



Action Plan on Intellectual Property



25 November 2020

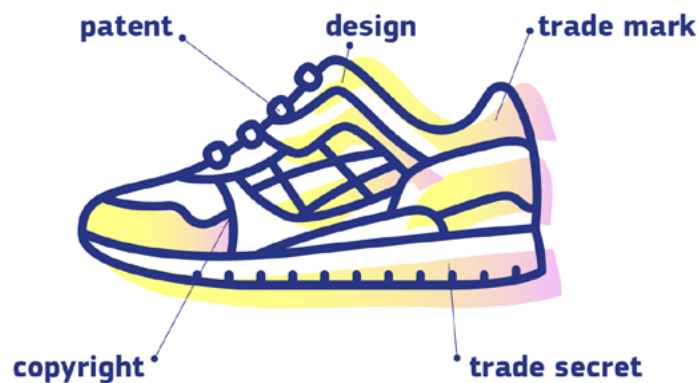
Intangible assets such as inventions, artistic creations, brands, software, know-how, etc. are the cornerstones of today's knowledge economy.

Intellectual property (IP), such as patents, trademarks, designs, copyright, geographical indications, plant variety rights and trade secret protection rules help companies protect and commercialise their intangible assets, fight unauthorised copying by competitors and provide them with a source of competitive advantage.

The share of intangibles in companies' overall value* has increased more than five-fold since 1975.



Today's industrial products are increasingly complex and tech-savvy. Companies must therefore increasingly make strategic use of IP to protect their products.



Industries that rely heavily on IP assets are a key contributor to Europe's GDP and job creation.



*data for US quoted stock market companies

IP-intensive industries also play a major role across various industrial ecosystems. They make up a large proportion of employment in the following ecosystems.*



Globally and in Europe, IP application filings are on the rise, including for patents, designs, and trademarks.

Number of applications in the EU 2010-19



Role of IP in addressing Europe’s challenges for the future



Innovative solutions are essential to address some of the most important social challenges of our time, such as ensuring the **green transition** of the European economy and our **digital leadership**. The EU is already a world leader on key green technologies and needs to ensure our IPR framework can support and further build on these strengths.



IP is also a key asset to **compete globally** and harness global competition and resilience. The EU has a robust IP framework, and rising numbers of high-quality EU patents for instance in green and digital technologies. We need to do more to ensure our companies make a strategic use of IP. Today, only 9% of SMEs use IP.



The Covid-19 crisis has also illustrated our **dependence on critical innovations and technologies**. A robust IP framework can help to boost innovation, secure a fast deployment of critical IP to fight emergencies and contribute to the development of a flourishing health system.

*Action Plan on Intellectual Property: "Appendix 1 - Contribution of IPR-intensive industries to employment in industrial ecosystems".

Building on our strengths and upgrading our IP system

