



EMBASSY OF BELGIUM Wallonia-Brussels Trade Commission

How to expand your business in the European Union, with the support of the Wallonia Export & Investment Agency (AWEx)

The EU is the world's largest single market and South African top export destination of goods with roughly 30% of the total S.A. exports going to the EU. Thanks to the recently signed trade agreement between SADC and Europe, almost 99% of South African goods can enter this market duty-free.

In between major submarkets like France, UK and Germany, **Belgium** appears like a little neutral country in the EU, highly respected and centrally located. The reason why everyone likes Belgians is for their humble and flexible personality, their multilingualism and their qualities of skilful negotiators.

Wallonia is the Southern French speaking half of Belgium, at the crossroads of the Latin and Germanic world. It is equivalent in size to the Gauteng province ($\pm 17,000 \text{ km}^2$), with a similar GDP as well ($\pm \text{€ } 100 \text{ billion}$). So it is a relatively small region but ideally located, connected and equipped to support foreign companies willing to expand their activity in the EU.

The **Wallonia Export & Investment Agency (AWEx)** through its office in Johannesburg can help your company tap into the European market. One way to enter this market is to set up a local office in Wallonia. Then you will be entitled to the free support of the AWEx networks, which include:

- Our HQ's in Brussels,
- Our six regional offices in Wallonia
- Our international network of 106 offices, allowing you to develop your business beyond Europe
- A dedicated office in charge of the relations with the European commission. This AWEX EU Office acts as a supporting organisation to liaise with the EU institutions and inform our companies on the programs and projects promoted or financed by the Commission.

Here are some examples of the support that AWEX would offer you in case you locate your business in Wallonia:

- Invitation to participate in more than 160 actions every year (mostly pavilions at trade shows and trade missions abroad).
- Assistance and recommendation for the issuance of work permits and provisional residence permits.
- Assistance in the legal and administrative process of setting up a company.
- Employment support : Assistance in the search for local workforce, assistance in securing recruitment grants, reductions in social security costs, training
- Visit of existing sites and facilities for potential warehousing or manufacturing activities.
- Introduction to our business clusters, professional or sector oriented associations and peer companies.

So don't wait any longer and get in touch to arrange a meeting.

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