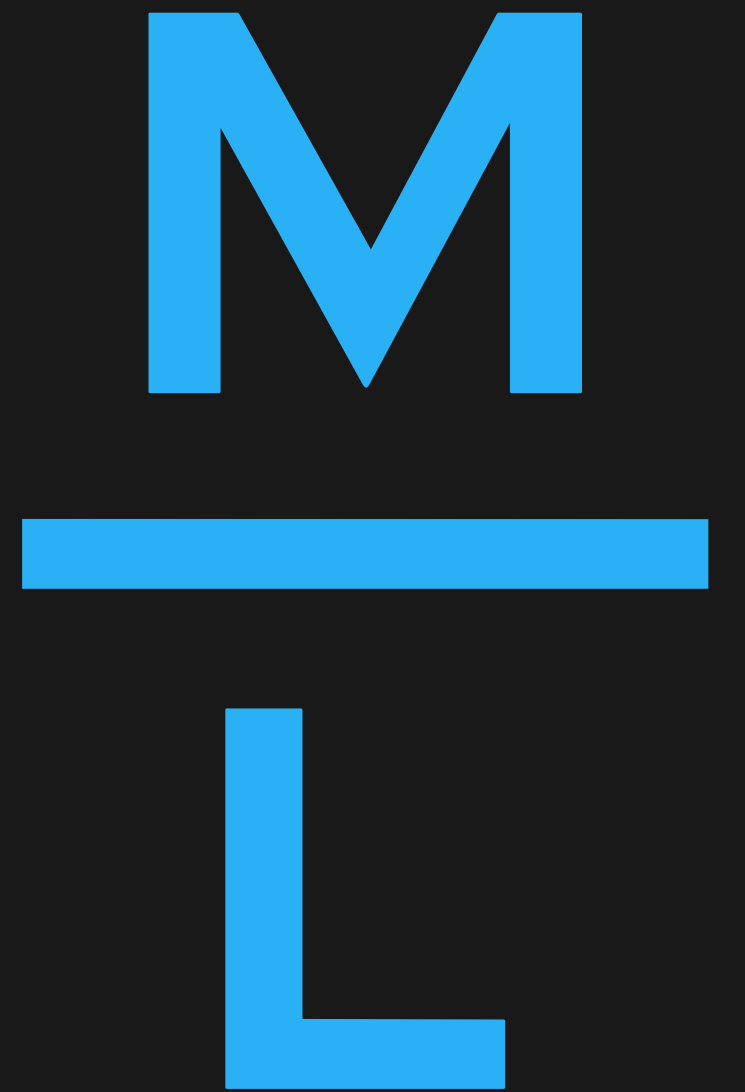


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# ROADMAP TO FILMING IN PORTUGAL

A comprehensive overview for  
international productions

June 2026



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# FILMING IN PORTUGAL

Portugal has a way of captivating anyone who arrives, offering a gentle blend of sunlight, sea breeze and a sense of timeless charm that feels instantly cinematic.

From the winding streets of centuries-old towns and castles to sweeping Atlantic cliffs, lush mountains and vibrant contemporary neighbourhoods, the country presents an extraordinary variety of moods and landscapes within remarkably short distances. Its people add to this atmosphere: open, relaxed and genuinely welcoming, creating a sense of ease that naturally extends to visitors and residents alike.

For production teams, this harmony between beauty and hospitality becomes a practical advantage: the mild climate provides long stretches of reliable daylight, the compact geography allows quick transitions between completely different settings, and the expanding network of talented professionals, robust financial incentives and supportive public bodies makes Portugal a very production-friendly option. It is not just inspiring; it also helps you get the job done.



## LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Portugal has a high level of foreign language proficiency, particularly in English, with the population ranking sixth globally in the EF English Proficiency Index (a leading figure in Southern Europe). As a result, international productions can expect clear and efficient communication with local crews and service providers.

Portuguese professionals are also recognised worldwide for their ability to adapt quickly to different work practices, innovative techniques and international production standards. Portugal has extensive experience in hosting foreign films, television series and co-productions, with local crews and service providers accustomed to multilingual sets and diverse technical and regulatory requirements.

Portuguese cities and regions are also well accustomed to hosting international productions. They can help provide local talent and manpower, logistical support and a collaborative environment that facilitates integration, as well as networking through festivals and industry events.

## LOCATIONS

Portugal offers a remarkable diversity of locations across its mainland and islands, including mountains, coastlines, cliffs, forests, plains, volcanic landscapes and a wide range of urban and rural settings.

Its natural light, architectural diversity and varied terrains enable the representation of multiple moods, historical periods and geographic contexts, making Portugal a versatile and effective location for international productions.





## North

Northern Portugal comprises historically significant urban environments alongside diverse natural landscapes.

Cities such as Porto, Braga, Viana do Castelo, Chaves, Bragança and Guimarães feature medieval urban centres, baroque architecture, tiled façades, iron bridges and riverfront districts.

The region's natural landscape includes mountain ranges, dense forests, granite formations, terraced vineyards and deeply carved river valleys. Coastal areas add Atlantic features eroded by wind and sea.

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**DURING A CEREMONY HELD AT THE RADISSON COLLECTION BERLIN ON THE SIDELINES OF THE 2026 EUROPEAN FILM MARKET, FIGUEIRA DA FOZ WAS AWARDED BY PUBLIC VOTE THE EUROPEAN FILM COMMISSION NETWORK'S AUDIENCE LOCATION AWARD 2025.**

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## Centre

Central Portugal combines geographic diversity with a varied and historically significant urban heritage.

Cities such as Coimbra feature academic and monumental architecture, while Aveiro is characterised by canal-lined streets and walled towns such as Óbidos and Tomar include preserved medieval structures and castles.

The region's natural landscape ranges from high-altitude mountain areas to extensive Atlantic coastline. It includes glacial valleys, rocky plateaus, beaches and dunes, river systems, forests, limestone hills, caves and inland valleys.

## Lisbon

Lisbon and its surrounding area present a diverse combination of urban and coastal environments. The city of Lisbon features steep hills, trams, tiled buildings, riverfront views, historic quarters and 18<sup>th</sup>-century boulevards.

Nearby locations further expand this range: Sintra offers forests, palaces and Romantic architecture, while Cascais provides coastal landscapes and the southern Tagus banks include industrial areas, bridges and contemporary structures.

The natural environment includes the Tagus River and estuary, forested mountains, cliffs and beaches.

## Alentejo

The Alentejo is defined by traditional urban layouts and well-preserved historical architecture.

