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Abogados

Digital payments streamlined by Central Bank

According to payretailers.com, an international payment solutions provider, 45% of all payment transactions are carried out in Argentina through cards (mostly credit cards), 18% are made in cash, 18% with e-wallets and 17% through bank transfers, while 87% of online purchases are paid for by using digital payment methods, by far the highest value among all neighbors in Latin America.

A recent report from the Argentine Fintech Chamber remarked that digital payments (e-wallets included) have been the fastest growing service within the fintech ecosystem, along with blockchain and crypto assets, such growth having been associated to certain measures from the Argentine Central Bank (BCRA) promoting immediate transfers and debits as well as the creation of the CVU (Virtual Uniform Key).

The activity of payment service providers (PSPs) started to be regulated by the BCRA on January, 2020 through Communications A 6859 and 6885, which defined PSPs as the entities that carried out at least one function in the retail payment scheme within the global payment system (such as offering payments accounts). Such PSPs were required to register before the BCRA and subject to a specific regulatory framework to operate.

Communication A 7514, issued on May 19, 2022, introduced certain changes to such legal regime, allowing e-wallets to use bank accounts or accounts of other PSPs to provide their services, banning the requirement (typically imposed by e-wallets) to transfer such funds thereto before processing the payment. As a result, PSPs such as Mercado Pago, Ualá, Naranja X and Yacaré shall have to adapt to this policy while banks shall be forced to facilitate its implementation. In addition, new security measures have been also imposed in such connection.