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**Bimonthly
Updates on
Intellectual
Property**

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Table of Contents

Legislation Updates	1
1. Turkey Announces New Official IP Fee Schedule for 2026.....	1
2. Major Overhaul of Zambia's Trademark Law: A New Era for Intellectual Property Protection Begins	5
3. EPO Announces 2026 Fee Adjustment Scheme, New Fees to Take Effect on April 1	8
4. Vietnam's Overhauled IP Law: Key Changes Taking Effect in April 2026.....	13
5. IPOS Pauses Accelerated Examination for New Requests.....	16
6. EU Proposed European Biotech Act: Accelerating the Commercialisation of IP	17
7. China Revises Pharmaceutical Regulations, Strengthening Protection for Drug Innovation	19
8. Major Overhaul of China's Foreign Trade Law: Comprehensive Strengthening of IP Protection and Implications for Global Business.....	21
9. Comprehensive Fee Increases for Finnish Trademarks, Patents, and Other IP Rights Effective January 1, 2026	25
10. China Extends Online Trademark Application by Two Hours	28
11. Vietnam Streamlines Customs IP Enforcement with New Digital-First Regulations	29
12. USPTO Adjusts Process for Obtaining Ceremonial Copies of Patent Grants: Opt-In Required Starting March 9, 2026	31
13. Hunan Province Launches New Trademark-Brand Evaluation Specification: A Clear Guide for Global Partners.....	33
14. Sri Lanka Launches Online Public IP Search Platform: Practical Tips for Enterprises.....	36

International Cooperation	38
15. Grenada Joins the Madrid System for International Trademark Registration, Extending Madrid Union to 116 Members	38
16. Japan’s Designation Fees Under the Hague System to Be Reduced from April 2026.....	40
17. The EU and India Conclude the FTA: IP Rights Underpin Bilateral Trade.....	41
Others.....	43
18. Surge in Spring Festival Gala Humanoid Robot Showcases Reflects Rapid Growth in China's Related Patents.....	43
19. EUIPO Reports Record-High IP Filings in 2025, Strong Growth from Chinese Applicants	45
20. China's IP Landscape: Key Highlights from 2025.....	47

Legislation Updates

Turkey Announces New Official IP Fee Schedule for 2026

The Turkish Patent and Trademark Office (TÜRKPATENT) has officially announced the new official fee schedule for intellectual property rights, which took effect from **January 1, 2026**. The updated fees apply to various IP procedures, including patents, utility models, trademarks, designs, and geographical indications, providing clear cost guidance for applicants. Below are the key fees and important policy highlights.

Official IP Fee Schedule for 2026 (Currency: Turkish Lira - TL)

1. Patents

Fee Item	Amount (TL)
Patent application fee	81.42
Priority claim fee (per claim)	398.08
Patent certificate issuance fee	969.33
Assignment recordal and publication fee	2,402.67
License recordal and publication fee	104.75
4th year annual fee	1,369.33
10th year annual fee	6,136.00
20th year annual fee	20,011.00
PCT national phase entry fee	14,075.00
Search report fee (for individuals/universities within quota)	2,108.33
Search report fee (for other applications)	4,316.67

2. Utility Models

Fee Item	Amount (TL)
Utility model application fee	81.42
Utility model certificate issuance fee	969.33
Assignment recordal and publication fee	2,402.67
2nd year annual fee	461.00
10th year annual fee	4,319.33

PCT national phase entry fee (as a utility model)	8,800.00
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3. Trademarks

Fee Item	Amount (TL)
Single-class trademark application fee	541.33
Fee for second class	541.33
Fee for third and each subsequent class	816.33
Trademark registration fee	2,027.17
Trademark renewal fee (for first two classes)	2,566.17
Trademark assignment recordal fee	1,470.58
Madrid international registration notification fee (to WIPO)	1,399.67
Trademark cancellation request fee	29,433.33
Madrid application containing Turkish wording (30% discount applied)	983.00

4. Designs

Fee Item	Amount (TL)
Design application fee (first design)	326.42
Fee for each additional design	265.58
Publication fee (per 8x8 cm area)	233.33
Request fee for deferred publication	233.33
Renewal fee (first design)	958.75
Renewal fee for each additional design	433.33
Assignment recordal fee	2,402.67

5. Geographical Indications (GIs) & Traditional Product Names

Fee Item	Amount (TL)
GI / Traditional product name application fee	23.08
GI / Traditional product name registration & recordal fee	248.08

6. Re-examination & Opposition

Fee Item	Amount (TL)
Trademark opposition fee	958.33
Appeal against trademark decision	2,266.67
Opposition to patent grant publication	4,316.67
Opposition to design publication (per design)	266.67

Key Notes & Policies

- **Taxes Excluded:** The listed fees **do not include** stamp duty and Value Added Tax (KDV). These must be calculated and added to the final payment amount.
- **Payment Deadlines are Crucial:** Failure to pay the required fees within the statutory time limits will result in the application being deemed withdrawn, and the relevant legal proceedings will become void.
- **Payment Method:** All fees must be paid online through TÜRKPATENT's electronic application system or by credit card.
- **Fee Reductions & Exemptions:**
 - ✧ Schools under the Ministry of National Education and their students are exempt from certain fees for patent, utility model, and design applications.
 - ✧ Applications submitted by university students within competitions organized by TÜRKPATENT are also eligible for fee exemptions.
 - ✧ Individuals benefit from preferential rates for the first 10 search/examination requests per year; universities for the first 100.
 - ✧ Legal entities holding the "Teknogirişim" badge are eligible for a **30% discount** on the urgent search report fee for up to 10 applications.
 - ✧ A **30% discount** applies to Madrid international trademark application notifications that contain wording in Turkish.
- **Transitional Provisions:** Applications filed before January 10, 2017, will continue to be processed and charged according to the previous legislation and its relevant fee schedules.

Summary & Recommendation

The 2026 Turkish IP fee structure is now clearly defined, maintaining a stable cost

framework while continuing to support education, innovation, and international applications through various policies. We recommend that all applicants verify the final payable amount via TÜRKPATENT's official electronic system and ensure timely payment to guarantee smooth processing of their applications.

For the complete official fee schedule, please refer to the annexes of the TÜRKPATENT Announcement (BİK/TÜRKPATENT: 2026/1).

Major Overhaul of Zambia's Trademark Law: A New Era for Intellectual Property Protection Begins

On December 31, 2025, the Patents and Companies Registration Agency (PACRA) of Zambia officially announced the full operationalization of the **Trade Marks Act No. 11 of 2023**, following the signing of Statutory Instrument No. 86 of 2025 by the Honourable Minister of Commerce, Trade and Industry, Hon. Chipoka Mulenga, MP. This landmark development signifies a comprehensive modernization of Zambia's intellectual property (IP) legal framework, designed to establish a more robust and efficient legal foundation for innovation and brand protection for both domestic and international enterprises. The new Act formally repeals and replaces the **Trade Marks Act of 1958**, which had been in force for over six decades, demonstrating Zambia's firm commitment to aligning with international standards, optimizing the business environment, and enhancing economic competitiveness.

