

Data description

Data sources

Intellectual property (IP) data are from the WIPO Statistics Database and are based primarily on WIPO's annual IP statistics survey (see below) and on data compiled by WIPO in processing international applications/registrations through the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) and the Madrid and Hague Systems. Data are available from WIPO's Statistics Data Center at www.wipo.int/ipstats.

Patent family and technology data are extracted from the WIPO Statistics Database and from the April 2015 edition of the European Patent Office's PATSTAT database.

Gross domestic product and population data are from the World Bank's World Development Indicators database. Patent Prosecution Highway data are from the Japan Patent Office's website (consulted in October 2015).

This report uses the World Bank's income classifications. Economies are classified according to 2014 gross national income per capita as calculated using the World Bank Atlas method. The classifications are low-income (USD 1,045 or less), lower middle-income (USD 1,046 to USD 4,125), upper middle-income (USD 4,126 to USD 12,735) and high-income (USD 12,736 or more).¹

This report uses United Nations (UN) definitions of regions and subregions, though the geographical terms used in the report may differ slightly from those defined by the UN.²

WIPO's annual IP statistics survey

WIPO collects data from national and regional IP offices around the world through an annual survey consisting of multiple questionnaires, and enters these data into the WIPO Statistics Database. When possible, data published on IP offices' websites or in annual reports are used to supplement questionnaire responses in cases where IP offices do not provide statistics. Efforts to improve the quality and availability of IP statistics and to gather data for as many IP offices and countries as possible are ongoing. The questionnaires are available in English, French and Spanish at www.wipo.int/ipstats/en/data_collection/questionnaire.

Data are broken down by IP office, origin, resident and non-resident applications, applications abroad, class count, design count and other factors. See the glossary for the definitions of key concepts used in this publication.

Offices are requested to report data by the origin (country or territory) of applications, grants or registrations. However, some offices are unable to provide a detailed breakdown. Instead, these offices report either an aggregate total or a simple breakdown by total resident and total non-resident. For this reason, the totals for each origin are underreported. However, the unknown origin shares of the 2014 totals are low, only 0.6% for patent applications, 0.5% for industrial design application design counts and 1% for trademark application class counts.

1. For further details on World Bank income classifications, see <http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-and-lending-groups>.
2. For further details on UN regional classifications, see <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/m49/m49regin.htm>.

Estimating world totals

World totals for applications for, and grants/registrations of, patents, utility models, trademarks, industrial designs and plant varieties are WIPO estimates. Data are not available for all IP offices for every year. Missing data are estimated using methods such as linear extrapolation and averaging adjacent data points. The estimation method used depends on the year and office in question. When an office provides data that are not broken down by origin, WIPO estimates the resident and non-resident counts using the historical shares of that office. Data are available for most of the larger offices. Only small shares of world totals are estimated. For example, the estimate of the total number of patent applications worldwide covers 147 offices. Data are available for 121 of them which account for 99.5% of the estimated world total. Table 1 shows the availability and coverage of data on applications for different types of IP.

Table 1: IP applications data coverage by IP type

IP type	Number of offices on which 2014 world totals are based	Number of offices for which data are available	Data coverage (%)
Patents	147	121	99.5
Utility models	70	62	99.9
Trademarks (a)	163	131	96.0
Industrial designs (b)	132	100	99.1
Plant varieties	67	63	99.7

a. refers to the number of trademark applications based on class count (that is, the number of classes specified in applications).

b. refers to the number of industrial design applications based on design count (that is, the number of designs contained in applications).

National and international data

Application and grant/registration data include both grants/registrations for direct filings and filings through international systems (where applicable). For patents and utility models, data include direct filings at national patent offices as well as PCT national phase entries. For trademarks, data include filings at national and regional offices and designations received by relevant offices through the Madrid System. For industrial designs, data include national and regional applications combined with designations received by relevant offices through the Hague System.

International comparability of indicators

Every effort has been made to compile IP statistics based on the same definitions and to facilitate international comparability. Although data are collected from offices using questionnaires from WIPO's harmonized annual IP survey, national laws and regulations for filing IP applications or for issuing IP rights as well as statistical reporting practices may differ across jurisdictions.

Due to the continual updating of data and the revision of historical statistics, data in this report may differ from data in previous editions and from data available on WIPO's website.

IP Systems at a glance

The patent system

A patent is a set of exclusive rights granted by law to applicants for an invention that meets the standards of novelty, non-obviousness and industrial applicability. It is valid for a limited period (generally 20 years), during which time the patent holder can commercially exploit the invention on an exclusive basis. In return, applicants are obliged to disclose their inventions to the public, so that others, skilled in the art, may replicate them. The patent system is designed to encourage innovation by providing innovators with time-limited exclusive legal rights, thus enabling them to appropriate the returns from their innovative activity.

