



# **Shadow Report on "Violence against women and gender inequality in and through the Media and ICT in Spain"**

## **REPORT**

The publication of this report to the CEDAW Committee is authorized. This Shadow Report has been prepared by Dr. Francisco José García Ramos, researcher at the Faculty of Information Sciences of the Complutense University of Madrid (UCM), on behalf of the Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMAG) and Lucía Vázquez Rodríguez, researcher at the Faculty of Information Sciences of the Complutense University of Madrid (UCM). The Alliance was launched in 2013 by UNESCO and more than 500 organizations, whose mission is to promote gender equality in and through the media and ICT. The aim of this report is to provide a background which shows the prevalence of the gender inequality and violence against women in and through the media and ICT in Spain. Too, to suggest a list of recommendations for the Spanish government and propose questions to be asked.

## **INTRODUCTION**

In 2007, the Spanish government led by the socialist Rodríguez Zapatero passed the Law 3/2007 on Substantive Equality between Women and Men (from now on referred to as the Equality Law); the establishment of the Ministry for Equality, one year later, confirmed that gender equality policies had become central in the Spanish political agenda. However, as observed in this report, little is recorded in the level of policies and mechanisms to eliminate VAW in media and ICT. The most meaningful advance has been made at the legislative level, within the context of the Equality Law, which included a chapter (Chapter III) specifically devoted to equality in the media: Article 36 states that publicly-owned media should spread an equal, plural and non-stereotyped image of women and men; while Article 37 specifies the measures to be adopted by the RTVE Corporation (Public Spanish TV and Radio), such as the elimination of sexist language or the adoption of self-regulation codes in order to transmit the values of gender equality; Article 38 focuses on the News Agency EFE in very similar terms,

while Article 39 covers gender equality in privately-owned media, highlighting again the role of self-regulation in order to achieve equality. Last but not least, Article 40 focuses on the importance of the Agencies regulating the media to ensure a fair treatment of women, and Article 41 stipulates that any form of advertising contradicting the principles of the Equality Law shall be considered illegal. The Law 1/2004 Against Gender Violence also includes a chapter -Chapter II- that refers specifically to advertising and media, covering issues ranging from the discrimination of women in the media to the fair treatment of gender violence as a Human Rights issue, again highlighting the role of self-regulation as a means to achieve equality between men and women in the media.

While Chapter II of the Law Against Gender Violence and Chapter III of the Equality Law were the first attempts to regulate issues of gender equality in Spanish media, their goals -such as the incorporation of women in managing positions or the actual adoption of self-regulation codes (which do indeed exist<sup>1</sup>)- are, as this report will show, far from being accomplished, with said Chapters remaining little more than a show for the gallery. A recent research project undertaken at the Complutense University of Madrid (Tajahuerce Ángel and Padilla Castillo, 2015) showed that the majority of journalists participating in the study do not always take into account gender equality and fair language practices, in most cases due to a lack of formal education in gender. Other studies show that only 13,3% of the Media and Communication BAs include gender-related modules in the curricula in Spain. In the film industry, the policies to ensure gender equality are slightly more encouraging; national public grants award 3 extra points to projects directed by women, 2 to those written by women, and 3 to those projects where at least 40% of the leaders of technical departments are female<sup>2</sup>, although these additional points do not have a real impact in the number of films directed by women that are released in Spanish cinemas, as we shall see. In a context of uncertainty and backlash against gender equality policies (particularly those fighting violence against women, such as the Law Against Gender Violence) characterized by the same rise of extreme right movements happening across Europe it is more important

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<sup>1</sup> In 2004, RTVE published the *Manual de información en género (Information in Gender Handbook)*, and in 2002 the *Manual de urgencia para el tratamiento de la violencia de género (Emergency Handbook on the treatment of gender violence)* was adopted by the main Spanish TV stations.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.revistadearte.com/2019/05/13/preferencia-para-las-mujeres-en-las-nuevas-ayudas-al-cine/>



than ever to highlight the role of media in educating the public in the values of gender equality.

Another obstacle we identify is the instrumental vision on media and ICT. These are usually seen as tools for the economic empowerment of women, because they can make them more profitable for the market, but not as instruments for the achievement of women's human rights. Several initiatives have arisen within the civil society and non-profit organizations that indicate a move in the right direction, such as the creation of CIMA (the Women Filmmakers Association) or the birth of the movement [#masmujerescreativas](#) (a platform designed to increase the visibility and promote equal opportunities for women in advertising), but much more needs to be done at the legislative level in order to achieve real, impactful change going beyond a statement of good intentions. Currently the Spanish State has the opportunity to mark a new route, taking media and ICT to the center of debates on women's human rights and the fight against violence of gender. In addition, by promoting a holistic perspective on gender and communication that addresses its different dimensions -contents, access and participation of women in media and ICT industries, participation of women in decision-making positions, access and use of ICT, audience rights, education for media and ICT with a gender perspective, access of women and girls to STEM careers and gender, media and ICT policies.

