

# Immigration and cultural audiovisual products in the Spanish market

## Inmigración y medios audiovisuales en el mercado español

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**ABSTRACT:** Immigration has become a social phenomenon with increasing importance in Spain. For that reason, media has put special focus on this issue, not only in news, but also in fiction products for television and cinema. In 2000s immigration topic appears quite often in plots and characters of serials and films. Moreover, immigrants' communities have become a new target for television programs and channels.

In this paper, we will review the research that has been done about this topic and will make a catalogue of this kind of film and television works. The purpose is to find out the reasons that possibly explain this phenomenon. Those can be a mix of commercial interests, issues of the political agenda or the reflection of a social fact. Hence, we will identify the audiovisual works related to immigration, then we will classify them according to different criteria, and finally, we will raise some conclusions about the causes of this recent development.

**Key words:** Spain, immigration, audiovisual works.

**RESUMEN:** La inmigración ha cobrado de nuevo importancia a finales de los años noventa en España. Por este motivo, los medios de comunicación empezaron a poner atención en los inmigrantes, no solo en cuanto tema informativo, sino también como protagonistas de las obras de ficción o como público con unas necesidades específicas que hay que satisfacer.

En la presente comunicación, revisaremos la investigación académica sobre los medios e inmigración y elaboraremos un catálogo de los medios sobre inmigración y para inmigrantes, de acuerdo a diferentes criterios, como financiación, promotores, idioma. El objetivo es reflexionar sobre las razones que explican la configuración de este nuevo mercado y cuestionar si tienen que ver más con razones comerciales o políticas.

**Palabras clave:** España, inmigración, productos audiovisuales.

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## 1. Introduction

Immigration has become a social phenomenon of increasing importance since the end of the last century in Spain (González, 2010; Retis, 2004; Ashuri, 2010). In 1998, immigrants made up 2% of the Spanish population and by 2007 they had already increased to 11,3%, of which 40% were of Latin American origin (INE, 2008). This market has proven to be a potentially powerful one for the business world (Alvarez et al., 2009). In 2007 there were approximately 5.3 million immigrants in Spain and their current status indicates the numbers will increase to eight million residents by the year 2015 (INE, 2008).

This immigrant population represents one of the significant consumer groups: according to data facilitated by Nielsen in 2007 they represented 10% of consumption by the total population in our country. Each immigrant is able to spend on a monthly average the equivalent to 1,081 Euros on products of large scale consumption. For that reason, advertisers have put attention in that market and media have started to produce contents addressed to this target, not only as items in the news, but also including characters in fiction and entertainment programs for television and cinema (Galán, 2006). Moreover, immigrant communities have become a new target for television programs and channels.

According to Björkin and Gutierrez

(2008, 227), “from 1990s onwards, due to the sociological changes that have occurred in Spain, television talk shows have focused on immigrants working in Spain”. The Catalanian Public Television (CCRTV) has created a new division on “Equality” in order to incorporate immigration as an issue in its contents. In the past few years, specifically as of 1996, films dealing with immigration have multiplied to such an extent that there now exist a substantial representation of them (Castiello, 2005; Gordillo, 2007). Perspectives on immigration have therefore become varied ones, thus enriching this aspect of modern society. Today’s cinema has distanced itself from the classic stereotypes among which we find negative aspects and has offered integrative and mutually enriching approaches to this age-old phenomena (López-Aguilera, 2010).

We would like to measure the size of this market, in terms of supply, audiences and contents. Our focus of attention will be on immigrants as a new target for audiovisual media companies. Therefore, we will look at the different media companies and their marketing strategies. We will set our focus on Spain as a country where the market is growing, reflecting Hispanic, European and African consumption. This market will continue to develop more in the coming years, when these populations become settled ones within Spain and overcome some of the current

prejudices that still exist (Igartua & Muñiz 2004).

In our research on immigration and the media we have first defined some of the key concepts with the intention of focusing on our understanding of the topic. In this same line, we have reviewed the recent literature about research on media and immigration, and the market reports focused on Spain. Finally, we have chosen examples of current channels, programs and films related to this topic with the purpose to classify them. We will conclude with the discussion of the possible causes of these recent developments.

## 2. Theoretical framework

In order to have a clear framework, it is necessary to identify the concepts we associate with immigrants, such as immigration, Diaspora, identity, belonging, cultural proximity and representation. These concepts will help to analyze the meaning of the media addressed to immigrants and their goals.

The first term that we need to define is *immigration*. It is related to population that is not native to the area or people living more or less permanently outside their countries of origin (Savage, 2005; Sinclair & Cunningham, 2000). There are many reasons to migrate to another country. Most cases are due to employment prospects and a better life style, yet

other types exist as occurs with business expatriates, foreign students and academics, retirees, and even long-term cultural tourists. In most cases all of these types of immigrants try “to face the challenges of negotiating a place for them in the host culture” (Sinclair & Cunningham, 2000, 12).

