

CHILE: THE SURVIVAL OF TELEVISION FICTION AT THE MERCY OF PRODUCTION COMPANIES¹

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Introduction

In many aspects, 2022 in Chile was a slow prolongation of 2021's post-pandemic, but with the pandemic already forgotten: the media attention was focused on politics (both for the change of government and for the continuity of the constituent process that emerged after the social unrest of 2019) and pay-TV continued its declining stagnation in subscribers and audience, greater than that of free-to-air television. In the latter, the leadership in audience and economic results was maintained by Mega and Chilevisión. The former continued to be the dominant -and almost solitary- actor in premiere fiction on free-to-air television, working hand in hand with independent production companies, a topic dealt with in depth in the last section of this report. In contrast to the analog world, the digital world (understood as connectivity, access and penetration of *streaming* platforms) enjoyed good health in 2022, although with little national premiere production in it.

The highlight of the year, in Aristotelian terms, is potency rather than act. Little was programmed for Korean television in 2022, and only towards the end of the year, but since it was not an anecdotal event, but a deliberate long-term strategy, it has an interesting transformational potential to anticipate.

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1. The Chilean Audiovisual Context in 2022

1.1 Free-to-air television in Chile

Table 1. National free-to-air television channels in Chile

Private channels (6)	Public channels (1)
Canal 13: Luksic Group (Chilean). Chilevisión (CHV): Paramount Global. Mega: Bethia Group (Chilean), Discovery Communications (27.5%). La Red: Albavisión Group. Telecanal: Inversiones Alfa Tres (linked to Albavisión). TV+: Media 23 (Chilean, 90%), Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso (10%).	Televisión Nacional de Chile (TVN), with advertising-only financing.
Total of channels: 7	

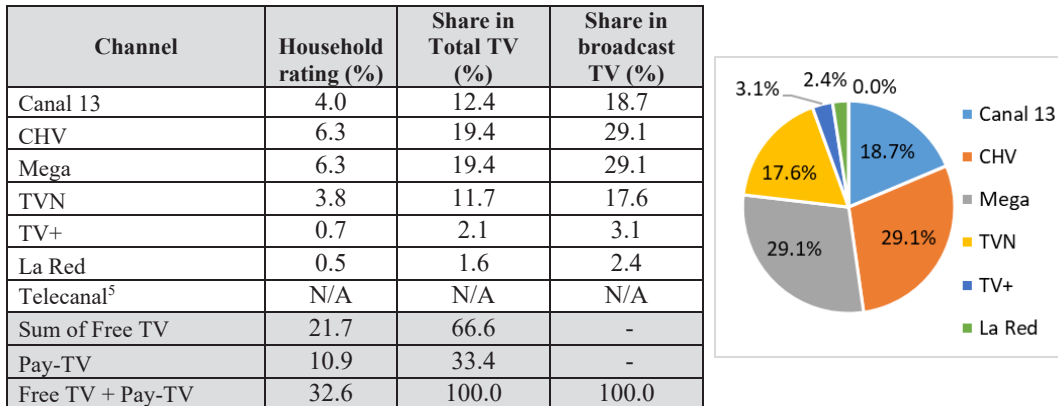
Source: Obitel Chile.

Both Mega and Chilevisión (CHV), the audience leaders, recorded profits for the second consecutive year in 2022, with US\$15.3 million and US\$23.6 million respectively³. It should be recalled that CHV had losses for the previous eight years, during the entire period it belonged to Warner Media. In turn, Televisión Nacional de Chile (TVN), the public channel, for the third year managed to make a profit, although of a lower order than the two leading channels: US\$3.5 million. In contrast to these three cases, Canal 13 reported losses of US\$4.3 million, as did Telecanal with US\$0.8 million. In the case of La Red, the signal experienced a critical situation during 2022, with delays in the payment of salaries, but it is not possible to provide further information as its income statements are not available at the Financial Market Commission, the regulatory entity that concentrates this information.

Chile is lagging far behind with respect to digital terrestrial television. After successive postponements, the analog switch-off is scheduled for December 2024. Although traditional channels and other actors have made progress, both in infrastructure and content (mainly in non-fiction) it is a topic completely absent from the public agenda. Its contents are not included in this report.

³ At the 2022 average exchange rate reported by the Central Bank.

Figure 1. TV rating and share by station during 2022 ⁴

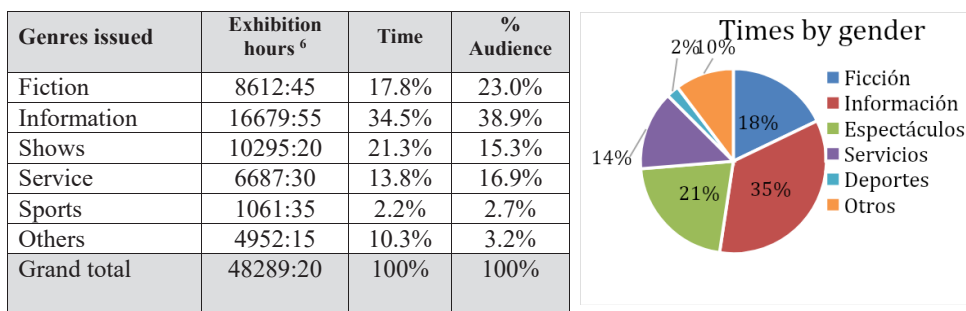


Source: Kantar IBOPE Media Chile - OBITEL Chile.

Graph 1 shows Mega and Chilevisión tied at 6.3 household *rating* points. Strictly speaking, Mega wins, but the difference appears at the third decimal point. Between 2014 and 2020, Mega clearly prevailed over the rest of the channels. Since 2021, this leadership is being challenged by CHV, which will also compete in evening fiction as of 2023.

The situation of Canal 13 and TVN is the opposite. Both, with 4% and 3.8% respectively, mark their lowest audience results since the *People Meter* audience measurement system began in Chile in 1992.

Figure 2. Genres and hours of TV programming during 2022



Source: Kantar IBOPE Media Chile - OBITEL Chile.

⁴ Graph 1 shows the data considering the 24 hours of the day. Sometimes, in the Chilean television industry, reference is made to the *television day*, which is the time from 7AM to 1AM. In this restricted time slot, the *rating* of free-to-air television is, on average, 24% higher than the one shown here and that of pay-TV is 16% higher.

⁵ Telecanal data are not included in graphs 1 and 2 since they are not being reported by Kantar Ibope Media. For the rest of the report, this is not relevant since it does not broadcast television fiction of Ibero-American origin, except for the occasional anecdotal exception.

⁶ Transmission times are shown rounded to five-minute intervals.

Between 2009 and 2017, television fiction always occupied more than 21% of screen time, reaching a maximum of 27% in 2016. This figure was broken in 2021, dropping to 16.9%, and fell again in 2022, reaching only 15.6%. The 17.8% shown in Chart 2 also includes theatrical cinema and animations. This decline is independent of the decrease in production reported in the following sections, since the table also includes reruns, Turkish fiction, and fiction of other origins.

The fact is that in Chile less fiction is being programmed in open television. This has been capitalized by information contents, which since 2019 have had a strong growth in participation. This shift from fiction to information can be probably explained as a combination of global and local factors. The global, the strength of *streaming* platforms in fiction. The local, the attention of the population in the news agenda first due to the so-called “social explosion” of 2019 and then the pandemic, the constituent process and the political contingency applied to various news focuses.