The core of the new legislation lies in establishing a more comprehensive and internationally integrated protection system. It explicitly extends registration protection to **service marks**, keeping pace with modern economic trends, and, for the first time, dedicates a specific chapter to establishing a **Geographical Indications (GI)** protection regime. This provides a legal shield for agricultural products, handicrafts, and other goods originating from specific regions that possess unique qualities or reputation, with significant potential to boost local specialty industries and rural development. Furthermore, the definition of a "trademark" has been expanded to explicitly include **non-traditional signs** such as scents, sounds, and the shape of goods. Protection for **well-known marks** is also strengthened, allowing right holders to assert their rights and oppose bad-faith registrations and infringements even if the mark is not registered or used in Zambia.

To integrate into the global IP governance system, the new Act domesticates the **Protocol Relating to the Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks**. This means trademark applicants can now use the streamlined Madrid System to seek international registration designating Zambia, significantly simplifying cross-border brand protection processes. Simultaneously, the Act incorporates the core principles of the **Paris Convention** and the **TRIPS Agreement**, ensuring its domestic protection standards

synchronize with mainstream international practices.

Regarding registration and administrative procedures, the new law focuses on enhancing efficiency and transparency. It expressly supports the **electronic maintenance of the Register** and recognizes the legal validity of **electronic filing and service of documents**. It also introduces flexible mechanisms such as **registration of series of marks, provisions for joint applications, and division of applications**, providing applicants with more strategic options. The examination process is clearer, structured into formal and substantive examination stages, and grants applicants sufficient rights to remedy deficiencies and present their case.

Of paramount importance is the establishment of an unprecedented and robust enforcement network. For civil remedies, right holders can seek **injunctions, claim damages, apply for orders to deliver up and dispose of infringing goods**, and resort to **provisional measures** to prevent escalating harm. A newly created **"Border Measures" chapter** authorizes right holders to apply to customs authorities to detain suspected counterfeit import/export goods based on reasonable suspicion, providing a sharp tool against cross-border infringement. On the criminal front, the Act details a series of offences including **counterfeiting trademarks, falsely applying a registered mark, and making or possessing infringing articles**, prescribing substantial fines and imprisonment terms for both individuals and legal entities, creating a strong deterrent. Additionally, the new law dedicates a chapter to regulating the **trade mark agent** profession, setting entry thresholds and practice requirements to ensure professional service quality.

To ensure a smooth transition, the Act's Schedule stipulates that trademarks registered under the old law remain valid, with renewals subject to the new rules; applications filed before the new Act's commencement will be processed under the new procedures; and existing trademark agents are granted a grace period to re-register.

In summary, the full implementation of Zambia's **Trade Marks Act, 2023** not only erects a new, modern pillar for its IP protection but also creates a more secure and predictable legal environment for domestic and foreign investors and innovators. PACRA has expressed its commitment to continued collaboration with all stakeholders to ensure the smooth implementation of the new law and to provide relevant guidance and support to businesses and the public. This transformative change signals Zambia's active participation in the new chapter

of global knowledge economy competition with a more open posture and a refined institutional framework.

EPO Announces 2026 Fee Adjustment Scheme, New Fees to Take Effect on April 1

The Administrative Council of the European Patent Organisation recently adopted Decision CA/D 9/25, amending the Implementing Regulations to the European Patent Convention (EPC) and the related fee schedules. The new fee standards will officially take effect on **April 1, 2026**, and will apply to most fees paid on or after that date. This adjustment involves the fee standards for multiple stages including filing, search, examination, and renewal, and introduces a reduction mechanism for the supplementary European search fee specifically for international search reports issued by certain authorities.

Overview of Main Adjustments

1. **Amendment to Implementing Regulations:** The last sentence of Rule 93(2) of the EPC Implementing Regulations is deleted.

2. **Updated Fee Standards:** The amounts of multiple fees have been adjusted, and the structure of some fees has been optimized (see the fee table below for details).

3. **New Reduction Measure:** For international applications for which the international search report or a supplementary international search report was drawn up by the Austrian Patent Office, the Finnish Patent and Registration Office, the Spanish Patent and Trademark Office, the Swedish Intellectual Property Office, the Turkish Patent and Trademark Office, the Nordic Patent Institute, or the Visegrad Patent Institute, the supplementary European search fee will be reduced by **€1,365**. This measure applies to applications filed up to and including March 31, 2028, and for which the fee is paid on or after April 1, 2026.

4. **Transitional Arrangements:**

i. For fees paid in due time but only at the pre-April 1, 2026 rate between April 1, 2026, and September 30, 2026, the payment will be deemed valid if the deficit is made good within two months of an invitation to that effect from the EPO.

ii. The new standard for the transmittal fee for an international application applies only to applications filed on or after April 1, 2026.

5. **Regulatory Replacement:** Effective April 1, 2026, the relevant provisions of the previous fee adjustment decision (CA/D 16/23) adopted in 2023 will be replaced by this new regulation.

EPO Table of Key Fees (Effective from April 1, 2026)

The following is a summary of some key fees applicable to payments made on or after April 1, 2026. For applications filed before April 1, 2009, some fees are subject to the old standards. Please refer to the official decision text for details.

Fee Item	Description	Amount (EUR)
1. Filing fee	European patent application or international application entering the European phase (EPO Form 1200)	
	(i) Filed online	135
	(ii) Not filed online	285
1a. Additional fee for excess pages	Application documents exceeding 35 pages (pages forming part of a sequence listing excluded), for the 36th and each subsequent page	17
1b. Additional fee for divisional applications	For a divisional application filed in respect of any earlier application which is itself a divisional application:	
	• 2nd generation	235
	• 3rd generation	480
	• 4th generation	715
	• 5th or any subsequent generation	955

2. Search fee	• European or supplementary European search	1,595
	• International search	1,885
	• Supplementary international search	1,885
3. Designation fee	For one or more Contracting States (applications filed on or after 1 April 2009)	720
4. Renewal fees (annual fees)	Calculated from the date of filing of the application:	
	• 3rd year	725
	• 4th year	885
	• 5th year	1,050
	• 6th year	1,215
	• 7th year	1,375
	• 8th year	1,540
	• 9th year	1,700
• 10th and each subsequent year	1,865	
5. Additional fee for belated payment of renewal fee		50% of the belated renewal fee
6. Examination fee	• European/international application requiring a supplementary European search report	2,010
	• International application not requiring a supplementary European search report	2,240

7. Fee for grant	Including fee for publication of the European patent specification (applications filed on or after 1 April 2009)	1,135
10. Opposition fee		880
10a. Limitation or revocation fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request for limitation • Request for revocation 	1,425 645
11. Appeal fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By persons referred to in Rule 7a, (2)(a)-(d) • By any other person 	2,015 2,925
11a. Fee for petition for review		3,570
15. Claims fee	For claims exceeding 15 (applications filed on or after 1 April 2009): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16th to 50th claim, each • 51st and each subsequent claim, each 	290 720
18. Transmittal fee for an international application	Applicable to applications filed on or after April 1, 2026	160

(Note: This table is a partial summary of fees and does not include all items, such as fees for further processing, re-establishment of rights, technical opinions, etc. For the complete list, please refer to the officially published text of the European Patent Office.)