“The concept of *Diaspora* has been deployed in understanding many of the major population movements of the nineteenth and twentieth century and the complex processes of the maintenance and negotiation of cultural identity that go along with them” (Sinclair & Cunningham, 2000, 11). Sinclair and Cunningham (2000, 12) continues to affirm that “the extent of the population movements of recent history can lay claim to beginning to break down the mutual identification between nation and culture” and we agree with them. It is precisely because of audiovisual channels and programs that cultural frontiers no longer exist. According to Wiley (2004, 86), “media and cultural boundaries, as supposed physical or territorial borders, are becoming increasingly important”.

On the other hand, some media managers visualize in these immigrant groups specific needs and interests and implement marketing strategies that will guarantee future customers once they acquire purchasing power. At this point they become absolutely integrated to the new country and their needs are similar to those of any other citizen.

Some of these groups become consumers of local media from the start because there is a desire for immediate assimilation yet there always exists a need to maintain contact with their own country. Going further, in the concept of *diasporic culture*, Sinclair and Cunningham (2000, 17) define it as “the constantly configuring process that occurs when immigrant or otherwise displaced cultures selectively adapt to host cultures, intermingling and evolving to form a regenerative new culture, a culture related to, but yet distinct from, both the original home and host cultures”.

This target is not just any number of viewers: they are an objective with shared interests that come with a nationality which implies an identity related to their country of origin, cultural roots, behaviour, tradition, and religion (Cogo, Gutierrez & Huertas 2008, 45). The sense of identity proportions a sense of belonging and also set borders that unite or separate them from others.

According to the cultural perspective as manifest in Bignell and Fickers (2008, 240), *identity* in the immigration context is “the kind of balance between the distinctive singularity of each individual and the social environment in which he or she is embedded”. Identity is a flexible and dynamic concept that media has most to do with, because “media constantly shape ‘imagined communities’ and thereby new ‘spaces of identity’”.

Close to the concept of identity is *belonging*. This is very much related to the concept of local as context, particular and historical residue. Savage (2005) uses two metaphors for that: “hub in a network” (Savage, 2005, 5-7) and “born and bred community” (Savage, 2005, 52). Obviously, this concept has to do with territoriality, neighbourhood and sense of being at home (Savage 2005, 29). Silvertson (1997) indicates how media consumption may be relevant to the theme of belonging. Savage (2005, 29) also uses the term *elective belonging*, which articulates senses of spatial attachment, social position, and forms of connectivity to other places (...).

There is another interesting concept known as *cultural proximity*. Gershon (2005, 27) defines it as “a desire for seeing TV programs that reflect a person’s own language, culture, history, and values”. According to Straubhaar (2007, 26) “audiences seem to prefer television programs that are as close to them as possible”. Moran follows up on this discussion when he affirms that (1998, 8), “language, together with religion, is the most important component of a particular culture and it literally defines the world view of its linguistic community”.

The contents of media exposure for immigrants involve “cultural flows” and “reception theory”. Crane (2002, 2), discusses the status of the theoretical models of cultural

globalization in relation to literature and emerging trends, and distinguishes from cultural imperialism to 'glocalization' or adaptation.

It would serve at this point to question the media's final objective when it focuses on immigrant markets. On the one hand, it serves to integrate and aid in the adaptation to the new country yet because it features the old culture as opposed to the new one; it also runs the risk of perpetuating the differences between the two.

In the face of the threat posed by globalization Robertson (1995) coined the term "glocalization" to explain the adaptation process to which global contents are subjected to in the different communities receiving them. This author affirms that local and global are not mutually exclusive. Global messages are processed in a different manner in each local community and the producers of global contents attempt to adapt their products to the local markets. In line with this affirmation, the risk of homogenization of contents which may exist in mass media would be rectified by the heterogeneity of the audience's own culture.

Following this theoretical current of thought, Lie (2003) focuses his attention on the process of cultural globalization within the media and formulates the following crucial question: How does a local population interact with the global message

received and how does it interpret it? Lie (2003) examines this questioning when he argues that the relationship between global communication and local culture generates two processes of an opposite nature yet complimentary and simultaneous. Alongside the phenomena of homogenization, which transmits a global message of synchronization, integration, unity and universality there co-exists an inverse phenomena which is a heterogeneous one. It is differentiated, disintegrated, and speaks of diversity and particularities all directly related to the different, local assimilation process.

More specifically related to our paper, we need to define the identity of one of the biggest group of immigrants in Spain, that are the ones coming from Latin America. We have a cultural proximity with this target because we have some common roots (Medina 2006). For this reason we need to define "Latino" and "Hispanics". According to Davila (2000), it is strongly related to the Spanish language, although the use of any term is not indifferent, and it has a particular sense.

The author clarifies and shares our belief that, "unlike 'Latino', which could be potentially applied to any person from Latin American origin, Hispanic ties Latin American-based populations to the one thing they all share in common, Spanish and their origins in Spain. The one exception is, of course, Brazil and Brazilians who,

despite forming a geographical part of Latin America, are excluded by the Hispanic media and marketing industry on the basis of their language (Davila 2000, 90). This author also asserts that people from the industry do not make such a distinction, and both terms are used interchangeably (Davila 2001, 14-16). For Appadurai (1996, 32), “latinidad is an ‘ethnoscape’, a diasporic community transcending the United States and Latin American nation states”.

