

WORLD STEEL REVIEW

Iron & Steel Statistics Bureau, March 2007



Total crude steel production for the 64 countries reporting to the IISI in January 2007 was estimated to be 107.8 million tonnes, an increase of 13.4% on January 2006. If China is excluded, the remaining 63 countries showed a 7% rise in crude steel production. Only North America and Oceania showed a drop in steel production.

In the European Union crude steel production for the 27 (including Bulgaria and Romania) in January rose by 9.6% on January 2006 to 18.1 million tonnes. In Germany steel production jumped by 25.6% to 4.3 million tonnes, although this was on a very low monthly total in January 2006. French production fell by 1.2% to 1.7 million tonnes, while Italy's steel production increased by 5.2% to 2.6 million tonnes. Spanish steel production also showed a marked increase of 25.4% to 1.6 million tonnes. In the UK, however, production fell by 0.8% to 1.1 million tonnes. Polish steel production rose by 9%, while Romanian production was up by 14.7%.

Outside of the European Union, steel production in Turkey increased by 13.7% to over 2 million tonnes, while in Serbia and Montenegro production rose by 25.5% to 145 thousand tonnes.

Registrations of new cars in Europe showed an increase of 1.1% in January 2007. Italian registrations increased by 3.5% to 248 thousand units, while German registrations fell by 10.5% to 200 thousand units. In France registrations increased by 1.8% to 172 thousand units, while in the UK registrations rose by 5.2% to 166 thousand units. The Spanish total increased by 2.7% to 116 thousand units. Poland's total jumped by almost 22% to 23 thousand units.

In Russia crude steel production rose by 11.5% compared to January 2006, at 6.4 million tonnes, with Ukrainian production up by 11.1% to 3.6 million tonnes. Steel production in Kazakhstan increased by 7.4%. Russian steel exports rose by 2% to 31.5 million tonnes in 2006, while imports rose by 28% to 5.8 million tonnes. Semis accounted for half of Russian exports. Russia's largest markets were Turkey, Italy and the USA. Ukrainian exports jumped by 12% to 30.6 million tonnes, of which semis accounted for 41%. Ukrainian steel imports were only 1.5 million tonnes in 2006, although this was 45% up on the previous year. The Ukraine's largest export markets were Russia, Turkey and Italy.

In North America January crude steel production was down 0.4%, although US production increased by 2.7% to 8.3 million tonnes. Canadian steel production, however, fell by 18.9% to just over 1 million tonnes, while Mexican production decreased by 0.3% to 1.4 million tonnes.

US steel shipments rose slightly in 2006, by 3.5% to 108.6 million tonnes. Exports only increased by 1.6% to 9.6 million tonnes, while imports jumped by 40% to 42.4 million tonnes exceeding the previous record high of 38.5 million tonnes in 1998. Thus apparent consumption was 141 million tonnes compared to 126 million tonnes in 2005. The sharp rise in imports was across a number of products: semis increased by 35% to 8.4 million tonnes, hot rolled coil was up 64% to 6.1 million tonnes, and welded tubes imports were up 35% to 4.8 million tonnes. Imports of CR almost doubled

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to 3.3 million tonnes. Canada remains the largest exporter of steel to the USA accounting for 13% of the total at 5.6 million tonnes, but China exported over 5.1 million tonnes which was 12% of the total. In fact Asian countries accounted for one third of the total imports. Imports from Russia more than doubled to 3.5 million tonnes exceeding the Mexican total of 3.4 million tonnes.

The largest exporter of semis to the USA was Russia followed by Mexico and the Ukraine, pushing Brazil into fourth place; these four countries accounted for 73% of the semis imported in 2006. The largest exporters of hot rolled coil to the USA were South Korea, Canada, Russia and Egypt, although these four only accounted for 50% of the total. China was the largest exporter of welded tubes to the USA, followed by Canada, South Korea and Mexico.

South American crude steel production was 1.8% up in January, with Brazilian production up by 4.9% to 2.7 million tonnes. Venezuelan steel production increased by 1.1% to 430 thousand tonnes, while Argentinian production fell by 18.5% to 336 thousand tonnes.

In Africa and the middle east, Iran's steel production rose in January by 4.8% to 852 thousand tonnes, while Egypt's production increased by 16.3% to 535 thousand tonnes. South Africa's production, however, fell by 6.5% to 817 thousand tonnes.

Asian crude steel production for the five major countries in January was up 19.9%, led by China with an increase of 27.3% to 38.4 million tonnes. Indian steel production rose by 7.1% to 3.9 million tonnes. Japanese production increased by 6.5% to 10.1 million tonnes. South Korean production was up 9.7% to 4.3 million tonnes, while in Taiwan steel production rose by 13.9% to 1.7 million tonnes.

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