The procedures for acquiring patent rights are governed by the rules and regulations of national and regional patent offices. These offices are responsible for issuing patents, and the rights are limited to the jurisdiction of the issuing authority. To obtain patent rights, applicants must file an application describing the invention with a national or regional office.

Applicants can also file an international application through the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) System, an international treaty administered by WIPO that facilitates the acquisition of patent rights in multiple jurisdictions. The PCT System simplifies the process of multiple national patent filings by delaying the requirement to file a separate application in each jurisdiction in which protection is sought. However, the decision whether to grant a patent remains the prerogative of national or regional patent offices, and patent rights are limited to the jurisdiction of each patent-granting authority.

The PCT application process begins with the international phase, during which an international search and optional preliminary examination and supplementary international search are performed. It concludes with the national phase, during which national (or regional) patent offices decide on the patentability of an invention according to national law. Further information about the PCT System is available at www.wipo.int/pct.

The utility model system

Like a patent, a utility model (UM) confers a set of rights for an invention for a limited period, during which UM holders can commercially exploit their inventions on an exclusive basis. The terms and conditions for granting a UM differ from those for granting a traditional patent. For example, UMs are issued for a shorter duration (7–10 years), and at most offices protection is granted without substantive examination. As with patents, procedures for granting UM rights are governed by the rules and regulations of national intellectual property (IP) offices, and rights are limited to the jurisdiction of the issuing authority.

Approximately 75 countries provide protection for UMs. In this report, the term “utility model” refers to UMs and other types of protection similar to UMs, such as innovation patents in Australia and short-term patents in Ireland.

Microorganisms under the Budapest Treaty

The Budapest Treaty on the International Recognition of the Deposit of Microorganisms for the Purposes of Patent Procedure plays an important role in biotechnological inventions. Disclosing an invention is a generally recognized requirement for receiving a patent. When an invention involves microorganisms, national laws in most countries require that the applicant deposit a sample at a designated International Depository Authority (IDA).

To eliminate the need to deposit a microorganism in every country in which patent protection is sought, the Budapest Treaty provides that depositing a microorganism with any IDA will suffice for the purposes of patent procedures at national patent offices of all contracting states and at regional patent offices that recognize the treaty. An IDA is a scientific institution – typically a “culture collection” – capable of storing microorganisms. Currently, there are 45 IDAs around the world. Further information about the Budapest Treaty is available at www.wipo.int/treaties/en/registration/budapest.

The trademark system

A trademark is a distinctive sign that identifies certain goods or services as those produced or provided by a specific person or enterprise. Trademarks can be registered for both goods and services. In the latter case, the term “service mark” is sometimes used. For simplicity, this report uses “trademark” regardless of whether the registration concerns goods or services. The holder of a registered trademark has the exclusive right to use the mark in relation to the goods or services for which it is registered and can block unauthorized use of the trademark, or a confusingly similar mark, to prevent consumers from being misled. Unlike patents, trademark registrations can be maintained indefinitely provided the trademark holder pays the required renewal fees.

The procedures for registering trademarks are governed by the rules and regulations of national and regional IP offices. Therefore, trademark rights are limited to the jurisdiction of the authority in which a trademark is registered. Trademark applicants can file an application with the relevant national or regional IP office or an international application through the Madrid System. However, when an applicant files internationally via the Madrid System, the decision to issue a trademark registration remains the prerogative of the national or regional IP office concerned, and trademark rights remain limited to the jurisdiction of the authority issuing that registration.

The Madrid System is governed legally by the Madrid Agreement (1891) and the Madrid Protocol (1989) and is administered by WIPO. It simplifies multinational trademark registration by allowing an applicant to apply for a trademark in a large number of countries by filing a single application through a national or regional IP office that is party to the System. This eliminates the requirement to file an individual application in each jurisdiction in which protection is sought. The System also simplifies subsequent management of the trademark, since it is possible to centrally request and record further changes, or to renew the registration through a single procedure. A registration recorded in the International Register yields the same effect as a registration made directly with each designated contracting party (Madrid member) if no refusal is made by the competent authority of that jurisdiction within a specified time limit. Further information about the Madrid System is available at www.wipo.int/madrid.

The industrial design system

Industrial designs are applied to a wide variety of industrial products and handicrafts.³ They refer to the ornamental or aesthetic aspects of a useful article, including compositions of lines or colors or three-dimensional forms that give a special appearance to a product or handicraft. The holder of a registered industrial design has exclusive rights over the design and can prevent unauthorized copying or imitation of the design by others.