1.2 Pay-TV in 2022

The number of households subscribing to pay-TV doubled between 2010 and 2017. However, thereafter growth stagnated and even declined in some years. In December 2022, compared to the same month of 2021, the number of subscribers fell by 4% and it is observed that cable operators, as a retention strategy, offer access at discounted prices to *streaming* platforms (Subtel, 2023a). Even more telling than the decrease in subscribers is the decrease in audience. It decreased by 19% compared to 2021.

Table 2. Pay-TV channels in Chile

10 most watched pay-TV channels in Chile in 2022			
Channel	Genre	Origin	Home Rating ⁷
24 Horas	Information	Chile	0.46
CNN Chile	Information	Chile	0.37
Space	Fiction and +	Foreign	0.36
TNT Series	Fiction	Foreign	0.29
TNT Sport HD	Sports	Chile	0.29
AXN	Fiction	Foreign	0.29
Universal TV	Fiction	Foreign	0.24
Discovery H&H	Information	Foreign	0.23
ESPN	Sports	Chile	0.23
Cartoon Network	Children's	Foreign	0.22

Source: Kantar IBOPE Media Chile.

There are two striking facts in the list of the most watched signals on pay-TV. First, the consolidation of news channels as the most watched. Although there are other national channels that offer news content, 24 Horas and CNN Chile are the only ones dedicated exclusively to news, and both are the most watched.

⁷ Calculated over 24 hours a day.

The second fact is the inverse of the previous one: the children's channels that, years ago, dominated the most watched channels, tend to regress. In 2022, only Cartoon Network is in tenth place of the top 10 most watched channels. This phenomenon is probably attributable to the greater penetration of *streaming* platforms in said period and their wide offer of content aimed at children's audiences.

1.3 Sources of financing for the audiovisual sector

The main source of public funding for broadcast television comes from the fund of the National Television Council (CNTV), which each year calls for bids to allocate funds in various categories. In 2022 it distributed Ch\$4,419 million, equivalent to approximately US\$5.1 million⁸. Measured in dollars, the fund has decreased in the last two years, with US\$ 5.6 million in 2021 and US\$ 5.8 million in 2020. Five years ago, it was US\$6.2 million. Regardless of the size of this fund, two elements have hindered its stimulus role. On the one hand, CNTV has had delays in the actual delivery of the funds already allocated, thus creating financial difficulties for producers who have benefited from said resources. More fundamentally, and increasingly problematic given the relevance of *streaming* platforms in their role as co-producers, CNTV establishes as a rule that the works financed by the institution must be premiered on open television before other exhibition windows. This condition is conflicting with the expectations of partners who contribute more than CNTV. This is one of the reasons that has led Fábula, Chile's largest independent production company, to declare that it prefers not to apply for CNTV funds so as not to be subject to this condition.

Although the CNTV fund is truly relevant for the development of quality productions, it represents a minor proportion of the financing of free-to-air television. In 2022, advertising investment on open access television reached US\$285 million. This figure is lower than the US\$319 million of advertising investment in 2021 and only 56% of the US\$518 million that television collected from advertising a decade earlier⁹. What is unquestionable is that the resources with which Chilean television is made decreases every year due to the greater participation of digital advertising, which in 2022 reached 48% of the total. The advertising investment of pay-TV has not been included in these amounts since pay-TV in Chile does not produce fiction.

1.4 Communication policies

During the campaign that led Gabriel Boric to the presidency, concerns were raised about the functioning of the media system in Chile and the willingness to give more

⁸ Considering the average exchange rate during the year, according to the "observed dollar" value reported by the Central Bank.

⁹ The advertising investment for 2021 and 2022 comes from the Asociación de Agencias de Medios (AAM) and that for 2012 comes from the Asociación Chilena de Agencias de Publicidad (ACHAP). A 15% agency commission was deducted from the latter to make it comparable with the others. The ACHAP series goes up to 2018 and the AAM series starts in 2014.

space to the development of public media, both at a central and local level. Similar concerns were expressed in the proposal for a new constitution, developed by the Constitutional Convention that operated between July 4, 2021, and July 4, 2022, and which was rejected in a plebiscite by 62% of the voters. The communications content of the proposal was not central to the constitutional debate, so it is unlikely to have had a significant impact on the outcome.

A few days after the rejection of the constitutional proposal, the government resumed its campaign initiative, convening three state universities to lead a diagnosis and proposals aimed at strengthening the right to information and freedom of the press¹⁰. The final report highlighted the importance of guaranteeing an information ecosystem that respects human rights and the right to information, emphasizing the quality of information and journalistic rigor. It also stressed the importance of diversity in media ownership and control to ensure both pluralism and diversity of voices, in addition to advocating a greater role for the state and policies that promote interculturality (Pancani et al., 2023). However, the rejection of the constitutional proposal, the government's parliamentary minority and the little enthusiasm that the initiative generated in more liberal sectors, suggest that, if there are legal changes, they will not be significant.

1.5 Digital and mobile connectivity infrastructure

According to the Digital Quality of Life Index, developed to measure the digital well-being of countries, Chile ranks first in Latin America and 40th in the world, followed by Uruguay (41st) and Argentina (45th)¹¹. This puts the country in a good relative position for the use of digital technologies in the consumption of audiovisual content, particularly *streaming* services. This is expressed in a relevant way in the availability of Internet connections, both from mobile and fixed devices. In Chile, this information is reported monthly by the Undersecretary of Telecommunications (Subtel, 2023b).

The number of fixed Internet connections has grown at an average annual rate of 7.4% over the last 10 years. Year 2022 grew by 4% compared to 2021, a much lower rate than the previous two years (10.7% and 12.8%), but explainable in a country with a high penetration rate, close to 65% of households. Fixed connections are particularly significant, as they are where broadband use is concentrated, with no traffic limits that facilitate audiovisual content consumption.

¹⁰ Press release from the Ministry General Secretariat of Government. Available at <https://msgg.gob.cl/wp/2022/07/15/gobierno-firma-convenio-para-fortalecer-el-derecho-a-la-informacion-y-libertad-de-prensa/>

¹¹ The index is built on five pillars: cost, according to the purchasing power of the population; speed and stability of Internet connections; degree of development and inclusiveness of the infrastructure; e-security; and degree of digitalization of government services. The 2022 version can be reviewed at <https://surfshark.com/dql2022>.

Mobile connections are also relevant for the audiovisual industry, as they allow users to access content outside their homes. This ubiquity of content consumption is a relevant factor in the shift of advertising investment towards digital. Considering the last 10 years (only 3G, 4G and 5G connections), the average growth rate has been 13%. However, last year it was, for the first time, negative. Still, the number of mobile devices in operation exceeds the size of the population. After this slight decline of 0.8% in the number of connections compared to 2021, the number of connections is approximately 114 per 100 inhabitants.

