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Filing international patent applications under the Patent Cooperation (PCT) in accordance with WIPO Treaty in 2008 increased by 2.4%, reaching 164000. In spite of the fact that the dynamic was modest compared with an average of 9.3% in the last three years, all applications submitted in 2008 constitute the highest number of applications received under the PCT in a year. Continued use of the PCT – the cornerstone of the international patent system - shows recognizing the importance of constant investments made in research, development and innovation in order to ensure competitiveness even in the difficult economic conditions.

In the Republic of Korea (+12.0%), China (+11.9%) and Sweden (+12.5%) in 2008 was found an invariable increase of filing of applications under PCT procedure. The largest number of PCT international applications, about one third of the total of 2008 (32.7% or 53,521 applications) was submitted by inventors fr om the United States, which remain in place already thirty years leading.

“Traditionally, filing the patent applications tend to be lower in periods of economic crisis because of the lim ited resources available for investments in innovative process. Usually, after improving the economic situation, recovery occurs and patent activity. Economic crises in the past have been a catalyst for innovative process, the emphasis is on raising effectiveness, and the identification and development of more efficient solutions” said Francis Gurry, WIPO Director General.

In the second place was placed Japan, with 28,774 submitted applications (17.5%), followed by Germany (18,428 applications), Republic of Korea (7908), France (6867), China (6089), UK (5517), Netherlands (4349), Sweden (4114), Switzerland (3832), Canada (2966), Italy (2939), Finland (2119), Australia (2028), Israel (1882) etc.

Among the users of PCT system for the first time took the lead the international telecommunications company Huawei Technologies Co Ltd, China, which submitted last year 1737 applications. The second place occupies the company Panasonic Corporation of Japan with 1729 applications, followed by Koninklijke Philips Electronics N. V. the Netherlands, Toyota Jidosha Kabushiki Kaisha of Japan and Robert Bosch GmbH of Germany.

Among the 100 companies - standing user of PCT system, 38 were from USA, 28 - Japan and 13 - from Germany. The majority of applications published in 2008 were related to medical technology (12.0%), telecommunications (8.5%) and pharmaceuticals (7.9%).

In the last years, WIPO makes every effort to improve and modernize the PCT system to increase its efficiency. Currently, about 70% of all applications are submitted completely or partially in electronic form. Also, through PATENTSCOPE ® search, the users can investigate more than 1.5 million international published patent applications beginning from those submitted in 1978. From July 1, 2008 there was reduced by 5% PCT international fee and to encourage the use of PCT system in developing countries for certain categories of applicants filing fee was reduced by 90%.

Details: http://www.wipo.int/pressroom/en/articles/2009/article_0002.html [1]

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