

THE EUROPEAN PATENT OFFICE

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE EPO - PATENTING TRENDS AT THE EPO IN THE FIELD OF PHARMACEUTICALS

NOVEMBER 2023

THE EPO AT A GLANCE

Our mission



We provide patent protection for inventions in up to 44 countries on the basis of one single application

6 298

employees, of which around



4 000

highly qualified **patent examiners**
working in all fields of technology

2nd largest



intergovernmental institution
in Europe

Our locations

Munich (headquarters), The Hague,
Berlin, Vienna and Brussels



Self-financing



Budget of **EUR 2.57bn**
without any public funding



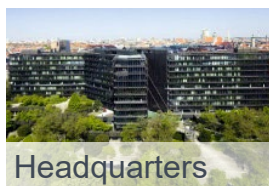
ABOUT US



OUR FIVE LOCATIONS IN EUROPE



Liaison office
with the EU



Headquarters



THE ROLE OF THE EPO IN THE EUROPEAN GRANT PROCEDURE (1)

We provide patent protection:

- in up to 39 EPO member states, one extension and four validation states based on a single application
- in one of the three official languages (English, French, German)

We make all patent documents available to the public.



THE ROLE OF THE EPO IN THE EUROPEAN GRANT PROCEDURE (2)

We are also responsible for:

- limitation and revocation by patentees
- opposition by third parties
- appeal proceedings before the Boards of Appeal



THE EPO ALSO PROCESSES INTERNATIONAL APPLICATIONS

We carry out approximately:

- 30% of all international search procedures
- 56% of all international preliminary examinations
- We deliver the international search report accompanied by a written opinion **within three months**.¹

¹ From the date of receipt of the application by the International Searching Authority.



QUALITY PATENTS



Highly **skilled and trained** examiners



State-of-the-art databases and tools



Thorough work and review processes at all steps



Timely delivery in accordance with user expectations



ISO 9001-certified Quality Management System

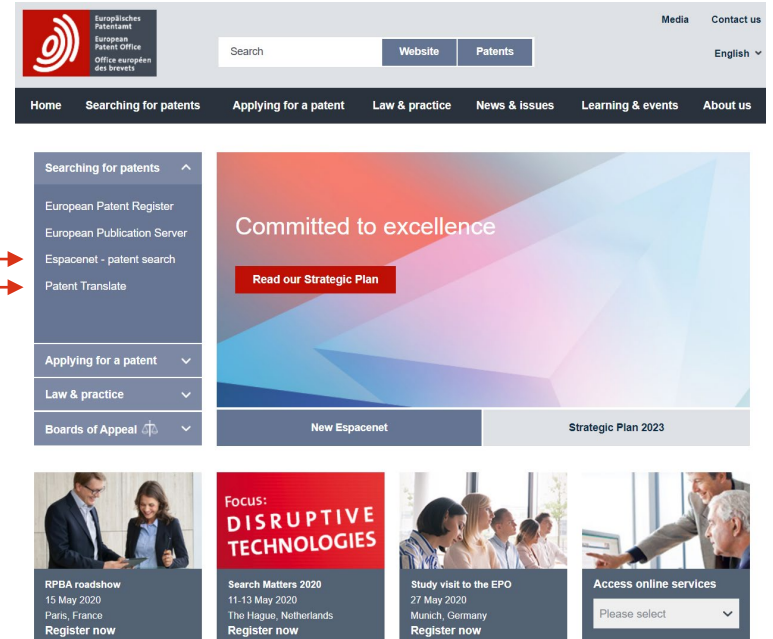
ALL PATENT DOCUMENTS ARE ACCESSIBLE FREE OF CHARGE ON EPO.ORG

Espacenet

About 140 million patent documents,
easily searchable

Patent Translate

Automatic translation between English
and 31 other languages, including
Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Russian

