



HELLENIC CAPITAL MARKET COMMISSION
Public Law Legal Entity

**DO NOT
INVEST
WITH YOUR EYES SHUT**

USEFUL INFORMATION AND ADVICE FOR INVESTORS

www.hcmc.gr

FOREWORD

In the context of the Hellenic Capital Market Commission's (HCMC) five-year Strategic Plan 2023–2028, investor protection is a top priority for us. In fulfilling its supervisory and regulatory responsibilities, the HCMC prioritizes investor protection, paying particular attention to safeguarding investor groups that are more vulnerable or exposed to emerging or increasingly complex risks.

The HCMC will continue to use the full range of HCMC tools in terms of policy, oversight, compliance and sanctions to address the causes of illegal practices effectively and consistently. One of the core commitments of the HCMC Strategic Plan is to step up efforts for financial literacy on capital market issues. This includes promoting initiatives that use accessible and engaging communication methods to inform investors about risks and capital markets, and organising training seminars and activities tailored to investor needs. This brochure is issued as part of these actions and in line with the work of the Joint Committee and IOSCO.

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WHO CAN INVESTORS CONTACT

Investors may participate in the capital market through various means, such as purchasing units in collective investments, transferrable securities (including stocks and bonds), or derivatives. To do so they may contact the following categories of companies:

»» Investment Services Firms (AEPEY)

They are authorised and supervised by the Hellenic Capital Market Commission to provide investment services such as the receipt, transmission and execution of orders for financial instruments, portfolio management, investment advice as well as underwriting or custody services. AEPEYs may cooperate with tied agents who are either natural or legal persons and act under the responsibility of the AEPEY. Their tied agents are listed in a directory posted on the HCMC website at http://www.hcmc.gr/en_US/web/portal/metroo-syndedemenon-antiprosopon-a.e.p.e.y.

»» Investment Intermediation Firms (AEED)

They are authorised and supervised by the Hellenic Capital Market Commission and provide investment services consisting exclusively in the receipt and transmission of orders for transferable securities and units issued by collective investment undertakings and the provision of investment advice in respect of transferable securities and units issued by collective investment undertakings. AEEDs are not allowed to hold funds and financial instruments of their clients. AEEDs are listed in a directory posted on the HCMC website at:

http://www.hcmc.gr/en_US/web/portal/orgcmc/cataeed

AEEDs may cooperate with tied agents. Their tied agents are listed in a directory posted on the HCMC website at:

http://www.hcmc.gr/aweb/files/antiprosopoi_AEED/%CE%91%CE%9D%CE%A4%CE%99%CE%A0%CE%A1%CE%9F%CE%A3%CE%A9%CE%A0%CE%9F%CE%99_%CE%91%CE%95%CE%95%CE%94.pdf

»» Mutual Fund Management Companies (MFMCs) and Alternative Investment Fund Management Companies (AIFMs, AIFMs)

They are authorised and supervised by the Hellenic Capital Market Commission for the management of undertakings for collective investment in transferable securities (UCITS) and alternative investment funds, respectively. Some (extended scope) MFMCs or AIFMs may also provide investment advice and portfolio management, provided they have received appropriate authorisation from the Hellenic Capital Market Commission.

MFMCs and AIFMs may cooperate with tied agents.

»» Credit institutions providing investment services

Investment services are also provided by credit institutions if they are duly authorised by the Bank of Greece.

»» EU Investment Firms that have obtained the so-called "European Passport"

In Greece, there are also investment firms authorised by a competent authority of an EU Member State, which may operate either on a cross-border basis or through a branch or a tied agent. Specifically, the branches of EU investment firms are published on the HCMC website at:

http://www.hcmc.gr/en_US/web/portal/ypokatastemata-e.p.e.y.

Investors seeking to engage with a specific company in order to receive investment services may consult the Hellenic Capital Market Commission's website, where legally authorised companies are registered (please, visit http://www.hcmc.gr/en_US/web/portal/supforagoras). This also applies for the websites of the competent capital market authorities in the EU Member States.

The above companies will hereinafter be collectively referred to as **"INVESTMENT FIRMS"**.



