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**“We Are in the Business of Creating
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MIR MUJTABA HUSSAIN

President and Founder,
Bureau of Middle East Recycling (BMR)

**UAE:
Building A Diversified
Steel Hub For Industry
And Global Trade**

**Uncertainty Endures -
A Market Report**

Sundeep Rao
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**Al Jazeera Steel Expands
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We Are Not New To The Region

When we launched Steelworld's Middle East Edition in September, we were naturally a bit anxious. Would the market accept a new dedicated edition? Would our old contacts from the region still remember us? The response to our inaugural issue has put all those apprehensions to rest. I want to personally thank our old associates, friends, conference delegates and sponsors who reached out with congratulatory messages and words of encouragement. Your response has been truly overwhelming and reassuring. It confirms what we always believed - that while this Middle East Edition is new, we are not new to the region. Having operated an office in the UAE till 2020 and having organized more than a dozen conferences in the region, we have old roots here. You made us feel at home from the very first issue, and your support gives us great confidence for the journey ahead.

The timing of this launch could not have been more appropriate, because the Middle East today stands at a very important juncture of growth. If there is one single factor that defines the economic vision of this region, it is infrastructure development. From Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 and NEOM, to the industrial cities of Jubail and Yanbu, to the expansion of ports and logistics hubs in the UAE, Oman and Qatar, infrastructure is the single biggest driving force for the regional economy and for steel demand. Every giga-project, every new city, every desalination plant, metro line and energy transition project translates directly into demand for steel - be it structural steel, plates, rebars, pipes or coated products. The region is no longer just an importer and consumer of steel; it is fast becoming a major producer with new investments in EAFs, DRI plants and downstream rolling capacities. This infrastructure-led growth ensures that steel will remain at the heart of the Middle East's economic transformation for the next two decades.

While this growth story is exciting, we cannot

ignore the reality of the recent past. The recent conflicts in the region, though extremely unfortunate, have caused considerable destruction of infrastructure in certain areas. Apart from the human cost, which is irreplaceable, there is a massive task of rebuilding that lies ahead. Houses, hospitals, roads, power lines, ports and industrial facilities will have to be rebuilt almost from scratch in affected zones. This reconstruction effort, whenever peace prevails, will itself generate a sustained and substantial demand for steel over many years. History shows us that every reconstruction phase brings with it a long cycle of demand for cement and steel. While we all pray for peace and stability, from an industry perspective, it is clear that the need to rebuild will keep the steel demand curve strong and resilient in the medium to long term.

One of the most encouraging trends we noticed after our first Middle East Edition was the tremendous interest it aroused back home in India. The Indian industry - especially the equipment manufacturers, technology suppliers, raw material and consumables suppliers, as well as steel producers looking for export opportunities - sees the Middle East as a natural partner. India has the technology, the engineering talent, the cost-effective equipment and the experience of running plants in similar conditions. The Middle East has the capital, the projects and the ambition. This synergy is natural and has to be nurtured. The days ahead will therefore be a mix of great opportunities and real challenges. The opportunity is to participate in one of the fastest growing steel markets in the world. The challenge is to bring back political stability and predictability so that industry and trade can flourish without disruption. Steel, after all, thrives on stability. We at Steelworld Middle East Edition hope to be a bridge - connecting Indian capabilities with Middle East opportunities, connecting project owners with technology providers, and connecting optimism with reality. We look forward to your continued support.

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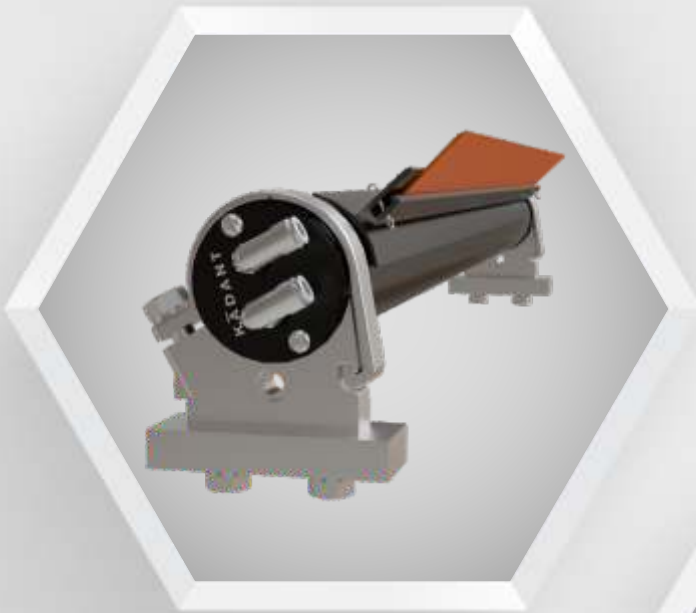
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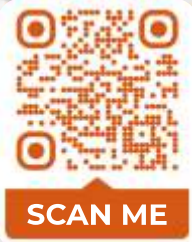
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“We Are in the Business of Creating Tomorrow’s Resources”

MIR MUJTABA HUSSAIN

President and Founder,
Bureau of Middle East Recycling (BMR)

Mir Mujtaba Hussain is the President and Founder of the Bureau of Middle East Recycling (BMR), and an Ambassador of the Global Recycling Foundation. With more than three decades of experience in the metals industry, he has worked to strengthen connections between recyclers, traders, consumers, governments and industry associations across the Middle East and international markets.

Through BMR, international conferences, collaborative initiatives and digital platforms, he promotes greater awareness of recycling’s role in resource conservation and environmental sustainability. He has also helped establish international partnerships with recycling associations. In recognition of his contribution to the industry, he has been named among the Top 100 Recyclers of the World by Recycling International magazine.

The recycling industry in the Middle East is entering a new phase, evolving from a trading-oriented business into a potential hub for resource recovery, advanced processing and sustainable manufacturing. With its strategic location, established logistics infrastructure and growing industrial capabilities, the region is well positioned to play a larger role in the global circular economy. However, realising this potential will require investment in infrastructure and technology, consistent regulations, international cooperation and greater recognition of recyclable materials as valuable industrial resources. In this Face to Face, Mir Mujtaba Hussain, President and Founder of the Bureau of Middle East Recycling (BMR), discusses the opportunities ahead, emerging growth segments, the challenges facing recyclers and his vision for strengthening the Middle East’s position in the global recycling industry.

How would you assess the current state of the recycling industry in the Middle East? What are the key opportunities and challenges facing the sector?

I strongly believe that the Middle East recycling industry is standing at a defining moment in its history. We are witnessing a remarkable transformation from being predominantly a global trading hub for recyclable materials to becoming an emerging centre for recycling, industrial manufacturing, innovation and sustainable resource management.

Our strategic geographical location connects Asia,

Europe and Africa. We also have world-class ports, excellent logistics infrastructure, visionary leadership and an entrepreneurial recycling community that has built strong international relationships over decades.

Governments across the region are increasingly recognising recycling as an essential pillar of economic diversification, industrial development and environmental sustainability.

However, geopolitical uncertainty, fluctuating commodity prices, changing trade regulations, export restrictions, shipping disruptions and financial pressures continue to

affect businesses. Greater investment in recycling infrastructure, advanced processing technologies and policies supporting the responsible movement of recyclable materials is also needed.

The Middle East should not simply be a gateway through which recyclable materials pass. It should become a destination where those materials are transformed into valuable resources. We are not merely traders of scrap; we contribute to industrial growth, create employment and preserve natural resources. The opportunities before us are much greater than the challenges, provided we move forward together.

Which materials and segments of the recycling industry do you see offering the greatest growth potential in the region over the next five to ten years?

I see tremendous potential across several segments, particularly ferrous and non-ferrous metals, aluminium, copper, electronic waste, battery recycling and advanced material recovery.

Metals will continue to play a central role in the Middle East recycling economy. Aluminium and copper, in particular, have significant long-term potential because of their importance in construction, infrastructure, transportation, renewable energy and electrical technologies. As the world moves towards electrification, clean energy and more sustainable manufacturing, demand for responsibly sourced recycled materials is expected to become increasingly important.



