



MFSA's Initiatives in Financial Literacy and Consumer Awareness

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6 March 2024



Why?



- ✓ We believe that empowered consumers are good consumers and can take better financial decisions
- ✓ Increases financial well being in society – a better society
- ✓ Increase confidence in local markets – also contribute to the Economy
- ✓ A statutory duty in terms of Article 4 of the MFSA Act
 - to provide and foster further training, knowledge and education on all matters relating to financial services
 - to ensure investor confidence in local regulated markets
- ✓ A Strategic Priority for MFSA in terms of the Strategic Statement published in February 2023.



Types of Channels Used

MFSA Website



Consumer Awareness and Campaigns

Conduct supervision aims to ensure an appropriate degree of protection for consumers of financial services. Consumer protection lies at the heart of conduct supervision. The MFSA protects consumers from the harm that can be caused by the misconduct of firms. This is done in a variety of ways. One fundamental tool used by the MFSA for the appropriate protection of consumers is consumer education – educating consumers of their rights and duties.

The MFSA therefore, not only seeks to ensure that consumers are made aware of the products and services they are purchasing through the provision of enough information, but also that they are aware of their rights and duties with respect to the same products and services.

Empowering consumers through education, allows consumers to make informed decisions when purchasing financial products and services.

 <p>Making Financial Decisions in a Sustainable Way</p>	 <p>Unlocking the World of Crypto</p>	 <p>Inflation: How It Affects Your Finances</p>	 <p>Bank Loans and Credit Cards</p>
 <p>FinTech: Risks and Benefits</p>	 <p>Insurance-Based Investment Products</p>	 <p>Invest Smartly</p>	 <p>Digital Banking Awareness</p>
 <p>Home Insurance</p>	 <p>Regulated vs Non-Regulated Market</p>	 <p>Bank Fees – Knowing and Comparing</p>	 <p>Payment Accounts with Basic Features</p>

Other Website Tools



Scam Detection

The MFSA has a substantial role to play in preventing harm to consumers from unauthorised activities including scams.

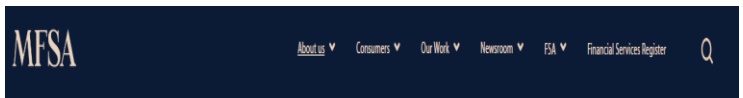


Scam Detection Guidelines

Financial Scams and How to Avoid Them	EN	MT
Guidance Note to the Public regarding Clone Companies	EN	
Guidance Note to the Public regarding Cryptocurrency Scams	EN	MT

Spotting a Financial Scam

- Remember that if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is! Don't be taken in by the hype and false promises. A scam is a scheme designed to trick you out of your money. If you haven't been a victim yourself, you probably know someone who has. You might receive a telephone call or e-mail, or might see an advert in the newspaper or on the internet. Scams can be easily spotted if you know what to look for. They often share common characteristics. Here are some tips on how to recognize a scam:
- You will benefit from a sum of money very easily** – There's no such thing as easy money and you're probably helping criminals to launder money.
 - You have to give away personal or account information** – Trustworthy firms, especially those you already do business with, never normally ask you for this. They may ask you to confirm certain details when you call them, but usually only after going through a standard security process with you first.
 - You have to make a quick decision** – Scammers don't like to give you time to think about the offer. They will try to pressurise you into making a decision by saying things like "if you don't act now, you'll miss out".
 - You are contacted unexpectedly** – You are contacted by someone you've never heard of and you wonder how they got your contact details.



Consumers | [Payment Accounts Fees Comparison Tool](#)

Payment Accounts Fees Comparison Tool

The Payment Accounts Fees Comparison Tool allows consumers to compare the fees being charged by Credit and Financial Institutions in respect of a Payment Account held in Malta. A payment account is defined as an account held in the name of one or more consumers which is used for the execution of payment transactions.

