

Africa IP SME Helpdesk

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Africa IP SME Helpdesk

Who are we?

An EU funded project implemented by the EUIPO



Under the scope of the Project AfrIPI: a cooperation programme focusing on IP and innovation in Africa



About AfrIPI



1. Legislative support



2. Support to national IP offices in Africa

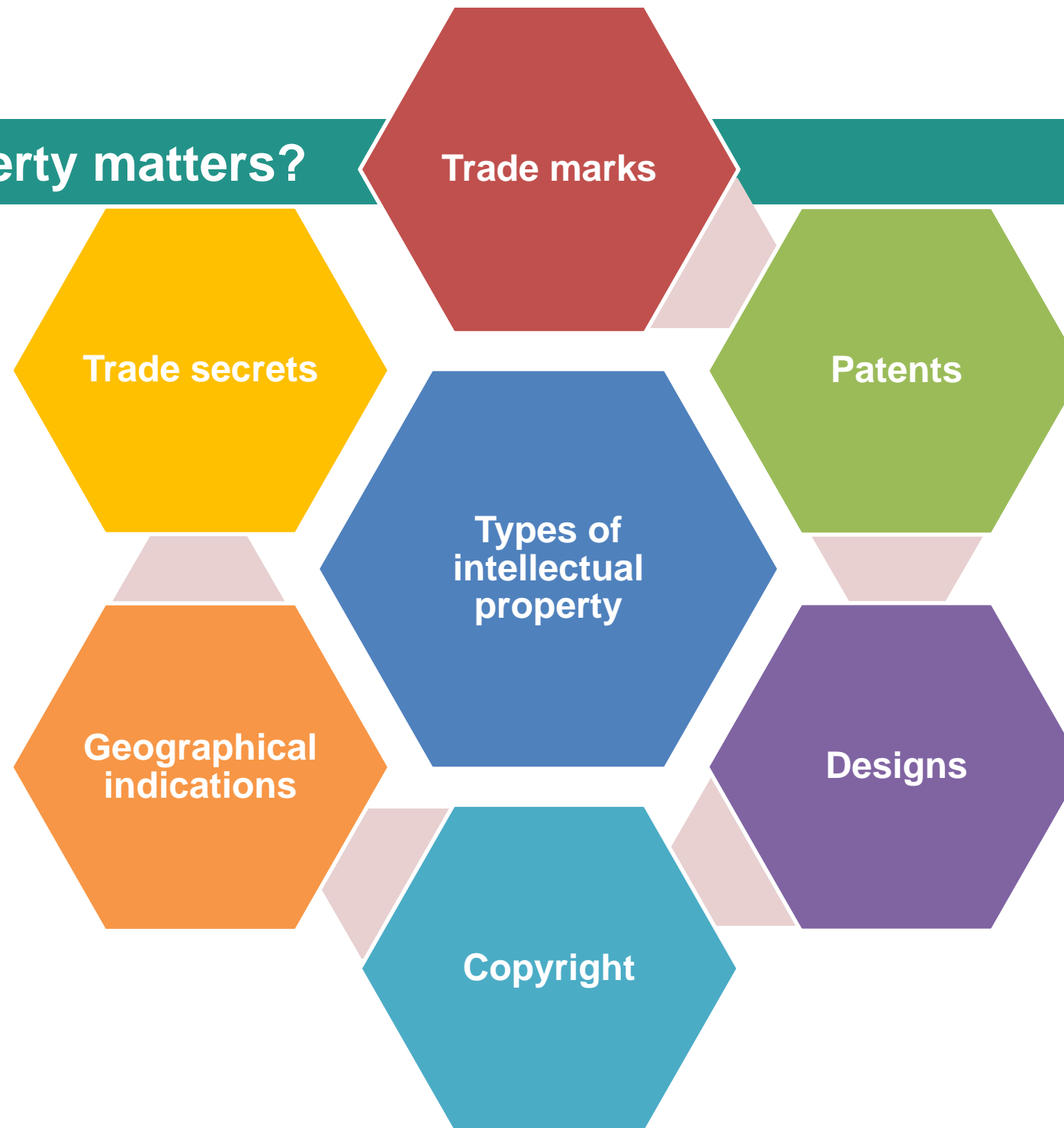


3. Support to SMEs



4. Supporting on geographical indications

Why Intellectual Property matters?



