

Hague Yearly Review 2017 – Executive Summary

International Registrations of Industrial Designs

2017

This executive brief identifies key trends in the use of the WIPO-administered Hague System for the International Registration of Industrial Designs. For fuller statistics, see the Hague Yearly Review 2017 – available in English at: www.wipo.int/ipstats

2016 Key numbers

Description	Applications/registrations		Designs contained in applications/registrations	
	Number	Change 2015-16	Number	Change 2015-16
International applications	5,562	+35.3%	18,716	+13.9%
International registrations	5,233	+46.1%	17,601	+21.5%
Designations in international applications	21,280	+13.7%	75,252	+1.4%
Designations in international registrations	19,509	+15.3%	68,985	+4.1%
Renewals of international registrations	3,150	-1.4%	13,249	-0.9%
International registrations in force	32,187	+9.7%	131,953	+7.3%

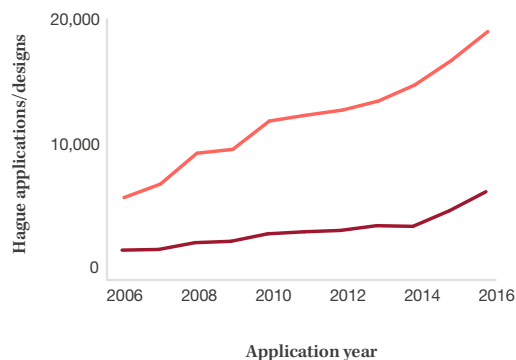
Hague international applications grew by 35.3% in 2016

International industrial design applications filed via the Hague System for the International Registration of Industrial Designs of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) grew by 35.3% in 2016. This high growth was due to the recent expansion of the Hague System to include Japan, the Republic of Korea and the United States of America (U.S.), and to the large numbers of applications filed by applicants from these new Hague members. The 5,562 applications filed in 2016 contained 18,716 designs (figure 1). The number of designs contained in applications increased by 13.9%, representing the tenth consecutive year of growth.

The Hague System allows applicants to register up to 100 different designs through a single international application. Focusing on both the number of applications and the number of designs contained in international applications provides a comprehensive depiction of the use of the Hague System. This Highlights section refers mainly to the number of designs contained in applications, while the standard figures and tables show the numbers of Hague applications together with the numbers of designs contained in those applications.

Figure 1

Trend in international applications and designs contained in international applications



■ APPLICATIONS ■ DESIGNS

Source: WIPO Statistics Database, May 2017.

The Hague System continues to increase its geographical scope

With the accession of Turkmenistan in 2016, the total number of Hague members increased to 65. In 2016, 2,175 applicants from at least 65 countries or territories filed at least one Hague international application. These 65 Hague members offer applicants the possibility to obtain protection for their designs in an area covering a total of 83 countries. The difference between the number of Hague members and the number of countries covered by the System is due to the fact that the African Intellectual Property Organization (OAPI) and the European Union (EU) are Hague members. By designating these intergovernmental organizations, an applicant can seek protection simultaneously within all their respective member states.

Who were the largest users of the Hague System in 2016?

Germany was the largest user of the Hague System in 2016 with 3,917 designs, followed by Switzerland (2,555), the Republic of Korea (1,882), the U.S. (1,410) and the Netherlands (1,317). Three recent members – Japan, the Republic of Korea and the U.S. – are among the top users of the System (figure 2). Combined, the top 10 origins accounted for 82% of all designs in 2016.

