

## **Worldline to acquire Cardlink, the leading Network Services Provider in Greece**

- **Acquisition of 92.5% of Cardlink, the leading Network Services Provider (NSP) in Greece, partnering with the CEO keeping 7.5% ownership**
- **Strategic opportunity to expand Worldline's Merchant Services business in the promising Greek market with a unique access to the leading local payment acceptance network**
- **Up to 243,000 merchants served and 500 million transactions managed per year**
- **€ 155 million enterprise value representing a c.11x EV/2020 OMDA multiple**

**Bezons, May 28, 2021 – Worldline [Euronext: WLN], a global leader in the payments industry, today announced the signing of a bidding agreement for the acquisition of 92.5% of the share capital of Cardlink, the leading Network Services Provider in Greece.**

**Gilles Grapinet, Worldline's Chairman and CEO**, said: *"The acquisition of Cardlink is a significant development in our Group consolidation strategy in Europe, extending our merchant services activities towards the South of Europe. Thanks to this transaction, we indeed benefit from a leading network services provider position in the fast-growing Greek market, driven by the ongoing adoption of electronic payments. This transaction offers attractive development opportunities for Worldline in the coming years and a strong footprint to further expand Cardlink presence in Greece."*

*We are extremely happy to welcome soon circa 110 new Worldline's colleagues, managers, and payment experts, led by George Drimiotis, Cardlink CEO who will remain shareholder of Cardlink alongside Worldline and will be in charge, within our Group, of pursuing the fast development of our business in Greece with the full support of our Merchant Services organization.*

*As the European leader in payments, we keep executing our strategic roadmap with a focus on value-creative consolidation opportunities to enhance Worldline scale, reach and direct presence in a growing number of countries."*

**George Drimiotis, Cardlink's CEO**, said: *"This is a very important day for our company. We are very excited to become part of the Worldline Group. This development will strengthen our positioning in the Greek market as the leading player in the evolution of the payments business and give us access to products and services that will enhance our offering and deliver more value to our merchant and bank customers."*

## **Greece: an attractive payment market**

With a cash penetration that remains high and a card transaction rate per capita more than twice below European countries average, the Greek market shows attractive growth opportunities with a growing addressable market driven by the shift from cash to card and electronic payment adoption. These favorable dynamics will continue thanks to strong underlying trends such as a positive macroeconomic environment (GDP growth, drop in unemployment, and regulations encouraging electronic payment), PSD2, open banking development (Banks connection to large ecosystems through APIs), and evolution of payment product offering (integrated POS, e-invoicing or advanced analytics).

Furthermore, the online and e-commerce development offers a strong growth potential with increased internet access for citizens over the past five years, rapidly transforming consumer behavior towards digital economy and online shopping becoming a standard in consumer habits, further boosted by Covid-19 related lockdowns.

As an additional very compelling characteristic, it is reminded that tourism is one of the most important sectors of the Greek economy and a key pillar of its economic growth. With more than 34 million tourists in 2019, Greece has established itself as one of the most visited countries in Europe and in the world for years. This represents a very attractive feature of the Greek payment market offering numerous additional growth opportunities in a post-Covid context by leveraging the very rich Worldline portfolio of travel and hospitality solutions.

## **Acquisition of Cardlink, the leading Network Services Provider**

Founded in 2004, Cardlink is the leading Greek Network Services Provider (NSP) with an above 240,000 POS fleet (46% of POS transactions), managing c. 500 million of transactions a year (53% MSV market share). The company also provides more than 10,000 online merchants with strong value-added services through the Cardlink check-out offering.

Cardlink is a well-recognized and regarded payment acceptance leader in Greece with:

- The largest multi-acquiring POS platform acceptance network;
- A long-term relationship with major systemic banks in Greece among which Alpha Bank and Eurobank, and;
- A strong and experienced management team.

## Strategic rationale

In this rapidly changing industry, driven by the customers' adoption of numerous and innovative payment methods, Cardlink is the ideal cornerstone to leverage Worldline payment offering and value-added services capabilities in order to provide the best customer proposition and user experience across all segments in Greece.

The leading position of Cardlink coupled with Worldline's global scale, best-in-class technologies, and payment expertise will allow the entity to grow revenue at a double-digit rate in the coming years. This accelerated growth rate will be delivered through POS acceptance deployment (white labels and Android offering), platform and processing leverage with main Greek banks, value-added services offering enlargement (analytics, loyalty, wallets), and one-stop-shop offering implementation (payment aggregator go-to-market).

