

China overtakes US in number of patent filings

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The U.N. says the Chinese filed the most patent applications in the world last year, overtaking the U.S. for the first time.

The U.N.'s [World Intellectual Property Organization](#) says China's patent office received 526,412 applications in 2011, ahead of the United States with 503,582 filings.

The agency's Director General Francis Gurry told reporters Tuesday in Geneva that the 2.14 million patent applications were filed worldwide last year, up 7.8 percent from 2010. He says that indicates a healthy emphasis on innovation despite weak economic conditions.

The [European patent office](#) had 142,793 applications in 2011, down 5.4 percent from 2010, but still up from 2009, when it received 134,580 applications.

China overtook Japan in 2010. Japan received 342,610 [patent applications](#) in 2011.

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