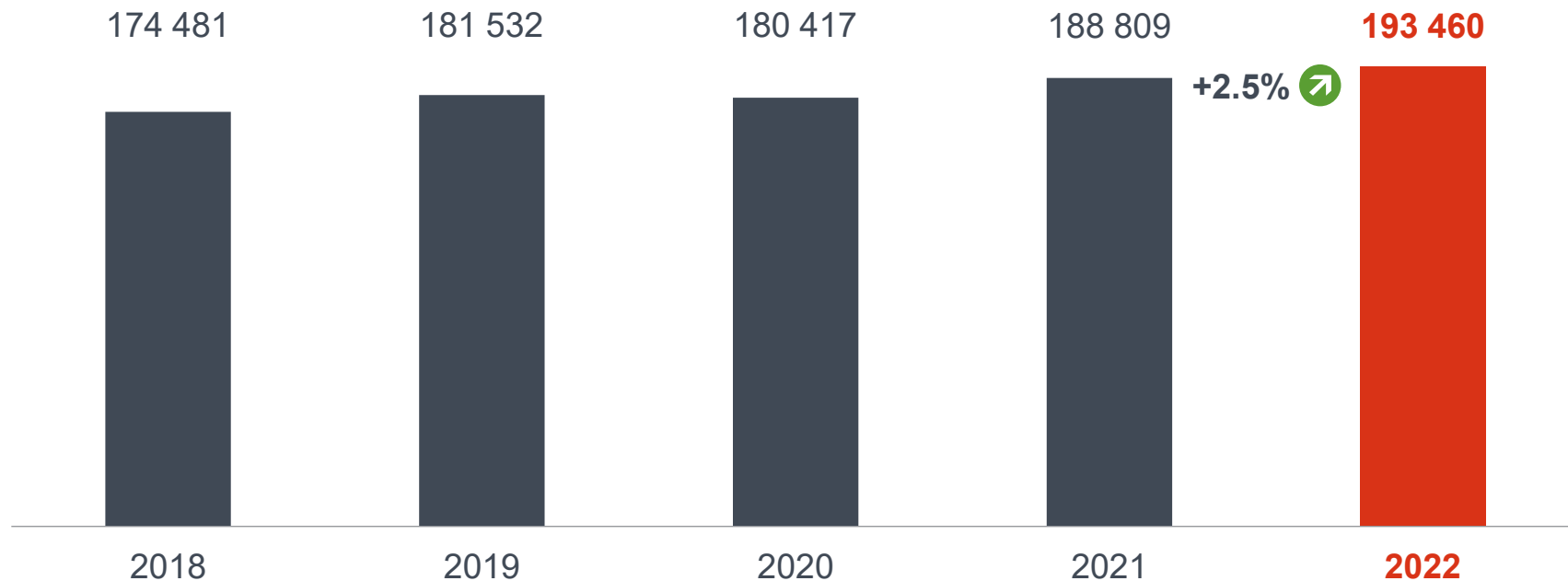


The screenshot shows the EPO website homepage. At the top left is the EPO logo. To its right is a search bar and buttons for 'Website' and 'Patents'. Further right are links for 'Media', 'Contact us', and a language dropdown set to 'English'. Below this is a dark navigation bar with links: 'Home', 'Searching for patents', 'Applying for a patent', 'Law & practice', 'News & issues', 'Learning & events', and 'About us'. The main content area features a large banner with the text 'Committed to excellence' and a 'Read our Strategic Plan' button. Below the banner are two buttons: 'New Espacenet' and 'Strategic Plan 2023'. On the left side, there is a vertical menu with expandable sections: 'Searching for patents' (expanded), 'Applying for a patent', 'Law & practice', and 'Boards of Appeal'. The 'Searching for patents' section includes links to 'European Patent Register', 'European Publication Server', 'Espacenet - patent search', and 'Patent Translate'. Below the main content area, there are four promotional tiles: 'RPBA roadshow' (15 May 2020, Paris, France), 'Focus: DISRUPTIVE TECHNOLOGIES' (Search Matters 2020, 11-13 May 2020, The Hague, Netherlands), 'Study visit to the EPO' (27 May 2020, Munich, Germany), and 'Access online services' (Please select).

