

12TH EDITION

# Doing Business 2015

## Going Beyond Efficiency

### Economy Profile 2015

## Estonia



COMPARING BUSINESS REGULATIONS FOR DOMESTIC FIRMS IN **189** ECONOMIES

*A World Bank Group Flagship Report*

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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.

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 189 economies, from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe, over time. The data set covers 47 economies in Sub-Saharan Africa, 32 in Latin America and the Caribbean, 25 in East Asia and the Pacific, 26 in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 20 in the Middle East and North Africa and 8 in South Asia, as well as 31 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 Estonia. 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, 2014 (except for the paying taxes indicators, which cover the period January–December 2013).

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 2015* presents the indicators, analyzes their relationship with economic outcomes and presents business regulatory reforms. The data, along with information on ordering *Doing Business 2015*, are available on the *Doing Business* website at <http://www.doingbusiness.org>.

## CHANGES IN *DOING BUSINESS 2015*

As part of a 2-year update in methodology, *Doing Business 2015* incorporates 7 important changes. First, the ease of doing business ranking as well as all topic-level rankings are now computed on the basis of distance to frontier scores (see the chapter on the distance to frontier and ease of doing business ranking). Second, for the 11 economies with a population of more than 100 million, data for a second city have been added to the data set and the ranking calculation. These economies are Bangladesh, Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Russian Federation and the United States. Third, for getting credit, the methodology has been revised for both the strength of legal rights index and the depth of credit information index. The number of points has been increased in both indices, from 10 to 12 for the strength of legal rights index and from 6 to 8 for the depth of credit information index. In addition, only credit bureaus and registries that cover at least 5% of the adult population can receive a score on the depth of credit information index.

Fourth, the name of the protecting investors indicator set has been changed to protecting minority investors to better reflect its scope—and the scope of the indicator set has been expanded to include shareholders' rights in corporate governance beyond related-party transactions. Fifth, the resolving insolvency indicator set has been expanded to include an index measuring the strength of the legal framework for insolvency. Sixth, the calculation of the distance to frontier score for paying taxes has been changed. The total tax rate component now enters the score in a nonlinear fashion, in an approach different from that used for all other indicators (see the chapter on the distance to frontier and ease of doing business ranking).

Finally, the name of the employing workers indicator set has been changed to labor market regulation, and the scope of this indicator set has also been changed. The indicators now focus on labor market regulation applying to the retail sector rather than the manufacturing sector, and their coverage has been expanded to include regulations on labor disputes and on benefits provided to workers. The labor market regulation indicators continue to be excluded from the aggregate distance to frontier score and ranking on the ease of doing business.

Beyond these changes there are 3 other updates in methodology. For paying taxes, the financial statement variables have been updated to be proportional to 2012 income per capita; previously they were proportional to 2005 income per capita. For enforcing contracts, the value of the claim is now set at twice the income per capita or \$5,000, whichever is greater. For dealing with construction permits, the cost of construction is now set at 50 times income per capita (before, the cost was assessed by the *Doing Business* respondents). In addition, this indicator set no longer includes the procedures for obtaining a landline telephone connection.

For more details on the changes, see the "What is changing in *Doing Business*?" chapter starting on page 24 of the *Doing Business 2015* report. For more details on the data and methodology, please see the "Data Notes" chapter starting on page 114 of the *Doing Business 2015* 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 189 by the ease of doing business ranking. This year's report 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 (DTF) scores. 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. (See the chapter on the distance to frontier and ease of doing business). The 10 topics included in the ranking in *Doing Business 2015*: 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 (formerly employing workers) are not included in this year's aggregate ease of doing business ranking, but the data are presented in this year's economy profile.

The aggregate ranking on the ease of doing business benchmarks each economy's performance on the indicators against that of all other economies in the *Doing Business* sample (figure 1.1). While this ranking tells much about the business environment in an economy, it does not tell the whole story. The ranking on the ease of doing business, and the underlying indicators, do not measure all aspects of the business environment that matter to firms and investors or that affect the competitiveness of the economy. Still, a high ranking does mean that the government has created a regulatory environment conducive to operating a business.

### ECONOMY OVERVIEW

Region: OECD high income

Income category: High income

Population: 1,324,612

GNI per capita (US\$): 17,370

DB2015 rank: 17

DB2014 rank: 16\*

Change in rank: -1

DB 2015 DTF: 78.8

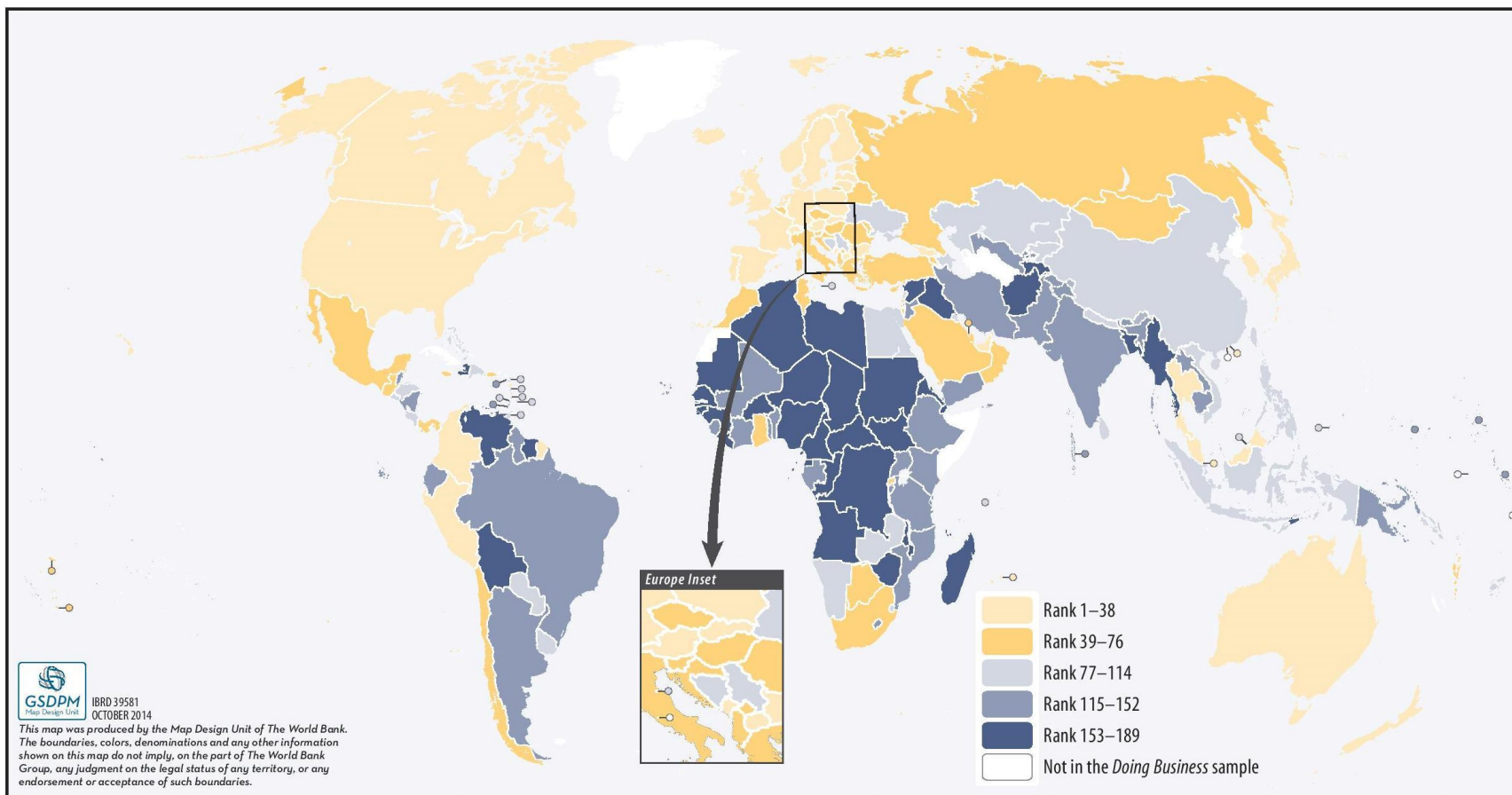
DB 2014 DTF: 78.5

Change in DTF: 0.3

\* DB2014 ranking shown is not last year's published ranking but a comparable ranking for DB2014 that captures the effects of such factors as data corrections and the changes in methodology. See the data notes starting on page 114 of the *Doing Business 2015* 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.

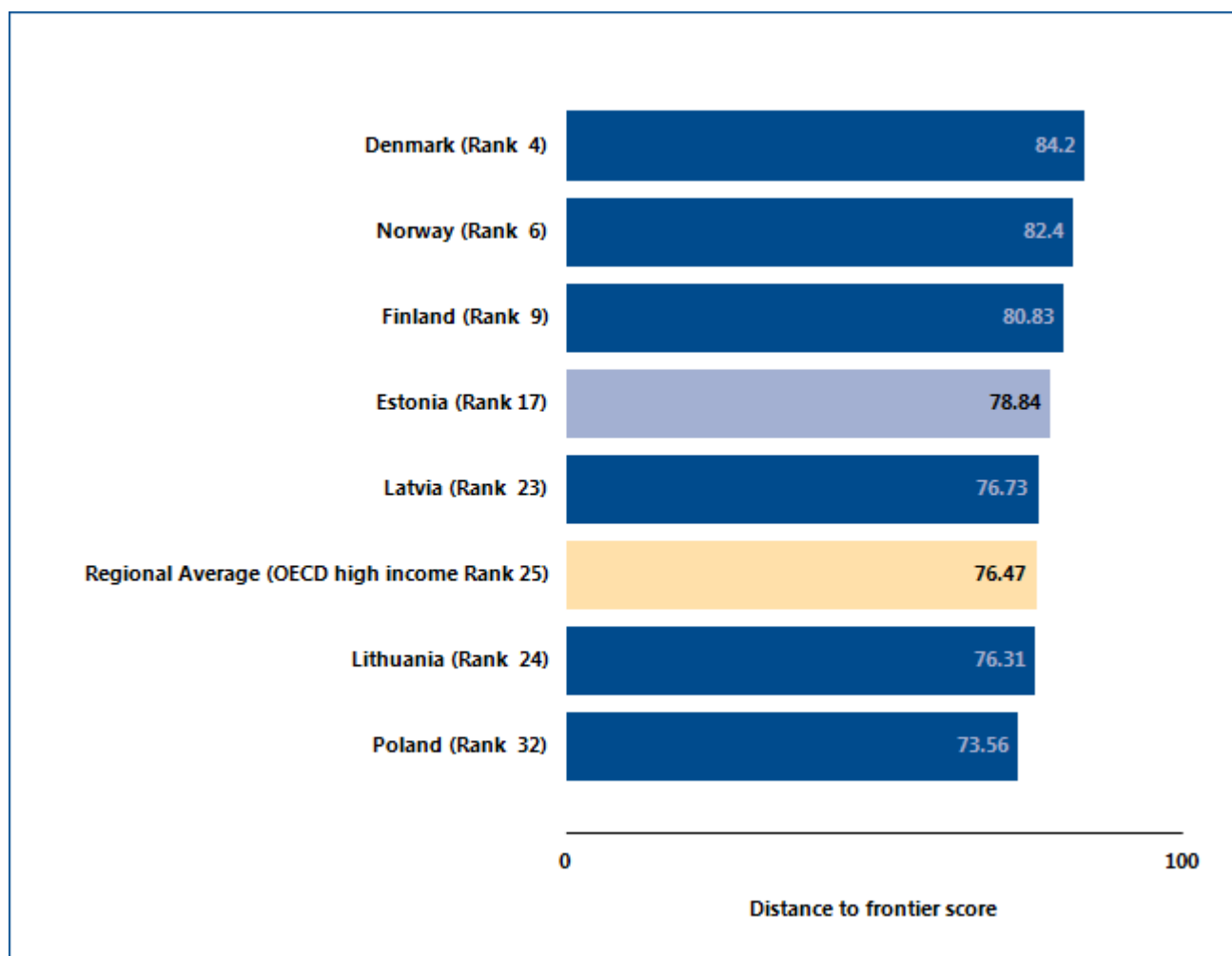


## THE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

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 Estonia and comparator economies rank on the ease of doing business



*Note:* The rankings are benchmarked to June 2014 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 - Estonia  
 (Scale: Rank 189 center, Rank 1 outer edge)

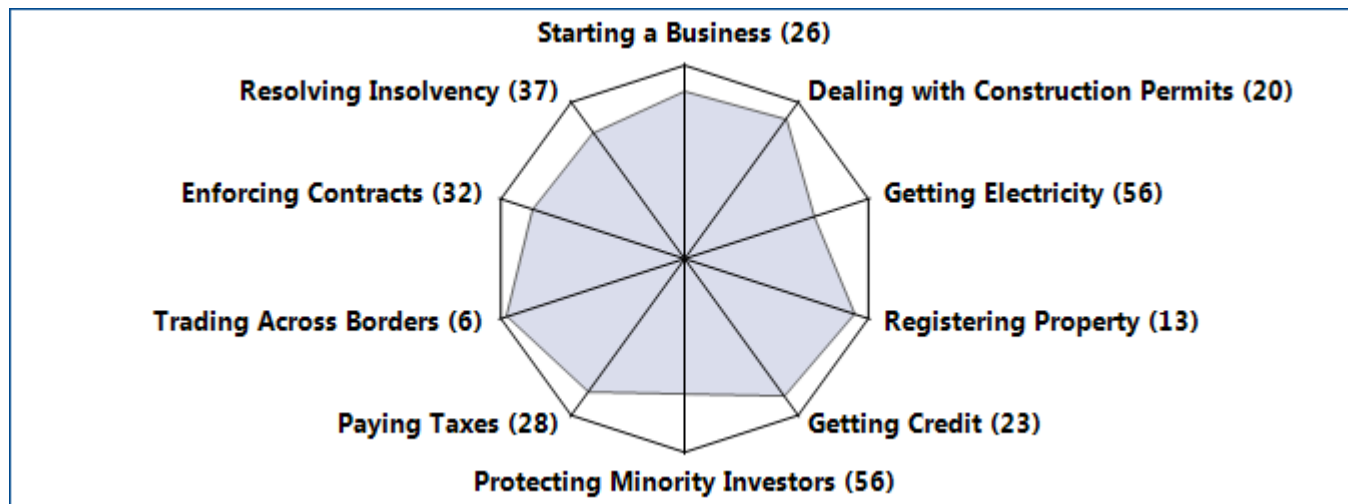
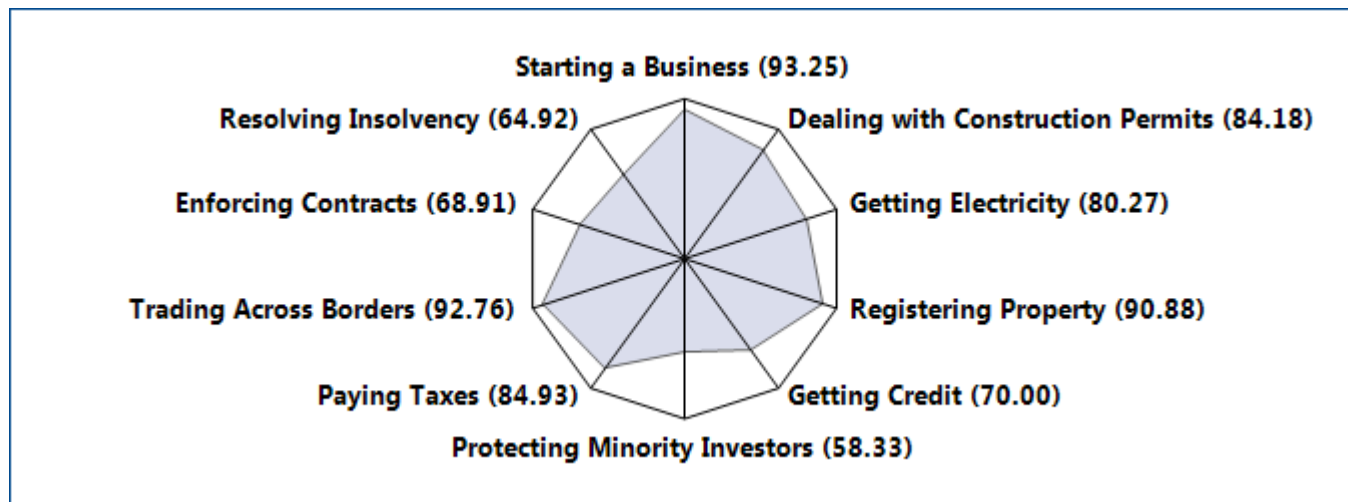


Figure 1.4 Distance to frontier scores on *Doing Business* topics - Estonia  
 (Scale: Score 0 center, Score 100 outer edge)



*Note:* The rankings are benchmarked to June 2014 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

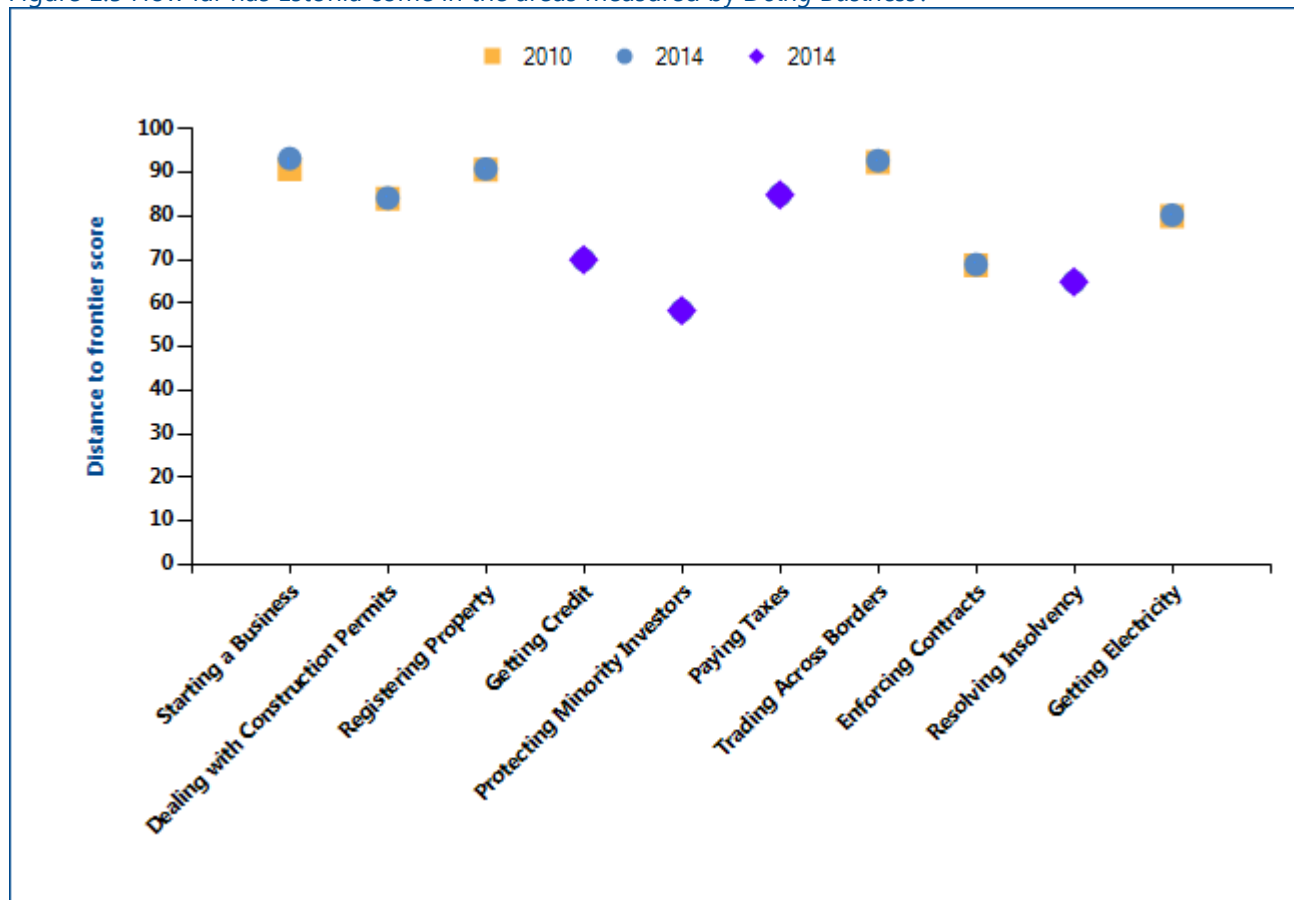
Just as the overall ranking on the ease of doing business tells only part of the story, so do changes in that ranking. Yearly movements in rankings can provide some indication of changes in an economy’s regulatory environment for firms, but they are always relative.

