

Annual Report 2020

# ANNUAL REPORT 2020



Korean Intellectual  
Property Office

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Publisher  
Korean Intellectual Property Office  
Government Complex Daejeon Building 4, 189, Cheongsu-ro,  
Seo-gu, Daejeon, 35208, Republic of Korea  
Tel +82 (42) 481-5126 Fax +82 (42) 472-9314  
Website: <http://www.kipo.go.kr/en/>  
E-mail: [kipomla@korea.kr](mailto:kipomla@korea.kr)

June 2021



Korean Intellectual Property Office



Korean Intellectual  
Property Office

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2020



# Message from the Commissioner

“  
As one of the world’s leading IP offices, we will spare no effort to engage in international cooperation and contribute to the advancement of the global IP system.”



In the progress of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), new digital and technology fields such as AI, big data, and blockchain are considered crucial for national competitiveness. Many countries are concentrating all of their energies on gaining a competitive edge in these fields. It is, therefore, becoming increasingly important to secure intellectual property rights (IPRs) and implement an effective protection system of IPRs which encompasses data, a core asset in the era of digital transformation. To this end, the Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO) endeavored to establish a foundation for an IPR system that befits a digital economy in the year 2020.

In this regard, KIPO established separate criteria on patentability for new digital industry inventions such as AI, IoT, Biotechnology, etc. in order to provide high-quality IP services to applicants regarding emerging technologies. Concerning industrial designs in the digital area, the National Assembly has passed an amendment to the Design Protection Act which comes into effect in 2021. This amendment protects a graphic design implemented in virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) as a design image in itself. We also began offering the first mobile filing services for trademark applications to increase users’ convenience in the digital environment. Meanwhile, in response to the new challenges of COVID-19, we reduced patent fees for applicants living in designated special disaster zones, made an ex-officio extension for IPR document submission, and newly introduced telephonic hearings in IP trial and appeal procedures.

For IP creation and utilization, KIPO launched the “National Patent Big Data Center” with the objective of analyzing IP information in a more systematic and multi-dimensional approach. Analysis results based

on the database of about 450 million IP information will be utilized to guide the direction of research and development (R&D) investment. In the financial sector, Korea’s IP finance market surpassed KRW 2 trillion (about USD 1.8 billion) in terms of new loan and investment in 2020 through collaboration with financial institutions to provide innovative enterprises with opportunities for financing. In addition, KIPO officially implemented services of the “Mutual Aid Program related to IPRs” after an enrollment process which establishes a stable management base to alleviate IP risk and support the entry into overseas markets for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). By the end of 2020, over 5,000 companies enrolled in this program since its introduction in August 2019.

With a view to building respect for IP, KIPO also stepped up its effort to construct an environment of strong IP protection for right holders both within Korea and abroad. An amendment to the Patent Act came into effect in December 2020 to stipulate a more substantial calculation of damage compensation, following the implementation of a legal system in 2019 for courts to award treble damages in cases of willful infringement. Additionally, KIPO set up an “Intellectual Property Right Dispute Response Center” to provide relevant information and practical consultation to companies involved in IPR disputes overseas. In April 2020, a new IP-DESK opened in Manila, Philippines to help companies successfully enter into the local market and protect their IPRs, which follows after Vietnam, Thailand and Indonesia in the ASEAN region.

On a global scale, even with the restrictions caused by COVID-19, KIPO closely cooperated bilaterally and multilaterally for the development of the IP system. We actively participated in virtual video conferences with major IP offices and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

to make collective endeavors in reducing burdens on IPR applicants and overcoming obstacles in such exceptional circumstances. Moreover, Korea, along with China and Japan celebrated their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of trilateral IP cooperation and set a vision for the next 10 years to jointly address new challenges, such as digital transformation and the spread of an epidemic. In November 2020, Korea, ASEAN member states and other participating countries witnessed the signing of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RECP) which will build a foundation for a stronger IPR protection system in the Asia-Pacific region.

In retrospect, the year 2020 was filled with many unexpected and unprecedented events that impacted the whole international community. Despite these unfavorable conditions, Korea made consistent effort to foster innovation and encourage creativity. As a result, the number of patent filings by Korean applicants increased, which led Korea to rank 4<sup>th</sup> in the world in terms of both the number of domestic patent filings and PCT filings. For the first time, Korea advanced to the 10<sup>th</sup> rank in WIPO’s Global Innovation Index.

These achievements would not have been possible without the support from inventors, applicants, and IP stakeholders both domestic and abroad. As one of the world’s leading IP offices, we will spare no effort to engage in international cooperation and contribute to the advancement of the global IP system.

It is my great pleasure to present to you KIPO’s 2020 Annual Report.

I hope it serves to provide you with a better understanding of our recent activities and vision for the future.

Kim Yong Rae | Commissioner

Kim, Yongrae



# Innovation

**KIPO fosters IP Innovation through fast services with reliable quality.**

Creative ideas have the power to change the world. KIPO continues to provide timely, accurate, innovative IP examination services to ensure that ideas are adequately protected as IPR.

## Premium Examination Services

KIPO aims to provide fast, high-quality, and customer-oriented examination services by continuing to improve examination systems, raise the quality of IP administration, and reduce first action pendency.

The average first office action pendency in 2020 was 11.1 months for patents and utility models, 8.9 months for trademarks, and 4.6 months for industrial designs.

Moreover, we offer appropriate examination services to accommodate the IP strategies of our users and timely registration of rights. Patent and utility model examinations have three tracks: regular examination, accelerated examination, and customer-deferred examination. Trademark and industrial design examinations have two tracks: regular examination and accelerated examination.

# 11.1 months

**First office action pendency  
for patents and utility models**

#### ◀Automatic Driving

Self-driving cars do not require a human to drive. This is a revolution that changes our daily lives. And it is a core technology that will lead the future industry.

#### ▶Bridal Palanquin

A palanquin to take the bride to the groom's home after the Korean traditional wedding ceremony. A mode of transport, the palanquin takes the form of a small litter on horizontal poles, carried by a group of bearers on their shoulders.





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# Competitiveness

KIPO increases its IP competitiveness by maintaining the highest number of resident patent applications per both GDP and population.

In this era of creative economies, IPRs are the core of competent business strategies. KIPO is dedicated to establishing a competitive and rewarding IP system by transforming novel ideas into strong IPRs.

# IP Competitiveness

## IPR Applications

In 2020, we received a preliminary total of 557,256 applications filing for patents, utility models, trademarks, and industrial designs. Out of that number, 79,054 applications were filed by non-residents.

## PCT Applications

The number of PCT applications from Korea has continued to grow every year. We have the 4th largest amount of PCT applications by country of origin where we had 20,600 PCT applications in total for 2020 which is a 5.2% increase from 19,560 in 2019 (Source: 2021 Yearly Review).

The Korean language is also the 5th most commonly used language as an official publication language (source: WIPO IP Statistics Data Center).

557,256

IPR applications

20,600

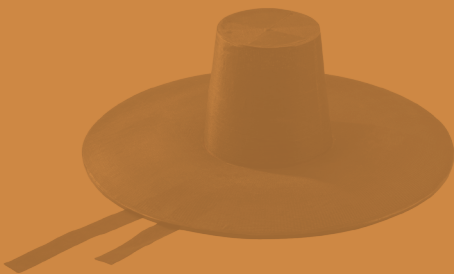
PCT applications

### ◀Gat Craft

A gat (Korean traditional hat) is made from horsehair with a bamboo frame and is partly transparent. As gat making requires artisanship throughout a complex series of techniques involving an array of materials, it has been designated as Intangible Cultural Property No. 4 on December 24, 1964.

### ▶Gat

A gat is a type of Korean traditional hat worn by men along with hanbok (Korean traditional clothing) during the Joseon period. As Korean historical dramas became popular around the world, a gat also drew attention from people around the world.





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### ▶ Gat

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# Harmonization

**KIPO collaborates with key national allies to create a global community that appropriately values and rewards inventions.**

Cooperation is fundamental to creating an environment where IPRs are promptly acquired and firmly protected for stakeholders. KIPO engages in activities that advance the global IP systems as it works to increase the value of IP.

Worldwide IP  
Collaboration

**13.3** million  
**CHF**  
contribution  
Korea Funds-In-Trust (FIT)

• PPH participants: Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Denmark, Eurasia, European Patent Office, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Taiwan (Province of China), UK, USA, and Vietnam.

**34** Countries/  
Regions  
Patent Prosecution Highway (PPH)  
WIPO Korea Funds-In-Trust (FIT)

Since 2004, Korea has contributed about 13.3 million Swiss francs in total for the continued operation of the WIPO Korea FIT. Jointly undertaken in collaboration with KIPO and WIPO, the funds are applied towards projects that help developing countries and strengthen the global IP system through economic, social, and cultural development.

**55** IP sharing  
projects

◀ Wedding Presents

One of the Korean wedding traditions. When the bridegroom's family sends silk to the bride's family, the bride's family makes silk quilts and clothes and sends them to their parents-in-law, and the parents-in-law send the money to the bride's house.

▶ Hwarot (Traditional)

A robe worn by princesses of upper-class women of the Joseon Dynasty when they got married. Various animal and plant patterns were embroidered on red silk to pray for health and happiness.

**Appropriate technology and brand development**



# Harmonization

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## Worldwide IP Collaboration

### Global Cooperation Forums

Taking on the role as one of the world's leading IP office, we engage in cooperation forums with other leading IP offices that contribute to harmonizing global IP systems such as the IP5 for patents, the TM5 for trademarks, and the ID5 for industrial designs.

### Patent Prosecution Highway (PPH) with 34 Countries and Regions

We work with countries around the world under the PPH for reducing the time and costs required to obtain patent rights overseas. As of 2020, the PPH has been implemented with 34 countries/regions.

• PPH participants: Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Denmark, Eurasia, European Patent Office, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Taiwan(Province of China), UK, USA, and Vietnam.

### 55 IP-Sharing Projects

Based on the experience of achieving remarkable development within a short period of time, KIPO carries out IP-Sharing projects to share our gained knowledge and help bridge the IP divide. In particular, we endeavor to assist local communities improve their quality of life and income with projects that facilitate cost efficient and sustainable appropriate technology and brand development.

### WIPO Korea Funds-In-Trust (FIT)

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#### ◀Wedding Presents

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#### ▶Hwarot (Traditional Korean Wedding Dress)

A robe worn by princesses or upper-class women of the Joseon Dynasty when they got married. Various animal and plant patterns were embroidered on red silk to pray for health and happiness.





# 2020 Highlights

Jan. 14 The 2020 New Year's Gala for Inventors and Patent Users



Feb. 09~13 KIPO-WIPO Heads Meeting



Mar. 02~06 The 77th Session of WIPO Coordination Committee for Director General Nomination  
10 KIPO-INPI (Brazil) Signing on PPH MOU



Apr. 01 KIPO-USPTO (USA) Heads of IP Office Virtual Meeting  
09 KIPO-CNIPA (China) Heads of IP Office Virtual Meeting  
22 KIPO-SAIP (Saudi Arabia) Heads of IP Office Virtual Meeting



May. 06 KIPO-EUIPO (EU) Heads of IP Office Virtual Meeting  
07~08 The 60th Extraordinary (Virtual) Session of WIPO General Assemblies  
14 KIPO-IPOS (Singapore) Signing on PCT-ISA MOU



Jun. 24 The 54th Invention Day Celebration  
29 KIPO-DIP (Laos) Signing on PRP MOU



Jul. 01 KIPO-IMPI (Mexico) PPH MOU Renewal  
21 IP5 Heads of IP Office Virtual Meeting



Aug. 06 The 33rd Korea Student Invention Exhibition  
12 KIPO-MISTI (Cambodia) MOU Signing on FRID  
27 WIPO Virtual Meeting



Sep. 21~25 The 61st (Hybrid) Session of WIPO General Assemblies  
21 Patent Big Data-based Industry Innovation Strategy Presentation  
22 KIPO-SAIP (Saudi Arabia) Heads of IP Office Virtual Meeting



Oct. 05 KIPO-BruIPO (Brunei) Signing on PRP MOU  
16 KIPO-USPTO (USA) Heads of IP Office Virtual Meeting  
26 IP Global Challenge Forum (IP20+)  
30 KIPO-EPO (Europe) Heads of IP Office Virtual Meeting



Nov. 09 The 16th Patent Information Expo  
12 KIPO-MylIPO (Malaysia) Signing on PPH MOU  
25 The 3rd Korea-ASEAN Heads of IP Office Virtual Meeting  
27 IPR Dispute Response Center Opening Ceremony



Dec. 01 The 20th TRIPO Head's Meeting (Hybrid)  
01 Korean Intellectual Property Exhibition  
03 The 79th (Hybrid) Session of WIPO Coordination Committee  
09 KIPO-WIPO Heads Virtual Meeting  
10 The 2020 Global IP Strategy Conference

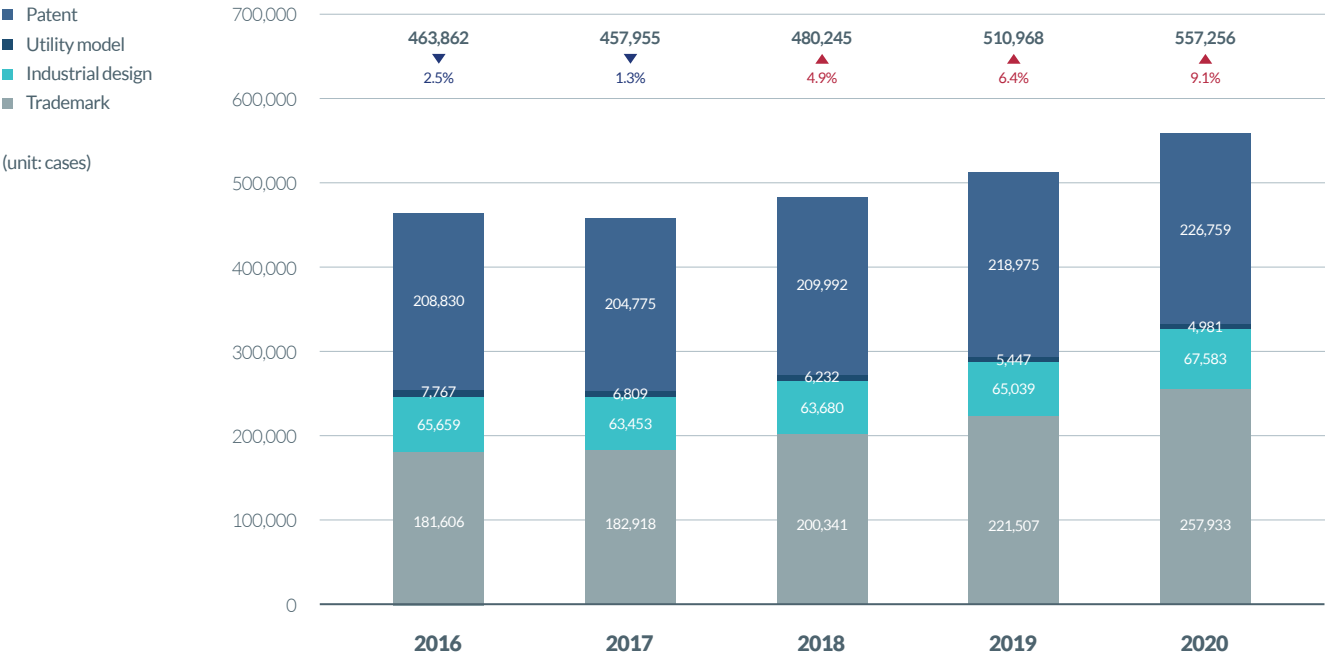


# 2020 IP Trends

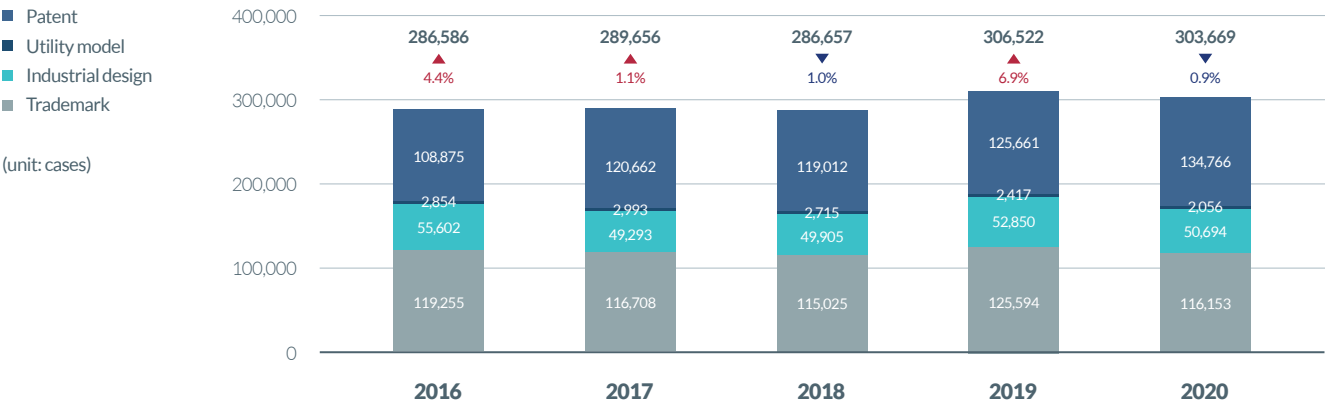
## IPR Applications and Registrations by Year

