Trends in patenting

Europe is an attractive technology market for European and international companies.

2018

Patent applications at the European Patent Office continue to grow in 2018:

- 2016: 159,087
- 2017: 166,594
- 2018: 174,317

+4.6%

Countries of origin:

- Europe accounts for almost half of the patent applications
- Germany: 15%
- France: 6%
- Switzerland: 5%
- Netherlands: 4%
- UK: 3%
- Italy: 3%
- Sweden: 2%

Top technology fields:

- Medical technology: 13,795
- Digital communication: 11,940
- Computer technology: 11,718
- Electrical machinery, apparatus, energy: 10,722
- Transport: 9,039

Other technology fields:

- Medical technology
- Digital communication
- Computer technology
- Electrical machinery, apparatus, energy
- Transport

1 in 5 applications is filed by an SME:

- Siemens: 2,493
- Huawei: 2,485
- Samsung: 2,449
- LG: 2,376
- United Technologies: 1,983

Trends in patenting

- 2018: 14.4%
- 2017: 9.7%
- 2016: 7.1%

Companies from European countries fuel growth:

- Austria: 3.9%
- Germany: 4.7%
- Spain: 6.3%
- Sweden: 7.1%
- Switzerland: 7.8%
- UK: 7.8%
- Belgium: 9.7%
- Denmark: 14.4%

Other global growth champions:

- US: 2.7%
- Japan: 3.9%
- P.R. China: 8.8%
- R. Korea: 13.0%

Top technology fields:

- Medical technology: +5.0%
- Digital communication: +0.7%
- Computer technology: +3.3%
- Electrical machinery, apparatus, energy: +4.7%
- Transport: +5.9%

All figures are based on European patent applications.
epo.org/annual-report2018