

## **WORLD STEEL REVIEW**

**Iron & Steel Statistics Bureau, March 2006**



Total crude steel production for the 61 countries reporting to the IISI in January 2006 was estimated to be 94.4 million tonnes, a rise of 4.6% on January 2005. If China is excluded, the remaining 60 countries showed a 1.6% fall in crude steel production. The European Union, the CIS and North America all showed a drop in steel production.

In the European Union crude steel production for the 25 in January fell by 5.8% on January 2005 to 15.8 million tonnes. The four largest countries all showed a drop in production. In Germany steel production was down 14% to 3.4 million tonnes, and French production was down 4.6% to 1.75 million tonnes. Italy's steel production only fell by 0.7% to 2.45 million tonnes. Spanish steel production was down 0.8% to 1.5 million tonnes. In the UK, on the other hand, production rose by 1.5% to nearly 1.2 million tonnes. Belgium's steel production fell by 20%, and Poland's production was down 8.5%; however, the Czech Republic showed a rise of 0.4%.

Arcelor is continuing to fight the takeover bid from Mittal Steel and is going to detail a strategic plan to maximise returns to shareholders (Metal Bulletin, 27 February). The intention is to take to the road to promote the plan to shareholders. In addition Arcelor is considering selling off its stainless steel business, one of the largest in the world, in order to raise more cash for shareholders. The business is not performing as well as most of Arcelor's other businesses according to analysts. Spain's Acerinox would be the most likely buyer as Germany's ThyssenKrupp would have anti trust issues.

Outside of the European Union, steel production in Turkey increased by 8.2% to nearly 1.8 million tonnes, while Romanian production fell by 18%. Turkey is still the largest importer of scrap in the world, importing over 13 million tonnes in 2005, half of which came from Russia, Romania and the USA.

Registrations of new cars in Europe showed an increase of 2.6% in January 2006, with a rise in most countries. Italian registrations increased by 10.7% to 237 thousand units, while German registrations rose by 10.8% to 223 thousand units. In France registrations increased by 2.8% to 169 thousand units, while in the UK, on the other hand, registrations fell by 13.3% to 157 thousand units. The Spanish total fell by 0.3% to 104 thousand units.

In Russia crude steel production was flat compared to January 2005, at 5.4 million tonnes, while Ukrainian production fell by 1.2% to 3.3 million tonnes. Steel production in Kazakhstan was down by 4.8%. Russia is the largest exporter of scrap in the world with Turkey, South Korea and Spain taking just over half the total in 2005.

In North America January crude steel production was down 3.1%, with US production down 2.2% to 8.1 million tonnes. Canadian steel production fell by 8.1% to 1.2 million tonnes, while Mexican production decreased by 2.6% to 1.3 million tonnes.

---

**For further information please contact: Phil Hunt Tel: +44 (0) 20 7343 3916 Fax: +44 (0) 020 7343 3903  
e-mail: [tradeadmin@issb.co.uk](mailto:tradeadmin@issb.co.uk) website: [www.issb.co.uk](http://www.issb.co.uk) or write to:  
Publications Dept, Ref: SOTN, ISSB Limited, 1 Carlton House Terrace, London, SW1Y 5DB, England**

Although US steel imports fell by 8% in 2005, exports of steel rose by 20% to 9.4 million tonnes. However, most of this increase went to Canada and Mexico. Canada accounted for 62% of the 9.4 million tonnes, with a further 21% going to Mexico. After these two countries India and China were the USA's next largest markets, but only took 168 thousand tonnes each, less than 2% of the total. US exports of hot rolled wide coil reached almost 1.6 million tonnes, with exports of coated sheet and strip at 1.4 million tonnes. Seamless and welded tube exports were 1.3 million tonnes.

South American crude steel production was 1.5% up in January, with Brazilian production down by 0.5% to 2.6 million tonnes. Argentinian steel production also fell by 0.5% to 408 thousand tonnes, while Venezuelan production jumped by 19% to 410 thousand tonnes.

In Africa and the middle east, Egypt's steel production rose in January by 15.8% to 500 thousand tonnes, and South Africa's production increased by 9% to 873 thousand tonnes. Steel production in Iran was up 14.4% to 813 thousand tonnes, putting it ahead of Poland and just behind Belgium in size.

Asian crude steel production for the five major countries in January was up 11.9%, led by China with an increase of 20.7% to 30.3 million tonnes. Indian steel production rose by 17.8% to 3.6 million tonnes. Japanese production, on the other hand, fell by 0.7% to 9.5 million tonnes. South Korean production decreased by 5.9% to 3.9 million tonnes, while in Taiwan steel production fell 13% to 1.5 million tonnes.

Indian exports of steel were over 4 million tonnes in the first nine months of 2005, 3% up on the same period in 2004. Its top 3 markets were China, the USA and the United Arab Emirates, which together took one third of total exports. The Far East accounted for 41.5% of total exports in 2005, with the Middle East a further 15%, and the European Union nearly 17%. Exports of galvanised sheet and strip reached almost 1.1 million tonnes, a 25% increase on 2004, with hot rolled wide coil exports also nearly 1.1 million tonnes, an increase of 38% on 2004. Welded tube exports were 400 thousand tonnes, 63% up on January to September 2004.

[END]