### IPR Applications

\*Including PCT, Madrid, Hague international applications

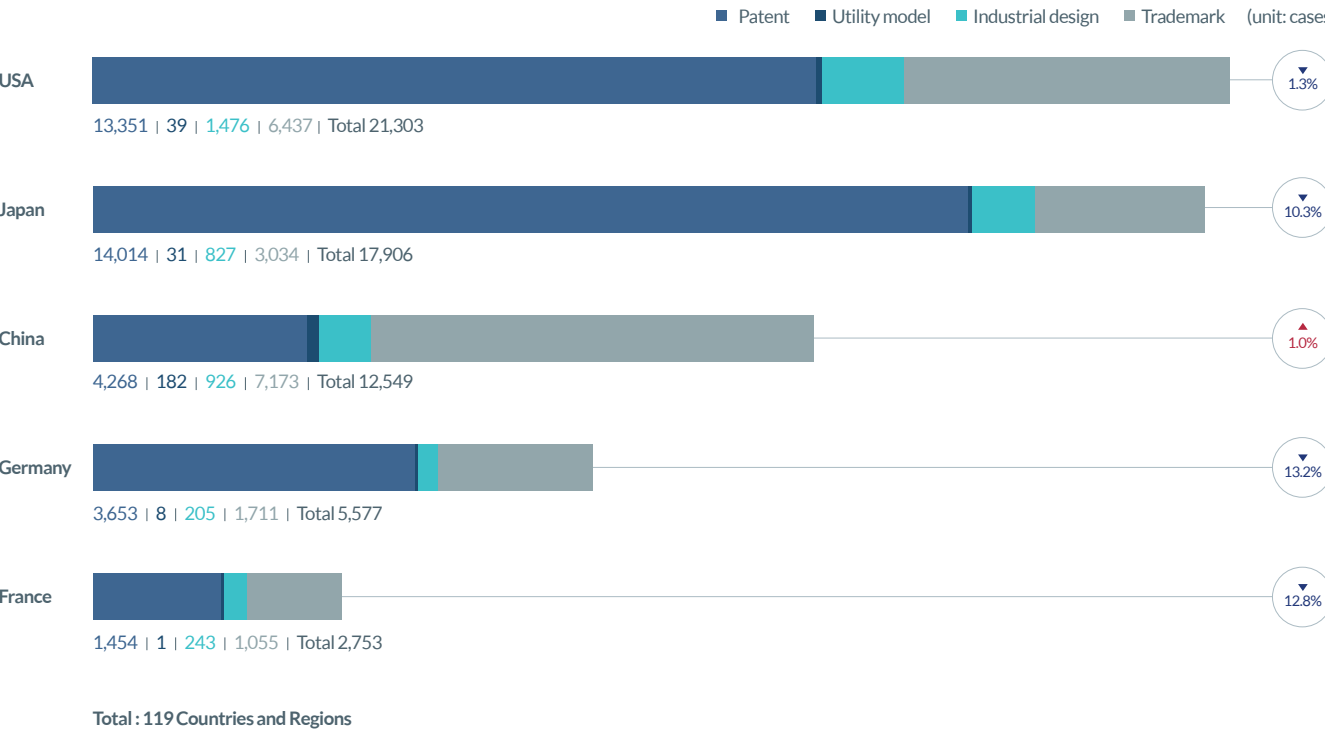
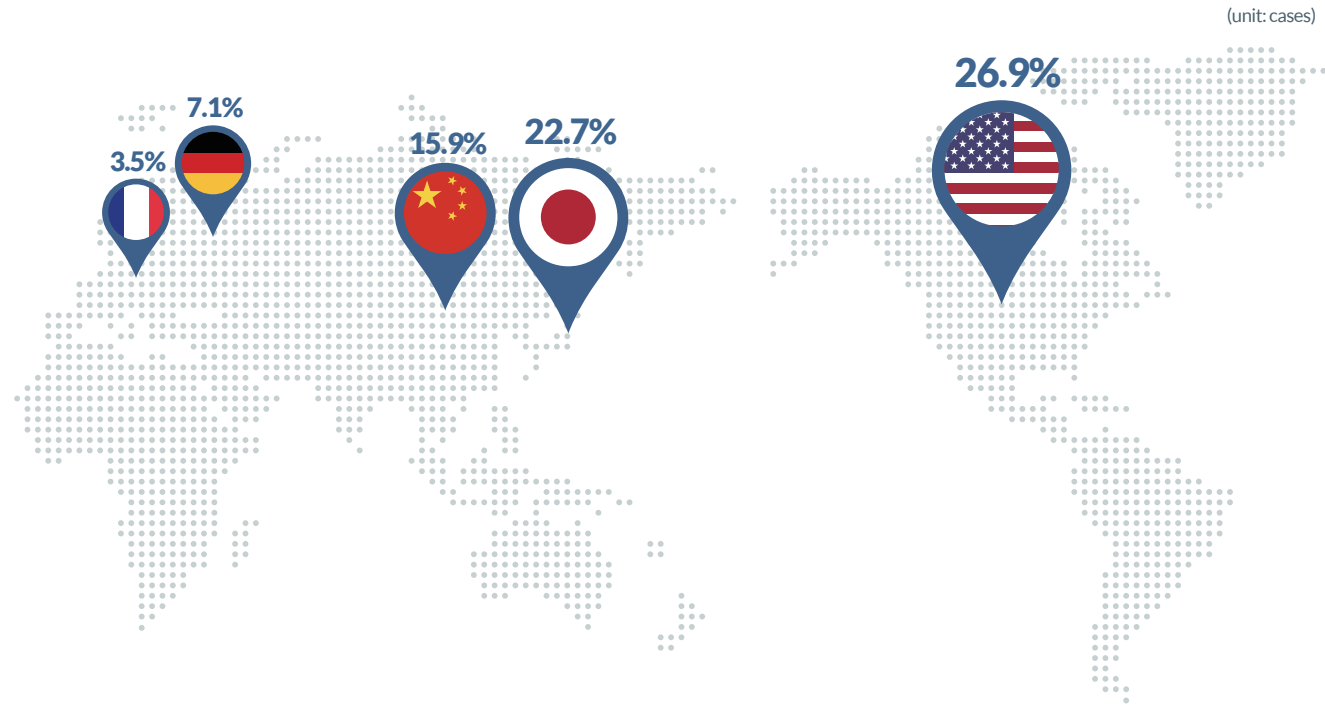


### IPR Registrations

























## Non-resident IPR Applications Filed at KIPO

### Top 5 Countries





Top IPR Filing Domestic & Foreign Companies

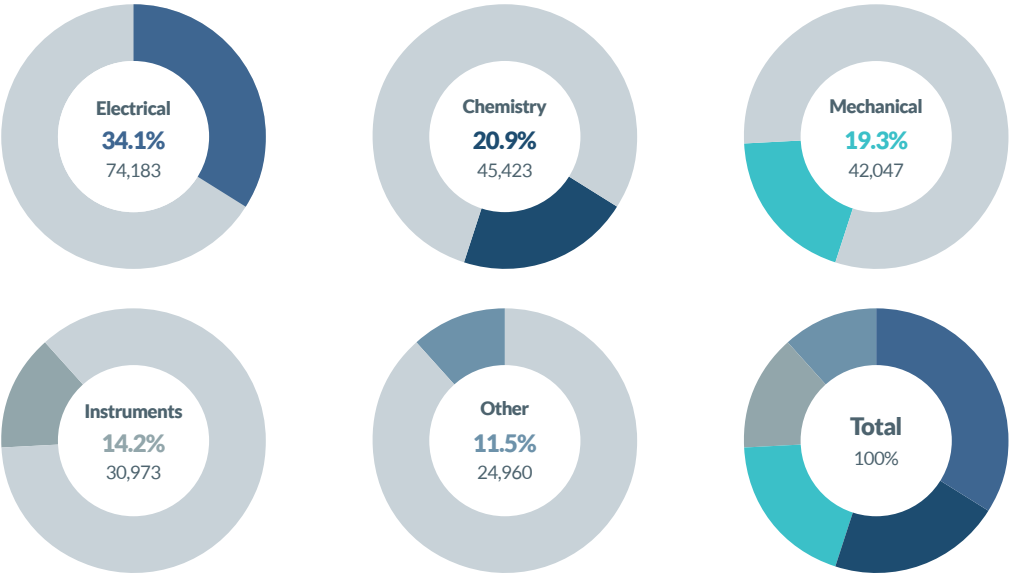
Patent	1st.	2nd.	3rd.	4th.	5th.
Domestic	<div>SAMSUNG ELECTRONICS</div> <div>7,446</div> <div>6,313 ▲17.9%</div>	<div>LG Electronics</div> <div>5,345</div> <div>7,805 ▼-31.5%</div>	<div>LG Chem</div> <div>4,423</div> <div>4,314 ▲2.5%</div>	<div>HYUNDAI</div> <div>3,000</div> <div>2,893 ▲3.7%</div>	<div>SAMSUNG DISPLAY</div> <div>2,957</div> <div>2,319 ▲27.5%</div>
Foreign	<div>TEL TOKYO ELECTRON</div> <div>623</div> <div>559 ▲11.4%</div>	<div>TSMC</div> <div>603</div> <div>483 ▲24.8%</div>	<div>SEI SEMICONDUCTOR ENERGY LABORATORY</div> <div>527</div> <div>435 ▲21.1%</div>	<div>OPPO</div> <div>509</div> <div>346 ▲47.1%</div>	<div>HUAWEI</div> <div>505</div> <div>654 ▼-22.8%</div>
Industrial design	1st.	2nd.	3rd.	4th.	5th.
Domestic	<div>LG Electronics</div> <div>1,129</div> <div>990 ▲14.0%</div>	<div>SAMSUNG ELECTRONICS</div> <div>788</div> <div>741 ▲6.3%</div>	<div>CJ</div> <div>684</div> <div>506 ▲35.2%</div>	<div>HYUNDAI</div> <div>289</div> <div>216 ▲33.8%</div>	<div>주식회사지앤미</div> <div>265</div> <div>65 ▲308%</div>
Foreign	<div></div> <div>197</div> <div>278 ▼-29.1%</div>	<div></div> <div>140</div> <div>143 ▼-2.1%</div>	<div>magic leap</div> <div>94</div> <div>2 ▲4,600%</div>	<div></div> <div>74</div> <div>24 ▲208%</div>	<div></div> <div>70</div> <div>3 ▲2,233%</div>
Trademark	1st.	2nd.	3rd.	4th.	5th.
Domestic	<div>AMOREPACIFIC</div> <div>1,043</div> <div>550 ▲89.6%</div>	<div>LG Household &amp; Health Care</div> <div>809</div> <div>946 ▼-14.5%</div>	<div>coupang</div> <div>767</div> <div>562 ▲36.5%</div>	<div>하이트진로</div> <div>467</div> <div>26 ▲1,696%</div>	<div>SM ENTERTAINMENT</div> <div>460</div> <div>269 ▲71.0%</div>
Foreign	<div>Sanrio</div> <div>175</div> <div>24 ▲629%</div>	<div>L'ORÉAL PARIS</div> <div>80</div> <div>114 ▼-29.8%</div>	<div>kao</div> <div>75</div> <div>74 ▲1.4%</div>	<div>Johnson &amp; Johnson</div> <div>66</div> <div>66 -</div>	<div>HUAWEI</div> <div>63</div> <div>51 ▲23.5%</div>

■ 2020 ■ 2019 | ▲▼ Year-over-year comparison (unit: cases)

Patent Applications by Technology

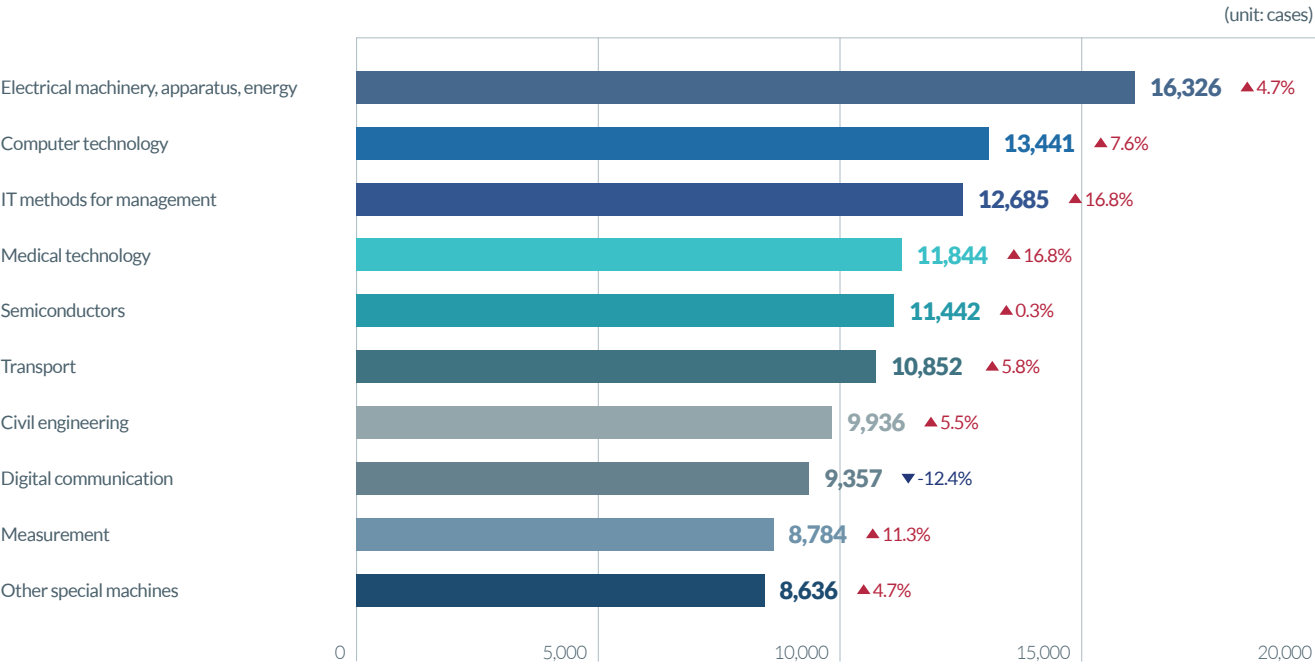
Top 5 WIPO Technology Fields

(unit: %)



Top 10 Technology Classifications

※ WIPO IPC-Technology concordance table (35 technology fields)

