

ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
SANTA MARIA DA FEIRA



bizfeira



santa maria da feira
câmara municipal



santa maria da feira
câmara municipal



WHAT WE HAVE DONE	03
WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO	09
01 INVESTMENT ATTRACTION	12
02 SUPPORT DIGITAL AND ENERGY TRANSFORMATION	14
03 TRAINING AND TALENT	15
04 QUALIFICATION AND EXPANSION OF AAE	16
05 EXPLORING THE ECONOMIC POTENTIAL OF THE DIASPORA	17
CROSS-CUTTING INITIATIVES	18





WHAT WE HAVE DONE

The Bizfeira project, promoted by the Municipality of Santa Maria da Feira, is part of the local economic development policies seeking to act in the highly competitive context existing between the territories to attract investments and establish businesses capable of generating wealth and employment for the populations and, consequently, contribute to increasing levels of income and quality of life for the Feirense society.

It was set up in 2014, a year in which the county had an unemployment rate above 15%, having contributed to a situation of full employment in 2019, with a rate of less than 4%, and in the last year going through a slight alteration due to the effects of the

pandemic, but whose signs allow us to foresee a quick recovery.

It stems from the strong understanding that by solving the employment situation and having a dynamic, competitive, and increasingly internationalized productive fabric, the needs for social support drastically decrease, freeing public entities and their resources to strengthen support for cases which effectively need help because they cannot work (vulnerable groups such as the elderly, disadvantaged youth, the sick, and others). In this way, it favours the creation of a more cohesive society, not being, therefore, a project aimed only at entrepreneurs and companies, but for everyone.

The services it increasingly offers are widely known, including the provision of a dedicated team with a single agent that accompanies the investor during all the phases of the investment: from receiving the investment intention to its final setting up. It also provides investors with all the information that will allow them to make a decision that is as informed as possible, and in the event of deciding on the installation, support is provided in the identification of the location, in the licensing process - quick route companies -, in recruitment, as well as facilitating and streamlining communication with public and private entities whose partnership proves to be relevant to the project in question, such as training centres and/or technology centres.

Bizfeira also promotes several campaigns that reinforce the proximity with the Feirense Diaspora spread out around the world; people who consider themselves to be extremely important county ambassadors, and fundamental in the promotion of the territory and its companies, as well as in the facilitation of business and internationalization processes.

The project also includes the promotion of business missions and economic diplomacy initiatives carried out with the direct involvement of the Presidency. These have contributed to increasing the competitiveness of companies, attracting investment and increasing employment.

Among other initiatives, we wish to highlight the organization of business events which have involved thousands of participants. Of these, the one that stands out is the Bizfeira Forum, which takes place annually and aims to provide a meeting between entrepreneurs and other relevant entities for economic development. The presence of Chambers of Commerce, talks, workshops, networking spaces, and the exhibition of innovative products and services constitute an excellent opportunity for everyone, and for companies in particular, to be in contact with the major challenges of the global market. As such, what is sought

is the access to better information and knowledge, contact with suitable and privileged partners, together with the establishment of collaborative processes, making companies more prepared for the challenges of the new economy, especially in a context of digital transformation and environmental challenges.

All these initiatives have been developed in a constant and committed manner, often with little visibility due to their very nature, but they have proven to be decisive for the good results obtained. In fact, the over 3200 business consultations carried out, the over 1560 companies visited, the informative campaigns, economic diplomacy, and business missions (over 50) and contacts with the Diaspora from Feira, among others, have contributed to the increase in volume of business and exports (Santa Maria da Feira is among the top ten most exporting municipalities). In this context, the attraction of foreign investment obtained in unprecedented amounts, coming from demanding international markets such as the United States, France, Spain, Switzerland, Belgium, Brazil, Israel, Germany, and Ireland, stands out.

It should also be noted that in 2016, the Bizfeira platform was distinguished with the 1st National Prize for the “European Business Promotion Awards”, in the category of Support to Internationalization, an initiative of the European Commission, with national coordination by IAPMEI and also by AMA – Agency for Administrative Modernization recognizing the Bizfeira platform as an example of good practices. In addition to this recognition, the Bizfeira platform was included in the Common Knowledge Network.

