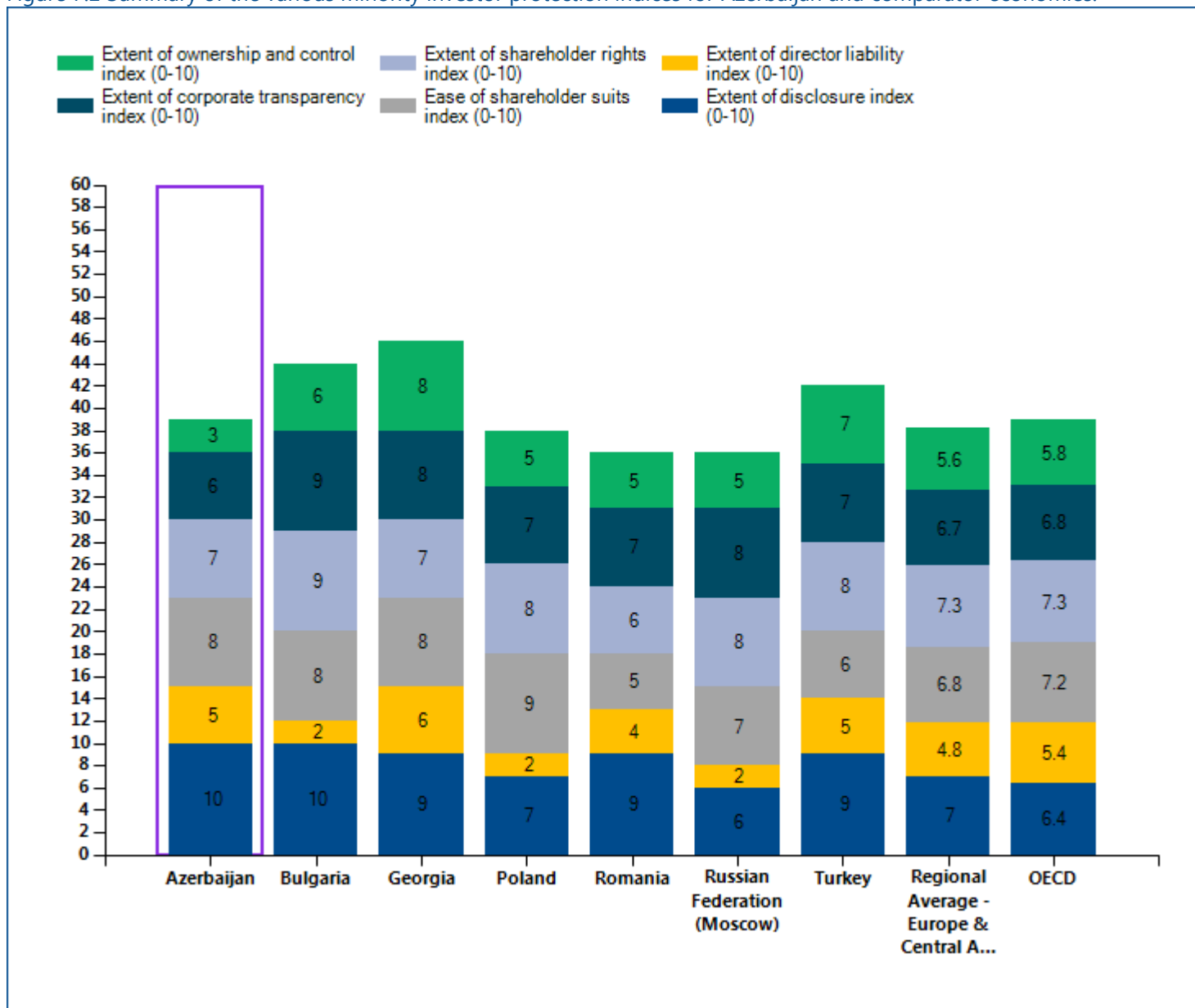
Source: Doing Business database.

PROTECTING MINORITY INVESTORS

One way to put an economy's scores on the protecting minority investors indicators into context is to see where the economy stands in the distribution of scores across comparator economies. Figure 7.2 highlights the scores on the various minority investor protection indices for Azerbaijan.

A summary of scoring for the protecting minority investors indicators at the end of this chapter provides details on how the indices were calculated.

Figure 7.2 Summary of the various minority investor protection indices for Azerbaijan and comparator economies.



Source: Doing Business database.

PROTECTING MINORITY INVESTORS

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. As a

result, reforms to strengthen minority investor protections may move ahead on different fronts—such as through new or amended company laws, securities regulations or civil procedure rules. What minority investor protection reforms has *Doing Business* recorded in Azerbaijan (table 7.1)?

Table 7.1 How has Azerbaijan strengthened minority investor protections—or not?
By *Doing Business* report year from DB2011 to DB2017

DB year	Reform
DB2016	Azerbaijan strengthened minority investor protections by introducing requirements that related-party transactions undergo external review and be voted on by disinterested shareholders.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

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>.

PROTECTING MINORITY INVESTORS

What are the details?

The protecting minority investors indicators reported here for Azerbaijan are based on detailed information collected through a survey of corporate and securities lawyers about securities regulations, company laws and court rules of evidence and procedure. To construct the six indicators on minority investor protection, scores are assigned to each based on a range of conditions relating

to disclosure, director liability, shareholder suits, shareholder rights, ownership and control and corporate transparency in a standard case study (for more details, see the Data Notes section of the *Doing Business 2017* report). The summary below shows the details underlying the scores for Azerbaijan.

Table 7.2 Summary of scoring for the protecting minority investors indicators in Azerbaijan

	Answer	Score
Strength of minority investor protection index (0-10)		6.5
Extent of conflict of interest regulation index (0-10)		7.7
Extent of disclosure index (0-10)		10.0
Which corporate body is legally sufficient to approve the Buyer-Seller transaction? (0-3)	Shareholders excluding interested parties	3.0
Must Mr. James disclose his conflict of interest to the board of directors? (0-2)	Full disclosure of all material facts	2.0
Must Buyer disclose the transaction in published periodic filings (annual reports)? (0-2)	Disclosure on the transaction and on the conflict of interest	2.0
Must Buyer immediately disclose the transaction to the public and/or shareholders? (0-2)	Disclosure on the transaction and on the conflict of interest	2.0
Must an external body review the terms of the transaction before it takes place? (0-1)	Yes	1.0
Extent of director liability index (0-10)		5.0
Can shareholders representing 10% of Buyer's share capital sue directly or derivatively for the damage the transaction caused to Buyer? (0-1)	Yes	1.0
Can shareholders hold the interested director liable for the damage the transaction caused to Buyer? (0-2)	Liable if negligent	1.0
Can shareholders hold the other directors liable for the damage the transaction caused to Buyer (0-2)	Liable if negligent	1.0
Must Mr. James pay damages for the harm caused to Buyer upon a successful claim by shareholders? (0-1)	Yes	1.0
Must Mr. James repay profits made from the transaction upon a successful claim by shareholders? (0-1)	Yes	1.0
Is Mr. James disqualified or fined and imprisoned upon a successful claim by shareholders? (0-1)	No	0.0
Can a court void the transaction upon a successful claim by shareholders? (0-2)	Only in case of fraud or bad faith	0.0
Ease of shareholder suits index (0-10)		8.0
Before suing can shareholders representing 10% of Buyer's share capital inspect the transaction documents? (0-1)	Yes	1.0
Can the plaintiff obtain any documents from the defendant and witnesses at trial? (0-3)	Any relevant document	3.0
Can the plaintiff request categories of documents from the	No	0.0

defendant without identifying specific ones? (0-1)		
Can the plaintiff directly question the defendant and witnesses at trial? (0-2)	Yes	2.0
Is the level of proof required for civil suits lower than that of criminal cases? (0-1)	Yes	1.0
Can shareholder plaintiffs recover their legal expenses from the company? (0-2)	Yes if successful	1.0
Extent of shareholder governance index (0-10)		5.3
Extent of shareholder rights index (0-10)		7.0
Does the sale of 51% of Buyer's assets require shareholder approval?	Yes	1.0
Can shareholders representing 10% of Buyer's share capital call for an extraordinary meeting of shareholders?	Yes	1.0
Must Buyer obtain its shareholders' approval every time it issues new shares?	Yes	1.0
Do shareholders automatically receive preemption rights every time Buyer issues new shares?	No	0.0
Must shareholders approve the election and dismissal of the external auditor?	Yes	1.0
Are changes to the rights of a class of shares only possible if the holders of the affected shares approve?	Yes	1.0
Assuming that Buyer is a limited company, does the sale of 51% of its assets require member approval?	No	0.0
Assuming that Buyer is a limited company, can members representing 10% call for an extraordinary meeting of members?	Yes	1.0
Assuming that Buyer is a limited company, must all members consent to add a new member?	Yes	1.0
Assuming that Buyer is a limited company, must a member first offer to sell his interest to the existing members before selling to a non-member?	No	0.0
Extent of ownership and control index (0-10)		3.0
Is it forbidden to appoint the same individual as CEO and chair of the board of directors?	Yes	1.0
Must the board of directors include independent and nonexecutive board members?	Yes	1.0
Can shareholders remove members of the board of directors without cause before the end of their term?	Yes	1.0
Must the board of directors include a separate audit committee exclusively comprising board members?	No	0.0
Must a potential acquirer make a tender offer to all shareholders upon acquiring 50% of Buyer?	No	0.0
Must Buyer pay dividends within a maximum period set by law after the declaration date?	No	0.0
Is a subsidiary prohibited from acquiring shares issued by its parent company?	No	0.0
Assuming that Buyer is a limited company, is there a management deadlock breaking mechanism?	No	0.0
Assuming that Buyer is a limited company, must a potential acquirer make a tender offer to all shareholders upon acquiring 50% of Buyer?	No	0.0
Assuming that Buyer is a limited company, must Buyer	No	0.0

distribute profits within a maximum period set by law after the declaration date?		
Extent of corporate transparency index (0-10)		6.0
Must Buyer disclose direct and indirect beneficial ownership stakes representing 5%?	Yes	1.0
Must Buyer disclose information about board members' other directorships as well as basic information on their primary employment?	No	0.0
Must Buyer disclose the compensation of individual managers?	No	0.0
Must a detailed notice of general meeting be sent 21 days before the meeting?	Yes	1.0
Can shareholders representing 5% of Buyer's share capital put items on the agenda for the general meeting?	Yes	1.0
Must Buyer's annual financial statements be audited by an external auditor?	Yes	1.0
Must Buyer disclose its audit reports to the public?	Yes	1.0
Assuming that Buyer is a limited company, must members meet at least once a year?	No	0.0
Assuming that Buyer is a limited company, can members representing 5% put items on the meeting agenda?	No	0.0
Assuming that Buyer is a limited company, must Buyer's annual financial statements be audited by an external auditor?	Yes	1.0