Electronic waste and battery recycling will also emerge as important growth sectors. The increasing use of electronic devices, electric vehicles and energy storage systems will create new opportunities to recover valuable materials and reduce dependence on primary resources.

However, the greatest opportunity is not simply in recycling more material. It is in creating more value from every tonne we recycle. Over the next decade, I would like to see the Middle East develop sophisticated recycling facilities capable of producing high-quality secondary raw materials for manufacturers worldwide. The future will belong to businesses that combine industry experience with technology, innovation and a global outlook.

What are the major barriers to expanding recycling capacity and improving material recovery rates across the Middle East?

In my opinion, the biggest challenge is not the absence of opportunity. It is creating the right ecosystem that allows our industry to realise its full potential.

One major barrier is the need for greater investment in collection, segregation, sorting and advanced processing infrastructure. Recycling begins long before materials reach a recycling plant. Without efficient collection systems and proper segregation, valuable resources can be lost or become more expensive to recover.

Another important challenge is regulatory consistency. Recycling is an international industry, and recyclable materials often travel across several countries before being transformed into new products. Unpredictable trade policies, export restrictions and complicated administrative requirements can affect the entire supply chain and create financial pressure, particularly for small and medium-sized businesses.

Access to affordable financing, advanced technologies, skilled manpower and reliable industrial demand is equally important. We must recognise that recyclable materials are not simply waste; they are valuable industrial raw materials that support manufacturing, economic development and the circular economy.

At BMR, we advocate constructive dialogue between recyclers, government authorities and international industry associations. We support responsible and transparent regulations that protect the environment while enabling legitimate recycling businesses to grow. Improving recycling rates requires trust, cooperation, investment and policies that recognise the true value of recyclers.

How can technology, investment and regional cooperation help build a more efficient and sustainable recycling ecosystem in the Middle East?

I believe technology, investment and cooperation are the three pillars that will define the future of recycling in the Middle East. Advanced sorting systems, artificial intelligence, automation, robotics and improved material recovery processes can help recyclers achieve greater efficiency, better quality and higher recovery rates. However, technology alone cannot deliver this transformation. We also need investment, industrial partnerships and a shared commitment to long-term development.

The Middle East has the financial strength, infrastructure and geographical advantages to attract global recycling technologies and establish world-class processing facilities. Bringing together the strengths of different countries and industries can create significant opportunities. For example, a recycling company from the UAE could partner with a manufacturer in India, a technology provider in Europe and an industrial group in China.

This philosophy underpins BMR's growing international engagement. Our international conferences, partnerships with recycling associations and initiatives such as the Global Partner Associations Meeting encourage meaningful cooperation across borders.

Regional cooperation within the GCC and the wider Middle East is equally essential. Countries can benefit from collaboration in recycling infrastructure, technology exchange, industrial investment and responsible material movement. We should see neighbouring countries as partners rather than merely competitors.

We must also involve young entrepreneurs and future industry leaders. Through BMR's NextGen initiatives, we aim to encourage younger generations to bring fresh ideas, embrace emerging technologies and lead the next phase of transformation.

Looking ahead, what is your vision for the Middle East recycling industry, and what role can BMR play in its growth and development?

My vision is very clear. I want the Middle East to be recognised as one of the world's most influential centres for recycling, resource recovery, sustainable manufacturing and international industrial cooperation. Our region has played a significant role in global recycling trade for decades. Now is



the time to build on that foundation and establish ourselves as leaders in value addition, advanced recycling technologies and the circular economy.

When we established BMR, our objective was to unite the recycling fraternity of the region, provide a platform for meaningful dialogue and ensure that our industry's voice was heard. Today, that vision is evolving into something much larger. BMR is expanding its international presence and strengthening relationships with recycling communities across India, China, Europe, the United States, the Far East and other major markets.

Our decision to take the 14th BMR International Conference to Ahmedabad, India, represents this ambition. In the years ahead, I envision BMR becoming a globally respected organisation connecting recyclers, manufacturers, investors, policymakers and industry associations, while continuing to represent the interests of the Middle East recycling fraternity.

We will continue advocating policies that support responsible trade, encouraging investment in recycling technologies, creating opportunities for our members and empowering the next generation of industry leaders.

When I introduced the philosophy of "One Language, One Vision, One Goal," it was never intended to be merely a slogan. It represents our commitment to connecting the global recycling community, pursuing a shared vision of a sustainable and innovative industry, and preserving resources for future generations.

Ultimately, my ambition is not simply to make BMR a bigger organisation. It is to make the recycling industry a stronger, more united and more respected force in the global economy. We are not just recycling materials. We are preserving the future of our planet.

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UAE: BUILDING A DIVERSIFIED STEEL HUB FOR INDUSTRY AND GLOBAL TRADE



The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has developed a steel industry that serves both domestic construction and regional markets. Steelmaking, rolling, flat-steel coating, pipe manufacturing and downstream processing operate alongside the country's major ports, logistics centres and industrial zones. As the UAE continues to diversify its economy, steel remains an important material for buildings, infrastructure, energy, manufacturing and industrial development.

The industry is supported by the UAE's national industrial strategy, Operation 300bn, which aims to increase the industrial sector's contribution to GDP to AED 300 billion by 2031. The strategy prioritises local manufacturing, stronger in-country value, technology adoption and exports. These priorities create an opportunity for steel producers to supply more of the domestic market while also serving customers across the Middle East, Africa, Asia and other international markets.

The UAE produced approximately 3.85 million tonnes (Mt) of crude steel in 2025, compared with about 3.72 Mt in 2024. The increase of around 3.3% placed the country 35th among global crude-steel producers. Its production base includes

integrated direct-reduced iron and electric steelmaking, as well as rolling and finishing plants that produce reinforcing bar, wire rod, heavy sections, sheet piles and coated flat steel products. ^[1,2]

The UAE market is not defined by production alone. Steel is used in construction, real estate, transport, utilities, energy projects, industrial facilities and fabrication. EMSTEEL, the country's largest steel and building-materials manufacturer, produced 3.404 Mt of crude steel and 3.3 Mt of finished steel products in 2025. Rebar remains an important part of its portfolio, alongside wire rod, heavy sections and sheet piles. ^[3]

The country also plays a significant role in international steel trade. Worldsteel recorded 13.4 Mt of imports of semi-finished and finished steel products in 2025, placing the UAE ninth among the world's steel-importing economies. This gross trade figure is not the same as domestic consumption: Worldsteel's measure of apparent steel use for the UAE was approximately 3.4 Mt in 2025. The two indicators cover different flows and should not be compared as if they measured the same thing. ^[1]



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The industry's next opportunity lies in combining the UAE's established long-product base with more downstream processing, coated flat products, pipes and higher-value applications. Investment in efficient production, recycling, lower-carbon steelmaking and dependable trade links can strengthen the UAE's position as a regional steel manufacturing and distribution hub.

Steel Production and Industrial Transformation

UAE crude steel production has increased over the past five years, rising from approximately 3.0 Mt in 2021 to 3.85 Mt in 2025. After stronger growth between 2022 and 2023, output eased slightly in 2024 before reaching a new high in 2025. The latest annual figure represents growth of about 3.3% over 2024 and keeps the UAE among the leading steel producers in the Gulf region. ^[1, 2]

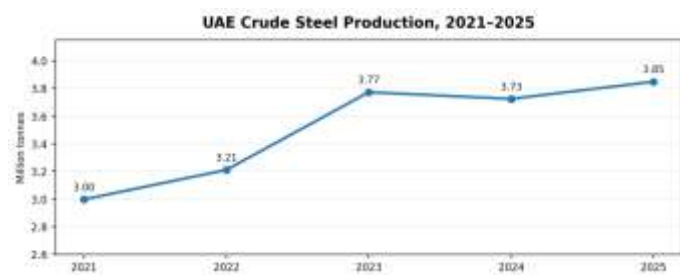


Figure 1. UAE crude steel production, 2021–2025. 2021–2024 historical figures from USGS; 2025 from worldsteel.