The procedures for registering industrial designs are governed by national or regional laws. An industrial design can be protected if it is new or original, and rights are limited to the jurisdiction of the issuing authority. Registrations can be obtained by filing an application with a relevant national or regional IP office or by filing an international application through the Hague System. Once a design is registered, the term of protection is generally five years and may be renewed for additional periods of five years up to, in most cases, 15 years. In some countries, industrial designs are protected through the delivery of a design patent rather than design registration.

The Hague System comprises several international treaties – the London Act, the Hague Act and the Geneva Act.⁴ The Hague System makes it possible for an applicant to register industrial designs in multiple countries by filing a single application with the International Bureau of WIPO. By allowing the filing of up to 100 different designs per application, the System offers considerable opportunities for efficiency gains. Moreover, it simplifies multinational registration by reducing the requirement to file separate applications with each office at which protection is sought. The System also streamlines subsequent management of industrial design registration, since it is possible to record changes or to renew the registration through a single procedure. Further information about the Hague System is available at www.wipo.int/hague/en.

3. The products and handicrafts to which industrial designs are applied range from technical and medical instruments to watches, jewelry and other luxury items, and from housewares, electrical appliances, vehicles and construction materials to textile designs and leisure goods.
4. The London Act has been frozen since January 2010, meaning that no new designation may be recorded under that Act.

Glossary

Plant variety protection

To obtain protection, a plant breeder must file an individual application with each authority entrusted with granting breeders' rights. A breeder's right is granted only when the variety is new, distinct, uniform and stable and has a suitable denomination.

In the United States of America (US), two legal frameworks protect new plant varieties: the Plant Patent Act (PPA) and the Plant Variety Protection Act (PVPA). Under the PPA, whoever invents or discovers and asexually reproduces any distinct and new variety of plant – including cultivated sports, mutants, hybrids and newly found seedlings other than a tuber-propagated plant (in practice, Irish potato and Jerusalem artichoke), or a plant found in an uncultivated state – may obtain a patent for it. Under the PVPA, the US protects all sexually reproduced plant varieties and tuber-propagated plant varieties, excluding fungi and bacteria.

This glossary provides definitions of key technical terms and concepts. Many of the terms are defined generically (for example, "application") but apply to several or all of the various forms of intellectual property (IP) covered in this report.

Applicant

An individual or other legal entity that files an application for a patent, utility model, trademark or industrial design. There may be more than one applicant in an application. For the statistics in this publication, the name of the first-named applicant is used to determine the origin of the application.

Application

The procedure for requesting IP rights at an office which then examines the application and decides whether to grant protection. Also refers to a set of documents submitted to an office by the applicant.

Application abroad

For statistical purposes, an application filed by a resident of a given state or jurisdiction with an IP office of another state or jurisdiction. For example, an application filed by an applicant domiciled in France with the Japan Patent Office (JPO) is considered an application abroad from the perspective of France. This differs from a "non-resident application", which describes an application filed by a resident of a foreign state or jurisdiction from the perspective of the office receiving the application, so the example above would be a non-resident application from the JPO's point of view.

Application date

The date on which the IP office receives an application that meets the minimum requirements. Also referred to as the filing date.

Budapest Treaty

Disclosure of an invention is a requirement for granting a patent. Normally, an invention is disclosed by means of a written description. Where an invention involves a microorganism or the use of a microorganism, disclosure is not always possible in writing but can sometimes only be effected by depositing a sample of the microorganism with a specialized institution. To eliminate the need to deposit a microorganism in each country in which patent protection is sought, the Budapest Treaty provides that the deposit of a microorganism with any "International Depository Authority" (IDA) suffices for the purposes of patent procedure at the national patent offices of all contracting states and at any regional patent office that recognizes the treaty.

Class

May refer to the classes defined in either the Locarno Classification or the Nice Classification. Classes indicate the categories of products and services (where applicable) for which industrial design or trademark protection is requested. See "Locarno Classification" and "Nice Classification".

Class count

The number of classes specified in a trademark application or registration. In the international trademark system and at certain national and regional offices, an applicant can file a trademark application that specifies one or more of the 45 goods and services classes of the Nice Classification. Offices use a single- or multi-class filing system. For example, the offices of Japan, the Republic of Korea and the United States of America (US) as well as many European IP offices have multi-class filing systems. The offices of Brazil, China and Mexico follow a single-class filing system, requiring a separate application for each class in which an applicant seeks trademark protection. To capture the differences in application numbers across offices, it is useful to compare their respective application and registration class counts.

Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO) of the European Union (EU)

An EU agency that manages a system of plant variety rights covering all EU member states.