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 Estonia 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 since 2010, except for getting credit, paying taxes, protecting minority investors and resolving insolvency which had methodology changes in 2014 and thus are only comparable to 2013. 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 2015* 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 Estonia

Indicator	Estonia DB2015	Estonia DB2014	Denmark DB2015	Finland DB2015	Latvia DB2015	Lithuania DB2015	Norway DB2015	Poland DB2015	Best performer globally DB2015
<b>Starting a Business (rank)</b>	26	40	25	27	36	11	22	85	New Zealand (1)
<b>Starting a Business (DTF Score)</b>	93.25	91.13	93.40	93.10	92.12	96.22	94.03	85.79	New Zealand (99.96)
<b>Procedures (number)</b>	4.0	5.0	4.0	3.0	4.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	New Zealand (1.0)*
<b>Time (days)</b>	4.5	6.5	5.5	14.0	12.5	3.5	5.0	30.0	New Zealand (0.5)
<b>Cost (% of income per capita)</b>	1.4	1.5	0.2	1.1	3.6	0.7	0.9	12.9	Slovenia (0.0)
<b>Paid-in min. capital (% of income per capita)</b>	18.6	20.6	14.5	7.0	0.0	0.0	5.0	12.3	112 Economies (0.0)*
<b>Dealing with Construction Permits (rank)</b>	20	20	5	33	47	15	27	137	Hong Kong SAR, China (1)
<b>Dealing with Construction Permits (DTF Score)</b>	84.18	84.13	89.84	81.61	78.38	85.27	83.05	62.97	Hong Kong SAR, China (95.53)

Indicator	Estonia DB2015	Estonia DB2014	Denmark DB2015	Finland DB2015	Latvia DB2015	Lithuania DB2015	Norway DB2015	Poland DB2015	Best performer globally DB2015
Procedures (number)	11.0	11.0	7.0	15.0	12.0	11.0	10.0	19.0	Hong Kong SAR, China (5.0)
Time (days)	103.0	103.0	64.0	64.0	149.0	91.0	122.5	212.0	Singapore (26.0)
Cost (% of warehouse value)	0.3	0.3	2.3	0.8	0.3	0.3	0.6	0.3	Qatar (0.0)*
Getting Electricity (rank)	56	54	14	33	89	105	25	64	Korea, Rep. (1)
Getting Electricity (DTF Score)	80.27	80.19	91.07	85.29	74.58	71.46	87.44	79.19	Korea, Rep. (99.83)
Procedures (number)	4.0	4.0	4.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	4.0	3.0	12 Economies (3.0)*
Time (days)	111.0	111.0	38.0	42.0	108.0	137.0	66.0	161.0	Korea, Rep. (18.0)*
Cost (% of income per capita)	169.2	188.0	114.9	29.7	308.2	45.5	11.9	20.8	Japan (0.0)
Registering Property (rank)	13	12	8	38	32	9	5	39	Georgia (1)
Registering Property (DTF Score)	90.88	90.75	92.61	80.58	81.69	92.39	94.12	80.30	Georgia (99.88)
Procedures (number)	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	5.0	3.0	1.0	6.0	4 Economies (1.0)*
Time (days)	17.5	17.5	4.0	32.0	18.0	2.5	3.0	33.0	3 Economies (1.0)*
Cost (% of property value)	0.4	0.5	0.6	4.0	2.0	0.8	2.5	0.3	4 Economies (0.0)*
Getting Credit (rank)	23	19	23	36	23	23	61	17	New Zealand (1)
Getting Credit (DTF Score)	70.00	70.00	70.00	65.00	70.00	70.00	55.00	75.00	New Zealand (100)
Strength of legal rights index (0-12)	7	7	8	7	9	6	5	7	3 Economies (12)*

Indicator	Estonia DB2015	Estonia DB2014	Denmark DB2015	Finland DB2015	Latvia DB2015	Lithuania DB2015	Norway DB2015	Poland DB2015	Best performer globally DB2015
Depth of credit information index (0-8)	7	7	6	6	5	8	6	8	23 Economies (8)*
Credit registry coverage (% of adults)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	76.8	28.8	0.0	0.0	Portugal (100.0)
Credit bureau coverage (% of adults)	34.2	33.7	7.8	19.6	0.0	97.7	100.0	84.3	23 Economies (100.0)*
Protecting Minority Investors (rank)	56	55	17	76	49	78	12	35	New Zealand (1)
Protecting Minority Investors (DTF Score)	58.33	58.33	67.50	55.83	60.00	55.00	70.00	62.50	New Zealand (81.67)
Extent of conflict of interest regulation index (0-10)	5.7	5.7	6.7	6.0	5.7	6.0	7.0	6.0	Singapore (9.3)*
Extent of shareholder governance index (0-10)	6.0	6.0	6.8	5.2	6.3	5.0	7.0	6.5	France (7.8)*
Strength of minority investor protection index (0-10)	5.8	5.8	6.8	5.6	6.0	5.5	7.0	6.3	New Zealand (8.2)
Paying Taxes (rank)	28	27	12	21	24	44	15	87	United Arab Emirates (1)*
Paying Taxes (DTF Score)	84.93	84.76	91.94	88.36	86.19	81.24	90.80	73.51	United Arab Emirates (99.44)*
Payments (number per year)	7.0	7.0	10.0	8.0	7.0	11.0	4.0	18.0	Hong Kong SAR, China (3.0)*
Time (hours per year)	81.0	81.0	130.0	93.0	193.0	175.0	83.0	286.0	Luxembourg (55.0)
Trading Across Borders (rank)	6	6	7	14	28	21	24	41	Singapore (1)
Trading Across Borders	92.76	92.51	92.23	89.10	85.36	87.21	85.56	81.80	Singapore (96.47)

Indicator	Estonia DB2015	Estonia DB2014	Denmark DB2015	Finland DB2015	Latvia DB2015	Lithuania DB2015	Norway DB2015	Poland DB2015	Best performer globally DB2015
(DTF Score)									
Documents to export (number)	3	3	4	4	5	4	4	5	Ireland (2)*
Time to export (days)	6.0	6.0	6.0	9.0	10.0	10.0	8.0	15.0	5 Economies (6.0)*
Cost to export (US\$ per container)	765.0	765.0	795.0	615.0	600.0	750.0	1,265.0	1,050.0	Timor-Leste (410.0)
Cost to export (deflated US\$ per container)	765.0	803.1	795.0	615.0	600.0	750.0	1,265.0	1,050.0	
Documents to import (number)	4	4	3	5	5	5	5	4	Ireland (2)*
Time to import (days)	5.0	5.0	5.0	7.0	11.0	9.0	7.0	14.0	Singapore (4.0)
Cost to import (US\$ per container)	795.0	795.0	745.0	625.0	801.0	800.0	1,140.0	1,025.0	Singapore (440.0)
Cost to import (deflated US\$ per container)	795.0	834.6	745.0	625.0	801.0	800.0	1,140.0	1,025.0	
Enforcing Contracts (rank)	32	32	34	17	16	14	8	52	Singapore (1)
Enforcing Contracts (DTF Score)	68.91	68.91	68.79	75.58	75.59	75.85	78.41	64.83	Singapore (89.54)
Time (days)	425.0	425.0	410.0	375.0	469.0	300.0	280.0	685.0	Singapore (150.0)
Cost (% of claim)	21.9	21.9	23.3	13.3	23.1	23.6	9.9	19.4	Iceland (9.0)
Procedures (number)	35.0	35.0	35.0	33.0	27.0	31.0	34.0	33.0	Singapore (21.0)*
Resolving Insolvency (rank)	37	35	9	1	40	67	8	32	Finland (1)
Resolving Insolvency (DTF Score)	64.92	64.69	84.59	93.85	63.42	48.47	85.62	69.73	Finland (93.85)

Indicator	Estonia DB2015	Estonia DB2014	Denmark DB2015	Finland DB2015	Latvia DB2015	Lithuania DB2015	Norway DB2015	Poland DB2015	Best performer globally DB2015
Time (years)	3.0		1.0	0.9	1.5	2.3	0.9	3.0	Ireland (0.4)
Cost (% of estate)	9.0	9.0	4.0	3.5	10.0	10.0	1.0	15.0	Norway (1.0)
Outcome (0 as piecemeal sale and 1 as going concern)	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	
Recovery rate (cents on the dollar)	39.3	38.9	87.5	90.2	48.2	43.6	92.3	57.0	Japan (92.9)
Strength of insolvency framework index (0-16)	14.0	14.0	12.0	14.5	12.0	8.0	11.5	12.5	5 Economies (15.0)*

Note: DB2014 rankings shown are not last year's published rankings but comparable rankings for DB2014 that capture the effects of such factors as data corrections and changes to the methodology. Trading across borders deflated and non-deflated values are identical in DB2015 because it is defined as the base year for the deflator. The best performer on time for paying taxes is defined as the lowest time recorded among all economies in the DB2015 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” or “not possible” 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>).

Source: *Doing Business* database.



## 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* measures the ease of starting a business in an economy by recording all procedures officially required or commonly done in practice by an entrepreneur to start up and formally operate an industrial or commercial business—as well as the time and cost required to complete these procedures. It also records the paid-in minimum capital that companies must deposit before registration (or within 3 months). 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, *Doing Business* uses several assumptions about the business and the procedures. It assumes that all information is readily available to the entrepreneur and that there has been no prior contact with officials. It also assumes that the entrepreneur will pay no bribes. And it assumes that the business:

- Is a limited liability company, located in the largest business city and is 100% domestically owned<sup>1</sup>.
- Has between 10 and 50 employees.
- Conducts general commercial or industrial activities.
- Has a start-up capital of 10 times income per capita.
- Has a turnover of at least 100 times income per capita.
- Does not qualify for any special benefits.
- Does not own real estate.

### 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 city<sup>1</sup>

Postregistration (for example, social security registration, company seal)

#### 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

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

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

<sup>1</sup> For the 11 economies with a population of more than 100 million, data for a second city have been added.

## STARTING A BUSINESS

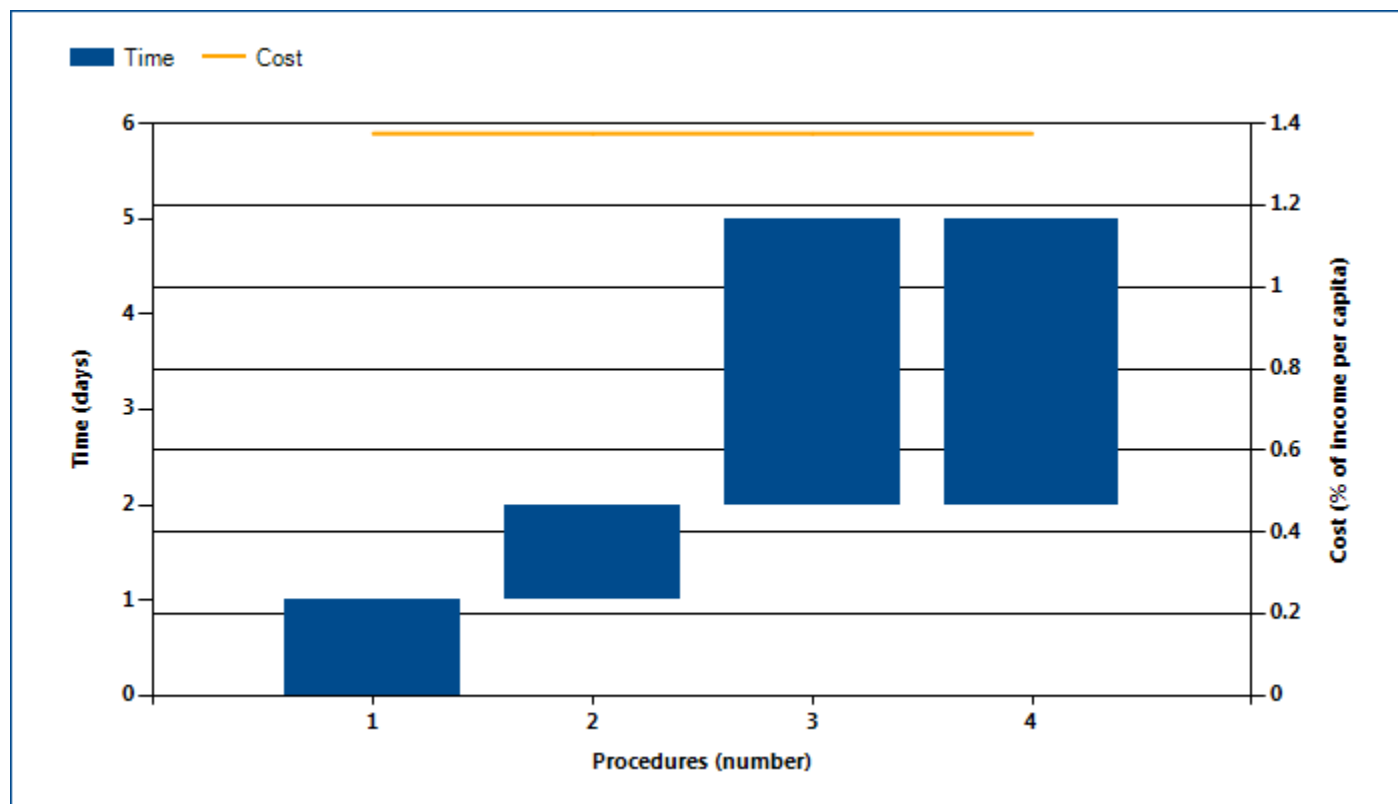
### Where does the economy stand today?

What does it take to start a business in Estonia? According to data collected by *Doing Business*, starting a business there requires 4.0 procedures, takes 4.5 days, costs 1.4% of income per capita and requires paid-in minimum capital of 18.6% of income per capita (figure 2.1). 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 2.1 What it takes to start a business in Estonia -

Paid-in minimum capital (% of income per capita): 18.6



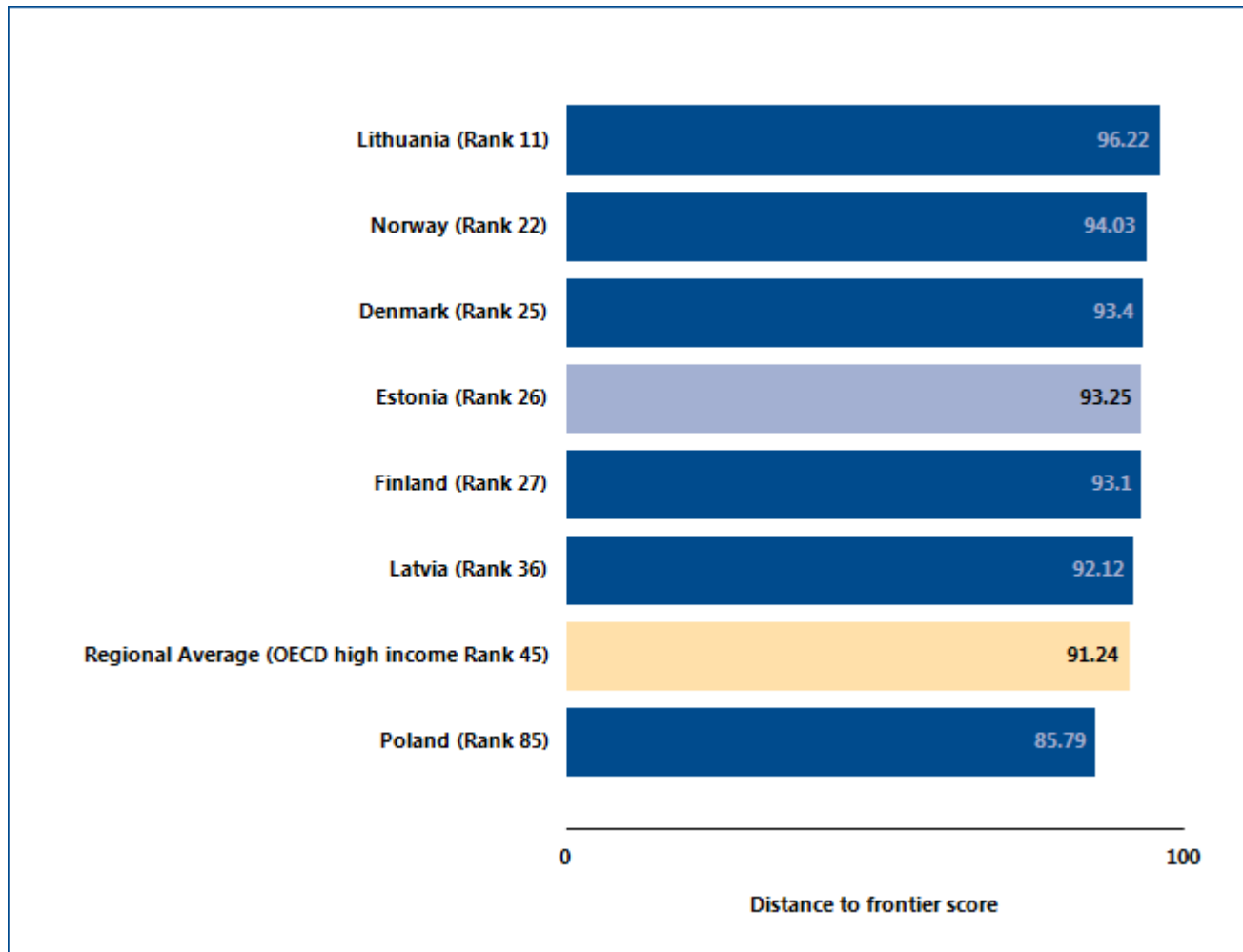
Note: Time shown in the figure above may not reflect simultaneity of procedures. Online procedures account for 0.5 days in the total time calculation. For more information on the methodology of the starting a business indicators, see the *Doing Business* website (<http://www.doingbusiness.org>). For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

### STARTING A BUSINESS

Globally, Estonia stands at 26 in the ranking of 189 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 Estonia to start a business.

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



Source: Doing Business database.

