

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

---

*Session document*

09.2.2009

B6-0000/2009

## **MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION**

further to Question for Oral Answer B6-0000/2009

pursuant to Rule 108(5) of the Rules of Procedure

by Pervenche Berès

on behalf of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs

on the implementation of the Single Euro Payments Area (SEPA)

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the joint statement from the Commission and the European Central Bank of 4 May 2006 on the Single Euro Payments Area,
  - having regard to the European Central Bank occasional paper No 71 of August 2007 on the economic impact of the Single Euro Payments Area,
  - having regard to Directive 2007/64/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 November 2007 on payment services in the internal market<sup>1</sup> (Payment Services Directive),
  - having regard to the Commission proposal of 13 October 2008 for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on cross-border payments in the Community (COM(2008)0640),
  - having regard to the sixth SEPA Progress Report of the European Central Bank of November 2008,
  - having regard to Rule 108(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the Single Euro Payments Area (SEPA) is meant as an integrated market for payment services, which is subject to effective competition and where there is no distinction between cross-border and national payments in euro,
- B. whereas SEPA is not only a self-regulatory initiative by the European Payments Council (EPC), but also a major public policy initiative reinforcing the Economic and Monetary Union as well as the Lisbon Agenda and supported by the Payment Services Directive, which provides the necessary harmonised legal framework, the success of which is, therefore, a matter of particular interest to Parliament,
- C. whereas SEPA migration started officially on 28 January 2008 with the launch of the SEPA payment instrument for credit transfer, while the SEPA Cards Framework has been in force since 1 January 2008, and the SEPA Direct Debit scheme is scheduled to start on 1 November 2009,
- D. whereas SEPA migration has been sluggish: by 1 October 2008, only 1,7 % of total transactions were made by way of the SEPA Credit Transfer format,
- E. whereas it is important that all relevant stakeholders - legislators, the banking industry and payment services users (in particular the public sector, which is a mass volume user of payment products) - contribute to achieving SEPA,
- F. whereas the use of SEPA products merely for cross-border payment transactions would not result in the success of the SEPA project, as fragmentation would persist and anticipated benefits for the banking industry as well as for its customers could not be realised,

---

<sup>1</sup> OJ L 319, 5.12.2007, p. 1.

- G. whereas on 4 September 2008, the Commission and the European Central Bank indicated to the EPC that they would be prepared to support the idea of a multilateral interchange fee (MIF) for cross-border direct debits within the framework of SEPA on the condition that such fees were objectively justified and applicable only for a limited period,
- H. whereas the Commission has pointed out concerns about existing MIF, and the industry has difficulties to build a proper solution,
- I. whereas with regard to an EU card solution based on the SEPA Cards Framework, the application of a MIF should also be resolved,
- J. whereas the continued legal validity of existing direct debit mandates should be ensured, as the obligation to sign new mandates when switching from national direct debit schemes to the SEPA Direct Debit scheme would be burdensome,
1. Emphasises its continued support for the creation of SEPA, which is subject to effective competition and where there is no distinction between cross-border and national payments in euro;
  2. Calls on the Commission to set a clear, appropriate and binding end date for migration to SEPA products,
  3. Calls on the Commission to provide for legal clarity as regards the application of a MIF for cross-border direct debits, in particular the definition of a point in time from which on all MIFs (for cross-border and national payments) shall be prohibited;
  4. Calls on the Commission to clarify further the issue of MIF for card payments;
  5. Calls for increased efforts to find appropriate solutions in the Member States to ensure the continued legal validity of existing direct debit mandates in the SEPA Direct Debit scheme;
  6. Calls on Member States to encourage their public administrations to use SEPA products as soon as possible and to give them a catalytic role in the migration process;
  7. Calls on the Commission to ensure that the migration to SEPA instruments will not result in a more expensive payment system for EU citizens;
  8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the European Central Bank and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.