CICS.NOVA: LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE

2022 Action Plan

CICS.NOVA

INTERDISCIPLINARY CENTRE
OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

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CICS.NOVA
CENTRO INTERDISCIPLINAR
DE CIÊNCIAS SOCIAIS

FCT
Fundação
para a Ciência
e a Tecnologia

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CICS.NOVA: looking into the future
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The Action Plan for the year 2022, entitled CICS.NOVA: *Looking into the future*, stems from two considerations: the assessment of the activities of the research centre over the last year and a half, and the enormous motivation to continue the commitments assumed by the current CICS.NOVA board in 2020. Accordingly, this document represents a commitment to continuity and, whenever necessary, adjustment of the strategy originally conceived since 2020. The present Action Plan is based on the assessment made in the Activity Report 2020 and identifies Strategic Objectives (SO) that translate into priority lines of action. These aim to facilitate the implementation of the strategy set by the current board of CICS.NOVA.

There are three Strategic Objectives for the year 2022:

- SO1 Reinforce the identity and culture of CICS.NOVA

- SO2 Boost research

- SO3 Strengthen the articulation between research activities and training

SO1 – Reinforce the identity and culture of CICS.NOVA

Promoting a culture of strong scientific research is essential to (re)built the identity of CICS.NOVA. It is strategic to strengthen such culture, ensuring that the research team becomes an ambassador of CICS.NOVA. CICS.NOVA organizational and scientific culture should be a guideline for all researchers, framing their decisions, work relations within academia and beyond. However, it is not enough to define values and formulate a direction, as embodied in CICS.NOVA mission. It is necessary to create strategies and actions that disseminate these values within CICS.NOVA, and, simultaneously, strengthen our identity and culture.

First, it is necessary to adjust the discourses and communication of CICS.NOVA, presenting us as a research unit that, through the promotion of critical thinking, aims to be recognized as an international reference in social sciences' research (underlining the relevance of our scientific outputs and encouraging its qualitative growth) and as a first-line promoter of the societal integration of scientific knowledge. This integration must take place both through knowledge transfer activities, giving public and scientific projection to the regular activities of CICS.NOVA, as well as through the involvement of our researchers in academic activities (undergraduate degrees; Master's; Doctorates and open courses) and the development of scientific outreach activities.

This discourse should also conveniently highlight the distinctive features of CICS.NOVA as compared to other research units, namely:

i) The eclecticism of CICS.NOVA's scientific activities as translated into its two main disciplinary domains (sociology and geography) and additional links with the life sciences, environmental sciences and engineering, which give a particularly original and comprehensive character to CICS.NOVA's scientific research.

ii) The national reach of CICS.NOVA's scientific activities as expressed in the dispersion of its 4 regional poles located in other higher education institutions, and which defines a unique identity in the social sciences' Portuguese context. This territorial scope shall be the basis for the academic collaboration and interdisciplinary research between researchers among and within different research groups, bringing together various contributions from different places and regions and, potentially, different theoretical and methodological perspectives.

This being said, it is crucial to reaffirm our commitment to a scientific development that is embedded in society, not limited to exclusive territories, either scientific or geographic, but that, on the contrary, expands to break down not only regional institutional borders but also national ones, and that is deeply rooted in freedom of thought.

In this sense, the following lines of action are presented:

a) Interdisciplinarity

To design a strategy that allows giving visibility to/increasing the centre's interdisciplinary components, developed both from social problems and from theoretical and/or epistemological questions. For this purpose, it is important to:

- identify research dynamics within the Research Groups that call for various disciplinary areas;

- highlight activities that integrate natural and social sciences contributions.

b) Research Groups, Thematic Lines and Teams

To rethink and redefine the structure of CICS.NOVA. As it stands, it is an overly complex structure, with 6 groups, 21 research teams, 2 thematic lines, 5 observatories, 4 regional poles, which not always represents or corresponds to the research dynamics of the centre. For this purpose, it is important to:

i. Evaluate the research dynamics by group and regional pole, through the groups' coordinators and in articulation with the Board;

ii. Make adjustments within each group, at team level, when necessary;

iii. Streamline, within each group, the research activities and respective discussion; whenever possible, to promote the articulation between PhD and PhD researchers;

iv. Promote transversal activities to the various groups; schedule meetings with the representatives of the thematic lines to articulate activities.

v. Identify teams/niches of working groups on themes that cut across all groups.

c) Articulation between regional poles/ scientific synergies of national scope

The correspondence between CICS.NOVA's national scope and the research that has been carried out, as well as the communication between regional poles, needs to be strengthened. For this purpose it is important to:

i. Promote actions aimed at the mutual knowledge of research activities developed at different regional poles and, whenever adjusted to the interests of researchers, promote collaborative projects that mobilize the multipolar composition of CICS.NOVA;

ii. Foster strategies aimed at translating the dispersion of CICS.NOVA into the design of nationwide research projects or others that mobilize case studies at the locations of our different regional poles;

iii. Give public expression to the national implantation of CICS.NOVA (North, South, Center, Islands), since it is one of its most distinctive features.

d) Observatories, laboratories, and networks/partnerships

The 5 observatories of CICS.NOVA and the public reach of their activities could be reinforced in terms of valuing CICS.NOVA's identity and its positioning/integration within the scope of civil society. For this purpose, it is important to:

i. Give public expression (through CICS.NOVA website, social networks, and others) to the institutional framework and activities of CICS.NOVA's observatories, valuing them scientifically and socially, as poles of science/society interaction and/or knowledge transfer;

ii. Define criteria for typifying and advertising the networks and partnerships in which CICS.NOVA's researchers are currently involved.

e) Internal communication and public projection

Reinforcing the identity and culture of CICS.NOVA will also involve a fine articulation with the centre's internal and external communication. The goal is to give real expression to the activities of CICS.NOVA's and to increase its public projection. For this purpose, it is important to:

i. Reformulate our website to render it more dynamic and appealing;

ii. Promote joint activities at the level of teams, groups, thematic lines, in order to enhance mutual knowledge among researchers, a feeling of belonging to CICS.NOVA and the recognition of its identifying features.