- An account offered by a Credit or a Financial Institution can be considered as a Payment Account only if consumers are able to do at least the following:
- (a) place funds in a payment account;
 - (b) withdraw cash from a payment account; and
 - (c) execute and receive payment transactions, including credit transfers, to and from a third party.

Therefore, all of the above three criteria must be met in order for an account to be classified as a Payment Account. This is important since a Credit or Financial Institution is obliged to provide the Authority with information on the fees being charged to consumers in respect of a Payment Account. Therefore, if a Credit or Financial Institution does not offer a Payment Account, the Credit or Financial Institution will not feature in the list of entities.

The fees displayed via the Payment Accounts Fees Comparison Tool reflect the fees of the most representative services linked to a payment account. This shall include fees related to the opening operating and closing of a payment account including payment services and payment transactions. Consumers should always refer to tariff sheet of the Credit or Financial Institution for the full list of fees being charged in respect of a service and/or product.

- In order to use the Payment Accounts Fees Comparison Tool, consumers have to
1. Select a minimum of two and a maximum of three entities;
 2. Select one of the product or service featuring on the website;
 3. Select one product or service per each entity;
 4. Click on "Compare" button.

If an entity is not offering the selected product or service, a notification will appear on the screen. The consumer will be asked to choose another entity in order to be able to proceed.

Consumers have the possibility of downloading a pdf copy of the information generated by the Payment Accounts Fees Comparison Tool. Such information can also be sent via email. To note that the document generated is not an official document of the Authority.



Jargon Buster

This jargon buster or glossary of words contains the definitions of some of the terms commonly used in financial services and related products.

Clear all filters

Search

- OR filter by letter
- A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

S

Safe (or Safety) Deposit Box

A type of safe usually located in groups inside a bank vault and rented to customers for their use in storing valuable items.

Safekeeping

A service provided by banks where securities and valuables are held.

Salesperson

In the financial world, a person whose job is to sell securities for brokers, dealers and corporations.

Sanction letter or Credit Agreement

The terms of a standardised loan are formally presented in writing by way of a sanction letter to each party in the transaction before any money or property changes hands. If a bank requires any collateral, this will be stipulated in the sanction letter as well. Most loans also have legal conditions regarding the maximum amount of interest that can be charged, as well as other clauses such as the length of time before repayment is required. A sanction letter may also include references to fees and costs related to the loan facility.

Social Media

YouTube/ Google Advert

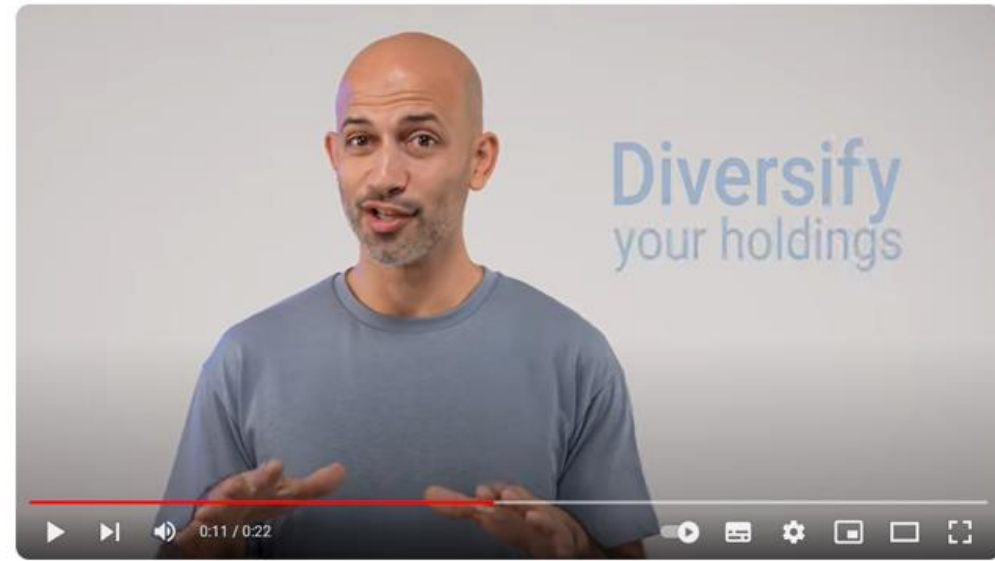


Crypto Investments - What To Look Out For!

