



CPVO • OCVV

Community Plant Variety Office
Office Communautaire des Variétés Végétales

CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT 2023

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Administrative Council analysis and assessment

The President of the Community Plant Variety Office presented the Annual Activity Report for the year 2023 to the Administrative Council (AC) on 11 April 2024.

CPVO applications decreased by 10% in comparison to 2022 and the CPVO is monitoring the situation closely. Despite the decrease of applications, the finances of the CPVO are still robust.

In 2023, the horticultural sector faced significant hurdles due to market volatility and trade contraction. These challenges not only disrupted supply chains but also placed considerable financial strain on producers. Instability in the markets led to unpredictable pricing and demand, making it difficult for horticultural businesses to plan for the future and secure investments. Meanwhile, trade contraction, influenced by various geopolitical and economic factors, limited export opportunities, exacerbated the sector's struggles.

Data show that the most affected sector is the ornamental one originating mainly from The Netherlands. The general economic crisis, inflation and fertilizers costs, among other factors, had a huge repercussion on costs' increase by Examination Offices. Amidst this economic landscape, in 2023 we noted an increase of communication activities, including regular study visits to European Union Member States, often combined with visits to Examination Offices and stakeholders, such as breeders and farmers. This has contributed to increase the visibility of the Office as a reference point of information, and to raise awareness on the importance of the CPVO's mission to support innovation in plant breeding with a robust IP rights system.

The CPVO is also looking forward to moving to its new premises and significant advancements have been made in relation to the new building project launched in 2022, which should guarantee costs' efficiencies in the years to come.

Despite the challenges the indicators provided in this report show that the objectives set in the 2023 Work Programme were satisfactorily achieved.

The AC takes note of the Management Report, especially the part related to Budget and Financial Management. It also takes note of the Assessment by the Management and the Declaration of Assurance.

The AC is satisfied with the declaration of the authorising officer that his report gives a true reflection of the situation on the ground and that he has reasonable assurance that the resources assigned to the activities described in his report have been used for their intended purpose. The AC also accepts that such activities were carried out with the principles of sound financial management. The AC is satisfied that the control procedures in place provide an adequate guarantee as to the legality and regularity of the affairs of the CPVO.

The AC is satisfied that the President of the CPVO is unaware of any matter not reported which could harm the interests of the CPVO.

Sobrino Mate, Jose Antonio

Jose Antonio Sobrino Mate

Chair of the CPVO Administrative Council



1. Executive Summary - Achievements of the year

1.1. Introduction by the CPVO President

Welcome to this Consolidated Annual Activity Report (CAAR) 2023. This report presents a comprehensive overview of the year's key activities, accomplishments, and the strides we have made in the field of plant variety protection over the past year.

The year 2023 has been a remarkable period for the CPVO, marked by significant enhancements in our operational processes, and impactful collaborations. We have continually strived to promote plant innovation, support breeders, and contribute to the achievement of European policies in the plant domain.

We have continued the implementation of our new Strategic Plan 2022-2026. We have made progress in refining our processes for examining and granting plant variety rights, ensuring a more efficient and transparent system for breeders and stakeholders. Embracing the digital transformation, we are implementing cutting-edge technologies and digital tools to streamline our operations, enhance data and content management, prepare ourselves to effectively align our digital tools to the newest cybersecurity standards and regulations, and improve our communication channels.

Our efforts with a variegated group of stakeholders have been intensified by expanding our network of collaborations, working closely with Member States Examination Offices, international organizations, research institutions, and the private sector at large.

Study visits in different Member States have continued with the aim of gathering a better understanding of ecosystems that drive innovation in plant breeding under different schemas (public-private partnerships, government authorities, researchers).

We have continued to invest in the training and development of our staff and experts, ensuring that our team is equipped with the latest knowledge and skills in different domains.

As we navigate the challenges and opportunities of the future, we remain dedicated to fostering an interdisciplinary environment where plant varieties are protected and valued according to high qualitative standards in close cooperation with Examination Offices, contributing to sustainable, and biodiverse Europe.

Francesco Mattina, CPVO President

11 April 2024



1.2. Achievement of CPVO Work Programme Objectives

The CPVO Work programme for 2023 outlined a number of objectives and indicators for each major activity defined for the year. What follows is an analysis of the state of play for the achievement of each of these objectives. Some of the objectives and indicators have been modified since the work program was adopted, therefore there are some differences between the two documents.

1.2.1. Strive for operational excellence

a) Continuous improvement of operational processes

The Community Plant Variety Office has taken significant steps towards enhancing operational efficiency by establishing a Lean Management community. This initiative brought together 12 key personnel from various units, focusing on intensive training in Lean Six Sigma¹ and Business Process Model and Notation (BPMN)² techniques. These staff members are also gaining practical experience through Kaizen projects aimed at refining PVR administration processes, all under the guidance of a seasoned Lean Six Sigma coach. The so-called Kaizen approach encourages every staff member of the Office, regardless of their position, to contribute ideas and participate in making improvements to processes, and services. This method focuses on eliminating inefficiencies, improving productivity, and achieving sustained continual improvement in targeted activities and processes. By fostering an environment where small, daily improvements are valued and implemented, Kaizen aims to enhance efficiency, competitiveness, and teamwork.

Concurrently, the Digital Transformation Unit (DTU) has conducted a thorough review of critical processes, identifying crucial improvement opportunities for 2024.

A pivotal element in 2023 is the development CPVO's Lean Management Maturity Assessment³. This tool has established a comprehensive framework for assessing the maturity of business processes and the extent of continuous improvement practices across the organization. It aims to harmonize Lean initiatives with CPVO's operational excellence goals, identify areas for Lean methodology enhancement, and lay the groundwork for a Continuous Improvement Roadmap.

An initial rapid assessment—set to be repeated annually through surveys, interviews, audits, and metric analysis—revealed that less than 25% of CPVO's business processes are "managed" in a manner that ensures consistency, control, and predictability. Additionally, the baseline maturity level for the effectiveness and efficiency of continuous improvement practices was categorized as level 1: Initial/Ad-hoc.

Through these initiatives, CPVO is methodically advancing towards a state of operational excellence, with a structured approach to continuous improvement and a robust, data-driven operational framework poised for 2024 and beyond.

Objectives 2023:

- Establish state of play of business processes
- Inception of a Business Process Management practice
- Foster a culture of continuous improvement

¹ Lean Six Sigma is a methodology that combines the waste-reduction principles of Lean manufacturing with the process improvement strategies of Six Sigma to enhance efficiency, reduce variability, and eliminate defects in processes.

² Business Process Model and Notation (BPMN) is a graphical representation framework for specifying business processes in a workflow, facilitating a clear and standardized understanding of process management and workflow among stakeholders.

³ The Lean Management Maturity Assessment is a tool used to evaluate an organization's adoption and integration of lean principles, identifying areas of strength and opportunities for improvement in its lean journey.



Foster a data-driven business practice		
Key Indicators	Target indicator	Result
1. % of business managed processes	+5% year to year from 2023 baseline	Baseline 2023: 25% Result 37% (+ 12%)
2. Continuous improvement maturity index (from score card)	Create 2023 baseline	1 : Initial/Ad-Hoc

b) Strengthen internal control

A new Internal Control Strategy and Methodology for the self-assessment were adopted in 2023, based on guidelines issued by the Performance Development Network under the framework of the European Agencies' Network.

Objectives 2023:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a best practice watch by sharing Inter Agencies best practices and cooperation Establish stronger bonds with internal units to ensure that all units in CPVO mature in the utilisation of control measures. 		
Key Indicators	Target indicator	Result
% of deviations identified per year and corrected	100 % correction of critical deviations within agreed remediation timeline as of detection	100% (no critical deviations identified in 2023)

c) Ensure preparedness for upcoming regulatory framework changes

Objectives 2023:		
Create a task force within the CPVO (a regulatory watch) to inform and advise the management of upcoming regulatory changes in their respective field of activity and to propose preparatory measures and actions to be taken into consideration.		
Key Indicators	Target indicator	Result
Create a task force within the CPVO (a regulatory watch) to inform and advise the management of upcoming regulatory changes in their respective field of activity and to propose preparatory measures and actions to be taken into consideration.	Creation of the task force in 2023	Task force created in July 2023 with colleagues from different units/teams.

d) Ensure fit for purpose organisational model
i. People and Resources Unit

Objectives 2023:		
Key Indicators	Target indicator	Result

Definition of an HR Strategy Creation of the CPVO Competency Maps Learning Needs Assessment Exercise Meeting the HR objectives in 2023 will set the baseline for calculating the Net Promoter Score (NPS) in 2024	Completion of these strategic documents during 2023.	All strategic documents have been delivered.
Objectives 2023: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accounting as key sector to enhance financial related processes and offer expert advice and trainings to staff and management alike whilst adhering to the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. 		
Key Indicators	Target indicator	Result
Accounting assessment surveys (at least twice per year)	+10% year to year from 2023 baseline	1

CPVO contribution to sustainability (the European Green Deal)

The CPVO is continuously striving to improve its' carbon footprint and to reduce energy consumption. Measures put in place such as closing one or several buildings during school holidays and blocking heating and air conditioning are giving encouraging results.

Objectives 2023: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To follow and to promote good sustainability practice and to reduce the environmental impacts of the Office's activities. 		
Key Indicator	Target indicator	Result
Reduce paper consumption	10% reduction of printed copies	-9,9%
Reduce electricity, heat and water consumption	10% reduction	-22% (electricity), -21% (gas), -31% (water)
Making virtual meetings the default and physical missions the exception	Report on no. of missions	149 physical missions

ii. Legal and Governance Affairs (L&GA) Unit

After its creation in 2022, in 2023 the L&GAU reinforced its unity and its transversal role in supporting the Office in ensuring compliance with all legal obligations that impact our organisation. The official appointment of the new Head of Unit in August 2023 also contributed to the stability of the team. Moreover, the appointment (and subsequent training) of the three new Lean ambassadors, one per team, has increased reflections and discussions on how to better improve the processes and procedures in the Unit, a work that should produce its first results in 2024.

In 2023 the Legal Service also put in place a new Flow for legal opinions, whose aim is to streamline the process of submitting and managing legal opinion requests. Said flow, further to simplifying the submission of legal opinion requests, also enables the Legal Service to monitor the timeliness of the replies as well as the quality of the work, since a survey is sent after sending a reply.



Objectives 2023:

- Rationalise Unit's business processes and procedures
- CPVO to be Data Protection (DP) compliant by design (processes and people)
- Service oriented institution

Key Indicators	Target indicator	Result
Metric 1: % of revised legal processes to date	Metric 1: +20%	Metric 1:40%
Metric 2: % legal processes under control (including meeting legal deadlines)	Metric 2: 100%	Metric 2: 100%
Metric 1: % of revised internal processes DP compliant	Metric 1: +20%	30%
Metric 2: % DP processes under control (including data breaches reports and EDPS audits and/or requests)	Metric 2: 100%	100%
Systematic surveys to stakeholders	Min. 80% satisfaction	80% achieved

As regards the revised legal processes to date, 20 were identified in the L&GAU (1 for the whole L&GAU, 6 for the Legal Service, 5 for the Registry and 8 in Procurement and Logistics). Out of these 20 processes, 8 were reviewed in 2023 (1 in the L&GAU, 2 in the Legal service, none in the Registry and 5 in Procurement), meaning that 40% of the processes to date were revised, hence meeting the objective of more than 20% of revised legal process in 2023.

Also all official deadlines in legal proceedings were met in 2023.

As per the Data protection work, the CPVO managed all data breaches in time and by reporting it to the DPO for validation purposes. 1 data breach was notified to the EDPS and the revision is still pending to date.

The work on the revision of records of data processing activities has been started in 2023 and will be completed in 2024. The revision of records allowed to revise 6 processes in the Legal and Governance Affairs Unit (Legal advice, legal proceedings, Mail management, Official publications, Public Access and PVR Caselaw database), and in some instances on top of verifying compliance, the revision triggered the identification of room for improvement to increase the level of DP standards in the processes. Hence, the 30% reported in the results concerns 30% of the L&GAU processes, not considering the start of the revision of other processes of the CPVO.

Furthermore, as regards the satisfaction survey sent to stakeholders in 2023, it gave as a result an 80% of satisfaction (taking into account the replies stating a "somewhat satisfied" and "very satisfied").



iii. Plant Variety Expertise Unit

Objectives 2023:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure high quality DUS testing 		
Key Indicators	Target indicator	Result
Number of revised/new Technical Protocols (TP) Number of titles delayed due to denomination publishing Number of accesses to Variety Finder Number of projects on denomination matters	8 new/revised TPs -5% +5% 4 Denomination projects	11 new/revised technical protocols - -7.5% of title delayed due to denomination publishing - Variety Finder : + 10% in 2023 compared to 2022 total number of visits (source matomo) Similarity tests : +5% for clients - Working Group on variety denomination guidelines, - Project linked to the new data dictionary of the new Common catalogue in place - EU plant variety portal data inserted in VF - documents linked to terms and conditions finalized, basis for the APIS developments - -Cooperation project with EUIPO -Presentation: Interface among Variety denominations, Trademarks and GIs

Objectives 2023:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create R&I sector to foster applied R&D in PV testing • Co-finance R&D projects 		
Key Indicators	Target indicator	Result



This approach marks a strategic departure from simply reacting to urgency, towards a more deliberate and strategic evaluation of each initiative's value and feasibility. By leveraging these prioritization frameworks, CPVO ensures that its digital transformation efforts are aligned with broader organizational goals, efficiently allocating resources to areas with the highest potential for impact. This prioritization not only enhances the decision-making process but also fosters a culture of strategic planning and outcome-focused development, ensuring that every roadmap item, whether a new product or an enhancement, is geared towards delivering maximum value to the organization and its stakeholders.

