

Beijing, 17 January, 2017

## **Launch of IP Key China project to support EU firms doing business in China**

IP Key China aims to strengthen and support the intellectual property system in China through specialised collaboration with the EU.

[IP Key China](#) aims to facilitate economic exchanges, trade and investment between EU and China, while developing a level playing field as regards Intellectual Property (IP) protection. IP Key will provide support to EU firms seeking to make inroads into the Chinese market or already doing business in China through a range of activities. Overall, the project is designed to strengthen intellectual property enforcement and protection and raise awareness about its importance as a driver of economic growth.

Directed by the European Commission, IP Key China is implemented by the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO), an EU decentralised agency based in Alicante, Spain, and co-funded by the EU [Partnership Instrument](#). Through close cooperation with Chinese stakeholders and the involvement of the industry, academia, enforcement and judicial authorities, the IP Key China project will support the bilateral dialogue on IP through a broad range of activities that will:

- cover the full intellectual property lifecycle;
- encompass a wide spectrum of IP rights; patents, trade marks, designs, geographical indications, copyright, trade secrets and plant varieties;
- focus on IP enforcement, collaborating with enforcers to train Chinese judges dealing with intellectual property matters;
- provide and extend access to online IP search database to increase the global transparency of IP Rights.

The launching event organised at the Novotel Beijing Xin Qiao earlier today was attended by Mr Chen Fuli, Director General of China's Ministry of Commerce, John Clark, Director at the European Commission, and Christian Archambeau, EUIPO Deputy Executive Director, among other stakeholders. Mr. Archambeau said:

*Ensuring that EU and Chinese entrepreneurs and creative thinkers can protect the intellectual assets on which the future depends, is the job that now lies ahead of us. It is important work, it is urgent, but the EUIPO looks forward to tackling this challenge.*

China is the EU's biggest source of imports and its second-biggest export market. China and Europe trade is worth on average over €1 billion a day, with EU brands and firms an increasingly significant presence in the vast Chinese market. For EU and Chinese businesses alike, intellectual property has never been so important. The EU and China have also confirmed their commitment to reinforcing cooperation on the protection and enforcement of Intellectual Property (IP) Rights and the EU-China IP Dialogue Mechanism was further reinforced in 2015 with the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding.

In fact, China is now the EU's second-biggest trading partner, and intellectual property rights-intensive industries are at the heart of that trade. [A study released in 2016](#) by the EUIPO and the European Patent Office showed that those industries accounted for around 90% of the EU's trade with the world, helping to generate a trade surplus of EUR 96 billion.

China, meanwhile, is strengthening its intellectual property presence, and driving the growth in world IP filings. Nearly seven million Chinese trade mark applications were made in 2017, and over three million Chinese patent applications were filed.

It is against this backdrop that IP Key China begins its activities in 2018 to support EU-China cooperation on IP. The IP Key team will consist of seven Beijing-based technical experts and assistants, supported by a strong support dedicated team in EUIPO's headquarters in Alicante, Spain. A significant number of specialised short term experts from other specialised IP agencies (such as CPVO or EPO), EU Member States and private practitioners, along with EUIPO's own experts will assure a successful implementation of the activities.

## **NEXT STEPS**

One of the first goals of the IP Key China – and a priority for EUIPO – is the integration of China into [TMView](#), the world's largest free trade mark search database, which already offers instant access to over 40 million trade marks from the registers participating offices around the globe.

This will clearly benefit EU right holders operating in China and Chinese businesses seeking information on international trade mark and design registrations.

## **BACKGROUND**

The EU and China have been cooperating closely on intellectual property for nearly two decades. The IP Key China project launched today builds on a previous four-year project, which carried out over 250 activities with Chinese and EU stakeholders, industry, academia and students and a wide range of stakeholder groups.

The project had a number of deliverables, including, notably, the fact that over four million Chinese industrial designs were made available through [DesignView](#), a global design search database built by EUIPO and its EU national and regional intellectual property office partners, and which is free, instantly accessible online and updated daily. China also joined [TMclass](#),

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the free online trade mark classification database – a vital tool for users of the IP system when applying for a trade mark.

## **ABOUT THE EUIPO**

The [European Union Intellectual Property Office](#) (EUIPO) is a decentralised agency of the EU, based in Alicante, Spain. It manages the registration of the European Union trade mark (EUTM) and the registered Community design (RCD), both of which provide intellectual property protection in all 28 EU Member States, as well as carrying out cooperation activities with the national and regional intellectual property offices of the EU. On behalf of the EU, EUIPO is also implementing similar IP Key projects funded under the Partnership Instrument in South East Asia, Latin America and India. In the longer term, this mode of cooperation may also be extended to the African and Caribbean regions.

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