

**Question for written answer E-005412/2013  
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: Limiting European steel production, closure of industrial sites, incentive towards carbon leakage and possible violation of European competition law

ArcelorMittal holds a 29% share of steel production in Europe, and the European Union imports 10% of its needs on average. In view of its production and the gap separating it from its competitors, ArcelorMittal is in a dominant position in the European steel market, which is an importer.

On 22 April 2013, ArcelorMittal permanently closed the blast furnaces in its heat plant on a site which was considered one of the three best performing sites in its group, according to the 'Faure' report submitted to the French Government in the summer of 2012. Prior to this announcement, ArcelorMittal systematically limited production at the site, transferred orders and gave up on technical development by abandoning the ULCOS project in December 2012, much to the surprise of the Commission. The same procedure was used in many other industrial sites in Europe, such as Liège in Belgium, but also in Bremen and Ekosthal in Germany.

According to the judgment of 13 February 1973 of the Court of Justice of the European Communities, *Hoffmann-La Roche & Co. AG*, limiting production and therefore limiting outlets and innovation could lead to a violation of Article 102(b) and represent abuse of a dominant position. ArcelorMittal, through its abusive use of the industrial sites in its possession and voluntary limiting of production on EU territory, is putting the European steel market at risk and directly affecting European industrial autonomy and trade between Member States, which are forced to import. Lastly, steel production sites outside the EU also generate pollution which is up to 40 times higher than European standards, representing blatant carbon leakages, a phenomenon which the Commission has set itself the goal of preventing.

In view of the above, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Does it believe that the ArcelorMittal group is violating the competition rules defined in Article 102(b) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union as a result of its abusive and voluntary limiting of production and outlets on European territory?
2. With regard to the priorities established during the European Summit of 11 and 12 March 2013 on competitiveness, what does the Commission intend to do to remedy the problem of carbon leakages?