

# Monthly Highlights

No. 9 / 2019

EUMOFA

European Market Observatory for  
Fisheries and Aquaculture Products

## In this issue

In August 2019, first-sales value and volume were greater in Belgium, Greece, Italy, Latvia, and Lithuania compared to August 2018, but were lower in France, Poland, and Sweden.

In the observed 36-month period (September 2016–August 2019), the average price of albacore in France (4,12 EUR/kg) was 5% higher than in Italy (3,94 EUR/kg), and 15% higher than in Spain (3,62 EUR/kg). Average swordfish prices were highest in Italy (8,78 EUR/kg), where they were 35% above the average in Spain (6,50 EUR/kg), and 28% higher than in Portugal (6,89 EUR/kg).

The price of frozen carp from Myanmar imported in the EU reached 2,24 EUR/kg in the last week of September (week 39); it was 3% above the price a year earlier, however the recorded volumes were 34% lower than the same week in 2018, at 126 tonnes.

In January–August 2019, the average retail price of fresh sole consumed in the UK's families was 18,44 EUR/kg, 2% higher compared to the same period in 2018.

Japan became the 38th country to agree a free trade agreement (FTA) with the EU in February 2019, when a new agreement between the two partners entered into force.

The EU accounted for 77% of the global production of whiting in 2017, being the most significant market for whiting in the world. Three Member States (the UK, France and Ireland) were responsible for 86% of whiting catches.

In 2018, Slovene fishermen landed about 126 tonnes of fresh fish products. The total volume of Slovenia's marine fishery was 2% lower than in 2017.



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# 1 First sales in Europe

In **January–August 2019**, 13 EU Member States (MS) and Norway reported first-sales data for 10 commodity groups<sup>1</sup>. First-sales data are based on both first-sales notes and data collected from auction markets.

## 1.1. Compared to the same period last year

**Increases in value and volume:** First sales grew in Greece, Italy, Latvia, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom. Increased supply of small pelagic species was the main factor leading to higher first sales in Latvia.

**Decreases in value and volume:** First sales declined in Belgium, Denmark, France, Lithuania, the Netherlands, and Sweden. The drop was particularly sharp in Sweden due to a steep decline in herring supply (-61%). The significant decline seen in Lithuania was due to cod (-79%).

Table 1. **JANUARY–AUGUST FIRST-SALES OVERVIEW OF THE REPORTING COUNTRIES**  
(volume in tonnes and value in million EUR)\*

	January–August 2017		January–August 2018		January–August 2019		Change from January–August 2018	
Country	Volume	Value	Volume	Value	Volume	Value	Volume	Value
Belgium	10.268	40,76	9.054	39,29	8.768	37,92	-3%	-4%
Denmark	151.387	219,18	159.849	224,28	151.073	207,03	-5%	-8%
France	128.059	433,16	126.885	420,62	120.066	408,20	-5%	-3%
Greece	n/a	n/a	14.596	29,53	15.893	32,14	9%	9%
Italy	64.187	233,28	56.745	214,88	57.401	236,22	1%	10%
Latvia	36.229	7,35	25.381	4,81	35.154	5,86	39%	22%
Lithuania	1.109	1,05	1.170	0,91	707	0,56	-40%	-38%
Netherlands	114.436	244,09	238.213	355,22	165.783	252,53	-30%	-29%
Norway	2.003.534	1.574,11	2.122.584	1.631,23	1.930.286	1.684,82	-9%	3%
Poland	70.017	22,80	66.754	20,35	71.218	19,14	7%	-6%
Portugal	62.978	131,63	62.004	131,77	67.380	141,49	9%	7%
Spain	319.078	809,81	336.639	928,62	340.004	966,03	1%	4%
Sweden	375.631	262,68	388.513	223,87	231.243	109,63	-40%	-51%
United Kingdom	209.796	384,14	165.124	298,66	176.254	382,34	7%	28%

\* Volume data are reported in net weight for EU MSs and in live weight equivalent (LWE) for Norway. Prices are reported in EUR/kg (without VAT). For Norway, they are reported in EUR/kg of live weight.

\*\*Partial data. First-sales data for Italy covers 229 ports (approximately 50% of the total landings).

Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).

<sup>1</sup> Commodity groups for which first sales are reported are: bivalves and other molluscs, cephalopods, crustaceans, flatfish, freshwater fish, groundfish, other marine fish, salmonids, small pelagics, and tuna and tuna-like species.



## 1.2. In August 2019

**Increases in value and volume:** First sales grew in Belgium, Greece, Italy, Latvia, and Lithuania. The increase was particularly marked in Latvia due to a high supply of sprat, herring and smelt.

**Decreases in value and volume:** First sales declined in France, Poland, and Sweden. For the latter two countries, the decline was due to a significant decrease in herring supply.

Table 2. **AUGUST FIRST-SALES OVERVIEW OF THE REPORTING COUNTRIES**  
(volume in tonnes and value in million EUR)

Country	August 2017		August 2018		August 2019		Change from August 2018	
	Volume	Value	Volume	Value	Volume	Value	Volume	Value
Belgium	1.206	5,40	1.086	4,61	1.167	5,01	7%	9%
Denmark	33.083	39,97	38.751	39,50	36.433	41,32	-6%	5%
France	15.978	57,98	16.546	55,29	15.391	54,64	-7%	-1%
Greece	n/a	n/a	1.363	3,26	2.107	3,87	55%	19%
Italy	6.505	27,68	6.238	26,48	6.440	27,83	3%	5%
Latvia	2.303	0,41	1.463	0,26	4.063	0,61	178%	134%
Lithuania	10,00	0,007	5,76	0,006	6,04	0,009	5%	43%
Netherlands	34.647	55,41	30.306	49,95	32.378	43,61	7%	-13%
Norway	121.841	129,56	127.592	144,58	164.073	131,15	29%	-9%
Poland	4.339	1,76	2.245	0,84	878	0,32	-61%	-62%
Portugal	12.867	21,51	14.284	21,99	12.346	22,33	-14%	2%
Spain	46.978	115,62	54.458	140,04	50.835	143,98	-7%	3%
Sweden	57.729	63,37	57.647	57,76	18.529	12,05	-68%	-79%
United Kingdom	28.792	44,15	29.664	45,57	28.021	53,48	-6%	17%

\*Volume data are reported in net weight for EU MSs and in live weight equivalent (LWE) for Norway. Prices are reported in EUR/kg (without VAT).  
For Norway, they are reported in EUR/kg of live weight.

\*\*Partial data. First-sales data for Italy covers 229 ports (approximately 50% of the total landings). Volume data is also reported in net weight.  
Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).

The most recent weekly first-sales data (**up to week 46-2019**) is available via the EUMOFA website, and can be accessed [here](#).

The most recent monthly first-sales data **for September** is available via the EUMOFA website, and can be accessed [here](#).

### 1.3. First sales in selected countries


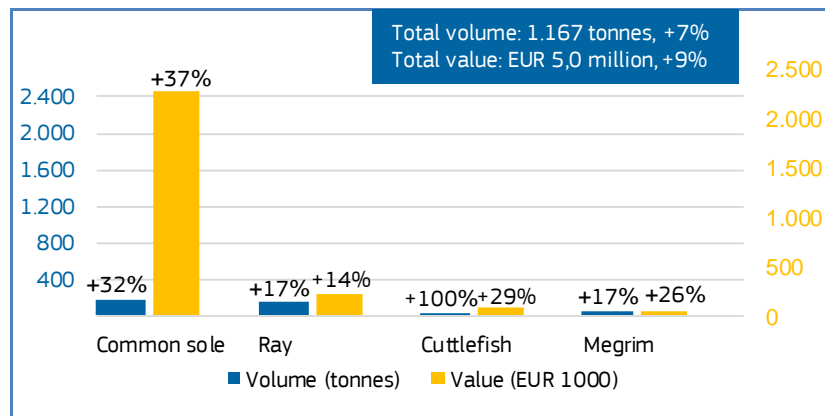
 In **Belgium** in **January–August 2019**, overall first-sales value and volume fell by 4% and 3%, respectively, in comparison with the same period in 2018. The species contributing the most to this decline were cuttlefish, European plaice, gurnard, and scallop. In **August 2019**, total value and volume were higher compared with August 2018. Common sole was the main species behind the increases seen, followed by ray, cuttlefish, and megrim. The price of cuttlefish fell by 36%, to 3,12 EUR/kg, due to a 100% increase in supply; the result of strong spring recruitment.

Figure 1. **FIRST SALES OF THE MAIN COMMERCIAL SPECIES IN BELGIUM, AUGUST 2019**



Percentages show change from the previous year.  
Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).


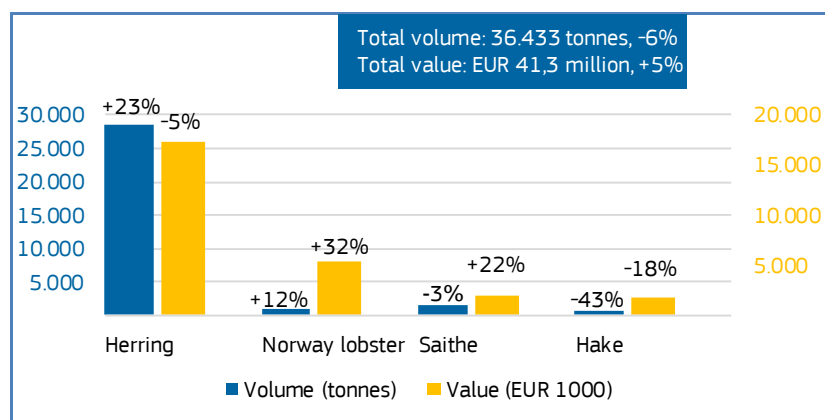
 In **Denmark** in **January–August 2019**, first-sales value fell by 8% and volume by 5%, compared to the same period in 2018, mainly due to shrimp (*Crangon* spp.), cod, common sole, coldwater shrimp, mussel *Mytilus* spp. and European plaice, among other species. In **August 2019**, first-sales value grew, while volume fell compared to August 2018. Increases in value were mainly due to the strong increase of average price of herring (+30%) and saithe (+27%), and an increased supply of highly valuable Norway lobster. The decrease in volume was due to a reduced supply of herring and hake.

Figure 2. **FIRST SALES OF THE MAIN COMMERCIAL SPECIES IN DENMARK, AUGUST 2019**



Percentages show change from the previous year.  
Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).


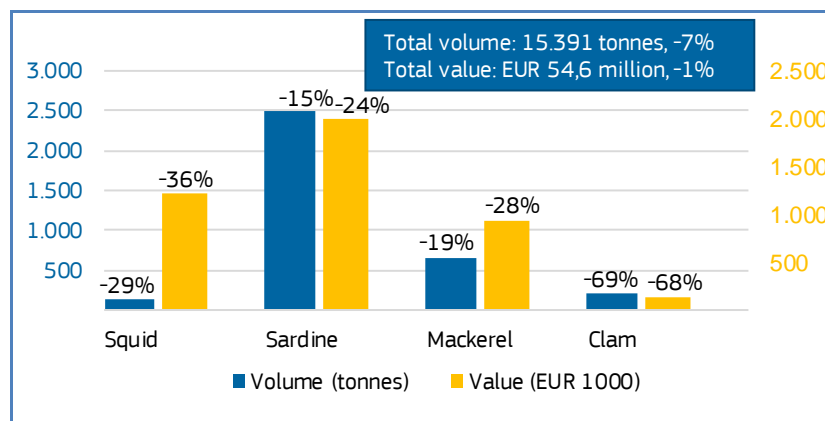
 In **France** in **January–August 2019**, first sales decreased by 3% in value and 5% in volume compared to January–August 2018. The value of monk and cuttlefish, and the volume of clam and hake, were the main drivers behind this decrease. In **August 2019**, both first-sales value and volume decreased compared to August 2018. Squid, sardine, mackerel, and clam were among the key species that saw the most significant decreases in value and volume.

Figure 3. **FIRST SALES OF THE MAIN COMMERCIAL SPECIES IN FRANCE, AUGUST 2019**

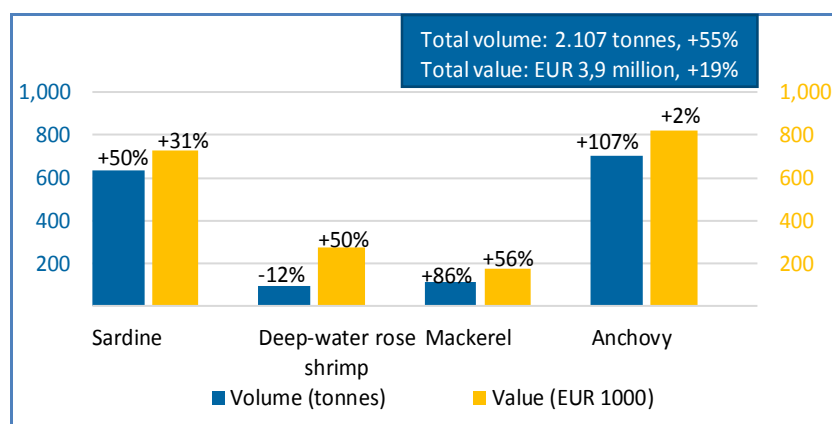


Percentages show change from the previous year.  
Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).



In **Greece** in **January–August 2019**, compared to the same period in 2018, first-sales value and volume increased by 9% due to sales of sardine, red mullet, hake, and squid. In **August 2019**, first-sales value and volume were significantly higher than in 2018. A good recruitment of key species: sardine, mackerel, and especially anchovy stocks was the key factor behind the increases seen. The high production of anchovy is observed also in the summer of 2018. According to stakeholders, catches in August 2019 were composed mainly the young of the year (YOY) that have low weight and lower price.

Figure 4. **FIRST SALES OF THE MAIN COMMERCIAL SPECIES IN GREECE, AUGUST 2019**



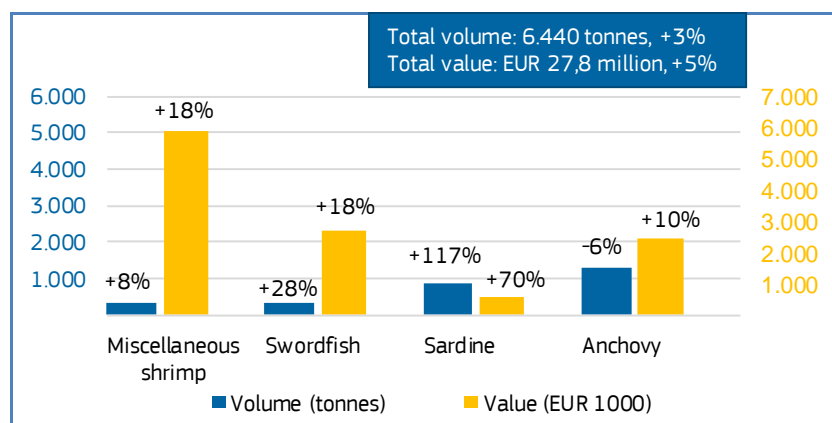
Percentages show change from the previous year.

Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).



In **Italy** in **January–August 2019**, compared to the same period in 2018, first-sales value grew by 10%, and volume by 1%. These changes were mainly due to miscellaneous shrimps\*, octopus, cuttlefish, swordfish, and sardine. In **August 2019**, first sales continued to show increases in value and volume compared to August 2018. The same species, with the addition of anchovy, were among the main species responsible. The average price of sardine fell sharply by 22%. This was linked to strong recruitment over the past three years leading to higher abundance but smaller (more juvenile) fish in the catches.

Figure 5. **FIRST SALES OF THE MAIN COMMERCIAL SPECIES IN ITALY, AUGUST 2019**



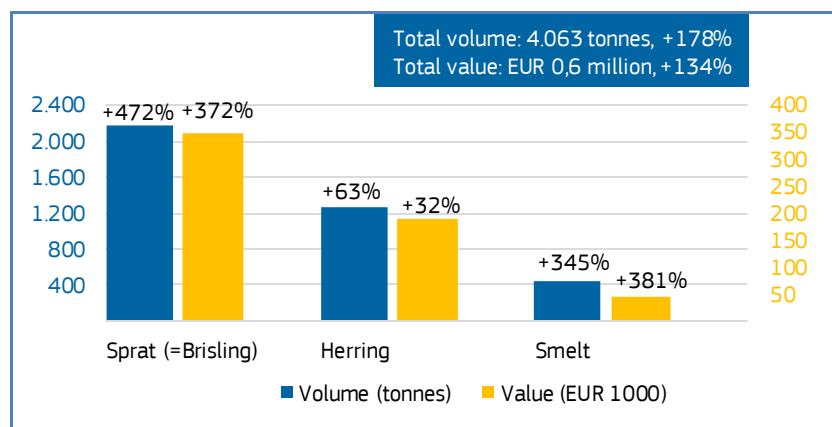
Percentages show change from the previous year. Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).

\*EUMOFA aggregation for species (Metadata 2, Annex 3: <http://eumofa.eu/supply-balance-and-other-methodologies>).



In **Latvia** in **January–August 2019**, small pelagic species (herring, sprat, smelt) were the key species responsible for marked increases in first-sales value and volume (+22% and +39%, respectively) compared to the same period in 2018. In **August 2019**, first sales significantly increased in both value and volume compared to August 2018 due to high sales of the same small pelagic species. The average price of herring and sprat decreased by 19% to 0,15 EUR/kg, and 17% to 0,16 EUR/kg, respectively, due to the high volume sold for both species.

Figure 6. **FIRST SALES OF THE MAIN COMMERCIAL SPECIES IN LATVIA, AUGUST 2019**



Percentages show change from the previous year.

Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).


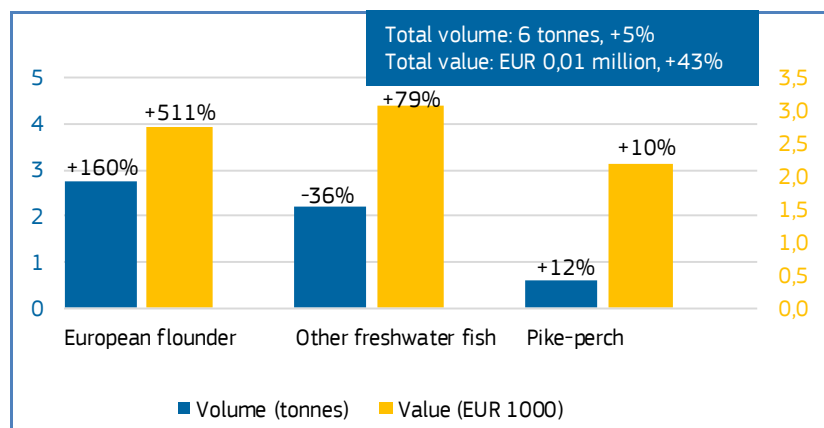
 In **Lithuania** in **January–August 2019**, first sales decreased by 38% in value and 40% in volume compared to January–August 2018, mainly due to a decline in cod. In **August 2019**, first-sales value and volume increased when compared to August 2018, largely due to European flounder. The average price of European flounder more than doubled in August 2019 compared to the same month of the previous year reaching 1,00 EUR/kg (+135%).

Figure 7. **FIRST SALES OF THE MAIN COMMERCIAL SPECIES IN LITHUANIA, AUGUST 2019**



Percentages show change from the previous year.  
Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).