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 rate¹. 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 tax 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

WHAT THE PAYING TAXES INDICATORS MEASURE

Tax payments for a manufacturing company in 2015 (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

¹ 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.

applies, the postfiling index is not included in the ranking of the ease of paying taxes.

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.

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.

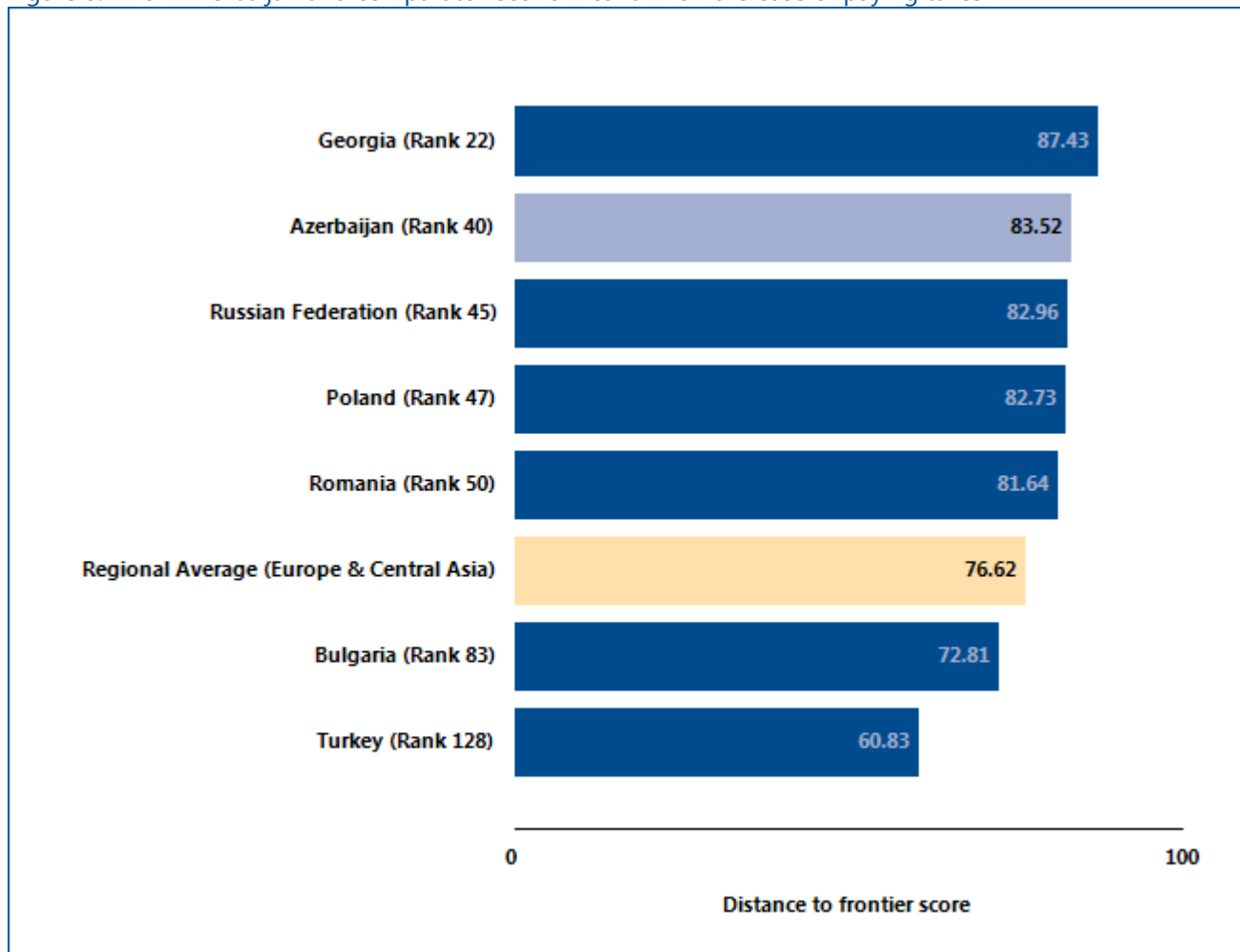
PAYING TAXES

Where does the economy stand today?

What is the administrative burden of complying with tax obligations and postfiling processes in Azerbaijan—and how much do firms pay in taxes? Globally, Azerbaijan stands at 40 in the ranking of 190 economies on the ease of paying taxes (figure 8.1). The rankings for comparator economies and the regional average ranking provide other useful information for assessing the tax compliance burden for businesses in Azerbaijan (see table 8.2 and

table 8.3 the end of this chapter for details). Most indicator sets refer to a case scenario in the largest business city of an economy, except for 11 economies for which the data are a population-weighted average of the 2 largest business cities. See the chapter on distance to frontier and ease of doing business ranking at the end of this profile for more details.

Figure 8.1 How Azerbaijan and comparator economies rank on the ease of paying taxes



Source: *Doing Business* database.

PAYING TAXES

Economies around the world have made paying taxes faster, easier and less costly for businesses—such as by consolidating payments and filings of taxes, offering electronic systems for filing and payment, establishing taxpayer service centers or allowing for more deductions

and exemptions. Many have lowered tax rates. Changes have brought concrete results. Some economies simplifying tax payment and reducing rates have seen tax revenue rise. What tax reforms has *Doing Business* recorded in Azerbaijan (table 8.1)?

Table 8.1 How has Azerbaijan made paying taxes easier—or not?
By *Doing Business* report year from DB2011 to DB2017

DB year	Reform
DB2011	A revision of Azerbaijan's tax code lowered several tax rates, including the profit tax rate, and simplified the process of paying corporate income tax and value added tax.
DB2015	Azerbaijan made paying taxes easier for companies by introducing an electronic system for filing and paying social insurance contributions.
DB2017	Azerbaijan made paying taxes easier by abolishing vehicle tax for residents.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

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>.

PAYING TAXES

What are the details?

The indicators reported here for Azerbaijan are based on the taxes and contributions that would be paid by a standardized case study company used by *Doing Business* in collecting the data (see the section in this chapter on what the indicators cover). Tax practitioners are asked to review a set of financial statements as well as a standardized list of assumptions and transactions that the company completed during its 2nd year of operation. Respondents are asked how much taxes and mandatory contributions the business must pay, how these taxes are filed and paid, how much time taxpayers spend preparing, filing and paying three major taxes (profit taxes, labor taxes including mandatory contributions and consumption taxes) and how much time taxpayers spend complying with postfiling processes and waiting for these processes to be completed.

LOCATION OF STANDARDIZED COMPANY

City: Baku

The taxes and contributions paid are listed in table 8.2, along with the associated number of payments, time and tax rate.

The postfiling index is based on 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 (table 8.3). These components are based on expanded case study assumptions. If only VAT (or GST) or corporate income tax applies for an economy, 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.

Table 8.2 Summary of tax rates and administration

Tax or mandatory contribution	Payments (number)	Notes on payments	Time (hours)	Statutory tax rate	Tax base	Total tax rate (% of profit)	Notes on total tax rate
Social security contributions	1	online	78	22%	gross salaries	24.82	
Corporate income tax	1	online	60	20%	taxable profit	12.95	
Property Tax	1	online		1%	Annual average tax written down value of Fixed Assets	1.97	

Tax or mandatory contribution	Payments (number)	Notes on payments	Time (hours)	Statutory tax rate	Tax base	Total tax rate (% of profit)	Notes on total tax rate
Tax on interest	0			10%	interest income	0.26	included in other taxes
Land tax	1	online		AZN 10	land area per 100 square meters	0.02	
Value added tax (VAT)	1	online	57	18%	goods and services	0.00	not included
Fuel tax	1				included in price of fuel	0.00	small amount
Employee paid - Social security	0	jointly		3%	gross salaries	0.00	withheld
Employee paid - labor tax	0	jointly		14%-25%	gross salaries	0.00	withheld
Totals	6.0		195.0			39.8	

Source: Doing Business database.

