

European migrants on the Costa del Sol: an analysis of the consumption of foreign media by the German audience in the process of European integration

Migrantes europeos en la Costa del Sol: análisis de la audiencia alemana en el consumo de los medios extranjeros en el proceso de integración europea



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Abstract:

This article analyses how the foreign-language media published on the Costa del Sol for the German population living in this region affect their process of European integration and construction. The aims are to determine the sociodemographic characteristics of this active audience, to identify their media diet and to analyse the role played by the media they consume in the integration of the German resident population into Spanish society, especially from the point of view of the process of European construction. Surveys and discussion groups make up the core methodology of this study. The main conclusion is that these media help them to an extent in their process of integration, although this role could be further expanded if the media met the information demands and the problems that hinder the residents' integration. Furthermore, the Germans living on the Costa del Sol display a strong pro-European spirit.

Keywords:

German population; Europe; media of diaspora; foreign residents.

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Resumen:

El artículo analiza el papel que desempeñan en el proceso de integración y construcción europea aquellos medios en lengua extranjera publicados en la Costa del Sol para la población alemana residente en esta región. Los objetivos son conocer las características sociodemográficas de esta audiencia activa, identificar su dieta mediática, analizar el papel que desempeñan los medios que componen esta dieta mediática en la integración de la población de residentes alemanes en la sociedad española, especialmente desde el punto de vista del proceso de construcción europea. La encuesta y el grupo de discusión conforman la metodología central de este estudio. La principal conclusión explica que estos medios les ayudan parcialmente en su proceso de integración, si bien, podría aumentar este papel si atendiese a las demandas informativas y los problemas que obstaculizan su integración. Además, los alemanes residentes en la Costa del Sol demuestran un fuerte espíritu europeísta.

Palabras clave:

Residentes alemanes; integración europea; prensa extranjera; residentes extranjeros.

1. Introduction

For decades, the Costa del Sol has been one of the preferred destinations for the European population to set up a new residence and this has given rise to an interesting media phenomenon in the area, namely, the emergence of foreign media targeted at these populations in their own language. This has led to an unusual scenario. Any group of migrants normally have access to two media ecosystems: the media of their country of origin and the media of the host country. In the case of the Costa del Sol (and other areas of Spain and Portugal), however, they also live alongside a third ecosystem, namely, the media produced exclusively for these populations in their own language, which in most cases are managed by Europeans who have been living in this area for decades.

In this particular context of European migration, population and media, our research focuses on the German residents living on the Costa del Sol¹. These are the second European nationality in terms of population with 9456² residents according to data provided by the Spanish Institute of Statistics (INE) in 2016, although the number of Germans registered at the town halls (as shown below) is much lower than those who actually reside – at least for a significant part of the year – on the Costa del Sol. In the absence of any specific exhaustive censuses, the INE is also the most reliable source of data for analysing this migratory phenomenon.

1 We understand the geographical area of the Costa del Sol as the coastal region in the south of the province of Málaga, including all those municipalities along the coast with a majority of foreign residents.

2 See: https://www.ine.es/dyngs/INEbase/es/operacion.htm?c=Estadistica_C&cid=1254736177012&menu=resultados&idp=1254734710990

This study is significant owing to the innovative perspective from which it seeks to determine the relevance of foreign media for Germans in the process of integration and the construction of Europe. It focuses on the analysis of the media consumption of the German population living on the Costa del Sol, which is not only the second largest European population group in the region, but also the second largest in terms of the number of media in their own language, according to the census carried out in this project.

This research aims to provide a better understanding of the overall process of achieving the goal of a united, pluralistic Europe, at a stage in the European project that is particularly critical because of Brexit and the wave of Euroscepticism in many European parties, which are fuelling fears among the peoples of Europe as regards the integration process. It is therefore more necessary than ever to analyse, on the one hand, how Europeans see this whole process and the role played or to be played by Spanish media published in German and the German media distributed in Spain. On the other, it is also essential to examine the way the German-language media distributed on the Costa del Sol promote or determine understanding, cohesion and integration, and, ultimately, help to achieve the goal of the European project.

This research, together with the other studies conducted in the project of which it is a part, will also help to obtain a snapshot of the European migrant populations as active audiences, or at least of a significant part of them.

2. Literature review

The first studies on the foreign media and information published in other languages on the Costa del Sol and in Spain were conducted when mass migration and tourism was beginning in the 1970s (García Galindo 1998). As García Galindo and López Romero (2013) and López Romero and Serrano Porras (2016) have noted, however, information in other languages has been published in the Costa del Sol press since the early 20th century. Yet, the long presence of information in other languages and the existence of foreign media on the Costa del Sol, the Canary Islands, the Valencian coast and other areas of Spain has not given rise to extensive research into this phenomenon. In general, academic research on foreign media is not very abundant and, in the little that has been conducted, the group that has received the most attention is the British, probably because they represent the main population of foreigners settled on the Costa del Sol (Karen O'Reilly 2009; Betty 1997; Betty & Duran 2008; Rodríguez, Fernández-Mayoralas, & Rojo 2004; Villaverde & Hierro 2013). Other authors have approached foreigners from a more general point of view (García Galindo & López Romero 2018; Oliveau et al. 2019). Our study now aims to look more closely at the situation of German citizens, the second largest European population living on the Costa del Sol.

Previous research on German residents in Spain is scarce and none of the studies that have been conducted have addressed the phenomenon on the Costa del Sol. Dorn Padilla (2012) examined the case of German tourists in the Canary Islands, but not German residents, as is our case. Her study is, nevertheless, of great interest because it analyses the press coverage of this community in the Canary Islands and shows that it is also the second largest European community present in the islands. Furthermore, she highlights the impact of German tourism on the development of journalistic activities

in this language and analyses in particular the functions of service journalism carried out by these media through two channels: that of bringing this population together and that of facilitating their stay in the area.