STATISTICS



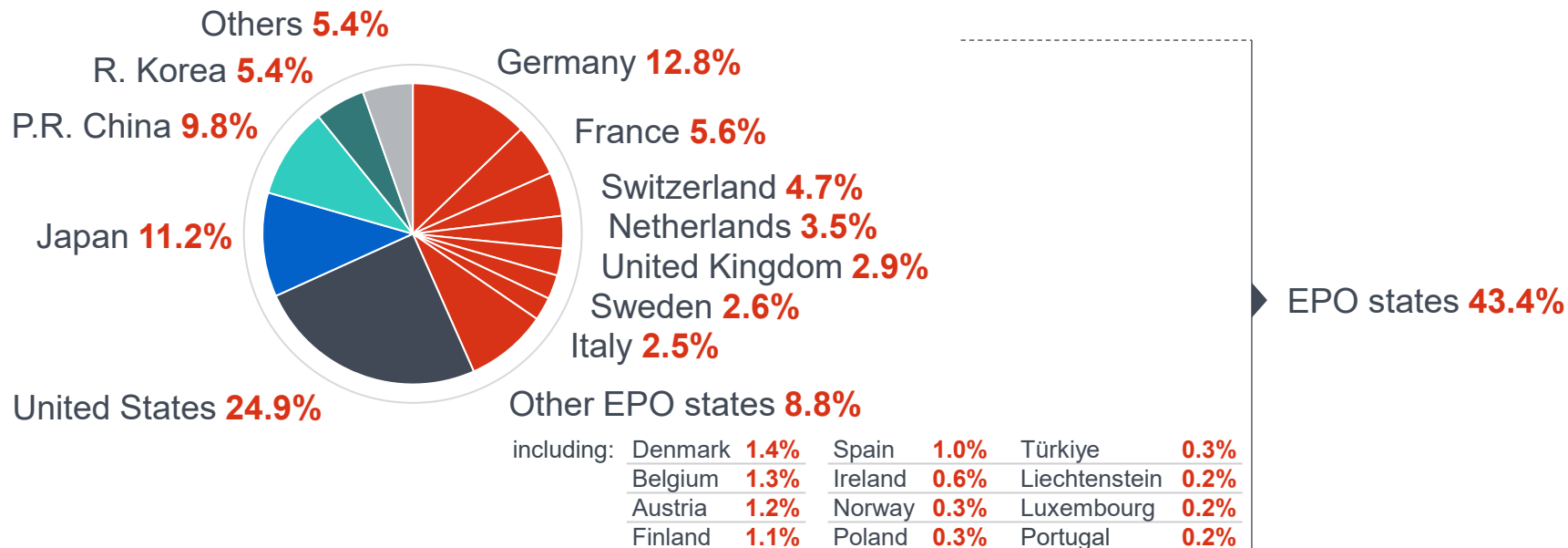
GROWTH OF EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATIONS



Source: EPO. Status: 30.01.2023.

European patent applications include direct European applications and international (PCT) applications that entered the European phase during the reporting period.

GEOGRAPHIC ORIGIN OF EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATIONS IN 2022



Source: EPO. Status: 30.01.2023.

European patent applications include direct European applications and international (PCT) applications that entered the European phase during the reporting period. The geographic origin is based on the country of residence of the first applicant listed on the application form (first-named applicant principle).

Note: Sums may vary slightly due to rounding.

