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Patent Statistics Report on the 10th Anniversary of China and Countries Jointly Building the Belt and Road Initiative (2013-2022)

The year 2023 marks the 10th anniversary of the “Belt and Road Initiative”. Over the past decade, the joint construction of the “Belt and Road” has played an important role in promoting openness and cooperation, innovation linkage and sustainable development. Economic and trade exchanges between China and countries jointly building the "Belt and Road" (hereinafter referred to as "co-building countries") are increasingly close, and patent activities are increasingly active.

Statistics show that from 2013 to 2022, a total of 115 co-building countries submitted patent applications in China, and the cumulative numbers of patent applications and grants in China were 253,000 and 112,000, with average annual growth rates of 5.4% and 9.8%, respectively. On the other hand, China had publication of patent applications in 50 co-building countries and related organizations, and the cumulative numbers of published and granted patent applications in the co-building countries were 67,000 and 35,000, with an average annual growth rates of 25.8% and 23.8%, respectively.

1. The co-building countries’ patent activities in China are becoming increasingly active.

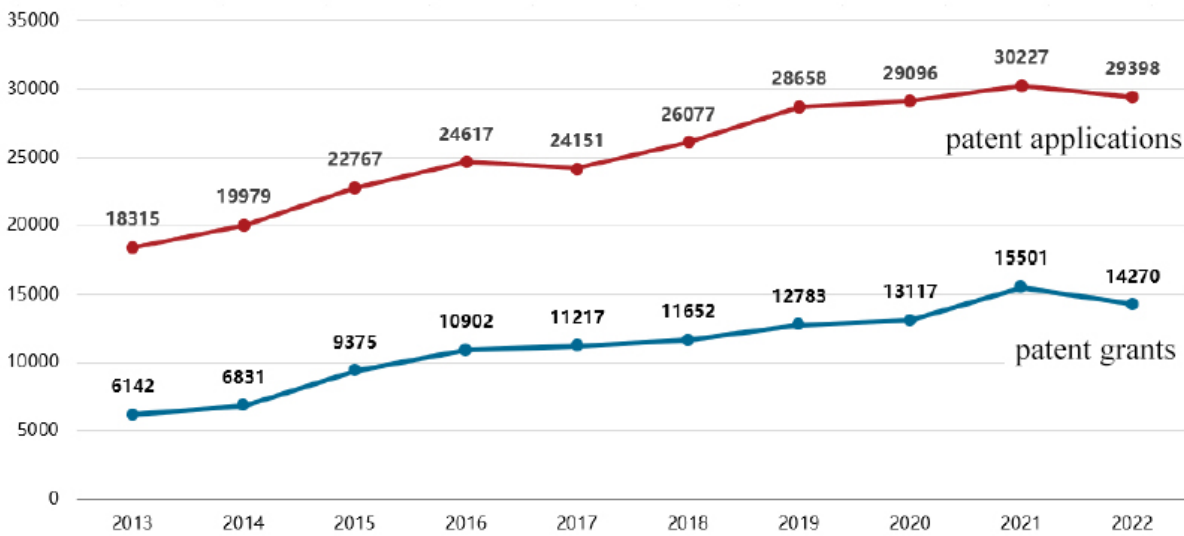


Fig.1 Patent applications and grants of co-building countries in China (2013-2022)

In regard of patent types, the co-building countries’ patent applications in China are mainly characterized by invention patents, and supplemented by design patents and utility model patents. From 2013 to 2022, applicants from the co-building countries submitted 199,000 applications for invention patents, 40,000 for design patents, and 14,000 for utility model patents in China, with an average annual growth rate of 5.8%, 1.3% and 12.0%, respectively.

(1)South Korea, Italy and Singapore are the three major co-building-country patent applicants in China.

