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Lithuania (Bank of Lithuania / ECB) vs Ireland (CBI / ECB): banking licenses compared

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In short: Lithuania (Bank of Lithuania / ECB): minimum capital €5m (bank); €1m (specialised bank), deposit protection €100,000. Ireland (CBI / ECB): minimum capital €5 million, deposit protection €100,000. Figures as of November 2026.

This page sets the two regimes side by side, using the same headings for each. It does not say which is 'better': that depends on who the clients are and what protection they need. The full rules, sources and FAQs are in the Banking license in Lithuania and Banking license in Ireland guides.

Side by side

	Lithuania	Ireland
Regulator	Bank of Lithuania and the European Central Bank (ECB)	Central Bank of Ireland and the European Central Bank (ECB)
License	Banking licence or specialised bank licence under the Law on Banks; the final decision is taken by the ECB	Banking licence under section 9 of the Central Bank Act 1971, granted by the ECB on a proposal from the Central Bank of Ireland
Legal basis	Law on Banks of the Republic of Lithuania; EU Capital Requirements Directive and Regulation; SSM Regulation	Central Bank Act 1971; EU Capital Requirements Directive and Regulation as applied in Ireland; SSM Regulation

	Lithuania	Ireland
Minimum capital	€5 million for a bank with a full banking licence. €1 million for a specialised bank, which may take deposits, lend and provide payment services but not most investment services. A specialised bank is subject to the same capital ratios and prudential rules as a full bank.	Initial capital of at least €5 million under the EU Capital Requirements Directive.
Application fee	A state fee is charged on the licence, reported at €50,683. In December 2023 the Ministry of Finance announced a reduction in bank licence fees; check the current amount with the Bank of Lithuania.	Not confirmed. We could not find a licensing fee published by an official source.
Decision time	The Bank of Lithuania must assess the application within 6 months of a complete file; the ECB then decides. The ECB says licensing decisions usually take 6 to 12 months.	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.
Local substance	A Lithuanian company with its head office in Lithuania, fit and proper managers and shareholders, and staff proportionate to the business model. The Bank of Lithuania accepts licence documents in English.	Head office and real management in Ireland, a board and senior managers approved under the Central Bank's fitness and probity regime, and a credible business plan.
Minimum capital ratios	Pillar 1 minimums under the CRR: Common Equity Tier 1 (CET1) of 4.5%, Tier 1 of 6% and total capital of 8% of risk-weighted assets, plus a 3% leverage ratio. On top come the 2.5% capital conservation buffer, other buffers set by the authorities and a bank-specific Pillar 2 requirement.	Pillar 1 minimums under the CRR: Common Equity Tier 1 (CET1) of 4.5%, Tier 1 of 6% and total capital of 8% of risk-weighted assets, plus a 3% leverage ratio. On top come the 2.5% capital conservation buffer, other buffers set by the authorities and a bank-specific Pillar 2 requirement.
Foreign bank branches	A bank from outside the EU can open a branch only with a national authorisation from the host country; it does not receive an EU passport. CRD VI (Directive (EU) 2024/1619) harmonises the rules for third-country branches across the EU.	A bank from outside the EU can open a branch only with a national authorisation from the host country; it does not receive an EU passport. CRD VI (Directive (EU) 2024/1619) harmonises the rules for third-country branches across the EU.

	Lithuania	Ireland
Liquidity	Liquidity coverage ratio (LCR) and net stable funding ratio (NSFR) of at least 100% under the CRR.	Liquidity coverage ratio (LCR) and net stable funding ratio (NSFR) of at least 100% under the CRR.
Deposit protection	Deposits are insured up to €100,000 per depositor, per bank, by the state deposit insurance scheme (Indėlių ir investicijų draudimas), under the EU Deposit Guarantee Schemes Directive.	€100,000 per depositor, per bank, under the Deposit Guarantee Scheme administered by the Central Bank of Ireland, in line with the EU Directive.
Cross-border passport	Yes. A bank authorised in one EU/EEA country can open branches and provide services in every other EEA country under the single passport, after notifying its supervisor. This applies to specialised banks too.	Yes. A bank authorised in one EU/EEA country can open branches and provide services in every other EEA country under the single passport, after notifying its supervisor.
Public register	Bank of Lithuania register of licences [2]	Central Bank of Ireland registers [4]

Each figure is sourced in the license guide, where every line carries its own reference.

Frequently asked questions

Which license costs more to hold, Lithuania or Ireland?

Lithuania: €5 million for a bank with a full banking licence. €1 million for a specialised bank, which may take deposits, lend and provide payment services but not most investment services. A specialised bank is subject to the same capital ratios and prudential rules as a full bank. Ireland: Initial capital of at least €5 million under the EU Capital Requirements Directive. Capital is only the floor: running costs (staff, audit, compliance, technology) usually exceed it.

Are the capital ratios the same under both licenses?

Lithuania: Pillar 1 minimums under the CRR: Common Equity Tier 1 (CET1) of 4.5%, Tier 1 of 6% and total capital of 8% of risk-weighted assets, plus a 3% leverage ratio. On top come the 2.5% capital conservation buffer, other buffers set by the authorities and a bank-specific Pillar 2 requirement. Ireland: Pillar 1 minimums under the CRR: Common Equity Tier 1 (CET1) of 4.5%, Tier 1 of 6% and total capital of 8% of risk-weighted assets, plus a 3% leverage ratio. On top come the 2.5% capital conservation buffer, other buffers set by the authorities and a bank-specific Pillar 2 requirement.

How much of a depositor's money is protected if the bank fails?

Lithuania: Deposits are insured up to €100,000 per depositor, per bank, by the state deposit insurance scheme (Indėlių ir investicijų draudimas), under the EU Deposit Guarantee Schemes Directive. Ireland: €100,000 per depositor, per bank, under the Deposit Guarantee Scheme administered by the Central Bank of Ireland, in line with the EU Directive.

Can a firm with one of these licenses serve clients in other countries?

Lithuania: Yes. A bank authorised in one EU/EEA country can open branches and provide services in every other EEA country under the single passport, after notifying its supervisor. This applies to specialised banks too. Ireland: Yes. A bank authorised in one EU/EEA country can open branches and provide services in every other EEA country under the single passport, after notifying its supervisor.

See also

- Banking license in Lithuania
- Banking license in Ireland
- UK (PRA / FCA) vs Lithuania (Bank of Lithuania / ECB): banking licenses compared
- Ireland (CBI / ECB) vs UK (PRA / FCA): banking licenses compared
- All 10 licenses in one table

References

1. Official Bank of Lithuania and the European Central Bank (ECB) . Lithuania. Accessed November 2026.
2. Official Bank of Lithuania register of licences . Bank of Lithuania / ECB. Accessed November 2026.

3. Official Central Bank of Ireland and the European Central Bank (ECB) . Ireland. Accessed November 2026.
4. Official Central Bank of Ireland registers . CBI / ECB. Accessed November 2026.

General information, not legal or investment advice. Figures as of November 2026; confirm with the regulator before applying or opening an account.

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