

Original Article



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Attractive Features of Cultural Incentive Policies for Brazilian Film Production Companies

*Fatores de atratividade das políticas culturais para produtoras cinematográficas brasileiras**Factores de atractivo de las políticas culturales para las productoras cinematográficas brasileñas*

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José L. M. Aleixo Filho

joselucasaleixo@gmail.com**Abstract**

This article investigates the factors that influence the choice of Brazilian film production companies regarding different public cultural incentive mechanisms. Based on a questionnaire applied to 80 companies from various regions of the country, the study identified the key elements valued in the selection of available funding instruments. Content analysis of the responses revealed three main categories: Finance, Logistics, and Creation. The results show that direct funding, lower bureaucracy, and easier access are the most attractive aspects. The Audiovisual Sector Fund was the most frequently cited mechanism, followed by the Audiovisual Law. The findings provide insights for improving public cultural policies directed at Brazil's audiovisual sector.

Keywords: National cinema; Public policies; Cultural incentive laws; Film production companies.

Resumo

Este artigo investiga os fatores que influenciam a escolha de produtoras cinematográficas brasileiras por diferentes mecanismos de incentivo público à cultura. Por meio de um questionário aplicado a 80 produtoras de distintas regiões do País, foram identificados os elementos mais valorizados pelas empresas na escolha entre os instrumentos de fomento disponíveis. A Análise de Conteúdo das respostas revelou três categorias principais: Finanças, Logística e Criação. Os resultados indicam que o financiamento direto, a menor burocracia e o acesso facilitado são os aspectos mais atrativos. O Fundo Setorial do Audiovisual foi o mecanismo mais citado, seguido pela Lei do Audiovisual. As conclusões oferecem subsídios para o aprimoramento das políticas públicas culturais voltadas ao setor audiovisual brasileiro.

Palavras-chave: Cinema nacional; Políticas públicas; Leis de incentivo à cultura; Produtoras cinematográficas.

Resumen

Este artículo investiga los factores que influyen en la elección de las productoras cinematográficas brasileñas entre los distintos mecanismos públicos de incentivo a la cultura. A través de un cuestionario aplicado

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Data Availability Statement:

The quantitative and categorized data generated and analyzed are included within the body of this article. The raw textual data (full transcripts of the production companies' responses) are not publicly available due to ethical restrictions regarding confidentiality and commercial secrecy agreed upon with the research participants.

Ethical Aspects and Institutional Approval:

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In accordance with sex and gender equity principles in research (SAGER Guidelines), it is clarified that variables regarding biological sex, gender identity, race, or ethnicity of individual respondents were not collected, as they did not constitute the primary analytical scope of this stage, which focused strictly on the institutional and logistical profile of the film production companies.

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a 80 productoras de diversas regiones del país, se identificaron los elementos más valorados en la selección de los instrumentos de fomento disponibles. El análisis de contenido de las respuestas reveló tres categorías principales: Finanzas, Logística y Creación. Los resultados indican que el financiamiento directo, la menor burocracia y el acceso facilitado son los aspectos más atractivos. El Fondo Sectorial del Audiovisual fue el mecanismo más citado, seguido por la Ley del Audiovisual. Las conclusiones ofrecen aportes para el perfeccionamiento de las políticas públicas culturales dirigidas al sector audiovisual brasileño.

Palabras clave: Cine nacional; Políticas públicas; Leyes de incentivo a la cultura; Productoras cinematográficas.

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Introduction

Throughout the history of Brazil, various public policies have been established to foster the development of the national audiovisual industry. In each republican period, beginning with the Vargas Era, different laws, decrees, tariffs, institutions, and representatives have introduced specific forms of support for the sector (SIMIS, 2017).

The historically close relationship between the State and audiovisual producers in Brazil was interrupted at the beginning of the Collor administration, following the economic crisis of the 1980s. In 1990, then-president Fernando Collor implemented a series of measures that dismantled cultural incentives, extinguishing agencies such as Embrafilme and the Brazilian Cinema Foundation (*Fundação do Cinema Brasileiro*). Consequently, national film production collapsed: in 1992, only three Brazilian films were commercially released, accounting for less than 1% share of the domestic market (IKEDA, 2016). This scenario contrasts sharply with the performance of the 1970s, when the country produced, on average, more than 100 films per year, accounting for approximately one-third of the national market (AMÂNCIO, 2007).

Faced with this crisis, a long struggle by civil society began in Brazil to reconstruct public policies for national cinema and culture. As a result of this mobilization, three main federal public financing mechanisms were established over the years: the Rouanet Law (*Lei Rouanet*), the Audiovisual Law (*Lei do Audiovisual*), and the Audiovisual Sector Fund (*Fundo Setorial do Audiovisual* – FSA).

In general, academic literature points out that public policies have contributed to an increase in investments in the audiovisual sector and the growth of feature film production. However, despite these advances, the market share of Brazilian films remains limited, being dominated by American productions (SILVA, 2011; IKEDA, 2015). In the last decade, although the number of Brazilian film releases has increased steadily, from 74 in 2010 to 167 in 2019, the national market share has fallen significantly, from 17.9% in 2010 to 11.7% in 2018 and 2019 (ANCINE, 2024).

