



Last update: 10-10-2023

BELGIUM IN THE WORLD AND IN THE EU

2021, sources: Eurostat and FAO

Belgium is a minor EU-27 producer of fishery and aquaculture products.

(1.000 tonnes)	World	EU-27	Belgium	% world	% EU-27
Catches	92.164	3.591	18,2	0,0197%	0,51%
Aquaculture	126.011	1.129	0,2	0,0002%	0,02%
Total	218.175	4.720	18,4	0,0084%	0,39%

FISHING FLEET

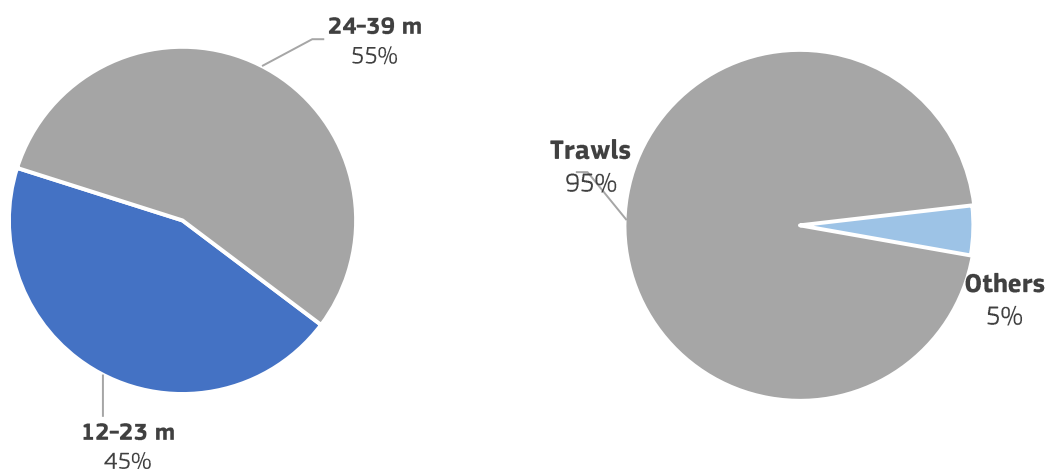
Fleet: 2022, source: EU fishing fleet register - Eurostat Employment: 2020, source: JRC

Vessels (2022)	Capacity (2022)	Power (2022)	
Number: 65	GT: 14.128	KW: 45.813	
TOTAL FTE: 225 (2020, source: JRC)			
0-11 m	12-23 m	24-39 m	>40 m
Jobs (FTE): 0%	Jobs (FTE): 18%	Jobs (FTE): 82%	Jobs (FTE): 0%

GT: Gross tonnage - KW: Kilowatt - FTE: Full Time Equivalent

The Belgian fishing fleet by length and gear

(% of total number of vessels)





Last update: 10-10-2023

LANDINGS

Source: EUMOFA, based on Eurostat data

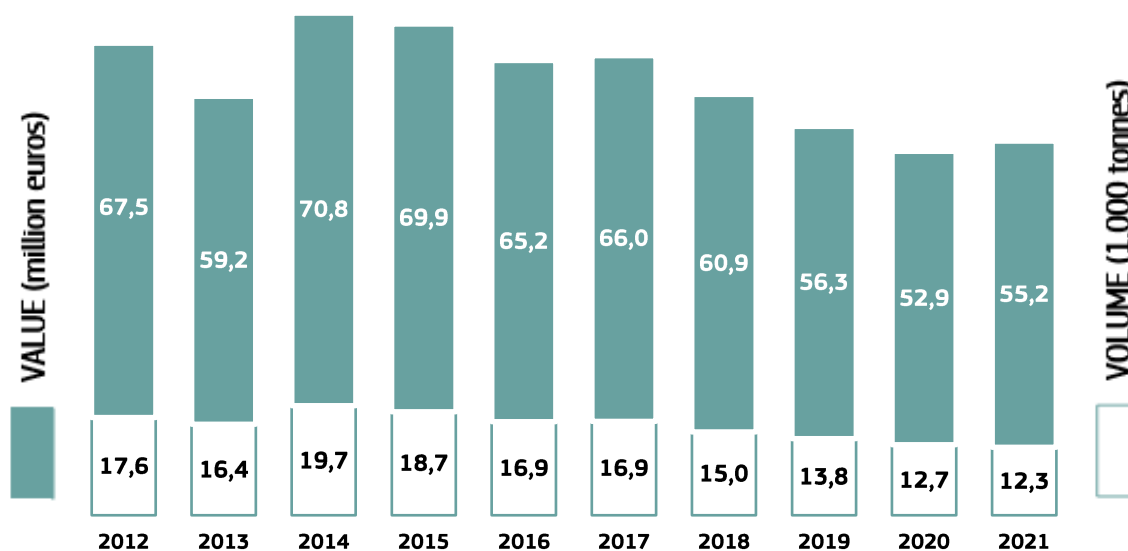
Landings comprise the initial unloading of any fisheries products from on board a fishing vessel in a given Member State. They include aquatic plants and species not destined for human consumption. Landings are recorded in net weight and value, and concern landings made by vessels from EU Member States, Iceland, Norway and the UK.