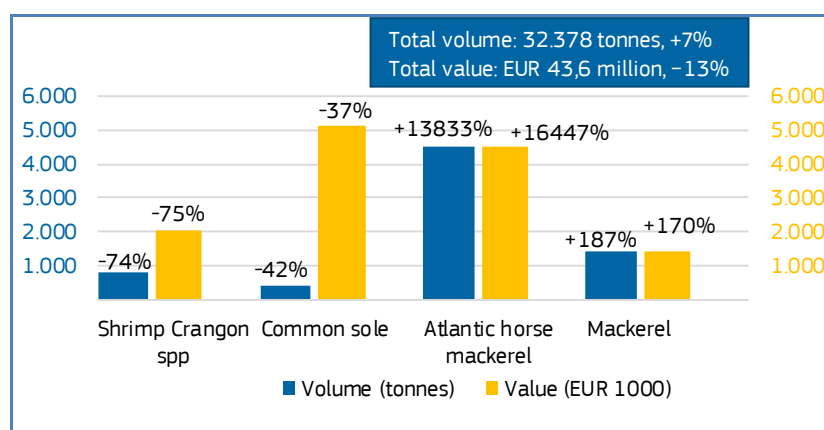
 In the **Netherlands** in **January–August 2019**, first sales fell by 29% in value and 30% in volume when compared to the same period in 2018. This was mainly due to a significant decrease in the supply of blue whiting (-43%) and herring (-40%). In **August 2019**, first-sales value fell – predominantly due to shrimp *Crangon* spp. and common sole sales – whereas volume grew in comparison to August 2018. This volume increase is linked to the greater supply of Atlantic horse mackerel and mackerel. Both stocks have experienced strong recruitment in recent years and status of the stocks was good, leading to the high first sales seen. Among the top-valued species, the average price of Atlantic horse mackerel increased by 19% to 1,00 EUR/kg.

Figure 8. **FIRST SALES OF THE MAIN COMMERCIAL SPECIES IN THE NETHERLANDS, AUGUST 2019**



Percentages show change from the previous year.  
Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).




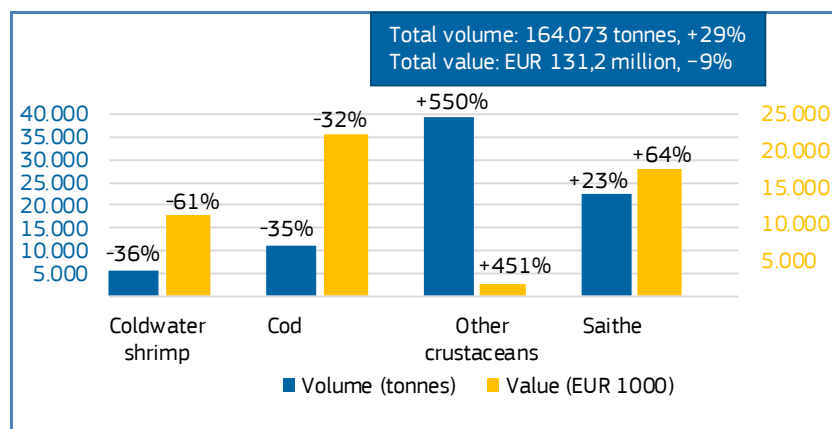
 In **Norway** in **January–August 2019**, first sales increased by 3% in value and decreased by 9% in volume compared to the same period in 2018. Value grew due to cod and mackerel sales, whereas volume fell due to miscellaneous small pelagic species\*. In **August 2019**, compared to August 2018, first-sales value fell, while volume grew. The main species contributing to the decrease in value was coldwater shrimp, while volume increase was the result of a higher supply of other crustaceans\*. The average price of coldwater shrimp decreased by 38% to 2,02 EUR/kg.

Figure 9. **FIRST SALES OF THE MAIN COMMERCIAL SPECIES IN NORWAY, AUGUST 2019**

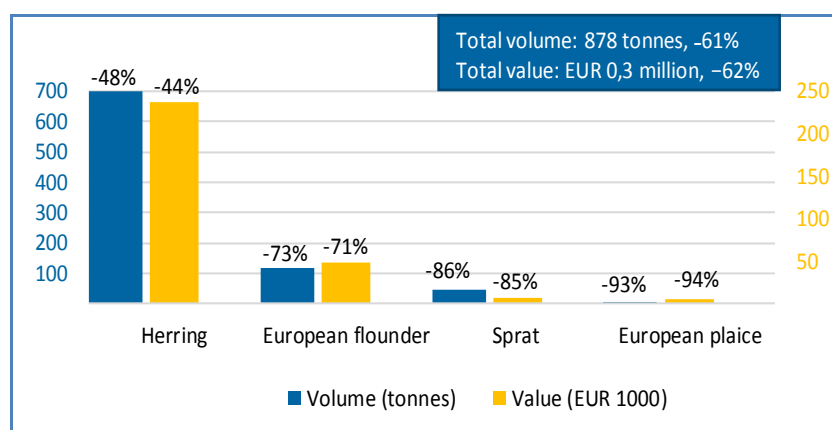


Percentages show change from the previous year. Volume data is reported in live weight equivalent (LWE). Prices are reported in EUR/kg of live weight.

\*EUMOFA aggregation for species (Metadata 2, Annex 3: <http://eumofa.eu/supply-balance-and-other-methodologies>).

 In **Poland** in **January–August 2019**, first sales decreased by 6% in value (linked to trout and herring), while volume increased by 7% (due to sprat) compared to the same period in 2018. In **August 2019**, first-sales value and volume dropped by over 60% compared to August 2018, with herring, European flounder, sprat, and European plaice as the main species behind this sharp decrease. Herring recorded a price increase of 7% to 0,34 EUR/kg, while European plaice prices decreased by 8% to 0,83 EUR/kg.

Figure 10. **FIRST SALES OF THE MAIN COMMERCIAL SPECIES IN POLAND, AUGUST 2019**



Percentages show change from the previous year.

Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).


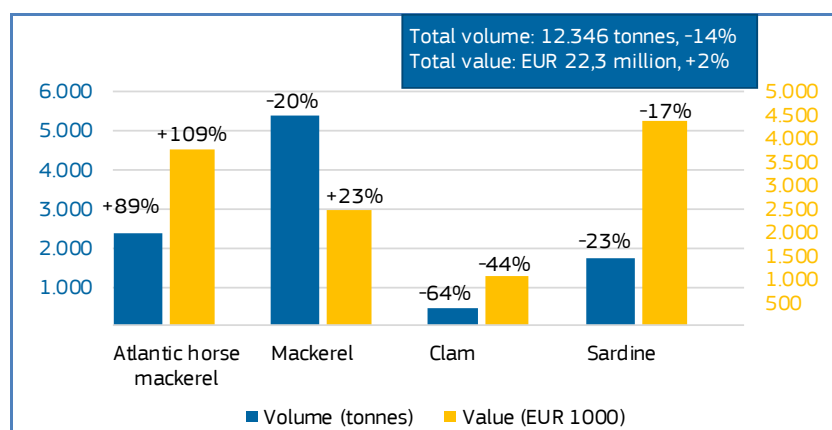
 In **Portugal** in **January–August 2019**, first sales increased by 7% in value and 9% in volume over the same period in 2018, mostly linked to sales of Atlantic horse mackerel and anchovy. In **August 2019**, first-sales value increased, largely due to Atlantic horse mackerel, while volume decrease is attributable to mackerel, clam and sardine, compared to August 2018. Mackerel, the most important species in terms of first-sales volume, recorded a price increase of 54% to 0,46 EUR/kg, linked to a reduction in supply.

Figure 11. **FIRST SALES OF THE MAIN COMMERCIAL SPECIES IN PORTUGAL, AUGUST 2019**



Percentages show change from the previous year.

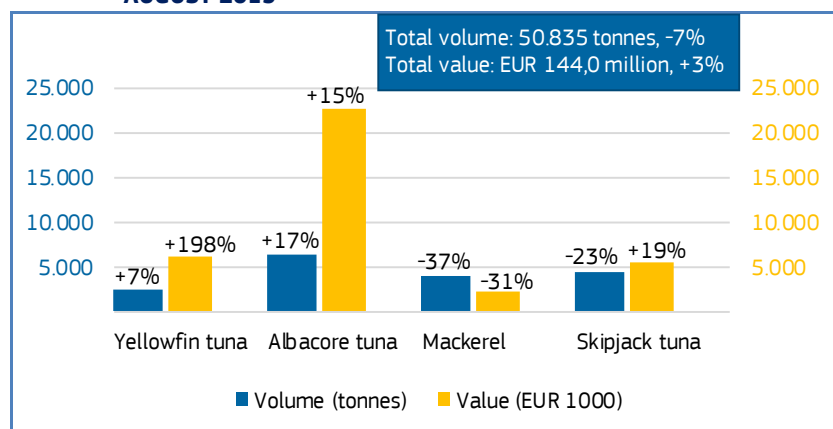
Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).



In **Spain** in  
**January–August**

**2019**, first-sales value increased by 4% due to octopus, anchovy, albacore tuna, and deep-water rose shrimp, relative to 2018. Volume grew slightly (+1%) over the same period as a result of high supply of Atlantic horse mackerel and anchovy. In **August 2019**, value increased while volume decreased compared to August 2018. Value grew mainly in connection with sales of yellowfin tuna while volume fell because of a decline in mackerel and skipjack tuna supply. The average price of yellowfin grew by as much as 179% to 2,48 EUR/kg. Reflecting a more usual price for the species, against an unusually low observed price in August 2018.

Figure 12. **FIRST SALES OF THE MAIN COMMERCIAL SPECIES IN SPAIN, AUGUST 2019**



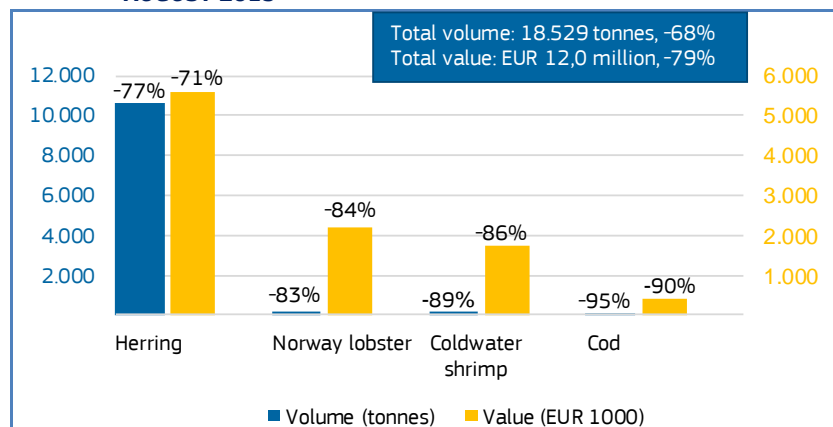
Percentages show change from the previous year.  
Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).



In **Sweden**, decreases  
in first-sales value

(-51%) and volume (-40%) in **January–August 2019**, compared to the same period in 2018, were mainly due to herring, coldwater shrimp, and Norway lobster. In **August 2019**, both value and volume continued a negative trend, relative to August 2018, with the most dramatic decreases in first sales seen for herring, Norway lobster, coldwater shrimp, and cod. The average price of herring grew by 28% to 0,52 EUR/kg.

Figure 13. **FIRST SALES OF THE MAIN COMMERCIAL SPECIES IN SWEDEN, AUGUST 2019**



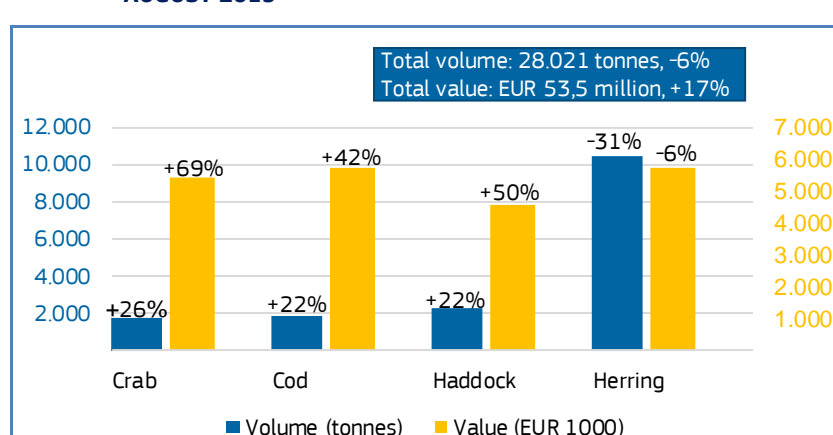
Percentages show change from the previous year.  
Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).



In the **UK** in  
**January–August**

**2019**, first-sales value and volume increased by 28% and 7%, respectively, compared to the same period in 2018. The increases were mostly based on sales of Norway lobster, crab, saithe, and haddock. In **August 2019**, the higher overall first-sales value was due to crab, cod, and haddock, while a decrease in volume was mainly linked to herring, compared to August 2018. Amongst other key species, a strong increase in average price was recorded for crab, where prices grew by 34% to 3,13 EUR/kg.

Figure 14. **FIRST SALES OF THE MAIN COMMERCIAL SPECIES IN THE UK, AUGUST 2019**

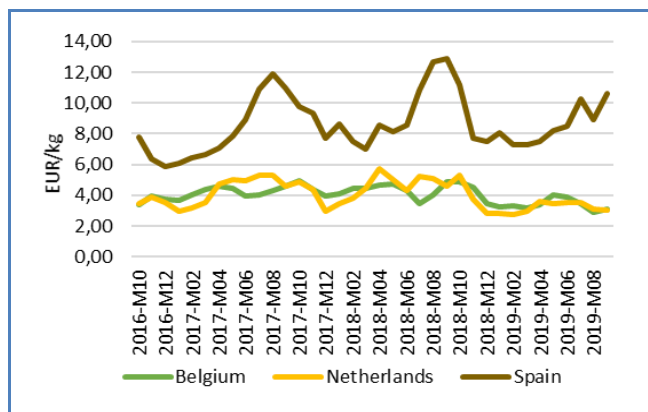


Percentages show change from the previous year.  
Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).



## 1.4. Comparison of first-sales prices of selected species in selected countries

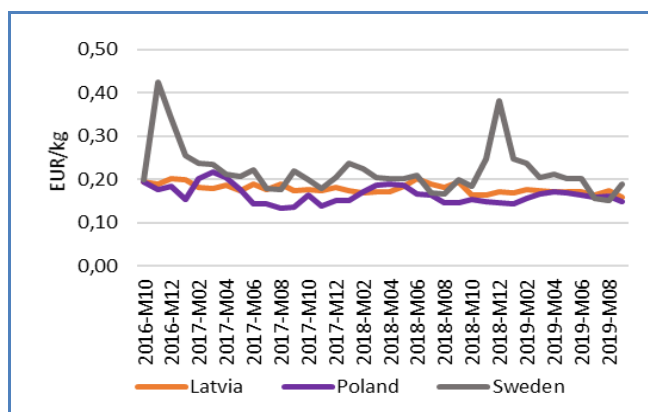
Figure 15. **FIRST-SALES PRICES OF CUTTLEFISH IN BELGIUM, THE NETHERLANDS, AND SPAIN**



Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).

First sales of **cuttlefish** occur in many European countries, including **Belgium, the Netherlands, and Spain**. The average first-sales prices in August 2019 (the most recent available month) were 3,12 EUR/kg in Belgium (up by 8% from July 2019 and down by 36% compared to August 2018); 3,04 EUR/kg in the Netherlands (down by 2% from the previous month and 34% lower than a year earlier); and 10,64 EUR/kg in Spain (which was up by 20% from the previous month and down by 18% from a year earlier). Cuttlefish prices in Belgium and the Netherlands show a slight decreasing trend over the observed period. In Spain, the opposite is observed. Volume changes were seasonal, with different peaks in the three countries: December–February in Belgium, October–December in the Netherlands, and November–February in Spain.

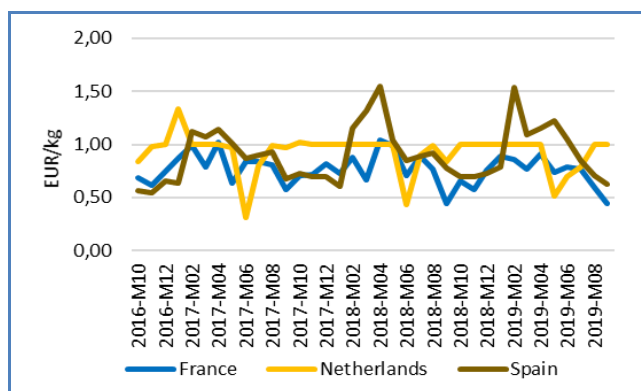
Figure 16. **FIRST-SALES PRICES OF SPRAT IN LATVIA, POLAND, AND SWEDEN**



Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).

EU first sales of **sprat** take place mainly in **Poland, as well as in Sweden, and Latvia**. In August 2019, the average first-sales prices of sprat were: 0,16 EUR/kg in Latvia (down by 9% from July 2019 and down by 17% compared with July 2018); 0,15 EUR/kg in Poland (down by 7% from the previous month and up by 3% from a year earlier); and 0,19 EUR/kg in Sweden (an increase of 24% from July 2019 but a decrease of 6% compared to July 2018). In Latvia and Poland prices were broadly similar and showed a slight decreasing trend. In Sweden, the price spikes seen are in line with a decrease in supply. First-sales volumes are seasonal in the three markets with peaks in February–March.

Figure 17. **FIRST-SALES PRICES OF ATLANTIC HORSE MACKEREL IN FRANCE, THE NETHERLANDS, AND SPAIN**



Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).

EU first sales of **Atlantic horse mackerel** take place in many European countries, most notably in **Spain, the Netherlands, as well as in France**. In August 2019, the average first-sales prices were: 0,45 EUR/kg in France (down by 25% from the previous month and up by 2% from a year earlier); 1,00 EUR/kg in the Netherlands (unchanged from July 2019 and up by 19% from August 2018); and 0,63 EUR/kg in Spain (a decrease of 12% from July 2019 and 19% lower than the previous year). Prices followed a slight increasing trend in Spain; the opposite occurred in France and the Netherlands. Volumes sold in first-sales markets are very seasonal. In Spain, where the majority of reported sales occur, the peak in Atlantic horse mackerel sales covers the months of September–November. In France, peaks are seen in April–June, and in the Netherlands the species is mainly sold in February. The reason behind the price of 1 EUR/kg, observed in the majority of the months analysed, is most likely due to first-sales activities within the same company that owns the finish fleet.



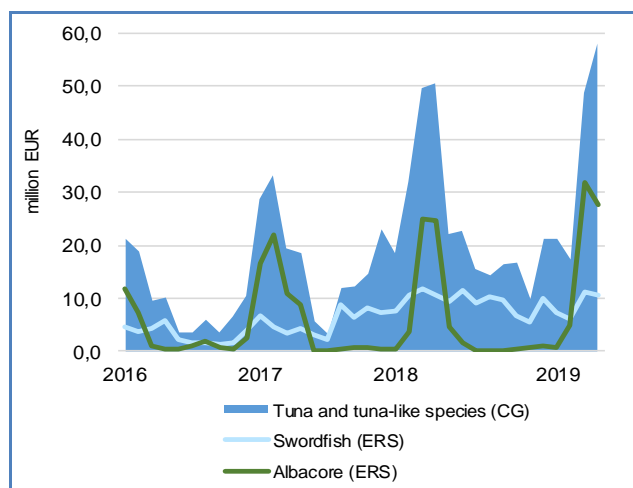
## 1.5. Commodity group of the month: Tuna and tuna-like species

The 'tuna and tuna-like species' commodity group (CG<sup>2</sup>) ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in value and 3<sup>rd</sup> in volume among ten CGs sold at the first-sales stage in August 2019<sup>3</sup>. First sales of these species reached EUR 58 million and 19.716 tonnes, increasing by 15% in value and decreasing 7% in volume compared to August 2018. In the past 36 months, the highest value of 'tuna and tuna-like species' first sales was registered in August 2019, the most recent month analysed.

