



Oifig Maoine Intleachtúla na hÉireann  
Intellectual Property Office of Ireland

# RÁITEAS STRAITÉISE

## STRATEGY STATEMENT 2023-2025



## Strategy Statement 2023 – 2025

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## 1. Executive Summary

The Intellectual Property Office of Ireland (IPOI) is an independent statutory office under the aegis of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE) with responsibility for the grant and registration of intellectual property rights in Ireland, specifically patent, supplementary protection certificate (SPC), trade mark and design rights.

This Strategy Statement sets out key priorities aligned with the four strategic goals which the IPOI will be working towards over the next three years (2023 to 2025). These priorities are also aligned with DETE's Statement of Strategy. Specifically, the IPOI's strategy will contribute to achieving the desired outcome of a *"A business environment facilitating investment and development, competition in the marketplace, and high standards of customer protection"* through continuing to develop a modern regulatory regime for intellectual property, that stimulates economic growth by encouraging innovation.

This Statement has been informed through a process of engagement with a range of stakeholders. We wish to acknowledge the contributions made by both DETE and its Agencies which have been incorporated into this Statement. This Statement provides a brief analysis of the current IP environment in Ireland, recent changes made to Irish IP legislation, as well as some risks and challenges facing the IPOI and Irish business.

## 2. Strategic Goals

### 2.1 Operational & Customer Service Excellence

Key actions include: Increasing digitisation of existing data and documents and undertaking digitalisation opportunities of data and processes where possible, obtaining ISO9001 Certification, maximising the Office's participation in the EPO<sup>1</sup>/EUIPO<sup>2</sup> Co-Operation Programmes using technology solutions to improve and enhance the customer service experience and revising the Office's Customer Service Action Plan.

### 2.2 Information Services Excellence

Key actions include: Increasing the visibility of the IPOI through greater use of social media, collaboration with relevant government bodies and agencies, maximising financial and technical assistance that EPO/EUIPO can provide and continuing to develop internal IP expertise through upskilling and resourcing of the IPOI Information Centre.

### 2.3 Supporting a robust IP Legal Framework

Key actions include: Ensuring that new IP legislation, rule changes and practice notices improve the administrative and regulatory environment that will benefit business and enterprise.

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<sup>1</sup> EPO – European Patent Office [EPO - Home](#)

<sup>2</sup> EUIPO – European Intellectual Property Office [EUIPO - Home \(europa.eu\)](#)

## 2.4 Staff and Workplace Excellence

Key actions include: Continuing to promote a culture of excellence in the workplace by providing staff with the skills, competencies and self-development required to deliver the best services for our customers.

The statement also contains (at Annex I) a table which reviews performance against the goals set out in the previous Strategy Statement for the period 2020 to 2022.

## 3. Introduction

### 3.1 The central mission of the IPOI is:

*“To deliver a modern, digitalised Intellectual Property Office, encouraging innovation and enterprise, that provides world class professional services to be proud of.”*

This is to be achieved through the protection of intellectual property rights in the fields of patents, trade marks and designs within an effective legal framework which encourages innovation in Ireland and facilitates the proactive dissemination of relevant knowledge on intellectual property rights (IPRs) and the intellectual property (IP) system.

### 3.2 The main legislation under which the Office operates comprises:

- The Patents Act 1992 (as amended)
- The Trade Marks Act 1996 (as amended)
- The Industrial Designs Act 2001(as amended)
- The Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000 (as amended) as well as the various Statutory Rules and Regulations made under these Acts; and
- The European Communities (Supplementary Protection Certificate) Regulations.

### 3.3 In addition to its core business of administering the relevant legislation concerned with the processing of applications for patents, SPCs, trade marks and industrial designs and maintaining the electronic registers and databases of these rights, the IPOI performs several operational and regulatory functions including:

- Administering proceedings before the Controller in relation to IP rights including hearings on oppositions to trademark registrations.
- Providing assistance and information on intellectual property rights.
- Maintaining the registers of patent and trademark attorneys authorised to operate in the State.
- Administering the registration and compliance reporting by copyright licensing bodies/collective management organisations as well as the resolution of disputes regarding royalty amounts payable to those bodies arising mainly in the area of public performance of sound recordings.
- Contributing to policy and legislative development on IP rights.