In 2021, 96% of landings in Belgium included fresh whole/gutted products, the rest mostly consisting of cooked products.

Almost all landings are destined for human consumption, the rest being used for industrial purposes.

There are 7 fishing ports registered in Belgium (source: EU Master Data Register, 25 September 2023).

Total landings. Values are deflated by using the GDP deflator (base=2015)



Main commercial species landed and % of total

2021, million euros (nominal value) and 1.000 tonnes



Species	Value (million euros)	% of total	Volume (1,000 tonnes)	% of total
COMMON SOLE	30,6	49%	2,3	19%
EUROPEAN PLAICE	4,8	8%	2,0	16%
MONK	4,4	7%	1,2	10%
RAY	3,0	5%	0,8	6%
TURBOT	2,9	5%	0,7	6%
OTHERS	16,2	26%	5,3	43%



Last update: 10-10-2023

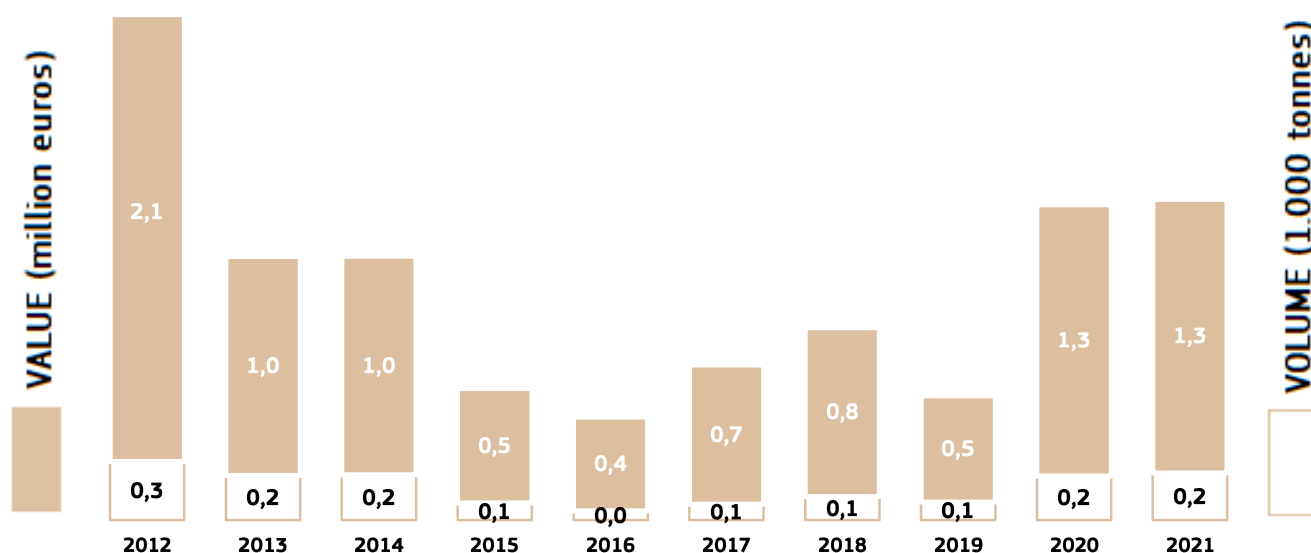
AQUACULTURE

Source: EUMOFA, based on Eurostat and FAO data.

