

# Trilateral Statistical Report

2005 edition

## PREFACE

Since the early 1980s, three key intellectual property offices in Asia, Europe and North America have combined their efforts to better understand and harmonize procedures and activities with respect to patent protection. Collaboration among the European Patent Office (EPO), the Japan Patent Office (JPO), and the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), has led to many accomplishments, especially in the area of patent statistics. The three offices, which are commonly referred to as the Trilateral Offices in the patent community, have once again jointly produced the Trilateral Statistical Report (TSR).

The TSR is an annual compilation of patent statistics that has been published since 1985. Besides promoting a better understanding of the importance of patent rights in the world, the purpose of this report is to facilitate an understanding of each office's operations and to increase general awareness about patent grant procedures. This supplements the annual reports for each of the three offices and is also partially based on statistics from the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in Geneva.

Applications for patent rights among the Trilateral Offices increased again in calendar year 2005. Together the Trilateral Offices recorded a 4.7 percent increase in patent applications compared to 2004. The USPTO experienced the highest percentage growth in 2005, with total patent application filings increasing by 9.5 percent from 2004 levels. At the EPO, patent application filings increased by 4.0 percent. Total patent application filings at the JPO increased by 0.9 percent. As expected, most filings were of domestic origin at each office, with the proportions ranging from 50 percent at the EPO to 86 percent at the JPO. In terms of fields of technologies, as defined by International Patent Classification, physics-related technologies represented the highest share at each office, and textiles and paper technologies represented the lowest. The offices granted a combined total of 320 009 patents in 2005, which is 7.8 percent below the 347 212 patents granted in 2004.

There are a variety of factors that have influenced patent filing trends in the past. These include changes to patent fees and rules. For example, the supranational systems such as the EPC and the PCT where applicants have to choose those countries for which they intend to seek patent protection, have changed by steps to a full open option system allowing applicants to delay their decisions on the targeted markets. The average numbers of designated countries per application in these systems has increased over the recent years. This led progressively to a higher level of demand for patent rights. In 2004, the last constraint on designation choices in the PCT system was lifted and, unless applicants decide otherwise, all PCT member countries are automatically designated at the outset. This gives the applicants a completely open option to obtain patent protection in many more countries. The set of countries that is chosen still tends to be restricted later on when applicants have to formalise their geographical choice by paying designation fees and/or entering the national/regional phases of the granting procedure.

Economic activity is often also cited as a key factor on patenting levels. However, interpreting worldwide patenting activity in terms of economic factors is not an exact science. Other important factors, such as political and technological considerations, also need to be considered. With this understanding in mind, a brief overview of recent economic activity follows.

Once again, the global economy expanded in 2005, and it has gained momentum. Business and consumer confidence continued to strengthen, and investment growth improved in almost all regions. According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), world output in calendar year 2005 increased by

4.9 percent over 2004 levels. The growth rate in 2004 was also healthy at a 5.3 percent annual rate.

This calendar year (2006), global economic activity continues to remain positive<sup>1</sup>. European countries are expected to grow more than in the recent past. Output in the Euro area should pick up to about 2.4 percent this year as compared to 1.3 percent in 2005. Growth in Asia will continue to be significant, especially in China and India where growth rates are expected to be 10.0 percent and 8.3 percent respectively, while Japan appears to be in a recovery phase although growth is more moderate there. In the United States, the economic outlook also remains positive with a growth rate of 3.4 percent expected by the end of 2006. World output is expected to increase at a rate of 5.1 percent in 2006. Overall, the economic outlook is expected to be positive despite ongoing risks, such as the surge in oil prices that may have peaked out during the summer months but can always be subject to further shocks.

There are many other factors that should be considered when examining patenting trends. In particular, measures of resources allocated to innovation-related activities and the perception of intellectual property in general are important factors. Research and development expenditures are often cited as a key measure of innovation. On a global scale, R&D expenditures have continued to trend upwards, but still at slower pace. Spending on innovation helps to fuel patenting, as intellectual property has continued to become more significant in a world with intensifying competition. Patents are increasingly being emphasized for a variety of business strategies, such as developing favorable partnerships and licensing agreements, capturing market share, and attracting new capital. With a greater emphasis on patenting, there is an expectation that demand will follow.

Strongly developing countries such as China and India record large growth rate increases in domestic patent filings. Globalization of markets and production continue to be key business trends. Countries are continuing to join the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) and the European Patent Convention (EPC). This goes together with a tendency to harmonize patent laws towards common international standards and stimulates further the flow of patent applications across borders. All of these factors contribute to worldwide patent growth from year to year.

The Trilateral Offices hope that this report brings useful information to the reader. The offices will continue to improve and to refine the report to better serve expectations and objectives of the public. This report is also available on the web sites of the Trilateral Offices, as listed on the back cover, and at the [Trilateral Co-operation web site](http://www.trilateral.net/tsr/)<sup>2</sup>. An additional Annex appears in the web version that gives data from the report over several additional previous years.

Trilateral Statistical Report 2005 Edition  
Jointly produced by EPO, JPO, and USPTO  
With co-operation of WIPO

October 2006

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<sup>1</sup> All economic data from the IMF World Economic Outlook Database as of September 2006.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.trilateral.net/tsr/>

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
Chapter 1	INTRODUCTION	1
Chapter 2	THE TRILATERAL OFFICES	5
	European Patent Office	6
	Japan Patent Office	11
	United States Patent and Trademark Office	14
Chapter 3	WORLDWIDE PATENTING ACTIVITY	18
	Patent Applications Filed	19
	Patent Activity by Blocs	21
	First Filings	21
	Origin of the Applications	22
	Targets of the applications	24
	Grants	26
	Interbloc Activity	28
	Flows of Applications	28
	Patent Families	29
Chapter 4	PATENT ACTIVITY AT TRILATERAL OFFICES	31
	Applications with the Trilateral Offices	32
	Patent Applications Filed	32
	Applications by Field of Technology	34
	Patents Granted at Trilateral Offices	36
	Trilateral Patent Procedures	40
	The Procedures	40
	Statistics on Procedures	42
Chapter 5	USE OF THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY	45
	The PCT as a Filing Route	46
	Applications Filed	46
	PCT Applications Entering the National/Regional Phase	47
	PCT Applications at the Trilateral Offices	48
	PCT Grants by the Trilateral Offices	49
	Patent Families Involving PCT Applications	50
	The Trilateral Offices as PCT Authorities	52
Chapter 6	OTHER WORK	54
Annex 1	DEFINITIONS FOR OFFICES EXPENDITURES	55
Annex 2	DEFINITIONS FOR STATISTICS ON PROCEDURES	58

## TABLES

		Page
Table 2.1	PRODUCTION INFORMATION EPO	7
Table 2.2	PRODUCTION INFORMATION JPO	12
Table 2.3	PRODUCTION INFORMATION USPTO	16
Table 4	STATISTICS ON PROCEDURES	43
Table 6	STATISTICS ON OTHER WORK	54

## GRAPHS

Fig. 2.1	PATENTS IN FORCE WORLDWIDE IN 2004	5
Fig. 2.2	EPO EXPENDITURES 2005 (Million EUR)	10
Fig. 2.3	JPO EXPENDITURES 2005 (Million Yen)	13
Fig. 2.4	USPTO EXPENDITURES 2005 (Million Dollar)	17
Fig. 3.1	WORLDWIDE PATENT APPLICATIONS BY FILING PROCEDURE	19
Fig. 3.2	DEMAND FOR PATENT RIGHTS WORLDWIDE	20
Fig. 3.3	FIRST FILINGS BY BLOC OF ORIGIN	21
Fig. 3.4	WORLDWIDE PATENT APPLICATIONS BY BLOC OF ORIGIN	22
Fig. 3.5	WORLDWIDE DEMAND FOR PATENT RIGHTS BY BLOC OF ORIGIN	23
Fig. 3.6	PROPORTION OF APPLICATIONS MADE IN THE BLOC OF ORIGIN	24
Fig. 3.7	WORLDWIDE DEMAND FOR PATENT RIGHTS BY FILING BLOC	25
Fig. 3.8	PATENTS GRANTED IN EACH BLOC	26
Fig. 3.9	PATENT RIGHTS GRANTED IN EACH BLOC	27
Fig. 3.10	FLOWS OF APPLICATIONS BETWEEN TRILATERAL BLOCS	28
Fig. 3.11	TRILATERAL PATENT FAMILIES BY BLOC OF ORIGIN	29
Fig. 3.12	2001 FIRST FILINGS USED FOR APPLICATIONS ABROAD	30
Fig. 4.1	DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN APPLICATIONS FILED	32
Fig. 4.2	PROPORTION OF APPLICATIONS PER COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	33
Fig. 4.3	PROPORTION OF APPLICATIONS PER FIELDS OF TECHNOLOGY	34
Fig. 4.4	PROPORTION OF APPLICATIONS IN HIGH TECH AREAS	35
Fig. 4.5	PATENTS GRANTED BY THE TRILATERAL OFFICES	36
Fig. 4.6	PROPORTION OF GRANTED PATENTS PER COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	37
Fig. 4.7	DISTRIBUTION OF PATENTEES BY NUMBER OF GRANTED PATENTS	38
Fig. 4.8	MAINTENANCE OF PATENTS GRANTED BY TRILATERAL OFFICES	39
Fig. 4.9	THE TRILATERAL PATENT PROCEDURES	40
Fig. 5.1	APPLICATIONS FILED VIA THE PCT BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	46
Fig. 5.2	PCT APPLICATIONS ENTERING THE NATIONAL/REGIONAL PHASE	47
Fig. 5.3	SHARE OF PCT APPLICATIONS IN THE GRANT PROCEDURE	48
Fig. 5.4	SHARE OF PCT IN THE PATENTS GRANTED	49
Fig. 5.5	TRILATERAL FAMILIES USING THE PCT ROUTE PER BLOC OF ORIGIN	50
Fig. 5.6	2001 BASED FAMILIES INVOLVING THE PCT	51
Fig. 5.7	RECEIVING OFFICES	52
Fig. 5.8	INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REQUESTS	53
Fig. 5.9	INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION DEMANDS	53

## Chapter 1

# INTRODUCTION

## DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

There are various types of intellectual property rights. They can be categorized as:

- Patents of invention,
- Utility model patents,
- Industrial design patents,
- Trademarks, and
- Copyrights.

This report concentrates on the first type, patents of invention.

Despite the existence of regional and international procedures, patent rights do differ between countries. One reason is that patent law varies from country to country. With different patent laws and procedures, applications can have a different scope, e.g. with respect to the average number of claims included in one application. This is one of the basic reasons for the differences between numbers of patent applications in Japan compared to Europe and the United States. The existence of differences in the scope of applicability of patent rights compromises to some extent the ability to compare patents from different countries.

In order to get protection for their innovations, applicants may use the following types of granting procedures, or combinations of them:

- national procedures,
- supranational procedures, consisting of:
  - **regional** procedures (for example the European or the African Intellectual Property Organization), and the
  - **international** Patent Cooperation Treaty procedure (PCT).

In this chapter, the statistics presented in the report and the relations between them will be briefly described. All statistics apart from some of those in Chapter 6 relate to patents of invention only.

Statistics are presented in accordance with the following definitions:

- Four geographical blocs are defined. The **European Patent Convention (EPC) contracting states**<sup>2</sup> (corresponding to the territory of all the states party to the EPC at the end of the reporting year), **Japan**, the **USA** and the rest of the world referred to as the bloc "**Others**".
- Demand for patent protection is considered principally by counting each **supranational application** only once. However, alternative presentations are also given in some places in terms of **demand for patent rights**, after cumulating the number of designated countries in each supranational application.

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<sup>2</sup> Referred as "**EPC States**" in the graphs.

- Filings of **PCT applications** are counted in the year of filing in the international phase, which is the first part of the PCT procedure.
- **Domestic applications** are defined as all demands for patent rights made by residents of the country where the application is filed. For the purpose of reporting statistics for the EPC contracting states considered as a bloc, **foreign applications** are given with regard to the applications made by non-residents of the EPC bloc as a whole. For example, applications made by French residents in one of the other EPC contracting states are counted as domestic demand in the EPC bloc.
- **First filings** are applications filed without claiming the priority of another previous filing, and all other applications are **subsequent filings**. The subsequent filings usually have to be made within one year of the first filings. In the absence of a complete set of available statistics on first filings, it is assumed in this report that domestic national filings are equivalent to first filings<sup>3</sup>, and that PCT filings are subsequent filings.
- **Grants** are reported as recorded by the WIPO in its Industrial Property Statistics series<sup>4</sup>. They are counted in the year they are issued or published.
- A **patent family** is a group of patent filings that claim the priority of a single filing, including the original priority forming filing itself, and any subsequent filings made throughout the world. The set of distinct priority forming filings (that indexes the set of patent families) in principle constitutes a better proxy measure for the set of first filings than the set of aggregated domestic national filings added to first filings at the EPO. **Trilateral patent families** are a filtered subset of patent families for which there is evidence of patenting activity in all trilateral blocs. Other types of filters can be applied to select patent families of high importance. For example, the subset of Trilateral patent families known as “Triadic patent families” that are currently reported in OECD publications. These require achievement of an application to the JPO and the EPO itself rather than to any patent office in the EPC contracting states. They also require that there be a grant at the USPTO rather than only an application there.

