

THE *HIERRO* SERIES AND ITS IMPACT ON TOURISM ON THE ISLAND OF EL HIERRO

LA SERIE *HIERRO* Y SU IMPACTO EN EL TURISMO DE LA ISLA DE EL HIERRO

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ABSTRACT:

In recent decades, the relationship between the audiovisual and tourism sectors has become increasingly close. The Canary Islands have been hosting national and international film projects for many years. However, the real impacts that all of them have had on the islands have not been studied.

The purpose of this work is to carry out a study of the impacts that the filming of the *Hierro* series on the island of El Hierro has had on both the tourism sector and the local population. For this purpose, a quantitative and qualitative methodology will be used, including interviews with local authorities and the local community. The aim is to demonstrate the synergies that exist between the audiovisual sector and the tourism sector in the Canary Islands, specifically on El Hierro.

Keywords:

Film Commission, Film Tourism, Hierro, Tourism Promotion.

RESUMEN:

En las últimas décadas, la relación que hay entre el sector audiovisual y el turístico se ha vuelto cada vez más estrecha. Canarias lleva muchos años siendo sede de proyectos cinematográficos nacionales e internacionales. Sin embargo, no se han estudiado los impactos reales que todos ellos han tenido en las islas.

A través del presente trabajo se pretende realizar un estudio de los impactos que ha supuesto tanto para el sector turístico, como para la población local, la grabación de la serie *Hierro* en la isla de El Hierro. Para ello, se utilizará una metodología cuantitativa y cualitativa, incluyendo entrevistas a autoridades locales y a la comunidad local. Con ello, se quiere demostrar las sinergias que existen entre el sector audiovisual y el sector turístico en Canarias, concretamente en El Hierro.

Palabras clave:

Film Commission, Hierro, Promoción Turística, Turismo Cinematográfico.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The audiovisual sector has thrived in recent decades, thanks in part to the emergence of new media formats and platforms. In this context, since 2010, the consumption of television and video on mobile devices has increased by 85% (Ericsson ConsumerLab, 2017). That is why TV series have been one of the most popular types of audiovisual products in recent years, and the major global television networks have used them to reach new audiences. This, together with the fact that TV series tend to generate strong emotional connections with viewers due to the extended and repetitive contact (Flayelle; Maurage; & Billieux, 2017), has created an opportunity for the tourism sector.

Already in 2008, TV shows and films were the second main element influencing travel decisions to a country after friends and family, as stated by a study carried out by FutureBrand (2008). This study also revealed that 13% of people initially opted for a country after seeing it on television or in a movie. Ten years later, in 2018, according to a study presented by TCI Research, 80 million travelers choose their destination based on movies and TV series. The research also pointed out that film induced visitors are mainly formed by Millennials and high-spending markets such as China and GCC¹.

This market niche is really interesting for tourist destinations, since it offers them opportunities to benefit from an indirect promotion channel. Furthermore, among the characteristics of film induced visitors, we find that they are more active in sharing their trip experiences on the social web, and have higher post-visit recommendation rates than average visitors. They also take part in 19% more cultural and natural activities during their trip. Besides that, they frequently express higher levels of satisfaction with guided tours and excursions, the natural beauty of the surroundings, leisure activities, and cultural diversity throughout their stay. On top of that, they tend to travel more frequently during off-peak seasons and are 10% more susceptible to destination advertising (Travel Daily News, 2018).

In the case of Spain, its role in the international film industry has been key since its beginnings. It has had a decisive influence in the development of western cinema with a European stamp -spaghetti western- and has hosted projects of all imaginable themes. Therefore, many tourist products related to these projects have been created (Turespaña, n.d.). From *Money Heist* in Madrid, to *Game of Thrones* in several locations of the mainland, or *Star Wars* in Seville, many are the routes of locations that have been created for tourists in our country.

The Canary Islands are not far behind. They have been the setting for movies such as Fast and Furious, Clash of the Titans or Jason Bourne, as well as series such as The Witcher or Black Mirror. All of them have had either positive or negative effects on the image of the destination and on the local economy, both during and after the shooting. Recently, a series called Hierro, was fully shot on the Canarian island of El Hierro. This series is going to be the focus of this research study.

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¹ Gulf Cooperation Council (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates)

2. OBJECTIVES

As advanced in the previous section, the object of study of this paper is the series *Hierro*. The aim is to do research on how the shooting of this series on the island of El Hierro has impacted on the tourism of that island. To do so, the following objectives have been set:

- a. Find out if the series works as a tourist promotion tool and encourages visits to the island by its viewers.
- b. Find out if there has been an increase in the number of visitors, and they have undergone a behavioral change after the series premiered.
- c. Find out if tourist products and campaigns related to the audiovisual story have been created. If so, find out if they have helped to diversify the offer.
- d. Find out if the series has helped to transform the positioning of the island.
- e. Find out if the series has served as a mechanism for the deseasonalization of the demand
- f. Find out what is the main purpose for tourists to visit the island after the series premiered.
- g. Find out what was the impact of the series on the local community.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. Film Tourism

The relation that tourism currently has with cinema has become a worldwide phenomenon. This tendency is nothing new, since film tourism emerged at the end of the 20th century. According to UNWTO (2017), film tourism can be considered as a branch of cultural tourism, which is a type of tourism activity in which the visitor's essential motivation is to learn, discover, experience and consume the tangible and intangible cultural attractions/products in a tourism destination.

The phenomenon of film tourism itself does not have a universally accepted definition due to the fact that there are different authors who have described it from different perspectives. Hudson & Ritchie (2006) define film tourism as a tourist activity induced by the viewing of a moving image which is accepted to include film, television, pre-recorded products (e.g. video/DVD/Blu-ray) and now digital media. However, there should be some distinction made between the form (i.e., a film or television program) and the medium through which the image is transmitted, because there are numerous ways to view film and filmic images, and viewing can occur in an increasing variety of environments.

In order to avoid the need to distinguish between film and television, some critics (Connell & Meyer, 2009; Fernandez-Young & Young, 2008; Olsberg, 2007) have suggested that the umbrella term "screen tourism" is more useful since it encompasses both media, reduces the complex use of the dual terms and decreases the chance of misinterpretation of the wider phenomenon. However, film tourism appears to be the generic term used in most studies and, while there are some debates around differences between images perceived via film and television, the term is presumably less important than the concept.

To have a better understanding of this term, it is also important to take into account the perspectives of authors such as Riley et al. (1998), who explain that film tourism occurs when a film contains a scene that attracts the viewer's attention and prompts them to travel to the location where the scene occurred. It was originally believed that this influence was limited to natural landscape attractions (Riley and Van Doren, 1992), but themes relating to production history, exciting sequences, and human interactions also make the public want to visit specific locations.

On the other hand, Zimmermann (2003) describes film tourism as all forms of traveling to destinations, which in general enable a connection with the world of film. Furthermore, it can be divided into three separate subcategories, including: "film promotion tourism", which consists of film teams traveling to different destinations in order to request aid money for their projects; "travel film tourism", comprising trips into foreign countries with a film camera; and "film-induced tourism", which is a journey stimulated by watching a movie that has a high impact on the consumer decision-making process. This last subcategory is often used to refer to film tourism as a whole, since the appearance of the term, proposed by Hudson and Richtie in 2006.

