



Canadian Intellectual  
Property Office

Office de la propriété  
intellectuelle du Canada

Canada

# IP Canada Report 2025



10th  
Edition

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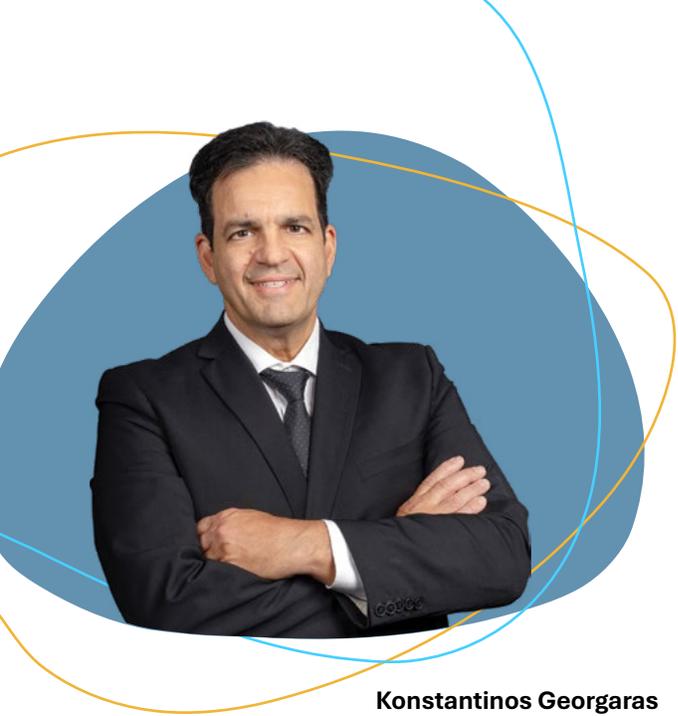
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**Konstantinos Georgaras**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

# Message from the CEO

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It is a great honour to present the Canadian Intellectual Property Office's (CIPO) 2025 edition of the IP Canada Report, marking the 10th iteration of this annual series first initiated in 2016. The IP Canada Report offers an overview of intellectual property (IP) activities in Canada and internationally by Canadians, showcasing our data and research efforts. The trends highlighted in this report, covering patents, trademarks, industrial designs, and plant breeders' rights, are vital to IP research. They provide insights into innovation trends, help identify technological

advancements, and inform policy decisions to foster economic growth and competitiveness. This report utilizes data from CIPO, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) to present the most recent IP trends in Canada and internationally by Canadians.

At CIPO, we recognize that enhancing our internal data and research capabilities, alongside fostering stronger partnerships with the global research and policy community, contributes to more informed decision-making that ultimately drives innovation and economic growth. These decisions are based on the expert analysis of IP data, which serves as the foundation for understanding emerging trends and technological advancements. By delivering timely and reliable insights, we aim to empower innovators, creators, and businesses to shape their strategic direction effectively. Our commitment to providing accurate and comprehensive IP data supports the development of policies that stimulate the economy and maintain Canada's competitive edge internationally. As a catalyst for innovation, CIPO plays a pivotal role in driving the nation's technological and creative advancements, ensuring that Canada's innovators have the tools and knowledge needed to succeed.

As the IP landscape evolves rapidly, shaped by economic shifts and technological advancements, CIPO remains steadfast in its commitment to supporting Canadian enterprises in navigating these complexities with confidence. IP is more than a legal framework—it is a driving force behind innovation, competitiveness, and economic prosperity. Through our 2024–2029 International Strategy, we are strengthening our engagement with global partners to foster a more inclusive and resilient IP system, ensuring Canadian businesses and innovators remain well-positioned to seize emerging opportunities on the world stage.

Together, we are shaping a future where an IP office serves as a catalyst for innovation. The IP Canada Report is a result of the collaborative efforts of analysts within CIPO and our external stakeholders. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude for their unwavering support and contributions. We look forward to another year of innovation and advancement at CIPO.

# About us

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CIPO is a special operating agency of Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED), responsible for the administration of IP in Canada. CIPO contributes to Canada's innovation and economic success by providing greater certainty in the marketplace through the timely delivery of quality IP rights, fostering and supporting invention and creativity through knowledge sharing, raising awareness to encourage innovators to better exploit IP, helping businesses compete globally through international cooperation and the promotion of Canada's IP interests, and administering Canada's IP system and office efficiently and effectively.<sup>1</sup>

## Our five-year business strategy:<sup>2</sup>



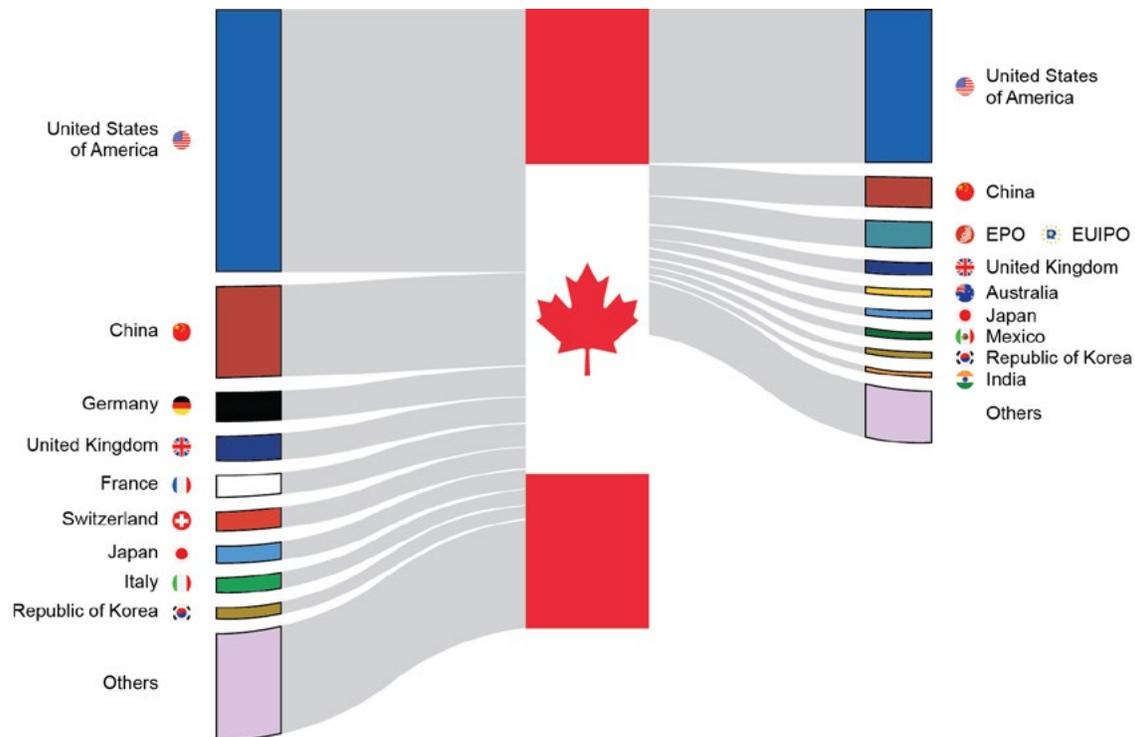
<sup>1</sup> Visit the [CIPO mandate](#) page for information on the organization's mission, vision and values, and the [publications](#) page for links to the latest annual report and business strategy.

<sup>2</sup> [CIPO's 2023–2028 Business Strategy](#)

# Executive summary

Canada is a major international destination and source of IP rights. In 2024, nearly 86,500 patents, trademarks and industrial designs were filed in Canada by non-residents. In parallel, Canadian residents filed approximately 44,500 IP rights abroad in 2023. The IP Canada Report presents trends and research in IP use both in Canada and abroad by Canadians, using data from CIPO, WIPO and the CFIA.

**Figure 1. Flow of IP applications into Canada in 2024 by origin (left), and from Canada in 2023 by destination (right)**



## IP activity still feeling the impact of economic uncertainty

In Canada, IP filing activity exhibited mixed trends in 2024. Trademark applications declined for the third consecutive year, falling by 4% to 68,672, with reductions in both resident and non-resident filings. Industrial design filings, however, continued their upward trajectory, increasing by 1% to 9,167, largely driven by designs filed by non-residents. The adoption of the Hague system reached a new high, with international registrations accounting for 47% of all industrial designs filed at CIPO. Meanwhile, plant breeders' rights applications saw a drop of 19% to 327, marking the second interruption in their growth trend since 2016. The majority of these filings came from non-residents, with horticultural and agricultural varieties experiencing respective declines of 25% and 11%. Finally, the 35,374 patent applications received by CIPO in 2024 marked a modest 1% decline from the previous year, suggesting a return to steadier levels of filing activity following recent fluctuations. These patterns reveal the evolving landscape of IP protection in Canada, shaped by global economic conditions and sector-specific shifts.

Abroad, Canadian IP activity showed varying results in 2023, reflecting adjustments to the global economic context. Patent filings declined slightly by 2% to 20,048, while trademark applications saw a more pronounced decrease of 11% to 21,051, marking the lowest level since 2018. In contrast, industrial designs filed abroad by Canadians experienced a sharp 30% surge, reaching a new historic peak of 3,365 designs, reflecting Canada's growing recognition of the importance of industrial designs internationally. The United States, China, the European Patent Office (EPO), the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO), and the United Kingdom remained the top destinations for Canadian applicants, though filing volumes varied significantly across types of IP rights. Notably, the reliance on international filing systems such as the PCT for patents, Madrid for trademarks, and Hague for industrial designs continued to shape Canada's engagement in global IP markets, underscoring the importance of international protection strategies for Canadian businesses.

## **Innovation endured through the pandemic, with Canadian businesses protecting the IP of their innovations**

The Survey of Innovation and Business Strategy (SIBS) 2022 offers a comprehensive analysis of Canada's innovation landscape, revealing how businesses navigated the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and adapted their strategies to sustain growth. The findings highlight a decline in overall innovation rates compared to previous years, yet they also demonstrate the resilience of Canadian enterprises to introduce new products and processes despite economic uncertainty. Larger firms and key sectors, such as information and cultural industries, and professional, scientific, and technical services, played a pivotal role in driving innovation, while IP of their innovations emerged as a crucial factor in securing a competitive advantage. The results of the survey help in designing targeted policies and support mechanisms to foster innovation across industries, ensuring long-term economic sustainability and technological advancement.

## **Canada's wildfire mitigation technologies are growing, with international collaborations fuelling high-impact solutions**

Canada's accelerating contributions to wildfire mitigation technologies reflect a growing commitment to tackling the escalating risks posed by wildfires. As the frequency and intensity of wildfires increase due to climate change, Canadian inventors and organizations are increasingly playing an essential role in developing innovations that enhance wildfire detection, suppression, and recovery. Patent activity in this field has expanded steadily, with certain regions and industries driving growth, positioning Canada as an influential player in wildfire mitigation efforts. Notably, Canadian inventors contribute significantly to high-impact innovations, particularly in collaboration with American counterparts, underscoring the importance of international cooperation in advancing technological solutions to address global wildfire challenges. This analysis highlights the need for continued research and investment in wildfire mitigation strategies, ensuring proactive responses to evolving environmental threats.



# Introduction

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The 2025 edition of the IP Canada Report marks the 10th installment in this annual series, presenting trends and research on IP usage in Canada and abroad by Canadians. The initial 4 sections of this report focus on trends in patent, trademark, industrial design, and plant breeders' rights applications. Similar to patents, plant breeders' rights safeguard new plant varieties and are managed by the Plant Breeders' Rights Office (PBRO) within the CFIA.<sup>3</sup> CIPO provides data on IP activities in Canada for 2024,<sup>4</sup> while the CFIA supplies data on plant breeders' rights.<sup>5</sup> International data, sourced from WIPO's IP Statistics Data Center,<sup>6</sup> lags in domestic data by one year because of the time required to compile data from all WIPO members. Therefore, this report includes international filing data only up to 2023.

Canadians understand the critical role that IP plays in economic growth and productivity. In 2024, Canada's position in the WIPO Global Innovation Index increased to 14th place,<sup>7</sup> moving up one spot from the previous year and maintaining its status among the top 20 economies since 2010. Canada also moved up to eighth place in terms of innovation inputs while keeping its 20th place for innovation outputs. Patents, trademarks, and industrial designs are essential contributors to a nation's innovation output. Increasing the domestic and international utilization of IP rights by Canadians is vital for thriving in a large, open economy that is increasingly driven by intangible assets.

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3 Canadian Food Inspection Agency, [Guide to Plant Breeders' Rights in Canada](#), Ottawa, 2015

4 CIPO data was retrieved on April 24, 2025.

5 CFIA data was retrieved on May 2, 2025.

6 Data from the WIPO [IP Statistics Data Center](#) was obtained on April 24, 2025. WIPO collects the previous year's data from member offices and provides public access. At the time of the production of this report, the last year available was 2023 for direct filings, and 2024 for filings through the PCT, Madrid, and Hague systems.

7 WIPO, [Global Innovation Index 2024](#), Geneva, Switzerland, 2023

The IP Canada Report 2025 presents the latest trends in IP activity within Canada and abroad by Canadians, reflecting the evolving financial conditions of 2024. The year was marked by cautious recovery efforts, more moderate inflation and interest rates, and sector-specific shifts. Trademark activity declined for the third consecutive year, falling by 4% to 68,672 applications, while industrial design filings increased by 1% to 9,167, which was driven by non-resident filings. Patent filing activity experienced a slight 1% decrease with 35,374 applications, whereas those for plant breeders' rights dropped by 19% to 327. Over the past decade, trademark filings grew by 35%, industrial designs by 59%, plant breeders' rights saw a 5% decline, and patents show no change. Internationally, Canadian IP activity showed mixed results, with trademarks decreasing by 11% to 21,051 filings, while industrial designs surged by 30%. The United States, China, Germany, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, France, the Netherlands, and Japan remained the top countries filing for IP in Canada, shaping the global landscape of innovation and IP.

Beyond trends, the report delves into 2 key areas of IP research. Insights from SIBS 2022 illustrate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on innovation rates, with businesses adapting their strategies and larger firms leading efforts to protect the IP or their innovations. Additionally, an IP analytics study highlights Canada's contributions to wildfire mitigation technologies, demonstrating steady growth in patent activity and the influential role of Canadian inventors. In particular, collaborations with American partners underscore the significance of international cooperation in advancing high-impact innovations that address global wildfire challenges.

