



A Jurisdictional Guide to Opening a Foreign Bank Account

As companies expand their operations into different jurisdictions, they will need to set up local bank accounts but how difficult is it? IR Global members explain all.

IR Global - The Future of Professional Services

IR Global was founded in 2010 and has since grown to become the largest practice area exclusive network of advisors in the world. This incredible success story has seen the network awarded Band 1 status by Chamber & Partners, featured in Legal 500 and in publications such as The Financial Times, Lawyer 360 and Practical Law, among many others.

The group's founding philosophy is based on bringing the best of the advisory community into a sharing economy; a system that is ethical, sustainable and provides significant added value to the client.

Businesses today require more than just a traditional lawyer or accountant. IR Global is at the forefront of this transition, with members providing strategic support and working closely alongside management teams to help realise their vision. We believe the archaic 'professional service firm' model is dying due to it being insular, expensive and slow. In IR Global, forward-thinking clients now have a credible alternative, which is open, cost effective and flexible.

Our Founding Philosophies

Multi-Disciplinary

We work alongside legal, accountancy, financial, corporate finance, transaction support and business intelligence firms, ensuring we can offer complete solutions tailored to the client's requirements.

Niche Expertise

In today's marketplace, both local knowledge and specific practice area/sector expertise is needed. We select just one firm, per jurisdiction, per practice area ensuring the very best experts are on hand to assist.

Vetting Process

Criteria is based on both quality of the firm and the character of the individuals within. It's key that all of our members share a common vision towards mutual success.

Personal Contact

The best relationships are built on trust and we take great efforts to bring our members together via regular events and networking activities. The friendships formed are highly valuable to the members and ensure client referrals are handled with great care.

Co-Operative Leadership

In contrast to authoritarian or directive leadership, our group puts teamwork and self-organisation in the centre. The group has steering committees for 12 practice area and regional working groups that focus on network development, quality controls and increasing client value.

Ethical Approach

It is our responsibility to utilise our business network and influence to instigate positive social change. IR Global founded Sinchi, a non-profit that focuses on the preservation of indigenous culture and knowledge and works with different indigenous communities/tribes around the world.

Strategic Partners

Strength comes via our extended network. If we feel a client's need is better handled by someone else, we are able to call on the assistance of our partners. First priority is to always ensure the client has the right representation whether that be with a member of IR Global or someone else.



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FOREWORD BY EDITOR, ANDREW CHILVERS

Opening a bank account in **different jurisdictions**

For companies that are looking to move into new jurisdictions to trade, setting up a bank account is a crucial part of the process.

For companies and individuals looking to move into new jurisdictions for business opportunities, setting up a bank account is a crucial part of the process. But this is never as straightforward as it seems.

In all countries, banks are obliged to crack down on fraud and any potential financial sculduggery. As a result, they tend to be very risk averse. Regardless of where a business establishes an office in the world, local banks will generally have the newly arrived expatriates jumping through various hoops, pulling their hair out in frustration.

The new arrival will need the relevant paperwork, including personal identity papers, a personal and business address, personal references and other numerous documents. And that's just the beginning.

Every jurisdiction has its own banks and banking rules, which are often complex and bureaucratic. Consequently, seeking advice from local legal and financial experts before setting up a bank account is imperative if a company is to get the right account for its particular business objectives. This is why it's so important to use local advisers who are experts in the jurisdiction to provide information about the local banking rules.

This will help businesspeople when they arrive to understand the complexity of the local banking system. It's important to understand that the risk appetite of banks varies from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Banks will undertake their own due diligence to ensure any company setting up is legally compliant and not engaged in any illegal activities.

Banks in some countries are particularly risk adverse, while others are more relaxed. For example, some banks require a director (or directors) of the company to present in person at a local branch before an application will be considered, so company directors need to be prepared to jump through some hoops to get an account.

Likewise, some jurisdictions are more accommodating to opening business and personal bank accounts. In the UK, banks will look for a director of the company to be based in the UK before they will assent to opening an account. Other countries have more relaxed legislation. But banks will be governed by the same legislation, so if you don't like one bank's vetting procedures, it's likely to be the same at other banks as well. The process can take weeks or even months – so be prepared for that when you are planning to set up in a jurisdiction.

Companies also need to consider whether they choose an international or local bank to open an account with. Both types of banks have their merits and, in some countries, it is easier to open an account with a local bank, and others with an international bank, depending on the banking regulations in the particular territory. What type of bank to open an account with will also depend on the complexity of the business – some local banks will not have the capacity or expertise to effectively deal with some of the different issues international businesses have.

All businesses looking to set up a bank account in a different jurisdiction should provide a clear and concise business plan for a corporate bank account, as well as basic compliance documents covering the directors. These are just a few of the issues that will concern businesses. What follows is the expert opinion on opening a bank account in different jurisdictions from a range of IR Global members from across the world. They address specific questions relating to their own jurisdiction, including the risk appetite of banks, how accommodating they are to overseas businesses and whether to join an international or local bank. Their responses demonstrate the myriad differences that exist across the world.



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IR Global - Contributors by Region

IR Global Accounting and Corporate Services experts aim to lead the industry and are at the forefront of the constantly developing legislation in their respective jurisdictions. The group's success can be attributed to our emphasis on cost effective solutions, personal service and seamless communication when acting on client requirements spanning multiple jurisdictions. For these reasons, IR members are fast becoming the 'go to' global alternative for businesses requiring international support. Get in touch and see how we can help you.



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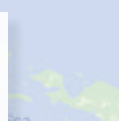
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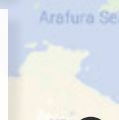
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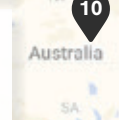
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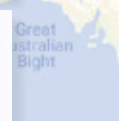
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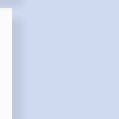
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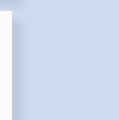
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Yves, is a certified accountant and tax advisor and general manager of Comptafid Benelux NV, a Belgian company established in Brussels in 1978 and Antwerp in 1995. The company is mainly active in accountancy and tax advice (national and international), guiding its clients to the different specialists on the Belgian market such as notary firms, law firms, insurance brokers, real estate and financial specialists, marketing and publicity firms.

With its international experience, Comptafid emphasises the knowledge of languages and is sensitive to different legal cultures. Languages such as English, French, Dutch and German are commonly spoken in the company.

comptafid.be

QUESTION ONE

What is the general risk appetite of banks in your jurisdiction and how does that affect setting up a new business bank account?

Belgium, is a small country having a complex structure on all different levels of the society and where business is very quick confronted with expanding business abroad. Belgian citizens are used to deal with foreign entities and their structure abroad.

This is not different with banks. Being confronted to complex and different structures then those known in Belgium is not extravagant. Belgium is also a country where development, research and testing the market is general accepted by the banks. Does that mean that the banks accept very easily new businesses? No, not at all. Besides a good developed business plan and good structured financing combined with a good marketing plan is the start of the accepting cycle.

Therefore it is important that this business plan is good structured and presented by a Belgian Certified Accountant or by a Belgian Public Certified Accountant. This approach guarantees that the business language of the entrepreneur is correctly translated into the financial language of the banks taking into account the Belgian culture on financing.

The risk of the project must be covered and described into different scenario's. But this is true for all new investment projects and not necessarily only for the banks. An investor, generally speaking is interested by its return on investment. The bank will not analyze a case where the investor doesn't receive in a reasonable time a return on investment. The lack of a reasonable profit in a general accepted economic environment is the basis for acceptance and opening of a relationship with the entrepreneur.

Belgian banks, as everywhere in the world, have their focus on certain banking activities. Its up to the Belgian Certified Accountant to analyze its clients investment project and propose without any preference to certain banks, in all neutrality those banks who fits the needs of the client and his investment project.

It would be hypocrite to declare that the Certified Accountant has no preferences, as a good organized Accounting Firm, he must dispose of the necessary contacts (introductions) within certain banks. That doesn't mean that he will not be independent. It is important that the Belgian Certified Accountant knows when certain interests of the banks are highlighted. He must know the strategy of the bank in a certain time.

You should compare the situation toward the mood of the banks compared to the waves on the sea. An example, taking into account, for strategy, the real estate investment activity. When this wave is high in a certain bank, it would be easier to introduce a query on credit lines in this bank for real estate rather than to go to another bank where the wave is low for this activity. Its like a sea surface. The waves are not on every place with the same height.

So opening a bank account is not only a question on compliance but also more a question of the interest of a bank at a certain moment related to a certain strategy of the bank. Compliance comes in a second stage and is, we do agree, in certain cases very annoying, but investors, if they are honest and trusty, should less be worried for this part. Their Lawyers and their Certified Accountants can definitely deal this matter. Starting up a business where in Belgium nobody is at home, where there is no office, only a letter box, and no physical "real" activity, just admit that you can just forget that kind of requests. That time is history.

In this philosophy you can easily understand why an identification in real, face to face, is absolutely necessary. A lot of people consider this obligation as absurd. The social contact between the banker and the foreign investor is the first social contact between two parties having the possibility to evaluate the professionalism of the further client, but also the way around. The foreign investor must feel that the considered bank will be the partner in his company on which he financially wants to rely on. If the foreign investor doesn't want to engage on the approach, the time is lost for both parties.

Some examples. "Argenta" is a Belgian bank who's focus is on private individuals rather than industrial or commercial clients. "Bank van Breda" focusses on independent individuals and companies in the medical sector, architects, lawyers para-medical, translators, notary's etc. and try always to combine the personal wealth of the individual against the business that has been proposed. "KBC", "ING" and "Paribas Fortis" are the top three banks in Belgium offering a very wide program of financial services. The approach to these banks is completely different.

| QUESTION TWO

How accommodating are banks in your jurisdiction for opening a business and personal bank account?

This is a question that has several answers. 85% of all banks are interested in doing private banking. They love it. You come to Belgium for this sector, you are welcome. In this case compliance is IMPORTANT. Of course, banks love your money, but is it legal, transparent, justified, etc.? Be aware that compliance is mainly driven by all the laws on money laundering. We will not enumerate all the obligations on money laundering, but be aware that Belgium is rather complete in this legislation. Where other countries, are not yet at this level, Belgium, is at the top on regulation!!!

The remaining 15% are definitely interested to have this foreign investor on board BEFORE COVID-19.

Effectively no banks are interested in having the foreign investor on board. They NOW refuse all new contacts. The banks want to serve "their" clients now in the first priority. The banking "time"-volume went up with 2000% for business clients. The Government guarantees, for several billions euro's, these new loans as the banks received the important task to decide themselves what business needs to be supported by the government and what businesses should be left alone. The banks want to support as maximum these enterprises who have a benefit for the Belgian economy. This situation will continue, from our point of view, till the end of the year.

| QUESTION THREE

Should you join an internationally reputable or established bank rather than a local bank?

It is, generally speaking, known in our business that going to a bank in another country always is a big question mark. The easiest way, is having your international banker in your home country, who knows you, letting him introduce you to the same bank in the targeted country. Is that always the best way of doing so? The answer can be yes or no. In fact, it depends in what way your home bank is fully established in the target country, using the full possibilities as those who exist in the target country as local Banks do. Mostly those international banks are "big", what that means is that your project is in a lot of cases too small to consider.

We remember a case where we wanted to start a business for our client in China. The Belgian Bank, originally from Holland, stated that they didn't want to open an account in Shanghai as the minimum deposit should be 300 millions euro's. The client project was 30 million euro's. Via an introduction we opened a Chinese Account in a Chinese local bank in combination with The Belgian Bank through a subsidiary in Hong Kong. It was The Belgian Bank who opened the doors in China in the Chinese bank. This Chinese bank was of course a must for Chinese regulation.

For Belgium we believe that using a local Belgian bank is the best way in functioning in Belgium. The Certified Accountant is the best placed man in getting the job done.



Comptafid Benelux is a Belgian company established in Brussels since 1978 and Antwerp since 1995. The company's main activity is accountancy and tax advice (both national and international).

Other than its own services, Comptafid Benelux guides its clients to different specialists on the

Belgian market such as notary firms, law firms, insurance brokers, real estate and financial specialists, marketing and publicity firms, etc.

The firm is head-quartered in the capital of Europe, Brussels, and is committed to producing high quality work, delivered and aimed at practical solutions.

Comptafid Schweiz is the Swiss subsidiary, that offers a full range of services such as accountancy, financial planning, corporate trust and legal services. The clients of Comptafid Schweiz range from listed multinationals to individual entrepreneurs.

| Top tips to smooth the opening process in Belgium

- Till the COVID 19 is controlling our economic life in Belgium, do not start any action if you are unknown in any Bank in Belgium. It is a waste of time.
- Don't lose your time in preparing a decent business plan and confront this plan with a Belgian Certified Accountant, so that your file will be ready at due time.
- Prepare yourself, together with the Belgian Certified Accountant, and your lawyers in order to identify all legal matters to comply to the Money Laundering laws in Belgium. Identification of the transaction, Domicile, Reasons for using the Bank account, source of funds, beneficiary owner etc.



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| QUESTION ONE

What is the general risk appetite of banks in your jurisdiction and how does that affect setting up a new business bank account?

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) is the apex bank in Nigeria and the principal regulator of banks and financial institutions. Nigeria presently has 22 licensed banks and 940 microfinance banks spread across the geographical landscape and servicing differs individual and corporate interests. Only banks and financial institutions registered by the CBN pursuant to the Banks and Other Financial Institutions Act are authorized to provide the platform for opening and the operation of bank accounts in Nigeria. Opening a bank account in Nigeria largely depends on the applicant, nature of business and the use of the bank account. Corporate entities and individuals are allowed to open and operate bank accounts in Nigeria provided they meet the requisite criteria.

A fundamental requirement for opening and operating a bank account for corporate bodies is the pre-requisite to register a business or body corporate. An incorporated company may either be a private company or a public company and may have limited or unlimited liability status. Only Directors and Officers of a Company (including the Company Secretary) are authorised to open and operate a bank account on behalf of the company. Furthermore, fund Investments by offshore parent companies in Nigeria, can only be made through inflow of funds into pre-approved bank accounts.

Apart from incorporated entities, expatriates employed in either the private or public sector may apply for and operate bank accounts. However, to qualify, such expatriates must provide proof of an approved Expatriate Quota (permit which allows companies to employ foreign nationals) and must have been issued a residency and work permit also referred to as Combined Expatriate Residency Permit and Aliens Card (CERPAC). Citizens from any country that is a party to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) are, however, exempted from this requirement as they are guaranteed free entry, residency and other accompanying rights. But such citizens must apply for and be issued with a Work Permit to qualify for the opening a bank account.

| QUESTION TWO

How accommodating are banks in your jurisdiction for opening a business and personal bank account?

Navigating through the legal and regulatory procedure for opening a bank account in Nigeria is straightforward and less cumbersome. Commercial practice and business exigencies determine to a large extent the nature, purpose and utility of bank accounts available in the various financial institutions in Nigeria; one size never fits all. Whilst general vetting regulations and Know-Your-Customer standards are set by the CBN via regulations, in an effort to gain as much market share as they can, Commercial Banks regularly devise easier and cost-effective strategies for on-boarding customers through easy-to-adapt account opening and operating processes. Irrespective of the nature and use of the account type, certain general rules apply to the opening and operation of bank accounts in Nigeria and they include:

- Completion of Account Opening Forms.
- Specimen Signature Cards.
- Means of Identification – The acceptable means of identification are a data page of international passports for non-resident Directors or International Passport or CERPAC (see above) for resident expatriates.
- Passport-sized photographs of each Signatory to the Account

- Utility Bill of the Business or Residential Address – An applicant is required to provide evidence of business or residential address and a copy of any utility bill (water bill, electricity bill or any other government bill) issued with reference to the address.
- Completed Reference Forms – Applicants would be required to submit two independent and Satisfactorily Completed References signed by existing Account Holders.
- Residence/Work Permit (CERPAC)/ This requirement applies to only resident expatriates employed in Nigeria.
- Biometric Registration – Each applicant would be required to enrol for biometric registration with the bank and obtain the Bank Verification Number (BVN). The BVN is a unique, ten-digit number assigned to each signatory to a bank account and which constitute a distinct identity for the account holder or signatory. It is noteworthy that the CBN and the Bankers' Committee have nominated some offshore banks as partners to facilitate the biometric registration for directors and expatriates who are outside Nigeria.

