



Annual Report



österreichisches
patentamt

The Green Move

Are you familiar with Reversi? This game is about surrounding your opponent from all sides. However, the goal is not to destroy them but to transform them. Reversi serves as the backdrop for the artwork created by student Fuko Katsuda for our annual report this year. It acts as a graphic metaphor for our key theme, 'IP for the Green and Digital Transition', illustrating that change is possible – with the help of innovations and technologies, for which we are the number one point of contact.



Alexander Van der Bellen

Austrian Federal President

To find viable answers to the major challenges of current times, two things are essential: First, we need many good ideas; second, we need reliable partners who support the implementation of these ideas. For over 125 years, the Austrian Patent Office has been a prime example of this. Since its founding in the 19th century, it has promoted innovation and supported inventors and creative minds in general, with foresight and reliability.

It considers itself the first point of contact for innovation – a modern partner for everyone who wants to shape the future. Its employees contribute expertise, dedication, and in-depth understanding to turn ideas into innovations that drive economic and societal progress. The work of the Austrian Patent Office shows that major challenges can only be overcome together, and highlights the importance of international cooperation. For many decades, the Austrian Patent Office has been actively collaborating with international partners. This report provides insights into the work of the Patent Office and illustrates how innovations are promoted and protected, not only in the field of patents but also in trademark protection and the many other areas of industrial property rights.

I wish you an inspiring read with the annual report for the Patent Office's anniversary year!

Photo © HBF/Carina Karlovits



Stefan Harasek

President of the Austrian Patent Office

Sustainable innovations are not only beneficial for the climate; they also secure our progress and prosperity. At the Austrian Patent Office, we see it as our mission to support all creative and innovative minds in Austria with our expertise, impartiality, and an ever-evolving range of services.

We do this with passion because we know: The challenges of our time can only be overcome together – and innovation is the key. Austria has already made significant progress, especially when it comes to patents in the field of environmental protection. Patent applications in Green Tech have tripled over the past 20 years, with Austria even leading Europe in the building sector. These inventions play a vital role in shaping a more sustainable future.

And that is exactly where we come in: by recognising the value of every new idea. Because we love innovation – and we want it to grow and thrive.

Photo © ÖPA/Viktoria Gassner

Fuko Katsuda

Student at the University of Applied Arts Vienna

We love innovation and creativity – including in the artistic design of our annual report. That's why, in 2024, we once again launched a competition, inviting students from the University of Applied Arts Vienna to submit their ideas.