　　Main activities already planned, among others:
　　- 5th cycle of the CICS.NOVA Ongoing Research Seminar (Permanent Seminar with frequency to be defined)
　　- Ciências Sociais à Conversa (Talking with the Social Sciences, every 2 months)
　　- CICS.NOVA Annual Forum (annual meeting with format and date to be defined)
　　- LabId Talks (bi-annual, promoted by the Laboratory of Ideas)

iii. Clarify the critical importance of disclosing researchers' activities to the research unity, particularly when there is a publication, the financing of a project, the organization of a conference or the development of activities with public projection;

iv. Encourage the use of CICS.NOVA's signature in professional emails of CICS.NOVA's researchers;

v. Implement mandatory affiliation to CICS.NOVA in the publications of all CICS.NOVA's integrated researchers, collaborators and PhD students.

SO2 – Boost research

a) Projects

The development of excellent research necessarily implies the existence of research projects funded under national and international calls. In this regard, it is important to recognize that CICS.NOVA has been improving its indicators, at the level of researchers who coordinate and/or participate in projects. However, there is still room for additional improvement. In this regard, the following stand out: the relative small number of applications for national and international projects in face of the total number of researchers; the minor articulation between CICS.NOVA's regional poles in terms of applications and research projects; the relative small public visibility, namely in terms of the website, of the projects currently in progress. The following lines of action are proposed to increase the number of funded research projects:

i. To stimulate applications for national and international calls, with a special focus on the current Framework Program - Horizon Europe (for instance through the participation in training sessions promoted by FCSH and CICS.NOVA).

ii. Without prejudice to all the projects or areas identified by the researchers, to identify thematic areas with projects with a national dimension that can benefit from the articulation between the various regional poles of CICS.NOVA.

iii. To improve the communication of the results of applications, giving visibility to successful applications and the projects themselves (for example, giving visibility to published scientific articles; organized conferences; public projection of results or other activities).

iv. To identify projects with a website and explore the possibility of hosting them either on the centre's website or on the faculty's website.

v. To reorganize the public communication of CICS.NOVA's research projects in our website. This reorganization should take in consideration the funding entity (national/international) and the scientific area(s) of the projects.

b) Scientific production in general

The increase in the number and quality of CICS.NOVA's publications in the last year and a half is unquestionable. In fact, CICS.NOVA has been significantly improving its indicators in terms of scientific production in general. However, we are aware that there is still room for improvement, and some particular points should be considered in this matter: the relative imbalance between the number of researchers and of scientific articles; the relative small expression of our outputs (papers and books) in the most valued national and international scientific outlets; the presence of co-authorships, without corresponding unfolding; the presence, though at smaller levels, of publications without peer review. The following lines of action are proposed to increase scientific production:

i. To encourage full-time researchers (without prejudice of others) to publish in indexed journals, particularly in in first and second quartile journals indexed in Scopus and Web of Science.

ii. To maximize the opportunities provided by CICS.NOVA journals to publish the work of CICS.NOVA researchers, particularly those who are not researching full time and PhD researchers.

iii. To encourage PhD students to publish, considering their numerical expression, on the one hand, and their career stage, on the other. This should be accomplished namely through internal and external activities such as workshops on scientific writing among others.

c) Applied research

Without prejudice to the need of rethinking this generic category and the importance of applied research in terms of funding, hiring researchers, and knowledge transfer, it is necessary to:

- strengthen the translation of applied research into the academic/scientific outputs most valued by the funding entities;

- further increase the societal projection of these projects.

The following lines of action are proposed:

i. To define strategies to engender additional scientific outputs for these activities, considering that these projects are effectively based on research tasks, but very seldom result in peer-reviewed academic publications. In this context, the possibilities of translating the reports delivered to contracting entities into book format or in special issues of periodicals shall be evaluated.

ii. To look into the clauses of the so-called applied research contracts, namely in what concerns the non-disclosure of results. In this regard:

- we need to raise awareness among researchers so that future applied research contracts do not include this type of clause; whenever not possible, publications with the financing entities and partners should be negotiated, stressing the relevance of these outputs for the research community and minimizing the effects of this type of clause, for example through the guarantee of anonymity, the establishment of embargo periods, or other options that prove to be important;

- on the other hand, and following the need to think about the category itself, it is important to properly typify these activities, even when they do not have a strictly academic translation (books, chapters, articles), in order to give them proper public and scientific projection;

iii. Accordingly, there is also a need to produce indicators regarding this type of investigation articulated with the objectives of sustainable development – possibly working with the SDG Compass indicators.

d) CICS.NOVA Editions

In this context, the strategy already under implementation shall be continued, with the aim of leading to the indexing of the various journals in a set of databases (namely in Scopus and WoS), as well as to an adequate projection within the national and international scientific community. Likewise, the work developed within the scope of the book collections of CICS.NOVA should be continued. Lines of action:

i. Continuing the already implemented strategy aimed at indexing journals and, more generally, at increased projection within the national and international scientific community (jointly with the journal's editorial boards).