In addition to the above, applicants for corporate bank accounts would be required to provide the following:

- Certificate of Company or Business Registration.
- Board Resolution – presentation of a Board Resolution signed by at least two directors approving the opening and operation of the Bank Account.
- SCUML Registration (where applicable) – The SCUML is an abbreviation of the Special Control Unit Against Money Laundering, an arm of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, an agency responsible for curtailing financial crimes in Nigeria. Banks are required to obtain an evidence of SCUML registration for certain businesses including dealers in jewellerys, luxury goods, professional service providers and consulting firms, hotels & hospitality, vehicle dealers, real estate, construction companies, supermarkets, etc.
- Tax Identification Number – Applicants for Corporate Accounts are also required to provide the tax identification number issued to the company by the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS).

It takes approximately 12 working days to set up a corporate account and 5 working days to open a private account.

| QUESTION THREE

Should you join an internationally reputable or established bank rather than a local bank?

The procedure for setting up bank accounts is generally uniform for both local and international banks, both of which are regulated by the Central Bank of Nigeria. The option to either set up a local bank account or pitching tent with an international bank depends largely on business exigencies. The term "local" hardly fits the top Nigerian banks, most of which provide wide platforms for the conduct of financial businesses beyond the Nigerian geographical space and have built affiliations with reputable global banks. Setting up a local bank account is encouraged considering the bank's generally acceptable risk tolerance levels and less vigorous vetting and on-boarding processes.

International banks operating in Nigeria have independent account opening and vetting processes often flavoured in the operating standards of the parent companies. Know-Your-Customer processes for international companies are also considered more rigorous. However, without compromising security and the integrity of the financial systems, most local banks provide flexible account opening procedures often tailored to meet specific customer needs. Also, local banks are generally more suitable for retail banking and have a wider geographical reach and presence in Nigeria than international banks.



The Board of DCSL consists of seasoned professionals with over a century's cumulative experience. Members of the Board have served as partners of top accounting firms and have worked in several industries spanning across the Nigerian economy.

Why Choose DCSL?

- We possess core competencies in our service areas, which we have acquired over several years
- We have sustained relationships with various regulators to create value for our clients
- We have an impressive portfolio of diverse clients across various sectors of the Nigerian economy
- We deliver value on a competitive fee arrangement, which is both time and value based

Top tips to smoothe the opening process in Nigeria

1. Ensure your business is registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission and has a certificate of registration as well as other relevant statutory documents issued. For private accounts, ensure that relevant Resident and Work Permit has been obtained.
2. Visit the website of the Central Bank of Nigeria to confirm the names and addresses of legally approved banks.
3. Consider the affiliation of the choice of bank with global financial institutions as this would widen the bouquet of benefits open to the customer.
4. Bank Verification Number issued in the course of the account opening process should be kept secret and not disclosed to anyone.
5. A director who is the representative of the major interest in the company should be a mandatory signatory to the account.



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Darrach couples his banking experience with a solid understanding of the Emirati corporate market to be a premier market leader in UAE company incorporation advisory.

uae-eu.com

| QUESTION ONE

What is the general risk appetite of banks in your jurisdiction and how does that affect setting up a new business bank account?

Investor confidence and risk appetite have steadily improved in the UAE over the past year. More than 70% of investors surveyed said that their view of investing in the Emirati market had either remained unchanged or became more favourable due to political and civil unrest in the Middle East, North Africa and Asia. In particular, unrest in Hong Kong and Lebanon have seen entrepreneurs, investors and bank utilisation rise in the UAE due to the ease of business/transactions compared to the jurisdictions above.

| QUESTION TWO

How accommodating are banks in your jurisdiction for opening a business and personal bank account?

Both UAE residents and non-residents can open a bank account. You may open a current income and savings account if you have residency in the UAE. If you're not a resident, banks will open only a cumulative deposit or call account that is usually used for an account specifically to pay for a non-resident mortgage and is a requirement in this instance. In practice, it is quite a simple process for residents/expatriates to open a new personal bank account in the UAE. There are minimal documentation requirements, with you often only needing to present your passport, Emirates ID and visa.

A bank could refuse to open a bank account because of the nationality/place of birth on the applicants' passport since banks try to avoid having customers from high-risk/sanctioned countries. Every bank has an internal rating of nationalities. However, certain bank accounts can accommodate, and as such, you should explore all your options and talk to multiple banks to increase your chances of opening an Emirati bank account.

Corporate Banking in the UAE

You can open bank accounts for various types of companies in the UAE, which are offshore companies, mainland companies or entities operating in a Free Zone. In practice, banks tend to prioritise mainland companies and Free Zone-based enterprises for opening a corporate bank account.

While offshore companies can open bank accounts, experience tells us that local Emirati banks and UAE branches of international banks are shying away from offshore company customers. Offshore banking options are becoming increasingly popular with offshore company owners. As such, there is no need to have a Dubai-based bank account since offshore companies tend not to have a physical presence in the UAE. Fortunately, there are other foreign banking jurisdictions, such as Mauritius and Switzerland, that offer some of the most sophisticated banking products in the world. These features include online banking, payment facility cards and finance options and ensure you do not have to sacrifice an optimal banking experience with an offshore account.

What information do Emirati banks check?

Emirati banks will request information confirming the legal existence of the entity. Companies owned by corporate entities will need to provide a full set of corporate documents to identify the management and ultimate beneficial ownership of the structure. You will most likely have to notarise/legalise these documents both in their country of origin and in the United Arab Emirates.

Global initiatives against tax evasion, money laundering and terrorist financing in the past decade have resulted in the Central Bank enhancing customer due diligence procedures on financial institutions that open accounts for offshore companies. As a result, banks have had to adopt a risk-based approach to account opening. The banking institution must understand the customer's business areas, the volume of deposits, potential profit and customer base.

Documents required to open a personal bank account in the UAE:

- Passport and a copy;
- Copy of your visa page;
- Salary Certificate;
- Emirates ID;
- Six months of bank statements from any other bank if you already have an account.

Documents required to open a corporate bank account in the UAE:

- Company Trade Licence;
- Certificate of Registration;
- Share Certificate(s);
- Company Memorandum & Articles of Association;
- Board Resolution empowering a Company Officer to open the account;
- Passport copies for shareholders and authorised signatories.

*Required documents will vary depending on the bank and the entity's corporate structure. Companies with corporate shareholders that are outside the UAE will be required to notarise and attest all parent company documents in the country of origin and again in the UAE.

Timescales for opening a UAE-based corporate account can range from two to six weeks depending on the complexity of your corporate structure and the availability of the required documents to open the account. Opening an offshore account can be relatively efficient when directly compared to Emirati-based entities, as the process can take as little as five working days as long as all your documentation is complete when you apply.

QUESTION THREE

Should you join an internationally reputable or established bank rather than a local bank?

The UAE Central Bank is the primary financial regulatory authority in the country. There are 23 local and 26 foreign banks in the UAE. Larger banks dominate the country's banking industry, with the five biggest banks accounting for about 60% of the sector's assets.

According to Moody's, the UAE banking system is stable due to the banks' resilient capital levels and liquidity buffers.

International banks such as HSBC, Citi Bank and Standard Chartered tend to have the trust and reliability of business owners new to the UAE because of the reputational connotations and global popularity. However, these banks tend to have higher minimum capital requirements and enhanced documentation/ due diligence procedures.

Local entities such as Emirates NBD, Mashreq, ADCB and RAK Bank tend to be the most popular option among more established businesses within the region due to the flexibility and the accessibility of the branches/ relationship managers. Minimum capital value starts at 50,000 UAE Dirhams, which is more accessible for many start-ups as opposed to the higher minimum capital requirements in place at most of the international banks.

It all depends on the structure of your business. It would help if you considered the scale of your business, where you plan to operate, your entity's financial state, and most importantly, your needs and preferences. Therefore, we will take a close look at your case and propose the more appropriate solution for your context and explain why.



Europe Emirates Group is a global firm providing a wide range of legal and fiscal services.

A team of business strategists and professionals, who place the customer at the centre of our approach and always strive to seek out and tailor solutions to perfectly match our customers' needs. We are an independent, efficient provider that guarantees absolute confidentiality in all matters.

In a world full of complicated and rapidly changing regulations, we provide a clear path, providing best advice regardless of how large or small our clients' businesses are; offering excellent services, at competitive pricing.

Top tips to smooth the opening process in UAE

- **Business Plan:** Having a detailed business plan is a crucial aspect of opening a bank account. Your ability to corroborate your need for a corporate banking product demonstrates to the bank that you are a serious entrepreneur/business owner.
- **Website:** An informative, up-to-date website brings substance to your entity. We recommend investing in creating one if you do not have one because it will boost your reputation when the time comes to open a bank account. It also will increase your credibility in the eyes of potential partners/clients.
- **Documentation:** Make sure all your documents are in order before you apply to ensure a smoother process. Gain detailed knowledge of the process from the bank in advance to effectively plan and work within your timeframe as opposed to the banks. That way, you can remain in control!
- **Research:** Take some time to research the available banks in your jurisdiction. Make sure you are aware of fees, criteria, restrictions, applicable currencies and processes. Have all the information you need to make an informed decision and enlist the help of an impartial banking expert who can talk you through the pros and cons before making a final decision.



GERMANY

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Andrea has been working for the FRTG Group since her studies in business administration and has been employed full-time since 2012. During her long affiliation with the company, she has driven the digitalisation of the firm and its services.

In her daily work she mainly advises small and medium-sized corporations in business and tax issues. In 2017 she acquired the title of tax consultant and has become the team leader of the tax department at the head office in Düsseldorf. Her goal is to provide each client with the best possible basis for their operational success through specific advice.

frtg-group.de/en

| QUESTION ONE

What is the general risk appetite of banks in your jurisdiction and how does that affect setting up a new business bank account?

Since the financial crisis of 2008, new standards for banks have been introduced throughout Europe, which are intended to reduce the risks for banks and investors alike by making it compulsory for banks to increase their capital ratios and by strictly tightening the regulatory environment. More than 10 years after the crisis, the public and politicians continue to focus on the risk culture of the banking sector, which has made all transactions with banks more cumbersome, applications more extensive and review procedures more intensive.

This is certainly true for the process of opening a new bank account, in which the opening of business accounts is subject to much stricter requirements than the opening of a private account. In the past, only a few documents of proof of the legally compliant establishment of the company were required, but today, also due to the ever more stringent EU money laundering directives, extensive documents and evidence are required.

Especially for (EU) foreigners, these requirements sometimes lead to a lack of understanding because they are not used to such bureaucracy from their home countries and sometimes the documents to be provided are difficult to obtain.

Moreover, it is generally much more difficult for private individuals and companies alike to open a bank account in Germany if they are domiciled outside the EU or the European Economic Area. German branch banks, for example, can refuse non-EU citizens as future customers without giving reason. Municipal Savings banks in particular usually do not take those customers on; most of them have stipulated in their GTCs that the beneficial owners and authorised signatories of the account must be German citizens or residents of Germany.

If one does not want to or cannot open an account with an internationally active bank, often direct banks remain the sole option. However, these usually only offer accounts on a credit basis for foreigners, but then often as a free account. Usually it is easier for expatriates to keep an account in their home country and receive salary payments there, as drawing credits are usually used and required.

| QUESTION TWO

How accommodating are banks in your jurisdiction for opening a business and personal bank account?

Since internationally active banks are also subject to a wide variety of national and EU-wide guidelines, the audit processes of the individual institutions differ only slightly. Banks with international business, e.g. the "Deutsche Bank AG", are still very interested in opening accounts for foreign citizens and companies. As a rule, one can assume that the bank will apply the same requirements as the country from which the interested party comes. The banks regularly use the possibility of making enquiries at foreign branches of the own institution in the country of residence of the potential new customer. At this point it also becomes clear why Municipal Savings Banks regularly do not want to accept foreign customers, as this option is not available to them.

Foreign citizens without residence in Germany require documents that confirm their identity and their registration address beyond any doubt. As a rule, identification documents must be accompanied by an apostille or legalisation for documents and certificates issued by the relevant German consulate abroad. If the customer is unable to appear in person to open the account, the representative must also be provided with a power of attorney with apostille. In this case, the identity of the account holder is subsequently established through

the Video Ident procedure or through the verification of identity by reliable third parties in accordance with the Money Laundering Act, such as notaries, banks, lawyers etc.

Legal entities wishing to open a German bank account must submit comprehensive documents certified and checked for authenticity by apostille; these include an extract from the commercial register, addresses and names of the members of the representative body including their official IDs with apostille and, if applicable, registration certificates as well as a notarized statute of the company.

| QUESTION THREE

Should you join an internationally reputable or established bank rather than a local bank?

Often the choice of a nationally or internationally active institute is not in the hands of the entrepreneur, due to the reasons discussed in question two.

In principle, local banks often offer more favorable conditions than international credit institutions. However, this is of course also associated with restrictions or services with costs, especially in international payment transactions.

The procedure of opening an account is generally completed more quickly with internationally active banks, as these follow a much more standardized procedure. However, the verification procedure and the associated requirements for the customer and the evidence to be provided do not differ between the individual banks due to the legal regulations.

Municipal Savings Banks are institutions under public law and as a rule belong to local authorities. In contrast to international commercial banks, they do not primarily serve to make a profit. For those reasons alone those banks are highly regarded in Germany and are rated as safe and low-risk by customers. In our experience, customers in Germany therefore have just as much confidence in the business activity, albeit for different reasons than with commercial banks. Keeping a bank account with such a savings bank is therefore certainly not a disadvantage in terms of external image for internationally active companies with business in Germany. It might, however, make the internal transactions more difficult than they would be with internationally active banks.

Nowadays the transaction time frame is short and rarely extends two business days, even when two different banks or local and international banks are involved.

Therefore, the choice of financial institution – if there is a choice – is often dependent on the type of business and the type of transactions required. With our broad experience in the various sectors of the economy as well as with individual companies and larger corporate entities and our good contacts to various banks we can consult you in the entire process of setting up a German bank account and go over the related advantages and disadvantages typical for your business.



The FRTG Group is an association of five tax consulting companies. This means the group can draw on a pool of experts who are able to provide their clients with qualified, comprehensive and personalised advice in different specialist areas. FRTG Group provides clients with individual solutions tailored precisely to their needs, from a single source for national and international companies of any legal form and size, entrepreneurs, associations, foundations and private individuals in the following areas;

- Auditing
- Tax consulting
- Services
- Business management consulting
- Restructuring

Independent institutes and magazines have awarded the FRTG Group several times already.

| Top tips to smooth the opening process in Germany

1. The first and, in our opinion, most important tip when opening a German bank account is: contact an experienced advisor! He or she can tell you the advantages and disadvantages of the various options, as well as compile a list of the required documents. Ideally, your advisor will have contacts with local, but also commercial banks and can put you in direct contact with the relevant decision-makers.
2. The second tip is to stay open to different solutions. We do not believe in a one-fits-all-concept and there isn't just one way of doing it.
3. It may be better not to just open a bank account in Germany, but to establish a German company. The establishment of a bank account would only be one step of many, but in the end it is the result tailored to your needs that counts. We are happy to be a reliable partner for you during this process.



NEW ZEALAND

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Richard has more than 30 years' experience with New Zealand (NZ) taxation, and particularly enjoys dealing with land tax issues and the GST regime.

Having spent the majority of his early career in the investigation's unit of the New Zealand Inland Revenue, Richard's passion for tax stuck and he eventually became Gilligan Sheppard's tax partner.

