

**New York Daily News**

**Salma Hayek: I was an illegal immigrant 'for a small period of time'**

**By Shari Weiss**  
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Academy Award-nominated actress Salma Hayek has revealed a new way of describing herself: former illegal immigrant.

The "Frida" actress made the surprising admission in an interview with V Magazine Spain, in their winter 2010-2011 issue.

According to E! Online, Hayek, who was born in Mexico, told the mag, "I was an illegal immigrant in the United States. It was for a small period of time, but I still did it."

Hayek, 44, was referring to when she moved to Los Angeles in 1991 and her visa expired shortly after. Her publicist clarified to E! that the "Ugly Betty" producer's status "was cleaned up immediately as Salma went to Mexico and renewed" her visa.

Still, in the interview, Hayek goes on to explain that her background was a disadvantage when pursuing an acting career in the States.

"I had to endure the worst time of all in terms of racial discrimination in Hollywood when I first started out," she said. "It was inconceivable to American directors and producers that a Mexican woman could have a lead role."

In 2006, Hayek, who by that point had become an American citizen, protested legislation that made illegal immigrants felons.

She told the Daily News, "As a human being, I find this situation intolerable. As an immigrant, I find it offensive."

The actress even temporarily shut down her production company to show "solidarity" with protesters.

And while the plight of illegal immigrants hasn't much improved since the 90s – some argue it's worse than ever – Hayek told V that "Hollywood has definitely grown, in embracing the inclusion of Latinos in the world."