The country's production ecosystem combines ironmaking, steelmaking and finished-product rolling. EMSTEEL operates three direct-reduction plants with 4.2 MTPA of DRI capacity and three steelmaking plants with 3.5 MTPA of steelmaking capacity. Its rolling operations include rebar, wire rod, heavy sections and sheet piles. In 2025, EMSTEEL's finished steel output increased to 3.3 Mt from 2.835 Mt in 2024, a rise of 16.4%. ^[3]

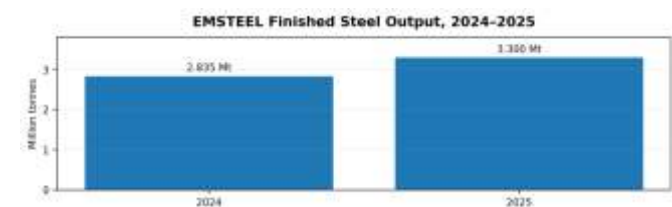


Figure 2. EMSTEEL finished-steel output increased by 16.4% in 2025. This is company data, not total UAE output.

This industrial base gives the UAE domestic supply capability in major construction products while also enabling value-added processing. The strategic task is to sustain reliable output, raise productivity and develop products that match the requirements of modern construction, energy systems and industrial manufacturing.

UAE Steel in Numbers

Indicator	Latest figure
Crude steel production, 2025	3.849 Mt
Change from 2024	+3.3%
Global crude steel rank, 2025	35th
Apparent steel use, 2025	3.4 Mt
Semi-finished/finished steel imports, 2025	13.4 Mt
EMSTEEL finished steel output, 2025	3.3 Mt
Operation 300bn industrial GDP target	AED 300 bn by 2031

Steel Consumption and the Main Demand Drivers

The UAE's apparent steel use, a measure of finished steel products absorbed by the domestic market, was approximately 3.4 Mt in 2025, compared with 3.5 Mt in 2024. Over the five-year period, apparent use has remained within a relatively narrow range of around 3.4–3.7 Mt. The annual figures show that domestic demand is substantial but can move with construction activity, investment cycles and project timing. ^[1]

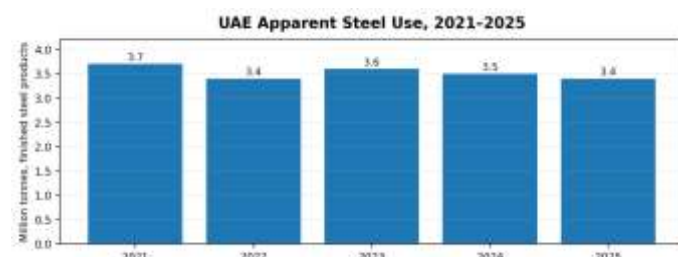


Figure 1. UAE crude steel production, 2021–2025. 2021–2024 historical figures from USGS; 2025 from worldsteel.

Construction and real estate are core steel-consuming activities, requiring rebar, wire rod, sections and fabricated products. Transport infrastructure, utilities, ports, industrial facilities and energy projects create demand for additional steel grades and product forms. Oil and gas projects require pipe-related and structural materials, while manufacturing and fabrication use flat and coated steel products. These are principal demand drivers; a comparable official percentage split by sector was not identified, so no sector shares are assigned here.



Figure 4. Main steel-demand drivers in the UAE. Product links are indicative; no unsupported market-share percentages are implied.

The UAE's industrial strategy reinforces this demand base by promoting local manufacturing and increasing the domestic value captured from industrial supply chains. For steelmakers, this creates opportunities not only in primary production but also in cutting, coating, fabrication and application-specific products. ^[4]



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From Long Products to a Broader Product Mix

Long products remain a central part of the UAE's steel industry. Rebar is used to reinforce concrete in buildings, bridges and civil infrastructure; wire rod supports wire drawing, fasteners and other industrial applications; and heavy sections and sheet piles are used in structural and infrastructure projects. EMSTEEL, AGSI, Conares and other local producers contribute to the long-products supply base.^[3, 5, 6]



Domestic mills and processors supply different product groups; imported feedstock and finished products complement local output.

Figure 5. Simplified UAE steel value chain: long products, flat/coated products, and pipes/tubes.

Flat and coated steel represents an important downstream segment. Al Ghurair Iron & Steel operates a 500,000-tonne-per-year flat-steel rolling and hot-dip galvanising complex in Abu Dhabi. Dana Steel manufactures products including galvanised, Aluzinc and pre-painted coils and sheets. These products are used in construction, roofing, cladding, fabrication, appliances and other manufacturing applications. Conares also lists colour-coated coils alongside its long products and ERW pipes.^[6, 7, 8]

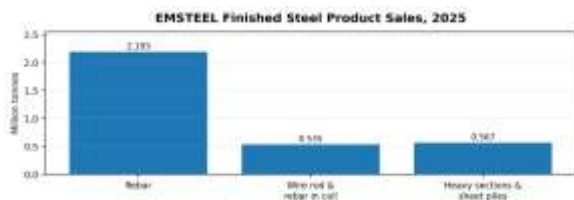


Figure 6. EMSTEEL's 2025 finished-steel product sales: rebar, wire rod/rebar in coil, and heavy sections/sheet piles. Company-level data.

This mix illustrates the different roles played by UAE producers and processors. Long products address construction demand, while coated flats and tubular products serve a broader set of downstream and industrial needs. Increasing the range of locally processed products can improve supply flexibility for UAE manufacturers and customers in nearby markets.

Key Steel Companies

EMSTEEL

Headquartered in Abu Dhabi, EMSTEEL is the UAE's largest steel and building-materials manufacturer. Its steel division has 3.5 MTPA of steelmaking capacity and 4.2 MTPA of direct-reduction capacity. It produces rebar, wire rod, heavy sections and sheet piles. In 2025, crude steel production reached 3.404 Mt and finished steel output reached 3.3 Mt.^[3]

ARABIAN GULF STEEL INDUSTRIES (AGSI)

AGSI is an integrated UAE steel producer with operations in Abu Dhabi, making billets and finished long products including rebar and sections. In 2026, its HRM 3 rolling mill added 600,000 tonnes per year of designed rebar rolling capacity. The company describes its production approach as focused on recycled local raw materials and lower emissions.^[5, 9]

CONARES

Based in Dubai, Conares reports annual production capacity of more than 1.5 million tonnes. Its portfolio spans rebar, rebar in coil, wire rod, ERW pipes and tubes, and colour-coated coils. This range positions the company across construction, infrastructure and selected downstream applications.^[6]

AL GHURAIR IRON & STEEL (AGIS)

AGIS is located in Abu Dhabi's Industrial City (ICAD) and is a joint venture between the Al Ghurair Group and Japan's Nippon Steel Corporation. Its 500,000 TPA facility combines cold rolling with hot-dip galvanising. The company supplies flat-steel products for construction, fabrication and non-automotive industries in the UAE, wider MENA region and international markets.^[7]

DANA STEEL

Dana Steel manufactures and exports flat and coated steel products, including galvanised (GI), Aluzinc (AZ), pre-painted galvanized (PPGI) and pre-painted Aluzinc (PPGL) coils and sheets. Its published UAE production information lists 250,000 tonnes per year of GI/AZ coil capacity and a 200,000-tonne-per-year continuous colour-coating line. These are separate processing-line capacities and should not be added together as one finished-output figure.^[8]

UNION IRON & STEEL (UIS)

Union Iron & Steel is an Abu Dhabi-based rebar producer established to supply UAE-made reinforcing bars to construction customers in the UAE and GCC. Its latest company website reports 450,000 tonnes of annual rolling capacity. The company's product is used to reinforce concrete in buildings, roads, bridges and other infrastructure.^[10]

These companies illustrate the breadth of the UAE industry: integrated steelmaking, long-product rolling, flat-steel cold rolling and coating, and pipes and tubes. The capacities



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listed here refer to company-reported or source-reported installed/design capacity unless actual annual production is explicitly stated.

