

Dr. Marta GIL-RAMÍREZ

University of Málaga. Spain. martagr@uma.es. <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0577-5628>

Dr. Rocío CHAMIZO-SÁNCHEZ

University of Málaga. Spain. rcs@uma.es. <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4426-8298>

Dr. Ruth GÓMEX-DE-TRAVESEDO-ROJAS

University of Málaga. Spain. ruthgr@uma.es. <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4452-5928>

Women and cinema: a pairing under construction. Analysis of segregation by gender in the production of Spanish feature films

Mujer y cine: un binomio en construcción. Análisis de la segregación por género en la producción de largometrajes españoles

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Abstract

Currently, despite the many advances in recent years, there remain professions in the Spanish context with a pressing gender gap. This pertains in the cinematographic sector, where women appear to be under-represented. There are only a few and partial academic studies that have addressed the situation of the industry from a gender perspective. Hence, this research seeks to analyse, from a quantitative approach, the whole of current Spanish production with the aim of detecting and making visible possible imbalances in the occupational structure of the film sector. The distribution based on the sex of the 5,372 professionals who participated in 495 films produced in 2020 and 2021 is analysed. The results allow us to determine that the positions related to the audiovisual are, largely, masculine-based, with women relegated to related positions linked to aesthetics (Makeup, Hairdressing and Wardrobe) sited at the base of the occupational pyramid. The findings also reveal the predilection of female directors for the documentary genre and, as an innovation on previous studies, this research establishes individual work (male or female) as the majority way in which the tasks of film production are performed.

Keywords

Women; cinema; audiovisual; gender; equity

Resumen

Actualmente, y a pesar de los muchos avances desarrollados en los últimos años, en el contexto español siguen existiendo profesiones con una acuciante brecha de género. Es el caso del sector cinematográfico, donde la mujer aparece subrepresentada. Son escasos y parciales los estudios académicos que hayan abordado la situación de la industria desde una perspectiva de género, por lo que esta investigación se propone analizar, desde un enfoque cuantitativo, el conjunto de la producción española actual con el objetivo de detectar y visibilizar posibles desequilibrios en la estructura ocupacional del sector cinematográfico. Se analiza la distribución en base al sexo de los 5.372 profesionales que participan en 495 películas producidas en 2020 y 2021. Los resultados permiten determinar que los puestos vinculados al audiovisual están, en su mayoría, masculinizados, quedando la mujer relegada a cargos relacionados con la estética (Maquillaje, Peluquería y Vestuario) que se posicionan en la base de la pirámide ocupacional. Los hallazgos apuntan igualmente a la predilección de las directoras por el género documental y, como innovación respecto a estudios precedentes, esta investigación establece el trabajo individual (masculino o femenino) como la forma mayoritaria en que se ejecutan las labores propias de la producción cinematográfica.

Palabras clave

Mujeres; cine; audiovisual; género; equidad

1. Introduction

In 21st century Spain, in a society with a consolidated democracy, the argument about the need for gender equality in any field, including the world of work, should be an outdated discourse. The reality reflects, however, that there is still a long way to go to achieve complete equality, despite the efforts being made by the administrations through public policies for effective equality between men and women. This study focuses on the film industry, a professional sector in which, according to previous studies, women are still under-represented (Arranz, 2007; Cuenca Suárez, 2015-2021; Hernández-Carrillo and Ruiz del Olmo, 2018; Ministerio de Cultura y Deporte, 2022; Ruiz del Olmo and Hernández-Carrillo, 2021) and pigeonholed into feminised jobs (Arranz, 2007; Cuenca Suárez, 2015-2021) that result in so-called "velvet ghettos" (Núñez, 2010).

Cinema is one of the cultural industries and, as such, is one of the main driving forces in shaping the collective imagination that underpins the identity values of society as a whole. This is why it is important to have gender diversity in the various professional categories involved in creating an audiovisual production, especially in the positions of responsibility that determine the subject matter and narrative form of this type of cultural storytelling. Films are as much a reflection of social reality as they are a constructor of it, which is why a vision biased towards a mainly male gaze limits the richness and plurality of the increasingly complicated identity prism that constitutes our society, distorting a reality, per se, full of nuances. A more equitable participation in the cinematographic sphere, although not guaranteed, would at least make it possible for the female perspective to also have an impact on the ideas and values that make up the social symbolic universe; contributing to a necessary advance in this field. Otherwise, cinema as a means of mass communication will continue to be a space for the symbolic legitimisation of patriarchy (Tornay-Márquez, 2021).

On a legal level, Spanish cinema possesses the necessary tools for the effective achievement of gender equality. Both the Organic Law of the Spanish State (Ley Orgánica 3/2007), and more specifically the Film Law - in Article 19 clause g - (Ley de Cine, 55/2007), have, for years, ensured an equal representation of men and women in film production (Ruiz-Guzmán, 2018). However, state policies do not seem to be making an impact on an industry whose core entities are still under-represented by women. This was expressed by the film director Iciar Bollain, one of the most relevant contemporary creators in Spain and with the greatest international projection (Guillamón, 2017), during an interview for the AISGE Foundation ^[1] (Crespo, 2017):

(...) there is a lack of female directors, but there is also a lack of female festival directors, a lack of female film critics. There are a lot of them, but very few of them are the star critic of a newspaper. We lack women in all the committees that decide on the projects to be done. (...) We need more female presence among the people who decide what to do and who is going to do it.

In recent years, we have witnessed multiple initiatives that, from the heart of audiovisual work, try to raise awareness of and denounce the "glass ceiling" (Bernal, 2017; Roquero, 2012) to which women are still subjected in the film profession. One of the most high profile was that launched by the Association of Women Filmmakers and Audiovisual Media (hereinafter CIMA^[2]) which, under the slogan #másmujeres [#morewomen], distributed 1,800 red fans during the 32nd edition of the Goya Awards (2018) to highlight the still pressing inequality between men and women in the profession and demand "a new air" in Spanish cinematography and audiovisual media. It was precisely in this edition of the Goyas when, for the first time, the awards in the specific area of directing went to two women: Best Director to Isabel Coixet for *La Librería* and Best New Director to Carla Simón for *Verano 1993* (García-Catalán, Rodríguez-Serrano and Martín-Núñez, 2022).

Another of the most representative initiatives arose in 2010 under the auspices of the *Instituto de la Mujer y para la Igualdad de Oportunidades* [Institute for Women and Equal Opportunities] (a dependent body of the Ministry of Equality of the Spanish Government). This is the travelling exhibition, *Mujeres de Cine* [Women in Film], which seeks to "vindicate and make visible the work of female film directors, as a representation of a whole group of women filmmakers who fight and make their way in the world of the film and audiovisual industry, (...) within and beyond our borders" (Instituto de las Mujeres, 2019). This initiative has recently (2020) gone a step further with the launch of an international video-on-demand platform for films made exclusively by women.

The existence of this type of pro-equality proposals in the sector is evidence of the continuing lack of parity in a society which, a priori, advocates for equality from both the institutional and social spheres. Some female voices in the world of Spanish film point, in this sense, to a continuing patriarchal configuration of the audiovisual canon, to the lack of references, to the lack of real equal opportunities in the financing of female productions or, in general terms, to an institutional distrust of women's capacity to lead and carry out major projects in the industry (Del Corral, 2017). In this respect, the recent contribution by Saavedra,

Herrero de la Fuente and Gago (2022) is of great interest, as it provides a qualitative overview of female participation in the industry based on the testimony of twelve women linked to the Spanish film sector. This perception of discrimination from women in the sector is not exclusive to the national territory. With regards to US cinema, a study resulting from the collaboration between the Sundance Institute and the organisation Women in Film Los Angeles (2013) gathered conclusions about the appreciation of women in the professional cinematographic field, establishing some additional motivations in addition to the already noted and preponderant financial barrier associated with gender, such as: sexist stereotypes on film sets, the work-life balance that continues to be a burden for women, or exclusionary hiring decisions.

