

Dear partners and friends of COPE,

We are glad to inform you that the project “COPE - Combating Poverty in Europe” has successfully started. As a part of our dissemination strategy we will be sending a quarterly newsletter to all interested partners. In this first issue we will report about the Kick-Off-Meeting of COPE and the next tasks of the project. Furthermore, you will find information on the public relations of the project such as the web page, the flyer or the facebook account.

Kick-Off-Meeting: We had a very successful kick-off-meeting at the end of March hosted by the German Team. All partners spent two very motivating days at the University of Oldenburg full of stimulating presentations of each work package and fruitful discussions about the next steps. All partners agreed on a detailed working plan for the next months until the first progress meeting in Milan. Moreover, we discussed about the implementation of each research activity and decided about the general course of the project: In the first year, the focus will be on the national and the European level. The first will be concluded in 2012, the latter in the second year. Research on the local arena will be the task for 2013. The third year will be dedicated to the individual level and to summarizing and concluding publications.

First Progress Meeting (3/4 Sept. 2012): The aims of this meeting, which all project partners as well as the scientific advisory committee and some of our European stakeholders will attend, are to agree on the methodological and empirical framework for all further research and to prepare the European and the national case studies. The latter will be done by presenting a first draft of the national papers dealing with the architecture of the minimum income schemes in each involved country. These presentations are the first part of the national papers and serve as a background for the national case studies.

Homepage: By the end of March, COPE will launch the project homepage. The address is: <http://www.cope-research.eu>. The page will be full of useful information about the general aim of the project, its current status and will contain detailed descriptions of all work packages and involved partners. Information material such as the COPE flyer or recent publications of the project partners will be provided on the homepage, too.

Facebook Page: COPE has its own facebook page. Please join us on facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/COPEresearch>.

Cooperation: Currently, there are several EU-funded projects working on topics that are related to COPE's research focus. There are especially four projects with high thematic proximity:

- LOCALISE – Local Worlds of Social Cohesion (University Oldenburg)
<http://www.localise-research.eu>
- IMPROVE – Poverty Reduction in Europe (University Antwerp)
- WILCO – Welfare Innovations at the Local Level in Favor of Cohesion (University Nijmegen) <http://www.wilcoproject.eu>
- FLOWS – Impact of Local Welfare Systems on Female Labour Force Participation and Social Cohesion (University Aalborg) <http://www.flows-eu.eu>

Cooperation with these projects would bring synergetic effects from which COPE could certainly benefit. We already have first contacts with some of these projects and are discussing now, how cooperation between these projects could look like.

Conference Invitation: We would like to draw your attention to a workshop on “Integrated Employment and Activation Policies in a Multi-level Welfare System” organized by LOCALISE. The workshop will take place in Milan August 30-31 2012. The date is right before COPE's first progress meeting that will be held in Milan as well. Further information about the workshop can be found here: http://www.localise-research.eu/?page_id=9

Further Information and Contact: If you have any questions about the project, know someone who might be interested in the newsletter or need any further information about COPE please contact either Martin Heidenreich, scientific coordinator (martin.heidenreich@uni-oldenburg.de) or Dorothee Spannagel, project manager (dorothee.spannagel@uni-oldenburg.de).

On behalf of the whole COPE team, best regards,
Martin Heidenreich (scientific coordinator) & Dorothee Spannagel (project manager)