Aquaculture consists in the farming of aquatic (fresh or saltwater) organisms, such as fish, molluscs, crustaceans and aquatic plants. Aquaculture data are reported in live weight equivalent and value.

Only limited freshwater production exists in Belgium, mainly consisting in trout farming.

Total production. Values are deflated by using the GDP deflator (base=2015)



PRODUCER ORGANISATIONS

Data as of 11-07-2023 source: DG MARE, [link](#)

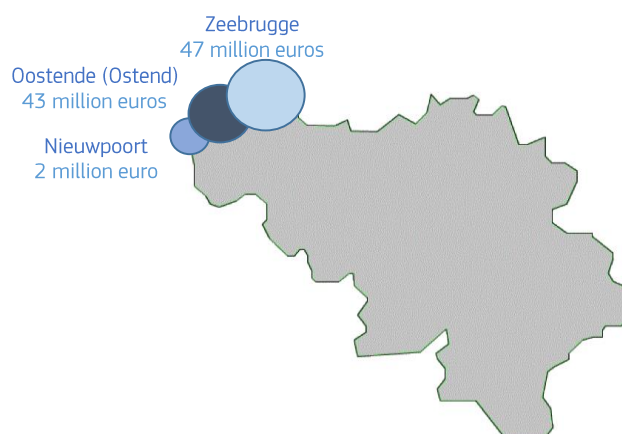
In Belgium, **1 producer organisation (PO)** is formally recognized, operating in the fishery sector. Its role is to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and of the Common organisation of the markets (CMO) through the collective management of its members' activities.



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FIRST SALES 2022, source: EUMOFA

First sales concern the fish that is sold or registered at an auction center or to registered buyers or to producer organizations (PO). First sales may differ from landings since the former do not cover fish that is landed by vessels owned by processing companies or direct sales to processors. In Belgium, there are three auctions, all located in the North Sea: Oostende (Ostend), Zeebrugge and Nieuwpoort. In 2022, total first sales amounted to 14.883 tonnes and 92 million euros.



Auctions	Volume (tonnes)	Value (million euros)	Top-3 main commercial species (in value)
Zeebrugge	7.499	47	Common sole, monk, European plaice
Oostende (Ostend)	7.008	43	Common sole, Shrimp <i>Crangon</i> spp., squid
Nieuwpoort	375	2	Shrimp <i>Crangon</i> spp., European seabass, common sole

WHOLESALE

Source: Vlaamse Visveiling

Wholesale is an intermediary stage in the distribution channel that buys in bulk and sells to resellers (e.g. retailers) rather than to consumers. There are no wholesale markets in Belgium. The three Belgian auctions (Oostende, Zeebrugge and Nieuwpoort) play an important role in the supply chain of fishery and aquaculture products. There are two auction management companies in Belgium:

- Vlaamse Visveiling (the most important): management company of the two auctions of Oostende and Zeebrugge. It gathers 170 buyers: wholesalers, supermarkets, markets and speciality stores.
- Nieuwpoortse Visveiling: management company of the Nieuwpoort auction.

PROCESSING

According to Eurostat-SBS, 1.305 persons were employed in the Belgian fish processing industry in 2020. The sector recorded a value added of 124,6 million euros, covering the 1,7% of the value added of total manufacture of food products.

In 2022, the main products sold were “Fresh or chilled fish fillets and fish meat (including shark fins), whether or not minced” and “Prepared meals and dishes based on fish, crustaceans and molluscs” (source: Eurostat-PRODCOM).

