



Cities on Volcanoes 9
November 20-25, 2016
Puerto Varas, Chile

'Understanding volcanoes and society: the key for risk mitigation'



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

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Keywords: Canary Islands, volcano hazards, risk management, educational program, volcanic window.

“Canary Islands: A volcanic window in the Atlantic Ocean” is an educational program born from the need to inform and educate citizens residing in the Canary Islands on the various hazards associated to volcanic phenomena. The Canary Islands is the only territory of Spain that hosts active volcanism, as is shown by the 16 historical eruptions that have occurred throughout this territory. The most recent one was a submarine eruption which took place on October 12, 2011, offshore El Hierro Island. In the last 7 years, ITER as well as INVOLCAN have been performing an educative program focused on educating to the population about the benefits of living in a volcanic territory, volcanic hazards, how to reduce volcanic risk and the management of volcanic risk in the Canaries. “Canary Islands: A volcanic window in the Atlantic Ocean” consists of three units, the first two dedicated to the IAVCEI/UNESCO videos “Understanding Volcanic Hazards” and “Reducing Volcanic Risk” and the third one dedicated to the management of volcanic risk in the Canaries. In addition, a volcanic trivial is provided to the attendees before the educative program starts. They have to answer to several questions directly related to each unit before and after the unit is taught, so it’s possible to estimate the impact of the program. Since this initiative started in 2008 the total number of attendees amounts to 18,911 persons. The ultimate goal of this educational program is to contribute to a better organized and informed community in relation to volcanic risk in Canaries and become much less vulnerable



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than a community that does not know or ignores volcanic hazards,
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and it is not organized to respond to them.

