



EU - ANGOLA BUSINESS FORUM

CONCEPT NOTE

Brussels, 24 March 2022

The objective of this first EU-Angola Business Forum is to **foster European investment in Angola by highlighting its economic opportunities and potential**. The event aims to promote Angola as an investment destination beyond oil and gas. It will focus on green and digital investments as catalyst to boost trade, create decent jobs and promote sustainable and diversified growth. Besides its potential, it will also serve as a platform to discuss the challenges and propose ways to move forward to improve the business climate.

To mobilise European investors, thematic panels on the key sectors for EU investment will discuss the opportunities and challenges business may face as well as the government reforms in place. European firms already established in Angola will present their business cases while business facilitators such as business organisations, incubators or financing institutions will feed the discussion with the list of concrete tools and services they offer to facilitate European investment in Angola. Moreover, EU and Angolan officials will explain how firms can take advantage of the Angola-EU Sustainable Investment Facilitation Agreement (SIFA) and the regional Economic Partnership Agreement (SADC - EU EPA).

Besides panels, the Forum will also offer a platform for direct interaction between companies (B2B) and between firms and policy makers (B2G). Firms can book slots to discuss their issues with peers or public officials in bilateral.

In sum, the Business Forum aims to foster investment and therefore, serve as a beacon to create more decent jobs and a more compliant, sustainable, eco-friendly and less climate aggressive business environment in Angola.

1. Background

In recent years, the Government of Angola has designed ambitious reforms including a Macroeconomic Stabilization Plan, new Investment Law and Privatization agenda, export diversification plan, modernised competition framework, simplified tax measures, but important challenges remain. Infrastructure gaps, shortage of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), heavy regulation, weak contract enforcement and dispute settlement and limited institutional capacity are areas to improve. The EU-funded 2019 Investment Policy Review of Angola confirmed that Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows are below the high potential, remain volatile and concentrate on the extractive sector.

Fostering business linkages is critical to Angola's success in diversifying its economy beyond oil and gas. The EU supports this under the EU-Angola Joint Way Forward, where the EU funds specific assistance to improve Angolan trade, investment, formulation and implementation of reforms and sustainable economic diversification. It is under this programme that the idea of holding an "EU-Angola Business Forum" was raised. Both, the President of the European Council, Charles Michel, and

the President of the Republic of Angola, João Lourenço, welcomed the initiative in a meeting held April 2021.

Furthermore, the rapid advance on the Angola-EU SIFA makes this an opportune moment to discuss how to increase the European investment in Angola. Once in place, SIFA will improve the investment climate and facilitate the attraction and expansion of investment between the Parties, based on modern and simplified rules, measures and procedures. Within this framework, Angola also moves forward towards the accession to the regional Economic Partnership Agreement with the EU (SADC-EU EPA).

2. Linkages to EU strategies

Angola's accession to the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), the SADC Trade Protocol, the negotiations to join the SADC-EU EPA and the SIFA will significantly contribute in connecting Angola's economy to regional and global value chains. Besides diversifying its economy, it could promote Angola as a potential hub for specialised goods & services.

The EU collaborates with Angola on their efforts towards this goal. Via its strategy with Africa, the EU supports national programmes to boost trade and sustainable investments; improve the investment climate and business environment; increase access to quality education, skills, research, innovation, health and social rights; and advance regional and continental economic integration.

The EU-Africa strategy, EU Green Deal, Digitalisation agenda and 2021-27 programming for EU support to Angola are in line with Angola's National Development Plan 2018-2022 last reviewed in July 2020 and particularly its pillar on "Sustainable, Diversified and Inclusive Economic Development" as well as 'Angola 2025', the country's long-term development strategy, which is being reviewed and has been extended until 2050. These public efforts to improve the local business climate are also backed up by the European private sector. In 2021, a study made by the EU Delegation and the Member States present in-country identified around 300 European business already established in Angola. The Forum aims to support current & potential European investors to strengthen their business in Angola. The highlighted sectors are: agriculture, energy, water, digitalisation, industry and infrastructure.

3. Audience

The event targets European investors and potential investors to enlarge their operations in Angola.

The private sector will be at the core of the EU-Angola Business Forum. Current investors will have the chance to discuss their opportunities & barriers and potential investors will be able to pose their questions on possible new investments in Angola including the possibility to diversify their regional portfolio by entering the Angolan market. Member States, EU Chambers of Commerce and other Business Support Organisations from the EU will be closely involved in the content and follow-up of this Forum.

The forum will foster public-private dialogue including participants from Angola's main ministries and agencies, European and Angolan firms as well as key European officials from different services such as EEAS – political branch, DG for International Partnerships (INTPA) – development branch-, TRADE – commercial branch, DG Mare – technical fisheries branch-, etc. It will also include the participation of EU Member States, Chambers of Commerce, Development Finance Institutions and private sector associations to identify and unlock Angola's promising investment opportunities.

4. Format

A physical event in Brussels will be complemented by an online platform allowing for a wider participation and interaction (i.e., B2B/B2G direct interactions and online meetings). Taking into consideration the rapid evolution of the Covid-19 pandemic, the event is designed to switch to a complete virtual format, if necessary.

5. Organisation

The practical organisation of the EU-Angola Business Forum is led by the European Commission (INTPA) together with the EU Delegation to Angola. They gather the collaborations from all other partners in the Angolan government and EU services.

Besides, they receive support from the EU-funded Trade Private Sector Development (TPSD) Facility that will provide technical support to fine-tune the concept note and support the event's content. Moreover, a communication firm will arrange the logistics, external communication and organisational aspects of this Business Forum.

See preliminary programme enclosed / attached.