Trade, Localisation and Outlook

The UAE is one of the world's major import markets for semi-finished and finished steel products. Worldsteel recorded imports of 13.4 Mt in 2025, up from 10.6 Mt in 2024, placing the country ninth among importers by volume. These are gross trade flows, not a direct measure of domestic steel consumption. Differences arise because import statistics cover cross-border movements of semi-finished and finished steel, whereas apparent steel use estimates finished products absorbed by the local market. ^[1]

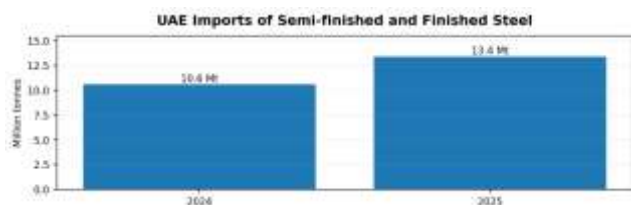


Figure 7. UAE imports of semi-finished and finished steel products, 2024–2025, million tonnes. Source: worldsteel.

For HS Chapter 72 (iron and steel), 2025 partner-reported trade data show China, Oman, India, Japan and the European Union among important sources of steel shipments to the UAE. Partner-reported imports of UAE-origin iron and steel identify Pakistan, the European Union, Israel, Oman and Kuwait among selected destination markets. These are partner-

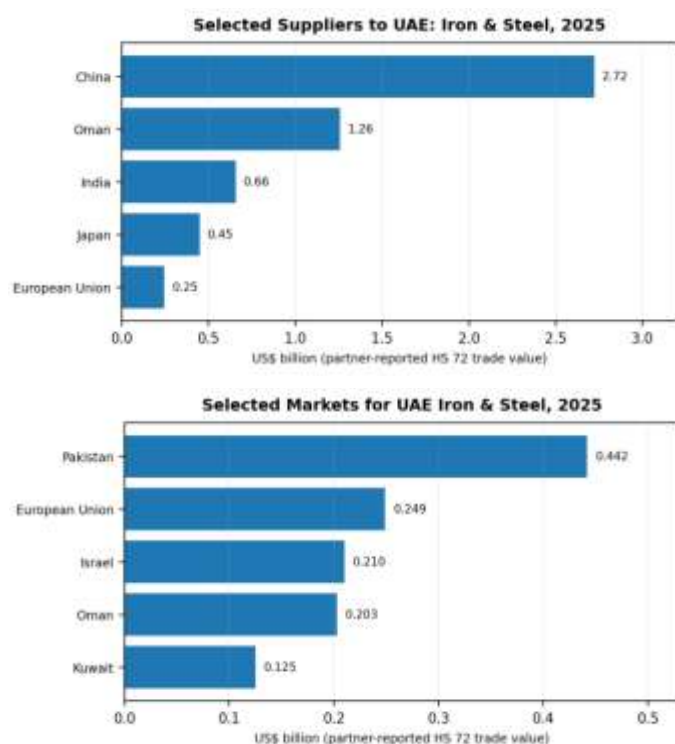


Figure 8-9. Selected partner-reported HS 72 trade values for 2025, in US\$ billion. Values may differ from UAE-reported totals because of mirror-statistics and reporting differences.

reported values rather than complete UAE-reported export totals, so they should be read as indicative bilateral flows. ^[11]

Localisation and Lower-Carbon Production

The UAE's industrial strategy prioritises higher local value, technology adoption and export competitiveness. For steel, this means opportunities in rolling, coating, fabrication, tubular products, recycling and lower-carbon manufacturing. EMSTEEL's DRI-based production chain and AGSI's reported investment in recycled feedstock and lower-emission rolling illustrate different routes through which UAE producers are addressing efficiency and sustainability. ^[3, 4, 5]

Outlook: A Regional Steel and Processing Hub

The UAE combines domestic steelmaking with downstream processing, industrial zones and strong port and logistics links. The challenge is to align capacity with demand, strengthen product value, compete in export markets and make production more efficient. With Operation 300bn supporting industrial diversification, steel can remain a strategic supplier to construction and infrastructure while expanding its role in manufacturing and regional trade.

Sources: [1] World Steel Association, World Steel in Figures 2026; [2] U.S. Geological Survey, United Arab Emirates mineral production table; [3] EMSTEEL Annual Report 2025; [4] UAE Government / Ministry of Industry and Advanced Technology, Operation 300bn; [5] AGSI official updates; [6] Conares official website; [7] Al Ghurair Iron & Steel / AGIS; [8] Dana Steel official website; [9] AGSI HRM 3 update; [10] Union Iron & Steel official website; [11] World Bank WITS/UN Comtrade, HS Chapter 72, 2025 partner-reported trade data.





- Sundeep Rao
Managing Director,
Sunre Industries

Uncertainty Endures

Gulf steelmakers face a logistics squeeze and soft private-sector demand as the regional conflict drags on, while the wider MENA industry fights a battle with Chinese imports that shows no sign of ending.

As 2026 draws to a close, steel markets across the Middle East, and in the GCC in particular, remain under sustained pressure. The conflict that began at the end of February has disrupted shipping through the Strait of Hormuz for more than seven months, and while a ceasefire was floated in April, it never took hold, and attacks on commercial vessels have intensified again this month. For an industry that depends on seaborne iron ore pellets, billet and scrap, and on export outlets for finished product, there are few harder environments in which to operate.

Table 1. Key figures at a glance

Indicator	Value	Comment
GCC steel demand, 2026 forecast	-11% y/y	After +17.7% in 2025; +11.3% rebound forecast for 2027
GCC crude steel output, 2025	21.6 Mt	+9.5% y/y; Saudi Arabia 10.8 Mt
Middle East crude steel, Jan–Aug 2026	33.3 Mt	-7.8% y/y
Africa crude steel, Jan–Aug 2026	16.7 Mt	+9.4% y/y
Steel volumes through Hormuz, Jan–Aug 2026	3.8 Mt	-65% vs 10.95 Mt a year earlier
War-risk premium, Hormuz transit (July 2026)	7.5–10% of hull value	vs ~0.25% before the war
China steel exports, 2025	119.0 Mt finished; 133.8 Mt incl. semis	All-time record; semis exports +62.7% in H1 2026

Source: worldsteel (SRO Oct 2026; production data); AISU via Fastmarkets; SMM; Marsh via S&P Global and The National; GACC via Mysteel; S&P Global.

Logistics: the defining constraint

Transport has become the single biggest issue for the region's steel importers. Delays at UAE ports outside the Strait and at Omani ports have grown steadily as cargo that would normally discharge inside the Gulf is rerouted to Fujairah, Khor Fakkan and Sohar. Bulk freight has also risen: average Supramax earnings climbed from about \$14,750/day in February to around \$21,300/day by mid-September, and Handysize from \$12,300/day to about \$17,800/day. Trucking from Sohar adds roughly \$40/t to landed costs. According to SMM, selected steel volumes moving through Hormuz fell to 3.8 Mt in January–August 2026, down 65% on the same period of 2025. Traffic has crept back since mid-year: September saw the highest number of transits since the conflict began, and Gulf crude exports are close to pre-war levels through ship-to-ship transfers outside the Gulf. However, waiting times at anchorage remain long, with median waits at Fujairah reaching around nine days in August, and the renewed attacks of October show how fragile this recovery is.

Importers have, for the most part, managed to keep material flowing, but only by absorbing much higher inland and ocean freight costs. Those costs have filtered through to domestic prices and squeezed margins along the chain.

The hidden costs: insurance and demurrage

Freight rates capture only part of the extra cost. Two further charges, war-risk insurance and demurrage, now add materially to the landed cost of every tonne of imported steel, billet and raw material.