This Strategy Statement aims to set goals and outcomes for the IPOI to support and continue to deliver on our mission for the three-year period 2023-2025. The plan has been developed in the context of societal changes and challenges resulting from the changed environment in which we now live and work, focussing on our key priorities aligned with the four strategic goals which the Office will be working towards over the next 3 years: (1) Operational & Customer Service excellence (2) Information Services excellence (3) Supporting a robust IP Legal Framework, and (4) Staff & Workplace excellence.

## **4. Environmental Analysis**

- 4.1** IP rights have become increasingly more important in a globalised world where intangible assets now make up most of the value of leading global companies. Intangible assets such as intellectual property rights and R&D are major company resources, underpinning the growth of the knowledge economy. Ireland is seen as having a highly developed knowledge economy, which focuses on services in high-tech, financial services and agribusiness. The increasing value of knowledge and service outputs has contributed to global increases in the demand for intellectual property rights.
- 4.2** Large companies where R&D constitutes a significant investment, such as the pharmaceutical, med tech and other IP intensive industries already have a high awareness of the IP system and a recognition of the values of IPRs. However, for smaller Irish businesses, there may be scepticism or lack of knowledge about the value and benefits of protecting their IPRs. It is for this reason the IPOI focusses its information awareness events on the SME sector to assist smaller enterprises and individual entrepreneurs better understand the IP system and to develop business strategies which take account of their IP. The IPOI will continue to increase this focus as part of its enhanced Communications & Outreach Strategy.
- 4.3** With over 99%<sup>3</sup> of all Irish enterprises categorised as being in the SME sector, the IPOI needs to reimagine and upscale how it provides its outreach services to ensure we reach our target audience, imparting clear and relevant information on the importance of IP rights and ensuring that we are making a difference in a rapidly changing world. There is a direct correlation between a company's ability to harness and capitalise its IP and its commercial success. Studies by the EU Intellectual Property Office<sup>4</sup>(EUIPO) have shown that SMEs that have filed at least one IP application are 21% more likely to experience subsequent growth. Similarly, SMEs that own IPRs have 20% higher revenue per employee than companies that do not and pay wages that are on average 19% higher than firms that do not own IPRs.<sup>5</sup> The IPOI has a strategic role to play in this area in assisting business to identify and maximise the value of IP and to provide this information in the early stages when its most critical.
- 4.4** As part of the Office's new Communications & Outreach Strategy, the IPOI will improve its media profile and public perception, by changing and modernising the focus of its outreach

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<sup>3</sup> [ireland-s-sme-test.pdf \(enterprise.gov.ie\)](https://www.enterprise.gov.ie/ireland-s-sme-test.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [2019 High-growth firms and intellectual property rights.pdf \(europa.eu\)](https://euiipo.europa.eu/2019-High-growth-firms-and-intellectual-property-rights.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [2021 IP Rights and firm performance in the EU en.pdf \(europa.eu\)](https://euiipo.europa.eu/2021-IP-Rights-and-firm-performance-in-the-EU-en.pdf)

by developing an IP information awareness campaign to ensure it is the first port of call for the provision of IP information services.

## **5. The Regulatory Environment and other issues**

- 5.1** In recent years, in conjunction with the Intellectual Property Unit (IPU) of DETE, the Office has sought to ensure that the regulatory environment for IPRs and Irish IP law has been modernised and has kept pace with International and European developments.
- 5.2** The EU Trade Mark Directive was transposed into Irish law on 14 January 2019. This was the first major reform of trade mark law in Ireland for over 20 years. There is an expectation that the current provisions on community design protection at the European level will be updated and reformed during the period of this plan.
- 5.3** *The European Union (Copyright and Related Rights in the Digital Single Market) Regulations (S.I. No 567 of 2021)* amends the Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000 and strengthens the rights and protections afforded to various categories of rightsholders to reflect the impact of technological advances and increased digitalisation. These regulations, which came into effect on 12 November 2021, also provide for wider access and use of copyright protected works to the potential benefits of the creative sectors, researchers, educators, cultural heritage institutions and citizens.
- 5.4** Ireland is a member of an informal forum of 45 countries known as Group B+ - a group established to promote and facilitate progress on key issues under consideration at the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and, in particular, to move forward on substantive patent law harmonisation. In May 2022, the IPOI, in conjunction with the IP offices of 19 other EU Member States, conducted a public consultation on three separate user proposals for harmonisation in the areas of grace period, conflicting applications and prior user rights. The consolidated results of the study were presented at the Group B+ Plenary meeting in September 2022.

