

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MISSION TO

FRANCE



END OF MISSION REPORT

JUNE 10-19, 2025

ORGANIZED BY

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY INTERNATIONAL TRADE CONSORTIUM (ITC)



Miami-Dade County
Board of County Commissioners
International Trade Consortium



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ITC

INTERNATIONAL TRADE CONSORTIUM

ABOUT US

The International Trade Consortium (ITC) promotes Miami-Dade County as a Global Gateway for bilateral trade and enhances access to economic development opportunities for local companies. Established in November 2002, our office is the lead liaison between the County and the Consular Corps of South Florida and serves as a one-stop information and referral resource for international affairs and trade.

ITC works with a wide range of partners, including foreign diplomatic and trade offices, bi-national chambers of commerce and county, state and federal government agencies, and economic development agencies, along with the Miami International Airport and PortMiami. We plan the County's official outbound business development missions, support inbound trade missions, and manage the Sister Cities program of Miami-Dade County.

ITC SERVICES

International Business Development Missions and Shows: International outbound missions consist of meeting with high-level government officials and economic development agencies to promote Miami-Dade County's role as a "Global Gateway" and the "Gateway to the Americas" for international trade.

Inbound Trade Missions: Foreign inbound trade missions are diplomatic reciprocal visits made by cities visited by Miami-Dade County. The ITC is the one stop center for incoming trade missions looking to do business in Miami-Dade County.

Calendar of Events: Listing of events hosted by the ITC and strategic business partners promoting bilateral trade.

Business Trade Alerts Newsletter: Miami-Dade County's latest trade alerts, international affairs, and consular corps news.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY IS A GLOBAL TRADE HUB

- GDP: \$192.8 billion
- Population: 2.8 million residents
- \$12.7 billion annual budget
- Operates Miami International Airport & PortMiami
- Growing tech + innovation ecosystem
- 4th largest Consular Corps in the US
- 83 consulates and honorary consular corps in South Florida
- 29 binational chambers
- 14 foreign trade offices
- 1400+ multinational corporations in South Florida, 72% in Miami-Dade County

ITC BOARD MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

The ITC Board of Directors is made up of 14 member organizations from public and private sectors of economic development agencies in the community and 17 directors appointed by the Mayor and County Commission that advise on matters related to Miami-Dade County's international trade.

CAMACOL

Florida Custom Brokers & Forwarders Association

Financial & International Business Association

Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce

Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau

Miami-Dade Beacon Council

Miami-Dade Chamber of Commerce

Miami International Airport

PortMiami

South Florida District Export Council

World Trade Center Miami

The Foundation for Democracy in Africa

Miami-Dade County Asian American Advisory Board

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY & FRANCE

Miami-Dade County and France have cultivated a robust and multifaceted bilateral relationship, underscored by significant trade exchanges, strategic partnerships, and cultural ties.

France is one of our most important trading partners, ranking 12th in trade and investment for Miami-Dade County, and a bilateral relationship valued at \$3.7 billion in 2024. France is one of the top investor countries in South Florida and a key European partner, contributing to sectors such as aerospace, emerging tech, pharmaceuticals, and luxury goods.

ITC works closely with the Consulate General of France in Miami to solidify cross-border relations between the two regions.

Sister City and Seaport Ties

The longstanding Sister Cities relationship between Miami-Dade County and the Metropolis of Aix-Marseille-Provence, established in 2017, facilitates ongoing collaboration in innovation, culture, education, and entrepreneurship. PortMiami's Sister Seaport agreement with the Port of Marseille-Fos complements this connection by promoting maritime logistics, trade routes, and business development between the two port cities.

Recent Engagements and Diplomatic Visits

In 2024, a delegation from Aix-Marseille-Provence, led by Metropolitan Councilor Vincent Languille visited Miami-Dade County for meetings with local officials, and ITC leadership. Discussions focused on strengthening cooperation in food and beverage, education, innovation, and air connectivity. In February 2025, Mayor Sophie Joissains of Aix-en-Provence renewed her city's 28-year Sister City agreement with Coral Gables, and met with ITC to further deepen regional connections.