According to Beeton (2006) and Hudson et al. (2011) film-induced tourism is defined as a tourist visit to a destination featured on television, video or the cinema screen and, from a wider perspective, also includes participation in activities such as visits to studios and film theme parks, or attending film premiers and festivals. Therefore, the analysis of *Hierro* that will be carried out in this paper belongs to the category of film-induced tourism.

Regarding the typology of film tourism, four types were proposed at the Spanish Conference on Film Shootings and Film Tourism held in 2018. These are:

- a. On location film tourism: Where the tourist travels to look for real or imaginary scenarios associated with movies.
- b. Off location film tourism: Related not only to the film locations, but to the film industry as a whole.
- c. Events: It encompasses tourism festivals, premieres, film courses and film chairs.
- d. Couch-surfing: Home-based tourism through television programs derived from travel.

3.2. Film Commissions

One of the main agents on film tourism are *film commissions*. These are local entities dedicated to promoting and fostering destinations as filming locations (Hermida et al., 2003). They function as the liaison between the place where a movie is going to be filmed and those in charge of the movie production, in addition to many other functions.

The first film commission was created in the United States in the late 1940s in response to the need for companies to have a nexus with municipalities to coordinate local services. With the increase in production and diversification of locations, cities and states sensed the need for a direct connection between local agencies and the entertainment industry (AFCI, n.d.).

Economically, film commissions are non-profit organizations, so paying for their management and advisory services is generally unnecessary. Users are only asked to mention the film commission's collaboration in the press book and title sequence, as well as the cession of

production images for promotion of both the city and the commission (Barcelona Film Commission, n.d.).

As far as their ownership is concerned, they are entities associated with a public administration. Thus, they are either specialized municipal offices -and therefore an integral part of the local council-, or independent entities linked to the local administration by means of agreements (Ramahí, 2011). In both cases, they are institutions with a clear public service vocation and closely related to local, provincial and regional administrations, as well as to professional and business federations and associations in the audiovisual sector in the area.

On a functional level, they are oriented towards attracting audiovisual productions to their territory, offering production companies a variety of services to facilitate the production of audiovisual works in their area of influence (Ramahí, 2011). In general, they are in charge of obtaining the necessary permits to film in their territory, acting as the connection between companies and professionals in the audiovisual and auxiliary sectors, offering advice on location scouting and information on logistics, accommodation, catering, transportation... and other aspects of interest for the realization of shootings.

Moreover, regarding the purpose of these entities, their main goal is to promote the audiovisual sector in their area of operation. Their primary mission is to promote and market their region as a filming location, thus becoming a tool for the territorial economic development of the audiovisual industry. However, given the direct economic impact of the sector on its environment and its diffusive nature, it also contributes to the strengthening of the service sectors related to the hotel and tourism industry, as well as to the promotion of the culture and identity of the territory (Redondo, 2000).

The most representative body in this field is the Association of Film Commissioners International (AFCI). It is the only global non-profit professional organization bringing together more than 300 agencies around the world, most of them concentrated in the United States and Europe, but with members in six continents. Their mission is to provide "advocacy, connectivity and education necessary for film commissions and businesses in the screen sector to foster economic growth, to initiate the groundwork for strong infrastructure and provide the essentials for professional development in a fair, sustainable and socially diverse manner world-wide" (AFCI, n.d.).

In the case of the Canarian Archipelago, the Canary Island Film brand exists to promote, under a unique entity, the destination as a set for film productions. This brand includes each of the seven Film Commissions that exist in the islands. There is one per island, but in the case of El Hierro, which is the most relevant in this paper, the Film Commission is merged with the Office of Tourism, Transport and Communications of the Council of El Hierro (Hosteltur, 2016).

3.3. Film Offices

There is another term very similar to film commission, which sometimes causes confusion with the first one. It is the so-called *film office*. The characteristics of both are very similar: one of the main objectives of both organizations is to contribute to the economic development and tourism

promotion of a territory. In addition, both types of organizations currently exist all over the world, especially in places where there is a mature film and audiovisual culture.

However, these two organizations are differentiated by some nuances. According to Calvo Flores (2019) the main difference between these two organizations lies in the territorial scope over which they operate: Film Offices, on the one hand, are administrative units under local government which operate at the local or provincial level, while the Commissions, on the other hand, are independent entities that cover regions and nations more broadly.

In addition, Hermida (2003) establishes functional differences between them. Thus, he attributes to the film commission the condition of forum for decision-making, while he links the film office to the execution of its measures and actions. In any case, he points out the few existing operational differences, and affirms that commissions and offices indistinctly follow both denominations.

3.4. Film sector in the Canary Islands

3.4.1. General overview

According to data from the National Statistics Institute (INE), in 2018, there were 570 audiovisual companies in the Canary Islands, 64 more than the previous year. These represented 0.39% of the companies in the Archipelago and accounted for 6.05% of Spanish audiovisual companies. Therefore, although its size is smaller, the audiovisual sector in the Canary Islands has more weight in its national sector than the rest of ICT activities.

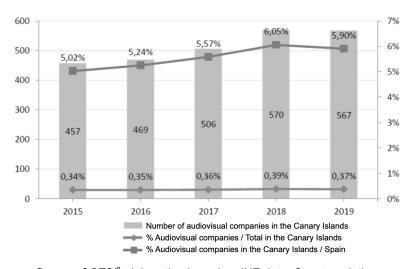


Figure 1: Evolution of audiovisual companies in the Canary Islands (2015-2019)

Source: OCTSI² elaboration based on INE data. Own translation.

From the total amount of companies in the audiovisual sector in the Canary Islands, more than two thirds are engaged in cinematographic activities, followed by radio broadcasting companies (22.6%), then companies whose economic activity is television programming and

² Observatorio Canario de las Telecomunicaciones y de la Sociedad de la Información (Canary Islands Telecommunications and Information Society Observatory).

broadcasting (11.1%), and finally, companies engaged in sound recording and music editing (1.2%).

Cinematographic activities, video and TV program activities

Radio broadcasting

TV programming and broadcasting

Sound recording and music editing

Figure 2: Types of companies in the audiovisual sector in the Canary Islands (2019)

Source: OCTSI elaboration based on INE data. Own translation.

According to data from the Ministry of Culture, Canary Islands production companies participated in the production of 18 feature films in 2019. Thus, without having had a historical film tradition, the Canary Islands have consolidated in recent years as a center of national production. In 2010 only 2 feature films were made in the Canary Islands, whereas the cumulative number for 2018 and 2019 is 39.

This increase in film production meant going from receiving 1% of the filming developed in Spain, to receiving 7% in 2014 and 4.7% in 2019 of the total productions carried out in our country (PROEXCA³, 2020). According to the information provided by the public administrations, the volume of investment received in the Archipelago for the attraction of audiovisual productions amounted to 60 million in 2018, as stated in Figure 3.

