

# W&B IP Newsletter

September of 2025, Vol. 101

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## Watson & Band Updates

### **Watson & Band Awarded "5A-Level Trademark Agency" for the Third Consecutive Year**

On September 5, during the welcome reception of the 15th China International Trademark and Brand Festival held in Taiyuan, the "Top 600 Trademark Agency Service Capability Data Statistics for 2025" list was jointly released by China Trademark magazine and IPDATA. Watson & Band Intellectual Property Agency Ltd. was once again featured on the list, receiving the "5A-Level Trademark Agency" designation for its outstanding service capabilities and exceptional business performance.

This marks the third consecutive year that Watson & Band has been included on the list since its initial release in 2023, consistently maintaining the highest possible rating. This achievement fully reflects the Watson & Band's comprehensive strength and consistent performance in the field of trademark agency.

## Patents

### Significant Decline Continues for 8 Months: From Jan-Aug 2025, Granted Invention Patents Drop by 23.18% and Utility Models by 26.31% YoY

According to the monthly statistical report for August 2025 recently published by the China National Intellectual Property Administration (CNIPA), the number of granted patents has fallen sharply. For the period of January-August 2025, the number of invention patent grants decreased by 23.18% year-on-year (YoY), while utility model grants fell by 26.31%. In contrast, design patent grants saw an increase of 3.38%.

| Patent Grants | Invention Patents | Utility Model Patents | Design Patents | Total   |
|---------------|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------|---------|
| 2024          |                   |                       |                |         |
| Jan-Aug       | 739875            | 1360130               | 410443         | 2510448 |
| 2025          |                   |                       |                |         |
| Jan-Aug       | 568369            | 1002323               | 424312         | 1995004 |
| Growth        | -171506           | -357807               | 13869          | -515444 |
| Growth Rate   | -23.18%           | -26.31%               | 3.38%          | -20.53% |

Data previously released by CNIPA shows a consistent downward trend in the cumulative number of grants throughout 2025 compared to the same periods in 2024.

| 2025 vs. 2024 | Change in Patent Grant Rate |               |        |
|---------------|-----------------------------|---------------|--------|
| YoY Change    | Invention Patents           | Utility Model | Design |
| Jan           | -13.93%                     | -4.99%        | 10.69% |
| Jan-Feb       | -15.93%                     | -2.67%        | 9.34%  |
| Jan-Mar       | -20.99%                     | -2.73%        | 10.07% |
| Jan-Apr       | -26.02%                     | -11.62%       | 3.95%  |
| Jan-May       | -28.04%                     | -17.79%       | 2.77%  |
| Jan-Jun       | -28.75%                     | -21.71%       | 3.12%  |
| Jan-Jul       | -26.59%                     | -24.69%       | 2.05%  |

This marks the eighth consecutive month of year-on-year decline for both invention and utility model patent grants, with the rate of decrease for utility model grants reaching a new high.

(Source: CNIPA)

# Trademarks

## CNIPA Releases Trademark Statistics for January-August 2025

The China National Intellectual Property Administration (CNIPA) recently published trademark statistics for the period of January to August 2025.

From January to August, trademark registrations in China totaled 2.851 million. As of the end of August, the total number of valid registered trademarks stood at 51.694 million.

Trademark Data Comparison for January-August (2024 and 2025)

|             | Cumulative Registrations | Total Valid Registrations | Opposition Applications | Review of Rejection Applications | Invalidation Applications | Applications for Review of Cancellation |
|-------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 2025        | 2850724                  | 51694257                  | 76845                   | 196294                           | 42508                     | 13396                                   |
| 2024        | 3168740                  | 48565535                  | 81389                   | 222759                           | 47250                     | 12228                                   |
| Change      | -318016                  | 3128722                   | -4544                   | -26465                           | -4742                     | 1168                                    |
| Growth Rate | -10.04%                  | 6.44%                     | -5.58%                  | -11.88%                          | -10.04%                   | 9.55%                                   |

(Source: CNIPA)

## Intellectual Property

### China Enters Top 10 for the First Time in the 2025 Global Innovation Index Report

On September 16, 2025, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) released the Global Innovation Index (GII) 2025. In this year's report, China ranked 10th, entering the top 10 for the first time and climbing 25 spots since 2013. China continues to lead the 36 upper-middle-income economies. This achievement demonstrates the significant success of China's innovation-driven development strategy and its accelerated efforts to build itself into a leader in science, technology, and intellectual property.

