

The World & The US:

The Rise of International OTT Platforms is Changing the Balance of Programming in Europe



Key Highlights

- Though still the dominant provider of programming to Europe, over the last three years US content has declined an average of 10 percentage points as a share of overall viewership in key European territories.
- The viewing that had been going to US content has moved to programming from the local country, Asia and other territories.
- The shift away from US content is a result of the migration of viewing toward OTT services, which has led platforms to look beyond the US for programming to differentiate themselves and satisfy demand.
- Netflix and Amazon have pursued very different original content strategies in Spain, a highly competitive market for local content. Amazon has a higher proportion of viewing to Spanish content, while Netflix has more viewing to content from a diverse set of countries.

Introduction

Much has been written about how streaming video, particularly the paid variety, has transformed the television industry. The discussion is usually about how viewers are throwing off the shackles of linear scheduling or shunning the interruptions of advertising. The explosion in the amount of content needed to feed the pipes of the platforms that provide these services has also received a lot of attention. But it's not just the expansion of the programming pie that should draw our focus, it is how the slices of that pie are changing with consideration to the countries that are supplying content.

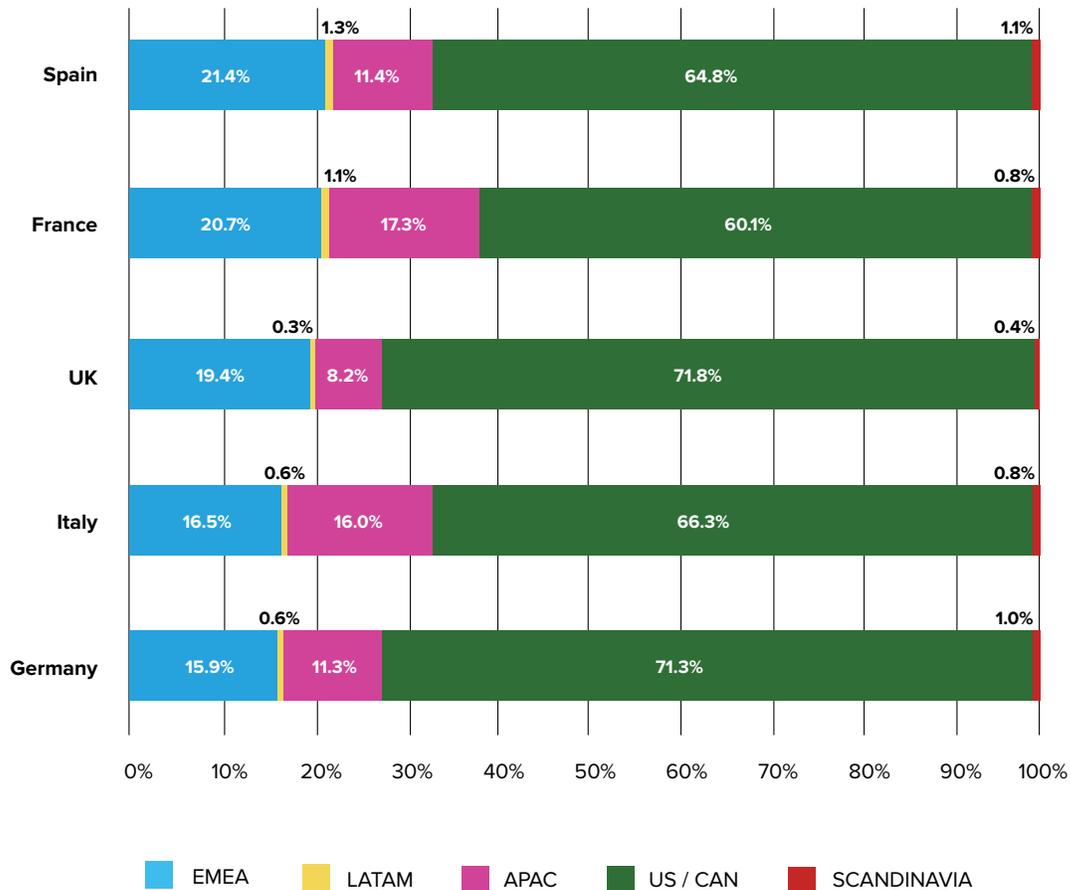
The US has been, and still is, the dominant supplier of television content to Europe. But as streaming platforms proliferate, and demand for programming increases, US share is declining. Moreover, the international platforms are competing against each other, as well as the local players, which is igniting demand for more local product. This paper will illustrate that dynamic and reveal what content from which countries are attracting viewers' attention. We focused on key countries in Europe, one of the hotbeds of local content production. Although some trends prove to be similar between the key European territories, there are significant differences too – between territories and platforms.



