# Update on EPC schemes

ERPB Technical Meeting, 25 June 2025
EFIP, 26 June 2025

# Agenda

**1** EPC payment schemes roll-out monitoring

**2** VOP and EDS

**3** International Instant Payments (OCT Inst)

**4** Open Banking (SPAA)

**5** Request to Pay (SRTP)

**6** Mobile and QR code

**7** Other EPC initiatives

# Development of Instant Payments in Europe, focus on SCT Inst scheme (1/2)

**Key numbers[1]**

|  |  | SEPA | Euro Area |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Penetration | % of SCT Inst vs. SCT PSPs | **78%** | **90%** | **Jun 2025** |
| Penetration | Countries with SCT Inst PSPs | **34** out of 41 | **20** out of 20 | **Jun 2025** |
| Usage | % of SCT Inst on total SEPA Credit Transfers volumes[3] | **24.8%** | **N/A** | **Q1 2025** |

**% of SCT Inst on total Credit Transfers (SCT + SCT Inst), SEPA area, Q3-2024**



1. Source: EPC data
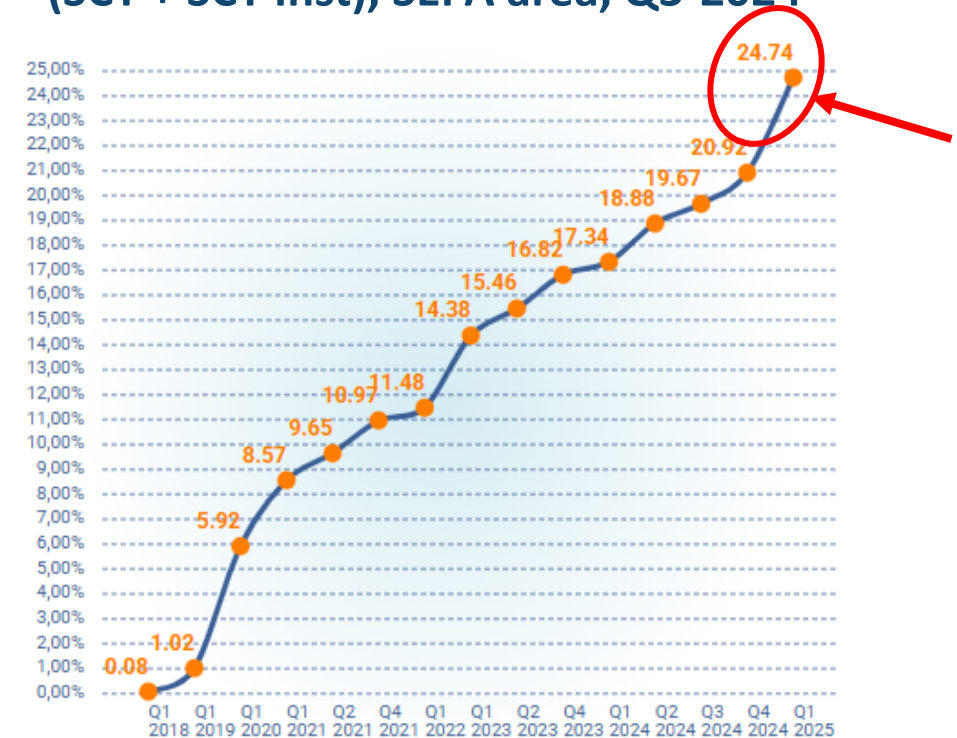
# 2025 EPC Payment Schemes Deployment, CSM view

- The overall CSM status insofar is **green**
- Risk element due to late start of UAT (last week of July) by one pan-European CSM