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

TABLE 1. First-run fiction titles broadcasted in 2022

FIRST-RUN NATIONAL TITLES - 9	CHV
Canal 13	6. <i>El Primero de Nosotros</i> (telenovela-Argentina)
1. <i>Cromosoma 21</i> (series)	7. <i>Días Mejores</i> (series-Spain)
2. <i>La Torre de Mabel</i> (telenovela)	Mega
Mega	8. <i>Aguanta Corazón</i> (telenovela-Brazil)
3. <i>Amar Profundo</i> (telenovela)	9. <i>Dulce Ambición</i> (telenovela-Brazil)
4. <i>Hasta Encontrarte</i> (telenovela)	10. <i>Huérfanos de su Tierra</i> (telenovela-Brazil)
5. <i>Hijos del Desierto</i> (telenovela)	11. <i>Rock Story</i> (telenovela-Brazil)
6. <i>La Ley de Baltazar</i> (telenovela)	12. <i>Suerte de Vivir</i> (telenovela-Brazil)
7. <i>Pobre Novio</i> (telenovela)	TVN
8. <i>Verdades Ocultas</i> (telenovela)	13. <i>Sandro de América</i> (miniseries-Argentina)
TVN	14. <i>Genesis</i> (telenovela-Brazil)
9. <i>Celeste</i> (series)	15. <i>Raphael</i> (miniseries-Spain)
FIRST-RUN FOREIGN TITLES - 15	La Red
Canal 13	16. <i>La Rosa de Guadalupe</i> (unitary-Mexico)
1. <i>Santa Evita</i> (mini-series-Argentina)	FIRST-RUN OBITEL CO-PRODUCTIONS - 1
2. <i>Vidas Ajenas</i> (telenovela-Brazil)	CHV
3. <i>Cuna de Lobos</i> (telenovela-Mexico)	1. <i>Bosé Yo Seré</i> (series-Obitel coproduction)
4. <i>Los Ricos También Lloran</i> (telenovela-Mexico)	
5. <i>Si nos Dejan</i> (telenovela-Mexico)	TOTAL OF FIRST-RUN TITLES: 26

Source: Kantar IBOPE Media Chile - OBITEL Chile.

In 1981, with *La Madrastra*, Canal 13 began the permanent production of telenovelas, which, alongside TVN, transformed the television industry into a duopoly in which they disputed the leadership. There were no other actors, except for some anecdotal and unsuccessful attempts by other channels towards the end of the 1990s and the first decade of this century. The highest production volume, in terms of number of serialized fiction titles, was in 2014 with 17 different telenovelas, six series, in addition to other fiction formats in smaller volume. The dominant actors were the same as always, but not only them. That year the change began first with the inrush of Turkish telenovelas. Then TVN saw how its fiction production area was

hostilely captured by Mega, which hired its director and more than 50 employees, amongst them actors, technicians, and other roles. Towards the end of that year, Mega started its own production and Canal 13 also experienced its own internal crisis. Eight years later, there is an absolute dominator that is neither TVN nor Canal 13, but Mega.

It is expected that 2022 will be the last year with declining production and that, as of 2023, at least in terms of telenovelas, there will be an upturn since a new actor will be incorporated. After its purchase by Paramount Global, CHV is betting on becoming a relevant actor of fiction production in Chile.

On the other hand, although the number of new productions is low, Mega's production is in good health: six telenovela titles premiered in 2022. Adding five from its agreement with Globo, which Canal 13 had years before, and six telenovelas of Turkish origin, it has a very robust fiction offer. In addition, Mega has expanded its market beyond the traditional one, reaching countries in Africa, Asia, and Europe with its production of telenovelas.

TABLE 1b. Rerun fiction titles broadcasted in 2022

NATIONAL RERUNS - 21	19. <i>Sucupira, La Comedia</i> (series)
Canal 13	TV+
1. <i>Adrenalina</i> (telenovela)	20. <i>Los Años Dorados</i> (sitcom)
2. <i>Cerro Alegre</i> (telenovela)	La Red
CHV	21. <i>Una Historia Necesaria</i> (other fiction tv)
3. <i>Gemelas</i> (telenovela)	FOREIGN RERUNS - 11
Mega	Canal 13
4. <i>Casa de Muñecos</i> (telenovela)	1. <i>Pasión de Gavilanes</i> (telenovela-Obitel coproduction)
5. <i>Si Yo Fuera Rico</i> (telenovela)	2. <i>Yo Soy Betty, la Fea</i> (telenovela-Colombia)
6. <i>Tranquilo Papá</i> (telenovela)	Mega
TVN	3. <i>El Tiempo no Para</i> (telenovela-Brazil)
7. <i>Amores de Mercado</i> (telenovela)	TVN
8. <i>Cuentos Chilenos</i> (telefilm)	4. <i>Moisés los 10 Mandamientos</i> (telenovela-Brazil)
9. <i>El Cuento del Tío</i> (unitary)	5. <i>Terra Nostra</i> (telenovela-Brazil)
10. <i>El Día Menos Pensado</i> (docudrama)	6. <i>Celia, la Serie</i> (telenovela-Colombia)
11. <i>En Terapia</i> (series)	TV+
12. <i>La Canción de tu Vida</i> (series)	7. <i>Hernán</i> (series-Mexico)
13. <i>La Fiera</i> (telenovela)	La Red
14. <i>La Vida es una Lotería</i> (unitary)	8. <i>Águila Roja</i> (series-Spain)
15. <i>Mea Culpa Clásicos</i> (docudrama)	9. <i>Hay Alguien Ahí</i> (series-Spain)
16. <i>Pampa Ilusión</i> (telenovela)	10. <i>Hispania, la Legenda</i> (series-Spain)
17. <i>Rojo y Miel</i> (telenovela)	11. <i>Como Dice el Dicho</i> (series-Mexico)
18. <i>Sucupira</i> (telenovela)	

Source: Kantar IBOPE Media Chile - OBITEL Chile

The advantage of decades of production is evident when reruns are included in the analysis. Archived material not only offers the possibility of an almost royalty-free

exhibition, except for payments to actors for image rights, but also, even if they are reruns, for a significant part of the population they are titles that have not been seen or, at least, are not fresh in the memory. Almost all the national titles rerun by Canal 13 and TVN were released more than 15 years ago and even one (*Rojo y Miel*) is from 1994. The amount of pseudo premiere hours of TVN and Canal 13, discounting summaries to make them comparable numbers, is 60% more than the national premiere hours shown in table 3. That is, national fiction was very present on TVN and Canal 13 screens, but mostly fiction already shown years ago, produced with larger production budgets than the current ones.

TABLE 2. Formats of national premiere fiction and their evolution during the five-year period.

Format	Titles						Hours					
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Telenovela	11	11	5	7	7	41	615:10	682:30	224:55	545:00	457:00	2524:35
Series	3	4	6	2	2	17	13:55	61:00	44:35	20:50	19:55	160:15
Miniseries	2	1	1	3	0	7	8:15	3:00	4:30	10:45	0:00	26:30
TV Movie	0	1	0	0	0	1	0:00	0:55	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:55
Unitary	1	0	0	0	0	1	84:40	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	84:40
Docudrama	0	0	0	1	0	1	0:00	0:00	0:00	10:05	0:00	10:05
Others	0	0	0	0	0	0	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00	0:00
Total	17	17	12	13	9	68	722:00	747:25	274:00	586:40	476:55	2807:00

Source: Kantar IBOPE Media Chile - OBITEL Chile

In 2022, the trend of reducing the diversity of formats was accentuated. A decade ago, the volume of production was also in telenovelas, but the presence of docudramas, telefilms, unitarios and sitcoms was common. This year, broadcast television's offer was limited only to telenovelas and series.

