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Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) – The 2025 Annual Economic Report on the EU Fishing Fleet (STECF 25-03 & 25-07)

Prellezo, R., Sabatella, E.C., Virtanen, J., Guillen, J. (eds.)

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Contact information
Name: STECF secretariat
Address: Unit D.02 Ocean and Water, Via Enrico Fermi 2749, 21027 Ispra VA, Italy
Email: jrc-stecf-secretariat@ec.europa.eu
Tel.: +39 0332 789343

The Joint Research Centre: EU Science Hub
https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu

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Authors

STECF advice:

Bastardie, Francois; Borges, Lisa; Casey, John; Daskalov, Georgi; Döring, Ralf; Drouineau, Hilaire; Goti Aralucea, Leyre; Grati, Fabio; Hamon, Katell; Ibaibarriaga, Leire; Jardim, Ernesto; Jung, Armelle; Ligas, Alessandro; Mannini, Alessandro; Martin, Paloma; Moore, Claire; Motova-Surmava, Arina; Nielsen, Rasmus; Nimmegeers, Sofie; Nord, Jenny; Pinto, Cecilia; Prellezo, Raúl; Raid, Tiit; Sabatella, Evelina Carmen; Sampedro, Paz; Somarakis, Stylianos; Stransky, Christoph; Ulrich, Clara; Uriarte, Andres; Valentinsson, Daniel; van Hoof, Luc; Velasco Guevara, Francisco; Vrgoc, Nedo.

EWG-25-03 & 25-07 report:

Prellezo, Raúl; Sabatella, Evelina Carmen; Andersen, Jesper L.; Avdic Mravlje, Edo; Berkenhagen, Jörg; Cano, Suzana; Carpenter, Griffin; De Clercq, Adelbert; Fernández-Gonzalez, Raquel; Ferreira, Rita; Guillen, Jordi; Guyader, Olivier; Ioannou, Myrto; Kazlauskas, Edvardas; Kovsars, Maksims; Kuzebski, Emil; Lees, Janek; Minguez Velasco, Alvaro; Minne, Marie-Dominique; Nicheva, Simona; Paun, Catalin; Perez Perez, Marcos Iñigo; Perry, Sarah; Robert, Marc; Rodriguez, Alexandre; Sabatella, Rosaria F.; Sciberras, Andrew; Swahnberg, Hanna; Taal, Kees; Toman, Daniel; Tzouramani, Irene; Valiente Viana, Maria; Valve, Joonas; Vesala, Lauri; Vukov, Ivana; Zhelev, Kolyo.

Abstract

Commission Decision of 25 February 2016 setting up a Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries, C(2016) 1084, OJ C 74, 26.2.2016, p. 4–10. The Commission may consult the group on any matter relating to marine and fisheries biology, fishing gear technology, fisheries economics, fisheries governance, ecosystem effects of fisheries, aquaculture or similar disciplines.

In 2023, the EU fishing fleet numbered 70,280 vessels. Based on data submitted by EU Member States under the EU multiannual programme (EU MAP) for data collection, there were 53,260 active vessels with a combined gross tonnage of 1.15 million and engine power of 4.36 million kW. Of the active vessels, 77% were SSCF vessels, 5.8% L12AG, 16.5% LSF and less than 0.5% DWF. In 2023 they offered direct employment to 119,479 fishers, corresponding to 73,974 FTEs; on average labour costs of EUR 29 447 per FTE, annually. The EU fleet spent 5.2 million days-at-sea and consumed 1.56 billion litres of fuel to land 3.39 million tonnes of seafood with a reported value of EUR 6.1 billion. The Gross Value Added (GVA) and gross profit (all excl. subsidies and fishing rights) were estimated at EUR 3.2 billion and EUR 1.0 billion, respectively. GVA as a proportion of revenue was estimated at 49.5% and gross profit margin at almost 15.8%. With a total net profit of EUR 59 million in 2023, net profit margin was set at 0.91%. These results should be read in a context of high inflation rates compared to the whole time series (2013-2023). Overall economic performance indicators display a deterioration compared to 2022 while nowcast estimates suggest that the economic performance of the EU fishing fleet has improved in 2024 and in 2025, specially driven by the decrease in fuel prices and lower inflation rates.

This publication includes: 1) a structural and economic overview of the EU fishing fleet in 2023, trend analyses for the years 2013-2023, and where possible nowcasts for 2024 and 2025; 2) a regional analysis of the EU fishing fleet by major sea basin, as well as, fleets operating in the EU Outermost Regions and in Other Fishing Regions; 3) a detailed structural and economic overview of each Member State’s fishing fleet, including qualitative economic performance assessments for 2023 and nowcasts for 2024 and 2025.

STECF Report on EWG 25-07 AER

Request to STECF

STECF is requested to evaluate the findings of the STECF Expert Working Group meeting and make any appropriate comments and recommendations.

STECF comments

EWG 25-03 took place online 7-11 April 2025 (AER I) and EWG 25-07 took place in Ispra, Italy 16-20 June 2025 (AER II). The two EWGs addressed all the ToRs.

STECF observes that the 2025 Annual Economic Report (AER) on the European Union (EU) fishing fleet provides a comprehensive overview of the latest information available on the structure and economic performance of the EU Member States fishing fleets. STECF notes that 2025 AER supersedes all previous AERs. Comparisons across AER reports should not be made.

STECF also notes that the reference and base year for the report is 2023 (including the forecast and nowcasting procedures for 2024 and 2025), which implies that all the values reported are inflated to this year based on the methodology explained in the AER.

STECF notes that the AER report includes the following five chapters: 1) A structural and economic overview of the EU fishing fleet in 2023, with nowcasts for 2024 and 2025, and trend analyses for the years 2013-2023; 2) A regional analysis of the EU fishing fleet by sea basin; 3) A detailed structural and economic overview of each Member State fishing fleet, including qualitative economic performance assessments for 2023 and nowcasts for 2024 and 2025, 4) A glossary, definition of indicators, an outline of the methodology and nowcast model used to estimate economic indicators for 2024 and 2025 and, 5) Data Coverage and Quality.

STECF notes that following PLEN 24-02 the proposed new fleet group definitions were used in 2025. That includes change of the name of “Long Distance Fisheries” (LDF) to “Distant Water Fleet” (DWF) as in the 2024 report (EWG 24-07) and separation of the “Large Scale Fleet” (LSF) into two groups: “under 12m vessels using active gears” (L12AG), and LSF that excludes under 12m vessels.

STECF observes that the AER results indicate that the net profitability of the EU fleet decreased in 2023, registering a net profit of EUR 59 million, down 61% from 2022. The Gross Profit was also lower than in 2022 down 12% compared to 2023. Value of landings (in real terms) decreased by 13.4% compared to the previous year while energy cost decreased sharply by 23.6%. Nowcast estimates indicate that the performance of the fleet will improve in 2024, and in 2025, compared to the 2023 values.

STECF also notes that in 2023, the EU fishing fleet numbered 70,280 vessels. There were 17,020 inactive vessels, bringing the number of active vessels to 53,260. These active vessels had a combined gross tonnage of 1.15 million and engine power of 4.36 million kW. Of the active vessels, 77% were SSCF vessels, 5.8% L12AG, 16.5% LSF and less than 0.5% DWF.

STECF notes that while the total number of active vessels in the EU fishing fleet continues to decline over the whole time series, the decline stabilised in 2023. However, other fleet capacity indicators, such as engine power and gross tonnage, demonstrated different trends compared to 2022: total fleet power and tonnage decreased by 2.8% and 4.2% respectively, compared to 2022.

STECF also notes that engaged crew was estimated at 119,479 fishers, corresponding to 73,974 FTEs in 2023. These values follow a similar trend as the capacity indicators (2% lower than in 2022). Almost 30% of the employed persons were estimated as being unpaid labour (similar to 2022). Average personnel cost per FTE (EUR 29 447) decreased by 7.5% in comparison with 2022. Of note, is the large variation in average personnel costs among Member States.

In order to operate, the EU fishing fleet consumed 1.56 billion litres of fuel and spent 5.2 million Days-at-Sea in 2023. This combination produced 3.39 million tonnes of seafood landings with a value of EUR 6.1 billion (a decrease of -13.4% compared to 2022).

STECF observes that the AER EWG raised a question on the consistency of the employment definition reported under the AER data call and EUMAP legislation. As it stands in the current guidelines indicator 'totjob' should include unpaid labour (see RCGECON guide https://dcf.ec.europa.eu/guidelines/socio-economic-variables_en?prefLang=it), however in the EUMAP the employment indicator is separated into number of paid and unpaid employees. The EWG proposed to align next year's data call with the EUMAP, clearly indicating in the official letter and in the templates that employment should be reported separately by paid labour and unpaid labour. The EWG also suggested that RCG_Econ (Regional Coordination Group for Economics Issues) should separately define paid labour indicator in the guidance document for the fleet economic variables to ensure consistency with the data call requirements and the legislation.

STECF further notes that the EWGs made a proposal to replace 'totjob' with "paid labour" in the data call templates.

STECF observes that development of the JRC web dashboard made a significant improvement to the quality checks of the data and facilitated the analysis this year. The EWGs provided detailed feedback to the JRC and suggested to move from Excel files analysis for the report to Dashboard in the future years. That should facilitate efficiency and improve processes during the EWGs.

STECF notes that in addition to reporting new issues associated with 2025 data call to DTMT, the EWG also, for the first time, reviewed the DTMT issues raised for the 2023 and 2024 data calls.

STECF notes that for the 2025 data call there were 25 data issues identified. These issues concern data submitted by 12 Member States with 9 issues ranked as 'medium severity' and 16 as 'low severity'. Of these, 7 issues related to coverage were reported by EWG, the remaining 18 were issues related to quality.

STECF notes that for the 2023 and 2024 data calls, a total of 60 historical issues were reviewed: 31 from the 2023 data call and 29 from the 2024. A total of 11 issues were checked as 'not OK' for the 2023 data call and 20 issues for the 2024 data call. STECF notes, that assessment of historical issues proved to be time-consuming, especially those related to quality. These last required not only detailed knowledge of

the datasets and regulatory provisions but also familiarity with navigating the dashboard.

The EWG 25-07 was informed that the 2024 issues were included in the TORs for the pre-screeners of the Annual Reports (AR) evaluation. This will imply that both comments from the EWG 25-07 and for the pre-screeners on the same ID issue have been made available for the EWG 25-08 on AR assessment. In order to streamline the procedure, EWG suggested that in the future:

1. The AER EWG should assess the previous year issues in the second EWG meeting because: a) the deadline for Member States to comment is the 31st of May; b) the Member States have the possibility to re-upload the data after the first meeting.
2. The AER EWG should only consider the issues for which Member States commented that data have been resubmitted in the current year data call. The rest of the issues should be assessed by the pre-screeners.

STECF notes that the amended workflows for data issues assessments are:

Data issues of the current year (n) data call

AER I:

1. Each national expert to check the data sent in the current year (n) data call and include data issues in the excel template.
    - data issues to be identified on the basis of: dashboard/data checks during the EWG/expert knowledge.
    - recurrent issues to be identified by comparison with the list of previous issues made available by JRC in the STECF working space
    - make use of the DTMT guidance (latest available version) on filling in issues
    - for each MS, the list of issues to be revised by at least another expert to ensure fully independence in the identification of data issues

AER II:

1. Revision of the data issues from AER I:
    - JRC to provide udpate on the Member States/data sets resubmitted between the two EWGs.
    - Two experts to be appointed as focal for the revision of the list from AER I on the basis of the updated dashboard.
2. New issues to be included in the excel template, on the basis of the regional data analysis, following the DTMT guidance. The focal person of each region/section is responsible for such updated.
3. Final assessment of the issues by the plenary session of the EWG.

Data issues of the n-1 year data call

The aim of this task is to follow up on issues for which the Member States informed that correct or missing data have been submitted in the data call of the following year (n).

AER II:

1. JRC to provide the list of issues for which Member States confirmed that data was resubmitted. This list should also include the comments by the Member States (that should have been received by the 31st of May.
2. Two or three experts to be appointed as focal for a) verifying whether missing data have been resubmitted, or previously uncovered fleet segments have been included and b) re-evaluating the issues related to “quality”. For the latter cases, input from national experts would be particularly needed.
3. Appointed experts will include their assessment in the columns: “End User Check (issue status)” and “End User Comment”.
4. Final assessment will be presented and discussed by the plenary session of the EWG.

STECF notes that some Member States resubmitted several past years of the time series during 2025 data call. That resulted in changes to the data and analysis compared to previous report, including the EU overview and regional sections. The EWG raised data resubmission as an issue due to uncertainty of impacts on the whole report and analysis, especially when compared to previous AER releases.

STECF notes that the nowcast for the Atlantic remains to be reliant on an *ad hoc* contract and individual expertise that might cause a risk for the EWG and the AER in the future. STECF also notes that on a voluntary basis Member States should be able to provide data for the nowcast t+1 (2024 in the AER 2025). A workshop facilitated by RCG ECON on methodology for this nowcast was proposed in 2024 by the AER EWG and supported by the plenary.

STECF conclusions

STECF concludes that the two EWGs addressed all TORs and STECF endorses the report.

STECF concludes that in the case of previously submitted data resubmission, Member States should provide an explanation of scale of changes and reasoning. This requirement could be added to the data call text for next year.

STECF concludes that further development of the Dashboard by JRC continues improving quality checks and analysis. The development and improvements based on EWGs feedback should continue with the aim to fully move analysis from the Excel files to the dashboard in the medium-term future.

STECF concludes that update of the employment definition will improve data call consistency with EUMAP and suggests clearly indicating in the official letter and in the templates that employment should be reported separately by paid labour and unpaid labour, therefore ‘totjob’ indicator should be changed to “paid labour”. These changes should also be implemented in relevant RCGECON guidelines.

STECF concludes that checking the data issues of previous years could be carried out by the EWG AER II if specified in an additional TOR for the EWGs.

STECF reiterates its conclusion from PLEN 24-02 that a workshop could be facilitated by RCGECON to develop a common method for nowcasting for the year t+1. Such a methodology could be applied by Member States to provide the nowcast for the year t+1 in the yearly data call. STECF concludes that nowcast for t+2 relies on one person and model, therefore suggests moving calculations to the JRC database in the near future.

STECF reiterates its conclusion from PLEN 24-02 that it is fundamental to provide the EWG experts with a manual on the database structure with a description of the different data aggregation and codes that will be available to them in the two AER EWGs. This would avoid misinterpretation of datasets and facilitate the involvement of new experts. This manual could be prepared before AER I with *ad hoc* contracts for the chairs with support from the JRC.

Contact details of STECF members

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Name	**Affiliation[1]**	**Email**
Ballesteros, Marta	Spanish Institute of Oceanography (IEO-CSIC), Center of Vigo, Subida a Radio Faro 50-55, Vigo, Spain.	marta.ballesteros@ieo.csic.es
Bastardie, François	Technical University of Denmark, National Institute of Aquatic Resources (DTU-AQUA), Kemitorvet, 2800 Kgs. Lyngby, Denmark	fba@aqua.dtu.dk
Casey, John	Independent consultant	blindlemoncasey@gmail.com
Colaço, Ana	University of the Azores, Institute of Marine Sciences - OKEANOS. Rua Professor Doutor Frederico Machado 4, 9900-140 Horta, Portugal	maria.aa.colaco@uac.pt

Name	Affiliation[1]	Email
Cuende de Francisco, Elsa	AZTI (Member of the Basque Research and Technology Alliance). Marine Research Unit. Center of Sukarrieta, Bizkaia, Spain.	ecuende@azti.es
Döring, Ralf	Thünen Institute [TI-SF] Federal Research Institute for Rural Areas, Forestry and Fisheries, Institute of Sea Fisheries, Economic analyses unit Herwigstrasse 31, D-27572 Bremerhaven, Germany	ralf.doering@thuenen.de
Drouineau, Hilaire	INRAE, UR EABX, 50 avenue de Verdun, 33612 Cestas Cedex, France	hilaire.drouineau@inrae.fr
Grati, Fabio	National Research Council (CNR) – Institute for Biological Resources and Marine Biotechnologies (IRBIM), L.go Fiera della Pesca, 2, 60125, Ancona, Italy	fabio.grati@cnr.it
Griffiths, Christopher	Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), Department of Aquatic Resources, Turistgatan 5, SE-45330, Lysekil, Sweden	christopher.griffiths@slu.se
Hidalgo, Manuel	Spanish Institute of Oceanography (IEO, CSIC), Balearic Oceanographic Center (COB), Palma, 07015, Spain	jm.hidalgo@ieo.csic.es
Ibaibarriaga, Leire	AZTI. Marine Research Unit. Txatxarramendi Ugartea z/g. E-48395 Sukarrieta, Bizkaia. Spain.	libaibarriaga@azti.es
Jackson, Emmet	Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), Ireland's Seafood Development Agency.	Emmet.jackson@bim.ie

Name	Affiliation[1]	Email
Jardim, Ernesto	Independent expert	ernesto.jardim@gmail.com
Jung, Armelle	DRDH, Techonopôle Brest-Iroise, BLP 15 rue Dumont d'Urville, Plouzane, France	armelle.jung@desrequinsetdeshommes.org
Ligas, Alessandro (vice-chair)	CIBM Consorzio per il Centro Interuniversitario di Biologia Marina ed Ecologia Applicata "G. Bacci", Viale N. Sauro 4, 57128 Livorno, Italy	ligas@cibm.it; ale.ligas76@gmail.com
Lucchetti, Alessandro	National Research Council (CNR) – Institute for Biological Resources and Marine Biotechnologies (IRBIM), Largo Fiera della Pesca, 2, 60125, Ancona, Italy	alessandro.lucchetti@cnr.it
Mannini, Alessandro	CNR IRBIM Ancona, Largo Fiera della Pesca, 260125 Ancona ITALY	alessandro.mannini@irbim.cnr.it
Moore, Claire	Marine Institute, Renville, Galway, Ireland	claire.moore@marine.ie
Motova - Surmava, Arina	Sea Fish Industry Authority, 18 Logie Mill, Logie Green Road, Edinburgh EH7 4HS, UK	arina.motova@seafish.co.uk
Nimmegeers, Sofie	Flanders research institute for agriculture, fisheries and food, Belgium	Sofie.Nimmegeers@ilvo.vlaanderen.be
Nord, Jenny (vice-chair)	Swedish Agency for Marine and Water management	jenny.nord@havochvatten.se
Pinto, Cecilia	Università di Genova, DISTAV - Dipartimento di Scienze della Terra, dell'Ambiente e della Vita, Corso Europa 26, 16132 Genova, Italy	cecilia.pinto@edu.unige.it
Prellezo, Raúl (chair)	AZTI -Unidad de Investigación Marina, Txatxarramendi Ugartea z/g 48395 Sukarrieta (Bizkaia), Spain	rprellezo@azti.es

Name	Affiliation[1]	Email
Raid, Tiit	Estonian Marine Institute, University of Tartu. Mäealuse 14, Tallinn, EE-126, Estonia	tiit.raid@gmail.com
Russo, Tommaso	University of Rome Tor Vergata, via della Ricerca Scientifica snc, 00133 Rome, Italy	Tommaso.Russo@Uniroma2.it
Sabatella, Evelina Carmen	National Research Council (CNR) – Institute for Research on Population and Social Policies (IRPPS), Corso S. Vincenzo Ferreri, 12, 84084 Fisciano, Salerno, Italy	evelinacarmen.sabatella@cnr.it
Savina-Rolland, Marie	Ifremer, 8 rue François Toullec 56100 Lorient	Marie.Savina.Rolland@ifremer.fr
Spedicato, Maria Teresa	Fondazione COISPA Via dei trulli 18-20 70126 Bari, Italy	spedicato@fondazionecoispa.org
Steins, Nathalie	Wageningen Marine Research Korringaweg 7 4401 NT Yerseke The Netherlands	nathalie.steins@wur.nl
Stransky, Christoph	Thünen Institute [TI-SF] Federal Research Institute for Rural Areas, Forestry and Fisheries, Institute of Sea Fisheries, Herwigstrasse 31, D-27572 Bremerhaven, Germany	christoph.stransky@thuenen.de
Tserpes, George	Hellenic Center for Marine Research (HCMR), Thalassokosmos, 71500 Gournes Pediados, Crete, Greece	gtserpes@hcmr.gr

Name	Affiliation[1]	Email
Ulrich, Clara	IFREMER, Rue de l'Ile d'Yeu, 44311 Nantes, France	Clara.Ulrich@ifremer.fr
Uriarte, Andres	Independent expert	auriartes@hotmail.com
Uusitalo, Laura	Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke), Finland	laura.uusitalo@luke.fi (secondary: laura.uusitalo@iki.fi)
Valentinsson, Daniel	Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), Department of Aquatic Resources, Turistgatan 5, SE-45330, Lysekil, Sweden	daniel.valentinsson@slu.se

REPORT TO THE STECF

Title of EWG
(EWG-25-03 & 25-07)

20 June 2025

This report does not necessarily reflect the view of the STECF and the European Commission and in no way anticipates the Commission's future policy in this area

1. INTRODUCTION

The STECF EWG 25-03 met during 07–11 April 2025 virtually. The meeting opened at 09:00 on 07 April and was adjourned at 16:00 on 11 April 2025.

The STECF EWG 25-07 met during 16–20 June 2025 in Ispra, Italy. The meeting opened at 09:00 on 16 June and was adjourned at 16:00 on 20 June 2025.

1.1 Terms of Reference for EWG-25-03 and 25-07

Background and general objectives provided by the Commission

The AER is the main source of economic and social data for scientific advice on the performance of the EU fishing fleet. It is also increasingly used by scientific bodies, national administrations and international institutions.

Given the increasing number of scientific uses of the AER and its growing complexity, there is a greater need to guarantee robust, precise data and analyses as well as streamline the content of the report.

The trimming down of the AER is intended to achieve a more balanced effort/product exercise, concentrating on the core, routine tasks of the AER on the one hand, while freeing up time and resources on the other so that EWG experts can focus on more applied economic analyses.

The 2025 AER will continue efforts made in previous years to streamline the contents while providing more in-depth look at the different factors driving the economic performance of the EU fleets. This will mainly be achieved through:

- dedicated data checking exercises, covering national and regional data sets: https://datacollection.jrc.ec.europa.eu/data-analysis
- more concise and less descriptive chapters, supplemented by the JRC online data dissemination tool https://datacollection.jrc.ec.europa.eu/da/fleet/
- a continued effort to provide more analytical outcomes, notably on drivers of profitability and trends

The report should provide an in-depth look at the different factors affecting the economic performance of the EU fishing fleet with a special focus on the major drivers and issues affecting the economic performance of the sector (such as stock status, capacity fuel and fish prices, etc). In addition to interpreting and explaining the quantitative results from the data collected and nowcasts, the report should contain qualitative information and analysis on the drivers and trends in performance and other aspects of policy relevance based largely on the scientists' expert knowledge. The main objective of the report is to obtain high quality interpretation of all data outputs to ensure the usefulness of the report for DG MARE's policy development, Member States and the industry. The analysis will be done at the EU, regional, national and fleet segment levels. The relevance and role of the following factors should be taken into account: changes in first sale prices, operational costs, in particular fuel prices; structural and marketing measures, market and trade determinants.

Special focus should be given to economic benefits of MSY (such as analysis of causality between stocks exploited sustainably and the improvement in the performance of the fleets; impacts of structural policies such as fleet capacity management. Given the social importance of this activity in many coastal

communities, particular emphasis should be paid to the social aspects, including trends on employment, salaries and labour productivity and interconnections with other sectors of the blue economy, such as aquaculture, fish processing, ocean energy, coastal tourism, etc. All relevant documentation and data will be made available on the DCF_JRC or STECF websites or will be made available on a dedicated EWG FTP. The final draft of the EWG report will be reviewed by the STECF during its summer plenary meeting in 2025.

Data transmission issues

All data issues that may impact the quality and robustness of the analyses in the AER, and associated STECF reports (e.g. Balance between fleet capacity and fishing opportunities) will be reported in the Data Transmission Monitoring Tool (DTMT).

Experts are also requested to follow up on previous data issues and confirm assess if they have been properly addressed.

Outline of the 2025 AER

STECF is requested to provide the Annual Economic Report on EU fishing fleets for 2023 including, the following sections:

STECF Observations

Executive Summary

Expert Working Group Report

1. EU Fleet Overview

This chapter will contain a section on each of the following topics:

- Fleet structure
- Fishing activity and production
- Employment and average salaries
- Economic performance
- Resource productivity and efficiency
- Main drivers and trends
- EU small-scale coastal fleet (key socio-economic indicators)
- EU distant-water and outermost region fleets (key socio-economic indicators)
- Assessment of the economic performance for 2023 and 2024 (nowcasts).

2. Regional Analysis

A specific chapter for each of the main fishing regions in which EU fleets operate, namely:

- North Sea & Eastern Arctic
- Baltic Sea
- North Western Waters
- South Western Waters
- Mediterranean Sea
- Black Sea
- EU Outermost Regions
- Other Fishing Regions (distinguishing where possible by RFMO, such as NAFO, ICCAT, IOTC, CECAF, etc.).

3. National Chapters

This section of the report will contain a specific chapter for each of the EU Member State fleets and shall include a brief section on the small-scale coastal and distant-water fleets (key socioeconomic indicators) where relevant, as well as the main drivers affecting profitability of the fishing fleets.

4. Annexes

To include sections on: Methodologies, data transmission issues, definitions, glossary, etc.

Structure, workflow and outputs of the EWGs

Following the 2025 EU-MAP call for economic data on the EU Fishing Fleet, the EWGs are requested to analyse and comment on the economic performance of the EU and national fishing fleets between 2008 and 2023, and where possible, 2024 and beyond.

Economic data series will be available up to 2023, with some provisional data up to 2024. As these data will be outdated by the time the report is published in July-August 2025, experts should provide indication on the main factors affecting the indicators used for the “nowcast” estimations (i.e. for 2024 and 2025). This becomes paramount in the current economic situation with high fuel prices.

The first EWG will focus primarily on data quality and coverage. EWG 25-03 will produce final draft national chapters, the formulation of which constitutes an integral part of the data checking process.

The second meeting (EWG 25-07) will focus on developing applied economic analysis based on the final data submitted. In particular, experts will produce a synthesis on the trends and economic results of the EU fishing fleet by main fishing region and aggregate it at EU level and identify the main factors behind these trends.

The specific objectives and priorities for the two working groups are described below.

EWG 25-03 (AER 1)

The first AER STECF EWG meeting should lead to a data quality check by the attending experts, a detailed account of any data transmission (DT) issues and the drafting of concise national chapters.

As a matter of priority, the EWG is requested to ensure that all unresolved data transmission (DT) issues and failures encountered prior to and during the EWG meeting are recorded on line via the Data Transmission Monitoring Tool (DTMT) available at: https://datacollection.jrc.ec.europa.eu/web/dcf/dtmt

Any outstanding data issues not covered by EWG 25-03 will be followed up by EWG 25-07. This may occur if MS submit revised data after EWG 25-03. That is, according to the data handling procedure, data submission may occur up to two weeks after the first meeting upon request of STECF or the JRC.

Guidance on how DT issues should be inserted in the DTMT, log-on credentials and access rights will be provided separately by the STECF Secretariat focal point for the EWG.

The European Commission has requested STECF to deliver an analysis of the socio-economic impacts of Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs). As preparation for this analysis, EWG 25-03 should assess the possibility to provide cost data specifically for deep-sea vessels for the Member States affected by VME closures.

Routine tasks AER 1

- Experts should check national data (national totals and fleet segment) and preliminary disaggregated regional data prepared by the JRC while producing their national chapters.
- National chapters should include a section on the impacts of high fuel prices and energy transition aspects.
- Detected data issues should be corrected and resubmitted during the meeting as far as possible.
- All unresolved data issues should be flagged and where possible, revised, corrected and resubmitted before the final deadline, i.e., two weeks after the first meeting.
- Time and data permitting, estimates of economic performance for 2024 and 2025 should be carried out.

National Chapters

Each national chapter should include a short description of the national fleet, performance results by fishing activity and an in-depth look at the different factors driving economic performance.

National chapters should follow the following structure:

- Short description of the national fleet
    - Fleet structure
    - Fishing activity and production
    - Employment and average salaries
- Economic performance results for 2023 and recent trends
    - National fleet performance
    - Resource productivity and efficiency
- Drivers affecting the economic performance
    - Market and trade (including first sale prices)
    - Operating costs (external factors)
    - Status of key stocks, changes in TACs and quotas
    - Management instruments
    - Innovation and development (role of the EMFF/ EMFAF)
- Assessment of the economic performance for 2024 and 2025 (nowcasts)
- Economic performance by fishing activity
    - Small-scale coastal fleet
    - Distant-water and outermost region fleets (if applicable)
- Economic performance of selected fleet segments
- Data issues

Outputs AER 1

Specifically, the EWG should provide:

- Data endorsement by the attending experts
- All pending data transmission (DT) issues and failures recorded in the Data Transmission Monitoring Tool (DTMT)
- Final drafts of national chapters
- A concise summary of the national chapter (2-3 lines) containing results for the main economic performance indicators for 2023; how they compare to

previous year's results (improvement/deterioration, etc.) and expected outcomes for 2024/2025.

EWG 25-07 (AER 2)

EWG 25-07 will continue from EWG 25-03 and produce final EU overview and regional chapters. The data checks performed for the regional analyses during the first meeting should free up time for deeper analyses.

Nowcasts for 2024 and 2025, where possible, will be completed and incorporated into the EU overview and national chapters.

Routine tasks AER 2

- Nowcasts for 2024 and 2025 should be updated and completed with the latest available information.
- National chapters should be finalised with nowcasts for 2024 and 2025.
- Regional analyses
- EU overview completed with main drivers and trends and nowcasts for 2024 and 2025 incorporated
- Any unresolved data transmission (DT) issues and failures should be reported in the DTMT.
- A follow-up on the previous DT issues should be also provided, in particular confirmation if these issues have been solved.

EU Overview

This chapter will again have specific sections on the following fleet categories:

- - EU small-scale coastal fleets: This section will investigate the drivers/factors behind the trends of the small-scale coastal fleets, whether there are regional differences and the possible reasons for these differences.
- - EU large-scale fleets: This section will examine the drivers/factors behind the performance and trends of the large-scale fleets, whether there are regional differences and the possible reasons for these differences.
- A separate category for fleets below 12 m using active gears should be prepared.
- - EU distant water fleets: This section will include an overview of the employment, profitability and salaries for the EU distant water fleets distinguishing by main RFMO (e.g. NAFO, ICCAT, IOTC). It will also investigate the factors behind the trends and identified any data gaps.
- - EU outermost region fleets: This section will include an overview of the employment, profitability and salaries across different outermost regions. It will also investigate the factors behind the trends and identified any data gaps.

Outputs AER 2

Specifically, by the end of the second meeting, the EWG should provide:

- Revised DTMT, containing only the unresolved/outstanding data issue;
- Final national chapters and summaries with nowcasts for 2024 and 2025;
- Final EU overview chapter with nowcasts for 2024 and 2025;
- Final Regional chapters;
- Outline of the current socio-economic impacts of fuel prices and trends in energy efficiency of the EU fleets;

- Draft Executive summary

1.2 The 2025 AER

The 2025 Annual Economic Report (AER) on the European Union (EU) fishing fleet provides a comprehensive overview of the latest information available on the structure and economic performance of EU Member State fishing fleets.

This report covers the period 2008 to 2023 and includes information on the EU fleet's fishing capacity, effort, employment, landings, income and costs. The reference year is 2023 with nowcast performance estimates provided for 2024 and 2025, where possible. The profitability and performance of the EU fishing fleet is reported in terms of Gross Value Added (GVA), profits (gross and net), profit margins, resource productivity (labour and capital) and efficiency (fuel use, LPUE, etc.).

All monetary values have been adjusted for inflation to 2023 constant prices. For this conversion from nominal to real values, a Harmonised index of consumer prices (HICP) 'deflator' for each Member State was applied to nominal values. Annual HICP data is taken from Eurostat's time-series of harmonised HICP (see Annex 3):

$$Real\ value\ _i = \frac{Nominal\ value_i}{\frac{HICP_i}{HICP_{2023}}}$$

where *i* represents the year for which the nominal value is converted into 2023 real value. All values in this report are therefore given in real 2023 euro, rather than nominal euro.

All the monetary values of the report, including tables and figures are presented in 2023 real value.

This publication includes:

- A structural and economic overview of the EU fishing fleet for the reference year 2023, with trend analyses for the period 2013 to 2023, including estimates for 2024 and 2025
- A regional analysis of the EU fishing fleet by major sea basin: North Sea & Eastern Arctic, Baltic Sea, North Western Waters, South Western Waters, Mediterranean Sea, Black Sea, as well as for the EU Outermost Regions and distant water fleets (DWF) in non-EU waters, i.e., RFMOs (NAFO, ICCAT, IOTC, CECAF and NEAFC);
- A detailed structural and economic overview of each Member State fishing fleet, including qualitative economic performance assessments for the years 2013-2023 and nowcasts for 2024 and 2025.

The content of this report is derived from data submitted by Member States in response to the 2025 fleet economic data call issued by DGMARE. The methodologies and procedures employed by individual Member States are described in detail within their respective Work Plans and Annual Reports prepared under the Data Collection Framework (DCF). These documents are referenced in the metadata file, accessible at: https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/d/stecf/2022_fleet_metadata. The Regional Work Plan developed by the Regional Coordination Group for Economic Issues (RCG Econ), available at: https://datacollection.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/d/dcf/econ_rwp_2025-2027, aims to ensure methodological consistency among Member States.

Due to the use of real values and possible resubmissions of previous year's data by Member States, **the 2025 AER supersedes all previous AERs. Comparisons across AER reports cannot not be made.**

Data sources and coverage

The data used to compile all the various analyses contained within the report were collected under the data collection framework, cf. Council Regulation (EC) No 199/2008 of 25 February 2008 for the years 2008 -2016 (DCF) and cf. Council Regulation (EC) No 2017/1004 of 17 May 2017, for the years 2017-2025 (EU-MAP).

The 2025 call requested data for the years 2023 and 2024. Fleet capacity data were requested up to and including 2024, while fishing activity (effort and landings), employment and economic parameters were requested up to and including 2023. Additionally, income from landings and several effort and landings variables were requested for 2024 (non-mandatory) to allow for economic performance nowcasts to be estimated at fleet segment and national level for 2024 and 2025.

This report includes data reported by national totals and by fleet segments (a combination of the main fishing technology used and vessel length group operating predominately in one supra-region). The data analysed covers transversal (capacity, effort and landings) and economic data (income, costs, employment, enterprises, capital value and investment).

In terms of the completeness of the Member States data submissions, most countries submitted the majority of parameters requested under the call. In many cases missing data relates to fleet segments with low vessel numbers for which data may be sensitive or hard to obtain (logbooks are compulsory for vessels over 10 metres only). In terms of data quality, inevitably some 'abnormal' estimates for various parameters were detected by the JRC or experts and in many cases rectified by the Member State. However, some coverage and quality issues remain outstanding:

- Greece provided only partial data for the years 2014-2017. Due to the incomplete coverage of the fishing activity and socio-economic data, Greece can only be included in the analyses for 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 years. The analysis of European Small Scale Coastal Fleet includes Greek data and therefore, the time series analysis has been restricted to the period 2018-2023.
- Due to the reduced number of vessels and/or enterprises, several Member States, including Italy, Germany and some of the Baltic States, do not deliver sensitive data on their distant water fleets, making coverage at the EU and regional levels incomplete.
- United Kingdom fleet segments have not been included in the analysis.
- As a Member State that entered the EU in 2013, Croatia is only required to provide data from 2012 onwards.
- Incomplete time series data due to either the non-submission or submission of questionable data, make trend analysis over the entire period 2008-2023 at the EU and regional levels impossible without excluding the Member States fleets that are incomplete.

See Section 5 – Data Coverage and Quality – for more information on data transmission issues.

2. EU FLEET OVERVIEW

2.1 Background

This chapter provides an overview of the EU fishing fleet's structure and economic performance in 2023, highlighting key trends from 2013 to 2023, using data submitted by Member States under the 2025 fleet economic data call issued by DGMARE. All monetary values have been adjusted for inflation to reflect 2023 constant prices, meaning data from earlier or later years may not directly match the values submitted by Member States. For converting nominal figures to real values, a Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (HICP) 'deflator' was applied for each Member State, sourced from Eurostat's HICP time series (see Annex 3).

Incomplete data submissions from several Member States have made trend analysis on the economic performance of the EU fleet over the analyzed period unfeasible. Greece, for instance, only provided partial data on landings, effort, and economic performance for the years 2014 to 2017, and thus is excluded from EU-level analysis for those years, although it is included from 2018 onwards. Additionally, with the United Kingdom officially leaving the EU at the end of 2020, British data has also been excluded from these analyses. Further details on data availability can be found in the chapter on quality and checking procedures (see Section 5).

For Member State-level analyses, national datasets are used, while fleet segment-level data are employed to compile results according to the main types of fishing activities: Small-Scale Coastal Fleet (SSCF), Large-Scale Fleets (LSF), vessels under 12 metres using active gears (L12AG), and Distant-Water Fleets (DWF). For 2023, EU-level results include all Member State fleets from this year, whereas results by fishing activity may omit some fleet segments with insufficient data.

Although the national and fleet segment datasets theoretically should align internally, discrepancies can occur due to missing or incomplete data for certain fleet segments. Occasionally, these discrepancies stem from issues related to statistical confidentiality. To address this, Member States may combine such fleet segments into "clusters" (marked with an asterisk) and provide data at a more aggregated level. Alternatively, statistically confidential data may be excluded at the fleet segment level but included in national totals, leading to inconsistencies between the two datasets.

This clustering procedure has also led to differences between the definition of L12AG fishing activity in this year's report compared to previous editions (e.g., AER 2024 and earlier). In such cases, L12AG and LSF segments have been combined (i.e., all segments using active gears) to align with earlier procedures and prevent discrepancies.

Normalised trends for indicator values at the EU level are presented relative to 2013 (using 2013=100 as a baseline) and, unless otherwise noted, include Greece's contributions.

To provide the most reliable, complete and up-to-date information as possible, this chapter includes:

- A snapshot of the EU fishing fleet in 2023, by Member State and main type of fishing activity, i.e. SSCF, L12AG, LSF, and DWF (including data summary tables).

- A section with nowcasts for 2024 and 2025 on the economic performance of EU fleets where possible (based on fleet segment data).
- A description of the main drivers and trends that may have contributed to the economic performance of the EU fleet over recent years.

The four main types of fishing activity used in the AER are defined as:

- Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF) - includes all vessels under 12 metres using static gears. According to the DCF gear definitions these include: ‘drift and/or fixed netters’, ‘pots and/or traps’, ‘hooks’, ‘passive gears only’, ‘other passive gears’, ‘polyvalent passive gears only’ and ‘active and passive gears’.
- Vessels under 12 metres using active gears (L12AG) - includes all vessels under 12 metres using active gears. According to the DCF gear definitions these include: ‘dredgers’, ‘demersal trawlers and/or demersal seiners’, ‘other active gears’, ‘polyvalent active gears only’, ‘purse seiners’, ‘beam trawlers’ and ‘pelagic trawlers’.
- Large-scale fleet (LSF) - segment includes all vessels over 12 metres operating predominately in EU waters.
- Distant-water fleet (DWF) - includes fishing vessels flying the flag of an EU Member State and fishing predominantly in non-EU waters.

2.2 At a glance

Due to incomplete data from certain Member States, sections like the EU Fleet Overview (Section 2) and Regional Analysis (Section 3) exclude Greece when analyzing trends across various indicators. This omission is explicitly noted in the text and figures. Additionally, to ensure confidentiality, some Member States did not provide data for certain fleet segments, which have also been excluded. The reference year is 2023, and **all monetary values are adjusted for inflation**, using constant 2023 prices.

Fleet capacity

In 2023, the EU fishing fleet consisted of 70,280 vessels. Among these, 17,020 vessels (24% of the total) were inactive, accounting for 0.139 million GTs and 0.834 million kW. This left 53,260 active vessels, with a combined gross tonnage of 1.15 million and engine power of 4.36 million kW.

Breaking down by type of activity, 77% of active vessels were part of the SSCF, 16.5% belonged to the LSF, 5.8% were psrt of the L12AG, and less than 0.5% comprised the DWF.

Compared to 2022, the number of active vessels in the EU fishing fleet increased by 0.6% in 2023. However, other fleet capacity indicators showed declines, with total fleet engine power dropping by 2.8% and gross tonnage decreasing by 4.2%.

Employment and labour costs

The EU fishing fleet employed 119,479 fishers in 2023, a slight decrease of 0.4% compared to 2022. This figure corresponds to 73,974 full-time equivalents (FTE), which is 2.1% lower than the previous year. Additionally, an estimated 35,724 individuals were classified as unpaid labor.

The average annual labor cost, which includes personnel expenses and the value of unpaid labor, per FTE was calculated at EUR 29,447 in 2023, marking a 7% decline compared to 2022.

Effort and Landings

The EU fleet was at sea for over 5.2 million days-at-sea (DaS) and consumed approximately 1.564 billion liters of fuel during this period. Reported landings amounted to 3.39 million tonnes of seafood, representing a 2.6% drop compared to 2022. The total value of these landings was EUR 6.14 billion, a 12% decrease compared to the previous year.

Landings per day at sea (LPUE) for the entire EU fleet were estimated at approximately 0.647 tonnes per day, reflecting a 5.8% decline compared to 2022.

The value per day at sea (VPUE) for the EU fleet was calculated at around EUR 1,169 per day, marking a 14.7% decrease from the previous year.

Economic performance

Regarding active vessels, revenue (gross value of landings plus other income) amounted to nearly EUR 6.47 billion, which represents a 10.6% decrease compared to 2022. Other income accounted for 4.2% of this total revenue (an increase from 3.4% in 2022).

The fleet generated EUR 3.202 billion in Gross Value Added (GVA), EUR 1.024 billion in gross profit, and EUR 59 million in net profit (all figures exclude subsidies and fishing rights). Compared to 2022, GVA and gross profits decreased by 10.1% and 11.6%, respectively. Net profit, while still positive, was significantly lower in 2023, showing a 61% decline from the previous year.

The GVA-to-revenue ratio for 2023 was estimated at 49.5% (slightly up from 49.2% in 2022). The gross profit margin stood at 15.8% (a slight decrease from 16% in 2022), while the net profit margin for active vessels was 0.9% (down from 2.1% in 2022). These figures highlight a notable decline in the economic performance of the entire EU fleet in 2023, particularly in net profit margins.

Despite the challenges, the EU fishing fleet remained marginally profitable in 2023. However, net performance dropped by 57% compared to 2022. When analyzed at the Member State level, five countries—Spain, Italy, France, Denmark, and Portugal—together accounted for 72% of the gross profit generated by European vessels in 2023. Conversely, 11 Member States reported negative net profits in 2023: Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, and Poland. It is important to note that the methodology used to calculate capital costs can significantly influence the net results presented, so these figures should be interpreted with caution.

The estimated physical value of the EU fishing fleet's capital in 2023 was EUR 5.0 billion, reflecting a reduction of 4.6% compared to 2022. Investments made during the year totalled over EUR 630 million, marking a sharp 53% decrease compared to 2022. The value of the EU's inactive fishing fleet in 2023 was estimated at EUR 543 million, lower than the EUR 625 million recorded in 2022.

EU Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

The EU SSCF included 41,106 active vessels, representing up to 77% of the total number of active vessels, but accounting for only 8% of the gross tonnage and 33% of the engine power.

The engaged crew totaled 61,138 fishers, which corresponds to 29,033 FTEs, making up 51.1% and 39.4% of the EU total, respectively.

The SSCF contributed 6.4% of the weight landed (215,986 tonnes) and 16.6% of the landed value (EUR 1.016 billion).

It generated EUR 702 million in GVA, a decrease of 3.2% compared to 2022, with EUR 226 million in gross profit (+21%) and EUR 93 million in net profit (+130%).

In relative terms, this resulted in a GVA to revenue ratio of 63.9% (+2.4% compared to 2022), a gross profit margin of 20.6% (up from 27.6% in 2022), and a net profit margin of 8.5% (up from 3.5% in 2022).

EU vessels under 12 metres using active gears (L12AG)

The EU L12AG had 3,114 active vessels, representing up to 5.8% of active vessels, but only 4% of gross tonnage and 11% of engine power. It employed 6,399 fishers or 2,342 FTE, accounting for 5.4% and 3.2% of the EU totals, respectively. The fleet landed 71,882 tonnes (2.1% of weight) valued at EUR 183 million (2.9%). It generated EUR 120 million in GVA (-15% from 2022), EUR 41.9 million in gross profit (+16.5%), and EUR 21 million in net profit (+80%). This equated to a GVA to revenue ratio of 58.9% (-0.26% from 2022), a gross profit margin of 20.6% (up from 15.4% in 2022), and a net profit margin of 10.3% (up from 5.0% in 2022).

EU Large-scale fleet (LSF)

The EU LSF comprised 8,801 vessels (16.5% of the EU active fleet) and covered 68% of the gross tonnage and 55% of the engine power of the EU total fishing fleet, respectively.

Engaged crew amounted to 46,216 fishers or 36,212 FTE, 38.7% and 48.8% of the EU total fishing fleet, respectively.

Contributed 71.2% to landed weight (2.4 million tonnes) and 64.5% to landed value (EUR 3.96 billion).

Generated EUR 2.028 billion in GVA (down by 10.9% compared to 2022), EUR 606 million (-20.5%) in gross profit and -EUR 76 million in net profit (-207%).

In relative terms, this amounted to a 49.7% GVA to revenue (down from 49.8% in 2022), 14.8% gross profit margin (down from 16.7%) and -1.9% net profit margin (down from +1.5% in 2022).

EU Distant-water fleet (DWF)

The EU fishing fleet comprised 0.5% of the active fleet (239 vessels) and accounted for 22.1% of total gross tonnage and 8% of engine power. It employed 5,725 fishers (4.8% of total employment). The fleet contributed 20.3% to landings by weight (690 million tonnes) and 17.1% by value (EUR 980 million).

It generated EUR 353 million in GVA (down 16% from 2022), EUR 151 million in Gross profit (down 12.6%), and EUR 21 million in Net profit (down 31%). This equates to a 32.7% GVA to revenue ratio (down from 33.1% in 2022), a 13.9% gross profit margin (up from 13.5%), and a 1.9% net profit margin (down from 2.4%).

Table 2.2.1 provides a summary of the evolution of the inactive EU fleet.