From 2013 to 2022, 115 Belt and Road countries filed patent applications in China. Among them, the top five countries in terms of cumulative applications are Republic of Korea (178,000), Italy (24,000), Singapore (15,000), Austria (11,000) and Luxembourg (3,000), and the top five countries together accounted for 91.3% of the total number of patent applications in China. (See Fig.2)

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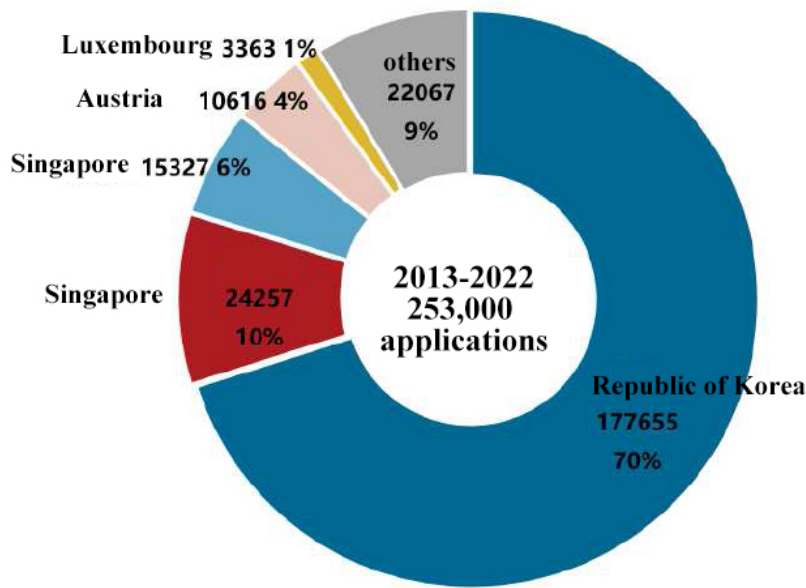


Fig.2 Patent applications of co-building countries in China (2013-2022)

(2) Digital technology is advantageous technical field involved in the invention patents filed by co-building countries in China.

From 2013 to 2022, the top five technical fields involved in the patent applications filed by applicants from the co-building countries in China are semiconductors (16,000), motors/electrical devices/electric energy (15,000), other consumer goods (15,000), computer technology (15,000) and digital communications (13,000), accounting for 46.1% of the total number of applications.

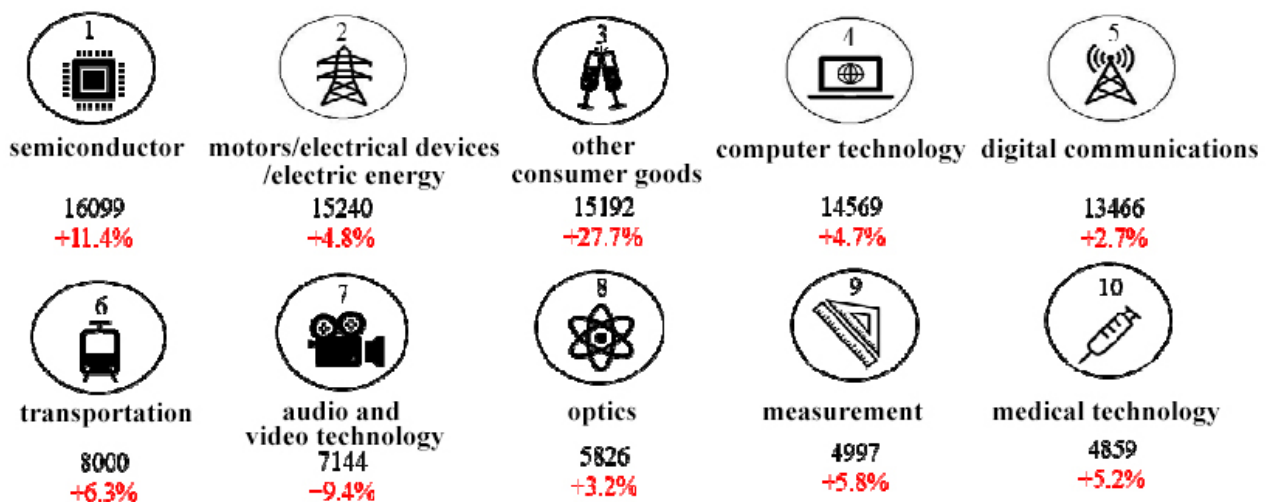


Fig.3 Top 10 technical fields involved in patent applications by co-building countries in China (2013-2022)

(3) More innovation entities from co-building countries have come to apply for patents in China.

