

Croatia has increased exports in the mining and extraction segment by as much as 630 % in the period from January to August 2020 and such growth can be largely attributed to INA's exports of domestic crude oil for processing in MOL's Hungarian refinery.

According to the Central Bureau of Statistics, exports in the first eight months of last year amounted to 47.3 million euros, while this year it increased to 344 million euros in the same period. This also boosted total exports to Hungary, which rose by 65.5 %. In May, Croatian media reported that INA, majority owned by Hungarian MOL, has signed an agreement with oil pipeline operator JANAF on transportation of crude oil from INA's now defunct oil refinery in Sisak to Hungarian refineries for processing. The agreement was signed in 2018 by Minister of Environment Protection and Energy Tomislav Coric, and in the first four months of 2020, JANAF transported some 247,000 tons of Croatian crude oil from Sisak to Hungary, instead to Rijeka refinery for processing. Crude oil has been delivered to Hungary from Sisak since the summer of 2019, which was the first time that Croatia exported oil from domestic production for processing in foreign refineries. According to sources from Sisak refinery, the majority of this oil was ultimately delivered to Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. In January, Belgian company De Smet Engineers & Contractors (DSEC) said that it has started basic engineering works on INA's second generation (2G) ethanol plant project. In March, INA signed a license agreement with French company Axens for the supply of its Futurol cellulosic ethanol technology. Last year, INA completed testing of the energy crop miscanthus as a source of bio-fuel as part of a program focused on ensuring the sustainability and profitability of its refining system. Last March, INA said that it has decided to start bitumen production at its oil refinery in Sisak, which should take place in March 2021. The company's management said that processing of crude oil at Sisak is planned until the end of the first half of 2019, after which the refinery will enter the transformation process. It will continue as a logistics center, while other projects will include the production of bitumen, lubricants and potentially production of bio fuels.