Why Intellectual Property matters?

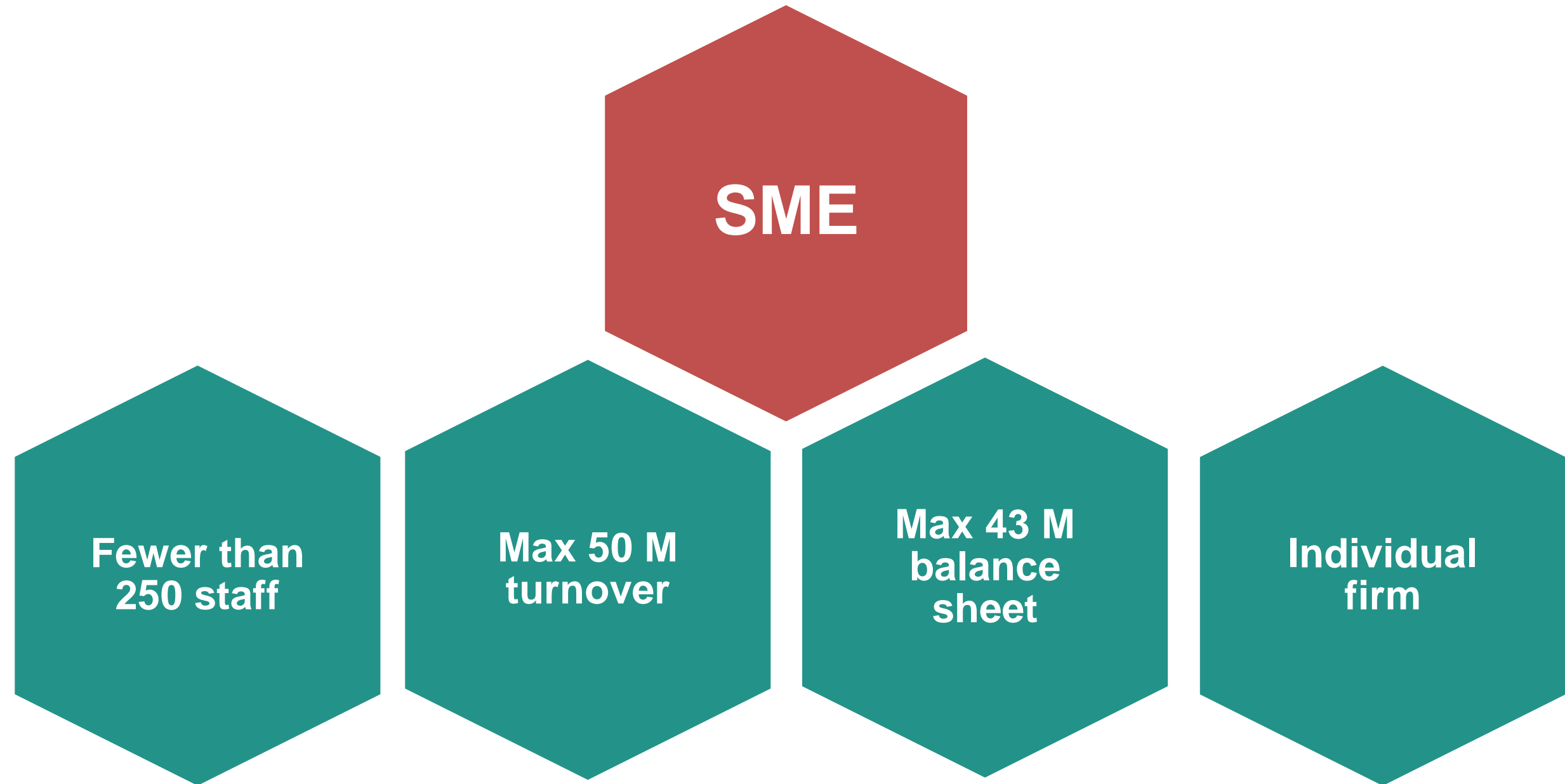
IP is a key business asset

To have
exclusive
rights

To use
these
rights for
distribution

To defend
your
business
interests

Is y business eligible?