SO3 – Strengthen the articulation between research activities and training

It is important to continue and reinforce the articulation of Research Activities with Training, namely with Doctorates and Master's Degrees offered by the Organic Units to which CICS.NOVA is associated to. Greater convergence between the activities of CICS.NOVA and the Doctoral and Master's courses to which the centre is formally linked allows leveraging the possibilities of articulation between the teaching-learning processes and the research processes, namely through direct contact between students and researchers, but also with external entities with whom CICS.NOVA establishes protocols, opening up opportunities for students and researchers (for example, in terms of supervision of dissertations/projects; insertion of students in research projects, within the scope of CICS.NOVA). For this purpose, it is important to:

i. produce a clearer picture of the teaching offer in which CICS.NOVA is involved, including free options in Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral degrees; free courses; summer and winter schools;

ii. produce a general and up-to-date database of Master's and Doctoral students, by degree, and by Research Group, in order to define their profiles (research, professional training, others);

iii. assess the availability of non-teaching researchers for the supervision or co-supervision of Master's and Doctoral students; give public visibility to this availability, making available to new students a list of possible advisors and possible areas of investigation; make this information available on the researchers' pages on the CICS.NOVA website;

iv. articulate with the coordinators of Master's and Doctoral programs in order to carry out activities promoting the interconnection of integrated researchers and PhD researchers.

The following initiatives and/or action strategies are planned:

a) Regular initiatives

- **Open day** (open to undergraduate and graduate levels) to be held biannually: presentation of the conditions for hosting CICS.NOVA; promotion and dissemination of projects (Master's and PhD).

- **Support for applications for Doctoral grants**: encourage Doctoral students to apply for FCT grants with CICS.NOVA as the host unit, through two sessions to support applications: a first, with CICS.NOVA researchers who have had participated in Doctoral evaluation panels from different scientific areas; and a second one, to discuss the applications.

- **Incentive to scientific productivity of doctoral students**: attribution of an incentive to scientific productivity to support the scientific activities of CICS.NOVA Doctoral researchers (next expected date: March 2022).

- **Annual meeting with Doctoral and Master's students**: presentation and discussion of CICS.NOVA activities and initiatives, with the aim of encouraging students' participation in the centre's initiatives.

- **International PhD student seminar**: organization of online seminars with internationally recognized researchers in the areas of Doctoral research, based on suggestions by PhD researchers (regularity: quarterly).

b) Other Initiatives (without prior scheduling)

- **Scientific writing workshop**: directed at supporting the writing of article drafts by Master's and Doctoral students. Participants to be selected through a call for papers. During the workshops, the drafts would be prepared for posterior submission for publication. The call can be open to all themes or can be transversal to several areas but directed to a specific theme.

- **Specific tools workshops**: eg. creation of bibliographic databases (Mendeley, Zotero); systematic literature review (Endnote); qualitative data analysis software (Maxqda, Nvivo); statistical analysis (SPSS); maps (Arcmap online); surveys (Kobotoolbox); English tools (Grammarly, Grammarlookup; Linguee); social network analysis.

- **Open access workshop**: interactive session hosted by CICS.NOVA (presentation of a set of Full Open Access journals; research tips on Web of Science and Scopus).

- Creation of **short videos** where researchers present their work in about 3 minutes.

c) Targeted action strategies

- **Offering of curricular internships**: welcoming undergraduate (2nd and 3rd year) students to carry out a curricular internship (two months) within the scope of ongoing projects (e.g., fieldwork, preparation and data analysis, etc.).

- **Creation of a database of advisors** available for Master's and Doctoral degrees, accessible on the CICS.NOVA website.

- **Invitation of professors of Master's and Doctoral degrees associated to CICS.NOVA** to attend Ongoing Seminars with their respective students.

- **Promotion and dissemination of CICS.NOVA Doctoral degrees** among Master's students, namely through Supervisors, Coordinators, and Departments (secretariats).

- **Promotion of the organization of RG initiatives** specifically oriented towards the discussion of research work by Master's and Doctoral students.

- **Systematic advertising of public defenses** of Master's and Doctoral thesis supervised by CICS.NOVA researchers.

d) Cross-cutting action strategies

- To stimulate the proposal of free options by CICS.NOVA researchers (as a teaching curricular unit or as part of a research project) and make their dissemination faster and wider (not limited to the faculty's website).

- To strengthen the connection between CICS.NOVA and the Sociology and Geography departments (improve contact with the respective departments, namely, their coordinators and the respective secretariats).

- To strengthen the articulation between CICS.NOVA and the Coordination of Hubs in the field of education/training.

- To encourage the participation of students in national congresses (APS and APG).

- To integrate these activities under a single initiative such as "Academia CICS.NOVA", which would have visibility on the website and in the various materials/social media of CICS.NOVA.

CICS.NOVA Research Groups: Action Plans

RG1: Social Inequalities and Public Action

The following reflection is based, on one hand, on a more quantitative analysis (namely using the 2020 production indicators) and on the other on a more qualitative analysis, namely based on the perception of the RG strengths and weaknesses.

Although the existence of some important aspects of the RG1 Dynamics (its capacity to attract PhD students and the capability to capture funding through projects (FCT and others), there are several aspects in which an improvement is highly recommended. First and foremost, its low production in terms of papers in indexed scientific journals (Scopus and/or WOS). Instead, the RG1 presents a high volume of publication in other indicators that are not so relevant in the current scientific context, namely book chapters in national publishers with no peer review.

Some of these aspects might be explained due to the fact that most of the RG1 integrated researchers are full time professors. But also, the considerable number of PhD students do not demonstrate a significant capacity in terms of publication in indexed scientific journals (Scopus and/or WOS).
The RG1 leadership has to promote initiatives and concrete actions in order to improve and promote the group's quantitative outputs, namely regarding the publication dynamics, and to deepen the involvement of its PhD students in the center's activities also publication outputs.