The "Tuna and tuna-like species" commodity group includes 7 main commercial species (MCS): albacore, bigeye, bluefin, skipjack, yellowfin, and miscellaneous tuna species, and swordfish<sup>4</sup>. Pelagic shark species, normally regarded as tuna-like species, are not included in the tuna and tuna-like species commodity group.

At Electronic Recording and Reporting System (ERS) level, albacore (48%) and swordfish (18%) together made up 66% of total reported first-sales value of this commodity group in August 2019 and 64% of the value in the past 36 months (September 2016-August 2019).

Figure 18. **FIRST-SALES VALUE COMPARISON AT CG AND ERS LEVEL FOR REPORTING COUNTRIES\***



\*Norway excluded from the analyses.  
Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).

## 1.6. Focus on albacore



Albacore tuna (*Thunnus alalunga*) is a cosmopolitan species found in tropical and temperate waters across the world's oceans, including the Mediterranean Sea. Albacore is one of the smallest tuna species and is of high economic importance in commercial and recreational fisheries. There are three separate stocks in the Atlantic Ocean: northern and southern stocks, and a Mediterranean stock. It is fast growing and matures at approximately 6 years, with an expected life-span of around 15 years. While albacore is a temperate species, spawning in the Atlantic occurs in tropical waters. Albacore are carnivorous, feeding on schooling stocks of sardine, anchovy, mackerel and squid. They have an average size of 60–80 cm.

The European Union is the main producer of albacore tuna in the Mediterranean Sea and the North Atlantic, catching 90% and 80% of the total catch of each of the stocks during the last decade, respectively<sup>5</sup>.

The Northern stock is exploited by surface fisheries (baitboat and troll) and longline fisheries. The majority of targeted EU surface fisheries occur in the Bay of Biscay, and in the vicinity of the Canary Islands and the Azores in summer and autumn. The Member States involved in these directed fisheries are Ireland, France, Portugal and Spain. The northern stock is managed with total allowable catches (TAC) and with a limit on the number of vessels. The majority of the catch of the Mediterranean stock comes from longline fisheries, where Italy is the main producer. Albacore appears also as by-catch in French purse-seine fisheries, coastal Spanish fleets, and in recreational fishing. The International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) is responsible for the management and conservation of albacore. The Mediterranean stock is managed with TAC, with spatio-temporal measures - which include a two-month closure between 1<sup>st</sup> October and 30<sup>th</sup> November for longlines - and with a limited list of vessels authorized to target albacore<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Annex 3: <http://eumofa.eu/supply-balance-and-other-methodologies>

<sup>3</sup> More data on commodity groups can be found in Table 1.2 in the Annex.

<sup>4</sup> \*EUMOFA aggregation for species - Metadata 2, Annex 3: <http://eumofa.eu/supply-balance-and-other-methodologies>

<sup>5</sup> [https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/reports/strategic-issues/-/asset\\_publisher/5fZb/document/id/1697322](https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/reports/strategic-issues/-/asset_publisher/5fZb/document/id/1697322)

<sup>6</sup> ICCAT REPORT 2018-2019 (I) [https://www.iccat.int/Documents/SCRS/ExecSum/ALB\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.iccat.int/Documents/SCRS/ExecSum/ALB_ENG.pdf)



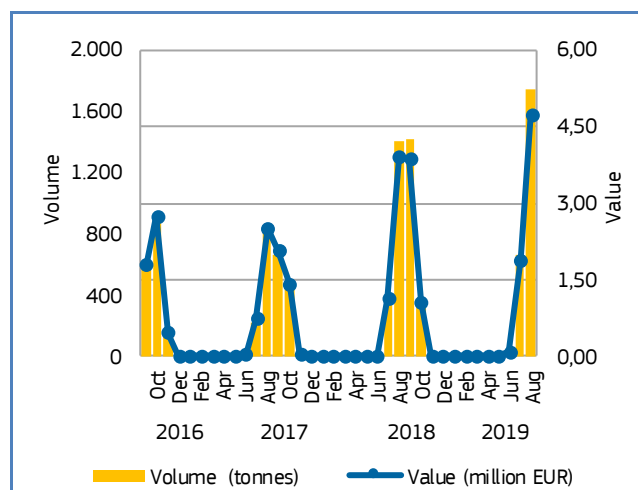
## Selected countries

In **France** in January–August 2019, first sales of albacore increased by 32% in value and 35% in volume compared with the same period in 2018. Compared to 2017, value and volume more than doubled (with increases of +105% and +135%, respectively). First sales of albacore show a seasonal pattern, as most sales are registered during summer months.

The French fleet mainly targets the northern stock of albacore, which is exploited by surface and longline fisheries<sup>7</sup>. Of 'tuna and tuna-like species' species sold at first-sales stage in August 2019, albacore accounted for 72% of the total first-sales value and 88% of first-sales volume.

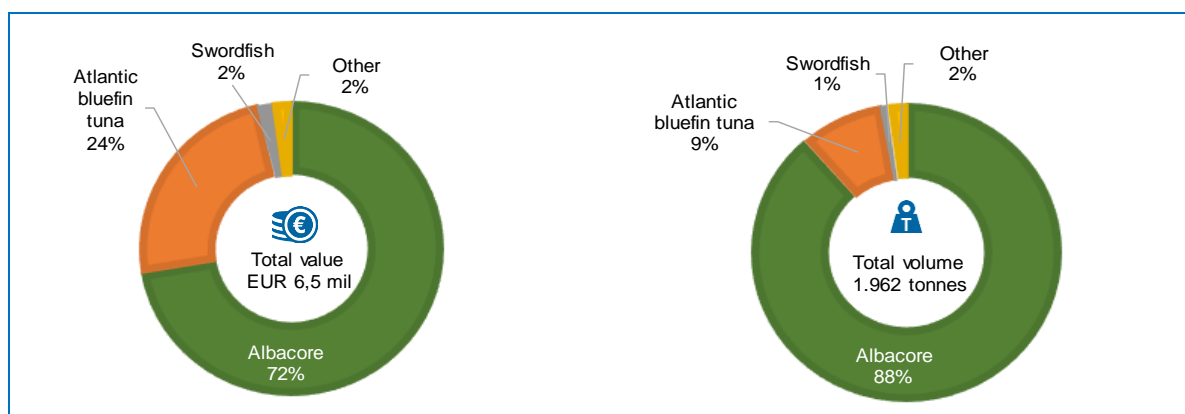
St Jean-de-Luz, La Turballe, and Guilvinec in the Bay of Biscay account for about 73% of total registered first-sales value in January–August 2019.

Figure 19. **ALBACORE: FIRST SALES IN FRANCE**



Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).

Figure 20. **FIRST-SALES COMPARISON OF TUNA AND TUNA-LIKE SPECIES (ERS) IN FRANCE, VALUE AND VOLUME, AUGUST 2019**



Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.iccat.int/Documents/SCRS/ExecSum/ALB\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.iccat.int/Documents/SCRS/ExecSum/ALB_ENG.pdf)



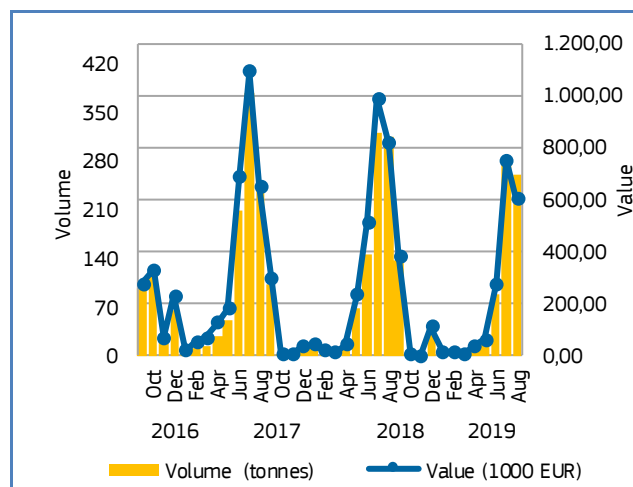
In **Italy** in January–August 2019, first sales of albacore decreased by 34% in value and 25% in volume relative to January–August 2018. Compared with the same period in 2017, first-sales value and volume decreased by 39% and 30%, respectively. The albacore fishery is seasonal, with highest sales during the summer, and very few catches in winter months.

Italy is the EU's main producer of albacore, landing around 53% of the catch during the last 10 years. Majority of catch is exploited by longlines<sup>8</sup>.

Of 'tuna and tuna-like species' species sold in August 2019, albacore comprised 16% of total first-sales value and 34% of volume.

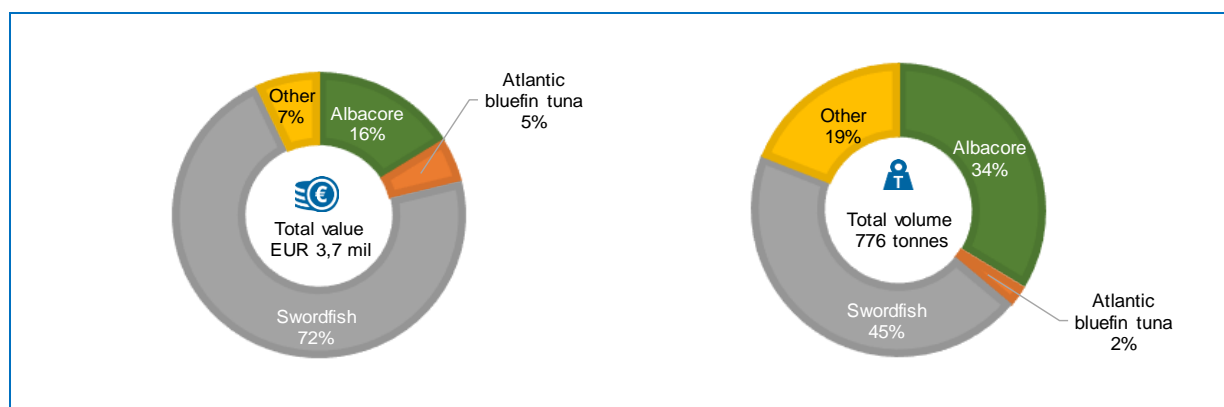
Riposto, Acitrezza, and Messina are the fishing ports on the island of Sicily where over 60% of first sales occurred during the first eight months of 2019.

Figure 21. **ALBACORE: FIRST SALES IN ITALY**



Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).

Figure 22. **FIRST-SALES COMPARISON OF TUNA AND TUNA-LIKE SPECIES (ERS) IN ITALY, VALUE AND VOLUME, AUGUST 2019**



Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.iccat.int/Documents/SCRS/ExecSum/ALB\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.iccat.int/Documents/SCRS/ExecSum/ALB_ENG.pdf)



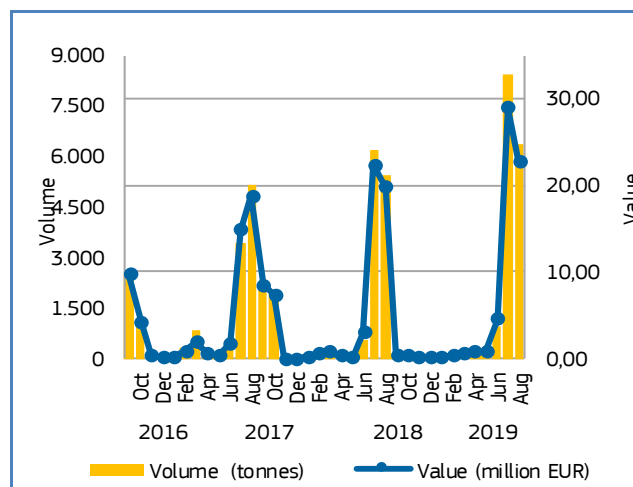
In **Spain** in January–August 2019, first sales of albacore grew by 25% in value and 29% in volume relative to the same period in 2018. Compared with January–August 2017, first-sales value and volume were higher by 49% and 57%, respectively. As in the rest of surveyed countries, albacore sales mainly occur during the summer. The annual migratory behaviour of juvenile albacore drives the marked seasonality of catches of this species, including in the Northeast Atlantic and Bay of Biscay offshore waters<sup>9</sup>.

The albacore fishery is targeted by Spanish bait boat and troll vessels working with two types of gear – longlines and artificial lures<sup>10</sup>.

Of 'tuna and tuna-like species' species sold in August 2019, albacore comprised 48% of total first-sales value and 37% of volume.

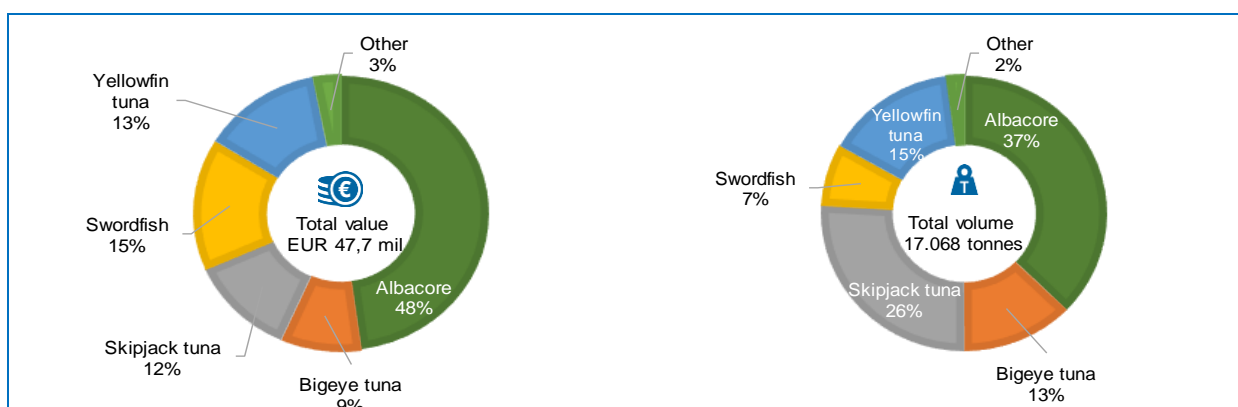
Guetaria, Fuenterrabía, and Aviles are the fishing ports in the Bay of Biscay with highest first sales from January to August 2019.

Figure 23. **ALBACORE: FIRST SALES IN SPAIN**



Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).

Figure 24. **FIRST-SALES COMPARISON OF TUNA AND TUNA-LIKE SPECIES (ERS) SPAIN, VALUE AND VOLUME, AUGUST 2019**



Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).

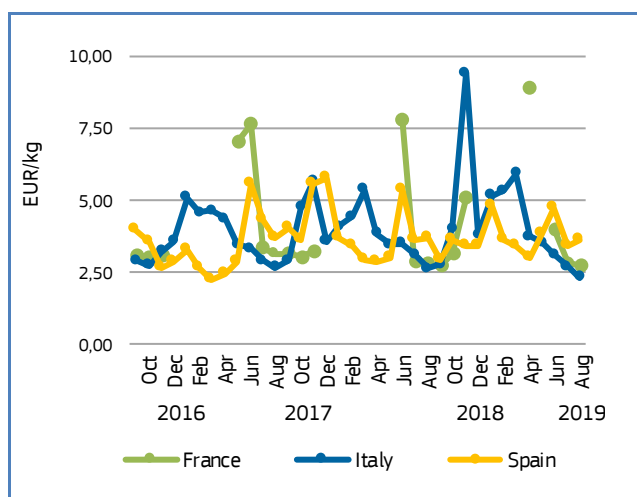
<sup>9</sup> [https://www.iccat.int/Documents/CVSP/CV075\\_2018/n\\_8/CV075082300.pdf](https://www.iccat.int/Documents/CVSP/CV075_2018/n_8/CV075082300.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> [https://www.seafish.org/media/Report\\_SR569\\_Tuna2005.doc](https://www.seafish.org/media/Report_SR569_Tuna2005.doc)



## Price trends

Figure 25. **ALBACORE: FIRST-SALES PRICE IN SELECTED COUNTRIES**



Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).

In the observed 36-month period (September 2016–August 2019), the average price of albacore in France (4,12 EUR/kg), was 5% higher than in Italy (3,94 EUR/kg), and 15% greater than in Spain (3,62 EUR/kg).

In **France** in August 2019, the average first-sales price of albacore (2,70 EUR/kg) slightly decreased by 3% and 13% compared to the same month in 2018 and in 2017, respectively. During the past 36 months, the lowest price was recorded in August 2019 at 2,70 EUR/kg for about 1.740 tonnes, while the highest price at over 5,00 EUR/kg was recorded at the start and the end of fishing season when, in general, catches are much lower. The albacore fishery is most intense from July to October.

In **Italy**, the average price of albacore was 2,30 EUR/kg in August 2019, 11% lower than the price in August 2018, and 13% down from August 2017. Over the past 36 months, prices were the highest during the winter when catches amounted to just a few tonnes. Prices reached a peak in March 2019 when less than one tonne of albacore was sold at an average price of 5,90 EUR/kg. The lowest price occurred in August 2019 at 2,30 EUR/kg for 261 tonnes. July and August are the months when the albacore fishery is at its greatest intensity.

In **Spain**, the average price of albacore was 3,58 EUR/kg in August 2019, 2% lower than the price in both August 2018 and 2017. The highest prices occur during the winter when supply is low, but also in June when the albacore fishing season starts. In the past 36 months, prices reached a peak in December 2017 when 2,3 tonnes were sold at an average price of 5,73 EUR/kg. The lowest price occurred in March 2017 at 2,20 EUR/kg for 849 tonnes.

### 1.7. Focus on swordfish



Swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*), a member of the family Xiphiidae, can be found in tropical, temperate and cold waters, and is distributed widely in the Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea. At its largest, this species can reach over 500 kg in weight and 4,5 metres in length. The best-known spawning grounds for swordfish are found in the Mediterranean Sea, around the southern part of the Italian peninsula and Sicily.

Spawning is most intensive between June and August. Swordfish feed on a wide variety of prey<sup>11</sup>.

EU fleets target three main stocks: the North Atlantic stock, the South Atlantic stock, and the Mediterranean stock. Swordfish is caught in coastal and offshore waters by longline, trawl, harpoon, and net. The species is available to fisheries mostly between April and December, with peak catches during spring.

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.fao.org/fishery/species/2503/en>





The EU plays a major role in Mediterranean swordfish fisheries, taking more than 70% of the total catches. Active Member States in the fishery are Italy, Spain and Greece, who, combined, account for over 90% of the EU quota for the species, with the remainder of fishing opportunities going to Malta, France, Cyprus and Croatia<sup>12</sup>.

Swordfish stocks are managed by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), which sets TACs and national quotas, as well as minimum landing size and other management measures. EU management measures for the Mediterranean stock include reduction of capacity and fishing effort, total allowable catches, reduction of the fleet, fishery closure periods, limitations on fishing gear size and improved selectivity to reduce juvenile catches, and control requirements<sup>13</sup>. Fishery closures are determined by each Member State. These can be either from the 1st October to 30th November, with an additional one-month closure at any point between the 15<sup>th</sup> February and the 31<sup>st</sup> March, or, alternatively, for the period of the 1<sup>st</sup> January to the 31<sup>st</sup> March each year<sup>14</sup>. In 2018, there were 7.537 EU vessels authorised to fish Mediterranean swordfish, of which 5.464 are recreational vessels and 1.918 are long-liners smaller than 24 m in length<sup>15</sup>.

