



# ACTIVITY REPORT 2014



belgian  
foreign trade agency





---

# MISSION STATEMENT

---

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

- deciding on and organising joint trade missions linked to an initiative by one or several of the Regions or at the request of the Federal Government;



- 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.





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from the President	6
Message from the General Management	7
Strategy and objectives for 2015	8
Institutional and financial framework	10
Budgetary allocations for 2014	10
Staff members 2014	11
<b>1. THE BELGIAN FOREIGN TRADE AGENCY IN 2014</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>1.1 JOINT TRADE MISSIONS</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>1.2 INFORMATION CENTRE</b>	<b>23</b>
1.2.1 Belgian Exporters' Database	24
1.2.2 Selective dissemination of information	25
1.2.3 Information seminars on international projects	28
<b>1.3 STUDIES, STATISTICS AND TAX CERTIFICATES</b>	<b>29</b>
1.3.1 Studies	30
1.3.2 Statistics	31
1.3.3 Tax certificates	33
<b>1.4 REGULATIONS AND LEGAL QUESTIONS</b>	<b>34</b>
1.4.1 Regulation case files	35
1.4.2 Geographical breakdown of questions	37
<b>1.5 WEBSITES</b>	<b>38</b>
1.5.1 The Belgian Foreign Trade Agency's website	39
1.5.2 <a href="http://www.belgianeconomicmission.be">www.belgianeconomicmission.be</a>	41
<b>1.6 COLLABORATION WITH THIRD PARTY INITIATIVES</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>2. BELGIAN FOREIGN TRADE IN 2014</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>2.1 EXPORTS</b>	<b>48</b>
2.1.1 Geographical evolution of exports	48
2.1.2 Sectoral evolution of exports	52
<b>2.2 IMPORTS</b>	<b>54</b>
2.2.1 Geographical evolution of imports	54
2.2.2 Sectoral evolution of imports	57
<b>2.3 GEOGRAPHICAL TRADE BALANCES</b>	<b>58</b>
Management bodies – Situation on 31 December 2014	60
Organisation chart – Situation on 31 December 2014	68
Figures and tables	70
Action plan for 2015 - 2016	72
Contacts and access map	74

---

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

---



**ANNEMIE  
NEYTS-UYTEBROECK**  
President of the Board  
of Directors

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck'.

The WTO will commemorate its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2015. Its Director-General, Roberto Azevêdo, recently stated that “Over the years, the WTO has helped to boost trade, resolve numerous trade disputes and assist developing countries with becoming part of the system of trade.” The 160 members of the WTO now represent 98% of global trade.

It has been possible to observe different trends in recent years. One such trend is the increasing globalisation of macro-economic shocks. Although the 2008-2009 crisis originated in the financial markets of certain developed countries, its effects were felt throughout the world. Another trend noted has been the marked rise in the prices of agricultural products and natural resources over the last ten years and the growing importance of exports of commodities. Finally, there has been an increase in the number of preferential trade agreements and free trade agreements.

Belgian foreign trade only experienced very minimal growth in 2014. Exports increased by 0.1%, while imports grew very slightly by 0.3%. Our trade balance for trade in goods remains positive, but Europe continues to dominate our trade with 76% of all exports and 72.6% of total imports. It therefore remains vital that we continue our activities in more distant markets, most notably via princely trade missions.

Her Royal Highness Princess Astrid continued her brilliant chairing of princely missions as Representative of His Majesty the King in 2014. Three joint trade missions were organised in 2014 instead of the traditional four, due to the holding of elections in May. The Saudi Arabia / Oman mission in March 2014 was followed by a mission to Colombia / Peru in October and Malaysia / Singapore in November. All were highly successfully and, once again, the Princess managed to satisfy the expectations of Belgian companies and provide them with optimal support.

The organising partners, AWEX (the Wallonia Export-Investment Agency), Brussels Invest & Export and Flanders Investment & Trade, as well as the FPS Foreign Affairs, can this year again be happy with the high rate of participation in the missions, as well as the overwhelming satisfaction

expressed by the companies regarding their organisation. Although only three missions were organised in 2014, they involved 948 participants representing 453 companies, federations or universities. This number is fully in line with previous years and shows that this type of initiative continues to please numerous followers.

The Agency also experienced a flood of requests to the Statistics and Regulations Departments and continued with dissemination of sectoral publications with new editions: “Belgian sustainable energy solutions” and “Belgian waste and recycling solutions”. Exporters continue to be informed about international business opportunities on a regular basis. All departments are therefore relentlessly continuing their efforts in order to support the Agency’s partners and, beyond that, the country’s companies.

---

## MESSAGE

# FROM THE GENERAL MANAGEMENT

---

Although Europe and the euro-zone are slowly emerging from the economic and financial crisis, Belgian foreign trade, heavily dependent on neighbouring countries, is struggling to recover. Belgium remains a key player in global trade and has nothing to be ashamed of with regard to its score. However, our companies need to continue their efforts to diversify into other markets. The joint trade missions remain the preferred instrument at their disposal in order to more rapidly penetrate markets and achieve their strategic objectives.

In 2014, the missions brought Her Royal Highness Princess Astrid, accompanied by the Belgian delegation, to the four corners of the globe. The mission to Saudi Arabia and Oman, the first of the year, immediately set the tone with the sizeable participation of no less than 353 people, representing 172 companies, federations and universities. The satisfaction survey conducted afterwards among the companies of the three Regions revealed a particularly high satisfaction rating of close to 80%. This positive trend continued in the second half of the year, with a mission to Colombia and Peru, in October, and Malaysia and Singapore, in November.

This was the first time that Colombia and Peru had been destinations for a princely trade mission. The timing of the visit was particularly appropriate following the conclusion of the free trade agreement between the European Union and the two countries. An especially warm welcome was therefore afforded to the Belgian delegation, comprising 291 participants, including 240 businessmen and academics representing 125 companies, federations and universities. The mission also



**MARC BOGAERTS**

Director General



**FABIENNE L'HOOST**

Deputy Director General

witnessed an innovation: the launch of a mobile application containing all necessary information for participants. The two final destinations of the year, Malaysia and Singapore, were also a success, once again highlighting the optimal management provided to the companies by the regional partners from the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency and the FPS Foreign Affairs.

The other departments from the Agency also experienced a

prolific year. The Statistics Department processed some 200 requests for bilateral reports within very short timeframes and is seeing year-on-year growth in the number of subscriptions. The Regulations Department developed a new application relating to the different distribution systems which has been online for a few months. At the same time, 632 requests and specific questions were processed in 2014 by the Department, with Incoterms still the dominant theme. Business opportunities were circulated to exporters on a large scale, with 14% growth in the tenders communicated. In addition to the economic studies published as part of the missions, two new sectoral publications were also launched: "Belgian waste and recycling solutions" and "Belgian sustainable energy solutions". These were markedly successful with actors on the ground and are regularly re-published.

The website of the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency recorded 55,295 visits in 2014, an increase of 11.6%.

Moreover, 2014 was marked by the repositioning of the Agency's regional partners, the impact of which will be felt in 2015. The Belgian Foreign Trade Agency has nevertheless been able to bounce back and launch a number of new promising projects which will be revealed in the spring. On the financial side of things, the 2014 accounts will clear a positive balance which will enable future challenges to be tackled.



---

# STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES

## 2015

---

The Belgian Foreign Trade Agency will face a number of sizeable challenges in 2015. With the organisation facing a serious reduction in its financial resources following a 50% cut in regional grants, the General Management, with the support of the staff, has launched an ambitious project aimed at developing and improving the quality of its offering in terms of international business opportunities for companies. A mobile application - Trade4U - providing faster access to information and a greater number of functionalities - will be launched in the spring. Various initiatives will be undertaken in order to better position Belgian companies making submissions for international calls for tenders and projects and increase their success rate. In return, companies will be asked for a modest contribution.

Following a decision of the Board of Directors, the annual number of princely trade missions has been reduced from four to two. However, the Board was in favour of the Agency contributing to the logistics organisation and economic components of state visits. The collaboration will be based on a contract for services between the FPS Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation and the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency. Two state visits are planned in 2015, imply-

ing that the Agency will return to its standard rate of four top-level visits over the year.

In terms of information technology, the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency will once again be able to take advantage of the invaluable support of FEDICT, this time in partnership with Smals. The main project will involve implementation of a new mission organisation management system, the development of which will be spread out over all of 2015, until February 2016.

Given the enormous financial issues in 2015, Management will impose even stricter management than previously, with very strict control of both expenditure and income generated by the implementation of the action plan.

The Agency, its Management and the entire team are committed to serving partners with the same enthusiasm and same concern for quality and speed, notwithstanding the vagaries of 2014.

---





## 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 Government and the Regions (Belgian Official Gazette of 20 December 2002).

The Belgian Foreign Trade Agency is managed by a Board of Directors whose Honorary President is His Majesty the King. The Board consists of 16 members appointed by the Regional Governments and the Federal Government providing an equal representation of public and private

sectors. Each Region appoints a Government Commissioner.

The Agency's Board of Directors held six meetings in 2014.

A Support Committee coordinates the implementation of decisions taken by the Board of Directors. Chaired by the Agency's Director General, it consists of three officials managing regional export institutions (AWEX, Brussels Invest & Export and Flanders Investment & Trade) and the Director General responsible for bilateral economic relations for the FPS Foreign Affairs. The Sup-

port Committee held five meetings in 2014.

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

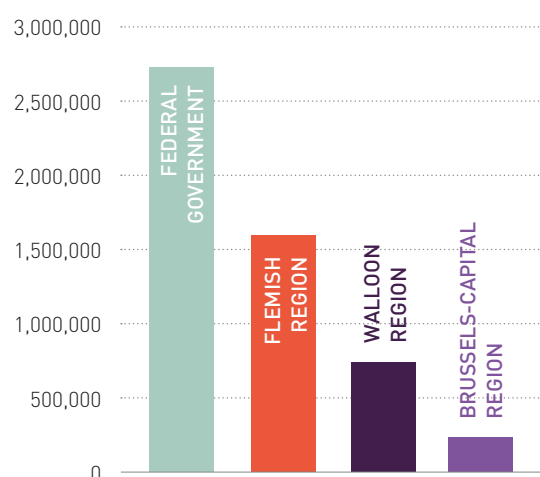
## BUDGETARY ALLOCATIONS FOR 2014

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 2014 budget (approved by the Board of Directors at its meeting held on 4 December 2014) amounted to EUR 5,505,784. Federal and Regional allocations represent the greatest part (95.70%) of these revenues.

**TAB.1** TOTAL ALLOCATIONS IN 2014

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT	2,715,000 €
FLEMISH REGION	1,586,000 €
WALLOON REGION	734,000 €
BRUSSELS-CAPITAL REGION	233,784 €

**FIG.1** BREAKDOWN OF ALLOCATIONS IN 2014







---

## STAFF MEMBERS

---

# 2014

The Cooperation Agreement stipulates that the number of Agency staff members may not exceed 50. On 31 December 2014, the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency employed 40 members of staff. After deducting the number of part-time and sick employees and those seconded to other institutions, this equates to 37.37 full-time staff members.







# 1

---

## THE BELGIAN FOREIGN TRADE AGENCY IN 2014

---

### 1.1

JOINT TRADE MISSIONS



### 1.2

INFORMATION CENTRE



### 1.3

STUDIES, STATISTICS AND TAX CERTIFICATES



### 1.4

REGULATIONS AND LEGAL QUESTIONS



### 1.5

WEBSITES



### 1.6

COLLABORATION WITH THIRD PARTY INITIATIVES

---

# 1.1

---

## JOINT TRADE MISSIONS

---

In 2014, three joint trade missions were organised by the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency, as usual in close collaboration with regional export promotion bodies: AWEX (the Wallonia Export-Investment Agency), Brussels Invest & Export and Flanders Investment & Trade, as well as the FPS Foreign Affairs.

These three missions brought 948 participants to Saudi Arabia and Oman, Colombia and Peru and to Malaysia and Singapore. Although only three missions were organised in 2014, due to the federal elections in May, the rate of participation was still high.





## SAUDI ARABIA & OMAN

### 14 - 21 MARCH 2014

In recent years, both Saudi Arabia and Oman have recorded some of the highest rates of growth in the world. Most of their revenue comes from exploitation of their gas and oil resources. The resulting swelling of their foreign exchange reserves has enabled them to implement important measures to diversify their economies and increase spending on social programmes. This environment offers countless opportunities to Belgian companies.

This is why an economic mission led by HRH Princess Astrid, Representative of HM the King, travelled to Saudi Arabia (Riyadh and Jeddah) and Oman (Muscat), from 14 to 21 March 2014. The Princess was accompanied for the entire mission by Didier Reynders, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and European Affairs. Jean-Claude Marcourt for the Walloon Government and the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, as well as Céline Fremault for the Government of the Brussels-Capital Region, were also present in Saudi Arabia.

The mission comprised 172 companies, federations and universities, with around 292 participants travelling to one or both of the countries. A total of 353 people participated, if the public sector and press is included.

It was a multi-sectoral mission which enabled certain strategic areas resulting from the host countries' policies of diversification to be highlighted. Most notable among these were energy and the environment, infrastructure and logistics, health, education, services, the banking sector as well as sport and tourism.

The pharmaceutical and biotechnology sectors attracted a lot of interest with 18 companies and 32 participants. One of the highlights was the seminar held at the King Abdulaziz University Hospital in Riyadh, where Belgian companies have created a "Center of Excellence" in radiology. Other companies, such as Agfa Gevaert, GSK and Mithra, were also in the spotlight due to their activities.



A second pillar was the infrastructure, construction and logistics sector with 38 participants. In this way, Besix presented the prestigious King Abdullah Sports City in Jeddah. Katoen Natie opened a new logistics terminal in Jubail. A stop was also made at the Solvay complex.

Yet another example was the visit to Duqm, which was just a small fishing port a few years ago. It will soon become the second most important petrochemical hub and will be operated by Antwerp Port until 2040.

Finally, the energy sector, which continues to predominate in both countries, was also showcased. HRH Princess Astrid, accompanied by representatives from a number of specialised companies, visited two of the biggest companies in the region, SABIC and PDO, in Saudi Arabia and Oman, respectively.

