

Press Release

Athens, January 15th 2025

Contactless payments with a bank card are now available on all public transportation under the jurisdiction of OASA

As of today, January 15th, Athens' public transportation system is entering a new era, offering more user-friendly and digital mobility services for all passengers. The option of contactless payments with a bank card is now available for boarding all public transportation under the jurisdiction of OASA (Buses, Trolleys, Metro, and Tram).

The new “tap2ride” service was officially presented today during a special event held at Syntagma Metro station. Present at the event were the Minister of Infrastructure and Transport, Mr. **Christos Staikouras**; the Deputy Minister of Infrastructure and Transport responsible for Transport, Mr. **Vassilis Oikonomou**; the General Secretary for Transport, Ms. **Despina Paliarouta**; the CEO of the Growthfund Mr. **Grigoris Dimitriadis**; the CEO of OASA, Mr. **George Spiliopoulos**; the Chairman of Hellas Smart Ticket S.A., a subsidiary of GEK TERNA Group, Mr. **George Agrafiotis**; the General Manager of Visa for Greece, Cyprus, Malta, and Israel, Ms. **Sevi Vassileva**; and the General Manager of NBG Pay, Mr. **Christoforos Chatzopoulos**.

The alternative option of using a bank card (**debit, credit, or prepaid**), in addition to the ATH.ENA Ticket or ATH.ENA Card, for public transportation offers another significant step in the digitalization of OASA Group's services, benefiting the passengers.

OASA, under a contract with **Hellas Smart Ticket S.A.**, a subsidiary of **GEK TERNA Group**, in collaboration with **LG CNS** and with the support of **Visa** and **NBG Pay**, has implemented the contactless transaction system for the public transportation of the capital city.

With the **tap2ride** service—initially introduced last April on the Express airport bus lines—passengers **can now board all modes of Athens public transport and pay for their tickets** by simply tapping their bank card on the validation machines at buses, trolleys, metro and tram.

Similarly, passengers can use their bank card even if it is **integrated into an app on their smartphone or smartwatch**. Payment cards issued by licensed financial institutions are also supported for use in the system.

GEK TERNA S.A.

85, Mesogeion Ave., Athens 11526, Greece, E: info@gekterna.com, P: +30 2106968000, F: +30 2106968098-99,

G.E.MI. Number: 000253001000

How the new service works

The upgraded validation machines now **“read” bank cards and charge the fare directly to the passenger's account.** From today, the available travel products in the system include the standard full-fare tickets for both urban and airport routes.

The new contactless transaction system simplifies commuting by eliminating the need for passengers to find ticket sales points or wait in lines at ticket booths or vending machines. Moreover, passengers do not need prior knowledge of the travel products to choose the appropriate one.

Passengers can use the new service for their daily travel needs, with a maximum daily charge equivalent to the cost of a daily ticket, which is €4.10, regardless of the number of trips. They can also use their bank card for airport transfers via Express buses at a cost of €5.50 and via the Metro at a cost of €9.00.

This functionality is especially convenient for passengers unfamiliar with Athens' public transport system, such as occasional users, visitors from other cities, and tourists.

Public urban transportation is being upgraded to facilitate citizens' daily lives. By adopting solutions and technologies like “tap2ride” contactless payments, the passenger experience is enhanced while contributing to the development of smart cities.

The Minister of Infrastructure and Transport, Mr. Christos Staikouras, highlighted regarding the implementation of tap2ride across all public transportation under OASA: *“Fare payment via bank card in urban transport is one of the ten priorities outlined in the Government's programmatic statements. It is an important service that:*

- *modernizes urban transportation,*
- *promotes smart mobility,*
- *facilitates public transport passengers,*
- *encourages its use by both citizens and visitors to the capital,*
- *reduces travel costs, and*
- *contributes to increasing the revenue of transportation agencies.*

This new service is part of the overall plan we are implementing to modernize public transport services. At the same time, the means of transportation and infrastructure are being upgraded. Of course, time, persistence, and significant effort are still required to create the conditions for sustainable urban mobility that we aim for and strive to achieve. We are moving forward with a plan, taking steady and methodical steps to transform a challenging situation that has developed over many years and to ensure that the public transport system will have infrastructure and resources that will serve citizens for many years to come”.

GEK TERNA S.A.