He deals with clients of all types and sizes and provides tax opinions on the appropriate treatment of items of income and expenditure. He also assists clients with IRD risk reviews and audits, and can assist clients who are having difficulties meeting their tax payment obligations to make suitable repayment arrangements with the IRD. Richard also provides cross-border tax advice, both to existing clients looking to expand their operations offshore, and to offshore persons looking to either establish a NZ presence for their business or to relocate themselves personally to NZ more permanently.

gilligansheppard.co.nz

| QUESTION ONE

What is the general risk appetite of banks in your jurisdiction and how does that affect setting up a new business bank account?

All of New Zealand's (NZ) financial institutions, including the major trading banks (Westpac, BNZ, ANZ, ASB, Kiwibank), are now governed by strict anti-money laundering rules (AML), which require customer due diligence (CDD) procedures to have been completed pre a new bank account being activated, and then on-going monitoring and reporting of suspicious transactions once the account is fully functional.

With the stringent requirements of the AML legislation now in place (recently extended to govern lawyers, accountants and real estate agents who are taking on new clients as well), it would have been reasonable to expect that once the CDD processes had been completed by the bank they would be indifferent as to whether the customer was offshore or onshore.

However, it has become clear in recent times, that all of the major trading banks at least, and no doubt the majority of the lesser known banks as well (due to the increased reporting obligations that have also been imposed on them), appear to shudder and try to hide in their burrows as soon as you mention that your offshore client wishes to open a new bank account.

The appetite for any risk is minimal (a position no doubt encouraged by the Reserve Bank of NZ's recent enforcement action against several of the major banks for inadequate internal controls). This is reduced even further if the client is looking to trade in NZ via their offshore entity as opposed to establishing a NZ-based structure, or worse, the client wishes to use an alternative trading structure such as a limited partnership, as opposed to the more vanilla company structure.

Most of the NZ banks also have a so called "black-listed jurisdictions" list, those countries with whom they simply will not deal with (or at least not without heavy involvement from their internal fraud investigative teams). Mention Iraq or some of the old Soviet states for example, even if the client is not directly situated in those jurisdictions, and the bank is likely to become extremely nervous.

| QUESTION TWO

How accommodating are banks in your jurisdiction for opening a business and personal bank account?

Most of the major trading banks offer both business and personal bank account options to those based offshore.

The account opening procedures are similar across the banks. Most will allow you to apply online prior to your arrival in NZ, and will issue you with account details to the extent that you can commence the deposit of funds into the NZ bank account via telegraphic transfer, also pre-arrival.

These accounts will have an inactive status, however, until you, or an appropriately authorised representative of the account holder (if it is a company business account for example), visits the bank physically, and provides the requisite proof of identity (POI) documents. Once the bank is satisfied with the POI documents, the bank account will be activated (then fully functional and able to be managed from offshore in most cases if necessary). If the bank account is not activated within a 12-month period, then the bank will return any deposited funds and shut it down.

The requisite POI documents are fairly identical across all major trading banks, no doubt because all these financial institutions are following the AML legislative requirements and the CDD guidance in that respect.

Whether the bank account is a personal or business one does not usually in itself increase the level of POI documentation. Instead, it is the type of customer that will dictate POI requirements. For example, an individual customer will usually only need to provide their passport, plus some proof of their residential address, whether that be in respect of the country where they have just come from (or still reside), or the NZ residential address they will be staying at.

POI for a company account, however, will require a copy of the company's certificate of incorporation (NZ or overseas), director's details (plus a passport photo), details of any individual who has de-facto control over the company, details of any shareholder who holds a greater than 25% ownership interest in the company, and finally local tax identification numbers (TIN's) for all of these parties, or a declaration as to why a TIN cannot be provided.

QUESTION THREE

Should you join an internationally reputable or established bank rather than a local bank?

Due to NZ's strict regulatory regime for its registered financial institutions, in terms of both Reserve Bank of NZ oversight and requirements to comply with NZ AML legislation, it makes little difference if you open a NZ bank account with an internationally reputable or established bank, or with a local bank that has no international affiliates.

It more likely therefore comes down to the profile of your client, their directive in terms of a desired banking relationship, particularly if there are likely to be multiple cross-border banking transactions between group members. This consequently may be better facilitated via having the same bank used in multiple jurisdictions.

From my own experience, using a bank that has cross-jurisdictional branches does not necessarily translate into greater ease in opening a new NZ bank account for your offshore client. I had one example recently where even though most of NZ's major trading banks as I previously stated are Australian owned, the NZ and Australian branches were not interested in talking to each other to assist our client with opening a new NZ account because he already had a trading history with the Australian parent.

Presently the Reserve Bank of NZ lists 26 registered banks in NZ. Of these, only 5 would be considered "local", and would probably not be considered as a viable NZ banking option by offshore clients. So I would suggest that the vetting procedures will be similar regardless of which international bank you choose (although some may be restricted to only dealing with those who have an account already in the parent's home jurisdiction).



Gilligan Sheppard is a different kind of accounting practice that does more than just accounting. The partners listen, then provide a no-nonsense, cut to the chase solution that will be tailored to each individual circumstance and need.

We're different. We challenge. We consider. Then - We deliver.

Gilligan Sheppard takes the time to understand each client and the particular challenges they face moving forward, given what they would like to achieve. The practice then methodically evaluates the options ahead, vigilantly considering the potential short and long-term outcomes, to ensure clients get the best possible advice.

Advice is delivered in a very simple, straight-talking manner that will always clearly elucidate the decisions that need to be made. Some clients have called it a breath of fresh air, which is quite fortunate, because we are not comfortable operating any other way.

Top tips to smooth the opening process in New Zealand

1. Have your POI document pack ready. You are going to need to provide the documents not only to banking institutions but also the Inland Revenue, NZ appointed accountants, lawyers and real estate agents in any event.
2. Use a local agent (accountant/lawyer) to assist you with opening the account if possible, as they are likely to have their own existing relationships with the various banks and people within in that regard, that can just Get Things Done.
3. Someone is going to have to physically appear at the NZ bank to activate the new account, so if your client is not planning on visiting NZ to do this themselves, then have them be prepared to appoint an agent in NZ to do this on their behalf.
4. Plan ahead – opening a NZ bank account is unlikely to happen overnight, so give yourself a 2-3 week timeframe. If you urgently require a NZ facility, some accountants will offer the use of their trust account to facilitate the odd transaction in the interim. But you will still need to have provided 1 to the accountant before they can offer this service to you.



US - NEW YORK

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Robert Hoberman joined the firm in 1981, became a partner four years later and now serves as the firm's managing partner. He has over 30 years of experience in management consulting working with all types of businesses. His expertise ranges from structuring business deals, tax planning, and estate and gift planning, valuations, including the use of trusts. He also has extensive familiarity dealing with banks and financial institutions, as well as tremendous knowledge of data processing, systems analysis, and consulting for commercial applications.

A graduate of Syracuse University with a B.S. in Accounting, Robert is a Certified Public Accountant in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Florida. He is a member of both the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) and the New York State Society of CPAs (NYSSCPA).

Robert previously received the Humanitarian of the Year award for his work with the NYC Chapter of The Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of America (NYC CCFA). He currently serves as a board member for the Lester M. Entin Foundation.

hobermanlesser.com

| QUESTION ONE

What is the general risk appetite of banks in your jurisdiction and how does that affect setting up a new business bank account?

US banks are always calling us a soliciting business. They have sales channels that are constantly looking for new sources of business and personal relationships. US banks are subject to Know Your Customer ("KYC") rules and as long as they get the information they need on the account owners and can verify that it is a legitimate entity, they are willing to open accounts.

▪ Different procedures for businesses depending on jurisdictions

- There are different procedures for Small Business Entities ("SBE") than for large commercial entities. SBE's are generally defined as doing less than \$5 million in sales. SBE's generally need to prove that they have authority to do business in the US and will have to provide copies of Articles of Incorporation, issuance of an Employer Identification Number ("EIN"), a copy of the ITIN for the responsible person as well as have an address in the US.
- Commercial entities with greater than \$5 million in sales have an easier time opening an account. US banks generally do not require an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number ("ITIN") of the responsible person, they do not need to have a US address. However, the bank will require copies of the documents of formation in their country. They do need to have some presence in the US (either an office or a responsible person).
- Companies formed in the US generally need to provide the bank a copy of the certificate of formation, issuance of the EIN and either a Social Security number or an ITIN of the person with signatory authority.

▪ Different procedures for personal accounts

- For personal accounts opened in a US bank, the bank will follow its KYC rules which generally mean that:
- Individuals must have a US address
- They need to be either a US citizen or a Green Card holder.

▪ Should an expatriate set up with a local bank or keep their salary offshore?

- There is no difference in the taxation of a US citizen if they deposit their foreign earnings in a US bank or a Foreign bank. However, if they open a bank account in a foreign country then they may be subject to the FINCEN reporting rules. Failure to comply with the annual information reporting (there is no tax due on the FINCEN reporting form) can trigger significant penalties and criminal charges.

| QUESTION TWO

How accommodating are banks in your jurisdiction for opening a business and personal bank account?

▪ How varied are banks' vetting procedures?

- Most US banks have similar provisions; however, they can vary at different times and the speed at which they process the paperwork can vary significantly as well. It is important to select a bank that is set up to handle these types of requests in an efficient and expeditious manner.

▪ What documents need to be provided?

- Certificate of formation
- If a foreign entity, authorization to do business in the US
- Proof of a responsible person (either a US citizen or an ITIN holder)
- US address or US presence.

- **How long does it typically take and what is the process?**

- If you have all of the documents readily available, the process can take anywhere from 2 days to one month.

QUESTION THREE

Should you join an internationally reputable or established bank rather than a local bank?

I would recommend that you use a large international bank. They have more resources, branches in other countries as well as affiliations with other foreign banks that can help you to facilitate transactions in more countries if the need arises.

However, if you know that you will only need to use the bank in the US, then it may make sense to open the account at a large regional bank that your advisor (accountant or someone else) has a relationship with so that you can get a more personalized experience and better service if a problem arises.

- **Is it easier to set up a local bank account and what does that mean for your business?**

- Having a bank account in the US will make it easier to receive payments from customers as well as make payments to vendors. Remember, a significant amount of commerce in the US is still transacted with checks.

- **What would be clients' perceptions if you set up a business account with a local bank?**

- I would not use a local bank unless it was either an international bank or a large regional bank. In either case, I think that the client would be very satisfied with the choice.

- **Are international banks' vetting procedures more difficult than local banks?**

- In the US, the vetting procedures are very similar due to the KYC rules imposed on the banks by the various laws that were put in place subsequent to the 9/11 attacks. The only difference that I would tell them to take into consideration is the service at a large regional bank is generally better than an international bank, but, an international bank will have more resources available to the client outside of the US



Hoberman & Lesser, LLP has developed a unique and distinctive client service style, combining the highest professional standards and commitment to client satisfaction, which sets us apart from other firms.

We are a full-service accounting and advisory firm providing auditing, accounting, tax and management advisory service to a broad range of corporate and individual clients across numerous industries. Hoberman & Lesser has been providing solutions-oriented advice, technical skills, value-added resources, and industry expertise for more than 85 years. We go "above and beyond" by providing creative thinking and customized planning and an extra dimension in client service, quality, and results.

Top tips to smooth the opening process in New York

To make the process go as quickly as possible:

- Have a US citizen or an ITIN holder available before you start the process (note: getting an ITIN issued typically takes 4-8 months).
- Have the paperwork for the formation of the entity available before you start the process.
- Get an introduction to the bank from a trusted US advisor that has a relationship with the financial institution. This will help to facilitate the process. It is always easier to do business and get over the inevitable problem when you work with people that know each other.



US - CALIFORNIA

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Dave Thompson combines his passion for logic and his innate skill with numbers to help small businesses and their owners increase profits, reduce tax liabilities and push through the opportunities and issues that strengthen businesses. He excels at establishing a strong and personal relationship with both domestic and international clients, and actively collaborates with them on business needs and issues. As an attentive and responsive advisor, Dave relates well to clients. He merges his private industry background with his public accounting knowledge, to help clients' reach their financial goals.

Having grown up in San Diego, Dave is familiar with the area, people and culture. Prior to joining Hutchinson and Bloodgood LLP, Dave managed his own accounting practice. In addition, he previously held Controller/CFO positions within the construction and real estate industries, assisting those companies that helped shape San Diego. Dave was impressed with H&B and its focus on forward thinking. He joined the Firm in 2005.

hblp.com

| QUESTION ONE

What is the general risk appetite of banks in your jurisdiction and how does that affect setting up a new business bank account?

The risk appetite of banks in the US that affects setting up a new business bank account is framed around the Bank Secrecy Act's Anti-Money Laundering (AML) Customer Identification Program (CIP) and Customer Due Diligence (CDD) rules.

The CIP rule requires institutions to verify the identity of their customers, while the CDD rule requires institutions to identify and verify the identities of beneficial owners of legal entity customers. The CDD rule also requires institutions to establish procedures to understand the nature and purpose of customer accounts for the purpose of forming a customer risk profile, and monitor accounts for suspicious activity and changes in customer information, including beneficial ownership information. The rules are intended to facilitate the prevention, detection, and prosecution of international money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

Banks that fail to get it right have been fined heavily. In 2013, JP Morgan agreed to a combined collection amount of \$2.05 billion by failing to detect and adequately report suspicious transactions arising out of Bernard Madoff's fraudulent investment scheme. This places a heavy burden on banks to have the required programs in place, reviewed by management regularly and enforced, sometimes at the risk of losing potential or existing customers.

The required programs can vary from bank to bank to allow banks to select verification methods that are reasonable and practicable. When prescribing minimum standards for AML programs flexibility is given to the extent to which the requirements imposed are commensurate with the size, location, and activities of the bank. The rule recognises this fact and, therefore, allows banks to employ such verification methods as would be suitable for a given firm to form a reasonable belief that it knows the true identities of its customers.

| QUESTION TWO

How accommodating are banks in your jurisdiction for opening a business and personal bank account?

In the US, you will find some banks that will work with international customers and some banks that will not. Banks that have branches in other countries are the most likely banks to allow a nonresident individual and/or business to open an account. The vetting procedures may vary from state to state, bank to bank, sometimes even between branches. All banks will follow their bank's CIP. In order to get to know the customer. Prior to opening an account, banks will require:

- Name;
- Date of birth, for an individual;
- Address, which shall be:
 - For an individual, a residential or business street address;
 - For an individual who does not have a residential or business street address or the residential or business street address of next of kin or of another contact individual; or
 - For a person other than an individual (such as a corporation, partnership, or trust), a principal place of business, local office, or other physical location; and

- Identification number, which shall be:
 - For a US person, a taxpayer identification number; or
 - For a non-US person, one or more of the following: A taxpayer identification number; passport number and country of issuance; alien identification card number; or number and country of issuance of any other government-issued document evidencing nationality or residence and bearing a photograph or similar safeguard.

It does not take that much time to open a bank account if you have the proper documents in most cases. A person new to the area, a nonresident individual or a nonresident entity without a US person as a signer on the account will most likely take longer. Most US persons can open an account online within minutes.

Most nonresident individuals and nonresident businesses will need to visit the bank in order to open an account. As part of the bank's CIP, the bank will check your identity. Many financial institutions also check a consumer reporting database to assess banking habits. If a person or an entity does not have a financial footprint or has a bad banking history a bank could reject the application. Yet for those to which that does not apply, with the proper documents, an account can be opened the same day. Although, it can take 7-10 days to get all the documents and/or debit cards.

QUESTION THREE

Should you join an internationally reputable or established bank rather than a local bank?

Generally, it is easier to set up a bank account with a bank that has international branches for nonresident individuals and nonresident entities. These banks are used to working with international customers. In addition, these banks are more familiar with currencies of the world while local banks have less experience. Additionally, it's important to consider other factors in making a decision to open an account with a local bank or an international bank. I had a client recently that expressed frustration with a local bank that knew nothing about imports or dealing with currencies. His US customer's check was mishandled. As a result, my client's goods were never released, potentially costing my client \$100,000. My client, not the bank, had to do the investigative work to find out what happened and to correct it.

