

Cryptocurrency trading platforms: beware of fraud! Update of the list of platforms regarding which the FSMA has identified signs of fraud

The FSMA is receiving an increasing number of consumer complaints regarding investments in cryptocurrencies. The FSMA once again warns the public about platforms offering investments in cryptocurrencies. Often these platforms are operated by fraudsters who are now resorting to cryptocurrencies to swindle consumers.

The FSMA continues to receive **numerous complaints** about trading platforms who claim to be active in the cryptocurrency trade. Consumers who have invested in cryptocurrencies through these platforms complain, in particular:

- that **they never recover the funds invested**;
- or that they simply have **heard nothing further from the company** after investing their money.

The FSMA has updated its [list of cryptocurrency trading platforms](#) regarding which it has received questions/complaints from consumers and vis-à-vis which the FSMA has identified signs of fraud. Would-be investors are encouraged to consult the aforementioned list. **Please note, however:** this list is based solely on observations made by the FSMA on the basis of complaints received from consumers. It therefore does not include all actors that are possibly unlawfully active in this sector.

The FSMA reminds consumers that these platforms all use the same ruse: they claim to offer the best (or one of the best) trading platform(s), enabling both beginners and professionals to trade in cryptocurrencies in a matter of seconds and with full confidence.

'Invest in cryptocurrencies with full confidence.'

'Invest in digital currencies in full confidence on one of the most reputed platforms on the market.'

'XXX: trading in cryptocurrencies easily accessible at last!'

Some of these platforms also offer other financial products with cryptocurrencies as underlying asset: savings accounts with supposedly guaranteed returns, servicing rights or derivative products such as CFDs.

For more information about this type of fraud, the FSMA invites would-be investors to consult its [warning](#) of 22 February 2018, which includes a particularly detailed and telling [testimony](#) by a victim of such a platform.

In order to prevent investors falling prey to this type of fraud, the FSMA **invites** would-be investors **to exercise the utmost prudence** and **advises them to remain alert for any indication of investment fraud**. It therefore offers a few recommendations:

- always **verify the identity of the company** (company identity, home country, etc.).

If a company cannot be clearly identified, it should not be trusted.

Be wary as well of companies that claim to hold authorizations from supervisory authorities and refer you to such authorizations. This is a frequently used technique. However, very often these are cases involving **identity theft**. The FSMA also wishes to remind consumers that there is currently no supervision of online platforms active in the cryptocurrency sector, and refers in this regard to its warnings dated [14 January 2014](#) and [16 April 2015](#).

Also be wary if the company or its **website is fairly new**; this is often the case with cryptocurrency trading platforms, which are generally less than a year old.

- always **ask** your interlocutor for **clear and comprehensible information**, and take a **critical attitude** to the information they provide.

Many cryptocurrency trading platforms promise guaranteed returns or protection of your entire capital. Such promises in the cryptocurrency sector are, however, illusory! Moreover, if an offer is fraudulent, the guarantees given are equally so.

- lastly, **be wary of (promises of) completely disproportionate gains**. Where a return seems too good to be true, it usually is.

More than ever, therefore, investor awareness is of the essence. In case of any doubt, feel free to contact the FSMA directly via the [consumer contact form](#) on its website.

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