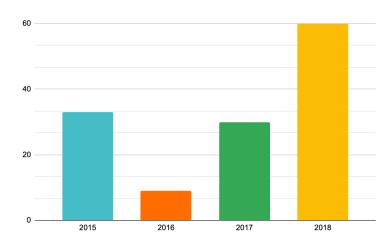


Figure 3: Investment attraction (millions of euros)

Source: PROEXCA elaboration based on press releases of the Public Administrations involved (Cabildos and Government of the Canary Islands)

³ PROEXCA: Sociedad Canaria de Fomento Económico (Canary Society for Economic Promotion).

With that being said, the main characteristics of the audiovisual sector in the Canary Islands can be gathered in the following SWOT analysis:

Figure 4: SWOT analysis of the Canarian audiovisual sector

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Strengths	Weaknesses
 Dynamism and youthfulness of the sector's professionals. Adaptability of the sector. Development of new technologies that limit the dependence on connectivity (streaming, led, etc.). Growing demand from telecommunication operators. High level of creativity. Availability of regional television. Qualified professionals. 	 Need for greater entrepreneurial vision of the business and management training. Insufficient foreign language skills Sector made up of micro-enterprises, with insufficient structures and financial muscle to undertake investments. Lack of notoriety of audiovisual production companies at a national / international level. Discontinuity in production. High dependence on public subsidies. Low modernization of equipment. Lack of local talent with national or international recognition. Labor intrusiveness. Profession close to the amateur world. Instability of the advertising sector.
Opportunities	Threats
 Internationalization, search for project opportunities and cooperation in other countries. Increased demand for fiction projects by platforms (Netflix, Amazon, etc.). Investment by public TV in quality audiovisual content in Canarian production companies. Diversification of clients and markets. No dependence on local TV. Co-productions with other national production companies. Concentration and merging of companies in the sector, to achieve a greater structure and project capacity. Promotion and development of investment through EIGs (Economic Interest Groupings). New formats and contents (contests, reality shows, documentaries). 	1. Budget instability of local television (RTVC). 2. High price sensitivity. 3. Slowdown of the local economy. 4. Legislative changes with respect to public subsidies. 5. Complexity in accessing international subsidies. 6. Increasingly competitive markets in our environment.

- 9. European, national and local public subsidies.
- 10. Minimum quotas of European cinema in EU channels and television operators.
- 12. Growth of animation and video games.

Source: PROEXCA. Own translation.

3.4.2. Tax incentives for audiovisual production in the Canary Islands

The Archipelago offers a series of attractive tax advantages for audiovisual production thanks to the Economic and Fiscal Regime (REF)⁴ of the Canary Islands within the legal framework of the EU and Spain. This circumstance consolidates the islands as one of the best places in Europe to host filming, since these benefits are combined with its climate, natural conditions, diversity of landscapes and a solid audiovisual sector with qualified teams and professionals. According to Canary Islands Film, these tax incentives are:

1. 50%-45% deduction for foreign productions

Producers with tax residence in the Canary Islands who are in charge of the execution of a foreign production (production service companies) will be entitled to a deduction for expenses incurred in the Canary Islands of 50% for the first million euros, and 45% thereafter. This incentive is limited to a maximum deduction of 18 million euros.

2. <u>50%-45% deduction for investment in Spanish productions or co-productions</u>

In the case of national productions developed in the Canary Islands, and which obtain the Canary Islands Certificate of Audiovisual Production, the deduction percentages amount to 50% on the first million euros, and 45% thereafter. This incentive is limited to a maximum refund of 18 million euros. In addition, this deduction may reach 54% in some cases.

3. Canary Islands Special Zone (ZEC)

A company engaged in production activities and activities related to the audiovisual sector may be incorporated as a ZEC entity, and be taxed at a reduced corporate income tax rate of 4% instead of the general rate of 25% in force in Spain, provided that a number of requirements are met. ZEC entities may carry out a wide range of activities in the audiovisual sector, such as: production of any kind, production services, shooting assistance, post-production, photography and advertising, and audiovisual distribution.

⁴ The Economic and Fiscal Regime of the Canary Islands is a broad set of regulations made up of special provisions of different ranks united by the common objective of compensating for the remoteness, insularity and scarce natural resources of the Archipelago with respect to the rest of Europe (El Día, 2009).

4. The Reserve for Investments in the Canary Islands (RIC)

This tax incentive allows a reduction in the corporate income tax base of up to 90% of the undistributed profit. Production companies can obtain RIC from other companies to invest in their productions as long as they obtain the Canary Islands Certificate of Audiovisual Work (not to be confused with the Canary Islands Certificate of Audiovisual Production) granted by the Canary Islands Government. The RIC can be invested in feature films, short films and audiovisual series of fiction, animation or documentary, when all of them have been made in the Canary Islands.

5. <u>Deductions for R&D+IT (Research and Development and Technological Innovation): 45%</u>

These consist of a 45% deduction for Research, Development and Technological Innovation activities carried out in the Canary Islands. They are applicable to animation and video games.

6. Zero rate IGIC (Canarian General Indirect Tax)

The IGIC tax rate of zero is applied to deliveries and imports of goods and services rendered for the execution of feature films or audiovisual fiction, animation or documentary series, under certain conditions. The application of the zero rate requires the prior recognition of the Canary Islands Tax Agency.

7. Deduction for advertising and publicity expenses: 15% - 10%

Consisting of a deduction of 15% to 10% of the amount paid for advertising and publicity expenses for the launching of products, opening and prospecting of markets abroad. This deduction is also valid for expenses arising from the participation in fairs and similar events, including those held in Spain and abroad.

4. METHODOLOGY: A QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE APPROACH

The methodology chosen to approach the research, in accordance with the defined objectives, is both qualitative and quantitative and is based on different tools.

Firstly, I have conducted a literature review to understand how film tourism is defined by different authors and how this kind of tourism impacts on the locations where shootings are carried out. For this purpose, I have compared several case studies of different cities and countries. Furthermore, this tool has helped to collect information regarding film commissions and film offices, as well as the benefits and drawbacks of shooting an audiovisual project in the Canary Islands.

Regarding the quantitative part of the methodology, I have analyzed tourist databases. Specifically the ones provided by the Canary Islands Institute of Statistics (ISTAC), Tenerife Tourism Corporation and Promotur⁵, in which we find different figures related to tourists arrivals, duration of stay, means of transportation to the islands, average expense during their stay, tourist profile, etc. This tool has been useful in order to make a comparison between the number of

⁵ Canary Islands Tourism Corporation

tourists who visited El Hierro before the shooting of the TV series *Hierro*, and the ones who did it after the shooting was finished, and the series premiered, among many other significant data.

On the other hand, another very useful instrument used for this research are interviews. I have contacted the Office of Tourism, Transport and Communications of the Council of El Hierro, as well as the town halls' tourism area of the three municipalities of the island. This has been done in order to know first hand the impacts caused by the filming of the series on the island. Moreover, both the Tenerife and El Hierro Film Commissions have been reached to gather information regarding the shooting of the series and all the aspects involved in that matter.

Finally, I have elaborated and offered a survey to the inhabitants of El Hierro. The purpose of this survey is to get a real perception of what people living on the island really think about the impacts of this series on the island and its local community. Furthermore, the changes they have seen around themselves and their daily life, whether these are positive or negative, have been taken into account in this survey.