Current Landscape by Country

All the large EU territories still heavily view content from the US, but there are differences regarding the balance of content originating in other countries. Italy and Germany proportionately view EMEA produced content less than other EU countries. France watches more from APAC, mostly in the form of Japanese anime, while the UK watches less of it than the other countries.

View Share By Originating Country



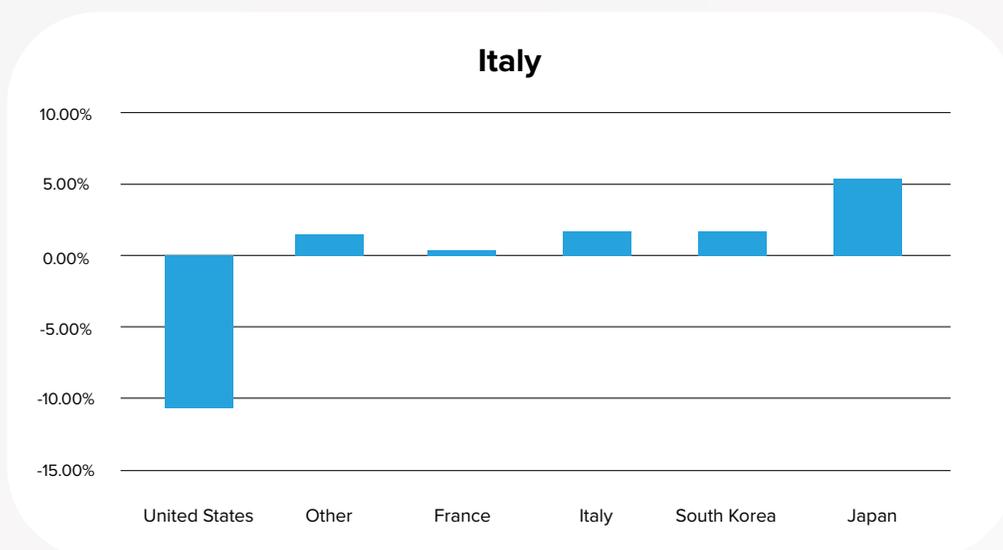
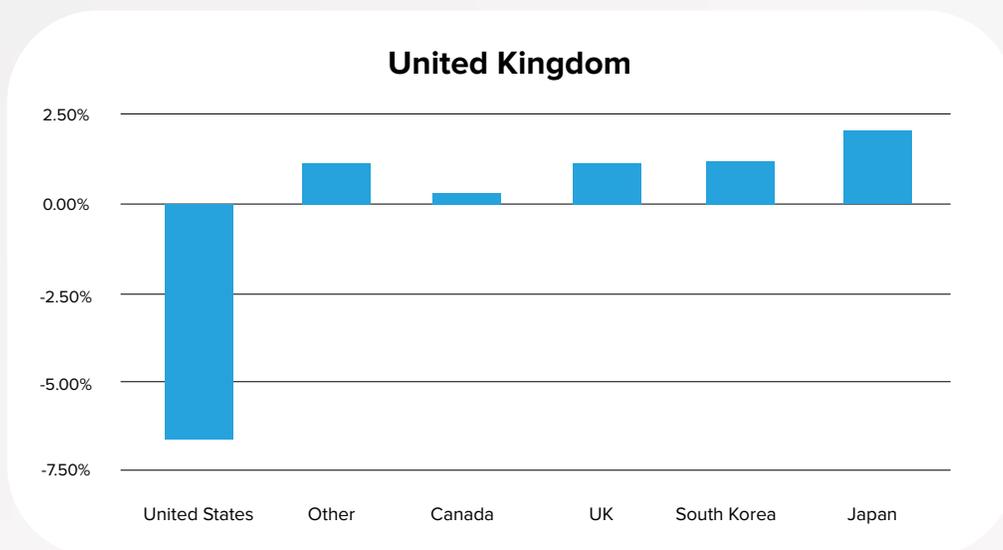
Source: Whip Media, CVMi. 2021. Balanced Sample.

