

## With nearly 20,000 filings in 2003, the United States continued to be the leading source of triadic patent families.

Figure 11.1. Number of triadic patent families by nationality of inventor, selected countries: 1985-2003

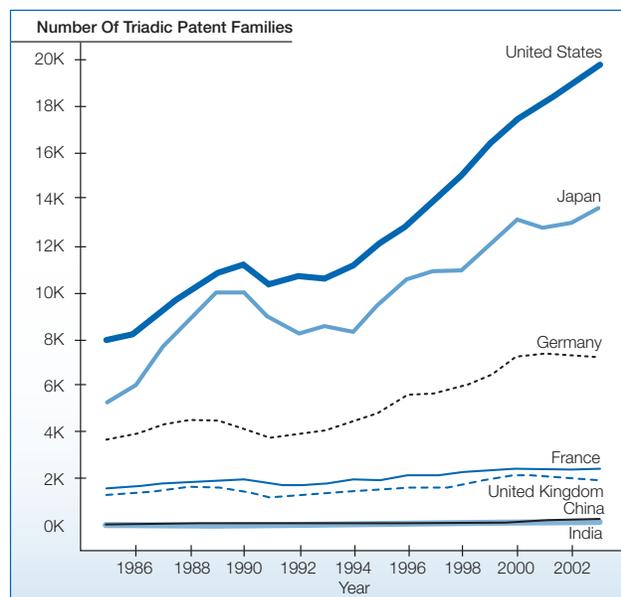
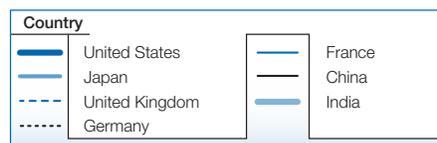
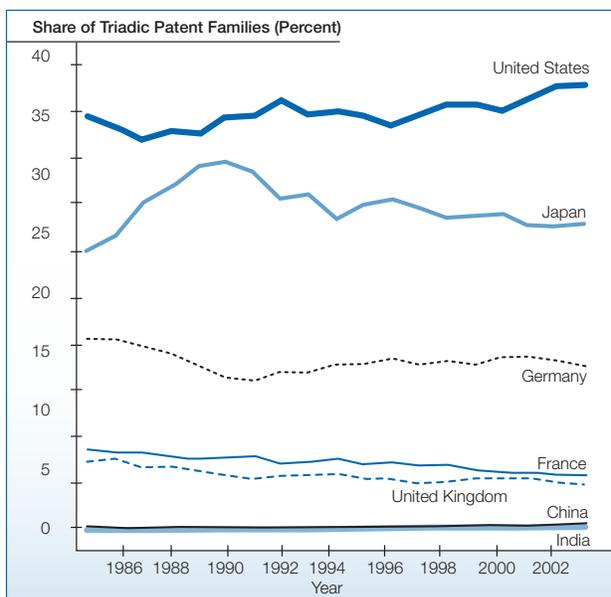


Figure 11.2. Share of triadic patent families by nationality of inventor, selected countries: 1985-2003



SOURCE: Appendix Tables 6-50 and 6-51, *Science and Engineering Indicators 2008*, National Science Foundation.

NOTES: Patents on fractional count basis, i.e., for patents with inventors from multiple countries, each country receives fractional credit based on proportion of its participating inventors. Number of patents estimated between 1998 and 2003 by OECD.

### Why is this indicator important?

- The high cost of filing for patents from three separate patent offices representing the world's three largest markets makes triadic patent families a more valid measure than simple patent counts for identifying economically valuable inventions.

### Key Observations

- The United States, Japan, Germany, France, and the United Kingdom were the top five filers of triadic patents in 2003, together accounting for 84% of the world's triadic patent families in 2003.
- The United States had the largest increase in world share between 1993 and 2003, increasing from 34 to 37% of the total.
- While their share of the world total remained small (less than half a percent each), China and India increased their filings of triadic patents from 33 to 225 and from 8 to 99, respectively, between 1993 and 2003.

### Related Discussion

- Patent shares by technology provide a more nuanced comparison of inventive output between countries and over time. Chapter 6 of *SEI 2008* discusses biotechnology and information and communications technology patenting trends.