WHAT INVESTORS NEED TO KNOW

Investment Services Agreement – Pre-Contractual Information

Before receiving any investment service, investors must have signed an investment services agreement with the investment firm of their choice. The agreement, as well as any annexes thereto, must clearly describe the rights and obligations of the parties, including, but not limited to, the type of services provided, the company's fees and any other commissions, the method and timing of payments for the execution of transactions and securities delivery, and the manner and frequency of updates provided to investors regarding their portfolio with the investment firm and related transactions. **Investors must carefully read and understand each clause of the agreement before signing it and request clarifications or additional information if needed.** Investors should also be informed of the documents referenced in the service agreement to be signed (such as policies posted on the website of each firm).

The investment firm must issue and provide its prospective clients with the Pre-Contractual Client Information Form, which includes essential details about the firm, client categorization, the financial instruments and services offered, the safekeeping and protection of client assets, applicable fees and charges, and a description of investment-related risks.

Investors should receive a copy of the investment services agreement they have signed. In the case of an electronic agreement, investors are advised to print and store the electronically signed agreement so as to have a copy of this agreement.



Dematerialized Securities System (DSS)

The DSS is a securities settlement system in Greece where financial instruments listed or admitted to trading on the Athens Stock Exchange are registered and monitored in book-entry (dematerialized) form. The DSS is managed by the "Hellenic Central Securities Depository S.A." ('ATHEXCSD'), which is authorised and supervised by the Hellenic Capital Market Commission. Before trading on the Athens Stock Exchange, and upon signing the relevant investment services agreement, each investor must select one or more DSS participants—such as AEPEYs or banks—that will hold their financial instruments in Securities Accounts maintained within the DSS. The main types of such accounts are the Individual Segregated Securities Accounts and/or the Omnibus Securities Accounts (collective account for more than one investor). If an investor chooses the individual client segregation level, then the client account is linked to a single account in the DSS. These options point to different costs and levels of protection. More detailed information is given in the informative brochure "Disclosure of protection & segregation levels" on the ATHEXGROUP website.

All entries in the records of ATHEXCSD are confidential. Investors can be informed of the entries and transactions performed in their Account either by a specific participant or by ATHEXCSD. The Depository automatically updates the Accounts with the corresponding rights and, in case of free share distribution, ATHEXCSD enters the new shares in the Accounts.

SOME GROUND RULES

1 Transmission of investor orders

Investment firms must provide their clients with information about the methods of communication between the investment firm and its clients or investors, including how orders are received, where applicable.

To safeguard investors' interests, orders are submitted either in writing (by post or email), by telephone, or electronically via a platform. The investment firm is obliged to record telephone conversations, electronic communications, or orders submitted via the online platform. If an order is placed during an in-person meeting, the time, location, identities of the participants and the moderator, as well as the content of the order—including price, volume, order type, and the time of transmission or execution—are recorded; a copy of the record is available to the client upon request. The investment firm must ensure that each order is executed in a manner that serves the best interests of the client, taking into account factors such as price, volume, speed, cost, and the likelihood of execution and settlement. When the client has given specific instructions, the investment firm executes the order in accordance with those instructions.

It should be noted that when an investment firm executes an order on behalf of a retail client, the optimal result is determined based on the total consideration, which includes the price of the financial instrument and all costs directly related to the execution of the order—such as fees paid to third parties involved in the execution, clearing costs, and other applicable charges.

2 Investor Information

The investment firm must provide the client with: (a) immediate updates on key information related to the execution of their order (except when portfolio management services are provided); and (b) a confirmation notice no later than the first business day following the execution of the transaction. Moreover, in addition to the above obligations of the firm, the client may also request information on the order status.

The confirmation notice regarding the execution of a client order includes, but is not limited to, information such as the type of order, quantity, price, applicable fees and charges, and the client's responsibilities concerning settlement—including the payment or delivery deadline and the relevant account details of the investment firm.

When portfolio management services are provided, the investment firm must issue a periodic portfolio management statement detailing the transactions carried out on behalf of the client and the portfolio valuation during the reporting period, unless those statements are provided by another entity (e.g. a custodian bank). The information also includes, but is not limited to, the total amount of fees and charges, the final amount of portfolio-related dividends, interest, and other payments received, as well as a comparison of portfolio performance against a benchmark investment index.

In the case of client orders involving units or shares in a collective investment undertaking that are executed periodically, the investment firm must provide information either immediately, as outlined above, or at least once every three months regarding the relevant transactions.