Design count

The number of designs contained in an industrial design application or registration. Under the Hague System for the International Registration of Industrial Designs, it is possible for an applicant to obtain protection for up to 100 industrial designs for products belonging to one and the same class by filing a single application. Some national or regional IP offices allow applications to contain more than one design for the same product or within the same class, while others allow only one design per application. In order to capture the differences in application numbers across offices, it is useful to compare their respective application and registration design counts.

Designation

Designation in an international application or registration means the request by which the applicant/international registration holder specifies the jurisdiction(s) in which they seek to protect their industrial designs (Hague System) or trademarks (Madrid System).

Direct filing

See "National route".

Equivalent application

Applications at regional offices are equivalent to multiple applications, one in each of the states that is a member of those offices. To calculate the number of equivalent applications for the Benelux Office for Intellectual Property (BOIP), the Eurasian Patent Organization (EAPO), the African Intellectual Property Organization (OAPI) and the Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market (OHIM), each application is multiplied by the corresponding number of member states. For European Patent Office (EPO) and African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO) data, each application is counted as one application abroad if the applicant does not reside in a member state or as one resident and one application abroad if the applicant resides in a member state. The equivalent application concept is used for reporting data by origin.

Equivalent grant (registration)

Grants (registrations) at regional offices are equivalent to multiple grants (registrations), one in each of the states that is a member of those offices. To calculate the number of equivalent grants (registrations) for BOIP, EAPO, OAPI or OHIM data, each grant (registration) is multiplied by the corresponding number of member states. For EPO and ARIPO data, each grant is counted as one grant abroad if the applicant does not reside in a member state or as one resident and one grant abroad if the applicant resides in a member state. The equivalent grant (registration) concept is used for reporting data by origin.

European Patent Office (EPO)

The EPO is the regional patent office created under the European Patent Convention, in charge of granting European patents for EPC member states. Under Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) procedures, the EPO acts as a receiving office, an International Searching Authority and an International Preliminary Examining Authority.

Filing

See “Application”.

Foreign-oriented patent families

A patent family having at least one filing office that is different from the office of the applicant’s origin. Foreign-oriented patent families are a subset of patent families. See “Patent family”.

Grant

A set of exclusive rights legally accorded to the applicant when a patent or utility model is granted or issued.

Gross domestic product (GDP)

The total unduplicated output of economic goods and services produced within a country as measured in monetary terms.

Hague international application

An application for the international registration of an industrial design filed under the WIPO-administered Hague System.

Hague international registration

An international registration issued via the Hague System, which facilitates the acquisition of industrial design rights in multiple jurisdictions. An application for international registration of an industrial design leads to its recording in the International Register and the publication of the registration in the *International Designs Bulletin*. If the registration is not refused by the IP office of a designated Hague member, the international registration will have the same effect as a registration made in that jurisdiction.

Hague member (Contracting Party)

A state or intergovernmental organization that is a member of the Hague System. Includes any state or intergovernmental organization party to the 1999 Act and/or the 1960 Act of the Hague Agreement. The entitlement to file an international application under the Hague Agreement is limited to natural persons or legal entities having a real and effective industrial or commercial establishment, or a domicile, in at least one of the Contracting Parties to the Agreement, or being a national of one of those Contracting Parties or of a member state of an intergovernmental organization that is a Contracting Party. In addition – but only under the 1999 Act – an international application may be filed on the basis of habitual residence in the jurisdiction of a Contracting Party.

Hague route

An alternative to the Paris route (the direct national or regional route), the Hague route enables an application for international registration of industrial designs to be filed using the Hague System.

Hague System

The abbreviated form of the Hague System for the International Registration of Industrial Designs. This System comprises several international treaties: the London Act of 1934 (frozen since 2010), the Hague Act of 1960 and the Geneva Act of 1999. The Hague System makes it possible for an applicant to register up to 100 industrial designs in multiple jurisdictions by filing a single application with the International Bureau of WIPO. It simplifies multinational registration by reducing the requirement to file separate applications with each IP office. The System also simplifies the subsequent management of the industrial design, since it is possible to record changes or renew the registration through a single procedural step.

In force

Refers to IP rights that are currently valid or, in the case of trademarks, active. To remain in force, IP protection must be maintained.

Industrial design

Industrial designs are applied to a wide variety of industrial products and handicrafts. They refer to the ornamental or aesthetic aspects of a useful article, including compositions of lines or colors or any three-dimensional forms that give a special appearance to a product or handicraft. The holder of a registered industrial design has exclusive rights against unauthorized copying or imitation of the design by third parties. Industrial design registrations are valid for a limited period. The term of protection is usually 15 years for most jurisdictions. However, differences in legislation exist, notably in China (which provides for a 10-year term from the application date) and the US (which provides for a 14-year term from the date of registration).

