

# Communication Report 2022

Annex to the Annual Review

## Executive summary

During 2022, we saw increases in both the output and impact of EPO communications, reflecting a more sophisticated and targeted strategy. The results were evident in both internal communications, driven by the launch of a new version of the intranet, and external communications, where media outreach and social media participation reached new levels.

The new version of the intranet, with several enhanced features, went live in September. Following this, the number of views grew significantly and we received over 1 million in each month from September to December. During the whole year, the number of news items posted on the intranet increased by 14%. EPOBEATS, a platform for EPO staff replacing newsletters and emails, also performed above target in 2022 – helping to shape the “One Office” mindset.

In response to feedback from audiences and stakeholders, a more focused and tailored approach to external communications was developed in 2022. This has led to high social media engagement rates, with a greater range of content including livestreaming videos, visuals and animations. For example, overall web visuals increased by 220% in 2022. In consequence, despite fewer posts and no advertising, the number of followers across all EPO media channels increased by 8.1% to over 267 000.

Communication campaigns for key EPO initiatives delivered positive results in 2022. Despite the lack of advertising on social media, the number of media clippings for the Patent Index increased by 20%, the number of radio and TV reports by 276% and the engagement rate by 359%. The hybrid European Inventor Award attracted almost 24 000 viewers and generated almost 3 500 media reports, with the European Inventor Award influencer campaign in particular having a greater reach.

One of our key aims is to reach and promote participation among new audiences, including young people and women. During 2022, the EPO launched the Young Inventors Prize and initiated the European Inventor Network (to be fully implemented throughout 2023) to engage with past European Inventor Award finalists and inspire and empower young people. The report on Women’s participation in inventive activities, one of four studies published by the Chief Economist Unit in 2022, reached over 42 000 social media users and was the subject of three livestreamed panel debates.

The focus on quality over quantity communication has delivered success in 2022, as demonstrated by the figure of 76% of Principal Directorate Communication stakeholders who are satisfied with the quality of support and timeliness (EPO customer satisfaction survey 2022). By focusing on key topics for the EPO – such as quality, the Unitary Patent, digital transformation and sustainability – we hope to build on this participation and engagement in 2023 and beyond.

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# 1. Key communication campaigns and deliverables

## 1.1 Communication output

Figure 1: Communication output in 2022 versus 2021

| Deliverables                                            | 2021  | 2022  | Change    |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-----------|
| News published on EPO website                           | 113   | 125   | +11%      |
| News published on intranet                              | 1 250 | 1 419 | +14%      |
| Events                                                  | 153   | 158   | +3%       |
| Videos (without European Inventor Award videos)         | 44    | 62    | +41%      |
| Social media posts                                      | 4 402 | 4 341 | -1.4%     |
| Social media campaigns (number of monitored activities) | 37    | 57    | +54%      |
| Press releases (number of campaigns)                    | 12    | 12    | no change |
| Media interviews                                        | 73    | 105   | +44%      |
| Brochures, publications                                 | 123   | 141   | +15%      |
| Infographics, icons, illustrations                      | 456   | 689   | +51%      |
| Web visuals                                             | 1 631 | 5 215 | +220%     |

Source: EPO

## 1.2 Patent Index campaign



The publication of the annual Patent Index is one of the EPO's most prominent communication campaigns. The Patent Index 2021 (published in April 2022) again received widespread media attention worldwide. Media coverage of the Patent Index has grown every year, and the publication is now a fixture in the press calendar. The number of media clippings was the highest ever, despite a difficult news environment (war in Ukraine, energy crunch, soaring inflation and coronavirus).

To promote the Patent Index 2021, the EPO once again ran a global media campaign as well as localised campaigns in 17 countries. We made various resources available, including graphs, infographics, an introductory video and animated infographic, three podcasts and a social media kit, as well as three web features on vaccine technologies, smart urban mobility, and applicants. The EPO also reached out to stakeholders such as the national IP offices of member states and the top 100 patent applicants.

This year's news that patent filings at the EPO were up 4.5% in 2021, after a slight dip in 2020, was widely reported, as was Huawei regaining its position as

the top applicant at the EPO. The detailed data provided by our Chief Business Analyst Unit is highly appreciated by journalists, as is our new Statistics & Trends Centre, where users can customise and download their own data.