In any given case, the analysis of the causes of this reality is complex and beyond the scope of this research, which considers it essential, first and foremost, to provide empirical data that will guarantee exhaustive knowledge of what is happening and generate the necessary reflection on the matter. From the academic field, it seems inevitable that we delve deeper into the current reality of the industry's professionals from a gender perspective in order to make the possible existing gap visible; and this is precisely the requirement proposed in this study: to address the different aspects that concern the men and women who currently work and express themselves through Spanish filmmaking, by analysing the professional categories that constitute it.

1.1. Women in the cinematographic profession: a reality lacking in academic dissemination

The lack of recording and dissemination of data in any field of knowledge leads to ignorance, generalisation or the distortion of the underlying reality. In relation to the role played by women in the Spanish film profession, the lack of academic studies that provide and transmit information in this regard is pressing. Academic research that has addressed this object of study is scarce and, in general, biased, although there has been a certain increase in interest in this area in recent years.

One of the pioneering works, which has become a benchmark in the field, is the report *Mujeres y Hombres en el Cine Español: una investigación empírica* [Women and Men in Spanish Cinema: an empirical study], produced in 2007 by the Research Team of the Complutense University of Madrid and led by Fátima Arranz, PhD in Political Science and Sociology. Among its more than 300 pages, the first chapter deals with professional categories in cinema and analyses the situation of gender relations in 26 jobs registered in the films included in the Film Annuals, published by the *Instituto de la Cinematografía y de las Artes Audiovisuales* [Institute of Cinematography and Visual Arts] (hereinafter ICAA), between 2000 and 2006. Among its main conclusions, it is highlighted that there is a reduced presence of women in the direction, production and technical fields of Spanish cinematography, with women obtaining most representation in the "specialist" group which includes hairdressing, make-up and wardrobe. Although this research laid the foundations for future analyses with a broad sample of 735 films, showing the evolution of the sector over six years, it has the limitation of not including Documentaries, a film genre in whose direction - as we will corroborate in this study - the female gender predominates, which represents an important bias in terms of the validity of the results.

The Arranz report (2007) led to the publication *Cine y Género en España* [Cinema and Gender in Spain] (Arranz, 2010), that comprehensively reviews the state of the art in relation to gender equality in the industry.

More recently, Hernández-Carrillo and Ruiz del Olmo (2018) and Ruiz del Olmo and Hernández-Carrillo (2021) addressed the presence and visibility of women in the films awarded throughout the 20 editions of the Malaga Spanish Language Film Festival. Although, in the first case they only focused on the role of women as a producer and, in the second, as a director and screenwriter. The findings point to an under-representation of women in both analyses, ranging from 20% to 30% representation depending on the position in question. The limitation regarding the fact that they only observed certain professional categories is accentuated by the context of the two studies which is limited to films in which women participated and which won awards in four of the categories proposed by the festival (the number of films analysed is not specified), as well as the fact that the sample was restricted to the Fiction genre (thus excluding, once again, Documentaries).

Another study that focuses on the area of directing, and more specifically in relation to commercial cinema, is the research carried out by Bernárdez-Rodal and Padilla-Castillo (2018), which looks at a history of the 100 highest grossing films (above 10 million euros) from 2001 to 2016, concluding an alarming fact: there is no film directed or co-directed by a woman that, in the period proposed by the analysis, has managed to surpass the aforementioned earnings threshold.

Furthermore, Meliveo and Cristófol (2022) examine the place of women as directors by analysing the winners in the categories of Best Director and Best New Director at the Goya Awards from 2000 to 2020. The conclusions reflect the low representation of women, which, in this case, stands at 19.04%. Once

again, the research is limited to one single professional role and to a very specific context (award-winning female directors in the Goyas in a sample of 42 films).

Outside the academic sphere, since 2017 the Ministry of Culture and Sport has included a gender differentiation of Spanish feature films in the Cultural Statistics Annuals (Ministerio de Cultura y Deporte, 2022), but only in relation to the professional categories of Direction and Screenplay.

Interestingly, the most up-to-date and complete reference linked to the object of study in question - the cinematographic profession from a gender perspective - doesn't come from the academic or institutional sphere but rather the associative field. It is CIMA which, annually since 2015 and under the supervision of Cuenca Suárez - social researcher of gender perspective -, publishes elaborate reports on the representation of women in the Spanish cinematographic sector. In addition to analysing the relationship between the female sector and economic issues in the industry, or the presence of films on which women have worked in award ceremonies and festivals in the sector, as far as this research is concerned, these reports detail the situation of women in the main positions of responsibility in Spanish feature films. Twelve professional roles are studied from very diverse perspectives (gender distribution of the staff involved, categorisation of each role - broadly female-dominated, female-dominated, equitable, male-dominated, broadly male-dominated-, gender segregation according to professional grouping or gender distribution according to film genre - fiction, animation and documentary). In the 7 years analysed, the reports published by CIMA paint a bleak picture regarding the role of women in the Spanish cinematographic sector, with a female representation that, in absolute terms, barely exceeds 30%. Most professional groups are male-dominated, with the exception of the so-called "technical-aesthetics" (wardrobe, make-up and hairdressing), where women are predominant, and production, where there is a tendency towards equality. Although the historical record shows an average year-on-year growth of 1% in female representation in the industry, this would be an excessively slow and unjustifiable trend towards parity in the Spanish democratic context.

Despite the important source of data provided by the CIMA reports (Cuenca Suárez, 2015-2021), they present a major limitation in terms of the composition of the sample, which is limited to the Spanish feature films nominated for 12 of the categories included in the Goya awards. This is how the studies themselves express it:

The limitations of the sample are found in the fact that not all the films released are submitted to this festival. Furthermore, among those that are submitted, not all apply to all the categories and, therefore, not all fact sheets are completed to the same level of detail. Another limitation that has been observed is that the very concept of these awards, and consequently the data obtained, is more focused on or better reflect the reality of Fiction feature films rather than that of Documentary or Animation feature films (Cuenca Suárez, 2021: 5).

In this way, these analyses (Cuenca Suárez, 2015-2021) exclude all those productions which don't achieve the sufficient recognition to apply for the aforementioned award, which is a significant restriction in terms of the results obtained.

In view of the particularities of the preceding studies in relation to the object of study proposed in this research, it is clear that there is a need for a more in-depth study in the academic sphere that would allow for greater visibility and dissemination of the reality of the sector as a whole. Thus, the main objective of this analysis is to understand, from a gender perspective, the current situation (2020/2021) of the Spanish film industry as a whole in terms of feature film production, regardless of the genre (fiction, animation, experimental or documentary).

From this main objective, we establish the following specific objectives:

- Establish the degree of feminisation, equality or masculinisation in the occupational structure of Spanish feature film production, taking into account the number of men and women in each of the professional categories involved in audiovisual work.
- Compare, according to the professional groups, the level of responsibility in the occupational structure based on gender.
- Determine the most representative ways of working; distinguishing between individual work, work by gender groupings, mixed work or work in multi-gender teams.
- In the case of Directing, establish if there is any gender differentiation which responds to the type of production.

2. Methodology

This research is eminently quantitative in nature, given that the objectives it seeks to address are of a quantifiable nature.

The data source used is the "Catalogue of Rated Films", public and accessible online, which is produced annually by the ICAA; an institution dependent on the Ministry of Culture and Sport and, therefore, the most representative official body at national level in relation to data concerning the film industry. Specifically, this study addresses feature films in general, without distinguishing the type of audiovisual piece (fiction, documentary, experimental or animation), produced in the years 2020 and 2021 in said Catalogue, both those produced entirely in Spain and those co-produced in the country, bringing together a total of 495 films (222 produced in 2020 and 273 produced in 2021).

The choice of time period was motivated by the desire to produce an up-to-date picture of the sector but has been conditioned by the effect that Covid-19 had on the film industry, paralysing many productions and significantly altering the data from 2020 onwards (Carballo Sánchez, 2022; Morales, 2021; Oliver, 2020). This circumstance resulted in the decision not to look retrospectively beyond 2020-2021. The ICAA's failure to rate Spanish feature films produced in 2022, at the time of writing this research, limits the possibility of approaching a larger sample over time.

