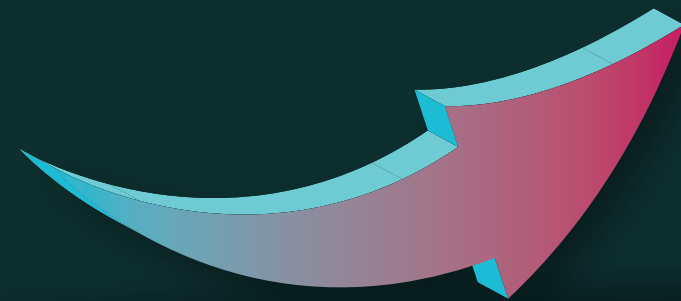# 4 FACTS ABOUT EPROCUREMENT ON THE PEPPOL NETWORK
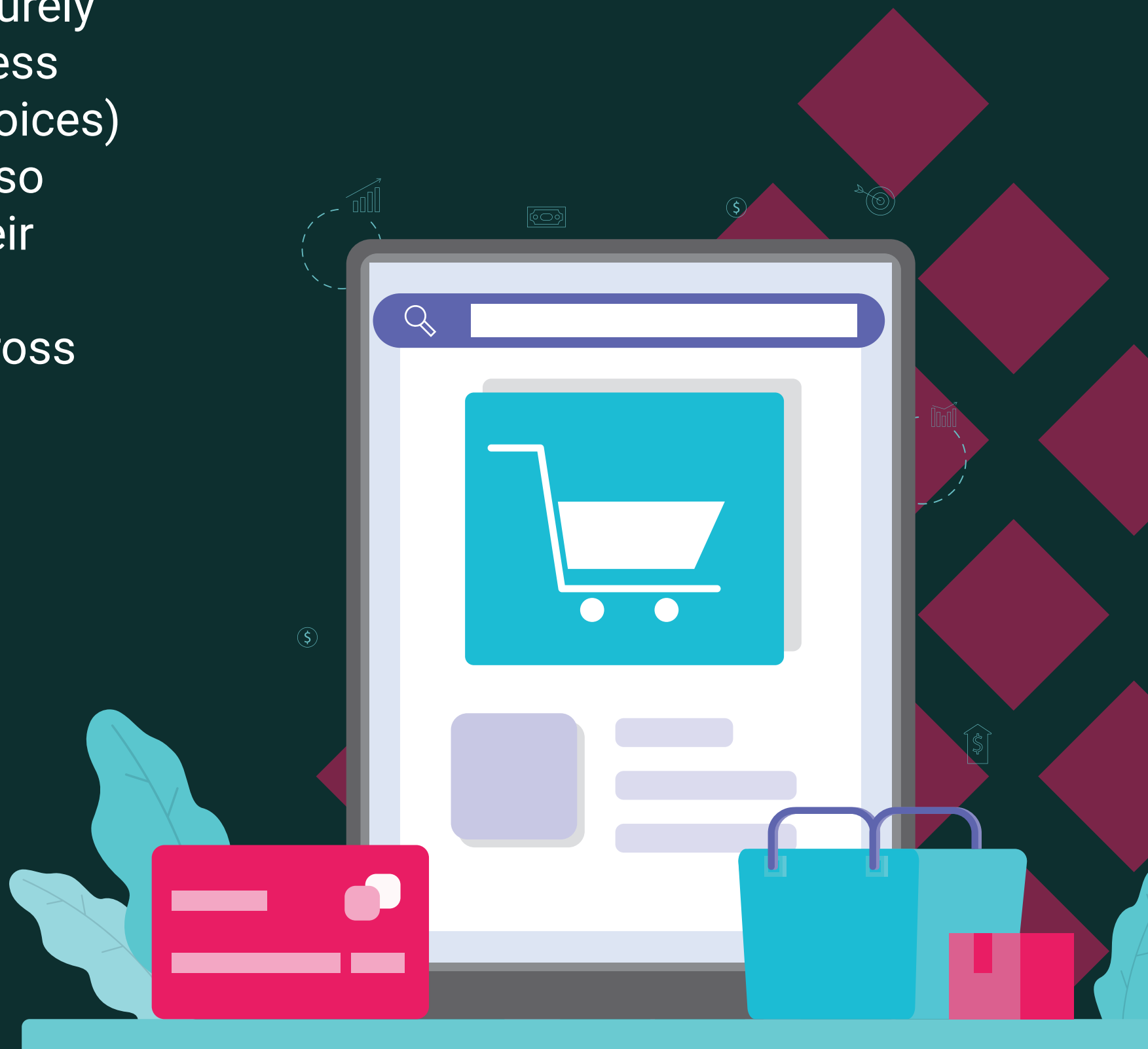
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What is Peppol?

