The future of commerce in Europe

Payments, identity, standards and AI

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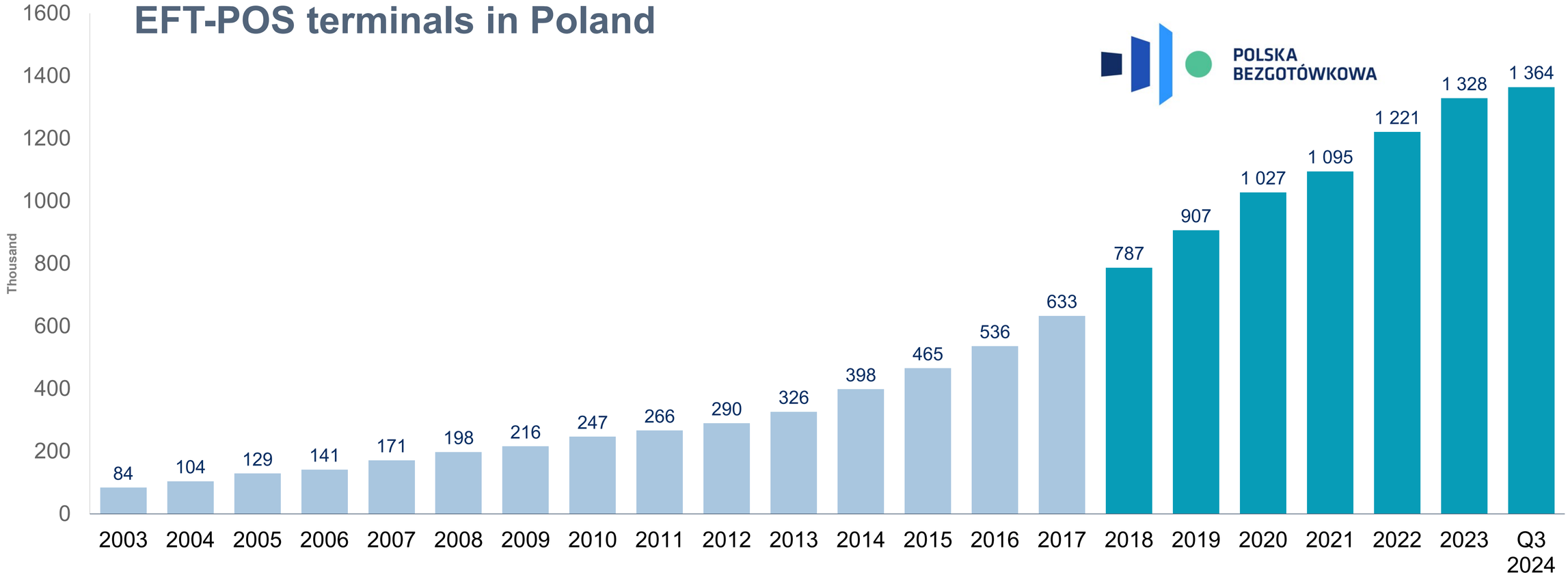
Poland’s cashless payment revolution