The ICAA's "Catalogue of Rated Films" has facilitated the extraction of the complete fact sheets for each of the 495 films, which, as a general rule and with a greater or lesser degree of detail, contain data relating to: ICAA file number, titles - in Spanish and English -, nationality, countries involved in the production, duration, production company, interpreters, list of professional roles involved, rating -both of the film and of the trailer-, takings, audience, year of production, length, type of film, genre, labels, display ratio, emulsion, original version, releases, start date of filming, end date of filming, places, festivals, national distributor, official website, synopsis - both in Spanish and English - and image of the official poster and, occasionally, images of some frames from the film.

From this extensive information, this proposal focuses in particular on the list of professional positions involved in film production and the type of film production. However, among the requirements of the administrative procedure set out by the ICAA to apply for the Rating of films for cinematographic use, apart from legal and economic issues and, for the purpose of this research (section c of the documentation required), it only includes the requirement to state the name of the person in charge of directing the film, without any other specification regarding the rest of the roles that have been involved (ICAA, 2018). In our opinion, this deficiency in the records leaves it to the discretion of the applicants (production or distribution companies holding the exploitation rights of cinematographic works for cinemas) to include, in greater or lesser detail, the list of professional positions that have been involved in the film production and that will be reflected in the complete fact sheet of the film; giving rise to a great disparity in this regard. In addition to this, each feature film obviously does not always require and include the same number and type of positions in its shooting.

Of the 495 complete fact sheets in the "Catalogue of Rated Films" between 2020 and 2021, a total of 51 professional categories are listed, with the representation of these categories varying widely. This study takes into consideration 22 of them (see Table 1), establishing as a criterion to take into account those positions that exceed 10% of representativeness^[3] and respecting the denomination and distinction that is reflected (although some positions could be grouped together due to their similarity or proximity in performance, such as sound editing and sound mixing). We have opted to respect what is explained in the complete fact sheets in order to avoid biasing the results.

Table 1. Breakdown according to the role analysed and their percentage representativeness relative to the overall number of roles

ROLE	FACT SHEETS IN WHICH THE ROLE IS RECORDED (N - %)					
	2020 (N = 222)		2021 (N = 273)		(2020-2021) (N = 495)	
	N	%	N	%	N	AVERAGE%
Directing	222	100%	273	100%	495	100%
Scriptwriting	222	100%	273	100%	495	100%
Production	89	40.09%	84	30.77%	173	34.95%
Executive Production	122	54.95%	71	26.01%	193	38.99%
Film Editing	208	93.69%	152	55.68%	360	72.73%
Art Direction	97	43.69%	50	18.32%	147	29.70%
Cinematography	212	95.50%	266	97.44%	478	96.57%
Music	174	78.38%	247	90.48%	421	85.05%
Production Management	105	47.30%	60	21.98%	165	33.33%
Assistant Director	95	42.79%	52	19.05%	147	29.70%
Production Assistant	63	28.38%	39	14.29%	102	20.61%
Hairdressing	66	29.73%	26	9.52%	92	18.59%
Wardrobe	83	37.39%	38	13.92%	121	24.44%
Make-up	101	45.50%	45	16.48%	146	29.49%
Camera	32	14.41%	18	6.59%	50	10.10%
Sound Technician	76	34.23%	58	21.25%	134	27.07%
Direct Sound Recording	106	47.75%	62	22.71%	168	33.94%
Sound Editing	83	37.39%	57	20.88%	140	28.28%
Sound Mixing	30	13.51%	38	13.92%	68	13.74%
Colour/Colour Grading	41	18.47%	43	15.75%	84	16.97%
Special Effects	32	14.41%	18	6.59%	50	10.10%
Stills Photography	48	21.62%	26	9.52%	74	14.95%

Source: Own elaboration

From this table, we note that the professional categories registered in the ICAA's "Catalogue of Rated Films" are neither exhaustive nor complete, but we consider that they are sufficient to provide an overview of the study of the professional distribution of the Spanish film industry by genre and the current state of the situation.

From among the 22 positions selected and given that the objectives of this research revolve around the gender variable (male and/or female), the names of the employees registered in each of them are extracted, giving an overall sample of 5,372 people (taking into account that, on occasions, more than one person holds the same position) (see Table 2). The results are distributed as follows:

Table 2. Composition of the sample: persons registered according to the positions analysed.

PROFESSIONAL GROUP	ROLE	PERSONS REGISTERED		
		2020	2021	(2020-2021)
		(N = 2,918)	(N = 2.454)	(N = 5,372)
		N	N	N
Management Group	Directing	256	316	572
	Scriptwriting	386	406	792
	Production	162	150	312
	Executive Production	231	135	366
Artistic Group	Film Editing	253	174	427
	Art Direction	103	59	162
	Cinematography	242	289	531
	Music	205	248	453
Production Group	Production Management	118	71	189
	Assistant Director	79	49	128
	Production Assistant	102	60	162
Specialist Group	Hairdressing	72	29	101
	Wardrobe	90	41	131
	Make-up	106	54	160
Technical Group	Camera	43	30	73
	Sound Technician	85	61	146
	Direct Sound Recording	135	88	223
	Sound Editing	92	61	153
	Sound Mixing	32	40	72
	Colour/Colour Grading	43	46	89
	Special Effects	32	18	50
	Stills Photography	51	29	80
TOTAL		2,918	2454	5372

Source: Own elaboration

Given the variability of the sample depending on the role concerned, the specific sample composition to which the results refer will be specified in each case during the presentation of the results (N = total number of persons registered in the role).

In order to achieve the first of the objectives proposed (to analyse the occupational structure of Spanish feature film production), we have processed the data on the names of the 5,372 people employed in the 22 professional categories analysed out of the 495 complete fact sheets included, taking into account and differentiating the sex of each one of them. It is necessary to mention that, although this process wasn't difficult in general, in some cases it was necessary to investigate in greater depth in order to determine their identity, given the ambiguity of some of the names (see examples such as: Jone, Curru, Gigi, Gin, Rain, Odile or Karin in the case of female names, or Chente, Nikita, Aline, Lati

or Yuri in the case of male names). The resulting figures were entered into Excel for later collation and comparison, extracting the percentages of representativeness from a gender perspective.

On the other hand, to determine the degree of feminisation, equity or masculinisation in each professional category, the analytical model used by Cuenca Suárez (2018, 2019, 2020, 2021) in the annual reports for CIMA is taken as a reference, which in turn is based on the percentage intervals set out in Organic Law 3/2007, of 22 March, for the effective equality of women and men:

Female-dominated area: W = +60%; M = -40%

Equal area: M/W = between 40-60%

Male-dominated area: M = +60%; W = -40%

To this base model, Cuenca Suárez (2018, 2019, 2020, 2021) adds two more categories to differentiate the most pronounced gender gaps:

Broadly female-dominated area: W = +80%; M = -20%

Broadly male-dominated area: M = +80%; W = -20%

This study uses all of the resulting 5 categories.

Regarding the comparison of the level of responsibility in the occupational structure according to gender, we start from the pyramidal categorisation proposed by Arranz (2007):

1. Managerial Group: professional categories with management and production functions that make up the first tier of the occupational scale (Directing, Scriptwriting, Producing, Executive Production, Associate Production, Co-Production).
2. Artistic Group: includes those categories whose main distinction lies in their artistic nature and/or which represent formative references of this nature (Editing, Plot, Art Direction, Cinematography, Music).
3. Production Group: professional categories focused on the exercise of tasks related to the control and execution of objectives (Production Management, Production Coordination, Production Assistant, Assistant Director, Production Manager).
4. Specialist Group: includes the categories of medium-qualified professionals (Hairdressing, Wardrobe, Make-up).
5. Technical Group: includes occupations with technical tasks and skilled work (Camera, Sound Technician, Direct Sound Recording, Sound Editing, Special Effects, Steadcam, Casting).

This categorisation is adapted to the objectives and particularities of this research, resulting in the groupings shown in table 2.