## **6. Unitary Patent and the Unified Patent Court**

- 6.1** The Unified Patent Court Agreement (UPCA) is an agreement between member states of the European Union (EU) which seeks to “improve the enforcement of patents and the defence against unfounded claims ... and to enhance legal certainty ... for litigation relating to the infringement and validity of patents” across the world’s largest trading block.
- 6.2** Twenty-four EU member states have currently signed up to the UPCA establishing a new Unitary Patent System and the Unified Patent Court (UPC). Ireland requires the successful passing of a constitutional referendum to ratify the UPCA, as it entails a transfer of jurisdiction in patent litigation from the Irish courts to an international court. If the UPCA remains unratified in Ireland, patent holders will not be able to rely on unitary patents or the

UPC to protect their inventions within Ireland. In June 2022, the Government reaffirmed its commitment to participate in the European Unitary Patent System and the UPC and to hold a referendum to enable Ireland to do so.

- 6.3** During the period of this Strategy Statement, the Office will continue to work with the Department to ensure that Ireland’s IP regulatory framework and IP law can facilitate Irish business to access and use intellectual property rights more effectively.

## 7. Blended Working

**7.1** With the mandating by the Government of public sector employees to move to blended working in 2022, the IPOI, like other organisations, must re-think ways of working. The majority of the IPOI staff worked remotely during the pandemic, successfully maintaining online and eservices, including electronic fee payments, application processing and both email and telephone enquiries. As a result of the introduction of blended working, the IPOI will ensure that its implementation successfully aligns with the business needs of the Office which will require strategic planning and management of organisational change.

**7.2** The IPOI will also consider where further changes to procedure and practices need to be made and what functionalities can be improved by further investment in technology etc, such as digitalisation of grant and registration certifications for patents, SPCs, trade marks and industrial designs.

## 8. Finances

**Table 1 - Receipts and Expenses 2018-2022**

	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
Net Receipts €m	9.800	9.800	9.800	10.200	10.300
Net Expenses €m	3.300	3.500	3.500	3.500	3.200

The bulk of the Offices fee income comes from renewal fees, in particular in relation to European patent renewal fees. A steadily increasing income stream from European patent renewals has compensated for any declines in other fee income and has meant that the Office’s income has increased steadily over the past five years, despite the economic impacts of the Covid 19 pandemic on business and enterprise.

By expedient use of technology, the continued enhancement of internal processes, developing online services, including e-services, the Office has improved access to information for the public and delivered major improvements to its digital infrastructure making it easier for customers to interact

with its services; in particular, self-service procedures such as online filing of patents, SPCs, trade marks and designs and an online fee payment functionality. Effective use of the EUIPO Co-Operation fund continues to allow for ICT infrastructure and service improvements. This has reduced processing times, improved productivity and has contributed to the Office being able to introduce new services without increasing staff numbers and without increasing its budget.