Important Notice: The information in this article is based on a non-authoritative text made available in advance by the EPO. The final legally binding text is the one subsequently published in the monthly edition of the Official Journal of the EPO. Applicants are strongly advised to consult the final official documents published on the EPO website before making any fee payment decisions.

Vietnam's Overhauled IP Law: Key Changes Taking Effect in April 2026

On 10 December 2025, Vietnam's National Assembly passed significant amendments to the Law on Intellectual Property, with the revised law entering into force on 1 April 2026. This landmark reform modernizes Vietnam's IP regime, aiming not only to strengthen the creation, protection, and commercialization of intellectual property, but also to foster innovation and the digital economy while aligning with international IP and trade standards.

Expedited Procedures for Faster Registration

The amended law substantially shortens timeframes across the application, examination, and opposition processes, offering a more efficient registration pathway.

Substantive examination periods have been reduced: for trademarks and industrial designs, the timeframe is now **5 months** (down from 9 and 7 months respectively), while for invention patents it is **12 months** (reduced from 18 months). A new **fast-track examination mechanism** is also available for eligible trademark and patent applications, allowing substantive examination to be completed within **3 months**.

Opposition periods are now streamlined: **3 months** for trademarks and industrial designs, and generally **6 months** for invention patents (also **3 months** under fast-track). Publication and decision-issuance timelines have also been tightened.

For foreign applicants, a notable procedural easing is the **elimination of notarization or legalization requirements for Powers of Attorney** when filing appeals, lowering administrative burdens for cross-border IP management.

Modernized Protection for Digital and AI Innovations

The law expands protectable subject matter to keep pace with technological developments.

Industrial design protection now expressly covers **non-physical designs, such as graphical user interfaces (GUIs), and partial designs**. The novelty grace period has also been widened, allowing a **6-month filing window** after certain disclosures.

Regarding artificial intelligence, the law clarifies that **only natural persons may be named as inventors**, though AI-assisted inventions remain potentially patentable. It also

permits the use of lawfully published IP-related data for **AI training**, provided such use does not unreasonably prejudice rights holders' legitimate interests. Further implementing rules are expected from the government.

Enhanced IP Commercialization and Legal Certainty

IP rights are now explicitly recognized as assets that may be used for **capital contribution, security, or transfer**, encouraging their market-based exploitation.

To improve predictability, the law specifies that Powers of Attorney without a fixed term will be governed by general civil law principles, typically valid for **one year** unless otherwise stated. Rights holders are advised to define duration or revocation clauses clearly in their POAs.

A new principle for resolving conflicts between overlapping IP rights has been introduced: where a later right obstructs an earlier one, courts may order **termination of the later right's exercise**.

Strengthened Enforcement and Remedies

The amendments introduce stronger measures against infringement, both online and offline.

Digital platform operators are now expressly subject to IP protection obligations and must implement measures consistent with IP, e-commerce, and cybersecurity regulations. Rights holders may seek **preliminary injunctions** to compel the **removal, blocking, or disabling of access** to infringing digital content.

In the physical realm, **storage of counterfeit goods** is explicitly deemed an infringing act. Courts may order the **destruction or non-commercial disposal** of counterfeit items, pirated goods, and related production materials.

Statutory damages ceilings have been raised: for material damages, up to **VND 1 billion (approx. USD 38,000)** may be awarded where actual loss is hard to quantify. Moral damages may now be calculated as **10 to 100 times the state-prescribed base salary**, offering greater flexibility.

Implications and Recommended Actions for Businesses

Vietnam's amended IP Law creates a more robust and predictable environment for IP owners, while also requiring proactive strategy updates.

Businesses should:

- Review existing and potential IP assets—particularly software interfaces, GUIs, and partial designs—for new registration opportunities under the expanded protection scope.
- Plan filings earlier to accommodate shorter examination timelines and consider using the new fast-track option where applicable.
- Update enforcement strategies to leverage new online tools, including preliminary injunctions and platform takedown mechanisms.
- Monitor forthcoming implementing regulations, especially regarding AI training data and IP valuation, to ensure compliance and strategic alignment.

This comprehensive reform signals Vietnam's commitment to a modern, transparent, and internationally integrated IP system, providing stronger safeguards for innovators and investors alike.

IPOS Pauses Accelerated Examination for New Requests

Singapore's Intellectual Property Office (IPOS) has announced a temporary suspension of its **SG Patents Fast** and **SG Trade Marks Fast** acceleration programs, effective **4 January 2026**.

Key Details:

- **Suspension:** IPOS has stopped accepting new requests for accelerated examination under these programs. This is pending a program review, with no specified resumption date.
- **Existing Requests Unaffected:** All eligible acceleration requests successfully submitted **before 4 January 2026** will continue to be processed on a fast-track basis.

Our Advice:

Applicants planning to utilise these acceleration channels are advised to monitor official IPOS channels for updates. Parties with pending accelerated applications need not take any action, as their cases will continue to be prioritised.

For the official notice, see the [IPOS Circular](#).

EU Proposed European Biotech Act: Accelerating the Commercialisation of IP

The European Commission published the proposed European Biotech Act on December 16, 2025, focusing on innovative development in the health biotech sector. It aims to strengthen the competitiveness of the EU's biotech industry and accelerate the translation of innovative achievements into practical applications. This proposal holds significant reference value for the preparation and application of biotech patents.

To incentivize the development of innovative biotech products and address the industry-wide challenge of the "disconnect between patent protection periods and marketing authorisation timelines" for biotechnological medicinal products, the proposal suggests that pharmaceutical companies may extend Supplementary Protection Certificates (SPCs). The holder of an SPC is entitled to a 12-month extension of the protection periods referred to in Article 13(1) and (2) of Regulation (EC) No 469/2009 of the Council of the European Union.

To qualify for this SPC extension, the following conditions must be met:

- The medicinal product contains a new active substance distinctly different from that of any authorised medicinal product in the Union;
- The medicinal product has a mechanism of action distinctly different and shows a level of safety and efficacy which is at least equivalent to that of any authorised medicinal product in the Union for the same disease;
 - The clinical trials for the medicinal product were conducted in more than two Member States of the European Union;
 - At least one manufacturing step (excluding packaging, quality testing and certification) is performed in the Union.

