

Ilyich Iron and Steel Works of Mariupol shuts down open-hearth production

Metinvest Group's Ilyich Iron and Steel Works of Mariupol stopped its open-hearth steel production facilities and will now develop converter steelmaking exclusively. The plant decommissioned six open-hearth furnaces, decreasing the plant's emissions of nitrogen compounds by almost 68% and dust emissions by 12%.

The shutdown of the open-hearth furnaces was one of Metinvest Group's most important commitments to improve the environmental situation in Mariupol.

The plant is already making its entire product line from converter steel. The overall reduction in steelmaking capacity will be offset by increased efficiency at the converter shop. Metinvest Group is planning to invest \$200 million to build a modern continuous caster when the economic and political situation in the country settles down.

The employees of the open-hearth shop have been offered jobs at other shops. The plant intends to retain all employees. Today, most open-hearth furnace shop steelmakers are working at the blast furnace, converter and rolling mill shops. If necessary, employees will be retrained to move to the other departments at the plant. More than 70 employees have already completed retraining courses.

Yuriy Zinchenko, Ilyich Iron and Steel Works of Mariupol general director:

"In the years it has been operating, the open-hearth furnace shop has produced almost 160 million tons of steel. However, the open-hearth production era has passed. The industry has ceased to generate profits as it is very energy-intensive and converter technology has advantages in terms of quality, efficiency and environmental friendliness. Almost all leading international steel manufacturers have shut down their open-hearth furnaces in favour of BOF converters or electric furnaces. We promised to close down open-hearth production before 2017 and did it earlier to improve the environmental situation in Mariupol. We are going to take care of our employees by retraining them and providing them with other jobs with good pay and benefits packages."