

At NOVA School of Law, our commitment to building a more inclusive society remains unwavering. We continually push the boundaries of innovation and internationalization within Portuguese academia, challenging outdated methods and hierarchies in legal education. Since our inception in 1997, we have been at the forefront of promoting non-discrimination, striving to advance transformative equality.

We recognize that the path to progress is not without challenges. Setbacks are an inevitable part of growth, encountered only by those willing to try. Recently, we faced one such challenge when we announced the opening of a post-graduate course on racism and xenophobia. This moment serves as an opportunity for reflection, open dialogue, understanding, and — most importantly — action. Alongside our public apology, we see this as a catalyst for meaningful change.

To that end, we are establishing a Working Group on Racism and Portugal's Colonial Legacy. This community-driven effort will include key voices from Portugal's Afrodescendant community, and aims to create lasting change within our institution and beyond. The Working Group will develop concrete strategies for systemic transformation, with the ultimate goal of addressing historical inequalities and adapting our practices to the diverse society in which we live. One of its key objectives will be the creation of a knowledge centre in 2025.

Fostering Community Dialogue: last week we hosted the Inclusion Day and Inclusion Talks, organized by our Diversity Officer in collaboration with students. This event engaged the entire NOVA community in honest, necessary conversations about racism, as well as homophobia, sexism, and ableism across both the private and public sectors.

NOVA School of Law remains a leader in promoting inclusion, diversity, and innovation. We view this moment ultimately not as a setback, but as an opportunity to further our mission of creating a more equitable academic and societal environment. We are committed to moving forward together, embracing this latest challenge as a critical step toward a more inclusive future for all.

Lisbon, 19 November 2024

Margarida Lima Rego

Dean, NOVA School of Law