

Mineral Industry Surveys

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U.S. PRODUCTION OF SELECTED MINERAL COMMODITIES IN THE FIRST QUARTER 2022

Previously, U.S. mine and plant production data for 14 selected mineral commodities were provided on a monthly (or quarterly) basis but beginning in 2022, production data for 2 additional mineral commodities, palladium and platinum, are also being provided by the U.S. Geological Survey to the Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System (FRS), for use in preparing its index of industrial production and the related capacity indexes and capacity utilization rates. These measures cover manufacturing, mining, and electric and gas utilities, and they are among the key economic indicators monitored by the FRS for guidance in determining national monetary policy.

Construction Materials

The combined production of construction-related materials (cement, construction sand and gravel, crushed stone, and gypsum) in the first quarter of 2022 decreased by 24% compared with that in the fourth quarter of 2021 following the typical seasonal trend (fig. 1, tables 1, 2). All construction-related materials had lower production in the first quarter of 2022 compared with that in the fourth quarter of 2021. In the first quarter of 2022 compared with the first quarter of 2021, production of cement was 6% higher, construction sand and gravel production was 5% higher, crushed stone production was 3% higher, but gypsum production was 8% lower (fig. 1, table 1).

Base Metals

Production of three base metals (copper, iron ore, and lead) was essentially unchanged, secondary aluminum production increased by 3% and zinc production increased by 9% in the first quarter of 2022 compared with that in the fourth quarter of 2021 (fig. 2, table 1). Comparing production in the first quarter of 2022 with that in the first quarter of 2021, the largest increases in production were zinc (10%), copper (8%), and secondary aluminum (3%). Production decreased for iron ore

(20%) and lead (6%) in the first quarter of 2022 compared with that in the first quarter of 2021 (fig. 2, table 1).

Precious Metals

During the first quarter of 2022, silver production increased by 4%, gold production was essentially unchanged and palladium and platinum production decreased by 4% each compared with production in the fourth quarter of 2021. Comparing production in the first quarter of 2022 with that in the first quarter of 2021, gold production was 18% higher and silver production was unchanged (fig. 3, table 1). Palladium production was 21% lower and platinum production was 20% lower in the first quarter of 2022 compared with that in the first quarter of 2021 (table 1).

Other Mineral Materials

In the first quarter 2022, production of phosphate rock was 9% lower and molybdenum and soda ash production were slightly lower each than those in the fourth quarter of 2021. Molybdenum and phosphate rock production were 31% and 13% lower, respectively, in the first quarter of 2022 compared with that in the first quarter of 2021, but soda ash production was 3% higher (table 1).

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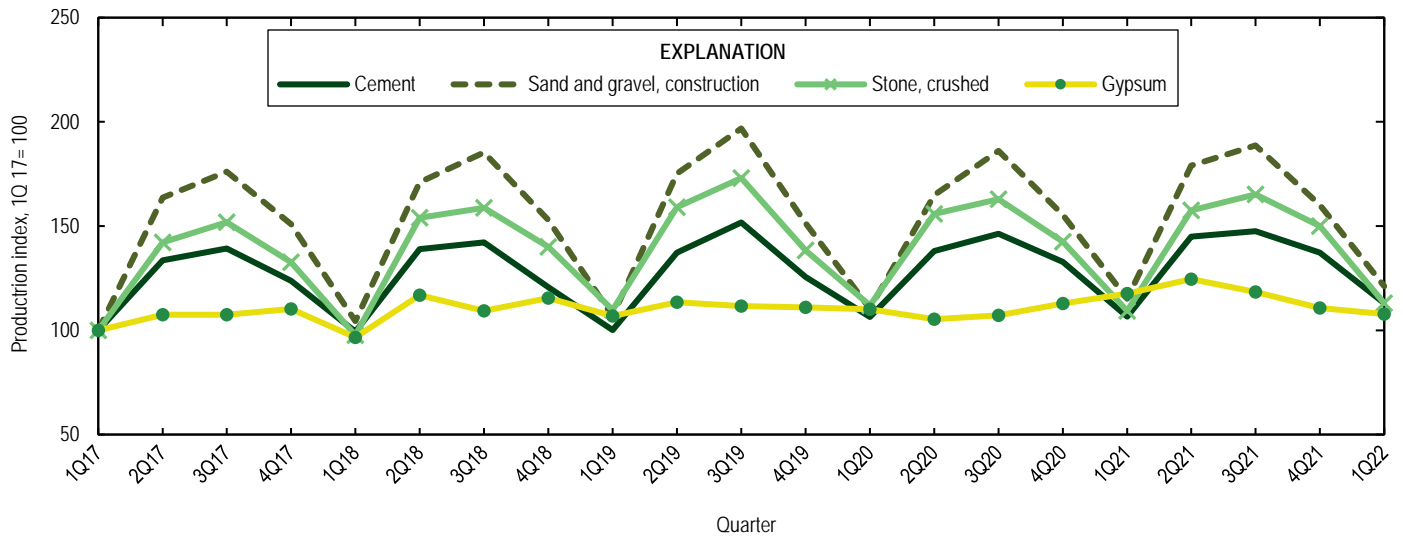


Figure 1. U.S. production of selected construction-related mineral commodities from the first quarter of 2017 through the first quarter of 2022, indexed to the first quarter of 2017.

