

Mineral Industry Surveys

For information, contact:

Kim B. Shedd, Cobalt Commodity Specialist
 National Minerals Information Center
 U.S. Geological Survey
 989 National Center
 Reston, VA 20192
 Telephone: (703) 648-4974, Fax: (703) 648-7757
 Email: ksheddd@usgs.gov

Annie Hwang (Data)
 Telephone: (703) 648-7952
 Fax: (703) 648-7975
 Email: ahwang@usgs.gov

Internet: <https://www.usgs.gov/centers/nmic>

COBALT IN APRIL 2020

The amount of cobalt contained in U.S. imports of cobalt metals and chemicals in April 2020 was 26% less than that imported in April 2019. For the first 4 months of 2020, the amount of cobalt contained in imports was 4% more than that imported during the same period in 2019 (table 2). The amount of cobalt contained in U.S. exports of unwrought cobalt and chemicals in April 2020 was 16% less than that exported in April 2019 and during the first 4 months of 2020, the amount exported was 23% less than that exported during the same period in 2019 (table 4).

April 2019. The following listed prices are for cobalt metal in April, in dollars per pound.

Type	Price range	Average price
U.S. spot ¹	15.10–16.50	15.76
LME cash mean ²	13.38–13.38	13.38

¹Source: Platts Metals Week, minimum 99.8% cobalt cathode.

²London Metal Exchange, mean of the cash buyer and cash seller price, minimum 99.3% cobalt briquettes, cathode, ingot, or rounds (converted from dollars per metric ton and rounded to the nearest cent).

Prices

In April, the monthly average U.S. spot cobalt price decreased by 9% from that in March and was slightly lower than that in April 2019. The monthly average LME cash mean price was slightly lower than that in March and 12% lower than that in

List services and web feed subscribers are the first to receive notification of USGS minerals information publications and data releases. For information on how to subscribe, go to <https://www.usgs.gov/centers/nmic/minerals-information-publication-list-services>.

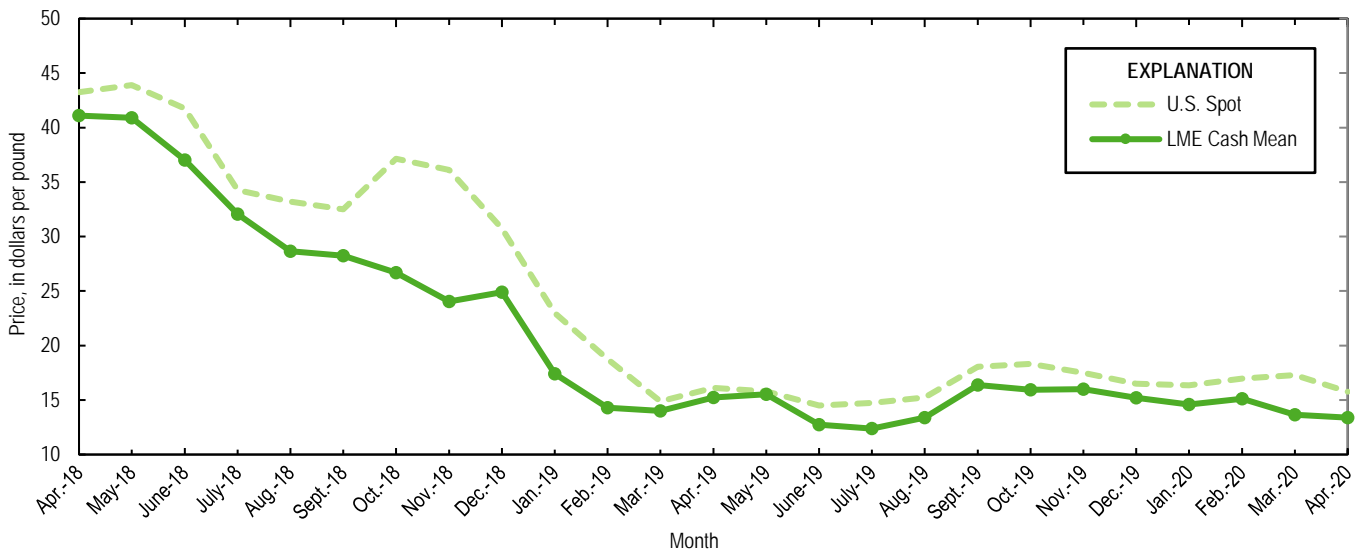


Figure 1. Average U.S. spot prices and LME cash mean prices for April 2018 through April 2020. Sources: Platts Metals Week and London Metal Exchange.