## STARTING A BUSINESS

## What are the details?

Underlying the indicators shown in this chapter for Estonia 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:** Private Limited Company (osaühing or OÜ)

**Paid in minimum capital requirement:** EUR 2,500

**City:** Tallinn

**Start-up Capital:** 10 times GNI per capita

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

No.	Procedure	Time to complete	Cost to complete
1	<p><b>Check the uniqueness of the proposed company name and submit the registration application to the Commercial Register</b></p> <p>The Commercial Register refuses to register a company if the name resembles an existing company name or registered trade mark. The entrepreneur can check proposed names online at <a href="http://www.rik.ee">www.rik.ee</a>. The law provides that the company business name shall be clearly distinguishable.</p> <p><i>Agency: Commercial Registry</i></p>	Less than one day (online procedure)	EUR 140.60 regular registration or EUR 185.34 expedited registration
2	<p><b>Deposit the initial capital in a bank</b></p> <p>If the share capital is higher than EUR 25,000 the entrepreneur needs to deposit it in a bank. However, if the decided share capital is not over EUR 25,000, it can be established at the memorandum of association that the shareholders are not obliged to make pre-payments for the shares.</p> <p>In that case a shareholder does not make a payment for the share, it will be personally liable to the company in the amount of his/her unpaid share contribution. As of October 2011, 61% of the companies were founded without making pre-payments.</p> <p><i>Agency: Commercial Bank</i></p>	1 day	no charge

No.	Procedure	Time to complete	Cost to complete
3	<p><b>Register for VAT at the Estonian National Tax Board</b></p> <p>The company must register itself as VAT payer if the taxable turnover of the company, excluding imports of goods, exceeds EUR 16,000, as calculated from the beginning of the calendar year.</p> <p>The company's management board must file an application for company registration, making the company liable for VAT with the Tax and Customs Board, within 3 days as of the date on which the taxable turnover of the company. Registration shall be completed by the Tax and Customs Board within 3 days of filing the application. Registration may be (and in the practice, often is) affected immediately after establishment.</p> <p>Starting January 1, 2009 the application for registration of the company as a taxable person can also be submitted electronically via the electronic system of the Commercial Register.</p> <p><i>Agency: Estonian National Tax and Customs Board</i></p>	3 days	no charge
4	<p><b>* Register with the Central Sick Fund of Estonia</b></p> <p>In Estonia, health insurance is provided through a compulsory scheme under which employers are obliged by law to pay social tax (the source of revenue for health insurance) for their employees. The employer is obliged to register all new employees, contractual workers and board members with the Health Insurance Fund within 7 days from their recruitment date.</p> <p>Health insurance is provided through a compulsory scheme under which employers are obliged by law to pay social tax of 33% of the taxable amount by the 10th day of the month following the taxable period. By the same date, the employer must also submit the corresponding tax declaration to the Tax and Customs Board.</p> <p><i>Agency: Central Sick Fund of Estonia</i></p>	Less than one day (online procedure, simultaneous with previous procedure)	no charge

\* Takes place simultaneously with another procedure.

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

Source: Doing Business database.

## 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 the procedures, time and cost for a business in the construction industry to obtain all the necessary approvals to build a warehouse in the economy's largest business city, connect it to basic utilities and register the warehouse so that it can be used as collateral or transferred to another entity.

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, *Doing Business* uses several assumptions about the business and the warehouse, including the utility connections.

The business:

- Is a limited liability company operating in the construction business and located 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. Is domestically owned and operated.
- Has 60 builders and other employees.

The warehouse:

- Is valued at 50 times income per capita.
- Is a new construction (there was no previous construction on the land).

### 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 the warehouse after its completion (if required for use as collateral or for transfer of the warehouse)

#### Time required to complete each procedure (calendar days)

Does not include time spent gathering information

Each procedure starts on a separate day. Procedures that can be fully completed online are recorded as ½ day.

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

- Will have complete architectural and technical plans prepared by a licensed architect or engineer.
- Will be connected to water and sewerage (sewage system, septic tank or their equivalent). The connection to each utility network will be 150 meters (492 feet) long.
- Will be used for general storage, such as of books or stationery (not for goods requiring special conditions).
- Will take 30 weeks to construct (excluding all delays due to administrative and regulatory requirements).

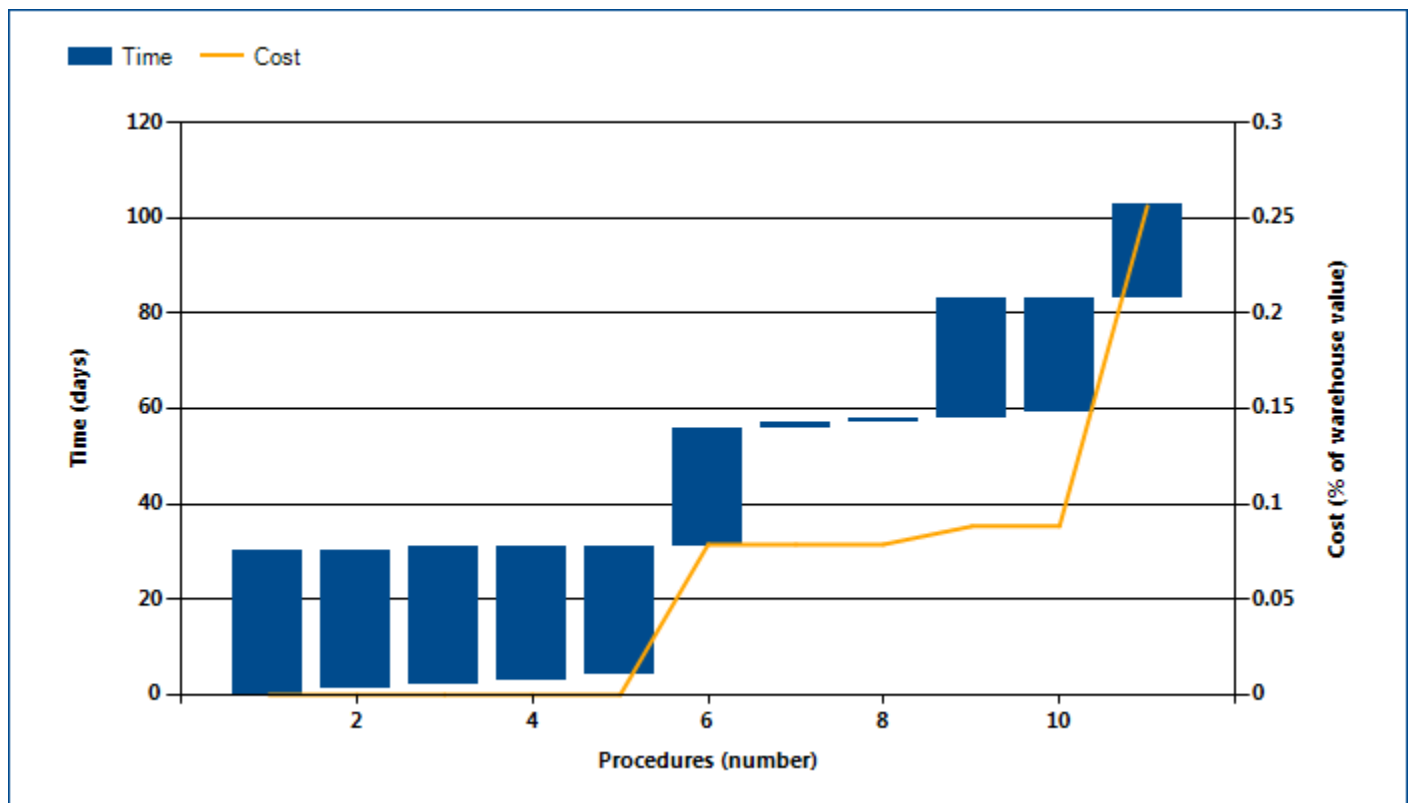
## DEALING WITH CONSTRUCTION PERMITS

### Where does the economy stand today?

What does it take to comply with the formalities to build a warehouse in Estonia? According to data collected by *Doing Business*, dealing with construction permits there requires 11.0 procedures, takes 103.0 days and costs 0.3% 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 Estonia -



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.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

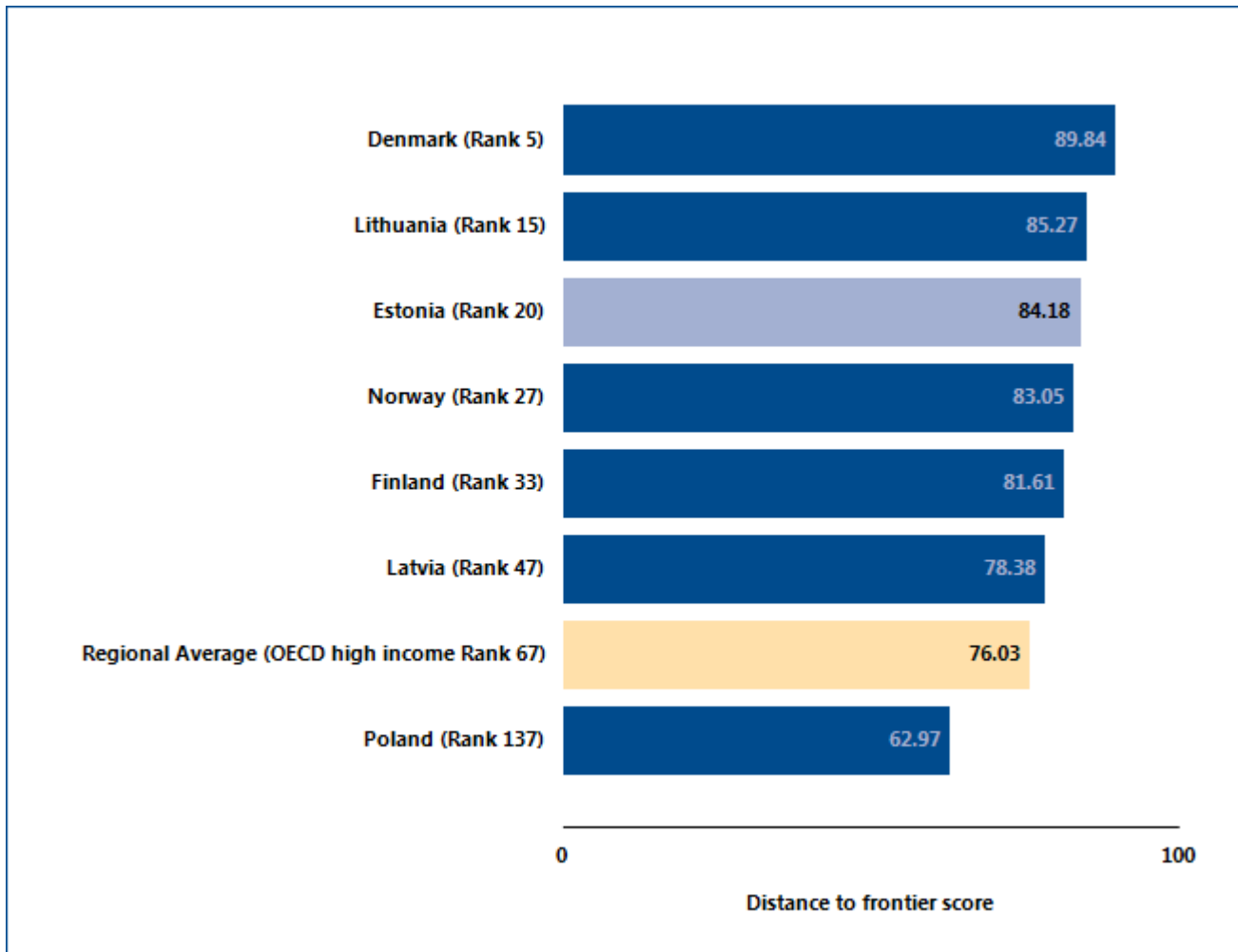


### DEALING WITH CONSTRUCTION PERMITS

Globally, Estonia stands at 20 in the ranking of 189 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 Estonia to legally build a warehouse.

Figure 3.2 How Estonia 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 Estonia (table 3.1)?

Table 3.1 How has Estonia made dealing with construction permits easier—or not?

By *Doing Business* report year from DB2010 to DB2015

DB year	Reform
<b>DB2011</b>	Estonia made dealing with construction permits more complex by increasing the time for obtaining design criteria from the municipality.

*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>.

*Source:* *Doing Business* database.

## DEALING WITH CONSTRUCTION PERMITS

### What are the details?

The indicators reported here for Estonia 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 cost of construction :** EUR 673,296

**City :** Tallinn

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 Estonia -

No.	Procedure	Time to complete	Cost to complete
1	<p><b>Obtain project clearance from Fire Department</b></p> <p>According to the Rescue Act of 2010, obtaining fire safety clearance for the building project from the National Rescue Service Agency or a local government rescue service should take 10 days. However in practice it takes 30 days. If the building project does not conform to the fire safety rules, the Rescue Service can decide to give on average five workdays to eliminate deficiencies.</p> <p><i>Agency: Fire Department</i></p>	30 days	no charge
2	<p><b>* Submit environmental impact assessment</b></p> <p>The Environmental Impact Assessment and Environmental Management System Act does not establish a term for submitting an environmental impact assessment report. The local municipality is the agency that decides whether it is necessary to assess the environmental impact of the project or not (if this is to be decided in the course of applying for a building permit, the matter of assessing the environmental impact of the project is decided in 20 days). The environmental impact of the project will also be assessed if an applicant wishes it to be assessed in the course of drawing up a construction project.</p> <p><i>Agency: Environment Department</i></p>	7 days	no charge
3	<p><b>* Obtain project clearance from Environment Department</b></p> <p>The Environmental Impact Assessment and Environmental Management System Act entered into effect on April 3, 2005, providing legal bases and procedures for assessing likely environmental impact, organization of eco-management and audit schemes, and the legal bases for awarding eco-labels to prevent environmental damage.</p>	29 days	no charge

No.	Procedure	Time to complete	Cost to complete
	<p>The environmental impact shall be assessed upon application for, or application for amendment of, a development consent (a building permit or a permit for the building use), if the proposed activity, which is the basis for the application for, or the amendment of, the development consent, potentially results in significant environmental impact. The impact shall also be assessed if activities are proposed that alone or in conjunction with other activities may potentially significantly affect a Natura 2000 site. A person who proposes an activity and intends to carry it out shall organize an environmental impact assessment and carry all the resulting expenses.</p> <p>It is up to the local municipality to decide whether it is at all necessary to assess the environmental impact of the project. There are two types of grounds for requiring an environmental impact assessment to be carried out. First of all there are instances in which it is obligatory to conduct environmental impact assessment. The hypothetical warehouse project should not qualify under this category. The second category is such that the local municipality is required to consider whether an environmental impact assessment is needed or not and if the local municipality decides that it is necessary, it must give reasons for such a decision. The hypothetical warehouse project might qualify under this category if for example considered to be (a part of) an industrial area development. Besides the fact that it is in hands of municipality to make a decision, there are no clear definitions on what does not exactly fall into category of projects that do not qualify for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). It is likely BuildCo would need to obtain a clearance but not the full scale EIA approval.</p> <p>The Environmental Impact Assessment and Environmental Management System Act established a term of 30 days for issuing a decision to approve the environmental impact assessment report. The time may vary from 30 days to 1 year for actual EIA approval both from Municipality and Environmental Supervisory Authority. It would also include a period of public hearing. However, that we are just getting a project clearance and our case is simple the procedure should be completed within 30 days.</p> <p><i>Agency: Environment Department</i></p>		
4	<p><b>* Obtain project clearance from Health Care Department</b></p> <p>A clearance for the building project from the Health Care Department is not required. However, this authority may be consulted by the local government before granting or refusing the building permit. In practice, the local government may ask the applicant to personally communicate with these authorities. There is no time limit for such communication. Further, the Health Care Department has the right to perform state supervision over compliance with occupational health requirements when the warehouse is put into use.</p> <p><i>Agency: Health Care Department</i></p>	28 days	no charge

No.	Procedure	Time to complete	Cost to complete
5	<p><b>* Obtain project clearance from Labor Inspections Department</b></p> <p>A clearance for the building project from the Labor Inspections Department is not required by law in the stage prior to approval of building permit. However, this authority may be consulted by the local government before granting or refusing the building permit. In practice, the local government may ask the applicant to personally communicate with these authorities. The Labor Inspectorate has the right to perform state supervision over compliance with occupational safety requirements during construction and when the warehouse is put into use. According to Occupational Health and Safety Act, Paragraph 13, the employer is obliged to notify the local department of the Labor Inspectorate in writing or in a format which can be reproduced in writing before commencing activities. Paragraph 26 provides that after receiving the notification, an inspector has the obligation to carry out an inspection. The employee of the Labor Inspectorate must set up the time of inspection with the owner of the building, but in extraordinary situations, the inspector has the right to commence supervision without informing the employer in advance.</p> <p><i>Agency: Labor Inspections Department</i></p>	27 days	no charge
6	<p><b>Obtain building permit</b></p> <p>To obtain a building permit from the Municipality, BuildCo must submit an application for a construction permit and construction design documentation. According to the Building Act, the local government must approve or refuse the issuance of a building permit within 20 days from the date on which the application for the building permit and the building design documentation are submitted. The Municipality conducts internal consultations with various departments and agencies. However in practice, BuildCo is likely to follow up with these authorities.</p> <p>Since June 2009, an energy certificate for the new building must be included in the application. The energy audit is assumed to be conducted by the engineers of the newly built warehouse.</p> <p>Prior to construction, BuildCo must notify the Municipality that construction will begin.</p> <p><i>Agency: Municipality</i></p>	25 days	EUR 531

No.	Procedure	Time to complete	Cost to complete
7	<p><b>Receive on-site inspection by Municipality</b></p> <p>During construction, the Municipality may monitor work to verify compliance with requirements. If the work does not comply, construction will be stopped.</p> <p><i>Agency: Municipality</i></p>	1 day	no charge
8	<p><b>Receive on-site inspection by Estonian Technical Surveillance Authority</b></p> <p>According to the amendment of Building Act from January 1, 2008 Estonian Technical Surveillance Authority may carry out state surveillance on construction sites, in addition to the surveillance exercised by the Municipality. Before the building is being used or in case of an emergency in a building that is already in use, the Estonian Technical Surveillance Authority does not have to inform the owner about the inspection beforehand. In other situations, the owner must be notified at least 24 hours in advance.</p> <p>The number of inspections is not limited by law -- it is up to the discretion of the Technical Surveillance Authority. However it should comply with the principles of good administration practices. The costs of the evaluation services, of the expert assessment of building design documentation and of the evaluation of construction works ordered to verify conformity to the requirements are borne by the Technical Surveillance Authority. If it is established that the construction works or building design documentation does not conform to the requirements established, the owner of the construction works has to compensate the Technical Surveillance Authority for the costs of the evaluation services ordered to verify conformity to the requirements, including the costs of expert assessment or evaluation.</p> <p><i>Agency: Technical Surveillance Authority</i></p>	1 day	no charge
9	<p><b>Apply for permit of use and request final inspection from Municipality</b></p> <p>The local municipality has discretion as to which agencies can be engaged in the inspection before the permit to use the building is issued. According to the law, the local municipality must issue a permit to use the building (or issue a refusal to not use the building) within 20 days from the date on which the last document necessary for the issue of the permit is submitted. However, in practice it takes longer. BuildCo would have the right to file an action to the administrative court in case the 20-day limit is not respected. In practice though few companies file lawsuits against the authorities.</p> <p><i>Agency: Municipality</i></p>	25 days	EUR 64

No.	Procedure	Time to complete	Cost to complete
10	<p><b>* Receive final inspection from Municipality and obtain permit of use</b></p> <p>The date and the time of the final inspection is agreed between the builder and the municipal authority. The permit for use is not issued before the final inspection is carried out.</p> <p><i>Agency: Municipality</i></p>	1 day	no charge
11	<p><b>Obtain water and sewerage connection</b></p> <p><i>Agency: AS Tallina Vesi</i></p>	20 days	EUR 1,131

\* Takes place simultaneously with another procedure.

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

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. 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.

The warehouse:

- Is owned by a local entrepreneur, located in the economy's largest business city, in an area where other warehouses are located. For the 11 economies with a population of more than 100 million, data for a second city have been added.
- Is not in a special economic zone where the connection would be eligible for subsidization or faster service.
- Is located in an area with no physical constraints (ie. property not near a railway).
- Is a new construction being connected to electricity for the first time.
- Is 2 stories, both above ground, with a total surface of about 1,300.6 square meters (14,000 square feet), is built on a plot of 929 square meters (10,000 square feet), is used for storage of refrigerated goods

The electricity connection:

- Is 150 meters long and is a 3-phase, 4-wire Y, 140-kilovolt-ampere (kVA) (subscribed capacity) connection.