Table 2.2.2 provides a summary of the main results for the EU active fleet (all figures exclude Greece) for the period 2013-2023 and nowcast results for 2024 and 2025.

Table 2.2.3 provides a summary of the main results for the EU active fleet, including Greece in 2018 and forward.

Tables 2.2.4 to 2.2.7 provide a summary of the main results for the EU fleet by main fishing activity (SSCF, LSF, L12AG and DWF) for the period 2013-2023 and nowcast results for 2024 and 2025.

Table 2.2.1. Inactive fleet evolution for 2013-2023.

EU		2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	%Δ 2023-2022	%Δ 2023-avg 2013-2022	%Δ 2023-2013
Number of vessels	thousand	22.7	22.4	25.3	22.8	22.5	21.4	22.4	23.6	17.5	18.5	17.0	-8.1%	-22.3%	-25.1%
Total vessel tonnage	thousand GT	344	328	325	320	308	302	299	308	104	119	140	17.0%	-49.4%	-59.4%
Total vessel power	thousand kW	1,565	1,546	1,593	1,538	1,507	1,424	1,427	1,514	729	789	835	5.8%	-38.8%	-46.7%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Table 2.2.2. Main results for the EU active fleet (excl. Greece) for 2013-2023 and nowcasts for 2024 and 2025.

EU (excluding Greece)		2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	*2024*	*2025*	%Δ 2023-2022	%Δ 2023-avg 2013-2022	%Δ 2023-2013
Number of vessels	thousand	46.0	45.6	45.1	47.2	47.5	46.2	45.7	44.6	44.3	43.3	42.6	*41.1*	*37.8*	-1.7%	-6.5%	-7.4%
Total vessel tonnage	thousand GT	1,230.2	1,251.3	1,215.7	1,188.4	1,192.4	1,202.6	1,187.5	1,144.5	1,154.5	1,151.9	1,101.2	*1,057.6*	*434.0*	-4.4%	-7.6%	-10.5%
Total vessel power	thousand kW	4,506.1	4,507.1	4,447.7	4,400.8	4,400.9	4,341.4	4,352.7	4,187.5	4,222.6	4,182.0	4,053.6	*3,857.4*	*1,850.3*	-3.1%	-6.9%	-10.0%
Engaged crew	thousand	118.4	117.8	114.8	115.5	118.3	114.0	110.7	105.4	105.8	103.7	102.2	*93.3*	*90.2*	-1.4%	-9.1%	-13.7%
FTE national	thousand	84.3	84.3	85.2	84.6	82.9	80.5	76.6	67.2	69.2	65.1	62.1	*58.0*	*57.9*	-4.7%	-20.4%	-26.4%
Days at sea	thousand	4,754	4,644	4,585	4,603	4,476	4,320	4,181	3,693	3,930	3,679	3,729	*3,720*	*3,402*	1.4%	-13.0%	-21.6%
Fishing days	thousand	4,672	4,607	4,519	4,616	4,346	4,300	4,120	3,644	3,861	3,661	3,693	*2,964*	*1,807*	0.9%	-12.8%	-21.0%
Energy consumption	million litre	1,998	1,938	2,056	2,003	1,982	1,954	1,970	1,796	1,776	1,547	1,495	*1,447*	*1,450*	-3.3%	-21.4%	-25.2%
Live weight of landings	thousand tonnes	4,100	4,313	4,305	4,206	4,545	4,437	3,984	3,892	3,523	3,428	3,334	*3,205*	*3,020*	-2.8%	-18.1%	-18.7%
Value of landings	million EUR	7,367	7,578	7,227	8,074	7,937	7,709	7,146	6,311	6,684	6,705	5,856	*5,641*	*5,604*	-12.7%	-19.5%	-20.5%
Gross value of landings	million EUR	7,187	7,362	7,391	7,901	7,797	7,584	7,051	6,213	6,673	6,726	5,915	*5,671*	*5,649*	-12.1%	-17.7%	-17.7%
Other income	million EUR	124	139	123	122	166	166	202	214	223	225	255	*235*	*228*	13.2%	49.6%	105.2%
Operating subsidies	million EUR	73.8	84.4	68.1	49.5	62.6	59.5	57.1	138.0	85.9	187.9	342.8	*316.4*	*312.1*	82.4%	295.4%	364.3%
Income from leasing out quota	million EUR	43.4	42.2	39.8	33.4	41.3	39.5	22.9	38.0	28.6	26.0	25.4			-2.1%	-28.4%	-41.3%
Personnel costs	million EUR	1,938	2,023	2,151	2,297	2,349	2,272	2,169	2,044	2,116	2,063	1,875	*1,798*	*1,775*	-9.1%	-12.5%	-3.3%
Value of unpaid labour	million EUR	297	297	269	295	299	286	250	230	250	224	185	*172*	*176*	-17.5%	-31.4%	-37.6%
Energy costs	million EUR	1,600	1,447	1,187	986	1,086	1,192	1,153	807	1,034	1,492	1,196	*1,022*	*899*	-19.8%	-0.2%	-25.3%
Repair & maintenance costs	million EUR	572	598	633	689	633	690	659	579	616	566	559	*517*	*504*	-1.2%	-10.4%	-2.2%
Other variable costs	million EUR	975	984	1,042	1,077	1,009	969	1,001	862	911	905	852	*823*	*813*	-5.8%	-12.4%	-12.6%
Other non-variable costs	million EUR	554	573	581	597	578	628	620	603	639	552	509	*469*	*458*	-7.8%	-14.1%	-8.1%
Consumption of fixed capital	million EUR	800	782	831	793	839	827	780	795	813	783	772	*711*	*685*	-1.5%	-4.0%	-3.5%
Opportunity cost of capital	million EUR	185	191	194	190	189	187	195	204	200	180	170	*157*	*151*	-5.3%	-11.0%	-7.9%
Lease/rental payments for quota	million EUR	42	61	74	67	51	47	46	48	56	35	32			-7.5%	-38.5%	-22.2%
Value of physical capital	million EUR	5,284	5,444	5,535	5,438	5,402	5,353	5,573	5,824	5,702	5,139	4,866	*4,473*	*4,307*	-5.3%	-11.0%	-7.9%
Value of quota and other fishing rights	million EUR	1,357	1,749	1,841	2,476	3,698	3,522	3,025	3,254	2,482	2,113	3,320			57.1%	30.1%	144.6%
Investments	million EUR	454	400	428	485	521	412	484	658	741	1,305	602	*53*	*51*	-53.8%	2.3%	32.6%
Gross Value Added	million EUR	3,611	3,900	4,071	4,674	4,657	4,272	3,821	3,574	3,696	3,436	3,053	*3,075*	*3,204*	-11.1%	-23.1%	-15.4%
Net Value Added	million EUR	2,811	3,118	3,240	3,881	3,818	3,445	3,041	2,780	2,883	2,653	2,282	*2,364*	*2,519*	-14.0%	-28.0%	-18.8%
Gross profit	million EUR	1,376	1,580	1,651	2,082	2,009	1,713	1,402	1,300	1,330	1,149	994	*1,104*	*1,252*	-13.5%	-36.3%	-27.8%
Net profit	million EUR	391	608	626	1,099	981	699	427	301	318	186	52	237	417	-72.1%	-90.8%	-86.7%
GVA to revenue	%	49	52	54	58	58	55	53	56	54	49	49	*52*	*55*	0.1%	-8.1%	0.2%
Gross profit margin	%	19	21	22	26	25	22	19	20	19	17	16	*19*	*21*	-2.5%	-23.5%	-14.4%
Net profit margin	%	5.3	8.1	8.3	13.7	12.3	9.0	5.9	4.7	4.6	2.7	0.8	*4.0*	*7.1*	-68.6%	-88.8%	-84.3%
GVA per FTE (labour productivity)	thousand EUR	42.8	46.3	47.8	55.2	56.2	53.1	49.9	53.2	53.4	52.8	49.2	*53.0*		-6.8%	-3.6%	14.9%
Labour costs per FTE	thousand EUR	26.5	27.5	28.4	30.6	32.0	31.8	31.6	33.9	34.2	35.1	33.2	*34.0*		-5.5%	6.5%	25.2%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Table 2.2.3. Main results for the EU active fleet (including Greece in 2018 and forward) and nowcasts for 2024 and 2025.

EU		2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	*2024*	*2025*	%Δ 2023-2022	%Δ 2023-avg 2013-2022	%Δ 2023-2013
Number of vessels	thousand	46.0	45.6	45.1	47.2	47.5	59.8	58.1	56.1	54.3	52.9	53.3	*52.5*	*49.2*	0.6%	3.9%	15.8%
Total vessel tonnage	thousand GT	1,230.2	1,251.3	1,215.7	1,188.4	1,192.4	1,268.0	1,250.5	1,202.9	1,210.0	1,207.0	1,155.7	*1,117.8*	*493.7*	-4.2%	-5.4%	-6.1%
Total vessel power	thousand kW	4,506.1	4,507.1	4,447.7	4,400.8	4,400.9	4,736.1	4,731.8	4,523.8	4,531.9	4,489.4	4,364.4	*4,202.0*	*2,193.1*	-2.8%	-3.6%	-3.1%
Engaged crew	thousand	118.4	117.8	114.8	115.5	118.3	134.8	131.8	124.5	122.2	120.0	119.5	*112.2*	*108.9*	-0.4%	-1.9%	0.9%
FTE national	thousand	84.3	84.3	85.2	84.6	82.9	98.7	94.8	81.8	81.9	75.5	74.0	*71.2*	*71.0*	-2.1%	-13.4%	-12.3%
Days at sea	thousand	4,754	4,644	4,585	4,603	4,476	6,164	6,112	5,323	5,506	5,075	5,247	*5,222*	*4,901*	3.4%	2.4%	10.4%
Fishing days	thousand	4,672	4,607	4,519	4,616	4,346	6,144	6,051	5,275	5,436	5,056	5,211	*4,467*	*3,306*	3.0%	2.7%	11.5%
Energy consumption	million litre	1,998	1,938	2,056	2,003	1,982	2,042	2,060	1,875	1,845	1,612	1,564	*1,518*	*1,519*	-3.0%	-19.4%	-21.7%
Live weight of landings	thousand tonnes	4,100	4,313	4,305	4,206	4,545	4,507	4,059	3,953	3,575	3,486	3,394	*3,276*	*3,091*	-2.6%	-17.3%	-17.2%
Value of landings	million EUR	7,367	7,578	7,227	8,074	7,937	8,213	7,667	6,715	6,985	6,958	6,135	*5,956*	*5,921*	-11.8%	-17.9%	-16.7%
Gross value of landings	million EUR	7,187	7,362	7,391	7,901	7,797	8,086	7,572	6,613	6,992	6,989	6,194	*5,992*	*5,958*	-11.4%	-16.2%	-13.8%
Other income	million EUR	124	139	123	122	166	166	203	214	229	247	272	*254*	*247*	10.1%	57.0%	118.9%
Operating subsidies	million EUR	73.8	84.4	68.1	49.5	62.6	61.0	58.7	178.3	111.2	210.1	343.6	*317.4*	*313.0*	63.6%	258.8%	365.5%
Income from leasing out quota	million EUR	43.4	42.2	39.8	33.4	41.3	39.5	22.9	38.0	28.6	26.0	25.4			-2.1%	-28.4%	-41.3%
Personnel costs	million EUR	1,938	2,023	2,151	2,297	2,349	2,351	2,243	2,112	2,168	2,109	1,928	*1,860*	*1,832*	-8.6%	-11.3%	-0.6%
Value of unpaid labour	million EUR	297	297	269	295	299	392	360	318	322	295	251	*244*	*245*	-15.1%	-20.3%	-15.5%
Energy costs	million EUR	1,600	1,447	1,187	986	1,086	1,271	1,232	866	1,094	1,562	1,263	*1,089*	*954*	-19.1%	2.5%	-21.0%
Repair & maintenance costs	million EUR	572	598	633	689	633	718	691	605	640	588	578	*539*	*525*	-1.7%	-9.2%	1.1%
Other variable costs	million EUR	975	984	1,042	1,077	1,009	1,042	1,077	932	971	964	904	*881*	*870*	-6.2%	-10.2%	-7.2%
Other non-variable costs	million EUR	554	573	581	597	578	637	631	614	648	560	518	*479*	*468*	-7.5%	-13.2%	-6.5%
Consumption of fixed capital	million EUR	800	782	831	793	839	868	827	841	855	820	788	*731*	*703*	-3.8%	-4.5%	-1.4%
Opportunity cost of capital	million EUR	184.9	190.5	193.7	190.3	189.1	192.8	201.3	210.1	205.3	184.9	176.5	*163.7*	*157.5*	-4.6%	-9.2%	-4.6%
Lease/rental payments for quota	million EUR	41.7	61.0	73.8	67.2	51.1	46.6	45.9	48.3	56.3	35.0	32.4			-7.5%	-38.5%	-22.2%
Value of physical capital	million EUR	5,284	5,444	5,535	5,438	5,402	5,509	5,752	6,003	5,866	5,283	5,042	*4,677*	*4,500*	-4.6%	-9.2%	-4.6%
Value of quota and other fishing rights	million EUR	1,357	1,749	1,841	2,476	3,698	3,522	3,025	3,254	2,482	2,113	3,320			57.1%	30.1%	144.6%
Investments	million EUR	454	400	428	485	521	442	525	697	772	1,334	630	*80*	*78*	-52.8%	4.0%	38.8%
Gross Value Added	million EUR	3,611	3,900	4,071	4,674	4,657	4,585	4,144	3,811	3,869	3,562	3,202	*3,258*	*3,388*	-10.1%	-21.7%	-11.3%
Net Value Added	million EUR	2,811	3,118	3,240	3,881	3,818	3,717	3,317	2,970	3,014	2,742	2,414	*2,527*	*2,685*	-12.0%	-26.0%	-14.1%
Gross profit	million EUR	1,376	1,580	1,651	2,082	2,009	1,842	1,540	1,380	1,378	1,158	1,024	*1,154*	*1,311*	-11.6%	-36.0%	-25.5%
Net profit	million EUR	391	608	626	1,099	981	782	512	330	319	153	59	*259*	*450*	-61.3%	-89.8%	-84.8%
GVA to revenue	%	49	52	54	58	58	56	53	56	54	49	50	*52*	*55*	0.6%	-8.2%	0.3%
Gross profit margin	%	19	21	22	26	25	22	20	20	19	16	16	*18*	*21*	-1.0%	-24.8%	-15.8%
Net profit margin	%	5	8	8	14	12	9	7	5	4	2	1	*4*	*7*	-56.7%	-87.8%	-82.9%
GVA per FTE (labour productivity)	thousand EUR	42.8	46.3	47.8	55.2	56.2	46.4	43.7	46.6	47.2	47.2	43.3	*45.8*	*55.3*	-8.2%	-9.7%	1.1%
Labour costs per FTE	thousand EUR	26.5	27.5	28.4	30.6	32.0	27.8	27.5	29.7	30.4	31.8	29.4	*29.6*	*33.7*	-7.5%	0.8%	11.1%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Table 2.2.4. Main results for the EU Small-scale coastal fleets (excl. Greece) for 2013-2023 and nowcasts for 2024 and 2025.

EU SSCF (excluding Greece)		2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	*2024*	*2025*	%Δ 2023-2022	%Δ 2023-avg 2013-2022	%Δ 2023-2013
Number of vessels	thousand	45.2	44.0	44.5	45.9	46.1	45.0	42.8	42.5	41.3	40.2	41.1	*40.7*	*38.8*	2.4%	-6.0%	-9.1%
Total vessel tonnage	thousand GT	109.6	107.3	107.9	108.4	108.4	103.9	100.6	98.9	98.2	95.6	96.6	*94.7*	*54.3*	1.0%	-7.0%	-11.9%
Total vessel power	thousand kW	1,591.6	1,562.0	1,564.6	1,552.9	1,553.5	1,510.7	1,469.3	1,447.9	1,458.6	1,437.4	1,452.1	*1,405.0*	*837.3*	1.0%	-4.1%	-8.8%
Engaged crew	thousand	73.8	70.2	71.4	73.0	71.9	67.3	62.7	61.9	60.1	59.9	61.1	*58.1*	*56.4*	2.1%	-9.1%	-17.2%
FTE national	thousand	48.2	43.9	46.6	45.8	26.7	40.8	35.6	31.6	33.0	29.3	29.0	*28.0*	*28.0*	-1.0%	-23.9%	-39.8%
Days at sea	thousand	2,744	4,483	3,210	4,580	2,540	4,192	4,113	3,650	3,855	3,502	3,765	3,806	3,627	7.5%	2.1%	37.2%
Fishing days	thousand	2,801	2,743	3,272	4,710	2,526	4,243	4,149	3,686	3,853	3,570	3,841	3,359	2,584	7.6%	8.0%	37.1%
Energy consumption	million litre	214	166	180	176	159	153	153	138	146	123	122	116	115	-1.1%	-24.2%	-43.1%
Live weight of landings	thousand tonnes	254	271	251	255	225	231	223	237	248	230	216	*208*	*211*	-6.1%	-10.9%	-15.0%
Value of landings	million EUR	872	1,142	964	1,289	994	1,236	1,152	1,024	1,102	1,053	1,016	*979*	*980*	-3.5%	-6.2%	16.6%
Gross value of landings	million EUR	1,039	1,134	1,068	1,344	1,045	1,251	1,190	1,050	1,151	1,080	1,015	*972*	*974*	-6.1%	-10.6%	-2.3%
Other income	million EUR	31	33	23	22	48	48	56	57	75	81	83	*81*	*79*	2.7%	75.0%	170.5%
Operating subsidies	million EUR	21.6	19.0	17.0	8.0	22.1	19.5	26.1	70.0	25.1	44.6	37.7	*33.7*	*32.6*	-15.4%	38.3%	74.4%
Income from leasing out quota	million EUR	1.6	1.4	2.6	1.3	5.9	1.4	1.3	1.9	1.6	1.3	1.9			52.4%	-4.7%	23.4%
Personnel costs	million EUR	359	331	342	372	388	350	354	342	353	368	333	*311*	*309*	-9.7%	-6.5%	-7.3%
Value of unpaid labour	million EUR	254	244	245	271	271	245	205	186	179	170	143	*139*	*138*	-15.4%	-36.8%	-43.5%
Energy costs	million EUR	218	168	150	140	134	132	125	101	122	138	121	*104*	*90*	-12.7%	-15.5%	-44.6%
Repair & maintenance costs	million EUR	99	86	88	90	75	77	77	74	81	76	72	*66*	*65*	-4.4%	-12.3%	-27.3%
Other variable costs	million EUR	156	130	137	131	130	129	134	120	129	130	120	*112*	*112*	-7.8%	-9.5%	-23.3%
Other non-variable costs	million EUR	87	88	85	90	68	90	89	92	94	92	83	*75*	*74*	-9.9%	-5.1%	-4.3%
Consumption of fixed capital	million EUR	156	133	129	125	131	126	119	132	136	122	107	*101*	*99*	-12.0%	-18.0%	-31.3%
Opportunity cost of capital	million EUR	32.4	26.3	28.0	28.2	27.9	27.3	28.3	28.0	26.8	24.7	25.3			2.4%	-9.1%	-22.0%
Lease/rental payments for quota	million EUR	1.7	1.4	1.9	1.7	1.6	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.2	0.9	0.7			-26.5%	-50.8%	-60.9%
Value of physical capital	million EUR	925	751	801	807	798	779	810	801	765	705	722	*676*	*655*	2.4%	-9.1%	-22.0%
Value of quota and other fishing rights	million EUR	108	92	74	104	150	136	162	162	84	72	158			117.5%	37.7%	46.3%
Investments	million EUR	108	62	87	59	46	63	37	90	80	108	77			-28.7%	4.2%	-28.5%
Gross Value Added	million EUR	509	695	631	916	687	871	821	720	801	725	702	*696*	*712*	-3.2%	-4.9%	37.8%
Net Value Added	million EUR	353	563	502	791	556	745	702	588	665	603	594	*596*	*613*	-1.4%	-2.0%	68.4%
Gross profit	million EUR	- 103	121	44	273	28	276	262	193	269	187	226	*247*	*264*	20.7%	45.7%	319.2%
Net profit	million EUR	- 292	- 38	- 113	120	- 131	123	115	33	106	40	93	*122*	*143*	130.4%	2581.1%	131.9%
GVA to revenue	%	48	60	58	67	63	67	66	65	65	62	64	*66*	*68*	2.4%	3.0%	34.3%
Gross profit margin	%	- 10	10	4	20	3	21	21	17	22	16	21	*23*	*25*	27.6%	64.6%	313.6%
Net profit margin	%	- 27	- 3	- 10	9	- 12	9	9	3	9	3	8	*12*	*14*	143.7%	917.8%	131.1%
GVA per FTE (labour productivity)	EUR	10,563	15,826	13,537	19,991	25,699	21,318	23,076	22,804	24,279	24,718	24,175	*24,871*	*25,391*	-2.2%	19.8%	128.9%
Labour costs per FTE	EUR	12,699	13,078	12,587	14,034	24,659	14,553	15,712	16,703	16,138	18,337	16,397	*16,058*	*15,957*	-10.6%	3.5%	29.1%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Table 2.2.5. Main results for the EU L12AG fleets for 2013-2023 and nowcasts for 2024 and 2025.

EU L12AG		2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	*2024*	*2025*	%Δ 2023-2022	%Δ 2023-avg 2013-2022	%Δ 2023-2013
Number of vessels	number	4,287	4,117	3,968	4,137	4,158	4,410	4,914	3,940	3,424	3,438	3,114	*3,078*	*1,881*	-9.4%	-23.7%	-27.4%
Total vessel tonnage	thousand GT	17.4	16.9	16.7	17.9	17.7	19.7	22.6	17.1	15.8	16.7	15.8	*15.0*	*3.1*	-5.7%	-11.7%	-9.6%
Total vessel power	thousand kW	196.8	196.6	193.6	207.4	201.0	222.1	251.7	196.9	181.5	191.1	179.3	*171.1*	*41.5*	-6.2%	-12.0%	-8.9%
Engaged crew	thousand	8.4	8.0	7.8	7.6	8.5	8.1	10.3	8.0	7.1	7.1	6.4	*4.3*	*4.1*	-9.4%	-20.9%	-24.1%
FTE national	thousand	4.7	4.3	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.0	6.3	3.3	3.0	2.7	2.3	1.8	1.8	-14.1%	-43.2%	-50.5%
Days at sea	thousand	376	388	359	366	399	396	452	321	288	*290*	244	243	158	-15.9%	-32.9%	-35.1%
Fishing days	thousand	363	377	348	359	391	389	450	314	281	*284*	237	159	69	-16.5%	-33.3%	-34.6%
Energy consumption	million litre	39	43	44	47	44	39	42	33	33	32	30	28	28	-7.1%	-24.6%	-23.9%
Live weight of landings	thousand tonnes	93	84	92	95	94	111	102	71	73	77	72	*69*	*68*	-6.5%	-19.3%	-22.5%
Value of landings	million EUR	196	217	216	234	233	258	254	195	209	217	183	*176*	*174*	-15.9%	-17.9%	-6.6%
Gross value of landings	million EUR	221	233	255	259	267	255	267	215	233	221	183	*174*	*173*	-17.2%	-24.7%	-17.4%
Other income	million EUR	4	6	3	7	11	13	16	10	8	12	21	*19*	*19*	69.8%	127.9%	376.6%
Operating subsidies	million EUR	1.8	4.2	3.3	5.3	1.5	2.2	1.8	5.5	5.5	8.7	9.2	*6.7*	*6.6*	4.7%	129.9%	400.2%
Income from leasing out quota	million EUR	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.4			82.9%	90.2%	55.0%
Personnel costs	million EUR	69	77	82	91	97	92	93	77	88	83	68	*64*	*64*	-18.6%	-20.1%	-1.2%
Value of unpaid labour	million EUR	26.7	33.1	28.0	19.5	34.4	28.5	36.6	27.1	21.3	21.4	10.0	*9.3*	*9.1*	-53.4%	-63.9%	-62.6%
Energy costs	million EUR	37	37	30	27	32	28	32	20	24	31	26	*21*	*18*	-16.9%	-12.9%	-29.8%
Repair & maintenance costs	million EUR	15	18	17	20	14	19	19	16	16	17	16	*14*	*14*	-3.4%	-5.7%	7.0%
Other variable costs	million EUR	22	22	22	25	28	25	32	23	27	24	25	*23*	*23*	1.2%	-1.6%	13.5%
Other non-variable costs	million EUR	19	21	21	22	12	21	20	20	22	20	17	*15*	*15*	-15.0%	-14.9%	-12.2%
Consumption of fixed capital	million EUR	24	23	23	23	22	21	28	23	22	20	17	*15*	*14*	-15.5%	-26.8%	-29.3%
Lease/rental payments for quota	million EUR	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0			-70.6%	-53.4%	-32.2%
Opportunity cost of capital	million EUR	5.9	5.8	5.5	6.3	5.9	5.6	6.5	5.3	4.7	4.5	4.2	*3.7*	*3.6*	-6.0%	-25.2%	-29.0%
Value of physical capital	million EUR	169	165	158	179	168	161	185	152	135	127	120	*105*	*101*	-6.0%	-25.2%	-29.0%
Value of quota and other fishing rights	million EUR	14	56	33	19	18	18	19	21	18	34	96			185.1%	286.5%	608.6%
Investments	million EUR	16	11	14	3	8	6	15	13	13	24	13	*2*	*2*	-44.7%	10.1%	-13.4%
Gross Value Added	million EUR	132	140	169	172	192	174	182	145	151	141	120	*120*	*121*	-14.9%	-25.1%	-9.6%
Net Value Added	million EUR	109	117	146	149	170	153	153	122	129	121	103	*105*	*107*	-14.8%	-24.8%	-5.3%
Gross profit	million EUR	37	31	59	61	61	54	52	41	41	36	42	*47*	*49*	16.5%	-11.4%	13.0%
Net profit	million EUR	7	2	31	32	33	26	17	13	15	12	21	*28*	*31*	79.9%	11.6%	182.2%
GVA to revenue	%	59	59	65	65	69	65	64	65	63	60	59	*62*	*63*	-2.6%	-7.1%	0.3%
Gross profit margin	%	16	13	23	23	22	20	18	18	17	15	21	*24*	*25*	33.4%	10.6%	25.3%
Net profit margin	%	3	1	12	12	12	10	6	6	6	5	10	*15*	*16*	106.0%	42.0%	213.0%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Table 2.2.6. Main results for the EU Large-scale fleets for 2013-2023 and nowcasts for 2024 and 2025.

EU27 LSF		2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	*2024*	*2025*	%Δ 2023-2022	%Δ 2023-avg 2013-2022	%Δ 2023-2013
Number of vessels	number	10,973	10,865	10,712	10,559	10,384	10,112	10,041	9,462	9,306	9,099	8,801	*8,562*	*8,294*	-3.3%	-13.3%	-19.8%
Total vessel tonnage	thousand GT	925.6	909.6	881.9	867.8	876.2	897.1	879.7	850.4	843.4	836.0	787.6	*765.3*	*225.1*	-5.8%	-10.2%	-14.9%
Total vessel power	thousand kW	2,807.9	2,767.3	2,728.1	2,679.7	2,685.6	2,663.8	2,664.3	2,549.5	2,547.2	2,509.2	2,384.2	*2,299.0*	*1,025.0*	-5.0%	-10.4%	-15.1%
Engaged crew	thousand	54.9	56.4	54.8	54.4	54.0	53.2	52.3	48.1	48.2	46.6	46.2	*44.2*	*43.1*	-0.7%	-11.6%	-15.8%
FTE national	thousand	47.5	49.7	50.0	50.7	44.5	46.5	44.8	39.6	39.1	36.1	36.2	35.1	35.1	0.3%	-19.2%	-23.8%
Days at sea	thousand	1,556	1,617	1,597	1,625	1,543	1,508	1,474	1,285	1,296	*1,215*	1,171	1,108	1,067	-3.7%	-20.5%	-24.8%
Fishing days	thousand	1,439	1,417	1,490	1,527	1,443	1,456	1,393	1,222	1,250	*1,149*	1,079	898	591	-6.1%	-21.7%	-25.0%
Energy consumption	million litre	1,484	1,443	1,466	1,512	1,500	1,480	1,466	1,305	1,317	1,131	1,082	1,057	1,073	-4.3%	-23.3%	-27.1%
Live weight of landings	thousand tonnes	3,059	3,229	3,290	3,203	3,551	3,444	3,038	3,049	2,540	2,465	2,417	*2,374*	*2,239*	-1.9%	-21.7%	-21.0%
Value of landings	million EUR	4,797	4,887	4,970	5,576	5,530	5,522	5,057	4,482	4,460	4,337	3,957	*3,882*	*3,880*	-8.8%	-20.3%	-17.5%
Gross value of landings	million EUR	4,697	4,863	4,945	5,560	5,401	5,337	4,955	4,362	4,429	4,434	3,936	*3,848*	*3,847*	-11.2%	-19.6%	-16.2%
Other income	million EUR	81	82	79	79	96	99	125	131	133	137	148	*133*	*129*	8.1%	41.7%	81.4%
Operating subsidies	million EUR	46.9	60.3	46.6	38.3	38.5	37.5	28.0	98.5	79.4	148.4	250.4	*231.0*	*229.0*	68.7%	302.2%	433.3%
Income from leasing out quota	million EUR	40.4	39.9	36.0	31.2	34.5	37.2	20.3	34.9	25.7	22.7	23.1			1.9%	-28.4%	-42.8%
Personnel costs	million EUR	1,407	1,474	1,579	1,706	1,671	1,640	1,538	1,436	1,461	1,410	1,326	*1,295*	*1,282*	-6.0%	-13.5%	-5.8%
Value of unpaid labour	million EUR	105.7	105.4	90.8	114.1	105.6	115.5	116.8	104.7	120.1	103.1	96.3	*95.0*	*96.9*	-6.5%	-10.9%	-8.9%
Energy costs	million EUR	1,181	1,072	859	743	823	911	873	600	762	1,058	857	*744*	*664*	-19.0%	-3.5%	-27.5%
Repair & maintenance costs	million EUR	397	416	457	499	464	482	477	432	436	396	379	*353*	*345*	-4.2%	-14.9%	-4.6%
Other variable costs	million EUR	598	580	582	627	576	576	565	510	525	504	516	*509*	*504*	2.4%	-8.5%	-13.6%
Other non-variable costs	million EUR	353	353	341	373	379	393	390	373	390	337	304	*281*	*276*	-9.7%	-17.3%	-13.8%
Consumption of fixed capital	million EUR	621	599	615	570	597	582	547	569	593	561	556	*519*	*500*	-0.8%	-5.0%	-10.4%
Lease/rental payments for quota	million EUR	38.9	58.2	67.4	61.6	44.8	42.4	41.6	42.4	47.8	32.4	31.7			-2.4%	-33.7%	-18.6%
Opportunity cost of capital	million EUR	138.0	137.1	140.1	137.8	139.3	138.3	142.0	150.9	150.8	131.0	125.2	*116.9*	*112.9*	-4.4%	-10.9%	-9.2%
Value of physical capital	million EUR	3,942	3,917	4,004	3,938	3,979	3,952	4,058	4,311	4,310	3,743	3,578	*3,339*	*3,226*	-4.4%	-10.9%	-9.2%
Value of quota and other fishing rights	million EUR	1,225	1,579	1,722	2,341	3,445	3,291	2,768	2,993	2,303	1,936	3,007			55.3%	27.4%	145.5%
Investments	million EUR	342	300	316	420	464	319	399	559	579	1,177	530	*30*	*29*	-55.0%	8.7%	54.8%
Gross Value Added	million EUR	2,249	2,524	2,785	3,397	3,256	3,074	2,775	2,578	2,450	2,276	2,028	*2,093*	*2,187*	-10.9%	-25.9%	-9.9%
Net Value Added	million EUR	1,628	1,924	2,170	2,827	2,659	2,493	2,228	2,009	1,857	1,715	1,471	*1,574*	*1,687*	-14.2%	-31.6%	-9.6%
Gross profit	million EUR	737	944	1,115	1,577	1,479	1,319	1,121	1,038	870	762	606	*703*	*808*	-20.5%	-44.7%	-17.8%
Net profit	million EUR	- 22	207	360	869	743	599	431	318	125	71	- 76	*68*	*195*	-207.2%	-120.5%	-244.5%
GVA to revenue	%	47	51	55	60	59	57	55	57	54	50	50	*53*	*55*	-0.3%	-8.9%	5.5%
Gross profit margin	%	15	19	22	28	27	24	22	23	19	17	15	*18*	*20*	-11.1%	-31.6%	-3.8%
Net profit margin	%	- 0.5	4.2	7.2	15.4	13.5	11.0	8.5	7.1	2.8	1.5	- 1.9	*1.7*	*4.9*	-220.0%	-126.2%	-303.1%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Table 2.2.7. Main results for the EU Distant-water fleets for 2013-2023 and nowcasts for 2024 and 2025.

EU DWF		2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	*2024*	*2025*	%Δ 2023-2022	%Δ 2023-avg 2013-2022	%Δ 2023-2013
Number of vessels	number	288	288	279	268	255	251	260	249	242	244	239	*230*	*218*	-2.0%	-8.9%	-17.0%
Total vessel tonnage	thousand GT	250.0	286.3	279.9	261.7	254.5	247.4	247.5	236.5	252.5	258.7	255.7	*242.8*	*211.2*	-1.1%	-0.7%	2.3%
Total vessel power	thousand kW	338.2	378.0	372.5	355.0	342.5	339.5	346.4	329.5	344.6	351.6	348.7	*327.0*	*289.3*	-0.8%	-0.3%	3.1%
Engaged crew	thousand	5.8	6.4	6.2	5.4	6.2	6.2	6.5	6.5	6.8	6.5	5.7	*5.5*	*5.4*	-11.8%	-8.5%	-1.1%
FTE national	thousand	6.4	7.2	7.8	6.9	7.3	7.4	8.1	7.3	6.8	7.4	6.4	*6.2*	*6.0*	-13.1%	-12.1%	-0.2%
Days at sea	thousand	78	78	77	72	75	68	73	67	67	*67*	67	65	49	0.5%	-6.7%	-13.6%
Fishing days	thousand	69	70	67	61	66	56	59	53	53	*53*	53	52	62	1.2%	-11.9%	-23.0%
Energy consumption	million litre	374	393	474	372	372	370	399	399	349	325	330	*317*	*304*	1.4%	-13.8%	-11.8%
Live weight of landings	thousand tonn	694	777	695	728	725	721	697	596	714	715	690	*625*	*572*	-3.5%	-2.3%	-0.6%
Value of landings	million EUR	1,503	1,654	1,226	1,513	1,430	1,197	1,202	1,013	1,214	1,350	980	*919*	*887*	-27.4%	-26.3%	-34.8%
Gross value of landings	million EUR	1,306	1,461	1,267	1,277	1,333	1,243	1,159	986	1,179	1,255	1,061	*998*	*965*	-15.5%	-14.9%	-18.8%
Other income	million EUR	8	19	18	14	14	6	5	16	13	17	21	*21*	*20*	18.5%	59.4%	163.6%
Operating subsidies	million EUR	7.6	6.8	4.3	1.1	2.2	1.8	2.9	4.3	1.3	8.3	46.4	*46.0*	*44.8*	458.7%	1044.0%	507.1%
Income from leasing out quota	million EUR	1.1	0.8	0.9	0.4	0.8	0.8	1.1	1.0	1.2	1.8	0.0			-99.6%	-99.2%	-99.3%
Personnel costs	million EUR	224	218	238	234	276	270	258	257	266	247	202	*191*	*178*	-18.4%	-19.0%	-9.9%
Value of unpaid labour	million EUR	0.9	0.5	0.2	0.7	0.0	2.8	1.3	0.9	0.8	1.2	0.9	*0.9*	*0.8*	-21.1%	3.6%	10.8%
Energy costs	million EUR	286	276	245	164	176	199	202	145	186	334	260	*220*	*181*	-22.3%	17.5%	-9.1%
Repair & maintenance costs	million EUR	109	116	113	119	111	140	118	84	108	100	111	*105*	*100*	10.9%	-0.6%	2.0%
Other variable costs	million EUR	287	337	392	385	340	312	347	278	290	306	243	*238*	*231*	-20.4%	-25.7%	-15.2%
Other non-variable costs	million EUR	103	120	141	120	126	133	133	129	143	112	114	*108*	*103*	2.2%	-9.4%	10.9%
Consumption of fixed capital	million EUR	65	58	92	117	131	139	133	117	104	117	108	*97*	*90*	-7.9%	0.7%	65.9%
Lease/rental payments for quota	million EUR	0.9	1.2	4.4	3.7	4.5	2.8	3.3	4.8	7.3	1.5	0.0			-98.7%	-99.4%	-97.9%
Opportunity cost of capital	million EUR	17.7	21.4	23.8	23.8	21.8	21.6	24.5	25.8	23.0	24.8	21.8	*19.5*	*18.1*	-12.0%	-4.5%	22.9%
Value of physical capital	million EUR	506	611	679	679	622	617	699	738	657	707	622	*557*	*517*	-12.0%	-4.5%	22.9%
Value of quota and other fishing rights	million EUR	11	22	12	12	85	76	76	78	78	71	59			-16.8%	12.7%	441.7%
Investments	million EUR	16	27	44	32	36	54	74	35	100	25	10	*10*	*10*	-60.3%	-77.5%	-38.2%
Gross Value Added	million EUR	530	630	394	504	593	466	366	367	466	421	353	*348*	*369*	-16.0%	-25.4%	-33.3%
Net Value Added	million EUR	464	572	302	387	463	327	233	250	362	304	245	*252*	*279*	-19.2%	-33.0%	-47.2%
Gross profit	million EUR	305	411	156	269	318	193	106	109	199	172	151	*157*	*190*	-12.6%	-32.7%	-50.6%
Net profit	million EUR	222	332	40	128	165	33	-51	-34	72	31	21	*41*	*82*	-31.4%	-77.7%	-90.6%
GVA to revenue	%	40	43	31	39	44	37	31	37	39	33	33	*34*	*37*	-1.2%	-12.7%	-19.0%
Gross profit margin	%	23	28	12	21	24	15	9	11	17	14	14	*15*	*19*	2.8%	-19.6%	-40.0%
Net profit margin	%	17	22	3	10	12	3	-4	3	6	2	2	*4*	*8*	-19.3%	-71.5%	-88.5%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

2.3 Overview of the EU fishing fleet in 2023

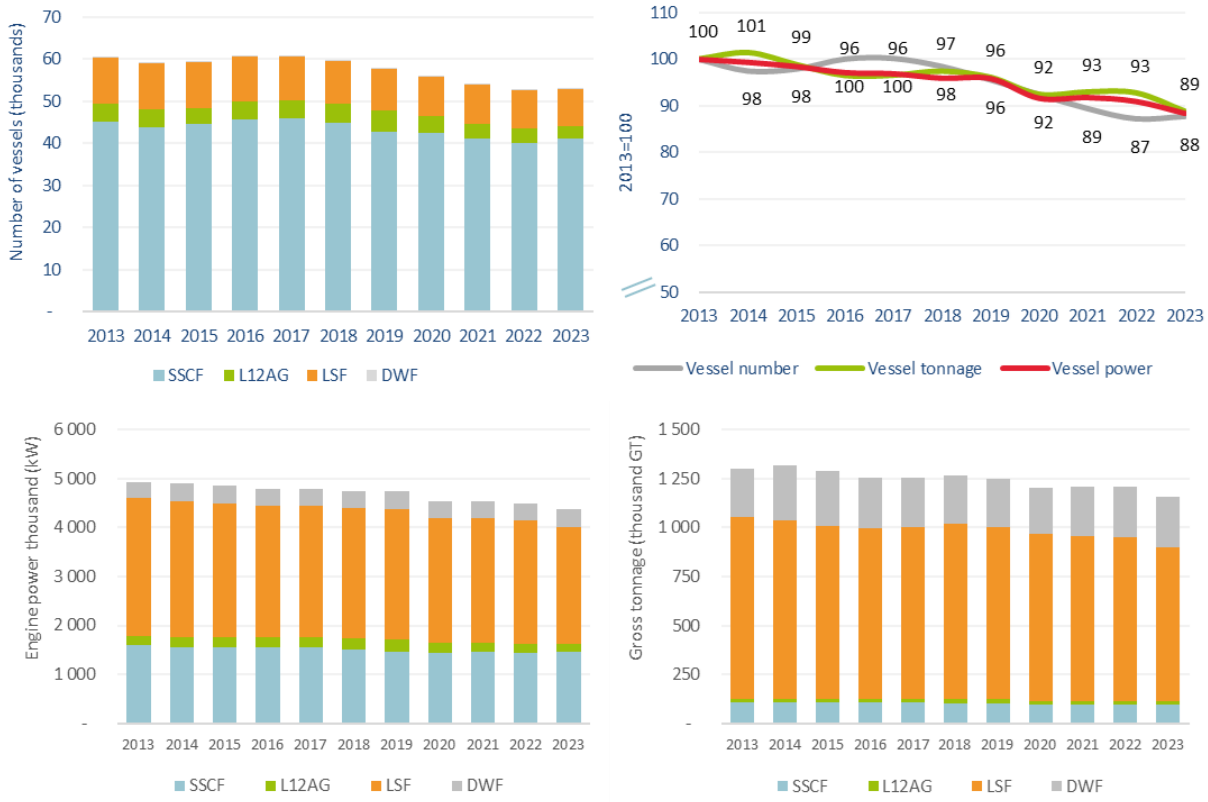
Fleet Capacity and structure

In 2023, the EU fleet comprised 70,280 vessels, representing a 1.6% decrease compared to 2022. Of these, 53,260 (76%) were active, showing an increase of 0.6% from 2022 (see Figure 2.3.1). The capacity of the EU fleet has seen a gradual decline on average from 2013 to 2023, with the number of active vessels consistently decreasing since 2018, amounting to a 12.3% reduction between 2013 and 2023. Compared to 2013, the fleet in 2023 experienced a decrease of 11.6% in kW and 11.3% in GT.

Greece held the largest fleet within the EU by total vessel count, accounting for 17.2% of the total, followed by Italy at 16.6%, and Spain at 12.4%. Belgium had the fewest vessels among Member States, with 65. The Spanish fleet possessed the highest GT at 24.8% of the total, while the French fleet excelled in engine power, comprising 18.7% of the total.

Considering only active vessels, Greece again maintained the largest fleet within the EU, with 20% of the total vessels, followed by Italy at 18.1% and Spain at 13.9%. Belgium had the smallest number of active vessels among Member States, with 58. The Spanish fleet had the largest share of GT at 26.3% of the total, whereas the French fleet led in engine power, contributing 19.6% of the total.

Figure 2.3.1. Trends and variations on capacity in number of vessels, gross tonnage and engine power (active fleet).

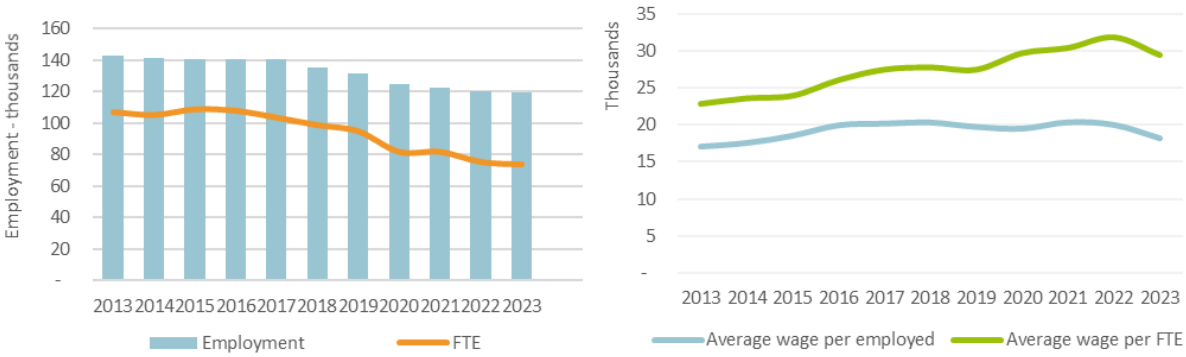


Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Employment and average personal costs

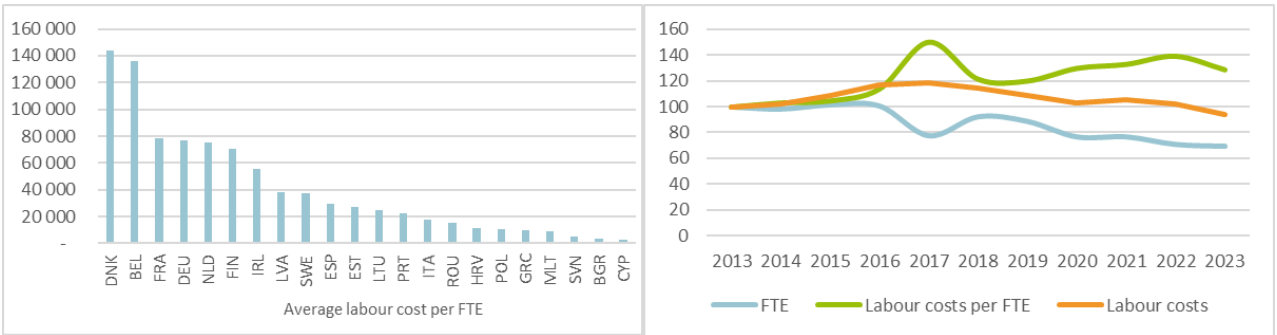
In 2023, there were 119,479 directly engaged fishers on the EU fishing fleet, equating to 73,974 FTEs. Total crew and FTEs decreased by 0.4% and 2.1%, respectively, from 2022. FTEs saw a total 31% decline over the period from 2013 to 2023. Personnel costs dropped by 8.6%, and average personnel cost per FTE fell by 7.5% compared to 2022, though it increased by nearly 29% from 2013. The Spanish, Italian, and Greek fleets employed the majority of the workforce, with Spain leading in both total and FTE employment. Average labour costs per FTE should be interpreted cautiously due to inconsistent data collection and calculation methods across Member States.

