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Certificate of incorporation

From CompanyFormationWiki, the free encyclopedia of company formation · Last updated 28 November 2026

In short: A certificate of incorporation is issued by the company registry when a company is registered. It shows the company's name, registration number and date of incorporation, and is the first document banks, tax authorities and foreign registries ask for.

Many registries now issue it electronically; some countries instead provide an extract from the commercial register (for example a *Handelsregisterauszug* in Germany or a KRS extract in Poland), which serves the same purpose and also shows current directors. For use abroad the certificate or extract often needs an apostille and a certified translation.

Because the certificate only proves registration on one date, banks and counterparties may also ask for a recent register extract or a certificate of good standing showing that the company is still active and up to date with its filings.

See also

- Apostille
- Statutory registers

References

1. Register your company . GOV.UK. Accessed November 2026.
2. Companies Act 2006, section 15: Issue of certificate of incorporation . legislation.gov.uk. Accessed November 2026.

Source: https://companyformationwiki.com/certificate-of-incorporation/
Version: last updated 28 November 2026. Check the online version for later changes.

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