Cities such as Évora contain Roman, medieval and traditional architectural elements, Elvas is defined by its extensive fortifications and military heritage, while smaller towns like Monsaraz and Marvão are situated on hilltops with stone fortifications and wide surrounding landscapes.

The region's natural landscape consists predominantly of broad plains with sparse vegetation, including cork oak forests, olive groves and agricultural land. It also includes large inland water bodies such as Alqueva Lake and a stretch of Atlantic coastline marked by elevated cliffs and yellow sand beaches.

## Algarve

The Algarve features a combination of coastal landscapes and varied urban settings.

Faro, Lagos, Tavira and Portimão comprise cobblestone streets, whitewashed and coloured façades, squares and seafront areas.

The natural environment consists of cliffs, sea caves, coves and inland rolling hills, orchards and traditional rural areas.

## Azores

The Azores are a Portuguese archipelago in the central Atlantic Ocean, halfway between Europe and the United States.

They are characterised by volcanic landscapes, green terrain, a mild, humid climate and distinct island cultures. Each island presents specific geographic features: São Miguel contains crater lakes and hot springs, Pico is dominated by its volcanic cone and peculiar vineyards, Terceira features lava caves and cultivated fields and Faial is defined by dark landscapes, due to volcanic activity.

Urban areas, including Ponta Delgada, Angra do Heroísmo and Horta, combine traditional Portuguese architecture with maritime infrastructure (both modern and traditional).



## Madeira

Madeira is characterised by dramatic volcanic landscapes, including basalt cliffs, deep ravines and mountainous terrain, as well as the UNESCO-protected Laurissilva forest in its interior. The eastern part of the island and nearby Porto Santo feature drier microclimates and sandy beaches.

Urban areas such as Funchal, Câmara de Lobos and Ponta do Sol combine traditional Portuguese architecture with coastal and contemporary elements.

Within short distances, the island offers access to diverse environments, including black sand beaches, terraced valleys, waterfalls, volcanic caves, elevated plateaus and subtropical coastal zones which have already been used in a major international production.





## ACCESSIBILITY

Portugal has a robust, well-developed transportation network that makes film production logistics efficient and easy to manage.

**Major airports on the mainland:** Lisbon, Porto and Faro (European and intercontinental connections, along with regular cargo capacity for equipment shipments).

**Smaller airports on the mainland:** Beja and Tires (accommodate private jets and can support equipment transport).

**Deep-water ports on the mainland:** Lisbon, Leixões, Sines and Setúbal (provide access for heavy or oversized cargo).

**Inter- and intra-city mobility:** Portugal's motorway network enables travel from North to South in six to seven hours, with key routes allowing transit between major cities in two or three hours, while urban public transportation, such as metro, bus or suburban rail, provides intra-city mobility.

**Accessibility on the islands:** In addition to the major international airports on the main islands, there are airports capable of handling inter-island crew flights and moderate cargo loads and modern commercial ports on all the islands of Madeira and the Azores.

Urban transportation, along with local production services and equipment mobility rentals, meet daily operational needs for film crews.

## CLIMATE

Portugal not only offers diverse landscapes but also excellent outdoor filming conditions.

As one of the sunniest countries in Europe, with over 300 days of sunshine per year, mild temperatures, and low rainfall, Portugal also has a low risk of weather-related disruptions.

While generally stable and bright, the climate varies by region due to the influence of the Atlantic Ocean, the Iberian landmass and local geography.

**Along the coast (including Porto and Lisbon):** climate is predominantly maritime, with temperate winters, moderate precipitation and hot, but not extreme, summers.

**Alentejo and the Algarve:** in the south climate becomes warmer and drier, with a distinctly Mediterranean character, featuring long, sunny summers and mild winters with limited rainfall.

**Interior and northern highlands:** conditions are drier and more continental, with colder winters – often marked by frost or snow at higher elevations – and hotter summers.

**The Islands (Madeira and the Azores):** enjoy a particularly mild, humid and stable climate year-round, with minimal temperature variation.

Overall, Portugal offers a wide range of microclimates within a relatively compact territory, combining generally stable, sunny conditions for much of the year with a rich diversity of seasonal environments.

## SAFETY

Portugal is widely recognised as one of the safest countries globally, with low crime rates and consistently high rankings in international safety indexes such as the Global Peace Index, meaning productions would operate in a secure environment, even in urban areas.

This overall sense of safety is reinforced by a well-structured emergency and healthcare system. Portugal offers universal coverage through its National Health Service (*Serviço Nacional de Saúde – SNS*), which is accessible to foreign nationals holding a residence permit and/or Portuguese Tax Identification Number (*Número de Identificação Fiscal – NIF*). In addition, private healthcare is widely available, providing high-quality services at comparatively low cost and often partially or fully covered by health insurance, making it an accessible option for residents and visitors alike.



AZORES

# INCENTIVES AND SUPPORT

Projects opting for Portugal as a pre/post-production or filming location can benefit from a range of financial incentives – not only those granted by the Portuguese State, but also those deriving from European or Ibero-American agreements to which Portugal is a party.

Portugal's incentive system was comprehensively reformed in 2026 and is now fully operational under the SCRI.PT framework.

In addition, Portugal is a signatory to more than a dozen bilateral and multilateral film co-production agreements and treaties, with further agreements currently under negotiation. These frameworks facilitate access to financing and co-production opportunities for projects involving multiple jurisdictions.

## FINANCIAL INCENTIVES (PORTUGAL)

In early 2026, Portugal reformed its film production incentive system by creating the Audiovisual and Film Industry Funding Programme (SCRI.PT). The framework now includes: (i) RIPAC, which provides incentives for big- and medium-budget film and audiovisual productions, including interactive, AR or VR projects, (ii) the Mutual Guarantee Line supporting credit for audiovisual and film production, and (iii) a new iteration of the scouting programme, which falls under RIPAC's scope but has rules of its own.

Under SCRI.PT rules, a single project cannot receive both RIPAC incentives (medium and big-budget) at the same time. However, a project receiving one RIPAC incentive may combine it with other public aid and with the Portugal Events programme, subject to State aid intensity limits (50% of final eligible cost, rising to 60% for international co-productions). Receiving a RIPAC incentive is also a prerequisite for access to the Mutual Guarantee Line, which can be used alongside it.

## SCRI.PT

Decree-Law No. 57/2026, published on 19 February, introduced a new public funding framework: SCRI.PT, now fully regulated by Ordinance No. 265-A/2026/1, of 17 June 2026, as first amended and republished by Ordinance No. 276-B/2026/1, of 26 June 2026.

