

Where your money **really** goes

The part brokers leave out of their adverts: which company actually holds your account, what protects your money if it fails, and the warning signs, for the 13 brokers we review.

Checked 15 October 2026 against each broker's own pages and the regulators' registers · Latest version: fxrecap.com/forex-broker-licence-check

6 things brokers don't tell you

1 The licence in the advert is usually not yours

FCA, CySEC and ASIC licences serve UK, EU and Australian clients. Sign up from Asia, Africa or Latin America and most brokers place you in an offshore company instead: Seychelles, Belize, Vanuatu, the BVI or Saint Lucia.

2 Compensation funds stop at the border

The UK's FSCS (up to £85,000) and Cyprus's fund (up to €20,000) pay only clients of the UK or Cypriot company. An offshore account has no statutory fund behind it.

3 High leverage and bonuses tell you where you are

EU and UK rules cap retail leverage at 30:1 and ban bonuses, and Australia bans incentives. If you are offered 1:1000 or a deposit bonus, your account is not under those regulators.

4 The Financial Commission is not a regulator

It is a private dispute body. Its fund pays up to €20,000, and only when a member ignores one of its own rulings.

5 Some "licences" are company registrations

St Vincent and the Grenadines and Saint Lucia register companies but do not supervise forex. Nobody checks the trading.

6 Insurance and negative balance promises are policy, not law

Offshore, a broker's insurance or negative balance protection is its own promise. Read the terms: a policy ceiling is not a personal guarantee, and some brokers do not guarantee it at all.

8 moves that protect your money

1 Read the company name before you deposit

It is on the client agreement and the account opening page. That company, not the brand, holds your money.

2 Keep only your trading margin at the broker

Leave savings in your bank. If a firm fails offshore, you are an unsecured creditor.

3 Withdraw profits every month

A small, regular withdrawal also proves the payout route works before you need it.

4 Finish verification on day one

Most withdrawal delays are identity or address checks left until the last minute.

5 Withdraw to the method you deposited with

Brokers return deposits to the original card or wallet first; plan for it.

6 Bookmark the real website

Clone sites copy names and licence numbers. Check the address against the regulator's register.

7 Turn on two-factor login

A hijacked account is the commonest way traders lose money that no regulator will refund.

8 If you live in the UK, EU or Australia, take the local company

It gives you leverage limits, negative balance rules and, in the UK and EU, a compensation fund.

Who really holds your money if you sign up outside the UK, EU and Australia

BROKER	COMPANY YOU JOIN	COMPENSATION FUND	NEGATIVE BALANCE PROTECTION	SAFETY NET AND WHAT TO WATCH
 IC Markets	Raw Trading Ltd Seychelles (FSA)	No	Not guaranteed	Segregated accounts at several top-tier banks, plus a client money insurance policy of up to US\$1,000,000 Watch out: The FCA Warning List names IC Markets Global. Its global site is now ic.com; icmarkets.com redirects there.
 XM	XM Global Limited Belize (FSC)	No	Yes, all clients	Segregated accounts and negative balance protection Watch out: Cyprus's €20,000 compensation fund covers only clients of the EU company, not XM Global.
 Exness	Exness (SC) Ltd and other offshore companies Seychelles (FSA)	No (Financial Commission fund up to €20,000, only on its own judgments)	Yes	Segregated accounts at several tier-1 banks; Financial Commission membership Watch out: The FCA and CySEC licences in its marketing do not cover any retail trader.
 FP Markets	FP Markets Ltd Saint Lucia (company registration)	No (its FAQ says FP Markets Ltd is not in a compensation scheme)	Yes	Segregated accounts at AA- rated banks, negative balance protection, external audit Watch out: Saint Lucia registers companies; no markets regulator stands behind the international account.
 AvaTrade	Ava Trade Markets Ltd British Virgin Islands (FSC)	No	Yes (Negative Balance Adjustment)	Segregated accounts and refund of negative balances Watch out: Its own Help Center says South Africans are registered under the BVI company, not a local licence.
 RoboForex	RoboForex Ltd Belize (FSC)	No statutory fund (Financial Commission fund up to €20,000 per case)	Yes	Financial Commission membership, €2.5 million civil liability insurance, execution audit Watch out: All protection beyond the Belize licence is the broker's own arrangement, not law.
 LiteFinance	LiteFinance Global LLC St Vincent and the Grenadines (company registration)	No	On ECN accounts only	Company policy only: no markets regulator oversees the international account Watch out: The Cyprus and Mauritius licences belong to sister companies, not the one most traders join.
 IUX	IUX's Mauritius or St Vincent company Mauritius (FSC) or St Vincent	No statutory fund (Financial Commission member)	Yes, reset to zero	Financial Commission membership and negative balance reset Watch out: Serves only 10 countries; leverage can be cut to 1:400 or lower around news without notice.
 Tickmill	Tickmill Ltd Seychelles (FSA, SD008)	No (FSCS and ICF are for UK and EU clients)	Yes, unconditional	Segregated funds, insurance at Lloyd's, negative balance protection Watch out: Read the insurance terms: a policy ceiling is not a personal guarantee.
 Vantage	Vantage Global Limited Vanuatu (VFSC, 700271)	No	Not guaranteed by rule	Segregated trust accounts with Australian banks; insurance policy Watch out: Vantage's own notice says international sign-ups get no FCA protections, leverage limits or compensation.
 Fusion Markets	Gleneagle Securities or Fusion Markets International Vanuatu (VFSC) or Seychelles (FSA)	No	Yes, except excluded countries	Client trust accounts at National Australia Bank, negative balance protection Watch out: Check your country is not on its excluded list for negative balance protection.
 FXTM	Exinity Limited Mauritius (FSC), also FSCA-licensed	No	Not described	Segregated accounts at top-tier banks Watch out: Indian residents cannot open an account with the international company.
 Elev8	Three offshore companies Mauritius, Seychelles, Comoros	No	Yes, reset to zero	Segregated accounts and negative balance protection Watch out: A brand launched in 2026, offshore on every licence.

Source: each broker's regulation guide on fxrecap.com, built from the broker's own legal pages. Your agreement may name a different company depending on your country; it always decides.

Check any licence yourself tap a regulator to open its official register

 FCA FINANCIAL CONDUCT AUTHORITY United Kingdom	 ASIC Australian Securities & Investments Commission Australia	 NFA / CFTC United States
 CySEC ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗ ΚΕΦΑΛΑΙΑΓΟΡΑΣ ΚΥΠΡΟΥ Cyprus (EU)	 Central Bank of Ireland Ireland (EU)	 BaFin Germany (EU)
 FINMA Switzerland	 MAS Monetary Authority of Singapore Singapore	 SFC SECURITIES AND FUTURES COMMISSION Hong Kong
 JFSA Financial Services Agency Japan	 FMA / FSPR FINANCIAL MARKETS AUTHORITY New Zealand	 DFSA Dubai Financial Services Authority UAE (DIFC)
 FSCA South Africa	 CMA CAPITAL Kenya	 FSC Financial Services Commission MAURITIUS Mauritius
 FSA Seychelles	 VFSC VANUATU FINANCIAL SERVICES COMMISSION REPUBLIC OF VANUATU Vanuatu	 Belize FSC Belize

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