



EPC Induction Pack

June 2025

About the EPC



The European Payments Council (EPC), an international not-for-profit association, offers one focal point and voice for the European payment service providers' sector on all European payment issues.

In constant dialogue with other stakeholders and regulators at European level, its role is to support and promote European payments integration and development and provide Single Euro Payments Area (SEPA) payment schemes facilitating about 50 billion transactions throughout 38 countries every year.



EPC governance structure

The EPC is established and governed as a Belgian international non-profit association
(in French: “association internationale sans but lucratif”, hereafter: “INPA”)
in accordance with the provisions of Book 10 and any other provisions applicable to international non-profit associations of the Belgian companies and associations Code of March 23, 2019

a) EPC purpose, mission and objectives

- The purpose of the European Payments Council (EPC), one representative of the European Payment Service Providers (PSPs)’ sector, is to support and promote European payments integration and development, notably SEPA
- Mission:
 - Contribute to safe, efficient, and convenient payments;
 - which meet the needs of payment service users (PSUs) and support the goals of competitiveness and innovation in an integrated European economy
- How?
 - Develop and manage pan-European payment and payment-related schemes
 - Formulate positions and proposals on European payment issues in constant dialogue with other stakeholders and regulators and taking a strategic and holistic perspective

EPC governance structure



b) EPC membership

- 83 members and 1 associate member – credit institutions, payment institutions (PIs), electronic money institutions (EMIs), and their national or European associations
- Eligibility criteria for (Associate) Membership (Art.4 EPC By-laws):
 - Legal entity which is regulated as a PSP as defined in the Payment Services Directive (PSD2) or equivalent; or
 - A legal entity representing and, directly or indirectly, having as members PSPs; AND
 - being established in a country or territory within the geographical scope of the EPC Schemes.

EPC governance structure



c) EPC bodies

- Decision-making bodies (General Assembly, Board, Scheme Management Governance Bodies) vs. non-decision-making bodies (working groups, support groups, multi-stakeholder groups and task forces)
- European Central Bank (ECB) observer in different bodies such as the PSSG, SEMSTF, CEWG, and PSEMWG
- Coordination by EPC Secretariat (18 people – staff and contractors)



Main stakeholders

- EPC Members
- Technical players such as Clearing and Settlement Mechanism (CSM) organisations

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- Representatives of end-users (consumers, retailers, corporate treasurers...)



EMOTA
The European eCommerce
& Omni-Channel Trade
Association



- The Euro Retail Payments Board

- The European Central Bank and European Commission

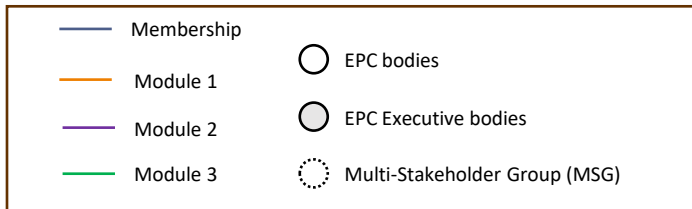
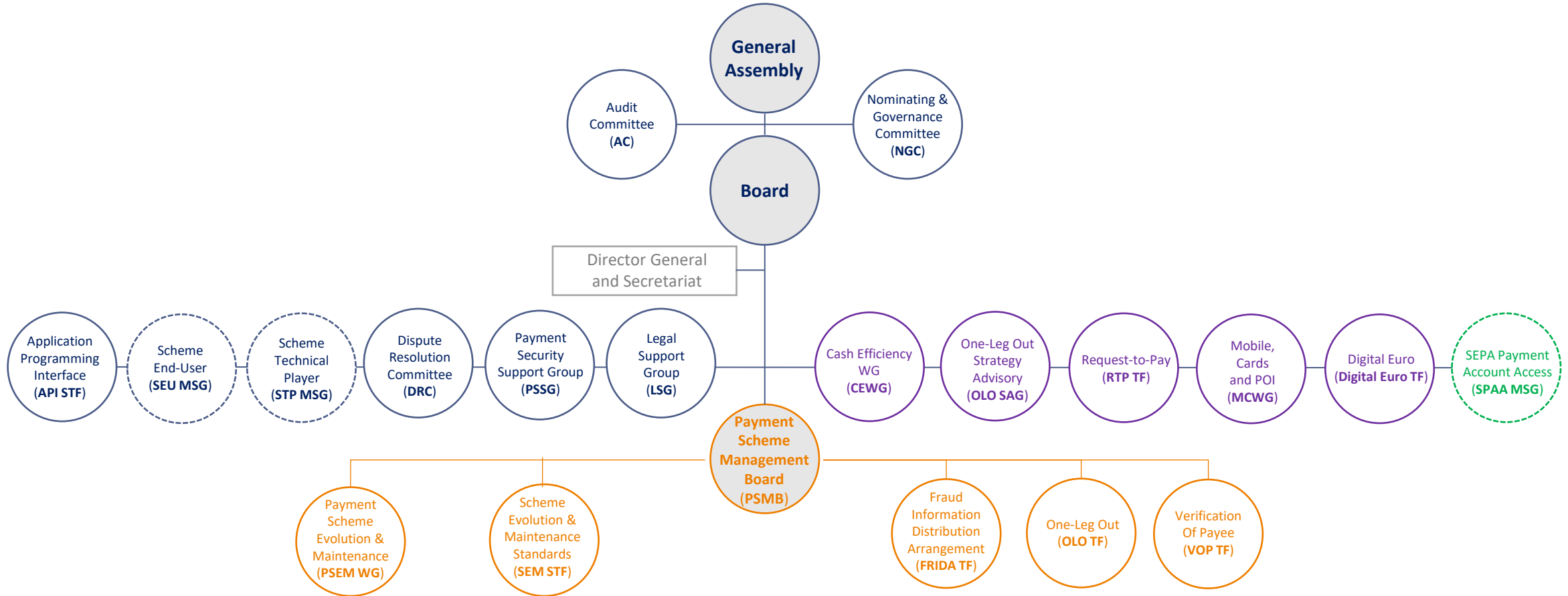