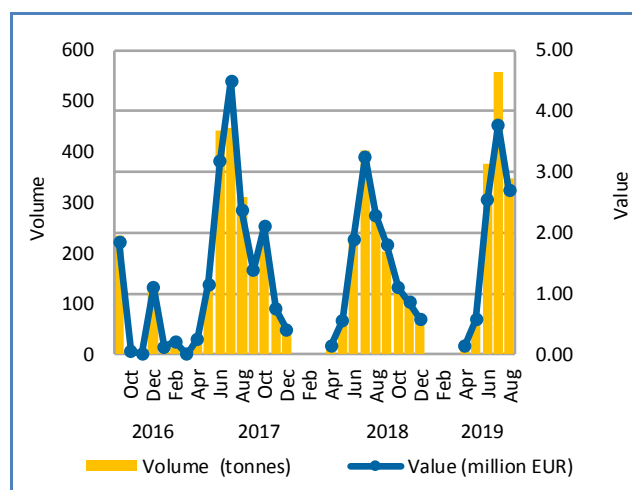
## Selected countries

In **Italy** in January–August 2019, first sales of swordfish increased by 19% in value and 39% in volume relative to the same period in 2018. Compared with January–August 2017, first-sales value and volume were lower by 17% and 3%, respectively. First sales are seasonal, with no sales during the fishery closure in January–March. The fishing closure period changed as of 2018, and it is in force from January to March.

Italy is the country with the highest EU quota for Mediterranean swordfish, resulting in fishing opportunities of 3.624 tonnes in 2018<sup>16</sup>. Of 'tuna and tuna-like species' species sold in August 2019, swordfish comprised 72% of total first-sales value and 45% of volume (cf. figure 22).

Porticello, Riposto, and Sant'Antioco are the fishing ports with highest registered first-sales value from January to August 2019.

Figure 26. **SWORDFISH: FIRST SALES IN ITALY**



Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).

<sup>12</sup> [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2018/630287/EPRS\\_ATA\(2018\)630287\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2018/630287/EPRS_ATA(2018)630287_EN.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> [https://www.iccat.int/Documents/Meetings/Docs/2017\\_PA4\\_FINAL\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.iccat.int/Documents/Meetings/Docs/2017_PA4_FINAL_ENG.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> Recommendation 16-05 <https://www.iccat.int/Documents/Recs/compendiopdf-e/2016-05-e.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/swordfish-new-step-towards-recovery-mediterranean\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/swordfish-new-step-towards-recovery-mediterranean_en)

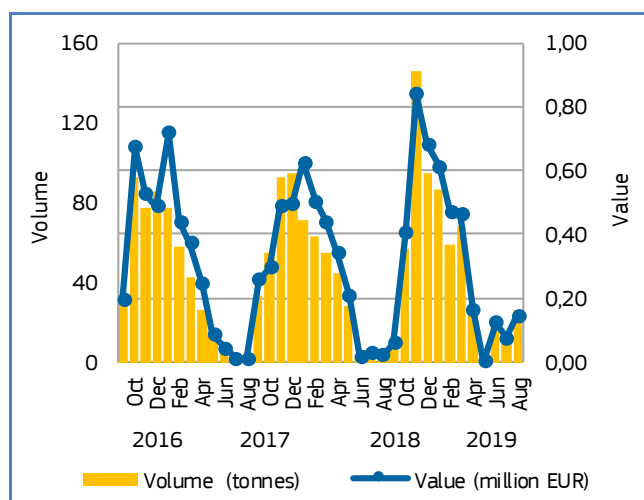
<sup>16</sup> Council Regulation (EU) 2018/120 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018R0120&from=EN>

In **Portugal** in January–August 2019, first sales of swordfish decreased by 7% in value, and increased 11% in volume compared to the same period in 2018. Compared to 2017, first sales grew by 7% in value, and by 33% in volume. The highest first sales are recorded during the winter (mainly November–December), whereas off-season with low sales is in the summer.

The Portuguese fleet targets the North Atlantic swordfish stock. Among the species of 'tuna and tuna-like species' caught by Portugal, swordfish accounted for 61% of value and 43% of volume in August 2019.

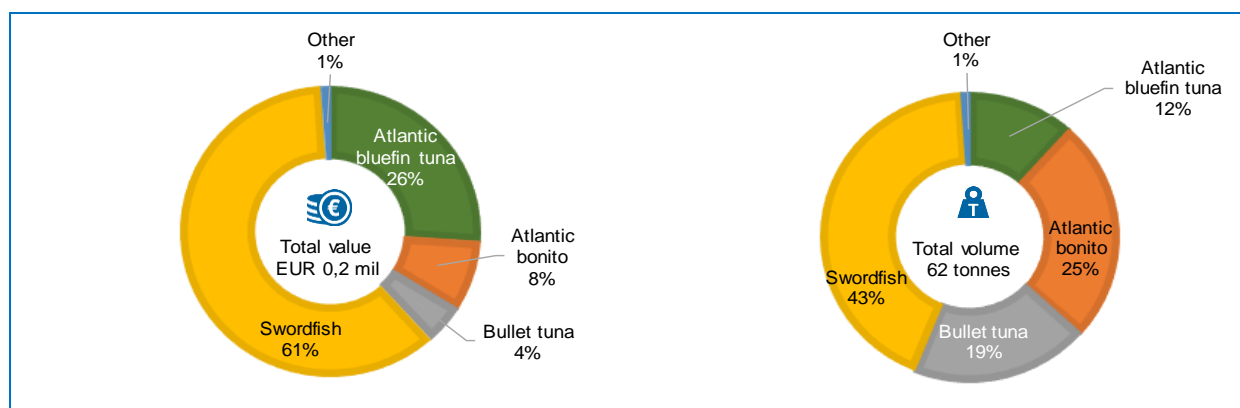
Peniche and Sesimbra are the fishing ports where 94% of swordfish first-sales value occurred in January–August 2019.

Figure 27. **SWORDFISH: FIRST SALES IN PORTUGAL**



Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).

Figure 28. **FIRST-SALES COMPARISON OF TUNA AND TUNA-LIKE SPECIES (ERS) IN PORTUGAL, VALUE AND VOLUME, AUGUST 2019**

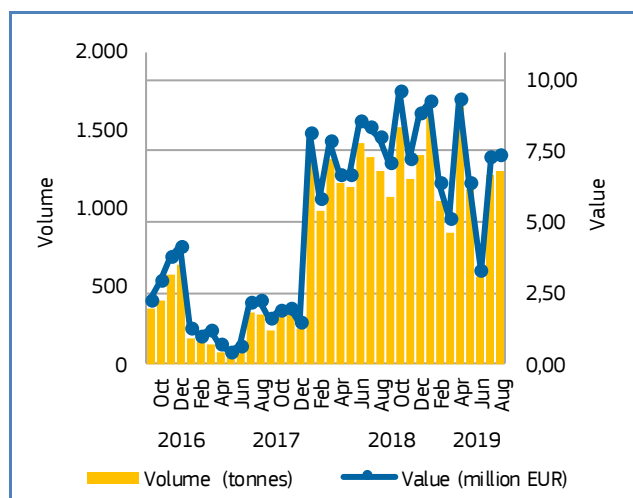


Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).

In **Spain** in January–August 2019, first sales of swordfish decreased by 10% in value and 7% in volume when compared to the same period in 2018. Against data from 2017, first-sales value increased by about five-fold, and volume by six-fold. The Spanish fishing fleet targets both North Atlantic and Mediterranean swordfish stocks, therefore considering the closure period for the latter, that could be the explanation for presence of first sales throughout all year in the past 36-months. As of 2018, first sales data include frozen swordfish products, what was not a case in the previous years, (2016–2017), therefore this is a main reason for higher sales reported from 2018 onwards.

Swordfish accounted for 15% of value and 7% of volume among first sales of species that belong to the group of 'tuna and tuna-like species' registered in August 2019 (cf. figure 24). About 50% of first-sales value was registered in the ports of Vigo and La Guardia between January–August 2019.

Figure 29. **SWORDFISH: FIRST SALES IN SPAIN**



Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).



## Price trends

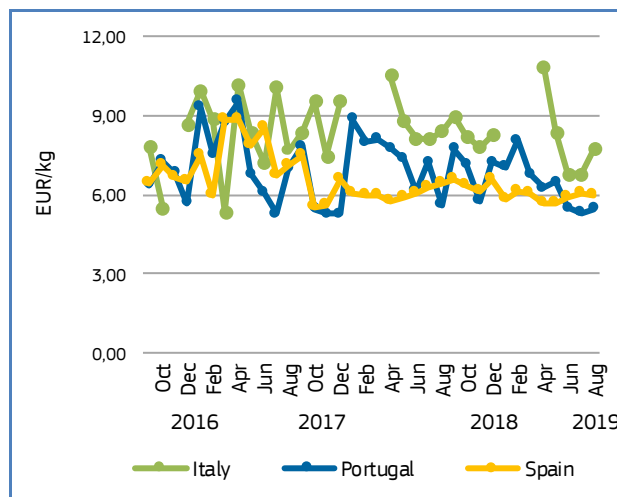
For the past 36 months (September 2016–August 2019), among the selected countries, the highest average price of swordfish was recorded in Italy (8,78 EUR/kg), 35% higher than in Spain (6,50 EUR/kg), and 28% higher than in Portugal (6,89 EUR/kg).

In **Italy** in August 2019, the price of 7,71 EUR/kg was lower than in August 2018 (–8%) but slightly higher compared to August 2017 (+1%). Prices are generally high when there is high demand and a low supply. The price in the observed period ranges from 3,11 EUR/kg to 16,35 EUR/kg. A peak season for the swordfish fishery is July–August each year. The highest first-sales volume in the observed period was reported in July 2019, at 5.556 tonnes.

In **Portugal** in August 2019, the average price of swordfish was 5,45 EUR/kg, which was the lowest among the surveyed countries (a decline of 3% compared to August 2018 and 22% compared to August 2017). In the observed period, the peak season for the swordfish fishery was typically from October to December. The lowest price was recorded in November 2017 at 5,25 EUR/kg for 93 tonnes, whereas the highest was in April 2017 at 9,52 EUR/kg for 26 tonnes.

In **Spain**, the average price of swordfish in August 2019 was 5,99 EUR/kg, 7% lower than the price in August 2018, and 15% lower than in August 2017. During the past 36 months, first-sales prices fluctuate in correlation with supply. The highest price was observed in April 2017 at 8,84 EUR/kg for 74 tonnes, whereas the lowest price was recorded in October 2017 at 5,53 EUR/kg for 340 tonnes.

Figure 30. **SWORDFISH: FIRST-SALES PRICE IN SELECTED COUNTRIES**



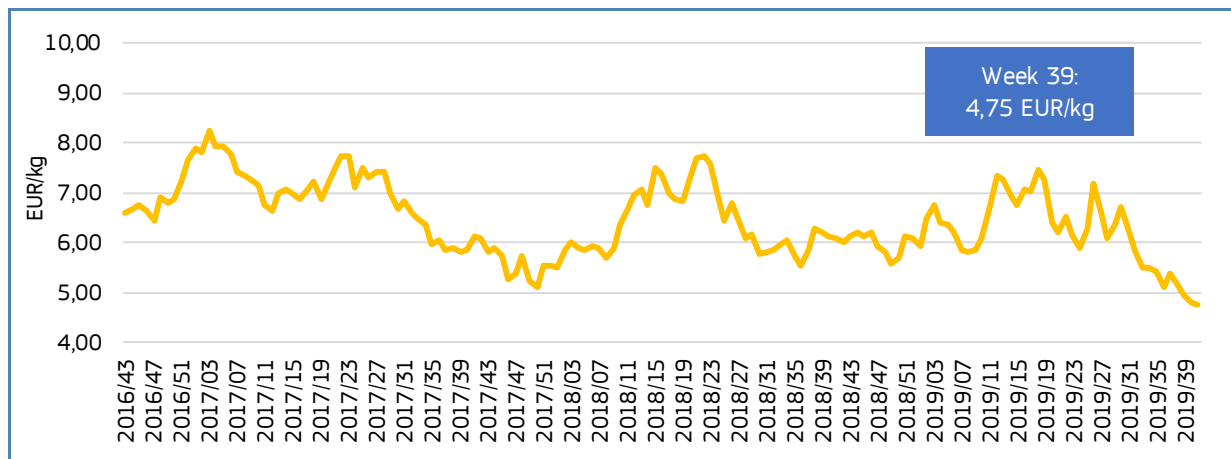
Source: EUMOFA (updated 17.10.2019).

## 2. Extra-EU imports

Each month, weekly extra-EU import prices (average unit values per week, in EUR per kg) are examined for nine species. Three species, which are the most relevant in terms of value and volume, are examined every month: frozen Alaskan pollock fillets from China, fresh whole Atlantic salmon from Norway, and frozen tropical shrimp (genus *Penaeus*) from Ecuador. The other six species change every month: three are from the commodity group of the month (in this issue, 'tuna and tuna-like species'), and this month they are fresh or chilled swordfish from Chile, frozen Albacore or long-finned tunas from South Africa, and skipjack in vegetable oil from Ecuador. The remaining three species are randomly selected, and this month are: frozen sole from Morocco, frozen carp from Myanmar, and whole frozen lobster from Canada.

The weekly price of **fresh whole Atlantic salmon** (*Salmo salar*, CN code 03021400) imported from **Norway** dropped to 4,75 EUR/kg in **week 39** (commencing on September 23<sup>rd</sup>). This price was down by 6% from the preceding four-week average of 5,07 EUR/kg and down by 22% from the prevailing price of 6,08 EUR/kg a year earlier (2018/39). The price drop in week 39 is most likely related to higher harvest activity in weeks 37 and 38. Imports in week 39 totalled 16.715 tonnes, an increase of 11% from the average during the previous four weeks, and up by 16% from the previous year.

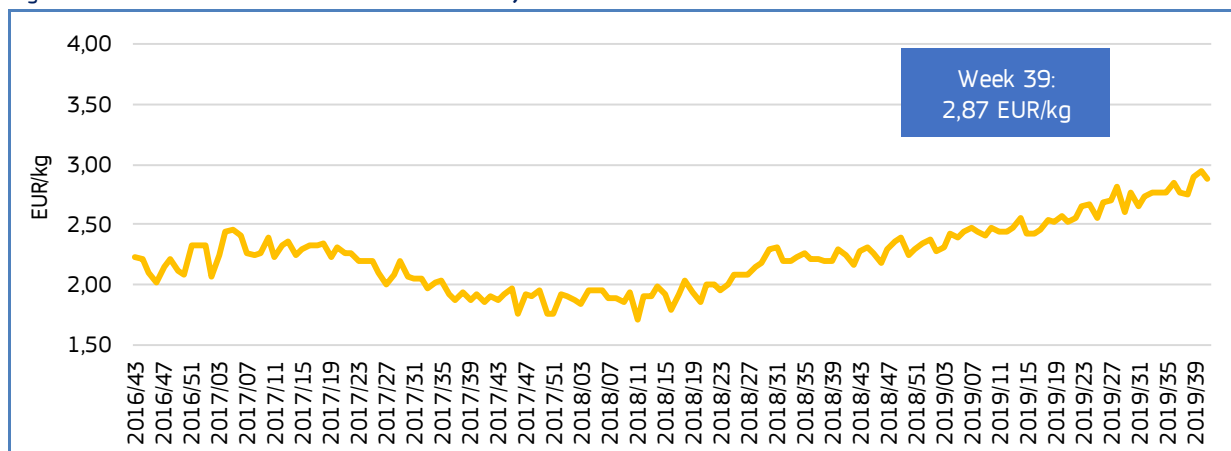
Figure 31. **IMPORT PRICE OF ATLANTIC SALMON, FRESH AND WHOLE FROM NORWAY**



Source: European Commission (updated 17.10.2019).

For **frozen fillets of Alaska pollock** (*Theragra chalcogramma*, CN code 03047500) imported from **China**, the price in **week 39** reached 2,87 EUR/kg, or 1% higher than the preceding four-week average of 2,84 EUR/kg. The price was 28% higher than the price of 2,25 EUR/kg in the same week in 2018. Volume totalled 3.462 tonnes, which was up by 4% from the average of the previous four weeks and 10% higher than the previous year (2018/39).

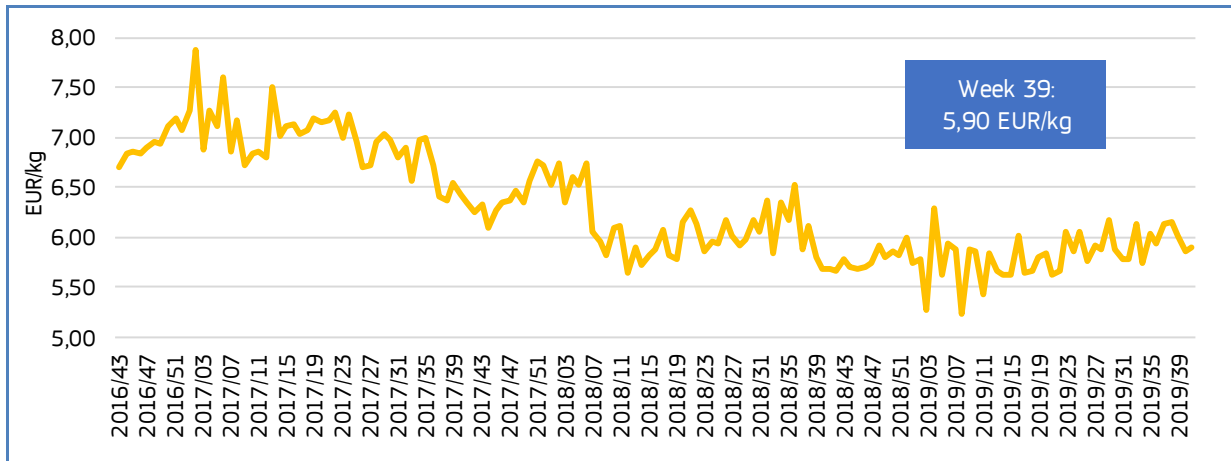
Figure 32. **IMPORT PRICE OF ALASKA POLLOCK, FROZEN FILLETS FROM CHINA**



Source: European Commission (updated 17.10.2019).

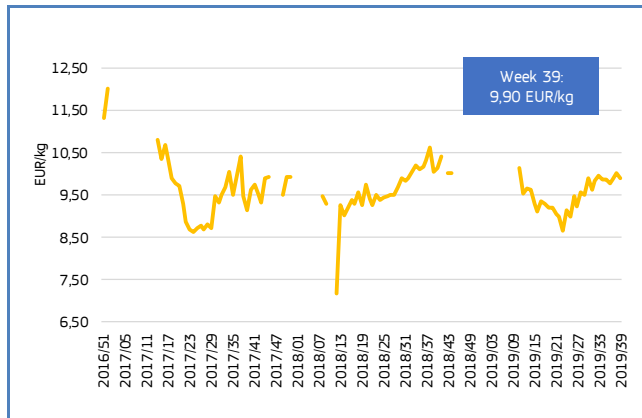
The price of **frozen tropical shrimp** (genus *Penaeus*, CN code 03061792) from **Ecuador** was 5,90 EUR/kg in **week 39**, 2% lower than the average of 6,04 EUR/kg during the preceding four weeks and up by 4% from the same week in 2018. The volume of 1.815 tonnes in week 39 was significantly lower than previous four-week average (–26%), yet it was significantly higher (+45%), compared with week 39 of the previous year. This is a product with a highly variable supply. Ecuador's production continues to rise, and outputs are mostly exported to Asia (China). At the same time, price of EU imports has shown a decreasing trend in the past 36 months.