Table 8.3 Summary of post filing data in Azerbaijan

	Answer	Score
Postfiling index (0-100)		81.0
VAT refunds		
Does VAT/GST exist?	Yes	
Frequency of VAT/GST refund submission	monthly	
Does a VAT/GST refund process exist per the case study?	Yes	
Restrictions on VAT refund process	Carry forward for 3 months	
Likelihood of VAT audit	Likely	
Time to comply with VAT refund (hours)	7.5	85.0
Time to obtain a VAT refund (weeks)	21.2	65.3
Corporate income tax audits		
Does corporate income tax exist?	Yes	
Likelihood of corporate income tax audit	Likely	
Time to comply with a corporate income tax audit (hours)	10.0	84.4
Time to complete a corporate income tax audit (weeks)	3.4	89.3

	Answer	Score
Administrative appeal process		
First level administrative appeal authority	Tax Appeal Council	
Is the appeal authority independent?	Independent department within tax office	
Are appeal guidelines accessible to the public?	Yes	
Source of appeal guidelines	online/in printed publication/in person at tax office	
Is there a legal time limit for the appeal authority to issue a decision on the tax appeal?	Yes	
Legal time limit	30 days	

Source: *Doing Business* database.

Note:

The postfiling index is the average of the scores on time to comply with VAT refund, time to obtain a VAT refund, time to comply with a corporate income tax audit and time to complete a corporate income tax audit.

N/A = Not applicable.

TRADING ACROSS BORDERS

In today's globalized world, making trade between economies easier is increasingly important for business. Excessive use of paper documents, 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. *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 (domestic transport is not used for calculating the ranking).

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.

WHAT THE TRADING ACROSS BORDERS

INDICATORS MEASURE FOR IMPORT & EXPORT

Documentary compliance

Obtaining, preparing and submitting documents during transport, clearance, inspections and port or border handling in origin economy

Obtaining, preparing and submitting documents required by destination economy and any transit economies

Covers all documents required by law and in practice, including electronic submissions of information as well as non-shipment-specific documents necessary to complete the trade

Border compliance

Customs clearance and inspections

Inspections by other agencies (if applied to more than 10% of shipments)

Port or border handling

Processing of documents during clearance, inspections and port or border handling.

Domestic transport

Loading and unloading of shipment at warehouse, dry port or border

Transport by most widely used mode between warehouse and terminal or dry port

Traffic delays and road police checks while shipment is en route

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. Special products, such as 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.
- 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

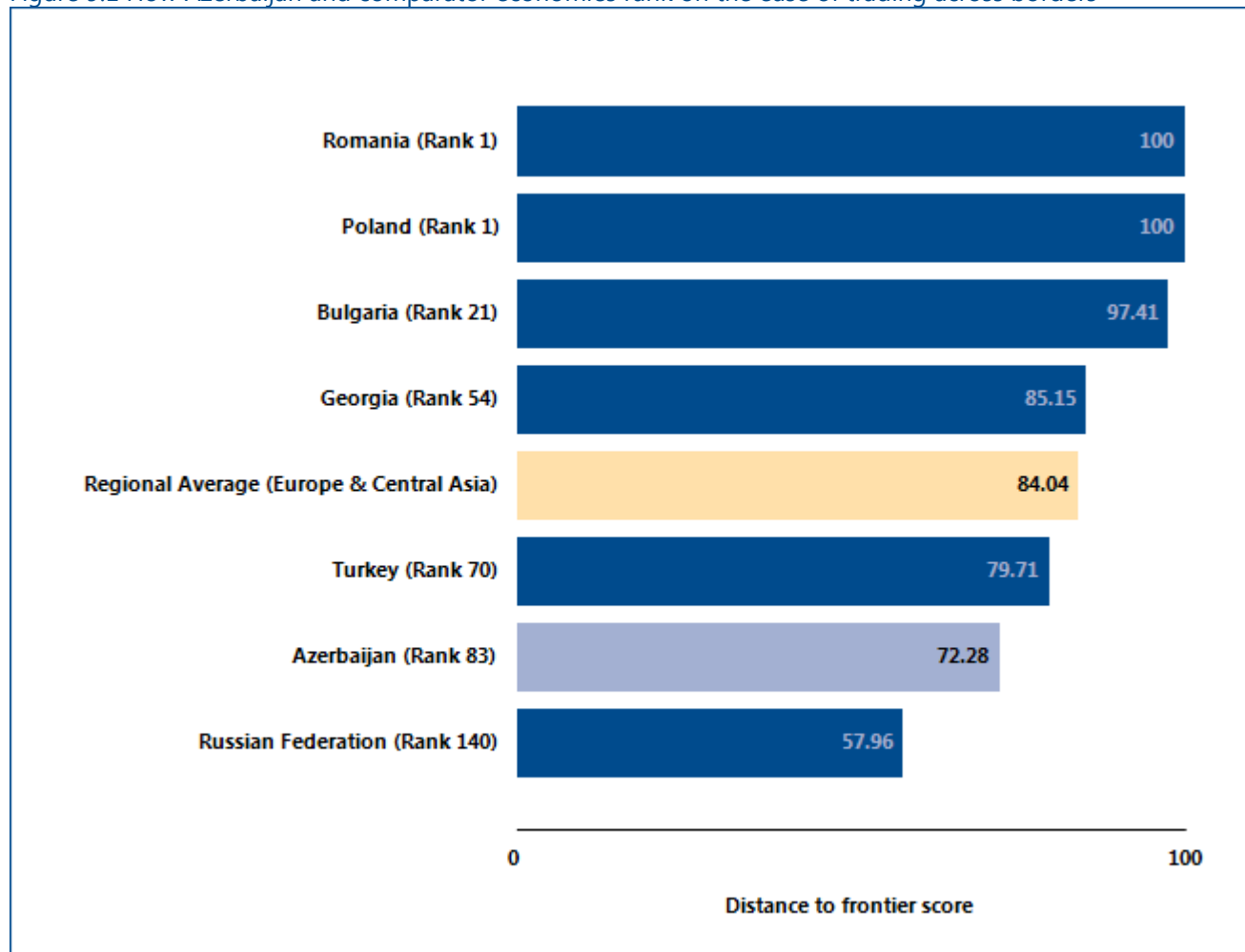
Where does the economy stand today?

The Trading across Borders indicator refers to a case study scenario of a warehouse in the largest business city of an economy (except for 11 economies for which the data are a population-weighted average of the 2 largest business cities) trading with the main import and export partner through the economy's main border crossing.

Globally, Azerbaijan stands at 83 in the ranking of 190 economies on the ease of trading across borders (figure 9.1).

While not included in the distance to frontier or ease of doing business ranking, data on domestic transportation is also recorded for all economies and provided in Table 9.3.

Figure 9.1 How Azerbaijan and comparator economies rank on the ease of trading across borders



Source: Doing Business database.

TRADING ACROSS BORDERS

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 the trading environment and boost firms' international competitiveness. What trade reforms has *Doing Business* recorded in Azerbaijan (table 9.1)?

Table 9.1 How has Azerbaijan made trading across borders easier—or not?
By *Doing Business* report year from DB2011 to DB2017

DB year	Reform
DB2014	Azerbaijan made trading across borders easier by streamlining internal customs procedures.
DB2017	Azerbaijan facilitated international trade processes by introducing an electronic system for submitting export and import declarations.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

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>.

TRADING ACROSS BORDERS

What are the details?

The indicators reported here for Azerbaijan are based on a set of specific predefined procedures for trading a shipment of goods by the most widely used mode of transport (whether sea or land 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.

LOCATION OF STANDARDIZED COMPANY

City: Baku

The details on the predefined set of procedures, and the associated time and cost, for exporting and importing a shipment of goods are listed in the summary below, along with the required documents.

Table 9.2 Summary of export and import time and cost for trading across borders in Azerbaijan

	Azerbaijan	Europe & Central Asia
Time to export: Border compliance (hours)	29	28
Cost to export: Border compliance (USD)	214	195
Time to export: Documentary compliance (hours)	33	27
Cost to export: Documentary compliance (USD)	300	111
Time to import: Border compliance (hours)	30	26
Cost to import: Border compliance (USD)	423	202
Time to import: Documentary compliance (hours)	38	26
Cost to import: Documentary compliance (USD)	200	91

Source: *Doing Business* database.

Table 9.3 Summary of trading details, transport time and documents for trading across borders in Azerbaijan

	Export	Import
Product	HS 17 : Sugars and sugar confectionery	HS 8708: Parts and accessories of motor vehicles
Trade partner	Iraq	Russian Federation
Border	Astara border crossing	Samur border crossing
Distance (km)	520	204
Domestic transport time (hours)	8	6
Domestic transport cost (USD)	500	400

Source: *Doing Business* database.

Note: 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.