- The European Payments Stakeholders Group

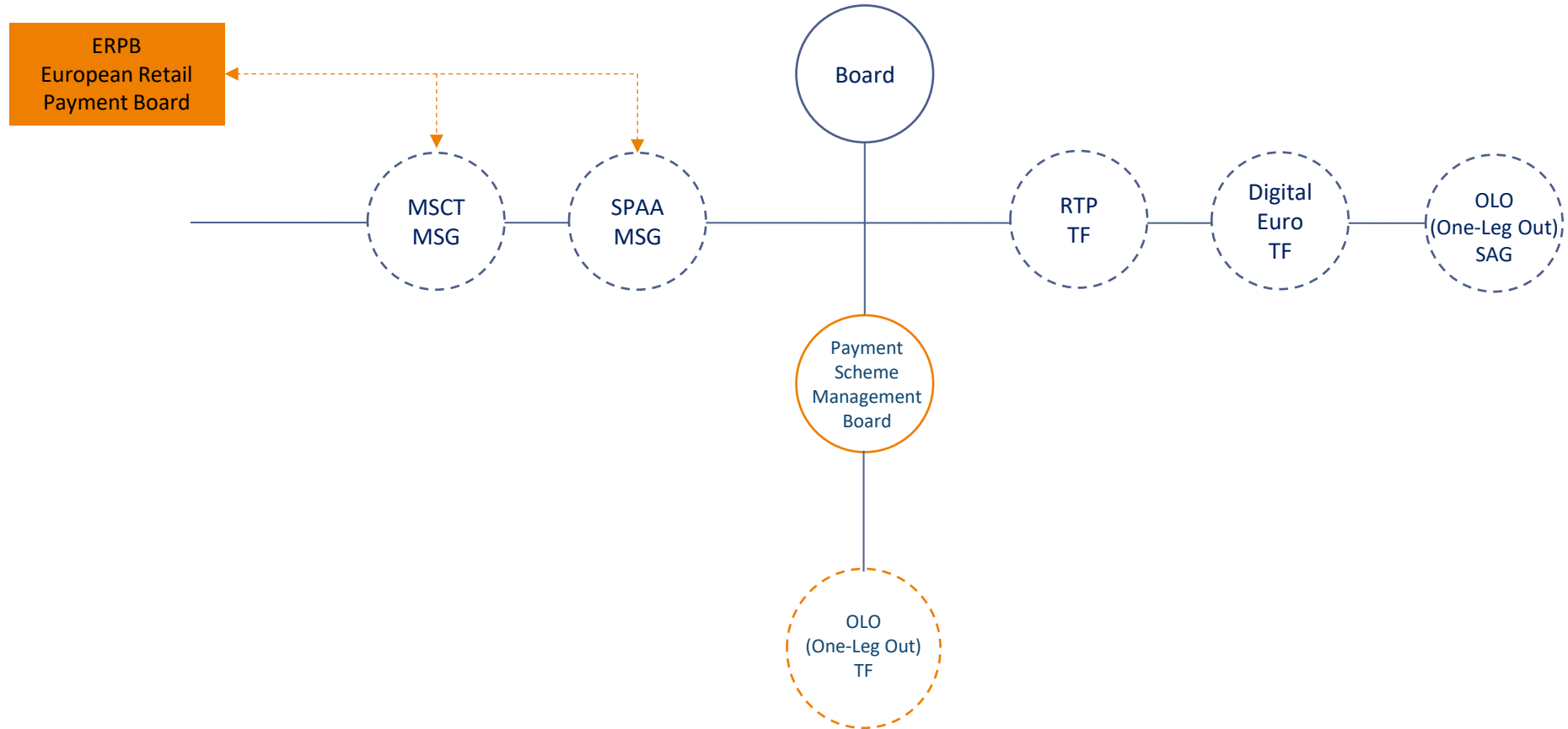


➔ On the whole, about 400 professionals from 38 countries are engaged in the EPC

Organisational chart – EPC permanent bodies



EPC organisation: non-permanent bodies



Annual accounts, work-plan, budget and funding



- Draft annual work-plan, budget and annual accounts approved by the General Assembly upon recommendation by the Board
- Funding
 - Annual contributions by EPC Members:
 - Association membership fee
 - Module 2 participation fee
 - Discount for combined Association membership and EPC Module 2 participation
 - Scheme participants
 - Aim: recover the costs related to the Scheme Management function performed by the EPC and the Scheme Management Governance Bodies
 - Based on the numbers of schemes adhered to
 - For declared groups as defined in the EMIR Regulation, the scheme participation fees will be consolidated and calculated based on a sliding scale taking into account the number of scheme participants that are part of such a group



Governance documents & selected policies

- Governance documents:
 - Articles of association: EPC By-laws (EPC148-19)
 - EPC Internal Rules (EPC149-19)

- Policies:
 - Code of Conduct Competition Law (EPC212-14)
 - Conflicts of Interest (EPC291-12)
 - Document Classification (EPC071-20)
 - External representation – Code of Conduct (EPC091-16)

Note: the aforementioned documents are available on the EPC Extranet, link: <https://extranet.epc-cep.eu/>



What do we do?

The key role of the EPC is that of a 'scheme manager'

- **Development of payment schemes and payment-related schemes, regularly updated to meet technology evolution and end-users needs**
- **Payment schemes**
 - SEPA Credit Transfer (SCT) |
 - SEPA Direct Debit Core (SDD Core)
 - SEPA Direct Debit Business to Business (SDD B2B) |
 - SEPA Instant Credit Transfer (SCT INST) |
 - **One leg-out Instant Credit Transfer (OCT INST)**
- The EPC payment schemes are used to facilitate some 50 billion transactions per year and are used by thousands of payment service providers.
- **Payment-related schemes**
 - SEPA Request to Pay (SRTP)