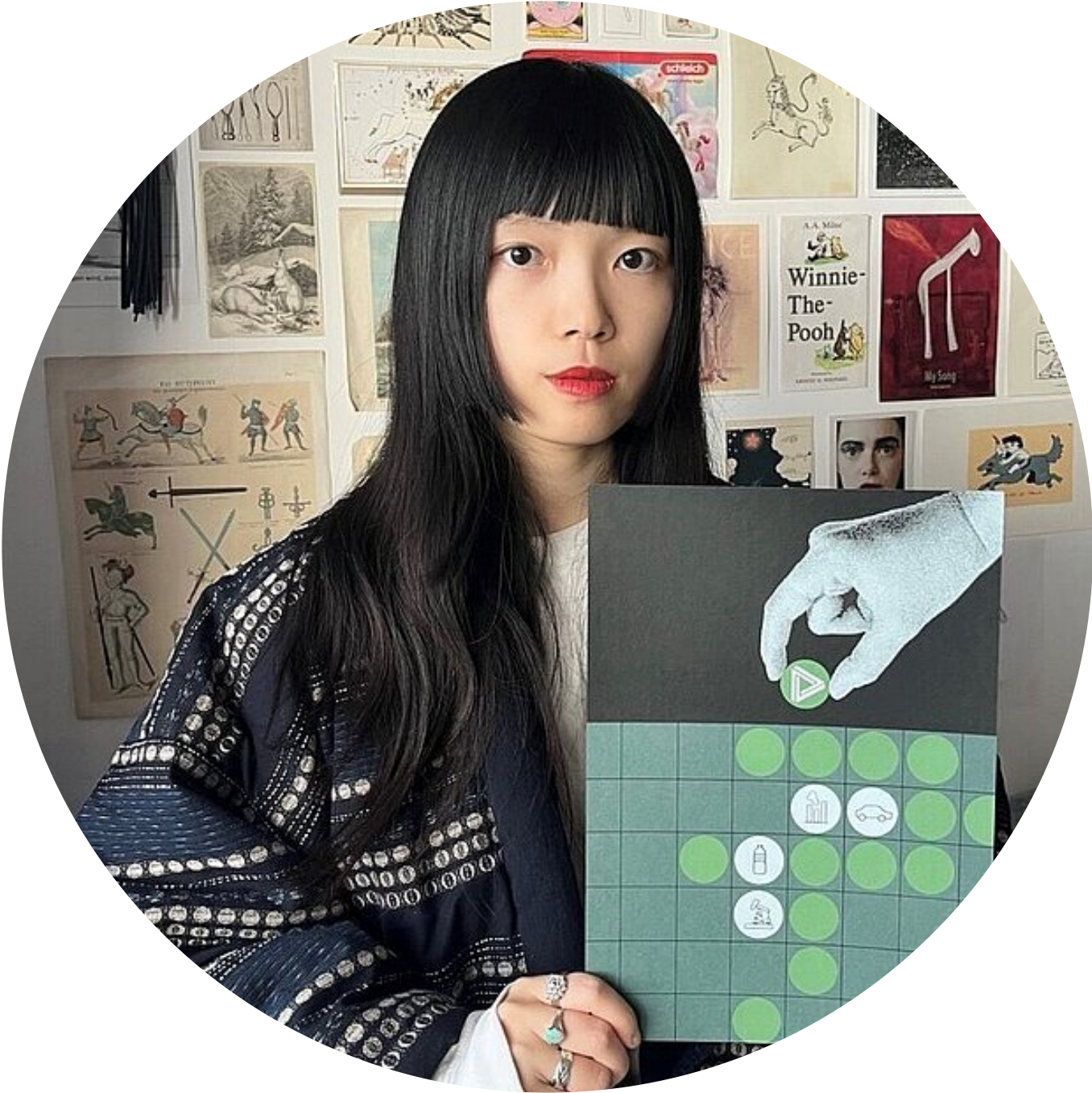
This year, Fuko Katsuda emerged as the winner. Her concept '**The Green Move**' captivated us with its playful approach to illustrating how the transition to greater sustainability can succeed.