Penalva and Brückner (2008) analysed the newspaper *Costa Blanca Nachrichten*³, the version of the subject addressed in this research produced in Alicante, and concluded that it is not a medium that transmits social demands. They also found that, in terms of interculturality, neither is it perceived as a hybrid medium, but instead acts as an intercultural medium among the German population. Brückner (2008) corroborated these results in another study carried out on the same newspaper.

The rest of the research on foreign media has focused on other nationalities and geographical areas, for example, the Canary Islands (Acirón Royo 1997; Martín Hernández 1990; González Cruz 1991), the Balearic Islands (Marimon & Vicens 2013) or Madrid (Retis 2008). Research has also been carried out on Latin American residents in this last Community (Gómez & Santín 2009; Mas Giral 2017).

Other scholars have addressed the problems of this kind of press, such as (cost-)free media (Santos Díez & Pérez Dasilva 2012; Rosell 2008; González Cortes 2009; Santos Díez 2008), that of translation studies (Taillefer de Haya 2005) and, of course, that of tourism, where other nationalities have been analysed in depth (Fernández & Mendoza 2007; Ocaña & Larubia 2012; Mazón 2018; Delgado Peña & Sortino Barrinuevo 2018; Millares 2018; Lakssfoss 2018; Woube 2017). Television has also devoted some attention to the subject in an audience study that examined young Britons on the Costa del Sol (Sáiz Díaz 2016).

This research aims to provide new data in this field of study, the conceptualisation of which is not yet fully agreed upon. In the literature consulted, various terminologies have been detected: ethnic press, press in the diaspora, immigrant press, foreign press, press for minorities or delocalised press (Blau 1998; Lacroix 1998; Gómez Mompert 2008). In this research, the most frequent term, “foreign press”, has been chosen to study the case of the German population, which, despite being the second most numerous group of Europeans both on the Costa del Sol and in the rest of Spain, has nevertheless received far less attention from scholars.

3. Objectives and Methodology

The initial hypothesis of this research is that German residents on the Costa del Sol are in favour of the European project and that the media targeted at this group help them in their process of integration. However, these media have shortcomings as they do not meet all the information demands of their consumers, as foreign residents in this geographical area.

This research has three objectives:

1. To determine the socio-demographic characteristics of this active audience (the German residents) on the Costa del Sol.

3 This newspaper has two other versions, one for the *Costa del Sol* with the name *Costa del Sol Nachrichten* and another for the region of Murcia with the name *Costa Cálida Nachrichten*.

2. To identify the media diet of the German population living on the Costa del Sol.
3. To analyse the role played by the media that make up this media diet in the integration of the German resident population into Spanish society, especially from the point of view of the process of European construction.

The methodology used here is that developed for the whole R&D&I project *Medios de Comunicación y construcción europea: estudio sociocomunicativo de los residentes comunitarios en el sur de España y de Portugal* (CSO2015-65837-R) [Media and European construction: socio-communicative study of community residents in southern Spain and Portugal]. This project was carried out from January 2016 to December 2019 and it is led by professor of Journalism Juan Antonio García Galindo. It is focused on those European migrant communities with the greatest media representation on the Costa del Sol and in the Algarve, namely, Germans, Danes, Finns, French, Dutch, British, Swedes and Norwegians. Finally, it was considered appropriate and necessary to include the Russian population due to the significant proportion of residents and their high representation in the media. Other community members such as Italians or Ukrainians were not included because there were no media published in their language.

The methodology is structured in two methodological blocks with a total of five phases. Obviously, throughout the project the contents of these phases have been updated with new information or aspects that have arisen and at some point certain phases have been carried out in parallel to others. The first block includes three phases.

Phase 1: Creation of an online database to which the results obtained from the bibliographic search on foreign media can be uploaded. The search for these media was carried out in national and international databases (Dialnet, Rebiun, Teseo, B-on, Google Academic and Scopus), and the key words or search equations used were: “foreign press”, “foreign media”, “media for immigrants”, “press for immigrants”, “community media”, “delocalised media”, “delocalised press”, “foreign press Costa del Sol”, “press and tourism Costa del Sol”⁴, adding after these terms the nationality analysed, which in the case under study is German.

For each document we chose to insert the type of text (book, article, chapter, etc.), the title, the name of the author, the year of publication and its editor, the internet link (if any), the disciplines (limited to a maximum of 5 words), key words, the full bibliographic reference in APA format, the relevance for the project and observations. A total of 203 general contributions were found and five of them analyse the German population, but only three focus on media targeted at this population.

