BANK ĊENTRALI TA' MALTA
EUROSISTEMA
CENTRAL BANK OF MALTA

Call for Expressions of Interest under the CBM Directive No. 21

The Central Bank of Malta is inviting operators of pan-European payment schemes, payment arrangements and other payment solutions to express their interest in being considered as part of the assessment and selection process established under the CBM Directive No. 21 (the Directive).

This Directive establishes a framework for the selection and harmonised adoption in Malta of a European scheme supporting peer-to-peer and point-of-interaction payments. The Directive supports the Bank's objective of promoting efficient, resilient and integrated retail payments and increasing the availability of secure and innovative European payment solutions with pan-European reach.

Call for expressions of interest

Operators of payment schemes, payment arrangements or other payment solutions that consider their scheme capable of satisfying the eligibility criteria set out in paragraph 9 of the Directive are invited to submit an expression of interest to the Bank.

Schemes identified by the Bank for consideration will be assessed against the eligibility criteria set out in paragraph 9 of the Directive, having regard to the additional considerations referred to in paragraph 10.

Eligibility criteria

The eligibility criteria under the Directive include, among other matters:

- European governance and strategic control;
- support for euro instant credit transfers based on the SEPA Instant Credit Transfer Scheme;
- support for peer-to-peer and physical and online point-of-interaction payments, or a documented and publicly committed roadmap to provide such services by no later than 1 April 2028;
- pan-European reach under a harmonised scheme rulebook;
- the availability of a standalone payment application;
- transparent and effective dispute-resolution arrangements;

- interoperability, open access and non-discriminatory direct participation by European payment service providers; and
- the capability to support harmonised adoption across the Maltese market.

Interested scheme operators should refer to paragraph 9 of the Directive for the complete eligibility criteria.

Information to be submitted

Interested scheme operators are required to complete the questionnaire published together with this call for expressions of interest.

The questionnaire seeks information concerning, among other matters, the scheme's:

- governance and ownership arrangements;
- current and planned functionalities;
- geographical reach and market adoption;
- participation and implementation model;
- compliance with the SEPA Instant Credit Transfer Scheme and cross-border interoperability;
- operational and technical dependencies;
- fraud-prevention and dispute-resolution arrangements;
- implementation plans for Malta; and
- future development roadmap.

Scheme operators are required to explain how their scheme satisfies each of the eligibility criteria set out in paragraph 9 of the Directive.

Completed questionnaires should be accompanied by any supporting documentation necessary to substantiate the information provided. This may include scheme rules, governance documents, technical specifications, implementation roadmaps, evidence of relevant public commitments and details of the proposed implementation model for Malta.

Each submission should include:

1. the completed questionnaire;
2. the relevant supporting documentation; and
3. the name and contact details of the person authorised to represent the scheme operator during the assessment process.

The Bank may request clarifications, additional documentation or further information after reviewing a submission. The Bank may decide not to identify a scheme for further assessment where the questionnaire is materially incomplete or sufficient supporting evidence has not been provided.

Nature of the call

This call is intended solely to support the transparent identification of schemes that may be considered under the Directive. It does not constitute a public procurement procedure, request for quotation, invitation to tender or offer or commitment to enter into any contractual arrangement.

The Bank reserves the right to amend, suspend or discontinue the process, extend the submission deadline or request additional information where considered necessary.

The submission of an expression of interest does not confer any right for a scheme to be assessed, selected or adopted under the Directive. The Bank will identify, assess and select the scheme in consultation with the Malta Financial Services Authority (the MFSA) and in accordance with the provisions of the Directive.

Submission deadline

Expressions of interest should be submitted electronically to **regulation@centralbankmalta.org** by no later than **2 December 2026**.

Submissions received after the deadline may not be considered as part of the current assessment process.