The following aspects relate to specific strategic points of improvement and the corresponding initiatives to encourage/promote them:

1. **Increase the number of publications in indexed journals**

- Disseminate call for papers relevant for the scientific thematic developed in RG1;

- Host regular meetings gathering all integrated researchers to discuss current publishing opportunities;

- Host regular meetings with our PhD students to encourage publications on open call for papers within their different areas of research;

- To organize workshops on scientific writing, and other training activities related to publication, open to all PhD students as well as all the other researchers.

2. **To stimulate the involvement of the RG1 PhD students within the center's activity**

- To promote and organize workshops and training activities that are appealing to the development of the PhD/Master's students' research (scientific writing; digital and software tools like NVivo, Maxqda, SPSS, Mendeley, etc);

- To establish regular sessions for students to present their current stage of research and to provide them an opportunity to discuss their research with other RG1 PhD/Master's students as well as other RG1 integrated researchers (this is currently the only RG that doesn't not promote this type of activity);

- To promote and encourage PhD/Master's students presentation's in Portuguese Sociological Association Congress (APS);

- To encourage their participation in CICS.NOVA initiatives like the CICS.NOVA Ongoing Seminar, conferences, workshops, lectures, Labid Talks, Ciências Sociais à Conversa, etc.

3. **To attract new Master's and PhD students to RG1**

- To narrow ties with FCSH departments in order to disseminate the RG1 activities within the undergraduate students;

- Establish the Open day and its follow-up day as every year initiative to welcome new students (within the RG1 and the centre's Master's and Doctoral offer) taking advantage of this moment to present and publicize the centre's research and researchers;

-To organize a list of researchers and their current research interests to be provided to new Master's and Doctoral offer in order to promote the coaptation of possible tutorship for RG1 integrated researchers.

4. Encourage national and international project applications or supervision of individual applications (FCT Doctoral Fellowships; ERS Grants, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowships - MSCA-IF, etc.)

- To provide information about the opening of the calls and specifications;

- Promote support and clarification sessions regarding the above mention open calls (like done in the past).

5. Increase national and international research projects with funding

- To promote common research proposals with national and international scope across RG1 thematic research areas (like already developed and materialized in the past in a FCT Call);

- To host regular meetings to analyse open calls and tenders to develop research proposals (namely during the open period of the calls)

- To take advantage to the international research networks that already involve RG1 researchers to establish common partnerships for research proposals (ESA-RN11; ISA-RC51, etc).

RG2: Citizenship, Work and Technology

Since 2020, the research group Citizenship, Work and Technology (RG2) of CICS.NOVA has continued to develop relevant research in its areas of expertise, namely Work, Organizations and Professional Trajectories, Technology, Communication and Risk, Political Participation, Activism and Leadership and Rights, Politics and Justice. During this time, our group was extremely successful in securing national and international funding for team projects and individual grants, including in co-creation projects, and was able to translate its activities into relevant scientific outputs as well as to develop significant outreach activities. While this scenario is extremely successful and deserves to be acknowledged, in the following years we should aim for a sustained growth of the quality of our research, participation of our researchers in the most relevant academic debates in our areas of expertise, and the adjustment of critical points of our activities. This considered, there are three areas in which RG2 can further strengthen its positioning, both within CICS.NOVA and within the academic community. In the following years, RG2 will contribute to:

1. **Reinforce the identity and culture of CICS.NOVA and RG2**

Since 2020, RG2 members have been participating on online group meetings aiming, on the one hand, to get acquainted with each other's work and to discuss past and future RG2 activities, and, on the other, to contribute to build CICS.NOVA's research identity, understood as a critical step towards the scientific success of our research centre. Attendance was quite encouraging, with between a third and half of our group members being present, and discussions were dynamic. During these years, and in addition to the Ongoing Seminar of CICS.NOVA, in which RG2 researchers participated during 2021, we have also initiated a seminar series to discuss the ongoing scientific activities of Master's and PhD researchers of our research group. The participants considered these opportunities as extremely important for the continuance of their work, but attendance was limited and thus knowledge of others' work and community bonds were difficult to establish.

In the following years, these and other initiatives involving all RG2 researchers, including the organization of a first conference on "Citizenship, work and technology" should be encouraged since they seem to be an indispensable path towards a firm sedimentation of our identity, research activities and for potentiating collaborations between our research group members.

2. Boost research

While we have 39 integrated researchers, only 8 of these are fully dedicated to develop research activities, with others mostly having a very significant part of their time dedicated to teaching. This constitutes a major asset for the articulation between teaching and research, but a setback in terms of the expected scientific productivity for such a large research group. In the following years, four different strategies could be used to overcome our current limitations.

- First, to develop specific activities aiming to attract and retain full time researchers, including continuing to support future applications to individual grants (FCT, ERC, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, "La Caixa" Foundation, AXA research Fund and others);

- Second, to develop a strategy to articulate the work of our researchers and promote collaborative efforts in grant applications. The above-mentioned organization of a conference on Citizenship, Work and Technology should be considered as a first effort towards this aim;

- Third, to promote the translation of the extensive teaching experience of our researchers into scientific outputs, advertising calls for scientific papers or books specifically targeting teaching expertise in social sciences. Fourth, to support scientific writing and publication submissions of RG2 researchers through the promotion of the participation of our researchers on scientific writing workshops and the dissemination of call for papers in our areas of expertise.

Altogether, these activities are expected to contribute to the continuous improvement of RG2 academic standards, which is of the utmost importance towards the consolidation of CICS.NOVA in the academic community.

