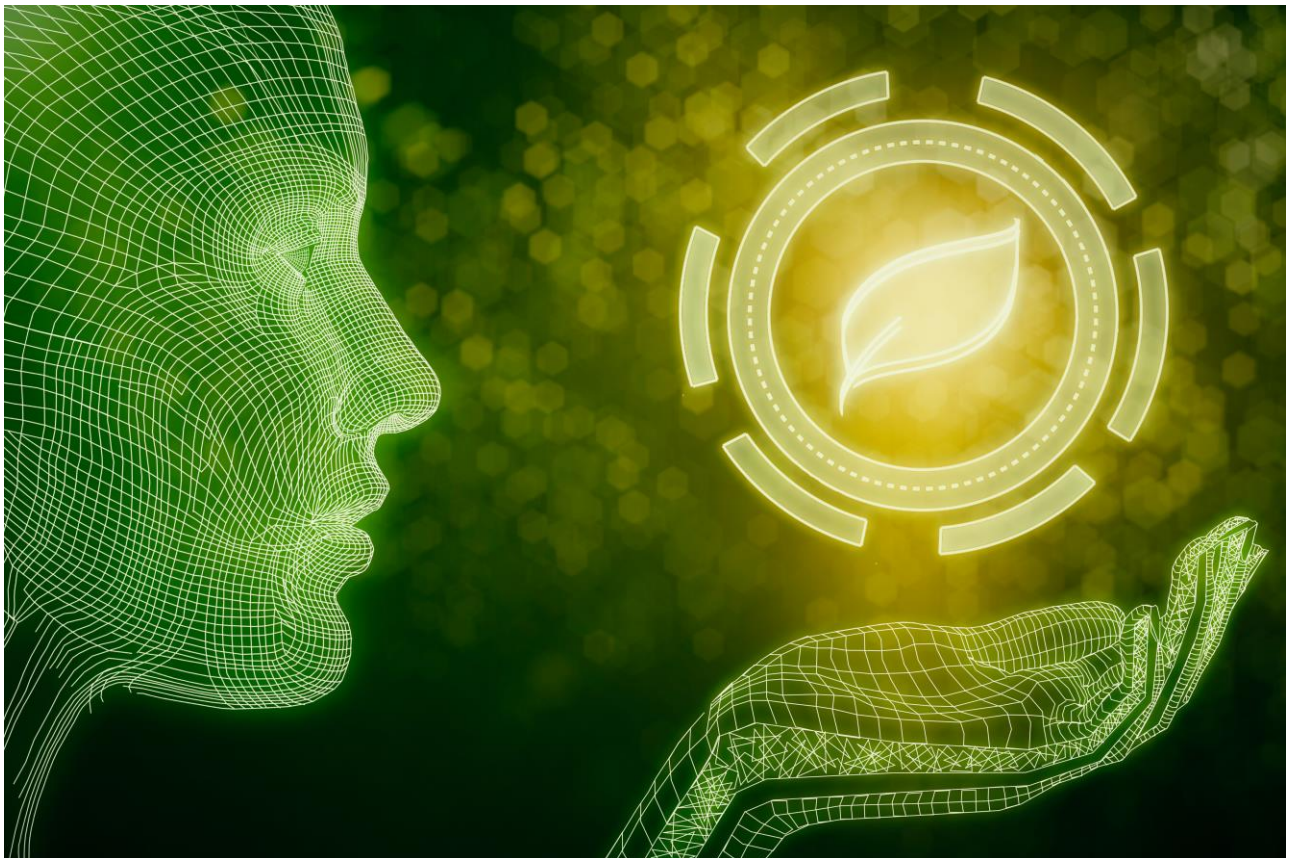


Green EU trade marks

Analysis of goods and services specifications, 1996-2020

Executive summary



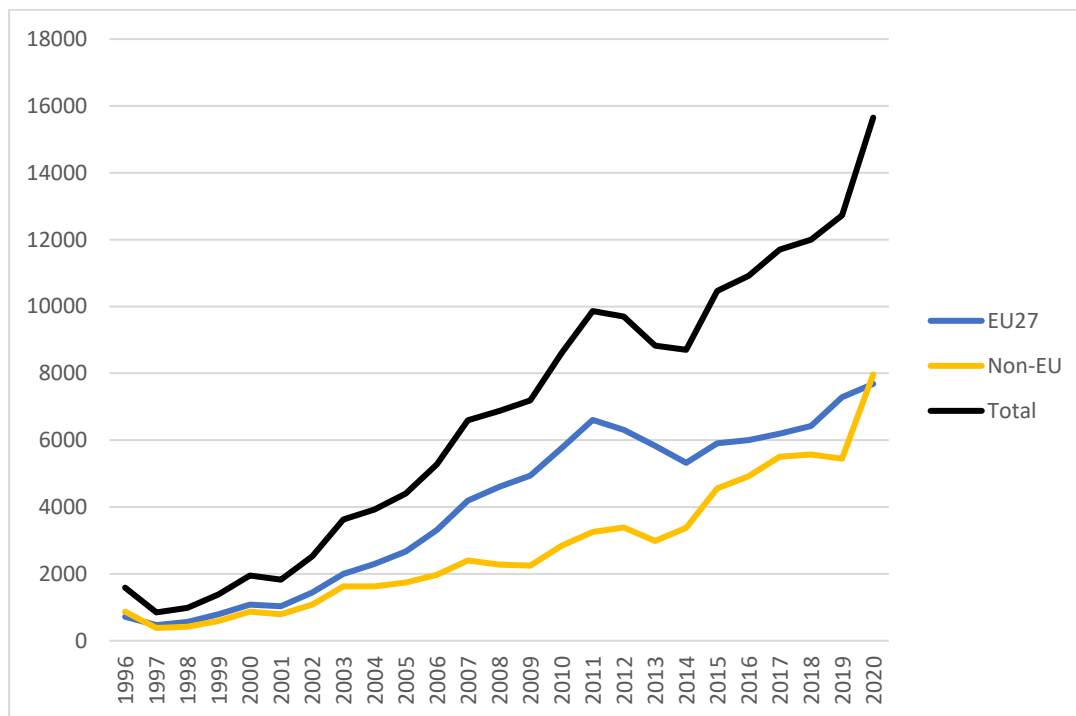
Executive summary

In this study, the G&S descriptions in the 2 million EUTM applications – filed at the EUIPO since it began operation in 1996 – are analysed for the presence of terms that can be said to be related to the protection of the environment and sustainability. Examples of such terms include expressions such as ‘photovoltaic’, ‘solar heating’, ‘wind energy’, ‘recycling’. Using the EUIPO’s Harmonised Database¹ as the source, approximately 900 such terms have been identified as ‘green’; these terms have in turn been classified in 35 categories which are further organised into 9 groups.

An algorithm was developed to search through the more than 65 million terms contained in the EUTM applications filed over the years in order to identify applications that contain