Chromium (Cr)

Base Year 2025

World Production

51 Mt of chromite concentrate

+2.8%

Brazil Production

594,313.40 t of chromium products (226,751.99 t of contained Cr_2O_3)

+8.4%

National Highlight

Production concentrated in Bahia, with FERBASA leading chromite mining and ferroalloy output.

Trade Balance

↓ Deficit of USD 828.6 million

Exports

USD 348.9 million

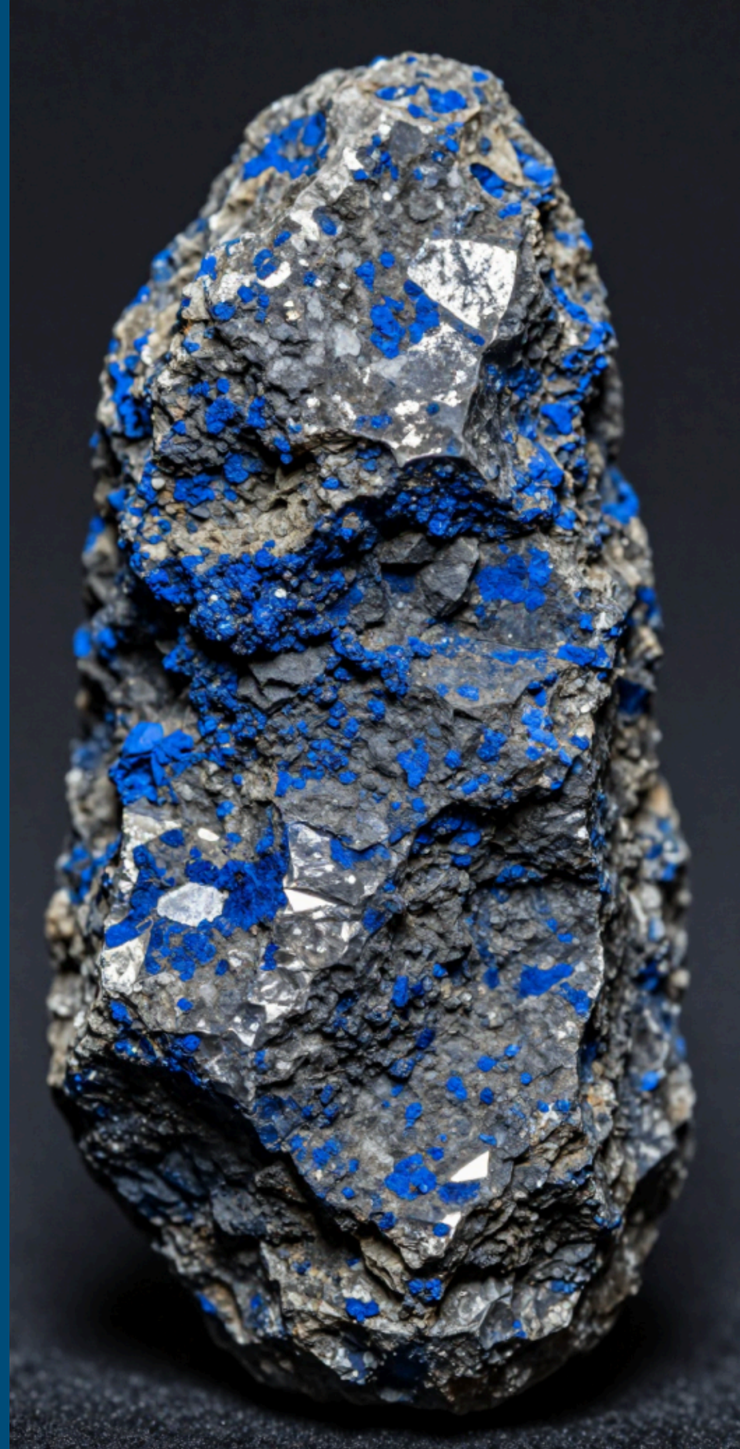
-7.7%

Mining Royalties (CFEM)

R$ 12.6 million

+2.7%

% Change 2025 vs 2024



What is Chromium?

Chromium (Cr) is a metallic chemical element with atomic number 24, belonging to the transition metals group of the periodic table. It is a hard, silvery metal, known mainly for giving metal alloys, especially stainless steels, resistance to corrosion, oxidation and wear, as well as greater hardness.

