

WORLD STEEL REVIEW

Iron & Steel Statistics Bureau, January 2013



Crude steel production in the 62 countries reporting to the World Steel Association totalled 122 million tonnes in November 2012, 5.1% higher than in November 2011. However, the eleven months total was 1,397 million tonnes, just 0.9% higher than the same period last year. Excluding China, the monthly total actually fell by 1.6%, whereas the year to date total decreased by 0.8%.

Steel production in the 27 member countries of the European Union decreased by 5.3% in November 2012 compared to the previous November to 13.5 million tonnes and the eleven months total was 4.8% lower at 157 million tonnes. German production showed a slight drop of 0.2% in November, bringing the eleven months total down 4.1% to 39.6 million tonnes. Production in Italy, on the other hand, fell by 12.9% in November, while the year to date total decreased by 4.5% to 25.5 million tonnes. French steel production fell by 5.4% in the month, while the year to date total only decreased slightly to 14.6 million tonnes. Spanish November production, however, was down by 14.2%, while the eleven months total fell by 13.4% to 12.7 million tonnes. UK monthly steel production increased by 13.5%, bringing the year to date total up 1.7% to 9 million tonnes. The Polish eleven month total fell by 2.7% to 7.8 million tonnes.

In the rest of Europe the largest producer is Turkey, where steel production increased by 4.6% in November, and by 6.5% in the year to date to 33 million tonnes, ahead of the Ukraine and Brazil. The Norwegian eleven months total rose by 16.7% to 646 thousand tonnes, while in Bosnia-Herzegovina the year to date total was up 8.2% to 635 thousand tonnes.

According to ACEA, the European car manufacturers' association, European car registrations fell by 10% in November, and were down by 7.2% in the eleven months. Registrations in Germany, the largest market, decreased by 3.5% in November, and by 1.7% in the year to date to just under 2.9 million cars. French registrations, however, were down by 19% in November and by 13.8% in the eleven months to 1.7 million cars. The UK, on the other hand, showed an 11.3% increase in November, while the year to date total was 5.4% up at 1.9 million cars. In Italy monthly registrations were down by 20% with the year nearly 20% down at 1.3 million cars. The fifth largest market, Spain, was also 20% down in the month and 12.6% down in the year to date at 648 thousand cars, while the Dutch total was down by 10% to 485 thousand cars.

In the CIS countries crude steel production in Russia fell by 0.7% in November bringing the year to date total up 3% to nearly 65 million tonnes. Ukrainian November production was down by 7.9%, making the eleven months total 30.3 million tonnes, a drop of 6.8%. Steel production in Kazakhstan decreased by 14% in the year to date to less than 3.8 million tonnes.

For further information please contact: Phil Hunt Tel: +44 (0) 20 7343 3916 Fax: +44 (0) 020 7343 3903
e-mail: tradeadmin@issb.co.uk website: www.issb.co.uk or write to:
Publications Dept, Ref: SOTN, ISSB Limited, 1 Carlton House Terrace, London, SW1Y 5DB, England

Steel production in the USA fell by 4.8% in November, bringing the year to date total up 3.2% to 81 million tonnes. Canadian production rose by 10.5% in November, and by 5.1% in the eleven months to 12.5 million tonnes. Mexican steel production rose by 11.4% in the month, while the year to date total actually fell by 0.5% to 16.5 million tonnes.

In South America, Brazilian crude steel production rose by 2.4% in November, although the year to date total was down 1.4% to 32 million tonnes compared to last year. Argentinian production in November fell by 18%, bringing the eleven months total down almost 10% to 4.7 million tonnes. Venezuelan crude steel production, on the other hand, was slightly up in the month, although the year to date total was down nearly 20% to 2.3 million tonnes.

Crude steel production in the MENA region was mixed with Iranian production up 12% in November and 10.4% in the year to 13.3 million tonnes. The Egyptian total rose by 15% in the month and by 2.1% in the year to date to 6 million tonnes. However, in South Africa the monthly total fell by 5.6%, although the eleven months total was up by 10% to 6.3 million tonnes. Saudi Arabian production rose by 2.4% in the month resulting in a 1.2% drop in the January to November total to just under 4.8 million tonnes.

In Asia Chinese steel production increased by 13.7% in November, while the eleven months total was up by 2.9% to 660 million tonnes, 47% of the world total. Indian steel production increased by 6.6% in the month, and by 4.2% in the year to date to 70 million tonnes. Japanese production actually fell by 2.3% in November, while the year to date total was down by 0.5% to just under 99 million tonnes. South Korean steel production was also down by 2.7% in the month, but rose by 1.6% in the year to date to over 63 million tonnes. Taiwanese steel production, however, fell by 13% in November and by 11% in the January to November period to 18.7 million tonnes.

Chinese exports of steel in November topped 5 million tonnes, and although it was not the highest monthly total in 2012, it was 22% above November 2011. Steel exports in the first 11 months of 2012 were 13% above the January to November total in 2011. Although China's largest steel export is coated sheet and strip which was 9.9 million tonnes in 2012 (1.2% down on the same period in 2011), the large increases were in exports of wire rod (up 80% to over 5 million tonnes) and also hot rolled bars (up 83% to 5 million tonnes). Exports of hot rolled wide strip increased by 11.6% to 5.5 million tonnes and seamless tubes were up 9% to 4.8 million tonnes.

The large increase in Chinese exports of bars and rods went primarily to other Asian countries, 78% of the total, with South Korea, Singapore and Thailand being the largest markets. Outside of Asia, the USA was the largest market followed by Saudi Arabia.

Phil Hunt
ISSB Ltd

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e-mail: tradeadmin@issb.co.uk website: www.issb.co.uk or write to:
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