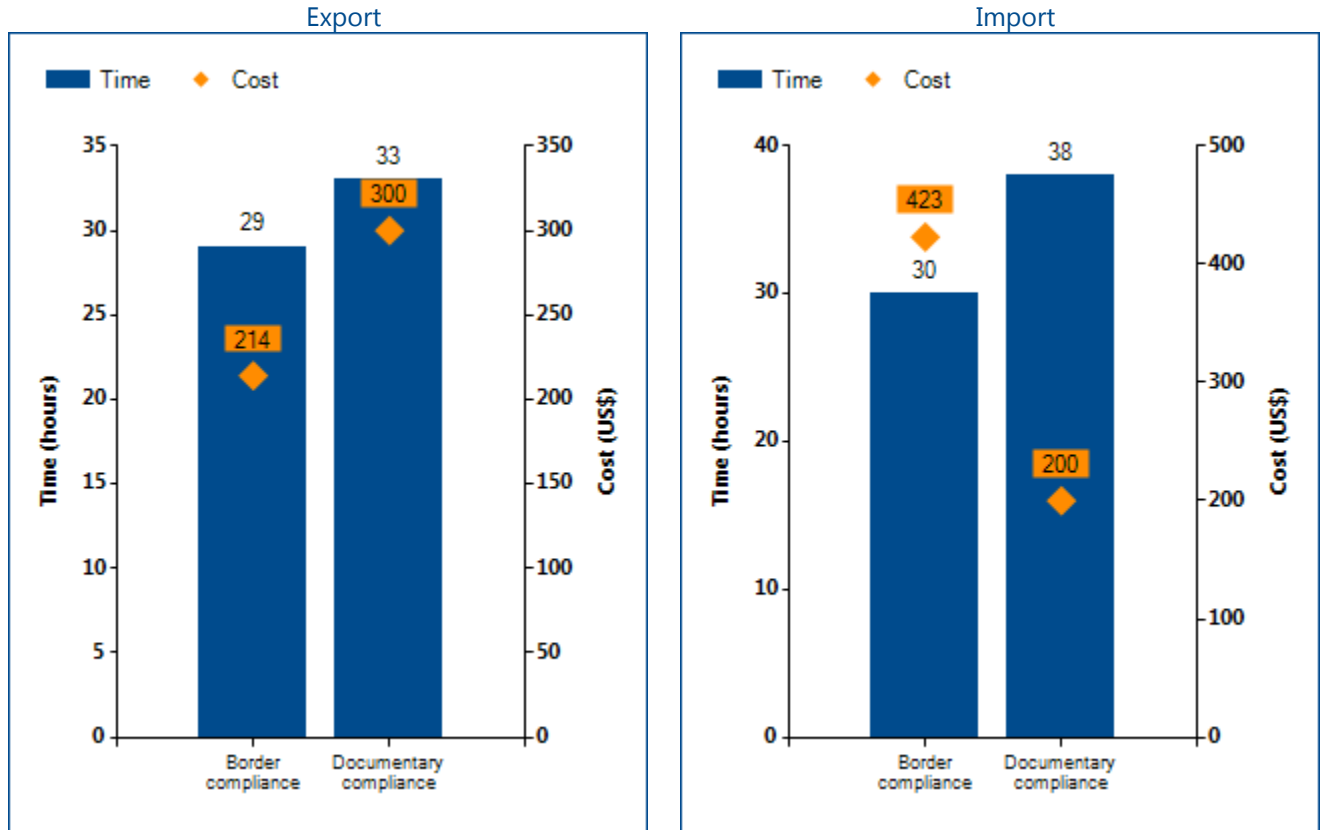
Documents to export
Commercial invoice
Certificate of origin
Contract
Customs Export Declaration
Certificate of quality
Phytosanitary certificate
CMR waybill

Documents to import
Commercial invoice
Certificate of origin
Contract with supplier
Customs Import Declaration
CMR waybill

Source: *Doing Business* database.

Note: *Doing Business* continues to collect data on the number of documents needed to trade internationally. Unlike in previous years, however, these data are excluded from the calculation of the distance to frontier score and ranking. The time and cost for documentary compliance serve as better measures of the overall cost and complexity of compliance with documentary requirements than does the number of documents required.

Figure 9.2 Summary of Azerbaijan on the ease of trading across borders



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, *Doing Business* measures 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. 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 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.
- The buyer orders custom-made goods, then fails to pay.
- The value of the dispute is 200% of the income per capita or the equivalent in local currency of USD 5,000, whichever is greater.

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)

- The seller sues the buyer before the court with jurisdiction over commercial cases worth 200% of income per capita or \$5,000.
- The seller requests a pretrial attachment to secure the claim.
- The dispute on the quality of the goods requires an expert opinion.
- The judge decides in favor of the seller; there is no appeal.
- The seller enforces the judgment through a public sale of the buyer's movable assets.

ENFORCING CONTRACTS

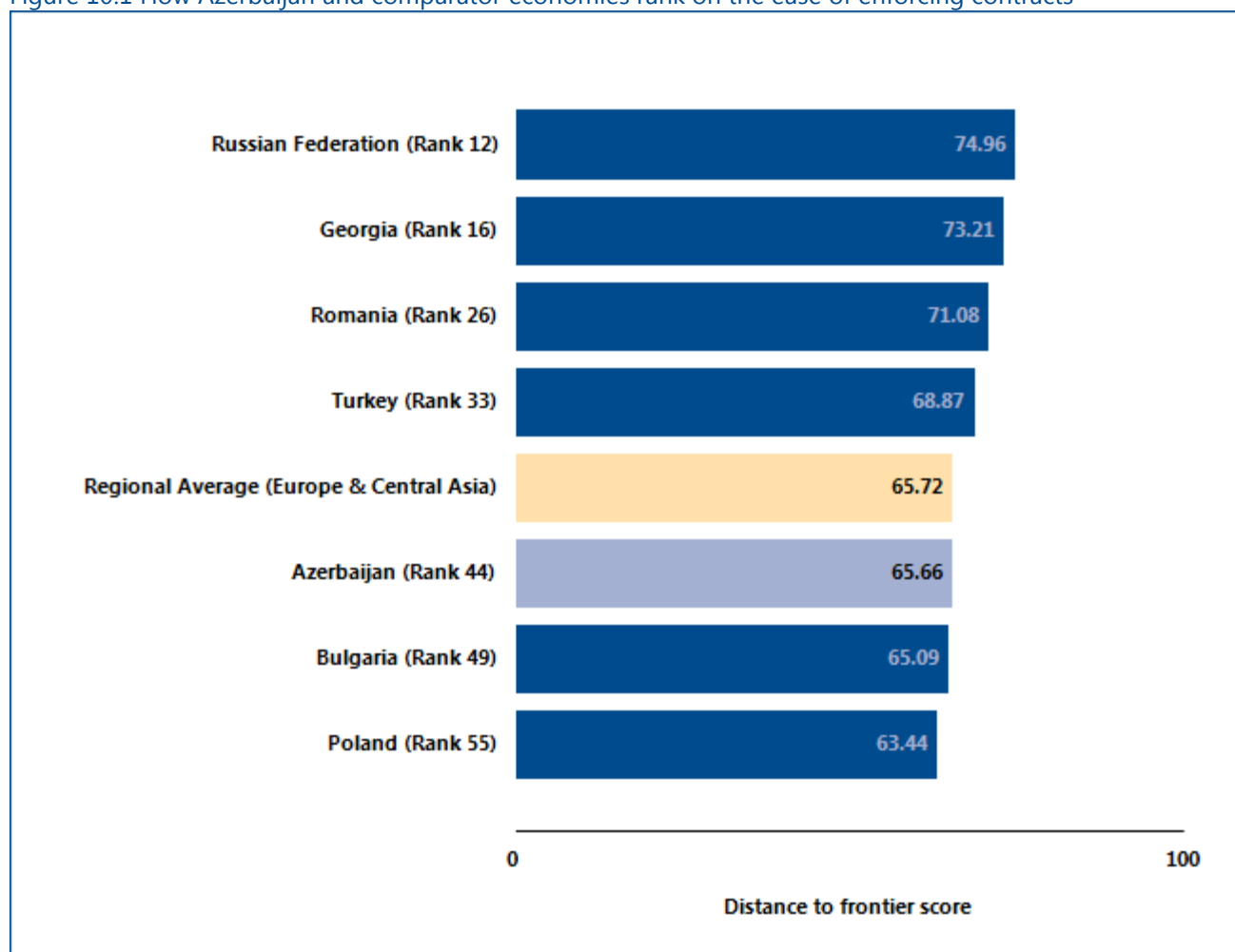
Where does the economy stand today?

How efficient is the process of resolving a commercial dispute through the courts in Azerbaijan? According to data collected by *Doing Business*, contract enforcement takes 277.0 days and costs 18.5% of the value of the claim. Most indicator sets refer to the largest business city of an economy, except for 11 economies for which the data are a population-weighted average of the 2 largest business cities. See the chapter on distance to

frontier and ease of doing business ranking at the end of this profile for more details.

Globally, Azerbaijan stands at 44 in the ranking of 190 economies on the ease of enforcing contracts (figure 10.1). The rankings for comparator economies and the regional average provide other useful benchmarks for assessing the efficiency of contract enforcement in Azerbaijan.

Figure 10.1 How Azerbaijan and comparator economies rank on the ease of enforcing contracts



Source: *Doing Business* database.