| Deliverables - Actions | Scheduled timelines for SCT, SDDs and OCT Inst | Scheduled timelines for SCT Inst |
|---|---|---|
| 1) Pan-European CSMs offering services to several national PSP communities: issuance of <u>stable</u> specifications | 28 Feb '25 (on time) | 10 Mar '25 (on time) |
| 2) CSMs offering services to one or just a few national PSP communities: issuance of <u>stable</u> specifications | Plan: by end Mar '25 Status: done between end March - start May 2025 | Plan: by end Apr '25 Status: done between end March and end April 2025 |
| 3) All CSMs and PSPs: internal system developments and related tests+work out their respective UAT environments | Start Apr - end Jun '25 | Start May - end Jun '25 except for one pan-European CSM – see 4) |
| 4) All CSMs and PSPs: UAT testing in the PSP-to-CSM-to-PSP space | Start Jul - end Aug '25 | • Several CSMs: start of Jul -> end Aug/start Sep '25 • One pan-European CSM: 28 July* -> 9 Sep '25 |
| 5) EPC: 1st go validation check | 22 Aug '25** | 22 Aug '25** |
| 6) PSPs: final (or self-certification) testing by PSPs of the PSP-to-CSM-to-PSP chain | 01 to 19 Sep '25 | 9 Sep – 19 Sep '25 |
| 7) EPC: 2nd go validation check | 19 Sep '25 | 19 Sep '25 |
| 8) CSMs: a 2 weeks' freeze period | 22 Sep '25 | 22 Sep '25 |
| 9) Entry-into-force date (and time for OCT Inst and SCT Inst) | 05 Oct '25 (and at 03:30 CEST) | 05 Oct '25 (and at 03:30 CEST) |

* Its UAT phase gradually opens as of 22/07 up to 28/07
** Six weeks before go-live date

Latest update (23 May 2025)

# 2025 EPC Payment Schemes Deployment, PSP communities view

- 10 June status: the overall PSP status is currently **green** (i.e. ready in time).

- Five out of 19 national PSP communities still report an orange status:
  - Two national PSP communities reported an orange status as a community position
  - Two other national PSP communities reported a green status for the majority of their PSPs, with either a few PSPs in the community concerned reporting an orange situation; or the community itself reporting an orange status limited to the VOP scheme implementation
  - One PSP community reported an orange status due to low response rate from the PSPs concerned

- The general concerns from these PSPs or communities concerned are:
  - Schedule and timing of all UAT periods (SCT, both SDDs, SCT Inst, VOP) overlapping with national summer holidays. This makes planning more challenging for PSPs and their service providers.
  - Resource issues and overlapping with other non-SEPA projects (e.g., CBPR+ migration to ISO 20022 and other parallel projects)
  - Challenge to be in full compliance with IPR amendments by October 2025. Especially the combination of the VOP scheme roll-out which impacts the current SCT and SCT Inst transaction processes, and the various changes to the 2025 SCT Inst scheme rulebook.

# VOP scheme, numbers[1] and expectations

- **"SCT Inst" scheme compliant PSPs**
  - Euro Area: 2,683
  - SEPA: 2,765
- **"SCT" scheme compliant PSPs**
  - Euro Area: 2,971
  - SEPA: 3,550
- **VOP participants**
  - **2.700 – 3.100** expected[2] PSPs as of 5 October 2025
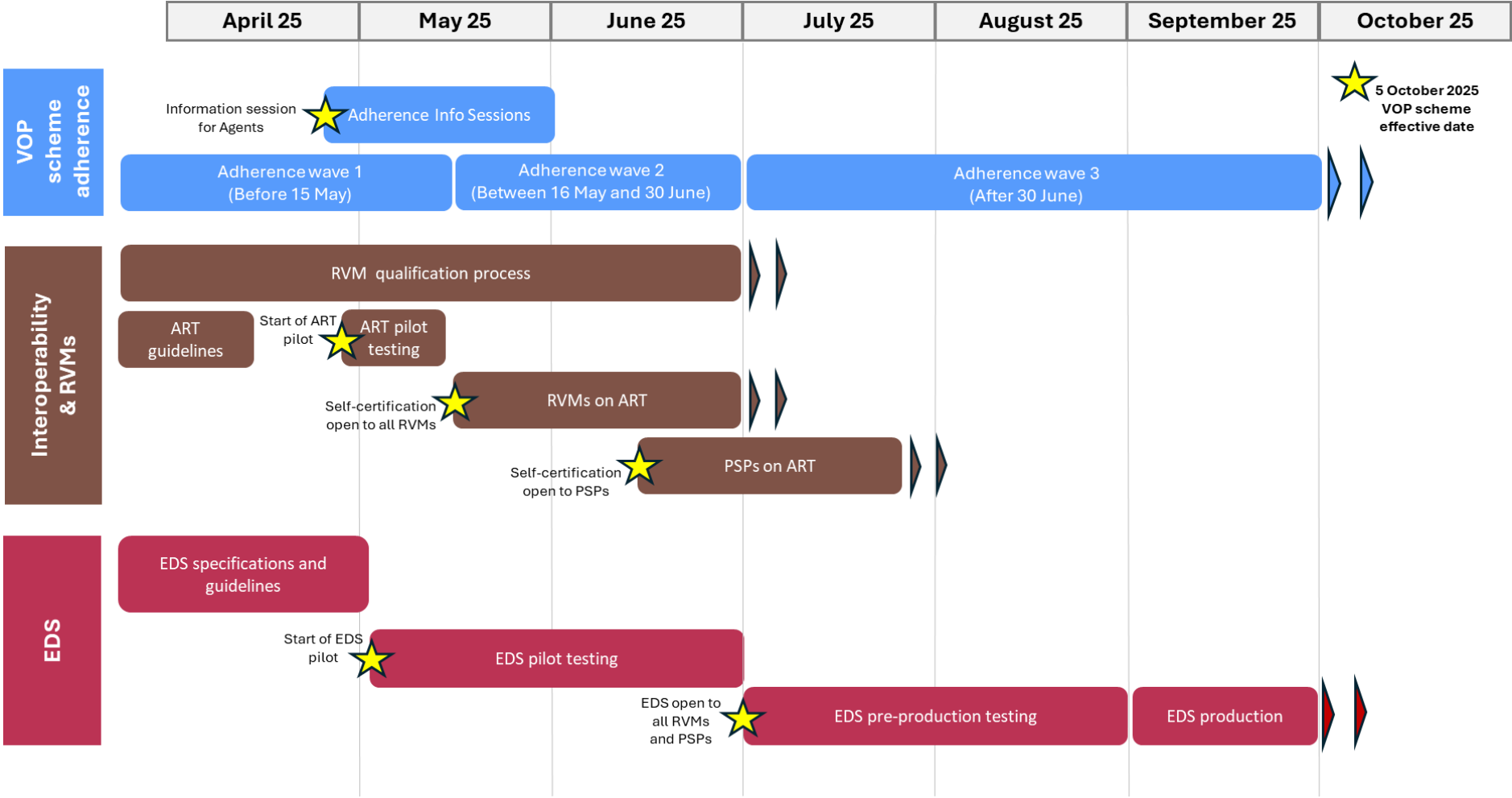  - **1.090** VOP applicants with status "Accepted"
  - **ar. 400 opt-out**
- **RVMs**
  - **3** fully qualified RVMs
  - **57** RVMs with "Ongoing" qualification status