Objective 2023:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of the IT roadmap • Delivery of the IT strategy for 2022-2026 		
Key Indicator	Target indicator	Result
% of implementation of IT Masterplan	100%	n.a.
Approved projects in the pipeline	15 projects approved of which 8 urgent	81 roadmap items approved of which 29 were delivered in 2023
Major projects to be finalised each year	2	5

- Ensure secure, robust, scalable, cloud-enabled and cost-effective digital operations meeting stakeholders' needs

The DTU's focused improvements in cloud operations have strengthened CPVO's digital service delivery, with notable advancements in cost management, efficiency, resilience, and security.

Cloud operations stayed within 3% of the budget, showcasing efficient cost control and operational efficiency through optimized refactored customer-facing applications. With less than 8 hours of cloud downtime in 2023, CPVO's cloud environment exemplifies resilience and robustness (99,9% uptime). Moreover, the absence of performance bottlenecks and cybersecurity issues underscores the strength and security of CPVO's digital infrastructure, ensuring dependable and safe services for all stakeholders.

- Become structurally agile to quicken capacity to respond to increasing frequency and complexity of changes in CPVO's operating context

The DTU is adapting to the increasing frequency and complexity of changes in its operational context by striving for structural agility. This strategic move is intended to enhance CPVO's responsiveness and adaptability to dynamic market and regulatory conditions.

The Agile Performance Hierarchy (APH) framework is employed to assess and help improve the DTU's agility. The APH evaluates organizational agility across various dimensions, offering insights into agile capabilities and identifying areas for improvement. The DTU's current score in the APH is 36 points, which places it in the "Developing Agility" category. This position indicates that the DTU has begun to effectively incorporate agile practices into its operations, yet there remains substantial scope for further development in its agility journey.

Objectives 2023:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure secure, robust, scalable, cloud-enabled and cost-effective digital operations meeting stakeholders' needs • Become structurally agile to quicken capacity to respond to increasing frequency and complexity of changes in CPVO's operating context • Develop CPVO's transformational management practices (Lean management introduction; Content management & Business Intelligence)



Key Indicators	Target indicator	Result
(Performance x Resilience x Security x Scalability x Cost) ratio	+5% year to year from 2023 baseline	Baseline 2023: 384 Performance (Score: 4/5 Above Average) Resilience (Score: 3/5 Average) Security (Score: 2.2/5 Below Average) Scalability (Score: 4/5 Above Average) Cost (Score: 4/5 Above Average)
Agile maturity index using Agile Performance Holarchy (APH)	+5% year to year from 2023 baseline	Baseline 2023: 36 points Agile Maturity Scorecard (Developing Agility)

e) Other organizational optimizations

Objectives 2023:

Efficiency gains in DUS testing practices via the audit of examination offices

Key Indicators	Target indicator	Result
Number of audits per year	At least one per year together with on-site visit	The report from the autumn 2022 pilot cost calculation audit project was finalised in 2023. No further cost calculation audits were undertaken in 2023, until such time as the CPVO defines a clear strategy on the matter going into the future.

f) Ensure reliability of Entrustment decisions for Examination Offices (EOs)

Objectives 2023:

- Reduce risks in relation to the number of technical examinations (TEs) and take overs (TOs) made by the CPVO

Key Indicators	Target indicator	Result
Focus on QAS assessments where it matters most: yearly audits to major examination offices (NL, DE, FR) and less frequent assessments to minor examination offices	Annual assessments to Naktuinbouw, Bundessortenamt and GEVES. Once-every-six-years assessment to EOs with less than 30 TEs/TOs over a three-year period.	QAS assessment of Naktuinbouw and four other EOs in 2023. Implementation of this Key indicator will require finalisation of current assessment cycle at the end of 2025

Objectives 2023:

Sharing of variety collections for major crops

Key Indicators	Target indicator	Result
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Rationalise the management of physical variety collections amongst the EU in a network of seed storage chambers, whilst ensuring that each of the entrusted examination office has access to the relevant plant material to carry out its DUS testing activities.	Explorative phase concluded and for at least one major species a coordination approach identified the WG implemented by the end of 2026.	Meeting carried out in an ad hoc WG, survey sent out for a few species, discussion of the outcome in the Vegetable Expert Meeting.
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1.2.2. Develop the PVR value chain

- a) Identify Plant Variety domains where the CPVO ought to be (more) present

In 2023 the CPVO carried out 1 seminar on the enforcement of PVR under the IPKey Latin America project, EU-Funded and implemented by the European Union Intellectual Property Office.

During 2023, in cooperation with the Observatory on IPR infringement the CPVO started the organisation of an enforcement seminar for custom authorities to be carried out in Q1 of 2024.

Concerning visits to EU Member States, in 2023 the President visited 3 Member States: Poland, Austria and Denmark. During those visits the President attended meetings with national breeders' organisations and breeding companies.

Objectives 2023:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PVP awareness raising amongst breeders Consolidate the solidity of PVR titles 		
Key Indicators	Target indicator	Result
- Set up a network of contacts of national breeders' associations	Outreach to 3 organisations per year	3
- Organisation of enforcement seminars	1 seminar per year	1
- Study visits in EU – MS	2 to 3 visits per year	3 visits
- Clarification of the EDV concept	UPOV EDV explanatory note adopted	UPOV EDV explanatory note adopted

b) Provide support for the harmonization of DUS procedures

A QAS Team evaluated on 23-24 November 2023 the on-site facilities of the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture (MARA) and the Shanghai Sub-Centre for Variety Testing, with respect to the DUS testing of certain edible mushroom species. Subsequent to the evaluation report and recommendations issued by QAS, the CPVO has a positive outlook regarding the possible establishment of a DUS testing/take over agreement with the Chinese authorities in 2024 for some edible mushroom species. Such an agreement could open up further opportunities for closer collaboration between CPVO and MARA, the world's two largest recipients of PVR applications

During the final quarter of 2023, the CPVO provided technical advice to the coordinator of the new Afripi project "Support for the establishment and management of variety collections in the DUS examination centres accredited by OAPI".

Objectives 2023-2025: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a leading role in the further development of technical procedures Participate in outreach activities targeting the implementation of high-quality standards in third country DUS authorities		
Key Indicators	Target indicator	Result
Number of revised/new CPVO Technical protocols	8 per year	11
Number of outreach activities with third countries	4 per year	Afripi (QAS), IPKey China (QAS)

c) Enhance our capabilities to monitor, support & influence PV R&D developments

Objectives 2023: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve involvement in the Horizon Europe research agenda in the planning, implementation and results dissemination phases where there is a direct link to variety research and testing and in particular IP • Co-finance R&D projects with the potential to impact quality and efficiency of DUS testing 		
Key Indicators	Target indicator	Result
Contact established with DG RTD and DG AGRI for the monitoring of R&D initiatives in plant innovation	number of Horizon Europe projects CPVO has suggested, is involved in or is monitoring.	In respect of the Commission Policy allowing contributions of EU agencies to R&D programming only with their line DG and on demand of DG SANTE, CPVO submitted a written contribution on potential R&D objectives to DG SANTE in Oct 2023.

d) Develop PVR awareness programmes

The CPVO in cooperation with the EU-Funded projects managed by the EUIPO and the European IPR Helpdesk organised webinars on several PVR related topics targeting EU SMEs. Moreover, the first e-learning



module on the licensing of Plant Variety Rights has been made available on the Academy Learning Portal of the EUIPO, in a section exclusively dedicated to Plant Variety Rights⁵.

Throughout the year the CPVO organised several outreach events under different scenarios (seminars at conferences, expositions, for sectorial organisations) to enhance the visibility of the CPVR system and to provide a reference point to the industry when it comes to PVR knowledge.

Concerning the establishment of a systematic survey for all the outreach activities of the CPVO, internal discussions were carried out to define the scope and the subject matter of the survey, which will be implemented from Q2 of 2024.

Educational establishments and Universities should be excluded from this target indicator, as there is a specific objective concerning professionals of tomorrow, where the activities target specifically scholars and future professionals in both specialised sectors of Intellectual Property and Plant Breeding related courses.

Objectives 2023:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to be a reference of excellence in the plant innovation sector and in raising PVR awareness Enhance the availability of e-learning offer 		
Key Indicators	Target indicator	Result
Awareness programme satisfaction index: - Survey results of e-learning modules	>70% (e-learning modules)	e-learning module with Certificate: 56 participants, 9 completed, satisfaction rate between "satisfied" and "very satisfied" for all 9 participants that concluded the survey.
- Survey results of virtual/in presence lectures Weighted average of 1 and 2 (relative importance of the events)	Survey established and adopted for in presence and virtual lectures	Survey concept started, to be implemented from 2024.

- e) Strengthen PVR value chain through enhanced digital interactions and tools
- Consolidate CPVO's digital front office (customer facing platforms)

The table presents an overview of the performance metrics for the Digital Transformation Unit, focusing on three critical areas of CPVO's digital front office (customer facing platforms): Enhancements, Quality, and Uptime. These metrics provide insight into the efficiency and effectiveness of DTU's software development and operational activities.

⁵ [EUIPO Academy Learning Portal - Catalogue \(europa.eu\)](https://euiipo-academy-learning-portal-catalogue.europa.eu)



Enhancements: The DTU successfully delivered 107.24 story points (or an equivalent metric) worth of new features over the period. This represents approximately 300 person-days of development activity dedicated to new features. This metric indicates the team's productivity and the value added to our digital products and services through new functionalities.

Quality: The Quality metric stands at 87.85%, calculated as 1 minus the percentage of story points spent on bug fixes out of the total story points addressed in the period. This relatively high percentage reflects the team's commitment to maintaining and improving the quality of CPVO applications, with a significant portion of effort directed towards delivering new features and service requests rather than fixing issues.

Uptime: Our cloud platforms demonstrated a remarkable Uptime of 99.5%. This metric, calculated as 100% minus the percentage of time the platforms were unavailable during the month, showcases the reliability and stability of our cloud infrastructure, ensuring that our services remain accessible to users with minimal interruptions.

The resulting Performance Index of 93,74 is a comprehensive indicator of DTU's overall effectiveness in delivering high-quality, reliable digital services while continuously enhancing CPVO's digital service offerings. It serves as the Baseline for future tracking of KPIs.

- Strengthen cybersecurity framework

The CPVO has significantly enhanced its cybersecurity with the completion of its Information Security Management System (ISMS), boosting resilience against cyber threats and ensuring compliance with EU information security regulations. The ISMS offers a methodical approach to safeguard sensitive information, preserving its security, integrity, and accessibility.

An important milestone is achieving 92,5% completion in mitigating the 2023 OWASP Top 10 security risks for its customer-facing platforms⁶. This reflects CPVO's dedication to protecting its digital infrastructure and customer data from significant cyber threats, thereby strengthening stakeholder trust and service reliability.

The successful ISMS implementation, alongside progress in addressing OWASP Top 10 risks, highlights CPVO's commitment to high information security standards and continuous cybersecurity improvement.

- Launch digital transformation of CPVO's back office (internal user facing platforms)

The CPVO has launched the PVR 2.0 programme, a 3-year initiative aimed at transforming Plant Variety Rights (PVR) administration by reengineering processes and applications. Covering a wide range of processes from applications to legal proceedings, PVR 2.0 aims to shift from traditional 'paper inspired' methods to digital-first processes, enhancing efficiency and future adaptability.

In 2023, the project kicked off with an analysis phase, leading to the first optimization workshops and the selection of a technological foundation critical for the program's success. Additionally, the definition of a Minimum Viable Product (MVP)⁷ has established a roadmap for initial outcomes and ongoing development.

Objectives:

- Consolidate CPVO's digital front office (customer facing platforms)
- Strengthen cybersecurity framework
- Launch digital transformation of CPVO's back office (internal user facing platforms)

⁶ OWASP, the Open Web Application Security Project, is an international nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the security of software through the identification of common vulnerabilities and the dissemination of open-source tools and best practices.

⁷ A Minimum Viable Product (MVP) is a version of a new product that includes only the essential features necessary to meet the needs of early adopters and validate the product concept in the market with the least effort.



Key Indicators	Target indicator	Result
1. (Enhancements x Quality x Uptime) index Enhancements : # story points delivered or equiv. metric per period (month) on new features Quality : 1 - % of story points spend per period (month) on bug fixes Uptime : 100% - % of time cloud platforms were unavailable (month)	+5% year to year from 2023 baseline	Baseline 2023: 93,74 Enhancements: 107,24 Quality: 87,85 % Uptime: 99,5%
2. Net Presenter Score (NPS) calculated from user satisfaction survey	Positive NPS trend over 2023 baseline	Not measured in 2023

f) Ensure cost-effective, high-quality DUS testing as basis of CPVR protection

Objectives 2023:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orient technical protocol discussions towards efficiency gains • Share best practices • Identify exploitable results from co-funded R&D projects • Strengthen incentives for Examination Offices to offer services at affordable cost 		
Key Indicators	Target indicator	Result
Sector expert meetings and field events on specific topics	4 sector expert meetings and 2 field events year	4 sector meetings held, Chrysanthemum open day in France, True Potato Seeds workshop in Germany.

1.2.3. Contribute to shaping a legal and policy framework fit for purpose

a) Basic Regulation fit for purpose

Objectives 2023-2025:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect Basic Regulation's insight from CPVO and its stakeholders to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) identify potential rules to be updated in the Basic Regulation b) be in the position to provide relevant proposals at the moment of the revision of the Basic Regulation • Facilitate and coordinate the signature of the Headquarters agreement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) ensure the necessary arrangements provided by the host Member State are laid down in the Headquarters agreement b) ensure the application of the protocol on privileges and immunities c) review and maintain the Headquarters agreement's template according to the Commission guidelines through the signature process 		

Key Indicators	Target indicator	Result
Signature of the Headquarters agreement	Signed by 2024	Significant progress achieved that makes it significantly possible the signature by 2024.

b) Build capabilities to anticipate and influence policy making

The CPVO receives the official report on Bio patents issued by Germany. In 2023 the CPVO held a meeting with Euroseeds and EPO where we presented the cooperation with EPO and the three organisations carried out discussions over the implementation of rule 28 and the disclaimer rule and other patent-PVR related issues.