Very closely associated to the relationship between media and identity is the concept of *representation*. In this area of study it represents the image of the cultural identities constructed by the media and reflected within a specific reality. The term refers to both the process of production (program, series, film etc.) with its internal construction (the final product) and its reception. In the studies on representation, identity markers such as social class, age, sex and ethnicity are usually valued and importance is granted to the authenticity of the representation (Alvarado et al, 1987; Hall 1997 & 2000). According to Sinclair and Cunningham (2000, 14), “representations of the migrant as a cultural victim have become familiar”, yet “more recently has attention been given to migration as a complex process of cultural negotiation, resistance, and adaptation”.

After reviewing the concepts, it seems

necessary to classify those media associated with immigration. According to the existing literature and real examples, these can be divided into the following categories:

a) *Ethnic media*: created by immigrants to eliminate the deformed image or stereotypes associated with the immigrant group. In addition to this it is a way of maintaining ties with the places of origin, participating in public life and striving for rights in the host country. Generally speaking, ethnic media are these aimed at immigrants and their content is therefore focused on themes of interest to them.

b) *Multicultural media*: aimed directly at the immigrant population as well as the native population.

c) *Transnational media*. In some media, there exists an international version of the same product in order to reach national audiences which are dispersed throughout other countries. Chalaby (2002, 2005) has studied in depth this phenomena and Brügemann and Schulz-Forberg (2009, 699) have classified the transnational media into four groups. The first one is the *national media with a transnational mission*: media that tries to reach audiences beyond the national territory with some kind of political mission, i.e. *Deutsche Welle*. The second group is *international media*: media characterized by some form of cooperation between media organizations from two or more

countries, i.e. *Arte*. The third group is *pan-regional media*: transnational media that address a specific world region, i.e. *Al Jazeera*; and lastly, the fourth group is *global media* that addresses an audience which is not territorially bound but rather defined by certain interests, i.e. *BBC World*. This is a media which transcends geographical boundaries and address audiences dispersed throughout the world but that share a common language and interests. This universality explains why they can be considered as media for immigrants since they can be consumed in the country of origin as well as the host country.

### 3. Research status

*Cultural Studies* as a discipline has conducted much research on diverse audience reception of programs perhaps neglecting the immigrant population because it has been considered to be more an area of interest to market studies (Huertas 2005, 52) In Latin America, Uribe (2004) examined soap opera reception by immigrants of Mexican origin living in Los Angeles. Another example would be Grimson (1999) who analyzes the use of media by Bolivian immigrants in Buenos Aires.

In the international academic world, the study of television use and reception by people living away from their country of origin is still at an infant stage (Huertas, 2005). One of the most complex and ambitious

studies was conducted by Katz and Liebes (1990). It is a study that despite methodological limitations has proven to be of immense value.

In Spain multiculturalism is a relatively recent phenomena but some international authors like Scheffer (2000) had already indicated ten years ago that “the main problems of multicultural societies is not multiculturalism as such, but the serious lack of meeting points for members from various cultures within those societies”. Conscious of the need to find common meeting points, some audiovisual productions have begun to include ethnic themes in order to encourage multicultural debates. Costera and De Bruin (2003) studied Dutch soap operas and demonstrated their capacity to generate common meeting points amongst diverse immigrant groups.

Multicultural does not exclusively refer to ethnicity or geographic origin. As a term it also refers to religion in many cases as an exclusionary element within the culture of the host country. The Spanish government has dedicated a great amount of resources to the diversity of religions in recent years stressing the importance of minority religions’ access to the media. Only a few religious creeds, however, have enjoyed free broadcasting time on public radio and television because they are considered to be significant in the population (Catholics, Evangelists, Jews, and Muslims) by the Spanish

Commission on Freedom of Worship according to a law issued the 10th of February in 1984. On the other hand, as Gonzalez (2003) observes, there are other minority religious groups who have access to broadcasting time without the requirements. It can thus be concluded that more than legal development of the right to access broadcasting time there is a variety of experiences. Exercising this right may vary depending on the autonomous region: religious groups may be dispersed or concentrated in areas (Callejo 2008, 33).

In 2010, the *Foundation for Pluralism and Co-habitation* commissioned a study on the presence of religious minorities in Spanish television series. According to its promoters, the presence of Afro American citizens on television series in the United States was a fundamental factor in facilitating this group's integration into society. One of its objectives is to convince television producers that religious minorities already present in Spain should also be included in their productions (Del Barrio, 2010). The existence of multiple religions and pluralism in reality is a consequence of immigration.

Cogo, Gutierrez and Huertas (2008) coordinated a field study in Barcelona and Sao Paulo centering on media consumption by immigrants and deduced that the main motives of consumption are related to information on the home country, a

desire to integrate into the host country, and the need for inexpensive entertainment. In addition, they point out that "the need to look for information on the home country guarantees a continuous link with it while immersed in a varying cultural context" and they conclude this "conditions their behavior as a receptor-audience (...)". This explains the increase of the so-called ethnic media featuring the "specific demands and concerns of the group in question" (Cogo et al. 2008, 11). Sabés-Turmo (2010) goes on to classify the mass media consumed by the Latino population living in Spain and the specific media aimed at it. Lacalle (2009) studied the representation of immigrants on Spanish television programs.