Figure 33. **IMPORT PRICE OF FROZEN TROPICAL SHRIMP FROM ECUADOR**



Source: European Commission (updated 17.10.2019).

Figure 34. **IMPORT PRICE OF FRESH OR CHILLED SWORDFISH FILLETS FROM CHILE**

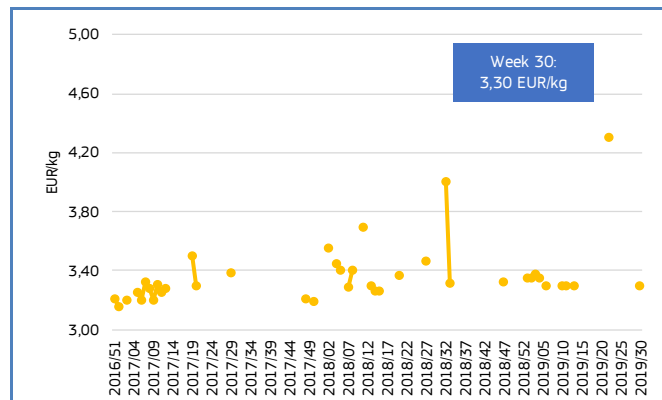


Source: European Commission (updated 17.10.2019).

For **fresh or chilled swordfish fillets** (*Xiphias gladius*, CN code 03044500) from **Chile**, the price in **week 39** was 9,90 EUR/kg, slightly up (+0,1%) from the preceding four-week average of 9,89 EUR/kg, and lower (–2%) from the price of 10,06 EUR/kg in the same week in 2018. At the same time, the volume recorded in week 39 (16 tonnes) was significantly lower (–51%) than the previous four-week average, but 13% higher than week 39 in 2018. However, overall the imported volume has increased in the past three years. Imports to Italy and France have been the main drivers behind this increase.

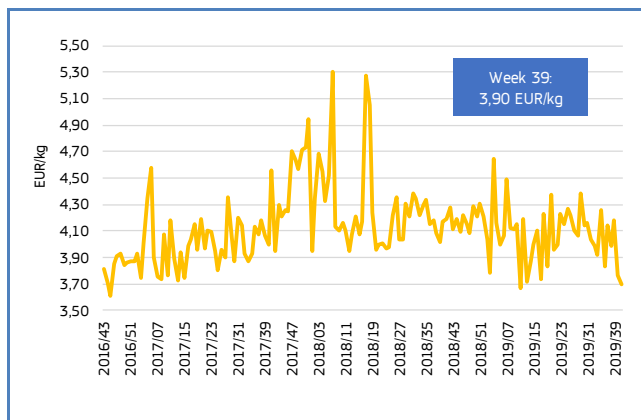
The price of **frozen albacore or long-finned tunas** for the industrial manufacture of products (*Thunnus alalunga*, CN code 03034110) from **South Africa** was 3,30 EUR/kg in week 30 (the latest available), down by 18% from week 32 of 2018, and down by 2% from the four-week average since week 1 of 2019 (3,36 EUR/kg). Prices seem to correlate inversely with imported volumes. They therefore show a steady increasing trend, while volume decreased. Volume in week 30 of 2019 doubled compared to week 32 of 2018; it was 50% lower than the four-week average (week 1 to 4 of 2019). EU trade in this product is sporadic, and it is used for processing by EU canneries. Imported volumes are highly variable, and they range from 12 to 135 tonnes. France and Spain are the main EU importers of this product.

Figure 35. **IMPORT PRICE OF FROZEN ALBACORE OR LONG-FINNED TUNAS FROM SOUTH AFRICA**



Source: European Commission (updated 17.10.2019).

Figure 36. **IMPORT PRICE OF PREPARED OR PRESERVED SKIPJACK IN VEGETABLE OIL FROM ECUADOR**

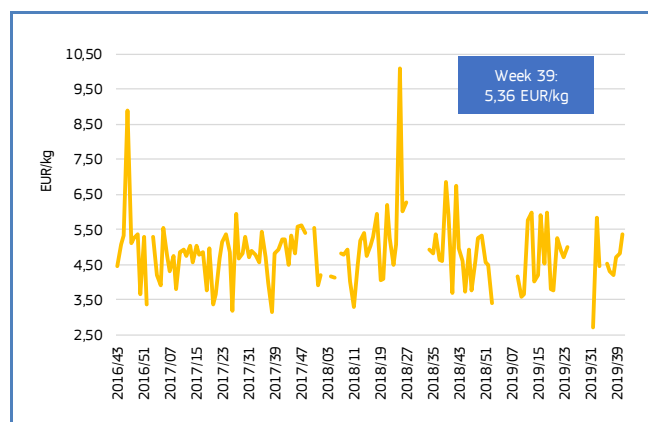


Source: European Commission (updated 17.10.2019).

For **skipjack in vegetable oil**, whole or in pieces, but not minced, prepared or preserved (CN code 16041421) from **Ecuador**, the price in **week 39** of 3,69 EUR/kg dropped 8% from the preceding four-week average price of 4,02 EUR/kg; it was 12% lower than the price from week 39 of the previous year (4,19 EUR/kg). The volume of 1.103 tonnes in week 39 was significantly lower (–28%) than the four-week average volume of 1.535 tonnes, but 50% higher than the volume a year earlier. Prices (as well as volumes) show fluctuations from week to week. This product's price showed a marginal increase, while imported volumes have increased steadily in the period commencing October 10th, 2016. However, since the beginning of 2018, price decreased constantly, while volume continued to show an increasing trend. Spain, the Netherlands and Germany are the biggest importers.

The price of **frozen sole** (*Solea* spp., CN code 03033300) from **Morocco** was 5,36 EUR/kg in week 39, an increase of 19% from the previous four-week average of 4,51 EUR/kg and significantly higher (+45%) than the price in the same week of 2018. The recorded volume of 43 tonnes were more than three-time greater than the preceding four weeks but 10% lower than a year earlier. The price peaks in weeks 44 of 2016 and 23 of 2018 do not correlate with low imported volume. Prices have decreased slowly during the last three years, and so has volume, albeit at a more rapid rate. Spain is the biggest importer of this product.

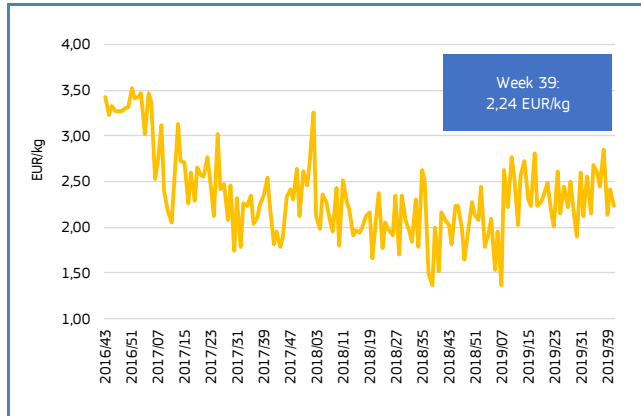
Figure 37. **IMPORT PRICE OF FROZEN SOLE FROM MOROCCO**



Source: European Commission (updated 17.10.2019).



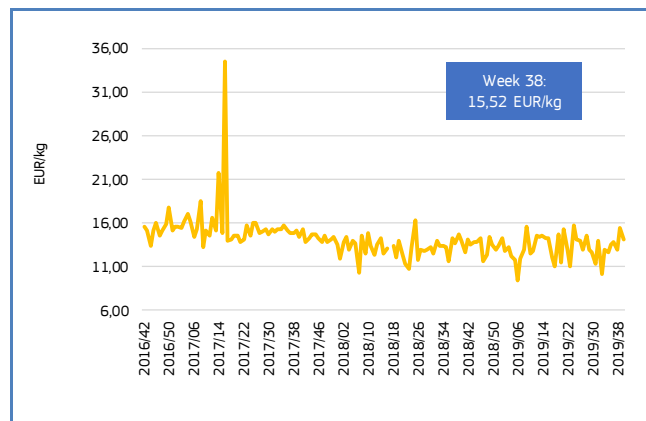
Figure 38. **IMPORT PRICE OF FROZEN CARP FROM MYANMAR**



Source: European Commission (updated 17.10.2019).

The price of frozen **lobster** (*Homarus* spp., CN code 03061210) from **Canada** was 15,52 EUR/kg in **week 38**, higher than both the previous four-week average and week 38 of the previous year (+17% and +5%, respectively). The recorded volume of 61 tonnes was 37% lower than the preceding four weeks and down 17% from a year earlier. This price has gradually increased over the observed period (from week 41 of 2016). The spike in price in week 15 of 2017 corresponds to the lowest recorded volume: 468 kg. France, Belgium and Italy are the biggest importers.

Figure 39. **IMPORT PRICE OF FROZEN LOBSTER FROM CANADA**



Source: European Commission (updated 17.10.2019).

The price of **frozen carp** (*Cyprinus* spp., *Carassius* spp., *Ctenopharyngodon idellus*, *Hypophthalmichthys* spp., *Cirrhinus* spp., *Mylopharyngodon piceus*, *Catla catla*, *Labeo* spp., *Osteochilus hasselti*, *Leptobarbus hoeveni*, *Megalobrama* spp., CN code 03032500) from **Myanmar** reached 2,24 EUR/kg in **week 39**; it was 9% lower than the preceding four-week average of 2,46 EUR/kg and 3% above the price of 2,17 EUR/kg a year earlier. The recorded volume of 126 tonnes in week 39 was 29% higher than the preceding four-week average and 34% lower than in week 39 of 2018. Prices correlated with the imported volume and they decreased significantly in the period observed (week 41 of 2016 till week 39 of 2019). The UK is the biggest importer of frozen carp.

### 3. Consumption

#### 3.1. HOUSEHOLD CONSUMPTION IN THE EU

In August 2019 compared to the same month a year earlier, consumption of fresh fisheries and aquaculture products increased in both volume and value in most of the surveyed Member States apart from Ireland where they decreased. Only in Poland volume decreased, but value increased, while in Italy consumption remained unchanged. The decrease seen in Ireland was mainly due to lower volume and value of haddock (27% and 24%, respectively). Reduced consumption of mackerel was the main reason for the decreased volume observed in Poland (47 tonnes, or 2%). A rise in trout and salmon value (16% and 14%, respectively) contributed to the overall value increase of 9% or EUR 1,5 million in this country. Hungary also registered stable consumed volumes in August 2019, however value decreased by 7%, or EUR 91.000.

Table 3. **AUGUST OVERVIEW OF THE REPORTING COUNTRIES (volume in tonnes and value in million EUR)**

Country	Per capita consumption 2016* (live weight equivalent, LWE) kg/capita/year	August 2017		August 2018		July 2019		August 2019		Change from August 2018 to August 2019	
		Volume	Value	Volume	Value	Volume	Value	Volume	Value	Volume	Value
Denmark	24,7	764	11,74	800	12,45	1.062	17,77	847	13,54	6%	9%
France	32,9	17.042	177,24	16.418	171,07	15.126	169,36	16.569	179,76	1%	5%
Germany	13,9	4.452	63,75	3.654	54,74	3.558	56,40	4.474	68,93	22%	26%
Hungary	5,2	316	1,57	260	1,53	353	1,65	261	1,43	0%	7%
Ireland	23,0	870	13,56	982	15,20	986	14,90	936	14,29	5%	6%
Italy	31,1	23.747	229,50	24.130	239,83	25.529	248,86	24.069	239,48	0%	0%
Netherlands	21,0	2.782	35,01	2.596	36,42	2.624	36,31	3.059	39,50	18%	8%
Poland	14,5	2.669	15,87	2.817	17,41	2.729	18,83	2.770	18,91	2%	9%
Portugal	57,0	5.521	36,19	4.834	31,37	4.243	27,30	5.954	37,01	23%	18%
Spain	45,7	45.439	342,84	42.322	322,23	48.081	368,94	42.914	333,35	1%	3%
Sweden	26,4	968	15,91	734	11,32	592	9,28	901	13,08	23%	16%
UK	23,7	3.906	61,25	4.329	67,62	3.646	57,03	4.521	68,74	4%	2%

Source: EUMOFA, based on Europanel (updated 22.10.2019).

\*Data on per capita consumption of all fish and seafood products for all EU Member States can be found at: [http://eumofa.eu/documents/20178/132648/EN\\_The+EU+fish+market+2018.pdf](http://eumofa.eu/documents/20178/132648/EN_The+EU+fish+market+2018.pdf)

For the past three years, household consumption of fresh fisheries and aquaculture products in the month of August has been below the annual average in both volume and value in most of the Member States surveyed, except in the Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden and the UK where the opposite was observed. Germany is the only Member State where volume was above but value below the annual average in this month.

The most recent weekly consumption data (up to week 46-2019) is available via the EUMOFA website, and can be accessed [here](#).

The most recent monthly consumption data for **September 2019** is available via the EUMOFA website, and can be accessed [here](#).

## 3.2. Fresh sole

**Habitat:** Flatfish from the Soleidae family, living in deeper waters in the winter, but moves to shallower waters to feed and spawn in spring and summer.

**Catch area:** Eastern Atlantic, North Sea, western Baltic and Mediterranean Sea, as well as the Black Sea.

**Producing countries in the EU:** France, the Netherlands, Belgium, the UK, Italy.

**Production method:** Caught, farmed in limited quantities.

**Main consumers in the EU:** Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, France, Belgium, Germany, the UK.

**Presentation:** Whole, fillets.

**Preservation:** Fresh, frozen.

**Ways of preparation:** Baked, fried, steamed.



### 3.2.1. General overview of household consumption in the UK

In 2016<sup>17</sup>, per capita consumption of all fisheries and aquaculture products in the UK was 23,7 kg or 2% lower than the average in the EU (24,3 kg). However, it remained unchanged compared to 2015. Compared to Portugal, where per capita consumption of 57,0 kg was the highest in the EU, consumption was 58% lower in the UK. See more on per capita consumption in the EU in Table 3.

Household consumption of sole in the UK decreased while prices increased over the period January 2016–August 2019. In 2018, prices increased 8% and consumed volumes dropped 22% compared to 2017.

We have covered **sole** in previous *Monthly Highlights*:

**First sales:** Belgium (3/2018, 2/2017, 4/2015, 6/2014, January 2013, August–September 2013), Denmark (7/2016), France (3/2018, 2/2017), Italy (3/2018, 2/2017), Portugal (2/2017, 9/2015, 2/2014).

**Extra-EU Import:** Iceland (4/2019), Morocco (11/2018).

**Consumption:** Belgium (5/2015, 2/2014), France (4/2016, 5/2015, 2/2014), Italy (4/2016, 5/2015, 2/2014), the Netherlands (5/2015, 2/2014), UK (4/2016, 5/2015, 2/2014).

**Topic of the month:** Sole in the EU market (6/2018), Price along the supply chain for sole in Belgium (Jan 2013).

<sup>17</sup> The most recent year data are available is 2016.

### 3.2.2. Consumption trends in the UK

**Long-term trend, January 2016 to August 2019:** Decreasing in volume and increasing in price.

**Yearly average price:** 15,71 EUR/kg (2016), 16,72 EUR/kg (2017), 18,10 EUR/kg (2018).

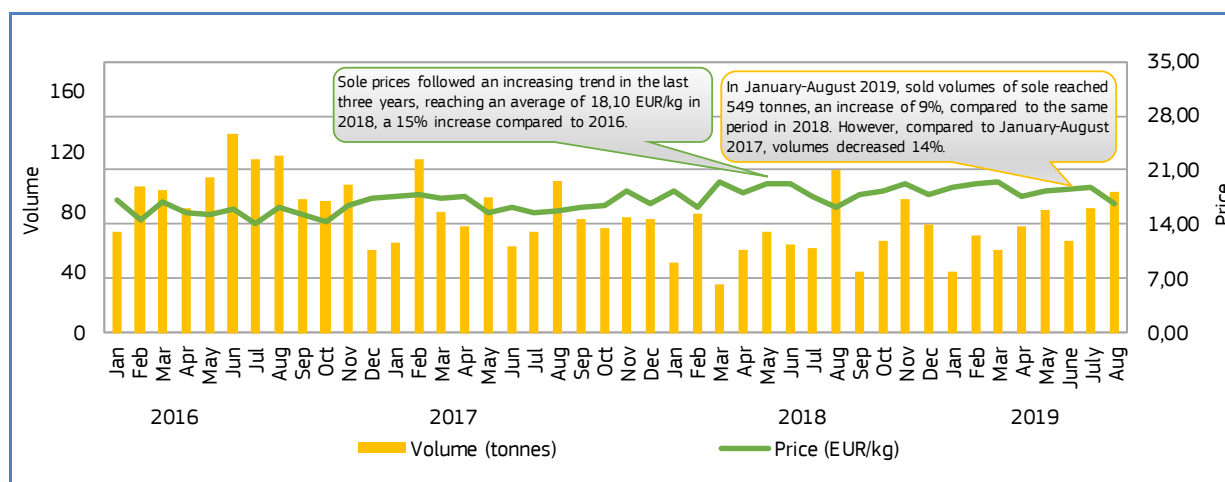
**Yearly consumption:** 1.137 tonnes (2016), 936 tonnes (2017), 765 tonnes (2018).

**Short-term trend, January to August 2019:** Decreasing slightly in both volume and price.

**Average price:** 18,44 EUR/kg.

**Consumption:** 549 tonnes.

Figure 40. RETAIL PRICE AND VOLUME OF FRESH SOLE PURCHASED BY HOUSEHOLDS IN THE UK



Source: EUMOFA, based on Europanel (updated 21.10.2019).

## 4. Case study – Importance of FTAs for EU FAPs

The EU is by far the world's biggest import market for fisheries and aquaculture products (FAPs), consuming seafood with an imported value of more than EUR 26 billion in 2018 – exceeding the second largest market, the USA, by approx. EUR 9 billion. China is the world's largest exporter of FAPs with an export value of EUR 18,5 billion in 2018, followed by Norway (EUR 9,9 billion) and the EU (EUR 5,75 billion)<sup>18</sup>. Trade of FAPs accounted for 0,3% of total exports and 1,3% of total imports for the EU in 2018<sup>19</sup>. The European Commission is the sole negotiating partner for all non-EU countries in matters concerning trading conditions for FAPs, acting on behalf of all EU Member States. This competence to conclude international agreements is one of the areas in which the EU has exclusive competence, as specified in Article 3 of the Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). Trading rules in the EU for FAPs are harmonised, meaning that the same rules apply across all Member States.



*Source: French Cultural Center.*

For many years, there has been a broad consensus among economic researchers and governmental institutes that trade barriers (e.g. high tariff rates) are disadvantageous for all aspects of global trade<sup>20</sup>. Countries that are open to international trade tend to grow faster, innovate more, improve productivity and provide higher income and more opportunities to their populations<sup>21</sup>.

The World Trade Organization (WTO) is the largest facilitator for international trade globally, with 164 member nations, including all major and emerging economies<sup>22</sup>. The central ideal underpinning the creation of the WTO was the desire for fair conditions for global trade players, through a set of rules and agreements – adhered to by all members – that control each nation's rights and duties. In addition, the WTO can impose sanctions against those members who fail in their obligation to meet these duties.

