

This fact sheet presents the latest UIS feature film data available as of December 2011. The 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions mandated the development, collection, analysis and dissemination of statistics on the diversity of cultural expressions. In response, in 2007 the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) included a set of questions in its biannual Feature Film Statistics Survey to enable the measurement of cultural diversity in cinema. Using data from the 2010 data collection, this fact sheet examines language diversity in film production and consumption.

## MEASURES OF DIVERSITY

Linguistic diversity in film production can be viewed in terms of internal and external diversity. Internal diversity means the languages of domestic film production mirror the linguistic characteristics of the country. External diversity looks at the use of foreign languages in domestic film production. The production and consumption of multilingual films, whether in a national or foreign language, can be an indicator of both internal and external diversity.

### INTERNAL DIVERSITY: DIVERSITY OF NATIONAL LANGUAGES IN DOMESTIC FILM PRODUCTION

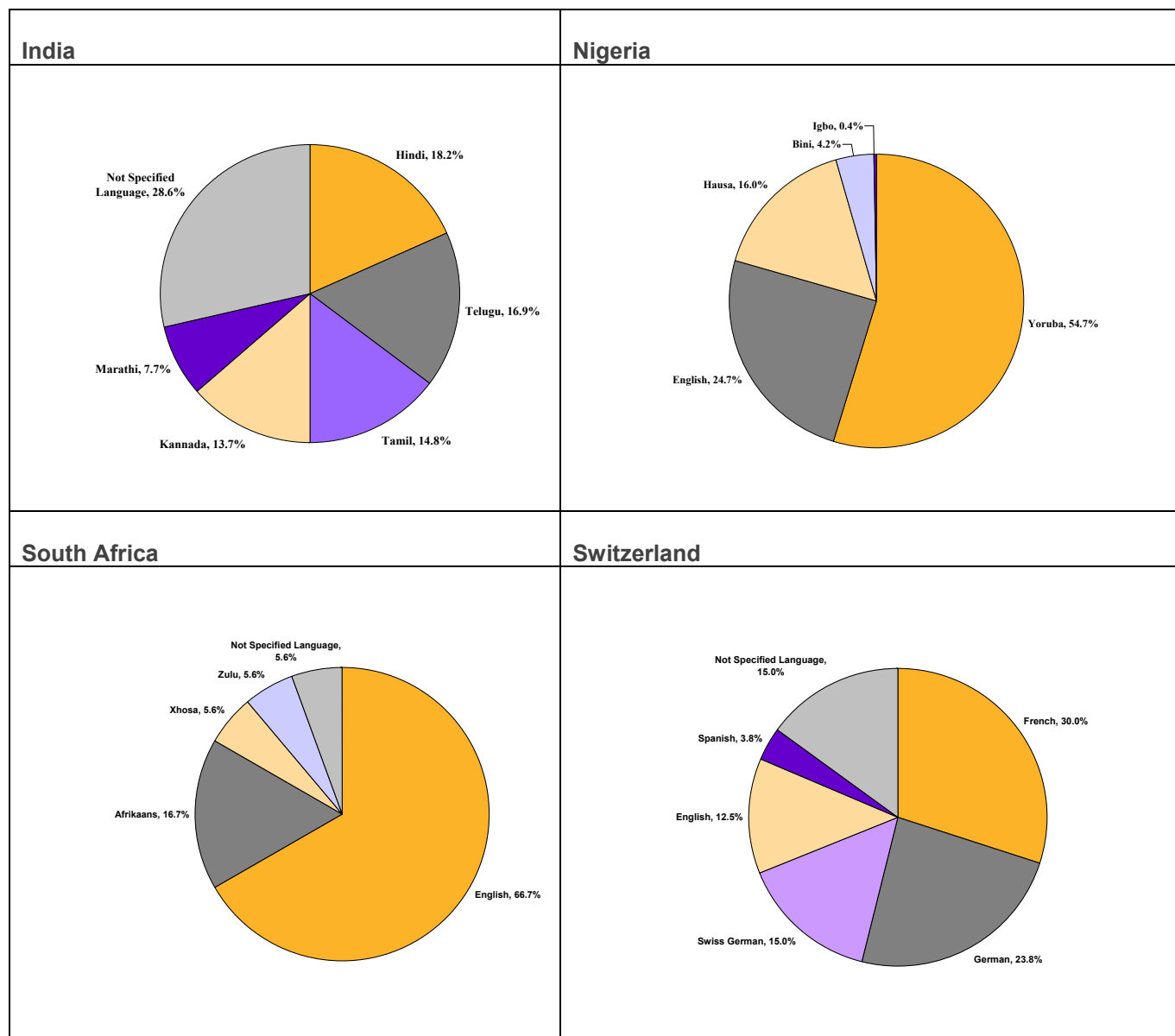
**Figure 1** shows four countries where the diversity of national languages is mirrored in domestic film production, illustrating internal diversity. The biggest film producers, India and Nigeria, produce films in a wide range of languages. This may be one of the reasons for the success of their film industries. They attract wide audiences who are able to relate to films produced in their own languages.