In this scenario, the intention is to intensify this investment promotion policy, increasingly based on the demand for qualified and well-paid labour, seeking to give continuity to the project, skillfully adjusting it to the municipality’s strategic investments and the dynamics and challenges of the national, European, and world economy.

figure 01

INVESTMENTS SUPPORTED BY SECTOR



INDÚSTRIA TRANSFORMADORA



CONSTRUÇÃO



RETAILHO E DISTRIBUIÇÃO



SAÚDE



LOGÍSTICA



RESTAURAÇÃO, BEBIDAS E HOTELARIA



BUSINESS SERVICES



TECNOLOGIAS DE INFORMAÇÃO



AGROALIMENTAR

OVER **270 MILLION EUROS** IN SUPPORTED INVESTMENT

figure 02 SUPPORTED INVESTMENTS ACCORDING TO PLACE OF ORIGIN



PORTUGAL



USA



SPAIN



BELGIUM



FRANCE





SWITZERLAND



GERMANY



BRAZIL



IRELAND



ISRAEL





WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO

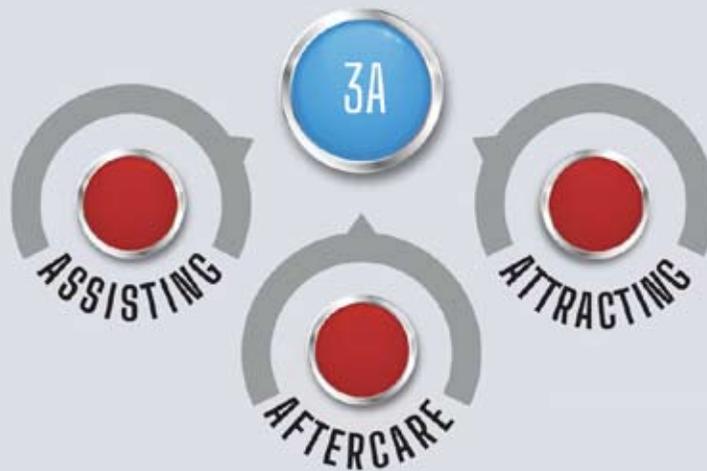
BIZFEIRA2030 ACTION PLAN

The **BizFeira2030 Action Plan** and its strategic pivots aim to strengthen the local economic fabric and the results already achieved, aligning the initiatives with the agenda of public policies and financial support that will indelibly mark the economic evolution of territories and companies. Specifically, BizFeira will consider the guidelines emanating from the agendas of the **Portugal 2030 Strategy** and, in particular, with regard to “**Digitalization, Innovation, and Qualifications as drivers of development**”, as well as the “**Climate transition and sustainability of resources**”, as these will constitute the major trends and drivers of business competitiveness, together with the urgent need to integrate Europe’s re-industrialization. The **Agenda 2030 and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (UN)**, as a common vision for Humanity, will also be considered.

Bizfeira’s action will consequently be based in **Assisting, Aftercare and Attracting (3A)** companies, publicizing and enhancing the conditions of excellence that have been created, which grants Santa Maria da Feira with a highly competitive environment for the development and localization of high added value business initiatives. An example of this is the municipality’s commitment, and the consequent registered demand, to locate here Business Service Centres and business projects linked to the technological areas of health, biomedical sciences, research and information, and communication technologies.

The objective will be to establish and attract the creation of qualified employment, with a view to qualifying a competitive economic fabric capable of providing higher remuneration. The aim is to achieve virtuous and generalized levels of higher wages, resulting from increases in productivity and

Figure 03
ACTION 3A



the creation of a more competitive environment in the local labour market.

As a result of the economic and societal dynamics we are witnessing, it is also crucial to invest in new emerging sectors, with the recent and significant emergence of companies linked to information and communication technologies (ICT) and research, diagnosis, equipment, and treatments in the health area. These are two areas of action in which the municipality intends to be recognized as a reference space for the location of this type of activities, constituting the development of the “Europarque – Health, IT & Research hub”, as the anchor project of this investment, taking advantage of the existing conditions in the Europarque surroundings, particularly at an environmental level.

The recent launch of the Visio-HUB business centre (on the premises of the former Visionarium) is

another successful example of this commitment, allowing for the installation of large companies in the areas of technology, information, communication, and electronics, in a completely infrastructured and refurbished space, which will give a new life to the equipment, presenting it as a new and attractive technological park in Santa Maria da Feira.

The facilitating of processes, of “building bridges”, between economic agents will be maintained, as well as the constant upgrade of the Bizfeira web platform (www.bizfeira.com) as a support, business promotion, and communication tool for the project.