With these methodological tools, I have carried out an analysis of the situation on the island regarding tourism, and I will develop it throughout this paper.

5. HIERRO: ARTISTIC AND PRODUCTION BACKGROUND

Hierro is a Spanish-French thriller created by Alfonso Blanco and Pepe Coira. The latter, together with his brother, Jorge Coira, are screenwriters and directors of the series. The series was shot on the Canarian island of El Hierro and co-produced by Portocabo (a subsidiary of Boomerang TV), Atlantique Productions and Arte France, for the on-demand platform Movistar+. Originally, the project announced in 2016, was being produced only by Portocabo for Atresmedia's laSexta channel, but was canceled during the scripting process due to the consolidation of other projects by the group's main channel, Antena 3, for the same type of series (such as *Vis a vis* or *Mar de plástico*). It was in 2018, when Movistar+ and the German-French channel Arte brought the series back. They started its shooting in May of that same year and with the French production company Atlantique Productions joining Portocabo (Wikipedia, 2022).

The series, consisting of two seasons of 6 and 8 chapters each, was previewed at the Séries Mania Festival in Lille, France on March 26, 2019, and premiered in Spain on June 7, 2019, via Movistar+. On September 3, 2019, the series was renewed for a second and final season, which premiered in Spain on February 19, 2021.

The plot of the first season of the series revolves around Candela Montes (Candela Peña), a judge forcibly sent to the remote courthouse of Valverde, on the island of El Hierro, as punishment and retaliation for her unorthodox behavior. She moves to the new destination with her teenage son, Nico, who suffers from a functional disability and therefore requires constant care. As soon as she arrives at the island, she has to investigate the strange death of Fran, a young man who disappears the night before his wedding and is found in an underwater cave. Díaz (Dario Grandinetti), an important local businessman with many shady deals, is blamed. He is the main suspect because he is Fran's boss and the father of his fiancée, Pilar. Given the known enmity between Díaz and Fran, all signs point to him. From then on, a plot is created that supports the judicial investigation of the crime.

During the second season, Judge Candela Montes, already adapted to the island, still wants to solve the drug trafficking case in which Díaz is involved. This causes the businessman to receive threats from his former partners, who even hire a hitman to kill him. At the same time, Candela must continue with the day-to-day cases of the court. One of them affects her more than she imagines: two parents fight to the end for the custody of their two daughters. This case divides the island between those who are in favor of the mother and those who are in favor of the father. A conflict that leads to an unpleasant event with many questions.

The attachment to the real and the local from the point of view of both the story and the production are the hallmarks of *Hierro*. The series integrates and takes advantage of autochthonous elements such as the landscapes of the island, from the winding roads to the forest of La Llanía or the juniper forest, a symbol of resistance that appears in the header. It also relies on local traditions, such as the Bajada de la Virgen de los Reyes, the patron saint, in the first season, or the Canarian wrestling that appears in the second season. In addition, the Councilor for Tourism of the Island Council, Lucía Fuentes, said in an interview with the newspaper El País, that the production showed a very faithful and respectful image of the way of living and thinking of the *Herreños*, without making a parody, so people were very happy.

As we see, the island itself is the main character of the series. This means that the landscapes, the traditions of the island and the accents of the actors (all Canarian except the two main characters) become an essential part of the plot of the series. If *Hierro* had been filmed elsewhere, it would have resulted in a completely different series, and that is what makes it so special.

This fidelity to the environment in which it is set is what has attracted so many viewers, making the series one of the biggest successes of Movistar+'s own production (Diario de Navarra, 2020). In addition, *Hierro* has proven to be addictive, as eight out of ten customers who started watching the first episode have ended up watching it in its entirety and customer ratings are also very positive (ABC, 2019).

Just three months after the premiere of its first season, *Hierro* had become the second-best premiere of all series, and was among the five most watched series to date on the platform's payment channels. Shortly after, on September 19, the series premiered in Germany and France, through the French channel ARTE France, and was also available on demand on arte.tv and DVD/VoD. It was also available on Movistar channels in a dozen Latin American countries: Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela (CineyTele, 2019).

The second season of the series, on the other hand, improved the audience numbers of the first season, something that is not usually common. In March 2021, *Hierro* had already been crowned as the most watched series on Movistar Plus so far that year. That means, it was not only the most consumed original Spanish fiction on the platform, but it had surpassed the other major North American and European premieres that the service had launched since the beginning of the year (Lojendio, 2021). With this, it is safe to say that the series has been a success, especially nationally, but also internationally.

6. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

6.1. El Hierro: The island and its tourism

El Hierro is the westernmost and southernmost island of the Canary Islands. It belongs to the province of Santa Cruz de Tenerife and its capital is Valverde. Besides Valverde, El Hierro has two other municipalities: La Frontera and El Pinar. The island has a population of 11,477 inhabitants (2021), which makes it the second least populated of the eight islands. With only 268.71 km², it is also the smallest of the seven major islands (CanariasLife, 2022).

Regarding tourism, El Hierro is the second island that receives the smallest amount of tourists in the archipelago, after La Gomera. As we can see in Figure 1, it only contributed 1% to the total amount of passengers received in the Canary Islands in 2021. The flow of tourists is so low that the island is not even taken into account in many of the statistics produced by the Canary Islands Institute of Statistics, Canary Islands Tourism or Tenerife Tourist Corporation. There is a lot of official tourism data missing.

Fuerteventura

13,5%

Fuerteventura

13,5%

Tenerife

36,8%

Gran Canaria

30,1%

Figure 5: Distribution of passengers arriving in the Canary Islands by island of destination (2021)

Source: AENA. Elaboration: Tenerife Tourist Corporation.

The lack of large tourist numbers comes from the fact that what the island has to offer is far removed from the concept of mass tourism. El Hierro positions itself as a nature-based, active tourism, cultural and rural destination (El Hierro official tourism site, 2018). It offers natural areas, diving sites for scuba diving, snorkeling and freediving, flight zones for paragliding, a multitude of paths and trails for hiking and cycling enthusiasts, bathing areas for cooling off, a multitude of viewpoints, several villages to visit and many traditions and festivities to discover. That's why there's the generalized conception that El Hierro should cater for quality rather than quantity in tourism.

The profile of tourists that visit El Hierro is composed of women (44.81%) and men (55.19%) almost equally, with an average age of 46 years. These are mainly senior and middle management salaried employees that have an annual household income of €50.000 approximately. This results in an average daily expenditure of €101 and an average expenditure per trip of €829, being the average stay on the island of 9.78 days. Regarding the nationalities of tourists visiting El Hierro, we find that 70% come from the Iberian Peninsula, 10% from Germany, and the remaining 20% from other countries (Promotur, 2021).