 - SEPA Payment Account Access (SPAA)
 - Verification of Payee (VOP)
- **Sets of rules and technical standards for the execution of/ supporting SEPA payment transactions that have to be followed by adhering payment service providers (PSPs) and other entities as relevant (for payment-related schemes)**
 - Based on technical standards defined by standards bodies (e.g. ISO)
 - Set out in Rulebooks and Implementation Guidelines
- **Regular change management cycle open to any stakeholders**
 - Every 2 years, with 1-year implementation time
 - Call for change requests
 - Public consultation on the change requests received
 - Complete transparency



Our other activities

- Supporting and promoting European payments integration in other fields such as:
 - Mobile and card payments
 - Digital Euro
- Representing payment service providers' position in all topics related to payments
 - Definition of technical positions and proposals on payment aspects of European legislation and regulation
 - Not a lobbying organisation
- Payments security and fraud prevention

General Assembly



- Composed of all EPC Members' Representatives (one Member, one vote)
- Meets 2x/year
- Responsibilities
 - approve the annual accounts, the annual work-plan and the annual budget;
 - receive reports from the Board, the Audit Committee and the Nominating and Governance Committee (NGC);
 - elect and revoke the members of the Board, the Audit Committee and the NGC;
 - elect and revoke the Chair and the Vice-Chair;
 - elect and revoke the external accountant and determine its remuneration;
 - grant discharge to the members of the Board and the external accountant;
 - approve the amount of the membership fees and the calculation of the membership fees, upon proposal of the Director General in consultation with the Audit Committee;
 - approve the amount of the additional contributions, upon proposal of the Director General in consultation with the Audit Committee;
 - approve amendments to the By-laws and the Internal Rules of the EPC; and
 - dissolve the EPC, decide on the allocation of the EPC's net assets in case of dissolution, and elect one or more liquidator(s).

