

Monthly Mineral Production Survey, December 2020

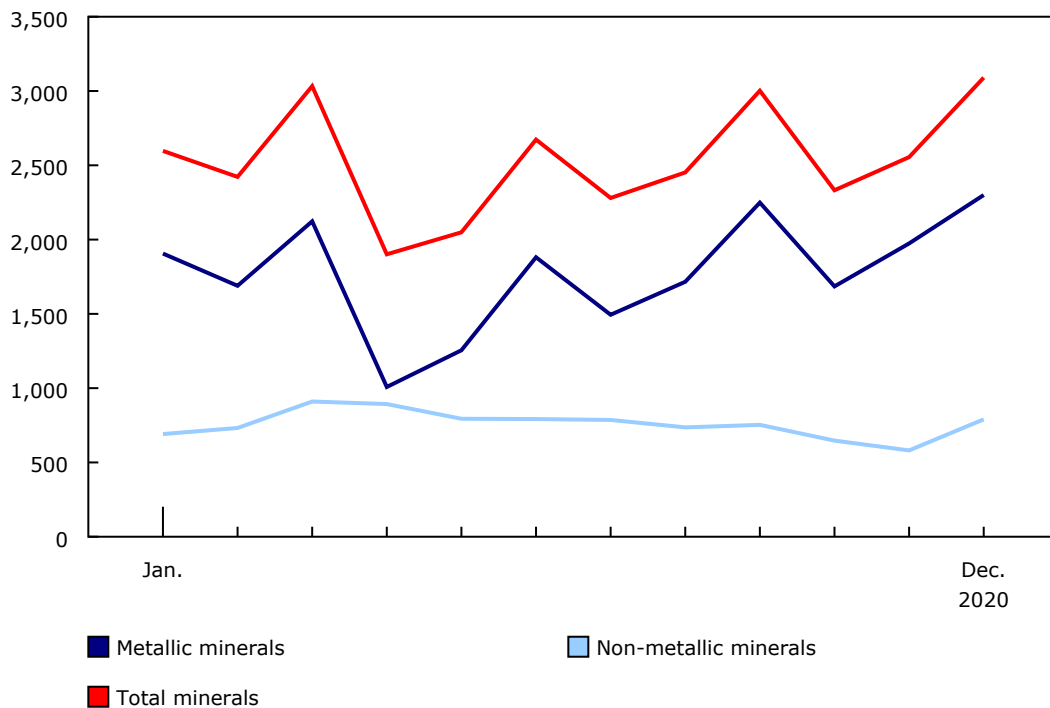
Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Monday, February 22, 2021

Value of shipments of metallic and non-metallic minerals recovers

The total value of shipments of minerals saw an initial decrease in October, followed by two consecutive monthly increases. In October, the total value of shipments of minerals declined 22.3% to \$2.3 billion, compared with September. In November, the total value of shipments of minerals rose 9.6% to \$2.6 billion as a result of an increase in the value of shipments of metallic minerals, which offset a decline in that of non-metallic minerals. In December, the value of shipments of both types of minerals grew 20.9% to \$3.1 billion.

Chart 1
Total value of shipments of minerals

millions of dollars



Note(s): Values do not include Quebec, as shipment values are unavailable for the province.
Source(s): Table 16-10-0021-01.

Value of metallic mineral shipments rebounds in fourth quarter

In October, the value of metallic mineral shipments declined 25.1% from September to \$1.7 billion. The overall drop posted in October was attributable to a decline in both quantity of shipments (-25.4%) and metal prices. Gold (-38.8%), silver (-33.4%) and iron ore (-19.0%) displayed the largest declines in value of shipments, all following strong increases the month before. Following October's decline, the value of shipments of metallic minerals recovered in November (+17.1%) and December (+16.6%). In November, iron ore was the sole commodity to show a decline (-19.1%), while other metallic commodities increased. The upward trend continued in December, with most metals showing increases amid rising metal prices.



