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Despite the economic situation, the European Patent Office saw record patent filings in 2011 and maintained its share globally, it reported today.

The 243,000 incoming applications was an increase of 3 percent over 2010, it said, according to preliminary figures. Detailed figures will be presented in March.

The EPO granted 62,115 patents in 2011, 7 percent more than in 2010.

Meanwhile, the global shift continued toward Asia, with Europe’s share unchanged, but the United States dropping to 24 percent from 26 percent in 2010. China’s share rose from 7 percent to 19 percent, and Japan’s from 5 percent to 18 percent. Top European filings were in Germany (14 percent), France (5 percent), Switzerland, United Kingdom and the Netherlands (3 percent each).

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