

Global macroeconomics

	2015	2016	2017
Real GDP (IHS February forecast)			
World	2.6	2.7	3.1
United States	2.4	2.4	2.8
European Union	1.8	1.8	2.1
China	6.9	6.3	6.3
Asia-Pacific	4.7	4.6	4.7

Source: IHS.

Energy and feedstocks

	Feb. 25	Prior week	year-ago	% change prior	% change YOY
Henry Hub natural gas (March; \$/MMBtu)	\$1.79	\$1.89	\$3.21	-5.6	-44.4
WTI oil (April; \$/bbl)	\$33.32	\$30.77	\$50.25	8.3	-33.7
Brent oil (April; \$/bbl)	\$35.29	\$32.60	\$59.77	8.3	-41.0
Mont Belvieu LDH Propane (Feb)	\$0.37	\$0.38	\$0.60	-2.6	-38.6

Source: NYMEX; CME.

Global industrial production

	2015	2016	2017
Industrial production (IHS February forecast)			
World	1.5	1.5	2.9
United States	1.3	-0.4	2.6
European Union	1.3	1.6	2.1
China	6.1	5.8	5.9
Asia-Pacific	3.4	3.8	4.3

Source: IHS.

US chemical indicators

	Latest	previous	year-ago	% change prior	% change YOY
Freight car loadings (week ended Feb. 20)	1,077.6	1,507	1,950.0	1.0	2.0
Chemical production Index (Jan, 2012=100)	100.7	99.7	99.9	1.0	0.8
Chemical mfg. producer price index (Jan; 1982=100)	264.9	264.3	265.1	0.2	-0.1
Chemical utilization rate (Jan)	75.7	74.8	74.2	1.2	2.0

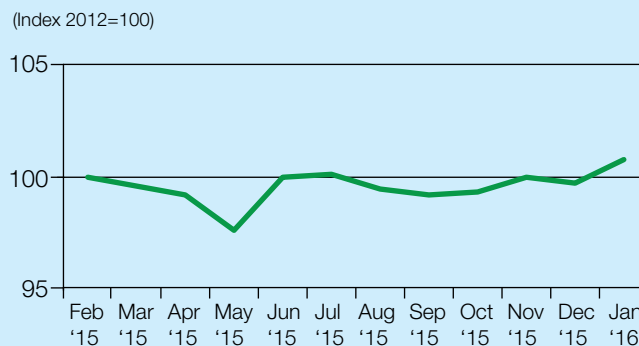
Source: AAR; Federal Reserve; Bureau of Labor Statistics.

North American chemical rail traffic rises

During the week ended 5 March, chemical railcar traffic in North America increased 4.8% year-on-year (YOY) on a continuing surge in the United States. For all of North America, chemical railcar traffic totaled 45,707 carloads, down 0.6% from the previous week, according to data released on 9 March by the Association of American Railroads (AAR). For the year to date, chemical railcar traffic in North America is up 0.7% versus the 11% decrease in all railcar traffic, according to AAR.

Chemical railcar traffic in the United States contributed 32,922 carloads to the total, up 1.0% from the previous week and up 7.9% YOY. For the year to date, US chemical railcar traffic is up 2.5% versus the 13% decrease in all railcar traffic. Canadian chemical rail traffic totaled 11,526, down 5.4% from the previous week and 3.8% YOY.

US chemical production



Source: Federal Reserve (Washington, DC)

Vital Stats will appear every Friday in IHS Chemical Week Business Daily. We encourage you to send us your feedback.