# The VOP roll-out challenge...

- **1st EPC scheme** based on **APIs** with a **central directory** and **massive adoption**

- **1st time** an EPC scheme to **scale up from 0 to 3.000 PSPs in less than 2 years**
  - 18 months since first Rulebook draft
  - 12 montsh since final Rulebook version
  - 6 months since the start of Adherence

- **1st time** the EPC is playing an **IT operating role** with **EDS** (EPC Directory Service)

- **1st time** the EPC is playing an **active role to facilitate Interoperability** (self-certification based on ART platform)

- **1st time** the EPC is developing a **contractual relationship with infrastructure players** (qualification process for Routing and/or Verification Mechanisms - **RVMs**)

- ...

# VOP program timeplan

# VOP scheme and EDS, status & next steps

**Status**

- **VOP documentation**
  - VOP scheme rulebook Risk Management Annex (RMA)     **published[1]**
  - ART documentation     **published**
  - EDS API specifications + YAML/JSON     **published**
  - EDS onboarding and registration     **published**
  - Q&As / clarifications     **published (ongoing)**

- **VOP adherence & onboarding support**
  - VOP adherence for PSPs     **ongoing**
  - Qualification process for RVMs     **ongoing**
  - **Training "video pills" on EDS onboarding**     **in preparation**
  - **Setup of support process Swift + EPC (L1/L2/L3)**     **in preparation**

- **VOP self-certification**
  - ART pilot 1 (3 RVMs),     **ongoing** (28 April)
  - ART pilot 2 (self-certification for all RVMs)     **ongoing** (19 May – 13 June)
  - Self-certification process based on ART open to PSPs not using RVMs     mid June
  - Self-certification test cases document     **published**

- **EDS**
  - EDS pilot 1 (max 10 PSPs + 10 RVMs),     **ongoing** (5 May – 20 June)
  - EDS pilot phase 2 (open to all)     23 June
  - EDS T&C for production     **published** (4 June)

- **VOP monitoring process**     **in preparation**

1. The RMA will not be published, it is only shared with the scheme participants, who may decide to share it under NDA with their own technical service providers

# VOP, open issues and pain points

1. **VOP bulk**
2. **IBAN-to-BIC** mapping
3. **PSPs communication plan for the October go-live**, to mitigate the undesired effects due to VOP introduction
4. Unintended consequences of **IPR Art. 5c(8) paragraph 3** [liability of the receiving PSP]