### 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
- Is to either the low-voltage or the medium-voltage distribution network and either overhead or underground, whichever is more common in the area where the warehouse is located. Included only negligible length in the customer's private domain.
- Requires crossing of a 10-meter road but all the works are carried out in a public land, so there is no crossing into other people's private property.
- Involves installing one electricity meter. The monthly electricity consumption will be 26880 kilowatt hour (kWh). The internal electrical wiring has been completed.

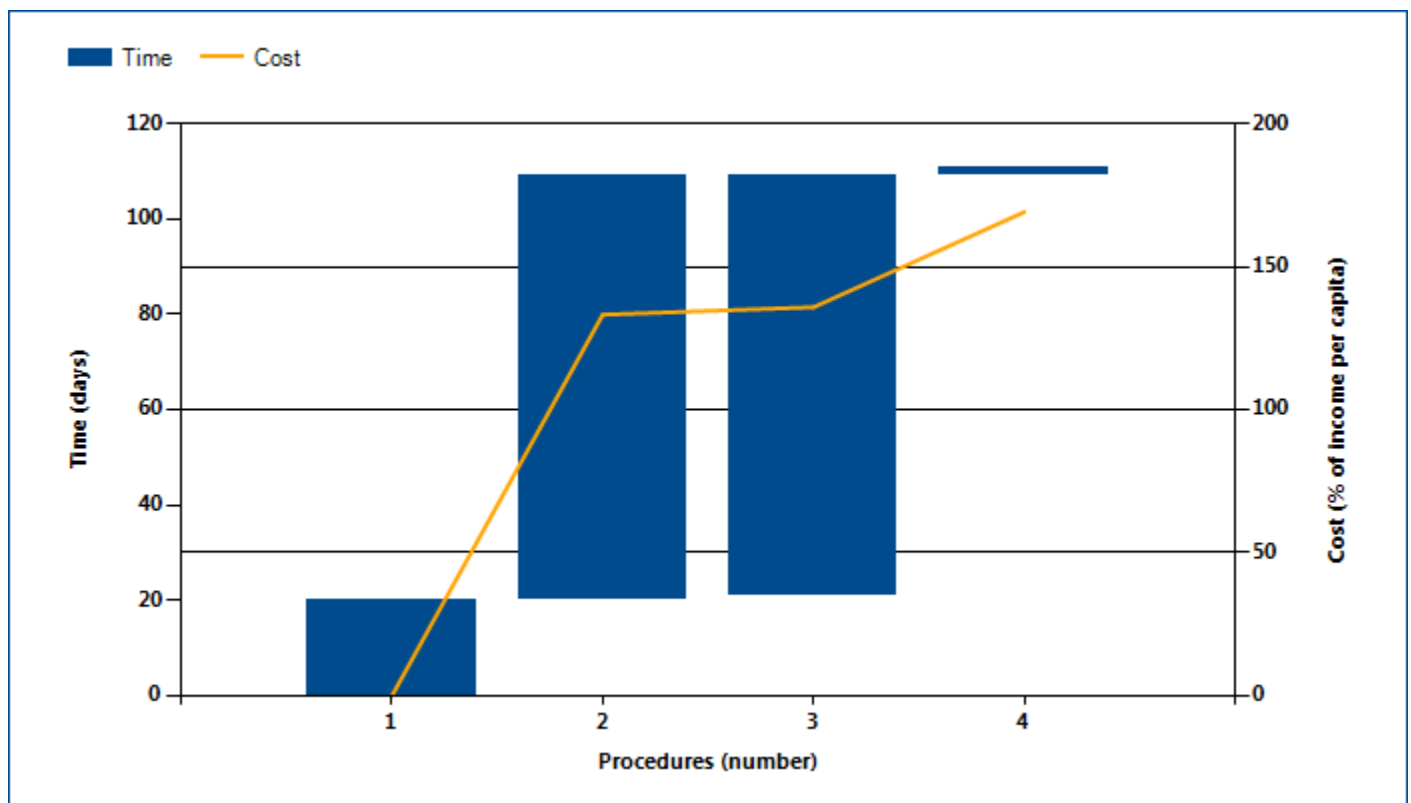
## GETTING ELECTRICITY

### Where does the economy stand today?

What does it take to obtain a new electricity connection in Estonia? According to data collected by *Doing Business*, getting electricity there requires 4.0 procedures, takes 111.0 days and costs 169.2% 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 Estonia -



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.

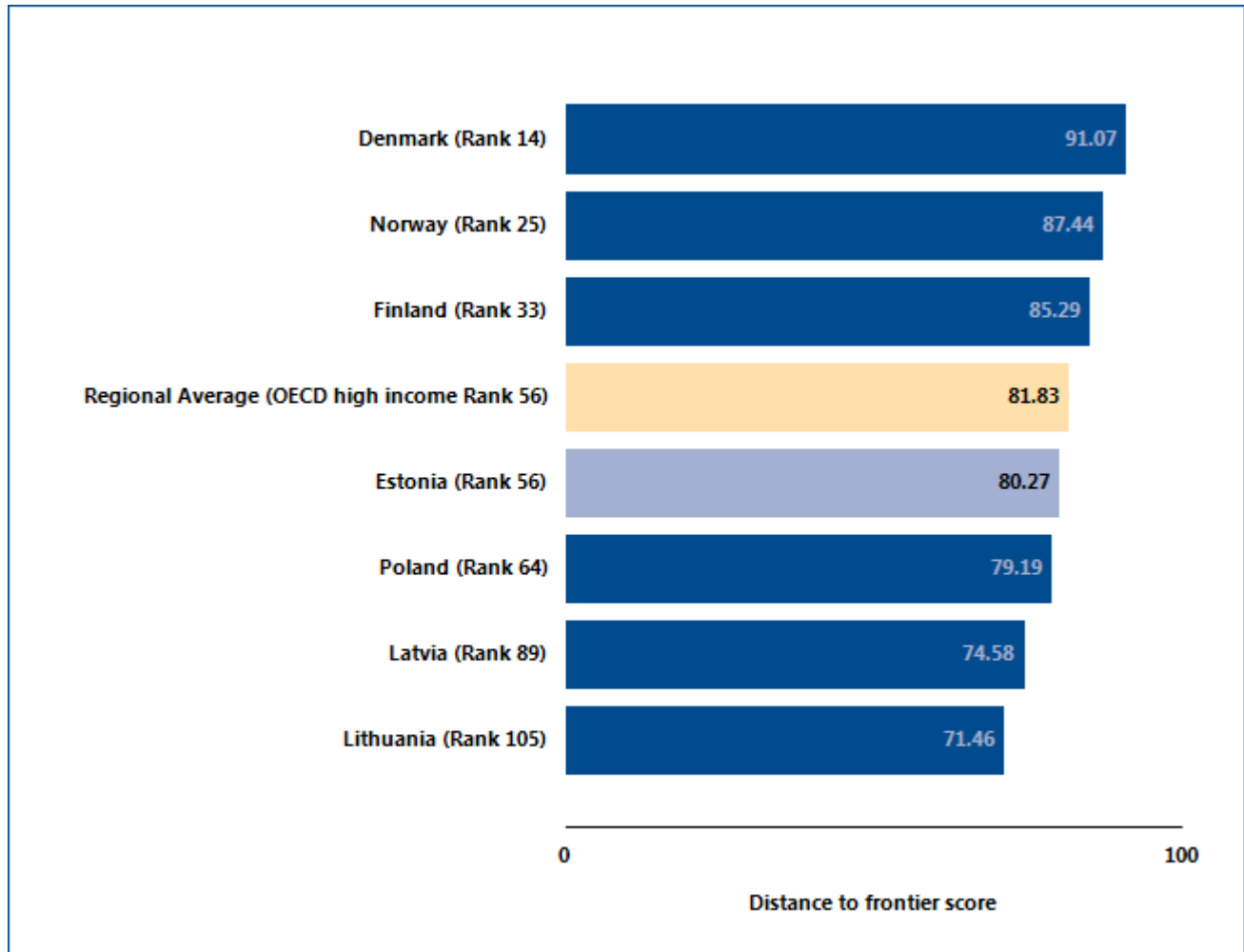
Source: *Doing Business* database.

### GETTING ELECTRICITY

Globally, Estonia stands at 56 in the ranking of 189 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 Estonia to connect a warehouse to electricity.

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



Source: Doing Business database.

## GETTING ELECTRICITY

### What are the details?

The indicators reported here for Estonia 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.

#### OBTAINING AN ELECTRICITY CONNECTION

**Name of utility:** Elektrilevi OÜ

**City:** Tallinn

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.

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

No.	Procedure	Time to complete	Cost to complete
1	<p><b>Submit an application to Elektrilevi OÜ for an electricity connection and await an estimate and technical conditions</b></p> <p>After determining the fuse size and the location of the subscription shield the customer submits an application for a connection.</p> <p>The application can be sent by e-mail. After submitting the application, a technical solution based on the data in the application will be presented to the customer by Elektrilevi OÜ. A contract offer is issued together with the technical conditions. There is an external inspection during this time period by Elektrilevi OÜ but no one from the applicant's party is required to be present during the inspection.</p> <p><i>Agency: Elektrilevi OÜ</i></p>	20 calendar days	EUR 0
2	<p><b>Await completion of the external connection works by Elektrilevi OÜ</b></p> <p>Once the estimate is received the connection agreement together with the supply contract can be concluded at the customer service centre. After the conclusion of the contract, an invoice for making the first installment payment is sent.</p> <p>Once the fee is received, the necessary works for the connection are carried out by Elektrilevi OÜ. Elektrilevi OÜ is in charge of the connection works beyond the metering point up to its network and an electrical contractor is in charge of the works from the metering point up to the building and internal wiring.</p>	89 calendar days	EUR 17,951.13

No.	Procedure	Time to complete	Cost to complete
	<i>Agency: Elektrilevi OÜ</i>		
3	<p><b>* An independent electric inspector (Tehnokontrollikeskus) conducts an internal wiring inspection and submits the inspection report to Elektrilevi OÜ</b></p> <p>Once the internal wiring is finished, measurements required by the Electrical Safety Act are ordered and a check of compliance is requested from an independent electrical inspector with a special permit for internal wiring inspections. The inspector has to prepare protocols on the inspection and issue a certificate of conformity. If the internal wiring is in order and conforms to the requirements, a notice on the conformity is submitted to the customer service centre or sent by post to Elektrilevi OÜ. The excavation permit is obtained by the utility at the local authority which takes about 1 month.</p> <p><i>Agency: Internal wiring inspector</i></p>	3 calendar days	EUR 350
4	<p><b>Await a notification from Elektrilevi OÜ on the completion of the works, sign a supply agreement and the final connection</b></p> <p>After the completion of the external connection works the customer will be notified of their completion and presented an invoice for payment of the second part of the connection fee, which the customer will be asked to pay within 14 days. When the connection fee is paid, the customer can conclude a network and electricity (supply) contract. Supply contract can be concluded with any supplier of electricity operating in Estonia's competitive market. Once the supply and the connection contracts are signed and the internal wiring tests are completed, the building will be connected to the power supply network.</p> <p><i>Agency: Elektrilevi OÜ</i></p>	2 calendar days	EUR 4,487.78

\* Takes place simultaneously with another procedure.

Source: Doing Business database.

## 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. 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.
- Are located in the economy's largest business city<sup>2</sup>.
- 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.
- Is registered in the land registry or cadastral, or both, and is free of title disputes.
- Property will be transferred in its entirety.

### 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<sup>2</sup>

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. Procedures that can be fully completed online are recorded as ½ day.

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

- Is located in a periurban commercial zone, and no rezoning is required.
- 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.

<sup>2</sup> For the 11 economies with a population of more than 100 million, data for a second city have been added.

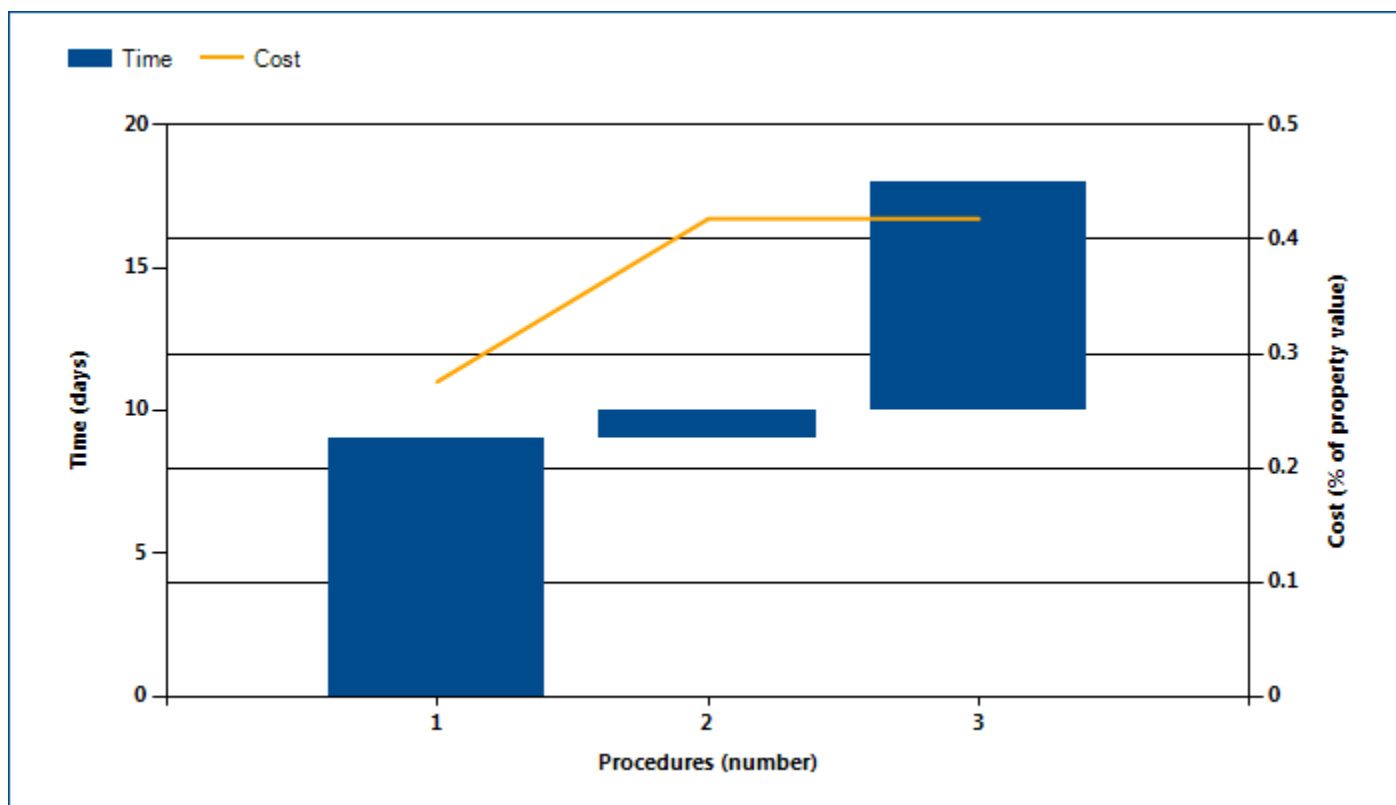
## REGISTERING PROPERTY

### Where does the economy stand today?

What does it take to complete a property transfer in Estonia? According to data collected by *Doing Business*, registering property there requires 3.0 procedures, takes 17.5 days and costs 0.4% of the property value (figure 5.1).

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 5.1 What it takes to register property in Estonia -



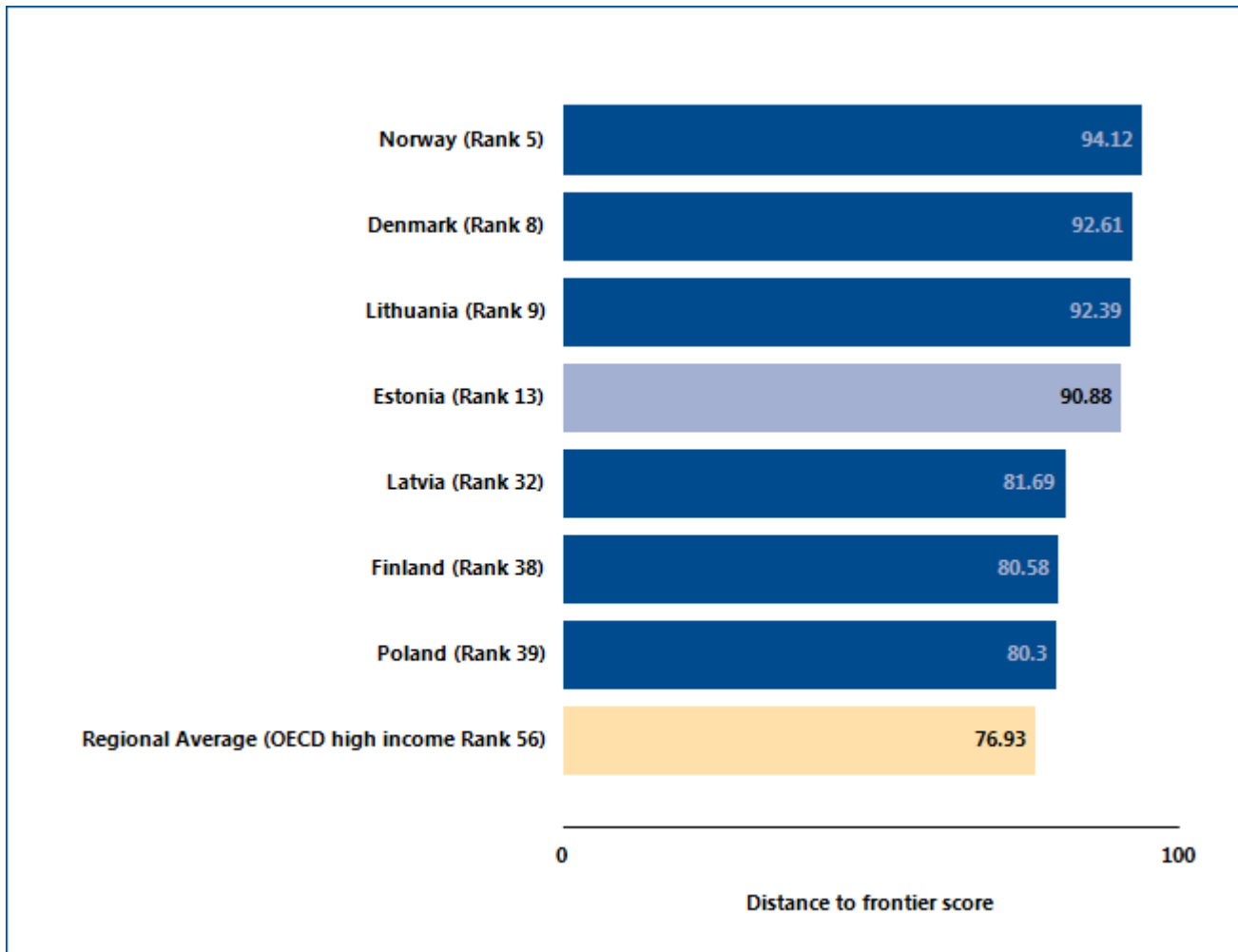
*Note:* Time shown in the figure above may not reflect simultaneity of procedures. Online procedures account for 0.5 days in the total time calculation. For more information on the methodology of the registering property indicators, see the *Doing Business* website (<http://www.doingbusiness.org>). For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

### REGISTERING PROPERTY

Globally, Estonia stands at 13 in the ranking of 189 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 Estonia to transfer property.

Figure 5.2 How Estonia 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 Estonia (table 5.1)?

Table 5.1 How has Estonia made registering property easier—or not?

