

27<sup>th</sup> September 2011

Prof Diogo de Abreu  
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Universidade de Lisboa  
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Dear Professor de Abreu

### Report of the Centro de Estudos Geográficos

Thank you for sending me the report on the activities of the Centro de Estudos Geográficos. It is very impressive to see that so many of the targets that were initially set for the CEG have not only been fulfilled but, in many instances, surpassed. The CEG as a whole has a very strong profile which places it amongst the leading departments of Geography in Europe. In particular, I would emphasise the Centro's international linkages, its engagement with critical areas of frontline research, and its intense dissemination activities, whether in academic publications, seminars, or reports.

- a) Internationalisation. This is essential for any group which seeks wider recognition, and the CEG excels in this respect. Its researchers publish in international journals, they participate in a very large number of international projects (especially EU Framework programmes) and either organize or participate international meetings. This is not surprising as the CEG is, for many international geographers, their first point of contact in the world of Portuguese geography.
- b) Engagement in critical areas of research. The impact of any centre's research does not depend only on its quality – and the CEG consistently displays high standards in this respect. It also depends on engaging with the main stream areas of research and debate, whether in theoretical, methodological or policy terms. The many research projects that the CEG is involved in demonstrate clear evidence of this type of engagement. For example, in issues around the changing nature of migration, researching the boundary between social and natural sciences, the spatialities of knowledge or in developing new forms of territorial organization and planning. These are all 'hot topics', at the top of the research agenda, which are attracting the attention of researchers internationally, and it is good to see the Centre is strongly engaged with them.



- c) There is increasing realisation in many academic communities that it is not sufficient to be an 'ivory tower', even if the quality of your research is excellent. It will have little academic, practice or policy impact unless it is widely disseminated. The CEG excels at this as is evident in its emphasis on applied work, its seminars and workshops for both academics and practitioners.

Furthermore, although each of the research groups has its own internal coherence, I am pleased to see that there is cross fertilisation between different groups, and that this includes trans-disciplinary work between the social and natural sciences, especially in the field of environmental studies.

My particular areas of expertise are in migration and tourism studies and, therefore, I will address my final comments to the work of these two clusters. MIGRARE is an outstanding research group for migration studies, and it is staffed with enthusiastic and highly internationalised researchers. They seem to be involved in all the leading international research partnerships, whether funded by Norface, Metropolis, or FP7. It is no surprise, therefore, that many international researchers always think first of this group when they are assembling a coalition of international partners to bid for funding. The cluster attracts strong funding, is active in conferences and seminars, and publishes in journals and books which have a good international reputation. TERRITUR is the focus of tourism research and it also has a strong international reputation, exemplified by its involvement in the 8 country, 6 million Euro, SECOA project which analyses how the relationship between human mobility and urbanisation impacts on the environment. They also have developed a strong taught doctoral programme with substantial cohorts in the first two intakes, which will soon contribute to a sharp increase in the number of PhDs produced by this group, and therefore by the CEG.

Yours sincerely/faithfully

Allan M Williams  
Professor of Tourism and Mobility Studies

