**Abstract**

A research project (PTDC/IVC-PEC/4886/2012) on Non-Traditional Students (NTS) in Higher Education (HE) is being carried out in two Portuguese HE institutions (University of Aveiro and University of Algarve). The pertinence of this project, which started in May 2013, comes from the absence of systematised research on NTS in HE in Portugal. Although the project is constituted by four interconnected research lines, which relate to four different groups of NTS, the authors intend here to focus on one line in particular: students from African Portuguese-speaking countries (PALOP). This research line will allow a detailed analysis on who these PALOP students are, what their difficulties are, how they deal with them and how they are integrated in the two participant universities. Also, it will allow a better understanding of the role of these universities' structures in the integration process and to draw some suggestions, at institutional level, in order to make these students' transitions more successful.

At the University of Aveiro (UA), the Social Services Office and the Pedagogical Office have the main objective of supporting a diversity of students in matters related to their personal and/or academic issues. These two Offices carry out specific actions and offer some resources to support PALOP students, namely in their integration at the university. In other words, their support aims to minimise integration problems in academia and in the local community. These practices are implemented at the beginning of each school year and during the permanence of these students at the university.

Thus, with this poster, the authors aim to disseminate practices that have been promoted by the Social Services Office and Pedagogical Office, in a systematised perspective, regarding social and academic support. Although these practices have considerable success, they may still be enhanced.

In this sense, the poster presentation will be an opportunity to share what may be called ‘good practices’, and to have critical feedback to improve HE institutions’ approaches to multiculturalism and namely to the integration of PALOP students.