

All countries

How long does it typically take to form/register the entity?

Asia

China How long does it typically take to form/register the entity? Usually 21-43 months for a WFOE but fast-track solution is available. Time-consuming aspects are, for example, notarisation and apostille certification legalisation of required documents, as well as the required government processes/bank AML procedures. Legalisation requirement could become a problem during pandemic, but manageable. A major development after November 7, 2023 is that the earlier legalization requirement applicable to certificate of good standing of the shareholder has now been replaced by apostille certification requirement which generally reduces the usual timeframe for an incorporation exercise.

An EJV usually takes longer to negotiate.

Hong Kong Approximately one month.

Singapore Approximately one to two days.

United Arab Emirates Onshore, that is outside the tax-free zones, one to two weeks following arrangement of appropriately legalised corporate documents and Arabic translation of the same.

Additional time is often required where, due to the nature of the proposed business to be conducted within the UAE, special approvals from third-party authorities are required in addition to the approval of the company registrar that is located at the Department of Economic Development ("DED") of the Emirate chosen to establish the entity.

The time frame varies from one tax-free zone to another. A time frame of minimum three to five weeks should be expected in these instances.

Europe

Austria The registration of a newly founded local company usually takes 5-10 business days from the submission of the respective registration application once all supporting information and documents have been obtained, which will also require the payment of the relevant share capital contribution amount (see below regarding arrangement of a bank account).

Czech Republic

Limited liability company/joint stock company:

Formation of a new entity: it takes approximately two to four weeks from the establishment by notarial deed to registration of the company with the Commercial Register (depending on delivery of all necessary supporting information and documents). The notary can also register a new company directly with the Commercial Register by the next day, which speeds up the registration process, provided that the notarial deed comprises a memorandum/articles of association with the very basic features. In addition, a meeting with the notary may occur via video-conference session (distance-wise).

Alternatively, a ready-made company (or the so-called SPV) can be acquired, which takes around two to three days from submission of complete required documentation.

Branch:

Approximately two weeks (depending on the delivery of all necessary supporting information and documents). Ordinarily, it is not possible to speed up the registration via the Czech notary, because the founding resolution on the establishment of the branch is usually adopted by the founder abroad, not in the Czech Republic.

England & Wales

Company:
Within a working day

Branch:
Within one to two working days once the documentation is completed.
The overall process takes typically one to two weeks.

Please note that legal changes are expected, requiring all directors to have their identity verified before they can be appointed as directors. This ID verification may need to be factored into the formation process. ID verification is expected to apply to overseas companies wishing to register a branch also.

France

In general, it takes eight to ten days following the filing of all legal documents. However, due to current processing delays encountered by some clerks of the commercial courts, this timeframe may be extended by a few weeks.

Germany

GmbH:

- Formation of new GmbH: Up to four weeks, plus the time to set up a bank account which is mandatory prior to incorporation and registration with the German commercial register
- Acquisition of a brand new shelf company GmbH: Two to three business days once all supporting information and documents have been provided.

Branch:

- Five to ten business days for the registration process once all supporting information and documents have been provided. The overall process typically takes up to four weeks.

Hungary	<p>The Hungarian company formation is one of the fastest in the EU. The registration of companies is done by courts of registration in an electronic procedure. The standard registration procedure takes approximately one to two weeks (15 working days at most) after all necessary corporate documents have been prepared. However, in case the shareholders use standard Articles of Association provided by law, the registration does not take more than 24-72 hours as of filing. VAT registration is also immediate, so you can start working immediately. Company records may be indicated in the English, German, French and Russian languages as well.</p>
Ireland	<p>Company: Within five working days for an online application.</p> <p>Branch: Within three to five working days once the documentation is completed. The overall process takes typically one to two weeks.</p>
Italy	<p>For both companies and branches, after having executed all the document and sent them in original to the relevant recipients, the incorporation usually requires around six to eight business days (it mostly depends on the processing time of filing of the incorporation deed executed before the Notary Public with the Register of Enterprises, as well as by the completion of other formalities, e.g., the release by the competent Tax Office of the VAT Number for the newly incorporated company).</p>
Netherlands	<p>Company:</p> <p>Approximately two weeks depending on timing for receipt of information (after receipt of all information and duly signed documents, formation can in principle be done within one business day).</p>
Poland	<p>Typically, incorporation and registration of a limited liability company or a joint stock company takes between four and six weeks.</p> <p>In the case of a limited liability company, it is also possible to set up a company within 24 hours when an electronic template of articles of association is used. This type of incorporation imposes some limitations upon the shareholders, eg contributions can be made only in cash.</p> <p>On July 1, 2021, an amendment to Polish law introducing online registration proceedings has come into force. Due to this change, electronic communication with the registry court is the rule - without the possibility of using written form. The application for entry must be submitted via the PRS (Court Registers Portal) portal and must be completed in the Polish language. This amendment was introduced inter alia to speed up the registration proceedings, however at this stage it is hard to assess whether this goal has been achieved.</p>
Portugal	<p>Within a working day.</p> <p>In case of foreign directors and/or shareholders that do not hold portuguese taxpayer numbers, such request must be done previously to the incorporation. If requested online, it takes around 10 days to be issued; if requested in person, and if previously booked, it usually takes 1 business day to be issued.</p> <p>Plus, if the shareholders wish to choose the company's name, it is mandatory to request a name certificate, which takes 10 days when is a regular request or 1 working day to be issued when requested with urgency. Nevertheless, the company can change its name any time after being incorporated.</p>

Slovakia

From formation to registration of a new LLC, JSC, JSA or a Branch with the Commercial Register (including obtaining business licenses): Approximately one to two weeks following completion/signing of all documents (the time period may be postponed in case of regulated business activities where special permission is needed).

Acquisition of a shelf company (LLC): Approximately two to five working days.

Registration of a company or of a transfer of a shelf company which has its seat located in Bratislava region might occasionally take longer due to the heavy workload at the local Commercial Register.

However, from July 17, 2022, the registration of the majority and/or minority shareholding interest in LLC has declaratory effects (i.e. the registration of the transfer of the shareholding interest in LLC in the Commercial Register merely confirms effects that have already occurred/ or may occur at the latest as of the date of the registration in the Commercial Register).

From February 2023, it is also possible to establish an LLC in a simplified manner by a dedicated electronic form for the creation of a Memorandum of Association (founding document) and a proposal for registration of the LLC. The advantage of establishing the LLC in the above manner is that the company will simultaneously obtain the trade license for selected business activities corresponding to the list of free trades according to the special regulation on trade business, by registering in the Commercial Register. This might serve to speed up the registration. However, the LLC may be established in a simplified manner only if specific conditions set out in the Slovak Commercial Code are met. Among others, establishing an LLC in a simplified manner is only possible if (i) the company has no more than 5 shareholders, (ii) the subject of business does not constitute more than 15 selected activities corresponding to the list of free trades according to the special regulation on trade business, and (iii) the contributions of the company's shareholders are exclusively in monetary terms.

Moreover, from November 1, 2023, the registration of a company is also possible via a notary, which might also serve to overcome postponing the registration due to the heavy workload at the Commercial Register.

Spain

3-5 weeks, depending on whether the inbound investor is present in Spain or not (i.e., if legal representation through power of attorney is necessary for the incorporation procedure or not).

South America

Brazil

Ltda.: 1 week after the receipt of the necessary documents.

S.A.: 1 to 2 weeks.

All foreign documents, before being sent to Brazil, must be apostilled and, once in Brazil, must be translated by a sworn translator.

Brazilian companies must have an address in Brazil. There are expeditors that provides these services, normally with the accountancy services.