3. Strengthen the articulation between research activities and training

Presently, RG2 integrates 27 PhD researchers among which only 2 have PhD fellowships. While this implies that we are reaching different types of populations, which can be translated into broader opportunities for diversified interactions and cross-fertility, it also means that most of our PhD researchers cannot be fully dedicated to their research projects. To overcome our present constrains, in the following years, we should develop a strategy to attract and retain full-time PhD researchers.

This can be accomplished through CICS.NOVA's continued support to the application to FCT individual PhD fellowships that should be complemented with the support to the application to other funding mechanisms, and by the integration of PhD researchers in RG2 team projects. In addition, the integration of undergraduate and graduate students.

In RG2, research projects should be promoted through the dissemination of a list of projects or researchers who are interested in welcoming and integrating undergraduate and graduate students. In this respect, the participation of our researchers, who many times have full time teaching duties, in initiatives of the undergraduate and graduate programmes that are associated with CICS.NOVA (such as the Open day and others) is particularly relevant. Also, it is critical to stimulate the participation of Master's and PhD researchers in RG2 and CICS.NOVA initiatives targeting all researchers (such as the Ongoing Seminar, workshops on particular tools for research and others) and, specifically, to promote broader scientific discussion of Master's and PhD research projects and outputs. This discussion was initiated through the development of a specific seminar series that discusses RG2 Master's and PhD researchers' ongoing activities, but needs to reach an increased number of researchers through an improvement in the communication of the relevance of such initiatives and/or through its articulation with similar initiatives of other research groups of CICS.NOVA.

Strengthening the involvement of undergraduate and graduate students in CICS.NOVA's activities and potentiating the full-time commitment of Master's and PhD researchers to scientific activities, as hereby proposed, is of the utmost relevance for a sustained scientific growth of our group and research centre.

RG3: Cities, Environment and Regional Development

As shown in CICS.NOVA's 2020 report, Research Group 3: Cities, Environment and Regional Development has been able to secure research grants and funding for individual and team projects, either in competitive calls or through partners and networks in the civil society. We have also had some success in debating and disseminating results within the national and international academic community – mostly through publication and participation in networks and scientific events – and outside academic boundaries, reaching out, co-creating, bridging, and bringing in participants, ideas and practices from other fields and areas of society.

Our strongest research areas include marine studies (conservation, economy, fishing practices, marine policy among other issues); environmental studies (including climate change, energy transition, desertification, soil erosion, agriculture); regional studies (including landscapes, local development, tourism); urban studies (comprising food systems and waste, urban agriculture; neighboring; public spaces; nightlife; urban inequalities and justice; urban government; urban social movements, housing, tourism). Within these research areas, we have conducted research aimed at addressing both theoretical and/or epistemological questions and real-world social problems.

If we look at the social impact of our research in terms of contribution to Sustainable Development Goals, we can say that we mostly contribute to goals (1) No Poverty, (7) Affordable and Clean Energy, (10) Reducing Inequality, (11) Sustainable Cities and Communities, (13) Climate Action, (14) Life Below Water and (15) Life on Land.

To contribute, as a group, to the consolidation of CICS.NOVA in the academic community we must continue this fruitful path and simultaneously invite the necessary degree of change and disruption into our ways of thinking and doing to ensure that we conduct connected, impactful, and future oriented research.

Our strategy for the near future is based on three different but interconnected goals:

1. **Strengthen our shared identity**

Since 2020, we have had several general group meetings, smaller group meetings, one Autumn Seminar, two PhD and Master's Workshops and several participations in the

CICS.NOVA Ongoing Seminar. We have also attempted to organize informal gatherings, in different settings, linked to research conducted within the group, but this was not possible due to the pandemic.

Although many of us have attended and actively participated in these gatherings, we have collectively recognized the need for increasing interconnectedness and knowledge about one another's research. Finding common and/or complementary interests and approaches is relevant not only to promote a better and friendlier work environment, but also to stimulate collaboration and share resources to improve the quality and impact of our research.

Going into 2022, we will:

- Make our meetings regular (every 3 months) and focused in specific debates;

- Organize an annual Group Seminar;

- Continue our Master's and PhD Workshops;

- Organize at least 1 annual informal activity (nature walk, field trip, tour/visit);

- Organize working groups: many tasks and activities within the group can and should be organized by small working groups of researchers to divide the workload and promote interconnection;

- Encourage participation in and attendance of CICS.NOVA's Ongoing Seminar and other initiatives that may promote interconnectedness;

- Encourage participation in the Urban Studies Knowledge Hub, a tool for further development in this area of research, that can also be useful to strengthen the connections within our group and with other researchers within CICS.NOVA.

2. Improve the quality and impact of our research

Research, conducted individual or in teams, benefits from the support of a wider group and of the structure of a research unit. RG3 must function as a focal point for capacity building, bringing together the resources and expertise of all its members to support

the collective goal of improving the quality and the academic and societal impact of the research. This includes promoting and supporting the participation of researchers in the most relevant academic debates in our areas of expertise, including publishing in outstanding journals and renowned publishers, and implementing activities that will expand our skills in different areas that are essential to navigate contemporary academia. It also involves contributing to improve all researcher's working conditions.