The Big Change

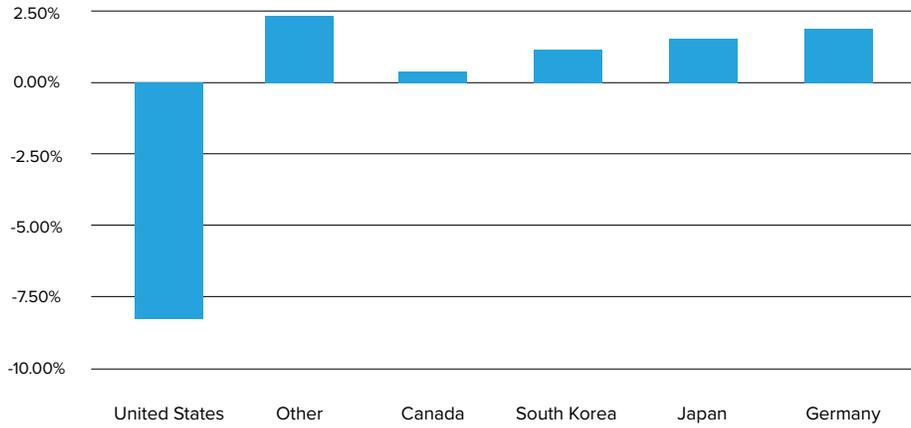
While US series continue to dominate in view share, it is down about 10% across France, Italy, Germany, Spain and the UK (FIGSUK) since 2019. Programming from Japan and South Korea has taken much of that share, as well as the programming local to that country. Of course *Squid Game* is mostly responsible for South Korea's increase, but there are titles like *Hellbound*, *My Name* and dozens of others that also have traction. Spain and France have also made in-roads across all of the FIGSUK.

Change in View Share (2021 vs. 2019)

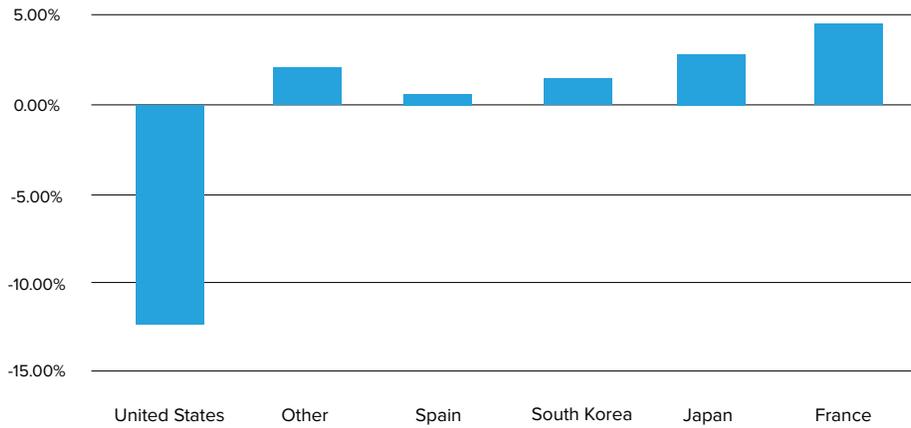
Source: Whip Media, CVMi. 2021 vs. 2019. Balanced Sample.



