

FY17 FIAS REFORM DESCRIPTIONS

COUNTRY	REFORM TOPIC	REFORM DESCRIPTION	NUMBER OF REFORMS	DB VALIDATED
AFRICA			20	
Cabo Verde	Construction permits	Cabo Verde made dealing with construction permits easier by publishing all regulations related to construction online free of charge.	1	DB18
Cabo Verde	Trade logistics	Cabo Verde made exporting and importing easier by implementing an automated customs data management system, ASYCUDA World.	1	DB18
Cameroon	Getting credit	The Central Bank of Cameroon created a database with information on financial transactions through banks and other financial institutions, streamlining the process of accessing credit by making it easier to check information on the creditworthiness of borrowers.	1	DB18
Gabon	Construction permits	Gabon made dealing with construction permits easier by publishing all the procedures, costs, laws, and regulations pertaining to getting a construction permit on a government website.	1	DB18
Ghana	Construction permits	Ghana made information on obtaining construction permits more accessible by uploading relevant laws and information on procedures and fees to a government website.	1	DB18
Guinea	Investment policy - Entry	In April 2017 the Ministry of Mines adopted a policy on local content development focused on developing and expanding local supply chains, increasing the competitiveness of domestic firms, and adapting educational and vocational training to current market demands. The first step involved setting up a Department of Community Relations and Development of Local Content within the ministry. The work of the department focuses on agreements and conventions relating to local content and on promoting local employment and the hiring of domestic companies and non-governmental organizations. An external consulting firm was hired to collect data on existing levels of local content among mining operators and subcontractors in Guinea. A resulting report produced data from surveys and interviews with 12 mining operators and 138 local subcontractors. This data is being analyzed by the ministry to adopt appropriate implementation regulations. Another step towards the implementation involves creation of a National Suppliers Database, with a first pilot in the mining sector benefiting from Bank Group support. A call for proposals has been published and the team is reviewing submitted proposals.	1	DB18
Madagascar	Getting credit	The central bank has merged different credit databases covering all commercial banks and the majority of microfinance. Coverage has reached 5 percent of the adult population, the threshold to receive points in the <i>Doing Business</i> Getting Credit Indicator.	1	DB18
Madagascar	Starting a business	The government's economic development website now carries legal advertisements for business creation, eliminating the need to go to a local newspaper agency for publishing.	1	DB18
Malawi	Construction permits	The project supported the formation of Sector Working Groups and provided technical assistance in support of reforms. Among other steps, the Blantyre City Assembly published updated fees for services provided by the city council. Fees to obtain a building permit were halved from 0.8 per cent to 0.4 per cent of development costs.	1	DB18
Malawi	Getting credit	Secured creditors receive an automatic stay on enforcement when data is entered into a court-supervised reorganization procedure. Secured creditors may continue to enforce security with permission of the court before tax claims and employee claims. This provides the secured creditors with highest possible priority in insolvency proceedings. The implementation effort involved engagement with banks to follow up on submission of data to credit bureaus, and training of insolvency practitioners and registrar general staff.	1	DB17
Malawi	Resolving insolvency	In insolvency proceedings, new regulation of insolvency practitioners protects creditor rights. The reform streamlined the insolvency process by introducing a reorganized procedure and enabling debtors to remain in business during insolvency proceedings.	1	DB18
Mali	Investment policy - Promotion	API Mali, the country's investment promotion agency, has played an important role in the launch of 14 agribusiness investments with a total estimated value of \$9.7 million. Using the team's 40 percent attribution rate, this works out to \$3.9 million in investment generated that can be claimed by the project. These investments have also already created 223 jobs, with more than half going to women. Investors credit API with guiding business plan development, registration, licensing, and issuing exemptions. In a survey of investors, 13 of 14 companies said that API provided valuable assistance during their establishment process; 5 said that API was the most helpful agency they dealt with during their establishment process.	1	
Mauritius	Construction permits	Mauritius made dealing with construction permits easier by reducing the number of days to obtain a sewage connection through an online application, reducing the number of days to obtain a building and land use permit from 21 to 18 days, streamlining process to obtain building and land use permits	1	DB18
Mauritius	Property transfers	Mauritius made registering property easier by publishing service standards on its website, improving on transparency of the information index, and increasing the reliability of the infrastructure and land dispute resolution index. The reform reduced the number of days to register property from 2 to 0.5.	1	DB18
Mauritius	Starting a business	Mauritius made starting a business easier by updating its online business registration platform, reducing the time needed to incorporate a company after payment to two hours, eliminating the procedure to re-register with the social security office for starting a business, reducing the number of procedures for women to register a business by reducing the need to provide an identity card, and reducing the cost of starting a business by eliminating trade fees.	1	DB18