Figure 2.3.2. Trends on employment (in persons employed and FTE) and average labour cost per total employment and FTE**.**



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 2.3.3. Variation in employment and average wage (based on 2013=100); average wage per FTE by Member State.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

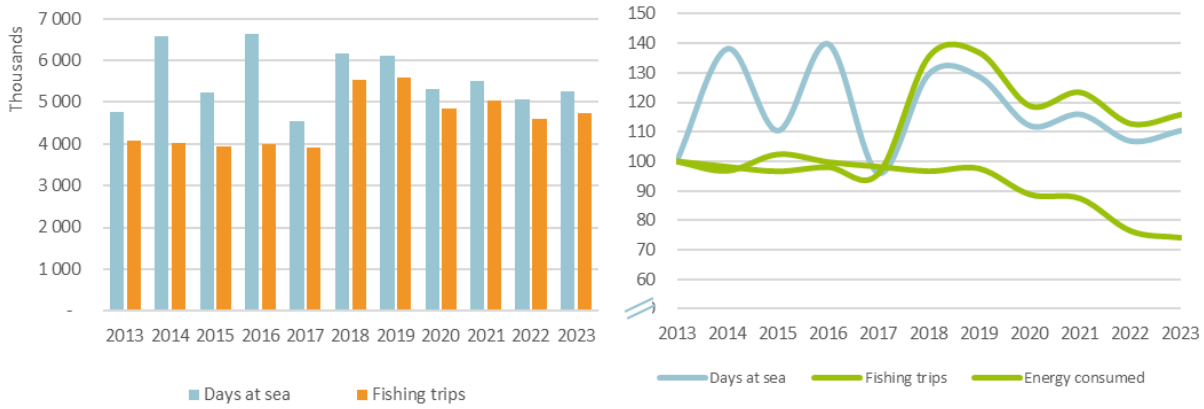
Fishing effort and fuel consumption

In 2023, the EU fishing fleet spent 5.247 million Days at Sea (DaS), a 3.4% increase from 2022, and used 1.56 billion litres of fuel. Each active vessel averaged 99 DaS and consumed 29,368 litres of fuel. While DaS per vessel rose by 2.8%, fuel

consumption per vessel fell by 3.6% compared to 2022. Since 2013, DaS per vessel increased by 26%, while fuel consumption decreased nearly equally.

Spain, France, Italy, and the Netherlands had the highest energy consumption, accounting for 29%, 18.4%, 12.7%, and 7.7% of the EU total, respectively. Greece (28.9%), Italy (19.4%), Spain (15.1%), and France (9.9%) made up over three-quarters of total sea days in the EU, with seven Member States contributing nearly 90% of DaS.

Figure 2.3.4. Trends and variations on fishing effort and fuel consumption (based on 2013=100).



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

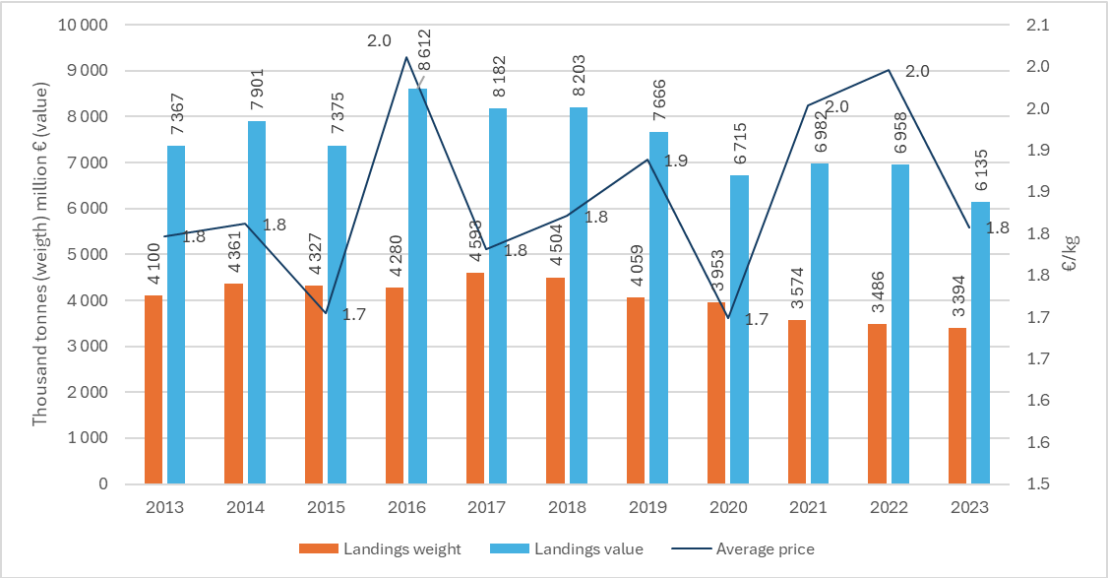
Landings

In 2023, the EU fleet landed 3.39 million tonnes of seafood, a 2.6% decrease from 2022. The value of these landings was EUR 6.1 billion, down 11.8% from the previous year (see Figure 2.3.5).

Changes in landed weight and value between 2013 and 2023 have shown that increased landings often lead to lower average prices and vice-versa. External factors such as COVID-19 and BREXIT have influenced these trends. The average price per kilo remained stable until 2019 but has risen since 2020, fluctuating between 2 euro/kg in 2022 and 1.81 euro/kg in 2023. The 2023 price is similar to 2018 levels but lower than in 2022, indicating challenges in adjusting selling prices to high inflation rates in the EU (see Figure 2.3.5).

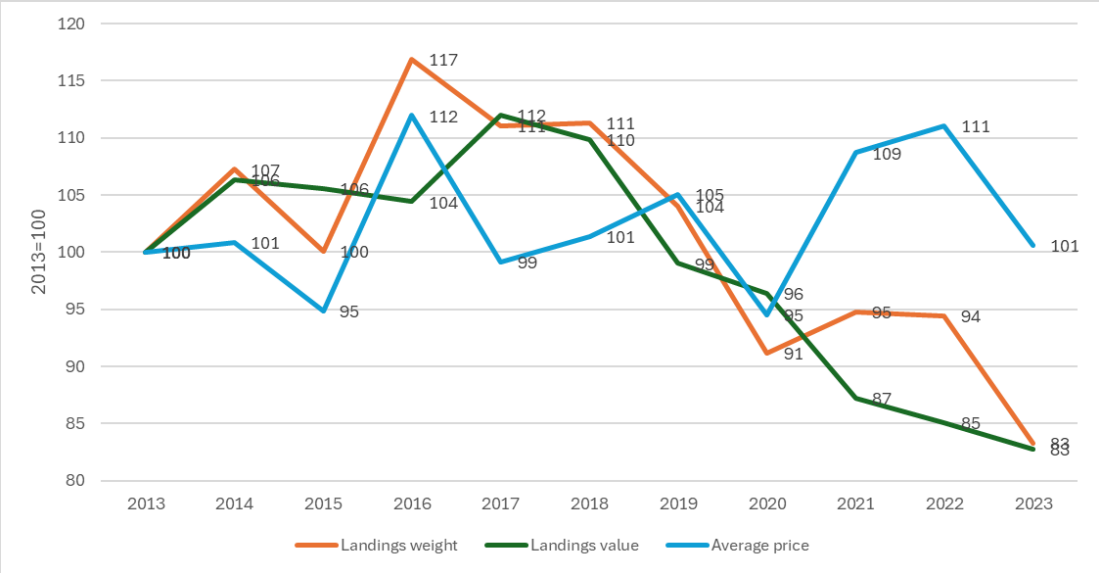
In 2023, Spain's fleet contributed 29.6% of the total landed value (23.1% in weight), followed by France (21.1% in value, 15.1% in weight), Italy (10.5% in value, 3.8% in weight), and Denmark (6.7% in value, 4.7% in weight).

Figure 2.3.5. Trends on landings in weight and value and average landed price.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 2.3.6. Variations on landings in weight and value and average landed price (based on 2013=100).

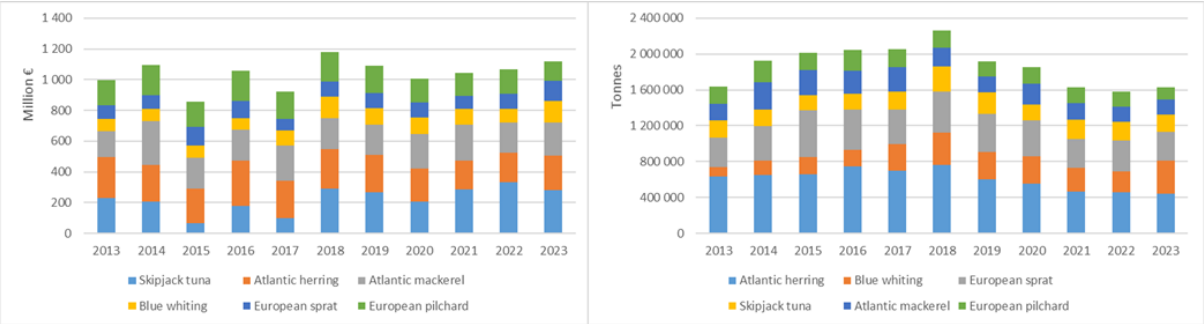


Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Top species and average landed prices

In 2023, the EU fleet's most landed species by weight were Atlantic herring (437,954 tonnes), blue whiting (373,910 tonnes), European sprat (318,350 tonnes), skipjack (192,067 tonnes), Atlantic mackerel (167,085 tonnes), and sandeels (148,191 tonnes). These six species made up about 47% of the total volume landed by EU vessels.

Figure 2.3.7. Trends for the top six species landed in weight and in value.



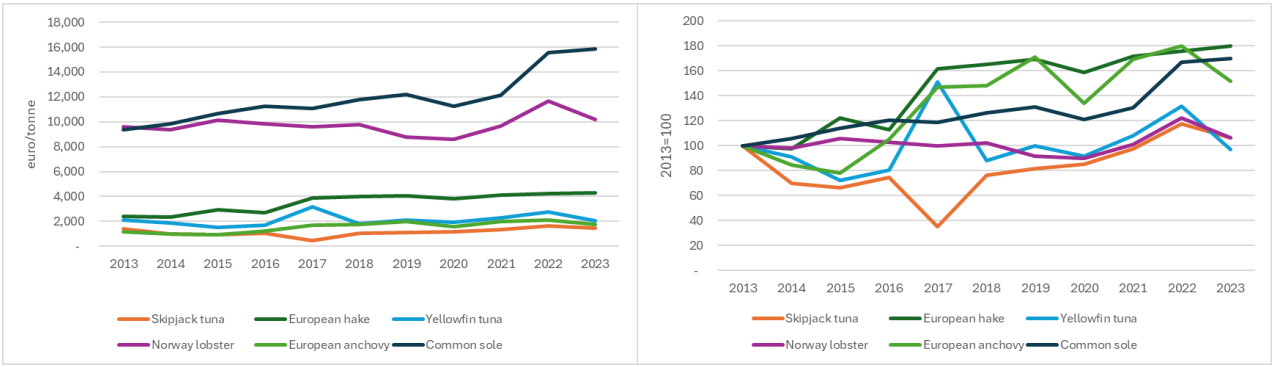
Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

European hake accounted for the highest total value of landings, EUR 324 million, followed by skipjack tuna (EUR 280 million), Atlantic herring (EUR 223 million), Atlantic mackerel (EUR 219 million), Norway lobster (EUR 198 million), and yellowfin tuna (EUR 195 million). These six species made up 23% of the total value landed by EU vessels.

Only blue whiting increased in weight between 2022 and 2023 (+59%), while the others decreased. Overall, landings for the top six species in weight grew by 9%, driven by blue whiting.

In 2023, average prices for all top six species, except European hake and common sole, decreased compared to 2022 (see Figure 2.3.8).

Figure 2.3.8. Average landed and variations in price (2013=100) of the top species landed in weight and/or value.



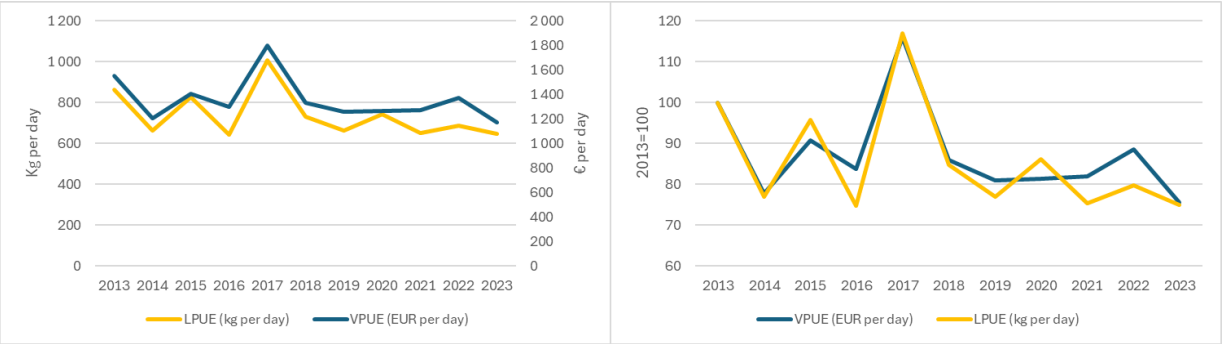
Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Landings per unit of effort

Landings weight and value per DaS serve as proxies for LPUE and VPUE but should be viewed cautiously due to lack of effort standardisation. Variations can stem from factors like season, location, fishing methods, or management changes.

In 2023, LPUE was 647 kg/DaS and VPUE was 1,169 euro/DaS, showing decreases of 5.8% and 14.7% compared to 2022. Compared to 2013, these indicators dropped by 25% (see Figure 2.3.9).

Figure 2.3.9. Trends and variations on landings per unit of effort (days-at-sea) by weight (LPUE) and value (VPUE) (based on 2013=100).



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Income and costs

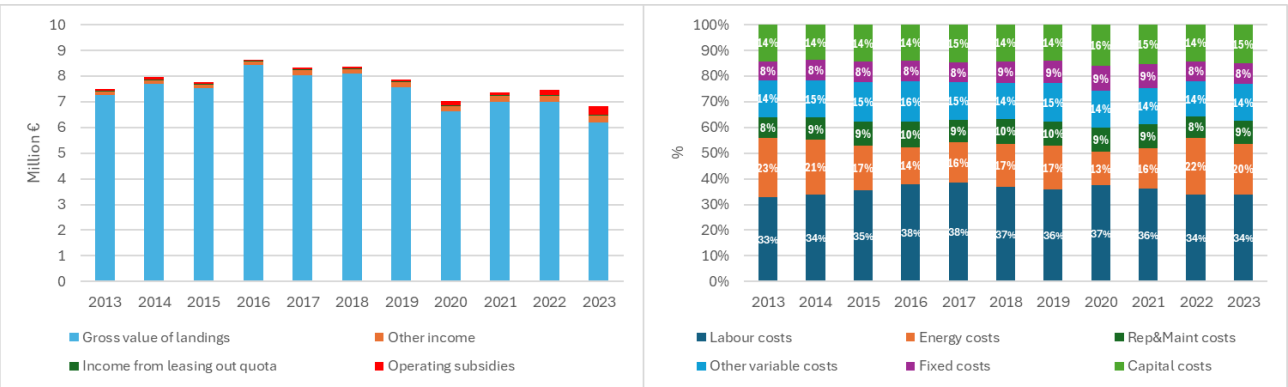
In 2023, the EU fishing fleet generated EUR 6.46 billion in revenue, a 10.6% drop from 2022 and a 12% decrease from 2013. Total costs were EUR 6.26 billion, or 97% of the revenue (see Figure 2.3.10).

Revenue sources included EUR 6.19 billion from fish sales and EUR 0.272 billion from non-fishing income. The fleet received EUR 344 million in operating subsidies (up 64% from 2022) and EUR 25 million from leasing quotas (see Figure 2.3.10).

Operating costs totaled EUR 5.4 billion (87% of total costs), with personnel costs at EUR 2.18 billion (40%), energy costs at EUR 1.26 billion (23%), and other variable costs at EUR 904 million (17%). Energy costs dropped by 19% compared to 2022. Production-related costs were EUR 1.09 billion, including EUR 578 million for repairs and maintenance and EUR 518 million in other non-variable costs.

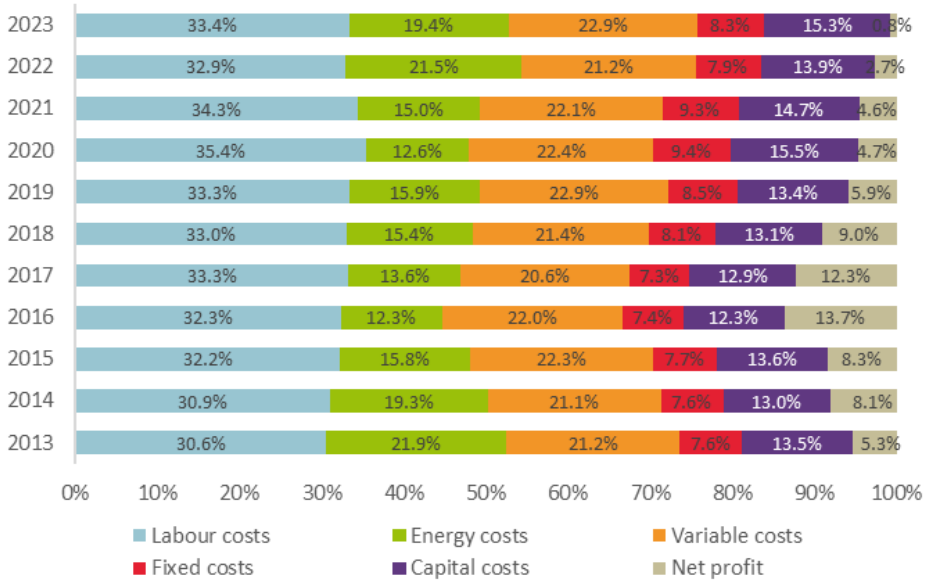
Revenue remained steady from 2013 to 2017, around EUR 7.3 billion, then decreased in 2019 and 2020. In 2023, revenue was down 10.6% from 2022. Total costs followed revenue trends, staying around EUR 6.5 billion from 2013 to 2019, dropping by 10% in 2020, then reaching EUR 6.1 billion in 2023 – a 10% decrease mainly due to lower energy costs.

Figure 2.3.10. Trends on main income and costs items.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

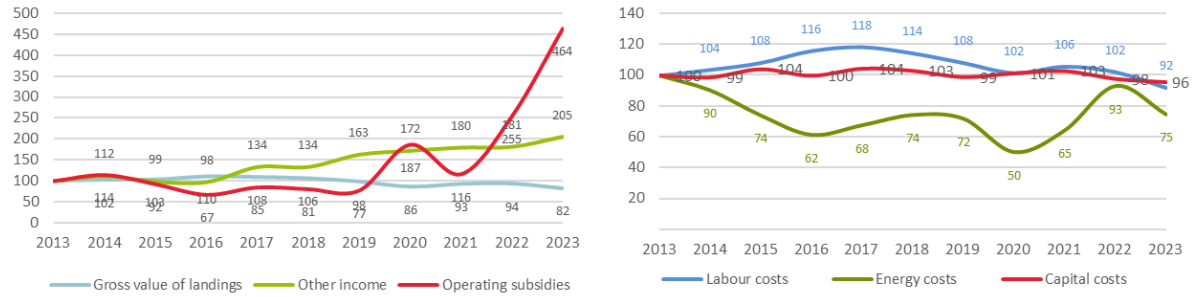
Figure 2.3.11. Trends on costs as a percentage of revenue



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

From 2013 to 2023, personnel costs made up 34-37% of total costs annually, energy costs accounted for 13-20%, and other variable costs contributed 14% (see Figure 2.3.12). Spain generated EUR 1.83 billion, 28% of the EU fleet revenue, while France generated EUR 1.36 billion, 21%, and Italy EUR 662 million, 10%.

Figure 2.3.12. Variations on main income and costs items (based on 2013=100)



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

From 2013 to 2023, average fuel prices varied significantly. Prices dropped from 2013, hit a low in 2016, then rose steadily from 2017. They fell sharply in 2020, stayed low until mid-2021, and then increased again. Fuel costs, a major part of the EU fleet's operational expenses, heavily affect its profitability. Energy costs were 13.4% of revenue in 2020, compared to almost 24% in 2022, similar to 2013 levels. In 2023, energy costs decreased by 19% compared to 2022 and nearly 27% compared to 2013, aligning with the 2013-2022 average.

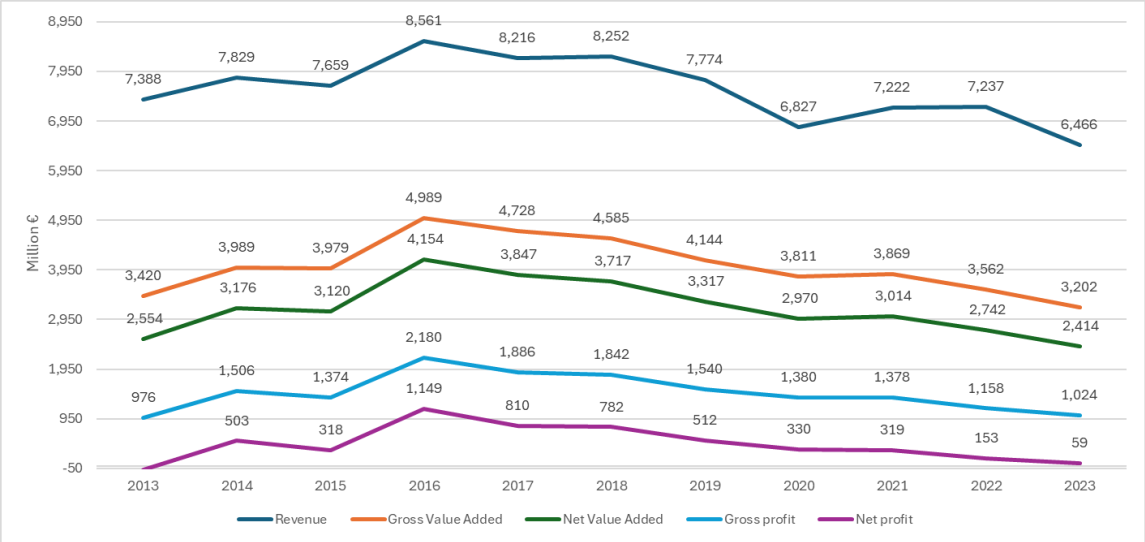
2.4 Economic Performance Indicators

Situation in 2023

In 2023, the EU fishing fleet generated a GVA of EUR 3.202 billion, representing a 10.1% decrease from 2022. The gross profit for the same period was recorded at EUR 1.024 billion, showing an 11.6% decline, and the net profit, excluding subsidies and fishing rights, stood at EUR 59 million, marking a significant reduction of 61%. These trends are illustrated in Figure 2.4.1.

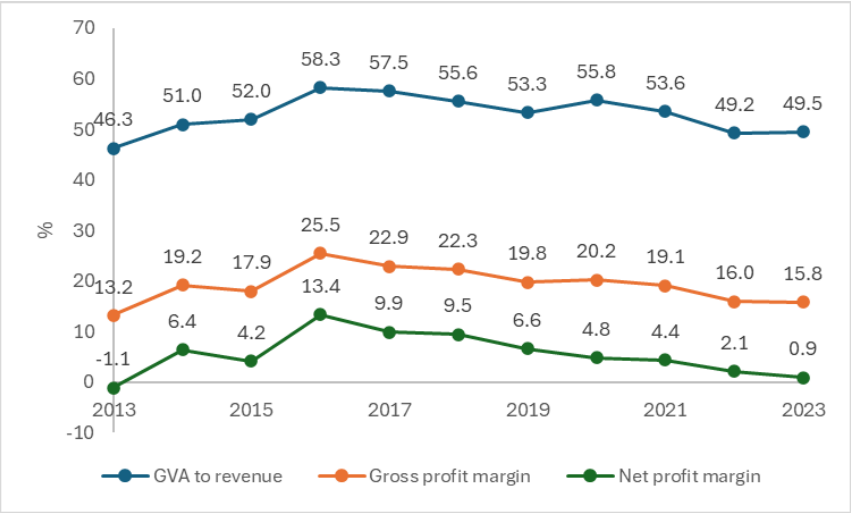
In relative terms, the GVA to revenue ratio was 50%. The proportion of revenue retained as gross profit, after deducting capital costs, was 16%, and the net profit margin was established at 1%. It is important to note that the methodology applied to calculate capital values can significantly influence the presented net results, which should therefore be interpreted with caution. As shown in Figures 2.4.1 and 2.4.2, the results indicate a continuous decreasing trend from 2016 to 2023, with a slight increase observed in 2021.

Figure 2.4.1. Trends on revenue and profit for the EU active fleet



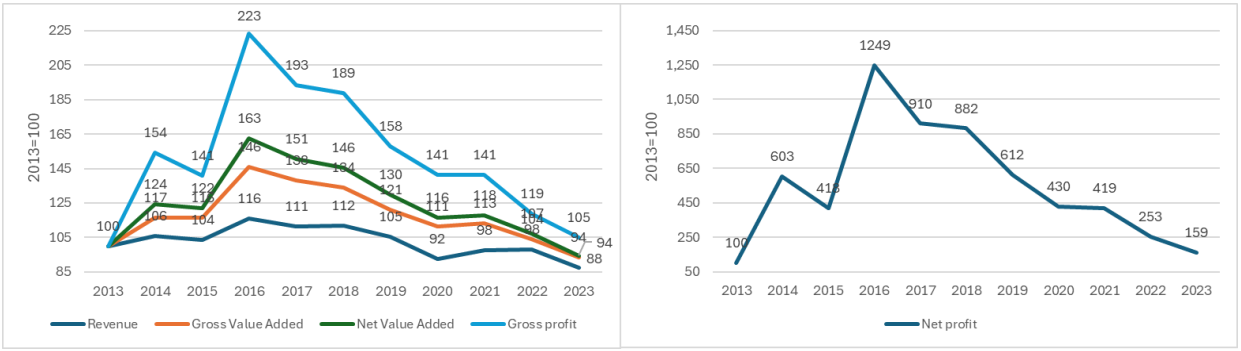
Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 2.4.2. Trends on revenue and profit margins for the EU active fleet.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 2.4.3. Variations on revenue and profits for the EU active fleet (based on 2013=100).



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

An analysis of the 2023 economic performance by Member State showed varied results. No Member State experienced gross losses, while 11 had net losses (Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Netherlands, and Poland). The methodology used to calculate capital values can significantly affect the net results presented.

The Spanish fleet generated the highest revenue of the total EU fleet (EUR 1.83 billion, -15% compared to 2022), GVA (EUR 0.84 billion, -21% compared to 2022), gross profit (EUR 215 million, -35%), and net profit (EUR 82 million, -57%).

The French fleet generated approximately EUR 1.36 billion (-11%) in revenue and EUR 660 million in GVA (-13%), followed by the Italian fleet, with EUR 662 million (-18%) in revenue and EUR 382 million in GVA (-19%).

Gross profit margins vary between Member States, from 6.3% (Netherlands) to 68% (Slovenia).

Capital value and investments

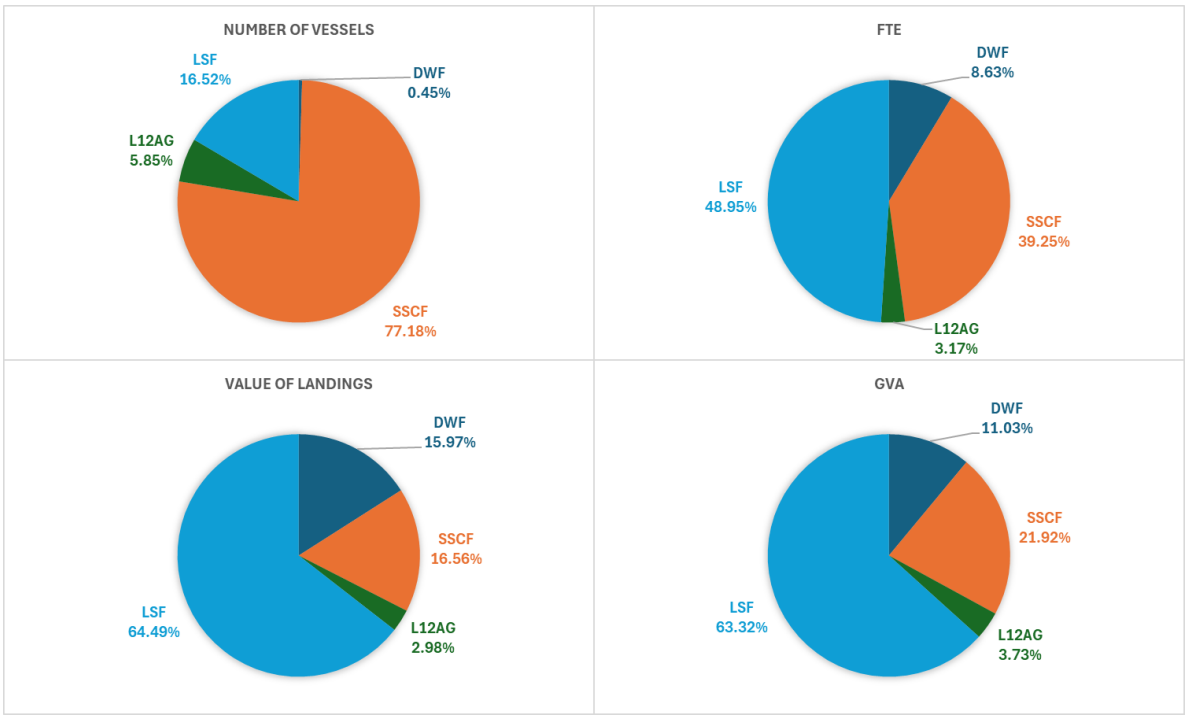
In 2023, the EU fleet had an estimated fixed capital consumption of EUR 788 million for active vessels. In-year investments totaled EUR 630 million, representing a 53% decrease compared to 2022. This notable decline is primarily attributed to the substantial increase in investment in the Danish fishing fleet in 2022 (+328% compared to 2021), which saw a reduction of 68% in 2023, though it still ranked as the second highest investment in the time series for the Danish fleet. The French fleet recorded the highest consumption of fixed capital value, amounting to approximately EUR 159 million in 2023, followed by Denmark (EUR 153 million), Italy (EUR 135 million), and Spain (EUR 114 million). Given the varied methodologies employed, such as the Perpetual Inventory Method (PIM) or alternative approaches, caution should be exercised when comparing economic results among Member States.

Share of main indicators among fishing activities

SSCF constitutes 77% of the EU's total number of active vessels, 39% of the FTEs, 22% of the GVA, and 17% of the gross value of landings.

L12AG constitutes 6% of the EU's total number of active vessels, 3% of the FTEs, 4% of the GVA, and 3% of the gross value of landings.

Figure 2.4.4. Share of number of vessels, FTE, value of landings and gross value added (GVA) among fishing activities.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

LSF accounts for 17% of the EU's total number of active vessels, 49% of the FTEs, 63% of the GVA, and 64% of the gross value of landings.

DWF encompasses 0.45% of the EU's total number of active vessels, 9% of the FTEs, 11% of the GVA, and 16% of the gross value of landings.

Operating subsidies

Operating subsidies are direct payments made by the general government or EU institutions to resident producers. In the context of fishing fleet data collection, these subsidies refer to direct payments/transfers related to vessel activity, excluding fuel tax refunds, subsidies for the permanent cessation of fishing activities, and investment subsidies (fleet modernization).

In 2023, the EU fleet received EUR 344 million in operating subsidies, marking a 64% increase from 2022 and a 340% increase from 2013. The increase in operating subsidies was primarily driven by various support payments introduced in response to the fuel crisis triggered by the war in Ukraine, as well as compensation for lost fishing opportunities resulting from Brexit. Operating subsidies are recorded in the reference year in which they are actually disbursed, which may lead to a time lag between the triggering event and the corresponding payment.

By fishing activity, the LSF received 73% of the subsidies, followed by the DWF with 13%, the SSCF with 11%, and L12AG with 3%.

Considering GVA as the GDP contribution, the ratio of operating subsidies to GVA by fishing activity was 13% for the DWF, 12% for the LSF, 8% for the L12AG, and 5% for the SSCF.

Furthermore, the DWF contributed 11% of the total GVA and 9% of the total FTEs while receiving 13% of the operating subsidies. The LSF contributed 63% of the total GVA and 46% of the total FTEs and received 73% of the operating subsidies. The L12AG contributed 4% of the total GVA and 3% of the total FTEs, receiving 3% of the operating subsidies. Lastly, the SSCF contributed 22% of the total GVA and 39% of the total FTEs while receiving 11% of the operating subsidies.

2.5 Labour and capital productivity

In 2023, the labour productivity (GVA/FTE) of the EU fishing fleets is estimated at EUR 43,289. The Danish fleet reports the highest level of productivity (EUR 364,758), followed by the Belgian fleet (EUR 178,666) and the German fleet (EUR 116,330). Labour productivity has increased by 35% since 2013. However, there is an observed decrease of 8.2% in 2023 compared to 2022 (Figure 2.5.1).

Capital productivity, measured as the Return on Fixed Tangible Assets (RoFTA), was estimated at 4.7% for the EU fishing fleets in 2023. This represents a significant decline of 27% compared to 2022 and the 2013-2022 average (12%), although it remains higher than the 2013 level (2%).

Labour and capital productivity by scale of fishing activity

Labour productivity (GVA/FTE) in the SSCF was estimated at EUR 24,175. This is a value -2.2% lower than in 2022, although an increase if we compare it with the 2018 situation (+13%)[1].

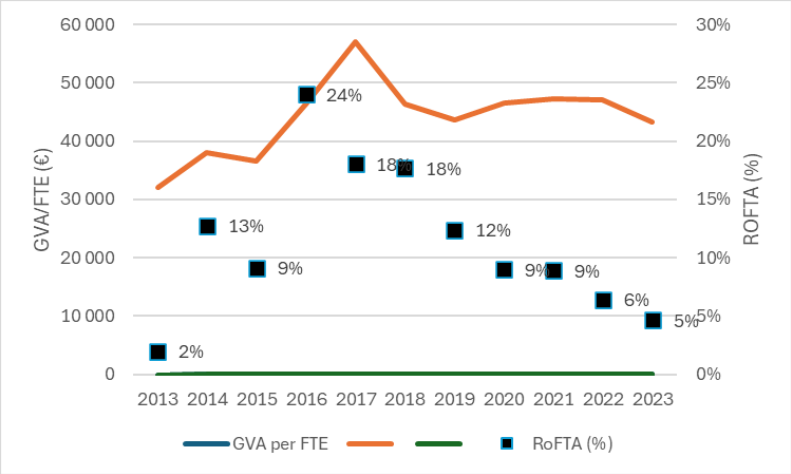
Labour productivity in the L12AG is estimated at EUR 50,997, similar to the previous year (-1.2%), although an increase if we compare it with the 2013 situation (+84%).

Labour productivity in the LSF is estimated at EUR 55,991, reduced compared to the previous year (-11.1%), although an increase if we compare it with the 2013 situation (+18.3%).

Labour productivity in the DWF is estimated at EUR 55,308 reduced compared to the previous year (-3.4%) and also when compared to the 2013 year (-33%).

Capital productivity of the LSF (RoFTA) was reduced from 5.4% in 2022 to 1.4% in 2023. For the case of the DWF this reduction was lower, from 7.8% in 2022 to 6.9% in 2023. This reduction is also observed in a longer perspective (compared to 2013) although magnified for the case of the DWF (-85%).

Figure 2.5.1. Trends on labour (GVA per FTE) and capital productivity (RoFTA) for the EU fleet.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

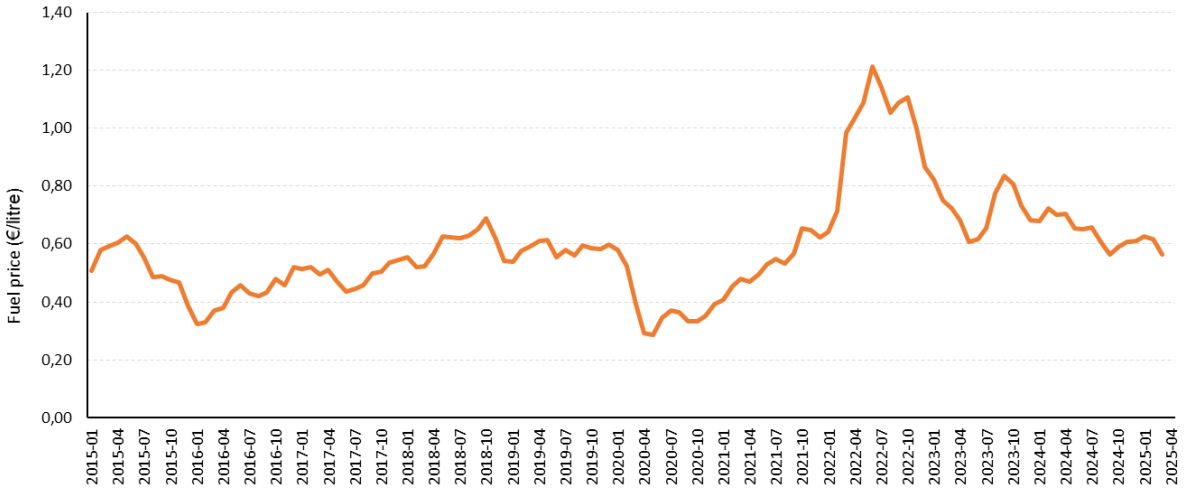
2.6 Energy prices

Marine fuel oil prices have shown fluctuations over the years. From 2015 until the end of 2019, prices ranged between 0.51 euro/litre and 0.60 euro/litre (in real terms). In the spring of 2020, prices reached a 10-year low at 0.28 euro/litre. However, from October 2020, the fuel price began to increase steadily, reaching 1.21 euro/litre by June 2022, a level not previously observed in the time series. Since then, the real price has gradually decreased. In 2023, the average value was 0.72 euro/litre, which was above the average value for the period from 2015 to 2025 (0.59 euro/litre). In

[1] Note that for the case of SSCF and L12AG, long-term comparisons are made using 2018 as a reference year (see Section 2.7).

2024, the average price declined to 0.65 euro/litre, while the first three months of 2025 showed an average price of 0.60 euro/litre (see Figure 2.6.1).

Figure 2.6.1. Fluctuations of the average marine fuel oil prices (in euro) for EU.



Source: EUMOFA database.

In 2023, the average energy costs per DaS for the total EU fleet amounted to EUR 241, representing a 21.8% decline compared to 2022. This reduction was partly influenced by the decrease in the average fuel price, which fell from 0.97 euro/litre in 2022 to 0.81 euro/litre in 2023.

The total average fuel consumption was approximately 298 litres per DaS in 2023, reflecting a 6.2% decrease from 2022 and continuing the downward trend observed in recent years. The total average fuel consumption per landed tonne was 460 litres in 2023, a slight decrease of 0.4% compared to 2022.

There were significant differences in the average fuel price per litre based on fishing activity. Both DWF and LSF had an average price of 0.79 euro/litre, whereas smaller vessel segments experienced higher prices, specifically 0.87 euro/litre per litre for the LD12AG segment and 0.99 euro/litre for the SSCF.

The SSCF accounted for 8% of the EU's total fuel consumption of 1.564 billion litres, resulting in 6% of the total landings by weight and 17% by value. The LD12AG segment consumed 2% of the total energy, achieving 2% of the landings by weight and 3% by value. The LSF segment was responsible for 69% of the EU's total energy consumption, corresponding to 71% of the landings by weight and 64% by value. The DWF segment consumed 21% of the total energy, leading to 20% of the landings by weight and 16% by value.

2.7 EU Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

2.7.1 Introduction

This section summarizes the key findings for the EU SSCF by major fishing region. The NAFO area is excluded as there are no EU small-scale vessels operating there. The analysis considers French Guiana, Guadeloupe, the Canary Islands, Madeira, the Azores, Martinique, la Réunion, and Mayotte. The trend analyses cover 2018-2023, the period for which complete data, including Greek data, is available.

Table 2.7.1. EU SSCF at a glance.

SSCF		2023	%Δ 2023-2022
Indicator	Units	SSCF	SSCF
Active vessels	Number	41,106	2%
FTE	Number	29,033	-1%
Gross Value of landings	Million €	1,016.0	-4%
GVA	Million €	701.9	-3%
Gross profit	Million €	225.8	21%
Net profit	Million €	93.1	130%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Main characteristics of Small-scale coastal vessels

- Typical multi-gear and multi-species fleet. The most commonly used gears are trammel nets and set gillnets, followed by pots, set longline and hand lines.
- Area of operation closest to landing points, usually operating within 12 miles.
- The vessels are usually owned by small families or one individual.
- Several associations and cooperatives of small-scale fishers aim to improve their strength in the supply chain.
- Use of multiple fishing gears by the same vessel.
- Represents the most significant part of the EU fleet in terms of number of vessels.
- SSCF generally increases production price more than the LSF, with potentially large gaps between prices at first sale. These differences can be due to quality linked to freshness, size grade, and shorter fish supply chain.
- The small-scale coastal fleet supports coastal communities, providing employment opportunities and contributing to local economies. These fishers have cultural and social ties to their communities, passing down traditional fishing knowledge through generations.
- Many small-scale coastal fishers practice sustainable fishing to preserve fish stocks and maintain ecological balance in coastal areas. They often use selective fishing techniques, avoid overfished species, and minimize bycatch (unintended catch of non-target species).

2.7.2 Key findings for 2023 and recent trends

In 2023, the EU small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF) comprised 41,106 vessels, accounting for 77% of the active fleet. These vessels contributed to 16.6% of the value and 6.4% of the weight of all EU landings. Despite representing 77% of the

fleet, SSCF vessels made up only 8.4% in terms of GTs. Landings in value decreased by 3.5% from 2022 and 18% from 2018. Vessel tonnage and power declined between 2018-2023 by 7% and 3.9%, respectively (Figure 2.7.1).

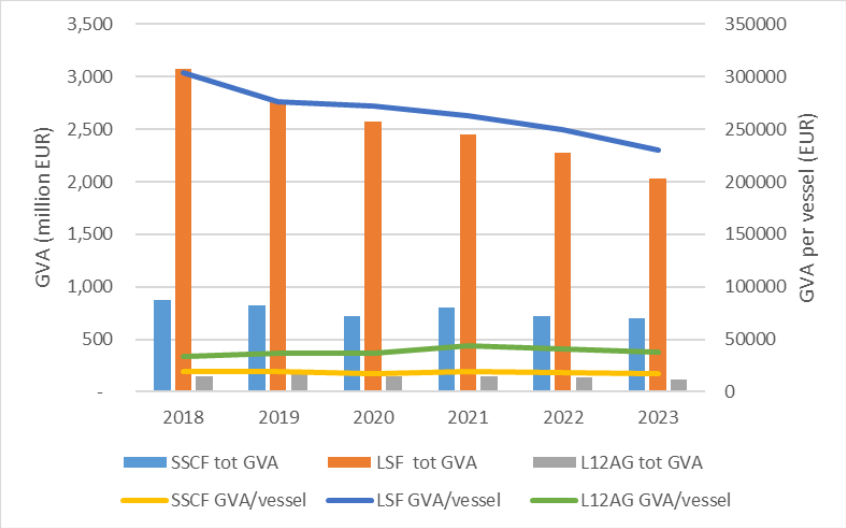
Employment and labour costs

In 2023, the SSCF employed 61,138 fishers (51% of the total EU crew) and had 29,033 FTEs (31% of all FTEs). Employment decreased by 9%, and FTEs dropped by 29% compared to 2018. Personnel costs were EUR 333 million, and unpaid labour costs were EUR 143 million in 2023. Total labour costs decreased by 20% from 2022 and 11% from 2018, driven largely by a sharp reduction in unpaid labour costs (-15% from 2022 and -41% from 2018). However, personnel costs per FTE increased by 34% from 2018 but decreased by 9% from 2022.

Economic performance

In 2023, GVA for SSCF was EUR 702 million, down 3% from 2022 and 19% from 2018. However, GVA per FTE fell by only 2% compared to 2022 but increased by 13% over the long term.

Figure 2.7.1. Trends of GVA and GVA per vessel for the SSCF, L12AG and LSF.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

When considering the GVA per vessel, SSCF shows a declining trend. It started at approximately EUR 19,330 per vessel in 2018, decreased to around EUR 18,053 in 2022, and further reduced to EUR 17,075 in 2023, representing a -5.4% reduction compared to 2022.

Fishers in SSCF are predominantly self-employed. The owner returns include compensation for labor as well as returns from the capital invested (such as the vessel and other physical capital) in the fishing activity. Net value added (NVA) demonstrates the remaining funds for fishers after covering all expenses (including consumption of fixed capital). The average NVA per FTE across all regions in 2023 was EUR 20,475, which is similar to the value obtained in 2022 but marks an increase of approximately +12% compared to EUR 18,233 obtained in 2018.

The term "other income" in the context of small-scale EU fishing fleets refers to additional revenue sources beyond primary fishing activities. These fleets engage in various non-fishing activities to supplement their earnings. Common examples include diversification activities such as ecotourism, recreational fishing charters, and support activities for aquaculture plants. Small-scale fleets may also receive financial support through grants, subsidies, or assistance programs aimed at promoting sustainable fishing practices, fleet modernization, or capacity building. Additionally, these fleets may participate in scientific research projects or offer consultancy services related to fisheries management, marine conservation, or environmental impact assessments, thereby generating income. Providing training and educational programs for aspiring fishers, fishery technicians, or marine conservationists represents another avenue for earning income by leveraging the fleet's knowledge and expertise. These various sources of other income highlight the adaptive and entrepreneurial nature of small-scale EU fishing fleets, enabling them to diversify their revenue streams beyond traditional fishing activities. This diversification contributes to their economic resilience and sustainability in the face of changing market conditions and regulatory frameworks.

In 2023, other income for SSCF was estimated at EUR 83 million, constituting 7.3% of total income. This figure represents a 2.7% increase compared to the EUR 81 million attained in 2022. However, when compared to 2018, the 2023 value is 72% higher. In relative terms, other income represented 3.6% of total income in 2018, which is considerably lower than the aforementioned 7.3% in 2023.

Operating subsidies support small-scale fishing fleets by promoting sustainable practices, fleet modernization, and capacity building. These subsidies may correlate with other income as they can fund diversification, research, or training.

