

WORLD STEEL REVIEW

Iron & Steel Statistics Bureau, June 2017



Production of crude steel for the 67 countries reporting to the World Steel Association in April was estimated to be 142 million tonnes, an increase of 5% over April 2016. The total of the 4 months to date was 551 million tonnes, 5.2% higher than the January to April total in 2016. Excluding China, which accounted for 50% of world production in the first four months of 2017, steel production rose by 5.1% in April and by 5.7% in the four months.

In the European Union 28, crude steel production increased by 6.1% in April to 14.3 million tonnes compared to April 2016, and rose by 4.5% in the year to date to 56.8 million tonnes. Monthly production in Germany rose by 8.1% in April and by 3.4% in the January to April period to 14.8 million tonnes. Italian crude steel production, however, fell by 6% in April, but increased by 2.5% in the year to date to 8.1 million tonnes. Steel production in France jumped by 30.8% in the month, and by 8.9% in the four months to date to 5.2 million tonnes. Spanish production, on the other hand, fell by 2.8% in April, and by just 0.1% in the year to date to 4.8 million tonnes. In Poland steel production was 9.1% up in April, while the 4 months total was up by 8.2% at 3.3 million tonnes. The UK year to date total was 3.2% higher at 2.6 million tonnes.

In the rest of Europe Turkish production increased by 6.5% in April, and by 12% in the four months to 11.8 million tonnes. Serbian steel production was 86% up in the year to date at 475 thousand tonnes. The four months total for Norway was 214 thousand tonnes, 5.4% up on the previous year's total, while in Bosnia steel production was 16.7% down in the year to date at 228 thousand tonnes.

Turkey's steel exports in March rose by 18.7% to nearly 1.9 million tonnes, with the largest tonnage (about 10% of the total) going to Singapore, mostly deformed rebars and rods in coil. The tonnage exported to the USA in March fell by 45%.

New car registrations in Europe fell by 6.8% in April compared to the previous April, according to ACEA, the European Car Manufacturers Association, while the four months total showed an increase of 4.5% to nearly 5.5 million cars. German registrations were down by 8% in

April, but up by 2.5% in the year to date to 1.1 million cars. UK registrations decreased by 19.8% in April, while the year to date total was 1.1% up at 972 thousand. Italian registrations fell by 4.6% in April, but rose by 8% in the year to date to 743 thousand cars. French registrations declined by 6% in April, but were up by 2% in the four months to 713 thousand cars. The Spanish automotive market increased by 1.1% in the month, and by 6.1% in the January to April period to 409 thousand cars. These 5 countries accounted for 72% of the European market.

Crude steel production in the CIS countries actually declined in both the month and year to date, although Russian production rose by 4.3% in April and 3.4% in the four months to 24 million tonnes. Ukrainian steel production, however, dropped by 28.6% in April and by 13.8% in the year to date to 7.2 million tonnes. Steel production in Kazakhstan, however, increased by 18.7% in April and by 11.5% in the four months to 1.5 million tonnes.

Russian exports of steel rose to over 3 million tonnes in March, an increase of 15.1% and the highest monthly total since March 2010. Almost half the exports were semis and the two largest markets were Turkey and Taiwan.

On the North American continent US steel production rose by 1.8% in April, and was up by 2.9% in the year to date to 27 million tonnes. Mexican steel production increased by 7.4% in April, while the four months total was up by 17.4% to 6.7 million tonnes. Canadian steel production showed a 4.3% increase in April, and 4.1% in the year to date, bringing the total to 4.6 million tonnes.

US imports of steel rose by 24.3% to nearly 3.2 million tonnes in March compared to February, the highest monthly total since May 2015. Imports of semis rose by 37.6% to 788 thousand tonnes, nearly all of which was wide slabs. Canada, Brazil and Mexico were the largest suppliers of steel in March.

Crude steel production in South America was 22% higher in April with Brazilian production up by 25.9%. The year to date Brazilian total was 14.4% up at 11.1 million tonnes, 80% of South America's total. Steel production in Argentina rose by 15.2% in April, while the four months total increased by 3.9% to 1.36 million tonnes. Chilean year to date production increased by 1.4% to 404 thousand tonnes. The Colombian four months total was 4.6% lower at 403 thousand tonnes, while Peru saw a rise in the year to date of 7.9% to 383 thousand tonnes. The year to date steel production in Ecuador, however, fell by 3.6% to 188 thousand tonnes.

In Africa and the Middle East Iran's production rose by 15% in April, while the year to date total was up by 14.3% to 6.4 million tonnes. South African steel production, on the other hand, decreased by 8.8% in April and was 0.8% down in the four months to 2.1 million tonnes. Egyptian production, however, jumped by 45% in April and was 35% up in the year to date to 2 million tonnes. Saudi Arabian steel production increased by 6.4% in April and by 6.9% in the four months to 1.8 million tonnes. The United Arab Emirates year to date total increased by 12.1% to 1.2 million tonnes.

Turning to the Far East, China's steel production rose by 4.9% in April to 72.8 million tonnes which was 51% of global production. The four months total was up 4.6% to 274 million tonnes. Japanese crude steel production rose in April by 3%, while the January to April total increased by 1.9% to 35 million tonnes. Indian production was 4.8% up in the month and 7.1% up in the year to date to 33.2 million tonnes. South Korean production, however, declined by 2.9% in April, although the year to date total increased by 2.8% to 22.8 million tonnes. Crude steel production in Taiwan rose by 1.8% in April, and by 4.2% in the year to date to 7.4 million tonnes. Vietnam's steel production in the year to date more than doubled to 3.3 million tonnes.

Chinese exports dropped by 14.4% in April compared to March to 6.4 million tonnes. There was a particularly large drop (50%) in exports of hot rolled bars and flats, especially to other Asian countries.

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