ENFORCING CONTRACTS

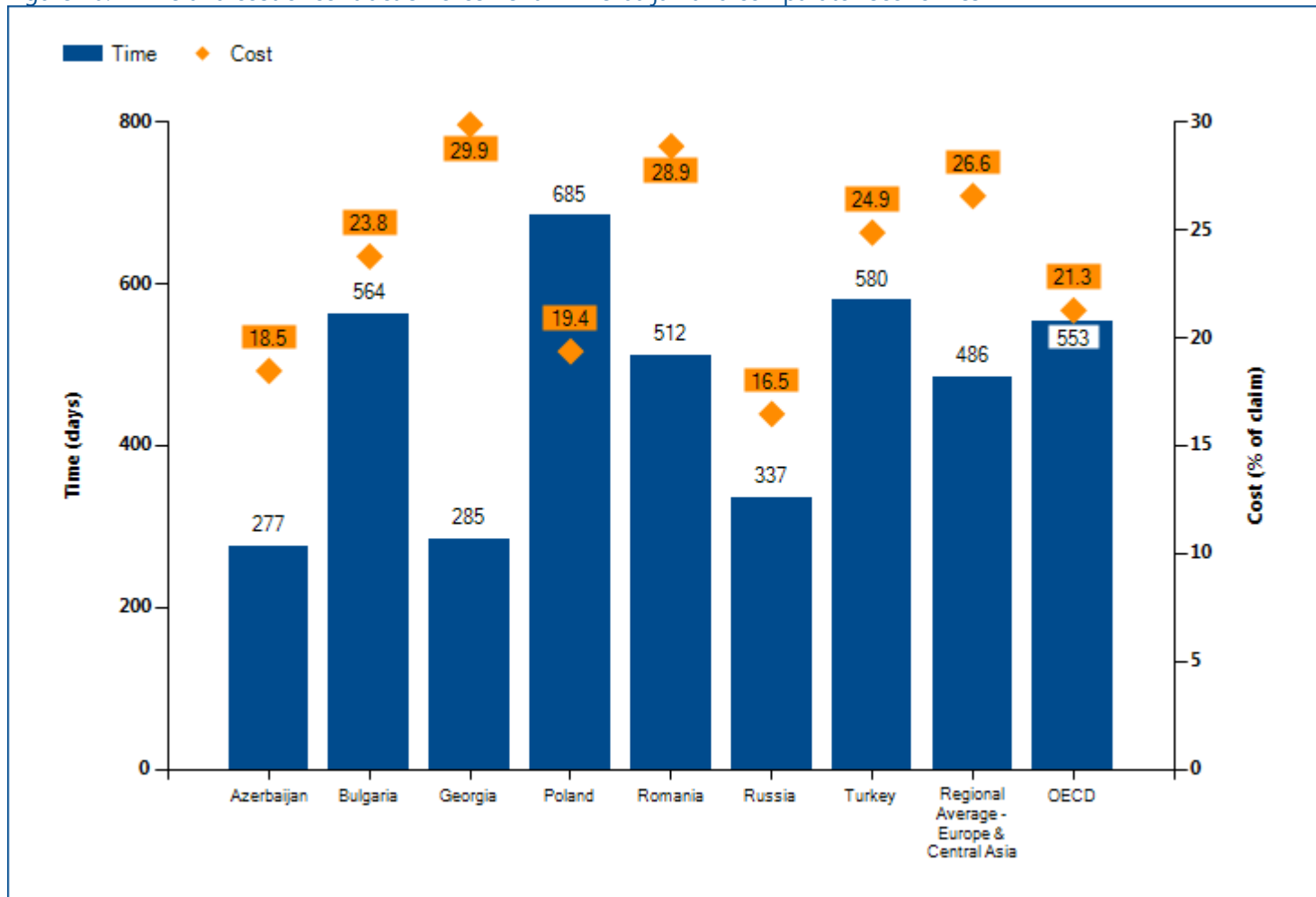
What are the details?

The data on time and cost reported here for Azerbaijan are built by following the step-by-step evolution of a commercial sale dispute within the court, under the assumptions about the case described above (figure 10.2). The time and cost of resolving the standardized dispute are identified through study of the codes of civil procedure and other court regulations, as well as through questionnaires completed by local litigation lawyers (and, in a quarter of the economies covered by *Doing Business*, by judges as well).

ECONOMY DETAILS

Claim value:	AZN 11,937
Court name:	Baku Administrative Commercial Court
City:	Baku

Figure 10.2 Time and cost of contract enforcement in Azerbaijan and comparator economies



Source: *Doing Business* database.

Table 10.2 Details on time and cost for enforcing contracts in Azerbaijan

Indicator	Azerbaijan	Europe & Central Asia average
Time (days)	277	486
Filing and service	27	
Trial and judgment	160	
Enforcement of judgment	90	
Cost (% of claim)	18.5	26.6
Attorney fees	16.4	
Court fees	1.1	
Enforcement fees	1.0	

Source: Doing Business database.

ENFORCING CONTRACTS

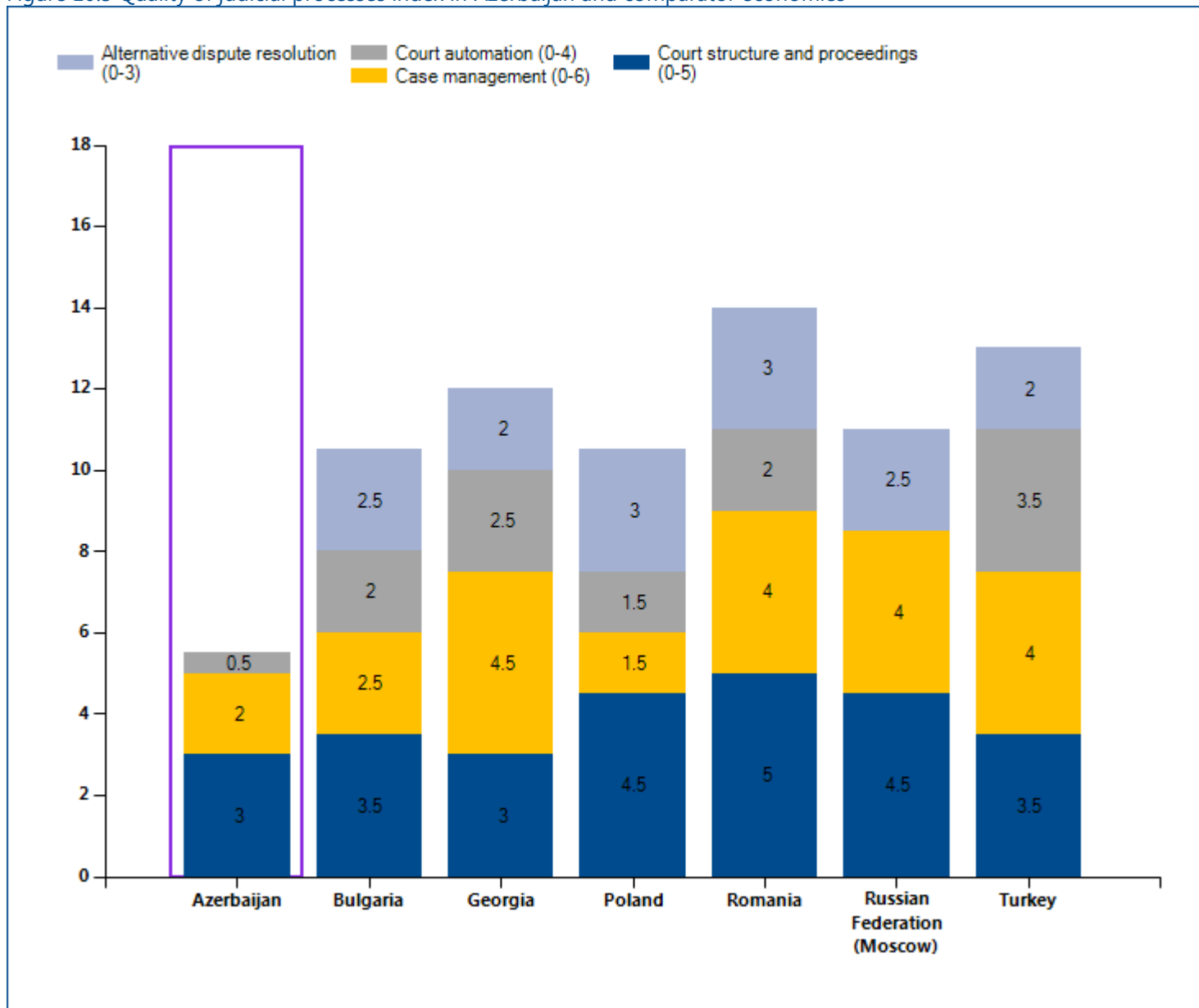
Quality of judicial processes index

The quality of judicial processes index measures whether each economy has adopted a series of good practices in its court system in four areas: court structure and proceedings, case management, court automation and alternative dispute resolution. The score on the quality of judicial processes index is the sum of the scores on these 4 sub-components. The index ranges from 0 to 18, with higher values indicating more efficient judicial processes.

The scores reported here show which of these good practices are available in Azerbaijan (figure 10.3).

This methodology was initially developed by Djankov and others (2003) and is adopted here with several changes. The quality of judicial processes index was introduced in *Doing Business 2016*. The good practices tested in this index were developed on the basis of internationally recognized good practices promoting judicial efficiency.

Figure 10.3 Quality of judicial processes index in Azerbaijan and comparator economies



Source: Doing Business database.