Alongside these business activities, the Belgian delegation was received at the highest level in Saudi Arabia thanks to the good relations between the two kingdoms. Strategic meetings took place with, among others:

- HRH Prince Mishaal bin Abdullah, Governor of Mekka,
- HRH Prince Khaled bin Bandar bin Abdulaziz, Governor of Riyadh,
- HE Abdullah bin Abdul Rahman Al Mogbel, Mayor of Riyadh,
- HRH Prince Muqrin bin Abdulaziz al-Saud, Second Deputy Prime Minister,
- HE Dr. Fahad Abuhimed, Deputy Minister for Trade and Industry,

- HE Dr. Mohammad bin Hamza Bakr Koshim, Deputy Minister for Health,
- HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Chairman of Kingdom Holding, and
- HRH Prince Sultan bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, President of the Saudi Commission for Tourism and Antiquities (SCTA).

The Belgian delegation was also able to take advantage of top level contacts in Oman in the key sectors for the mission. Several meetings were held with the following ministers:

- HE Sayyid Fahd bin Mahmoud Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister,
- HE Youssef bin Alawi bin Abdullah, Minister for Foreign Affairs,
- HE Dr. Ahmed bin Mohammed bin Obaid al Sa'eedi, Minister for Health,
- HE Dr. Mohammed bin Hamad al Rumhi, Minister for Oil and Gas, and
- HE Ahmed Mohammed Al-Futaisi, Minister for Transport.

A total of 18 contracts were signed during this mission: 14 in Saudi Arabia and 4 in Oman. Newtec, Roam Chemie and ABLCC & BECI had already planned on concluding two contracts during the mission, while Market-IP signed three. Avalane, Hict, Oncodna, Radiomatix, The Sniffers, Mithra Pharmaceuticals, GSK, Phaeros Group and Consortium Antwerp Port (CAP) were delighted to establish new business ventures.





## COLOMBIA & PERU

18 - 25 OCTOBER 2014

Colombia and Peru are commonly referred to as “the new Latin-American tigers” due to their growth rate of more than 4%. Both countries benefit from diversified economies, an expanding middle class, numerous construction and innovation projects, significant natural resources, legislation that is favourable towards international trade, proper management of public finances as well as a good reputation on the financial markets. In light of the free trade agreement that the two countries recently concluded with the European Union (2013), it seemed like a particularly appropriate time to organise a princely trade mission.

Leading a delegation of 291 participants, including 240 businessmen and academics representing 125 companies, universities and federations, HRH Princess Astrid was accompanied at federal level by Didier Reynders, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Pieter De Crem, Federal Secretary of State for

Foreign Trade. At regional level, Wallonia was represented by Jean-Claude Marcourt, Vice-President of the Walloon Government, Walloon Regional Minister of the Economy, Industry and Digitalisation and Vice-President of the Government of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, Minister for Higher Education, Research and Media, while Cécile Jodogne, Secretary of State for Foreign Trade and Minister for the Commission of the French-speaking community in charge of Civil Service and Health Policy, represented the Brussels-Capital Region.

The business sectors most represented by companies were infrastructure, energy, environment and green technologies, transport and logistics and food and drink.

Building on their numerous relationships of cooperation with local universities, including the University of La Molina, the university institutions also had a sizeable presence with an academic delegation of 30 people.





After a cultural visit in Bogotá to the Museo de Arte Moderno and the Museo del Oro which attracted a lot of media attention, the programme for the trade mission officially started with an opening seminar bringing together 400 Belgian and Colombian businessmen.

The theme of energy occupied a prime position on the agenda with an Energy and Power Generation Power Lunch organised by the Agoria Renewable Energy Club, a tour of Ecopetrol and the signing of an agreement between Exmar and Pacific Rubiales Energy.

Important seminars took place in both countries relating to transport and logistics. These characterised Belgium as a gateway to Europe and highlighted its expertise in port development. The relevant Colombian and Peruvian ministers attended these events.

Fytolab and ERC organised a presentation of their activities in Colombia in the presence of Colombian and Belgian guests. A Belgian delegation also had the opportunity to admire the brand new showroom of the Belgian company Delat Light. In Peru, the companies Applitek, Bekaert and Durabilis featured on the programme with a donation of equipment by Applitek, a visit by an official delegation of the steel wire company PRODAC (Peruvian partner of the Bekaert group) as well as a presentation of Durabilis's SteviaOne project.

The delegation could not leave Lima without exploring the International Potato Centre. A visit to the temple of the sun at the Pachacámac archaeological site, where a team of archaeologists from ULB are conducting excavations as part

of the Ychsma project, brought the mission to a close.

The relevant ministers or deputy ministers attended most of these activities which produced an impressive list of contacts.

HRH Princess Astrid and the ministers were received in Colombia by HE President Juan Manuel Santos for an official meeting. The following day, a rare occurrence, President Santos joined the official lunch being offered by Minister for Foreign Affairs, María Ángela Holguín Cuéllar, at the last minute, to which 37 officials, businessmen and Belgian university presidents were also invited.

The complete list of official contacts organised in Bogotá appears as follows:

- HE Juan Manuel Santos, President of the Republic of Colombia,
- HE Celcia Álvarez-Correa Glen, Minister for Trade, Industry and Tourism,
- HE Maria Angela Holguín Cuéllar, Minister for Foreign Affairs,
- HE Natalia Abello Vives, Minister for Transport,
- HE Alejandro Gaviria Uribe, Minister for Health and Dr. Blanca Elvira Cajigas de Acosta, Director of INVIMA,
- HE Maria Isabel Mejía, Deputy Minister for ICT and Dr. Carlos A. Sánchez Torres, Director of the General Register Office,

- HE Aurelio Irigorri Valencia, Minister for Agriculture and Luis Humberto Martinez Lacouture, General Manager of ICA,
- HE Carlos Eraso, Deputy Minister for Energy, and
- Gustavo Petro, Mayor of Bogota.
- HE Dicky Edwin Quintanilla, Deputy Minister for Mines and Energy,
- HE Juan Manuel Benites Ramos, Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation, and
- Hernan Nunez Gonzales, Deputy Mayor of Lima.

In Peru, a discussion with HE President Ollanta Humala Tasso featured on the programme, to which was added, also at the last minute, an invitation from the First Lady, Nadine Heredia Alarcon de Humala, to HRH Princess Astrid. Together they visited the Instituto Nacional de Enfermedades Neoplásicas.

Official contacts took place in Peru with:

- HE Ollanta Humala Tasso, President of the Republic of Peru,
- HE José Gallardo Ku, Minister for Transport,
- HE Magali Silva, Minister for Foreign Trade and Tourism,
- HE Gonzalo Gutiérrez Reinol, Minister for Foreign Affairs,
- HE Milton von Hesse La Serna, Minister for Housing, Construction and Sanitation,
- HE Midori De Habich, Minister for Health,

During the mission, 8 Belgian companies concluded contracts with local partners. In Colombia, these were APEC, ULB and ULg within the context of the official signing ceremony as well as EXMAR and its partner Pacific Rubiales Energy, during an activity in the presence of, among others, HE German Vargas Lleras, Vice-President of Colombia. In Peru, at the express request of President Humala Tasso, the signing of the agreement between ARES and PRONABEC, concerning the establishment of a scholarship programme for students, took place at the Presidential Palace, in the presence of the President and the Princess.







## MALAYSIA & SINGAPORE

### 22 - 28 NOVEMBER 2014

Malaysia is the third power in the Association of South Eastern Asian Nations (ASEAN). It had a growth rate of 4.7% in 2013. The plan to modernise the economy aims to move Malaysia from a “middle income country” to a “high income country” between now and 2020. As regards trade, negotiations to conclude a regional free trade agreement with the European Union were launched in 2010.

Singapore is a member of the exclusive club of most prosperous countries and its economy is one of the most open in the world. The World Bank’s “Doing Business 2015” report places it in first place in the rankings. This “Asian tiger” is firmly outward-looking. A new free trade agreement with the European Union was adopted in 2013.

These opportunities persuaded many businessmen to join the last princely trade mission for 2014.

This brought together no less than 304 participants, including

250 businessmen and academics representing 156 companies, federations and universities.

At federal level, Didier Reynders, Deputy Federal Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign and European Affairs and Pieter De Crem, Federal Secretary of State for Foreign Trade took part in the mission. The regional governments were represented by Geert Bourgeois, Minister-President of the Flanders Government and Flemish Regional Minister for Foreign Policy and Real Estate (Singapore section), by Jean-Claude Marcourt, Vice-President of the Walloon Government, Regional Walloon Minister for the Economy, Industry, Innovation and Digitalisation and Vice-President of the Government of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, Minister for Higher Education, Research and Media and by Cécile Jodogne, Regional Brussels Secretary of State for Foreign Trade and Minister for the Commission of the French-speaking community in charge of the Civil Service and Health Policy.



Like previous princely trade missions, the emphasis was placed on specific sectors. The most heavily represented areas of activity were food and drink, information and communication technologies (ICT), transport and logistics and, finally, energy, the environment and green technologies.

The mission programme started in Kuala Lumpur with a visit to the Islamic Arts Museum and an information session on the commercial environment in Malaysia. The presence of certain Malaysian ministers added a boost to seminars relating to their areas of responsibility such as "Innovative patient specific healthcare - a Belgian medical technology seminar" and "Sustainable urban development, cleantech technologies for modern cities". Six other activities, mainly relating to the agri-food, chemical and diamond sectors, helped to showcase Belgian know-how, strengthen relations between businessmen in the two countries and encourage investments in its territory.

Numerous official openings and visits of companies also took place in the presence of HRH Princess

Astrid and representatives of the governments: inauguration of the Asia Regional Office of Lhoist, the opening of the new offices of SWIFT, the presentation of the installations of AMB-Ecosteryl, the visit to the headquarters of Maybank Ageas Holdings Berhad and, finally, the official opening of the UniOlean production site. HE Douglas Uggah Embas, Minister for Plantations and Raw Materials, joined this last activity while HE Mustapa Mohamed, Minister for International Trade and Industry, participated in the inauguration of the Lhoist offices, in spite of a busy schedule.

An information session on, among other things, the free trade agreement between Singapore and the European Union marked the start of the Singapore visit. Seminars relating to health and green technologies were boosted by the presence of the relevant Singaporean ministers.

The diamond sector was not forgotten with three activities organised. Five other events relating to the promotion of investment in Belgium, our expertise in the area of banking and ICT also featured

on the programme. This mission was, moreover, an opportunity to reaffirm the special bonds that link Singaporeans to our country: the President of PSA International and the President of Keppel Corporation Limited were awarded the distinction of Commander of the Order of the Crown.

During their stay, HRH Princess Astrid and the representatives of the governments also visited various companies and institutions. They paid visits to GSK Biologicals, Solvay, the Port Authority of Singapore (PSA), the National University of Singapore, the Marina Bay Sands to explore the work of Buzon, to Katoen Natie, DEME and, finally, to the site of Gardens By the Bay, to highlight the contribution of Vyncke to the project.

The very full agenda also included top level meetings between HRH Princess Astrid, representatives of the governments and local authorities both in Malaysia and Singapore.



In Malaysia, meetings took place with the following personalities:

- HE Najib Razak, Prime Minister,
- HE Mustapa Mohamed, Minister for International Trade and Industry,
- HE Abdul Rahman Dahlan, Minister for Urban Wellbeing, Housing and Local Government, and
- HE Hilmi Yahaya, Deputy Minister for Health.

In Singapore, the Belgian delegation met the following ministers:

- HE Lee Hsien Loong, Prime Minister,
- HE Grace Fu Hai Yien, Minister, Prime Minister's Office, second Minister for the Environment, second Minister for Foreign Affairs,
- HE Lim Hng Kiang, Minister for Trade and Industry, and
- HE Gan Kim Yong, Minister for Health.

A total of 22 agreements and contracts were signed during the mission: 12 in Malaysia and 10 in Singapore.

The following companies concluded collaborations with Malaysian partners: Network Mining, Good iD, The Belgian Chocolate Group, Ets De Smet, Mirage Gold, Bruyere, Materialise, BECI (Brussels Enter-

prises Commerce and Industry), the Fédération des Chambres de Commerce belges (Federation of Belgian Chambers of Commerce), HEC-ULg - Management School of the University of Liege, Waterleau and AMB Ecosteryl.

In Singapore, the following companies and institutions cemented their partnership with local companies: Ovam, Keppel Seghers, Waterleau, VVSG, University of Antwerp, Good iD, Duc d'O / Baronie group, Innofocus, Materialise and Katoen Natie.



# 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 manages and updates a certain number of databases.



## 1.2.1 BELGIAN EXPORTERS' DATABASE

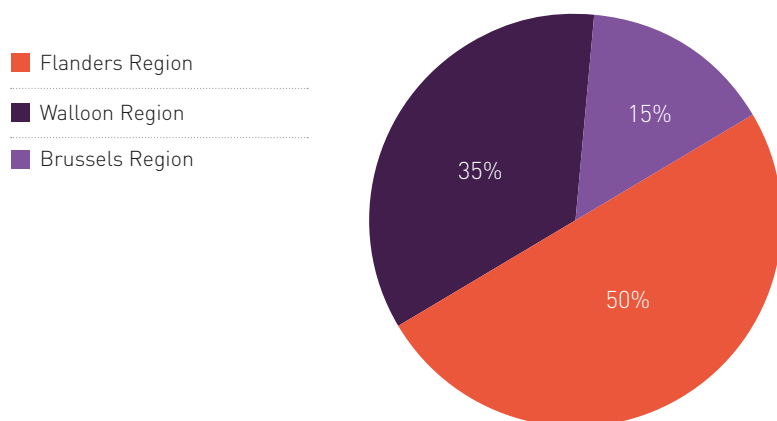
Each company registered in the database of Belgian exporters is represented by a record that includes the details of that company. These details include general information about the company (contact details, contact persons, staff employed, etc.) as well as information related to its activities (products/services) and to

the export markets and markets of interest to the exporter.

At the end of 2014, the Exporters' Database included 23,252 entries. Over 1,100 new registrations were recorded during this year. The majority of these new registrations were communicated by regional organisations re-

sponsible for promoting foreign trade (AWEX, Brussels Invest & Export and FIT), with the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency responsible for codifying the companies' activities so that they can receive the Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) and are included on the website.

