

## **Survival strategies and/or futurescapes? – Social work in times of welfare restrictions**

Along the last five years, Portugal had been under a programme of external assistance made of adjustment measures imposed and monitored by the so-called Troika (IMF, ECB and European Commission). Drastic reductions were implemented within the welfare field, with very severe consequences on life conditions of the many citizens namely those most deprived. These circumstances are also affecting the professional ethos of those working on the front line of social services and benefits. Social workers are an important part of these professionals and they see their role and recognition questioned due to the inadequacy and insufficiency of the support provided.

This paper aims to explore the main changes registered within social welfare and the effects on poverty and impoverishment and on the quality of the human ambience of local communities. The on-going political process of improvement of some of the previous restricted measures, is the context and opportunity to project this analysis in terms of restoring future ways of intervention. To take part in the rehabilitation of the public social sphere and of the welfare regime is a crucial domain open to a renewed professional investment of Portuguese social workers (and others working under similar conditions).