Highlights of coverage included nearly 90 wire reports by widely cited news agencies such as AFP, dpa, Bloomberg, Reuters, Kyodo News and Xinhua, and 250 articles in print newspapers. Around the time of the publication, over 50 media interviews on the Patent Index in different languages were arranged with EPO speakers (up from 34 last year). The interviewees included colleagues from the Chief Economist Unit, the Chief Business Analyst Unit, PD Communication, DG 1, DG 4 and DG 5. These interviews contributed to the quality and breadth of the reporting. This year we also had a record 173 TV and radio broadcasts – some of them airing in primetime and reaching millions of viewers and listeners.

The Patent Index 2021 was widely shared and discussed on social media, demonstrating its relevance to business, policymakers, journalists and academics. More than 1 200 people and organisations (media outlets, IP professionals, patent applicants and EPO staff) spoke about the Patent Index in their own channels (up 30% compared to last year). For example the CEO of Siemens, Roland Busch, tweeted a note of congratulations and thanks to their inventors for helping the company reach fifth place in the EPO's applicant ranking. Despite not doing any social media advertising for this campaign, there was a record engagement rate: nearly 4%, compared to 0.87% last year.

Journalists look to the EPO's statistics as an indicator of innovation levels as well as trends in technology

Figure 2: Impact of press and social media activities in 2022 versus 2021

| Indicator                    | 2021            | 2022            | Change |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------|
| Media clippings              | 2 009           | 2 412           | +20%   |
| Tier-1 media clippings       | 659             | 725             | +10%   |
| Advertising Value Equivalent | EUR 8.5 million | EUR 9.3 million | +9%    |
| Radio/TV reports             | 46              | 173             | +276%  |
| Social media reach (users)   | 1.3 million     | 269 537*        | -79%*  |
| Engagement rate              | 0.87%           | 4%              | +360%  |

\* No advertising activities organised in 2022

Source: EPO

### 1.3 Chief Economist's studies



The studies published by the Chief Economist Unit (CEU) are excellent means to provoke discussion in the media and to demonstrate the usefulness of EPO data for policy making. In 2022, the CEU published four main studies (one more than

in 2021). Each of these was accompanied by targeted press and social media campaigns. Two promotional videos and two podcasts were produced and there were three livestreamed panel debates for the women inventors study.

In 2022, the campaigns were aimed at a more tailored audience in more markets. There was also more focus on reaching IP professionals via LinkedIn. Stakeholders were particularly interested in processes and core business-related content. There were 54 interviews with EPO experts (compared to just 15 in 2021) as well as interviews with European Inventor Award finalists and winners.

Chief Economist studies spotlight the economic impact of innovation and patents

Figure 3: Impact of press and social media activities

| Indicator          | Deep tech innovation (with EIB*) | Grace Period impact | IPR intensive industries (with EUIPO**) | Women's part. in inventive activity |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Media clipp.       | 90                               | n/a                 | 438                                     | 837                                 |
| Tier-1 clipp.      | 36                               | n/a                 | 100                                     | 263                                 |
| AVE                | EUR 303 950                      | n/a                 | EUR 1 272 975                           | EUR 4 644 892                       |
| Social media reach | 15 514                           | 15 262              | 22 680                                  | 42 481                              |
| Engagem.           | 377                              | 835                 | 743                                     | 1 782                               |
| Eng. Rate***       | 2.43%                            | 5.47%               | 3.28%                                   | 4.19%                               |

\*EIB: European Investment Bank

\*\*EUIPO: European Union Intellectual Property Office

\*\*\*Industry rates between 1-5% are considered successful

Source: EPO

## 1.4 European Inventor Award



As in previous years, the European Inventor Award was one of the EPO's flagship communication campaigns. The European Inventor Award 2022 was organised as a hybrid event TV-style with the finalists and a small audience in the studio and the event streamed live. Almost 24 000 viewers watched the ceremony.

An international media campaign was run in 16 countries. This resulted in almost 3 500 media reports and an overall potential reach of 360 million people, with a high performance in top-tier media. There were 171 interviews conducted with the Award finalists and winners.

The European Inventor Award campaign plays a significant role in raising awareness of the EPO

The social media campaign, which again entailed work with influencers, reached 6 million users and achieved a record 10% engagement rate. The establishment of the EPO GIPHY account delivered more than 11.2 million dedicated views.