Further definitions for statistics on procedures are given in Annex 2.

## Chapter 2

In this chapter, a summary of the recent developments in the Trilateral Offices is presented. Further information on budget item definitions is given in Annex 1.

## Chapter 3

This chapter provides an assessment of the development of worldwide patent applications. Statistics in this chapter are derived primarily from the Industrial Property Statistics of the WIPO.

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<sup>3</sup> Except in the section on patent families, for estimation of the numbers of first filings in the EPC bloc, an approximation is made by adding first filings at the EPO to aggregated domestic national applications in the EPC contracting states. In the section on patent families, data are available on first filings as those that do not quote the priority of other filings.

<sup>4</sup> WIPO's Industrial Property Statistics are available at <http://www.wipo.int/ipstats/en/statistics/patents/index.html>

The number of inventions for which a patent application is filed is less than the total number of applications made. Generally for each invention, one application is filed first in the country of residence, followed by applications to as many foreign countries as required, each such foreign application claiming the priority of the earlier application. First filings can be seen as an indicator of innovation and inventive activity, while foreign filings are a measure of international trade and globalization.

This chapter also gives an indication of the interdependency and importance of the major geographical markets. The development of the total number of applications filed worldwide is given first. Next, there is a discussion of bloc-wise patent activity (first filings, origins of applications, targets of applications, patent grants). This is followed by a description of inter-bloc activity, firstly in terms of the flows of applications between the trilateral blocs, and then in terms of patent families.

## **Chapter 4**

This part of the report considers the substantive activities of the Trilateral Offices. The aggregate demand for services in the patent procedures of the Trilateral Offices is not exactly equivalent to the overall demand for patent rights. For example, the designated offices do not examine PCT applications definitively until they enter the national or regional phase.

Statistics are given for applications filed with Trilateral Offices from each filing bloc, also showing domestic and foreign filings. Direct applications to the Trilateral Offices are counted at the date of filing. PCT applications are counted at the moment they enter the national or regional phase. Part of the demand for patent rights in the EPC contracting states is processed through the national offices, and therefore does not result in workload for the EPO. The demand at the EPO is given in terms of applications rather than in terms of designations.

Statistics are provided on the breakdown of applications by fields of technology according to the International Patent Classification (IPC).

Although the patent applications filed do indeed represent demands for services, the work is not always performed at a comparable point in time. Consequently, neither the number of applications filed nor the number of requests for examination is a perfect basis for comparison. Taking into account the fact that the percentage of applications that are granted is generally constant in each of the three procedures, some indicator of services actually demanded can nevertheless be provided using statistics on granted patents.

Further analyses of patent grants are also provided, in terms of the blocs of origin of the grants and in terms of the distributions of numbers of grants per applicant. In Chapter 4, the numbers of grant actions by the Trilateral Offices themselves are described, even though grants by the EPO lead to multiple patents in the designated EPC contracting states.

To illustrate the similarities as well as the differences in the granting procedures at the three offices, characteristics of the trilateral patent granting procedures are shown in the last section of Chapter 4.



## **Chapter 5**

This chapter shows how the PCT impacts patenting activities, particularly at the Trilateral Offices. PCT work includes the actions required by the three offices for PCT applications in the international phase as receiving office, international search authorities and international preliminary examination authorities.

Most of the data were obtained from the WIPO Industrial Property Statistics, as collected from each country and region. However, some statistics (e.g. national stage entry figures, international searches information, and international preliminary examination information) were provided by the Trilateral Offices.

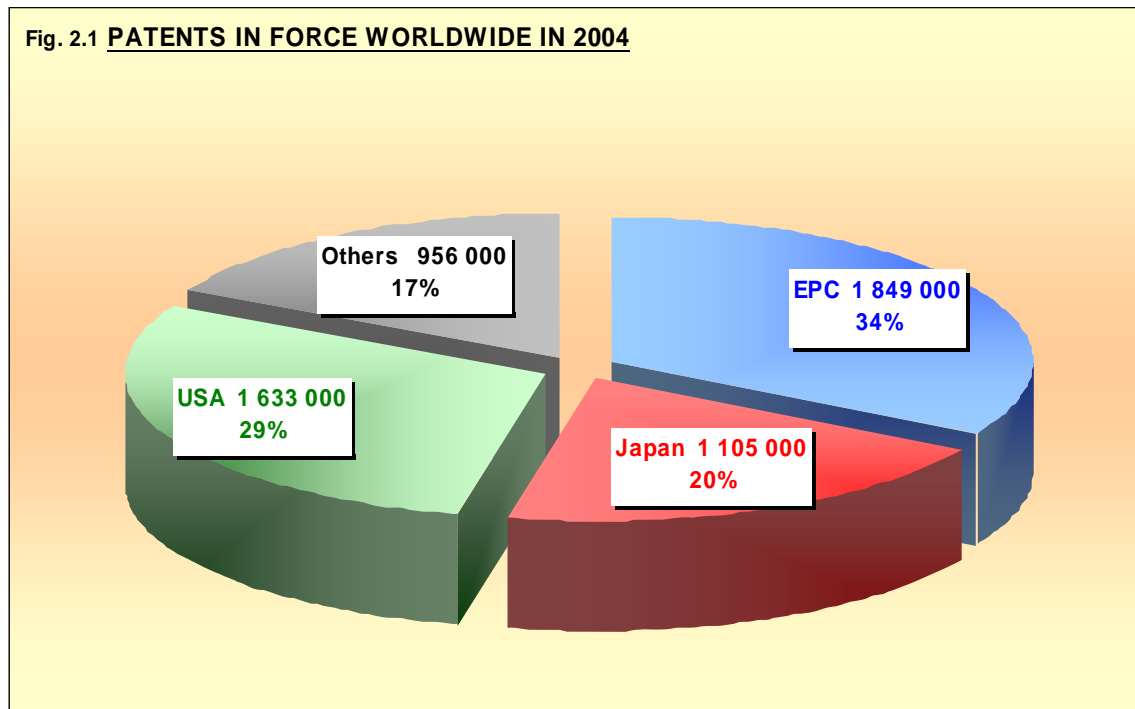
## **Chapter 6**

The last chapter is dedicated to the other activities the Trilateral Offices are performing that are not common to all three offices, as well as work related to other types of industrial property rights.

## Chapter 2

# THE TRILATERAL OFFICES

Patent rights are well used throughout the world. The most recent information on worldwide patent rights is available from the 2004 WIPO Industrial Property Statistics. At the end of the year 2004, a total of 5.5 million patents were in force. The EPC contracting states, the JPO and the USPTO, together cover about 83% of the total patents worldwide. In the EPC contracting states, patents are granted either by the national offices or by the EPO.



## EUROPEAN PATENT OFFICE

The European Patent Office (EPO), the main patent granting authority for Europe, represents a good example of economic and political cooperation, providing patent protection in up to 36 European countries on the basis of a single patent application and a unitary grant procedure. The EPO currently receives about twice as many patent filings as it did in 1996.

The Organization continues to expand. In 2005 the European Patent Convention entered into force in Latvia, which so became the 31<sup>st</sup> EPC Contracting state. By the end of the year, the members of the underlying European Patent Organization were:

Austria	Belgium	Bulgaria	Cyprus	Czech Republic	Denmark
Ellas	Estonia	Finland	France	Germany	Hungary
Iceland	Ireland	Italy	Latvia	Liechtenstein	Lithuania
Luxembourg	Monaco	Netherlands	Poland	Portugal	Romania
Slovakia	Slovenia	Spain	Sweden	Switzerland	Turkey
United Kingdom					

Other states have agreements with the EPO to allow applicants to request an extension of European patents to their territory. No new such agreements entered recently into force. At the end of 2005, extensions of European patent could be requested for:

**Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Serbia and Montenegro.**

Together, the above states build a market of about 590 million people.

Some other states that have expressed recently their intention to join the Organisation are Norway, Malta and Croatia.

### Grant Procedure

The mission of the EPO is to support innovation, competitiveness, and economic growth for the benefit of the citizens of Europe. Its main task is to grant European patents according to the European Patent Convention (EPC). Moreover, the EPO acts as a receiving, searching, and examining authority under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT). A further task is to perform, on the behalf of patent offices of certain member states, state of the art searches for the purpose of national procedures and to carry out searches at the request of third parties.

To keep pace with the higher demand for its services, the Office continued with its internal adjustments. With the completed deployment of the BEST<sup>5</sup> project, a number of changes have been made to the grant procedure to speed up patenting without sacrificing quality.

Since July 2005, all applications entering the European granting procedure are subject to an extended European search. Considering the success of the project when used for first filings, the EPO decided to expand the new process to all applications. The search report is now supplemented with the first substantive examination communication. This gives the applicants added value on the top of the

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<sup>5</sup> Bringing Examination and Search Together

search report and enables earlier risk management.

A new comprehensive quality management system was introduced at the EPO in 2005. By having implications at every stage of the procedure, as well as on training and equipment provided to examiners and including internal auditing of granted patents, the system aims at establishing a quality standard to reinforce the innovation support function of the EPO.

The EPO launched a "Scenario Project" to prepare its future, in order to realign if and where necessary the patent system and its significance in the years to come. The project is based on a series of interviews with different partners such as patent system users, experts and critics around the world to gather enough material to establish meaningful scenarios for the future development of the patent system. Results are expected to be presented in 2007.

**Table 2.1: PRODUCTION INFORMATION EPO**

<b>PRODUCTION FIGURES</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>
<b>Filings</b>		
Total Euro-direct & Euro-PCT international phase	180 662	193 623
Total Euro-direct & Euro-PCT regional phase	123 775	128 679
<b>Searches carried out</b>		
European searches (Euro & Euro-PCT supplementary)	77 984	74 068
PCT international searches	65 898	69 722
Searches on behalf of national offices and other searches	21 964	19 354
Total production search	165 846	163 144
<b>Examination: final actions performed</b>		
European examination	76 328	84 026
PCT Chapter II	27 805	17 975
Opposition (final action)	1 979	2 331
Total final actions examination / opposition	106 112	104 332
<b>Appeals settled</b>		
Technical appeals	1 369	1 395
PCT protests	32	37
Other appeals	50	50
Total decisions	1 451	1 482

In Table 2.1, the latest production figures for search (European, PCT and national searches), for examination (European and PCT Ch. II), for opposition and for appeal in the European procedure are given for the years 2004 and 2005.

In 2005, the Office production in search decreased by 2% to about 163 100 completed searches. While the examination work under the PCT has been further reduced, the number of final actions in European examination increased by 10% to 84 000. In 2005, 1 480 decisions in appeal were completed (2% more than in 2004).

## Documentation

The Office further improved the range and quality of its databases and online search tools. The EPO documentation database grew further in 2005. The electronically searchable EPO database contains more than 53 million patent documents. The non-patent literature now contains 62 million searchable abstracts. New databases were acquired in the fields of telecommunication standards and traditional knowledge. Special efforts helped to give users access to 1.3 million Chinese patent documents.

The EPO citation database currently contains 14 million references relating to 5 million applications or publications.

In 2005, a total of 236 million documents were viewed from EPOQUE, a rise of 25% over 2004.

The EPO's in-house classification system (ECLA<sup>6</sup>) is an expanded form of the IPC<sup>7</sup>. With 130 000 subclasses, it allows for fast and systematic access to the search documentation available in each technical field. The ECLA system is also used in [esp@cenet](mailto:esp@cenet), the free Internet service to access patent documents. A major activity in 2005 was the implementation of the IPC reform in the EPO's tool to make it ready for the new IPC to enter into force at the beginning of 2006.

The electronic filing tool epoline<sup>®</sup> made available by the EPO received a growing response from the users. About 23% of European applications were made using the online-filing offered within epoline<sup>®</sup>.

## Patent Information

The EPO is a producer of patent information products and services and has set up databases that are available not only for internal use, but also for dissemination by national offices. The products and services are presented under the acronym EPIDOS<sup>8</sup>. These products and services are available both directly to users and to commercial data suppliers.

The linking up of national patent libraries to form an information network (PATLIB<sup>9</sup>) is one of the key elements for the effective patent based transfer of knowledge in Europe. These information centres are equipped with CD-ROM workstations, which facilitate user access to patent documents.

