



Activity Report 2011



belgian
foreign trade agency

Mission Statement

In accordance with Article 3 of the Cooperation Agreement dated 24 May 2002 between the Federal Authority and the Regions, the Agency is responsible for:

- deciding on and organising trade missions linked to an initiative by one or several of the Regions or at the request of the Federal Authority,
- organising, developing and disseminating information, studies and documentation about external markets to regional services responsible for foreign trade in accordance with Appendix 1,
- tasks of common interest decided unanimously by the Board.



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Message from the President

The global economic climate may not have been particularly rosy in 2011 but it will go down in history as a record year for the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency.

In fact joint economic missions presided by HRH Prince Philippe were attended by unprecedented numbers with three missions involving over four hundred participants in 2011. In two years the number of businesswomen and men who participated in annual missions increased from 659 to 1,159, representing an increase of almost 75%.

Once again the missions' growing success illustrates the quality of the preparatory work carried out by our partner organisers, the AWEX (the Wallonia Trade & Investment Agency), Flanders Investment & Trade and Brussels Invest & Export, as well as the FPS Foreign Affairs Belgium, who work closely with the Agency's mission team. They share a common goal of providing businesses with privileged contacts with local companies and a tailor-made programme.

I extend my warmest thanks to our Honorary President, HRH Prince Philippe, who spares no efforts in promoting our businesses to the authorities in the countries visited, offering Belgian companies invaluable support in their approach to foreign markets. His presence at each of the missions' events draws a high-level audience and ensures that the Belgian corporate image is identified far beyond its borders.

The other Agency departments have also been highly successful in their achievements. The 'statistics' and 'studies' departments have been extremely busy and did not fail in their task of responding to all requests, and also did so in a timely manner. Similarly, the 'regulations' department handled an impressive number of dossiers. Lastly the business opportunities announced by the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency increased particularly with regards to invitations to tender.

I commend the Agency for this performance and I thank the general management that encourages all employees to increase productivity while striving for the greatest professionalism.

Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck

President of the Board of Directors



Message from the General Management

Despite the economic downturn and context, which was hardly conducive to business, Belgian exporters revealed themselves to be particularly entrepreneurial in 2011 and participated in the Princely missions in great numbers. Almost 1,200 businessmen seized the opportunity they were offered to access the highest spheres of influence in the countries visited.

Some ambitious destinations were selected in 2011 starting with Russia and the United States in the first six months followed by China and Chile in the second half of the year. We might have been able to predict that these growth markets would attract considerable interest however their success surpassed all expectations with almost 800 companies and 1,200 businessmen taking part. This unparalleled success resulted in an increased workload for all members of the mission organising team, whose primary concern is to maintain the same quality organisation and an equivalent level of service despite such high numbers of participants.

Requests flooded in to the statistics department which, in addition to conventional bilateral reports, carried out a number of comparative analyses for longer-term trends in Belgian foreign trade. A study was published on 'Belgian biotechnology' primarily for distribution at the BIO International Convention in June 2011 during the Belgian economic mission to the United States. This study, carried out in close partnership with the Regions, Essenscia, BIO, Biowin, Flanders Bio and Brussels Life Tech, has also been widely acclaimed by these sectoral associations and those working in the field in Belgium. The regulations department managed a total of almost 600 dossiers in 2010. In addition many training courses have been given in relation to INCOTERMS.

The Agency continued with the selective distribution of projects, calls for tender and business proposals to the 21,000 companies registered in the exporters' file. Unfortunately the Darwin IT project, which was to replace the distribution system, has had to be abandoned and will result in the search for new ideas. The website has been updated with many new sections, photographs and news items and illustrates our dynamic activities.

Despite a reduction in our financial resources, prudent management and conservative spending have allowed us to end the year in a balanced financial position.

The Belgian Foreign Trade Agency thus displays a positive balance for 2011 despite the ups and downs of the European and international economy.

Marc Bogaerts
General Manager




Fabienne L'Hoost
Deputy General Manager




Strategy and objectives for 2012

Widespread budgetary restrictions will encourage us to optimise financial and human resources more than ever and to demonstrate creativity to achieve more with less.

Merging the studies and statistics departments will allow us to develop new activities and publications based on the use of new management systems and data processing in collaboration with EUROSTAT. The department will aim to provide more detailed analyses and comparisons between the evolution of Belgian foreign trade and those of its partner countries. The overall objective will be to offer a personalised service and better respond to client and user demands. A sectoral study entitled 'Belgian software' will be published in collaboration with the regional and sectoral authorities involved.

We will design micro sites for the Agency's joint economic missions – specific websites for each mission – in partnership with the Information and Communication Technology Federal Public Service, which is sponsoring the project. The first will be introduced to promote the mission to Japan in June 2012. These will be temporary sites, developed in English, which will allow participants to follow live news of the Princely missions from day to day.

Following the departure of the IT manager the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency will focus on a new form of IT management with the support of a project manager, appointed by the Information and Communication Technology Federal Public Service, on the one hand and with the support of the Prime Minister's Chancellery departments on the other. This formula offers the important advantage of coaching for the IT team without having to make any financial investment.

The exporters database will be redesigned and an emphasis will be placed on its distribution to audiences abroad. New language options will be considered. In addition we will focus on providing more information that has previously been distributed to companies systematically via the website. This 'push' approach falls in line with current communication trends.

Communication and consultation, with Federal and Regional partners and internally, will remain key to the organisation. Particular attention will be devoted to the editorial, graphic and aesthetic quality of each publication.

In terms of human resources recruitment policy will remain extremely cautious and selective in accordance with the Board of Directors' demands. Therefore colleagues that leave the Agency will not be systematically replaced but we will strive to better target our resources and to increase exhibitory.



Institutional and financial framework

The Belgian Foreign Trade Agency is a public institution, which is an incorporated body, founded under the Cooperation Agreement of 24 May 2002 agreed between the Federal Authority and the Regions (Belgian Official Gazette 20.12.02).

The Belgian Foreign Trade Agency is managed by a Board of Directors whose Honorary President is HRH Prince Philippe. The Board consists of sixteen members appointed by the Regional Governments and the Federal Authority providing an equal representation of public and private sectors. Each Region appoints a Government Commissioner.

The Agency's Board of Directors held four meetings in 2011.

A Support Committee coordinates the implementation of decisions taken by the Board of Directors. Chaired by the Agency's General Manager, it consists of three officials managing regional export institutions (AWEX - the Wallonia Trade & Investment Agency -, Brussels Invest & Export and Flanders Investment & Trade) and the General Manager responsible for bilateral economic relations for the Federal Public Service for Foreign Affairs. The Support Committee held eight meetings in 2011.

The Agency's day-to-day management is carried out by a General manager assisted by a Deputy General Manager, both appointed by the Board of Directors and belonging to a different linguistic group. Marc Bogaerts is the General Manager and Fabienne L'Hoost is the Deputy General Manager.

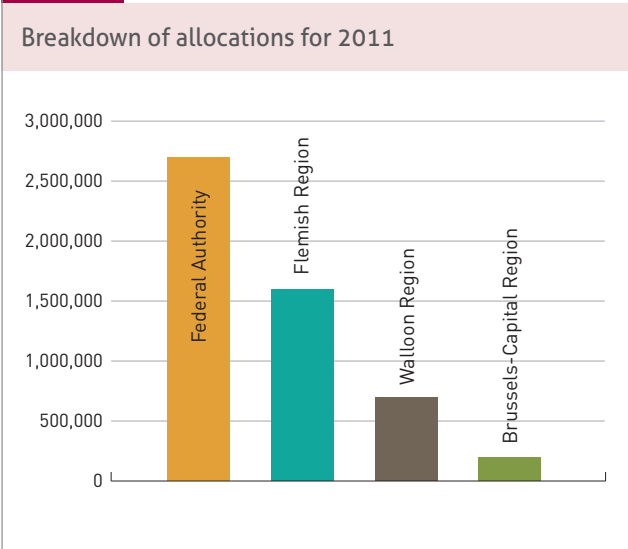
Budgetary allocations for 2011

The Agency is funded by an indexed Federal grant and by contributions from the Regions based on the distribution scale with regard to taxes on natural persons. Revenues for the 2011 budget (approved by the Board of Directors at its meeting held on 21.12.2011) amounted to EUR 5,502,621.00. Federal and Regional allocations represent the greatest part (96.89%) of these revenues.

TABLE 1

Total allocations in 2011	
	EUR
Federal Authority	2,767,000.00
Walloon Region	734,000.00
Brussels-Capital Region	232,621.00
Flemish Region	1,598,000.00

FIGURE 1



Staff Members 2011

The Cooperation Agreement stipulates that the number of Agency staff members may not exceed fifty. On 31.12.2011 the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency employed 44 members of staff. After deducting the number of part-time and sick employees and those seconded to other institutions this equates to 41.1 full-time staff members.







1. The BFTA in 2011

- 1.1 Joint economic missions
- 1.2 Information centre
- 1.3 Foreign trade statistics
- 1.4 Regulations and legal questions
- 1.5 Website
- 1.6 Collaboration with third party initiatives

1.1 Joint economic missions



Russia



United States



China



Chile

The Belgian Foreign Trade Agency organises joint economic missions in collaboration with regional authorities that promote exports: the Wallonia Trade & Investment Agency, Brussels Invest & Export and Flanders Investment & Trade. The FPS Foreign Affairs manages the political aspects and protocol for the programme.

JOINT ECONOMIC MISSIONS ORGANISED IN 2011

In 2011 four joint economic missions were organised presided by HRH Prince Philippe, the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency's Honorary President. They travelled to Russia, the United States, China and Chile.

RUSSIA

3-8 April 2011

The economic mission to the Russian Federation, presided by HRH Prince Philippe, was attended by Mr Steven Vanackere, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Institutional Reform. Mr Jean-Claude Marcourt, Vice President, Minister for the Economy, SMEs, Foreign Trade, New Technologies and Higher Education and Mr Benoît Cerexhe, Minister for the Economy, Employment, Scientific Research and Foreign Trade participated in the mission on behalf of the Walloon Region and the Brussels-Capital Region respectively.

No fewer than 216 companies and professional organisations participated and were represented by 330 businessmen. Including representatives for the public sector and the press the delegation comprised approximately 440 people.

OFFICIAL CONTACTS

The Belgian delegation was received at the highest level and the official programme included the following political contacts:

- 🏠 Dmitri Medvedev, President,
- 🏠 Igor Shuvalov, Deputy Prime Minister,
- 🏠 Viktor Khristenko, Minister for Industry and Trade,
- 🏠 Elvira Nabiullina, Minister for Economic Development,
- 🏠 Viktor Basargin, Minister for Regional Development,
- 🏠 Sergei Sobyenin, Mayor of Moscow,
- 🏠 Valentina Matvienko, Governor of Saint Petersburg,
- 🏠 Valery Serdyukov, Governor of Leningrad Oblast.



RUSSIA

3-8 April 2011



KEY CITIES AND SECTORS

The mission visited two cities: Moscow and Saint Petersburg. The mission focused on the following sectors:

- 🏠 Infrastructure and construction
- 🏠 Transportation and logistics
- 🏠 Energy
- 🏠 Healthcare
- 🏠 Financial sector

EVENTS

- 🏠 A briefing for the participants followed by an 'Association of European Business' panel during which some of the members presented their experience in Russia,
- 🏠 A working breakfast with Belgian companies (Solvay, Deceuninck, UCB and NMC) who have recently invested and increased their activities in Russia,
- 🏠 A working lunch organised by the Agoria Carbon Energy Club during which Emerson and GDF SUEZ provided information on Russian strategies for the energy market,
- 🏠 A presentation of the Skolkovo Innovation Centre attended by Viktor Vekselberg, President of the Renova Group's Board of Directors and President Medvedev, the centre's coordinator. The centre's goal is to become a Silicon Valley with five priority areas: nuclear, aeronautics, energy efficiency, biotechnology and IT. This was followed by an exchange of ideas with the Belgian companies and associations present,
- 🏠 A working meeting with the Russian Football Association attended by its President Mr S. Fursenko. There was a presentation of the 'Long-term grassroots football development programme' for Russia's organisation of the Football World Cup in 2018,
- 🏠 A workshop entitled 'The Modernisation of Russian Industry' (organised by the CCBLR, the Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce for Russia and Belarus), during which the pharmaceutical and chemical sectors were discussed as well as the modernisation of the Russian transportation industry,
- 🏠 A working lunch entitled 'Moscow as a Financial Centre', organised by the Agoria Banking Club and SWIFT, attended by the Deputy Governor of the Russian Central Bank, the President of MICEX, the Russian stock exchange, and CEOs from the large Russian banks,
- 🏠 A working meeting with Lukoil attended by the CEO Vagit Alekperov. The official part was followed by contacts between the twelve Belgian companies present and the different departments of Lukoil,
- 🏠 A seminar entitled 'Belgian Innovation to Save Lives' organised by AWEX, Brussels Invest & Export, FIT, Healthcare Belgium, Essenscia and Biowin in Moscow and Saint Petersburg,
- 🏠 An inaugural visit to the Belgian stand at the Mosbuild fair, the largest international fair for the Russian construction sector, at which twenty Belgian companies participated,
- 🏠 A seminar entitled 'Belgian expertise in sustainable construction' organised by AWEX, Brussels Invest & Export, FIT, the Construction Confederation and Essenscia during the Mosbuild fair,
- 🏠 A working meeting at Gazprom Neft, organised by the Carbon Energy Club, during which there was a presentation of investments planned for the next few years (amounting to EUR 1.5 billion),
- 🏠 A workshop organised by Brussels Invest & Export entitled 'Showcase Brussels' with around fifty participating Russian travel agencies specialised in organising meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions,



- 🏠 Seminars related to investments in Moscow and Saint Petersburg organised by AWEX, Brussels Invest & Export and FIT,
- 🏠 A working meeting with the Mayor of Moscow that focused specifically on healthcare, transport and mobility. The presence of specialist Moscow services at the Belgian seminar 'Healthcare' and a meeting on mobility issues particularly contributed to the focus on these two sectors,
- 🏠 A dinner for CEOs at the Belgian ambassador's residence organised by the FPS Foreign Affairs,
- 🏠 A working meeting with Gazprom attended by the CEO Alexei Miller,
- 🏠 The 'Diamond' networking seminar organised by the AWDC (Antwerp World Diamond Centre) and Alrosa,
- 🏠 A working visit for specialist Belgian companies to Rusnano, the Russian Nanotechnology Corporation, organised by FIT. Its themes were: the potential, in terms of energy, for energy efficiency, solar biotechnology and optical electronics,
- 🏠 A working meeting with port authorities at the new deep water port currently under construction at Ust-Luga (110 km from Saint Petersburg) which, once it is operational, will become the main port in the Baltic Sea.