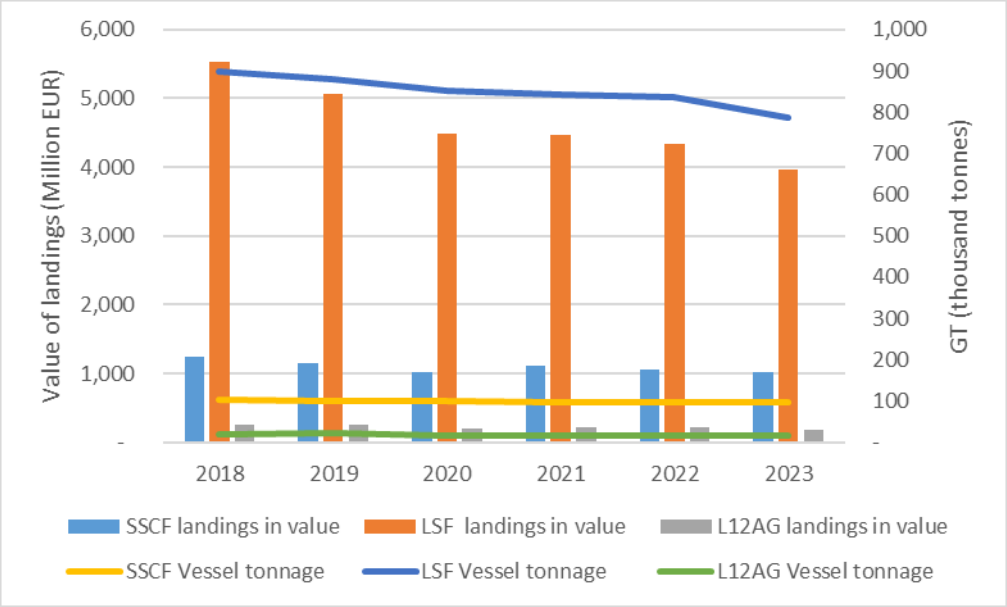
In 2023, subsidies for SSCF were estimated at EUR 38 million (3.3% of total income), down 15% from EUR 45 million in 2022. Compared to 2018, this amount is 94% higher. In 2018, other income was only 1.5% of total income, much lower than 3.3% in 2023. It's important to note there can be a delay between starting the administrative process and receiving the subsidies.

2.7.3 SSCF at regional level

Landings value

While SSCF, L12AG, and LSF have seen declines in landing values, LSF's drop is more significant. However, SSCF and L12AG have maintained vessel tonnage, whereas LSF's has reduced significantly, suggesting small-scale fisheries are maintaining fleets through sustainable or niche markets. In contrast, LSF's fleet reduction may be due to sustainability efforts and lower efficiency. LSF reflects the industrial sector's approach with large vessels targeting various species over extensive areas, while SSCF focuses on local, specialized, and often more sustainable practices.

Figure 2.7.2. Trends on the landings in value and vessel tonnage for the SSCF, L12AG and LSF.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

The value of landings in the SSCF varied by region from 2018 to 2023. The Mediterranean region significantly influences the value of landings, accounting for 41% of the total value. The SWW are the second most significant region, responsible for 31% of the SSCF landings' value. Although there were some declines, the overall trend has remained stable, indicating sustained importance in SSCF's overall performance.

The Baltic region experienced a general decline in landings value from 2018 to 2022, with a slight increase in 2023. Its share in the total value remains modest at 3.9% in 2023, showing some resilience but limited recovery.

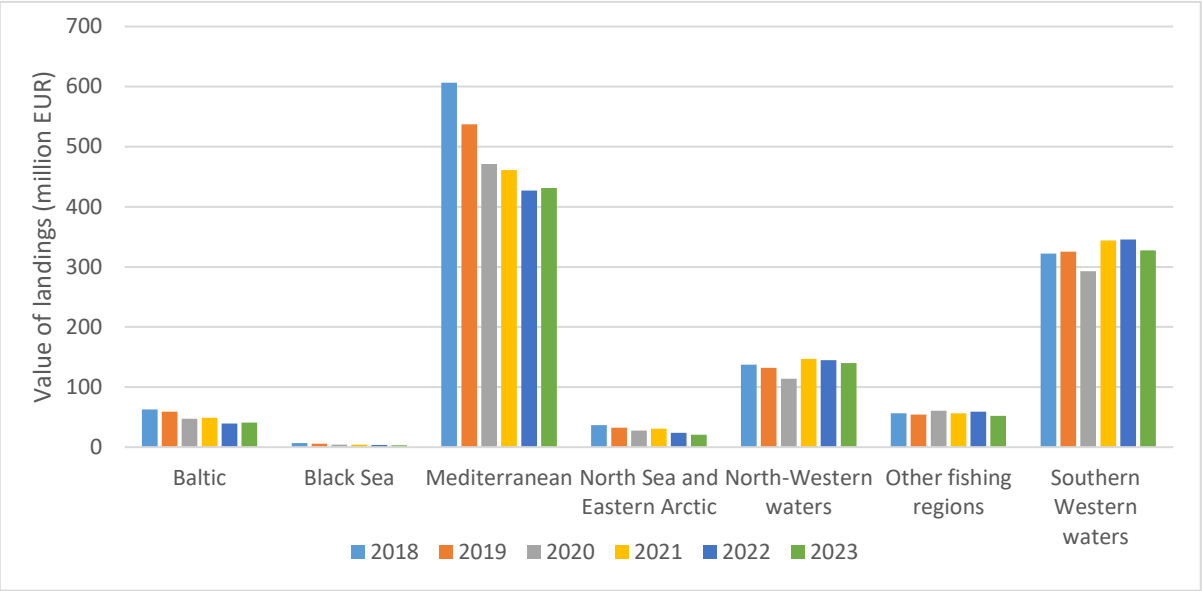
The Black Sea saw a continuous drop in landings value, reaching its lowest point in 2023 with 0.3% of the total. This decrease may be due to factors such as overfishing, environmental challenges, or reduced demand.

The NSEA region has experienced a consistent decline in landings value, with a notable decrease in 2023. Its contribution to the total value remains minimal at 2.0%, highlighting persistent challenges in this area.

NWW have shown significant fluctuations, particularly in 2021, which saw a sharp increase in value. Values stabilized in the following years, contributing approximately 13.4% to the total landings value in 2023. This region achieved the highest value of landings per vessel, around EUR 88,000 per year, followed by SSCF vessels operating in SWW with EUR 50,000 (see Figure 2.7.4).

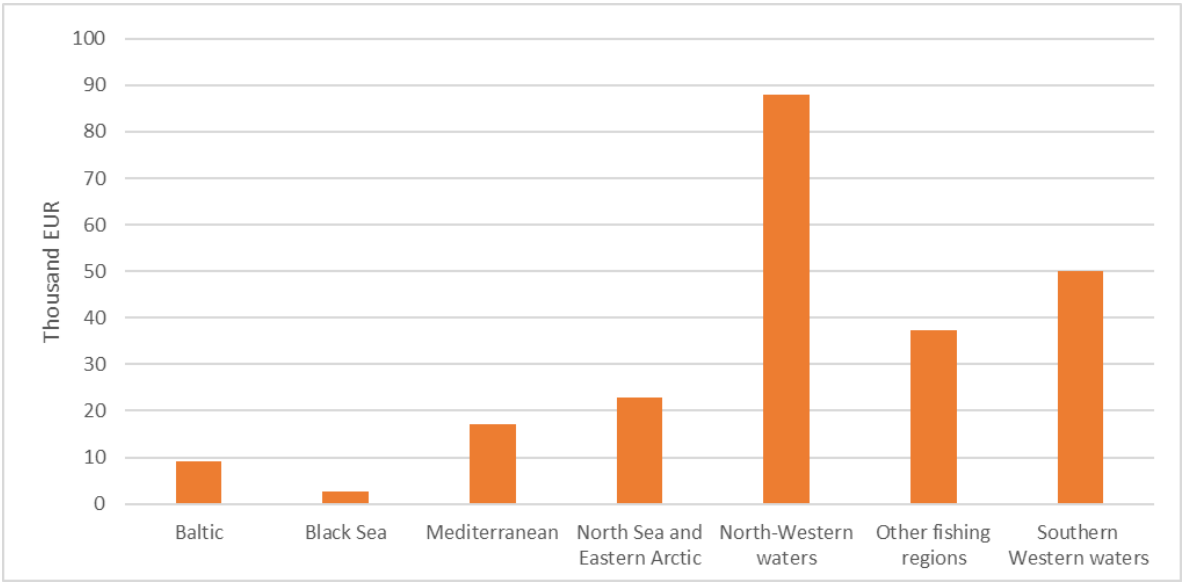
Other Fishing Regions have exhibited fluctuating landings values but continue to be relatively small contributors to the overall value at 5.0%. The slight drop in 2023 may reflect regional volatility or market conditions.

Figure 2.7.3. Trends on landings in value for the SSCF by main fishing region.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 2.7.4. Trends on landings in value per vessel for the SSCF by main fishing region.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

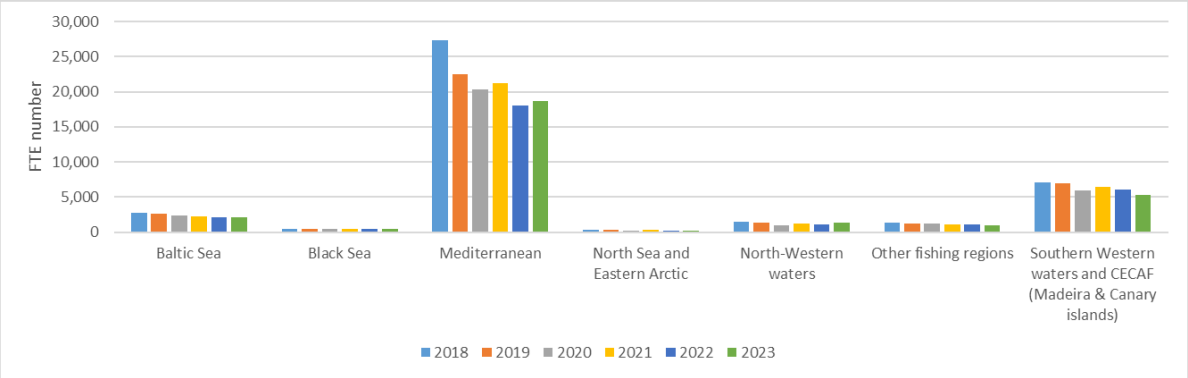
Employment and labour costs

The Mediterranean region has the highest number of FTEs, followed by the SWW and Baltic regions. In contrast, the Baltic and Mediterranean regions saw the largest reductions in FTEs among all EU regions between 2018 and 2023, with decreases of 14% and 13%, respectively (see Figure 2.7.5).

In 2023, the annual average labour cost per FTE in the SSCF was around EUR 25,000, a 10% decrease from 2022. The highest costs were in NSEA (EUR 49,224) and NWW (EUR 47,139), while the lowest were in the Black Sea

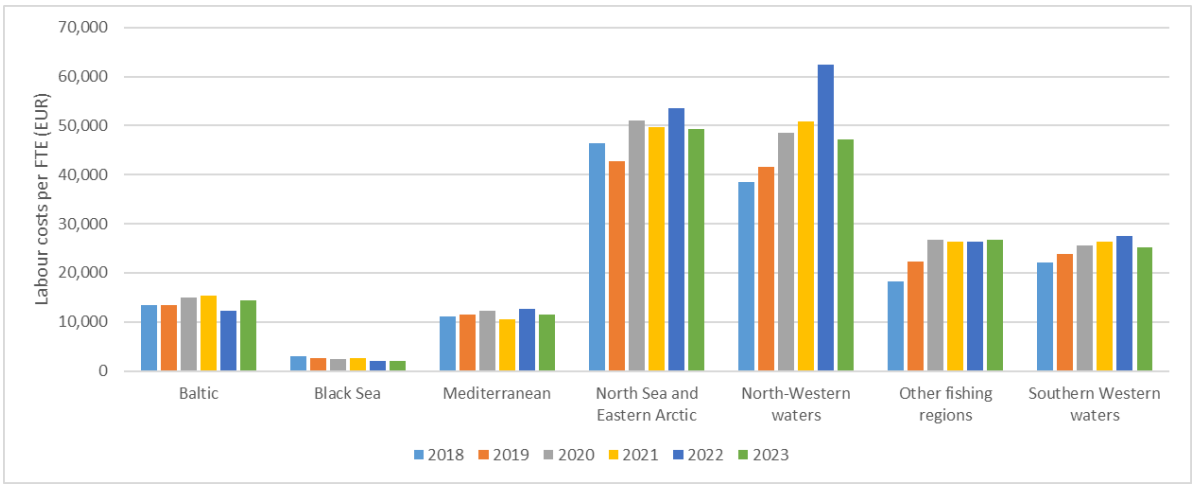
(EUR 2,078), the Mediterranean (EUR 11,407), and the Baltic (EUR 14,382) (Figure 2.7.6).

Figure 2.7.5. Trends on FTE in numbers for the SSCF by main fishing region.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 2.7.6. Trends on labour cost per FTE for the SSCF by main fishing region.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Economic performance

Most regions have experienced an upward trend in GVA per FTE, particularly in areas like the Baltic and SWW. This suggests that the sector is becoming more efficient in terms of value generated per worker, which may reflect improved fishing practices, better management, or a shift toward higher-value products.

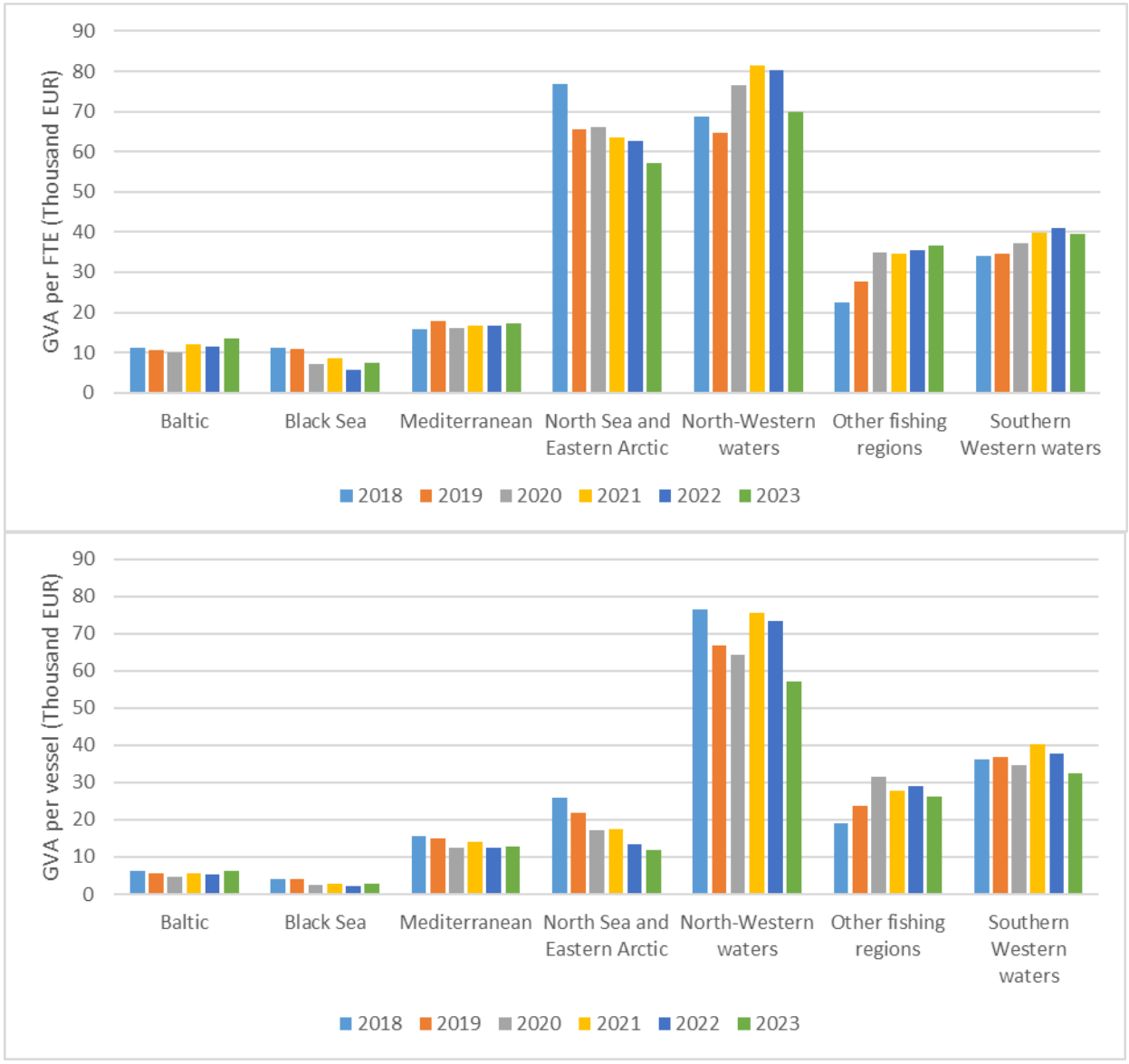
In the Baltic, the average GVA per FTE increased by 27.3% in 2023 compared to the 2018–2022 average, reflecting a strong productivity trend. The Black Sea showed a decline of 20.5%, despite a partial recovery in 2023. The Mediterranean remained stable, with a slight increase of 1.2%, indicating consistent productivity in small-scale coastal fisheries. In contrast, the NSEA saw a drop of 15.2%, suggesting possible structural challenges. NWW also declined slightly, by 5.9%, despite a peak in 2021. Meanwhile, other fishing regions recorded an increase of 18.6%, and SWW grew steadily by 4.3%, confirming a sustained improvement in efficiency.

GVA per vessel has decreased in many regions, notably in the NSEA and NWW. This may suggest a shift towards smaller, more sustainable vessels or reduced efficiency. The Baltic saw a slight GVA increase of +7.1% in 2023 compared to the 2018–2022 average. The Black Sea experienced a -6.3% decline, the Mediterranean a -5.8% decrease, and the NSEA a notable -36.8% drop. NWW fell by -20.0%, while other regions had a minimal change of -0.8%. SWW declined steadily by -14.0%. The top three regions for GVA per vessel in 2023 are NWW (EUR 57,000), SWW (EUR 32,000), and Other-fishing regions (EUR 26,000).

In terms of NVA per FTE, the Baltic experienced an increase of +50% in 2023 compared to the 2018–2022 average. The Black Sea saw a decline of -18.6%, while the Mediterranean remained largely stable with a growth of +4.5%. The NSEA continued to decrease, dropping by -21.2%. NWW also declined slightly, by -4.8%. Other fishing regions showed growth of +22.8%, and SWW rose by +4.2% in 2023 compared to the 2019-2022 average (see Figure 2.7.7).

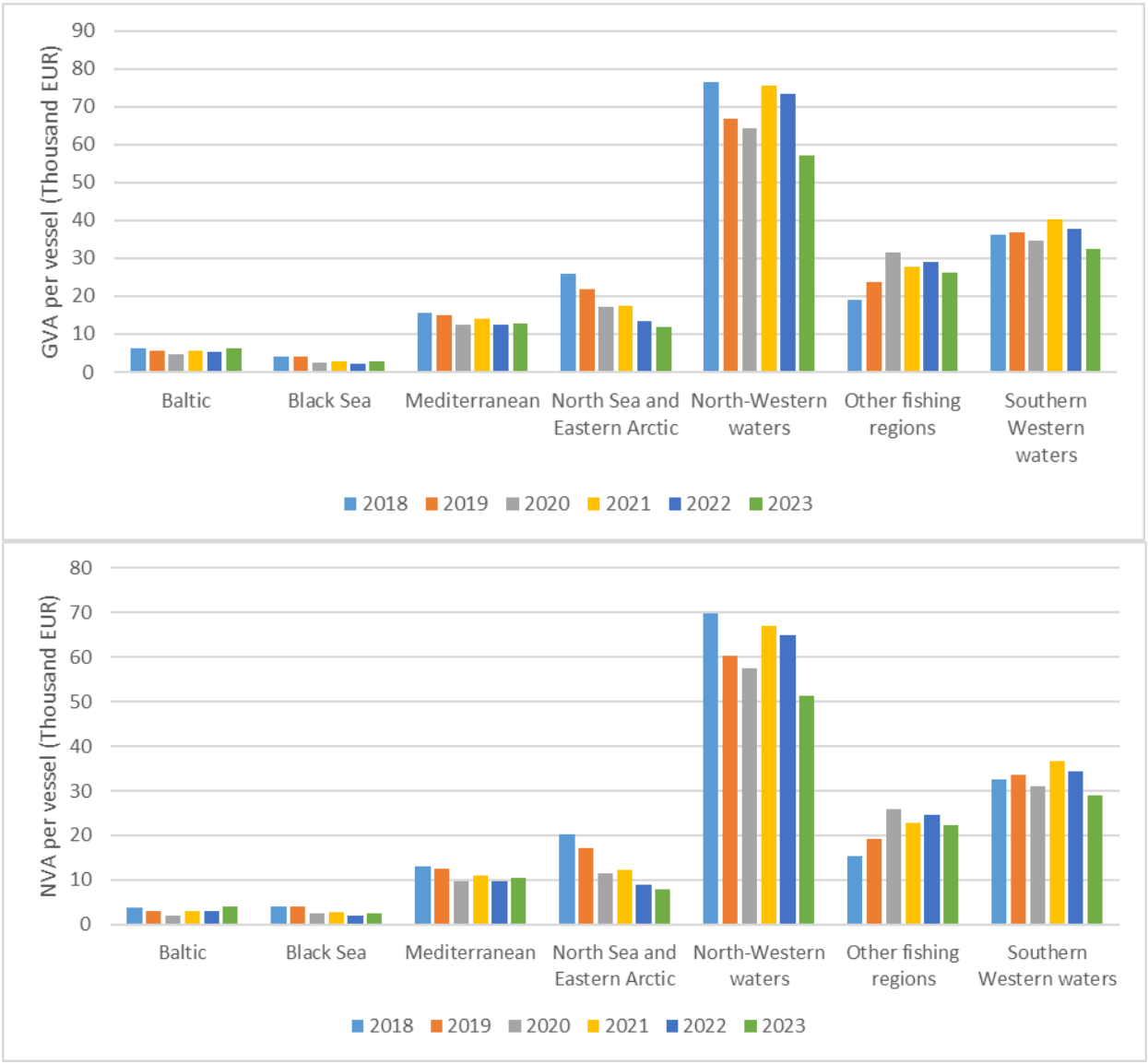
For NVA per vessel, the Baltic experienced an increase of +33.3% in 2023 compared to the 2018–2022 average. The Black Sea remained relatively stable with a drop of -6.3%, and the Mediterranean saw a minimal decline of -3.5%. The NSEA recorded a decrease of -42.9%, while NWW dropped by -20.3%. Other fishing regions remained nearly unchanged, with a rise of +1.9%. Lastly, the SWW experienced a decline of -14.2% in the period analysed (see Figure 2.7.8).

Figure 2.7.7. Trends on GVA per FTE (up) and per vessel (down) for the SSCF by main fishing region



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 2.7.8. Trends on average NVA per FTE (up) and GVA per vessel (down) for the SSCF by fishing region.

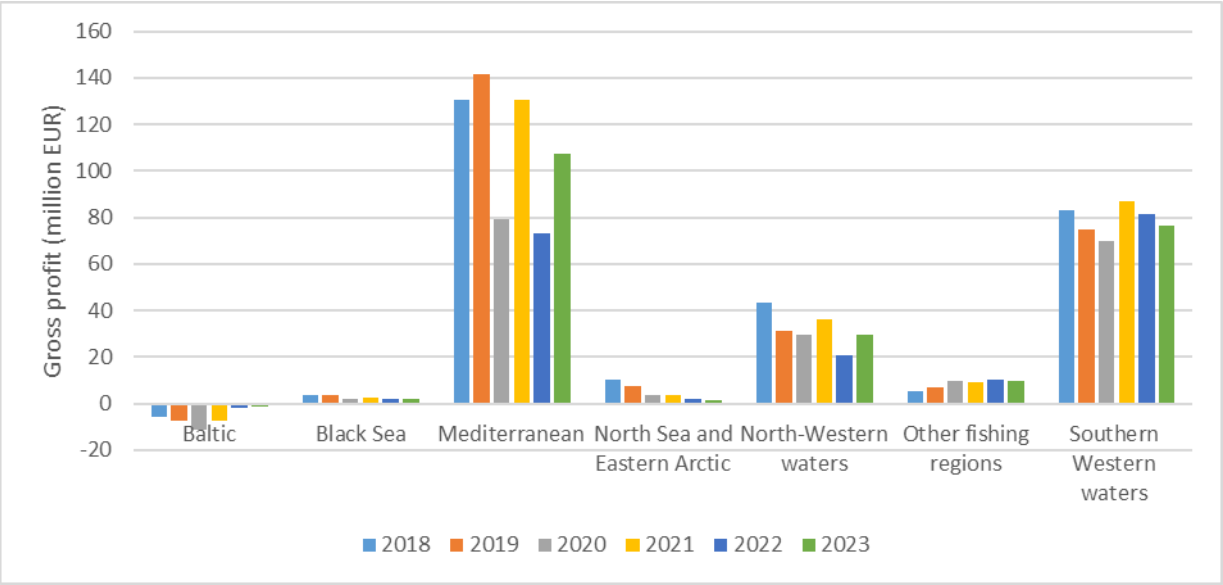


Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

In terms of gross profits, the Baltic region recorded persistent negative figures, though losses gradually decreased from -EUR 6 million in 2018 to -EUR 1.6 million in 2023. The Black Sea, Mediterranean, and NWW regions all experienced periods of positive gross profits, with the Mediterranean achieving notable success in 2019 and 2021, reaching EUR 130 million. In other regions, gross profits remained relatively stable, with the SWW sustaining robust figures, peaking at EUR 86.8 million in 2021 before slightly declining to EUR 76.3 million in 2023 (see Figure 2.7.9).

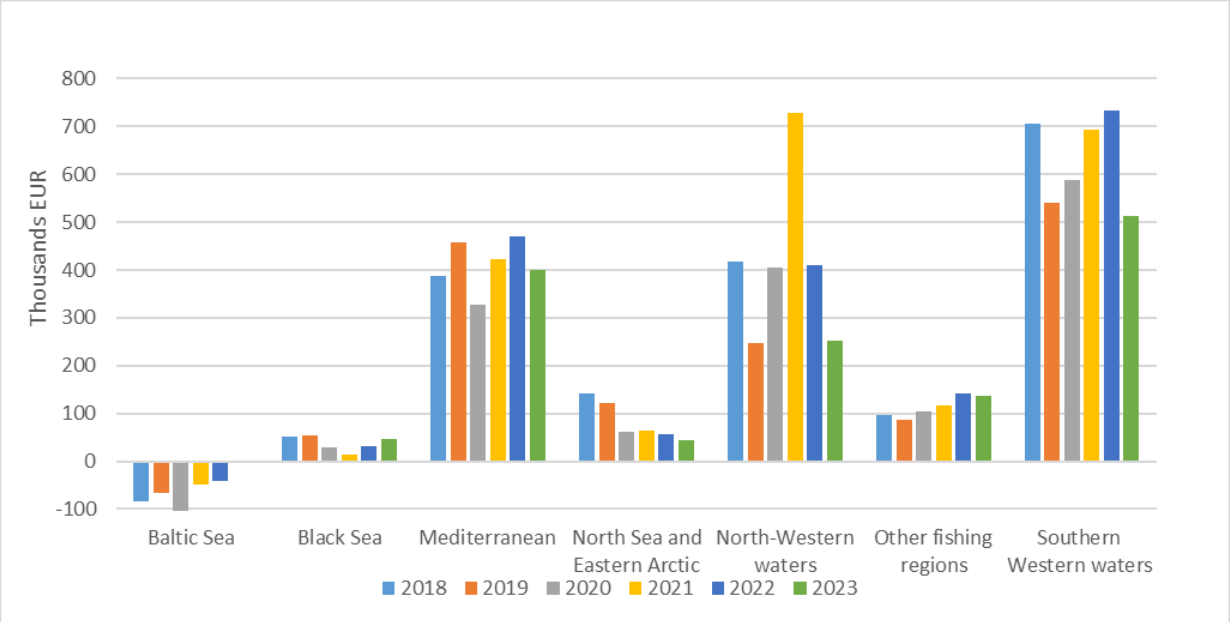
Figure 2.7.10 illustrates the average gross profit per vessel for SSCF. The highest values for both indicators are observed in the NWW and SWW regions. Notably, the greatest disparity between these two indicators is evident in the Mediterranean, NSEA, and Baltic regions. This disparity may suggest higher depreciation costs and opportunity cost of capital in these regions compared to others.

Figure 2.7.9. Trends on gross profit for the SSCF by fishing region.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 2.7.10. Trends on gross profit per vessel for the SSCF by fishing region.



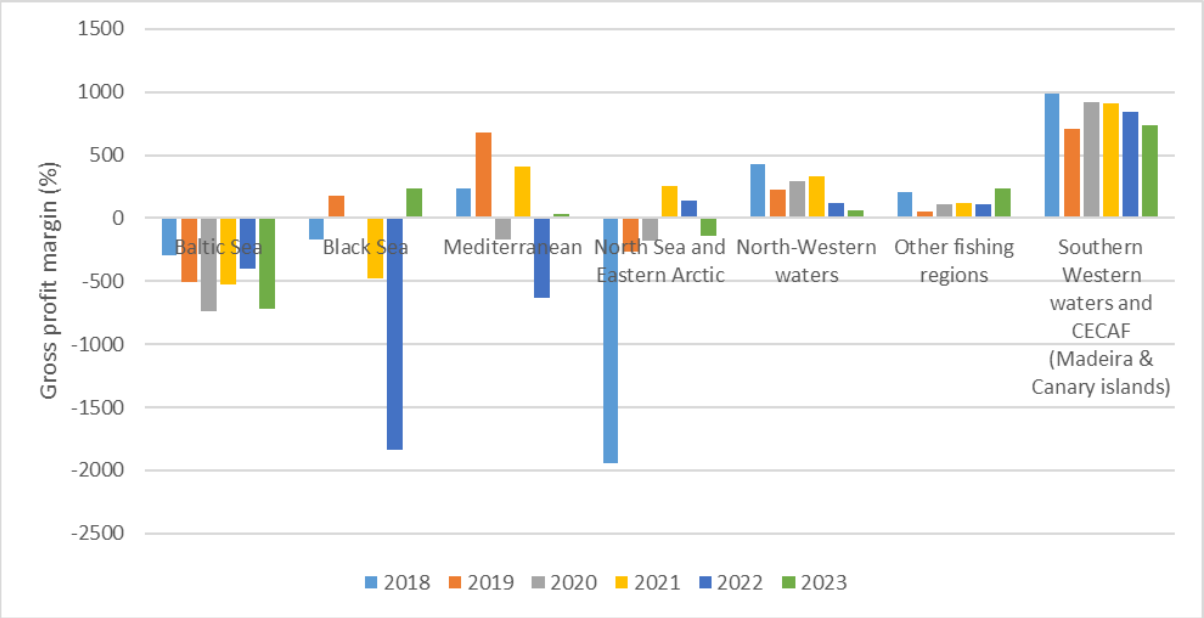
Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

The gross profit margin in SSCF is influenced by several factors, including the type of fishing activities, operational costs, market conditions, and the efficiency of fleet management.

The gross profit margin (GRPm) for the SSCF exhibits significant variability across different regions from 2018 to 2023. In the Baltic Sea, the margin has consistently been negative, with the GRPm deteriorating from -298% in 2018 to -715% in 2023, indicating substantial losses in this area. Conversely, the Black Sea experienced a remarkable recovery, shifting from a negative margin of -166% in 2018 to a positive

margin of 235% in 2023, reflecting enhanced profitability. The Mediterranean region saw fluctuating margins, with a strong positive GRPm of 238% in 2018, followed by notable negative values in 2020 and 2022, before stabilizing with a positive margin of 37% in 2023. The NSEA predominantly faced negative margins, improving from -1,947% in 2018 to -143% in 2023, though the financial environment remains challenging. In NWW, the GRPm showed more consistency, starting at 431% in 2018 and gradually decreasing to 57% in 2023. Other-fishing regions also exhibited fluctuations, with the margin increasing from 210% in 2018 to 239% in 2023, indicating some improvement. SWW (including CECAF, Madeira, and the Canary Islands) maintained a positive GRPm throughout, although the margin decreased from 983% in 2018 to 738% in 2023, suggesting a slight reduction in profitability but overall strong performance.

Figure 2.7.11. Trends on gross profit margin for the SSCF by fishing region.

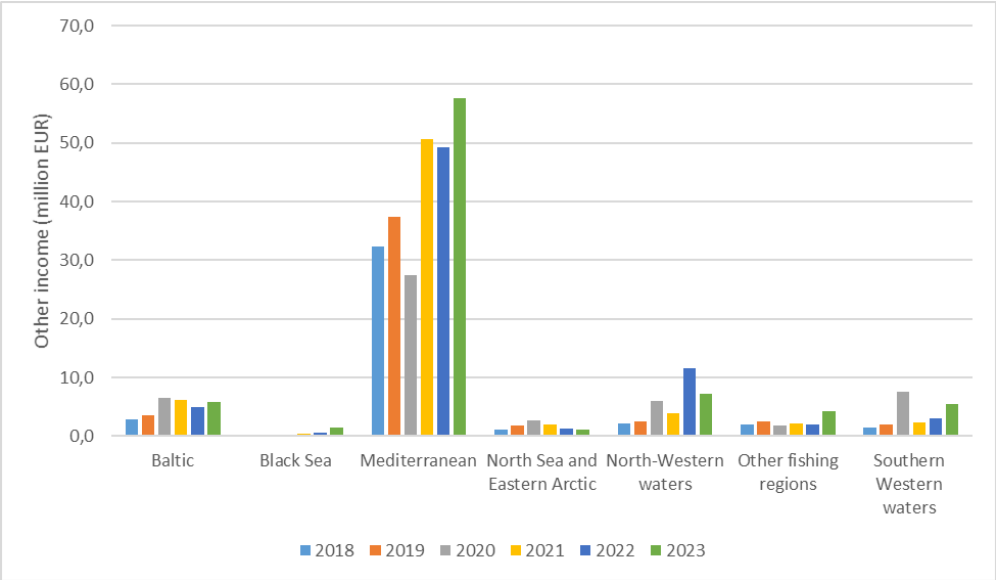


Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 2.7.12 displays "Other income" from various European fishing regions from 2018 to 2023. The Mediterranean region shows the highest other income, peaking at EUR 57.6 million in 2023, while other regions such as the Baltic, Black Sea, NSEA, NWW, other fishing regions, and SWW display significantly lower income levels. There are fluctuations in income within each region over the years, with some regions experiencing increases, such as the NWW in 2022.

The higher other income in the Mediterranean can be attributed to several factors. The region has the largest SSCF in the EU, which often engages in value-added activities like tourism (recreational fishing and fishing tours), contributing to other income. Its status as a major tourist destination enhances income through marine-related tourism activities, including boat tours, diving, and maritime festivals. The cultural heritage of the Mediterranean linked to the sea supports these income-generating activities. The COVID-19 crisis and a consequent decline in tourism revenues may have contributed to lower values of other incomes in 2020, especially in the Mediterranean.

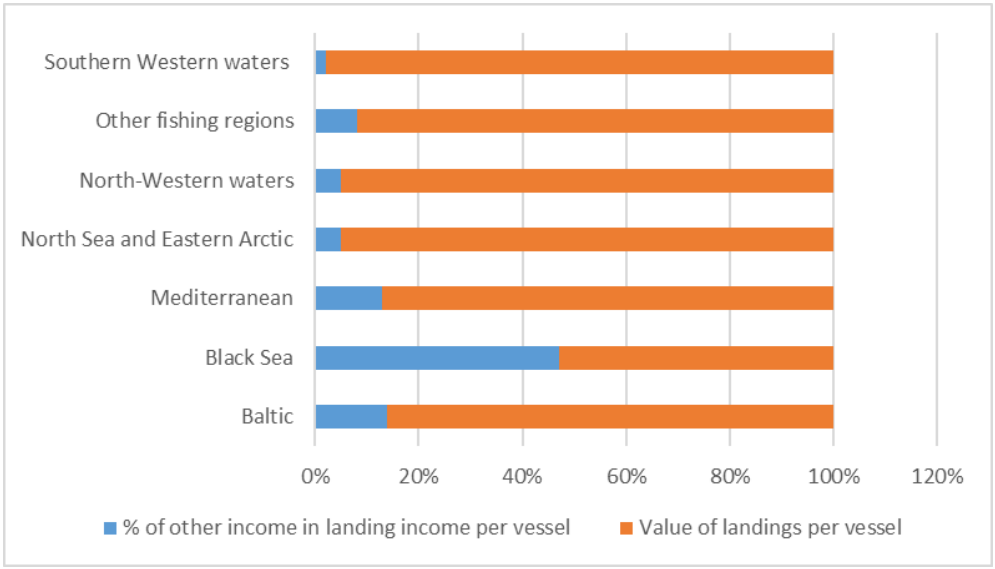
Figure 2.7.12. Other income for the SSCF by fishing region.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 2.7.13 shows the percentage of other income in total income per vessel across EU fishing regions, along with the value of landings per vessel. The Mediterranean region has the highest absolute other income but only 13% of its total income, with landings at 87%. The Black Sea and Baltic regions have more diversified incomes, with other income at 47% and 14%, respectively. The SWW region relies heavily on landing income, with just 2% from other sources. NSEA and NWW report 5% other income, while other regions average 8%, primarily relying on landing income.

Figure 2.7.13. Share of Other income in landing income per vessel for the SSCF by fishing region.



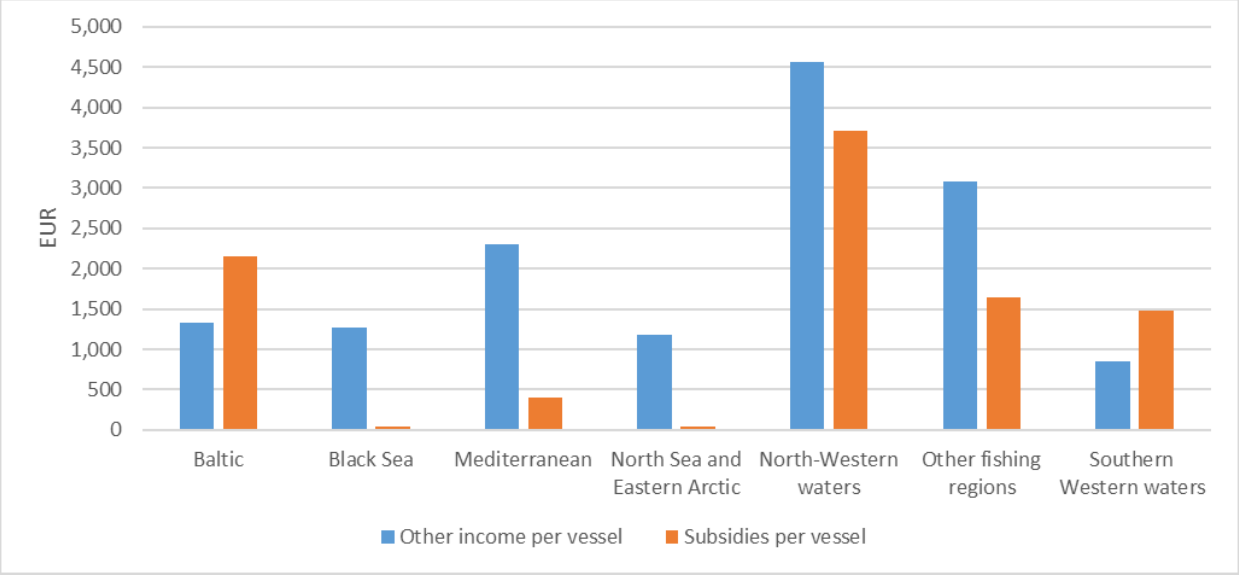
Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

The data presented in Figure 2.7.14 identifies regions with the highest value of operating subsidies per vessel within small-scale fishing fleets. The NWW, Baltic Sea, and other fishing regions are notable for receiving considerable financial support. These subsidies reflect an acknowledgment of the necessity to sustain fishing activities, promote environmental sustainability, and ensure economic viability.

For the SSCF, the analysis of other income per vessel and subsidies per vessel reveals diverse financial conditions across different regions. In the Baltic Sea, other income per vessel amounts to EUR 1,323, while subsidies per vessel are EUR 2,159, indicating a significant dependency on subsidies. Conversely, the Black Sea exhibits lower other income per vessel at EUR 1,273, with minimal subsidy contributions of EUR 39 per vessel, suggesting a more self-reliant financial structure. The Mediterranean region registers relatively high other income per vessel at EUR 2,298, with subsidies contributing EUR 404 per vessel, indicating a balanced mix of income sources.

In the NSEA, other income per vessel is EUR 1,174, while subsidies remain low at EUR 42 per vessel, implying lesser reliance on government support. NWW exhibit the highest other income per vessel at EUR 4,569 and substantial subsidies at EUR 3,707 per vessel, demonstrating robust support and financial activity in this region. Other fishing regions show moderate other income levels at EUR 3,077 and subsidies at EUR 1,643 per vessel, suggesting a healthy yet less reliant structure compared to NWW. Finally, the SWW display other income per vessel at EUR 844, with subsidies of EUR 1,478 per vessel, highlighting a reliance on subsidies to augment income despite lower earnings from other sources.

Figure 2.7.14. Other income and operating subsidies per vessel for the SSCF by fishing region.



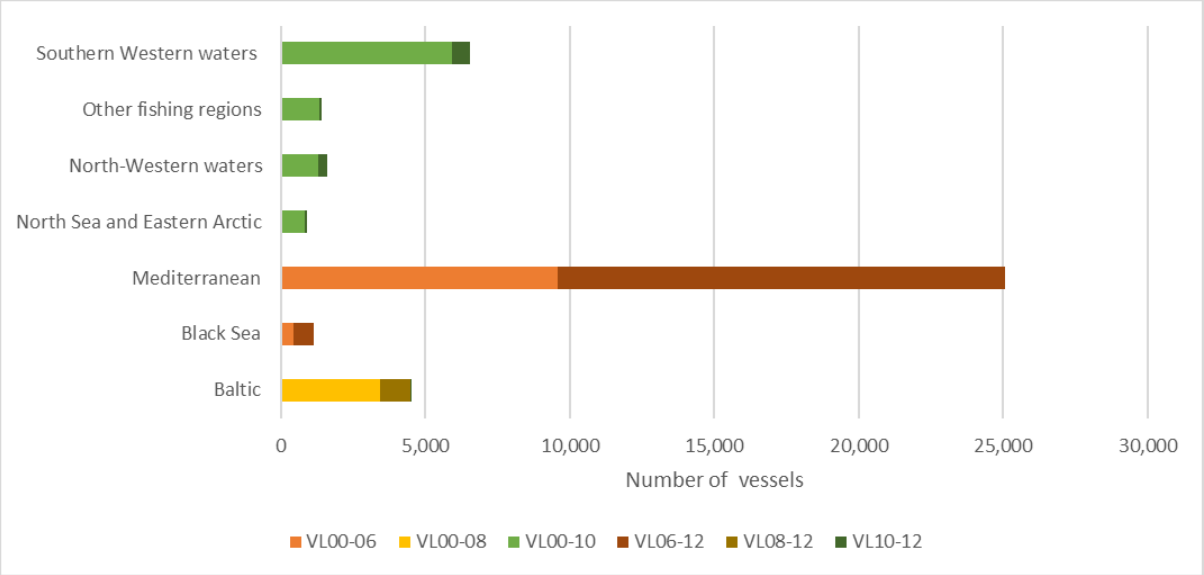
Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

2.7.4 Economic performance by length class

Vessel length class refers to the categorization of fishing vessels based on their size. Within the European Union's small-scale coastal fishing sector, six vessel length classes have been identified: VL00-06 (Black Sea and Mediterranean), VL00-08 (Baltic and North Sea), VL00-10 (Baltic, Mediterranean, North Sea, Northwestern Waters, Other fishing regions, and Southwestern Waters), VL06-12 (Black Sea, Mediterranean and SWW), VL08-12 (Baltic and North Sea) and VL10-12 (Baltic, NSEA, NWW, Other fishing regions and SWW). These length classes encompass a spectrum of vessel sizes commonly encountered in coastal waters, reflecting the diversity of fishing practices and species targeted by the small-scale fleet.

Figure 2.7.15 presents the distribution of fishing vessels by length class across different EU regions. The Mediterranean region has the highest number of vessels, with 9,568 in the VL00-06 class and 15,492 in the VL06-12 class, underscoring its significant small-scale coastal fleet. The Baltic region possesses substantial numbers in the VL00-08 and VL08-12 classes, with 3,436 and 1,032 vessels, respectively. The Black Sea region shows notable figures in the VL00-06 class (422) and a significant count in the VL06-12 class (707). The NSEA region has fewer vessels, with prominent counts in the VL00-10 and VL10-12 classes, totaling 819 and 83 vessels, respectively. The NWW region reported 1,303 vessels in the VL00-10 class and 285 in the VL10-12 class, indicating a moderate fleet size with a mix of small and medium vessels. Other fishing regions documented 1,337 vessels in the VL00-10 class and 67 in the VL10-12 class. The SWW region had 5,902 vessels in the VL00-10 class and 635 in the VL10-12 class (see Figure 2.7.15).

Figure 2.7.15. Number of vessels by length class for the SSCF by fishing region in 2023.

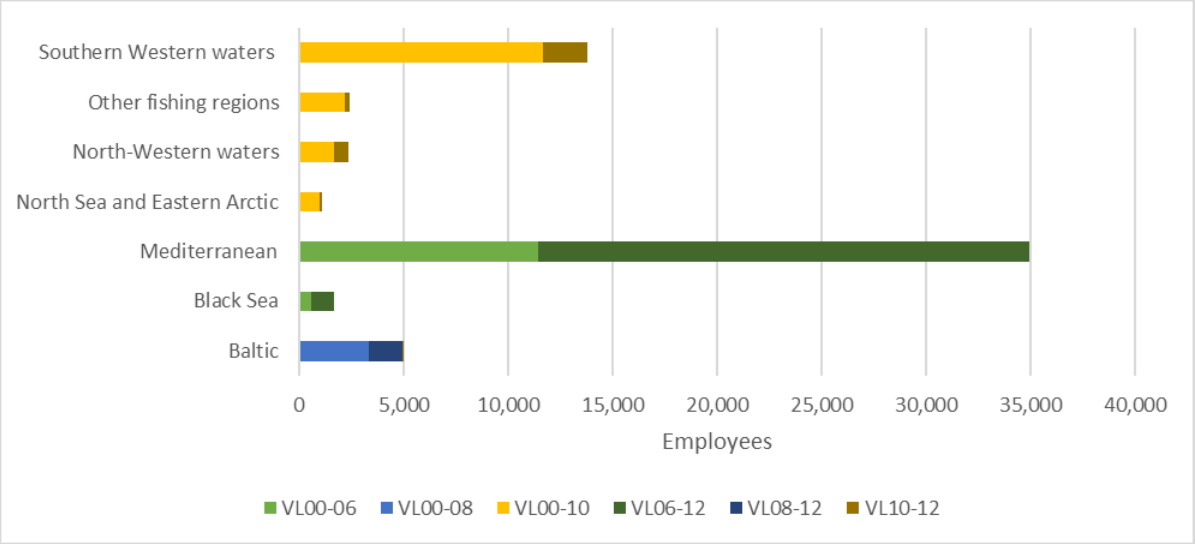


Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Among the available data, the three length classes with the highest number of employees are identified. The Mediterranean region has the VL06-12 length class, employing 23,501 persons. This indicates a substantial workforce within this length class in terms of employment within the SSCF segment. In the SWW, the VL00-10

length class has the second-highest employment rate, employing 11,655 persons. Finally, the Mediterranean region also has a significant number of employees in the VL00-06 length class, totaling 11,420 persons (see Figure 2.7.16).