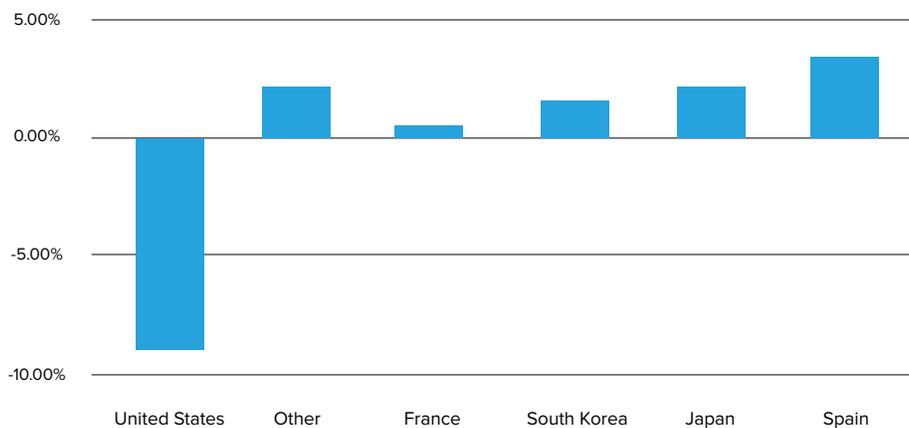
Germany



France



Spain

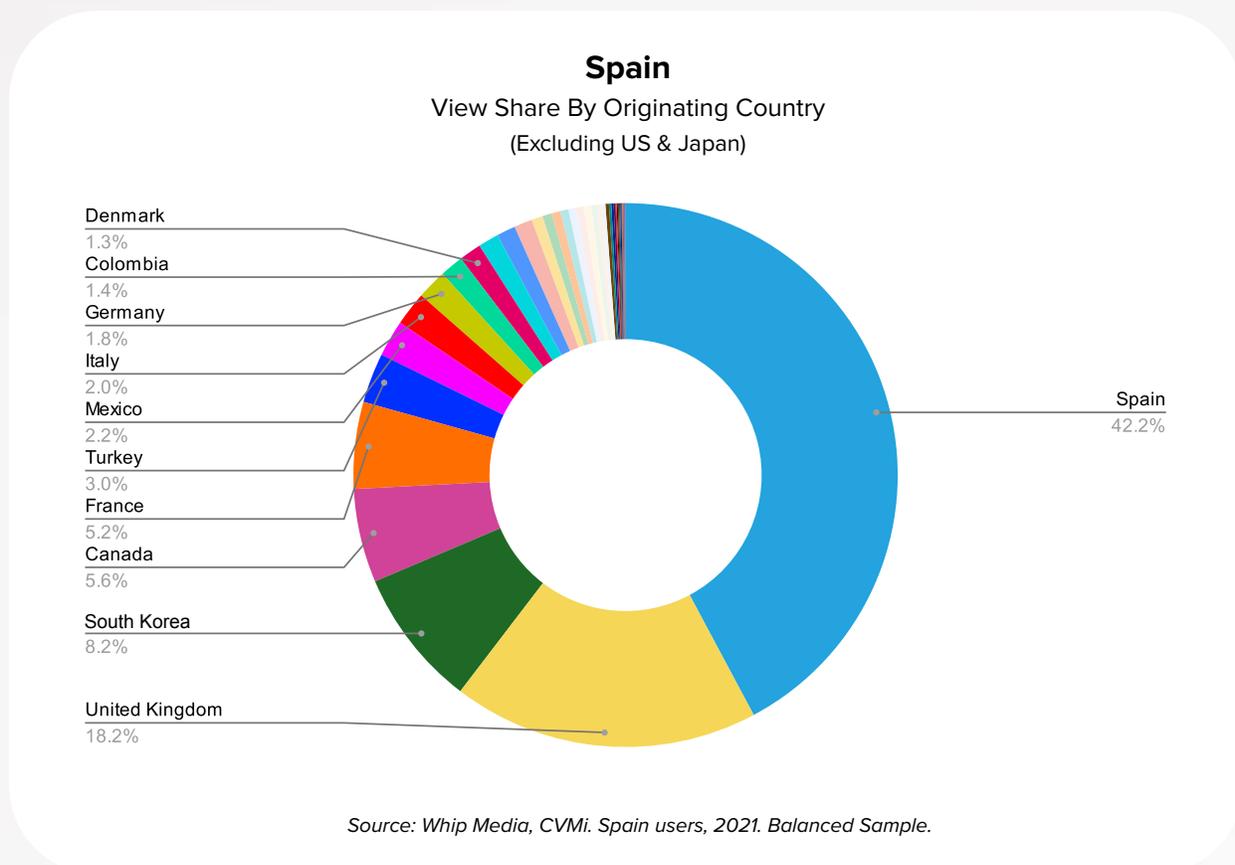


Spotlight on Spain

Spain has an interesting mix of interest in both local content as well as foreign. In a 2021 [Whip Media paper](#), Spain had the highest proportion of viewing to EU content in the FIGSUK. Furthermore, a survey of Spanish viewers in summer 2021 revealed they are the most favorable toward the new EU policy requiring a 30% quota for EU content on SVODs in the EU. Yet, Spain also has a particularly diverse pattern of consumption, including content not just from the familiar countries, but also some strength from LATAM players.