CONTRACTS SIGNED

Nineteen organisations and Belgian companies signed cooperation agreements or contracts with Russian partners in Moscow. Six contracts were also signed in Saint Petersburg.

MOSCOW

- 🏠 ABS Belgium 🔗 Master Cleaning,
- 🏠 Brasserie d'Ecaussinnes 🔗 Russian Tradition Group,
- 🏠 Dermo Expert Group 🔗 Confidence LLC,
- 🏠 Glorieux Exhibitions 🔗 Nizhegorodskaya Yarmarka,
- 🏠 Ion Beam Applications (IBA) 🔗 Joint Institute for Nuclear Research (JINR),
- 🏠 Koramic Holding - Lamifil 🔗 SimRoss,
- 🏠 Liebrecht & wood 🔗 Fashion House-Retailer NO ONE,
- 🏠 Lhoist Group 🔗 TMK,
- 🏠 Mitra Innovations 🔗 Sberbank leasing,
- 🏠 Prayon 🔗 Phosagro,
- 🏠 Sitra 🔗 Sitra Iprus,
- 🏠 UCB Pharma Russia 🔗 Binnopharm,
- 🏠 Wabco Europe 🔗 Wabco Rus.

SAINT PETERSBURG

- 🏠 Dermo Expert Group 🔗 Confidence LLC,
- 🏠 e-Xstream engineering 🔗 Computational Mechanics Laboratory (CompMechLab),
- 🏠 Ion Beam Applications (IBA) 🔗 Federal center of nuclear medicine projects design-development (FSUE),
- 🏠 ProsPer 🔗 NGO Uuskasutus-Tramel Oy,
- 🏠 Samtech 🔗 The National Research University of Information Technologies, Mechanics-Optics (University ITMO),
- 🏠 VK Group 🔗 AM O,618.



USA

22-30 June 2011



HRH Prince Philippe presided an economic mission to the United States (New York, Washington and Boston) from 22 to 30 June 2011. He was accompanied by Mr Steven Vanackere, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Institutional Reform. Mr Kris Peeters, Minister-President of the Flemish Government and Mr Jean-Claude Marcourt, Vice President and Minister for the Economy, SMEs, Foreign Trade and New Technology and Higher Education from the Walloon Government also participated in this mission. The Brussels-Capital Region was represented by Mr Benoît Cerexhe, Minister for the Economy, Employment, Scientific Research and Foreign Trade and by Mr Jean-Luc Vanraes, Minister for Finance, the Budget, Institutional Affairs and Foreign Relations for the Brussels-Capital Region. It was the first joint economic mission attended by all the Regional Ministers for foreign trade.

The mission was attended by over 400 participants – including the public sector and the press – representing 300 companies, institutions and universities.

HRH Princess Mathilde honoured this mission with her presence.

OFFICIAL CONTACTS

The official programme included high-level political contacts. HRH Prince Philippe and Mr Steven Vanackere met with Joe Biden, Vice President of the United States of America at the White House in Washington. A meeting with Senator John Kerry also took place at Capitol Hill.

CITIES AND KEY SECTORS

The high number of participants confirmed the continued interest of Belgian companies in the colossal and high-performing American market that occupied fifth place on the list of Belgium's main customers in 2010.

Four large sectors were of particular interest to the companies: pharma, biotech, ICT and finance.

One should emphasise that in 2010 almost 57% of our exports to the United States came from the chemical sector, consisting more specifically of pharmaceutical products.



The vast majority of biotech companies enrolled in the mission participated at the largest international fair on the theme, the 'BIO INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION' that was held in Washington between 27 and 30 June.

The mission visited three important economic hubs on the northeast coast of the United States:

NEW YORK

The mission's starting point, New York, allowed companies to make numerous B2B contacts and to profile themselves in certain sectors such as the finance sector.

Various activities proved to be highly successful for the participants:

- ★ a seminar entitled 'Financial Innovation: Belgian approach in the heart of Europe' was organised by Brussels Invest & Export and Febelfin (in collaboration with FIT and AWEX) at the premises of Swift (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication),
- ★ a seminar entitled 'Pan European Pension Funds, Now a Reality' organised by the BNY Mellon Bank at its offices on Wall Street,
- ★ a finance breakfast, an initiative of the Agoria Banking Club.

A 'Bio-Pharma Networking lunch' was also organised along with visits to American companies Pfizer, Johnson & Johnson and IBM.

Belgacom presented new cutting-edge technology before the official Belgian reception. This reception involved all participants in the joint economic mission and a number of businessmen.

The Flemish Government organised a visit to 'Flanders House' in New York, which was followed by a concert by the 'Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia' and a reception.

WASHINGTON

The main events organised in Washington were related to the BIO 2011 fair where Belgium was ranked in the top ten participating countries and where our biopharmaceutical companies made quite an impression. For this event the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency published a study that highlighted the expertise and skills of Belgian companies involved in biotechnology: 'Belgian biotechnology'. This publication was widely distributed. BIO 2011 united seventy companies and organisations from three Regions on one stand.

Two major events were planned around the theme of BIO 2011:

- ★ 'Belgium: Governmental Funding Initiatives Boosting Biotech R&D' session, during which HRH Prince Philippe highlighted the expertise and strengths of the Belgian biotechnology sector,
- ★ the official inauguration of the Belgian pavilion attended by the President and CEO of the Biotechnology Industry Organisation, Mr James C. Greenwood.

In addition to the essential Belgian reception, an investment seminar 'How to make your voice heard in Brussels, Capital of Europe' was also organised along with the following two events:

- ★ a seminar entitled 'Demystifying the US Market', in collaboration with the US Department of Commerce,



USA

22-30 June 2011



- ★ a session on the Food and Drug Administration, the U.S. Federal Government Agency that monitors food and medicine, attended by FDA Commissioner Dr Margaret Hamburg.

Lastly the pharmaceutical company Merck organised a highly successful luncheon meeting featuring various presentations.

BOSTON

In Boston, there were working visits to the MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) and Harvard University.

Two visits were planned to the MIT, one to showcase various presentations (concentrating on research and energy, etc.), the other focused on the media.

At Harvard University two events were planned at the 'Medical School': a presentation seminar by GSK and a second focusing on cell therapy in Wallonia.

An important delegation of Belgian businessmen also participated in a presentation of the biotechnology company Genzyme at its offices, and visited the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute.

A UCB seminar was also held before the Belgian reception.

CONTRACTS SIGNED





NEW YORK

- ★ 4DDynamics  3D Systems Corporation
- ★ Copymetrics  Campbell Soup Company
- ★ Copymetrics  Colgate - Palmolive Company
- ★ Decizium Sa/ YourTour  Philadelphia Conventions and Visitors Bureau
- ★ Hercules Trophy International  New York City Department of Parks and Recreation
- ★ IP Trade  Cisco
- ★ IXSyS  Health Net Connect, Inc.

WASHINGTON

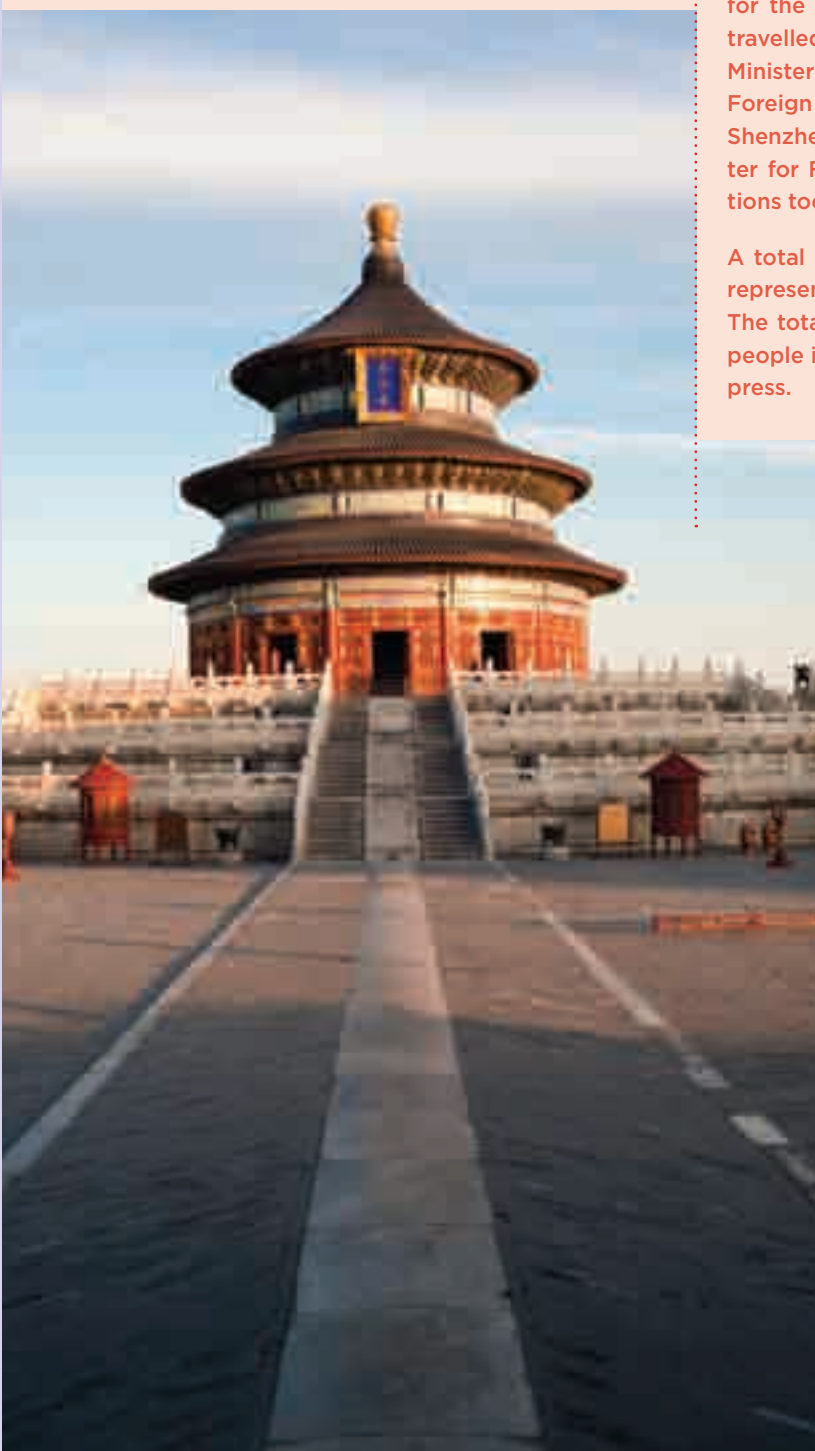
- ★ Brussels Capital Region  District of Columbia
- ★ Visit Brussels  Destination DC
- ★ Press Club Brussels Europe  The National Press Club
- ★ Brewery Corsendonk  L Knife and Son3
- ★ 4DDynamics  Digital Signal Corporation
- ★ Septentrio nv  Altus - BMI/SBI
- ★ Van Hool NV  Stagecoach Group

BOSTON

- ★ Aphesa  Vega Technology group
- ★ SerEX Consulting  Accreon USA
- ★ Université Catholique de Louvain  MIT
- ★ Cardio3 BioSciences S.A.  Advanced Technology Materials

CHINA

20-29 October
2011



The joint economic mission to the People's Republic of China was presided by HRH Prince Philippe accompanied in Beijing by Mr Steven Vanackere, Vice Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Institutional Reform. Ms Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck, Minister of State and President of the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency Board of Directors, took over in Chongqing, Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Shanghai.

The Regional Ministers were also present. Mr Kris Peeters, Minister-President of the Flemish Government and Flemish Minister for the Economy, Foreign Policy, Agriculture and Rural Policy travelled to Beijing. Mr Benoît Cerexhe, Brussels-Capital Region Minister for the Economy, Employment, Scientific Research and Foreign Trade joined the mission in Beijing, Guangzhou and Shenzhen. Mr Jean-Luc Vanraes, Brussels-Capital Region Minister for Finance, Budget, Institutional Affairs and Foreign Relations took part in the programme in Beijing.

A total of 229 companies and professional organisations were represented and 393 businessmen participated in the mission. The total number of participants amounted to a record of 473 people including representatives from the public sector and the press.

