

ARGENTINA¹: FROM THE SMALL SCREEN TO THE PLATFORMS. THE REBIRTH OF TELEVISION FICTION

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7764/obitel.23.e.arg>

Authors:

Monica Kirchheimer² (<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3319-0520>)

Ezequiel Rivero³ (<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-8124-0975>)

Introduction

2022 was a year dominated by the return of the reality show par excellence: *Big Brother* -since October- and the World Cup. These two events were the most watched and generated an interesting debate about the topics, modes and programs that attract audiences to broadcast television. In addition, only two fictions of national production were released on open television channels, while, as has been reported in previous years, national fictions for streaming platforms release their first chapter in linear television spaces. This premiere works as a sort of caller towards novelties in on-demand viewing spaces. In this scenario, the telenovelas released on open television during the year (*El Primero de Nosotros* and *La 1-5/18 Somos Uno*⁴) did not end up meeting the expectations initially generated.

1. The Audiovisual Context of Argentina in 2022

1.1. Open television in Argentina

Argentina's open television system can be characterized through the main players based in Buenos Aires, which includes six private channels that, through direct ownership of affiliates in different provinces, or commercial agreements with repeaters and the sale of specific content, achieve national coverage despite having licenses that, in most cases, only cover the Buenos Aires Metropolitan Area (this includes the City of Buenos Aires and surrounding urban areas).

¹ The Obitel Argentina team would like to thank Kantar Ibope Media, since without the information provided by them it would not be possible to carry out some of the analyses presented here.

² Professor and researcher at the National University of the Arts (UNA) and the University of Buenos Aires (UBA).

³ Conicet postdoctoral fellow at the National University of Quilmes (UNQ).

⁴ *La 1-5/18. Somos Uno* began airing in September 2021 but continued until March 2022.

Box 1. National open television channels in Argentina

Private channels (6)	Public channels (1)
América 2 (channel 2)	TV Pública (channel 7)
El Nueve (channel 9)	
Telefe (channel 11)	
El Trece (channel 13)	
Net TV	
Bravo TV	
TOTAL CHANNELS = 7	

Source: Obitel Argentina

The most consolidated and long-established private commercial channels are Telefe (Paramount, United States), El Trece (Grupo Clarín, Argentina), El Nueve (Grupo Octubre, Argentina) and América (Grupo América, Argentina). Net TV (Grupo Perfil, Argentina) was added in 2018, and Bravo TV (Grupo Olmos and Grupo Crónica, Argentina)⁵ in 2022. The latter still have low brand recognition, low audience levels and a programming that highlights the repositioning of fictions from different Ibero-American countries, generally already aired years before by other open TV channels. TV Pública (Radio y Televisión Argentina Sociedad del Estado) is the first Argentine television channel and the only one with a nationwide license. However, the state broadcaster enjoys a low social significance, marginal audience levels, capture of its editorial line by the governments in office and permanent difficulties to stabilize an identity and artistic-communication project in the long term (Schejtman, Rivero and Becerra, 2021). Channels licensed for open television are also available through Digital Terrestrial Television (known in Argentina under the brand name Televisión Digital Abierta, TDA), with reach within their respective coverage areas⁶.

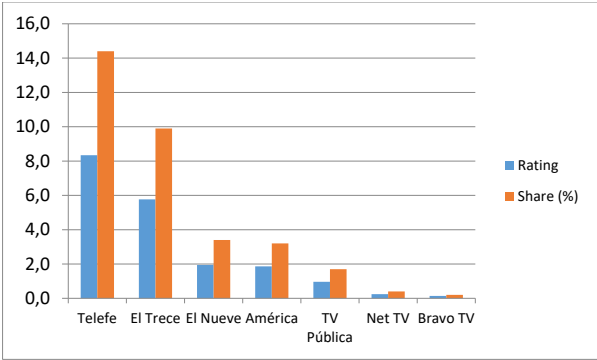
Graph 1. TV rating and share by channel (rating per household).

Channel	Rating household	%	Share (%)
Telefe	8,3	43,3	14,4
El Trece	5,8	29,9	9,9
El Nueve	1,9	10,1	3,4
América	1,9	9,7	3,2
TV Pública	1,0	5,0	1,7
Net TV	0,2	1,2	0,4
Bravo TV	0,1	0,7	0,2
TOTAL	19,3	100,0	33,2

Source: Kantar Ibope Media and Obitel Argentina.

⁵ None of these television channels located in the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires, the nation’s capital city, has national reach. This is achieved through agreements and retransmission agreements with local television stations.

⁶ Information available in April 2023 at <https://www.tda.gob.ar/canales-cobertura.php>.

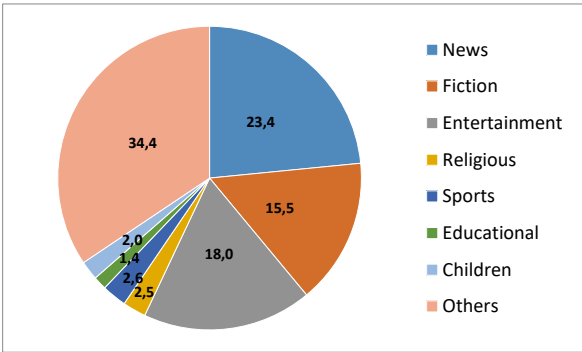


Source: Kantar Ibope Media and Obitel Argentina.

Graph 2: Genres and hours broadcast in TV programming

Broadcast genres	Exhibition hours	%
News	12.966:00	23,4
Fiction	8.592:00	15,5
Entertainment	9.983:00	18,0
Religious	1.374:00	2,5
Sports	1.461:00	2,6
Educational	786:00	1,4
Children	1.125:00	2,0
Others	19.025:00	34,4
TOTAL	55.312:00	100,0

Source: Kantar Ibope Media and Obitel Argentina.



Source: Kantar Ibope Media and Obitel Argentina.

The total number of hours shown by the seven channels observed increased by 11.1% due to the start of the new channel, Bravo TV, as of May 2022. In percentage terms, no significant variations are observed in the participation of each genre in the total hours broadcast with the only exception of fiction, which went from representing 10% of the programming in 2021, with 4,996 hours, to 15.5% of the total, with 8,592 hours broadcast. This jump is mainly explained by the contributions of NetTV and BravoTV, which base most of their programming on

Latin American telenovelas, generally broadcast in previous years on other open television channels, such as *Avenida Brasil*, *La Usurpadora*, *Rosario Tijeras* or *Pedro el Escamoso*. Thus, and paradoxically, as we will see below, the presence of fiction on the open television screen in Argentina grew in 2022, although it is neither national nor premiere fiction.

1.2. Pay TV and VoD platforms in Argentina in 2022

According to data from the Ente Nacional de Comunicaciones (ENaCom) for the third quarter of 2022, 67.2% of Argentine households had some pay TV service. This figure is slightly lower than the 68.7% reported by the state agency for the same period in 2021. Most of the connections were made through a physical link (cable modem and to a lesser extent ADSL), while satellite technology captures a smaller market share of less than 15%. If clandestine connections are added, it is estimated that close to 80% of the country’s households would have access to this service, one of the highest penetration levels in the continent. The pay TV market is strongly concentrated in the hands of the company Personal (controlled by the merged Telecom-Clarín Group), which holds close to 40% of the market, especially in provincial capitals and the most profitable urban centers. There are also peripheral players such as telecommunications cooperatives and SMEs that provide this service in places farther away from large urban centers and with lower population density and commercial interest, which together account for less than 20% of the pay TV market.