Tech Collaboration: French Tech Miami & French-American Chamber of Commerce

ITC has actively fostered connections with France's innovation ecosystem through its partnership with Le French Tech Miami. As part of this collaboration, ITC participated in French Tech Capital Days, engaging with French startups and investors seeking to expand into the U.S. and Latin American markets. These interactions promote technology transfer, facilitate market entry for French innovators, and provide U.S.-based companies with access to European networks and talent.

Looking Ahead

With Air France and French startups increasing their presence in the region, and ongoing dialogues around smart cities, emerging technologies, and sustainable infrastructure, the Miami-Dade County-France relationship is poised to deepen further.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY ITC'S BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MISSION TO FRANCE

Miami-Dade County International Trade Consortium (ITC) led a targeted business development mission to Paris, France, from June 10-18, 2025. The mission, led by Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners (BCC) Chairman Anthony Rodriguez, co-led by ITC Chairman Commissioner Oliver G. Gilbert, III, and joined by Commissioner Marleine Bastien, Commissioner Danielle Cohen Higgins and Senator Rene Garcia aimed to strengthen commercial ties, expand sister city relationships, and position Miami-Dade County as a leading U.S. destination for French innovation, investment, and trade.

The visit commenced with high-level business engagements, including a strategic breakfast hosted at EY headquarters and a startup-focused panel discussion at VivaTech, France's premier innovation and tech event. These sessions highlighted Miami's emergence as a tech and logistics hub, offering French companies unparalleled access to Latin American and Caribbean markets.

Throughout the week, the delegation actively participated in VivaTech programming, held bilateral meetings with French regional governments and mobility startups, and explored avenues for collaboration in tourism, aviation, infrastructure, and sustainability. A key highlight was the meeting with the Aix-Marseille-Provence Metropole to advance Sister City and Sister Seaport cooperation. The team also engaged with top-tier innovation firms, including those in air mobility, and conducted a site visit to Urbanloop, a low-emission transit project under development by Groupe SNCF. ITC partnered with the Miami-Dade Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) for this meeting.

A major highlight was attending the 2025 Paris Air Show, one of the world's premier aerospace exhibitions. The delegation met with global aviation leaders and explored emerging technologies relevant to Miami International Airport and PortMiami. Additionally, the delegation engaged with air mobility leaders such as Wisk and Eve Air Mobility to explore potential air taxi integration in the County's transportation ecosystem.

In the sports diplomacy space, the delegation met with the Fédération Française de Football (FFF) to discuss collaboration opportunities in the lead-up to FIFA World Cup 2026, including training infrastructure, fan experiences, and policy best practices.

The mission culminated in a policy-oriented briefing at the U.S. Embassy in Paris. These interactions reinforced Miami-Dade County's long-term objectives to drive innovation-based economic development, expand international partnerships, and attract foreign direct investment to the region.

The mission successfully enhanced visibility for Miami-Dade's global competitiveness, showcased its innovation ecosystem, and laid the groundwork for impactful partnerships across sectors such as tech, aerospace, tourism, transportation, and sports diplomacy.

MEETINGS IN PARIS, FRANCE

(JUNE 10 - 18, 2025)

TUESDAY, JUNE 10

THE MIAMI ADVANTAGE PETIT-DÉJEUNER:



Held at Ernst & Young headquarters at Tour First in Paris, the Miami Advantage Petit-Déjeuner brought together Miami-Dade County officials and French business leaders for a strategic discussion on why Miami is the premier U.S. destination for international expansion.

Commissioner Oliver G. Gilbert III, Chairman of the Miami-Dade County International Trade Consortium (ITC) Board, delivered the keynote address, emphasizing Miami-Dade County's role as a global hub for commerce, innovation, and connectivity to Latin America and the Caribbean.

The event, co-hosted by EY and the Miami-Dade Beacon Council, focused on the County's pro-business climate and reinforced Miami's positioning as the ideal launchpad for French and European companies entering the U.S. and broader Americas. The breakfast also set the tone for deeper collaboration throughout VivaTech week.

YADAY CONNECT: “MIAMI, THE NEW TECH HUB”



To kick off Team Miami’s presence at VivaTech 2025, Romain Afflelou of YADAY VC Investors and Association Antoine Alléno hosted a dynamic panel discussion titled “Miami, the New Tech Hub.” The session brought together top innovators and stakeholders from both France and Miami to explore the County’s growing reputation as a global tech destination.