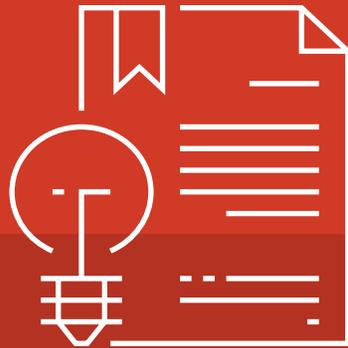
CIPO also administers 4 other forms of IP that are not included in this report: copyrights, integrated circuit topographies, official marks, and geographical indications. A copyright does not need to be registered to be enforced in Canada.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, formal data does not fully encompass its usage. Integrated circuit topographies refer to the three-dimensional configurations of electronic circuits embodied in integrated circuit products or layout designs, and are not included because of a lack of readily accessible data on domestic and international activity.<sup>9</sup> Official marks are protected under the *Trademarks Act* and include any badge, crest, emblem, or mark adopted and used by any public authority in Canada.<sup>10</sup> A geographical indication can identify a wine or spirit, or an agricultural product or food of a category set out in the *Trademarks Act*. CIPO is responsible for processing requests for protection of geographical indications and ensures that they be entered on the list of protected geographical indications maintained by the Registrar.

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8 CIPO, [A guide to copyright](#), 2018

9 CIPO, [A Guide to Integrated Circuit Topographies](#), Ottawa, 2015

10 CIPO, [The various categories of marks](#)



## Patents

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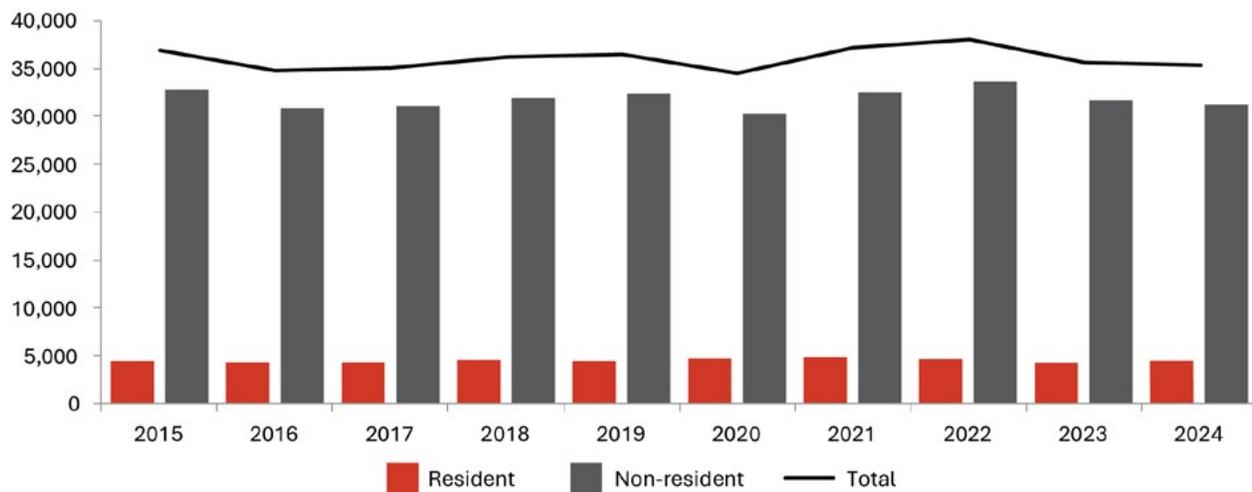
Patents grant applicants time limited, legally protected, exclusive rights to make, use, and sell their inventions. They incentivize private investment in science and technology with the opportunity for a period of monopoly profits. Eventual expiry of these rights and public release of the technical disclosures required to obtain them allow others to benefit from these innovations as well. Canada received 35,374 patents in 2024, approximately 1% less than in the previous year, while Canadians filed 20,048 patents abroad in 2023, a 2% year-over-year decrease.



## Patent applications filed in Canada

Figure 2 presents patent filing activity in Canada, shown both as a total and separately for resident and non-resident applicants. Following a 6% decline in 2023, the trend appears to be returning to a more stable trajectory in 2024 with 35,374 applications, representing a modest 1% decrease from the previous year. This change was driven by a 5% increase in filings from Canadian residents with 4,304 applications, offset by a 1% decline in filings from non-residents. Non-resident applicants continued to account for the vast majority of filings, with 31,070 applications representing 88% of the total. This share has remained consistent over the past decade, during which time resident filings rose by 3% and non-resident filings declined by 1%, reaffirming Canada's role as a key jurisdiction for global innovators.

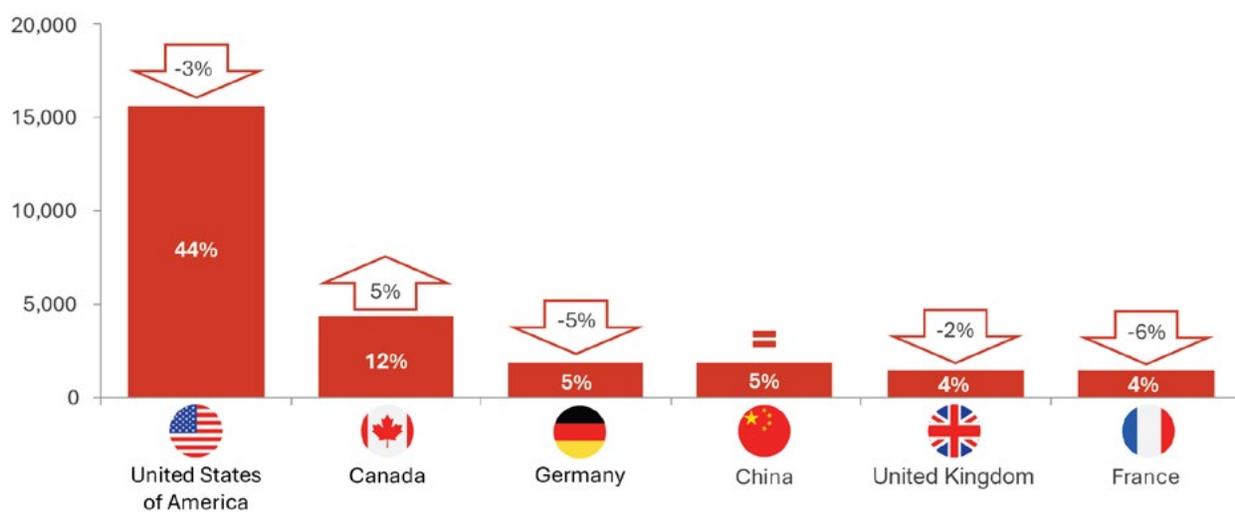
Figure 2. Patent applications in Canada, by residency status, 2015–2024





The top 6 countries filing for patents in Canada in 2024 are presented in Figure 3. The composition of the top 4 remained unchanged from the previous year, while the last 2 positions saw France return to sixth place, replacing Switzerland. The United States continued to lead with 15,532 applications, representing 44% of total patent activity at CIPO. Canadian residents followed with 4,304 filings, accounting for 12% of the total. Filings from Germany, China, the United Kingdom, and France amounted to 1,865, 1,824, 1,409, and 1,309 applications, respectively. Notably, none of the top international origins showed positive growth in 2024, with declines ranging from nearly 0% for China to a 6% drop for France. Collectively, these 6 countries were responsible for 74% of all applications in Canada in 2024, a proportion consistent with previous years.

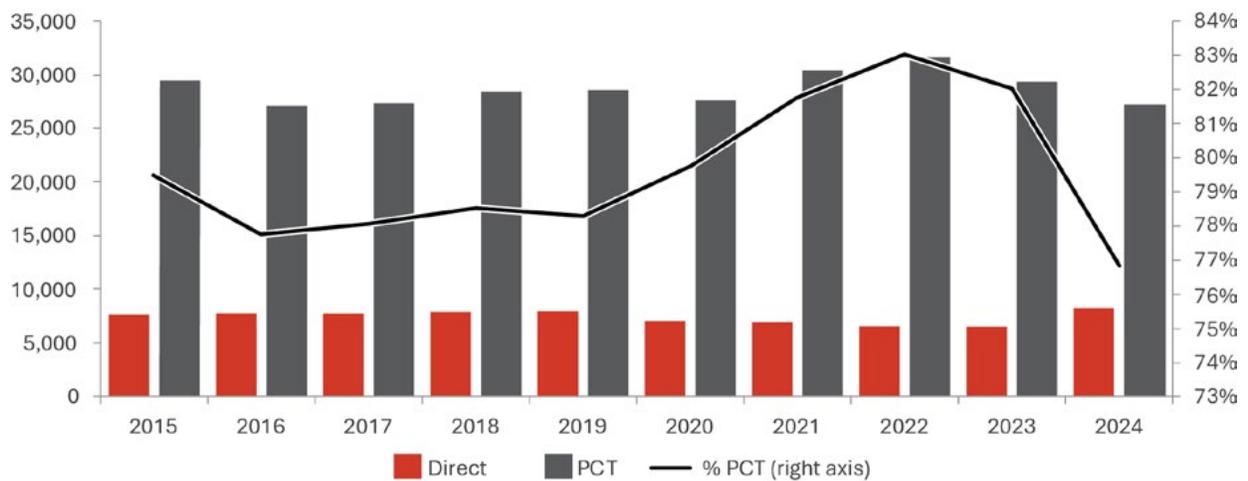
**Figure 3. Top countries filing for patents in Canada, 2024**





Patent protection is granted within specific jurisdictions. Applicants seeking coverage in multiple countries may file individually with each IP office, or opt for the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT), which facilitates international filings through WIPO. Figure 4 illustrates the breakdown of filings in Canada by route: either directly with CIPO or via the PCT system. In 2024, 27,176 applications were submitted through the PCT, accounting for 77% of total filings. This marks a 7% decline compared to the previous year and reflects a shift in filing behaviour. Direct filings, by contrast, rose sharply to 8,198 applications, an increase of 28% over 2023. The reduced share of PCT filings may be attributed to the slight drop in non-resident activity, the rise in resident filings, and a return to proportions more typical of the period prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Figure 4. Patent applications in Canada, by filing route, 2015–2024**

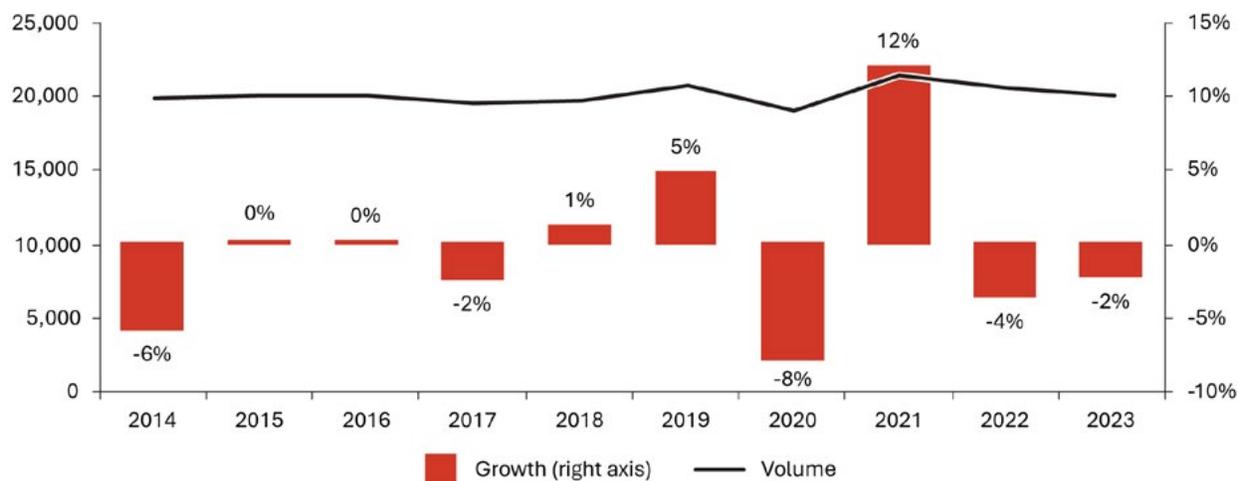




## Patent applications filed abroad by Canadians

The long-term level trend of patent filings abroad by Canadians is observed in Figure 5, with a decrease of only 5% in total over the entire 10-year period shown. The most significant year-over-year changes were an 8% decline in 2020, amid the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, which was then reversed by a 12% recovery in 2021. In 2023, Canadians filed 20,048 patent applications abroad, 2% fewer than the previous year.

Figure 5. Patent applications filed abroad by Canadians, 2014–2023



The top 5 destinations for Canadian patent applicants in 2023 are shown in Figure 6. They remain identical to those of the previous year. Collectively, these leading destinations received 85% of the year's filings abroad by Canadians. The United States and Japan received 12,185 and 776 Canadian filings, respectively, occupying the first and fourth position, and showing no variation with respect to the applications received in 2022. The EPO was second, attracting 2,054 Canadian applications, representing a 3% gain. China and Australia experienced significant decreases of 13% and 14%, respectively, from the previous year.