Box 2. Most watched pay TV channels in Argentina 2022

10 most watched pay TV channels in Argentina			
Channel	Genre	Origin	Rating household
TN	News	Argentina	1,9
C5N	News	Argentina	1,2
LN+	News	Argentina	1,1
TyC Sports	Sports	Argentina	0,9
Crónica TV	News	Argentina	0,9
A24	News	Argentina	0,8
ESPN	Sports	United States	0,8
Canal 26	News	Argentina	0,7
Cartoon Network	Children	United States	0,5
Universal TV	Varieties	United States	0,4

Source: Kantar Ibope Media and Obitel Argentina.

The first two places among the most watched pay-TV channels are unchanged with respect to the previous year. TN (Grupo Clarín) and C5N (Grupo Indalo), whose programming is oriented to information, analysis, opinion and political debate, grew in audience and remained as the most watched stations. Likewise, the opinion

channel LN+ went from seventh place the previous year to become the third most watched pay TV channel.

Although 2022 was not an election year, the information, analysis and political opinion channels in general climbed in the audience. This may be due, in part, to the political, economic and social crisis the country is going through, which found a high point in the assassination attempt against the Vice-President of the Nation in September 2022, her prison sentence and lifetime disqualification to hold public office, the replacement of three ministers of Economy in one year and the frequent political tensions within the ruling party and the opposition, together with the general deterioration of the main socioeconomic indicators.

As we have said, pay TV in the country has a penetration close to 80% of households, but pay TV channels, although with exceptions, are not regular producers of serialized fiction content. On the side of global video-on-demand platforms, Netflix was the first player to settle in that market in 2011, which it comfortably dominated until 2020, when the launches of Disney+, Star+, HBO Max, among others, took place. According to data from Havas Media (2022), the video platform market in Argentina is currently led by Netflix (25%), closely followed by Prime Video (22%), Disney+ (13%), HBO Max (10%) and Paramount+ (6%). Since 2018 and increasingly, all these companies, with the sole exception of Paramount+, have ventured into the production of “local” serialized fiction. In 2022, as will be seen below, the set of global platforms released more national serialized fiction shows than the sum of all open television channels.

1.3. Sources of financing for the audiovisual sector

According to the Argentine Chamber of Media Agencies (CAAM, in Spanish), “in the first semester 2022 the media advertising investment market grew 84% in current pesos compared to the same semester 2021, and translated into dollars there is a 52% growth”⁷. In the first six months of the year, television received USD 220,600,000 (41.4% of total investment), a slight increase in absolute terms compared to USD 146,700,000 in the same period of the previous year. Compared to the January-June period of the previous year, the distribution of advertising investment remains stable among the different media, with television (41.4%) and digital media (41.1%) accounting for the largest share. Another important source of income for the media (although it is not clear if it is accounted for in the above CAAM numbers), is the state investment. As reported by the National Media Secretariat, between September 2021 and April 2022 (eight months) the six main open television channels in Buenos Aires received AR\$ 618,730,142.25 (about USD 3,000,000 at the official exchange rate of April 2023), which represents 7.1% of the total invested⁸. To this must be

⁷ Available in April 2023 at <https://www.agenciasdemedios.com.ar/inversiones-publicitarias/>

⁸ Data available at https://www.argentina.gob.ar/sites/default/files/informe_inversion_al_30-5.pdf

added the state advertising that the media receive from different provinces or municipalities, which makes it even more complex to calculate the exact amount of money they receive for this concept⁹.

1.4. Communication policies

The year 2022 was a year of low intensity for communication policies. One of the main regulatory actions of Alberto Fernández's government was the issuance of the Necessity and Urgency Decree 690/2020 in August 2020, which declared ICT services as a public service in the context of the pandemic. That decree gave the National State the power to intervene in the setting of tariffs for some communication services. However, large telecommunications companies, some SMEs and, more recently, all other players providing this type of services, obtained injunctions from the courts against the implementation of this measure, so that its practical effect was very limited.

On the other hand, by the end of 2022 the Ente Nacional de Comunicación advanced with the issuance of a regulation for the implementation of 5G technology in the country¹⁰. However, at the closing of this chapter, the specialized press reported disagreements between the National State's collection claims for the spectrum bidding and what large companies would be willing to effectively invest, so that the bidding documents are not yet known and the deployment of this technology in the country does not appear as a possibility in the short term. In the framework of the transmissions of the Qatar 2022 Men's World Cup, the National Government put in value the transmission infrastructure of the Digital Terrestrial Television system, which had been neglected during the government of Mauricio Macri (2015-2019) and also during the current one, until 2022¹¹.

1.5. Digital and mobile connectivity infrastructure

Mobile telephony continues to be, together with free and open television, the most widespread information access technology, with a nationwide penetration that exceeds 100% in almost all regions of the country, and a national average of 128.9% according to ENaCom data for the third quarter of 2022¹². As of September 2022, there were 59.7 million mobile accesses in the country, out of a population of 46 million. However, more than 50% of active mobile lines are prepaid and more widely used among lower middle socioeconomic sectors. The deployment of 4G technology has grown rapidly in recent years, reaching a wide coverage of the territory. Regarding broadband to the home, the average penetration at national level reaches 76.6% of the country's households, an increase of almost 6% compared to the same period

⁹ See more at <https://chequeado.com/el-explicador/publicidad-oficial-como-cuanto-y-a-que-medios-reparten-el-dinero-los-gobiernos-porteno-bonaerense-y-santafesino/>

¹⁰ Source: https://www.enacom.gob.ar/institucional/un-paso-decisivo-para-la-llegada-del-5g-a-la-argentina_n4236

¹¹ See more at <https://www.letrap.com.ar/nota/2022-11-7-10-1-0-la-apuesta-mundial-de-la-tv-publica-para-sostener-la-pesada-mochila-de-la-tda>

¹² Data available at <https://indicadores.enacom.gob.ar/Informes>

of 2021. Likewise, there are regions such as the City of Buenos Aires where the adoption of the service is almost total, and other provinces such as Chaco, Formosa, Corrientes and Santa Cruz, where this figure does not reach 50% of households.

Although the national average speed is 62.5 Mbps (a significant growth compared to 48.5 Mbps in 2021) and access offers at more than 30 Mbps are common, almost 40% of domestic connections are concentrated in the speed range below 30 Mbps, with large variations in the speed available depending on the province.

As for the type of technology, cable modem dominates (54.3%), but fiber-to-the-home connections have grown in recent years to reach 25.8% in 2022. The territorial extension added to the dispersion of the population in rural areas or in small urban concentrations, combined with the absence or low quality of connectivity infrastructure in some regions and economic difficulties, prevent access to the Internet.

The absence of the market and the State in some areas of the country has allowed the deployment of telecommunications cooperatives and, more experimentally, the emergence of community internet access networks self-managed by the inhabitants themselves.