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Seychelles	Construction permits	The Seychelles Planning Authority made building regulations available online, updating the website to include this information in May 2017. The reform has improved transparency by making legislation related to the construction industry easily available to the public.	1	DB18
Seychelles	Property transfers	In February 2017, the Seychelles launched a complaint mechanism for dealing with problems at the land and property registry. Complaints may now be filed online via a dedicated webpage.	1	DB18
Zambia	Tax simplification and compliance management	Zambia made paying taxes easier by introducing an online platform for filing and making payments. The government also reduced the property transfer tax rate.	1	DB18
Zambia	Trade logistics	Zambia made exporting and importing easier by implementing a web-based customs data management platform, ASYCUDA World.	1	DB18
Zimbabwe		Zimbabwe made business start-up more efficient by decreasing the time needed to register with the National Social Security Authority (NSSA) and by removing a requirement to publish the license application in a local newspaper. The Ministry of Local Government waived the need to advertise for businesses operating in designated areas. The Bank Group team provided technical support in business regulation reform. As part of the technical support provided to a number of government agencies, the Harare City Council, and a technical working group on starting a business, the team provided a granular reform action plan that identified issues hindering business start-up in Harare and making recommendations to streamline and eliminate a number of procedures. Specific focus was given to automation and reduction of time and cost to launch. The team facilitated a study visit to New Zealand (ranked No 1 in this <i>Doing Business</i> Indicator) for the working group on starting a business. Bank Group automation experts visited Harare to review ongoing efforts and advise on the best practices. The team prepared a number of technical notes addressing various components of the reform, including licensing simplification and one-stop-shop models. Zimbabwe has used the granular action plans and technical advice to design and prioritize reforms.	1	DB18
EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC			2	
Mongolia	Investment policy - Entry	The project provided technical assistance to the government and private sector resulting in abrogation of the Strategic Entities Foreign Investment Law and adoption of a new investment law. Under the old law, government had power of discretionary approval and takeover of any existing foreign investment in mining, the financial sector, and media. The new Investment Law eliminated arbitrary screening of FDI by private entities in these three sectors and other business sectors as well.	1	
Myanmar	Investment policy - Entry	The Bank Group worked with government to enact a new investment legal framework applicable to both domestic and foreign investors. The landmark reform opened a significant number of sectors to investment, significantly streamlining investment entry procedures and strengthening investment protection guarantees. The proposed legal framework was subject to the widest public consultation in the country over the last decade. The new law has already contributed to more than doubling the amount of FDI flowing into the country, from \$4.1 billion in 2014 to \$9.5 billion in 2016.	1	DB18
EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA			26	
Albania	Tax simplification and compliance management	Albania introduced an online system for filling taxes and making payments. Since 2007, Albania has been working on an online system for filing corporate income and value-added taxes, labor contributions, and payroll taxes. The platform first started for VAT declarations and for large taxpayers. In 2012 it was expanded to other types of taxes and taxpayers. However, the online system was not user-friendly. Under the upgraded system, business are required to file online.	1	DB17
Armenia	Inspections	Beginning in 2015, Armenia committed to inspection reform improve inspection outcomes and reduce burden for businesses. Resulting reform helps reduce the number of inspection bodies, eliminates potential overlaps and duplicating roles of inspectorates and other state agencies, clarifies their roles in dealing with specific types of risks, and focuses on risks in planning inspections. The new inspection regime also introduces a notification and information system to alert businesses of requirements and expectations from inspectors. Inspectorates have shifted to a risk-based inspection system; the government adopted checklists and created new inspectorates while reducing the overall number of inspections bodies.	1	
Armenia	Investment policy - Incentives	To increase the transparency and create a comprehensive incentives inventory, the government published a comprehensive mapping of all incentives provided to investors across the different legislations and levels of government. The inventory is available in English and Armenian, with each incentive linked to additional information on relevant legal frameworks, eligibility criteria, administrative and monitoring bodies, and policy objectives. All agencies offering incentives to foreign and domestic investors are instructed to participate in this process. The inventory, with supporting documents, is published at the Ministry of Economic Development and Investments website.	1	
Azerbaijan	Enforcing contracts	Azerbaijan made enforcing contracts easier by introducing a system that allows users to pay court fees electronically. Court fees are regulated by the Law On Stamp duties, which contains a series of provisions on the electronic payment of fees. The law has been under implementation since November 2016. Court fees can now be paid electronically for the Baku Administrative Commercial Court through a government payment portal.	1	DB18