On the other hand, the following categories are proposed for the determination of the most representative forms of work - a variable that represents a novelty in relation to previous studies:

- Individual work: those roles which are carried out by just one person, whether it is a man or a woman.
- Gender-grouped work: occupations performed jointly by two or more men or by two or more women.
- Mixed work: those professions which are carried out by a man and a woman together.
- Multi-gender group work: in this category we group together those roles carried out by three or more people of a different gender.

Finally, in the case of Directing, the data are classified according to whether the authorship of the film corresponds to men or women and the results are contrasted with the typology/genre of the production, differentiating between the four registered options: fiction, documentary, animation and experimental film.

The overall sample has been collated and analysed by three coders (the research authors). Based on Cohen's kappa coefficient, an intercoder reliability level of $k = 0.87$ was found.

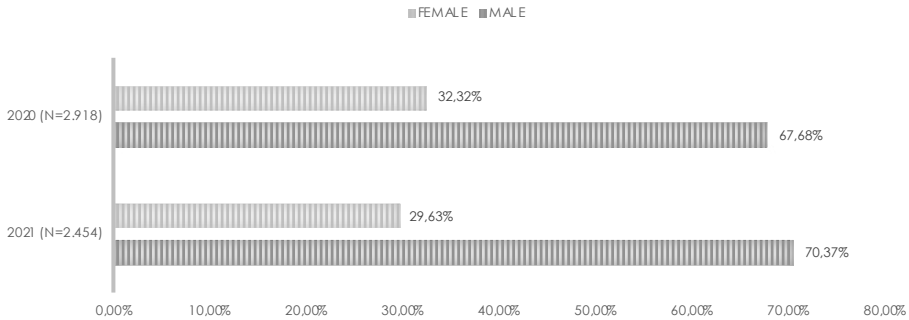
3. Results

In global terms, in the period between 2020 and 2021, the participation of women in professional positions in the Spanish film industry (31.09%) is much lower than that of men (68.91%).

Taking into account the percentage intervals set out in Organic Law 3/2007 of the 22nd of March, the low percentage of female representation in the labour structure linked to the production of Spanish feature films represents a male-dominated sector, in which the presence of women does not even reach a third of the total.

If we look at the breakdown of the situation in each year (see Graph 1), the picture is even less encouraging, as from 2020 to 2021, the gender gap in the film industry increases by 2.69%.

Graph 1. Female/male representation broken down by years



Source: Own elaboration

3.1. Horizontal segregation in the cinematographic production of Spanish feature films

There is a lack of equity in most of the professional categories analysed (see Table 3). Of the 22 film-related jobs taken into consideration, 14 show an over-representation of male professionals, representing 63.64% of the total, and four show the opposite situation (18.18%), an unbalanced female presence on the rise. Only four positions (18.18%) show a balanced situation regarding the gender distribution of the staff working in them.

Table 3. Professional categorisation according to the range of women's representativeness (2020-2021)

INTERVAL OF REPRESENTATIVITY	CATEGORISATION	ROLE (N OVERALL) (% WOMEN)
80%-100%	BROADLY FEMALE-DOMINATED	Make-up (N=160) (91.25%)
		Wardrobe (N=131) (90.08%)
60%-80%	FEMALE-DOMINATED	Hairdressing (N=101) (70.30%)
		Art Direction (N=162) (61.73%)
		Production Management (N=189) (53.97%)
40%-60%	EQUAL	Production Assistant (N=162) (48.44%)
		Executive Production (N=366) (45.36%)
		Assistant Director (N=128) (43.83%)

INTERVAL OF REPRESENTATIVITY	CATEGORISATION	ROLE (N OVERALL) (% WOMEN)
20%-40%	MALE-DOMINATED	Special Effects (N=50) (34.00%)
		Film Editing (N=427) (28.57%)
		Colour/Colour Grading (N=89) (26.97%)
		Scriptwriting (N=792) (26.89%)
		Production (N=312) (22.76%)
		Direct Sound Recording (N=223) (21.52%)
		Directing (N=572) (21.15%)
		Photo Editing (N=80) (20.00%)
		Sound Editing (N=153) (16.34%)
		Music (N=453) (15.45%)
0%-20%	BROADLY MALE-DOMINATED	Sound Mixing (N=72) (15.28%)
		Cinematography (N=531) (14.12%)
		Camera (N=73) (12.33%)
		Sound (N=146) (8.22%)

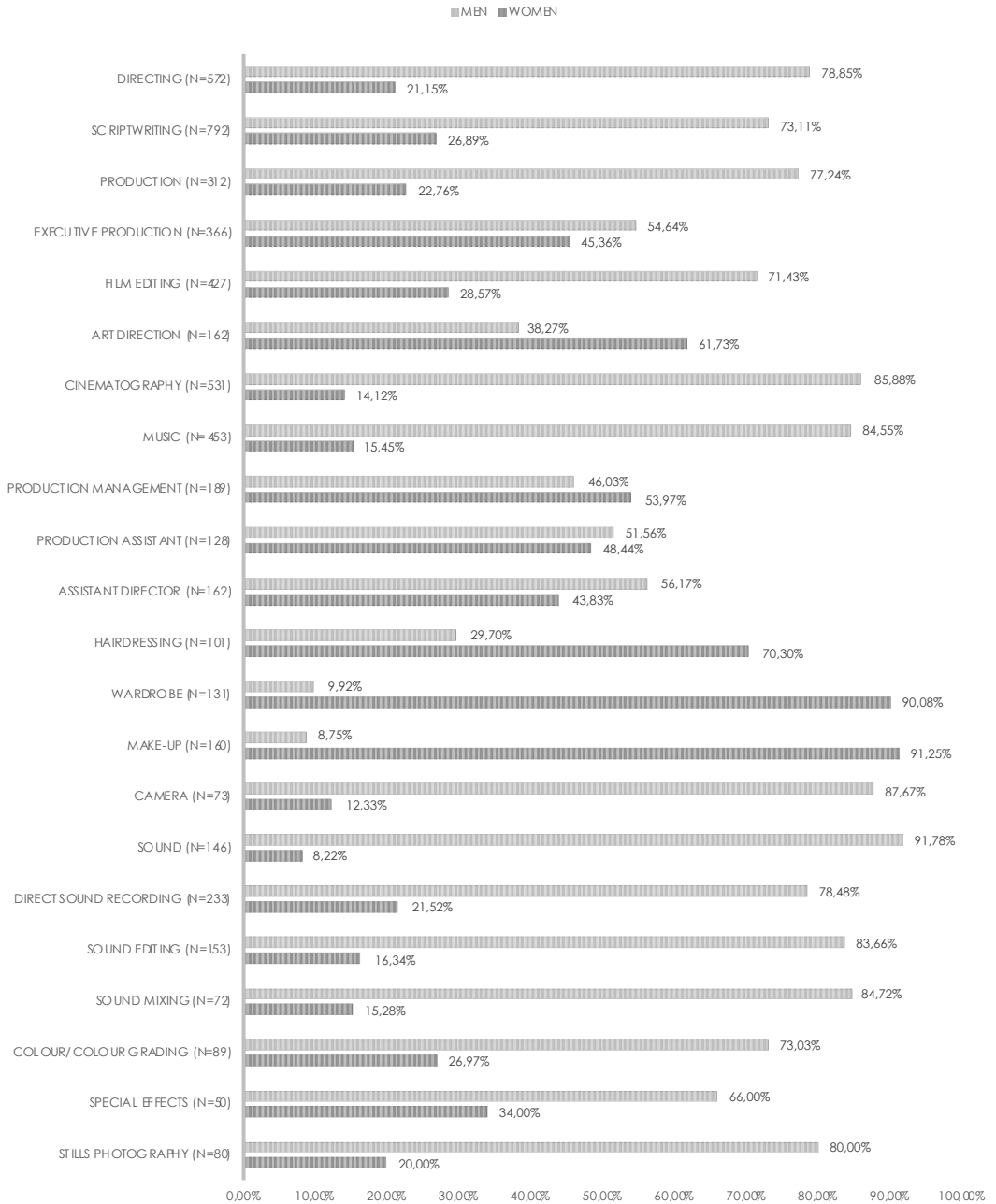
Source: Own elaboration

Of the four occupational categories in which women are over-represented, there are two where the imbalance is acute, being largely feminised positions. These are Make-up and Wardrobe. The other two, Hairdressing and Art Direction, are feminised positions, where the preponderance of female professionals is also highly significant. At the other extreme, six job categories have male representation above 80%, i.e., they are largely male-dominated positions. They are positions mainly linked to technical jobs (Sound Editing, Sound Mixing, Camera and Sound) or artistic creation (Music and Cinematography). Also masculinised, although to a lesser degree, are eight other categories that form part of audiovisual work. These are divided between technical positions (special effects, editing, colour/colour grading, direct sound recording and stills photography) and managerial or organisational positions (scriptwriting, production and directing). These data point to a pressing gender inequality that correlates with social stereotypes in which women are pigeonholed into aesthetic work, while men develop professionally in managerial, organisational or technical fields.