2. Analysis of the Year: National and Ibero-American Release Fiction in 2022

TABLE 1. Release fiction productions screened in 2022
(domestic, foreign Obitel and co-productions)

NATIONAL PREVIOUSLY UNRELEASED PRODUCTIONS – 10 Telefe – 1 national production 1. <i>El Primero de Nosotros</i> (telenovela) El Trece – 5 national productions 2. <i>La 1-5/18 Somos Uno</i> (telenovela) 3. <i>El Encargado</i> (miniseries) 4. <i>Los Protectores</i> (miniseries) 5. <i>Robo Mundial</i> (miniseries) 6. <i>Santa Evita</i> (miniseries) El Nueve – 2 national productions 7. <i>El Hincha</i> (miniseries) 8. <i>Supernova</i> (miniseries) TV Pública - 2 productions 9. <i>40 Años</i> (miniseries) 10. <i>Las Polacas</i> (miniseries) América – 0 productions Net TV – 0 productions Bravo TV – 0 productions CO-PRODUCTIONS – 1 TV Pública - 1 production 11. <i>Sumergidos</i> (series, Argentina-Brazil)	IMPORTED PREVIOUSLY UNRELEASED PRODUCTIONS – 6 Telefe - 1 production 1. <i>Club 57 2</i> (miniseries – Hispanic US and Italy) 2. <i>Génesis</i> (telenovela – Brazil) 3. <i>Dulce Ambición</i> (telenovela – Brazil) Net TV- 2 productions 4. <i>El Señor de los Cielos</i> (telenovela – Hispanic US) 5. <i>La Piloto</i> (telenovela – Mexico) Bravo TV – 1 production 6. <i>Enfermeras</i> (telenovela – Colombia) El Trece - 0 El Nueve - 0 productions América – 0 productions TV Pública –0 productions TOTAL PREVIOUSLY UNRELEASED PRODUCTIONS: 17
---	---

Source: Obitel Argentina

The number of domestic and imported unreleased productions remains at 17, as in the previous year, with an increase in the number of Argentine productions from eight in 2021 to ten in 2022. This happens, however, in the midst of the consolidation of a phenomenon that we have already reported in the previous yearbook referred to the use of the linear screen for the premiere of one or two episodes as a “promotional” of series that then become part of the catalogs of different video on demand platforms. This happened in particular this year with the alliance between El Trece and Star+, which allowed the premiere of the first chapters of the series *Robo Mundial*, *El Encargado*, *Los Protectores* and *Santa Evita* on open television. Telefe was the only free-to-air channel to release a daily series in 2022, *El Primero de Nosotros*, since *La 1-5/18 Somos Uno* of El Trece is a continuation of the previous year. TV Pública, which in 2021 had not released any fiction, resumed with the airing of two shows produced in the province of Santa Fe, *40 Abriles* and *Las Polacas*.

TABLE 1b. Reruns exhibition in 2022
(domestic, foreign Obitel productions, and co-productions).

NATIONAL RERUNS– 6	FOREIGN RERUNS – 14
Telefe - 1 national production	Net TV- 3 productions
1. <i>Casados con Hijos</i> (series - Argentina)	7. <i>Betty la Fea</i> (telenovela – Colombia)
El Nueve – 1 national production	8. <i>Imperio</i> (telenovela – Brazil)
2. <i>Ricos y Famosos</i> (telenovela- Argentina)	9. <i>Pedro el Escamoso</i> (telenovela – Colombia)
TV Pública - 4 productions	Bravo TV – 11 productions
3. <i>Artigas</i> (miniseries – Argentina)	10. <i>Avenida Brasil</i> (telenovela – Brazil)
4. <i>En Viaje</i> (miniseries – Argentina)	11. <i>Destilando Amor</i> (telenovela – Mexico)
5. <i>Okupas</i> (miniseries – Argentina)	12. <i>El Cartel</i> (telenovela – Colombia)
6. <i>Post Mortem</i> (miniseries – Argentina)	13. <i>Esmeralda</i> (telenovela – Mexico)
El Trece – 0 productions	14. <i>La Usurpadora</i> (telenovela – Mexico)
América – 0 productions	15. <i>La Venganza de Analía</i> (telenovela – Colombia)
Net TV – 0 productions	16. <i>Metástasis</i> (series – Colombia)
Bravo TV – 0 productions	17. <i>Primera Dama</i> (telenovela – Colombia)
CO-PRODUCTIONS – 0	18. <i>Querer sin Límites</i> (telenovela – Brazil)
	19. <i>Rosario Tijeras</i> (series – Mexico)
	20. <i>Los Herederos del Monte</i> (telenovela – Colombia, Hispanic US)
	El Nueve - 0 productions
	América – 0 productions
	TV Pública – 0 productions
	El Trece – 0 productions
	TOTAL RERUNS: 20

Source: Obitel Argentina

Outside the Obitel sphere, numerous Turkish shows were programmed, although, unlike in previous years, most of them were broadcast in the evenings. Telefe broadcast

the Turkish telenovelas *Amor de Familia*, the return of *Doctor Milagro* on Saturday afternoons, *Fugitiva*, *Hercai*, *Nuestro Amor Eterno*, *Soñar Contigo* and *Zuleyha*. Bravo TV broadcast in prime-time the Turkish fiction *En Nombre del Honor* and NetTV the Italian-Argentine telenovela *Tierra Indomable*, originally released in 2010. These productions, which generally exceed 150 chapters each on average, added to the large number of reruns of *Obitel*, especially on Bravo TV and NetTV, explain the increase of fiction as a genre on the open television screen. Added to this there is an unusual practice in open television channels in Buenos Aires, which is the repetition of the same episode in two different time slots within the same day. Such is the case of *Pedro el Escamoso* on NetTV broadcasted from six to seven in the morning and then from five to seven in the afternoon. This strategy is even more accentuated in Bravo TV, which did the same with shows such as *Avenida Brasil*, *Destilando Amor*, *Esmeralda*, *Primera Dama*, *Querer sin Límites*, and even the telenovela *Enfermeras*, which had two versions: one suitable for all audiences that aired at 3 pm, and another promoted as “original version uncut rerun” at 11 pm the same day¹³.

TABLE 2. Formats of national fiction released in 2022
and its evolution in the five-year period.

Format	Productions						Hours					
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Telenovela	5	4	1	1	2	13	389:10	289:30	35:00	72:10	115:05	900:55
Series	3	5	0	2	0	10	55:30	38:00	0:00	14:10	0:00	107:40
Miniseries	10	8	4	5	9	36	66:20	36:30	26:45	17:00	28:55	175:30
Sitcom	0	1	0	0	0	1	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
Unitary	2	0	0	0	0	2	16:00	7:40	0:00	0:00	0:00	23:40
Docudrama	0	0	0	0	0	0	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
Others	0	0	0	0	0	0	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
Total	20	18	5	8	11	62	527:00	371:40	61:45	103:20	144:00	1207:45

Source: Kantar Ibope Media y Obitel Argentina

The evolution of formats in the last five years allows noticing the quasi-disappearance of the national premiere telenovela from the open television screen. In any case, short formats (series, miniseries, unitaries) are also decreasing, although the latter, as we will see below, reappear as the favorite format of Argentine fiction on VoD platforms. Taking the period 2018-2022, a 45% drop in the number of productions and 53% in the number of hours is observed. The latter indicator sinks further due to the disappearance of telenovelas and the increase of short formats, which contribute fewer hours and gain more relative weight in the programming.