This scenario highlights the relevance of cultural policies for the national audiovisual sector, but it also underscores the need to understand how these laws can be structured to better meet the needs and expectations of the industry, enabling its further development. Despite the differences between the available funding models, the factors that influence the choice of film production companies for one model or another remain poorly understood.

In light of this, this article seeks to answer the following question: what factors influence the choice of Brazilian film production companies for a specific public funding model? The objective is to identify, based on the perception of these production companies, the elements that make one funding model more attractive than another, contributing to the debate on the formulation of more effective public policies aligned with the sector's demands.

To this end, qualitative and exploratory research was conducted through the application of an online questionnaire to film production companies of various sizes and regions in Brazil. The open-ended questions sought to capture the companies' perceptions regarding the main public incentive mechanisms available. The responses were analyzed using the Content Analysis technique, which included the thematic coding and categorization of the arguments presented. This approach allowed for the identification of the factors most valued by production companies when choosing between the mechanisms, as well as their analysis in light of theories on cultural policies and audiovisual sector funding in the country.

Public policies in the Brazilian audiovisual sector

Brazil has three main audiovisual incentive mechanisms: the Rouanet Law, the Audiovisual Law, and the Audiovisual Sector Fund (FSA).

Created in 1991, the Rouanet Law became known for its tax deduction mechanism, through which individuals and companies allocate a portion of their income tax to pre-approved cultural projects. Article 18 of the Law designates projects that can receive up to 100% deduction, such as short and medium-length films. Article 26, on the other hand, addresses other categories, such as feature films, with lower deduction percentages that vary according to the type of support and the sponsor's profile (BRASIL, 1991).

The Audiovisual Law also operates based on the logic of the tax deduction, but it is more specific: it was created to directly stimulate the production of Brazilian audiovisual works. Through it, investors can support projects and, in return, deduct part of the tax due. The difference is that, in some modalities, the

investor can even become a partner in the work, participating in the profits if there is a commercial return. Furthermore, companies that profit from the exhibition of foreign films in Brazil can reinvest part of these taxes in domestic productions (BRASIL, 1993).

The Audiovisual Sector Fund (FSA) was established in 2006 with the objective of developing the country's audiovisual production chain in an integrated manner (CALABRE; TAVARES, 2021). Unlike previous laws, the FSA utilizes direct public funds derived from sectoral contributions, such as Condecine and Fistel (BRASIL, 2006). Its management is based on public calls for proposals, and projects must be previously approved by the National Film Agency (*Agência Nacional de Cinema*) (ANCINE, 2021).

Theoretical Review

The audiovisual support instruments in Brazil, described in the previous section, operate through different logics, at times prioritizing market action via tax incentives, and at others promoting direct State investment. There is no consensus within the academic literature regarding which of these models would be more effective for the sustainable development of the sector. Henkin, Paes, and Valiati (2016) argue that the Rouanet Law presents positive aspects, since shifting responsibility to civil society during the support process saves administrative costs and enables the creation of channels that facilitate private investment. However, the authors also maintain that by delegating decisions to the business sector, Rouanet Law opens space for the commercial interests of their marketing strategies.

As Pitombo (2006) observes, contemporary cultural sponsorship differs from the traditional patronage practiced until the 19th century, which was based on a model of selfless donation, often associated with aristocratic families. In the current context, sponsorship actions are typically integrated into broader organizational strategies, in which support for culture is not motivated solely by the symbolic valuation of art, but also by the interest in adding positive attributes associated with the cultural asset to the brand. In this way, sponsorship becomes an instrument of differentiation and enhancement of the company's image in a highly competitive and saturated market.

For Rubim (2016), there is an immense imbalance between incentive laws and other modalities of financing and support for culture in the country, due to the strong predominance of indirect financing in the cultural sector, such as the Rouanet Law and the Audiovisual Law. The author understands that tax incentive laws direct resources toward products with greater market appeal. In this sense, these policies fail to reach and support other forms of cultural expression — including popular, experimental, and high-culture forms— and, consequently, fail to reflect the country's cultural complexity and diversity.

When analyzing the Rouanet Law and the Audiovisual Law, Ikeda (2016) highlights problems in delegating project selection to the marketing departments of companies whose areas of operation are entirely distinct from the audiovisual sector, such as banks or oil companies, since these organizations lack adequate knowledge about the specificities of the cultural segment, which hinders its development. Furthermore, the low tax deduction limits, between 3% and 6% of the annual income tax, mean that production companies require several years to raise the necessary funds. Even so, many projects fail to fully raise the approved amounts, leading to productions marked by technical difficulties and poorly finished productions.

Pitombo (2006) reinforces that the Rouanet Law failed to stimulate the investment of companies' own resources in cultural projects, undermining a fundamental principle of the logic behind tax incentive policies. Rubim (2016) addresses this same issue by stating that, with the near-universal application of the 100% tax exemption provided for in current incentive laws, the funds used are entirely public. Thus, private companies, although they have control over the selection of projects to be funded, do not need to contribute any of their own capital. This situation brings yet another unintended consequence, as it discourages government mechanisms that do not allow for full tax exemption.