The role of film fiction as an identity maker has been widely studied in the academia, especially in the English-speaking world. In Spain, academic interest has increased notably as can be seen in work conducted by Santaolalla (2005), Castiello (2005), Moyano (2005), Cavielles-Llamas (2009) and López-Aguilera (2010). Numerous articles and compiled editions have been published in addition to these monographic studies. In general, the authors involved agree that Spanish films on immigration are generally still at an early phase of development within the industry. Proof of this is that these are not films neither made for immigrants nor aimed at them. As Castiello (2004, 427) observes "in the



films made between 1990 and 2003 the focus is not identity nor the problems faced by the second or third generation". On the contrary, they are films that tend to address its attention to the extreme conditions the newly-arrived immigrant must endure and frequently create stereotypes of the different groups. Although there are exceptions, what we are now contemplating is a social film-making which is reflexive and condemns. An evolution can be traced from the year 2003 to current day films showing a more positive and active vision of the immigrant. The receiving audience is beginning to see "the other" in "itself" as forming part of society (Cavielles-Llamas, 2009; López Aguilar, 2010).

The business sector is also beginning to show interest in the immigrant population (Cogo et al. 2008, 83). In some countries, from a commercial point of view, audience research already quantifies this population segment and the information is beginning to become highly valuable to the marketing and advertising sectors (Huertas, 2005). Proof of this is that audience studies are now focusing on immigrants. The U.S. film industry has resorted to studying its audience through segments, directing its marketing of films to different groups. One crucial group is the Hispanic sector which is currently 28% of the twenty-six million spectators which make up the heavy movie-goer market in the United States (Behr and Diaz, 2009). The movie industry in

Hollywood has also commissioned specific studies on audiences and markets in the Afro American and Hispanic sectors which have revealed interesting facts on movie consumption by these groups (McClintock, 2009). In the Spanish context no representative studies have been performed to date.

Hence, research on immigration is conducted from a cultural studies perspective, public policies, media consumption and market research. In Spain, most of the research is led from public policies and media consumption.

#### **4. The Market for Media and Immigration in Spain**

In the following section we will attempt to revise the main market studies which have been conducted in Spain analyzing media consumption by immigration and presenting figures based on this market sector. In 2002 The General Study of the Media (EGM) introduced a question on nationality and made public its results. In 2007 it presented the first edition of EMI (Studies on the Media for Immigrants) was published sponsored by the ACPI (Association for Awareness of the Immigrant Population). The results of this study with respect to 2004 indicate: foreigners consult the internet more regularly and attend movies more assiduously than the native population. On the other hand, this same sector reads newspapers and their supplements or listens to the

radio at inferior rates compared to native Spaniards. Magazine consumption, along with that of television (national coverage) is similar in both cases. If we differentiate between general radio (general programming) and music-based radio, the latter is preferred by foreigners.

The General Study of Media differentiates among four groups: Africans, Europeans, Americans and Asians.

- Asians form the group which least consumes mass media probably in part due to the difficulty of the language.
- The Latin Americans, on the other hand, are the group which most consumes mass media. The information published does not, however, allow us to distinguish which sector of this American immigrant population speaks Spanish.
- The Africans are the ones who least access the internet probably due to the socio-economical problems of their country of origin

This information allows businesses dedicated to communication learn about their audiences and design communication products that can satisfy their needs.

In addition to the EGM other institutions also study the immigrant population and their media consumption. Since 2006 *Etnia*

*Communication* has been carrying out an analysis of the consumption and the socio-demographic profile of the “migrant” group in Spain focusing on the Rumanian and Bulgarian population. The analysis is published in the *Yearbook on Immigrant Communication in Spain*. The group Havas Media has launched a study on immigrant population based on economic, socio-demographic variables and the consumption of media that allows for distinguishing five segments: heads of family, workers, singles, students, and the well-to-do (Communication Yearbook 2009, 80).

Finally, the European research group *Minority Media* from the University of Poitiers has compiled a directory with the mass media borne out of migration in Spain. Knowing a market involves having the data related to its size, consumption, and the companies which have already invested in it. Sources of information are scarce, dispersed, and offer a disparity in figures yet it is important that we compile some of the data published in this preliminary study.

*Minority Media* devised a list of the media which has been most developed by immigrants. As table 1 illustrates, for the time being, the development of television channels is a minor one in comparison to magazines and radio because the investment involved is superior and management more complex, needing government authorization. Some groups like the

Arab, Chinese, Pakistani, or African have their own media. Most of the African media are in Spanish although some are in French or English. The

Chinese, however, promote their own media in their own tongue. Radio is the principal media creating programs for immigrants.

**Table 1.** Types of media developed by immigrants in Spain (2008-2009)

40.13 %	Newspapers and magazines
33.54%	Radios
10.66%	Television
6.90%	On line press
6.58%	Web sites
1.57%	On line radio
0.63%	On line television

Source: Minority Media, in 2009 Yearbook, 115

The following table illustrates the type of business model of media directed to immigrants and promoted by them.

**Table 2.** Business models of media developed by immigrants in Spain (2008-2009)

Commercial	52.41%
Private (non-profit)	31.03%
Public	16.21%
Public (commercial)	0.34%

Source: Minority Media, in 2009 Yearbook, 114.