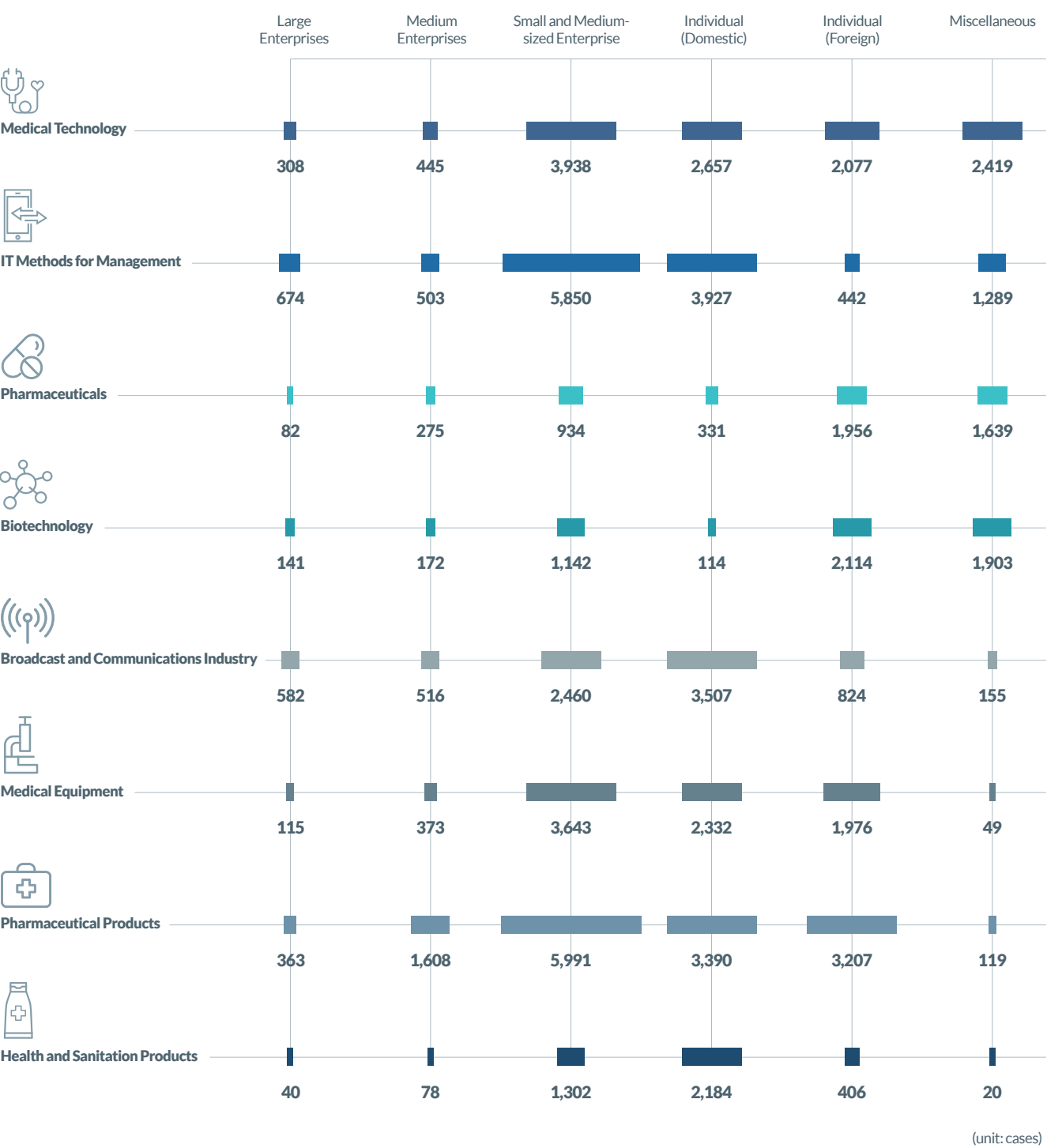


IP Application Trends Related to COVID-19 and Digital Economy

Change in Applications by Fields



Applications of 8 Fields by Applicant Type





# Providing IP Services

22	Response to COVID-19: Adjustment of Examination & Trial Services
25	New Examination Guides for New Digital Industry Inventions
26	Cutting-edge Technology Used for e-Filing and the First Mobile Application for Trademarks
27	Improvement of Trademark & Design Examination



Bukchon Hanok Village  
View of Seoul N Tower from Bukchon Hanok Village, Bukchon, close to many palaces in Seoul, used to be where the royal family and nobles lived, and many independence activists during the Japanese colonial period lived there.



# Response to COVID-19: Adjustment of Examination & Trial Services

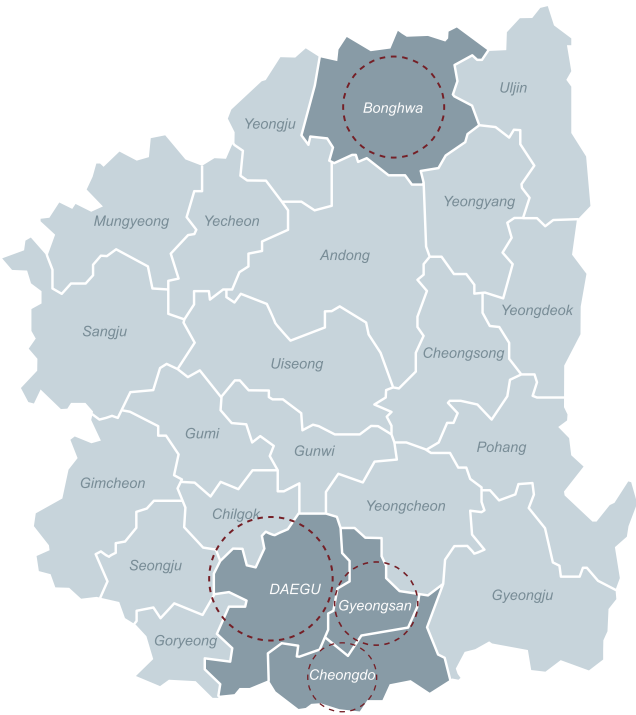
## Patent Fee Reduction for Special Disaster Zones

The sudden and rapid proliferation of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) brought about consequential changes to many standard practices and economic order across the world. In the Republic of Korea (ROK), early cluster outbreaks of COVID-19 severely affected specific regions, such as Daegu City and Gyeongsangbuk-do Province. As the Korean government designated these regions as special disaster zones on March 15, 2020, the Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO) declared a one-year patent fee reduction for the residents of these regions until March 14, 2021.

More specifically, individuals and businesses with their resident address in

these special disaster zones were eligible for a reduction of their patent fees. A 30% fee reduction was provided for trial requests, registration for establishment of rights, annual registrations and applications for patents, utility models, and designs. Also, a 75% fee reduction was provided for international search requests by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) filing international patent applications under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT).

During this time of crisis, a patent attorney survey result revealed a demand for more government support, such as reduced official fees for special disaster zones. Also, despite the overall trend of increased domestic patent applications for the first



Fee Reduction for Special Disaster Zones

Category	Reduction Amount
Fee for application	30% ↓
Fee for requesting a trial	
Fee for registering establishment of right	
Fee for annual registration	
Fee for PCT international search	75% ↓
• Target regions : Daegu, Gyeongsan-si, Cheongdo-gun, Bonghwa-gun • Exemption period: March 15, 2020 - March 14, 2021	

## Ex Officio Extension for Patent Document Submission

quarter of 2020, Daegu and Gyeongbuk, in particular, showed a decrease in patent applications. Therefore, these measures

were implemented in order to lessen burden on users and help encourage patent applications.

Considering the global impact of COVID-19, it was anticipated that domestic and overseas applicants would have difficulty meeting the submission deadline of patent applications designated by KIPO. Under the Korean Patent Act, KIPO was able to ex officio extended document submission deadlines for 82,795 cases in total.

Initially, any deadline for document submission falling within March 31 to April 29, 2020 was ex officio extended to April 30, 2020. Afterwards, any deadline falling within April 30 to May 30, 2020 was extended to May 31, 2020 for a second time. These particular extensions did not require applicants or agents to file

for an extension nor to pay the fees arising therefrom. By alleviating this burden, applicants were able to proceed with the acquisition of their intellectual property right (IPR). The same arrangement was extended to patent applications from overseas where the spread of COVID-19 was severe.

Meanwhile, KIPO also approved requests for additional extensions to deadlines as long as the indicated reason was due to COVID-19. Even for situations where a deadline was missed and a patent application became invalid or the right was terminated, it would be possible to apply for redress of rights and to have the fee waived for reasons due to COVID-19.

Deadline Extension for Document Submission

Category	Original Deadline	Extended Deadline	Number of Cases
1st extension	March 31, 2020–April 29, 2020	April 30, 2020	30,155
2nd extension	April 30, 2020–May 30, 2020	May 31, 2020	52,640
Total 82,795 Cases			



**Additional measures  
for IP Trial and Appeal  
Proceedings in response  
to COVID-19**

In response to the new challenges of the pandemic, KIPO adopted additional measures so that cases could continue to be heard in a safe environment. Previously, the Intellectual Property Trial and Appeal Board (IPTAB) of KIPO only allowed videoconference oral hearings in which parties needed to be physically present in the hearing rooms in Seoul or Daejeon. However, KIPO implemented telephonic hearings to prevent parties and representatives from having to physically attend oral proceedings and instead participate by telephone, as measure of social distancing in the effort to contain the pandemic. Also, telephonic

hearings could potentially provide benefits in situations where Internet access is not secure.

With the consent of the adverse party, parties may request for online interviews or telephonic hearings either online or by phone. However, if the case requires examination of witnesses or taking of evidence, oral proceedings will be held in the IPTAB oral hearing rooms. Furthermore, online interviews were introduced in order to enable parties to participate remotely from their home or offices via Internet ([vc.on-nara.go.kr](http://vc.on-nara.go.kr)).

# New Examination Guides for New Digital Industry Inventions

KIPO newly established the "Examination Guides by Art Field" which contains "Criteria on Patentability for Inventions in the Digital Industry Fields." In order to provide proper protection for inventions of Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) technologies, a few major countries have made amendments to their existing examination guidelines by adding example cases of related technologies.

KIPO, on the other hand, created separate criteria on patentability according to each new digital industry. The guides outline patentability requirements and written description requirements and include various example cases with a focus on convergence technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI), Internet of things (IoT), biotechnology, etc.

For instance, the guide on AI provides patentability requirements and specific examination cases together with guidelines on drafting specifications to help applicants obtain high quality patents, a feature which many companies previously found too difficult due to the characteristics of new industries.

When it comes to was IoT, the criteria on patentability was modified to have sufficient consideration on the characteristics and effects according to each service field. This is in order to prevent unreasonable application of manufacturing-based patentability requirements to ICT convergence technologies and to encourage new market entrants.

As for the bio-field, the previously ambiguous patentability criteria for AI-based new drugs development was supplemented, thus providing support for pharmaceutical businesses to establish optimal patent application strategies for each development stage of AI-based drug repositioning technology.

KIPO will further identify new digital industries with ample growth potential, such as autonomous driving systems, intelligent robots and cosmetics, so as to provide more suitable criteria on patentability.



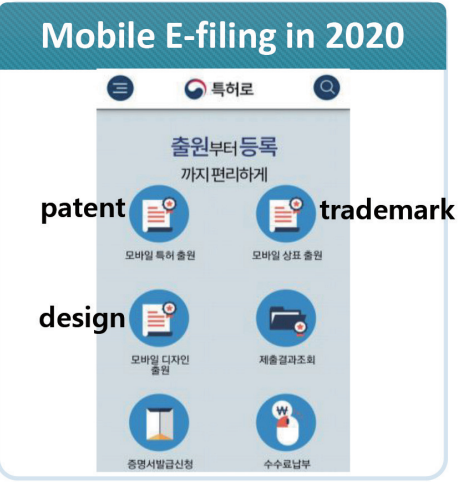
# Cutting-edge Technology Used for e-Filing and the First Mobile Application for Trademarks

In 2020, KIPO's e-filing website "Patent-ro" (www.patent.go.kr), was upgraded with focus on enhancing user access and functionality. New features have been included to help streamline the process of filing IPR applications for users. The upgrades were made by incorporating cutting-edge IT technology to vastly improve features for user convenience and to offer a user interface (UI) compatible with PCs and mobile devices, such as tablets, smartphones, etc.

Most importantly, KIPO is the first ever to offer mobile e-filing services for trademark applications, which was released to the public on March 2020. It is now possible to carry out a wide range of services through a mobile device from filing trademark

applications to receiving notifications, paying fees, viewing examination progress, obtaining registration certificates, etc. Users are also able to customize their homescreen for quick access to their most used features.

Additionally, the website allows a simple authentication process through browser-embedded authorization certifications or "Digital Onepass," a system that gives access to a wide range of Korean government services through a single username and verification tool. Furthermore, by utilizing a blockchain-based proxy service to distribute and share filing data, users can benefit from 24/7 uninterrupted submission services for their IPR application.



# Improvement of Trademark & Design Examination

## Amendment of Trademark Examination Guidelines Regarding Trade Dress

More and more businesses are applying to protect their trade dress under trademark rights. The term "trade dress" is a broader concept which refers to a product's total image or overall appearance that distinguishes the product from competitors and encompasses the product's size, 2D or 3D shape, color, texture, etc.

Reflecting this increasing trend, several amendments were made to the "Trademark Examination Guidelines" to improve examination quality and accuracy related to various types of visually perceivable and non-perceivable marks, including 3D shape, sound, color and color marks which will be in effect starting January 1, 2021.

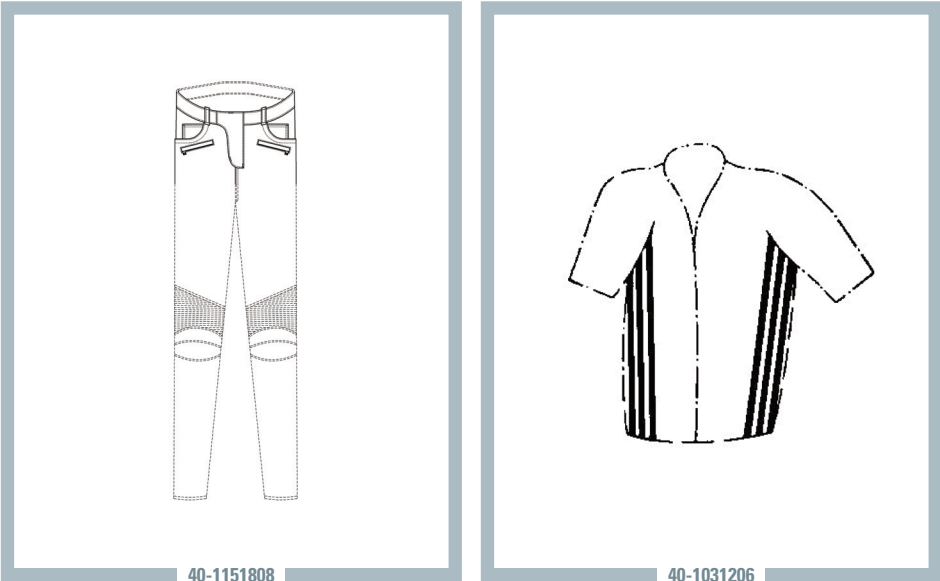
First of all, a distinctive appearance of a business can be recognized as the trademark of a specified individual. For example, the interior/ exterior of a building in which goods are sold and services are provided can be classified as a type of 3D mark. In order to provide better protection as a registered trademark, specific guidelines for examination were established. In particular, applicants are able to illustrate the interior and exterior appearance of their place of business in their application with solid lines to indicate elements to be protected and dotted lines to indicate elements not to be protected, which may change depending on actual use.

Examples of Registered 3D Marks by Type

	Shape of the goods	Shape of the packaging (containers) for the goods	Shape of the packaging (containers) for the goods	Shape unrelated to the goods or their packaging
Mark				
Reg. No.	40-1138531	1216793	40-1302518	41-0364501
Designated goods	Ice candies, ice creams	Umbrella sticks, canes	Perfume, cosmetics	Data search in computer files for others



Examples of Position Marks in Korea



Secondly, according to established Supreme Court case law, a “position mark” is recognized when “a shape (3D) or figure (2D) has acquired distinctiveness when used in a particular position on a product.” This scope was expanded to also include “colors (a single color or combination of colors) which have acquired distinctiveness when used in a particular position.” The supplemented system allows the use of a specific color or combination of colors in a specific position to be protected as a “position mark” as long as it acts as a source identifier in the final product. Further, improvements were made by expanding the range for expressing specific shades of color (i.e. Pantone, HEX, RGB, CMYK, etc.) and by amending the

guidelines on acquiring distinctiveness regarding sound trademarks.