3 Transaction settlement

If an investor purchases securities (e.g., stocks or bonds) listed on the Athens Stock Exchange, the transaction is finalized upon the transfer of the securities from the seller's Securities Account to the buyer's Securities Account on the DSS. Simultaneously, the corresponding debit and credit entries are made to the participants' cash accounts via the TARGET2 payment system of the European Central Bank (ECB).

The investor must either pay the purchase price for the securities or deliver the securities for sale to the AEPEY or investment firm with which they cooperate, provided the firm is authorised to offer custody and management services

for financial instruments. Under no circumstances should they make payments to an AEPEY or investment firm that is not authorised to provide custody services, to an investment intermediation firm, or to a personal account of a natural person. Therefore, they should always ask whether the investment firm with which they have an agreement is also authorised to offer custody services. Where the investment firm is not authorised, it must inform the client of the partner custodian(s) where the client's funds and financial instruments are held.

The firm is not permitted to transfer funds or securities between the accounts of different clients, or between client accounts and the firm's own accounts, for the purpose of settling outstanding amounts.

4

Investor protection insurance

Investors' claims in securities or money against the firms with which they cooperate are insured by the Investment Guarantee Fund (Guarantee Fund). Contributions to the Guarantee Fund must be made by Investment Services Firms (AEPEYs), MFMCs, AIFMs, Investment Intermediation Firms (AEEDs) (unless they have equivalent insurance coverage), and credit institutions that, under Article 53(3) of Law 4370/2016, provide covered services. Investment firms and management companies authorised in non-EU states that offer covered services in Greece through a branch must also contribute, if the HCMC determines that investors in those firms are not protected by an equivalent compensation scheme in their home state. Investment firms and management companies of an EU Member State that provide covered services through a branch in Greece also participate in the Guarantee Fund for supplementary coverage of their investors on a voluntary basis.

When a company is unable to fulfil its obligations to clients (return securities or pay money), the Guarantee Fund covers these obligations up to the amount of EUR 30,000 per client. The Guarantee Fund does not compensate investor claims arising from acts or omissions of a company that constitute breach of the agreement between the parties or a violation of applicable law (for more information, see <https://www.syneggitiko.gr/en/>)



INVESTOR OBLIGATIONS

The smooth operation of the stock market requires consistent and faithful compliance with the applicable legal framework by all participants, including investment firms, listed companies, and investors. Investors must:

- » **know and provide, where and when required, the correct details of their DSS Investor Account;**
- » **pay the amount due to the investment firm** related to the execution of their order —whether in cash or securities— **within the period** specified in their agreement;
- » **avoid participating in schemes to defraud the terms and restrictions applicable to the public offer.** For example, spreading false or misleading information—such as rumours or inaccurate news, especially via the internet or social media—can significantly affect a share's price and harm investors who base their decisions (e.g., whether to buy and in what quantity) on incorrect or manipulated information;
- » **not engage in schemes aimed at artificially altering the price or marketability of securities** (e.g., stocks or bonds), (acts constituting market manipulation) **or in schemes aimed at exploiting information that is not yet known to the general public** (acts constituting insider trading). These two types of actions constitute illegal practices. If an investor becomes aware of such manipulations by individuals or companies, or is encouraged to participate in such practices, they must immediately report the incident to the Hellenic Capital Market Commission. For example, insider trading occurs when someone, relying on information that a company is about to merge with another company (which has not yet been announced and is therefore not known to retail investors) buys shares in that company to take advantage of the expected increase in share price following the announcement of the merger;
- » **be particularly cautious with investment recommendations** shared on social media or in the news, especially when made by professionals, experts, or others, who do not meet the legal requirements for providing such advice

PUBLIC OFFER

A public offer is the process of making a company's securities available to investors. This may involve the issuance of new shares or bonds, such as through capital increases or bond loans, or the sale of existing shares and may be linked to the admission of securities for trading on a trading venue (e.g. a stock exchange). The Issuing Company cooperates with companies that have been authorized to provide underwriting services (credit institution or investment firms) for the issuance, sale and/or admission of the securities to trading on a trading venue.

Before deciding whether to participate in a public offer, investors should carefully study the Prospectus, the content of which is approved by the HCMC. The Prospectus is provided by the Underwriters and contains detailed information about the issuing company, including its management, financial condition, performance, future outlook, and the potential risks associated with its operations. In general, it provides all the necessary information for evaluating the Issuing company and its prospects. It is advisable for investors to read not only the summary but the entire text of the Prospectus. They should pay particular attention to the investment risks and financial data of a company.

