



PRESS RELEASE

Spanish Payment App Bizum Joins EMPSA, Driving European Payment Interoperability and Sovereignty

Leading Spanish payment app provider Bizum joins EMPSA as the organisation's 15th member. With the Spanish mobile payment leader added, EMPSA's reach grows to over 90 million users.

Zurich/Madrid, June 7, 2022 – The European Mobile Payment Systems Association (EMPSA) has reached another important milestone: Today, the Spanish mobile payment leader **Bizum** is joining EMPSA as the 15th member. Bizum's joining accelerates EMPSA's trajectory of growth towards full European coverage. With the Spanish mobile payment market added to the pan-European interoperability platform, EMPSA's reach grows to a considerable size of more than 90 million consumers in 16 European markets. "What we are seeing is that EMPSA is becoming 'real'. Interoperability between European payment system is no longer a mere concept. It is being taken very seriously by payment systems, merchants and banks across the continent," comments EMPSA Chairman **Christian Pirkner**.

Ángel Nigorra, Director General of Bizum, comments: "With our membership of EMPSA we are entering an exploratory phase to analyse the opportunity of this potential interoperability and hope to contribute to establishing a future pan-European mobile payment solution. We have always discussed the interoperability of Bizum with other European solutions as a very real possibility and share EMPSA's belief that European consumers should freely choose their payment method."

Pan-European mobile payment for over 90 million consumers

EMPSA's approach to establish a comprehensive, scalable and sovereign European payment system is to interlink the existing leading national payment systems, enabling transactions between them based on the consumer's preferred payment app. Since its inception in 2019, it has been EMPSA's clear understanding that every European mobile payment user should have the right and the possibility to use her or his mobile payment app also while travelling abroad.

Bizum has more than 20 million users in Spain, making the payment system's joining a major milestone for EMPSA. Gaining access to the Spanish mobile payment market, EMPSA's members now boast a vast accumulative user base of over 90 million consumers. This milestone comes only a short few months after the association's first cross-border transaction between Swiss mobile payment system Twint and its Austrian-German counterpart, Bluecode, which took place in January. "We're currently in a so far very successful 'Friends-and-Family phase. We have shown that interoperability is possible – live in production. We're very close to achieving full interoperability between the Twint and Bluecode systems, accessible for all users", says **Pirkner**.

As a next step, Italian payment system provider **Bancomat** aims at joining the Twint-Bluecode network, forming the EMPSA Alpine Cluster. "With the Alpine Cluster growing and Bizum joining us, EMPSA is further gaining momentum in building a Europe-wide payment system that is truly sovereign and European", comments **Pirkner**.

Building a Europe-wide sovereign payment system based on national champions

Following a bottoms-up approach, EMPSA aims to connect European payment systems and make them interoperable in order to establish a comprehensive European mobile payment network. EMPSA was founded in 2019 by seven European mobile payment providers, with the goal to enable every European to use their domestic payment app anywhere in Europe. After Today, EMPSA consists of 15 mobile payment providers in 16 different markets, comprising more than 90 million consumers, more than one million merchants, and several hundred European banks.

EMPSA's approach to establishing a scalable Europe-wide payment system is based on connecting existing national mobile payment leaders. This bottoms-up approach allows for creating European payment sovereignty without having to build new infrastructure from the ground up. Even more importantly, national mobile payment champions can continue to focus on their customers' needs and create local use-cases for them while becoming interoperable across Europe. "The interoperability of European payment systems will strengthen Europe as an economic power, because a sovereign and independent European payment system can react to pressure from overseas more resiliently and more agile. Not just European banks will benefit from this innovation, but especially merchants and consumers," concludes **Pirkner**.

About EMPSA:

The European Mobile Payment Association (EMPSA) consists of 15 members in 16 European Markets, representing more than 90 million users, more than one million merchants and hundreds of European Banks. Current members include: BAMCARD (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Bankart (Slovenia), BANCOMAT (Italy), Bancontact Payconiq Company (Belgium), Bizum (Spain), BLIK (Poland), BORICA AD (Bulgaria), Bluecode (Austria and Germany), iDEAL (Netherlands), MobilePay (Denmark and Finland), Plick (Italy), SIBS (Portugal), Swish (Sweden), TWINT (Switzerland) und Vipps (Norway). Further information: www.empsa.org.

About Bizum:

Bizum is an immediate account to account mobile payment solution, offering users the following advantages: universality, being available on any Smartphone and without having to change bank, due to being interconnected with practically all of them; convenience, as it is not necessary to know the account number of the recipient, instead using only their mobile phone number (or selecting their contact from the list on our phone); speed, as the money will be in the recipient's account in under 5 seconds; and the security and trust derived from being backed by the Spanish banking system and using its applications and security measures, without having to provide additional data.

Bizum is a joint project which is among the digital innovation initiatives of the Spanish banking system, a payment solution with which banks broaden the services offered to their clients. The total number of entities participating now represents a market share of almost 99%. Bizum continues working toward the membership of new entities.

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