**‘Paper or digital? How do citizens want to handle their financial data’?** This was the title of a breakfast event in the European Parliament, hosted by European People’s Party **MEP Heinz K. Becker** on 12th October. The event met great interest with 30 attendees from the European Parliament, European banks, London Economics, Better Finance, postal operators and industry.

Citizens are increasingly being pressured by governments and private companies, such as utility companies, banks and insurance companies, to communicate by electronic means often regardless of their willingness or ability to use these communication tools. The [Keep Me Posted EU campaign](http://www.keepmepostedeu.org/) was set up to promote and defend the citizen’s right to choose how they wish to be contacted, so as not to marginalise people who are significantly disadvantaged if everything is digital.

Hosting **MEP Heinz K. Becker** expressed his strong support for the campaign in his opening speech, recognising it as a **pro-citizen’s choice** campaign rather than an anti-digital campaign. “I defend the Pro-Choice Approach. Inclusiveness shall be a universal principle” he stressed.

JamesSuter from London Economics stated that **receiving mail by post positively affects consumers’ understanding and management of their finances**. This was the outcome of a behavioural comparative study among consumers receiving their bank statement digitally and on paper.

**MEP Othmar Karas** sent a message underliningthe important role of the Parliament in current legislative dossiers at EU level, including cybersecurity and digitalisation of industry. He stressed the need for a balance between digital and paper. He is against a standardised model for all - **the freedom of choice must be safeguarded.**

Mag. **Wolfgang Haunold from the Austrian National Bank** provided interesting facts about cash and card payments, raising a trust issue as card payments allow traceability and access to personal information by third parties. He took a clear stand that a cashless society is not a positive model. “Consumers must maintain the possibility to pay in cash without being forced to do differently”.

**Jean-Francois Junger, Deputy Head of Unit Public Services in the European Commission´s DG Connect** stated that the digital transformation offers huge communication possibilities with citizens. However, **Europe cannot afford to lose cohesion of society**. “No EU citizens can be left behind” he said, adding that the public sector needs to be an inspiring model for inclusion. This is enshrined in two complementary key elements of the e-government action plan: `Digital by default – the possibility to interact with public administration´ and `Inclusiveness´– including 100% of society.

MEP Heinz Becker concluded the discussion thanking all speakers and participants and saying he was glad to see that the European Commission is a partner in defending European citizen’s right to choose .

Beyond the European campaign, national initiatives have been established in Austria, Spain, Belgium, Slovenia, Denmark, Germany and the United Kingdom.

**Note to the editor:**

Keep Me Posted EU is a European initiative promoting the citizen’s right to choose how they receive important information - paper, digital or both - without being penalised. Keep Me Posted EU is a pro-citizen-choice campaign promoting the inclusion of vulnerable citizens at European level.

To view all KMPEU supporting organisations go to: <http://www.keepmepostedeu.org/supporters>.

Information and contact: [www.keepmepostedeu.org](http://www.keepmepostedeu.org); [info@keepmepostedeu.org](mailto:info@keepmepostedeu.org)