4 These key words were searched in Spanish.

Image 1: Bibliographic database

Libro, artículo, tesis...	Título	Autor
Prensa (Recortes de prensa)	Torrox, 'la pequeña Alemania' de Málaga	José Carlos Pozo
Artículos de revistas científicas	Fixed laws, fluid lives: the citizenship status of post-retirement migrants in the European Union	Ackers, L. and Dwyer, P.
Libros	The British on the Costa del Sol	Karen O'Reilly
Informes/Estadísticas/Anuarios	Observatorio turístico Andalucía-Algarve. Demanda turística	CEAL, FOE, CEA, UE, JUE
Libros	A Comunicación Social Transfronteiriça	Alberto Pena Rodríguez
Capítulos de libro	Historia del Periodismo Portugués	Alberto Pena Rodríguez
Tesis doctorales y otros trabajos	Portugal en América. La prensa portuguesa en los Estados Unidos de América: inmigración periodismo y propaganda (1877-2010)	Alberto Pena Rodríguez
Libros	Emigración e exilio nos Estados Unidos de América. Experiencias de Galicia e Azores	Alberto Pena, Mário Mesquita
Artículos de revistas científicas	El papel de los destinos turísticos en la transformación sociodemográfica del litoral mediterráneo español	Francesc González Reverte
Artículos de revistas científicas	La actividad turística en el territorio andaluz. Establecimiento de indicadores, distribución y evolución de los mismos	Alfonso Fernández Tabales
Artículos de revistas científicas	Residentes extranjeros y crecimiento demográfico en el territorio andaluz	María del Carmen Ocaña
Artículos de revistas científicas	La consolidación de las publicaciones para extranjeros en España	María Eugenia González
Libros	Recursos, potencialidades y modelos turísticos en el Baixo Alentejo, Algarve y provincia de Huelva	José Manuel Jurado Almor
Artículos de revistas científicas	Extranjeros en Andalucía: diversificación de las corrientes inmigratorias y sus patrones de distribución sobre el espacio andaluz	Remedios Larrubia Varga
Libros	Practising the Good Life: Lifestyle Migration in Practices	Kate Torkington, Inês Dav
Capítulos de libro	Glocalización comunicativa y prensa local extranjera en España: La visión de los residentes alemanes de la Costa Blanca.	Brückner, G.
Artículos de revistas científicas	Comunicación intercultural. Un estudio de caso sobre la prensa local extranjera en España.	Penalva, C. y Brückner, G
Libros	La integración de los extranjeros: un análisis transversal desde Andalucía	Sánchez Lorenzo, S. (ed.)
Libros	Voces de la inmigración, medios latinos en Madrid.	Gómez-Escalonilla, G. (co

Source: own elaboration

Phase 2: Development of a media census to obtain a comprehensive overview of the current situation regarding the media for foreigners on the Costa del Sol. This census, which in this study focuses on the German media, was carried out as part of the structure designed by López Romero (2009) in her doctoral thesis on this field of study, which comprises the following sections of analysis: geographical area, name of the media, type of media (newspaper, magazine, television channel, etc.), radio station frequencies (if applicable), start year, finish year, frequency, language (indicating if more than one), full address of head office, stock, printing press, editor-in-chief and editors, ownership, geographical scope, orientation and nature of the media, contact details and observations.

The census, carried out from January 2016 to May 2018, covered the existing printed press, digital press and radio media on the Costa del Sol. However, it should be noted that this census included several media that have closed down since the study began. Altogether 130 media were found, 112 on the Costa del Sol and 18 on the Algarve. Three methods were developed to complete this database: a web-based bibliographic and documentary search to detect new publications; interviews with journalists and managers of known foreign media so that they could inform us of the existence of other media in their area; and a field search carried out by visiting tourist areas and places with a large influx of tourists, where many of these publications are made available free of charge.

The following are all the media detected for the German population on the Costa del Sol:

- SUR Deutsche Ausgabe

- Costa del Sol Nachrichten
- Spanien Aktuell
- Das Aktuelle Spanienmagazin
- SAZ-Aktuell
- Der Marktplatz

Nevertheless, there are seven other media that include some section or subsection with information in German:

- Andalucía Golf Guide
- andaluz.tv
- Economía Hispano Alemana/ Deutsch-Spanische Wirtschaft
- XtraFM
- A Spanish Life
- Finest Magazine Marbella
- Ronda Magazine

Image 2. Screenshot of part of the sample used in the media census

C	D	E	F	G	H
Nombre completo del medio	Tipología del medio	Dial	Año de inicio	Año de finalización	Periodicidad
Andalucía Golf Guide	Guía			2005	Acaba dentro del periodo Sin periodicidad regular
¿ SUR deutsche Ausgabe	Periódico			2004	sigue Semanal
¿ Costa del Sol Nachrichten	Periódico			1996	sigue Semanal
¿ Spanien aktuell	Revista		Desconocido		sigue Mensual
¿ Das aktuelle Spanienmagazin	Revista		Desconocido		sigue Mensual
¿ andaluz.tv	Prensa digital			2009	sigue Sin periodicidad regular
¿ Economía Hispano alemana / Deutsch-Spanische Wir	Prensa digital			1953	sigue Bimestral
¿ SAZ-aktuell	Prensa digital		Desconocido		sigue Diaria
¿ XtraFM	Radio digital			2006	sigue Diaria
Der Marktplatz	Revista			2013	sigue Bimestral
¿ A Spanish Life - Marbella	Prensa digital			2005	sigue Sin periodicidad regular
¿ Finest Magazine Marbella	Guía			1973	sigue Bimestral

Source: own elaboration

Phase 3: Creation of a database for saving contacts relevant to the project. The contacts located at the main reference points of the foreign population, which in this study are the Germans on the Costa del Sol, should make it easier for us to distribute the surveys and to recruit participants willing to take part in the focus groups.

This database consists of eleven sections: Associations, federations and clubs; Foreigners' Department(s); Consulate(s); Foreign educational centres; Universities; Religious centres; Airports; Railway stations; Ports; People; and Others. Contact details for each institution or organisation listed, together with a rating of how useful they are for the project, were entered in the database. Altogether, from the 78 contacts obtained for all nationalities in the overall project, the following collaborators were selected for the study of German residents:

- Marion Fischer, organiser of German meetings at the Lizzarran Restaurant in Arroyo de la Miel (Málaga), to distribute the surveys.
- The German-Spanish meeting group organised by *Intercambio Deutsch-Español* at Sprizze One in Arroyo de la Miel (Málaga).
- Justo Sánchez Arévalo, property administrator in Torrox Costa, who works with numerous homeowners' associations in buildings and residential area in La Axarquía, many of them with a large number of German residents.

This selection also takes into account the location, on the east or west coast, as the two areas of the Costa del Sol, separated by the capital, display a very different socio-demographic dispersal in terms of the distribution and composition of the native population, as well as the communities of foreign and Spanish residents and tourists, which will be explained below.

The second methodological block includes the last two phases.

Phase 4: Determination of the minimum number of respondents required for each language and the creation and distribution of the questionnaire for collecting data on the media diet, the level of integration, the individual personal situation and the particular opinion of each of the respondents on the process of European construction.

