



European Research Council  
Established by the European Commission

# ERC country sheet



## Portugal



### Background information

Population (2013)	10.5 million
GDP per capita (2012)	€ 19 200 (provisional)
R&D intensity (2012)	1.5% of GDP (provisional)

An overview of the research system in Portugal is available on [ERAWATCH](#)

### ERC funding

Since 2007, **some 4 500 projects** have been selected to receive ERC funding. The ERC has to date evaluated over **43 000 project proposals** for its calls. The grants are open to researchers of any nationality provided they are based in, or willing to move to, a host institution located in Europe<sup>1</sup>, where they need to spend at least half of their research time.

### ERC core grant schemes<sup>2</sup>

<b>Evaluated proposals with Portuguese host institutions</b>	<b>649</b>	
<b>Selected projects in Portuguese Host institutions</b>	<b>34</b>	
By type of ERC grant scheme	Starting Grants	22
	Consolidator Grants <sup>3</sup>	4
	Advanced Grants	8
Distribution of ERC grants by domain	Physical Sciences & Engineering	10
	Life Sciences	18
	Social Sciences & Humanities	6
Distribution of ERC grants by gender	Women	12
	Men	22
Total ERC funding committed	About € 53.80 million	
Non-Portuguese ERC grantees in Portuguese Host institutions	4	
<b>Portuguese ERC grantees based outside Portugal</b>	<b>21</b>	

<sup>1</sup> In the EU or the Horizon 2020 Associated Countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland, Israel, Liechtenstein, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland, Turkey). These countries are associated pending the conclusion of specific agreements. See further information on the [Participant Portal](#). In the case of Switzerland, please refer to this [information note](#).

<sup>2</sup> Data as of 11/02/2014, Calls 2007-2013.

<sup>3</sup> Since 2013, the ERC Starting Grant scheme has been split in two: i) the ERC Starting Grant, targeted at researchers with at least 2 and up to 7 years of experience after their PhD, and ii) the new ERC Consolidator Grant for researchers with over 7 and up to 12 years of experience after their PhD.

Top three host institutions in Portugal <sup>4</sup>				
Host institution	Starting Grants	Consolidator Grants	Advanced Grants	Total
Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation	4	1	1	6
University of Lisbon - Institute of Molecular Medicine	3	1		4
Champalimaud Foundation	2	1	1	4

### Additional ERC funding initiatives<sup>5</sup>

Number of ERC grantees in Portuguese host institutions with <b>ERC Proof of Concept</b> funding	1
Total funding	About € 150 000

### Some Portuguese key personalities in the ERC

- [Prof. Maria Teresa Lago](#) is a former member of the ERC Scientific Council<sup>6</sup>. She is a Full Professor at the School of Sciences, University of Porto.
- **Some 34 Portuguese scientists<sup>7</sup>** are serving as ERC panel members or remote referees, external experts involved in the evaluation and the selection of ERC grantees.

### Examples of ERC-funded projects<sup>8</sup>

#### Understanding the function of serotonin

Serotonin is involved in a wide spectrum of brain functions and disorders, yet it remains controversial and enigmatic. Researchers suggest that past studies have been significantly hampered by technical limitations in the selectivity and temporal resolution of the conventional pharmacological and electrophysiological methods that have been applied. This project proposes to apply novel methods that will allow overcoming these limitations and thereby gaining new insight into the biological functions of this important molecule.

**Researcher:** Zachary Mainen

**Host institution:** Champalimaud Foundation, Lisboa

**Project:** Optogenetic Analysis of Serotonin Function in the Mammalian Brain (5HT-OPTOGENETICS)

**ERC call:** Advanced Grant 2009

**ERC funding:** € 2.32 million for five years

#### Links:

[Researcher's webpage](#) ▪ [Host institution's website](#)

<sup>4</sup> Current host institutions. Data as of 11/02/2014.

<sup>5</sup> Data as of 11/02/2014.

<sup>6</sup> The Scientific Council is the ERC's governing body representing the European research community.

<sup>7</sup> Data for 2007-2012 ERC calls.

<sup>8</sup> The complete list of signed projects in each country can be found on the [ERC website](#).

*Information displayed is automatically updated through the information available on the CORDIS platform.*

*Please note that only funded projects, whose grant agreements have been signed, appear in this database. For this reason, the total number of projects in this database may differ from the figures provided in this document.*

### Setting the path to discover new planets

The detection of more than 300 extrasolar planets orbiting stars similar to the sun opened the window to a new field of astrophysics. Many projects currently search for Earth-like planets by using a huge battery of telescopes and instruments. This project aims at exploring both the stellar limitations of the radial-velocity technique and the ways of reducing them, having in mind the detection of Earth-like planets. It also seeks to develop and apply software packages to study the properties of the planet-host stars. Results could improve our capacity to detect, study, and characterize unknown very low mass extra-solar planets.