To speed up the market entry of innovative achievements in health biotechnology and reduce the time costs for enterprises to bring innovations to fruition, the European Commission simultaneously proposes to streamline regulatory procedures and shorten clinical trial authorisation timelines, thereby accelerating the commercial translation of intellectual property. The proposal introduces corresponding amendments to Regulation (EU) No 536/2014, **including the following key adjustments:**

- The authorisation timeline for multinational clinical trials will be shortened from 106 days to 75 days (including validation and ethical review);
- The additional 50-day assessment period for Advanced Therapy Medicinal Products (ATMPs) will be eliminated;
- The assessment period for substantial modifications to clinical trials will be reduced from 96 days to 47 days.

Furthermore, the EU will establish an "EU Health Biotechnology Support Network". It aims to assist developers of biotech products and projects in identifying the applicable rules and identifying opportunities, thereby fostering the biotech innovation ecosystem.

The network will specifically provide the following information services and support:

- Information on the national and Union rules applicable to the development and placing on the market of health biotech products, including applicable authorisation procedures;
- Information for the identification and use of applicable regulatory frameworks and regulatory support mechanisms for innovative health biotech products;
- Information and support for project promoters regarding intellectual property procedures and technology transfer.

This proposal provides robust institutional safeguards for innovators in the biotech field. And it is designed to consolidate and enhance the EU's core competitiveness in the global health biotech sector.

For more details, please see the original text: [Proposal for a Regulation Of the European Parliament and of The Council on Establishing A Framework of Measures for Strengthening Union’S Biotechnology And Biomanufacturing Sectors Particularly in The Area of Health And Amending Regulations.](#)

China Revises Pharmaceutical Regulations, Strengthening Protection for Drug Innovation

On December 31, 2025, the State Council adopted the revised Implementing Regulations of the Drug Administration Law of the People's Republic of China at its 76th executive meeting. The modified regulations, announced on January 27, will take **effect on May 15, 2026**. This is the **first comprehensive revision** in over twenty years since the regulation came into effect.

The revision aims to **strengthen the protection of pharmaceutical intellectual property and encourage sustained innovation**.

The new regulations, for the first time, formally introduce market exclusivity for pediatric and rare disease drugs:

- Eligible pediatric drugs will be granted a market exclusivity period of up to 2 years.
- Eligible drugs for rare disease treatment will be granted a market exclusivity period of up to 7 years.

It tackles the long-standing dilemma of "high investment, long cycles, and low returns" in developing these drugs, as well as strengthens companies' motivation for research and development, provides more enduring market protection for innovative drugs upon market entry, thereby effectively extending the product life cycles and enhancing their commercial value.

Furthermore, the regulations provide **protection for eligible pharmaceutical trial data and other relevant data**. The protection period for such data shall not exceed 6 years from the date of drug registration. During the protection period, other applicants are not permitted to directly rely on this undisclosed data to apply for drug registration applications without authorization, except where they submit data obtained independently. The previous regulations lacked defined timeframes and enforceable prohibitions, offering minimal substantive protection. The revised regulations address this gap by instituting clear, operational legal clauses that form a robust legal shield.

The revision of the Implementing Regulations of the Drug Administration Law provides robust safeguards for innovative pharmaceutical companies. Simultaneously, it sets a higher

threshold for drug approval, compelling the generic drug industry to develop towards higher technological sophistication. This move is designed to incentivize high-quality pharmaceutical innovation and foster a more efficient pharmaceutical ecosystem.

Major Overhaul of China's Foreign Trade Law: Comprehensive Strengthening of IP Protection and Implications for Global Business

China's National People's Congress Standing Committee has recently adopted the newly amended Foreign Trade Law, marking a substantial, systematic, and forward-looking upgrade to the nation's legal framework governing external trade.

The new law, effective March 1, 2026, aims to **advance high-standard opening-up and promote high-quality development of foreign trade**. It notably **significantly strengthens the protection of intellectual property (IP) related to foreign trade** and sets clear directions for emerging sectors such as digital trade and green trade.

01 Overview of Key Revisions: Evolution in Legislative Philosophy and Structure

Compared to the 2022 version, the new revised law incorporates "**safeguarding national sovereignty, security, and development interests**" into its legislative objectives and emphasizes its enactment "**in accordance with the Constitution**," further solidifying its foundation in national interest and the rule of law.

Structurally, the law has expanded from 69 to **83 articles**, achieving greater comprehensiveness and logical coherence. The General Provisions section introduces two pivotal additions:

First, it explicitly states that "**the State shall proactively align with high-standard international economic and trade rules**" (Article 6), demonstrating China's resolve to deepen institutional opening-up.

Second, it establishes a "**trade policy compliance mechanism**" (Article 7), requiring governments at all levels to conduct compliance assessments in accordance with national regulations when formulating policies involving foreign trade, thereby mitigating international compliance risks at the source.

02 IP Protection: A Systemic Shift from 'Protection' to 'Empowerment'

The protection of intellectual property related to foreign trade is a **core strengthened area** of this amendment. The new law not only reinforces existing protection mechanisms but

also systematically incorporates elements of **international collaboration, risk prevention, and capacity building**.

New Article 33 stipulates:

"The State shall carry out international exchange and cooperation on intellectual property related to foreign trade, actively promote external negotiations concerning such intellectual property, establish and improve early-warning and rights protection assistance information platforms for overseas intellectual property, and enhance the compliance levels and risk response capabilities of foreign trade operators regarding intellectual property."

This indicates a strategic shift from reactive protection to proactive planning, aiming to construct a **comprehensive, full-chain IP safeguarding system** for Chinese enterprises expanding globally.

Refining Regulation Against Abuse of Rights: Article 34 (corresponding to the previous Article 29) removes the qualifier "one of," broadening the scope for enforcement. Competent authorities may now take necessary measures against IP right holders who engage in acts such as **preventing licensees from challenging the validity of the IP, imposing mandatory package licensing, or stipulating exclusive grant-back conditions in licensing contracts**, where such acts harm fair competition in foreign trade.

Strengthened Reciprocal Measures: Article 35 streamlines the definition of protected entities from "legal persons, other organizations, or individuals" to **"individuals and organizations,"** offering broader coverage and more precise wording. It further clarifies that should another country or region fail to grant national treatment to Chinese entities or provide adequate and effective IP protection for goods, technologies, or services originating from China, Chinese authorities may take necessary measures in accordance with the law and relevant international treaties, presenting a **more defined and clear toolkit for response**.

03 Trade in Services: Establishing a 'Negative List' Management Model

The new law introduces a **breakthrough provision** in the chapter on trade in services. **New Article 31** specifies that a **negative list management system** will be implemented for cross-border trade in services conducted via modes such as cross-border supply, consumption abroad, and movement of natural persons.