In 2009, about 75% of Nigerian films were produced in local languages, such as Yoruba (54.7%), Hausa (16%), Bini (4.2%) and Igbo (0.4%). In 2009, India produced 18.2% of their film production in Hindi, 16.9% in Telugu, 14.8% in Tamil, 13.7% in Kannada and 7.7% in Marathi. English, with a 66.7% share, was more prominent in South Africa, while African languages such as Xhosa and Zulu represented only around 10% of film production. In Switzerland, film production is dominated by four languages: French (30%), German 23.8%, Swiss German (15%) and English (12.5%).

### GEOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION OF DIVERSITY IN LANGUAGES OF FILM PRODUCTION

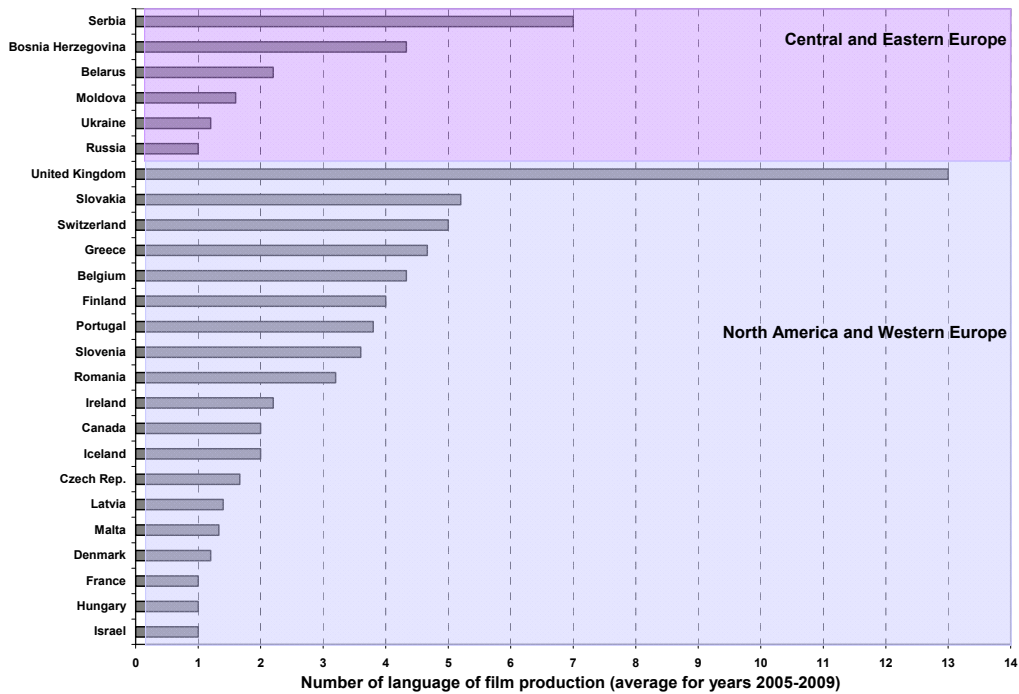
Are there regional patterns in the production of linguistically diverse films? **Figures 2** and **3** show the average number of languages of film production for several countries, classified by region. The United Kingdom leads in external linguistic diversity with films produced in at least 13 languages from 2005 to 2009. It also leads in the production of multilingual films (see **Table 1**). After English, Hindi is the second language of film production in the United Kingdom.