56 companies
Sales: 702,7 million euros
 (2020, source: Eurostat - SBS)



IMPORT – EXPORT

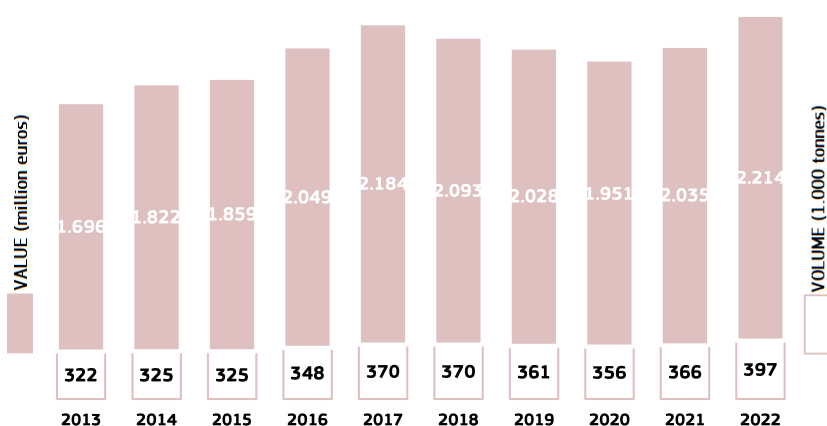

Source: EUMOFA, based on Eurostat-COMEXT data.

Values in the bar charts are deflated by using the GDP deflator (base=2015)

IMPORT

Main commercial species imported and % of total imports

2022, million euros (nominal value)

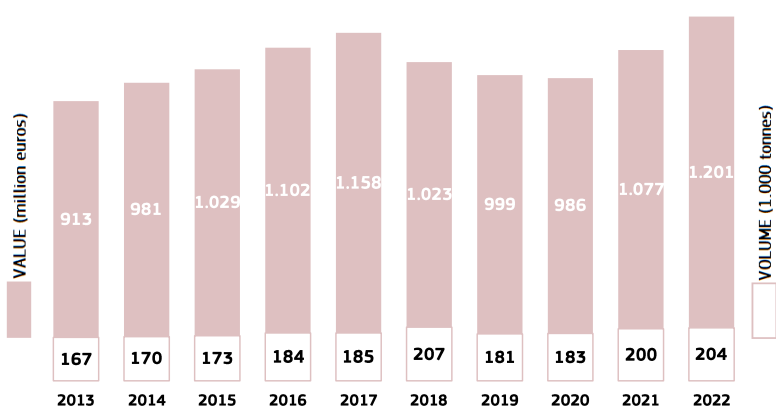




SHRIMPS (MAINLY WARMWATER)	667	26%
SALMON	501	19%
COD	141	5%
MUSSEL MYTILUS SPP.	83	3%
SKIPJACK TUNA	78	3%
OTHERS	1141	44%

EXPORT

Main commercial species exported and % of total exports

2022, million euros (nominal value)

SHRIMPS (MAINLY WARMWATER)	424	29,5%
SALMON	194	13,5%
FISH OIL	68	4,7%
LOBSTER HOMARUS SPP.	55	3,8%
COD	54	3,8%
OTHERS	641	44,6%