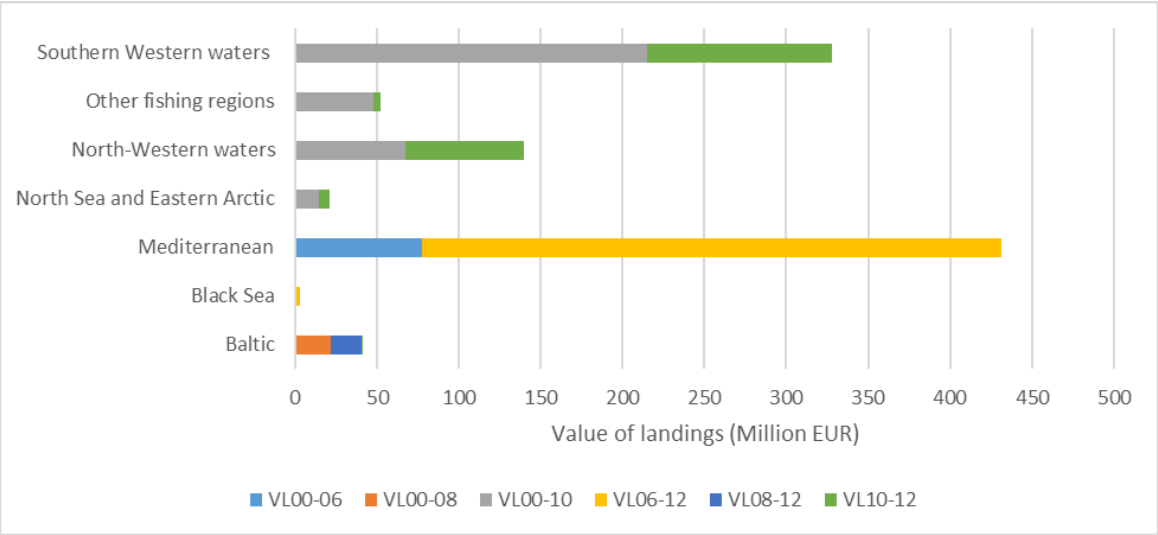
Figure 2.7.16. Employment by length class for the SSCF by fishing region in 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

In the Baltic, landings are primarily from the VL00-08 class (EUR 22 million) and the VL08-12 class (EUR19 million). The Black Sea's main landings come from the VL06-12 class (EUR 3 million). In the Mediterranean, the VL00-06 class lands EUR 78 million and the VL06-12 class brings in EUR 354 million. The NSEA reports EUR 14 million from the VL00-10 class and EUR 7 million from the VL10-12 class. NWW see EUR 67 million from the VL00-10 class and EUR 72 million from the VL10-12 class. Other regions show EUR 48 million from the VL00-10 class and EUR 4 million from the VL10-12 class. SWW report EUR 215 million from the VL00-10 class and EUR 112 million from the VL10-12 class.

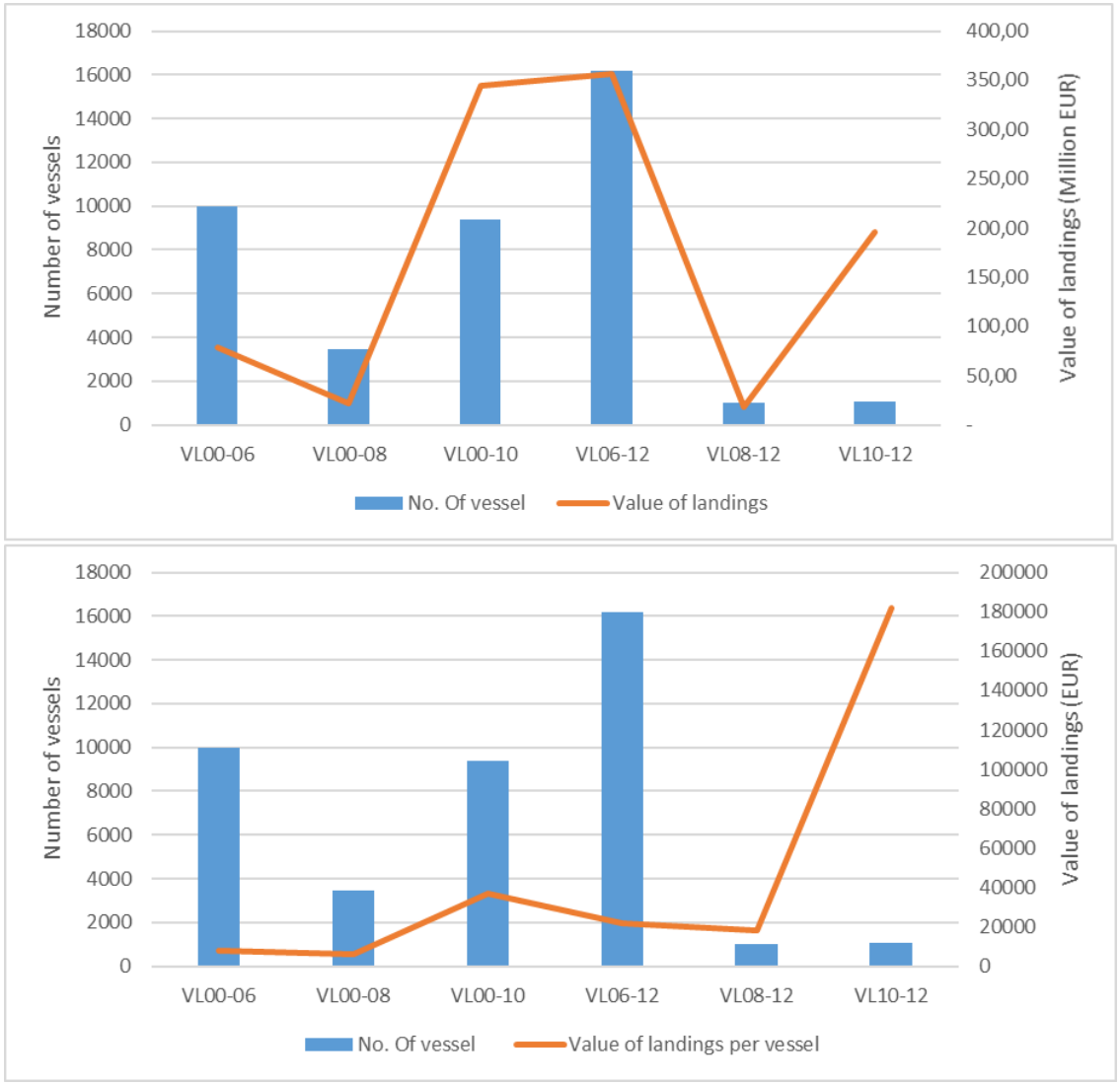
Figure 2.7.17. Value of landings by length class for the SSCF by fishing region in 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

The VL06-12 segment has the highest total landing value at EUR 356 million, due to its large number of vessels. The VL10-12 segment has the highest value per vessel at EUR 181,991. In comparison, VL00-10 vessels achieve EUR 36,797 each, and VL06-12 vessels make EUR 22,004 each (see Figure 2.7.18).

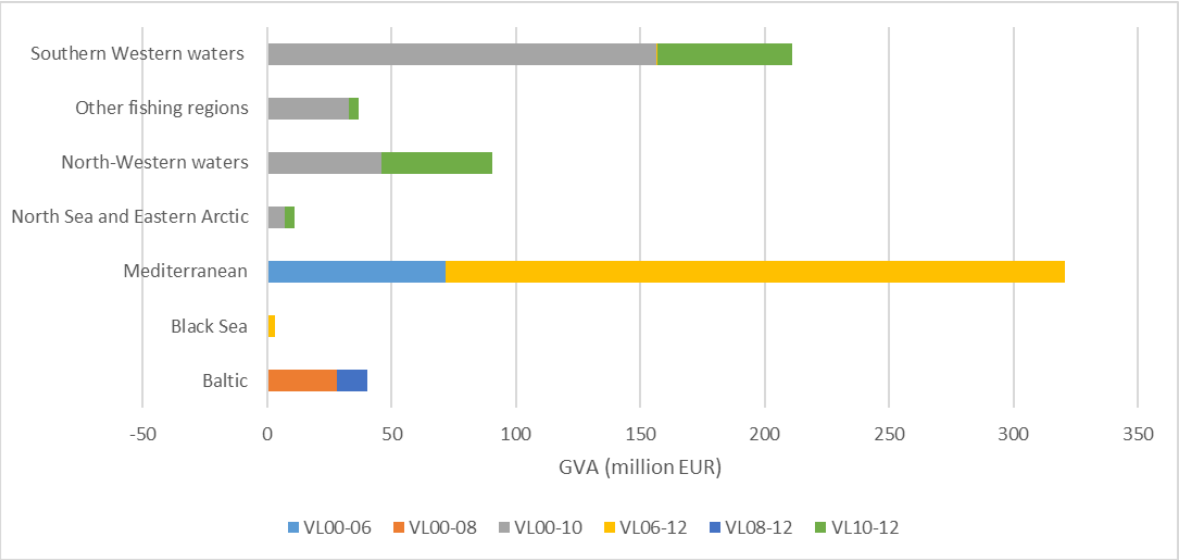
Figure 2.7.18. Value of landings by length class (up) and per vessel (down) for the SSCF in 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

The data shows the GVA for different fishing regions and length classes. The Mediterranean region has the highest GVA, contributing EUR 249 million in the VL06-12 class and EUR 71 million in the VL00-06 class. The SWW region follows with EUR 156 million in the VL00-10 class and EUR 54 million in the VL10-12 class (see Figure 2.7.19).

Figure 2.7.19. GVA by length class for the SSCF by fishing region in 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

2.8 EU Vessels under 12 metres using active gears (L12AG)

Table 2.8.1. EU L12AG at a glance.

L12AG		2023	%Δ 2023-2022
Indicator	**Units**	**L12AG**	**L12AG**
Active vessels	Number	3,114	-9%
FTE	Number	2,342	-14%
Gross Value of landings	Million €	183.0	-16%
GVA	Million €	119.7	-15%
Gross profit	Million €	41.9	17%
Net profit	Million €	20.9	80%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

In the AER 2024, the EWG 24-07 conducted an analysis of fleet segments that, despite being classified under LSF due to their use of active gears (excluding them from SSCF), were less than 12 metres in length. Based on this analysis and the conclusions reached by the STECF (PLEN 24-02), the EWG 25-03/07 resolved to divide the former LSF category into two distinct groups:

- The EU fleet under 12 metres using active gears (L12AG) which comprises fishing vessels under 12 metres using active gears.
- The EU large-scale fleet (LSF) comprises all fishing vessels over 12 metres using static gears and towed gears operating predominately in EU waters.

In 2023, the EU fleet of vessels under 12 metres using active gears (L12AG) consisted of 3,114 vessels, representing 5.85% of the EU active fleet and 4.7% of fishing effort (measured in fishing days). This segment was responsible for 2.1% of the total weight of EU landings (71,882 tonnes) and accounted for 2.2% of the total value (EUR 183 million).

Spain led the L12AG fleet by flag state, comprising 38% of the total number of vessels, followed by France at 22% and Croatia at 15%. These three Member States collectively accounted for 75% of the L12AG vessels.

The L12AG fleet exhibited a capacity of 15,764 GT (1.4% of the total) and 179,319 kW (4.1% of the total). The trend in the number of L12AG vessels continued to decline in 2023, maintaining a downward trajectory from previous years.

Employment within the L12AG sector constituted 5.4% of jobs (6,399 jobs) and 3.2% of full-time equivalents (FTEs) (2,342) in the EU fishing fleet.

For the year 2023, GVA for this fleet segment was approximately EUR 119 million, representing 3.7% of the EU total. Gross profit was estimated at EUR 42 million (4.1% of the EU total), while net profit was approximately EUR 21 million (8.8% of the EU total). Comparatively, GVA decreased by 15.1% from 2022, whereas gross profit and net profit saw increases of 17% and 80%, respectively.

Labour productivity (GVA per FTE) was estimated at EUR 50,997. The average labour cost per FTE in the L12AG fleet for 2023 was EUR 28,949 per year, marking a 6.3% decrease from 2022. In relative terms, the GVA to revenue ratio stood at 58.8% (down from 60.4% in 2022), the gross profit margin increased to 20.5% (up from 15.4% in 2022), and the net profit margin was 10.18% (up from 5.0% in 2022).

2.9 EU Large-scale fleet (LSF)

Table 2.9.1. EU LSF at a glance.

LSF		2023	%Δ 2023-2022
Indicator	**Units**	**LSF**	**LSF**
Active vessels	Number	8,801	-3%
FTE	Number	36,212	0%
Gross Value of landings	Million €	3,957	-9%
GVA	Million €	2,028	-11%
Gross profit	Million €	606	-21%
Net profit	Million €	- 76	-207%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

The EU large-scale fleet (LSF) consists of fishing vessels over 12 metres that use static and active gears, primarily operating in EU waters. In 2023, the fleet included 8,801 vessels and employed 46,216 fishers, equivalent to 36,212 full-time equivalents (FTE), accounting for 16.5%, 38.7%, and 48.8% of the total active EU fleet, respectively.

This fleet contributed 71% to landings and 65% to the value of these landings of the total EU fleet. The GVA was approximately EUR 2.03 billion (63% of the EU total), while the gross profit was around EUR 606 million (59% of the EU total). The estimated net profit was -EUR 76 million.

In 2023, the LSF remained operationally profitable; however, GVA decreased by 11% compared to 2022, and gross and net profits decreased by 21% and 207%, respectively (this last being negative). Labour productivity (measured as GVA per FTE) was estimated at EUR 55,991, representing an 11% decrease from 2022. On average, the labour cost per FTE in the LSF in 2023 was EUR 39,265 per year. All productivity indicators experienced significant declines between 2013 and 2023, and compared to 2022, driven by sharp increases in fuel costs (in 2022) and reduction in the total landings and value of them.

2.10 EU Distant-water fleet (DWF)

Table 2.10.1. EU DWF at a glance.

DWF		2023	%Δ 2023-2022
Indicator	Units	DWF	DWF
Active vessels	Number	239	-2%
FTE	Number	6,387	-13%
Gross Value of landings	Million €	980	-27%
GVA	Million €	353	-16%
Gross profit	Million €	151	-13%
Net profit	Million €	21	-31%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

The EU Distant-water fleet (DWF) consists of fishing vessels operating under the flag of a Member State and primarily fishing in non-EU waters. In 2023, there were 239 vessels, representing 0.45% of the active EU fleet and 1.3% of the effort (days at sea). Notably, it accounted for 20.3% of the total EU landings by weight (689,802 tonnes) and 16% by value (EUR 979.78 million).

Concerning flag states, Spain leads with 80% of the total number of vessels in the EU DWF, followed by France (8%), Portugal (7%), Lithuania (2%), Italy (with three vessels), and Poland (with two vessels).

In terms of capacity, the active vessels of the DWF have a capacity of 255,748 GT (22% of the total) or 348,670 kW (8% of the total). The number of DWF vessels decreased from 244 in 2022 to 239 in 2023, continuing a downward trend from 288 in 2013 to 239 in 2023, which represents a reduction of 17%. This trend does not correlate with the level of catches and landings, which increased by 3% between 2013 and 2022.

Regarding employment, the DWF accounts for 8.6% of FTEs, totaling 6,387 within the EU fishing fleet.

In 2023, the GVA of the DWF was estimated at approximately EUR 353 million (11% of the EU total). Gross profit was around EUR 151 million (15% of the EU total), and net profit was estimated at EUR 21 million. Compared to 2022, GVA decreased by 16%, gross profit by 12.6%, and net profit by 31%.

Labour productivity, measured as GVA per FTE, was estimated at EUR 55,308. The average labour cost per FTE in the EU DWF in 2023 was EUR 31,724 per year, which is 6% lower than in 2022. Productivity indicators have either decreased or remained stable from 2013 to 2023. In relative terms, this equated to a 32.7% GVA to revenue ratio (down from 33.1% in 2022), a 13.9% gross profit margin (up from 13.5% in 2021), and a 1.9% net profit margin (down from 2.4% in 2022).

2.11 Main drivers and trends affecting the economic performance of the EU fleet

Summary of main trends on economic performance

After continuous growth in the economic performance of the EU fishing fleet (excluding Greece and the United Kingdom) from 2013 to 2016, a declining trend in profitability was observed from 2017 to 2020. Although 2021 seemed to break this downward trend, the increase in fuel costs in 2022 and high inflation in 2023 made these two years the least profitable since 2013.

Different factors impact various fleets differently. A significant factor in 2023 is the Ukrainian-Russian war, which, despite a decrease in fuel prices, has not translated into increased fish prices due to high general inflation. Other factors affecting economic performance by main fishing region include, but are not limited to, the following:

North Sea and Eastern Arctic

Factors contributing to the overall situation include:

- The uncertain status of TACs due to Brexit in early 2021 and the lack of agreements with the United Kingdom. In the first quarter of 2021, quotas for important demersal species were set at 25% of the 2020 quota. For pelagic species like North-East Atlantic mackerel, horse mackerel, and blue whiting, quotas were set between 45-60% for the first quarter of the year because of the seasonality of catches. In 2025, renegotiations occurred regarding quotas and access to fishing grounds in coastal waters with the UK.
- Later in 2021, the EU reached an agreement with the UK on the total TAC for significant and shared species. The UK requested a larger share of the TAC. As a result, 25% of the value of EU fishing quotas in UK waters was transferred to the UK, gradually reducing fishing opportunities for EU fleets from 2021 to 2025. Most of this transfer occurred in 2021 (60%) and 2022 (70%), with the remainder in 2023 (92%) and in 2024 (100%). Brexit has consequently reshaped fisheries relations, impacting some EU fleets operating in the North Sea, as well as the English Channel, Irish Sea, and Atlantic Ocean. Fish stocks in the North Sea have become shared stocks with the UK, now requiring joint management. Access for EU vessels to UK waters is subject to licenses issued by UK authorities. The quota reduction mainly affects France, Ireland, and the Netherlands, but also impacts Denmark, Germany, Spain, and Belgium, and to a lesser extent Sweden, Poland, Portugal, Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia. However, the outlook suggests that the impact of Brexit on fisheries should diminish over time.
- Negotiations between the EU and Norway, the Faroe Islands, and Iceland about TAC shares (mainly for blue whiting and mackerel) have led to less favorable outcomes for EU TAC shares and landings. The EU TAC share appears to have declined in recent years, consistent with ICES advice (ICES, 2024).
- A decrease in landings of (flat)fish. For example, landings of common sole decreased by 37% in 2022 compared to 2021, and by another 26% in 2023 compared to 2022.
- Vertical integration, where companies own vessels and other parts of the seafood supply chain, has diminished, leading to ownership shifts since 2021.

- Fuel prices returned closer to pre-2022 maximum prices but remained high, likely impacting economic performance.

Factors potentially hindering future economic performance include:

- Ongoing quota adjustments due to the UK's departure from the EU since 2021, impacting pelagic (herring) and flatfish (common sole and plaice) fishing performance in the region.
- In the Netherlands, the BAR (Brexit Adjustment Regulation) has come into effect, leading fishers to stop fishing activities. With fewer fishing opportunities for flatfish, 51 vessels were decommissioned in 2023. This capacity cut is expected to hinder the remaining (flatfish) segment's ability to produce sufficient fish in the coming years, resulting in underutilized quotas.
- Flatfish catchability is decreasing; while the exact cause remains unknown, factors such as climate change, changes in food availability, and spatial availability for fish to dwell and reproduce are suggested to play a role.
- The quota for common sole has significantly decreased for some countries, such as the Netherlands. From 2021 to 2023, the Dutch sole quota decreased by 58%, and in 2024 it decreased by another 61% compared to 2023. A large portion of the Dutch fleet's landing value comes from sole (17%), so the quota reduction will considerably affect economic performance. Additionally, sole is often caught together with plaice, likely leading to reduced plaice catches and higher economic impacts (8% of the Dutch fleet's landing value is generated by plaice).
- Innovation and progress in the energy transition are hindered by a lack of R&D and implementable solutions. Furthermore, if fish prices remain high and fuel prices do not peak, marine diesel remains the most energy-dense fuel relative to onboard volume, which further stalls the drive and investment in R&D.

Baltic Sea

Factors that may positively impact fleet performance in the region include:

- The only Baltic herring stock with a TAC increase was Central herring (70,822 tonnes, +32%). Plaice TAC increased by 25% to 11,313 tonnes.
- Compensations from the EMFF funds have been provided to owners of fishing vessels for the temporary or permanent cessation of fishing activities to protect cod, herring stocks, and eel. Such compensations could provide significant support to fishing companies in the short term. Permanent cessation could reduce fishing pressure or allow more fishing opportunities to be allocated to individual fishers.
- Policy management instruments, specifically quota allocation (introduced in some countries), may have helped improve the economic performance of certain fleets.
- While aging vessels, obsolete equipment, and insufficient investment lead to increased maintenance costs and reduce fleet profitability, the EMFF does offer the possibility of engine replacement if fishing capacity is proven to be in balance with exploitation. Some Member States have already introduced such schemes. However, due to the poor status of several important stocks negatively impacting balance indicators, several fleet segments in the Baltic are considered out of balance and thus do not qualify for this type of support.

Factors that may negatively impact fleet performance in the region include:

- In 2023, TAC for the Bothnian herring stock decreased significantly by 28% (31,298 tonnes less). Gulf of Riga herring TAC decreased by 4% (2,054 tonnes less). Western herring TAC remained at a very low level (788 tonnes). As herring has been an important component of the Baltic fishing fleet's catch, these substantial quota reductions had a considerable negative effect on economic performance.
- The cod stocks in both the Eastern and Western parts of the Baltic Sea are in critical condition. Commercial cod fishing was significantly reduced in 2019, and direct fisheries on cod were not permitted from 2020 to 2023, except for small-scale fisheries targeting the Western cod stock. Cod catches are allowed only as an unavoidable by-catch. The Eastern cod quota remained at 595 tonnes in 2023 (following a 92% reduction in 2020 and a 70% reduction in 2021). The Western cod quota remained at 489 tonnes after an 88% cut in 2021. These ongoing challenges pose a significant threat to a considerable portion of the regional fleet. ICES anticipates that the cod stock will remain in a dire condition in the mid-term.
- The main basin salmon quota remained unchanged at 63,811 fish in 2023, with no directed fishery being permitted (only bycatch). Sprat quota decreased by 11% to 224,114 tonnes (27,829 tonnes less). While commercially important, sprat is only targeted by a few specialized fleets.
- Fishing performance, especially in the SSCF, is highly weather-dependent. Even in favorable economic conditions, weather can be a limiting factor for fleet performance, particularly for seasonal fisheries.
- In certain areas, the increasing population of seals has been reported as a substantial problem when performing fisheries using passive gears. Damage to both gear and fish has been experienced, leading to the cessation of certain fisheries.

North Western Waters

Factors that may positively impact fleet performance in the region include:

- Landings by weight increased by 15%, and the value of landings rose by 1% in the region.
- Energy costs for the NWW fleet decreased by 18%, thanks to lower fuel prices. France and Ireland saw a 16% reduction in energy costs, positively impacting the NWW fleet’s performance.
- Quotas for key species like blue whiting and Norway lobster increased.
- Fish prices for species such as Atlantic mackerel and blue whiting went up.
- The biomass of horse mackerel recovered, and Norway lobster stock showed positive trends.

Factors that may negatively impact fleet performance in the region include:

- Brexit led to 25% of the EU's fishing rights in UK waters being transferred to UK fleets between 2021 and 2026, affecting French and Irish fleets.
- Atlantic mackerel quotas for Ireland dropped by 32% from 78,000 tonnes in 2020 to 53,400 tonnes in 2023.
- Prices for high-value species like Norway lobster, Atlantic scallop, and European hake decreased.

- Quotas for pelagic species, including mackerel and horse mackerel, were reduced.

South Western Waters

- The management plan for western waters was based on the possibility of using catch bands around MSY (Art. 4), in order to take account of the complexity of managing mixed fisheries, which are particularly present in south-western waters. In this sense, the setting of fishing opportunities could not exceed the value of the TAC associated with the median FMSY for all stocks.
- TACs variations for a number of stocks, e.g., hake, anchovy or mackerel.
- The landing obligation creates an incentive to develop more selective fishing gear and reduce unwanted catches, while on the other hand, the lack of quota for some species caught in mixed fisheries forces the premature closure of some fisheries (the "choke effect").
- The variation of the prices for the main species such as European pilchard, blue whiting, albacore or octopus.
- Although fuel prices have fallen compared to 2022, they remain one of the fleet's main expenses, affecting its profitability.

Mediterranean Sea

Factors that may negatively influence fleet performance in the region include:

- Overexploitation: Many assessed key demersal and small pelagic stocks in the Mediterranean remain overexploited (FAO, 2024). This aligns with observed declines in both landings and economic value of these species in 2023. For instance, hake landings decreased by 6% compared to the 2013-2022 average, and red mullet by 24%, while their values dropped by 14% and 22%, respectively. Similarly, European anchovy and sardine, especially in the Adriatic Sea, remain overexploited and/or outside safe biological limits. Landings of anchovy decreased by 21% compared to the 2013-2022 average, and sardine by 43%, while their values dropped by 34% and 40%, respectively.
- Energy crisis: the effects of the energy crisis triggered by Russia’s invasion of Ukraine continued into 2023, significantly impacting the operational costs of the fishing sector. Fuel prices, while lower than the peak levels reached in 2022, continued to exceed pre-crisis levels. The sharp rise in global energy prices strained the profitability of fishing activities, particularly in fuel-intensive segments such as bottom trawlers and purse seiners.
- The marine resources and ecosystems of this region have come under increasing pressure in recent years, driven by diversification and intensification of marine and maritime activities. In addition, competition between EU fishing vessels and vessels from other countries that do not have to follow EU legislation is perceived to be growing by fishers.
- Labour costs decrease, mainly in LSF; the reduction can be linked to the negative trend in revenues as, in most countries, labour costs are directly related to revenues and variable costs as the traditional based income sharing system between the ship-owner and the crew is the most prevalent.
- Fishing sector is losing social and economic importance at the local level: factors such as the high average age of fishers, the difficulty in attracting the

younger generations, the poor working conditions and low wages severely affected the fishery sector in the region. Inefficient vessels with poor economic performance, exit the sector or stay inactive. EMFAF introduced permanent cessation measures by scrapping the fishing vessel or by decommissioning it; the implementation of this instrument will lead to an additional reduction of the active vessels in the short period.

- Labour challenges: many fleet owners are currently facing serious labour challenges, particularly related to generational turnover and a growing shortage of skilled workers. As older workers retire, there is an urgent need to replace them, but finding qualified personnel has become increasingly difficult. To help address this gap, the employment of workers from third countries is on the rise, especially in LSF. However, integrating foreign workers into the workforce is not always straightforward. Major obstacles include complex bureaucratic procedures, high administrative costs and the lack of recognition for skills and qualifications obtained abroad.

Factors that may positively influence fleet performance in the region include:

- Diversification of sales channels: looking at single species, besides the standard market effect on prices due to the decrease in the landed volume (supply) of some species (e.g. anchovies, pilchards, giant and red shrimps), other factors appear to be key in the valorisation of supply. The role of Producer Organizations has improved in recent years, with the adoption of initiatives aimed at improving the control of the supply as well as at adding value to landings. For the giant red shrimps, introducing innovative market strategies, including the implementation of labelling and certification schemes, helped the demersal trawlers add value to the fishery product. Similar initiatives are underway for deep-water rose shrimps and some large pelagic. Despite this, there were still a highly fragmented sales channels dominated by regional wholesalers and traditional fishmongers; small-scale fisheries are improving their ability to sell directly in local markets, supported by the use of new technologies
- Investment in more energy-intensive fishing gear and equipment: in 2023, energy costs equal to 21% of the revenues in the fishing sector, highlighting a persistently high level. In response to these persistent energy pressures, there is a growing focus on investing in more efficient engines and selective fishing gear. These improvements are crucial for strengthening the sector’s economic resilience. This investment trend is expected to accelerate, supported by funding from the EMFAF.
- Despite the overall prevalence of overexploitation, some stocks in certain areas have shown signs of improvement in recent years (FAO, 2024). This includes deep-water rose shrimp in the central Mediterranean and Atlantic bluefin tuna, supported by stable or increasing landings and values in 2023, indicating a positive response to management measures.

Black Sea

Factors that may positively influence fleet performance in the region include:

- An additional increase in the turbot quota for both Bulgaria and Romania over the past three years, along with the implementation of a management plan for third-country fishing in the Black Sea.

- The rise in average prices for certain key species with substantial landings, such as sea snails, and the maintenance of stable average prices for other species.
- The sea snail stock in GSA 29 being fished near FMSY, permitting fishing vessels and processing plants using this species to continue providing employment in the region.
- The trend of nearly stable or decreasing fuel costs at the regional level, which is directly related to energy costs and continues to represent a major percentage of expenses.

Factors that may negatively impact fleet performance in the region include:

- Adverse weather conditions in the Black Sea, including strong winds and significant temperature variations between winter and summer, which have considerably affected fishing activities by the SSCF, leading to reduced DaS and consequently negatively impacting total employment.
- The LSF+L12AG fleets of both countries are primarily composed of vessels equipped with trawls and polyvalent active and passive gears. As trawling is fuel-intensive, maintaining a stable level of days-at-sea results in consistently high energy costs.

Other factors affecting fleet performance in the region include:

- The Black Sea fishery's high dependency on a limited number of valuable species. In terms of landing weight and value, sea snails are the most profitable species. According to the latest available data from 2023, their stock in the Black Sea is considered to be around reference biological points. Sprat, typically the second most important fishery, is evaluated as sustainably exploited. The turbot stock also shows improvement, primarily due to the implementation of management measures.
- The GFCM has established a set of emergency measures for stocks in the Black Sea region to ensure alignment in the implementation of management measures by all countries operating in the region.

OMR

Most outermost regions (OMRs) face geographic isolation, increasing costs for local fishers. The European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) compensates these additional expenses. However, benefits for fishers in Guadeloupe, Martinique, and French Guiana remain limited.

Capital cost increases hinder fleet renewal and new entrants, with fuel prices affecting performance significantly. Compensation for fuel costs was introduced in French OMRs in 2022, while Portugal applies lower fuel taxes and Spain grants subsidies based on consumption.

Landing prices have generally declined, impacting fleet profitability, particularly in regions like the Canary Islands and French OMRs due to competition from international seafood markets.

Inadequate infrastructure dissuades entry into the sector, compounded by a lack of incentives and training, especially for young fishers. Variations in TACs and quotas affect fleet performance, with internal competition due to insufficient access regulations.

Marine ecosystems face threats from extreme weather events and environmental changes, such as Sargassum algae inflows in the Caribbean affecting fishing stocks and operations. Pollution from agriculture also affects coastal habitats and bans fishing areas in Guadeloupe and Martinique.

Portuguese OMRs experience adverse weather impacting vessel activity and economic performance.

NAFO

There is a stable activity of the EU fleet in NAFO area with capacity well adjusted to the fishing possibility. The economic performance of the fleets is driven and conditioned on the value of key commercial species caught by the Spanish and Portuguese demersal trawlers. Despite its recent high volume of landings, silver hake shows a remarkably lower price than other species caught such as Greenland halibut or Atlantic Redfish.

Capacity, effort, and landings in weight have decreased in general since 2013 although it seems to be quite stable and even slightly increasing in recent years. This seems to be consistent with the adaptive fishing strategies and business plans of the concerned fleets due to lower availability of fishing opportunities in the convention area, particularly for Cod, Redfish, and Northern Prawns. In recent years, demersal fishing trawlers targeting cod and redfish have increased their annual level of catch either in other species within the NAFO RA (e.g. silver hake) or fishing grounds such as the North-East Atlantic (FAO 27) or the South-West Atlantic (FAO 41), targeting other demersal species. This factor could partially explain the oscillations in days at sea in the area.

On 1 January 2021, the UK withdrew the EU, becoming an independent coastal state. This involved renegotiating the country's membership of regional fisheries management organisations in which it was integrated as an EU member. On 3 April 2020, the UK notified the European Commission of its intention to express its consent, in its own capacity, to be bound by five international agreements establishing five regional fisheries management organisations including NAFO, in the area of the Union's exclusive external competence on fisheries. As a result, the UK joined NAFO as a new independent member in September 2020, becoming NAFO’s 13th contracting party.

ICCAT

The primary factors influencing the industry are:

There is an observable near-linear relationship between two correlated factors: a 20% estimated reduction in the weight of landings for two tropical tuna stocks (skipjack and yellowfin) compared to 2022, and the implementation of a 72-day fishing closure for EU purse seiners in the Atlantic Ocean. Additionally, the EU quota for bigeye tuna has not been fully utilized.

In terms of trade, Spanish and Portuguese surface longliners resumed trade relations in 2023 after the COVID-19 crisis period (2020-2022) with countries exhibiting high demand for swordfish and frozen sharks, such as Italy, Brazil, and Senegal. The construction and modernization of storage and freezing facilities managed by various POs representing the fleets have also contributed to a partial reduction in operational costs for certain companies from Galicia.

Regarding variable operational costs, energy prices for the EU DWF remain relatively high in 2023 at 0.81 euro/litre, compared to the historical average. However, this represents an 18% reduction from the peak of 2022 (0.99 euro/litre).

For the French freezer tuna purse seine fishing fleet over 40 metres (in terms of landed value), operating profitability indicators show a negative trend in both 2022 and 2023. The deterioration in macroeconomic conditions has led to a significant increase in operating costs over recent years (fuel, logistics, etc.), while prices have only risen slightly. Concurrently, demand for canned tuna declined between 2020 and 2023.

The main limiting factors include:

Stringent management measures for tropical tunas, such as the time closure for FADs (Fish Aggregating Devices) in the Atlantic Ocean, have had a substantial negative economic impact on fleet activity and catch levels for French and Spanish purse seine vessels active in the ICCAT RA. This closure prompted effort displacement to the Indian Ocean and, to a lesser extent, the Pacific Ocean, thereby jeopardizing the short-term economic viability of some companies whose vessels traditionally operated in these fishing grounds.

A reduction in the FAD closure was agreed at the ICCAT Annual Meeting 2024, decreasing it from 72 to 45 days starting in 2025. This decision was made at the political level without scientific evidence supporting it, given SCRS's inability to assess the effectiveness of the closures for stock recovery.

Regarding sharks, ICCAT restrictions on vessels catching and retaining on board, transhipping, or landing North Atlantic shortfin mako have directly impacted the catch of EU surface longliners, notably reducing landings in this area reported by Spanish and Portuguese longliners. Given that mako is a commercially targeted species alongside swordfish, tropical tunas, and blue sharks, this has affected the business plans of companies.

This trade measure was adopted due to the inclusion of shortfin mako under CITES Appendix 2. The requirement to issue a non-detrimental findings document by trade authorities, coupled with increased observer coverage, has already reduced reported catches of this species while increasing fishing pressure on other target species such as blue shark or swordfish, and displacing effort to other regions (Indian and Pacific Ocean).

IOTC

The main drivers are:

Spanish and French purse seiners over 40 metres LOA rely heavily on the Indian Ocean, with Spanish vessels showing a dependency of over 66% and French vessels over 60% in terms of value of landings (2020-2024). The Atlantic Ocean is their secondary fishing ground. An Italian purse seiner also shows nearly 100% dependency on the Indian Ocean. Despite decreased species value, EU purse seiners reported stability in profitability in 2023. However, Spanish vessels outperformed French ones, landing more than double both in weight and value.

Trade restrictions by CITES and ICCAT RA for Northern Atlantic Shortfin Mako have influenced market behavior, doubling its first sale price to above 4 euros/kilo in 2023 and 2024.

The main limiting factors are:

Yellowfin tuna quotas implemented since 2017 have impacted EU purse seine activity; Spain faced a 21% reduction, France 4%, and Italy had no activity in 2014. The Spanish government further limited tropical tuna catch in 2019. The IOTC imposed reporting obligations and reduced the ratio of supply vessels to purse seiners, which was later revised.

Measures to reduce yellowfin tuna catch by 15% led to increased skipjack landings, which are less profitable. Data deficiencies exist in total catch estimates, particularly for non-target species. Enhanced reporting on by-catch is needed for better knowledge of sensitive species.

Overfishing and IUU fishing by non-EU fleets threaten the conservation of tuna stocks and the economic viability of the EU fleet due to stock deterioration and quota reductions. Reduced fishing opportunities negatively impact coastal economies in the Indian Ocean, leading to reduced access fees, lack of raw material for canning factories, and economic loss.

CECAF

The EU currently has 11 Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement (SFPA) protocols in force with third countries. There are two main types of agreements: tuna agreements that allow EU vessels to pursue migrating tuna stocks along the coasts of Africa and through the Indian Ocean, as well as in the Pacific Ocean; and mixed agreements that provide access to a wide range of fish stocks in the partner country's exclusive economic zone.

As of June 2025, the EU has seven tuna agreements in force with Cabo Verde, Gabon, Kiribati, Seychelles, Mauritius, Madagascar, and The Gambia (with a hake component for the last two); and three mixed agreements with Greenland, Guinea Bissau, and Mauritania.

Specifically, in the CECAF area, the EU has bilateral SFPAs with Cabo Verde, Gabon, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, and The Gambia.

The EU also has "dormant" agreements with Morocco, Senegal, Equatorial Guinea, and Liberia. Dormant agreements refer to fisheries partnership agreements that remain in force but without an active implementing protocol, thus prohibiting EU vessels from fishing in these waters.

The agreement with Morocco expired in July 2023, and the European Court of Justice ruling in October 2024 confirmed the sovereignty of Western Sahara over its exclusive economic zone (EEZ) in the legal dispute between Morocco and Western Sahara (rulings T-344/19 and T-356/19) related to the 2019 EU-Morocco trade agreements on fisheries and agricultural products. Nearly 90% of the catch from EU fishing fleets under the SFPA with Morocco occurred in the waters now recognized as controlled by Western Sahara.

The SFPA with Senegal expired in November 2014 and was not renewed, due to Senegal being identified as a non-cooperating country in addressing illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing (receiving a "yellow card"). Previously, the fisheries agreement allowed no EU vessels from Spain and France to fish in Senegalese waters as part of the tuna network fisheries agreements in West Africa, with a limited demersal hake component.

NEAFC

The NEAFC region faces challenges in fisheries management due to climate change, geopolitical shifts, and new biodiversity frameworks. Migratory changes are altering species distribution, benefiting some coastal states while increasing disputes overfishing rights and shared stocks. Ecosystem-based conservation efforts include closures for vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) and stricter regulations to curb illegal fishing.

In 2024, new rules require compliance with NEAFC measures, addressing IUU fishing and promoting stock recovery. Recommendations emphasize scientific catch limits, stricter controls, and protecting VMEs. Plans for 2025 focus on enhanced conservation, climate impact adaptation, and improved electronic monitoring systems for vessels. Geopolitical tensions may challenge EU negotiations over access to fishing grounds and quotas.

The EU's market influence remains key in sustaining international fisheries agreements.

2.12 Assessment for 2024 and outlook for 2025 and beyond

Nowcast for 2024 and 2025

The nowcast results for 2024 and 2025 are detailed throughout each of the chapters for the main analyses, as well as in Tables 2.2.2-2.2.6. This section summarises the performance of the EU fleet in 2024 and 2025 based on nowcasting and preliminary data (where available). The EWG 25-07 notes that the nowcasting is only based on the number of vessels, fuel prices, and general fish prices for the Mediterranean, Black Sea, and Other Fishing Region fleet segments. For the Northeast Atlantic fleet segments, the nowcasting is also based on TACs, stock biomass (for 2024), and fish prices for each TAC species individually. As 2023 is the base year for the nowcasts, the results are strongly related to the economic performance in this year. The nowcasting methodology does not consider possible strategic changes in fleet behaviour based on optimising the trips (e.g. performing shorter trips when fuel prices are higher). Furthermore, the methodology does not consider biological effects such as phytoplankton episodes that have affected the activity of some fleets in the Mediterranean. The full nowcasting methodology is included in the annex 5 at the end of the report.

Nowcast for 2024

- The nowcast results anticipate a 4% decrease in landed weight in 2024 compared to 2023. With fish prices remaining stable, there is a similar 4% decrease in landed value.
- On the cost side, a 7% decrease is anticipated for operating costs which is largely driven by a 15% decrease in fuel costs as the price of oil fell in 2024.
- Overall, the change in economic performance is anticipated to slightly improve in 2024 across most metrics including GVA (1%), gross profit (11%), and net profit (357%). This improvement is from a record low year in 2023, and most indicators remain below their decadal average. The number of vessels and employment continue a long-term and steady decline.
- In terms of profitability, the gross profit margin reaches a level of 19% and the net profit margin 4%.

- Key drivers of these results are fewer fishing opportunities (decrease in income and variable costs) fuel prices (decrease in variable costs), vessel decommissioning (decrease in fixed costs), and in some Member States improving efficiency (increase in catch per day at sea).

Nowcast for 2025

- The results anticipate a 9% decrease in landed weight in 2025 compared to 2023 (6% decrease compared to 2024). This effect is compensated by higher fish prices, leading to just a 4% decrease in landed value compared to 2023 (1% decrease compared to 2024).
- On the cost side, a 11% decrease is anticipated (4% decrease compared to 2024), driven largely by lower fuel costs and lower vessel-related costs due to a smaller fleet size.
- Overall, the change in economic performance is anticipated to moderately improve in 2025 across most metrics including GVA (5% compared to 2023, 4% compared to 2024), gross profit (26% compared to 2023, 13% compared to 2024), and net profit (704% compared to 2023, 76% compared to 2024). This year-on-year improvement brings these indicators from their lower levels recorded in 2023 to levels that are closer to their decadal average. The number of vessels and employment continue a long-term and steady decline.
- In terms of profitability, the gross profit margin reaches a level of 21% and the net profit margin 7%.
- Key drivers of these results are vessel decommissioning (decrease in fixed costs), the continued lower fuel prices (decrease in all costs), and rising fish prices (increase in income), particularly for pelagic species. The change in fishing opportunities varies significantly by Member States and fleet segments.

Nowcast by Member State

- Results for 2024 anticipate that most Member States improve their profitability compared to 2023. The Member States with reduced profitability include the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania) and the Black Sea countries (Bulgaria, Romania). In terms of the absolute level, all Member States are anticipated to report positive gross profits. In net terms, 16 Member States report positive profits, which is up from 11 in 2023.
- Results for 2025 anticipate a further improvement in the main economic indicators. Only four Member States have reduced profitability and again the poor fishing conditions in the Baltic Sea are a clear driver in three of the four cases (Germany, Poland, Latvia). Like in 2024, all Member States are anticipated to report positive gross profits. In net terms, 18 Member States report positive net profits (all but Cyprus, Germany, Ireland, and Malta).

Nowcast by type of fishery

- The SSCF follows the same trend as the whole EU fleet in 2024 with landed weight and landed value both decreasing by 4%. GVA in 2024 remains at a similar level (1% decrease), while gross profits and net profits increase by 9% and 31% respectively following a reduction in operating costs and fuel costs in particular. For 2025, landed weight and value remain similar to 2024 (a 1% increase and 0% change, respectively), but a further reduction in fuel costs improve economic indicators further (a 7% increase in gross profits and 16% increase in net profits). The gross profit margin reaches 25% and the Net profit

margin reaches 14% in 2025, which are the highest levels of SSCF profitability recorded in the time series.

- For the LSF the situation is similar for 2024, with landed weight and landed value decreasing both by 2%. In 2025 the value of landings decreases by 5% but is compensated for by higher fish prices such that there is no change in the value of landings. Over both 2024 and 2025 there is a decrease in the number of vessels and days at sea such that operating costs fall, and economic indicators rise. GVA increases by 3% in 2024 and 5% in 2025, gross profit increases by 15% in 2024 and 16% in 2025, and Net profit increases by 183% in 2024 and 211% in 2025. The gross profit margin reaches 20% and the net profit margin reaches 5% in 2025, which are in line with their decadal average.
- The trend in economic performance is more negative for the DWF than the SCFF and LSF. In 2024, landed weight falls by 9% and landed value falls by 6%. In 2025, landed weight falls by a further 8% and landed value falls by 3%. In both years price increases help compensate for the decrease in landed weight. Similar to the SCFF and LSF, the DWF records decreases in operational costs driven by reductions in the number of vessels, DaS, and fuel prices. The result is that GVA decrease by 1% in 2024 and increases by 6% in 2025, gross profit increases by 4% in 2024 and 21% in 2025, and net profit increases by 4% in 2024 and 21% in 2025. The gross profit margin reaches 19% and the net profit margin reaches 8%, which are the highest level since 2017.

Outlook for 2025 and beyond

The outlook for 2025 is that landings will decrease due to several significant decreases in fishing opportunities across EU waters. This includes much of the Baltic Sea (e.g. herring and sprat), Iberian horse mackerel, Northeast Atlantic mackerel, Celtic Sea hake, and restrictions on effort and a few TAC species in the Western Mediterranean. However, there are indications that fish prices help compensate for these TAC reductions as fish prices have risen in 2025 for many of the same species including mackerel, sprat, hake and over the same time period as the TAC reduction. This may be due to price elasticity as lower quantities of landings lead to higher first sale prices. In contrast, prices are stable for other species that do not have the same TAC trend (e.g. haddock, whiting, monkfish, Norway lobster, cod). Early indications are that restricted fishing opportunities are likely to continue, e.g. the latest Baltic Sea stock assessments show poor stock health and even lower catch advice for 2026.