As can be observed in the table, the majority of the media created by immigrants is business-related and financed by advertising.

Table 3 illustrates the television consumption time in 2008. Spaniards

dedicated more time to media consumption than did foreigners. However, maximum consumption was reflected in thematic channels' use because of their specific content aimed at a cultural or linguistic community.

**Table 3.** Average minutes consumed per nationality  
(01/02 to 31/12/2008)

Spaniards:	226 minutes
Foreigners:	209 minutes

Source: TN Sofres 2009

According to TNSofres, in 2009, there were 4.5% immigrants (almost 2 million viewers), but according to Vaca (2005, 105) no agreement exists between this data and what has been published by the INE and EGM.

According to EGM television in Spain has 1,491,000 television viewers who are immigrants from Latin America. The following is a distribution by channels.

**Table 4.** Immigrant audiences in Spanish channels

Antena 3 TV	645.000
Tele 5	528.000
La 1	378.000
Cuatro	245.000
La Sexta	192.000
La 2	119.000

Source: 2ª wave EGM, 2008

This data demonstrates that Latin American immigrants enjoy a general television for entertainment instead of programs addressed specifically to them as those on TVE 1 and La 2 from the public television.

Although we have focused our study on audiovisual media it is well worth mentioning that immigrants are also top consumers of electronic media, even surpassing native Spaniards' use. The very nature of internet allows accessing Spanish media in addition to that produced in their own countries. To conclude, advertising has also

expressed its interest in this group and some local products have been aimed at it (Baladron 2009) as occurs with the firm *Campofrío* which will sell products aimed exclusively at the Columbian and Rumanian markets under the brand "tastes from my homeland". Other sectors, such as telecommunications, courier services, and banking are also developing products and messages aimed at these groups: *MoneyGram* – money transfers -, *Productos Nativo* – Latinamerican food distributors -, Vodafone and its campaign "talk with

those you love” and Movistar, “Call me. Don’t wait to tell me”. In the past few years we have witnessed a change in attitude in the advertising aimed at the immigrant sector which is now being treated by business like the powerful five million potential consumer group it represents. Advertising today stresses a happy and smiling immigrant as opposed to a troubled one (Communication Yearbook, 2009 p.75). Spanish cinema is now beginning to reflect the reality of immigration but it is still in an initial stage where studies of audience segmentation do not even exist.

### 5. Catalogue of Spanish audiovisual contents for immigrants

We will initially focus on the examples directly related to television and similar-type media like advertising and internet and then move on the examples in movies.

#### a) Immigration and Television

The giant media groups have yet to develop a strategy aimed at this target and only some examples can be found as will be now illustrated. Pablo Romero, Director of Programming of Digital + (Communication Yearbook 2009, 28) indicates that this pay television channel has broadened its programming to reach these new groups: in 2007 it launched *Canal + Latino* and *Canal + Romania*. In addition, this pay television channel has facilitated the international distribution of various American ones

like *Cubavisión*, *Canal de las Estrellas* (México), *Caracol Internacional* (Colombia), *Ecuavisa Internacional* (Ecuador), *Telefe Internacional* (Argentina), *TV Record* (Brasil). *Canal Telenovelas* which distributes the Mexican soap operas and the children’s channel *Jetix* along with the musical *channel 40 Latino*. It also distributes the main Latino radio stations: *Radio Tropicana*, *Caracol* and *Activa* (Colombia), *RPP Noticias* (Perú), *Bésame Radio* (Chile) and *Radio Continental* (Argentina) (Communication Yearbook 2009, 135-137). Digital + has also bought films: *4 months 3 weeks and 2 days* the Rumanian film that won the Golden Palm in the Cannes film festival and *So Far (Qué tan lejos)* (Ecuador). But this channel does not solely aim for the Latino group and have launched *Pro TV International* and *Radio Romania* aimed at the Rumanian sector of its potential audience who reside abroad.

The first companies in Spain promoting ethnic media were Latin American and began to invest in 1994 in the country’s capital (Navarro 2009, 112). The first radio stations, *Radio Eurocaribe* and *Radio Gladys Palmera*, were first launched simultaneously both in Madrid and Barcelona. The first television channel dates back to the year 2004, *Canal Latino TV*, offering 24 hours of programming. In the past few years media coverage has proliferated on the internet precisely because it is much cheaper to produce and distribution is greater.

The following table offers a catalogue of recently-created channels related to immigration and their contents. The first two are promoted by a

consolidated media group, Digital +, and the rest are launched by individuals or groups related to immigrants.

