

## **WORLD STEEL REVIEW**

**Iron & Steel Statistics Bureau, March 2012**



Total crude steel production for the 59 countries reporting to the World Steel Association in January 2012 was estimated to be 116 million tonnes, which was a decrease of 7.9% on January 2011. If China is excluded, the remaining 58 countries showed a 3.2% decrease in crude steel production.

In the European Union crude steel production for the 27 in January fell by 5.6% on January 2011 to 13.9 million tonnes. In Germany steel production was down by 8.5% to nearly 3.4 million tonnes, while Italian production increased by 4.6% to 2.2 million tonnes. French steel production actually rose by 11.2% to 1.4 million tonnes, while Spanish steel production dropped by 13% to 1.2 million tonnes. In the UK, however, production decreased by 24% to 672 thousand tonnes. Polish steel production, on the other hand, jumped by 20% to 790 thousand tonnes. Belgium showed one of the largest falls in production at 33% to 500 thousand tonnes.

Outside of the European Union, steel production in Turkey increased by 14.4% to 3.1 million tonnes, while in Serbia production fell by 47% to 79 thousand tonnes. Norwegian steel production rose by 40% to 65 thousand tonnes.

Registrations of new cars in Europe showed a decrease of 6.6% in January 2012, although two thirds of the countries recorded an increase. German registrations showed a slight fall of 0.4% to 210 thousand units, while French registrations dropped by nearly 21% to 147 thousand units. In Italy registrations fell by 17% to 137 thousand units, while in the UK they remained flat at 129 thousand units. In Holland registrations decreased by 5.8% to 70 thousand units, while in Spain the total rose by 2.5% to 55 thousand units.

In Russia crude steel production was flat compared to January 2011 at 5.9 million tonnes, while Ukrainian production fell by 1.6% to 2.9 million tonnes. Steel production in Kazakhstan dropped by 23% to 317 thousand tonnes.

In North America January crude steel production increased by 4.7%, with US production up by 5.7% to 7.6 million tonnes. Canadian steel production remained flat at 1.1 million tonnes, while Mexican production rose by 3.7% to 1.6 million tonnes.

US imports of steel reached nearly 27 million tonnes in 2011, 19.4% up on 2010. Exports of steel in 2011 rose by 12.7% to 13.3 million tonnes. 22% of US imports in 2011, some 6 million tonnes, were semis, mostly slabs, which was an increase of one third on the 2010 total. Seamless and welded tubes accounted for nearly 24% of the total imported in 2011 at 6.3 million tonnes, which was 24% up on the 2010 total. Nearly 29% of US steel imports came from Asian countries, although Canada is still the largest supplier of steel, accounting for 21% of the

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total in 2011. Brazil and Mexico both accounted for just over 10% each, followed by South Korea at just under 10%. The 27 countries of the European Union accounted for 15% of total imports in 2011.

South American crude steel production increased by 1.4% in January, with Brazilian production up by 0.6% to 2.8 million tonnes. Argentinian steel production rose by 9.8% to 397 thousand tonnes, while Venezuelan production fell by 9% to 240 thousand tonnes.

In South Africa steel production was estimated to be 570 thousand tonnes in January, 5.8% up on the previous January. However, in Egypt, production decreased by 8.8% on January 2011 to 514 thousand tonnes.

The 18 countries within the MENA region imported an average of 3.4 million tonnes of steel per month during the first ten months of 2011, down from 3.75 million tonnes per month in 2010. Iran was the largest importer of steel accounting for 19.5% of the total in the first ten months of 2011 compared to 21.6% of the total in 2010. The United Arab Emirates accounted for 15.6% of MENA imports in the first ten months of 2011 with Saudi Arabia taking 14.5%. These three countries accounted for 50% of steel imports by MENA in 2011. In terms of the products imported, billets and slabs accounted for 21% of the total in 2011 with deformed reinforcing bars accounting for 19%, and hot rolled wide strip was 11.6% of the total.

Turkey remains the largest supplier of steel to the MENA region, 20% of the total in the first ten months of 2011, with the Ukraine the next largest supplier at nearly 15% of the total. China beat Russia into third place in 2011 compared to 2010 with 11%; Russia dropped from 12% of the total in 2010 to just under 11% in 2011.

Asian crude steel production for the five major countries in January was 11.4% down with all five countries showing a drop. China's decrease was 13% to 52 million tonnes, while Japanese steel production fell by 10.6% to 8.6 million tonnes. Indian steel production only fell by 0.7% to 6.1 million tonnes, but South Korean production dropped by 9.6% to 5.1 million tonnes. In Taiwan steel production fell by 6.2% to 1.9 million tonnes.

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