

Country business guide: Singapore

1. INTRODUCTION

WORLD RANKING	Ease of doing business by World Bank 2 nd in the world, 2019 (link);
	Business registration in Singapore can be completed within 1 week with a minimum paid-up share capital of SG\$1.
OFFICIAL LANGUAGE(S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English; Mandarin; Bahasa (Malaysia); Tamil.
CURRENCY	Singapore Dollars (SGD)
POPULATION	Size 5.7 million, 2019 (link)
	Unemployment rate 2.1%, 2018 (link)
GDP PER CAPITA	S\$87,108 (at current prices), 2018 (link)
	3.1% real growth, as per 2018 (link)
OTHER COMMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Singapore is the most politically stable country in Asia; Multiple government grants such as StartUp SG, SPRING, IPOS are available for different businesses; Main industries: Manufacturing, Logistics, Banking & Finance, IT & Media, Tourism.

2. SETTING UP A BUSINESS

HOW LONG IT TAKES ?	1 week
HOW MUCH IT COSTS ?	SG\$1 as minimum paid-up share capital
MOST COMMONLY USED CORPORATE STRUCTURE?	Private limited company
	➤ 1 resident director and 1 shareholder required;
	➤ Most popular business structure used by foreign investors;
	➤ Can be used both for trading and holding activities;
	➤ There is no requirement to have physical office space or local staff in Singapore to complete business setup;

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LIST OF TYPICAL DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO REGISTER A COMPANY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notarized passport copies of directors & shareholders; Incorporation forms- 45 & 45B;
HOW TO REGISTER THE COMPANY ? (STEP-BY-STEP)	<p>Step 1 : Name reservation Select a unique name for the business and reserve it with ACRA</p> <p>Step 2 : Appointment of company secretary Appoint a secretary to manage company's statutory administration and annual returns</p> <p>Step 3 : Document preparation & submission Gather all the required documents, complete, sign and duly file them with ACRA</p>
OTHER COMMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under certain conditions, a Singapore private limited company can be legally exempt from Singapore corporate income tax; Apostille is not possible in Singapore since it is not a part of 1961 Hague Convention; Singapore is the regional hub most commonly used by MNCs for their expansion in south-east Asia;

3. OPEN BANK ACCOUNT

HOW LONG IT TAKES ?	At least 2 months
WHAT YOU NEED WHEN OPENING A CORPORATE BANK ACCOUNT ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed information on company's activities; Company's customers & suppliers; Company's financial projections;
OTHER COMMENTS	Our recommended banks are DBS Bank, OCBC, UOB, HSBC and Standard Chartered;

4. TAX, ACCOUNTING & LEGAL

RELEVANT INFORMATION, OBLIGATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From 2019, companies are granted 20% corporate tax rebate capped at S\$20,000; Start-ups are exempt from corporate tax on the first S\$100,000; Registered shipping companies are entitled to various tax benefits; Compulsory to maintain all secretarial records.
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TAX AND VAT	Corporate tax 17%, 2019 (source), file online with IRAS (link)
	GST 7%, 2019 (source)
	Withholding tax on dividends 10% - 15% (source)
OTHER COMMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 comprehensive double taxation agreements; • 2 free trade zones in Jurong Port and Changi Airport Group; • More than 600 ports in 123 countries are connected to Singapore by 200 shipping lines.

5. OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

ADVANTAGES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Singapore is a global financial centre offering lucrative opportunities for financial companies; • The country is a member of ASEAN which allows products manufactured within the region to be exempt from import duties (subject to rules of origin); • Businesses benefit from quality workpool but highest salaries in ASEAN and tight labour market;
DISADVANTAGES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All businesses are required to have at least 1 resident director; • Increased regulatory requirements to hire foreign workers; • Most Singapore banks require company directors and bank signatories to be physically present for corporate account opening.

USEFUL WEBSITES:

- <https://www.healyconsultants.com/singapore-company-registration/>
- <https://www.acra.gov.sg/>
- <https://www.iras.gov.sg/irashome/default.aspx>
- <https://www.healyconsultants.com/singapore-company-registration/accounting-tax/>