

Why Singapore as a location for international business and investment?

At the crossroads of finance, tax and accounting, our clients count on us to look out for their best interests. To develop and deliver the most relevant solutions to suit your particular goals, we work together with the finest lawyers and financial experts. With our roots in banking and a large international network, we have the global reach and local knowledge to help you succeed.

Singapore, a vibrant cosmopolitan city, is being widely referred to as the 'Switzerland of Asia'. The combination of its strong banking secrecy rules, generous tax incentives, as well as its highly regarded international reputation, attracts many high net worth individuals and corporations to Singapore. It is one of the most popular jurisdictions to establish a business.

Benefits of setting up in Singapore

Strategic location

Located at the southern tip of Peninsular Malaysia, Singapore is strategically positioned at the main crossroads of the world. It is an ideal converging point for business and trade, making it one of the world's busiest economic hubs.

Excellent reputation

With its reputation as one of the most stable societies in Asia, Singapore has achieved economic success and a high standard of living. It was voted "World's easiest place to do business" by The World Bank, and is ranked first in Asia for "World Business Environment" rankings by the Economist Intelligence Unit.

Good network and infrastructure

Singapore, being well-served by air, sea and telecommunications connectivity, is one of the most competitive transportation and telecommunications hubs in Asia Pacific. It has one of the world's busiest ports and an award-winning international airport.

Financial and banking hub

Singapore is Asia's third largest financial centre, after Japan and Hong Kong. It is also the fourth largest foreign exchange trading centre in the world. More than 500 local and foreign financial institutions have set up their offices here. Singapore has matured as a leading private banking destination for international investors, attracting deposits from all around Asia to as far as Europe.

Sophisticated banking system

The country has highly regarded banking secrecy laws and supervisory practices that have been acknowledged by the Financial Stability Forum (an organisation backed by the Bank for International Settlements). Its stringent secrecy regulations prohibit banks from releasing any client related information. The country's central bank, the Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS), supervises and regulates the banking industry to ensure compliance with all laws and regulations.

Strong legal framework

Singapore's legal framework is based on the common law system. Its laws relating to financial services are similar to those of leading financial centres such as New York and London. The common law heritage together with the country's clear laws, easy access to justice and an efficient legal system have helped to attract investments into the country.

Attractive tax system

Singapore's competitive corporate and individual tax regime have attracted an influx of foreign capital and international investors to the country over the years.

▶ Territorial tax regime

Singapore will impose tax on any person's income sourced within the country or foreign-sourced if remitted into Singapore unless exempted. From the basis period 2009, the corporate tax rate for a company resident in Singapore is 17%, while the tax rate for resident individual ranges from 3.5% to 20%.

▶ Tax incentive

Singapore has introduced several tax initiatives to encourage the growth of selected industries. Among them are transportation, trading, insurance, fund, finance and leasing. Eligible tax payers enjoy concessionary tax rates of 10%, 5% or even an exemption from corporate income tax for the first 5 years up to 20 years.

▶ Holding company

An extensive network of over 60 Double Taxation Agreements (DTAs) reduces the rate of withholding taxes levied on dividends, interests and royalties remitted by foreign subsidiaries to their Singapore holding company.

Dividends received by a Singaporean holding company from its subsidiary shall be exempted from Singapore corporate income tax if the foreign income has been subjected to tax in a jurisdiction with a "headline" tax rate of at least 15%

Singapore does not levy withholding tax on dividends, nor does it tax capital gains.

▶ Foreign trust

There is a comprehensive and exhaustive list of income derived by a foreign trust or its eligible holding company which is exempt from tax. A foreign trust is one by deed settled by a settlor who is a non-resident and non-citizen of Singapore for the benefit of beneficiaries who are non residents and non-citizens of Singapore. Beneficiaries receiving distributions under such foreign trust will not be subjected to tax in Singapore.

▶ No estate duty

Singapore abolished estate duty in 2008.

Extensive trade network

The existing Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) help eliminate barriers to trade and investment, allowing a smoother flow of goods, services and people into and out of the country.

Talented and competitive workforce

Singapore offers a world class workforce with a high level of productivity, technical proficiency, positive work attitude and global mindset. English is the official business language. The general literacy rate is at 95% (15 years and over), out of which, over 60% know 2 or more languages.

Ideal country of residence

As one of Asia's safest and politically stable cities, Singapore is reputed as an ideal country of residence by many. It provides world-class education system, high quality medical healthcare services and a relatively low crime rate. Singapore came in first in the "Best place to live in Asia" ranking by ECA International.

Establish a business entity in Singapore

At Intertrust Singapore, we provide professional assistance on the most relevant and appropriate business and tax strategy for individuals or corporations who need to establish businesses in Singapore.

With a team of over 60 experienced staff, we provide a full range of business services for our clients:

- ▶ incorporation of a company
- ▶ registration of a Singapore branch
- ▶ setting up of a representative office
- ▶ corporate secretarial services
- ▶ provision of registered office
- ▶ accounting and payroll services
- ▶ employment and dependent pass application
- ▶ immigration documentation
- ▶ other ongoing company maintenance activities.

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Our clients come from every corner of the globe. Different countries, different cultures. Just like us. We have more than 1,000 professionals in more than 20 countries worldwide. So we have the local knowledge and sensitivity to see things from your point of view.

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