LEADING FIELDS OF TECHNOLOGY

TOP 10

		2022	Change	
1	Digital communication	16 705	+11.2%	↗
2	Medical technology	15 683	+1.0%	↗
3	Computer technology	15 193	+1.8%	↗
4	Electrical machinery, apparatus, energy	13 951	+18.2%	↗
5	Pharmaceuticals	9 310	+1.0%	↗
6	Transport	9 272	-2.6%	↘
7	Measurement	9 185	+1.0%	↗
8	Biotechnology	8 168	+11.0%	↗
9	Other special machines ranging from agriculture to 3D printing	6 382	-1.8%	↘
10	Organic fine chemistry	5 955	-0.4%	↘

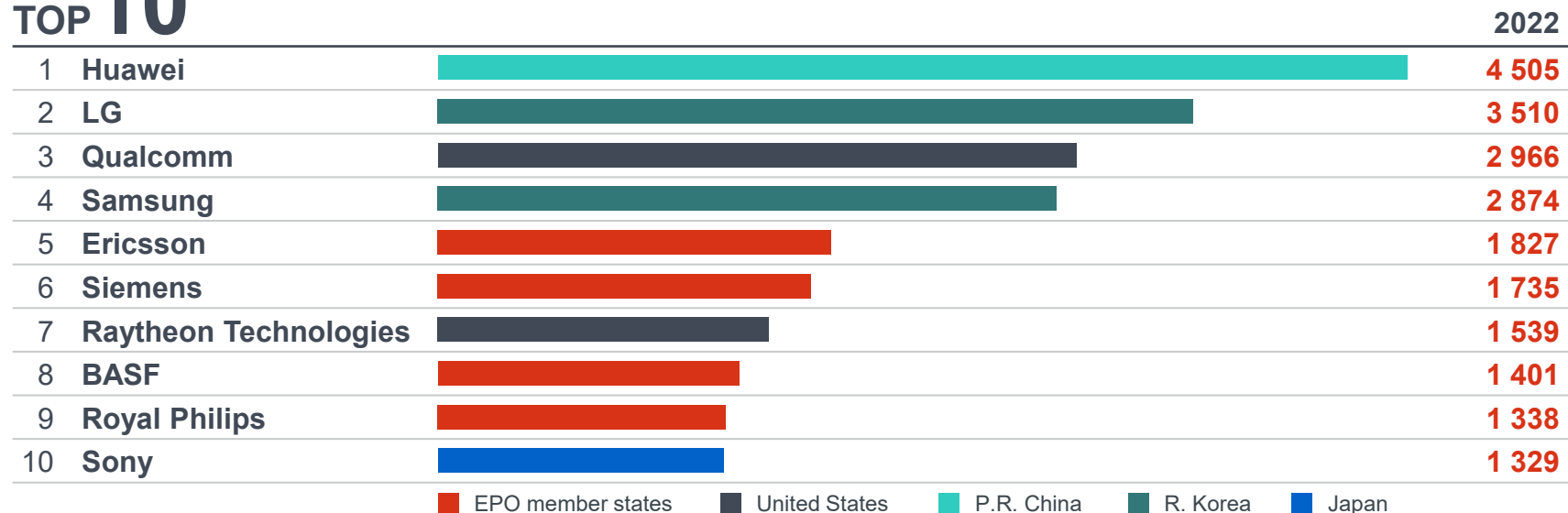
Source: EPO. Status: 30.01.2023.

European patent applications include direct European applications and international (PCT) applications that entered the European phase during the reporting period.

The definition of the fields is based on the WIPO IPC technology concordance.