¹³ See more at https://www.grupocronica.com.ar/resources/descargables/mediakit_bravo_tv_2022.pdf

TABLE 3. Released fiction exhibited in 2022: countries of origin

Country	Productions	%	Hours	%
NATIONAL (total)	11	65	144:00	15
OBITEL COUNTRIES (total)	6	35	831:30	85
Argentina	11	65	144:00	15
Brazil	2	12	136:20	14
Chile	0	0	0:00	0
Colombia	1	6	342:15	35
Ecuador	0	0	0:00	0
Spain	0	0	0:00	0
Hispanic US	1	6	314:05	32
Mexico	1	6	35:25	4
Peru	0	0	0:00	0
Portugal	0	0	0:00	0
Uruguay	0	0	0:00	0
Venezuela	0	0	0:00	0
CO-PRODUCTIONS (totals)	2	12	12:30	1
National Co-Productions	1	6	9:20	1
Obitel countries Co-Productions	1	6	2:35	0
TOTAL	17	100	975:30	100

Source: Kantar Ibope Media y Obitel Argentina

The total number of national releases remains stable in relation to the previous year, but distorted by the launching, on El Trece, of single promotional episodes of series made exclusively for the Star+ platform. Along with the above, there is a slight recovery in the number of national premiere hours after the historic low reached in the first year of the pandemic. However, the 144 hours of national releases in 2022 are far from the more than 1000 hours of a decade ago, thus consolidating a process of displacement of Argentine fiction from open television to the platforms. The presence of Obitel fiction increased by almost 200 hours with respect to the previous year. The countries of origin of these contents are the same: Brazil, Colombia, Hispanic United States and Mexico.

TABLE 4. Formats of national and Ibero-American fiction exhibited in 2022

Format	Productions				Hours			
	National	%	Obitel Area	%	National	%	Obitel Area	%
Telenovela	2	18,2	5	83,3	115:05	79,9	828:50	99,7
Series	0	0,0	1	16,7	0:00	0,0	0:00	0,0
Miniseries	9	81,8	0	0,0	28:55	20,1	2:40	0,3
Telefilm	0	0,0	0	0,0	0:00	0,0	0:00	0,0
Unitary	0	0,0	0	0,0	0:00	0,0	0:00	0,0
Docudrama	0	0,0	0	0,0	0:00	0,0	0:00	0,0
Others	0	0,0	0	0,0	0:00	0,0	0:00	0,0
Total	11	100	6	100	144:00	100	831:30	100

Source: Kantar Ibope Media y Obitel Argentina

As shown in the table above, in the field of Argentine fiction, the releases of short-format productions are preponderant. In the case of national telenovelas, of the two reported, only one was released during 2022 and the other is a continuation of a production started the previous year. As usual, in the opposite direction, imports of Obitel productions are concentrated almost exclusively in telenovelas.

TABLE 5: Top 10 Most watched productions in 2022

Title		Channel	Production company (country)	Format/genre	No. of episodes in 2022	Time slot	Rating	Share
1	<i>El Primero de Nosotros</i>	Telefe	Viacom Studios (AR)	Telenovela	59	Prime-Time	11,2	16,6
2	<i>La 1-5/18. Somos Uno</i>	El Trece	Pol-Ka (AR)	Telenovela	60	Prime-Time	8,9	14,8
3	<i>Dulce Ambición</i>	Telefe	Globo (BR)	Telenovela	46	Tarde	8,9	17,8
4	<i>El Encargado</i>	El Trece	Pegsa Group (AR)	Miniseries	1	Prime-Time	8,6	13,4
5	<i>Génesis</i> ¹⁴	Telefe	Record TV (BR)	Telenovela	93	Prime-Time / Tarde	8,0	12,5
6	<i>Santa Evita</i>	El Trece	Non Stop (AR)	Miniseries	1	Prime-Time	7,8	11,2
7	<i>Los Protectores</i>	El Trece	Kapow (AR)	Miniseries	2	Prime-Time	7,4	9,7
8	<i>Robo Mundial</i>	El Trece	Full Frame, Pampa Film, Gloriamundi (AR)	Miniseries	1	Prime-Time	6,1	9,8
9	<i>Supernova</i>	El Nueve	Kapow and Grupo Octubre (AR)	Miniseries	4	Prime-Time	1,7	2,2
10	<i>El Hinch</i>	El Nueve	GM Comunicación. Grupo Octubre (AR)	Miniseries	6	Prime-Time	1,5	2,0
Total National Productions: 8				Foreign Original Scripts: 2				
80%				20%				

Source: Kantar Ibope Media and Obitel Argentina

As in the previous year, the most watched fiction is national, with an average rating slightly higher than the show that topped the top ten in 2021. Also as in 2021, two of the ten most watched shows are of Brazilian origin. The remaining ones are Argentine, but as we have mentioned, four of them are actually single promotional episodes of series exclusive to the Star+ platform.

¹⁴ The telenovela Génesis (Telefe) was broadcast in 2022 in two different timeslots. Originally, the channel programmed it in prime-time where it aired 53 episodes with an average rating of 9.3. It then moved to the evening time slot where it aired another 40 episodes with an audience of 6.6 rating points. Thus, in order to avoid duplicating the title in the top ten, all the audience indicators presented in tables 5 and 6 are averages of the broadcasts in both time slots.

TABLE 5a: Top 10 most watched national productions in 2022

Title		Channel	Production company (country)	Format/genre	No. of episodes in 2022	Time slot	Rating	Share
1	<i>El Primero de Nosotros</i>	Telefe	Viacom Studios (AR)	Telenovela	59	Prime-Time	11,2	16,6
2	<i>La 1-5/18. Somos Uno</i>	El Trece	Pol-Ka (AR)	Telenovela	60	Prime-Time	8,9	14,8
3	<i>El Encargado</i>	El Trece	Pegsa Group (AR)	Miniseries	1	Prime-Time	8,6	13,4
4	<i>Santa Evita</i>	El Trece	Non Stop (AR)	Miniseries	1	Prime-Time	7,8	11,2
5	<i>Los Protectores</i>	El Trece	Kapow (AR)	Miniseries	2	Prime-Time	7,4	9,7
6	<i>Robo Mundial</i>	El Trece	Full Frame, Pampa Film (AR)	Miniseries	1	Prime-Time	6,1	9,8
7	<i>Supernova</i>	El Nueve	Kapow and Grupo Octubre (AR)	Miniseries	4	Prime-Time	1,7	2,2
8	<i>El Hinch</i>	El Nueve	GM Comunicación. Grupo Octubre (AR)	Miniseries	6	Prime-Time	1,5	2,0
9	<i>Sumergidos</i>	TV Pública	Story Lab Jaque Content (AR/BR)	Miniseries	13	Prime-Time	0,5	0,7
10	<i>Las Polacas</i>	TV Pública	Suárez/Ciampechini (AR)	Miniseries	6	Prime-Time	0,2	0,3
Total National Productions: 10				Foreign Original Scripts: 0				
100%				0%				

Source: Kantar Ibope Media and Obitel Argentina

In recent years, Obitel Argentina has observed that productions with relatively low audience levels and broadcasted in channels that compete for the fourth or fifth position in the general rating, nevertheless manage to include national fictions among the most watched programs of the year, given the generalized drop in the fiction audience and the lower broadcasting of this type of contents.