In 2022, a total of 73 co-building countries filed patent applications in China, with an increase of 7 over the number in 2013; a total of 3,982 innovation entities from co-building countries filed patent applications in China – 654 more than the number in 2013. The total number of patent applications filed by the top 20 applicants from 2013 to 2022 totaled 99,000, accounting for 38.9% of the total number of applications.

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2. China has maintained a rapid growth in terms of both publications and grants of patent applications in the co-building countries.

The number of published patent applications filed by Chinese applicants in the co-building countries has increased from 2,000 in 2013 to 15,000 in 2022, with an average annual growth of 25.8%; on the other side, the number of corresponding patent grants has increased from 1,000 in 2013 to 8,000 in 2022, with an average annual growth of 23.8%.

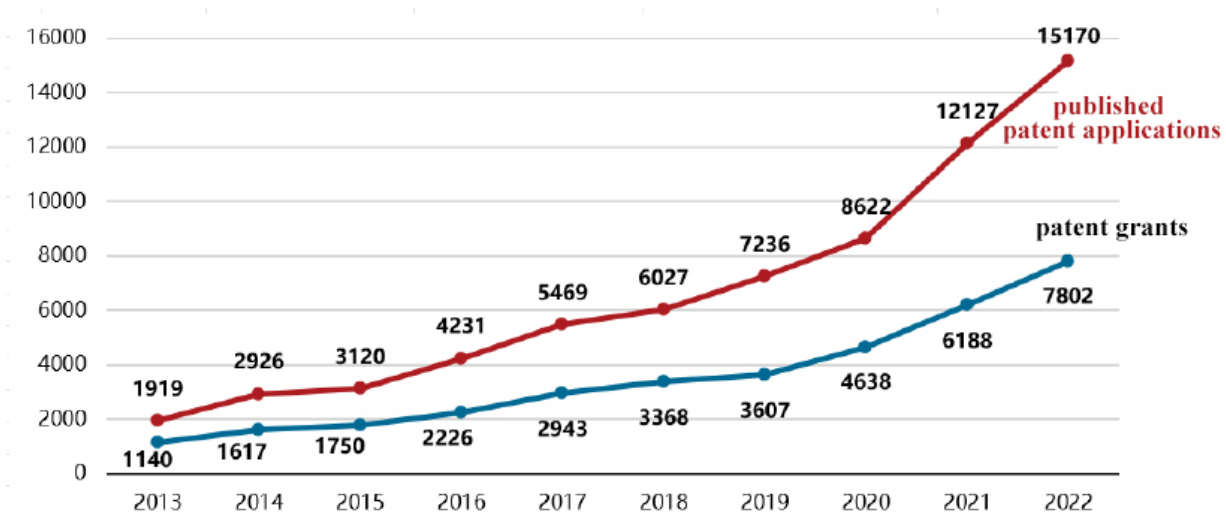


Fig.4 Published patent applications and patent grants of China in co-building countries (2013-2022)

(1)The friend circle of "Belt and Road" patent cooperation continues to expand.

(a)Chinese enterprises have applied for patents in 48 countries.

In 2022, Chinese enterprises published patent applications in 41 co-building countries and related organizations, with an increase of 7 countries over the number in 2013, and reached a total of 48 over the ten years, gradually expanding from Asia to South Africa, Western Europe and other countries.