Figure 6: Main characteristics of tourists visiting El Hierro (2021)

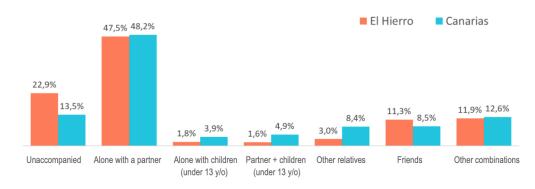
		El Hierro	Canary Islands
Gender	% Women	44.81%	50.44%
Age* Average age		45.77	43.29
Employment situation % Senior and middle management salaried employees		59.60%	57.80%
	% Entrepreneurs and self-employed	24.40%	21.10%
Purchasing power**	Annual household income (thousands of €)	€50.28	€51.76

^{*}Tourists older than 15 years old

Source: Own elaboration based on Promotur data

These tourists come mainly with their partner (47.5%) or alone (22.9%) and their main motivation to visit El Hierro is to explore the island, as well as to practice hobbies and relax (Promotur, 2021). They seek both the connection with nature and the image of landscapes antagonistic to their places of origin.

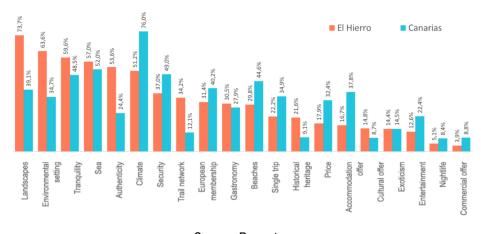
Figure 7: With whom do tourists who visit El Hierro travel? (2021)



Source: Promotur

Moreover, the five main reasons why tourists choose El Hierro as their vacation destination are: landscapes, environmental setting, tranquility, sea and authenticity, by order of relevance. As we see, the priorities and interests of tourists who visit El Hierro are aligned with the positioning of the island.

Figure 8: Reasons for choosing El Hierro as a vacation destination (2021)



Source: Promotur

^{*}Promotur estimation

Regarding accommodation, El Hierro offers apartments, guesthouses, vacation homes, hotels, villas and rural houses. In all, it offers 21 lodging establishments, with a total of 222 rooms and 582 beds (2021). In Figure 2, these figures are represented, and we can see the comparison with the rest of the islands. Although it attracts a larger number of tourists than La Gomera, El Hierro is the island with the lowest number of accommodation places.

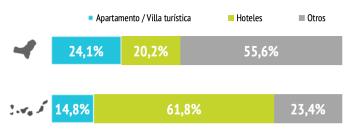
Figure 9: Open establishments, beds, and rooms offered in the Canary Islands (2021)

2021 Total	Establishments	Rooms	Beds
Canaries	778	98.883	236.547
Lanzarote	131	16.884	41.148
Fuerteventura	82	16.590	38.454
Gran Canaria	261	28.410	66.755
Tenerife	195	33.649	82.456
La Gomera	44	1.435	3.171
La Palma	44	1.685	3.982
El Hierro	21	222	582

Source: Own elaboration based on ISTAC data.

Unlike the general behavior of tourists visiting the Canary Islands, who stay mainly in hotels (61.8%), tourists visiting El Hierro stay mainly in tourist apartments or villas (24.1%). This is due to the fact that the island only has 8 hotels, totaling 243 hotel vacancies, whereas the total number of extra-hotel vacancies is 339. That is why hotels are the second most chosen accommodation type on the island (20.2%). Finally, the remaining 55.6% stay in other types of accommodation, such as: homes/rooms rented from private individuals, private accommodation (their own, friends' or relatives' homes, free home exchange or other private accommodation) or other types of accommodation.

Figure 10: Where do tourists visiting El Hierro stay? (2021)



Source: Promotur

6.2. Tourist arrival and behavior before and after the shooting of the series

As explained in the previous section, the series has two seasons: the first one was shot in 2018 and premiered in 2019, and the second one was shot in 2020 and premiered in 2021. Therefore, in this section we are going to see two comparisons regarding the arrival and behavior of tourists visiting El Hierro: on the one hand, a comparison about the arrivals and change of behavior of tourists from 2018 to 2019 and on the other hand, the same comparison but between the years 2020 and 2021.

6.2.1. Tourist arrival and behavioral change from 2018 to 2019

In the year 2018, El Hierro received 5,517 tourists over 15 years of age, excluding Canarian tourists. This figure is rather small in comparison with the number of tourists that the whole Canarian archipelago received: 13,485,651. However, the average stay of tourists visiting El Hierro is way higher than the average in the Canary Islands: 13 days versus 9 days. Regarding the expenditure, tourists visiting the westernmost island make an average trip expenditure of €1,081 and an average daily expenditure of €111.4.

The following year, in 2019, the tourist arrival on the island increased to 9,028, this is 3,511 tourists more than the previous year. One of the reasons for this great growth could be that season 1 of *Hierro* had already premiered in June. According to Movistar, and like I mentioned in the previous section, the audience figures were outstanding, and already in September, the series had become the second-best premiere of all series, and was among the five most watched to date on the platform (ABC, 2019). However, to prove this, we would need to look at tourist arrival numbers per month and interview tourists arriving to know the reason for their visit to the island, and both data is non-existent.

Furthermore, the average stay grew a bit from 13.30 days in 2018 to 13.84 days in 2019. Both the average trip expenditure and the average daily expenditure increased as well: the former being \leq 1,249 and the latter, \leq 118.6. It is very likely that the increase in spending is a consequence of the increase in the length of stay.

Figure 11: Comparison of tourist arrival and behavior in 2018 and 2019

	2018	2019			
	El Hierro	Canary Islands	El Hierro	Canary Islands	
Tourist arrival (>15 y/o)	5,517	13,485,651	9,028	13,271,035	
Average trip expenditure (€)	1,081	1,196	1,249	1,136	
Average stay (days)	13.30	9.32	13.84	09.09	
Average daily expenditure (€)	111.4	143.6	118.6	138.9	

Source: Own elaboration based on Promotur data

With regard to the most relevant aspects in the choice of the island, the top three in both years are: landscapes, tranquility and the environmental setting. However, other aspects like the climate, the authenticity, or the trail network also play an important role in this decision. As we have already seen, the series places special emphasis on the island's landscapes, as it has spectacular photography and shows images taken by drones that had never been seen before. In addition, this series also puts the spotlight on the island's customs, on the way of life of the people who inhabit it and their idiosyncrasies. It is an essential part of the plot. This could be one of the reasons why all the aspects mentioned above, except for the climate, increased their relevance percentage from 2018 to 2019, as Figure 8 shows.

Figure 12: Reasons for choosing El Hierro as a vacation destination (2018-2019)

	2018	2019
Landscapes	78.0%	82.6%
Tranquility	70.2%	77.1%
Environmental setting	64.8%	65.4%
Sea	64.0%	58.9%
Climate	58.2%	53.5%
Authenticity	43.7%	50.7%
Trail network	28.9%	44.2%

Source: Own elaboration based on Promotur data

Moreover, it is also worth mentioning that the activities performed on the island by tourists changed from one year to the next. In 2018, the most common activity to practice was walking and strolling with 70.2%, and even though that figure increased the following year to 71.6%, there was an activity that increased even more, becoming the top one: touring the island on their own (79.1% versus 64.7% in 2018). If we think about it, this change makes sense, since many people who visited El Hierro in 2019, made a tour of the island visiting all the locations that appear in the series.