OFFICIAL CONTACTS

The Belgian delegation was welcomed at the highest level. Please see below an overview of the main official contacts:

- HE Xi Jinping, Vice President
- HE Wang Qishan, Deputy Prime Minister
- HE Wan Gang, Minister for Science and Technology
- HE Wang Gong, Chairman of the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission of the State Council (SASAC)
- HE Bo Xilai, Secretary of the Municipality of Chongqing (CPC)
- HE Huang Qifan, Mayor of Chongqing
- HE Wang Yang, Party Secretary for Guangdong Province
- HE Wan Qingliang, Mayor of Guangzhou
- HE Wang Rong, Party Secretary of Shenzhen
- HE Han Zheng, Mayor of Shanghai



CHINA

20-29 October 2011



CITIES AND KEY SECTORS

We chose locations where Belgian companies have been present for a long time such as Beijing, Tianjin – which has the largest concentration of Belgian companies in the north – Guangzhou and Shenzhen (two major growth areas in southern China). China's 'Go West' policy was also taken into account during the visit to Chongqing. In Shanghai events focused on the 40th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries as well as on contacts with Belgian companies in the area.

Based on priorities defined in the twelfth five-year plan and opportunities for our companies the following sectors were highlighted during the mission:

- Transportation and logistics
- Public health
- Clean and green technology
- Specific technology and ICT
- The diamond sector
- The vehicle construction sector

EVENTS

BEIJING

- A working breakfast on the theme 'Insight into the 12th Five-Year Plan from the outside' by David Hoffman, Vice President and General Manager of the Conference Board's Centre.
- A seminar entitled 'IPR Protection in China'.
- A 'China-Belgium Education Forum', at Beijing University, in collaboration with Belgian establishments, with the aim of attracting Chinese students to Belgium and of supporting cooperation between Belgian and Chinese universities.

- A high-level dinner attended by Chen Feng, President of the HNA Group, top management and a selection of Belgian entrepreneurs.
- A working breakfast entitled 'Innovation Cooperation' followed by a seminar on 'Low carbon Energy' during which Belgian technology was presented.
- A working session with President Li Shufu of the Zhejiang Geely Holding Group in the frame of the 'Automotive track' with about fifteen entrepreneurs from the automobile sector. They participated in a trip across the country to visit some of the largest constructors.
- A seminar entitled 'The Province of Hebei: an excellent location for Belgian investments and trade cooperation'.
- A working breakfast with a selection of major Chinese SOEs and Belgian CEOs, with the active participation of the President and Executives of SASAC (State Owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission).
- The launch of the 'Diamond Road Show' by the AWDC in collaboration with the ICBC and Chinese Arts & Crafts. The 'road show' officially started in Beijing and subsequently passed through various Chinese cities.
- A working meeting with the State Food and Drug Administration (SFDA), attended by Commissioner Shao Mingli, featuring a presentation on the Belgian biopharmaceutical sector and its contribution to the Chinese pharmaceutical sector.
- Two specific events were organised around the theme of the 40th anniversary of diplomatic relations:
 - A cultural event in the CAFA Museum (China Central Academy for Fine Arts) with a performance by the Jin Xing Shanghai Dance



Theatre 'Rosas danst Rosas', choreographed by Anne Teresa de Keersmaecker, and an exhibition of Belgian art in the first 'CAFAM' biennial.

- A passionate presentation by the Franco Dragone Entertainment Group during the official reception.

CHONGQING

- A seminar on 'The Go West Policy & Opportunities in Chongqing'.
- A seminar entitled 'Antwerp-Chongqing Logistic Connection'.
- A 'Belgium-China Business Forum' which allowed Chinese and Belgian CEOs to share their experiences during the working breakfast.
- A working visit to the 'Two Rivers New Development Zone'.

GUANGZHOU

- A logistics seminar entitled: 'Belgium, your gateway to the European Market'.
- A seminar on: 'Doing business in the Pearl River Delta'.
- A piano recital by Shen Wenyu, prize winner of the Queen Elizabeth competition, at the Opera House to commemorate the 40th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Belgium and China.

SHENZHEN

- An Investment Power Lunch.

SHANGHAI

- A working meeting with the Shanghai International Port Group (SIPG), attended by President Chen Xuyuan.

- A high-level Shanghai-Belgium Dinner was organised for business leaders and CEOs of Belgian companies established in the Shanghai Region.
- An event related to collaboration in Antarctica including a visit to the Chinese icebreaker 'Xue Long' and meetings with the management of the State Oceanic Administration and the Polar Research Institute of China.

CONTRACTS SIGNED

The trip to China resulted in an impressive number of forty-eight cooperation agreements being signed: twenty-six in Beijing, twelve in Chongqing, six in Shenzhen, three in Shanghai and one in Guangzhou.

The majority were obviously commercial in nature but some were cultural (CAFA and the VUB, the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Antwerp and the Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts), academic (the Vlerick Management School and the National School of Development of Peking University, the University of Antwerp with Chongqing University, the Antwerp Management School and the Chongqing University School of Economics and Business Administration, the VUB and LIAMA) and scientific (agreements in Shanghai on polar research), which added a special dimension to the economic mission.

Agreements were also reached between both countries' customs authorities and between public actors and private partners (agreements on venture capital funds and 'mirror' funds).

On the Belgian side commercial agreements were signed by companies including: Agoria, A-law, APEC, AppliTek, AWDC, AWEX, BECI, BIE, Bpost, Corsendonk, De Wille, de Wolf & Partners, Good!D, Horsepower Europe, Egemin, Hamon Thermal Europe, the Antwerp Port Authority, Lapauw International, Liège Airport, LMS International, Logistics in Wallonia, Mobile Controle Systems, POM-Antwerp, Rsscan, SCK, Solvay, Solvitec, Tractebel, UCB and VLM.

We should also mention the agreement reached between the Province of Antwerp and the Municipality of Chongqing as well as the signing, in November, of the major contract between the Franco Dragone Group and the Chinese Real Estate Group Dalian Wanda. This relates to the construction of five new theatres, the first of which will be built in Wuhan and will open its doors towards the end of 2013.



CHILE

3-8 December 2011

The economic mission to Chile presided by HRH Prince Philippe took place from 3 to 8 December, mainly in Santiago, though it did include a visit to the ESO, European Southern Observatory, in Paranal on 7 and 8 December.

Minister of State Jos Chabert acted as the Federal representative. Minister Jean-Claude Marcourt, Vice President of the Walloon Government and Minister for the Economy, SMEs, Foreign Trade, New Technology and Higher Education joined the mission as of Monday 5 December.

PARTICIPANTS

The mission counted 211 participants, including 130 entrepreneurs representing 100 companies and professional organisations, 27 delegates from the academic world, 15 journalists and 33 public sector managers.

KEY SECTORS

This mission targeted the following sectors: health-care, ICT, aerospace, mining, transportation and logistics, renewable energy, construction and infrastructure, and lastly the agri-food sector.

OFFICIAL CONTACTS

On 6 December HRH Prince Philippe was received by HE President Piñera Echenique, President of the Republic of Chile for an official meeting. This was followed by a working meeting organised at La Moneda presidential palace, and then an official lunch to which sixty members of the Belgian delegation were invited. This lunch was an opportunity to network with the Chilean Ministers, business leaders and the country's decision-makers.

On 5 December a meeting was held with the Chilean Minister for Energy, Rodrigo Álvarez, at which the Belgian companies Schröder, Acotec, Greenwatt and the FNRS participated along with their Chilean partners (Schröder Chile, Tega/Acotec Chile and Visors).





EVENTS

MONDAY 5 DECEMBER

- A working breakfast organised by the FEB in collaboration with the Chambers of Commerce. Vittorio Corbo, former Governor of the Central Bank of Chile discussed Chile's macro-economic situation.
- A visit to the ESO (European Southern Observatory) with businesses involved in the astronomy sector. The 'Extremely Large Telescope' project and opportunities for Belgian companies in the sector were presented by Professor Tarengi and M. Patrick Geeraert, Head of the ESO Procurement Department. HRH Prince Philippe outlined the strengths the Belgian companies who then had the opportunity of presenting their activities and technologies and to make B2B contacts.
- A networking lunch organised by Sofofa (the organisation for Chilean employers) and Belgolux with around 400 Belgian and Chilean guests.
- A seminar devoted to R&D, spin-offs and clusters organised by WBI (Wallonia-Brussels International).
- A visit to the IBA cyclotron at the Arturo López Perez Foundation.
- A healthcare seminar co-organised by AWEX and Healthcare Belgium, giving Belgian companies the opportunity to present their firms to their Chilean partners.
- A presentation of two books: 'Isla de Pascua, el gran tabú' and 'Bélgica - Chile: 200 años de amistad' and an investiture ceremony. These were granted to Mr Errázuriz and to Mr Luksic. The day ended with the official Belgian reception.

TUESDAY 6 DECEMBER

- A Belgian-Chilean Business Partnership Breakfast highlighting three Belgian companies operating in Chile. The Machiels Group signed a contract with the Municipality of Antofagasta for the treatment of waste and the development of its 'Closing the circle' project on a local level. Greenwatt runs a highly innovative project for generating green energy from cacti in partnership with the Chilean firm Visors. Lastly Senior-Assist, which specialises in care for the elderly, will invest \$35 million in the construction of homes for the elderly in Santiago by 2013.
- A visit to Codelco, a national company that produces copper and a global leader in its sector, just had to be included in the Princely mission's programme. Opportunities for collaboration were revealed to Belgian companies following an official meeting with Codelco's CEO, Mr Diego Hernández. Belgian expertise in this sector was presented prior to the B2B meetings.
- A port seminar organised by FIT and FITA. The most prominent figures in the Chilean port sector were presented including the authorities. Belgian expertise in sustainable port policy and knowledge centres was underlined.

WEDNESDAY 7 DECEMBER

- A visit to the ESO Paranal Observatory with a limited delegation from the aerospace/astronomy sector.



CHILE

3-8 December 2011



CONTRACTS SIGNED

Ten contracts were signed during the mission.


■ The creation of a 'Belgian Chapter (Sigdo Koppers, SQM, Molymet & GDF SUEZ)' signed by Eduardo Guilisasti, a member of Sofofa's Executive Committee and Frederik Janssens, President of Belgolux (during the Sofofa-Belgolux lunch)


■ AMB Ecosteryl  ZUBIMED INSUMOS MEDICOS

■ Greenwatt  VISORS Generación S.A.

■ Koddaert NV  Koddaert Acero SPA

■ Sarens  Transvertal

■ Schröder  Ilustre Municipalidad de La Reina

■ Veldeman Structure Solutions  Daniel Antonio Baez Lago (agent)

■ A student exchange contract between the ULB and the Universidad de Chile

■ A MOU between Wallonia-Brussels International (WBI) and the General Directorate of International Economic Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

■ A 'Letter of Intent' related to research in the city of Antofagasta signed by the company Machiels.



1.2 Information centre

In accordance with Article 2 of Appendix 1 to the Cooperation Agreement the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency organises, develops and disseminates documentation about foreign markets to regional organisations responsible for promoting foreign trade.

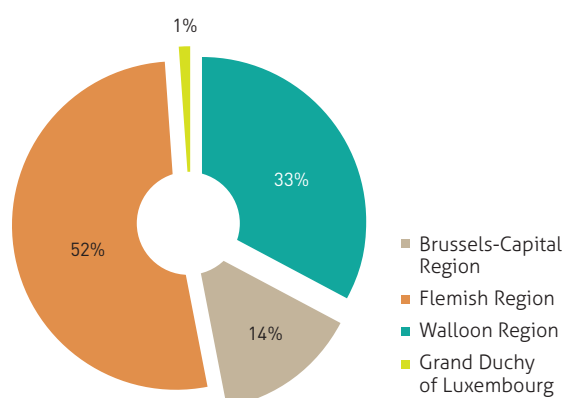
In order to carry out this task effectively the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency is responsible for managing and updating a number of databases:

1.2.1 The Exporters' File

At the end of 2011 the Exporters' File included 21,640 entries. Over 2,000 new registrations were recorded during this year. The majority of these new registrations were communicated by regional organisations responsible for promoting foreign trade (AWEX, Brussels Invest & Export and FIT). The Belgian Foreign Trade Agency takes responsibility for classifying the companies' activities so that they receive the Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) and are included on the website and the 'Blue' CD ROM.

FIGURE 2

Geographical breakdown of the Exporters' File in 2011

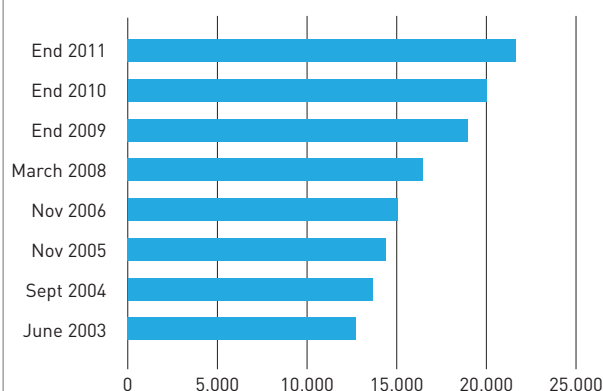


There are regular exchanges between the various databases (Regions/ACE) in order to transfer the products/services classified by the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency to the regional organisations' files. This synchronisation ensures that all the firms in the regional databases are also included in the Exporters' File.

During 2011 we were informed of 1,000 bankruptcies, which is a particularly high figure compared with previous years.