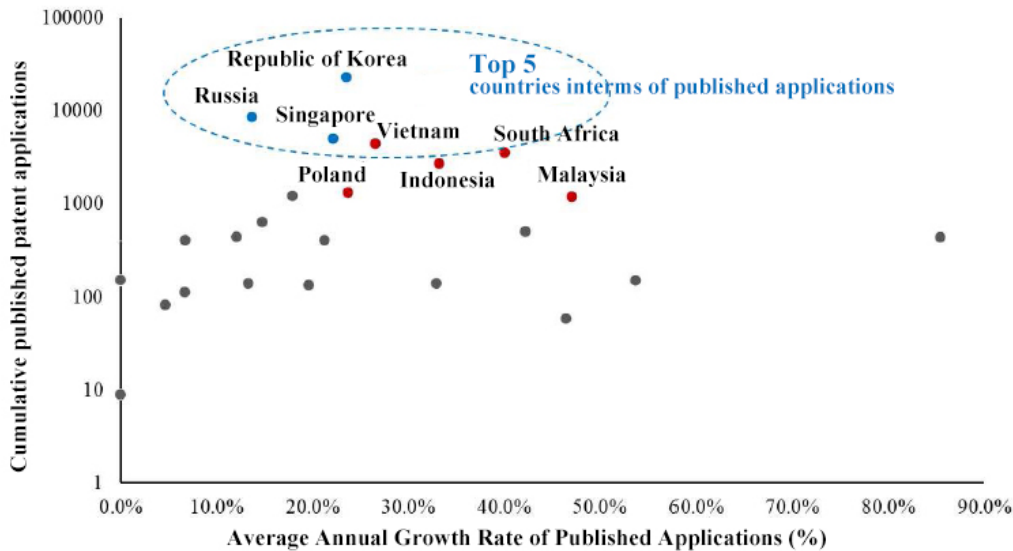


Fig.5 Published patent applications by China in co-building countries and average annual growth rate (2013-2022)

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(b)RCEP countries are the main destination countries for the "Belt and Road" patent portfolios of Chinese enterprises.

In 2022, with the implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (RCEP), the world's largest free trade area was officially landed, regional trade and investment was more free and convenient, and RCEP member countries became an important focus for China to deepen intellectual property cooperation with co-building countries. In 2022, Chinese enterprises published 7,736 patent applications in RCEP members, accounting for 65.6% of the total number of applications filed by the co-building countries. Five of the top 10 co-building countries in terms of published applications are also RCEP members, namely, the Republic of Korea (4,548), Vietnam (1,007), Indonesia (754), Singapore (706) and Malaysia (610).

(2)Technological innovation in digital technology and other fields contributes to the Belt and Road Cooperation. From 2013 to 2022, the top five technology fields in terms of cumulative number of invention patent applications filed by Chinese enterprises in the co-building countries are: digital communication (11,249), computer technology (8,661), motor/electrical device/electric energy (3,339), organic fine chemistry (3,127) and audio and video technology (2,805), the total of which accounted for 50.7% of the total number of published applications.

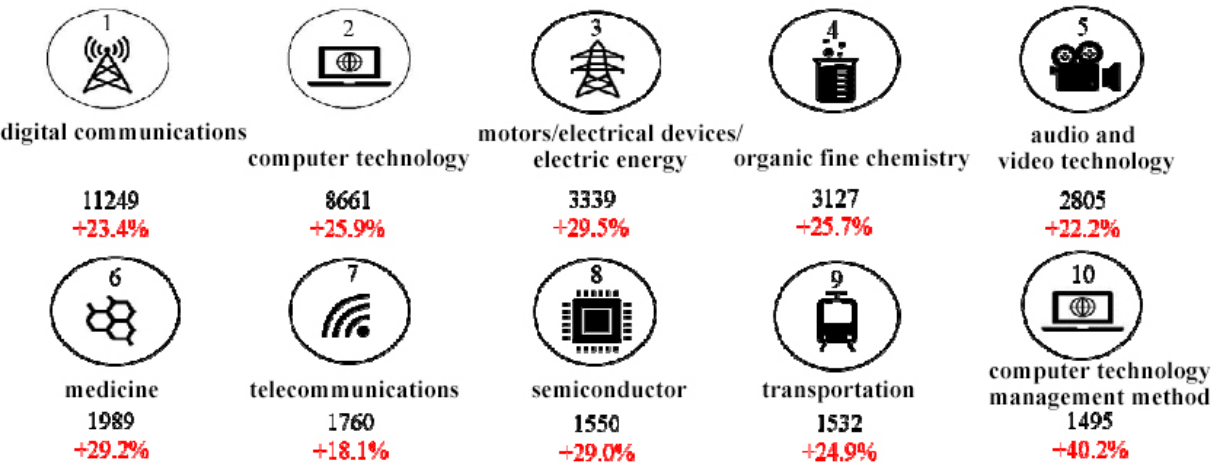


Fig.6 Top 10 technical fields involved in published patent applications by China in co-building countries (2013-2022)

(3)Enterprises from China's Guangdong Province maintain a leading position in terms of patent portfolios in the Belt and Road countries.