On 1 April 2005, the European Publication Server became the official vehicle for the publication of European patent documents. This allows free publication of all European patent applications and patents on the Internet to replace the paper versions. The paper version of the European patent bulletin was discontinued at the end of 2004 and is replaced by the Internet version.

On 1 January 2005, the European Patent Academy opened its doors. In partnership with the IP offices of the member states, it will support the development and harmonization of patent-related intellectual property law and practice in the EPC contracting states by improving IP-related training and education structures in Europe.

The 2005 Patent Information Conference was held in Budapest in November in parallel with the European Commission's PATINOVA conference. Some 630 delegates and 40 exhibitors attended this

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<sup>6</sup> EPO CLAssification

<sup>7</sup> International Patent Classification. See [www.wipo.int/classifications/ipc/en/preface.htm](http://www.wipo.int/classifications/ipc/en/preface.htm)

<sup>8</sup> European Patent Information and DOcumentation Services - formerly INPADOC

<sup>9</sup> PATent LIBrary

joint event. The 2005 PATLIB conference took place in Romania in May. Co-organized with the Romanian Patent Office, it attracted 450 participants from 39 countries. The “Far East meets West” meeting was organised in Vienna, where patent information experts from Japan, China and Korea met with European patent users.

Among other events, an International Conference on “Intellectual property as an economic asset” was held in Berlin in June 2005 in cooperation with the OECD and the German Economics and Labour Ministry.

## **Technical Cooperation**

The EPO has pursued its cooperation with other European countries concerning IT infrastructure, promoting IP issues and modernising patent systems.

During 2005, substantial progress was made on the EPTOS<sup>10</sup> tool box. This system will soon provide the National Offices with a complete set of automation tools to manage their business of Patents, Trademarks and other types of Industrial Property.

In 2005, various technical projects were conducted in cooperation with the European Commission, the WIPO, the OHIM<sup>11</sup> and national local authorities. Such activities were held in Ukraine, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro. They aim at supporting the development of the local IP infra-structure and at fostering patent awareness in the countries.

In the context of the EC-ASEAN IP cooperation programme, the EPO contributed to the organization of seminars and workshops on geographical indication protection, IPR border control and IPC enforcement.

The annual joint committee meeting between the EPO and the Chinese Office (SIPO) agreed on the 2006 bilateral action plan, providing for the transition from a technical cooperation to a strategic partnership.

In cooperation with the WIPO and the French Office (INPI), a regional training centre for the African supranational Office OAPI was officially opened in Cameroon. The EPO agreed with the Egyptian Patent Office to set up a Patent Information Centre in Alexandria, and in cooperation with the WIPO to establish an IP training centre in Egypt.

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<sup>10</sup> Electronic Patent and Trademark Office System

<sup>11</sup> Office of Harmonization for the Internal Market

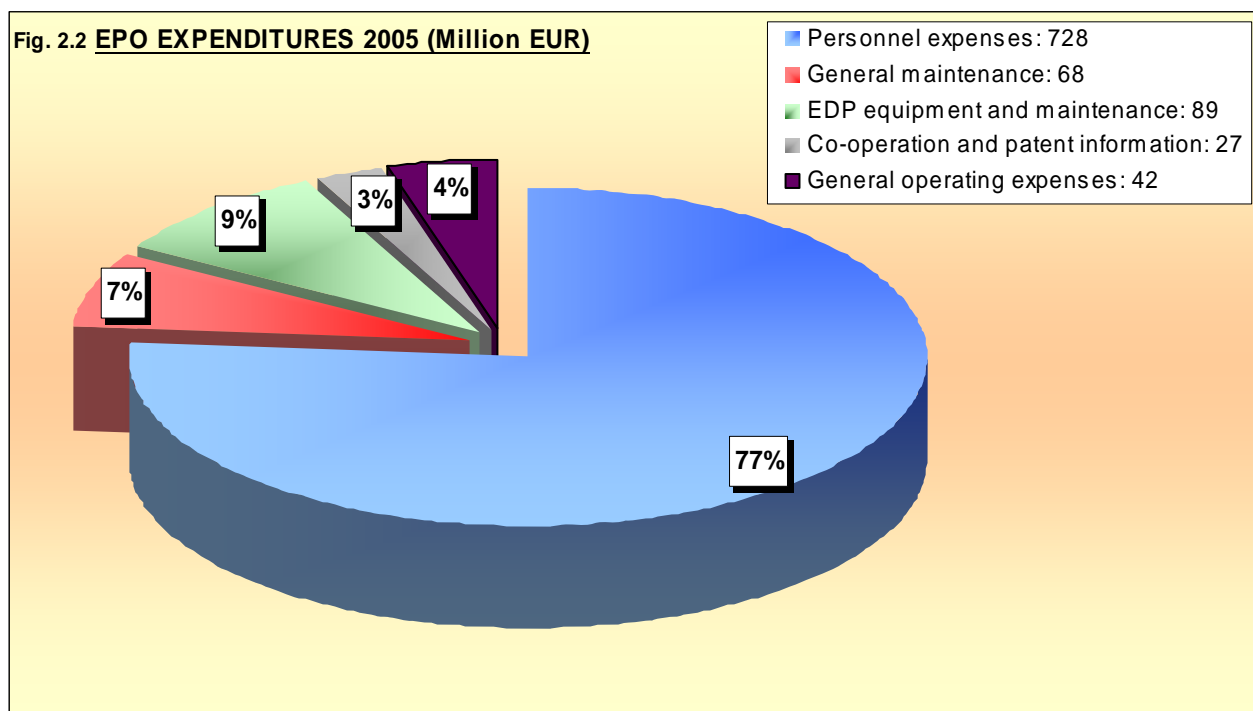
## EPO's budget

The EPO is financially autonomous. Expenditure is met entirely out of income, mainly consisting of fees paid by applicants and patentees. Procedural fees, such as the filing, search, examination, appeal fees, and renewal fees for European patent applications are paid to the EPO directly. These fees are recorded as income for the accounting year, irrespective of the fact that they may partly relate to work to be performed in later years. On the other hand, the renewal fees for European patents are collected by the designated contracting states and determined by national law. From these renewal fees, 50% is kept by the National Offices and 50% is transferred to the EPO.

Total expenditure in the year 2005 (excluding investments) was EUR 953 million. This breaks down into EUR 728 million (77%) for personnel expenses, EUR 68 million (7%) for general maintenance (including depreciation), EUR 89 million (9%) for EDP equipment and maintenance (including depreciation), EUR 26 million (3%) for patent information and cooperation with the contracting states and EUR 42 million (4%) for general operating expenses.

Total income to the EPO in 2005 amounted to EUR 1 005 million.

Detailed description of the budget items can be found in Annex 1.



## EPO Staff Composition

During 2005, the EPO increased its number of employees by 3.4% and 200 examiners have been recruited partly to compensate for departure. By the end of the year, the staff reached a total of 6 118, including 3 449 examiners in search, examination, opposition, and 138 members of Boards of Appeal.

Further information can be found from the EPO's Homepage:

[www.european-patent-office.org](http://www.european-patent-office.org)

## **JAPAN PATENT OFFICE**

The Japan Patent Office (JPO) is committed to comprehensive development of industry through planning and carrying out examinations and appeals under the system of industrial property rights, which includes patents, utility models, designs, and trademarks.

In order to ensure sustainable growth, it is essential for Japan to establish itself as an intellectual property-based nation where the achievements of intellectual creation activities become the source of national wealth. It is necessary to establish “the intellectual creation cycle” of creation, protection and exploitation of intellectual property in order to achieve an intellectual property-based nation. To this end, the JPO, which is responsible for the core of the intellectual property administration, shall continue specific measures to establish the human and system environments that will support the adequate protection and effective exploitation of intellectual property.

### **Examination and appeal examination**

In patent examination, the number of requests for examination has exceeded the number of first office actions for seven years since 1999. Furthermore, due to factors such as the ever-increasing examination burden due to technology becoming increasingly complex and advanced, and the number of international search reports rapidly rising, we are in a more severe examination environment than ever before. In addition, since the period to file a request for examination was shortened in October 2001, the number of requests is beginning to increase at a high rate (an increase of about 21%, from 330 000 in 2004 to 400 000 in 2005.)

Under these circumstances, the JPO has been making efforts to promote expeditious and accurate examinations through several approaches mentioned later. As a result, in 2005, the period for the first office action was 26 months on average.

The total number of requests for appeal examination in 2005 was 23 054, decreasing by 954 under the previous year.

### **Achieving expeditious and accurate patent examination at the highest global standard**

To strengthen the examination system, the JPO has scheduled to employ 500 fixed-term examiners for 5 years since FY 2004 in addition to increasing regular examiners. The JPO has employed 98 fixed-term employees every year from FY2004 to FY2006. Also, the JPO will further promote outsourcing of prior art search to registered search agencies in the private sector.

### **International efforts**

With the objective to expedite patent examination on a global scale and improve convenience for users, the JPO and the USPTO will commence the Patent Prosecution Highway (PPH) pilot program from July 2006 based on the discussion at the trilateral conference in 2005. The JPO will also promote the PPH plan with the Republic of Korea Office (KIPO) based on the agreement reached at the meeting between commissioners of JPO and KIPO. Furthermore, as anti-counterfeiting measures, the JPO will request the governments of infringing countries to strengthen protection of intellectual property, and will provide regulatory authorities of such countries with support for capacity building. The JPO will implement these measures proactively through close coordination between the government and private sectors and with cooperation from European countries and the United States.

### **Strengthening protection of designs and brands**

In order to strengthen the international competitiveness of Japanese companies, it is also absolutely



necessary to support activities to increase product values with attractive designs and brands. In the “Bill for Partial Revision to the Design Act and Related Acts” submitted to the current session of the Diet, it is proposed that the term of a design right should be extended from 15 years to 20 years, trademarks used by retailers should be protected as service marks, and an act of exporting counterfeits from Japan should be regarded as infringement. Also, the JPO will make active efforts to publicize and implement the regionally based collective mark system that was put into force in April 2006 for the protection of regional brands.

### Supporting local companies and SMEs

As measures for local companies and SME<sup>12</sup>s, the JPO will support revitalizations of local regions from the perspective of protecting and utilizing intellectual property, and also help SMEs that fall behind large companies in establishing systems for the strategic use of intellectual property. More specifically, the JPO will support “Regional Intellectual Property Strategy Headquarters” established in each regional block, and support the implementation of various projects such as holding seminars in accordance with the “Regional Intellectual Property Strategy Program” formulated by each headquarters. The JPO will also provide SMEs with support for conducting prior art search.

### Developing an environment to stimulate the Intellectual Property Cycle

The JPO will promote environmental development in order to stimulate the “Intellectual Creation Cycle,” which consists of creation, protection, and utilization of intellectual property, and achieve the goal of “making Japan an Intellectual Property-Based Nation.” Via the NCIP<sup>13</sup>, the JPO will carry out projects to enhance the essential infrastructures to achieve the goals of “information” and “human resources,” encouraging strategic protection and utilization of intellectual property in industry through an active exchange of opinions with business executives.

**Table 2.2: PRODUCTION INFORMATION JPO**

<b>PRODUCTION FIGURES</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>
<b>Applications filed</b>		
Domestic	368 416	367 960
Foreign	54 665	59 118
Total	423 081	427 078
<b>Grants</b>		
Domestic	112 527	111 088
Foreign	11 665	11 856
Total	124 192	122 944
Applications in appeal	24 008	23 054
(Acceptance)	(5 728)	(5 712)

### Budget

The JPO FY2005<sup>14</sup> budget totaled approximately 117 554 million yen. The breakdown of expenditures is as follows:

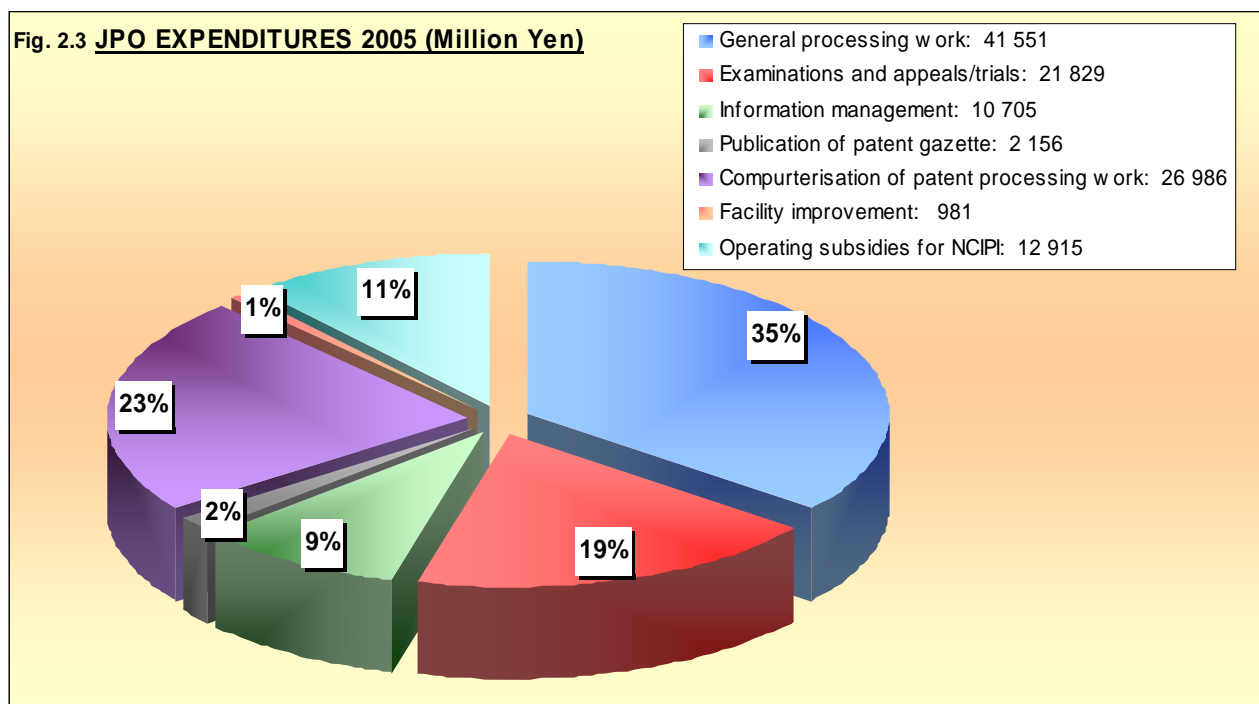
<sup>12</sup> Small and Medium size Enterprises

<sup>13</sup> National Center for Industrial Property Information and Training

<sup>14</sup> Period of JPO's FY2005 is from April 1, 2005 to March 31, 2006

- 41 551 million yen for general processing work (includes personnel expenses)
- (30 384 million yen for existing personnel)
- 21 829 million yen for examinations and appeals/trials, etc.
- 10 705 million yen for information management
- 2 156 million yen for publication of patent gazette, etc.
- 26 986 million yen for computerisation of patent processing work
- 981 million yen for facility improvement
- 12 915 million yen for operating for NCIPI (subsidy)
- 431 million yens for others.

Detailed description of the budget items can be found in Annex 1.



### JPO Staff Composition

As of the end of FY2005, the JPO employed a total of 2 651 staff. This includes 98 new fixed-term examiners to further cut the time required for examination.

Examiners:	1 557
Patent / Utility model:	1 358
Design:	51
Trademark:	148
Appeal examiners:	389
General staff:	705

Further information can be found from the JPO's Homepage:

<http://www.jpo.go.jp>

# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

## Mission Statement

The mission of the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) is to ensure that the intellectual property system contributes to a strong national and global economy, encourages investment in innovation, and fosters entrepreneurship. This mission is accomplished by the USPTO through its two distinct business lines, Patents and Trademarks, which embodies Intellectual Property inventions or creations and aims to:

- ❑ Promote the progress of science and the useful arts by securing, for limited times to inventors, the exclusive rights to their respective discoveries (Article 1, Section 8 of the United States Constitution).
- ❑ Provide businesses with enhanced protection of trademark rights and notices of the trademark rights claimed by others, as well as protect consumers against confusion and deception in the marketplace.
- ❑ Build the infrastructure for innovation and lead the way in creating a quality-focused, highly productive, responsive organization that supports a market-driven Intellectual Property system for the 21st Century.

## Services and Operations

As an agency of the United States Department of Commerce, the primary services provided by the USPTO are examining patent and trademark applications and disseminating patent and trademark information. The USPTO encourages technological advancement by providing incentives to invent, invest in, and disclose new technology by issuing patents.

The USPTO provides valued products and services to its customers in exchange for fees that are appropriated to fund its operations. The powers and duties of the USPTO are vested in the Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the USPTO, who consults with the Patent Public Advisory Committee and the Trademark Public Advisory Committee. The Commissioners of Patents and Trademarks act as the chief operating officers of the agency's two major business lines.

## USPTO Strategic Plan

The USPTO has faced unprecedented challenges in recent years including increasingly complex technology and resource limitations. In response to customer demands for higher quality products and services and Congressional concerns about the agency's ability to continue to operate under a traditional business model, in fiscal year 2002 the USPTO implemented the 21st Century Strategic Plan. This plan also assists the USPTO in carrying out the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), which requires U.S. agencies to plan and measure the performance of their programs. The 21st Century Strategic Plan was updated in fiscal year 2003 and it covers the period through fiscal year 2008. The goal of the plan is to transform the USPTO into a responsive and flexible agency capable of competing in a global, market-driven economy.

With the passage of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2005 (P.L. 108-447) in December 2004, certain fee changes were enacted for two fiscal years with the USPTO receiving full access to its projected fee income for 2005. This allows the USPTO to move forward with many of the initiatives contained in the 21st Century Strategic Plan. The plan builds the foundation to facilitate improvements in patent and trademark quality and address increases in pendency due to the growing complexity of applications and increasing workloads. The USPTO will continue to explore all opportunities available to optimize patent and trademark quality and processing times, including working with its IP partners on worksharing initiatives, expanding and training examination staff with a focus on core examination functions, and working with customers and stakeholders on changes to processes which will aid in meeting the workload challenges it faces. Additionally, the USPTO continues to focus on increasing the number of applications and communications received and processed electronically, as well as other e-government initiatives. Strengthening worldwide protection and enforcement of intellectual property is also a priority of the USPTO, as many of its initiatives address this effort. Achievement of the USPTO's long-term goals is dependent upon permanent authorization of the revised fee schedule that was set forth in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2005.

### **Intellectual Property Protection**

Throughout fiscal year 2005, strengthening intellectual property protection and enforcement was one of the main themes of USPTO efforts worldwide. Officials from the USPTO discussed ways of enhancing protection for copyrights, geographical indications, patents, trademarks, trade secrets and other forms of intellectual property in China, Brazil, Russia, Turkey, India, throughout Asia, the Middle East region, and the continent of Africa, as well as for the countries with which the United States is negotiating or has negotiated Free Trade Agreements (Thailand, Andean countries, Oman, United Arab Emirates, and the Southern Africa Customs Union).

Fiscal year 2005 marked the expansion of IP protection and enforcement programs, which included training assistance programs; special work assignments aimed at enhancing technical assistance; a public awareness campaign; and studies on key intellectual property issues. Attorney specialists from the Office of International Relations and the Office of Enforcement provided country specific review of intellectual property laws, and recommended strengthened enforcement provisions along with training of judges, prosecutors, customs officials, and intellectual property office technical staff. Broader multilateral training programs, such as the intellectual property Enforcement Academy and the Visiting Scholars Program were offered to representatives of a variety of countries throughout the year.

Piracy and counterfeiting continued as major concerns during 2005, and the USPTO has worked closely with the State Department, the Office of the United States Trade Representative, the Department of Commerce, and others on these vital issues. As part of the President's Strategy Targeting Organized Piracy! (STOP!) initiative, the USPTO worked with other U.S. government agencies on the shared goal of fighting piracy and counterfeiting. The USPTO staffed the STOP! hotline, 1-866-999-HALT, which lets callers receive information from our attorneys with regional expertise on intellectual property rights and enforcement. The STOP! gateway website, [www.stopfakes.gov](http://www.stopfakes.gov), features specialized information, including USPTO-designed "intellectual property toolkits" to help businesses protect their rights in other countries, such as China, Korea, and Mexico. The USPTO will continue to work with other countries to build a consensus and protect America's IP community.

**Table 2.3: PRODUCTION INFORMATION USPTO**

<b>PRODUCTION FIGURES</b>	<b>2004</b>		<b>2005</b>	
<b>Applications Filed<sup>15</sup></b>	356 943		390 733	
<b>First Actions<sup>16</sup></b>	288 530		302 659	
<b>Grants</b>				
U.S. Residents	84 271	51%	74 637	52%
Foreign	80 022	49%	69 169	48%
Japan	35 350	22%	30 341	21%
EPC states	26 246	16%	22 182	15%
Others	18 426	11%	16 646	12%
Total	164 293	100%	143 806	100%
PCT Chapter II	17 030		11 427	
<b>Applications in appeal and interference proceedings</b>				
Ex-parte Appeal Contested	2 387		2 973	
Ex-parte Appeal Disposed	3 355		2 888	
Inter-partes Appeal Contested	70		109	
Inter-partes Appeal Disposed	99		106	
<b>Patent Cases in Litigation</b>				
Cases filed	66		51	
Cases disposed	61		55	
Pending cases (end of calendar year)	42		42	

### USPTO's budget

In calendar year 2005, USPTO expenditures reached \$1.5 billion. USPTO expenditures are divided into seven major categories: salaries and benefits, equipment, rent and utilities, printing, supplies and materials, contracts/services, and all other expenses.

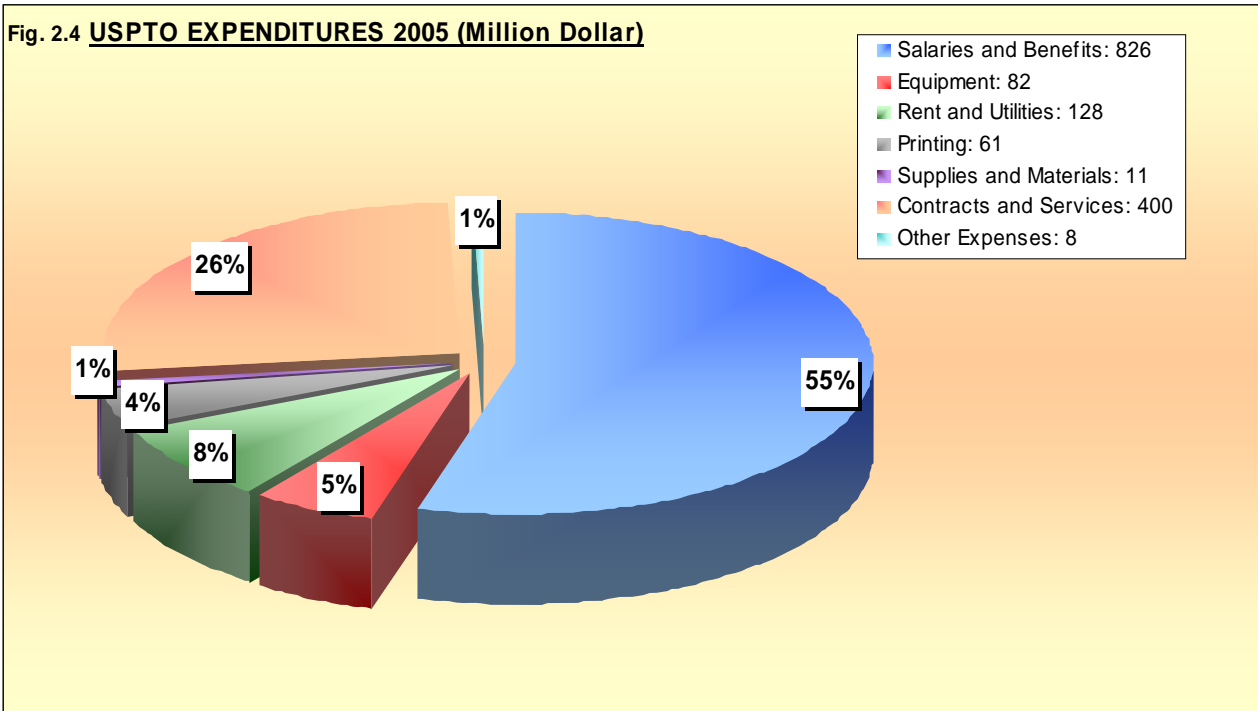
The majority of expenditures in 2005 were attributed to the USPTO's labor force. Salaries and benefits accounted for 54.5 percent of overall expenditures, or about \$826 million. Contracts and services were the second major expenditure, which represented about 26.4 percent of expenditures. Rent and utilities were the third largest at 8.4 percent. A breakdown of all the major spending categories is shown in Fig. 2.4.

Detailed description of the budget items can be found in Annex 1.