The strategic management of SCRI.PT is entrusted to the *Instituto do Cinema e do Audiovisual* (ICA) and a Selection Committee comprising three specialists appointed by the ministries responsible for media, tourism and culture. Turismo de Portugal co-finances the programme.

SCRI.PT comprises two distinct but coordinated funding schemes:

(i) the Audiovisual and Film Production Incentive Scheme (RIPAC); and

(ii) the Mutual Guarantee Line for the Support of Credit to Audiovisual and Cinematographic Production.

Both RIPAC incentives share definitions, eligibility rules and a common 100-point scoring table. Total annual budget: EUR 50M

(EUR 15M medium-budget; EUR 20M large-budget; EUR 15M flexible).

In parallel, funding can also be granted under the scouting missions support programme, which can be accumulated with but does not depend on a successful application to either funding scheme.

## FINANCIAL INCENTIVE FOR LARGE-BUDGET FILM AND AUDIOVISUAL PRODUCTION

DECREE-LAW NO. 57/2026; ARTICLE 17-A OF THE CINEMA AND AUDIOVISUAL LAW; ORDINANCE NO. 265-A/2026/1, AS FIRST AMENDED AND REPUBLISHED BY ORDINANCE NO. 276-B/2026/1

The large-budget incentive targets productions with at least EUR 2.5 million eligible expenditure in Portugal. Eligible: fiction, animation, documentary, interactive, AR/VR.

Rates: 30% on first EUR 2M; up to 25% above; 30% flat for low-density/Autonomous Regions/ the employment of individuals with disabilities. Caps: EUR 6M per film/season; EUR 3M per episode.

Eligible costs: payroll and goods/services from PT-based companies. Above-the-line

cap: 35% (10% per category).  
Cross-border EEA: up to 20%.  
Payment: single instalment  
by end of April following final  
assessment.

Pre-application costs (12  
months prior to grant) eligible  
if certified. Deadline: expenses  
incurred within 24 months (36  
for animation) of grant. Minimum  
EUR 3,000/minute for fiction  
series.

Applications at any time  
(first-come, first-served).  
Decision: ICA 10 business days  
+ Committee 10 business days;  
silence = approval.

Scoring: minimum 45 points  
(18 Part A). Foreign-initiative  
threshold: 20 points (8 Part A).

Applicants must be entities  
registered in Portugal (including  
special purpose vehicles), listed  
in the national register of film  
and audiovisual companies, and  
active in audiovisual production  
or related technical services.

### FINANCIAL INCENTIVE FOR MEDIUM-BUDGET FILM AND AUDIOVISUAL PRODUCTION

DECREE-LAW NO. 57/2026; ORDINANCE  
NO. 265-A/2026/1, AS FIRST AMENDED  
AND REPUBLISHED BY ORDINANCE  
NO. 276-B/2026/1

Medium-budget: EUR 500K-2.5M  
eligible expenditure (EUR 200K  
for documentaries). Eligible:  
fiction, animation, documentary,  
interactive, AR/VR.

Rates: 30% general; 40%  
low-density/Autonomous Regions.  
Cap: EUR 1,000,000 per project;  
30% annual per entity. Two  
phases/year (March/September),  
~40 business days. Payment:  
10%/40%/30%/20% in four  
instalments.

### SUPPORT FOR LOCATION SCOUTING

DECREE-LAW NO. 57/2026; ORDINANCE  
NO. 265-A/2026/1 (ARTICLE 9 AND  
ANNEX II), AS FIRST AMENDED  
AND REPUBLISHED BY ORDINANCE  
NO. 276-B/2026/1

A dedicated support for foreign  
producers to carry out location  
scouting missions, administered  
within the medium-budget budget  
envelope.

Max two missions per project; up  
to 4 foreign + 4 portuguese team  
members. Must include director,  
producer, DoP or location  
manager.

Eligible costs: travel,  
accommodation, subsistence  
(EUR 100/person/day). Submit  
ICA form at the latest 20 business  
days before mission.

Annual cap: 2.5% of  
medium-budget allocation  
(~EUR 375,000).

If project proceeds to RIPAC,  
scouting support counts toward  
State aid intensity.

Note: though the Ordinance  
links scouting to medium-budget  
incentive, access via the  
large-budget incentive is not  
expressly denied.

### MUTUAL GUARANTEE LINE FOR THE SUPPORT OF CREDIT TO AUDIOVISUAL AND CINEMATOGRAPHIC PRODUCTION

DECREE-LAW NO. 57/2026

The Mutual Guarantee Line has a  
total allocation of EUR 150 million  
for the four-year period from  
2026 to 2029.

It will be established by *Banco  
Português de Fomento* in  
cooperation with *Turismo  
de Portugal*, ICA and the  
#PortugalMediaLab Mission  
Structure, and will be available to  
film and audiovisual productions  
supported under the RIPAC  
incentives.

Access to the Mutual Guarantee  
Line requires prior approval  
under one of the RIPAC  
incentives (either large-budget  
or medium-budget). The  
Line is available to all film  
and audiovisual productions  
supported under RIPAC.

### SCRI.PT KEY DEFINITIONS

Executive producer:  
Portuguese entity assembling  
artistic/technical means without  
holding rights. Applies for  
incentive on behalf of foreign  
production.

Indirect beneficiary: foreign  
producer benefiting through the  
local executive producer.

Low-density territories: National  
Programme for Territorial  
Cohesion areas + Azores/Madeira.  
Enhanced rates: 30% (large)/40%  
(medium).

*De facto* co-production:  
contractual co-production  
without treaty. Co-ownership,  
shared exploitation,  
revenue-sharing. Min 10%  
Portuguese share.

SPV: EU/EEA entities register  
as non-resident to apply; must  
establish PT SPV/branch before  
eligible expenditure.

Compliance: RIPAC beneficiaries  
are subject to State aid rules and  
audit requirements.

### SCRI.PT ELIGIBILITY: KEY RESTRICTIONS

Ineligible:  
news/propaganda/commercials;  
pornography;  
racism/xenophobia/violence;  
non-State-aid-compliant works;  
duplicates.

Commercial exploitation must be  
assured (cinema/TV/platform).

Confirmed financing: >50%  
of eligible expenditure at  
application.

Non-independent producers  
(broadcaster/platform-linked):  
15% cap of annual allocation per  
year.

### SCRI.PT INCENTIVES: THE 100-POINT SCORING TABLE

Part A – Cultural Value (60 pts):  
Location (A1.1, 7); Language  
(A1.2, 6); Territory visibility  
(A2.1, 6); International circulation  
(A2.4, 8); Co-production (A2.5,  
4); Distribution synergies (A2.6,  
5); Gender equality (A2.3, 2);  
Format bonus (A1.5, 4); PT music  
(A1.6, 3).

