

WORLD STEEL REVIEW

Iron & Steel Statistics Bureau, March 2010



Total crude steel production for the 66 countries reporting to the World Steel Association in January 2010 was estimated to be 109.2 million tonnes, an increase of 25.9% on January 2009. If China is excluded, the remaining 65 countries showed a 32.8% rise in crude steel production. Most countries recorded an increase in steel production in January.

In the European Union crude steel production for the 27 in January rose by 33.7% on January 2009 to 13.5 million tonnes. In Germany steel production was up 27.7% to 3.4 million tonnes, while Italian production increased by 17.2% to 1.9 million tonnes. Spanish steel production jumped by 51% to nearly 1.4 million tonnes, and French steel production rose by 32% to 1.1 million tonnes. In the UK production increased by nearly 48% to just under one million tonnes. Greece was the only EU country to show a drop in steel production in January, down by 42%.

Outside of the European Union, steel production in Turkey increased by just 2% to 2.1 million tonnes, while in Serbia production more than tripled to 136 thousand tonnes.

While Turkey was the tenth largest producer of steel in the world in 2009 just behind Brazil, it was by far the largest exporter of deformed reinforcing bars, accounting for over one third of global exports. Turkish exports of rebars in 2009 dropped by 15% to 8.6 million tonnes compared to the 2008 total. Some 45% of this total went to Middle Eastern countries, with the UAE the largest single market in the region. This compares to 76% of the 2008 total going to the Middle East. Egypt was the largest export market for Turkey taking 2.3 million tonnes of rebars in 2009, bringing the African total to 39% of Turkish exports. The MENA countries alone took 80% of Turkish rebar exports in 2009, very slightly up on the previous year. Outside of these regions Asian countries took 5% of Turkish rebar exports in 2009 with the European Union only taking 3.6% of the total compared to 7.2% in 2008.

Registrations of new cars in Europe showed an increase of 15.7% in January 2010, although a third of the countries recorded a decrease. German registrations fell by 4.3% to 181 thousand units, while Italian registrations jumped by 30% to 206 thousand units. In France registrations increased by 14.3% to 171 thousand units, while in the UK they rose by 30% to 145 thousand units. The Spanish total was up 18% to 70 thousand units. Poland, the largest of the East European countries showed a decrease of 4.9% to 25 thousand units, while Romania's total fell by 85% to 2 thousand units.

In Russia crude steel production was 33% up compared to January 2009 to 5.2 million tonnes, with Ukrainian production up by 28.4% to 2.7 million tonnes. Steel production in Kazakhstan jumped by 49%.

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In North America January crude steel production increased by 46%, with US production up 49% to 6.1 million tonnes. Canadian steel production rose by 36% to 1.1 million tonnes, while Mexican production also rose by 36% to 1.3 million tonnes.

South American crude steel production increased by 48% in January, with Brazilian production up by two thirds to 2.7 million tonnes. Venezuelan steel production fell by 8.2% to 350 thousand tonnes, while Argentinian production was up 18.5% to 337 thousand tonnes.

In Africa and the Middle East steel production was estimated to be about 2.75 million tonnes in January, about 20% up on the previous January, although in Iran, the largest producer, production was down by 5% on January 2009 to 900 thousand tonnes. South Africa's production, however, jumped by 51% to 710 thousand tonnes. In Saudi Arabia steel production more than doubled to 471 thousand tonnes, putting it ahead of Egypt where production remained flat at 443 thousand tonnes.

Asian crude steel production for the five major countries in January was 21.8% up. Although China's production increased by 18.2% to 48.7 million tonnes, this monthly total was below that of several months in 2009. Indian steel production rose by 14.8% to 5.4 million tonnes, while Japanese production jumped by 37% to 8.7 million tonnes. South Korean production was up 32% to 4.5 million tonnes, and in Taiwan steel production showed a 71% increase to 1.7 million tonnes.

Imports of steel by Vietnam have risen over the last few years, exceeding 9 million tonnes in 2009, making it about the tenth largest importer of steel. According to data reported by the countries exporting to Vietnam, 70% of its imports come from other Asian countries with Japan and China being its largest suppliers. Russia is its third largest supplier at 1.3 million tonnes in 2009. Hot rolled coil accounted for one third of Vietnam's steel imports at just over 3 million tonnes, with ingots and semis accounting for a further 22% at over 2 million tonnes. Hot rolled plate lengths accounted for 11% at just under one million tonnes, with bars, rods and sections together accounting for a further 11% at just over one million tonnes. Imports of CR were 850 thousand tonnes.

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