

WORLD STEEL REVIEW

Iron & Steel Statistics Bureau, November 2015



Crude steel production in September for the 66 countries reporting to the World Steel Association was 131 million tonnes, some 3.7% down compared to the September 2014 total. The total for the first nine months of 2015 was 1212 million tonnes, which was 2.4% lower than the previous year's January to September total. However, excluding China, the monthly total was 4.4% down and the year to date production fell by 2.8%. Global crude steel production for the full year is estimated to be 1615 million tonnes, compared to 1662 million in 2014.

In the European Union crude steel production for the 28 countries decreased by 4.6% in September to 13.6 million tonnes; however, the year to date total fell by just 0.3% to 127 million tonnes. Germany's September production fell by 3.9%, while the year to date total was up just 0.1% at 32.6 million tonnes. Italy's monthly production also fell by 3.9%, bringing the nine months total down 8.8% to 16.7 million tonnes. French production decreased by 8.5% in September, while the year to date total fell by 4.2% to 11.7 million tonnes. In Spain, on the other hand, the monthly total increased by 8.5%, and the year to date total rose by 5.3% to 11.4 million tonnes. The UK monthly total was down by 43% following the closure of SSI, bringing the nine months total down by 7.5% to 8.6 million tonnes. The Polish year to date total rose by 10% to 7.1 million tonnes.

European car registrations in the countries monitored by ACEA increased by 9.8% in September 2015 compared to 2014, bringing the year to date total up by 8.8% to 10.8 million cars. In Germany registrations increased by 4.8% in September, and by 5.5% in the nine months to 2.4 million cars. UK registrations were 8.6% up in the month, with the year to date total up 7.1% to 2.1 million cars. In France the monthly total rose by 9.1%, and the nine months total increased by 6.3% to 1.4 million cars. Italian registrations, however, showed an increase of 17.2% in September, while the year to date total increased by 15.3% to 1.2 million cars. Spain's monthly total jumped by 22.5% in September, while the nine months total rose by 22.4% to 784 thousand cars. These five countries accounted for 73% of European registrations.

Crude steel production in the rest of Europe is dominated by Turkey where September production decreased by 14.1%, bringing the year to date total down 7.8% to 23.8 million tonnes. Steel production in Bosnia was 1.3% up in the nine months to 607 thousand tonnes, while Serbian production was 87% up in the nine months to 734 thousand tonnes. Norwegian steel production decreased by 3.2% in the year to date to 422 thousand tonnes.

Russian crude steel production showed a decrease of 3.2% in September, with the nine months total down by 0.5% to 53.3 million tonnes. Ukrainian steel production, however, rose by 14.1% in September, although the year to date total fell by 20.5% to 17.1 million tonnes. Kazakhstan's nine months total decreased by 2% to 2.7 million tonnes while Belarus had a 6.6% increase to 2 million tonnes in the nine months.

On the North American continent US September crude steel production was down by 8.5% to 6.7 million tonnes, bringing the year to date total to 60.6 million tonnes, a decrease of 8.6%. Canadian production was flat in September, and only rose by 0.7% in the year to date to 9.6 million tonnes. In Mexico monthly steel production was 1.3% up, while the nine months total fell by 2.8% to 14 million tonnes.

US steel imports declined in August to just under 2.9 million tonnes, 16.6% lower than the August 2014 total. According to the American Institute for International Steel imports in September showed a further decline of 9.4% on August 2015 which, coupled with the fall in crude steel production, is not a good sign for the economy. Imports of semis fell by 35.7% in August compared to August 2014 with welded tube imports down by 28.6% and seamless tube imports down by 56%. Imports of hot rolled wide strip showed a slight increase of 3.5% compared to last year. Canada and Brazil are still the largest suppliers of steel to the USA accounting for one third of total imports in August. However, South Korea and Japan overtook Mexico as the next largest suppliers of steel.

In South America Brazilian crude steel production decreased by 13% in September, although the year to date total was down just 1.2% to 25.3 million tonnes. Argentinian production decreased by 3.8% in September, although the nine months total was down by 7.8% to 3.8 million tonnes. In Venezuela, on the other hand, monthly crude steel production in the year to date was 11.1% higher at 1.1 million tonnes. Steel production in Colombia was 2.7% down in the nine months at 896 thousand tonnes, while Peruvian production rose by 3.8% to 831 thousand tonnes. Production in Chile increased by 2.1% in the year to date to 830 thousand tonnes.

In Africa and the Middle East, South African crude steel production jumped by 24.5% in September, while the year to date total was 14.5% up at 5.7 million tonnes. Egypt's production jumped by 43% in September, although the year to date total was down by 8.8% to 4.3 million tonnes. Iranian steel production fell by 6.4% in the month, while the year to date total was 1.4% higher at 12.2 million tonnes, higher than the French total. The Saudi Arabian nine months total fell by 4.2% to 4.5 million tonnes while production in Qatar fell by 11.9% in the year to date to 2 million tonnes. On the other hand steel production in the UAE increased by 30% in the nine months to 2.2 million tonnes.

The five major Asian countries - China, India, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan – all showed a decrease in steel production in September. Chinese production was down by 3% in September, bringing the year to date total to 608.9 million tonnes, a decrease of 2.1%, but still 50% of global steel production. Japanese production fell by 7.3% in the month, while the cumulative total decreased by 5.2% to 78.8 million tonnes. Indian steel production was 1.4% lower in the month, but was 3.1% higher in the year to date at 67.6

million tonnes. South Korean production decreased by 2.7% in September and by 3.4% in the nine months to 52 million tonnes. Taiwanese steel production decreased by 6% in the month, and by 0.6% in the year to date to 16.8 million tonnes. The year to date production in Thailand fell by 8% to 2.9 million tonnes.

Chinese steel exports reached an all time high in September at 11.2 million tonnes, 15.5% above the August total and 32% higher than September 2014. 57% of exports (6.3 million tonnes) in September went to other Asian countries with South Korea and Vietnam being the largest markets. In fact China accounted for 64% of South Korea's imports in September, although the peak month was July when 69% of South Korea's imports came from China. Over one million tonnes of China's September exports went to the European Union with Italy, Belgium and Spain being the largest recipients. A further one million tonnes went to African countries with Egypt by far the largest market. Outside of Asia the largest markets were Italy (367kt) and Saudi Arabia (354kt). In fact the Middle East took 1.2 million tonnes of steel from China in September.

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