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137K views 2 months ago

[Video Link](#)



Follow These 3 Steps Before Buying Crypto

MFSA 342 subscribers [Subscribe](#) 13 [Share](#) [Save](#) [...](#)

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[Video Link](#)

TV and Radio Interviews / Adverts

Screen grabs of media – Illum ma' Steph

[Part 1](#)

[Part 2](#)



Screen grabs of media – Bay Radio

[Crypto Currencies Challenge](#)



MFSA Crypto-Currency

This will be an informative and entertaining reel about crypto-currency, including the benefits of crypto and how to be safe when buying or selling crypto.

This will be a quiz between two presenters, making it engaging with a fun and informative game.

Game:

Option A: The participants will be holding a tray and when someone gets a question wrong – items will be added to the tray, and they can't drop it.

Option B: The participants will be squatting and have items added on to them (their legs) when answering a question incorrectly.

Notes:

WANT TO LEARN ABOUT CRYPTO-ASSETS AND HOW THEY WORK? CONTINUE WATCHING

Question 1. What are crypto assets?

Crypto assets are digital money that use special codes and networks to make and send value independently. Transactions are secure, transparent, faster, and cheaper.

Question 2. What is the impact of crypto-assets on financial services?

Crypto-assets offer new ways to move and manage money faster, cheaper, and more freely than traditional systems.

Online and Print Newspaper Articles

The screenshot shows the top portion of a news article on the Times of Malta website. The navigation bar includes categories like Latest, National, World, Opinion, Fact-check, X2, Sport, Motoring, Business (highlighted), and Commu. The article title is "Understanding the impact of inflation on financial services products". Below the title is a subtitle: "Impact on the purchasing power of consumers' regular salary and financial decisions." There are tags for "Business" and "Finance". The article is dated "12 March 2023" and written by "Antonio Battagliano". It is marked as a "Sponsored article" and has a "3 min read" indicator. Social media sharing icons for Facebook, Twitter, Messenger, WhatsApp, and LinkedIn are visible. The main image is a digital graphic with a glowing line graph and data points.

TIMES MALTA Latest National World Opinion Fact-check X2 Sport Motoring **Business** Commu

Understanding the impact of inflation on financial services products

Impact on the purchasing power of consumers' regular salary and financial decisions.