Figure 6. Top international destinations for Canadian patent applicants, 2023

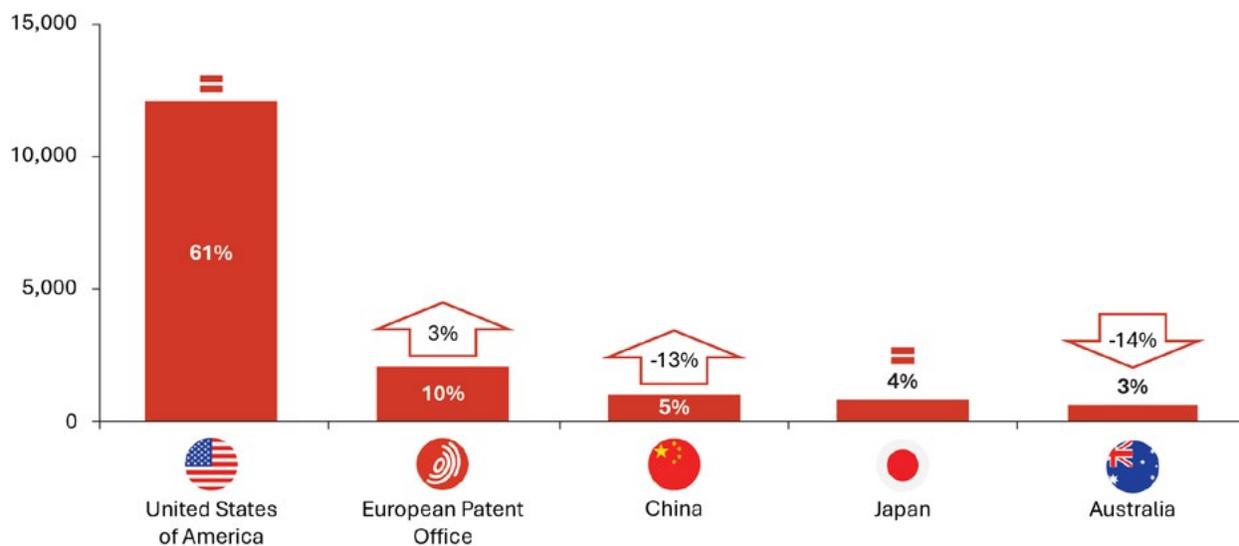
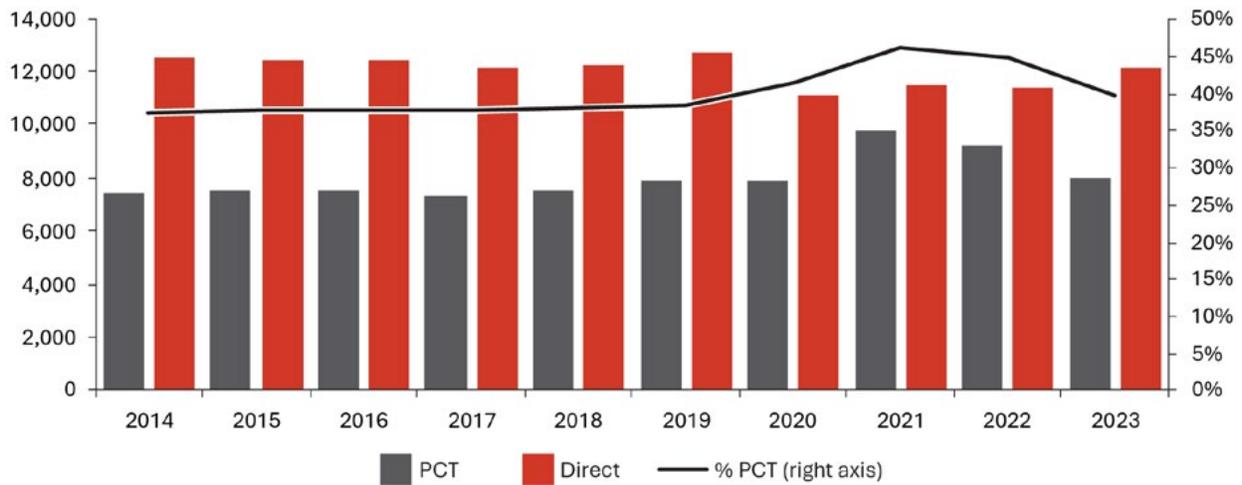




Figure 7 analyzes Canadian patent filings abroad by filing route. During the pandemic years of 2020 to 2022, the proportion of PCT filings was unusually high, driven by both lower direct filings in all 3 years and higher PCT filings in 2021 and 2022. Throughout the rest of the 10-year period, there was a very consistent trend of approximately 12,500 direct filings and 7,500 PCT filings. The proportion of PCT filings was roughly 38% for this period and increased steadily. In 2023, this trend returned with 12,078 direct applications, 7,970 applications through the PCT, and a PCT proportion of just under 40%.

**Figure 7. Patent applications filed abroad by Canadians, by filing route, 2014–2023**



## Conclusion

CIPO received 35,374 patent applications in 2024, marking a slight year-over-year decline of 1%. This shift reflects a return to more stable filing levels, driven by a combination of decreased filings from the United States and a reduction in PCT-based applications. Notably, this was offset by a significant increase in filings from resident applicants. In 2023, Canadians filed 20,048 patent applications abroad, reflecting a 2% decline from the previous year. This decrease was entirely driven by a drop in filings through the PCT system, whose share of total applications fell from 45% in 2022 to 40% in 2023. The primary destinations for Canadian patent filings remained the United States, the EPO, and China.



## Trademarks

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Trademarks grant applicants exclusive rights to use certain signs or combinations of signs to distinguish their goods or services from those of others. These signs can include words, designs, tastes, textures, moving images, modes of packaging, holograms, sounds, scents, three-dimensional shapes, colours, or any combination of these.<sup>11</sup> Trademarks are essential for businesses as they protect brand identity, foster consumer trust, and help companies differentiate themselves in competitive markets. In Canada, trademark filing trends provide valuable insight into the evolving business landscape, highlighting the growing role of international applicants and the shifting preferences for registration methods. In 2024, trademark filings at CIPO totaled 68,672, marking a 4% decline compared to the previous year, with decreases observed in both resident and non-resident applications. Similarly, Canadians filed for 21,051 trademarks abroad in 2023, reflecting an 11% drop from 2022.

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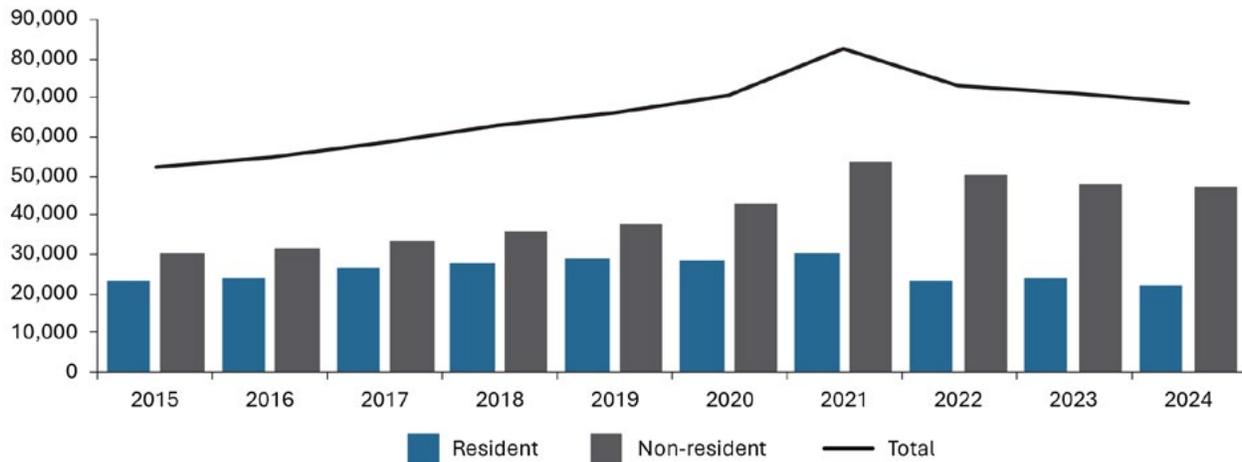
<sup>11</sup> CIPO, [Trademarks guide](#), Ottawa, 2022



## Trademark applications filed in Canada

Figure 8 illustrates the residency status composition of trademark applications filed in Canada over the past decade. In 2024, CIPO received 68,672 trademark applications, reflecting a 4% decline from the previous year and marking the third consecutive annual decrease, following an 11% drop in 2022 and a more moderate 3% decline in 2023. This trend is consistent with that of other developed countries that experienced a spike in trademark filings during the pandemic and declines in 2022.<sup>12</sup> In 2024, non-residents accounted for 46,835 applications, representing a 2% decrease from the previous year, while resident filings fell to 21,837, marking an 8% drop. Residents comprised 32% of all trademark filings in 2024, slightly down from 33% in 2023. Over the past decade, total trademark applications in Canada have risen by 35%, with non-resident filings surging by 58%, whereas resident activity has seen only a 2% increase. Trademark trends highlight Canada’s dynamic business landscape, where local enterprises and international investors seek to establish their brands in a competitive market.

Figure 8. Trademark applications in Canada, by residency status, 2015–2024

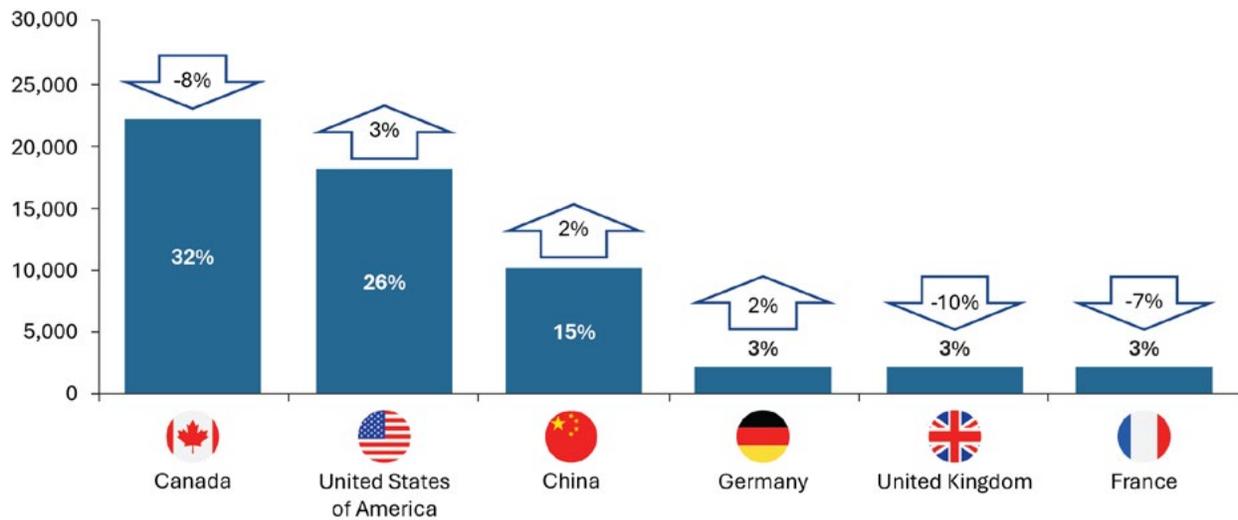


<sup>12</sup> World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) (2024)  
[World Intellectual Property Indicators 2024](#)



The top 6 origins of trademark applications in Canada for 2024 are presented in Figure 9. The rankings among countries have remained largely consistent compared to 2023, with only Germany and the United Kingdom swapping positions, now occupying fourth and fifth place, respectively. Canada continues to lead with 21,837 trademark filings, reflecting an 8% decline from the previous year. The United States follows with 17,832 applications, marking a 3% increase, while China holds third place with 9,956 filings, a modest 2% rise. Germany, the United Kingdom, and France round out the top 6 contributors, with 2,018, 1,979, and 1,747 applications, respectively. Collectively, these 6 origins accounted for 81% of all trademark submissions in Canada in 2024, unchanged from 2023, while international filings represented 72% of all non-resident applications.

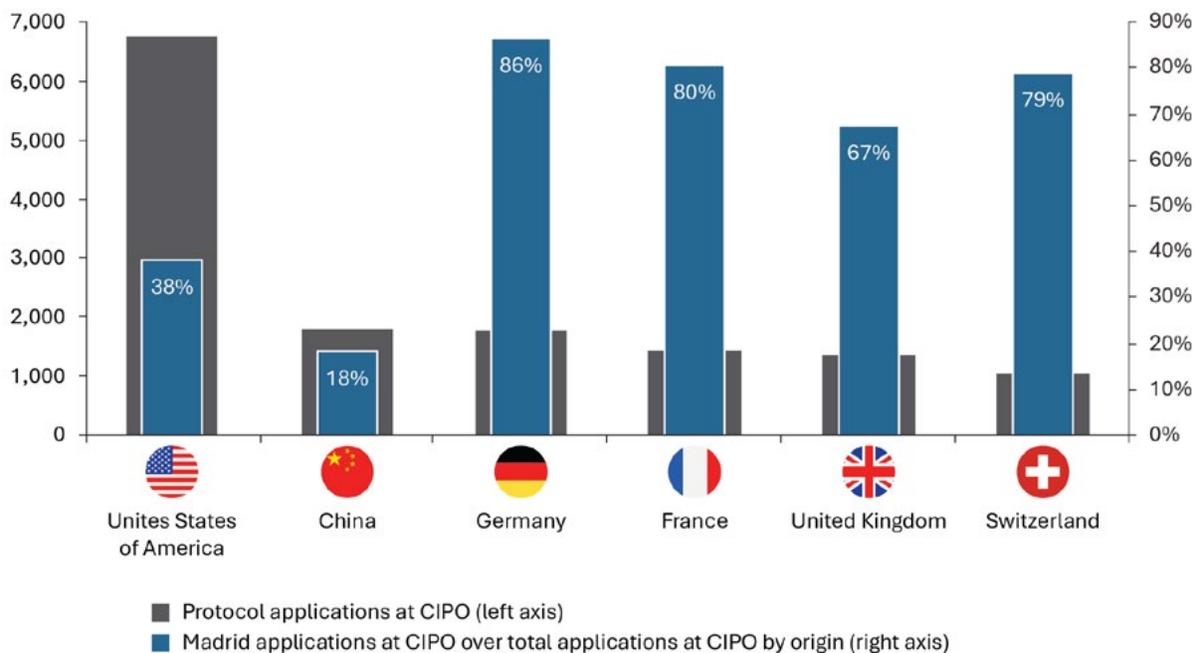
**Figure 9. Top countries filing for trademarks in Canada, 2024**





Through the Madrid system, trademark owners can submit a single international registration request through WIPO, selecting the member countries where they want protection. In Canada, the top 6 origins of Protocol applications in 2023 are displayed in Figure 10,<sup>13</sup> with outer bars representing total application volumes and inner bars indicating the share of filings made via the Madrid system. European applicants tend to rely on the Madrid system extensively when seeking trademark protection in Canada; Germany, France, the United Kingdom, and Switzerland occupy the third to sixth positions in terms of the number of Protocol applications filed in Canada, but the proportion of these filings over their totals ranges from 67% to 86%. In contrast, American and Chinese applicants, despite being the top filers in terms of Protocol applications, frequently submit their filings directly to CIPO. This results in their proportions of these applications being significantly lower, overall, with 38% and 18%, respectively.