TABLE 1
 REPORTED STOCKS OF COBALT METAL, END OF PERIOD

(Metric tons, contained cobalt)

Period	U.S. Government ²	LME ¹		Total
		U.S. warehouse	Non-U.S. warehouse	
2019:				
April	302	204	700	904
May	302	200	661	861
June	302	200	659	859
July	302	191	649	840
August	302	191	645	836
September	302	191	643	834
October	302	111	600	711
November	302	111	576	687
December	302	102	583	685
2020:				
January	302	95	555	650
February	302	94	551	645
March	302	92	551	643
April	302	91	513	604

¹London Metal Exchange.

²Data from Defense Logistics Agency Strategic Materials.

TABLE 2
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF COBALT, BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY¹

Period and country or locality of origin	Metals ²		Oxides and hydroxides		Salts and compounds ³		Total cobalt content for the period ⁵ (metric tons)	Cobalt content, year to date ^{5,6} (metric tons)
	Gross weight (metric tons)	Value ⁴ (thousands)	Gross weight (metric tons)	Value ⁴ (thousands)	Gross weight (metric tons)	Value ⁴ (thousands)		
2019:								
April	1,260	\$48,400	161	\$3,960	239	\$3,630	1,470	4,870 ^r
May	1,220	43,000	190	4,740	286	2,880	1,440	6,310 ^r
June	558	17,800	123	3,000	141	1,190	687	7,000 ^r
July	1,030	33,900 ^r	181	4,350	115	1,580	1,200	8,200 ^r
August	674 ^r	20,100 ^r	119	2,670	88	1,120	790 ^r	8,990 ^r
September	1,420 ^r	48,300 ^r	123	3,110	191	1,930	1,570 ^r	10,600 ^r
October	779 ^r	27,800 ^r	198	5,150	152	1,640	973 ^r	11,500 ^r
November	829	29,600	167	4,600	231	3,110	1,030	12,600 ^r
December	1,210	42,500 ^r	102	2,740	103	1,370	1,320	13,900 ^r
January–April	4,230 ^r	190,000 ^r	505 ^r	14,000 ^r	803 ^r	13,100 ^r	4,870 ^r	XX
January–December	11,900 ^r	453,000 ^r	1,710 ^r	44,300 ^r	2,110 ^r	27,900 ^r	13,900 ^r	XX
2020:								
January	1,670	62,300	141	3,560	147	1,330	1,820	1,820
February	803	27,300	112	2,850	76	768	906	2,720
March	1,080	40,600	160	3,810	203	2,360	1,260	3,980
April:								
Australia	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	729
Belgium	--	--	46	1,320	--	--	33	96
Brazil	--	--	--	--	51	367	16	35
Canada	165	5,270	(7)	4	--	--	165	703
China	5	121	--	--	19	163	10	53
Finland	41	1,590	20	496	196	2,170	119	333
Germany	4	191	--	--	(7)	2	4	15
Japan	192	6,890	--	--	--	--	192	686
Korea, Republic of	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	15
Madagascar	84	3,150	--	--	--	--	84	313
Mexico	40	1,330	--	--	--	--	40	40
Morocco	20	712	--	--	--	--	20	100
Netherlands	--	--	4	66	--	--	3	14
Norway	218	7,630	--	--	--	--	218	1,340
Russia	143	5,000	--	--	--	--	143	347
South Africa	11	81	--	--	--	--	11	55
Taiwan	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	32
United Kingdom	4	222	32	866	14	179	32	161
Other	--	--	1	30	--	--	1	6
Total	927	32,200	103	2,780	279	2,880	1,090	5,070
January–April	4,480	162,000	516	13,000	706	7,330	5,070	XX

^rRevised. XX Not applicable. -- Zero.

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

²Unwrought cobalt, excluding alloys; includes cobalt cathode and cobalt metal powder; may include intermediate products of cobalt metallurgy.

³Includes cobalt acetates, cobalt carbonates, cobalt chlorides, and cobalt sulfates.

⁴Customs value.

⁵Estimated from gross weights.

⁶May include revisions to previously published data.