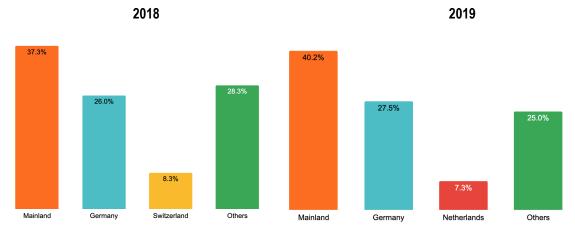
Figure 13: Performed activities on the island (2018-2019)

	2018	2019
Walking, strolling	70.2%	71.6%
Touring the island on their own	64.7%	79.1%
Nature activities	46.7%	38.6%
Beach	45.8%	54.2%
Sport activities	31.9%	31.5%
Tasting Canarian gastronomy	31.3%	41.5%

Source: Own elaboration based on Promotur data

Regarding the nationalities of these tourists, most of them come from other Canarian islands, but excluding those, the ones coming from the mainland make up the majority (37.3% in 2018 and 40.2% in 2019). As for the rest of the nationalities, we do not see a big change from one year to another, but in the case of the Netherlands, which went from 1.6% in 2018 to 7.3% in 2019. We do not see major modifications in the French and German markets either, something that makes sense, since the first season of the series premiered in those countries in September 2019, almost at the end of the year.

Figure 14: Nationalities of tourists visiting El Hierro (2018-2019)



Source: Own elaboration based on Promotur data

As for the general satisfaction of the trip, there is a huge difference from one year to another. In 2018, the average rating that El Hierro received was 8.7, whereas in 2019 this number increased to 9.2, meaning that in general, trips that year were much more successful. This is due to the fact that the trip experience for tourists in 2018 was worse or much worse than expected, at 11.1%. On the contrary, this percentage dropped to 0 in 2019.

The series might have helped a lot to change this perception. Before it was aired, tourists could only see an image of El Hierro in tourist campaigns specifically designed to attract them, and even if it was not an invented image, far from it, it did not transcend beyond being simply images. However, in the series one can not only see the beautiful landscapes, but also understand the culture of the island, the way of being of the people who live there and somehow get an idea of what to expect from the island and its people. Before *Hierro*, there had never been such a far-reaching campaign that showed everything that is shown on the series.

2018

Worse / much worse than expected

Up to expectations

Better / much better than expected

Figure 15: Trip experience for tourists visiting El Hierro (2018-2019)

Source: Own elaboration based on Promotur data

6.2.2. Tourist arrival and behavioral change from 2020 to 2021

In 2020, El Hierro only received 3,647 tourists over 15 years of age, excluding Canarian tourists. This is a very small figure in comparison with the numbers received the previous year on the island. Including Canarian tourists, in 2019 El Hierro received over 20,000 tourists, whereas in 2020 this figure dropped to not even 7,000. There is a logical reason for this drastic change: the COVID-19 pandemic. In Spain from March until June from that year, there was a mandatory confinement for the entire country, so it was not possible to leave the house, much less travel. Besides that, once it was possible to travel again, there were many health requirements that made many people decide not to travel.

In 2021, a great improvement in figures can already be seen, as the island received 4,383 tourists over 15 years of age, excluding those from the Canary Islands. And if we include the latter, the sum amounts to almost 14,000 tourists.

However, even though the number of tourists increased in 2021, the average stay, and both the average trip expenditure and the average daily expenditure decreased. This is also a direct consequence of the COVID-19 sanitary crisis, which was also an economic crisis. The average stay changed from 11 days to less than 10, the average trip expenditure went down from €961 to €829, and the average daily expenditure went down by €1: from €102.1 to €101.1. If we look at the behavior of tourists in the Canary Islands in general, it was practically the same, except for average expenditures, which instead of decreasing, increased.

Figure 16: Comparison of tourist arrival and behavior in 2018 and 2019

	2020		2021	
	El Hierro	Canary Islands	El Hierro	Canary Islands
Tourist arrival (>15 y/o)	3,647	4,110,955	4,383	5,827,892
Average trip expenditure (€)	961	1,170	829	1,206
Average stay (days)	11.03	10.14	9.78	9.54
Average daily expenditure (€)	102.1	135.3	101.1	144.0

Source: Own elaboration based on Promotur data

Regarding the most relevant aspects in the choice of the island, in 2020 landscapes and tranquility keep being on the top of the list, but unlike in 2018 and 2019, climate ranks second on the list. In addition, other aspects like the environmental setting, the authenticity, or the sea are also given a lot of importance in this decision. Once again, preferences here are driven because of the situation lived during the pandemic rather than anything related to the series. However, in 2021, the trio landscapes-tranquility-environmental setting was back on top of the preferences chart.

Figure 17: Reasons for choosing El Hierro as a vacation destination (2020-2021)

	2020	2021
Landscapes	72.7%	73.7%
Tranquility	61.7%	59.6%
Environmental setting	57.9%	63.6%
Sea	55.7%	57.0%
Climate	63.4%	51.2%
Authenticity	56.5%	53.6%
Trail network	39.8%	34.2%

Source: Own elaboration based on Promotur data

As for the activities performed on the island by tourists, we see that once again, touring the island on their own and walking/strolling are the most preferred ones. In 2020, hiking follows these two with a 65.2% of preference, whereas in 2021, going to the beach is the third preference, with 55.2%. All of them are outdoor activities, which was the preference of tourists just after finishing confinement, as a consequence of being without leaving home for so long.

Figure 18: Performed activities on the island (2020-2021)

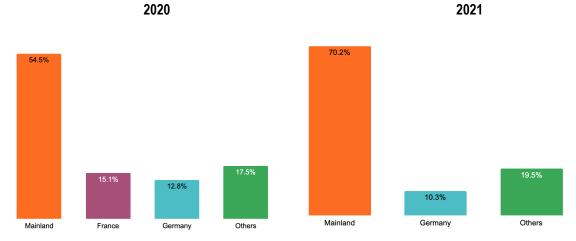
	2020	2021
Touring the island on their own	74.3%	72.7%
Walking, strolling	73.5%	59.0%
Hiking	65.2%	48.5%
Beach	53.5%	55.2%
Tasting Canarian gastronomy	41.1%	33.0%
Swimming	35.2%	27.7%

Source: Own elaboration based on Promotur data

With regard to the nationalities of tourists received in 2020, we can see very interesting numbers. Again, the largest share is occupied by the domestic market, with 54.5%. However, we see a very big increase in the French market share, which went from 1.9% in 2019 to 15.1% the following year. The German market's figures, on their part, dropped from 27.5% in 2019 to 12.8% in 2020, however it is still the third-biggest market that traveled to El Hierro in 2020. It is highly likely that a large part of both the French and German markets had chosen to travel to the island because of the series. The first season of *Hierro* premiered in these two countries in September 2019, having considerable success.

On the other hand, in 2021 these figures for both countries dropped again. Germany fell to 10.3% and there isn't even an existing official percentage for the French market. However, the domestic market increased immensely, reaching 70.2% of the market share.