FIGURE 1. LANGUAGE DIVERSITY IN FILM PRODUCTION, 2009



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, January 2012.

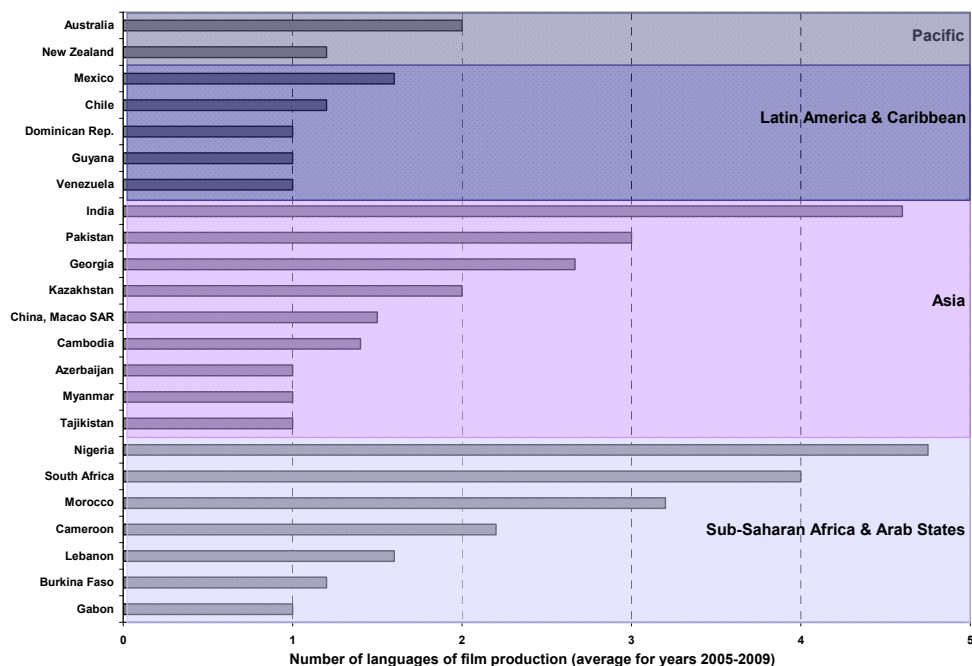
**FIGURE 2. AVERAGE NUMBER OF LANGUAGES USED IN FILM PRODUCTION**  
North American and European countries, 2005-2009



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, January 2012.

Figure 2 also illustrates that formerly united countries, such as Slovakia and the Czech Republic, as well as Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Slovenia, produced films in an average of five languages between 2005 and 2009. The foreign language of production is usually the language of a neighbouring country.