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Azerbaijan	Protecting investors	Azerbaijan strengthened minority investor protections by increasing shareholder rights and roles in majority corporate decisions, clarifying ownership and control structures, and requiring greater corporate transparency.	1	DB18
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Investment policy - Incentives	The reform increased information sharing on incentives via an open online inventory. An inventory of incentives has been made available for 10 municipalities, with incentives accessible in English and the local language. This new online access is improving the transparency and governance of incentives for foreign and domestic investors.	1	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Licenses and permits	The team's intervention combined work in several subnational localities (municipalities and cantons) into one reform. Project work was instrumental in streamlining licenses and permits related to business operations through a system review that proposed ways to simplify and eliminate regulation at the municipal level. Five municipalities and the Sarajevo canton were involved in an effort that began in the fall of 2015 and finished in December 2016. Results have been verified on the ground independently since then, enabling the team to report as of the end of FY17. The effort involved review of 594 business licenses and permits in these localities. The review led to streamlining of licenses and permits, reducing processing time, costs and fees, and documentation. It also led to improved online access to these licenses and permits. Over 85 percent of business procedures were improved or eliminated; related costs declined by 28 percent from the pre-reform baseline in these six localities. Waiting time was reduced by approximately 22 percent, and average taxes and fees were reduced by 11 percent. Each locality had a minimum of three business-related regulations that were significantly changed, for example, local administrative stamp duties and local fees for businesses, local permits and licenses and administrative deadlines for processing requests. The improvements were verified by the Europe and Central Asia monitoring and evaluation team. In addition, the project helped establish six electronic registries of licenses and permits that reduced the risk of unclear legal requirements for businesses. All relevant information related to each single administrative procedure can be found on these e-registries along with submission forms. The online system provides transparency and clearly sets out the required steps. Officials must meet specific deadlines for processing submissions; the deadlines are publicly available and included on all submission forms.	1	
Croatia	Property transfers	Croatia made it easier to transfer property by decreasing the real estate transfer tax from 5 percent to 4 percent.	1	DB18
Kazakhstan	Enforcing contracts	Kazakhstan made enforcing contracts easier by introducing additional time standards for key court events that are respected in the majority of cases. A law passed in February 2017 included amendments relating to banking and improving conditions for entrepreneurial activity. Among the changes in the civil procedure code, the law sets additional time standards for key court events in civil cases.	1	DB18
Kazakhstan	Property transfers	1. Kazakhstan made it easier to transfer a property by improving transparency and land dispute resolution mechanisms of the land administration system. Under the reform, land registration plans were made available in Almaty on a government website. Citizens can access the information by creating an account on the website using their identification number. 2. In February 2017, the government of Kazakhstan started publishing statistics on the number of land disputes in the first instance.	1	DB18
Kazakhstan	Protecting investors	Kazakhstan strengthened minority investor protections by increasing shareholder rights and roles in major corporate decisions, clarifying ownership and control structures, requiring greater corporate transparency, and allowing greater access to corporate information during trials. The new law, which took effect in March 2017, directly addresses shareholders rights, ownership and control structure, corporate transparency, and the ease of shareholders suits. In relation to limited liability companies, the amendments introduced an optional external audit for medium-sized LLCs and mandatory external audits for large LLCs when certain thresholds are satisfied. Regarding joint stock companies, the law clarified the procedure and set time limits for payment of dividends and introduced a requirement that shareholder approve issuance of new shares. The reform also clarified the right of parties in corporate disputes to request documents relevant to a case without identifying each specific document.	1	DB18
Kosovo	Getting credit	Getting credit Kosovo strengthened access to credit by adopting a new law that establishes clear priority rules inside bankruptcy for secured creditors and clear grounds for relief from a stay for secured creditors in reorganization procedures.	1	DB18
Kosovo	Starting a business	Kosovo made starting a business easier by simplifying the process to register employees. The reform changed the process to register employees so that separate registration of employees is no longer required, and companies register new employees through their regular monthly payroll tax return.	1	DB18
Kosovo	Resolving insolvency	Kosovo made resolving insolvency easier by introducing a legal framework for corporate insolvency, making liquidation and reorganization procedures available to debtors and creditors.	1	

