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# "Social Inclusion funded by Europe? The impact of the European Social Fund on local social and employment policies"

Abstract: This paper is interested in the effects which the European Social Fund (ESF) has on local social and employment policies in six European countries. It adapts a research perspective which combines both the usages of the ESF as a European resource and the impact this usage might have on the local level. By applying a fuzzy-set ideal type analysis, three different types of local responses to the ESF are identified: among the 18 local entities under study are 1) ‘careerists’, which use the ESF extensively and where also an impact can be observed, 2) ‘opportunists’ which use the ESF but where no impact can be observed, and 3) ‘refuseniks’, where no usage and no impact can be measured. Each of these types is characterized by specific institutional and structural patterns, a fact which allows for explorative reflections on causal mechanisms behind the usage and impact of the ESF.