**Figure 10. Top countries filing for trademarks using the Madrid system and designating Canada, 2024**



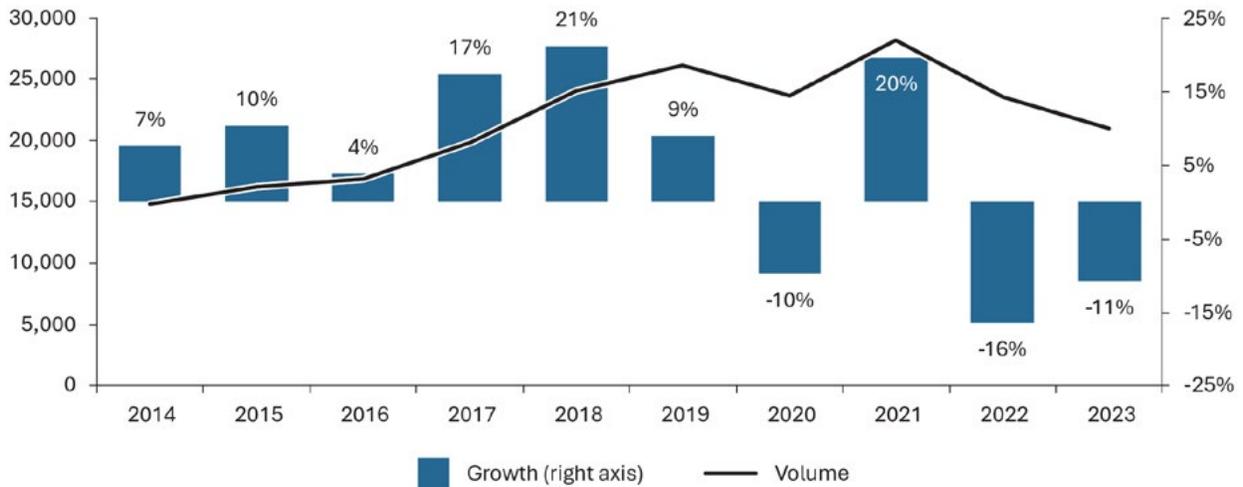
<sup>13</sup> Applications filed through the Madrid system that designate Canada are referred to as Protocol applications under Canadian legislation. Technically, Protocol applications will always be filed by non-residents since Canadians generally cannot designate their own country; they must have a base application in their country of origin.



## Trademark applications filed abroad by Canadians

Figure 11 presents trademark applications abroad by Canadians and year-over-year changes therein. Finishing a second year of consecutive decline, Canadian trademark activity abroad in 2023 was the lowest since 2018, with 21,051 filings. The long-term perspective is still positive, with Canadians increasing their overall trademark filing activity abroad by 53% over the 10-year period.

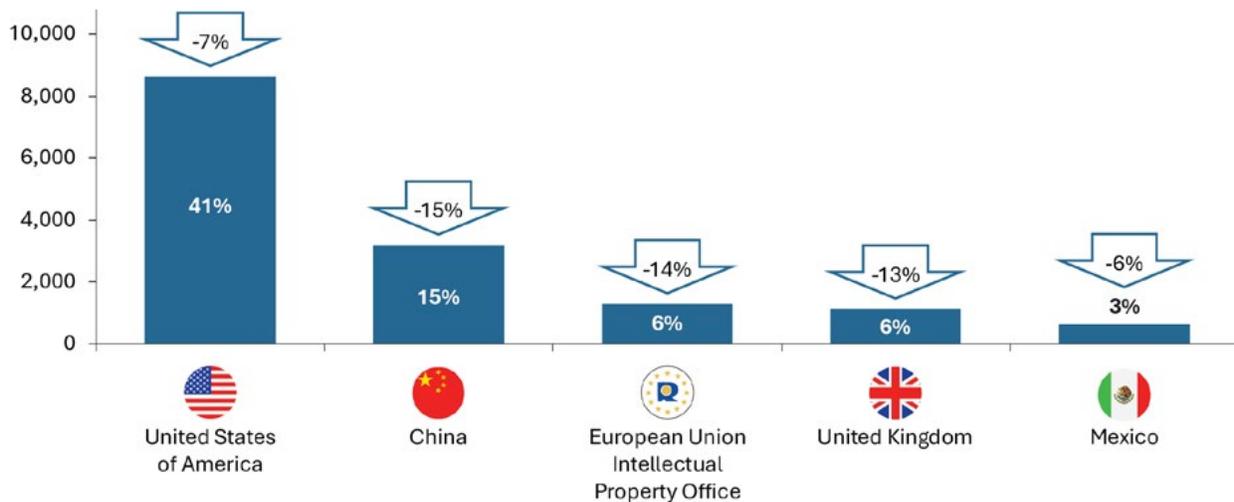
Figure 11. Trademark applications filed abroad by Canadians, 2014–2023





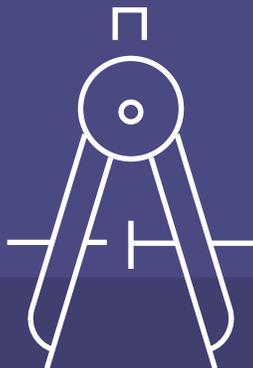
The top 5 international destinations of trademark applications by Canadians in 2023 are shown in Figure 12. Collectively, these destinations represent 71% of the year's Canadian trademark activity abroad. The top 4 remained the same as in 2022, with Mexico taking fifth position. All 5 destinations saw declines in activity from Canadians. The United States and Mexico experienced smaller declines than the other 3 destinations, with the former receiving 8,649 filings and the latter 619 for the year. Steeper decreases brought China, the EUIPO, and the United Kingdom 3,175, 1,315, and 1,152 applications from Canadians, respectively.

**Figure 12. Top international destinations for Canadian trademark applicants, 2023**



## Conclusion

Trademark trends in Canada reflect a shifting landscape marked by steady international engagement and a fluctuating domestic market. Despite 3 consecutive years of decline in total applications, Canada's trademark system remains a focal point for both resident and non-resident filers, showcasing the country's continued relevance as a competitive space for brand protection. Non-resident applications represent 68% of total filings, signalling strong foreign interest in the Canadian market. Reliance on the Madrid system by European applicants further underscores the interconnected nature of global trademark activity. While trademark activity abroad by Canadians has seen declines in recent years, the long-term trend remains positive, with a substantial 53% increase in filings over the last 10 years. The United States, China, the EUIPO, the United Kingdom, and Mexico continue to be key destinations for Canadian applicants, despite recent decreases in filing volumes. These patterns suggest that Canadian businesses maintain a strong interest in expanding their brand presence beyond national borders, adapting to the evolving global economic environment.



## Industrial designs

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Industrial designs grant applicants exclusive rights to their products' unique aesthetic features: shape, configuration, colour, pattern, ornament, or any combination of these.<sup>14</sup>

In Canada, industrial design filings have steadily increased, with non-residents driving most activity, underscoring Canada's role as a key jurisdiction for design protection.

The Hague Agreement has further streamlined registration, with international filings reaching record highs in 2024, now representing 47% of all designs filed with CIPO. Meanwhile, Canadian businesses continue expanding their global presence, with international design filings hitting historic peaks despite recent fluctuations. Leading international destinations, including the United States, EUIPO, and the United Kingdom, reflect Canada's increasing recognition of the importance of industrial designs. These trends highlight the growing reliance on international registration systems and Canada's strategic positioning in an increasingly interconnected economy.

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<sup>14</sup> CIPO, [Industrial designs guide](#), Ottawa, 2024



## Industrial designs filed in Canada

The industrial design filing activity at CIPO is depicted in Figure 13, highlighting trends among both residents and non-residents. In 2024, a total of 9,167 designs were filed in Canada, reflecting a 1% increase from the previous year. Non-residents dominated this activity, accounting for 93% of the total with 8,508 designs, marking a 3% rise compared to 2023. Meanwhile, resident filings experienced a 16% decline, totaling 659 applications. Despite fluctuations in resident activity, the overall upward trajectory in design filings continues, having grown 59% over the past decade. This trend reinforces Canada's position as an attractive jurisdiction for industrial design protection.

**Figure 13. Industrial designs filed in Canada, by residency status, 2015–2024**

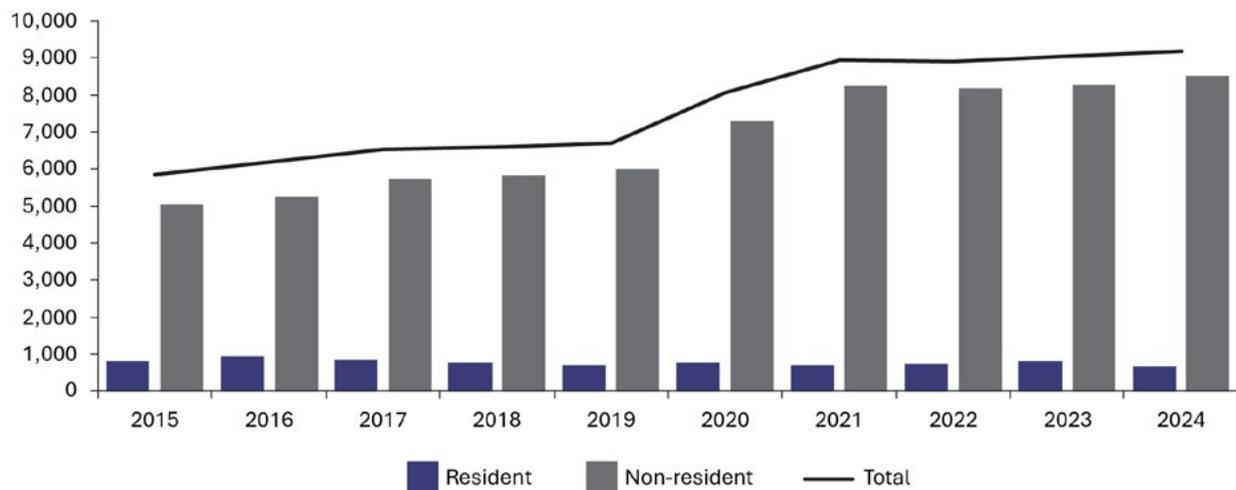
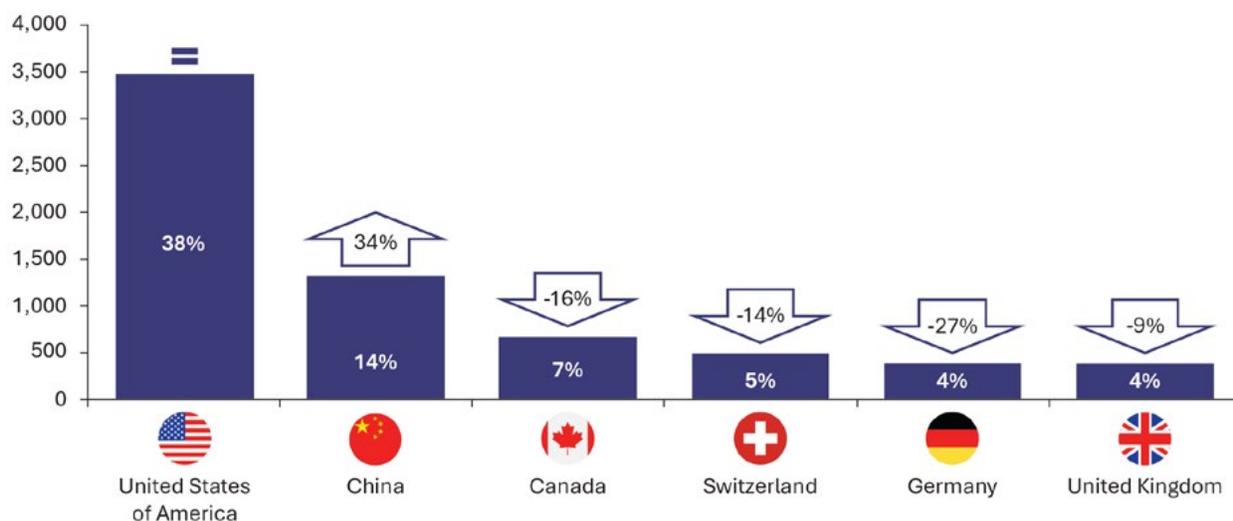




Figure 14 highlights the top 6 countries filing for industrial design protection with CIPO in 2024. The rankings remained consistent with 2023, reflecting stable patterns among leading jurisdictions. The United States retained its position as the largest filing source, submitting 3,483 designs, unchanged from the previous year. China followed in second place with 1,311 filings, marking a significant 34% increase compared to 2023. Canada ranked third, contributing 659 designs, but experiencing a 16% decline year-over-year. Switzerland, Germany, and the United Kingdom rounded out the top 6, submitting 485, 380, and 368 designs, respectively. Each of these European countries saw annual declines in filings. Collectively, these top 6 origins accounted for 73% of all industrial design applications received by CIPO in 2024.

**Figure 14. Top countries filing for industrial designs in Canada, 2024**

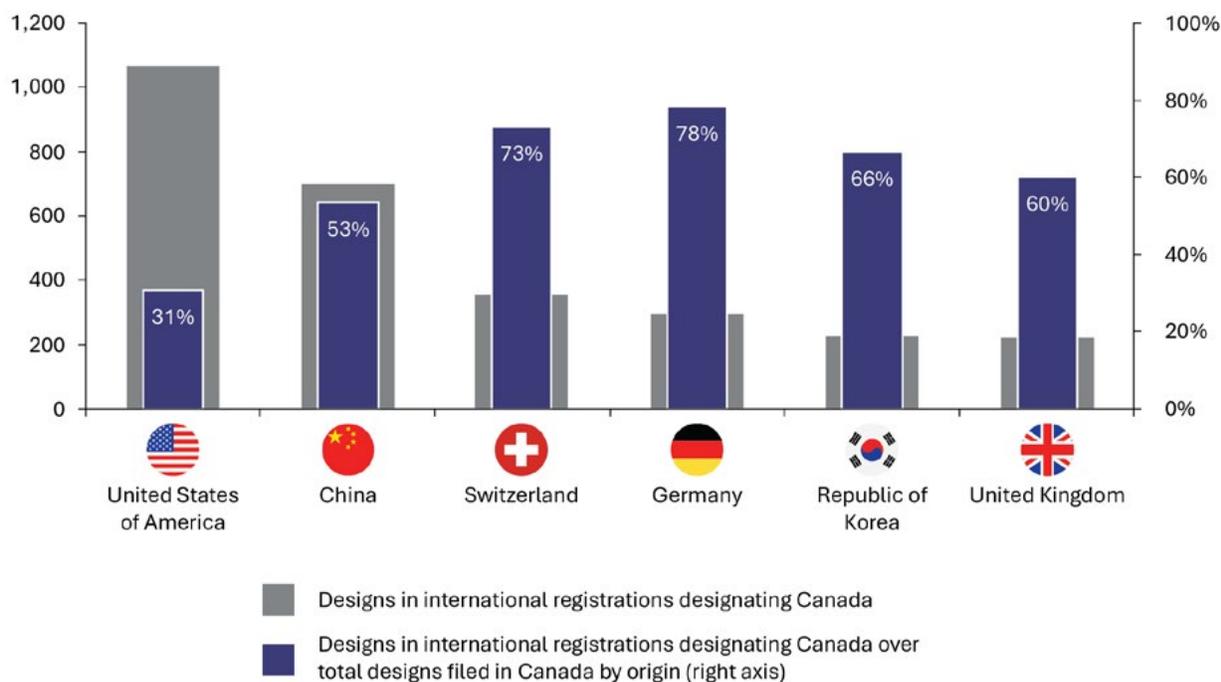


Since Canada's adoption of the Hague Agreement in 2018, applicants can seek industrial design protection in Canada through a single international registration via WIPO, alongside multiple other jurisdictions. The Hague system streamlines filings by allowing up to 100 unique designs to be bundled within a single application. In 2024, 1,989 international registrations designated Canada, encompassing 4,821 designs—an average of 2.42 designs per registration. Compared to 2023, the number of international registrations grew by 12%, while the total design filings under this system rose by 11%. This increasing reliance on the Hague system by industrial design applicants set a new record, with 47% of all designs filed at CIPO in 2024 having been submitted through international registrations.