Another main driver of economic performance is fuel prices, which, after peaking in 2022, have consistently decreased in 2023, 2024, and the first months of 2025 as well. This decrease in a major operating cost has led to a corresponding increase in fleet economic performance almost universally across segment sizes and countries. The major oil price forecasts (e.g. IEA, EIA) expect fuel prices to decline further in the years ahead as both OPEC and non-OPEC countries add oil supply to the market. However, current geopolitical tensions in the Middle East may cause price increases and almost certainly price volatility.

Vessel numbers continue a long-term downward trend in 2025. The same underlying factors (aging vessels, retiring fishers, fleet consolidation) appear likely to continue in future years. These trends may even be compounded if fishing opportunities decrease in future years as previously described.

A fourth key driver, interest rates, are currently decreasing after remaining around a decadal high in 2023 and 2024. Expectations are that interest rates may decrease further, therefore lowering investment costs for the EU fishing fleet.

Taken together, the picture is of a reduced EU fishing fleet, with reduced landings, but with a more ambiguous economic outlook if fish prices and cost drivers continue to improve.

Table 2.12.1. Main results for the EU by MS fleet for 2023 and nowcasts for 2024 and 2025

	Gross Value Added (EUR million)					Gross profit (EUR million)					Net profit (EUR million)					GVA to revenue (%)					Gross profit margin (%)					Net profit margin (%)				
MS	2023	2024	2025	% diff 2024-2023	% diff 2025-2024	2023	2024	2025	% diff 2024-2023	% diff 2025-2024	2023	2024	2025	% diff 2024-2023	% diff 2025-2024	2023	2024	2025	% diff 2024-2023	% diff 2025-2024	2023	2024	2025	% diff 2024-2023	% diff 2025-2024	2023	2024	2025	% diff 2024-2023	% diff 2025-2024
BEL	41.7	39.6	39.0	-5%	-2%	10.0	10.7	11.7	7%	9%	-2.4	-0.6	0.2	74%	127%	43	45	46	5%	4%	10	12	14	18%	15%	-2	-1	0	72%	129%
BGR	4.2	4.5	4.8	6%	7%	2.4	2.5	2.9	3%	16%	1.6	1.5	1.9	-2%	26%	62	63	67	2%	7%	35	35	40	-1%	15%	23	22	27	-5%	24%
CYP	3.3	3.7	3.8	11%	2%	1.5	1.7	1.9	17%	12%	-0.4	-0.3	0.0	32%	95%	50	52	55	4%	7%	22	24	28	10%	16%	-6	-4	0	37%	94%
DEU	81.9	68.2	61.9	-17%	-9%	28.0	19.5	15.5	-31%	-20%	-10.0	-23.1	-29.7	-131%	-29%	43	38	37	-10%	-4%	15	11	9	-25%	-16%	-5	-13	-18	-149%	-36%
DNK	277.9	282.6	283.2	2%	0%	168.2	178.3	178.4	6%	0%	-10.8	18.3	23.7	269%	29%	63	66	67	5%	2%	38	42	42	10%	1%	-2	4	6	275%	31%
ESP	841.5	857.1	899.6	2%	5%	215.8	261.9	307.6	21%	17%	82.1	137.5	184.5	67%	34%	46	49	51	6%	5%	12	15	18	27%	17%	4	8	10	75%	34%
EST	16.5	16.1	15.9	-2%	-2%	10.6	10.5	10.4	-2%	-1%	7.7	7.6	7.5	-1%	-1%	69	72	73	4%	2%	44	46	48	5%	2%	32	34	34	5%	2%
FIN	20.5	23.9	27.0	17%	13%	8.3	12.7	15.0	53%	19%	-3.0	1.4	4.1	145%	203%	51	59	62	15%	5%	21	31	34	50%	11%	-8	3	10	144%	182%
FRA	660.2	671.8	682.7	2%	2%	138.2	174.3	197.6	26%	13%	-55.0	20.3	53.0	137%	161%	48	52	54	7%	4%	10	13	16	33%	16%	-4	2	4	139%	168%
GRC	149.0	172.5	184.6	16%	7%	30.3	42.4	58.9	40%	39%	7.4	17.1	33.7	130%	97%	50	53	56	5%	6%	10	13	18	27%	38%	3	5	10		96%
HRV	80.0	77.7	74.3	-3%	-4%	43.4	45.6	47.3	5%	4%	23.8	27.8	31.5	17%	13%	63	66	69	5%	5%	34	39	44	13%	14%	19	24	29	26%	24%
IRL	144.5	121.7	126.9	-16%	4%	48.0	36.1	40.9	-25%	13%	-4.4	-12.8	-8.0	-187%	38%	45	43	44	-5%	4%	15	13	14	-15%	13%	-1	-4	-3	-225%	38%
ITA	381.6	388.0	411.6	2%	6%	144.7	154.4	181.7	7%	18%	-8.4	2.9	30.0	134%	928%	58	59	63	3%	6%	22	24	28	8%	17%	-1	0	5	135%	925%
LTU	29.2	14.6	15.8	-50%	8%	19.9	5.4	7.0	-73%	29%	13.1	-1.4	0.1	-111%	109%	28	16	18	-41%	10%	19	6	8	-68%	31%	12	-2	0	-113%	109%
LVA	19.3	16.6	15.4	-14%	-7%	12.1	10.5	9.6	-13%	-8%	11.6	10.0	9.2	-14%	-8%	76	77	78	1%	1%	48	48	48	2%	0%	46	46	46	1%	0%
MLT	8.1	7.3	7.9	-10%	8%	1.6	0.7	1.3	-59%	94%	-9.0	-9.9	-9.4	-10%	5%	46	45	48	-4%	6%	9	4	8	-56%	91%	-52	-61	-57	-18%	6%
NLD	111.5	157.7	176.4	41%	12%	19.4	53.6	67.8	176%	27%	-18.6	16.4	30.5	188%	87%	36	47	49	28%	4%	6	16	19	150%	18%	-6	5	8	180%	74%
POL	27.9	26.7	27.7	-4%	4%	5.2	7.8	7.4	51%	-6%	-2.5	1.1	1.0	145%	-7%	63	67	69	7%	2%	12	20	18	69%	-7%	-6	3	3	150%	-9%
PRT	238.2	236.8	250.9	-1%	6%	73.3	77.7	91.9	6%	18%	18.5	21.1	42.4	14%	101%	57	59	63	2%	7%	18	19	23	9%	19%	4	5	11	17%	103%
ROU	3.4	2.6	2.3	-25%	-9%	2.7	1.9	1.8	-28%	-7%	2.2	1.5	1.4	-33%	-5%	73	70	73	-4%	4%	58	53	56	-9%	7%	47	40	44	-15%	9%
SVN	2.5	2.6	2.6	3%	0%	2.2	2.3	2.3	5%	0%	2.0	2.2	2.2	5%	1%	78	81	82	3%	2%	68	71	73	5%	3%	63	66	68	5%	3%
SWE	59.6	65.3	74.0	10%	13%	38.2	43.5	52.5	14%	21%	13.9	20.6	40.7	48%	98%	47	53	63	12%	18%	30	35	44	17%	26%	11	17	34		107%
EU	3,202	3,258	3,388	2%	4%	1,024	1,154	1,311	13%	14%	59	259	450	337%	74%																

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call. Nowcast for 2024 and 2025.

3. REGIONAL ANALYSIS

3.1 Introduction

The EU fishing fleet primarily operates in FAO areas 27 (Northeast Atlantic, Baltic, and North seas) and 37 (Mediterranean and Black seas). Some EU fleets also fish in more distant regions, known as "Other Fishing Regions" (OFR), including EU outermost areas.

This section analyzes the economic performance of the EU fishing fleet by main region. Economic data by fleet segment are broken down based on effort and landings data at the sub-region level (FAO level 3 or 4). Due to explicit data and methodological limitations (see Annex 4), all results provided in this chapter should be considered exploratory rather than a source of factual statements that are considered robust enough to be a basis for policy decisions. See Annex 4 for more details on the methodology used.

The EU fishing fleet was analysed by the following fishing regions:

North Atlantic (NAO):

- North Sea & Eastern Arctic (NSEA).
- Baltic Sea (BS).
- North Western Waters (extended) (NWW).
- Southern Western Waters (SWW).

Mediterranean & Black seas (MBS):

- Mediterranean Sea (MED).
- Black Sea (BKS).

Other Fishing Regions (OFR):

- EU Outermost regions (OMR) – six France, two Portugal and one Spain.
- Distant Water Fleet (DWF) – NAFO, ICCAT, IOTC, CECAF and NEAFC.

3.2 North Sea & Eastern Arctic

3.2.1 Regional Details

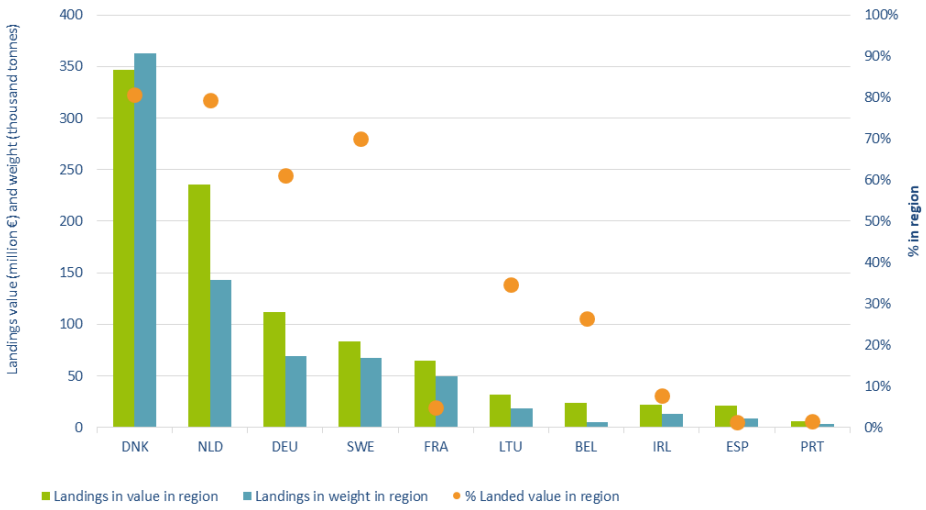
The North Sea & Eastern Arctic (NSEA) region, defined for this report, includes ICES areas 27.1 through 27.7d. The analysis covers landings from fleets of Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, Ireland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, and Sweden. These fleets primarily target high-value species, such as common sole, shrimp, and Norway lobster, along with other demersal and pelagic species.

In 2023, the Danish fleet led in landed weight (363,000 tonnes) and value (EUR 347 million), followed by the Dutch fleet (143,000 tonnes and EUR 236 million). Together, these two countries contributed 68% of the landed weight and 61% of the landed value in the NSEA. The French, German, Swedish, and Belgian fleets had lower landings.

The NSEA is crucial for Denmark (81% of total landings), the Netherlands (79%), Sweden (70%), Germany (61%), Lithuania (35%), and Belgium (26%). Other countries' dependency was below 8%. Notably, Germany's dependency decreased (71% in 2022 to 61% in 2023), while Lithuania's increased (24% in 2022 to 35% in 2023).

Denmark caught 73% of its landings in the NSEA, followed by the Netherlands (55%), Germany (42%), Sweden (47%), Belgium (31%), and Lithuania (10%).

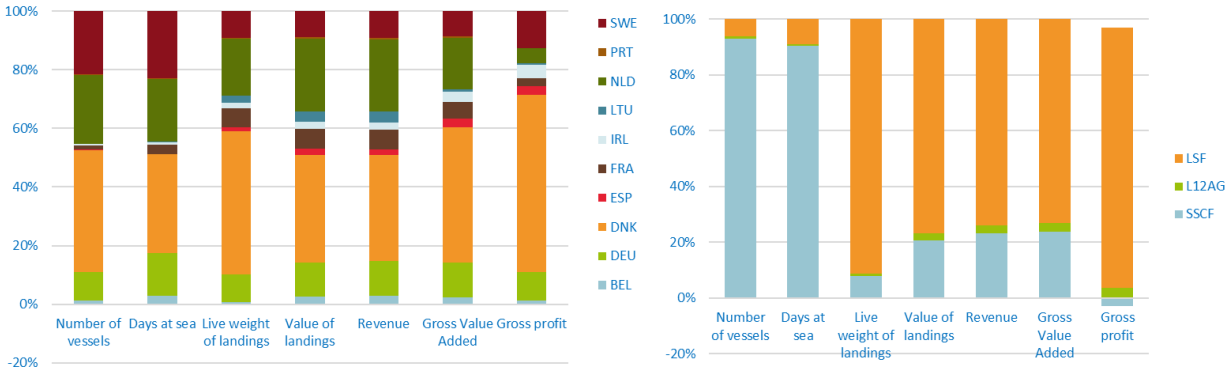
Figure 3.2.1. Importance of the NSEA region for MS fisheries in terms of landings weight and value, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Although the share of the number of small-scale vessels in 2023 was almost half (47%) of the total fleet and the effort was slightly less than a quarter (18%) of the total days-at-sea in the NSEA, their economic contribution as well as their share of landed weight was marginal. In contrast, the LSF landed 97% of the total weight and 94% of the total value (see Figure 3.2.2).

Figure 3.2.2. Share by MS fleet and fishing activity in the NSEA, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

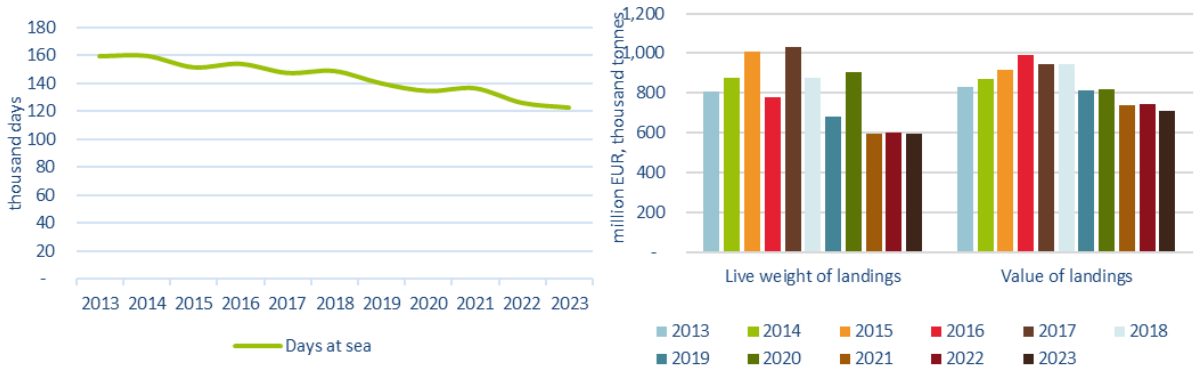
3.2.2 Overview of the main results for EU fleets in the NSEA

Fishing effort, landings, and prices

The total fishing effort in 2023 amounted to 156,000 days at sea (DaS), which is approximately 6% lower than in 2022 (166,000 DaS) and 23% lower than the average for the period 2013-2022. The weight of landings was about 1% lower (741,000 tonnes in 2023), and 36% lower than the average between 2013 and 2022. With a decrease in fish prices averaging 6.6% (to 1.28 euro/kg), the total value of landings in 2023 was EUR 948 million, 12% lower than in 2022. This value was 31% lower than the average of 2013-2022.

Fish prices in the North Sea have fluctuated over recent years. The price for common shrimp was particularly high in 2016 and 2017 (6.61 and 6.50 euro/kg, respectively). From 2018 to 2021, prices stabilized between 2.50 and 3.50 euro/kg. In 2022, the price rose by 28% to 4.92 euro/kg, while the volume of landings increased by 3% to 27,000 tonnes. In 2023, common shrimp prices increased by 14% to 5.71 euro/kg, while the weight of landings decreased to slightly over 15,000 tonnes. Prices for herring increased by 18% in 2023 to 0.65 euro/kg, while the landings in volume decreased by 19% to 218,000 tonnes. Prices for mackerel increased by 15% to 1.21 euro/kg, while the volume of landings decreased by over 5% to 68,000 tonnes. Cod prices were 3% higher at 2.96 euro/kg, while the volume of landings dropped by 11% to 30,000 tonnes. Fuel prices in 2023 decreased by 24% to 0.73 euro/litre, returning towards pre-2022 levels but not as low as prices before the COVID-19 pandemic. For comparison, in 2020 the fuel price was 0.39 euro/litre. Fuel is an important operational cost and a critical factor for profitability.

Figure 3.2.3. Trends on effort and landings for MS fleets operating in the NSEA.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

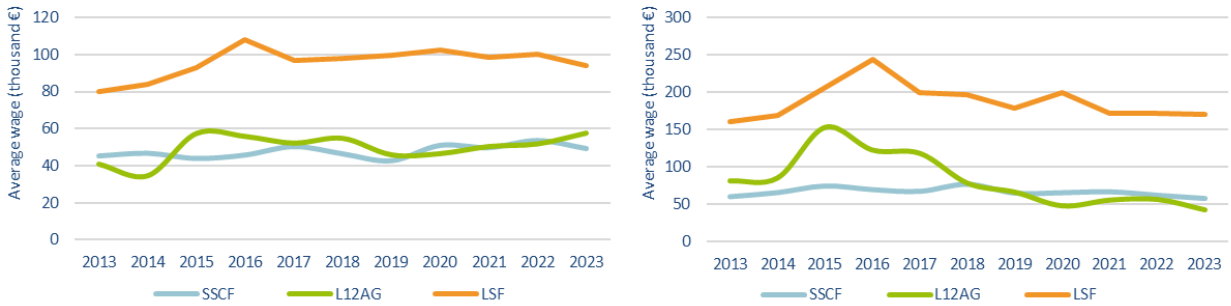
Employment, wages and, labour productivity

Employment measured in terms of FTE remained stable between 2013 and 2018, ranging from 4,200 to 4,600 FTE. Since 2019, employment has decreased, reaching its lowest point at just over 3,000 FTE in 2023. The primary contributors to employment are the Netherlands (35%), Denmark (23%), and Sweden (13%). In 2023, overall regional employment was approximately 34% lower compared to the average between 2013 and 2021.

Wages per FTE remained relatively stable in the LSF from 2021 to 2023. Between 2013 and 2021, wages per FTE increased by 21% (see Figure 3.2.4). In 2023, the average wage in the LSF was estimated at roughly EUR 94,000, a significant increase from EUR 76,000 in 2022. This increase is due to the inclusion of a new activity category for vessels under 12 metres with active gears (L12AG), which had previously been clustered within the LSF. The average wages in the L12AG group ranged between EUR 34,000 and EUR 57,000, averaging EUR 50,000 from 2013 to 2023. The lower average wages of the L12AG group likely reduced the average wages of the LSF fleet when these vessels were included in the LSF category. For the L12AG fleet, average wages showed a decreasing trend from 2015 to 2019 but have been increasing since. The SSCF exhibited variability in average wages over the period from 2013 to 2023, with average wages at EUR 49,000 in 2023.

The productivity (GVA/FTE) of the LSF fluctuated between 2013 and 2021 without a clear trend. In 2023, productivity for the LSF was slightly lower than in 2022 (-7%) and also lower than the average of the period 2013-2022 (-12%). Productivity fluctuation in the LSF decreased in 2023 compared to 2022 due to the separate analysis of the L12AG activity category. The L12AG mainly exhibited a decreasing trend in productivity, with an all-time high in 2015 and an all-time low in 2023, recording an 82% decrease in 2023 compared to 2015. For the SSCF, productivity remained relatively stable, reaching its lowest point since 2013 in 2023.

Figure 3.2.4. Trends on average wage per FTE and GVA per FTE by fishing activity for MS fleets operating in the NSEA.

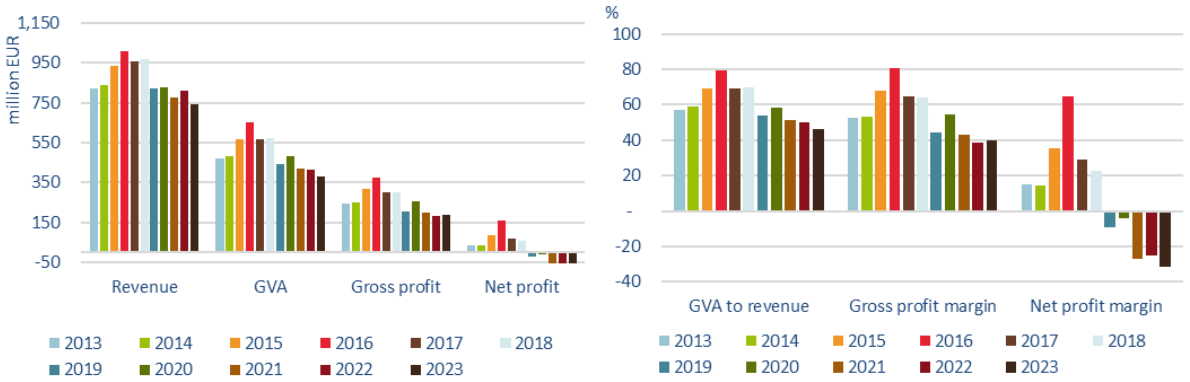


Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Economic performance

In 2023, the NSEA fleet generated EUR 984 million in revenue, a 15% drop from 2022. The GVA for the fleets was estimated at EUR 460 million, down 12% from 2022. Gross profit was about EUR 199 million, a 4% decrease compared to 2022 (Figure 3.2.5).

Figure 3.2.5. Trends on revenue and profits for MS fleets operating in the NSEA.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

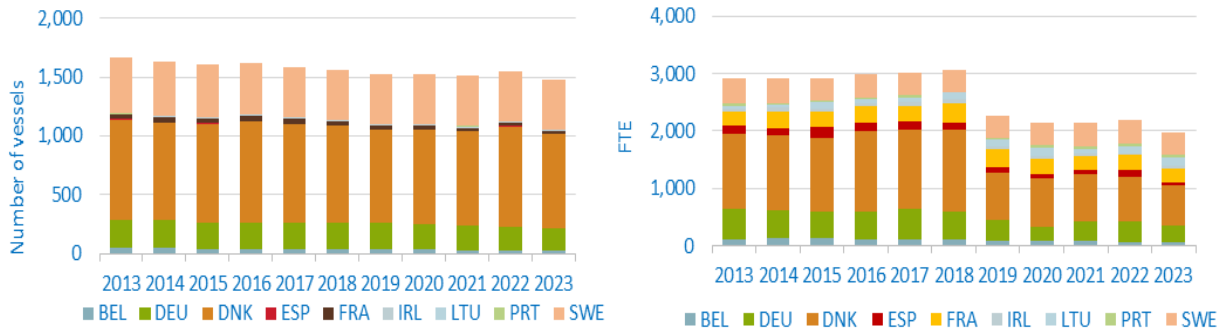
3.2.3 Trends by Member State fleet

Fleet capacity and employment

In 2023, EU fleets in the NSEA numbered 1,929 vessels, down 6% from 2022. Nearly half were in the SSCF (47%). Denmark had the largest fleet with 803 vessels (42%), followed by the Netherlands (454) and Sweden (418). The greatest declines were in Denmark (-50 vessels), the Netherlands (-44), and Germany (-14), while only minor increases occurred in the French (+2) and German (+1) L12AG segments. No country saw a net fleet size increase.

Total NSEA employment was 3,012 FTE, a 10% decrease from 2022. The Dutch fleet had the highest employment (1,042 FTE), followed by Danish (697 FTE) and Swedish (389 FTE) fleets.

Figure 3.2.6. Trends on number of vessels and employment (in FTE) for MS fleets operating in the NSEA.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

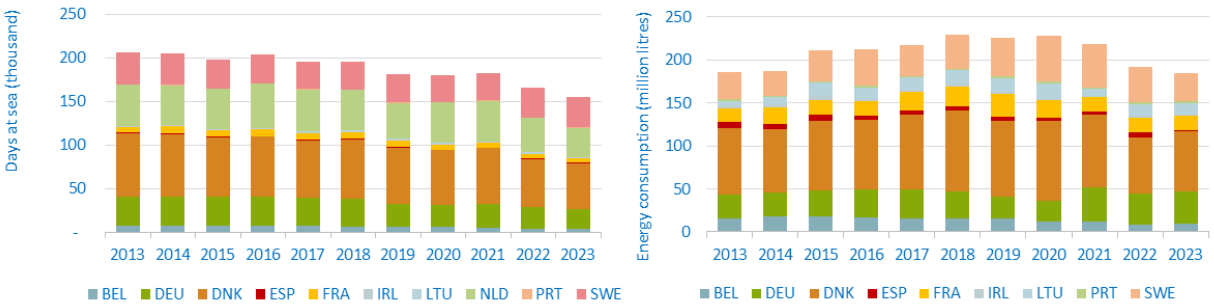
Fishing effort

Between 2013 and 2018, fleet capacity development saw stable effort levels (196,000 – 207,000 DaS). An 8% drop occurred in 2019, remaining stable until it further decreased by 10% in 2022 and another 6% in 2023 to 156,000 DaS. This recent decrease was mainly due to reductions in the Dutch and Danish fleets. Conversely, efforts from Danish, Irish, and Lithuanian fleets increased.

Around 18% of DaS were carried out by SSCF, with Swedish and Danish small-scale vessels contributing 52% and 39%, respectively. The L12AG fleet contributed 5% of DaS, predominantly from Swedish and Danish vessels (each 44%). LSF accounted for 77% of DaS, with Denmark (32%), the Netherlands (27%), Germany (18%), and Sweden (15%) being the most active.

Fuel consumption increased between 2014 and 2018 but stabilized in 2019 and 2020 (-1% and +1%). It then decreased in 2021 (-5%), 2022 (-12%), and 2023 (-4%), totaling 184 million litres in 2023.

Figure 3.2.7. Trends on fishing effort (in DaS) and fuel consumption for MS fleets operating in the NSEA.



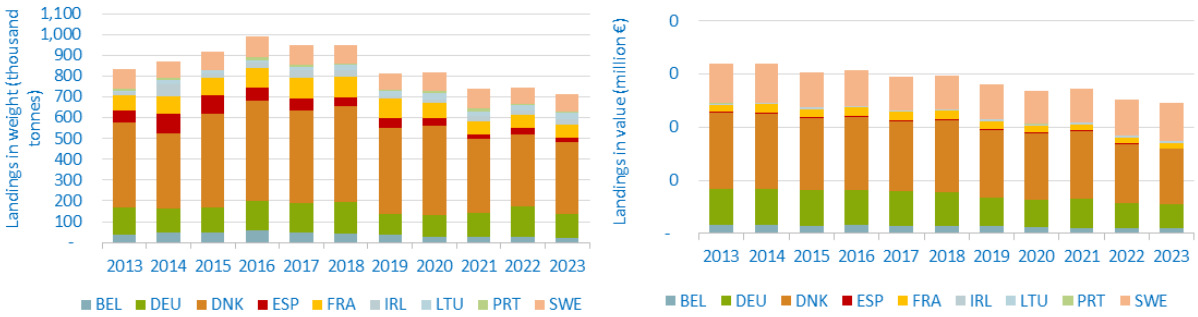
Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Landings and top species

In 2020, landings increased by 29% compared to 2019, but dropped again in 2021 by 33%, the lowest since 2013. In 2022, landings rose slightly by 1% to 793,000 tonnes, then fell by 6% in 2023 to 745,000 tonnes.

Despite higher landings in 2020, their value decreased by 16% from 2018 to 2019 and remained stable in 2020. From 2013 to 2016, the value of landings increased annually; from 2017 to 2023, values fluctuated each year. In 2023, it dropped by 8% to 948,000 tonnes. (Figure 3.2.8).

Figure 3.2.8. Trends on landings in weight and value for MS fleets operating in the NSEA.

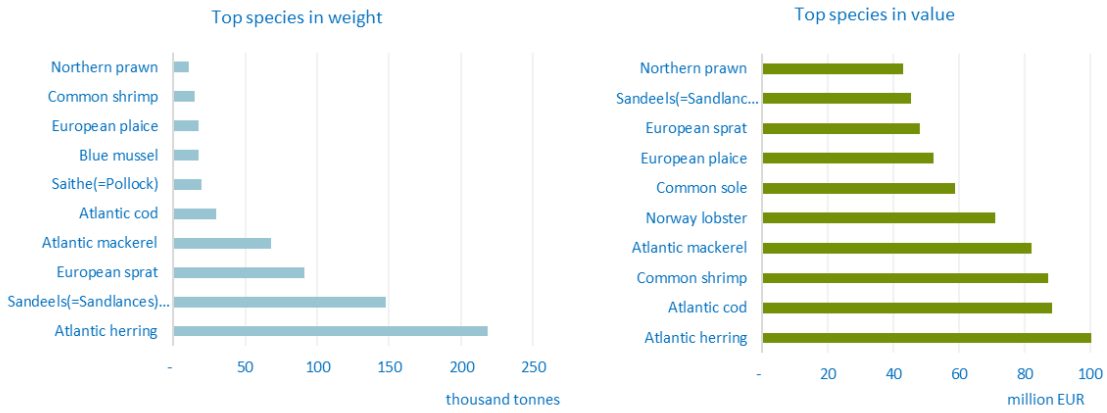


Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

In 2023, the most significant species by weight were Atlantic herring (218,000 tonnes, -16% compared to 2022) and Sand eel (148,000 tonnes, +74%). European sprat (91,000 tonnes; +2%), Atlantic mackerel (68,000 tonnes; -5%) and Atlantic cod (30,000 tonnes; -10%) also had substantial landings (Figure 3.9).

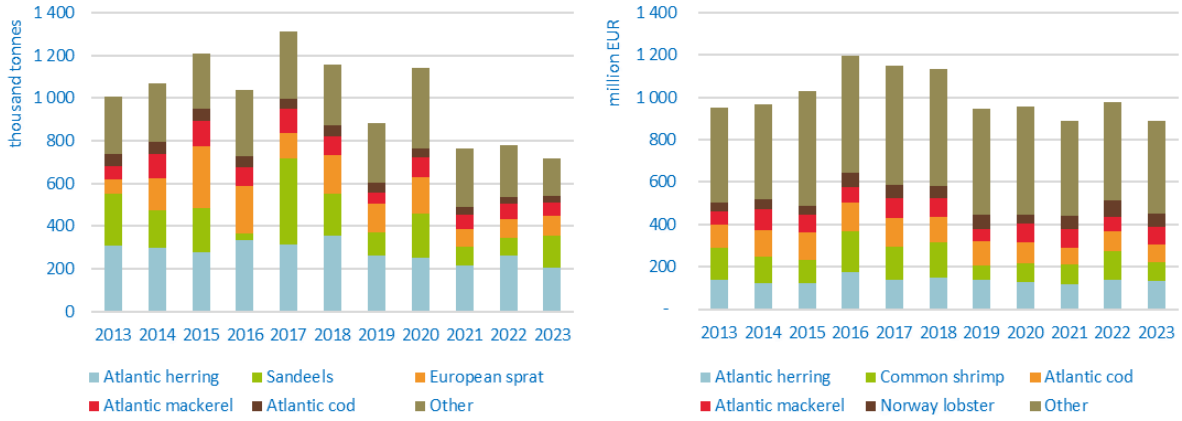
By value, the most notable species in 2023 were: Atlantic herring (EUR 142 million, +2% compared to 2022), Atlantic cod (EUR 89 million, -7%), common shrimp (EUR 87 million, -35%), Atlantic mackerel (EUR 82 million, +12%), and Norway lobster (EUR 71 million, -15%) (Figure 3.2.9).

Figure 3.2.9. Top 10 species in landed weight and value from the NSEA, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.2.10. Trends on landings for the top species in landed weight and value for MS fleets operating in the NSEA.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Economic performance

In 2023, the revenue generated by the EU NSEA fleet was estimated to be EUR 984 million, representing a decrease of approximately 13% compared to 2022. Of this total revenue, Denmark contributed 36% (EUR 357 million), the Netherlands contributed 29% (EUR 241 million), and Germany contributed 12% (EUR 117 million).

In absolute terms, the most significant reduction in revenue was observed in the Dutch fleet, which declined from EUR 320 million in 2022 to EUR 241 million in 2023, marking a 25% decrease. The Spanish fleet experienced the second largest reduction, with revenue decreasing from EUR 60 million to EUR 17 million, a substantial 71% decline. Conversely, the Lithuanian fleet saw an increase in revenue from EUR 31 million to EUR 38 million, the Swedish fleet from EUR 84 million to EUR 89 million, and the Danish fleet from EUR 352 million to EUR 357 million. Lithuania recorded the highest relative revenue increase at 23%, while Sweden and Ireland both showed a relative increase of 6%.

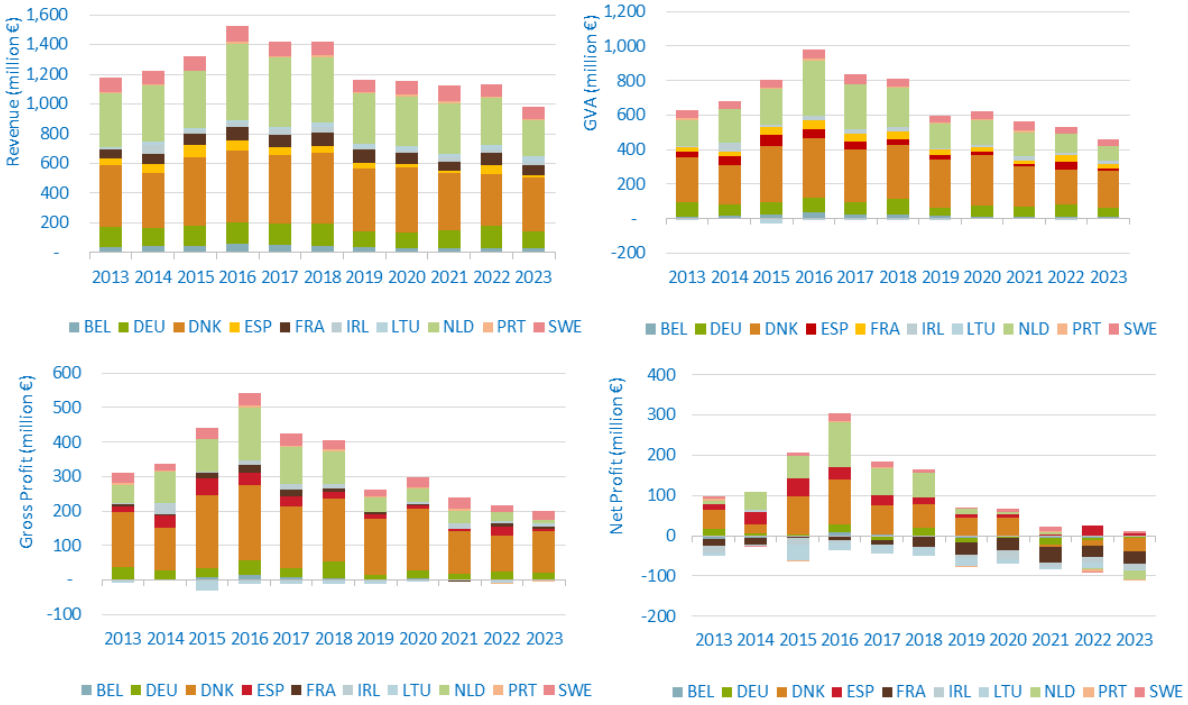
The GVA produced by the fleet analyzed in 2023 was estimated at EUR 460 million, indicating an overall decrease of 12% compared to 2022. The fleets achieved a Gross profit of EUR 199 million, reflecting a 4% decrease from 2022. However, the Net profit was negative, standing at -EUR 99 million, compared to -EUR 65 million in 2022. Only the Swedish (EUR 7 million) and the Spanish fleets (EUR 5 million) reported positive revenue.

By fishing activity, the SSCF sector generated EUR 21 million in revenue in 2023, a decrease of 13% relative to 2022, while the revenue for the L12AG fleet decreased by 7%, from EUR 10 million to EUR 9 million. The LSF segment experienced the largest decline both in absolute and relative terms, with revenue decreasing by 14% from EUR 1,068 million to EUR 915 million.

Despite the overall decline in total revenue across all fleet activities, certain countries recorded increases in revenue within specific fleet activities such as SSCF, L12AG, or LSF. Among the SSCF fleets, only France reported an increase in revenue, rising by 53% to EUR 1.3 million. The Danish, German, and Dutch SSCF fleets all faced revenue declines. Within the L12AG fleets, only Denmark and Sweden had

substantial revenues exceeding EUR 1 million. The Danish L12AG revenue decreased by 21% to EUR 4.3 million, while the Swedish L12AG revenue increased by 7% to EUR 3.6 million. Marginal changes were noted for the Dutch, French, and Swedish L12AG fleets. In the LSF fleets, the most considerable revenue increases were seen in the Danish fleet (up 3% to EUR 345 million) and the Swedish fleet (up 7% to EUR 76 million). The largest reductions in LSF revenue occurred in the Dutch (down 25% to EUR 238 million), Spanish (down 71% to EUR 17 million), and German (down 22% to EUR 117 million) fleets.

Figure 3.2.11. Trends on Revenue, GVA. Gross profit and Net profit for MS fleets operating in the NSEA.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

3.2.4 Main factors affecting the performance of the fleet

Factors that may have contributed to the overall situation include:

- The uncertain situation concerning TACs as a result of Brexit at the beginning of 2021 and lacking agreements with the United Kingdom. The quotas of important demersal species were set to 25% of the quota for 2020 in the first quarter of 2021. For pelagic species like North-East Atlantic mackerel, horse mackerel, and blue whiting, the quotas were set to 45-60% for the first quarter of the year because of the seasonality of catches. In 2025 there were renegotiation with respect to the UK about the quotas and access to fishing grounds in coastal waters.
- Later in 2021, the EU agreed with the UK about the total TAC for important and shared species. The UK claimed a larger share of the TAC. 25% of the value of the fishing quotas of the EU landings in UK waters was transferred to

the UK which gradually reduces fishing opportunities for EU fleets from 2021 to 2025. Most of the transfer has happened in 2021 (60%) and 2022 (70%), and the remainder in 2023 (92%) and in 2024 (100%). Brexit therefore has reshaped fisheries relations with consequences for some EU fleets operating in the North Sea but also in the English Channel, Irish Sea, and the Atlantic Ocean. Fish stocks in the North Sea have become shared stocks with the UK, which must now also be jointly managed. Access for EU vessels to UK waters is now subject to licenses delivered by UK authorities. The quota reduction in value for the EU will mainly affect France, Ireland, and the Netherlands, but also Denmark, Germany, Spain, and Belgium, and to a lesser extent Sweden, Poland, Portugal, Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia. The outlook is however that the impact of Brexit on fisheries should reduce over time.

- Negotiations between the EU and Norway, the Faroe Islands, and Iceland about TAC shares (mainly for blue whiting and mackerel) have led to unfavourable development of EU TAC shares and landings. The EU TAC share appears to further decline in recent years but is in accordance to ICES advice (ICES, 2024) .
- A decrease in landings of (flat)fish. Landings of common sole, for instance, decreased by 37% in 2022 compared to 2021, and another 26% in 2023 compared to 2022.
- Vertical integration, where companies own vessels and also own other parts of the seafood supply chain, has been reduced leading to shifts in ownership since 2021.
- Fuel prices returned closer to pre-2022 maximum prices but were still very high and therefore higher fuel prices may have had an impact.

Factors that may hamper economic performance in the future include:

- Ongoing quota adjustment as a consequence of UK leaving the EU since 2021 will have a substantial negative impact on pelagic (herring) as well as flatfish (common sole and plaice) fishing performance in the region.
- In the Netherlands, the BAR (Brexit Adjustment Regulation) has come into effect for fishers to stop fishing activities. As a result of fewer fishing opportunities, for flatfish, 51 vessels were decommissioned in 2023. Because of this cut in capacity, it is expected that the remaining (flatfish)segment will not be able to produce enough fish in the coming years, and that quota will be underexploited.
- The catchability of flatfish is going down and although the exact cause is currently still unknown, climate change, shifts in food availability for species as well as spatial availability for fishes to dwell and reproduce are carefully suggested to play a current and increasing role.
- The quota of common sole has severely decreased for some countries, like the Netherlands. From 2021 to 2023 the Dutch sole quota decreased by 58%, and in 2024 it decreased by another 61% compared to 2023. A large part of the value of landings by the Dutch fleet comes from sole (17%), so the cut in quota will have considerable effects on the economic performance. Additionally, sole is often caught together with plaice. It is therefore likely that the plaice catches will also go down as a consequence of the reduction in sole quota. Hence, the effect on the economic performance will be even higher (8% of the landings value of the Dutch fleet is generated by plaice).

- Innovation and progress in the energy transition is hampering because of a lack of R&D and solutions that can be implemented. In addition, if fish prices remain high and fuel prices do not peak, marine diesel is still the most energy dense fuel especially in relation to the volume that can be taken onboard. Such factors further stop the drive and investment for R&D.

Regulation and Fisheries management in the region

The management plans in force in 2023 that impacted the North Sea/Eastern Arctic included:

- Long-term plans for cod stocks and the fisheries exploiting those stocks (Council Regulation (EC) No 1342/2008). The effort controls of the cod recovery zone were repealed in November 2016 by the EU Parliament and Council Regulation No 2016/2094. This is a long-term plan and as it was already implemented in 2016, it will have a small impact on 2023 results.
- A multiannual plan for demersal stocks (e.g. cod, haddock, sole, plaice, saithe, etc.) in the North Sea and the fisheries (Regulation EU 2018/973) exploiting those stocks, specifying details of the implementation of the landing obligation in the North Sea and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 676/2007 and (EC) No 1342/2008.
- A multiannual plan for certain demersal stocks fished in the Western Waters and adjacent waters (Regulation 2019/472 of the European Parliament and of the Council).
- A multiannual management plan for bluefin tuna in the Eastern Atlantic was adopted to promote more selective gears with a reduced environmental impact (Council Regulation (EU) No 2023/2053 of Sep 13, 2023).

Other EU and national legislation that may affect the economic performance of the fleets operating in the NSEA include marine protected areas and spatial management issues, like:

- Wind farms: in particular the expansion of wind farm areas will have a strong effect on fishing opportunities. This process has been accelerated due to recent political developments. Wind farm areas are in general closed for fishing and thus further limit the areas left for fishing. Moreover, the installation and operation of wind farms will have an impact on the marine fauna.
- NOx emission: the Dutch (mainly shrimp-) vessels fishing near the Dutch coastline are obliged to install a scrubber before October 1st of 2023 to bring the NOx emission down to a very limited quantity. Nevertheless, the permits for fishing shrimp after 2024 are still pending. Before the beginning of 2025, a decision should be made by the Dutch government whether the shrimp fleet will be allowed to fish in Natura 2000 (N2000) areas along the Dutch coastal areas and in the Wadden Sea. This uncertainty is a real threat to the existence of this part (a large part) of the Dutch active fleet. Almost 70% of the number of vessels in the Dutch cutter fleet are shrimp vessels.
- Closed areas: from 2023 January 1st, the Dutch government did not issue permits for bottom trawling (shrimp fishery) in N2000 areas which are along the Dutch coastline. From a formal point of view, fisheries in N2000 areas are not allowed by law at the moment. A temporary permit (a derogation) is given

until the end of 2024 before it is known whether the government can grant a permit for shrimp fisheries in these areas or not. A juridical procedure is running now. The Dutch shrimp fishery depends heavily on these areas.

- Marine protected areas (MPA's): the European Parliament is discussing a possible closure of MPA to bottom trawling by 2030, an important segment for most Member States fishing in the Greater North Sea. Although, this has not direct impact on results presented here yet, it does create tension and unrest among fishers, therefore having a social impact. Furthermore, it can also have economic consequences, as such uncertainty around future fishing opportunities may reduce investments and discourage younger generations from entering the fishing industry.

Status of important stocks

At the overall level, the majority of the stocks in the NSEA experience a fishing pressure below F_{MSY} (ICES, 2024). The estimations for the spawning stocks of flatfish are good, but recruitment is lower than expected. Additionally, it is noteworthy that the uptake of flatfish quota has been very low in the last few years. Fishers have stated for some time that they are not able to catch the allowed quantities. Hence, they consider the flatfish stocks less abundant than estimated by ICES.

Atlantic herring, haddock, saithe, hake, and Norway lobster in the North Sea are all managed at biomass levels compatible with producing the MSY. However, not all Norway lobster stocks have an MSY analytical target. Yet, some Norway lobster, hake, and plaice stocks have a high spawning-stock biomass (SSB), although this has been dwindling in recent years. According to ICES advice, the plaice stock's spawning stock biomass continues to develop favourably under the current management plan, which has not changed in recent years (ICES 2024). As stock variability for MSY and SSB has increased in recent years, close attention needs to be paid to MSY and SSB for each stock, and only careful general conclusions should be made.

Despite the implementation of the cod management plan since 2003, the fishing mortality of North Sea cod is still above F_{MSY}. The recovery did not occur as quickly as expected by the ICES assessment group in 2017 (ICES, 2017). Therefore, cod in the North Sea and Eastern English Channel remains a point of concern but TAC has gone up slightly in 2023. Advice on cod remains cautious as fishing pressure remains above MSY, however stock biomass has been increasing in recent years (ICES, 2024).

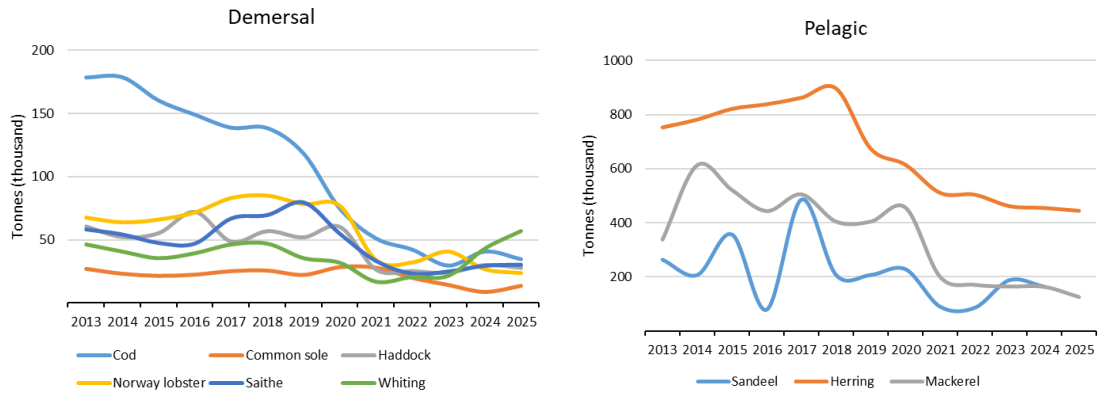
Brown shrimp (Crangon crangon) is the third most important species in value landed from the NSEA. There is no TAC regime for this species. There is a PAP (Productie en Aanvoer Plan/Production and Landings Plan) for this species in the Netherlands which includes harvest control rules and measures that can be taken to regulate the weekly fishing effort. The PAP qualifies shrimp fisheries to fish under a sustainability certificate (MSC) since 2017. In addition, much work is ongoing for tracking brown shrimp stocks in European Waters by the Working Group on Crangon crangon (WGCRAN, ICES, 2025).