## **9. Links with the Department's Statement of Strategy**

- 9.1** The Department's Statement of Strategy includes several goals which include supporting entrepreneurship, promoting innovation and maintaining a regulatory environment as well as enhancing our business regulatory environment and Ireland's attractiveness as a place to do business.
- 9.2** Through its day-to-day activities, the IPOI's strategy will contribute to achieving DETE's desired outcome of a *"A business environment facilitating investment and development, competition in the marketplace, and high standards of customer protection."* The Office will look to play its part in achieving a modern and responsive regulatory regime for IP and will continue to assist with the preparation of IP legislation (particularly where the legislation impacts on the role of the Controller or creates functions for the Controller).
- 9.3** In the area of supporting entrepreneurship and innovation, the Office has developed a new Communications and Outreach Strategy which will enable the IPOI to be recognised as the primary source of expertise and information in relation to IPRs, and to become an important element of the wider innovation network in Ireland. The IPOI will also continue to prioritise and improve the delivery of innovative and responsive information awareness services, which will include significantly ramping up its social media presence, tying in with the Department's goal of *"Providing a progressive IP regime that stimulates economic growth by encouraging innovation and creativity across society and which is responsive to the challenges and opportunities of a digital economy."* The IPOI will also collaborate with other relevant government bodies and agencies such as Enterprise Ireland and the NSAI as well as the third level sector.
- 9.4** The IPOI will continue to align itself with the values of the Department by fostering *"a culture of accountability efficiency, innovation, and value for money, which is rooted in a public service ethos of independence, equality, integrity, impartiality, openness, dignity, and respect."*



## 10. Function, Mission Statement and Goals

### Function

The IPOI is an independent statutory office under the aegis of DETE with responsibility for the grant and registration of intellectual property rights (IPRs) in Ireland, specifically patent, SPC, trade mark and industrial design rights. The IPOI is staffed by 47 civil servants who are assigned by the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

### Mission Statement

The central mission of the IPOI is: **“To deliver a modern, digitalised Intellectual Property Office, encouraging innovation and enterprise, that provides world class professional services to be proud of.”**

### Main Goals

The Office will pursue its central mission by seeking to achieve the following main goals over the coming three years:

1. **Operational & Customer Service excellence.**
2. **Information Services excellence.**
3. **Supporting a robust IP legal framework.**
4. **Staff & Workplace excellence.**

### Goal 1: Operational & Customer Service excellence

Vision: To consolidate our position as a high performing and well-regarded Intellectual Property Office among our stakeholders, partners, and peers. Over the next three years we will:

- Ensure the efficient processing of all intellectual property right applications.
- Support the delivery and continuous development of digital services across the Office, by engaging with the ICT unit to deliver transformation and identifying processes and services that can be improved with new technologies.
- Continue to explore the use of technology solutions to enhance customer experiences and improve the immediacy and reliability of our external-facing services in line with stakeholder expectations and our service commitments.
- Produce an annual ICT plan for the Office (in conjunction with the ICT Unit) with priority projects reflected in the Office’s annual business plan.
- Complete the process of ISO9001 certification.
- Maximise participation in selected areas of the EPO & EUIPO Co-Operation Programmes which will be of most benefit to the Office.
- Continue to monitor the new customer service targets as set out in the IPOI Customer Action Plan 2023-2025 Plan to ensure our targets reflect external and internal customer needs and continue to deliver a responsive and quality service in line with performance targets.
- Optimise use of our data to support operational effectiveness and customer service.

- Continue to engage and collaborate with staff to ensure they are part of the ongoing changes and the benefits of digital transformation.
- Use the opportunity of any new rules or rule changes to reduce procedural burdens on applicants, streamline and refine the Office's administrative processes and procedures in line with best practice.

## **Outcomes**

- All IPR applications are processed efficiently and effectively, and any backlogs minimised and eliminated as quickly as possible.
- An almost fully digitised work environment which delivers optimum efficiency and is adaptable to meet changes to customer needs and business requirements.
- A robust and responsive ICT architecture, administration system and website built on an up-to-date technology platform that allows the office to provide effective and efficient services and tools, as well as enhanced accessibility to IP data.
- Maximising the practical benefits and assistance of co-operation and convergence programmes offered by the EPO and EUIPO, for the benefit of the Office and its customers.
- Obtain a globally recognised ISO Quality Management System.