It is impossible to dismantle the culture of violence against women and girls without considering the responsibility of media and new technologies.

## BACKGROUND

### **Media contents**

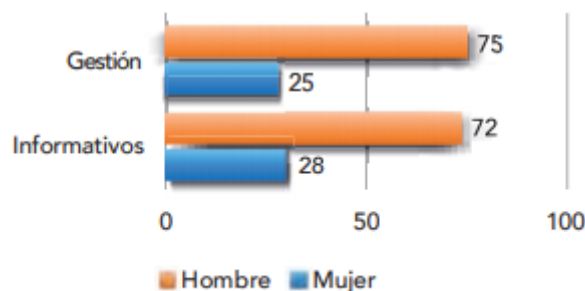
According to [the European Journalism Observatory](#), only 21% of the articles analyzed were signed by women, and only 21% of the pictures published featured only women as opposed to 45% of the images featuring just men.

Only 19,2% of Spanish films star women as opposed to 45,6% of films with a male protagonist, as the [Association of Communication Users](#) informs.

### **Gender inequality in media structure**

- In the field of journalism, 60% of those unemployed are women, as the [National Report on Journalism as a Profession](#), published by the Madrid Press Association (APM) denounces.
- According to the same report, only 25% of the members of the managing boards are women. The percentage goes up to 28% within managers of the news sections. In addition, there is only one woman in charge of one of the 15 biggest print newspapers, and another one in charge of one of the 20 most read digital newspapers.

**Tabla 7b**  
**Equipos directivos de las 30 mayores empresas de medios de España**



- In the field of Media and Communication, women represent the majority of employees earning salaries from less than 600€ to 2,000€, while there are 12% more men than women with indefinite contracts: <http://www.apiaweb.org/2017/03/08/mujeres-medios-comunicacion/>
- While the majority of those awarded a Degree in Advertising are women, in the creative departments of advertising agencies they only represent 20% of the total, as recorded by the [Platform Masmujerescreativas](#).
- They also denounce that only 14% of the creative directors in Spain are women, a percentage that goes down to 1% amongst General Creative Directors.
- According to the [CIMA Report 2018](#) edited by the Women Filmmakers Association (CIMA) the percentage of women as department leaders in film is only 21% of the total. Even worse, in 2017 only 7% of the films released in Spanish movie theaters had been directed by women. In addition, films directed by women have a budget 50% lower than those directed by men.

- According to the CIMA Report, the sexual division of labor particularly marginalizes the participation of women in areas such as production (31%), direction (20%) and technical roles -photography (9%), sound (11%), editing (24%) and special effects (7%). Only the departments of make up and hair (73%) and costume design (92%) employ a majority of women.
- According to a [Report](#) edited by Planner Media, only 21% of women publish opinion pieces in Spanish newspapers.
- Women who have reached decision-making positions on radio and television, identify the prevalence of gender inequality, which is evident in practices such as the masculinisation of work routines, wage inequality and recognition; the glass ceiling; and the marginalization of women from male bargaining spaces.

### **Cyber-violence against women**

In November 2018, the [International Federation of Journalists](#) published the results of a survey measuring the extent to which women journalists are subject to insults, harassing and threats in the Internet, which showed that 64% of the women working in media have experienced some form of cyber-violence.

In more general terms, a [recent study](#) by International Amnesty shows that one in five Spanish women has experienced some form of cyber-violence, with 27% of women in Spain subject to physical or sexual threats in the Internet.

### **SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT**

- Promote laws, regulations and policies on gender equality in and through media and ICT, with a rights-based approach that promotes: eliminating gender stereotypes in media content and advertising; promote access and participation of women in these sectors, including the regulatory bodies; to guarantee the rights of women journalists and all women working in media; to guarantee of freedom of expression and women's access to information; and to eradicate violence against women online and offline.
- Ensure that digital and radio and television policies and regulations support women's media networks in order to close the gap in women's content.



- Guarantee that women have the same rights to economic resources, access and control over ownership of the media and ownership of ICT.
- Implement policies for algorithmic transparency on the Internet.
- Produce regular data based on gender indicators, to inform about the different dimensions of the gender, media and ICT agenda.
- Promote media and digital literacy programs with a gender perspective that focuses on marginalized women and girls, encouraging the efforts of women's organizations in the use of digital media and online spaces to amplify their stories.
- Promote curricula in the journalism and communication careers of the universities, so that they incorporate the gender perspective.
- Promote the incorporation of girls and young women into STEM careers.
- Eradicate violence against women and girls from media and ICT contents.
- Promote self-regulation codes that guarantee: equal access of women in the workforce, equal pay, full labor rights, safety conditions for women media professionals and policies to combat violence against women.