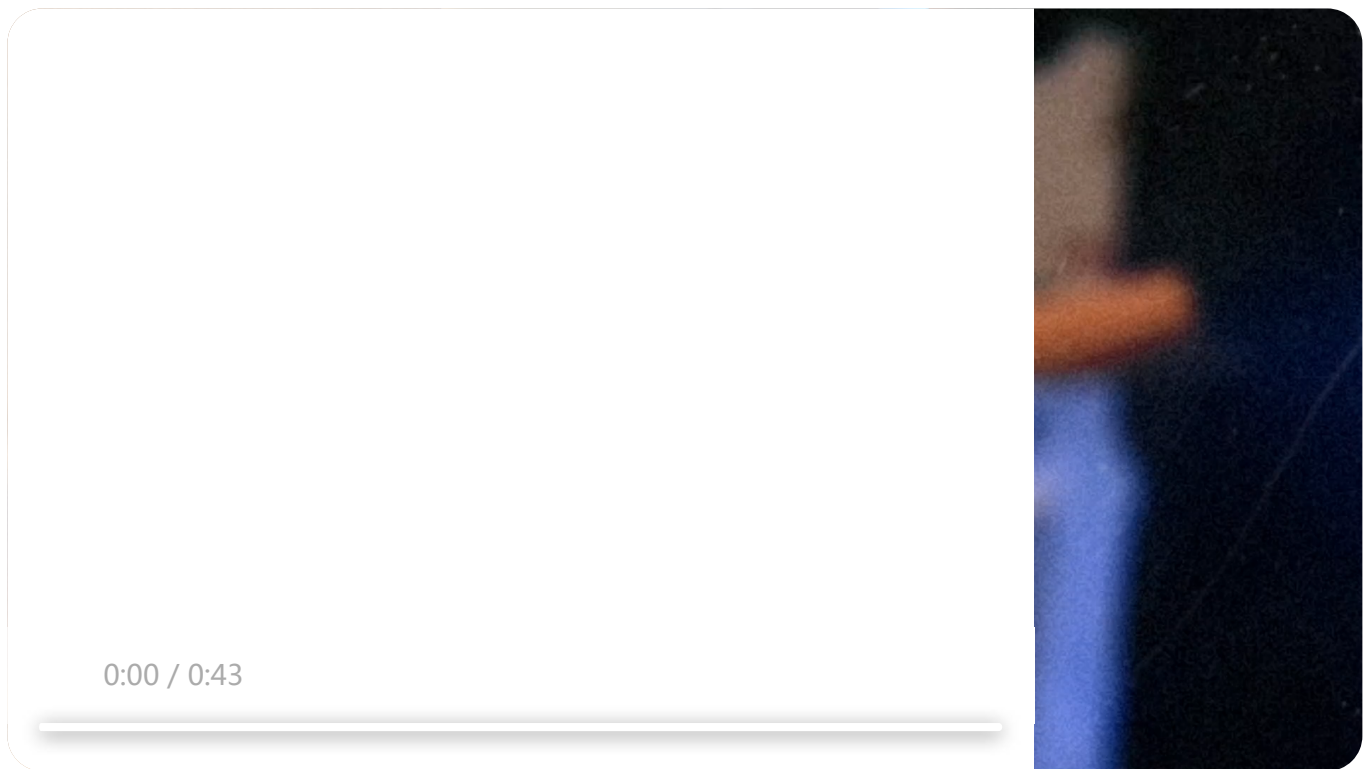
Fuko Katsuda: 'What I'm proposing in my images is a kind of 'Green Reversi'. Green discs outflank the opponent's discs, each disc representing an issue that should be reconsidered or reduced in order to protect our environment. Although a single move might seem small, it leads to a larger transition over time. This playful approach ideally creates a shift in perspective towards the mindset that: We can achieve the green transition.'

Fuko Katsuda was born in 1995 in Osaka, Japan, and has been studying drawing and printmaking at the University of Applied Arts Vienna since 2021.

Photo © Stefan Grob

Video © Fuko Katsuda





125 Years - A Look into the Future

2024 was a special year for us: We celebrated the 125th anniversary of the Austrian Patent Office. But rather than just looking critically at the past, we wanted to use this occasion to bring current challenges into focus. To do so, we hosted a high-profile conference at the Wien Museum, focusing on the role of intellectual property in driving the green and digital transition.

The response was overwhelming: Our invitation was accepted by colleagues from 27 European countries, along with numerous national network partners – including start-up founders, CEOs of major companies, national award winners, university rectors, and representatives from politics, business and research.

This impressive level of interest reaffirms and motivates us to continue on the path of innovation and progress together. It is in this spirit that we are already looking forward to the next 125 years of creativity and collaboration!

Photo: Daren Tang (Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization, WIPO) and Stefan Harasek (President Austrian Patent Office, ÖPA) © ÖPA/Niklas Stadler



How Sustainable are We?

As a government authority committed to shaping a better future through innovation, we recognize our responsibility to make our daily operations more sustainable. This is something we continuously work on.

As part of our office renovation, completed in 2024, we consciously opted for downsizing and now operate in a reduced office space powered entirely by renewable energy. Naturally, we also switched our entire lighting to LED technology.

Our employees play a crucial role in our sustainability efforts: 70 % of our staff commute by public transport, and 8 % even cycle to work.

Beyond our office walls, we strive to set a positive example. All major events hosted by the Patent Office proudly carry the 'Green Event' label.

And last but not least: We are a paperless office. The Patent Office's entire range of services is 100 % digital, and we continue to reduce internal paper consumption – our records management is now predominantly digital.



Cash is King? Not Quite!

Start-ups with protected patents and trademarks are more economically successful than those without intellectual property rights – a fact supported by numerous international studies.

Yet in Austria, there is still no option to recognise self-created and internally used patents as assets on a company's balance sheet. In 2024, we at the Patent Office focused intensively on this issue and are committed to driving change.

