

Evaluation Panel: SOCIAL SCIENCES - Law and Political Science

R&D Unit: Centro de Investigação de Direito Público (CIDP)

Coordinator: Carlos Manuel de Almeida Blanco de Morais

Integrated PhD Researchers: 39

Overall Quality Grade: EXCELLENT

Evaluation Criteria Ratings

- (A) Quality, merit, relevance and internationalization of the R&D activities of the Integrated Researchers in the R&D Unit Application: 5
- (B) Merit of the team of Integrated Researchers: 5
- (C) Appropriateness of objectives, strategy, plan of activities and organization: 5

Base Funding for (2020-2023): 368 K€

Recommended Programmatic Support

PhD Fellowships: 13

Programmatic Funding: 1120 K€, including for 3 (2 Junior, 1 Auxiliar) New PhD Researchers Contracts.

Justification, Comments and Recommendations

CIDP provides a clear example of a superbly run, fully internationalized high-quality R&D Centre of globally competitive quality boasting an able hard working team and a clear vision of the future. The Panel was deeply impressed by the Centre significant achievements on all counts and unanimously rated it overall “Excellent”, as well as “excellent” on all individual sub-criteria. It is the only legal R&D Centre in the country to have achieved this score in this evaluation round, as it is significantly ahead of all the peers on all the FCT evaluation criteria: a model for all the others to follow and to learn from.

The publication track-record nationally and internationally that CIDP managed to achieve puts it en par with the top peers around the world. Publications in legendary outlets shaping respective fields, such as *Ratio Juris*, *European Constitutional Law Review*, *European Public Law*, *Zeitschrift für Öffentliches Recht* and others, as well as book chapters with core international publishers in the volumes edited by the global leaders in different sub-fields of public law are a significant marker of top quality. The national research scene is not forgotten either: the output is solid and the Centre journal is running very well. Besides, an agreement with Almedina has been signed to showcase Portuguese-language work.

Crucially, notwithstanding the superb amount of leading publications and a clear track-record of globally significant research of primary importance, the Centre boasts a full understanding of the basic tenet that a research facility should continuously improve – precisely what they have now achieved since the last assessment, when the Centre was ranked “very good”. Given the clarity of CIDP objectives (presented in a delightfully clear and insightful way during the Panel visit) and the worked out understanding of how to get there, the Centre is on the rise. It has not yet reached the peak of its performance. Established in 2012 (similar to the inception dates of a number of other R&D Units), the CIDP has progressed at lightning speed compared with the peers: its inclusive governance structure is as crystal clear as it is working in practice to empower researchers to perform at the top-quality international level. The splendid team of highly motivated researchers is balanced in terms of age and gender and boasts significant international experience. Research leadership and planning is crisp and well-articulated to bring about superb results fast.

The core aspect of CIDP's effective internationalization strategy is stimulating a surge in peer reviewed academic journal publishing. CIDP has external sources of funding (more than half a million euros for the consulting projects alone over the review period), which then is invested in much needed technical language and research management support _ an investment that has paid back. Crucially, while raising money, the Centre does not follow the money: the lines of research are solidly defined and getting contracts in is not the core task, which shows in the stellar publications. The Panel was particularly impressed by the Centre policy to use the royalties from the books it published to give awards to the most promising young researchers for research stays at the key institutions abroad. This is a significant difference with other Centres publishing their research in-house and spending, rather than making money on the dissemination of their results. The Centre links with outstanding universities such as EUI, FGV etc. are impressive and deserve a mention. Importantly, the Centre also cooperates with other R&D Units in Portugal (eg. CEDIS). Cooperation has acquired extra added value due to its stimulating interdisciplinary character.

Both core priorities of the Centre – to remain a reference in Portugal and to enjoy a clear international presence – have been unanimously judged by the Panel to have been abundantly fulfilled.