Peppol is a set of artefacts and specifications that facilitate cross-border eProcurement. It's a trade facilitation protocol that's designed to streamline procurement procedures and standardisations in international supply chains.

Peppol allows businesses and government entities to securely exchange electronic business documents (including eInvoices) using open standards. It also allows them to connect their existing accounting and procurement platforms across borders.

While Peppol is developed and maintained by its community members, oversight and management is undertaken by OpenPeppol. OpenPeppol is a non-profit international association registered in Belgium.

Members of OpenPeppol come from both the public and private sectors. Membership is on the rise since new members from all over the world are continuously being admitted by the association.

By aligning business processes using common standards, leveraging open source technologies, and addressing common legal issues, entities that use Peppol can benefit from the interoperability of different eProcurement, financial, and invoicing systems. They can also take advantage of a simplified onboarding process for new customers and vendors.

How are Electronic Business Documents Exchanged Through Peppol?

Trading partners can exchange standards-based e-documents and structured data over Peppol using the 4-corner model. Data is securely transmitted through a network of approved Service Providers known as access points (APs).

Buyers and suppliers are free to choose their preferred Peppol access point providers to connect to all participants on the network (a concept known as "connect once, connect to all"). To connect to the network, the end users first need to register their Peppol ID.

After the Peppol ID has been validated (which could be instantaneous, depending on the AP provider), end users can quickly and securely send business documents to other Peppol users. While you can send business documents without registering your Peppol ID, you cannot receive documents prior to registering.

End users can locate each other using the Peppol Directory, which is a free-to-browse service.

End users can use one, or a combination of these terms, to search the Peppol Directory:

- Company name
- The Peppol endpoint ID
- Country
- Peppol document capabilities

End users can also use the following optional search terms (whenever available):

- Contact details
- Additional identifiers
- The registration date
- Website
- Additional free text

What are the Origins of Peppol?

Peppol was originally a large-scale pilot financed by the European Commission and a consortium of 11 European countries. The pilot ran from May 2008 to August 2012 under the name PEPPOL (all caps). PEPPOL's goal was to resolve the unnecessary complications that were impeding international eProcurement.

The consortium members were able to reach a consensus on common technical standards, leading to the creation of the network. After the pilot phase ended in August 2012, the OpenPeppol Association was founded in Belgium in September 2012 to continue work on the framework.

PEPPOL was originally an acronym for "Pan-European Public Procurement Online". In late 2019, the acronym was rebranded to Peppol. Aside from removing all uppercase letters, both "public procurement" and "Pan-European" were de-emphasised. This indicated the network's move away from its original scope limitations.