# VOP, what PSPs should be prepared for as of 5/10...

ILLUSTRATIVE

**NO VOP**


SCTInst chart (2019–2025F), values rising from ~1,300,000,000 to ~12,500,000,000
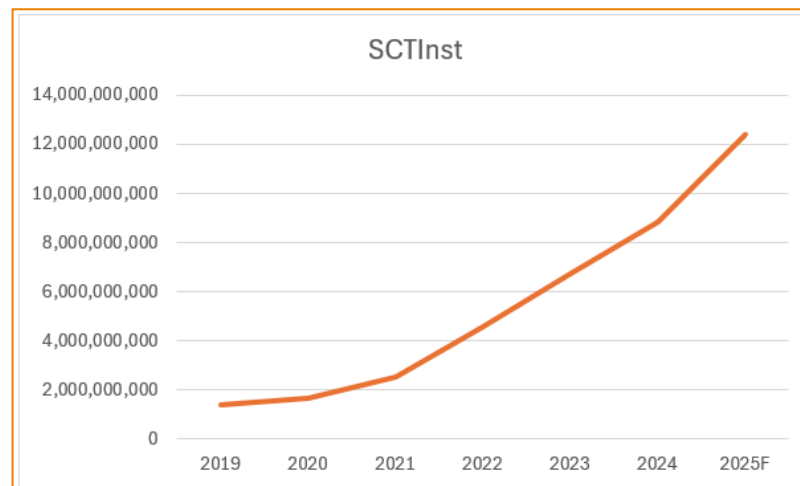
**WITH VOP**

and no mitigation plan


SCTInst chart (2019–2025F) with "5 Oct" marker
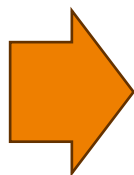
...I tried to send a **Credit Transfer** to my daughter in Spain but I received a strange **TECHNICAL ERROR**... I guess it is one of those **NASTY SCAM ATTEMPTS** the TV always warns about!!


ID 230022043 © Nicoleta Ionescu — dreamstime.com

# VOP, what PSPs should be prepared for after 5/10. Experience from markets that already launched VOP/COP

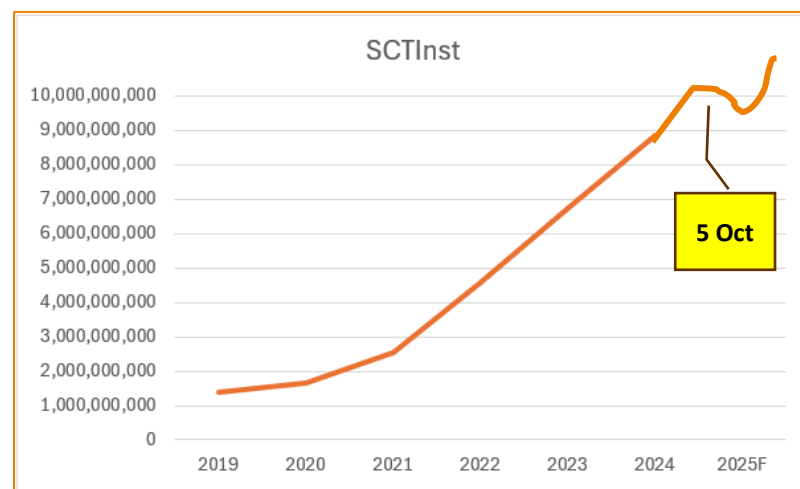1. **What ratio of positive / close match / technical error (NOAP) results can we expect?**
   - **NL** (service not mandatory, 97% penetration). 90% match, 6% close-match, 4% no-match [source: Surepay]
   - **UK** – data not publicly available.
   - **FR** (service not mandatory). 85% full match – 15% no match [source: SEPAmail]

2. **Should we expect a significant difference between results for domestic and for cross-border payments?**
   - Relevant differences at PSP level in the % of close match vs. no match, depending on tuning of the algorithms
   - Relevant differences in how people make credit transfers
     - E.g., in the Netherlands it is common to use initials plus surname as the beneficiary whereas in other countries its customary to use the full name. When making a cross-border transaction from the NL to another country, different results in close-match % should be expected.
   - For business accounts, verification against trading name of a business is relevant, whereas businesses can have multiple trading names. However, data quality of the trading names strongly differs per country / per PSP.

