

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 China National Intellectual Property Administration (CNIPA)¹ 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 Key IP5 statistical indicators 2017 data report that was made earlier in 2018. The latest reports, along with other data exchanges and information about the Group, can be found at the IP5 Offices homepage www.fiveipoffices.org.

On 1 June 2017, the 10th meeting of the IP5 Heads of Office was held in Valletta, Malta. Together with representatives of industry groups from the five regions, the IP5 Heads of Office celebrated ten years of IP5 cooperation. The major achievements include, the Global Dossier, the Common Citation Document, the IP5 Common Application Format, the IP5 Patent Prosecution Highway, the IP5 patent information Policy, the IP5 Quality Management Meeting, the Mutual machine Translation and the IP5 Industry Consultation Group.

The Heads of Office agreed to envision patent harmonisation of practices and procedures, enhanced work sharing, high quality and timely search and examination results, and seamless access to patent information in order to promote an efficient, cost effective and user friendly international patent landscape. The vital importance of cooperation with industry was restated.

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 includes some statistics that are collected and published by the WIPO.

As the global patent system becomes more harmonized, common economic driving forces have been a major influence on patent filings at the offices. There are diverse factors that influence patent filing trends. Trend breaks can be caused by changes to patent rules and fees as well as by changes in the economic climate.

According to the World Economic Outlook² of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), global growth for 2018 and 2019 is projected to be 3.7 percent for both years, but the expansion is becoming less even and risks to the outlook are mounting. Financial market conditions remain accommodative for advanced economies, which is where many patent applications are made. It seems likely that the drivers for patent applications will remain positive unless there is a major disruption to world economies.

At the IP5 Offices in 2017, the applications increased 3.9 percent at the EPO and 3.2 percent at the CNIPA, stabilized at the JPO and at the USPTO, while they decreased

¹ From August 28, 2018, the English name abbreviation of National Intellectual Property Administration, PRC changed from State Intellectual Property Office of the People’s Republic of China (SIPO) to China National Intellectual Property Administration (CNIPA).

² World Economic Outlook October 2018: www.imf.org

by 1.9 percent at the KIPO. The data showed annual growth of 1.8 percent for overall applications at the IP5 Offices (See Chapters 2 and 4 of this report).

Political and technological factors also influence the levels of patent filings. Globalization 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. Common vehicles for applying across different jurisdictions have also appeared, such as the PCT system, the validation agreements with the EPO and the Patent Prosecution Highway (PPH). These factors have had a positive impact on worldwide patent growth over recent years.

While applications are user driven, grants show the production capacity of the offices on those applications after some delay.

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 Annexes 1 and 2 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). Please also note a new page at the IP5 website that links to statistics at each Office (www.fiveipoffices.org/resources/annualreports.html).

The web version of the report has an additional annex which is a glossary of patent-related terms. It also has a statistical table file that includes extended time series and graphs of much of the data found in this report.

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