

WORLD STEEL REVIEW

Iron & Steel Statistics Bureau, September 2014



Production of crude steel in July for the 65 countries reporting to the World Steel Association was estimated to be 137 million tonnes, an increase of 1.7% over July 2013. The total for the first seven months of 2014, however, showed a rise of 2.4% to nearly 960 million tonnes. If China is excluded from the total, the total for July rose by 1.9% with the year to date total up by 2.2%.

In the European Union 28, crude steel production fell by 2% in July to 13.3 million tonnes compared to July 2013, although the seven months total increased by 3% to nearly 101 million tonnes. German crude steel production increased by 1.5% in July, bringing the year to date total up 3.9% to 26 million tonnes. Italy's steel production fell by 3.6% in July, while the seven months total rose by 2.1% to 15 million tonnes. France is the third largest steel producer in the EU and production rose by 1.6% in July, while the year to date total increased by 3.2% to 9.7 million tonnes. Spanish production was 5.9% up in July, while the seven months total increased by just 1.6% to 8.5 million tonnes. UK steel production, on the other hand, fell by 4.4% in July, while the year to date total was 5.9% higher at 7.1 million tonnes.

In the rest of Europe, Turkey's steel production rose by 1% in July, bringing the year to date total down by 0.9% to 19.9 million tonnes. Bosnia's seven months total increased by 10% to 482 thousand tonnes, while Serbia's total increased by 60% to 274 thousand tonnes. The Norwegian total rose by 1.9% to 328 thousand tonnes.

In the CIS countries Russian production jumped by 8.1% in July, bringing the year to date total to 41.5 million tonnes, 2.7% up on the previous year. Ukrainian crude steel production, however, decreased by 11.7% in July, while the year to date total fell by 7.6% to 18 million tonnes. Kazakhstan's seven month total showed a rise of 15.6% in production to nearly 2.1 million tonnes, while in Belarus the year to date total dropped by 9.5% to 1.4 million tonnes.

On the North American continent US crude steel production rose by 2.3% in July to 7.6 million tonnes, while the seven months total increased by 1.3% to 51.2 million tonnes. Canadian monthly production rose by 5.7%, with the year to date total flat at 7.2 million tonnes. Crude steel production in Mexico, however, decreased by 0.2% in July, making the year to date total 8% higher at 11.3 million tonnes compared to the first seven months of 2013.

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In South America Brazilian steel production was just 0.5% higher in July, while the year to date total was 1.1% down at 19.7 million tonnes. Production in Argentina, on the other hand, rose by 3.3% in July, and the seven months total was 10.7% up at 3.2 million tonnes. Venezuelan steel production was 11.3% higher in the month, although the year to date total was 25% down at 1.1 million tonnes. Chile's seven months total declined by 17% to 663 thousand tonnes with Colombia down 2.1% at 712 thousand tonnes. The Peruvian seven months total, however, was 7.7% up at 662 thousand tonnes.

Turning to Africa and the Middle East, Iranian production rose by 11.4% in July, bringing the year to date total up 9.3% to 9.5 million tonnes. South African production, however, decreased by 1.5% in July, although the seven months total was 0.4% up at 4.2 million tonnes. Egypt's July total jumped by 44%, bringing the seven months total up by 10% to 4.2 million tonnes. Saudi Arabian year to date production increased by 12.3% to 3.6 million tonnes.

Crude steel production in China increased by 1.5% in July to 68 million tonnes, bringing the year to date total up by 2.7% to 481 million tonnes, 50% of world steel production. Japanese steel production was flat in the month, but up by just 0.8% in the first seven months to 64.5 million tonnes. In India production increased by 1.7% in July, and by 1.4% in the year to date to 48.2 million tonnes. South Korean steel production, however, rose by 6.2% in July, with the seven months total up 8.7% to 42 million tonnes. Taiwanese crude steel production increased by 3.5% in July, but fell by 0.4% in the year to date to 13 million tonnes.

India is the fourth largest steel producing country in the world with exports of 10.1 million tonnes in 2013 and imports of 7.4 million tonnes. Steel exports in the first five months of 2014 were 9.6% up on 2013 at 4.3 million tonnes, while imports were 22% down in the five months to May. However, the tonnage imported in May was nearly 708 thousand tonnes, 36% above May 2013 and the highest monthly total since March 2013.

Flat products accounted for almost 80% of Indian imports in 2014 with HR wide strip and CR the largest imports at 21.5% and 20% of the total all steel respectively. 80% of India's steel imports in May 2014 came from other Asian countries with a further 9.3% from the European Union. China alone accounted for 39% of India's imports in May followed by South Korea and Japan. Outside of Asia the largest single supplier of steel to India in May was the Ukraine.

Chinese exports of steel reached almost 8 million tonnes in July 2014, 57% above July 2013 and the highest monthly total since August 2008. Exports of flat products were 49% of the total in July and long products were 39% of the total. 1.5 million tonnes of hot rolled bars and flats were exported in July and just under 1.5 million tonnes of coated sheet and strip was exported. Hot rolled wide strip exports were 1.1 million tonnes and rods and bars in coil were almost 900 thousand tonnes. The exports of seamless and welded tubes and pipes were 915 thousand tonnes in July.

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Over 400 million tonnes of steel is traded annually and the largest product group is coated sheet and strip at 53.6 million tonnes in 2013. Close behind that is carbon hot rolled wide strip at 53.2 million tonnes followed by carbon semis at almost 50 million tonnes. CR was the fourth largest product group at 24.6 million tonnes and welded tubes and pipes came next at 23.8 million tonnes. The largest single product traded in 2013 was low carbon slabs at 26.7 million tonnes followed by hot dipped galvanised sheet at 25.7 million tonnes.

The total stainless steel traded in 2013 was 18 million tonnes, mostly cold rolled flat and hot rolled flat products. China was the largest exporter of stainless steel accounting for 15% of the world total, followed by Belgium, Italy and South Korea. Alloy steel traded totalled nearly 65 million tonnes with bars and rods the two largest product groups. China accounted for 47% of the world total with Japan at 11% followed by Germany, France and South Korea.

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