Panel participants included:

- **Commissioner Oliver G. Gilbert, III**, *Chairman, Miami-Dade County ITC*
- **Jean-Christophe Lambert**, *CEO & Co-Founder, Ascendance*
- **Naïk Londono**, *CEO, Cosmo Connected*
- **Aileen Bouclé, AICP**, *Executive Director, Miami-Dade Transportation Planning Organization*
- **Etienne Gillard**, *Mana Tech*
- **Corine Busson-Benhammou**, *La French Tech Miami*

Startups such as AELER, Ascendance, and Cosmo Connected shared insights on why they are expanding into Miami, citing strategic access to the Americas, supportive business climate, and collaborative tech ecosystem. The panel highlighted the powerful synergy between public and private sector players in supporting cross-border tech growth.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11

KEYNOTE SPEECHES AT VIVATECH



Miami-Dade County delegates attended VivaTech 2025 and were welcomed at the Black Stage, by thought leaders Melissa Medina, Co-founder and CEO of eMerge Americas, and Moishe Mana, Chairman and CEO of Mana Common. Their joint keynote on “Startup, Scaleup & Growth” set the tone for collaboration between Miami’s thriving tech scene and France’s innovation ecosystem.

THURSDAY, JUNE 12

VIVATECH PARTICIPATION AND MIAMI/FLORIDA PAVILION BRIEFING



For the first time in the history of VivaTech, Miami-Dade County had a pavilion showcasing the County's start-up ecosystem, thanks to the efforts and collaboration of Mana Tech, La French Tech Miami, eMerge Americas, and the Consulate General of France in Miami. ITC supported the initiative by taking a high-level delegation to VivaTech, led by ITC Chairman, Commissioner Oliver G. Gilbert, III, and joined by Commissioner Marleine Bastien and Senator Rene Garcia.

Delegates spent the day exploring innovation at VivaTech. A special morning briefing was hosted at the Miami/Florida Pavilion to orient the delegation, with event organizers providing context on France's startup landscape and Miami's positioning as a gateway to Latin America and the Caribbean.

MEETING WITH AIX MARSEILLE PROVENCE METROPOLE



ITC delegation met with Paul Bichat, Chief of Service, Service Relations International Influence, and Beatrice D’Estienne D’orves, In Charge of International Relations from Aix-Marseille-Provence Metropole, a long-standing Sister City of Miami-Dade County. Discussions included bilateral collaboration in health tech, tourism, logistics, maritime sectors, and follow-ups from their 2024 delegation visit to Miami-Dade County. Paul and Beatrice are planning a peer exchange visit to Miami at the end of 2025.

FRIDAY, JUNE 13

MEETING WITH FOUNDERS OF VIVATECH



The delegation met with Maurice Lévy, Emeritus Chairman of Publicis Groupe, and François Bitouzet, Managing Director of VivaTech. The dialogue focused on leveraging large-scale innovation platforms to attract global investment, with insights into media, branding, and the scaling of entrepreneurial ecosystems. In the presence of the ITC delegation and eMerge Americas, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between La French Tech Miami, VivaTech, Mana Tech, and the French Consulate General in Miami to bring Viva Technology to Miami-Dade County in 2027.

MEETINGS WITH URBAN MOBILITY STARTUPS



At the Miami/Florida Pavilion, Commissioner Gilbert engaged with leading French startups in urban mobility, including sustainable transport, e-mobility infrastructure, and smart city solutions. Commissioner Gilbert emphasized Miami-Dade's interest in partnerships for transportation innovation and public-private pilots.

SATURDAY, JUNE 14

URBANLOOP SITE VISIT



Miami-Dade County delegation visited Station Urbanloop in Trappes to explore the “mini-metro” personal rapid transit system developed by Groupe SNCF. The visit offered a close look at automated electric capsules in action and stimulated discussion on low-emission transport systems in future Miami-Dade infrastructure planning. Miami-Dade Transportation Planning Organization partnered with ITC for this meeting.

MONDAY, JUNE 16

PARIS AIR SHOW



The delegation attended the 2025 Paris Air Show—one of the world’s largest and most influential aerospace exhibitions. The visit offered valuable insights into next-generation aviation, sustainable aerospace solutions, and air mobility technologies relevant to Miami-Dade County’s transportation and infrastructure goals.