at least one ‘green’ term². The purpose was to examine whether the increased concern among the public and policymakers over climate change and environmental degradation is reflected in the EUTM applications.

The main finding of the study is that growing interest in sustainability is indeed reflected in the EUTMs filed at the EUIPO. As seen in the graphs below, the absolute number of green EUTMs has increased significantly since 1996, as has the share of green EUTMs, although the latter has oscillated between 10% and 12% during the past decade.

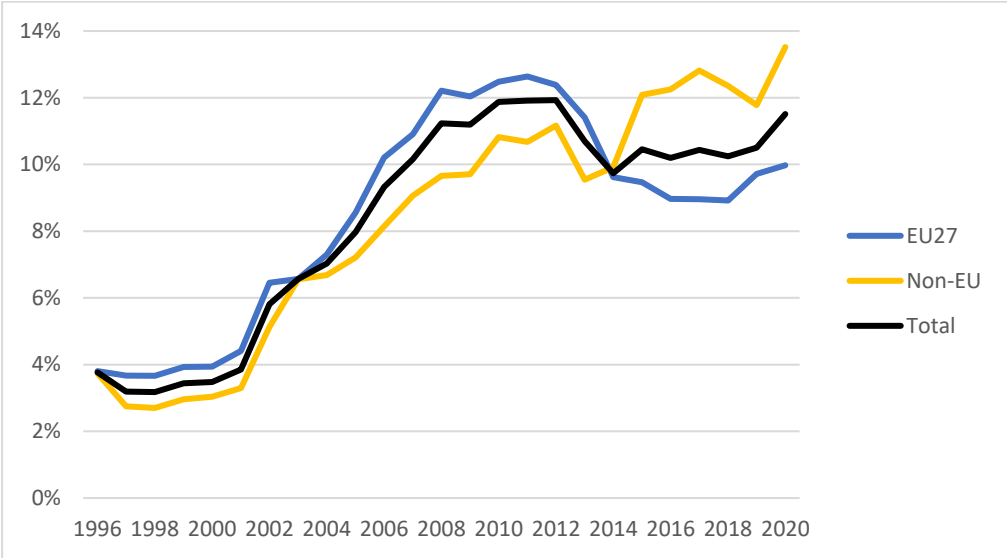
Figure 1. Green EUTM filings, 1996-2020



¹ The Harmonised Database (HDB) is a database of approximately 85 000 G&S terms available to EUTM applicants. These terms have been translated into all EU languages and have already been accepted by all IP offices in the EU as well as in some third countries.

² Such EUTMs are referred to as ‘green EUTMs’ in this report.