Figure 19: Nationalities of tourists visiting El Hierro (2020-2021)



Source: Own elaboration based on Promotur data

Regarding the trip experience of tourists who visited the island during the year 2020, we see that their experience was either up to expectations or better than them. The island managed to maintain a 0% of people whose experience was worse or much worse than expected, as had already happened in 2019. Furthermore, the share of people whose experience was better/way better than expected increased from 47.9% in 2019 to 51% in 2020. However, this figure dropped again in 2021 to 48,2, still a higher percentage than in 2019, as we can appreciate in the following figure.

2020

Worse / much worse than expected
Up to expectations
Better / way better than expected

Figure 20: Trip experience for tourists visiting El Hierro (2020-2021)

Source: Own elaboration based on Promotur data

As for the people whose trip experience was up to expectations, we see similar figures in both years: 49% in 2020 and 47.6% in 2021. Nevertheless, in 2021 a percentage of people whose trip was worse/way worse than they expected reappeared: 4.2%.

6.3. Perception of the local authorities and course of action taken

As we have seen so far, the series *Hierro* has meant a greater awareness of the island at national and international level, and in a way it has been a great free indirect promotional campaign. This

has meant that the tourism local authorities have taken advantage of this momentum to transform the positioning of the island.

I had the chance to participate in an interview with a member of the Oficina de Consejería de Turismo, Transporte y Comunicaciones de El Hierro (Office of Tourism, Transport and Communications of the Council of El Hierro), to get first-hand knowledge of the actions carried out by the tourism authorities of El Hierro.

To begin with, tourism products related to the series have been created. These consist of several routes of locations that appear in the series. These routes have their corresponding informative brochures showing the location and explaining at what point in the series it appears, as well as its importance to the narrative thread. In addition, these brochures are accompanied by a map of the island, where one can see all the locations signalized (Annexes 1, 2 and 3). Besides that, there are information points at every location, which provide detailed information about them. There, one can also find QR codes of all the locations that redirect to a web link where the place is explained, its location is shown on the map, and photographs of the place in the series are shown (Annexes 4, 5 and 6).

On the other hand, these tourism products have helped to diversify the tourist offer on the island. This is because many of the locations are different from the most visited tourist sites on the island. The series has given added value to locations that were previously of no interest for tourists.

As for the series itself, it has helped to transform the positioning of the island as a tourist destination. According to the interviewee, after the "boom" of the *Hierro* series, the island is receiving another profile of tourists who were not previously interested in this destination. However, it has not served as a mechanism to deseasonalize the demand, as tourists still choose to visit the island in the summer months, which is the peak season.

The Office of Tourism of the Council of El Hierro is sure that the series has worked as a tool for tourism promotion. This means that the landscapes and locations that appear in the series, as well as the culture shown, and the authenticity of the island and its people, invite the viewer to get to know the island more closely, encouraging visits. Regarding the tourist profile, they assure that another type of visitor is arriving to the island, more interested in the cinematographic world, although the main profile is still the same, as shown in the previous section. Therefore, film tourism has not become the main reason for tourists to visit El Hierro, but this tourist profile has indeed increased.

Moreover, the interviewee assures that the series has attracted a large number of visitors and the locations that appear on the series, some of them non-touristy, receive many visitors. This information is also backed up by the Councilor for Tourism of the Island Council, Lucía Fuentes, who said in an interview with the newspaper El País, that although she does not have specific statistics, she recognizes that there was a significant increase in travelers after the broadcast of the series.

This has had a positive impact on the island and its inhabitants, especially in an economic sense. Both the filming and the subsequent broadcast created a need for services that were mostly covered by local businesses. To a certain extent, the overloading of the island at certain times of the summer could also have had a negative impact on the inhabitants, as the island is not prepared to accommodate so many tourists simultaneously. In any case, the Office assures that this negative detriment was almost imperceptible and the benefits that the series brought to the island were much greater.

6.4. Perception of the local community

As explained in the methodology section, I have carried out a survey to obtain a true approximation to what the inhabitants of El Hierro think about the impacts of the shooting of this series (Annex 7). The survey consisted of fifteen questions divided into two sections.

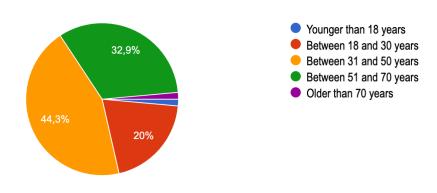
In the first section I asked the participants about their gender, age range, nationality and also if they lived currently in El Hierro or had lived there during the shooting of the first and second seasons, this is between 2018 and 2020.

In the second section, that was only available to those who had answered "Yes" to at least one of the two last questions, participants had to answer their reason for residence in El Hierro, if they knew the series and if they had watched it, and then give their opinions on what they thought the impacts of the shooting had been and the changes they had and have noticed in their lives after it.

Altogether, 210 people answered the survey. From those, 144 were women (68.6%) and 66 men (31.4%). The ages of the participants were quite different, which provides different points of view and is very beneficial for this analysis. In the following graph, we can see that age distribution:

Figure 21: Participants' answers to question number 2 in the survey

Please select your age range:



Source: Own elaboration

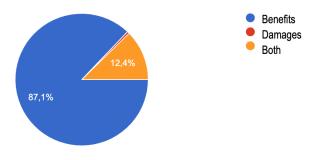
On the other hand, of all respondents, a share of 72.9% lives currently in El Hierro, and 88.5% lived there during the shooting of the series, between 2018 and 2020. Only 11.4% of participants do not live at the moment nor lived during the signaled period on the island. Therefore, those 24 respondents didn't finish the complete survey.

Moving to the second part of the questionnaire, we find that there is widespread knowledge about the series since only 9.7% of the participants haven't watched it, and yet they all knew about its existence.

Once the questionnaire started getting deeper into the matter at stake, respondents were asked if they thought that the shooting of the series on the island had brought benefits, damages or both for them. The islanders' response is resounding: this series benefitted them. That's what 99.5% of participants think. From those, 12.4% think that it did bring benefits, but also some damages. The main reason why inhabitants of El Hierro think this production has been beneficial for them is the great tourist promotion campaign that it has represented for the island.

Figure 22: Participants' answers to question number 9 in the survey

What do you think the shooting of the series on the island has meant for the inhabitants of the island?



Source: Own elaboration

This has happened because landscapes are a fundamental part of the story being told on this series. Landscapes are one more character in the story, and therefore, they are very well described and shown. The use of drone images has given the viewer a completely different perspective of the island, and it has made it very appealing. This has meant a very big promotion campaign, since the number of tourists on the island has increased and El Hierro has achieved to be in the spotlight as one of the most attractive tourist destinations within the national panorama.

Another major impact recognized by respondents is the great international visibility the series has provided. Before *Hierro* was shot, many people from Spain didn't even know that the island existed. Now not only they know it does, but they can also locate it on a map. Even people from outside of Spain have learned about the existence of El Hierro.

Furthermore, people think that it has improved the economy of the island. There was housing rented for the crew, and housing was rented for the shooting itself. Also, the cost of food and living expenses for that long period of time had an impact on the local economy. It also created a lot of employment for the local population and had a great impact on the island's

businesses, since every service needed by people involved in the shooting (accommodation, food, rental cars...) were covered by the local establishments.