**FIGURE 3. AVERAGE NUMBER OF LANGUAGES USED IN FILM PRODUCTION BY REGION, 2005-2009**



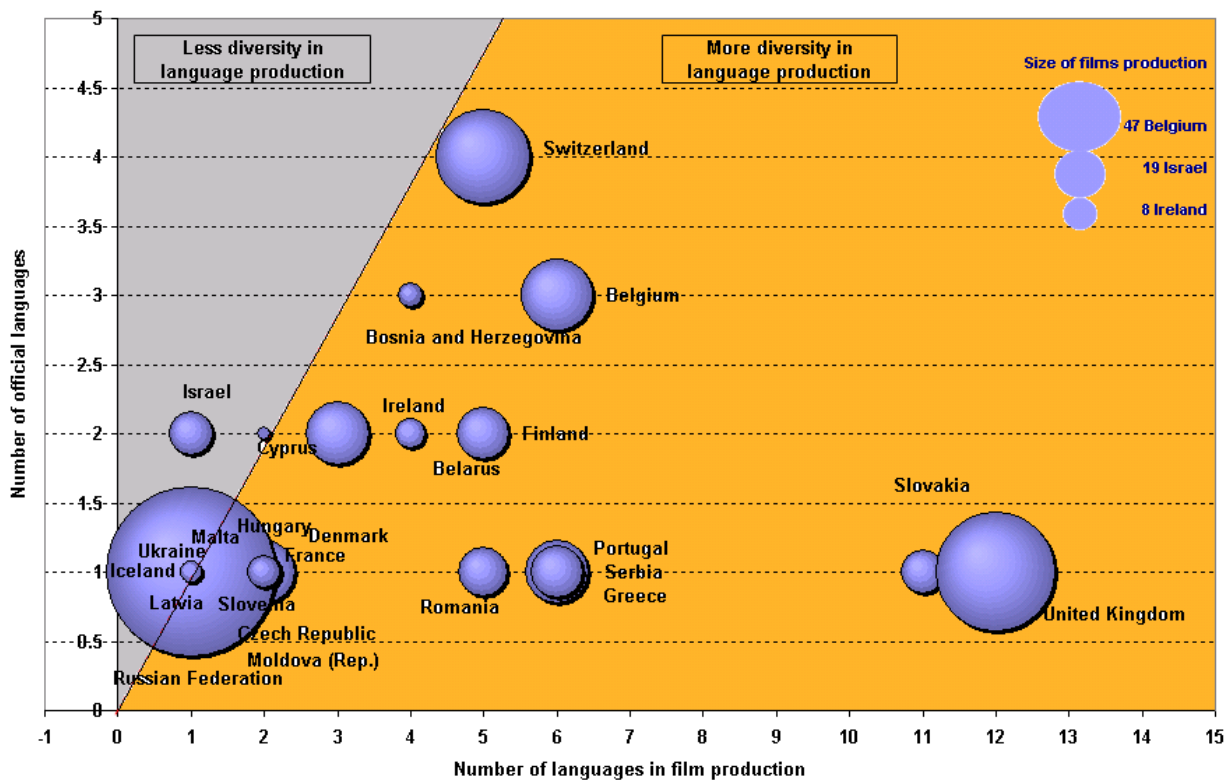
Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, January 2012.

## EXTERNAL DIVERSITY: PRESENCE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN DOMESTIC FILM PRODUCTION

**Figure 4** shows that in some European countries there is a correlation between the number of official languages and the number of languages used in domestic film production. For the vast majority of European countries, the number of languages used in film production is higher than the number of national languages, which suggests external diversity. This phenomenon may be explained by the high level of coproduction within Europe.

**FIGURE 4. DIVERSITY OF LANGUAGES OF FILM PRODUCTION IN EUROPE, 2009**

Diversity in language of film production in Europe, 2009



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, January 2012.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF MULTILINGUAL FILMS

Multilingual films are another measure of linguistic diversity in film production and consumption. A multilingual film is defined as a domestic production that uses several languages, which may include a foreign language. Their prevalence may be a reflection of cultural change. "With dubbing and subtitling practices, films have long been able to move between cultural contexts. However, the emergence of multilingual films offers a different approach, namely incorporating the contemporary context of cultural exchange, characterised by cross-border flows of people, commodities and culture, into the story-world of the film." (UIS Information Bulletin No. 8, forthcoming).

**Table 1** shows that the number of multilingual films produced annually from 2007 to 2009 was stable, with on average 44 multilingual films being produced. The majority of countries produced one or two multilingual films each. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Portugal and the United Kingdom produced a relatively high proportion of multilingual films – at least five films each during the same period. **Table 2** shows a concentration of multilingual films in Europe, representing 73% of all multilingual films produced during this period. Again, this high rate may be a reflection of the prevalence of coproductions in the region.

**TABLE 1. ORIGIN OF MULTILINGUAL<sup>1</sup> FILMS BY COUNTRY PRODUCERS**

Number of multilingual films	2007	2008	2009
1	Australia, Belgium, Latvia, Mexico, Moldova, Pakistan, Serbia, Slovenia	Belgium, Georgia, Greece, Iceland, Mexico, New Zealand, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine	Cyprus, Finland, Greece, Kazakhstan, Macao, Slovenia
2	Greece, Lebanon, Romania	Cameroon, Luxemburg, Moldova, Morocco, Portugal	Belarus, Belgium, Georgia, Lao, Lebanon, Romania,
3	Belarus	Lebanon, Serbia, South Africa	Morocco, Serbia, Slovakia
5	...	...	Bosnia and Herzegovina, United Kingdom
6	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Morocco, Portugal	...	...
8	United Kingdom	United Kingdom	...
9	...	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Portugal
<b>Total multilingual films</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>46</b>

**TABLE 2. REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF MULTILINGUAL FILM PRODUCTION**

	2007	2008	2009
Europe and North America	32	32	35
Sub-Saharan Africa	0	5	0
Arab States	8	5	5
Asia	1	1	6
Pacific	1	1	0
Latin America and the Caribbean	1	1	0
<b>Total multilingual films</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>46</b>

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, January 2012.