Consequently, on the following pages, the Strategic Pivots of the BizFeira 2030 Action Plan are defined:

figure 04
CROSS-CUTTING ACTIVITIES AND STRATEGIC PIVOTS

CROSS-CUTTING INITIATIVES

> Setting up of the Bizfeira Roundtable

> Upgrade of the Bizfeira 4.0 Platform

> Bizfeira Business Forum



INVESTMENT
ATTRACTION

01

STRATEGIC PIVOTS



DIGITAL AND
ENERGETIC
TRANSFORMATION

02



TRAINING
AND TALENT

03



QUALIFICATION
AND EXPANSION
OF THE AAE

04



ECONOMIC
POTENTIAL OF
THE DIASPORA

05

01

INVESTMENT ATTRACTION

- a) FDI – FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT b) STRATEGIC EMERGING SECTORS
c) EXPANSION d) REINDUSTRIALIZATION**

Attracting and supporting the expansion of business projects will continue to be pivotal to the Biz-Feira project, both in terms of foreign and national investment. Without putting aside investments in so-called traditional or complementary sectors, a selective attitude will be adopted in mobilizing investments in strategic areas of the future, such as Health, Business Centres, and TICE (Information Technologies, Communication, and Electronics Hub) so as to further innovation.

Initiatives

— **Economic diplomacy campaigns**

— **Communication actions**

- a) Communicate the differentiating factors of the territory
- b) Promote and give visibility to companies (Good Makers)
- c) Communicate other information about the project, its strategy and actions, as well as knowledge relevant to the companies

— **Strengthen institutional partnerships with Chambers of Commerce, Business Associations, education and research system entities, leading companies, and other economic agents, such as:**

- > Aicep Portugal Global, E.P.E Trade & Investment Agency of Portugal
- > IAPMEI, I.P. - Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation
- > IEFP – Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional (Employment and Professional Training Institute)
- > GRACE - Reflection and Support Group for Corporate Citizenship
- > ACEPI - Association of the Digital Economy
- > Porto and North of Portugal Tourism
- > UP - Porto University
- > UA – Aveiro University
- > ISVOUGA – Higher Institute of Entre Douro e Vouga
- > INESC TEC - Institute of Systems and Computer Engineering, Technology, and Science
- > ANI - National Innovation Agency
- > ENERGAIA – Southern Energy Agency of the Porto Metropolitan Area



- > APCOR – Portuguese Cork Association
 - > AETICE - Association of Companies of Information Technologies, Communication, and Electronics
 - > APICCAPS – Portuguese Association of Footwear, Components, Leather Articles and their Substitutes Manufacturers
 - > AIMMAP – Association of Metallurgical, Metalworking, and Related Industries of Portugal
 - > AEF – Business Association of the Municipality of Santa Maria da Feira
 - > ALTICE Portugal
 - > CTCP – Technological Centre for Footwear of Portugal
 - > CTCOR - Cork Technological Centre
 - > CINCORK - Professional Training Centre for the Cork Industry
 - > CFPIC – Professional Training Centre for the Footwear Industry (Design Footwear Academy)
 - > ADRITEM – Regional Integrated Development Association of Terras de Santa Maria
 - > ALPE – Local Agency for Employment, and expansion to other relevant entities.
- **Support and monitor the installation of new investments**
 - **Production of local economic information**
 - **Information about financing instruments**
 - **Provision of information about existing incentives (Portugal 2030 and PRR)**
 - **Networking campaigns and business promotion (networking events and promotion of the Bizfeira Platform)**
 - **Selective policy for attracting complementary investments (commitment to strategic sectors, such as a focus on Health, TICE, Business Services, and sectors with greater added value)**
 - **Promotion of skilled and creative entrepreneurship aimed at social and societal challenges**

02

SUPPORT DIGITAL AND ENERGY TRANSFORMATION

Due to the growing importance of these themes for the future of business competitiveness, it is important that the local productive fabric and BizFeira are equipped with information about the evolution, trends, and challenges resulting from economic dynamics, as well as contact with the best practices with regard to adapting to the new demands that digital transformation and adaptation to climate change imply.

Initiatives

- **Promotion of awareness campaigns**
- **Creation of the “Observatory for the Digital and Environmental Transition”**

Through the establishment of partnerships and collaboration with relevant entities for this context, the goal is that the Observatory can develop actions to support the diagnosis of the state of maturity of each company with regard to the adoption of industry 4.0 and environmental and energy sustainability practices, allowing to provide information adjusted to the needs of



companies, monitor progress, identify support, and adjust project initiatives so that the impact on the municipality’s economy is greater.

- **Information about existing incentive systems for business actions and projects that fall under these themes**
- **Promotion of qualified and creative Entrepreneurship in the areas of response to digital transformation and environmental sustainability**

03

TRAINING AND TALENT

The adaptation of human resource training to the current needs of companies and the establishment of qualified staff are essential to increase the competitiveness of companies in the city of Santa Maria da Feira, as well as for the establishment of new companies. As such, BizFeira will continue to promote, in close proximity to companies and training entities, a set of actions that allow for the alignment of the training offer with the demand and supporting companies in the recruitment of talents most suited to their needs.