Table 10.3 Details of the quality of judicial processes index in Azerbaijan

	Answer	Score
Quality of judicial processes index (0-18)		5.5
Court structure and proceedings (0-5)		3.0
1. Is there a court or division of a court dedicated solely to hearing commercial cases?	Yes	1.5
2. Small claims court		0.0
2.a. Is there a small claims court or a fast-track procedure for small claims?	No	
2.b. If yes, is self-representation allowed?	n.a.	
3. Is pretrial attachment available?	Yes	1.0
4. Are new cases assigned randomly to judges?	Yes, but manual	0.5
5. Does a woman's testimony carry the same evidentiary weight in court as a man's?	Yes	0.0
Case management (0-6)		2.0
1. Time standards		0.0
1.a. Are there laws setting overall time standards for key court events in a civil case?	Yes	
1.b. If yes, are the time standards set for at least three court events?	No	
1.c. Are these time standards respected in more than 50% of cases?	Yes	
2. Adjournments		0.0
2.a. Does the law regulate the maximum number of adjournments that can be granted?	No	
2.b. Are adjournments limited to unforeseen and exceptional circumstances?	No	
2.c. If rules on adjournments exist, are they respected in more than 50% of cases?	n.a.	
3. Can two of the following four reports be generated about the competent court: (i) time to disposition report; (ii) clearance rate report; (iii) age of pending cases report; and (iv) single case progress report?	Yes	1.0
4. Is a pretrial conference among the case management techniques used before the competent court?	Yes	1.0
5. Are there any electronic case management tools in place within the competent court for use by judges?	No	0.0

	Answer	Score
6. Are there any electronic case management tools in place within the competent court for use by lawyers?	No	0.0
Court automation (0-4)		0.5
1. Can the initial complaint be filed electronically through a dedicated platform within the competent court?	No	0.0
2. Is it possible to carry out service of process electronically for claims filed before the competent court?	No	0.0
3. Can court fees be paid electronically within the competent court?	No	0.0
4. Publication of judgments		0.5
4.a Are judgments rendered in commercial cases at all levels made available to the general public through publication in official gazettes, in newspapers or on the internet or court website?	No	
4.b. Are judgments rendered in commercial cases at the appellate and supreme court level made available to the general public through publication in official gazettes, in newspapers or on the internet or court website?	Yes	
Alternative dispute resolution (0-3)		0.0
1. Arbitration		0.0
1.a. Is domestic commercial arbitration governed by a consolidated law or consolidated chapter or section of the applicable code of civil procedure encompassing substantially all its aspects?	No	
1.b. Are there any commercial disputes—aside from those that deal with public order or public policy—that cannot be submitted to arbitration?	n.a.	
1.c. Are valid arbitration clauses or agreements usually enforced by the courts?	n.a.	
2. Mediation/Conciliation		0.0
2.a. Is voluntary mediation or conciliation available?	No	
2.b. Are mediation, conciliation or both governed by a consolidated law or consolidated chapter or section of the applicable code of civil procedure encompassing substantially all their aspects?	n.a.	
2.c. Are there financial incentives for parties to attempt mediation or conciliation (i.e., if mediation or conciliation is successful, a refund of court filing fees, income tax credits or the like)?	n.a.	

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.

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,

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)

management of debtor's assets, reorganization proceedings and creditor participation.

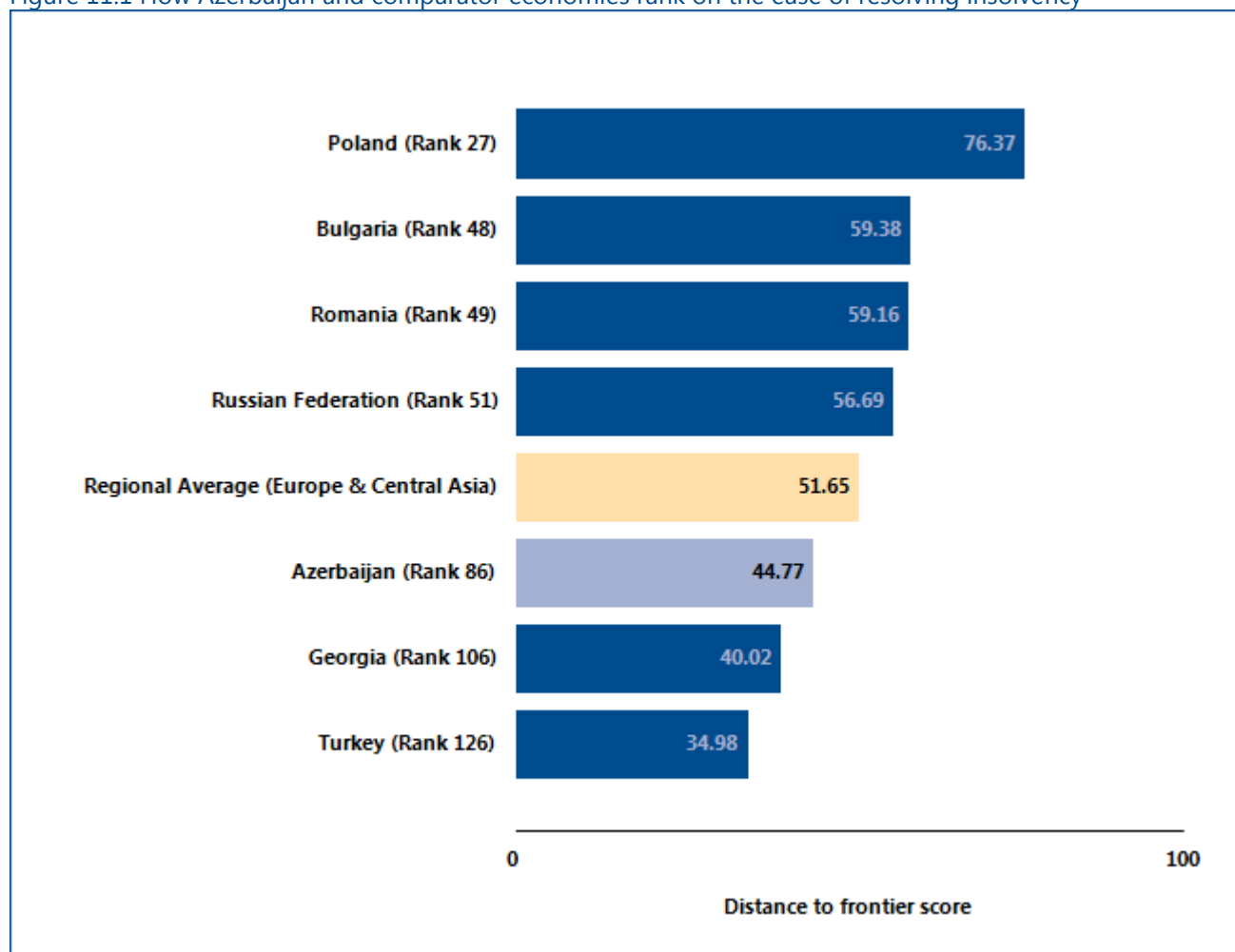
RESOLVING INSOLVENCY

Where does the economy stand today?

Globally, Azerbaijan stands at 86 in the ranking of 190 economies on the ease of resolving insolvency (figure 11.1). 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.

Figure 11.1 How Azerbaijan and comparator economies rank on the ease of resolving insolvency



Source: Doing Business database.

RESOLVING INSOLVENCY

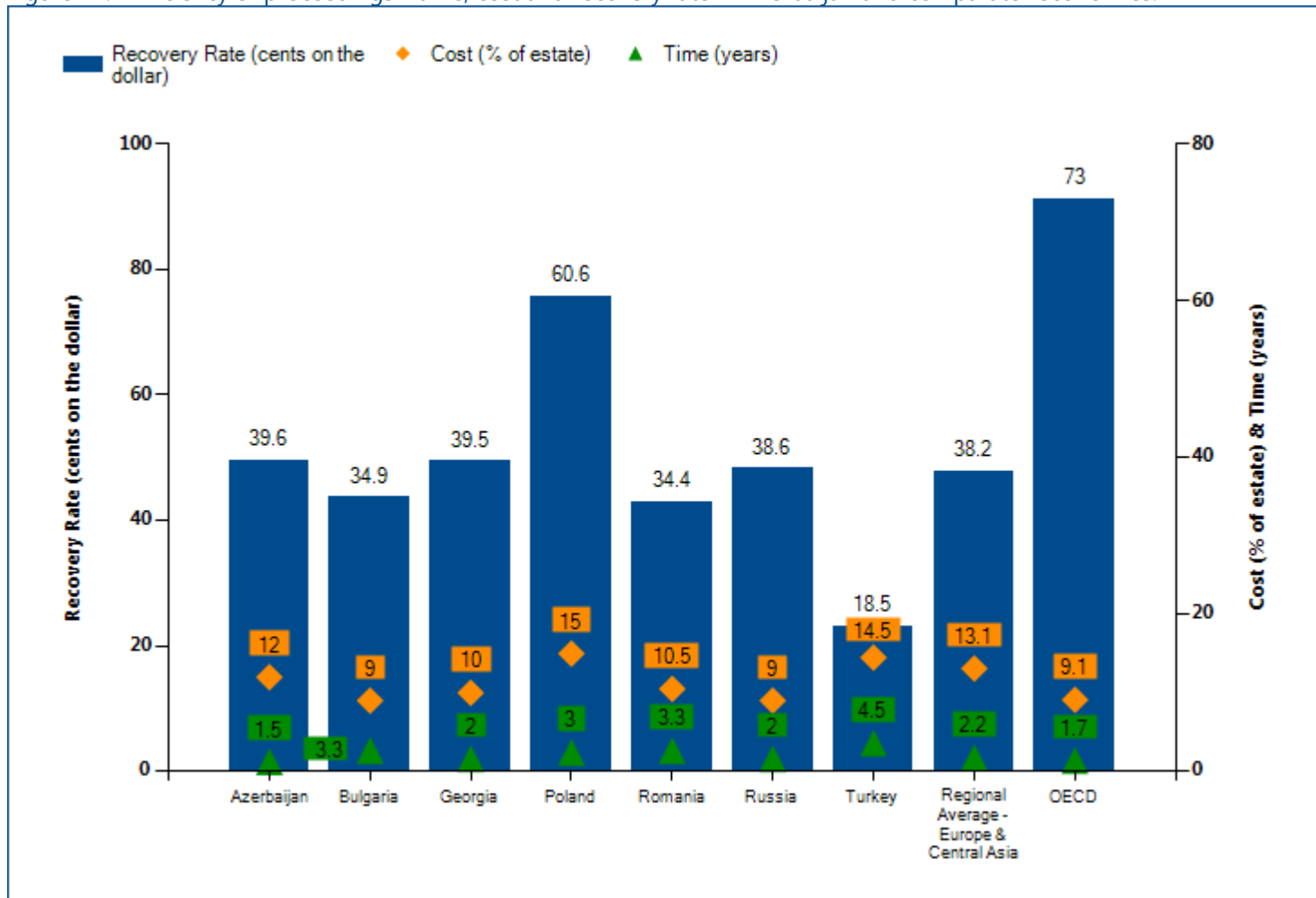
Recovery of debt in insolvency

Data on the time, cost and outcome refer to the most likely in-court insolvency procedure applicable under specific case study assumptions.