Objectives 2023:		
Germany (and probably other MS) is doing a monitoring of Bio patents and the CPVO will launch a survey to understand if such monitoring is done and can be shared with the CPVO. The CPVO will continue cooperating with the EPO.		
Key Indicators	Target indicator	Result
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooperation with the European Patent Office ('EPO') carried out according to the Administrative Agreement Monitoring plant patent grants in cooperation with the EPO. 	<p>Fulfilment of the Administrative Agreement with the EPO.</p> <p>Setting up a CPVO report on the number of critical plant patents which should serve as a basis for discussion in the CPVO-EPO cooperation.</p>	<p>Workshop organised on CPVO-EPO cooperation</p> <p>Discussions with relevant parties held</p>

c) Facilitate cooperation between EU & other institutional partner in matters of PVR

- i. Facilitate access to relevant information, appropriate network and support the decision-making process to the benefit of the PVR value chain stakeholders

In 2023 the CPVO ought to establish a mechanism to measure its involvement in the discussions concerning legislative and policy initiatives stemming from the EU co-legislators.

During 2023 three main proposals were discussed by the co-legislators, namely:

- Plant Reproductive Material (PRM): the European Commission involved the CPVO at the time of the publication of the proposal. The Council also involved the CPVO at the launch of the discussion and 2 meetings under the Spanish presidency (July-December 2023).
- Forest Reproductive Material (FRM): the CPVO was not involved in the discussions.
- New Genomic Techniques (NGT): during the year the involvement in the discussions was limited and did not concern strictly the legislative proposal.

The three initiatives do not directly concern the revision of the CPVR legislative framework in the European Union but regulate related sectors that could have an indirect impact on the CPVR system.

The CPVO during the revision of this objective for the Single Programming Document of 2024-2026, developed a simplified version of the Key Indicators, easier to monitor and that would provide a qualitative and quantitative indication on the involvement of the Office in official legislative procedures of the EU.

The metrics will help to monitor the involvement of the Agency in different initiatives and from different actors.



Objectives 2023: Support and advise to the Commission and co-legislators on EU Policies related to PVR Ensure the CPVO is present in the relevant policy making fora to reach relevant objectives for the benefit of breeders and society at large.			
Key Indicators	Change in the Key Indicators	Target indicator	Result
(Building on the visibility metric) How many times (in %) was the CPVO contacted	How many times (in %) was the CPVO contacted: # initiatives where CPVO was contacted / total # initiatives officially published	Positive trend from 2023 baseline	Baseline: involved in 1 out of 3 initiatives (33%) For the initiative on which the CPVO was involved: 4/5
Was the CPVO involved throughout the duration of the 'initiative' (yes/no) (in % of total initiatives)	Was the CPVO involved throughout the duration of the 'initiatives': Weighted average of involvement (1-5; 1 minimum involvement; 5 complete)		
For the initiatives we detected, and were not contacted, for how many were we successful in being involved? (%). Outreach KPI = a x b x c			

- ii. Sharing capabilities and resources with other EU / international organisations in order to foster efficiencies, economies of scale, innovation, best practices and more generally enhance cooperation

On 16-17 March 2023 the triannual training for QAS technical experts from throughout the EU took place at the meeting facilities of the European Banking Agency (EBA) in Paris. The CPVO utilised 2/3 meeting rooms simultaneously for the different working groups, and the Office was not charged for this service by EBA. Further economies in time and money were achieved by the CPVO, with the 32 QAS experts not having to make the return trip from Paris to Angers as well as avoiding any additional overnight stays.

The usual cooperation with the European Intellectual Property Office continues, with shared services like the internal auditor, the DPO (ended in December 2023), IT.

Objectives 2023: Enhance fruitful corporate and organisation relationships, to deliver value to CPVO stakeholders		
Key Indicators	Target indicator	Result
Creating opportunities Number of cooperations for, inter alia, shared services, shared initiatives, shared facilities, MoU	>0	1 Shared services with EUIPO (IT, internal audit, DPO)

- iii. Promote global standards, interoperability, synergies, capacity building and involvement of European and international actors, towards the establishment and development of effective PVP systems

In 2023 the CPVO carried out in the framework of different projects 14 activities targeting third countries.

4 activities concentrated on capacity building and enhancing the implementation of high standards' PVR system in target countries, including by providing DUS trainings to Chinese and Colombian officials.



2 closed workshops were organised for Thai and Indonesian officials on PVR System implementation in the framework of UPOV 91.

1 workshop focused on PVR enforcement, targeting Latin America countries, under IPKey projects.

It is difficult to predict if policy, legislative and practical developments directly stem from the activities carried out by the CPVO, in cooperation with other institutional partners. Nevertheless, the CPVO can measure continuous involvement of key actors of the PVR system in future activities, by analysing proposals for cooperation received following up from past activities and the level of involvement of policy makers into the discussion.

<p>Objectives 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide IP/PVR support to the European Commission following requests on FTA negotiations and other international cooperation projects <p>Support third countries in the implementation and/or development of PVR system</p>		
Key Indicators	Target indicator	Result
<p>Number of countries that have committed to take effective measures, <i>inter alia</i>, through legislation, guidelines, best practices, or enforcement measures</p> <p>(% of activities carried out)</p>	30%	In 2023 countries that have requested assistance for 2024 are: Japan, Thailand, Chile, Colombia, China, out of 8 target countries (excluding regional activities).

d) Communication & outreach

In order to align the mindset, task priorities, and vision of our staff with the objectives set forth in the Strategic Plan for 2022-2026, a staff assembly was organized in May 2023. The goal of the Staff Assembly was to ensure that staff had ample opportunity to familiarize with, understand, and align with the Strategic Plan 2022-2026. In a unique format, each manager took turns presenting their relevant sections, ensuring after each segment that staff grasped the reasons, logic, and drivers behind the strategic decisions. Following every presentation, a discussion period with open-ended questions was facilitated. We subsequently launched a survey to ascertain the staff's understanding and integration of the plan's objectives into their daily work. By seeking feedback directly from the staff members, we aimed to evaluate the impact of the assembly and identify any areas needing further attention or clarification.

<p>Objectives 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise the Communication strategy and prepare an annual communication plan; Conduct thorough media and stakeholders mapping encompassing relevant public and private stakeholders, including NGOs, in order to gather and monitor topical intelligence and address relevant target audiences; Devise joint campaigns and cross-visibility actions through the organisation of events, webinars and other digital communications (i.e. website and social media) aiming at positioning the CPVO as the reference point for CPVR-related issues at EU level. Design and implement a new internal communication strategy with the aim to align the corporate culture and commitments on staff vision and priorities with the CPVO strategic plan. 		
Key Indicators	Target indicator	Result



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update the 2019 External communication strategy to align it with new communication trends and with the CPVO strategic vision towards 2026 - Produce a draft annual communication plan for the year ahead to be validated by the CPVO President and presented at the AC Autumn meeting of the previous year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Produce new External communication strategy to be presented, together with communication plan 2024, at the AC Autumn meeting of 2023. - Present draft communication plan for Year 202x +1 at the Autumn AC meeting of Year 202x. 	<p>Multi annual External Communication Strategy produced and adopted during the 2023 AC Autumn meeting along with annual breakdown communication activities.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Build functional database: have proper repository for storing the data and keeping it up to date; keep the existing data up to date; grow the data by conducting research - Efficient and systematic monitoring of news and relevant actions undertaken by the relevant stakeholders - Establishing contacts and interactions with relevant stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Value of updated data in the database/mapping > 130 (=at least 5 per MS) 	<p>Functional database set and constantly updated Systematic monitoring of news conducted. 25 media outlets reported news about or related to the CPVO in 2023. Establishing contacts and interactions with relevant stakeholders, consistently documented in a dedicated database. Currently, 193 entries</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organise major joint events such as seminar or policy conference (at least 1 per year) - Build online stakeholder community by aggregating and reusing relevant digital content on the website and social media - Produce audiovisual content such as video tutorials and webinars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Event > or = 2 - Webinars > or = 6 - Social media tagging > or = 24 - Joint press release > or = 6 	<p>Social media tagging 125 4 Events 16 webinars 272 posts on LinkedIn 272 posts on X</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that staff mentality, tasks priorities and vision are aligned with strategic objectives of the Strategic Plan 2022-2026. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If survey: >90% of compliance/alignment measured - If issues reported: <10 per year across all CPVO units 	<p>86,67% of respondents to the survey replied that they were satisfied or very satisfied</p>



- e) Prepare the PVR professionals of tomorrow

The CPVO continued its cooperation with universities and educational institutions by delivering lectures on the CPVR System.

For the first year PVR was introduced in the trademark and design intensive modules organised by the EUIPO which gathered more than 700 participants from Universities, national IP Offices, EUIPO, CPVO and EPO.

The CPVO in 2023 continued the discussion on building a dedicated team to coordinate the “Academia” initiatives of the Office, starting from a mapping of top tier Universities in the domain of IPRs and scientific curricula related to plant breeding. Subject to availability of resources, the mapping may continue in 2024, to identify potential partners to build a stronger network.

Together with the development of a satisfaction survey for outreaching events, the survey for students will be built and used starting from Q2 of 2024.

Objectives 2023		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish program and survey to be submitted to students • Structure the PVR professionals of tomorrow program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify EU Universities to be approached to discuss curricula and identify opportunities to include PVR modules ○ Develop and fine tune university-ready offer ○ Sign MoU with partner universities 		
Key Indicators	Target indicator	Result
Survey defined and implemented	N/A	Background research conducted

1.3. Cost of activities

The table below shows the breakdown of real costs (actual commitments 2023) for the activities defined above. This is based on a total of EUR 24.56 million in commitments. Staff allocations are based on staff in service at year-end (51) and detailed breakdowns based on the last screening exercise.

This table demonstrates that almost 84% of the budget of the CPVO is allocated to its core activities.

Table 1 - Breakdown of cost of activities

Activity	HR (fte)	% of total	Operational budget	Staff and overhead	Total	% of total
Managing the system: Processing applications	17.1	33.5%	8,381,395	4,999,944	13,381,339	54.5%
QAS	1	2.0%	30,000	292,394	322,394	1.3%
Development of the system	4.5	8.8%	-	1,315,775	1,315,775	5.4%
R&D Projects	1.5	2.9%	2,495	438,592	441,087	1.8%
Information Technology	9.4	18.4%	1,150,428	2,748,507	3,898,935	15.9%
External Relations	3.5	6.9%	-	1,023,380	1,023,380	4.2%
Enforcement and interface PVR/Patents	1	2.0%	-	292,394	292,394	1.2%
Total Core Activities	38	74.5%	9,564,318	11,110,987	20,675,305	84.2%
Budget	0.3	0.6%	-	87,718	87,718	0.4%
Accounts	3.7	7.3%	-	1,081,859	1,081,859	4.4%
Total Neutral Activities	4	7.8%	-	1,169,578	1,169,578	4.8%
HR	2	3.9%	-	584,789	584,789	2.4%
General Services	6	11.8%	-	1,754,366	1,754,366	7.1%
Internal Control, Audit, other	1	2.0%	82,578	292,394	374,972	1.5%
Total Horizontal support	9	17.6%	82,578	2,631,550	2,714,128	11.1%
Grand total	51	100.0%	9,646,896	14,912,114	24,559,010	100.0%

2. Management Report

2.1. Administrative Council

The spring Administrative Council (AC) meeting was organized allowing hybrid participation. It was organized in Angers on 31 March 2023. Below are the main decisions taken by the AC.

The consolidated annual activity report (CAAR) for 2022 provided a complete overview of the CPVO's activities for 2022 and included the AC Analysis and Assessment adopted and signed by the Chairperson of the AC. The AC adopted a decision to discharge the President of the CPVO for the implementation of the 2021 budget.

The AC agreed to the proposal of revision of the Single Programming Document (SPD) 2023-2025, in order to align it with the Strategic Plan 2022-2026. The draft SPD 2024-2026 was presented and formally adopted during the AC Meeting in autumn 2023. The AC took note of the preliminary draft budget for 2024.

The members of the Administrative Council adopted the update to the CPVO conflict of interest policy, which was modified in accordance with comments received by the European Commission.

The members of the Administrative Council took note of the state of play of the CPVO building project.

In April 2023 the Chair convened an extraordinary meeting for conducting the interviews of the candidate Vice-President of the CPVO and the candidates for the position of Chair of the CPVO Board of Appeal. The meeting was concluded with the adoption of the official opinion of the AC to the European Commission on the candidates for said positions.

The autumn meeting was held in presence in Spain, on 5-6 October 2023. The meeting took place at the headquarters of the Instituto de Hortofruticultura Subtropical y Mediterránea (IHSM). On 6 October AC members and observers visited the premises of the experimental station of IHSM, "La Mayora".

The members of the AC elected the new Chair and Vice-Chair of the Administrative Council. Mr. José Antonio Sobrino Maté from Spain was elected as the new Chair of the AC. Ms. Kristine Bech Klindt from Denmark was elected as the new Vice Chair of the AC.

The members of the Administrative Council approved the procedure for the sale of the buildings.

The members of the Administrative Council adopted the SPD 2024-2026 and formally endorsed the already adopted SPD 2023-2025 and approved the draft budget for 2024.

During both meetings the AC took several other decisions and approved a number of proposals for entrustment of Examination Offices.

2.2. Major Developments

2.2.1. The state of the system

Statistics

In 2023 the CPVO received 2866 applications, representing a decrease of 10% in comparison to the previous year and a decrease of 19% compared to 2021.

The CPVO receives most of its applications from the ornamental and agricultural sectors, where the number of applications has clearly been strongly decreasing in the past 2 years. In the ornamental sector, the decreasing trend seems to reflect a 10 years' tendency, while in the agricultural sector the decrease follows an increase's tendency in the past 10 years, reaching its peak in 2021.