By *Doing Business* report year from DB2010 to DB2015

DB year	Reform
<b>DB2010</b>	Estonia made registering property easier by computerizing property records at the land registry and thereby enabling notaries to carry out the process online.

*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>.

*Source:* *Doing Business* database.

## 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).

STANDARD PROPERTY TRANSFER	
Property value:	EUR 673,296
City:	Tallinn

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

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

No.	Procedure	Time to complete	Cost to complete
1	<p><b>A notary prepares the Sale-purchase Agreement &amp; the Agreement on Transfer of the Ownership of the Real Estate, and the parties sign it at the notary’s office</b></p> <p>Pursuant to Estonian law, it is mandatory that all transactions related to the transfer of real estate are notarized by a notary public. The parties may prepare the sale and purchase agreement in accordance with the laws of the Republic of Estonia. However, the notary will review it and if the agreement is not in accordance with the law, then the notary will amend the agreement or ask parties of the agreement to modify the agreement in accordance with the law, since the notary is financially liable for any potential mistakes or law violations. Copies of all documents related to the agreement (transaction data, power of attorneys, documents concerning acquisition of the property, copies of identity documents, etc) shall be delivered to the notary’s office 3-4 days before the conclusion of the agreement. All originals shall be submitted to the notary on the day of the conclusion of the agreement. In case a document has not been issued in the Republic of Estonia, the document shall be certified by an apostille or legalized and translated into Estonian prior to the conclusion of the agreement. Since 2007 notaries use the E-Notary program which facilitates the preparation of notarial deeds. E-Notary offers contract templates and necessary data about parties to and object of a transaction come from different registers. By entering personal identification code or the name of a person into the box of details of the party, E-Notary finds the respective individual and completes, based on the data of the Population Register, the rest of the blank boxes - name etc. Upon the entry of registered immovable number, E-Notary finds and displays, based on the data of the electronic Land Register, other data related to the registered immovable – address, area etc. Once the contract is signed, the notary makes digital copy of the contract and the contract is thereof forwarded electronically to the Land Register.</p>	3-15 days	<p>Notary fee according to the Notary Fees Act (Part 3 Article 22) for a property transaction up to EUR 613,560 is notary fee EUR 927.35. As this case is a bilateral transaction, therefore a notary fee for certifying a transaction shall be the double full fee, i.e. EUR 1,854.70. VAT is 20%.</p>

No.	Procedure	Time to complete	Cost to complete
	<i>Agency: Notary</i>		
2	<p><b>Payment of the state fee (stamp duty) at a commercial bank</b></p> <p>The state fee for making the changes in the Land Register must be paid prior to applying for registration.</p> <p><i>Agency: Commercial Bank</i></p>	Less than a day (online procedure)	State fee for a property transaction of 606,234 EUR is 958,67 EUR. (Appendix 2, State Fees Act of January 1, 2011)
3	<p><b>A notarized application is filed to the Land Register and corresponding entries are made to the Land Register</b></p> <p>The notarized application to the Land Register is filed to transfer the ownership of the real estate to the buyer in the Land Register Book. As of June 1, 2007, this application can be filed online through the "e-notary" system which allows the notary to submit the application electronically without using any paper application. Computerization of property records at the Land Registry have been ongoing for a few years has finally been completed at the end of 2008. Land Register shall publish a register notice regarding a Real Estate, which has not yet been entered in the Land Register only before opening a register part for an immovable in the register. The notice is published in the official publication <i>Ametlikud Teadaanded</i> and, if necessary, in any other manner available to the persons concerned. In case the Real Estate is already registered in the Land Register (as in this case), no publication is necessary. The documentation shall include: (i) Notarized Sale Purchase Agreement and Agreement of the Transfer of the Ownership of Real Estate (obtained in Procedure 1). (ii) Receipt of payment of state fee (obtained in Procedure 2)</p> <p><i>Agency: Land Register</i></p>	8 days	Already paid in Procedure 2

\* Takes place simultaneously with another procedure.

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

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' rights to view a potential borrower's financial history (positive or negative)—valuable information to consider when assessing risk. And they permit borrowers to establish a good credit history that will allow easier 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 2015* report). These scenarios assume that the borrower:

- Is a private 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)<sup>3</sup>

Rights of borrowers and lenders through collateral laws

Protection of secured creditors' rights through bankruptcy laws

#### Depth of credit information index (0–8)<sup>4</sup>

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.

<sup>3</sup> For the legal rights index, 2 new points are added in *Doing Business 2015* for new data collected to assess the overall legal framework for secured transactions and the functioning of the collateral registry.

<sup>4</sup> For the credit information index, 2 new points are added in *Doing Business 2015* for new data collected on accessing borrowers' credit information online and availability of credit scores.

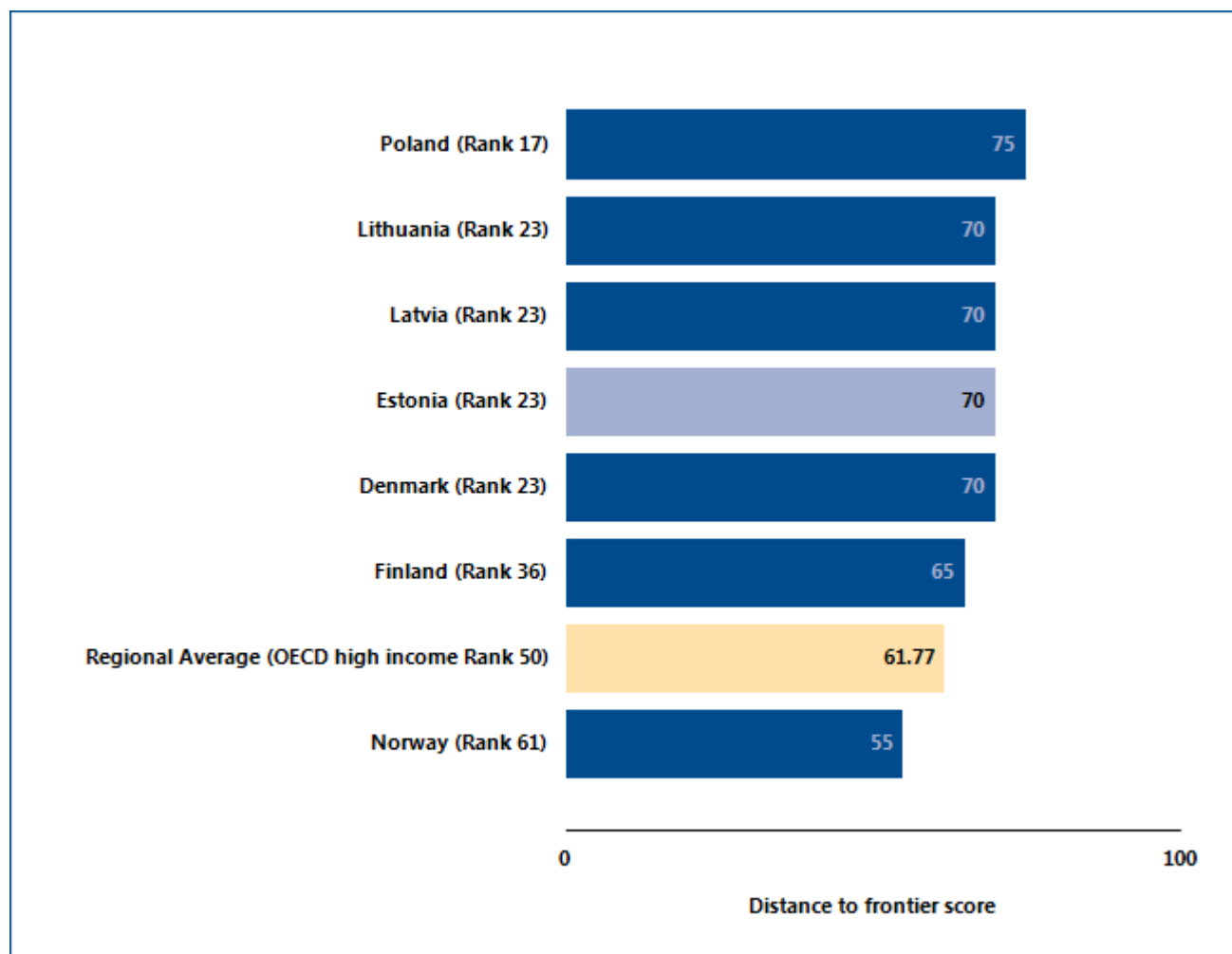
## GETTING CREDIT

### Where does the economy stand today?

How well do the credit information system and collateral and bankruptcy laws in Estonia facilitate access to credit? The economy has a score of 7 on the depth of credit information index and a score of 7 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, Estonia stands at 23 in the ranking of 189 economies on the ease of getting credit (figure 6.1). The rankings for comparator economies and the regional average ranking provide other useful information for assessing how well regulations and institutions in Estonia support lending and borrowing.

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



Source: Doing Business database.

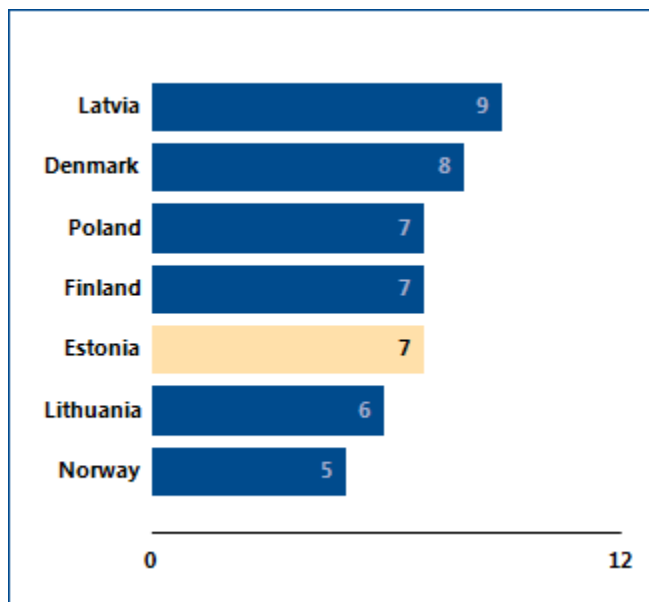
### GETTING CREDIT

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 Estonia 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?

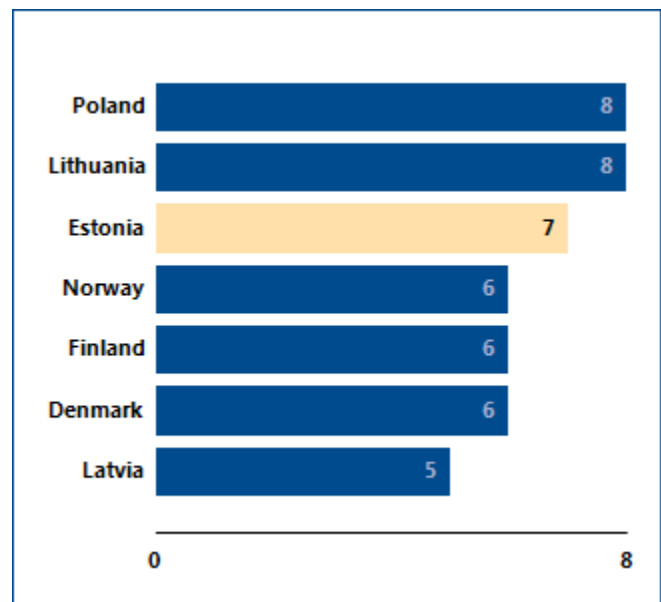
Economy scores on strength of legal rights index



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

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

Economy scores on depth of credit information index



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.  
Source: Doing Business database.

## 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 Estonia (table 6.1)?

Table 6.1 How has Estonia made getting credit easier—or not?  
By *Doing Business* report year from DB2010 to DB2015

DB year	Reform
<b>DB2011</b>	Estonia improved access to credit by amending the Code of Enforcement Procedure and allowing out-of-court enforcement of collateral by secured creditors.

*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>.

*Source:* *Doing Business* database.

## GETTING CREDIT

### What are the details?

The getting credit indicators reported here for Estonia 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: 7
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?	No
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?	No
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?	Yes
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?	No
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?	Yes
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?	Yes
Does a notice-based collateral registry exist in which all functional equivalents can be registered?	No
Does a modern collateral registry exist in which registrations, amendments, cancellations and searches can be performed online by any interested third party?	Yes
Are secured creditors paid first (i.e. before tax claims and employee claims) when a debtor defaults outside an insolvency procedure?	Yes
Are secured creditors paid first (i.e. before tax claims and employee claims) when a business is liquidated?	Yes
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?	No



Strength of legal rights index (0–12)	Index score: 7
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?	Yes

Depth of credit information index (0–8)	Credit bureau	Credit registry	Index score: 7
Are data on both firms and individuals distributed?	Yes	No	1
Are both positive and negative credit data distributed?	No	No	0
Are data from retailers or utility companies - in addition to data from banks and financial institutions - distributed?	Yes	No	1
Are at least 2 years of historical data distributed? (Credit bureaus and registries that distribute more than 10 years of negative data or erase data on defaults as soon as they are repaid obtain a score of 0 for this component.)	Yes	No	1
Are data on loan amounts below 1% of income per capita distributed?	Yes	No	1
By law, do borrowers have the right to access their data in the credit bureau or credit registry?	Yes	No	1
Can banks and financial institutions access borrowers' credit information online (for example, through an online platform, a system-to-system connection or both)?	Yes	No	1
Are bureau or registry credit scores offered as a value-added service to help banks and financial institutions assess the creditworthiness of borrowers?	Yes	No	1

*Note:* Prior to *Doing Business 2015*, the depth of credit information index covered only the first 6 features listed above. 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 (% of adults)	Credit registry (% of adults)
Number of firms	100,000	0
Number of individuals	200,000	0
Percent of total	34.2	0.0

*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 (or at least 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.

The transaction involves the following details:

- Mr. James, a director and the majority shareholder of the company, proposes that the company purchase used trucks from another company he owns.
- The price is higher than the going price for used trucks, but the transaction goes forward.
- All required approvals are obtained, and all required disclosures made, though the transaction is prejudicial to Buyer.
- Shareholders sue the interested parties and the members of the board of directors.

### 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)

Sum of the extent of disclosure, extent of director liability and ease of shareholder indices, divided by 3

#### Extent of shareholder rights index (0-10.5)

Shareholders' rights and role in major corporate decisions

#### Strength of governance structure index (0-10.5)

Governance safeguards protecting shareholders from undue board control and entrenchment

#### Extent of corporate transparency index (0-9)

Corporate transparency on ownership stakes, compensation, audits and financial prospects

#### Extent of shareholder governance index (0–10)

Sum of the extent of shareholders rights, strength of governance structure and extent of corporate transparency indices, divided by 3

#### Strength of investor protection index (0–10)

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

## PROTECTING MINORITY INVESTORS

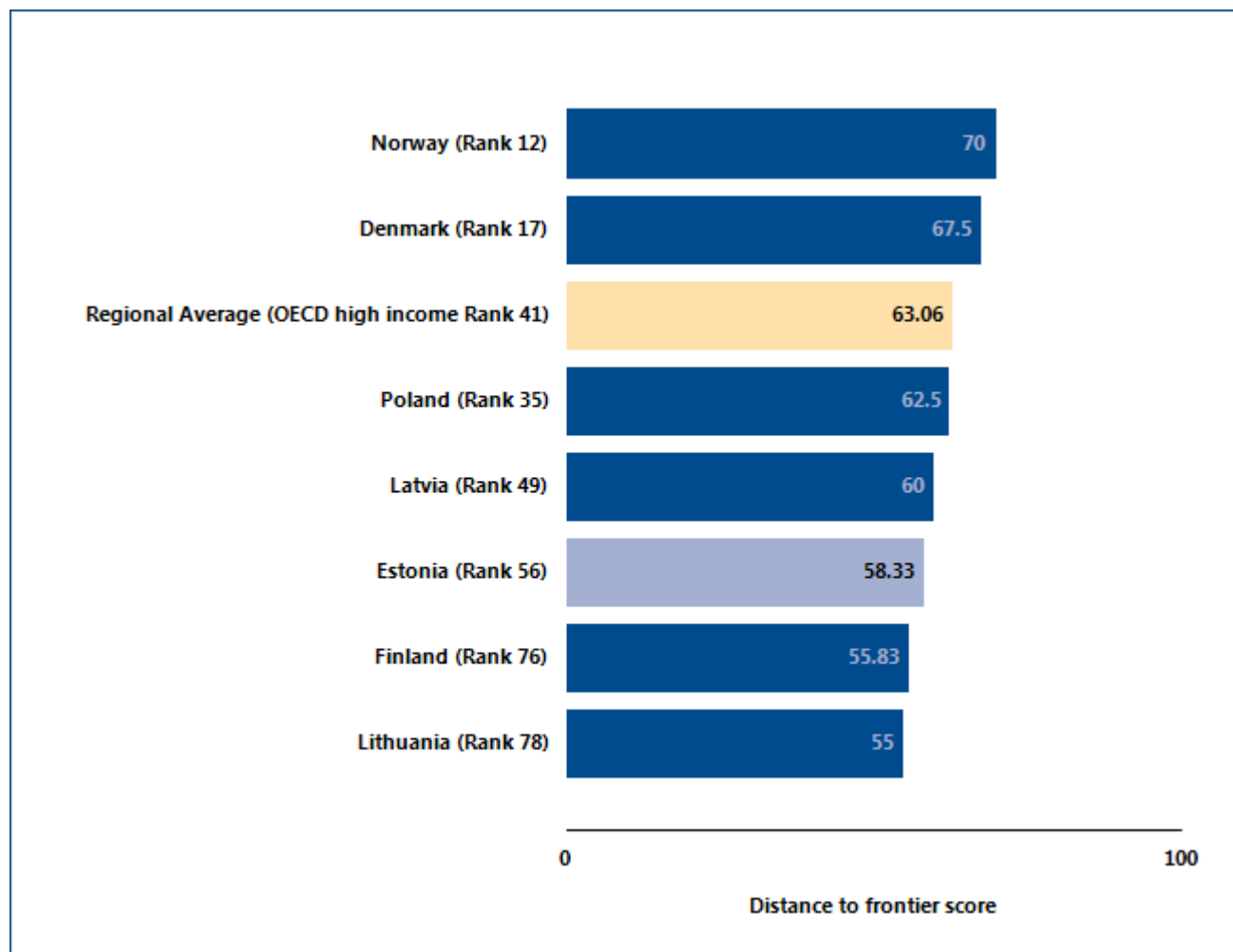
### Where does the economy stand today?

How strong are minority investor protections against self-dealing in Estonia? The economy has a score of 58.33 on the strength of minority investor protection index, with a higher score indicating stronger protections.

Globally, Estonia stands at 56 in the ranking of 189 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 Estonia and comparator economies perform on the strength of minority investor protection index



Source: Doing Business database.

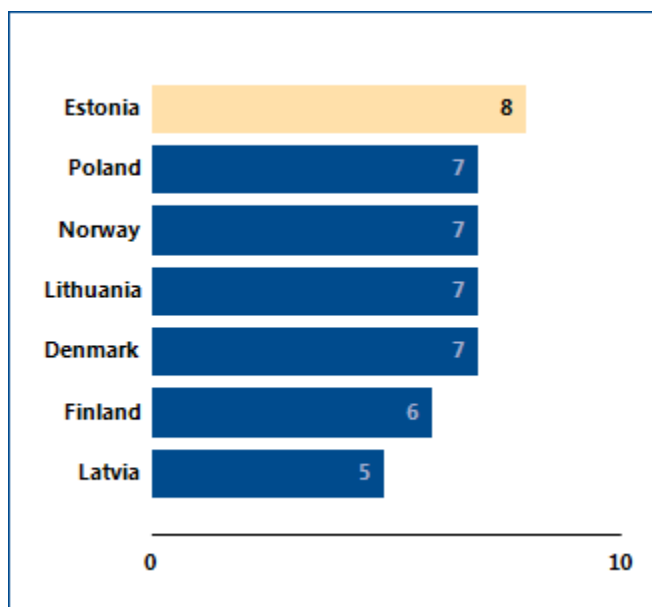
## PROTECTING MINORITY INVESTORS

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. Figures 7.2 through 7.7 highlight the scores on the various minority investor protection

indices for Estonia in 2014. 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 How extensive are disclosure requirements?