Figure 15 highlights the top 6 countries filing for industrial design protection in Canada through the Hague system. The outer bars represent the absolute number of designs submitted via international registrations designating Canada, while the inner bars indicate the proportion of these filings relative to each country's total industrial design activity with CIPO. The United States accounted for 1,064 designs through the Hague system, representing 31% of its total filings in Canada—an 8 percentage-point increase compared to 2023. For the other 5 countries, their reliance on the Hague system was notably higher. China, ranking second with 698 designs, increased its Hague system usage from 47% in 2023 to 53% in 2024, underscoring the country's growing preference for this streamlined international filing system. Three European nations—Switzerland, Germany, and the United Kingdom—alongside the Republic of Korea, exhibited even higher Hague system adoption rates. The proportion of designs filed through the system in these countries ranged from 60% to 78% of their total industrial design activity in Canada, reflecting their strategic approach to global design registration.

**Figure 15. Top countries filing for industrial designs using the Hague system and designating Canada, 2024**





## Industrial designs filed abroad by Canadians

Figure 16 tracks annual industrial designs filed abroad by Canadians. The spectacular 30% increase in 2023 rivals the record 43% increase 2 years prior, reaching a new historic peak of 3,365 designs. The 2 major increases in 2023 and 2021, offset by the 20% decrease in the pandemic year of 2020, account for the majority of the 60% increase over the 10-year period shown.

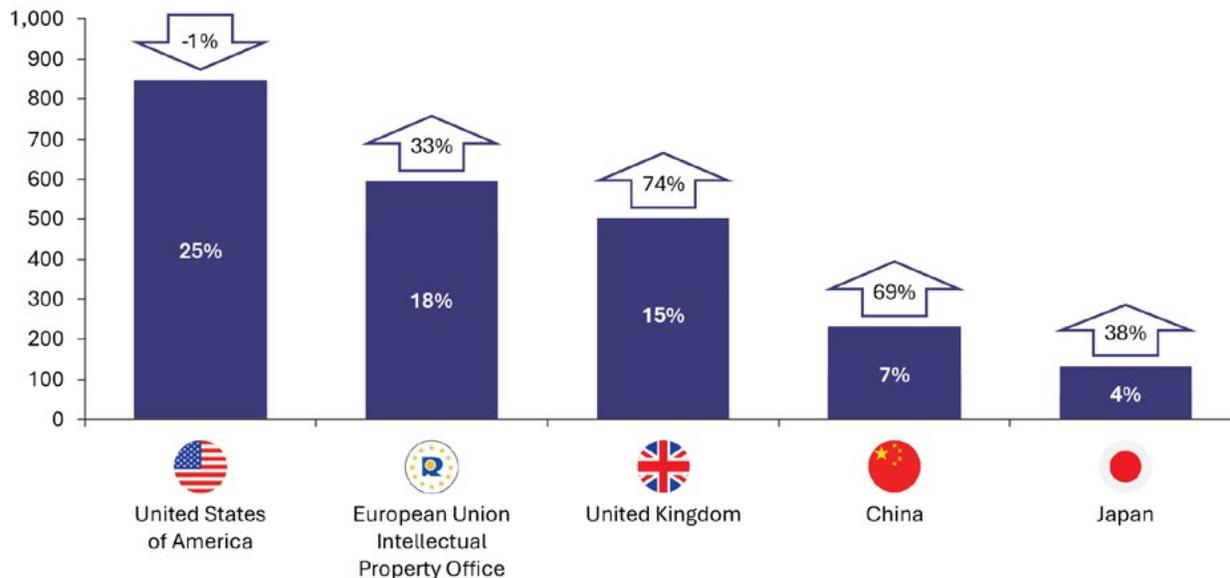
Figure 16. Canadian industrial designs filed abroad, 2014–2023





In Figure 17, the top 5 international destinations in 2023 for Canadian industrial designs are shown to be unchanged with respect to the previous year. Collectively, these 5 destinations received 71% of Canadians' industrial designs filed abroad. With 847 designs, the United States was the only destination among the 5 to not report an increase for the year. The other 4 destinations all saw major year-over-year increases, ranging from 33% for the EUIPO to 74% for the United Kingdom.

**Figure 17. Top international destinations for Canadian industrial design applicants, 2023**



## Conclusion

Canada's industrial design filing landscape continues to evolve, reflecting both domestic trends and international engagement. While total filings saw a modest increase in 2024, non-resident applicants dominated the activity, reinforcing Canada's role as an attractive jurisdiction for design protection. The Hague system has played a crucial role in this shift, with its streamlined registration process gaining traction among applicants, reaching a record-high 47% of all filings through international registrations. Industrial design activity abroad by Canadians has reached a new historic peak, demonstrating a commitment to expanding brand presence internationally. The 30% surge in filings in 2023—part of a broader decade-long increase—highlights the growing interest among Canadian innovators in securing design protection beyond national borders. Major international destinations, including the EUIPO, the United Kingdom, China, and Japan, saw significant growth in Canadian filings, reinforcing the country's global footprint in industrial design. These trends underline Canada's increasing participation in international design markets and its strategic adoption of global registration systems, positioning its businesses for long-term success in a globalized economy.



## Plant breeders' rights

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Plant breeders' rights grant breeders the ability to safeguard their newly developed plant varieties, ensuring exclusive control over their reproductive materials, such as seeds, cuttings, and budwood. These varieties fall into 2 main categories: horticultural plants, comprising fruits, vegetables, and ornamental species; and agricultural plants, which include cereals, pulses, potatoes, oilseeds, and forage crops. The Plant Breeders' Rights Office (PBRO), operating within the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), oversees the enforcement of the *Plant Breeders' Rights Act* and its associated regulations in Canada. In 2024, the PBRO received 217 applications for plant breeders' rights, marking a 19% decrease compared to the previous year. This decline stemmed from reduced submissions by both domestic and international applicants across both horticultural and agricultural plant categories.



## Plant breeders' rights applications filed in Canada

As illustrated in Figure 18, total plant breeders' rights filings declined in 2024, reaching 327. Of these, 164 applications were for horticultural varieties, accounting for half of the total, while the remaining 163 sought protection for agricultural varieties. The annual decrease of 19% was driven by a 24% drop in resident filings, and a 17% reduction in non-resident submissions, bringing their total to 253. This decline disrupted the upward trend that had been ongoing since 2017, with the only previous interruption occurring in 2020.

Figure 18. Plant breeders' rights applications in Canada, by residency status, 2015–2024

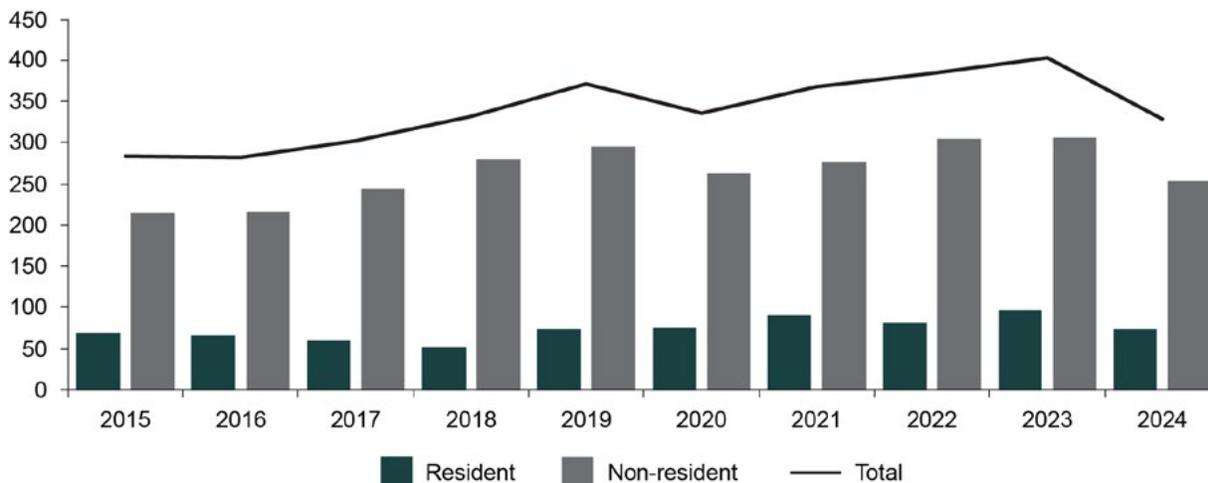
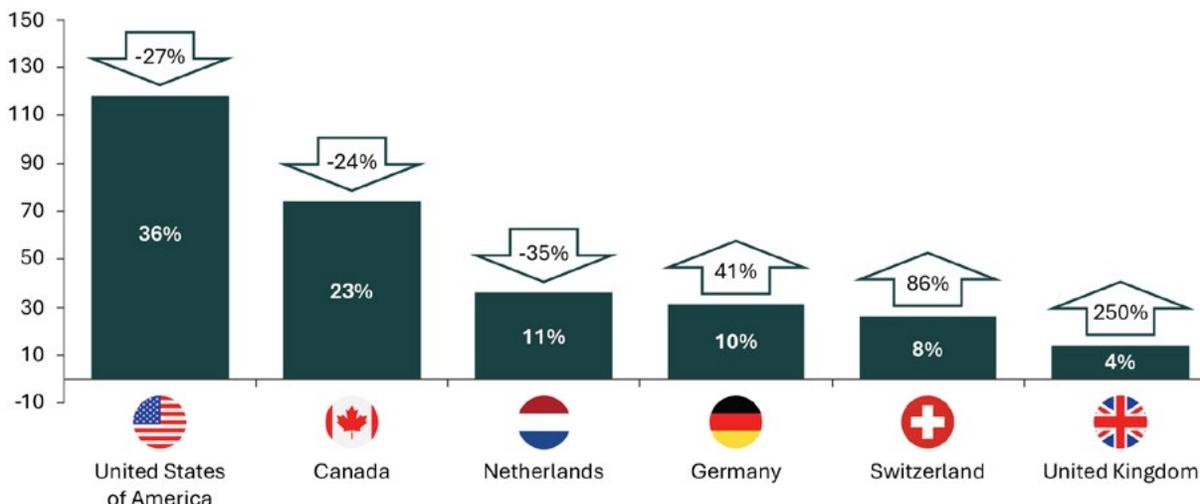


Figure 19 highlights the top 6 countries filing for plant breeders' rights at the PBRO in 2024. Leading the rankings, the United States submitted 118 applications, representing 36% of the total, though this figure marked a 27% decline compared to 2023. Canada and the Netherlands followed as the second and third highest filers, accounting for 23% and 11% of all applications, with 74 and 36 filings, respectively. Their numbers dropped by 24% and 35% compared to the previous year. Germany, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom rounded out the top 6, each experiencing positive growth. In Canada, the vast majority of plant breeders' rights applications—more than 9 out of 10—came from these 6 leading origins.

Figure 19. Top countries filing for plant breeders' rights in Canada, 2024

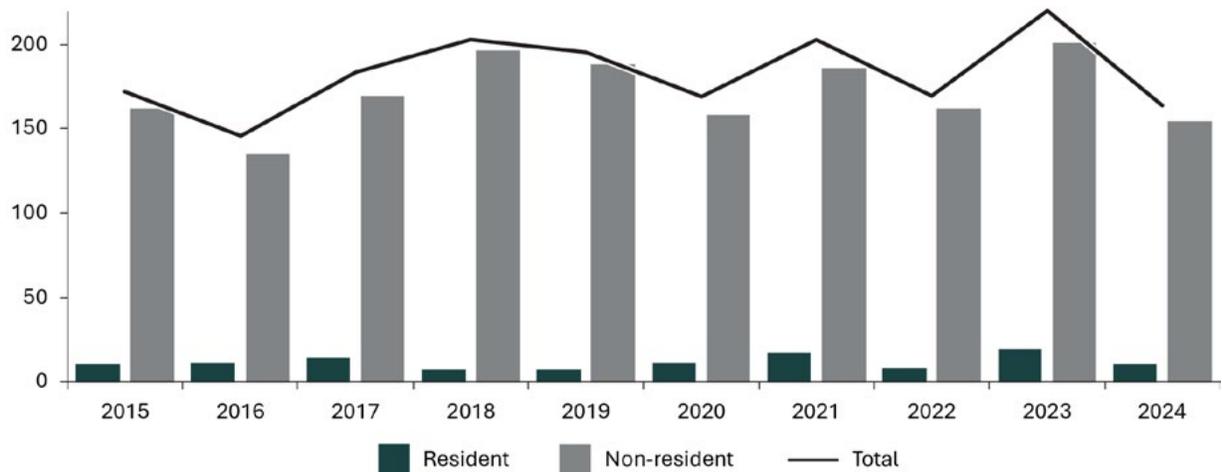




## Filing activity by variety group – Horticultural

Horticultural varieties continue to be dominated by non-resident filings, which accounted for 94% of all applications in 2024. The 154 filings from non-residents reflect a 23% annual decline, serving as the primary factor behind the overall 25% drop in horticultural applications. Although resident filings made up just 6% of the total in 2023, their numbers have nearly halved compared to the previous year, as illustrated in Figure 20. Over the past decade, the sector has seen a 13% overall reduction, largely influenced by a 14% decrease in non-resident activity, while resident filings have shown an 11% increase during the same period.

