MARIE SKŁODOWSKA-CURIE POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS 2025

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR HOSTING MARIE CURIE FELLOWS

HOST INSTITUTION

NOVA FCSH

RESEARCH GROUP AND URL

Interdisciplinary Centre of Social Sciences (CICS.NOVA)

RG4 – Sustainability and Socio-Ecological Systems
https://www.cics.nova.fcsh.unl.pt/en/homepage/

SUPERVISOR (NAME AND E-MAIL)

Iva Pires
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SHORT CV OF THE SUPERVISOR

Iva Miranda Pires is associate professor with tenure at the NOVA University of Lisbon – School of Social Sciences and Humanities (NOVA FCSH); she holds a degree in Geography, from University of Coimbra and a PhD in Human Geography, from University of Lisbon. She teaches at the Sociology Department where she also coordinates the PhD program in Human Ecology. She is a Visiting Professor at the NOVA School of Medicine, where she teaches the History and Sociology of Food course in the Nutrition programme. She has teaching experience at foreign universities. She is a Senior Researcher at the Centre for Interdisciplinary Social Sciences (CICS.NOVA), where she is a member of the Executive Board and coordinates the research group RG4 - Sustainability and Socio-Ecological Systems, which aims to explore the multifaceted concept of sustainability. She has a long experience in research, either managing research projects or as a team member of several research projects funded by the Portuguese Science Foundation (FCT) as well as international projects. At present, she is engaged in several projects that address critical issues in the areas of sustainability, resources use, climate resilience, energy, and sustainable food systems. The most recent ones related with the food system are: European Consumer Food Waste Forum (2021-2023) as an expert, coordinated by the Joint Research Center (JRC) in cooperation with DG SANTE and the Combine project (2024-2026) that will combine different types of actions and measures in various places of life, such as school, workplace canteens and homes, to reduce food waste among consumers. She coordinated the project PERDA (Project on the Study and Reflection on Food Waste) (2011), the first estimation of food waste in the Portuguese food supply chain. She has extensive experience in supervising theses, both master's degrees (62 of which have been completed) and PhD (16 theses have been completed, 7 of which have been awarded grants, 5 from the Foundation for Science and Technology, 1 CAPES grant (Brazil) and a grant from a French foundation) and post-doctoral (6 completed supervisions). She coordinated three EUTOPIA Summer Schools (2023, 2024 and 2025, which will take place from 18 to 22 July) for PhD students, focusing on the role of interdisciplinary research in addressing issues relevant to science and society. She has several publications, including books, both as author of chapters and as editor, and articles in national and foreign journals. She actively participates in academia by attending national and international conferences, serving on the scientific committee of conferences and organizing special sessions. She has also been a lecturer and guest speaker at national and international conferences. She has experience and skills on science communication, namely on food waste. She works practically with schools on activities for food waste prevention, with consumer engagement to create awareness for sustainable consumption forms, food waste and solutions and with various stakeholders to reduce food waste and to increase public awareness on it. Her main scientific areas of research are social and economic geography, human ecology, food supply chains and food waste.

5 SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

- Pires, Iva (2025). Desperdício Alimentar, in M. Patrão Neves & Alexandra Bento (cood.s), Ética Aplicada: Nutrição (pp. 165-186). Lisboa, Edições 70 (a ser publicado em julho de 2025)
- Pires, Iva and Karl Bruckmeier, K. (2024). Introduction: interdisciplinarity, human ecology, the social and the environmental sciences, Forum Sociológico N.45:1-8

- Pires, I (2023). Sixty years of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and the challenges ahead to create a healthy food system for people and planet, In Bernadett Csurgó, Nicole Mathie and Boldizsár Megyesi (editors) Rural society, power, and social integration (being published).

- Candeal, T., Brüggemann, N., Bruns, H., Casonato, C., Diercxsens, C., Garcia Herrero, L., Gil, J.M., Haglund, Y., Kaptan, G., Kasza, G., Mikkelsen, B.E., Obersteiner, G., **Pires, I.M**., Swannell, R., Vainioranta, J., Van Herpen, E., Vittuari, M., Watanabe, K. and Sala, S. (2023). Tools, best practices and recommendations to reduce consumer food waste - A compendium. Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg. doi:10.2760/404597, JRC133004.
  https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC133004

- Pires, I.; Machado, J.; Rocha, A.; Liz Martins, M. (2022). Food Waste Perception of Workplace Canteen Users—A Case Study. Sustainability, 14 (3): 1324. https://doi.org/10.3390/su14031324

PROJECT TITLE AND SHORT DESCRIPTION

Transforming Food Systems: Multidisciplinary Perspectives

The subject of food has become increasingly central in contemporary society. Food systems are shaped not only by economic factors (such as price, availability, and supply stability) and production processes, but also by social and cultural norms around eating practices, consumer choices, and the symbolic role of food in national identity. Public policies, global trade, and the various actors along the food chain—producers, agribusiness, distributors, food services, and consumers—all influence the system, often with unequal power and conflicting interests across different socio-economic and geographic contexts.

In the near future, challenges related to food supply and demand will intensify. A shift toward more sustainable food systems and consumption patterns is urgently needed. The global population continues to grow, food insecurity remains widespread, and there's mounting pressure to reduce the ecological footprint of food production, distribution, and consumption—all of which contribute to climate change. On top of that, rising energy costs, resource scarcity (such as water and soil), and unexpected disruptions like pandemics and armed conflicts further threaten food systems and drive-up prices.

Globally, about one-third of all food produced is lost or wasted, while 822 million people face food insecurity. The COVID-19 pandemic pushed another 135 million into hunger. The full impact of the war in Ukraine is still unfolding. In the EU alone, 55 million tonnes of food are wasted annually, bringing significant environmental, economic, and social consequences. In Western countries, most of this waste happens in households—where food is bought, prepared, and consumed at home or in places like schools, offices, restaurants, and hotels.

Understanding consumer behavior is crucial. People's food choices influence how much is wasted. Reducing food loss and waste is a core goal of the United Nations 2030 Agenda (target 12.3), and achieving it depends heavily on shifting individual and collective behaviors.

At the same time, broader changes in modern society are transforming how we eat. Trends toward food homogenization, the erosion of diverse food cultures, and the increasing "medicalization" of food reflect deeper shifts. Snacking and processed foods are replacing main meals. Unhealthy diets are becoming the norm—causing both overnutrition and malnutrition, and contributing to a global surge in lifestyle-related diseases such as obesity.

Meanwhile, trust in the food system is declining. Repeated food crises have made consumers more aware of risks and more anxious about where their food comes from and how it's produced.

Students are invited to explore these issues through multidisciplinary approaches.

SCIENTIFIC AREA WHERE THE PROJECT FITS BEST*

Social Sciences and Humanities (SOC)

***Scientific Area where the project fits best** – Please select/indicate the scientific area according to the panel evaluation areas: Chemistry (CHE) • Social Sciences and Humanities (SOC) • Economic Sciences (ECO) • Information Science and Engineering (ENG) • Environment and Geosciences (ENV) • Life Sciences (LIF) • Mathematics (MAT) • Physics (PHY)