**FIG. 2** GEOGRAPHICAL BREAKDOWN OF THE BELGIAN EXPORTERS' DATABASE IN 2014

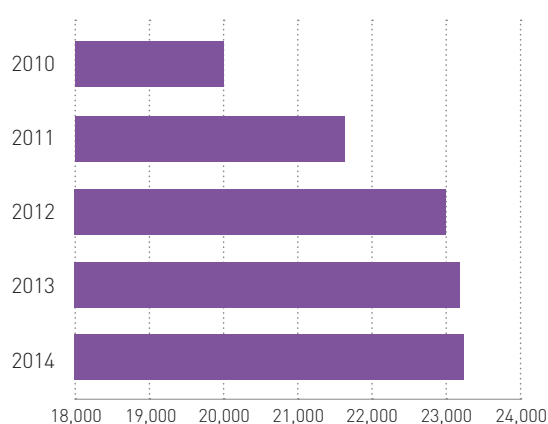


There are regular exchanges between the various databases (Regions/BFTA) in order to transfer the products/services classified by the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency to the regional organisa-

tions' files. This synchronisation ensures that all the firms in the regional databases are included in the Exporters' Database.

During 2014, almost 700 company shutdowns were recorded (closures, bankruptcies).

**FIG. 3** BELGIAN EXPORTERS' DATABASE REGISTRATION EVOLUTION, 2010 - 2014



The Exporters' Database can be viewed on the Agency's website. Any company or organisation wishing to obtain information about the firms or lists of addresses can contact the Department.

## 1.2.2 SELECTIVE DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

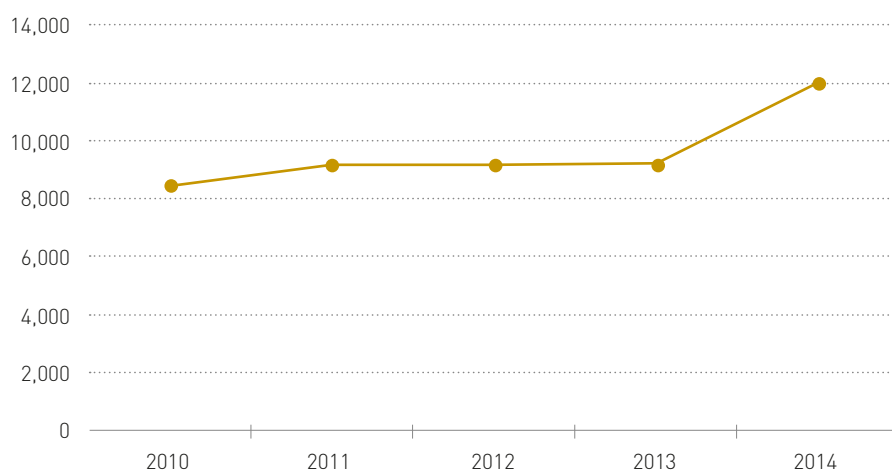
As part of its mission to provide information about foreign markets, the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency communicates, on behalf of regional partners, three types of business opportunities to Belgian companies registered in the Exporters' Database as well as circulating notices.

As previously mentioned, business proposals, tenders and international projects are circulated to companies quickly 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 as stated when it registered or when its file was updated in the Exporters' Database. The notices are not necessarily subject to the combined selection of products/services and country as they may sometimes relate to invitations to economic or trade missions or to contact days or to informing companies about a new regulation in force in an export market or a market in which they are interested.

Provided free of charge to companies, the Selective Dissemination of Information bears the logo of the regional organisation for the promotion of foreign trade and is communicated by e-mail. In 2014, the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency circulated over 12,039 SDI notices.

**FIG.4** EVOLUTION IN BUSINESS PROPOSAL ANNOUNCEMENTS, 2010 - 2014

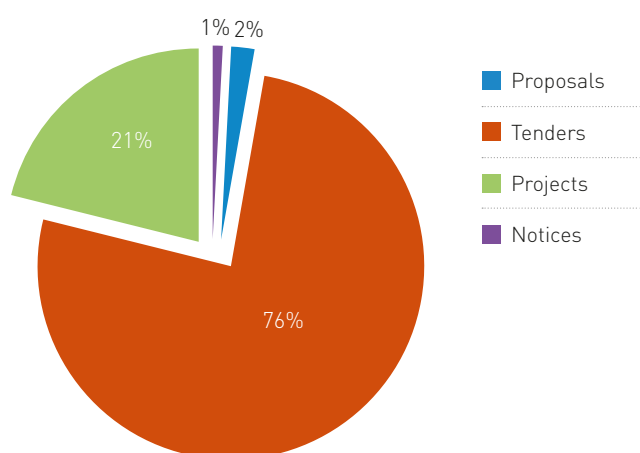


**TAB.2** NUMBER OF ANNOUNCEMENTS CIRCULATED BY TYPE OF BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY, 2010 - 2014

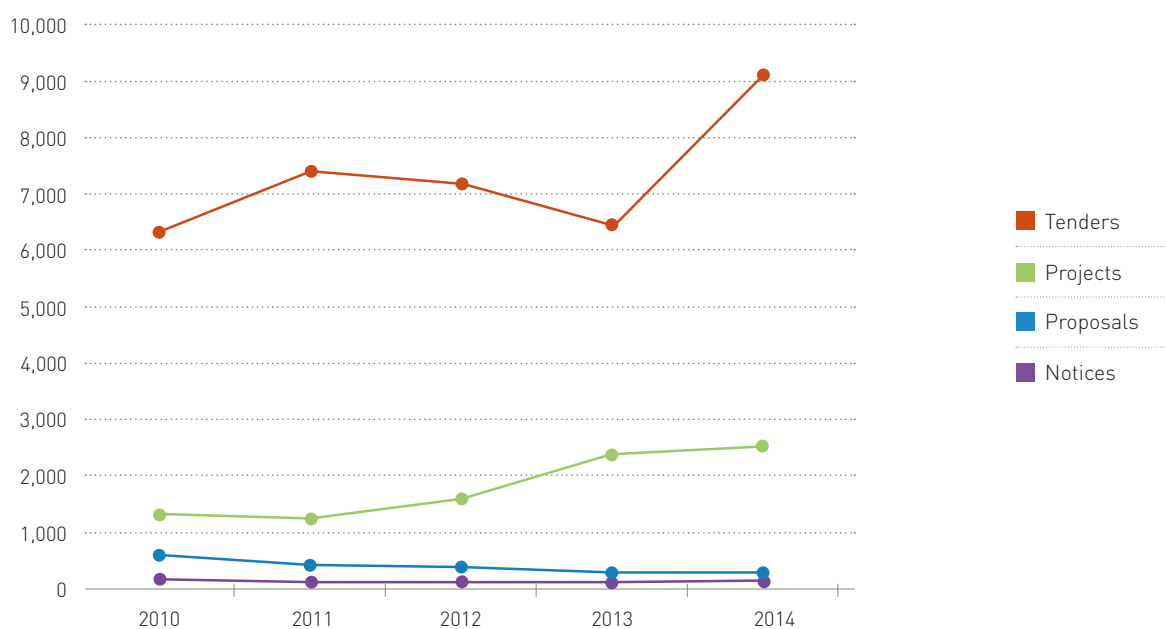
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
BUSINESS PROPOSALS	618	427	387	300	277
TENDERS	6,329	7,430	7,125	6,453	9,101
INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS	1,321	1,207	1,573	2,355	2,534
NOTICES	156	109	114	92	127



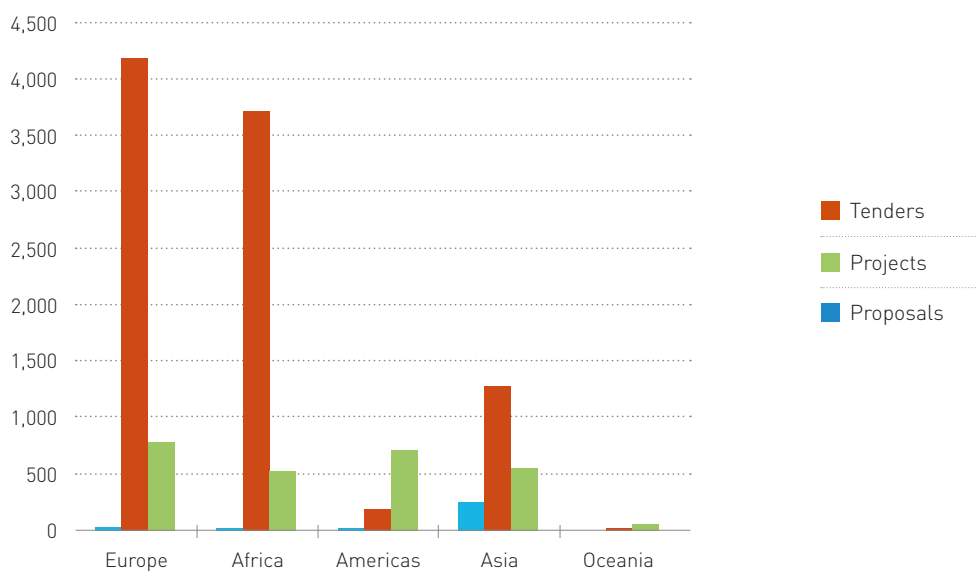
**FIG. 5** BREAKDOWN BY TYPE OF BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY IN 2014



**FIG. 6** EVOLUTION PER TYPE OF BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY, 2010 - 2014

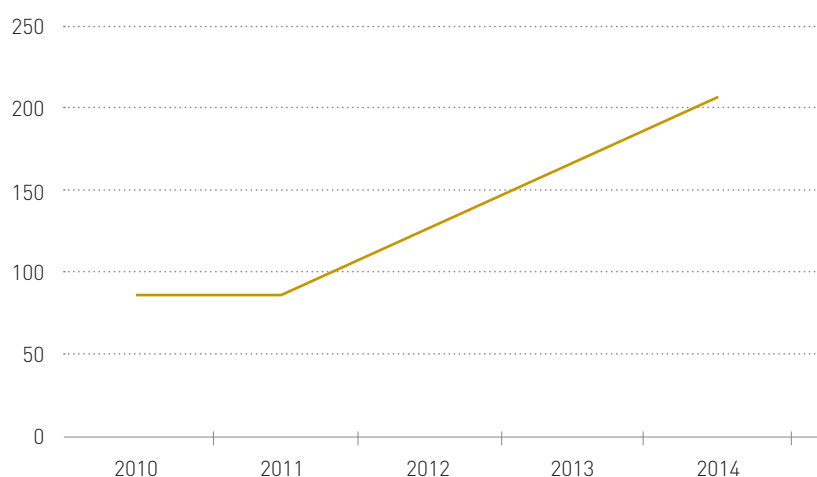


**FIG. 7** GEOGRAPHICAL BREAKDOWN OF BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES BY CONTINENT IN 2014



**TAB.3** TOP 10 LOCATIONS PER BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY IN 2014

PROPOSALS	TENDERS	PROJECTS
Pakistan	Algeria	Brazil
Jordan	Germany	Uruguay
Lebanon	France	Peru
Iraq	Spain	Mexico
Algeria	United Kingdom	Haiti
United Kingdom	India	Jamaica
United States	The Netherlands	Colombia
Iran	Grand Duchy of Luxembourg	Morocco
India	Italy	Uganda
	Sweden	Tanzania

**FIG. 8** NUMBER OF ORDER SPECIFICATIONS, 2010 - 2014

In 2014, the tenders unit recorded renewed growth in the number of specifications ordered. The number increased from 168 orders in 2013 to 207 in 2014. In 2012, orders were already up 50% compared to 2011. The Belgian Foreign Trade Agency offers companies the possibility of having specifications collected so that they can participate in calls for tenders in distant markets.

To this end, the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency contacts departments in Belgian embassies and consulates or regional economic and commercial attachés who obtain the documents from official bodies and distribute them to the companies.

Upon receipt of the statement of disbursement, the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency reimburses the embassies/consulates or the regional economic or commercial attachés and draws up an invoice for the companies in euros. This procedure ensures that, on the one hand, companies obtain the essential documents they need in time to participate in the tender and, on the other, that they do not have to bear exchange rate costs.



## 1.2.3 INFORMATION SEMINARS ON INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS

Just as they do every year, the 18 members of the Permanent Representations and organisations responsible for promoting foreign trade organised a sectoral seminar.

Two or three countries are responsible for organising each seminar while the other countries are responsible for inviting and registering their companies. The purpose of these seminars is to bring together the representatives of European Union companies that have an interest in European external aid programmes.

The 2014 seminar was held on 27 November at the BLOOM hotel and was entitled “Energy Sector in EU External Aid Programmes”. Practical organisation was carried out by the permanent representations of Italy and Sweden.

From among the 113 participants, Belgium was represented by 12 companies:

- ABB SA, Brussels,
- AREVA BRUSSELS, Brussels,
- BIOTEC, Louvain-la-Neuve,
- CEEP, Brussels,
- COWI BELGIUM, Brussels,
- INGENIUM, Bruges,
- MWH GLOBAL, La Hulpe,
- SAFEGE, Brussels,
- SIEMENS, Huizingen,
- TRACTEBEL ENGINEERING, Brussels,
- 2ZK-TUZETKA SA, Nivelles,
- VEOLIA, Brussels,
- AWEX.

The morning was interspersed with different presentations by

the members of the European Commission and the European Investment Bank (EIB) relating to energy and, more specifically, renewable energy.

The seminar began with a special session that enabled companies to familiarise themselves with the procedures to be followed to participate in these European aid programmes.

After lunch, the participating companies had the opportunity to meet each other during bilateral meetings, which they had been able to organise in advance on the website [www.sectorseminars.eu](http://www.sectorseminars.eu) and to appeal to the representatives of the EIB, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and Europeaid.