In the fruit and vegetable sectors, the number of applications is rather stable.

Data from the Common Catalogue suggest that the proportion of newly released varieties granted CPVR remains stable, in the agricultural and vegetable sector. The variation in number of applications in these sectors seem to mostly follow the variation of newly registered varieties.

As expected, the number of titles in force, making up the most important source of financing of the Office, will stabilize at some point and that situation seems to approach in the coming years even if it is not the case

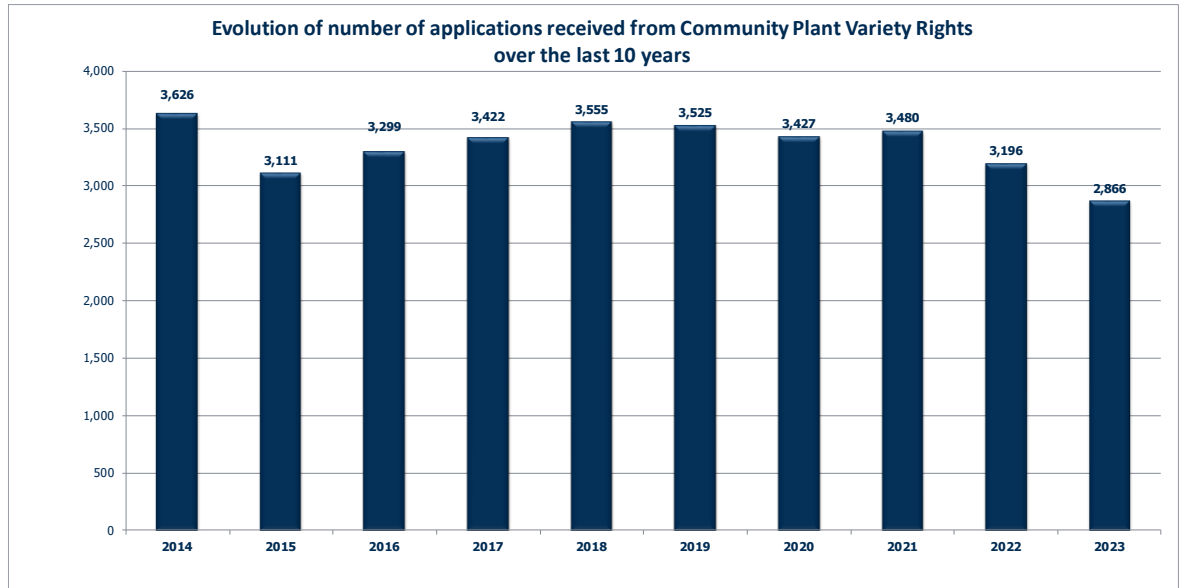


yet. The amount of fees paid in relation to titles in force continues to increase, reflecting still an increase of breeders' PVR related budget dedicated to intellectual property despite the often-adverse economic environment.

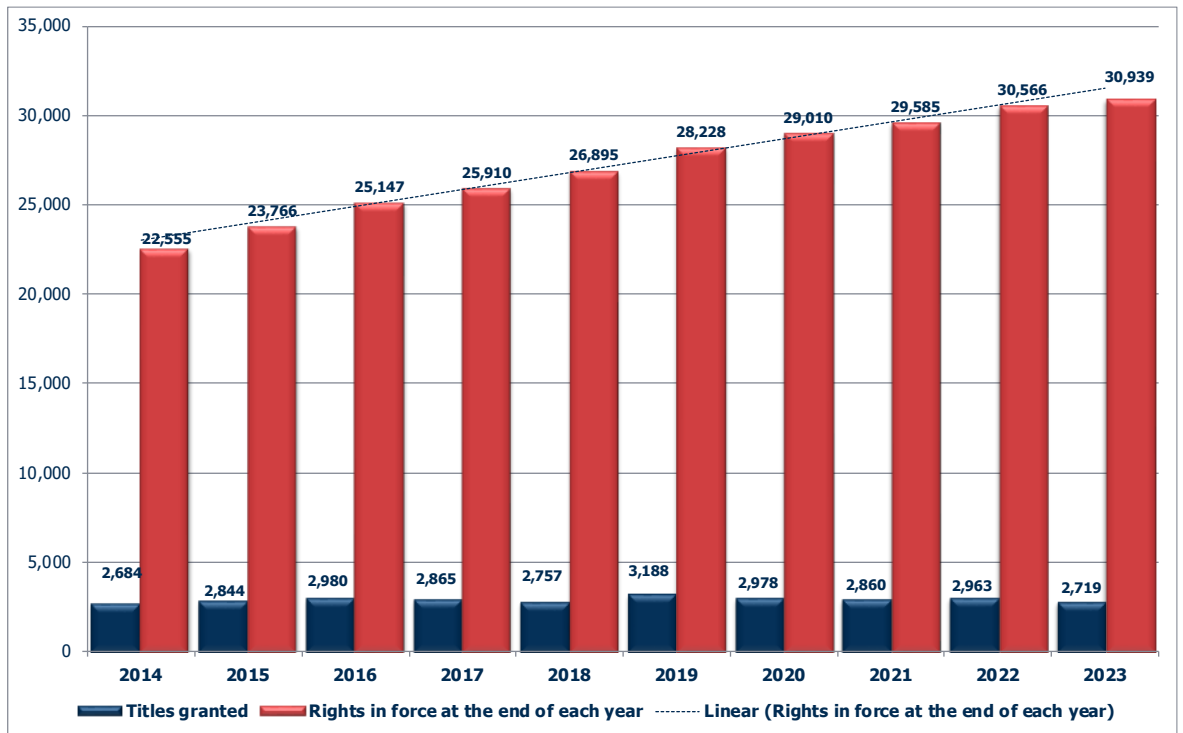
These investigations will continue in a newly set up business intelligence activity, gathering further information from statistics and interviews of various stake holders.

Key statistics (see **Annex I** for more details)

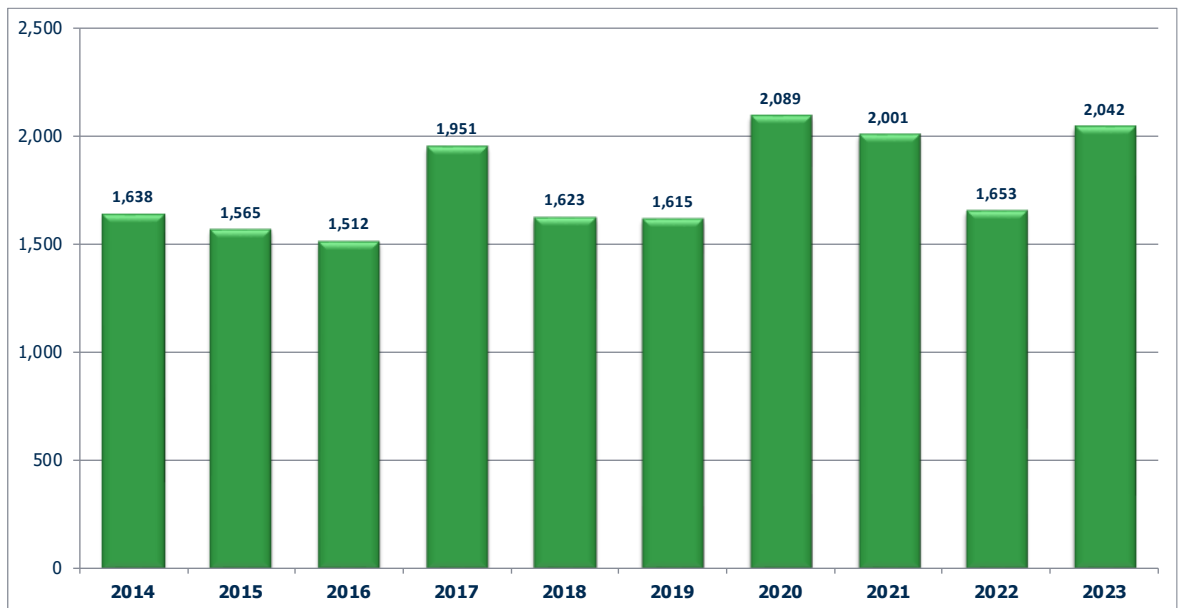
Evolution of number of applications received over the last 10 years



Evolution of CPVR granted rights and rights in force at the end of each year over the last 10 years



Evolution of number of surrenders of CPVR over the last 10 years



Development of the system

The revision of the Council Regulation 2100/94 has again been postponed by the European Commission due to the ongoing work on the revision of the PRM and NGT legislation. No timeline has been specified, especially in the current context with the European Parliament elections taking place in June 2024.

Significant progress has been achieved in the Headquarters agreement with France. Indeed, after active negotiations last year with the French authorities, the final document has been approved by the Administrative Council in 2024.



Communication & other activities

The major developments in the communication sector and in the cooperation with universities and other EU and international organisations are already detailed in the reporting section above. The mentioned actions are now related to specific objectives of the CPVO Strategic Plan 2022-2026 and monitored in terms of results.

The Communication & stakeholders' relations sector has developed a detailed reporting framework concerning the objective of increasing CPVO visibility and presence in different media outlets. It has worked on strengthening the relationship between the CPVO and major stakeholders and partners, such as the involvement of Examination Offices in disseminating information on different initiatives, such as the SME Fund, co-funded by the EUIPO and the European Commission.

The work with the academia world is under development notwithstanding the workload of the different Units, and tailored lectures for universities with which the CPVO has signed Memorandum of Understanding in the past, such as the Magister Lvcentivus of the University of Alicante, the LUISS University of Rome. The cooperation with the IP Helpdesk continued also in 2023 with 5 webinars carried out on PVR related topics.

In 2023 the work of the CPVO in EU-Funded cooperation projects concerning Intellectual Property Rights continued as in the past, therefore marking a regular year. For instance, the CPVO continued to work with the teams of IPKey projects (Latin America, China and South East Asia), AL-INVEST Verde, AfrIPI, CarIPI, and carried out activities under the TAIEX program with the support of experts from Member States authorities.

New building project

The Administrative Council agreed in 2022 that the CPVO should carry out the so-called "market prospection" to search for a suitable and cost-effective new headquarters in Angers. The procedure was carried out fully in line with the Financial Regulations and in the Administrative Council Spring meeting of 2023, the CPVO presented the results of this search for a new building designed to regroup all staff in one single location (currently, staff are spread over three separate buildings) and to meet environmental standards both locally in France and also to align with the policies applied in the central institutions in Brussels.

A project, the "Nymphé" building was chosen following the market prospection and given the financial benefits, the Administrative Council agreed to move ahead with the purchase of the building. The initial contract was signed in Autumn 2023 (the "promesse de vente" and the final purchase expected in June 2024 and construction beginning in September 2024. It is expected that the building will be finished in the second semester of 2025, with a delivery date on 1 December 2025.

For the sale of the current buildings, the CPVO carried out extensive consultations with EU Institutions and proposed a very transparent procedure (sale through public auction) that was agreed by the Administrative Council in the Autumn meeting 2023. The sales will only begin when the final contract for the purchase has been signed and it is foreseen that for a transition period, the CPVO will sell one of its current buildings and move to hot desking.

The overall project is expected to be positive for the budget, with sales of existing buildings expected to cover the cost of purchase and fit-out of the new building. Furthermore, it is expected that there shall be savings of the order EUR 200.000 per year due to reductions in spending on electricity, heating, cleaning, security, maintenance, etc.

2.3. Budgetary and Financial Management

2.3.1. Overview of the budget and financial year

In accordance with the financial regulations of the Community Plant Variety Office, the Provisional Budgetary and Financial Accounts for the year 2023 are provided in **Annex VIII**. These reports shall be subject to audit by the European Court of Auditors. The key figures related to these accounts are explained hereafter.



2.3.2. Budgetary Accounts

Table 2 - Budget Outturn

		2023	2022	% variation 2023
Income	Fees revenue	19,394,593.00	18,318,353.00	5.88%
	Other revenue	274,955.83	151,630.00	81.33%
	Total	19,669,548.83	18,469,983.00	6.49%
Expenditure	Title 1 Staff expenditure	(9,057,215.96)	(8,463,314.25)	7.02%
	Title 2 Administrative expenditure	(1,639,888.50)	(1,820,871.29)	-9.94%
	Title 3 Operational expenditure	(8,321,512.25)	(8,560,569.58)	-2.79%
	Total	(19,018,616.71)	(18,844,755.12)	0.92%
Grand Total	650,932.12	(374,772.12)	-273.69%	
Non budgetary income		105,101.40	86,174.47	21.96%
Net outturn for the year		756,033.52	-288,597.65	-361.97%

2.3.3. Revenue

Table 3 - Fees 2023/2022

	2023	2022	% variation 2023
Annual fees	11,159,560.00	10,109,220.00	10.39%
Application fees	1,291,750.00	1,431,600.00	-9.77%
Examination fees	6,103,655.00	6,261,013.00	-2.51%
Other fees	839,628.00	516,520.00	62.55%
Grand Total	19,394,593.00	18,318,353.00	5.88%

2.3.4. Expenditure

Table 4 - Budget Execution Levels

	Final payment appropriation	Executed	Paid %	Cancelled appropriations	Cancelled %
Title 1 Staff expenditure	10,356,000.00	9,057,215.96	87.5%	1,298,784.04	12.5%
Title 2 Admin. expenditure	1,894,000.00	1,639,888.50	86.6%	254,111.50	13.4%
Title 3 Operational expenditure	9,419,625.00	8,321,512.25	88.3%	1,098,112.75	11.7%
Grand Total	21,669,625.00	19,018,616.71	87.8%	2,651,008.29	12.2%

Table 5 - Budget execution comparison

	Budget execution 2023	Budget execution 2022	% Change
Title 1 Staff expenditure	9,057,215.96	8,463,314.25	7.0%
Title 2 Admin. expenditure	1,639,888.50	1,820,871.29	-9.9%
Title 3 Operational expenditure	8,321,512.25	8,560,569.58	-2.8%
Grand Total	19,018,616.71	18,844,755.12	0.9%