War-risk insurance. Before the conflict, additional war-risk premiums for a Gulf call were around 0.25% of a vessel's hull value per voyage. By early March they had reached 1.5%. After easing to 1–3% following a June memorandum of understanding, they jumped again to 7.5–10% in July, according to broker Marsh. The risk is also spreading: after the Houthis declared a maritime embargo on Saudi shipping on 20 July, premiums for Bab al-Mandab rose to 0.5%. Calls on Saudi Arabia's west coast that avoid both chokepoints were still quoted at about 0.1%.

For a Supramax carrying 45,000 t of steel, and assuming a hull value of \$25 million, a 7.5–10% premium works out at \$1.9–2.5 million per voyage, or roughly \$42–56/t. Before the war, the equivalent figure was about \$1.4/t. At a billet price of around

\$470/t CPT Jebel Ali (Fastmarkets, April), that is a 9–12% increase in landed cost from insurance alone. Iran has also proposed transit fees as part of any reopening of the Strait. Sources put these at about \$10/t in April, but in August Iran was seeking 5–7% of cargo value, equivalent to \$24–33/t on billet.

Demurrage. The rerouting of Gulf-bound cargo to ports outside the Strait has created queues at anchorage. In the week of 2–8 August, median waits were 9.25 days at Fujairah, 4.8 days at Khor Fakkan and 4.6 days at Sohar, and cargo dwell times at Sohar have more than quadrupled since the conflict began. With Supramax time-charter rates at around \$20,000–22,000 per day in September, every day a vessel waits for a berth costs the charterer roughly that amount in demurrage. A nine-day wait at Fujairah therefore adds about \$185,000 per voyage, or around \$4/t on a 45,000 t cargo. That comes on top of trucking from Sohar into the UAE, which adds roughly \$40/t.

Table 2. Indicative extra costs on an imported steel cargo

Cost item	Indicative cost	Basis
War-risk premium, Hormuz transit	\$42–56/t	7.5–10% of an assumed \$25m hull; 45,000 t cargo
War-risk premium, pre-war	~\$1.4/t	0.25% of hull value
Proposed Iranian transit fee	\$10–33/t	~\$10/t (April) to 5–7% of cargo value (August)
Demurrage while awaiting berth	~\$2–4/t	4.6–9.25 days at ~\$20,000/day
Trucking from Sohar to the UAE	~\$40/t	Trade estimate, April 2026
Higher Supramax hire vs pre-conflict	~\$4–6/t	~\$6,500/day higher over a 30–40-day voyage; 45,000 t cargo

Source: Author's estimates based on Marsh, Fastmarkets, Nautica Shipping/Portcast, The Signal Group and Breakwave Advisors. Figures are illustrative; actual costs depend on vessel, contract terms and route.

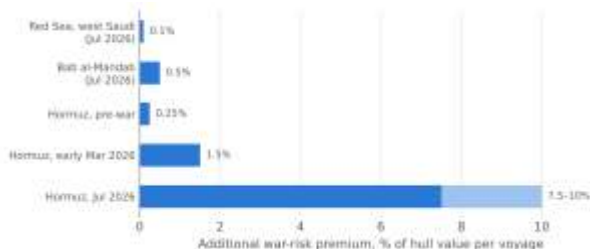
Taken together, a bulk cargo that must transit Hormuz can carry \$50–100/t in extra costs from insurance, transit fees and waiting time, before any increase in freight. Rerouting to ports outside the Strait avoids the transit premium, but replaces it with demurrage, port congestion and inland haulage. This helps explain why domestic producers with their own coastal access outside the Strait have held a clear cost advantage.

Geography decides who copes

Location has become a major competitive factor. UAE producers are better placed than most of their GCC peers, with only Oman in a stronger position, because both have access to ports on the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea that avoid the Strait altogether.

- **Kuwait, Qatar and Bahrain** sit wholly inside the Arabian Gulf and have very few alternatives. Bahrain's Foulath Holding briefly declared force majeure in late March.
- **Saudi Arabia** has most of its steelmaking on the Eastern Province coast, a very long way from Jeddah and the Red Sea ports that offer an alternative route. That route is no longer risk-free either, after the Houthis declared an embargo on Saudi shipping in July.
- **DRI-based mills** across the Gulf have been hit by shortages of imported iron ore pellets, forcing a shift towards scrap and pushing Saudi scrap prices to record levels in April.

Figure 1. Additional war-risk premiums by route, 2026 (% of hull value per voyage)



Source: Marsh via S&P Global Commodity Insights (22 July 2026) and The National (17 July 2026); Kpler (6 March 2026). Light segment shows the quoted range.

The overall balance: from shortage to surplus

The conflict has hit both sides of the GCC steel balance, but not at the same time. In the first months, supply was the binding constraint. Shortages of imported pellets, billet and scrap forced mills to cut output faster than demand fell, the market tightened, and rebar prices rose through the spring.

By the third quarter the position had reversed. Project delays have caught up with the market, and demand has weakened across the GCC. worldsteel describes this as “not the destruction of demand but its deferral”: projects have been postponed, not cancelled. In the UAE, government and infrastructure announcements have not offset a pullback by private developers. With domestic mills now better supplied, the long products market has turned from short to long. UAE mills cut prices in September, and smaller Saudi producers followed in early October, citing weak demand.

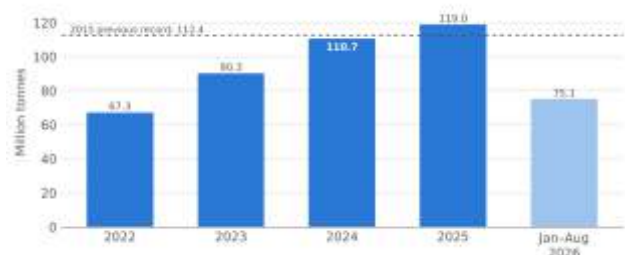
- **Long products.** Years of investment in rebar and wire rod capacity have left the region broadly self-sufficient in long products. With construction slowing, this segment now has more capacity than it needs and is the most exposed to price competition, both between local mills and from Turkish, Chinese and Iranian billet and rebar.
- **Flat products.** The flat steel balance is very different. The GCC remains structurally short of hot-rolled, cold-rolled and coated products. Saudi Arabia is the region’s only hot-rolled coil producer, and imports have met most of the growth in demand. Every tonne of that deficit has to come through the disrupted logistics chain, so higher freight, insurance and demurrage costs pass straight into flat steel prices. New flat-rolled capacity in Oman and Saudi Arabia, due from 2027, should narrow the gap, although the conflict may delay it.

Overall, the GCC remains a net importer of finished steel. Before the conflict that gap was widening as demand outpaced local supply. For now it is narrowing, but only because demand has stalled. Once the Strait reopens and deferred projects return, the region is likely to swing back towards shortage, especially in flat products.

Wider MENA: the China challenge

Outside the Gulf, the defining issue is Chinese competition. China exported a record 119 Mt of finished steel in 2025, passing the previous 2015 peak, and 133.8 Mt including semi-finished products. Finished steel exports were 3.0% lower in January–August 2026 at

Figure 2. China finished steel exports. 2022 – Jan–Aug 2026 (Mt)



Source: GACC via Mysteel and SteelOrbis. Jan–Aug 2026 is a partial-year figure; excludes semi-finished products.

75.1 Mt, but August shipments were 6.8% higher than a year earlier. More importantly for MENA’s re-rollers, Chinese exports of billet and slab rose 62.7% in the first half of 2026, setting a new record. Billet-importing markets such as the UAE, Egypt and Morocco are directly exposed to this shift. At the same time, higher energy and freight costs have raised input costs for MENA producers and cut into already thin margins.

If these conditions persist, we expect more countries to tighten trade defence through anti-dumping duties, safeguards and other tariff and non-tariff measures. Several North African markets have already moved in that direction.

