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Banking licenses compared

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This table sets the banking license of each jurisdiction covered by BankLicenseWiki side by side, using the same headings for each. It is not a ranking: which regime fits depends on the customers a bank will serve and where. Every figure is sourced in the jurisdiction's own guide.

In short: Minimum capital ranges from €1 million for a Lithuanian specialised bank and €5 million for most EU banks to HK$300 million in Hong Kong and S$1.5 billion for a Singapore full bank; the United States and Australia set capital case by case. Deposit protection ranges from €100,000 in the EU to $250,000 in the US and A$250,000 in Australia. Only EU banks carry a passport to other countries (figures as of November 2026).

Capital, fees and timelines

Jurisdiction	Supervisor	Website	Minimum capital	Application fee	Decision time
Australia	APRA	apra.gov.au	Set by APRA case by case	Not confirmed	No statutory deadline found

Jurisdiction	Supervisor	Website	Minimum capital	Application fee	Decision time
Germany	BaFin / ECB	bafin.de	€5 million	Not confirmed	EU law requires a decision within 6 months of a complete application and no later than 12 months after receipt; the ECB says decisions usually take 6 to 12 months
Hong Kong	HKMA	hkma.gov.hk	HK$300 million (licensed bank)	Not confirmed	No statutory deadline found
Ireland	CBI / ECB	centralbank.ie	€5 million	Not confirmed	The ECB says decisions usually take 6 to 12 months: EU law requires a decision within 6 months of a complete application and no later than 12 months after receipt

Jurisdiction	Supervisor	Website	Minimum capital	Application fee	Decision time
Lithuania	Bank of Lithuania / ECB	lb.lt	€5m (bank); €1m (specialised bank)	A state fee is charged on the licence, reported at €50,683	The Bank of Lithuania must assess the application within 6 months of a complete file; the ECB then decides
Luxembourg	CSSF / ECB	cssf.lu	€5 million (EU floor)	Not confirmed	The ECB says decisions usually take 6 to 12 months: EU law requires a decision within 6 months of a complete application and no later than 12 months after receipt
Singapore	MAS	mas.gov.sg	S$1.5 billion (digital: from S$15m; wholesale: S$100m)	Not confirmed	No statutory deadline found
Switzerland	FINMA	finma.ch	CHF 10 million (FinTech licence: CHF 300,000)	We could not confirm a fixed licensing fee; FINMA charges fees under its fees ordinance	No statutory deadline found

Jurisdiction	Supervisor	Website	Minimum capital	Application fee	Decision time
United Kingdom	PRA / FCA	bankofengland.co.uk	€5m (from £1m/€1m for small specialist banks)	Reported at £55,740 in total for the PRA and FCA application fees; we could not confirm the current figure from an official source	By law within 6 months of a complete application, or 12 months if incomplete
United States	OCC / FDIC	occ.gov	Set case by case (8% Tier 1 leverage, first 3 years)	Not confirmed	Since August 2026 the FDIC aims to give qualifying de novo applicants a contingent authorisation within 120 days of receiving the deposit insurance application, followed by final approval before opening

Capital ratios, branches and deposit protection

Jurisdiction	Minimum capital ratios	Foreign bank branches	Deposit protection	Passport
Australia	Basel III (APS 110)	Yes (foreign ADI)	A$250,000 (FCS)	No
Germany	4.5% / 6% / 8% + buffers	Yes (national licence)	€100,000	Yes (EEA)
Hong Kong	4.5% / 6% / 8% + buffers	Yes	HK$800,000 (DPS)	No
Ireland	4.5% / 6% / 8% + buffers	Yes (national licence)	€100,000	Yes (EEA)
Lithuania	4.5% / 6% / 8% + buffers	Yes (national licence)	€100,000	Yes (EEA)
Luxembourg	4.5% / 6% / 8% + buffers	Yes (national licence)	€100,000 (FGDL)	Yes (EEA)
Singapore	Basel III, above minimums	Yes	S$100,000 (SDIC)	No
Switzerland	Basel III + category add-ons	Yes (FINMA licence)	CHF 100,000 (esisuisse)	No
United Kingdom	4.5% / 6% / 8% + buffers	Yes (retail deposits usually via a subsidiary)	£120,000 (FSCS)	No
United States	4.5% / 6% / 8%; leverage 4%	Yes (federal or state)	$250,000 (FDIC)	Nationwide (no foreign passport)

Figures as of November 2026. “Not confirmed” means we could not verify a figure from an official source; it does not mean there is none. See the disclaimer.

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Patterns

- **One rulebook, one decision-maker in the euro area:** in Lithuania, Germany, Ireland and Luxembourg the national supervisor assesses the application, but the ECB grants every banking licence, under the same EU capital and liquidity rules. See Passporting.
- **Lower entry points exist, with limits:** the UK's mobilisation route, Australia's Restricted ADI licence, Singapore's restricted digital full bank, Lithuania's specialised bank and Switzerland's FinTech licence all let a new entrant start smaller. See Phased and restricted bank licenses.
- **Deposit protection is per depositor, per bank:** limits apply to the total held at one licensed bank, not per account, and usually exclude investments. See Deposit guarantee schemes.

Source: https://banklicensewiki.com/compare-licenses/
Version: last updated 28 November 2026. Check the online version for later changes.

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Popular comparisons

Two-license comparisons, side by side:

- UK (PRA / FCA) vs Lithuania (Bank of Lithuania / ECB)
- Lithuania (Bank of Lithuania / ECB) vs Ireland (CBI / ECB)
- Germany (BaFin / ECB) vs Luxembourg (CSSF / ECB)
- Switzerland (FINMA) vs UK (PRA / FCA)
- Singapore (MAS) vs Hong Kong (HKMA)
- US (OCC / FDIC) vs UK (PRA / FCA)
- Australia (APRA) vs Singapore (MAS)
- Luxembourg (CSSF / ECB) vs Switzerland (FINMA)
- Ireland (CBI / ECB) vs UK (PRA / FCA)