Figure 4: Impact of the communication campaign for the European Inventor Award



Source: EPO

## 1.5 Next generation European Inventor Award



The EPO established the Young Inventors Prize to encourage and support the next generation of inventors, and to recognise problem-solving initiatives across all fields of science and technology. With the new prize the EPO acknowledges young innovators who use technology to develop solutions in any field that are helping to reach the UN Sustainable Development Goals, ranging from climate action and sustainable cities to quality education and zero hunger.

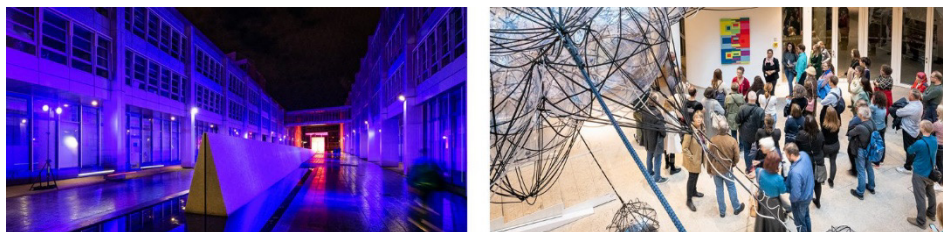
The three inaugural Young Inventors Prize winners were revealed during the European Inventor Award ceremony. Each of the first-place winners received a cash prize of EUR 20 000, while the runner-up was awarded EUR 10 000.

As part of the transformation of the Award, more than 30 staff members took part in the awards ceremony by presenting awards while others attended the physical event. In addition, there were internal activities for staff including public viewing across the EPO sites. We have also highlighted nominations by staff through pitch presentations and thanks on the intranet. In total, there were more than 550 nominations in 2022. We aim to increase this number in 2023, with the first edition of a group challenge “nomination jam”.

The Young Inventors Prize acknowledges the work done by younger generations in the field of sustainability

The concept of the European Inventor Network has been initiated in 2022 to be fully implemented throughout 2023. This engages with past European Inventor Award finalists and winners to inspire and empower young people to unleash their creativity and use science and technology to tackle society's challenges.

## 1.6 The Long Night of Museums in Munich



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In October, the EPO took part for the second time in the City of Munich's "Lange Nacht der Museen" (The Long Night of Museums). The aim of the campaign is to demonstrate the EPO's close ties with Munich and to strengthen the relationship with local communities. The EPO was a main sponsor of this event, with its logo prominent and high visibility throughout Munich.

In 2022, we held an open house event in the PschorrHöfe building with guided tours of the art collection, the premier of a short film "Light art", a presentation on the patenting process and an illumination concept for the public space. Thanks to the relaxation of health rules, we were able to welcome visitors and staff indoors as well as outdoors.

The children's programme comprising bespoke tours and art workshops (with involvement of the European School Munich) was a new feature in 2022. Overall, there was a high level of interest among staff and their families, with 570 free tickets (compared to 400 in 2021). The social media campaign included a new influencer marketing and an Instagram takeover of the organiser's account for 24 hours (2021: paid advertising, 2022: only organic campaign on EPO channels). Social media reach fell as there were no advertising activities but there was some coverage in local media, including reporting by tier 1 media such as two articles in Süddeutsche Zeitung (SZ) and a tv report on Bayerischer Rundfunk (BR).

The "Lange Nacht der Museen" (The Long Night of Museums) is a landmark project in the EPO's communication on art topics and local partnership

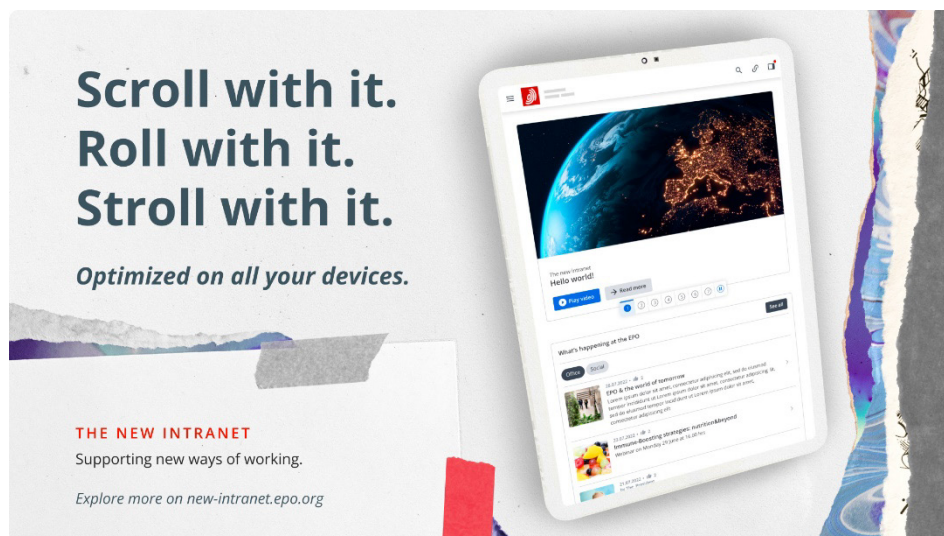
Figure 5: Impact of the communication activities for "The Long Night of Museums"