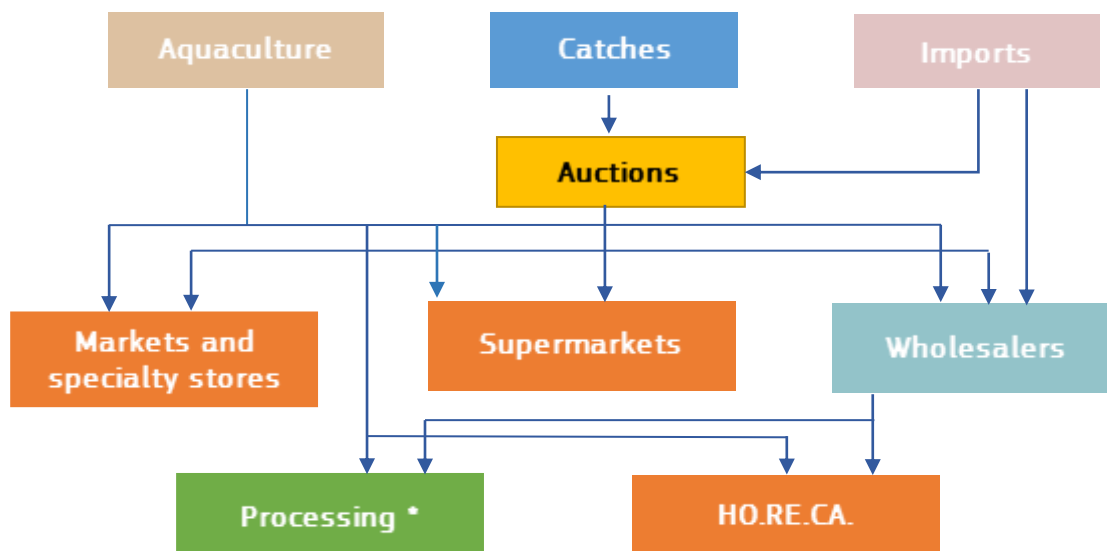




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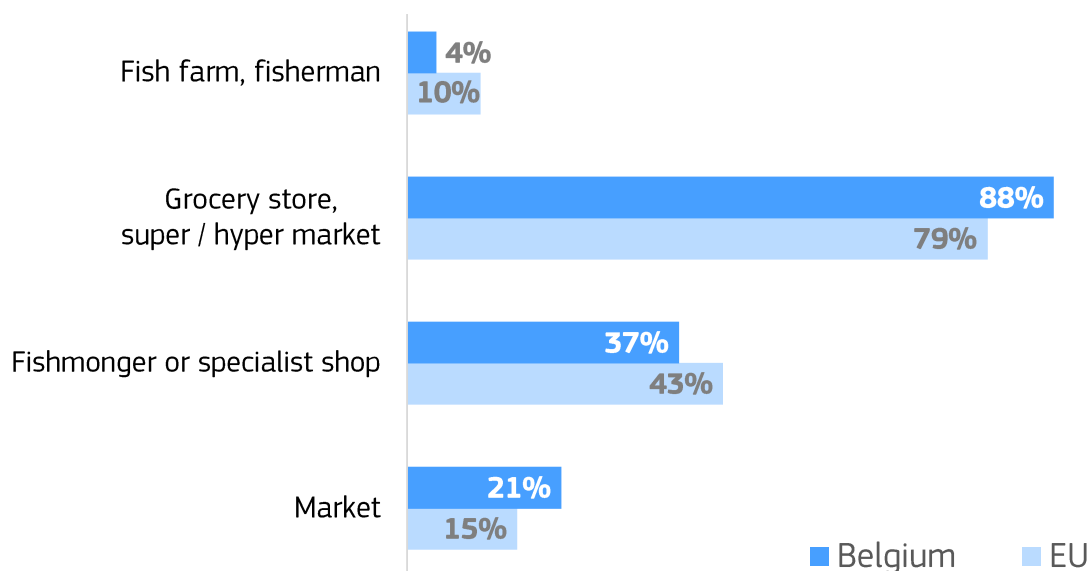
DISTRIBUTION

The supply chain of fisheries and aquaculture products in Belgium (based on the operational programme for the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund - EMFF - of Belgium):



* Processing depends heavily on imports. The majority of processed products are exported.

Consumer preferences on purchasing channels (source: Eurobarometer, 2021):





