EPO Strategic Plan 2023
Public Consultation

The European Patent Office is in the final stages of elaborating its Strategic Plan for the period 2019-2023. We have received the views of many stakeholders and considered them for the version we presently offer on our website for comments in this last round of the public consultation.

We are eager to gather your views and opinions. They will contribute to the development of the Strategic Plan and help to define the future priorities of the Office.

Please send your contributions to the consultation via the filled out PDF template to: consultationSP2023@epo.org

The closing date for content submission is 10 May 2019. The Strategic Plan will be submitted for adoption to the Administrative Council of the European Patent Organisation in June 2019.

The Plan will steer all the activities of the Office for the coming years in different sectors. It will be translated into concrete actions and projects, which will be subject to regular monitoring, with progress and achievements reported in an ongoing manner.
A. I am providing comments on behalf of an organisation

Organisation name and contact person

Empolis Information Management GmbH, Michael Wischmeyer

[ ] On behalf of the organisation I agree to the publication of its comments on the EPO website.

B. I am providing comments as an individual

First name | Last name

☐ I am providing comments on my personal behalf and agree to their publication on the EPO website

I belong to one of the following categories:
☐ patent applicant: individual
☐ patent applicant: company
☐ patent applicant: institution
☐ professional representative / patent attorney
☐ in-house patent agent
☐ law firm
☐ association of IP / patent professionals
☐ IP / patent office
☐ inter-governmental organisation
☐ non-governmental organization
☐ academy / university
☐ other
Please provide your comments on the draft version of the EPO Strategic Plan 2023 available on our website

*Your comments (unlimited number of words)*

We have studied EPO’s Strategic Plan 2023 in detail with great interest. In our opinion and experience the plan provides comprehensive information about the most important future activities of the European Patent Office in the following years and covers the relevant areas.

From our many years of experience as full-service provider and former supplier of the EPO we have some remarks, mainly on Goal 2, Key Initiative 2.

The planned enhancements of EPO’s new search system in terms of functionality, such as

- New Viewer
- Extension of the data by Non-patent literature
- Standardization of the databases

represent comparable functionalities that Empolis delivered to EPO in the past as part of EPOQUE in a three decades-long cooperation.

The requirements for a search system for patent examination are highly complex and have a wide range. This applies in particular for the user experience, the search functionalities, the data and database handling, the scalability and the operation of such systems in production.

To provide next generation systems for patent search which cover the full scope of required functionalities, the development of the software and the roll-out into production can take several years. Recent developments of new search technology at EPO confirm this.

In this respect, we recommend a strategy and development plan with iterative enhancements providing better tools for the patent examiners in rather short development cycles with at least two updates per year. At the same time, the development should be planned in an agile manner with close involvement from stakeholders of the user community, e.g. as product owners in the sense of the SCRUM methodology.

Such a planning lowers the risks of costly development of the system into wrong directions and provides the chance to deliver beneficial enhancements on the path to a complete next generation system.
We have understood that the new production system should also serve as a basis for an extended EPOQUE Net for the National Offices. With an iterative strategy and plan, a time-consuming serialization or a resource-heavy parallelization of developments can be avoided and synergies from the development of the new production system can be utilized to provide enhancements for EPOQUE Net and the National Offices in shorter cycles.

Furthermore, we consider the use of Cloud technology, also in combination with hosting services, as potential contribution for an effective solution for the National Offices. Native Cloud architectures become more and more common in industry because of its cost benefits and the efficient deployment methods, e.g. by means of technologies like Kubernetes.

Finally, we consider methods of Artificially Intelligence as applicable for an extension and fast improvements of the Pre-Search, Pre-Classification and Pre-Filing facilities. Our recent discussions with companies from German industry clearly show the market demand for process optimization and automation in the patent application process. With respective offerings from EPO, we see a good chance for the industry to check their patent ideas comprehensively in advance of the patent application to EPO. This leads potentially to a smaller number of high-quality applications which provide benefits for the EPO and the applicants.
Terms of use

This public consultation invites comments from people or stakeholders who are interested in the EPO strategic plan.

Subject to your permission, we may publish contributions on our website.

Contributions that infringe the "Terms and conditions of use for the website" (and in particular Article 9 thereof) or the following conditions will not be considered for publication:

• Contributions must be in English, French or German
• Contributions must be related to the topic of the consultation of the EPO’s strategic plan
• Contributions should not name individual staff members of the EPO
• Contributions should not contain personal attacks
• Contributions should not use offensive language, or contain racist, sexist or homophobic remarks
• Contributions should refrain from mentioning pending applications or revealing confidential information
• Contributions should not advertise for businesses or services
• The publication of contributions on the EPO website does not constitute an endorsement of their contents by the European Patent Organisation.

Privacy notice

Privacy statement for the public consultation on the EPO’s strategic plan

The European Patent Office (EPO) is committed to protecting your privacy and the personal data you provide as part of our consultation. We will process personal data that you provide in accordance with our Data Protection Guidelines, which aim to ensure best practice when handling users' personal data.

What personal data will we collect?

If you participate in our public consultation, we will collect your first name, last name and email address.

Why will we collect this data?

Within the framework of its activities under the European Patent Convention, the Organisation is committed to improving continuously its services to the users of the
European patent system. Consulting the public on the future EPO strategy is part of this continuous effort and the personal data collected on this occasion will help the Organisation to better serve the community of users.

**Who will be responsible for managing this data at the EPO?**

The department responsible for managing this data will be External Communication. You can contact them by emailing website@epo.org.

**Does the EPO have a designated Data Protection Officer?**

Yes. You can contact them by emailing dataprotection@epo.org.

**Who will we share your data with?**

We will not share your personal data with anyone outside the EPO.

**Will we use the data for automated individual decision-making, including profiling?**

No, we will not use the personal data you provide for automated decision-making, including profiling.

**How long will we keep your data for?**

We will delete or anonymise your personal data as soon as we no longer need it to conduct the consultation, unless we are under a legal obligation to further process or to store it.

**What rights do you have?**

- **Right of access:** You have the right to ask for confirmation of whether or not we are processing your personal data and, if we are, to ask for access to that data and for information such as the purposes of the processing and the categories of personal data concerned.
- **Right to correction:** You have the right to ask for the correction of inaccurate personal data.
- **Right to deletion:** In certain circumstances, you have the right to ask for your personal data to be deleted without undue delay, for example if we no longer need it for the purposes for which we collected it or it has been processed unlawfully.
- **Right to restriction of processing:** In certain circumstances, you have the right to ask that were strict the processing of your personal data, for example if you think that the personal data we are processing about you is incorrect or the processing unlawful.
- **Right to object:** In certain circumstances, you have the right to object to the processing of your personal data, in particular if we process it without a legitimate interest or use it for marketing purposes.

To exercise any of your rights, all you have to do is write to us at website@epo.org.