

Preface

The IP5 Statistics Report (IP5 SR) is jointly produced by the “IP5 Offices”, a group that consists of the European Patent Office (EPO), the Japan Patent Office (JPO), the Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO), the State Intellectual Property Office of the People’s Republic of China (SIPO), and the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) along with the support of the International Bureau (IB) of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). It follows on from a provisional 2014 key IP5 statistical data report that was made earlier in 2015. This report, along with other data exchanges and information about the Group can be found at www.fiveipoffices.org.

IP5 Patent Prosecution Highway (IP5 PPH) is an IP5 project in the area of work-sharing and quality. The IP5 Offices launched on January 6th, 2014 the comprehensive IP5 PPH pilot programme for a period of three years ending on January 5th, 2017. Under this programme, a PPH request can be based:

- either on the latest Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) work product, which can be the written opinion of the International Search Authority (WO-ISA) or the international preliminary examination report (IPER), that has been established by one of the IP5 Offices as International Search Authority (ISA) or International Preliminary Examination Authority (IPEA) respectively,
- or on the national work product established during the processing of a national application or a PCT application that has entered the national phase before one of the IP5 Offices.

The IP5 PPH leverages fast-track patent examination procedures already available at the offices to allow applicants to obtain corresponding patents faster and more efficiently. It also permits each office to exploit the work previously done by the other office.

Collaboration between the IP5 Offices has proven to be successful in the area of patent statistics. In addition to promoting a better understanding of patenting activity both at the IP5 Offices and worldwide, this report explains each office’s operations and informs about patent grant procedures. It discusses background activities at each office, reviews worldwide patenting developments and then compares the patent related work at the IP5 Offices. The IP5 SR supplements annual reports for each of the IP5 Offices and also presents specific statistics that are collected and published by the WIPO.

There are diverse factors that influence patent filing trends. In the past, trend breaks have been mainly caused by changes to patent rules and fees as well as by sudden changes in the economic climate. Every year there is a background of changes at one or more of the IP5 Offices. As the global patent system becomes more harmonized, common economic driving forces have been a major influence on patent filings at the offices.

According to the World Economic Outlook² of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), global growth remains moderate and is projected to be 3.1 percent in 2015. In line with the IMF Outlook, the data presented in this report shows a global rebound in patent filings since 2009, as well as regional differences in economic growth as reflected through the filings. Worldwide patent filings grew 10 percent in 2013. More recent data are however available from the IP5 Offices (see Chapter 2 and 4 of this report). In 2014, filings grew 12.5 percent for the SIPO, 2.8 percent for the KIPO, 1.3 percent for the USPTO, 3.1 percent for the EPO. But the filings decreased by 0.7 percent at the JPO, which shows applicants have become more selective in filing applications, meaning that intellectual property strategies of companies, etc. are

² World Economic Outlook October 2015, www.imf.org.

shifting from quantity to quality. The data showed a total annual growth of 5.6 percent for overall filings at the IP5 Offices.

Although patent filing is closely tied to economic growth, political and technological factors are also influential. Globalisation of markets and production continues to be a key business trend. There is a worldwide tendency to harmonize patent laws with common international standards and to facilitate filing of applications across borders. These factors have had a positive impact on worldwide patent growth over recent years.

The IP5 Offices hope that this report provides useful information to the readers. The IP5 Offices will continue to improve and refine the report to better serve expectations and objectives of the public. Definitions related to the terminology used in the report are given in annex 1 and 2 that appear at the end.

When reading this report, please bear in mind that the procedures and practices among the IP5 Offices differ in a number of areas. Therefore, care should be taken when analysing, interpreting, and comparing the various statistics.

Materials from this report can be freely reproduced in other publications, but we request that this should be accompanied by a reference to the title and the web site location of this report, www.fiveipoffices.org/statistics.html.

An additional annex appears in the web version that gives a glossary of patent related terms. A data file is also available that contains statistics covering more years.

EPO, JPO, SIPO, KIPO, and USPTO
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