FIGURE 3

Exporters' File registration progress



1.2.2 THE 'BLUE' CD ROM

The Belgian Foreign Trade Agency distributed the latest version of the 'Blue' CD ROM during 2011. This foreign trade promotional tool allows diplomatic missions and Belgian consulates abroad as well as regional and economic attachés to quickly provide their foreign contacts with lists of companies that can offer the products or services they are looking for.



The Exporters' File on the Agency website enables potential importers to obtain up-to-date information. Moreover the service is available to any company or organisation wishing to obtain company details or address lists.

1.2.3 The selective dissemination of information

The task assigned to the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency related to the provision of information about foreign markets involves communicating three types of business opportunities to Belgian and Luxembourg companies registered in the Exporters' File as well as the circulation of notices and Trade Flashes.

Business proposals, tenders and international projects are circulated to companies quickly and using a targeted approach that takes into account the company's profile recorded in the database. This profile doesn't just include the products/services provided by the company but also specifies the countries it exports to and those it is interested in. The notices are not necessarily subject to the combined selection of products/services and country; they sometimes relate to invitations to economic or trade missions or to contact days or inform companies about a new regulation that enters into force in an export market or a market they are interested in.

The SDI service is provided to companies free of charge by post or electronically and bears the logo of the regional organisation for the promotion of foreign trade. Over 20,000 companies receive SDI by email, which is almost 92% of the companies included in the Exporters' File.

In 2011 the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency circulated over 9,000 SDI announcements.

TABLE 2

Number of announcements circulated in 2011 per type of business opportunity	
Business proposals	427
Tenders	7,430
International projects	1,207
Notices (including Trade Flashes)	109

FIGURE 4

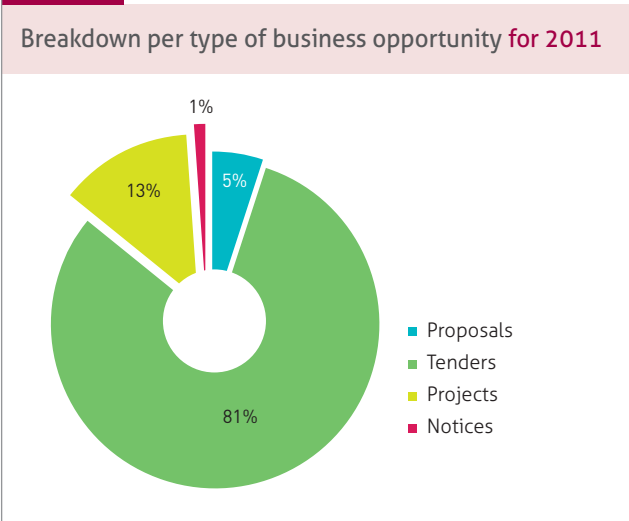




FIGURE 5

SDI evolution per type of opportunity over the last few years

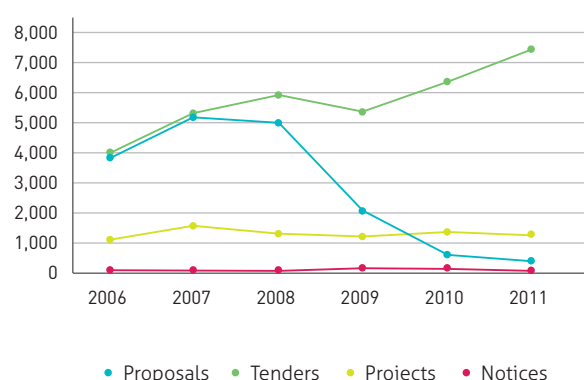


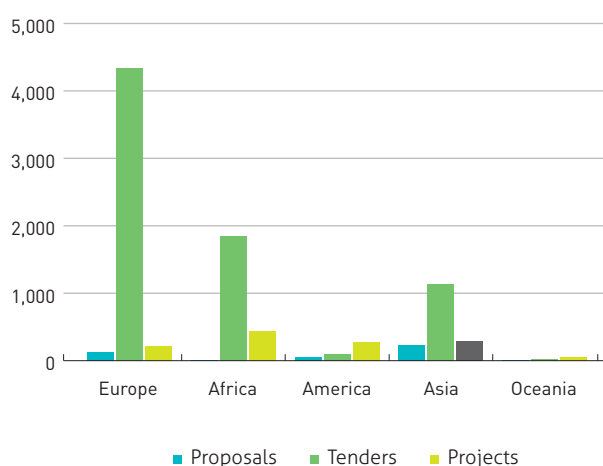
TABLE 3

TOP 10 locations per business opportunity

PROPOSALS	TENDERS	PROJECTS
Lebanon	France	China
India	Germany	India
Israel	Algeria	Vietnam
Brazil	United Kingdom	Moldavia
Afghanistan	Spain	Rwanda
Pakistan	Netherlands	Burundi
United Arab Emirates	Romania	Niger
Poland	Sweden	Sierra Leone
Moldavia	Italy	Tanzania
Sri Lanka	Greece	Mozambique

FIGURE 6

Geographical breakdown of business opportunities (by continent) in 2011



1.2.4 Trade Flashes

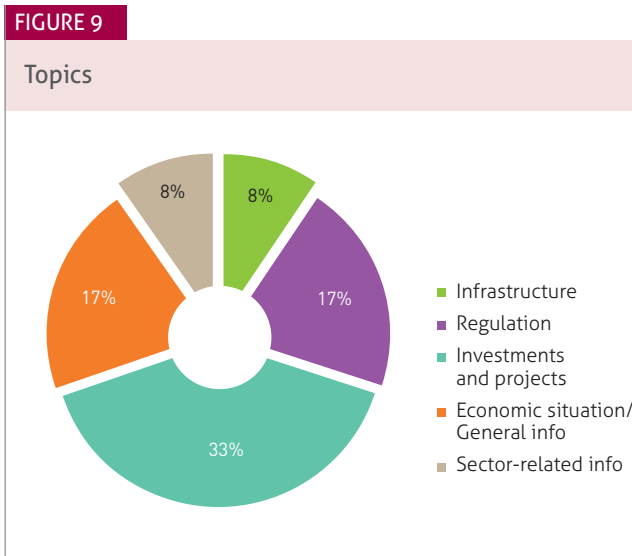
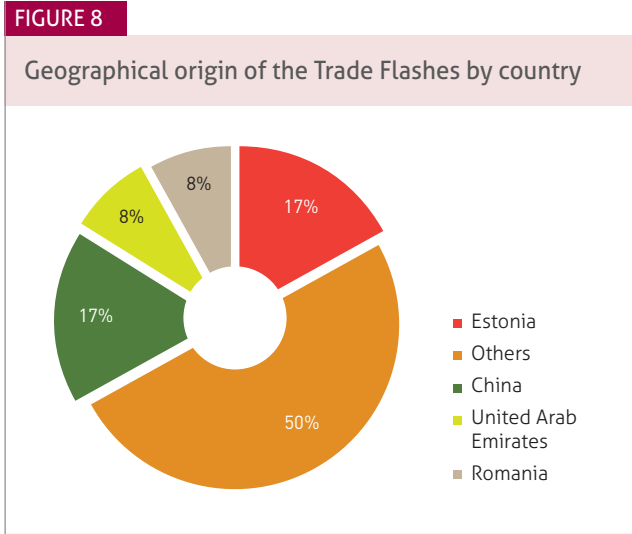
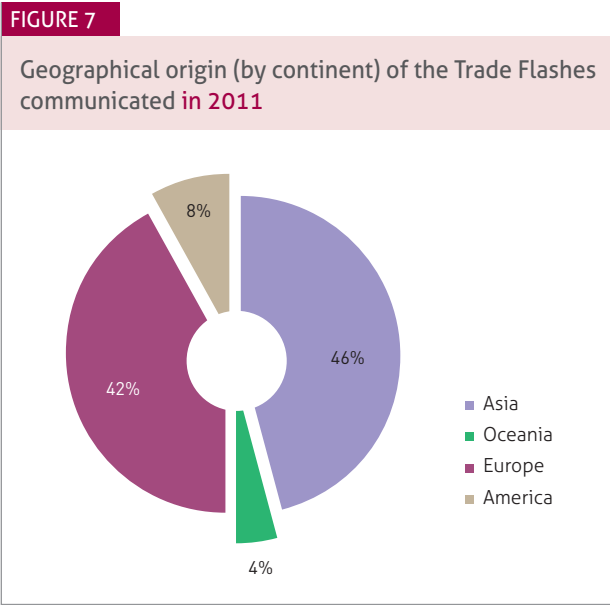
The system for circulating Trade Flashes, established by representatives from the FPS Foreign Affairs, the three Regions and the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency in 2009, lost momentum during the course of 2011.

A Trade Flash essentially consists of first hand information regarding major projects, of details about upcoming projects/tenders or about regulations that have not yet been made public. The primary objective of a Trade Flash is to provide fast, concise and targeted information representing an economic and commercial interest to Belgian and Luxembourg companies registered in the Exporters' File to promote foreign trade.

Trade Flashes are sent to companies by email using Selective Dissemination of Information and all electronic mail bears the logo of the regional organisation for the promotion of foreign trade depending on the area in which the company is based. They are communicated in French or Dutch.

This year the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency circulated just twenty-four Trade Flashes to corporations.

The following diagram illustrates some details of the Trade Flashes circulated in 2011:



Forty-one percent of Trade Flashes circulated concerned the launch of infrastructure projects and/or investments and therefore presented a clear economic and commercial interest to companies. They involved future energy, road, airport or rail projects.

Future calls for bids, tenders or international projects which the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency learned about through the Trade Flash system (such as projects involving the Asian Development Bank) were all circulated directly by the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency's Tender or International Projects units via the Selective Dissemination of Information system.



1.2.5 Information seminars on international projects

Just as they do every year the eighteen members of the Permanent representations and organisations responsible for promoting foreign trade organised two sectoral seminars in 2011.

Three countries are responsible for organising each seminar while the other countries are responsible for inviting and registering their companies.

The first seminar, whose practical organisation was the responsibility of the Permanent representations of France, Germany and Italy, was held at the Hotel Le Plaza, Boulevard Adolphe Max in Brussels on Thursday 26 May and was entitled 'Private Sector Development and SME Support in EU External Aid Programmes'.

Some 128 companies registered their participation including eight Belgian companies:

- Euro-Mediterranean Networks
- IMB & Associates
- Purcon
- VSI Planning
- EC Liaison office to Fokker Technologies, Ballast Nedam, Damen Shipyards Group, Holland Shipbuilding Association and Philips Healthcare
- Safege
- Pinnacle
- Cardno Emerging Markets Belgium S.A.

The second seminar was co-organised by the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency's 'International Projects' department with the assistance of AICEP Portugal Global and the Permanent Representation of Austria.

It took place on 24 November at the Hotel Crowne Plaza in Brussels and on the theme of: 'Energy in EU External Aid Programmes'.

Some 97 companies from France, Germany, Austria, Belgium, Italy, Sweden, Greece, Spain, Cyprus, the United Kingdom, Portugal, the Netherlands and the Czech Republic were present.

Belgium was represented by:

- Hincio
- Kilowatt Solar
- Power@Sea
- Clerens Consulting
- Beaumont Consult
- 3 E N.V./S.A.

The seminar consisted of two parts:

- The first session comprised a number of talks:

'Guidelines on Participation in EU External Aid Programmes', by Ms Lene Topp, Manager at Ramboll Management Consulting,

'Energy in EU External Aid Programmes', by Mr Markus Cornaro, Director DG DEVCO and Mr Jean-Paul Joulia, Head of Unit Energy, DG DEVCO,

'Energy Financing in the EU blending financing mechanisms', by Mr Thorsten Ewerbeck, DG DEVCO,

'Investment Officer, European Investment Bank', by Mr Gunther Mate (EIB),

'The Energy Portal INOGATE', by Ms Simone Rave and 'IPA Projects. A Glance at a Consultants Experiences', by Mr Christian Oberleitner.

- The second part offered participating companies the opportunity to meet each other in the form of 'bilateral meetings' in order to conclude contracts or establish consortiums.

We are sure they will prove to be fruitful for our companies in the near future!

1.3 Foreign trade statistics

The year 2011 saw an increase in the demand for statistical data both from official institutions and the media.

Mission

Authorised, in accordance with Article 2 of the Appendix to the Cooperation Agreement, to collect, process and disseminate national and international comparative statistics, each month the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency receives data from the National Bank of Belgium related to intra and extra-community trade. Since August 2011 the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency also receives figures for foreign trade in services. Statistics related to services are only circulated every three months.

The NBB and Eurostat are the Statistics department's primary sources of information. The Economist Intelligence Unit (Viewswire), the World Trade Organisation and websites of the various foreign authorities responsible for foreign trade statistics are also consulted frequently.

Events

Developments in the Arab countries during the spring of 2011 and the many new diplomatic and consulate postings are two factors that explain the extra workload faced by the statistics team, which was increasingly in high demand.

1.3.1 Standard tasks

Sending statistical data to subscribers

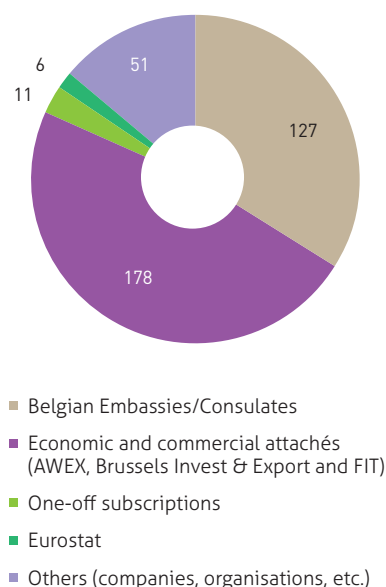
The number of the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency's clients rose to over 373 in 2011. The latter receive figures at an established frequency rate (monthly, quarterly, annually) that correspond to a specific demand or to their interest profile.