Lastly, examination standards were strengthened by supplementing examination guidelines for non-traditional marks in terms of functionality so that some 3D shapes which should be protected as patents are not erroneously registered as trademarks. For instance, it is now required to comprehensively consider the existence of relevant patents/utility models, the promotion via advertisements on the functionality of the product, as well as the existence of alternative shapes of the product for the same function, and the ease and economic feasibility of producing such alternative forms.

**Restructure of the Partial-Substantive Design Examination System (PSES)**

Partial-substantive design examination system (PSES) allows early acquisition of rights through rapid examination of formality and eligibility of design applications of which have a short design life cycle and are easy to copy (clothes, fabric, etc.).

The first office action of PSES would take about 60 days from the date of the filing. However, it could not accommodate the fast-changing reality of the design industry where fast fashion trends change in just 2~3 weeks. Therefore, from January 2020, KIPO significantly reduced the processing time of the first office action of PSES

from 60 days to 10 days by improving the efficiency of internal procedures and recruiting experienced examiners.

Additionally, KIPO expanded the PSES track to cover more classes. Previously, PSES was applied only to designs from three classifications: Clothing and haberdashery (Class 2), Textile piece goods (Class 5), and Stationery and office equipment (Class 19). Since December 2020, four more classifications were added: Foodstuffs (Class 1), Travel goods (Class 3), Packages and containers (Class 9), and Articles of adornment (Class 11).

The Partial-Substantive Design Examination System track (in effect December 1, 2020)

Locarno classification	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 5	Class 9	Class 11	Class 19
Articles	Foodstuffs	Clothing & haberdashery	Travel goods	textile piece goods	Packages & containers	Articles of adornment	Stationery & office equipment

Oftentimes, if a design is not registered under the Design Protection Act, it is difficult to receive proper protection. Even with protection under other laws, companies often give up taking actions against third parties who illegally use their

design without permission due to the time and cost. With these new measures, it is expected to allow companies to secure their design with the launch of their business.



# Promoting IP Creation and Utilization

- 32 Opening of the Korean Patent Big Data Center
- 32 IP Finance Surpasses KRW 2 Trillion
- 33 Release of Mutual Aid Loans



Smart City  
Smart technology is changing the future of cities. Many cities around the world are evolving into smart cities to solve problems such as environmental pollution, lack of energy, traffic congestion, and increased crime.



# Opening of the Korean Patent Big Data Center

KIPO and the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy launched the "National Patent Big Data Center" in June 2020 under the Korea Intellectual Property Strategy Agency (KISTA). The Center will analyze a database of about 450 million IP information across the world to help establish strategies to identify and foster promising future technologies.



For instance, multi-dimensional analysis of patent big data will allow examination of patent competitiveness by company and by country as well as identify future technologies to guide direction of research and development (R&D). Furthermore, it is expected that the utilization of patent big data in the IP market will extend even to the private sector, such as through patent consultations for companies.

Through the National Patent Big Data Center, KIPO plans to produce and provide patent-based information of major industries and technologies, such as patent trend monitoring and analysis as well as promising future technology discovery regarding national core industries (i.e. AI, Bio-health, autonomous vehicles, etc.) and matters of public safety.

## IP Finance Surpasses KRW 2 Trillion

For the first time, Korea's IP finance market surpassed a scale of KRW 2 trillion in new transactions of loans and investments in 2020. "IP Financing" refers to financing activities backed by the value of intangible IP assets of companies. At times, SMEs may possess high quality IP but have insufficient tangible collateral and low credit ratings. Therefore, they are unable to apply for loans through conventional methods. In this setting, financial institutions provide opportunities for financing to companies in the form of loans collateralized by IP, loans guaranteed by IP and IP-based investments

based on the IP valuation of the company's IP assets.

Soon after reaching a total amount of KRW 1 trillion in 2019, the amount of IP-backed financing transactions in Korea rapidly increased by 52.8% to total KRW 2.064 trillion in 2020. More specifically, loans collateralized by IP accounted for KRW 1.093 trillion and loans guaranteed by IP accounted for KRW 708.9 billion. Investment in companies that own outstanding IP rights or a direct investment for IP rights, or IP-based investment,

accounted for KRW 262.1 billion.

Especially in 2020, the expansion of IP financing has helped support Korean SMEs by providing opportunities of financial funds to innovative enterprises who have been economically affected by

COVID-19. KIPO plans to work to increase the number of financial institutions that provide loans collateralized by IP and to enhance the quality of IP valuation services in order to stimulate financial support for SMEs and venture enterprises with innovative technology.

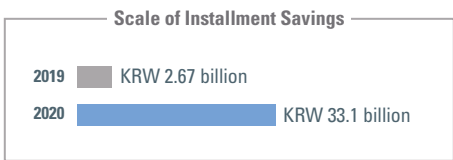
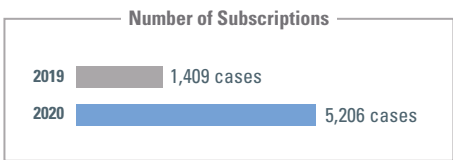
## Release of Mutual Aid Loans

Operated through the Korea Technology Finance Corporation (KIBO), KIPO implemented the Mutual Aid Program related to IPRs as a policy program to provide a financial base to SMEs for alleviating the burden of costly expenses related to IP through mutual aid. Subsequently, the program's loan services began to be released for subscribing members in 2020.

The mutual aid program operates based on the revenue of installment deposits of its members. Due to this nature, the first year was spent gathering companies to subscribe to the program and enrolled members are eligible to receive loans after accumulating more than 12 payments (monthly installments). Therefore, companies were issued loans beginning in

July 2020 after its launch in 2019. Additionally, in consideration of the economic hardships caused by COVID-19, a temporary interest rate reduction on loans was implemented from September 2020 until August 2021. The interest rate of loans for IP expenses was reduced from 1.75% to 1.25% and the interest rate for loans for operating funds was reduced from 3.25% to 2.25%.

Since the launch of its services, the mutual aid program has gained 5,206 members in just 16 months of companies which desire to protect their patents, trademarks, designs, etc. and the number continues to increase to that scale. Such mutual aid loans will continue to help SMEs that are faced with unexpected challenges such as IP disputes both domestic and international incidents.



as of Dec. 2020



# Strengthening IP Protection

36	"Reasonably Expected" Damage Compensation in Effect
37	10th Anniversary of The Special Judicial Police
38	Response to IP Infringement and Dispute

COVID-19 Prevention System  
Korea's excellent COVID-19 prevention system has received great attention from around the world. The Korean government has promised continuous cooperation with the international community to respond to COVID-19.



# “Reasonably Expected” Damage Compensation in Effect

A partial amendment of the Patent Act went into effect on December 10, 2020 which entitles a more reasonable compensation for damages from infringement. The amendment stipulates that a patent holder can claim damages for the infringer’s product sales that surpass beyond the patent holder’s own production capacity (Article 128, Patent Act).

Previously, the amount of compensation was subject to an amount “ordinarily expected” in royalties which was limited to the production capacity of the patent holder. For example, even when an infringer sells 10,000 units of a product, if the production capacity of the original patent holder is 100 units, damages could not be claimed for the 9,900 units that is beyond his/her own production capacity.

However, instead of having a deterrent effect, larger corporations with larger production sales could profit by taking advantage of the limited production capacity of smaller businesses. They would only need to pay a relatively small amount for infringement damages rather than going through the process of making proper license agreements.

With the amendment in force, right holders are able to claim damages that is calculated as a “reasonably expected” amount in royalties which can go beyond the original production capacity (e.g. remaining 9,900 units of the infringer’s sales). This calculation method has been widely recognized in major developed countries such as France, Japan. UK, and the U.S.

Moreover, in the case that there is willful infringement of the patent right, the courts can award compensation up to three times the recognized amount of damages as well as on all profits made on infringement

products sales. Enforcement of this amendment will help establish stronger protection of patent rights against large-scale, deliberate and malicious infringements.

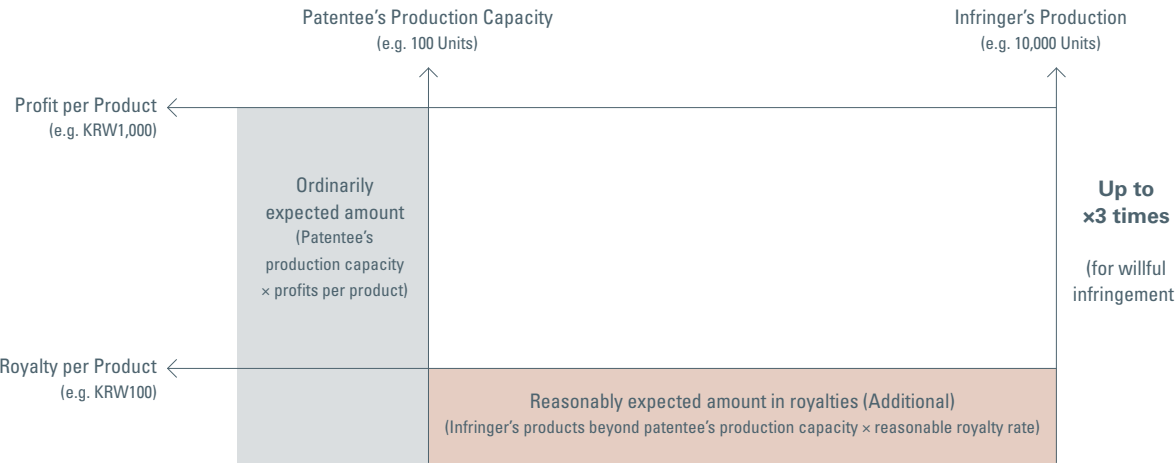
## 10th Anniversary of The Special Judicial Police

In 2020, the KIPO Special Judicial Police (SJP) on Industrial Property celebrated its 10th anniversary. In September 2010, KIPO established the SJP as Korea's first-ever investigative authority dedicated to enforcement against counterfeit products from trademark infringements. By March 2019, amendments were made to expand the scope of authority and allow investigations on all IP, such as patents, trade secrets, and design infringement along with trademarks.

Moreover, online consumption has rapidly increased due to the growth of the “untact” or “contact-free” industry. Subsequently, more and more counterfeit products are being traded on online markets and platforms. Accordingly, the SJP focused its investigation capabilities on online transactions of counterfeits and even made an arrest that involved a whole family who sold KRW 62.5 billion worth of counterfeit luxury items through live broadcasts on social media.

True to its role as enforcers of IP protection, the SJP has been able to handle about 45,000 case since beginning 10 years ago. In the process of investigations, about 3,500 trademark infringers have been charged with criminal activity and about 12 million items of counterfeit products (valued at KRW 500 billion in genuine goods) have been confiscated.

The SJP not only focuses investigations on products related to public health and safety but has been expanding its attention to the growing popularity of Korean pop culture (K-pop) and related merchandise. Last year in particular, the SJP cracked down on counterfeit products related to BTS, a world-famous Korean boy band, which helped spread the importance of IP



- > With consideration that a patent can be licensed by multiple people at the same time  
(Patentee's production capacity x profits per product) + (Infringer's products beyond patentee's production capacity x reasonable royalty rate)  
\*Up to 3 times in compensation for willful infringement
- >> Important to calculate damage compensation based on a reasonable royalty rate



protection for the K-pop industry.

In total, there are 35 investigators across the three branch offices of Daejeon, Seoul, and Busan who are actively responding to IP infringement cases across the

nation. Members with specific technical specialties are recruited in order to provide prompt and accurate assessment regarding infringements, thereby helping to lead the way to eliminate IP infringements and enhance IPR protection.

# Response to IP Infringement and Dispute

## Opening the IPR Dispute Response Center

In November 2020, KIPO opened the “Intellectual Property Right Dispute Response Center” with the Korea Intellectual Property Protection Agency (KOIPA) to expand support for Korean companies exporting to overseas markets. The center will be dedicated to providing companies with relevant information and consultations on IPR disputes.

In particular, there has been rising concern regarding disputes where overseas companies are the original patent holder



and Korean companies are the latecomers. Also, the overseas trade environment may become increasingly unstable and international IPR disputes may increase due to recent global trade disputes and the COVID-19 crisis. To address these issues, the IPR Dispute Response Center will provide information and consultation regarding IP disputes and appropriate response measures to SMEs who lack IP dispute response capabilities.

Furthermore, IPR infringements related to Korean brands (K-brands) have been rising due to the increased popularity and export of Korean culture and entertainment products. In an effort to fight against overseas K-brand infringement, the IPR Dispute Response Center will also monitor counterfeit products circulating online and bad faith registration of trademarks of K-brands by trademark brokers and provide follow-up measures.

## IPR support in the New Southern Market

KIPO has been working together with the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA) to provide diverse support for protecting the IPRs of Korean SMEs entering local markets especially in the South and Southeast Asian Region. In 2017, the Korean government launched a diplomatic initiative aimed at realizing mutual prosperity and peace by seeking to elevate Korea's relations with ASEAN member states and India in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres.

To help Korean companies enter markets in this region, also called “New Southern Markets,” companies are offered services at no costs through KOTRA-led exhibitions, buyer consultations, and delegation parties to search for similar trademarks in the respective local market. As long as there

are no preexisting similar trademarks, they will receive the support to file a trademark application through the IP-DESK located in the respective country.

These IP-DESKS have been established in various parts of the world in order to provide support to Korean companies in international markets by helping secure trademark rights and respond to infringement disputes and by hosting informational sessions on dealing with trademark brokers. The most recent IP-DESK was established in Manila, Philippines in March 2020. Korean companies in the Philippines will be able to receive the various services provided by the local IP-DESK, such as consultation with local IPR experts and financial support to secure rights and to respond against disputes.



\* Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN): Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.



# Establishing Global IP Cooperation

- 42 Strengthening Cooperation with WIPO
- 43 RCEP Signing Among Nations of the Asia-Pacific Region
- 44 Major IP Offices to Enhance the Role of IP in Tackling Global Challenges
- 46 10-Year Vision for Trilateral IP Cooperation



Hahoe Byeolsingut Tallori (Mask Dance Drama of Hahoe)  
Hahoe Byeolsingut Tallori is held in Andong Hahoe Village. The mask used for this performance is the oldest surviving mask in Korea and is designated as a national treasure. After this performance, young and old Koreans and foreigners have an exciting dance party.



# Strengthening Cooperation with WIPO

The Republic of Korea (ROK) first became a member of the World Intellectual Property Office (WIPO) in 1979 which is the global forum for IP services, policy, information, and cooperation. Particularly in 2020, effort was focused on strengthening the long-standing relationship with WIPO as well as actively participating in global discussions during the COVID-19 epidemic.

On March 4th, 2020, the KIPO Commissioner, as head of the ROK delegation, participated in the Extraordinary Session of the WIPO Coordination Committee held in Geneva. The Coordination Committee nominated Mr. Daren Tang as the candidate for the post of the next Director General. Subsequently, due to the unprecedented global health crisis, the appointment of Mr. Daren Tang as the 5th WIPO Director-

General was confirmed through written procedure at the 28th Extraordinary Session of the WIPO General Assembly held from May 7th to 8th.

Further, the Assemblies of the Member States of WIPO (Sixty-First Series of Meetings) was held from September 21st to 25th through a hybrid format to allow member states to participate physically or online in compliance to health and safety measures. The KIPO Commissioner delivered a General Statement which emphasized the necessity of R&D and IPR creation to overcome the COVID-19 crisis and highlighted the importance of promoting WIPO and IP Offices’ digital transformation for users’ accessibility and convenience.

In December, a bilateral video conference was held where the newly appointed WIPO

Director-General shared his vision for identifying new collaborations between the two institutions. The KIPO Commissioner in turn discussed cooperation projects using the WIPO-Korea Funds-In-Trust to promote sustainable economic development and help reduce the IP gap between developing and developed countries.