Business Finance

12 March 2023 | Antonio Battagliano

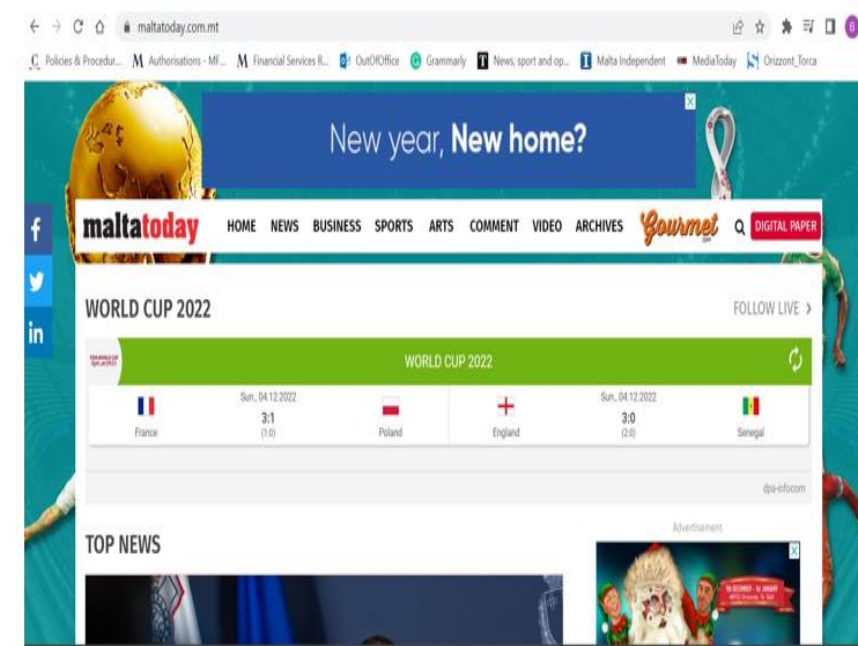
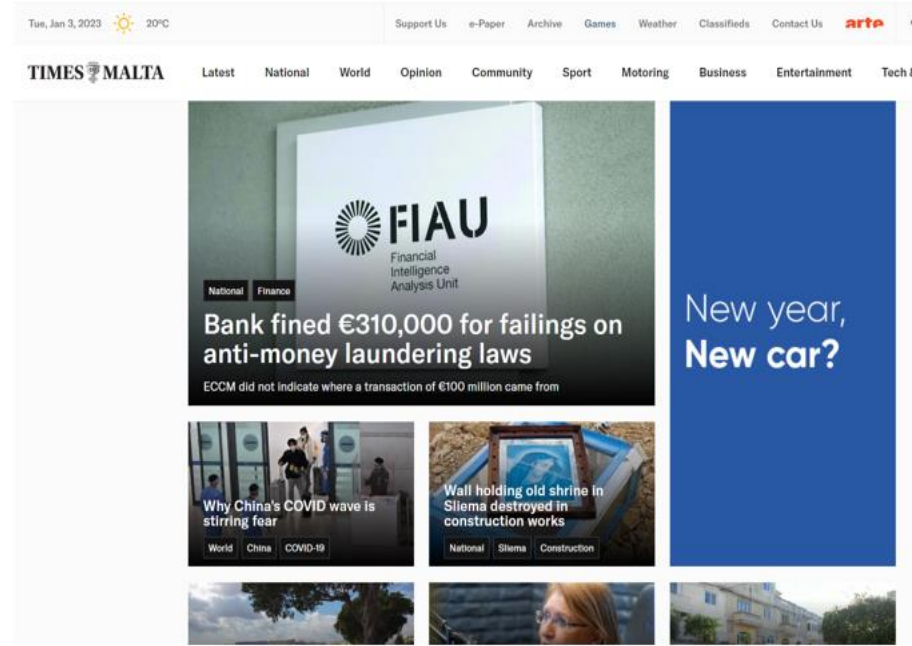
3 min read

Sponsored article

f t m w in



Digital Banners for popular newspaper sites



We had two digital banners, one for loans and another for credit cards

Bus Shelters Adverts

new year,
new house?

Before taking a **HOME LOAN**, stop and **SHOP AROUND**.

Always do your **research** and find out what **different banks** are offering.



SCAN TO LEARN MORE




MFSA MALTA FINANCIAL SERVICES AUTHORITY
www.mfsa.mt/yourbanking


new year,
new car?

Before taking a **PERSONAL LOAN**, stop and **READ**.

Always read the **terms and conditions** before signing the **contract**.



SCAN TO LEARN MORE




MFSA MALTA FINANCIAL SERVICES AUTHORITY
www.mfsa.mt/yourbanking


cashless
shopping spree?

Before applying for a **CREDIT CARD**, stop and **ASK**.

Always do your **research** and ask about the **interest rates** and other fees.



SCAN TO LEARN MORE



MFSA MALTA FINANCIAL SERVICES AUTHORITY
www.mfsa.mt/yourbanking

School Visits



Printed Leaflets and Posters to be left at Banks

WHICH BANKS MUST OFFER A PAYMENT ACCOUNT WITH BASIC FEATURES?

The obligation on banks comes from the Payment Accounts Regulations (Legal Notice 411 of 2016) – but it does not apply to all the banks in Malta.

