

Belgium Metals Report Q2 2014

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Abstracts

BMI View: In Q214 we are sticking with our full-year production forecasts for Belgium's steel sector. An up-tick in Belgium's economic growth in 2014 is unlikely to filter down into the country's steel sector with the industry continuing to be hit by overcapacity coupled with sluggish demand deriving, in part, from weak growth across the region's automotive sector. The country's largest producer continues to downsize its Belgium operations, in favour of channelling investment to neighbouring regions, such as France.

Meanwhile recent calls to introduce subsidies to support the European steel industry have led to suggestions that the Belgian government may move to nationalise ArcelorMittal's steel operations in Liege.

Nationalisation may provide support for Belgium's steel sector which is being hit by flatlining demand from across the eurozone region, including from its main export market, Germany. Falling local demand has been exacerbated by an influx of cheap Chinese steel following increasing production from Chinese steel works leading to overcapacity.

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