TABLE 3. First-run fiction exhibited in 2022: countries of origin

Format	Titles				Hours			
	National	%	Rest Obitel	%	National	%	Rest Obitel	%
Telenovela	7	77.8	11	64.7	457:00	95.8	662:45	79.6
Series	2	22.2	2	11.8	19:55	4.2	1:40	0.2
Miniseries	0	0.0	3	17.6	0:00	0.0	15:15	1.8
Telefilm	0	0.0	0	0.0	0:00	0.0	0:00	0.0
Unitary	0	0.0	1	5.9	0:00	0.0	153:00	18.4
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	9	100	17	100	476:55	100	832:40	100

Source: Kantar IBOPE Media Chile - OBITEL Chile

Table 3 shows the origin of the Ibero-American premiere productions exhibited during 2022. During the last decade, the countries from which Chile has imported productions have been mainly Mexico and Brazil. In both cases, a decrease in the number of titles has been observed as of 2015. The Mexican case has coincided with its substitution of products of Turkish origin. Meanwhile, in the Brazilian case, the change of Globo's partner in Chile has also had an influence. For more than 20 years, Canal 13 had a privileged relationship with Globo, whose telenovelas were shown after lunchtime. The irruption of Mega not only meant undermining TVN's production capacity, but also taking away Canal 13's contract with Globo. For a while, Globo's exit from Canal 13 was not reflected in a large presence of Brazilian titles on Mega, where two or three telenovelas were shown per year, but as of 2022 there seems to have changed, as Mega exhibited a record of seven Brazilian telenovelas. To weigh the influence of fiction from the different Obitel countries, it is necessary to consider that telenovelas of Turkish origin follow similar exhibition and consumption logics to those of Ibero-American origin and occupy an extremely high space within Chilean screens. During 2022, 13 Turkish telenovelas were shown. In volume of exhibition hours, this more than doubled those of national premiere fiction and is 9% more than the sum of fiction imported from all Obitel countries, in addition to being programmed at times of higher audience than the latter. Some 50% of Turkish fiction is in *prime* time, while only 20% of Ibero-American fiction (not Chilean) occupies that programming space.

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

Format	Titles				Hours			
	National	%	Rest Obitel	%	National	%	Rest Obitel	%
Telenovela	7	77.8	11	64.7	457:00	95.8	662:45	79.6
Series	2	22.2	2	11.8	19:55	4.2	1:40	0.2
Miniseries	0	0.0	3	17.6	0:00	0.0	15:15	1.8
Telefilm	0	0.0	0	0.0	0:00	0.0	0:00	0.0
Unitary	0	0.0	1	5.9	0:00	0.0	153:00	18.4
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	9	100	17	100	476:55	100	832:40	100

Source: Kantar IBOPE Media Chile - OBITEL Chile

What in 2021 seemed to be a turnaround in the trend - imported hours of series surpassed those of telenovelas - in 2022 proved to be an anecdotal fact: telenovelas returned to their usual predominance among television fiction formats, widely surpassing hours of series and miniseries.

The only format with relevant screen time when compared to telenovela is that of unitarios, with almost 17% among the hours of imported fiction. However, this is a unique and exceptional case that is repeated year after year, *La Rosa de Guadalupe*, which accumulates hours of screen time on La Red, but which in Chile, unlike Mexico, has an audience that in 66% of the broadcasts did not reach one *rating point*.

TABLE 5: 10 Most watched titles in 2022

Title	Channel	Production Company (Country)	Format/genre	No. of cap/ep in 2022	Time zone	Rating	Share	
1	<i>La Ley de Baltazar</i>	Mega	Chilefilms (CL)	Telenovela/ Romantic Comedy	147	Prime time	17.0	26.4
2	<i>Pobre Novio</i>	Mega	Mega+Chilefilms (CL)	Telenovela/Comedy	90	Prime time	15.3	24.6
3	<i>Hijos del Desierto</i>	Mega	Mazal (CL)	Telenovela/ Period police drama	75	Prime time	14.0	22.0
4	<i>Amar Profundo</i>	Mega	Mega + DDRio (CL)	Telenovela/Dramatic comedy	157	Prime time	12.6	20.8
5	<i>Verdades Ocultas</i>	Mega	Chilefilms (CL)	Telenovela/Drama	110	Afternoon	12.4	25.1
6	<i>Hasta Encontrarte</i>	Mega	Mega+Chilefilms (CL)	Telenovela/ Romantic Drama	115	Afternoon	12.2	24.8
7	<i>Suerte de Vivir</i>	Mega	Estúdios Globo (BR)	Telenovela/ Romantic Drama	132	Afternoon	10.5	21.4
8	<i>Dulce Ambición</i>	Mega	Estúdios Globo (BR)	Telenovela/ Melodrama	77	Afternoon	8.9	18.6
9	<i>Días Mejores</i>	CHV	Viacom+Zeta (ES)	Series/Comedy drama	1	Night	7.6	16.6
10	<i>Huérfanos de su Tierra</i>	Mega	Estúdios Globo (BR)	Telenovela/ Romantic Drama	14	Afternoon	7.0	15.0
Total of national productions: 6			Original foreign scripts: 4					
60%			4%					

Source: Kantar IBOPE Media Chile - OBITEL Chile

Only an anomalous fact, which is more a promotional fact than a real programming offer, prevents the *Top 10* from being completely dominated by Mega in 2022. In ninth place appears a single broadcast (May 6) of the successful Spanish series *Días Mejores*. The rest of the first season could not be seen on Chilevisión, but could be seen on Paramount+, both subsidiaries of Paramount Global. The purpose of this broadcast was only to promote the *streaming* signal. Although this is an anecdotal fact, it speaks of the communicating vessels between the different screens that are becoming increasingly interdependent.

If Turkish fiction were to join Table 5, it would occupy three places, with *Traicionada* (Mega) occupying position six, *Doctor Milagro* (CHV) in position eight and *El Escape de Cemre* (Mega) in position 10.

The six national productions in this list correspond to Mega. With minor exceptions, when this space was dominated by Canal 13 and TVN, productions were made by the channels' in-house teams. Mega's approach is different. In all the cases of the *Top 10*, the productions are developed together with external production companies, with different degrees of involvement of Mega's teams in the production.

TABLE 5b: 10 Most watched national titles in 2022

	Title	Channel	Production Company (Country)	Format/genre	No. of cap/ep in 2022	Time zone	Rating	Share
1	<i>La Ley de Baltazar</i>	Mega	Chilefilms (CL)	Telenovela/ Romantic Comedy	147	Prime time	17.0	26.4
2	<i>Pobre Novio</i>	Mega	Mega+Chilefilms (CL)	Telenovela/Comedy	90	Prime time	15.3	24.6
3	<i>Hijos del Desierto</i>	Mega	Mazal	Telenovela/ Period police drama	75	Prime time	14.0	22.0
4	<i>Amar Profundo</i>	Mega	Mega + DDRio (CL)	Telenovela/Dramatic comedy	157	Prime time	12.6	20.8
5	<i>Verdades Ocultas</i>	Mega	Chilefilms (CL)	Telenovela/Drama	110	Afternoon	12.4	25.1
6	<i>Hasta Encontrarte</i>	Mega	Mega+Chilefilms (CL)	Telenovela/ Romantic Drama	115	Afternoon	12.2	24.8
11	<i>Cromosoma 21</i>	Channel 13	Canal 13 + Film & + Maker Wild Sheep Content (CL)	Series / Police drama	8	Prime time	5.6	9.3
18	<i>La Torre de Mabel</i>	Channel 13	Mazal (CL)	Telenovela / Romantic comedy	31	Nocturno	3.3	7.8
26	<i>Celeste</i>	TVN	Jaime Morales Productions (CL)	Series / Juvenile	8	Tomorrow	1.1	5.0
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
					Original foreign scripts: 0			
					0%			

Source: Kantar IBOPE Media Chile - OBITEL Chile

Table 5b, destined to the ten national titles with the highest audience, only includes nine. The reason is that, in 2022, for the first time in the 16 years this report has been elaborated, less than 10 national television fiction titles were produced.