To participate in a public offer, investors must complete the required subscription forms and pay the corresponding amount for their investment.

Following the subscription period and prior to the commencement of trading, the final offer price of the shares, based on the order book, is determined and announced by the Principal Underwriter. The order book functions as a type of auction, where institutional investors (such as portfolio investment companies, mutual fund management companies, and credit institutions) submit bids for the shares based on current supply and demand conditions and the financial data of the issuing company. The shares are allocated to investors by the Principal Underwriter on the basis of criteria detailed in the Prospectus.

By participating in a public offer of shares, investors become co-owners of the company. Investing in shares or corporate bonds carries the risk of a change in the price of the shares or corporate bonds held by the investor. The investor's expectations regarding the future price of shares or corporate bonds may not be confirmed and the share price may, for instance, be lower at the end of its first trading day than the public offer price.

MUTUAL FUNDS

A Mutual Fund (M/F) is a group of assets consisting of financial instruments (transferable securities, money market instruments, units of collective investment undertakings, derivative financial instruments). Participation in a mutual fund is represented by a nominal, intangible title of ownership, known as a unit. Investors in mutual funds have exclusive ownership of their units as well as institutional protection, since mutual funds are governed by a comprehensive supervisory framework that protects investors. A mutual fund is jointly owned by its unit holders and does not constitute a legal entity; its assets are professionally managed by specialized Mutual Fund Management Companies (MFCs). Many investors who wish to invest in the Stock Exchange but lack the required knowledge and experience or the necessary time, prefer to invest in mutual funds, effectively entrusting the management of their portfolio to an MFC.

Based on the unit price, investors may purchase units or redeem those they already hold. Immediate redemption is mandatory upon request by the unit holder. The net unit price is calculated by dividing the net assets by the number of units. The unit sale and redemption price is derived from the net price. The sale price is the sum of the sales fee plus the net price, while the redemption price is the difference of the net price minus the redemption fee.

MFCs must inform unit holders about the M/F asset composition on a quarterly basis. They must also let them know of any change and the value of their shares. In general, mutual fund portfolios must be valued daily, which includes calculating the sale and redemption price of each unit, determining the number of units and the net unit price of each M/F, as well as ensuring transparency regarding the charges and fees and how they are calculated. The safekeeping of the M/F assets is entrusted to a custodian that investors should know.

Depending mainly on the securities in which they invest or their return target, mutual funds are distinguished into the following categories: **money market funds** (investing mainly in deposits and money market instruments), **bond funds** (investing mainly in government and corporate bonds), **equity funds** (investing mainly in stocks), **mixed funds** (investing in stocks, bonds and money market products), **composite funds** (seeking to achieve a specific return) and **funds of funds** (investing mainly in units of other mutual funds). Mutual funds are also classified based on the market in which they primarily invest their assets, domestic or foreign. Based on their investment goals and risk appetite, investors can choose in which class of mutual funds to invest. In order to invest in mutual fund units, investors can contact MFCs, as well as banks, insurance companies, investment firms, AEEDs, their branches, tied agents and any other company authorised by the HCMC to provide this service.

The Fund's regulation (including, among other things, its purpose and policy) may be amended jointly by the management company and the custodian. In such case, the management company must post these amendments immediately on its website, while informing the Hellenic Capital Market Commission, and communicate them to each unit holder on a durable medium. Therefore, please read these updates carefully when they are sent to you.

Prior to applying for M/F units, an investor must carefully review the Prospectus, the M/F Regulation, the Key Information Document and its latest published Annual or Semi-Annual Report. Moreover, they can study the Quarterly Report containing the composition of the M/F portfolio. The amount invested in a mutual fund is paid to its Custodian, which may be a bank or an investment firm (duly authorised to provide custody services), as specified in the fund's Regulation.

Mutual Funds belong to Undertakings for Collective Investment in Transferable Securities (UCITS) and MFCs are UCITS Managers. In Greece, EU UCITS as well as units of Alternative Investment Funds (AIF) are also available from AIF Managers (AIFM). The website of the Hellenic Capital Market Commission publishes the respective lists of these companies as well as those of Portfolio Investment Companies, Real Estate Investment Companies (REICs) and Occupational Insurance Funds.



INVEST WISELY

Choose carefully the company through which you will invest.