⁷Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 3
U.S. IMPORTS FOR CONSUMPTION OF ADDITIONAL COBALT MATERIALS, BY COUNTRY OR LOCALITY¹

Period and country or locality of origin	Unwrought cobalt alloys		Cobalt waste and scrap		Wrought cobalt and cobalt articles	
	Gross weight (metric tons)	Value ² (thousands)	Gross weight (metric tons)	Value ² (thousands)	Gross weight (metric tons)	Value ² (thousands)
2019:						
April	38	\$2,870	253	\$3,430	34	\$4,500 ^r
May	18	1,140	156	3,360	41	4,540 ^r
June	21	1,550	145	1,460	47	4,480
July	34	2,430	223	2,420	55	4,640 ^r
August	39	2,470	171	2,440	23	3,180 ^r
September	22	1,510	155	1,880	41 ^r	4,150 ^r
October	16	875	158	2,130 ^r	47	4,980
November	21	1,240	192	2,950	43	4,480
December	40	2,280	152	2,170	52	5,320
January–April ^f	158	10,100	745	10,100	142	18,000
January–December	369 ^r	23,600 ^r	2,100	28,900 ^r	491 ^r	53,800 ^r
2020:						
January	12	738	180	1,620	37	4,360
February	36	1,650	69	769	30	3,570
March	40	1,890	248	2,240	49	5,880
April:						
Belgium	3	106	--	--	(3)	17
Canada	(3)	15	9	79	2	605
France	--	--	22	182	3	715
Germany	--	--	5	2	2	251
Japan	(3)	25	52	460	--	--
Norway	5	404	--	--	(3)	83
Romania	--	--	29	406	--	--
Singapore	--	--	16	278	--	--
Tunisia	--	--	13	135	--	--
United Kingdom	41	2,020	16	232	21	1,880
Other	--	--	4	54	3	675
Total	49	2,570	167	1,830	31	4,230
January–April	138	6,850	663	6,450	148	18,000

^rRevised. -- Zero.

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

²Customs value.

³Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 4
U.S. EXPORTS OF COBALT MATERIALS¹

Period	Unwrought cobalt, powders, matte, waste and scrap ²		Oxides and hydroxides		Salts and compounds ³		Total cobalt content for the period ⁵ (metric tons)	Cobalt content, year to date ^{5,6} (metric tons)
	Gross weight (metric tons)	Value ⁴ (thousands)	Gross weight (metric tons)	Value ⁴ (thousands)	Gross weight (metric tons)	Value ⁴ (thousands)		
2019:								
April	424	\$10,800	4	\$207	16	\$157	431	1,670 ^r
May	285	9,430	3	74	46	287	299	1,970 ^r
June	286 ^r	10,300 ^r	7	90	10	208	294 ^r	2,270 ^r
July	214	8,870	44	658	19	170	250	2,520 ^r
August	398	10,700	4	115	--	--	401	2,920 ^r
September	248 ^r	8,830 ^r	2	55	26	316	256 ^r	3,170 ^r
October	260 ^r	9,650 ^r	5	215	38	487	272 ^r	3,450 ^r
November	267	8,330 ^r	(7)	13	--	--	267	3,710 ^r
December	361	11,000	1	25	(7)	4	361	4,070 ^r
January–April	1,650 ^r	51,100 ^r	13	466	64	900	1,670 ^r	XX
January–December	3,970 ^r	128,000 ^r	79	1,710	203	2,370	4,070 ^r	XX
2020:								
January	335	11,900	8	326	32	93	349	349
February	301	8,930	14	489	3	39	311	660
March	248	8,320	7	249	65	292	268	928
April	351	8,700	3	109	39	340	363	1,290
January–April	1,240	37,900	31	1,170	139	764	1,290	XX

^rRevised. XX Not applicable. -- Zero.

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

²May include other intermediate products of cobalt metallurgy and unwrought cobalt alloys.

³Cobalt acetates and cobalt chlorides.

⁴Free alongside ship (f.a.s.) value.

⁵Estimated from gross weights.

⁶May include revisions to previously published data.

⁷Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

TABLE 5
U.S. EXPORTS OF WROUGHT COBALT, COBALT ORE,
AND CONCENTRATES¹

Period	Wrought cobalt and cobalt articles		Cobalt ore and concentrates	
	Gross weight (metric tons)	Value ² (thousands)	Gross weight (metric tons)	Value ² (thousands)
2019:				
April	151	\$13,300	--	--
May	117	12,600	(3)	\$6
June	109	11,400	(3)	5
July	102	11,300	--	--
August	127	13,700	--	--
September	141 ^r	12,600 ^r	(3)	10
October	229	17,200	(3)	4
November	242	18,700	--	--
December	208	16,700 ^r	77	211
January–April	469	50,100	24	367
January–December	1,750 ^r	164,000	102	603
2020:				
January	107	11,800	150	515
February	128	14,900	--	--
March	123	13,700	--	--
April	100	10,600	(3)	6
January–April	458	51,100	150	521

^rRevised. -- Zero.

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

²Free alongside ship (f.a.s.) value.

³Less than ½ unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.