The only area where the distribution is equitable is made up of four professional categories mainly related to the film production sector (Production Management, Production Assistant, Executive Producer and Assistant Director). This sector encompasses work that involves the implementation of both economic and organisational issues.

In no case is the professional category totally masculinised or feminised (see Graph 2), but what is striking in these extremes is the situation of imbalance in the positions of Camera and Sound, where women are below 10% in the former (8.22%) and slightly above 12% in the latter (12.33%); and in the positions of Make-up and Wardrobe, where the opposite situation occurs: men are barely represented with percentages, in both cases, below 10% (8.75% -Make-up-; 9.92% -Wardrobe-).

Graph 2. Representativeness by professional category (overall 2020-2021)



Source: Own elaboration

If we look at the year-on-year variation from 2020 to 2021 in each of the categories analysed (see Table 4), some significant trends can be detected. In six of the 22 positions covered (Direction, Music, Production Management, Assistant Director, Wardrobe, Sound Mixing) the degree of representation of women remains stable with increases or decreases of no more or less than 2%. The presence of women increases in varying degrees (between 4.45% and 16.31%) in nine of the examined professional positions in the film sector (Scriptwriting, Editing, Art Direction, Cinematography, Production Assistant, Hairdressing, Camera, Direct Sound Recording, Special Effects) and decreases in seven others (Production, Executive Production, Make-up, Sound, Sound Editing, Colour/Colour Grading, Stills Photography), also in varying percentages (between 2.74% and 10.82%).

Table 4. Female representation according to professional category and year; and year-on-year variation

ROLE	2020		2021		YEAR-ON-YEAR VARIATION
	N OVERALL	% WOMEN	N OVERALL	% WOMEN	(+/-) %
Directing	256	20.70%	316	21.52%	+ 0.82%
Scriptwriting	386	24.61%	406	29.06%	+ 4.45%
Production	162	24.07%	150	21.33%	+ 2.74%
Executive Production	231	47.19%	135	42.22%	+ 4.97%
Film Editing	253	26.09%	174	32.18%	+ 6.09%
Art Direction	103	59.22%	59	66.10%	+ 6.88%
Cinematography	242	11.16%	289	16.61%	+ 5.45%
Music	205	15.12%	248	15.73%	+ 0.61%
Production Management	118	53.39%	71	54.93%	+ 1.54%
Production Assistant	79	45.57%	49	53.06%	+ 7.49%
Assistant Director	102	43.14%	60	45.00%	+ 1.86%
Hairdressing	72	68.06%	29	75.86%	+ 7.80%
Wardrobe	90	90.00%	41	90.24%	+ 0.24%
Make-up	106	93.40%	54	87.04%	+ 6.36%
Camera	43	9.30%	30	16.67%	+ 7.37%
Sound Technician	85	9.41%	61	6.56%	+ 2.85%
Direct Sound Recording	135	15.56%	88	30.68%	+ 15.12%
Sound Editing	92	19.57%	61	11.48%	+ 8.09%
Sound Mixing	32	15.63%	40	15.00%	+ 0.63%
Colour/Colour Grading	43	32.56%	46	21.74%	+ 10.82%
Special Effects	32	28.13%	18	44.44%	+ 16.31%
Stills Photography	51	21.57%	29	17.24%	+ 4.33%

Source: Own elaboration

The growing trend in the female representation in 9 of the 22 professional categories observed could, a priori, seem like encouraging data. However, it is necessary to contrast these year-on-year variation figures with the different positions according to the range of women's representation, which leads to their categorisation as masculinised, feminised or equitable (see Table 5).

Table 5. Cross-over between year-on-year change and occupational categorisation according to the range of women's representativeness

ROLE	YEAR-ON-YEAR VARIATION OF FEMALE REPRESENTATION (+/-)%	QUALITATIVE YEAR-ON-YEAR VARIATION OF FEMALE REPRESENTATION	PROFESSIONAL CATEGORISATION ACCORDING TO THE RANGE OF WOMEN'S REPRESENTATIVITY (2020-2021)
Directing	+ 0.82%	Stable situation	Male-dominated role
Scriptwriting	+ 4.45%	Upward trend	Male-dominated role
Production	- 2.74%	Downward trend	Male-dominated role
Executive Production	- 4.97%	Downward trend	Equal role
Film Editing	+ 6.09%	Significant upward trend	Male-dominated role
Art Direction	+ 6.88%	Significant upward trend	Female-dominated role
Cinematography	+ 5.45%	Significant upward trend	Broadly male-dominated role
Music	+ 0.61%	Stable situation	Broadly male-dominated role
Production Management	+ 1.54%	Stable situation	Equal role
Production Assistant	+ 7.49%	Significant upward trend	Equal role
Assistant Director	+ 1.86%	Stable situation	Equal role
Hairdressing	+ 7.80%	Significant upward trend	Female-dominated role
Wardrobe	+ 0.24%	Stable situation	Broadly female-dominated role
Make-up	- 6.36%	Significant downward trend	Broadly female-dominated role
Camera	+ 7.37%	Significant upward trend	Broadly male-dominated role
Sound Technician	- 2.85%	Downward trend	Broadly male-dominated role
Direct Sound Recording	+ 15.12%	Very pronounced upward trend	Male-dominated role
Sound Editing	- 8.09%	Significant downward trend	Broadly male-dominated role
Sound Mixing	- 0.63%	Stable situation	Broadly male-dominated role
Colour/Colour Grading	- 10.82%	Very pronounced downward trend	Male-dominated role
Special Effects	+ 16.31%	Very pronounced upward trend	Male-dominated role
Stills Photography	- 4.33%	Downward trend	Male-dominated role

Source: Own elaboration

From the perspective of equity (M/F = between 40-60%) as the ideal to be achieved in all positions, there are some encouraging and some worrying trends.

On the positive side, we see the percentage increases regarding the presence of women in largely male-dominated positions such as Cinematography or Camera operation, with a significant upward trend (5.45% and 7.37% respectively); or simply in male-dominated positions such as Scriptwriting, Editing, Direct Sound Recording and Special Effects. Among the latter, the very pronounced increases in the last two are striking, both exceeding a year-on-year rise of 15% (15.12% -Direct Sound Recording-; 16.31% -Special Effects-). Also going in the right direction is the significant downward trend (6.36%) of women in make-up roles, a sector that is currently over-feminised.

However, the downward trend of 4.97% in the roles of Executive Production, where women represent 43.36%, is alarming; if this downward trend in representation continues, this professional category will move from being equal to being male dominated.