In fact, series such as *Las Polacas* of TV Pública with an average of 0.2 rating points enter the national top ten. On its part, El Nueve includes among the most watched shows two of its own fictions: *Supernova* and *El Hinch*, also with audience levels below two points. Grupo Octubre, which controls El Nueve, a station that does not usually produce or broadcast national fiction, enters the group of channels that have produced fiction, with *Supernova* for the Prime Video platform and *El Hinch* for Flow of Grupo Clarín.

TABLE 6: Audience profile of the 10 most watched productions:
gender, age, socio-economic status

Title		Channel	Sex %		SES%			
			Women	Men	ABC1	C2	C3	D
1	<i>El Primero de Nosotros</i>	Telefe	63,7	36,3	24,7	15,9	28,4	31,0
2	<i>La 1-5/18. Somos Uno</i>	El Trece	54,1	45,9	21,8	21,5	26,0	30,8
3	<i>Dulce Ambición</i>	Telefe	64,5	35,5	29,4	15,6	20,6	34,4
4	<i>El Encargado</i>	El Trece	52,4	47,6	9,3	30,3	32,0	28,3
5	<i>Génesis</i>	Telefe	61,3	38,7	16,6	12,2	27,6	43,4
6	<i>Santa Evita</i>	El Trece	55,1	44,9	8,0	34,0	32,3	25,7
7	<i>Los Protectores</i>	El Trece	56,8	43,2	35,0	11,6	28,1	25,4
8	<i>Robo Mundial</i>	El Trece	54,7	45,3	9,9	23,3	28,8	38,0
9	<i>Supernova</i>	El Nueve	43,5	56,5	27,2	20,8	24,7	27,3
10	<i>El Hincha</i>	El Nueve	45,2	54,8	2,5	29,2	31,9	36,4

Title		Age %				
		04 - 12	13-19	19-24	35-44	45+
1	<i>El Primero de Nosotros</i>	16,4	20,1	22,7	20,1	20,6
2	<i>La 1-5/18 Somos Uno</i>	17,4	16,8	21,7	17,2	26,9
3	<i>Dulce Ambición</i>	15,2	19,1	22,1	20,7	22,9
4	<i>El Encargado</i>	17,1	14,3	19,0	16,8	32,8
5	<i>Génesis</i>	13,9	17,1	24,9	23,0	20,8
6	<i>Santa Evita</i>	15,9	29,6	8,4	21,0	25,0
7	<i>Los Protectores</i>	18,6	16,2	19,8	12,9	32,5
8	<i>Robo Mundial</i>	26,0	15,2	26,2	9,8	22,7
9	<i>Supernova</i>	6,8	20,0	27,9	25,8	19,6
10	<i>El Hincha</i>	13,4	16,4	18,8	29,2	22,2

Source: Kantar Ibope Media y Obitel Argentina

As for the audience profile, there are no major novelties. In relation to gender, women are in the majority in almost all cases, with exceptions such as *Robo Mundial*, which deals with football and attracted the interest of a larger portion of male audience. Seen by socioeconomic level, fiction on open television is mainly consumed by audiences with middle and low income. As in previous years, it is observed that the audience of biblical-themed serial fictions such as *Génesis* (Record, Brazil) is mostly composed of the lower-income segment. On average, 43.5% of the audience of the ten most watched fictions is 35 years old or older.

3. VoD 2022 Monitoring

During 2022, the consolidation of the ecosystem of global or international platforms that produce fictional content in Argentina continued. The main global video-on-demand platforms operating in the country (Netflix, Prime Video, Star+, Disney+, HBO Max) doubled the release of Argentine original fictions compared to the previous year. Since 2018, when Netflix premiered *Edha*, the first Argentine fiction made for a platform, year by year the number of premieres has increased until reaching 14 in 2022.

Thus, the number of national releases in VoD services (14) widely surpassed the releases in open television (11). In turn, as we have mentioned, out of the total number of productions that Obitel considers open television releases, four are actually pre-releases of one or two episodes of productions made for platforms: *El Encargado*, *Santa Evita*, *Los Protectores* and *Robo Mundial*, all of them Star+ exclusive productions whose first episode¹⁵ was broadcast by El Trece. This consolidates a trend that we have been reporting since previous years regarding the displacement of fiction production from the traditional screen to video on demand systems.

3.1 VoD platform market in 2022

The video-on-demand platform market showed no significant changes in 2022 in Argentina. Market leadership, until recently strongly dominated by one company, is now shared between Netflix (25%) and Prime Video (24%), according to Havas data for the third quarter of 2021. According to this consultancy, Disney+ (13%), HBO Max (10%) and Paramount+ (6%) also have significant market shares. With the sole exception of Flow, linked to the ICT services operator Personal (Telecom-Clarín), the rest of the TVE (TV Everywhere) platforms linked to subscription television operators, including Movistar TV, Telecentro Play, Claro Video, DirecTV Go, have not yet ventured into the production of original national fictions.

On the consumption side, according to data from the consulting firm Carrier y Asociados, during 2022, 94% of households connected to the Internet will use some video on demand service, which represents an increase of 4% over the previous year. According to the same consulting firm, having already overcome the boom in subscriptions that occurred during the pandemic, the adoption of video streaming services will continue to grow in 2022, even in low socioeconomic households and among older populations. Furthermore, improvements in broadband connectivity conditions in the country allow these services to be adopted in large urban centers, medium-sized cities and small towns, almost equally in percentage terms¹⁶.

¹⁵ In the case of *Los Protectores*, El Trece aired the first two episodes of the Star+ exclusive fiction.

¹⁶ Watch Streaming Caudaloso, 09/09/2022, available at <https://mailchi.mp/6d2709d7fd72/streaming-caudaloso?e=883840bcc8>.

3.2. Local VoD platforms in 2022 (national, regional)

Along with global and transnational platforms and some local initiatives such as Flow, linked to the subscription television operator Personal (formerly Cablevisión), which serves as an Internet aggregator of content from different sources, we can find the platforms of the National State. Cont.ar, under the state-owned company Contenidos Públicos Sociedad del Estado, is a reversion of a predecessor platform, Contenidos Digitales Abiertos (CDA) of 2011, which operates completely free of charge (FVOD) and includes in its catalog a significant number of national series, especially those made with state support. It is also a space to access the live streaming transmissions of all public channels (TV Pública, Encuentro, PakaPaka, Depor TV), Radio Nacional and other cultural contents. For its part, Cine.ar Play, managed by the National Institute of Cinema and Audiovisual Arts (INCAA, in Spanish) has been operating since 2015 (previously under the brand Odeon) and as of 2022 had accumulated 481,505 unique users, according to data from Empresa Argentina de Soluciones Satelitales (AR-SAT)¹⁷. Cine.ar Play offers short fiction, movies and documentaries with free access or pay-per-transaction mode (TVOD).

3.3. VoD analysis in 2022: national release fiction and co-productions

In 2022, the five main global video platforms released a total of 14 national serialized fiction productions, the highest number since these services have been producing fictional contents in the country. Such proliferation evidences a greater interest of global streaming platforms in producing national contents in association with independent production houses, all of them based in Buenos Aires and with extensive background in audiovisual production, both in film and television.

