

WORLD STEEL REVIEW

Iron & Steel Statistics Bureau, March 2017



Total crude steel production for the 67 countries reporting to the World Steel Association in January 2017 was estimated to be 136.5 million tonnes, which was an increase of 7% on January 2016. If China is excluded, the remaining 66 countries showed a 6.6% increase in crude steel production.

In the European Union crude steel production for the 28 countries rose in January by 2.4% compared to January 2016 to 13.8 million tonnes. In Germany steel production only rose by 1.2% to 3.6 million tonnes, while Italian production was just 0.3% up at 1.8 million tonnes. French steel production, however, decreased by 14% to 1.1 million tonnes, while Spanish steel production was down by 4.2% to 1.2 million tonnes. In the UK, on the other hand, production jumped by 17.5% to 730 thousand tonnes, while that of Poland rose by 17.8% to 835 thousand tonnes.

Outside of the European Union, steel production in Turkey increased by 12.8% to 2.9 million tonnes, while Bosnian production fell by 41% to 44 thousand tonnes. However, Serbian steel production more than doubled to 87 thousand tonnes.

Registrations of new cars in Europe showed an increase of 10.1% in January 2017 to a total of 1.2 million cars which was the highest January total since 2008. German registrations rose by 10.5% to 241 thousand units, while UK registrations increased by 2.9% to nearly 175 thousand units. However, in Italy registrations were up by 10.1% to 172 thousand units, while in France they rose by 10.6% to 153 thousand units. Spanish registrations were up by 10.7% to 84.5 thousand units. These five countries accounted for 68.5% of the total in Europe.

In Russia crude steel production jumped by 11.6% compared to January 2016 to 6.2 million tonnes, while Ukrainian production rose by 8.5% to 2.1 million tonnes. Steel production in Kazakhstan increased by 14.6% to 399 thousand tonnes while in Belarus production was up nearly one third to 200 thousand tonnes.

In North America January crude steel production increased by 4%, with US production up by 6.5% to 6.9 million tonnes. Mexican steel production rose by 8.4% to 1.5 million tonnes, while Canadian production actually fell by 11.7% to one million tonnes.

US imports of steel dropped to 30.9 million tonnes in 2016 from 36.5 million in 2015 and 41.4 million in 2014. One quarter of this total (8.2 million tonnes) came from Canada and Mexico with a further 4 million from Brazil. South Korea accounted for a further 3.5 million tonnes in 2016.

The fall in US imports was mostly in semis, hot rolled wide coil, seamless and welded tubes. Imports of semis accounted for 19.4% of total imports in 2016. Hot rolled wide coil was 12% of imports in 2016 and welded tubes were 10%.

South American crude steel production increased by 11.6% in January, with Brazilian production up by 14.4% to nearly 2.9 million tonnes. Argentinian steel production, on the other hand, fell by 11.6% to 291 thousand tonnes, while Peruvian production jumped by 63% to 100 thousand tonnes. Colombian steel production decreased by 2.6% to 95 thousand tonnes and steel production in Chile fell by 11.7% to 90 thousand tonnes. Venezuelan steel production actually rose by 28% to 70 thousand tonnes.

In Africa and the Middle East steel production rose by 14.2%, while Iran saw production increase by 11.3% to 1.5 million tonnes in January. South African production only rose by 1.2% to 533 thousand tonnes, while Egyptian steel production jumped by 38% to 535 thousand tonnes compared to January 2016. Saudi Arabian production was up by 16% to 483 thousand tonnes, while in the United Arab Emirates production increased by 12.9% to 318 thousand tonnes. Qatari steel production also jumped by 24% to 247 thousand tonnes.

Asian crude steel production for the seven major countries in January was up by 7.1%. China's steel production increased by 7.4% to 67.2 million tonnes, while Japanese production rose by 2.7% to 9 million tonnes. Indian steel production was 12% up at 8.4 million tonnes, while South Korean production rose by 3.2% to 5.9 million tonnes. Taiwanese steel production increased by 4.4% to 1.9 million tonnes. Production in Pakistan showed a 36% increase to 340 thousand tonnes, ahead of Thailand at 310 thousand tonnes, which was an increase of just 1.8% on January 2016.

Global exports of stainless steel are estimated to reach 21 million tonnes in 2016, up from 19.7 million tonnes in 2015. China, which is by far the largest exporter in the world, exported 3.9 million tonnes, up by 15.2% from the 2015 total. Belgian exports are estimated to drop from the 2015 total of 1.8 million tonnes, while South Korea's stainless exports rose by 4.6% to nearly 1.6 million tonnes.

In 2016 75% of China's stainless steel exports went to other Asian countries with Taiwan, South Korea, Vietnam and India being the largest markets. Outside of those four countries, Italy was the next largest market for China.

Stainless hot rolled wide coil accounted for 42% of China's stainless exports in 2016, and cold rolled plate and sheet accounted for a further 30% of exports. Pipes, tubes and fittings accounted for 13% of China's stainless exports in 2016.

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