Consider seeking out a US-based multinational bank that has branches in the resident country. Open an account with them before leaving for the US. This provides international applicants with the opportunity to build up a business relationship with the bank which should simplify applying for an account at one of its branches in US. In closing, be prepared, know what your needs are and the bank's capabilities.



Since our inception in 1922, we have lived by the philosophy "To Serve the Client."

We deliver accounting and consulting services that maximize your wealth and position your business for growth. We offer a wide range of services including assurance, tax compliance and planning, technology consulting, and business advisory services. To understand and meet your unique needs, we have assembled an extraordinary team of 30 partners and over 100 team members with diverse backgrounds and experiences in public accounting and private industry. Our goal is to exceed your expectations.

We believe that our team's diversity is at the core of our success and a key element that allows us to provide the most innovative services in the world. With varied work experiences, education and talent, our team unites to develop solutions that are based on a range of perspectives and ideas, that are robust and optimized. Our clients also benefit from our multi-cultural business advisors who understand numerous cultures and speak a variety of languages.

At Hutchinson and Bloodgood LLP, we are dedicated to developing long-term relationships with our clients and are committed to providing Security, Profit and Peace of Mind.

Top tips to smooth the opening process in California

- Do your due diligence – know your needs and the capabilities of the bank.
- Consider opening an account with a U.S. based multinational bank that has a branch in your resident country.
- Arrange for an introduction from the resident country bank to the U.S. branch bank ahead of time.
- Be prepared – know what documents the bank requires and bring them with you to the bank.



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Felix Hammerschmidt is co-owner and director of full service tax consulting and auditing firms Interexpert and Holztrattner&Partner, both based in Vienna. He has more than 25 years of professional experience in tax, assurance and corporate law. Specialising in international tax planning, Felix has gathered extensive competence in servicing foreign clients in their business activities in Austria.

Felix is a member of the Austrian Chamber of Tax Advisers and Auditors and on number of supervisory boards including the board of the Austrian National Library. He is always available for his clients and IR Global members to answer questions on issues involved with Austria.

interexpert.com

| QUESTION ONE

What is the general risk appetite of Austrian banks and how does that affect setting up a new business bank account?

The general risk appetite of Austrian standard banks has decreased significantly over the years. Although there have been no prominent cases, some institutes became involved in money laundering cases and had to accept painful fines. A small bank with a rather lenient approach regarding KYC-procedures and more tolerance for the business of shady clients has been shut down by the authorities recently. On top of that, the fee level of Austrian banks is rather low due to fierce competition between them: understandably, banks are not willing to take considerable risk for an annual income of some hundred Euros.

The set up process for new bank accounts, however, follows common OECD-standards based on a strict KYC approach. This is only insofar remarkable as Austria used to have a very strict banks' discretion policy for decades – only comparable to the Swiss model. This has now been fully adjusted to international rules.

Banks are using uniform procedures for opening business and personal accounts. Beneficial owners of Austrian companies have to be fully documented in the company register or the register of beneficial ownership respectively. For companies domiciled in other EU-countries an extract of a comparable register is required. If beneficial owners are domiciled in non-EU-countries, companies must have a managing director residing in Austria.

To open a personal account, the customer must have a primary residence in Austria – irrespective of their nationality. Austria has a well-established financial sector and is even qualified as overbanked. Consequently, fees for private bank accounts are very competitive and often cheaper as comparable products of international institutes. Therefore, also expatriates usually have their personal bank account with a local bank.

| QUESTION TWO

How accommodating are banks in Austria for opening a business and personal bank account?

Austrian banks have developed their standard KYC-procedures for opening business and personal accounts. Although they are all using their own forms, they all are following the same logic.

To open a personal account an official ID (passport, identity card) and a certificate of your registered home address is sufficient. Austria is having a mandatory system requiring everyone residing in the country to register her/his home addresses with the local authority. After forms and documents are complete, the procedure to open a personal account is usually finished after two days.

Duration and complexity of the process to open a business account very much depends on the ownership structure of the client. A company with natural persons as shareholders and a local management passes the vetting process within a day or two. The involvement of another company on a shareholder level triggers an identification process regarding ultimate beneficial owners. Based on a digitalised company register this can be sorted out for Austrian companies in a short time. As soon as foreign entities are involved, comparable confirmations issued by authorities are required. These documents must not be older than six weeks and have to be notarized and apostilled. In case of a complex legal structure and the involvement of different jurisdictions, the whole process may be lengthy and costly. If the chain of ownership includes offshore entities, banks may be reluctant to open a business bank account. Also legal forms which are uncommon in Austria like trusts under British law may be a knock-on factor for an account opening process.



For the time being clients have to fulfil KYC-processes with many service providers (banks, legal and tax consultants etc.) presenting the same documents repeatedly. To improve this situation the Austrian Ministry of Finance is currently building up a data bank, where IDs shall be centrally stored.

| QUESTION THREE

Should you join an internationally reputable or established bank rather than a local bank?

Austrian banks offer a wider range of financial products to their private customers. Their fee structure is very competitive, so people resident in Austria mostly prefer to have their accounts with a local bank.

The standard procedure for the formation of a company under Austrian law requires that at least one business account is opened at a local bank. Therefore, the set-up of a NewCo includes a standard KYC-process. Vetting procedures of local institutes are very much comparable to international banks.

To speed up the opening process of a business account – and the formation of a company – clients should:

- Prepare IDs of management and beneficial owners and deliver them upfront;
- Prepare sufficient documents to make the complete chain of ownership transparent;
- Consider the legal structure of a NewCo: off shore entities and trust should only be involved, if really necessary.

Set up in 1946 Interexpert is based on its core values reliability and strong client orientation. Together with its twin-company, Holztrattner&Partner the group has a combined team of around 50 individuals.

Interexpert is a full service company with broad experience in financial accounting, tax, assurance and corporate law. Our activities include company formation, director and corporate secretary and comprehensive business information for newly arrived entrepreneurs in Austria. Beside the national market, CEE and CIS countries including Russia have been a focus of Interexpert for many years. Our clients range from owner-managed businesses to publicly quoted companies and we serve them with a professional and dedicated no-nonsense attitude.

| Top tips to smooth the opening process in Austria

- **Be prepared:** Complete an up-to-date set of documents already at hand, when or even before the bank sends out its burdensome forms and questionnaires speeds up things and makes life easier – even for compliance departments.
- **Keep things easy:** Banks love easy to comprehend business models: it should be obvious, why and for which kind of transactions a bank account is needed. Any involvement of off-shore-jurisdictions, uncommon legal company forms or business models, which have developed a smell of tax evasion in recent years should only be used, when really necessary.
- **Be local:** Banks also love to have local contact persons: this should be a local agent or adviser as well as a resident manager of the account holding company. Entities without any responsible person resident in Austria will have problems to open a bank account.



IRELAND

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Damien Malone was the founder of Malone & Co. over a decade ago. He holds an Honours Degree in Business & Accountancy and is a Fellow of both the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants and the Institute of Taxation in Ireland.

He is passionate about assisting SME's and their owners in developing sustainable, compliant and efficient structures for their business. Among his other business and commercial interests, he is chairman of the Damone investment group. He has spoken at numerous events on various tax and financial matters and has delivered business and taxation seminars for Irish state enterprise bodies.

Outside of the office Damien is a national hunt racing follower and a Liverpool supporter. He also has a keen interest in Gaelic Games and assists a number of local community and voluntary bodies at committee level.

Damien is looking forward to helping all IR members with their client's requirements in Ireland and to talking with other members about our clients' international needs.

maloneaccountants.ie

| QUESTION ONE

What is the general risk appetite of banks in your jurisdiction and how does that affect setting up a new business bank account?

Like most other jurisdictions, financial institutions in Ireland are conservative in these times when it comes to their risk appetite for opening bank accounts for those not known to them. This is even more so since the financial crisis. Our financial institutions like to display an "open for business" attitude, but in practice prospective applicants need to fit in with their preferred business model type and their client risk assessment will then be evaluated in line with this before a decision is reached on the account opening.

The procedures for all businesses are generally consistent for companies incorporated on the Irish Registrar with one additional requirement of note for companies incorporated outside of Ireland. Such companies require a completed legal report and this form needs to be signed and stamped by a law firm in the same jurisdiction in which the company was formed. The legal report must confirm the company's general particulars along with confirmation that no insolvency procedures are being processed in relation to the Company and the details of all charges, mortgages, liens and other security interests affecting the assets of the company.

We will advise our clients to set up with the bank that meets their objectives upon assessing their needs and taking into consideration how easily it is to conduct their banking requirements remotely. If a company feels they may have a requirement for a working capital or finance facilities we would always recommend that they open accounts with our pillar banks who have a retail presence.

Our office has established relations with all the main pillar banks operating in Ireland. Our corporate services manager previously worked with Bank of Ireland and has maintained close contact with her former colleagues. We therefore consider that we are uniquely positioned to assist and advise on the opening of bank accounts for international clients looking to set up bank accounts in Ireland.

| QUESTION TWO

How accommodating are banks in your jurisdiction for opening a business and personal bank account?

Financial institutions in Ireland are willing to do business both personal and business once there is a clear need for their services and compliance procedures and checks have been fulfilled. Based on our experience there is no scope for any special allowances or "once offs" to be taken into consideration when hoping to secure the banks services.

Anti-Money Laundering procedures for new business should follow a prescribed format but, in some cases, this can be varied from institution to institution. More detailed information can be requested if the company is deemed to be high risk by the bank which often leads to frustration for the client and unavoidable delays in the progress of the application. As standard practice, the following items are required for business account opening in Ireland:

- Bank Account application;
- Copy of Passport and one address verification dated within the last 6 months for each director (maximum of 2 directors), company secretary and any shareholder with 25% or more holding. If any of the above live outside the EEA, then two forms of address verification are required from two different providers;

- Certificate of Incorporation;
- Copy of Constitution or Memorandum and Articles of Association.
- In addition to the above some, financial institutions in Ireland can request additional items which are not standard listed below:
- A list on company headed paper of all directors, including occupation, address and date of birth, signed by the Company Secretary;
- A list on company headed paper of all shareholders with 25% or more of the issued share capital, signed by the Company Secretary.

Financial institutions in Ireland state that they will only open a personal bank account for non-resident individuals if they have a direct link with Ireland for example they work for an Irish company or they have a controlling interest in an Irish company. The same identification documents are required for all individuals which include a copy of passport and address verification dated in the last 6 months (two forms of address verification required if living outside the EEA). In some instances certification of these documents are required.

The processing times for opening a business account take longer than personal accounts. Personal accounts can be opened in a matter of days. The processing times we are experiencing at present can take anything from two weeks to two months in very complex cases. Once the bank has signed off on compliance and is happy to proceed the account will be opened in a matter of days.

QUESTION THREE

Should you join an internationally reputable or established bank rather than a local bank?

The decision to join an internationally reputable or established bank rather than a local bank depends on the nature of the activity, the banking services needed and the planned future direction of the company. Some companies will form based on trading in a local market and for these types of companies a local bank would be sufficient. Some companies that plan on dealing on a global scale would be more suited to an Internationally reputable bank. You need to look at each client and their business plan and provide advice best suited to their needs.

We believe it is easier to open a bank account with a local bank that will have a networked, retail presence on the ground. If you are trading in the country in which your company has been formed, you have the added comfort of having a one-to-one relationship with your account manager and have easy access to the retail network. If you are dealing with an internationally established bank you may not have this type of personalised service or may not have retail offices where you can attend.

We try to educate clients and manage their expectations when it comes to advising and handling the process of opening a bank account whether it be with a local branch or alternative provider. We make recommendations based on their business needs and provide the pros and cons of each suggestion. We have developed strong working relationship with our clients and they value our input, knowledge and honesty with the process.

Based on feedback obtained from clients who we have worked with previously on international banks, their views would suggest that they undertake similar vetting procedures as the local options. In very specific high-risk cases and individual to each company the bank may request additional documentation.



MALONE & COMPANY ACCOUNTANTS LTD.
CHARTERED CERTIFIED ACCOUNTANTS
& CHARTERED TAX ADVISORS

Malone & Co. is a regulated practice with the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants as well as being members of the Institute of Taxation in Ireland. Our team consists of qualified accountants, chartered tax advisors and accounting technicians.

We assist clients from all over the world on a daily basis who wish to locate to Ireland and we have developed extensive contacts including with the inward investment agencies in Ireland. In Ireland we have succeeded in attracting some of the world's leading companies in sectors such as software, technology, pharmaceutical, biosciences and manufacturing to name but a few.

At Malone & Co. we have the on the ground knowledge and experience in Ireland of structuring new business for clients to avail of the many attractive benefits of the Irish tax regime.

Top tips to smooth the opening process in Ireland

- Be prepared; have all company incorporation documents and identification documents all within date available.
- Have a detailed plan for your company prepared to include the expected turnover/financials, a list of countries that the company will trade with, the nature and source of payments and receipts transacting on the account, foreign exchange considerations, expected daily limit requirements and future planned direction for the business. This will enable the Business advisor to discuss all support and ancillary services they can provide.
- Bring along references from trade partners and Accountants and Solicitors if available.
- Have applications completed as much as possible in advance of any meeting with the bank personnel.



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Nick is a Chartered Accountant and has worked in both commercial accounting and public practice across Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom since 1998. Experienced in the information technology, finance, communications, property, food manufacturing and retailing industries, Nick works with international business clients to ensure that Australian regulatory obligations are met as well as providing monthly accounting, taxation, internal reporting, payment processing and payroll services. Nick's strong understanding of cross-border taxation issues enables local compliance with Significant Global Entity (SGE) lodgement requirements including the preparation of transfer pricing documentation and lodgement of local Australian files.

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Ric is a Chartered Accountant and has worked in public practice since 1989. Ric graduated from University of Technology Sydney (UTS) with a Bachelor of Business and went on to complete a Masters in Taxation Law. Ric was admitted to the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia as a Member in 1996 and as a Fellow in 2013.

Along with his extensive tax knowledge, Ric can assist you to structure your business affairs to minimise tax and protect your financial interests. Ric acts for a number of foreign entities with interests in Australia and assists with their tax compliance.

Ric also acts as resident director, secretary and public officer for a number of Australian subsidiaries of overseas companies and Local Agent for Foreign companies registered in Australia and advises on corporate matters generally in regards to those positions.

www.mcburney.com.au

| QUESTION ONE

What is the general risk appetite of banks in your jurisdiction and how does that affect setting up a new business bank account?

There has been an unmistakable recent shift in the risk appetite of banks in Australia following a legal enquiry into the sector, known as the 2018 Royal Commission into Misconduct in the Banking, Superannuation and Financial Services Industry. Since this time, anyone opening a bank account or obtaining finance in Australia has faced significant regulatory challenges as Australian banks and financial institutions have overhauled their AML/KYC and business operating procedures.

It is important to recognise that some banks have more stringent requirements than others. With respect to opening a company bank account, some banks will not permit any account to be opened or accessed unless all directors have presented themselves in person at a local branch in Australia to be identified. To avoid a "necessary" 20-hour each-way flight from Europe, Asia or North America, we have encountered situations where overseas directors could not be appointed to a company board so that the Australian bank account could remain operational.

Even within the banks themselves, there is often a misunderstanding by the banks employees on the documentation requirements for foreign organisations and individuals in opening an account. Contacting the bank through a general call centre can be frustrating and result in significant delays in opening an account when compared with making first contact with an employee experienced with international business banking. This is where McBurneys can greatly assist by making introductions to the bank that cannot otherwise be easily accessed through a general enquiry. We can also add our significant wealth of experience to help navigate which bank may be more accepting of the situation.

