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**ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION****Support** - n.a.**Review Stage at time of this submission** - Preliminary searches.**Conflicts of interest** - None declared.**INPLASY registration number:** INPLASY202380107

**Amendments** - This protocol was registered with the International Platform of Registered Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Protocols (INPLASY) on 25 August 2023 and was last updated on 25 August 2023.

**INTRODUCTION**

**Review question / Objective** The review question seeks to answer the following research issue: "How do the identity and control criteria of the concept of Welfare Deservingness is related to populist movements (emerging after 2010 in Europe), and to the access to social protection services by vulnerable non-contributory social groups?"

This study aims to investigate whether the criteria of "Identity" and "Control" (two of the constructs of the CARIN Scale, Van Oorschot, 2000) of the concept of Welfare Deservingness may be related to the populist movements that have consolidated in the European political arena after 2010. Such evidence is cut out at the level of social protection systems, namely about their access by vulnerable social groups that do not subscribe to the contributory social security system.

According to the purposes of the study, the following themes of analysis were constructed: (I) The relationship between Welfare Deservingness criteria (control and identity) and access to social

protection systems; (ii) The relationship between populist movements and access to social protection services; (iii) The systematization of professional's practices of professionals in social protection systems; and (iv) The perception of social workers about welfare deservingness.

**Rationale** The consolidation of welfare Deservingness in the context of the severe economic and social crises that have been crossed Europe can be observed in the discourse and social practice of national governments since the 2008-2009 crisis and has materialized with the revival of nationalisms in the European Union (Wodak and Boukala, 2015; Fligstein et al., 2012 cited by Santos et al., 2021).

The crises, however, brought the growth of radicalization, Euroscepticism, and populism throughout Europe (Lapavitsas, 2019; Nunes 2013 cit. by Santos et al., 2021) and the re-emergence of the extremist movements which feedback the logic of exclusion and hierarchization of social merit based on the logic of contribution and retribution (ibidem). Currently, it's difficult to draw a

consistent narrative about Welfare Deservingness in Portugal.

The impact of austerity measures, post-crisis of 2008-09, on the notion of "Welfare Deservingness" in the Portuguese context, determines the need to deepen scientific knowledge in this area (Brito, 2019).

It's also of central importance for Social Work, as it can determine different professional procedures in accordance with regulations, not only political and regulatory but also in terms of the resources available in the management of inequalities, namely, in the programs and social measures accessible for the resolution of social issues.

**Condition being studied** The populist discourse follows the premise of dividing the world between "us" and "them" (Wodak, 2022). According to the author, the creation of the "others" is a reaction of fear in front of an uncertain future in which blaming what is foreign to the traditional system seems to be the immediate and quick solution for the return to stability (Wodak, 2022).

Migrants and refugees fall into the group of "Them", defined by "race", religion, or language that is not "ours". Wodak's study also concludes that "beyond the exclusion of 'others outside' - far-right populism also targets 'others below', i.e. the homeless, the unemployed and the beggars, usually denigrated as 'lazy', 'gypsies', 'scum', even 'parasites'". (Wodak, 2022, p. 11).

The criteria of Welfare Deservingness - CARIN - (Coughlin, 1980; Jeene, M; Larsen C., 2005; Van Oorschot, 2000; Van Oorschot & et al., 2013; Petterson, 1999), defined by van Oorschot are: Control, Attitude, Reciprocity, Identity and Need. They allow to measure the perception of different audiences about who has more or less rights, or about who deserves more or less universal solidarity and the associated social guarantees.

In this study, it should be noted that the methodological option of analyzing the Control and Identity criteria of the Welfare Deservingness concept was because these are the most debated on social protection schemes, as well as being considered by van Oorschot (2006) as the most important.

The Control criterion associated with the need dimension concerns individuals' control over, or responsibility for, their needs. In this case, the less control the citizen has over their need (namely in terms of deviations from regular life, such as illness, accident, death, aging, or another dimension of the life cycle), the more the citizen deserves support and guarantees from social protection schemes (Van Oorschot, 2000.).

On the other hand, the Identity criterion refers to the identity of the poor, i.e. their proximity to the

rich or their "sympathy". The closer they are to "us", the more they are deserving of social protection schemes and guarantees (Van Oorschot, 2000).

## METHODS

**Participant or population** Frontline professionals who implement social protection measures aimed at vulnerable groups who do not contribute to the social protection system.

**Intervention** Not applicable.

**Comparator** Not applicable.

**Study designs to be included** The approach that guides this research fits the exploratory and interpretive paradigm through a qualitative methodological strategy. Exploratory studies are carried out "especially when the chosen topic is little explored, making it difficult to formulate precise hypotheses and possible verification. Often exploratory research is the first stage of a broader investigation" (Vilelas, 2017, p. 177). The quote is illustrative of the research using the Systematic Literature Review method, using the PRISMA 2020 protocol as a data collection tool, and encompassing specialized bibliography, namely scientific articles. The information obtained was complemented by other information that did not undergo a careful selection, but whose use was fundamental to obtaining knowledge about the object of study (Grey Literature).