Today, the Peppol network is used outside of Europe and is becoming an increasingly global network. Its use cases include business-to-business (B2B), business-to-government (B2G), and government-to-government (G2G) transactions.
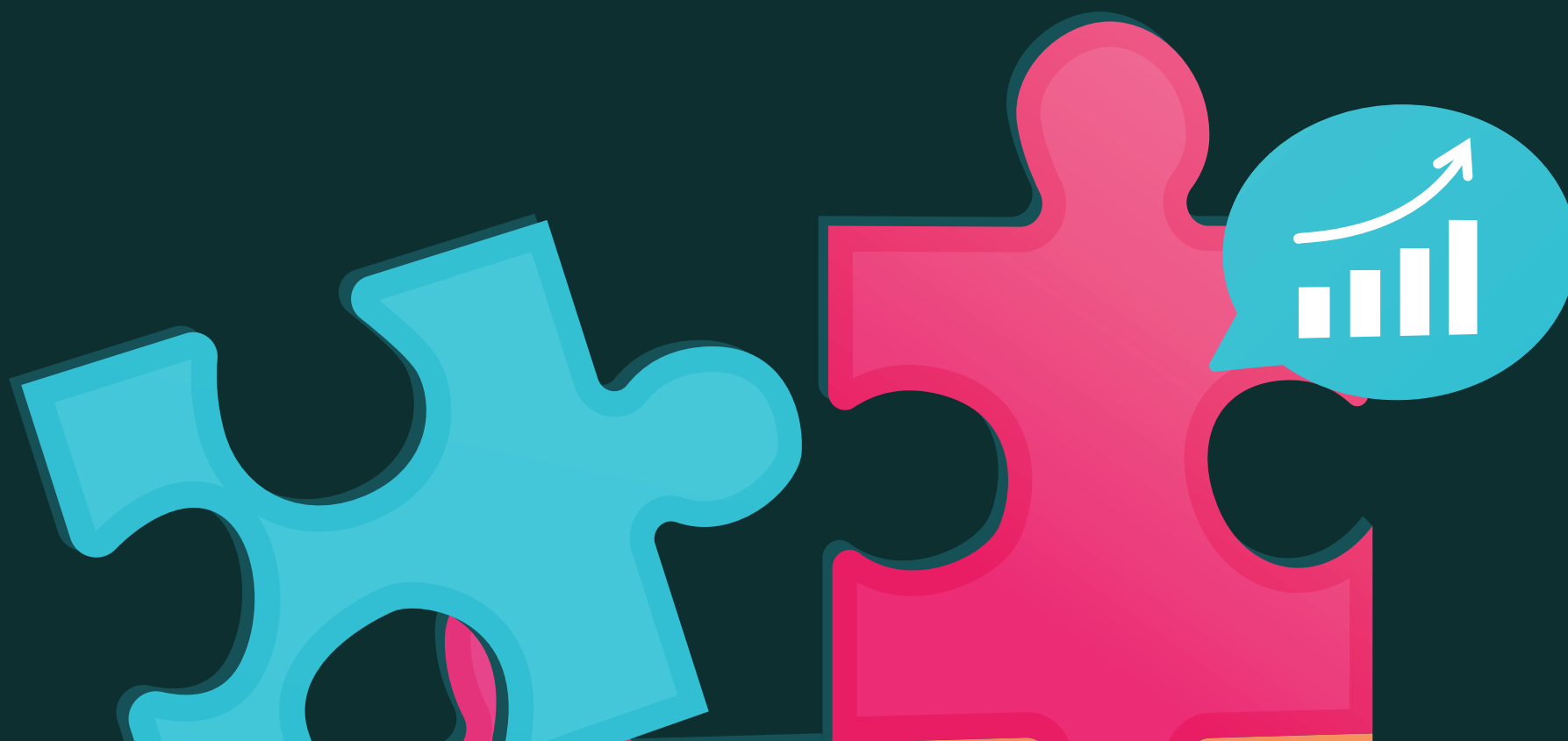
Who are the Main Stakeholders of Peppol?

The three main stakeholders of Peppol are the Peppol Authorities, the Peppol Service Providers, and the Peppol end users.

Peppol Authorities - These are generally government departments or agencies that are appointed by their governments to drive the adoption of Peppol within their jurisdictions. PAs are allowed to define the Peppol Authority Specific Requirements (PASR) that are applicable to the use of the network within their jurisdictions.

The PASR applies automatically to all Service Providers located within the jurisdiction of the PA. Currently, there are 18 Peppol Authorities, with OpenPeppol acting as the PA in jurisdictions without existing PAs.

Peppol Service Providers - These provide end users with access point services, as well as addressing and capability lookup services. Additional services include providing translation of data formats from the users' proprietary formats for business documents into the Peppol formats for transmission across the Peppol network.

There are more than 300 Peppol Service Providers around the world. When the end user sends an eInvoice, the Service Provider's access point transmits it to the recipient's access point. The recipient's AP then forwards the eInvoice to the recipient.

Peppol End Users - These are the buyers and sellers that send and receive business documents (including eInvoices). End users aren't required to be members of OpenPeppol to send and receive messages or trade electronically.

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