Table 6 - Staff expenditure comparison

Budget article	Description.	Budget execution 2023	Budget execution 2022	% Change
E1100	Staff	8,850,602.67	8,219,077.04	7.7%
E1200	Training	73,808.95	65,252.56	13.1%
E1300	Travel	120,481.30	128,207.86	-6.0%
E1400	Interim staff	-	35,807.72	-100.0%
E1500	Assistance	11,477.44	13,900.38	-17.4%
E1700	Representation	845.60	1,068.69	-20.9%
Grand Total		9,057,215.96	8,463,314.25	7.0%

Table 7 - Administrative expenditure comparison

Budget article	Description.	Budget execution 2023	Budget execution 2022	% Change
E2000	Property	219,436.15	298,154.30	-26.4%
E2100	IT expenses	1,150,427.84	1,032,529.33	11.4%
E2200	Other equipment	12,235.15	25,674.66	-52.3%
E2300	General admin.	14,464.82	51,325.46	-71.8%
E2400	Postage and telecom	46,517.55	61,522.58	-24.4%
E2500	Meetings and notices	114,228.22	192,698.71	-40.7%
E2600	Audit and evaluation	82,578.77	158,966.25	-48.1%
Grand Total		1,639,888.50	1,820,871.29	-9.9%

Table 8 - Operational expenditure comparison

Budget article	Description.	Budget execution 2023	Budget execution 2022	% Change
E3000	Examination office fees	6,985,952.25	7,718,949.75	-9.5%
E3200	Examination reports	435,200.00	410,640.00	6.0%
E3400	Publications	22,233.40	13,981.02	59.0%
E3500	Studies	528,283.82	306,839.80	72.2%
E3600	Special advisors	93,717.78	110,159.01	-14.9%
E3800	Building purchase	256,125.00	-	-
Grand Total		8,321,512.25	8,560,569.58	-2.8%

2.3.5. Budget transfers and revisions

Budget article	Description.	Payment appropriations				Commitment appropriations			
		Initial payment budget	Payment budget amendments	Payment budget transfers	Final payment appropriati..	Initial Commitment Budget	Commitment budget amendments	Commitment budget transfers	Final commitment budget
E1100	Staff	10,035,000.00	0.00	(4,000.00)	10,031,000	10,035,000.00	0.00	(4,000.00)	10,031,000.00
E2600	Audit and evaluation	105,000.00	0.00	4,000.00	109,000	105,000.00	0.00	4,000.00	109,000.00
E3000	Examination office fees	7,970,000.00	0.00	0.00	7,970,000	9,100,000.00	0.00	(96,875.00)	9,003,125.00
E3200	Examination reports	460,000.00	20,000.00	0.00	480,000	450,000.00	20,000.00	0.00	470,000.00
E3500	Studies	750,000.00	(216,500.00)	0.00	533,500	0.00	0.00	6,000.00	6,000.00
E3600	Special advisors	60,000.00	80,000.00	0.00	140,000	80,000.00	0.00	70,000.00	150,000.00
E3800	Building purchase	0.00	256,125.00	0.00	256,125	0.00	5,300,000.00	20,875.00	5,320,875.00

2.3.6. Financial Accounts

Economic Outturn Account 2023 (comparison with 2022)

		2023	2022
Income	Income from fees	18,716,347.58	18,733,646.84
	Income from administrative operations	63,336.53	50,047.45
	Total	18,779,684.11	18,783,694.29
Expenditure	Salaries and social taxes	(8,952,328.30)	(8,203,464.49)
	Overheads	(2,017,867.22)	(1,760,271.61)
	Operational expenses	(7,857,984.15)	(8,061,360.30)
	Depreciation	(264,397.90)	(248,867.04)
	Total	(19,092,577.57)	(18,273,963.44)
Result		(312,893.46)	509,730.85
Financial revenue	Interest income	326,091.16	60,143.38
	Miscellaneous financial income	100,859.35	13,111.12
	Total	426,950.51	73,254.50
Financial expenditure	Bank charges & exchange differences	(2,767.50)	(3,766.51)
	Total	(2,767.50)	(3,766.51)
Result		424,183.01	69,487.99
Economic outturn for the year		111,289.55	579,218.84

2.4. Delegation and sub-delegation

Delegation and sub-delegation of the powers of budget implementation to agency's staff

Assurance received from other Authorising Officers by Delegation (AODs): in line with the requirements, the Head of People & Resources Unit, in her capacity as Authorising Officer by Delegation provided an assurance to the President concerning budget implementation.

Delegating budgetary powers to staff members is part of the sub process "perform general accounting" of the CPVO. A detailed procedure was adopted in October 2018 and updated in 2022.

In general, the time limit of the delegation is set to the end date of the contract of the staff member.

It is the Head of Unit who defines if a delegation of budgetary powers is necessary for the tasks to be performed by a staff member. If it is the case, the Head of Unit shall take a decision on what powers should be delegated and what budgetary lines should be concerned. The information is transmitted to the Internal Control Coordinator, who prepares the decision on delegation. Once finalised, the decision is signed by the President of the CPVO (authorising officer) and the staff member.

The Accounting Officer is informed of all granting of delegations, which have an impact on the accounting system. The Digital Transformation Unit is also informed in order to give the accurate access rights in the accounting system.

New delegations of budgetary powers are transferred to the Court of Auditors in preparation of their spring audit. A summary table of all delegations is also provided. At this occasion, all delegations are verified by the Internal Control Coordinator and the Accounting Officer, and any necessary up-dates are carried out.

List of the Budget Lines covered by sub-delegations granted to another AOD:

Authorising Officer by Delegation	Budget Lines (Commitments and payments)
Vice-President	- All budget lines
Head of Plant Variety Expertise Unit	- Title 3 (Operational Expenses) - Missions
Head of People & Resources Unit	- Title 1 (Staff expenses) and Title 2 (Administrative Expenses, except Line 2100)
Head of Digital Transformation Unit	- Line 2100 (IT expenses) - Missions
Head of Legal & Governance Affairs Unit	- Title 1 (Staff expenses) and Title 2 (Administrative Expenses, except Line 2100) and Lines 3400 & 3600

2.5. Human Resources

The Human Resources team at CPVO achieved remarkable progress in 2023, making substantial contributions to the agency's strategic development and future readiness.

This year's highlights include:

- Strategic Documents:
 - **HR Strategy:** This pivotal document outlined comprehensive objectives in learning and development, business continuity, talent attraction and retention, and HR professionalisation. It serves as a roadmap for HR's future direction.
 - **CPVO Competency Maps:** Developed collaboratively with all staff members, these maps detailed 12 competencies crucial for future challenges. Aligned with trends identified by institutions such as the OECD and World Economic Forum, they validate our forward-thinking approach.
 - **Learning Needs Assessment Exercise:** Conducted with input from staff and Heads of Unit, this exercise identified the agency's future learning needs, guiding our investment strategy in professional development for the period 2024-2026.

These strategic documents are instrumental in steering the Agency towards a future-ready context.

The foundation of a succession business plan was also launched, with a recruitment plan to be actioned from 2024 onwards. Key recruitments in 2023 included a Communication Officer, a Document Management Officer, and the Head of Legal & Governance Affairs unit. The appointment of the new CPVO Vice-President, Ms Nuria Urquia Fernandez, was also confirmed in December 2023 and on 16 January 2024 Ms Urquia Fernandez started her functions. This was another important milestone, further strengthening the CPVO leadership board.

A major initiative was the Lean Efficiency & Process Advancement (LEAP) project, led by the HR team. This project, driven by a group led by the Head of HR, focused on process improvement and efficiency enhancement in areas vital to the agency's core business. Training staff members in process analysis and improvement techniques, the LEAP project underscores the CPVO's commitment to operational excellence and continuous improvement.

These achievements by the HR team reflect the Agency's dedication to maintaining high standards in HR practices and the commitment to ensuring the CPVO is well-equipped to meet the challenges of the future with a skilled, adaptable, and well-prepared workforce.

Finally, the approved establishment plan for 2024 is 51 staff members.

2.6. Strategy for efficiency gains

2.7. Assessment of audit and ex-post evaluation results during the year

2.7.1. Internal Audit

Internal Audit assists management by providing independent, objective assurance and consulting services designed to add value and improve the organisation's operations. It helps the organisation accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control, and governance processes.

Approved audit plan

Audit activities were based on the Audit Plan 2023, which was approved by the President of the Office in February 2023.

The selection of audits for 2023 was based on the bi-annual risk assessment exercise, the audit universe coverage as well as on Internal Audit's professional judgment.

The Audit Plan 2023 included 2 audits:

- BoA process / Legal expenses
- General Services contracts management

A follow-up on the audit of the Internal Control Framework carried out in 2021 was also realised.

The two audits on BoA process/Legal expenses and General Services contracts management were both launched in September 2023 and were carried out on-line. They were not yet finalised by December 2023.

Finally, the audit plan 2024 setting the course of Internal Audit work for 2024, was established and communicated in December 2023. It will be approved by the AC in April 2024.

2.7.2. European Court of Auditors

The main conclusions to be found in the Report on the annual accounts of the Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO) for the financial year 2022 adopted in Luxembourg at the Court meeting on 19 September 2023 reads:

Opinion on the reliability of the accounts

In our opinion, the CPVO's accounts for the year ended 31 December 2022 present fairly, in all material respects, the CPVO's financial position at 31 December 2022, the results of its operations, its cash flows, and the changes in net assets for the year then ended, in accordance with its Financial Regulation and with accounting rules adopted by the Commission's accounting officer. These are based on internationally accepted accounting standards for the public sector.

Opinion on the legality and the regularity of the transactions underlying the accounts

Revenue

In our opinion, the revenue underlying the accounts of the CPVO for the year ended 31 December 2022 is legal and regular in all material respects.

Payments



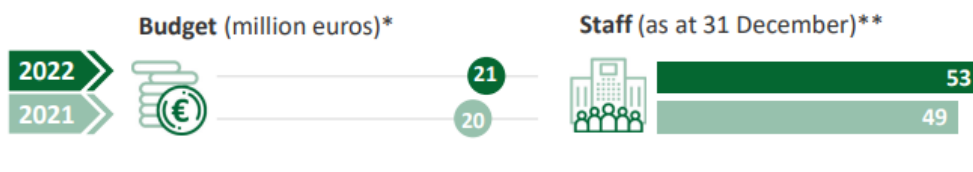
In our opinion, the payments underlying the accounts of the CPVO for the year ended 31 December 2022 are legal and regular in all material respects.

Report on the annual accounts of the Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO) for the financial year 2022

INTRODUCTION

01. The Community Plant Variety Office (hereinafter 'the Office', or 'CPVO'), which is located in Angers, was created by Council Regulation (EC) No 2100/94 [\(1\)](#). Its main task is to register and examine applications for the grant of EU industrial property rights for plant varieties and to ensure that the necessary technical examinations are carried out by the competent offices in the member states. The CPVO is a self-financed body. Its budget is funded from fees charged to private companies.

Figure 1 -Key figures for the CPVO [\(2\)](#)



* Budget figures are based on the total payment appropriations available during the financial year.

** 'Staff' includes EU officials, EU temporary agents, EU contract staff and seconded national experts, but excludes interim workers and consultants.

Source: Annual accounts of the CPVO for the 2021 and 2022 financial years; staff figures provided by the CPVO.

Information in support of the statement of assurance

02. Our audit approach, the basis for our opinion, the responsibilities of the CPVO's management and of those charged with governance, and the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts and underlying transactions are described in section 3.1 (of [the original report](#)). The signature on page 351 (of the original report) forms an integral part of the opinion.

The ECA's statement of assurance provided to the European Parliament and the Council – Independent auditor's report

OPINION

03. We have audited:
 - a. the accounts of the Community Plant Variety Office ("the CPVO"), which comprise the financial statements [\(3\)](#) and the reports on the implementation of the budget [\(4\)](#) for the financial year ended 31 December 2022; and
 - b. the legality and regularity of the transactions underlying those accounts.

as required by Article 287 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

Reliability of the accounts

Opinion on the reliability of the accounts

04. In our opinion, the CPVO's accounts for the year ended 31 December 2022 present fairly, in all material respects, the CPVO's financial position at 31 December 2022, the results of its operations, its cash flows, and the changes in net assets for the year then ended, in accordance with its Financial Regulation and with accounting rules adopted by the Commission's accounting officer. These are based on internationally accepted accounting standards for the public sector.

Legality and regularity of the transactions underlying the accounts

Revenue

Opinion on the legality and regularity of revenue underlying the accounts

05. In our opinion, the revenue underlying the accounts of the CPVO for the year ended 31 December 2022 is legal and regular in all material respects.

Payments

Opinion on the legality and regularity of payments underlying the accounts

06. In our opinion, the payments underlying the accounts of the CPVO for the year ended 31 December 2022 are legal and regular in all material respects

07. The observations which follow do not call the ECA's opinion into question.

Observations on the legality and regularity of transactions

08. In our [2021 report](#) (see point 09 hereunder), we concluded that a framework contract for security services was irregular because the CPVO excluded two tenderes based on irregular requirements to demonstrate financial capacity. As a result, all the subsequent payments under these contracts are irregular, including the 2022 payments amounting to €63 231.

Observations on management and control systems

09. In a procurement for IT services, we found the following shortcomings:
- a. The selection criteria in the tender specifications required an annual turnover of four times the estimated annual contract value. This goes against point 19 of Annex I of the Financial Regulation, which stipulates that the minimum yearly turnover must not exceed two times the estimated annual contract value.
 - b. The tender specifications did not include the annual budget of the contract and, therefore, it was not clear how to calculate the minimum turnover required in the selection criteria. Consequently, the Evaluation Committee did not apply this requirement when assessing the financial capacity of the single tenderer who submitted a bid.