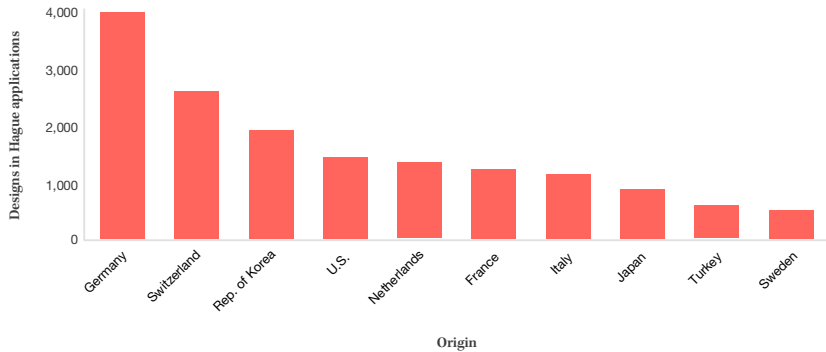
Applicants from Hague member countries located on the European continent accounted for 71.9% of all designs, followed by those in Asia (20.3%) and North America (7.6%). Between 2005 and 2016, Asia saw its share increase by 18 percentage points, whereas North America's share increased by 7.5 percentage points (figure 3). This can largely be attributed to the Republic of Korea becoming a Hague member in 2014, and Japan and the U.S. joining in 2015.

Among the top 20 origins, Cyprus (+138.4%), Turkey (+136.5%) and Japan (+109.2%) each recorded high annual growth, albeit from a low base (standard figure A9). In addition, the strong growth in Cyprus was driven by a single applicant – Kronoplus Limited, which sought protection for 169 designs in 2016. The Netherlands (+72.2%), Sweden (+72%) and Denmark (+50.9%) also saw large increases. Nine of the top 20 origins saw declines, the sharpest being for Austria (-25.4%), Switzerland (-22.9%) and Luxembourg (-29.1%).

The top origins include 19 high-income countries, 15 of which are located in Europe. Turkey is the only upper middle-income country listed among the top 20.

Figure 2

Designs contained in international applications for the top 10 origins, 2016



Source: WIPO Statistics Database, May 2017.

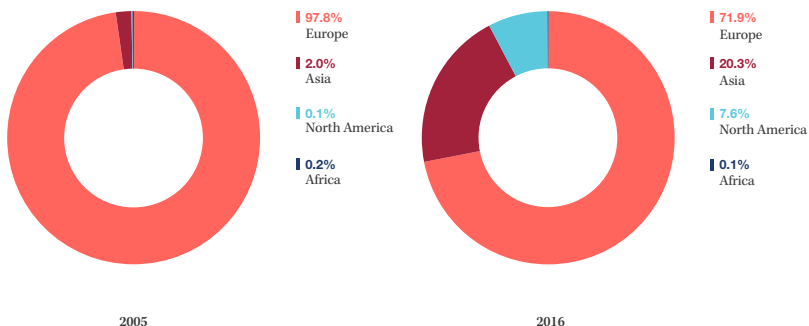
Distribution of designs per application among the largest users of the Hague System

The Hague System allows applicants to register up to 100 different designs through a single international application. On average, there were 3.4 designs per application filed in 2016 – considerably fewer than the 4.9 designs per application filed in 2014. This can be explained in part by the applications from recent Hague members Japan and the Republic of Korea, which contained fewer designs per application compared to long-established members Germany and Switzerland.

The distribution of designs per application varies widely across origins. Among the top eight origins, the Republic of Korea (89.7%) had the highest share of single-design applications, whereas Germany (28.1%) recorded the lowest share (standard figure A11). Applications containing up to two designs accounted for 94.1% of all applications from the Republic of Korea, while for Germany the share was just 48.7%. Only one application – filed by Fonkel Meubelmarketing of the Netherlands – contained 100 designs.

Figure 3

Designs contained in international applications by region



Source: WIPO Statistics Database, May 2017.

Which companies filed the most designs in 2016?

Fonkel Meubelmarketing (953 designs) overtook Samsung Electronics of the Republic of Korea (862) as the largest user of the Hague System (figure 4). The Republic of Korea's LG Electronics came third with 728 designs, followed by Swatch of Switzerland (383) and Procter & Gamble of the U.S. (348). The top 10 applicants represent a diverse set of industries, including automobiles, construction materials, electronics, furnishing, household goods, software and computer services, and watches and jewelry. The top 50 list for 2016 contains applicants from 17 origins. Germany had the highest number of top applicants from any single country with 12, followed by Switzerland (8) and the Republic of Korea (4).