This is set to significantly enhance **transparency and predictability** in the services trade sector and represents a key step towards aligning with high-standard international rules. Services trade via commercial presence continues to be governed by relevant regulations such as the *Foreign Investment Law*, reflecting a categorized management approach.

04 New Forms of Trade and Trade Order: Emphasizing Digitalization, Green Transition, and Security

To accommodate new trends in foreign trade development, the new law **introduces dedicated articles** to support new business forms and models:

Promoting Digital Transformation (Article 60): Explicitly supports digital trade, the application of electronic bills of lading and invoices, and promotes the international mutual recognition of digital certificates and electronic signatures.

Accelerating the Development of a Green Trade System (Article 61): Encourages the import and export of green and low-carbon products, and promotes the development of and international cooperation concerning related product standards, certification, and labeling systems.

Enhancing Foreign Trade Order and Security Provisions: New Article 40 authorizes the state to take measures, including prohibitions or restrictions on trade, against foreign entities that **endanger China's sovereignty, security, and development interests**, violate normal market transaction principles, or adopt **discriminatory measures against Chinese entities causing serious harm**. It explicitly prohibits any organization or individual from providing such entities with **assistance including agency, freight, customs declaration, or warehousing services**, thereby fortifying the **barrier for trade security**.

05 Legal Liability: Significantly Increased Costs for Violations

The new law substantially raises penalties for violations, reflecting an orientation toward "**strict regulation and robust protection.**"

For example, the maximum fine for unauthorized import or export of goods under state trading management has been **sharply increased from 50,000 RMB to 500,000 RMB**.

The penalty baseline for serious violations, such as dealing in prohibited or restricted

goods/technologies or services, has also been significantly raised. Notably, **in cases where there are no illegal gains or where such gains are less than 500,000 RMB, a fine of up to 500,000 RMB may be imposed**, demonstrating markedly enhanced deterrence.

Conclusion and Outlook

This revision of the Foreign Trade Law constitutes a **systematic innovation grounded in the present while focused on the long term**. It responds to the need to safeguard national interests within a complex international trade environment while proactively positioning China in future growth areas like **digital trade and the green economy**.

Particularly noteworthy is the evolving role of the law in the IP domain—transitioning from **providing baseline protection to enabling strategic empowerment**. By building an **integrated support platform for early warning, rights protection, and compliance**, it aims to assist Chinese enterprises in navigating global competition with greater stability and confidence.

Following the implementation of the new law, foreign trade enterprises should promptly conduct **compliance self-assessments and strategic adjustments**, with particular focus on areas such as IP risk prevention, cross-border data compliance, and alignment with green standards. Simultaneously, they should fully utilize state-provided mechanisms for **trade promotion, financial support, and diversified dispute resolution** to enhance their international competitiveness within a framework of higher-level opening-up.

Comprehensive Fee Increases for Finnish Trademarks, Patents, and Other IP Rights Effective January 1, 2026

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland has issued Decree 1216/2025, adjusting the fees for intellectual property services provided by the Finnish Patent and Registration Office (PRH). The new fee schedule took effect on January 1, 2026, aiming to cover the operational costs of PRH service groups. The adjustments impact multiple areas, including trademarks, patents, supplementary protection certificates (SPCs), utility models, and layout-designs of integrated circuits, with an **overall upward trend in costs**. Notably, **design right fees remain unchanged**.

Below is a comparison list of key fee items of general concern to international applicants:

Overview of Major Fee Changes

I. Trademark-Related Fees (EUR)

Fee Item	New Fee (from 2026)	Old Fee
Trademark Application (Online)	€250	€240
Trademark Application (Paper)	€300	€290
Trademark Renewal (Online)	€250	€240
Trademark Renewal (Paper)	€300	€290
Trademark Renewal (Online, after expiry)	€320	€290
Trademark Renewal (Paper, after expiry)	€370	€340
Filing an Opposition (Online)	€310	€290
Filing an Opposition (Paper)	€360	€340
Administrative Revocation/Invalidation (Online)	€440	€420
Administrative Revocation/Invalidation (Paper)	€490	€470
Receipt of International Trademark Application	€170	€160

II. Patent-Related Fees (EUR)

Fee Item	New Fee (from 2026)	Old Fee
Patent Application Fee (Online Filing)	€450	€430

Patent Application Fee (Non-Online Filing)	€580	€540
Additional Fee per Claim over 15	€60 per claim	€50 per claim
2nd Year Annual Fee	€80	€0
10th Year Annual Fee	€450	€430
20th Year Annual Fee	€1,010	€965
Opposition Fee	€950	€900
Publication Fee for Translation Validating a European Patent in Finland (Online Filing)	€450	€430

III. Supplementary Protection Certificate (SPC) Fees (EUR)

Fee Item	New Fee (from 2026)	Old Fee
SPC Application Fee	€600	€550
SPC 1st Year Annual Fee	€1,060	€1,020
SPC 6th Year Annual Fee	€1,560	€1,020

IV. Utility Model-Related Fees (EUR)

Fee Item	New Fee (from 2026)	Old Fee
Registration Fee (Online Filing)	€250	€230
Registration Fee (Non-Online Filing)	€310	€280
Additional Fee per Claim over 5	€30 per claim	€25 per claim
Reinstatement Fee	€110	€70

V. Integrated Circuit Layout-Design Fees (EUR)

Fee Item	New Fee (from 2026)	Old Fee
Registration Fee	€530	€500
Reinstatement Fee	€110	€90

Important Notes

- All new fees have been published on the PRH website (prh.fi) effective January 1, 2026.
- Fees for the PCT international phase have also been adjusted due to changes

in the Euro/Swiss Franc exchange rate. Please refer to the fee schedule published on the WIPO website for details.

- Applicants are advised to check the latest official fee schedule before filing applications or conducting related procedures to ensure proper budget planning.

These fee adjustments reflect increased costs associated with maintaining and managing intellectual property rights in Finland. It is recommended that relevant companies and rights holders plan their IP strategies and renewal timelines in advance, and prioritize online filing to benefit from relatively lower official fees.

China Extends Online Trademark Application by Two Hours

[The Trademark Office of the China National Intellectual Property Administration](#) has announced an optimization measure: effective from February 1, 2026, the daily operating hours for submitting trademark applications via the online system were extended by two hours, shifting from 08:00–20:00 to 08:00–22:00. Functions such as business inquiries remain accessible around the clock.

This adjustment aims to address the growing demand for trademark registration services from enterprises and all sectors of society, and to further optimize the business environment. This move enhances the convenience and accessibility of government services.

For trademark holders and practitioners, the extension of application hours increases flexibility in handling urgent filings and meeting statutory deadlines. Particularly for market entities involved in international business coordination or facing tight work schedules, the newly added evening service hours will provide greater operational flexibility.

This service upgrade reflects the efforts of the competent authorities to refine services and respond to market needs. It is expected to effectively support market entities in carrying out brand strategy and protection work more efficiently.