It is a fact that our productivity has been increasing in quantity and impact, but it is important to continue expanding. Going into 2022, we will:

- Disseminate information about specific calls and potential partners within the group and CICS.NOVA, and specifically between poles, and stimulate collaborative efforts in grant applications for team/consortium projects;

- Offer scientific support for grant applications for team/consortium projects by organizing debate sessions around proposals within specific areas;

- Strategically communicate our group's expertise areas in the academic community and offer scientific support for applications for individual funding schemes with the aim of increasing our attractiveness as a host institution for full time researchers and encouraging our researcher's applications;

- Gather and disseminate accurate and up-to-date information about outstanding, best ranked, open access scientific journals and publishers in our specific areas;

- Organize writing and publishing workshops as well as a "writing community" within our group;

- Promote debates and sessions for sharing practices on how to improve the societal and scientific impact of our research (within our group meetings and annual Seminar);

· Participation of researchers and teams in CICS.NOVA's Ongoing Seminar and in the Urban Studies Knowledge Hub is also significant.

3. Expand the interface between our research and training

Conducting future oriented research means being at the forefront of scientific

debates but also investing our resources in attracting, training, and supporting any young researchers. It also means mobilizing the theoretical, methodological, and empirical knowledge created through research to improve teaching and enrich the overall student experience at all levels.

In this sense, in RG3 we will work towards:

- Supporting PhD students in their applications for funding, so they can devote their time to research and conclude their thesis within the appropriate time;

- Organizing specific group meetings with PhD students to exchange information, experiences, and practices;

·- Continuing to organize monthly PhD and Master's workshops in order to critically debate work and results;

- Encouraging principal investigators to include contracts for students and young researchers within their projects;

- Encouraging principal investigators to invite PhD, Master's, and undergraduate students to participate in their projects, either in internships or free option Curricular Units;

- Encouraging PhD, Master's and undergraduate students to participate in the group's activities and research projects by creating and disseminating a list of projects interested in hosting young researchers;

- Encouraging young researchers from RG3 to participate in all the initiatives organized for them at CICS.NOVA such as the open day, meetings, scientific productivity incentive, etc. but also all seminars, methodological and skills workshops, and activities that are organized for all researchers;

- Intensifying the communication with coordinators and professors of the undergraduate, Master's and PhD programs associated with CICS.NOVA to generally increase the level of involvement and participation of students in our activities.

RG4: Modeling and Planning Systems

1. To boost research, by increasing the number of articles published in Scopus journals relevant in the field of geography.

The group already has a high rate of papers presented and published at conferences. These constitute a good starting point for deepening and solidifying scientific results, essential for developing future high-quality articles to be submitted to international journals with a high academic impact.

2. To continue to submit proposals, as a proposing institution, in national and international scientific competitions. We should also focus on establishing academic partnerships with other research teams that will also allow us to compete as partner institutions.

3. To maintain existing institutional links and partnerships and look for new partners that will open up new lines of research.

This includes services to the community, where scientific competencies are aligned with the needs of institutions to support the elaboration of public policies or the development of territorial-based methodological approaches.

4. To improve the articulation between research and students.

Students will be invited to propose themes and authors relevant to their lines of work and to organize, in collaboration with the rest of the group, seminars, conferences or workshops. In this way, the intention is to bring the group's event proposals closer to the needs of Master's and Doctoral students.

To continue with the dissemination of ongoing projects and the reception of students who want to collaborate in them. These activities have been carried out successfully and prove to be a way for students to experience the different phases of the scientific process, from the collection of information, its processing and presentation of results at conferences and in the writing of articles.

5. To continue to build bridges with researchers from other CICS.NOVA groups as a way of promoting new thematic lines.

This collaboration started in 2020 and has already produced some works developed in the area of education (with RG5). The same strategy should continue, namely with the RG3 researchers, given the existing affinity of themes.

6. To promote workshops on useful tools for scientific writing that make the thesis and article submission process more efficient and faster.

7. To publicize academic work to civil society through open classes and other scientific dissemination events for non-specialized audiences.

8. To continue with regular group meetings – MaPS Talks – as a way of disseminating and discussing research activities of interest to researchers. These sessions are also a place for the presentation of work proposals by Doctoral students and visitors, thus allowing for scientific follow-up throughout their training.

9. To continue receiving postgraduate students from other nationalities who want to come and collaborate and develop their research with researchers from the group.

RG5: Health, Population and Wellbeing

As reflected in the group's Highlights 2020 report, RG5 shows an excellent publication track record, especially on indexed journals. This excellent record is also reflected by other scientific outputs in terms of disseminating the results of the high quality research it produces, such as participations in scientific events and networks. This is even more significant since the group has very few full-time researchers. During this period of time, our research group was successful in securing national funding for team projects, although the same did not happen for individual grants (including Doctoral fellowships) or international funded projects. The group also presents low levels of knowledge transfer and co-creation partnerships with civil society actors and other relevant stakeholders. Furthermore, currently, RG5 presents unsatisfying capacity to attract PhD students, showing the lowest number among the six RGs (12 in 2020 and 2 in 2021).

In view of the foregoing, a summary of the major strategic aims for 2022 of the Research Group 5 – Health, Population, and Wellbeing is set out below, complemented with a brief description of some implementation actions to attain positive and impactful scientific outcomes.

1. Increase the number of publications in indexed journals, particularly in Scopus and Web of Science (preferably in Q1 and Q2 journals, which is not the actual prevalence)

- Disseminating calls from journals with a high impact factor in the RG5's thematic areas and lines of research.

- Dynamizing meetings for discussion and sharing of information about the journals considered as reference in the field to be selected and targeted for article submission.

- Stimulating the creation of joint writing partnerships with foreign colleagues within the scope of the research networks already established or to be created, in order to foster scientific output indicators by co-authorships.