The team of top scholars at different stages of their careers that the Centre assembled is well-calibrated in terms of gender balance and intergenerational continuity. Further improvements on this count are part of the Centre strategy, despite the fact that women make up 43% of the Integrated Researchers. Some researchers have reached agreements with the Faculty to consolidate their teaching in one semester but the general sentiment in the room is that most conduct their research at night and on the weekends. When asked about work/life balance, the CIDP mentioned that there is full legal compliance but the general tone is "manageable but not without sacrifice". The superb results the Centre demonstrated prove that the top team is working well.

CIDP identified that they need staff to support research activities, as well as positions created exclusively for research – as there are currently no full-time researchers in the Centre, which puts its academic output in an even more remarkable light – and needs to create partnerships with the NGO and the third sector. They are working to acquire more public funding and to fight the culture of individual research in law.

As to foreign talent, the concern (which has been echoed by a number of R&D Units) is that salaries in Portugal do not attract foreign academics. The Panel recommended that the R&D Unit seek to attract foreign researchers with sizeable foreign grants (e.g. Marie Curie, Horizon2020 and others). The research track-record of the Centre makes attracting such funding a clear possibility. CIDP explained, however, that there is an administrative issue in that the University of Lisbon handles such applications – an agreement with the University will have to be reached to directly attract such scholars to the CIDP. The Centre has clear objectives along the lines of the proposed research with specific conferences already planned (as soon as November 2018), which is a good indicator of the direction of the Centre.

The Centre has a clear view of the problems faced by Portuguese academia, for instance teaching primarily in Portuguese and a disproportional emphasis on Portuguese in PhD training. The Centre introduces classes in English to attract both foreign students and foreign researchers.

The needs are clear: the doctoral students mentioned the need for more administrative support and technical language support, this could be accomplished with a staff hire (e.g. translator) or it was mentioned by one researcher, with connection to undergraduate students so that they could also be exposed to research. Clearly the lack of administrative staff is an issue across all R&D Units and this was the most referenced concern and request.

What concerns the value added by CIDP for the Integrated Researchers, the Centre facilitates work and collaborations internationally, access to non-published works/works in progress, redirection and expansion of individual research areas and networks, and more proactive guidance for junior researchers. The senior researchers spoke of working to combine their personal networks with that of CIDP and involving junior researchers directly in their work and overall, enhances the international dimension of their work; specifically, by placing and connecting individual research in international networks.

As concerning particularly impressive scholars, the Panel got an impression that CIDP boasted a hugely competitive team of top scholars, each able to make a significant contribution in its own right. This being said, Tiago Fidalgo de Freitas, a PhD student and one of the leaders of the Centre, was very impressive and an obvious talent of outstanding quality.

The main cited concern on which all the cohorts of the top-level scholars at the Centre could fully converge was the red tape of the FCT. The forms were cited as ineffective and unnecessarily cumbersome. Also cumbersome is the ability to have questions answered without having to go through various channels/forms. Answers given are frequently unsatisfactory. These observations are fully in line with the Panel own information about FCT: the country research climate will definitely improve if the FCT changed its ways.

As the Centre puts its future strategy until 2022 into operation, the Panel recommends that the Centre external advisors (and other external advisors beyond Portugal) are regularly consulted to ensure that it remains on track to meet its goals. This is particularly important given the changing nature of academia and legal scholarship in Europe and worldwide, and will ensure that the Centre maintains its commitment to excellence.

The Unit, which is the only Unit in Law in the country to be awarded an all-star 5-5-5 'excellent' rating asked for 26 PhD scholarships in the application. Given the limitations of this FCT Program, the Panel was bound to grant half of what was

asked for. All the other R&D Centres in the country get significantly less PhD fellowships awarded, which is a direct reflection of their lower score. CIDP is such a marvellous Centre, that the Panel was satisfied that awarding as many PhD places as they asked for would be great.

Given that the need for more granting and research support has been mentioned during the visit, the Panel has decided, besides awarding two post-docs, to award funding also for a full-time assistant of this kind.

Given that this Centre is by far the best among all the R&D Units the Panel has evaluated in law, the Panel decided to award the Programmatic Funding the Centre requested in the application in full.