Spain had one of the stronger increases in view share in the region from its local programming, as well as one of the steepest declines for US programming, behind only France. When focusing solely on non-US content (and excluding Japanese titles, which in this case are primarily anime), Spanish content holds a 42% share of views in Spain. Following that are typical suppliers like the UK, Canada and France. Relative newcomer South Korea holds a significant share too.

Right behind France is Turkey; a non-Spanish speaking, non-English speaking and non-EU country. It also made modest gains in view share versus 2019 in Spain.



What are the Spaniards watching from Turkey?

Turkish dramas, particularly with romantic themes, have gained traction in Spain. Understanding what genres are trending can inform development and acquisition strategies. The success of the Turkish dramas begs the question: Where else can one source romantic dramas that are new to my audience?

Top Ten Turkish Programs in Spain (2021)

GENRES	TITLE
■ Comedy Drama Romance	Love Is In The Air (2020)
Drama Family	Kadin
■ Comedy Drama Romance	My Little Girl
■ Drama Romance	Hercai
Drama Family	The Innocents (2020)
Drama Fantasy Mystery	The Gift (2019)
■ Action Drama Family Romance	Legacy (2020)
■ Drama Romance Thriller	A Woman Scorned
■ Drama Romance	My Home My Destiny
■ Drama Romance	Bitter Lands

■ Indicates Romantic Drama

Source: Whip Media, CVMi. Spain users, 2021. Balanced Sample.

Netflix & Amazon in Spain: A Tale of Two Strategies

According to a Whip Media Survey from August of 2021, Netflix and Amazon were the two most subscribed SVODs in Spain. Examining each service's distribution of view share by their programming's country of origin reveals some significant differences.

Among Amazon's original programming in Spain, Spanish titles comprise over a third of its viewing there. Add in the portion of viewing going to US originated programming, and only about 5% of Amazon's viewing goes to shows from other countries.

In contrast, Netflix has only 17% of its view share in Spain going to local original programming – about half of Amazon's share. After we account for their US view share, 27% of Netflix's viewing, or about 5 times that of Amazon, goes to content from other countries.

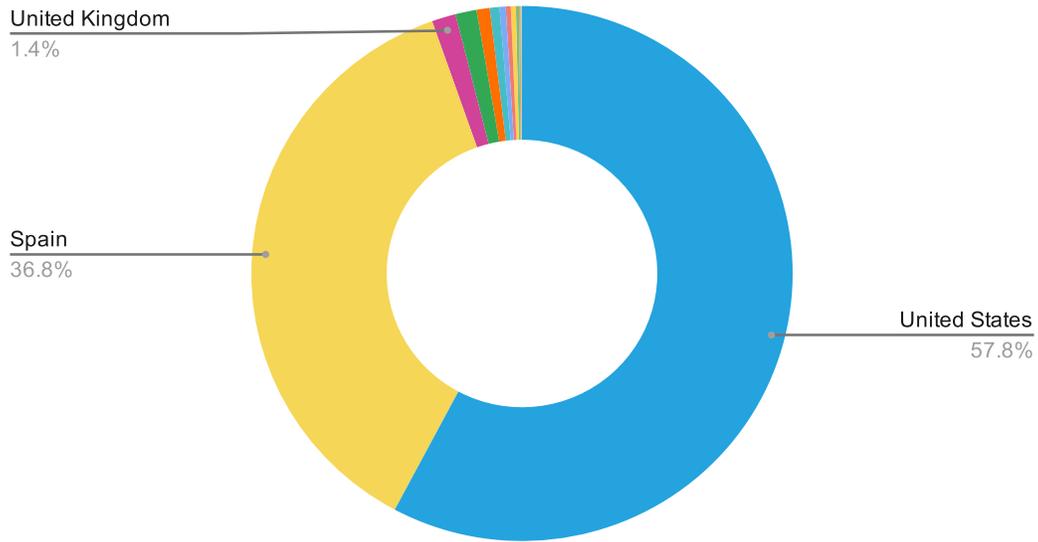
Interestingly, both of these platforms showed marked decreases from 2019 for their US view share (-23.7 percentage points for Amazon, -19.7 for Netflix) and increases for Spanish view share (+23.6 for Amazon, +6.2 for Netflix).

