

## **WORLD STEEL REVIEW**

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



Total crude steel production for the 60 countries reporting to the World Steel Association in February 2012 was estimated to be 121 million tonnes, an increase of 2.4% on February 2011. The total for the two months to date in 2012 was just 0.9% up on the same period in 2011 at 244 million tonnes. However, excluding China, global crude steel production only rose by 1.6% in February and actually fell by 0.2% in the two months. All regions showed an increase in both the month and year to date except for the European Union and Oceania.

In the European Union, crude steel production by the 27 fell by 3.6% in February, and by 4.5% to 28 million tonnes in the two months to date compared to the same period last year. German crude steel production was down 3.1% in February, and by 5.6% in the year to date to 7 million tonnes. Production in Italy, however, was up by 7.3% in February, while the two months total was up 6.3% to 4.7 million tonnes. French monthly production increased by 9.3%, with the year to date up 10.2% to nearly 2.7 million tonnes, while Spanish steel production fell by 14.3% in February and by 13.7% in the two months to just over 2.3 million tonnes. United Kingdom steel production decreased by 26% in February, bringing the year to date total down 25% to 1.2 million tonnes. However, Poland had the largest increase in steel production at 20% in both February and the year to date, reaching 1.6 million tonnes in the two months. Belgium had the largest fall in steel production, down 32.7% in February and down 33% in the year to date to 970 thousand tonnes.

Crude steel production in other European countries varied considerably. Turkish production in February rose by 12.3% with the year to date total up 13.4% to 5.9 million tonnes. Serbian steel production, on the other hand, fell by 92% in February and by 70% in the year to date to 92 thousand tonnes. Norwegian steel production rose by 39% in the year to date to 123 thousand tonnes.

Turkish steel exports reached 17 million tonnes in 2011, an increase of 5.3% on the previous year, making it the eighth largest exporting country in the world, just behind Italy. Some 40% of Turkish exports go to the Middle East, particularly the UAE, Iraq and Saudi Arabia. A further 19% went to Africa and 18.5% went to the European Union.

ACEA, the European car manufacturers association, reported that car registrations in Europe fell by 9.2% in February, while the year to date total decreased by 7.8%, to 1.9 million cars. German registrations were flat in both February and in the two months at 435 thousand cars, while French registrations fell by 20% in the month and by 20.5% in the two months to 310 thousand cars. The Italian February total was down 19% and the year to date was down 18% to 268 thousand cars, while in the UK February was just 2.5% lower and the two months total fell

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by 0.8% to 191 thousand cars. The Spanish two months total was flat at 120 thousand cars, while the Belgian total fell by 17% to 88 thousand cars. These six countries accounted for 73% of total registrations in Europe.

In the CIS crude steel production increased by just 1.8% in February, while the year to date total was flat at 18.5 million tonnes. Russia's monthly total only rose by 8.1%, while the two months were 4.1% up to 12 million tonnes. Ukrainian steel production, however, fell by 7.8% in February, bringing the year to date total to 5.4 million tonnes, a decrease of 4.6%. In Kazakhstan the two month crude steel production total decreased by 22% to 614 thousand tonnes, while Belarus steel production fell by 1.7% to 412 thousand tonnes.

While Russia's crude steel production grew by 2.9% in 2011, its exports fell by 10% to 24.7 million tonnes making it the sixth largest steel exporting country below the Ukraine and Germany. One third of Russia's exports went to the European Union with Italy, Germany and Denmark taking 70% of the EU total. Iran was its largest export market in 2011 taking 14% of total exports, with the Middle East as a whole accounting for 17.6% of the total. The Far East accounted for 15% of total exports, although this was down by 45% compared to 2010.

Turning to North America, US crude steel production rose by 12.8% in February, and by 9.9% in the year to date to 15.3 million tonnes. Mexican steel production was 5% up in the month, and 4.4% up in the two months to date to 3 million tonnes. Canadian production, on the other hand, rose by 21% in February, and by 15% in the year to date to 2.25 million tonnes.

In South America, there was a 3.4% increase in Brazilian crude steel production in February, with the year to date total up by 2.5% to 5.6 million tonnes. Argentinian production was up 2.2% in the month and by 5.5% in the two months to 846 thousand tonnes, while Venezuelan steel production in the year to date fell by 16.4% to 470 thousand tonnes. Production in Chile was down 27% in the two months to 205 thousand tonnes, with the Colombian total up 11% to 223 thousand tonnes.

South African crude steel production fell in February by 5.3%, while the year to date total was down 5.4% to 1.2 million tonnes. Egyptian steel production, however, increased by 3.1% in the two months to just over one million tonnes. Production in Iran rose by 6.3% in February, and by 6.4% in the year to date to 2.5 million tonnes. In Saudi Arabia steel production for the two months was 0.6% up at 897 thousand tonnes.

Crude steel production in the Far East varied in the 5 major countries. Chinese production increased by 3.3% in February and by 2.2% in the two months to nearly 113 million tonnes. Japanese production, however, fell by 3.7% in February and by 7.3% in the year to date to 17.2 million tonnes. Indian production was down by just 0.6% in February and by 0.7% in the year to date to 11.8 million tonnes. South Korean steel production increased by 7.6% in the month, bringing the year to date total up 4.6% to 11.2 million tonnes. Taiwanese production fell by 2.1% in February and by 4.9% in the two months total to 3.7 million tonnes.

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South Korean exports of steel rose to nearly 29 million tonnes in 2011, a 17% increase on 2010, making it the third largest exporting country in the world. 64% of its exports went to other Asian countries with China and Japan being by far the largest markets. North and South America accounted for a further 17.5% of Korean exports with the USA being its third largest market. The Middle East took 9.3% of Korean exports in 2011.

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