For foreign individuals coming to Australia, obtaining a bank account can be far more straightforward. An account can even be opened from overseas and funds can be deposited in advance of arrival in Australia. Then having landed in Australia, a foreign individual need only present themselves to a local Australia branch with their passport and the account can be fully activated. An expatriate moving to Australia would probably want to ensure some if not all of their pay is received in Australia for them to cover their living expenses.

| QUESTION TWO

How accommodating are banks in your jurisdiction for opening a business and personal bank account?

Whilst opening a personal bank account can be fairly straightforward with a foreign passport and attendance at a local branch, a lot more organisation and planning needs to go into the opening of a business bank account. The key is preparation and having the right documentation available to be provided to the bank.

Australian banks are accommodating to opening business bank accounts provided you are able to meet their vetting process. Restrictions may be placed on companies who can be traced back to countries or individuals that have embargoes.

An organisation chart should be made available to the bank early in the process to enable them to understand the group and to identify the organisation's ultimate economic owners.

Under the relevant AML/KYC regulations, all directors, shareholders and account signatories will need to be identified in order to open an account. Individuals will be required to provide at least two of the following certified documents;

- foreign passport, foreign drivers' licence, Foreign Government issued National Identification card, Birth certificate issued by a Foreign Government, Foreign citizenship certificate.

The documents will need to be certified by a Public Notary and/or Australian Embassy or Consulate staff.

The name on the identity documents must match with the company registration documents otherwise further documents may be required.

Foreign company shareholders in the group will require a certified copy of the certificate of incorporation from the relevant jurisdiction in which it is registered.

McBurneys can assist to liaise with the respective bank's staff to ensure the documentation provided can be appropriately vetted BEFORE sending documents to be certified and arranging for the original certified copies to be sent by courier to Australia.

| QUESTION THREE

Should you join an internationally reputable or established bank rather than a local bank?

The Australian banking sector is dominated by four major banks: Australia and New Zealand Banking Group (ANZ), Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA), National Australia Bank (NAB) and Westpac Banking Corporation (WBC)

There are a number of good reasons to join a local Australia bank including;

- access to a walk-in branch network;
- locally tailored internet banking platform;
- understanding of local business dynamics and access to resources;
- confidence for Australian customers;
- data integration with local accounting, taxation and software systems International banks that also have a presence operating at a retail level include ING, HSBC and Citibank. While these banks do offer personal banking and home loan products, they primarily focus on large corporate entities requiring complex international banking solutions. They have limited branch networks and predominantly accessed via call centres, on-line and at their CBD head-quarters.

There is limited benefit in have pre-established relationships overseas with international banks because of mandatory government legislation that dictates the minimum identification requirements for opening a bank account at a local level.



McBurneys has a strong history of providing corporate services, taxation, accounting and business advisory services to clients who require personalised, expert and timely advice. With proud traditions and extensive experience, McBurneys has fresh innovative ideas and is forward thinking to assist clients navigate Australian business environment. Being a full-service accounting firm enables McBurneys to provide a complete local office function including corporate services, accounting, taxation, payroll and cash management to foreign owned subsidiaries.

With 30 professional staff including 6 principals, McBurneys has resources to draw on specialised advice when needed. The highly experienced team of professionals at McBurneys primary aim is to create and protect wealth of businesses and business leaders.

Top tips to smooth the opening process in Australia

1. Unless you can have all directors attend a local bank branch in person in Australia, make sure you know which banks are likely to facilitate the opening of a company bank account. McBurneys can assist in directing you to the right bank and the right people within that bank.
2. Start the process early. It can take several months to obtain the necessary documentation to open a bank account and to obtain the necessary tax registrations.
3. If timing is of the essence contact McBurneys and tell us so that we can suggest alternatives which can speed up matters significantly.
4. Banking payment systems, branch access, internet banking platforms and security will differ between financial institutions. Choosing the right bank will create business efficiencies going forward.
5. Getting the documentation right the first time is vital to speeding up the process of opening an account.



ISRAEL

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At Mellius we have years of professional expertise and experience and we facilitate the process of opening a bank account in Israel as well as in a wide range of states and banks, from Singapore to Hong Kong in the East, Switzerland, Lichtenstein and the UK in Europe, and all through the US in the West.

mellius.com

| QUESTION ONE

What is the general risk appetite of banks in your jurisdiction and how does that affect setting up a new business bank account?

The banking system in Israel is highly sophisticated and offers a wide range of advanced features. All the major banks in Israel are proficient in all international financial operations; and provide various financial services to different types of companies with comprehensive, efficient and high quality financing solutions for every business purpose. Israeli banks are represented worldwide, most having branches in several important financial centres.

All banks operate under the supervision of the national Central Bank, which also manages the country's national currency and include banking options of commercial services, investments and cooperative credit institutions.

It is becoming more difficult to open commercial bank accounts in Israel, particularly for companies owned by foreign nationals due to the changes in the anti-money laundering laws, FATCA requirements and BEPS regulations.

All main banks specialise in a range of industries but focus mainly on technology companies, high-tech, start-ups, RND and bio-medicine, retail and real estate.

In order to open an account it is required to prove some connection to Israel and therefore it is recommended and significantly easier to register an Israeli company.

Registering an Israeli company can offer significant tax benefits and, in some circumstances, even reach a tax rate of 12% and even less.

| QUESTION TWO

How accommodating are banks in your jurisdiction for opening a business and personal bank account?

There are 12 banks in Israel, among them the top five accommodate international business accounts and private accounts for foreign nationals.

Business Accounts:

The vetting procedure is similar in all major banks in Israel:

- All banks require a reasonable connection to Israel;
- The KYC procedure requires the following documentation:
 - a. Company documents translated to English and certified by notary and apostille;
 - b. Company extract from the last 3 months, certified by notary and apostille;
 - c. KYC documents for all individuals involved in the company (directors, shareholders and beneficial owners) including passport copy, additional ID and proof of address, all certified by notary and apostille;

All banks need to perform a video validation with the company's director and authorised signatory;

- Company resolution to open a bank account at a specific bank;
- Attorney's approval for expected actions in the account; and
- Financial statements of the company, if any.

The process for opening a bank account for international companies is long and difficult due to a new regulation that was introduced to the banking system in the past few years. However, according to local legislation it is mandatory for all Israeli banks to open business accounts for Israeli entities and therefore it is much easier and faster to register a local company and open a bank account for the Israeli entity.

Private Accounts:

All 12 banks in Israel accommodate private accounts for foreign citizens and offer “non-resident accounts” for individuals who live abroad, but can prove a connection to Israel. The eligibility for opening the account will depend on whether the individual meets the criteria the banks set including the number of days spent in Israel per year.

The vetting procedure is similar in all banks:

- The KYC procedure requires the following documentation:
 - a. Valid passport copy
 - b. Additional Identification certificate such as a driving license
 - c. A proven connection to Israel;

In case the individual is a foreign resident, it is required to arrive to a meeting at the bank in order to open the account. In case the individual lives abroad, it is required to perform a video call with a bank representative.

The process for opening a private bank account for a foreigner usually takes 2-4 weeks, depending on the bank's internal compliance procedure.

| QUESTION THREE**Should you join an internationally reputable or established bank rather than a local bank?**

The banking system in Israel is very stable and highly sophisticated which offers a wide range of advanced features such as full and easily operated online services in various languages, which makes it very attractive to foreign companies and individuals.

In the global perspective, the international banking system is creating difficulties in the process of opening bank accounts for foreign companies, the vetting procedures are becoming more complicated and banks are not eager to open new accounts.

Israel is no different. As previously mentioned, it is difficult to open a bank account for a foreign company in Israel and therefore it is preferable to register an Israeli company and open a local bank account. The process might take several weeks up to two months, but the banks are required by local legislation to open a business account for all Israeli companies.



Mellius is an international company specializing in facilitating the establishment of companies and various legal entities around the world, including funds, partnerships, foundations, and trusts.

Mellius focuses on high-quality, effective and creative solutions to help establish legal entities in over 100 jurisdictions around the globe while coordinating between various types of activities, client profiles, area of activity and additional factors.

As of today, Mellius is the largest Corporate Service Provider in Israel with branches in Switzerland and Bulgaria.

Mellius portfolio of clients is comprised of legal entities in all sized, from young start-ups at the very beginning of their corporate lives, through mature companies, all the way to publicly traded companies listed (mainly) in the London Stock Exchange, Nasdaq and TASE.



MEXICO

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He is a Certified Public Accountant of the Superior Institute of Technology and Study of Monterrey, Campus Monterrey (ITESM). His current practice focuses on auditing services to assure decision makers and other users about the validity of their financial information.

He is in charge of international business providing advice for the operation of new businesses established in Mexico that report to subsidiaries abroad.

Pedro has developed his professional experience in accounting áreas in consulting companies such as Quali Consulting Group, Salles, Sainz - Grant Thornton and Mora & Vazquez Asociados with experience in different sectors such as Industrial, Commercial, Financial, Personnel Services and Maquiladora, among others.

m-v.mx/en

| QUESTION ONE

What is the general risk appetite of banks in your jurisdiction and how does that affect setting up a new business bank account?

Banks in Mexico for the most part are subsidiaries of foreign banks. You also have a few big national banks that are not related to foreign banks and a few other smaller banks. In any case all banks are subject to the same federal regulations regarding their permit to operate and compliance regulations.

All banks and especially international banks are aware of the risks their operations entail such as money laundering, so when opening a bank account expect a thorough investigation and "client knowledge" disclosure requests. This also applies when the company in question has foreign capital and stockholders. Generally, expect the same type of requirements of information, documents and disclosures from all banks when opening an account. However, the difference might be that a bigger bank may have different vetting procedures to verify the information gathered, especially from their legal department, which in some cases asks for clarification or additional information when they feel that the information may not be complete. Whenever the information is deemed incomplete or if they feel they require additional clarification, then expect more time for the account to be ready.

Personal accounts on the other hand are much easier when you supply the bank with all documents and disclosures they ask for. In the case of expatriates, if they are going to stay and work in Mexico for 180 days or more a year, then having a bank account to deposit income makes sense, so they can comply with the Income tax obligations.

| QUESTION TWO

How accommodating are banks in your jurisdiction for opening a business and personal bank account?

In general, all banks since they are all subject to the same federal regulations should have the same requirements of information when opening bank accounts. What may vary is the way they go about verifying that all of the information is correct. Bigger banks may have different levels of people to scrutinise the information gathered. For instance, when opening a bank account for a corporation with foreign ownership, it may be the case that you start the procedure with the bank's branch client executive who gathers all documents and information, then it would go to the branch manager to double check that the file is complete. From there it is sent over to the bank's central legal department electronically, and that is where it may take a few more days to analyse the information.

If all is well the account may typically be opened within 2 weeks. But if during the vetting procedure it turns out that there is a need for clarification and/or additional information, then expect another two weeks for the additional vetting process to be completed since the information has to flow from the bank's legal department to the bank's branch. From there it goes to the client, or in this case the company's duly appointed legal representative for such an endeavour. If the requested information is already available it can be supplied at that time, but if it is something that was not requested previously it may take additional time to gather it from the foreign owners.

The information needed to open a business account are the following:

- Official photo ID of the appointed legal representative who will be the holder of the bank account;
- Incorporation papers;
- Notarised power of attorney granted to the legal representative;

- Fiscal address of company;
- Viable proof of address;
- Tax ID number and document;
- Electronic signature proof or query in the tax authority website as proof.

| QUESTION THREE

Should you join an internationally reputable or established bank rather than a local bank?

It doesn't really matter if you go with a local bank or an international bank, all banks are subject to the same regulations and savings protections insurance. It is more a question of what bank can provide the services you need, which will depend on the type of operations and transactions you would engage in. For example, if you need national coverage in all of Mexico or if you are just going to operate in a given region of the country or city. If for instance, you are going to regularly make international transactions, it makes more sense to use a foreign bank since they will be more used to this type of transactions. On the other hand using a smaller bank you may get a more personal service and have a better experience overall. But in the end it's all going to come down to selecting a bank that is better suited to your operation and also that you agree with the costs related to the transactions you would incur.



Mora & Vazquez Asociados, S.C. is an accounting and consulting firm providing services to both international and domestic companies for over 15 years. Our commitment is in providing a personalized service of the highest standards which brings effective solutions to our clients.

We provide services in 4 main areas:

1. Taxes
2. Business Process Outsourcing
3. Business Consulting
4. Audit and Assurance

Our professional staff has experience in the following sectors:

- Financial Services
- Commercial sector
- Government
- Manufacturing
- Maquiladora
- Engineering and construction
- Food services

Top tips to smooth the opening process in Mexico

- Make sure you understand and define what are your banking needs, what services are you going to use, what regions are you going to operate in, inquire about the costs of the services and find a bank that better matches what you are looking for.
- Make sure you understand and readily have beforehand all the requirements the bank has for opening the bank account. It is better to previously inquire about these requirements and if something is missing or you do not have it, then that is the time to request or produce the documents.
- If you are a foreign company, make sure you have help from local professionals to handle all this. Banks constantly need to beef up their client knowledge and anti-money laundering processes to meet constantly evolving government requirements. This may change or extend the requirements the banks have for opening the bank account.



BRAZIL

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Cesar has a bachelor's degree in accounting and management. With more than 20 years of experience in auditing, he specialises in multinational companies, with an emphasis on conversion and consolidation of statements prepared in accordance with international accounting principles (IFRS) and USGAAP as well as on shared management projects.

He is responsible for providing assistance and advice to international companies. He has trained abroad, in the USA, Australia, South Africa, Canada and New Zealand, and is a member of Ibraccon - Instituto dos Auditores Independentes do Brasil (Institute of Independent Auditors of Brazil).

krestonpartnership.com

| QUESTION ONE

What is the general risk appetite of banks in your jurisdiction and how does that affect setting up a new business bank account?

The risk appetite may vary from bank to bank in Brazil. The risk valuation will depend on the company's business and also the maturity of the company in Brazil, combined with its turnover.

In Brazil, we do not have a restricted limit for loans or investments, as long it is approved by the banker within registration before the Central Bank of Brazil.

- There are no different procedures for companies or local jurisdictions.
- There are no different procedures for personal accounts.
- Should an expatriate set up with a local bank or keep their salary offshore?

We would advise expatriates to set up a local bank account in Brazil in order to handle its financial activities on a daily basis, however, he/she would be able to send cash out from Brazil to his/her account, always. Always, following the Central Bank of Brazil regulations.

| QUESTION TWO

How accommodating are banks in your jurisdiction for opening a business and personal bank account?

Generally speaking, for foreign companies and foreign individuals it is not an easy process to establish a bank account in Brazil, especially with a domestic bank. Brazil does not have many international banks operating as a Commercial Banks. These days the easiest international bank to operate with is Santander Bank.

How varied are banks' vetting procedures?

The local banks must be in compliance with Central Bank regulations. Therefore, the companies and individuals must provide the support documentation below.

What documents need to be provided?

- Chart of Organisation, identifying the final beneficiary (UBO regulation);
- Shareholders Articles of Incorporation (notarised and translated into Portuguese);
- Power of attorney to a Brazilian tax resident (notarized and translated into Portuguese);
- KYC (knowing your Customer) questionnaire and, also local working papers must be fulfilled;
- Copy of Passport or another document providing his/her mother's maiden name;
- For individuals, they must have a local Federal ID number ("CPF");

How long does it typically take and what is the process?

It may vary from bank to bank, but based on our local experience it would take around 10 days (at Santander Bank).

| QUESTION THREE

Should you join an internationally reputable or established bank rather than a local bank?

We would recommend joining an internationally reputable financial institutional. Large corporation may set up their bank account using their international enrolment, such as: Citi Bank, BoA, JP Morgan. Domestic companies are not allowed to use these.

- **Is it easier to set up a local bank account and what does that mean for your business?** It is not an easy process, unless we have all the requested documentation from the company. We would assist international companies to set up a bank account in Brazil and also assist them to manage local payments (full outsourcing services in Brazil).
- **What would be clients' perceptions if you set up a business account with a local bank?** Based on our experience, some companies have been struggling to set up a bank account in Brazil and, we have figured out local contacts in Brazil, which have been helping us to speed up this process.
- **Are international banks' vetting procedures more difficult than local banks?** The procedure is the same. Domestic banks are more bureaucratic than International banks.