2. Boost research projects funded under national and international programmes (especially because all the 3 running FCT R&D projects within RG5 will be finished in 2022)

a) Foster the submission of applications, with CICS.NOVA as proponent or host institution, to calls for FCT Individual Projects (CEEC-Ind) and/or R&D Projects in all scientific domains, and also the la Caixa Foundation Social Research Call

- Alerting researchers to the opening and period of calls; organizing sessions to share experiences and advice between researchers who have had funded projects and those who intend to submit new proposals; stimulating researchers' participation in training sessions promoted by FCSH and CICS.NOVA.

- Encouraging the establishment of collaborative partnerships for projects proposal submission with other research groups (also involving different regional poles) working on related themes, in order to strengthen the teams' scientific potential and promote both multipolarity and interdisciplinarity, which are two of the core features of CICS.NOVA' identity and culture.

b) Promote the submission of project applications or supervision of individual applications (e.g. ERC Grants, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowships - MSCA-IF, etc.) to European calls, within the scope of the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation Horizon Europe

- Sharing information about specific calls and work programmes launched in the group's thematic areas and lines of research (e.g. Cluster Health of Horizon Europa).

- Encouraging researchers interested in being contacted by potential MSCA-IF candidates to apply for the CICS.NOVA supervisors' database.

3. Enhance contribution of the RG5 to Knowledge Co-creation and Transfer, and to the Knowledge4Policy Projects strategy, stimulating the connection of the research group to civil society and stakeholders, and the establishment of institutional partnerships

- Encouraging institutional partnerships within the scope of collaborative projects, mobilizing researchers, their skills and resources to create knowledge and scientific evidence to inform and support policymaking or the development of intervention actions and provision of services to the community, to respond to new societal challenges and specific needs of the institutions/stakeholders. Yet also emphasizing their translation into academic outputs, namely scientific publications.

- Publicizing and exposing the academic work of the RG5 to stakeholders and civil society through scientific dissemination initiatives aimed at non-specialized audiences.

4. Encourage the participation of RG5 members (integrated members, PhD students and collaborators) in initiatives related to the group's lines of research and in the CICS.NOVA's own activities, to increase internal communication and public projection of their research

- In addition to the dissemination of initiatives through the usual CICS.NOVA communication channels, drawing the group members' attention to those that meet their themes of interest and research through a more personalized communication.

- Encouraging the participation of RG5 members (integrated members, collaborators and PhD students) in the CICS.NOVA regular initiatives (CICS.NOVA Ongoing Seminar, Ciências Sociais à Conversa, CICS.NOVA Annual Forum and LABID Talks), with the purpose of promoting the dissemination and discussion of the results of the ongoing research (e.g. contacting the colleagues who had already expressed an interest in presenting their research work within the scope of the first edition of the seminar cycle).

- Stimulating the participation of RG5 members in the NOVAhealth Platform, namely in the Working Group Health Systems and Policies, to foster the contribution of the social sciences and CICS.NOVA researchers in particular to the ongoing research initiatives.

5. Contribute to fostering the internationalization of RG5 researchers

- Taking advantage of the participation of the actual RG5 coordinator on the ESA RN16 Board, to encourage the participation of the group's researchers in international conferences and in the establishment of collaborative research networks.

6. Improve the articulation between research activities and training, to increase the number of doctoral students affiliated to the RG5 and to promote their integration and follow-up

- Bringing the undergraduate and Master's students closer to the RG5 themes, in order to attract future Doctoral students (at the end of 2021 the RG5 only had two PhD researchers). For this purpose, encouraging the RG5 researchers to open curricular internships and scientific initiation grants (e.g. FCT's "Programa Verão com Ciência"), as well as to propose free curricular units in the various modalities (mainly integration in a research project, but also teaching, cycle of conferences and seminars), which allow welcoming students in the ongoing projects at RG5 or at least bring them closer to the respective research topics and theoretical, epistemological and/or methodological approaches, similarly to what happened in 2021.

- Maintaining close communication with the Coordinator at NOVA FCSH of the OpenSoc Program in order to suggest researchers from the RG5 with an adequate profile to provide tutoring of students enrolled in Doctoral studies, in accordance with the interests expressed by the latter.

- Creating a monthly workshop where Master's and Doctoral students will be sharing their research projects and outputs and discussing it with an expert in the field, invited for that purpose.

- Involving Master's and Doctoral students in the organization of conferences/seminars on themes related to their interests and lines of research (e.g., inviting internationally recognized researchers as keynote speakers).

- Encouraging the participation of Master's and Doctoral students in workshops or training sessions on useful tools and tips for conducting and publicizing their research work (e.g., scientific writing, qualitative and quantitative data analysis software, FCT Doctoral grants applications, open access policy, etc.).

RG6: Education Knowledge and Culture

RG6 – Education, Knowledge and Culture is a relatively recent group within CICS.NOVA organic structure, but quite an active one and with many researchers holding Doctoral degrees – about 40 – distributed by most of the CICS.NOVA poles. As briefly (and only partially) illustrated by the group's Highlights 2020 report, RG6 displays a clear-cut and interdisciplinary approach to the topics of Education, Knowledge and Culture, which dwells at the crossroads of sociology (of education with extensions in the sociology and history of knowledge and science) and education sciences (including pedagogy, curriculum studies and education policy, among others).

Its functioning has been organized into four teams, respectively focused on the study of the **social contexts of educational success and failure** (team 1); the study of the relation between **school and community** itself, within the framework of the social and political universes that involve them (team 2); in the study of forms of appropriation of school knowledge, on the part of students, and the use of **curriculum, technologies, and training** instruments used by teachers and other educational agents (team 3); and also in the study of the relative position of **higher education** (universities and polytechnics) and science in the broader space of Portuguese educational system, and also cultural, political, and economic national and international landscapes (team 4).