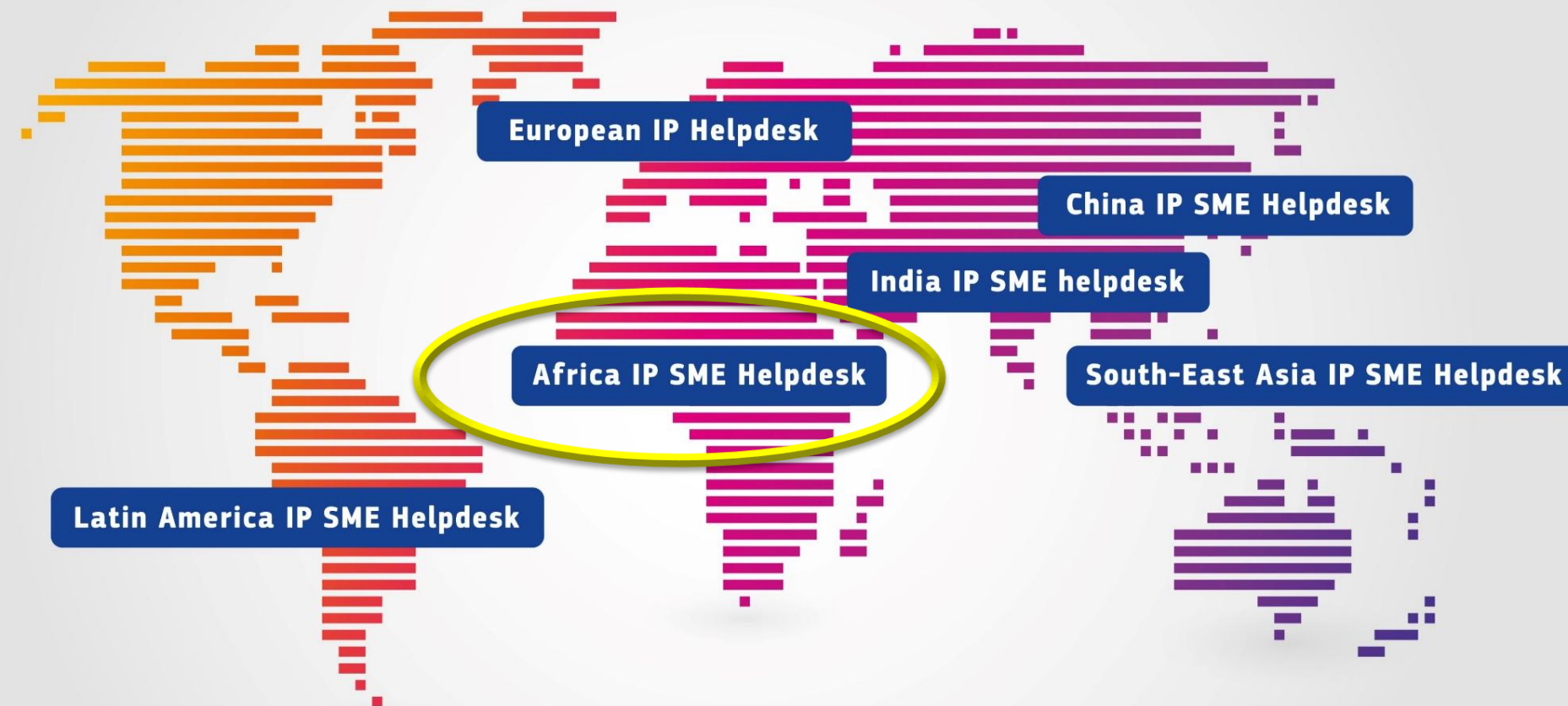
SME scoreboard

- ✓ SMEs represent 99% of European businesses;
- ✓ Only 10 % of EU SMEs owns registered IP rights;
- ✓ 93% reports a positive impact;
- ✓ 45 % of IP rights' owners have sought financial gains through their IP assets;
- ✓ 36% declares to have succeeded.

2022 Intellectual Property SME Scoreboard

International IP SME Helpdesks

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ADVICE FOR YOUR BUSINESS



Six EU-funded helpdesks offer free resources to your small or medium-sized business to help you manage your intellectual property.



