

Information release

ECC-Spain warns of criminals impersonating ECC-Net to defraud consumers

Fraudsters contact victims of financial fraud and make them believe they can get their money back.

Madrid, 10 December 2024. The European Consumer Centre in Spain (ECC-Spain) is alerting consumers to a new scam identified by the European Consumer Centres Network (ECC-Net). In this case, the criminals pose as ECC-Net staff and contact consumers who have usually been victims of other financial scams in which they have lost part of their capital. The fraudsters take advantage of this situation to contact consumers under the pretext of making them believe that they will get their money back.

How scammers operate

Fraudsters contact victims by telephone and e-mail, claiming to act on behalf of the ECC-Net network. In particular, they target consumers who have previously been defrauded by financial scams. In their communications, these fake professionals present themselves as consumer rights advocates, and lead victims to believe that the money they have lost has been located in London in a Swiss bank account and that they will proceed to transfer it back to the consumer's bank account. However, before making this transfer, the criminals demand personal information to verify the identity of the victims. In addition, they warn them that if this information is not provided by 30 December 2024, their money will be donated to charities in Europe.

To convince victims, criminals use false arguments, claiming that investigations carried out by ECC-Net in cooperation with the financial supervisory authority, the European Central Bank and Interpol have led to the uncovering of this financial fraud.

The European Consumer Centre in Spain clarifies that this is a new scam and that the ECC-Net network does not contact consumers to ask for payment or personal data. It also warns that the European Consumer Centres network does not intervene in matters related to crime or scams. It is therefore recommended that all persons who are contacted by these scammers cease communication immediately and report them to the competent authorities (police or "guardia civil").

How to recognise the scam

- ✓ The communications are signed by a supposed 'Chief Inspector of the European Consumer Rights Centre (ECC-Net)'. At present, there is no such position in the ECC-Net network.
- ✓ The correct name of the ECC-Net Centres is 'European Consumer Centre', not 'European Consumer Rights Centre'.
- ✓ The ECC-Net logo used in the signature is not linked to ECC-Net.
- ✓ The e-mail address shows a different name than the one used in the content of the e-mail (e.g. Andrew Werner versus Andrew Platt). Also, the domain is not linked to the ECC-Net.

ECC-Spain recommendations

- ✓ **Verify identity.** If in doubt, contact the [European Consumer Centre](#) in Spain directly.
- ✓ **Protect personal data.** Do not give out any personal data. Fraudsters often try to obtain sensitive information such as bank details or copies of identity documents using deceptive methods.
- ✓ **Do not make payments.** ECC-Net does not charge for its services. Its advice and assistance is provided free of charge.
- ✓ **Report to law enforcement authorities.** It is recommended to report the facts to the police or "guardia civil". It is also advisable to inform the European Consumer Centre where you live if you receive a fraudulent e-mail of this type. If you live in ECC-Spain, please contact ECC-Spain by e-mail at cec@consumo.gob.es.



About ECC-Spain

The European Consumer Centre in Spain ([ECC-Spain](#)) is a public body that provides services to consumers living in Spain. It is funded by the European Union and the Ministry of Social Rights, Consumer Affairs and Agenda 2030 and, like the other centres that make up the ECC-Net network, it provides information, advice and assistance to consumers on cross-border European consumer issues. As part of these assistance services, it mediates on behalf of consumers by handling their complaints related to purchases made in shops based in another Member State, as well as in Iceland, Norway and the United Kingdom. This helps residents of Spain to better understand their rights as consumers and to enjoy all the benefits of the single internal market and the digital single market. The European Consumer Centres do not intervene in cases of fraud or crime.