

China's steel exports decline 10% y-o-y in Jan-Apr'26 as demand weakens across key regions

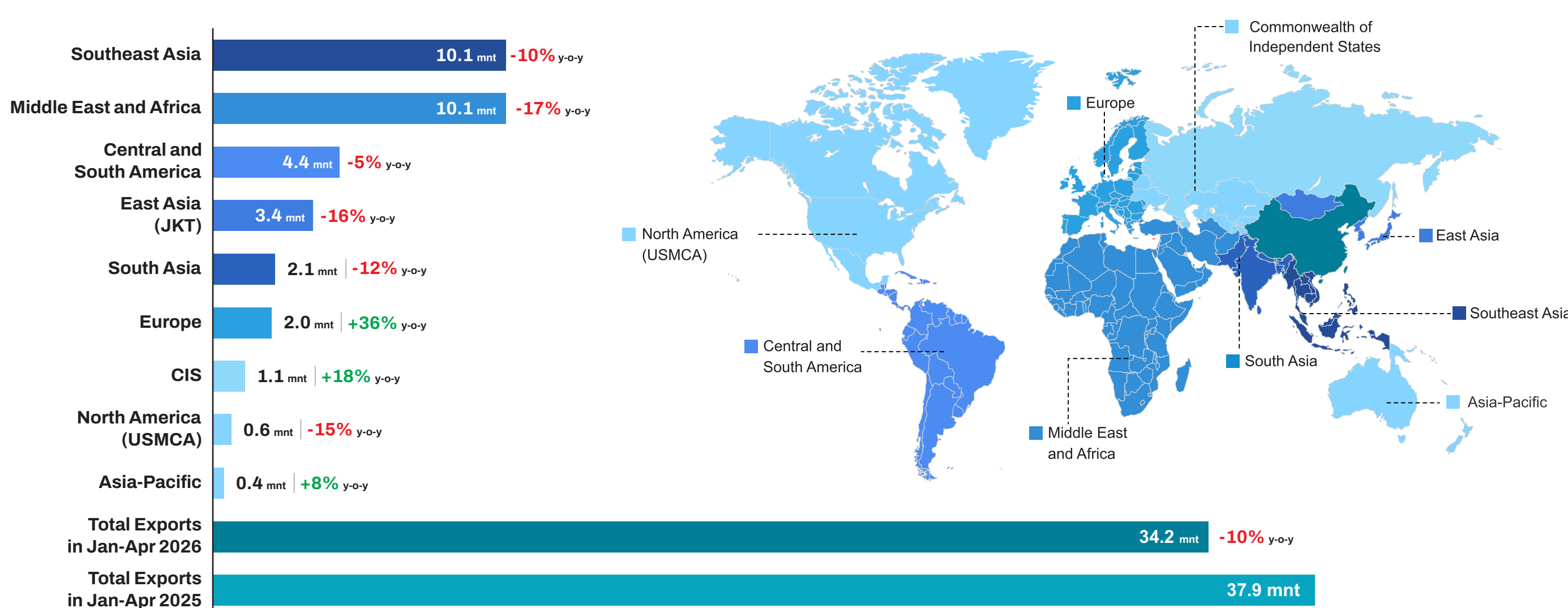
China's steel exports declined 10% year-on-year to 34.2 million tonnes (mnt) in January-April 2026 from 37.9 mnt in the corresponding period last year, indicating that global demand conditions across key export markets remained under pressure despite continued reliance on exports by Chinese mills.

The decline was broad-based, with major export destinations including Southeast Asia, the Middle East & Africa, East Asia, and South Asia all recording contractions during the period. Given that these regions account for the majority of China's steel exports, the scale and spread of the slowdown suggest that weakening regional demand and rising trade barriers are increasingly limiting global absorption of Chinese steel rather than simply redirecting trade flows between markets.

China's steel exports are expected to remain under pressure in the near term as demand across major importing regions remains uneven amid rising protectionism, weak manufacturing conditions, and slowing industrial activity.

While Chinese mills are likely to continue relying on exports amid weak domestic demand conditions, incremental export volumes may increasingly face resistance across global markets rather than being easily redirected to alternative regions.

China's Region-wise Steel Exports in 4M 2026 (Jan-Apr)



JKT: Japan, South Korea, Taiwan | USMCA: United States–Mexico–Canada Agreement
All above figures are rounded off. | Quantity in million tonnes (mnt) | % change in year-on-year (y-o-y) | Source: China Customs, BigMint