Part B – Cooperation (40 pts):  
Shooting in PT (B3, 10); PT  
technical resources (B4, 10); Key  
persons (B1, 15); PT crew (B2, 5).

Letters of intent score 50% less  
than binding contracts for A2.4.

Thresholds: General 45/18;  
Foreign-initiative 20/8; No PT  
filming 25/9.

Tip: B3+B4 = up to 20 pts for  
filming in PT and using PT  
services. With A2.1+A1.1, up to 33  
pts from PT-commitment criteria.

## FINANCIAL AID (EU AND IBERO-AMERICAN)

In addition to national incentives, productions in Portugal may also access funding from European or Ibero-American funding programmes. The most relevant are the Creative Europe MEDIA, the EURIMAGES and the IBERMEDIA funding.

Alongside support for content production, explained in detail on the right, Creative Europe MEDIA also includes grants to support the technical training of professionals in the sector, support for distribution outside Europe, and innovation and the use of cutting-edge tools for the sector.

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### CREATIVE EUROPE MEDIA

REGULATION (EU) NO. 2021/818 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL OF 20 MAY 2021

Support for producers under the Creative Europe Media programme includes funding for both television and audiovisual work.

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(i) Development of audiovisual works supports the development of feature-length fiction films, creative documentaries and animation projects (one-offs or series) intended for commercial exploitation.

Available for single projects (including co-development), slates of three to five works (slate funding) and mini-slates of two to three works for independent producers from low-production-capacity countries (mini-slate funding).

Eligibility requires prior production experience and international distribution of previous works.

Funding covers up to 70% of the approved budget, with maximum amounts ranging from EUR 70,000 to EUR 510,000, depending on scheme, project scale, genre and number of partners.

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(ii) Production of works for television and digital platforms covers the production of fiction, animation and creative documentary works for television and digital platforms by independent producers, with the confirmed participation of at least two broadcasters or VOD platforms from different MEDIA-participating countries.

Applicants may apply individually or as a consortium and must be established in countries participating in the MEDIA strand of the Creative Europe Programme.

Funding is provided as a fixed lump sum covering up to 70% of eligible costs, subject to minimum duration requirements by genre, with a maximum support threshold of up to EUR 2 million for productions with budgets over EUR 20 million.

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### EURIMAGES

EURIMAGES is a European film fund providing soft loans and subsidies for feature-length fiction, animation and documentary projects of at least 70 minutes, requiring a minimum of two co-producers from different member states.

Co-production budget contributions are regulated, with maximum and minimum shares for majority and minority producers depending on whether the project is bilateral or multilateral. [European Convention on Cinematographic Co-production](#) rules apply when relevant.

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### CPLP AUDIOVISUAL

CPLP AUDIOVISUAL is a programme under which a call for proposals will be launched to provide financial support for the production of documentaries and fiction works.

Each country will select one original 52-minute project, which will receive EUR 65,000 in funding.

See below for more information about this programme.

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### IBERMEDIA

IBERMEDIA is a multilateral fund supporting film production in the Ibero-American region, ratified by 14 member and observer countries, including Argentina, Brazil, Spain, Mexico and Portugal.

It finances feature-length fiction, animation and creative documentaries of at least 70 minutes in Spanish or Portuguese, requiring co-productions between at least two producers from different member states.

Co-production shares are regulated, with majority producers limited to a maximum of 70% to 80% and minority producers contributing 10% to 20%.

Projects must not have started principal photography or animation and funding is provided as a conditional, interest-free loan of up to 50% of the budget, capped at USD 200,000 (USD 100,000 for documentaries).



## CO-PRODUCTION TREATIES

Portugal is a party to 12 bilateral agreements or treaties on co-production, namely with: France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Mozambique, São Tomé and Príncipe, Morocco, India and Israel. A co-production agreement is expected to be signed with Canada in the near future.

In addition, Portugal is a party to two international multilateral treaties on co-production: the Council of Europe Convention on Film Co-production (1992, revised in 2017) and the [Ibero-American Agreement on Film Co-production](#).

All these conventions include rules regarding several key areas: (i) the nationality of co-produced films, which are generally considered national in each participating country and entitled to available benefits; (ii) the proportion of financial, in-kind or personal contributions by each co-producer, typically ranging between 20% and 80%, with minimum and maximum thresholds for multilateral or minority participations; (iii) the nationality or residency of directors, producers and key creative or technical staff; (iv) the location of principal photography

or animation, usually within the participating countries; and (v) the required creative and technical contributions of each co-producer to ensure meaningful involvement from all.

They also establish compliance with national legal and regulatory frameworks and, where applicable, broader conventions such as the Council of Europe or Ibero-American agreements, which may set additional rules for multilateral co-productions.

The SCRI.PT framework also supports *de facto* co-productions – projects without treaty coverage where contractual co-ownership, shared exploitation, and revenue-sharing exist. Min 10% Portuguese share qualifies for up to 3 pts (A2.5).

Portugal is also part of the CPLP Audiovisual Programme (PAV III). In addition to the competition for financial support, this programme also includes a Documentary Exchange Programme, featuring documentaries produced in the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, and a wide range of training and technical and artistic qualification activities.

# PRODUCTION IN PORTUGAL

Portugal provides both a defined legal framework and a favourable cost-quality context for film production. While productions must naturally comply with company, labour, tax and customs legislation, the country offers conditions that support cost efficiency and high technical standards across several production stages.

## CORPORATE STRUCTURES

An international project may carry out its production in Portugal either independently or in collaboration with a Portuguese production company.<sup>1</sup> The main structural options for doing so are thus:

- establishing a Portuguese company or branch for the production company with tax personality or a SPV (Special Purpose Vehicle) to handle all production's financial matters in Portugal;
- entering into a co-production agreement with a Portuguese production company, with a defined scope for production to take place in Portugal;

- entering into an executive production services agreement with a Portuguese production company that provides services in the field of film or audiovisual production.

Each of these alternatives presents a series of nuances and trade-offs to evaluate according to the specific details of each project, particularly in commercial, financial and tax terms.

Under Portuguese Cinema Law, it is mandatory for film and audiovisual companies to register with the ICA. However, the ICA allows film and audiovisual companies established in another EU or EEA country to apply for Portuguese incentives as non-resident entities, provided they establish a company or branch with tax status in Portugal.

Under SCRI.PT, ICA maintains a non-resident EU/EEA registration track for incentive applications before local establishment. A PT company, branch or SPV with tax personality must exist before eligible expenditure begins. SPVs of limited duration are expressly permitted.