The lack of clarity in the tender specifications regarding some criteria undermines the transparency and objectivity of the procedure and the excessive turnover requirement, could have discouraged some potential tenderers from submitting their bids.

10. On 1 September 2021, the current President of the CPVO took up duties as President ad interim. However, he did not issue new delegations of his powers as authorising officer at the time. Nor did he reconfirm the existing delegations that had been issued by the previous president. This situation persisted after the nomination of the current President of the CPVO on a permanent basis on 1 February 2022, until our audit visit in November 2022. The CPVO's internal rules did not provide for the automatic continuity of existing delegations when the president changed. For an extended period, the CPVO's budget was therefore implemented on the basis of outdated delegations. This indicates a weakness in the associated management and control systems.
11. For two grants (amounting to €469 037) funding research projects, we detected that the CPVO had not defined the criteria to be used to evaluate the operational and technical aspects of proposed projects prior to awarding a grant, including the criteria to set the co-financing rates. The CPVO also does not carry out comprehensive ex-ante and ex-post checks (including checks on site) on the reality and eligibility of the activities and costs funded under its grants. In addition, requests for final payment are not accompanied by sufficient supporting documentation such as timesheets, payslips and invoices. These are systematic weakness in the CPVO's management and control systems, contravening Article 111 of the Financial Regulation and increasing the risk of overpayment.



Follow-up of previous years' observations

12. An overview of the action taken in response to the ECA's observations from previous years is provided in the **Annex**.
13. This Report was adopted by Chamber IV, headed by Mr. Mihails KOZLOVS, Member of the Court of Auditors, in Luxembourg at its meeting of 19 September 2023.

For the Court of Auditors

Tony Murphy

President

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EC) No 2100/94 on Community plant variety rights, [OJ L 227, 1.9.1994, p. 1](#).

(More information on the Office's competences and activities is available on its website: www.cpvo.europa.eu

⁽²⁾ The financial statements comprise the balance sheet, the statement of financial performance, the cash flow statement, the statement of changes in net assets and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes.

⁽⁴⁾ The reports on implementation of the budget comprise the reports which aggregate all budgetary operations and the explanatory notes.



ANNEX

Follow-up of previous years' comments

Sequence number	Year of the ECA's observation	The ECA's observation (summary)	Action taken to respond to ECA's observations	Status of the ECA's observations (Open/Closed)
1	2014	Although the Office became operational in 1995, no headquarters agreement has yet been signed with the host Member State.	This is not within the CPVO's control. Following several requests to France, the CPVO received a draft headquarters agreement on 3 March 2023 for comment.	Open
2	2016	The Office's founding Regulation does not require periodic external performance evaluations.	This is not within the CPVO's control. The CPVO and its Administrative Council have asked the Commission to update this. The issue was raised again in the Administrative Council meeting of 31 March 2023.	Open
3	2021	Procurement procedure for security services (which concluded with a contract of €249 609) and the associated payments considered irregular because of the application by the evaluation committee of illegal tender specifications to demonstrate tender's financial capacity which lead to the exclusion of two tenderers.	The CPVO made payments under this contract in 2022 (see point 09). The CPVO's intention is to terminate the current contract as soon as possible. We also found similar issues in our 2022 audit (see point 10). The CPVO accepted to review and update the tender specifications to demonstrate tender's financial capacity.	Open

The CPVO's reply

08. The CPVO takes note of the observations of the Court. The CPVO has decided to terminate the current contract as soon as the CPVO will be able to enter a new contract (following the publication of a new call for tender).

09. The CPVO takes note of the observation of the Court. An explicit calculation shall be documented in future calls for tender and the procedure shall be updated.

10. The CPVO takes note of the observation of the Court. New guidelines on the procedure to replace the CPVO president in case of absence or indisposed have been adopted on 31/03/2023 (attached to this reply).



11. The CPVO acknowledges that there are weaknesses in the R&D procedure. The procedure shall be updated to make it more robust. CPVO will carefully review future proposals in light of the comments of the Court.

2.8. Follow-up Internal Control

2.8.1. Follow up of recommendations and action plans for audits and evaluations

The 2023 Internal Audit work programme was not yet finalised in December 2023.

The following tables show some statistics on IA recommendations for the last years.

Breakdown of recommendations past 3 years

Department	Completed	In progress	Not started	Total
Digital Transformation Unit	1	2		3
Legal & Governance Affairs Unit	3	2	2	7
People & Resources Unit	1	5		6
Presidency	1	1		2
Total	6	10	2	18

When broken down by audit, the view is as follows:

Audit	Completed	In progress	Not started	Total
Budget and Financial Accounts			1	1
Business Continuity Plan	1	1		2
Communication			3	3
Internal Control	1	1		2
Inventory Management	3			3
M1 2022	1			1

2.9. Follow up of recommendations issued following investigations by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)⁸

The CPVO was subject to one investigation by OLAF in 2023.

⁸ Article 11 Regulation (EU/Euratom) 883/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning investigations conducted by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)

2.10. Follow up of observations from the Discharge authority

The Discharge Authority (the Administrative Council), on the basis of the Audit by the Court of Auditors, Internal Audit results and reporting from the Agency gave a discharge to the President, without specifying corrective actions.

2.11. Environment management

Notwithstanding the resource constraints faced by the CPVO, an environmental management strategy was adopted in December 2020, which was up-dated in 2023. The CPVO's vision is to be a cost-effective and environment-friendly working place. At present, the CPVO's aim is to follow and to promote good sustainability practice and to reduce the environmental impacts of its activities. In the future, the aim would be to help its stakeholders to do the same, if possible.

Baselines were identified for 9 environmental issues, and the results for 2023 are reported on in Annex VII.

2.12. Assessment by Management

The CPVO regularly checks the efficiency of its internal control system through ex post controls and makes immediate mitigating actions when needed.

The number of non-compliance and exception reports decreased, which is an indication that the efforts in raising staff awareness has paid off. A new Internal Control Strategy and Methodology for the self-assessment were adopted, which improved the monitoring and assessment of the internal control framework.

The system is globally working well. The Court of Auditors' final report on 2022 accounts and financial management is positive but with some remarks.

Based on the above, the Management assesses that the internal control system is working well, that all measures were taken to prevent irregularities and fraud and that the underlying transactions were legal and regular and complied with sound financial management

2.13. External Evaluations

There was no external evaluation carried out in 2023.

3. Assessment of the effectiveness of internal control systems

3.1. Effectiveness of internal control systems

Methodology:

In 2023 the CPVO adopted an Internal Control Strategy and Self-Assessment Methodology, following the guidelines developed by the Performance Development Network of the Agencies (which is based on the Commission self-assessment). This self assessment includes the result of the ex-post controls, the reports in the register of non-compliance and exceptions, the result of the staff engagement survey, and a self-assessment carried out by the management of each principle of the framework. The result of the self-assessment is consolidated in a report where the assessment of each principle is explained and where strengths and weaknesses are identified. A conclusion is drawn on the areas where improvements can be made and how to achieve this. The report is published to all staff on the internal web site of the CPVO.

Implementation and compliance:

The internal control principles are well implemented in the CPVO and they are all complied with. Trainings and awareness of staff are carried out regularly and has improved in 2023.

The compliance and effectiveness of internal control systems are regularly assessed by the Court of Auditors in its mission in the CPVO, as well as by the Internal Auditor.

An annual calendar is drawn up with the timing of the ex-post controls to be carried out during the year, which mainly concerns budgetary operations. In 2023 one additional ex-post control was carried out on conflict of interest declarations, and follow-ups on the controls carried out in 2022 on a R&D project and specific IT costs using the imprest account were verified.

Fraud prevention:

The CPVO up-dated its Anti-Fraud policy in 2023 (signature date 14 October 2023). An evaluation of the former strategy was made, a staff survey was carried out, as well as a fraud risk assessment to identify any new potential fraud risks. Feedback was sought from OLAF and DG SANTE on the strategy and their comments were taken into account. This was the basis for the new strategy which was presented to the AC in October 2023.

The revision and monitoring of the policy was done by the Internal Control Coordinator.

The CPVO adopted a policy on Prevention and Management of Conflict of Interest in 2018. After a follow-up control on the implementation of that policy in 2020, an up-dated version was adopted by the Administrative Council on 7 October 2021. A further up-date was made in 2022 and the new version was adopted by the AC in March 2023. The CPVO has also adopted the Commission Decision C(2018) 4048 of 29 June 2018 on outside activities by analogy. These policies include the implementation of Article 16(3) of the Staff Regulations concerning senior officials leaving the service. The senior officials are asked to fill out a declaration on honour when leaving the service and a declaration of intention to engage in an occupational activity after leaving the service, if they do so. These declarations were updated in 2023.

Cost and Benefits:

No major weaknesses were identified in the CPVO Internal Control Framework in 2023. The CPVO considers the balance between effectiveness, efficiency and economy of controls to be fair taken into account the resources of the Office. The estimated cost for internal control in 2023 amounted to 23 000 €, which corresponds to 20% of the annual basic salary for an AD9 post. This includes the ex-ante controls by authorising officers and the ex-post controls of the Internal Control Coordinator.

3.2. Conclusions of assessment of internal control systems

The overall result of the assessment on the CPVO internal control system is effective. No reservations have been made during 2023.

3.3. Declaration of assurance

In 2024, the Head of People & Resources Unit, on the basis of a number of supporting audits and evaluations has made the following declaration:

Declaration of assurance

In 2024, the Head of People & Resources Unit, on the basis of a number of supporting audits and evaluations, has made the following declaration:

On the basis of:

- The self-assessment of internal controls
- Follow-up of internal audit recommendations
- Result of ex-post controls

I declare that in accordance with the CPVO's internal control framework, I have reported my advice and recommendations on the overall state of internal control in the CPVO to the President.

I hereby certify that the information provided in the present Annual Activity Report and in its annexes is, to the best of my knowledge, accurate, reliable, and complete.

Date: 18 March 2024

Signed:

Annamaria Sideri

Annamaria Sideri

4. Management Assurance

The assurance below is based on, *inter alia*, the declaration of the Head of People & Resources Unit, the results of the Internal Audits of the CPVO, the ex-Post controls put in place in 2023 and previous years, and the findings of the Court of Auditors.

On the basis of the facts in his possession, the President of the CPVO declares that the information contained in this report gives a true view. He has reasonable assurance that the resources assigned to the activities described in this report have been used for their intended purpose and in accordance with the principles of sound financial management, and that the control procedures put in place give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions. He is unaware of any matter not reported which could harm the interests of the CPVO.

2023 Declaration of Assurance the President of the CPVO

I, the undersigned, Francesco Mattina, President of the CPVO, in my capacity as authorizing officer,

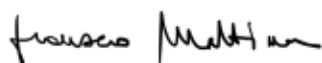
Declare that the information contained in this report gives a true and fair view.

State that I have reasonable assurance that the resources assigned to the activities described in this report have been used for their intended purpose and in accordance with the principles of sound financial management, and that the control procedures put in place give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of the underlying transaction. This reasonable assurance is based on my own judgment and on the information at my disposal, such as the results of the self-assessment, ex-post controls, the work of the Internal Auditor and the lessons learnt from the reports of the Court of Auditors for years prior to the year of this declaration.

Confirm that I am not aware of anything not reported here, which could harm the interests of Community Plant Variety Office.

Angers, 15 March 2024

Francesco Mattina



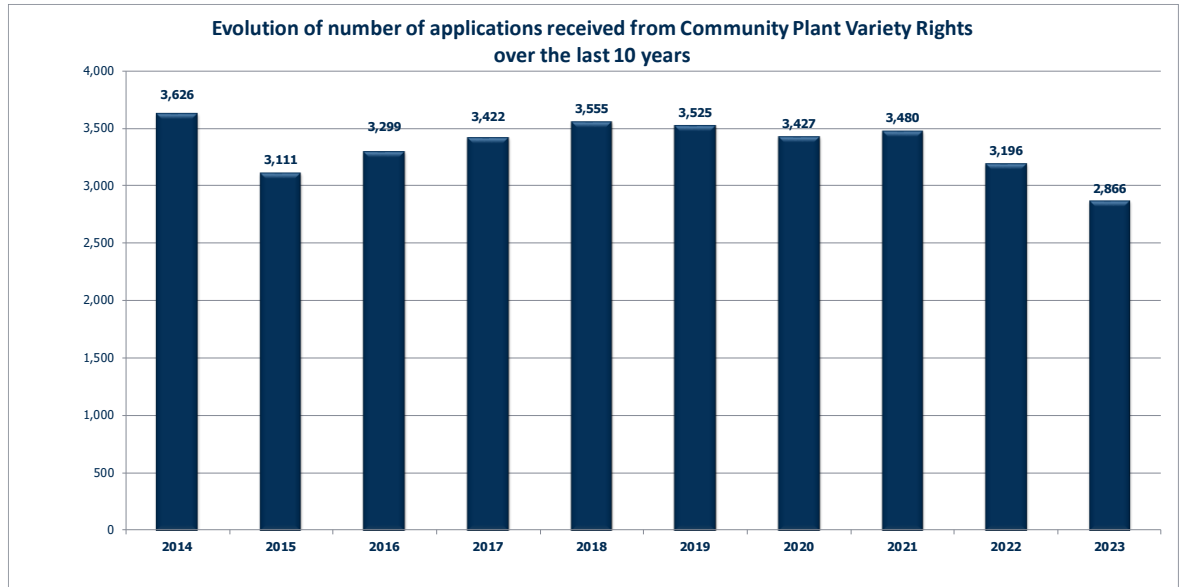
President of the CPVO

5. Declaration of assurance

This document is a declaration signed by the President, as Authorising Officer and representing the CPVO, together with the Accountant giving their assurance on the accounts of the Office, according to the provisions of the Financial Regulations of the CPVO. The original document was sent to the President of the Court of Auditors (**Annex VIII**).