Last update: 10-10-2023

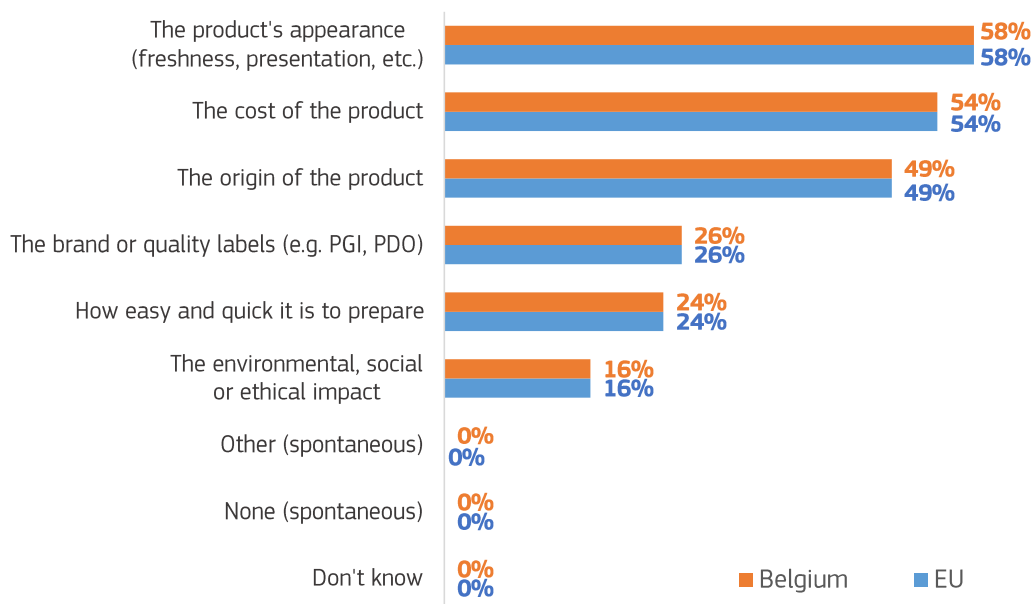
CONSUMPTION

In 2021, apparent consumption was estimated at 21,79 kg per capita, a 3-decrease compared with 2020. The most consumed species were salmon, cod, mussel and skipjack tuna (source: EUMOFA).

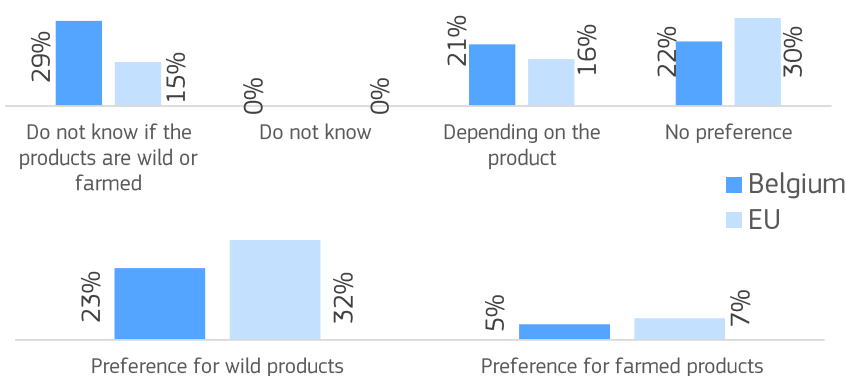
Regular consumers, namely those who eat fishery and aquaculture products at least once a month, mainly belong to the age groups 40-54 and over 55. Young people (15-24) are less inclined to consume fish in Belgium, as well as at EU-28 level. However, in this category, regular consumers cover 69% of the total, which is slightly higher than at EU level (67%, UK included). Belgians consume especially fresh and frozen products; loose fish is more rarely consumed (54%) than at EU level (68%, UK included) (source: EUMOFA, "EU consumer habits regarding fishery and aquaculture products", 2017).

21,79 kg
per capita in live
weight equivalent
(2021, source: EUMOFA)

Purchasing factors (source: Eurobarometer, 2021)



Preferences regarding wild or farmed products (source: Eurobarometer, 2021)





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THE COUNTRY IN EUMOFA



LANDINGS

Volumes and values are collected from Eurostat – Fishery.

They are available on a yearly basis and accessible through simple and advanced tables, as well as through the bulk download facility.

AQUACULTURE

Volumes and values are collected from Eurostat – Fishery and integrated with FAO data.

They are available on a yearly basis and accessible through simple and advanced tables, as well as through the bulk download facility.

FIRST SALES

Volumes and values are collected from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries of the Government of Flanders on a weekly and monthly basis.

Weekly data are monitored for a selection of 18 main commercial species and 3 auctions (click [here](#) for the full list).

Monthly data cover all species sold in the three auctions.

Both weekly and monthly data are accessible through simple and advanced tables, as well as through the bulk download facility. As for monthly first sales, data at disaggregated level are also accessible, through a dedicated advanced table and the bulk download facility.

WHOLESALE

No data available

IMPORT - EXPORT

Volumes and values are collected from Eurostat – COMEXT. Data concern trade flows of all fisheries and aquaculture products as recorded by national customs.

They are available on a monthly and yearly basis and accessible through simple and advanced tables, as well as through the bulk download facility.

PROCESSING

Data are collected from Eurostat – PRODCOM. They concern ex-farm quantities and values of fisheries and aquaculture products sold in the country after being transformed from raw material into final products.

They are available on a yearly basis and accessible through simple tables, as well as through the bulk download facility.

CONSUMPTION

Retail prices from online shops are available [here](#), as collected via price-scraper.