<sup>15</sup> For utility patents only

<sup>16</sup> Utility, plant, and reissue patents

Fig. 2.4 **USPTO EXPENDITURES 2005 (Million Dollar)**



### USPTO Staff Composition

In fiscal year<sup>17</sup> 2005, the total staff at the USPTO was 7 363. The Patent staff total was 5 699. This total was comprised of 4 177 Utility, Plant and Reissue (UPR) examiners, 81 Design examiners, and 1 441 managerial, administrative and technical support staff. As reported in past Trilateral Statistical Reports, the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences is no longer part of the Patent organization. It is now part of the Office of General Counsel (OGC), which has approximately 230 employees and consists of five organizations that are concerned with legal review of agency decisions, defense of agency decisions in court and administrative tribunals, internal agency legal advice, and regulation of persons practicing before the USPTO. The number of employees on the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences decreased in 2005, and the total at the end of the year was 103.

### More Information

Further information can be found from the USPTO 's Homepage:

<http://www.uspto.gov>

<sup>17</sup> Period of USPTO's FY2005 is from October 1, 2004 to September 30, 2005

## Chapter 3

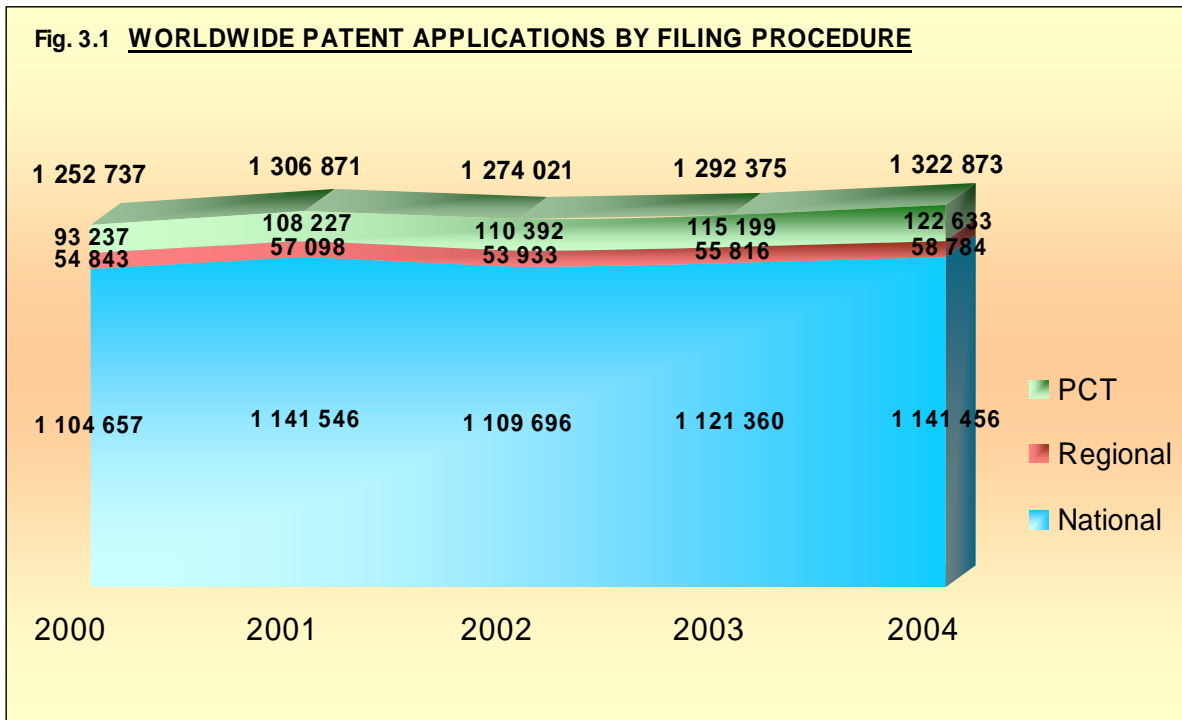
# **WORLDWIDE PATENTING ACTIVITY**

Although the Trilateral Offices represent a significant proportion of total patents worldwide, the global picture is not complete without including the other offices from around the world. This chapter examines worldwide patent activities in terms of patent applications and grants. The statistics mostly cover a five-year period from 2000 to 2004. More current and detailed data from the Trilateral Offices are presented in Chapter 4. Comparable statistics on the usage of the PCT system appear in Chapter 5.

Applications reported hereafter are counted by the calendar year of filing and grants by the calendar year of granting.

## PATENT APPLICATIONS FILED

The data in Fig. 3.1 below show the numbers of applications filed all over the world.

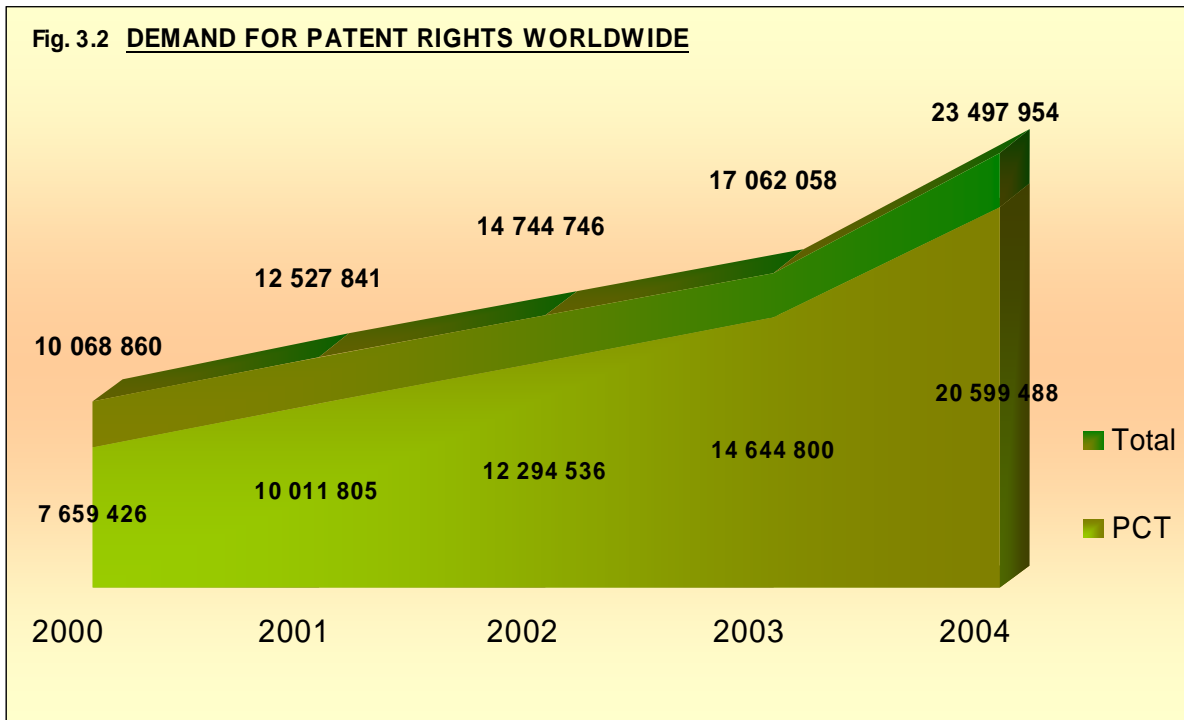


About 1.3 million applications were filed in 2004. This represented the number of actions taken in 2004 to protect inventions around the world. This is slightly higher than during the previous years. Although most of these applications were filed according to national procedures (86% in 2004), the growth in filings is also led by the ever-increasing use of supranational systems and in particular the PCT system.

Considering that not all the offices report filing statistics on a regular basis, one should be careful in interpreting this data. It can at least be concluded that they show a continuing tendency to use the patent systems in the world and that this does not seem to decline over time.



Fig. 3.2 below shows the development of the worldwide demand for patent rights including cumulated supranational designations. This gives an indication of the number of individual patent applications that would be required if there were no supranational patent systems to obtain the same geographical coverage for inventions.



This figure contains the numbers of designations at filing in regional and international applications, as well as national filings. In January, 2004, the PCT rules were revised to introduce a "deemed all designation system", or automatic designation of all participating countries from one international application. It should be reemphasised that Fig. 3.2 represents multiple applications for sovereign rights within the distinct application events. This factor probably explains the large increase in the number of PCT designations in 2004 compared to 2003. It can also be mentioned that, even before 2004, the fee scheme for filing international applications led to many or all participating countries usually being designated.

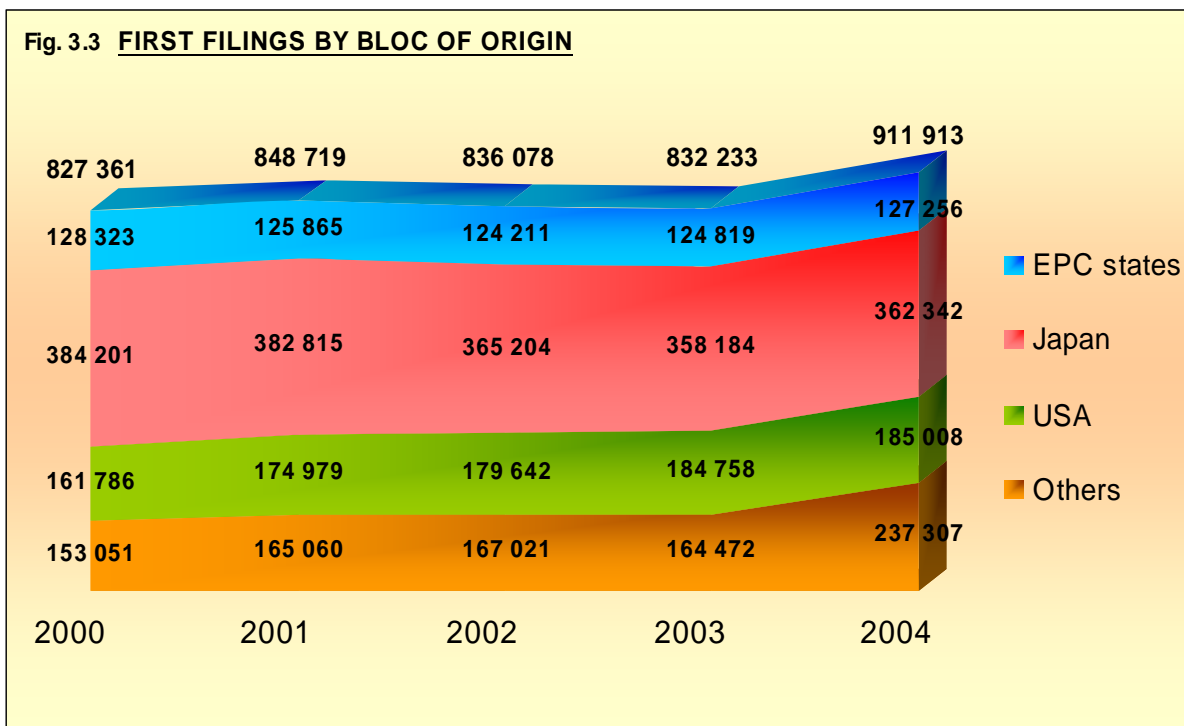
Demands for patent rights have been increasing at an average compound rate of 24% per year since 2000 (19% per year for 2000 to 2003, 38% from 2003 to 2004). In 2004 the total demand reached nearly 23 498 000, of which 88% was made from multiple designations via the PCT route.

Although most of the applications were filed according to national procedures, in fact a large part of the demand arises from multiple designations under the PCT system. On average in 2004, 17.8 designations were made for each application. In 2000 the comparable figure was only 8.0 designations for each application, and in 2003 it was 13.2 designations for each application.

# PATENT ACTIVITY BY BLOCS

## FIRST FILINGS

The process of patent protection starts with first filing, an initial patent application made to protect an invention or an innovation prior to any subsequent filing to extend the protection to other countries. The development of first filings in the major filing blocs is shown in Fig. 3.3.