The first column of the table shows the position reached by each title in the complete ranking, including all Ibero-American fiction. In 11th place appears *Cromosoma 21*, which was financed by the National Television Council fund and was released on Netflix in 2023. *La Torre de Mabel*, in 18th place, had begun broadcasting in mid-2021. Finally, the case of *Celeste* is unique. It was created for NTV, the cultural children's signal of TVN, but once on the air, it was decided to move it to the main channel.

TABLE 6: 10 Most watched titles in 2022

Title		Channel	Gender %		GSE%			
			Women	Men	ABC1	C2	C3	D
1	<i>La Ley de Baltazar</i>	Mega	64%	36%	8%	18%	32%	43%
2	<i>Pobre Novio</i>	Mega	62%	38%	8%	20%	30%	42%
3	<i>Hijos del Desierto</i>	Mega	61%	39%	8%	20%	33%	39%
4	<i>Amar Profundo</i>	Mega	60%	40%	9%	17%	32%	42%
5	<i>Verdades Ocultas</i>	Mega	67%	33%	9%	18%	25%	48%
6	<i>Hasta Encontrarte</i>	Mega	66%	34%	6%	16%	27%	51%
7	<i>Suerte de Vivir</i>	Mega	65%	35%	6%	15%	26%	54%
8	<i>Dulce Ambición</i>	Mega	66%	34%	8%	15%	27%	49%
9	<i>Días Mejores</i>	CHV	52%	48%	4%	12%	39%	45%
10	<i>Huérfanos de su Tierra</i>	Mega	63%	37%	5%	16%	26%	53%

Title		Age % Age						
		04 - 12	13-17	18-24	25-34	35-49	50-64	65+
1	<i>La Ley de Baltazar</i>	4%	4%	5%	13%	26%	25%	22%
2	<i>Pobre Novio</i>	5%	4%	4%	16%	25%	25%	20%
3	<i>Hijos del Desierto</i>	3%	2%	6%	14%	26%	27%	21%
4	<i>Amar Profundo</i>	4%	4%	5%	17%	26%	25%	19%
5	<i>Verdades Ocultas</i>	5%	3%	4%	12%	22%	24%	29%
6	<i>Hasta Encontrarte</i>	4%	3%	5%	9%	21%	23%	36%
7	<i>Suerte de Vivir</i>	5%	3%	5%	9%	20%	22%	35%
8	<i>Dulce Ambición</i>	4%	3%	4%	12%	20%	27%	30%
9	<i>Días Mejores</i>	3%	0%	5%	6%	14%	45%	27%
10	<i>Huérfanos de su Tierra</i>	4%	2%	6%	8%	19%	25%	35%

Source: Kantar IBOPE Media Chile - OBITEL Chile

The audience profiles shown in Table 6 are quite homogeneous, but their intertemporal comparison is informative about the phenomenon of change in television fiction audiences. Compared to the profiles with those obtained a decade ago, the aging of the audiences is notorious. In 2012, those under 25 years of age represented 25% of the audience. In 2022, only 12%, i.e., this audience segment dropped by almost half. The opposite is true for older viewers. While in 2012 people aged 50 and over constituted 36% of the audience, in 2022 that number rose to 54%.

3. VoD 2022 Monitoring

3.1. VoD Platforms Market

The large *streaming companies* do not report their subscriber figures in Chile, although there are estimates, such as those from Statista or FlixPatrol, which for Netflix alone place them at between one million and one and a half million¹². Some indirect measures suggest sustained growth since the pandemic.

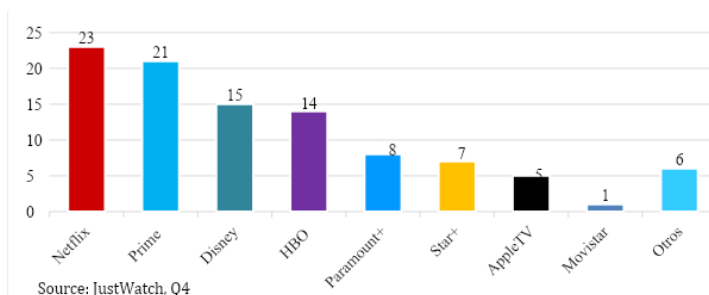
A sign of the growth of *streaming* is provided by the telecommunications company Entel, which holds a 35% of mobile data traffic (Subtel, 2023a). It reports that mobile data usage grew by 33% nationally in 2022 compared to 2021. Of this total, *streaming* accounts for 22%¹³.

The Undersecretary of Telecommunications (Subtel) records data traffic in Chile through fixed and mobile networks. The Subtel series shows that, although it has been slowing down, traffic is growing at very high rates: 60% between 2020 and 2019, triggered by the quarantine, but still growing at 25% in 2021 and then 16% in 2022 (Subtel, 2023a).

With numbers that are not comparable to those of Statista or FlixPatrol, the National Television Council published a study in which it estimated that 42% of Chilean households have access to some *streaming* platform, being 2.02 the average number of platforms that these households have, reaching 5 or more in 3% of households (CNTV, 2022).

In the absence of administrative information on the number of subscribers, the alternative available to compare their relative shares is the estimate made quarterly by JustWatch, the German *streaming* search and audience information services company present in 120 countries¹⁴.

Figure 3. Participation of the main international platforms



¹² For Statista projections see <https://www.statista.com/statistics/324077/chile-netflix-subscribers/> and for FlixPatrol projections see <https://flixpatrol.com/streaming-service/netflix/subscribers/#list> (accessed 5/27/2023).

¹³ Company press release of 01/31/2023. <https://informacioncorporativa.entel.cl/comunicaciones-de-prensa/posts/uso-de-datos-moviles-crecio-un-33-a-nivel-nacional-durante-2022> (accessed 05/27/2023).

¹⁴ See <https://www.pauta.cl/ocio/netflix-alcanza-solo-el-23-de-las-preferencias-de-lo-usuarios> (accessed on 05/27/2023)

Unlike 2021, in which the irruption of HBO Max and Star+ towards the middle of the year did not particularly affect Netflix and the rest of the platforms, in 2022 what is noticeable is a stable decline of Netflix together with a strong growth of HBO Max and Star+. All in all, JustWatch reports that Netflix remains the *streaming* platform with the highest penetration in Chile, but with Prime Video just two points behind. Although for Netflix this is a drop of only one point from the same period last year, at the end of the first quarter, according to the same source, its share was 25%. This trend seems to be close to the situation in the North American market, where the two main players are practically tied.

3.2. Supply of local VoD platforms by 2022

Figure 3 shows the market shares of eight VoD *streaming* platforms. In addition to being the most popular, they are all from North American origin, but the offer of VoD services, paid or free, is not limited to them and it is possible to recognize other platforms of a different nature.

On the one hand, there are the platforms of heritage nature, whose mission is to preserve and disseminate the Chilean audiovisual heritage. Here, the Cineteca Nacional stands out, which, in addition to its work of physical preservation of audiovisual titles and dissemination through its own room, offers a VoD access service to some of the materials it preserves¹⁵. Along the same lines are the Cineteca de la Universidad de Chile and the Archivo Fílmico UC of the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile.

The National Television Council (CNTV), in addition to its regulatory and promotional role, makes available to the public the audiovisual works it has helped finance through two different VoD services. On the one hand, CNTV Play hosts more than 150 titles of different genres and formats, mostly serialized. As of July 2022, it had more than 300,000 registered users. At the same time, content specifically for children is offered through CNTV Niños, which has around 2,600 children's videos of different types.