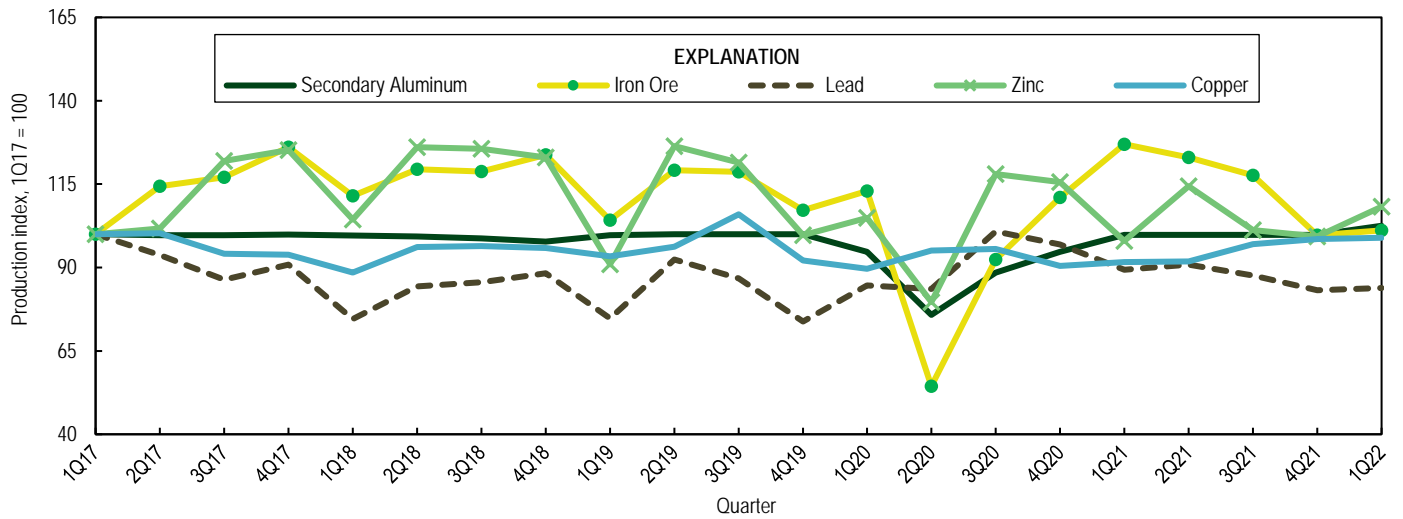


Figure 2. U.S. production of selected base metals from the first quarter of 2017 through the first quarter of 2022, indexed to the first quarter of 2017.

