
FINAL NOTICE

To: Markos Theodosi Markou

**Individual
Reference
Number: MXM01997**

Date: 10 July 2025

1. ACTION

1.1. For the reasons given in this Notice, the Financial Conduct Authority hereby:

- (1) imposes on Mr Markos Markou, pursuant to section 66 of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 ("the Act"), a financial penalty of £10,000; and
- (2) makes an order which takes effect from the date of this Notice, pursuant to section 56 of the Act, prohibiting Mr Markou from performing any function in relation to any regulated activity carried on by an authorised person, exempt person or exempt professional firm.

1.2. By an application made to Companies House dated 17 October 2024, Mr Markou, as the sole director of Financial Solutions (Euro) Limited ("FSE"), applied for the strike off and dissolution of FSE. On 7 January 2025, FSE was struck off the Companies House register. On 14 January 2025, FSE was

dissolved.

- 1.3. As a result, the Authority cancelled FSE's authorisation given to it under Part 4A of the Act and Mr Markou's approvals to perform the above controlled functions at FSE lapsed. Were it not for those circumstances, the Authority would also by this Notice have withdrawn approvals to perform the SMF1 (Director) and SMF3 (Chief Executive) controlled functions at FSE.

2. REASONS FOR ACTION

- 2.1. By a Decision Notice given to Mr Markou on 29 January 2021, the Authority decided to impose a financial penalty of £25,000 on Mr Markou as it considered that he had failed to comply with Statement of Principle 1 (Integrity) of the Authority's Statements of Principle and Code of Practice for Approved Persons between 24 November 2015 to 14 October 2017. The Authority also decided to withdraw Mr Markou's approval to perform the SMF1 and SMF3 controlled functions at FSE, and to make an order prohibiting him from performing any function in relation to any regulated activity carried on by an authorised person, exempt person or exempt professional firm as a result of its decision that he lacked fitness and propriety to perform such functions.

- 2.2. Mr Markou referred the matter to the Upper Tribunal (Tax and Chancery Chamber) ("the Tribunal"). By a decision released on 28 April 2023, the Tribunal allowed Mr Markou's reference and directed the Authority not to impose a financial penalty. In respect of the Authority's decision to withdraw Mr Markou's approvals and to make an order prohibiting him from performing any function in relation to any regulated activity carried on by an authorised person, exempt person or exempt professional firm, the Tribunal remitted the matter back to the Authority for reconsideration. The Tribunal's decision can be found at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/644b9a3dfaf4aa000ce1305d/Markou_v_FCA_final.pdf

- 2.3. The Authority appealed to the Court of Appeal (Civil Division), which handed down its judgment on 17 December 2024. The Court of Appeal's judgment can be found at:

<https://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWCA/Civ/2024/1575.html>

- 2.4. The judgment sets out its detailed reasons and should therefore be read in full. Those reasons are incorporated herein.
- 2.5. The Court of Appeal concluded that Mr Markou had acted recklessly in that he had unreasonably taken the risk of:
- (1) FSE carrying on regulated activity without Professional Indemnity Insurance after he knew of its expiry;
 - (2) giving misleading evidence concerning whether FSE had carried on such activity to the Tribunal in this reference and in a previous reference to the Tribunal made by FSE; and
 - (3) not adhering to FSE's Mortgage Sales Process (the "MSP") policy in respect of file reviews and the taking of the number of mortgage applicant payslips specified in the MSP, which were steps designed to protect against fraud. Mr Markou had chosen to adopt the MSP and had notified the Authority that he had adopted it. However, he decided instead to adopt a less onerous approach of which the Authority was not aware.
- 2.6. The Court of Appeal decided that, as a senior regulated individual, Mr Markou's recklessness amounts to a lack of integrity.
- 2.7. However, the Court of Appeal also decided that the Tribunal had been in a better position to make an evaluation of the Authority's criticisms of Mr Markou in relation to adherence to other aspects of FSE's policies and to training, oversight and supervision of FSE's mortgage advisors and that it was consequently not open to the Court of Appeal to interfere with the Tribunal's decision that Mr Markou had not acted recklessly in this respect. The Court of Appeal also found that Mr Markou had not acted recklessly in respect of an inaccuracy in FSE's Initial Disclosure Document given to its clients.
- 2.8. The Court of Appeal remade the Tribunal's decision. It dismissed Mr Markou's reference in respect of the Authority's decision to withdraw the approvals given to Mr Markou to perform the SMF1 and SMF3 functions at FSE and in respect of the Authority's decision to make an order prohibiting him from performing any function in relation to any regulated activity carried out by an authorised

person, exempt person or exempt professional firm. In respect of the Authority's decision to take disciplinary action, the Court of Appeal remitted the matter of the financial penalty to the Authority with a direction for the Authority to impose on Mr Markou a financial penalty of £10,000.

- 2.9. In light of the above and in accordance with the Court of Appeal's direction, the Authority gives Mr Markou this Final Notice.

3. PROCEDURAL MATTERS

- 3.1. This Notice is given to Mr Markou under, and in accordance with, section 390 of the Act.

Manner of and time for payment

- 3.2. The financial penalty must be paid in full by Mr Markou to the Authority by no later than 24 July 2025, 14 days from the date of this Final Notice.

If the financial penalty is not paid

- 3.3. If all or any of the financial penalty is outstanding on 24 July 2025, the Authority may recover the outstanding amount as a debt owed by Mr Markou and due to the Authority.

Publicity

- 3.4. Sections 391(4), 391(6) and 391(7) of the Act apply to the publication of information about the matter to which this notice relates. Under those provisions, the Authority must publish such information about the matter to which this notice relates as the Authority considers appropriate. The information may be published in such manner as the Authority considers appropriate. However, the Authority may not publish information if such publication would, in the opinion of the Authority, be unfair to you or prejudicial to the interests of consumers or detrimental to the stability of the UK financial system.

Authority contacts

- 3.5. For more information concerning this matter generally, contact Richard Topham at the Authority (direct line: 020 7066 1180, email: Richard.Topham@fca.org.uk).

Dharmesh Gadhavi
Head of Department
Enforcement and Market Oversight Division