



INSTITUTO SUPERIOR
DE CIÊNCIAS SOCIAIS
E POLÍTICAS
UNIVERSIDADE DE LISBOA

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Social policy and integrated governance: the Social Network Programme

Name: Ana Cláudia Dias Ribeiro

Orientadora: Professora Doutora Ana Cláudia Esgaio

Coorientador: Professor Doutor Hermano Duarte de Almeida e Carmo

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ABSTRACT

Social Policy takes a central place in contemporary society in promotion of social cohesion and well-being, seeking sustainable development through a system of public policies. Facing wicked social problems, networks emerge as an alternative in social organisation, seeking that interorganisational relationships translate into integrated governance, sustained by the stimulation of a climate of trust that enables the generation of social capital.

We sought to characterise and analyse the governance model underlying the organisational network that constitutes the Social Network Programme, and to analyse its relevance to the development of social capital in the context of social policy.

A predominantly qualitative study was developed, having been territorially delimited to the Social Network of Palmela. After an exploratory approach, observation and documentary research, an interview survey* (conducted to 24 respondents) was used, focusing on collaborative leadership, enlightened participation, quality communication and adequate evaluation.

The analysis and discussion of the data allowed the convergence of the model with the analysed Programme to be verified. The Social Network is seen as fundamental to the leadership of entities and the organisation of resources in an effective and efficient way.

However, facing scenarios of uncertainty and new challenges, of which the transfer of competencies and the pandemic are the most significant examples, constraints and opportunities for improvement are pointed out, allowing this public policy to be rethought in the instrumental, relational and strategic domains, anchored in trust.

Keywords: Social policy, social network, integrated governance, collaboration, social capital, trust