IP Helpdesk

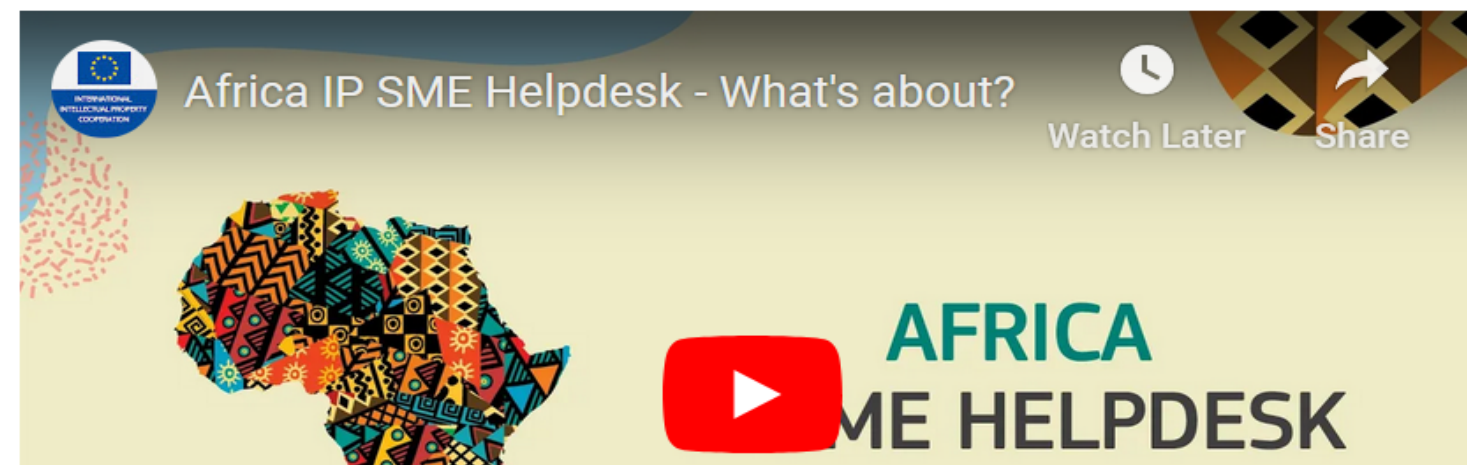
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Africa IP SME Helpdesk

A first-line IP assistance service for European SMEs that operate or intend to access the African market and look to improve their global competitiveness.

The Africa IP SME Helpdesk supports small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) from the European Union (EU) to both protect and enforce their Intellectual Property (IP) rights in/or relating to Africa by providing free information and services. These comprise jargon-free, first-line, confidential advice on intellectual property and related issues, as well as training, materials and online resources.