Just as the CNTV plays a role in promoting television, the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage does the same for cinema. This ministry makes available to the public some of the titles it has supported through the VoD platform OndaMedia. This service has the particularity that, although it is free for the public, it pays the filmmakers for the viewing of their works.

In addition to the VoD services mentioned above, all of which are of a public service nature, there are also services offered by some of the television channels. Canal 13 with 13Now (free), Mega with Mega Go (paid) and TVN with TVN Play (free),

¹⁵ The Cineteca is not formally offered as a VoD service, but provides access to its online catalog, through which it is possible to access those materials available for *online* viewing. Ver <https://cinotecanacional-bd.cl/acervo/8320ba399a46a571140bea0780b119917d74a0fc/ffb3a13e1b09dcd-4663930b3b118ae5f992221b5/index.php?mp=hom&mh=>

which has more than 5,000 hours of content available. In the case of CHV, whose owner is Paramount Global, some of its content is available through the Pluto TV platform (free).

In a similar way to broadcast television channels, the main pay-TV operators offer their own *streaming* services, either to access their content live, via VoD or rental and purchase of other material. The main ones are Movistar Play, Entel Go, DirecTV Go, VTR+, Claro Video. The latter two are in the process of merging.

In terms of thematically segmented services, it is worth mentioning TNT Sport's Chilean subsidiary, Estadio TNT Sports Chile, which offers its subscribers access to the local soccer tournament and other related content.

Finally, it is worth mentioning the Chilean platform Riivi, launched in 2020 with a focus on Latin American films, series, and documentaries. Access is free of charge and is financed through advertising. It has more than 300,000 users and plans to expand to Argentina and Mexico.

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

The presence of Chilean serialized fiction made for platforms is limited and with little prospect of increasing. This does not mean that Chileans are producing little, but that they are not producing in Chile. Fábula, Chile's largest production company, which produced three of the four titles in Table 8, opened offices in Los Angeles and Mexico City. The reason is simple: 70% of Netflix's production budget for Latin America is spent in Mexico. It is more profitable to produce there than in Chile, where Netflix has told industry executives that its production would not go beyond one film a year. For its part, Amazon closed its office and has also let it be known that it would not continue producing in Chile. The reason for producing locally is to attract local audiences and besides being a small market, its penetration is already high.

Another factor that limits the development of series for platforms is self-induced. The CNTV established as a rule that any work financed by it must be shown on an open television channel before being shown in other exhibition windows. However, CNTV funds are a minority contribution to the production costs of a high standard series, thus reducing the attractiveness for a platform. As mentioned, Fábula has stated that it prefers not to apply for CNTV funds, but for other production companies, with less capacity to raise financing, this policy is a serious limitation.

Table 8 shows the premiere titles of Chilean serialized fiction on platforms. Of these, the seventh season of *Verdades Ocultas* - the only title not produced by Fábula - qualifies at the edges of the definition adopted for this table. It is a telenovela made and exhibited on open television, but its seventh and last season premiered during the same year on Mega and on Netflix.

42 Días en la Oscuridad is the first original series for Netflix and the first major success of a Chilean series produced for platforms. At its peak, on Netflix it became

the seventh most watched series among non-English speaking series¹⁶. It is based on a real case of a woman who disappears without a trace in southern Chile. Her husband claims to have received a ransom call, which triggers a suspenseful plot in which the sister of the missing woman leads her search, facing the indifference of institutions, social prejudice, and media harassment.

The case of the second season of *El Presidente* is illustrative of the complexities of applying the traditional categories of territoriality to a series. Its production was led from Chile by Fábula, but it was co-produced by Gaumont (France) and Kapow (Argentina) and the execution in Uruguay, where it was shot, oversaw the Uruguayan production company Salado.

**TABLE 7. National titles and premiere co-productions
exhibited in 2022 on VoD systems**

NATIONAL PREMIERE TITLES	PREMIERE CO-PRODUCTIONS
Prime Video (1) 01. <i>La Jauría, S2</i> (series)	Prime Video (2) 01. <i>El Presidente, S2</i> (series - Chile, France, Argentina)
Netflix (2) 02. <i>42 Días en la Oscuridad</i> (series) 03. <i>Verdades Ocultas, T7</i> (Telenovela)	02. <i>Noticias de un Secuestro</i> (miniseries - Chile, Colombia)

Source: Obitel Chile

4. Interactivity and audience participation

After five years of broadcasting, *Verdades Ocultas* came to an end. With a presence in several social networks, Mega uploaded daily updates, and comments about the telenovela. On Instagram (IG) it found a good channel of interaction, both on the “Teleseries Mega” site and on that of the telenovela itself, with more than 21 thousand followers. There, every day, shocking scenes were commented, or viewers were asked their opinion about the twists and turns of this telenovela that spanned over years, where the entrance and exit of many actors were justified with deaths and plastic surgeries, amongst others. In the Teleseries Mega account, the previews and comments about this telenovela alternated with posts about others, such as *Amar Profundo*, or *La Ley de Baltazar*.

Regarding the latter, three months before its premiere, Mega used the different platforms to involve viewers, sharing photos of the crew meetings and locations, set in a town in southern Chile - Cochamó -, which over the months became a tourist attraction. Likewise, videos were uploaded with *backstage* images and interviews

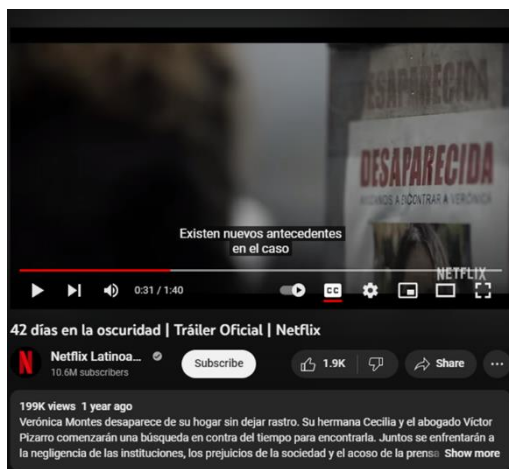
¹⁶ This data was published on Instagram from the Netflix Chile account.

with the actors. In this way, IG became a channel to interact with the audience, taking advantage of the success of this telenovela. Its 80 thousand followers on IG illustrate the high rating that this telenovela had. Its beautiful landscapes, intimate story and attractive characters helped to achieve this.