Board



- Has all the powers necessary to accomplish the purpose and mission of the EPC, except for the powers that are specifically granted to other EPC bodies (e.g. the General Assembly)
- Composition
 - Composed of minimum 18 and maximum 31 members (one member, one vote)
 - Except for the Chair, all members should be Representatives of Members
 - Vice-Chair elected from amongst the Board members
 - maximum 5 members who are Representatives of different European PSP sector associations;
 - the remaining members shall be Representatives from National Communities (or “coalitions” of National Communities) based on payment volumes as described in the Internal Rules
- Meets 4x/year
- Responsibilities
 - take decisions on matters within the scope of the work of the EPC;
 - prepare reports to the General Assembly about the exercise of its role and functions;
 - review and approve the meeting agendas of the General Assembly and make recommendations for the Resolutions to be taken by the General Assembly;
 - monitor the implementation of its decisions;
 - finalise the annual accounts, the annual work-plan, and the annual budget for General Assembly approval;
 - receive reports of the Scheme Management Governance Bodies (SMGBs), ensure the SMGBs remain within their delegated authorities and act at all times in the best interests of the Schemes;
 - Receive reports of the Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC);
 - establish Working Groups, Support Groups, Multi-Stakeholder Groups and Task Forces; and
 - grant discharge to the Director General.

Board members



- EPC level: the EPC Members are not personally liable for the acts concluded by the INPA. Moreover, the Members do not involve their personal assets. Consequently, the only guarantee the creditors of the INPA have, are the assets of the INPA.
- Board level:
 - General principle: the INPA will be liable for the acts and omissions of its directors and officers (the person(s) entrusted with the day-to-day management of the association) →
 - Members of the Board do not incur any personal liability in relation to the commitments of the INPA. Their liability is limited to the execution of the mandate that they have received and to offences committed during their administration:
 - Contractual liability v-à-v the INPA
 - The directors of the INPA must execute their mandate with due diligence. If a director would fail to do so, the INPA may call him/her to account, including claiming damages. It is up to the INPA to prove that the director failed in executing his/her mandate diligently.
 - Extra-contractual liability v-à-v third parties
 - When a director of an INPA makes a mistake which causes a loss to a third party, the latter may choose to hold the director (together with the INPA as the case may be) responsible, based on the law of tort (extra-contractual liability based on article 1382 of the Belgian Civil Code).
 - Criminal liability
 - If a director commits a criminal offence in the exercise of his/her mandate, he or she may be criminally sanctioned for such acts and can be held civilly liable by the INPA and/or third parties.
 - It is to be noted that directors can be held personally liable for certain infringements of competition law rules (criminal liability and/or extra-contractual liability v-à-v third parties)

Board members - discharge



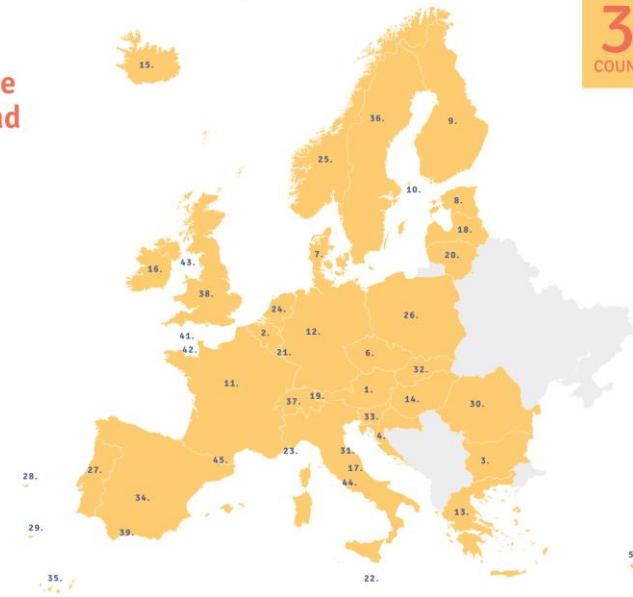
- “Discharge” is the legal technique whereby Board members are officially discharged from liability for the execution of their mandate over a specified period (usually the previous year), as presented to the General Assembly with the presentation of the annual financial statements.
- Only the General Assembly is authorised to discharge the members of the Board.
- In principle, the discharge only covers the contractual liability incurred for mistakes of the Board v-à-v the INPA. So the discharge does not cover third party liability and also does not affect the criminal liability of directors.
- The EPC has a “Directors and Officers liability insurance”, covering the EPC Board members for claims made against them while serving on the Board.