Annex I. 2023 Core Business Statistics

Graph 1: Evolution of the annual number of applications for Community plant variety protection (2014-2023)



Graph 2: Shares of application numbers per crop sector in 2023

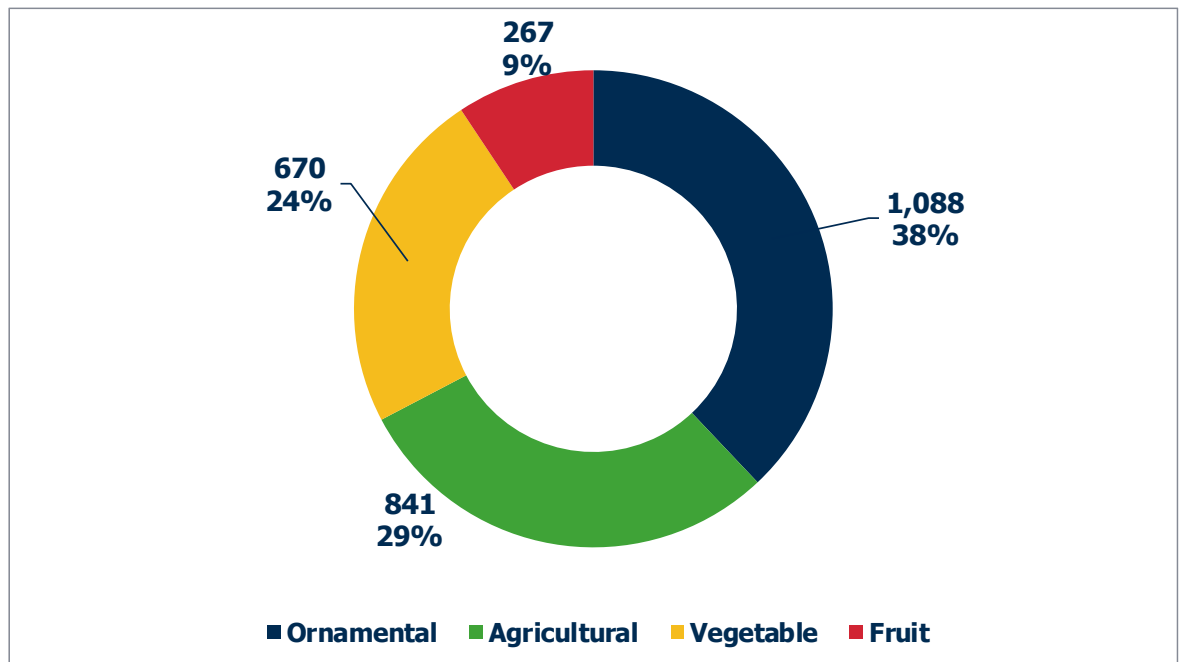


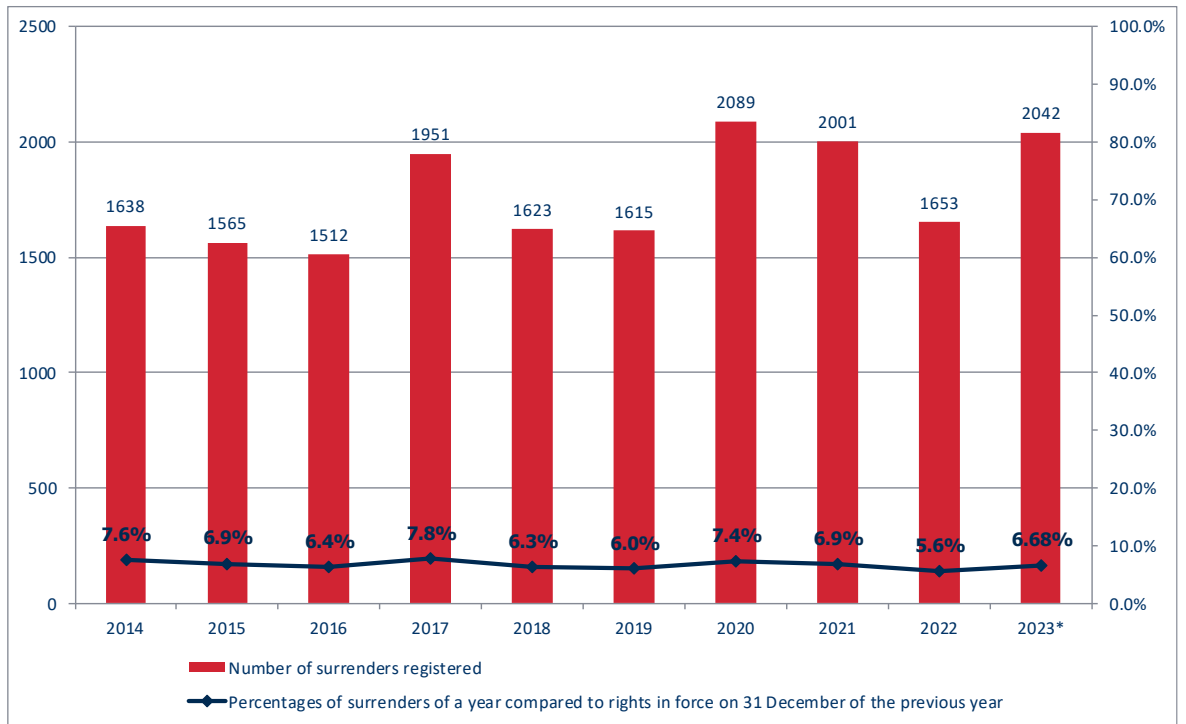
Table 1: Member States from which CPVR applications were filed in 2023

Member State of main applicant	Number of applications received in 2023
Netherlands	1002
France	418
Germany	336
Italy	117
Spain	107
Denmark	97
Belgium	45
Poland	32
Hungary	22
Austria	13
Czechia	7
Greece	6
Sweden	4
Finland	4
Slovenia	3
Portugal	2
Latvia	1
Ireland	1
Bulgaria	1
Total	2218

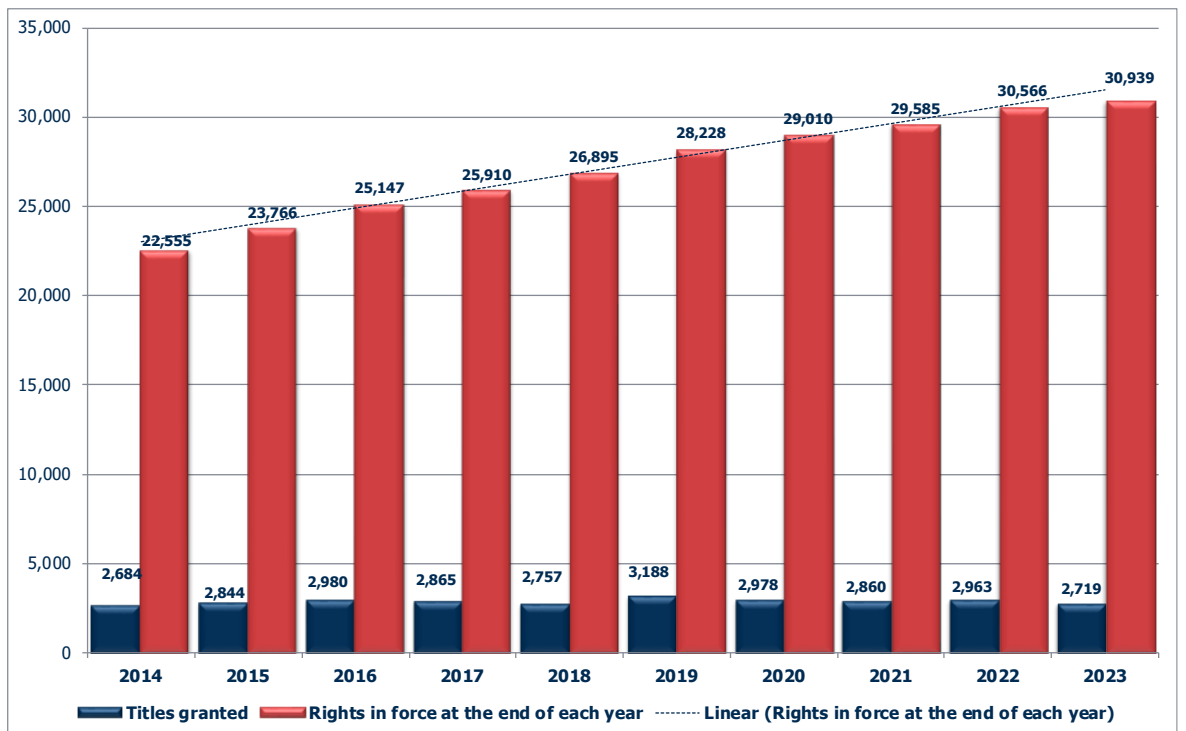
Table 2: Non-EU countries from which CPVR applications were filed in 2023

Country of main applicant	Number of applications received in 2023
United States of America	246
Switzerland	193
United Kingdom	42
Australia	39
Japan	36
Israel	26
Canada	12
Colombia	10
China	9
Taiwan	8
South Africa	7
South Korea	5
New Zealand	4
Argentina	4
Thailand	2
Mauritius	1
Iran	1
Costa Rica	1
Chile	1
Brazil	1
Total	648

Graph 3: Number of surrenders of CPVRs (2014-2023)



Graph 4: Number of rights granted each year from 2014 to 2023 and those remaining in force on 31 December 2023 from those granted per year

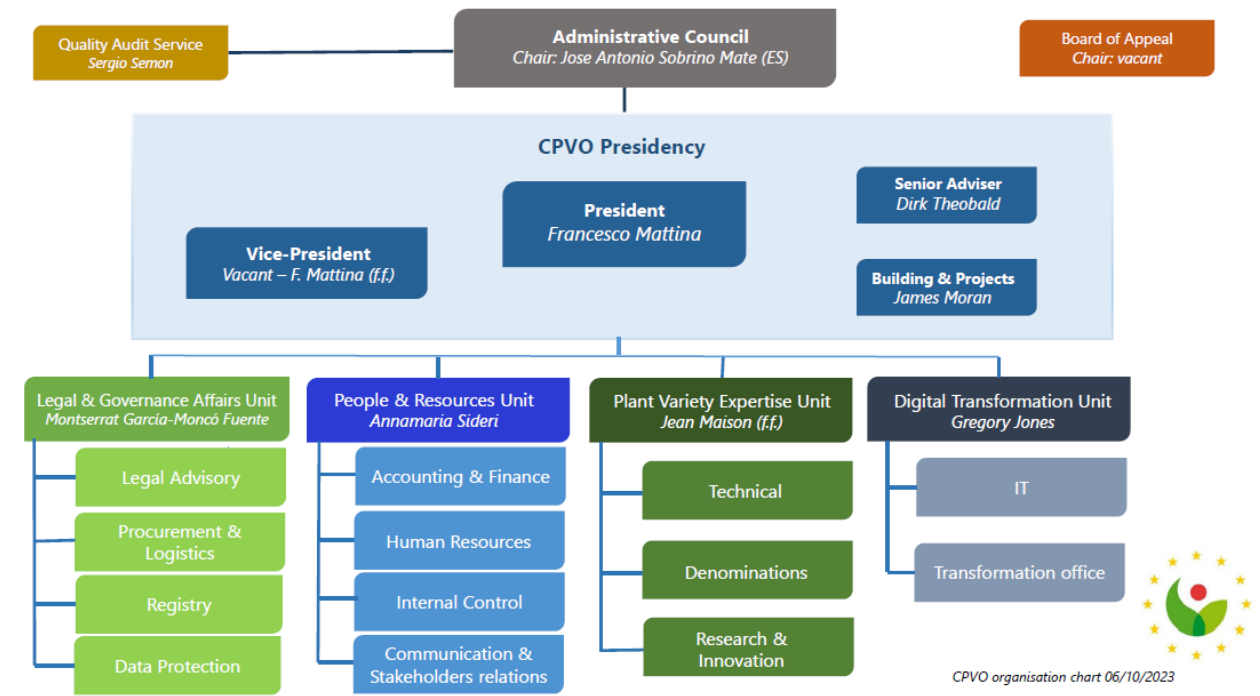


At the end of 2023, of the 65 103 rights granted in total, 30 939 (48 %) were still in force.

Annex II. Statistics on financial management

All information is provided above.

Annex III. Organisational chart



1.

Annex IV. Establishment plan and additional information on Human Resources management

- Information on the entry level recruitment grade/function group for each type of post

Indicative table - Information on recruitment grade/function group for each type of post

Key functions (examples – terminology should be adjusted to each agency's job titles)	Type of contract (official, TA or CA)	Function group, grade of recruitment*	Indication whether the function is dedicated to administrative support or operations [subject to definitions used in screening methodology]
President	TA	AD 14 (external)	Operations
Vice President	TA	AD 12 (external)	Operations
Adviser	Official	AD 14 (internal)	Operations
Head of Unit	TA / Official	AD 9 (most recent recruitment was external)	Head of Administrative Unit support, others operational
Administrator (Technical Experts / Legal Officers / IT Experts / Quality Audit / Team Leader)	TA / Official	AD 6 (external)	Operations
Accountant	TA	AST 10 (internal)	Support
Senior Assistant	TA	AST 10 (internal)	Operation
Administrative Assistants	TA	AST 1 (no recent recruitments)	Mixed

- For TA, please specify if the recruitment was internal, inter-agency or external as well as the specific grade of recruitment (No brackets)

•Table Job screening/benchmarking against previous year results⁹

Screening category	Screening sub-category	31/12/2021		31/12/2022		31/12/2023	
		%	Staff	%	Staff	%	Staff
Operational	Evaluation & impact assessment	2.0%	1	1.9%	1	2.0%	1
	General Operational	8.2%	4	9.6%	5	10.0%	5
	Programme management and implementation	65.3%	32	57.7%	30	60.0%	30
	Top level operational coordination	-	-	1.9%	1	2.0%	1
	Total	75.5%	37	71.2%	37	74.0%	37
Neutral	Neutral - finance and procurement	6.1%	3	7.7%	4	8.0%	4
	Total	6.1%	3	7.7%	4	8.0%	4
Administrative support and coordination	Administrative support	16.3%	8	19.2%	10	16.0%	8
	Coordination	2.0%	1	1.9%	1	2.0%	1
	Total	18.4%	9	21.2%	11	18.0%	9
	Grand Total	100.0%	49	100.0%	52	100.0%	50

• Information on the list of HR implementing rules adopted 2023

NA

Gender representation

Table 1 - Data on 31/12/2023 /statutory staff (only officials, AT and AC)

		Official		Temporary		Contract Agents		Grand Total	
		Staff	%	Staff	%	Staff	%	Staff	%
Female	Administrator level	1	2%	10	20%	1	2%	12	24%
	Assistant level & (AST/SC)	1	2%	15	30%	0	0%	16	32%
	Total	2	4%	25	50%	1	2%	28	56%
Male	Administrator level	3	6%	9	18%	1	2%	13	26%
	Assistant level & (AST/SC)			6	12%	3	6%	9	12%

⁹ Table as per Methodology for Agencies job screening (2014)

	Total	3	6%	15	30%	4	8%	22	44%
Grand Total		5	10%	40	80%	5	10%	50	100%

The CPVO commits to attract and recruit female candidates for managerial positions.

