

WORLD STEEL REVIEW

Iron & Steel Statistics Bureau, February 2015



The World Steel Association estimated global crude steel production for the full list of 93 countries to be 1661 million tonnes in 2014, just 0.8% up on the annual 2013 total of 1649 million tonnes and the highest total ever. However, China accounted for 50% of this total, and the annual total excluding China actually increased by 1.5% compared to 2013. The EU, North America, the Middle East and Asia all showed a rise in crude steel production in 2014.

European Union

Total crude steel production for the 28 countries of the European Union in December actually fell by 5.7%, although the annual total rose by 1.8% to 169 million tonnes, 10.2% of the world total. Germany made 25% of the EU total at 42.9 million tonnes, which was slightly up on 2013, although the December total was down by 5.8%. Italian steel production dropped by 16.9% in December, but fell by just 1.4% in the year to 23.7 million tonnes. French December production fell by 6.3%, bringing the year to date total to 16.1 million tonnes, an increase of 2.9%. Spanish steel production decreased by 3.8% in December making the year total 14.2 million tonnes which was just 0.6% lower than in 2013. Steel production in the UK, however, dropped by 34% in December, although the year to date total increased by 1.8% to 12.1 million tonnes. The 12 months total in Poland increased by 8.4% to 8.6 million tonnes, while the Austrian total fell by 1.2% to just under 7.9 million tonnes.

Other Europe

In Turkey, the largest West European steel producer outside the European Union, crude steel production was 34 million tonnes in 2014, a decrease of 1.8% compared to 2013; the December total fell by 6.3%. Steel production in Bosnia-Herzegovina increased by 9.7% in 2014 to 793 thousand tonnes, while Norwegian production fell by 1.6% to 595 thousand tonnes. However, Serbian production rose by 47% in the year to 583 thousand tonnes.

European car registrations increased by 4.9% in December 2014 compared to the previous year, according to ACEA and the year total increased by 5.4% to 13 million cars. German registrations increased by 2.9% to 3 million cars in 2014, while the UK total rose by 9.3% to nearly 2.5 million cars. In France, however, registrations increased by just 0.3% to 1.8 million cars, while in Italy registrations were up by 4.2% to nearly 1.4 million cars, Spanish registrations increased by 18.4% to 855 thousand cars. The Belgian total on the other hand fell by 0.6% to 483 thousand cars.

The CIS countries

The countries of the former USSR showed a decrease of 6.3% in crude steel production in December while the annual total was down by 2.8% to 105 million tonnes, 6.3% of world production. Russian steel production rose by 2.6% in both December and in the year to date to nearly 71 million tonnes making it the sixth largest producer in the world, just behind South Korea. However, Ukrainian December production fell by 28.5% bringing the annual total down 17% to 27.2 million tonnes. Annual steel production in Kazakhstan increased by 12.3% in 2014 to 3.7 million tonnes, while production in Belarus was up 12% to 2.5 million tonnes. Russian exports of steel in the first 11 months of 2014 rose by 15% compared to 2013 and were slightly above the 2012 total. Half of the exports in 2014 were semis, although the increase in these was only 3.7%. Hot rolled coil exports rose by 6.8% to 3.9 million tonnes, but exports of CR plate and sheet increased by 19.5% to over 1.4 million tonnes. Hot rolled plate exports were up 62.5% to 858 thousand tonnes. Exports of hot rolled bars rose by 64% to 816 thousand tonnes and exports of welded tubes jumped by 183% to 756 thousand tonnes. Russia's largest market was Turkey which took 4.1 million tonnes, 16.8% of the total exported in 2014. Taiwan was the second largest market at 2.5 million tonnes, 10.2% of the total. The European Union accounted for almost 24% of total exports at 5.8 million tonnes with Belgium the largest importing country followed by Italy. North America imported 3.5 million tonnes from Russia in 2014, 14.2% of the total.

North America

North American production accounted for 7.3% of the world's total, with production in the USA increasing by 1.7% in the year to date to 88 million tonnes, maintaining its position as the third largest steel producer in the world. The US December production showed a 3.7% increase on December 2013. Canadian annual crude steel production was up 2% at 12.6 million tonnes, while the December month total rose by 2.1%. Mexican December production, however, fell by 2.7%, although the year total increased by 4.2% to 19 million tonnes. In Trinidad and Tobago the annual total fell by 21.5% to 483 thousand tonnes, while in Guatemala production was up 2.1% to 393 thousand tonnes.

South America

In South America, crude steel production rose by 3% in December, but fell by 1.4% in the full year to 45 million tonnes, just 2.7% of world production. Brazilian annual steel production was down by 0.7% to 34 million tonnes, while the December total fell 1%. Argentinian steel production, on the other hand, rose by 2.9% in the month, bringing the annual total up by 5.8% to 5.5 million tonnes. Although Venezuelan production was 48% up in December, the annual total fell by 31.5% to under 1.5 million tonnes. Annual steel production in Chile decreased by 15% to 1.1 million tonnes, while in Colombia it was up by 2.7% to nearly 1.3 million tonnes. In Peru steel production rose by 7% to 1.1 million tonnes.

Africa and the Middle East

Steel production in Africa and the Middle East accounted for 2.7% of the world total. African production decreased by 0.7% to 15.9 million tonnes in 2014, while in the Middle East it rose by 7.7% to 28.5 million tonnes. Iran was the largest producer in the region with production increasing by 5.9% to 16.3 million tonnes, while South Africa's steel production fell by 0.6% to 7.2 million tonnes. Egypt's annual total fell by 4% to 6.5 million tonnes, while Saudi Arabian steel production increased by 15% to 6.3 million tonnes. Qatar made 3 million tonnes of steel in 2014, 36% up on the previous year. The UAE total, however, was 17% down at 2.4 million tonnes.

Asia

Crude steel production in the Asian countries increased by 0.8% in the year to over 1.1 million tonnes, 68% of world production. China's December production was 1.5% higher, bringing the year to date total up by 0.9% to 822.7 million tonnes, the highest annual crude steel production ever. Japan's annual crude steel production was only 0.1% up in 2014 at 111 million tonnes, while the monthly total decreased by 3.7%. India increased its annual production by 2.3% to 83 million tonnes, only 5 million tonnes less than the USA. South Korean steel production in December was down by 1.6%, but the year to date total increased by 7.5% to 71 million tonnes in 2014. Crude steel production in Taiwan increased by 17.9% in December, and by 4.3% in the year to over 23 million tonnes. Australia's annual total, on the other hand, decreased by 1.7% to 4.6 million tonnes. China's steel exports in December reached 10 million tonnes, the highest total ever recorded, bringing the 2014 year total to almost 93 million tonnes. Exports of hot rolled bars in 2014 more than doubled to 18.4 million tonnes and exports of hot rolled wide strip almost doubled to 13 million tonnes. Rods and bars in coil exports were 11.4 million tonnes, an increase of 42%. Nearly 57% of Chinese steel exports in 2014 went to other Asian countries and a further 10% went to middle eastern countries. North and South America took 15% of Chinese exports in 2014.

P G Hunt
ISSB Ltd