This acquisition represents a privileged opportunity for Worldline to strongly expand its Merchant Services activities in this attractive European market. Worldline intends to further develop the longstanding partnerships of Cardlink with key local acquiring banks which are benefitting from its leading POS acceptance capabilities, its direct access to an existing and high-quality merchants' portfolio, while generating significant growth opportunities fueled by increasing card penetration and online capabilities.

Furthermore, a robust integration and development program will be implemented at closing to further improve profitability rate through operating leverage and costs efficiency.

## Impacts of the transaction on Worldline

The key financial impacts of the newly acquired entity on Worldline are the following:

- Additional annual revenue of c. € 40 million at closing with expected double-digit organic growth CAGR over the next 4 years;
- OMDA margin of c. 35% expected at closing with upside potential driven by revenue growth and operating leverage;
- Estimated cash-out of c. € 130 million at closing (for 92.5% ownership), preserving Worldline's financial flexibility and based on an c.11x EV/2020 OMDA multiple;
- Investment of the CEO that will keep a 7.5% ownership in Cardlink;
- Customary minority buy-back mechanism through a call option exercisable by Worldline (5 years after closing), and;
- Closing expected in H2 2021, subjected to satisfaction of customary condition precedent.

## Forthcoming events

- July 27, 2021 H1 2021 results
- October 19, 2021 Q3 2021 revenue

## Contacts

### Investor Relations

Laurent Marie  
+33 7 84 50 18 90  
[laurent.marie@ingenico.com](mailto:laurent.marie@ingenico.com)

Benoit d'Amécourt  
+33 6 75 51 41 47  
[benoit.damecourt@worldline.com](mailto:benoit.damecourt@worldline.com)

### Communication

Sandrine van der Ghinst  
+32 499 585 380  
[sandrine.vanderghinst@worldline.com](mailto:sandrine.vanderghinst@worldline.com)

Hélène Carlander  
+33 7 72 25 96 04  
[helene.carlander@worldline.com](mailto:helene.carlander@worldline.com)

## About Worldline

Worldline [Euronext: WLN] is the European leader in the payments and transactional services industry and #4 player worldwide. With its global reach and its commitment to innovation, Worldline is the technology partner of choice for merchants, banks and third-party acquirers as well as public transport operators, government agencies and industrial companies in all sectors. Powered by over 20,000 employees in more than 50 countries, Worldline provides its clients with sustainable, trusted and secure solutions across the payment value chain, fostering their business growth wherever they are. Services offered by Worldline in the areas of Merchant Services; Terminals, Solutions & Services; Financial Services and Mobility & e-Transactional Services include domestic and cross-border commercial acquiring, both in-store and online, highly-secure payment transaction processing, a broad portfolio of payment terminals as well as e-ticketing and digital services in the industrial environment. In 2020 Worldline generated a proforma revenue of 4.8 billion euros. [worldline.com](http://worldline.com)

Worldline's corporate sense of purpose ("raison d'être") is to design and operate leading digital payment and transactional solutions that enable sustainable economic growth and reinforce trust and security in our societies. We make them environmentally friendly, widely accessible and support social transformation.

## Follow us



## Disclaimer

This document contains forward-looking statements that involve risks and uncertainties, including references, concerning the Group's expected growth and profitability in the future which may significantly impact the expected performance indicated in the forward-looking statements. These risks and uncertainties are linked to factors out of the control of the Company and not precisely estimated, such as market conditions or competitors' behaviors. Any forward-looking statements made in this document are statements about Worldline's beliefs and expectations and should be evaluated as such. Forward-looking statements include statements that may relate to Worldline's plans, objectives, strategies, goals, future events, future revenues or synergies, or performance, and other information that is not historical information. Actual events or results may differ from those described in this document due to a number of risks and uncertainties that are described within the 2020 Universal Registration Document filed with the Autorité des marchés financiers (AMF) on April 13, 2021 under the filing number: D.21-0303.

Worldline does not undertake, and specifically disclaims, any obligation or responsibility to update or amend any of the information above except as otherwise required by law.

This document is disseminated for information purposes only and does not constitute an offer to purchase, or a solicitation of an offer to sell, any securities in the United States or any other jurisdiction. Securities may not be offered or sold in the United States unless they have been registered under the U.S. Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the "U.S. Securities Act") or the securities laws of any U.S. state, or are exempt from registration. The securities that may be offered in any transaction have not been and will not be registered under the U.S. Securities Act or the securities laws of any U.S. state and Worldline does not intend to make a public offering of any such securities in the United States.