Geographical scope of SEPA schemes

<https://www.europeanpaymentscouncil.eu/document-library/other/map-sepa-scheme-countries-and-territories>

SEPA Scheme Countries and Territories



1. Austria
2. Belgium
3. Bulgaria
4. Croatia
5. Cyprus
6. Czech Republic
7. Denmark
8. Estonia
9. Finland
(incl. Åland Islands - 10)
11. France
(incl. overseas territories of French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Mayotte, Réunion, Saint Barthélemy, French part of Saint Martin, Saint Pierre and Miquelon)
12. Germany
13. Greece
14. Hungary
16. Ireland
17. Italy
18. Latvia
19. Liechtenstein
20. Lithuania
21. Luxembourg
22. Malta
23. Monaco
24. Netherlands
25. Norway
26. Poland
27. Portugal
(incl. Azores - 28 - and Madeira - 29)
30. Romania
31. San Marino
32. Slovakia
33. Slovenia
34. Spain
(incl. Canary Islands - 35)
36. Sweden
37. Switzerland
38. United Kingdom
(incl. Gibraltar - 39)
40. British Crown Dependencies:
Guernsey - 41, Jersey - 42, Isle of Man - 43
44. Vatican City State / Holy See
45. Principality of Andorra

List updated in March 2019

Scheme management



- Principles governing scheme management are set out in the relevant Scheme Management Governance Documents, annexed to the EPC scheme rulebooks
- Scheme management functions:
 - Setting rules and procedures for the administration of the EPC schemes and the process of maintaining and managing the evolution of the schemes
 - Ensuring compliance with their rules, as set out in the scheme rulebooks
- The compliance function of scheme management is delegated to the Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC).
- Oversight by Eurosystem

Scheme management



- Scheme adherence:
 - Payment Scheme Participants (June 2025):
 - SEPA Credit Transfer: 3,550 PSPs
 - SEPA Direct Debit Core: 2,814 PSPs
 - SEPA Direct Debit Business-to-Business: 2,360 PSPs
 - SCT Inst: 2,765 PSPs (scheme effective since 21 November 2017)
 - OCT Inst: 90 PSPs (scheme effective since 28 November 2023)

- Payment Scheme Eligibility criteria:
 - Active in banking/ provision of payment services
 - Incorporated/licensed in a SEPA country
 - Solvency, liquidity and capital requirements
 - AML requirements
 - Reachable through a Clearing and Settlement Mechanism

Payment Scheme Management Board



- Responsible, under the delegated authority of the Board, for performing the functions of management and evolution of the EPC Payment Schemes
- Composition
 - Composed of maximum 25 members (one member, one vote)
 - 3 independent members, including the Chair
 - Up to 22 members shall be representatives of Payment Scheme Participants (nominated by an individual National Community of Payment Scheme Participants or a “coalition” of National Communities of Payment Scheme Participants)
- Meets 4x/year
- The PSMB is a body with decision-making power. This power may only be exercised in relation to the specific functions of Payment Scheme Management for which it is responsible pursuant to the EPC Payment Scheme Management Rules.

Role of the Board in Scheme Management



- The PSMB acts under the responsibility of the Board and
 - reports to the Board on its activities and performance at least 2x a year and/or at the request of the Board and
 - complies with the Board's instructions in specified instances if deemed necessary by the Board.
- As part of its strategic and decision-making role, the Board shall decide on:
 - the introduction of new Schemes,
 - the termination of any Scheme, and
 - strategic changes to be implemented into the Schemes in accordance with the SMIRs including the geographical scope of the Schemes.
- The Board elects the members of the PSMB (upon consultation with the Payment Scheme Participants Assembly), and, in certain exceptional cases, revokes the members of the PSMB in accordance with the EPC Payment Scheme Management Rules.



THANK YOU !



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