



PRESS RELEASE

ACHs join forces to optimize European clearing services

New company incorporated by six EACHA members

Athens/Bucharest/Madrid/Milan/Utrecht/Warsaw, 25th June 2015. Six members of the European Automated Clearing House Association (EACHA) have joined forces to deliver centralized and optimized processing services for SEPA transactions. For this purpose they have set up a new company called European Clearing Cooperative (ECC), registered on 23rd June 2015. The objective of ECC is to strengthen interoperability and further increase efficiency in the Single Euro Payments Area through a shared service platform. This new European payment platform, expected to be operational by the end of 2015, will deliver an optimized central ACH interoperability model, based on the EACHA framework, using a multi-cycle model and interbank settlement in TARGET2. ECC has been founded by a group of European Automated Clearing Houses (ACHs) – DIAS, Equens, Iberpay, ICBPI, KIR, and TRANSFOND. Currently, these entities together with the ACHs operated by three central banks - Banca d'Italia, Deutsche Bundesbank and Oesterreichische Nationalbank – intend to process their cross-ACH transactions, meaning transactions sent by one participating ACH to another. Participation in ECC will be open to all ACHs active in Europe.

With migration to SEPA schemes, the market is expected to rapidly evolve to deliver optimized payment services and offer new innovative solutions to meet growing customer expectations. ECC participants see this as an opportunity to enhance service delivery within SEPA through closer cooperation, in line with the EU ambition to build up an integrated European payments market. As banks and corporates concentrate their payment processing in fewer SEPA countries, the volumes of interoperability links are expected to show very significant increases. The shared service platform will create economies of scale and will support the increasing market demands.

Benefits

ECC will provide a number of significant benefits for its participants and their clients. Firstly, it allows for efficient and reliable processing of growing cross-ACH transaction volumes in the integrated European payments market. Processing such growing volumes through a single platform will significantly enhance cost efficiency by reaping economies of scale, moving from bilateral to multilateral interoperability. Secondly, it provides full reachability towards the payment service providers participating in the connected ACHs, with more than 3,200 reachable BICs (Business Identifier Codes). Moreover, pooling of capabilities and operational resources from multiple ACHs within the ECC will open up possibilities for further cooperation in future developments, such as in the area of real-time clearing and settlement.

Open to other ACHs

Participation in ECC is open to all ACHs active in SEPA. The investing ACHs will operate and jointly govern ECC as a shared facility. Participating ACHs can benefit from the shared services



while continuing to support their local communities under their own local service arrangements. Michal Szymanski, Chairman of ECC's Board and vice-president of KIR: "We are confident that ECC will deliver outstanding service value to our customers. It creates important synergies and cost advantages on the interoperability level within the EACHA framework, while at the same time giving participating ACHs the freedom to act with their local communities. We look forward to welcoming other ACHs to actively participate in ECC and to use the provided services like the ACH operating central banks Deutsche Bundesbank, Oesterreichische Nationalbank and Banca d'Italia intend to do."