

## Strategy 2018-2022

In 2018-2022, CIIE will develop research considering European policy guidelines and orientations for expanding new opportunities for cultural and social development, insuring "innovation, social fairness, active citizenship", as well as "[strengthening] European identity in all its diversity" (EU, 2017: 2). The persistence of social inequalities and the promise that education and training can contribute to create pivotal changes guide CIIE's action. Our epistemological perspective - distinctive among educational research centers in Portugal - values the specificity of education processes within the scope of the social and human sciences, based on interdisciplinary dialogue and a focus on knowledge application that coexists with and expands knowledge development in itself.

The Centre aims to:

1. Contribute to the development of knowledge by producing state-of-the-art research that addresses emerging educational challenges and draws implications for significant in- and out-of-school educational problems;
2. Promote inclusive forms of enhancing respect towards diversity as the motto of the European identity, by creating and assessing pedagogical devices that involve schooland-community-partnerships, digital education and the arts;
3. Train young researchers and foster emerging researchers' careers by investing in a close connection with a high-quality doctoral program (DPE-UP) and the continued development of a supportive and challenging research environment;
4. Encourage a public, reasoned debate on educational issues by intentionally engaging inter/national researchers from diverse scientific areas, education professionals and policy makers in the discussion of research results and their implications for educational policy and practice;
5. Broaden its internationalization strategy, balancing the European focus that has been central in the last years with a renewed attention to CPLP countries by investing in more sustainable networks (NW) that interweave the Global North and the Global South.

Three main axes will guide CIIE research and intervention activities:

- vulnerable groups, equity and social justice
- innovation, knowledge sharing, science with and for people
- participation, democracy and social change.

These axes will infuse the Centre's initiatives in research, advanced training and knowledge transfer, advocating a close and strong connection with educational professionals, lay audiences and researchers in inter/national contexts. A major asset is the existing strong networks with African and South American countries, supported by close collaboration with the HEI where former PhD students from these countries currently work in.

Internally, CIIE is organized as a rhizomatic structure where researchers meet in multiple niches shaped by strategic areas guiding research efforts. These areas build on existing research strengths that result from previous projects and garner expertise from diverse sub-

disciplinary areas of the educational sciences. This increases the Centre's research capacity and its ability to contribute to the advancement of educational research, the training of emerging researchers, the fostering of partnerships with inter/national research networks, and also to influence educational policies and practices. The strategic areas for the 2018-2022 period are:

### **1. Engagement of Vulnerable Young People in Education and Training**

Concerns with inequalities, diversities, citizenship, social, political and cultural rights have been central in CIIE research projects such as FP7 [RESL.eu](#) and [NAOS](#). Such themes will continue to be developed through projects that combine research, educational interventions, the development of digital tools and teacher training.

Due to changes in the productive sphere and the labour market, as well the destandardisation of life courses, education and training can no longer be regarded as guarantors of social integration. Nonetheless, they remain important enablers of better life conditions. Indeed, recent OECD research indicates that Portugal has, for short-cycle tertiary education, the highest earning advantage (over 60%) compared to average full-time earnings of adults that have not gone past upper secondary education. Also, despite the current allure of vocational education, which typically enables a quicker integration in the labour market, it has been shown that graduates from general programmes achieve better conditions in employment and earnings later in life. Thus, engaging vulnerable young people in education and training may work both as a defence mechanism against the entrenchment of exclusion and a way out from their vulnerable condition.

A proper understanding of the engagement of vulnerable young people in education and training requires considering both quantitative indicators and qualitative dimensions, as well as the viewpoints of different actors, namely policy-makers, school managers and teachers, the youngsters and their families.

### **2. Contemporary Educational Challenges for Migrants and Refugees**

Education plays a key role in the integration of migrants and refugees and, as both phenomena increased in the context of the European Union, so did the emphasis on creating educational shelters for these groups of children, young people and adults. Research shows a tendency for the migrant/refugee status to be associated with lower levels of educational attainment, in a context marked by intense cross-national, cross-group and intra-group differences. As in other areas of multicultural research, the recognition of 'diversity within diversity' seems to be essential. CIIE has a tradition of studies in this area (e.g., [PIDOP](#), [SIRIUS](#)), and is committed to continuing to develop research that takes claims for the recognition of diverse cultural groups as opportunities to improve the quality of formal and non-formal education, as the creation of diverse educational environments where one learns to interact with (inevitably) different others has significant benefits for the inclusion of all.

### **3. Empowerment and Inclusion Through Digital Education and Arts**

In our increasingly complex, diverse and progressively digitalised societies, the empowerment and autonomy of individuals and groups are of core relevance as they involve individual and organisational elements. This includes cooperation and social and political participation, and a critical, interdisciplinary, broad and multifaceted understanding of the world and the way in which it works. CIIE focuses in the theoretical and empirical production on empowerment and on how digital education and the arts can contribute to promote it, particularly in what concerns vulnerable groups most at risk of exclusion and with institutions willing to improve

their educational practices. CIIE makes a distinctive contribution towards the social and educational challenges brought about by the inclusion of a critical understanding of digital technologies and the arts as ways to connect to culture and diversity by privileging participatory approaches that foster the creation of public spaces of collaborative discussion.

#### **4. Citizenship, Communication and Literacy in Health and Wellbeing**

This area is based on collaborative partnerships with the Faculty of Medicine, health institutions, schools, NGOs and municipalities. CIIE is part of LACLIS (Health Literacy Creation Lab), a Media Innovation Lab of U.Porto, and co-coordinates the Master in Health Education (with the Faculty of Medicine). The most important aim is to deepen knowledge and communication competences related to health literacy through public debates between faculty from different scientific fields, teachers and other health professionals and through multidisciplinary networks involving national and international researchers and professionals. It is also relevant to deepen collaborations through mobility programs, research projects focusing health education, health professionals training, and active ageing promotion, in line with *Health 2020 – A European Policy Framework and Strategy for the 21st Century* (WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2013).