## **Goal 2: Information Services Excellence**

Vision: Deliver a world class intellectual property rights information centre of excellence for business start-ups, entrepreneurs, students, and the SME sector. Over the next three years we will:

- Implement the IPOI Communications and Outreach Strategy.
- Increase our collaboration with a wider range of stakeholders, Government Agencies and Offices in relation to information exchange and increasing awareness of IPR.
- Increase the visibility of the IPOI through a social media information campaign and the creation of more user focussed and engaging content.
- Engage with the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> level education sector to increase the awareness of intellectual property rights amongst students.
- Identify best practice in other IPOs/EUIPO and EPO and how this can best be applied to Ireland.
- Maximise assistance provided by EPO & EUIPO through the co-operation programmes in terms of financial assistance, mentoring and unlocking expertise and resources.
- Enhance and develop internal IP expertise through training, upskilling, and resourcing the Information Centre as required.
- IPOI (in collaboration with other agencies) to act as a central point of contact in relation to the collation and promotion of relevant information on all available IP grants and IP support opportunities available to SMEs across all IPOI social media platforms, on our website and as part of our information presentations.
- Provide clear and timely information on the Unitary Patent.
- Improve accessibility features of the website.

- Continue to support and attend blue ribbon events such as BT Young Scientist and Technology exhibition and the Student Enterprise Awards, as well as engaging in other events such as SciFest.
- Continue to provide IP Clinics as required in conjunction with the Patent Examination Unit.

### **Outcomes**

- Production of measurable targets, (such as increase in number of events attended, analysis of social media analytics and production of relevant metrics to show increase in followers, online interaction etc) to demonstrate the increased visibility of the IPOI as a centre of IP excellence.
- Add value to Ireland's IP system in line with stakeholder expectations by communicating key messages to stakeholders via website, social media platforms, webinars and presentations.
- IPOI regarded as the primary source of expertise and information in relation to IPRs.
- Prioritisation and improvement of the delivery of innovative and responsive information awareness services.
- Increase in engagement with a wide range of bodies and agencies, such as the National Standards Authority of Ireland, Knowledge Transfer Ireland & Enterprise Ireland.
- Bringing a greater emphasis to the increasingly important role of IP and of the IPOI as a critical component of the national innovation infrastructure.

### **Goal 3: Supporting a robust IP legal framework**

Vision: Continue to contribute to the creation of an effective and resilient regulatory environment for the protection of all intellectual property rights. Over the next three years we will:

- Propose or provide input into any new legislation with a view to improving the administrative and regulatory environment for intellectual property protection.
- Provide ongoing policy observations to the IPU on IP issues.
- Use the opportunity of any legislative changes to reduce procedural burdens on applicants and to streamline the administrative procedures in line with best practice.
- Continue to create and publish Office practice notices on the Office's website so that they can be easily accessed.
- Assist with the identification of any legal implications and legislative changes to the Patents Act and Rules which might be required to give effect to the Unitary Patent and the Unified Patent Court or any other matter.
- Assist the IPU in providing observations on any new EU proposal for a Unitary SPC.
- Provide observations on the EU Regulation establishing geographical indication protection for craft and industrial products.
- Assist and provide advice on a proposal for the reform of EU legislation on industrial design protection.

### **Outcomes:**

- An IP regulatory framework which has a strong legal basis, reflects changes to European IP law and supports the needs of Irish business and enterprise in addition to the needs of the Office.
- Ease of access to Office practice and procedures.

### **Goal 4: Staff & Workplace Excellence**

Vision: Continue to promote a culture of excellence and self-development of all staff in order to deliver the best in customer service. Over the next three years we will:

- Continue to support and develop an enthusiastic, professional, and flexible staff complement with the appropriate skills and competencies capable of delivering the best service for our customers.
- Build on our strengths by continuously improving and evolving to meet future needs by developing our staff to have the skills and capabilities required for current and future roles.
- Provide staff with a supportive working environment to facilitate the best practices in workplace health and wellbeing.
- Improve organisational effectiveness through enhancing staff skills, job satisfaction and knowledge sharing through the provision of appropriate training and coaching, having detailed up-to-date procedure manuals, devolving increased responsibilities and increasing staff participation in project teams, etc.
- Encourage and promote internal staff role rotation, as well as external temporary transfers in and out of the IPOI and Department to expand knowledge, skills, competencies, opportunities, and promotional opportunities.
- In line with the Public Sector Climate Action Mandate, ensure the IPOI is a sustainable and environmentally responsible workplace by reducing our emissions, implementing energy saving projects and establishing a green ethos in our Office.