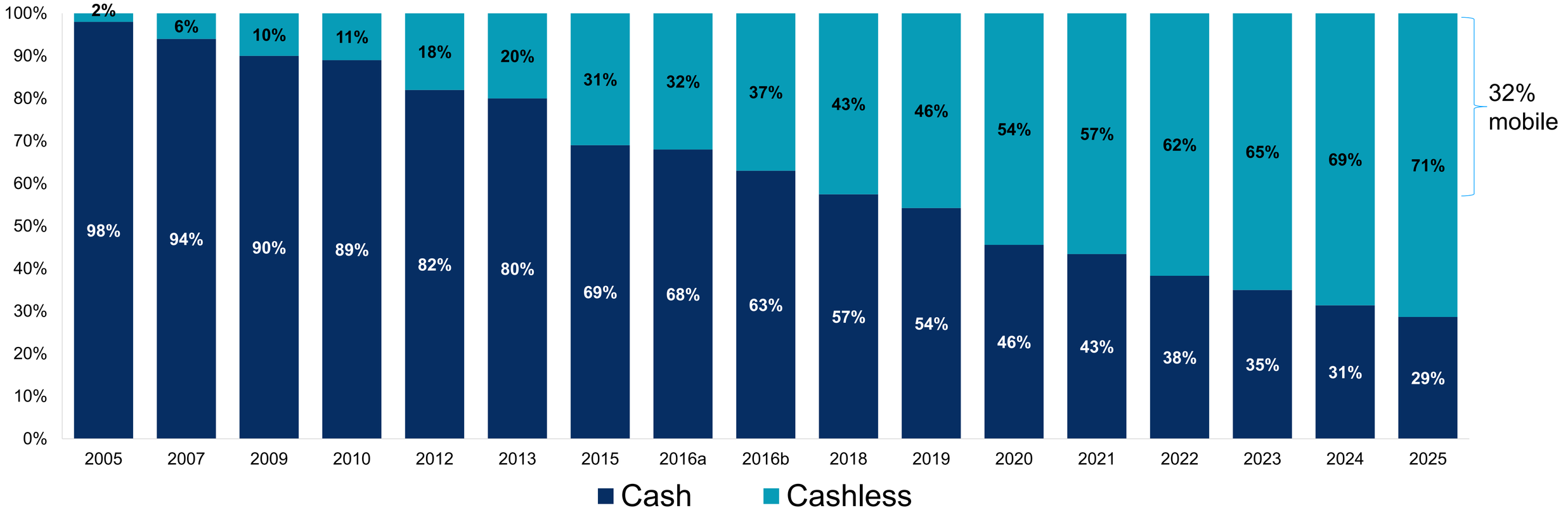
Welcome to a country transformed by eight years of change in everyday payments!



Source: author’s analysis of National Bank of Poland, Payment Systems Department data (2003–Q3 2024).

Cashless payments became the majority

Cashless share of retail transactions in POS rose from 43% in 2018 to 71% in 2025.



Sources: NBP, Payment System in Poland (2020). 2018–2025: POLASIK Research consumer panel for the Cashless Poland Foundation.
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Four layers of future European commerce

Four related areas of change in European payments and digital commerce.

AI-driven commerce

Common standards

Trusted digital identity

Real-time payments

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Real-time payments

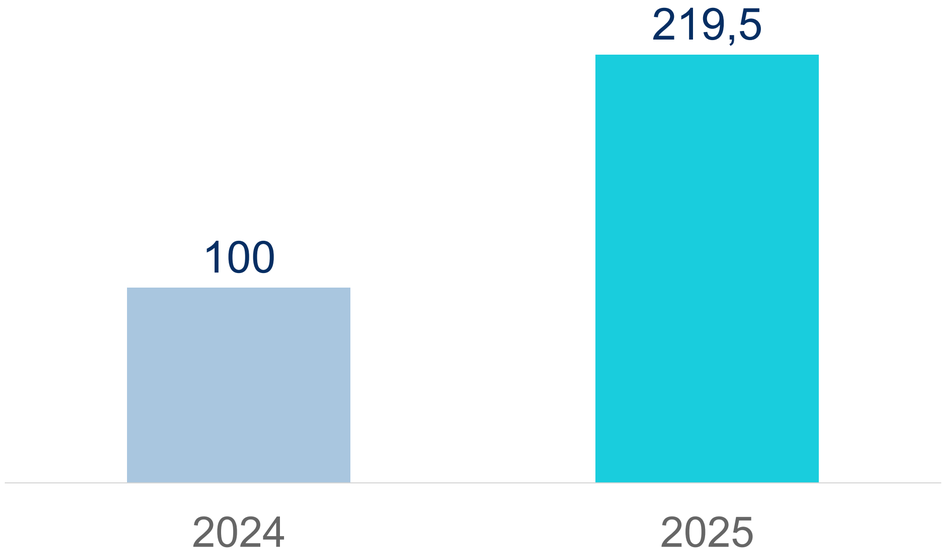
Instant payments infrastructure

Instant euro transfers expand alongside verification of recipient details.

998m

euro payments in TIPS, 2025

+119.5% year on year



Euro transaction volume index, 2024 = 100

ECB: TARGET Services 2025 — ecb.europa.eu

European Commission: instant payments — europa.eu

Competition for the European shopper

Cards, Big Tech wallets and European payment solutions compete for e-commerce.

Cards

Click to Pay

US Big Tech wallets

Apple Pay, Google Pay

Wero / EPI

A common European wallet

National payment solutions

BLIK, Bizum, MB WAY,
BANCOMAT, Vipps MobilePay

EMVCo: Click to Pay — emvco.com
EPI: Wero rollout — EPI newsroom

Apple: Apple Pay — apple.com
BLIK: European cooperation — blik.com

Google: Google Pay — pay.google.com
BANCOMAT: EuroPA / EPI — bancomat.it

European payment networks are connecting

EPI and EuroPA partners are building a common interoperability hub.