Our proposal: Intellectual property should be eligible for balance sheet recognition in the future. In most other EU countries, this is already standard practice.

For founders, this could be a crucial advantage when seeking funding. Because one thing is clear: Investors love companies with patents. A striking 88 % of European investors have patent-holding companies in their portfolios, and some even specialise exclusively in such businesses.



The High Art of Great Ideas

Austrian universities are bursting with brilliant ideas. In fact, 10.2 % of all patents filed from Europe at the European Patent Office originate from universities.

The innovative strength of Austria's universities is also reflected in the National Award for Patents where higher education institutions regularly win recognition for groundbreaking inventions and forward-thinking ideas.

However, international studies show that European universities struggle to turn knowledge into marketable products – particularly in comparison to the United States. The reasons are manifold: A lack of the right environment, insufficient access to venture capital, and an underdeveloped start-up culture all play a role. As the Austrian Patent Office, we want to drive change. Together with our national and international partners, we aim to create better conditions for universities so that their outstanding ideas can reach the market faster and more easily in the future.



Everything within the Law

Laws form the foundation of our work and provide a framework for the success of inventions, products, and services. Yet they are also a constantly evolving field. Regular legislative updates are essential to ensure that legal frameworks keep pace with the changing needs of users.

In autumn 2024, the long-awaited EU design protection reform package was finalised. Terminologically 'design' is now anchored at national level. In practical terms, the revision makes it easier, more cost-effective and more efficient for designers to protect their creations – including in the digital world.

Speaking of design: Another milestone was achieved in November 2024 – in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, the International Design Law Treaty was adopted. This agreement, established by the member states of the

World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), lays the foundation for an internationally standardised system of design protection.

There was also an important new development in the field of geographical indications: These labels provide information about the origin, quality, and production methods. Until now, a European protection system with national verification existed only for wine and agricultural products (e.g. 'Wachauer Marille' or 'Marchfelder Spargel'). By the end of 2025, this protection will be extended to artisanal and industrial products as well.



What Happened in 2024?

With our 'Brands Pop-Up' talk series, we continued our Austria-wide tour, making a stop in Linz in June 2024. More than 120 creative minds attended for discussions on branding, design, and the creative economy. Experts shared dos and don'ts, success stories, and failures from the worlds of AI, digital communication, and rebranding.

Our IP Academy also saw strong participation in 2024: Across around 100 seminars, workshops, and training sessions, we welcomed almost 3,000 participants. As always, all events were free of charge and could be attended online, some of them also in person.

One highlight we are particularly proud of: Our IP Academy launched a new discussion format, 'Masters of IP', bringing current and relevant intellectual property topics to the stage.

Diversity is another key issue for us – because diversity fuels creativity and, in many cases, makes it possible in the first place. In this spirit, we invited the well-known drag queen Candy Licious to give a talk at our office for Pride Month, helping to raise awareness internally. The turnout was overwhelming.

An anniversary is always a good opportunity to take a critical look at the past. We did so in collaboration with historians Maria Wirth and Alexander Pinwinkler. For the first time since our founding, an independent, scholarly and comprehensive publication now examines the history of the Austrian Patent Office – including, for the first time, its darkest chapter: the Nazi era.