Region-wise list of exporting countries

Country	Exports in Apr'26	Exports in Mar'26	% change	Exports in Jan-Apr'26	Total Exports in Jan-Apr'25	% change	Total Exports in 2025 (Jan-Dec)
Southeast Asia							
Vietnam	0.81 mnt	0.63 mnt	+28% m-o-m	2.31 mnt	3.23 mnt	-28% y-o-y	10.28 mnt
Philippines	0.62 mnt	0.36 mnt	+73% m-o-m	1.72 mnt	1.83 mnt	-6% y-o-y	5.66 mnt
Indonesia	0.54 mnt	0.45 mnt	+18% m-o-m	1.66 mnt	1.57 mnt	+6% y-o-y	4.75 mnt
Thailand	0.49 mnt	0.49 mnt	0% m-o-m	1.65 mnt	2.05 mnt	-19% y-o-y	5.80 mnt
Malaysia	0.25 mnt	0.29 mnt	-14% m-o-m	0.91 mnt	0.90 mnt	+1% y-o-y	3.08 mnt
Others	0.48 mnt	0.59 mnt	-19% m-o-m	1.82 mnt	1.59 mnt	+14% y-o-y	4.84 mnt
Total	3.18 mnt	2.81 mnt	+13% m-o-m	10.07 mnt	11.16 mnt	-10% y-o-y	34.40 mnt
Middle East and Africa							
Saudi Arabia	0.17 mnt	0.34 mnt	-50% m-o-m	1.35 mnt	1.76 mnt	-23% y-o-y	5.57 mnt
Türkiye	0.34 mnt	0.31 mnt	+10% m-o-m	1.08 mnt	1.35 mnt	-20% y-o-y	3.85 mnt
United Arab Emirates	0.06 mnt	0.15 mnt	-60% m-o-m	0.95 mnt	1.96 mnt	-51% y-o-y	5.46 mnt
Nigeria	0.18 mnt	0.18 mnt	-2% m-o-m	0.71 mnt	0.64 mnt	+10% y-o-y	2.03 mnt
Egypt	0.08 mnt	0.18 mnt	-57% m-o-m	0.49 mnt	0.42 mnt	+17% y-o-y	1.56 mnt
Others	1.41 mnt	1.31 mnt	+8% m-o-m	5.48 mnt	5.94 mnt	-8% y-o-y	19.17 mnt
Total	2.23 mnt	2.46 mnt	-9% m-o-m	10.07 mnt	12.08 mnt	-17% y-o-y	37.64 mnt
Central and South America							
Peru	0.23 mnt	0.22 mnt	+5% m-o-m	0.79 mnt	0.75 mnt	+6% y-o-y	2.40 mnt
Colombia	0.15 mnt	0.15 mnt	-3% m-o-m	0.59 mnt	0.47 mnt	+25% y-o-y	1.57 mnt
Brazil	0.07 mnt	0.10 mnt	-25% m-o-m	0.55 mnt	1.12 mnt	-50% y-o-y	3.34 mnt
Chile	0.14 mnt	0.14 mnt	+2% m-o-m	0.47 mnt	0.58 mnt	-18% y-o-y	1.67 mnt
Ecuador	0.12 mnt	0.11 mnt	+16% m-o-m	0.38 mnt	0.32 mnt	+19% y-o-y	1.05 mnt
Others	0.49 mnt	0.33 mnt	+48% m-o-m	1.59 mnt	1.38 mnt	+15% y-o-y	4.96 mnt
Total	1.21 mnt	1.05 mnt	+15% m-o-m	4.36 mnt	4.61 mnt	-5% y-o-y	14.99 mnt
East Asia (JKT)							
South Korea	0.51 mnt	0.76 mnt	-33% m-o-m	1.97 mnt	2.40 mnt	-18% y-o-y	7.27 mnt
China Hong Kong	0.21 mnt	0.21 mnt	-3% m-o-m	0.64 mnt	0.65 mnt	-1% y-o-y	2.05 mnt
Taiwan, China	0.12 mnt	0.11 mnt	+12% m-o-m	0.34 mnt	0.45 mnt	-25% y-o-y	1.17 mnt
Japan	0.06 mnt	0.08 mnt	-28% m-o-m	0.28 mnt	0.38 mnt	-27% y-o-y	1.26 mnt
Mongolia	0.09 mnt	0.06 mnt	+63% m-o-m	0.17 mnt	0.18 mnt	-4% y-o-y	0.63 mnt
Others	0.01 mnt	0.01 mnt	+11% m-o-m	0.03 mnt	0.03 mnt	+7% y-o-y	0.08 mnt
Total	1.00 mnt	1.23 mnt	-19% m-o-m	3.43 mnt	4.08 mnt	-16% y-o-y	12.46 mnt
South Asia							
India	0.29 mnt	0.26 mnt	+14% m-o-m	0.88 mnt	0.60 mnt	+45% y-o-y	2.17 mnt
Pakistan	0.19 mnt	0.19 mnt	+2% m-o-m	0.78 mnt	1.28 mnt	-39% y-o-y	3.12 mnt
Bangladesh	0.12 mnt	0.08 mnt	+55% m-o-m	0.33 mnt	0.39 mnt	-14% y-o-y	1.21 mnt
