



EPC113-12 (version 1.0)

## Press Release

### **European Payments Council Elects New Chair and Vice Chair to Take Office in June 2012**

**23 March 2012 – Brussels: The European Payments Council (EPC), representing the European banking industry in relation to payments, on 22 March 2012 elected Javier Santamaría as Chair and Günther Gall as Vice Chair. Mr Santamaría and Mr Gall will take office in June 2012. They will succeed current EPC Chair Gerard Hartsink and Vice Chair Claude Brun whose mandates will end in June 2012.**

EPC Chair elect Javier Santamaría has served as a member of the EPC Plenary since the creation of the EPC in 2002. The Plenary is the decision-making body of the EPC. Since 2009, Mr Santamaría also chaired the EPC SEPA Payment Schemes Working Group. Mr Santamaría, former Head of Operations and Business Services, is Assistant General Manager with Banco Santander. He represents the bank in several organisations related to payment systems and transaction banking in addition to the EPC: Mr Santamaría is a member of the Board of the Euro Banking Association, a Director of the SWIFT Board and of the Iberpay Board. He also continues to be actively involved in academic matters.

EPC Vice Chair elect Günther Gall has served as a member of the EPC Plenary since 2002 as well. In the EPC, Mr Gall represents Raiffeisen Zentralbank Group, Vienna. He is Executive Director and Head of Transaction Services at Raiffeisen Bank International Group, a subsidiary of Raiffeisen Zentralbank Group. Mr Gall is a Director of the SWIFT Board and a member of the Board of the Euro Banking Association. He chairs the Payment Systems Working Group of the European Association of Co-operative Banks and co-chairs the global Payment Market Practice Group of SWIFT.

EPC Chair elect Javier Santamaría comments: “I would like to express my respect and gratitude for the invaluable contributions of Chair Gerard Hartsink and Vice Chair Claude Brun. Their leadership over many years has been instrumental in achieving the goal of the EPC; namely, to support and promote the Single Euro Payments Area (SEPA). I am very honoured to have the opportunity to continue this important work together with the EPC members and in close dialogue with all SEPA stakeholders.”

EPC Vice Chair elect Günther Gall adds: “I very much look forward to supporting the EPC in this new role and at this juncture in the SEPA process. Our efforts will continue to aim at making SEPA the best possible payment experience for all market participants.”

Mr Santamaría and Mr Gall were elected for a two-year term in office commencing on 20 June 2012.

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**About the European Payments Council:**

The European Payments Council (EPC) is the coordination and decision-making body of the European banking industry in relation to payments. The term bank is used in a non-discriminatory fashion and includes payment institutions. The purpose of the EPC is to support and promote the Single Euro Payments Area (SEPA). SEPA is a European Union (EU) integration initiative in the area of payments designed to achieve the completion of the EU internal market and monetary union. SEPA is the area where citizens, companies and other economic actors can make and receive payments in euro, throughout Europe, whether within or across national boundaries under the same basic conditions, rights and obligations, regardless of their location. SEPA is currently defined as consisting of the EU 27 Member States plus Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Switzerland and Monaco. The EPC develops the payment schemes and frameworks which help to realise SEPA. The EPC consists of 74 members representing banks, banking communities and payment institutions. More than 360 professionals from 32 countries are directly engaged in the work programme of the EPC, representing all sizes and sectors of the banking industry within Europe.

**Source: European Payments Council**

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