There are many companies to which you can turn for investments in transferable securities (AEPEYs, MFMCs, AIFMs, credit institutions, AEEDs). Choose the company with which to do business on the criterion of the best possible service for the services and products you want. Ask to be informed in advance about the services that the investment firm can offer, as not all (investment firms) provide the same services.



- » Make sure that the company you will do business with is authorised to provide services in Greece.
- » Find out about the custodians and where the financial instruments and the money you will be asked to pay will be kept.
- » Learn about fees, commissions and other charges imposed by the investment firm.
- » Also find out how fees, commissions and other charges are modified and how you will be informed each time if the company makes modifications.
- » Carefully read the printed material provided for your information or signature and ask for explanations if you have any questions or doubts.
- » Find out how easy it would be to liquidate your investment.
- » Make sure that your transactions are carried out in accordance with the applicable regulations based on the information you receive from the investment firm, and that you are provided with all the legal documents proving the execution and clearing of your transactions.

Define your investment profile.

All investments in financial instruments entail risks. With the help of your investment advisor, define your risk appetite. An investment firm providing investment advice or portfolio management must obtain the necessary information on the knowledge and experience of clients (or potential clients) in relation to a particular type of product or service, on their financial situation (including ability to bear losses) and on their investment objectives (including risk tolerance). This way, the investment firm can recommend the investment services and financial instruments that are appropriate for your specific situation and, in particular, the risk tolerance and ability to bear losses.

Invest according to your financial capabilities, your risk appetite and your sustainability preferences.

Learn about the risks of each form of investment in relation to the expected returns. Usually, this risk-return ratio is proportional. For example, stocks carry higher risk than time deposits, but can also offer higher returns.

- » Your investment advisor (if you have one) can present all available options based on your investment profile. The information provided to you on your investment options must be accurate, clear, simple and concise, adequate and not misleading.
- » Remember that there can NEVER be high returns without high risk, which can lead to loss of part or all of your invested capital.
- » Moreover, in the age of environmental, social and governance awareness, EU law requires specific companies to disclose information on how they operate and manage social and environmental challenges. This can help you assess the non-financial performance of the companies you want to invest in.
- » Do not put all your savings into a single financial instrument (e.g. a stock or a bond). Build a diversified portfolio, even if it's small, to spread the risks. To diversify your portfolio, ask your investment advisor to present you with investment solutions that suit your risk profile as well as:

DESCRIBE

how each investment product works and the risks and costs involved in investing in it.

INFORM

you on the historical returns of each product and its possible future outlook, since there are no guaranteed returns on the Stock Exchange and for this reason companies are not allowed to make such promises.

ANALYSE

how each investment interacts with the portfolio's overall performance

Regularly monitor the progress of your investments.

As market conditions change over the years and your needs vary over time, your investment advisor must monitor your investment portfolio and present you with the appropriate adjustments according to your investment profile and instructions.

» Never act hurriedly and impulsively. Opportunities for proper investments in the Stock Exchange are always there. You should keep in mind that markets do not always go up. They also go down. In any case, you must remain calm and not act impulsively. Do not rush to sell when the price of a financial instrument (e.g. a stock) falls, or buy when it goes up, but analyse the data carefully.

» Choose your investments carefully. Do not allow yourself to be influenced or misled by opinions of non-experts and anonymous rumours. Seek advice only from companies that legally operate in the provision of investment services. Do not follow the prompts or advice of people who operate outside any regulatory framework.

» If you have questions or are uncertain about an issue, ask for clarifications or seek a second opinion from these companies.

» Have a personal opinion about your investment. Listed companies must publish half-yearly and annual financial statements and, optionally, quarterly financial statements. Always consult this information as well as the announcements of listed companies posted on their website. The announcements of Greek listed companies are also posted on the Athens Stock Exchange website. Rely on the facts of a company, such as its financial data, its growth rate, its management, its organization, its outlook. Only consider the official announcements of each listed company and its official financial information.



REMEMBER:

- » **Returns from stock exchange investments and mutual funds are not guaranteed. For this reason, companies are prohibited from making any such promises.**
- » **Investing in the Stock Exchange is not a gamble. It involves the placement of your assets and should be done with prudence and careful planning.**

IF YOU ENCOUNTER ANY PROBLEM:

Εάν πιστεύετε ότι:



the terms of the cooperation agreement you have signed are NOT respected;



the rules of capital market legislation are NOT complied with;



you are NOT treated equally with other clients



discuss the matter or address a letter in writing to your investment firm. The company must have and publish a complaints handling process to be able to promptly handle all client complaints. This process should also include the contact details of the company's complaints handling function so that you know where to turn to. If you file a complaint, you may request proof that it has been received. Investment firms must allow clients and potential clients to file complaints free of charge

You can also contact the Hellenic Capital Market Commission (see the link: http://www.hcmc.gr/en_US/web/portal/katagellies) and/or the Association of Members of the Athens Stock Exchange (SMEXA).