Sri Lanka	0.05 mnt	0.01 mnt	+392% m-o-m	0.14 mnt	0.15 mnt	-7% y-o-y	0.54 mnt
Nepal	0.004 mnt	0.003 mnt	+24% m-o-m	0.01 mnt	0.01 mnt	-15% y-o-y	0.04 mnt
Total	0.66 mnt	0.53 mnt	+24% m-o-m	2.15 mnt	2.44 mnt	-12% y-o-y	7.08 mnt
Europe							
Italy	0.12 mnt	0.04 mnt	+255% m-o-m	0.37 mnt	0.33 mnt	+12% y-o-y	1.22 mnt
Belgium	0.14 mnt	0.05 mnt	+154% m-o-m	0.37 mnt	0.22 mnt	+63% y-o-y	0.89 mnt
Spain	0.08 mnt	0.05 mnt	+68% m-o-m	0.32 mnt	0.18 mnt	+80% y-o-y	0.55 mnt
Poland	0.04 mnt	0.03 mnt	+42% m-o-m	0.13 mnt	0.14 mnt	-6% y-o-y	0.45 mnt
U.K.	0.04 mnt	0.02 mnt	+71% m-o-m	0.11 mnt	0.07 mnt	+63% y-o-y	0.24 mnt
Others	0.15 mnt	0.25 mnt	-41% m-o-m	0.73 mnt	0.55 mnt	+32% y-o-y	2.15 mnt
Total	0.57 mnt	0.43 mnt	+31% m-o-m	2.02 mnt	1.49 mnt	+36% y-o-y	5.51 mnt
Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)							
Russia	0.12 mnt	0.09 mnt	+35% m-o-m	0.37 mnt	0.35 mnt	+6% y-o-y	1.18 mnt
Uzbekistan	0.07 mnt	0.08 mnt	-11% m-o-m	0.25 mnt	0.20 mnt	+26% y-o-y	0.66 mnt
Kazakhstan	0.06 mnt	0.03 mnt	+77% m-o-m	0.15 mnt	0.16 mnt	-4% y-o-y	0.65 mnt
Ukraine	0.02 mnt	0.07 mnt	-74% m-o-m	0.10 mnt	0.04 mnt	+161% y-o-y	0.15 mnt
Kyrgyzstan	0.05 mnt	0.03 mnt	+89% m-o-m	0.09 mnt	0.04 mnt	+123% y-o-y	0.35 mnt
Others	0.04 mnt	0.03 mnt	+55% m-o-m	0.14 mnt	0.15 mnt	-9% y-o-y	0.53 mnt
Total	0.36 mnt	0.33 mnt	+10% m-o-m	1.10 mnt	0.94 mnt	+18% y-o-y	3.52 mnt
North America (USMCA)							
Mexico	0.08 mnt	0.09 mnt	-8% m-o-m	0.27 mnt	0.32 mnt	-15% y-o-y	0.99 mnt
USA	0.07 mnt	0.06 mnt	+21% m-o-m	0.23 mnt	0.30 mnt	-22% y-o-y	0.76 mnt
Canada	0.05 mnt	0.03 mnt	+35% m-o-m	0.12 mnt	0.12 mnt	+4% y-o-y	0.50 mnt
Others	0.0004 mnt	0.0003 mnt	+63% m-o-m	0.0009 mnt	0.0011 mnt	-17% y-o-y	0.0034 mnt
Total	0.20 mnt	0.18 mnt	+10% m-o-m	0.63 mnt	0.74 mnt	-15% y-o-y	2.25 mnt
Asia-Pacific							
Australia	0.05 mnt	0.07 mnt	-19% m-o-m	0.23 mnt	0.24 mnt	-3% y-o-y	0.78 mnt
New Zealand	0.01 mnt	0.02 mnt	-51% m-o-m	0.06 mnt	0.04 mnt	+62% y-o-y	0.13 mnt
Papua New Guinea	0.02 mnt	0.01 mnt	+97% m-o-m	0.05 mnt	0.04 mnt	+19% y-o-y	0.12 mnt
Maldives	0.002 mnt	0.004 mnt	-40% m-o-m	0.01 mnt	0.01 mnt	+58% y-o-y	0.03 mnt
Fiji	0.004 mnt	0.002 mnt	+68% m-o-m	0.01 mnt	0.01 mnt	+32% y-o-y	0.03 mnt
Others	0.006 mnt	0.005 mnt	+24% m-o-m	0.02 mnt	0.02 mnt	-12% y-o-y	0.07 mnt
Total	0.09 mnt	0.11 mnt	-13% m-o-m	0.38 mnt	0.35 mnt	+8% y-o-y	1.17 mnt
Grand Total	9.5 mnt	9.1 mnt	+4% m-o-m	34.2 mnt	37.9 mnt	-10% y-o-y	119 mnt

All above figures are rounded off. | Quantity in million tonnes (mnt) | % change in month-on-month (m-o-m) % change in year-on-year (y-o-y) | Source: BigMint

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