Initiatives

- The mapping of the training needs of the local productive fabric
- The articulation with “ALPE – Local Employment Agency” and in particular by supporting the “Train to Employ” campaign, which consists of training tailored to the specific needs of companies, using specialized training partners, and streamlined in the work context as a “quick route” for the profes-

sional integration of people participating in the training context

- Working with training entities
- Execution of HR recruitment/placement support campaigns



04

QUALIFYING AND EXPANSION OF THE AAE

(Business Reception Areas)

Improving the operating and installation conditions of companies is an essential investment, so urban and environmental re-qualification will continue, as will the creation of support services in the Business Reception Areas (AAE) and the availability of new spaces.

In addition to the private business parks that are being set up, the project in the Europarque surroundings stands out due to its importance, both for its dimension and for its strategic nature, which complements and enhances it.

A new city is born in an area of over 400 ha, in a reference space that brings together crucial areas: health, education, research, information technologies, well-being, and leisure. We will have a city within a city.

The “HITR | HEALTH, IT & RESEARCH” will be the anchor Project of this “new city” that will make Santa Maria da Feira a national and international refe-

rence space in health research, creating conditions for the development of a cluster in this sector.

The area, in addition to the amenities resulting from the Europarque infrastructure and its landscape and environmental integration, also provides spaces for the location of other economic activities.



05

EXPLORE THE ECONOMIC POTENTIAL OF THE DIASPORA

Santa Maria da Feira has a very important community living abroad with whom we wish to maintain and deepen affective relationships, and who have shown willingness and conditions to support the municipality's economic development process.

BizFeira has supported the promotion of these links with local people from around the world and with the "Casas da Vila da Feira", boosting knowledge about our companies in the markets where they operate, promoting business and attracting investment to the municipality.

The following also stand out:

- **GACE – Support Office for Emigrant Communities**, which will continue to support citizens who have been emigrated, who are coming back, who wish to emigrate, or people who still reside abroad and all those who wish to live, study, work, and invest in Santa Maria da Feira;
- **the articulation with the National Diaspora Investor Support Programme (PNAID)**, which is a national programme to value Portuguese communities that promote investment of the diaspora, as well as exports and the internationalization of national companies through the diaspora.





CROSSCUTTING INITIATIVES

» **Creation of the Bizfeira Roundtable**

The Bizfeira Roundtable aims to strengthen cooperation and create networks, with the goal of becoming an aggregating space for partnerships (formal and informal) established with the municipality and with the Bizfeira project, integrating reference companies, business associations, entities of the teaching and research system and other relevant entities, and reference people for the promotion of local economic development.

It is intended to act as a space for listening and reflection, for the strategic definition of initiatives to be developed that can increase the competitiveness of our companies, promote business, attract investment, and create jobs.

» **BizFeira 4.0 Platform Upgrade**

The BizFeira Platform will be subject to permanent restructuring and updates in order to improve its

capacity to respond to the constant challenges the economic agents face, improving its features and making it more appealing and easier to use in multiple formats (computer, tablet, and mobile phone). Its aim, as a response to this difficult context, is to add a specific focus to local commerce, accommodation, and restaurants, continuing to provide a great visibility to the entire economic fabric, pertinent information for the activity and installation of companies, as well as for conducting business.

» **BizFeira Business Forum**

The Bizfeira Forum, which takes place annually, will continue to be a time for assessing economic activity and evolution, for networking and for reflection and knowledge about the major challenges that companies have to deal with, with the intention of being increasingly more known, boosting mobilization capacity and relevance to economic agents.



The BizFeira project, in an increasingly proficient way, fulfils the objectives that presided over its creation, promoting Santa Maria da Feira as an innovative, entrepreneurial, and competitive territory for the development of business activities with increasing added value and that give priority to the dynamics of digital transformation and the principles of environmental sustainability. The excellent infrastructure and conditions made available, the environment conducive to innovation and the mobilization of qualified human resources, make the municipality an ideal space for hosting business projects that contribute positively to the well-being of People and the Planet, as they become more competitive, generate profit, and create jobs. Consequently, we will have a more resilient and cohesive municipality.

Santa Maria da Feira is, therefore, a territory that reconciles economic development with quality of life, providing a favourable environment for investing, working, but also for living.

Without the constraints of large urban centres, all the while being close to them, the municipality has been adding reasons for appeal, reinforced by the current context in which we live and by the growing phenomenon of digital transformation, which make it an excellent place to live and carry out professional activities, without the cost, pollution, congestion, or commute from other locations. More and more individuals and families can have a daily life in Santa Maria da Feira with a more enriching social experience in a community, a diverse cultural offer, and enjoy wide green spaces and contact with Nature, in addition to a network of quality facilities which make the municipality a reference space to live a full life.

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