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Kyrgyz Republic	Getting credit	The Kyrgyz Republic improved its credit information system by adopting a new law on exchanging credit information. The law, which entered into force on July 16, 2016, fully regulates the activities of credit bureaus, establishing a procedure for sharing information between data users, data providers, credit bureaus, and public authorities. Businesses and individuals have the right to receive a credit report from a licensed credit bureau free of charge once a year. Additionally, the law guarantees borrower rights to inspect their own credit data. A related bylaw outlines which documents the prospective credit bureaus need to submit to the National Bank of the Kyrgyz Republic in order to be licensed. A further provision which went into force in October 2016 sets out specific requirements for activities of a credit bureau such as ensuring reliability and safety of data, providing credit reports, managing changes in credit history, organizing internal audit of the activities of the credit bureau, and supervising the activities of the credit bureau.	1	DB18
Kyrgyz Republic	Tax simplification and compliance management	The government introduced innovative methods of making tax payments for small and medium businesses. Electronic tax payment options through point-of-service terminals, ATM machines, Internet banking, and mobile banking and electronic purse are available in eight banks, enabling taxpayers to save money and time, eliminate direct contact between an entrepreneur and tax inspector, and enhance the tax transparency. To increase the awareness among stakeholders, informative materials were developed and made available online. The State Tax Service reports that the amount of non-cash payments has significantly increased from 2013 to 2016.	1	
Kyrgyz Republic	Tax simplification and compliance management	A revision to the tax code reduces tax filing frequency for small and medium enterprises from monthly to quarterly. The project provided assistance in drafting and promoting amendments. It will reduce tax compliance costs of a majority of businesses. As of the end of 2016, nearly 33,000 taxpayers had benefited from the improved tax administration.	1	
Serbia	Construction permits	Serbia made dealing with construction permits faster by implementing an online system and streamlining the process of obtaining technical conditions for building permits. The reform was made possible due to the implementation of a new Law on construction permitting which significantly simplified permitting and introduced electronic permits. The project provided training for local governments to assure successful implementation. The newly developed e-permitting software received and processed 35,000 applications in the first eight months of 2016, of which 90 percent were resolved. Serbia was able to reduce the time for construction permitting from 272 days and 18 procedures to 150 days and 12 procedures.	1	DB17
Serbia	Enforcing contracts	Serbia adopted a law to broaden and clarify the competence of enforcement agents and the powers of the courts in enforcement proceedings. The law entered into force in July 2016. Its main purpose is to eliminate deficiencies of the previous enforcement regime by broadening enforcement officer powers, increase judicial oversight of the work of enforcement officers, improve the appeals mechanism against enforcement decisions, provide clearer definitions of legal solutions in order to avoid ambiguities in their application, and include a clearer definition of the status and role of enforcement officers.	1	DB18
Serbia	Starting a business	Serbia made starting a business easier by reducing the signature certification fee and increasing the efficiency of the registry, reducing the time for business registration.	1	DB18
Tajikistan	Starting a business	Tajikistan made starting a business easier by doubling the revenue threshold for mandatory VAT registration under a new law adopted in November 2016.	1	DB18
Tajikistan	Tax simplification and compliance management	The tax authority approved a new risk-based audit system throughout the country. The measure ensures that data is shared between the regions and the center in electronic form, thus enabling risk-based auditing and also clearing the way for subsequent reforms such as VAT and e-filing. A single risk-based audit system is used nationwide, ensuring consistency and quality in audit selection and allowing government to adjust the model if needed. Under the measure, local tax offices effectively lose their discretion in selecting audits, removing a source of potential corruption and abuse. The number of tax audits has decreased from 2,026 in 2015 to 1,883 in 2016, while tax revenues increased by 34 percent from 2015 to 2016.	1	
Uzbekistan	Protecting investors	Uzbekistan strengthened minority investor protections by increasing corporate transparency requirements. In December 2016, the Ministry of Justice of Uzbekistan amended rules relevant to the <i>Doing Business</i> Protecting Minority Investors indicator. The reform affects disclosure requirements for listed companies and now includes information regarding executive and supervisory board member remuneration and compensation.	1	DB18
Uzbekistan	Starting a business	Uzbekistan made starting a business easier by rolling out a new platform for business registration, starting with name verification as the first step.	1	DB18
Uzbekistan	Tax simplification and compliance management	Uzbekistan made paying taxes easier and less costly by introducing an electronic system for filing and paying VAT, land tax, unified social payment, CIT, infrastructure development tax, environmental tax, personal pension fund contributions, and cumulative pension contributions.	1	DB18
Uzbekistan	Construction permits	Uzbekistan made dealing with construction permits easier by streamlining the process of obtaining approvals of land plot allocations from various agencies.	1	DB18
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN			4	
