

**8<sup>th</sup> ESPAnet Conference 2010:  
Social Policy and the Global Crisis: Consequences and Responses**

**Abstract for Stream 2: Poverty and Social Exclusion (Bea Cantillon)**

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**Title: The Europeanization of Poverty Policies on the local level**

The risk of poverty is rising in Europe. Especially children represent a group that is increasingly negatively affected. Most distributional state measures are not sufficient to overcome those trends. The European Union wants to make aware of this increasing social and political problem by announcing the year 2010 as “European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion” with special focus on children. The EU not only seeks to develop better strategies for the national level but increasingly focuses on the role of the local level for the fight against poverty and exclusion. Here, social actors have the responsibility to alleviate the consequences of poverty and social exclusion locally.

However, political actors on the local level are increasingly affected by cut-backs of national state funding. As a reaction, there has been a rise of cooperation between the local and the European level. Local actors extensively try to widen their confines of financial and ideational resources with support by the EU, such as the European Social Funds. The funding is bound to principles and procedures and the EU also often determines the areas, target groups and projects. Local actors must plan and implement their projects according to EU-provisions in order to receive support.

Although there are vast numbers of local projects against poverty that are already initiated and supported by the European level, the political analysis of the impact of the EU on the local level suffers from a deficit. With special focus on the case of Germany, my article discusses the Europeanization of poverty policies on the local level. The paper investigates to which extent European strategies have become prevalent locally.