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Social Policy in Dispute: Perceptions of Social Workers on the Minimum Income Schemes

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ABSTRACT This paper investigates the Minimum Income (MI) scheme in Spain by analyzing the content of semi-structured interviews conducted with key informants (social workers of regional and local administrations). Drawing on the concepts of welfare regime and the approach that views social policy in terms of cultural practices, this study has focused on the perceptions on the policy process of public servants. The study confirms the initial hypothesis that the Minimum Income scheme was designed for a context of moderate unemployment and social exclusion, and in order to give response to the current context of massive poverty and social exclusion, the Decree that regulates it must be updated. It identifies five shortcomings in the MI policy, which include the delay in the concession, the lack of coordination among public administrations, the non-binding character of the "social report" of the social workers, the lack of integration efficiency, and the absence of control and monitoring procedures.