Regarding the FSA, Calabre and Tavares (2021) point out that, although it also adopts an investment-oriented logic, with an emphasis on management capacity, on the fiscal health of the production companies, and the potential for economic return of the projects, the Fund is not limited to business criteria. Beyond financial results, the FSA equally seeks to promote works of artistic relevance, especially those capable of circulating in international festivals and enhancing the visibility of Brazilian cinema abroad.

Although public policies aimed at the audiovisual sector present a range of positive and negative aspects debated in the academic literature, a significant gap remains: an understanding of production companies' own perceptions regarding the mechanisms that support them. In this sense, this research aims

to contribute to filling this gap by offering an analysis grounded in production companies' experiences and opinions regarding the available instruments.

Methodology

To investigate audiovisual production companies' perceptions of cultural incentive mechanisms, an online questionnaire was developed using the Google Forms platform. The questionnaire was structured into two main sections:

- 1) Company information:
 - Municipality and state of registration;
 - Type and number of audiovisual works produced.
- 2) Preference for specific laws:
 - Choice of the most attractive law among the Rouanet Law, the Audiovisual Law, the Audiovisual Sector Fund, or another;
 - Justification for the choice, via an open-ended response.

Ancine has made available on its website a list of independent Brazilian production companies registered in its system, which includes 13,002 companies (ANCINE, 2023). Based on this list, a filter was applied, selecting only production companies that list the National Classification of Economic Activities (CNAE) 5911-1/99 (film, video, and television program production activities) as the company's primary activity. A total of 6,426 companies were found in this category. Subsequently, another filtering was conducted, excluding production companies with a classification level of 1, since, according to ANCINE's criteria, it is possible that they have not produced any audiovisual works and, therefore, have no experience with the mechanisms of incentive laws.

Thus, 636 production companies were found, which constitute the target population of this study. The questionnaire was sent to these companies, and the data were collected between September and November 2024. At the end of the data collection stage, the questionnaire was answered by 80 companies, which corresponds to a response rate of approximately 12.6%. This rate, although sufficient for the exploratory nature of the research, may have been influenced by the academic and independent nature of the study.

Based on the data obtained from the open-ended questions, a Content Analysis was conducted, a research methodology used to interpret the content of different types of documents and texts. This data must be processed and organized to enable a clearer understanding, as well as an appropriate interpretation and inference of the meanings it conveys. Bardin (1977) divides Content Analysis into three parts: pre-analysis; exploration of the material; and processing of the results and the interpretation.

Pre-analysis is the research phase in which the *corpus* is defined, that is, the set of documents selected to undergo the analysis processes. In this study, the number of participants was limited and the opinions expressed were objective, so there was no need for further data selection, and the texts were analyzed in their entirety (BARDIN, 1977).

The exploration of the material is the phase in which raw data are segmented to reach the central meaning of the text. To this end, data coding must be performed to identify the units of analysis. According to Franco (2020), these units can take different forms, such as words, themes, characters, and items. For this research, the "theme" was selected as the unit of analysis, since it is adopted to analyze motivations, opinions, values, beliefs, and trends, in accordance with the objective of this study.

Also during the exploration of the material, categorization must be performed, which consists of grouping the previous codes into categories that share similar characteristics, organizing the units of analysis in a logical and coherent manner. The categorization criterion can be semantic, syntactic, lexical, or expressive. In this study, semantic categorization was chosen, which is based on thematic segments, since the units of analysis were also coded into themes.

Finally, the processing and interpretation of the results is the research phase in which the raw data are analyzed and related to the theoretical framework and the research objectives. According to Bardin (1977), inferences can be made based on the sender, who produces the message; the receiver, who receives it; the message itself; and the medium, which refers to the channel of the message. For this research, the focus of the analysis was the message, specifically its meaning.

Table 1 summarizes the content analysis protocol developed for this study, adapting the steps proposed by Bardin (1977) to the research objectives.



Table 1 - Content Analysis Methodology.

Step	Description	Procedure Adopted in the Study
1. Pre-Analysis	Definition of the <i>corpus</i> and preparation of the material.	- <i>Corpus</i>: 80 open-ended responses from film production companies. - Selection criteria: Exhaustiveness (all responses were analyzed) and relevance (alignment with research objectives).
2. Coding	Identification of units of analysis.	- Units of analysis: Themes (e.g., “direct financing,” “bureaucracy”). - Counting rule: Frequency of occurrence of themes (quantification).
3. Categorization	Grouping of themes into analytical categories.	- Semantic criterion: Grouping by thematic affinity (e.g., “access” + “bureaucracy” = “Logistics” category). - Validation criteria: Mutual exclusion (a theme cannot be in two categories) and homogeneity (same classification principle).
4. Analysis and Inference	Interpretation of the results in light of the theoretical framework.	- Focus: Meaning of the message (content of the responses). - Triangulation: Comparison with previous studies.

Source: Elaborated by the authors (2026).

Image description for accessibility: Content Analysis Methodology: The table describes the methodological process structured in four sequential stages applied to the corpus of 80 open-ended responses from film production companies. In the pre-analysis, the material was selected based on the criteria of exhaustiveness and pertinence. In the coding, themes were identified as recording units, quantified by their frequency of occurrence. The categorization performed the semantic grouping of themes by affinity into analytical categories, validated by mutual exclusion and homogeneity. Finally, the analysis and inference performed the interpretation of the meaning of the messages and the triangulation of data with previous studies.

