

**REPORT OF THE ADVISORY BOARD ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CENTRE
FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH ON JUSTICE DURING THE PERIOD OF
2018-2023**

As Advisory Board members we have with great interest followed the activities of the Centre of Research in Law, now Centre for Interdisciplinary Research on Law (CIJ). The activities carried out respected the programme submitted in the previous FCT evaluation. Of course, the pandemic had its effect and imposed a slowdown and adaptation with the move to online events. Since 2022, there has been a return to normality and activities have experienced a significant boost.

Across the several projects and the lines of research, CIJ organized numerous activities, including national and international events, seminars, and conferences, many of them highly relevant for the development of Law in Portugal. Its choice of research topics and output channels is timely and pertinent in scholarly terms and seems useful to society more generally. As the Evaluation Committee emphasised in its report, CIJ has not just followed trends, but has accompanied and been at the forefront of research into issues of unavoidable relevance to Portuguese and international current affairs. Regarding publications, there was a focus on improving the dissemination of the research according to open science rules through ebooks, the Research Papers series or encouraging researchers to publish in international journals. It is expected that the Board's commitment may produce more visible results in the coming years.

During 2022 and 2023, there was a clear effort to integrate new researchers, experienced and young, including PhD students, to strengthen the internal cohesion, to foster the dynamics of the Centre, including the diversification of its external connections, and to expand the activities to areas of law less represented in the Centre, e.g. criminal law. As a result, the number of researchers increased from 40 to 64. This process of reform culminated with the inclusion of Criminology within the scope of the activities of CIJ, reinforcing the interdisciplinary approach and converting it into a centre with a unique identity and capacity in Portugal. As a result, the

number of researchers almost doubled at the beginning of 2024 and the Centre has a dynamic team with proven credits and capabilities, both experienced and young.

The period between 2018 and 2023 was a relevant period in the development and affirmation of the Centre on the national and international scientific research scene, placing it firmly on the trajectory of a leading center of research in legal and criminological sciences. Over the last six years it was a national reference both in areas of private and public law and now also in Criminology, it has put in place a strategy of professional development of its integrated researchers in an open and participatory way.

If the priorities set in the programme for 2025-2029 are properly promoted - strengthening the internationalization through the participation in international networks and projects and publishing with international publishers; strengthening the impact of research by promoting connections with public and private stakeholders; reinforcing advanced training, through the involvement PhD students in research, the award of doctoral scholarships in projects, training actions (post-doc and specialization courses) and continuous professional training (“lifelong learning”); investing in research careers, by hiring PhD holders as researchers with the support of the FCT-Tenure Program - CIJ will certainly improve its relevance as a pioneering and excellent research centre in Law and Criminology, both at national and international level.

In conclusion, CIJ has generally fulfilled and even went beyond the program planned and contracted in the previous FCT evaluation. In our view, considering the evaluation criteria defined by the FCT, CIJ is an R&D unit recognized for its quality and innovative research, contributing to the advancement of knowledge and its application, from a national and international perspective. Its objectives, strategy, activity plan and organization for the following five years seem appropriate to guarantee the excellence and the national and international projection of its R&D activities.

Done and unanimously approved by the members present at the External Advisory Committee meeting on the 25th of March 2024 (Professor Andres Luelmo, Professor Esther Arroyo Amayuelas, Professor Marcelo Aebi, Professor Maria Fernanda Espinosa, Professor Peter Essers, and Professor Vitulia Ivone).