The number of potential residents per nationality on the Costa del Sol is established from the official information provided by the INE regarding the European foreign population residing in Málaga. The figure given by this institution (for all the selected foreign nationalities) of 89917⁵ foreign residents in 2016 is considerably lower than the generally estimated number, but it is the only official data available.

The characteristics to be met by the sample of foreign residents are determined by a simple sampling design with proportional quotas by sex and age, adjusted to the profile of the European foreigner on the Costa del Sol, as well as the population universe on which the results of the survey should be inferred. The sampling error applied was +3.45% and the confidence level was 95.5%, and hence the sample required 800 surveys. The number of surveys required per nationality was then calculated proportionally from this data. The results of this calculation showed that 84 respondents were required for the survey on the community of German residents. The proportional distribution of all the surveys is shown in the following table:

5 Data obtained from the INE continuous register:
https://www.ine.es/dyns/INEbase/es/operacion.htm?c=Estadistica_C&cid=1254736177012&menu=resultados&idp=1254734710990

Image 3: Proportional distribution of the surveys required by nationalities

Nationality	No. Foreign Residents	Percentages	No. Surveys
Germany	9456	10.5	84
Denmark	3732	4.2	33
Finland	5413	6.0	48
France	5852	6.5	52
Holland	6075	6.8	54
United Kingdom	46451	51.7	413
Sweden	4606	5.1	41
Norway	2156	2.4	19
Russia	6176	6.9	55
Total	89917	100.0	800

Source: compiled by the authors based on INE data

Since respondents had to meet a number of requirements regarding the duration of their residence on the Costa del Sol and there are always surveys that have to be discarded because they do not meet the requirements or are incomplete, a significantly higher number of questionnaires were distributed and collected. It was thus possible to maintain a good balance between the different complementary variables such as male-female, age, or duration and place of residence.

The questionnaire initially drafted in Spanish and agreed upon for the general project was translated by professional translators into the corresponding language of the other nationalities under study. The translators were briefed beforehand on the meaning and purpose of each question to ensure that their translations were as accurate as possible. Before starting to distribute the questionnaires, a pretest was carried out with the online versions in English and German, from 30 November 2017 to 25 December 2017, to allow any possible errors to be corrected.

The questionnaire in German therefore contained, as in the other languages, the same 41 questions of three types, namely, closed, semi-open and open, grouped into five thematic blocks: moving to Spain (6 questions); social relations (5 questions); integration (11 questions); media from their home country (3 questions) and media produced on the Costa del Sol (16). The questionnaires were distributed both in print form and online between November 2017 and March 2018.

Lastly, Phase 5 consists of a focus group that made it possible to go deeper into those issues that the individual surveys were not able to explain, as well as to obtain new information or nuances in the discussion. The focus group was held on 9 November 2018 on the premises of the Faculty of Communication Sciences in Málaga with 7 participants (4 men and 3 women), a moderator, an observer and an interpreter. The official part of the session, which was video recorded, lasted an hour and a half. At the beginning of each thematic block, the moderator invited the participants to intervene successively and then they were allowed to engage in a free discussion, which was only interrupted to allow the interpreter time to

translate the comments of all the participants. The information was then transcribed and translated into Spanish, as was done with the results from all the written surveys and from the discussion groups of the other seven nationalities in the general project.

4. Results

4.1. *Characteristics of the socio-demographic structure of the German audience on the Costa del Sol*

The foreign populations living on the Costa del Sol have traditionally been spread over certain geographical areas, and the case of the Germans is no exception. The data obtained from the surveys reveal that they are settled mainly in Vélez Málaga (20%), Torrox⁶ (12%) and Marbella (9.5%). However, in order to interpret these data, it is important to note that when we refer to Vélez Málaga we must include its neighbouring districts, such as Torre del Mar or Benajafé, and when we refer to Torrox, we must include its dependent village of Torrox Costa.

These residents are mainly located here, probably because in Algarrobo Costa and Torre del Mar, at the end of the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s, blocks of apartments started to be built in order to attract the German working and middle classes. The builders were German, like the Bauhoffman company, or Spaniards who were in personal relationships with German women, such as the development company Toto, whose owner was married to a German woman. And it is also noteworthy that in many other cases, Germans and Scandinavians put up the money and let local Spanish people (first on commission and then with shares in the business) carry out the construction, promotion and sale of apartments, plots and houses.

Thus, the area of La Axarquía was where the localities with high percentages of Germans such as Algarrobo Costa, Torrox Costa and Torre del Mar emerged (although here, as it is also one of the favourite places chosen by people from Madrid for their summer holidays in apartments, the situation was more diluted). Similarly, in terms of villas and a wealthy public, the urbanisations of Caleta del Sol, Rivera de Trayamar or La Sirena were created where up until not long ago a high percentage of the owners were of German, Scandinavian and, albeit somewhat less, British origin, as the latter were based in Nerja or the western part of the Costa del Sol.

There are three main reasons that have brought the German population to the Costa del Sol: the climate (24%), the quality of life (20%) and the warm welcoming attitude of the Spaniards (12%). The climate and the quality of life are the chief reasons why these populations settle on the Costa del Sol. This is especially so because they are a mostly retired people seeking a better climate that plays a decisive role in their emotional and physical well-being, in addition to the possible leisure activities allowed by a better climate.

6 The German colony in this municipality is a great attraction for the rest of the population and is also a sign that is visible on the town's signage (Pozo 2015).

For many years we came to Spain on holiday and always had the desire to come and live here. We chose Málaga because we needed to be close to a big city, for the culture. (...) first we also thought: "let's try one year" and we had to extend it because one year was not enough to value it, and now we have a home that we like so we are still here. (Participant no.2, woman, 57 years old).

