

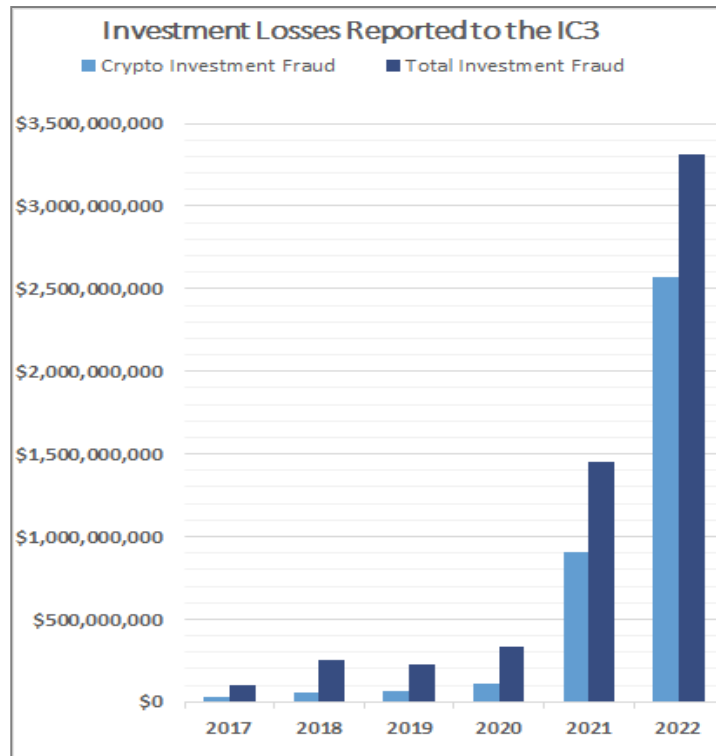
INVESTMENT⁷



In 2022, investment scams were the costliest scheme reported to the IC3. Investment fraud complaints increased from \$1.45 billion in 2021 to \$3.31 billion in 2022, which is a 127%. Within those complaints, cryptocurrency investment fraud rose from \$907 million in 2021 to \$2.57 billion in 2022, an increase of 183%.

Crypto-investment scams saw unprecedented increases in the number of victims and the dollar losses to these investors. Many victims have assumed massive debt to cover losses from these fraudulent investments and the most targeted age group reporting this type of scam are victims ages 30 to 49. Some variations of crypto-investment scams reported in 2022 are:

- Liquidity Mining: victims are enticed to link their cryptocurrency wallet to a fraudulent liquidity mining application. Scammers then wipe out the victims' funds without notification or permission from the victim. (PSA I-072122-PSA⁸).
- Hacked Social Media: scammers used hacked social media accounts to perpetrate a fraudulent investment opportunity using cryptocurrency, targeting existing friends of the hacked user.
- Celebrity Impersonation: impersonating a well-known celebrity or social figure, the scammers feign a friendship with the targeted victim who is eventually enticed to learn how to invest in cryptocurrency or is given the opportunity to invest by the scammer.
- Real Estate Professionals: the scammer contacts a real estate agent, usually offering to buy a very expensive property for cash or cryptocurrency. Once engaged, the fraudster will expose their control of fictitious accounts with purported value of millions of dollars to entice them to engage in their investment scheme.
- Employment: victims apply for fake positions online at an investment firm or company supposedly affiliated with investing. Instead of a job, the victims are instead offered advice investment advice. The investment is fraudulent and designed to retrieve as much money from the target as possible.



⁷ Accessibility description: Chart shows Investment Fraud Losses Reported to the IC3 by Year for 2017 to 2022.

⁸ Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) | Scammers Target and Exploit Owners of Cryptocurrencies in Liquidity Mining Scam