Photos from top to bottom

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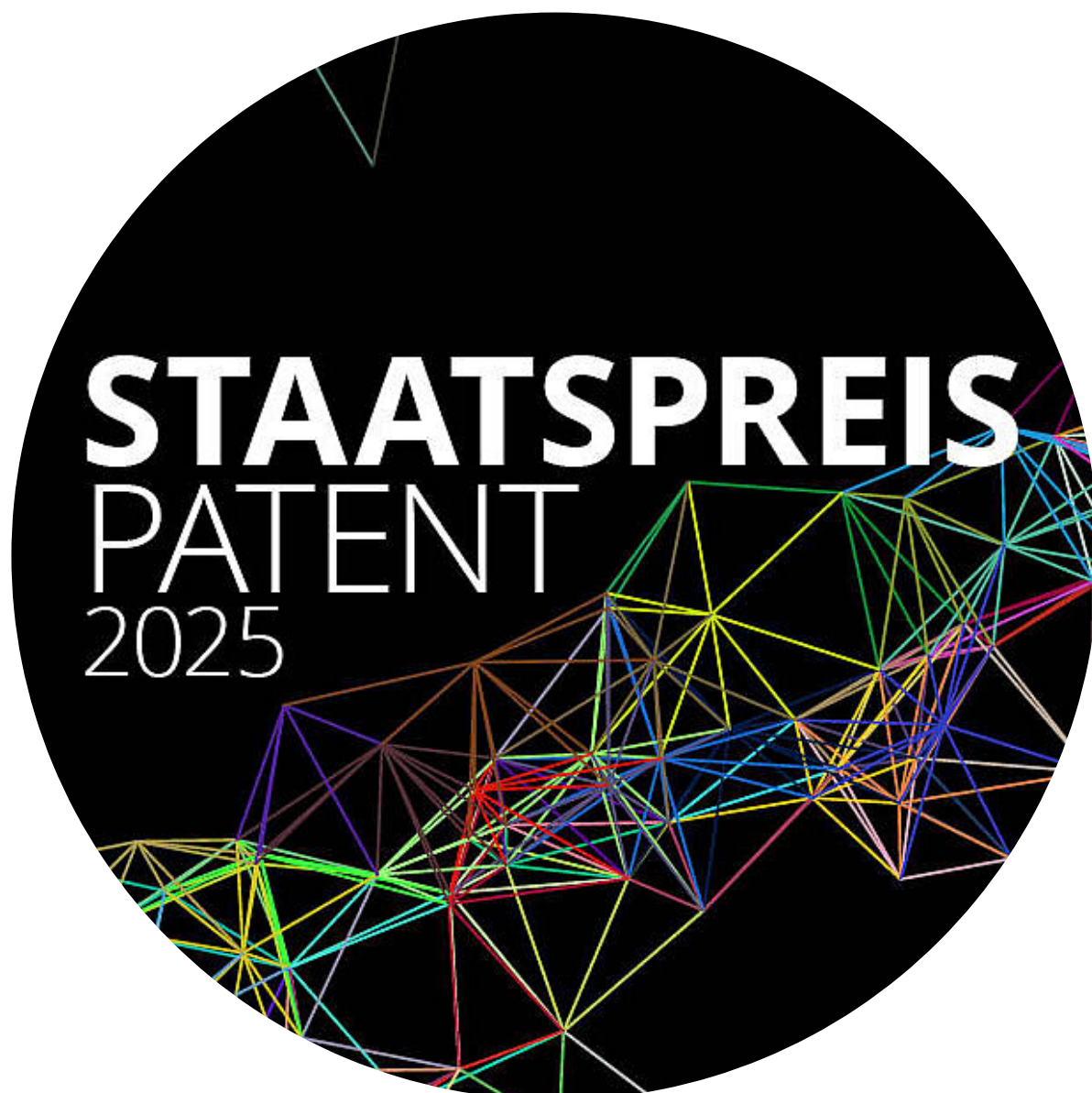
What's Coming in 2025?

In 2025, together with our Ministry, we will present the National Award for Patents for the fifth time. Alongside the categories 'Best Patent' and 'Best Trademark', this year will also see the introduction of a new special award: the 'Matilda'. This will honour an organisation that makes an outstanding contribution to empowering innovative women and drives structural change.

On a legislative front, 2025 will see the revision of the Patent Act. With various modernisation measures, we aim to accelerate and simplify procedures while taking further steps towards harmonisation within the European framework. Additionally, this reform will lay the legal foundation for protecting geographical indications for artisanal and industrial products.

With regard to unitary patents, small and medium-sized enterprises, in particular, are making use of this new protection option, which applies in up to 18 countries. As of 1 January 2025, the local division of the Unified Patent Court is now housed within the Austrian Patent Office. This means that legal disputes concerning unitary patents – with effects in all participating states – can now be resolved in

Austria, with German as the language of proceedings. We are delighted that this important institution has now found its home on Dresdner Strasse.





