

## **Socialists achieve major victory with the introduction of a "childhood guarantee" to tackle child poverty**

The S & D Group has on the 26th November a major victory with the introduction of a "childhood guarantee" to help children get out of poverty risk situations. Today, in Europe, 20 million children live in families that cannot afford even a daily meal. Against the worsening of public services, the European Parliament now requires the Commission and the Member States to implement a "childhood assurance" so that "all children in poverty have access to free health care, free education, decent housing and adequate nutrition as part of the integrated European plan to combat child poverty, including both a childhood warranty as support programs and opportunities for parents to leave social exclusion and integrate the labor market."

According to Maria João Rodrigues, Vice-president of the socialist counter to the economic and social areas, and one of the promoters of the proposal, "European leaders have to admit that something is fundamentally wrong if, despite all the measures implemented, social inequalities and child poverty continue to increase. It is urgent to invest in children, it is indeed the best investment a society can make. The MEP stresses that "one in four children in the EU are at risk of poverty or social exclusion, ie there is no time to lose," defend clear measures when it comes to access to education, child care, housing and services of health." Children of the guarantee must be seen as a fundamental instrument for the stability and prosperity of the European Union as a whole," she concluded.

The Socialists consider that "covering these areas of action, through national and European plans, the EU will give the opportunity to millions of children to considerably improve their conditions and life and its prospects for the future."

The document approved this week also notes worrying figures for the drop-out rate in Portugal, which is above 20%, while the average rate in the EU stood at 13%. Portugal is also named as one of the countries where the risk of child poverty persists in families where parents work.