

2013 Statistical Overview

IPR applications

The total preliminary number of IPR applications—including patents, utility models, designs, and trademarks—submitted to KIPO in 2013 amounted to 430,164, an 8.4% growth rate year-on-year. In 2013, trademark applications totaled 147,667, showing an 11.4% increase year-on-year, the highest growth rate among all IPRs. Utility model applications decreased 11.7% year-on-year to total 10,968, while design applications increased 6.0% for a total of 66,940.

Patent applications for 2013 totaled 204,589, an 8.3% growth rate year-on-year. Volatility caused by the financial crisis lowered the number of patent applications by 4.2% in 2009, but this was soon rectified in 2010 by a 4.0% growth, which kicked off an upward trend that has since continued unabated.

Patent applications stood at around 200 in 1949, before jumping to around 5,000 in 1980, and 100,000 in 2000. Over the past 13 years, this number has doubled to over 200,000.

There were 44,611 foreign applications, accounting for 21.8% of the total number of patent applications. The greatest number of patent applications (16,297) was from Japan, posting a 1.8% growth rate year-on-year. This was followed by the United States (12,987, 14.5% year-on-year increase), Germany (4,419, 19.6%), France (1,949, 7.5%), Switzerland (1,330, 22.7%), and China (1,145, 16.6%).

Patent application competitiveness

According to the World IP Indicator, which was unveiled by WIPO in December of 2013, Korea ranked first for six consecutive years (2007 to 2012) in regard to the number of resident patent applications per GDP and population.

PCT & Madrid System

According to WIPO statistics in March 2014, the number of global international applications filed under the PCT amounted to 205,300, representing a 5.1% increase in comparison to 2012. Korea experienced a 4.5% increase in PCT applications (from 11,847 in 2012 to 12,386 in 2013), accounting for 6.0% of all PCT applications—the 5th largest amount by country of origin. The number of international applications filed under the PCT by Korean applicants has experienced a steady annual increase that is primarily due to a clearer understanding of the advantages of the PCT system, rising awareness as to the importance of IPRs, and continued efforts toward the consolidation of international patent rights.

Meanwhile, the total number of international trademark applications filed under the Madrid System in 2013 increased to 46,829, the highest number ever recorded, representing a 6.4% rise from 2012. Korea increased its number of Madrid international applications by 1.6% (from 502 in 2012 to 510 in 2013), the 18th largest amount by country of origin. The number of Madrid international applications submitted by foreigners designating Korea reached 10,967 in 2013, an 8.7% increase from 10,090 in 2012.