¹⁷ Data available in April 2023 at <https://datos.arsat.com.ar/dataset/cinear-play>.

TABLE 7. National fiction and co-productions exhibited in 2022 on VoD systems

RELEASE NATIONAL PRODUCTIONS	RELEASE CO-PRODUCTIONS
Netflix (3)	No co-productions to report in 2022
01. <i>El Marginal 4</i> (miniseries)	
02. <i>El Marginal 5</i> (miniseries)	
03. <i>Casi Feliz 2</i> (miniseries)	
HBO Max (1)	
04. <i>María Marta: El Crimen del Country</i> (miniseries)	
Disney+ (1)	
05. <i>Tierra Incógnita</i> (miniseries)	
Prime Video (4)	
06. <i>Porno y Helado</i> (miniseries)	
07. <i>Iosi, El Espía Arrepentido</i> (miniseries)	
08. <i>Supernova</i> (miniseries)	
09. <i>El Fin del Amor</i> (miniseries)	
Star+ (5)	
10. <i>Santa Evita</i> (miniseries)	
11. <i>Los Protectores</i> (miniseries)	
12. <i>Limbo</i> (miniseries)	
13. <i>El Encargado</i> (miniseries)	
14. <i>Robo Mundial</i> (miniseries)	
Total: 14	Total: 0

Source: Obitel Argentina

The first video-on-demand platform to establish itself in the domestic market in 2011 and to produce national content in 2018 is Netflix, which released a total of ten original productions by 2022. That number is enough for it to lead as the global platform with the most Argentine content of its own production. However, in the last two years, both Prime Video and Star+ have accelerated the pace of local releases and already have six original Argentine productions each. 2022 was a prolific year for Star+, which released five series, while Prime Video did the same with four releases. HBO and Disney+ followed them among the platforms that also ventured into the production of Argentine content, although at a slower pace. All of them are miniseries of between eight and thirteen episodes.

3.4. Narrative characteristics of VoD in 2022

Unlike previous years, when platform releases focused on issues related to corruption, organized crime or violence, since 2021 the narrative panorama has been more diverse. The most notable exception is the continuity of a rather violent story, with the release of the fourth and fifth seasons of the prison-themed series *El Marginal* (Underground/Telemundo). It is worth remembering that this is an original title of TV Pública de Argentina (Channel 7) which, after its transfer to the platform, which was in charge of the production of the last three seasons, accentuated the darker aspects of the plot with emphasis on explicit violence, crimes, the functioning of

mafias inside prisons, the confrontation between gangs and the collusion between inmates and prison authorities, among others.

Light and youthful comedy, with some dramatic twists, dominated the panorama of release series on the platforms. There we have the second season of the Netflix series *Casi Feliz* (HC Films and Tiger House), a comedy that follows the work, love and family vicissitudes of a radio host, where the greatest conflict is concentrated in his difficulty to solve his love life in middle age. With their own thematic nuances, the same line is followed by series such as *Porno y Helado* (Navajo Films for Prime Video), which tells the story of a group of young friends who are forced to create a fake music band; *El Fin del Amor* (K&S Films for Prime Video), based on the book of the same name by Tamara Tenenbaum, narrates the journey of a young journalist and philosophy professor who questions some of her life decisions, her relationship with her family and her Jewish faith; and *Supernova* (Kapow for Prime Video), whose story focuses on the lives of three characters on the threshold of their 30s who face social mandates while discovering their desires and frustrations.

On the other hand, there are some productions that take as thematic references real police events or events related to the recent history of the country. *María Marta: El Crimen del Country* (WarnerMedia International, Kapow and Pol-ka Producciones for HBO) takes to fiction one of the most resounding and mediatic crimes of the last decades in Argentina. *Iosi, el Espía Arrepentido* (The Mediapro Studio for Prime Video) tells the story of an intelligence agent infiltrating the Jewish community of Buenos Aires, based on the investigative book of the same name by Horacio Lutzky and Miriam Lewin. *Santa Evita* (Non Stop for Star+), based on the 1995 novel by Tomás Eloy Martínez, combines real and fictional events surrounding the kidnapping of the embalmed body of Eva Duarte de Perón.

4. Interactivity and audience participation

The scarce national productions released during the year, added to an also poor performance, show that the place of national primetime fiction has lost again this year the impact it had in other moments. This is accompanied by a null proposal for audience participation, for which there is minimal interaction in the official comment spaces in the different social networks (Facebook, YouTube, the channel's website and Twitter). In these spaces, the audience is invited to relive particular moments of the fiction and to watch episodes or highlights. In spite of this, audience participation in these spaces is focused on comments on the programs. In this sense, it is interesting to analyze two moments of the plot of *El Primero de Nosotros* (Telefe). One quite celebrated in social networks is the moment when actors Jorge-lina Aruzzi (Valeria in *El Primero de Nosotros* and Lily in *Chiquititas*, 2006 Telefe) and Gastón Ricaud ("Kili" in *Chiquititas*) meet on a date through an application for

that purpose, and end up kissing. What was celebrated in the networks (particularly Twitter) more than the love encounter of the telenovela released this year, was the love encounter that did not happen then (in *Chiquititas*). The love tension between Lily and “Kili” in the children’s soap opera ends up materializing in this other one.



Source: Twitter¹⁸

The *Chiquititas* fandom celebrated this meeting on the social network by posting photos of then and now, and reflecting on the years that have passed since then. A now adult audience that remembers a platonic adolescent love.



Source: Twitter¹⁹

¹⁸ In the Twitter post, along with the sequence of images, it can be read: “Do you understand that in today’s episode of *El Primero de Nosotros* they made us go back to 2006 when we saw Lili and Kili in *Chiquititas*? In short, they wanted to tell us that we are old.

¹⁹ In the first image can be read: “I have seen this scene about 5 times and I am still crying like the first time. Tremendous performance by @benjavicunamori and @castrolucianoOk”. In the second image, the following dialogue can be read: 1) Are you done with the series? 2) The series ended with me.

The other narrative moment that generated a lot of interaction was the end of the fiction, in which the main character dies after suffering from cancer. The farewell to his friend Nico (played by Luciano Castro), who accompanies him at the moment of his death, generated great impact on the audience. It was read as a moment of true love, of surrender and pain, and at the same time celebrated due to Castro's great performance. A certain playful tone, more typical of humor, appeared in some posts to describe the emotion of the ending.

5. Highlights of the Year

2022 is the longed-for effect of a consolidated audience in front of the TV set watching an open channel. This was the constant of the live broadcasts of the Qatar 2022 World Cup. In this context, the rating achieved by TV Pública for the Argentina-France final match was 38.4 points, an extremely unusual number for any channel, but especially for the state channel, which, as stated, has an almost non-existent rating, at least in the urban centers where Kantar Ibope carries out its measurements. In this sense, the World Cup generated numbers that are not found in any other event.



Source: Televisión.com with data from Kantar Ibope Media.