One of our neighbours told us that we should go to Andalusia, that Andalusia was very beautiful, and that we should visit it, and so we ended up talking about whether we should buy (a house) there or not. And in the end we decided to come to Málaga, to Benajárfes, and we saw this little house, we bought it and we come here to Andalusia, on holiday, every year for two or three months. (Participant no.4, man, 75 years old).

Such decisions also end up with the purchase of homes in the area. The data revealed in the surveys indicate that 39% live in owned homes, 42% in rented homes and 18% own a second home. These data must be interpreted bearing in mind that rental is quite firmly established in the German culture, and the price of housing in Germany is very similar to that of Spain – in some cases even lower. This explains why Germans still prefer to rent and not to be tied down when it comes to moving around for professional or family reasons and also when it comes to going on holiday. The fact that 42% of people live in rented homes is also, or essentially, related to the fact that German citizens in their own country prefer to use this type of housing to maintain their freedom. The data from our surveys show that 57% of Germans live in owned property – for 18%, it is a second home – and 42% live in rented homes. We might think that these percentages are very different from the situation in Spain (where 84%⁷ have at least one home of their own) or the European average of 70%, if we compare them with the situation in Germany, where rental is traditionally preferred and only 45%⁸ of Germans have their own home, although in recent years the tendency to buy more than rent has increased. We could therefore understand this to mean that they are adapting to local customs and showing their commitment to the place where they live.

The percentage of the German population that is active is relatively low, 21% are workers with a paid job and 16% are self-employed, the rest are retired (59%). This low percentage of self-employed workers is largely due, as already mentioned, to the fact that opportunities for Germans to work in Spain are quite limited, and hence they tend to have companies related either to the property market and construction or to translation, or in some cases to both of them combined.

The long-term future plans of this population on the Costa del Sol are clear: 91% say they intend to stay here for now. This can therefore be interpreted as indicating that the German population is already part of the cultural, media and economic ecosystem of the Costa del Sol.

4.2 The media diet of German residents on the Costa del Sol

The Germans living on the Costa del Sol, according to the results, are characterised by their consuming the media of their home country (87%) and the media produced for this group of European residents on the Costa del Sol (87%). Respond-

7 For further information, see: <https://www.elmundo.es/economia/vivienda/2017/05/22/5922af1b468aeb744e8b45a0.html>

8 For further information, see: <https://www.faz.net/aktuell/finanzen/meine-finanzen/mieten-und-wohnen/nachrichten/warum-die-deutschen-ehrerzur-miete-wohnen-14743908.html>

ents argue that they consume media from both sources because those from Germany provide them with general information and inform them about events worldwide (38%) and about their country of origin (31%), while those edited on the Costa del Sol offer them information that is useful in their daily life (23%) in our country, help them get to know the Costa del Sol (18%) and are in their language (17%).

This high rate of consumption of each media ecosystem may be due to the fact that they complement each other and only together can they satisfy the main interests and information needs of the German residents. According to 65% of the respondents, the media from their home country do not provide them with any information about the Costa del Sol. And the media from the Costa del Sol say very little about what is happening in their home country or on an international level. They add that they consume the media edited on the Costa del Sol because they provide them with information that can be useful for their daily life and about what is going on in the territory where they live, including different activities taking place in the region that can cover their leisure and cultural needs.

The specific contents of most interest to them are, in decreasing order, news about Spain (12%), local events (11%), local politics (9%), culture and leisure (10%). Thus, the results of this section indicate how a large majority of German residents show an interest in becoming integrated in life on the Costa del Sol and keeping up with what's going on in the community to which they have decided to belong.

It is also noteworthy that although 76% of the respondents consider that the information obtained is useful for them to know more about the place where they live, 55% say that the information provided does not help them to solve their day-to-day problems as foreign residents on the Costa del Sol. Significantly, the majority of respondents said that they consume the media produced for the population under study on the Costa del Sol because it is in their language, and 59% stated that these media do not help them to learn Spanish. This data is relevant because in the surveys and discussion groups the participants stressed that not having a reasonable command of Spanish is one of the main barriers to their integration.

The results of the surveys show that the media most consumed by German residents are those published on paper. At present, four magazines and three newspapers are published entirely in German on the Costa del Sol, along with six other multilingual media. Among these print media the most consumed by the respondents are the *Sur Deutsche Ausgabe* and the *Costa del Sol Nachrichten*. This traditional press is perhaps the most read because it is regularly available in most press outlets that offer foreign publications, but we understand that the results may also be influenced by the fact that among those surveyed there is a high rate of retired people (59%), who are likely to be more inclined to read print material than online media⁹.

It should also be borne in mind that even though these two media must be paid for – unlike the general trend in the press for foreigners, which is free – they are still the only means of obtaining “full” information, where for the reader the

9 *SAZ-aktuell* is an exclusively digital newspaper. *Spanien aktuell* and *Das aktuelle Spanienmagazin* are more like magazines with cultural and leisure information and advertising, the latter only available online. *Economía Hispano alemana / Deutsch-Spanische Wirtschaft* is also an online-only magazine that deals specifically with economic topics.

advertising purposes play at least a secondary role “[...] everything is there, events, announcements, what’s going on, contacts...” (Participant no.5, woman, 73 years old). Additionally, they also offer commercial advertising that is carefully selected to cater for the needs that Germans living in the region usually have, both in terms of its offer and its attention to potential clients in German or English. The local media in Spanish, whether audiovisual or printed, do not generally represent a feasible alternative due to the language barrier, although a considerable number of Germans do make an effort to consume them:

Because the presenter speaks so fast we can hardly understand him, at least that’s what happens to me. But you can read the text at the bottom of the screen and thus get an idea and have more information than just from what you hear. (Participant no.7, man, 75 years old).