3. **Expected VOP stabilization period after launch?**
   - A couple of months (reported experience on a single country)
   - Different PSPs exhibit very different performances (e.g. sub-optimal matching rates)

# Status update on the OCT Inst scheme

- **Status**
  - 90 scheme participants (Spain + Andorra)
  - 2 self-declared compliant CSMs

- **Recent achievements**
  - OCT Inst Webinar in May, several positive comments (see here video and presentations)
  - OCT Inst scheme Rulebook and IGs licensed to the NPC to be implemented in the Nordics
  - Ongoing exchange with TIPS in the frame of its cross-currency initiative

- **Challenges**
  - Establishing reciprocity with non-Euro leg jurisdictions

- **Next steps**
  - Ongoing market developments possibly favouring OCT Inst growth
    - Synergies with ECB TIPS international agenda
    - US market (The Clearing House)
    - Possible market-driven initiatives to support OCT Inst

# Status update on the SPAA scheme

- **Status**
  - 5 scheme participants (all ABs)
- **Recent achievements**
  - In March 2025, the Board approved the new SPAA MSG composition
  - The first meeting of the 'new' SPAA MSG took place on 24 March 2025
  - SPAA MSG concurred to launch a SPAA scheme change management cycle in September 2025 (subject to Board approval)
- **Challenges**
  - To date, no Asset Holder has come forward to join the SPAA pilot project[1].
  - Regarding giroAPI, it is to be determined if/how interoperability can be ensured and how fragmentation in the market can be prevented.
  - PSR is expected to impact the SPAA scheme's premium functionalities
- **Next steps**
  - Prepare the further development of the SPAA scheme
  - Work on achieving 'functional' convergence with the Berlin Group's openFinance API Framework[2] and the giroAPI scheme
  - Review and approval of the (revised) Terms of Reference of the SPAA Business Conditions Work Block, SPAA Communication Work Block and the new SPAA Rulebook Development Work Block
  - Seek to establish a 'coalition of the willing' for the SPAA pilot.

[1] *besides DSGV who is involved in a separate pilot project with one specific Asset Broker*

[2] *to date, the Berlin Group is currently the only standardisation initiative that has developed relevant API specifications for SPAA*

# Status update on the SRTP scheme

- **Status**
  - 3 SRTP scheme participants successfully homologated and published in the ROP.
  - 3 Referenced Technical Solution Providers (RTSPs) duly homologated and are listed on the EPC website.

- **Recent achievements**
  - After Spain, also the Italian Market confirmed the intention to launch SRTP services (Public Administration)
  - SRTP 4.0 scheme rulebook was published on 29 November 2024.
  - SRTP Task Force agreed on a strong simplification of the homologation process. The way to implement this simplification is currently being negotiated with the Homologation Body.
  - The SRTP Task Force agreed on the approach to implement an API Test Toolbox.

- **Challenges**
  - Implement the simplification of the homologation as soon as possible.

- **Next steps**
  - Publish the fourth version of the Implementation Guidelines and of the API specifications.
  - Publish the fourth version of the Clarification Paper when the EDS will be available for the SRTP scheme
  - Communicate about the simplification of the homologation and launch actions to foster adherences.
  - Implement the EPC Directory Service (EDS) for the SRTP scheme.
  - Implement the API Test Toolbox.

# Status update on QR-codes

- **Recent achievements**
    - On 29 January the final specifications were submitted to the CEN Management Centre (CCMC) for initiating the Enquiry stage within the TC 225
    - In May 2025, after CEN internal work (including among others, translation and preparation of national publication) the Enquiry ballot among the members of CEN TC 225 was opened for 12 weeks, until 31 July.
    - The MCWG and Board members were encouraged to liaise with the representatives of their countries in CEN for a positive vote

- **Challenges**
    - Finalising the standardisation process with CEN, including review of comments after Enquiry ballot, final editing, approval ballot, expecting a publication by the End of 2025

- **Next steps**
    - Follow-up after the CEN Enquiry ballot, including processing the comments received

# Other EPC initiatives

- **Fraud prevention and contrast (FRIDA TF)**
  - Setup completed
  - Kick-off on 26 June
  - Real activity to start in Q3-2025

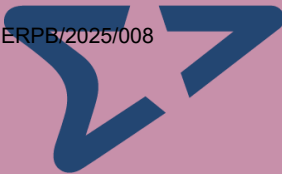- **API standardisation (API STF)**
  - Setup completed (apart Chair election)
  - Kick-off before end of June
  - Need to agree on a «common way forward» with standardisation initiatives (namely, Berlin Group)