Banks which have five or more branches in Malta must offer the payment account with basic features. They may also offer online accounts with the same features. Of course, other banks may offer this account – but they are not obliged to do so.

Specifically, you should find this account available at:



DO YOU NEED A BASIC ACCOUNT FOR YOUR PAYMENTS?

CHECK IF YOU ARE ELIGIBLE!

For more information, you may visit your preferred branch. You may also contact the MFSA on communications@mfsa.mt or call on 21441155 or visit the website at www.mfsa.mt

This leaflet was issued by the MFSA and banks are obliged to provide it in all their branches.



Topics Recently Addressed

Topics Recently Addressed

- Bank Loans and Credit Cards
- Inflation
- Crypto Currencies
- Warning on Scams
- Warnings on Unlicensed Service Providers
- Basic Payment Account
- Home Insurance
- Insurance Based Investment Products



Malta Financial Services Authority - MFSA
5 February at 16:35 · 🌐

The MFSA has recently issued a warning ⚠️ regarding the following unlicensed entities:

- 👉 **Forex Cryptocurrency Investment**
- 👉 **Global Trading Earners & P240 Ltd**
- 👉 **InnovativeFX Trade**

These are **NEITHER** ❌ Maltese-registered Companies NOR licensed or otherwise authorised by the #MFSA to provide any investment or other financial services.

If you are a victim of a scam or think you might be dealing with an unauthorised entity or any other type of financial scam, first of all, stop all transactions with the entity and contact 📞 the MFSA as soon as suspicion arises.

Read the full warnings here 📄
<https://www.mfsa.mt/news/warnings/mfsa-warnings/>
 #FinancialSafety #MFSA #ConsumerProtection





2024 Consumer Education Campaigns

Greenwashing



- Few adults across participating countries hold financial products that are labelled “sustainable”, “green” or otherwise indicate a sustainable designation. In Malta – 3.2% of respondents. (source: OECD /INFE 2023 international survey of adult financial literacy)
- Awareness relating to these products and their beneficial qualities vis a vis the environment but need to avoid greenwashing.
- Consumer Awareness Campaign launched in Feb 2024



Investment in Bonds

➤ **Concerns identified :**

- Local Issues are usually immediately taken up irrespective of coupon value
- Risk/Return profile may not be fully understood by investors
- Prospectus disclosures may be overwhelming

➤ **Campaign to address:**

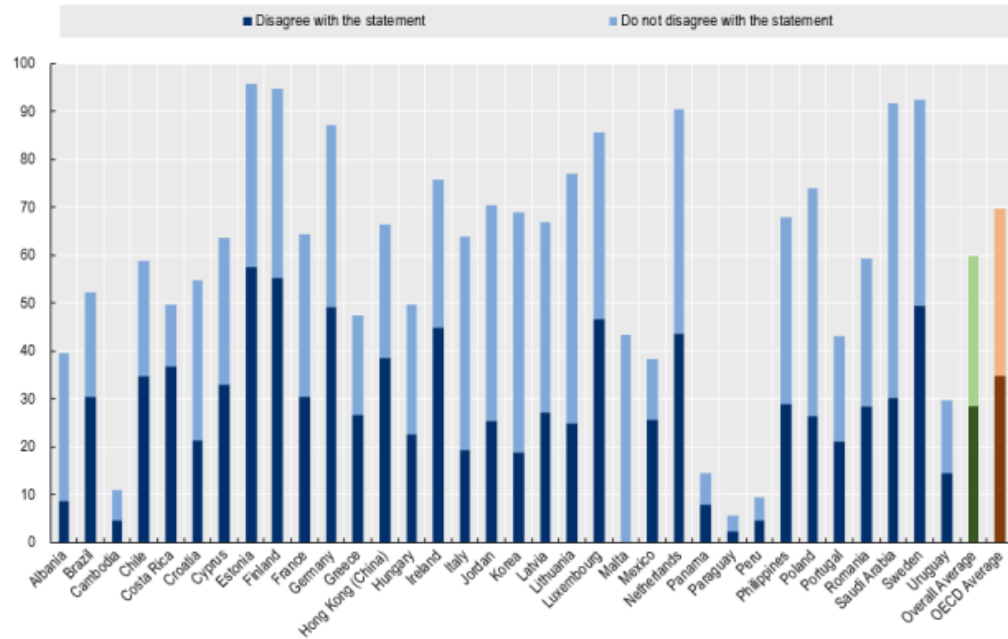
- ✓ Relationship between risk and return (coupon value)
- ✓ Interpretation of certain disclosures in the prospectus
- ✓ Clarification of terminology (secured vs unsecured)