This structure allowed for the identification of patterns in the producers’ preferences, as detailed in the Results section.

Pre-Analysis

At the end of the data collection, 80 companies responded to the questionnaire. Of these, 35 are located in São Paulo and 21 in Rio de Janeiro, totaling 70% of the sample. This predominance reflects the regional concentration already present in the list of production companies registered with Ancine, which limits the generalization of the results to regions with a lower productive density, as they may present their own dynamics and challenges. Figure 1 displays the states of all respondents.

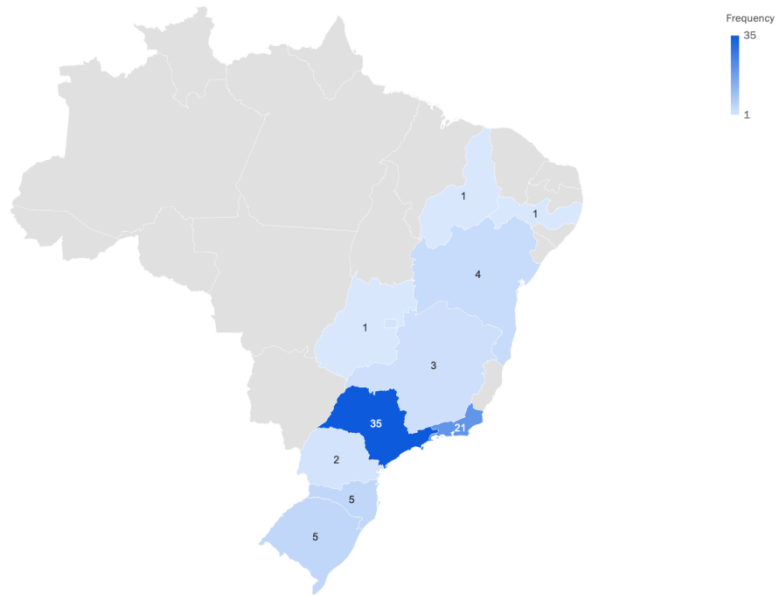
Image description for accessibility: Figure 1: Geographic distribution of film production companies. The choropleth map of Brazil presents the frequency of responses by state using a continuous chromatic scale of blue tones. A vertical legend in the upper right corner indicates that the saturated dark blue tone represents the maximum value of 35 occurrences, while progressively lighter and softer tones decrease to sky blue, associated with the minimum value of 1 occurrence. São Paulo displays the most intense dark blue color with 35 records, and Rio de Janeiro stands out in medium blue with 21. The other highlighted states (Goiás, Bahia, Paraíba, Minas Gerais, Paraná, Santa Catarina, and Rio Grande do Sul) vary between 1 and 5 occurrences in very light blue shades, while areas with no records remain filled in neutral gray.

Of the 80 companies that responded to the questionnaire, 49 have produced 12 or more audiovisual works, 25 have completed between 6 and 11, 5 have produced between 4 and 5, and only 1 has completed between 2 and 3 productions. This indicates that the majority of the respondents have experience in the audiovisual sector, with a significant track record of productions (Figure 2).

As described in the methodology, the second section of the questionnaire asked respondents to indicate their preference among the three audiovisual incentive mechanisms that formed the basis of this research: the Rouanet Law, the Audiovisual Law, and the FSA, with the option to suggest other mechanisms. The responses obtained for this question can be viewed in Figure 3.

The FSA was chosen by 53.8% of production companies, highlighting its importance in the sector. The Audiovisual Law, with 28.8%, remains a relevant alternative, while the Rouanet Law, with 8.8%, is less commonly used in the audiovisual sector. Other mechanisms, such as the Paulo Gustavo Law and state laws, were also mentioned.

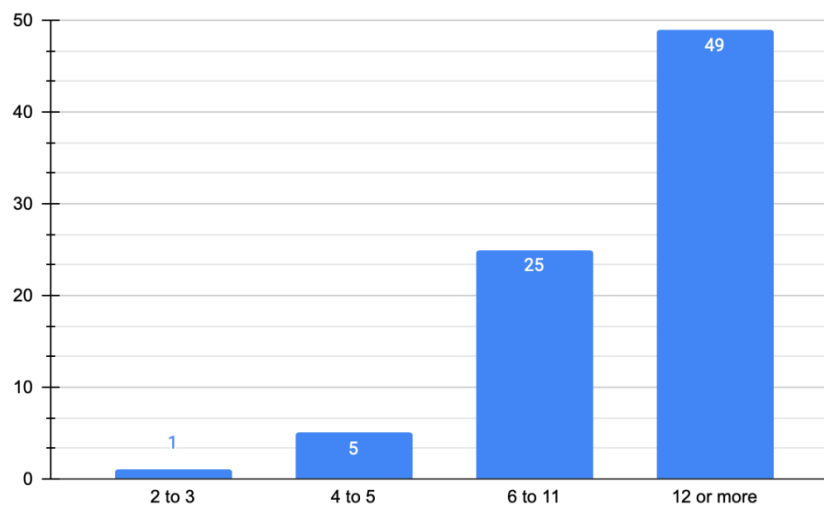
Figure 1 - State of production companies.