### **Outcomes**

- A professional, trained and resilient staff equipped to deal with the challenges of a blended workplace.
- A workplace which optimises its use of energy and encourages sustainability and green awareness.

### **Indicators of success**

- Effective and efficient administrative systems for the grant/registration of patents, SPCs designs and trade marks in place (measured through performance against customer service targets).
- Evidence that the desired qualitative and quantitative outcomes under each goal have been achieved.

- Delivery of a high-quality intellectual property protection system which meet the needs of our customers (measured through online usage, customer feedback and performance against customer service targets).
- Customer satisfaction (measured through customer satisfaction surveys).
- IPOI regarded as a progressive, professional and safe place to work (measured through upward feedback and staff inputs to management through divisional and section meetings).
- Increased visibility of the IPOI as a centre of excellence for IP information, as well as an increase in the range of stakeholders engaged with and outreach events attended.

## Risk Analysis and Challenges for the IPOI

The Office's Risk Register identifies the main potential risks faced by the Office which primarily relate to business continuity, online services and financial irregularity. The Office's website and its administration system are essential for the Office's work and have become increasingly important as the Office moves towards paperless processing. Ensuring continuity for the administration system and for the number of services which the Office delivers online and the need to be able to offer the web services as far as possible on a 24/7 basis with almost no downtime has become increasingly important from a risk perspective. This combined-with the ability of staff to remote work and continue to deliver key services online is also important to ensure and maintain business continuity.

The other area of risk which has been identified is in the area of financial irregularities and fraud. The Office continues to review this area (in conjunction with the Internal Audit unit) with a view to ensuring that adequate controls are in place and best practice is being followed.

The Office in conjunction with the ICT Unit will continue to pursue the goal of appropriate and adequate redundancy and backup of all the Office's systems, including its website services involving virtualisation and remote hosting to mitigate any risks and to ensure uninterrupted business continuity. In addition to the identified risks there are several factors which will pose challenges over the period of this strategy statement, some of which may have the potential to impact on the Office's ability to fully achieve its goals.

- **Budgetary constraints:** Adverse economic conditions and the sharp rise in inflation rates may lead to insufficient financial and technical resources to deliver a digital workplace and online services to enable smarter ways of working which serves both internal and external customers to the extent that the IPOI might wish.
- **Increasing scope and complexity of EU legislation in the IP area:** Difficulties around copyright harmonisation, challenges to laws preventing patenting plants and animals, and patenting of AI.
- **Unitary Patent System:** Ratification of the UPC by Ireland will result in a significant loss of income to the Exchequer due to the consequential decline in European patent renewal fees received by the IPOI. If the UPCA remains unratified in Ireland, patent holders will not be able to rely on unitary patents or the UPC to protect their inventions within Ireland.

- **Business continuity – Blended Working Policy:** The IPOI's capability to continue to provide its services with the introduction of blended working may result in potential difficulties in terms of business continuity and staff cohesion.
- **Workforce planning and succession planning:** Potential loss of corporate knowledge due to retirements and promotion etc.

In so far as it is possible, the Office will seek to address these challenges when reviewing its business needs as part of its annual business, ICT and workforce planning processes.