## HIRING

Portugal has both a diverse, high-quality range of artists and technicians in the various areas necessary for production as well as favourable material and legal conditions when it comes to hiring them.

Portugal has various schools and universities offering courses focused on various aspects of the film industry. Casting options for extras, supporting roles or even leads are numerous. As for technicians, Portugal stands out for its experience and speed in assimilating new techniques and working methods as brought up by international demand.

Portugal also offers plenty of “green consultancy” services and training courses locally, thus ensuring that productions can comply with sustainability standards with specialised, local help.

Contractually, production companies must comply with Portuguese legislation in all applicable areas. In this regard, it may be relevant for a production company to pay particular attention to Labour Law and to the legislation governing work visas.

<sup>1</sup> The Portugal Film Commission provides a Directory of Entities that facilitates searching for a viable production partner.



## Employment laws

With respect to Labour Law, Portugal's [Labour Code](#) offers two main types of contractual regime under which production companies may hire resources: employment, whereby professionals are employees of the hiring entity and Service Provision Agreements where professionals are hired as independent contractors responsible for the delivery of specified services to the production entity.

In addition to being governed by the Labour Code, employment contracts in the cultural sector must also comply with the [Statute for culture sector](#)

[professionals](#), which applies to professionals in artistic and cultural activities. The law generally provides standard working hours and rest periods, with flexibility allowed for certain roles and productions. The Labour Code and the Statute permit various contract types (including fixed-term, very-short-term, intermittent and multi-employer contracts) and allow the overlap of multiple jobs, except where exclusivity or incompatibility apply.

The national minimum wage for 2026 is set at EUR 920. In addition to pay, the employer must

fulfil tax obligations arising from the employment relationship, as well as payment of its share of mandatory social security contributions.

Given the specific characteristics of the work carried out in a film or series production, it is common for professionals to be subject to a Service Provision Agreement and the Statute also provides for a set of rules in this case.

In any situation, the use of the various options available under the different contractual regimes must be carefully analysed and tailored to the specifics of each entity and role within the production project.

## Labour costs

According to Eurostat data, Portugal has one of the lowest hourly labour costs in the European Union and the Eurozone, standing at an average of EUR 18.20 per hour in 2024, below the average of EUR 33.50 in the European Union and EUR 37.30 in the Eurozone. The two main components of these labour costs are wages and salaries and non-wage factors, namely employees' social security contributions.

## Visas and work permits

For situations and roles where it may be necessary to bring in crew from other countries, it is important to

bear in mind the legal framework governing visas and residence permits in Portugal.

For stays of up to 90 days in every 180 days, third-country nationals from more than 60 countries, such as the USA, Canada, the UK, Japan and Australia only need a passport valid for at least three months beyond the intended stay. Even though no authorisation forms are required at the moment to travel to the Schengen Area, it is expected that an authorisation system, ETIAS, will be implemented in late 2026, and will apply to nationals of visa-free countries travelling for stays of up to 90 days. Nationals from countries outside this exemption list must obtain a Schengen visa for short stays.

For longer stays, non-EU/EEA/Swiss/Community of Portuguese Language Countries production team members may need a visa, although a work permit is not required unless services are provided to a Portuguese company, including for productions spanning multiple EU countries.

The most suitable option is generally a Temporary Stay Visa for Work or Research, or, alternatively, a Schengen visa for short stays, which may be complemented by obtaining a Tax Identification Number and, where relevant, a residence permit for access to services such as the National Health Service.

## ADMINISTRATIVE LICENCES AND AUTHORISATIONS

Depending on the nature of the filming, it may be necessary to request authorisation or supervision from certain national authorities, particularly when filming takes place in public or protected areas or when it involves dangerous activities or equipment. Some of these licences and authorisations incur costs.

The Portuguese public services' website ([gov.pt](http://gov.pt)) provides a simulator which allows the site visitor to identify which authorities and the nature of the authorisations and permits to be requested. The most common and relevant are summarised here.

FILMING TAKES PLACE ON/ INVOLVES THE USE OF	COMPETENT AUTHORITY	OBSERVATIONS
<b>Autonomous Regions</b>	Regional Secretariat responsible for culture	May be requested online and are cost-free
<b>Public streets and/or where such filming involves noisy activities</b>	Municipalities	Certain municipalities provide online forms and waive municipal fees for productions deemed to have significant value for the city
<b>National Monuments or Palaces</b>	Museum, Monument or Palace in question	National Museums and Palaces and World Heritage Monuments may have their own regulations governing this matter and request a fee
<b>Firearms, parking on public roads or road closures</b>	Public Security Police ( <i>Polícia de Segurança Pública – PSP</i> ), the National Republican Guard ( <i>Guarda Nacional Republicana – GNR</i> ) or the Municipal Police, depending on the location of the filming	PSP provides a website where necessary requests may be submitted to the Department of Weapons and Explosives concerning the use of specific pyrotechnic or firearms-related materials, as well as an email address for that purpose ( <a href="mailto:filmagens.dae@psp.pt">filmagens.dae@psp.pt</a> )
<b>Fire, whether through explosions, fireworks or pyrotechnics</b>	Local fire department	Fees incurred
<b>Beaches, maritime zones, inland waters or protected areas</b>	Port captaincy, maritime, environmental authorities, namely the Portuguese Environment Agency ( <i>Agência Portuguesa do Ambiente – APA</i> ) and the Institute for Nature Conservation and Forests ( <i>Instituto da Conservação da Natureza e das Florestas – ICNF</i> ), or Municipalities	May be requested online

FILMING TAKES PLACE ON/ INVOLVES THE USE OF	COMPETENT AUTHORITY	OBSERVATIONS
<b>Animals</b>	Regional Food and Veterinary Service Directorate ( <i>Direção-Geral da Alimentação e Veterinária – DGAV</i> )	Animals must be insured and have access to appropriate feeding and watering facilities
<b>Drones with certain specifications or aircraft</b>	National Authority for Civil Aviation ( <i>Autoridade Nacional da Aviação Civil – ANAC</i> ) and the National Aeronautics Authority ( <i>Autoridade Aeronáutica Nacional – AAN</i> )	May be requested through the filling of an online form
<b>National roads or motorways, bridges and viaducts, or railways</b>	<i>Infraestruturas de Portugal (I.P.)</i> , <i>Comboios de Portugal (C.P.)</i> or concessionaire	May be requested online
<b>Children</b>	Local Commission for the Protection of Children and Youth ( <i>Comissão de Proteção de Crianças e Jovens – CPCJ</i> )	

All these authorisations and licences are mandatory and require contact and cooperation with the competent national, regional or municipal authorities.



