



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

## MEMO

Brussels, 13 June 2013

### **Antitrust: Commission closes investigation of EPC but continues monitoring online payments market**

The European Commission has closed an antitrust investigation opened in September 2011 to examine the standardisation process for payments over the internet (e-payments) carried out by the European Payments Council (EPC).

The EPC is the decision-making and coordination body of the European banking industry in relation to payments. The Commission had concerns that through its work on standards for e-payments, and in particular the e-Payments Framework, the EPC could exclude new entrants not linked to a bank from the e-payments market.

In the course of the investigation the EPC announced its decision to stop the development of the e-Payments Framework and any other standardisation initiatives that would have the same object or effect. As a result, the complainant in this case, Sofort AG, withdrew its complaint. Under these circumstances – and as [announced](#) in February 2013 – the Commission has decided to close its investigation.

Internet payments are vital for the development of e-commerce and the good functioning of the EU internal market. The Commission, in close co-operation with national competition authorities, will therefore monitor this market closely to ensure healthy competition and a level playing field for all operators. In addition, following the Green Paper published on 11 January 2012<sup>1</sup>, the Commission is considering proposing legislation to establish objective and non-discriminatory rules for all players active in the e-payments market. These rules would be aimed at ensuring that customers can make secure payments while ensuring that new players are not prevented from entering the market.

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<sup>1</sup> Green Paper – Towards an integrated European market for card, internet and mobile payments, [COM\(2011\)941](#)