## Annex I Review of Strategy Statement 2020 to 2022

### Goal 1: Provide Excellent Customer Service

<b>During the period 2020 to 2022 the Office undertook to:</b>	<b>Achieved/Delivered/Current Status:</b>
<b>Continue to encourage staff innovation by reviewing and improving administrative procedures and tools with a view to simplification of same and achieving organisational excellence.</b>	<b>Achieved</b> The Office is always looking at ways of automating work processes. During the pandemic, the Office had to examine different ways of working, for example, all PAFs and refunds are now processed in a paperless environment.  The Office adopted the WIPO ePCT portal for online filing of PCT applications.  The annual Patent & TM Agent exams are now held online, following automation of the process during the pandemic.
<b>Produce an annual ICT plan for the Office (in consultation with ICT Unit) with priority projects reflected in the IPOI Business Plan.</b>	<b>Achieved</b> Office ICT plan developed in consultation with the ICT Unit each year.
<b>With the assistance of the EUIPO, begin the process of adopting a globally recognised quality management system leading to ISO 9001 certification.</b>	<b>Ongoing</b> The certification process commenced at the start of 2022, having been delayed due to the pandemic and is expected to be completed in Qtr. 1 2023.
<b>Maintain quality of orders and decisions and ensure they are issued and made publicly available in a timely manner.</b>	<b>Achieved</b> Orders and decision now published on website.
<b>Participate in the EUIPO and the European Patent Office convergence programmes in selected areas which will be of most benefit to the Office.</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
<b>To the extent possible, avail of any new tools or functionality developed under the new EUIPO or the EPO co-operation programmes which deliver benefits to internal and external customers, (having due regard to costs and benefits).</b>	<b>Achieved and ongoing</b> IPOI signed a three-year Co-Operation Agreement with the EPO in 2021, focussing on data quality, building expertise, training and fostering innovation.  TM and Design application tools have had technology upgrades.  New functionality delivered in 2022 to facilitate uploading of IPOI patent data to the EPO.
<b>Cease the creation of paper application files so that all applications for IP rights are scanned and processed electronically from application to grant/registration.</b>	<b>Partially achieved</b> IR TM paper applications have yet to be automated.

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**Continue to digitise work processes, improve document management and records management, develop a system of digital file creation, and develop new file structure for shared administrative files.**

**Achieved**

IPOI commenced a shared file management system with the introduction of eDocs in 2022.

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**Improve organisational effectiveness through enhancing staff skills, job satisfaction and knowledge sharing through the provision of appropriate training and coaching, having detailed up-to-date work manuals, devolving increased responsibilities and participation in project teams, etc.**

**Achieved**

Staff received training in the appropriate competencies required to deliver on the key tasks and goals set out in each annual business plan and the customer service action plan.

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## Goal 2: Customer Service Excellence

During the period 2020 to 2022 the Office undertook to:	Achieved/ Delivered/Current Status:
Following consultation with stakeholders and a review of the existing Customer Service Action Plan, draw up a new Action Plan for the period 2020-2022 to ensure our measures and targets reflect external and internal customer needs.	<b>Achieved</b> Customer service targets were generally met to a satisfactory level of achievement.
Where feasible, benchmark our targets with other national IP offices.	<b>Achieved</b> IPOI examined how other national offices of similar size set their targets and used this information when drawing up the new Customer Service Action Plan 2023-2025.
Continue to deliver a responsive and quality service in line with performance targets.	<b>Achieved</b> Customer service targets were met to a satisfactory level rate of achievement.
Seek to acquire, customise or develop IP business tools, (e.g. an online IP Health-check - Audit tool to assist small business customers and entrepreneurs) and make them available to Irish business via the Office's website.	<b>Achieved and ongoing</b> The IP Scan Service is also available through our participation in the EUIPO SME Project.
Where necessary, upgrade existing online guides and tools provided by the EUIPO and EPO.	<b>Achieved and ongoing</b>
Optimise use of our data to better support operational effectiveness and customer service.	<b>Achieved</b> Use of customer survey for feedback to deliver a high-quality customer service.
Continue to explore the use of technology solutions to enhance customer experiences and improve immediacy and reliability of our external-facing services in line with stakeholder expectations and our service commitments.	<b>Ongoing</b>

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### Goal 3: An Effective IP Legal Framework