The *Sur* newspaper opts for a somewhat “bilingual” information format by including in its German edition a special edition of the *Sur* in Spanish every Thursday, although it is not really a translation of the German version. The following is a conversation from the focus group that goes into this aspect in greater depth:

They are very important for us, in the evenings, or at the doctor’s... we leaf through them from the first to the last pages: when there is a storm, where something has happened... these publications are very important for us. Especially when things happen, for contacts and also for events, and letters from readers, or lawyers, answers... sometimes, even following a recipe, if it’s all right. For us they are indeed interesting from start to finish. (Participant no.5, woman, 75 years old).

They are very important to know what is going on here in the country. (Participant no.4, man, 75 years old).

I see it that way too, especially for someone who doesn’t speak Spanish, they are very good for getting to know a little about politics, what you were saying, what’s going on... (Participant no.1, man, 48 years old).

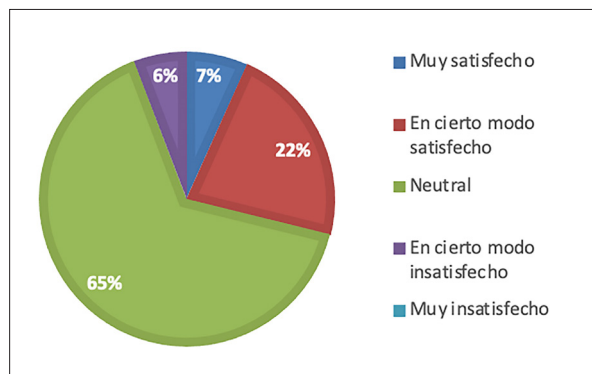
Also travel articles. (Participant no.5, woman, 75 years old).

Ah yes, the travel articles, for example “Los Pueblos Andaluces”, I think this (section) is great, for discovering these small villages that hardly anybody knows, not even the Spaniards. They appear in a series, each week a different Spanish village, or the Axarquía thing, that is very good (information), simply for knowing where you can travel. (Participant no.1, man, 48 years old).

Otherwise, we don’t know what’s going on. (Participant no.5, woman, 75 years old).

Not surprisingly, the focus group’s level of satisfaction with these media is not as high as that reported in the surveys:

Image 4. Level of satisfaction with the German-language press produced on the Costa del Sol



Source: own elaboration

The large percentage of “neutrals” (65%) is interpreted in part as being due to the large amount of advertising these media have to include in order to survive. In the German SUR (*Sur Deutsche Ausgabe*), half of the content is informative and the other half is cultural, leisure and commercial advertising. It is understandable that no matter how interesting a newspaper is, German readers are not going to rate it very positively when half of its content is advertising, but neither do they rate it negatively, since some of the advertising is of particular interest to this group, as pointed out earlier. In fact, they are also asked about this specific aspect in the surveys and 70% say that the advertising in these media provides them with useful information.

The comments made by the focus group confirm this neutral assessment of the most widely read press, but also a more critical stance towards the other German-language media: “50% are translated, do not have much content and are not specifically addressed to Germans either” (Participant no.1, man, 48 years old). The local press for Germans therefore meets the definitions of service journalism in the sense indicated by Diezhandino (1993), which is essentially intended to provide practical information, but in no way promotes the integration of these people into Spanish society or, in a broader interpretation, European cohesion.

The personal comments in the surveys confirm that to inform themselves about Europe and the process of European construction, or about highly topical phenomena such as Brexit, German residents do not resort to the media published on the Costa del Sol in their own language, but continue to use the media from their country or the Spanish media, in the case of those who are fluent in Spanish:

As far as information is concerned, I get it from the Spanish press, also the German press, but more the Spanish, and the German press more on the Internet. Various media. (Participant no.2, woman, 57 years old).

I get my information from both the Spanish and the German press, and it's really interesting, because they offer very different points of view and perspectives. (Participant no.1, man, 48 years old).

We do it exactly the same way even though our Spanish is not very good, but we watch the news directly on TV. And we understand around half of it. And the perspective or opinion is not only formed from the news: first of all, we have a very different view, as we have already mentioned, and it also has to do with our circle of friends – we often see them, we talk, we discuss things, politics is a recurring topic. (Participant no.6, woman, 60 years old).

This primary function of the foreign media on the Costa del Sol as service journalism coincides with that of the study on foreign media for Germans in the Canary Islands conducted by Dorn Padilla (2012).

The focus group also highlighted how these populations are affected by the shortcomings of the information on the European Union published in the media in their countries of origin and in Spain. They point out that it is not geared to the more practical problems of European citizens, emphasising the fact that in the contents they do not find solutions to their everyday problems. This is a deficit that they remark on in an area that is fundamental in the feeling of integration, such as municipal elections, in which every German citizen can participate. Perhaps for this reason, in the data obtained in the survey, of the 85% of Germans registered in their municipality, only 34% have ever voted in the Spanish local elections.

Another of the shortcomings or criticisms they make of the way information about Europe is dealt with in the press in general is that the topics or the media agenda are too focused on certain current affairs, such as Brexit or immigration.

Look at what is happening in Germany, they keep talking about immigrants, and the idiots are not capable of talking about the real problems, like for example, the shortage of flats, there is not enough housing in Germany, it's crazy. People can't drive their cars because of the corrupt politics, the automotive industry, nobody talks about that; when there are problems they talk about emigrants and not about the real issues. That services are being neglected... we have real problems in society and they are talking about things that are not problems. (Participant no.3, man, 57 years old).

Right, the (crisis) in nurseries, schools. (Participant no.7, woman, 75 years old).

4.3. The process of integration of German migrants in the current European context

From the outset, both the group of retired German residents and the professionally active have had a clear pro-European and Community stance and have been faithfully committed to the European project. For 90% of the respondents it is very important to be a citizen of the European Union. This is confirmed even more strongly by the focus group. The force in their comments leaves no doubt about the paramount importance of belonging to the European Union for this population. The European project makes it decidedly easier for them to settle on the Costa del Sol, from both a bureaucratic and a day-to-day point of view, it motivates them to integrate and favours cohesion:

I think we have had a very positive experience within the European Union. We used to live in a border town, in Aachen, and it is right on the border, with Belgium and the Netherlands as our neighbours. And we remember the times when there were still borders and, compared with what it's like now, for us it is a very positive thing. For me at least, the fact that we now live in Spain, we wouldn't have been able to sort that out if the EU didn't exist, in the way it is structured. (Participant no.2, woman, 57 years old).