Beyond the World Cup period, Argentine open television maintains -in 2022- a programming linked to non-fiction genres²⁰. The most watched program of the year was the new edition of *Gran Hermano* (*Big Brother*), which was scheduled to last three months and was extended for five and a half months. The reality show not only had its two daily editions, but also a very large set of satellite programs that included a show with the intervention of ex-participants from previous editions who commented on the alternatives in the house and a specific debate show. In addition, there is a series of programs that comment on the details of the participants of the

²⁰ It is noteworthy that the six most watched programs on television in 2022 are programs related to reality TV: *Gran Hermano*, *La Voz Argentina*, *Master Chef Celebrity*. To see the performance of the different programs, please visit <http://television.com.ar/los-10-programas-mas-vistos-de-2022/239312>.

house, another one with interviews to those who were eliminated from the house, and finally, a special party broadcast on Friday nights. In this way, the conversation about *Gran Hermano* is reproduced and increased from program to program. This happens on Telefe, the channel that broadcasts the reality show, as well as on El Trece and América, which incorporate the topic in their talk shows.

6. Theme of the Year: Independent production companies and the internationalization of production.

The emergence of audiovisual narrative was initially marked, in the first half of the 20th century, by cinema as a medium. This implied not only the construction of a type of on-screen narrative, but also a space for gathering, ritual and community consumption. The change that occurs in the middle of the century with the domestic incorporation of television will be the dominant one until almost the end of the first decade of the 21st century. Television (open television at first and pay TV later) ruled and disputed both the news agenda and serial fiction production, which found in this medium a space to grow and become an industry (on an international scale, at least in our country). This expansion and growth effect was lost as gradually as it had been gained. The migration and specification of audiences from the linear television screen in favor of other screens, whose presence develops vertiginously, has changed the productive panorama of national fiction (serial and non-serial, television and cinematographic). The current scenario is described by Axel Kuschvatzky in an interview conducted by Diego Lerer as a crisis for audiovisual production:

La forma de financiación que sostuvo al cine argentino desde 1996 está en estado agónico (...). Me refiero al modelo de coproducción con Europa sostenido por fondos públicos. Con la depreciación de la moneda local y la falta de actualización de los fondos de fomento no se puede prefinanciar una película de rango medio para arriba. Y en ese movimiento los cineastas argentinos de perfil más alto fueron hacia las series y películas financiadas por empresas extranjeras que no dependen de fondos públicos. Pablo Trapero, Damián Szifron, Juan José Campanella: todos empezaron a construir una carrera en el exterior porque la capacidad de financiación de la Argentina estaba muy reducida (2023)²¹.

This passage between narrative spaces is also highlighted by Marcelo Stiletano, in the newspaper *La Nación* (2022), who states that: “El reconocimiento para El reino

²¹ “The form of financing that has sustained Argentine cinema since 1996 is in an agonizing state (...) I am referring to the model of co-production with Europe supported by public funds. With the depreciation of the local currency and the lack of updating of development funds, it is not possible to pre-finance a mid-range film. And in that movement, Argentine filmmakers of higher profile went towards series and films financed by foreign companies that do not depend on public funds. Pablo Trapero, Damián Szifron, Juan José Campanella: they all started to build a career abroad because Argentina’s financing capacity was so reduced” (2023).

y la llegada inminente de títulos muy atractivos consolidan una transformación que parece inexorable: todas las nuevas ficciones producidas en nuestro país tienen destino de plataforma” (n/d)²².

In this scenario, in addition to the financial crisis, it is evident that convergence does not only operate in the technological aspect, but also that this situation has affected spaces that are usually diverse: that of cinematographic narration and television serialized narration. Nowadays, audiovisual directors do not distinguish their expressive medium. This transformation was led, in particular, by independent production companies, since they are the institutions that have the most flexible and adequate structure for the mode of production demanded by the new actors.

The existence of independent production companies in Argentina is a structure installed prior to the movements that have dominated the last decade. Argentina has historically had an important audiovisual production, both in terms of volume and quality recognition. This production was sustained in the cinematographic space by state subsidies that finance filmmaking through the National Institute of Cinematography and Audiovisual Arts (INCAA) and television narrative with private financing. The exception to this form of production was that transmitted by the public television channel.

As has been commented in previous yearbooks, for years the two television networks with the best performance programmed fiction from independent production companies associated to the networks. In the case of El Trece, its associated production company was Pol-ka. On the other hand, other networks such as América or Telefe worked with a wider variety of production companies, particularly with fictions by Underground (Ortega) or Dori Media (Dori), among others. These production companies were responsible for a series of thematic, format and style renovations in national open television during the new millennium.

Today, this scenario has been radically transformed. What was guaranteed in the scheme until the beginning of the second decade of the century was the exhibition screens. The new actor on the scene is distribution. Unlike the two traditional channels (cinema and television), it is now the form of distribution that makes up a new ecosystem. According to Rivero and Bizberge (2022) this is

(...) integrado por actores de distinto origen, modos de financiamiento y tipo de gestión (público o privada), aunque con predominio de gestión privada: 1) surgidos del entorno digital o “nativos de Internet” (Netflix, Apple, Amazon), 2) provenientes de la industria audiovisual tradicional de creación de contenidos (HBO, Disney, Star) y 3) vinculados a empresas de telecomunicaciones y transporte de datos (Telefónica, Claro, Telecom); 4) a las empresas de TV paga (por ejemplo DirecTV Go); 5) las plataformas estatales de acceso gratuito (Cine.ar, Cont.ar, entre otros). (p.5)²³

²² “The recognition for *El reino* and the imminent arrival of very attractive productions consolidate a transformation that seems inexorable: all new fiction produced in our country is destined to be in a platform”.

²³ “(...) made up of players of different origins, financing methods and type of management (public or private), although with a predominance of private management: 1) emerging from the digital

Different alliances show the increase in national production for streaming platforms, which are displacing the productive capacity towards their audiovisual spaces, relegating both cinema and linear open television. In the case of Netflix, Rivero and Bizberge observe that almost 50% of the national production offer in the platform

se concentra en 18 firmas, la mayoría empresas nacionales de extensa trayectoria en la prestación de servicios audiovisuales para el mercado local y regional. Kuarzo Entertainment Argentina (ex Endemol) participa como productora en 4 títulos, seguida de Patagonik Film Group, Pampa Films, Torneos, Mandarina Ideas y Contenidos, Pol-ka, Underground (Telemundo), K&S, HC Films y Non Stop, todas ellas con 1 título cada una. Productoras como Cinema 7 también integran la lista pero especializadas en contenidos deportivos, mientras que BluePrint Content participa en la realización de los especiales de stand-up nacionales (2022, p.10)²⁴.

However, in the total offer on Netflix there is both fiction and non-fiction, both series, miniseries and feature films. They also note that

en empresas productoras de contenidos audiovisuales tradicionales como HBO Max, Paramount+ y Star+ tienden a acotar el listado de casas independientes a las que requieren servicios de producción. Cuando lo hacen, los nombres se reiteran, siendo también habitual que la realización quede en manos de la propia empresa que ya cuenta con capacidades para producir contenidos. En el caso de las plataformas “nativas de Internet”, Netflix y Amazon Prime Video, se vinculan con un número mayor de casas productoras independientes. (Rivero y Bizberge, 2022 p. 17)²⁵.

If we focus on fiction serialized releases in the four main platforms, we find a total of 28 releases of national production in their libraries since their landing in Argentina²⁶.