According to data collected by *Doing Business*, resolving insolvency takes 1.5 years on average and costs 12.0% of the debtor’s estate, with the most likely outcome being that the company will be sold as piecemeal sale. The

average recovery rate is 39.6 cents on the dollar. Most indicator sets refer to a case scenario in the largest business city of an economy, except for 11 economies for which the data are a population-weighted average of the 2 largest business cities.

Figure 11.2 Efficiency of proceedings - time, cost and recovery rate in Azerbaijan and comparator economies.



Source: *Doing Business* database.

Note: The recovery rate is calculated based on the time, cost and outcome of insolvency proceedings involving domestic legal entities and is recorded as cents on the dollar recovered by secured creditors. The calculation takes into account the outcome: whether the business emerges from the proceedings as a going concern or the assets are sold piecemeal. Then the costs of the proceedings are deducted. Finally, the value lost as a result of the time the money remains tied up in insolvency proceedings is taken into account. The recovery rate is the present value of the remaining proceeds, based on end-2015 lending rates.

Table 11.1 Details of data on efficiency of insolvency proceedings in Azerbaijan

Indicator	Answer	Explanation
Proceeding	foreclosure	BizBank will initiate foreclosure proceeding, because it is cheaper and faster than insolvency proceeding. Additionally, secured creditors have the right to enforce their security interest even if other parties (debtor, unsecured creditors) start insolvency proceedings.
Outcome	piecemeal sale	It will be difficult to find a buyer willing to purchase the hotel as a going concern.
Time (in years)	1.5	<p>Before BizBank can initiate foreclosure proceedings, it must give at least two months after the debtor fails to pay and then give one month notice of default to the debtor. The debtor or any other interested party may appeal the notice of default in the court within 21 days from the date of service. The creditor must register the notice of default with the State Register Service of Immovable Property within 7 days from its service upon the debtor. Once the notice of default is registered, BizBank may apply to a court for a judgment to foreclose upon the secured assets. During a preliminary hearing (0.5-1 month after filing), the judge reviews material and accepts Bizbank's case for consideration. A hearing will take place where Mirage and BizBank will present their claims. The court will issue a decision in Bank's favor within several months. Mirage will likely appeal the decision (within 30 days), and the appeal will be decided within a few months and the decision becomes effective immediately. Within 3 days of receipt of the effective court judgment, the court bailiff must send an order on foreclosure to a specialized auctioneer. The entire adjudication process will take about 1 year.</p> <p>After that, a specialized auctioneer must publish two announcements – 30 days and 15 days before the proposed public auction sale. The first auction requires that the property be sold for at least 70% of the starting price. The second auction allows the sale of the foreclosed property at a price which covers the auction expenses and the secured obligations to the mortgagee and any senior mortgagee(s). In our case, it is likely that there will be two auctions, as it will not be easy to find a buyer. The entire process will take approximately 6 months until the proceeds are paid to BizBank.</p>
Cost (% of estate)	12.0	The main expenses will include attorneys' fees of AZN 10,000 + a success fee of 10% of the value of the assets.
Recovery rate: 39.6		

Source: Doing Business database.

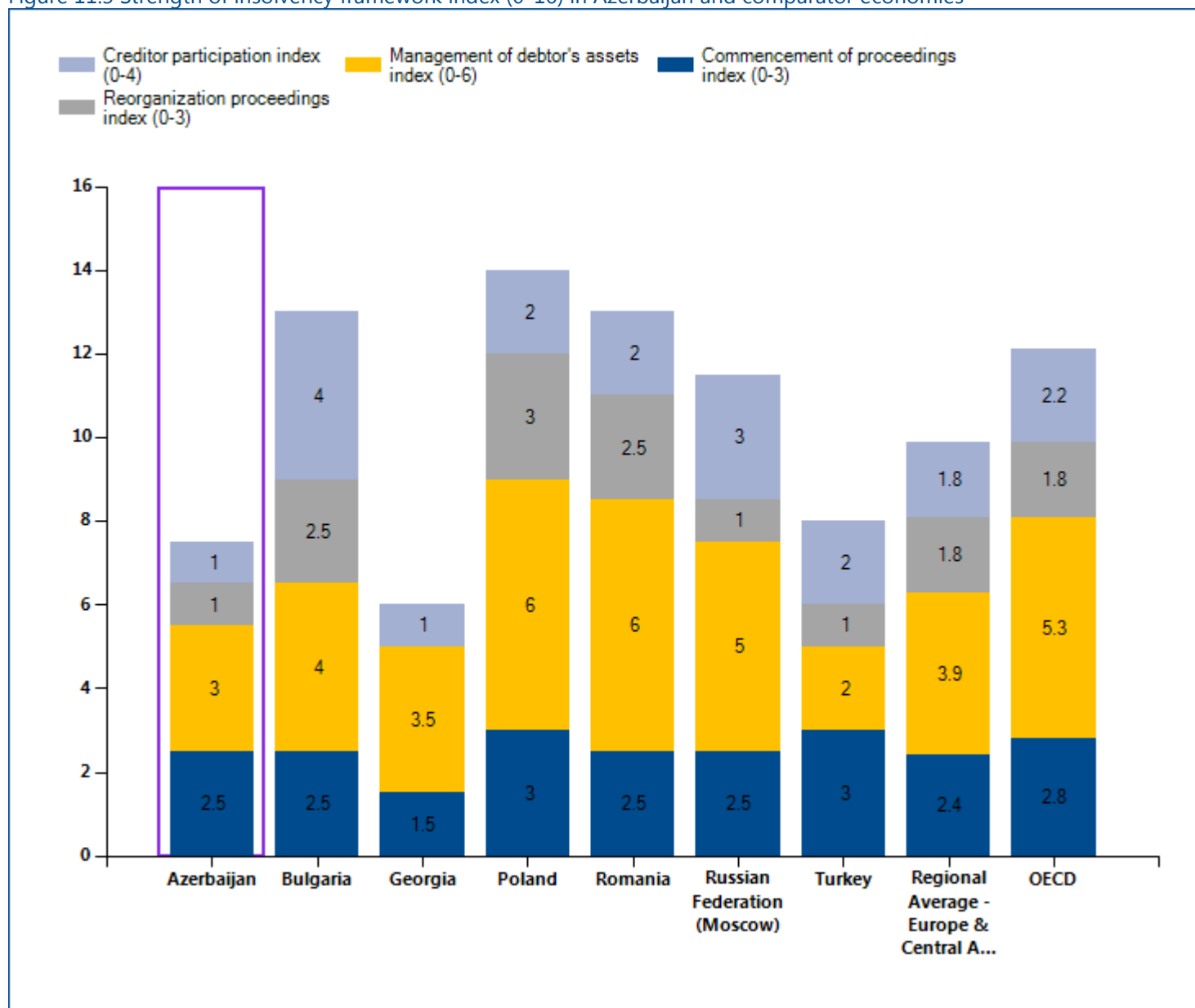
RESOLVING INSOLVENCY

Strength of resolving insolvency index

The strength of insolvency framework index is the sum of the scores on the commencement of proceedings index, management of debtor's assets index, reorganization proceedings index and creditor participation index. The index ranges from 0 to 16,

with higher values indicating insolvency legislation that is better designed for rehabilitating viable firms and liquidating nonviable ones. Azerbaijan's score on the strength of insolvency framework index is 7.5 out of 16. Data on provisions applicable to judicial liquidation and reorganization is based on the current law governing insolvency proceedings in each economy.

Figure 11.3 Strength of insolvency framework index (0-16) in Azerbaijan and comparator economies



Source: Doing Business database.

Note: Even if the economy's legal framework includes provisions related to insolvency proceedings (liquidation or

reorganization), the economy receives 0 points for the strength of insolvency framework index, if time, cost and outcome indicators are recorded as “no practice”.