Vietnam Streamlines Customs IP Enforcement with New Digital-First Regulations

The Ministry of Finance of Vietnam has issued Circular No. 06/2026/TT-BTC, introducing significant amendments to the procedures for customs enforcement of intellectual property rights. The new circular, which will take effect on March 1, 2026, aims to modernize border protection mechanisms through digital transformation, procedural streamlining, and enhanced enforcement clarity.

A key focus of the reform is the **mandatory digitalization of IP recordation processes**. Applications for customs IP records must now be filed primarily through the official electronic portal, with physical submissions accepted only under exceptional technical circumstances. Supporting documents can be submitted in electronic format, significantly reducing administrative burdens. Customs authorities are now bound by a clear 20-working-day timeline to process complete applications, and rightsholders gain the ability to track application status in real time via the online system.

In a move to boost enforcement efficiency, the circular delegates greater decision-making power to on-site customs team leaders. They are now authorized to proactively suspend shipments suspected of IP infringement even without a prior request from the rightsholder. To ensure prompt action by rights owners, customs must notify them of any suspension decision within eight working hours. The regulations also explicitly confirm that goods imported or exported via e-commerce channels fall within the scope of customs IP enforcement, addressing a previously ambiguous area.

The strengthened enforcement powers are balanced by new accountability measures. Notably, if a proactive suspension by customs is later found to be unjustified, the responsible customs unit is obligated to compensate the affected consignee for direct damages incurred. This provision introduces a meaningful check on enforcement actions. Customs is also required to inform rightsholders of the final outcome of cases within a stipulated period, promoting transparency throughout the enforcement cycle.

Overall, Circular 06 represents a targeted update to Vietnam's customs IP regime. By embracing digital tools, accelerating on-the-ground decisions, and clarifying responsibilities,

it seeks to create a more predictable, efficient, and balanced framework for IP protection at the border. Businesses involved in cross-border trade with Vietnam should prepare for these changes ahead of the March 2026 effective date.

USPTO Adjusts Process for Obtaining Ceremonial Copies of Patent Grants: Opt-In Required Starting March 9, 2026

The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) recently announced that effective March 9, 2026, it will no longer automatically mail courtesy ceremonial copies of patent grants to applicants. Instead, applicants must opt in to receive a ceremonial copy—a change aimed at improving efficiency, reducing costs, and minimizing paper waste.

Since transitioning to fully electronic patent grants in April 2023, the USPTO has been mailing a complimentary ceremonial copy for each electronically issued patent to help stakeholders adapt to the transition. These ceremonial copies are bound commemorative items featuring the USPTO Director’s signature and seal, while the electronic version remains the official legal patent grant.

Under the new rules, patent applications for which the issue fee is paid on or after March 9, 2026, will not automatically receive a paper ceremonial copy. Applicants who wish to obtain one must actively opt in at the time of issue fee payment. This can be done by checking a new box on the PTOL-85b Notice of Allowance form (for those mailed on or after March 9, 2026) or by selecting the corresponding option when paying the issue fee online via Patent Center. If an applicant inadvertently fails to check the box at the time of payment, they may still opt in by emailing eGrants@uspto.gov with the patent number by June 9, 2026. One free ceremonial copy will be mailed to the correspondence address of record per patent. Duplicate copies are not currently available.

It is important to note that applications for which the issue fee is paid before March 9, 2026, will still receive a ceremonial copy automatically, with no opt-in required. The official electronic patent grant can be accessed through Patent Center. In addition, the USPTO continues to offer for-fee presentation copies—certified copies of the first page of a patent, suitable for framing and display, complete with a special ribbon and seal. In the future, ceremonial copies will also be available for purchase at the Certified Copy Center for a nominal fee.

This change reflects the USPTO’s ongoing commitment to digital transformation and environmentally sustainable practices. Applicants are encouraged to take note of the effective

date and ensure timely action if they wish to receive a ceremonial copy.

Hunan Province Launches New Trademark-Brand Evaluation Specification: A Clear Guide for Global Partners

Recently, the Hunan Trademark and Brand Association officially issued the group standard Evaluation Specification for Well-known Trademark-Brand (referred to as “the Specification” in the following text), which will take effect on **March 1, 2026**.

As a core hub in central China, Hunan boasts strong strengths in advanced manufacturing, geographical indication agriculture and high-tech industries, and is a key market for international brand cooperation. The Specification is consistent with the core logic of the Evaluation Specification for Well-known Trademark-Brand issued by the China Trademark Association, while fully reflecting the industrial characteristics of Hunan. It provides a clear institutional reference for international stakeholders to participate in brand cooperation and market development in Hunan.

Based on the national counterpart, this Specification has completed a series of localized upgrades.

In the **application process**, membership in the Hunan Trademark and Brand Association is added as a mandatory requirement for evaluation participation. Meanwhile, it specifies a rigid requirement for trademark use: **continuous use for at least 3 years, or 5 years of use if the registration period is less than 3 years**, making the application threshold more specific and operable. Geographical indication trademarks and trademarks of specialized, sophisticated, unique and innovative enterprises are included in the priority support scope.

In terms of the **evaluation index system**, the five first-level indicators of the national Specification – legal factors, management factors, market factors, financial factors, and social responsibility – are restructured into six dimensions: **market competitiveness, legal factors, consumer perception, brand development, financial factors, and social responsibility**. The indicator of relevant public brand awareness, previously a sub-item under market factors, is upgraded to an independent first-level indicator of consumer perception. A new independent first-level indicator of brand development is added, and the weighting of legal factors is increased.

In addition, the Specification further refines the **evaluation procedures and dynamic**

management requirements. It adds credit verification and random on-site inspections, specifies a **7-day preliminary review announcement period**, and adopts strict reconsideration voting rules. For certificate management, **an annual review system** is added based on the 3-year validity period. Certified entities are required to file major changes within 30 days. **Specific circumstances for cancellation** are supplemented, including loss of association membership and failure to use the trademark properly for six consecutive months, realizing standardized supervision throughout the process from application and certification to follow-up management.

The optimization and implementation of these standards provide international enterprises, professional service institutions, and relevant entities in the global brand evaluation and development sector with clear evaluation criteria, cooperation frameworks, and operation guidelines for distinctive local brands in Hunan. They serve as an important window for the international community to understand the rules of brand development and prioritize industrial cooperation in Hunan, and offer practical institutional references and action bases for participating in brand development and cross-border cooperation in the region.

Core Implications for Relevant International Stakeholders

1. International Enterprises Planning to Enter the Hunan Market and Cooperate with Local Enterprises

International enterprises may focus on priority sectors in Hunan such as geographical indication industries and specialized, sophisticated, unique and innovative fields, and conduct in-depth cooperation with local enterprises in line with Hunan's brand evaluation requirements. Meanwhile, they shall comply with Hunan's regulatory requirements, emphasize the standardized use of trademarks and preservation of usage evidence, focus on consumer perception and brand development planning, and adapt to Hunan's local brand evaluation system. Furthermore, the membership requirement and annual review system provide clear operational guidelines for international enterprises engaged in brand evaluation and cooperation in Hunan.