# Thank You!

@EPC_SEPA

**ANNEX**

# Verification of Payee (VOP) scheme, documentation

| Document | URL |
|---|---|
| **VOP Scheme Rulebook v1.0** | Verification Of Payee Scheme Rulebook \| European Payments Council |
| **VOP Recommendations for the Matching Processes** | EPC recommendations for the matching processes under the Verification Of Payee scheme rulebook \| European Payments Council |
| **VOP Inter-PSP API specifications v1.0.1** | Verification Of Payee Scheme Inter-PSP API Specifications \| European Payments Council |
| **YAML file** | https://www.europeanpaymentscouncil.eu/sites/default/files/files/2024-11/EPC267-24 VOP API YAML_v1.0_0.zip |
| **EPC API Security Framework (ASF)** | API Security Framework \| European Payments Council |
| **EDS local file technical specifications** | EDS Local File \| European Payments Council |
| **EDS Web GUI** | EDS Web GUI \| European Payments Council |
| **EDS API specifications** | EDS API Specifications \| European Payments Council |
| **EDS Onboarding and Registration Guide** | EDS Onboarding and Registration Guide \| European Payments Council |
| **VOP API Reference Toolbox (ART) – Test Cases** | Verification Of Payee API Reference Toolbox – Test Cases \| European Payments Council |

# VOP scheme, key actors and flows
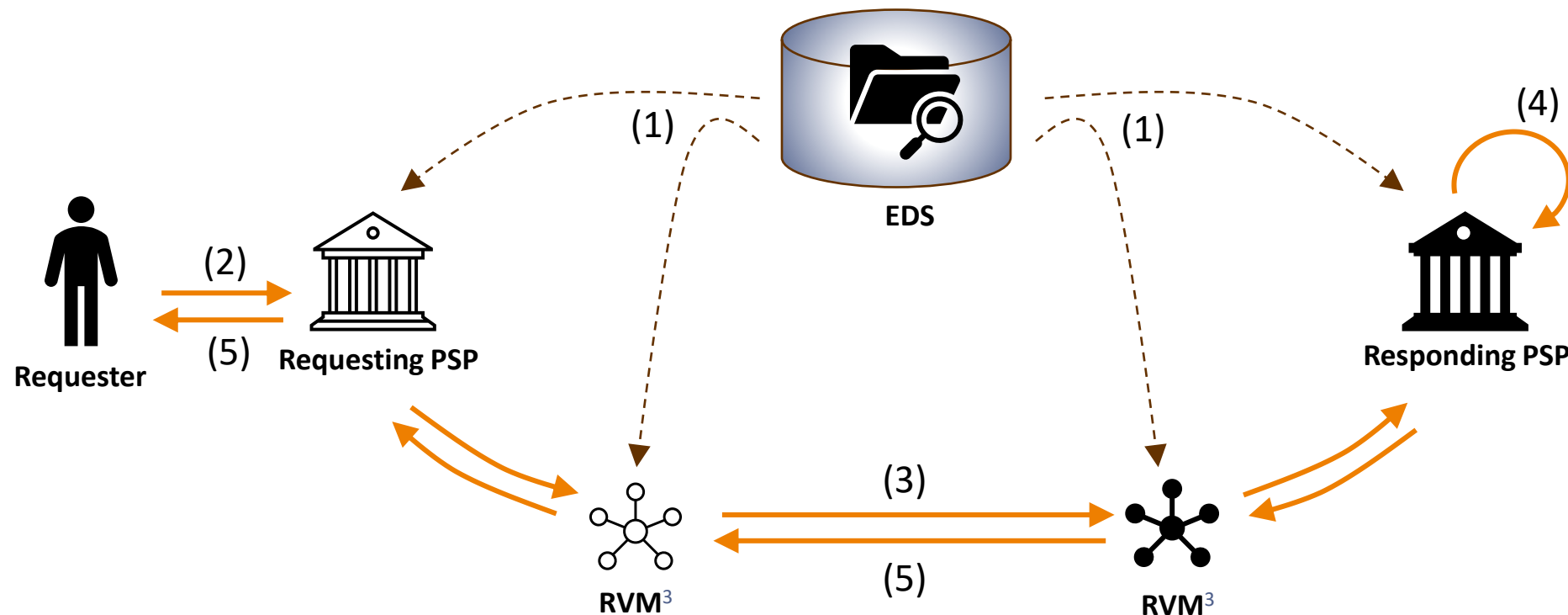


(1) EDS local file downloaded daily and cached by PSPs and/or RVMs
(2) Before authorising an (instant) Credit Transfer, the Requester inserts IBAN and name[2] triggering a VOP request
(3) Requesting PSP[1] sends the VOP request to the Responding PSP
(4) Responding PSP[1] authenticates and authorizes Requesting PSP[1] using the EDS local file
(5) Responding PSP[1] provides VOP result (match, no match, close-match…)