Table 3. Trade defence in MENA steel markets

Country	Selected trade-defence measures in force
Egypt	Safeguard duties stepped down in September 2026 for year two: billet 12% (min. \$64/t), HRC 13.5%, CRC 13.0%, HDG 13.5%, PPGI 14.0%; protection runs to September 2028. Anti-dumping on rebar and wire rod (China 29%); 15% local price preference in tenders
Algeria	30% base duty; up to 25% national preference in tenders; import certification and FX controls. Imports fell from 35% of consumption in 2021 to 16% in 2025
Morocco	Additional 19% duty on HRC until 2029; anti-dumping on CRC from Egypt; provisional duty on galvanised wire; 15% surcharge on imports in public procurement
Saudi Arabia	15% import duty on HR coil

Source: GMK Center (Sept 2026); SteelOrbis (Apr 2026); Yieh (Apr 2026); CRU.

Outlook

GCC: Our expectation is that the conflict will be resolved in the coming year, and that markets will normalise fairly quickly afterwards. That view carries risk: worldsteel’s April forecast assumed a resolution by June, and talks over a Hormuz transit corridor stalled in August. The GCC’s structural drivers, including infrastructure pipelines, import substitution in flat products and new capacity, remain intact, and deferred projects could return quickly once the Strait reopens.

Wider MENA: For the rest of the region, the Chinese challenge has no end in sight. Producers and governments will need to adapt, through trade defence, procurement preferences and cost competitiveness, to protect a sector that is central to industrial development and employment.

Notes and sources

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Al Jazeera Steel

Expands its Product Range with New Medium Section Mill in Kezad

Al Jazeera Steel Products Company (AJSP) has expanded its manufacturing presence in the Gulf with a new medium section mill in KEZAD, Abu Dhabi UAE. Developed with Italian technology partner POMINI LRM, the facility has an installed production capacity of 450,000 tonnes per annum and commenced production in September 2026. The project extends the company's capabilities into larger structural sections and creates a platform for future production of higher-value products, including rails.

The investment builds on AJSP's established operations in Oman. Founded in 1999 and listed on the Muscat Stock Exchange, the parent company operates a tube mill and a merchant bar mill in Suhar, each with an annual capacity of 300,000 tonnes. The merchant bar mill serves the smaller section segment, with a range from 40 to 100 mm. The new UAE facility complements this portfolio, allowing the group to address a wider spectrum of customer requirements. With the addition

of the 450,000 MT capacity in UAE, along with the existing 600,000 MT capacity in Oman, the combined rolling capacity now exceeds 1 Million MT per annum.

In its initial phase, the KEZAD mill's product programme covers beams, columns and channels in the 100–300 mm range, alongside round bars and flat bars. This broadens AJSP's offering for structural fabrication, construction and industrial applications. It also creates opportunities to serve customers requiring several product categories from the same producer, supported by greater consistency in supply planning and technical coordination across the group.

A central consideration in the mill's design is the ability to combine dimensional accuracy with operational flexibility. Section quality depends on maintaining the required shape and dimensions consistently throughout a production campaign. For fabricators and end users, this consistency helps simplify fit-up and assembly, reduce corrective work and support predictable performance

during subsequent processing.

The rolling line incorporates a 3+1 Reducing and Sizing Universal Compact Tandem Mill configuration. This arrangement provides dedicated control over the final dimensions of the rolled section, with the last stand used for fine adjustment. Automated control across all four stands helps maintain close dimensional tolerances throughout rolling. The practical objective is repeatable product geometry over successive lengths and across the production campaign.

POMINI LRM's Red-Ring rolling stands provide the rigidity required for precision rolling. Their robust construction helps limit deflection under rolling loads, supporting stable dimensional control. The mill also incorporates a sliding Red-Ring stand mechanism designed to minimise surface scratching and improve temperature control. Together, these features support the production of sections with consistent dimensions and surface quality, both of which matter to customers carrying out fabrication and further processing.

The reversing mill configuration provides flexibility in the rolling sequence, while quick-change systems reduce the time required for roll and stand changes. This is particularly relevant to a mill producing multiple section profiles and sizes. Shorter changeovers support plant availability and make it easier to organise production campaigns around different customer requirements. Accessible components and durable rolling stands also facilitate maintenance, with predictive maintenance scheduling intended to reduce unplanned interruptions.

Automation extends from furnace charging through to bar finishing. The mill's Level 2 process automation coordinates production information and process settings across the line, helping operators maintain consistency between successive stages. This supports a more controlled operating environment as the facility

develops its production programme and expands the range of products rolled.

Quality control is supported by laser-based inline dimensional measurement. By checking dimensions during production, the system provides timely information on the rolled profile and helps identify deviations early. This allows operating teams to respond while rolling is in progress. A multistand straightener further supports finished-product quality by controlling straightness, an important requirement for handling, fabrication and installation.

These capabilities also provide a basis for developing more demanding and specialised products. Tight dimensional control, surface quality and straightness are especially relevant where customers require consistent processing behaviour and accurate assembly. The mill has therefore been configured with both its initial structural section programme and future product development in mind.

Rail production is planned for the second phase of the project, including premium transport rails. The mill's provision for rail rolling represents a potential extension into applications with demanding requirements for dimensional consistency, material properties and product integrity. This phase will build on the operating experience gained from the initial product programme. Rail production



remains a planned development and is separate from the mill's current section and bar offering.

The KEZAD location gives AJSP a manufacturing presence in the UAE alongside its established Oman operations. Strategically, the expanded product range positions the group to address customers in the UAE and wider GCC, while providing a broader offering for export opportunities. For steel distributors, fabricators and project suppliers, a regional source of medium sections can support procurement planning and closer coordination of deliveries with project schedules.

Energy efficiency is another important element of the mill's design. Controlled rolling temperatures and reduced heat loss

are intended to improve the use of thermal energy during processing. Process automation supports consistent operation, while accurate rolling and effective finishing can help limit avoidable rework. These features connect resource efficiency with day-to-day manufacturing performance, although quantified energy savings will need to be established through operating data.

With production having commenced in May 2026, the new mill marks the transition from project development to operation. Its early production programme establishes the foundation for a wider product offering over time. The combination of precision rolling equipment, automated process control and flexible changeovers provides the technical basis for building production volumes while maintaining consistent quality.

AJSP's longer-term plans also include backward integration through a steel meltshop. Such a development could give the group greater control over feedstock availability, steel chemistry and production coordination, supporting the future development of its section and rail businesses. AJSP also plan to produce various Engineering Steel at a later stage. Together, the KEZAD mill, planned rail phase and proposed meltshop define a staged approach to growth: expanding the product portfolio, developing more specialised capabilities and strengthening the group's manufacturing base across Oman and the UAE.



UAE Recommends Anti-Dumping Duties on Chinese Heavy Steel Sections



The UAE Ministry of Foreign Trade has recommended definitive anti-dumping duties on imports of heavy steel sections from China after finding that the imports caused material injury to the domestic industry. The final determination was still pending in the report published by MESTEEL, making the recommendation an important development for the country's structural steel market.

Chinese imports of the covered products reached 177,798 tonnes during the investigation period from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025, compared with 29,191 tonnes in the reference period. The investigation identified a 21% price-undercutting margin against UAE-produced material. Reported dumping margins ranged from 15.29% to 46.91%, depending on the exporter.

The products covered include U-sections, I-sections and H-sections, along with certain alloy steel angles, shapes and sections. These products are widely used in construction, industrial facilities and infrastructure projects.

Anti-dumping measures are designed to address imports found to be sold at dumped prices and to remedy the injury established through an investigation. Any final duties could affect the landed cost and competitiveness of imported structural sections, as well as sourcing decisions made by UAE buyers.

For domestic manufacturers, the recommendation may be significant if the final determination confirms the proposed measures. For fabricators and steel consumers, the outcome will be important in assessing procurement costs and the availability of imported material. The final decision and its implementation should be verified before publication.

Saudi HRC Buying Slows as Shipping Risks Mount



Buying activity in Saudi Arabia's hot-rolled coil (HRC) market has slowed as purchasers remain cautious amid regional shipping risks and uncertainty over imported material, according to MESTEEL's market report published on 14 October. The slowdown highlights the influence of logistics and geopolitical conditions on steel procurement across the Gulf.

