



40 Years of Pioneering in IP

April

1. The 2025 China Patent Survey Report was released, highlighting the effectiveness of enterprise innovation and transformation

On April 1, the China National Intellectual Property Administration (CNIPA) released the 2025 China Patent Survey Report, which shows that Chinese enterprises have continued to improve their patent output and transformation capabilities, further consolidating their position as the primary drivers of innovation.

Key data from the report indicate that in 2025, the share of enterprise invention patents resulting from R&D activities reached 87.4%, raising 0.8% year-on-year. The industrialization rate of invention patents stood at 54.0%, marking an increase of 0.7% from that of the previous year.

In terms of enterprise size, the patent industrialization rates for large, medium, and small enterprises were 51.2%, 62.0%, and 57.9%, respectively—all showing increases. Private enterprises recorded higher R&D investment and industrialization rates than the overall averages.

In terms of trends, the empowering effect of patent transformation is evident: the industrialization level in strategic emerging fields is 4.7% above the national average. Moreover, 42.5% of enterprises have made strategic patent portfolios for future industries. In traditional sectors, the industrialization rates of the metal products industry and general equipment manufacturing have both exceeded 70%.

Overall, Chinese enterprises' ability to convert patents into practical applications has been steadily improving. Traditional industries are accelerating their transformation and upgrading through technological innovation. The supporting role of patents in industrial development will continue to be prominent, bolstering innovation-driven growth.

2. China ranks third in European Patent Applications, with Huawei and CATL entering the top 10 corporate applicants

The European Patent Office (EPO) recently released its 2025 Technology Dashboard Report, which shows that the total number of global patent applications accepted by EPO has reached a new record high of 201,974, marking a year-on-year increase of 1.4%. Among these applications, China filed 22,031 patent applications, a year-on-year increase of 9.7%, elevating the country to third place globally for the first time. Furthermore, China has demonstrated the fastest growth rate among the top five applicant countries, accounting for 10.9% of the global total. Digital communication stands as the field with the highest number of Chinese patent applications, while transportation and semiconductors have witnessed the fastest growth rates, with year-on-year increases exceeding 30% each. This signifies that Chinese enterprises are accelerating their technological layout and global influence in the European

market.

Among all the enterprises that submitted patent applications to the European Patent Office in 2025, South Korea's Samsung ranked first with 5,337 applications, followed by Huawei with 4,744 applications, ranking second globally. LG of South Korea and Qualcomm of the United States ranked third and fourth with 4,464 and 2,939 applications, respectively. Additionally, CATL entered the top ten globally with 1,305 applications, marking the first time that two Chinese enterprises have made it to the top ten.

In 2025, the field with the highest number of patent applications received by the EPO was computer technology, with a total of 17,844 applications, marking a year-on-year increase of 6.1%. The core driving force behind this is the explosive growth of artificial intelligence technology. In the future, patent portfolios centered around large AI models, general artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and computing infrastructure will become the core of competition among countries and serve as the "engine" for future economic growth.

The number of patent applications in the field of digital communication has seen the largest increase, rising by 11.4% year-on-year to reach 17,802. As 5G evolves towards 6G, the competition for Standard Essential Patents (SEP) will become a core hotspot.

Transportation is one of the fastest-growing fields for patent applications in China, with a year-on-year increase of over 30%. This growth is attributed to the global energy transition and the widespread adoption of smart vehicles. Technologies such as power batteries, electric drive and control systems, automotive-grade chips, and intelligent driving systems will continue to be hotspots of competition.

The semiconductor sector is also leading the way with a growth rate exceeding 30%. AI chips, power semiconductors, advanced manufacturing processes, and packaging technologies will be key areas for breaking through global supply chain constraints and achieving technological autonomy.

Enterprises can leverage their unique business characteristics to steadily advance patent portfolio development in their areas of strength, while keeping a close eye on technological progress and patent trends in frontier fields such as artificial intelligence and semiconductors. When entering the European market, they should intensify research into the local patent landscape, make prudent use of relevant systems to improve planning efficiency, and prioritize compliance and risk prevention. It is also essential to focus on cultivating high-quality patents, realizing patent value through diverse approaches, and engaging in global technological competition and cooperation with greater stability.

3. Core Points of the Guidelines for Invention Patent Applications Involving Standards

Recently, the CNIPA released the Guidelines for Invention Patent Applications Involving Standards, focusing on the communication field, guiding and regulating invention patent applications involving standards, promoting the integration of patents with international standards, and facilitating patents to become Standard Essential Patents (SEP).

SEP (Standard Essential Patent) is essential for implementing standards, with the core lying in the correspondence between patent claims and standards. Correspondence analysis between the two is conducted by decomposing the technical features of claims and comparing them with standard descriptions. A commonly used tool for this purpose is the Claim Comparison Table (CC Table).

Standardization at various stages requires adapting patent strategies: initial patents should be arranged during the proposal stage. During the drafting and review stages, the portfolio should be refined and the claims adjusted. After publication, the claims of pending patents can be amended in conjunction with the final standard content, so as to promote patent authorization and transformation.

There are three core application strategies. First, the priority system: filing an early application to secure a filing date, then submitting subsequent applications within the prescribed period to claim the priority of the earlier application. Second, the novelty grace period: a special remedial measure that involves declaring the grace period at the time of filing and submitting supporting documents within a specified timeframe. Third, deferred examination: requesting deferral of examination when submitting the request for substantive examination, combined with a strategy of postponing that request. This approach prevents patents from being examined before the

relevant standard is finalized, allows applicants to adaptively amend claims as standardization progresses, and provides up to six years of pendency.

When drafting patent applications, it is necessary to consider both authorization and standardization alignment. Drafters should use standard terminology, design claims in a hierarchical manner, and expand implementation examples. Additionally, factors such as inventiveness and alternative solutions should be taken into account. In responding to examination opinions, it is essential to consider the generational evolution of communication standards, clarify technical meanings, refine claim scope, and achieve coordinated development between patents and standards.

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