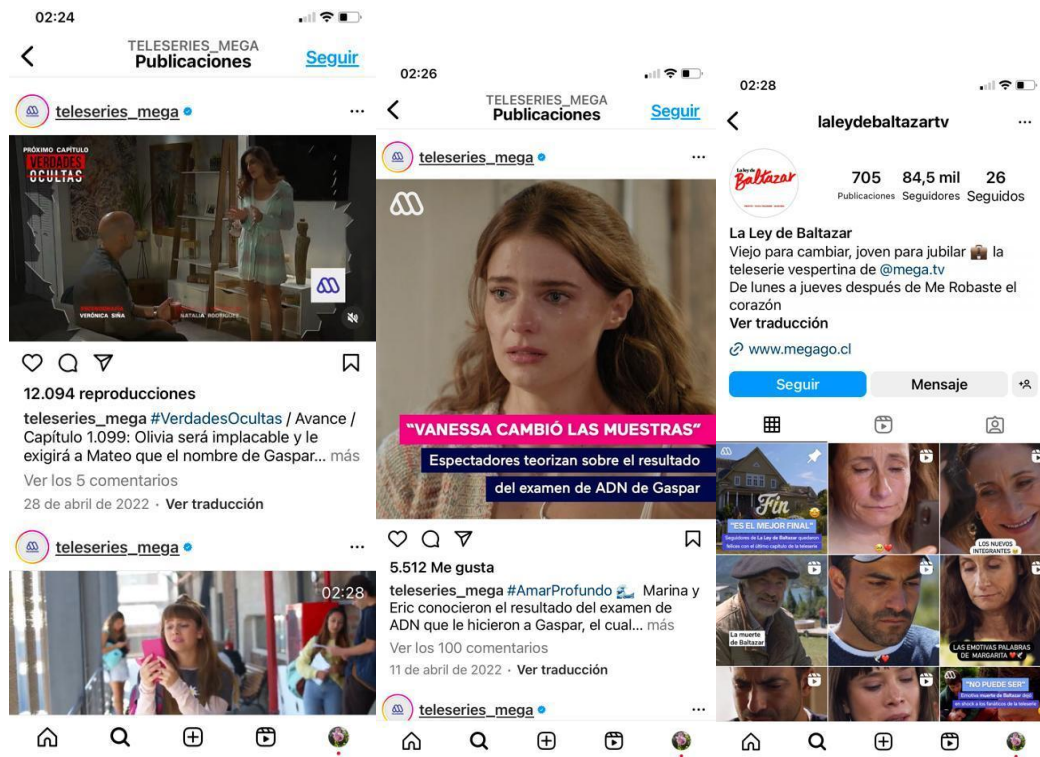
Meanwhile, on Twitter, viewers also commented on the attitudes of the protagonists, although no differences were observed this year in the strategies of the channels regarding their actions in social networks. The use of the *hashtag* presents two functionalities: the first one, to indicate which production is being broadcasted (following the pattern #”telenovela name”_at_”channel name”); while the second one aims at a call to action of the viewer (for example, #MarianoSeReconcilia), so that the contributions in social networks use that hashtag.

Much like what happened with *La Ley de Baltazar*, but with less advance notice, the IG of *Hijos del Desierto*, Mega’s nighttime telenovelas, began to upload previews of the telenovela and information about the actors and characters. Set in the port of Valparaíso in the 1930s, this telenovela boosted intrigue, suspense, love, and violence. With close to 80 thousand followers on IG, it managed to keep the attention of viewers thanks to the use of social media.

YouTube, meanwhile, was used to promote the productions through special audiovisual pieces, as was the case with *42 Días en la Oscuridad*, aired on Netflix.



Source: <https://youtu.be/u52xWzHdN4o>, revised 08/06/2023



Source: Instagram teleseries_mega, and La ley de Baltazar (revised 05/06/2023).

5. Highlights of the year

The presence of Asian fiction, particularly from South Korea, has reappeared strongly in Chilean open-access television. Although it is an emerging phenomenon that has not yet challenged the predominance of Turkish melodramas on the screen, two situations have shown that doramas, or more specifically, K-Dramas, have emerged from their niche spaces in *streaming* platforms and websites to become part of the outstanding offer of the private channel Canal 13 and the state channel, Televisión Nacional de Chile (TVN).

In the first case, there are already four Korean fictions aired consecutively. Canal 13 began this offer with a safe bet by programming *Escalera al Cielo*, a successful Korean drama available on various *streaming* platforms, which has triumphed in more than 15 Latin American countries and which in Chile had already been broadcast by TVN in 2006. This production, already in 2023, was followed by the successful series *Sorpresas del Destino*, *Mirada de Ángel* and *Pacto de Amor*, all with dramatic overtones and plot arcs recognizable by the consumer audience of classic Latin American melodrama that include heroines in disgrace, memory loss, incurable diseases and unscrupulous villains that truncate the romantic destiny of the protagonists. This offer has been announced by the media as “Korean telenovelas” that “take over Canal 13’s afternoon”, since they are broadcasted in the after-lunch time slot. In this

slot, they have been programmed together with reruns of proven Latin American hits such as *Yo soy Betty, la Fea*, and *Pasión de Gavilanes*.

In the case of TVN, during the second half of 2022, an alliance was announced between the channel and the Korean Broadcasting System (KBS) of South Korea. This agreement shows a concrete and planned interest on the part of the Chilean channel to incorporate in its 2023 programming schedule contents from that country and, thus, attract new, younger audiences that have moved away from the small screen. According to the information released, both media aim, on the one hand, to exchange content, including the export to Korea of part of the catalogue of TVN's Drama Area, and, on the other hand, the generation of content for digital platforms (especially TVN Play) and for different programs of the national channel.

As an inaugural milestone of this alliance, TVN supported the broadcasting of the Music Bank 2022 Festival held in November at the Monumental Stadium in Santiago, which was broadcasted for the first time by an open signal in Chile. Although this K-Pop festival was considered by some media as “chaotic” due to production problems and only three of the six scheduled groups could perform due to weather conditions, the thousands of people who filled the stadium showcased the growing success of Korean pop culture amongst Chileans. In fact, on December 9, the festival was broadcasted on its entirety through TVN, including the fall of one of the singers and the moment when the show was suspended. On that occasion, the award-winning Korean film *Parasite*, also a reference of the so-called “Korean wave” or “hallyu” (Dettleff, 2018; Carballo, 2018), was also programmed at a *prime time* slot.

6. Theme of the year: Independent production companies and the internationalization of television fiction production in Ibero-America.

Since 1967, the Chilean television fiction industry has had audience successes with series and telenovelas such as *Los días jóvenes*, *Padre Gallo* and *La colorina*. However, production was intermittent, and the production systems were not very schematic. It was with the premiere of *La Madrastra* (1981) that Chile started a continuous production, with “millionaire budgets, competition amongst channels, emergence of stars and planning of several productions at the same time” (Rodríguez Frías & Gutiérrez López, 2021, p.15).

This fact, together with the arrival of Herval Rossano in 1982 from Brazil after directing *La esclava Isaura* (Red Globo), changed and structured the production of an industry that lacked systematization. Ricardo Vicuña, one of the first telenovela directors at TVN, recalls that it was Rossano who imposed the way of organizing recordings with the “roteros” model: “it comes from *roteiro*, which in Brazil means shooting plan. It is the planning of what is going to be recorded during a week” (Rodríguez Frías & Gutiérrez López, 2021, p.16).

In the past, the channels were responsible for the entire production process, from the conception of the idea to the hiring of actors, scriptwriters, and technical crew, as well as the construction of sets, costumes, and the execution of shooting. The budget depended on the channel's board of directors and *ratings* became a crucial factor in attracting advertisers.

Today, the television fiction industry in Chile has undergone significant changes in its production form, where three factors were a turning point in the system: the inclusion of new schedules for national fiction, the creation of new drama areas in channels that until then had produced fiction intermittently, and the strengthening and growth of external production companies.

6.1 The great leap of production companies to TV

Previously, production companies in Chile focused on producing advertising and film, with concrete series or program projects for specific channels on a secondary basis. The funds from the National Television Council (CNTV) were conditioned to the alliance between the production company and the channel that committed to the broadcast.

