

WORLD STEEL REVIEW

Iron & Steel Statistics Bureau, August 2015



Production of crude steel for the countries reporting to the World Steel Association in June 2015 was estimated to be nearly 136 million tonnes, 2.4% lower than the June 2014 total. This brought the total for the first six months of 2015 to 813 million tonnes, 2% below the January to June period in 2014. However, excluding China, which accounted for 50% of the total in 2015, the year to date total fell by 2.8%, while the June total was down by 4%.

Crude steel production in the 28 member countries of the European Union increased by 1.7% in June compared to June 2014, with the year to date total up by just 0.5% to 88 million tonnes compared with the same period last year. Monthly production in Germany increased by 5.8%, while the six months total was down 1.5% at 22.1 million tonnes. Italian production, however, decreased by 11.4% in June, and by 10.6% in the year to date to 11.7 million tonnes. French crude steel production fell by 1.3% in June, bringing the year to date total to 8.2 million tonnes, a decrease of 1.7%. Spanish production was down by 3.3% in the month, but rose by 3.3% in the six months to 7.8 million tonnes. The UK total increased by 3.5% in June, while the year to date total was just 1% up at 6.3 million tonnes. Polish steel production jumped by 24.3% in June and the six months total rose by 17.6% to 4.9 million tonnes.

Elsewhere in Europe, Turkey's steel production decreased by 4.5% in the month with the half year total down by 5.7% to 16.2 million tonnes. The Serbian year to date total more than doubled to 489 thousand tonnes, while Bosnia's six month total increased by 1% to 417 thousand tonnes.

European car registrations, according to ACEA, rose by 14.8% in June, while the total for the first six months of 2015 increased by 8.2% to 7.4 million cars. German registrations rose by 12.9% in June and were up by 5.2% in the half year to 1.6 million cars. The UK market also increased by 12.9% in June and by 7% in the six months to nearly 1.4 million cars. French registrations, however, rose by 15% in June and by 6.1% in the six months to just over one million cars. In Italy the June total rose by 14.4%, and by 15.2% in the year to date to 873 thousand cars. The next largest market was Spain where the six months total jumped by 22% to 555 thousand cars. These five countries accounted for 73% of total European registrations. The largest monthly rise of all the European countries was in Portugal with a 34% increase.

Turning to the CIS, Russian steel production was 7.5% down in June, while the half year total was just 0.8% up at 35.7 million tonnes. Ukraine's crude steel production, however, fell by 21.8% in June and by 27.2% in the six months to 11.3 million tonnes. In

Kazakhstan, steel production increased by 4.5% in the half year to 1.9 million tonnes. The Belarus six months total, however, rose by 13.4% to 1.4 million tonnes.

Russian exports of steel in the first five months of 2015 rose by 11.5% to 12.5 million tonnes. Turkey was Russia's largest market taking 2.4 million tonnes in 2015, the second largest being Taiwan at 1.3 million tonnes. The European Union countries accounted for 25% of the total at 3.16 million tonnes. Other CIS countries took 2.2 million tonnes.

Slabs and billets accounted for half Russia's exports in 2015 at 6.4 million tonnes with low carbon slabs accounting for half that total. The next largest product group exported was hot rolled wide coil at 2.2 million tonnes with CR at 638 thousand tonnes.

The North American continent's crude steel production was down in June with the USA total down by 8.5%, bringing the six months total to almost 40 million tonnes, a decrease of 8.6%. Mexican production was only 0.3% down in June, bringing the year to date total to 9.3 million tonnes, a fall of 4.1% on the 2014 total. Crude steel production in Canada fell by 3.1% in June, while the half year total rose by 0.7% to 6.25 million tonnes.

Crude steel production in South America rose by 0.8% in June with Brazilian production up by 2.1%, bringing the six months to date to 17.1 million tonnes, an increase of 2%. Elsewhere on the continent, production in Argentina fell by 6.9% in June and by 9.8% in the half year to 2.4 million tonnes. Venezuelan steel production decreased by 7.2% in the month, bringing the year to date total to 685 thousand tonnes, 6% down on the 2014 total. The six months total in Peru, however, was 9.8% higher at 596 thousand tonnes, while in Colombia it was down by 8.7% at 550 thousand tonnes. However, in Chile the half year total was down by 3.6% to 532 thousand tonnes.

In Africa and the Middle East, Egyptian production dropped by 34% in June while the year to date showed a 7.3% fall to 3.1 million tonnes. South African production, on the other hand, rose by 2.3% in June, but fell by 7.6% in the six months to 3.2 million tonnes. In Iran steel production rose by 1.5% in June, and was 4.5% higher in the half year at 8.4 million tonnes. Saudi Arabian production increased by 10.3% in June and by just 0.2% in the first six months of the year to 3.1 million tonnes. In the UAE steel production increased by 14.6% in the year to date to 1.5 million tonnes, while in Qatar steel production fell by 10.2% in the half year to 1.3 million tonnes.

The five main steel producing countries of the Far East all showed a fall in steel production except India. China's June steel production was 0.8% lower at 69 million tonnes, 50.8% of the world's total; this brought the six months total to 410 million tonnes, a decline of 1.3%. Crude steel production in Japan fell by 6.2% in June with the year to date total down by 4.7% at 53 million tonnes. Indian steel production in June increased by 0.8%, bringing the year to date total to 45 million tonnes, an increase of 4.2% making India the third largest steel producer in the world. South Korean steel production, on the other hand, decreased by 3.6% in June and by 4.9% in the year to date to 34.5 million tonnes. Taiwanese production decreased by 25.5% in June, and by 4.6% in the six months to 10.6 million tonnes.

Indian exports of steel in April dropped by 10% compared to April 2014 to 679 thousand tonnes, its lowest monthly total since July 2013. However, exports of CR sheet and coil increased by 16% to 108 thousand tonnes while nearly every other product showed a decline.

India's largest export markets in April 2015 were the USA, Bangladesh and Italy. Nearly 27% of exports went to other Asian markets and 22.5% went to Middle Eastern countries. China's steel exports also fell to 8.8 million tonnes in June, although this was 25% higher than the June 2014 total. More than one quarter of this total was hot rolled bars and flats with exports of 2.4 million tonnes in June.

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