

Sweden among the easiest place in the world for small and medium sized firms to do businesses. **Full list: country-by-country**



- [Sweden among world's least corrupt nations](#)
- [Sweden 10th 'most admired country globally'](#)

Singapore remains the easiest place in the world for small and medium sized firms to do businesses but rival Hong Kong gained on it as it came second in a World Bank report released Thursday.

Also Sweden climbed in this year's ranking, up four steps to number 14. The country has strengthened investor protections and made it easier to start a business. However, during the year it has become slightly harder to get credit.

"Sweden improved the most in the ease of doing business, rising from 18 to 14 in the rankings", the report said. "It reduced the minimum capital requirement for business start-up, streamlined property registration and strengthened investor protections by increasing requirements for corporate disclosure and regulating the approval of transactions between interested parties".

- Starting a Business: Sweden cut the minimum capital requirement for limited liability companies by half, making it easier to start a business.

- Registering Property:

Sweden made registering property easier by eliminating the requirement to obtain a preemption waiver from the municipality

- Protecting Investors:

Sweden strengthened investor protections by requiring greater corporate disclosure and regulating the approval of transactions between interested parties.

The annual report sheds light on how easy or difficult it is for local entrepreneurs to open and run their businesses, comparing 183 economies.

Despite Singapore's top spot, the city-state's lead was eroded as Hong Kong made big strides in cutting red tape in the past year, according to "Doing Business 2010", jointly conducted with the International Finance Corporation.

New Zealand, Britain, Denmark, Norway, Ireland, Australia, Canada, and the United States completed top 10.

"Hong Kong's success in offering one of the best business environments globally rests on continuous reforms despite its already established position as a leader," said Geoffrey Walton, business line Leader for the World Bank's East Asia and Pacific business climate unit.

"Hong Kong has made use of online applications to make complying with business regulations easier or implemented one-stop shops for efficient processing of construction permits," he added.

The report noted that the southern Chinese financial hub abolished a tax on diesel fuel and streamlined the legal process for commercial

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disputes.

But IFC spokesman Hannfried von Hindenburg said highlighting Hong Kong's reform efforts did not take away from Singapore's success.

"Singapore is number one and has been for five years running," he said.

Singapore leads the world in investor protection, ahead of New Zealand and Hong Kong, the report said.

The report's criteria includes dealing with construction permits, registering property, getting credit, paying taxes, trading across borders and closing a business.

China was ranked 79th, although it, along with Vietnam and East Timor were the three most improved countries over the past five years.

Chad was bottom of the list, with the Central African Republic second bottom and Burundi third last.

Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia remained the most difficult places to conduct business, although three African countries were among this year's top 10 most improved nations -- Rwanda, Cape Verde and Zambia.

[Economy Ease of Doing Business Rank](#) □

<u>Singapore</u>	1
<u>Hong Kong SAR, China</u>	2
<u>New Zealand</u>	3
<u>United Kingdom</u>	4
<u>United States</u>	5
<u>Denmark</u>	6

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Canada	7
Norway	8
Ireland	9
Australia	10
Saudi Arabia	11
Georgia	12
Finland	13
Sweden	14
Iceland	15
Korea, Rep.	16
Estonia	17
Japan	18
Thailand	19
Mauritius	20
Malaysia	21
Germany	22
Lithuania	23
Latvia	24
Belgium	25
France	26
Switzerland	27
Bahrain	28
Israel	29
Netherlands	30
Portugal	31
Austria	32
Taiwan, China	33
South Africa	34
Mexico	
SUBNATIONAL	
35	
Peru	36
Cyprus	37
Macedonia, FYR	38

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Colombia

SUBNATIONAL

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United Arab Emirates 40

Slovak Republic 41

Slovenia 42

Chile 43

Kyrgyz Republic 44

Luxembourg 45

Hungary 46

Puerto Rico 47

Armenia 48

Spain 49

Qatar 50

Bulgaria 51

Botswana 52

St. Lucia 53

Azerbaijan 54

Tunisia 55

Romania 56

Oman 57

Rwanda 58

Kazakhstan 59

Vanuatu 60

Samoa 61

Fiji 62

Czech Republic 63

Antigua and Barbuda 64

Turkey 65

Montenegro 66

Ghana 67

Belarus 68

Namibia 69

Poland 70

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Tonga	71
Panama	72
Mongolia	73
Kuwait	74
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	75
Zambia	76
Bahamas, the	77
Vietnam	78
China	

SUBNATIONAL

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Italy	80
Jamaica	81
Albania	82
Pakistan	

SUBNATIONAL

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Croatia	84
Maldives	85
El Salvador	86
St. Kitts and Nevis	87
Dominica	88
Serbia	89
Moldova	90
Dominican Republic	91
Grenada	92
Kiribati	93
Egypt, Arab Rep.	