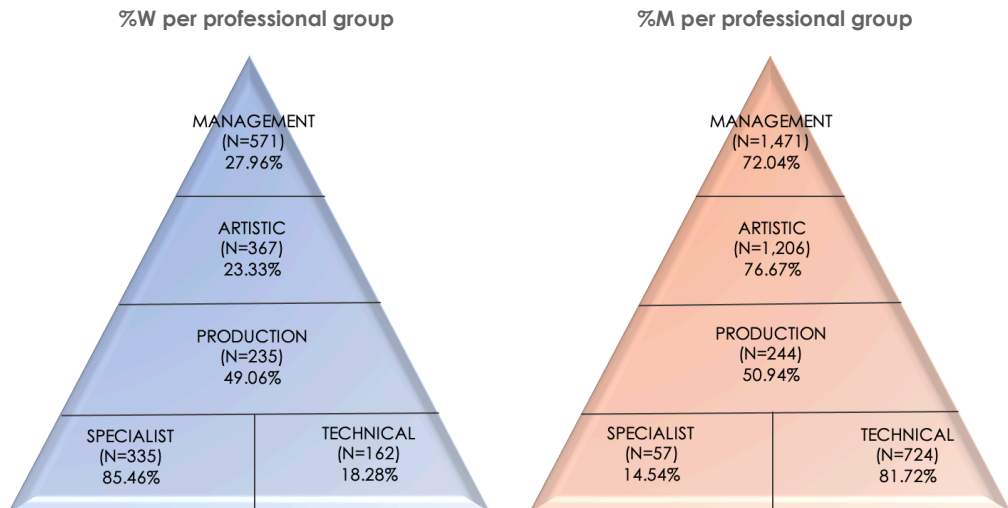
Equally worrying is the situation in feminised positions where the trend in female participation is increasing (6.88% -Art Direction-; 7.80% -Hairdressing-) and in those positions where the situation remains stable (+0.24% -Wardrobe-), given that the tendency is to consolidate or maintain the existing imbalance.

In the same way, the decreases in female representation in professional categories classified as masculinised (10.82% -Colour/Colour grading-; 4.33% -Stills photography-) or largely masculinised (2.85% -Sound-; 8.09% -Sound editing-) are seen as negative. If the observed trend continues, both the position of Colour/colour grading and Stills photography would change its categorisation from masculinised to largely masculinised, worsening the inequality between men and women and, with it, the horizontal gender segregation found in the professions associated with the film sector.

3.2. Vertical segregation in the cinematographic production of Spanish feature films

Looking at the overall period (2020-2021), we find a very pronounced vertical segregation in terms of female participation in occupational groups (see Graph 3). Women are over-represented at the lowest level of the structure through the specialist group, where they share the spotlight with the prevalence of men in the technical group. At the highest levels that bring together the most responsible positions within the film production organisation chart (management and artistic group), the imbalance is very significant. Only in the production group, which includes intermediate positions linked to financial and organisational jobs, are the scales balanced.

Graph 3. Percentages of representation according to level of responsibility (overall 2020-2021)



Source: Own elaboration

Therefore, we find a great polarisation in the base of the pyramid, in which women prevail in aesthetic tasks, while men are in the majority in technical matters. Looking at the results related to the top half of the pyramid, vertical gender segregation intensifies, leaving women under-represented in managerial and creative roles that carry a higher degree of responsibility - and therefore decision-making power - in the professional hierarchy associated with film production.

The male gender leads teams and performs technological tasks, while the female gender performs middle management tasks in coalition with men, or functions at the bottom of the occupational ladder that require a much lower degree of specialisation.

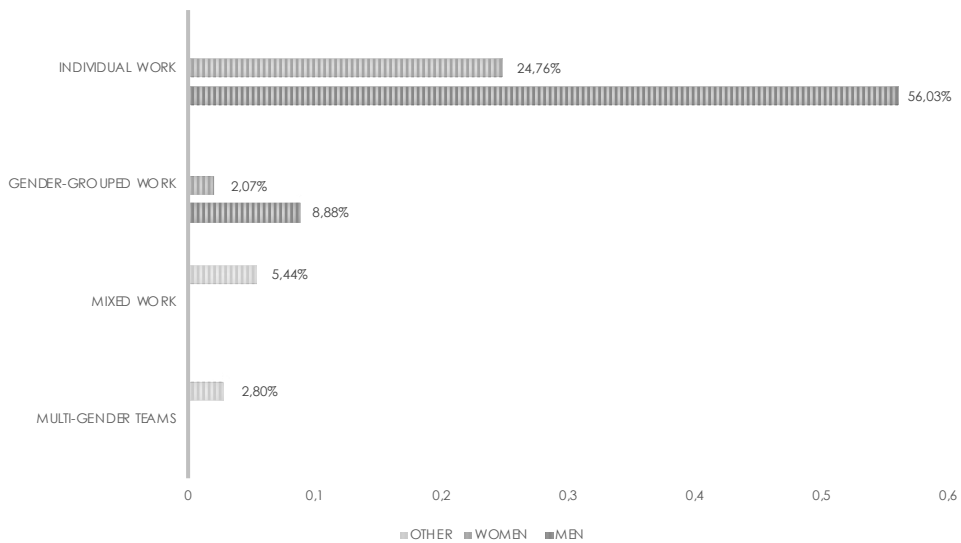
If we look at the data broken down by year, we see that there is hardly any change from 2020 to 2021, apart from a 3.28% increase in the representation of women in the production group; but it is precisely this group where there is the greatest balance, so this upward trend would not alter the overall picture detected.

3.3. Most representative forms of work in Spanish feature film production

In addition to analysing the work structure of the Spanish film industry from a gender perspective, both horizontally and vertically, we were interested in finding out how this structure is organised and the most common ways of working between men and women in the sector.

Apart from the already evident over-representation of men, in general terms and without going into a breakdown of the different occupational categories, both men and women mostly choose to work alone (see Graph 4). This modality accounts for 80.80% of the total.

Graph 4. Most representative forms of work (overall 2020-2021)