Wero / EPI

Common brand and scheme

EuroPA partners

BANCOMAT, Bizum, MB WAY, Vipps MobilePay

Shared hub, existing brands and user experiences

2 Feb 2026

Interoperability MoU

16 Apr 2026

Cross-border retail PoC

13 May 2026

BLIK announces talks to join

Announced roadmap: P2P in 2026, e-commerce and POS in 2027

Sources: EPI joint announcements (2 Feb and 16 Apr 2026), epicompany.eu. BLIK announcement (13 May 2026), blik.com.

Digital euro: a potential public layer

Public infrastructure could support private services, subject to legislation and an issuance decision.

36

PSPs selected for the pilot

H2 2027

Planned start of the 12-month pilot

28 Sep 2026: new call for innovation experiments

ECB: 36 pilot PSPs, 14 Jul 2026 — ecb.europa.eu

ECB: innovation call, 28 Sep 2026 — ecb.europa.eu

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Trusted digital identity

Digital identity and payment authentication

EUDI Wallet can combine verified attributes with payment authentication.

Who am I?

What can I prove?

Can I authorise?

European Commission: EUDI payment authentication — ec.europa.eu

A possible wallet-based purchase journey

To prove eligibility and authorise payment while sharing only the necessary data.

01

Prove age

02

Share address

03

Approve payment

Illustrative future checkout

European Commission: EUDI payment authentication — ec.europa.eu

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Common standards

Structured payment data

ISO 20022 gives payment information a common structure that software can interpret.

97%

of Swift payment instructions sent in ISO 20022

Swift observation after the November 2025 cutover

Reconciliation

Screening

Automation

Swift: ISO 20022 cutover, 25 Nov 2025 — swift.com

ISO: structured financial data — iso.org

Interoperability across providers

Shared specifications support transactions across providers and national markets.

Payment

SEPA Instant

Recipient

Verification of Payee

Identity

EUDI Wallet

Data

ISO 20022 – incl. nexo standards: Acquirer Protocol, Retailer Protocol, TMS Protocol

European Commission: instant payments — europa.eu
European Commission: EUDI Wallet — ec.europa.eu

EPC: Verification of Payee — europeanpaymentscouncil.eu
ISO: ISO 20022 — iso.org
nexo standards: https://www.nexo-standards.org/standards

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AI-driven commerce

AI agents in commerce

An AI agent could act within a clear mandate, budget and approval policy.

**“Find my flight.
Keep it under €400.
Ask before paying.”**

Illustrative customer instruction

Mastercard: Santander agent payment — mastercard.com

Mastercard: Worldline / ING pilot — mastercard.com

Consent, scope and accountability

To verify the mandate, identify the agent and keep responsibility clear.

Who gave consent?

Which agent is acting?

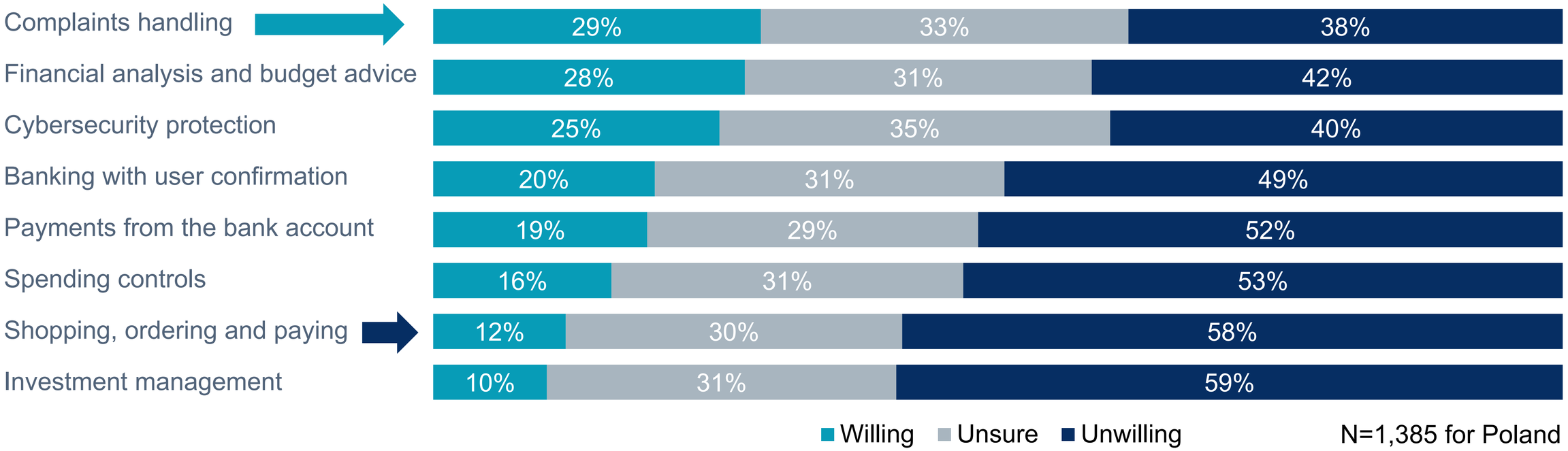
What may it buy?