We feel so intensely European, that I speak for us at least when I say that we cannot understand why Catalonia wants to become separate, or the English, I cannot understand it because it offers so many advantages... (Participant no.6, German woman, 60 years old).

Or the English. (Participant no.1, German man, 48 years old).

Yes, or the English. I totally agree... if you just compare it with before... now you can go anywhere, the currency is the same, you can easily compare, the prices, the services... (Participant no.2, German woman, 57 years old).

I believe that anyone who has not understood this is trying to go back 50 years. Everything is already so intertwined, everything, you can see for example in the official pages of the British: they report that there are now 30,000 laws that need to be rewritten or voted on again. That is not possible, it is not something that can happen. And besides, it is not just a practical issue, life on a day-to-day basis also has to do with politics at a higher level. As far as we are concerned, at our age, we could no longer comprehend a life without it. (Participant no.3, man, 57 years old).

I'm not that sure either that I would be living here now without the EU. I arrived in Spain with 100 (German) marks in my pocket, at that time we still used marks, I was stressed out for two weeks with the authorities, and I became self-employed. In Spain. And I could start working. (Participant no.1, German man, 48 years old).

That would not have been possible otherwise. (Participant no.5, woman, 73 years old).

It probably would have been possible, but I don't know, I don't think I would have accepted that challenge, given the circumstances, because that way they hand it to you on a platter [sic]. And when I retire, all I have to do is go to Germany, submit the documents from here that prove that I have worked, and they themselves calculate and supplement what I have worked and I will receive a European pension. Is there anything better than that? I don't think so. I get my information from both the Spanish and the German press, and it's really interesting, because they offer very different points of view and perspectives. (Participant no.1, German man, 48 years old).

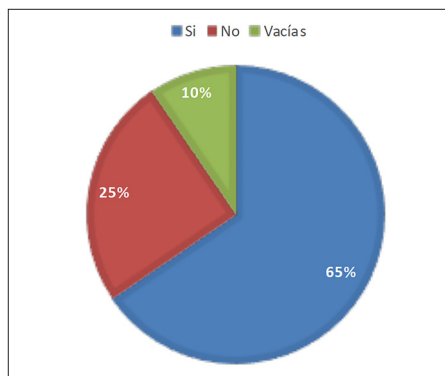
The data obtained reveal how personal historical background together with a very positive view of Europe is and has been a key factor in establishing residence in Spain, but at the same time that it will be difficult to fully accomplish the process of integration. The results show that 59% of those surveyed always feel "at home" on the Costa del Sol, 35%, "most of the time", only 5%, "sometimes" and "never", 1%. The perception that Germans have of the integration of other European residents is quite different: 60% feel "somewhat integrated" and 35% "not integrated at all".

When analysing the attitude of Germans towards integration and the factors that increase or slow down their process of integration on the Costa del Sol, the surveys indicate that 62% have taken Spanish classes at some time, 90% have Spanish friends or acquaintances and 59% belong to a sports, cultural or social club. These associations tend to play an important role in the process of integration of their fellow citizens. In the case of our German respondents, however, these results must be put into perspective because if we check the situation behind the survey data, we will see that the associations to which they belong are essentially made up of compatriots and a few other Europeans. Something similar happens when we take a more careful look at the fact that 90% have Spanish friends or acquaintances, as most of them complain about the difficulty of maintaining a closer or continuous relationship with them. Hence, 51% maintain their daily social rela-

tions with a mixture of people from their country of origin, Spaniards and citizens from other countries; 25% only keep relationships with their compatriots and 4% exclusively with residents from other countries.

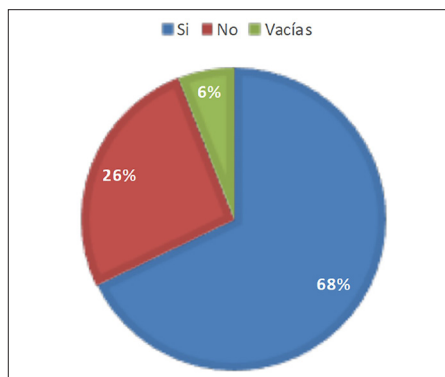
One element that favours integration into Spanish society and relations with other nationalities is the foreign media produced on the Costa del Sol. Results show that 65% of the German respondents believe these media help them in their process of integration into Spanish society, and 68% think they also foster unity between the members of the different foreign communities residing in the region.

Image 5. Opinion of those surveyed on whether they believe that the media for foreigners promotes integration between the foreign community and Spanish society



Source: own elaboration

Image 6. Opinion of respondents on whether they believe that the media for foreigners promotes integration among members of foreign communities living on the Costa del Sol



Source: own elaboration

The focus group offers some clues that explain what factors increase or make their relationship with Spaniards more difficult. Positive factors include, for example, living in residential areas with a majority of Spaniards or having a romantic relationship with a Spanish partner (which makes contact with the family possible and extends the network of contacts). Thus, participants who are married to Spanish partners note that their social circle "is 99% Spanish" (participant, no.1, man, 48 years old), but for those whose partner is German it is the opposite. "It's very difficult, I also work from home and it is very difficult to come into contact with Spaniards. There are some Spaniards with whom I have contact, but the others are German or English". (Participant no.2, woman, 57 years old).

Another aspect of the poor integration is due to certain cultural aspects or customs of the Spanish, for example, the family ties that make it difficult for them to spend time with others outside their family.