Founded in 2004, we are a company with specialized services in Auditing, Financial and Tax Consulting, as well as Outsourcing. We are currently headquartered in a large Brazilian shopping center, Avenida Paulista, but with operations abroad in more than 100 countries, through companies associated with Kreston.

Since 2006, we have been a member of Kreston International, the 12th largest auditing company in the world, which has been in business since the 1970s as a result of a merger between consultancies from the United Kingdom, Germany and France. Kreston has over 700 offices and 21,000 employees.

We rely on the technical skills of our partners and employees, as well as technological innovations, which we seek to maintain in order to offer our partners and customers a high-quality service, enabling their growth.

| Top tips to smooth the opening process in Brazil

- Be organised with the companies' documentation. It will be mandatory to present it to the banks;
- Have a local contact on the ground to assist you on this process; it will be more difficult without a local assistant/adviser;
- Avoid domestic banks, they are unfamiliar with international business.



ENGLAND

Paul Beare

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Paul Beare founded Paul Beare Ltd having worked in a previous accountancy firm, following his involvement in a successful merger and acquisition in 2014.

With an extensive support network of international providers that Paul has built up over the years, clients and potential UK in-bound start-ups regularly approach him for UK and international expansion support. He is referred by many clients as their trusted advisor.

paulbeare.com

| QUESTION ONE

What is the general risk appetite of banks in your jurisdiction and how does that affect setting up a new business bank account?

Most overseas companies trading or beginning to trade in the UK will require a UK bank account to conduct business, but it is not a legal requirement to have a UK-based bank account to trade in the UK. For practical reasons it makes sense to have a locally domiciled account.

The general risk appetite of banks in our jurisdiction is very low. If the company we represent has a UK Director then we have a chance of succeeding in opening a bank account. However, the main issue comes about when the parent company or main shareholders are located in high risk countries such as Africa.

UK banks undertake customer due diligence prior to setting up a bank account for new customers and no-one should get a bank account personally if they do not reside in the country.

| QUESTION TWO

How accommodating are banks in your jurisdiction for opening a business and personal bank account?

UK banks are not willing to open a personal account if you do not reside in the country and business accounts are similar in the fact that they must have a UK director based in the UK as a minimum. This policy can vary slightly between banks, but the majority hold this same stance.

In our experience, it can take anywhere from two to six months to open a business bank account in the UK, depending on the complexity of the ownership structure. This is why we offer this service to overseas clients because the process can be very painful, lengthy and frustrating. With our support, we can reduce this time to approximately two months from start to finish. We can also set up a client trust account in certain situations. This type of account is where funds are held in trust whilst two or more parties complete a transaction. The client can't have access to this account and transactions are completed by us on their behalf.

UK banks undertake customer due diligence prior to setting up a bank account for new customers. This is part of the anti-money laundering (AML) regime and is a key requirement of the Money Laundering Regulations 2007 in the UK. Key shareholders (usually 10-25% or more) together with those individuals who will be named on the UK bank mandate will be asked to prove their identity and home address, with documents such as:

- Proof of ID: passport, UK photo driving licence or national ID card;
- Two forms of proof of address: recent bank statement or utility bill or council tax statement;
- Proof of parent company and ownership structure.

If the individual is not in the country then the copies of proof of identity need to be certified by a notary.

| QUESTION THREE

Should you join an internationally reputable or established bank rather than a local bank?

At Paul Beare Ltd, for the majority of clients, we would advise them to join an internationally reputable bank as there really isn't any such thing as a 'local bank' anymore.

The big 4 (HSBC, NatWest, Barclays, and Lloyds) do have the capacity to deal with and understand the complexity of our clients' structure, however, even they like an application to 'appear' straightforward, which is where we come in, completing the work for the client and to make it an easier process for the bank. The smaller international banks such as Metro or Santander may look at very simple set up structures but the identification for these clients would require their presence in the UK to present their identification documents. The larger international banks would usually accept certified documents for identification. All banks are now ideally looking for a UK director as a minimum for bank account set up at the moment.



Paul and his team support the needs of overseas companies setting up and operating in the UK.

One element is overriding among every client – they all need support and expert guidance. They advise around the appropriate legal entity, payroll, VAT, banking and company secretarial services. Clients range from publicly-quoted companies, through to owner-managed businesses. Paul travels frequently to Australia, New Zealand and the US.

Paul has been heavily involved in IR for seven years, using IR Global as a support network for clients when they are using their UK company to expand further. Clients will use this as a foundation for further expansion into Europe and beyond.

Paul Beare has particular expertise in helping clients with overseas companies to expand into the UK, while choosing between a UK branch or a UK subsidiary.

| Top tips to smooth the opening process in England

We provide all our overseas clients with our checklist for opening a UK bank account. This is an overview as to what sort of data and detail that is required to open a bank account in the UK for overseas owned companies.

- Key information on the parent company is required.
- Key information on the UK company is required.
- UK bank mandate details are required
- Anti-money laundering data.
- Resident for tax purposes.

Read more here: <https://paulbeare.com/2017/10/09/checklist-opening-uk-bank-account/>



ISLE OF MAN

Nick Kelly

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Nick joined Peregrine in July 2007 and is responsible for the accounting and tax departments. His role includes overseeing the preparation of management accounts, financial statements and tax returns for clients as well as monitoring international tax compliance and VAT returns.

Having developed quickly in his role and having qualified as a Certified Chartered Accountant, Nick was invited to sit on the Peregrine board of directors in 2015. He was recently approved by the Isle of Man Gaming Supervision Commission ("GSC") allowing him to be a director on e-gaming companies licensed by the GSC.

peregrine-iom.com

| QUESTION ONE

What is the general risk appetite of banks in your jurisdiction and how does that affect setting up a new business bank account?

I would consider the general risk appetite on the Isle of Man to be medium to low when it comes to banking – the banks on the Island are focussed on stable, well known industries that they have considerable experience in. While the e-Gaming industry is prominent on the Island, it is one of the industries that banks are most cautious about mainly because of the volatility. The banks here are equally, if not more, cautious when it comes to businesses working in the crypto space too as it is considered a high risk area for the facilitation of money laundering. We often find that the banks on the Isle of Man don't want to open accounts for businesses where the accounts won't be ran by individuals on Island, however, they do make exceptions if the business is of high value.

The good news is that banks are happier dealing with a business that they know which can make procedures a lot easier. We are an approved introducer with a lot of the banks on the Island which means that we generally have an easier path to open an account than a potential client who "walks in".

A few years ago the local Government created a new initiative called the "Alternative Banking Regime" which was a framework designed to provide new banking opportunities for businesses on the Isle of Man. The ABR's aim was to attract banking operations to the Island, in particular Private Banks, Foreign Bank branches and Representative Offices. An example of this would be that in 2019 a South African Bank was granted a Class 1 (3) license under the Regime. The hope has been to help businesses in more risky industries and although it's still early days, it does seem to be working and we have seen the main high street banks become more open to new business.

| QUESTION TWO

How accommodating are banks in your jurisdiction for opening a business and personal bank account?

Opening up a bank account can vary from six weeks to six months. All of the banks have similar vetting procedures due to the regulations imposed upon them by the local regulator. There isn't a lot of variety so if you're unhappy with one bank's vetting procedures, you're likely to be unhappy with them all!

The types of documentation that the banks require are the usual kind such as ID and proof of address for all of the directors, shareholders and account signatories. Unless of course this information is already held by the bank, i.e. Peregrine, as an eligible introducer doesn't have to provide due diligence for our directors with every application.

It is possible that the high street banks may go further than we feel they need to when requesting certain documentation but it can often be "Head Office" determining what documents are needed to open up a bank account, meaning their policy may not be based on the local legislation. Some of the not-so-traditional and newer banks can make things easier.

One of the common barriers we find is determining the difference between "Source of Funds" and "Source of Wealth". Due to the regulatory environment, this is key to any bank application and something we must also fully understand as a CSP business.

| QUESTION THREE

Should you join an internationally reputable or established bank rather than a local bank?

In the Isle of Man, our local banks are all backed by international banks. The closest we have to a “local” bank is the Isle of Man Bank which is backed by RBSI.

The vetting procedures are possibly slightly different but the reality is the bigger banks set their policies at Head Office. Having said this, we must point out that all of the banks, local or international, have fully staffed local offices to deal with their day to day business.

The banking industry has seen a toughening of regulations since the financial crisis in 2008 but we're now seeing a more lenient, common sense and risk based approach being applied as more competitors emerge to service markets otherwise abandoned by the bigger high street banks.

As a small self-governing jurisdiction, the Isle of Man Government has the ability to draft appropriate legislation to encourage more entrants in to the sector and, working closely with the private sector, are finding solutions to ensure the future of the Island's core financial centre remains as bright as ever.



Peregrine Corporate Services Limited (“Peregrine”) was first established in 1986 to provide company and trust administration services on the Isle of Man to a worldwide client base.

We have a rich heritage of providing high quality, professional services to our clients, utilising our background in accountancy with a team of professionally qualified accountants on our board of directors.

With almost 35 years of experience, we pride ourselves in offering a professional, friendly service to our clients from a longstanding, knowledgeable workforce. With a very low turnover of staff, we are able to put client relationships first, ensuring that clients know our team and vice-versa.

| Top tips to smooth the opening process in Isle of Man

- Don't leave it too late – maximise your time as it isn't always a quick process;
- There's no such thing as providing too much information – the more you can give them the better;
- Be upfront about your long-term intentions.



MAURITIUS

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Vimal is the Managing Director of Premier Group that operates through two licensed companies – in Mauritius (member of INAA Group) & in Seychelles (member of UHY) – with over 20 years experience in international business advisory, international tax and trusts. He also speaks on topics related to tax and trust.

He is a senior trust practitioner, holds an LLM in Business Law from De Montfort Leicester University, a law degree from the University of London, a degree in Economics from Sri Ram College of Commerce (SRCC) – University of Delhi, Postgraduate diploma in International Trust Management from Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners (STEP) and Central Law Training UK, Member of STEP, member of the International Tax Planning Association (ITPA), the International Business Structuring Association (IBSA) and other professional bodies. He was a past director of INAA Group, which is an international association of accountants and tax advisers and was also the past Chairman of STEP Mauritius and past board member.

premier.mu

| QUESTION ONE

What is the general risk appetite of banks in your jurisdiction and how does that affect setting up a new business bank account?

I Premier's banking solutions in Mauritius

- In Mauritius the bank account opening procedures have been streamlined and there is no need for the directors/authorised signatories to visit the banks to open bank accounts.
- Each account opening is duly considered and risk profiled before a decision is taken. Several factors are considered such as the business activity, size of transfers, countries of operations etc. Decisions are then quickly communicated whether they will onboard the client or not.
- The client needs to be duly introduced by a licensed Management Company like us at Premier Financial Services Limited.
- Banks in addition also provide a variety of banking services such as trade finance, loans, project financing, debit/ credit cards, trade financing, merchant accounts, investment custodian accounts, etc.

II. Premier's Role in opening bank accounts

- As an Eligible Introducer, Premier will act as intermediary between the bank and the client and, hence, the client is not required to visit the bank for the bank account opening.
- Professional Advice - depending on the client's banking services requirements, we will suggest with which bank the account can be opened.
- Premier can assist in opening bank accounts for Mauritius entities (companies, trusts, foundations) and foreign entities (BVI, Seychelles, Cyprus, Malta, Singapore, UK etc). We can also help clients to open personal bank accounts in Mauritius.

III. Minimum balance requirements

- The minimum balance requirements for opening a corporate or personal bank account in Mauritius varies from bank to bank.
- Most banks do not require a minimum balance. Premier would be happy to discuss each bank's requirements.
- The approval for the bank accounts is done on a case-by-case basis. Due to our excellent banking relationships with the banks, Premier assist you its clients in opening a corporate/personal bank account quickly.

IV. Features and benefits for opening a bank account in Mauritius

- Multiple currencies bank accounts (EUR, USD, GBP, AED, RAND)
- No physical presence required
- Confidentiality protected by banking law subject to international common reporting standard
- Debit and Credit Visa/Mastercard card
- Low minimum balance requirements
- Trade Financing
- Very good & user-friendly Internet Banking Facilities
- SWIFT /IBAN services;
- Fast Track account opening
- No exchange control.

QUESTION TWO

How accommodating are banks in your jurisdiction for opening a business and personal bank account?

I. Bank's onboarding process

It should be noted that Mauritius is an International Financial Centre (IFC) accommodating foreign investors and business people using the IFC.

- Initially, Premier will seek pre-approval from banks in Mauritius based on the basic information received from the client.
- Once the pre-approval has been received, a comprehensive list of documentations will be sent by the 'Eligible Introducer' to complete the process of bank account opening.
- Complete due diligence will then be carried out by the banks once all requisite documentations have been submitted to the bank.

II. Bank account opening process by Premier- Corporate/ Personal bank account opening

a) PRE-APPROVAL PROCESS

- Personal bank account
 - Passport copy & CV of the client.
 - Client to advise on the rationale for opening a personal bank account in Mauritius.
 - Estimated size of inwards and outwards transactions monthly; and
 - Types of incomings and outgoings into the account.

2. Corporate bank account

- Business plan of the company;
- Passport and CV on the Ultimate Beneficial Owners; and
- Estimated figures of inwards and outwards transactions monthly.

b) POST PRE-APPROVAL

Once the pre-approval has been received, Premier will the client bank account opening forms for signatures and will also require the following documentations to be provided:

- Premier's Application Form
- Premier's Terms & Conditions
- Full Compliance documents.

QUESTION THREE

Should you join an internationally reputable or established bank rather than a local bank?

In Mauritius, there is a very interesting mix of international and local banks licensed by the Bank of Mauritius.

International versus local banks:

The banking facilities for international and local banks are almost same. However, it is perceived that it is easier to open bank accounts with local banks compared to international banks. Some international banks have a minimum balance compared to local banks and their group policies may be bureaucratic and time consuming sometimes.

Premier's experience in bank account opening – Foreign Entities

So far, Premier have assisted several clients in opening bank accounts for companies/entities located in different jurisdictions across the world in Europe, Asia, Africa, BVI, Seychelles, Hong Kong, Singapore, UK and others.



Premier Financial Services Limited ("Premier") is a Management & Trust Company operating in Mauritius. Premier is licensed and regulated by the Mauritius Financial Services Commission which oversees the reputation of Mauritius as an International Financial Centre. Premier offers its services to high net worth individuals, private companies, multinationals and listed entities across the globe. Our group and affiliate companies are based in Mauritius and the Seychelles. Premier's promoters have been operating in the fiduciary industry for over 20 years and have been managing assets over \$1 billion in aggregate.

Premier is a member of the INAA Group (www.inaa.org), which is an international association of independent accounting firms.

Top tips to smooth the opening process in Mauritius

The following are some tips to secure a smooth account opening:

- Pre-approval process to save time and cost.
- Highlight the exact banking requirements to make the right choice of banks
- Select the right Management Company, such as Premier, to act as the Eligible Introducer to the banks to open the bank accounts. Premier has successfully opened bank accounts for various clients since the past 13 years. We have the relevant expertise in this area of business and our staff are well qualified and dedicated towards our clients to help with the bank account opening process.
- Ensure basic information is provided for the account opening process:
 - Clear and concise business plan to be provided for a corporate bank account.
 - Basic compliance documents (passport copy, utility bill dated less than 3 months old, bank reference letter and signed CV) on directors, shareholders and Ultimate Beneficial Owners to be provided.



BARBADOS

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Roland Jones AICB, CPA, CGA, FCA, TEP is Managing Director and Founder of the Axebridge Group. Roland has more than 26 years of experience in the areas of Banking, Trusts, Wealth Management and International Financial Services. Roland is a trust professional, a chartered accountant and banker and sits on the board of the Axebridge Group of companies and several private international business companies.