As shown in following figure of the top 20 rankings for the 2025 Global Innovation Index (GII), China has entered the top 10 for the first time.

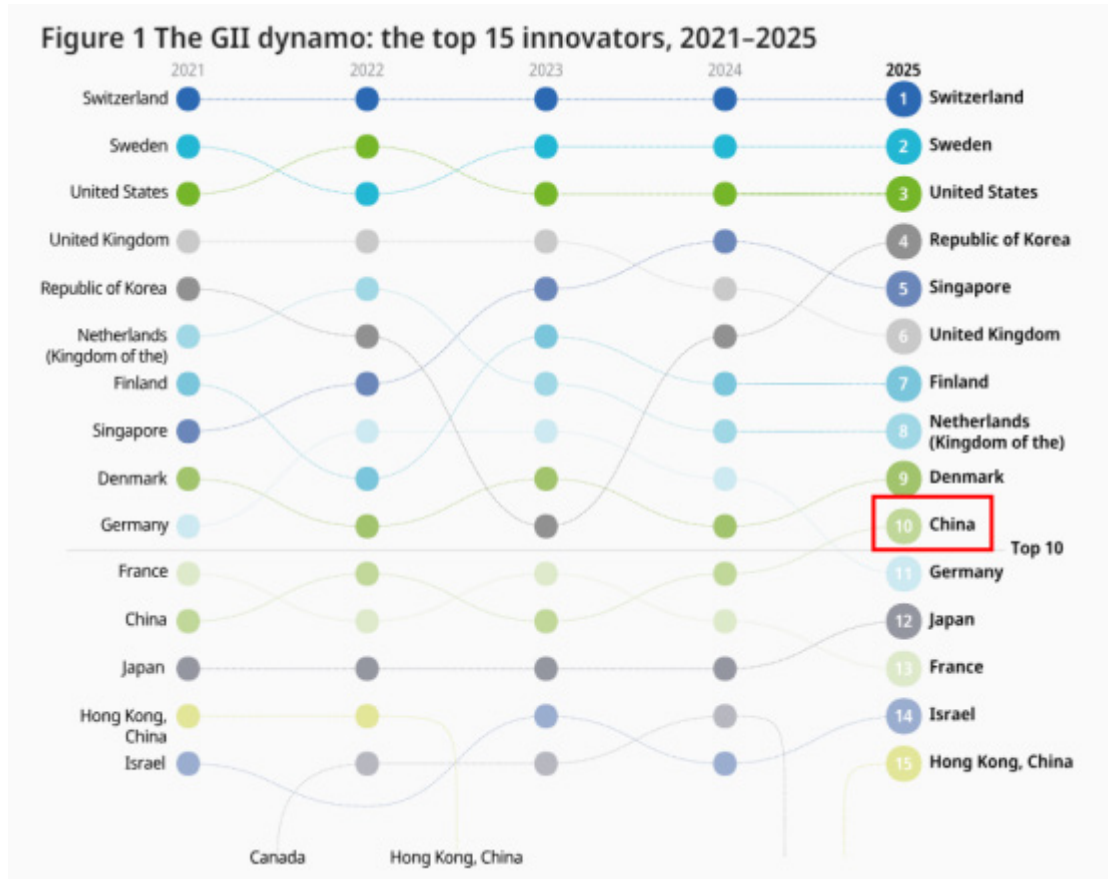
| GII rank<br>↓ | Economy                      | Score | Income group rank | Region rank |
|---------------|------------------------------|-------|-------------------|-------------|
| 1             | Switzerland                  | 66.0  | 1                 | 1           |
| 2             | Sweden                       | 62.6  | 2                 | 2           |
| 3             | United States                | 61.7  | 3                 | 1           |
| 4             | Republic of Korea            | 60.0  | 4                 | 1           |
| 5             | Singapore                    | 59.9  | 5                 | 2           |
| 6             | United Kingdom               | 59.1  | 6                 | 3           |
| 7             | Finland                      | 57.7  | 7                 | 4           |
| 8             | Netherlands (Kingdom of the) | 57.0  | 8                 | 5           |
| 9             | Denmark                      | 56.9  | 9                 | 6           |
| 10            | China                        | 56.6  | 1                 | 3           |
| 11            | Germany                      | 55.5  | 10                | 7           |
| 12            | Japan                        | 53.6  | 11                | 4           |
| 13            | France                       | 53.4  | 12                | 8           |
| 14            | Israel                       | 52.3  | 13                | 1           |
| 15            | Hong Kong, China             | 51.5  | 14                | 5           |
| 16            | Estonia                      | 51.1  | 15                | 9           |
| 17            | Canada                       | 51.1  | 16                | 2           |
| 18            | Ireland                      | 50.4  | 17                | 10          |
| 19            | Austria                      | 50.1  | 18                | 11          |
| 20            | Norway                       | 49.2  | 19                | 12          |