From 2013 to 2022, enterprises from China's Guangdong Province published the largest number of patent applications in the co-building countries (24,559), with an average annual growth rate of 21.8%, accounting for 42.5% of the total; the number of applications from enterprises in the Yangtze River Delta (Shanghai, Zhejiang, Jiangsu and Anhui) increased significantly, reaching 14,377, with an average annual growth rate of 31.2% and accounting for 24.9% of the total; the number of published applications from enterprises in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region was 8,836, with an annual increase of 23.4% and accounting for 15.3% of the total.

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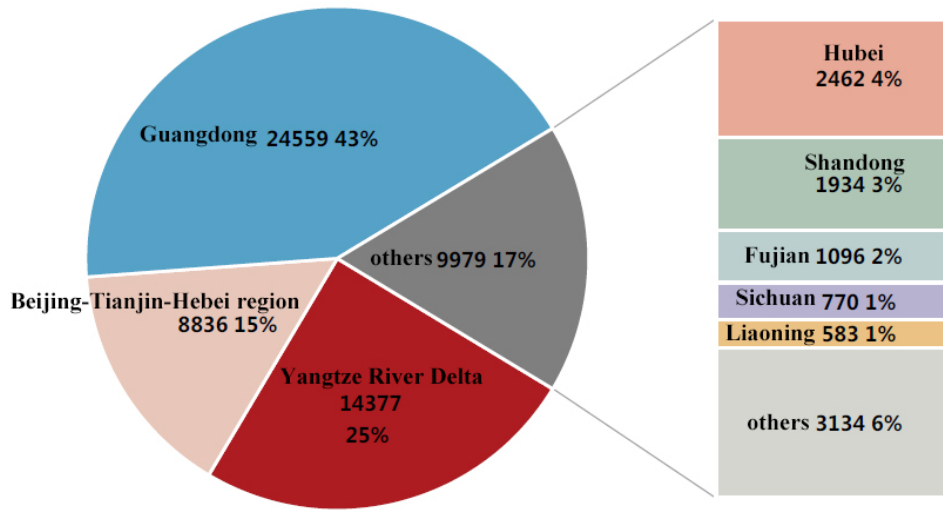


Fig.7 Regional distribution of published patent applications by Chinese enterprises in co-building countries (2013-2022)

3. Patents help green building of the "Belt and Road".

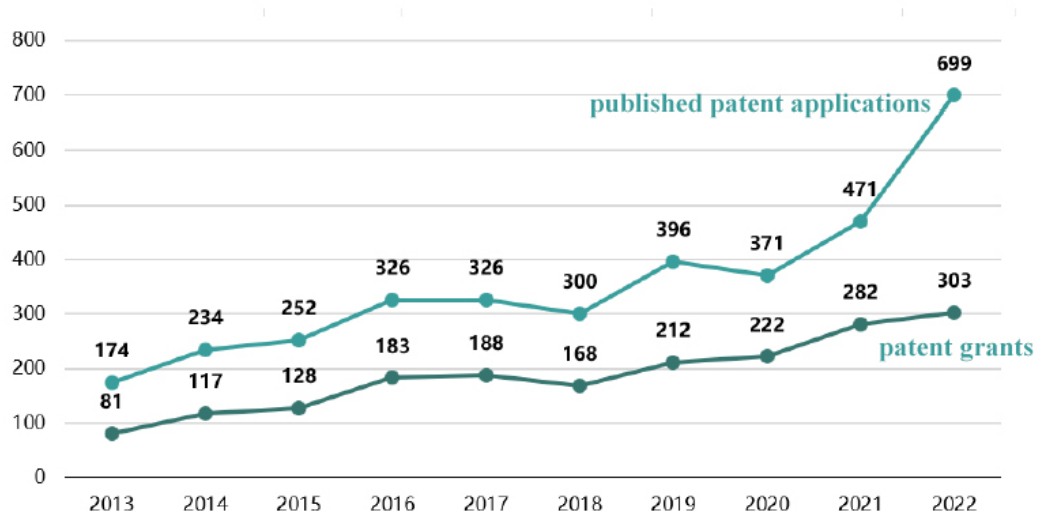


Fig.8 Published patent applications and patent grants related to green and low-carbon technology of China in co-building countries (2013-2022)

