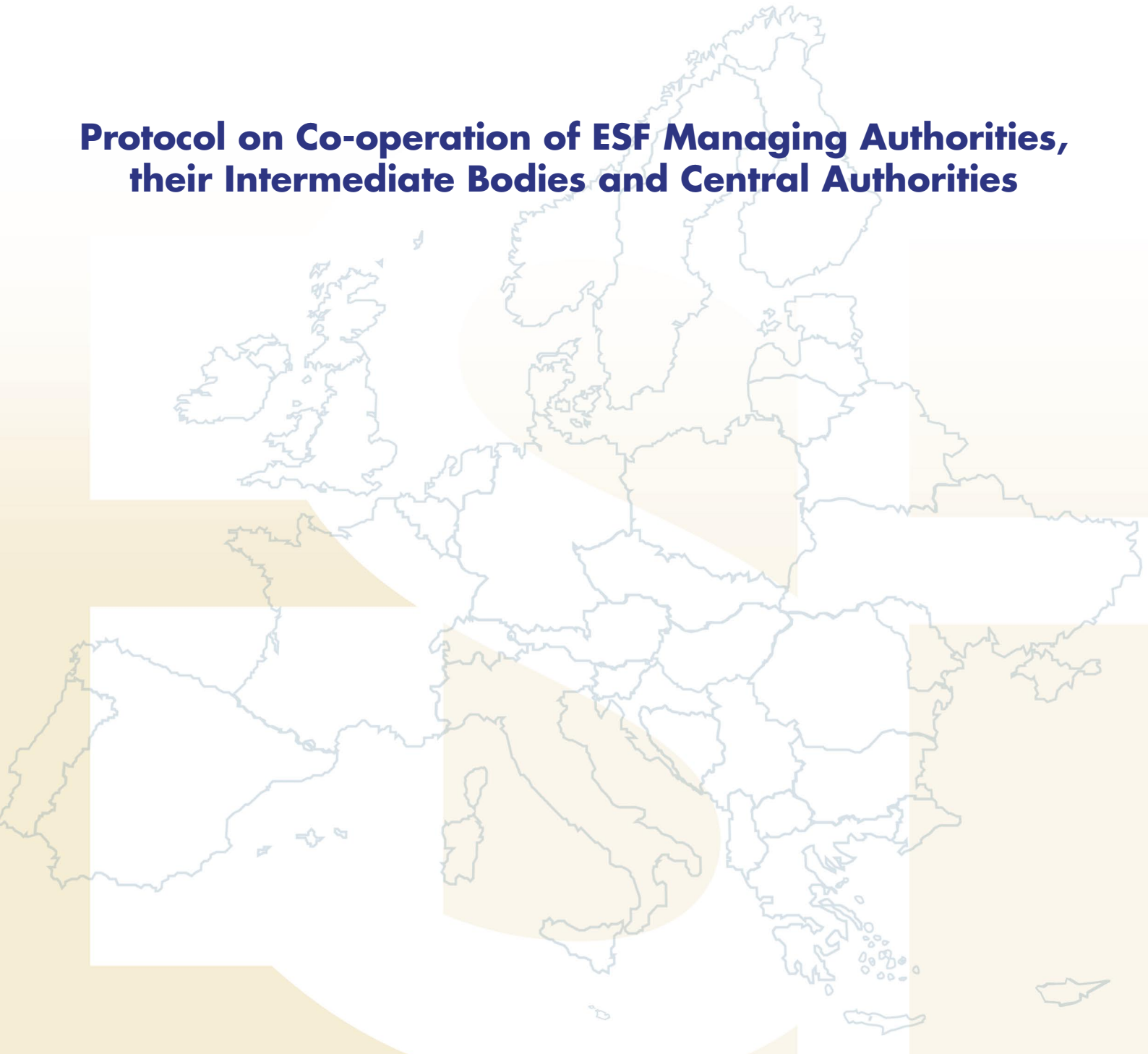




European Union
European Social Fund

Protocol on Co-operation of ESF Managing Authorities, their Intermediate Bodies and Central Authorities



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1

The undersigning Managing Authorities, Intermediate Bodies and Central Authorities of the European Social Fund, with respect to

- the common task of contributing to the priorities of the Community as regards strengthening economic and social cohesion by improving employment and job opportunities, encouraging a high level of employment and more and better jobs,
- the requirement to take account of the special needs of certain target groups on the labour market, especially those most in need,
- the objectives, priorities and tasks of the European Social Fund,
- support and synergy among transnational actions promoted by the European Commission, in particular by the Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities,

agree to collaborate with the aim to support and assist the design and delivery of ESF programmes, thus increasing the overall performance in the respective member states and regions.



2

The parties to this protocol agree to co-operate in the following areas:

- The multilateral exchange of experience, knowledge, analyses and evaluations in all thematic fields of the European Social Fund, as well as in areas of technical administration;
- The identification and exchange of best practice initiatives;
- The exploration of the possibility of bilateral and/or multilateral projects;
- The drafting of recommendations for the optimisation of future ESF activities to the European authorities.

The Collaboration can be in the form of

- The exchange of written material, documents and publications,
- The organisation of seminars and workshops,
- The mutual advice by experts (including peer reviews),
- The organisation of and participation in conferences;
- And the exchange of staff.

Details of co-operation are to be fixed in the Programme of Work.



3

The organisation of the co-operation shall be as follows:

All parties to this agreement are represented in the **Assembly of Partners** with equal rights. There is no burden imposed to any party beyond their voluntary commitment. All expenses (travel and accommodation, conferences, project costs etc.) are covered by each party itself unless there is a voluntary commitment to do otherwise.

A **President** is assigned on a rotating principle on half year basis, whose task is to suggest and, upon its decision by the members, support the execution of the programme of work in co-operation with the secretariat.

To support and facilitate the execution of the programme of work a **Secretariat** is set up. It shall take care of the basic structures of co-operation, coordinate the different activities, and serve as a contact point to members. It shall provide for the documentation and basic information of the network's actions and related activities. This secretariat will be placed in the Autonomous Province of Trento (with the support of Tecnostruttura delle Regioni per il Fondo Sociale Europeo di Roma), Italy.

The operating language of the network shall be English.

4

An annual **Programme of Work** will be decided upon by the way of unilateral agreement by all the undersigned partners. The Programme of Work will specify areas of co-operation between the undersigned partners regarding the key topics, events and projects to be realised, respectively.

The Programme of Work will be suggested by the managing authority in presidency.

5

This protocol does not limit the undersigning parties to form or participate in other agreements in any way.

Membership can be terminated by declaration at any time.