Statistics

Facts and Figures

For a detailed look at 2024 - including which federal states were the most innovative and creative, which company filed the most inventions, and how many patents, trademarks, and designs were registered with us - you'll find the key figures here:

10.204 Inventions in total

2.177 Inventions

4.441 Trademarks

361 Designs

1.685 International Trademarks

1.540 Services

Inventions in Detail

2.177 Inventions

were filed at the Austrian Patent Office in 2024.



1.180 Inventions

were newly granted by the Austrian Patent Office in 2024.

136.044 Inventions

are in force at the Austrian Patent Office.



10.866 Inventions

were applied for by Austrians worldwide.

888 Inventions-Services
were provided by our experts.



124.653 European Patents
are in force in Austria.

Top Inventors 2024

Ranked by the number of invention applications in 2024 (patent and utility model applications).

AVL List GmbH

192

Julius Blum GmbH

61

Zumtobel Lighting GmbH

35

Siemens Mobility Austria GmbH

30

Mondi AG

26

Engel Austria GmbH

21

Plasser & Theurer, Export von Bahnbaumaschinen GmbH

21

Technische Universität Wien

18

Trumpf Maschinen Austria GmbH & Co KG

17

TGW Logistics Group GmbH

16

Hydrogen Gruber Schmidt GmbH

16

Top Universities 2024

Ranked by the number of invention applications in 2024 (patent and utility model applications).

Technische Universität Wien

18

Medizinische Universität Wien

9

Universität Linz

5

Universität Graz

4

Trademarks in Detail

4.441 Trademarks

were filed at the Austrian Patent Office in 2024.



3.832 Trademarks

were registered.

95.398 Trademarks

are in force at the Austrian Patent Office.

1.685 International Trademarks

have been applied for protection in Austria.

652 Trademark-Services

were provided by our experts.



444 Trademarks

were filed worldwide via the Austrian Patent Office.

By the way: Our trademark records are fully digital, saving both time and paper. Nearly half of all trademarks are now

registered via Fast Track, with an average registration time of just 4 days. Pretty cool, right?

Top Trademark Applicants 2024

Ranked by the number of Trademark applications in 2024.

Biogena GmbH & Co KG

37

Fleischwaren Berger Gesellschaft m.b.H. & Co KG

36

Genericon Pharma Gesellschaft m.b.H.

25

Österreichische Lotterien Ges.m.b.H.

21

G.L. Pharma GmbH

17

Lugner City GmbH

16

Chongqing Changan Automobile Co. Ltd.

15

B2B Management Service GmbH

14

Westbahn Management GmbH

14

Red Bull GmbH

12

Designs in Detail

361 Designs

were filed at the Austrian Patent Office in 2024.



354 Designs

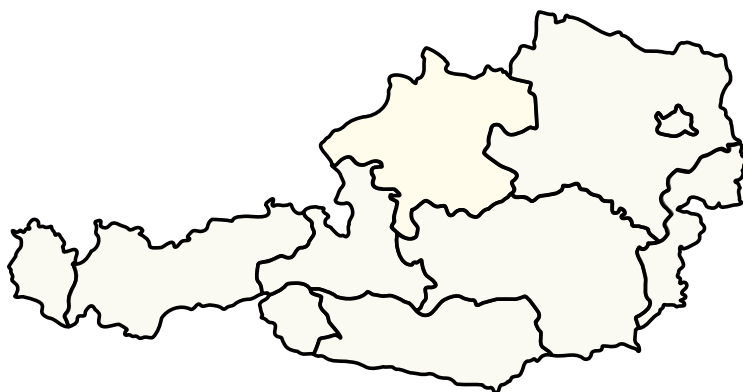
were registered.

6.265 Designs

are in force at the Austrian Patent Office.

Statistics of the Federal States

This is how busy Austrians were in 2024: they registered a total of 1,894 inventions, 3,985 trademarks and 290 designs. Detailed figures for the individual regions are available by selecting a federal state. Upper Austria leads the ranking for invention applications with 638 applications. If you count the applications by population, the chance of meeting an inventor is highest in Vorarlberg.



Upper Austria

Applications

448 Patents

55 Utility models

522 Trademarks

48 Designs

Top invention applicant

Engel Austria GmbH (21 applications)

Top trademark applicant

Anita Schaubmaier (9 applications)

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