Occurrence

In nature, chromium is associated mainly with chromite (an oxide), its main economic source. Chromite is the raw material for producing ferrochrome and chromium oxides and compounds. Its main occurrences include chromite deposits, mafic and ultramafic rocks, igneous complexes, ophiolitic bodies and concentrations associated with platinum-group metals.

Main Applications

The main applications of chromium are concentrated in the steel industry, especially stainless steel and superalloys, since it increases resistance to corrosion, oxidation, wear and high temperatures. Its main uses include: production of stainless steel and ferrochrome; superalloys; metal coatings and chrome plating; pigments, chemical compounds, refractories and strategic special alloys.

Chromium is a critical and strategic mineral for the steel industry. Amid growing global concern over the supply of critical minerals, Brazil remains the only chromite producer in the Americas.

1. World Supply

In 2025, according to the United States Geological Survey (USGS), world production was approximately 51 million tonnes of chromite concentrate, an increase of about 2.8% over the previous year.



Table 1 – Main chromium producing countries (chromite concentrate) – 2025

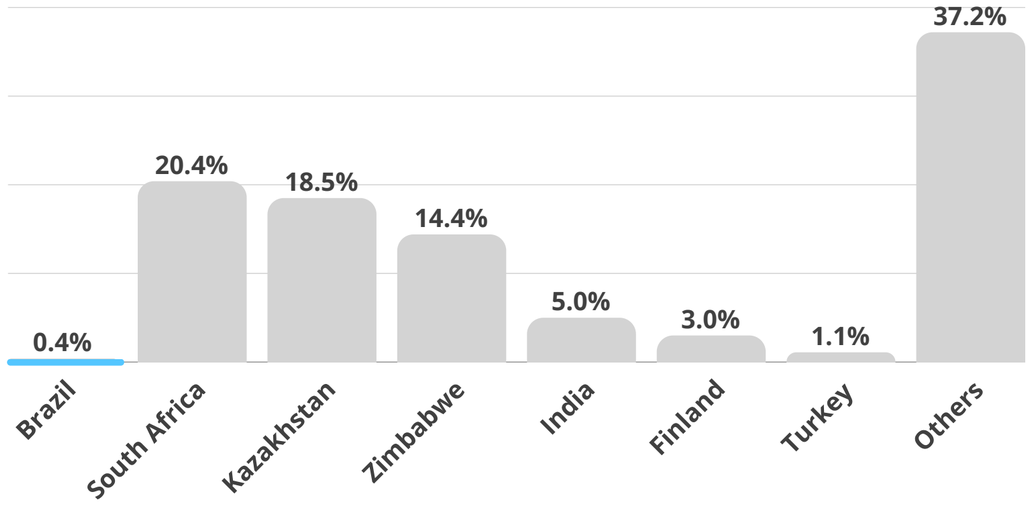
Country	Production (kt)	Share (%)
Brazil	**594**	**1.2**
South Africa	23,000	45.1
Turkey	9,000	17.6
Kazakhstan	7,000	13.7
India	3,000	5.9
Zimbabwe	2,000	3.9
Others	6,406	12.6
Total	**51,000**	**100.0**

Source: ANM; USGS-Mineral Commodity Summaries 2026. Brazil's production corrected relative to the USGS figure.

2. Reserves

According to the United States Geological Survey (USGS), world reserves of contained chromite in 2025 amounted to approximately 540 million tonnes, distributed as follows (in thousand t): South Africa (110,000), Kazakhstan (100,000), Zimbabwe (78,000), India (27,000), Finland (16,000), Turkey (5,700).

Distribution of the Main World Chromium Reserves – 2025
(in contained chromite)





Brazil's share of global reserves is modest, about 0.14%, at around 778.9 thousand tonnes of contained chromite (proven and probable reserves), as reported in the Annual Mining Report (RAL).

Source: ANM; USGS - Mineral Commodity Summaries 2026 (Chromium).

3. Domestic Production

In 2025, Brazilian chromium production totaled 594 thousand tonnes of chromium products, corresponding to 226.8 thousand tonnes of contained Cr_2O_3.

Year	2023	2024	2025
Chromium (contained Cr_2O_3, kt)	193.5	209.1	226.8



Photo: Ferbasa

Brazil's processed production in 2025 reached 594 thousand t of chromium products, namely chromite sand, chromite concentrate and lump chromitite, produced in the states of Bahia and Amapá.