However, in the early 2000s, the panorama changed drastically. The entry on the scene of the production company Roos Films, with sitcoms, telefilms, and telenovelas for several channels, introduced a new form of television fiction development. To this was added the opening of new schedules in the programming grid: in 2005, TVN premiered *Ídolos*, the first night telenovela in Chile at 10:00 pm, which inaugurated a new time slot for this type of fiction. Additionally, the end of the series *Los Venegas* in 2010 left TVN without content in the 15:00 slot for the first time in more than two decades. Other channels, in that time slot, broadcast foreign telenovelas or repeats of national productions, but TVN bet on generating its own telenovela, *Esperanza* (2011), reinstating the Chilean daytime telenovela, something not seen since 1982 when Canal 13 broadcasted *Bienvenido Hermano Andes*.

Additionally, TVN and Canal 13, actors of a practically uninterrupted fiction production duopoly, were confronted by Mega and CHV with their new Drama Areas that began to grow with new fiction proposals.

This context, together with the lack of space in studios, the need to comply with shooting schedules and the growing pressure to generate more fictional content for the small screen implied outsourcing the creation of new audiovisual fiction. In addition, it was necessary to refresh the financing logic. Pablo Ávila, television producer and current president and CEO of AGTV and Mazal Producciones, began to rethink the business model when he was Production Manager of TVN and then as Programming Manager of Canal 13, because he began to know the macro numbers of the industry. For him, television was facing an economic crisis, with advertising unable to maintain the high sales standards of the past. Channels

could not maintain large teams of staff as they had in the “Golden Age” of the industry. Avila (2023) saw “a business opportunity to become independent and take that operational cost out of the channels”.

The production company Myfriend, which had been a pioneer in producing *Esperanza* with TVN, changed channels to produce *Buscando a María* (2015) for CHV. Bowen Producciones, which had produced for Canal 13 the adaptation of the Argentine telenovela *Rebelde Way* under the name *Corazón Rebelde* (2009), won TVN’s bid to produce *Dama y Obrero* (2012), making way for TVN to become its first and only supplier. Chilefilms, known for producing films, anthology series and series, in addition to leasing its studios and facilities to various channels, began producing *Verdades Ocultas* for Mega in 2019, generating an alliance that continues to this day. For its part, AGTV signed in 2015 with Mega’s new Drama Area an agreement to produce four telenovelas; after that it did something similar with Canal 13 for five years, to then return to Mega to produce *Hijos del Desierto* (2023), taking full charge of billing and technical equipment, even switching to cameras with cinema optics, Blackmagic 12K.

In his more than two decades of experience, Jaime Morales, scriptwriter of telenovelas such as *Los Carmona*, *La Chúcaro* and the Chilean adaptation of the series *Ana y los siete*, has witnessed this consolidation between external production companies and channels, which has led to different production models: there are channels that act as production companies without external support, independent production companies in charge of the content of a channel following its guidelines, and, finally, a “hybrid” model where, in the words of Morales (2023) “the production company enters to set guidelines within the content to the narrative or form”.

This change of models allowed consolidating the use of independent production companies for the creation of television audiovisual fiction. Thus, Morales, after realizing that due to the content crisis it was important to become the manager of his own projects, created his own production company, Jaime Morales Producciones, presenting a very small series proposal to TVN. “As we progressed in conversations, the project grew and we finally had a first season on NTV, TVN’s cultural channel,” he explains.

Thus, *Celeste* (2022), a youth series that had three seasons and fluctuated between TVN’s cultural signal, NTV, and that of the channel itself, was born. Morales experienced what it meant to be an independent producer and to deal with a channel in a concrete way, because he knew the limits and editorial line of NTV, which “had a very clear spirit of a family cultural channel [...]. They watched over the content”.

Currently, the relationship between external production companies and television channels varies according to the economic model, format, and genre they produce. Telenovela production companies, such as DDRio, Mazal and AGTV, are highly dependent on the channels, although they have a stable production structure.

On the other hand, series production companies, such as Parox or Fábula, tend to have a more solid structure, as they distribute for platforms such as Amazon and Netflix. These production companies have greater financial security and operational efficiency. As for cinema, there are well-known production companies associated with directors, such as Andrés Wood or Silvio Caiozzi, while independent films depend more on state funds and are usually linked to smaller and more unstable production companies.

6.2 Production Company Models in the Audiovisual Industry

In Chile, the Association of Independent Producers (API) groups smaller production companies, while the Association of Television Producers (APCT) brings together production companies that have been around longer and are more established. However, for Marcela Santibáñez, Oscar-nominated producer for her work on the documentary *El Agente Topo* (2021), “in Chile all production companies are independent”.

According to Santibáñez, what makes it possible to speak of different scales and financing logics, differentiating between independent and dependent production companies, does not lie in whether they produce for foreign platforms or for a channel, but in their size and financial capacity. Smaller production companies tend to have difficulties due to the lack of cash flow to finance projects. In contrast, larger production companies have already established a steady flow of revenue and work. In addition, there is a disparity in the number of employees and labor stability, where the system for smaller production companies is considered more precarious (Santibáñez, 2023).

Santibáñez notes that in Chile the audiovisual industry has numerous small independent production companies, which arise due to the lack of comprehensive regulations governing their activity. In her words, these production companies are easy to create, because “although it is necessary to meet certain requirements, such as being a legal entity, beyond that, there are not many regulations”. Many of these production companies do not last in the long term, as they are created to apply for financing funds and disappear after one or two years, since they lack projects or economic solvency, unlike larger production companies with permanent flows, such as Fábula, which have advertising contracts and international financing. In addition, they have access to additional platforms for the distribution of their content beyond broadcast TV.

Daniel Castell, creative director in charge of Fábula’s platform content development (in the series area), differs with Santibáñez, and identifies three types of television fiction production companies in Chile: independent, dependent and co-producers. Independent production companies, which for Castell are like Fábula, have a solid and consolidated business model. Fábula, founded by Pablo and Juan de Dios

Larraín almost twenty years ago, initially stood out in advertising and film production. Its international recognition came with the Oscar-nominated film *No* (2012). Subsequently, in 2014, Fábula ventured into television with *No, la serie*, broadcasted by TVN, and in 2015 created its television department. However, while Fábula produced programs for TVN, CHV and Canal 13, it soon left the Chilean channels behind and went on to produce content for OTT platforms.

Secondly, Castell specifies that there are dependent production companies, which are in an initial phase and depend on state funds due to their lack of seniority and trajectory to participate in international co-productions. Finally, there are the dependent production companies with a more established name, whose main strategy is co-production. These production companies focus on co-producing projects until they achieve the necessary economic sustainability to develop and sell projects on their own (Castell, 2023).

Both Santibáñez and Castell agree that, whether television fiction production companies are independent or not, what differentiates them most is whether they have elements that facilitate the production of content for foreign platforms, and whether they are aware of the regulations and demands of catalogues and international standards required in the industry at a global level.

Today, independent production companies have greater interference in the creative content, financing, and exhibition of television audiovisual fiction, whether they are dependent on the broadcasting platform or not. Telenovela production companies are the ones that produce with less independence because they rely on the channel for broadcasting, unlike those that produce series that have several platforms where to sell their content. Thus, both the production system and those in charge of structuring and developing television fiction projects have had to adapt to an era where *streaming* and platforms are the future. However, Castell (2023) is critical in this regard, noting that today Fábula is exploring other financing phases so as not to appeal only to financing through direct sales with platforms, since, according to him, the trend in the market is that “the sale of licenses is coming back quite strongly”.

Television fiction production in Chile has evolved from depending mainly on the channels and the “roteros” model to being dominated by independent production companies that have enriched the offer and promoted competition among channels. Although there are differences in size and economic solvency, all production companies in Chile consider themselves independent to some extent. These changes have boosted the development and professionalization of the television fiction industry in the country.

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