When categorized by income group, China holds the top position among the 36 upper middle-income economies, as shown in the following figure of the Top Three Innovation Economies by Income Group.

| High-income     | Upper middle-income | Lower middle-income | Low-income |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------|
| 1 Switzerland   | 1 China             | 1 India             | 1 Rwanda   |
| 2 Sweden        | 2 Malaysia          | 2 Viet Nam          | 2 Togo     |
| 3 United States | 3 Türkiye           | 3 Philippines       | 3 Uganda   |

# Intellectual Property

The following figure of the GII dynamo for the top 15 innovators over the last five years shows that between 2021 and 2024, China ranked either 11th or 12th<sup>22</sup>. This year marks its first time entering the GII top 10.

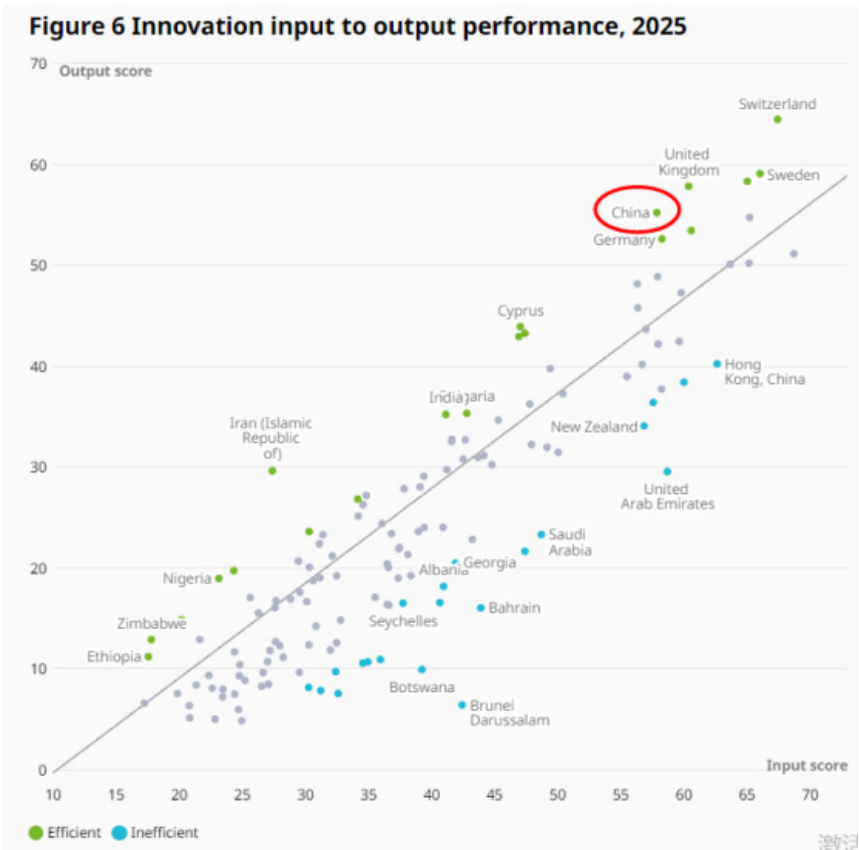


The Report assesses the innovation ecosystem performance of 139 economies based on two broad areas: Innovation Inputs and Innovation Outputs. Its framework is built upon 7 pillars: Institutions, Human Capital & Research, Infrastructure, Market Sophistication, Business Sophistication, Knowledge & Technology Outputs, and Creative Outputs. These pillars encompass a total of 21 sub-pillars and 78 detailed indicators.

According to the Report, China demonstrates a clear advantage in Innovation Outputs, ranking 5th in 2025, which is an improvement of two places from 2024<sup>7</sup>. In Innovation Inputs, China ranked 19th, climbing four spots from the previous year.