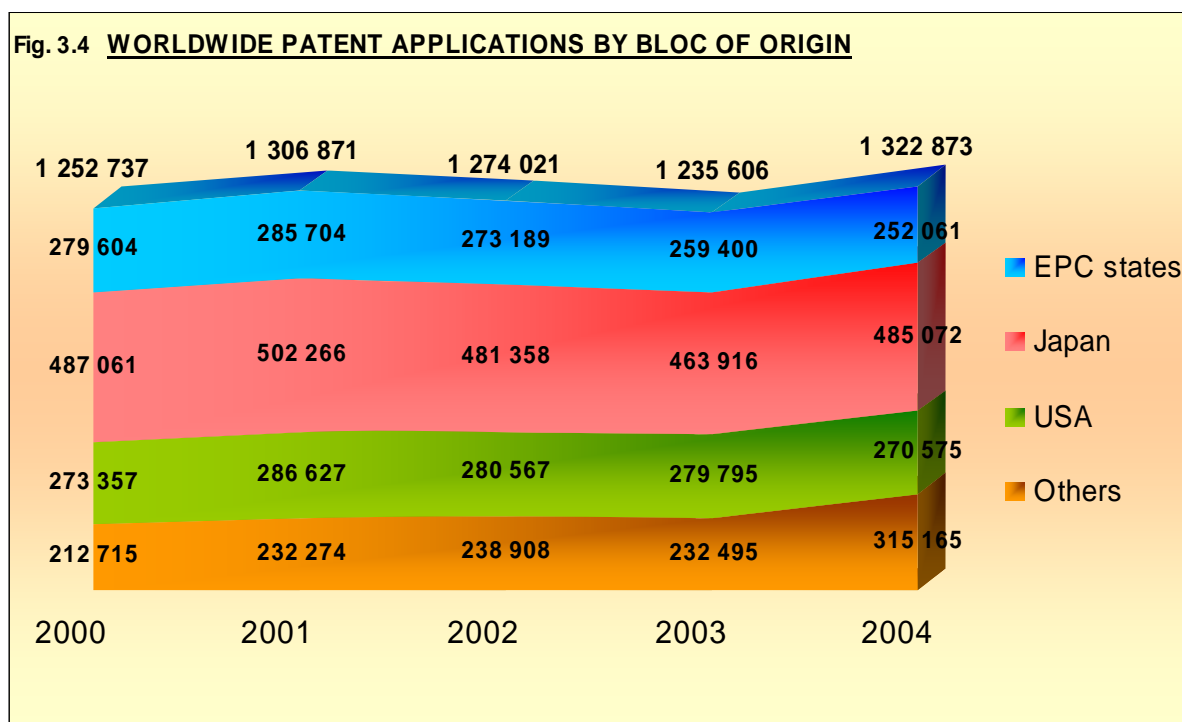
The number of first filings increased by 9.6% to 912 000 from 2003 to 2004. This compares to an effective lack of growth from 2000 to 2003. There were increases recorded in all blocs except for USA.

Japan recorded 362 342 first filings (about 40% of the whole) as the highest number in 2004, but shows a tendency to decrease compared with 384 201 (about 46% of the whole) in 2000. The EPC contracting states recorded 127 256 in 2004. USA recorded 185 008 in 2004 (only 0.1% increase over 2003), but did previously show a tendency to increase from 2000 to 2003.

The total number of first filings in 2003 was 832 233. From these first filings, one year later, in 2004, 410 960 subsequent filings were filed. Thus on average one invention, for which one first filing was made, led to 0.49 subsequent filings. The use of the international and regional patent systems allows for the filing of fewer applications for a broader geographical coverage of the protected inventions. So it does not follow that a first filing is extended on average to less than 1 other country, but that at that stage the centralized procedures allow a reduction of the number of subsequent applications while nevertheless expanding the provisional protection to a large number of countries. The selection of the countries where protection is to be obtained can then be reviewed at any time in the subsequent granting procedures.

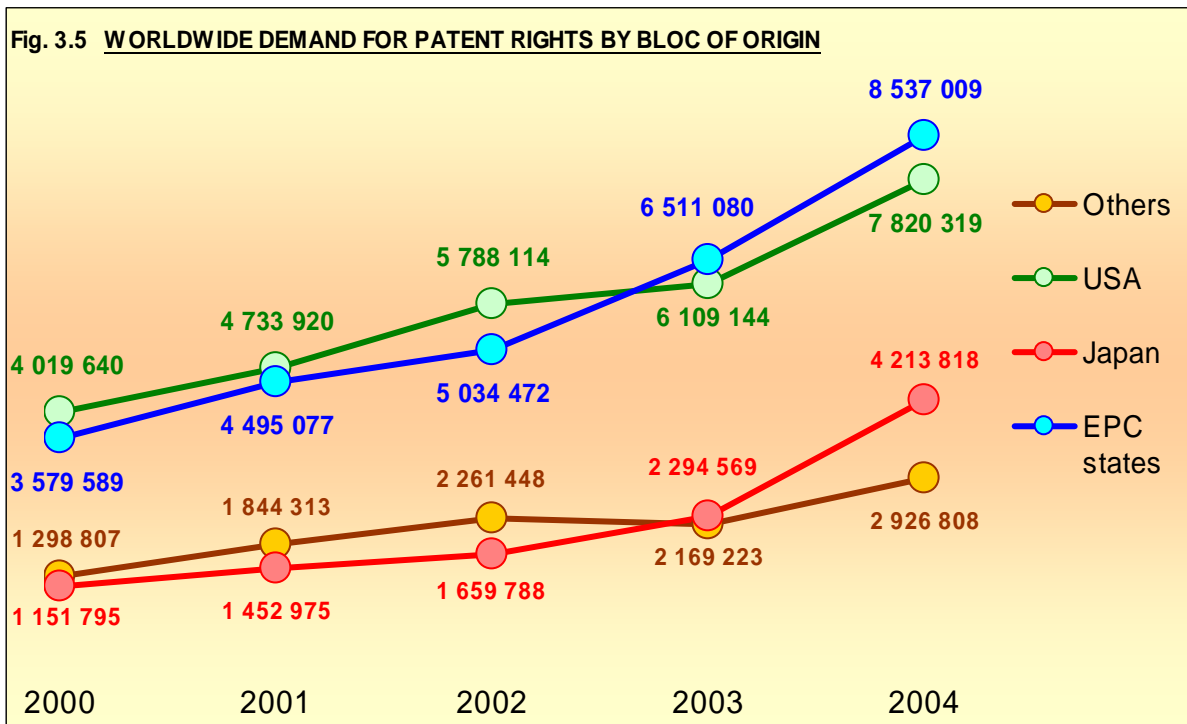
## ORIGIN OF THE APPLICATIONS

Fig. 3.4 shows the worldwide numbers of applications, categorized by the blocs of origin of the applicants.



Japan remained the bloc from which the largest share of applications were originating. Whilst the number of applications filed by residents of Europe and the USA tended to decline, the number of applications by residents of the rest of the world increased substantially in 2004. This might reflect different ways of using the patent systems among the different regions. Compared to Fig. 3.1, applications for which the country of origin could not be determined were not taken into account in Fig. 3.4.

Fig. 3.5 shows the origin of the demand for patent rights including cumulated designations. Although the demand from residents in the USA and EPC contracting states was increasing (28% and 31% respectively) in 2004, the demand from residents in Japan was increasing at an especially high rate (84%).

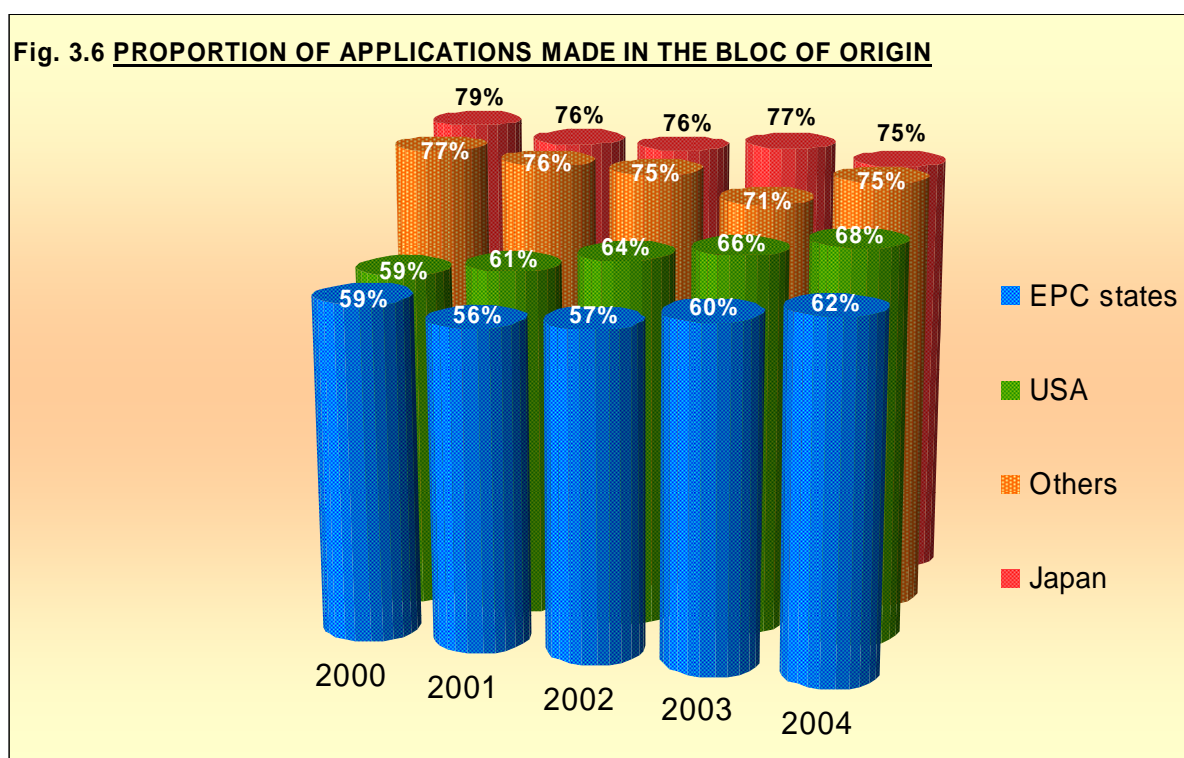


Reasons for the large increase in demand for patent rights since 2004 are discussed under Fig. 3.2. Fig 3.5 shows that these increases have been taken up fairly strongly by Japan and USA based applicants, while the relative increase for EPC based applicants is not so great because they were already previously using the PCT system to a great extent.

## TARGETS OF THE APPLICATIONS

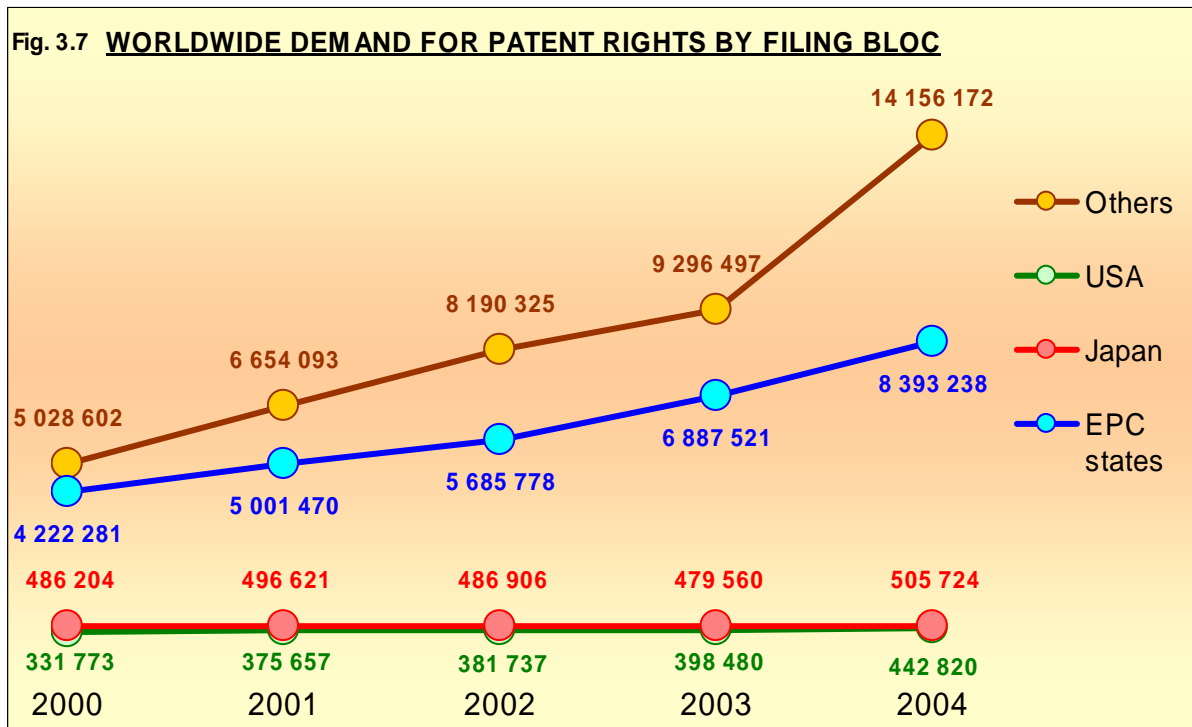
Fig. 3.6 shows, for applications filed throughout the world by the residents of each bloc, the proportions of those applications that were made in bloc of origin. In most cases, the first filing is made in the country of residence and subsequent applications are made to protect the invention abroad.

The proportion of applications made in the bloc of origin is highest in Japan and "Others" (both 75%), followed in order by USA (increasing to 68%) and EPC contracting states (increasing to 62%). EPC contracting states have shown a tendency to increase since 2001 and USA also shows an upward trend. Japan seems to have no clear trend, while "Others" showed a dip in 2003.



