**PRESS RELEASE**

**“Technology vs. Fire”:**

**Inventions help us build a better world**

**The European Patent Office (EPO) and the**

**Hellenic Industrial Property Organisation (OBI)**

**Athens-Munich, 13 March 2024\_**22022 was one of the worst years in European in Europe in terms of fires, as more than 830 000 hectares of land across Europe was devastated by forest fires, roughly the area of Crete.

According to the European Forest Fire Information System (EFFIS), 2022 was the second worst year in Europe in terms of burned areas, as well as the number of fires.

Dealing with this catastrophic phenomenon, which is a result of the climate crisis, is a crucial challenge for all of us. These wildfires cost the European Union 2.5 billion euros in economic damage and the human cost was immeasurable.

The [European Patent Office](https://www.epo.org/en?mtm_campaign=firefighting&mtm_keyword=pressrelease&mtm_medium=press) (EPO) in collaboration with the [Hellenic Industrial Property Organisation](https://www.obi.gr/) (OBI) present an exhibition of all the modern know-how and technical information contained in the patents of the [firefighting platform](https://www.epo.org/en/news-events/in-focus/firefighting?mtm_campaign=firefighting&mtm_keyword=pressrelease&mtm_medium=press) created by the EPO to support the activities focused on saving our planet and its people from the unfortunately recurring devastating forest fires.

In the immersive exhibition "**Technology vs. Fire. Inventions help us build a better world"**, great innovative technologies to prevent, shield, combat and restore burnt areas will be presented to the general public for the first time, with the ultimate goal of maintaining the ecological balance of our planet for future generations.

The wildfire season is not going to stop. Due to the environmental, social and economic impacts, it is more urgent than ever to invest in research and make the most of innovation.

EPO examiners have joined forces with the experts from the national IP offices of Greece, Spain, Portugal, France and Italy to gather relevant firefighting queries.

The firefighting platform aims to better prepare local authorities and national governments to prevent the devastation of previous years and to provide them with assistance in this very crucial fight. By sharing important information contained in patents globally, it provides users with the knowledge of existing inventions and can lead scientists, inventors and governments to new, in-depth knowledge, breakthrough ideas and important collaborations.

“With the UN warning of a 30% rise in wildfires by 2050, our collective response must go beyond individual efforts. We must pool as many resources as we can and empower innovators to bring new tech to market,” said EPO President, António Campinos. “I believe that we will not necessarily be defined by the challenges we face, but by the collective efforts with which we confront them. The exhibition is a testament to this.”

“Research and innovation could only stand but at the forefront of preventing and tackling forest fires. Climate change is challenging the world with increasingly extreme events,” said Director General of the Hellenic Industrial Property Organisation (OBI), Panagiotis G. Kanellopoulos. “The EPO exhibition in cooperation with OBI, organised in Athens and based in the heart of the Mediterranean, symbolises the decisive involvement of the intellectual property system promoting new technologies in the fight against fires.”

The exhibition, organised with the valuable cooperation of the Hellenic Fire Brigade, the National Observatory of Athens and the Agricultural University of Athens, will be **open to visitors from 13.03.2024 to 27.03.2024 at Zappeio Megaro**. It focuses on **4 main areas**:

**• detection and prevention**

**• fire extinguishing**

**• protective equipment**

**• post-fire restoration**

**Exhibition details:**

**Monday-Friday: 09:00 – 17:00**

**Saturday-Sunday: 11:00-19:00**

**Zappeio Megaron, Halls 2 & 3**

**Vasilissis Olgas Avenue**

**105 57 Athens**

**More about the Platform:**

The EPO platform hosts a broad range of innovations, from Artificial Intelligence and aerial technologies to virtual reality firefighting training and flame-retardant materials. The field of fire extinguishing is currently the one with the highest number of patent applications filed, ahead of detection and prevention, protective equipment and post-fire restoration. It draws data from the EPO's public database, [Espacenet](https://worldwide.espacenet.com/?mtm_campaign=firefighting&mtm_keyword=pressrelease&mtm_medium=press), of over 140 million documents from 100 countries and provides quick access to critical information.

The EPO platform hosts a broad range of innovations, from artificial intelligence and aerial technologies to virtual reality firefighting training and flame-retardant materials.  This is third such EPO initiative, following the “[Fighting Coronavirus](https://www.epo.org/en/news-events/in-focus/fighting-coronavirus?mtm_campaign=firefighting&mtm_keyword=pressrelease&mtm_medium=press)”  and “[Clean energy technologies](https://www.epo.org/en/news-events/in-focus/clean-energy?mtm_campaign=firefighting&mtm_keyword=pressrelease&mtm_medium=press)” platforms.  More recently the EPO has also launched a cancer technology platform called [“Technologies combatting cancer”](https://www.epo.org/en/news-events/in-focus/technologies-combatting-cancer?mtm_campaign=firefighting&mtm_keyword=pressrelease&mtm_medium=press).

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**About the EPO**

With 6 300 staff members, the [European Patent Office (EPO)](https://www.epo.org/en?mtm_campaign=firefighting&mtm_keyword=pressrelease&mtm_medium=press) is one of the largest public service institutions in Europe. Headquartered in Munich with offices in Berlin, Brussels, The Hague and Vienna, the EPO was founded with the aim of strengthening co-operation on patents in Europe. Through the EPO's centralised patent granting procedure, inventors can obtain high-quality patent protection in up to 45 countries, covering a market of some 700 million people. The EPO is also the world's leading authority in patent information and patent searching.

**About the Hellenic Industrial Property Organisation (OBI):**

The Hellenic Industrial Property Organisation (OBI) has been operating since 1988 and is the exclusively responsible body in Greece for the protection of patents, trademarks and industrial properties. The purpose of OBI is to contribute to the technological and industrial development of the country, providing important services in the field of Industrial Property.