**Table 5.** Channels related to immigration

TV channels aimed at immigrants/ethnic groups						
Name	Coverage	Language	Nature	Income	Frequency	Year
Canal+ Rumanía	National	Rumanian	Private	Ads	Daily	2007
Canal+ Latino	National	Spanish	Private	Ads	Daily	2007
TV Onda	Local (Castellón)	Spanish				
Rumanian	Private	Ads	Weekly	2007		
Canal Latino TV	National	Spanish	Private	Ads	Daily	2004
Fomento a la integración	National	Spanish	Private	Ads	Daily	2008
Xarxa de Televisions Locals	Regional	Spanish	Public	Ads	Weekly	2000
TVchannels on Internet						
TV Onda Latina	Intern.	Spanish	Private	Jewish		
Ads	Internet	2008				
Seefarad TV	Intern.	Spanish	Private	Ads	Internet	n.a.
Europa latina	Intern.	Spanish				
Italian						
Portuguese	Private	Ads	Internet	2007		
Ucide TV	Intern.	Spanish	Spanish Muslim Unión	Muslims	Internet	2008

Source: own elaboration

The creation of channels seems to be a riskier operation than creating programs. In the past few years the production of programs with the topic of immigrants has proliferated not only on thematic channels but also on generalized channels.

RTVE (Spanish public television) has launched various programs featuring immigrants and aimed at a general public: *Hijos de Babel* and *Destino: España*. *Hijos de Babel* (2009) is a music show in the form of a contest which features immigrants in Spain and

**Table 6.** Contents related to immigration

<b>Ethnic programs</b>				
<b>Name</b>	<b>Channel</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Broadcast Time</b>
Destino: España	La 1	General	Spanish	F 23:00
Hijos de Babel	La 2	General	Spanish	Daily 14:50-15:15
Shalom	La 2	Jewish	Spanish	Sun. 9:30
Islam Hoy	La 2	Muslims	Spanish, Arab	Sunday 9.15
América en España	Canal 24 h	Latinos	Spanish	Sat 13:30 and Wed. 18:30
Barrio Latino	Canal 24 h	Latinos	Spanish	Sat.1:30 y Tues. 18:30
De Sur a Norte	Canal24 h.	Latinos	Spanish	Friday 18:30
Hecho en América	Canal24 h.	Latinos	Spanish	Mon. 18:30
Telenoticias sin fronteras	Telemadrid	Spanish	Spanish, Arab, Chinese, Bulgarian	Sun. 20.00
Son latino	Canal 25 TV	Latinos	Spanish	Sat. 13:00 D 9:00
Los latinos con Natalia	Tele 7 (Valencia)	Latinos	Spanish	Friday 15:00
Argumentos. Migración y cultura	TEIb <sup>2</sup>	Latinos	Spanish	Internet
Punto de encuentro	Canal 7 (Madrid)	Immigrants	Spanish	Sat. 14.30
La hora del inmigrante	Solidaria TV (de Remar)	Immigrants	Spanish	n.a.
<b>Multicultural Programs</b>				
Karakia	C 33	Multicult.	Catalan	Tues 21:30
Infos idiomas	XTVL	Multicult.	Various languages <sup>3</sup>	n.a.
Andalucía sin fronteras	Canal Sur	Multicult.	Spanish	Sun. 1:00
Con todos los acentos	La 2	Multicult.	Spanish	Sun.9:30
Tot un món	TV 3	Multicult.	Catalan	Sat.-Sun. 14.20
Els nous catalans	TVE Catalunya	Multicult.	Catalan Spanish	Sun. 12.30

Source: own elaboration

<sup>2</sup> Televisión Educativa y Cultural Iberoamericana.<sup>3</sup> Arab, Italian, Norwegian, Japanese, French, Chinese, Portuguese, Finnish., Swedish, German, Aranés (from Valle de Arán, Catalonia).

aimed at fostering integration and solidarity among different cultures. It is broadcasted nationally but its original format was first created in San Cugat in the region of Catalonia. After September of 2009 it was replaced with *Con todos los acentos* which offered immigrants a program that provided a place to exchange information, experiences, advice, and self-knowledge. *Destino: España (Destiny: Spain)* is another program offered by TVE which is a turn on its popular *Españoles en el Mundo (Spaniards throughout the World)*. This program is centered on personal stories narrated by foreigners who live in Spain. It is not original in format since various channels already have similar programs airing. Immigrant perspective has contributed to widening viewers' knowledge of how they deal with cultural differences and such diverse themes as family and economy. Through their opinion it is possible to learn if the stereotypes associated with Spain like fiesta (partying), sun, and beach, continue to attract foreigners to Spain.

In addition to the public Spanish television, other channels have followed this type of program format in recent years. Following in the line of the previously-cited classification scheme it is worth distinguishing ethnic content aimed at immigrants from multicultural programs.

The concern for immigrants in the Spanish public television is not new.

Throughout the period 1991-1995, the International branch of the state-run television initiated programming with a unique content for its international channels in Europe and America for Spaniards in other countries. In 1991 an international news show was launched with a Latin-American audience in mind. Thirty minutes long, this news show aired from Mondays to Fridays featuring news and topics "that would be of most interest to viewers on this continent" (RTVE 1991, 205).

