

Patent statistics in the age of globalisation:
new legal procedures, new analytical
methods, new economic interpretation.

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Abstract

Patent analysis seems to become more difficult in the age of globalisation. Starting from microlevel observations, it is evident that multinational enterprises pursue different technological, marketing and strategic aims. In effect, they cover world markets in a distinctly different manner with patent intellectual property. This article, in good economic tradition, starts with consideration of recent microlevel patent behaviour in telecommunications before new macroeconomic procedures to measure technical change are outlined. The new challenges to patent statistics comprise the assignment of countries to patent documents of multinational firms, the appropriate use of economic 'filters' in comparing patent statistics from various patent offices, the fitting of the new international patent procedures offered by the amended Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) to national statistics, the assignment of patent applications in case of

withdrawn country destinations and the estimation of time series if most recent data sets are incomplete. We propose consistent, workable adjustments to patent statistics that overcome the above-mentioned biases, which we denote the 'triad patent model', for measuring technical progress in the proper economic sense. First applications deal with the assessment of the pace of technical change in major countries up until 1995. In conclusion we discuss problems for future research. The main policy implication is that macroeconomic patent statistics can correct for the effects of global knowledge production, indeed, as these are not disruptive but rather limited and well accountable.



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Keywords

Patent statistics; Measurement of technical change; Global knowledge production; International patent procedures

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