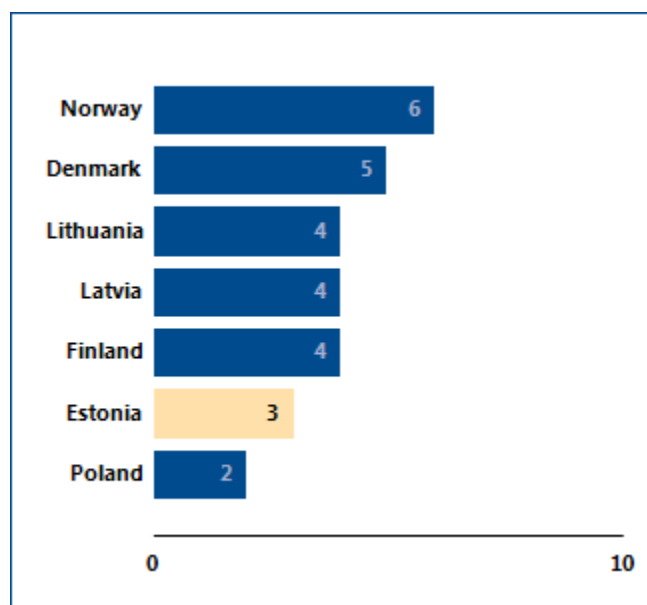
### Extent of disclosure index (0-10)



Note: Higher scores indicate greater disclosure.  
Source: Doing Business database.

Figure 7.3 How extensive is the liability regime for directors?

### Extent of director liability index (0-10)

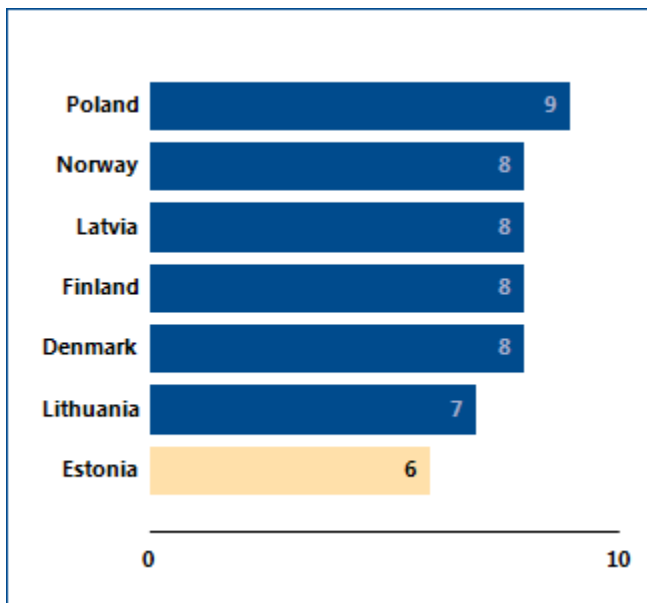


Note: Higher scores indicate greater liability of directors.  
Source: Doing Business database.

## PROTECTING MINORITY INVESTORS

Figure 7.4 How easy is accessing internal corporate documents?

### Ease of shareholder suits index (0-10)



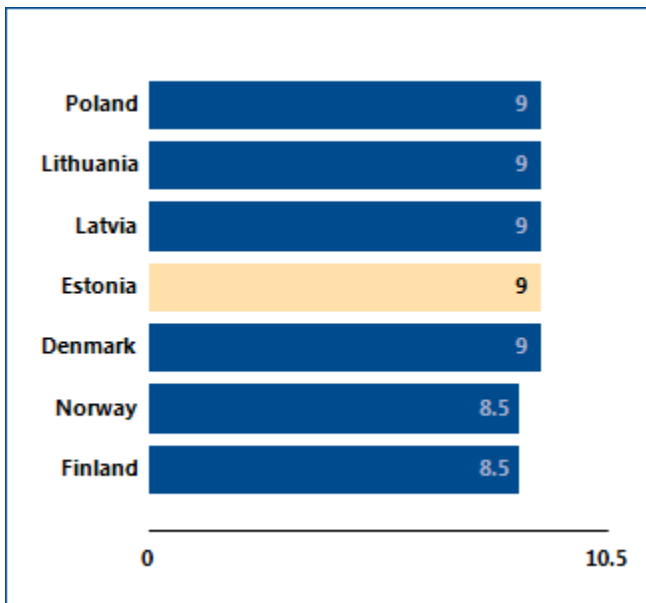
Note: Higher scores indicate greater minority shareholder access to evidence before and during trial.

Source: Doing Business database.

## PROTECTING MINORITY INVESTORS

Figure 7.5 How extensive are shareholder rights?

**Extent of shareholder rights index (0-10.5)**

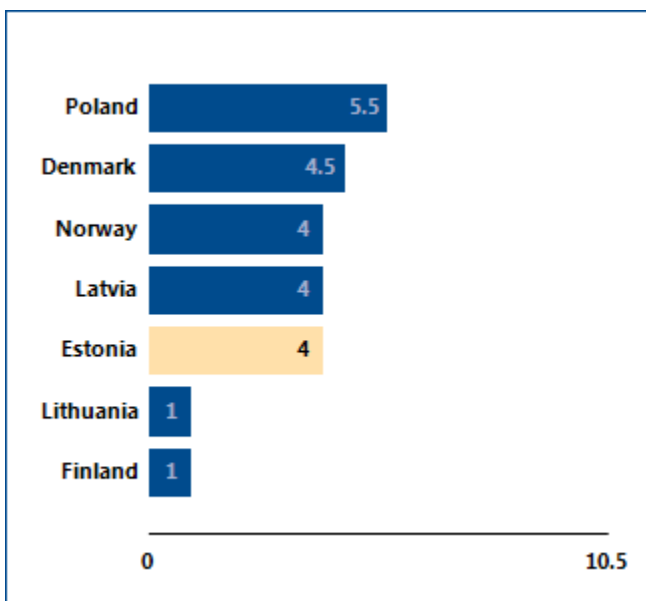


Note: The higher the score, the stronger the protections.

Source: Doing Business database.

Figure 7.6 How strong is the governance structure?

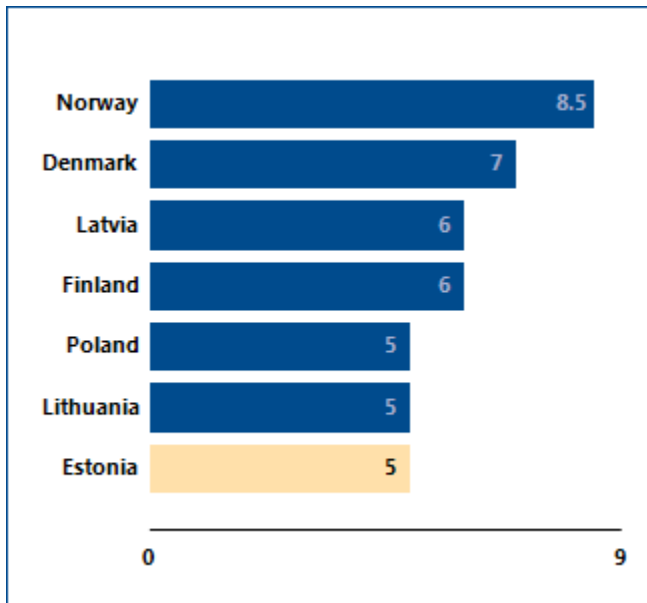
**Strength of governance structure index (0-10.5)**



Note: Higher scores indicate more stringent governance structure requirements.

Source: Doing Business database.

Figure 7.7 How extensive is corporate transparency?

**Extent of corporate transparency index (0-9)**

Note: Higher scores indicate greater transparency.  
Source: Doing Business database.



## PROTECTING MINORITY INVESTORS

### What are the details?

The protecting minority investors indicators reported here for Estonia 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, governance structure and corporate transparency in a standard case study (for more details, see the Data Notes section of the *Doing Business 2015* report). The summary below shows the details underlying the scores for Estonia.

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

	Answer	Score
<b>Extent of disclosure index (0-10)</b>		8.0
Which corporate body can provide legally sufficient approval for the Buyer-Seller transaction? (0-3)	Board of directors excluding interested members	2
Is disclosure by the interested director to the board of directors required? (0-2)	Full disclosure of all material facts	2
Is disclosure of the transaction in published periodic filings (annual reports) required? (0-2)	Disclosure on the transaction and on the conflict of interest	2
Is immediate disclosure of the transaction to the public and/or shareholders required? (0-2)	Disclosure on the transaction and on the conflict of interest	2
Must an external body review the terms of the transaction before it takes place? (0-1)	No	0
<b>Extent of director liability index (0-10)</b>		3.0
Can shareholders sue directly or derivatively for the damage caused by the Buyer-Seller transaction to the company? (0-1)	No	0
Can shareholders hold the interested director liable for the damage caused by the transaction to the company? (0-2)	Liable if negligent	1
Can shareholders hold members of the approving body liable for the damage caused by the transaction to the company? (0-2)	Liable if negligent	1
Must the interested director pay damages for the harm caused to the company upon a successful claim by a shareholder plaintiff? (0-1)	Yes	1
Must the interested director repay profits made from the transaction upon a successful claim by a shareholder plaintiff? (0-1)	No	0
Can both fines and imprisonment be applied against the interested director? (0-1)	No	0
Can a court void the transaction upon a successful claim by a shareholder plaintiff? (0-2)	Only in case of fraud or bad faith	0
<b>Ease of shareholder suits index (0-10)</b>		6.0
Before filing suit, can shareholders owning 10% of the company's share capital inspect the transaction documents? (0-1)	Yes	1
Can the plaintiff obtain any documents from the defendant	No	3

and witnesses during trial? (0-3)		
Can the plaintiff request categories of documents from the defendant without identifying specific ones? (0-1)	No	0
Can the plaintiff directly question the defendant and witnesses during trial? (0-2)	No	0
Is the level of proof required for civil suits lower than that of criminal cases? (0-1)	Yes	1
Can shareholder plaintiffs recover their legal expenses from the company? (0-2)	Yes if successful	1
<b>Strength of minority investor protection index (0-10)</b>		<b>5.8</b>
<b>Extent of conflict of interest regulation index (0-10)</b>		<b>5.7</b>
<b>Extent of shareholder rights index (0-10.5)</b>		<b>9.0</b>
Can shareholders amend company bylaws or statutes with a simple majority?	Yes	1.5
Can shareholders owning 10% of the company's share capital call for an extraordinary meeting of shareholders?	Yes	1.5
Can shareholders remove members of the board of directors before the end of their term.	No	0
Must a company obtain its shareholders' approval every time it issues new shares?	Yes	1.5
Are shareholders automatically granted subscription rights on new shares?	Yes	1.5
Must shareholders approve the election and dismissal of the external auditor?	Yes	1.5
Can shareholders freely trade shares prior to a major corporate action or meeting of shareholders?	Yes	1.5
<b>Strength of governance structure index (0-10.5)</b>		<b>4.0</b>
Is the CEO barred from also serving as chair of the board of directors?	No	0
Must the board of directors include independent board members?	No	0
Must a company have a separate audit committee?	No	0
Must changes to the voting rights of a series or class of shares be approved only by the holders of the affected shares?	Yes	1.5
Must a potential acquirer make a tender offer to all shareholders upon acquiring 50% of a company?	Yes for listed companies	1
Is cross-shareholding between 2 independent companies limited to 10% of outstanding shares?	No	0
Is a subsidiary barred from acquiring shares issued by its parent company?	Yes	1.5
<b>Extent of corporate transparency index (0-9)</b>		<b>5.0</b>
Must ownership stakes representing 10% be disclosed?	Yes for listed companies	1
Must information about board members' other directorships as well as basic information on their primary employment be disclosed?	No	0
Must the compensation of individual managers be disclosed?	No	0
Must financial statements contain explanatory notes on significant accounting policies, trends, risks, uncertainties and other factors influencing the reporting?	Yes	1.5
Must annual financial statements be audited by an external	Yes	1.5

auditor?		
Must audit reports be disclosed to the public?	Yes for listed companies	1
<b>Extent of shareholder governance index (0-10)</b>		<b>6.0</b>

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* measures the taxes and mandatory contributions that a medium-size company must pay in a given year as well as the administrative burden of paying taxes and contributions. 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 as well as time taken to comply with tax laws. 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 component indicators, with a threshold and a nonlinear transformation applied to one of the component indicators, the total tax rate<sup>5</sup>. The financial statement variables have been updated to be proportional to 2012 income per capita; previously they were proportional to 2005 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, 2012.
- The business starts from the same financial position in each economy. All the taxes and mandatory contributions are recorded at all levels of government.

<sup>5</sup> The nonlinear distance to frontier for the total tax rate is equal to the distance to frontier for the total tax rate if the total tax rate is greater than the threshold and is equal to the threshold if the total tax rate is less than the threshold. The threshold is defined as the total tax rate of the 15th percentile of the distribution for all countries included in the analysis. It is calculated and adjusted on a yearly basis. The second year of operation is recorded at the lower end of the distribution of tax rates. A range of standard deductions and exemptions are also recorded. Instead, it is mainly empirical in nature, set at the lower end of the distribution of tax rates. Taxes and mandatory contributions are recorded at all levels of government. 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). This year's threshold is 26.1%.

### WHAT THE PAYING TAXES INDICATORS MEASURE

#### Tax payments for a manufacturing company in 2013 (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

- 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.

## PAYING TAXES

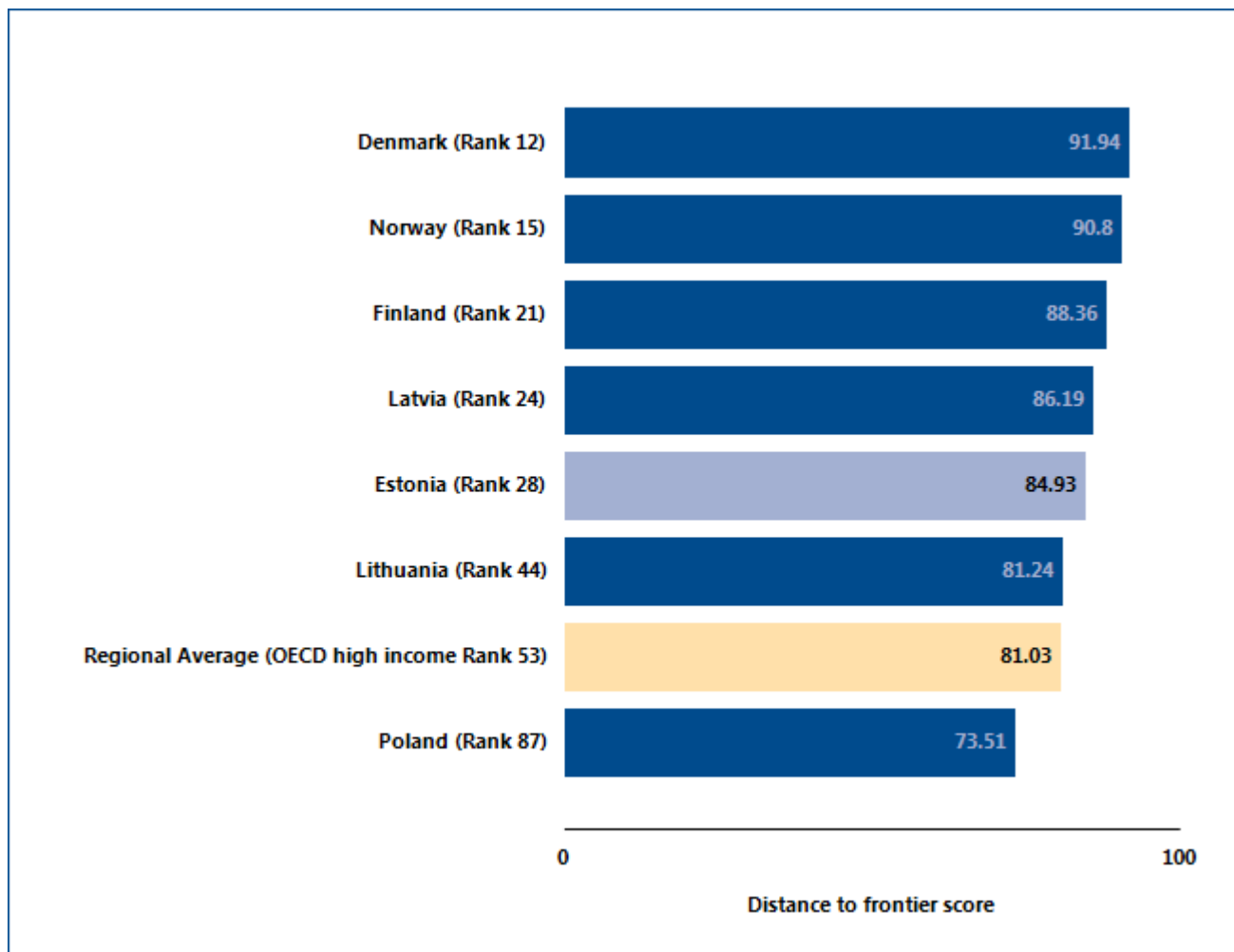
### Where does the economy stand today?

What is the administrative burden of complying with taxes in Estonia—and how much do firms pay in taxes? On average, firms make 7.0 tax payments a year, spend 81.0 hours a year filing, preparing and paying taxes and pay total taxes amounting to 49.3% of profit (see the summary at 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.

Globally, Estonia stands at 28 in the ranking of 189 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 Estonia.

Figure 8.1 How Estonia 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 and easier for businesses—such as by consolidating filings, reducing the frequency of payments or offering electronic filing and payment. 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 Estonia (table 8.1)?

Table 8.1 How has Estonia made paying taxes easier—or not?  
By *Doing Business* report year from DB2010 to DB2015

DB year	Reform
DB2011	Estonia increased the unemployment insurance contribution rate.
DB2012	In Estonia a municipal sales tax introduced in Tallinn made paying taxes costlier for firms, though a later parliamentary measure abolished local sales taxes effective January 1, 2012.

*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>.

*Source:* *Doing Business* database.

## PAYING TAXES

### What are the details?

The indicators reported here for Estonia 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 and how these taxes are filed and paid.

#### LOCATION OF STANDARDIZED COMPANY

**City: Tallinn**

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

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	0	paid jointly	34	33%	gross salaries	37.2	
Dividend tax	1	online filing	20	21/79	distributed dividends	8.4	
Land tax	1		0	2.5%	property value	1.9	
Unemployment insurance contributions	0	paid jointly	0	1%	gross salaries	1	
Fringe benefit tax	0	paid jointly	0	68.35%	fringe benefits	0.8	
Heavy vehicle tax	1		0	EUR 275	fixed fee depending on type of vehicle	0	
Advertising tax	1		0	EUR 0.45 /m <sup>2</sup> / day	fixed fee	0	small amount
Stamp duty	1		0		contract value	0	small amount

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
Fuel tax	1		0		included in price of fuel	0	small amount
Employee paid - Unemployment insurance contributions	0	paid jointly	0	2.8%	gross salaries	0	withheld
Value added tax (VAT)	1	online filing	27	20%	value added	0	not included
Employee paid - Compulsory pension contributions	0	paid jointly	0	2%	gross salaries	0	withheld
Totals	7.0		81.0			49.3	

Source: Doing Business database.