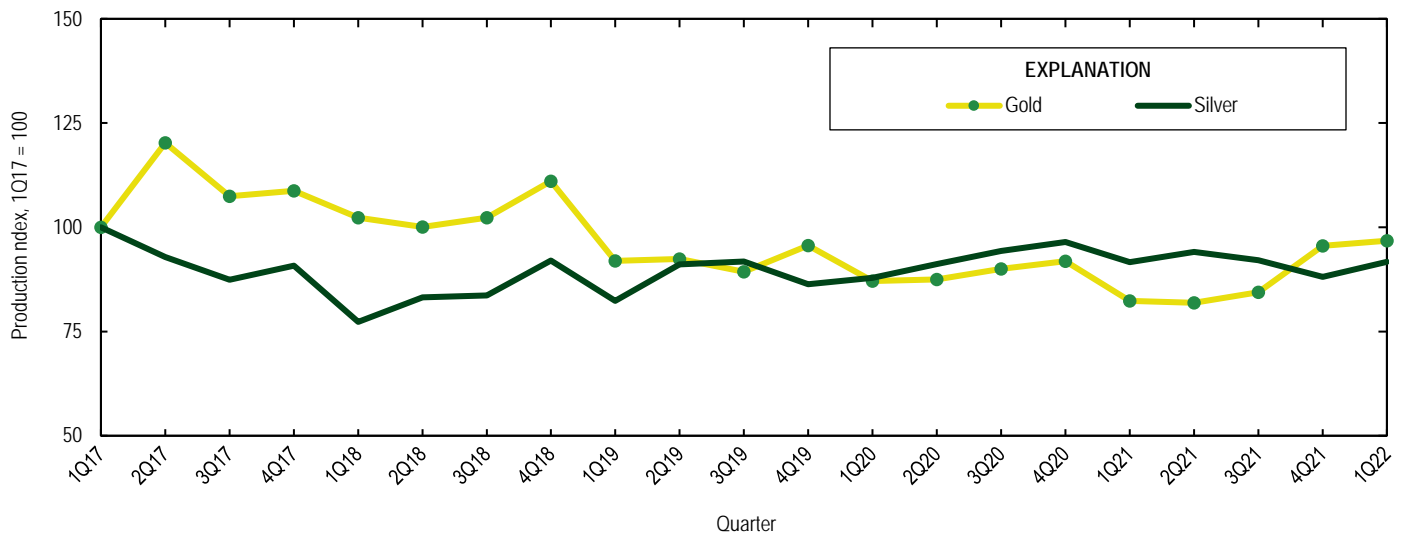


Figure 3. U.S. mine production of gold and silver from the first quarter of 2017 through the first quarter of 2022, indexed to the first quarter of 2017.

TABLE 1
PRODUCTION TRENDS FOR SELECTED MINERAL COMMODITIES¹

Mineral commodity	Percent change, 1st quarter 2022 vs. 4th quarter 2021	Percent change, 1st quarter 2022 vs. 1st quarter 2021
Aluminum (secondary)	3	3
Cement ^e	-18	6
Copper	(2)	8
Gold	1	18
Gypsum	-3	-8
Iron ore ^e	1	-20
Lead	1	-6
Molybdenum	-2	-31
Palladium	-4	-21
Phosphate rock	-9	-13
Platinum	-4	-20
Sand and gravel, construction	-24	5
Silver	5	(2)
Soda ash	-2	3
Stone, crushed	-25	3
Zinc	9	10

^eEstimated.

¹Based on data available through July 7, 2022.

²Less than 0.5 percent.

TABLE 2
U.S. PRODUCTION OF SELECTED MINERAL COMMODITIES, BY QUARTER^{1,2}

Commodity		2021					2022		1st quarter	
		1st quarter	2d quarter	3d quarter	4th quarter	1st quarter- 4th quarter	1st quarter	2021	2022	
Aluminum ³	thousand metric tons	209	209	209	209	837	215	209	215	
Cement ⁴	million metric tons	18.1	24.6 ^r	25.0	23.3 ^r	90.9 ^r	19.1	18.1	19.1	
Copper ⁵	thousand metric tons	297	298	315	319	1230	321	297	321	
Gold ⁵	metric tons	44.7	44.4	45.8 ^r	51.8 ^r	187 ^r	52.5	44.7	52.5	
Gypsum ⁵	million metric tons	4.6	4.9	4.7	4.4	18.6	4.3	4.6	4.3	
Iron ore ⁷	do.	13.2 ^r	12.8 ^r	12.3 ^r	10.4 ^r	48.7 ^r	10.5	13.2 ^r	10.5	
Lead ⁵	thousand metric tons	72.6	73.8	71.2	67.6	285	68.2	72.6	68.2	
Molybdenum ⁵	do.	13.1 ^r	9.4 ^r	9.6	9.2 ^r	41.1 ^r	9.0	13.1 ^r	9.0	
Palladium ⁵	metric tons	3.7	3.5	3.5	3.1	13.7	2.9	3.7	2.9	
Phosphate rock, marketable	million metric tons	5.3	5.6	5.8	5.1	21.8	4.6	5.3	4.6	
Platinum ⁵	metric tons	1.1	1.0	1.0	0.9	4.0	0.9	1.1	0.9	
Sand and gravel, construction ⁸	million metric tons	176 ^r	273 ^r	288 ^r	245 ^r	981 ^r	185	176 ^r	185	
Silver ⁵	metric tons	255	261	254 ^r	244 ^r	1010 ^r	255	255	255	
Soda ash ⁷	million metric tons	2.7 ^r	2.8	2.8	2.9	11.3	2.8	2.7 ^r	2.8	
Stone, crushed ⁸	do.	281 ^r	405 ^r	425 ^r	386 ^r	1500 ^r	291	281 ^r	291	
Zinc ⁵	thousand metric tons	163	191	169	166 ^r	688 ^r	180	163	180	

⁵Estimated. ⁶Revised. do. Ditto.

¹Based on data available through July 7, 2022.

²Data are rounded to no more than three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

³Aluminum alloys produced at secondary smelters in the United States, less primary aluminum consumed, primary silicon consumed, and other alloying ingredients consumed.

⁴Shipments of domestically produced portland and blended cement, including cement made from imported clinker, as a proxy for actual domestic cement production.

⁵Recoverable mine production.

⁶Calculated production.

⁷Mine production.

⁸Sold or used; quarterly survey based on sample survey.