During the period 2020 to 2022 the Office undertook to:	Achieved/Completed/Current Status:
<p><b>Propose or provide input into any new legislation with a view to improving the administrative and regulatory environment for intellectual property protection.</b></p>	<p>The Office contributed text and amendments to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copyright and Related Rights (Certification of Licensing Scheme for Primary Schools) (The Irish Copyright Licensing Agency Limited) Order 2020 (SI No 275 of 2020)</li> <li>• Copyright and Related Rights (Certification of Licensing Scheme for Post-Primary Schools) (The Irish Copyright Licensing Agency Limited) Order 2020 (SI No 276 of 2020)</li> <li>• Copyright and Related Rights (Certification of Licensing scheme for Higher Education Institutions) (The Irish Copyright Licensing Agency Limited) Order 2020 (SI No 277 of 2020)</li> <li>• Copyright and Related Rights (Certification of Licensing Scheme for Further Education Providers) (The Irish Copyright Licensing Agency Limited) Order 2020 (SI No 278 of 2020)</li> <li>• European Union (Copyright and Related Rights in the Digital Single Market) Regulations 2021 (S.I. No 567 of 2021)</li> </ul> <p>Provided observations to IPU on the Community Design Protection. Intervened in two CJEU cases involving SPCS.</p>
<p><b>Provide ongoing policy observations to the IPU on IP issues.</b></p>	<p><b>Achieved</b></p> <p>The IPOI provided advice and consultation where required.</p>
<p><b>Provide advice on discussions on a proposal for the reform of the Designs Directive.</b></p>	<p><b>Ongoing</b></p>
<p><b>Assist with the identification and drafting of any legislative changes arising from the transposition of the EU Digital Single Market Directive.</b></p>	<p><b>Completed</b></p> <p>This legislation was enacted into Irish legislation in 2021.</p>
<p><b>Use the opportunity of any new rules or rule changes to reduce procedural burdens on applicants, and to streamline and clarify the Office’s administrative processes and procedures in line with best practice.</b></p>	<p><b>Ongoing</b></p>

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<b>Assist with the identification of any legal implications and legislative changes to the Patents Act and Rules which might be required to give effect to the Unitary Patent.</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Continue to create and publish Office practice notices in the Office's website so that they can be easily accessed.</b>	<b>Achieved</b> All IPOI Practice Notices are now published on the website.

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## Goal 4: Effective Promotion of Awareness and Understanding of IP Rights

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During the period 2020 to 2022 the Office undertook to:	Achieved/Delivered/Current Status:
<p><b>Continue to improve the provision of and public access to intellectual property information by using the Office's website as a dynamic information tool.</b></p> <p><b>Meet the annual targets set for IP events (seminars, exhibitions, courses and clinics) which are provided in support of new business start-ups, entrepreneurs and individual inventors.</b></p> <p><b>Co-operate with Enterprise Ireland (EI), Third Level Institutions, Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) and others to deliver outreach awareness raising IP events.</b></p> <p><b>Redesign all the IP Information booklets and redraft where necessary to reflect legal and other changes to the IP environment.</b></p>	<p><b>Achieved and ongoing</b> User friendly interface for e-filing and e-services now available on IPOI website. Significant website accessibility improvements undertaken.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b> Reduction in the amount of events attended due to the Covid 19 pandemic.</p> <p><b>Partially achieved</b> Information raising activities were limited in 2020 and 2021 due to the Covid 19 Pandemic.</p> <p><b>Achieved</b> A full suite of revised IP booklets was published in 2021.</p>
<p><b>As part of the EPO's quality at source programme and in order to improve access to Irish patent information by, (a) improving the transmission of published patent data to the EPO and (b) securing the financial and technical support and assistance of the EPO under the new Co-operation programme to digitally capture patent specifications and make them available online for public use.</b></p>	<p><b>Ongoing</b> The IPOI is collaborating with the EPO on this project to digitally capture more published patent data to comply with WIPO standards. All IE patent data now includes citations. IPOI is also developing a module to allow transmission of patent citation information via XML files to the EPO.</p>
<p><b>Run awareness surveys via the website (using the EUIPO online survey tool or another suitable tool with a view to identifying gap and trends and to better inform our information strategy.</b></p>	<p><b>Partially Achieved</b> The IPOI developed its own tailor-made customer service feedback facility which is available on our website and is promoted at all information awareness events.</p>
<p><b>Complete the actions and activities which the IPOI has agreed to deliver with the EU as part of the EU VIP4SME programme.</b></p>	<p><b>Completed</b></p>
<p><b>Continue our involvement with the Student Enterprise Awards with a view to increasing an awareness of IP amongst second level students.</b></p>	<p><b>Ongoing</b> IPOI attended the in-person event in 2022 after a 2-year absence due to the pandemic.</p>

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