The share of the number of designs held by the top five applicants from each of the top five origins ranged from 25.2% in Germany to 94.2% in the Republic of Korea (figure 5). The top German applicant, Volkswagen AG, accounted for 8.6% of all designs from Germany, while Samsung Electronics accounted for 45.8% of all designs from the Republic of Korea. For the Netherlands, Fonkel Meubelmarketing accounted for close to three-fifths of all designs – the largest share for a single applicant among the top five origins.

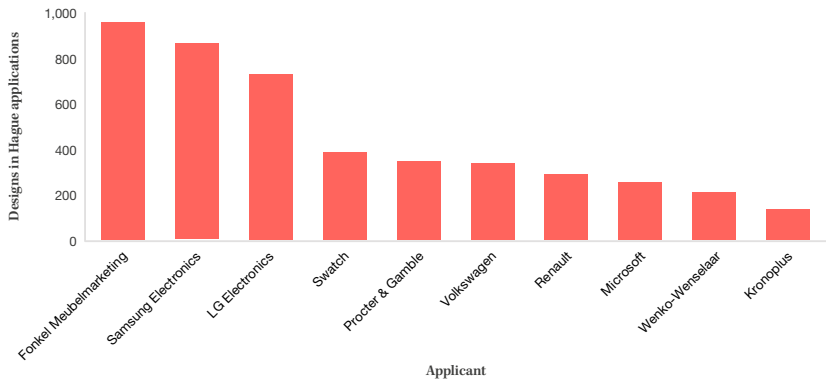
Where do Hague applicants seek to protect their designs?

The Hague System simplifies the process of multinational registration by creating a single international procedure for protecting a design in multiple jurisdictions. Applicants list the Hague members in whose jurisdictions they wish to protect their designs (known as “designated members”). In 2016, the number of designations in all international applications grew by 13.7%, whereas the number of designs in all designations increased by a modest 1.4%. Specifically, 75,252 designs were contained in all designations made in 2016.

The EU was the most designated Hague member in international applications in 2016, with 4,088 designations containing 14,952 designs (figure 6). It has been the most designated member since 2010. It was followed by Switzerland (8,811 designations), Turkey (6,137), the U.S. (4,722) and Norway (3,324). Among the top five designated members, the EU (+12%) and the U.S. (+92%) saw strong growth in the number of designs in designations, while Norway (-5.3%), Switzerland (-7.5%) and Turkey (-1.1%) saw declines.

Figure 4

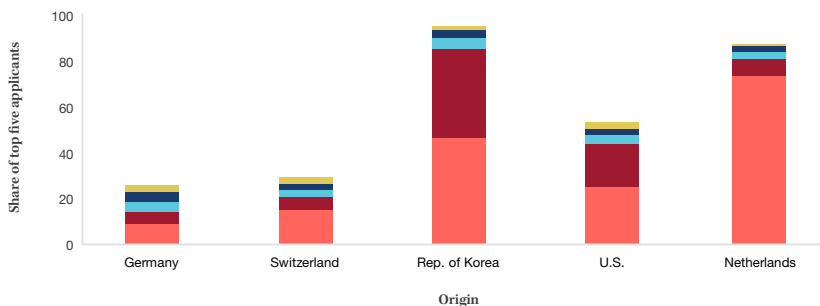
Top applicants based on the number of designs, 2016



Source: WIPO Statistics Database, May 2017.

Figure 5

Share of top applicants for the top five origins (based on number of designs), 2016



Source: WIPO Statistics Database, May 2017.

Nine middle-income countries appear among the top 20 most designated Hague members, including Turkey (6,137), Ukraine (3,005), Morocco (1,879) and Tunisia (1,481).

Designs contained in designations from Switzerland accounted for the largest shares of all designations received by 8 of the top 15 designated Hague members, with shares ranging from 16.8% in the Republic of Korea to 43.2% in Albania.