All Belgian diplomatic and consular posts receive the foreign trade results for Belgium with their country or countries of jurisdiction by email. On request this data is also sent to all the economic and commercial attachés of the three Regions.

The Belgian Foreign Trade Agency also sends statistical data to foreign companies or embassies that want more detailed information than that covered by the twenty-two sections in the nomenclature.

FIGURE 10

Total number of statistics subscriptions in 2011





Compilation of quarterly brochures, an annual brochure and reports

Every quarter the Agency publishes a brochure containing key data related to Belgian foreign trade. Two versions of this brochure are available: a bilingual Dutch/French version and an English version.

Quarterly reports published in French, Dutch and English portray an accurate picture of the evolution of Belgian imports and exports over 3, 6, 9 or 12 months.

Once a year the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency publishes a brochure detailing Belgian foreign trade with all world countries and according to the twenty-two sections of the nomenclature.

An international report on global trade based on results provided by the World Trade Organisation (WTO) is also published in three languages (French, Dutch and English). This report allows one to compare Belgium's commercial performance with that of other world countries.

Furthermore the Statistics department publishes a list of the main products exported by Belgium and the share of global exports for this product or group of products that this represents. This document includes the different products in descending order of importance for which our country is categorised as a 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th or 5th class global exporter.

Compilation of reports on Belgium's trade relations

Reports on Princely missions

The Statistics department publishes reports on Belgium's trade relations with countries that are chosen as destinations for a Princely mission.

In 2011 four reports were published, in French, Dutch, English and Spanish (for the mission to Chile), corres-

ponding to the four Princely missions carried out during the year. These reports related to the following countries: Russia, the United States, China and Chile.

The Statistics department was particularly creative with regard to the reports for China and Chile as they incorporated a services section.

Other reports

In 2011 the Statistics department compiled some 150 reports on bilateral trade relations in French, Dutch, English and Spanish. This data is continuously updated.

Of these, fifty-six reports were requested by the Royal Palace (compared to forty-six in 2010) for visits by Foreign Heads of State or letters of credence for new ambassadors.

Other persons or authorities that frequently request reports are:

- the Minister of Foreign Affairs
- the FPS Foreign Affairs
- Belgian embassies abroad
- foreign embassies in Belgium
- economic and commercial attachés
- Chambers of Commerce and Federations
- journalists
- students

Following events that unfolded in Arab countries at the beginning of the year the Statistics department was interviewed by **television and radio channels** (RTBF, Canal Z, VRT Nieuwsdienst and Twizzradio) as well as by **representatives from the written press** (notably De Morgen).

1.3.2 Occasional tasks

Briefings organised around new postings

In 2011 the Statistics department provided statistical reports for briefings given to ambassadors leaving for posts in Finland, Morocco, Switzerland, Iraq and Vietnam.

In all twenty or so reports were published for this purpose. Country fact sheets were created at the same time. These fact sheets summarise the evolution of bilateral trade relations in 2010 and at the end of the first few months of 2011.

The Vietnam fact sheet was also used as a working document at the meeting of the Joint Belgium-Vietnam Commission organised in Hanoi on 22 June.

We should also mention our participation at 'Libya' round tables organised at the FPS Foreign Affairs.

Preparation of visits to the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency or to third party institutions - Contribution to events and publications

In 2011 the Statistics department welcomed representatives from the Regions as well as from foreign embassies such as Afghanistan, Nicaragua, and Pakistan.

An information morning was organised for Ms Xiaoling Li from the Sun Yat-Sen University in Guangzhou as part of the European Union Visitors Programme. Other presentations were given during the visit by Vietnamese and Chinese delegations.

Participation at the 'Business opportunities with the Dominican Republic' seminar organised by AWEX in March and the 'Malawi' seminar arranged by FIT in June.



Contributions to publications:

- Made in Belgium 2011 - Belgium's foreign trade;
- The Belgium-Japan Association - Chamber of Commerce quarterly newsletter - June 2011 Belgium's trade relations with Japan;
- The FPS Foreign Affairs - brochure about Belgium - Belgian exports classified according to the main product groups;
- The Belgian Chamber of Commerce and the Ivory Coast - Statistics for Belgium-Ivory Coast bilateral trade relations.

Statistics related to services

As requested by its partners on several occasions the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency has concluded an agreement with the NBB to obtain statistics for external trade in services. FIT already received this data but the NBB agreed to transmit this information to AWEX and Brussels Invest & Export as well.

The Belgian Foreign Trade Agency received the (corrected) statistical data for services in September and has therefore been able to start compiling a first test study. The bilateral reports are therefore complemented by a services section.

1.4 Regulations and legal questions

Article 2 of Appendix 1 to the Cooperation Agreement stipulates that, with regard to legal and regulatory information and documentation, the Agency is responsible for the following matters:

- exports (Belgian and European regulations),
- sales structures and related contractual obligations,
- product control: health standards and regulations,
- fiscal obligations (customs and indirect taxes),
- commercial practices,
- sales and distribution,
- exports and imports in Belgium,
- industrial property,
- setting up business abroad,
- payment regulations and commercial litigation.

In addition to disseminating general information (copies of law texts, import tariffs, names of lawyers, etc.) for a number of years a clear trend has been emerging related to the communication of practical advice.

Most queries relate to:

- Strategic choices: which distribution methods, which customs regime, which delivery terms and conditions, etc. are most appropriate in a certain given situation?
- Verifying or adapting contracts: re-reading contracts, formulating counter-proposals, etc.
- The application of administrative requirements: how

to invoice, how to apply VAT, which documents to include, authentication, etc.

- Assessing the consequences of legal acts: evaluating indemnity due to a client as a result of the termination of a commercial agency, choice of payment terms, the importance of the right of ownership, etc.
- Analysis of disputes: arbitration or tribunal, etc.

Replies are generally made in writing. In rare cases and for practical reasons (limited personnel, limited availability, lack of time) and at the express request of regional partners, face-to-face meetings can be organised with the companies concerned.

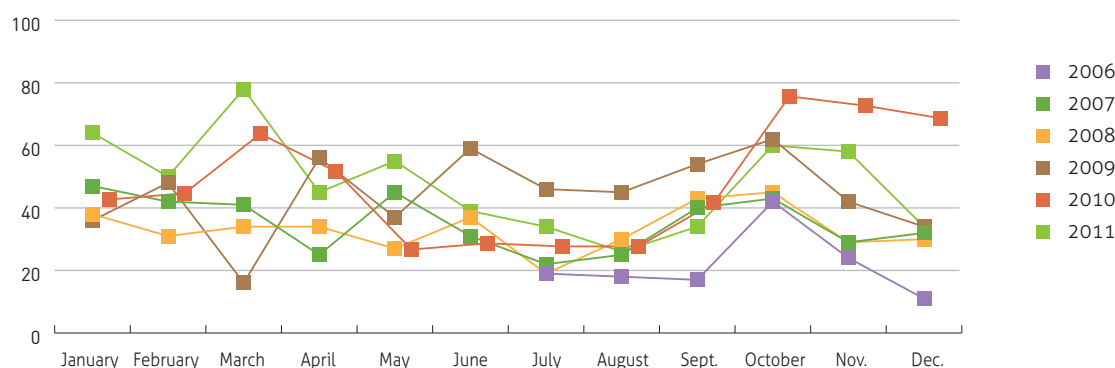
1.4.1 Regulatory case files

Between 01.01.2011 and 09.12.2011 the Regulations department opened a total of 558 new case files. Since 2006 some 2,700 case files have been processed.

Telephone requests and questions from visitors, not confirmed in writing, have not been included.

FIGURE 11

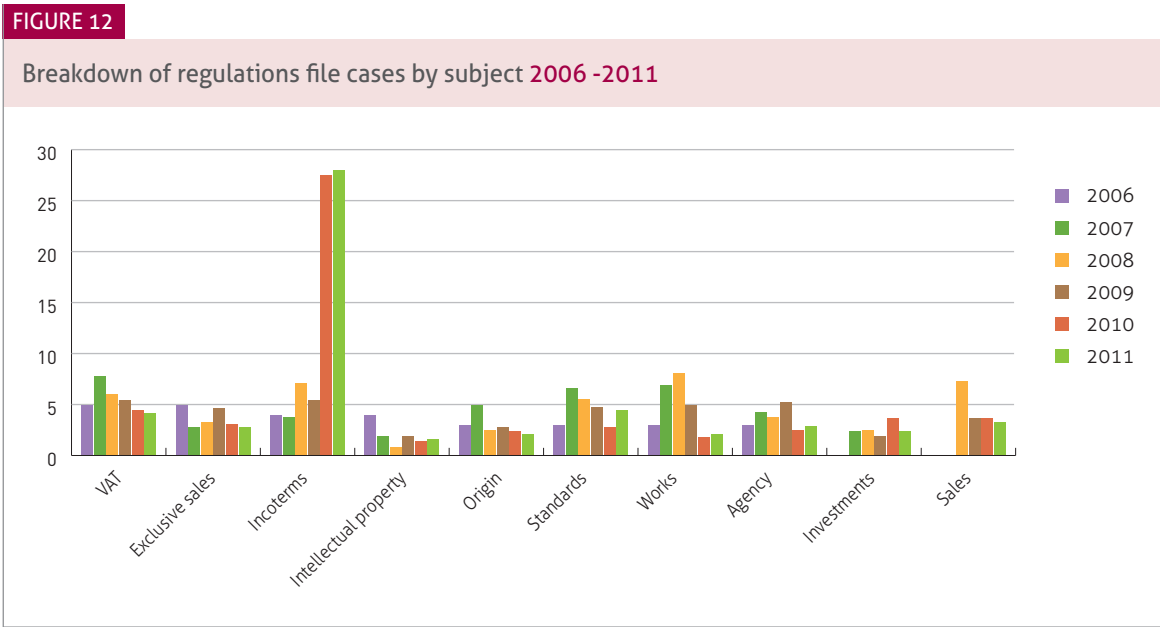
Breakdown of the number of cases handled by the Regulations department





Since the Regulations department was created, the distribution of case files according to type has remained relatively stable: litigation cases and internal case files constitute a small percentage while the vast majority involve regulatory questions from companies.

The breakdown of 'Regulations' case files according to the nature of questions posed in 2011 is as follows:



In 2010 an exponential increase was recorded in questions related to Incoterms; this evolution was confirmed in 2011. The Belgian Foreign Trade Agency’s collaboration in the compilation and translation of these international regulations can account for this.

Furthermore it is noteworthy that interest in the more ‘regulatory’ themes (documents, provenance, standards, customs, etc.), which had decreased somewhat in previous years, has caught up with the more ‘legal’ themes

(all aspects of distribution, sales, investments, intellectual property etc.) This trend also appears to have been confirmed in 2011.

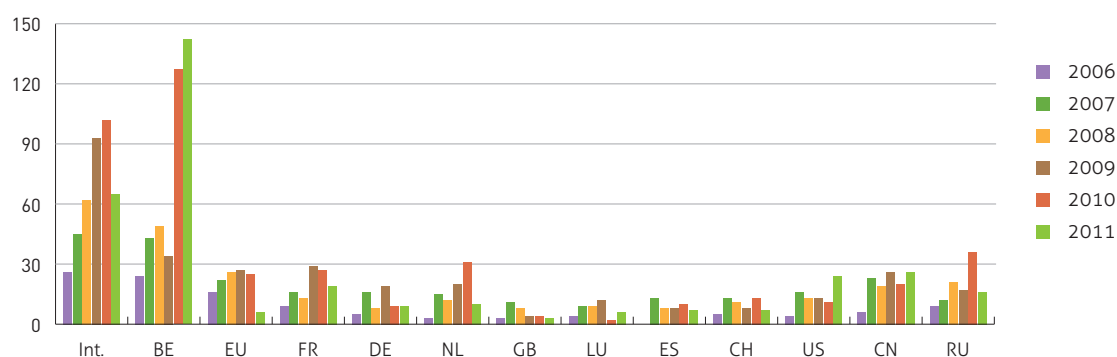
In general questions are very varied and necessitate a broad knowledge of all aspects of international trade.



1.4.2 Geographical breakdown of questions

FIGURE 13

Geographical breakdown of questions between 2006 - 2011



The geographical breakdown of questions has remained relatively stable over the years. Queries with no particular geographical context traditionally represent a share of approximately 20% (though this share seems to have increased in 2011), similarly questions related to Belgian regulations are equally as common.

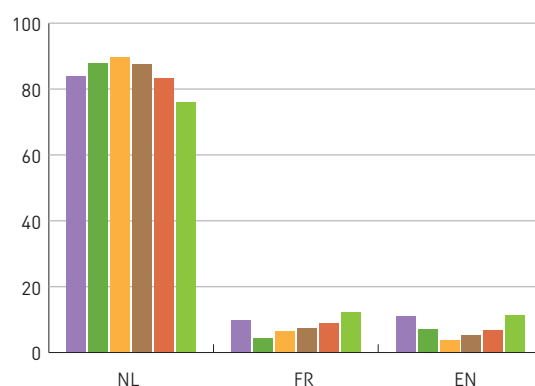
One significant evolution in 2011 involves the increase in requests concerning major markets (USA, China, and the Russian Federation), special attention was devoted to certain Arab countries that are subject to embargoes, and finally there was a reduction in questions regarding European regulations.

The 'Mercosur' region and India are still relatively absent, this very likely confirms the statistics: there is an obvious interest (cf. the success of economic missions) but for the moment very little actual trade.