Key meetings included discussions with HEICO Corporation, a major aerospace supplier headquartered in South Florida, focused on expanding collaboration in technology, maintenance, and workforce development. The delegation also met with Choose Paris Region, the regional economic development agency, to explore bilateral partnerships in airport innovation and investment attraction.

TUESDAY, JUNE 17

MEETING WITH FÉDÉRATION FRANÇAISE DE FOOTBALL (FFF)

The Miami-Dade County delegation met with François Bigot, Head of Institutional & International Affairs, at the FFF headquarters. With Miami set to host seven FIFA World Cup 2026 matches, the dialogue centered on sports diplomacy, fan engagement, training infrastructure, and event operations. County elected officials emphasized how such exchanges shape public policy and legacy planning.

NETWORKING AT GROUPE AÉROPORT DE PARIS CHALET



Commissioner Danielle Cohen Higgins met with Kiran Merchant, Vice Chairman of Merchant Aviation. Topics included Miami International Airport's capacity and global positioning, drawing parallels with Groupe ADP's aviation expertise.

VISIT TO WISK & EVE PAVILIONS - AIR TAXIS



Delegates toured air taxi innovators Wisk and Eve Air Mobility, examining next-gen aircraft, urban air mobility frameworks, and regulatory implications for potential adoption in Miami-Dade County.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18

U.S. EMBASSY BRIEFING IN PARIS



The Mission concluded with a country briefing by senior staff from the U.S. Embassy in Paris, held at the Pullman Montparnasse. The session provided macroeconomic and political context, investment trends, and commercial opportunities in France. The Embassy's Commercial and Political Affairs sections fielded questions and encouraged continued U.S.-France subnational partnerships.

MISSION OUTCOME & FOLLOW-UP

The ITC Business Development Mission to Paris in June 2025 yielded several tangible outcomes that advance Miami-Dade County’s global economic and innovation agenda:

FOLLOW-UP ON VIVATECH MOU

Following the Memorandum of Understanding signed between La French Tech Miami, VivaTech, Mana Tech and the French Consulate General in Miami to bring Viva Technology to Miami-Dade County in 2027, a follow-up meeting has been scheduled between ITC and local stakeholders—including French Tech Miami, eMerge Americas, and Mana Tech—to explore the feasibility of hosting a VivaTech-branded satellite event in Miami-Dade County. The goal is to align public-private partners and build a sustainable platform for innovation exchange between Miami and the European tech ecosystem.

STRENGTHENING AIR MOBILITY PARTNERSHIPS

Delegates met with representatives from Wisk and Eve Air Mobility, a global leader in electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) aircraft. Discussions focused on regulatory frameworks, pilot programs, and opportunities to integrate advanced air mobility into Miami-Dade’s long-term transportation planning. These conversations reinforced the County’s interest in becoming an early adopter of air taxi solutions and opened doors to future partnerships with global aviation innovators. ITC is setting up follow-up meetings.

EXPANDED SISTER CITY AND SEAPORT DIALOGUE

Engagements with Aix-Marseille-Provence Metropole (AMP) reaffirmed the strength of the Sister City and Sister Seaport agreements. Both parties agreed to pursue renewed collaboration in maritime logistics, tourism, and port-led economic development. ITC is working with the AMP team to plan their year-end visit.

URBAN MOBILITY & INFRASTRUCTURE INSIGHTS

Site visits and discussions with urban transport startups, including Urbanloop, provided firsthand insight into emerging solutions in personal rapid transit and green mobility. These engagements are being evaluated for relevance to Miami-Dade County’s Smart Plan and infrastructure innovation initiatives.

FOLLOW-UP MEETING WITH GROUPE AÉROPORT DE PARIS (ADP)

ITC is setting up a meeting between Commissioner Danielle Cohen Higgins and Merchant Aviation, the US Subsidiary of ADP.

YADAY CAPITAL OFFICIAL MIAMI LAUNCH

Yaday Capital officially launched its Miami Chapter in December 2025. Yaday Capital is a Paris-based venture capital firm, that focuses on early-growth (Series A/B) investments in B2B tech startups with strong Artificial Intelligence (AI) components, targeting sectors like healthcare, finance, and climate.

The large presence of Miami-Dade County officials and companies at the Paris launch led to Miami being selected as the next destination.