Source: ANM

4. Foreign Trade

In 2025, the chromium sector recorded a trade deficit of USD FOB 828.6 million.



Mineral Sector Exports

Total: USD FOB 348.9 million
Change: -7.7%

Main destinations:
Netherlands (10.7%)
United States (10.0%)
Argentina (10.0%)

Mineral Sector Imports

Total: USD FOB 1,177.5 million
Change: +16.8%

Main origins:
China (31.9%)
India (11.1%)
United States (9.8%)

Source: Open Data/Ministry of Development, Industry, Trade and Services (MDIC) and COMEXMIN/ANM

- Data include the Mineral Extraction Industry (IEM) and the Mineral Processing Industry (ITM)

***USD FOB/t** = The seller fulfills its obligations and responsibilities when the goods, cleared for export, are delivered, stowed on board the vessel at the port of shipment, both indicated by the buyer, on the date or within the agreed period.

Foreign trade: main products of the mineral extraction industry (IEM) in 2025

Main Exported Products

	Chromite (chromium ores) - NCM 26100010	Other chromium ores and concentrates - NCM 26100090
USD FOB	961,869	58,618
EXP Share (%)	94.3	5.7

Main Imported Products

	Chromite (chromium ores) - NCM 26100010	Other chromium ores and concentrates - NCM 26100090
USD FOB	6,310,039	1,163
IMP Share (%)	100.0	0.0

Foreign trade: main products of the mineral processing industry (ITM) in 2025

Main Exported Products

	NCM 73042400 - Stainless steel pipes for oil/gas drilling	NCM 72042100 - Stainless steel waste and scrap
USD FOB	59,193,128	45,091,113
EXP Share (%)	17.0	13.0

Main Imported Products

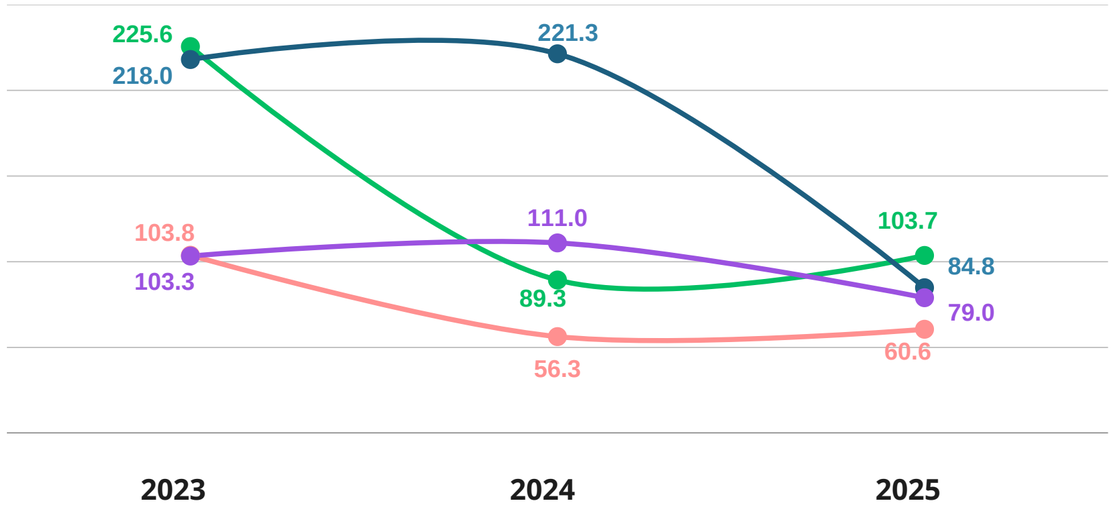
	NCM 73042400 - Stainless steel pipes for oil/gas drilling	NCM 72193300 - Flat-rolled stainless steel (1–3 mm)
USD FOB	137,404,032	80,655,670
IMP Share (%)	11.7	6.9

Source: Open Data/Ministry of Development, Industry, Trade and Services (MDIC).

5. Prices

Chromium prices are determined by supply and demand conditions for chromium ore, ferrochrome and chromium metal in the main international markets.