HRC is an important flat steel product used in manufacturing, fabrication, pipes and tubes, and other industrial applications. Buyers in markets that rely partly on imported material must consider not only the mill price but also freight charges, vessel availability, delivery schedules and the risks associated with shipping routes.

According to the report, import enquiries have weakened as buyers adopt a cautious approach. Uncertainty over transportation can make it more difficult for purchasers to commit to orders when the timing and delivered cost of material are less predictable.

The market situation also illustrates how regional security developments can influence steel trade even when the underlying requirement for industrial materials remains. Importers may delay purchases, reassess shipment timing or compare alternative supply sources as they manage procurement risks.

For steel producers, traders and consumers, the direction of the HRC market will depend on changes in shipping conditions, import offers and buying confidence. Any assessment of price movements should be based on updated market quotations, since the report does not establish a specific price change attributable to the slowdown.

Saudi Steel Pipe Secures SAR 177 Million Aramco Supply Contract



Saudi Steel Pipe Company (SSP) has secured a contract worth approximately SAR 177 million (\$47.2 million) from Saudi Aramco to supply steel pipes for oil and gas applications. The contract adds to the company's order book and reinforces the role of domestic pipe manufacturers in supporting Saudi Arabia's

energy industry.

According to the reported contract details, the purchase order has a term of up to 12 months. The financial impact is expected to be reflected in SSP's results during the second half of 2027. The order covers steel pipes required for applications within the oil and gas sector.

Steel pipes are essential to energy infrastructure, including systems used in the transportation and production of oil and gas. Reliable access to suitable pipe products is therefore an important consideration for operators undertaking maintenance, development and expansion projects.

For Saudi Arabia's steel industry, contracts of this nature demonstrate the continuing demand for specialised steel products linked to the country's energy sector. They also provide domestic manufacturers with opportunities to participate in projects requiring established manufacturing capabilities and compliance with customer specifications.

The award highlights the importance of the relationship between local steel producers and major energy companies. As Saudi Arabia continues to develop its industrial supply chain, domestic pipe manufacturers are positioned to play a role in meeting the material requirements of the Kingdom's oil and gas operations.

Lamprell and IMI Sign Offshore Fabrication Agreement in Saudi Arabia

Energy-sector contractor Lamprell has signed an agreement with International Maritime Industries (IMI) for the fabrication of offshore structures, including a production platform and jacket structures, as part of an offshore engineering, procurement, construction and installation project. Fabrication will take place at IMI's facility in Ras Al-Khair, Saudi Arabia.

The agreement marks the first time IMI's yard will undertake fabrication work for offshore production platforms and jacket support structures. The development expands the facility's activities beyond its established shipbuilding, vessel



maintenance and repair capabilities.

The project also reflects cooperation between two companies with established links to the regional energy industry. Lamprell will draw on its offshore engineering and fabrication experience, while IMI will develop its capabilities in manufacturing infrastructure for offshore operations.

For the steel industry, offshore

platforms and jacket structures represent an important application for fabricated steel, requiring complex engineering, structural integrity and manufacturing quality. The agreement therefore has relevance beyond shipbuilding, connecting industrial fabrication with the material requirements of offshore oil and gas developments.

The collaboration supports Saudi Arabia's efforts to expand domestic industrial capabilities and increase local content in energy projects. Its progress will demonstrate how the Kingdom's industrial facilities can broaden their roles in specialised offshore manufacturing.

Najd Steel Obtains UAE Certification for Billet Supply



Saudi Arabia's Najd Steel Factory has obtained certification for its square steel billets under the UAE's Emirates Conformity Assessment Scheme (ECAS), according to a report published by MESTEEL. The certification opens a route for the company's certified billet products to be supplied to the UAE market, subject to applicable commercial and regulatory requirements.

Steel billets are semi-finished products used as feedstock in the manufacture of long steel products, including reinforcing bars and wire rod. Their quality and conformity are important to downstream manufacturers because the characteristics of the billet influence subsequent rolling operations and the properties of the finished product.

Certification can help suppliers demonstrate that their products meet the applicable conformity requirements of a destination market. For a Saudi producer seeking access to UAE customers, the approval represents a potentially useful step towards expanding regional market opportunities.

The development is relevant to steel trade between Gulf Cooperation Council countries, where producers and buyers operate within an increasingly interconnected industrial market. Access to additional sources of billet may also provide downstream mills with more procurement options.

However, certification alone does not confirm that commercial shipments have begun or establish the volumes that Najd Steel may supply. The scale of any future business will depend on customer demand, pricing, logistics and the company's ability to secure orders.

METSCCO Selects IFS Cloud and Industrial AI to Modernise Operations

Saudi Arabia-based METSCCO Heavy Steel Industries has selected IFS Cloud, incorporating IFS.ai Industrial AI capabilities, as part of its plans to modernise business operations and strengthen manufacturing and project management processes. The announcement highlights the growing use of digital systems in industrial infrastructure and heavy fabrication businesses.

Industrial companies often manage complex workflows involving engineering, procurement, production planning, project execution, equipment and delivery schedules. Integrating these activities through an enterprise platform can help improve access to operational information and support coordination



across departments.

For a heavy steel fabrication business, digitalisation can be particularly relevant because projects may involve multiple production stages, material requirements and customer-specific specifications. Better-connected

systems can support planning and visibility, although the actual benefits depend on implementation, data quality and adoption by employees.

The selection of an industrial AI-enabled platform reflects the wider movement towards data-driven operations in the steel and engineering sectors. Manufacturers are exploring digital tools to improve productivity, manage resources and strengthen oversight of complex projects.

For Saudi Arabia's industrial sector, initiatives such as this form part of the broader shift towards technology-enabled manufacturing. The announcement does not, by itself, quantify expected savings or productivity improvements, but it signals METSCCO's intention to strengthen its digital operating framework.

EMSTEEL Earns EcoVadis Platinum Medal for Sustainability Performance



Abu Dhabi-based EMSTEEL Group has received the EcoVadis Platinum Medal for 2026, achieving a score of 95 out of 100 and placing among the top 1% of companies assessed worldwide over the preceding 12 months. The recognition marks an improvement from the Bronze Medal the group received in 2025.

EcoVadis assesses corporate sustainability performance using recognised standards and frameworks. Its evaluations cover areas relevant to responsible business practices and sustainability management. According to EMSTEEL, the improved rating reflects its work on decarbonisation, resource efficiency, circularity, low-carbon

products, health and safety, and governance.

EMSTEEL operates in steel and building materials, with reported annual production capacity of approximately 3.5 million tonnes of steel and 4.6 million tonnes of cement. Its products include reinforcing bars, wire rod, heavy sections and sheet piles, and the group exports to more than 70 markets.

Sustainability assessments are becoming increasingly relevant to industrial suppliers as customers and procurement teams evaluate environmental, social and governance practices alongside product quality and commercial terms.

For the Middle East steel industry, EMSTEEL's recognition highlights the growing importance of sustainability management and transparent reporting. While a rating is not a direct measure of the carbon footprint of every steel product, it can serve as an indicator of a company's broader sustainability systems and business practices.

SPARK and Dalipal Sign \$2.1 Billion Steel Pipe Manufacturing Deal

Saudi Arabia's King Salman Energy Park (SPARK) has signed a 25-year land lease agreement with China's Dalipal Holdings for the development of an advanced energy-equipment manufacturing facility. The project carries a planned investment of approximately \$2.1 billion and is intended to serve Saudi Arabia, the wider Middle East and international markets.

The agreement covers a site measuring approximately 1.03 million square metres at SPARK. The first phase is expected to involve investment of around \$600 million, focusing on manufacturing seamless steel pipes for oil and gas wells, including casing, production tubing and drill pipes, as well as pipes for hydrogen-related applications.

