

Austria telecoms provider accepts cryptocurrency

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Facebook unveiled plans in June for its own virtual currency, Libra, rattling financial regulators who fear the social media giant's potential to disrupt the financial system.

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How much is that in crypto?

Austria's leading telecoms provider A1 said Thursday that it was letting customers pay in cryptocurrency under a pilot project to test the popularity of virtual payments.

Customers can now pay in Bitcoin, Litecoin, Dash and other cryptocurrencies at selected shops throughout the country, the company said.

"It is a trial. If it turns out as we think (that this is popular), we will extend our offer," A1 spokesman Jochen Schuetzenauer told AFP, adding it was already common to pay in cryptocurrency in America and Asia.

A1, which counts more than 5.3 million mobile phone customers among Austria's 8.8 million population, said transactions would be secured with customers paying in cryptocurrency but vendors getting euros.

Cryptocurrencies, whose electronic nature makes them difficult to trace, have flourished since Bitcoin launched in 2009.

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