

# Mineral Industry Surveys

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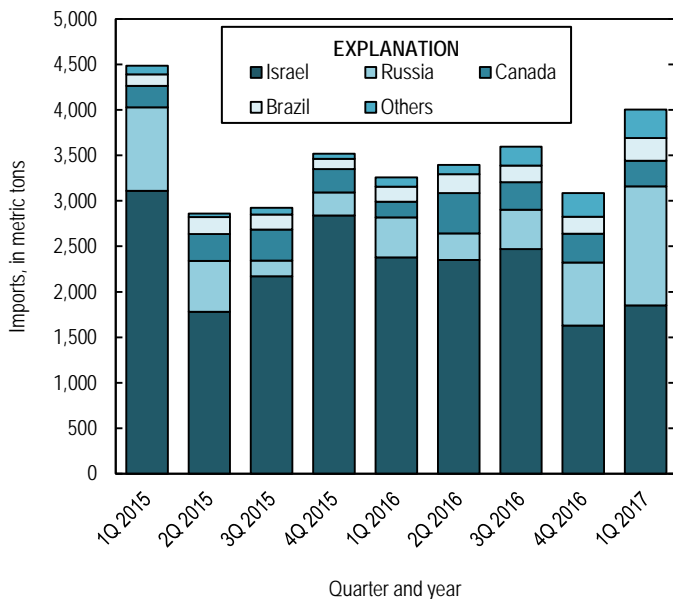
## MAGNESIUM IN THE FIRST QUARTER 2017

U.S. magnesium exports in the first quarter of 2017 were 15% more than exports in the first quarter of 2016 but 26% less than those in the fourth quarter of 2016. Canada (42%) and Mexico (38%) were the principal destinations. Exports of metal, alloys, scrap, and semifabricated magnesium products decreased by 54%, 14%, 9%, and 19%, respectively compared with exports in the fourth quarter 2016 (table 1).

Magnesium imports for consumption in the first quarter of 2017 were 11% more than imports in fourth quarter of 2016 but 6% less than those in the first quarter of 2016. Israel was the source of 46% of imported magnesium metal, and Russia was the source of 33% (fig. 1). Scrap accounted for 36% of the imports in the first quarter of 2017, 43% of which came from Canada, 26% came from the United Kingdom, and 23% came from Mexico (table 1).

The U.S. spot Western average price for magnesium was unchanged in the first quarter 2017. The average U.S. spot dealer price for imported magnesium decreased slightly during the first quarter 2017. Outside of the United States, average daily magnesium prices in China decreased slightly during the first quarter 2017, and average daily magnesium prices in Europe decreased by 5% during the quarter (table 2). Prices of magnesium from China in Europe declined by 10% in January compared to prices in December because of weak demand; however, prices increased during February and March as production costs and demand in China increased (Yee, 2017).

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**Reference Cited**

Yee, Alvin, 2017, China’s magnesium export offers track higher domestic prices: Platts Metals Daily, v. 6, no. 44, March 3, p. 10–11.

Figure 1. Quarterly imports of magnesium metal from the first quarter 2015 through the first quarter 2017. Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 1  
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION AND EXPORTS OF MAGNESIUM<sup>1</sup>

(Metric tons)

	2017				
	2016	January	February	March	January– March
<b>Imports for consumption:</b>					
Metal	13,300	1,440	1,380	1,200	4,010
Waste and scrap	21,900	1,480	1,040	1,390	3,910
Alloys (magnesium content)	7,840 <sup>r</sup>	355	647	1,110	2,110
Sheet, tubing, ribbons, wire, powder, and other (magnesium content)	3,430 <sup>r</sup>	232	206	535	973
<b>Total</b>	<b>46,500 <sup>r</sup></b>	<b>3,510</b>	<b>3,260</b>	<b>4,230</b>	<b>11,000</b>
<b>Exports:</b>					
Metal	5,270	446	296	88	830
Waste and scrap	991 <sup>r</sup>	151	94	120	365
Alloys (gross weight)	10,700	1,210	925	789	2,920
Sheet, tubing, ribbons, wire, powder, and other (gross weight)	2,080	97	94	129	320
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,100</b>	<b>1,900</b>	<b>1,410</b>	<b>1,130</b>	<b>4,440</b>

<sup>r</sup>Revised.

<sup>1</sup>Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 2  
MAGNESIUM PRICES, FIRST QUARTER 2017

		Beginning of quarter	End of quarter
U.S. spot dealer import	dollars per pound	1.47–1.55	1.45–1.50
U.S. spot Western	do.	2.10–2.20	2.10–2.20
China	dollars per metric ton	2,250–2,300	2,210–2,270
European free market	do.	2,300–2,400	2,200–2,250
do. Ditto.			

Source: Platts Metals Week.