



ECPA Calls for Strong Stance on European Payments Sovereignty

New report shows scale of European Card Scheme payments and explores value of domestic schemes amid tumultuous geopolitical climate and need to reduce dependency on non-European payment platforms

3rd June 2025, Brussels: Today, the European Card Payment Association (ECPA) publishes new data showing the critical role of European Card Schemes (ECSs) in a white paper titled [Safeguarding Europe's Financial Future](#).

The white paper shows that in 2024 there were over 263 million ECS payment cards in circulation, which made 31.5 billion transactions last year alone.

It also explores the urgent need to protect the sovereignty over payment infrastructure in Europe offered by ECSs, amid challenges such as the current American administration's increasingly isolationist approach or unpredictable geopolitical events such as the ongoing conflict in Ukraine.

The white paper sets out the ECPA's asks of policymakers across Europe, including:

- The development of a comprehensive payments and industrial policy that ensures at least one EU-based payment method is always available to European consumers and businesses thus ensuring European sovereignty for payments
- The continued development and widespread adoption of European open standards, such as CPACE
- Regulatory measures that focus on ensuring a level playing field between ECS and global players
- Mechanisms to facilitate infrastructure sharing and cross-border acceptance agreements between European stakeholders
- Support for initiatives for European solutions that enhance the cross-border interoperability of ECS card payments

The white paper's conclusions align with the European Commission's focus on strategic autonomy in payments. It launches as Christine Lagarde, President of the European Central Bank, called in April for a "March towards independence" from international payment platforms.



Juan Carlos Martín, Chairman, ECPA, comments: *"For the last two decades, predicting the demise of European Card Schemes has been par for the course. But the data released today shows the opposite. European Card Schemes play a critical role in European payments infrastructure and continue to grow in both transaction volumes and influence."*

"To safeguard Europe's financial future, resilience and autonomy, particularly at a time when economic relationships between nations can quickly sour, it is of the utmost importance that the sovereignty and cooperation unique to Europe's card schemes is enthusiastically supported by all stakeholders. Control over payment infrastructure is inseparable from true economic sovereignty, and financial and regulatory institutions across the continent must prioritise collaboration that achieves this for the entire European continent."

Read Safeguarding Europe's Financial Future [here](#).

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About ECPA (European Card Payment Association)

Founded in June 2014 as a non-profit international association, ECPA represents European card schemes and organisations managing essential functions such as type approval within the European Economic Area (EEA).

The association represents the interests of its members on subjects which impact the use and / or users of payment cards or similar payment instruments, including measures intended to promote the creation of a single European market for card payments (SEPA for Cards).

Current members of the ECPA include Bancontact Payconiq Company (Belgium), Bankid BankAsept (Norway), Borica (Bulgaria), Groupement des Cartes Bancaires CB (France), Dutch Payments Association (Netherlands), Nets Denmark (Denmark), Pan-Nordic Card Association (Scandinavia), PostFinance (Switzerland), STMP (Spain), BKM (Türkiye) and SIBS MB (Portugal).

www.europeancardpaymentassociation.com