#### *b) Cinema: a case study*

The media's obsession with cornering this area of the market is not as strong in the case of Spanish cinema. Different reasons are given: it is a relatively small market compared to that of television and the news media, and, of course, is not as lucrative as the Hollywood one with an extensive and integrated immigrant-origin market of a 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation (Pozo, 2001). Secondly, Spanish cinema has concentrated all of its efforts on competing with foreign cinema (mainly that of the U.S.A.) distributed in our country, and at the same time has attempted to "internationalize" our cinema's distribution mainly in Latin America. It must also be added here that movie production has to adjust its economic criteria to other criteria (artistic sensitivity) that quite often have a strong influence on the movie-making



process in Spain. In the past few years a growing amount of Latin American films or jointly produced (Spanish and Latin American) are being distributed on a national scale whose predictable public is primarily of Latin American origin. However, Box office sales have been feeble and no segmentation market studies are available to certify results (ICAA, 2009). In fact, in United States statistics point that immigrant population (Hispanics concretely) prefers not its own country movies nor immigration-theme movies but conventional genres as family, horror, and romantic comedies (Behr & Diaz, 2009).

What seems to be very obvious as of today is that the movie industry will need to rely on specific tools to design its future strategies aimed at cornering an immigrant population like that of the Latinos who include as one of their major leisure activities that of movie-going (Santamarina, 2005; Martín-Cerdeño, 2006).

Rather than focused on the market, in the case of the movie industry, it is worthy studying issues related to identity and representation. *Cartas de Alou* (*Letters from Alou*, Montxo Armendáriz, 1990) is the first significant film to explore the theme of immigration in our country and the promise of a better life. Other films have followed from 1995-96 like *Bwana* (Imanol Uribe) and *Cosas que dejé en la Habana* (*Things that I left in*

*Havana*, Gutiérrez Aragón, 1996).

From this point onwards, films on this theme continue to be produced reflecting diversity in quality, impact, genre, and treatment of this issue. According to Santaolalla, this surge in productivity may be due to the political climate which reflects a more integrative attitude instead of a defensive one as can be seen in the Plan for the Social Integration of Immigrants (1994) and in 1995, the creation of *The Permanent Observatory for Immigration* (Santaolalla, 2006). Of all the films released, those with the most impact in terms of ticket sales and awards are: *Flores de otro mundo* (*Flowers from Another World*, Iciar Bollaín, 1999), *Balseros* (*Boat People*, Bosch y Doménech, 2002), *Poniente* (*West Wind*, Chus Gutiérrez, 2002), *Extranjeras* (*Foreign Women*, Helena Taberna, 2003), *Princesas* (*Princesses*, Fernando León, 2005) y *Regreso a Hansala* (*Return to Hansala*, Chus Gutiérrez, 2008).

In this paper we do not focus on films reflecting Spanish migration to other countries nor those films with immigration as a subplot or with immigrants as secondary characters although all of these types of films are growing in numbers. Between January of the year 2000 and December of 2002, 287 films produced in Spain by Spaniards premiered in Madrid. Of these premieres 67 featured a foreign character which quite often was that of a marginalized, foreign-born woman (Argote, 2007).

**Table 7.** Main movies focused on immigration, released between 1990-2009

TITLE	DIRECTOR	YEAR	GENRE	GROUP
Las Cartas de Alou	Montxo Armendáriz	1990	Drama	Subsaharian
Ciudadanos bajo sospecha	Llorenç Soler	1993	Documental	Subsaharian
Los baúles del retorno	María Miró	1995	Drama	Subsaharian
Bwana	Imanol Uribe	1996	Comedy	Subsaharian
Taxi	Carlos Saura	1996	Thriller	Multiethnic
Susanna	Antonio Chavarrías	1996	Drama	Muslim
La sal de la vida	Eugenio Martín	1996	Comedy	Latino
En la puta calle	Enrique Gabriel	1996	Drama	Latino (Cubano)
Menos que cero	Ernesto Tellería	1996	Drama	East Europe
Cosas que dejé en la Habana	M. Gutiérrez Aragón	1997	Drama	Latino (Cubano)
Saïd	Llorenç Soler	1998	Drama	Maghribian
El sudor de los ruiseñores	Juanma Cotelo	1998	Drama	East Europe
Flores de otro mundo	Iciar Bollaín	1999	Drama	Latino
La fuente amarilla	Miguel Santemas	1999	Thriller	Chinesse
En construcción	José Luis Guerín	2001	Documental	Multiethnic
Salvajes	Carlos Molinero	2001	Drama	Subsaharian
Poniente	Chus Gutiérrez	2002	Drama	Maghribian
Balseros	Carles Bosch/J.M. Doménech	2002	Documental	Latino (Cubano)
Extranjeras	Helena Taberna	2002	Documental	Multiethnic
El otro lado... un acercamiento a Lavapiés	Basil Ramsis	2002	Documental	Multiethnic
El traje	Alberto Rodríguez	2002	Comedy	Subsaharian
llegal	Ignacio Vilar	2002	Drama	Subsaharian
La novia de Lázaro	Fernando Merinero	2002	Drama	Latino (Cubano)
Cuatro puntos cardinales	Natalia Díaz et al.	2002	Documental	Multiethnic
Los novios búlgaros	Eloy de la Iglesia	2003	Comedy	East Europe
Tánger	Juan Madrid	2003	Thriller	Maghribian
Si nos dejan	Ana Torres	2004	Documental	Multiethnic
Apuntes para una odisea soriana interpretada por negros	Llorenç Soler	2004	Documental	Multiethnic
Habana Blues	Benito Zambrano	2005	Musical	Latino (Cubano)
Princesas	Fernando León	2005	Drama	Latino
Agua con sal	Pedro Pérez Rosado	2005	Drama	Latino (Cubano)
El próximo oriente	Fernando Colomo	2006	Comedy	Multiethnic
Pobladores	Manuel G <sup>a</sup> Serrano	2006	Documental	Maghribian, Latino
14 kilómetros	Gerardo Olivares	2007	Drama	Subsaharian
El viaje de Saïd	Coke Rioboo	2007	Animation	Maghribian
Retorno a Hansala	Chus Gutiérrez	2008	Drama	Maghribian
Myna se va	Sonia Escolano/Sadrac González	2009	Drama	East Europe
Harraga	Eva Patricia Fdez./ Mario de la Torre	2009	Documental	Maghribian