Intellectual property (IP)

Creations of the mind: inventions, literary and artistic works, symbols, names, images and designs used in commerce. IP is divided into two categories: industrial property – which includes patents, utility models, trademarks, industrial designs and geographical indications of source – and copyright, which includes literary and artistic works such as novels, poems, plays, films, musical works, artistic works (such as drawings, paintings, photographs and sculptures) and architectural designs. Rights related to copyright include those of performing artists in their performances, those of producers of phonograms in their recordings and those of broadcasters in their radio and television programs.

International Bureau of WIPO

In the context of the PCT, Hague and Madrid Systems, the International Bureau of WIPO acts as a receiving office for international applications from all contracting states and contracting parties. It also handles processing tasks with respect to these applications and the subsequent management of Hague and Madrid System registrations.

International Depository Authority (IDA)

A scientific institution – typically a culture collection – capable of storing microorganisms that has acquired the status of an International Depository Authority under the Budapest Treaty and provides for the receipt, acceptance and storage of microorganisms and the furnishing of samples thereof. Currently, 45 such authorities exist around the world.

International Patent Classification (IPC)

Provides for a hierarchical system of language-independent symbols for the classification of patents and utility models according to the different areas of technology to which they pertain. The symbols contain information relating to sections, classes, subclasses and groups.

International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV)

An intergovernmental organization established by the International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV Convention), which was adopted on December 2, 1961. UPOV provides and promotes an effective system of plant variety protection with the aim of encouraging the development of new varieties of plants for the benefit of society.

Invention

A new solution to a technical problem. To qualify for patent protection, the invention must be novel, involve an inventive step and be industrially applicable, as judged by a person skilled in the art.

Locarno Classification (LOC)

The abbreviated form of the International Classification for Industrial Designs under the Locarno Agreement used for registering industrial designs. The LOC comprises a list of 32 classes and their respective subclasses, with explanatory notes plus an alphabetical list of the goods in which industrial designs are incorporated and an indication of the classes and subclasses into which they fall.

Madrid international application

An application for international registration under the Madrid System, which is a request for protection of a trademark in one or more Madrid member jurisdictions. Such international applications must be based on a trademark registration issued by the trademark holder's "home" national or regional office.

Madrid international registration

An international registration issued under the Madrid System, which facilitates the acquisition of trademark rights in multiple jurisdictions. An application for international registration of a mark leads to its recording in the International Register and the publication of the international registration in the *WIPO Gazette of International Marks*. If the international registration is not refused protection by a designated Madrid member, it will have the same effect as a national or regional trademark registration made under the law applicable in that Madrid member's jurisdiction.

Madrid member (Contracting Party)

A state or intergovernmental organization (the EU) that is party to the Madrid Agreement and/or the Madrid Protocol.

Madrid route

An alternative to the Paris route (the direct national or regional route), the Madrid route enables an application for international registration of a trademark to be filed using the Madrid System.

Madrid System

The abbreviated form of the Madrid System for the International Registration of Marks, established under the Madrid Agreement and the Madrid Protocol and administered by WIPO. The Madrid System makes it possible for an applicant to register a trademark in a large number of countries by filing a single application at their national or regional IP office if it is party to the System. The Madrid System simplifies the process of multinational trademark registration by reducing the requirement to file separate applications at each office. It also simplifies the subsequent management of the mark, since it is possible to record changes or renew the registration through a single procedural step. Registration through the Madrid System does not create an international trademark, and the decision to register or refuse the trademark remains in the hands of national or regional offices. Trademark rights are limited to the jurisdiction of each trademark registration office.

Maintenance

An act by the applicant to keep an IP grant/registration valid (in force), primarily by paying the required fee to the IP office of the state or jurisdiction providing protection. The fee is also known as a "maintenance fee". A trademark can be maintained indefinitely by paying renewal fees; however, patents, utility models and industrial designs can be maintained for only a limited number of years.

Microorganism deposit

The transmittal of a microorganism to an International Depositary Authority (IDA), which receives and accepts it, the storage of such a microorganism by the IDA, or both transmittal and storage.

National Phase Entry (NPE)

See "National phase under the PCT".

National phase under the PCT

The phase that follows the international phase of the PCT procedure and that consists of the entry and processing of the international application in the individual countries or regions in which the applicant seeks protection for an invention.

National route

Applications for IP protection filed directly with the national office of, or acting for, the relevant state or jurisdiction (see also "PCT route", "Hague route" or "Madrid route"). The national route is also called the "direct route" or "Paris route".

Nice Classification (NCL)

The abbreviated form of the International Classification of Goods and Services for the Purposes of the Registration of Marks, an international classification established under the Nice Agreement. The Nice Classification consists of 45 classes, which are divided into 34 classes for goods and 11 for services. See also "Class".