## TRADING ACROSS BORDERS

In today's globalized world, making trade between economies easier is increasingly important for business. Excessive document requirements, burdensome customs procedures, inefficient port operations and inadequate infrastructure all lead to extra costs and delays for exporters and importers, stifling trade potential. Research shows that exporters in developing countries gain more from a 10% drop in their trading costs than from a similar reduction in the tariffs applied to their products in global markets.

### What do the indicators cover?

*Doing Business* measures the time and cost (excluding tariffs and the time and cost for sea transport) associated with exporting and importing a standard shipment of goods by sea transport, and the number of documents necessary to complete the transaction. The indicators cover predefined stages such as documentation requirements and procedures at customs and other regulatory agencies as well as at the port. They also cover trade logistics, including the time and cost of inland transport to the largest business city. 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 each of the component indicators. To make the data comparable across economies, *Doing Business* uses several assumptions about the business and the traded goods.

The business:

- Is located in the economy's largest business city. For the 11 economies with a population of more than 100 million, data for a second city have been added.
- Is a private, limited liability company, domestically owned and does not operate with special export or import privileges.
- Conducts export and import activities, but does not have any special accreditation such as an authorized economic operator status.

### WHAT THE TRADING ACROSS BORDERS INDICATORS MEASURE

#### Documents required to export and import (number)

- Bank documents
- Customs clearance documents
- Port and terminal handling documents
- Transport documents

#### Time required to export and import (days)

- Obtaining, filling out and submitting all the documents
- Inland transport and handling
- Customs clearance and inspections
- Port and terminal handling
- Does not include sea transport time

#### Cost required to export and import (US\$ per container)

- All documentation
- Inland transport and handling
- Customs clearance and inspections
- Port and terminal handling
- Official costs only, no bribes

The traded product:

- Is not hazardous nor includes military items.
- Does not require refrigeration or any other special environment.
- Do not require any special phytosanitary or environmental safety standards other than accepted international standards.
- Is one of the economy's leading export or import products.
- Is transported in a dry-cargo, 20-foot full container load.



## TRADING ACROSS BORDERS

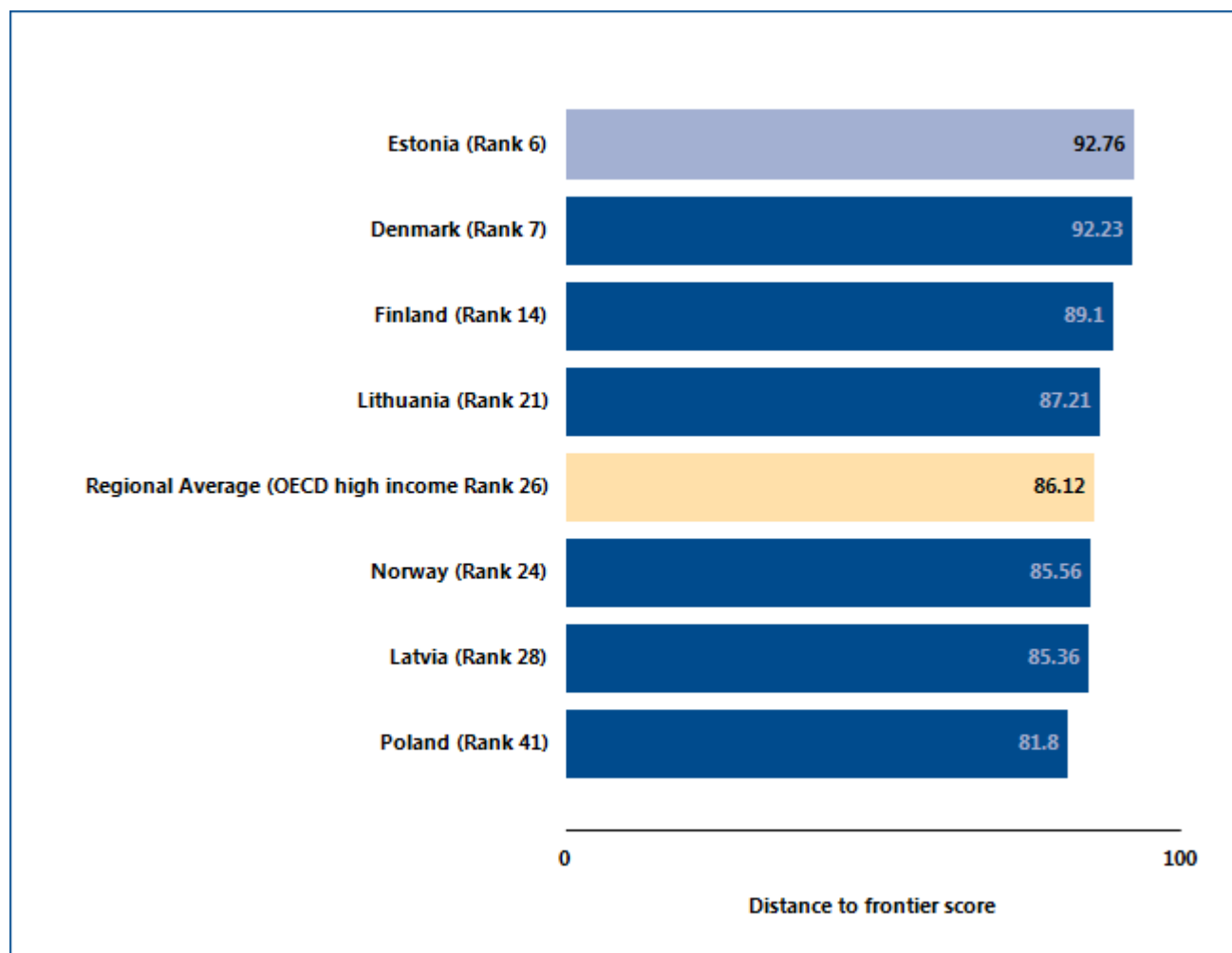
### Where does the economy stand today?

What does it take to export or import in Estonia? According to data collected by *Doing Business*, exporting a standard container of goods requires 3 documents, takes 6.0 days and costs \$765.0. Importing the same container of goods requires 4 documents, takes 5.0 days and costs \$795.0 (see the summary of four predefined stages and documents at 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.

Globally, Estonia stands at 6 in the ranking of 189 economies on the ease of trading across borders (figure 9.1). The rankings for comparator economies and the regional average ranking provide other useful information for assessing how easy it is for a business in Estonia to export and import goods.

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



Source: *Doing Business* database.

## TRADING ACROSS BORDERS

### What are the details?

The indicators reported here for Estonia are based on a set of specific predefined stages for trading a standard shipment of goods by ocean transport (see the section in this chapter on what the indicators cover). Information on the required documents and the time and cost to complete export and import is collected from local freight forwarders, shipping lines, customs brokers, port officials and banks.

#### LOCATION OF STANDARDIZED COMPANY

**Port Name: Tallinn (Muuga)**

**City: Tallinn**

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

Table 9.2 Summary of predefined stages and documents for trading across borders in Estonia

Stages to export	Time (days)	Cost (US\$)
Customs clearance and inspections	1	25
Documents preparation	3	220
Inland transportation and handling	1	240
Ports and terminal handling	1	280
Totals	6	765

Stages to import	Time (days)	Cost (US\$)
Customs clearance and inspections	1	25
Documents preparation	2	200
Inland transportation and handling	1	240
Ports and terminal handling	1	330
Totals	5	795

**Documents to export**

Bill of Lading

Commercial invoice

Customs export declaration

**Documents to import**

Bill of lading

Cargo release order

Commercial invoice

Customs import declaration

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 efficiency of the judicial system in resolving a commercial dispute before local courts. Following the step-by-step evolution of a standardized case study, it collects data relating to the time, cost and procedural complexity of resolving a commercial lawsuit. The ranking on the ease of enforcing contracts is the simple average of the percentile rankings on its component indicators: procedures, time and cost.

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 seller and buyer are located in the economy's largest business city. For the 11 economies with a population of more than 100 million, data for a second city have been added.
- The buyer orders custom-made goods, then fails to pay.
- The seller sues the buyer before a competent court.
- The value of the claim 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

#### Procedures to enforce a contract through the courts (number)

- Steps to file and serve the case
- Steps for trial and judgment
- Steps to enforce the judgment

#### Time required to complete procedures (calendar days)

- Time to file and serve the case
- Time for trial and obtaining judgment
- Time to enforce the judgment

#### Cost required to complete procedures (% of claim)

- Average attorney fees
- Court costs
- Enforcement costs

- 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

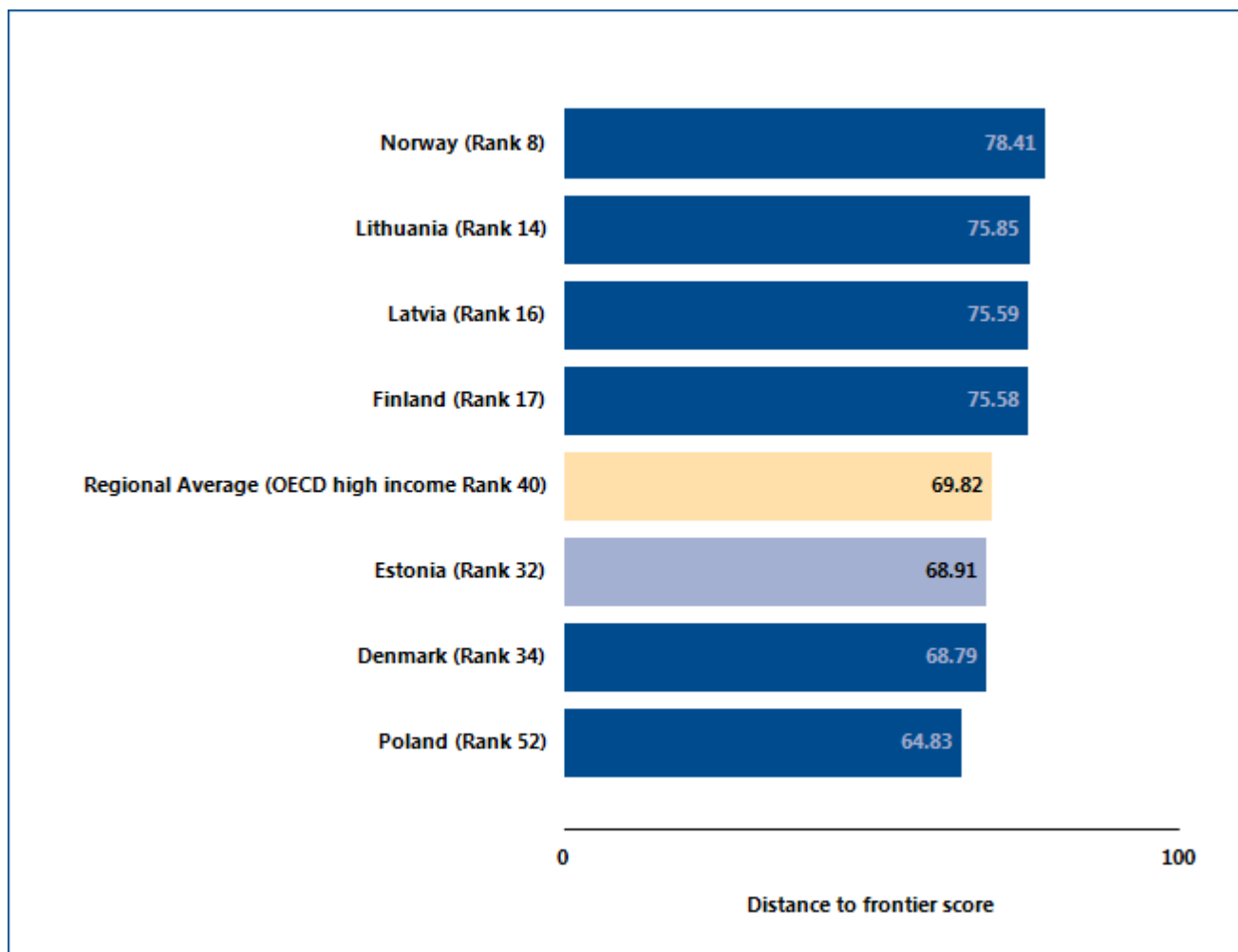
### Where does the economy stand today?

How efficient is the process of resolving a commercial dispute through the courts in Estonia? According to data collected by *Doing Business*, contract enforcement takes 425.0 days, costs 21.9% of the value of the claim and requires 35.0 procedures (see the summary at 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.

Globally, Estonia stands at 32 in the ranking of 189 economies on the ease of enforcing contracts (figure 10.1). The rankings for comparator economies and the regional average ranking provide other useful benchmarks for assessing the efficiency of contract enforcement in Estonia.

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



Source: *Doing Business* database.

## ENFORCING CONTRACTS

Economies in all regions have improved contract enforcement in recent years. A judiciary can be improved in different ways. Higher-income economies tend to look for ways to enhance efficiency by introducing new technology. Lower-income economies often work on

reducing backlogs by introducing periodic reviews to clear inactive cases from the docket and by making procedures faster. What reforms making it easier (or more difficult) to enforce contracts has *Doing Business* recorded in Estonia (table 10.1)?

Table 10.1 How has Estonia made enforcing contracts easier—or not?

By *Doing Business* report year from DB2010 to DB2015

DB year	Reform
DB2014	Estonia made enforcing contracts easier by lowering court fees.

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>.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

## ENFORCING CONTRACTS

### What are the details?

The indicators reported here for Estonia are based on a set of specific procedural steps required to resolve a standardized commercial dispute through the courts (see the section in this chapter on what the indicators cover). These procedures, and the time and cost of completing them, 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).

COURT NAME	
<b>Claim value:</b>	<b>EUR 24,249</b>
<b>Court name:</b>	<b>Harju County Court</b>
<b>City:</b>	<b>Tallinn</b>

Table 10.2 Summary of time, cost and procedures for enforcing a contract in Estonia

Indicator	Estonia	OECD high income average
<b>Time (days)</b>	425	540
Filing and service	30	
Trial and judgment	320	
Enforcement of judgment	75	
<b>Cost (% of claim)</b>	21.9	21.4
Attorney cost (% of claim)	9.0	
Court cost (% of claim)	11.9	
Enforcement Cost (% of claim)	1.0	
<b>Procedures (number)</b>	35	32
Number of procedures (without bonus points)	36	
Electronic filing of court cases	-1	
Total number of procedures (including bonus points)	35	

No.	Procedures
	Filing and service:
1	Plaintiff hires a lawyer: Plaintiff hires a lawyer.
*	Plaintiff files a summons and complaint: Plaintiff files a summons and complaint with the court (orally or in writing).
*	Plaintiff pays court fees: Plaintiff pays court fees (e.g. court duties, stamp duties, or any other type of court fees). Answer 'yes' even if Plaintiff recovers these costs.
2	Registration of court case: Registration of court case by the court administration (this can include assigning a reference number to the case).
*	Assignment of court case to a judge: Assignment of court case to a judge (through a random procedure, automated system, ruling of an administrative judge, court officer, etc).
3	Judicial scrutiny of summons and complaint: Judge examines Plaintiff's summons and complaint for formal requirements as a matter of law or standard practice.
*	Judge admits summons and complaint: Judge admits summons and complaint (after verifying the formal requirements).
4	Delivery of summons and complaint to person authorized to perform service of process on Defendant: The judge or a court officer delivers the summons to a summoning office, officer, or authorized person (including Plaintiff), for service of process on Defendant.
5	Attempt at physical delivery: An attempt to physically deliver summons and complaint to Defendant is made.
*	Application for pre-judgment attachment: Plaintiff submits an application in writing for the attachment of Defendant's property prior to judgment.
*	Decision on pre-judgment attachment: Judge decides whether to grant Plaintiff's request for pre-judgment attachment of Defendant's property and notifies Plaintiff and Defendant of the decision.
6	Guarantees securing attached property: Plaintiff submits guarantees or bonds to secure Defendant against possible damages to attached property.
7	Pre-judgment attachment order: Defendant's property is attached prior to judgment. Attachment order either involves physical attachment, or is achieved by freezing, registering, marking, or otherwise separating and restricting Defendant's movement of specific moveable assets.
8	Custody of assets attached prior to judgment: If physical attachment is ordered, Defendant's attached assets are placed in the custody or control of an enforcement officer or private bailiff.
9	Report on pre-judgment attachment: Court enforcement officer or private bailiff issues and delivers a report on the attachment of Defendant's property to the judge.
	Trial and judgment:
10	Defendant files an answer to Plaintiff's claim: Defendant files a written pleading which includes his answer or defense on the merits of the case (see assumption 4).



No.	Procedures
11	Deadline for Plaintiff to reply to Defendant's defense or answer: Judge sets a deadline for Plaintiff's submission of a reply to the Defendant's defense or answer.
12	Plaintiff's written reply to Defendant's answer: Plaintiff responds to Defendant's answer with a written pleading, which may or may not include witness statements or expert (witness) statements.
13	Filing of written submissions: Plaintiff and Defendant file written pleadings and submissions with the court and transmit copies of the written pleadings or submissions to one another. The pleadings may or may not include witness statements or expert (witness) statements.
*	Court appointment of independent expert: Judge appoints, either at the parties' request or at his own initiative, an independent expert to decide whether the quality of the goods Plaintiff delivered to Defendant is adequate. (see assumption 5-b).
*	Delivery of expert report by court-appointed expert: The independent expert, appointed by the court, delivers his or her expert report to the court (see assumption 5-b).
14	Pre-trial conference on procedure: The judge meets with the parties to discuss procedural issues (for example which applications and motions parties intend to file, which documents parties intend to rely on, etc.).
*	Setting of date(s) for oral hearing or trial: Judge sets the date(s) for the oral hearing or trial.
15	Preliminary hearing aimed at preparing for the oral hearing: The judge meets the parties to make practical arrangements for the oral hearing on the merits of the case.
*	List of (expert) witnesses: The parties file a list of (expert) witnesses with the court (see assumption 5-a).
16	Adjournments: Court proceedings are delayed because one or both parties request and obtain an adjournment to prepare for the oral hearing or trial as a matter of common practice.
17	Oral hearing (prevalent in civil law): The parties argue the merits of the case at an oral hearing before the judge. Witnesses and a court-appointed independent expert may be heard and questioned at the oral hearing.
18	Closing of the evidence period: The court makes the formal decision to close the evidence period.
*	Final arguments: The parties present their final factual and legal arguments to the court either by oral presentation or by a written submission.
19	Judgment date: The judge sets a date for delivery of the judgment.
20	Notification of judgment in court: The parties are notified of the judgment at a court hearing.
21	Writing of judgment: The judge produces a written copy of the judgment.
22	Registration of judgment: The court office registers the judgment after receiving a written copy of the judgment.
23	Court notification of availability of the written judgment: The court notifies the parties that the written judgment is available at the courthouse.
24	Plaintiff receives a copy of the judgment: Plaintiff receives a copy of the written judgment which is 100% in favor of Plaintiff (see assumption 6).

