

# International Stainless Steel Forum



## Media Release

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### **Stainless steel production for first half of 2009 down – but recovering strongly**

*Brussels, 21 September 2009* - Preliminary figures released by the International Stainless Steel Forum (ISSF) show that stainless steel crude steel production decreased in the first half of 2009 by 26.7% compared to the same period of 2008. Total production for the first six months of 2009 was 10.8 million metric tons (mmt). All major regions showed lower production volumes in the first half year 2009. Only China reported an increased production volume during the period.

Excluding China, stainless steel production in the Asia region declined by 34% to 3 million tons in the first half of 2009. All stainless producing countries (except China) were affected. Reductions in production volume ranged from 10 to 50% depending on the country. China increased its stainless steel production in the period by 5.3% to 4.1 mmt. China now accounts for almost 40% of the world's stainless steel production.

Western Europe/Africa reported a 40.5% decrease in stainless steel production during the first six months of 2009. Total output was 2.9 mmt in this period, down from 4.9 mmt for the first half of 2008.

In The Americas region, stainless crude steel production declined by 40.6% to 0.8 million tons in the first half of 2009. Production in the Eastern Europe region showed a decrease of 48.6%. Total production was just 100,000 tons, an almost negligible volume.

**Table 1: Stainless and heat-resisting crude steel production (in '000 metric tons)**

Region	First Half Year		+/-% Y-o-Y	Quarter		+/-% Q-o-Q
	2008	2009		1/2009	2/2009	
Western Europe/Africa	4,865	2,894	-40.5	1,314	1,580	20.3
Eastern Europe	194	100	-48.6	50	50	0.4
The Americas	1,394	829	-40.6	410	418	1.9
Asia (excluding China)	4,484	2,959	-34.0	1,289	1,670	29.6
China	3,861	4,067	5.3	1,769	2,298	29.9
<b>Total world</b>	<b>14,798</b>	<b>10,848</b>	<b>-26.7</b>	<b>4,832</b>	<b>6,017</b>	<b>24.5</b>

Source: International Stainless Steel Forum (ISSF)

Comparing the first and second quarters of 2009 indicates that a significant recovery in stainless steel production may have begun. All regions, except Eastern Europe and the Americas, showed strongly

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increased production volumes in the second quarter. In Asia and China the increase was almost 30% above first quarter production. Western Europe/Africa reported a 20% increase in the same period.

A comparison of the market share of each of the main stainless steel grades shows there has been a recovery in the market-share of austenitic steels (300 series) compared to the levels of 2008. The market-share of ferritic grades has fallen, mainly due to the global decline in automotive production, typically a strong market for 400 series grades. The market share of chromium-manganese steels (200 series) has increased a little, largely due to an improved domestic market in China.

**Table 2: Market share of stainless steel grades (% of total stainless steel production)**

Grade category	2008	2009
	Full Year	First Six Months
CrMn steels (200 series)	11.4	13.0
CrNi steels (300 series)	60.5	62.1
Cr steels (400 series)	28.1	24.8

Source: International Stainless Steel Forum (ISSF)

**Notes to editors:**

The International Stainless Steel Forum (ISSF) is a non-profit research organisation, which serves as the world forum on various aspects of the international stainless steel industry.

Founded in 1996, ISSF has its own Secretary General, Board of Directors, Committees and budgets. ISSF is legally a part of the World Steel Association. ISSF is based in Brussels, Belgium.