TAC development of main species

Figure 3.12 shows the EU TACs for 2013 to 2025 for some pelagic and demersal species. It should be noted that in some cases the TAC areas are not limited to the NSEA and include adjacent waters. Figures for herring, cod, common sole, and Norway lobster comprise more than one stock. It has to be pointed out that up to 2020 figures include the United Kingdom quota, hence numbers from 2021 onwards are by default lower as United Kingdom shares are no longer included. EU quotas in the region have decreased significantly in recent years, particularly for the demersal sector. For the upcoming years, the TAC and quota for demersal stocks remain low, especially for common sole. An exception is whiting, where quotas have been increasing and are projected to reach a peak in 2025.

Sand eel quota has been variable over the years, with a minimum value in 2016 and 2020, but a maximum value of 2017. Mackerel quota was increased in 2020 but has shown a strong decrease since then, now stabilising towards 2025. Herring quota have been slowly decreasing since 2018. Cod and saithe quotas show a constantly decreasing trend. Norway lobster, sole, and haddock show a stable or slightly increasing trend in recent years, with especially Norway lobster showing an increase in quota towards 2023 but decreasing again towards 2025.

Figure 3.2.12. TACs pre-uplift for demersal species (left) and major pelagic species (right).



Source: Calculated based on EU TAC dataset provided to the EWG 25-07.

Landing obligation (LO)

As in 2020, in 2023 the economic impact of the implemented LO was hard to observe due to many exemptions of the discard ban for certain species in the North Sea. In the North Sea discard plan, a number of exemptions from the LO were granted for the duration of the Delegated Regulation. In 2023 Member States again have to indicate whether fisheries can implement the LO and have to submit additional scientific information supporting the exemption for STECF to assess the provided scientific information.

According to Ullrich (2018), the highest risk for the incidence of choke species was seen with Northern hake in trawl fisheries and North Sea plaice in small-meshed beam trawl fisheries. According to the 2021 ICES mixed fisheries considerations

(ICES 2021), cod might become a choke species for several fleets in 2022 and further.

In 2023, the European Council approved (Council Regulation (EU) No 2023/194 of Jan 30, 2023) to improve the legislation of the LO, in order to refine and improve monitoring and enforcement of the LO, aiming at a more economically viable and flexible fisheries. However, the LO as such remains a challenging regulation to bring into practice, and continues to have an impact on the economics of fisheries.

3.2.5 Description of relevant fisheries in the region

In 2023, Danish pelagic trawlers over 40 metres led in revenue with EUR 162 million, followed by Dutch beam trawlers over 40 metres (EUR 76 million), Danish demersal trawlers and seiners of 24-40 metres (EUR 56 million), and Dutch pelagic trawlers over 40 metres (EUR 52 million). The highest GVA fleets were Danish pelagic trawlers over 40 metres and Danish demersal trawlers and seiners of 24-40 metres.

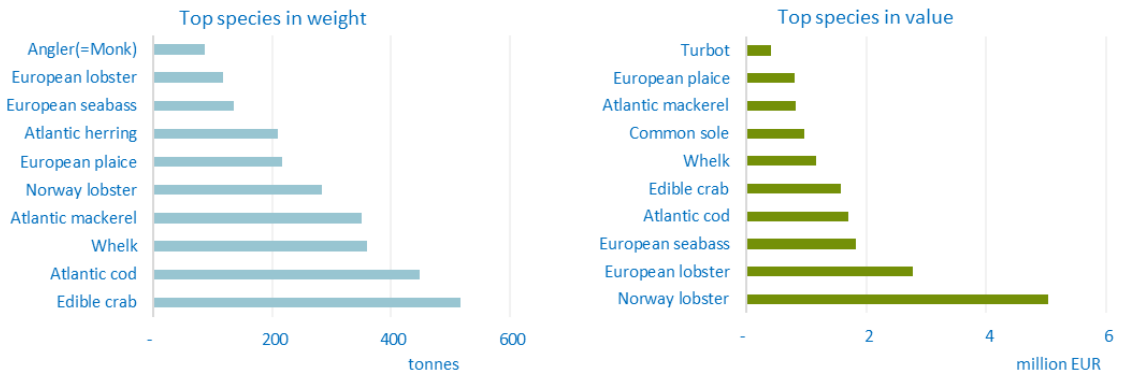
Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

SSCF from six Member States operated in NSEA in 2023. Of these, the Danish fleet, consisting of 462 vessels and employing 42 FTEs, generated the second highest revenue (EUR 8.1 million), with Sweden generating the highest revenue (EUR 9.2 million). In 2023 not a single country generated a positive net profit. The Danish fleet had the largest net loss (-EUR 1.6 million). In the NSEA region, Danish SSCF contributed 24% of total active vessels, 1.4% of FTE, and 0.8% of revenues. The Swedish SSCF, with 276 vessels generated revenue of EUR 9.2 million, but a negative net profit of -EUR 0.5 million. Overall, the SSCF segment was not profitable in 2023 (net profit of almost -EUR 6.0 million), just like in 2021 and 2022 (-EUR 5.6 million and -EUR 6.6 million, respectively).

The most profitable in terms of gross profit in 2023 were the SSCF fleets of Sweden and France with EUR 1.7 million and EUR 0.3 million, respectively. In terms of net profit, the fleet of Denmark made a negative result of -EUR 1.6 million. All Member States fleets in the NSEA demonstrated a lower FTE in comparison with total engaged crew indicating that a large majority of those employed in the SSCF are part-time or casual workers. SSCF fisheries contributed to 6% of total FTE in the region.

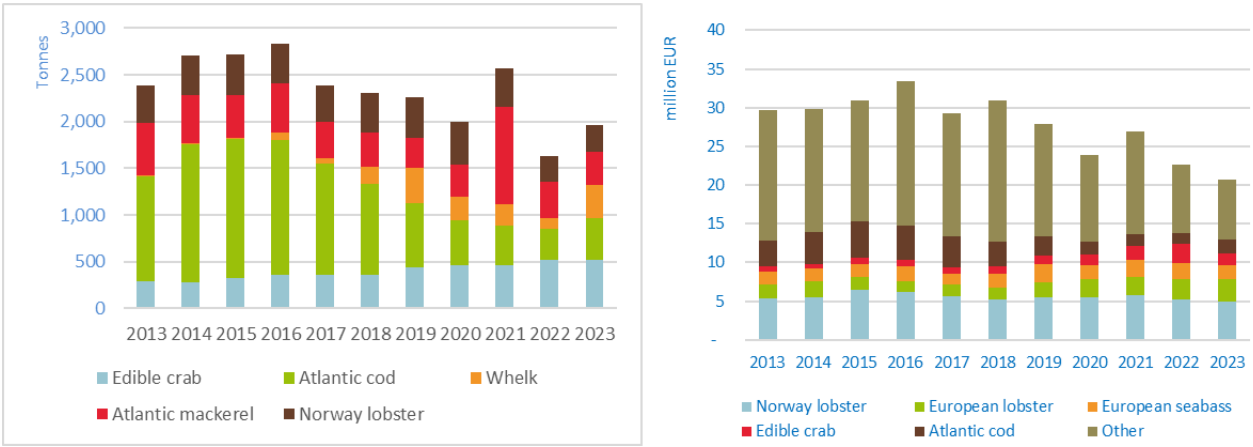
Landings were valued at EUR 21 million in 2023. The most important species for SSCF in 2023 in weight were edible crab (517 tonnes, approximately the same as in 2022), Atlantic cod (449 tonnes, +32%), whelk (360 tonnes, +326%), and Atlantic mackerel (351 tonnes, -8%). In value, the top species in 2023 were Norway lobster (EUR 5.0 million, -4% compared to 2022), European lobster (EUR 2.8 million, +6%), and European seabass (EUR 1.8 million, -15%) (Figure 3.13).

Figure 3.2.13. Top 10 species landed in weight and value by MS SSCF operating in the NSEA, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call

Figure 3.2.14. Trends in landings of the top species landed in weight and value by MS SSCF operating in the NSEA.



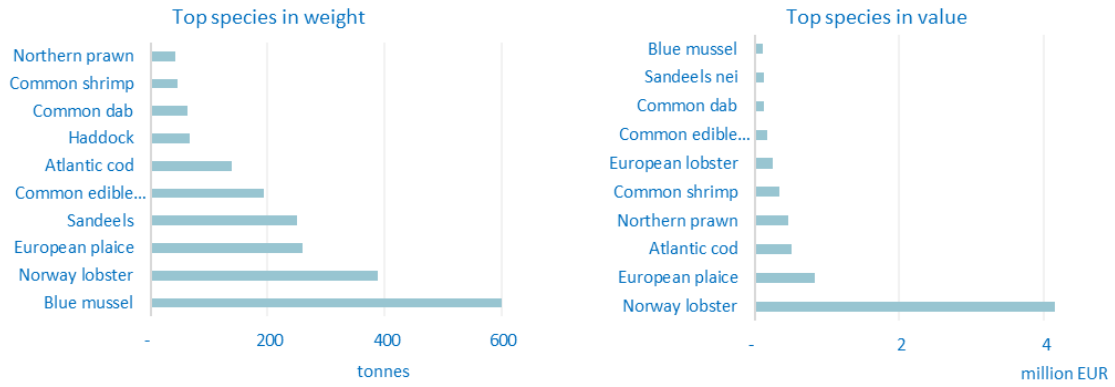
Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Vessels under 12 metres using active gear fleet (L12AG)

Sweden and the Netherlands had 41 and 21 vessels in this category, respectively, while Germany and France have only a few. Gross profit was negative for all Member States with L12AG vessels, with Denmark at -EUR 578,000. Similar gross profits for France, the Netherlands, and Sweden were around -EUR 130,000. Net profit was also negative, with Sweden at -EUR 850,000, the Netherlands at -EUR 426,000, and France and Denmark at approximately -EUR 200,000 each. The total net profit of L12AG vessels was -EUR 3.6 million. Except for France's negative GVA (-EUR 89,000), other states showed positive GVA values, Denmark leading with EUR 1.6 million.

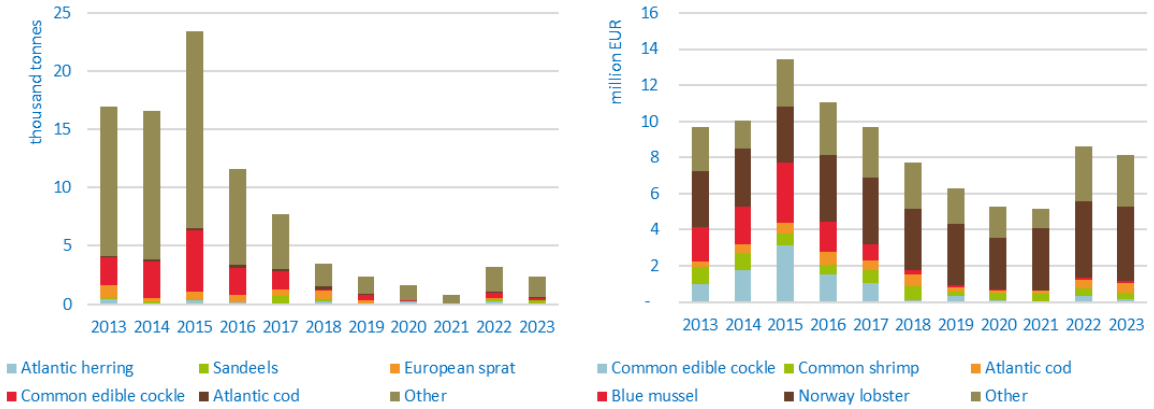
Despite being newly categorized in 2023, the trends from 2013-2023 remained stable with a peak in 2015. In 2023, the L12AG vessels provided 70 FTE, primarily from Sweden (36) and Denmark (26). The Netherlands employed 67 crew but only accounted for 5 FTE, indicating occasional activity. Overall, 208 crew worked part-time or periodically on these vessels.

Figure 3.2.15. Top 10 species landed in weight and value by MS L12AG operating in the NSEA, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.2.16. Trends in landings of the top species landed in weight and value by MS L12AG operating in the NSEA.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

The total landings value for L12AG vessels in 2023 was estimated at EUR 8.1 million, mainly from Denmark (EUR 4.2 million) and Sweden (EUR 3.6 million). Norway lobster was the most valuable species at EUR 4.2 million, followed by European plaice (EUR 834,000) and Atlantic cod (EUR 504,000). In terms of weight, blue mussel (600,000 tonnes), Norway lobster (388,000 tonnes), and European plaice (260,000 tonnes) were the top species.

Large-scale fishery (LSF)

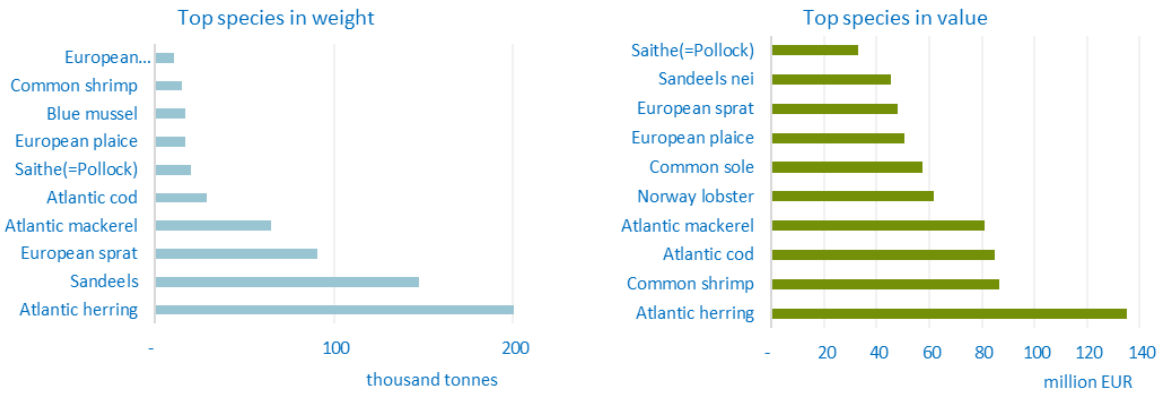
In 2023, Nine Member States operated 878 LSF vessels in the NSEA. The Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, and Sweden accounted for 94% of these vessels. Denmark and the Netherlands had the highest revenue with EUR 345 million and EUR 238 million, respectively, followed by Germany with EUR 117 million. LSF gross profit was EUR 197 million, an 8% decline from 2022. Denmark led with EUR 121 million, while Spain, the Netherlands, Germany, and Sweden reported varying profits. Spain and the Netherlands faced significant losses, whereas Sweden increased its

profit. The total GVA for all countries was EUR 442 million, down 14% from 2022, with Spain and Sweden showing positive net profitability. Other countries had negative net profit, notably Denmark (-EUR 31 million) and France (-EUR 28 million), leading to a combined net loss of -EUR 86 million.

Employment in the LSF sector was highest in the Netherlands and Denmark, with 1,141 and 812 jobs, respectively. While SSCF showed a disparity between the number of crew and FTEs, LSF figures were closer, indicating a higher level of full-time employment.

In 2023, landings were worth EUR 887 million. The Danish LSF contributed 38% and Dutch LSF 26% of this value. Key species by weight included Atlantic herring (207,000 tonnes, -20% from 2022), sand eels (148,000 tonnes, +74%), and European sprat (91,000 tonnes, +2%). Notably reduced catches were Norway pout (2,800 tonnes, -87%) and common shrimp (15,000 tonnes, -44%). In terms of value, top species were Atlantic herring (135,000 tonnes, -3%), common shrimp (87,000 tonnes, -35%), and Atlantic cod (85,000 tonnes, -8%) (see Figure 3.2.17).

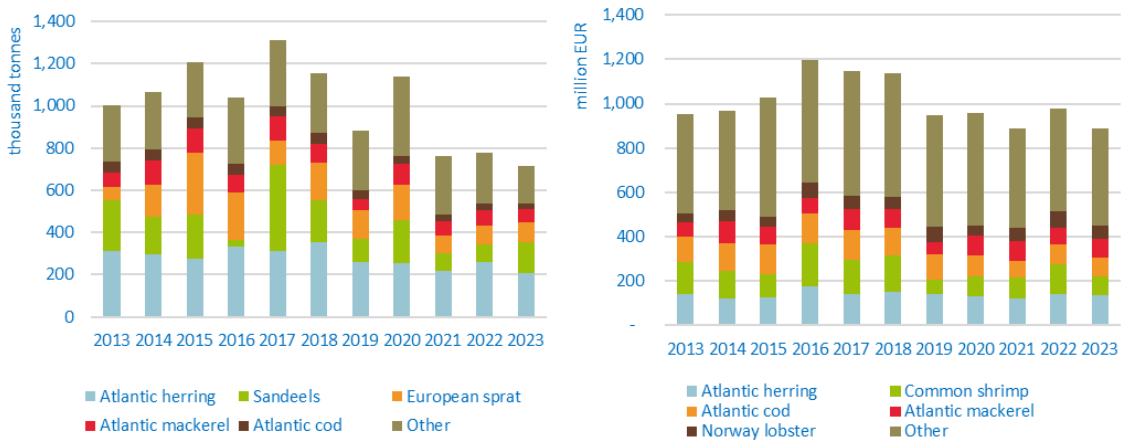
Figure 3.2.17. Top 10 species landed in weight and value by MS LSF operating in the NSEA, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Two Lithuanian vessels engaged in demersal fisheries are active in the Eastern Arctic. As these are in a cluster with the long-distance fleet, these vessels are displayed under “LDF”. As for all fleets covering more than one region the figures on employment, cost, and economic performance are estimated based upon disaggregation procedures. As the segment is very small, the data must be interpreted with particular caution. Lithuanian catches are not included in Figure 3.2.17 and Figure 3.2.18, but as these are small the main species would not, in any case, be amongst the top 10 species.

Figure 3.2.18. Trends in landings of the top species landed in weight and value by MS LSF operating in the NSEA.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

3.2.6 Performance by fleet segment

Pelagic fishery

The pelagic fishery operates in the North Sea, Eastern Arctic, Northeast Atlantic, NWW, and SWW regions. In the North Sea, the highest landed value is achieved by the pelagic fleets of Denmark, The Netherlands, Sweden, Germany, France, and Ireland. There is a distinction between industrial and non-industrial fisheries. The Danish and Swedish pelagic fleets predominantly land Atlantic herring, sand eel, and European sprat; with sand eel and sprat being used for industrial purposes such as fishmeal and fish oil, whereas Atlantic mackerel, Atlantic herring, and horse mackerel are significant for human consumption.

The Danish pelagic fishery in the North Sea mainly targets sand eel (118,000 tonnes in 2023), European sprat (78,000 tonnes), Atlantic herring (77,000 tonnes) and Atlantic mackerel (19,000 tonnes). Sand eel and European sprat are primarily used for industrial purposes, while the other species are destined for human consumption. In Denmark, all these species are regulated under an Individual Transferable Quota (ITQ) regime. The fishery is primarily executed by large pelagic trawlers, although vessels from the demersal segment also participate seasonally.

The Dutch pelagic fleet in the North Sea comprises large trawlers, including freezer trawlers ranging from 60 metres to over 100 metres in length. These vessels mainly target Atlantic herring (58,000 tonnes), Atlantic mackerel (17,000 tonnes), and European pilchard (sardine) (9,000 tonnes). Their landings are intended for human consumption rather than industrial purposes. All targeted species are managed under an ITQ regime and overseen by the Pelagic Freezer-trawler Association (PFA).

The German pelagic fishery employs large freezer trawlers and medium-sized trawlers targeting Atlantic herring (27,000 tonnes) and Atlantic mackerel (10,000 tonnes). Additionally, pelagic trawlers of approximately 30 metres conduct seasonal fisheries on sand eel (4,000 tonnes).

In Sweden, the main target species are sand eel (26,000 tonnes) and Atlantic herring (23,000 tonnes). Most vessels operate within an ITQ system and primarily land their catches in Denmark.

Ireland's pelagic fisheries in the area are relatively small, focusing mainly on Atlantic mackerel (11,000 tonnes) followed by herring (1,000 tonnes).

Demersal roundfish and Nephrops (Norway lobster) fishery

Key species targeted include cod, Norway lobster, haddock, saithe, and hake. Haddock and hake were fished close to or below F_{MSY}, while cod fisheries remained above F_{MSY} in 2020, and saithe was above F_{MSY} only in 2020. The cod recovery plan in the North Sea has not yet met assessment experts' expectations regarding the improvement of stock status over recent years, a situation that persisted through 2023.

The Danish demersal roundfish fishery targets cod, haddock, saithe, and Norway lobster, with Danish vessels accounting for 62% of the Norway lobster landing weight. Various vessel segments participate in this fishery.

The French fleet also engages in the cod and saithe fishery within ICES Division 4a.

German demersal trawlers in the North Sea predominantly target saithe in ICES Division 4a, involving vessels between 30 and 41 metres in length. These vessels also catch some cod and minor amounts of haddock. The fish is landed in Denmark or Germany for fresh markets and processing. Although the Norway lobster fishery has gained importance for certain vessels, it remains of minor overall significance.

Dutch demersal roundfish fishery vessels target cod and Norway lobster, but this fishery holds minor importance in the national context. Turbot and plaice are bycatch, contributing to overall revenues. Vessels are medium-sized, ranging from 24 to 30 metres. Species landed fresh are exported to markets in France, Italy, and Spain.

Swedish demersal vessels catch significant quantities of Norway lobster, cod, saithe, and haddock, although these fisheries are of minor importance concerning total catches of these species.

The Spanish demersal trawler fleet operates mainly in the Eastern Arctic with a TAC for Atlantic cod in EU and Norwegian waters (27.1, 27.2b).

Belgium has a small demersal fishing fleet primarily targeting Norway lobster, European plaice, and common sole. Ireland records some minor catches and landings of Norway lobster in the area.

Lithuanian and Polish vessels conduct fisheries targeting Northern prawn.

Flatfish fishery (plaice and sole)

The primary Member States involved in the flatfish fishery in 2023 were the Netherlands, Denmark, Belgium, and Germany. Of the four main flatfish species in terms of landed value (common sole, European plaice, turbot, and brill), the Netherlands accounted for 64%, Denmark 20%, Germany 8%, and Belgium 7%.

The Dutch flatfish fishery is primarily conducted by beam trawlers longer than 40 metres. This segment achieved a net profit of EUR 3 million in 2023. However, this result should be interpreted cautiously because the fleet is old, leading to low depreciation costs. Despite this, the profit remains insufficient to support investment in new vessels or innovations. In the long term, this may pose a risk to the fleet due to older vessels requiring more maintenance, being more prone to mechanical and

technical issues, and being fuel intensive. Fuel consumption has become an issue again in recent years because the pulse trawl technique was banned from EU waters in June 2021. Prior to the ban, many Dutch vessels utilized the Pulse trawl, resulting in significant fuel savings (40-50% less compared to conventional beam trawling with tickler chains). During those years, the fishery was profitable. Following the ban, profits have decreased.

The Danish fleet targets flatfish mainly using otter trawls in ICES division 3a and Area 4. Regarding target species, Common sole catches are relatively low, whereas plaice is a target species in some fisheries. In the cod and Norway lobster fisheries, plaice is a bycatch. Like Dutch flatfish fisheries, catches have declined in recent years.

For Belgian beam trawlers, flatfish is a major species in the southern North Sea. While the Dutch used pulse gear, Belgian beam trawlers utilized more traditional beam trawl gear, although they have made various technical adjustments to reduce fuel consumption. The Belgian beam trawl fleet saw newly built vessels ordered in 2019 entering the fleet from 2020 to 2022. Most of these vessels aim at saving fuel consumption and energy costs. The total landed weight has been decreasing over recent years but increased slightly in 2023.

French vessels target plaice and sole in the Channel area (ICES division 7d). Sole catches historically were higher than plaice landings but declined significantly in 2023 (-83%) and were lower than plaice landings.

The German flatfish fishery is operated by a limited number of (mostly Dutch-owned) beam trawlers. These vessels fish similarly to the Dutch fleet. Landings had been declining in recent years but increased in 2023.

Brown Shrimp Fishery

In 2023, the main shrimp fishing countries were the Netherlands (49%), Germany (41%), Denmark (9%), and Belgium (2%). This fishery used smaller beam trawlers, mostly under 24 metres, and significant catches occurred in coastal areas of the southern North Sea and the Wadden Sea. The fleets' performance declined, with total landed weight hitting a record low of 15,000 tonnes, down 44%.

3.3 Baltic Sea

3.3.1 Regional Details

The Baltic Sea encompasses ICES divisions 27.3b, c, and d, and is bordered by the Swedish part of the Scandinavian Peninsula, mainland Europe, and the Danish islands. The central part of the Baltic Sea is demarcated by the Gulf of Bothnia to the north, the Gulf of Finland to the northeast, and the Gulf of Riga to the east. For ease of reference, the EU vessels operating in these regions will be referred to as the EU Baltic Sea fleet or fisheries.

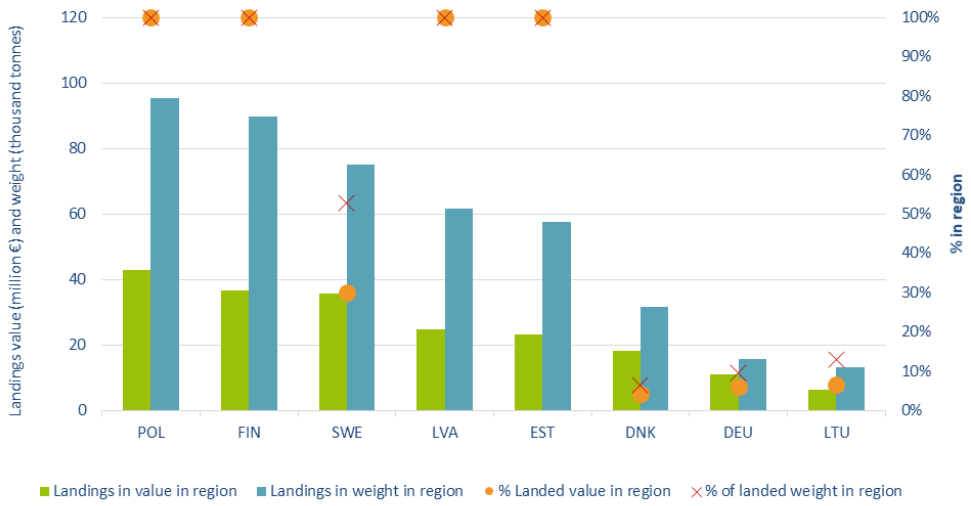
In 2023, eight Member States were active in Baltic Sea fisheries: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Sweden (see Figure 3.3.1). Many of these countries are heavily reliant on the region, with herring and sprat being the primary target species.

According to available EU-MAP data, the fisheries of Poland, Finland, Estonia, and Latvia are wholly dependent on the Baltic Sea region for their landings. However, it is important to note that vessels from Estonia, Latvia, and Poland operating in the high seas (DWFs) are excluded from this analysis due to confidentiality reasons. Conversely, the Lithuanian fleet shows low dependency on the Baltic Sea due to its DWFs operating in other regions. Some Danish and Swedish vessels operate in both the Baltic Sea and the North Sea, while German vessels fishing in the Baltic Sea do not typically fish in the North Sea.

In 2023, the Polish fleet was the most significant in terms of both landed value (EUR 43 million) and landed weight (95,000 tonnes) (see Figure 3.3.1).

Some time series are influenced by the availability of economic data for the German pelagic fleet in 2021. While data for the value and weight of landings have been consistent throughout the time series, other data were not included in the dataset until then.

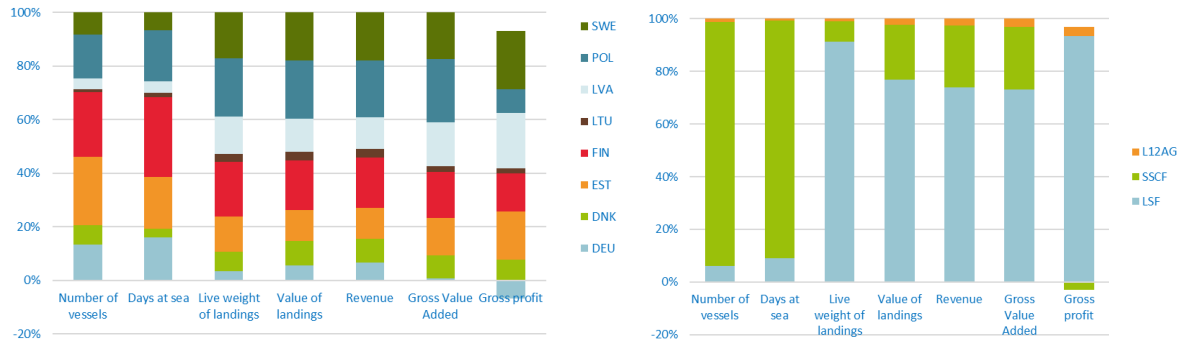
Figure 3.3.1. Importance of the Baltic Sea region for MS fleets in terms of landings weight and value, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

In 2023, small-scale vessels made up 93% of the total Baltic Sea fleet. Although they accounted for 90% of days-at-sea, their economic contribution and share of the landed weight were relatively low. Large-scale vessels landed 91% of the total weight and 77% of the total value (see Figure 3.3.2).

Figure 3.3.2. Share by MS and fishing activity fleets operating in the Baltic Sea, 2023.



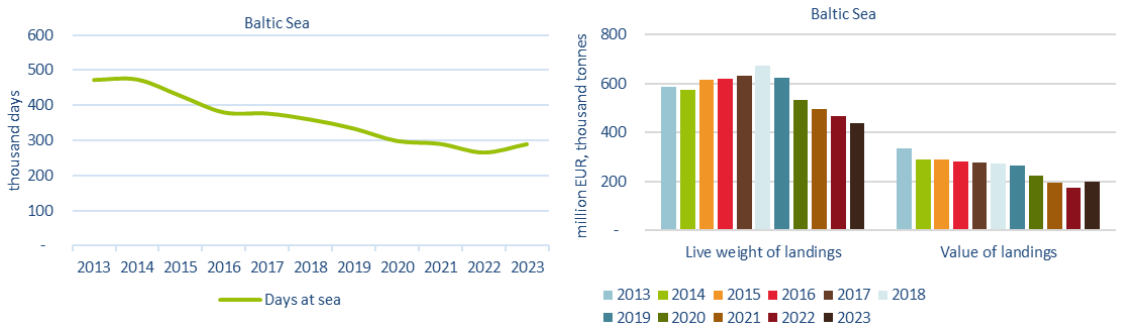
Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

3.3.2 Overview of the main results for EU Baltic Sea fleet

Fishing effort and landings

In 2023, EU Baltic Sea fleets spent 290,000 days at sea, reflecting a 9% increase following a general downward trend observed since 2013. The weight and value of landings amounted to approximately 439,000 tonnes and EUR 198 million, respectively. From 2013 to 2018, landings (by weight) from the Baltic Sea increased slightly. Nevertheless, between 2019 and 2023, the weight of landings decreased by 30%, with an additional 6% decrease noted between 2022 and 2023. The value of landings experienced a significant decline in 2014 due to a drop in the price of small pelagic species. Although there was a slight recovery in 2015, the value of landings continued to decrease steadily. In contrast, in 2023, the value of landings rose by 13%, primarily driven by an increase in the price of small pelagic species (see Figure 3.3.3).

Figure 3.3.3. Trends on effort and landings for MS fleets operating in the Baltic Sea region.

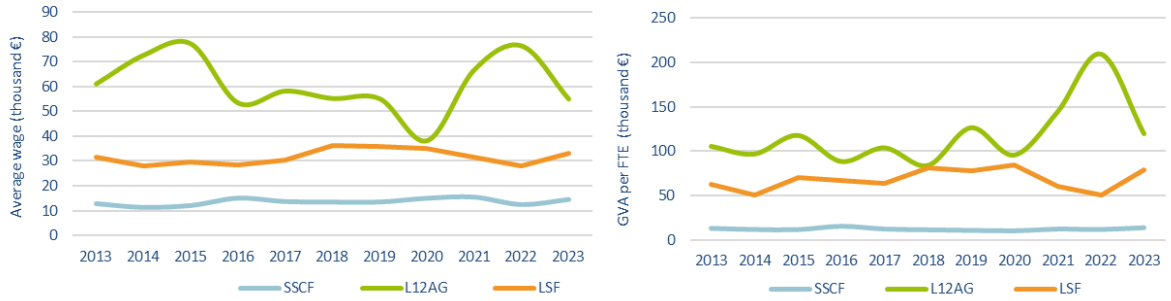


Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Employment, wages and labour productivity

In 2023, average labour costs per FTE rose by 16% for SSCF to EUR 14,000 and by 18% for LSF to EUR 33,000 (Figure 3.3.4). Labour productivity (GVA/FTE) increased by 18% for SSCF to EUR 13,000 and by 55% for LSF to EUR 80,000 (see Figure 3.3.4).

Figure 3.3.4. Trends on average labour cost and GVA per FTE by fishing activity for MS fleets operating in the Baltic Sea.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

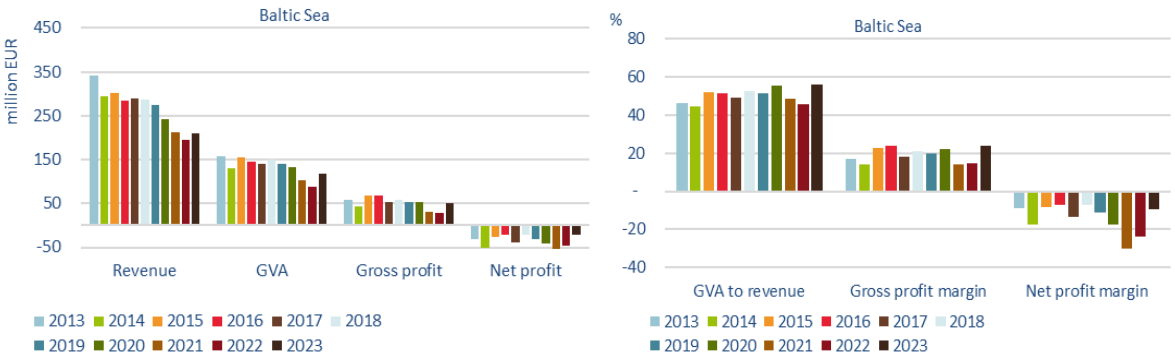
The values for segment L12AG should be interpreted carefully, given that the high overall average wage per FTE and GVA/FTE are determined by a Swedish fleet segment. This segment shows extremely high values compared to similar German and Danish ones.

Economic performance

The value of landings generated by the EU Baltic Sea fleet in 2023 was estimated at almost EUR 198 million, marking a 13% increase on 2022.

The GVA produced in 2023 was around EUR 118 million, which is a 33% increase compared to 2022. Fleets operating in the region generated around EUR 50.7 million in gross profit, which is a 79% increase on the previous year's record. The net loss was -EUR 20 million in 2023, compared to -EUR 46.7 million in 2022 — a reduction in losses of 56% (see Figure 3.3.5).

Figure 3.3.5. Trends on revenue and profits for MS fleets operating in the Baltic Sea.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

3.3.3 Trends by Member State fleet

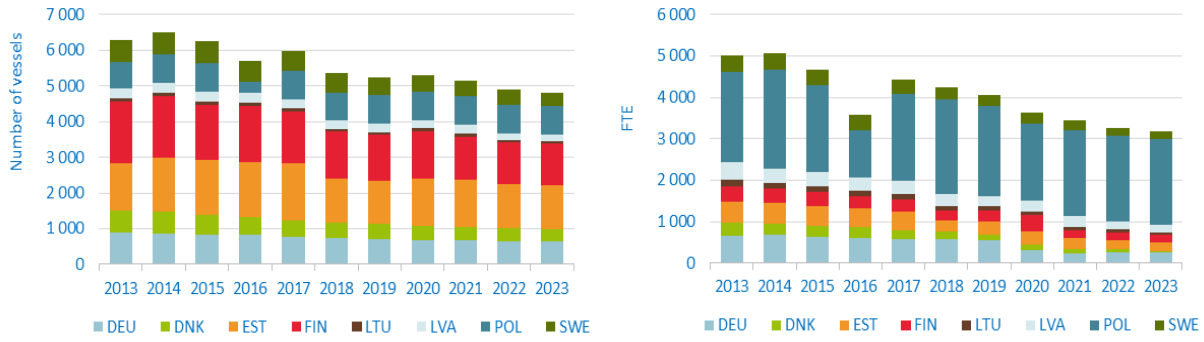
Fleet capacity and employment

Member State fleets operating in the Baltic Sea collectively numbered around 4,819 vessels in 2023 (1.4% less compared to 2022 or 15% less compared to long term average). The Lithuanian fleet declined the most 13% or 27%, respectively year to year or 2023 compared to long term average (2013-2022). Total employment in the region amounted only to 3,266 FTE in 2023, 2.4% reduction compared to 2022. Compared to long term average the total FTE employment on board of vessels operating in Baltic Sea decreased by 23% (Figure 3.3.6). Employment in Lithuania declined the most, by 47%, over the long term, following by Estonia (-41%) and Germany (-38%). The largest fleet belonged to Estonia 1,232 vessels (26% of the total) following by Finland –1,158 vessels (24%)- and Poland 797 vessels (16%).

The capacity of the fleet was reduced by 6.5% in 2023 and amounted to 51,354 GT with the largest share made up of Polish fleet – 28% (14,581GT) followed by Finnish –18% (9,111 GT). The largest decline of GT during 2022-2023 was observed in Lithuanian and Swedish fleet, 25% and 22%, respectively, while capacity of Finnish and Latvian fleet increased by 1.4% and 0.4% respectively. The capacity of the Baltic fleet was 18% lower in 2023 compared to long term average. In the long term, the Swedish fleet decreased the most significantly (by 42%) following by Lithuania (39%) and Latvia (27%).

The dominance of SSCF fisheries in the region indicates predominantly part-time nature of employment mostly represented by Danish and Finnish fleets with average 0.07 and 0.09 FTE per person employed, respectively. SSCF contributed as much as 65% of the total FTE employment on the Baltic in 2022 (63% in 2022). Employment, measured in terms of FTE, showed a decreasing trend over the period (2013-2023). SSCF FTE decreased by 20% in 2023 compared to long term average while LSF 29%. In 2023 (compared to 2022) the largest reductions in the SSCF employment were observed in Danish (-48%) and Lithuanian (-18%) fleets, while in Latvian and Polish fleets the employment increased by 4% and 4%, respectively.

Figure 3.3.6. Trends on the number of vessels and employment in FTE for MS fleets operating in the Baltic Sea.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fishing effort

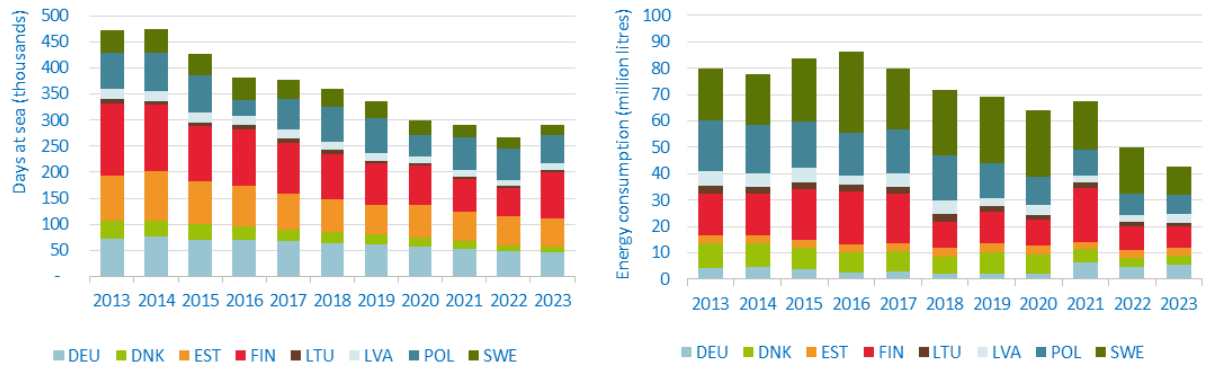
The EU Baltic Sea fleets spent 290,540 DaS in 2023, an 8.8% increase compared to 2022 (or 21% decrease compared to the 2013-2022 period)

In 2020 the decline in fishing effort was under conditions of COVID-19 lockdown in 2021-2022 it may be attributed to reduced herring and sprat catch possibility as well as continued closure of direct cod fishing. The observed increase in effort should be attributed to the increased activity of the Finnish fleet, which spent 58% more days at sea in 2023 compared to 2022 (see Figure 3.3.7).

The biggest decline of fishing effort was observed in Danish and Swedish fleets, 13% and 14%, respectively. Vessels from Finland, Poland and Estonia had the highest effort, accounting for 68% of total DaS (or about 20% each) in the region because of the small-scale fleet dominance in these Member States. In terms of relative changes, the Danish effort had decreased the most. In 2023 it was 58% smaller compared to 2013-2022 average.

In 2022, the Baltic Sea fleet consumed 49.7 million litres of estimated fuel value, in 2023 it decreased to 42.8 million litres (-14%). The Swedish fleet achieved the highest fuel savings – fuel consumption by the Swedish fleet decreased by 37% in 2023 compared to 2022, and by 52% compared to the long-term average.

Figure 3.3.7. Trends on effort (in DaS) and energy consumption for MS fleets operating in the Baltic Sea.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

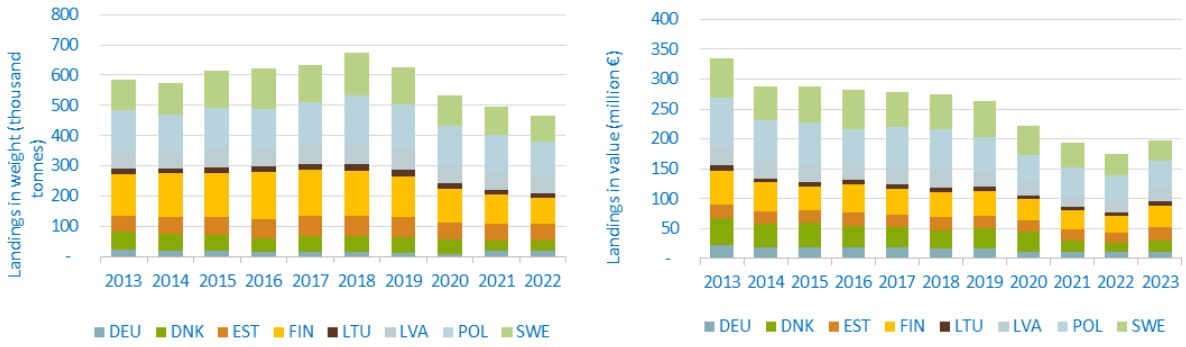
Landings and top species

The weight and value of landings in 2023 was 439 290 tonnes (5.6% decrease compared to 2022) and EUR 198.2 million (+13.4% increase compared to2022). In long term volume and value of landings decreased by 24.5% and 23.7% respectively. Value of landings increased in all countries except for Sweden -3%). Landings value increased the most in Estonia (-43%) following by Lithuania (-34.5%) and Denmark (14%).

In terms of landed weight, Poland (95,385 tonnes), Finland (89,671 tonnes) and Sweden (75,086 tonnes) and were the leading Member States, accounting for 59% of total weight landed from the Baltic. Poland (EUR 42.8million), Finland (EUR 36.6

million), Sweden (EUR 35.7 million) and Latvia (EUR 24.6 million) collectively accounted for around 58% of the total value of landings in 2023.

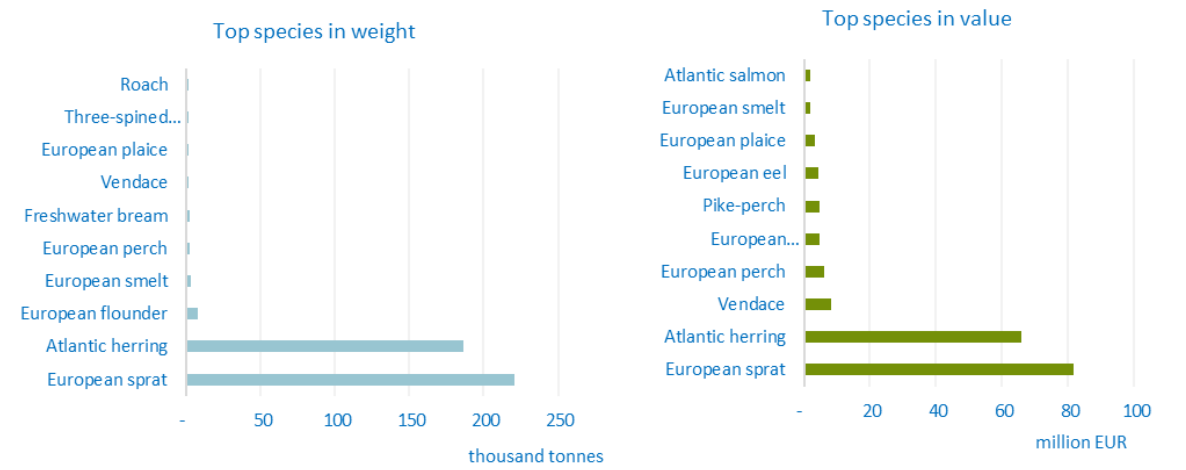
Figure 3.3.8. Trends on landings in weight and value for MS fleets operating in the Baltic Sea.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

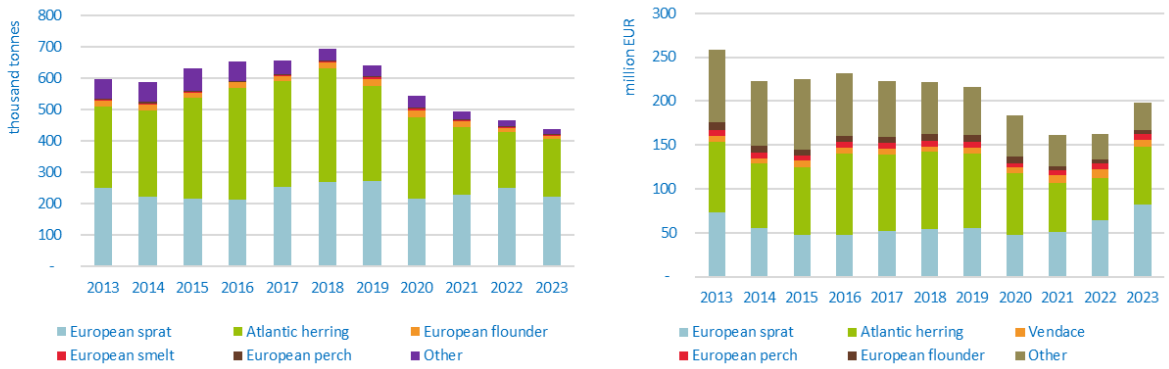
In 2023, the most important species (by weight of landings) were European sprat (220,624 tonnes, 50% of the total landed weight), Atlantic herring (186,499 tonnes) accounting for 42% of the total landed weight. Both species together made up over 90% of the total Baltic landings in 2023. European sprat generated the highest value (EUR 81.7 million), representing 41% of the landed value), followed by Atlantic herring (EUR 65.7 million, 33% of the landed value) (see Figure 3.3.9).