The project forms part of Saudi Arabia's broader effort to develop domestic manufacturing capacity for the energy sector. Establishing production facilities within the Kingdom can strengthen local supply chains and create opportunities for industrial services, engineering and supporting businesses.

The inclusion of hydrogen pipes in the planned product portfolio also reflects the potential for advanced tubular products to serve emerging energy applications alongside conventional oil and gas demand.

For the regional steel industry, the proposed facility represents a major investment in value-added pipe manufacturing. Its development will be watched for progress on construction, commissioning and the establishment of production capabilities in Saudi Arabia.

AGSI Reports Verified Low-Carbon Footprint for Rebar Produced in Abu Dhabi

Arabian Gulf Steel Industries (AGSI) has reported a verified cradle-to-gate carbon footprint of 139 kg of carbon dioxide equivalent per tonne for reinforcing steel produced at its facility in Khalifa Economic Zones Abu Dhabi (KEZAD). The company said the result represents a significant milestone for lower-carbon construction materials manufactured in the UAE.

The figure was verified through an Environmental Product Declaration under the CARES programme. AGSI also reported a carbon footprint of 218 kg CO₂e per tonne for rebar produced at its Sharjah operations. The company said both figures are below the typical range of 600–700 kg CO₂e per tonne cited for scrap-based rebar production. The announcement highlights the growing importance of independently verified environmental data in the steel supply chain.

Construction companies, infrastructure developers and procurement teams are increasingly examining the embodied carbon of materials alongside price, quality and technical performance.

For the Middle East steel industry, lower-carbon product credentials could become an important differentiator as sustainability requirements become more prominent in construction and infrastructure projects. AGSI's reported results also underline the role of product-level carbon measurement in assessing progress towards lower-emission steel production.

Meranti Green Steel Signs MoU with Muscat University



Meranti Green Steel has signed a memorandum of understanding with Muscat University to strengthen cooperation between industry and academia in Oman. The agreement provides a framework for collaboration connected with the country's developing green iron and steel sector.

Partnerships between industrial companies and universities can help connect technical research, workforce development and academic expertise with the requirements of manufacturing

projects. In emerging low-emissions steelmaking, this relationship may be particularly relevant to the development of skills and knowledge in areas such as ironmaking technology, process efficiency and industrial decarbonisation.

Oman has been seeking to establish a stronger position in the production of green iron and related industrial materials. The country's energy resources, industrial zones and export infrastructure are relevant to ambitions to develop lower-emissions products for international markets. However, the long-term development of these industries also depends on technology, project economics, infrastructure and demand.

The MoU is an early step in building cooperation between the company and the university; it should not be interpreted as confirmation of a new production facility or a specific investment commitment unless further details are announced.

For the regional steel industry, the agreement highlights the importance of building technical capabilities alongside investment in industrial infrastructure. Collaboration with universities can help prepare the skills and research base needed to support future developments in lower-carbon iron and steel production.

Jindal Steel Oman Partners with Oman Cement to Reuse Steel Slag

Jindal Steel Oman and Oman Cement Company have signed a three-year memorandum of understanding to support the use of approximately one million tonnes of steel slag in cement clinker production. The agreement aims to establish a productive use for a by-product generated during steel manufacturing while reducing the requirement for virgin raw materials in cement production.

Under the proposed arrangement, steel slag from Jindal Steel Oman's operations will be used as an alternative raw material in Oman Cement's clinker manufacturing process. The companies expect the initiative to improve resource efficiency and encourage the industrial use of materials that might otherwise require separate handling or disposal.

The collaboration brings together two major industrial



activities that have traditionally operated through separate material supply chains. By linking steelmaking by-products with cement production, the partnership demonstrates how industrial residues can become useful inputs for another manufacturing process.

The initiative also aligns with wider efforts to develop circular-economy practices and lower the environmental impact of industrial production. For steelmakers, finding viable uses for slag can improve

resource utilisation, while cement producers may benefit from alternative raw-material sources.

For Oman, the agreement represents a practical example of cross-sector industrial cooperation. Its implementation will be important in determining how effectively steel by-products can be incorporated into cement manufacturing at the proposed scale.

Major Steel Producing Countries in the Middle East

Country	2025 Rank	2025 Production (Mt)	2024 Rank	2025 Production (Mt)
Iran	10	32.0	10	31.4
Saudi Arabia	18	10.8	20	9.6
United Arab Emirates	35	3.8	38	3.7
Iraq	39	3.0	41	3.0
Oman	40	3.0	40	3.0
Qatar	48	1.7	58	1.2

Crude Steel Production MIDDLE EAST



Jul 2026
 -13.4%
3.8 Mt

Jan-Jul 2026
 -8.1%
29.6 Mt

The latest figures point to a softer year for Middle East steelmaking. Both monthly and year-to-date crude steel production are below the corresponding periods of 2025, suggesting that the decline extends beyond a single month's performance. With the region continuing to invest heavily in infrastructure, energy and industrial projects, the direction of steel production in the coming months will be an important indicator to watch.

Crude Steel Production

y-o-y growth rates (%) million tonnes

Regions	July 2026	Jan-July 2026
Africa	2.0	14.6
Asia and Oceania	109.4	799.6
European Union (27)	10.5	76.0
Other Europ	3.7	25.7
Middle East	3.8	29.6
North America	9.6	65.9
Russia & Other CIS (4) + Ukraine	6.7	45.5
South America	3.6	24.1
World	149.2	1081.2

Source : World Steel Association (WSA)

STEEL MARKET & PRICE SNAPSHOT

Global benchmarks | First week of October 2026

Most prices of major steel products and raw materials remained stable in global markets during the first week of October 2026, with limited movements in some products.

Prices of Turkish HMS 1&2 (80:20) scrap, CFR Turkey from the USA, stood at around \$403 per tonne, unchanged from the previous week.

01 | RAW MATERIALS

Material	Market/ Basis	Price	WoW
HMS 1 & 2 Scrap (80:20)	USA -> Turkey, CFR	\$ 403/t	No Change
Iron Ore, 62% Fe	Australia, CFR	\$ 97/t	- \$ 1

02 | SEMI- FINISHED STEEL

Product	Market/ Basis	Price	WoW
Billet	Russia, FOB	\$ 470-480/t	No Change
Billet	China, FOB	\$ 465-470/t	+ \$ 1
Billet	CIS -> Turkey, CFR	\$ 515-525/t	No Change

Meanwhile, Russian hot-rolled coil (HRC), FOB, remained stable at \$505–510 per tonne, while Chinese cold-rolled coil (CRC), 1 mm, FOB, held at \$660–670 per tonne.

03 | FINISHED STEEL

Product	Market/ Basis	Price	WoW
Rebar	Turkey, FOB	\$ 620-630/t	No Change
Wire Rod	Turkey, FOB	\$ 660-670/t	No Change
HR Coil	Russia, FOB	\$ 505-510/t	No Change
CR Coil, 1mm	China, FOB	\$ 660-670/t	No Change

Overall, weekly price movements indicate relative stability across global steel and raw material markets, with a limited decline in iron ore and a slight increase in Chinese billet prices, while most other products maintained their previous levels.

WHAT THE NUMBERS TELL US

The first week of October points to relative stability across global steel and raw material markets. Most reported benchmarks remained unchanged, with iron ore recording a marginal decline of \$1/t and Chinese billet prices edging up by \$1/t. Turkish rebar and wire rod prices held steady, as did Russian HRC and Chinese CR coil. Overall, the data suggests limited week-on-week movement across the reported product categories.

GLOBAL BENCHMARKS AND REGIONAL REFERENCE FOR MIDDLE EAST STEEL

The reported benchmarks offer useful reference points for steelmakers, traders and buyers across the Middle East, despite not representing a comprehensive set of domestic regional prices. Turkish rebar, wire rod and billet prices remain relevant indicators for regional trade, while US-origin scrap delivered to Turkey and Australian iron ore provide upstream market references. The broadly unchanged prices this week indicate a pause in movement across several key international benchmarks.

Source : Arab Iron & Steel Union (AISU)

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