**Researcher:** Nuno Miguel Cardoso Santos

**Host institution:** Centre for Astrophysics, University of Porto

**Project:** Extra-solar planets and stellar astrophysics: towards the detection of other EARTHS (EXO-EARTHS)

**ERC call:** Starting Grant 2009

**ERC funding:** € 928,000 for five years

**Links:**

[Researcher's webpage](#) ▪ [Host institution's webpage](#)

### Mitosis and chromosomes

Mitosis is a vital process by which cells divide. Prof Maiato's research aims to understand more about its impact upon the fidelity of chromosome segregation, in particular how the gain or loss of a chromosome can cause cancers or birth defects. Central to this project is the exploration of how the addition or subtraction of a chromosome affects an essential process for life, with strong implications for human health. This knowledge will be critical for our understanding of how cancer cells develop, but it will also allow us to devise ways to control the process, with the ultimate aim of leading cancer cells to "commit suicide".

**Researcher:** Helder Martins Maiato

**Host institution:** Institute for Molecular and Cell Biology (IBMC), University of Porto

**Project:** Spatiotemporal regulation of chromosome segregation fidelity (PRECISE)

**ERC call:** Starting Grant 2010

**ERC funding:** €1.48 million for five years

**Links:**

[Researcher's webpage](#) ▪ [Host institution's website](#)

### Studies on sexual diversity

Ana Cristina Santos's team will conduct 6 cross national qualitative studies to examine the current strands of partnering, parenting and friendship in Spain, Portugal and Italy. Her objective is to draw up conclusions on the social, cultural and legal impacts of these changes in family life and intimacy. It could also shed new light on the wider range of personal and family models, the connection between practices and legal frameworks and on the way citizenship is to be understood in contemporary societies, including at an EU level.

**Researcher:** Ana Cristina Santos

**Host institution:** Centre for Social Studies, University of Coimbra

**Project:** Citizenship, Care and Choice: The Micropolitics of Intimacy in Southern Europe (INTIMATE)

**ERC call:** Starting Grant 2013

**ERC funding:** € 1.46 million for five years

**Links:**

[Researcher's webpage](#) ▪ [Host institution's website](#)

# The ERC in some Portuguese media



**Investigadora ganha bolsa de um milhão**

Agueda Sofia Aboim, com raízes no município aguedense, obteve financiamento para um estudo sobre género e direitos sociais na Europa.

**Artículo Jorge Pires**

Foi no âmbito do European Research Council - Consolidator Grant (ERC) que a investigadora com raízes em Agueda, recebeu atribuição de uma bolsa de um milhão de euros, destinada a estudos no âmbito do programa "TRANSGENERATIONS - Gender identity and social rights in Europe" financiado por 10 milhões de euros para a investigação europeia.

De acordo com a informação disponibilizada pelo Diário de Aveiro, Sofia Aboim, 35 anos, é investigadora no âmbito do programa "TRANSGENERATIONS - Gender identity and social rights in Europe" financiado por 10 milhões de euros para a investigação europeia.

De acordo com a informação disponibilizada pelo Diário de Aveiro, Sofia Aboim, 35 anos, é investigadora no âmbito do programa "TRANSGENERATIONS - Gender identity and social rights in Europe" financiado por 10 milhões de euros para a investigação europeia.

31/01/2014, Diário de Aveiro



**Português recebe dois milhões para estudar organização da memória**

Rui Costa, que é investigador principal do Programa de Neurociências da Fundação Champalimaud, recebe pela segunda vez um financiamento atribuído pelo European Research Council (ERC).

Rui Costa, que é investigador principal do Programa de Neurociências da Fundação Champalimaud, vai receber um financiamento europeu de cerca de dois milhões de euros para estudar o mecanismo do cérebro que organiza as memórias.

14/01/2014, Radio Renascença, [link](#)



## Ministério quer que cientistas portugueses concorram mais a bolsas internacionais

14 de Janeiro, 2014

O Ministério da Educação e Ciência (MEC) felicitou hoje os quatro investigadores que trabalham em Portugal e receberam o prémio europeu, considerando que o país tem muitos investigadores em termos percentuais, mas poucos concorrem a estes galardões.

Foram hoje conhecidos os 312 investigadores distinguidos com a Bolsa "Consolidator Grants" do Conselho Europeu de Inovação (European Research Council - ERC).

Entre os vencedores de uma bolsa que ronda os dois milhões de euros cada estão quatro investigadores que trabalham em Portugal: Rui Costa, da Fundação Champalimaud, Edgar Gomes, do Instituto de Medicina Molecular da Faculdade de Medicina da Universidade de Lisboa, Lars Jansen, do Instituto Gulbenkian de Ciência, e Sofia Aboim, do Instituto de Ciências Sociais da Universidade de Lisboa.

14/01/2014, Sol, [link](#)



**Cientista que quis ser médica ganha bolsa de 1,4 milhões**

Uma investigadora portuguesa, Sofia Aboim, recebeu um financiamento europeu de cerca de 1,4 milhões de euros para estudar o mecanismo do cérebro que organiza as memórias.

Sofia Aboim, 35 anos, é investigadora no âmbito do programa "TRANSGENERATIONS - Gender identity and social rights in Europe" financiado por 10 milhões de euros para a investigação europeia.

16/06/2013, Público

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More information: <http://erc.europa.eu>

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