He is a member of Certified General Accountants of Canada (CGA), the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Barbados (ICAB), the Institute of Canadian Bankers (ICB), the International Fiscal Association, and the Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners (STEP). Roland also sits on the Council of STEP worldwide.

axebridge.com

| QUESTION ONE

What is the general risk appetite of banks in your jurisdiction and how does that affect setting up a new business bank account?

Banking is a risky business. With anti-money laundering and anti-terrorism rules, reporting requirements, risk of sanctions and fines, de-risking, additional and more complicated reporting requirements, it's hard to navigate the minefield. Therefore, some of the requirements many of you will come across when trying to open a personal or business account may seem daunting. This paper hopes to make the process easier to understand and navigate as you establish a bank account for your corporate needs in Barbados.

In Barbados we have five major banks. There's the Canadians (Scotia, RBC and CIBC's FirstCaribbean) then we have the Trinidad-based Republic Bank and First-Citizens. All are reputable. All are sophisticated in terms of their online banking capability and general infrastructure. Each bank will have their own procedures, policies and risk appetite. But below is the basic information you will need to open a corporate bank account.

The risk appetite for most banks can be described as low to moderate. Internal policies will weight risk based on a number of factors including country, industry, whether or not the ultimate beneficial owner(s), director(s) or authorised signatories are politically exposed. Country risk for Latin and Caribbean as well as Middle Eastern countries tend to be higher (and therefore more challenging to establish accounts), whereas developed western countries (the US, Canada, UK) tend to be assigned as lower risk.

The US may have additional requirements such as confirmation of tax compliance and documents needed for FATCA reporting. Business and personal expatriate accounts tend to carry the same appetite and rigour to open business accounts. Foreign exchange restrictions have been relaxed over the last year, but some expatriates feel comfortable keeping some of the majority of their income in an account outside of Barbados with local accounts for in country expenses.

| QUESTION TWO

How accommodating are banks in your jurisdiction for opening a business and personal bank account?

Barbados is generally well known in the international community with international banks and firms operating for a number of years. The large accounting firms KPMG, PWC, E&Y and Deloitte have operated in Barbados for over 40 years with recent additions from the likes of Baker Tilley and BDO. Similarly, Barbados boasts a mature banking industry with local and international banks and a number of mergers over the years. Banks such as RBC have operated in Barbados since 1911. Therefore, clients want and are comfortable with opening an account with local or international banks in Barbados.

Information and Documentation Required:

Shareholders, Ultimate Beneficial Owners ('UBOs')

1. Declaration of Source of Funds (usually the bank will have a form they will require the UBO to sign) with supporting evidence
2. W-8BEN OR W-9 Form where applicable
3. Certified proof of address (utility bill is preferred and should be no older than 1 month old)
4. Written reference dated within 2 months with individual's name and address from a financial institution confirming a current relationship that is satisfactory and that has existed for at least two years. Reference must be on the bank's letterhead and should be addressed to: **the name and address of the bank the account is being opened at**

5. Professional reference (from an Attorney or Accountant who has known the individual for 2 years or more). Reference must be on the firm's letterhead and should be addressed to: **name and address of the bank the account is being opened at**

6. Certified copies of two valid pieces of identification (ideally a passport along with drivers licence or national Identification) that are/have:

- A - Government issued
- B - Photo-bearing
- C - Date of birth
- D - Unique identifier #
- E - Signature

Directors, Officers and Authorised Signatories

1. Certified proof of address (utility bill is preferred and should be no older than 1 month old. Most institutions will also accept confirmation of address in the bank reference presuming that is from a recognized and reputable institution).
2. Professional reference (from an Attorney or Accountant who has known the individual for 2 years or more. Reference must be on the firm's letterhead and should be addressed to:
3. Name and address of the bank the account is being opened at
4. Certified copies of two valid pieces of identification (ideally passport along with drivers licence or national Identification) that are/have:
 - a. Government issued
 - b. Photo-bearing
 - c. Date of birth
 - d. Unique identifier #
 - e. Signature

Companies

Corporate bodies that are - Shareholders, UBO;

1. Declaration of Source of Funds (Bank will normally have a form they will ask the director or authorized person to complete and sign) with supporting evidence
2. W-8BEN-E Form
3. Certified copies of Certificate & Article of Incorporation/Association/Memorandum
4. Certified copy of By Law
5. Certificate of Good Standing – Original or certified copy
6. Certified copy of Register of Director
7. Certified copy of Register of Shareholder
8. Certified copy of Certificate of Incumbency (List of Officers authorized to sign on company's behalf)
9. Copy of most recent Financial Statement.
10. Certified copy of resolution or extract of minutes with resolution to open the bank account (the bank will also provide a template of resolution for Director and or authorised person to sign)

Corporate Bodies That Are: - Directors, Officers

1. Certified copies of Certificate & Article of Incorporation/Association/Memorandum
2. Certified copy of By Law
3. Certificate of Good Standing – original or certified copy
4. Certified copy of Register of Director
5. Certified copy of Register of Shareholder



The Axebridge Group is a privately held wealth, trust and corporate services firm specialising in finding traditional and alternative solutions for private and corporate clients.

Axebridge is a full service Trust and Corporate Services Provider, licensed and regulated in Barbados. The team of dedicated professionals assist entities to meet their tax and treasury objectives by providing substantive support and presence with a wide range of activities. These include; trustee and trust administration services, company formation and registration, director and other fiduciary services, corporate services and administrative duties including fiduciary (e.g. directors), corporate secretary, registered office, accounting and administration plus bookkeeping and accounting services.

Top tips to smooth the opening process in Barbados

- Copies of all IDs must be in colour, must be clear/clean (facial features on IDs must be properly seen), information must be legible, no part of the ID is to be cut off, must be a scanned copy that will print on a clean white background (must not be taken laying on furniture where you can see a table when printed).
- Copies of all proof of addresses must be in colour, must be clear/clean, information must be legible.
- Copies of IDs and proof of addresses must be certified and bear the stamp of the notary certifying the documents.
- References & Bio/Resumes must be in English.
- Where a corporate body holds a position such as shareholder and/or director, full due diligence information as per the above w where applicable is required for the company.
- All documentation must be in English. If not in English documents must translated by a certified translator to English



HONG KONG

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Andrew earned his bachelor and master's degrees in 1996 and 1998 respectively. As a Certified Public Accountant based in Hong Kong, he began his career at Value Plus CPA since its inception. With his flying start, Andrew quickly rose to the status of Chief Executive Officer.

With more than 20 years of experience in public accounting, management consulting and business advisory services, his CPA firm has served hundreds and thousands of portfolio clients from different sectors all over the world and was selected as "Business Advisory Firm of the Year" by Corporate INTL magazine due to his all-round experiences in strategic business development.

His numerous engagements include: business formation, company secretarial services, financial accounting and reporting, auditing and attestation, tax advisory and planning, forensic accounting as well as transaction advisory services.

onetoonecf.com

| QUESTION ONE

What is the general risk appetite of banks in your jurisdiction and how does that affect setting up a new business bank account?

In recent years most banks in Hong Kong have been reluctant to open a corporate bank account for their clients. There are a number of reasons for this.

First and foremost, a bank looks for profit. It sounds logical, but it's an often overlooked factor in the discussion about opening bank accounts. While many people think – and banks claim – that the reason it's difficult to open bank account is simply because of strict risk management policies, this is only part of the story. Even the Hong Kong Monetary Authority does not deny that lack of profitability is the real reason for rejection.

Hong Kong banks have not yet adapted to the 21st century where almost anything can be done online. There are many entrepreneurs and digital nomads that have incorporated an offshore company in Hong Kong, but they may not be based in Hong Kong as it's not necessary when running an e-commerce business that can operate from anywhere in the world.

To open a bank account, a bank performs a so-called 'Know-your-customer' process (KYC). During this process, the bank needs to verify different elements; for example, it needs to understand what the business does and conduct checks on the shareholders and directors. Neat Business follows stringent due diligence processes, so for companies with more complicated structures it will take longer to perform all necessary checks.

Especially for new businesses and start-ups without financial history, a bank will want to know more about the nature of your business to make sure you are not engaged in money laundering or criminal activities. This is understandable, but regrettably many traditional banks do not understand new business models very well. Because of an anti-risk mentality, paired with the uncertainty about whether the company will be profitable for the bank, they would rather automatically reject an application than spend time to investigate and better understand it.

| QUESTION TWO

How accommodating are banks in your jurisdiction for opening a business and personal bank account?

Not very accommodating. Ironically, Hong Kong is a cosmopolitan and international city in many ways, until it comes to opening a corporate bank account. If you're a permanent resident, it may be easier for you to open a personal and a corporate bank account than if you are not living here or have a certain nationality.

- **How varied are banks' vetting procedures?** It really depends. From our experiences, the famous banks are more difficult to open personal as well as corporate bank account in Hong Kong.
- **What documents need to be provided?**
 1. Original minutes for bank account opening approval
 2. Original ID document of directors and shareholders
 3. Original Business Registration Certificate and Certificate of Incorporation
 4. Original Memorandum and Articles of Association
 5. Company chop/common seal
 6. Other statutory records
 7. Address proof of directors
 8. Business proof, such as purchase orders, sales/purchase invoices, contracts, bills of lading, etc.
- **How long does it typically take and what is the process?** 4 to 8 weeks

| QUESTION THREE

Should you join an internationally reputable or established bank rather than a local bank?

This is based on your preference. I can't see much difference between the two for a limited liability company.

- **Is it easier to set up a local bank account and what does that mean for your business?** Sometimes but not always. For our client's ordinary course of business, I can't see any difference.
- **What would be clients' perceptions if you set up a business account with a local bank?** Not much, from my perspective.
- **Are international banks' vetting procedures more difficult than local banks?** That's exactly the case.



ONEtoONE Corporate Finance Group is an international corporation specialized in M&A advisory in the middle-market. With more than 100 senior professionals, ONEtoONE helps find, attract and close deals with the buyers or investors who can pay the most, thus maximizing the value of your company. ONEtoONE has worked on over 1,000 corporate operations, both in local and in cross-border transactions.

Today we have hundreds of Merger & Acquisition (M&A) advisors, sector consultants and researchers working in our teams all around the world. Each of our experts is highly qualified through years of study and real experience as M&A advisors and our sector specialists have held top positions in their sector.

ONEtoONE members are part of a consolidated collaborative matrix of Corporate Finance professionals. Our team enjoys a variety of unique tools that are designed to help our members reduce transaction time, and maximize success rates and deal values. We have an International Perspective. Everyone in the ONEtoONE team shares the same goals and shares the same values; this allows us to work under the same methodology and achieve excellent results.

| Top tips to smooth the opening process in Hong Kong

Here I offer 3 useful tips for those who experienced troubles opening up bank account:

1. Banks that have strict requirements for account opening are often international banks or local banks involved in international businesses because they have pressure from foreign governments. As a result, I suggest you find some smaller local banks where opening an account is much easier if you don't have the need to transfer money overseas and only need local deposit and withdrawal.
2. Many transactions can be done by attorneys or accountants. Professionals will most certainly transfer money to any foreign account appointed by you once the things are properly done. In most cases, you don't even have to open up a bank account in Hong Kong.
3. OB (offshore banking) is permitted in certain Asian countries. They can help you with your difficulties you have in Hong Kong in spite of a more complicated process.



SLOVAKIA

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Andrea also graduated from the Economic University in Bratislava in the faculty of General Economics, specialising in finance, banking and investments. She has a doctor of law degree in commercial law and traffic policing from the Police Academy in Bratislava.

vasilpartners.com

| QUESTION ONE

What is the general risk appetite of banks in your jurisdiction and how does that affect setting up a new business bank account?

I consider the real risk for new clients regarding banks in Slovakia as not high due to strict AML and KYC rules adopted into Slovak law during the past two years. However, despite this, the banks behave as if the actual risk is extremely high. This is mirrored in the situation when from year to year it is more difficult and takes more time to open a bank account, not only for the foreign entities but also for the Slovak entrepreneurs. When in the past it was possible to open a bank account within a couple of days, now it may take a couple of weeks and without guarantees that the bank accepts the client and actually opens the bank account. This applies mainly to foreign entities, but my experience with the banks in Slovakia is that Slovak companies have to ask the bank in advance whether it accepts them as a client and opens the account. Slovak companies with solely Slovak citizens as shareholders and directors are accepted by banks in Slovakia, but once there is a foreign element involved (e.g. foreign entity or citizen as shareholder or director of the company, even from another EU country), the banks look at such cases carefully and require more information and documents from the client to verify them prior to a decision whether the client should be accepted to open the bank account or not.

When the bank refuses to open the bank account for the client it does not have to give any reasons to the client. There are a couple of "problematic" jurisdictions that are not accepted by banks in Slovakia – for instance, it is almost impossible to open a bank account for US and Russian entities and citizens, also entities and citizens from offshore jurisdictions are seldom accepted. From EU jurisdictions mainly entities from Cyprus are not accepted.

As for personal accounts, EU citizens are allowed to open personal bank accounts in Slovak banks, while other jurisdictions are considered individually as in the case of legal entities.

| QUESTION TWO

How accommodating are banks in your jurisdiction for opening a business and personal bank account?

The banks' vetting procedures are similar because the banks have to follow AML and KYC rules stipulated by the law and Slovak Central Bank regulations.

For opening business bank accounts the basic documents required are:

- an extract from the commercial/business registry;
- the corporate documents of the company (not applied on the Slovak entity);
- the documents regarding the directors of the company (the ID cards or passports as proof of ID and the utility bills as the proof of address);
- a business plan by the company (not applied in the Slovak entity) ;
- a questionnaire of the bank regarding the identification of UBO, PEP, the source of money used by the company for doing the business and the transactions via the bank account. Additionally, the estimation of the amount of transactions planned to be done via bank account, the business structure of the client from the client to natural persons who are UBOs of the client.

Opening a personal bank account is much easier and requires only the ID card or passport of the client (EU resident) and the proof of address of the client's permanent residence in the EU country. For non-EU residents also a residence permit in Slovakia is required.

The time of the procedure of opening the bank account depends on the type of the client – the more complicated structure the client has and the more foreign elements are involved in the client's structure, the longer it takes to obtain the

decision of the compliance department of the bank. After that the opening of the bank account is a formality, but the personal presence of the directors is usually required.

| QUESTION THREE

Should you join an internationally reputable or established bank rather than a local bank?

There are mostly banks with the foreign capital in Slovakia and less than 5% of Slovak capital in the banks in Slovakia. Thus, which bank to join depends on the preferences of clients and the needs of their business. Foreign clients with subsidiaries in Slovakia usually use a bank that is used by their parent company in their home country.

As for the difficulty of opening a bank account and the banks' vetting procedures, I would not distinguish between the local banks and the foreign banks. I find it similar in all banks in Slovakia as all banks have to follow the same AML and KYC rules required by Slovak laws and by the regulations of the Slovak Central Bank. Each bank may have its own rules and procedures which differentiate it from others, but all banks follow the same laws and rules regarding AML and KYC policy.



Vasil & Partners is an umbrella name for a law firm specialising primarily in corporate and commercial law, international tax law with the formation and management of onshore and offshore companies in various jurisdictions. The firm is also a multi-family office providing solutions for protecting and growing family assets, family succession and wealth transfer planning, tax compliance and tax planning.