Language of the questions posed

FIGURE 14

Language of the questions posed, 2006 - 2011



1.5 Website

The Belgian Foreign Trade Agency's new website celebrated its first birthday in 2011. Its first year was characterised by regular updates, the addition of new sections and major modifications to its layout. The contents of the entire site were updated.

TABLE 4

Website: average length of visits in 2011	
Visits per month	Average length of visits (in minutes)
January	9.37
February	4.3
March	4.08
April	3.42
May	8.5
June	3.48
July	2.88
August	3.42
September	3.73
October	4.55
November	3.68
December	4.13

Documents are published in association with the missions and can be consulted 'online' by the participants and by a much wider audience to whom they represent a certain interest (embassies regional economic attachés, ministerial cabinets, European institutions, the press and the academic world, etc.). Country studies, bilateral reports, regulatory studies and participant brochures are also distributed electronically. The missions' schedule is also updated.

TABLE 5

Website: geographical origin of visitors in 2011 – top 10 countries	
Total	28,231
Belgium	21,168
United States	1,306
Netherlands	1,235
France	1,223
Germany	261
United Kingdom	230
Spain	176
China	152
Canada	139
Russia	130

The 'Information Centre' section has been complemented with an interactive module, which allows companies to consult business opportunities online according to the geographical zone and product(s) in which they are interested. This section is updated on a daily basis.

A new 'Regional economic representations' section has been created to help businesses find the details of their regional economic attachés abroad. Thanks to a user-friendly search interface each regional economic representation can be found here. More than 220 countries are listed. This section is updated several times a year.

FIGURE 15

Website: the creation of a new 'Regional economic representations' section



The contacts page has been improved with the addition of photographs of those persons presented; each name is now accompanied by a photograph. The same goes for members of the Board of Directors and the Support Committee.

There is also a section specifically devoted to activity reports.

Lastly there is now an online 'Jobs' section.

The homepage has been redesigned too. Its layout has been optimised to offer easier and quicker access to the information being sought.

FIGURE 16

Website: improvements to the layout, examples of the homepage and 'Jobs' section



An external audit underlined the site's professionalism and listed a series of points that could be explored to perfect it. The latter mainly relate to improvements that could be made to the site's referencing.

1.6 Collaboration with third party initiatives

The Agency occasionally lends its support to a range of events. In most cases these are organised by regional departments for the promotion of foreign trade (or in close collaboration with the latter) as well as by the FPS Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation. During 2011 the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency participated in the following events:

- 1 February 2011: A presentation about 'Documents in international trade' (Laureate in Export management, Antwerp)
- 3 March 2011: A seminar entitled 'Doing business with the United States' organised by UNIZO
- 3 March 2011: A conference entitled 'Exporting to Russia and Ukraine (contractual aspects)' (Globus - Herentals)
- 7 March 2011: A presentation entitled 'Doing Business in Europe' (Marquette Executives - UAMS - Antwerp University Management School)
- 24 May 2011: A seminar entitled 'Doing business with China' organised by UNIZO
- 14 September 2011: A presentation entitled 'State Aid to International Trade (Law & Practice in Belgium)' (CCIB - Brussels)
- 29 September 2011: A presentation about 'Payment terms in international trade' (Graydon lunch seminar - Antwerp)
- 20 October 2011: A presentation about 'Payment methods and Delcredere' (Brussels Invest & Export - Brussels)
- 18 and 25 October 2011: A seminar entitled 'Foreign trade techniques' (University College Ghent)
- 25 and 27 October 2011: A conference on 'Payment methods in international trade' (National Delcredere Office, Brussels)
- 27 October 2011: Brussels Invest & Export asked the SDI department to give a presentation on the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency's activities at a seminar entitled 'International Tenders, Projects & Technical Assistance: EIB, EBRD, IFC/WORLD BANK GROUP, EUROPEAN COMMISSION'
- 3 November 2011: The Belgian Foreign Trade Agency welcomed trainee diplomats and gave a presentation of how the Agency operates
- 21 November 2011: A conference on 'Global Sourcing' (Flanders Trade Link - Kortrijk)
- 22 November 2011: A seminar entitled 'Doing business with Russia and Ukraine' (Dag van de Export, Export Day - VOKA Hasselt)
- 24 November 2011: A presentation on 'Taxation on imports in Brazil' (Agoria - Brussels)
- 25 November 2011: The Belgian Foreign Trade Agency welcomed a delegation from the Chinese Ministry for Trade and gave a presentation on how the Agency operates and on Belgium-China bilateral relations
- 7 December 2011: A presentation on the 'Belgian Foreign Trade Agency's role in the preparation and coordination of economic missions around the world to benefit businesses' to the Degroof Bank
- 8 December 2011: A seminar entitled 'Doing business in Vietnam' organised by UNIZO
- 13 December 2011: A presentation on 'Costs and risks in exporting' (Learning Network Limburg - VOKA - Hasselt)
- 19 December 2011: A presentation related to 'The organisation of foreign trade in Belgium' to the ICHEC management school

During the year:

- Seminars related to 'Incoterms 2010', organised nationally (for organisations such as Pfizer, Katoennatie, Daikin, VOKA, Nike, Vandemoortele, Total, Icarus, Médecins sans frontières and Agoria - Chaudfontaine) and internationally (including in Lisbon, Paris, Vienna, Athens, Mexico City, Entebbe (Uganda), Barcelona, Nairobi (Kenya), Yaoundé (Cameroun) and Stockholm)
- Presentations about the 'International Sales Contract' (for organisations such as the UA, VOKA and UNIZO)
- K. Vanheusden, Director of the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency is also a Professor that was invited by the VUB - Brussels Institute of Contemporary China Studies to participate in the 'Export Management' course (in the

Postgraduate courses 'Investing In Europe' and 'China Business Development')

- In 2011 the SDI department welcomed a number of representatives from foreign embassies in Brussels (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Afghanistan and Nicaragua, etc.) It also assisted in distributing information from organisations such as: Enterprise Flanders, the BTC, Chambers of Commerce, etc. and was asked by the FPS Foreign Affairs to assist at the Asia/Oceania Round Table during the Diplomatic Service Days.





Analysis of the figures for 2011 (source: nbb – community concept*)

The following results demonstrate that Belgian foreign trade did not suffer the negative effects of the crisis in 2011. The reason for this is that in terms of foreign trade Belgium is heavily dependent on its large neighbour Germany, which rebounded after the crisis. Belgian exports and imports increased at rates approaching 10% in 2011; Belgian foreign trade is therefore doing better than before the 2008-2009 crisis.

In 2011 Belgian **exports** increased by **11.4%**, rising from EUR 308.3 billion to EUR 343.4 billion.

Belgian **imports** grew at an even faster rate. Between 2010 and 2011 Belgian purchases abroad increased by **12.7%**, rising from EUR 296.7 billion to EUR 334.3 billion.

Belgium's **balance of trade** is positive but decreased from EUR 11.7 billion in 2010 to **EUR 9.1 billion** in 2011.

TABLE 6

Evolution in Belgian exports and imports between **2010 and 2011**

In billions of EUR	Exports	Imports	Balance	Coverage rate %
2010	308.3	296.7	11.7	103.9
2011	343.4	334.3	9.1	102.7
% var. 2011/2010	11.4	12.7		



2. Belgian foreign trade in 2011

- 2.1 Exports
- 2.2 Imports
- 2.3 Geographical Trade Balances

** Community concept/National concept*

The results are presented according to the community concept which, unlike the national concept, takes into account imports and exports carried out by non-residents subject to VAT in Belgium, and in which no resident intervenes. Returned goods are also taken into account.

2.1 Exports

2.1.1 Geographical evolution of exports

EUROPE

Two distinctions are made in the analysis of the evolution of Belgian exports to other European countries. A distinction is made between the **European Union** on the one hand and **countries outside the European Union** on the other. The European Union is also subdivided into:

- countries that are part of the eurozone
- and countries that are not part of the eurozone.

The rate of growth for exports to European Union member countries amounted to **10.0%** in 2011 compared with 12.0% in 2010.

Both the rate of growth in Belgian sales to countries belonging to the eurozone and the rate of growth in sales to countries outside the eurozone have slightly decreased:

- the former decreased from +11.4% in 2010 to **+9.8%** in 2011, while
- the latter decreased from +15.0% in 2010 to **+11.4%** in 2011.

Countries in the eurozone

Apart from Spain (-0.5%), Greece (-2.7%) and Portugal (-4.9%), where the decline in Belgian sales reflects the economic problems those countries are experiencing, Belgium has seen exports increase to all countries in the eurozone. The highest increase in Belgian exports was to Estonia (+42.1%), the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg (+15.0%), the Netherlands (+13.8%) and Slovenia (+11.7%). The sudden rise in exports to Estonia can largely be explained by the fact that on 1 January 2011 the euro replaced the Estonian kroon, which contrasts sharply with the decline in exports to this country recorded in 2010 (-1.4%).

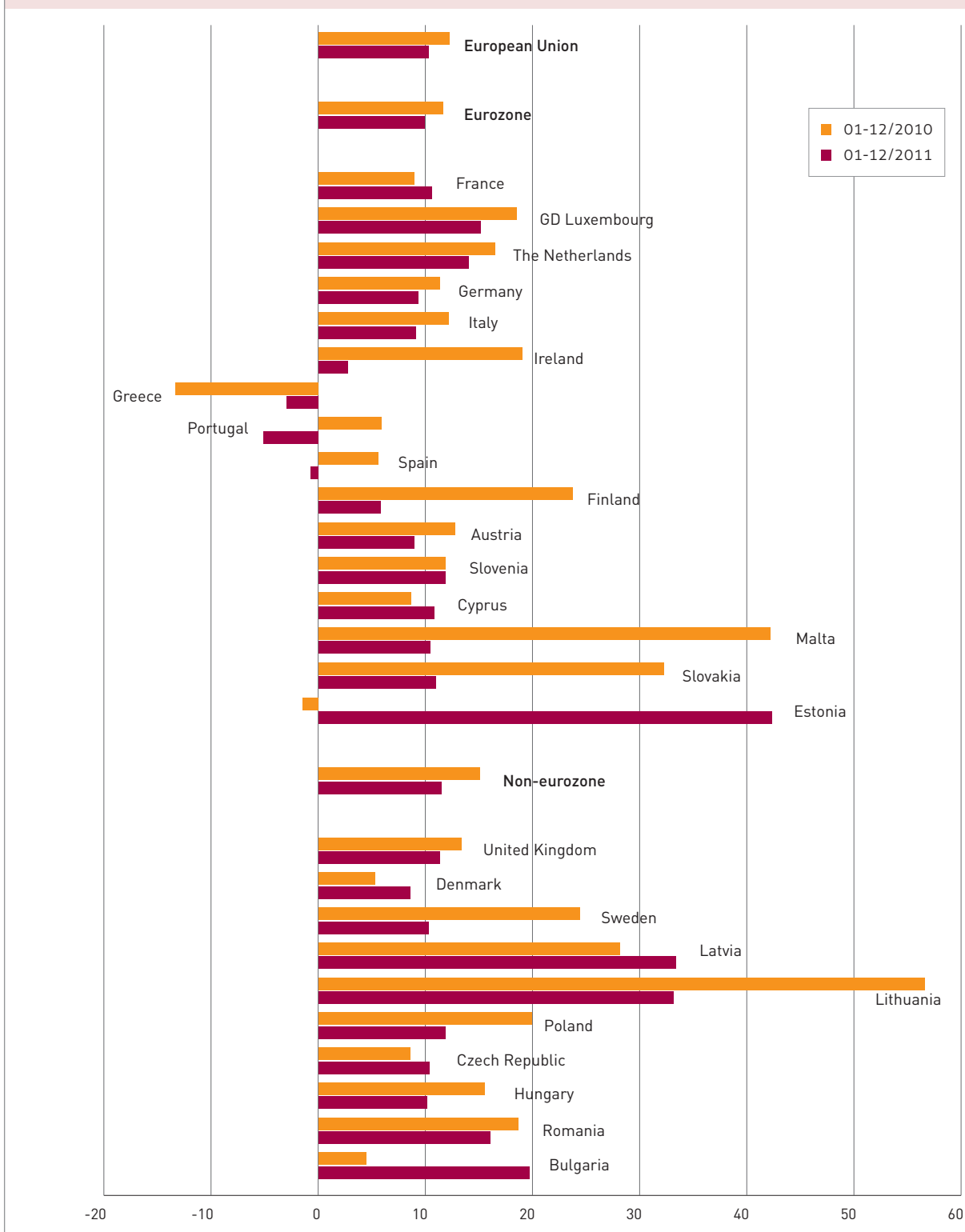
Countries outside the Eurozone

Belgium managed to increase sales to all markets. The most impressive performance was achieved in Latvia (+33.2%), Lithuania (+32.9%), and Bulgaria (+19.7%). With the exception of Denmark (+8.4%) all growth rates were higher than 10%.



