

WORLD STEEL REVIEW

Iron & Steel Statistics Bureau, February 2016



The World Steel Association estimated global crude steel production for the full list of 92 countries to be 1623 million tonnes in 2015, 2.8% less than the annual 2014 total of 1670 million tonnes. China accounted for 49.5% of this total, and the annual total excluding China actually fell by 3.4% compared to 2014. All regions showed a drop in crude steel production in 2015 apart from Oceania.

European Union

Total crude steel production for the 28 countries of the European Union in December actually fell by 8.3%, although the annual total was only down by 1.8% to 166 million tonnes, 10.2% of the world total. Germany made nearly 26% of the EU total at 42.7 million tonnes, which was slightly less than in 2014, although the December total was down by 8.3%. Italian steel production actually rose by 2.1% in December, but fell by 7.1% in the year to 22.0 million tonnes. French December production dropped by 12.2%, bringing the year to date total to 15 million tonnes, a decrease of 7.2%. Spanish steel production increased by 3% in December making the year total 14.9 million tonnes which was 4.4% higher than in 2014. Steel production in the UK, however, dropped by 34% in December, while the year to date total decreased by 10.4% to 10.9 million tonnes. The 12 months total in Poland increased by 6.4% to 9.1 million tonnes, while the Austrian total fell by 2.3% to 7.7 million tonnes.

Other Europe

In Turkey, the largest West European steel producer outside the European Union, crude steel production was 31.5 million tonnes in 2015, a decrease of 7.4% compared to 2014; the December total fell by 1.6%. Steel production in Bosnia-Herzegovina increased by 3.3% in 2015 to 819 thousand tonnes, while Serbian production jumped by 64% to 955 thousand tonnes. However, Norwegian production fell by 3.7% in the year to 578 thousand tonnes.

European car registrations increased by 15.9% in December 2015 compared to the previous year, according to ACEA and the year total increased by 9.2% to 14.2 million cars. German registrations increased by 5.6% to 3.2 million cars in 2015, while the UK total rose by 6.3% to 2.6 million cars. In France registrations increased by 6.8% to 1.9 million cars, while in Italy registrations jumped by 15.8% to nearly 1.6 million cars, Spanish registrations rose even more, by 20.9%, to just over one million cars. The Belgian annual total reached 501 thousand cars, an increase of 3.8%.

The CIS countries

The countries of the former USSR showed a decrease of 2.4% in crude steel production in December while the annual total was down by 4.3% to 101 million tonnes, 6.2% of world production. Russian steel production was 3.3% down in December and just 0.5% down in the year to date to 71 million tonnes making it the fifth largest producer in the world, just ahead of South Korea. Ukrainian December production fell by just 0.2% bringing the annual total down 15.6% to 22.9 million tonnes. Annual steel production in Kazakhstan decreased by 3.5% in 2015 to 3.5 million tonnes, while production in Belarus was up by 4% to 2.6 million tonnes.

North America

North American production accounted for 6.8% of the world's total, with production in the USA falling by 10.5% in the year to date to 79 million tonnes, making it the fourth largest steel producer in the world after India. The US December production showed a 16.3% drop on December 2014. Canadian annual crude steel production was down 2.2% at 12.5 million tonnes, while the December month total decreased by 4.9%. Mexican December production fell by 6.5%, while the year total decreased by 3.9% to 18.3 million tonnes. Guatemalan production was up 0.9% to 398 thousand tonnes, while in Trinidad and Tobago the annual total fell by 36% to 311 thousand tonnes.

South America

In South America, crude steel production fell by 7.2% in December, and by 2.5% in the full year to 44 million tonnes, just 2.7% of world production. Brazilian annual steel production was down by 1.9% to 33 million tonnes, while the December total fell 6.1%. Argentinian steel production, on the other hand, fell by 16.7% in the month, bringing the annual total down by 8.4% to 5 million tonnes. Venezuelan December production was down by 32.6%, and the annual total decreased by 9.4% to 1.3 million tonnes. Annual steel production in Colombia increased by 1.4% to 1.2 million tonnes, while in Chile it was up by 2.8% to 1.1 million tonnes. In Peru steel production rose by 0.8% to just under 1.1 million tonnes.

Africa and the Middle East

Steel production in Africa and the Middle East accounted for 2.8% of the world total. African production decreased by 0.2% to 15 million tonnes in 2015, while in the Middle East it fell by 0.5% to 29.8 million tonnes. Iran was the largest producer in the region with an annual total of 16.1 million tonnes, a decline of 1.4% from the year before. South Africa's steel production actually rose by 16.3% to 7.6 million tonnes in 2015. Egypt's annual total, however, fell by 15.1% to 5.5 million tonnes, while Saudi Arabian steel production decreased by 10% to 5.7 million tonnes. Qatar made 2.6 million tonnes of steel in 2015, 14.1% down on the previous year. The UAE total, on the other hand, was 25.8% up at 3 million tonnes.

Asia

Crude steel production in the Asian countries decreased by 2.3% in the year to over 1.1 billion tonnes, 69% of world production. China's December production was 5.2% lower, bringing the year to date total down by 2.3% to just under 804 million tonnes. Japan's annual crude steel production was 5% down in 2015 at 105 million tonnes, while the monthly total decreased by 4.5%. India increased its annual production by 2.6% to nearly 90 million tonnes, making it the third largest steel producer in the world. South Korean steel production in December rose by 2.1%, but the year to date total decreased by 2.6% to just under 70 million tonnes in 2015. Crude steel production in Taiwan fell by 19.6% in December, and by 7.1% in the year to 21.5 million tonnes. Australia's annual total, on the other hand, increased by 6.9% to 4.9 million tonnes.

China's exports of steel rose to over 10.5 million tonnes in December, the second highest monthly total ever recorded and 5% up on December 2014. This was partly due to a huge increase in the exports of hot rolled bars to almost 3.3 million tonnes, 27% up on the December 2014 total. Exports of hot rolled wide coil were down very slightly at 1.4 million tonnes, while rods and bars in coil were up 15.3% to 1.25 million tonnes. 63% of China's exports in 2015 were alloy steel with hot rolled bars, hot rolled coil and wire rod accounting for 80% of the total. Non alloy steel accounted for 34% of China's exports in 2015.

China's imports of iron ore in December reached their highest monthly total ever at over 96 million tonnes, 10.8% up on the December 2014 total.

Asian countries still remain the main markets for Chinese steel exports taking 60% of the December exports and 58% of all 2015 exports. South Korea took 13.5 million tonnes of Chinese exports in 2015 with Vietnam taking 10.1 million tonnes. The Philippines and Indonesia both took over 5 million tonnes. The Middle East took 10.7 million tonnes and the European Union 8.5 million tonnes.

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