| Indicator                                  | 2021      | 2022     | Change |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------|----------|--------|
| Number of visitors                         | 128       | 880      | +588%  |
| Kids at children's programme               | n/a       | 39       | n/a    |
| Visibility of EPO logo in Munich           | 79 000    | 104 000  | +32%   |
| Page views art section on epo.org          | 5 816     | 10 013   | +72%   |
| Media clippings                            | 15 + 1 TV | 8 + 1 TV | -47%   |
| Social Media reach (EPO channels)*         | 534 525   | 11 396*  | -98%*  |
| Reach of Social Media influencer marketing | n/a       | 199 331  | n/a    |

\* No advertising activities organised in 2022

Source: EPO

## 2. Relaunches of intranet and epo.org



The highlight in 2022 was the launch of the new intranet in September 2022. This featured a responsive design; new features such as quick access, people search and social functions; new structure and content; and a new search engine. More than 150 editors have been trained to update content in the new content management system. A communications campaign was also run to engage content owners and end users. The feedback was collected, leading to questions being answered and improvements implemented or proposed.

Significant progress was also made in developing the new epo.org during 2022, and launch is planned in 2023. Improvements were made (March and November 2022) to the Statistics & Trends Centre which already appears in the new platform since June 2021.

## 3. Communication channels performance

### 3.1 Events



In 2022, the channel strategy for events was focused on high-level events, in particular the European Inventor Award and the EPO Tech Day (15-16 February). The online event explored a diverse range of sustainable innovation, and how to accelerate the development of technologies of transformation required to sustain planetary health – both human health and the health of planet Earth.

In addition to these two events, the Event Management team organised more than 150 patent events. These included Patent Knowledge Week (4 to 7 October) which welcomed 1 800 registered participants from 97 countries, and the EPO

Excellent results could be achieved for the event channel key indicators effectiveness and relevance of external events

User Day (28 to 29 November) which attracted over 2 200 participants from at least 46 countries, as well as 2 300 viewers on LinkedIn and YouTube. Record numbers and high satisfaction rates were also recorded for Search Matters, the PATLIB Conference and the High-Growth Technology Business Conference.

Looking ahead, we aim to improve the reach and impact on the intended target group and expand the range of issues covered. New event formats for exhibitions and a policy on New Ways of Managing Events have also been developed.

Figure 6: Key indicators for the event channel performance in 2022 versus 2021

| Indicator                                        | 2021          | 2022          | Change    |
|--------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|-----------|
| Events organised in total                        | 153           | 158           | +3%       |
| Number of event participants*                    | 18 000        | 27 000        | +50%      |
| Number of countries participants registered from | 90+ countries | 90+ countries | no change |
| Patent relevant topics                           | 46            | 51            | +11%      |
| Effectiveness of EPO external events             | 88%           | 92%           | +5%       |
| Relevance of external strategic events           | 83%           | 90%           | +8%       |

\*The European Inventor Award is considered a campaign. The respective participation figures are not included here but reported separately under 1.5.