No.	Procedures
25	Defendant is formally notified of the judgment: Plaintiff or court formally notifies the Defendant of the judgment. The appeal period starts to run from the day the Defendant is formally notified of the judgment.
26	Appeal period: By law Defendant has the opportunity to appeal the judgment during a specified period. Defendant decides not to appeal. Seller decides to start enforcing the judgment when the appeal period ends (see assumption 8).
27	Order for reimbursement by Defendant of Plaintiff's court fees: The judgment orders Defendant to reimburse Plaintiff for the court fees Plaintiff has advanced, because Defendant has lost the case.
	Enforcement of judgment:
28	Plaintiff retains an enforcement agent to enforce the judgment.: Plaintiff retains the services of a court enforcement officer such as a court bailiff or sheriff, or a private bailiff.
*	Plaintiff requests an enforcement order: Plaintiff applies to the court to obtain the enforcement order ('seal' on judgment).
29	Attachment of enforcement order to judgment: The judge attaches the enforcement order ('seal') to the judgment.
*	Delivery of enforcement order: The court's enforcement order is delivered to a court enforcement officer or a private bailiff.
30	Request to Defendant to comply voluntarily with judgment: Plaintiff, a court enforcement officer or a private bailiff requests Defendant to voluntarily comply with the judgment.
31	Identification of Defendant's assets by court official or Defendant for purposes of enforcement: The judge, a court enforcement officer, a private bailiff or the Defendant himself identifies Defendant's movable assets for the purposes of enforcing the judgment through a sale of Defendant's assets.
32	Contestation of selection of assets identified for sale: A party, Plaintiff or Defendant, which was not involved in the designation of the assets for attachment, contests the selection of assets for enforcement of judgment through a sale.
33	Creditor notification of intent to attach: A court enforcement officer or private bailiff notifies other creditors of the intent to attach Defendant's goods.
34	Attachment: Defendant's movable goods are attached (physically or by registering, marking or separating assets).
35	Sale through public auction: The Defendant's movable property is sold at public auction.
36	Reimbursement of Plaintiff's enforcement fees: Defendant reimburses Plaintiff's enforcement fees which Plaintiff had advanced previously.

\* Not counted in the total number of procedures.

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 improving 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 thereby improve growth and sustainability in the economy overall.

### 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 recouped by secured creditors through reorganization, liquidation or debt enforcement (foreclosure) 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.

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

The ranking of the Resolving Insolvency indicator is based on the recovery rate and the total score of 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 survey responses by local insolvency practitioners and verified through a study of laws and regulations as well as public information on bankruptcy systems.

### 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)

## RESOLVING INSOLVENCY

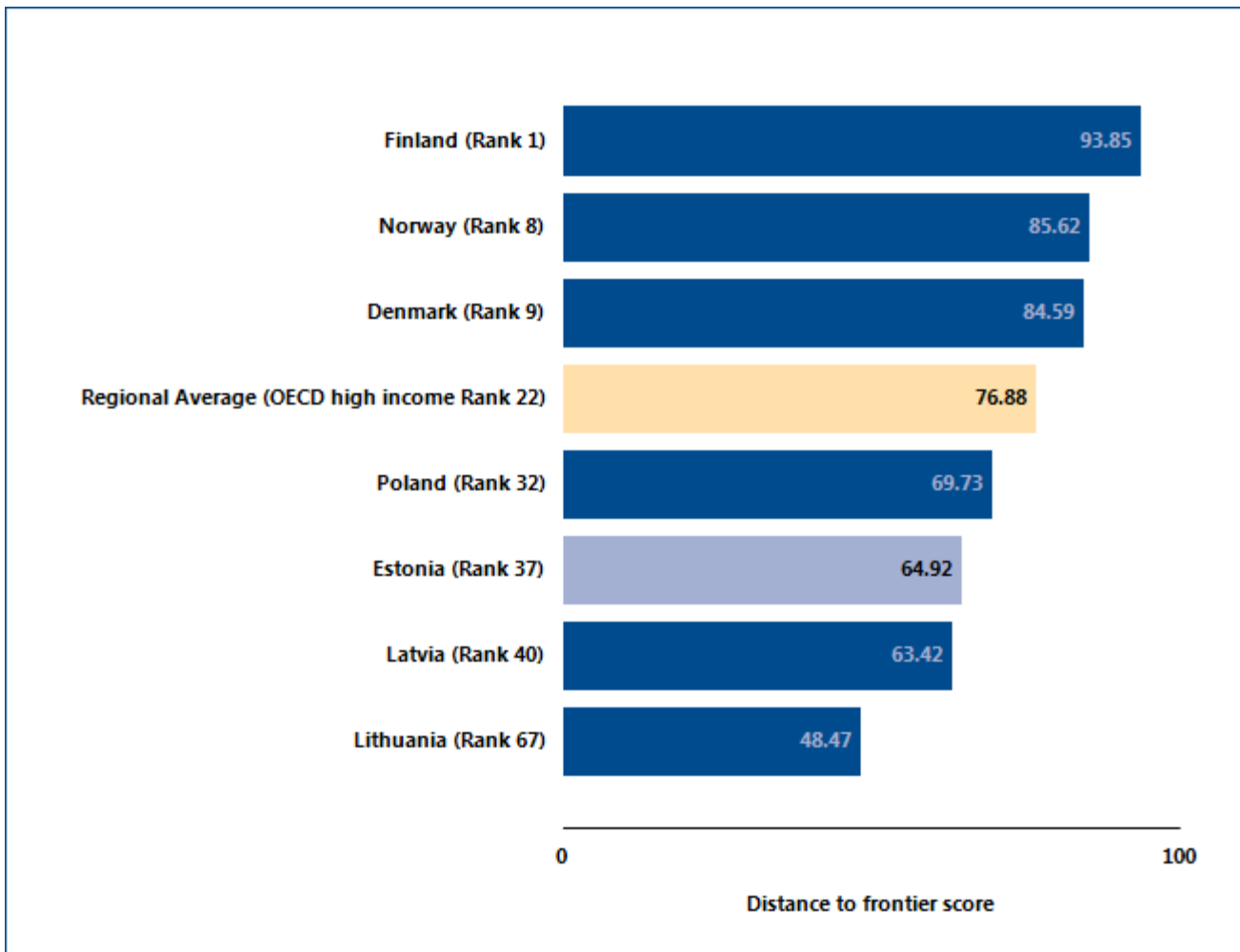
### Where does the economy stand today?

Combination of quality regulations and efficient practice characterize the top-performing economies. How efficient are insolvency proceedings in Estonia? According to data collected by *Doing Business*, resolving insolvency takes 3.0 years on average and costs 9.0% 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 39.3 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. See the chapter on distance to frontier and ease of doing business ranking at the end of this profile for more details.

According to data collected by *Doing Business*, Estonia scores 2.5 out of 3 points on the commencement of proceedings index, 5.5 out of 6 points on the management of debtor's assets index, 2.0 out of 3 points on the reorganization proceedings index, and 4.0 out of 4 points on the creditor participation index. Estonia's total score on the strength of insolvency framework index is 14.0 out of 16.

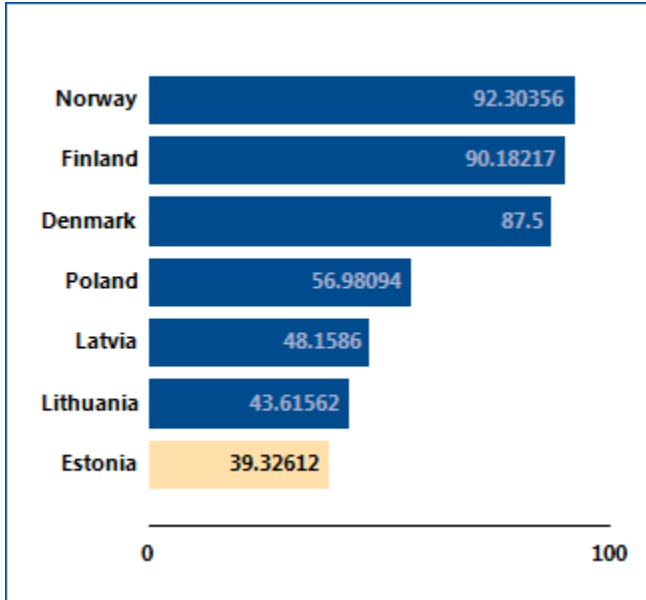
Globally, Estonia stands at 37 in the ranking of 189 economies on the ease of resolving insolvency (figure 11.1). The rankings for comparator economies and the regional average ranking provide other useful benchmarks for assessing the efficiency of insolvency proceedings in Estonia.

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



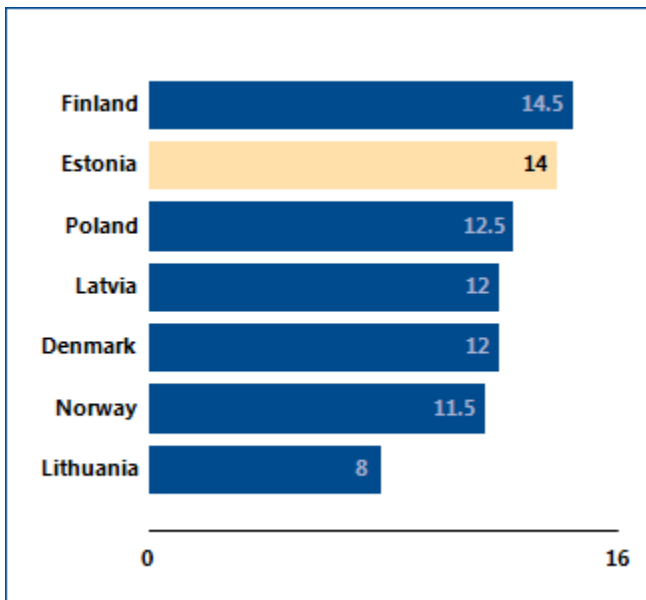
Source: Doing Business database.

Figure 11.2 Recovery Rate (0-100) - Estonia



Source: Doing Business database.

Figure 11.3 Strength of insolvency framework index (0-16) - Estonia



Source: Doing Business database.

## RESOLVING INSOLVENCY

A well-balanced bankruptcy system distinguishes companies that are financially distressed but economically viable from inefficient companies that should be liquidated. But in some insolvency systems even viable businesses are liquidated. This is starting to

change. Many recent reforms of bankruptcy laws have been aimed at helping more of the viable businesses survive. What insolvency reforms has *Doing Business* recorded in Estonia (table 11.1)?

Table 11.1 How has Estonia made resolving insolvency easier—or not?

By *Doing Business* report year from DB2010 to DB2015

DB year	Reform
<b>DB2010</b>	Estonia enhanced its insolvency process by establishing a new reorganization procedure to enable financially distressed companies to restructure their debt and apply other means to restore financial health and profitability.
<b>DB2011</b>	Amendments to Estonia's recent insolvency law increased the chances that viable businesses will survive insolvency by improving procedures and changing the qualification requirements for insolvency administrators.

*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>.

*Source:* *Doing Business* database.

## LABOR MARKET REGULATION

*Doing Business* measures flexibility in the regulation of employment, specifically as it affects the hiring and redundancy of workers and the rigidity of working hours. This year, for the first time, the indicators measuring flexibility in labor market regulations focus on those affecting the food retail industry, using a standardized case study of a cashier in a supermarket. Also new is that *Doing Business* collects data on regulations applying to employees hired through temporary-work agencies as well as on those applying to permanent employees or employees hired on fixed-term contracts. The indicators also cover additional areas of labor market regulation, including social protection schemes and benefits as well as labor disputes.

Over the period from 2007 to 2011 improvements were made to align the methodology for the labor market regulation indicators (formerly the employing workers indicators) with the letter and spirit of the International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions. Only 6 of the 188 ILO conventions cover areas measured by *Doing Business*: employee termination, weekend work, holiday with pay, night work, protection against unemployment and medical care and sickness benefits. The *Doing Business* methodology is fully consistent with these 6 conventions. The ILO conventions covering areas related to the labor market regulation indicators do not include the ILO core labor standards—8 conventions covering the right to collective bargaining, the elimination of forced labor, the abolition of child labor and equitable treatment in employment practices.

Between 2009 and 2011 the World Bank Group worked with a consultative group—including labor lawyers, employer and employee representatives, and experts from the ILO, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), civil society and the private sector—to review the methodology for the labor market regulation indicators and explore future areas of research.

A full report with the conclusions of the consultative group is available at:  
<http://www.doingbusiness.org/methodology/employing-workers>.

*Doing Business 2015* presents the data for the labor market regulation indicators in an annex. The report does not present rankings of economies on these indicators nor include the topic in the aggregate distance to frontier score or ranking on the ease of doing business. Detailed data collected on labor market regulations are available on the *Doing Business* website (<http://www.doingbusiness.org>). The data on labor market regulations are based on a detailed survey of 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 a grocery store
- 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) with 60 employees.
- 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.
- 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

Employment laws are needed to protect workers from arbitrary or unfair treatment and to ensure efficient contracting between employers and workers. Many economies that changed their labor market regulation in

the past 5 years did so in ways that increased labor market flexibility. What changes did Estonia adopt that affected the *Doing Business* indicators on labor market regulation (table 12.1)?

Table 12.1 What changes did Estonia make in terms of labor market regulation?

DB year	Reform
<b>DB2011</b>	Estonia eliminated the applicable priority rules for dismissals as well as the obligation to notify and obtain the approval of a third party in case of redundancy dismissals. It also removed restrictions on night work and reduced notice period and severance payment applicable in case of redundancy dismissals.

Source: *Doing Business* database.

## LABOR MARKET REGULATION

### What are the details?

The data reported here for Estonia 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.

#### Difficulty of hiring index

Difficulty of hiring covers 4 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 1 year of work experience; and (iv) the ratio of the minimum

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

Difficulty of hiring index	Data
Fixed-term contracts prohibited for permanent tasks?	Yes
Maximum length of a single fixed-term contract (months)	60 months - Art. 9 (1) New ECA
Maximum length of fixed-term contracts, including renewals (months)	120
Minimum wage applicable to the worker assumed in the case study (US\$/month)	457.92
Ratio of minimum wage to value added per worker	0.21

Source: *Doing Business* database.

## LABOR MARKET REGULATION

### Rigidity of hours index

Rigidity of hours covers 7 areas: (i) whether the workweek can extend to 50 hours or more (including overtime) for 2 months in a year to respond to a seasonal increase in workload; (ii) the maximum number of days allowed in the workweek; (iii) the premium for night work (as a percentage of hourly pay); (iv) the premium for work on a weekly rest day (as a percentage of hourly pay); (v) whether there are restrictions on night work; (vi) whether there are restrictions on weekly holiday work; and (vii) the average paid annual leave for workers with 1 year of tenure, 5 years of tenure and 10 years of tenure.

Rigidity of hours index	Data
50-hour workweek allowed for 2 months a year in case of a seasonal increase in workload?	Yes
Maximum working days per week	5.0
Premium for night work (% of hourly pay)	25%
Premium for work on weekly rest day (% of hourly pay)	0%
Major restrictions on night work?	Yes
Major restrictions on weekly holiday?	No
Paid annual leave for a worker with 1 year of tenure (in working days)	24.0
Paid annual leave for a worker with 5 years of tenure (in working days)	24.0
Paid annual leave for a worker with 10 years of tenure (in working days)	24.0
Paid annual leave (average for workers with 1, 5 and 10 years of tenure, in working days)	24.0

Source: *Doing Business* database.

## LABOR MARKET REGULATION

### Difficulty of redundancy index

Difficulty of redundancy index looks at 9 questions: (i) what the length is in months of the maximum probationary period; (ii) whether redundancy is disallowed as a basis for terminating workers; (iii) whether the employer needs to notify a third party (such as a government agency) to terminate 1 redundant worker; (iv) whether the employer needs to notify a third party to terminate a group of 9 redundant workers; (v)

whether the employer needs approval from a third party to terminate 1 redundant worker; (vi) whether the employer needs approval from a third party to terminate a group of 9 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.

Difficulty of redundancy index	Data
Maximum length of probationary period (months)	4.0
Dismissal due to redundancy allowed by law?	Yes
Third-party notification if 1 worker is dismissed?	No
Third-party approval if 1 worker is dismissed?	No
Third-party notification if 9 workers are dismissed?	No
Third-party approval if 9 workers are dismissed?	No
Retraining or reassignment obligation before redundancy?	Yes
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, severance payments and penalties 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	4.3
Notice period for redundancy dismissal for a worker with 5 years of tenure	8.6
Notice period for redundancy dismissal for a worker with 10 years of tenure	12.9
Notice period for redundancy dismissal (average for workers with 1, 5 and 10 years of tenure)	8.6
Severance pay for redundancy dismissal for a worker with 1 year of tenure	4.3
Severance pay for redundancy dismissal for a worker with 5 years of tenure	4.3
Severance pay for redundancy dismissal for a worker with 10 years of tenure	4.3
Severance pay for redundancy dismissal (average for workers with 1, 5 and 10 years of tenure)	4.3

Source: *Doing Business* database.

### Social protection schemes and benefits & Labor disputes

*Doing Business* collects data on the existence of unemployment protection schemes as well as data on whether employers are legally required to provide health insurance for employees with permanent contracts.

*Doing Business* also assesses the mechanisms available to resolve labor disputes. More specifically, it collects data on what courts would be competent to hear labor disputes and whether the competent court is specialized in resolving labor disputes.

Social protection schemes and benefits & Labor disputes indicator	Data
Availability of unemployment protection scheme?	Yes
Health insurance existing for permanent employees?	No
Availability of courts or court sections specializing in labor disputes?	No

Source: *Doing Business* database.



## DISTANCE TO FRONTIER AND EASE OF DOING BUSINESS RANKING

This year's report presents results for 2 aggregate measures: the distance to frontier score and the ease of doing business ranking, which for the first time this year 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 31 indicators for 10 *Doing Business* topics (the labor market regulation indicators are excluded). For starting a business, for example, Canada and New Zealand have 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 110 other economies have no paid-in minimum capital requirement (table 15.1 in the *Doing Business 2015* report).

#### Calculation of the distance to frontier score

Calculating the distance to frontier score for each economy involves 2 main steps. First, individual component indicators are normalized to a common unit where each of the 31 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 after data for the indicator were collected for the first time. For legal indicators such as those on getting credit or protecting minority investors, 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. For the time to pay taxes the frontier is defined as the lowest time recorded among all economies that levy the 3 major taxes: profit tax, labor taxes and mandatory contributions, and value added tax (VAT) or sales tax. In addition, the cost to export and cost to import for each year are divided by the GDP deflator, to take the general price level into account when benchmarking these absolute-cost indicators across economies with different inflation trends. The base year for the deflator is 2013 for all economies.

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, 2 rules were defined: the 95th percentile is used for the indicators with the most dispersed distributions (including time, cost, minimum capital and number of payments to pay taxes), and the 99th percentile is used for number of procedures and number of documents to trade. No outlier was 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 15.1 in the *Doing Business 2015* report).

Second, for each economy the scores obtained for individual indicators 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*<sup>6</sup>. Thus *Doing Business* uses the simplest

<sup>6</sup> See Djankov, Manraj and others (2005). Principal components and unobserved components methods yield a ranking nearly identical to

method: weighting all topics equally and, within each topic, giving equal weight to each of the topic components<sup>7</sup>.

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 5 decimals. However, indicator ranking calculations and the ease of doing business ranking calculations are based on 2 decimals. The difference between an economy's distance to frontier score in any previous year and its score in 2014 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

This year, for the first time, 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 in the calculation done in previous years (line B is smaller than line A in figure 15.2 of the *Doing Business 2015* 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 before (line D is bigger than line C in figure 15.2 of the *Doing Business 2015* report).

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

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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.

<sup>7</sup> 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

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 for which a second city was added in this year's report, the distance to frontier score is calculated as the population-weighted average of the distance to frontier scores for the 2 cities covered (table 12.1). This is done for the aggregate score, the scores for each topic and the scores for all the component indicators for each topic.

Table 12.1 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 2013/14

*Doing Business 2015* uses a simple method to calculate which economies improved the ease of doing business the most. First, it selects the economies that in 2013/14 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-one economies meet this criterion: Azerbaijan; Benin; the Democratic Republic of Congo; Côte d'Ivoire; the Czech Republic; Greece; India; Ireland; Kazakhstan; Lithuania; the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; Poland; Senegal; the Seychelles; Spain; Switzerland; Taiwan, China; Tajikistan; Togo; Trinidad and Tobago; and the United Arab Emirates. 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 3 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 189. The ranking of economies is determined by sorting the aggregate distance to frontier scores, rounded to 2 decimals.

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