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NEWS RELEASE

ARGENTINA RANKED MOST COMPLEX PLACE TO DO BUSINESS IN THE WORLD

UK and Ireland ranked amongst the least complex

Whistleblowing and Cyber Security top the compliance agenda of multinational boards

London, UK, 28 January 2015 – For the second year running, Argentina has been ranked as the most complex country for multinational enterprises to do business in according to TMF Group's Global Benchmark Complexity Index.

The far-reaching annual study by TMF Group, a leading provider of global business and compliance services, has ranked 81 jurisdictions across Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia-Pacific and the Americas according to how complex they are to do business in from a regulatory and compliance perspective.

According to the findings, South America was found to be the most complex region to operate in, accounting for the top three places and half of the Index's top 20, including Brazil, which climbed 15 places to number two in the rankings.

The high levels of government bureaucracy and red tape are cited as key reasons for making the local business environment in Brazil extremely challenging. For example, it can take around 54 days of work to start a business in Brazil compared to just 6 days in the United Kingdom.

The UK (including the Channel Islands) and Ireland are ranked amongst the least complex places to do business, alongside Australia, Hong Kong and New Zealand.

Ireland has retained its place in the top three least complex business destinations (79th out of 81) for the second year running thanks largely to its common law framework, stable political environment, strong legal framework and pro-business attitude. The enactment of the Companies Bill in early 2015 is expected to simplify its environment even further and initiatives such as the Knowledge Development Box, which will enhance Ireland's onshore intellectual property regime, will ensure Ireland remains one of the most popular destinations for international business.

Results summary:

- **Argentina** (1st), **Brazil** (2nd) and **Bolivia** (3rd) are ranked as the most complex
- **Poland** (7th) is the only European country to feature in the top 20 despite significant reform, thanks in part to systems and laws inherited from the former Soviet Union
- Also in the top 10 were the **United Arab Emirates** (4th) and the emerging economies of **Korea** (5th), **Indonesia** (9th) and **Thailand** (10th)
- **Ireland** (79th), **Hong Kong** (80th) and **Jersey** (81st) ranked as the least complex

The research identified local legal systems as a key driver in the complexity of regulatory environments. Those countries that operated a civil law framework, including many South American countries, were typically ranked higher than those where common law is employed.

Other drivers include economic and political turbulence such as the recent presidential elections in Indonesia and the formation of a new parliament in Thailand in June 2014. There were also significant changes in the global business environment and an increase in the compliance requirements shouldered by organisations, including FACTA, anti-bribery and corruption, the OECD Base Erosion and Profit Shifting ('BEPS') Project and changes in international company law.

In terms of trending compliance topics over the course of 2014, whistleblowing and cyber security featured the most heavily. Whistleblowing programs are increasingly being implemented by multinational companies as they seek to raise their global corporate governance standards and identify and address weaknesses across their global operations in order to defend stakeholder value.

Commenting on the findings, Thorold Youngman-Sullivan, Global Head of Corporate Secretarial Services at TMF Group, said: *"The burden of managing various international entities continues to be a major headache for multinational companies and their boards of directors. Growing internal and external stakeholder pressure, changing regulation and the continued expansion by multinationals into new territories have all added to the compliance responsibilities shouldered by their in-house teams.*

"As part of this, certain jurisdictions have changed significantly their complexity ranking from the previous year as new rules come into force, meaning that there are an increasing number of potential pitfalls waiting for those firms expanding into new territories without sufficient knowledge of the local landscapes."

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About TMF Group:

TMF Group is a leading global provider of high value business services to clients operating and investing globally. It focuses on providing highly specialised and business-critical financial, legal and human resource administrative services that enable clients to operate their corporate structures, finance vehicles and investment funds in different geographical locations. TMF Group has operations in more than 80 countries across the Americas, Asia Pacific, Europe and the Middle East.
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Full complexity index table overleaf

2013	2014 Ranking	Country	REGION
1	1	Argentina	AMERICAS
17	2	Brazil	AMERICAS
2	3	Bolivia	AMERICAS
4	4	United Arab Emirates	EMEA
14	5	Korea	APAC
30	6	Mexico	AMERICAS
7	7	Poland	EMEA
35	8	Paraguay	AMERICAS
5	9	Indonesia	APAC
6	10	Thailand	APAC
11	11	Japan	APAC
8	12	China	APAC
13	13	Philippines	APAC
24	14	Vietnam	APAC
40	15	Malaysia	APAC
3	16	Peru	AMERICAS
9	17	Nicaragua	AMERICAS
18	18	Venezuela	AMERICAS
19	19	Chile	AMERICAS
15	20	Ecuador	AMERICAS
28	21	Colombia	AMERICAS
31	22	Taiwan	APAC
23	23	Honduras	AMERICAS
10	24	Kazakhstan	EMEA
22	25	Ukraine	EMEA
29	26	Russia	EMEA
33	27	Croatia	EMEA
34	28	Egypt	EMEA
37	29	Uruguay	AMERICAS
46	30	Kenya	EMEA
47	31	Belgium	EMEA
12	32	Turkey	EMEA
16	33	Romania	EMEA
20	34	Dominican Republic	AMERICAS
27	35	France	EMEA
60	36	Cyprus	EMEA
66	37	Sweden	EMEA
21	38	Guatemala	AMERICAS
39	39	Costa Rica	AMERICAS
25	40	Switzerland	EMEA

2013	2014 Ranking	Country	REGION
26	41	El Salvador	AMERICAS
42	42	Slovakia	EMEA
32	43	Hungary	EMEA
36	44	India	APAC
38	45	Czech Rep	EMEA
53	46	Finland	EMEA
54	47	Bermuda	AMERICAS
55	48	Spain	EMEA
49	49	Serbia	EMEA
64	50	Germany	EMEA
65	51	Israel	EMEA
43	52	Panama	AMERICAS
44	53	USA	AMERICAS
50	54	Aruba	AMERICAS
56	55	Norway	EMEA
67	56	Jamaica	AMERICAS
57	57	Luxembourg	EMEA
69	58	Curacao	AMERICAS
59	59	Singapore	APAC
41	60	Austria	EMEA
61	61	South Africa	EMEA
62	62	Slovenia	EMEA
45	63	Italy	EMEA
48	64	Labuan	APAC
51	65	Bulgaria	EMEA
70	66	Malta	EMEA
71	67	Cayman Islands	AMERICAS
76	68	The Netherlands	EMEA
52	69	Mauritius	EMEA
78	70	Denmark	EMEA
79	71	British Virgin Islands	AMERICAS
81	72	New Zealand	APAC
73	73	Barbados	AMERICAS
74	74	United Kingdom	EMEA
75	75	Guernsey	EMEA
58	76	Australia	APAC
63	77	Puerto Rico	AMERICAS
72	78	Bonaire	AMERICAS
80	79	Ireland	EMEA
68	80	Hong Kong	APAC
77	81	Jersey	EMEA