TOP APPLICANTS 2022

TOP 10

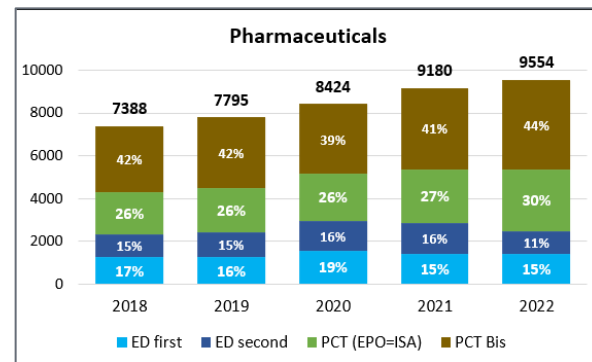
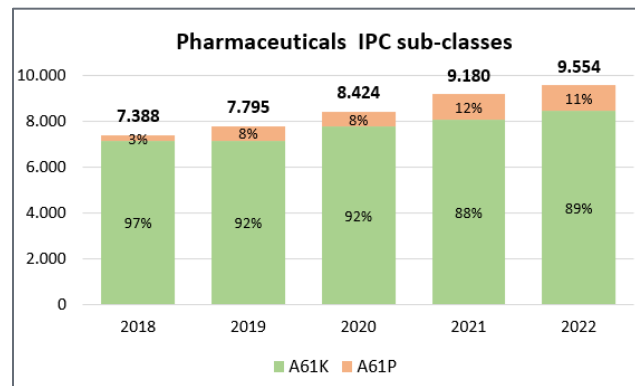
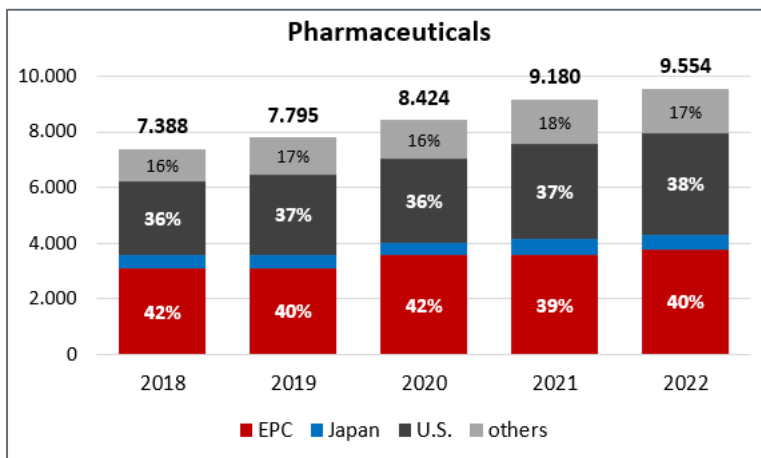


Source: EPO. Status: 30.01.2023.

This is the ranking of the main consolidated applicants at the EPO in 2022 (first-named applicant principle). It is based on European patent applications filed with the EPO, which include direct European applications and international (PCT) applications that entered the European phase during the reporting period. Applications by identifiable subsidiaries, not necessarily located in the same country, are allocated to the consolidated applicants. The countries refer to the country of residence of the headquarters.

EPO FILINGS IN PHARMACEUTICALS

A61K: Preparations For Medical, Dental Or Toiletory Purposes
(excluding: A61K 8 - Cosmetics or similar toiletry preparations)
A61P: Specific Therapeutic Activity Of Chemical Compounds Or Medicinal Preparations



EPO LEADING APPLICANTS IN PHARMACEUTICALS

1	INSTITUT NATIONAL DE LA SANTE ET DE LA RECHER	538
2	JOHNSON & JOHNSON	467
3	NOVARTIS AG	414
4	UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA	375
5	MERCK & CO	347
6	HOFFMANN-LA ROCHE LTD	322
7	SANOFI SA	282
8	BOEHRINGER INGELHEIM PHARMA GMBH & CO. KG	263
9	NESTLE SA	249
10	GLAXO SMITH KLINE	242
11	BAYER AG	209
12	DSM N.V.	201
13	BRISTOL-MYERS SQUIBB COMPANY	199
14	TAKEDA PHARMACEUTICAL CO., LTD	189
15	UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SYSTEM	174
16	PFIZER, INC.	144
17	DANA-FARBER CANCER INSTITUTE, INC.	143
18	UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA	139
19	MERCK KGAA	126
20	MEMORIAL SLOAN KETTERING CANCER CENTER	124

Main countries of origin		
1	United States	15.649
2	Germany	3.082
3	France	2.578
4	Japan	2.503
5	Switzerland	2.468
6	P.R. China	2.068
7	United Kingdom	1.504
8	Republic of Korea	1.386
9	Netherlands	1.157
10	Denmark	972
11	Belgium	952
12	Italy	932
13	Spain	873
14	Israel	716
15	Canada	715

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