Meanwhile, KIPO, WIPO, and the Korea

Patent Attorneys Association (KPAA) collaborated to host a “WIPO Roving Webinar” in November 2020 for WIPO’s IP global service users in the ROK. Korean staff currently at WIPO were invited online to introduce the standard practices and procedures of the global IP systems, such as the PCT System (patent), the Madrid System (trademark), the Hague System (design), as well as WIPO’s global database of IP information.

# RCEP Signing Among Nations of the Asia-Pacific Region

On November 15, 2020, the representatives of 15 countries including the ROK, Australia, China, Japan, and New Zealand and the ten countries of the ASEAN region gathered virtually to witness the signing of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) during the 4th RCEP Summit. The RCEP signing is significant as a trade agreement among Asia-Pacific nations to strengthen economic linkages and enhance trade and investment activities, thereby, creating the world’s largest trading bloc to date.

The RCEP will create a foundation for IPR

protection with a considerable market that accounts for 2.26 billion people or 30% of the world's population, USD 26.3 trillion or 30% of the world’s GDP, and USD 5.4 trillion or 28.7% of global trade. The Agreement contains 20 Chapters, 17 annexes and 54 schedules of commitments of which specifically defines a total of 83 provisions with respect to patents, designs, trademarks, etc.

While the Korea-ASEAN FTA which has been in effect since 2007 has only one declaratory clause regarding cooperation on IP rights, the RCEP has a total of







83 clauses which regulate trademark, patent, design in detail. The RCEP is therefore expected to help supplement and strengthen IPR protection in the Asia-Pacific region.

The provisions of the RCEP are expected to be in effect from 2022 after 60% of the member parties have completed the

ratification processes in their respective country. Member parties will be required to process trademark applications and registrations in accordance with the international classification of WIPO (Nice classification). Thus, as the RCEP comes into effect, there will be sufficient protection of IPRs for companies doing business in the local markets of the region.

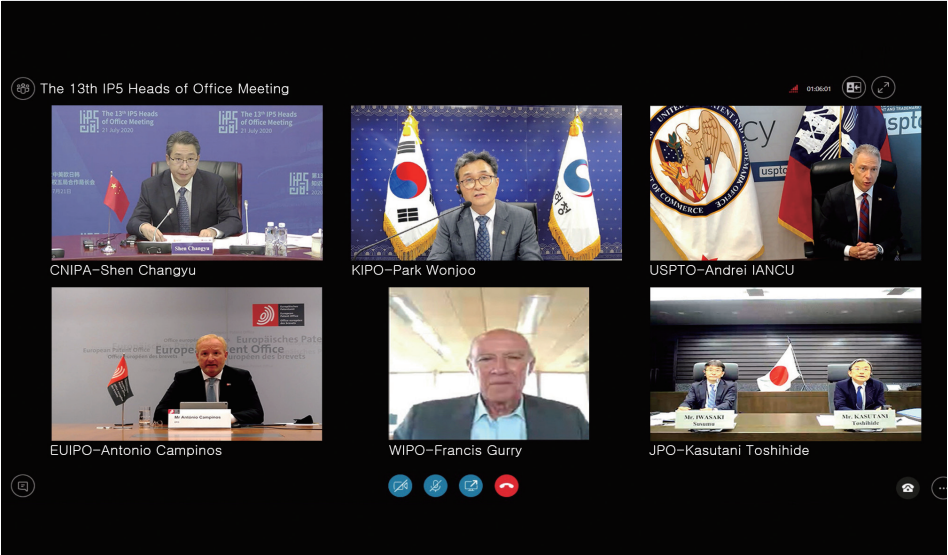
# Major IP Offices to Enhance the Role of IP in Tackling Global Challenges

The forum of the world’s five largest IP offices (IP5), namely KIPO, the China National Intellectual Property Administration (CNIPA), European Patent Office (EPO), Japan Patent Office (JPO), and United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), convened for the 13th Heads of IP5 Office Meeting on July 21, 2020. Since the launch of the consultative body in 2007, meetings have been hosted on a yearly rotation among the IP5 offices. However, this year, the meeting was held via video conference for the first time on account of the outbreak of COVID-19 and the WIPO Director-General attended in an observer capacity.

In addition to discussing ongoing collaborative activities, the five heads of office shared about the measures taken by the individual IP offices to mitigate the effects of the pandemic on applicants

and innovators as well as discuss IP5 cooperation for the post-pandemic times. Members agreed to enhance public and mutual access to patent information and technological knowledge related to COVID-19 detection, prevention and treatment and to share best practices in dealing with global challenges.

Moreover, IP was emphasized for its potential key role in boosting economic recovery and innovation especially in times of crisis. The IP5 agreed to continue supporting the international IP community in addition to advancing IP cooperation related to new emerging technologies, harmonizing examination practices and procedures, improving quality and efficiency in patent examination, and actively engaging with IP5 industry associations. These commitments have been reflected and highlighted in the Joint





Statement published on the official IP5 website ([www.fiveipoffices.org](http://www.fiveipoffices.org))

The KIPO Commissioner emphasized that in the quest for combating the COVID-19 pandemic, the world’s five largest IP offices would have to play a more active and flexible role on the global stage to find a good balance between securing free access to medicines for public health and safety and ensuring patent protection for pharmaceutical products. The IP5 offices plan to continue its endeavors to improve the IP system to make it more responsive to future challenges and serve as a

“catalyst” for technical advancement and safe future for society.

In the field of trademark and design, the five offices (CNIPA, EUIPO, JPO, USPTO, KIPO) of the TM5 and ID5 also announced a 2020 Joint Statement emphasizing the necessity of enhancing cooperation in new technological areas, improving examination services for user convenience, and collaborating internationally through online channels in order to foster post-pandemic development of the trademark and design systems.

# 10-Year Vision for Trilateral IP Cooperation

For two decades, KIPO, CNIPA and JPO have come together to establish a trilateral cooperation on IP, called the TRIPO cooperation, with the goal of facilitating exchange and utilization of patent examination information, harmonizing patent examination practices, and establishing international norms. The three offices have actively carried out cooperative activities and cooperation in six areas, including IP automation, patents, designs, trademarks, trials and appeals, and human resources development.

In December 2020, the annual TRIPO Heads of Office meeting was hosted by KIPO via video conference where the three offices discussed accomplishments thus far and future needs. Notably, the collective volume of international patent applications handled by the three offices has increased from about 40% in 2001 to about 60% over the twenty years, and the volume of trademark filing increased from about 20% to about 60% in the same period, making the ROK, China, and Japan the three largest IP economies in the world.



In celebration of the 20th anniversary of the TRIPO cooperation, a 10-year vision for trilateral IP cooperation was established with a view to adopting it at a next trilateral Summit Meeting. Under the new vision, TRIPO will make concerted efforts for joint responses to address new challenges, such as digital transformation and the spread of a pandemic, by improving relevant laws, examination practices and systems for facilitating the creation and protection of innovative technologies. Also, they will cooperate to improve public access and encourage utilization of patent information by the private sector and to expand cooperation to include other countries or regions, thereby supporting the endeavor to achieve technological development and innovation-driven growth.

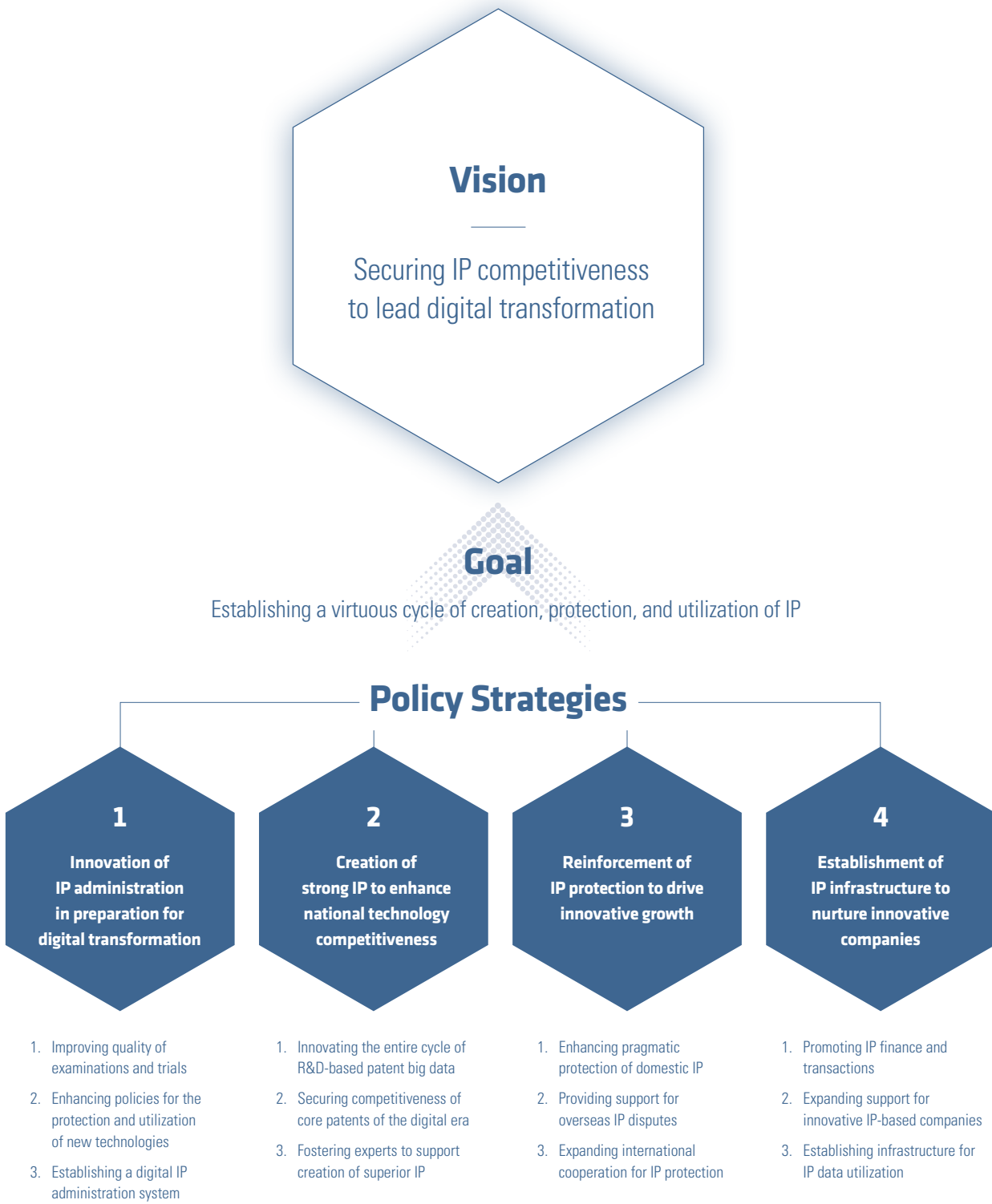
Furthermore, the meeting was especially meaningful in that each country shared information on their respective cooperative programs implemented with ASEAN countries. With all three countries participating in the RCEP, discussions were made on the possibilities of a joint approach for the first time after signing the agreement. Accordingly, the TRIPO cooperation will continue to advance the range and depth of cooperation based on mutual trust.



# Appendix

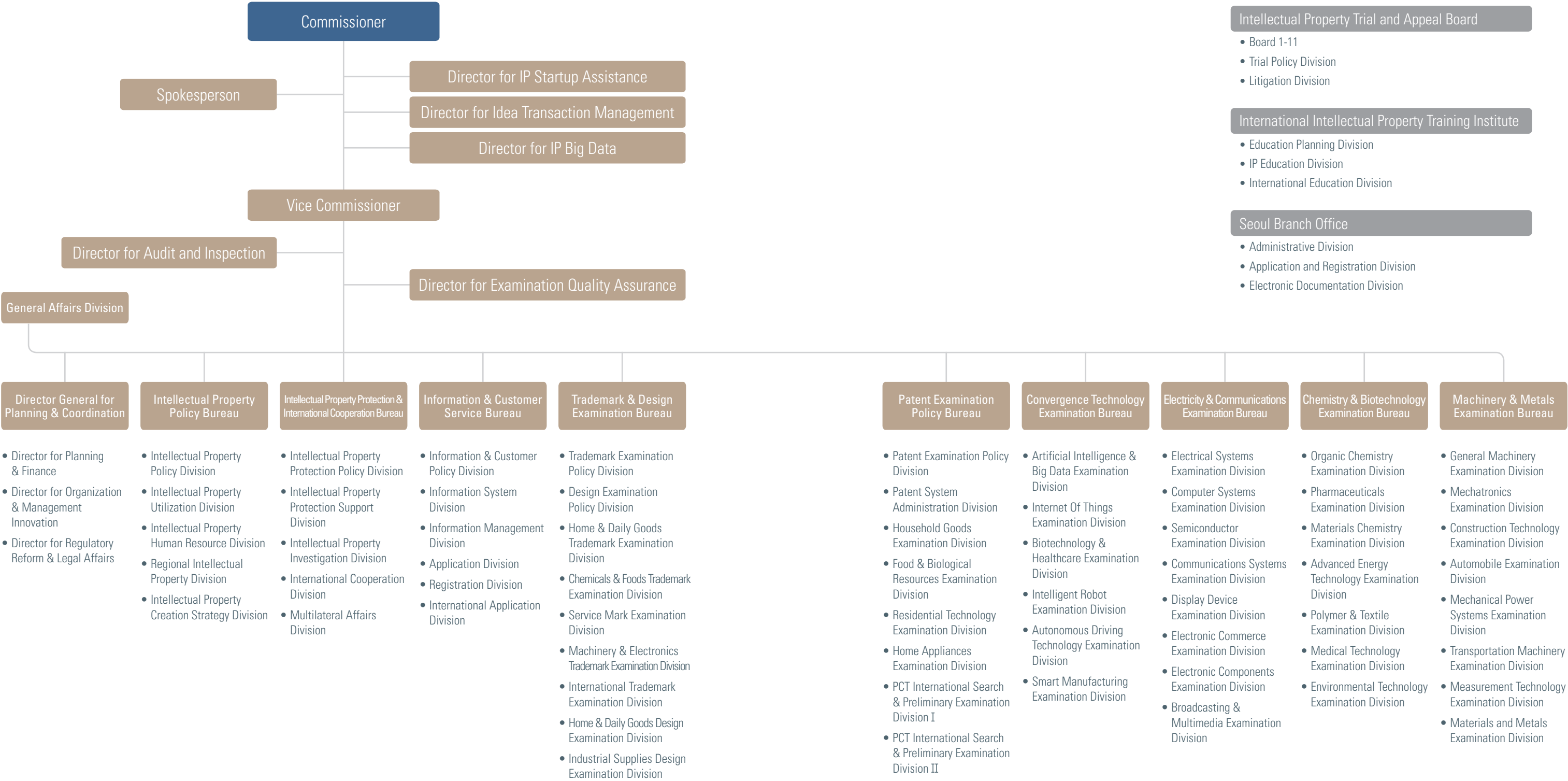


# 2021 KIPO Vision & Strategy





# KIPO Organization Chart





## Applications

Application by IPR type

(unit: cases)					
Category	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Patents	208,830	204,775	209,992	218,975	226,759
Utility models	7,767	6,811	6,232	5,447	4,981
Subtotal	216,597	211,586	216,224	224,422	231,740
Designs	64,678 (66,728)	62,528 (64,986)	62,823 (65,434)	64,111 (66,637)	66,354 (68,695)
Trademarks	170,347 (204,012)	168,556 (202,539)	185,968 (232,109)	204,998 (252,309)	243,935 (290,207)
Total	451,622 (696,167)	442,670 (485,922)	465,015 (513,767)	493,531 (543,368)	542,029 (590,642)

Note: Figures in parentheses include multiple applications.