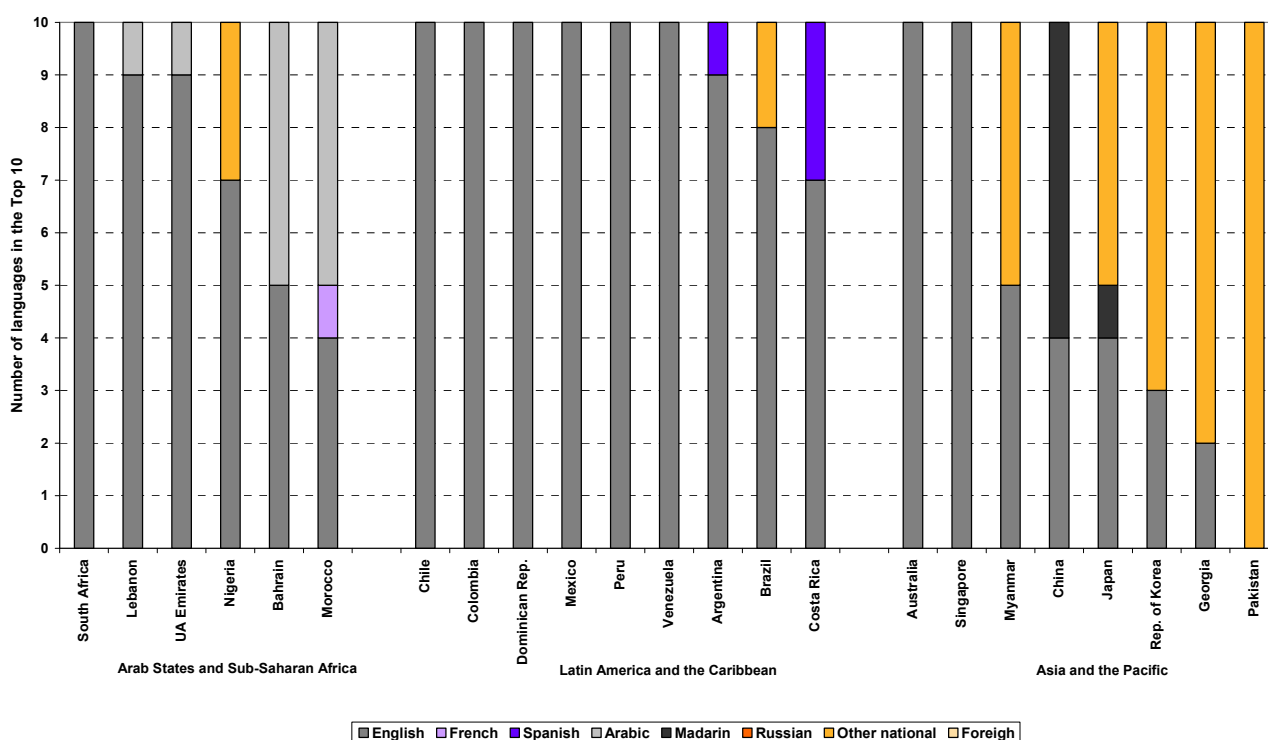
<sup>1</sup> Movies for which only a limited number of dialogues were used in a different language are not considered.

## DIVERSITY OF LANGUAGES OF FILMS BASED ON ADMISSIONS

Another important indicator of diversity is the language of films ranked by admissions. UIS data do not enable us to measure the languages of all films viewed; however, we can get a reliable picture by looking at the languages of the Top 10 films in countries with data. **Figures 5** and **6** show the share of English compared to national languages among the Top 10 movies in 2009. The results illustrate the prominence of the English language, which is the result of the dominance of Hollywood movies in the Top 10 globally.

