**PRESS RELEASE**

**Exhibition ‘Technology vs. Fire’:**

**Inventions that help us improve the world**

**Organised by the European Patent Office (EPO) and the Slovenian Intellectual Property Office (SIPO)**

**Munich /** **Ljubljana, 11 April 2024 –** An exhibition on the technological inventions that help us fight forest fires opens at the Kosovel House in Sežana today. Visitors can learn how firefighting equipment has evolved, see a mock-up of a Slovenian satellite that detects and monitors fires, try firefighting with 3D glasses and find out when the Karst region will be green again. The exhibition will run until 21 April and admission is free.

The exhibition is organised by the Slovenian Intellectual Property Office (SIPO) and the European Patent Office (EPO), with exhibits and photographs from the Pivka Military History Park Museum, the Military Museum Tabor Lokev, the Skylabs company from Maribor and the Fire and Rescue Service Institute Sežana.

The exhibition aims to **raise awareness among the general public about the origin, prevention and consequences of forest fires and reforestation**. It is deliberately set in a region that was among the worst affected by the recent devastating fires in the Karst. The interactive exhibition presents the role of innovation and technology in tackling forest fires. Visitors can also see several objects protected by intellectual property (IP) rights.

The exhibition also includes interviews with Slovenian researchers, firefighters and satellite experts, providing unique insights into modern firefighting and life-saving technologies, along with testimonies from those who fought the 2022 forest fire.

Approximately 150 people attended **the opening ceremony**. They were addressed by State Secretary, Dejan Židan, Director of the SIPO, Karin Žvokelj and EPO representatives. The Commander of the Civil Protection of the Republic of Slovenia, Srečko Šestan, and the Commander of the Professional Firefighting Unit Sežana, Blaž Turk, also shared their experiences.

**State Secretary, Dejan Židan,** stressed that cooperation between the state and the people is crucial in achieving common goals for a better and safer future. The recent fires have reminded us of the importance of joining forces and fighting together to prevent such serious disasters. Only a joint effort can ensure the safety and sustainable development of our environment. He added that intellectual property is not only a driver of economic progress, but also a key tool for achieving sustainable goals and the development of society as a whole, and it is therefore right to bring it to the attention of all people, including through events such as this.

**The Director of the SIPO, Karin Žvokelj,** said in her speech that the aim of the exhibition is to raise awareness of how valuable innovation is and how crucial it is to protect it and use it for the benefit of the community. The exhibition offers a glimpse of how intellectual property is not just an abstract concept, but is all around us in everyday life, including in areas as vital as fire safety.

**More about the EPO firefighting platform:**

The EPO platform hosts a broad range of inventions, 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/), of over 150 million documents from 100 countries and provides quick access to critical information.

This is one of four such initiatives launched by the EPO, also including the [Fighting coronavirus](https://www.epo.org/news-events/in-focus/fighting-coronavirus.html?mtm_keyword=pressrelease&mtm_medium=press), [Clean energy technologies](https://www.epo.org/en/news-events/in-focus/clean-energy?mtm_keyword=pressrelease&mtm_medium=press) and [Technologies combatting cancer](https://www.epo.org/en/news-events/in-focus/technologies-combatting-cancer?mtm_keyword=pressrelease&mtm_medium=press) platforms.

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**About the EPO**

With 6 300 staff members, the [European Patent Office (EPO)](http://www.epo.org?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 Slovenian Intellectual Property Office (SIPO)**

The [Slovenian Intellectual Property Office (SIPO)](https://www.gov.si/en/state-authorities/bodies-within-ministries/slovenian-intellectual-property-office/about-the-intellectual-property-office/) operates as a body within the Ministry of the Economy, Tourism and Sport OF Slovenia and performs its work independently. The office performs tasks in the field of intellectual property, including copyright law and industrial property law.