PCT applications (KIPO as the Receiving Office)

(unit: cases)					
Category	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Number of applications	15,595	15,790	16,991	18,885	19,675
Growth rate	6.8%	1.2%	7.6%	11.1%	4.2%

International trademark applications under the Madrid System

(unit: cases)					
Category	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Korea as office of origin	942	1,053	1,322	1,419	1,599
Korea as designated office	11,259	14,362	14,373	16,509	13,998

International design applications under the Hague System

(unit: cases)					
Category	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Korea as office of origin	104	133	116	178	250
Korea as designated office	981	925	857	928	1,229

Comparison of domestic and foreign applications

			(unit: cases)				
Category			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Patents	Domestic	Cases	163,424	159,095	162,576	171,606	180,484
		Ratio	78.3%	77.7%	77.40%	78.4%	79.6%
	Foreign	Cases	45,406	45,680	47,416	47,396	46,275
		Ratio	21.7%	22.3%	22.60%	21.6%	20.4%
	Total		208,830	204,775	209,992	218,975	226,759
Utility models	Domestic	Cases	7,395	6,448	5,768	4,975	4,595
		Ratio	95.2%	94.7%	92.60%	91.3%	92.3%
	Foreign	Cases	372	363	464	472	386
		Ratio	4.8%	5.3%	7.40%	8.7%	7.7%
	Total		7,767	6,811	6,232	5,447	4,981
Designs	Domestic	Cases	61,491 (62,618)	59,085 (60,379)	58,699 (60,021)	59,877 (61,204)	62,698 (63,939)
		Ratio	95.1% (93.8%)	94.5% (92.9%)	93.4% (91.7%)	93.3% (91.8%)	94.5% (93.1%)
	Foreign	Cases	3,187 (4,110)	3,443 (4,607)	4,124 (5,413)	4,234 (5,433)	3,656 (4,756)
		Ratio	4.9% (6.2%)	5.5% (7.1%)	6.6% (8.3%)	6.7% (8.2%)	5.5% (6.9%)
	Total		64,678 (66,728)	62,528 (64,986)	62,823 (65,434)	64,111 (66,637)	66,354 (68,695)
Trademarks	Domestic	Cases	157,107 (183,612)	155,674 (181,229)	170,545 (207,958)	190,204 (228,530)	230,318 (269,332)
		Ratio	92.2% (90.0%)	92.4% (89.5%)	91.7% (89.6%)	92.8% (90.6%)	94.4% (92.8%)
	Foreign	Cases	13,240 (20,400)	12,882 (21,310)	15,423 (24,151)	14,794 (23,779)	13,617 (20,875)
		Ratio	7.8% (10.0%)	7.6% (10.5%)	8.3% (10.4%)	7.2% (9.4%)	5.6% (7.2%)
	Total		170,347 (204,012)	168,556 (202,539)	185,968 (232,109)	204,998 (252,309)	243,935 (290,207)
Total	Domestic	Cases	389,417 (417,049)	380,302 (407,151)	397,588 (436,323)	426,662 (466,315)	478,095 (518,350)
		Ratio	86.2% (85.6%)	85.9% (85.0%)	85.5% (84.9%)	86.5% (85.8%)	88.2% (87.8%)
	Foreign	Cases	62,205 (70,288)	62,368 (71,960)	67,427 (77,444)	66,869 (77,053)	63,934 (72,292)
		Ratio	13.8% (14.4%)	14.1% (15.0%)	14.5% (15.1%)	13.5% (14.2%)	11.8% (12.2%)
	Total		451,622 (487,337)	442,670 (479,111)	465,015 (513,767)	493,531 (543,368)	542,029 (590,642)

Note: Figures in parentheses include multiple applications.



Patent and utility model applications by technological field in 2020

(unit: cases)

Classification	Patents			Utility models		
	Domestic	Foreign	Subtotal	Domestic	Foreign	Subtotal
Electrical machinery, apparatus, energy	13,304	3,056	16,360	231	42	273
Audio-visual technology	5,406	1,454	6,860	92	10	102
Telecommunications	2,618	654	3,272	38	10	48
Digital communication	6,571	2,804	9,375	7	-	7
Basic communication processes	517	323	840	-	-	-
Computer technology	10,672	2,796	13,468	51	11	62
IT methods for management	12,251	449	12,700	31		31
Semiconductors	7,615	3,847	11,462	3	11	14
Optics	2,864	2,075	4,939	41	9	50
Measurement	7,159	1,644	8,803	84	6	90
Analysis of biological materials	602	208	810	3	-	3
Control	4,193	424	4,617	65	2	67
Medical technology	9,776	2,093	11,869	223	55	278
Organic fine chemistry	3,757	2,271	6,028	4	2	6
Biotechnology	3,475	2,147	5,622	9	-	9
Pharmaceuticals	3,264	1,975	5,239	3	1	4
Macromolecular chemistry, polymers	2,111	1,866	3,977	-	-	-
Food chemistry	4,132	246	4,378	14	2	16
Basic materials chemistry	3,007	1,586	4,593	11	2	13
Materials, metallurgy	2,743	1,293	4,036	4		4
Surface technology, coating	2,046	1,460	3,506	15	4	19
Micro-structural and nano-technology	42	21	63	-	-	-
Chemical engineering	3,785	937	4,722	83	4	87
Environmental technology	3,082	355	3,437	65	4	69
Handling	4,278	719	4,997	288	29	317
Machine tools	3,525	1,042	4,567	133	9	142
Engines, pumps, turbines	2,538	795	3,333	50	7	57
Textile and paper machines	1,686	547	2,233	25	1	26
Other special machines	7,238	1,421	8,659	346	7	353
Thermal processes and apparatus	3,324	331	3,655	105	13	118
Mechanical elements	2,854	960	3,814	132	12	144
Transport	9,675	1,197	10,872	265	11	276

(unit: cases)

Classification	Patents			Utility models		
	Domestic	Foreign	Subtotal	Domestic	Foreign	Subtotal
Furniture, games	6,128	528	6,656	630	61	691
Other consumer goods	7,355	1,060	8,415	857	46	903
Civil engineering	9,500	461	9,961	361	4	365
Others	7,391	1,230	8,621	326	11	337
Total	180,484	46,275	226,759	4,595	386	4,981

Note: Figures for 2020 are preliminary.

Patent applications in biotechnology

(unit: cases)

Category	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
	Cases	Ratio	Cases	Ratio	Cases	Ratio	Cases	Ratio	Cases	Ratio
Domestic	6,700	75.1%	7,328	74.9%	7,239	72.2%	7,269	71.0%	7,878	71.0%
Foreign	2,222	24.9%	2,462	25.1%	2,794	27.8%	2,973	29.0%	3,218	29.0%
Total	8,922	100%	9,790	100%	10,033	100%	10,242	100%	11,096	100%

Note1: Figures for 2020 are preliminary.  
Note2: Based on the following biotechnological categories of the Eighth Edition of the International Patent Classification: A01H; A01K 67/00-67/04; A01N 63/00-65/00; A61K 8/97-8/99; A61K 8/64-8/68; A61K 35/12-35/76; 36/00-36/9068; A61K 38/00-38/58, 39/00-39/44, 48/00, 51/00-51/10; C02F; C07H 19/00-21/04; C07K; C12C-M; C12N; C12P; C12Q; C12S; G01N 33/50-33/98.

Patent applications in business methods

(unit: cases)

Category	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
	Cases	Ratio	Cases	Ratio	Cases	Ratio	Cases	Ratio	Cases	Ratio
Domestic	9,381	94.7%	8,852	95.2%	9,754	94.8%	10,321	95.1%	12,251	96.5%
Foreign	522	5.3%	446	4.8%	536	5.2%	534	4.9%	449	3.5%
Total	9,903	100%	9,298	100%	10,290	100%	10,855	100%	12,700	100%

Note1: Figures for 2020 are preliminary.  
Note2: Based on the Ninth Edition of the International Patent Classification.



Applications by residents of foreign countries/regions in 2020

(unit: cases)

Countries/Regions	Patent & Utility models		Designs		Trademarks		Total
	Domestic	PCT	Domestic	Hague	Domestic	Madrid	
United States of America	1,679	11,703	1,359 (1,913)	117 (550)	3,525 (6,111)	2,905 (5,258)	21,288 (27,214)
Japan	4,077	9,969	691 (830)	136 (287)	1,616 (2,849)	1,418 (3,183)	17,907 (21,195)
China	770	3,685	782 (842)	144 (236)	4,981(5,877)	2,190 (3,715)	12,552 (15,125)
Germany	615	3,045	68 (90)	136 (469)	182 (348)	1,526 (4,298)	5,572 (8,865)
France	152	1,303	88 (98)	156 (257)	276 (481)	780 (1,907)	2,755 (4,198)
United Kingdom	67	1,045	72 (110)	22 (39)	461(1,017)	604 (1,764)	2,271 (4,042)
Switzerland	152	1,159	64 (206)	107 (242)	228 (366)	732 (1,728)	2,442 (3,853)
Italy	58	371	39 (65)	89 (152)	155 (261)	725 (1,494)	1,437 (2,401)
Netherlands	142	781	174 (181)	60 (239)	66 (90)	233 (546)	1,456 (1,979)
Taiwan, Province of China	1,273	113	53 (56)	-	385 (580)	-	1,824 (2,022)
Sweden	80	643	37 (63)	21 (106)	71 (129)	234 (630)	1,086 (1,651)
Australia	19	208	18 (18)	1 (1)	150 (204)	343 (852)	739 (1,302)
Canada	26	377	17 (25)	4 (18)	242 (410)	125 (305)	791 (1,161)
Singapore	57	165	11 (37)	8 (26)	223 (374)	181 (425)	645 (1,084)
Denmark	16	207	46 (67)	18 (51)	44 (80)	165 (388)	496 (809)
Spain	6	139	5 (6)	2 (2)	75 (92)	252 (423)	479 (668)
Finland	33	226	8 (8)	3 (15)	27 (98)	126 (384)	423 (764)
Austria	41	283	4 (5)	3 (8)	16 (52)	123 (334)	470 (723)
Belgium	11	251	4 (10)	32 (37)	21 (33)	116 (237)	435 (579)
Israel	48	315	10 (10)	10 (11)	33 (56)	89 (158)	505 (598)
Russian Federation	7	88	4 (4)	12 (12)	19 (23)	131 (314)	261 (448)
Ireland	35	137	9 (13)	2 (4)	28 (60)	78 (136)	289 (385)
Luxembourg	11	113	22 (23)	5 (8)	29 (43)	81 (159)	261 (357)
Cayman Islands	4	72	1 (4)	-	73 (229)	13 (60)	163 (369)
Turkey	1	33	4 (4)	6 (7)	11 (15)	101 (192)	156 (252)
Norway	2	110	-	7 (17)	17 (39)	46 (131)	182 (299)
New Zealand	5	27	25 (25)	-	35 (52)	65 (116)	157 (225)
Thailand	13	39	3 (3)	-	63 (81)	37 (45)	155 (181)
Poland	4	31	-	2 (5)	13 (21)	49 (156)	99 (217)
India	10	106	1 (1)	1 (1)	33 (39)	26 (60)	177 (217)
Viet Nam	1	1	-	-	60 (74)	48 (87)	110 (163)
Cyprus	1	9	1 (1)	-	14 (19)	47 (133)	72 (163)
Saudi Arabia	1	131	-	-	17 (28)	-	149 (160)
Portugal	3	17	1 (1)	2 (2)	9 (9)	43 (76)	75 (108)

(unit: cases)

Countries/Regions	Patent & Utility models		Designs		Trademarks		Total
	Domestic	PCT	Domestic	Hague	Domestic	Madrid	
Czech Republic	4	18	6 (6)	5 (5)	2 (6)	31 (70)	66 (109)
United Arab Emirates	-	5	-	-	52 (69)	3 (9)	60 (83)
Mexico	2	11	2 (2)	1 (1)	29 (56)	14 (16)	59 (88)
The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China	-	-	2 (2)	-	39 (89)	-	41 (91)
Malaysia	11	15	-	-	34 (42)	11 (17)	71 (85)
Liechtenstein	8	27	1 (2)	2 (10)	1 (3)	21 (51)	60 (101)
Indonesia	1	-	3 (3)	-	12 (13)	31 (62)	47 (79)
Virgin Islands (British)	-	-	2 (2)	-	26 (43)	12 (19)	40 (64)
Monaco	-	2	-	-	8 (16)	15 (55)	25 (73)
Malta	4	11	1 (1)	-	5 (5)	15 (51)	36 (72)
Brazil	-	20	3 (3)	-	13 (14)	14 (25)	50 (62)
Chile	-	6	-	-	34 (37)	-	40 (43)
Barbados	10	7	9 (10)	-	2 (5)	11(22)	39 (54)
South Africa	1	14	2 (2)	-	22 (34)	-	39 (51)
Hungary	1	16	-	1 (1)	1 (1)	13 (34)	32 (53)
Lithuania	-	2	-	2 (3)	5 (9)	14 (28)	23 (42)
Estonia	-	3	-	1 (1)	-	14 (37)	18 (41)
Greece	3	22	-	1 (1)	1 (6)	7 (14)	34 (46)
Ukraine	-	2	-	2 (2)	1 (1)	12 (32)	17 (37)
Latvia	-	1	-	2 (3)	-	13 (32)	16 (36)
Philippines	-	2	-	-	11 (16)	8 (14)	21 (32)
Antigua and Barbuda	-	43	-	-	-	-	43 (43)
Croatia	-	2	-	4 (16)	-	10 (10)	16 (28)
Slovenia	-	8	-	2 (4)	-	7 (19)	17 (31)
Qatar	-	-	-	-	6 (18)	2 (8)	8 (26)
Bulgaria	-	6	-	-	-	9 (17)	15 (23)
Argentina	-	1	-	-	11 (18)	-	12 (19)
Slovakia	-	5	-	1 (1)	-	6 (16)	12 (22)
Belarus	-	3	-	-	-	7 (16)	10 (19)
Iceland	-	2	-	-	-	6 (17)	8 (19)
Romania	-	1	-	-	9 (9)	1 (3)	11 (13)
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	1	2	-	-	5 (6)	2 (4)	10 (13)
Mauritius	-	1	-	-	9 (9)	-	10 (10)



(unit: cases)

Countries/Regions	Patent & Utility models		Designs		Trademarks		Total
	Domestic	PCT	Domestic	Hague	Domestic	Madrid	
Pakistan	1	-	-	-	7 (9)	-	8 (10)
Uzbekistan	2	-	-	-	3 (3)	3 (5)	8 (10)
Mongolia	2	-	3 (3)	-	1 (1)	1 (4)	7 (10)
Serbia	-	-	-	1 (5)	-	3 (5)	4 (10)
Kazakhstan	-	-	-	-	1 (1)	5 (6)	6 (7)
San Marino	-	-	-	-	2 (2)	3 (5)	5 (7)
Bermuda	-	1	-	-	3 (3)	2 (3)	6 (7)
Bahamas	-	-	-	-	5 (5)	1 (1)	6 (6)
Lebanon	-	-	-	-	4 (8)	-	4 (8)
Seychelles	4	-	-	-	2 (5)	-	6 (9)
Kuwait	1	-	-	-	5 (5)	-	6 (6)
Tajikistan	-	-	-	-	5 (6)	-	5 (6)
Panama	-	-	-	-	3 (7)	-	3 (7)
Egypt	-	2	-	-	3 (5)	-	5 (7)
Andorra	1	-	-	-	1 (3)	2 (3)	4 (7)
Curacao	-	-	-	-	1 (2)	3 (3)	4 (5)
Cuba	-	5	-	-	1 (1)	1 (1)	7 (7)
EUIPO	-	-	-	-	4 (4)	-	4 (4)
Peru	-	2	-	-	3 (3)	-	5 (5)
Samoa	-	-	-	-	3 (5)	-	3 (5)
Colombia	-	1	-	-	2 (4)	-	3 (5)
Sri Lanka	-	1	-	-	3 (3)	-	4 (4)
Isle of Man	-	-	-	-	-	1 (6)	1 (6)
Puerto Rico	-	-	-	-	2 (2)	1 (2)	3 (4)
Armenia	-	-	-	-	2 (2)	1 (1)	3 (3)
Republic of Moldova	-	-	-	-	-	2 (4)	2 (4)
Tunisia	-	-	-	-	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)
Costa Rica	-	1	-	-	2 (3)	-	3 (4)
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	-	-	-	-	-	1 (4)	1 (4)
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	-	-	-	1 (1)	-	1 (2)	2 (3)
Georgia	-	-	-	-	-	2 (2)	2 (2)
Saint Kitts and Nevis	-	4	-	-	-	-	4 (4)
Gibraltar	-	-	-	-	-	1 (3)	1 (3)

(unit: cases)

Countries/Regions	Patent & Utility models		Designs		Trademarks		Total
	Domestic	PCT	Domestic	Hague	Domestic	Madrid	
Guernsey	-	1	-	-	-	1 (1)	2 (2)
Marshall Islands	-	-	-	-	1 (1)	-	1 (1)
Cambodia	-	-	-	-	1 (1)	-	1 (1)
Ecuador	-	-	-	-	1 (1)	-	1 (1)
Kyrgyzstan	-	-	-	-	1 (1)	-	1 (1)
Jordan	-	-	-	-	1 (1)	-	1 (1)
Uruguay	-	-	-	-	-	1 (1)	1 (1)
Iraq	-	-	-	-	1 (1)	-	1 (1)
Brunei Darussalam	-	-	-	-	-	1 (1)	1 (1)
Zimbabwe	-	-	-	-	1 (1)	-	1 (1)
Sudan	-	-	1 (1)	-	-	-	1 (1)
Nepal	1	-	-	-	-	-	1 (1)
Albania	1	-	-	-	-	-	1 (1)
Dominican Republic	-	1	-	-	-	-	1 (1)
Bangladesh	1	-	-	-	-	-	1 (1)
Belize	-	1	-	-	-	-	1 (1)
Syrian Arab Republic	-	1	-	-	-	-	1 (1)
Others	-	-	-	-	5 (10)	-	5 (10)
Total	9,480	37,181	3,656 (4,756)	1,132 (2,856)	13,617 (20,875)	13,980 (30,457)	79,046 (105,605)

Note: Figures in parentheses include multiple applications.