According to the statistics of the "Green and Low-carbon Technology Patent Classification System" of the CNIPA, from 2013 to 2022, China's total number of published green and low-carbon technology invention patent applications in the co-building countries was 3,549, with an average annual growth rate of 16.7%; the number of said patents granted was 1,884, with an average annual growth rate of 15.8%.

(Source: National Administration for Intellectual Property)

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CNIPA: Statistics on Patents (January to September 2023)

Recently, China National Intellectual Property Administration (“CNIPA”) released the monthly report of intellectual property data from January to September 2023. According to the monthly report, the data statistics of the three types of patents granted during said period are listed as follows:

Statistics on Patent Grants (January to September 2023)			
	Year 2023	Year 2022	Annual Growth Rate
Inventions	698,822	615,019	+13.63%
Utility Models	1,596,992	2,143,441	-25.49%
Designs	487,977	532,464	-8.35%
Total	2,783,791	3,290,924	-15.41%

According to the CNIPA’s monthly report (statistical table of domestic patent grants based on patentee types), the number of invention patents granted from January to September 2023 is compared with the corresponding number in 2022:

Invention Patent Grants (January to September 2023)			
Statistical Table of Domestic Patent Grants based on Patentee Types			
	Year 2023	Year 2022	Annual Growth Rate
Colleges and universities	139,042	138,384	+0.48%
Scientific research institutions	35,173	37,850	-7.07%
Enterprises	423,770	337,815	+25.44%
Public institutions	12,447	7,231	+72.13%
Individuals	9,771	11,411	-14.37%

Besides, according to the CNIPA’s monthly report (statistical table of domestic patent grants based on patentee types), the number of utility model patents granted from January to September 2023 is compared with the corresponding number in 2022:

Utility Model Patent Grants (January to September 2023)			
Statistical Table of Domestic Patent Grants based on Patentee Types			
	Year 2023	Year 2022	Annual Growth Rate
Colleges and universities	46,065	96,958	-52.49%
Scientific research institutions	12,483	21,589	-42.18
Enterprises	1,393,728	1,783,941	-21.87%
Public institutions	44,214	45,553	-2.94%
Individuals	96,246	189,111	-49.11%

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And also according to the CNIPA’s monthly report (statistical table of domestic patent grants based on patentee types), the number of design patents granted from January to September 2023 is compared with the corresponding number in 2022:

Design Patent Grants (January to September 2023)			
Statistical Table of Domestic Patent Grants based on Patentee Types			
	Year 2023	Year 2022	Annual Growth Rate
Colleges and universities	14,121	13,316	+6.05%
Scientific research institutions	1,131	1,145	-1.22%
Enterprises	302,020	322,433	-6.33%
Public institutions	2,309	1,579	+46.23%
Individuals	161,451	184,963	-12.71%

(Source: China National Intellectual Property Administration)

Intellectual Property

P.R.C. Supreme People's Court Releases Statistical Data on the Trial of Intellectual Property Cases from January to September 2023

Recently, the P.R.C. Supreme People's Court released the major statistical data of judicial trial work from January to September 2023. Among these, statistics on the trial of intellectual property cases show:

The number of first-instance intellectual property cases was 371,000, reaching an increase of 1.61%; and among them, patent contract disputes, patent ownership and infringement disputes increased significantly over the same period last year, at 42% and 27% respectively. The number of newly accepted civil cases of first instance involving technological intellectual property was 17,000, reaching an increase of 56.70% over the same period last year. And among these cases, 6,725 were newly accepted cases concerning copyright infringement of computer software, at an increase of 260% over the same period last year; and 6,438 were newly accepted cases concerning patent infringement of utility models, at an increase of 31.6% over the same period last year.

(Source: WeChat Account of the IP Tribunal of the P.R.C. Supreme People’s Court)