Table 2 - Data regarding gender evolution over 5 years of the Middle and Senior management¹³

	N-5		N-1	
	Number	%	Number	%
Female Managers	0	0	2 ¹⁴	40
Male Managers	4	0	3	60

In case of significant continuous imbalance, please explain and detail action plan implemented in the agency.

Geographical Balance

Explanatory figures to highlight nationalities of staff (split per Administrator/CA FG IV and Assistant /CA FG I, II, III)

Table 1 - Data on 31/12/2023

Nationality	AD + CA FG IV		AST/SC- AST + CA FGI/CA FGII/CA FGIII		TOTAL	
	Number	% of total staff members in AD and FG IV categories	Number	% of total staff members in AST SC/AST and FG I, II and III categories	Number	% of total staff
Belgian		0.0%	2	4.0%	2	4.0%
French	6	12.0%	17	34.0%	23	46.0%
German	1	2.0%	1	2.0%	2	4.0%
Greek	1	2.0%	1	2.0%	2	4.0%
Irish	1	2.0%	1	2.0%	2	4.0%
Italian	8	16.0%	1	2.0%	9	18.0%
Polish	1	2.0%		0.0%	1	2.0%
Portuguese	1	2.0%	1	2.0%	2	4.0%
Romanian		0.0%	1	2.0%	1	2.0%
Slovak	1	2.0%		0.0%	1	2.0%
Spanish	4	8.0%		0.0%	4	8.0%
Swedish		0.0%	1	2.0%	1	2.0%
Total	24	48.0%	26	52.0%	50	100.0%

- statutory staff only (officials, AT and AC)

Table 2 - Evolution over 5 years of the most represented nationality in the Agency

Most represented nationality	2019		2023	
	Number	%	Number	%
French	26	52	23	46

Annex V. Human and financial resources by activity

Actual consumption of the human and financial resources by the end of year split between activities.

Activity	HR (fte)	% of total	Operational budget	Staff and overhead	Total	% of total
Managing the system: Processing applications	17.1	34.2%	8,381,395	5,099,943	13,481,338	54.9%
QAS	1	2.0%	30,000	298,242	328,242	1.3%
Development of the system	3.5	7.0%	-	1,043,848	1,043,848	4.3%
R&D Projects	1.5	3.0%	2,495	447,363	449,858	1.8%
Information Technology	9.4	18.8%	1,150,428	2,803,477	3,953,905	16.1%
External Relations	3.5	7.0%	-	1,043,848	1,043,848	4.3%
Enforcement and interface PVR/Patents	1	2.0%	-	298,242	298,242	1.2%
Total Core Activities	37	74.0%	9,564,318	11,034,964	20,599,282	83.9%
Budget	0.3	0.6%	-	89,473	89,473	0.4%
Accounts	3.7	7.4%	-	1,103,496	1,103,496	4.5%
Total Neutral Activities	4	8.0%	-	1,192,969	1,192,969	4.9%
HR	2	4.0%	-	596,485	596,485	2.4%
General Services	6	12.0%	-	1,789,454	1,789,454	7.3%
Internal Control, Audit, other	1	2.0%	82,578	298,242	380,820	1.6%
Total Horizontal support	9	18.0%	82,578	2,684,181	2,766,759	11.3%
Grand total	50	100.0%	9,646,896	14,912,114	24,559,010	100.0%

Annex VI. Contribution, grant and service level agreements, Financial Framework Partnership Agreements

Actual state of play of implementation

	General information ¹⁰					Financial and HR impacts				
	Actual or expected date of signature	Total amount	Duration	Counterpart	Short description		N	N+1	N+2	N+3
Grant agreements										
1. 7515057 Tomato	16/07/2019	295 000	2.5 years extended to 31/08/2023	Naktuinbouw	International validation of a SNP set to determine genetic distances for the management of tomato reference collection	Amount				
						Number of CA	N/A			
						Number of SNEs	N/A			
2. 7515996 Harmorescoll	23/12/2019	262 000	01/06/2023 extended to 01/04/2024	GEVES	Setting up an EU system for harmonized collections of reference isolates, controls and differentials to facilitate disease	Amount				
						Number of CA	N/A			
						Number of SNEs	N/A			

¹⁰ For on-going agreements, please provide the requested general information. For expected agreements, please provide the information available. When the information is not known, please put "not known"

					resistance testing					
3. 7517891 Durum wheat DURDUS tools	14/12/2020	126 513	01.03.2023	AGES	Integration of molecular data into DUS testing in durum wheat: development of a common online molecular database and a genetic distance calculation tool	Amount				
						Number of CA	N/A			
						Number of SNEs	N/A			
4. 7519702 Updating DUS resistance tests	20/01/2022	206 646	31/04/2025	GEVES	"Updating DUS resistance tests according to pests' evolution: - Setting up resistance tests to ToBRFV for tomato and pepper - Improvement of resistance test melon/Aphis gossypii"	Amount Number of CA Number of SNEs				
5. 7519780 Molecular data for	04/04/2022	141 277	31/01/2024	GEVES	"Harnessing molecular data to support DUS testing in	Amount Number of CA Number of SNEs				

Hydrangea DUS					ornamentals: a case-study on Hydrangea”					
Expected grant agreements	Not known	(max EUR 500.000/year)				Amount				
Total grant agreements: 5						Amount				
						Number of CA	N/A			
						Number of SNEs	N/A			
Service-level agreements										
1. SLA-PMO	13/10/2023		1-year renewable		European Commission-HR	Amount				
						Number of CA	N/A			
						Number of SNEs	N/A			
2. DIGIT 009 Global Services Level Agreement	20/03/2019		1-year renewable		European Commission - DIGIT	Amount				
						Number of CA	N/A			
						Number of SNEs	N/A			
3. Recruitment	31/05/2007		1-year renewable		EPSO	Amount				
						Number of CA	N/A			
						Number of SNEs	N/A			
4. HR management	01/03/2020		1-year renewable		PMO	Amount				
						Number of CA	N/A			
						Number of SNEs	N/A			
5. Permanent Secretariat	01/01/2019		1-year renewable		EFSA	Amount				
						Number of CA	N/A			
						Number of SNEs	N/A			
6. CDT	2012		1 year renewable		CDT	Number of CA/ Number of SNEs	N/A			
7. Internal audits, renewed with Global SLA	First signed on 2/02/2015. Renewed on 27/07/2021		Last renewal for indefinite period		EUIPO	Number of CA/ Number of SNEs	N/A			

8. Board of Appeal activities	17/05/2021		For indefinite period		EUIPO	Number of CA/ Number of SNEs	N/A			
9. Administrative arrangement	21/07/2021		For indefinite period		EPO	Number of CA/ Number of SNEs	N/A			
10. CERT-EU-047 Security Support	06/09/2017		1 year renewable		European Commission - DIGIT					
Total service-level agreements: 10						Amount				
						Number of CA				
						Number of SNEs				
TOTAL						Amount				
						Number of CA	N/A			
						Number of SNEs	N/A			

Annex VII. Environment management

The table below provides concrete actions that has been taken by the CPVO in order to meet the environmental policy

Environmental issue	Source of impact	Action plan	Performance indicator per year	Baselines 2022	Results 2023
1.Electricity consumption	1. Central computing and data storage by servers.	Gradual move of IT infrastructure to the cloud. Less purchases of hardware servers.	Less hardware purchases.	0 servers bought	0 servers bought
	2. Cooling in server room	Lower of cooling needs in server rooms to save energy.	Energy consumption decrease.	Decrease number of server rooms from 3 to 2.	Decrease number of server rooms from 3 to 2.
2.Paper consumption	3. Printing documents and emails	Raising awareness to move towards paperless office, e.g. further digitalisation of administrative workflow, including applications. All personal printers to be removed and the number of shared printers to be reduced.	Number of new digitalised procedures % on-line applications No personal printers and reduced number of shared printers 10% reduction of printed copies in absolute and per FTE figures	FlowForma procedures adopted. 99,8% on-line applications. 107 311 printed copies in total/2 236 copies per FTE	FlowForma procedures adopted. Nearly 100% on-line applications (only 2 paper applications out of 2866). No personal printers and maintenance of 6 shared printers. 96 704 printed copies in total/1 934 copies per FTE (-9,9%)

			building was closed during the year.	One building closed during three weeks over the Christmas period.	weeks during school holidays.
4.Waste sorting and reduction	6. Waste sorting and reduction	Provide proper information and training to staff and cleaning staff. Follow-up on the handling by the garbage company.	% of trainings/initiatives to staff to reduce waste consumption and increase recycling.	Recycling information published on the intranet and on the waste bins.	European Week for Waste Reduction organised in November 2023, together with the implementation of new policy on the removal from use of all paper cups.
5.Greenhouse gas emissions	7. Business travel of staff	<p>Making virtual meetings the default and physical missions the exception where possible. Missions are all validated by the President and not any longer HoUs.</p> <p>Adopt new Mission Guide</p> <p>Encourage travel by train instead of plane when the distance is less than 1000 km.</p>	<p>Reporting on number of virtual and physical missions.</p> <p>Report on the results.</p> <p>Adoption of the new Mission Guide.</p> <p>Report on number of missions by train/plane.</p>	<p>158 physical missions</p> <p>Reduction of the mission budget.</p>	<p>149 physical missions.</p> <p>Maintained at 200 000€.</p> <p>Not adopted since no new Mission Guide adopted by the Commission.</p> <p>62 by plane, 71 by train</p>

	8. External participants coming to CPVO-organised meetings by plane	Using videoconferencing when applicable.	Reporting on number of virtual and physical meetings.		
6. Various negative environmental impacts of the CPVO	9. All procurement	Calls for tender or relevant services must include environmental criteria according to the type of goods purchased. All purchases are carried out against best available environmental criteria.	All procurement aligned to EU directives.	Joint call for tender for green electricity.	All calls for tender include environmental requirements.
7. Various positive environmental impacts of CPVO awareness raising	10. Green communication/awareness-raising activities	Develop and implement an integrated approach to awareness raising.	Reporting on the results	Creation of a CPVO greening network with enhanced communication.	Greening corner in Teams with regular communication on awareness raising (water use campaign, switch off the lights campaign)
8. Environmental economic and social impacts	11. All CPVO activities	Using synergies between CPVO and staff health and well-being aspects. Encourage the use of car sharing, public transport and bicycles, whenever feasible. In case a couple works at the Office, only one car park is allowed.	Reporting on the results. Make available only one parking space for couples working in the Office.		Initial contacts made with EBA on their experiences with EMAS certification New hot-parking policy adopted.
9. Internal environment	12. Environment in buildings/health and safety aspects	Involve the CPVO and staff well-being coordinator in office space optimisation projects.	Reporting on the results	Real Estate Committee including staff committee representative.	Greening and staff committee representatives included in the

					Real Estate Committee.
	13. Review the possibility of rationalising office spaces	Look into possibilities to move to a new, environmental friendly building	Reporting on the researches	Launch of call for tender with two building projects to be presented to the AC in March 2023.	One building project identified and presented to the AC in October 2023. Agreement made to purchase it in 2024.

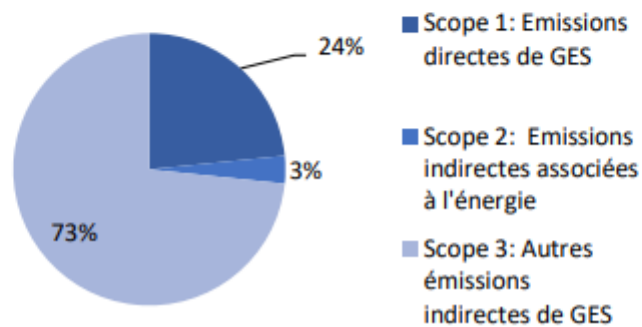
In 2023 the CPVO realised its second carbon footprint calculation for the year 2022, using the form elaborated by Global Climate Initiatives. The global result was (available in French only):

Selon les informations reçues, l'empreinte carbone totale du présent bilan GES de OFFICE COMMUNAUTAIRE DES VARIÉTÉS VÉGÉTALES pour son activité Agence européenne est :

241 tCO₂e

Cette section du rapport permet d'obtenir une vision d'ensemble concernant les résultats du Bilan GES au sein de chacun des trois Scopes précédemment définis.

Scopes	Résultats
Scope 1: Emissions directes de GES	56,45 tCO ₂ e
Scope 2: Emissions indirectes associées à l'énergie	7,90 tCO ₂ e
Scope 3: Autres émissions indirectes de GES	176,88 tCO ₂ e



The full report is available on the CPVO website: <https://cpvo.europa.eu/en/about-us/what-we-do/reports>

Annex VIII. (draft/final) Annual Accounts

Document provided separately