Examinations

Patents and utility models

(unit: cases)

Category			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Patents	First Action	Approval of registration	7,872	9,891	9,126	9,637	11,483
		Notice of preliminary rejection or amendment	163,347	158,013	148,772	158,527	170,299
		Other notices	991	1,012	1,202	1,613	1,990
		Withdrawal or abandonment	2,582	2,196	2,190	2,594	2,723
		Total	174,792	171,112	161,290	172,371	186,495
	Final Decisions	Approval of registration	101,678	110,408	106,129	115,302	126,228
		Rejection or cancellation	66,055	62,869	55,613	50,944	47,331
		Withdrawal abandonment, annulment, or rejection	4,320	3,841	3,636	3,914	3,997
		Total	172,053	177,118	165,378	170,160	177,556
Utility models	First Action	Approval of registration	317	337	235	225	216
		Notice of preliminary rejection or amendment	6,848	6,161	5,258	4,739	4,007
		Other notices	25	13	12	21	14
		Withdrawal or abandonment	131	122	113	109	99
		Total	7,321	6,633	5,618	5,094	4,336
	Final Decisions	Approval of registration	2,935	3,040	2,619	2,329	1,994
		Rejection or cancellation	4,214	3,729	3,282	2,815	2,254
		Withdrawal abandonment, annulment, or rejection	268	234	196	217	174
		Total	7,417	7,003	6,097	5,361	4,422

Designs and trademarks

(unit: cases)

Category			2015	2016	2017	2019	2020
Designs	First Action	Publication/approval of registration	31,398 (32,755)	29,453 (30,598)	27,559 (28,708)	31,029 (32,218)	31,232 (32,640)
		Notice of preliminary rejection	31,540 (33,951)	30,275 (32,647)	29,654 (31,962)	29,303 (31,778)	27,068 (29,055)
		Other notices	-	-	-	-	-
		Total	62,938 (66,706)	59,728 (63,245)	57,213 (60,670)	60,332 (63,996)	58,300 (61,695)
	Final Decisions	Approval of registration	55,783 (58,302)	51,166 (53,480)	50,161 (52,750)	53,987 (56,989)	51,407 (54,101)
		Rejection	8,396 (9,496)	7,190 (7,978)	7,356 (8,089)	7,343 (8,055)	7,095 (7,776)
		Total	64,179 (67,798)	58,356 (61,458)	57,517 (60,839)	61,330 (65,044)	58,502 (61,877)
Trademarks	First Action	Publication/approval of registration	98,921 (112,521)	94,490 (107,033)	96,236 (109,983)	98,557 (112,244)	94,942 (108,405)
		Notice of preliminary rejection	73,377 (106,332)	69,393 (97,656)	73,376 (106,978)	77,623 (116,298)	67,433 (99,287)
		Other notices	-	-	-	-	-
		Total	172,298(218,853)	163,883 (204,689)	169,612 (216,961)	176,180 (228,542)	162,375 (207,692)
	Final Decisions	Approval of registration	136,948(173,024)	133,378 (166,963)	133,359 (168,237)	145,794 (187,392)	133,882 (173,499)
		Rejection	33,015 (41,813)	31,773 (39,414)	29,873 (36,697)	32,014 (41,658)	28,219 (37,267)
		Total	169,963(214,837)	165,151 (206,377)	163,232 (204,934)	177,808 (229,050)	162,101 (210,766)

Note: Figures in parentheses include multiple applications.



Average first office action pendency

(unit: month)

Category	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Patents / Utility models	10.6	10.4	10.3	10.8	11.1
Trademarks	4.8	5.0	5.5	6.8	8.9
Designs	4.7	4.9	4.9	5.4	4.6

Average total pendency

(unit: month)

Category	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Patents / Utility models	16.2	15.9	15.8	15.6	15.8
Trademarks	9.6	9.8	10.4	11.1	13.2
Designs	5.9	6.2	6.3	6.7	6.0

PCT international search reports and preliminary examinations undertaken by KIPO

(unit: cases)

Category	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
International Search Reports	28,176	25,955	24,123	27,167	28,547
International Preliminary Examinations	209	169	131	131	100

Note: Based on KIPO data

Registrations

Registrations by IPR type

(unit: cases)

Category	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Patents	108,875	120,662	119,014	125,661	134,766
Utility models	2,854	2,993	2,715	2,417	2,056
Subtotal	111,729	123,655	121,729	128,078	136,822
Designs	55,602	49,293	49,905	52,850	50,694
Trademarks	119,255	116,704	115,025	125,594	116,153
Total	286,586	289,652	286,659	306,522	303,669

Note: Trademark registration renewals are excluded.

Comparison of domestic and foreign registrations

(unit: cases)

Category			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Patents	Domestic	Cases	82,400	90,847	89,229	94,852	103,881
		Ratio	75.7%	75.3%	75.0%	75.5%	77.1%
	Foreign	Cases	26,475	29,815	29,785	30,809	30,885
		Ratio	24.3%	24.7%	25.0%	24.5%	22.9%
	Total		108,875	120,662	119,014	125,661	134,766
Utility models	Domestic	Cases	2,694	2,810	2,521	2,238	1,842
		Ratio	94.4%	93.9%	92.9%	92.6%	89.6%
	Foreign	Cases	160	183	194	179	214
		Ratio	5.6%	6.1%	7.1%	7.4%	10.4%
	Total		2,854	2,993	2,715	2,417	2,056
Designs	Domestic	Cases	50,242	44,052	44,150	46,011	45,169
		Ratio	90.4%	89.4%	88.5%	87.1%	89.1%
	Foreign	Cases	5,360	5,241	5,755	6,839	5,525
		Ratio	9.6%	10.6%	11.5%	12.9%	10.9%
	Total		55,602	49,293	49,905	52,850	50,694



(unit: cases)

Category			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Trademarks	Domestic	Cases	99,934	96,993	94,532	102,333	94,892
		Ratio	83.8%	83.1%	82.2%	81.5%	81.7%
	Foreign	Cases	19,321	19,711	20,493	23,261	21,261
		Ratio	16.2%	16.9%	17.8%	18.5%	18.3%
	Total		119,255	116,704	115,025	125,594	116,153
Total	Domestic	Cases	235,270	234,702	230,432	245,434	245,784
		Ratio	82.1%	81.0%	80.4%	80.1%	80.9%
	Foreign	Cases	51,316	54,950	56,227	61,088	57,885
		Ratio	17.9%	19.0%	19.6%	19.9%	19.1%
	Total		286,586	289,652	286,659	306,522	303,669

(unit: cases)

Classification	Patents			Utility models		
	Domestic	Foreign	Subtotal	Domestic	Foreign	Subtotal
Measurement	4,744	1,115	5,859	40	7	47
Analysis of biological materials	459	131	590	-	-	-
Control	2,409	312	2,721	30	1	31
Medical technology	4,672	1,088	5,760	86	13	99
Organic fine chemistry	2,297	1,252	3,549	1	-	1
Biotechnology	2,153	856	3,009	-	-	-
Pharmaceuticals	1,828	736	2,564	-	-	-
Macromolecular chemistry, polymers	1,389	1,289	2,678	-	-	-
Food chemistry	1,825	135	1,960	8	1	9
Materials, metallurgy	2,232	864	3,096	6	1	7
Surface technology, coating	1,559	905	2,464	6	-	6
Micro-structural and nano-technology	49	17	66	-	-	-
Chemical engineering	2,429	586	3,015	36	5	41
Environmental technology	2,189	316	2,505	41	4	45
Basic materials chemistry	2142	1172	3314	2	2	4
Handling	2,600	620	3,220	158	12	170
Machine tools	2,607	822	3,429	67	6	73
Engines, pumps, turbines	1,871	903	2,774	25	9	34
Textile and paper machines	1,181	443	1,624	15	3	18
Other special machines	4,170	968	5,138	147	10	157
Thermal processes and apparatus	2,223	225	2,448	38	3	41
Mechanical elements	1,957	774	2,731	64	24	88
Transport	5,087	1,027	6,114	124	8	132
Furniture, games	2,965	348	3,313	240	15	255
Other consumer goods	2,857	587	3,444	262	21	283
Civil engineering	6,715	345	7,060	213	6	219
Total	103,881	30,885	134,766	1,842	214	2,056

Note: Figures for 2020 are preliminary.

Patent and utility model registrations by technological field in 2020

(unit: cases)

Classification	Patents			Utility models		
	Domestic	Foreign	Subtotal	Domestic	Foreign	Subtotal
Electrical machinery, apparatus, energy	8,294	2,317	10,611	135	17	152
Audio-visual technology	3,865	1,142	5,007	46	13	59
Telecommunications	2,106	492	2,598	13	-	13
Digital communication	3,934	1,853	5,787	1	-	1
Basic communication processes	367	279	646	-	1	1
Computer technology	6,506	2,032	8,538	14	14	28
IT methods for management	4,581	277	4,858	4	-	4
Semiconductors	4,942	3,226	8,168	6	13	19
Optics	2,677	1,431	4,108	14	5	19



Patent registrations in biotechnology

(unit: cases)

Category	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
	Cases	Ratio	Cases	Ratio	Cases	Ratio	Cases	Ratio	Cases	Ratio
Domestic	3,507	78.6%	4,709	80.9%	4,524	79.3%	4,534	78.4%	4,969	79.0%
Foreign	955	21.4%	1,111	19.1%	1,149	20.3%	1,249	21.6%	1,321	21.0%
Total	4,462	100%	5,820	100%	5,673	100%	5,783	100%	6,290	100%

Note1: Figures for 2020 are preliminary.

Note2: Based on the following biotechnological categories of the Eighth Edition of the International Patent Classification: A01H; A01K 67/00-67/04; A01N 63/00-65/00; A61K 8/97-8/99; A61K 8/64-8/68; A61K 35/12-35/76; 36/00-36/9068; A61K 38/00-38/58, 39/00-39/44, 48/00, 51/00-51/10; C02F; C07H 19/00-21/04; C07K; C12C-M; C12N; C12P; C12Q; C12S; G01N 33/50-33/98.

Patent registrations in business methods

(unit: cases)

Category	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
	Cases	Ratio	Cases	Ratio	Cases	Ratio	Cases	Ratio	Cases	Ratio
Domestic	3,145	93.9%	3,782	93.7%	3,560	93.1%	3,500	93.6%	4,581	94.3%
Foreign	204	6.1%	253	6.3%	262	6.9%	241	6.4%	277	5.7%
Total	3,349	100%	4,035	100%	3,822	100%	3,741	100%	4,858	100%

Note1: Figures for 2020 are preliminary.

Note2: Based on the Ninth Edition of the International Patent Classification.

Registrations by resident of foreign countries/regions in 2020

(unit: cases)

Countries/Regions	Patent & Utility models		Designs		Trademarks		Total
	Domestic	PCT	Domestic	Hague	Domestic	Madrid	
United States of America	7,726	805	1,329	174	2,606 (4,725)	2,216 (3,922)	14,856 (18,681)
Japan	9,825	1006	806	201	1,476 (2,838)	1,342 (2,984)	14,656 (17,660)
China	1,904	220	688	59	3,301 (3,979)	1,629 (2,619)	7,801 (9,469)
Netherlands	603	61	246	129	53 (118)	180 (487)	1,272 (1,644)
Switzerland	617	70	144	195	170 (259)	635 (1,397)	1,831 (2,682)
Germany	2,343	260	103	278	176 (354)	1,251 (3,669)	4,411 (7,007)
France	926	113	84	181	273 (396)	709 (1,698)	2,286 (3,398)

(unit: cases)

Countries/Regions	Patent & Utility models		Designs		Trademarks		Total
	Domestic	PCT	Domestic	Hague	Domestic	Madrid	
Sweden	513	60	79	22	30 (68)	192 (500)	896 (1,242)
United Kingdom	489	67	71	33	338 (694)	561 (1,453)	1,559 (2,807)
Italy	230	28	68	207	100 (151)	559 (1,151)	1,192 (1,835)
Taiwan, Province of China	817	94	53	-	333 (476)	-	1,297 (1,440)
Denmark	87	8	26	31	24 (59)	148 (365)	324 (576)
Cayman Islands	261	19	26	-	36 (125)	6 (12)	348 (443)
Canada	186	20	25	4	204 (417)	31 (54)	470 (706)
Luxembourg	84	5	24	1	6 (10)	59 (126)	179 (250)
Australia	90	7	22	-	104 (144)	247 (553)	470 (816)
Israel	153	11	20	2	26 (39)	70 (113)	282 (338)
Singapore	82	13	18	1	126 (250)	142 (349)	382 (713)
Liechtenstein	10	1	16	22	-	26 (44)	75 (93)
Thailand	17	3	9	-	63 (91)	28 (36)	120 (156)
Belgium	130	16	7	10	12 (15)	92 (192)	267 (370)
New Zealand	25	-	6	-	32 (49)	55 (130)	118 (210)
Finland	177	24	6	13	45 (93)	93 (307)	358 (620)
Ireland	107	6	5	21	34 (61)	52 (86)	225 (286)
Hungary	6	1	3	2	-	12 (24)	24 (36)
Turkey	15	-	2	2	8 (13)	46 (81)	73 (113)
Virgin Islands (British)	11	-	2	-	43 (97)	10 (28)	66 (138)
Mongolia	-	-	2	-	-	-	2 (2)
South Africa	12	2	2	-	4 (4)	1 (1)	21 (21)
Spain	77	8	2	4	64 (76)	185 (360)	340 (527)
Barbados	38	6	2	-	13 (54)	-	59 (100)
Norway	53	5	2	5	3 (5)	63 (209)	131 (279)
The Macao Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China	-	-	2	-	3 (3)	-	5 (5)
Greece	8	2	1	2	6 (13)	9 (17)	28 (43)
Mexico	12	3	1	-	30 (42)	3 (7)	49 (65)
Indonesia	1	-	1	-	34 (45)	5 (7)	41 (54)
Pakistan	-	-	1	-	3 (3)	-	4 (4)
Austria	204	15	1	1	11 (84)	100 (258)	332 (563)
India	41	7	1	-	16 (16)	29 (42)	94 (107)
Brazil	12	1	1	-	8 (16)	-	22 (30)



