What are the key figures, missions and networks of Hauts-de-France Innovation Développement (HDFID)?

I would first like to recall the three fundamental missions of HDFID: strengthen entrepreneurship in the region; support companies in their development projects through innovation; lead and coordinate regional innovation policy programs, particularly within the framework of the **S3 strategy (Smart Specialization Strategy)**.

To fulfill these missions, the agency's human resources are around 40 employees and its 2021 budget amounted to €4.5 million. The efficiency of HDFID's actions is conditioned by the animation or co-animation of numerous networks such as the Innovation Parks, the Business Development Research Network, the Europe Research Innovation Network, and the **Europe Enterprise Network (EEN)**.



© HDFID



© HDFID

What mechanisms do you rely on to support innovative projects?

The main support mechanisms are the **Regional Incubation Fund** (prototyping, patents, market studies), the Innovation Diagnostic, the Cyber Investment Pass, Industry of the Future and the Starter Checkbook. For example, the Direct BUROTIC company in Denain benefited from the **Cyber Pass** and set up a cybersecurity audit

which made it possible to analyze data exchanges and make employees aware of internal faults.

Could you tell us about the Industry of the Future 2021 Call for collaborative innovation projects?

This call for projects aims to enable companies, technical centers and research laboratories in the region to work together on major levers of competitiveness. A concrete example is the **HYBSTER Racket** project, which aims to manufacture tennis rackets in France at moderate costs by using new materials to relocate the activity to Hauts-de-France.

What do you think are the main challenges to be met in order to further increase regional attractiveness in terms of innovation?

The region has many strengths: industrial diversity, university potential and a geographical position at the crossroads of Europe. However, the large number of stakeholders can constitute a handicap if the ecosystem is not endowed with a collective dynamic. This is why the digital platform **Res'Hauts-de-France Business** was created to bring together local economic players and facilitate synergies.

It is also a question of enhancing our position to help companies develop internationally and to reduce territorial disparities, particularly between the former Picardy and the former Nord-Pas-de-Calais. Networking platforms like **Plug in Labs**, which presents the skills of research laboratories, are essential to overcome the isolation of certain business leaders. Finally, as former president of UTC, I would say that the role of training is essential for a true culture of innovation to permeate the entire territory.



© HDFID