The WTO fosters a level playing field: all WTO members, of any size or economic importance, have the same rights and obligations, and are equal within all agreements negotiated through the organisation. The key objective for the organisation is to lower trade barriers between its member nations – historically, the focus has been on customs barriers, as they are easy to measure economically. Customs reliefs negotiated through the WTO, or between any member nations, apply to all members under the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) principle. This essentially means that each nation in the WTO has the same duty rate on a product as the country with the lowest rate; designed to give all members equal conditions to compete in all markets.

Under article 24 in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), a multilateral trade agreement established in 1947, there is an opportunity for countries to break the non-discrimination principle of the WTO through bilateral trade agreements. These enable individual nations to act outside of WTO terms and secure better trading conditions – gaining competitive advantage against other nations in chosen markets. Research has underscored that there are trade measures other than tariff reliefs, which are at least as effective in establishing beneficial trading agreements<sup>23</sup>. Thus, in modern trade agreements, non-tariff barriers are given more weight. There are often separate chapters for Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) and Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures (SPS) in newer agreements. TBT agreements aim to ensure that technical regulations, standards and conformity assessment procedures are non-discriminatory and do not create unnecessary obstacles to trade. SPS agreements are aimed at preserving food safety and animal health through conformity in veterinary

<sup>18</sup> Eurostat for EU countries (online data code [DS-016890](#)) and IHS Markit for non-EU countries.

<sup>19</sup> Eurostat. Updated September 2019.

<sup>20</sup> Kowalski, P. 2006. The Doha Development Agenda: Welfare Gains from Further Multilateral Tariff Liberalisation.

<sup>21</sup> The World Bank. 2018. Stronger Open Trade Policies Enable Economic Growth for All

<sup>22</sup> World Trade Organisation. 2019. *About WTO*.

<sup>23</sup> e.g. Craig, Julian C, and Ahmed U Zafar. 2005. The impact of barriers to export on export marketing performance.

standards, certification etc. By establishing a common set of rules for non-tariff barriers, in addition to tariff reliefs, barriers to effective trade between partners can be further reduced.

## 4.1. EU trade agreements

EU Member States benefit from increased negotiating power when the EU establishes trade agreements with other countries<sup>24</sup>. The EU negotiates trade agreements to strengthen its economy and create jobs. EU trade agreements help European businesses in two ways: by providing easier access, at lower prices, to the raw materials and other inputs they need, and; by leading to increased exports to countries and regions outside the EU.

In addition, building strong rules and values into trade agreements helps the EU shape globalisation, especially on issues like human rights, working conditions and environmental protection. The Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP) removes import duties from products coming into the EU market from vulnerable developing countries. This helps developing countries to alleviate poverty and create jobs based on international values and principles, including with regards to labour and human rights<sup>25</sup>.

The EU has several trade agreements with countries and regional associations all over the world. These agreements can be categorised as Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) and GSPs. FTAs are bilateral/regional agreements liberalising tariffs and other factors related to trade. EPAs cover a wider range of aspects within a trading partnership, with facilitation for movement of people, inclusion of competition policy, etc. The EU has categorised its trade agreements as “first generation” and “new generation”, with the new generation agreements including those applied since 2010 and onwards<sup>26</sup>.

Japan became the 38<sup>th</sup> country to agree a trade agreement with the EU in February 2019, when a new agreement between the two partners entered into force. As of October 2019, five additional agreements already in place are being negotiated and updated. In addition, 47 countries have trade agreements that are categorised as partially in place<sup>27</sup>: agreements of this category may lack a signature from some EU Member States, or it may be that some aspects of the agreement will not enter into force until a later date. Most of these agreements already have an impact on trade, with liberalisation in tariffs or standardised factors such as TBT or SPS.

In 1994, the two large fishery and aquaculture nations Norway and Iceland signed the Economic Area Agreement (EEA) with the EU to gain access to the EU market on more or less equal terms to Member States. The exceptions within this agreement covered, amongst other items, agricultural and seafood products – meaning that fish from these nations is not exempt from tariffs<sup>28</sup>. Although these nations have a close connection to the EU market through well-established trade and cooperation on several areas, they are not counted as FTA partners in the realm of fishery and aquaculture products. Even though trade conditions for seafood is excluded from the EEA, Norway and the EU has negotiated bilateral agreements that provides preferential tariff conditions and tariff quotas for some species, including several white fish species. The preferential tariff rates do not include important species like salmon, herring etc<sup>29</sup>.

The EU has opened talks with a number of potential FTA partners, with many agreements either pending or under current negotiation. Several of these potential agreements are with large seafood producing and/or consuming nations such as Vietnam, USA, China, India and Mercosur<sup>30</sup>. These agreements could change the market dynamics of fishery and aquaculture products, both for the EU and from a global perspective.

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<sup>24</sup> European Commission. 2018. Policy making.

<sup>25</sup> European Commission. 2019. Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP).

<sup>26</sup> European Commission. 2019. Implementation of Free Trade Agreements.

<sup>27</sup> European Commission. 2019. Negotiations and agreements.

<sup>28</sup> European Commission. 2019. Trade Policy, Countries and regions, Norway.

<sup>29</sup> Norwegian Ministry of foreign affairs. 2012. The EEA Agreement and Norway's other agreements with the EU (3.2.6).

<sup>30</sup> Mercosur members: Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay.



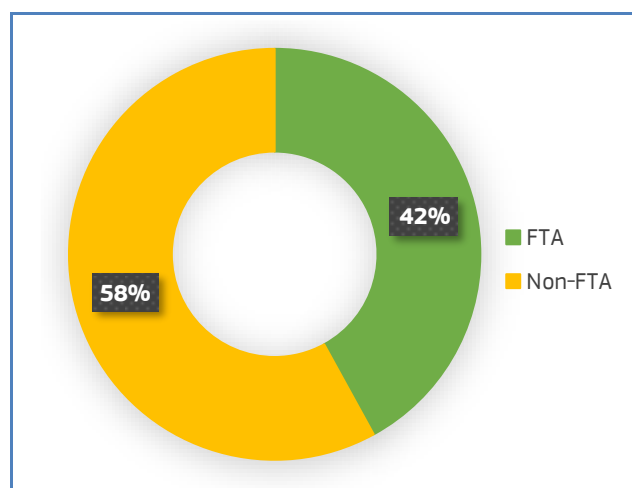
## 4.2. EU exports of FAPs

EU exports of FAPs have increased steadily over the last decade and nearly doubled in terms of value since 2010. From 2016 to 2018, growth in value was mainly driven by increasing volumes, which grew by 22% during the two-year-period. In the years prior to 2016 the increasing trend in exports' value was due to higher prices and a shift in species compositions.

In 2018, the EU exported FAPs of approx. EUR 5,3 billion – of which 42% was destined for FTA partners. When looking at this share by volume, it is even larger: at 47%. Export to FTA partners is dominated by lower-priced products to a greater extent than exports to non-FTA partner countries. In some instances, high-value export products are most highly sought-after by markets without FTAs with the EU.

Processed or preserved products are often impacted by tariff liberalisations in FTAs, as they originally have high tariff rates. In EU exports of FAPs, there are no signs that this has affected the trade of these products to any extent. When comparing EU exports to trade partners with and without an FTA, there are no trends exemplifying an increased incentive for larger exports of processed products from the EU.

Figure 41. **DESTINATION COUNTRIES OF EU EXPORTS OF FAPs IN VALUE (SHARE IN 2018)**



Source: EUMOFA, based on EUROSTAT (online data code: DS-016890).

Table 4. **TOP 10 DESTINATIONS OF EU EXPORTS OF FAPs IN 2018 (value in million EUR)**

Country	FTA	2010	2018	Most important species
USA	No	381	777	Salmon, octopus, trout
China	No	226	706	Halibut, cod, shrimp
Switzerland	Yes	280	484	Salmon, cod, trout
Japan	Yes*	213	380	Tuna, halibut, salmon
Norway	No	137	234	Shrimp, cod, salmon
Nigeria	No	148	220	Herring, blue whiting, mackerel
Morocco	Yes	106	175	Shrimp, anchovy, tuna
Vietnam	No	46	127	Salmon, halibut, trout
South Korea	Yes	39	125	Molluscs, tuna, redfish
Ukraine	Yes	63	109	Mackerel, herring, hake

Source: EUMOFA, based on EUROSTAT (online data code: DS-016890).

\*Japan became FTA-partner in 2019.

The export of FAPs from the EU is dominated by countries with ample purchasing power. Over the last decade, USA and China have been the two countries importing the highest share of FAPs from the EU in value terms. Switzerland and Norway have also been important destinations, although the Norwegian market is exempt from open trade terms specifically on seafood. Japan, which is the fourth largest market for EU FAPs, recently (in February of this year) entered into an EPA with the EU. This will have an impact on trading conditions between the two partners. Other important exporting markets that currently hold FTAs with the EU are Morocco, South Korea and Ukraine.

FAPs exported to FTA partners largely include species intended for further processing in the destination market. The finished product will, in many cases, head back to the EU or be re-exported to other large consuming countries (as it is the case for Ecuador and the Seychelles). An important exception is bluefin tuna exported to Japan, which is mainly fillets destined for consumption in that end market. Furthermore, the USA and China, influential export markets for the EU, are final markets for most FAPs.

Of the top FAPs exported by the EU in 2018, higher-value species, like salmon and Greenland halibut, were predominantly sold to non-FTA trading partners. These non-FTA partners are high-consuming markets with large purchasing power, like USA and China.

Table 5. **TOP SPECIES EXPORTED BY THE EU IN VALUE IN 2018 (value in million EU, volume in 1000 tonnes)**

Species	FTA partners		Most important partner (% of total export value)
	Volume	Value	
Salmon	26	250	Switzerland (14%)
Bluefin tuna	18	230	Japan (83%)
Skipjack tuna	160	230	Ecuador (23%)
Mackerel	93	130	Egypt (9%)
Shrimp <i>Crangon</i> spp.	23	110	Morocco (85%)
Yellowfin tuna	51	100	Seychelles (24%)

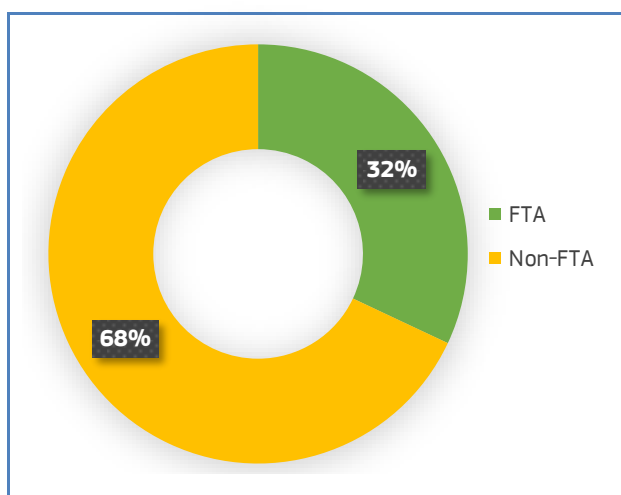
  

Species	Non-FTA partners		Most important partner (% of total export value)
	Volume	Value	
Salmon	78	680	USA (43%)
Greenland halibut	43	220	China (66%)
Cod	43	180	China (37%)
Coldwater shrimp	25	120	China (44%)
Herring	141	120	Nigeria (43%)
Octopus	10	120	USA (70%)

Source: EUMOFA, based on EUROSTAT (online data code: DS-016890).

### 4.3. EU imports of FAPs

Figure 42. **COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN OF EU IMPORTS OF FAPs IN VALUE, SHARE IN 2018**



Source: EUMOFA, based on EUROSTAT (online data code: DS-016890).

The EU is the world's largest market for FAPs, with a total import value surpassing EUR 26,5 billion in 2018. Imports have increased each year over the last decade, in terms of value. Volumes have averaged at about 5,5 million tonnes in the period 2010-2016, and they surpassed 6 million tonnes in both 2017 and 2018. Products imported in the EU are either intended to be sold directly to the consumer or can be raw material sold to the seafood processing industry. Implementation of FTAs has created better trading conditions for both import markets, but imports of processed products are often introduced with a slower timeframe through downscaling of tariffs. For the EU seafood processing industry, FTAs provide a reliable source of raw material at a more competitive price, however international processors that have lower processing costs may still serve as increased competition for these products.

Table 6. **TOP 10 SUPPLIERS BY VALUE IN 2018 (value in million EUR)**

Country	FTA	2010	2018	Most important species
Norway	No	3.825	6.796	Salmon, cod, herring
China	No	1.514	1.841	Alaska pollock, cod, salmon
Ecuador	Yes	682	1.312	Shrimp, tuna, swordfish
Morocco	Yes	742	1.265	Octopus, sardine, shrimp
Iceland	No	892	1.232	Cod, saithe, redfish
Vietnam	No	854	1.169	Shrimp, catfish, redfish
USA	No	772	919	Alaska pollock, salmon, lobster <i>Homarus</i> spp.
India	No	536	837	Shrimp, squid, octopus
Russia	No	270	687	Cod, Alaska pollock, haddock
Argentina	No	617	672	Shrimp, hake, squid

Source: EUMOFA, based on EUROSTAT (online data code: DS-016890).

Countries in the non-FTA category supply the EU market with 35% of the fresh FAPs imported – a considerably higher proportion than FTA partners, who supply 12% of imported fresh FAPs. This is greatly influenced by the high volumes of imported Norwegian and Icelandic FAPs which are predominantly fresh products. The largest FTA partners supplying fresh products to the EU are the Faroe Islands (mainly exporting salmon), Turkey (exporting seabass and seabream) and Canada (exporting lobster *Homarus* spp). Processed and prepared products made up 34% of the value of FAP imports from FTA partners in 2018. In comparison, only 9% of the value of FAPs imported from non-FTA partners were processed and prepared products. The imported prepared and processed products are dominated by: tuna from FTA partners, and frozen warmwater shrimp, and dried and salted cod from non-FTA partners.

More than two thirds of imported FAPs are from suppliers in countries without a trade agreement with the EU. Norway, the largest supplier of FAPs to the EU, has an economic agreement where seafood is excluded from the open trade conditions. This is also the case for Iceland. However, because these nations have a long history of two-way trading in FAPs with the EU, and due to the close cooperation between these countries and the EU in several other areas, the FAPs trading conditions for Norway and Iceland are less stringent, compared to an ordinary non-FTA trading situation regarding non-tariff trade barriers.

Table 7. **TOP IMPORTED SPECIES IN 2018 (value in million EU, volume in 1000 tonnes)**

Species	FTA partners		Most important supplier (% of total import value)
	Volume	Value	
Warmwater shrimp	187	1.300	Ecuador (30%)
Skipjack tuna	278	1.120	Ecuador (27%)
Yellowfin tuna	169	720	Seychelles (16%)
Octopus	53	560	Morocco (43%)
Hake	129	480	Namibia (42%)
Salmon	58	470	Faroe Islands (4%)
Species	Non-FTA partners		Most important supplier (% of total import value)
	Volume	Value	
Salmon	866	5.660	Norway (84%)
Cod	478	2.380	Norway (35%)
Warmwater shrimp	310	2.310	Argentina (26%)
Squid	207	750	Falkland Islands (20%)
Alaska pollock	304	670	China (47%)
Skipjack tuna	134	510	Philippines (12%)

Source: EUMOFA, based on EUROSTAT (online data code: DS-016890).

#### 4.4. FTA importance of EU FAPs

Over the past decades, the EU has built up several FTAs and EPAs which have given both producers and consumers a better foundation for access to new markets and products, including FAPs. Many agreements have been negotiated and signed, and many more are in the pipeline for future completion. Through a continuous focus on negotiating new trade agreements, the EU hopes to strengthen its global influence on issues like human rights, working conditions and environmental protection, in addition to easing trade through open markets<sup>31</sup>.

As the world's most important market for fisheries and aquaculture products, the EU benefits significantly from better market access, lower tariff rates and easier trading conditions. Consumers can now access a larger range of FAPs, at lower prices. Seafood processors can also have improved access to cheaper raw materials, and to export markets for their products. However, EU producers are still likely to experience increased export competition from foreign processed FAPs producers, some of whom enjoy competitive advantages in production costs.

Table 8. **EU TRADE BALANCE BY SPECIES (value in million EUR)**

Top 5			
FTA partners		Non-FTA partners	
Shrimp <i>Crangon</i> spp.	+98	Greenland halibut	+86
Atlantic horse mackerel	+77	Blue whiting	+75
Bluefin tuna	+74	Oyster	+47
Herring	+57	Sardine	+40
Mackerel	+55	Atlantic horse mackerel	+29
Bottom 5			
FTA partner		Non-FTA partners	
Warmwater shrimp	-1.250	Salmon	-4.970
Skipjack tuna	-885	Warmwater shrimp	-2.200
Yellowfin tuna	-620	Cod	-2.160
Octopus	-535	Squid	-735
Hake	-435	Alaska pollock	-665

Source: EUMOFA, based on EUROSTAT (online data code: DS-016890).

With a FAPs trade deficit of EUR 20,5 billion in 2018, it is clear the EU is highly dependent on imports to cover domestic seafood consumption. For the past decade, salmon has been the most valuable species for EU FAPs exports. In 2018, the exported value of salmon was more than three times higher than the value of the second most valuable export species: skipjack tuna. Still, the EU imports considerably more salmon than it exports. Imports of salmon to the EU from Norway and Iceland contribute to it being the species with the highest trade deficiency, followed by cod and warmwater shrimp. On the other hand, the EU has a positive trade balance for some species – although they are of far lower value. Shrimp *Crangon* spp. and Atlantic horse mackerel are the species the EU has the largest positive trade balance for – both exceeding EUR 100 million in 2018.

Comparing the trade balance between the EU and countries with or without an FTA, the largest deficit is clearly with those countries that do not have a trade agreement. In 2018, FAPs traded with FTA partners had a trade deficit of EUR 5,9 billion, while non-FTA partners had a EUR 14,6 billion deficit. Today, the EU has FTAs with some big players in the global trade of FAPs, but several of the largest seafood markets trade without an EU FTA. Specifically, the USA and China are the EU's most important exporting markets for FAPs, while Norway and China are the largest suppliers of FAPs to the EU – all FAPs trade with these countries currently operates without a trade agreement to fully liberalise trade conditions.

For some of the EU's seafood processing industry, FTAs with major producing countries have been of great value, improving access to raw material. Species such as tuna and warmwater shrimp have gained significantly better trading conditions after trade agreements with high-supplying countries have entered into force. Beyond total or partial tariff eliminations, the agreements continue to contribute to developing a rules-based trading system and they improve market access for EU FAPs<sup>32</sup>. The improved trading conditions lead to easier access to raw material for the EU seafood processing

<sup>31</sup> European Commission. 2019. Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030.

<sup>32</sup> European Commission. 2019. Report on Implementation of EU Free Trade Agreements.

market and better access to the EU market for foreign stakeholders. For EU producers and processors, it is unclear whether the improved trading conditions cause a better or worse competitive situation regarding export of processed and preserved products, and it is likely the level of competition might differ from species to species.

#### **4.5. Future potential**

The EU currently has several negotiations ongoing, pending or awaiting ratification or signatures from some parties. The EU has pending agreements with 27 African nations in Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA), the East African Community (EAC) and in West Africa. Singapore and Vietnam are also on the list of nations with pending agreements. Of the countries on that list, the most important FAPs producing and consuming market is Vietnam. In 2018, the EU exported EUR 125 million worth of FAPs to Vietnam, and imported FAPs worth EUR 1,2 billion from Vietnam – with warmwater shrimp as the main species supplied accounting for approx. 55% of imported value.