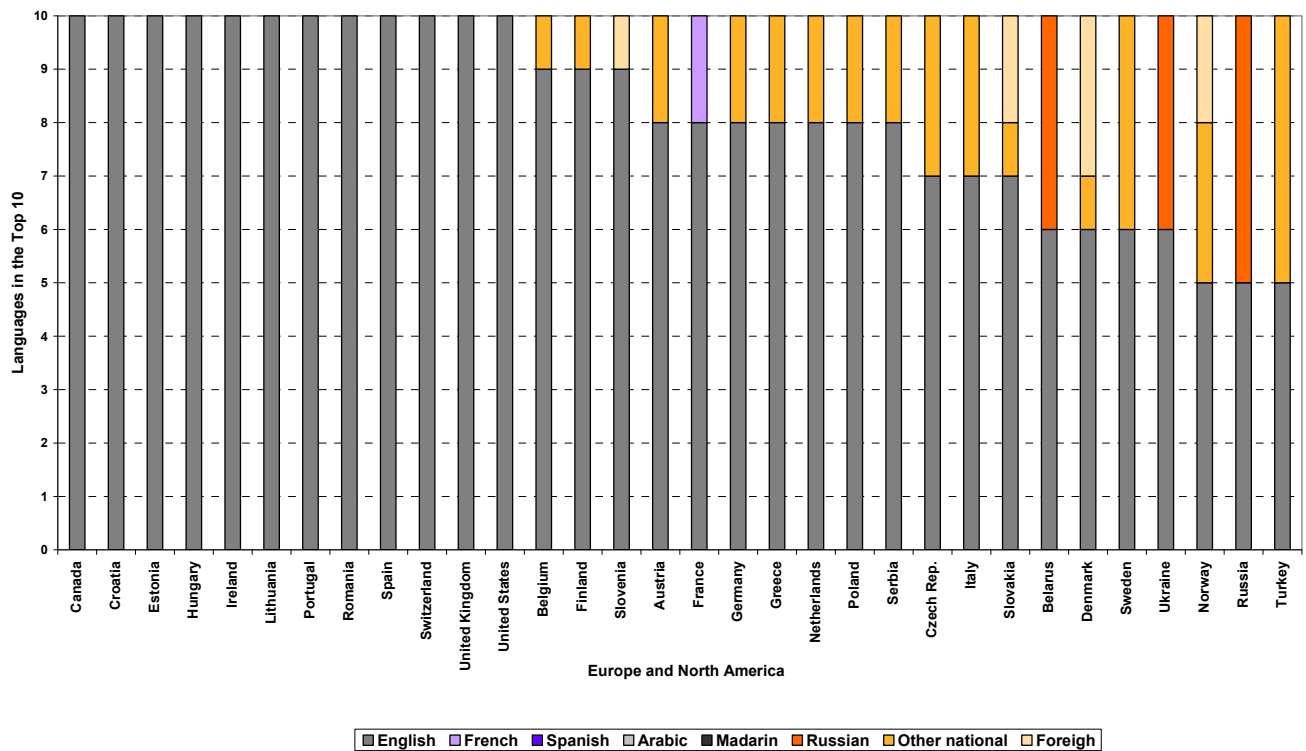
In Switzerland, the diversity of languages in domestic film production is not reflected in the Top 10, which were all English-language movies. In Latin American, no Spanish movie appeared in the Top 10 hits except in Argentina and Costa Rica. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the biggest share of national language film consumption occurred in countries such as Morocco, Pakistan, Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation, reflecting the success of domestically produced movies. In addition, some regional influence is visible in the Top 10, showing the success of foreign movies in countries sharing common languages. For example, Russian movies are present in the Top 10 in the Ukraine and Belarus. Egyptian movies are present in several Top 10 hits of Arabic-speaking countries (except for Morocco).

**FIGURE 5. LANGUAGE OF THE TOP 10 MOVIES BY REGION IN 2009**



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, January 2012.

**FIGURE 6. LANGUAGE OF TOP 10 MOVIES IN EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA, 2009**



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, January 2012.

Please consult the UIS website at [www.uis.unesco.org](http://www.uis.unesco.org) to access the UIS Data Centre and subscribe to an email alert service on the Institute’s latest publications and data releases. For further information on cultural diversity, refer to UIS Technical Paper No. 6.