

Executive Summary

The IP5 Statistics Report (IP5 SR) is an annual compilation of patent statistics for the five largest intellectual property (IP) offices – the IP5 Offices – namely the European Patent Office (EPO), the Japan Patent Office (JPO), the Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO), the China National Intellectual Property Administration (CNIPA) and the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO).

- At the end of 2019, 14.9 million patents were in force in the world (+6.9 percent). 91 percent of these patents were in force in one of the IP5 Office jurisdictions.
- In 2019, 3.2 million patent applications were filed worldwide, either as direct national, direct regional or international phase PCT applications, of which 94 percent originated from the IP5 Blocs.
- In 2019, 89 percent of the worldwide patent applications were filed as direct national applications. The proportion of applications filed via the PCT remained stable.
- In 2020, 2.8 million patent applications were filed at the IP5 Offices (+2.1 percent).
- Together the IP5 Offices granted 1.3 million patents in 2020 (+6.3 percent).
- At the IP5 offices, there have not been significant delays in their first action pendency and total pendency for patent applications.
- In 2020, the main developments at the IP5 Offices were:
 - IP5: In July, the 13th meeting of the IP5 Heads of Office was held virtually. The IP5 Heads agreed in the meeting to continue to strengthen their co-operation in the area of intellectual property (IP), including tackling challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and providing better services for users and the public. They confirmed that the five offices would continue to pursue IP5 initiatives to advance cooperation in new emerging technologies and artificial intelligence and enhance harmonization of practices and procedures.
 - EPO: In 2020, the EPO successfully tackled a slightly higher workload than in 2019, while also achieving steady improvements in timeliness. To support staff in mastering the incoming workload, the EPO also leveraged digital tools to improve efficiency. Despite the difficult conditions, the EPO reduced its overall stock and reduced pendency in examination while maintaining pendency in search at 4.5 months.
 - JPO: The JPO has been aiming to achieve the “world’s fastest and utmost quality patent examinations”, and implementing various measures focused on “maintaining speed”, “granting high quality rights”. In 2020, the JPO received 288,472 patent applications, and the total pendency and the first action (FA) pendency were 14.8 and 10.1 months on average, respectively. Furthermore, the number of international search reports the JPO prepared under the PCT has been increasing in recent years and reached 50,338.
 - KIPO: The annual average first office action pendency period was 11.1 months for patents and utility models. KIPO received a preliminary total of 557,256

applications for Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) including patents and utility models in 2020. The number of PCT applications filed from Korea increased by 4.2 percent from 18,885 in 2019 to 19,675 in 2020, which is the fourth largest amount by country of origin.

- CNIPA: In 2020, 1.12 million invention patent applications, 2.63 million utility model patent applications and 770,000 industrial design patent applications were examined by the CNIPA. The average examination pendency for high-value invention patents and invention patents in general was reduced to 14 and 20 months respectively.
- USPTO: In 2020, the USPTO hosted the inaugural meeting for the National Council for Expanding American Innovation (NCEAI) (known now as the Council for Inclusive Innovation or CI²) in September. The goal of the CI² is to work with the USPTO in developing a comprehensive national innovation strategy that builds a diverse and inclusive ecosystem encouraging, empowering, and supporting all future innovators. The USPTO successfully met its pendency goals despite the challenges of moving to a mandatory telework posture due to the COVID-19 pandemic.