On the whole, the proportions are increasing. This is because the increasing use of regional and international procedures leads to rather less use of national procedures to apply abroad. Therefore patent users filed somewhat fewer applications abroad, even though they may continue to apply more and more to protect their inventions by a first filing. As a consequence, out of the total number of applications filed, the share of applications filed abroad diminished, leading to an apparent increase of the proportion of filings made in the bloc of origin.

Fig. 3.7 shows information on demand for patent rights including cumulated designations categorized by the target blocs in which patent rights are sought.

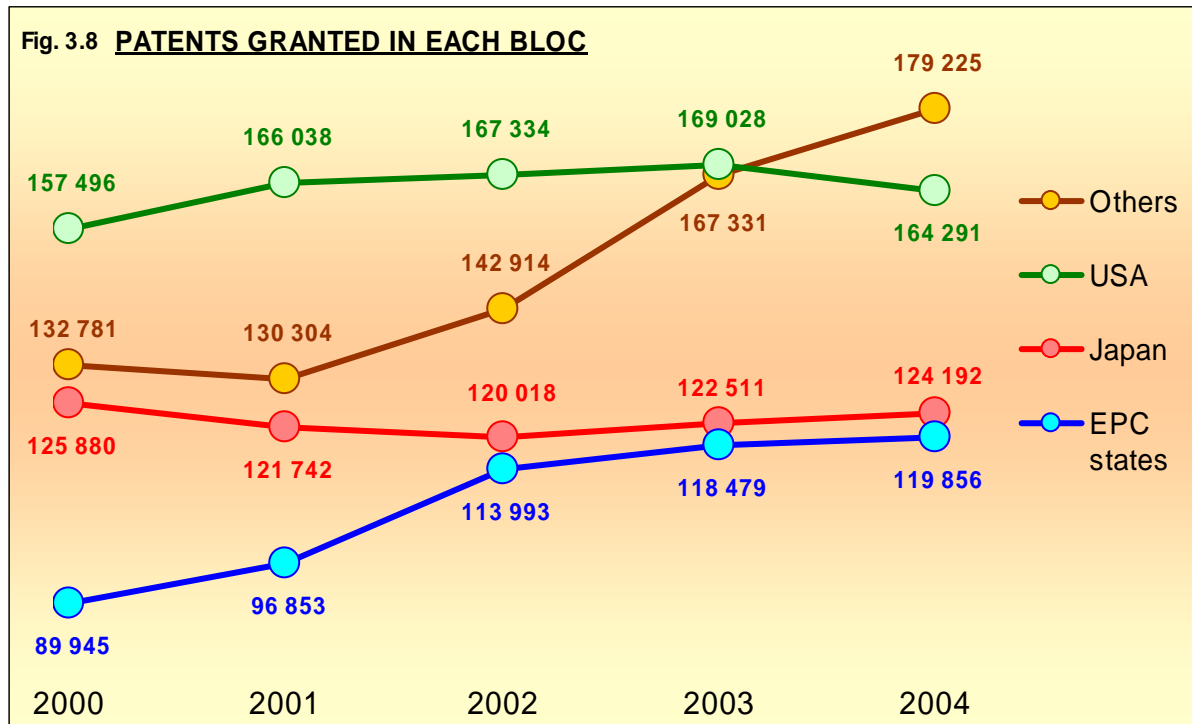


Following the behaviour described under Fig. 3.5, it can be seen here that the rule change in the PCT system has led to a large increase in demand for patent rights in "Others".

Demand in "Others" is the highest followed by the EPC contracting states. The demand increased in all blocs over the period 2000-2004. Within the Trilateral blocs, the relative change was the highest in the EPC contracting states (99% increase overall, 18% compound increase per year for 2000 to 2003, 22% increase from 2003 to 2004), followed by the USPTO (33% increase overall), and Japan (4% increase overall).

## GRANTS

The development of the use of patent systems is shown in Fig. 3.8 in terms of the cumulative numbers of patents granted by the various offices in each bloc.

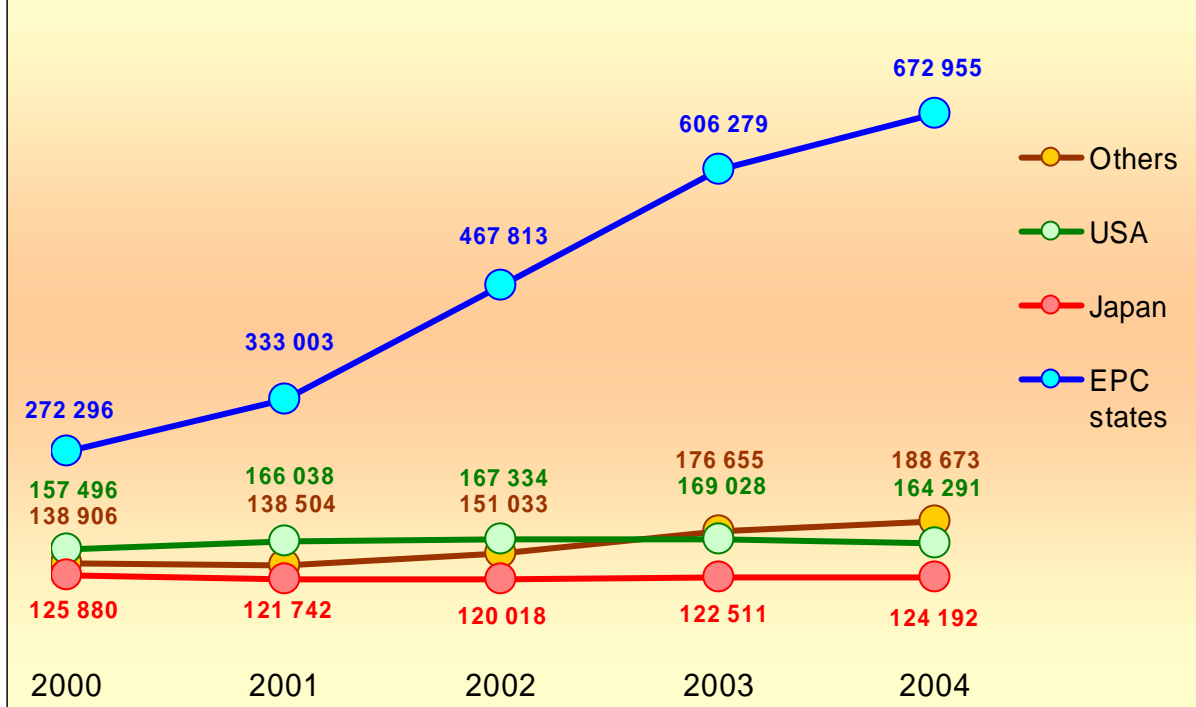


Though there is an overall increase of the number of patents granted throughout the world, the changes are not simultaneous and of the same amplitude in the various regions. After a marked decline during the late 1990's, the number of granted patents increased slightly in Japan since 2002. In the USA, the number declined in 2004 and it is below the 2001 level, while in the EPC grants have continued to increase, though at a lower pace than in 2001 and 2002.

In the other countries, the rise is partly due to more reported figures as well as to a genuine marked increase in the numbers of granted patents in some countries, especially China (+33%), Republic of Korea (+11%), Canada (+13%), Singapore (+38%) and Hong Kong (+38%).

Regional granting procedures lead to multiple patent rights in the various designated states within the region concerned. Fig. 3.9 shows the development of grants as reflected in these rights, and differs from Fig. 3.8 only for those blocs where regional procedures exist in addition to national ones (EPC contracting states and "Others").

**Fig. 3.9 PATENT RIGHTS GRANTED IN EACH BLOC**



The number of patent rights worldwide has a tendency to increase since 2000. In 2004, the number recorded was about 1 150 000, or a 10 % increase from 2003 to 2004. In Japan and the USA, the changes are relatively small after 2000.

In the EPC states, a growing number of patents were granted via the regional procedure, after entry to the EPO either directly or via the PCT system. This explains the large numbers of patent rights granted there (for EPC there was a growth of 11% from 2003 to 2004, while Fig. 3.8 shows that this was from an increase of only 4.3% in actual grant actions).

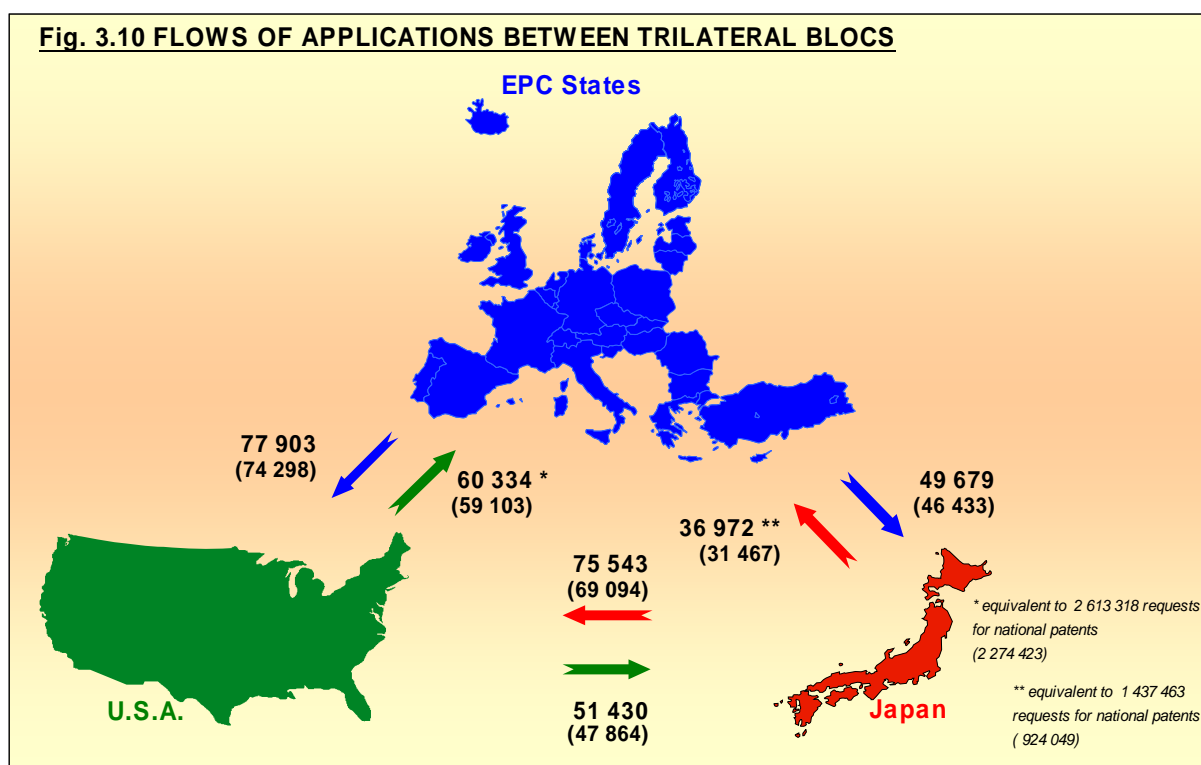


## INTERBLOC ACTIVITY

### FLOWS OF APPLICATIONS

The flows of patent applications and requests for patent rights between the three major filing blocs are described next. Fig. 3.10 shows details of the specific flows of applications between the trilateral blocs in 2004. The 2003 figures are given in brackets.

As in 2004, Japanese applicants file many more applications in the USA than in the EPC area. US applicants tend to apply more in the EPC area than in Japan. Residents of EPC contracting states file many more applications in the USA than they do in Japan.