The Hellenic Capital Market Commission reviews investor complaints and takes the necessary measures each time. However, investors should be aware that the Commission is reviewing complaints from the point of view of compliance with the law. It does not resolve bilateral private disputes for which the judicial authorities are responsible. Therefore:

» You should be aware that the financial situation of a listed company is important, but there are other factors that affect the prices of financial instruments, such as interest rates, inflation, economic and political stability, international developments and extraordinary events.

» You must be particularly cautious before investing in securities that are constantly rising or show large price fluctuations that are not justified by economic data.

» Follow closely the Daily Official List of the Stock Exchange and the announcements for listed companies included in the list.

» Find out how easy it is to liquidate your investment.

» Carefully read the printed material provided for your information or signature. Ask for explanations if you have any questions or doubts.

» Bear in mind that, in general, experience has shown that participating in capital markets, such as stock exchanges, is mainly beneficial for those who make medium- and long-term investments. This is especially true for new investors. On the contrary, those who engage, without adequate information, in frequent transactions, seeking to make short-term profits, are usually faced with losses.

» Make sure that your transactions are carried out in accordance with the applicable regulations and that you are provided with all the legal documents proving the execution and clearing of your transactions.

ONLINE INVESTMENTS BY INEXPERIENCED RETAIL INVESTORS

The observed increase in investments through online transactions on online platforms operating across borders requires increased alertness, especially on the part of inexperienced retail investors.

Specifically:

There has been a steady rise in retail investors trading on speculative and complex financial products through electronic platforms.

The ever-increasing online presence of investors of all ages, knowledge and experience in recent years has led to an increase in investment and trading in speculative and complex financial products through online platforms and an increase in online activity by financial influencers ('finfluencers'). As a result, there has been increased activity from companies whose business models include app-based technology, aggressive online marketing, and games. Technological advances make it possible to reach new digitally savvy consumers/investors, as well as investors who have less knowledge or experience and are more vulnerable to fraud.

These developments contribute to a rise in incidents of misleading and fraudulent online activity in transferable securities, derivatives and crypto-currencies. Unauthorised persons, using aggressive phone, email or social media marketing of financial instruments, claiming to represent reputable companies and promising "safe investments", advertise transactions through electronic platforms mainly in FOREX, precious metals, oil, CFDs and crypto-currencies, such as bitcoin, resulting in losses for investors.

Using digital media, consumers/investors and businesses have access to digital financial instruments, and new innovative products, services and business models are constantly being developed. New business models/ applications/ solutions help to make investments more accessible and inclusive for the general public.

Investors are better positioned to identify and compare – more easily and faster – a wider range of financial services and products, both domestically and across borders.

On the other hand, however, these developments and trends carry risks for consumers/investors, as digital media may exacerbate the risk of inadequate or inappropriate disclosures for the digital provision of services, and intensify their pursuit of higher returns.

Online brokers, as well as investment firms providing online investment services, explore ways to interact with investors with a more "social touch", for example, by providing guidance/inspiration using examples of what interests other investors. This can be seen as an exchange of experience, without the services of a prominent investment advisor identifying rational choices.

Various techniques are increasingly being deployed to make the experience more investor-friendly. 'Game' techniques in trading apps and personal recommendations on social media may prompt retail investors to engage in trading behaviours without comprehending the risks involved.

In particular, younger, inexperienced investors and those unfamiliar with the use of apps and social media may be drawn into actions with unpleasant consequences. Also, less educated investors or investors seeking higher returns may be persuaded to adopt riskier behaviour or invest in complex or highly volatile products. These categories of investors may be vulnerable to fraudulent activities.

It has also been observed that individuals tend to make different decisions when interacting with an online interface as opposed to interacting with a human or with printed material. See also ESMA's Statement:

https://www.esma.europa.eu/sites/default/files/library/esma70-154-2780_esmas_statement_on_investment_recommendations_on_social_media.pdf

Online activity by financial ‘influencers’ is also on the rise – the risk of individuals acting outside the regulatory perimeter of competent authorities, using social media to provide investment recommendations for investments including in complex products.