1. Or a Routing and/or Verification Mechanism (RVM) acting on behalf of the PSP
2. Or another identifier, for business users.
3. Requesting and/or Responding side RVM may or may not be present (or also be one and
the same, e.g. for domestic transaction)

Pres EPC086-25
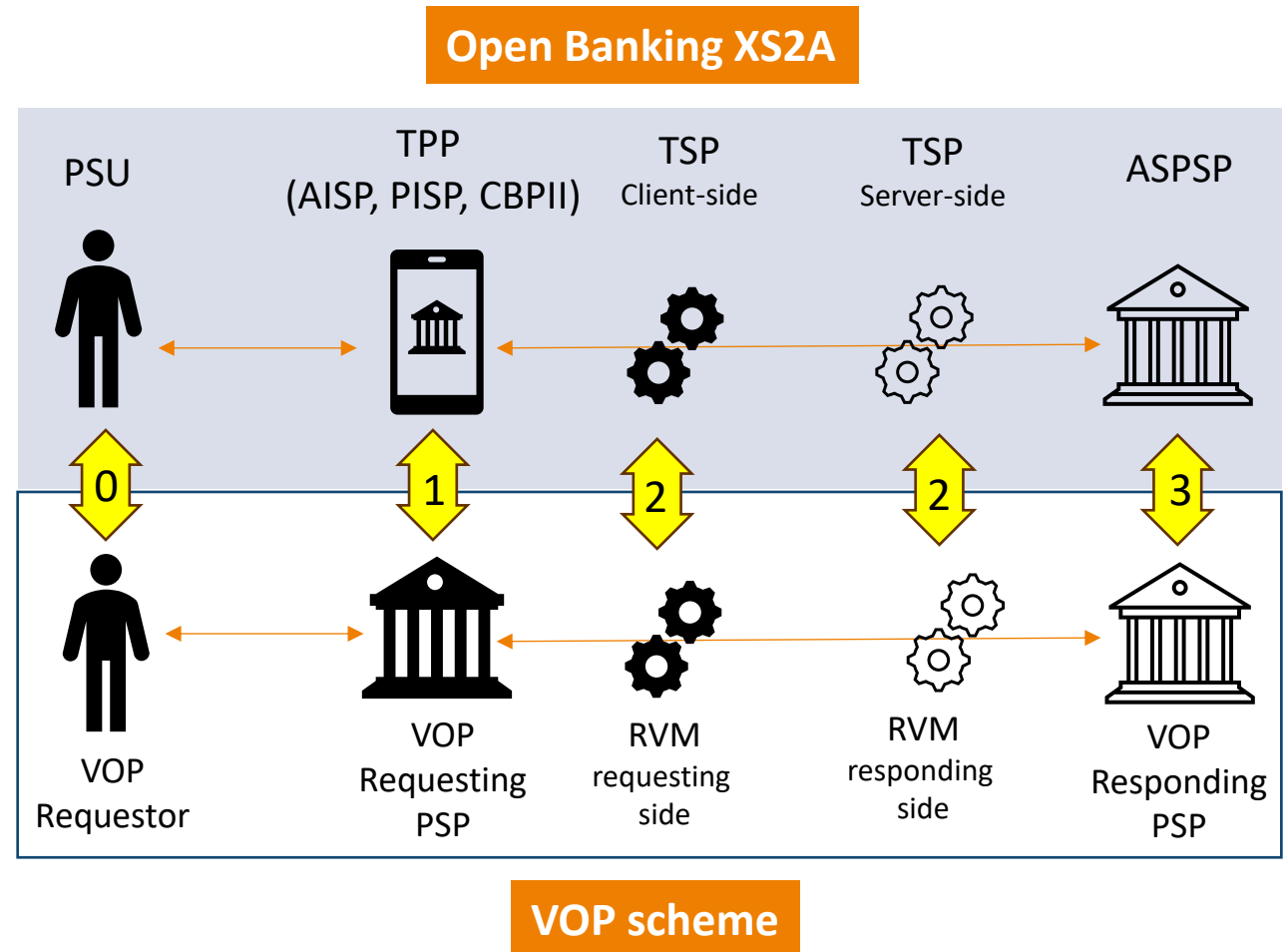
21

# VOP scheme, security architecture

- Key technical design choice: to **leverage PSD2 XS2A open banking security architecture**

