



G+D supports fast implementation of European Payments Initiative EPI

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Giesecke+Devrient

Giesecke+Devrient (G+D) welcomes the European Payments Initiative (EPI) as a long overdue step towards establishing a sovereign pan-European payment system and an urgently needed alternative to the dominant global payment providers.

The time has come for a sovereign European payment scheme. So far, Europeans have been dependent on dominant global payment service providers for cashless and digital payments, e.g. for online shopping. But that is about to change. The European Payments Initiative EPI plans to introduce a payment system including cards and a mobile wallet app which can be used for everyday situations, such as paying in stores or online, as well as person-to-person (P2P) money transfers. This would allow European citizens to withdraw cash throughout Europe and make cashless payments with their cards or via the app at POS terminals – all under the umbrella of strict European security standards, because their data stays in Europe. This ensures independence for end consumers in cashless payments, and fast and secure processes for merchants – and everyone benefits from lower fees compared to private-sector payment service providers.

This is of strong interest to the European banking sector. Currently, 31 banks and two payment service providers from seven European countries are involved in the EPI, with additional support coming from the European Central Bank and the European Commission. The EPI's task will be to establish a pan-European payment scheme that covers all cashless payment transactions in accordance with European standards for payment cards and mobile apps in a dedicated, end-to-end infrastructure. To make this initiative a success, it should build on proven networks, interfaces and system solutions. Furthermore, banks must have the freedom to shape the look and usability, fee structures and business models to make them more convenient and attractive than competing systems. The EPI is thus coming at the right time as the European response to the trend toward digital and connected payments, as well as the growing concerns about the entry of big-tech giants into the financial and payments industries, which would further exacerbate dependence on global tech companies.

The EPI is particularly interesting in the context of the coming introduction of the Digital Euro as a sovereign Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) by the European Central Bank (ECB). Together, the EPI and the Digital Euro represent two of the most important lighthouse projects that will enable Europe's innovative capabilities and solution excellence to be experienced on a daily basis. The initiative thus joins a number of projects, such as the Europe Cloud GAIA-X, which are designed to strengthen Europe's sovereignty for the future.

"The time has come for more European sovereignty in payments. The EPI strengthens the relevance and resilience of the European banking sector in retail payments, also on an international basis. In addition, the EPI will facilitate the development of European digital identity solutions and support the Digital Euro," said Ralf Wintergerst, Chairman of the Management Board and Group CEO of Giesecke+Devrient. "Experienced service providers are needed to implement the EPI. As a European company with global expertise in payment systems and highly specialized partners such as Nectetera and secunet, G+D is ideally equipped to expertly support the European Payments Initiative and ensure its success."

About Giesecke+Devrient

Giesecke+Devrient (G+D) is a global security technology group headquartered in Munich. As a partner to organizations with highest demands, G+D engineers trust and secures essential values with its solutions. The company's innovative technology protects physical and digital payments, the connectivity of people and machines, the identity of people and objects, as well as digital infrastructures and confidential data.

G+D was founded in 1852. In the fiscal year 2020, the company generated a turnover of 2.31 billion euros with around 11,500 employees. G+D is represented by 74 subsidiaries and joint ventures in 32 countries. Further information: www.gi-de.com