

InvestEU Scoreboard¹

Presentation of the financing or investment operation:

Implementing Partner: European Investment Fund (EIF)

Name of the Operation: FORWARD.one Fund II ("FORWARD.one" or the "Fund")

Type of approval: Individual financing or investment operation

Name of the financial intermediary (for intermediated operations): FORWARD.one Fund II

Country(-ies) of implementation of the operation:

The Fund is expected to target primarily the Netherlands, as well as other EU countries.

Short description of the financing or investment operation:

The Fund will invest in the early stage hardware companies with focus on semiconductor technologies and semiconductor chips, sensor technologies, nanotechnology, advanced materials, photonics and quantum computing.

The increased fund size will enable the team to provide larger financing to promising hardware start-ups and accelerate their expansion while building a diversified portfolio.

The Fund will aim to be the first institutional investor for early stage high-tech hardware focused companies, and help entrepreneurs structure their management teams and operations to build successful industry leaders.

As a matter of example, in the previous fund, the team invested in hardware companies with specialisation in robotics, sensors, audio driver technology, industrial noise cancellation, photonic quantum computing and other – the Fund will target similar subsectors, but at the same time will also expand its reach.

Public Statement

Eligible areas for the operation in accordance with Annex II to the InvestEU Regulation:

Item 5 of Annex II of the InvestEU Regulation:

research, development and innovation

Item 6 of Annex II of the InvestEU Regulation:

the development, deployment and scaling-up of digital technologies and services, especially digital technologies and services, including media, online service platforms and secure digital communication, that contribute to the objectives of the Digital Europe Programme

Item 7 of Annex II of the InvestEU Regulation:

financial support to entities employing up to 499 employees, with a particular focus on SMEs, and small mid-cap companies

In particular, the Fund's strategy is focused on the following Target Areas:

- **Semiconductor technologies** for development and production of microelectronics and photonics components and systems, including but not limited to:

¹ This Scoreboard of indicators reflects the information presented to the InvestEU Investment Committee (IC) for its decision on the use of the EU guarantee for this operation. Therefore, the document does not take into account possible developments that could have occurred after this decision.

- analogue, digital and mixed-signal modules (e.g. chiplets), intellectual property, components and systems for applications such as sensing, data processing, communication, actuation and power management;
- semiconductor solutions contributing to increasing energy efficiency and/or reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- semiconductor materials, wafers, intellectual property, process design kits, design tools, handling and processing tools and equipment, for front-end or back-end manufacturing.

- **Semiconductor chips**, including but not limited to design and deployment of electronic and photonic integrated circuits (chips) and integrated systems for applications such as AI, edge computing, Blockchain/DLT, Cybersecurity, IoT, 5G/6G, HPC, Quantum Computing and Other Digital Technologies.

- **Industrial technologies** that enable process, goods and service technologies innovation and that cut across industries, including but not limited to:

- Robotics and automation,
- Nanotechnology,
- Photonics technologies,
- Advanced materials.

The investment will be in the form of equity, which will in turn allow the Fund to promote equity or quasi-equity investments at the level of each underlying investment, which is an essential element in supporting early stage hardware technology companies based.

The operation addresses in particular the market gap in semi-conductors, as well as wider underserved niche of early hardware focused start-ups in the Netherlands and also other EU countries. The presence of capital in the Netherlands and elsewhere in the EU in this sector is still insufficient with competition being limited.

An EIF commitment at a subsequent closing will be important for the Fund to reach a target fund size which is considered adequate to execute the strategy, and to diversify and enlarge the Fund's investor base.

The provision of capital for early-stage companies in the hardware subsector in the Netherlands is limited to a small number of specialized VC funds and some Business Angel investors. The majority of the institutional VC investors in the region tend to start investing in hardware companies at later stages (from Series A and later). The Fund will play an important role in taking a higher financial exposure to the start-up companies, thereby shouldering financial risks that smaller investors could not take and some larger investors would oversee, but which is necessary to scale the underlying businesses.

The scale of financing expected to be made available by the financial intermediary to final recipients (i.e. leverage), taking into account the closing at which the EIF will join is estimated to be c. 5.8x, in accordance with the "InvestEU Leverage and Multiplier Effect Calculation Methodology" as approved by the InvestEU Steering Board.

With respect to the benefits generated by the operation for the final recipients, it is worth highlighting in particular the following key features: (i) the provision of equity financing; (ii) the longer holding period (within up to 12 years term of the fund); (iii) contribution to the diversification of funding sources for final recipients; (iv) the financing in local currencies, and (v) the transfer of experience, know-how and institutional investor network by the financial intermediary to portfolio companies, therefore helping their internal & external growth, internationalization, digitalization and access to bank financing.

In relation to the impact of the operation on the ecosystem, the Fund will invest at the very early stages, where the founders are looking for a first institutional investor with willingness to take on strong risks, to support the company in scaling the operations. The number of such institutional providers of sufficient

capital for the early stage financing in the Netherlands is limited. In addition and if necessary, the manager of the Fund will bring its own network of potential co-investors in the companies in the medium term.
Pillar 3 - Market failure or sub-optimal investment situation addressed by the financing or investment operation (Excellent)
Pillar 4 - Financial and technical contribution by the Implementing Partner (Very Good)
Pillar 5 - Impact of the financing or investment operation (Very Good)
Pillar 7 - Complementary indicators ²
<p>Operation-specific indicators, estimated on the “InvestEU Leverage and Multiplier Effect Calculation Methodology” as approved by the InvestEU Steering Board.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – (a.1) Leverage effect: Indicatively 5.8x – (a.2) Multiplier effect: Indicatively 14.4x – (f) Investment supporting digitalisation: yes

² The InvestEU methodology is used in order to calculate figures presented in this document. The financial intermediary’s estimates may differ.