**Figure 20. Plant breeders' rights applications for horticultural varieties in Canada by residency status, 2015–2024**

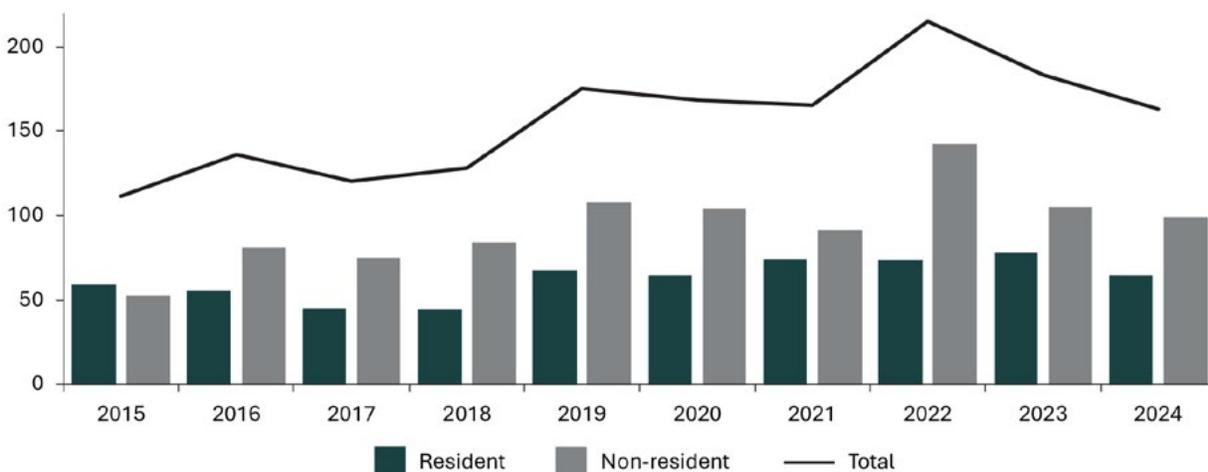




## Filing activity by variety group – Agricultural

In 2024, the PBRO registered 163 applications for agricultural varieties, marking an 11% decline from the previous year. This represents the second consecutive year of negative growth, following the 15% drop seen in 2023. Resident filings are more concentrated in agricultural varieties and, as Figure 21 illustrates, the balance between resident and non-resident applications is more evenly distributed in this category. In 2023, residents submitted 64 filings, a decrease of 18% compared to 2022, accounting for 39% of the total, down from 43% in the previous year. Meanwhile, non-resident activity also declined, with applications falling by 6% to 99. Despite these short-term fluctuations, agricultural varieties have contributed to long-term growth in plant breeders' rights filings, showing a 3% increase over the past decade.

**Figure 21. Plant breeders' rights applications for agricultural varieties in Canada, by residency status, 2015–2024**



## Conclusion

The growth of plant breeders' rights applications that started in 2016 was interrupted for the second time in 2024 following the contraction experienced in 2020. In Canada, filing trends for this form of IP right are typically characterized by a strong presence of non-resident activity, and protection is sought mainly for horticultural varieties. The 19% decrease in filing activity in 2024 was characterized by contractions in applications from the top 3 origins (the United States, Canada, and the Netherlands), and the 25% and 11% decreases in filings for horticultural and agricultural varieties, respectively.



## IP and innovation in Canada at a glance

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Innovation is the driving force behind new products, services, and technologies. It enhances our quality of life and solves pressing challenges, while helping businesses and economies stay competitive in a rapidly evolving global market. Protecting the IP of those products, services, or business processes is crucial to ensure that innovators' rights be safeguarded, therefore promoting fair competition, encouraging further research and development, and capitalizing on those creations.

## Canada's national survey on innovation

The Survey of Innovation and Business Strategy (SIBS) is a comprehensive survey conducted by Statistics Canada that collects data on the strategic decisions, innovation activities, operational tactics, and global value chain activities of businesses and industrial non-profit organizations across various sectors in Canada. It targets Canadian enterprises with 20 or more employees and revenues of \$250,000 or more, across 14 North American Industry Classification System sectors and 5 regions defined as Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Alberta, and rest of Canada.

The survey is run every 3 years. In preparation for the 2022 iteration, CIPO provided input in designing the questionnaire, with an emphasis on follow-up questions that would help understand how Canadian businesses protect their innovation. The reference period for this iteration of the survey was 2022, and the data collection took place between January and March of 2023, on a sample of approximately 15,000 firms from the target population of about 74,000 Canadian enterprises. The expected response rate was 50% by stratum.

### SIBS 2022 – General results on innovation

According to the SIBS 2022 report,<sup>15</sup> the rate of product or business innovation dropped from 80% in the 2017–2019 period to 72% in 2020–2022, largely due to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Both product and process innovation rates declined, with product innovation falling to 47% and business process innovation to 63%. Despite these challenges, some businesses adapted by introducing innovations, specifically in response to the pandemic, with 5% of product and business process innovators doing so. The top sectors were information and cultural industries; finance and insurance; and professional, scientific, and technical services, with nearly 80% of businesses reporting innovation. Larger businesses and those in Ontario continued to lead in terms of innovation rates, while environmental benefits from innovations decreased from 57% to 47%. The top obstacles to innovation were COVID-19, lack of skills, and uncertainty and risk, reported by over half of Canadian businesses.

Among the positive outcomes identified by the survey, 41% of businesses implementing business process innovations reported savings, with large businesses achieving the highest savings rate at 50%, followed by medium-sized businesses at 45%, and small businesses at 40%. In addition, 14% of businesses reported cooperating with partners for innovation activities; of that total, 79% was with businesses or organizations, while 14% was with post-secondary institutions, and 3% with research institutions. Finally, 34% of innovators reported using at least one government support program, an increase with respect to the previous iteration, highlighting the importance of the government's role in supporting the innovation ecosystem.

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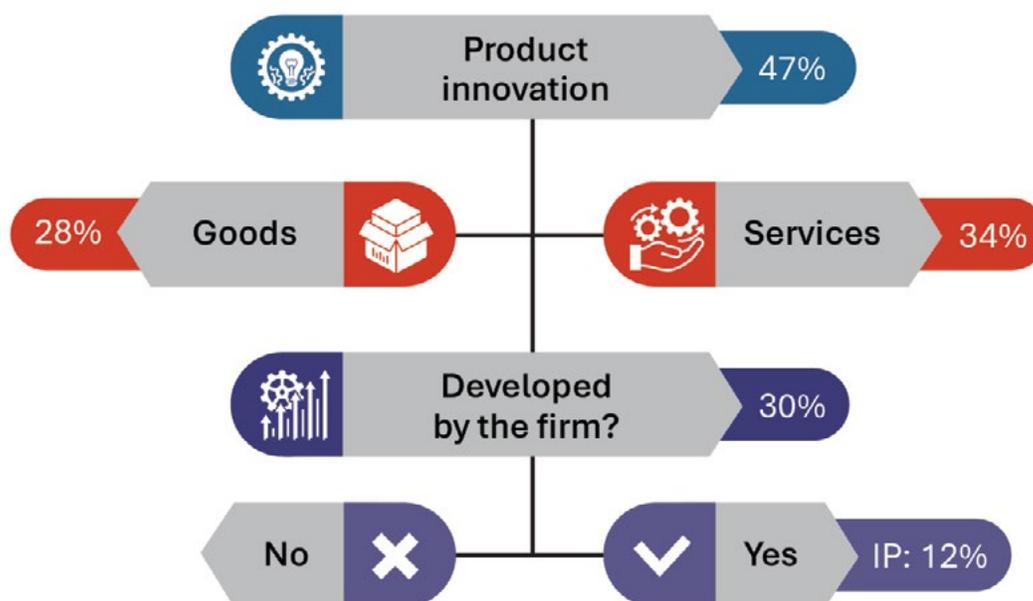
<sup>15</sup> [The Daily — Survey of Innovation and Business Strategy, 2020-2022](#)

## First descriptive results on IP-protected innovation

It is important to understand the definition of innovation used for the purpose of this survey, as it may differ from that of other studies. For SIBS, innovation is “a new or improved product or process (or combination thereof) that differs significantly from the unit’s previous products or processes and that has been made available to potential users (product) or brought into use by the unit (process)”. According to this definition, 47% of respondents reported “new or improved goods or services introduced onto the market or brought into use by this business” between 2020 and 2022.<sup>16</sup> More specifically, 28% of surveyed firms reported goods innovation, while 34% reported service innovation.<sup>17</sup>

Given CIPO’s focus on IP protection, its research pays special attention to cases where the product innovation is developed by the own firm. According to the survey, 65% of product innovators (or 30% of the total interviewed) reported having developed their own product innovation; from those, 38% protected the IP of that innovation. In summary, of all firms represented by the survey, 12% protected the IP of their own product innovation. Figure 22 below depicts these findings.

Figure 22. Overview of IP-protected innovation in Canada



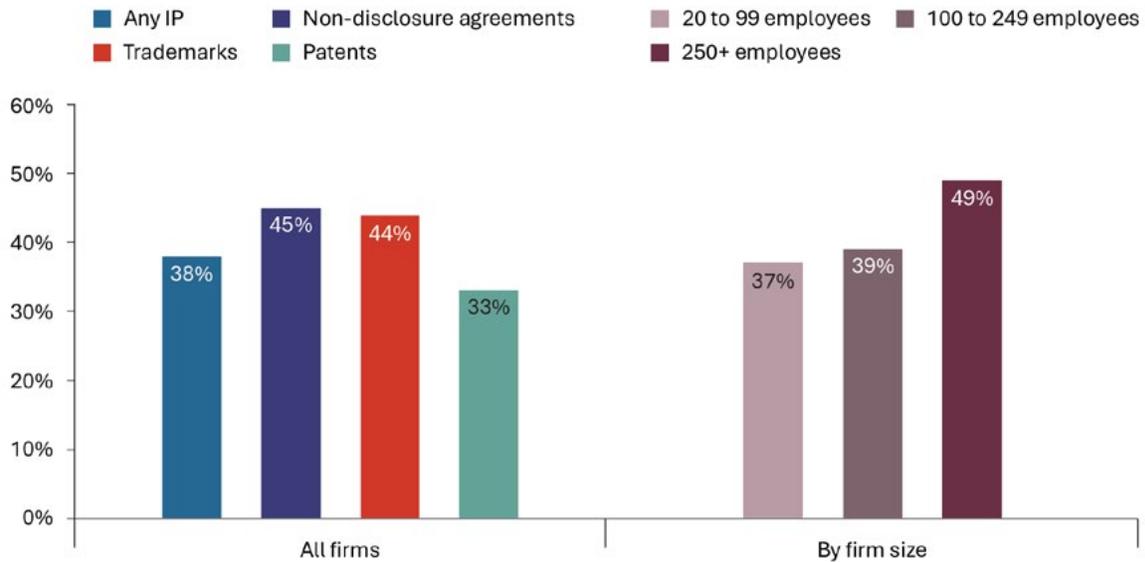
<sup>16</sup> For the 2022 iteration of SIBS, the follow-up questions on IP protection were solely for product (goods and services) innovation. For this reason, business process innovation falls outside the scope of this report.

<sup>17</sup> Under the survey’s definitions, goods innovation and services innovation add to product innovation.

## IP protection among product innovators

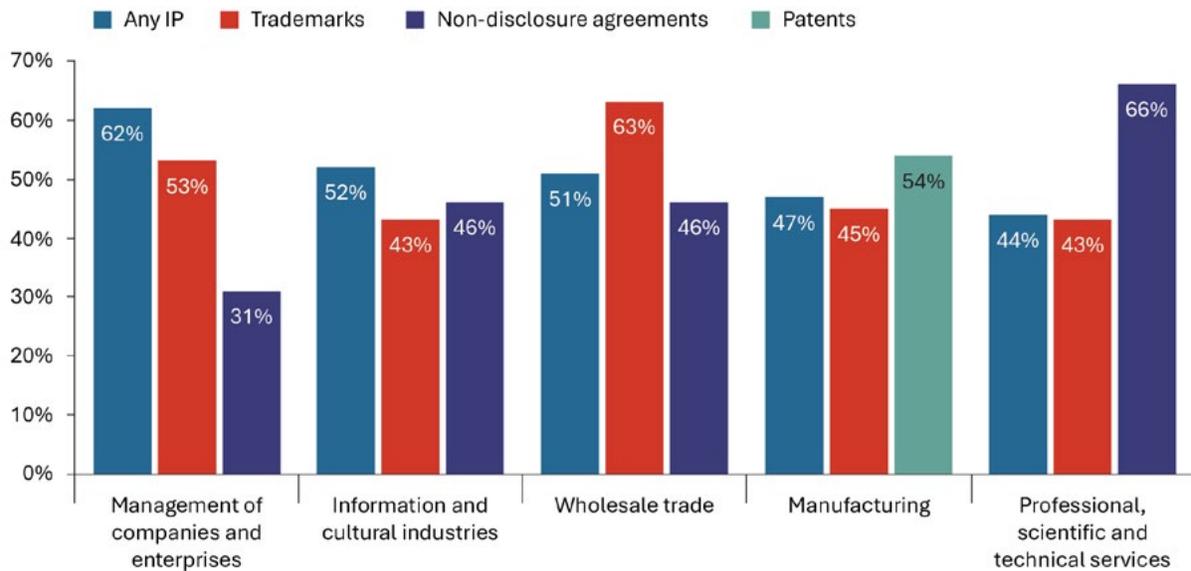
Protecting the IP of innovations is crucial for product innovators, with 38% taking measures to safeguard their creations. For those who filed for IP protection, the most commonly utilized rights included non-disclosure agreements (45%), trademarks (44%), and patents (33%). These protections are vital for securing a competitive advantage, fostering trust with stakeholders, and ensuring a firm's long-term success in the marketplace. Robust IP strategies are essential for safeguarding the fruits of innovative efforts and stimulating further creativity and growth. The usage of IP protection is significantly associated with the size of the firm. For instance, for firms with between 20 and 99 employees, 37% filed for the IP of their innovations. This percentage increased to 39% for firms with between 100 and 249 employees and 49% for firms with 250 or more employees. Figure 23 summarizes these results, supporting the idea that larger firms likely have more resources and greater incentives to protect their innovations, as they often face higher risks of IP theft and can afford the costs associated with IP filings.

Figure 23. IP protection of innovation by IP right and firm size



The analysis also reveals that the intensity and the preferences among different types of IP rights to protect innovation vary significantly across sectors. This is depicted in Figure 24, which uses a purple fill to refer to informal rights such as non-disclosure agreements. Within the sector of management of companies and enterprises, 62% protected their innovation, with 53% utilizing trademarks and 31% employing non-disclosure agreements. In the information and cultural industries, 52% protected the IP of their innovations, with non-disclosure agreements and trademarks being used in 46% and 43% of cases, respectively. Meanwhile, 51% of the wholesale trade sector sought IP protection, with 63% relying on trademarks and 46% on non-disclosure agreements. Manufacturing firms, despite ranking fourth in the group, place an emphasis on patents (54%) alongside trademarks (45%), distinguishing themselves as the only sector in the chart using patents and trademarks, both formal IP rights, as the primary form of IP protection of their innovations. Finally, 44% of firms in the sector of professional, scientific, and technical services protected their innovations, with 66% using non-disclosure agreements and 43% using trademarks.