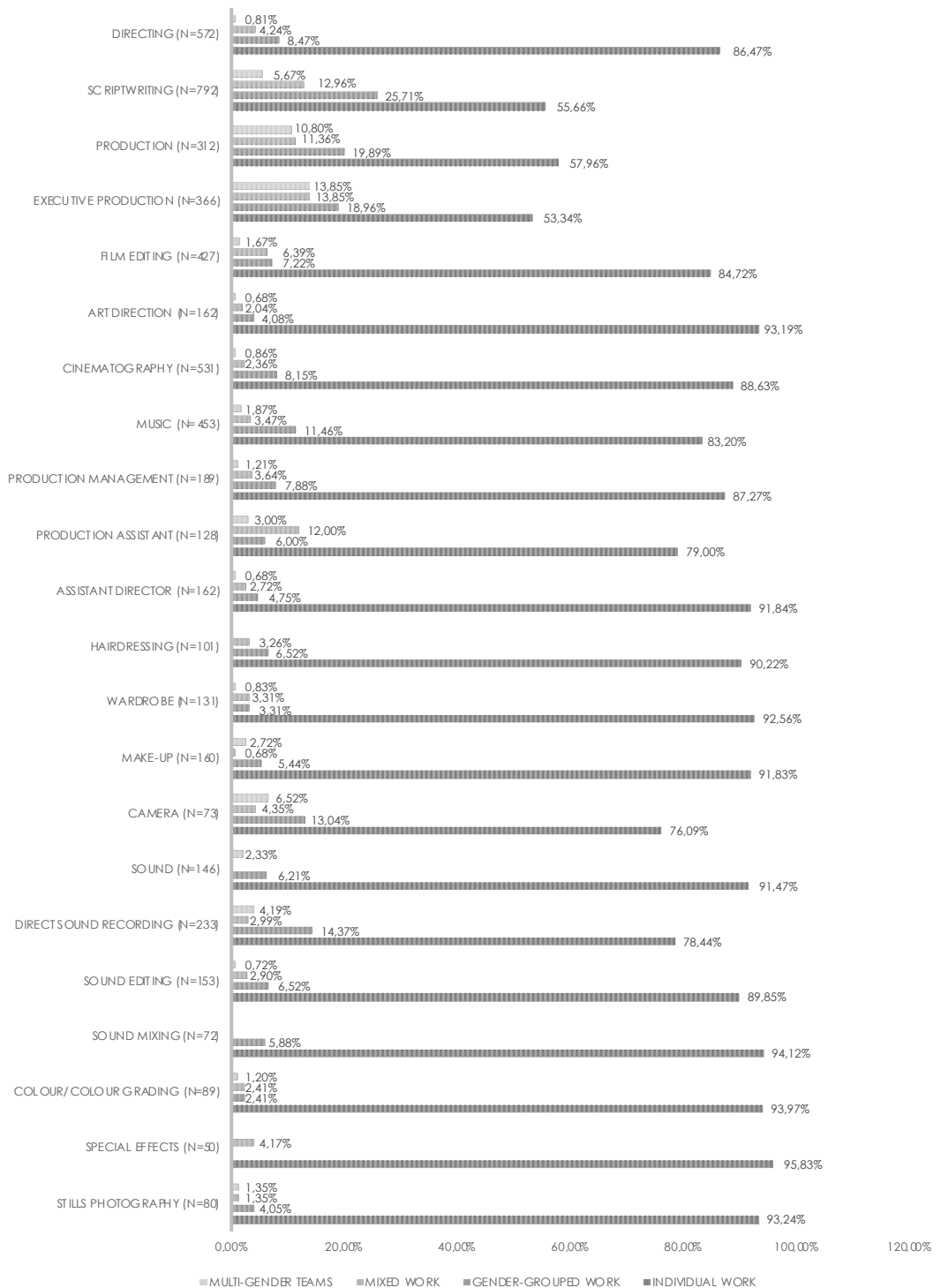


Source: Own elaboration

Only in 10.96% of cases do men or women join together with people of the same sex to carry out any of the tasks related to the audiovisual sector. It is very rare (5.44%) for a man and a woman to share a role and, almost insignificant (2.80%) are those cases in which a multi-gender team is formed to carry out any of the roles inherent to film production.

However, if we look at what happens in this respect in each of the positions analysed (see Graph 5), we find some significant data.

Graph 5. Forms of working broken down by job (overall 2020-2021)



Source: Own elaboration

As already reflected in the generic data, in almost half of the occupational categories (10 out of 22) the individual form of working exceeds 90%. These are Art Direction, Assistant Director, Hairdressing, Wardrobe, Make-up, Sound, Sound Mixing, Colour/Colour Grading, Special Effects and Stills Photography.

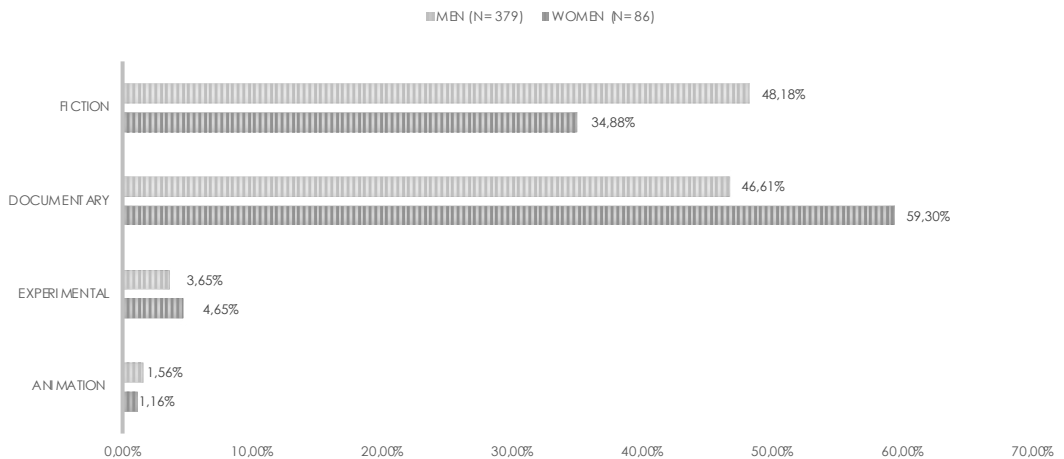
In only three positions does the individual work format, although in the majority, coexist proportionally with other forms, between 53% and 58%: Scriptwriting, Production, Executive Production. In these three occupational categories, gender groupings (two or more men; two or more women) also stand out, accounting on average for 21.52% of the work modes. The remaining percentage in these three cases is divided equally between mixed work and multi-gender teams, in the case of Production and Executive Production (the only positions where this last modality exceeds 10%); and in the case of Scriptwriting, the work shared between a man and a woman is somewhat greater (12.96%) compared to the formation of teams of three or more people of different sexes (5.67%). In addition to these three positions, the mixed work format is above 10% in Music, Camera and Direct Sound Recording.

3.4. Gender differentiation: Direction and type of production (N= 495 feature films)

Of the 495 films taken into consideration in this analysis, 379 were directed by men, whether it's individually, co-directed or directed by 3 men. In these three categories, 89 films were directed by women. The number of occasions (22) where a man and a woman share the direction of a film is much lower, and the number of occasions (4) where this position is shared between more than 3 people of different sexes is almost negligible.

If we cross-reference the figures for feature films directed exclusively by men or by women (N=468) with the type of film genres (see Graph 6), we find that women are mainly interested in Documentaries (59.30%), while men share, almost equally, their interest between Fiction (48.18%) and Documentaries (46.61%).

Graph 6. Relationship between Direction and type of production from a gender perspective (N=468)



Source: Own elaboration

The genres of Animation and Experimental cinema are in the minority in the production of Spanish feature films and the differences based on the sex of the director(s) are not significant.

4. Discussion and conclusions

The results obtained in relation to Spanish film production as a whole (taking into account both wholly Spanish production and co-production, as well as all genres: fiction, documentary, animation and experimental) show that the sector is currently (2020-2021) male-dominated, with a low percentage of female representation, which is alarming in the democratic context in which the industry is located.

These generic findings coincide with the preceding literature (Arranz, 2007; Cuenca Suárez, 2015-2021; Hernández-Carrillo and Ruiz del Olmo, 2018; Ministerio de Cultura y Deporte, 2022; Ruiz del Olmo and Hernández-Carrillo, 2021). However, given the differences in context and sample composition of most of the previous studies compared to the present research, it is not relevant in all cases to discuss the results.

Regarding the first of the specific objectives (horizontal analysis of the Spanish cinematographic structure from a gender perspective), it does seem appropriate, given the proximity to the object of study and the methodology used in this proposal, to examine the data obtained by Cuenca Suárez (2020, 2021) (see Table 6) in order to determine possible concurrences or disparities.

Table 6. Comparison with Cuenca Suárez (2020, 2021) in relation to female representation in the different professional positions

	CUENCA SUAREZ (CIMA)	RESULTS OF THE CURRENT STUDY	VARIATION %
Directing	19%	21.15%	+2.15%
Scriptwriting	28.5%	24.89%	-3.61%
Production	29%	22.76%	-6.24%
Film Editor	28%	28.57%	+0.57%
Art Direction	57.5%	61.73%	+4.23%
Cinematography	15.5%	14.12%	-1.38%
Music	11.5%	15.45%	+3.95%
Production Management	59%	53.97%	-5.03%
Wardrobe	85%	90.08%	+5.08%
Hairdressing and Make-up (*Average in the present study)	70%	80.77%	+10.77%
Sound	20%	8.22%	-11.78%
Special Effects	27.5%	34%	+6.5%

Source: own elaboration based on Cuenca Suárez (2020, 2021)

Although for the most part the results obtained regarding the professional positions that this research shares with Cuenca Suárez (2020, 2021) are quite close (see Table 6), with variations ranging in percentage increases or decreases between 0.57% and 6.5% (which could be due to the fact that these reports are limited to the films that are candidates for the Goya awards), the marked discrepancies in specific positions such as "Make-up and Hairdressing" (+10.77%) and "Sound" (-11.78%) are the most striking. These different results also give rise to disagreements regarding the classification of these occupational categories according to the range of female representation (see Table 7).

