

THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF SWITZERLAND

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The reserves of the small deposits of metalliferous ores that existed in Switzerland have long since been depleted and metal mining has ceased. Current mineral production was limited mainly to commodities required for construction, such as cement, clays, gravel, gypsum, lime, and sand. The mineral industry was largely controlled by the Government and was owned either privately or by regional governments (cantons). Cantonal or communal governments granted mining or processing licenses and directly operated electrical generating facilities, water resources, gas utilities, and local transportation facilities.

Metal processing was confined to the production of primary and secondary aluminum, secondary lead, and steel. All metal production in Switzerland was from either imported raw materials or from scrap. Switzerland relied on imports for many mineral commodities because of self-imposed environmental restrictions and lack of natural resources (table 1).

For more extensive coverage of the mineral industry of Switzerland, see the 1998 Minerals Yearbook, volume III, Mineral Industries of Europe and Central Eurasia.

TABLE 1
SWITZERLAND: ESTIMATED PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES 1/

(Thousand metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity 2/		1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
METALS						
Aluminum:						
Primary	metric tons	20,726 3/	26,592 3/	27,339 3/	32,062 3/	34,000
Secondary	do.	10,700	6,000	6,000	6,000	15,000
Iron and steel:						
Pig iron		100	100	100	100	100
Steel, crude		1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Semimanufactures, rolled products		700	700	700	700	700
Lead, refined, secondary	metric tons	6,400	6,200	9,000 r/	10,000	9,500
INDUSTRIAL MINERALS						
Cement, hydraulic		4,000	3,800	3,800	3,600	3,600
Gypsum		300	300	300	300	300
Lime		35	35	35	35	30
Nitrogen, N content of ammonia		30	30	30	30	30
Salt		300	300	300	300	300
Sulfur, from petroleum refining	metric tons	3,000	4,000	5,000	4,500	4,000
MINERAL FUELS AND RELATED MATERIALS						
Petroleum refinery products:						
Liquefied petroleum gas	thousand 42-gallon barrels	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Gasoline	do.	9,000	9,000	9,000	9,000	9,000
Jet fuel	do.	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Distillate fuel oil	do.	10,000	9,500	9,500	9,500	9,500
Residual fuel oil	do.	6,000	5,500	5,500	5,500	5,500
Bitumen	do.	800	800	800	800	800
Refinery fuel and losses	do.	2,000	2,000	2,000	200	200
Total 4/	do.	31,800	30,800	30,800	30,800	30,800

r/ Revised.

1/ Table includes data available through March 2000.

2/ In addition to the commodities listed, a variety of crude construction materials (common clay, sand and gravel and stone) were produced, but output was not reported, and available general information was inadequate to make reliable estimates of output level.

3/ Reported figure.

4/ Total of listed products only.

TABLE 2
SWITZERLAND: STRUCTURE OF THE MINERAL INDUSTRY IN 1999

(Thousand metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity	Major operating companies and major equity owners	Location of main facilities	Annual capacity
Aluminum	Alusuisse-Lonza Holding AG	Smelter at Stag	48
Cement	Bundr Cementwerke AG (Holderbank Management and Consulting Ltd. 100%)	Plant at Untervaz	700
Do.	Cementfabrik Holderbank AG	Plant at Rekingen	700
Lead, secondary	Metallum AG	Smelter at Pratteln	13
Refinery, petroleum	Reffinerie du Sud-Ouest SA (Compagnie Francaise des Petroles 49%, and British Petroleum 49% are major share holders.)	Refinery at Collombey	40,000
Do.	Reffinerie de Cressier SA (Kninklijke Nederlandsche Petroleum Maatschappij NV 100%)	Refinery at Cressier	36,000
Salt	Zentralbureau des Vereins der Schweizerischen Rheinsalinen (Government 100%)	Saline at Schweizerhalle	350
Do.	La Societe des Mines (Canton of Vaud 100%)	Saline at Bex	50
Steel	Monteforno Acciaierie e Laminatoi SA (Von Roll Group 93.6%)	Plant at Bodio	380
Do.	Von Roll Group	Plant at Gerlafingen	650
Do.	Von Moss Stahl AG	Plant at Emmenbrucke	300