# 1.3

---

## **STUDIES, STATISTICS AND TAX CERTIFICATES**

---

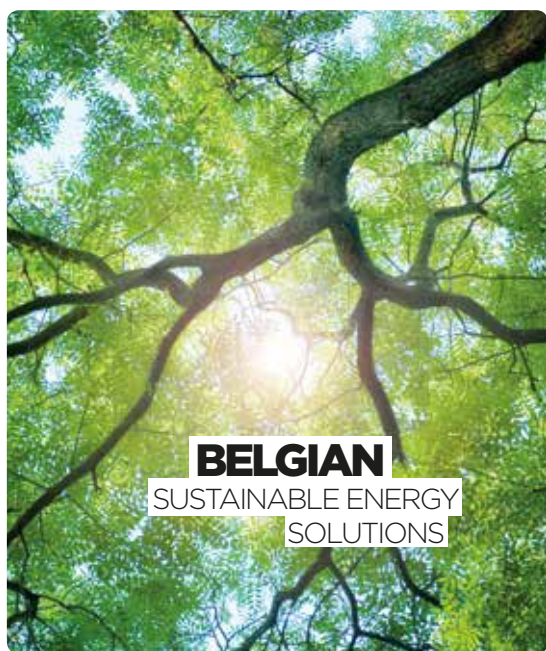
## 1.3.1 STUDIES

In 2014, six 'country' studies were published, in French and Dutch, corresponding to the princely trade missions carried out during the year. They related to the following countries: Saudi Arabia, Oman, Colombia, Peru, Malaysia and Singapore. They aim to provide the reader with an overall macroeconomic view as well as a list of flourishing export sectors. They also list the key sectors that offer major opportunities for our Belgian export companies. Out-

side participants in the missions, these studies are of interest to many site visitors: more than 8% of all sections viewed, which is several thousand visits, relate to these studies.

Furthermore, two sectoral publications "Belgian sustainable energy solutions" and "Belgian waste and recycling solutions" were created in collaboration with federal and regional partners as well as with federations

and associations. They analyse the sector's specific characteristics and offer first-hand accounts from key players. They complement a collection showcasing the competitiveness of Belgian companies in a given sector.





## 1.3.2 STATISTICS

### MISSION

The Belgian Foreign Trade Agency is authorised, in accordance with Article 2 of the Appendix to the Cooperation Agreement, to collect, process and disseminate national and international comparative statistics.

### ACTIVITIES

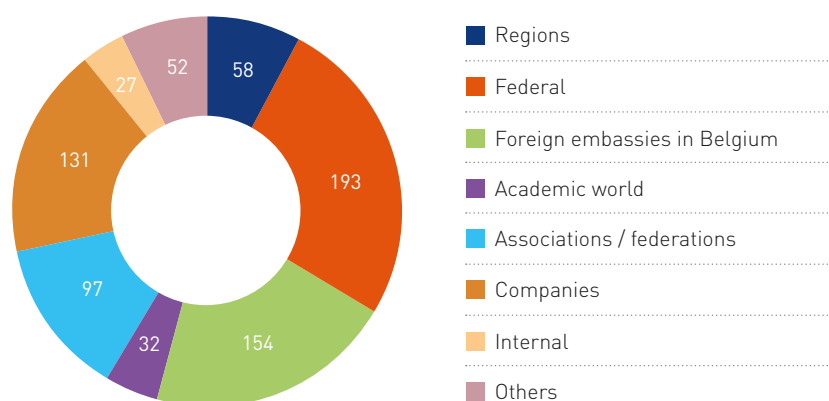
The upward trend since 2012 in queries submitted to the Department was confirmed in 2014. In all, 591 clients contacted the Department, an increase of 6.9% over 2013.

The drafting of bilateral reports also increased by 7.1%: no less than 225 reports were prepared in this way in 2014.

#### Ad hoc requests

The main clients are the Federal Public Services, followed by foreign embassies in Belgium, companies, associations and federations as well as the Regions.

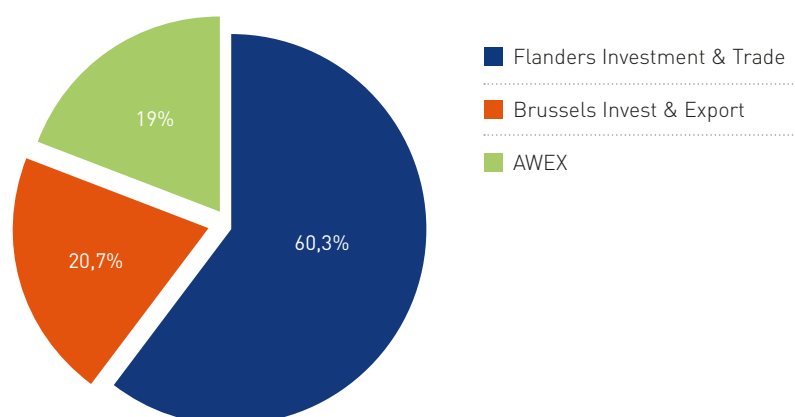
**FIG. 9** BREAKDOWN OF CLIENTS RELATING TO AD HOC REQUESTS IN 2014



Numbers sent in 2014  
(not including subscriptions)

The majority (60.3%) of regional requests come from Flanders. The remainder is shared almost equally between Wallonia and Brussels.

**FIG. 10** BREAKDOWN OF REGIONAL CLIENTS FOR AD HOC REQUESTS IN 2014



In addition, the Statistics Department regularly responded to questions from the press. Numerous requests relating to the impact of Russian sanctions were handled both for the press as well as various public organisations.

## Bilateral reports and facts sheets

In 2014, the Department compiled 225 reports on bilateral trade relations in French, Dutch and English. These reports provide a highly comprehensive overview of the trade in goods and services between Belgium and its various partners.

Also in 2014, the concept of Belgium's share of the market within the European Union of 28 was introduced. This enables the changes in value of Belgian trade flows to be weighted by the same changes in values of European imports and exports.

These reports are also published on the Agency's website and are the most viewed section, year after year.

Of these reports, 26 were requested by the Royal Palace for visits by Foreign Heads of State or for the handing over of letters of credence for new ambassadors.

The following persons or authorities also requested reports: the Prime Minister, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the FPS Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, Belgian embassies abroad, foreign embassies in Belgium, economic and commercial attachés, the European Parliament, the federations and chambers of commerce, journalists and students.

The bilateral trade sheets are condensed versions of the reports:

they provide a concise overview of trade relations between Belgium and a partner. They are available in English and can be downloaded from the Agency's website. Some 184 fact sheets were generated on request in 2014.

They are used by numerous partners and by the press, particularly to illustrate background articles.

## Quarterly brochures, 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 developments in Belgian imports and exports over 3, 6, 9 or 12 months.

Once a year, the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency publishes a brochure detailing Belgium's foreign trade with all world countries and according to the 22 sections of the nomenclature.



An overall 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.

The Statistics Department also publishes a list of the main products exported by Belgium and the share of global exports represented by this product or group of

products. This document lists, in descending order of importance, the different products for which our country is categorised as a 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> class global exporter.

In addition to these activities, the Department published its traditional quarterly reports and comments related to Belgian foreign trade, the 'World Trade' publication and the 'Belgian Foreign Trade' publication.

Finally, a continents/products summary is published on a monthly basis which provides a summary overview of the main partners and products traded.

## Subscriptions

The Belgian Foreign Trade Agency had 371 subscribers in 2014 of which 26 were new subscriptions. They receive figures, at a pre-determined interval (monthly, quarterly or annually), corresponding to a specific request or to their interest profile.

Each month all Belgian diplomatic and consular posts are sent the

foreign trade results for Belgium with their country or countries of jurisdiction by e-mail. 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 certain foreign companies or certain foreign embassies that

want more detailed information than that covered by the 22 sections in the nomenclature.

All data is sent electronically in .xls format.

---

## 1.3.3 TAX CERTIFICATES

---

Tax exemption for additional staff recruited to perform export activities is a FPS Finances tax support measure (article 67 of the Belgian Income Tax Code 1992 introduced by means of the Law of 27 October 1997 containing the provisions for tax-based stimuli for exports and research, Belgian Official Gazette of 2 December 1997). It provides for tax exemption on taxable profits up to EUR 10,000 (indexed for 2014, income from 2013 at EUR 15,050) in the event of an additional full-time member of staff being recruited in Belgium as an 'export' manager.

Those that are entitled to this exemption include industrial, trading and agricultural companies (whether they are start-

ups, SMEs or large enterprises). This exemption does not apply to professionals, employees or any person already performing a remunerated activity.

If the newly appointed export manager was already employed full-time by the company, the exemption may still apply as long as the company recruits a new full-time employee within thirty days of the export manager assuming his/her new role.

The granting of this exemption is subject in part to the submission of a nominative declaration in view of obtaining exemption for the export manager and also obtaining a certificate issued by the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency.

In 2014, 52 certificates were granted, including 9 new case files and 43 existing ones. Of the companies that benefited, 47 are Dutch-speaking and 5 are French-speaking.



# 1.4

---

## REGULATIONS AND LEGAL QUESTIONS

---

Article 2 of Appendix 1 to the Co-operation 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),
- the sales structures and related contractual obligations,
- product control: health standards and regulations,
- tax 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 technique, which customs regime, which delivery conditions, etc. are the most appropriate in a given concrete situation?
- Verifying or adapting contracts: re-reading contracts, putting together counter-proposals, etc.
- The application of administrative requirements: how to invoice, how to apply VAT, which documents to include, legalisation, etc.?
- Assessing the consequences of legal acts: evaluating compensation due to a client as a result of the termination of a commercial agency, choice of payment terms, the importance of retention of title, etc.
- Analysis of disputes: arbitration or courts, etc.

The responses to these queries are generally given 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.

Certain projects are deserving of special mention. After developing its first online “legal” application in 2013 (<http://incoterms.abh-ace.be>), a new application concerning distribution techniques was made available (<http://distribution-channels.abh-ace.be/fr/index.html>). Another one will follow in 2015, focusing on VAT. Each of them is designed to help users with making the right choices when organising their international transactions. The objective is not to “reinvent the wheel every time”. When other interesting applications are identified elsewhere, they are also listed on the Agency’s website.

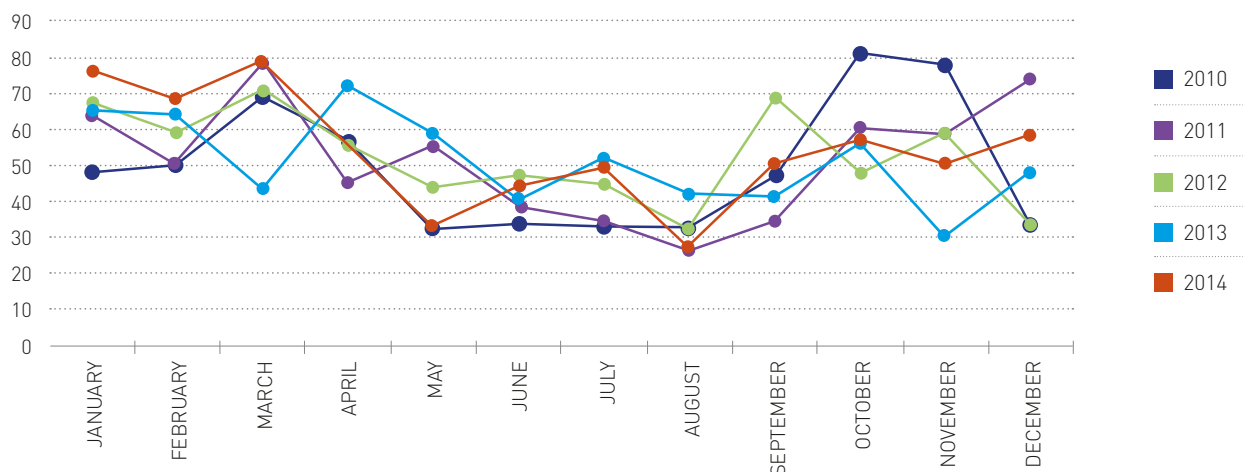
## 1.4.1 REGULATION CASE FILES

During the period 1 January to 31 December 2014, the Regulations Department opened 643 new case files, bringing the total number processed since 2006 to 4,592 (as of 31 December 2014).

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



**FIG. 11** NUMBER OF CASE FILES PROCESSED BY THE REGULATIONS DEPARTMENT, 2010 - 2014

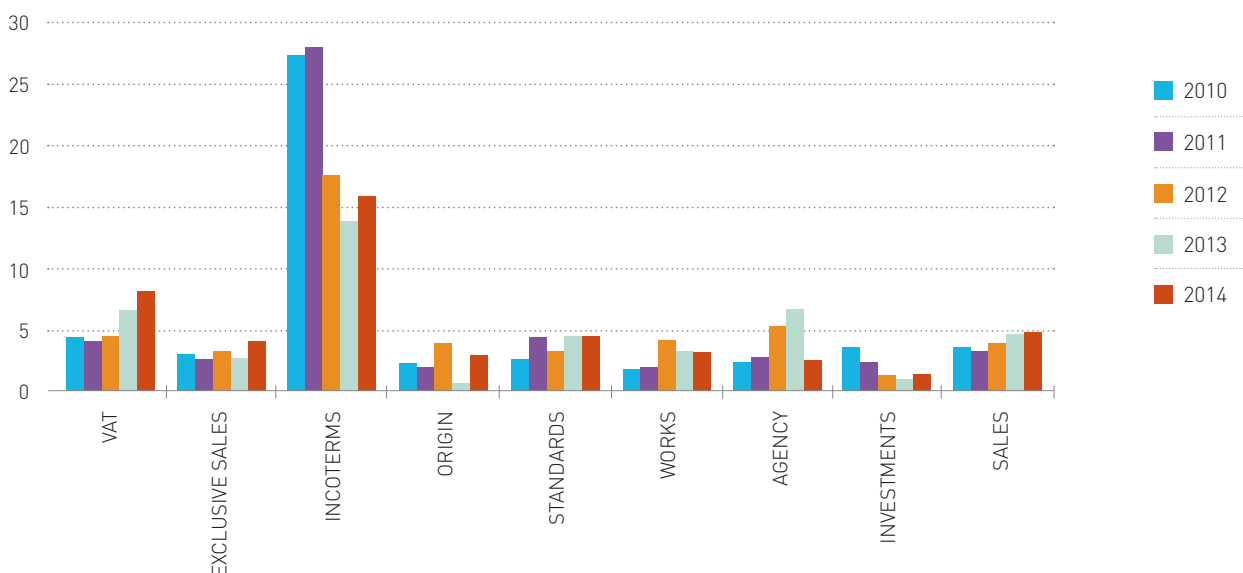


Since the Regulations Department was created, the distribution of case files according to type of query has remained relatively stable: litigation case files (almost zero in 2013) and those concerning the legal structure

of the Agency make up a tiny portion of the volume, whereas the grand majority (always around 80%) relate to queries about regulations from companies and federations.

The breakdown of regulations case files according to the nature of questions posed in 2014 is as follows:

**FIG. 12** BREAKDOWN OF REGULATIONS CASE FILES BY SUBJECT, 2010 - 2014



The high prevalence of queries relating to Incoterms (which peaked in 2010 and 2011) declined somewhat in 2012 as well as in 2013, before bouncing back in 2014. This theme remains by far the most important among the case file themes submitted to the Regulations Department.

The Agency's contribution to the drafting and translation of these international trade rules, its participation in various seminars and training sessions on the subject, as well as the development of an application have also certainly played a role.

Furthermore, it is noteworthy that interest in the more 'regulatory' themes (VAT, customs, documents, standards, etc.), which had been rather limited in previous years, has gained ground, along with several 'contractual themes' (all aspects of distribution and sales). In this respect



also, the Agency's collaboration with seminars and on development of contract templates has also most definitely played a role. Questions relating to VAT, in particular, have recorded a marked increase since 2012.

The more 'legal' themes, not related to freedom of contract (and therefore to decision-making autonomy) but related to 'documen-

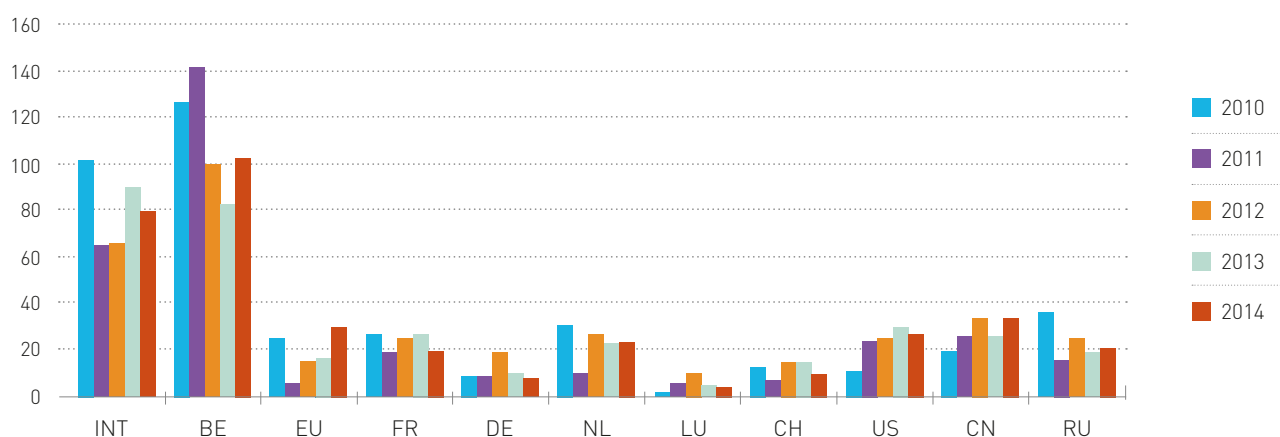
tation on applicable regulations' (investments, intellectual property, etc.) certainly appear to have been definitively relegated to a position of secondary importance.

In general, the finding that the queries submitted are highly varied is borne out. Responding to them requires broad, practical knowledge of all aspects of international trade. However, this

does not prevent a clear correlation between, on the one hand, the themes presented externally by the Regulations Department - mainly during training and seminars - and, on the other hand, the questions submitted to it.

## 1.4.2 GEOGRAPHICAL BREAKDOWN OF QUESTIONS

**FIG. 13** GEOGRAPHICAL BREAKDOWN OF QUESTIONS, 2010 - 2014



In the past, the geographical breakdown of case files processed remained relatively stable with, traditionally, a significant portion of "questions without any particular geographical context" (around 20%). Since 2011, the opposite has been the case. In 2014, only 12% of questions were without any specific geographical context.

Questions on Belgian regulations still remain popular, but the most striking fact is the increase in the volume of questions relating to certain major faraway markets (United States, China, Russian Federation and also, since 2014, Brazil). These are gaining ground over those relating to EU countries. The striking return, within the statistics, of European coun-

tries particularly impacted by the crisis in the euro zone (such as Spain and Italy) seems to be sustainable.

Arab countries experiencing embargo-related problems also continue to show significant scores.

# 1.5

---

## WEBSITES

---

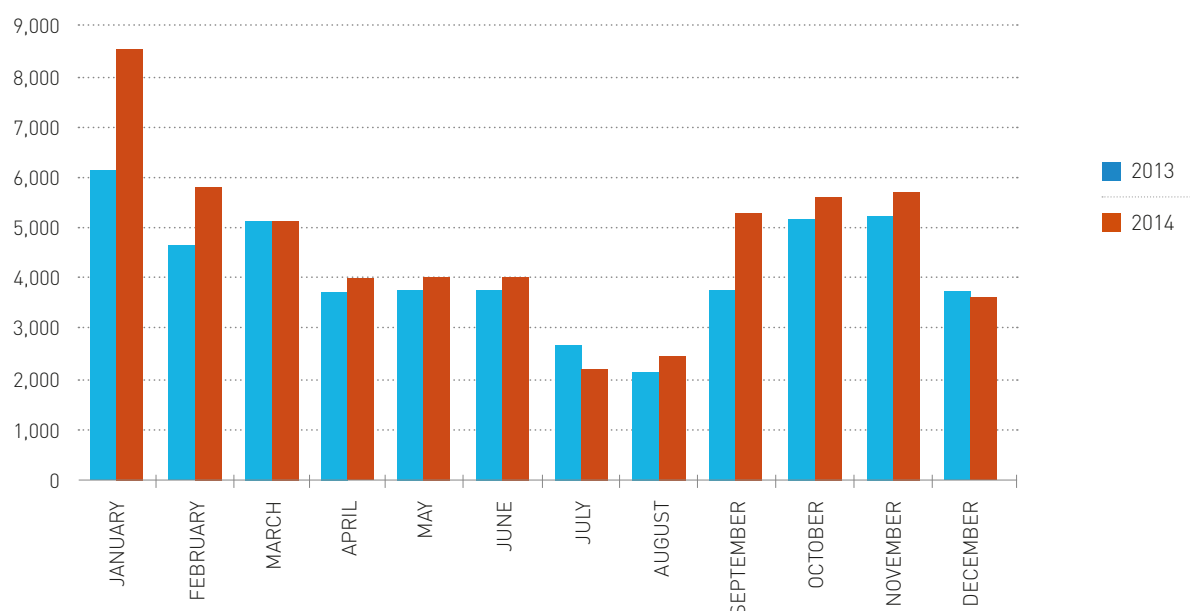
## 1.5.1 THE BELGIAN FOREIGN TRADE AGENCY'S WEBSITE

**TAB.4** EVOLUTION IN THE NUMBER OF UNIQUE VISITORS ON A MONTHLY BASIS TO WWW.ABH-ACE.BE, 2013 - 2014

	2013	2014
January	6,117	8,507
February	4,653	5,801
March	5,123	5,114
April	3,707	3,986
May	3,804	4,036
June	3,386	2,971
July	2,686	2,189
August	2,169	2,493
September	3,757	5,286
October	5,163	5,586
November	5,230	5,703
December	3,729	3,623
<b>Total</b>	<b>49,524</b>	<b>55,295</b>

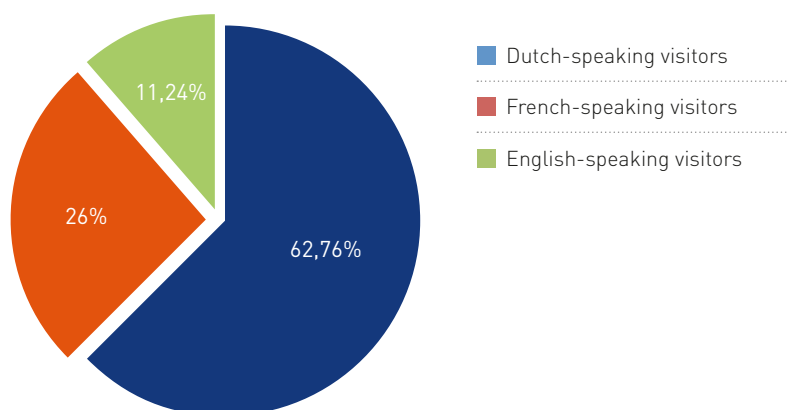
This year, the website of the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency has exceeded the milestone of 50,000 unique visitors for the first time. This increase is even more remarkable given that significant increases have already been recorded in the three previous years (30%, 32% and 21% respectively). The launch of an English language version of the website certainly contributed to this. This has been online for one and a half years and is attracting a specific audience.

**FIG.14** EVOLUTION IN THE NUMBER OF UNIQUE VISITORS ON A MONTHLY BASIS TO WWW.ABH-ACE.BE, 2013 - 2014





**FIG. 15** BREAKDOWN OF VISITORS BY LANGUAGE WWW.ABH-ACE.BE IN 2014



Of all pages visited, 62.76% were viewed by Dutch-speakers while the French language and English language pages represented 26% and 11.24%, respectively, of the total.

**TAB.5** OVERVIEW OF THE MOST VIEWED SECTIONS AT WWW.ABH-ACE.BE

Sections most viewed based on the 50 most visited pages	in %
Statistics	68%
Economic studies	9%
Economic missions	7%
Regulations	4%

The statistics pages are, by far, the most viewed, and this is true for the three languages. The reports and bilateral trade sheets are actively downloaded. The economic studies section is in second place and the economic missions are third out of the top 3 of most viewed sections.

**FIG. 16** NEW APPLICATION: HOW TO ORGANISE YOUR DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS ABROAD?



Following the success of the Incoterms application, a new app - relating to distribution networks - has been launched this year. These two tools can be accessed via the Agency website. In 2015, a new application relating to whether or not to invoice for VAT will be put online.

Did you know that?

- An average visitor is active for 4.15 min. on the website.
- 31.5% of visitors are regular visitors.
- Around 75% of countries have connected at least once to the Agency website.

## 1.5.2 WWW.BELGIANECONOMICMISSION.BE

Over the course of their 3 years of existence, the websites specific to each economic mission have confirmed their popularity with participants and local partners.

The average number of visits per site in 2013 was 2,219 unique visitors, reaching 2,384 in 2014. These statistics represent 6.7

unique visitors per participant in 2013, a ratio that climbed to 7.5 in 2014.

Like last year, 60% of visits were from Belgium. Next were Oman, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Singapore, Colombia, Peru and France. The most viewed information was the profiles of participants, the

activities and the programme as well as the photo galleries.

**TAB.6** NUMBER OF VISITORS TO WWW.BELGIANECONOMICMISSION.BE IN 2014

Mission	Participants	Dates	Visits	Unique visitors
Saudi Arabia & Oman	353	27/02 – 30/03	4,321	2,574
Colombia & Peru	291	07/10 – 04/11	3,101	1,838
Malaysia & Singapore	304	06/11 – 15/12	3,281	2,153
<b>Total for 2014</b>	<b>948</b>	<b>01/01 – 15/12</b>	<b>12,530</b>	<b>7,152</b>

### NEW MOBILE APPLICATION

The innovation marking 2014 was the release of a website application for iOS and Android users which has been available since the Colombian and Peruvian economic missions. With this app, participants can, among other things, contact other participants (which facilitates networking), download the programme, activities and publications, view photos, contact the organisers and even convert the local currency to euros. This app was received with great enthusiasm.



## SOCIAL MEDIA

Since 2014, the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency has also had a presence on social media.

The “Belgian Economic Mission” Facebook page publishes key events in the preparation and activities of each mission. It is also used to share messages, links and photos from partners.

The LinkedIn group is instead used to circulate economic information as part of a mission as well as for networking between participants.





# 1.6

---

## **COLABORATION WITH THIRD PARTY INITIATIVES**

---

The Agency occasionally lends its support to various events. In most cases, these are organised by regional departments for the promotion of foreign trade (or in close collaboration with them) as well as by the FPS Foreign Affairs. During 2014, the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency contributed to the following activities:

- January 2014: Contribution to the writing of an article for "Belgian Research in Europe",
- 23 January 2014: Presentation of the Saudi Arabia and Oman mission to the Arab Belgian Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce (ABLCC),
- 7 February 2014: Information session for diplomats, organised by the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency,
- 5 June 2014: Presentation of the Statistics Department to the Belgian-Luxembourg Chambers of Commerce Abroad Academy,

- 4 July 2014: "Economic missions: springboards for your exports" seminar, organised by Brussels Invest & Export,
- 16 October 2014: Information session "Support for exports and foreign investments", organised by Agoria,
- 3 November 2014: International FEB Russia platform - Presentation of the latest bilateral trade statistics, organised by the FEB (Federation of Enterprises in Belgium).

Throughout the year:

- The Regulations Department has provided close to fifty training sessions on various aspects of international trade (Incoterms, sales, payment techniques, representation and distribution, etc.):

#### ► Open training

- abroad: Paris, Vienna, Zagreb, Oran, Sofia, Amsterdam, among others,
- in Belgium: for VOKA, UNIZO, BECI, Portilog, Business Clubs, among others.

- Internal training of employees to improve the operation of various companies and organisations (MSF, Siemens, The Chocolate Group, etc.).

- In educational establishments: VUB (BICCS), UA, ITMMA, IBI, etc.

- The SDI Department has contributed to the dissemination of information originating from organisations such as Agentschap Ondernemen, the CTB (Belgian Technical Cooperation), chambers of commerce, etc.



# 2

---

## BELGIAN FOREIGN TRADE IN 2014

---

### 2.1

EXPORTS



### 2.2

IMPORTS



### 2.3

GEOGRAPHICAL TRADE BALANCES

---

## ANALYSIS OF THE FIGURES FOR 2014

[SOURCE: EUROSTAT - COMMUNITY CONCEPT\*]

### General developments in Belgium's foreign trade position

**TAB.7** EVOLUTION OF BELGIAN IMPORTS AND EXPORTS IN 2013 - 2014

In million EUR	Exports	Imports	Balance	Coverage
01-12/2013	352,955.7	340,092.9	12,862.8	103.8
01-12/2014	353,214.6	339,391.1	13,823.4	104.1
Var. (in %)	0.1	-0.2		

Over the years, Belgium's international exports have grown strongly. The share of Europe in our foreign trade has gradually decreased in favour of the other continents. However, as a result of the current economic circumstances, this trend of recent years, where Europe's share declined in favour of emerging economies such as Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, has come to an end and has even been somewhat reversed. In uncertain economic times, Belgian exports seem to be focused more on the European market.

### Position of Belgium compared to that of other EU countries

In 2013, Belgium managed to perform better than the European average, but in 2014 it was lagging somewhat behind. This is illustrated by the figures below.

#### ► Exports

**TAB.8** EVOLUTION OF BELGIAN EXPORTS IN 2013 - 2014

In million EUR	2013	2014	Variation (in %)	Share (in %)
1 Germany	1,093,160.4	1,134,808.8	3.8	24.5
2 Netherlands	505,651.5	505,755.6	0	10.9
3 France	437,439.2	438,624.6	0.3	9.5
...				
6 Belgium	352,955.7	353,214.6	0.1	7.6
...				
Total EU-28	4,578,957.3	4,636,439.4	1.3	100.0

Total exports of goods from the European Union (EU-28) amounted to EUR 4,636.4 million in 2014. **Belgium accounted for 7.6% of this figure, which makes it the 6<sup>th</sup> major exporter of goods within the EU.** Germany took first place with 24.5, ahead of the Netherlands (10.9%) and France (9.5%).

While European exports (EU-28) were up by 1.3% in 2014, Belgium's sales only grew by 0.1% during this period. Exports from Germany and France grew by 3.8% and 0.3% respectively, while those from the Netherlands remained nearly unchanged (+0.0%).

From a percentage viewpoint, Belgium underperformed in comparison to the EU-average. As Belgian sales increased at a slower rate than the European average, our country lost market share.



## ► Imports

**TAB.9** EVOLUTION OF BELGIAN IMPORTS IN 2013 - 2014

In million EUR	2013	2014	Variation (in %)	Share (in %)
1 Germany	897,187.3	915,057.6	2.0	20.2
2 United Kingdom	493,808.1	514,121.5	4.1	11.4
3 France	513,114.4	510,264.1	-0.6	11.3
...				
6 Belgium	340,092.9	339,391.1	-0.2	7.5
...				
Total EU-28	4,456,528.4	4,528,749.9	1.6	100.0

Total imports of goods by the European Union (EU-28) amounted to EUR 4,528.7 million in 2014. **Belgium was the 6<sup>th</sup> largest importer of goods within the EU with a share of 7.5%.** First place was again occupied by Germany, with a share of 20.2%, before the United Kingdom (11.4%) and France (11.3%).

While European imports (EU-28) grew by 1.6% in 2014, Belgium's purchases decreased by 0.2%. Imports to Germany and the United Kingdom were up by 2.0% and 4.1% respectively, while those going to France fell by 0.6%.

Belgium's performance in 2014 was clearly less positive than the EU average. This has caused our market share to decrease.

*\* 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 for which no resident intervenes. Returned goods are also taken into account.*

# 2.1

## EXPORTS

### 2.1.1 GEOGRAPHICAL DEVELOPMENTS - EXPORTS

#### European exports

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 then subdivided into:

- countries that are part of the euro area, and
- countries that are not part of the euro area.

In 2014, Belgian deliveries to the member states of the **European Union** grew by **0.8%**, whereas a year earlier they had increased by 1.9%.

While Belgian exports of goods to euro-area countries were down last year, deliveries to countries that do not belong to the euro area rose sharply. The relevant changes were as follows:

- -1.1% in 2014 compared with +0.9% in 2013 for the first group of countries, and
- +8.9% in 2014 compared with +6.3% in 2013 for the second group of countries.

**FIG. 17** PERCENTAGE VARIATION IN EXPORTS TO THE EU IN 2014 (2013) (IN %)



## Euro area countries

In 2014, the best export performance within the eurozone was achieved by Greece (+7.1%), where the local economy has been hit hard by the crisis of recent years. Other countries where Belgian exports increased in 2014 were Austria (+6.6%), Portugal (+4.8%), Spain (+4.2%), Ireland (+2.9%), Slovakia (+1.8%) and Cyprus (+0.4%).

Despite the positive development of Belgian exports of goods to the aforementioned countries, total sales within the eurozone were still down by 1.1%. This was due to the drop in exports to Malta (-24.6%), Estonia (-9.9%), the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg (-7.2%), the Netherlands (-4.1%), Finland (-4.1%), Latvia (-3.0%) and Germany (-0.9%).

## Countries that do not belong to the euro area

Thanks to good results for, among others, Croatia (+33.6%), Bulgaria (+19.3%), the United Kingdom (+11.3%), Hungary (+11.2%) and Poland (+8.9%), total Belgian exports to countries that do not belong to the euro area rose by 8.9% in 2014, unaffected by the decline in exports to Lithuania (-10.6%).

Belgian exports to **other European countries outside the European Union** fell by 8.7% in 2014, after an increase of 4.0% during the previous year. The main reason for this negative evolution is the drop in exports to Russia. The well-known trade conflict between the West and Russia has caused Belgian exports to that country to plunge by 20.0%, from EUR 5.1 billion in 2013 to EUR 4.1 billion in 2014.

Other countries where Belgian exports lost ground were Ukraine (-30.3%), Norway (-7.2%) and Switzerland (-2.9%).

Growth in Belgian exports to, among others, Iceland (+10.7%) and Turkey (+4.3%) proved insufficient to offset these negative results.

FIG. 18

PERCENTAGE VARIATION IN EXPORTS TO EUROPEAN COUNTRIES OUTSIDE THE EU IN 2014 (2013) (IN %)



## Intercontinental exports

Developments for **intercontinental exports** varied considerably. While exports to Asia and Africa rose in 2014, those to the Americas and Oceania fell. This is shown below:

- **Africa:** +1.7% in 2014 compared with +13.2% in 2013;
- **Americas:** -0.9% in 2014 compared with -3.0% in 2013;
- **Asia:** +2.7% in 2014 compared with -0.1% in 2013;
- **Oceania:** -9.1% in 2014 compared with -0.2% in 2013.

Where **Africa** is concerned, deliveries to, among others, Ghana (-24.9%), Libya (-23.7%), Nigeria (-16.8%), Cameroon (-11.7%), Tunisia (-11.0%), South Africa (-9.3%), Egypt (-7.6%) and the Democratic Republic of Congo (-6.2%) were down. The cutback in exports to these countries was, however,

less significant than the rise in sales to, among others, Ivory Coast (+8.8%), Algeria (+8.1%), Kenya (+3.8%), Angola (+2.8%) and Morocco (+2.1%).

As regards the **Americas**, however, Belgian exporters saw sales fall in 2014. The 0.9% drop in total exports to this continent was mainly due to lower sales in Argentina (-58.6%), Canada (-20.1%), Chile (-17.2%), Peru (-8.1%), Mexico (-7.6%), Venezuela (-1.2%) and Brazil (-1.1%). Strong performance in, among others, Cuba (+15.4%), Colombia and the United States (both +6.0%) were unable to remedy this situation.

Exports from Belgium to **Asia** increased primarily in Jordan (+65.7%), Iran (+32.7%), South Korea (+16.0%), Singapore (+12.9%), the UAE (+10.9%), India (+8.0%), Israel (+6.3%), Hong Kong (+3.9%) and China (+3.6%). Belgian ex-

ports fell in, among others, Sri Lanka (-51.5%), Syria (-16.0%), Malaysia (-14.3%), Japan (-12.1%), Thailand (-10.2%), Pakistan (-10.2%), Kuwait (-9.2%), Saudi Arabia (-7.3%), Vietnam (-5.8%) and Taiwan (-5.5%). Asia remains Belgium's most important market outside Europe thanks to the fact that exports to this continent were up by 2.7% in 2014.

The general result for **Oceania** was also negative. Total exports to this continent fell by 9.1% in 2014 (compared with -0.2% in 2013). After a 0.6% decrease in 2013, sales to Australia dropped by 9.7% in 2014. Exports to New Zealand were down by 9.5% during this period.



## Market share

The **European Union** remains Belgium's largest trading partner by far. From 2013 to 2014, the EU share increased slightly, from 70.1% to 70.6%. The trend of recent years, which saw a drop in the EU share in favour of emerging economies such as Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, was thus somewhat reversed last year.

*Euro area countries* accounted for a share of 56.1% in 2014 compared with 56.7% in 2013. The share of *other EU countries* rose from 13.3% to 14.5%.

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

- Germany's share fell from 16.9% to 16.7%;

- France's share remained the same at 15.6%;
- the Netherlands' share decreased from 12.3% to 11.8% and
- the United Kingdom's share rose from 7.5% to 8.4%.

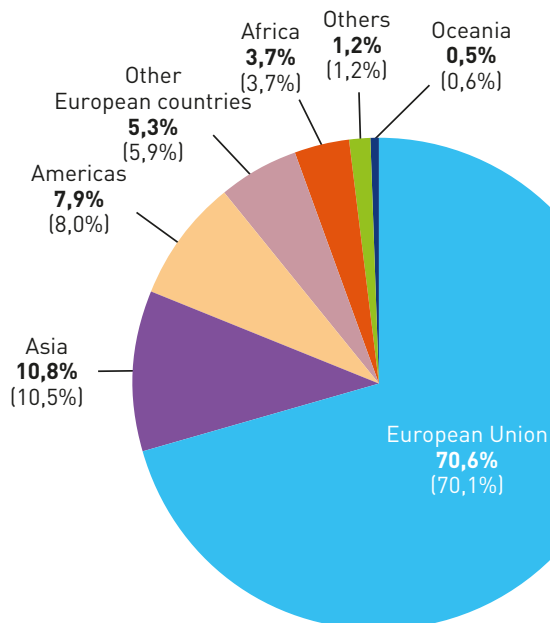
The share of European countries **outside the European Union** was reduced from 5.9% to 5.3%. As previously mentioned, this is largely attributable to the trade conflict with Russia.

The share of Belgian goods exports going to the different continents changed as follows in 2014 compared with a year earlier:

- **Africa:** share remained the same at 3.7%;

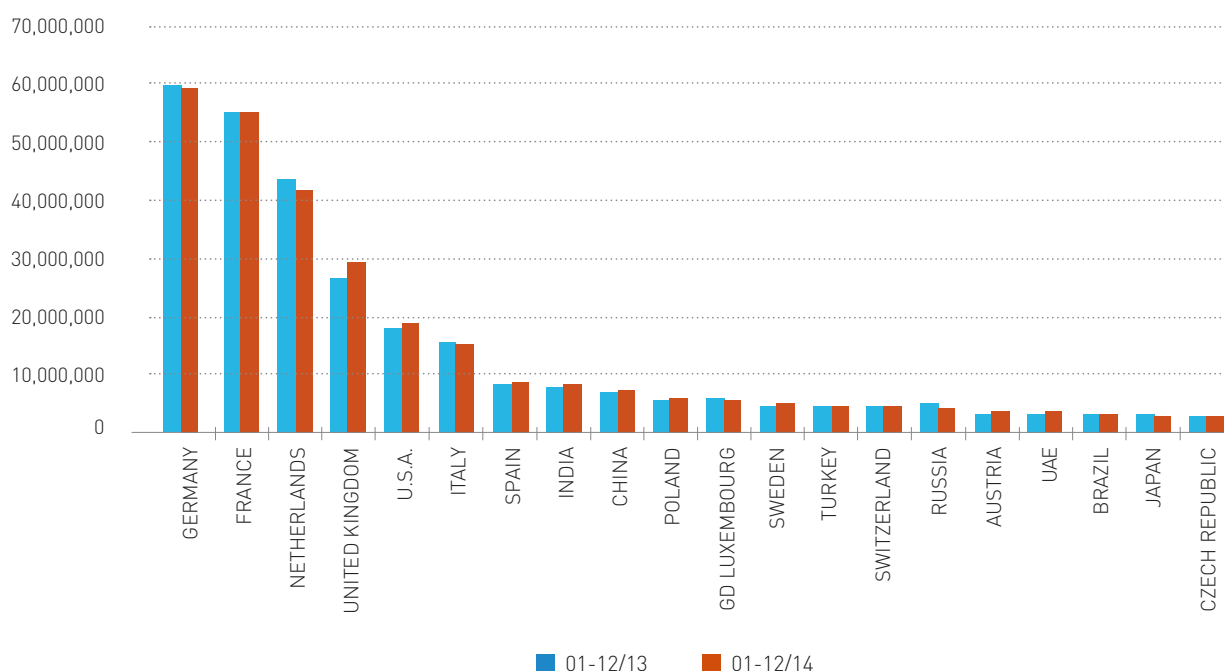
- **Americas:** 7.9% in 2014 compared with 8.0% in 2013;
- **Asia:** 10.8% in 2014 compared with 10.5% in 2013;
- **Oceania:** 0.5% in 2014 compared with 0.6% in 2013.

**FIG. 19** PERCENTAGE SHARE IN EXPORTS BY CONTINENT IN 2014 (2013)



Across all continents, Belgium's **top 20 customers** in 2014 were:

**FIG. 20** BELGIUM'S TOP 20 CUSTOMERS (IN MILLION EUR)



With EUR 59,134.1 million, **Germany** remained our number-one customer in 2014. However, exports were down from EUR 59,699.1 million in 2013, a decrease of 0.9%.

**France** held on to second place. In 2014, exports to this country amounted to EUR 55,045.5 million.

on. Compared with the previous year, exports fell by 0.4%, from EUR 55,255.0 million.

Finally, Belgian exports to the Netherlands decreased from EUR 43,466.4 million in 2013 to EUR 41,700.2 million in 2014.

## 2.1.2 SECTORAL DEVELOPMENTS - EXPORTS

The **chemical products** sector was still responsible for the lion's share of total Belgian exports with 23.5%. Exports for this group of products rose by 0.5% from 2013 to 2014.

**Mineral products** took second place, accounting for 12.1% of total Belgian exports. Sales for this product group decreased by 9.7% as opposed to a surge of 13.1% the previous year. The cutback in exports for this sector can largely be attributed to the sub-shares

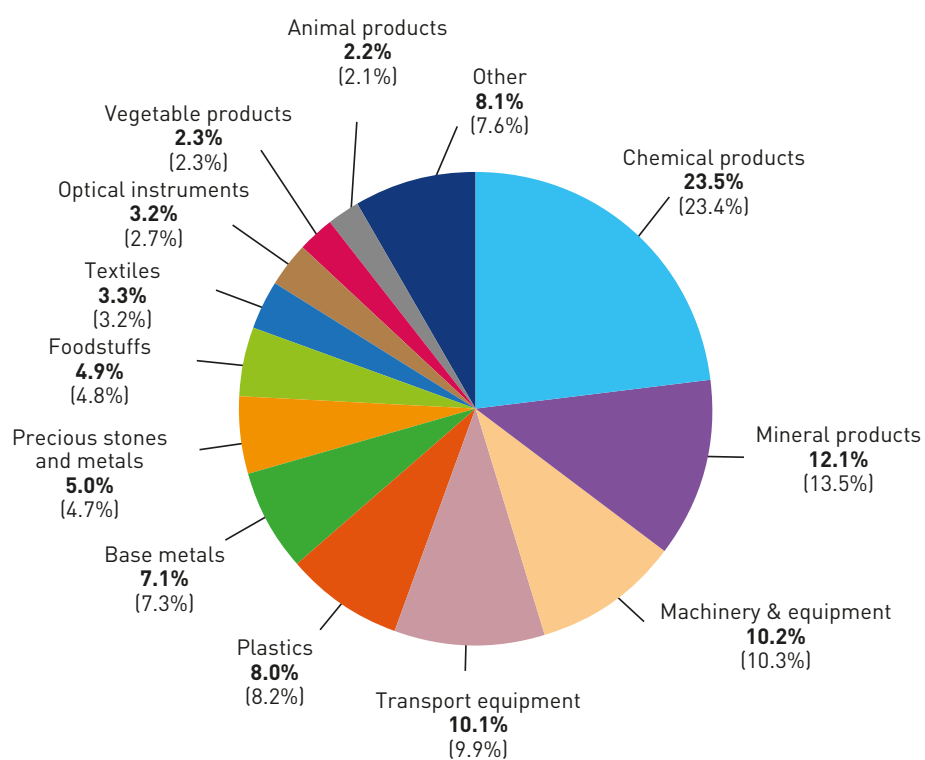
for "petroleum oils and oils obtained from bituminous minerals" and "petroleum gases and other gaseous hydrocarbons".

**Machinery and equipment** was third with a share of 10.2%, despite a drop in exports of 1.1%.

**Transport equipment** came in fourth with a share of 10.1% (+2.1%) of total Belgian exports.

**Plastics** completed the top five of the most important export products. Despite a drop in sales of 1.9% this group of products represented a share of 8.0%.

**FIG. 21** PERCENTAGE BREAKDOWN OF EXPORTS BY SECTOR IN 2014 (2013)



# 2.2

## IMPORTS

### 2.2.1 GEOGRAPHICAL DEVELOPMENTS – IMPORTS

Belgian imports from **European Union** countries fell by 1.5% in 2014, compared to a decrease of 0.3% the year before. Belgium's purchases *within the euro area* dropped by 1.5%. Imports from *other EU countries outside the euro area* were down by 1.6%, following a drop of 0.3% in 2013.

In the **euro area**, Belgium saw a decrease in imports from Cyprus (-33.6%), Latvia (-24.9%), Malta (-21.2%), Portugal (-12.8%), Spain (-6.2%), France (-3.5%), Slovakia (-3.3%), the Netherlands (-2.5%) and Germany (-2.4%). Imports from Estonia (+23.5%), Slovenia

(+18.6%), Greece (+14.1%), Italy (+12.0%), the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg (+8.6%), Austria (+3.4%), Finland (+2.8%) and Ireland (+2.1%) were up in 2014. Nevertheless, the positive figures were unable to offset the negative results.

Why imports from **other EU countries outside the euro area** fell by 1.6% in 2014 is attributable to imports from Sweden (-7.7%) and the United Kingdom (-7.1%). The decline in purchases from these countries outweighed increased imports from, among others, Croatia (+45.7%), Bulga-

ria (+41.4%), Denmark (+23.2%), Lithuania (+14.9%), Hungary (+10.8%) and Poland (+10.3%).



**FIG. 22** PERCENTAGE VARIATION IN IMPORTS FROM THE EU IN 2014 (2013)



Imports from the rest of the world developed differently depending on the continent. Imports from the Americas and Africa rose in 2014, while those from Asia and Oceania fell. This is shown below:

- **Africa:** +24.3% in 2014 compared to -6.9% in 2013;
- **Americas:** +6.1% in 2014 compared to +6.5% in 2013;
- **Asia:** -2.3% in 2014 compared to -0.7% in 2013 ;
- **Oceania:** -14.1% in 2014 compared to -16.4% in 2013.

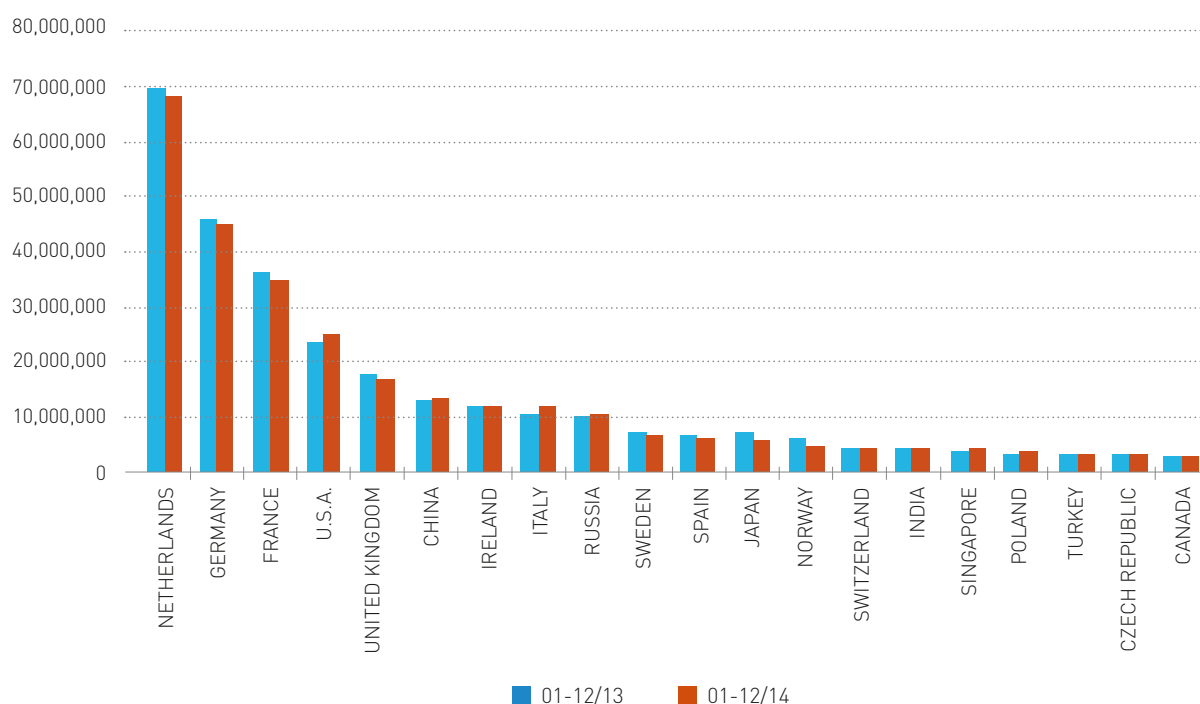
**FIG. 23** PERCENTAGE VARIATION IN IMPORTS FROM EUROPEAN COUNTRIES IN 2014 (2013) (IN %)



Imports from **other European countries outside the EU** decreased by 0.6% in 2014 due to a drop in imports from Norway (-23.2%) and Iceland (-5.2%). The rise in purchases from, among others, Ukraine (+21.4%), Switzerland (+10.7%), Russia (+5.5%) and Turkey (+4.5%) had no effect on this situation.

Across all continents, the following countries were Belgium's **top 20 suppliers** in 2014:

**FIG. 24** BELGIUM'S TOP 20 SUPPLIERS (IN MILLION EUR)



## 2.2.2 SECTORAL DEVELOPMENTS - IMPORTS

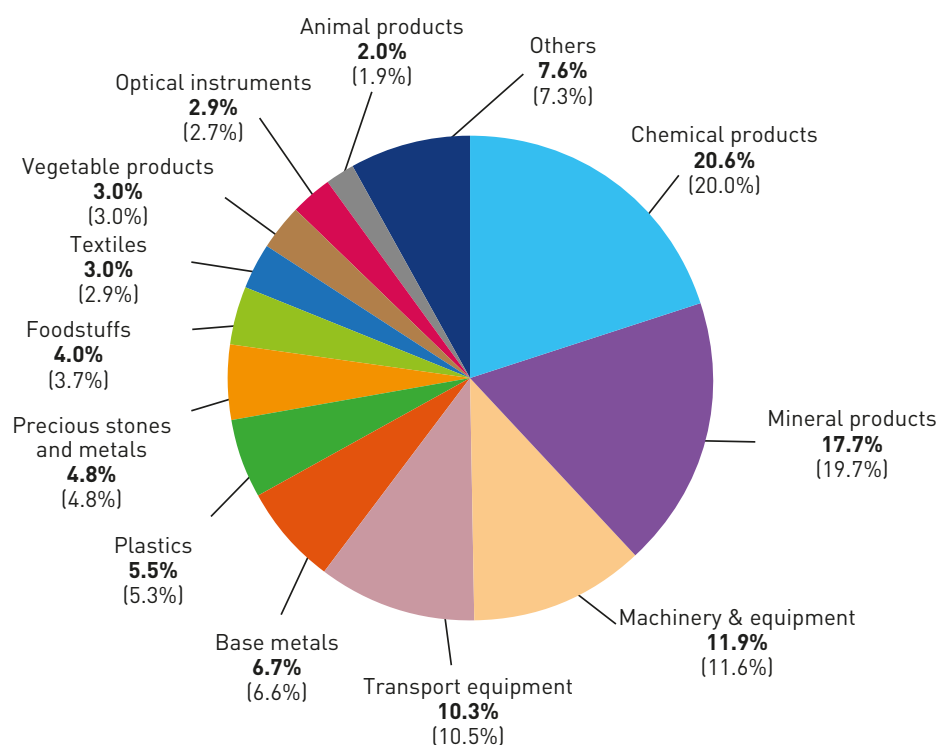
As was the case for exports, the largest share of imports was attributable to **chemical products**, which accounted for roughly a fifth of total imports (20.6%). The share of this product group grew slightly in 2014 due to an increase in imports of 2.9%.

**Mineral products** occupied second place with a share of 17.7%, a drop of 9.9% when compared to the previous year.

The top five of the major import sectors was completed by **machinery and equipment, transport**

**equipment** and **base metals**, with a share of total Belgian imports of 11.9%, 10.3% and 6.7% respectively.

**FIG. 25** PERCENTAGE BREAKDOWN OF IMPORTS BY SECTOR IN 2014 (2013)



# 2.3

---

## GEOGRAPHICAL TRADE BALANCES

---

Belgium announced a trade surplus with the **European Union**. In fact, the surplus even increased significantly from EUR 21.5 billion in 2013 to EUR 27.0 billion in 2014.

### **Euro area countries**

In 2014, the positive trade balance with France grew slightly to EUR 20.3 billion (compared with EUR 19.2 billion in 2013). Significant, but lower surpluses were also recorded with, among others,

Germany (EUR 14.3 billion), Italy (EUR 3.6 billion), the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg (EUR 3.0 billion), Spain (EUR 2.7 billion) and Austria (EUR 1.6 billion).

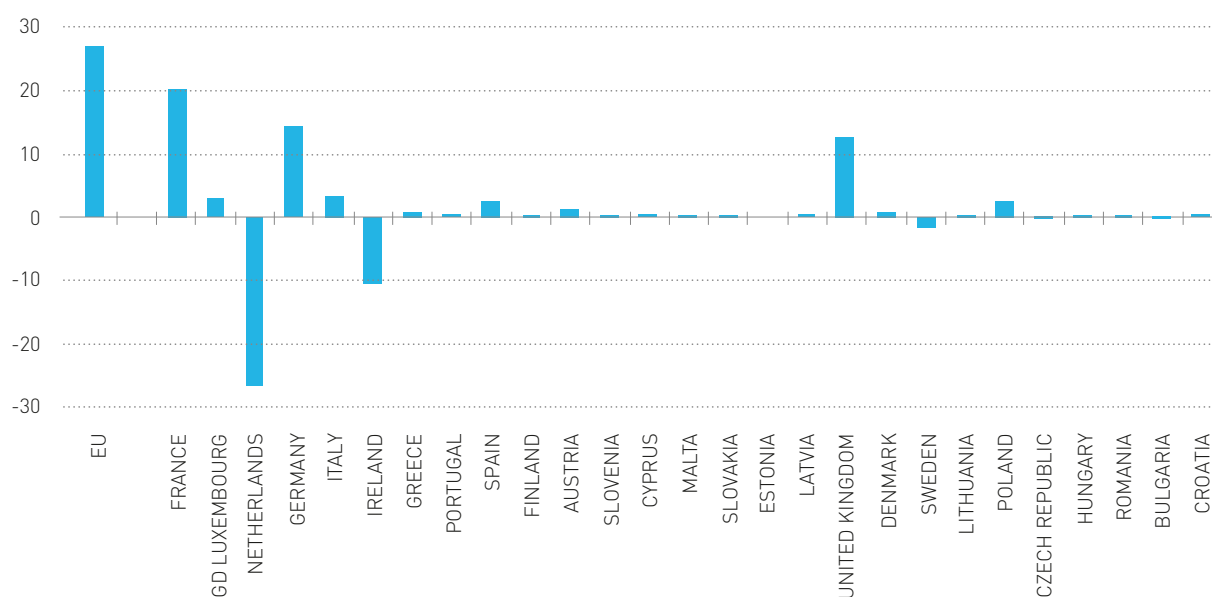
The trade deficit with the Netherlands amounted to EUR 26.3 billion in 2014, just as it did a year earlier. The trade balance with Ireland also remained clearly negative (EUR -10.4 billion).

### **EU countries outside the euro area**

With regard to the EU countries outside the euro area, the overall trade balance remained positive. It even increased from EUR 11.3 billion in 2013 to EUR 16.1 billion in 2014.



**FIG. 26** TRADE BALANCE BELGIUM - EU IN 2014 (IN BILLION EUR)



Belgium's trade balance with **other European countries outside the EU** remained negative. In fact, the deficit increased from EUR -4.1 billion to EUR -5.7 billion. Belgium's negative balance with Russia increased to EUR -6.4 billion. Conversely, the deficit with Norway was reduced from EUR -4.4 billion in 2013 to EUR -3.1 billion in 2014.