The firm represents high net worth individuals and their families, entrepreneurs, professionals and businesses of all sizes on a discrete basis, offering comprehensive advice on matters related to their tax affairs, business transactions and real estate with focus on cross-border issues. Vasil & Partners works very closely with associates in onshore and offshore locations and has extensive experience in coordinating overseas advice and the creation and administration of tax-efficient structures for its clients.

| Top tips to smooth the opening process in Slovakia

- To smooth the bank opening process I would recommend ongoing research of the banks with queries about the services, bank charges/fees, type of clients and their business to be accepted or not accepted. This will help clients to find out in advance whether the bank will be allow them to open a bank account and to find out what particular bank would be most suitable.
- Since personal contacts including with bankers are invaluable, I would recommend building an ongoing strong, long-lasting personal relationships with bankers in different banks; speak to them, meet them, network all the time 24/7.
- To increase the chances of success, I would recommend approaching simultaneously more banks (at least three) with an initial query regarding whether they would accept your particular client. Then start the actual process of opening the account with the bank that has responded positively. It would also save you and your client lots of time.



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wdm.com.mt

| QUESTION ONE

What is the general risk appetite of banks in your jurisdiction and how does that affect setting up a new business bank account?

Over the years, Malta has developed one of Europe's healthiest and most profitable banking sectors. The Maltese banking sector, which follows a conservative and traditional banking model, is well capitalised and the asset quality of most Maltese banks is very sound. Banking legislation in Malta is based on EU legislation and is compliant with the Basel Core Principles. The supervision of the island's largest banks falls under the remit of the European Central Bank, whilst the Malta Financial Services Authority is in charge of the supervision of all the other institutions.

Risk management in banking throughout the world has been transformed over the past decade. Moreover, money laundering and terrorist financing have become significant risks for banks which can ultimately affect their viability, and the reputation of their country's financial system. The global banking regulatory framework has changed and with it the banks' risk appetite. Malta is no exception to this, with these developments dictating to Maltese banks their business strategies in the face of a more rigorous and intrusive supervisory approaches, coupled with more meticulous standards of anti-money laundering rules.

Maltese banks are free to set their own risk appetite and chase opportunities presented by Malta's leading role in blockchain and crypto technology, and in the medical cannabis sector. Yet the risk aversion of correspondent banks that see the Maltese market as too small to process payments related to activity such as gaming transactions, which may be considered as too risky, has impacted more heavily on Malta and other smaller jurisdictions. This, coupled with the drive by banking regulators to force a reduction of the risks inherent to the industry such as conduct, compliance, reputational and IT risks, has led banks in Malta to implement a de-risking exercise.

The risk appetite of Maltese banks, which is an articulation of the risks that banks are willing to assume in the conduct of their business, has been revised in consultation with supervisory authorities and has become more restricted. As a consequence, certain risks that banks used to assume as part of their business now generally lie outside the revised risk appetite. The opening and maintaining of bank accounts for companies and private clients alike is therefore accordingly governed.

| QUESTION TWO

How accommodating are banks in your jurisdiction for opening a business and personal bank account?

As explained in my response to the previous questions, the opening of a business or personal account will be hugely impacted by the risk appetite of banks and financial institutions. The opening of a bank account will depend on onboarding procedures of the bank or financial institution, which would typically revolve around who wants to open the bank account, the nature of the client business and type of transactions that will be supported by the account. The time frame to open a bank account might vary from a few days to a few months, depending on the challenges faced during the client onboarding stage.

It is custom that prior to kickstarting the actual onboarding process, the client would be asked to fill in a preliminary check form. Upon the positive evaluation of such a preliminary check form, the formal onboarding process will begin by the bank or financial institution. The client will be accepted only upon the successful completion of the onboarding process.

When a private client approaches a bank or financial institution to open an account, typically they will:

- request a personal identification such as an ID Card or passport;

- verify your address. To do this, the bank or financial institution may also ask you to provide a recent utility bill;
- verify that you are legally eligible (e.g. age of applicant) to open an account;
- keep record of your occupation;
- request a character reference – this is usually necessary to open a current account;

When a business client approaches a bank or financial institution to open an account, besides asking for the above information with respect to the ultimate beneficial owner(s), they will also typically request:

- a business or company profile;
- business or company registration certificate;
- financial statements or financial projections where necessary;
- information to determine the source of funds the source of wealth.

In some cases the client may be requested to pay an onboarding fee and to provide additional information to comply with the bank's or financial institution's due diligence process.

| QUESTION THREE

Should you join an internationally reputable or established bank rather than a local bank?

The reputation of the bank together with the jurisdictional reputation of where the bank is situated will always be key in deciding which bank to partner with. Despite this, the nature of the banking service required by the client will also play an important part when choosing a bank.

Different types of banks serve different purposes and clients will choose the bank which would best serve their needs. Reputable, established international banks are usually used to take advantage of tax incentives offered by a particular jurisdiction, for better asset protection purposes and possibly for greater financial privacy provided within the permitted remit and obligations at law. On the other hand, domestic banks would be used by a customer because the latter would require a bank which has enhanced local knowledge of the typical business needs required by him. Domestic banks might also be chosen because they provide that level of personal relationship required and aspired by local clients when requesting credit facilities or expertise in connecting people and businesses together.

In today's world, any serious bank would acknowledge that client onboarding is a major focal point for them. Such banks would therefore streamline their onboarding process and offer a customised client service whilst grappling with evolving market dynamics, stiff competition, regulatory scrutiny and operational overheads. The setting up of a bank account has become more complex and time consuming both for international banks and for domestic banks. Having a bank account with a reputable bank from a reputable jurisdiction, irrespective of whether the bank is an international or local bank, almost equates to a certificate of excellence for the client who would have successfully fulfilled the bank's onboarding requirements.



Founded in 1994, WDM International is a Malta-based multidisciplinary firm offering audit,

tax, legal, corporate and advisory services. Truly entrepreneurial in character and form, the firm offers its services to a local and international clientele. WDM International strives to create value through focused excellence and constantly aims to continue growing, not only organically, but even by attracting new clients who could benefit from our approach.

WDM International provides a tailor-made service throughout, dedicating its energy to turning clients' business dreams into a successful reality. We have the know-how and practical experience to guide clients throughout their business needs, while taking advantage of all the benefits Malta has to offer.

| Top tips to smooth the opening process in Malta

Prior to opening a bank account you must:

- Seek adequate advice to help you understand all the steps required to open a bank account;
- Ensure that you have all the required documentation in place for due diligence purposes. The documentation should be in original, duly signed, certified and apostilled where necessary. This should save time during the onboarding process.
- Remember to inform the bank as to how you would like tax to be deducted from any interest credited to your bank account. Unless you advise the bank otherwise, withholding tax at the rate of 15% will be deducted from the interest paid on the accounts;
- Be aware that the bank may also ask you to sign a Data Protection Form or declaration (which may be part of the form used when applying or purchasing a product or service). By signing this, you authorise the bank to use information which it may have about you for direct marketing purposes and you agree to receive periodical information about products or services supplied by your bank.



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Martín is an international accounting partner at Zirkzee Group accountants and tax lawyers, a top 75 firm in the Netherlands, with 5 equity partners and 60 professionals working from three branches in Oegstgeest/Leiden, Noordwijk and Gouda.

Martín has 20 years experience in the (international) accounting arena. Martín is also responsible for the automation of administrative processes (for both clients as internally), corporate ID and HRM.

Martín obtained his Bachelor in Business Economics at Hogeschool Holland Amsterdam and completed several relevant masters thereafter.

A good family man, Martín likes to visit music festivals and is very knowledgeable about spirits and is not shy of drinking a good glass of wine and smoking a quality cigar.

zirkzeegroup.com

| QUESTION ONE

What is the general risk appetite of banks in your jurisdiction and how does that affect setting up a new business bank account?

The Netherlands represents the ideal choice for setting up a foreign bank account. It is known for its moderate risk profile, great local infrastructure, and a stable political climate. Advantageously, Schiphol airport accommodates direct flights from all parts of the world, locating you directly in Amsterdam, or anywhere else in the Netherlands under 3 hours.

The main risk parameters that affect setting up a new business account in the Netherlands are among others:

- Minimum levels for capital ratios;
- Risk-adjusted return measures;
- Concentration limits for single counterparties;
- Concentration limits for countries and industry sectors;
- Liquidity ratios (Loan-to-Deposit ratio, LCR, and NSFR);
- Market risk ratios;
- Operational risk ratios.

| QUESTION TWO

How accommodating are banks in your jurisdiction for opening a business and personal bank account?

To open up a bank account in the Netherlands, your company will need to present or identify itself to the bank of your choosing until the Ultimate Parent Company and the Ultimate Beneficial Owners. Explaining the reasons for starting the activity in the Netherlands. This includes anticipation of the growth revenue, members of staff, cashflow, client descriptions, and the locations of clients and suppliers.

Furthermore, company policy on anti-corruption and money laundering is required.

Finally, there must be an indication of the type of products that the customer wants to purchase before the application is processed.

Know Your Customer (KYC) procedures are a critical function to assess customer risk and a legal requirement to comply with the Dutch Anti-Money Laundering (AML) laws. Dutch law does require financial service providers to identify the persons mentioned in this KYC documents checklist. In case you are unable to meet with the bank in the Netherlands, or at one of the local branches of the bank, to be identified in person, it is possible to delegate this identification to certain third parties.

Uniquely Zirkzee Group has several experienced service providers, like European Growth Advisors and European Growth Reverent, in their network that can consult and assist your company with these KYC procedures. Smoothing this process considerably. In this case, the bank still requires the aforementioned certified copies of the identification documents.

Know Your Customer (KYC) procedures are a critical function to assess customer risk and a legal requirement to comply with the Dutch Anti-Money Laundering (AML) laws. Uniquely, Zirkzee Group has several service providers like European Growth Advisors and European Growth Reverent in their network that can consult and assist your company with these KYC procedures.

| QUESTION THREE

Should you join an internationally reputable or established bank rather than a local bank?

We would recommend a Dutch bank that operates internationally. Zirkzee Group has excellent relations with Rabobank, ABN Amro, and ING. The greatest advantage of these banks is that they often have local branches where the identification of employees, Ultimate Beneficiary Owners, or board members can take place. This can save you a lot of time and money in the process of opening up a foreign bank account. Moreover, these banks can provide full communication in English, German, French in most cases or Dutch if you wish. If you do decide to take a trip to Europe for the identification process, we are always happy to assist you and show you around our beautiful country.

Zirkzee Group

*accountants, auditors, tax lawyers
expat, payroll and trust services*

Every company or every entrepreneur is different. That is why our services are customized to the client's wishes. Zirkzee Group's clients consist mainly of internationally operating companies, start-up companies and entrepreneurs who are excited about working within our network. We offer services for all of our clients in the following areas: accounting, payroll services, tax and expat services.

Being located in the SBIC-building in Noordwijk, the Netherlands, Zirkzee Group is part of a community that involves lots of techno starters from the ESA-BIC incubation program. Within this community companies experience each other's assistance and contagious enthusiasm. This educational and inspirational environment encourages better results.

Doing business with Zirkzee Group means we will become your business partner. Our entire approach is focused on getting the best out of your company. Sharing with you our passion for entrepreneurship, our expertise and our broad network. Bringing people together and contributing to their success is what gives us a purpose. Hence our motto: become part of our community!

| Top tips to smooth the opening process in The Netherlands

- Contact Zirkzee Group and become part of our community.
- Disclose and provide all requested information complete, accurate, in time and in an orderly fashion.
- If possible come over to the Netherlands to meet, greet and get identified by all local service providers.
- Create a proper flow of cashflow (forecast) to run over the Dutch bank account.



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At Mellius we have years of professional expertise and experience and we facilitate the process of opening a bank account in Israel as well as in a wide range of states and banks, from Singapore to Hong Kong in the East, Switzerland, Lichtenstein and the UK in Europe, and all through the US in the West.

mellius.com

| QUESTION ONE

What is the general risk appetite of banks in your jurisdiction and how does that affect setting up a new business bank account?

Hungary is one of the most developed economies in Central Europe. As a member of the European Union, it is a gateway to a market of more than 450 million people. Its strategic location makes it an investment destination and ideal logistics point, due to the stability and performance of the Hungarian economy which has improved significantly in recent years.

Its financial system is one of the most developed in the area. Together with its government legislation, favourable investment policies and tax incentives aimed at improving competitiveness.

The banking sector in Hungary includes approximately 50 banks including foreign and local institutions. All banks operate under the supervision of the national Central Bank in Hungary (Magyar Nemzeti Bank (MNB)) which is part of the European System of Central Banks (ESCB).

The banking system of Hungary is up to date and offers a wide range of advanced features including **English-speaking customer service**, as well as online banking services in the English language. It is possible to open multi-currency accounts including EUR, GBP and USD.

All main banks specialize in a wide range of industries but focus mainly on ecommerce and online services, start-ups, technology, bio-medicine, retail, and real estate.

The local government encourages foreign investments. As a result, establishing a local company, including opening a bank account in most of banks is an efficient, organized and swift process compared to most European countries. In this respect the Hungarian governments reduced the corporate income tax to be the lowest one in the EU and of today it stands on 9%.

The process of opening a bank account for foreign companies compared to local companies owned by a foreigner, is more complicated due to the changes in the anti-money laundering laws, FATCA requirements and BEPS regulations.

| QUESTION TWO

How accommodating are banks in your jurisdiction for opening a business and personal bank account?

Most banks in Hungary accommodate international business accounts, investment accounts and private accounts for foreign nationals.

Business Accounts:

- The vetting procedure is very similar in all major banks in Hungary;
- All banks require a reasonable connection to Hungary;
- The KYC procedure requires the following documentation:
- Company documents translated to Hungarian language and certified by notary and apostille;
- Company Extract from the last 3 months, translated to Hungarian language and certified by notary and apostille;
- KYC documents for all individuals involved in the company (directors, shareholders and beneficial owners) including passport copy and proof of address, all certified by notary and apostille;
- Specimen signature certified by a notary and apostille;
- Financial statements of the company, if any; and

- It is required for the company's directors and signatories to arrive to a meeting at the bank.

The process for opening a bank account for international companies is more challenging and complicated due to new regulation that has been introduced to the banking system in the past few years. However, according to the local legislation it is mandatory for all Hungarian companies to open a business account in a local bank and therefore it is much efficient for international companies to register a local company and open a bank account this entity.

Private Accounts:

A large number of banks in Hungary accommodate private accounts for foreign citizens and offer "non-resident accounts" for individuals who live abroad but can prove a connection to Hungary. The eligibility for opening the account will depend on whether the individual meets the criteria the banks set.

The vetting procedure is similar in all banks:

- The KYC procedure requires the following documentation:
- Valid passport copy;
- Additional Identification certificate such as a driving license;
- A proven connection to Hungary; and
- It is required to arrive to a meeting at the bank in order to open the account.

The process for opening a private bank account for a foreigner usually takes 2-4 weeks, depending on the bank's internal compliance procedure.

| QUESTION THREE

Should you join an internationally reputable or established bank rather than a local bank?

The banking system in Hungary is very stable and offers a wide range of advanced features such as full and easily operated online services in the English language, which makes it very attractive to foreign companies and individuals.

In the global perspective, the international banking system is creating challenges in the process of opening bank accounts for foreign companies, the vetting procedures are becoming more and more complicated and banks are not eager to open new accounts.

Hungary is not different. As previously mentioned, it is more difficult to open a bank account for a foreign company in Hungary and therefore the most suitable way will be to incorporate a local entity and open.

Mellius has a vast experience and professional expertise in the Hungarian market and we facilitate the process of opening a bank account in Hungary as well as in a wide range of states and banks, from Singapore to Hong Kong in the East, Switzerland, Lichtenstein and the UK in Europe, and all through the U.S. in the West.



Mellius is an international company specializing in facilitating the establishment of companies and various legal entities around the world, including funds, partnerships, foundations, and trusts.

Mellius focuses on high-quality, effective and creative solutions to help establish legal entities in over 100 jurisdictions around the globe while coordinating between various types of activities, client profiles, area of activity and additional factors.

As of today, Mellius is the largest Corporate Service Provider in Israel with branches in Switzerland and Bulgaria.

Mellius portfolio of clients is comprised of legal entities in all sized, from young start-ups at the very beginning of their corporate lives, through mature companies, all the way to publicly traded companies listed (mainly) in the London Stock Exchange, Nasdaq and TASE.

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