ENHANCED INTERNATIONAL POSITIONING FOR MIAMI-DADE

The mission significantly raised Miami-Dade County’s profile among French investors, startups, and public-sector stakeholders. The “Miami Advantage” messaging was reinforced across multiple engagements, solidifying the County’s position as a gateway to the Americas and a rising tech and logistics hub.

MISSION DELEGATES

1. **THE HON. ANTHONY RODRIGUEZ** – Chairman, Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners (BCC)
2. **THE HON. OLIVER G. GILBERT III** – Commissioner District 1 & ITC Board Chairman, Miami-Dade BCC
3. **THE HON. MARLEINE BASTIEN** – Commissioner District 2, Miami-Dade BCC
4. **THE HON. DANIELLE COHEN HIGGINS** – Commissioner District 8, Miami-Dade BCC
5. **THE HON. RENÉ GARCIA** – Commissioner District 13, Miami-Dade BCC
6. **GERARD PHILIPPEAUX** – Executive Director ITC, Miami-Dade County International Trade Consortium (ITC)
7. **SUDESHNA CHATTERJEE** – Senior Global Engagement Officer ITC, Miami-Dade County International Trade Consortium (ITC)
8. **AILEEN BOUCLÉ** – Executive Director, Miami-Dade County Transportation Planning Organization
9. **ZAINAB SALIM** – Deputy Director, Administration, Miami-Dade County Transportation Planning Organization
10. **THE HON. ERIC DIAZ-PADRON** – Mayor, City of West Miami
11. **DAVID WHITAKER** – President & CEO, Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau
12. **TJ VILLAMIL** – President - Business Development, eMerge Americas
13. **ALICE BRAVO** – President & CEO, Alice Bravo & Associates
14. **ERIN HENDRIX** – Partner, LSN Partners
15. **ALEX HECKLER** – Partner, LSN Partners
16. **DEAN TAITZ** – Founder, Ruddell Group
17. **GUILLAUME LEMASSON** – Counsel, GreenbergTraurig
18. **JEVE CLAYTON** – Chief of Staff D8, Miami-Dade BCC
19. **LAUREN PARDO** – Dy. Chief of Staff Senator René Garcia, D13 Miami-Dade BCC
20. **ALDO GONZALEZ** – Legislative Assistant - Office of the Chair, Miami-Dade BCC
21. **RHYS DAO SHANAHAN** – Legislative Aide D1, Miami-Dade BCC
22. **AIYANNA BRIGITTE STIVERNE** – Commission Aide D1, Miami-Dade BCC
23. **PATRICIA VILNEUS** – Commissioner Assistant D2, Miami-Dade BCC
24. **JEAN DERISCA** – BCC District Coordinator D2, Miami-Dade BCC
25. **JULIO RODRIGUEZ** – Commission Aide D8, Miami-Dade BCC

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY ELECTED OFFICIALS



Daniella Levine Cava
Mayor



Anthony Rodriguez
*Chairman
District 10*



Kionne L. McGhee
*Vice Chairman
District 9*



Oliver G. Gilbert, III
District 1



Marleine Bastien
District 2



Keon Hardemon
District 3



Micky Steinberg
District 4



Vicki L. Lopez
District 5



Natalie Milian Orbis
District 6



Raquel A. Regalado
District 7



Danielle Cohen Higgins
District 8



Roberto J. Gonzalez
District 11



Juan Carlos Bermudez
District 12



Sen. René García
District 13

APPRECIATION

ITC Chairman, Commissioner Oliver G. Gilbert, III, thanks the mission sponsors, participants, hosts, and staff of the various organizations that contributed to the success of the Business Development Mission to Paris, France. While ITC was pleased to plan and coordinate the Mission, we offer our deepest thanks for the collaboration of our sponsors, partners, and hosts of this mission:

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FL, USA:

1. Office of Chairman Anthony Rodriguez
2. Office of Commissioner Oliver G. Gilbert, III
3. Office of Commissioner Marleine Bastien
4. Office of Commissioner Danielle Cohen Higgins
5. Office of Commissioner René Garcia
6. Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau
7. City of North Miami
8. LSN Partners
9. US Department of Commerce (South Florida Office)
10. Consulate General of France in Miami
11. La French Tech Miami
12. French-American Chamber of Commerce Florida

FRANCE:

1. US Embassy in Paris
2. VivaTech
3. French Football Federation
4. Groupe Aeroporte De Paris



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