El Salvador	Construction permits	El Salvador initiated reforms in construction permitting and implemented an automated system that has decreased the number of procedures needed to obtain a construction permit from 24 to 23 and gained three points in the Building Quality Index.	1	DB18

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Guyana	Property transfers	The team provided the government with diagnostic findings and recommendations across a variety of <i>Doing Business</i> indicators, including Registering property. A followup mission in 2017 engaged key stakeholders related to property registration and the Ministers of Business and Finance to discuss reform in this area. The efforts to increase transparency and efficiency at the property registry are ongoing under this engagement. The effort began with high-level decisions to allocate more resources to improve operations. This reform decreased the time needed for registering property from 75 to 45 days.	1	DB18
Panama	Resolving insolvency	The team delivered a <i>Doing Business</i> Memorandum to Panama, which updated the previous memo from 2014. Both included reform recommendations in the area of resolving insolvency, including comments to the draft insolvency law which was passed in March 2016 and became effective in January 2017. As recorded by <i>Doing Business</i> , the new legislation has increased the strength of the insolvency framework index by 2 points.	1	DB18
St. Kitts and Nevis	Trade logistics	St. Kitts and Nevis made trading across borders easier by updating its website and implementing ASYCUDA, the automated customs data management system, reducing documentary compliance time for exports and imports. The project supported the customs department in developing a guide for import and export procedures now available on its website.	1	DB18
MENA			4	
Egypt, Arab Rep.	Protecting investors	Egypt strengthened minority investor protections by increasing shareholder rights and roles in major corporate decisions. In 2016, the team prepared a reform recommendations matrix that included short-, medium-, and long-term recommendations on how Egypt can improve the regulatory environment for businesses in line with global good practices. The matrix included recommendations on protecting minority investors. All recommendations for this indicator were implemented over the last <i>Doing Business</i> reporting cycle.	1	DB18
Iraq	Starting a business	The team supported Iraq's business environment reform effort beginning in March 2017. Tax identification numbers are now issued with the certificate of incorporation. Entrepreneurs are no longer required to register separately with the tax authority. In addition, since January 2017, the time to register a company has declined due to an increase in resources at the registry and improvement of the online registration system. Iraq made starting a business easier by combining multiple registration procedures and reducing the time to register a company.	1	DB18
Iraq	Getting credit	The project team helped Iraq establish a new credit registry, managed by the Central Bank of Iraq. First legally established in October 2014, the registry listed 234,967 consumers and 4,877 commercial borrowers as of January 2017, with information on their borrowing history over the past five years.	1	DB18
West Bank and Gaza	Getting credit	The Bank Group team traveled to Ramallah in December 2015 to meet with relevant public and private stakeholders in response to a request from the Ministry of National Economy for assistance in improving the investment climate in 8 of the 10 areas covered by the <i>Doing Business</i> report, including the Getting credit indicator. A reform recommendations matrix was prepared with short-, medium-, and long-term recommendations on how the Palestinian Authority can improve the regulatory environment for businesses in line with global good practices, including recommendations in the area of Getting credit. The West Bank and Gaza strengthened access to credit by introducing a new secured transactions law and by setting up a new collateral registry. The new law implemented a functional secured transactions system.	1	DB18
SOUTH ASIA			6	
India	Starting a business	India made starting a business faster by merging the applications for permanent account number and the tax account number, and by improving the online application system. This reform applies to both Delhi and Mumbai. Mumbai also made starting a business faster by merging the applications for the value-added tax and the profession tax.	1	DB18
India	Protecting minority investors	India strengthened minority investor protections by increasing the remedies available in cases of prejudicial transactions between interested parties. This reform applies to both Delhi and Mumbai.	1	DB18
India	Enforcing Contracts	India made enforcing contracts easier by introducing the National Judicial Data Grid, which makes it possible to generate case measurement reports on local counts. This reform applies to both Delhi and Mumbai.	1	DB18
India	Getting credit	India strengthened access to credit by amending the rules of priority of secured creditors outside organizations proceedings and by adopting a new law on insolvency that provides a time limit and clear grounds for relief to the automatic stay for secured creditors during reorganization proceedings. This reform applies to both Delhi and Mumbai.	1	DB18
India	Construction permits	India made dealing with construction permits less cumbersome by implementing an online system that has streamlined the process in New Delhi and Mumbai. The online system has streamlined the process of obtaining a building permit, thereby reducing the number of procedures and the time required to obtain a building permit in India.	1	DB18
India	Resolving Insolvency	India made resolving insolvency easier by adopting a new insolvency and bankruptcy code that introduced a reorganization procedure for corporate debtors and facilitated continuation of a debtor's business during insolvency proceedings. This reform applies to both Delhi and Mumbai.	1	DB18
Grand Total			62	