

ABOUT THE 2011 INTERNATIONAL PROPERTY RIGHTS INDEX

This report presents the fifth edition of the *International Property Rights Index* (IPRI).

The IPRI is an annual study that compares countries in terms of their protection of property rights – both physical and intellectual. Like previous editions of the IPRI, the 2011 report seeks to investigate the effects of a country's strong legal and political environment, recognition, and enforcement of physical and intellectual property rights on the economic development of a country. This year's report compares 129 economies using these three variables as core components and ranks them accordingly.

Because of the expansion of some of the underlying data sources this year's index welcomes the addition of Angola, Iran, Lebanon, Rwanda, and Swaziland. Being both geographically and economically diverse, these countries significantly contribute to the comprehensiveness of the index. Unfortunately, a lack of data on intellectual property rights prevented the Kyrgyz Republic from being ranked and included in this year's index. The net change of four countries to some extent hinders a direct comparison of the IPRI rankings in this report to last year's report. The reader is reminded that some changes in relative positions of the countries could reflect changes in the sample of countries instead of substantive changes within a country's property rights regime. To enable assessing changes in countries' performance, the authors present new tables showing the changes in absolute scores for the IPRI and its components ([Tables 5-8](#)).

Since its inaugural publication in 2007, the authors have focused on identifying the data sources that best represent the strength of a nation's property regime while keeping in mind the necessity for consistency of the index. The 2011 index uses the same components and data sources as the 2010 index and maintains consistency with the previous editions by using the same weighting scheme. Additionally, an extensive analysis of the previous years' data has been done to identify any issues that could hamper the comparison of scores across years.

To better compare countries' IPRI scores across time country profiles have been included to provide the historic progression of the IPRI scores and its components, point to any advances or regressions, and show strong or weak points in countries' property rights.

Following last year's shift, the gender equality component of the 2011 IPRI focuses solely on non-OECD countries. The total number of countries scored for this component is 83 this year, which represents a small increase from last year. The authors believe, however, that the issue of gender equality is especially relevant to developing countries where large disparities in land rights continue to exist and large improvements in their property rights remain to be realized. Therefore, the focus of this component on non-OECD countries is appropriate.

In addition to providing a quantitative measure of the protection of property rights, the report highlights various aspects of property rights through case studies. Once again, the authors have collaborated with the IPRI's partner organizations to identify issues that need further elaboration in the index. The case studies present an opportunity to draw attention to aspects of property rights that even the most comprehensive index might not be able to address. They also highlight the developments in property rights in various regions of the world with the aim of providing clear and compelling evidence for the positive role that property rights play in economic development. The 2011 report contains five case studies on various property rights issues contributed by the IPRI partner organizations.

The 2011 IPRI builds on the previous editions to provide an even more comprehensive measure of property rights. Despite significant improvements over the years, there continue to be data limitations and challenges with data collection and interpretation. We are confident that future editions of the report will address and progressively overcome these issues.