**Eligibility criteria** The articles selected for the present systematic literature review were based on the following inclusion criteria: a) qualitative empirical studies and, therefore, quantitative studies were eliminated; b) peer-reviewed articles - the peer-review process is the mediation process in the publication of scientific journals, 2019" and, thus, quantitative studies were eliminated; b) peer-reviewed articles - the peer review process is the mediation process in the publication of articles in scientific journals and consists of an evaluation of scientific works by reviewers, experts in the scientific field. c) articles analysing the association between Social Deservingness, populist movements and access to social protection services; d) articles written in English and/or Portuguese; e) studies published after 2010, since it is the period under analysis of this dissertation; f) the population to be considered was individuals accessing social protection services; g) although populist movements are growing worldwide, the space to be considered will be Europe. This systematic literature review had the following

exclusion criteria: a) systematic literature review studies, in order to avoid duplicating the objective of the study; b) studies on access to justice or health, since the aim is to obtain data on access to the social protection system; c) articles that did not specifically include two of the three concepts under analysis; d) studies prior to 2010.

**Information sources** The search was carried out in the Scopus and Web of Science search engines, using the following descriptors: "identity AND control AND welfare deservingness", "welfare deservingness AND populism", "control AND identity AND welfare deservingness AND right wings", "welfare deservingness AND non-contributing vulnerable social groups" and "populism AND non-contributing vulnerable social groups". The selection took place between March and May 2023. Initially, the search resulted in 2143 articles, 2019 from the Scopus database and 124 from the Web of Science.

Consequently, the search was narrowed down based on the definition of specific areas of interest. In the Web of Science database, the following areas were selected: "sociology", "social work", "political science", "multidisciplinary psychology", "social issues", "social psychology" and "interdisciplinary social sciences". In the Scopus database, the refined areas were "social sciences", "decision sciences" and "multidisciplinary". This selection resulted in 1891 papers (1794 from Scopus and 66 from Web of Science), 252 of which were eliminated in total, 225 from the Scopus database, and 58 from the Web of Science database. In both databases, articles with open access were filtered, resulting in a total of 728 (698 from the Scopus database and 30 from Web of Science); 1163 articles were eliminated because they did not have open access.

After this step, the results found (728) were exported to the Zotero software. Of the 728 articles identified, 112 were eliminated for being duplicates, reducing the number to 616.

In this phase, the analysis of the titles and abstracts has begun. A total of 519 articles were eliminated (a. 36 articles because they only address to health and/or justice; b. 462 articles because they did not involve two of the concepts under analysis, c. 21 articles whose analysis focused on a context other than Europe).

Finally, 97 articles were selected for full-text reading, of which 88 were eliminated because they did not specifically address two of the topics under analysis. The search culminated in the selection of 9 articles for analysis.

It has also been used the grey literature, namely the book *Politics of Fear: The Shameless Normalisation of Far-right Discourse*, by Ruth

Wodak (2022). The information provided by the book was important to better understand the characteristics of extremist movements and social polarisation in line with the theme and objectives of the study and, also, with the recent 2020 amendment to the PRISMA Protocol (Page et al., 2021).

**Main outcome(s)** The analysis of evidence will respect the PRISMA 2020 protocol, using a thematic analysis, that will include a description and discussion about the analytical themes and concepts of this study. The results will be illustrated through tables and described in a narrative way using the main objectives as the guide codes for meta-analyses.

**Quality assessment / Risk of bias analysis** The operationalization of the protocol guidelines of the PRISMA model was rigorously considered. The research was carried out in continuous discussion with another researcher, with supervisory functions and circular questioning on the work developed. The analysis of the process and evaluation of the methodological rigor and quality of the study was carried out by an independent scientific reviewer using the CASP - Qualitative Checklist questionnaire (Critical Appraisal Skills Programme, 2018).

**Strategy of data synthesis** The use of the Meta-analyses will integrate the final discussion of the data obtained, providing a general interpretation of the results and discussing the limitations of the review process used. For further impact and publication, the study will respect the results obtained in the thematic approach which will respect the specific goals of the literature review namely I) The relationship between Welfare Deservingness criteria (control and identity) and access to social protection systems; (ii) The relationship between populist movements and access to social protection services; (iii) The systematization of professional's practices of professionals in social protection systems; and (iv) The perception of social workers about welfare deservingness.

**Subgroup analysis** Not Applicable.

**Sensitivity analysis** The study will embrace only literature and won't have an intervention approach, therefore the research will not involve sensitive data.

**Language restriction** Portuguese and English.

**Country(ies) involved** Portugal.

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**Keywords** welfare deservingness; social work; populism; social protection; CARIN; identity; control.

**Dissemination plans** The study makes part of the research to obtain a master's in social work. Therefore it will make part of the academic repository of Coimbra University and after the final assessment, it will be disseminated by publishing it in a national and international scientific journal.

#### **Contributions of each author**

Author 1 - Patricia Pereira - The Author 1 prepares and develops the protocol, will be part of the selection and data extraction process, and will prepare the manuscript for this review.

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Author 2 - Clara Santos - Author 2 supervised the creation of this manuscript, provided research oversight, critically reviewed, and provided full feedback on this protocol. The author will be included in the selection and data extraction process as a secondary reviewer and collaborate with a critical review.

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Author 3 - Vanessa Nunes - Author 3 assisted in the creation of this manuscript, critically reviewed it, and provided feedback. The author will be responsible for the quality assessment of all phases of the systematic review. Provided research oversight, the author will also critically review the manuscript for this review.

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