

WORLD STEEL REVIEW

Iron & Steel Statistics Bureau, February 2007



The IISI estimates crude steel production for its 62 monthly countries to be 1217.3 million tonnes in 2006, 8.8% up on the year 2005 total of 1118.9 million tonnes. However, China accounted for 34% of this total, and the total excluding China rose by 4.6% compared to 2005. The December crude steel production for the 62 countries rose by 9.4% to 104.4 million tonnes.

The IISI estimates crude steel production annually for 99 countries which was 1239.4 million tonnes in 2006, with all regions showing an increase in production.

European Union

Total crude steel production for the 25 countries of the European Union was 198.4 million tonnes, 16% of the world total, and 5.8% higher than the total for 2005. Germany made 24% of the EU total at 47.2 million tonnes, an increase of 6.1% on 2005. This makes Germany the sixth largest steel producing country in the world, just behind South Korea at 48.4 million tonnes. French steel production rose by 1.9% in the year to 19.7 million tonnes. Italian production, on the other hand, rose by 7.5% to 31.6 million tonnes, its highest total ever and making it the ninth largest steel producer in the world ahead of Brazil. Spanish steel production rose by 2.4% on the 2005 total reaching 18.3 million tonnes, also its highest total ever. UK steel production increased by 4.8% to 13.9 million tonnes. Poland's annual total was up 18.7% at 10 million tonnes, with Belgium up 11.8% to 11.7 million tonnes, and the Czech Republic up 10.8% to 6.9 million tonnes. Only Netherlands and Sweden showed a fall in steel production.

While Italian steel production reached its highest total ever in 2006 at 31.6 million tonnes, Italian imports also peaked at almost 20 million tonnes in the first ten months of the year, 27% higher than in 2005. HR coil accounted for 29% of imports at 5.7 million tonnes, followed by ingots and semis at 4.6 million tonnes, 23% of the total. 47% of total imports came from other EU countries, 22% from the CIS and 15% from Asian countries, mostly China. Italian exports also reached a new high in the ten months, rising by 20% to 14.3 million tonnes. The largest exports were hot rolled coil and welded tubes.

Other Europe

In Turkey, the largest West European steel producer outside the European Union, crude steel production reached 23.3 million tonnes, an increase of 11.2% and its highest total ever. This puts Turkey in 11th place ahead of Taiwan and France. Romanian steel production rose by 1% to 6.3 million tonnes, while in Bulgaria steel production was up 9% to 2.1 million tonnes. Serbia and Montenegro, however, showed a 42% increase to 1.8 million tonnes.

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European car registrations increased by 0.7% in 2006 compared to the previous year according to ACEA, reaching 15.4 million cars. German registrations increased by 3.8% to 3.5 million cars, while the UK total fell by 3.9% to 2.3 million cars. Italian registrations rose by 3.7% to 2.3 million cars, fractionally less than the UK total. The French total showed a drop of 3.3% to 2.0 million cars, and Spanish registrations were down 2% to 1.5 million cars. These five countries accounted for 76% of the European total. After the big 5 came Belgium (526 thousand cars) and the Netherlands (484 thousand cars).

The CIS countries

The countries of the former USSR showed an increase of 6% in crude steel production with the overall total up to 119.7 million tonnes, almost 10% of world production. Russian steel production grew by 7.1% to 70.8 million tonnes making it the fourth largest steel producer in the world, while Ukrainian production increased by 5.9% to 40.9 million tonnes putting it in eighth place behind India. Steel production in Kazakhstan fell by 5.7% to 4.2 million tonnes.

North America

North America accounted for 10.6% of the world's total, with production in the USA, the third largest steel producer in the world, increasing by 5.6% in 2006 to 98.5 million tonnes. Canadian crude steel production was almost flat at 15.4 million tonnes, while Mexican production rose by 0.7% to 16.3 million tonnes, ahead of Canada and the UK.

South America

In South America, crude steel production was very slightly down at 45.3 million tonnes, 3.7% of world production. Brazilian steel production decreased by 2.2% to 30.9 million tonnes, making it the tenth largest steel producer in the world, just behind Italy. Argentinian steel production, on the other hand, rose by 2.8% to 5.5 million tonnes. Venezuelan production, however, fell by 0.9% to 4.9 million tonnes. Steel production in Chile increased by 5.8% to 1.6 million tonnes.

Africa and the Middle East

Steel production in Africa rose by 1.5% to 18.5 million tonnes with South African production increasing by 2.4% to 9.7 million tonnes; Egyptian production rose by 7.1% to 6 million tonnes. Iranian steel production showed an increase of 4.1% to 9.8 million tonnes, while Saudi Arabian steel production fell by 5.1% to 4 million tonnes. Africa and the Middle East accounted for 2.7% of world steel production.

Asia

Crude steel production in Asia rose by 12.2% to 665.7 million tonnes, nearly 54% of world production. China strengthened its position as the largest steel producing country in the world, increasing production in 2006 by 17.7% to 418.8 million tonnes, more than three and a half times the Japanese total, and the highest annual crude steel production ever. The Chinese December total was 38 million tonnes, an increase of 19.3% on the December 2005 total, and the highest monthly total ever recorded. Japan's crude steel production, on the other hand, rose by 3.3% to 116.2 million tonnes. In South Korea steel production increased by 1.3% to 48.4 million tonnes in 2006, its highest level ever and making it the fifth largest producer in the world, just ahead of Germany. Crude steel production in India was 44 million tonnes, up by 7.7% on 2005, making it the seventh largest steel producer in the world, ahead of the Ukraine. Taiwan's production rose to 20.1 million tonnes, an increase of 6.1% on 2005. Elsewhere in Asia, Malaysian steel production rose by 3% to 5.5 million tonnes, while Thailand's production was up nearly 4% to 5.4 million tonnes.

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After starting the year as a small net steel exporter, China's exports grew substantially, so that by the end of the year the net export total was 4.5 million tonnes. Total steel exports in the 12 months of 2006 were 51.7 million tonnes. 58% of this went to other Asian countries, down from 73% the year before, while 15% went to the European Union and 11% to the USA. The USA, taking 5.4 million tonnes, became China's second largest market after South Korea which took 10.4 million tonnes, 20% of China's total exports.

China's top export in 2006 was ingots and semis (9.1 million tonnes) for which the top 7 markets were other Asian countries. Hot rolled coil exports doubled to 7.6 million tonnes, of which 60% went to South Korea and Italy. Rod exports jumped 77% to 5.9 million tonnes for which the USA was the largest market followed by South Korea.

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