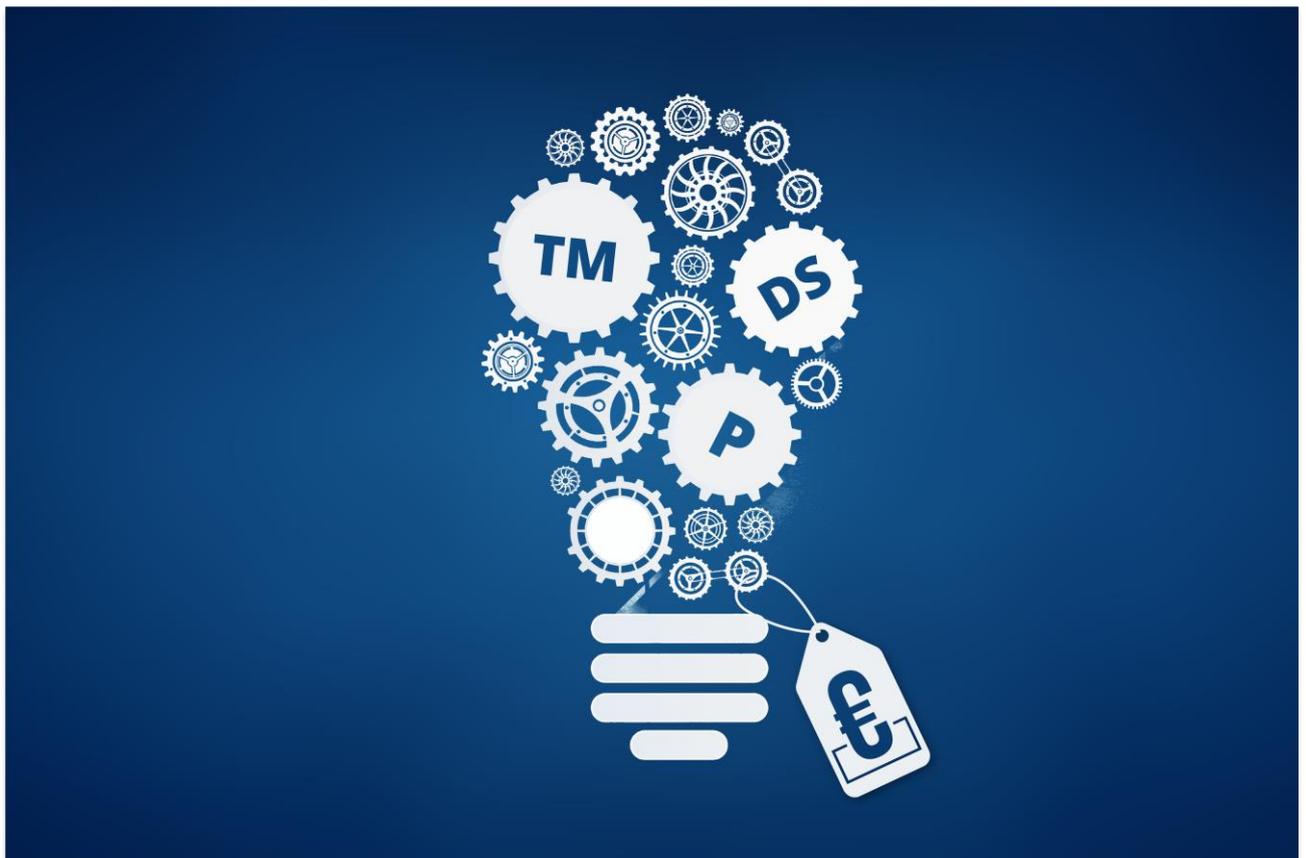


Use of IPR bundles by EU firms 2014-2015



October 2020

Executive summary

This study looks at EU firms that simultaneously use different types of IPRs for the same products in the period 2014-2015. The sample is made up of 63 286 firms altogether holding 76 202 European patents, 98 257 EU trade marks (EUTMs) and 21 676 registered Community designs (RCDs). These IPRs represent 48.2% ⁽¹⁾ of the total IPRs filed in the EUIPO and the EPO by European Union (EU) firms during the period.

Of the firms in this sample, 8.3% have applied for more than one type of IPR. The IPRs filed by these firms correspond to 35.7% of all IPRs in the sample. Out of these firms, 1 % applied for all three IPRs, (patents, trade marks, and registered designs) during the period. This corresponds to 16.8% of all IPRs registered in the EUIPO and the EPO by firms in the sample. These figures indicate a strong concentration of IPRs.

Out of the total designs and patents registered, half belong to firms from the sample. Furthermore 45% of design filings come from firms also filing trade marks. Trade mark filings show a different pattern though. Most trade marks (nearly 80%) are filed by firms that file only trade marks but neither designs nor patents.

Patents are the IPR that is most often used together with other rights. Firms filing both trade marks and patents filed nearly 4 patents for every trade mark; firms filing both designs and patents filed 6.5 patents for every design. When it comes to designs and trade marks filed by the same firm, there are 1.5 trade marks per design.

The multi-IPR firms have a strong economic weight, representing 31.9% of employment and 35.5% of turnover in the sample. Firms filing all three types of IPR represent 14.1% of employment and 16% of turnover.

The size of firms is of importance. The larger the firm, the more likely is it to be a multi-IPR business. More than 20% of large firms have filed more than one type of IPR, compared to only 7% of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). More than 64% of the all IPRs filed by large firms are concurrent, compared to 20 % of IPRs filed by SMEs.

The study also shows significant differences among sectors. At one extreme, 15 % of firms in ‘manufacturing and mining’ are multi-IPR firms, while only 6% of firms active in ‘services, commerce and utilities’ use concurrent IPRs. This is not surprising given that those sectors file relatively few patents.

⁽¹⁾ Specifically, they represent 55.9% of patents, 43.4% of trade marks, and 49.2% of designs.

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