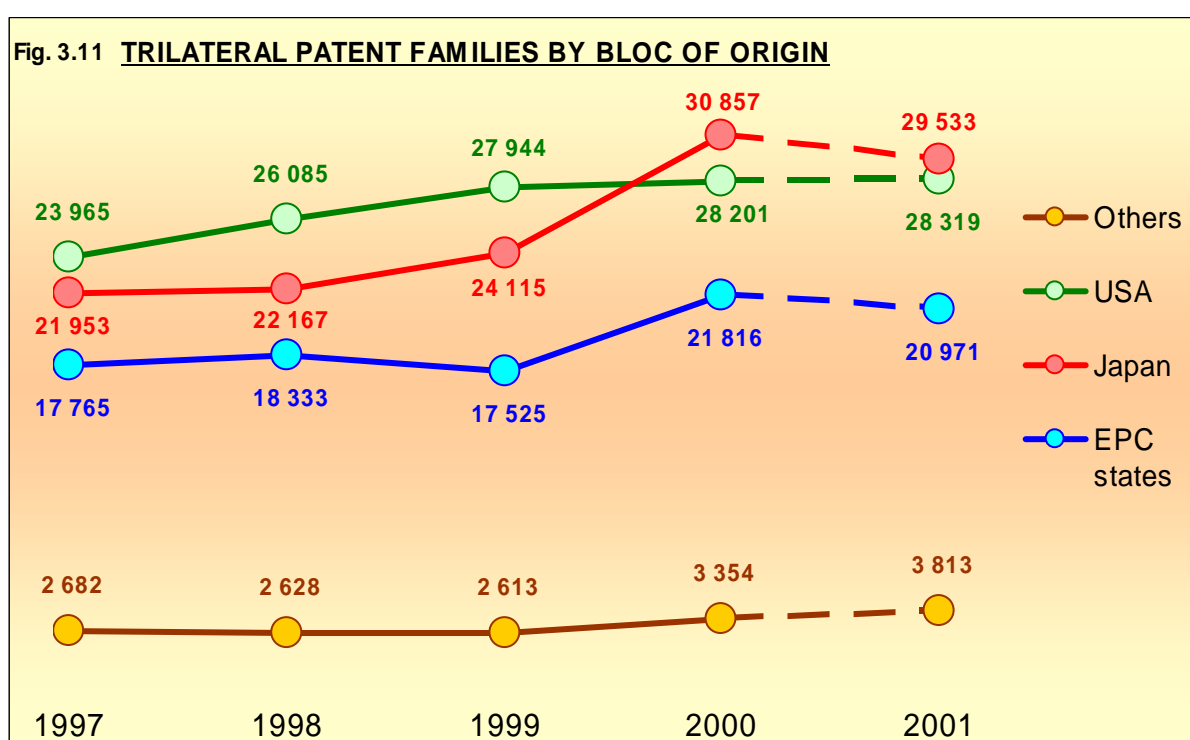
The notes (\*) and (\*\*) in the graph allow a comparison of the flows of applications to EPC contracting states with the equivalent flows expressed in terms of rights including cumulative designations<sup>18</sup>. Applicants from the USA filed 60 334 applications in the EPC contracting states, equivalent to 2 613 318 national patent applications (43.3 per application; 38.5 in 2003). Japanese applicants filed 36 972 applications in the EPC contracting states, equivalent to 1 437 463 national patent applications (38.9 per application; 29.4 in 2003). If there had been no supranational systems, applicants from the USA and Japan would not have filed so many applications in Europe. The supranational procedures allow them to seek patent protection in more European countries by filing far fewer applications.

<sup>18</sup> See the remarks after Fig. 3.2 for explanations on the figures for requests for national patents in footnotes \* and \*\* of Fig. 3.10.

## PATENT FAMILIES

The information in this section was obtained indirectly from the DOCDB database of worldwide patent publications. The statistics are based on references to priorities given in published applications and differ slightly from the statistics earlier in this chapter, which are based on counts of patent applications provided by individual patent offices. Detailed tables that show the flows of patent families between blocs can be seen in the web based annex to this report.

The development over time of trilateral patent families is shown in Fig. 3.11. Due to the delay in publication (from the moment of filing), the figures can only be reported with any degree of accuracy after several years of delay. The figures for references to priorities and flows between trilateral blocs are fairly accurate up to the year 2001, but the figures for trilateral patent families may not be accurate after the year 2000 because for them there needs to be time to gather the evidence of activity in all three blocs.

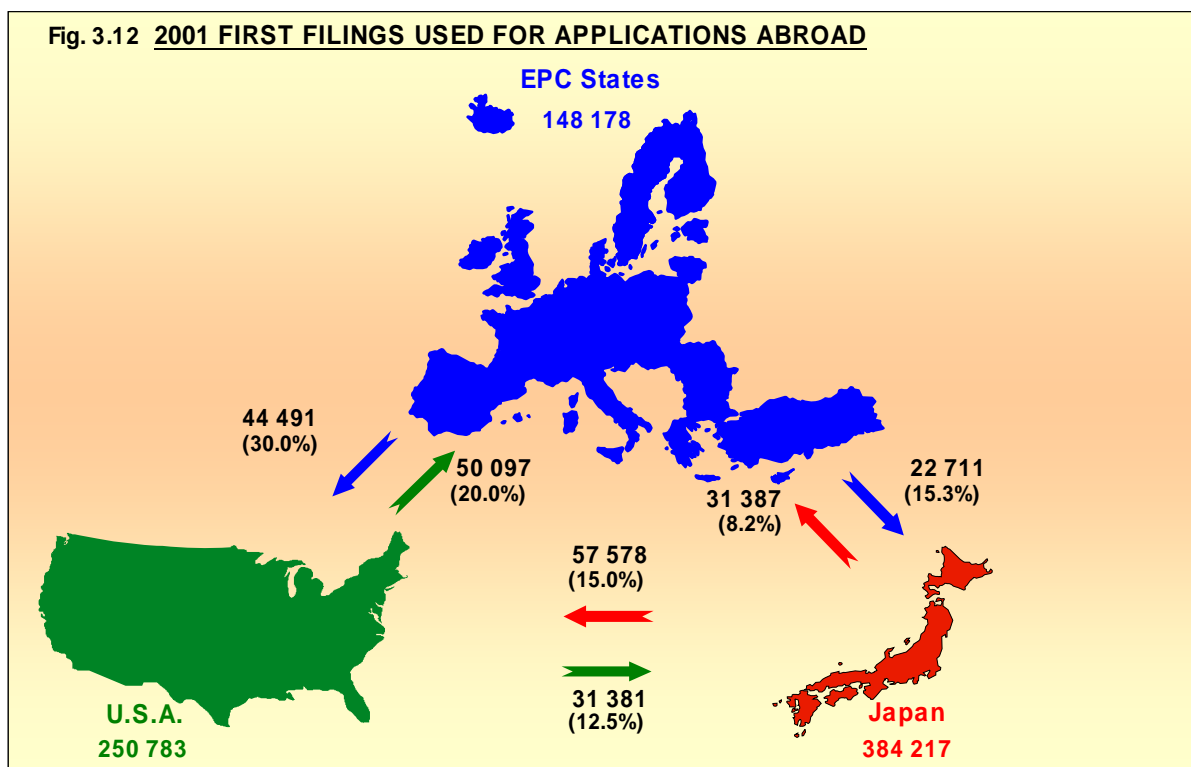


The trilateral patent families' data turned upwards for Japan and EPC states in 2000, while the data for USA was fairly stable over the period to 2000. The total number of trilateral patent families in 2000 was 84 228, of which 25.9% originated from EPC contracting states, 36.6% from Japan, 33.5% from the USA and 4.0% from other states. The corresponding figures for 1999 were a total of 72 197 trilateral patent families, of which 24.3% originated from EPC contracting states, 33.4% from Japan, 38.7% from the USA and 3.6% from other states.

Out of all priority forming filings in the trilateral area in 2000, 10.8% formed trilateral patent families. The proportions differed considerably according to the bloc of origin of the priority forming filings. For EPC contracting states, 14.2% of priority forming filings formed trilateral patent families (was 14.3% in 1999); for USA 11.3% (was 13.1%); for Japan 7.7% (was 8.1%), and for other countries 1.6% (was 1.5%).

A striking feature of Fig. 3.11 is that the numbers of trilateral patent families for EPC contracting states and Japan increased by around 25% in one step between 1999 and 2000. This is probably to be explained by the fact that USPTO started publishing applications for priority filings in 2000 and so the numbers of trilateral families coming from abroad will be more accurately reflected from 2000 onwards. Prior to 2000, there was a censoring effect against the other blocs since a patent application that terminated before grant in USPTO could not be counted as part of a trilateral patent family.

The flows of patent families between trilateral blocs are shown in Fig. 3.12. The number given for each bloc is the total number of distinct references to priority filings in 2001. This can be taken as an indicator of the number of first filings in the bloc. The flow figures between blocs of origin and target blocs indicate the numbers of secondary filings in the target bloc that referenced priority filings from the bloc of origin in 2001.



From information tabulated in the web-based annex of this report, out of all first filings in the trilateral area in 2001, only 20.3% formed patent families including at least one other trilateral bloc. When considered by bloc of the priority applications, this proportion was much smaller for Japan than for the other blocs (31.2% for EPC contracting states, 15.5% for Japan, and 21.2% for USA). However the absolute number of such filings for Japan (59 432) was larger than the filings from the other blocs (EPC contracting states 46 231, USA 53 159) due to the large number of first filings in Japan. When the trilateral blocs receiving subsequent applications from the trilateral area are considered, a larger proportion of filings were received by USA than by the other blocs (12.8% by EPC contracting states, 13.6% by Japan, and 19.2% by USA). From all the priority forming first filings throughout the world in 2001, 17.5% formed patent families including at least one trilateral bloc.

## Chapter 4

# **PATENT ACTIVITY AT TRILATERAL OFFICES**

This chapter presents trends in patent application filings and grants at Trilateral Offices. These statistics are generally more up-to-date than those presented in Chapter 3, since information appears here for 2005. Regarding Europe, statistics are for EPO only and trends in the patent offices of the EPC contracting states are not covered. Whereas the EPO is indicated from the viewpoint of an office, EPC contracting states are indicated as a region from which patent applications are originating.

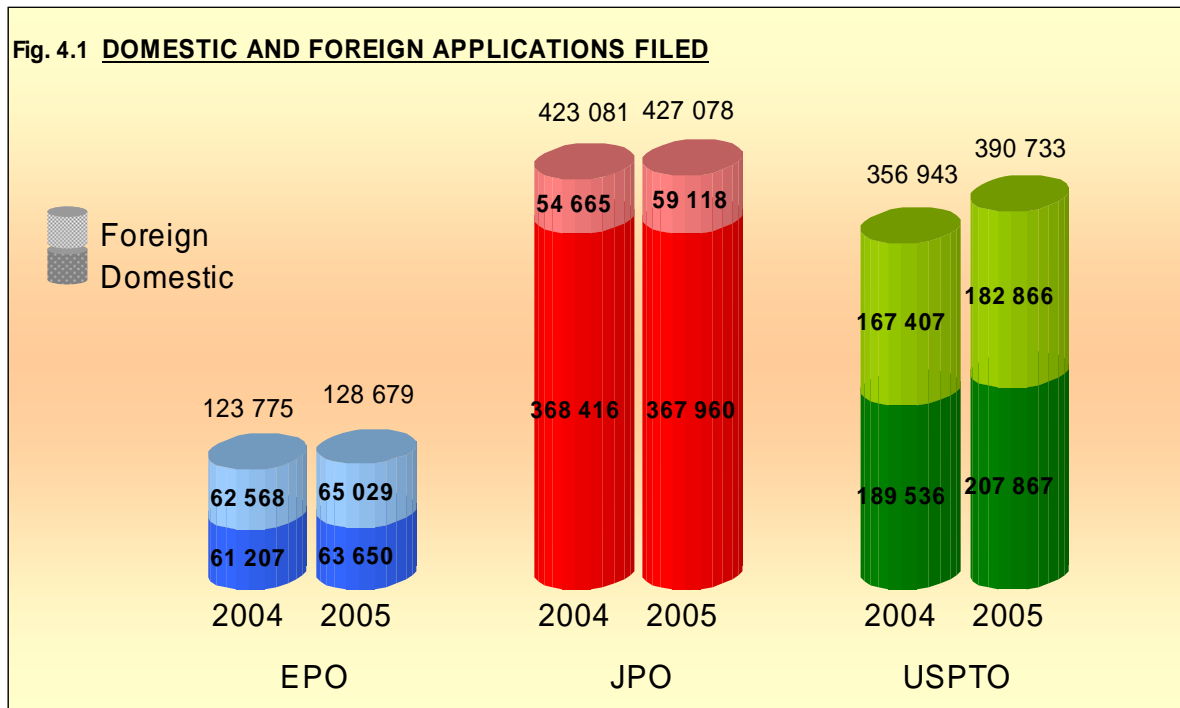
Demand at Trilateral Offices is demonstrated by statistics on patent applications filed. In this chapter, statistics will be presented for the total of direct national/regional applications filed and PCT applications entering the national/regional phase.

In the statistics on granted patents, direct, regional and international applications granted are taken into account. Since in this context the statistics are meant to give insight to the work involved rather than the number of resulting individual patent rights, hereinafter "patents granted" will correspond to the number of grant actions (issuances or publications).

# APPLICATIONS WITH THE TRILATERAL OFFICES

## PATENT APPLICATIONS FILED

The numbers of domestic (residents of the country) and foreign (non-residents) patent applications filed with each one of the Trilateral Offices for the years 2004 and 2005 are shown in Fig 4.1.



There were a total of 427 078 patent applications filed with the JPO in 2005, which is an increase of 3 997 filings or 0.9% above 2004. The number of patent application filings at the EPO increased by 4 904 (4.0%). USPTO patent application filings also increased over 2004 levels by 33 790 (9.5%).

































































