

**EPI: The European Payments Initiative**

**The European Payments Initiative (EPI) enters the next phase with Worldline and Nets becoming shareholders of the EPI Interim Company, as the first third-party acquirers to join the initiative.**

- **EPI is also glad to announce the appointment of Dr. Joachim Schmalzl as chairman of the board and Martina Weimert as CEO of the Interim Company.**

**Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, Brussels, Copenhagen, Frankfurt, Madrid, Munich, Paris, Valencia – 25 November 2020**

In July 2020, a group of 16 major European banks from five countries (Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Spain) paved the way for the future launch of the European Payments Initiative, by announcing the creation of the EPI Interim Company in Brussels, responsible for initiating the implementation of the joint payment initiative.

The ambition of EPI is to create a unified, innovative pan-European payment solution leveraging Instant Payment/SEPA Instant Credit Transfer (SCT Inst), which offers a card for consumers and merchants across Europe, a digital wallet and P2P payments. The solution aims to become a new standard in payments for European consumers and merchants across all types of retail transactions including in-store, online, cash withdrawal and “peer-to-peer”, as an alternative to existing international payment solutions and schemes.

Today, EPI Interim Company is glad to announce that Worldline and Nets<sup>1</sup> are joining as shareholders of the recently created company, as the first third-party acquirers to join the initiative. The joining of third-party acquirers will greatly contribute to the expansion of EPI's acceptance network on the merchant side in Europe and will allow EPI to build up its own payment ecosystem in the continent. Other well-progressed expansion talks are also ongoing with various players.

Gilles Grapinet, Chairman and CEO of Worldline, commented: *“Worldline warmly welcomed the launch of the European Payments Initiative by 16 major banks earlier this year, and consequently gladly accepted their invitation to join the EPI interim Company as the first non-bank acquirer. Almost 20 years after the introduction of the Euro, the moment has come to join forces in a collective effort to provide consumers and merchants with a truly*

<sup>1</sup> Validation by the EPI Board foreseen in the next days.

*European digital payment solution, carefully designed for the business needs of the 21st century. As Europe's leading Payment Service Provider for POS and E/M Commerce, Worldline intends to actively contribute to the definition of the necessary success factors for the future roll-out of EPI".*

Bo Nilsson, Group CEO of Nets, commented: *"The European Payments Initiative will benefit the entire payments ecosystem in Europe. All stakeholders including issuers, acquirers, merchants and ultimately the end-consumers will gain from a strong and truly European digital payment solution. As a pan-European PayTech leader, and with our origin in one of the most digitised regions in the world, we look forward to becoming a significant contributor to designing and establishing a successful EPI platform. Based on modern payment technologies and capabilities, we will strive to make payments easier for merchants, banks and consumers across Europe".*

EPI Interim Company is also glad to announce the appointment of Dr. Joachim Schmalzl as chairman of the board and Martina Weimert as CEO of the Interim Company.

Dr. Joachim Schmalzl is an executive member of the board of the umbrella organization of the German Savings Banks (Deutscher Sparkassen- und Giroverband). In this position, he is responsible for developing and driving forward the group's Business Model, Digitization, and Payments strategy.

As a partner at Oliver Wyman, Martina has been supporting European banks since the beginning of the initiative and has gained in-depth experience in payments working for 16 years on numerous issuing and acquiring solutions, in European and international markets and for all kinds of players of the payments ecosystem.

## About CaixaBank

CaixaBank is the leading financial group in retail banking in Spain and one of the top banks in Portugal, where it controls 100% of BPI, as well as the market leader in cards and payment solutions through CaixaBank Payments & Consumer. The group, chaired by Jordi Gual and with Gonzalo Gortázar as CEO, has 15.4 million customers and the largest commercial network in Spain and Portugal with more than 4,300 branches, and is a leader in innovation with the largest base of digital customers in Spain (7 million).

CaixaBank has developed projects that have marked technological milestones in the sector, such as the first commercial roll out of contactless and mobile payment systems in Europe, the creation of the first contactless ATMs in the world, the introduction of ATMs with facial recognition technology and the development of the first artificial intelligence applications for customer services. CaixaBank is also committed to a socially-responsible model of universal banking, based on quality, customer service, and specialisation with a

tailor-made value-proposition for each segment. Its goal is to contribute to its customers' financial well-being while supporting the progress of society as a whole.

### About EPI

The European Payments Initiative (EPI) aims to create a unified pan-European payment solution. Its founding members are so far:

