

In January 2003, the closing down of Arcelor's hot rolling plant in the Liège region was announced, with the complete closing down of the plant foreseen in 2009. Because of the inevitable consequences this has on the labour market, Jean-Claude Marcourt, Minister for Economic Affairs and Employment (Walloon Region), commissioned the survey *Impact of the closing of the "hot phase" on Arcelor's subcontractors* in order to anticipate the social consequences of the closing down of Arcelor's blast furnace n°6 in Liège.

The authors of the survey are Anne-France MOSSOUX (Forem Advice Liège, Analysis of Employment & Training Market - AMEF) and Fabienne MICHEL (Subregional Employment & Training Committee of Liège - CSEF). The results were published in June 2005. They are for internal use only, so a copy of the report can not be provided. The questionnaire itself is public, however.

The questionnaire was developed in order to provide objective data that allow to quantify and to qualify the impact of the restructuring process within Arcelor that had already started with the closing down of the blast furnace n° 6 and the closing down of the whole plant in 2009. The consequences of these events on employment in the Liège region could not be left unanswered.

The questionnaire has been built upon different elements: profile of companies and their staff, future perspectives in terms of employment, degree of dependence on the hot steel industry, evolution of activities and clients.

Arcelor's subcontractors (in the large sense of the word: supply industry included) in the province of Liège, that offered services to Arcelor in the last 3 years, and that have a link with Arcelor's turnover.

The sample frame was chosen on basis of 3 criteria: Arcelor's subcontractors (in the large sense of the word: supply industry included)

- situated in the province of Liège,
- that offered services to Arcelor in the last 3 years,
- and that have a link with Arcelor's turnover.

Arcelor provided a list with 53 companies.

The questionnaire – composed of 14 questions- was written and then tested upon 5 companies. The questionnaire was adapted in function of their remarks and was then sent to the companies by mail on the 10th of June, with a letter explaining the objectives and the context of the questionnaire. Companies were asked to reply by fax before 17th of June. Companies were contacted by phone between 20th and 24th of June, this being the end date of the questionnaire.

The response level was 74 %, response was not obligatory however. 53 companies have been contacted, of which 39 have replied. Among the companies that didn't reply, 3 were unreachable, one had gone bankrupt, 3 didn't answer because they felt they were not involved.

The main results of the survey are the following:

- Profile of companies: main activities, number of staff (per age and gender), profile of staff, contracts
- Degree of dependence of the company and its staff on the hot steel industry
- Future perspectives of the companies



Regional Key Competencies

- a way to manage structural changes (ATG)

- Evolution of activities and clients since 2003

The results of the survey have led to the set-up of a tool to promote occupational mobility of subcontractors of Arcelor: Le dispositif de reclassement des travailleurs sous-traitants d'Arcelor, a service similar to outplacement for Arcelor's subcontractors, managed by the Walloon public employment service.