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CCB and FPS Economy join forces to better tackle online fraud

In order to better protect citizens against online fraud, the Centre for Cybersecurity Belgium (CCB) is working with its partners on a joint methodology that will enable faster action to be taken against unreliable websites, thereby preventing new victims. As part of a new collaboration with the FPS Economy, this approach has already been applied to 30 websites, enabling almost 25,000 people to be warned in good time.

Daily fight against unfair practices

The partners at the FPS Economy (Economic Inspection) receive daily reports of unfair commercial practices, scams or fraud via websites. Each report is carefully analysed and, if necessary, an investigation is opened. Companies are given a deadline to remedy any infringements.

If this does not happen, or if it is a case of manifest fraud, the new collaboration with the CCB makes it possible to introduce procedures to make these websites inaccessible. This collaboration strengthens the protection of consumers and companies in a faster and more effective way.

Automatic redirection to warning

The system automatically redirects any attempt to visit a fraudulent website to a warning page – a special page on the FPS Economy website or the Safeonweb website. This redirection is carried out by the CCB via the BAPS (*Belgian Anti-Phishing Shield*) system, which automatically checks whether visited websites are on the list of known unreliable sites.

The process works as follows: as soon as you click on a link, your computer automatically sends a DNS request to your internet service provider. Thanks to the BAPS system, the provider's DNS server checks whether the website is on the list of known malicious websites. This list is provided by partners such as the Economic Inspection. If there is a match, you will be redirected to the warning page instead of the original website. The sites are therefore made inaccessible without being physically taken offline.

“ Thanks to close cooperation with the FPS Economy, we were able to protect more than 25,000 internet users who clicked on a suspicious link to a fraudulent website through the BAPS project. This cooperation shows how powerful joint action can be in the fight against online fraud. We would like to thank all citizens who continue to forward suspicious messages to suspicious@safeonweb.be. Your vigilance really makes a difference. Keep doing this en masse. Together, we can make the internet safer for everyone. ”



Miguel De Bruycker
Director-General of the Centre for Cybersecurity Belgium

Public disclosure as an additional tool

In addition to redirecting users to warning pages, the partners at the FPS Economy also take action against the companies behind fraudulent websites through public communication.

If infringements are not stopped, the name of the suspected website and the company responsible are published. Information about the infringements detected, the underlying practices and the methods used may also be added. This approach warns potential victims and puts additional pressure on companies to comply with the rules and make the necessary adjustments. This prevents new victims from suffering serious damage.

Once a company brings its website into compliance with the regulations and demonstrates that it is no longer involved in harmful practices, its name is removed from all communications. If the website was blocked by the BAPS system, it is made accessible again.

Reporting suspicious websites

Have you noticed any untrustworthy websites? Report them via safeonweb.be and the official channels of our partners. They analyse all reports and may decide to launch an investigation to stop fraudulent practices, with technical support from the CCB for swift and effective action.

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