2. International Professional Service Institutions Including Trademark Agencies and Brand Consultancies

This Specification serves as an important research sample for international trademark

agencies, brand consultancies, intellectual property service institutions and other organizations to understand the localization characteristics of China's brand evaluation system. Institutions may thoroughly study the detailed rules of this Specification to provide targeted professional services for international enterprises entering Hunan in trademark registration, brand evaluation planning, compliance management and other aspects. Meanwhile, they may take this Specification as a reference to explore the adaptation path of international brand evaluation standards in regional markets of China, and support Hunan's local brands in going global and international brands in entering Hunan.

3. Relevant Entities in the Global Brand Evaluation and Development Sector

This Specification offers practical experience for professional institutions, research entities and relevant organizations worldwide that are engaged in building regional characteristic brand evaluation systems. Its elaborate design in legal compliance supervision, dynamic brand management and whole-process evaluation supervision provides useful references for global stakeholders to cultivate regionally distinctive brands and implement standardized management. It also demonstrates the latest progress in the development of local brand evaluation systems in China that respond to real market conditions.

Sri Lanka Launches Online Public IP Search Platform: Practical Tips for Enterprises

The National Intellectual Property Office (NIPO) of Sri Lanka has officially launched a public online search platform for intellectual property records, which has been officially open since February 5. Users can freely access Sri Lanka's national intellectual property database covering all categories of trademarks, patents and industrial designs through this platform.

According to official disclosure from NIPO, the launch of this platform, supported by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), is an important initiative for Sri Lanka to deepen international intellectual property cooperation. The platform not only realizes the free and public inquiry of intellectual property registration information but also will serve as the foundation for subsequent digital upgrades. NIPO clearly stated that it will launch an online filing function in the next step to further simplify the registration processes for trademarks, patents and other intellectual property, promoting the all-round upgrading of Sri Lanka's intellectual property system towards efficiency improvement, process simplification and information disclosure.

Sri Lanka maintains a first-to-file system, under which intellectual property rights are mainly obtained through registration rather than mere use. The launch of this online search platform enables enterprises to conduct more efficient pre-application safety review searches, significantly reducing the risk of rights conflicts caused by information asymmetry, and also making review and search a standard preparatory step before intellectual property filing.

For enterprises looking to layout in the Sri Lankan and South Asian markets, this reform brings multiple practical insights.

Firstly, enterprises should incorporate Sri Lanka's IP online search platform into their regular rights verification system, completing a comprehensive search for prior rights before filing to avoid infringement risks.

Secondly, based on the first-to-file principle, it is recommended that enterprises submit intellectual property applications in advance to secure priority rights, especially for categories prone to squatting such as trademarks and industrial designs, so as to shorten the layout cycle.

Finally, it is necessary to establish a regular intellectual property monitoring strategy,

using the public information on the platform to timely monitor potential rights conflicts or counterfeiting behaviors, ensuring the adequate protection of their own intellectual property rights.

International Cooperation

Grenada Joins the Madrid System for International Trademark Registration, Extending Madrid Union to 116 Members

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) has notified the accession of Grenada to the international trademark registration system, a significant step that will streamline brand protection for businesses in and connected to the Caribbean nation.

The Government of Grenada submitted its instrument of accession to the **Protocol Relating to the Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks (Madrid Protocol)** on December 15, 2025. The Madrid Protocol will officially enter into force for Grenada on **March 15, 2026**.

This accession means that, as of the effective date, businesses and trademark owners in Grenada will be able to use a single application to seek trademark protection across all 116 members of the Madrid System, covering 132 countries worldwide. Conversely, holders of international trademarks will be able to extend protection to Grenada simply by designating it in an existing or future international application.

Key Declarations by Grenada

In its accession instrument, the Government of Grenada made two important declarations under the Protocol:

1. **Refusal Time Limit:** Grenada has set the standard time limit for notifying a refusal of protection for an international trademark registration at **18 months**. Furthermore, in line with the Protocol's provisions, if a refusal is based on an opposition proceeding, Grenada may notify that refusal after the 18-month period has expired.

2. **Fee Structure:** Grenada has chosen to collect an **individual fee** for international registrations and renewals where it is designated, instead of receiving a share of the collective fees generated by the Madrid System's member states. This provides clarity on cost structures for applicants seeking protection in Grenada.

About the Madrid System

The Madrid System offers a centralized, cost-effective, and efficient mechanism for registering and managing trademarks worldwide. Administered by WIPO, it simplifies the process of obtaining and maintaining trademark protection in multiple jurisdictions, significantly benefiting businesses looking to expand their global reach.

For the full list of Madrid members, please refer to the following link: [Member List of Madrid Union](#)

Japan's Designation Fees Under the Hague System to Be Reduced from April 2026

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) has announced a decrease in the individual designation fees payable for Japan under the Hague Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Industrial Designs. The change, set by the Director General of WIPO in accordance with the Regulations under the Geneva Act (1999), will come into effect on **April 1, 2026**.

The revised fee schedule in Swiss francs (CHF) is as follows:

- **International Application** (per design): Reduced from CHF 436 to **CHF 373**.
- **First Renewal** (per design): Reduced from CHF 493 to **CHF 423**.
- **Second, Third, and Fourth Renewals** (per design): Similarly reduced from CHF 493 to **CHF 423**.

This adjustment applies to both new international applications designating Japan and the renewal of existing international registrations for Japan.

The EU and India Conclude the FTA: IP Rights Underpin Bilateral Trade

On January 27, 2026, the European Union and India officially announced the conclusion of negotiations on the Free Trade Agreement (FTA). This landmark trade agreement, covering over 2 billion people worldwide, has finalized several core consensus in the field of intellectual property (IP). The European Commission and India's Ministry of Commerce and Industry disclosed the IP-related contents of the agreement through official press releases and fact sheets respectively. The two sides have reached a high degree of consensus on the core scope of protection, while presenting different emphases in their expressions based on their respective industrial demands.

Both sides confirmed that the agreement will provide high-level protection and **enforcement** for copyrights, trademarks, industrial designs, trade secrets and plant variety rights on the basis of the TRIPS Agreement and existing international IP treaties, and promote the convergence of IP laws between India and the EU. This arrangement will simplify cross-jurisdictional rule adaptation, remove institutional barriers for bilateral trade and investment activities involving intellectual property, and establish a clear and smoothly implemented IP protection and operation framework, providing a more solid legal guarantee for the cross-border development of related industries.

