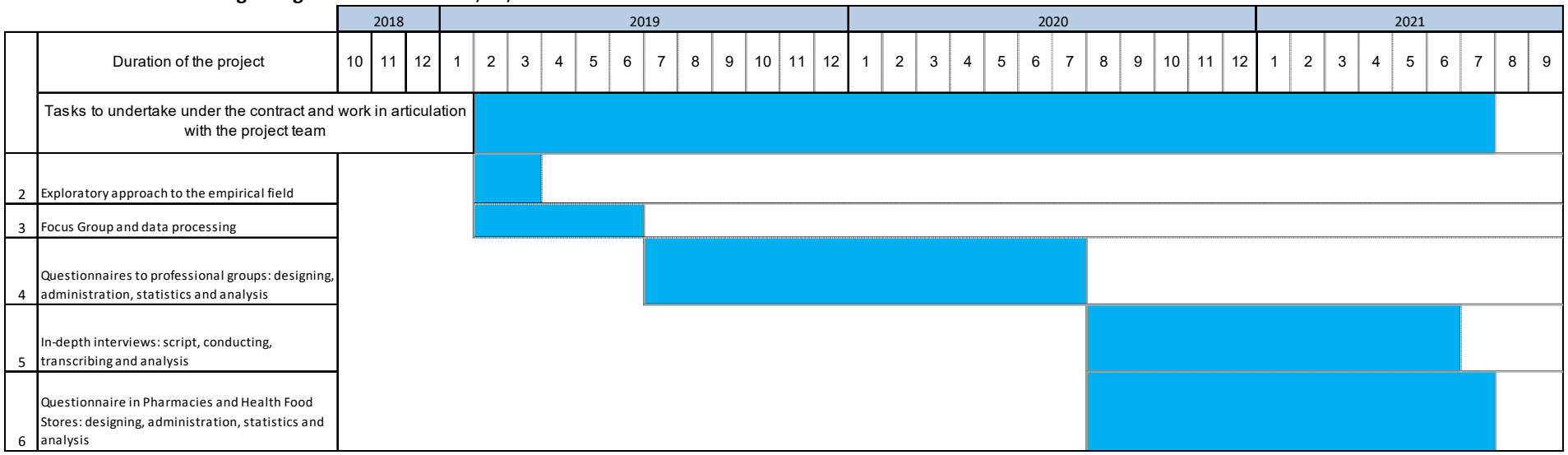
Project title: Medicines and dietary supplements in performance consumptions: social practices, contexts and literacy (PTDC/SOC-SOC/30734/2017)

Sinopse:
The use of medicines, dietary supplements, and natural products, to enhance physical, intellectual, and social performance – referred here as performance consumptions – is growing in current societies. It is a complex phenomenon that reflects a change in the conventional use of therapeutic resources, expanding it beyond the realm of health and sickness. This project aims to grasp this modern phenomenon by analyzing performance consumptions within the contexts that spur them. Hence, the focus of analysis – which has commonly been on individual consumption practices - will be redirected towards the social contextuality that structures individuals' daily lives. The central research object is twofold. Firstly, it concerns practices and dispositions to engage in performance consumptions within specific social contexts. Secondly, it regards their literacy on, and the sources of information used for, different types of consumption. The project focuses on three professional groups associated with contexts of high pressure for performance.The study will be conducted in the urban areas of Lisbon and Oporto. Data collection will follow a mixed methods approach: focus groups, surveys and semi-structured interviews. Additionally, the indicators regarding literacy patterns and information sources, will be replicated to a sample of consumers of performance products, in pharmacies and food supplements stores. This research seeks to respond to several imperatives. It will contribute to further sociological knowledge of a phenomenon with multiple social impacts, on which empirical studies are still scarce. It shall provide a set of indicators on new forms of social demands on labor, which may support policies to promote a social healthier work environment. It operationalizes the issue of literacy in a multidisciplinary perspective, widening scientific perception and the grounds for citizenship on this topic.

Starting date of the project: 04/10/2018 - Finishing date of the project: 03/09/2021
Estimated date for the beginning of the contract: 01/02/2019