(unit: cases)

Countries/Regions	Patent & Utility models		Designs		Trademarks		Total
	Domestic	PCT	Domestic	Hague	Domestic	Madrid	
Malaysia	7	-	1	-	29 (85)	5 (15)	42 (108)
Portugal	3	2	1	2	7 (7)	21 (41)	36 (56)
Bulgaria	3	-	-	-	-	10 (19)	13 (22)
Russian Federation	48	5	-	1	16 (19)	87 (250)	157 (323)
Republic of Moldova	-	-	-	-	-	3 (4)	3 (4)
Saudi Arabia	51	10	-	-	6 (8)	-	67 (69)
Belarus	-	-	-	-	7 (7)	4 (6)	11 (13)
Gibraltar	-	-	-	-	-	2 (2)	2 (2)
Cuba	3	1	-	-	-	2 (2)	6 (6)
Saint Kitts and Nevis	-	-	-	-	2 (4)	-	2 (4)
Mauritius	1	-	-	-	-	1 (1)	2 (2)
Romania	1	-	-	-	1 (1)	6 (27)	8 (29)
Lebanon	-	-	-	-	3 (5)	-	3 (5)
Myanmar	-	-	-	-	1 (1)	-	1 (1)
Cambodia	1	-	-	-	1 (1)	-	2 (2)
Ukraine	1	-	-	3	1 (1)	11 (13)	16 (18)
Bahamas	2	1	-	-	-	-	3 (3)
Lithuania	2	1	-	-	2 (2)	6 (14)	11 (19)
Tunisia	-	-	-	-	-	8 (8)	8 (8)
Andorra	1	-	-	-	1 (1)	-	2 (2)
Marshall Islands	-	-	-	-	-	2 (5)	2 (5)
Uruguay	1	-	-	-	-	-	1 (1)
Malta	7	-	-	-	3 (5)	10 (24)	20 (36)
Philippines	2	1	-	-	11 (22)	5 (10)	19 (35)
Jersey(U.K.)	11	1	-	-	-	2 (11)	14 (23)
Iceland	-	-	-	1	-	7 (17)	8 (18)
United Arab Emirates	5	-	-	-	22 (30)	3 (5)	30 (40)
Serbia	-	-	-	5	-	1 (1)	6 (6)
Lao People's Democratic Republic	-	-	-	-	-	1 (1)	1 (1)
Curacao	-	-	-	-	1 (1)	-	1 (1)
Slovakia	4	-	-	-	-	3 (5)	7 (9)
Egypt	-	-	-	-	-	3 (5)	3 (5)
Bangladesh	2	-	-	-	-	-	2 (2)
Iraq	-	-	-	-	1 (1)	-	1 (1)
Monaco	1	-	-	-	5 (5)	12 (30)	18 (36)
Latvia	-	-	-	-	1 (1)	10 (20)	11 (21)
Estonia	3	1	-	1	1 (1)	11 (27)	17 (33)

(unit: cases)

Countries/Regions	Patent & Utility models		Designs		Trademarks		Total
	Domestic	PCT	Domestic	Hague	Domestic	Madrid	
Slovenia	4	-	-	-	-	7 (9)	11 (13)
Croatia	2	-	-	-	2 (2)	2 (4)	6 (8)
Antigua and Barbuda	-	-	-	-	1 (1)	-	1 (1)
Qatar	2	-	-	-	8 (13)	-	10 (15)
Jordan	3	-	-	-	-	-	3 (3)
Argentina	-	-	-	-	3 (3)	1 (1)	4 (4)
Brunei Darussalam	-	-	-	-	-	1 (2)	1 (2)
Costa Rica	-	-	-	-	4 (7)	-	4 (7)
Bermuda	1	-	-	-	4 (6)	4 (6)	9 (13)
Viet Nam	-	-	-	-	29 (33)	37 (65)	66 (98)
Uzbekistan	1	-	-	-	7 (7)	-	8 (8)
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	-	1	-	-	-	3 (4)	4 (5)
Armenia	-	-	-	-	1 (1)	4 (4)	5 (5)
Seychelles	2	-	-	-	3 (3)	-	5 (5)
Syrian Arab Republic	-	-	-	-	-	1 (1)	1 (1)
Poland	9	1	-	1	3 (4)	41 (84)	55 (99)
Cyprus	17	1	-	2	4 (5)	22 (46)	46 (71)
Czech Republic	7	-	-	-	5 (10)	34 (68)	46 (85)
Morocco	-	-	-	-	-	1 (3)	1 (3)
Kazakhstan	-	-	-	-	6 (6)	1 (3)	7 (9)
Belize	1	-	-	-	1 (1)	-	2 (2)
Samoa	1	-	-	-	2 (4)	-	3 (5)
Ghana	-	-	-	-	1 (1)	-	1 (1)
Bahrain	-	-	-	-	1 (1)	-	1 (1)
Georgia	-	-	-	-	-	2 (3)	2 (3)
Colombia	-	-	-	-	2 (4)	-	2 (4)
Peru	-	-	-	-	2 (4)	-	2 (4)
The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China	-	-	-	-	12 (18)	-	12 (18)
Chile	2	1	-	-	22 (24)	-	25 (27)
Panama	-	-	-	-	5 (7)	-	5 (7)
Kuwait	1	-	-	-	2 (2)	-	3 (3)
Tajikistan	-	-	-	-	1 (1)	-	1 (1)
Others	-	-	-	-	-	11 (30)	11 (30)
Total	28,105	2,994	3,909	1,616	10,067 (16,258)	11,194 (24,177)	57,885 (77,059)

Note: Figures in parentheses include multiple applications



# Trials and appeals

Trials and appeals requested

(unit: cases)

Category		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Appeal against examiner's decision to reject application	Patents	5,470	4,351	3,624	2,820	2,110
	Utility models	200	180	162	128	59
	Designs	109	90	102	58	50
	Trademarks	1,626 (2,284)	1,569 (2,295)	1,437 (2,046)	1,330 (1,868)	1,021 (1,615)
	Subtotal	7,405 (8,063)	6,190 (6,916)	5,325 (5,934)	4,336 (4,874)	3,240 (3,834)
Appeals against examiner's decision to dismiss amendment	Patents	1	1	1	-	-
	Utility models	-	-	-	-	-
	Designs	5	1	-	-	-
	Trademarks	5 (11)	-	-	3	-
	Subtotal	11 (17)	2	1	3	-
Appeals against examiner's decision of cancellation	Patents	-	-	-	-	-
	Utility models	-	-	-	-	-
	Designs	2	-	1	3	3
	Trademarks	-	-	-	-	-
	Subtotal	2	-	1	3	3
Trials for correction	Patents	145	136	128	127	119
	Utility models	9	4	-	2	3
	Designs	-	-	-	-	-
	Trademarks	-	-	-	-	-
	Subtotal	154	140	128	129	122
Invalidation	Patents	548	529	460	478	383
	Utility models	50	27	21	15	20
	Designs	247	194	207	215	188
	Trademarks	492 (553)	433 (486)	472 (559)	472 (541)	372 (433)
	Subtotal	1,337 (1,398)	1,183 (1,236)	1,160 (1,247)	1,180 (1,249)	963 (1,024)

(unit: cases)

Category		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Trials to confirm scope of IP right	Patents	632	671	512	348	374
	Utility models	47	29	20	21	17
	Designs	149	136	151	136	169
	Trademarks	101 (170)	90 (102)	158 (175)	103 (123)	108 (129)
	Subtotal	929 (998)	926 (938)	841 (858)	608 (628)	668 (689)
Cancellation trials on trademark registration	Patents	-	1	1	-	-
	Utility models	-	-	-	-	-
	Designs	-	-	17	-	-
	Trademarks	2,122 (2,526)	2,124 (2,474)	2,523 (3,011)	2,574 (3,193)	2,497 (3,003)
	Subtotal	2,122 (2,526)	2,125 (2,475)	2,541 (3,029)	2,574 (3,193)	2,497 (3,003)
Opposition of patent/ utility model	Patents		109	150	174	146
	Utility models		1	4	1	9
	Designs		1	-	-	-
	Trademarks		-	-	-	-
	Subtotal		111	154	175	155
Grand total	Patents	6,796	5,689	4,876	3,947	3,132
	Utility models	306	240	207	167	108
	Designs	512	421	478	412	410
	Trademarks	4,346 (5,544)	4,216 (5,357)	4,590 (5,791)	4,482 (5,728)	3,998 (5,180)
	Total	11,960 (13,158)	10,566 (11,565)	10,151 (11,352)	9,008 (10,254)	7,648 (8,830)

Note1: Figures in parentheses include multiple applications.

Note2: Opposition of patents / Utility model has been enforced from March, 2020

\* Rejection refers to appeals against examiners' decisions of refusal and appeals against examiners' decisions to dismiss utility models.

\*\* Invalidation refers to invalidation trials and trials for invalidation of corrections.



Successful petitions

(unit: cases)

Category		2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
		Accep-tance	Ratio	Accep-tance	Ratio	Accep-tance	Ratio	Accep-tance	Ratio	Accep-tance	Ratio
Ex partes	Patents	1,036	29.0 %	1,078	30.3 %	1,370	31.1 %	1,977	36.3	1,341	39.9
	Utility models	32	33.0 %	33	26.0 %	40	20.5 %	48	24.2	45	24.9
	Designs	50	43.1 %	43	31.9 %	21	20.6 %	27	32.5	20	40.8
	Trademarks	655 (1,053)	48.4 % (53.1 %)	605 (896)	54.8 % (58.9 %)	1,026 (1,648)	58.3 % (63.1 %)	1,017 (1,607)	55.2 (60.4)	693 (1,063)	55.9 (60.4)
	Subtotal	1,773 (2,171)	41.5 % (37.6 %)	1,759 (2,050)	35.7 % (38.4 %)	2,457 (3,079)	38.0 % (42.1 %)	3,069 (3,659)	40.5 (43.6)	2,099 (2,469)	43.4 (46.1)
Inter partes	Patents	526	42.2 %	616	46.2 %	552	49.1 %	653	53.4	382	42.8
	Utility models	52	50.5 %	45	54.9 %	19	35.2 %	16	35.6	8	24.2
	Designs	164 (166)	54.8 % (55.1 %)	187	47.9 %	210	51.0 %	142	48.3	140	53.8
	Trademarks	1,436 (1,691)	65.2 % (64.0 %)	2,436 (2,760)	78.1 % (76.9 %)	1,747 (1,962)	70.1 % (70.2 %)	2,753 (3,173)	74.0 (73.6)	1,877 (2,351)	70.6 (72.4)
	Subtotal	2,178 (2,435)	56.6 % (56.7 %)	3,284 (3,608)	66.7 % (66.9 %)	2,528 (2,743)	61.9 % (62.6 %)	3,564 (3,984)	67.5 (67.8)	2,407 (2,881)	62.6 (65.0)
Grand total	Patents	1,562	32.4 %	1,694	34.6 %	1,922	34.7 %	2,630	39.4	1,723	40.5
	Utility models	84	42.0 %	78	37.3 %	59	23.7 %	64	26.3	53	24.8
	Designs	214 (216)	51.6 % (51.8 %)	230	43.8 %	231	44.9 %	169	44.8	160	51.8
	Trademarks	2,091 (2,744)	58.8 % (59.3 %)	3,041 (3,656)	72.0 % (71.5 %)	2,773 (3,610)	65.2 % (66.8 %)	3,770 (4,780)	67.8 (68.5)	2,570 (3,414)	65.9 (68.2)
	Total	3,951 (4,606)	43.9 % (45.8 %)	5,043 (5,658)	51.2 % (52.7 %)	4,985 (5,822)	47.3 % (49.8 %)	6,633 (7,643)	51.6 (53.6)	4,506 (5,350)	51.9 (54.7)

Note1: Figures in parentheses include multiple applications.

Note2: The successful petitions refer to the number of petitions granted. These figures exclude cases where the registration was decided on the basis of an examiner's reconsideration before a trial and invalidation of a patent process. The figures in parentheses indicate the percentage of the petitions granted.

- Ex partes: Appeals against examiners' decisions of refusal / Appeals against examiners' decisions of cancellation / Appeals against examiners' decisions to dismiss amendments / Trials for correction

- Inter partes: Invalidation trials / Trials to confirm scope of IP rights / Trials for invalidation of correction / Trials for granting non-exclusive licenses / Trials for invalidation of registrations for extension of patent right term / Trials for invalidation of registration for renewals of trademark right term / Cancellation trials on trademark registrations / Cancellation trials on registrations of exclusive or non-exclusive licenses / Trials for invalidation on registrations for conversion of classification of goods

Comparison of domestic and foreign trial requests

(unit: cases)

Category		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Patents	Domestic	3,891	3,499	3,214	2,545	2,064
	Foreign	2,905	2,190	1,662	1,402	1,068
Utility models	Domestic	301	237	201	164	102
	Foreign	5	3	6	3	6
Designs	Domestic	459	373	419	381	386
	Foreign	53	48	59	31	24
Trademarks	Domestic	3,014	2,703	3,077	2,939	2,780
	Foreign	2,530	1,513	1,513	1,543	1,218
Total		13,158	10,566	10,151	9,008	7,648

Note: Multiple applications for trademarks and designs are treated as single applications.



# Income and expenditures / KIPO staff

Income

(unit: USD)

Category	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Income from fees	397,276,404	428,025,022	446,163,758	443,443,731	484,871,681
Income carried over from the previous year	22,901,485	28,072,668	42,855,898	17,542,755	9,997,345
Internal income and others	90,568,774	119,661,120	148,403,121	115,788,238	109,041,593
Total	510,746,664	575,758,810	637,422,777	576,774,723	603,910,619

Expenditures

(unit: USD)

Category	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Non-personnel resources (projects)	360,459,363	393,025,808	455,687,588	413,003,996	400,492,035
Personnel resources	99,443,391	106,532,589	116,102,191	116,951,668	122,678,761
Deposit for special fund	23,621,577	35,270,004	47,461,470	37,046,713	33,516,814
Total	483,524,330	534,828,401	619,251,249	567,002,377	556,687,611

KIPO staff

(unit: number of positions)

Category		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Examiners	Patents and utility models	734	832	875	839	850
	Designs and trademarks	162	165	162	191	193
Administrative judges		95	103	107	107	107
Administrative staff		601	527	517	604	618
Total		1,592	1,627	1,661	1,741	1,768

Academic and professional credentials of KIPO examiners

(unit: number of staff)

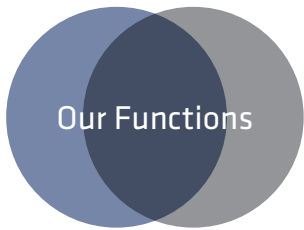
Category		Ph. D	Master's degrees	Patent attorney certificate only	Lawyer certificate only	Professional engineer certificate only
Examiners	Patents and utility models	329	102	36	5	16
	Trademarks	7	10	5	1	0
	Designs	2	9	0	0	0
	Total	338	121	41	6	16



# About KIPO



The Korean Intellectual Property Office is the governmental authority in charge of affairs regarding patents, utility models, industrial designs, and trademarks. It was established in 1949 as an external bureau of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry under the name of Patent Bureau. In 1977, the Patent Bureau became an independent office of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and took the name of Korean Industrial Property Office. In 2000, it was renamed the Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO).



The main functions of KIPO include: the examination and registration of intellectual property rights; the conducting of trials on intellectual property disputes; the management and dissemination of information on intellectual property rights; the promotion and enhancement of public awareness of invention activities; the advancement of international cooperation; and the training of experts on intellectual property rights.



In response to the competitive global environment where intellectual property is becoming increasingly valuable, we aim to advance Korea and its position in the world through innovative intellectual property.



We support technological innovation and industrial development by promoting the creation, protection, and utilization of intellectual property. We strive to provide world-class intellectual property services; to promote the economic and industrial use of intellectual property; and to create an environment respectful of the intellectual property system.

<http://www.kipo.go.kr/en/>