The EU clarified in the agreement that it will simultaneously advance negotiations on a special **Geographical Indications (GIs) agreement** with India. By combating counterfeiting and other forms of unfair competition, it will help the EU's traditional iconic agricultural products expand into the Indian market. As an important sub-field of IP, the special protection and cooperation on geographical indications will build a more standardized cross-border protection framework, promote the connection and coordinated implementation of relevant field rules, strengthen the brand protection barrier for the development of characteristic industries on both sides of Europe and India, and create a healthier trading environment for cross-border specialty products. It is worth noting that negotiations on the geographical indications agreement were relaunched simultaneously with those on the FTA, and relevant consultations are still ongoing.

In the FTA fact sheet released by India's Ministry of Commerce and Industry, a special

chapter titled "Innovate, Protect, Prosper: Intellectual Property" was set up to elaborate the core demands of India in the negotiations and the outcomes of the agreement's implementation. At the same time, it **affirms the Doha Declaration**, seeking a balance between IP protection and public health interests. This makes the rules for cross-border IP protection and rights remedy clearer, and lays a institutional foundation for the compliant development of relevant industries and the stability of prices of people's livelihood products.

India incorporated its core demands into the agreement provisions, explicitly recognizing the importance of digital libraries, and especially attaching importance to the **Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) initiative** initiated by India. This has established an exclusive international protection barrier for India's precious intangible assets such as traditional medicine and distinctive handicrafts. Meanwhile, the two sides also agreed to establish a regular communication mechanism in the field of technology transfer, which promotes the coordination of relevant field rules and resource sharing, builds a smoother bridge for the cross-border development of traditional characteristic industries and technology industries, and facilitates the protection, transformation and implementation of various innovative achievements and traditional crafts.

As a significant outcome of over a decade of negotiations between the EU and India, the IP framework of this FTA not only reflects the global trend toward high-standard protection but also accommodates the core industrial concerns and development needs of both parties.

Others

Surge in Spring Festival Gala Humanoid Robot Showcases Reflects Rapid Growth in China's Related Patents

As the 2026 Chinese New Year holiday concludes, the Spring Festival Gala, a traditional program celebrating the holiday, featured a noticeably higher frequency of humanoid robot appearances compared to previous years. Multiple domestic robot brands participated in various performances, demonstrating a range of technical capabilities from cluster control and high-precision motion to bionic interaction. This phenomenon indicates an acceleration in the industrialization process of China's humanoid robot sector.



Screenshots of Spring Festival Gala

Mirroring the technological demonstrations on stage, China's intellectual property

accumulation in the humanoid robot field is also exhibiting rapid growth. As of February 24, 2026, a search for the keyword "humanoid robot" in the China patent database yields 2,590 valid patents. These patents span multiple technological layers, from core components and motion control algorithms to bionic interaction systems, forming the technical foundation for industry development.

From a broader perspective, China's humanoid robot industry has entered a critical phase, transitioning from technological verification to scaled application. Multiple mainstream manufacturers have established patent portfolios in key areas such as servo systems, precision control, and modular design, leading to a continuous increase in the localization rate of core components. Industry data indicates that China accounts for a relatively high proportion of global patent applications in the humanoid robot-related field, reflecting the significant investment by domestic enterprises in technological innovation and intellectual property protection.

For international intellectual property professionals, the prominent presence of humanoid robots on China's Spring Festival stage is not just a vivid demonstration of technological maturity, but also signals that the sector is about to enter a crucial period for mass production. With the continuous accumulation of valid patents and the gradual improvement of the industrial chain, the trends in the refined operation of intellectual property and overseas market expansion by Chinese humanoid robot companies warrant continued attention.

EUIPO Reports Record-High IP Filings in 2025, Strong Growth from Chinese Applicants

The European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) received a record 327,735 applications for European Union trade marks (EUTMs) and designs (EUDs) in 2025. This represents the highest annual number since the Office began operations in 1996 and a 7.8% increase compared to 2024.

Trade Mark Applications Driven by EU and International Markets

EUTM applications accounted for the majority of filings, reaching 196,886 with a year-on-year increase of 9.1%. Applicants from EU Member States filed 9.4% more applications, representing 57.5% of the total. Germany, Italy, and Spain were the most active within the EU.

Applications from China showed robust growth, increasing by 13.3% and constituting nearly 16% of all EUTM applications, followed by the USA (9%) and the UK (4.2%). Key sectors for applications included advertising and business management, electrical apparatus, and technological services.

Design Applications Reach New Peak, Led by Non-EU Filings

The EUIPO received 130,849 design applications in 2025, a 6% increase and the second consecutive record year. Notably, for the first time, a majority (52%) originated from outside the EU.

China was the leading source country, with filings growing by 18.4% and accounting for 29.9% of all EUD applications. The United Kingdom and the United States followed with increases of 17.8% and 8.4%, respectively. Within the EU, Germany and Italy submitted the highest number of design applications.

New System for Craft and Industrial Geographical Indications

In December 2025, the EUIPO expanded its remit to accept applications for Craft and Industrial Geographical Indications (CIGIs). The new system aims to support local value creation. In its initial weeks, 45 applications were received, primarily for stones and minerals and textiles.

Outlook

The record filing numbers in 2025 demonstrate sustained global confidence in the EU IP

system. The results mark a strong start for the EUIPO Strategic Plan 2030, highlighting the Office's role in supporting a modern and resilient European innovation ecosystem.

China's IP Landscape: Key Highlights from 2025

China has achieved significant progress in intellectual property creation and protection, as reported at the 2026 National Intellectual Property Administration Conference. By the end of 2025, examination efficiency for patents and trademarks reached the fastest international level under a comparable examination system. **The average patent examination cycle was reduced to 15 months**, down from 20 months at the end of the 13th Five-Year Plan period, while **the average trademark registration cycle remained stable at 4 months**. Random inspection pass rates for trademark-related processes consistently exceeded 97%.

In terms of output and quality, **the number of valid domestic invention patents in China has now surpassed 5 million**. The country also achieved 16 high-value invention patents per 10,000 people, exceeding the target set in the 14th Five-Year Plan. For multiple consecutive years, **China has maintained its position as the global leader in PCT international patent applications**.

The **IP protection framework** continues to expand, with 129 national-level IP protection and rapid rights protection centers established. These centers have handled a total of 480,000 cases. Additionally, 116 overseas IP dispute guidance platforms have provided assistance in over 4,200 cases, helping enterprises recover estimated losses of approximately 41 billion yuan. Public satisfaction with IP protection has steadily increased from 80.05 points in 2020 to 82.81 points in 2025.

According to the WIPO *Global Innovation Index 2025* report, **China entered the global top ten for the first time, ranking 10th**. The country is home to 24 of the world's top 100 science and technology clusters, leading all nations for three consecutive years. The Shenzhen-Hong Kong-Guangzhou cluster ranked first globally, reflecting broad international recognition of China's innovation development.