

Press Release

Paris, May 9, 2026

Africa Forward: Business France mobilizes African and French economic players in Nairobi to fast-track investment and innovation partnerships

At the Africa Forward 2026 Summit, Business France, public investment bank Bpifrance and development finance institution Proparco are jointly organizing the “Inspire & Connect” Economic Forum, bringing together more than 2,000 African and French participants in Nairobi, from public decision-makers, investors and entrepreneurs to businesses and economic institutions.

Africa Forward aims to strengthen firm partnerships between African and French actors around investment, innovation, industrialization and job creation.

A delegation of nearly 70 French SMEs and mid-sized companies in Nairobi

Business France is mobilizing a delegation of nearly 70 French businesses, mainly SMEs and mid-sized companies, from France’s regions and entrepreneurial base.

Kenya, the second largest economy in East Africa, is now establishing itself as a major regional hub for investment, innovation and enterprise. France is among the top five foreign investors in the country, with nearly 150 French firms operating locally, accounting for approximately 36,000 direct jobs.

The businesses involved cover strategic sectors such as energy, infrastructure, healthcare, digital technology, urban services and sports equipment. They include Hodi (mobility and transport solutions), Intégrale (digital technologies and services), Alyce (data and smart mobility solutions) and Metalu Plast (sports equipment and multi-sport infrastructure).

“Connect” at the heart of the Economic Forum

Business France is leading the “Connect” dimension of the Forum so as to promote economic networking and the emergence of tangible projects between African and French players.

In this capacity, the agency is organizing more than 850 B2B and B2G meetings during the Forum, bringing together businesses, investors, public institutions and economic decision-makers.

This program includes targeted business meetings, meetings with African public decision-makers, economic networking sessions, as well as several field visits and visits to industrial sites organized in and around Nairobi.

Highlights included a visit to the KenGen geothermal site in Olkaria, Kenya, illustrating opportunities for cooperation in the fields of energy and sustainable infrastructure.

The aim is to promote the emergence of sustainable partnerships and to support French business’ access to economic opportunities on the African continent.

Two strategic themes championed by Business France: Overseas territories and the development of African investments in France

The first theme will focus on the role of Mayotte and Réunion as strategic economic interfaces between Europe on the one hand, and on the other hand East and Southern Africa. Around forty businesses from these overseas territories will be mobilized in Nairobi to promote regional economic integration in the Indian Ocean region.

The second will focus on the growing momentum of African investment in France. More than 1,400 African businesses are currently established in France, accounting for nearly 15,000 jobs and an estimated stock of foreign direct investment of €8.6 billion. Between 2024 and 2025, Business France supported 65 African investment projects in France, resulting in more than 1,000 jobs being created or maintained.

Africa, a strategic priority for Business France

Business France operates through a network of 11 offices and 72 experts covering more than 30 African markets that together make up nearly 80% of the continent's GDP. By 2025, Business France had supported more than 2,100 French businesses in Africa. Furthermore, more than 560 young talents are deployed within 260 firms in 34 African countries through the VIE program.

“Connect Forum reflects a strong conviction that economic relations between France and African economies are now built around investment, innovation, industrial partnerships and the creation of shared value. Through Africa Forward, Business France aims to foster tangible, sustainable and mutually beneficial economic cooperation between African and French stakeholders,” said Louis Margueritte, Chief Executive Officer of Business France.

About Business France

Business France is the public consulting business serving the international development of the French economy. It is responsible for fostering export-led growth by French businesses, as well as promoting and facilitating foreign investment in France.

It promotes France's firms, business image and nationwide attractiveness as an investment location, and also runs the V.I.E international internship program, which connects businesses with young talent for international assignments.

Business France has more than 1,400 personnel, both in France and in 53 countries throughout the world.

In 2025, support from Business France made it possible to generate €2.5 billion in additional export revenues for French SMEs and mid-size companies, accounting for more than 25,386 jobs created or planned. Business France supported 59% of the 1,878 foreign investment decisions in 2025, accounting for 35,426 forecast jobs.

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