Intellectual Property

| Year | GII Position | Innovation Inputs | Innovation Outputs |
|------|--------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 2020 | 14th         | 26th              | 6th                |
| 2021 | 12th         | 25th              | 7th                |
| 2022 | 11th         | 21st              | 8th                |
| 2023 | 12th         | 25th              | 8th                |
| 2024 | 11th         | 23rd              | 7th                |
| 2025 | 10th         | 19th              | 5th                |

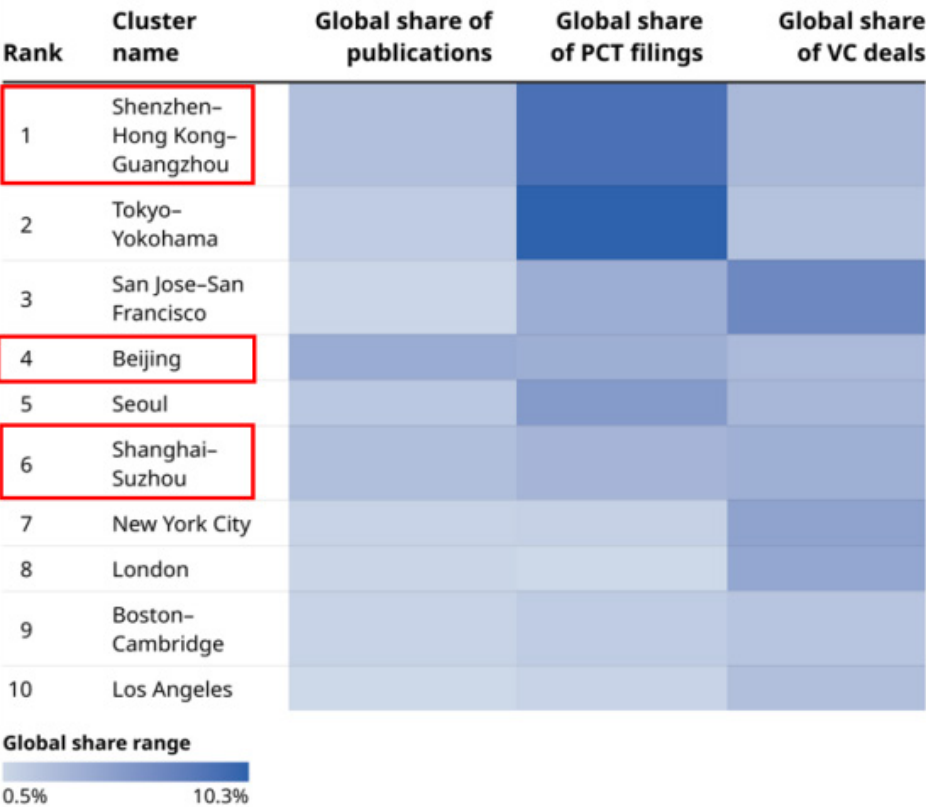


First, China ranks first globally in multiple IP-related sub-indicators. These include industrial design applications, utility model applications, and trademark applications by origin per unit of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), as well as the share of creative goods exports in total trade. Furthermore, China ranks second globally for sub-indicators such as invention patent applications by origin per unit of GDP, the development of its industrial clusters, and its share of gross enterprise expenditure on R&D (GERD).

## Intellectual Property

Second, China has the highest number of top innovation clusters in the world. It is home to 24 of the top 100 global innovation clusters. The Shenzhen-Hong Kong-Guangzhou cluster now ranks first globally for the first time, while the Beijing (4th) and Shanghai-Suzhou (6th) clusters are also in the top 10. These areas are key hotspots for global patent applications, technological innovation, and venture capital investment.

**Figure 1 Top 10 innovation clusters, and their footprint, 2025**



Source: WIPO Statistics Database, May 2025.

Third, its brand value holds steady at second place globally. In 2025, among the world's top 5,000 brands, the total value of Chinese brands reached \$1.81 trillion, an increase of 2.84% compared to 2024, securing the second position worldwide.

Furthermore, the Report notes that the export of China's high-tech products and its position within the global value chain continue to strengthen, with particularly outstanding performance in the fields of artificial intelligence, semiconductors, and green technology.

(Text source: Official WeChat of CNPIA; Image source: WIPO official website)