FIGURE 17

Variations in exports to the European Union in 2011 (2010) (in %)

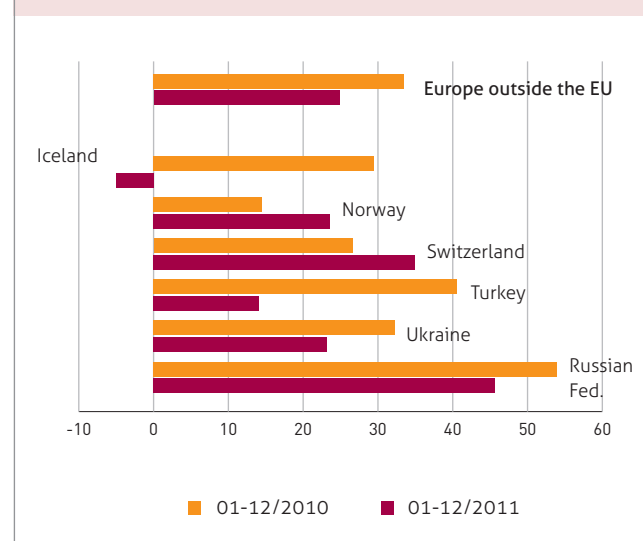


Belgian exports to **other European countries outside the EU** also flourished despite the fact that their growth in 2011 (+25.4%) was lower than that recorded in 2010 (+32.6%).

Growth was recorded in all markets except in Iceland where Belgian sales fell by 4.3% compared with 2010. We should highlight Belgium's performance in Switzerland (+35.5%) and in Russia (+35.2%) in particular.

FIGURE 18

Variations in exports to European countries outside the EU in 2011 (2010) (in %)



INTERCONTINENTAL EXPORTS

Developments recorded in **intercontinental exports** vary considerably. In certain cases the growth rate of Belgian sales increased while they decreased in others.

- **Africa:** +24.4% in 2011 compared with +13.2% in 2010;
- **America:** +1.0% in 2011 compared with +24.4% in 2010;
- **Asia:** +19.4% in 2011 compared with +31.0% in 2010 and
- **Oceania:** +5.2% in 2011 compared with +33.6% in 2010.

In **Africa** exports particularly decreased to Libya (-61.0%), the Ivory Coast (-28.2%), Algeria (-9.3%), Angola (-8.7%) and Tunisia (-8.3%). Despite these considerable decreases the rate of growth for Belgian exports to the African continent as a whole increased from +13.2% in 2010 to +24.4% in 2011, as a result of the impressive performance of our exporters to Nigeria (+109.7%), Kenya (+45.3%), Egypt (+33.4%) and South Africa (+29.7%).

In **America** Belgian exporters saw their sales slightly increase overall despite falling Belgian sales to Canada (-8.7%) and the United States (-1.6%). However great success was achieved in Argentina (+40.0%), Colombia (+29.6%), Peru (+27.9%), Cuba (+27.8%), Venezuela (+19.5%), Chile (+14.1%) and Mexico (+11.5%). The substantial increase in exports to these countries compensated for the decline in exports to the United States and Canada. Consequently Belgian sales to the American market as a whole grew by +1.0% (compared with an increase of +24.4% in 2010).

In **Asia** Belgian sales increased to Saudi Arabia (+50.0%), China (+35.6%), the United Arab Emirates (+35.6%), Singapore (+35.0%), Taiwan (+28.3%), South Korea (+25.5%) and Jordan (+23.6%). With regard to other countries Belgian exports fell to Kuwait (-19.0%), Syria (-9.5%) and Pakistan (-6.5%). Although Asia continues to be the driving force the overall rate of growth in exports to the Asian continent slumped from +31.0% in 2010 to +19.4% in 2011.



In **Oceania** results were positive but not as good as in 2010. Sales to this continent saw their rate of growth recede from +33.6% in 2010 to +5.2% in 2011. After an increase of 31.5% in 2010 sales to Australia 'only' grew by 5.2% in 2011. Exports to New Zealand increased by 6.7%.

MARKET SHARES

The **European Union** still represents the largest share of Belgium's customers. However from 2010 to 2011 the EU share of Belgian exports has fallen slightly from 73.0% to 72.7%. This downward trend, which already began a few years ago, is growing to the benefit of other continents.

Eurozone countries currently account for 59.4% compared with 60.2% in 2010 and the share of **other EU countries** remained stable at 12.8%.

A few slight variations should be noted for Belgium's four largest customers:

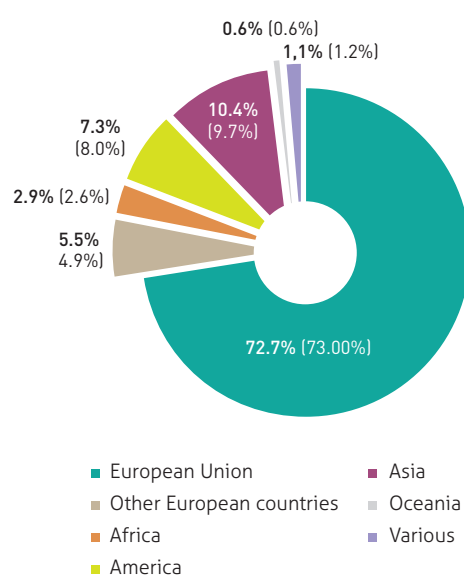
- Germany's share fell from 18.6% to 18.2%;
- France's share fell from 16.6% to 16.4%;
- The Netherlands showed an increase with its share rising from 11.9% to 12.2%;
- The United Kingdom's share stagnated at 7.0%.

The share of European countries **outside the European Union** rose from 4.9% in 2010 to 5.5% in 2011.

From 2010 to 2011 Belgian foreign trade shares for the different continents evolved as follows:

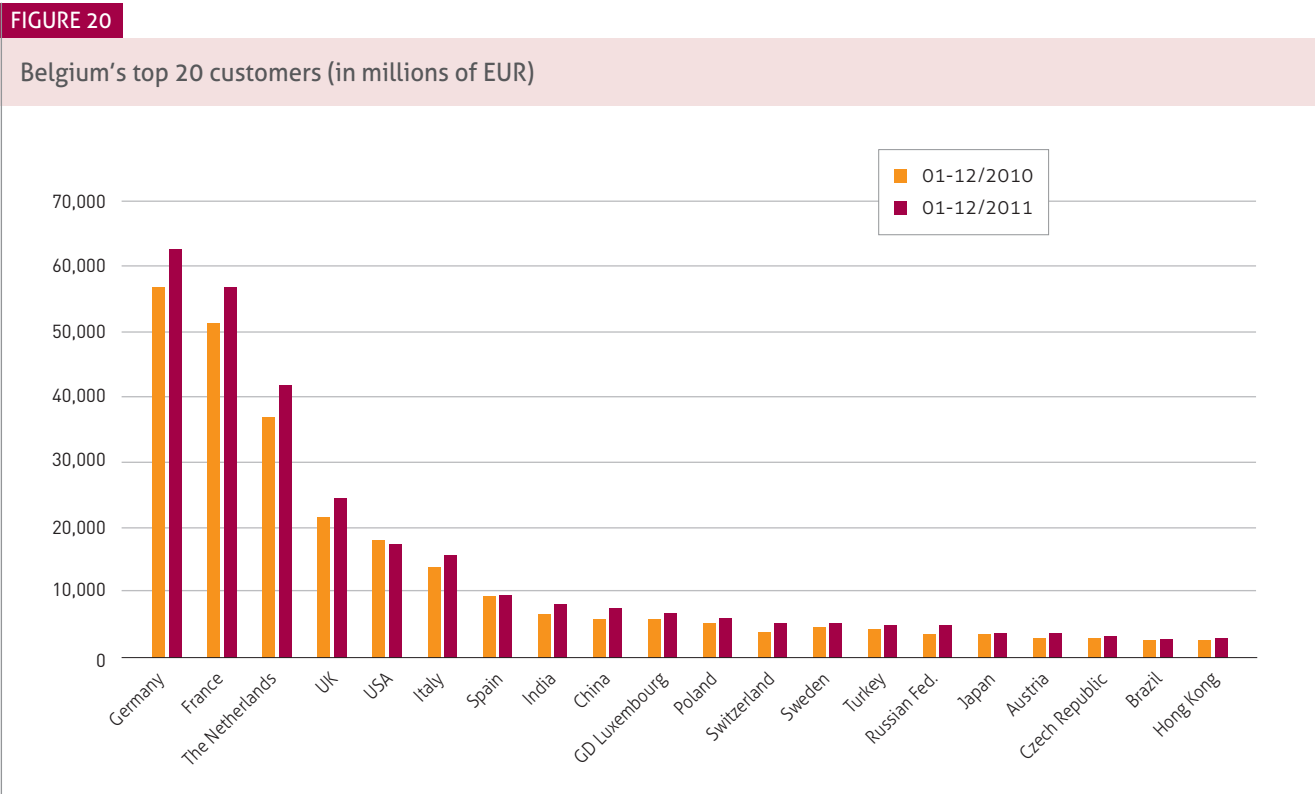
FIGURE 19

Share of exports per continent in 2011 (2010)





Across all continents our **top 20 customers** were:



With EUR 62,515.7 million **Germany** remains our number one customer thanks to an increase in Belgian exports amounting to 9.1%. In 2010 exports reached EUR 57,302.4 million.

France holds on to second place. In 2011 Belgian exports to the Hexagon amounted to EUR 56,419.9 million. Compared to 2010 exports to this country increased by 16.4% while they had already grown in 2010 and totalled 51,126.4 million.

Finally Belgian exports to **the Netherlands** also grew from EUR 36,705.3 million in 2010 to EUR 41,765.9 million in 2011.



2.1.2 The sectoral evolution of exports

The share of **chemical products** climbs to first place accounting for 23.3% of total exports. From 2010 to 2011 these exports grew by +1.3%.

Accounting for 11.4% of total Belgian exports **mineral products** take second place. Sales for this product group increased by +34.0%. They already grew by +43.9% in 2010. These dramatic increases are largely due to the sub-shares for 'Petroleum oils or bituminous minerals', 'Petroleum gas and other gaseous hydrocarbons' and

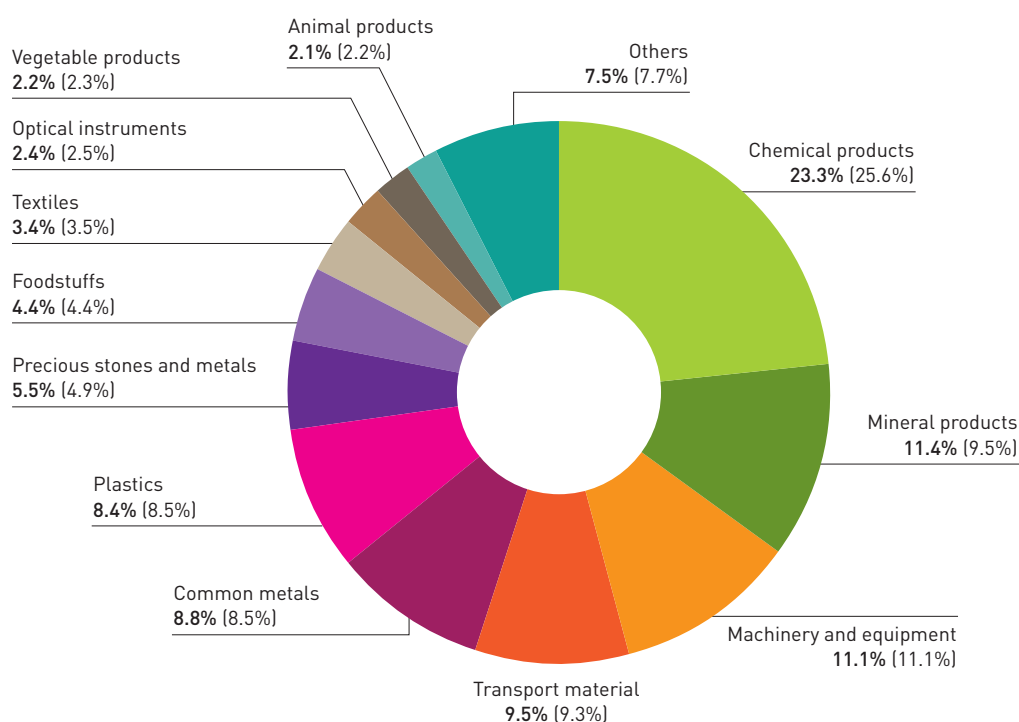
'Crude petroleum oils or bituminous minerals'.

Thanks to a +11.1%, increase in sales **machinery and equipment** takes third place with a share of 11.1%.

Transport equipment takes fourth place with a 9.5% share and exports up by +13.9%.

FIGURE 21

Sectoral breakdown of exports in 2011 (2010)



2.2 Imports

2.2.1 Geographical evolution of imports

Belgian imports from **European Union** countries showed an increase of +10.9% in 2011 compared with an increase of +14.6% in 2010. The rate of growth for purchases made by Belgium in the eurozone decreased from +13.0% to +9.6%. Similarly the growth rate for Belgian imports from other EU countries not belonging to the eurozone fell from + 24.7% in 2010 to +18.0% in 2011.