Social media influencers often act as uncontrolled advisers guiding retail investors to invest in financial instruments without handing them any Key Information Document (KID) or any other relevant information to help them make their own investment decisions, and/or without them even knowing that regulated product information documents exist and should be provided to them.

‘Influencers’ are a fast-growing phenomenon, reflecting increased interest in investment – especially among younger people. However, ‘influencers’ do not always comply with the rules. They may also promote dangerous products and are not always transparent about their interests and the fee they receive.

Be extra cautious when you see ads online and on social media promising high returns.

Loss of property from investments following aggressive selling techniques and related advice.

Risks to investors arise mainly from:

- a) wrong purchases resulting from inadequate/ misleading disclosures of the features of the purchased products and the risks entailed for Investors;
- b) lack of awareness of the potential for manipulation or biased content of digital information.
- c) the format and presentation of insufficient information in digital media.
- d) marketing communications unsuitable for retail investors.
- e) an increasing use of ‘game’ techniques that may help convey complex information in a simple and satisfactory manner, but the incorrect use of these techniques may prompt investors to take actions based on emotions rather than rational decisions.

Before making any investment decision, always do your own research on the product and company through which you are considering investing, and make sure you have received the above key information.

The Hellenic Capital Market Commission posts warnings on its website to inform investors.

Click on: http://www.hcmc.gr/en_US/web/portal/warninghcmc



If a company that has approached you is on the aforementioned HCMC list, DO NOT DO BUSINESS with them and DO NOT INVEST.

On the website of the International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO) you can find warnings to investors issued by supervisory authorities from around the world, including the Hellenic Capital Market Commission. Click on:

https://www.iosco.org/investor_protection/?subsection=investor_alerts_portal



If a company that has approached you is on the aforementioned IOSCO list, DO NOT DO BUSINESS with them and DO NOT INVEST.

Finally, click the following link of the **European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA)** to check whether or not a company is authorised by any European capital market authority.

<https://www.esma.europa.eu/investor-corner/is-the-firm-regulated>

Get to know the Hellenic Capital Market Commission

The Hellenic Capital Market Commission is an independent supervisory authority established by Law 2324/1995 to protect investors and ensure the proper functioning of the Greek capital market. It oversees the implementation of capital market legislation, is accountable to the competent committee of the Greek Parliament and is supervised by the Minister of Finance. In this context, the Hellenic Capital Market Commission submits its activity report to the Speaker of the Parliament and the Minister of National Economy and Finance.

Against this backdrop, the Hellenic Capital Market Commission sets the general rules for the organisation and functioning of the capital market, issues guidelines setting out how these rules are to be applied and takes measures to ensure the proper functioning of the market.

Among other things, it supervises domestic and foreign entities providing investment services, collective and alternative investment undertakings, their managers, new investment schemes, occupational insurance funds, listed companies in terms of transparency obligations, including their financial statements, and the shareholders of listed companies in terms of their obligation to declare significant holdings, approves public offers and prospectuses for share capital increases, and monitors and controls transactions in terms of market manipulation as well as insider trading. At the same time, it supervises the compliance of supervised persons with the framework for combating money laundering and terrorist financing.

The entities supervised by the Hellenic Capital Market Commission also include trading venues in Greece (including the Athens Stock Exchange), clearing and settlement bodies, the Hellenic Central Securities Depository. It also monitors domestic and international developments and research activity on capital markets, conducts studies where appropriate and certifies capital market executives as to their professional competence. It serves citizens and receives and investigates investor complaints and grievances.

The Hellenic Capital Market Commission has the power to impose administrative sanctions and measures on legal and natural persons who violate capital market legislation, as well as to file criminal complaints in the event of serious indications of criminal offences related to the capital market.

The Hellenic Capital Market Commission has a special section on its website dedicated to Financial Literacy (See the link:

http://www.hcmc.gr/en_US/web/portal/protoboulies-gia-chrematooikonomiko-alphabetismo

HELLENIC CAPITAL MARKET COMMISSION

3–5 Hippokratous Street,
106 79 Athens
Call Center: +30 210 3377100

Central Registry E-mail:
info@cmc.gov.gr

Thessaloniki Regional Office:
16–18 Katouni Street,
546 25 Thessaloniki

www.hcmc.gr