Non-resident

For statistical purposes, a “non-resident” application refers to an application filed with the IP office of, or acting for, a state or jurisdiction in which the first-named applicant in the application is not domiciled. For example, an application filed with the JPO by an applicant residing in France is considered a non-resident application from the perspective of the JPO. Non-resident applications are sometimes referred to as foreign applications. A non-resident grant or registration is an IP right issued on the basis of a non-resident application.

Origin (country or region)

For statistical purposes, the origin of an application means the country or territory of residence of the first-named applicant in the application. In some cases (notably in the US), the country of origin is determined by the residence of the assignee rather than that of the applicant.

Paris Convention

The Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property (1883), signed on March 20, 1883, is one of the most important IP treaties. It establishes the “right of priority” that enables an IP applicant, when filing an application in countries other than the original country of filing, to claim priority of an earlier application filed up to 12 months previously.

Paris route

An alternative to the PCT, Hague or Madrid routes, the Paris route (also called the “direct route” or “national route”) enables individual IP applications to be filed directly with an office that is a signatory of the Paris Convention.

Patent

A set of exclusive rights granted by law to applicants for inventions that are new, non-obvious and commercially applicable. A patent is valid for a limited period of time (generally 20 years), during which patent holders can commercially exploit their inventions on an exclusive basis. In return, applicants are obliged to disclose their inventions to the public in a manner that enables others, skilled in the art, to replicate the invention. The patent system is designed to encourage innovation by providing innovators with time-limited exclusive legal rights, thus enabling them to appropriate the returns from their innovative activity.

Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT)

The PCT is an international treaty administered by WIPO. The PCT System facilitates the filing of patent applications worldwide and makes it possible to seek patent protection for an invention simultaneously in each of a large number of countries by first filing a single international patent application. The granting of patents, which remains under the control of national or regional patent offices, is carried out in what is called the “national phase” or “regional phase”.

Patent family

A set of interrelated patent applications filed in one or more countries or jurisdictions to protect the same invention.

PCT filing

Abbreviated form of “PCT international application”.

PCT international application

A patent application filed through the WIPO-administered Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT).

PCT-Patent Prosecution Highway Pilots (PCT-PPH)

A number of bilateral agreements signed between patent offices enable applicants to request a fast-track examination procedure, whereby patent examiners can make use of the work products of another office or offices. These work products can include the results of a favorable written opinion by an International Searching Authority, the written opinion of an International Preliminary Examining Authority or the international preliminary report on patentability issued within the framework of the PCT. By requesting this procedure, applicants can generally obtain patents from participating offices more quickly.

PCT route

Patent applications filed or patents granted based on PCT international applications.

PCT System

The PCT, an international treaty administered by WIPO, facilitates the acquisition of patent rights in a large number of jurisdictions. The PCT System simplifies the process of multiple national patent filings by reducing the requirement to file a separate application in each jurisdiction. However, the decision whether to grant patent rights remains in the hands of national and regional patent offices, and patent rights remain limited to the jurisdiction of the patent-granting authority. The PCT international application process starts with the international phase, during which an international search and possibly a preliminary examination are performed, and concludes with the national phase, during which a national or regional patent office decides on the patentability of an invention according to national law.

Pending patent application

In general, this refers to a patent application filed with a patent office for which no patent has yet been granted or refused, and for which the application has not been withdrawn. In jurisdictions where a request for examination is required to start the examination process, a pending application may refer to an application for which a request for examination has been received or for which no patent has been granted or refused, and for which the application has not been withdrawn.

Plant Patent Act (PPA) of the US

Under the law commonly known as the “Plant Patent Act”, whoever invents or discovers and asexually reproduces any distinct and new variety of plant, including cultivated sports, mutants, hybrids and newly found seedlings, other than a tuber-propagated plant or a plant found in an uncultivated state, may obtain a patent therefor.

Plant variety

According to the UPOV Convention, plant variety means a plant grouping within a single botanical taxon of the lowest known rank, which, irrespective of whether the conditions for the grant of a breeder’s right are fully met, can be defined by the expression of the characteristics resulting from a given genotype or combination of genotypes, distinguished from any other plant grouping by the expression of at least one of the said characteristics and considered as a unit with regard to its suitability for being propagated unchanged.

Plant variety grant

Under the UPOV Convention, the breeder’s right is granted (title of protection is issued) only when the variety is new, distinct, uniform, stable and has a suitable denomination.

Plant Variety Protection Act (PVPA) of the US

Under the PVPA, the US protects all sexually reproduced plant varieties and tuber-propagated plant varieties, excluding fungi and bacteria.