With regard to the other continents, it should be noted that Belgium's trade balance with the **Americas** deteriorated con-

siderably. The deficit of EUR -5.7 billion recorded in 2013 grew to EUR -8.1 billion in 2014.

The deficit with **Asia** fell from EUR -8.7 billion in 2013 to EUR -6.6 billion in 2014 due in part to the declining trade deficit with Japan.

Belgium's trade balance with **Africa** showed a surplus of EUR 2.9 billion in 2014, which is a considerable contraction over 2013, when the surplus still amounted to EUR 4.7 billion.

The trade balance with **Oceania** ended 2014 with a surplus of EUR 449.5 million, which is a rise of EUR 47.5 million compared to a year earlier.

---

# MANAGEMENT BODIES

SITUATION ON 31.12.14

---

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Honorary President**

His Majesty the King



**President**

**Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck**

Minister of State

Member of the European Parliament



**Vice President**

**Pierre Henri Rion**

Business angel

---

## FEDERAL GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES

---

### PUBLIC SECTOR



**Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck**  
Minister of State  
Member of the European Parliament



**Régine Vandriessche**  
Deputy Director General,  
Bilateral Affairs, FPS Foreign Affairs,  
Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation

### PRIVATE SECTOR



**Pieter Timmermans**  
CEO of the Federation of Enterprises in Belgium (FEB)



**Didier Malherbe**  
Vice President – UCB,  
CEO UCB Belgium

## WALLOON REGION REPRESENTATIVES

### PUBLIC SECTOR



**Pascale Delcomminette**  
Acting CEO of the Wallonia Export-  
Investment Agency (AWEX)



**Xavier Geudens**  
Director  
Ministry of the Walloon Region,  
Economic Inspection Department

### PRIVATE SECTOR



**Pierre Henri Rion**  
Business angel



**Jean-Jacques Westhof**  
Director of the Department of Foreign Trade  
of the Walloon Business Federation

### GOVERNMENT COMMISSIONER



**Nathalie Lafontaine**  
Deputy Director  
Cabinet of Minister Jean-Claude Marcourt Vice President  
of the Walloon Government, Regional Walloon Minister for the Economy, Industry, Innovation  
and Digitalisation and Vice President of the Government of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation,  
Minister for Higher Education, Research and Media

---

## BRUSSELS-CAPITAL REGION REPRESENTATIVES

---

### PUBLIC SECTOR



**Bénédicte Wilders**

Director - Head of Department,  
Brussels Invest & Export



**Frank Lelon**

Exterior Relations Advisor to the Cabinet of Guy Vanhengel,  
the Brussels-Capital Region Government Minister responsible for Finances,  
Budget, Public Service and Foreign Relations

### PRIVATE SECTOR



**Olivier Willocx**

Administrator - BECI



**Pierre Konings**

Director - KBC Bank & Insurance

### GOVERNMENT COMMISSIONER



**Christophe T'Sas**

Director of the Cabinet for the State Secretary of the Brussels-Capital Region,  
responsible for Foreign Trade, Firefighting and Emergency Medical Assistance,  
Cécile Jodogne



## FLEMISH REGION REPRESENTATIVES

### PUBLIC SECTOR



**Claire Tillekaerts**  
CEO -  
Flanders Investment & Trade (FIT)



**Carla Brion**  
Director of the Flemish Environment Company  
(VMM)

### PRIVATE SECTOR



**Gijs Kooken**  
Unizo International Attaché



**Jo Libeer**  
CEO of Flanders' Chamber  
of Commerce and Industry (VOKA)

### GOVERNMENT COMMISSIONER



**Jurian Van Parys**  
Department " Internationaal Vlaanderen "

## SUPPORT COMMITTEE

### MEMBERS



**Pascale Delcomminette**  
Acting CEO of the Wallonia Export-  
Investment Agency (AWEX)



**Bénédicte Wilders**  
Director - Head of Department,  
Brussels Invest & Export



**Claire Tillekaerts**  
CEO -  
Flanders Investment & Trade (FIT)



**Régine Vandriessche**  
Deputy Director General,  
Bilateral Affairs, FPS Foreign Affairs,  
Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation



**Marc Bogaerts**  
Director General  
of the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency



**Fabienne L'Hoost**  
Deputy Director General  
of the Belgian Foreign Trade Agency

## AUDIT COMMITTEE

### PRESIDENT



**Yves Windelincx**

Honorary CEO of the Credendo Group  
(until April 2014)

### MEMBERS



**Pierre Konings**

Director - KBC Bank & Insurance



**Baudouin Gillis**

(until October 2014)



**Pierre Henri Rion**

Business angel



**Claire Tillekaerts**

CEO -  
Flanders Investment & Trade (FIT)

---

## MANAGEMENT BOARD

---



**Marc Bogaerts**  
Director General



**Fabienne L'Hoost**  
Deputy Director General



**Koen Vanheusden**  
Director



**Christelle Charlier**  
Director

# ORGANISATION CHART

## SITUATION ON 31.12.14



**Marc Bogaerts**  
Director General

### GENERAL MANAGEMENT



**Fabienne L'Hoost**  
Deputy Director General

---

## ORGANISATION OF JOINT TRADE MISSIONS

Welcoming VIPs, delegations & foreign visitors



**Wouter Decoster**  
Trade Missions Coordinator



**Julie Derwa**  
Trade Missions Coordinator



**Rosemary Donck**  
Media and Social Media Manager



**Patrick Gillard**  
Trade Missions Coordinator



**Céline Vandermeersch**  
Trade Missions Coordinator



REGULATIONS / HUMAN RESOURCES /  
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY



**Koen Vanheusden**  
Director

STUDIES, STATISTICS AND COMMUNICATION / FISCAL CERTIFICATES  
FOR APPOINTING AN EXPORT MANAGER



**Christelle Charlier**  
Director

SELECTIVE DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION /  
BELGIAN EXPORTERS' DATABASE / BUSINESS PROPOSALS / ENCODING



**Ingrid Delvoy**  
Deputy Director

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT



**Roland Bastaits**  
Deputy Director

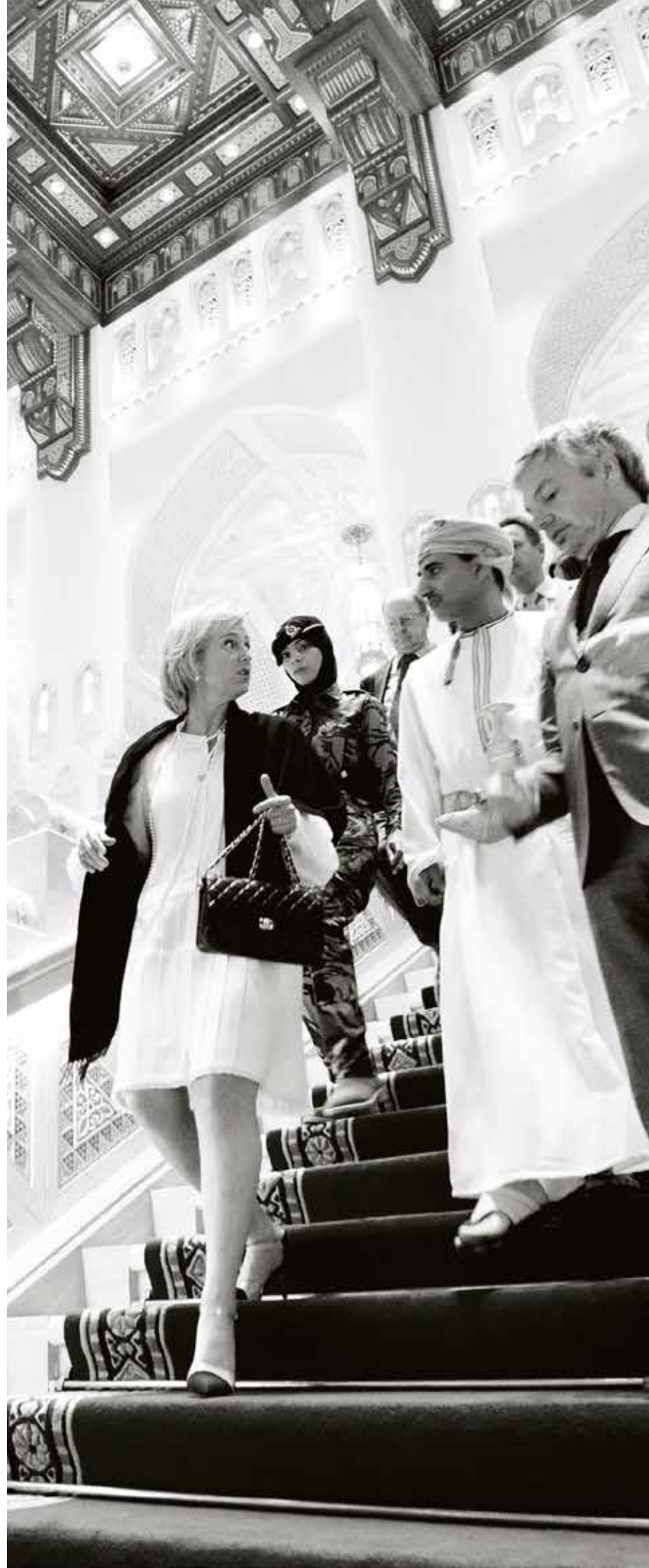
# FIGURES & TABLES

## FIGURES

<b>FIG.1</b>	Breakdown of allocations in 2014	<b>10</b>	<b>FIG.12</b>	Breakdown of regulations case files by subject, 2010 – 2014	<b>36</b>	<b>FIG.22</b>	Percentage variation in imports from the EU in 2014 (2013)	<b>55</b>
<b>FIG.2</b>	Geographical breakdown of the Belgian Exporters' Database in 2014	<b>24</b>	<b>FIG.13</b>	Geographical breakdown of questions, 2010 – 2014	<b>37</b>	<b>FIG.23</b>	Percentage variation in imports from European countries in 2014 (2013) (in %)	<b>56</b>
<b>FIG.3</b>	Belgian Exporters' Database registration evolution, 2010 – 2014	<b>24</b>	<b>FIG.14</b>	Evolution in the number of unique visitors on a monthly basis to www.abh-ace.be, 2013 – 2014	<b>39</b>	<b>FIG.24</b>	Belgium's top 20 suppliers (in million EUR)	<b>56</b>
<b>FIG.4</b>	Evolution in business proposal announcements, 2010 – 2014	<b>25</b>	<b>FIG.15</b>	Breakdown of visitors by language www.abh-ace.be in 2014	<b>40</b>	<b>FIG.25</b>	Percentage breakdown of imports by sector in 2014 (2013)	<b>57</b>
<b>FIG.5</b>	Breakdown by type of business opportunity in 2014	<b>26</b>	<b>FIG.16</b>	New application: how to organise your distribution channels abroad?	<b>40</b>	<b>FIG.26</b>	Trade balance Belgium - EU in 2014 (in billion EUR)	<b>59</b>
<b>FIG.6</b>	Evolution per type of business opportunity, 2010 – 2014	<b>26</b>	<b>FIG.17</b>	Percentage variation in exports to the EU in 2014 (2013) (in %)	<b>49</b>			
<b>FIG.7</b>	Geographical breakdown of business opportunities by continent in 2014	<b>26</b>	<b>FIG.18</b>	Percentage variation in exports to European countries outside the EU in 2014 (2013) (in %)	<b>50</b>			
<b>FIG.8</b>	Number of orders of specifications, 2010 – 2014	<b>27</b>	<b>FIG.19</b>	Percentage share in exports by continent in 2014 (2013)	<b>51</b>			
<b>FIG.9</b>	Breakdown of clients relating to ad hoc requests in 2014	<b>31</b>	<b>FIG.20</b>	Belgium's top 20 customers (in million EUR)	<b>52</b>			
<b>FIG.10</b>	Breakdown of regional clients for ad hoc requests in 2014	<b>31</b>	<b>FIG.21</b>	Percentage breakdown of exports by sector in 2014 (2013)	<b>53</b>			
<b>FIG.11</b>	Number of case files processed by the Regulations Department, 2010 – 2014	<b>36</b>						

## TABLES

<b>TAB.1</b>	<b>Total allocations in 2014</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>TAB.2</b>	<b>Number of announcements circulated by type of business opportunity, 2010 - 2014</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>TAB.3</b>	<b>Top 10 locations per business opportunity in 2014</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>TAB.4</b>	<b>Evolution in the number of unique visitors on a monthly basis to <a href="http://www.abh-ace.be">www.abh-ace.be</a>, 2013 - 2014</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>TAB.5</b>	<b>Overview of most viewed sections at <a href="http://www.abh-ace.be">www.abh-ace.be</a></b>	<b>40</b>
<b>TAB.6</b>	<b>Number of visitors to <a href="http://www.belgianeconomicmission.be">www.belgianeconomicmission.be</a> in 2014</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>TAB.7</b>	<b>Evolution of Belgian imports and exports in 2013 - 2014</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>TAB.8</b>	<b>Evolution of Belgian exports in 2013 - 2014</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>TAB.9</b>	<b>Evolution of Belgian imports in 2013 - 2014</b>	<b>47</b>



# ACTION PLAN FOR 2015-2016

## JOINT TRADE MISSIONS

PRESIDED OVER BY **HER ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCESS ASTRID**,  
REPRESENTATIVE OF **HIS MAJESTY THE KING**.



21 > 27  
MARCH  
2015

&



24 > 31  
OCTOBER  
2015



FIRST  
HALF  
OF 2016









# CONTACTS AND ACCESS MAP



belgian  
foreign trade agency

## BELGIAN FOREIGN TRADE AGENCY

Rue Montoyerstraat 3  
B - 1000 Brussels

+32 2 206 35 11

info@abh-ace.be

[www.abh-ace.be](http://www.abh-ace.be)

[www.belgianeconomicmission.be](http://www.belgianeconomicmission.be)









## BELGIAN FOREIGN TRADE AGENCY

Rue Montoyerstraat 3  
B - 1000 Brussels

+32 2 206 35 11  
info@abh-ace.be

www.abh-ace.be  
www.belgianeconomicmission.be

COMPOSITION: KATHLEEN DERIDDER  
RESPONSIBLE PUBLISHER: FABIENNE L'HOOST  
PICTURE CREDITS: © BELGAIMAGE  
PUBLICATION DATE: APRIL 2015  
PRINTED ON FSC-CERTIFIED PAPER



belgian  
foreign trade agency