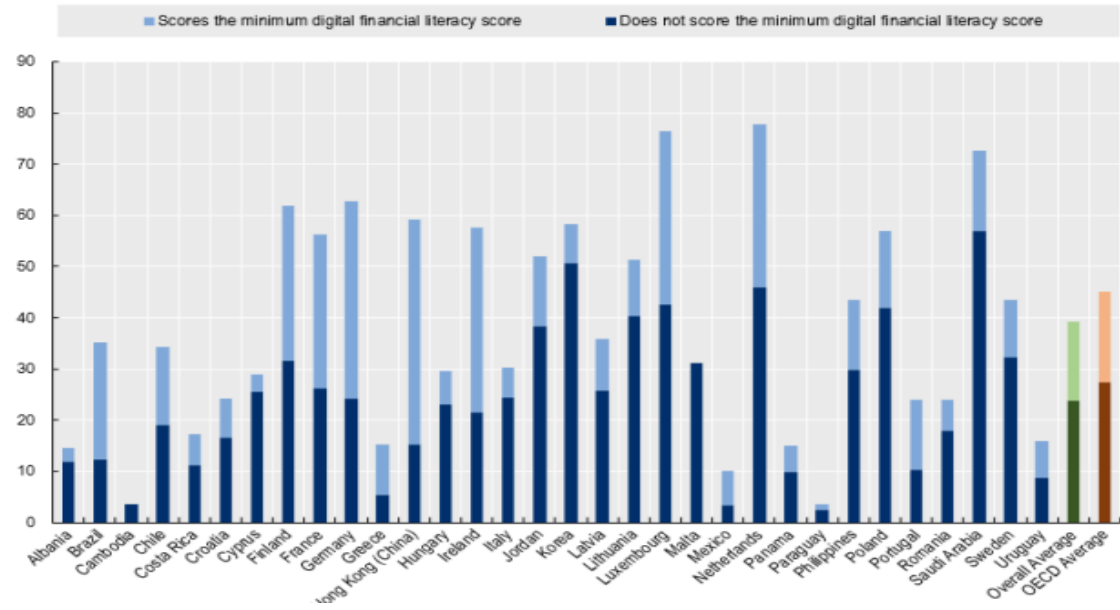
Cybersecurity

Issues identified: source - (OECD /INFE 2023 international survey of adult financial literacy)

Percentage of adults who shop online, by perception of the safety of public Wi-Fi



Percentage of adults who manage financial products and services online, by digital financial literacy



Cybersecurity Campaign

➤ To Address these areas:

- ✓ Social Engineering (e.g. the use of deception to manipulate individuals to divulge confidential or personal info)
- ✓ Basic Personal Cybersecurity Tips
- ✓ Risks attributed to Online Gaming within the finance context;
- ✓ Platformisation (purchasing of financial products through digital means).



Next Steps.....

- ✓ Establishment of Calendar of Financial Education Initiatives for 2024 increasing footprint
- ✓ Collaboration with other entities including GEMMA to better synergise efforts in this area
- ✓ Engaging in further Consumer Awareness Campaigns targeting particular topics
- ✓ Participation in a National Stakeholders Committee – working group to co ordinate Financial Education Initiatives on a national level better.

Thank you

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