

WORLD STEEL REVIEW

Iron & Steel Statistics Bureau, February 2013



The World Steel Association estimated global crude steel production to be 1548 million tonnes in 2012, 1.2% up on the annual 2011 total of 1529 million tonnes and the highest total ever. However, China accounted for 46% of this total, and the annual total excluding China actually fell by 0.4% compared to 2011. The December crude steel production for the 62 monthly reporting countries increased by 2.4% to 121 million tonnes.

European Union

Total crude steel production for the 27 countries of the European Union in December actually fell by 2.6%, and the annual total was down by 4.7% to 169 million tonnes, 10.9% of the world total. Germany made 25% of the EU total at 42.7 million tonnes, a decrease of 3.7% on 2011, with the December total up by 1.4%. Italian steel production was 16% down in December with a decrease of 5.2% in the year to 27.2 million tonnes. French December production fell by 12.5%, bringing the year to date total to 15.6 million tonnes, a fall of 1.1%. Spanish steel production was down just 1.5% in December making the year total 13.6 million tonnes which was 12% lower than in 2011. Steel production in the UK, however, rose by 23.6% in December bringing the year to date total up by 2.9% to 9.8 million tonnes. The 12 months total in Poland decreased by 4.7% to 8.4 million tonnes, after a 27% decrease in the December total.

Other Europe

In Turkey, the largest West European steel producer outside the European Union, crude steel production was nearly 36 million tonnes in 2012, an increase of 5.2% compared to 2011, while the December total fell by 8.6%. Turkey made more steel than the Ukraine or Brazil in 2012. Serbian steel production declined and stopped during 2012, so the total was only 346 thousand tonnes, about one quarter of the 2011 total. Norway's annual total, however, actually rose by 14% to 685 thousand tonnes. Bosnia's annual steel production increased by 8% to 700 thousand tonnes.

European car registrations decreased by 7.8% in 2012 compared to the previous year, according to ACEA, to 12.5 million cars which was its lowest total since 1995. German registrations decreased by 2.9% to 3.1 million cars, while the French total fell by 13.9% to 1.9 million cars. In the United Kingdom, however, registrations increased by 5.3% to just over 2 million cars, while in Italy registrations dropped by 20% to 1.4 million cars. Spanish registrations showed a fall of 13.4% to 700 thousand cars and the Dutch total was down nearly 10% to 503 thousand cars.

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The CIS countries

The countries of the former USSR showed a decrease of 1.2% in crude steel production with the overall total down to 111 million tonnes, 7.2% of world production. Russian steel production fell in December but actually rose by 2.5% in the year to date to over 70 million tonnes making it the fifth largest producer in the world just ahead of South Korea. Ukrainian December production fell by 9.7% bringing the annual total down 6.9% to 33 million tonnes. Steel production in Kazakhstan dropped by 18% in 2012 to 3.9 million tonnes, while production in Belarus was up 5% to 2.7 million tonnes.

North America

North America accounted for 7.9% of the world's total, with production in the USA increasing by 2.5% in the year to date to 88.6 million tonnes, maintaining its position as the third largest steel producer in the world. The US December production, however, showed a decrease of 5.5% on December 2011. Canadian annual crude steel production was 5.9% up at 13.7 million tonnes, while the December month total rose by 15%. Mexican December production rose by 10%, although the year total only increased by 0.4% to 18.2 million tonnes. In Trinidad and Tobago the annual total rose by 1.1% to 610 thousand tonnes.

South America

In South America, crude steel production fell by 3.2% in December, and by 3% in the full year to 47 million tonnes, just 3% of world production. Brazilian annual steel production was down by 1.5% to 34.7 million tonnes, while the December total increased by 2.6%. Argentinian steel production dropped by 27% in the month, bringing the annual total down by 11% to 5 million tonnes. Venezuelan production, however, was up by 9.6% in December, although the annual total fell by 17% to 2.6 million tonnes. Annual steel production in Chile increased by 4.3% to 1.7 million tonnes, while in Colombia it rose by 2.8% to 1.3 million tonnes. In Peru steel production was 5.1% higher at 973 thousand tonnes.

Africa and the Middle East

Steel production in Africa and the Middle East accounted for 2.6% of the world total. African production only rose by 0.3% to 15.7 million tonnes in 2012, while in the Middle East it rose by 5.3% to 24.2 million tonnes. Iran was the largest producer in the region with production increasing by 9.6% to 14.5 million tonnes. South Africa's steel production, on the other hand, fell by 5.7% to 7.1 million tonnes. Egypt's annual total rose by 2.2% to 6.6 million tonnes, while Saudi Arabian steel production decreased by 1.4% to 5.2 million tonnes. Qatar made 2.1 million tonnes of steel in 2012, 4.5% up on the previous year.

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Asia

Crude steel production in the Asian countries increased by 5.6% in December, and by 2.6% in the year to one million tonnes, 65% of world production. China's December production was 7.7% higher, bringing the year to date total up by 3.1% to 716 million tonnes, the highest annual crude steel production ever. Japan's annual crude steel production, however, was 0.3% lower than in 2011 at 107.2 million tonnes, although the monthly total increased by 2%. India increased its annual production by 4.3% to nearly 77 million tonnes, making it the fourth largest steel producing country ahead of Russia and South Korea. Korean steel production in December fell by 3.4%, but the year to date total increased by 1.2% to 69 million tonnes in 2012. Crude steel production in Taiwan fell by 6.4% in December, but increased by 2.4% in the year to 20.7 million tonnes. Australia's annual total, however, decreased by 23.6% to 4.9 million tonnes.

China remains by far the largest exporter of steel in 2012, increasing its total by 14.4% to 54.8 million tonnes. Japan only showed a slight increase in steel exports to just under 41 million tonnes. South Korea's total rose to 30 million tonnes, up by 4.7%, pushing it into third place despite a 10% increase in Russian steel exports to 27 million tonnes. Germany's total exports fell by 2.9% to 26.4 million tonnes.

China's largest export in 2012 was zinc and other coated sheet and strip at 10.8 million tonnes which showed a slight increase on the 2011 total. Hot rolled wide strip which increased by 18% to 6.1 million tonnes compared to 2011 was the next largest export. Wire rod exports showed an 86% increase to 5.6 million tonnes in 2012, while hot rolled bars rose by 84% to 5.5 million tonnes.

Asian countries accounted for 57% of Chinese exports in 2012 with South Korea accounting for 18% of the total alone. The total of over 31 million tonnes to Asia was 20% up on 2011. The Americas accounted for 14.7% of total exports at 8 million tonnes, an increase of 20% on 2011. Exports to the USA rose by 30% to almost 1.9 million tonnes. However, Chinese exports to the European Union fell by 24% to 3.9 million tonnes with both Belgium and Italy showing sharp falls of 36% and 35% respectively. Exports to the CIS rose by 24.5% to 2.1 million tonnes and exports to Africa rose by 19% to 3.2 million tonnes.

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