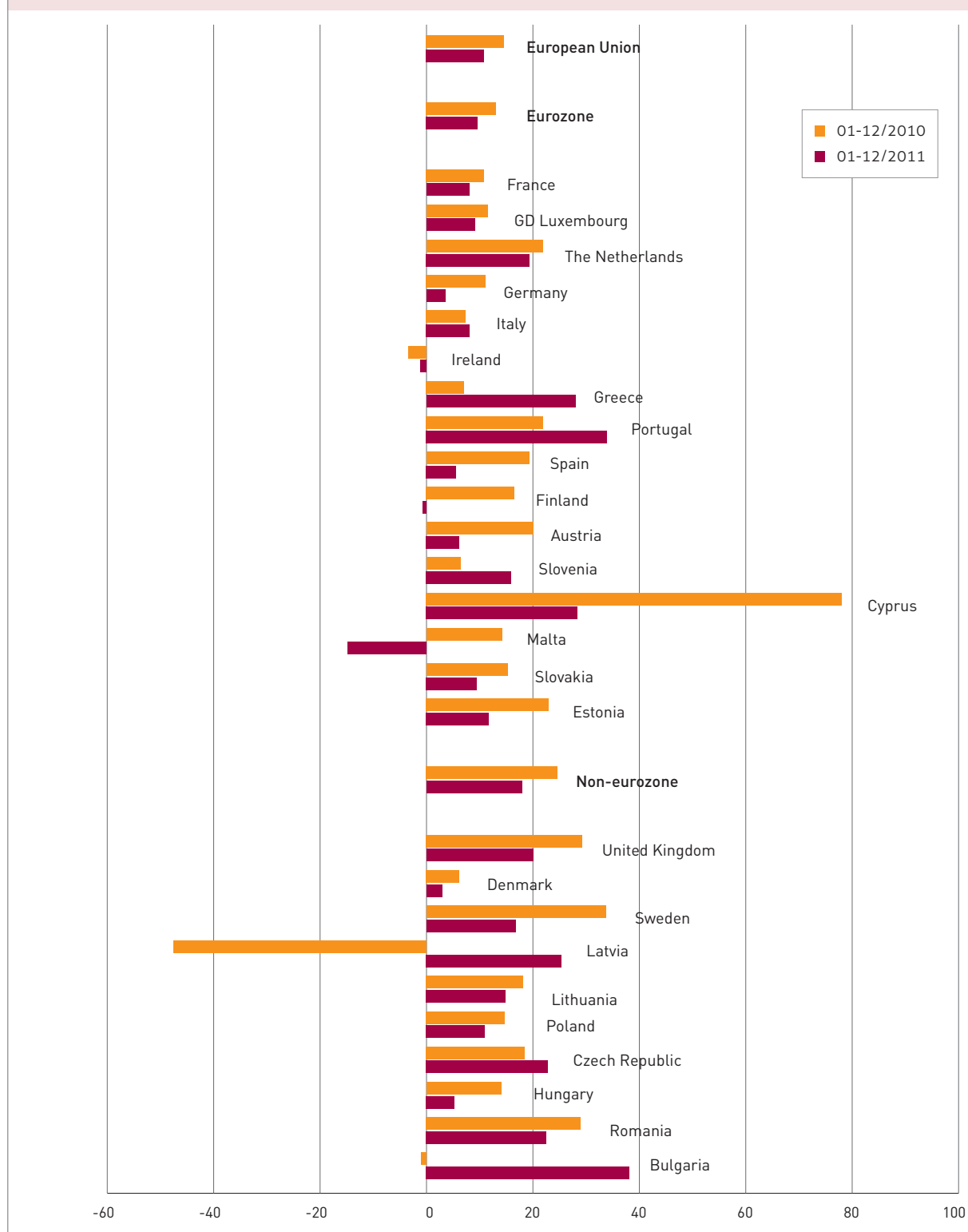
In the **eurozone** Belgium saw an increase in imports from Portugal (+33.9%), Cyprus (+28.5%), Greece (+28.0%) and the Netherlands (+19.2%). Only imports from Malta (-14.6%), Ireland (-1.2%) and Finland (-0.6%) decreased in 2011.

Imports from each of the **EU countries that have not adopted the euro** increased in 2011. We should point out the increase in imports from Bulgaria (+38.0%), Latvia (+25.1%), the Czech Republic (22.5%), Romania (+22.2%), the United Kingdom (+19.9%) and Sweden (+16.5%).



FIGURE 22

Variations in imports from the European Union in 2011 (2010) (in %)



Purchases made from other European countries outside the EU increased by 32.7% due to an increase in imports from Russia (+43.6%), Ukraine (+38.6%), Norway (+33.2%), Switzerland (+27.0%) and Turkey (+13.9%). Only imports from Iceland fell (-10.6%) in 2011.

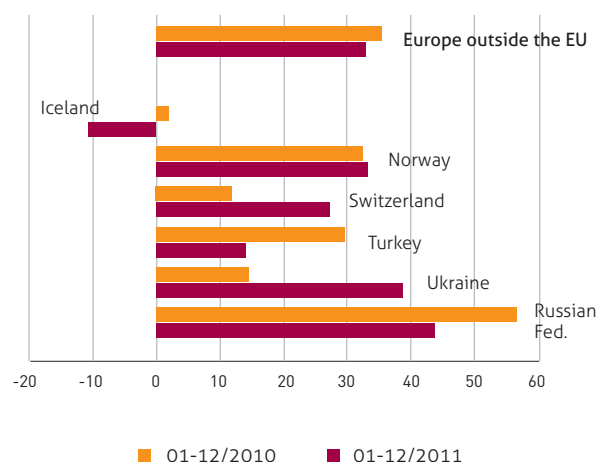
Imports from the **rest of the world** evolved differently from one country to another. Those from Oceania increased more sharply than in 2010 while those from Africa, Asia and America increased but at a lower rate than in 2010.

- **Africa:** +12.7% in 2011 compared with +27.6% in 2010;
- **America:** +14.2% in 2011 compared with +17.3% in 2010;
- **Asia:** +12.6% in 2011 compared with +21.6% in 2010 and
- **Oceania:** +29.7% in 2011 compared with +27.9% in 2010.

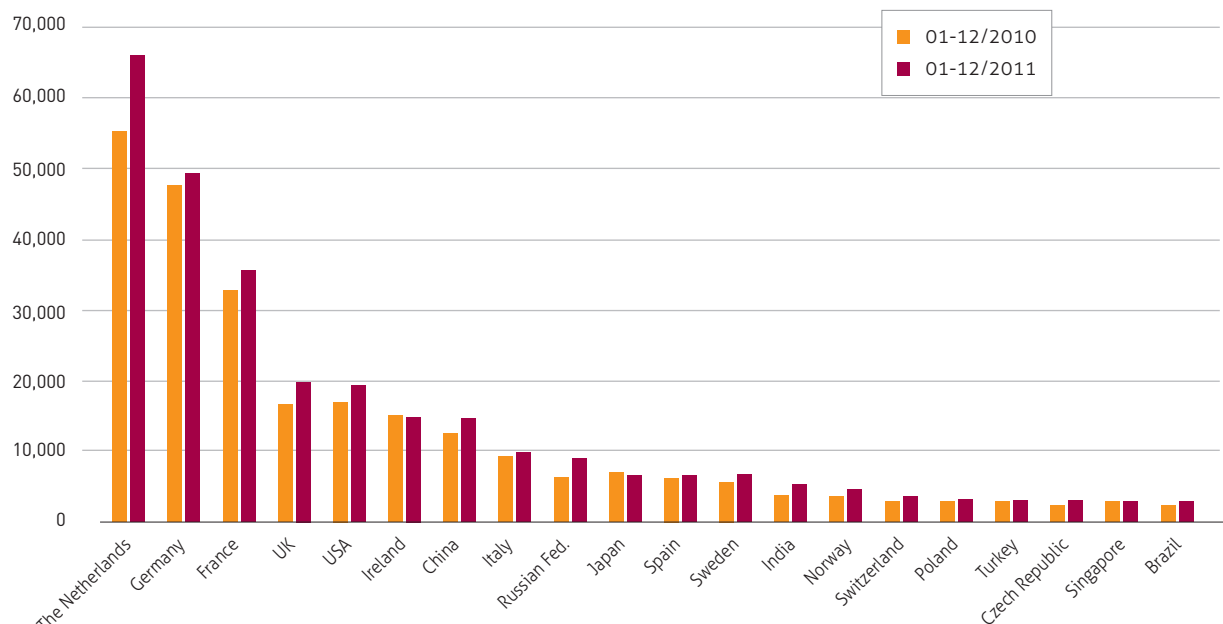
Across all continents the following countries were Belgium's **top 20 suppliers** in 2011:

FIGURE 23

Variations in imports from European countries outside the EU in 2011 (2010) (en %)


FIGURE 24

Belgium's top 20 suppliers (in millions of EUR)





2.2.2 The sectoral evolution of imports

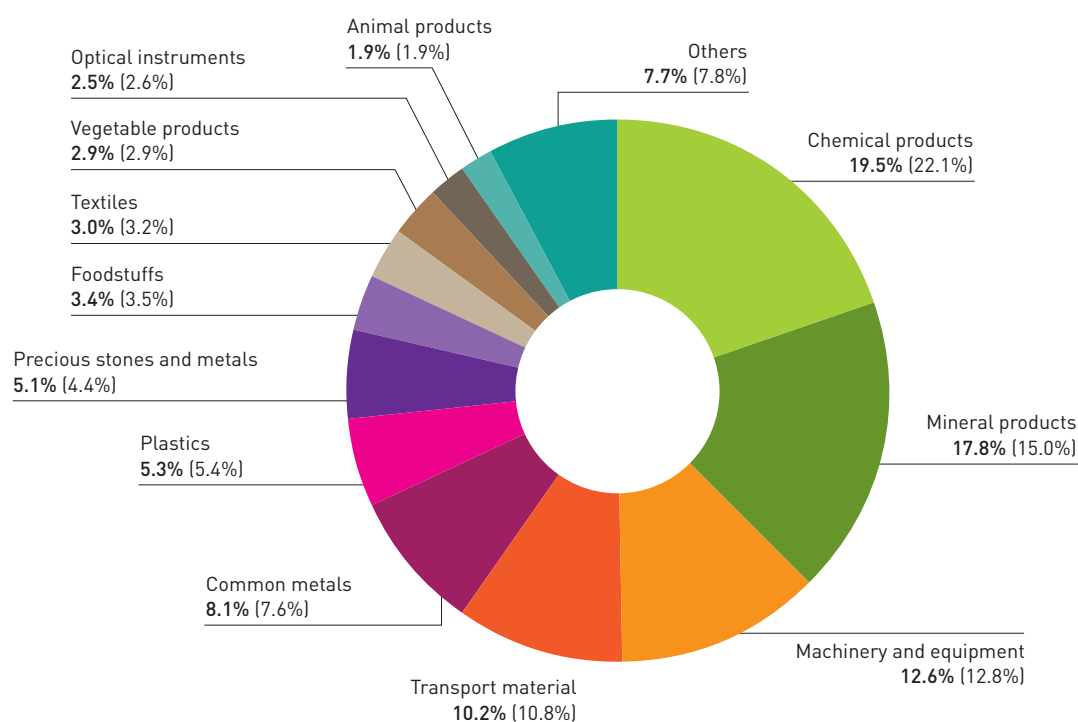
Just as for exports the largest share of imports also belongs to **chemical products**, which accounts for almost a fifth of our total imports (19.5%). Due to a -0.2% decrease in purchases this share decreased in 2011 compared with 2010.

The other three main shares in 2011 were related to **mineral products, machinery and equipment** and **transport equipment**, which account for 17.8%, 12.6% and 10.2% of Belgium's total imports respectively. Imports for these three shares increased by 33.6%, 11.2% and 6.7% respectively.

These are followed by imports of **base metals**, which grew by 19.6% accounting in turn for 8.1% of Belgium's total imports.

FIGURE 25

Sectoral breakdown of imports in 2011 (2010)



2.3 Geographical trade balances

Belgium announced a trade surplus with the **European Union**. It increased slightly in 2011 and the positive balance rose from EUR 19.6 billion in 2010 to EUR 19.9 billion in 2011.

Eurozone countries

In 2011 the positive trade balance with France expanded (EUR 20.9 billion). Other significant surpluses, although smaller, were recorded with Germany (EUR 13.2 billion), Italy (EUR 5.7 billion), the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg (EUR 3.9 billion) and Spain (EUR 2.6 billion).

With the Netherlands the trade balance deteriorated further; the deficit increased from EUR 18.5 billion in 2010 to EUR 24.1 billion in 2011. The trade balance deficit with Ireland also remained at (EUR 13.1 billion).

With regard to countries outside the eurozone the overall trade balance remains positive even if it has decreased. Of EUR 8.1 billion actual profits amount to revenues of EUR 6.9 billion.



The trade balance deteriorated with **other European countries outside the EU**. The trade deficit in fact increased from EUR -1,015.1 million to EUR -2,492.4 million. Belgium's negative balance with Russia increased to EUR -4,227.1 million and with Norway it also deteriorated increasing to EUR -2,656.2 million.

With regard to the other continents it should be noted that Belgium's trade balance with **America** worsened. A trade deficit amounting to EUR -1,177.1 million recorded in 2010 increased and ran to EUR -4,632.6 million in 2011.

With **Asia** the deficit amounting to EUR -10,745.3 million in 2010 reduced significantly to EUR -10,072.4 million in 2011.

Belgium's trade balance with **Africa** showed a surplus of EUR 1,782.3 million in 2011 which is more than double the surplus for 2010 (EUR 765.7 million).

With regard to **Oceania** the trade balance was closed in 2011 with a surplus of EUR 185.1 million while the surplus amounted to EUR 498.9 million in 2010.



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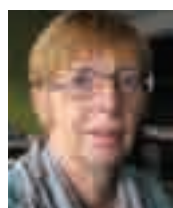
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Action plan for 2012 - 2013

JOINT ECONOMIC MISSIONS

presided by HRH Prince Philippe

2012

Vietnam - 10-16 March

Japan - 9-16 June

Turkey - 15-19 October

Australia & New Zealand - 16-30 November



Vietnam



Japan



Turkey



Australia & New Zealand

2013

Thailand - 16-22 March

West Coast of the United States - 8-14 June

South Africa & Angola - 19-25 October

India - 23-29 November or 30 November-6 December



Thailand



West Coast of the United States



South Africa & Angola



India

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