Prior art

All information disclosed to the public about an invention, in any form, before a given date. Information on prior art can assist in determining whether the claimed invention is new and involves an inventive step (is non-obvious) for the purposes of international searches and international preliminary examination.

Priority date

The filing date of the application on the basis of which priority is claimed.

Publication date

The date on which an IP application is disclosed to the public. On that date, the subject matter of the application becomes prior art.

Regional application/grant (registration)

An application filed with or granted (registered) by a regional IP office having jurisdiction over more than one country. Regional IP offices in operation include ARIPO, the BOIP, EAPO, the EPO, OAPI and OHIM.

Regional route (or regional direct)

Applications for IP protection filed or granted based on applications filed with a regional IP office.

Registered Community Design

A registration issued by OHIM based on a single application filed directly with the office by an applicant seeking protection within the EU as a whole.

Registration

A set of exclusive rights legally accorded to the applicant when an industrial design or trademark is registered or issued. See “Industrial design” or “Trademark”. Registrations are issued to applicants to make use of and exploit their industrial design or trademark for a limited period of time and can, in some cases (particularly in the case of trademarks), be renewed indefinitely.

Renewal

The process by which the protection of an IP right is maintained (that is, kept in force). Usually consists of paying renewal fees to an IP office at regular intervals. If renewal fees are not paid, the registration may lapse. See “Maintenance”.

Resident

For statistical purposes, a resident application refers to an application filed with the IP office of, or acting for, the state or jurisdiction in which the first-named applicant in the application has residence. For example, an application filed with the JPO by a resident of Japan is considered a resident application for the JPO. Resident applications are sometimes referred to as “domestic applications”. A resident grant/registration is an IP right issued on the basis of a resident application.

Trademark

A sign used by the owner of certain products or provider of certain services to distinguish them from the products or services of other companies. A trademark can consist of words and combinations of words (for instance, slogans), names, logos, figures and images, letters, numbers, sounds and moving images, or a combination thereof. The procedures for registering trademarks are governed by the legislation and procedures of national and regional IP offices. Trademark rights are limited to the jurisdiction of the IP office that registers the trademark. Trademarks can be registered by filing an application at the relevant national or regional office(s) or by filing an international application through the Madrid System.

Utility model

A special form of patent right granted by a state or jurisdiction to an inventor or the inventor’s assignee for a fixed period of time. The terms and conditions for granting a utility model are slightly different from those for normal patents (including a shorter term of protection and less stringent patentability requirements). The term can also describe what are known in certain countries as “petty patents”, “short-term patents” or “innovation patents”.

World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

A United Nations specialized agency dedicated to the promotion of innovation and creativity for the economic, social and cultural development of all countries through a balanced and effective international IP system. Established in 1967, WIPO’s mandate is to promote the protection of IP throughout the world through cooperation among states and in collaboration with other international organizations.

List of abbreviations

ARIPO	African Regional Intellectual Property Organization
BOIP	Benelux Office for Intellectual Property
CPVO	Community Plant Variety Office of the European Union
EAPO	Eurasian Patent Organization
EPO	European Patent Office
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross domestic product
ID	Industrial design
IDA	International Depository Authority
IP	Intellectual Property
IPC	International Patent Classification
JPO	Japan Patent Office
KIPO	Korean Intellectual Property Office
LOC	Locarno Classification
NCL	Nice Classification
OAPI	African Intellectual Property Organization
OHIM	Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market (of the European Union)
PCT	Patent Cooperation Treaty
PPA	Plant Patent Act of the United States of America
PVPA	Plant Variety Protection Act of the United States of America
SIPO	State Intellectual Property Office of the People's Republic of China
UK	United Kingdom
UM	Utility model
UPOV	International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants
US	United States of America
USPTO	United States Patent and Trademark Office
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization

Annexes

Annex A

Definitions for selected energy-related technology fields

Energy-related technologies	International patent classification (IPC) symbols
Solar energy technology	F24J 2/00, F24J 2/02, F24J 2/04, F24J 2/05, F24J 2/06, F24J 2/07, F24J 2/08, F24J 2/10, F24J 2/12, F24J 2/13, F24J 2/14, F24J 2/15, F24J 2/16, F24J 2/18, F24J 2/23, F24J 2/24, F24J 2/36, F24J 2/38, F24J 2/42, F24J 2/46, F03G 6/06, G02B 5/10, H01L 31/052, E04D 13/18, H01L 31/04, H01L 31/042, H01L 31/18, E04D 1/30, G02F 1/136, G05F 1/67, H01L 25/00, H01L 31/00, H01L 31/048, H01L 33/00, H02J 7/35, H02N 6/00
Fuel cell technology	H01M 4/00, H01M 4/86, H01M 4/88, H01M 4/90, H01M 8/00, H01M 8/02, H01M 8/04, H01M 8/06, H01M 8/08, H01M 8/10, H01M 8/12, H01M 8/14, H01M 8/16, H01M 8/18, H01M 8/20, H01M 8/22, H01M 8/24
Wind energy	F03D 1/00, F03D 3/00, F03D 5/00, F03D 7/00, F03D 9/00, F03D 11/00, B60L 8/00
Geothermal energy	F24J 3/08, F03G 4/00, F03G 7/05