## INFRASTRUCTURE AND LOGISTICS

Portugal has a variety of filming equipment and infrastructure on offer at competitive prices.

### Studios, soundstages and backlots

Portugal offers a growing range of filming equipment and production infrastructure at competitive prices. While studio facilities are not yet the country's most established asset, there is an expanding network of spaces capable of supporting a wide variety of production needs.

Current facilities generally provide industry-standard lighting and grip packages. Some venues offer additional features such as chroma key stages, motion-capture areas or early-stage virtual-production solutions, though availability and technical specifications vary between locations.

### Post-production facilities

Portugal has an established and growing post-production sector, mainly based in Lisbon and Porto, providing services for national and international film, television and streaming productions. Facilities are accustomed to working with foreign clients, with English-speaking teams and workflows that align with international technical standards.

In Lisbon, most of the major players offer full-service pipelines, including picture finishing in HDR, Dolby Vision mastering and theatre-grade colour suites, as well as Dolby-certified audio studios capable of 5.1, 7.1 and immersive formats.

Portugal also benefits from a pool of experienced editors, colourists, sound designers and VFX artists, many of whom have worked on co-productions with major platforms.

In addition, government incentives (as seen above) can apply to post-production work carried out in the country, making Portugal financially attractive for productions looking to finish their films locally.

## Equipment

The range of equipment on offer is also varied and of high quality at one of the lowest costs in EU and Eurozone.<sup>2</sup> In this regard, Portugal Film Commission acts as an important bridge with companies operating in this sector through its search engine in the Entity Directory.

Portugal has a well-developed equipment rental and technical-support sector that comfortably serve both national and international productions. Lisbon and Porto host several large, reputable rental houses offering a full range of professional gear, from cinema cameras and lenses to lighting, grip and on-set communication systems.

Equipment suppliers in Portugal are experienced in supporting international productions, providing multilingual crews, on-set technical support and access to modern, well-maintained equipment, in keeping with international standards. For large-scale or specialised shoots, suppliers regularly collaborate with European partners to ensure rapid access to specific technologies.

Import of production equipment into Portugal from outside the EU is covered by the rules of the [Convention on Temporary Admission](#).

<sup>2</sup> European Commission, *Eurostat, Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (HICP) annual average indices – photographic and cinematographic equipment and optical instruments (CP0912)*.

## Transport and accommodation

Portugal has a relatively low cost of living compared to the EU average, ranking the lowest in Western Europe, with accommodation and daily expenses generally more affordable than in other major European countries.

While Lisbon and Porto are more expensive, hotel and long-stay accommodation prices remain reasonable and costs drop significantly outside major urban centres, where Portugal also offers a wide range of high-quality and luxury hotels.

Travel costs are moderate, with affordable public transport, economical intercity train and bus fares and reasonably priced domestic and short-haul flights.



# FILM FESTIVALS IN PORTUGAL

Portugal hosts a wide range of events dedicated to promoting national and international cinema. It organises numerous film festivals of different scales and thematic focuses, contributing to a rich and diverse cinematic landscape. Among these, the following festivals stand out for their significance and recognition:

## Lisbon Film Festival

Lisbon Film Festival is a major international film festival held in Lisbon. The programme includes high-profile premieres, auteur-driven films and independent productions, alongside masterclasses, industry panels and special events for filmmakers, critics and the wider public.

## IndieLisboa

IndieLisboa is an international film festival held annually in Lisbon, dedicated to the exhibition and promotion of independent cinema, both local and international. Its goal is to highlight and give a platform specifically to independent work, contribute to its wider dissemination through professional exchange and audience engagement. The festival even includes a “kids” programme, dedicated to family-friendly independent cinema (including animation).

## MOTELX – Lisbon International Horror Film Festival

MOTELX is an annual horror film festival held in Lisbon, showcasing a curated selection of international horror, thriller and dark fantasy films, from short works to feature-length productions, complemented by workshops, masterclasses and a range of industry and audience-focused events.

## Doclisboa

Doclisboa is a documentary film festival held annually in Lisbon. The programme includes screenings, debates and industry events, featuring both established and emerging documentarians and presenting a range of social, cultural and artistic nonfiction films.

# DIRECTORY

## ICA – INSTITUTE OF CINEMA AND AUDIOVISUAL

ICA oversees funding and incentive schemes for film and audiovisual projects, regulating and certifying national film productions, and promotes Portuguese cinema internationally.

### CONTACTS

Tel.: (+351) 213 230 800

Email: [info@ica-ip.pt](mailto:info@ica-ip.pt)

## PFC – PORTUGAL FILM COMMISSION

PFC is responsible for promoting Portugal as a destination for international film productions, facilitating filming permits and production logistics, and attracting foreign investment to the Portuguese audiovisual sector.

### CONTACTS

Tel.: (+351) 213 230 870

Email: [mail@portugalfilmcommission.com](mailto:mail@portugalfilmcommission.com)

There are 12 Regional Film Commissions in Portugal. The following represent the country's major filming hubs.

**Regional film commissions are responsible for supporting film and audiovisual productions within their territories, by facilitating the awarding of necessary permits, helping to coordinate with local authorities and providing information on locations, services and infrastructure. Regional film commissions also promote their regions as filming destinations and assist ICA and PFC in their efforts to attract national and international productions.**

## LISBON FILM COMMISSION

### CONTACTS

Tel.: (+351) 218 170 962

Email: [lisboafilmcommission@cm-lisboa.pt](mailto:lisboafilmcommission@cm-lisboa.pt)

## PORTO FILM COMMISSION

### CONTACTS

Tel.: (+351) 930 424 014

Email: [info@filmporto.pt](mailto:info@filmporto.pt)

## CENTRO FILM COMMISSION

### CONTACTS

Tel.: (+351) 913 129 074

Email: [info@cpfc.pt](mailto:info@cpfc.pt)

## LOULÉ FILM OFFICE

### CONTACTS

Tel.: (+351) 289 400 600 (Manuel

Baptista, Film Officer)

Email: [film@cm-loule.pt](mailto:film@cm-loule.pt)

## MADEIRA FILM COMMISSION

### CONTACTS

Tel.: (+351) 291 145 300

Email: [madeirafilmcommission@madeira.gov.pt](mailto:madeirafilmcommission@madeira.gov.pt)

## AZORES FILM COMMISSION

### CONTACTS

Tel.: (+351) 295 213 343

Email: [geral@azoresfilmcommission.org](mailto:geral@azoresfilmcommission.org)

## MUTIM – WOMEN WORKING IN MOVING IMAGES

The industry association with the most members, integrating women working in film and audiovisual media in Portugal.