Source: own elaboration

In total, the sample of films featuring immigration as central plot is almost sixty, including short films, medium-length, feature films, documentaries and those films of a hybrid genre. They are a small percentage within the total of Spanish-produced films but significant enough to be considered representative of the existing social reality.

It must be mentioned here that in the past five years there has been a predominant tendency to work with this theme in the documentary or documentary hybrid genre in which the female director predominates (Costa Mas, 2008). There is a total absence of foreign-born producers or directors except for the Argentinean Ana Torres (*Si nos dejan -If They Leave Us-* 2004), and the Egyptian director Basil Ramsis (*El otro lado... un acercamiento a Lavapiés - The Other Side... Approaching Lavapies-* 2000). For Martínez-Carazo (2005), it is logical since this does not usually occur until the second or third generation but it is expected and will probably occur sooner than later with the cheapening of film production through digitalization. What already does exist today is a growing group of actors appearing in different productions who Castiello (2005) has identified.

Those immigrants most featured in films today are those belonging to the Sub-Saharan group in which the themes of cultural conflict and segregation are explored and where the protagonists are usually men.

Secondly, the Latin American group which tends to be featured in films of a more optimistic nature and with a dominant presence of female protagonists. The least-represented group in films today is that of the Eastern European one. According to Costa Mas (2008, 20), the Spanish cinema's imagination differentiates an Eastern European immigration which is "over-valued", an immigration which is "preferred" (Latin American) and a hostile one (Sub-Saharan and Muslim with varying cultural differences).

The profile of these archetypes is worth describing in detail for all three ethnic-cultural groups as they are portrayed in films. The Latin American group's profile has the following traits on screen: dynamic in the workplace, intense relationships with the native Spaniards who despite some minor cultural differences share the same history, language and religion. Mixed couples are abundant among Latinos and Spaniards and they are always portrayed as happy (Castiello, 2005). Films tend to use public spaces like parks, squares or churches in the characters' interactive space. (Costa Mas, 2008)

To conclude, all these films (specially the box office hits) had a certain significant impact on the Spanish population's perspective on immigration, even though their economic success of these films are not comparable to those produced by Hollywood (Rings, 2009, 72).

## 6. Conclusion

According to the findings, there is an increasing interest from policy makers in immigration, that media has hosted in their contents. The Council for Spanish Citizenship which was created in 1987 under the Royal decree 1339/1987 on the 30th of October has as its objective to foresee institutional channels of participation for Spaniards who reside abroad. In 2008 The General Council of Spanish Citizenship substituted the General Council of Immigration and is currently under the Ministry of Labor. The objective of this organism is “to guarantee the right of Spaniards residing abroad to participate in matters that concern them and to promote the collaboration of the Spanish Public Administration in matters concerning Spaniards abroad and returning home” (Royal Decree 230/2008, 15th of February, General Council of Spanish Citizens Abroad).

An example of interaction and dialogue among the communities of this 21<sup>st</sup> century diaspora and the RTVE Corporation is the request for transmission of news programs. In April of 2009 the Commission for Human Rights of the General Council of Spanish Citizenship Abroad presented a proposal requesting that the state-run channel RTVE programming present “frequent news relative to the daily life of Spanish citizens abroad and of the organisms that represent them abroad”

(Commission for Human Rights of the General Council of Spanish Citizens Abroad, 2009: 4).

In addition to this public initiative, we have observed that the immigrant market is still young because it is recent to Spain. Media companies do not risk their capital until they observe the target market's consumer capacity. Initiative in this area is still scarce although market research has begun to produce studies with data that will contribute to the creation of new channels and contents for the immigrant target groups and to make immigration closer to Spanish population.

Yet it must be said that the disparity and dispersion of such groups only contributes to slowing down media companies' strategy. Language also poses a difficulty. In the case of Latin Americans, for the most part it coincides with the Spanish language but in order to attract other groups different tools must be developed in order to translate and produce in the different groups' languages which of course will make the product more expensive. Immigrant films tend to have their origin in condemnation: the revelation of the cruel reality of multicultural integration and thus there is no business-related objective.

To conclude, it must be stressed here that there is another obstacle which needs to be mentioned within the framework of this discussion and that is

the acceptance by the immigrant population of the national media. Once they have left their country, immigrants in general wish to initiate integration in the receiving country and one of the

best ways to do so is through the host country's conventional media. The use of the national media, however, ultimately causes that interest in having their own media declines.

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