Note: For definitions of IPC symbols, see www.wipo.int/classifications/ipc. The correspondence between IPC symbols and technology fields is not always clear-cut. Therefore, it is difficult to capture all patents in a specific technology field. Nonetheless, the IPC-based definitions of the four technologies presented above are likely to capture the vast majority of related patents.

Source: WIPO.

Annex B

International Classification of Goods and Services under the Nice Agreement

Class heading	Goods or services
Class 3	Bleaching preparations and other substances for laundry use; cleaning, polishing, scouring and abrasive preparations; soaps; perfumery, essential oils, cosmetics, hair lotions; dentifrices
Class 5	Pharmaceutical and veterinary preparations; sanitary preparations for medical purposes; dietetic substances adapted for medical use, food for babies; plasters, materials for dressings; material for stopping teeth, dental wax; disinfectants; preparations for destroying vermin; fungicides, herbicides
Class 9	Scientific, nautical, surveying, photographic, cinematographic, optical, weighing, measuring, signaling, checking (supervision), life-saving and teaching apparatus and instruments; apparatus and instruments for conducting, switching, transforming, accumulating, regulating or controlling electricity; apparatus for recording, transmission or reproduction of sound or images; magnetic data carriers, recording discs; automatic vending machines and mechanisms for coin-operated apparatus; cash registers, calculating machines, data processing equipment and computers; fire-extinguishing apparatus
Class 25	Clothing, footwear, headgear
Class 29	Meat, fish, poultry and game; meat extracts; preserved, frozen, dried and cooked fruits and vegetables; jellies, jams, compotes; eggs; milk and milk products; edible oils and fats
Class 30	Coffee, tea, cocoa, sugar, rice, tapioca, sago, artificial coffee; flour and preparations made from cereals, bread, pastry and confectionery, ices; honey, treacle; yeast, baking-powder; salt, mustard; vinegar, sauces (condiments); spices; ice
Class 35	Advertising; business management; business administration; office functions
Class 41	Education; providing of training; entertainment; sporting and cultural activities
Class 42	Scientific and technological services and research and design relating thereto; industrial analysis and research services; design and development of computer hardware and software
Class 43	Services for providing food and drink; temporary accommodation

Note: See www.wipo.int/classifications/nice for a complete list of all classes and further information on the International Classification of Goods and Services under the Nice Agreement.

Source: WIPO.

Industry sector	Abbreviation (where applicable)	Nice classes
Agricultural products and services	Agriculture	29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 43
Management, Communications, Real estate and Financial services	Business	35, 36
Chemicals		1, 2, 4
Textiles – Clothing and Accessories	Clothing	14, 18, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 34
Construction, Infrastructure	Construction	6, 17, 19, 37, 40
Pharmaceuticals, Health, Cosmetics	Health	3, 5, 10, 44
Household equipment		8, 11, 20, 21
Leisure, Education, Training	Leisure & Education	13, 15, 16, 28, 41
Scientific research, Information and Communication Technology	Research & Technology	9, 38, 42, 45
Transportation and Logistics	Transportation	7, 12, 39

Source: Edital@.

Annex C

International Classification for Industrial Designs (Locarno Classification)

Class Heading	Goods
Class 2	Articles of clothing and haberdashery
Class 6	Furnishing
Class 7	Household goods, not elsewhere specified
Class 9	Packages and containers for the transport or handling of goods
Class 11	Articles of adornment
Class 12	Means of transport or hoisting
Class 14	Recording, communication or information retrieval equipment
Class 25	Building units and construction elements
Class 26	Lighting apparatus
Class 32	Graphic symbols and logos, surface patterns, ornamentation

Note: See www.wipo.int/classifications/locarno for a complete list of all classes and further information.

Source: WIPO.

Sector	Locarno classes
Advertising	20, 32
Agricultural products and food preparation	1, 27, 31
Construction	23, 25, 29
Electricity and lighting	13, 26
Furniture and household goods	6, 7, 30
Health, pharma and cosmetics	24, 28
ICT and audiovisual	14, 16, 18
Leisure and education	17, 19, 21, 22
Packaging	9
Textiles and accessories	2, 3, 5, 11
Tools and machines	4, 8, 10, 15
Transport	12

Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).