



2013 Minerals Yearbook

LATVIA

THE MINERAL INDUSTRY OF LATVIA

By Lin Shi

Latvia was the seventh-ranked peat producer in the world in 2013 (Apodaca, 2015). Although it produced some crude steel, the country had a small mineral industry that was primarily engaged in the mining of industrial minerals, including dolomite and sand and gravel. Latvia's Ventspils seaport, which is a major port on the Baltic Sea, plays an important role as a transport hub, including for Russia's exports of oil, fertilizers, and other mineral products.

Minerals in the National Economy

In 2013, Latvia's gross domestic product (GDP) was \$30.91 billion, and the real GDP rate of growth increased by 4% from that of 2012. The industrial sector accounted for 25.7% of the GDP (Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, 2014, p. 328).

Production

Data on mineral production are in table 1.

Structure of the Mineral Industry

In 2013, JSC Liepājas Metalurģis was the only metallurgical company operating in Latvia and one of the few operating in the Baltic States. CEMEX SIA was Latvia's sole cement producer and supplier; the company manufactured mainly ready-mix concrete for the country's industrial and construction sectors.

Mineral Trade

The country's total exports were valued at about \$12.7 billion in 2013 compared with \$12.3 billion in 2012; exported commodities included metals, such as iron and steel, and fuels, such as peat. Total imports were valued at about \$15.6 billion in 2013 compared with \$15.2 billion in 2012, and imported commodities included metals, such as iron and steel products, and fuels, such as diesel and natural gas. Latvia's major export partners were Lithuania, which received about 17% of Latvia's total exports, by value; Estonia, about 13%; Russia, about 12%; Germany, about 7%; Poland, about 6%; and Sweden, about 5%. The country's major import partners were Lithuania, which supplied about 20% of Latvia's total imports, by value; Germany, about 12%; Poland, about 10%; and Estonia and Russia, about 8% each (Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, 2014, p. 328; World Bank, The, 2014).

Commodity Review

Metals

Iron and Steel.—JSC Liepājas Metalurģis' semi-integrated metallurgical mill plant installed an electric arc furnace with a

designed production capacity of 850,000 metric tons per year of steel products. In 2013, Liepājas Metalurģis' production decreased by 13% compared with that of 2012; the company exported 98% of its products, which accounted for 10% of Latvia's total exports (tables 1, 2; JSC Liepājas Metalurģis, 2014a, b).

Industrial Minerals

Cement.—In 2013, CEMEX completed a \$409 million expansion of the Broceni cement plant, which was fully commissioned. The plant was designed to manufacture about 1.6 million metric tons per year of cement. The company planned to export its products primarily to Belarus, Estonia, Finland, Lithuania, and Russia (CEMEX S.A.B. de C.V., 2014a, b).

Mineral Fuels and Related Materials

Peat.—In 2013, according to the Latvia Peat Producers Association, Latvia's peat production and exports both amounted to about 1 million metric tons owing to favorable weather conditions during the spring and summer. Latvia's peat exports (by volume) had increased to Austria, Brazil, China, Denmark, Oman, Peru, Qatar, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom and had decreased to Germany, Japan, Lithuania, South Africa, Sweden, and Syria. Latvia stopped exporting peat to Sudan, Venezuela, and Zimbabwe, and began exporting peat to 10 other countries, including French Polynesia, Iceland, Kyrgyzstan, Montenegro, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nicaragua, North Korea, Seychelles, and Yemen (Latvian Peat Producers Association, 2014).

Outlook

Latvia is expected to maintain its role as one of the world's leading peat-producing countries in 2014. It is likely to increase peat exports to the countries of the European Union and Eastern Europe because peat is an important source of energy in most of these countries. CEMEX could expand its cement production capacity and increase cement exports to recover some of the company's recent investment. The European Commission forecasted that Latvia's GDP rate of growth would decrease to 2.6% in 2014 (European Commission, 2014; FocusEconomics, 2014).

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TABLE 1
 LATVIA: PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES¹

(Metric tons)

Commodity ²	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013 ^c
METALS					
Steel, crude ^c	690,000 ^r	655,000	515,000	800,000	700,000
INDUSTRIAL MINERALS					
Cement, portland ^c	650,000	1,100,000	1,100,000	1,100,000 ^r	1,300,000
Dolomite, crude (excluding calcined, crushed dolomite aggregate) ^c	929,070 ³	930,000	930,000	930,000	930,000
Gravel, pebbles, shingle and flint of a kind used for concrete aggregates, for road metal, or for railway and other ballast	5,195,972	4,736,785	5,641,510 ^r	6,040,668 ^r	6,000,000
Sand and gravel	2,292,848	1,388,188	2,337,916	2,425,667 ^r	2,400,000
Sand, construction ^c	1,314,535 ³	1,320,000	1,281,995 ³	1,280,000	1,280,000
Stone, crushed	500,000	1,375,197	2,050,976	2,072,775 ^r	2,000,000
MINERAL FUELS AND RELATED MATERIALS					
Peat	1,163,803	1,119,417	1,387,689 ^r	1,160,292 ^{r,4}	1,096,292 ⁴

^cEstimated; estimated data are rounded to no more than three significant digits. ^rRevised.

¹Table includes data available through September 1, 2014.

²In addition to the commodities listed, Latvia produced clay, gypsum, industrial sand, and limestone but output was not reported, and available information was inadequate to make reliable estimates of output.

³Reported figure.

⁴Production based on volume exported.

TABLE 2
 LATVIA: STRUCTURE OF THE MINERAL INDUSTRY IN 2013

(Thousand metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity	Major operating companies and major equity owners	Location of main facility	Annual capacity
Cement	CEMEX SIA (CEMEX S.A.B. de C.V., 100%)	Plant in Broceni	1,600
Steel	JSC Liepājas Metalurģs	Plant in Liepāja	850