Source: EPO

## 3.2 Social media

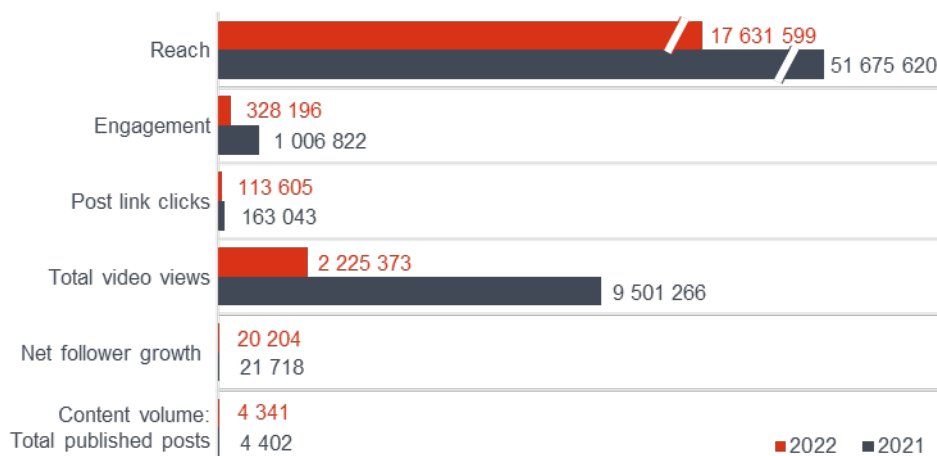
A more focused approach in 2022 led to high engagement rates on all the EPO's social media channels, an 8% increase in the EPO's social media community, meaningful conversations with the users on all platforms (especially LinkedIn) about the latest developments at the EPO as well as innovation in general, women's contributions in STEM, the EPO's studies, and other topics.

Engaging content was tailored to each channel and to the specific audience, for example by using videos, visuals and animations. This was a direct response to listening to our social media audiences and engaging more on topics relevant to their interests and work. It enhanced all of the EPO's communications activities as well as supporting campaigns/activities that were limited to social media.

During 2022, the focus in social media was on quality rather than quantity. This resulted in fewer posts being published and earned content replacing advertising. In addition, during quarters 1 and 2, the European Inventor Award paid social media promotion was reduced to a minimum due to the war in Ukraine. This led to an overall decline in reach, with no viral videos in 2022 and changes to the channels' algorithms.

The EPO is very well positioned in terms of social media followers and engagement

Figure 7: Impact social media communication in 2022 versus 2021 (all EPO channels)\*



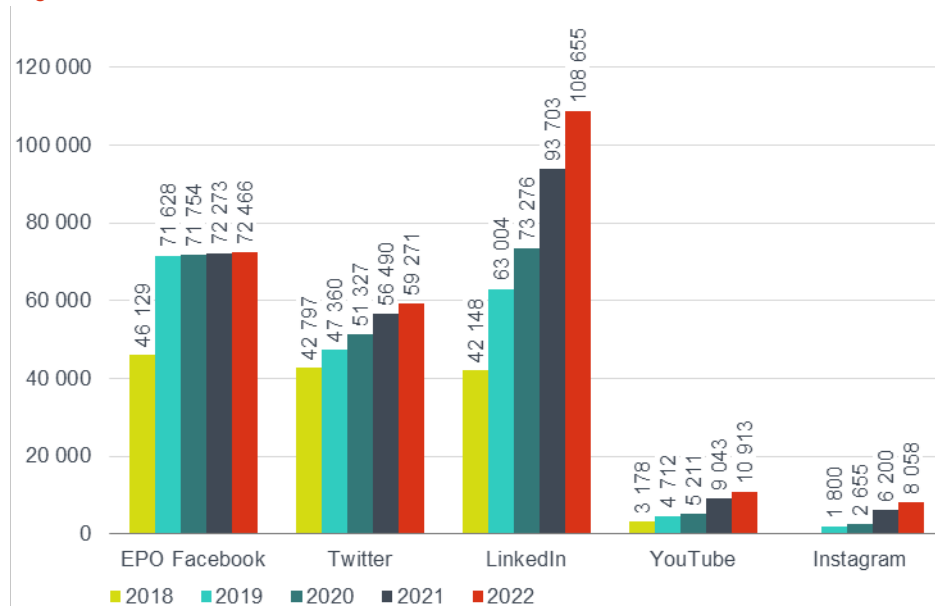
\*Limited advertising efforts; No viral video; Changes to channels' algorithms

Source: EPO

However, our social media content strategy in 2022 attracted more followers interested in staying up to date with what is going on at the EPO, as well as overall in innovation. So despite fewer posts being published and no advertising taking place, the total number of followers for all EPO channels increased. This also led to greater engagement.

