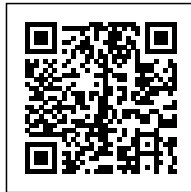


# NEW LAW IGNITING FILM WAR - PBBR

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**After the Government stopped opening production support tenders for new films, the Portuguese film industry is facing a new economic crisis, says César Bessa Monteiro, a Founding Partner of pbbbr.**

The Film Act has been recently regulated, and contains a provision whereby the Institute for Cinema and Audiovisual (ICA) can earn its own income from financial contributions made by television (TV) networks and operators of paid TV. "They have introduced this Regulation to try and implement a model that could help national producers to create more films, as well as license and export national products," says Bessa Monteiro. "However, none of these TV operators are willing to finance other entities whatsoever."

Despite a compulsory tax of €3.50 per new subscriber, several major Portuguese TV operators have ignored the July 31st, 2013 deadline, and are refusing to pay approximately €12.5m in tax – money that is said to be essential to the ICA's finances and the future of Portuguese film making, explains

Bessa Monteiro.

For Ricardo Henriques, an Associate at pbb, this looks likely to be a long drawn-out scenario. "The fight between TV operators and cinema producers will probably end up in court, to examine whether the tax actually complies with the law."

Such open opposition continues to invite discussion around the perception of culture in a time of austerity in Portugal. While the Government has asked that the main stakeholders realise their responsibilities, so far there has been little progress to enforce a supposedly compulsory law, Henriques adds.

"In the meantime, this will hurt cinema even more because while some works have enjoyed success, there are now very few successful cinema producers – a true reflection of how the downturn is hitting the cinema sector."