Table 7. Comparison with Cuenca Suárez (2020,2021) regarding the level of masculinisation, equity or feminisation of the professional positions

INTERVAL OF REPRESENTATIVENESS	CATEGORISATION	COMPARATIVE POSITIONS (% WOMEN)	
		CUENCA SUAREZ (CIMA) (2020/2021)	RESULTS OF THE PRESENT STUDY (2020/2021)
80%-100%	BROADLY FEMALE-DOMINATED	Wardrobe (85%)	*Average Hairdressing and Make-up (80.77%) Wardrobe (90.08%)
		Hairdressing and Make-up (70%)	Art Direction (61.73%)
60%-80%	FEMALE-DOMINATED	Production Management (59%)	Production Management (53.97%)
40%-60%	EQUAL	Art Direction (57.5%)	

INTERVAL OF REPRESENTATIVENESS	CATEGORISATION	COMPARATIVE POSITIONS (% WOMEN)	
		CUENCA SUAREZ (CIMA) (2020/2021)	RESULTS OF THE PRESENT STUDY (2020/2021)
20%-40%	MALE-DOMINATED	Production (29%)	Special Effects (34.00%)
		Film Editing (28%)	Film Editing (28.57%)
		Scriptwriting (28.5%)	Scriptwriting (26.89%)
		Special Effects (27.5%)	Production (22.76%)
		Sound (20%)	Directing (21.15%)
0%-20%	BROADLY MALE-DOMINATED	Directing (19%)	Music (15.45%)
		Cinematography (15.5%)	Cinematography (14.12%)
		Music (11.5%)	Sound (8.22%)

Source: own elaboration based on Cuenca Suárez (2020, 2021)

The obvious disparities between the two studies could be justified in the different sample compositions: Cuenca-Suárez (2020, 2021) is limited to Spanish feature films nominated for the Goya Awards -314 films-; while the present study (2020-2021) deals with the total number of feature films produced and included in the Catalogue of Films rated by the ICAA -495 films-. In any case, these discrepancies point to the need for further academic study of this topic in order to validate and continue the line initiated by the present research, which, in relation to the first of the specific objectives, draws the following conclusions:

- A strong horizontal gender segregation is detected in the current work structure of the Spanish film industry. In most professional positions there is an over-representation of men, leading to the (sometimes very pronounced) masculinisation of these positions. Equally alarming is the fact that we find feminised or highly feminised professional categories, which increase the gender gap in the sector.
- In the context of this dire situation from a gender perspective, the percentage evolution of women's representation from 2020 to 2021 presents some encouraging trends. If the participation of women in positions such as Cinematography, Camera, Scriptwriting, Editing, Direct Sound Recording and Special Effects continues to increase in the coming years, as evidenced by the year-on-year variation reflected in this research, a more equitable film sector could be envisaged in the medium/long term. The year-on-year decline in female representation in the Make-up department, if continued, would also contribute to narrowing the gender gap in the industry.

In relation to the second of the specific objectives (comparison from a gender perspective of the professional groups according to the levels of responsibility they entail), comparing the results obtained by Arranz (2007) with those obtained in this research (see Table 8) will allow us to observe the evolution of the sector.

Table 8. Comparison with Arranz (2007) in relation to female representation in the different professional groups

	ARRANZ, 2007 (AVERAGE 2000– 2006)	RESULTS OF THE PRESENT STUDY (2020/2021)	VARIATION %
MANAGEMENT GROUP	9.5%	27.96%	+18.46%
ARTISTIC GROUP	14.2%	23.33%	+9.13%
PRODUCTION GROUP	34%	49.06%	+15.06%
SPECIALIST GROUP	Above 80%	85.46%	+5.46%
TECHNICAL GROUP	Around 10%	18.28%	+8.28%

Source: own elaboration based on Arranz (2007)

Without losing sight of the limitation that Arranz's (2007) results might contain by not addressing the Documentary genre unlike the present study, the overwhelming upward variations in all professional groups from the 2000-2006 period analysed by Arranz (2007) to the 2020-2021 period addressed by this research seem to evidence a slow but steady positive evolution of women's participation in the Spanish film industry. This is especially striking in the Management and Production groups. If we were to distribute these increases equally among the five occupational groups and over the 15 years from 2006 to 2021, the average annual increase would be 0.74%. This figure is close to the 1% average year-on-year growth in female representation in the Spanish film sector reflected in the CIMA reports (Cuenca Suárez, 2015-2021).

Apart from this slow and insufficient growth in the participation of women in Spanish audiovisual production, the discussion of the results obtained with the previous findings leads to this conclusion regarding the second specific objective:

- There is a strong vertical gender segregation in terms of female participation in occupational groups. The Spanish film production structure would be reproducing verticalized industrial models which reinforce the male authority figure (Bernárdez-Rodal and Padilla-Castillo, 2018). The typology of groups where male professionals (managerial, creative or technical) prevail in contrast to those where women predominate (related to aesthetic matters) points to a worrying link between the situation of the Spanish audiovisual industry and gender stereotypes typical of patriarchal societies where women are pigeonholed in minor tasks related to the care of physical appearance, while men develop professionally in areas that require higher qualifications and grant a greater degree of "power" (and decision-making).
- The year-on-year variation between 2020 and 2021 does not suggest that this imbalance in the position of women in audiovisual occupational groups is likely to change in the future.

In relation to the third specific objective (to determine the most representative forms of work between men and women in the sector), the findings represent an innovation with respect to previous studies, given that, until now, the ways in which both sexes are grouped or separated in order to carry out jobs linked to the audiovisual sector had not been analysed. In this sense, it is concluded that:

- Both men and women are more likely to choose to work individually in the roles that are involved in an audiovisual production.
- In only three of the 22 positions analysed do we find a considerable percentage of other forms of working. The professionals on whom the scripts, production or executive production depend tend, as a second option after the individual format, to be grouped by genre.

In relation to the fourth specific objective (to establish whether there is any gender differentiation that responds to the relationship between the Direction and the typology of production), it is concluded that:

- Most Spanish female directors opt for the documentary genre, while Spanish male directors opt for documentaries almost equally as much as for fiction.

These findings coincide with the statement made by Ruiz del Olmo and Hernández-Carrillo (2021) regarding the 2014-2015 period, in which more than half of the films with a female director were documentary films. Although it is not the aim of this study to investigate the causes of women's preference for this genre, Bernárdez-Rodal and Padilla-Castillo (2018) and Ruiz del Olmo and Hernández-Carrillo (2021) point to the difficulties they encounter in obtaining the necessary funding to undertake a fiction project, which usually has a higher cost than a documentary project. In this sense, it seems appropriate to rethink and reflect on the effectiveness (or ineffectiveness) of the public policies implemented in favour of a more egalitarian film industry.

The main limitations of this study are, in our opinion, determined by the initial disparity of the sample which, in relation to certain under-represented professional positions, makes it necessary to take the results obtained with caution. In this sense, it seems appropriate to propose a necessary revision of the criteria for the administrative procedure that the ICAA has established in order to apply for the Rating of films for cinematographic exploitation, which only requires the registration of the person responsible for the Direction of the audiovisual production. Including the obligation to provide detailed information on all the personnel involved in the different positions in the production of a film would contribute to giving greater visibility to all the professionals who form part of the sector and would enable more complete and rigorous reports to be drawn up in this respect. In any case, this study, practically pioneering at the academic level in terms of approaching the situation of the Spanish film sector from a gender perspective with a comprehensive and up-to-date vision, proposes a line of research that requires continuity in order to verify whether or not there has been an evolution in the role currently played by women as professionals in film production in Spain. It would also be interesting to undertake more qualitative studies to help understand the causes of the imbalance in the industry.

5. Contributions

Contributions	Authors
Research design	Author 1,
Documentary search	Author 1, 2
Data collection	Author 3
Critical data analysis and interpretation	Author 1, 2, 3
Review and approval of versions	Author 1

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8. Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that no conflict of interest exists.

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Notes

1. The AISGE Foundation is a non-profit organisation set up in 2002 that works for the benefit of performers in the audiovisual media through welfare, promotional, training and communication activities.

2. This professional association (CIMA) has been working since 2006 through exhibitions, conferences, talks, consultancy programmes, etc. to promote an equal presence of female filmmakers and professionals in the sector and to contribute to a balanced and realistic representation of women in audiovisual content.

3. The professional categories that are excluded from the study because they do not reach the minimum of 10% representativeness with respect to the overall number are: post-production supervision, digital effects, special effects make-up, narrator, voice-over, animator, costume designer, poster design, translations, documentation, sets, script editor, content manager, content director, character design, graphic design, director, technical direction, choreography, steadcam, casting, production manager, production coordinator, producer, associate producer, co-producer, storyline, and head of electrics.