85, Mesogeion Ave., Athens 11526, Greece, E: info@gekterna.com, P: +30 2106968000, F: +30 2106968098-99,
G.E.MI. Number: 000253001000

The Deputy Minister of Transport, Mr. Vasilis Oikonomou, stated: *“The introduction of contactless payments in Athens' public transportation system (Buses, Trolleys, Metro, Tram) marks a significant step in the digital modernization of the city's public transit and an upgrade in citizens' daily lives. The new “Tap2Ride” service provides passengers with an easy, fast, and secure way to travel without the need for physical tickets or cash. With contactless payments through mobile devices or credit cards, people can now navigate the entire transportation network effortlessly. This system not only facilitates daily commutes for residents but also enhances the experience of tourists, positioning Athens as one of Europe’s modern smart cities. The government and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport are committed to steadily advancing the upgrade of the public transportation system with the aim of better serving citizens, ensuring their satisfaction, and strengthening the city’s sustainability. I am proud of this significant development, and we will continue to work tirelessly to provide citizens with an improved quality of life through modern, sustainable, and user-friendly transportation services”.*

From his side, **the CEO of Growthfund, Mr. Grigoris Dimitriadis**, mentioned: *“It is a very important day for Growthfund, as urban public transport is a top priority for us. The implementation of the innovative Tap2Ride service in Athens Public Transport, starting today, marks another step toward improving the capital’s transportation system. Growthfund’s goal, in collaboration with the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport, is to provide better, more frequent, higher-quality, and environmentally friendly transport services. This goal is supported by continuously adapting our services to meet the needs of the city, passengers, and the environment”.*

The CEO of OASA, Mr. George Spiliopoulos, emphasized accordingly: *“Today is a landmark day for Athens' public transportation. The full implementation of the contactless transaction system, which allows the alternative use of a bank card for boarding all OASA public transport, represents a major step towards improving service for passengers. This benefits both regular users of public transport and visitors/tourists to the city. At the same time, it reaffirms OASA Group's commitment to its digital modernization. The adoption of the “contactless” technological solution using EMV bank cards places Athens Public Transport among the European metropolitan organizations applying “smart city” practices and promoting sustainable urban mobility”.*

Referring to the implementation of the project, **Mr. George Agrafiotis, Chairman of the Board of HST S.A., a subsidiary of GEK TERNA Group**, stated: *“Today, we present a project that upgrades the services provided to citizens and improves the efficiency of OASA, a project that was successfully funded and completed by GEK TERNA, in collaboration with our technological partner, LG CNS of Korea. In this project, a truly effective and reliable model of project assignment and management was applied, without fragmentation of responsibilities and with clear duties for the involved parties. This is a model that we, at GEK TERNA, believe should serve as a standard for similar projects.”*

GEK TERNA S.A.

85, Mesogeion Ave., Athens 11526, Greece, E: info@gekterna.com, P: +30 2106968000, F: +30 2106968098-99,
G.E.MI. Number: 000253001000

Ms. Sevi Vassileva, General Manager for Greece, Israel, Malta, and Cyprus at Visa, stated: *"Today, Athens inaugurates a new era of urban mobility with the introduction of contactless payments for boarding all public transportation, thanks to Visa's support. Leveraging our global expertise from over 800 similar urban mobility projects worldwide, we are introducing a solution that will not only make life easier for citizens by eliminating the need to purchase the correct ticket, making travel faster and more convenient, but will also reduce the cost of issuing paper tickets, upgrade city mobility, and promote sustainable behaviors. Moreover, the service significantly enhances the experience of tourists, as Athens continues to grow as a popular year-round destination. We are proud to support Athens in transforming public transportation through digital payments, as we have done in many other European cities."*

Mr. Christoforos Chatzopoulos, General Manager of NBG Pay, emphasized: *"At NBG Pay, we firmly believe that technological advancements can make a difference and improve everyone's daily life. We are particularly delighted to have contributed our expertise to the implementation of the tap2ride service. Through this collaboration with OASA, we actively support the modernization of public transportation, while making contactless payments an easy, secure, and fast experience for the citizens and visitors of Athens. The tap2ride service accelerates the boarding process and promotes sustainable mobility in the city, making transportation more accessible for everyone. Undoubtedly, this service is a game-changer for urban public transport, marking another step toward the digital transformation of urban mobility"*.