I think that life with the family is a priority here, very important for Andalusians. This is not a Spanish thing, I think it's an Andalusian thing, and it is very difficult because people do not have time to be with us. Andalusians spend all their free time with their family and so they have practically no spare time to spend with friends or other people – not only foreigners, but other Spaniards as well. There's no room for new contacts. (Participant no.1, man, 57 years old).

Another factor hampering relations that the focus group commented on is the fact that Spaniards do not usually invite friends to their homes, not even those who they have previously invited to theirs. The participants stressed that Spanish culture, unlike that of Germany, is more inclined to arrange meetings and celebrations outside the family home:

But it's quite odd with the Spanish, we like to invite friends over and have a barbecue in the garden or something like that. We have contact with Spaniards, as you just said, they are our closest neighbours, but they would never invite us beyond their terrace. (Participant no.7, man, 75 years old).

That is the difference, it's decisive. (Participant no.2, woman, 57 years old).

It probably has to do with the fact that the buildings are very small, and it is difficult to have guests, the Spaniards. (Participant no.7, man, 75 years old).

But that is ingrained in their culture. (Participant no.2, woman, 57 years old).

The family comes first, and they go out with their family at the weekend and there is no time left to establish other contacts. The only person who speaks Spanish with us is the (neighbours' association) administrator. (Participant no.7, man, 75 years old).

The settlement of the German population on the Costa del Sol, due to or in spite of all this, is not always successful and quite a few Germans return to their country after living or trying to survive here. The emotionally involuntary returns are not usually caused by social issues but by work or age. Germans who try to settle down working in Spain soon find that labour conditions and pay are a quite a lot worse than in Germany:

The salaries are not balanced, and the conditions are not fantastic, you don't have the same security as in Germany. Here, in comparison with Germany, there are few labour rights, and the younger you are, or if you are very young, it's okay, you can stay a few years, but from twenty-something or twenty-many, even, when you think about the future, it is no longer possible. (Participant no.3, man, 57 years old).

The long-term plans of German residents on the Costa del Sol are clear: 91% say that they intend to stay here for the time being, so the directors of the media and the European institutions should continue to consider them as part of the cultural, media and economic ecosystem of the Costa del Sol and pay more attention to them in the future.

5. Conclusions

The aims of this research have focused on the role played by foreign media for the German population on the Costa del Sol, on their process of European integration in this geographical area, and on identifying the profile of the socio-demographic characteristics of these audiences. This research is part of the R&D&I project *Medios de comunicación y construcción europea: estudio sociocomunicativo de los residentes comunitarios en el sur de España y de Portugal (CSO2015-65837-R)* (Mass media and the construction of Europe: a socio-communicative study of the EU residents in the south of Spain and Portugal).

The main conclusion drawn from the data collected through surveys and a focus group applied to the German population residing on the Costa del Sol is that these media are helpful and necessary in their process of integration in this geographical area. However, they could be more effective in this function if they met these audiences' demands for information and helped address the main problems that hinder their integration.

They partly fulfil the integrating role because they carry out service journalism. They provide practical information about cultural, tourist and festive events in the region, targeted at the local population but which is also of great interest to tourists and foreign residents looking for entertainment, how to contact local residents or their compatriots according to their interests or how to locate specific services for foreign residents. They consider this information useful and very necessary because it is the only thing they have in their language to keep up with what is happening on the Costa del Sol and because it helps them to integrate into Spanish and foreign society. However, they demand information on matters that will help them to solve their daily problems as EU residents on the Costa del Sol, as this is identified as one of the main deficiencies of the foreign media. This deficiency could be made up for by giving more coverage to events in which this audience can participate as residents (for example, in municipal elections) or by placing even more emphasis on information that has to do with guidelines and procedures for their status as European residents.

Both the retired and the professionally active German audience, from both areas of the Costa del Sol, display a great pro-European spirit and value the advantages of the European project in order to become integrated into other communities, because they are experiencing them on a day-by-day basis. This is why they are highly interested in European and world issues or events. However, the foreign media do not cover this demand, which is why they resort to two other media ecosystems: the press in their country of origin and the Spanish media. However, they also highlight the fact that these two

ecosystems each have their shortcomings. The main one is that they address general topics and do not focus on issues of interest to European residents.

The Spanish media are only consumed by those who have learned Spanish, and not knowing this language is their main barrier to integration. However, other factors that affect integration are living in communities made up mostly of Germans, having a partner of the same nationality, having a job that only allows them to establish relationships with Germans or other foreign nationalities, or certain customs of the Spanish population. The media can only help overcome these problems to a limited extent, but efforts should be made to put forward proposals that help improve integration or contact with Spanish society. Thus, the initial hypothesis has been fulfilled.

In this context, it is considered that perhaps these media should be configured as the spearhead of these groups in their integration, now that they have access to data that help this, while at the same time they can improve their business. The current configuration of these media, as indicated by Rosell (2008), is that the managers of these companies work with the idea that the future of the “ethnic media” is conditioned by the group itself and, consequently, limited to the time that their integration process lasts until there are no differences with the rest of the Spaniards. That is to say, rather than responding to the needs and requirements of their audience, these media seem to follow in the wake of these citizens. However, perhaps it is only a matter of time before foreign media, once they become aware of the important role they play as a thread guiding the integration of the German population on the Costa del Sol, actually help to increase that integration.

In this study we have seen the importance of listening to the audience and, in the case of the Germans who live on the Costa del Sol, they show that they are a population that is firmly convinced about continuing to live in this area. This reinforces our proposal that the media for foreigners should introduce important changes to meet the needs of these populations and improve their integration process, since, after all, the Costa del Sol has become their home.

Finally, we would like to note some future research arising from this work. These lines will analyse the process of construction of the journalistic message and the themes offered in the foreign press considered in this study. To do so, they will make use of interviews with the editors-in-chief of the media analysed in order to alleviate the deficiencies and optimise the demands for European integration of the German resident population on the Costa del Sol.

6. Funding

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