### CONTACTS

Email: [geral@mutim.org](mailto:geral@mutim.org)

## PORTUGUESE CINEMATHEQUE

The Portuguese Cinematheque manages the preservation and archiving of national film heritage. It organises film screenings, retrospectives and educational activities, and conducts research and documentation on the history of cinema.

### CONTACTS

Tel.: (+351) 213 596 200

Email: [cinemateca@cinemateca.pt](mailto:cinemateca@cinemateca.pt)

## CREATIVE EUROPE DESK PORTUGAL

The Creative Europe Desk Portugal offers support for applications to European audiovisual funding programmes, including Creative Europe Media. The Desk promotes Portuguese audiovisual projects in international markets and provides training in cultural project management and European funding mechanisms.

### CONTACTS

Tel.: (+351) 213 230 800 (speak to the Creative Europe Information Centre, dial 8)

Email: [geral@europacriativa.eu](mailto:geral@europacriativa.eu)

## SPA – PORTUGUESE SOCIETY OF AUTHORS

SPA is responsible for the collective management of authors' rights in film and audiovisual works, overseeing the licensing of uses and the distribution of royalties. It also offers guidance on the copyright and rights-management regulatory framework.

### CONTACTS

Tel.: (+351) 213 594 400

Email: [geral@spautores.pt](mailto:geral@spautores.pt)

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## TURISMO DE PORTUGAL

Turismo de Portugal is the managing entity and vehicle for the processing, decision-making and implementation of support granted under RIPAC, in conjunction with ICA. It is also responsible for the development of the Mutual Guarantee Line for the support of Credit to Audiovisual and Cinematographic Production.

### CONTACTS

Tel.: (+351) 211 140 200

Email: [info@turismodeportugal.pt](mailto:info@turismodeportugal.pt)

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## LEFFEST

### CONTACTS

Tel.: (+351) 213 255 835

Email:

[info@leffest.com](mailto:info@leffest.com) (for general inquiries)

[production@leffest.com](mailto:production@leffest.com) (for partnerships)

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## MOTELX

### CONTACTS

Email:

[geral@motelx.org](mailto:geral@motelx.org) (for general inquiries)

[films@motelx.org](mailto:films@motelx.org) (for submissions)

[producao@motelx.org](mailto:producao@motelx.org) (for sponsorships)

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## DOCLISBOA

### CONTACTS

Tel.: (+351) 213 470 816

Email: [doclisboa@doclisboa.org](mailto:doclisboa@doclisboa.org)

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## INDIELISBOA

### CONTACTS

Tel.: (+351) 213 158 399

Email:

[info@indielisboa.com](mailto:info@indielisboa.com) (for general inquiries)

[industry@indielisboa.com](mailto:industry@indielisboa.com) (for industry/lab questions)



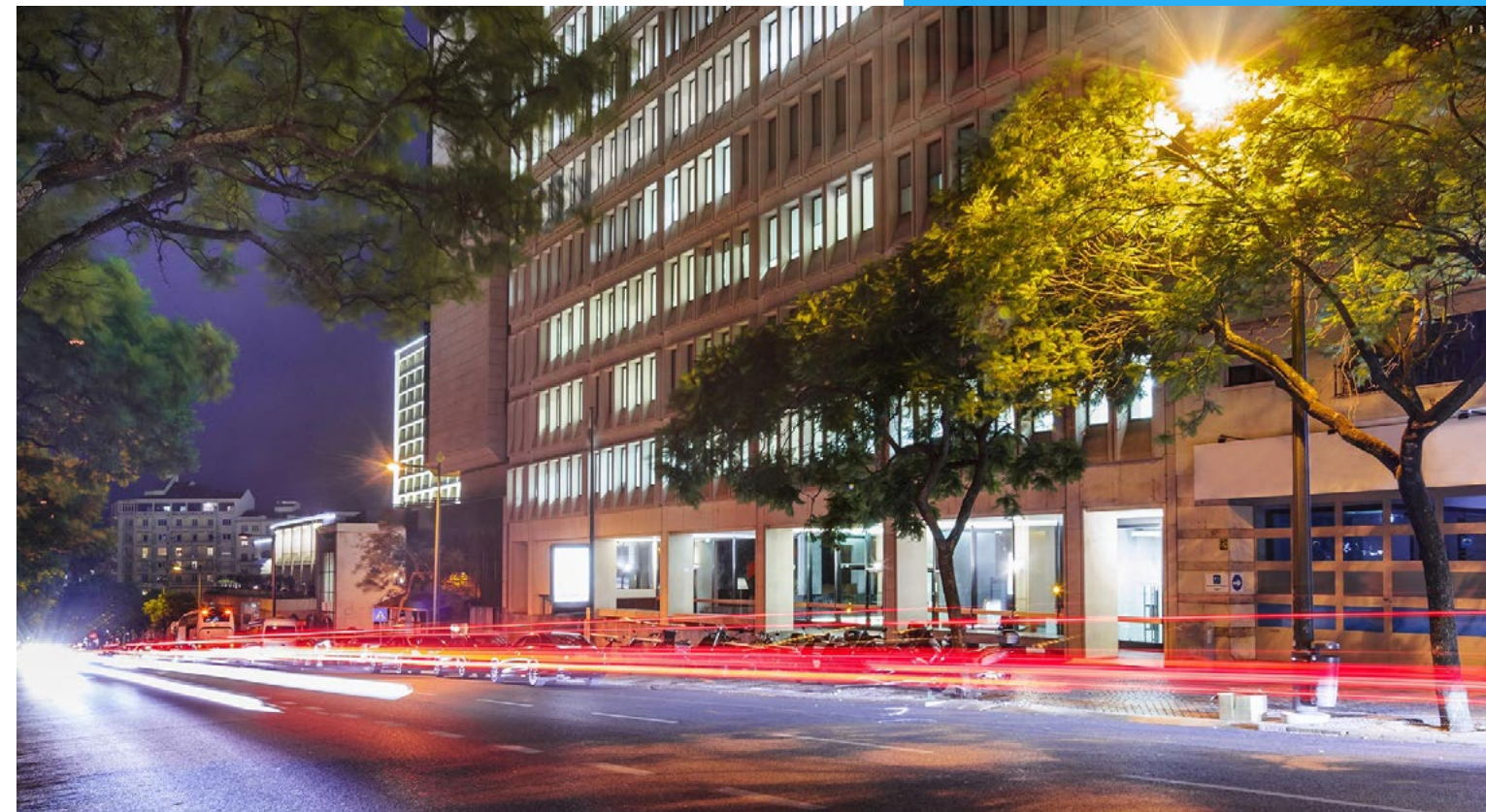
# ABOUT MORAIS LEITÃO

Morais Leitão is a leading full-service law and consultancy firm in Portugal, with decades of experience and a consistently strong market presence. Widely recognised at both national and international levels, the firm is a benchmark across all major areas of law. Its leading position and global execution capability are independently acknowledged by the market.