Talks are ongoing with many large FAPs trading countries and regions, including: the USA (which is on hold until further notice, since 2016), China, Australia and Mercosur. Many of these are important partners for the EU FAPs industry and already hold a solid position in the EU market. Through implementation of trade agreements with these countries, EU FAPs production and consumption could see considerable benefits. Improved access to the EU market will, in theory, give incentives to these trading partners to increase their involvement in the EU market, either as suppliers of raw material or as competitors.

## 5. Case study – First sales of whiting in major places of sale

With almost 30.000 tonnes landed in 2017, whiting<sup>33</sup> is the sixth of the largest main commercial species within the groundfish commodity group<sup>34</sup>.

### 5.1. EU whiting fisheries and markets

Whiting is distributed throughout the Northeast Atlantic, from the northern coast of Portugal to Iceland and the south-western Barents Sea. The two main catching areas for this species are the North Sea/Eastern Channel and the Celtic Sea. Whiting can also be found in the western Mediterranean Sea, Black Sea, Aegean Sea and the Adriatic Sea.

Table 9. **LANDINGS OF WHITING IN THE EU IN 2017**  
(volume in tonnes)

Member States	Volume (tonnes)
United Kingdom	9.768
France	9.618
Ireland	5.738
The Netherlands	1.253
Italy	919
Denmark	697
Poland	371
Germany	336
Croatia	122
Other	371
<b>Total</b>	<b>29.193</b>

Source: EUMOFA.

The EU accounted for 77% of the global production of whiting in 2017, the other producing countries being Turkey, Norway and Iceland. In the EU, three Member states (the United Kingdom, France and Ireland) were responsible for 86% of whiting catches<sup>35</sup>.

The EU, particularly the UK and France, is the most significant market for whiting in the world.

As a species, whiting is of secondary commercial importance compared to, for example, cod or hake. Since the late 1970s, EU commercial landings have gradually declined: falling from a record volume of 272.000 tonnes in 1976 to 30-35.0000 tonnes in the 2010s. Whiting is caught in mixed trawl fisheries, along with cod and haddock and it is also caught in Norway lobster fisheries, especially in France. In 2018, the EU TAC for whiting was 46.720 tonnes, out of which 17.754 tonnes was allocated to France, 16.355 tonnes to the United Kingdom, 6.268 tonnes to Ireland, 2.841 tonnes to Denmark, and 1.216 tonnes to the Netherlands, the remaining 2.276 tonnes being allocated to Spain, Belgium, Germany, and Sweden.

<sup>33</sup> Whiting (*Merlangius merlangus*) should not be confused with blue whiting (*Micromesistius poutassou*), mostly used for oil production or surimi.

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.eumofa.eu/en/web/eumofa/ad-hoc-queries3>

<sup>35</sup> FAO Fishstat.



In terms of first sales of whiting, Peterhead in the United Kingdom and Boulogne-sur-Mer in France are two key locations, followed by other British (Lerwick, Fraserburgh, Scalloway) and French (Roscoff, Cherbourg, Saint-Quay-Portrieux) ports. First on the list of landing ports for whiting after the UK and France is the Dutch port of IJmuiden. The three locations selected for this analysis are thus Peterhead, Boulogne-sur-Mer and IJmuiden.

Table 10. **MAJOR FIRST-SALE PLACES<sup>36</sup> FOR WHITING IN THE EU IN 2017 (volume in tonnes)**

Member States/Port	Volume (tonnes)
UK - Peterhead	3.498
FR - Boulogne-sur-Mer	3.130
UK - Lerwick	996
FR - Roscoff	880
FR - Cherbourg	863
FR - Saint-Quay-Portrieux	845
FR - Le Guilvinec	721
FR - Erquy	712
UK - Fraserburgh	624
UK - Scalloway	454
FR - Les Sables-d'Olonne	303
FR - Port-en-Bessin	287
NL - IJmuiden	273
UK - Cullivoe	267

Source: EUMOFA.

## 5.1. First sales of whiting in Peterhead, Boulogne-sur-Mer and IJmuiden

- **Peterhead** is by far the largest auction in the UK both in terms of value and volume, with a turnover of EUR 148 million for 108.150 tonnes of fish sold in 2018. It is based on the northeast coast of Scotland. In 2018, whiting was the 7<sup>th</sup> most significant species for this market, both in value and volume, after mackerel, cod, haddock, monk, herring and saithe (in descending order of value)<sup>37</sup>.
- **Boulogne-sur-Mer** located on the northern part of the Channel, is home to the largest auction in terms of volume, in France. The Boulogne-sur-Mer auction is the 3<sup>rd</sup> most significant auction in terms of value in France, with a turnover of EUR 49 million for 21.000 tonnes of fish sold in 2018. In 2018, whiting was the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest species in volume (after saithe) and the 5<sup>th</sup> most important in terms of value, after squid, saithe, mackerel and scallop<sup>38</sup>.
- **IJmuiden** is located at the mouth of the North Sea Canal, which connects Amsterdam to the North Sea, and is by far the largest Dutch auction both in terms of value and volume with a turnover of EUR 276 million for 235.000 tonnes of fish sold in 2018. IJmuiden is primarily a blue whiting and small pelagics port. In 2018, whiting ranked 15<sup>th</sup> in volume and 23<sup>rd</sup> in value, in terms of species sold<sup>39</sup>.

The highest first-sale volume of whiting is recorded in Peterhead with almost 3.500 tonnes in 2017, followed by Boulogne with 3.130 tonnes in the same year.

In 2018, Peterhead was responsible for 42% of all first sales of whiting in the United Kingdom in volume, while Boulogne accounted for 40% of all first sales of whiting in France. IJmuiden's share of the Dutch first-sales of whiting was 34%.

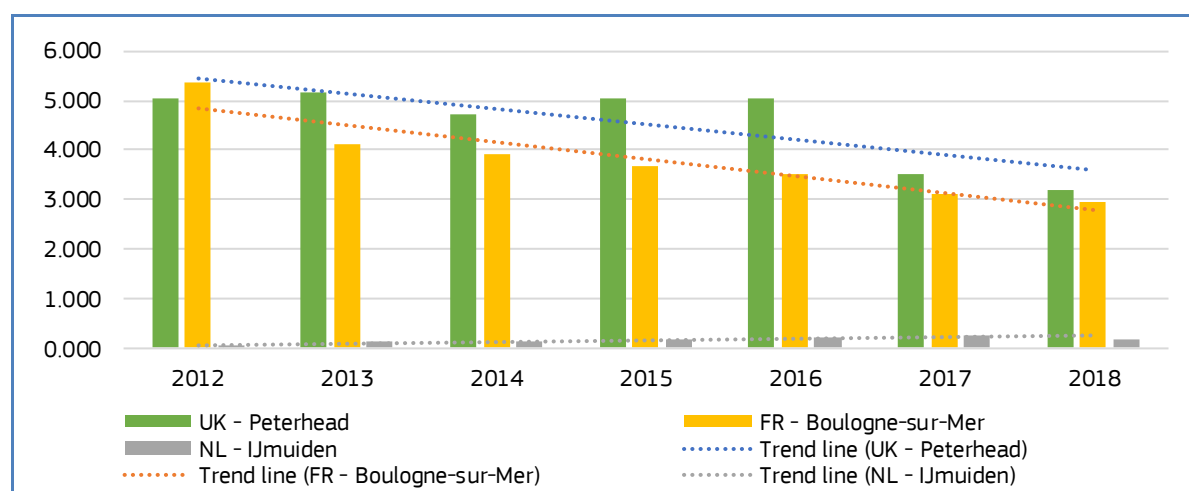
<sup>36</sup> Significant first sale places also exist in Ireland for whiting, e.g. Dunmore East (1.664 tonnes in 2016) and Castletownbere (1.585 tonnes in 2016), but detailed data are not available in EUMOFA database.

<sup>37</sup> EUMOFA.

<sup>38</sup> See footnote 37.

<sup>39</sup> See footnote 38.

Figure 43. **FIRST SALES OF WHITING IN THE THREE SELECTED PLACES (volume in tonnes)**



Sources: EUMOFA.

First sales of whiting have experienced a similar downward trend in both Peterhead and Boulogne-sur-Mer between 2012 and 2018. By contrast, sales in IJmuiden grew significantly but still remain at a sales level far below that of the two other ports.

## 5.2. Analysis by presentation state and size

In all three markets, whiting is most commonly sold as a whole fish – this presentation state accounts for 68% of total first sales of whiting in Peterhead, 86% in Boulogne-sur-Mer, and 54% in IJmuiden.

Table 11. **FIRST SALES OF WHITING BY PRESENTATION STATE IN THE THREE KEY LOCATIONS IN 2018**

Place of sale	Presentation states	Volume (tonnes)	Value (1000 EUR)	% volume	% value
FR - Boulogne	Whole	2.752	3.175	92,6	85,9
	Gutted	216	501	7,3	13,5
	Roe	4	22	0,1	0,6
NL - IJmuiden	Whole	108	102	61,1	54,2
	Gutted	68	83	38,3	44,0
	Roe	1	4	0,5	1,9
UK - Peterhead	Whole	2.283	3.329	71,8	67,6
	Gutted	895	1.598	28,2	32,4
	Roe	0	0	0,0	0,0

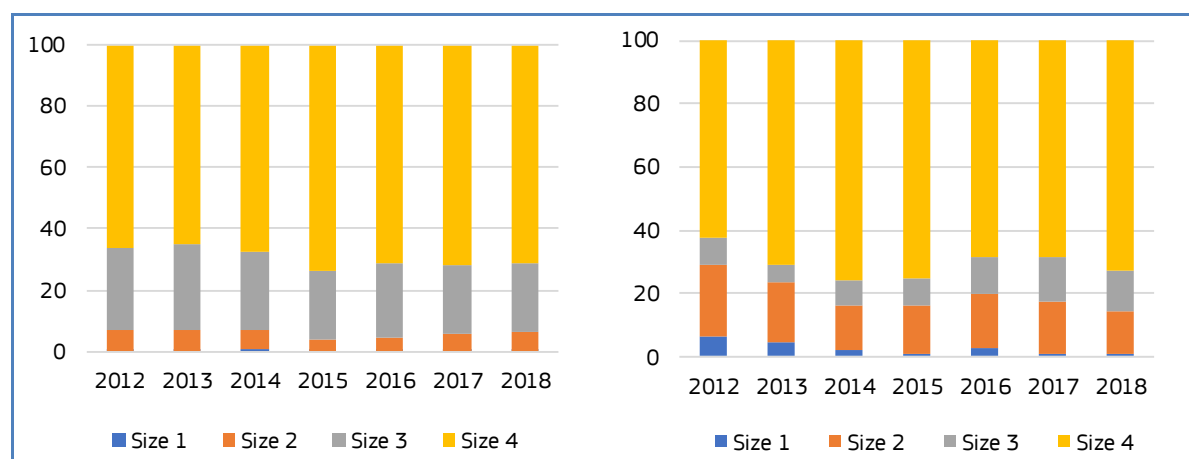
Source: EUMOFA.

Marketing of whiting in the European Union is regulated by marketing standards that establish size and freshness grades<sup>40</sup>. Specifically, marketing standards for fresh whiting establish the following four size grades used by European Union auctions recording their sales' statistics:

<sup>40</sup> Council Regulation (EC) No 2406/96 of 26 November 1996 laying down common marketing standards for certain fishery products.

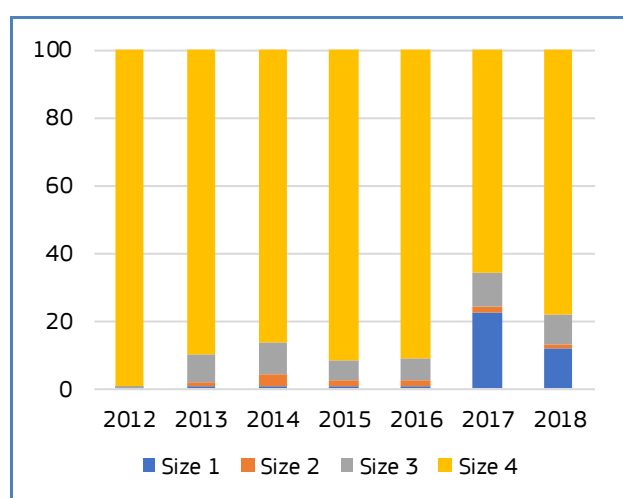
- Size grade 1: 0,500 kg and over;
- Size grade 2: 350 to 500 g;
- Size grade 3: 250 to 350 g;
- Size grade 4: 110 to 250 g.

Figure 44. **BREAKDOWN OF FIRST SALES OF WHITING BY SIZE IN BOULOGNE (LEFT) AND PETERHEAD (RIGHT)**



Source: EUMOFA.

Figure 45. **BREAKDOWN OF FIRST SALES OF WHITING BY SIZE IN IJMUIDEN**



Source: EUMOFA.

Data show that sales of whiting are dominated by small-sizes fish. In 2018, sizes 3 and 4 (less than 350 g) represent 94% of sales in Boulogne, 86% in Peterhead and 87% in IJmuiden.

Larger sizes available (1 and 2) show a decreasing trend in Peterhead, falling (as a percentage of first sales) from 28,8% in 2012 to 14,3% in 2018. The proportion of larger fish on the market in Boulogne is relatively stable, but smaller in comparison (6,8% in 2012, to 6,1% in 2018). The opposite trend is seen in IJmuiden, where sales of large-sized fish were almost non-existent at the beginning of the period (0,4% in 2012), before experiencing a significant increase in 2017-2018. Volumes of sizes 1 and 2 remain at a low level in absolute terms (66 tonnes in 2017 and 23 tonnes in 2018), as the overall sales of whiting are 17-18 times smaller in IJmuiden than in Peterhead or Boulogne (2018 volume data)<sup>41</sup>.

The significance of this prevalence of smaller fish can be linked to the state of the stock in the Celtic Sea, where the fishery is characterised by large catches of small whiting. Since 2012, selective gears (square-meshed panels<sup>42</sup>, which facilitate the escapement of small undersized fish) have been rigged on trawlers fishing in the Celtic Sea, however, the selectivity rate has not improved significantly<sup>43</sup>.

<sup>41</sup> See footnote 37.

<sup>42</sup> <https://www.seafish.org/gear/devices/profile/square-mesh-panels>

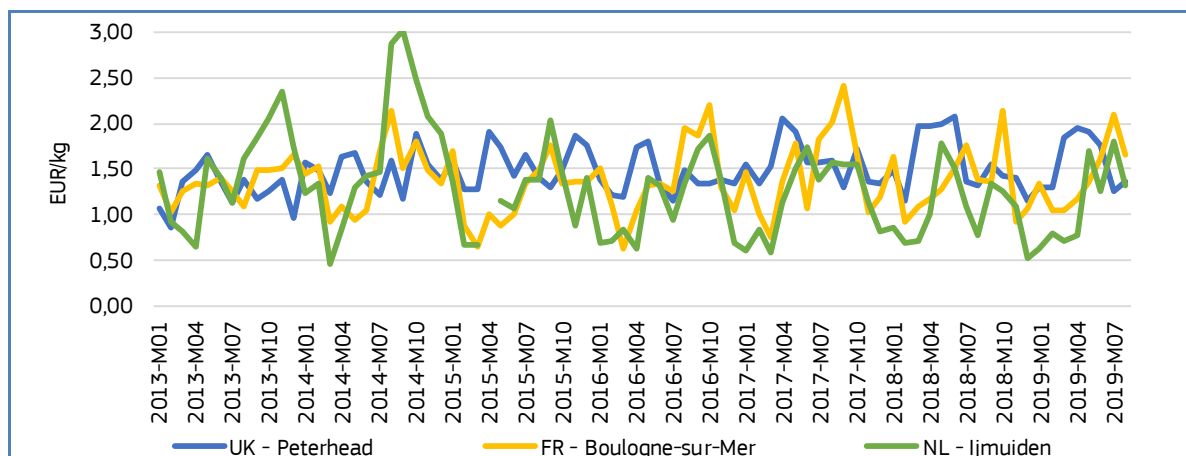
<sup>43</sup> <http://www.guidedesespèces.org/fr/merlan>

### 5.3. Price trends

#### ➤ General price trends

The figure below shows the evolution of first sale prices in the three selected locations from January 2013 to August 2019 (most recent data available for the three ports). Significant differences appear between the three auctions.

Figure 46. **MONTHLY FIRST-SALES PRICES IN THE THREE SELECTED AUCTIONS**



Source: EUMOFA.

The average price across the 80-month period is significantly higher in Peterhead (1,46 EUR/kg), compared to Boulogne (1,24 EUR/kg) and IJmuiden (1,27 EUR/kg). This is clearly related to the proportion of gutted fish for sale, which is demonstrably higher in Peterhead (28% of all whiting volumes in 2018, compared to 7% in Boulogne), and to the proportion of large-sized fish which is also higher in Peterhead (sizes 1 and 2 represent 14% of all whiting volumes in 2018, compared to 6% in Boulogne).

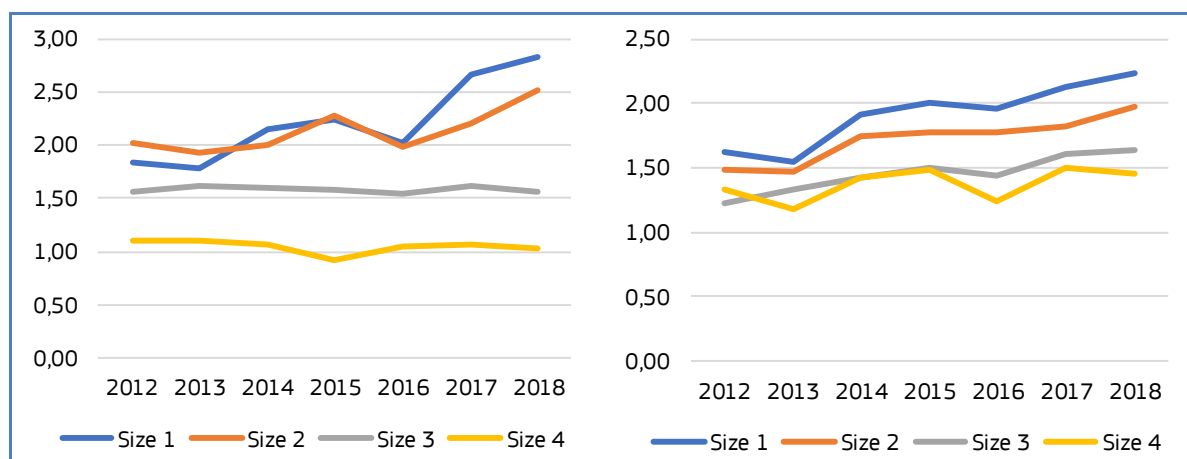
We can also observe that prices follow a slightly increasing trend in Peterhead and Boulogne while they are on a downward trend in IJmuiden.

The amplitude of variation in prices is the most significant for IJmuiden, where average monthly sales are very low (15 tonnes over the period 2013-2019), compared to Boulogne (290 tonnes) and Peterhead (369 tonnes). Extremely low levels in IJmuiden (less than 5 tonnes/month) can generate a greater degree of price variation (e.g. 3,02 EUR/kg for 4,6 tonnes sold in September 2014 compared to 0,46 EUR/kg for 2,8 tonnes sold in March 2014). Unlike in the other two ports, whiting is not a core species in IJmuiden and has no dedicated traders, which makes it less sensitive to supply and demand.