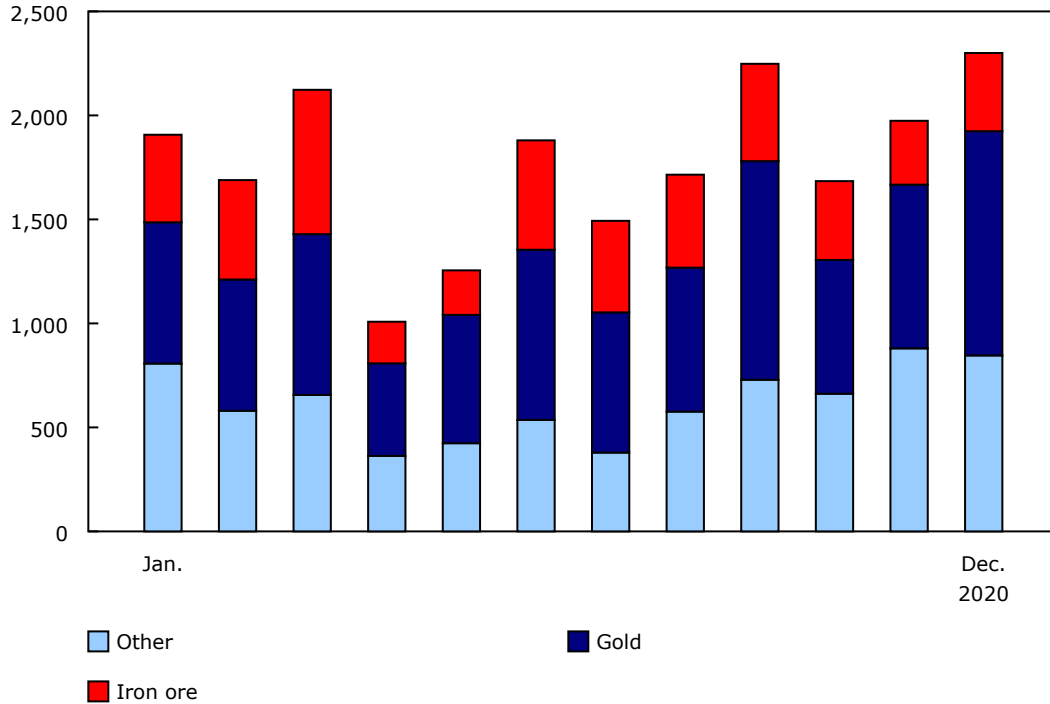
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Chart 2
Value of shipments of metallic minerals

millions of dollars



Note(s): Values do not include Quebec, as shipment values are unavailable for the province.
Source(s): Table 16-10-0021-01.