In addition to a team of lawyers, we also have consultants specialising in areas complementary to law. Together, we form a highly technological and innovative multidisciplinary team, prepared to respond to our clients' most complex challenges.

## MORAIS LEITÃO LEGAL CIRCLE

Morais Leitão has built a strong international network, the *Morais Leitão Legal Circle*, across Angola, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Singapore, Timor-Leste and Macau. This organic network ensures a highly integrated and effective cross-border response to the complex and sophisticated needs of clients, delivering full-service legal support through *Morais Leitão Legal Circle* offices and associated firms in Brazil, Guinea-Bissau and São Tomé and Príncipe.



Our lawyers are routinely involved in the most complex and large-scale deals in Portugal, Lusophone Africa and Lusophone Asia – frequently including “firsts” and reducing the “learning curve” when assisting our clients in such jurisdictions.

In 2023, *Morais Leitão* expanded its international footprint with the opening of an office in Singapore, strengthening its position as a strategic hub connecting Asia-Pacific, Africa and Europe.

## DESKS

We have different country desks to help us deliver comprehensive and effective legal services to clients operating in an increasingly globalised environment, ensuring that we can assist in the complexities of international business and law, namely our Brazilian, China, French, German, Indian and Spanish desks.

## PRACTICE AREAS

- Administrative and Public Law
- Arbitration
- Banking and Finance
- Capital Markets
- Corporate and M&A
- Corporate Real Estate And Tourism
- Criminal, Regulatory Offences and Compliance
- Data Protection
- Employment, Pensions And Immigration
- Environment
- European Law and Competition
- Intellectual Property

- Litigation
- Restructuring and Insolvency
- Tax
- Urban Planning

## INDUSTRIES

- Agribusiness
- Banks and Financial Services
- Construction and Real Estate
- Defence and Aerospace
- Energy and Natural Resources
- Gaming
- Health and Pharmaceuticals
- Industrial Activities
- Infrastructure
- Insurance and Pension Funds
- Media & Entertainment
- Private Equity
- Public Sector
- Retail and Consumer Goods

- Sports
- Technology
- Telecommunications
- Tourism and Leisure
- Transportation
- Water, Sanitation and Waste
- Wealth Management

## BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

- Preventive Analysis
- Forensic Investigation
- Assessment.AI
- Document Automation
- Electronic Signature

# OUR RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

## ENTERTAINMENT & MEDIA

Morais Leitão advises national and international clients across the entertainment and media industries, delivering practical and business-oriented legal solutions throughout the full lifecycle of creative and audiovisual projects.

We work with Hollywood actors, producers, studios, broadcasters and streaming platforms – including Studio Canal, Globo, Castelo Lopes, Columbia Pictures, NOS Lusomundo Cinemas and SIC – combining regulatory, contractual and intellectual property expertise with a strong understanding of the sector’s operational and commercial realities.

Our experience covers production and distribution, regulatory compliance, licensing, funding and contract negotiation. We maintain a close working relationship with SIC – Sociedade Independente de Comunicação, S.A., and regularly advise on filming, licensing and incentive mechanisms in Portugal. We also advised on the launch of OPTO, SIC’s streaming platform and supported several high-profile productions and sensitive matters.

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### KEY SERVICES

**Advising on regulatory frameworks applicable to audiovisual and media projects**

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**Structuring and negotiating production, co-production and distribution agreements**

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**Assisting with filming licences, public space use and administrative procedures**

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**Advising on investment structures and access to public incentives**

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**Representing clients before regulatory and administrative authorities**

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## TAX

Morais Leitão advises clients in the entertainment and media industries on tax structuring and planning, supporting the optimisation of investments, productions and cross-border activities.

We provide integrated tax solutions tailored to film, television, streaming and co-production projects, from initial structuring to distribution and monetisation.

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### KEY SERVICES

**Advising on tax structuring for audiovisual and media projects**

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**Advising on national and European incentives, including the film and audiovisual tax rebate**

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**Structuring cross-border investment and financing models**

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**Advising on transfer pricing, royalties, image rights and taxation of artistic income**

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**Representing clients in tax inspections and disputes**

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## EMPLOYMENT & TALENT

Morais Leitão advises artists, creative professionals, production companies and media groups on employment and talent-related matters, combining advisory and litigation support tailored to production environments.

We support clients throughout the production cycle, including hiring, project-based work, mobility and termination, with particular focus on international productions and non-resident talent.

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### KEY SERVICES

**Structuring employment and talent models for audiovisual projects**

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**Drafting and negotiating employment and service contracts**

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**Advising private clients and high-profile talent on mobility, outsourcing and non-resident talent**

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**Structuring IP, confidentiality and non-competition clauses**

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**Advising on immigration, visas and residence matters**

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## INSURANCE, RISK & COMPLIANCE

Morais Leitão advises clients on insurance, risk management and compliance, helping protect investments and ensure business continuity in audiovisual and media projects.

We support production companies, broadcasters and event organisers in structuring insurance coverage and managing claims arising from filming and production activities.

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### KEY SERVICES

Advising on production insurance, E&O, liability and event cancellation

Assisting with claims management and dispute resolution

Advising on compliance with insurance and distribution rules

Supporting international insurance arrangements

## INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY & CONTENT PROTECTION

Morais Leitão provides comprehensive legal advice on intellectual property and content protection, with a strong focus on the creative, audiovisual and media sectors.

We advise producers, broadcasters, streaming platforms and creative professionals on the protection, licensing and commercial exploitation of creative assets.

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### KEY SERVICES

Advising on copyright ownership and licensing

Drafting and negotiating IP-related agreements

Representing clients in IP litigation and arbitration

Advising on digital regulation, online content and AI-related issues

As a member of Lex Mundi, Morais Leitão ensures seamless cross-border coordination for clients operating globally in the entertainment and media industries.

## KEY CONTACT



**JOANA SIMÕES  
COELHO**  
jcoelho@mlgts.pt

**Morais Leitão is available to answer any questions you may have.**

# MORAIIS LEITÃO

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