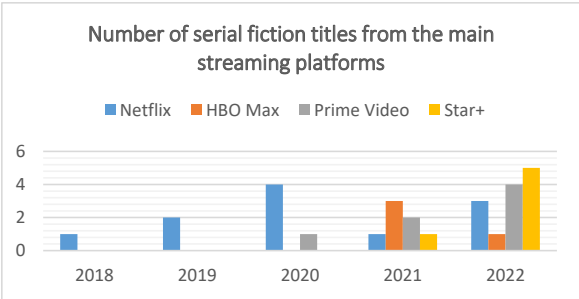
environment or “Internet natives” (Netflix, Apple, Amazon), 2) coming from the traditional audiovisual industry of content creation (HBO, Disney, Star) and 3) linked to telecommunications and data transport companies (Telefónica, Claro, Telecom); 4) pay TV companies (for example DirecTV Go); 5) free access state platforms (Cine.ar, Cont.ar, among others)”. (p.5)

²⁴ “is concentrated in 18 companies, most of which are national companies with extensive experience in the provision of audiovisual services for the local and regional market. Kuarzo Entertainment Argentina (formerly Endemol) participates as producer in four productions, followed by Patagonik Film Group, Pampa Films, Torneos, Mandarina Ideas y Contenidos, Pol-ka, Underground (Telemundo), K&S, HC Films and Non Stop, all of them with 1 production each. Producers such as Cinema 7 also make up the list but specializing in sports content, while BluePrint Content participates in the production of national stand-up specials” (2022, p.10).

²⁵ “traditional audiovisual content production companies such as HBO Max, Paramount+ and Star+ tend to narrow down the list of independent houses from which they require production services. When they do so, the names are reiterated, and it is also common for the production to be left in the hands of the company itself, which already has the capacity to produce content. In the case of the “Internet-native” platforms, Netflix and Amazon Prime Video, they are linked to a larger number of independent production houses” (Rivero and Bizberge, 2022 p. 17).

²⁶ Netflix: 10 productions from 2018; HBO Max, 4 productions from 2021; Prime Video 5 productions from 2020 and Star+ 2 productions from 2021.

The distribution of original material produced for the platforms in numbers evidences a sort of illusion with respect to the overabundance of presence of the platforms and their benefit in relation to the national audiovisual industry.



Source: Obitel Argentina.

The apparent expansion of the national audiovisual production market is evidence of a model that reduces and constrains the sector. This is why we cannot agree with the optimism of Stiletano (2022), who states that

El perfil de coproducción consigue dos resultados valiosos: un mayor respaldo financiero para sostener trabajos de gran exigencia y una llegada mucho más plausible a los mercados internacionales. De la mano del streaming, la Argentina podría recuperar en el mediano plazo algo o parte de su fortaleza perdida como protagonista reconocido de ficciones en el mundo audiovisual (s/p)²⁷.

This celebratory perspective overlooks the fact that the apparent openness has several drawbacks. On the one hand, the formats chosen are of short and medium duration, an aspect that does not guarantee a real growth of employment in the audiovisual production sector; on the other hand, the forms of production are detrimental to the actors of the audiovisual complex, since the agreements and forms of work that they would have in regulated spaces such as film and television are not always respected. In addition, there is the reproduction of a local and eventually international²⁸ star

²⁷ “The co-production profile achieves two valuable results: a greater financial backing to sustain highly demanding works and a much more plausible arrival to international markets. With streaming, Argentina could recover in the medium term some or part of its lost strength as a recognized protagonist of fictions in the audiovisual world” (n/d).

²⁸ This is how Stiletano describes it in his article in La Nación: “El punto más extremo de esa realidad se explica con la presencia en Buenos Aires de Robert De Niro, que pasó toda la semana pasada ocupado en su participación en el rodaje de Nada, la nueva serie de Mariano Cohn y Gastón Duprat que tendrá estreno directo en la plataforma Star+, una de las expresiones del poder audiovisual de Disney. La llegada a nuestro país de una de las máximas estrellas internacionales del cine en las últimas décadas no podría explicarse hoy en otro contexto. Hasta podría decirse que su participación en la serie funciona como un simpático aporte del star system internacional a su contrapartida local: Luis Brandoni y Guillermo Francella también estarán en esta ambiciosa producción, pensada para su estreno en streaming para 2023” (2022. s/p) (Translation: The most extreme aspect of this reality is explained by the presence in Buenos Aires of Robert De Niro, who spent last week busy shooting Nada, the new series by Mariano Cohn and Gastón Duprat that will have its direct premiere on the

system of production companies, actors and, as already mentioned, directors. In this situation, with no specific regulation and non-standardized ways of working, independent production companies are dependent on the programming space, the rhythm of production and the production cycles imposed by the platforms. But also of a demand for themes that, in many cases, are the result of a national specification that identifies themes, styles and belongings as a seal of nationality. A situation that in the case of Argentina privileges stories of violence, corruption and bad living, even when, as we have explained in this chapter, in 2022 the production of Argentine fiction on platforms has proposed a greater thematic diversity.

Star+ platform, one of the expressions of Disney's audiovisual power. The arrival in our country of one of the top international movie stars of the last decades could not be explained today in any other context. It could even be said that his participation in the series works as a sympathetic contribution of the international star system to its local counterpart: Luis Brandoni and Guillermo Francella will also be in this ambitious production, planned for its streaming premiere in 2023).

References

- Carboni, O. and Rivero, E. (2022). Una perspectiva dialógica entre la estructura productiva y las tramas narrativas de las ficciones seriadas televisivas argentinas (2011-2020). *Comunicación y Sociedad*, 1-24. <https://doi.org/10.32870/cys.v2022.8330>
- Convergencia (2021). Mapa de Alianzas de Comunicaciones en Argentina 2021. 26° edition. Updated 12/15/2021.
- Havas Media (2022). Panorama de medios. Informe de la consultora Havas. havasgroup.com.ar
- Kirchheimer, M. and Rivero, E. (2022). Argentina: La ficción seriada está en otra parte. In *Anuario Obitel 2022. Transformaciones en la serialidad de la ficción televisiva iberoamericana en tiempos de streaming*.
- Lerer, D. (May 29, 2023). Era del streaming: la industria audiovisual argentina pelea por su lugar en el mundo. *Tiempo Argentino*. <https://www.tiempoar.com.ar/espectaculos/era-del-streaming-la-industria-audiovisual-argentina-pelea-por-su-lugar-en-el-mundo/>
- Rivero, E and Bizberge, A. (2022). Diversidad en plataformas de video a demanda en Argentina. *Intersecciones en Comunicación*. 1 (16) ISSN: 1515-2332 / 2250-4184
- Schetjman, N., Rivero, E. and Becerra, M. (2021). State Media and Digital Citizenship in Latin America: Is there a Place for the Weak?. In Tuñez-López, M., Campos-Freire, F. and Rodríguez-Castro, M. (Eds) *The Values of Public Service Media in the Internet Society*. United Kingdom. Palgrave <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-56466-7>
- Stiletano, M. (May 8, 2022). El buen momento del streaming en la Argentina: producción local con ambiciones globales y una expansión que no tiene techo. *La Nación*. <https://www.lanacion.com.ar/espectaculos/series-de-tv/el-buen-momento-del-streaming-en-la-argentina-produccion-local-con-ambiciones-globales-y-una-nid08052022/>
- S/A. *Anuario 2022*. <http://television.com.ar/anuario-2022>