SUBNATIONAL

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Seychelles	95
Solomon Islands	96
Trinidad and Tobago	97
Kenya	

SUBNATIONAL

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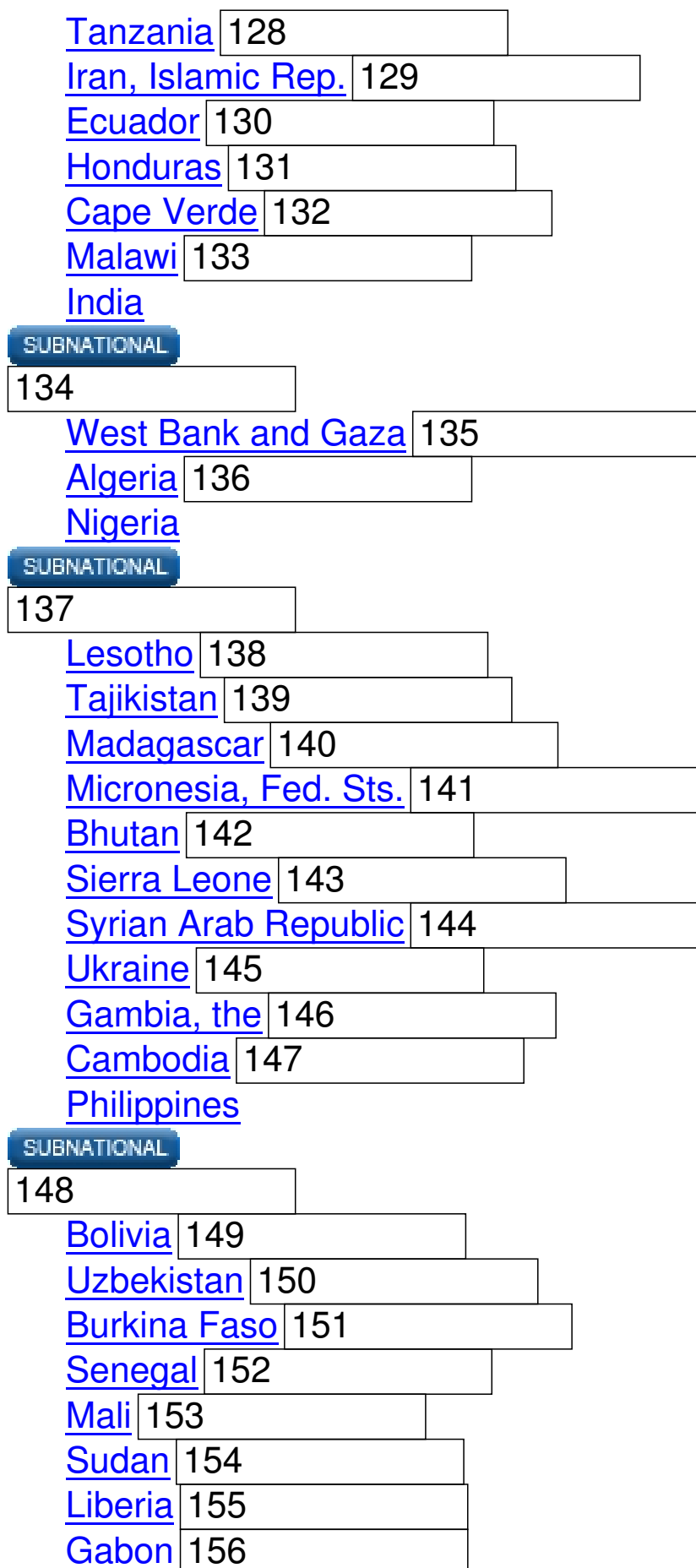
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