

On 22 September 2011, the Commission decided to initiate antitrust proceedings in case COMP 39876 – Payment Network / EPC within the meaning of Article 11(6) of Council Regulation No 1/2003 and Article 2(1) of Commission Regulation No 773/2004.

The proceedings were opened with a view to adopting a decision in application of Chapter III of Council Regulation No 1/2003 and concern the standardisation process for e-payments undertaken by the European Payments Council ("EPC") in order to ensure interoperability between current (or future) e-payment schemes. The EPC is the association which was created by the banks to implement the Single Euro Payments Area. The Commission intends to investigate, in particular, whether infringements (within the meaning of Article 101 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and Article 53 of the EEA Agreement) were committed by the EPC.

The initiation of proceedings does not signify that the Commission has made a definitive finding of an infringement but merely signifies that the Commission will deal with the case as a matter of priority.