Services



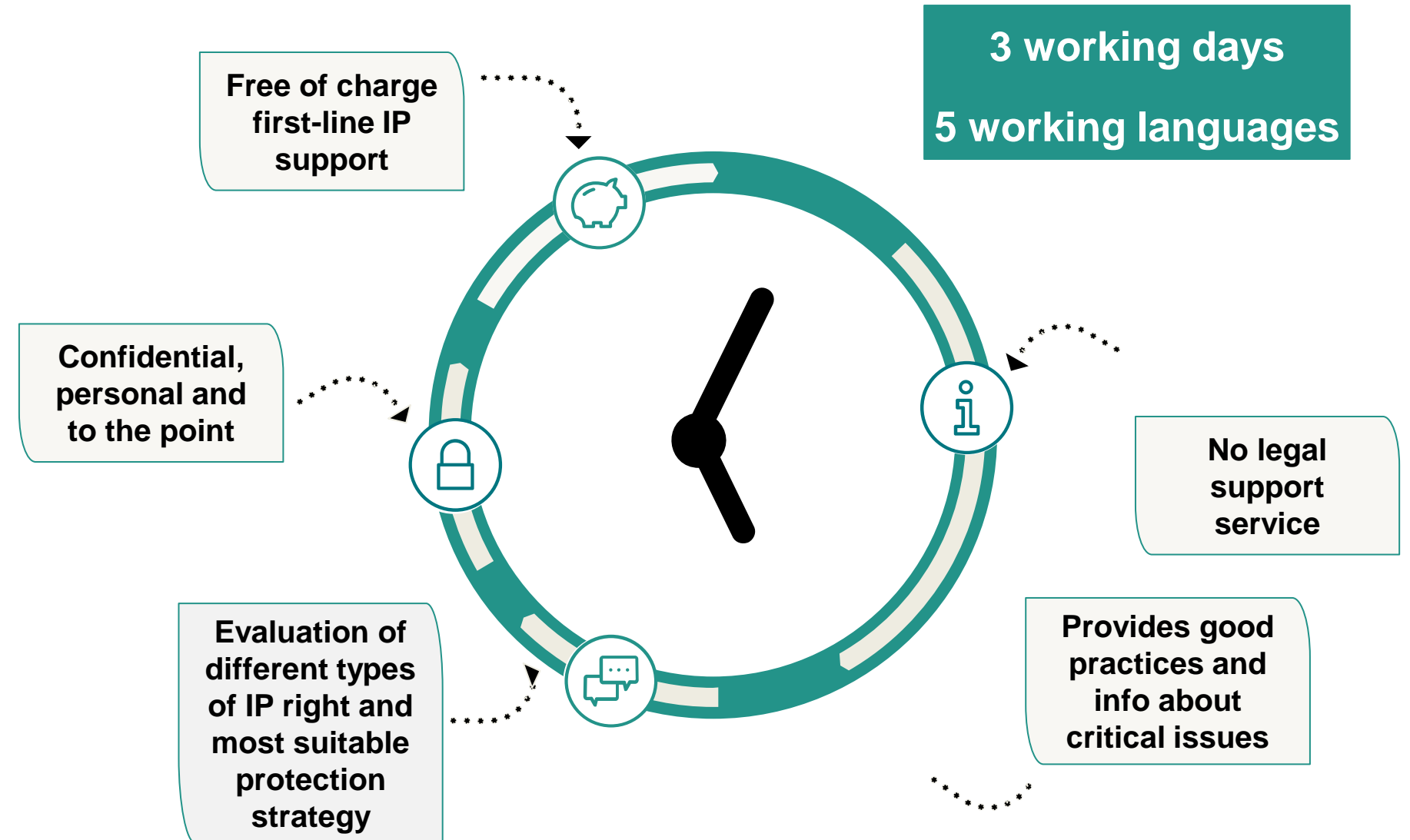
Helpline

IP Materials

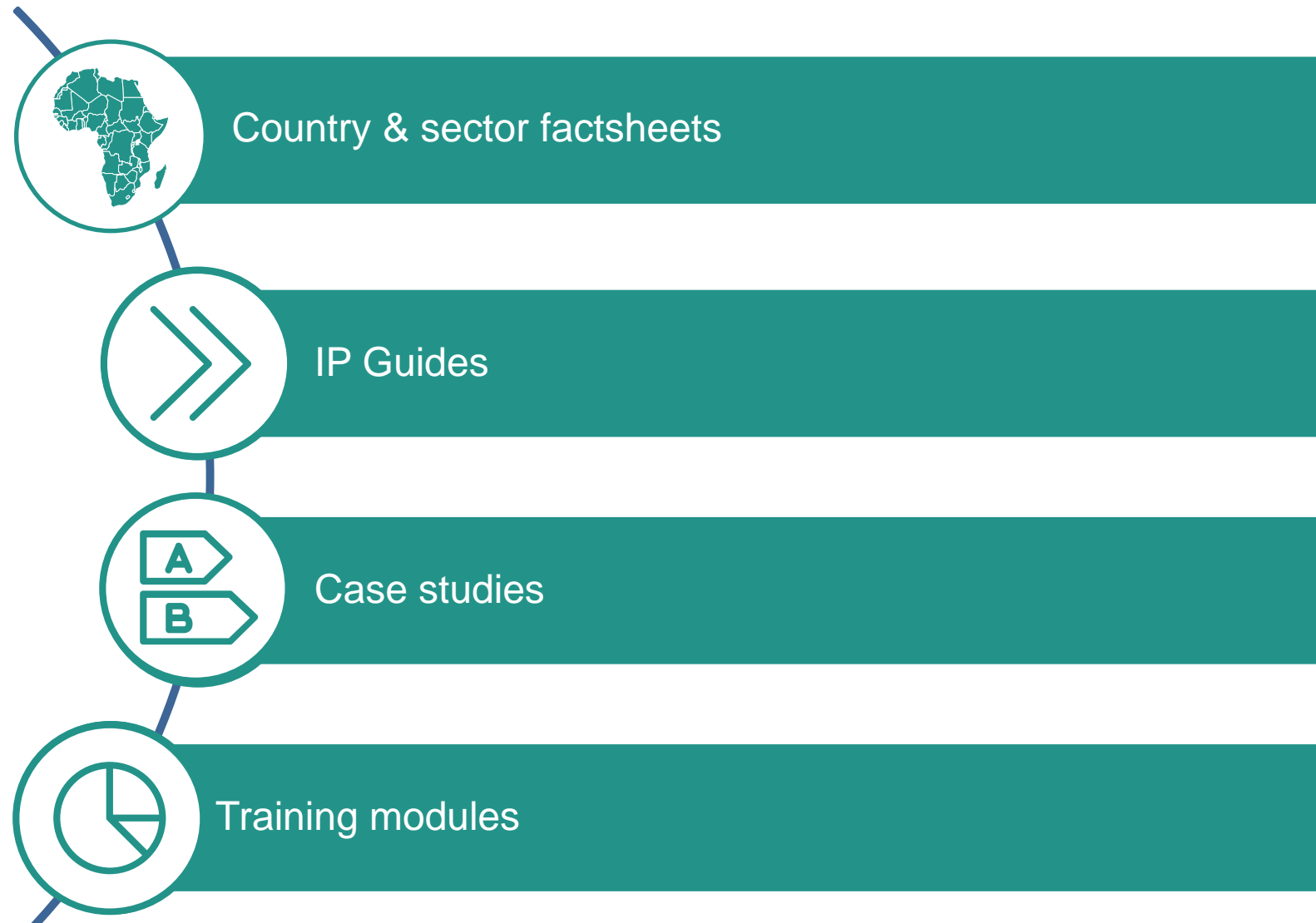
Events and training

FREE OF CHARGE

Helpline



Online resources



Online resources



> 50 country factsheets



14 case studies
and IP guides



24 online training modules



Example

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PATENT VALIDATION SYSTEM IN TUNISIA

Background
Company X, a fast-rising data infrastructure company from a country in the Single Market Programme, provides integrated data services and cloud operations solutions to enterprise customers across Europe. The company recently developed cloud operations software designed to help nursing homes and other geriatric facilities streamline their client information systems. Company X had registered the patent prior to the software's launch and quickly penetrated the European markets.

In line with its Africa 2030 internationalisation agenda, the company decided to open its first African headquarters in Tunisia. The company decided to explore Tunisia's intellectual property system and determine the best approach for patent registration in the country.

Actions undertaken
After reviewing Tunisia's intellectual property system, Company X discovered that the country had signed a patent validation agreement with the European Union in 2016. This agreement allows for the extension of European patent protection to Tunisia for patents granted by the European Patent Organisation (EPO). In effect, European patents may be validated in Tunisia upon the applicant's request. However, this request must be made within a specific time frame, and the applicant must pay the required fee to the EPO. If the payment is not made within six months of the European patent grant, the validation request will be deemed withdrawn, although a two-month grace period may apply.

Based on this information, Company X, which had initially intended to file patents for the new software alone, resolved to enter a validation request for all its EU patents to be registered in Tunisia. Within a few months of meeting the local requirements stipulated by Tunisia's patent laws, all the patents were validated, and the inventions were protected accordingly.

Lessons learnt

- Understanding the intellectual property system of prospective markets prior to expansion is a business imperative.
- By taking the initiative to explore the local IP system, Company X realised they could validate all their EU patents, rather than just one, through the seamless and cost-effective validation method.
- International collaborations significantly optimise brand expansion and internationalisation opportunities for businesses worldwide. Therefore, businesses must actively seek out existing alliances that best support their commercial objectives.

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Case study on custom protection

IP guides

European Commission | AFRICA IP SME HELPDESK

Guide to IPR Protection in EGYPT



Training and events



Online and on-site

Connecting SMEs with each other
and with multipliers

Capacity building

Participation in matchmaking
events

Collaboration with local experts
and stakeholders

On countries' IP landscapes, regional IP
systems, industries, key amendments

Outreach



47 promotion and matchmaking events



69 training events



>2400 stakeholders reached



Contacts

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Thank you