In one sentence, and as stated in the above said report, RG6 research focuses on the study of educational and knowledge-production institutions and respective symbolic and material outputs, considering both their internal dynamics (sociological and pedagogical) and external determinants (political, economic and cultural), with a strong penchant for policy-oriented research (mainly with local governments and schools).

Besides its fine-tuned identity, and as also shown in the group's Highlights 2020 report, RG6 research displays a very good level of scientific publications on relevant journals and other analogous outputs, and a suitable balance between this and knowledge transfer and co-creation partnerships with appropriate actors of civil society. The academic and societal outreach of these initiatives can be further assessed by their vigorous echoes on the social and traditional media, and through the recognition of the national and international scientific communities, as measured by the acceptance of

RG6 research papers and books by Portuguese and foreign renowned publishers (and congresses), and by RG6 researchers' affiliations with important scientific networks worldwide. Finally, RG6 displays a strong ability to attract Doctoral and Master's students, with excellent levels of success.

Having said this, there is clearly room for improvement, regarding:

1. Identity and Scope

a) While education, as a subject, is definitely well covered, from multiple and complementary perspectives, there is clearly an opportunity to further develop cultural and science and technology studies within RG6 scope, and particularly alongside other RGs activities,

- by identifying, developing, and valuing skills dispersed in these areas, in RG6 itself, and elsewhere in CICS.NOVA;

- by reinforcing our full-time research staff, through the attraction of new individual candidates and the supporting of collective projects applications on these themes, to FCT and ERC calls (among others).

b) While research teams within RG6 are well-formed and there is already some level of interaction between them (namely across researchers from the same regional poles, in CICS.NOVA.IPLeiria, CICS.NOVA.UAçores and CICS.NOVA.UÉvora), communication and collaboration between teams and poles gathered in RG6 could and should be furthered,

- by promoting more regular informal meetings between RG6 researchers, namely taking advantage of the renewed IT technologies brought about during the pandemic crisis;

- by promoting an annual conference to showcase RG6 activities, to be added to the group's participation in CICS.NOVA Ongoing Research Seminar and the new CICS.NOVA Forum (to be held periodically in one of its poles).

c) While interdisciplinarity is in the matrix of RG6 identity and activities, disciplinary integration with further perspectives, inside and outside CICS.NOVA, can be enhanced,

- by designing and organizing joint seminars with other RGs, namely RG2 and RG5, on such issues as cultural and science and technology studies, as stated, among others;

- by designing and organizing a non-permanent RG6 seminar cycle with CICS.NOVA researchers (not necessarily from the group) and external speakers, with expertise within the pertinent subjects.

2. Research and Outreach

a) While there is a good level of scientific publications on relevant journals and other relevant outputs by RG6 members (professors and researchers), more full-time researchers (only 3, at the time, 2 fully integrated, in a universe of 42) should be incorporated;

- by trying to sensitize CICS.NOVA as a whole and CICS.NOVA board to the need of allocating full-time researchers to RG6, possibly through potential CICS.NOVA own calls (besides the above said external calls), and trying to encourage individual applications among the RG6 Doctoral candidates (see below);

- by trying to seduce highly motivated students among CICS.NOVA new Doctoral candidates, through the presence of renowned RG6 researchers at CICS.NOVA Open Day and CICS.NOVA Doctoral programs' presentation sessions.

b) While there is an excellent level of research projects or services provisions financed by civil society partners, more team research projects should be incorporated, besides those currently underway and the one just selected (2021) for funding by FCT with the participation of CICS.NOVA.IPLeiria,

- by disseminating relevant calls more actively at RG6 level;

- by taking advantage of the possible joint seminars with other RGs and of the above said annual RG6 conference to promote and elaborate on project ideas (or reserve a time-slot to that effect).

c) While there is a fair level of national and international recognition of RG6 research activities, there is clear margin to further it, namely

- by encouraging and promoting RG6-led and/or CICS.NOVA-led joint thematic issues to relevant journals;

- by encouraging and promoting RG6-led and/or CICS.NOVA-led joint symposia and round-tables at relevant continental and world scientific congresses.

3. Integration and Training

a) While RG6 hosts a relevant number of Doctoral students (28), there is a clear need to increase the number of scholarship holders (only one, at the moment),

- by continuing to promote support sessions to the application to FCT individual PhD scholarships, at CICS.NOVA level;

- by the integration, when possible, of PhD researchers in RG6 pertinent projects.

b) While there is a strong alignment of RG6 Doctoral dissertations' subjects with the themes cultivated by RG6 integrated researchers and research teams, there is the apparent need to increase the involvement of Doctoral students with the academic life of the centre as a whole and with the activities of the RG6 in particular,

- by organizing and promoting new post-graduate seminars at CICS.NOVA level and/or RG6 level (currently in preparation), as it is already done within certain research teams (and namely among RG6 researchers at FCT NOVA);

- by promoting more regular informal meetings between RG6 PhD researchers, namely taking advantage of the renewed IT technologies brought about during the pandemic crisis (as in the case of integrated researchers, referred to above);

c) While there is a good level of PhD and Master's completion among RG6 graduate students, there is a large margin to further involve them in relevant publications and initiatives and to encourage them to publish or to organize academic events on their own (with proper assistance, and without any detriment to their PhD activities and official supervision),

- by promoting workshops on scientific writing or on relevant tools for research, specifically directed to post-graduate researchers, and possibly organizing annual calls (Summer Schools) on specific subjects (not necessarily within RG6), to select and actively support the submission of the more promising proposals;

- by promoting the participation of undergraduate and postgraduate students on RG6 research projects, through the credit mechanism offered by NOVA FCSH and other relevant higher education institutions within CICS.NOVA to that effect.

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