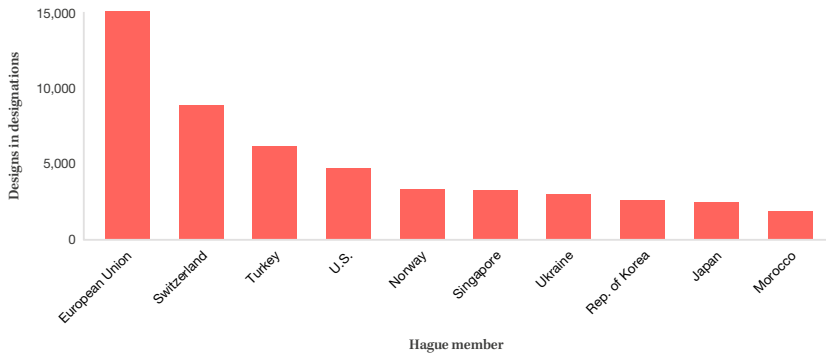
Which classes are most frequently specified in international applications?

Designs related to furnishing (Class 6; 12.6%) accounted for the largest share of total designs in 2016, followed by recording and communication equipment (Class 14; 11.3%), means of transport (Class 12; 8.2%) and clocks and watches (Class 10; 7.1%). The top 10 most specified classes accounted for 71.3% of all designs, a slight increase on their combined share in 2015 (68.6%).

While designs related to furnishing (Class 6) were the most frequently specified class in international applications overall, class shares differ across origins (standard table A26). For example, Class 12 was the most frequently specified class in applications from France (20.7% of all designs), Germany (17.1%) and Sweden (30.1%); for Japan (15.1%), the Republic of Korea (49.6%) and the U.S. (32.5%) it was Class 14; and for Switzerland, Class 10 accounted for the largest share (33.5%).

Figure 6

Number of designs contained in international applications for the top 10 designated Hague members, 2016



Source: WIPO Statistics Database, May 2017.

International registrations of industrial designs grew by 46% in 2016

The International Bureau (IB) recorded 5,233 international registrations containing 17,601 designs in 2016. Registrations grew by 46.1%, while the number of designs in registrations rose by 21.5% (figure 7). Most of the growth can be attributed to a significant increase in registrations of applications from the Netherlands, the Republic of Korea and the U.S. For example, the number of international registrations for the Republic of Korea grew by 158%, while the number of designs contained in those registrations grew by 75%. Holders residing in Germany accounted for 20.2% of all design registrations, followed by holders in Switzerland (13.8%), the Republic of Korea (10.8%), the Netherlands (7.6%) and the U.S. (7.5%).

Figure 7

Trend in international registrations and designs contained in those registrations



■ REGISTRATIONS ■ DESIGNS

Source: WIPO Statistics Database, May 2017.

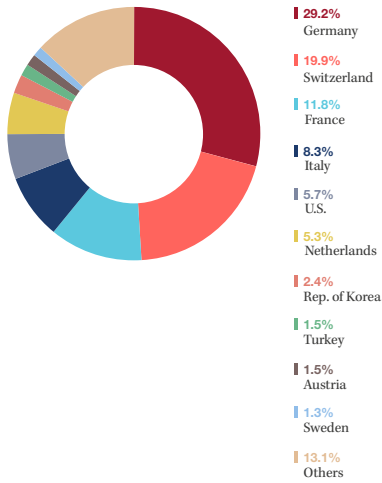
*Registrations in force have now
grown for seven years running*

The number of registrations in force (active registrations) increased by 9.7% in 2016, marking the seventh consecutive year of growth. The 32,187 registrations in force contained 131,953 designs. Both registrations in force and designs contained in those registrations are concentrated in a small number of countries, with holders residing in Germany (29.2%), Switzerland (19.9%), France (11.8%) and Italy (8.3%) together accounting for more than two-thirds of all active designs (figure 8).

Studying registrations in force by right holder helps to provide insights into the concentration of registrations at the individual and firm level. In 2016, approximately two-thirds of firms or individuals holding an active registration had only one registration in their portfolio (standard figure A45). Another 13.7% of holders owned only two active registrations, and holders with three active registrations accounted for 6.3% of the total. Just 27 portfolios had more than 100 active registrations. The distribution of active registrations has remained more or less unchanged over the past few years.

Figure 8

Share of designs contained in active registrations for the top 10 origins, 2016



Source: WIPO Statistics Database, May 2017.



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