The amplitude in variation of prices is bigger in Boulogne, where prices are often at their lowest in the month of March. This is linked to the fact that March is the month which, year on year, records the highest landings of whiting. In addition, in March there are high levels of first sales of saithe, dab and sole. These abundance of whiting on the market in March and competition from high landings of other species lead to low whiting prices at this period.

## ➤ Trends by size

Figure 47. **FIRST-SALES PRICES OF WHITING BY SIZE GRADE IN 2012-2018 IN BOULOGNE (LEFT) AND PETERHEAD (RIGHT)**

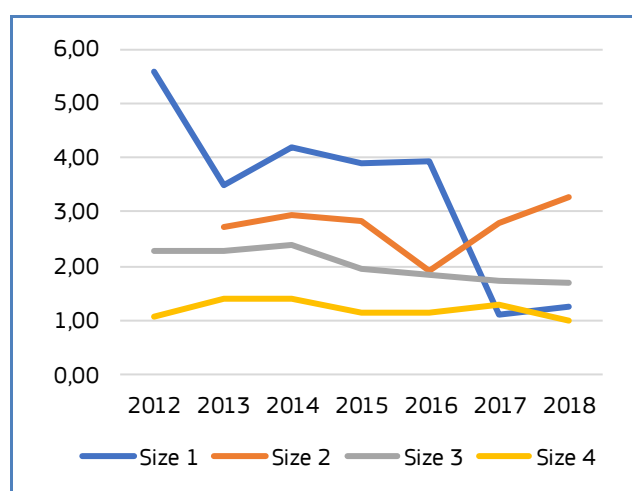


Source: EUMOFA.

Boulogne and IJmuiden show a clear differentiation between sales value of sizes 3 and 4 (in Boulogne, size 3 is paid 50% more than size 4). However, in Peterhead the price premium for size 3, which was non-existent until 2015, is limited to just a 10% increase in comparison to size 4 in the years 2016-2018.

The strong decrease of size 1 in IJmuiden in 2017-2018 is related to the evolution of volumes. From 2012 to 2016 the landings of size 1 were almost non-existent in IJmuiden (81 kg for the whole year 2012, 623 kg in 2013, 805 kg in 2014, 1.100 kg in 2015, 1.013 kg in 2016), size 1 representing less than 1% of total whiting's first sales for all these years. In 2017 and 2018, the first sales were much higher (61.147 kg and 20.438 kg respectively), representing 22% and 2% of whiting's total sales respectively.

Figure 48. **FIRST-SALES PRICES OF WHITING BY SIZE GRADE IN 2012-2018 IN IJMUIDEN**



Source: EUMOFA.

Table 12. **WHITING: EVOLUTION OF FIRST-SALES PRICES BY SIZE IN BOULOGNE AND PETERHEAD IN 2012-2018**

Size category	Boulogne	Peterhead
1	+53%	+37%
2	+24%	+32%
3	+1%	+33%
4	-8%	+9%

Source: EUMOFA.

it is also interesting to note that in Boulogne-sur-Mer the price evolution within the 2012-2018 period is directly related to size: the bigger the size, the stronger the price increase. Large sizes are indeed easier to value in fillets and more adapted to today's conduct of companies.

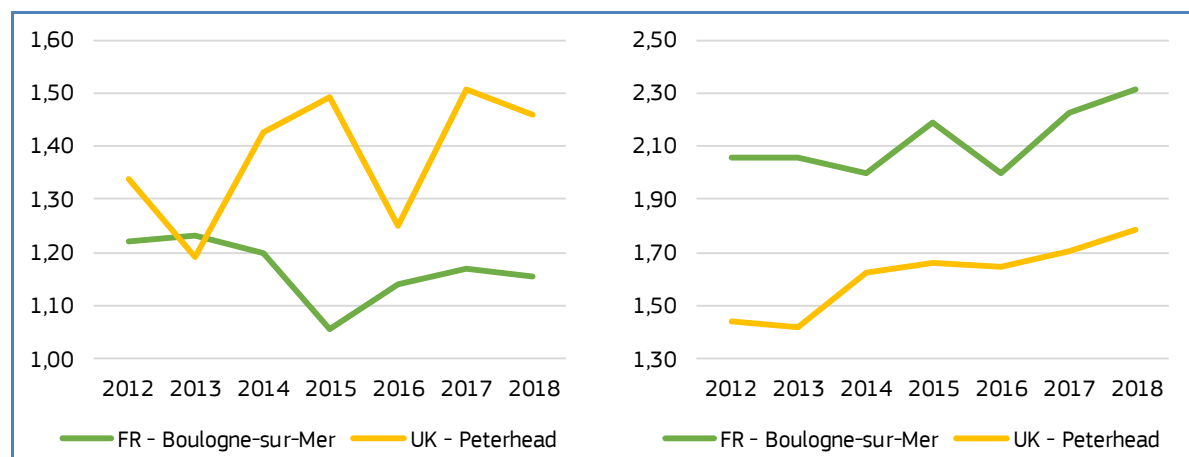
In Peterhead, the price evolution is about the same for the three largest sizes and significantly lower for the smallest size.

### ➤ Trends by presentation state

The price trajectory for gutted whiting is more stable than for whole fish. It shows a gradual, relatively linear increase.

The difference between whole and gutted fish is much more marked in Boulogne, where gutted fish is paid 81% more, on average, than whole (2,12 EUR/kg vs. 1,17 EUR/kg) across the period. In Peterhead, where sales of gutted fish are more common, the difference in price between gutted and whole fish is much less pronounced (1,61 EUR/kg vs. 1,38 EUR/kg; i.e. +17%).

Figure 49. **FIRST-SALES PRICES BY PRESENTATION STATE, WHOLE (LEFT) AND GUTTED (RIGHT), IN BOULOGNE-SUR-MER AND PETERHEAD IN 2012-2018**



Source: EUMOFA.

### ➤ Fishing gear

There is a price premium for line-caught fish over trawled fish, especially in France, where line-caught whiting receives a much better price than trawled whiting. In Paris-Rungis wholesale market in September 2019 (average monthly prices), the following prices could be observed<sup>44</sup>:

- trawled whiting, whole, 200-300 g: 3,50 EUR/kg
- trawled whiting, whole, 300-500 g: 6,00 EUR/kg
- line-caught whiting, whole, 300-500 g: 7,50 EUR/kg.

<sup>44</sup> FranceAgriMer/Réseau des Nouvelles des Marchés.

## 6. Global highlights

**EU / Gambia / IUU:** Twenty fisheries inspectors from the Republic of The Gambia received training in control techniques to fight and deter illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. Fisheries inspectors from Gambian administrations have been trained to become familiar with the different techniques and applicable regulations, in the context of the recent membership of the Republic of The Gambia to the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) and the sustainable fisheries partnership agreement signed with the EU<sup>45</sup>.



**EU / Ocean Governance / Sustainability:** On 30 September 2019, the European Commission and Germany kicked off the first Marine Regions Forum. The first Marine Regions Forum covers all major ocean governance challenges, including ecosystem-based management, climate change mitigation and adaption, as well as protection of marine biodiversity<sup>46</sup>.

**EU / Fisheries / NAFO:** At the 41st Annual Meeting of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO), the EU and other contracting parties focused on ensuring the sustainable management of the key fish stocks in the Northwest Atlantic. The EU took a lead role in finding solutions on important stocks, such as cod, redfish and shrimp in the Flemish Cap, which are of particular importance to the Union. The parties have also agreed on control and enforcement measures, with seven proposals tabled by the EU being adopted<sup>47</sup>.

**Slovenia / Fisheries / Supply:** In 2018, Slovene fishermen landed about 126 tonnes of fresh fish products. The total volume of Slovenia's marine fishery was 2% lower than in 2017. About 75% of the total fishery products landed in 2018 were fresh fish products. Of these, crustaceans represented 1% and molluscs 24%, with musky octopus dominating among mollusc landings. Marine catch declined for the fourth consecutive year. The value of fish products landed in 2018 was about EUR 864.000, or 3% lower than the purchase value of landings in 2017<sup>48</sup>.

**Croatia / Fisheries:** In 2018, the number of fishermen engaged in commercial sea fisheries increased by 1,6% and the total number of fishing vessels by 0,2%, when compared with 2017. Total catches (69.791 tonnes) and aquaculture production (16.781 tonnes) of marine fish and other sea organisms increased by 3.196 tonnes or by 3,8% in 2018, when compared to the previous year. Out of the total pelagic fish catches, the largest share, 72,5%, was attributable to sardine<sup>49</sup>.

**Japan / Tuna / Supply:** Total imports of fresh and frozen tuna reached 15.817 tonnes in August 2019, worth EUR 88,4 million. These figures are 16% lower in volume and maintain similar value in relation to July. Compared to August of 2018, figures grew 2% for volume and fell 20% for value<sup>50</sup>.

**USA / Albacore / Consumption:** Americans consume about 58% of the world's albacore tuna catches, mostly sold in the retail segment of canned tuna products. In 2018, more than half of the world's raw albacore tuna (150.000 tonnes) was used to produce 9 million canned albacore tuna worth EUR 680 million. In the US retail market, 30% of canned tuna sold are products derived from albacore. Global albacore tuna production in 2018 is estimated at 260.000 tonnes and the final market value is about EUR 2,2 billion<sup>51</sup>.

<sup>45</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/press/european-fisheries-control-agency-efca-trains-gambian-fisheries-inspectors\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/press/european-fisheries-control-agency-efca-trains-gambian-fisheries-inspectors_en)

<sup>46</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/press/marine-regions-forum-fills-critical-gap-ocean-governance-landscape\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/press/marine-regions-forum-fills-critical-gap-ocean-governance-landscape_en)

<sup>47</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/press/northwest-atlantic-important-decisions-conservation-and-enforcement-measures-2020\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/press/northwest-atlantic-important-decisions-conservation-and-enforcement-measures-2020_en)

<sup>48</sup> <https://www.stat.si/StatWeb/en/News/Index/8218>

<sup>49</sup> Croatian Bureau of Statistics, ISSN 1330-0350 [https://www.dzs.hr/Hrv\\_Eng/publication/2019/01-04-01\\_01\\_2019.htm](https://www.dzs.hr/Hrv_Eng/publication/2019/01-04-01_01_2019.htm)

<sup>50</sup> <https://fis.com/fis/worldnews/worldnews.asp?l=e&id=104864&ndb=1>

<sup>51</sup> <https://fis.com/fis/worldnews/worldnews.asp?l=e&id=104861&ndb=1>



## 7. Macroeconomic Context

### 7.1 Marine fuel

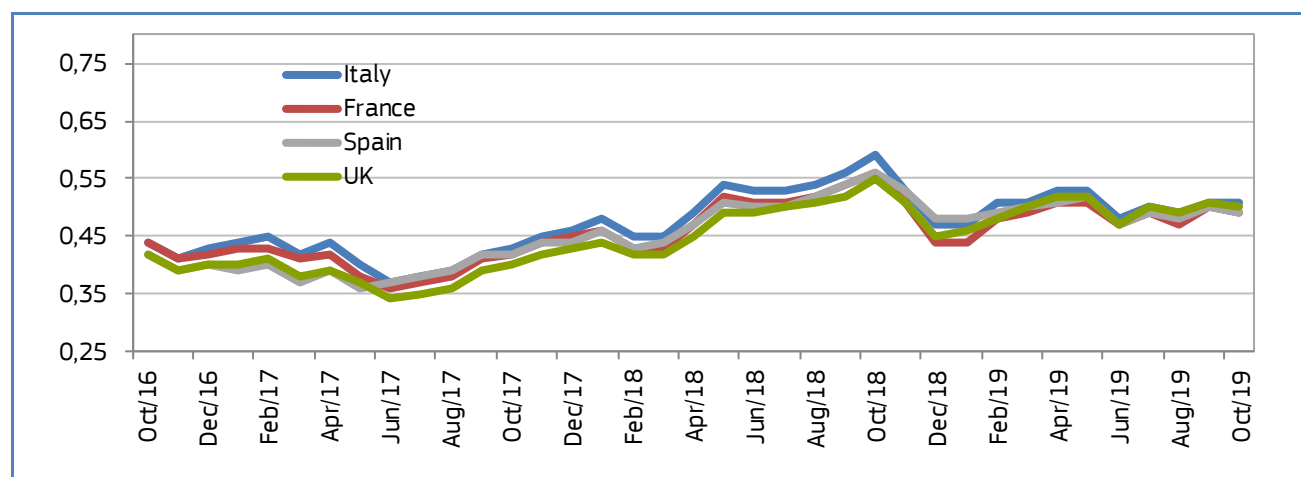
Average prices for marine fuel in **October 2019** ranged between 0,49 and 0,51 EUR/litre in ports in **France, Italy, Spain,** and the **UK**. These prices were about 2% lower compared with the previous month and 12% lower compared with the same month in 2018.

Table 13. **AVERAGE PRICE OF MARINE DIESEL IN ITALY, FRANCE, SPAIN, AND THE UK (EUR/litre)**

Member State	Oct 2019	Change from Sep 2019	Change from Oct 2018
France (ports of Lorient and Boulogne)	0,49	-2%	-13%
Italy (ports of Ancona and Livorno)	0,51	0%	-14%
Spain (ports of A Coruña and Vigo)	0,49	-2%	-13%
The UK (ports of Grimsby and Aberdeen)	0,50	-2%	-9%

Source: Chamber of Commerce of Forlì-Cesena, Italy; DPMA, France; MABUX.

Figure 50. **AVERAGE PRICE OF MARINE DIESEL IN ITALY, FRANCE, SPAIN, AND THE UK (EUR/litre)**

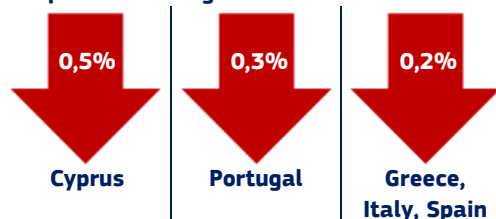


Source: Chamber of Commerce of Forlì-Cesena, Italy; DPMA, France; MABUX.

### 7.2 Consumer prices

The EU annual inflation rate was at 1,2% in September 2019, down from 1,4% in August 2019. In September 2018, the rate was 2,2%.

**Inflation: lowest rates in September 2019, compared with August 2019.**



**Inflation: highest rates in September 2019, compared with August 2019.**

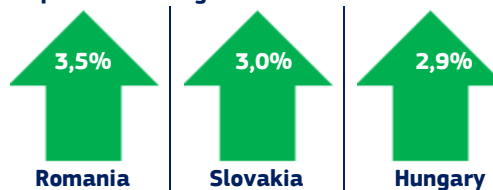


Table 14. **HARMONISED INDEX OF CONSUMER PRICES IN THE EU** (2015 = 100)

HICP	Sep 2017	Sep 2018	Aug 2019	Sep 2019	Change from Aug 2019	Change from Sep 2018
<b>Food and non-alcoholic beverages</b>	102,13	104,38	106,72	106,46	↓ 0,2%	↑ 2,0%
<b>Fish and seafood</b>	107,45	109,41	111,48	111,17	↓ 0,3%	↑ 2,6%

Source: Eurostat.

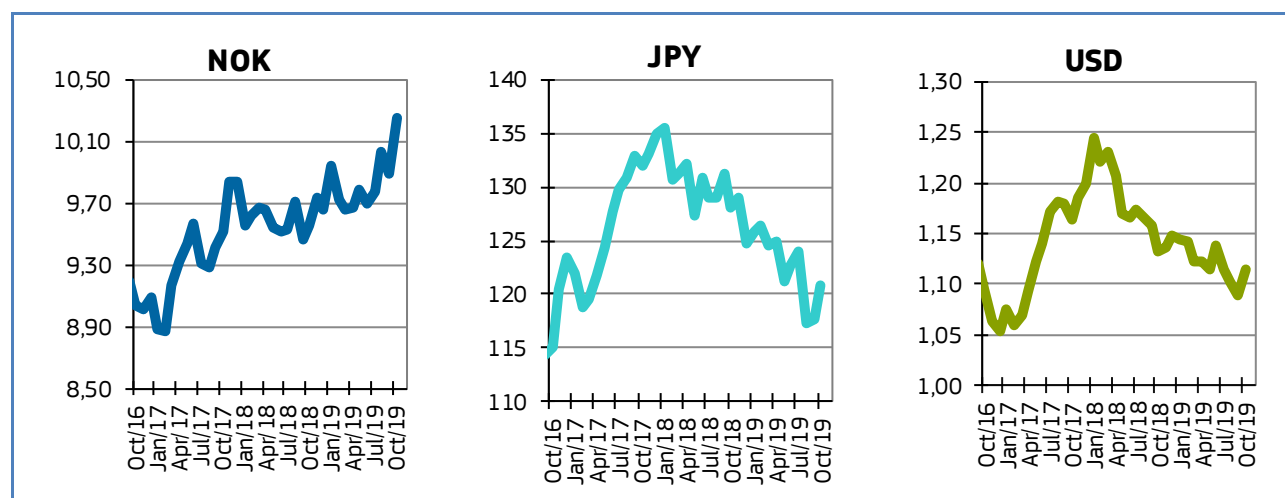
### 7.3 Exchange rates

Table 15. **EXCHANGE RATES FOR SELECTED CURRENCIES**

Currency	Oct 2017	Oct 2018	Sep 2019	Oct 2019
NOK	9,5238	9,5528	9,8953	10,2520
JPY	132,00	128,15	117,59	120,73
USD	1,1638	1,1318	1,0889	1,1154

Source: European Central Bank.

In October 2019, the euro appreciated against the Japanese yen (+2,7%), the Norwegian krone (+3,6%), and the US dollar (+2,4%) from September 2019. For the past six months, the euro has fluctuated around 9,91 against the Norwegian krone. Compared with October 2018, the euro has depreciated 5,8% against the Japanese yen and 1,4% against the US dollar, but it appreciated 7,3% against the Norwegian krone.

Figure 51. **TREND OF EURO EXCHANGE RATES**

Source: European Central Bank.

Manuscript completed in November 2019

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PDF ISSN 2314-9671

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This report has been compiled using EUMOFA data and the following sources:

**First sales:** DG Mare - European Commission, FAO, European Council, Seafish.org, Fishsource.org, Britishseafishing.co.uk.

**Consumption:** EUROPANEL.

**Case studies:** Eurostat, IHS Markit, European Commission, Kowalski, P., The World Bank, World Trade Organisation, Craig, Julian C, and Ahmed U Zafar, FAO Fishstat, European Council, FranceAgriMer.

**Global highlights:** DG Mare - European Commission, Prensa Latina News Agency.

**Macroeconomic context:** EUROSTAT, Chamber of Commerce of Forlì-Cesena, Italy: DPMA, France: ARVI, Spain: MABUX, European Central Bank.

The underlying first-sales data is in a separate Annex available on the EUMOFA website. Analyses are made at aggregated (main commercial species) level and according to the EU Electronic recording and reporting system (ERS).

In the context of this Monthly Highlight, analyses are led in current prices, expressed in nominal values.

The **European Market Observatory for Fisheries and Aquaculture Products (EUMOFA)** was developed by the European Commission, representing one of the tools of the new Market Policy in the framework of the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy. [Regulation (EU) No 1379/2013 art. 42].

As a **market intelligence tool**, EUMOFA provides regular weekly prices, monthly market trends, and annual structural data along the supply chain.

The database is based on data provided and validated by Member States and European institutions. It is available in 24 languages.

The EUMOFA website is publicly available at the following address: [www.eumofa.eu](http://www.eumofa.eu).

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