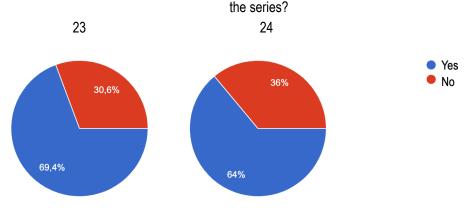
From a cultural point of view, many people were able to participate as extras in the shooting, get to know this discipline from the inside, meet the actors and many people from the island. All this had an impact on the value people from El Hierro give to their island. Besides that, a great interest has arisen about the traditions and customs of the island and the most important ones have been made known (such as The Descent of the Virgin). Furthermore, the way of being of the *Herreños* and their idiosyncrasy has been reflected, in a very faithful way to reality.

On the other hand, as we can appreciate in Figure 22, only 0.5% of respondents think that the shooting of *Hierro* has been only damaging for them. The main reasons that these people, and people who think it was both beneficial and damaging give are that: some calmness of the island has been lost, trips need to be planned way more in advance than before to find flight tickets, house rentals are now more difficult to find and more expensive, it is not so easy to find parking spots anymore, and there is more traffic due to a higher number of people on the island. Respondents also highlight that the island still does not have adequate tourist infrastructure to accommodate the big demand of tourism that it has had and is still having.

Afterwards, I asked participants if they had noticed any change in their daily life during and after the shooting of the series. Results were very similar in both questions. Between 30 and 36% of respondents didn't notice any change at all, whereas between 64 and 69% did notice some changes during and after the shooting of the series.

Figures 23 and 24: Participants' answers to questions 11 and 13 in the survey

23. Did you notice any changes in your daily life, for better or worse, during the shooting of the series? 24. Have you noticed any changes in your daily life, for better or worse, after the shooting and premiere of



Source: Own elaboration

During the shooting of the series, what people noticed the most was more people on the island. More people entering the local businesses and therefore higher number of sales, more traffic and higher accommodation occupancy. Many of the participants could rent every property they had during that time. As negative impacts, the lack of parking spots, rental cars and accommodation stand out. Also, there was restricted access to many areas.

After the shooting and premiere of the series, a streak in tourism, consumption, and revenue were the most impactful aspects on the life of the locals. Besides that, more people from abroad were looking for houses and private land properties for long term rentals at an economic level that many *Herreños* can not afford. On top of that, there have been improvements on public spaces and infrastructure.

To finish, respondents were asked whether they thought the shooting was a positive or negative experience for the island as a whole. To this, only two people said it was a negative experience, another two that it was both positive and negative, and 182 that it was fully positive.

Their main reasoning was the knowledge of the island abroad and the tourist promotion entailed. They also argued that this entire promotion would be insufficient if public institutions and the government do not try to keep boosting and improving the island and its resources. Yet, this promotion may alter the island's charm, mostly due to its calmness.

7. FINDINGS & PROPOSALS FOR PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT

As I have been demonstrating throughout this paper, I can affirm that the *Hierro* series has had, in general, a positive impact on tourism on the island of El Hierro that is enormously greater than the negative one. Furthermore, the impact that this series has meant for the local community has also been very beneficial.

With the analysis carried out, I can provide answers to the objectives proposed at the beginning of this research. To begin with, the series does work as a tourist promotion tool. It has served as a great indirect tourism campaign that has been more useful than any of those carried out in the last years. As such, it has encouraged visits to the island, especially after the premiere of the first season, in 2019, when the island almost doubled the number of visitors received, compared to the previous year. In 2020, the percentage of French and Germans increased in comparison to 2020, although the figures are not very significant due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Moreover, the series has helped to transform the positioning of the island, attracting a tourist profile to the island that wasn't interested in the destination before. Nevertheless, it didn't serve as a mechanism for the deseasonalization of the demand, since most tourists still choose to visit the island during the summer season. Besides that, the main purpose of visiting the island hasn't changed from previous years, however, the island is now also receiving another type of tourist, one more interested in the cinematographic world. In addition, tourist products have been created, consisting of routes of locations that appear in the series, a very common tourist product in destinations where a cinematographic project has been shot.

All the previous mentioned aspects mean positive impacts on the island. However, there are two main negative aspects that are worth highlighting. The first one consists of an overcrowding of the island, its natural areas and its facilities. This leads to a generalized discomfort among one part of the local population. The second negative aspect is the sharp rise in rental, property and land prices, to a point where *Herreños* can not afford it anymore.

During the process of studying the impact of the series on the island of El Hierro, I have reached several conclusions. Firstly, there is much official tourism data that is missing. Data that

is available for other islands, but that has never been created for El Hierro, because of the small percentage that tourism in the island means for the Canary Islands in general. Secondly, El Hierro does not have enough infrastructure to accommodate a very big amount of tourists: there aren't enough accommodation establishments (only 21), nor available rental cars, nor enough frequency or seats in air and sea transportation. This is a direct consequence of the type of tourism rooted on the island: quality rather than quantity and tourists who seek tranquility and disconnection, far from crowded places.

Moreover, although it is true that the local authorities have taken action to take advantage of the promotional momentum that the series has given the island, this action is far from being enough to keep the interest on the island. For that reason, I propose a course of action that could be considered to keep that engagement that tourists have been showing on the island after the series premiered. On the one hand, it is necessary to do an in-depth analysis of the tourism sector on the island. Tourism research has to be carried out by both El Hierro authorities and Promotur (Canary Islands Tourism) with the same intensity and detail as it is done for islands such as Tenerife or Gran Canaria. There can not be missing official tourism data of the island, knowing how important the tourism sector is in the archipelago. It is necessary to study the island and how tourists behave, in order to know what are the opportunities that the island presents with regard to tourism, and what are the elements that can differentiate its offer. As it is clear that the "boom" of the series will not last forever, it would be interesting to carry this study to find a way to complement film tourism with nature and relaxation tourism offered in El Hierro in the past years.

On the other hand, the national and local markets are already consolidated on the island. However, we have seen that after the series was aired, French and German markets have risen their interest in El Hierro. It would be a great moment to deepen communication with these new markets. Thus, besides attending big tourism fairs (such as Fitur, ITB, WTM, etc.), which representatives of the island already do, they should start taking part in B2B specialized events with these two markets. This would mean attending events with agents of the tourism sector in those two countries. Besides that, El Hierro tourism authorities should start planning roadshows in France and Germany with travel agents and tour operators to show them what the island has to offer, so that they can sell it to the final consumer with first-hand knowledge. Moreover, they could organize press and familiarization trips to bring some of those travel agents/tour operators and some press agents to the island, with the purpose of showing El Hierro through the experience, which would add value to their previous understanding of the island.

Furthermore, to follow the strategy proposed above, the island would have to, at least, double the number of lodging establishments currently available. And with that, increase and improve all kinds of infrastructure on the island. Finally, it would be necessary to renegotiate air and sea connections, to increase frequencies or even to study the possibility of establishing direct charter flights with some cities in France and Germany.

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9. ANNEXES

Annex 1:



Annex 2:



Annex 3:



Annex 4: Annex 5:



Annex 6:



Annex 7:

Link to the survey: https://forms.gle/5C2RHMRgjfnD9CQF9