Who is accountable?

Mastercard: Worldline / ING agent payment, 2 Jun 2026 — mastercard.com

Consumer willingness to delegate to AI agents

29% would delegate complaints handling, compared with 12% for shopping and 10% for investments.



Source: M. Polasik, M. Czarkowska, the NCU study 2026; Willing = two positive responses. Unwilling = two negative responses.
Survey: March 2026, N=1,385 for Poland. Results weighted using population weights.

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Possible changes in the purchase journey

Identity and intent could become as important as the payment instrument.

Yesterday

Card
Checkout
Bank account

Today

Wallet
Instant payment
Identity

Tomorrow

Identity and intent
AI agent
Conditional payment

A conceptual progression, with overlapping models

Invitation to collaborate with AI for FinTech Copernicus Hub

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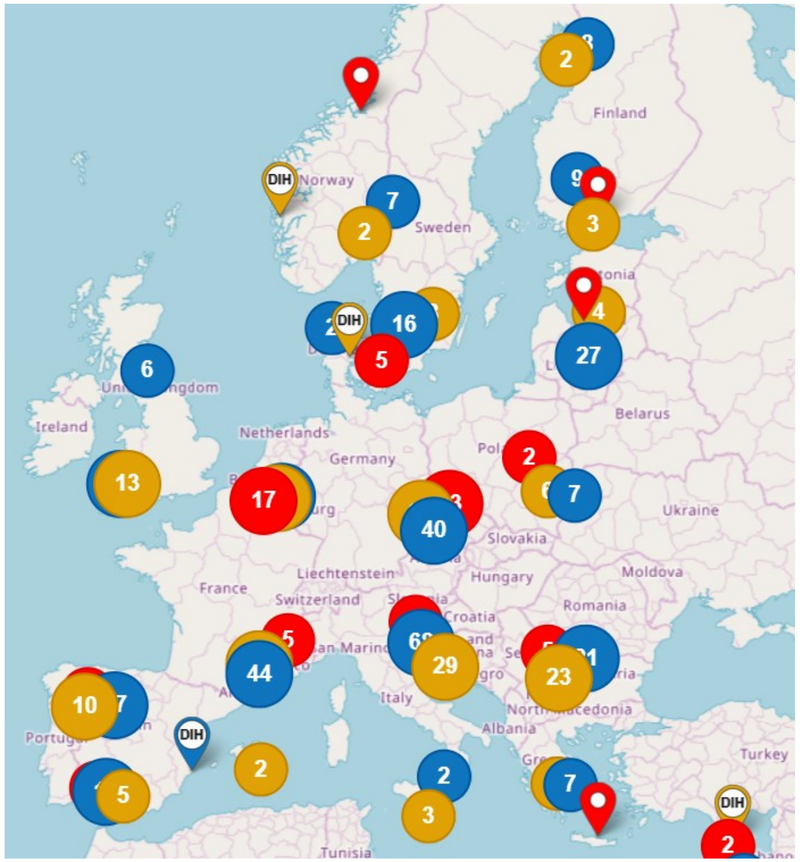
EDIH European Digital Innovation Hubs Network

Industry–university collaboration within the EDIHs network, knowledge transfer and AI Factories' calculation power.

Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń

15 consortium partners

EUR 3.4 million over three years



EU funding awarded

Project launch scheduled for Dec 1st 2026

EDIHs support digital adoption by SMEs.
European Commission catalogue: european-digital-innovation-hubs.ec.europa.eu/edih-catalogue/ftch

Commerce across the four layers

Payments, identity, standards and AI

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