Table 11.2 Summary of data for the strength of insolvency framework index in Azerbaijan

	Answer	Score
Strength of insolvency framework index (0-16)		7.5
Commencement of proceedings index (0-3)		2.5
What procedures are available to a DEBTOR when commencing insolvency proceedings?	(a) Debtor may file for both liquidation and reorganization	1.0
Does the insolvency framework allow a CREDITOR to file for insolvency of the debtor?	(b) Yes, but a creditor may file for liquidation only	0.5
What basis for commencement of the insolvency proceedings is allowed under the insolvency framework?	(a) Debtor is generally unable to pay its debts as they mature	1.0
Management of debtor's assets index (0-6)		3.0
Does the insolvency framework allow the continuation of contracts supplying essential goods and services to the debtor?	Yes	1.0
Does the insolvency framework allow the rejection by the debtor of overly burdensome contracts?	Yes	1.0
Does the insolvency framework allow avoidance of preferential transactions?	Yes	1.0
Does the insolvency framework allow avoidance of undervalued transactions?	No	0.0
Does the insolvency framework provide for the possibility of the debtor obtaining credit after commencement of insolvency proceedings?	No	0.0
Does the insolvency framework assign priority to post-commencement credit?	(c) No priority is assigned to post-commencement creditors	0.0
Reorganization proceedings index (0-3)		1.0
Which creditors vote on the proposed reorganization plan?	(b) Only creditors whose rights are affected by the proposed plan	1.0
Does the insolvency framework require that dissenting creditors in reorganization receive at least as much as what they would obtain in a liquidation?	No	0.0
Are the creditors divided into classes for the purposes of voting on the reorganization plan, does each class vote separately and are creditors in	No	0.0

	Answer	Score
the same class treated equally?		
Creditor participation index (0-4)		1.0
Does the insolvency framework require approval by the creditors for selection or appointment of the insolvency representative?	Yes	1.0
Does the insolvency framework require approval by the creditors for sale of substantial assets of the debtor?	No	0.0
Does the insolvency framework provide that a creditor has the right to request information from the insolvency representative?	No	0.0
Does the insolvency framework provide that a creditor has the right to object to decisions accepting or rejecting creditors' claims?	No	0.0

Source: *Doing Business* database.

LABOR MARKET REGULATION

Doing Business studies the flexibility of regulation of employment, specifically as it relates to the areas of hiring, working hours and redundancy. *Doing Business* also measures several aspects of job quality such as the availability of maternity leave, paid sick leave and the equal treatment of men and women at the workplace.

Doing Business 2017 presents the data for the labor market regulation indicators in an annex. The report does not present rankings of economies on these indicators or include the topic in the aggregate distance to frontier score or ranking on the ease of doing business. Detailed data collected on labor market regulation are available on the *Doing Business* website (<http://www.doingbusiness.org>). The data on labor market regulation are based on a detailed questionnaire on employment regulations that is completed by local lawyers and public officials. Employment laws and regulations as well as secondary sources are reviewed to ensure accuracy.

To make the data comparable across economies, several assumptions about the worker and the business are used.

The worker:

- Is a cashier in a supermarket or grocery store, age 19, with one year of work experience.
- Is a full-time employee.
- Is not a member of the labor union, unless membership is mandatory.

The business:

- Is a limited liability company (or the equivalent in the economy).
- Operates a supermarket or grocery store in the economy's largest business city. For 11 economies the data are also collected for the second largest business city.
- Has 60 employees.
- Is subject to collective bargaining agreements if such agreements cover more than 50% of the

food retail sector and they apply even to firms that are not party to them.

- Abides by every law and regulation but does not grant workers more benefits than those mandated by law, regulation or (if applicable) collective bargaining agreements.

LABOR MARKET REGULATION

What are the details?

The data reported here for Azerbaijan are based on a detailed survey of labor market regulation that is completed by local lawyers and public officials.

Employment laws and regulations as well as secondary sources are reviewed to ensure accuracy.

Hiring

Data on hiring cover five areas: (i) whether fixed-term contracts are prohibited for permanent tasks; (ii) the maximum cumulative duration of fixed-term contracts; (iii) the minimum wage for a cashier, age 19, with one year of work experience; and (iv) the ratio of the

minimum wage to the average value added per worker (the ratio of an economy's GNI per capita to the working-age population as a percentage of the total population).

Hiring	Data
Fixed-term contracts prohibited for permanent tasks?	No
Maximum length of a single fixed-term contract (months)	60 uninterrupted months is the maximum before turning into an indefinite-term contract (Article 45.5)
Maximum length of fixed-term contracts, including renewals (months)	60.0
Minimum wage applicable to the worker assumed in the case study (US\$/month)	126.7
Ratio of minimum wage to value added per worker	0.2

Source: *Doing Business* database.

LABOR MARKET REGULATION

Working hours

Data on working hours cover nine areas: (i) the maximum number of working days allowed per week; (ii) the premium for night work (as a percentage of hourly pay); (iii) the premium for work on a weekly rest day (as a percentage of hourly pay); (iv) the premium for overtime work (as a percentage of hourly pay); (v) whether there are restrictions on night work; (vi) whether nonpregnant

and nonnursing women can work the same night hours as men*; (vii) whether there are restrictions on weekly holiday work; (viii) whether there are restrictions on overtime work; and (ix) the average paid annual leave for workers with 1 year of tenure, 5 years of tenure, and 10 years of tenure.

Working Hours	Data
Maximum number of working days per week	6.0
Premium for night work (% of hourly pay)	40.0
Premium for work on weekly rest day (% of hourly pay)	150.0
Premium for overtime work (% of hourly pay)	100.0
Restrictions on night work?	Yes
Whether nonpregnant and nonnursing women can work the same night hours as men	No
Restrictions on weekly holiday?	No
Restrictions on overtime work?	No
Paid annual leave for a worker with 1 year of tenure (working days)	15.0
Paid annual leave for a worker with 5 years of tenure (working days)	17.0
Paid annual leave for a worker with 10 years of tenure (working days)	19.0
Paid annual leave (average for workers with 1, 5 and 10 years of tenure, in working days)	17.0

Source: *Doing Business* database.

LABOR MARKET REGULATION

Redundancy rules

Data on redundancy cover nine areas: (i) the length of the maximum probationary period (in months) for permanent employees; (ii) whether redundancy is allowed as a basis for terminating workers; (iii) whether the employer needs to notify a third party (such as a government agency) to terminate one redundant worker; (iv) whether the employer needs to notify a third party to terminate a group of nine redundant workers; (v)

whether the employer needs approval from a third party to terminate one redundant worker; (vi) whether the employer needs approval from a third party to terminate a group of nine redundant workers; (vii) whether the law requires the employer to reassign or retrain a worker before making the worker redundant; (viii) whether priority rules apply for redundancies; and (ix) whether priority rules apply for reemployment.

Redundancy rules	Data
Maximum length of probationary period (months)	3.0
Dismissal due to redundancy allowed by law?	Yes
Third-party notification if one worker is dismissed?	No
Third-party approval if one worker is dismissed?	No
Third-party notification if nine workers are dismissed?	No
Third-party approval if nine workers are dismissed?	No
Retraining or reassignment obligation before redundancy?	No
Priority rules for redundancies?	Yes
Priority rules for reemployment?	No

Source: *Doing Business* database.

LABOR MARKET REGULATION

Redundancy cost

Redundancy cost measures the cost of advance notice requirements and severance payments due when terminating a redundant worker, expressed in weeks of salary. The average value of notice requirements and

severance payments applicable to a worker with 1 year of tenure, a worker with 5 years and a worker with 10 years is considered. One month is recorded as 4 and 1/3 weeks.

Redundancy cost indicator (in salary weeks)	Data
Notice period for redundancy dismissal for a worker with 1 year of tenure	8.7
Notice period for redundancy dismissal for a worker with 5 years of tenure	8.7
Notice period for redundancy dismissal for a worker with 10 years of tenure	8.7
Notice period for redundancy dismissal (average for workers with 1, 5 and 10 years of tenure)	8.7
Severance pay for redundancy dismissal for a worker with 1 year of tenure	13.0
Severance pay for redundancy dismissal for a worker with 5 years of tenure	13.0
Severance pay for redundancy dismissal for a worker with 10 years of tenure	13.0
Severance pay for redundancy dismissal (average for workers with 1, 5 and 10 years of tenure)	13.0

Source: Doing Business database.

LABOR MARKET REGULATION

Job quality

Doing Business introduced new data on job quality in 2015. *Doing Business 2017* covers eight questions on job quality (i) whether the law mandates equal remuneration for work of equal value; (ii) whether the law mandates nondiscrimination based on gender in hiring; (iii) whether the law mandates paid or unpaid maternity leave; (iv) the minimum length of paid maternity leave (in calendar days); (v) whether employees on maternity

leave receive 100% of wages; (vi) the availability of five fully paid days of sick leave a year; (vii) whether a worker is eligible for an unemployment protection scheme after one year of service; and (viii) the minimum duration of the contribution period (in months) required for unemployment protection.

Job Quality	Data
Equal remuneration for work of equal value?	Yes
Gender nondiscrimination in hiring?	Yes
Paid or unpaid maternity leave mandated by law?	Yes
Minimum length of maternity leave (calendar days)?	126.0
Receive 100% of wages on maternity leave?	Yes
Five fully paid days of sick leave a year?	Yes
Unemployment protection after one year of employment?	Yes
Minimum contribution period for unemployment protection (months)?	6.0

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 41 indicators for 10 *Doing Business* topics (the labor market regulation indicators are excluded). For starting a business, for example, New Zealand has 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 111 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 41 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 *Doing Business 2017* report).

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*². Thus *Doing Business* uses the simplest method: weighting all topics equally and, within each topic, giving equal weight to each of the topic components³.

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 2017 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).

² 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.

³ 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

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.

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 2015/16

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 2015/16 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. Twenty-nine economies meet this criterion: Algeria; Azerbaijan; Bahrain; Belarus; Brazil; Brunei Darussalam; Burkina Faso; Côte d'Ivoire; Georgia; India; Indonesia; Kazakhstan; Kenya; Madagascar; Mali; Mauritania; Morocco; Niger; Pakistan; Poland; Senegal; Serbia; Singapore; Thailand; Togo; Uganda; the United Arab Emirates; Uzbekistan and Vanuatu. 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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