**Figure 24. Intensity and preferences in IP protection for Canadian innovation, by sector**



## Conclusion

SIBS offers invaluable insights into the innovation landscape within Canada. The 2022 iteration highlighted the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on innovation rates. However, it also showcased the resilience of Canadian businesses, many of which adapted by introducing new innovations in response to the challenges posed by the pandemic. The survey shed light on the critical role of IP protection in a firm's own innovation. With 38% of product innovators taking measures to protect their creations, it is evident that robust IP strategies are essential for securing a competitive advantage and fostering long-term success. The analysis revealed that the usage of IP protection is strongly associated with the size of the firm and varies across different industries, with larger firms and certain sectors placing a greater emphasis on formal IP rights. These findings highlight the need for targeted support and policies to encourage and facilitate innovation across all sectors of the Canadian economy.





## Patent landscape for wildfire mitigation technologies

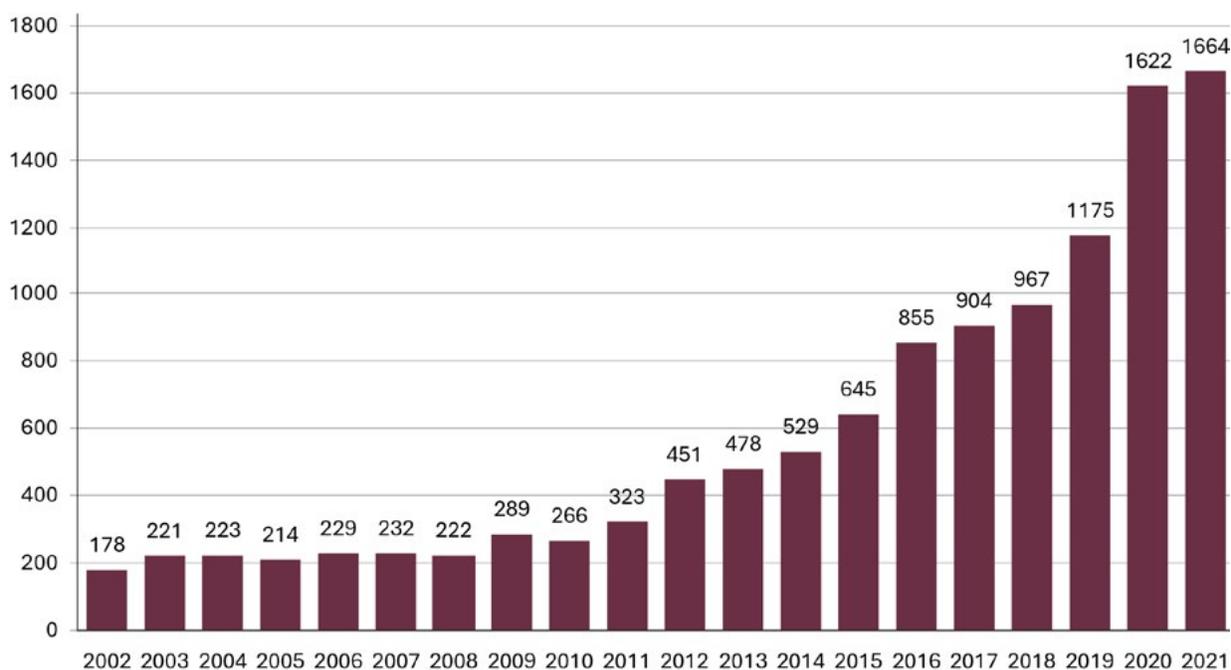
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Wildfires are a growing global challenge with significant environmental and economic impacts. Canada, with nearly 367 million hectares of forests, is the third most forested country and faces increasing risks. The forestry sector alone contributes \$33 billion to GDP annually and supports 496,663 direct and indirect jobs. Wildfires also worsen air quality and impede Canada’s progress toward meeting carbon emission reduction goals. The challenges posed by wildfires are not limited to Canada; they represent a global issue exacerbated by climate change, which drives long-term shifts in forest ecosystems and increases the frequency and severity of wildfires. Fortunately, there has been a surge in innovation aimed at addressing these challenges. Our patent landscape report on wildfire mitigation technologies categorizes the international patent dataset into 4 main groups, encompassing a comprehensive range of innovations that span the entire wildfire management cycle—from monitoring and forecasting to fire extinguishing, protective equipment, and post-fire restoration.

## Canada's inventions profile

As shown in Figure 25, between 2002 and 2021, global inventions in wildfire mitigation technologies grew at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 13%,<sup>18</sup> rising from 178 inventions in 2002 to 1,664 in 2021; over the same period, Canadian inventions grew at a CAGR of 3%. A total of 11,687 inventions were identified worldwide, with Canadians responsible for 157 of these, representing 1.3% of the total. Over 45% of all patent applications in this field were filed between 2018 and 2021. Of the 19,355 inventors and 4,472 organizations worldwide contributing to this field, 177 inventors and 43 organizations are Canadian.

Figure 25. Global and Canadian trends in wildfire mitigation patent activity, 2002–2021

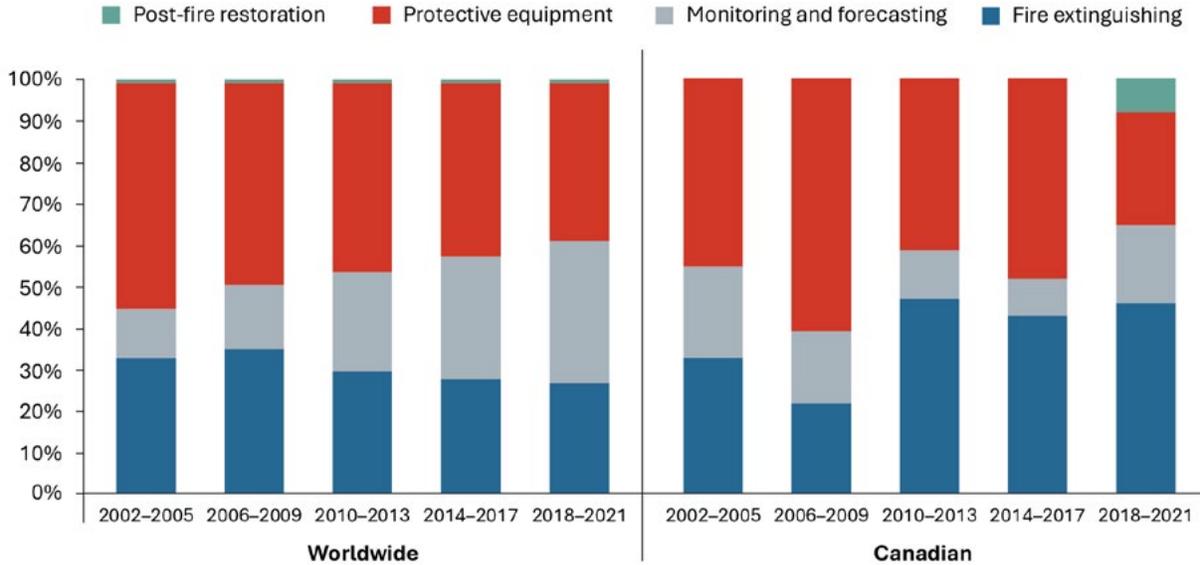


<sup>18</sup> The term “inventions” in this report refers to priority filings of International Patent Documentation (INPADOC) extended patent families.

## Global vs. Canadian trends in technology categories

Figure 26 illustrates the evolving landscape of wildfire mitigation technologies by comparing global and Canadian trends across technology categories from 2002 to 2021. Notable differences emerged: while fire extinguishing declined globally (33% to 27%), it grew in Canada (33% to 46%). It is worth noting that despite the global share decline, fire extinguishing patent activity actually increased in absolute volumes from 261 to 1,453. Monitoring and forecasting surged globally (12% to 34%) but lagged in Canada, reaching only 19% by 2018–2021. Both regions saw protective equipment decline (globally from 55% to 38%, and in Canada from 45% to 27%). Post-fire restoration remained minimal globally (1%) but emerged in Canada only recently, reaching 8% during 2018–2021. Canada has made important contributions to wildfire mitigation technologies, with strong performance in fire extinguishing and protective equipment, but lags behind global trends in monitoring and forecasting.

**Figure 26. Patent filing trends in wildfire mitigation technologies by category, 2002–2021**

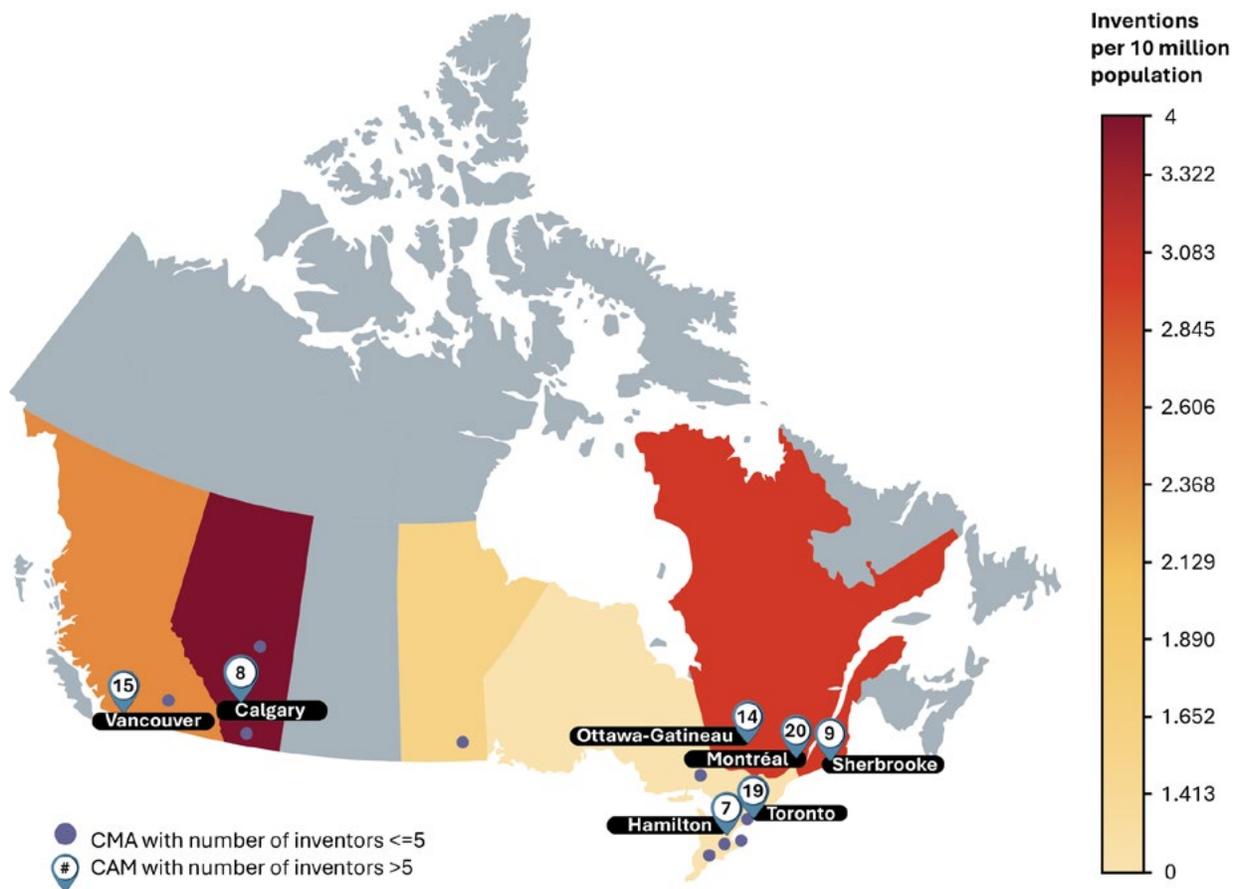


## Regional clusters of patent activity

### Inventor activity

The distribution of Canadian inventor patent activity by province/territory (PT) across the country is depicted in Figure 27. Each PT with wildfire mitigation inventions is shaded in orange, with darker shades representing a higher number of inventions. Invention volumes are fractionally counted and normalized by population size in this figure. Alberta leads in population-adjusted invention rates, followed by Quebec and British Columbia, while Manitoba and Ontario display lower invention rates. The map also highlights that Montréal, Toronto, Vancouver, and Ottawa-Gatineau have the highest number of inventors involved in wildfire mitigation technology inventions across various Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs).