Chart – Average FOB Prices - USD/kg net - Last 3 Years



- Other stainless steel tube or pipe fittings
  NCM: 73072900
- Stainless steel in ingots and other primary forms
  NCM: 72181000
- Other flat-rolled products of stainless steel, of a width of less than 600 mm and a thickness exceeding 3 mm but less than 4.75 mm
  NCM: 72201290
- Threaded elbows, bends and sleeves for stainless steel pipes
  NCM: 73072200

Source: Open Data/Ministry of Development, Industry, Trade and Services (MDIC).
***USD FOB/kg** = The seller fulfills its obligations and responsibilities when the goods, cleared for export, are delivered, stowed on board the vessel at the port of shipment, both indicated by the buyer, on the date or within the agreed period.

6. Financial Compensation for the Exploitation of Mineral Resources (CFEM)

In 2025, collections of CFEM, Brazil's mining royalty, for chromium totaled R$ 12,615,769.50, an increase of approximately 2.7% over 2024. The 2021–2025 series shows a recovery after the decline recorded in 2023.

Year	Total Amount Paid (R$)
2021	10,940,964.76
2022	8,993,919.36
2023	8,355,706.47
2024	12,278,872.06
2025	12,615,769.50
Grand Total	**53,185,232.15**

7. Investments and Mining Rights

In 2025, chromium investments totaled R$ 105.2 million, concentrated mainly in the mining stage (97.1%).

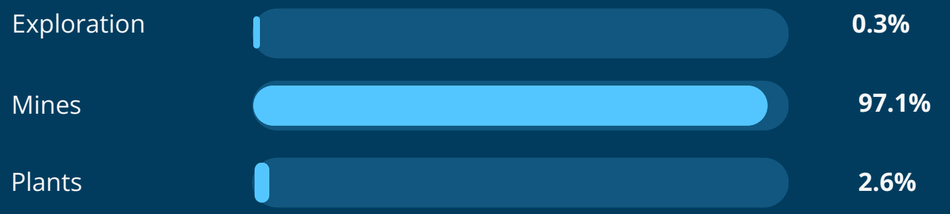
Mining Investments

In 2025, total investments declared in the Annual Mining Reports (RALs) and the Mineral Exploration Investment Declarations (DIPEM) amounted to R$ 105.2 million, most of it allocated to mines (97.1%), followed by plants (2.6%) and mineral exploration (0.3%).

Main States

- BA (50.2%)
- CE (47.3%)
- MG (2.5%)

Investment Breakdown



Mining Rights 2025

Main States

- BA (6 permits)
- CE (2 permits)
- MG (2 permits)

Mineral Exploration

- 11 exploration permits published
- 3 final reports filed
- 3 final reports approved (MG)

Mining Applications

- 1 mining application filed (BA)

Mining Concession/ PLG

- no mining concession orders published in 2025

8. Relevant Factors

In 2025, the global chromium market remained strongly conditioned by the performance of the stainless steel chain, the main destination for ferrochrome and, consequently, chromite. Chromium remains an essential input for the production of stainless steels and superalloys, as it provides resistance to corrosion, oxidation and wear and better performance at high temperatures. South Africa remained the world's leading producer and exporter of chromium ore, while China remained the main production hub for ferrochrome and stainless steel, though highly dependent on imported ore, mainly from South Africa.

On the international stage, a highlight was the estimated increase in world chromite production in 2025, accompanied by changes in supply and demand dynamics. According to the USGS, global chromite ore production grew compared with 2024, with the possibility of future supply expansion in countries such as Brazil, Kazakhstan and Zimbabwe, driven by investments, expansions and new projects. At the same time, the market was affected by the relative slowdown in Chinese demand for stainless steel, oversupply in certain segments and falling or volatile ferrochrome prices, reflecting China's weight as the world's largest chromium consumer.

Another relevant factor was the persistence of supply risks associated with the high geographic concentration of chromite reserves, production and international trade. South Africa holds a significant share of global chromium ore resources and reserves, but faces structural challenges related to energy, logistics and production costs. In 2025, chromium also retained strategic relevance for industrial economies, having been included in the final United States critical minerals list, published in 2025, due to its importance for economic, industrial and defense security.

In Brazil, chromium maintained its importance as a mineral commodity used predominantly in metallurgy, associated mainly with the production of chromite and ferrochrome, with emphasis on deposits and operations linked to mafic-ultramafic complexes. Although Brazil's share of the world market is still relatively small compared with the major producers, updated USGS data place Brazil among the countries with potential to expand production, reinforcing the importance of monitoring this commodity in the context of strategic minerals and special metal alloy chains.

Sources: USGS – Mineral Commodity Summaries 2026; USGS – Final List of U.S. Critical Minerals (2025).