Source: Elaborated by the authors (2026).

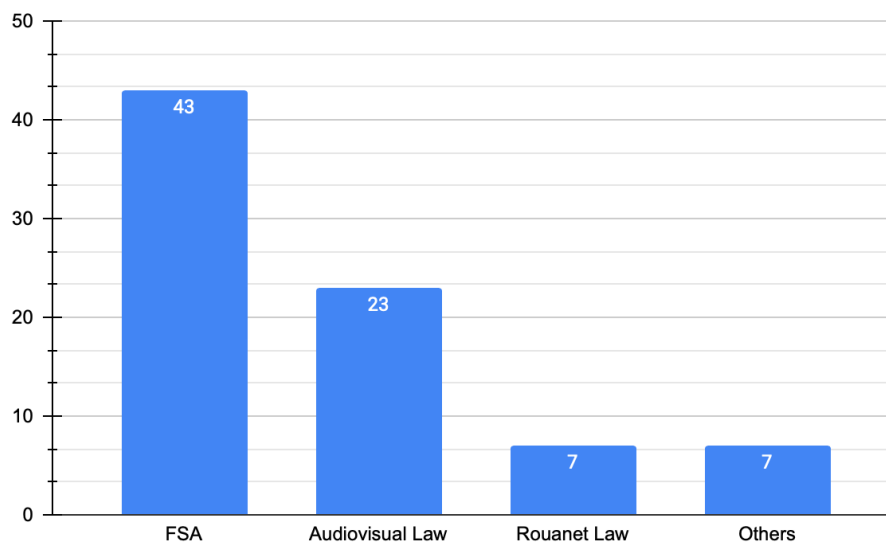
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Figure 2 - Number of audiovisual works produced.



Source: Elaborated by the authors (2026).

Image description for accessibility: Figure 2: Vertical bar chart. The chart displays four blue columns in ascending order over a vertical axis from 0 to 50. The first bar, for the “2 to 3” interval, has 1 occurrence; the second, from “4 to 5”, has 5; the third, from “6 to 11”, records 25; and the fourth and largest bar, for “12 or more”, concentrates the maximum value of 49 occurrences. Source: Survey results.

Figure 3 - Preference for audiovisual incentive mechanisms.

Source: Elaborated by the authors (2026).

Image description for accessibility: Figure 3: Vertical bar chart. The chart presents four blue columns in descending order over a vertical axis from 0 to 50. The first bar, “Fundo Setorial do Audiovisual (FSA)”, records the maximum value of 43 occurrences; the second, “Lei do Audiovisual”, has 23; and the last two, “Lei Rouanet” and “Outras”, tie with 7 occurrences each.

Coding

Next, participants were asked to explain the reasons behind their preferences regarding the previous question. For the content analysis, all responses were read, and their units of analysis were coded by theme. In this process, 14 initial themes were identified, as described in Table 2.

Table 2 - Initial themes of the units of analysis.

Theme	Description
Access	Ease of submitting and approving projects through the mechanism.
Bureaucracy	Perception of slowness, complexity, or excessive steps.
Context	Adaptation of the mechanism to the regional specificities of production companies.
Counterpart	Requirement for financial contribution by the production company to access the resource.
Quotas	Inclusion of quotas in the selection of projects aimed at minority groups.
Rights	Guarantee of control and ownership of the work's rights.
Diversity	Variety of support programs offered by the mechanism.
Specificity	Focus on a specific line of support offered by the mechanism.
Experience	Familiarity of the production company with the procedures of the mechanism.
Direct funding	Resources passed directly to the production company, without intermediaries.
Indirect funding	Use of part of the taxes due to finance projects.
Freedom	Creative autonomy and flexibility in content production.
Return	Potential for profit or financial return from the work.
Volume	Total amount of resources offered by the mechanism.

Source: Elaborated by the authors (2026).

Image description for accessibility: Table 2: Analytical themes and definitions. The table conceptualizes the fourteen themes used in the analysis: access (ease of application), bureaucracy (complexity), context (regional adaptation), counterpart (financial contribution by the production company), quotas (minority groups), rights (ownership of the work), diversity (variety of support lines), specificity (focused line), experience (familiarity with procedures), direct funding (transfer without intermediaries), indirect funding (tax incentives), freedom (creative autonomy), return (profit potential), and volume (amount of resources).

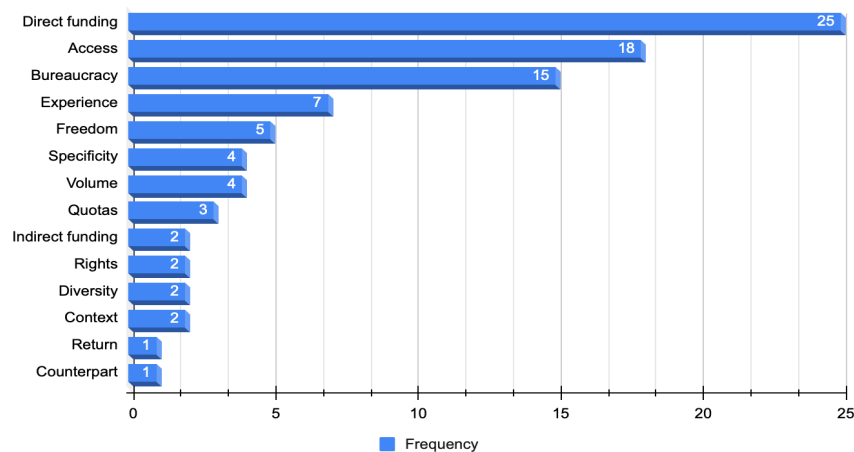
It is important to highlight that some responses presented more than one unit of analysis; that is, they received more than one code. On the other hand, some responses were not coded due to a lack of clarity in the text. Subsequently, the enumeration rule was applied, which considers the frequency of occurrence of the themes. The proportion of these occurrences can be seen in Figure 4.

Figure 4 indicates that the production companies prioritize “direct funding,” ease of “access” to the public call for projects, and reduction of “bureaucracy.”

Next, it was highlighted which specific mechanisms were associated with these themes as justifications in the companies’ choices. Figure 5 shows the frequency of occurrence of the themes in the responses of the companies that chose the FSA.

The most frequently cited theme in the justifications for choosing the FSA was “direct funding”. One of the companies justified its preference for the Fund by stating that it is not necessary to seek and convince corporate marketing departments to obtain the resources, nor to mold the project with this in mind. As previously discussed based on Ikeda (2016), mediation by marketing departments of private companies — a characteristic of indirect funding — can harm the sector, given these companies’ lack of familiarity with

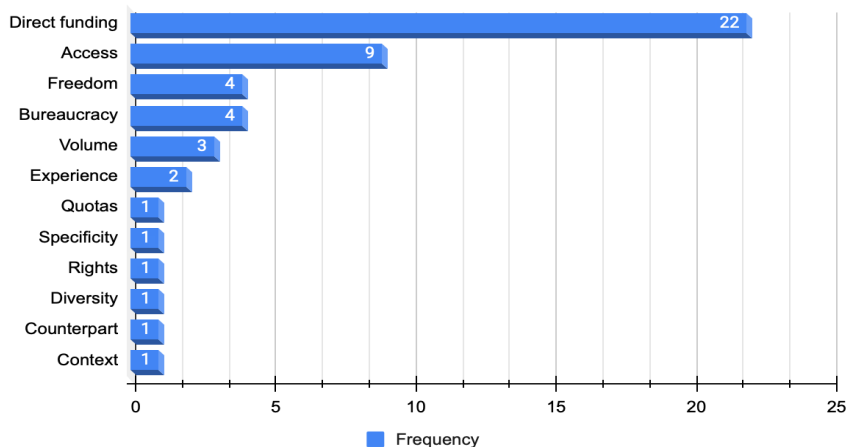
Figure 4 - Frequency of theme occurrence in general responses.



Source: Elaborated by the authors (2026).

Image description for accessibility: Figure 4: Horizontal bar chart. The chart presents the frequency of the fourteen analytical themes arranged in descending order over a horizontal axis from 0 to 25. “Direct funding” leads with 25 occurrences, followed by “Access” with 18 and “Bureaucracy” with 15. The theme “Experience” records 7 occurrences, “Freedom” has 5, while “Specificity” and “Volume” have 4 each. The theme “Quotas” presents 3 occurrences. Tied with 2 occurrences each are the themes “Indirect funding”, “Rights”, “Diversity”, and “Context”. Finally, “Return” and “Counterpart” record the minimum value of 1 occurrence each.

Figure 5 - Frequency of occurrence of themes in FSA responses.



Source: Elaborated by the authors (2026).

Image description for accessibility: Figure 5: Horizontal bar chart. The chart presents the frequency of twelve analytical themes arranged in descending order over a horizontal axis from 0 to 25. “Direct funding” leads isolated with 22 occurrences, followed by “Access” with 9. The themes “Freedom” and “Bureaucracy” appear tied with 4 occurrences each, followed by “Volume” with 3 and “Experience” with 2. Finally, the themes “Quotas”, “Specificity”, “Rights”, “Diversity”, “Counterpart”, and “Context” close the chart tied with the minimum value of 1 occurrence each.

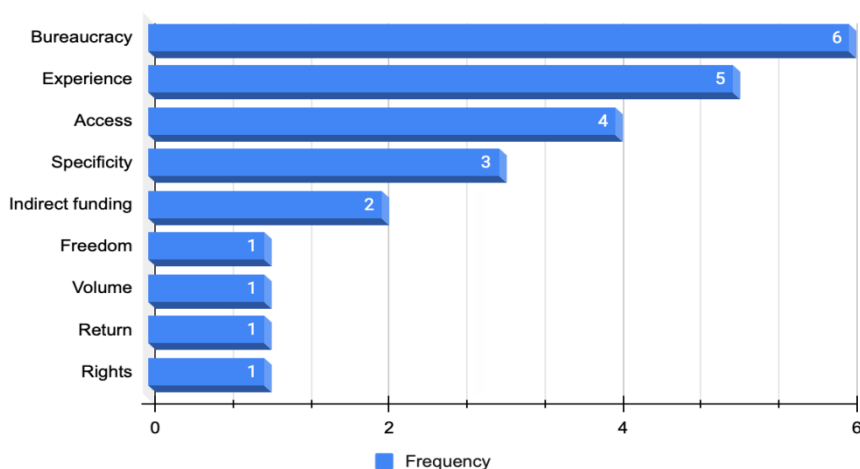
the specificities of the audiovisual economy. This mediation tends to prioritize marketing interests, often at the expense of the artistic or cultural relevance of the projects.

“Access” was also frequently cited as a reason for preferring the FSA. A producer explained: “[...] access to tax incentive companies is neither easy nor democratic, since, after approval, direct contact with the marketing departments of large companies and/or television channels is required. Thus, selection through a public call for proposals allows for more democratic access [...]” This difficulty in accessing major sponsoring companies is mentioned by other producers: “[...] With the FSA, once approved, there is no need to seek out and negotiate with sponsors. On the other hand, under the Audiovisual Law, only those with relationships with major companies can secure sponsorship.” Another producer noted that: “[...] incentive laws don’t work very well. It’s very difficult to secure funding; companies want to invest in major events or well-known filmmakers, they don’t invest much in smaller films. The FSA, through its calls for proposals, is more viable [...]”.

There are also production companies that highlight the creative “freedom” provided by the Fund: “Due to its more direct and agile financing approach for the feasibility process, it also stands out for supporting projects that often fail to attract investment through tax incentives, ensuring that high-quality and diverse works have the chance to be produced”. Rubim (2016) corroborates this opinion by pointing out that laws based on tax deductions tend to direct resources toward projects with greater commercial appeal, prioritizing productions involving major attractions and celebrities, carried out in the country’s main consumer centers, as this offers greater visibility to the sponsoring brands. This hinders access of independent production companies, located outside major centers or with projects of lower commercial appeal, to the resources made available by incentive laws.

Figure 6 shows the frequency of occurrence of the themes in the responses of the companies that chose the Audiovisual Law.

Figure 6 - Frequency of occurrence of themes in Audiovisual Law responses.



Source: Elaborated by the authors (2026).

Image description for accessibility: Figure 6: Horizontal bar chart. The chart presents the frequency of nine analytical themes arranged in descending order over a horizontal axis ranging from 0 to 6. “Bureaucracy” leads with the maximum value of 6 occurrences, followed by “Access” with 4, “Specificity” with 3, and “Indirect funding” with 2. Finally, the themes “Freedom”, “Volume”, “Return”, and “Rights” close the chart tied with the minimum value of 1 occurrence each.

The Audiovisual Law was chosen especially due to reduced “bureaucracy”. The production companies stated: “It is the law that has less bureaucracy and higher limits.”; “Less bureaucracy (although it still exists) and a greater possibility of medium-term return.”; “Rouanet Law and FSA are more bureaucratic and slower in their results.”; “Flexibility, less bureaucracy.”; “For the simplicity and agility compared to the FSA.”. This demonstrates a perception that the Audiovisual Law offers a more agile and less complex process compared to other mechanisms, which makes it more attractive for production companies seeking agility in the development of their projects.

Regarding “experience,” many production companies stated they are already more familiar with the procedures and processes of the Law. It is worth noting that the text of the Audiovisual Law is unified, while the FSA presents specific calls for proposals for each selection process, which may demand greater adaptation and time to understand the updates and particularities of each call. Another recurring theme in the

respondents' justifications was the "specificity" of the Audiovisual Law, especially regarding the type of work financed. One of the companies pointed out: "Indirect Funding exclusive to feature films (+70 min)". This is related to the fact that, in the indirect funding modality, the Rouanet Law does not allow for the execution of feature films with full deduction; only medium-length and short films, which means that, for many production companies, it is not a viable option. This restriction may explain the lower preference for the Rouanet Law observed among the production companies analyzed.

There were also companies that mentioned other incentive mechanisms. One of them highlighted regional incentive laws, justifying it with the theme "context": "Although, in general, all audiovisual incentive laws need a lot of improvement, the regional ones tend to have a greater adherence to the specific characteristics of the place". Another company, which also preferred state programs, stated: "[...] I still believe that the direct incentive calls for proposals from the state Department of Culture are the best due to lower competition (we do not compete with companies at the national level) [...]". This indicates that some production companies value state incentive mechanisms because they understand that regional policies can more directly meet the needs and capacities of local companies.

Categorization

Subsequently, the data were categorized, grouping the themes into categories that shared similar characteristics. Table 3 shows the categories and their themes, as well as the frequency of each.

Table 3 - Analysis Categories.

Category	Theme
Creation (13)	Rights (2)
	Diversity (2)
	Specificity (4)
	Freedom (5)
Logistics (45)	Access (18)
	Bureaucracy (15)
	Context (2)
	Quotas (3)
	Experience (7)
Finance (33)	Counterpart (1)
	Direct financing (25)
	Indirect financing (2)
	Return (1)
	Volume (4)

Source: Elaborated by the authors (2026).

Image description for accessibility: Table 3: Distribution of categories and themes. The table summarizes the frequencies of three analytical categories and their respective themes in descending order. The "Logistics" category leads with 45 occurrences, encompassing Access (18), Bureaucracy (15), Experience (7), Quotas (3), and Context (2). In second place, the "Finance" category totals 33 occurrences, distributed among Direct funding (25), Volume (4), Indirect funding (2), Counterpart (1), and Return (1). Finally, the "Creation" category records 13 occurrences, divided among Freedom (5), Specificity (4), Rights (2), and Diversity (2).

The "Creation" category, comprising four themes mentioned 13 times, covers aspects related to creative freedom, content rights, and the thematic requirements of calls for proposals. The "Logistics" category, with five themes and 45 mentions, refers to processes, deadlines, and operational requirements of incentive mechanisms. Finally, the "Finance" category, with five themes cited 33 times, gathers economic elements such as the type of funding, the need for counterpart contributions, potential for financial return, and the amount made available by each law.

It is noted that "Logistics" was the most frequently mentioned category, indicating the weight of operational aspects in producers' decisions. Part of these elements functions as an exclusion factor: high bureaucracy, application difficulties, and incompatible deadlines end up driving companies away from certain instruments, regardless of the financial potential involved. Some production companies, for example, prefer

the Audiovisual Law because, even though it does not offer direct funding, it presents less bureaucracy than the FSA, which makes its access more predictable and less burdensome in operational terms.

Even so, the theme “direct funding” appears as the most individually cited, functioning as a strong attraction factor. This suggests that, despite the relevance of logistical aspects, the possibility of direct access to financial resources remains a decisive factor for many companies when choosing their financing mechanisms. For this reason, the majority of respondents indicated the FSA as their preferred mechanism, even in the face of criticisms regarding its bureaucracy.

Analysis and Inference

This article aimed to understand the factors that influence the choice of Brazilian film production companies among the main public incentive mechanisms for cinema currently available in the country. Based on a Content Analysis of open-ended responses obtained through a questionnaire applied to 80 companies in the sector, it was identified that both logistical aspects — such as facilitated access, lower bureaucracy, and familiarity with procedures — and financial factors, especially direct funding, exert a strong influence on this decision-making process.

The FSA was the most cited mechanism, gathering 53.8% of the preferences. The justifications highlighted the absence of intermediaries, the full transfer of resources, and the ease of access. The production companies pointed out that the Fund eliminates the need to negotiate with the marketing departments of large companies, as occurs in laws based on tax deductions. Greater creative freedom and support for projects with less commercial appeal were also frequently mentioned, aligning with the analyses of Rubim (2016), who emphasizes the difficulties of tax incentive models in accommodating more diverse cultural expressions due to the marketing logic of the sponsoring companies.

The Audiovisual Law emerged as the second most chosen, with 28.8% of the preferences, standing out for presenting less bureaucracy compared to the other mechanisms. Production companies reported that the fundraising process through this law is more agile and less complex. Another distinguishing feature noted was its exclusive focus on the audiovisual sector: it is the only tax deduction mechanism at the federal level that allows for the financing of feature films. This particularity makes the law more attractive to experienced production companies focused on this format, unlike the Rouanet Law, which does not provide full tax deductions for feature films.

Analysis of the justifications led to the identification of three major thematic categories: “Creation”, “Logistics”, and “Finance”. Among these categories, themes related to “Logistics” were the most frequently mentioned, indicating that process efficiency and operational simplicity hold significant weight in the production companies’ decisions. However, “direct funding” was the most individually cited theme, which highlights that, although logistical aspects are strongly valued, the direct funding model remains the primary factor in determining their choice.

The data suggest that the choice of mechanism varies according to the profile of the projects and the production companies’ relationships with sponsors. Companies that work with more commercial productions, or that maintain active relationships with major sponsors, tend to opt for the Audiovisual Law. In these cases, the main disadvantage of incentive laws — the hindered access to companies capable of providing resources — has already been overcome by the production company’s own network of contacts, leaving primarily the advantage of less bureaucracy and greater operational predictability.

In contrast, production companies that do not have major sponsors, or that develop projects with less commercial appeal — such as auteur, experimental, or niche-specific works — tend to turn to the FSA. Despite the greater bureaucracy, the Fund offers direct funding, eliminating the reliance on negotiations with the marketing departments of sponsoring companies. Furthermore, the FSA provides greater creative freedom and enables projects with uncertain economic potential, catering to a production profile that would be unlikely to receive support through tax deduction mechanisms.

The results reinforce that the attractiveness of financing mechanisms does not stem from a single factor, but from a combination of logistical and financial dimensions. If, on the one hand, clear processes, proportional requirements, and predictability act as essential operational facilitators, on the other, direct funding is essential for the viability of production companies that do not have access to major sponsors or that develop projects with less commercial appeal. In this sense, the excessive reliance on tax deduction laws can limit the diversity of national production, as it delegates part of the funding decisions to the market criteria of sponsoring companies. More efficient public policies must focus on correcting market asymmetries, ensuring

that production companies of different profiles, sizes, and locations have the actual means to produce their works and contribute to the plurality of the Brazilian audiovisual sector.

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