



<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	PhleBDIS: The emergence and spread of Phlebotomine sandfly-borne diseases: new challenges and possible threats – Refª IF/01302/201
<b>BRIEF DESCRIPTION</b>	The emergence of sandfly-borne diseases (leishmaniasis and phleboviruses) is a potential threat to humans and animals worldwide. Albeit <i>Leishmania infantum</i> still represents the main risk for humans in Europe, there is an elevated threat for the introduction and spread of non-endemic species due to climate changes, tourism and migration (Middle East, Africa). Phleboviruses other than those usually associated with the Mediterranean region (eg Toscana), have recently been detected in Algeria, France, Spain and Tunisia.
<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	To characterize the frequency and genetic variability of emerging viral and protozoan agents transmitted by sandflies. Detection of <i>Leishmania</i> and <i>Phlebovirus</i> in sandflies and domestic animals will be initially done by <i>in vitro</i> isolation followed by molecular methodologies.
<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b>	Sand flies will be collected during sand fly activity for 2-3 consecutive years and biological, climatic and environmental factors data will be registered. After morphological identification, they will be tested for the detection and isolation of both <i>Leishmania</i> and <i>Phlebovirus</i> . Further, the presence of <i>Leishmania</i> and Phleboviruses will also be evaluated in vertebrate hosts by means of serological, parasite isolation and molecular tools. Molecular characterization of isolated microorganisms and phylogenetic-based analyses of the obtained sequence data will be carried out using a Bayesian approach.
<b>FUNDING AGENCY</b>	Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia (FCT)
<b>DURATION</b>	2017-2019
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