- PSD2 vs. VOP **analogy**:
  1. **TPP ⇔ VOP Requesting PSP**
  2. **ASPSP ⇔ VOP Responding PSP**
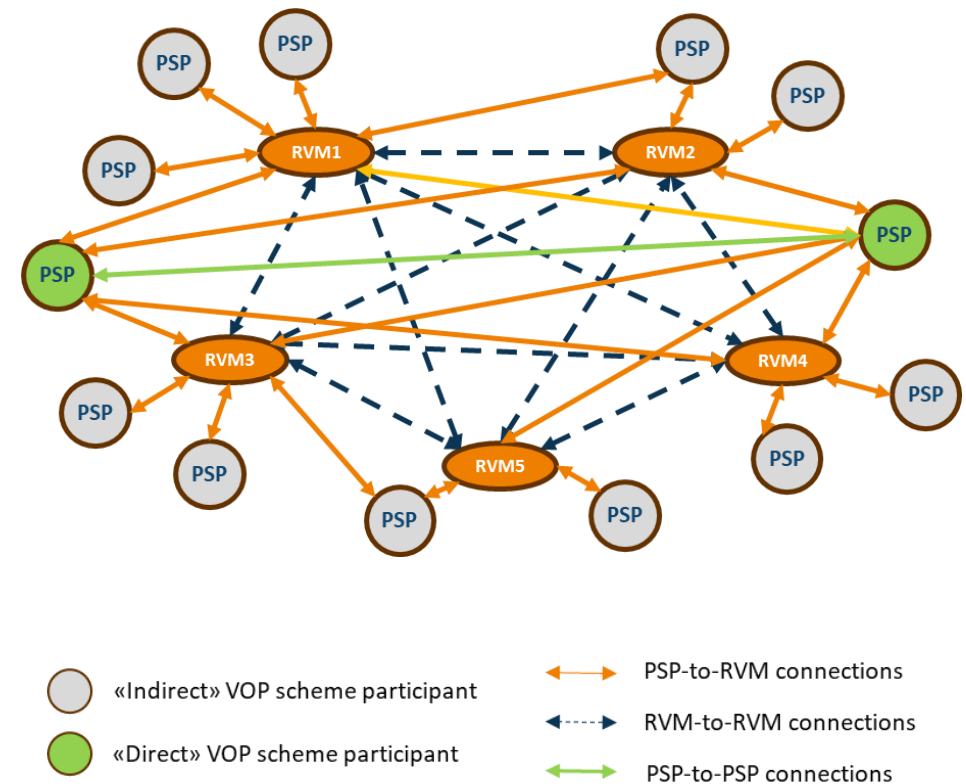  3. **TSP ⇔ RVM**

- **Benefits**
  - **Tried & tested architecture** and security practice based on **eIDAS 1.0 standard**
  - Possible **reuse of QWAC PSD2 certificates** for VOP Requesting PSP



Open Banking XS2A

| PSU | TPP (AISP, PISP, CBPII) | TSP Client-side | TSP Server-side | ASPSP |

VOP scheme

| VOP Requestor | VOP Requesting PSP | RVM requesting side | RVM responding side | VOP Responding PSP |

# VOP, a European reachability and interoperability challenge

- VOP will be the **first massive usage scheme** based on **open APIs** in European A2A payments

- Expected scenario[1]:

    - **3,000 PSPs** (2025), up to **3,500+** (2027 and beyond)

    - **Indirect** (via RVMs) and **direct participation models** for PSPs

    - Several **billion VOP requests per year**

    - **300-400 reachable API end-points** → potentially ar. 50.000 integration interfaces to be tested

- **SEPA-wide reachability** through a centralized **directory service** (**EDS**)

- To facilitate **interoperability between RVMs/PSPs,** the EPC defined a **self-certification processes** and provided *ad hoc* **testing tools** (ART and VOP test cases document)



- ⬤ «Indirect» VOP scheme participant
- ⬤ «Direct» VOP scheme participant
- ⟷ PSP-to-RVM connections
- ◀- - -▶ RVM-to-RVM connections
- ⟷ PSP-to-PSP connections

[1] *Source: EPC Secretariat*