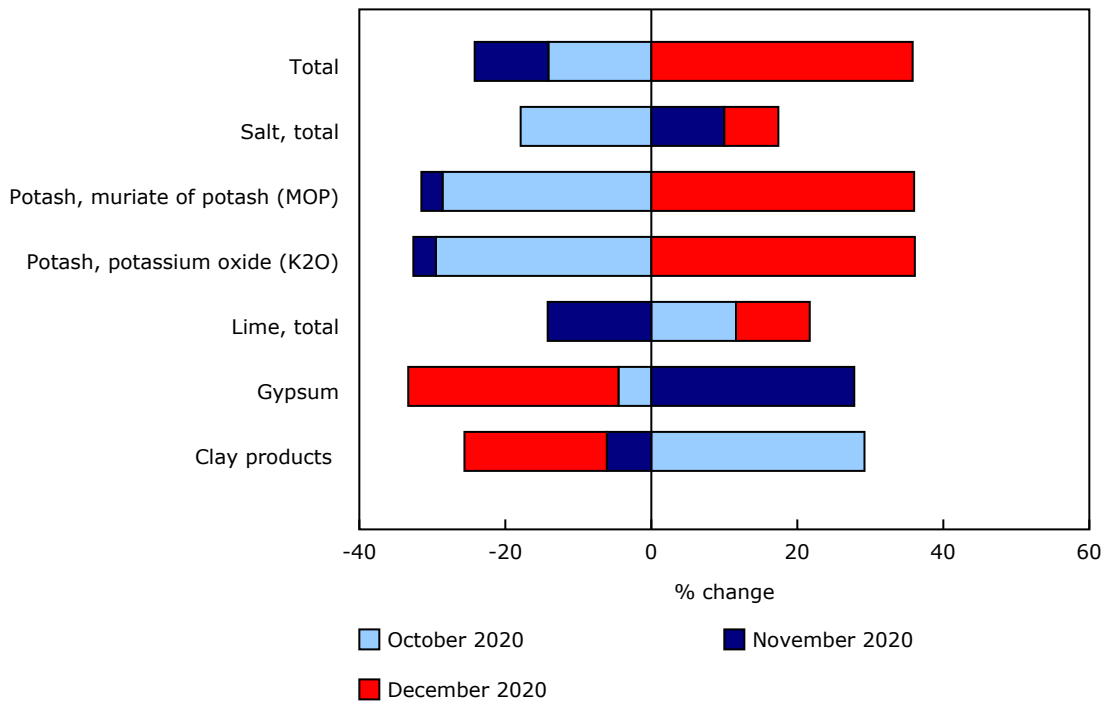
Zinc production decreases sharply

During the fourth quarter, zinc production decreased by 4.3 million kilograms, with a drop of 26.8% in December alone. During the same period, nickel production increased by 3.0 million kilograms, the strongest growth in metal production, with gains of 4.5% in October, 15.0% in November and 2.0% in December. The production of copper increased significantly in October (+18.3%), followed by moderate declines in November (-1.4%) and December (-3.1%). After posting a 3.8% decrease in October, gold production increased in both November (+2.6%) and December (+13.6%), which represented an additional production of 1 924 kilograms over the period.

Value of shipments of non-metallic minerals rebounds during the fourth quarter

The value of shipments of non-metallic minerals displayed two consecutive, large declines in October (-14.1%) and November (-10.1%), followed by a substantial recovery in December (+35.8%). The value of shipments of diamonds more than doubled in October, but the growth was not enough to offset declines in potassium oxide (-29.5%) and muriate of potash (-28.6%). The decrease in shipment values continued in November, when only gypsum (+27.8%) and salt (+10.0%) showed increases. Most commodities contributed to December's increase, with diamonds (+67.2%), potassium oxide (+36.1%) and muriate of potash (+36.0%) showing the largest gains in percentage and absolute change.

Chart 3
Month-to-month change in the value of shipment of non-metallic minerals



Note(s): Values do not include Quebec, as shipment values are unavailable for the province.
Source(s): Table 16-10-0020-01.

Potash and gypsum production on the rise

During the fourth quarter, potash production increased by 487 847 metric tonnes. There were strong increases in November (+31.0%), and December (+41.3%) had the highest production recorded in 2020. During the same period, gypsum production increased by 34 208 metric tonnes because of gains in October (+15.7%) and November (+11.1%). Despite a 2.7% increase in November, salt production showed the strongest decline in production of non-metallic materials over the period (-202 930 metric tonnes), following decreases in both October (-12.4%) and December (-10.9%).

Note to readers

The Monthly Mineral Production Survey estimates the production, shipments and inventories of Canada's leading minerals. This survey covers several metallic minerals (iron, gold, silver, etc.) and non-metallic minerals (diamonds, gypsum, potash, salt, etc.).

The Monthly Survey of Smelters and Metal Refineries covers smelters and metal refineries for a variety of base metals, including copper, lead, nickel and zinc.

The Monthly Mineral Production Survey has been redesigned over the last two years and is now conducted within the Integrated Business Statistics Program as part of the Minerals and Metals Production Statistics Program modernization initiative.

Data from the Monthly Mineral Production Survey and the Monthly Survey of Smelters and Metal Refineries are released every month and a detailed review is released every three months, on the month ending the quarter.

Data are not seasonally adjusted.

Data for the two previous months are subject to revision based on late responses. Data for October and November 2020 have been revised with this release.

Data prior to 2020 can be found on the [Production of Canada's Leading Minerals](#) page of the Natural Resources Canada website.

Data for Quebec are collected by the Institut de la statistique du Québec (ISQ). In some cases, data are not available for Quebec, and Quebec's estimates may not be directly comparable to data published for the rest of Canada. For example, the value of shipments from Quebec mines is not currently collected by the ISQ. As a result, the total value of Canadian shipments covers only activity outside Quebec.

Statistics Canada is working with the ISQ to harmonize survey content so that respondents operating in Quebec will eventually answer the same monthly questionnaire that is distributed to other provinces and territories.

Unless otherwise stated, metallic mineral production and shipments refer to recovered content from concentrates, whereas metallic mineral inventories refer to concentrates. The value and quantity of shipments of iron include iron agglomerates and concentrates, while iron production refers only to iron concentrates.

Non-metallic mineral shipment and production quantity excludes diamonds, which are measured in carats.

The value of shipments facilitates comparison between mineral commodities since the units of measure of quantities produced or shipped vary dramatically from one mineral to another (e.g., iron in millions of tonnes versus diamonds in carats).

Available tables: [16-10-0019-01](#) to [16-10-0021-01](#) .

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers [5238](#) and [5247](#).

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca).