



PRESS RELEASE

LUXINNOVATION PUBLISHES ITS ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Esch-sur-Alzette, 28 May 2020 – Luxinnovation, the national innovation agency, has published its annual report for 2019, a year characterised by an increase in the number of companies supported through various programmes and services. The launch of a Digital Innovation Hub and the reform of Luxembourg Cluster Initiative were other key achievements aimed at further supporting companies' innovation capacity and competitiveness.

Luxinnovation's annual report was presented at a press conference held on 28 May in the presence of Minister of the Economy Franz Fayot. *"With 35 years of experience of supporting companies in their R&D and innovation efforts, Luxinnovation is a trusted partner for business and research,"* commented Minister Fayot. *"The agency is a key player for turning the government's visions for the future of Luxembourg's economy into reality."*

A client-centric approach

The Luxembourg Cluster Initiative was revised in 2019, putting companies at the very centre of its functioning. *"The aim was to better grasp and meet the needs of companies and to contribute to the development of Luxembourg's economy by taking on board their ideas and experience,"* explained Luxinnovation's CEO Sasha Baillie. The agency set up dedicated individual company support including a comprehensive needs analysis, and guidance of its clients towards relevant internal and external integrated solutions and services.

Luxinnovation also established a structured ideation process for transforming ideas put forward by individual companies, business federations or ministries into pilot projects leading to potential public-private partnerships. Cross-sector cluster advisory groups support the process. Examples of ongoing flagship projects being explored are the offer and demand in circular construction, circularity and recycling of plastics within the region, and a platform for regional timber trade.

Stimulating digital transformation and performance

The Luxembourg Digital Innovation Hub (L-DIH) was launched on 30 September 2019. A collaboration between the Ministry of the Economy, FEDIL — The Voice of Luxembourg's Industry, Luxinnovation, the University of Luxembourg, the Chamber of Commerce, the Luxembourg Institute of Science and Technology (LIST) and the Luxembourg National Research Fund, the hub is hosted and managed by Luxinnovation. It helps companies find the right experts, advisors and IT solutions providers in Luxembourg or in other European countries who can support them with defining and succeeding with their digital transformation. The L-DIH is part of the pan-European network of Digital Innovation Hubs.

The participation in Luxinnovation "Fit 4" performance programmes for SMEs almost doubled in 2019. Fit 4 Digital remained the largest programmes, with no less than 110 new companies taking part in 2019. The complementary Fit 4 Digital Packages, which were launched on 23 October by the Minister for SMEs, the House of Entrepreneurship (HoE) and Luxinnovation, directly proved to be a success with 135 "Digital Quick Checks" performed and over 30 companies participating before the end of the year.

International business development and start-up support

Luxinnovation continued its efforts to promote Luxembourg as an attractive destination for international businesses, carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Economy, the network of Luxembourg embassies and Trade and Investment Offices as well as the House of Entrepreneurship. The efforts clearly bore fruit: 68 foreign companies visited Luxembourg, and 19 international firms incorporated here with the help of Luxinnovation, an increase with around 60% compared to the previous year. *“Luxinnovation and the Ministry of the Economy have built great programmes such as Fit 4 Start that make it very hard not to come to Luxembourg, especially if you have R&D activities,”* says Aaron Turner, President and Chief Security Officer of HighSide, interviewed in the annual report.

Over 500 entrepreneurs from 61 different countries applied to the acceleration programme Fit 4 Start, which for the first time offered places to start-ups in the space sector as well as to those active in healthtech and ICT. 30 start-ups were selected for participation. In addition, Luxinnovation supported the creation of 75 start-ups.

Solutions for successful R&D and innovation projects

The agency also continued supporting companies and other organisations with the design and implementation of R&D and innovation projects and access to relevant funding measures. In 2019, the Ministry of the Economy approved over 120 applications for R&D and innovation subsidies and over 20 applications for environmental protection aid. *“Luxinnovation supports us to formulate R&D projects that are eligible for state aid,”* says Alain Schumacher, Chief Technology Officer of IEE, in the report. *“By asking crucial questions about the projects and how the outcome will be used in practice, they also help us avoid ‘inventor blindness’ and to keep focused on our business case. Having this support from external experts is very important.”*

In addition, 102 new contracts were signed for projects funded by Horizon 2020, the European framework programme for research and innovation. Luxembourg-based project partners thus obtained €32 millions of Horizon 2020 funding. With a success rate of 17% of submitted applications – the 5th highest in the EU – Luxembourg largely exceeds the European average of 12%.

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Luxinnovation contributes to the economic development of Luxembourg by fostering innovation, fuelling international growth and attracting foreign direct investment. Set up as an Economic Interest Group, Luxinnovation is supported by the Ministry of the Economy, the Ministry for Higher Education and Research, the Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce, the Luxembourg Chamber of Skilled Crafts and FEDIL – The Voice of Luxembourg’s Industry. www.luxinnovation.lu