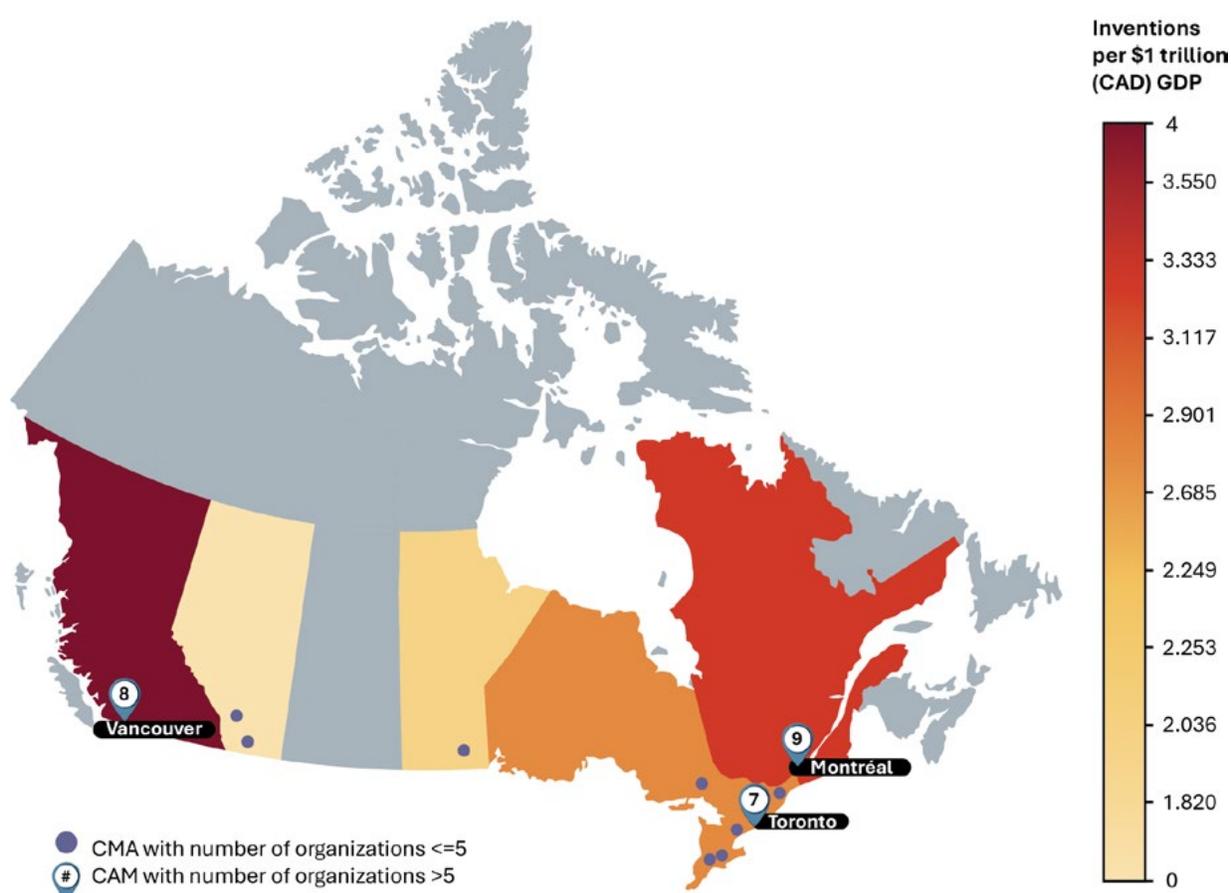
Figure 27. Regional clusters of patent activity by Canadian inventors, 2002–2021



## Organization activity

Figure 28 shows the patent activity of Canadian organizations across the country, with each PT reporting inventions in wildfire mitigation technologies shaded in orange. Darker shades represent a higher number of inventions per GDP. British Columbia leads with the highest number of inventions per trillion GDP, followed by Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, and Alberta. The data also highlights that Montréal, Vancouver, and Toronto have the highest number of organizations involved in wildfire mitigation technology inventions across various CMAs.

Figure 28. Regional clusters of patent activity by Canadian organizations, 2002–2021

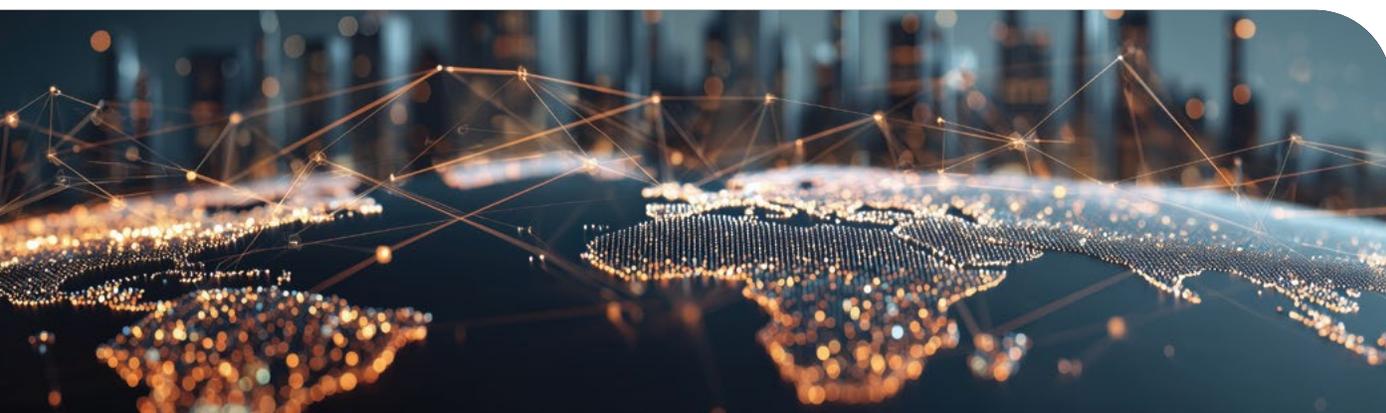


## Importance of Canadian inventions

Not all inventions are equally important, but one sign of their impact is their ability to attract follow-on innovation. Patent importance can be assessed through network analysis of patent citations by valuing both the quantity and the quality of citations. For the purpose of this study, CIPO uses PatentVector data to measure patent importance based on citation networks and article-level Eigenfactor scores. Canada accounts for 1% of total wildfire mitigation technology inventions, and its share of important inventions is also 1%. This alignment suggests that while Canada's contributions are relatively small in volume, they maintain average influence within the network. The data on inventors, however, suggest a different story. Canadian inventors primarily co-develop wildfire mitigation technologies with partners in the United States. When American patent data in this field is analyzed to assess the value of having a Canadian inventor on an American invention, the results reveal that patents featuring one or more Canadian co-inventors—without other foreign contributors—have an average patent importance that is 3 times higher than American patents without a Canadian co-inventor. This finding underscores the critical role Canadian inventors play in driving high-impact innovation within wildfire mitigation technologies.

## Conclusion

Wildfire mitigation technologies are essential in addressing the increasing risks and impacts of wildfires globally and in Canada. While Canada's contributions to patenting these innovations remain modest in volume, the country's inventions exhibit a steady growth rate, demonstrating a commitment to developing solutions that enhance wildfire detection, suppression, and recovery. The relative specialization of Canadian organizations highlights the nation's early focus on wildfire mitigation, though its specialization has declined in recent years. However, the importance of Canadian inventors, particularly in collaboration with American counterparts, underscores their significant role in high-impact innovations.



## Conclusion

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The IP Canada Report 2025 presented the latest trends in IP activity in Canada and abroad by Canadians. The past year was characterized by evolving financial conditions, cautious recovery efforts, more moderate inflation and interest rates, and sector-specific shifts. Trademark activity declined by 4% to 68,672 applications, marking the first period of 3 consecutive annual decreases. In contrast, industrial designs increased by 1% to reach 9,167 counts; such an increase was primarily driven by non-resident filing activity. With 35,374 total applications, patent activity was very stable, as a result of a 5% increase in resident filings, and a 1% decrease in filings from non-residents. Finally, the PBRO received 327 applications for plant breeders' rights, a 19% annual decrease. The 10-year growth rates in filing activity were 35% for trademarks, 59% for industrial designs, -5% for plant breeders' rights, and no change for patents. The United States, China, Germany, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, France, the Netherlands, and Japan were the top countries filing for IP in Canada. IP activity abroad by Canadians showed mixed results in 2023, a year characterized by persistent inflation and high interest rates. Patents declined 2% to 20,048 counts and trademarks decreased by 11% with 21,051 filings, while industrial designs experienced a notable 30% surge. The 10 year growth rates were -5%, 53%, and 60%, respectively.

On the innovation front, SIBS 2022 provided valuable insights into Canada's innovation landscape, revealing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on innovation rates and the adaptive strategies businesses employed in response. The findings emphasize the crucial role of IP in protecting innovation, with larger firms and certain industries demonstrating a stronger tendency to safeguard their innovations. These results support the development of policies to foster innovation across sectors and ensure sustained economic growth. Finally, findings from an IP analytics study revealed that Canada's contributions to wildfire mitigation technologies are steadily growing and remain influential. The country has demonstrated a commitment to developing innovations that enhance wildfire detection, suppression, and recovery, with certain regions and sectors leading in terms of patent activity. Notably, Canadian inventors play a crucial role in high-impact innovations, particularly in collaboration with American partners, highlighting the value of international cooperation in addressing global wildfire challenges.

As in previous years, the IP trends highlighted in the IP Canada Report 2025 demonstrate the resilience of IP users in navigating the evolving economic landscape of 2024. Despite global uncertainties and shifting market dynamics, innovators and businesses continued to adapt, leveraging IP to secure new opportunities and drive sustainable growth.

# Appendix A

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CIPO administers IP rights in Canada, including patents, trademarks, industrial designs, copyright, geographical indications, official marks, and integrated circuit topographies. This report focuses on the first 3 of these IP rights. Each type of IP protection is designed for different circumstances. The fees applied by CIPO change yearly and can be found in the [updated list of fees and payment forms](#) on its website.

## Patents

Patents provide a time-limited, legally protected, exclusive right to make, use, and sell an invention. In this way, patents serve as a reward for ingenuity. Patents apply to newly developed technology, as well as to improvements on products or processes.

Patent protection is valid in the country or region that issues the patent. In Canada, a patent is valid for 20 years from the date that it is filed. Patents can have a great deal of value. They can be sold, licensed, or used as assets to attract funding from investors.<sup>19</sup>

In exchange for these benefits, a full description of the invention must be provided when filing a patent application. This helps enrich technical knowledge worldwide. Details of patent applications filed in Canada are disclosed to the public after an 18-month period of confidentiality.

To be eligible for patent protection, an invention must be new (first in the world), useful (functional and operative), and inventive (showing ingenuity and not obvious to someone of average skill who works in the field of the invention). The invention can be a product (e.g., a door lock); a composition (e.g., a chemical composition used in lubricants for door locks); a machine (e.g., for making door locks); a process (e.g., a method for making door locks); or an improvement on any of these.

In Canada, the first applicant to file a patent application is entitled to obtain the patent. The patent should be filed as soon as possible after an invention is completed in case someone else is on a similar track.

Any public disclosure of an invention before filing may make it impossible to obtain a patent. There is an exception in Canada and the United States if the public disclosure was made by the inventor or by someone who learned of the invention from the inventor less than one year before filing the patent application.

The [PCT system](#) provides inventors with a streamlined process to seek protection in multiple countries by filing a single international application. It helps simplify the initial stages of the patenting process and provides inventors with an international search and non-binding opinion on the patentability of an invention, before entering national or regional phases.

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<sup>19</sup> CIPO, [Patents](#)

## Trademarks

Trademarks can consist of words, designs, tastes, textures, moving images, modes of packaging, holograms, sounds, scents, three-dimensional shapes, colours, or a combination of these used to distinguish the goods or services of one person or organization from those of others. Over time, trademarks stand for not only the actual goods or services a person or company offers, but also the reputation of the producer. Trademarks are a very valuable form of IP.<sup>20</sup>

A certification mark, a type of trademark, can be licensed to many people or companies for the purpose of showing that certain goods or services meet a defined standard. For example, the Woolmark design, owned by Woolmark Americas Ltd., is used on clothing and other goods.

For more information, consult CIPO's web page on [international trademarks under the Madrid Protocol](#).

## Industrial designs

An industrial design is about how something looks. It protects the visual features of shape, configuration, pattern, or ornament, and any combination of these features applied to a finished article. In other words, it protects the appearance of an article. For example, industrial designs can be found in many everyday products, such as the unique contour of a car hood, the graphical user interface on a phone, or the specific shape or pattern of your favourite shoes. If you want to register an industrial design, it has to be novel. Registration will provide you with an exclusive right to your design for up to 15 years.

You may file for registration through CIPO or through the Hague system. An application filed through CIPO may protect your design only in Canada. An application filed through the Hague system may protect your design in multiple countries, including in Canada. For more information on how to apply for registration, please consult the [Industrial designs guide](#).<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> CIPO, [Trademarks guide](#)

<sup>21</sup> CIPO, [Industrial designs guide](#)

# Appendix B

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## Interpreting patent data

Patent data is a good starting point for analyzing the development of new technologies as it provides important information on the specific innovation in the invention, and who are the leading inventors and applicants. Like any data source, patent data has its strengths and weaknesses. If used in the wrong way, it can lead to erroneous conclusions and poor policy. The following provides context on the use of patents in understanding innovation.

While patents measure the flow of new ideas, it has been argued that patents may not measure innovation for 3 important reasons: patents do not include non-patented innovations, not all patents result in commercialization, and many patents are strategic in nature.<sup>22</sup> For this reason, the analysis is based on patent families that include applications in at least 2 jurisdictions. This makes it more likely for these patent families to be a higher-valued invention and that the firm will commercialize the invention.

Another challenge presented is that many innovations or inventions remain hidden as trade secrets. These innovations will be missed in a measure that includes only patents. However, a 2008 study indicates that world-first innovators patent more frequently. Conversely, firms that patent infrequently tend to be imitators.<sup>23</sup> In addition, the study finds that firms that protect their IP are more likely to increase their profits than those that do not. Moreover, SMEs that patent are more likely to be high-growth firms, which is important for success.<sup>24</sup> These conclusions are reinforced by a Canadian study where it was noted that firms that are aggressive innovators—ones that introduce radically new products involving patent protection—have higher profits.<sup>25</sup> Finally, while some inventions are not patented, patents are obtained for almost all economically significant inventions.<sup>26</sup>

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22 Kleinknecht, Alfred, Van Montfort, Kees and Brouwew, Erik (2002), “The Non-Trivial Choice between Innovation Indicators”, *Economics of Innovation and New Technology*, 11(2), 109-121

23 Hanel, Petr (2008), “The Use of Intellectual Property Rights and Innovation by Manufacturing Firms in Canada”, *Economics of Innovation and New Technology*, 17(4), 285-309

24 2014 Survey on Financing and Growth of Small and Medium Enterprises, ISED and Statistics Canada

25 Baldwin, John R. and Gellatly, Guy (2006), “Innovation Capabilities: The Knowledge Capital Behind the Survival and Growth of Firms”, *The Canadian Economy in Transition* research paper series, Statistics Canada

26 Dernis, H. and D. Guellec (2001), “Using patent counts for cross-country comparisons of technology output”, *STI mimeo*, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

Below are the primary ways to view or interpret patent data:

## Market reach

Patent filings in foreign markets are a good indicator of firms accessing those markets. Surveys have shown that firms that hold patents are more likely to be exporters.

## Innovative activity

When we do not account for filings in multiple jurisdictions, we are double and triple counting the number of patented inventions or innovative activities. In order to address this, patent data allows for the formation of patent families whereby each family includes all related or similar patents in all jurisdictions.

## Scientific strength

It is possible to identify the researchers or scientists, rather than the company or applicant. While these can be the same, they are often different. In this way, we can see the inventive activity of Canadian researchers working in other countries or for non-Canadian companies.

## Relative advantage

Canada is a small open economy. For this reason, it is unlikely that our industries or innovators would have an absolute advantage in a particular area, be the most prolific IP users, or have the largest global market share. However, there are areas where we have a comparative or relative advantage. Much work has been done in the creation of metrics of relative technological advantage and relative specialization.