The number of stakeholders that interact with the EPO on social media continued to grow

Figure 8: Evolution in EPO social media followers from 2018 to 2022



Source: EPO

### 3.3 Media

The impact of the media relations activities increased in 2022 even though the number of campaigns remained the same. The increase in interviews and clippings was noteworthy. However, there were fewer media enquiries as many of these were concerned to COVID and vaccines topics in the last two years.

Media partnerships for the European Inventor Award were also downsized, with its related impact in some of the indicators (such as reach).

Figure 9: Key indicators for the media channel performance in 2022 versus 2021

| Indicator                                               | 2021           | 2022           | Change    |
|---------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------|
| Press releases (counting one for each campaign / topic) | 12             | 12             | no change |
| Media queries                                           | 250            | 160            | -36%      |
| Interviews                                              | 73             | 105            | +44%      |
| Clippings (overall)                                     | 8 013          | 15 910         | +99%      |
| Clippings main campaigns                                | 6 441          | 7 241          | +12%      |
| Tier-1 clippings (main campaigns)                       | 1 891          | 1 893          | no change |
| Ratio of reports in Tier1 media                         | 29%            | 26%            | -10%      |
| Reach (main campaigns)                                  | 1 651 616 740  | 1 015 190 183  | -39%      |
| AVE (main campaigns)                                    | EUR 34 839 255 | EUR 41 174 600 | +18%      |

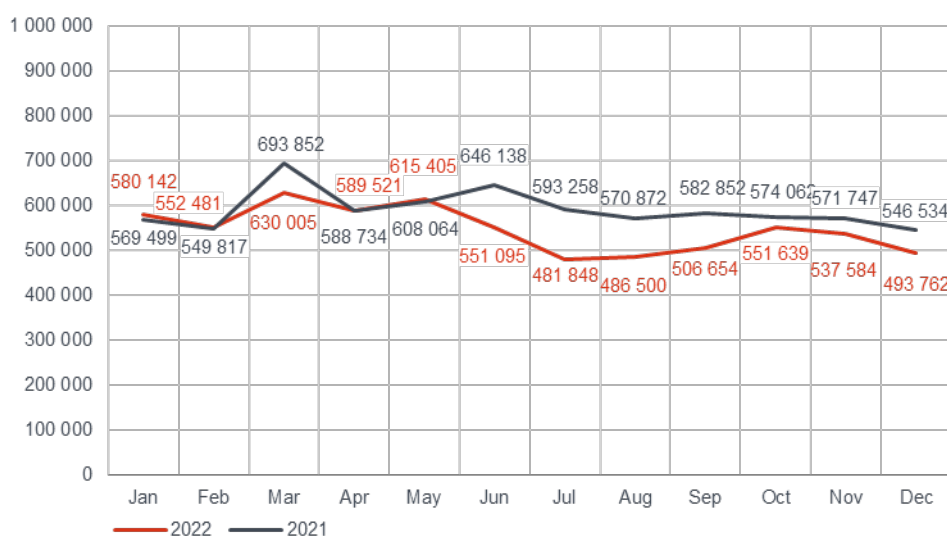
Source: EPO

### 3.4 Intranet and EPO website

According to the 2022 website user satisfaction survey, 70% of EPO website users perceive that the Office does a good job of keeping them informed about matters that affect them. In 2022, the number of unique visitors on the **mobile website m.epo.org** increased by 23%. While the 2021 and 2022 data are not fully comparable due to changes in the statistics tool used, it seems that there is a trend towards visitors accessing the EPO website from mobile devices.

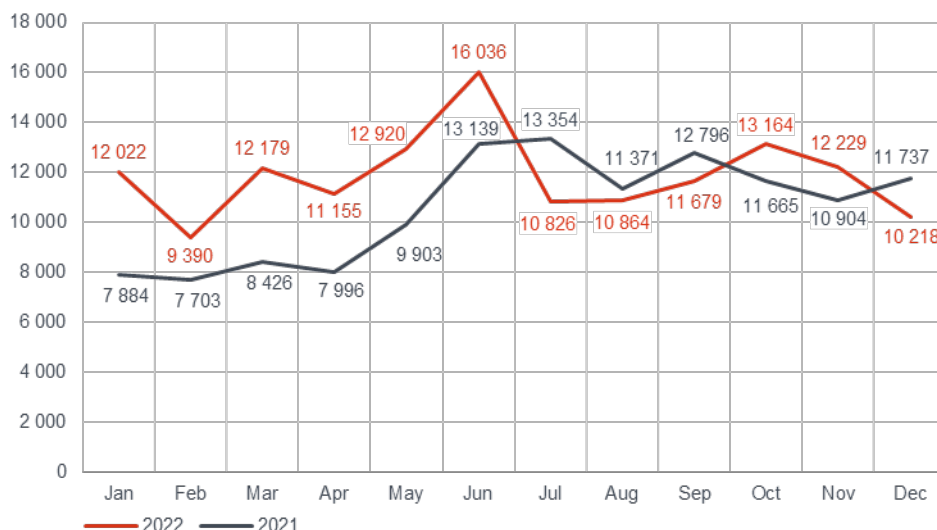
During 2022, the EPO enhanced the value that its website offers stakeholders