#### **5. Higher Education, Innovation and Diversity**

Higher education has been a locus of research and intervention of CIIE teams. In its relationship with university pedagogy, several projects have been developed before the Bologna Process reforms. The focus on innovation as a driver has been used to analyse its role in the reconfiguration of the relationship between the university 'first' and 'second' missions, i.e., education and research. CIIE has been giving particular attention to the curricular and pedagogical dimensions, which have been critically approached to counterbalance technocratic approaches and to contribute to the professional development of academics. Additionally, to promote the quality of higher education and research processes seeking innovation, projects are involving students in the production of knowledge and in the exercise of social responsibility.

Diversity is often associated with the expansion of the higher education system and the need to diversify programmes, based on pressures to adapt to a more diverse population and regional, social and economic needs. Under the framework of CIIE's action-plan, diversity has been dealt with in research and intervention activities with the aim for increasing the range of choices available to learners, for matching education needs and abilities of individual students.

#### **6. Community Education, Participation and Social Change**

One of the distinctive marks of CIIE is its commitment to social and educational intervention, valuing collaborative and participatory strategies to promote educational innovation and social changes. This tradition rests on the assumption that education is inevitably 'in-context', and that situated and ecological perspectives are better ways to understand and foster change through the cooperation between researchers, policy-makers, other stakeholders and lay citizens. The educational implications of existing inequalities based on tensions between globalisation and territorialisation, belonging and distrust, identities and diversity ... are essential in contemporary Europe, and must be openly addressed by research that aims to promote critical and reflective links between the EU and its citizens. This has been the focus of CIIE projects in the past (e.g., PIDOP, LIBE), and will continue to be a central aim of the

research in the future. Issues of discrimination, racism and other forms of radicalisation will become foci of future projects.

### **7. Training, Equity and the Teaching Profession**

The professionalisation of teaching continues to be the greatest challenge for the development of educational systems. It is also, given the relations it establishes with teacher education and teacher identity, an area with a strong tradition in CIIE. Several funded research projects have been developed articulating teachers' CPD (continuous professional development) and intercultural education, creativity and social justice and equity. The importance given to the subjective and communicational dimension of educational change inspires important research on the relationship between pre- and in- service teacher education and identities of teachers and educators. With a strong internationalisation, the area integrates three networks involving several countries, mostly in Europe and Latin America, and different universities in Portugal: the Luso-Brazilian Consortium of Teachers' Work and Education, The Network on Research and Teaching Nexus and the Network of Life (Hi)stories Life in Education.

The promotion of equity, social justice and democracy inspires research in the area, which at the moment takes on the challenge of reflecting teacher education and identity in cooperation contexts, notably in Africa. It also invests, with national partnerships, in research on the communicational dimension of pedagogical supervision, and with international partnerships (Poland, UK, Lithuania and Romania) in the study of the impact of advanced training (Ph.D) on Teachers' CPD. Several advisory/consulting actions are performed by members of CIIE in this area.

### **8. Evaluation and Public Policies in Education**

Assessment as a device to improve learning is pursued by CIIE's projects and actions. There is also a strong tradition of collaboration with schools (e.g., TEIP Consulting), educational agencies (e.g., A3ES) and international organisations and researchers (e.g., UNDP, Maceió Secretary of Education-BR). To promote data-driven decision making, a project is underway to define and systematise indicators about the Portuguese educational system, producing recommendations for an Education Observatory. Additionally, CIIE is developing studies enabling the development of an institutional self-assessment culture guided by curricular justice and promoting social justice.

Contributing to the debate and the definition of public policies in education is part of CIIE's mission statement. This can be attained through a careful selection of the research topics, considering both their theoretical and socio-political relevance; studies focused on improving learning and reducing socio-educational inequalities are particularly welcome. Also, if impact is to be achieved, it is beneficial to design research that can be more easily reported to wider, lay audiences (by 'impact' we mean beneficial changes in the real world as a result of research). In this sense, it is expected that research on public policies in education delivers recommendations to relevant stakeholders. As such, this is an area where the conflation of social and sociological problems is paramount to enhance the effectiveness of the research undertaken.

### **9. Pedagogical Management and Democratic Participation**

This area focuses on the transformation of the pedagogical relationship at the micro, meso and macro levels, which requires the invention of new processes of management of school relations, mediation of knowledge and participation. It is structured in three fundamental axes:

curricular studies and innovation; didactic mediation and pedagogical differentiation; and school administration and management. In the curriculum axes, CIE has developed several projects with high impact and a wide dissemination. The influence of CIE's research on national decisions in this area is also strong, as is the case with the current project of autonomy and curricular flexibility of the Ministry of Education – an initiative that encourages Portuguese schools and teachers to contribute to a more meaningful and inclusive education. This investment strengthened CIE's relationship with TEIP schools and a consultancy service was created that currently integrates 12 school clusters. In the School Life Observatory (OBVIE) since 2008 a partnership exists involving CIE and more than 20 school clusters. Studies on school administration and management have been developed in CIE for more than a decade, in their relations with autonomy and school leadership. CIE is a member of the European Education Policy Network on Teachers and School Leaders (EEN). CIE researchers have been monitoring autonomy and municipalisation contracting processes, and participating in school clusters management bodies.