

## Global Patent Filings Rise in 2014 for Fifth Straight Year; China Driving Growth

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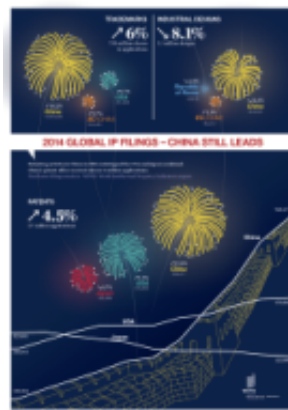
Innovators filed some 2.7 million patent applications to mark another worldwide annual rise in 2014, as application activity in China outstripped the combined total in its next-closest followers, the United States and Japan.

**Video: Press conference**  ([watch on YouTube](#))

Trademark and plant variety filings also showed strong growth last year, while industrial design applications declined for the first time in two decades, according to the **2015 edition of the World Intellectual Property Indicators** - WIPO's annual report on the latest trends in intellectual property (IP) activity worldwide.

“Demand for IP rights continued to grow around the globe in 2014,” said WIPO Director General Francis Gurry. “This underscores the central role that new technology and brand recognition play in determining success in today’s marketplace. It also highlights the important task that falls to IP offices in maintaining quality when examining IP applications.”

### 2014 IP Filings



At a glance: Patent, trademark and industrial design filings in 2014

### Highlights

Video: Report highlights - [Watch on YouTube](#)

	2013	2014	Growth (%)
Patent applications	2,564,800	2,680,900	4.5

<b>Trademark application class counts</b>	7,028,400	7,449,400	6.0
<b>Industrial design application design counts</b>	1,238,200	1,138,400	-8.1

## Patents

In total, innovators filed some 2.7 million patent applications worldwide in 2014, up 4.5% from 2013. For each year since 2003, with the exception of 2009, patent applications have grown. Filings in China were the main driver of growth in 2014. The global total consists of 1.8 million resident filings and 0.9 million non-resident filings.

Video: Key patenting trends in 2014 - [Watch on YouTube](#) .

Patent offices receiving the highest number of applications in 2014 were China, with 928,177 filings, followed by the US (578,802), Japan (325,989), the Republic of Korea (210,292) and the European Patent Office (EPO, 152,662). If the current trend continues, China's State Intellectual Property Office (SIPO) is set to become the first office to receive a million applications in a single year. China (+12.5%), the EPO (+3.2%), the Republic of Korea (+2.8%) and the US (+1.3%) saw growth in 2014. Japan recorded a 0.7% decline.

Along with China, Brazil and India - two large middle-income countries – rank among the top ten offices.

Among the top 20 offices, the Islamic Republic of Iran (+18.5%) and China (+12.5%) saw the fastest growth in filings, followed by Indonesia (+7.7%), and Thailand (+7.1%). Among other the large middle-income countries Viet Nam (+11.3%), Turkey (+9.4%) and the Philippines (+9.3%) recorded strong growth in filings.

US applicants filed the most applications abroad (224,400), followed by those from Japan (200,000) and Germany (105,600). By contrast, Chinese applicants filed comparatively few applications abroad - only around 36,700.

Computer technology (7.8% of total) saw most applications worldwide, followed by electrical machinery (7.4%), measurement (4.8%) and digital communication (4.6%). Digital communication and computer technology have been the two fastest growing technological fields over the past 20 years.

An estimated 1.18 million patents were granted worldwide in 2014. After strong growth for the previous five years, 2014 saw relatively modest growth of 0.3%. This is mainly due to fewer grants issued by the Japan Patent Office (JPO), which granted 50,000 less patents in 2014 than in 2013.

An estimated 10.2 million patents were in force worldwide in 2014, with the bulk of them in the US (24.7% of world total), Japan (18.8%) and China (11.7%).



WIPO Director General Francis Gurry presents the World Intellectual Property Indicators 2015 at a press conference at the United Nations Office in Geneva (photo: WIPO).

## Trademarks

Trademark applications have almost doubled since 2000. The total number of classes specified in applications reached 7.45 million in 2014, up 6% on 2013.<sup>1</sup> China drove this growth in filings. Residents filing for protection within their domestic jurisdiction accounted for three-quarters of global filing activity.

China – with a class count of 2.22 million – saw, by far, the highest trademark filing activity, followed by the US (471,228), the EU’s Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market (OHIM) (333,443), France (269,837) and Japan (242,073). China (+18.2%) and Japan (+16.9%) saw double-digit growth in 2014. The U.S. (+6.7%) and OHIM (+2.7%) also saw filing increases, while France recorded a 10% decline. Among the top 20 offices, India (+15.4%) and Mexico (+10.8%) also reported strong growth.

Trademarks were sought most often in advertising and business management sector. In 2014, this category accounted for 9.8% of total filing activity. It was followed by the clothing industry and by scientific, photographic, measuring instruments, recording equipment, computers and software.

The total number of trademark registrations issued worldwide in 2014 increased markedly by 16.3% to reach 3.49 million. China accounted for most of this growth.

Along with China (+36%), Argentina (+19%), Brazil (+132%) and Turkey (+12%) saw large increases in registration activity in 2014.

## Industrial Designs

For the first time in more than 20 years, the total number of designs contained in all industrial design applications filed worldwide in 2014 dropped by 8.1% to about 1.14 million in 2014.<sup>2</sup> The fall was mainly due to a sharp decrease in filings by Chinese residents.

China received applications containing 564,555 designs in 2014, followed by the EU’s OHIM (98,273), the Republic of Korea (68,441), Germany (61,054) and Turkey (48,799). China (-14.4%), Turkey (-4.5%) and the Republic of Korea (-2.3%) saw lower filing activity in 2014 than in the previous year, while

Germany (+6.6%) and OHIM (+1.3%) saw increased filing activity.

## Plant Varieties

Plant variety applications reached a new record in 2014 with around 15,600 filings worldwide. The 3.3% increase in 2014 marks the fourth consecutive year of growth.

The EU's Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO) – with 3,625 filings – received the largest number of filings, followed by China (2,026), which overtook the US (1,567) and Ukraine (1,447).

Among the top five offices, China (+34%) and the CPVO (+10%) recorded growth in 2014, while the other three offices saw declines, with the US (-17%) recording the sharpest.

1. Class counts are the total number of classes specified in trademark applications. Some IP offices have a single-class filing system, which requires applicants to file a separate application for each class in which the goods or services to which the mark is applied are classified. Other offices follow a multi-class filing system, which enables applicants to file a single application in which goods or services belonging to a number of classes can be specified. †
2. Design counts are the total number of designs contained in industrial design applications. Some IP offices allow applications to contain more than one design, while other IP offices allow only one design per application. †

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## About the World Intellectual Property Indicators report

WIPO's World Intellectual Property Indicators 2015 provides a wide range of indicators covering the following areas of intellectual property: patents, utility models, trademarks, industrial designs, microorganisms and plant variety protection. It draws on data from more than 100 national and regional IP offices. For additional data visit: [wipo.int/ipstats/wipi](http://wipo.int/ipstats/wipi).

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## About WIPO

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) is the global forum for intellectual property policy, services, information and cooperation. A specialized agency of the United Nations, WIPO assists its 188 member states in developing a balanced international IP legal framework to meet society's evolving needs. It provides business services for obtaining IP rights in multiple countries and resolving disputes. It delivers capacity-building programs to help developing countries benefit from using IP. And it provides free access to unique knowledge banks of IP information.

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