Figure 2. Green EUTM filings as a share of all EUTM filings, 1996-2020



A second trend that can be seen in the chart is the increasing importance of green EUTM filings from outside the EU. This reflects the increase in such filings from Chinese companies. Other non-EU countries with significant green EUTM activity are South Korea, Switzerland, the UK, and the USA. Among EU Member States, the top green EUTM filing countries are Germany, Spain, France, Italy and the Netherlands.

Figure 3. Green EUTMs by main product group, 2015-2020

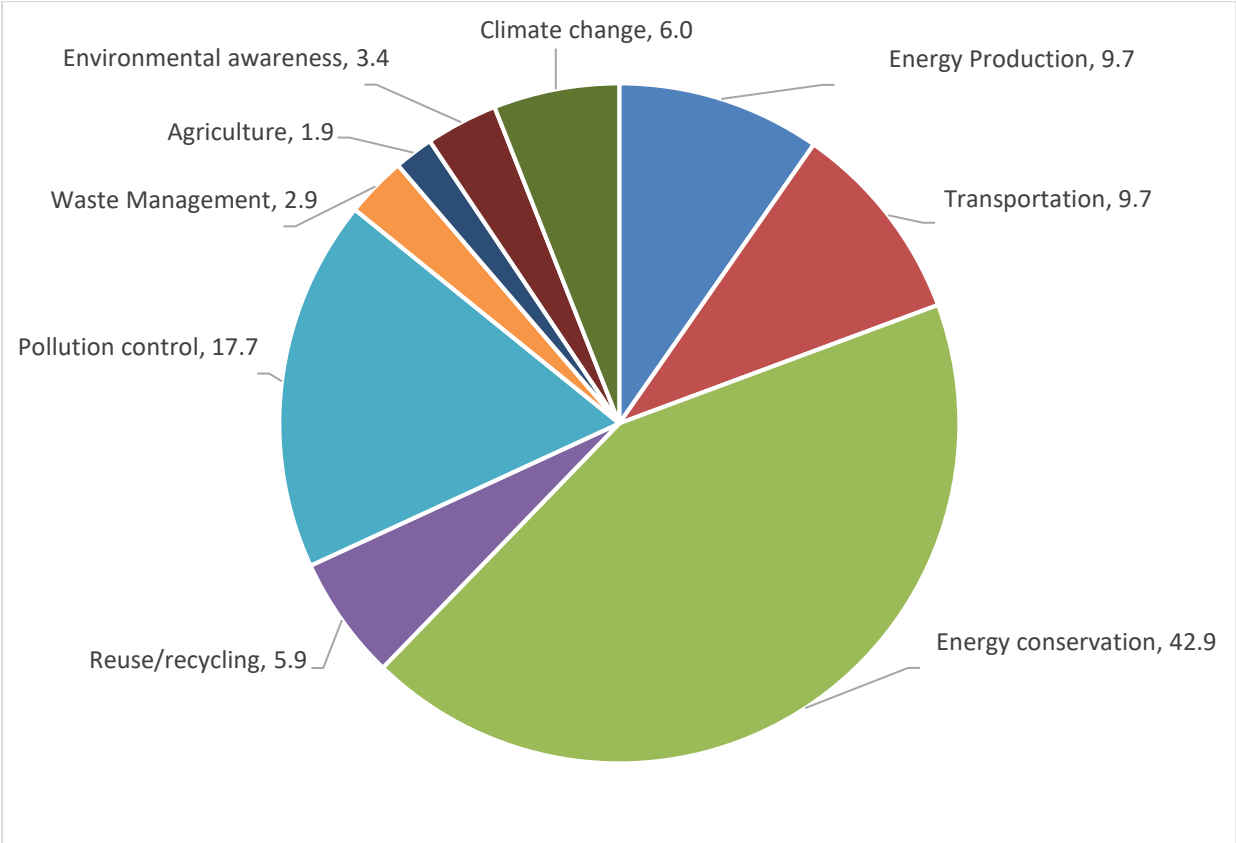


Figure 3 shows the distribution of green EUTMs filed in the most recent 5-year period among the 9 main product groups. The dominant product groups are Energy Conservation and Energy Production, which together account for more than 52% of green EUTM filings, followed by Pollution Control with 18% of filings, and Transportation (close to 10%).

Another interesting finding is that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are active in the sphere of green EUTMs, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Green EUTMs by size of applicant, 2015-2020

Firm size	Green TMs	Total TMs	Green	Bundle with patents
Large	8 571	67 754	12.7%	36.3%
SME	11 554	118 860	9.7%	7.8%
medium	4 261	43 821	9.7%	11.7%
small	4 031	38 759	10.4%	6.8%
micro	3 262	36 280	9.0%	4.2%

For large companies in this sample, close to 13% of EUTM filings are green. This percentage is somewhat lower for SMEs, but even for the smallest companies in this group the green EUTM share is 9%. As shown in the last column, when it comes to patent activity, large companies are far more active than SMEs, but the table shows that SMEs still play a significant role in bringing environmentally relevant G&S to the EU marketplace.