Both approaches are clearly working for these platforms, but for the ones that are competing with them, this data can inform their own programming choices. Maybe a "thread the needle" strategy, like finding content from other countries that matches locally popular genres (i.e. Turkish romantic dramas!), is a good place to start.



Amazon / Spain

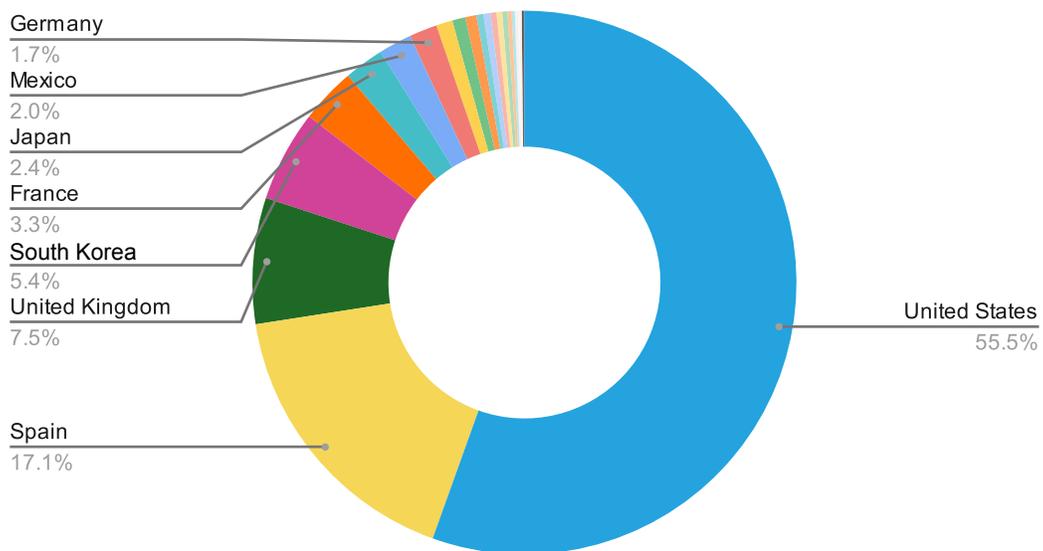
View Share By Originating Country



Source: Whip Media, CVMi. Spain users, 2021. Balanced Sample.

Netflix / Spain

View Share By Originating Country



Source: Whip Media, CVMi. Spain users, 2021. Balanced Sample.

Conclusion

As streaming has exploded in recent years, so has demand for content. It seems inevitable that with more content, a greater diversity of sources producing it would be required. Competition for audiences is encouraging platforms to seek out compelling content, wherever it is produced. International services like Netflix and Amazon are surfacing that content in very efficient ways, with the allure for creators of having a worldwide hit in an accelerated time frame. In addition to finding programming from diverse, previously under-represented markets, the OTT services are teaming with local production companies and rediscovering homegrown talent in the countries they serve, spurred on in Europe by the relatively new EU policy requiring 30% of content be “European work.” All of this means a smaller slice of the pie is likely for US content going forward.

Regardless of whether one is a buyer or seller of content, it is important to understand the audience that content will serve, and understand it in a variety of dimensions. One of those dimensions can be country of origin as culture inevitably informs art. If a platform’s audience is responding to a country’s programs, that is a trend that can be exploited. Conversely, one might see a lack of content from a country and that can be interpreted as an opportunity. Whatever the strategy, understanding which countries’ content is resonating is another arrow in the quiver.

ABOUT WHIP MEDIA

Whip Media is reimagining content licensing to create a smarter, more connected entertainment ecosystem. We help leading entertainment companies succeed in today’s high-volume, high-velocity global content environment with a market-leading cloud software platform that combines unique, actionable insights with scalable, connected workflows for licensing, content planning and financial operations.

ABOUT MIPTV

MIPTV is the longest running international television market taking place in Cannes each April. It brings together global distributors, producers, buyers and commissioners of drama, doc, kids, factual and formats programming for a curated week of business meetings, matchmaking opportunities, exclusive market intelligence, conferences sessions and global networking.

METHODOLOGY

The data was collected from users of TV Time, an app that allows participants to report their consumption of video content and their attitudes about it. Monthly active users in France, Italy, Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom combined was 1,016,415. Samples were balanced in each country by age and gender to reflect each country’s population. “View Share” is defined as the portion of all views, for selected filter criteria, belonging to a specific piece of content.