Figure 10: Visitors to www.epo.org in 2022 versus 2021



Source: EPO

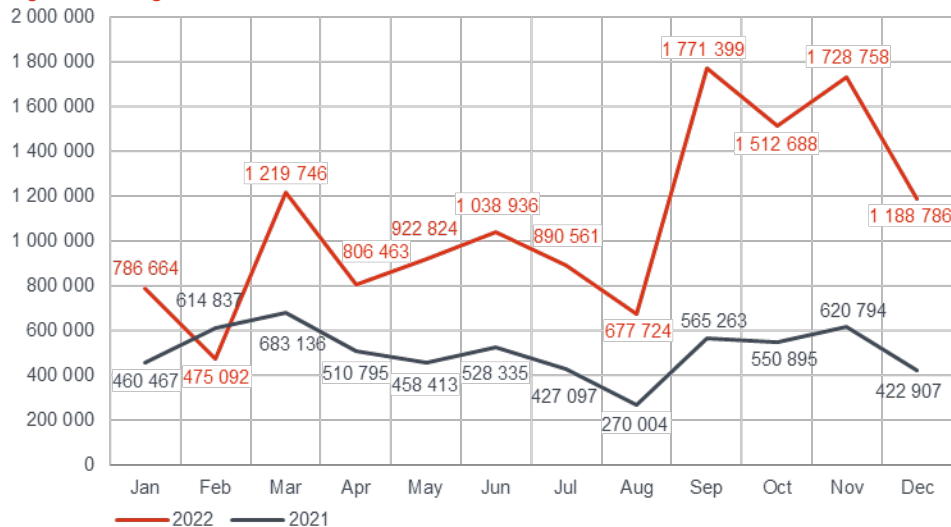
Figure 11: Visitors to m.epo.org (mobile website) in 2022 versus 2021



Source: EPO

The focus in 2022 was the launch of the new version of the intranet, which went live in September. Following this, page views went up. While the 2021 and 2022 data are not directly comparable due to technical issues with the statistics tool, the overall trend is positive.

Figure 12: Page views on the intranet in 2022 versus 2021



Source: EPO

### 3.5 EPO podcast and newsletters

The EPO's **"Talk innovation" podcast** provides perspectives on innovation through interviews with experts, including patent examiners, inventors and specialists in the commercialisation of innovation. Despite fewer episodes being published in 2022, and no social media advertising activity, the number of plays remained consistent.

The podcast gives an opportunity to learn more about the EPO, the patent system and innovation

Figure 13: Key indicators for “Talk innovation” in 2022 versus 2021

| Indicator                    | 2021    | 2022    | Change |
|------------------------------|---------|---------|--------|
| New episodes published       | 37      | 25      | -32%   |
| Plays                        | 18 000  | 18 129  | +1%    |
| Social media - Reach         | 440 000 | 172 687 | -61%*  |
| Social media - Trailer plays | 50 000  | 29 123  | -42%*  |
| Social media - Interactions  | 6 000   | 3368*   | -44%*  |

\* No advertising activities organised in 2022

Source: EPO

The **EPO newsletter** was sent to 16 388 subscribers in 2022. Written for patent professionals, the newsletter has details of key EPO events and training opportunities, with links to the EPO website.

### 3.6 Audio visual communication and graphic design

The EPO's audio-visual team produces videos, organises live event transmissions and films senior executives for communication purposes. The number of graphic design deliverables increased in 2022, with the biggest growth coming in social media and web visuals.

Figure 14: Selected graphic design products and deliverables in 2022 versus 2021



Source: EPO