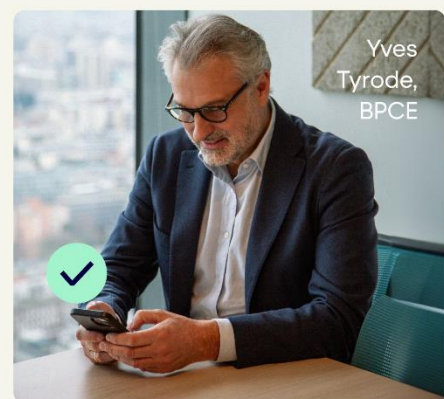


## **EPI successfully executes first instant payment transactions in Europe with 'wero' between customers from Banque Populaire and Caisse d'Epargne (Groupe BPCE) in France and Sparkasse Elbe-Elster Bank in Germany**

**[Brussels, 14 December 2023] - The European Payments Initiative (EPI) is thrilled to announce the successful completion of its first account-to-account instant payment transactions with wero, EPI's newly developed instant payment solution. This significant milestone was achieved today through a proof of concept conducted between customers from Sparkasse Elbe-Elster in Germany and Banque Populaire and Caisse d'Epargne (Groupe BPCE) in France.**

The inaugural transaction, worth 10 euros, was sent today from a German account to a French account via the easy-to-use new payment solution. The advanced technology employed by the dedicated teams at both banks ensured that the transfer was instant. Subsequently, the bank teams proceeded to conduct several additional transactions throughout the day, seamlessly moving various amounts of euros between the designated accounts.



This successful demonstration shows the progress done by EPI in building its account-to-account (A2A) payment means based on SCT Inst and its digital wallet. The enthusiasm and dedication exhibited by all the teams during this significant occasion were truly inspiring. Looking ahead, EPI plans to extend the use of wero to the first pilot users within its member banks in Belgium, France, and Germany in the new year.

*"Today marks a significant achievement for EPI and for the European payments landscape as a whole. The successful execution of our first account-to-account instant payment transactions with wero demonstrates our capacity to deliver value and innovation to consumers and merchants in Europe. I thank the dedicated teams for their relentless pursuit of this accomplishment. We have now launched our concrete journey of delivering all kind of payment use cases and related services to the market and are moving towards our goal of changing the way Europe pays.", says Martina Weimert, the CEO of EPI.*



*"Groupe BPCE, a founding member of EPI, is delighted to have played an active role in this major milestone for EPI in collaboration with the German Savings Banks Association. As fervent promoters of a unified instant payment solution for Europe, our contribution to bringing the first transactions to life was obvious to us. It also illustrates our ambition to integrate the EPI solution, wero, into the mobile banking apps of Banque Populaire and Caisse d'Epargne in order to continue to bring ever greater value to their customers," explains Yves Tyrode, CEO Digital & Payments, Groupe BPCE.*

*"The successful completion of the first account-to-account-transaction with wero is a significant technological milestone for European independence in payment. With this pioneering achievement, we demonstrate our commitment to transforming the payment landscape in Europe by providing a secure, efficient, and fully integrated payment solution for banks, customers and merchants.", continues Joachim Schmalzl, Managing Director, DSGV and Chair of EPI Board of Directors.*

As per the outlined roadmap, wero will be integrated into the applications of EPI's member banks, in addition to being available as a standalone mobile app on both Android and iOS platforms. EPI is actively engaged in preparing for the 2024 commercial launch of 'wero' in Belgium, France, and Germany, with subsequent expansion planned for the Netherlands and other countries in the future.

#### **About EPI:**

The European Payments Initiative (EPI) is an initiative backed by 16 European banks and merchant service providers to progressively build a payment solution tailored for Europe. EPI leverages the instant account-to-account payments infrastructure available in Europe to improve efficiency and remove intermediaries in the payment flow. It aims at enabling the next-generation payments for consumers and merchants in Europe across all types of retail transactions via a wallet. EPI will initially support person-to-person (P2P) and person-to-professional (P2Pro) payments, followed by online and mobile shopping payments and then point-of-sale payments while combining them with attractive value-added services in the future.

#### **About Groupe BPCE:**

Groupe BPCE is the second-largest banking group in France. Through its 100,000 staff, the group serves 35 million customers – individuals, professionals, companies, investors and local government bodies – around the world. It operates in the retail banking and insurance fields in France via its two major networks, Banque Populaire and Caisse d'Epargne, along with Banque Palatine and Oney. It also pursues its activities worldwide with the asset & wealth management services provided by Natixis Investment Managers and the wholesale banking expertise of Natixis Corporate & Investment Banking. The Group's financial strength is recognized by four credit rating agencies with the following senior preferred LT ratings: Moody's (A1, stable outlook), Standard & Poor's (A, stable outlook), Fitch (A+, stable outlook) and R&I (A+, stable outlook).

**About DSGV:**

The Deutscher Sparkassen- und Giroverband (German Savings Banks Association, DSGV) is the umbrella organisation of the Sparkassen-Finanzgruppe.

It is funded by the regional savings banks associations together with the Landesbanken. It represents the interests of the Sparkassen-Finanzgruppe on banking policy, regulatory law and other banking industry issues on a national and international level. It also organises decision-making and stipulates strategic direction within the Group, acting in cooperation with the regional associations and other Group institutions.

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