



"Canary Islands, a volcanic window in the Atlantic Ocean": a 7 year effort of public awareness on volcano hazards and risk management

Fátima Rodríguez (1), David Calvo (1), Nemesio M. Pérez (1,2), Eleazar Padrón (1,2), Gladys Melián (1,2), Germán Padilla (1,2), José Barrancos (1,2), Pedro A. Hernández (1,2), María Asensio-Ramos (1), and Mar Alonso (1)

(1) Instituto Volcanológico de Canarias (INVOLCAN), 38400, Puerto de la Cruz, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain, (2) Environmental Research Division, Instituto Tecnológico y de Energías Renovables (ITER), 38611, Granadilla de Abona, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain

"Canary Islands: A volcanic window in the Atlantic Ocean" is an educational program born from the need to inform and educate citizens residing in the Canary Islands on the various hazards associated to volcanic phenomena. The Canary Islands is the only territory of Spain that hosts active volcanism, as is shown by the 16 historical eruptions that have occurred throughout this territory, being the last one a submarine eruption taking place on October 12, 2011, offshore El Hierro Island. In the last 7 years, ITER as well as INVOLCAN have been performing an educative program focused on educating to the population about the benefits of a volcanic territory, volcanic hazards, how to reduce volcanic risk and the management of volcanic risk in the Canary Islands. "Canary Islands: A volcanic window in the Atlantic Ocean" consists of three units, the first two dedicated to the IAVCEI/UNESCO videos "Understanding Volcanic Hazards" and "Reducing Volcanic Risk" and the third one dedicated to the management of volcanic risk in the Canary Islands, as well as some other aspects of the volcanic phenomena. Generally the three units are shown consecutively on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. This educative program has been roaming all around the 88 municipalities of the archipelago since this initiative started in 2008. The total number of attendees since then amounts to 18,911 people. The increase of assistance was constant until 2011, with annual percentages of 7.8, 17.1 and 20.9 respectively, regarding to ratio assistant/municipality. Despite the heterogeneity of the audience, the main audience is related to aged people of 45 years and older. This could be related to the memories of the recent eruptions occurred at La Palma Island in 1949 and 1971. It is important to point out that many of those people attending the educative program are representatives of local government (i.e. civil protection). Regarding the interest of the audience, the educational program attendees have shown special interest on the possibility that a lateral collapse may occur in the volcanic edifices of Teide in Tenerife and Cumbre Vieja in La Palma. In addition, a volcanic trivial is provided to the attendees before the educative program starts. They have to answer to several questions directly related to each unit before and after the unit is taught, so it's possible to estimate the impact of the program. It's also important to highlight that after each unit ends, the rates of success in the answers sharply increase. Therefore, the ultimate goal of this educational program is to contribute to a better organized and informed community in relation to volcanic risk in Canary Islands and become much less vulnerable than a community that does not know or ignores volcanic hazards, and it is not organized to respond to them.