

WORLD STEEL REVIEW

Iron & Steel Statistics Bureau, October 2013



Crude steel production in August was estimated to be 130 million tonnes, according to the 64 countries reporting to the World Steel Association, an increase of 5.2% over August 2012. The total for the first eight months of 2013 was 1051 thousand tonnes, 2.3% up on the same period in 2012. However, excluding China, the August total fell by 1.6%, and the year to date total was down by 2.7%. In fact the eight months total was down in all regions apart from Asia and the Middle East.

In the European Union crude steel production for the 27 member states rose by 1.3% in August compared to August 2012 to 12 million tonnes, while the eight months total decreased by 4.9% to 109 million tonnes. German crude steel production dropped by 6.3% in August, while the January to August total was down by 2.6% to 28 million tonnes compared to the same period the previous year. Italian production fell by 7.5% in August, while the year to date total was 14.1% down at 15.9 million tonnes. Production in France, on the other hand, increased by 21.7% in August, although the eight months total decreased by 2.3% to 10.5 million tonnes. Spanish production rose by 10.3% in August, while the year to date total dropped 3% to 9.2 million tonnes. The United Kingdom showed an increase in steel production in August of 4%, with the eight months total up by 17.4% to 7.3 million tonnes. Polish steel production fell by 10.4% in the eight months to 5.4 million tonnes.

In the rest of Europe Turkey's crude steel production was 2.6 million tonnes in August, a drop of 15.4%; hence the year to date production was down by 5.4% to 22.8 million tonnes. Steel production in Bosnia rose by 6.3% in the eight months to 497 thousand tonnes, ahead of the Norwegian total of 377 thousand tonnes, which was a decrease of 14.4% on 2012.

Turkey's exports of steel in July dropped to their lowest point since January 2012 at just over 1.3 million tonnes. In fact due to a rise in imports of steel the balance of trade became negative for the first time since January 2010. Exports of deformed rebars, accounting for almost half Turkey's exports, only fell by 3.2% compared to July 2012, but exports of semis fell by nearly 80%.

Imports of steel by Turkey in July rose to their highest monthly level since July 2008 at 1.34 million tonnes. This was mainly due to a sharp rise in the imports of semis which reached their highest monthly total ever at nearly 554 thousand tonnes. Semis accounted for 41% of Turkey's steel imports in July. 80% of these came from Russia and the Ukraine, a mixture of billets and slabs in both cases.

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According to ACEA, the European Car Manufacturers Association, passenger car registrations in Europe fell by 4.9% in August, while the eight months total was down by 5.2% compared to 2012. In Germany registrations fell by 5.5% in August, and were 6.6% down in the year to date to just under 2 million cars. In France, August registrations decreased by 10.5%, while the year to date total was down 9.8% at 1.17 million cars. In the United Kingdom, however, the August total jumped by 10.9%, while the eight months total rose by 10.4% to 1.4 million cars. Italian registrations were also down by 6.6% in August, with the year to date total decreasing by 9% to 893 thousand cars. The Spanish eight months total dropped by 3.6% to 501 thousand cars, while the August total fell by 18.3%.

In the CIS countries Russian steel production decreased by 1.9% in August, bringing the eight months total to 46.2 million tonnes, 2.8% lower than the 2012 total. In the Ukraine, on the other hand, crude steel production actually rose by 4.1% in August, while the year to date was down by 0.6% to 22.3 million tonnes. Production in Kazakhstan decreased by 22% in the eight months to 2.1 million tonnes.

On the North American continent crude steel production in the USA fell by 2.9% in August bringing the year to date total down 5.2% to 58 million tonnes. Canadian August steel production fell by 16.1%, with the eight months total decreasing by 13.2% to 8 million tonnes. Mexican production also fell, by 2.3%, in August, bringing the year to date total to 11.7 million tonnes, 1.5% down on 2012.

In South America, Brazilian crude steel production in August increased by 4.6%, while the eight months total fell by 1.4% to 22.9 million tonnes. Argentinian steel production jumped by 26% in August, but the year to date was still down by 3.3% at 3.3 million tonnes. In Venezuela August production rose by 13.8%, while the eight months total increased by 1.8% to just under 1.7 million tonnes.

Production in Iran rose by 13.2% in August, bringing the eight months total up by 3.1% to almost 10 million tonnes. South African production, however, fell by 6.2% in August making the year to date total nearly 4.5 million tonnes, a decrease of 8.6%. Egypt's steel production decreased by 8.4% in August, while the eight months total was down by 1.7% to 4.3 million tonnes. Steel production in Saudi Arabia rose by 3.6% in August, while the year to date total was up 7.1% to 3.7 million tonnes.

Among the key Asian countries Chinese crude steel production increased by 12.8% to over 66 million tonnes in August, bringing the year to date total up 7.8% to nearly 522 million tonnes, almost 50% of the world total. Indian steel production only rose by 0.9% in August, and by 2.5% to 53 million tonnes in the eight months. Japan's steel production, however, fell by 0.6% in August, but the eight months total was up by 0.9% at 73 million tonnes. South Korean production decreased by 13.1% in August, and by 6.3% in the year to date to 43.5 million tonnes. Taiwanese steel production, on the other hand, increased by 10.1% in the month and by 6.6% in the year to date to 15 million tonnes.

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Global exports of stainless steel in the first half of 2013 declined by 0.8% compared to the same period in 2012 to 8.8 million tonnes. However, China, which accounted for 14.6% of exports in 2013, showed a rise of 25.8% over 2012 to nearly 1.3 million tonnes. The second largest exporter in 2013 was Belgium at 878 thousand tonnes, an almost identical figure with the first half of 2012. Italy was the third largest exporter of stainless at 754 thousand tonnes, some 12.9% below its 2012 total.

In terms of product split almost 3.5 million tonnes, some 39% of the total in 2013, was CR plate, sheet or strip. HR coil and strip accounted for a further 23% of the total at just over 2 million tonnes. Exports of stainless rods and bars reached 964 thousand tonnes in the first half of 2013, with tubes and fittings at 922 thousand tonnes.

China's largest export in stainless products in 2013 was HR coil and strip (39% of the total) followed by CR plate, sheet and strip (33% of the total). Tubes and fittings only accounted for 14.5% of stainless exports in 2013.

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