Figure 3.3.9. Top 10 species in landed weight and value by MS fleets operating in the Baltic Sea, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.3.10. Trends on landings of the top six species in landed value for MS fleets operating in the Baltic Sea.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Atlantic cod landings value decreased as much as 99% in 2023 compared to the 2013-2022 long term average. The total landed weight and value of Baltic herring declined by 35%. Landings of European sprat, another economically important species for the Baltic fishing fleet, decreased by 7.6% in 2023 compared to the 2013-2022 long term average (see Figure 3.3.10).

Economic performance

The profitability of the Baltic fleet increased in 2023, and gross profit remained positive. The fleet generated EUR 50.7 million Gross profit in 2023 compared to EUR 28.3 million in 2022 (+80%). Only one Member State reported negative gross profitability, Germany (-EUR 3.8 million). Lithuanian fleet produced gross losses in 2022 but in 2022 managed to improve profitability and generated a positive outcome (EUR 1.2 million). The highest gross profits were produced by Swedish (EUR 12.8 million), Latvian (EUR 12.0 million) and Estonian (EUR 10.6 million) fleets.

The Net profit of the EU Baltic fleet remained highly negative however improved to EUR 20.3 million, from EUR 46.7 million in 2022. Four countries reported positive net profit i.e. Latvia EUR 11.6 million, Sweden EUR 3.7 million, Estonia EUR 7.7 million and Lithuania EUR 0.7 million. Germany and Denmark experienced again highest net losses in the region (Figure 3.3.11**Error! Reference source not found.**)

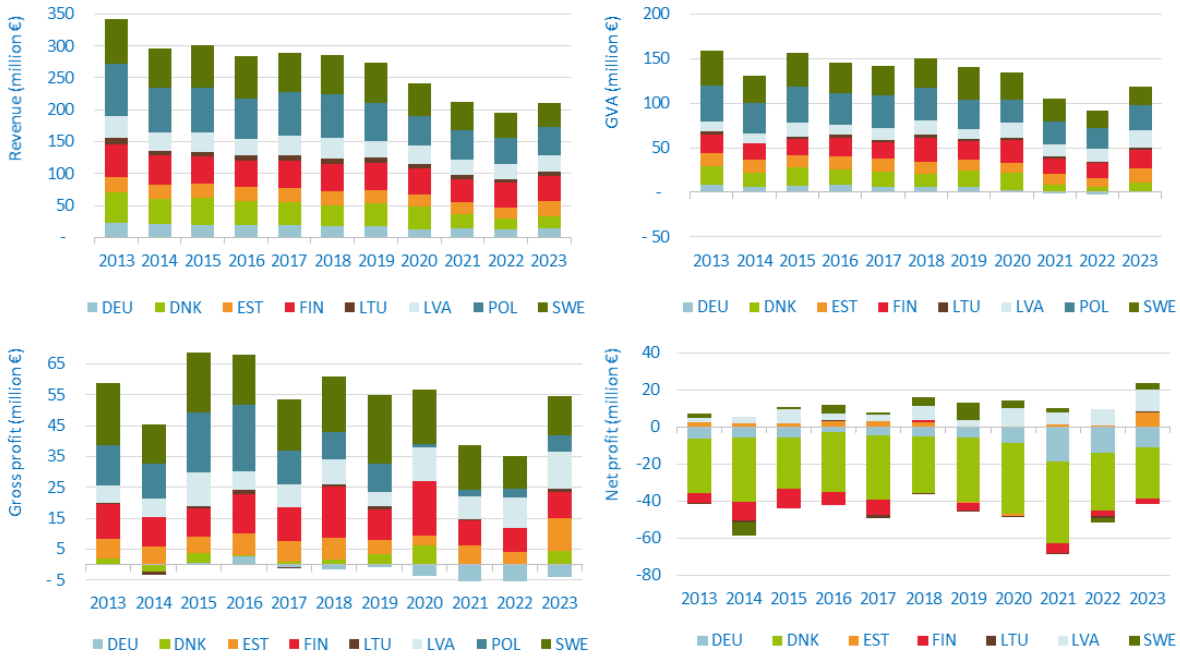
In 2023, revenue reached EUR 210.7 million, an 8% increase from 2022 but a 22% decline compared to the 2013-2022 average. Sweden, Poland, and Finland contributed nearly 60% of the total, with revenues of EUR 37.8 million, EUR 44.3 million, and EUR 40.0 million respectively.

The GVA generated by the Baltic fleet in 2023 was EUR 118.1 million, a 33% increase compared to 2022 GVA (EUR 88.6 million). The indicator improved and was positive for all Member states, including German fleet which produced in 2022 negative GVA of EUR 2.8 million. The Polish fleet produced again the highest GVA of EUR 20.4 million – 3.9% increase compared to 2022. GVA of the other countries increased between 23% (Finland) and 70% (Estonia).

Increased prices for two most important species i.e. European sprat by 45% and Atlantic herring by 31% that contributed to the increased landings revenues of the

Baltic fleet as well as lower fuel consumption as well as energy costs were two main reasons that positively influenced profitability of the Baltic fisheries in 2023.

Figure 3.3.11. Trends on revenue and profits for MS fleets operating in the Baltic Sea.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

3.3.4 Main factors affecting the performance of the fleet

Factors that may negatively impact fleet performance in the region include:

- In 2023, TAC for the Bothnian herring stock decreased considerably by -28% (31,298 tonnes less). Gulf of Riga herring TAC decreased -4% (2,054 tonnes less). Western herring TAC remained at a very low level (788 tonnes). As herring has been an important part of the catch of Baltic fishing fleet, these substantial quota cuts had a considerable negative- effect on the economic performance.
- The cod stocks both in the Eastern and Western part of the Baltic Sea are in critical condition. The commercial cod fishing was significantly reduced in 2019 and direct fisheries on cod were not permitted in 2020-2023, except for small-scale fisheries on the Western cod stock. The cod catches are allowed only as an unavoidable by-catch. Eastern cod quota remained at 595 tonnes in 2023 (after -92% in 2020 and –70% in 2021). Western cod quota remained at 489 tonnes after an 88% cut in 2021. Altogether, this is an ongoing threat to a considerable part of the regional fleet. ICES expects that the cod stock most probably will remain in a dire condition in the middle-term.
- The main basin salmon quota remained unchanged at 63,811 fish in 2023 with no directed fishery being permitted (only bycatch).
- Sprat quota decreased – 11% to 224,114 tonnes (27,829 tonnes less). It is a commercially important species, but only for few specialised fleets.

- Fishing performance, especially in the SSCF, is very weather dependent. Even with favourable economic conditions, it can be a limiting factor for fleet performance, especially for seasonal fisheries.
- In some areas the increasing population of seals has been reported as substantial problem when performing fisheries using passive gears. Damage to both gear and fish has been experienced, thus resulting in the cessation of certain fisheries.

Factors that may positively impact fleet performance in the region include:

- The only Baltic herring stock with a TAC increase was Central herring (70,822 tonnes, +32%). A TAC increase applied also to plaice (+25% to 11,313 tonnes).
- Compensations from the EMFF funds have been provided to the owners of the fishing vessels for the temporary or permanent cessation of fishing activities due to the protection of cod and herring stocks as well as eel. Such compensations could provide significant support to the fishing companies in the short-term. Permanent cessation could also reduce fishing pressure or allow to assign more fishing opportunities to individual fishers.
- Policy management instruments, specifically quota allocation (introduced in some countries), may have helped to improve the economic performance of certain fleets.
- While aging vessels, obsolete equipment and insufficient investment all lead to increased maintenance costs and reduce the profitability of the fleet, the EMFF does provide the possibility of engine replacement if the fishing capacity is proven to be in balance with exploitation. Some Member States have already introduced such schemes. However, as the poor status of several important stocks has a negative impact on the balance indicators, several fleet segments in the Baltic are regarded not in balance and, hence, do not qualify for this kind of support.

Regulation and fisheries management in the region

A multiannual plan for the stocks of Western Baltic cod (ICES divisions 22-24), Eastern Baltic cod (ICES division 25-32) Central Baltic herring (ICES divisions 25-29 and 32), Western Baltic herring (ICES division 22-24), Gulf of Riga herring (ICES division 28.1), Gulf of Bothnia herring (ICES division 30-31) and Baltic sprat (ICES division 22-32) was adopted by European Parliament and the Council on 6 July 2016 (Regulation (EU) 2016/1139). The plan shall contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the common fisheries policy in particular by applying the precautionary approach to fisheries management and shall aim to ensure that exploitation of living marine biological resources restores and maintains populations of harvested species above levels which can produce MSY. The plan shall also contribute to the elimination of discards by avoiding and reducing unwanted catches, and to the implementation of the LO. The plan was last amended in November 2020 (Regulation (EU) 2020/1781) by adding details for the implementation of the landing obligation in the Union waters of the Baltic Sea for Atlantic salmon (Salmo salar) in ICES Subdivisions 22-32 and open possibility for fishing capacity reduction for vessels that targeted Eastern Baltic cod, Western Baltic cod and Western Baltic herring.

Council Regulation (EU) 2022/2090 fixed the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks applicable in the Baltic Sea for 2023.

The LO has been in force since 1 January 2015 for pelagic and demersal fisheries in the Baltic Sea. Regulation (EU) 2018/306[2] aims to progressively eliminate discards for Baltic Sea cod and plaice fisheries through the introduction of a landing obligation.

Technical measures were implemented in 2019 for the Baltic Sea region in the frame of the conservation of fisheries resources and the protection of marine ecosystems. The activities include prohibition to retain on board or land any quantity of marine organisms unless at least 85% of the live weight thereof consists of molluscs and/or Furcellaria lumbricalis; to have on board or deploy any driftnet, or to use bottom-set gillnets, entangling nets and trammel nets for some species. To optimise exploitation patterns and to provide protection for juveniles and spawning aggregations of marine biological resources, Regulation (EU) 2019/1241[3] on the conservation of fisheries resources and the protection of marine ecosystems through technical measures was established. Some of the objectives are to minimise incidental catch of sensitive marine species and potential negative impacts of fishing on marine habitats.

The European eel recovery plan (Regulation (EU) 1100/2007) also affects several Baltic States. Within this plan, Member States are required to allow 40% of adult eels to escape from inland waters to the sea where they can spawn. EU regulations also comprise technical conservation measures, including mesh size, minimum landing size, by-catch limitations as well as periods and areas closed for fishing.

TAC development of main species

Atlantic cod, Atlantic herring, European sprat, Atlantic salmon and plaice are the main species in the Baltic Sea which are managed by TAC. Cod is managed by two stocks, Eastern and Western cod. Herring is managed by four stocks: Western, Central, Bothnian and Gulf of Riga herring. Salmon is managed by two stocks, Gulf of Finland and main basin salmon.

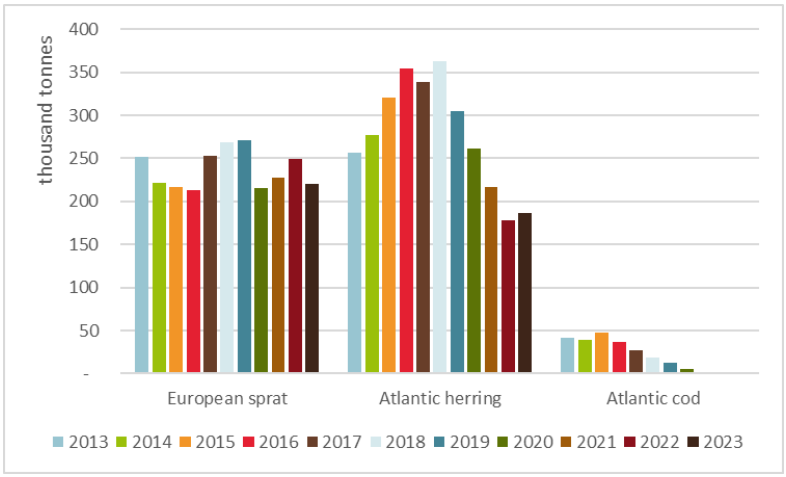
Figure 3.3.12 provides the development of catches for the TAC species herring, cod, and sprat in the Baltic Sea. Overall, the decrease in catches of herring and cod over time is evident.

The TACs set for 2023 were as follows:

- Western Baltic herring 788 tonnes (unchanged).
- Bothnian herring 111,345 tonnes (-28%).
- Central herring 70,822 tonnes (+32%).
- Gulf of Riga herring 45,643 tonnes (-4%).
- Eastern Baltic cod 595 tonnes (-5%, bycatch only).
- Western Baltic cod 489 tonnes (unchanged, bycatch only).
- Main basin salmon 63,811 fish (unchanged, bycatch only).
- Gulf of Finland salmon 9,455 fish (unchanged).
- Plaice 11,313 tonnes (+25%).
- Sprat 224,114 tonnes (-11%).

[2] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32018R0306.
[3] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32019R1241.

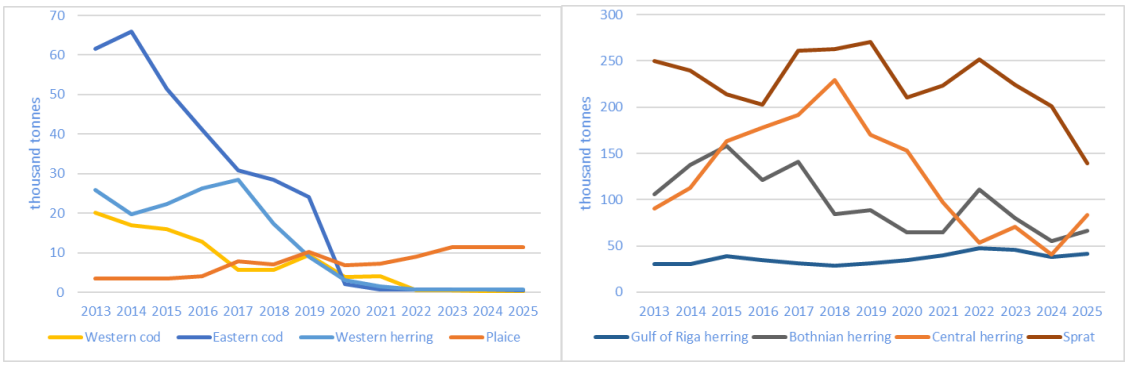
Figure 3.3.12. Reported catches for the important TACs species herring, sprat, and cod in the Baltic Sea, 2013-2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

The time series of these stocks, including 2024 and 2025 data, is shown in Figure 3.3.13. While Gulf of Riga herring and plaice show a stable or slightly increasing trend over the years, the dramatic decrease of TACs for Western and Eastern cod as well as for Western and Central herring is evident. In recent years, also the sprat quota has decreased substantially.

Figure 3.3.13. EU TACs for the main Baltic stocks 2013-2025.



Source: EWG 25-07 produced.

Status of important stocks

According to ICES, the Eastern Baltic cod stock is in a critical state. The biomass has decreased to 5% of its 2010 level. Despite significant reductions in fishing mortality, recruitment remains low. Following the precautionary principle, ICES recommends halting fishing for this stock. The Western Baltic cod stock is described as having reduced reproductive capacity. Between 2021 and 2023, its biomass was 20% of the long-term average and three times below the reference limit. This decline is due to

weak year classes from 2015-2020 combined with intensive fishing. ICES suggests maintaining a low catch quota of 24 tonnes for 2025, the same as for 2024.

For Western Baltic herring, ICES observed a 10% increase in biomass in 2023 compared to 2022. However, the stock remains at one of its lowest levels since the early 1990s. In 2023, 3,300 tonnes were caught, compared to over 200,000 tonnes in 1990. ICES attributes this decline to high fishing mortality and low recruitment since 2005 and recommends closing the fishery entirely in 2025.

In 2023, ICES advised a 45% reduction in the TAC for Central Baltic herring, from 95,600 tonnes to 52,500 tonnes for 2024, due to the stock being below the biomass limit reference point (B_{lim}) for most of the last 30 years. For 2025, ICES advises a catch limit not exceeding 125,300 tonnes due to improved biomass after reducing catches significantly.

The Baltic sprat stock is assessed by ICES as sustainably exploited, maintaining full reproductive capacity. Yet, there are fluctuations in year-class strength, notably weak classes in 2021 and 2022. Sprat biomass variations reflect these fluctuations and intense exploitation. ICES advises a modest TAC reduction of 3%. In 2023, Baltic sprat catches totaled approximately 270,000 tonnes, which is 10% less than the previous year. Due to weak year classes from 2021-2023, ICES recommends that 2025 catches not exceed 165,000 tonnes, representing a 32% reduction from the 2024 quota.

ICES advice on salmon remains consistent: zero catches in 2025 in areas where salmon from "weak" river populations occur, particularly in the Central Baltic. The Baltic plaice (flounder) stock remains in good condition, according to ICES, partly due to strong recruitment during the 2019–2021 period.

3.3.5 Description of relevant fisheries in the region

Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

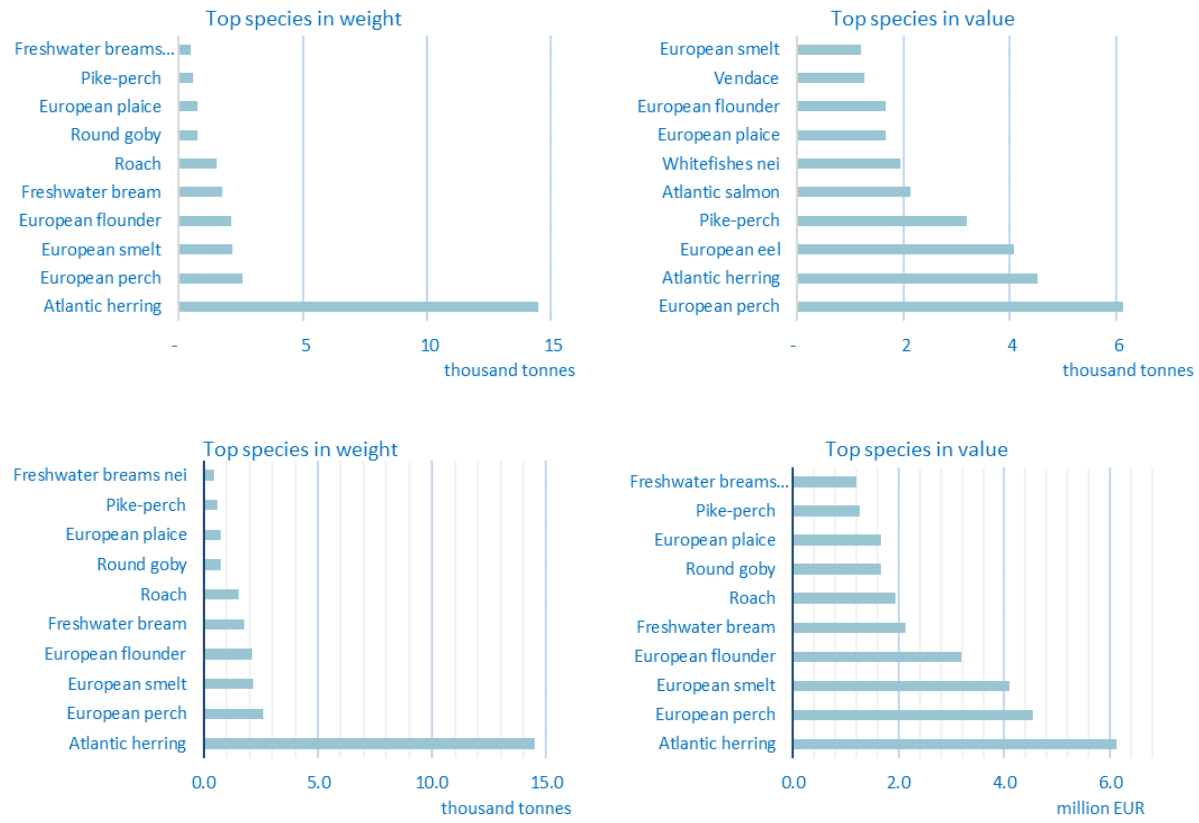
The socio-economic aspects underscore the significance of the Baltic SSCF. In 2023, 93% of the total number of vessels in the Baltic Sea belonged to this fleet, amounting to 4,474, a slight decrease of 0.9% compared to 2022. The total number of individuals employed on these small-scale vessels was approximately 4,923 fishers (down from 5,008 in 2022), equating to 2,069 full-time equivalents (FTE), representing a 0.7% increase from 2022. SSCF contributed 78% (65% in FTE) of the total employment in the Baltic Sea in 2023.

The fleet accounts for 8% of the weight and 21% of the landed value from the Baltic Sea. Revenue generated by SSCF in 2023 amounted to EUR 49.1 million, which represents an increase of 1.3% compared to 2022.

In 2023, SSCF generated a GVA of EUR 28.1 million, up from EUR 23.6 million in 2022. Although overall profitability remained negative, there was a slight improvement compared to 2022. The fleet incurred gross losses of EUR 1.6 million in 2023, compared to EUR 1.7 million in 2022. The gross profit margin improved from -3.6% in 2022 to -3.3% in 2023. The GVA per FTE indicator increased from EUR 11,511 in 2022 to EUR 13,604 in 2023 (-7%), and the average GVA per vessel rose by 26%, from EUR 5,239 in 2022 to EUR 6,290 in 2023.

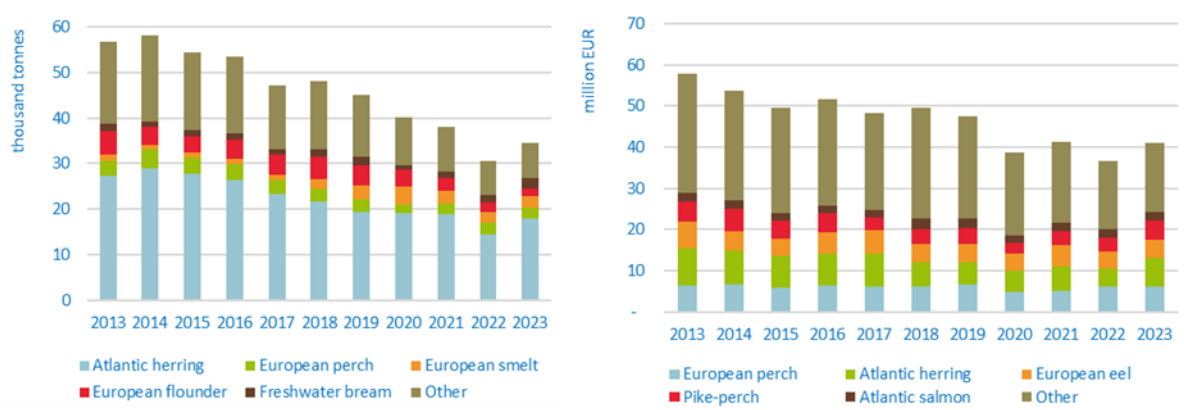
Atlantic herring (42%), European perch (7%), and European smelt (6%) were the three most important species in terms of landings weight. The species composition of SSCF landings has evolved over the past decade. Atlantic cod, once the most significant species in terms of revenue until 2019, has seen its contribution decline due to deteriorating stock status of both Eastern and Western Baltic cod stocks. Consequently, a closure of cod fisheries was imposed in 2019 (July 22) for ICES subdivisions 24, 25, and 26 of the Baltic Sea, with exceptions for bycatches allowed under the quota system and some derogation for vessels less than 12 metres LOA fishing in shallow waters. The contribution of Atlantic cod to SSCF revenues decreased from 37% in 2008 to 14% in 2016, and further dropped to 0.8% in 2023. Conversely, the share of European smelt in total revenues increased from 3% to 6% between 2013 and 2023.

Figure 3.3.14. Top 10 species landed in weight and value by the SSCF operating in the Baltic Sea, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.3.15. Trends in landings of the top species landed in weight and value by the SSCF operating in the Baltic Sea.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

The deteriorated status of Baltic cod and herring stocks has affected Danish, Swedish and German coastal fisheries the most. Between 2013 and 2023, the landings value of Danish SSCF decreased by 64%, followed by Sweden (-57%), Germany (-49%). On the other side revenues of Estonia SSCF increased by 37%. In case of Estonia the increase was caused by higher European perch, Atlantic salmon, European smelt or Vendace value of catches. Total Danish fish landings weight was 85% lower in 2023 compared to long term average. The landings decreased by 66% and 61% in Germany and Sweden respectively.

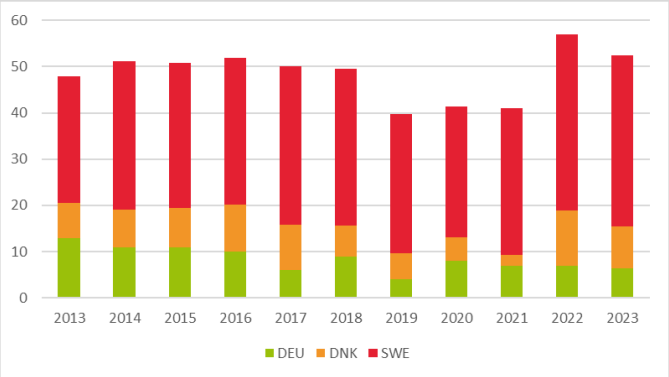
Vessels under 12 metres using active gear fleet (L12AG)

Socio-economic aspects determine the importance of the vessels <12m using active gear in the Baltic. The segment is rather small. In 2023, about 1% of the total number of Baltic Sea vessels belonged to that fleet amounted to 52 (-8% compared to 2022). Only three MSs (Denmark, Germany and Sweden) have reported data on the L12AG segment. Figure 3.32 illustrates the changes in the number of vessels in this segment over the years. The total number of people employed onboard the L12AG segment vessels amounted to about 113 fishers (70 in 2022) or 31 FTE (20 in 2022). In 2023, L12AG contributed 1.8% (or 1.0% in FTE) of the total employment in the Baltic Sea.

The fleet accounts for 0.8% of weight and 2.4% of the landed value from the Baltic Sea in 2023. Revenue generated by the L12AG in 2023 was EUR 5.6 million, -15.6% less compared to 2022.

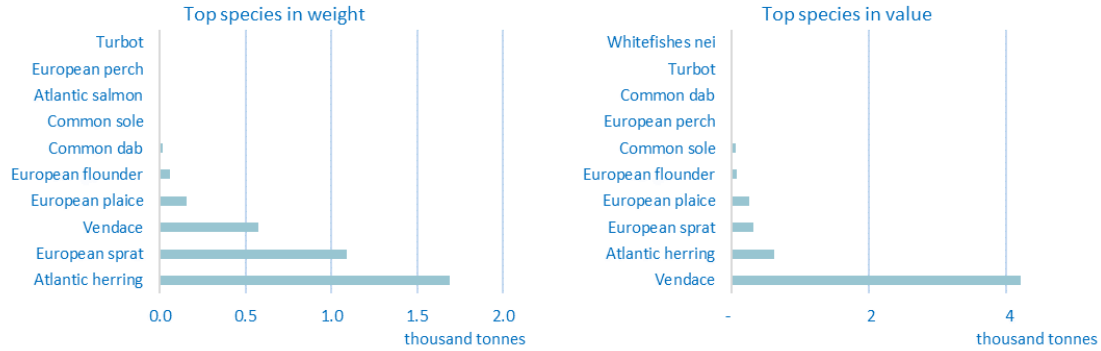
In 2023, L12AG's gross value added was EUR 3.6 million, down from EUR 4.3 million in 2022. Overall profitability fell by 27%, with a gross profit of EUR 2.0 million compared to EUR 2.7 million in 2022. The gross profit margin dropped from 41.1% to 35.5%. GVA per FTE decreased by 43%, from EUR 210,000 to EUR 120,000. Average GVA per vessel declined by 7%, from EUR 75,000 to EUR 70,000.

Figure 3.3.16. Number of vessels in the L12AG segment operating in the Baltic Sea.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

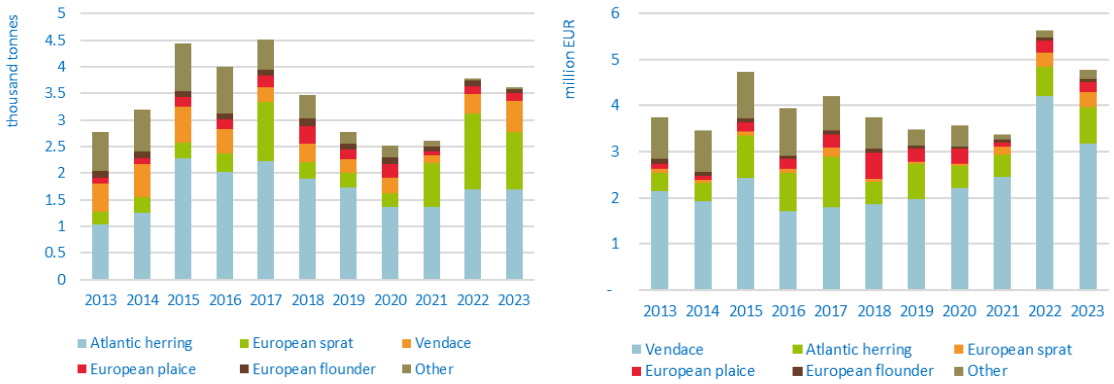
Figure 3.3.17. Top 10 species landed in weight and value by the L12AG operating in the Baltic Sea, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Atlantic herring (45%), European sprat (38%), and vendace (10%) are the three most important species in terms of landings weight (see Figure 3.3.17). The species composition of L12AG landings has changed slightly over the past ten years (see Figure 3.3.18). The sprat share has increased in recent years while herring showing a slight decrease. In terms of value, vendace is by far the dominant species (75%), followed by herring (11%) and sprat (6%).

Figure 3.3.18. Trends in landings of the top species landed in weight and value by the L12AG operating in the Baltic Sea.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

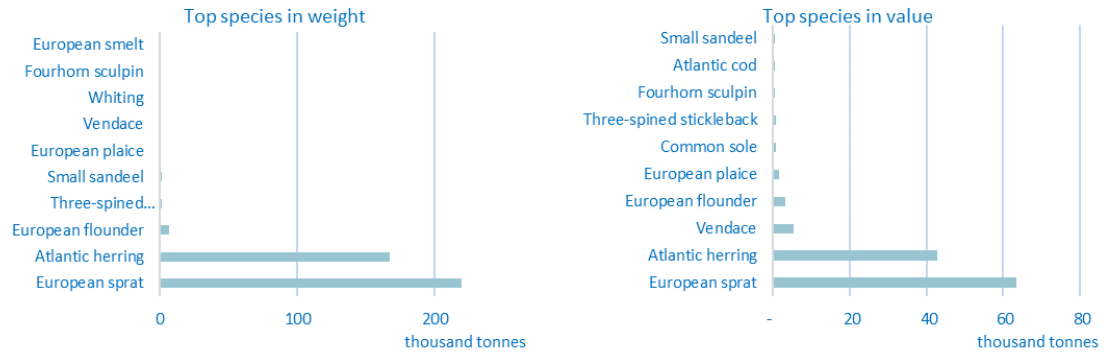
Large-scale fleet (LSF)

In 2022, the LSF in the Baltic consisted of 293 vessels (7.4% decrease compared to 2022). Value of fish landed by the fleet in 2023 amounted to EUR 152.3 million, 12% more compared to 2022. Gross profit generated by LSF was positive (EUR 50.3 million) and increased significantly by as much as 84%. Increased prices for two most important species for LSF in the Baltic i.e. European sprat and Atlantic herring as well as lower fuel consumption and energy costs were main reasons that positively influenced profitability of the LSF fleet. The number of people employed continued its decreasing trend in 2023 (-9% both FTE and total jobs). The GVA/revenue indicator improved compared to 2022 (from 43% to 55%), GVA itself increased to EUR 86.3 million (42%).

European sprat (EUR 81.4 million), Atlantic herring (EUR 58.0 million), and vendace (EUR 4.2 million) were the three most important species in terms of landings value in 2022, collectively making up 94% of total landings revenues in 2023 (see Figure 3.3.19). The fishing pattern of the fleet landings has changed significantly over the last years (2013-2022), thus disfavouring demersal species. The value of Atlantic cod landings decreased by 80% and its contribution to total revenues of the LSF decreased from 19% in 2013 to 0.2% in 2023. In the same period, the contribution of Atlantic herring and European sprat to revenues increased from 35% and 37% in 2013 to 38% and 53% in 2023 (see Figure 3.3.20).

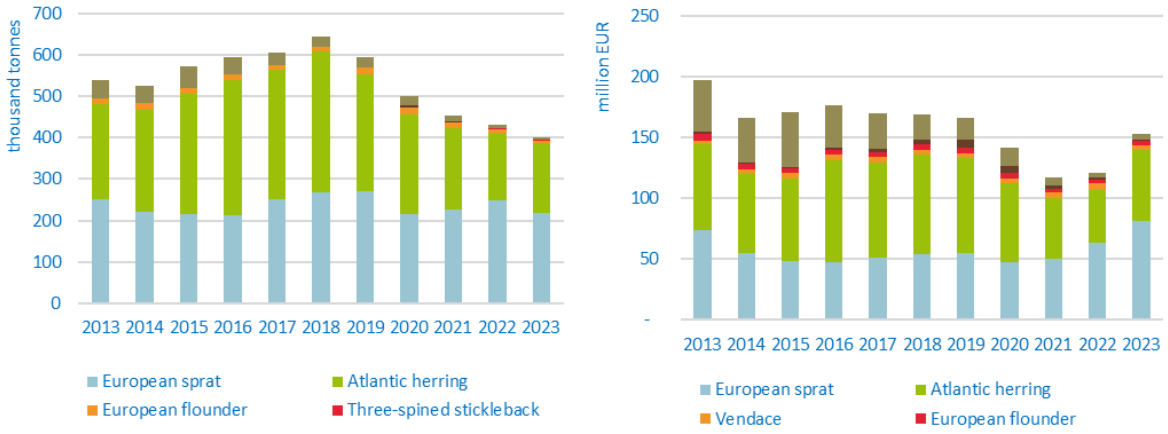
In 2023, Poland, Sweden, and Finland led in LSF landings, with shares of 22%, 18%, and 17% respectively. The fleet's total GVA rose by 42% to EUR 86.3 million, and average GVA per FTE increased by 55% to EUR 79,300. The Swedish LSF fleet remained the region's most profitable (EUR 12.1 million), followed by Latvia (EUR 10.9 million) and Poland (EUR 10.7 million). Germany's LSF fleet continued to report a negative gross profit (-EUR 3.9 million). Labour costs rose by 7%, while energy costs fell by 13% compared to 2022.

Figure 3.3.19. Top 10 species landed in weight (left) and value (right) by LSF operating in the Baltic Sea, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.3.20. Trends in landings of the top species landed in weight and value by the LSF operating in the Baltic Sea.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

3.3.6 Performance by fleet segment

There were 57 fleet segments operating in the Baltic Sea in 2023 (58 in 2022). Segments using non-active gears (PG, PGP, HOK, FPO and DFN) dominated the fleet accounting for 93% (4,500 units) of the total number of vessels. The segments generated EUR 50 million revenues and GVA of EUR 28 million 23% of the total output of the Baltic fleet. Pelagic trawlers dominated the output contributing to 75% of the total value of landings, followed by demersal trawlers segments (19%) and vessels using passive gears – PG (16%) (Figure 3.3.21).

Pelagic trawlers produced the highest gross profit (EUR 41.5 million compared to EUR 21 million in 2022), followed by DTS (EUR 12.8 million after EUR 10.1 million in 2022). Though the economic performance of the segments using non-active gears deteriorated – the gross profit generated in 2023 was negative and amounted to EUR 3.5 million compared to -EUR 2.5 million in 2022. One important reason for the net losses of the vessels using non-active gears (mostly smaller one) is the estimated opportunity cost of unpaid labour. For the fleet segments below 12 metres,

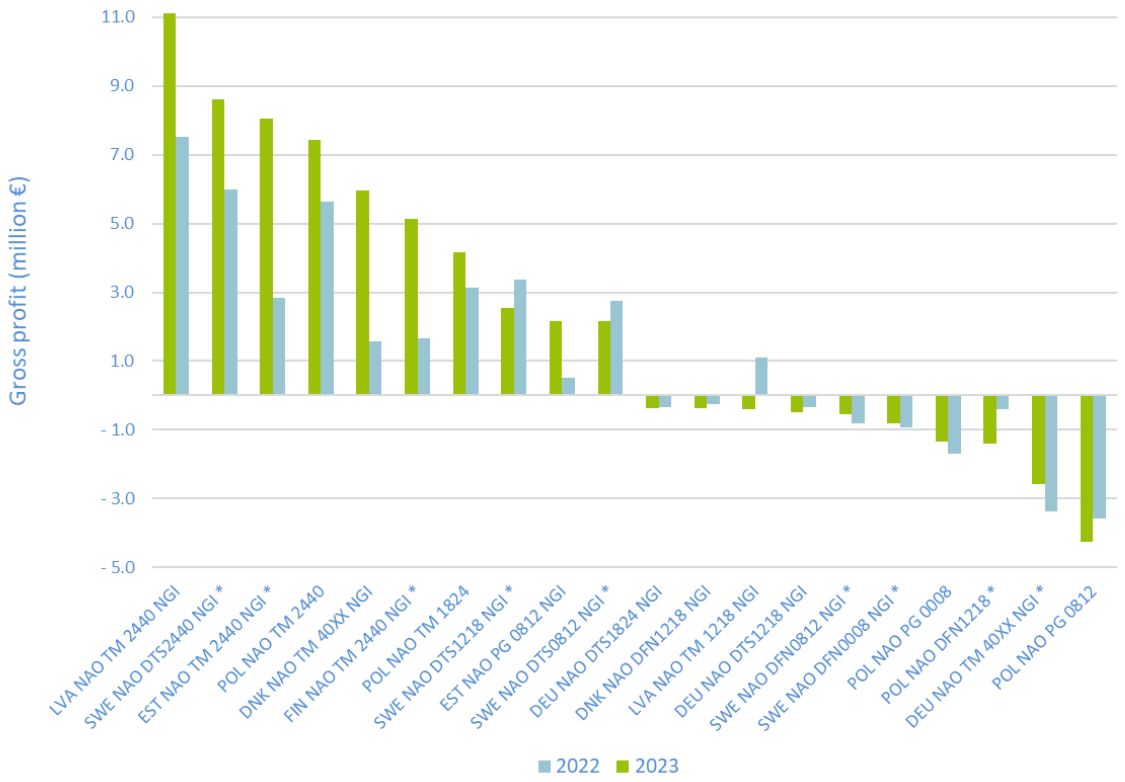
and to a certain extent for the 12-18 metres segments, the estimated cost of unpaid labour may be high in proportion to the catch value, making the gross profit negative.

Segments using passive gears deployed the highest effort with 267,000 fishing days in 2022 (-8.4% compared to 2021) followed by TM with 17,700 days (no significant change compared to 2021) and DTS with 8,900 days (8% increase compared to 2021).

Of the 57 fleet segments operating in the Baltic 25 made positive gross profits in 2023. From the top 10 most profitable segments 6 belonged to pelagic trawlers, 3 to demersal trawlers and one to passive gear vessels below 8 metres (EST PG0008). Out of 10 least profitable segments 5 belonged to SSCF.

At the fleet segment level, Latvian 24-40m pelagic trawlers (26 vessels) generated the highest gross profit (EUR 11.3 million), following by Swedish 24-40m demersal trawlers and seiners segment (EUR 8.6 million), the Estonian 24-40m pelagic trawlers and the Polish 24-40m pelagic trawlers segment (EUR 7.4 million). The success of the Swedish 24–40 m demersal trawler and seiner segment may be attributed to the fact that these vessels operate in both the Baltic Sea and the North Sea allowing greater flexibility in utilizing quotas across the two management areas. The pelagic segments from Latvia, Estonia, and Poland benefited from increased prices of small pelagic species (especially European sprat). Additionally, the Latvian 24-40 m as well as Estonian pelagic trawler segments gain an advantage from the short distance to fishing grounds, resulting in savings on fuel and labour costs.

Figure 3.3.21. Top ten most profitable and top ten least profitable fleet segments operating in the Baltic Sea, 2022-2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

3.4 North Western Waters

3.4.1 Regional Details

The North Western Waters (NWW) region is located in the north-eastern Atlantic, off the west coast of Ireland and Scotland, extending into the Celtic Sea, Irish Sea, and the English Channel. Covering approximately 1.15 million km², the NWW encompasses the Atlantic ICES areas 5, 6, and 7. To simplify, EU vessels operating in these fishing zones are collectively referred to as the NWW fleet.

In 2023, nine Member States—Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain—conducted fishing operations in this area. The dominant fleets were from France and Ireland, followed by Spain, the Netherlands, and Belgium. The remaining Member States engaged in only a minor portion of their overall fishing activity within the NWW (see Figure 3.4.1).

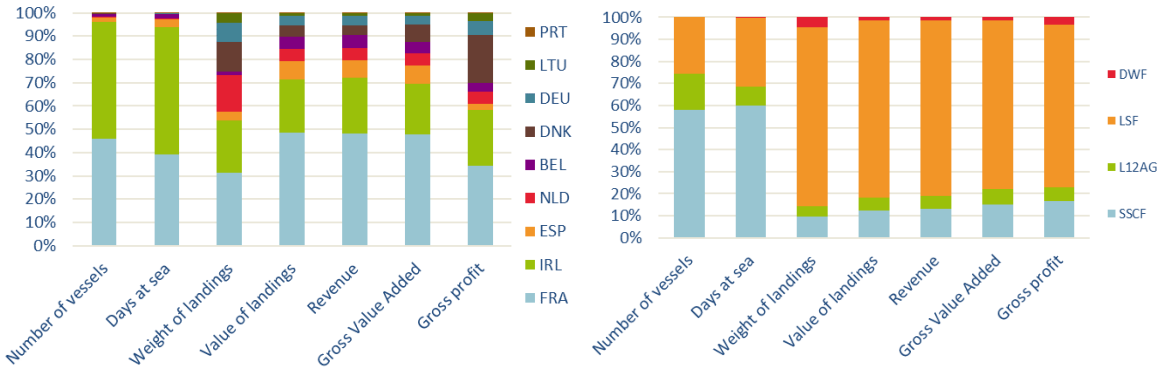
Based on the value of landings, the Irish and French fleets recorded the highest levels of landings in the NWW in 2023. Notably, Ireland had the highest total percentage of national landed value from the region at 90%, reflecting its significant reliance on this area (99% of the days-at-sea -DaS- occur here). Belgium (60%) and France (31%) also demonstrate substantial dependency on the NWW in terms of DaS. In terms of landed weight, Ireland and Belgium exhibited the highest dependency (91% and 66%, respectively). Similarly, Ireland and Belgium accounted for the largest share of landed value in 2023 (90% and 69%, respectively), whereas previously, Ireland and France held this position (see Figure 3.4.2).

Figure 3.4.1. Importance of the NWW MS fleets in terms of landings in weight and value, 2023



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.4.2. Share by MS fleet and fishing activity in NWW, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

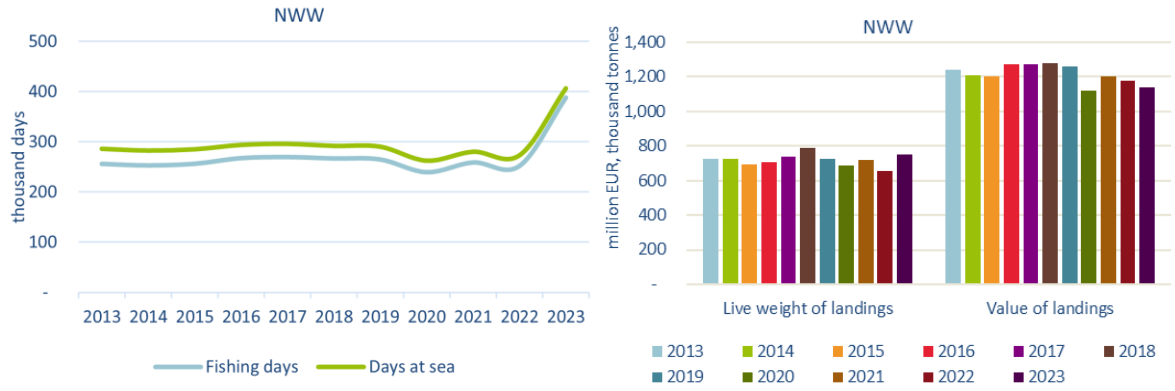
3.4.2 Overview of the main results for EU fleets in the NWW

Fishing effort and landings

From 2013 to 2019, fishing effort exhibited a stable trend, followed by a significant reduction in 2020 with an 11% decrease in DaS attributed to COVID-19 restrictions. Since 2021, there has been an upward trend. In the region, the total fishing effort in 2023 amounted to 406,649 DaS.

The total landings in weight increased by 15%, reaching 777,800 tonnes in 2023 compared to 2022. This represents the highest weight of landings in the past decade and a 9% increase from the lowest recorded weight of landings in 2020 (686,500 tonnes). In 2023, there was a slight increase of 1% in the value of landings, bringing the total value to EUR 1.14 billion, despite a substantial increase in landings by weight. This marks the highest value of landings over the last decade and a 14% increase from the lowest observed value of landings in 2020 (EUR 999 million).

Figure 3.4.3. Trends on effort and landings for Member States fleets operating in NWW.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Minor players in the region experienced notable increases in the value of landings in 2023: Lithuania (207%), Portugal (30%), Denmark (20%), Germany (20%), and the Netherlands (2%). Conversely, the four Member States that are more dependent on

this region experienced decreases: Belgium (-11%), France (-8%), Spain (-4%), and Ireland (-1%).

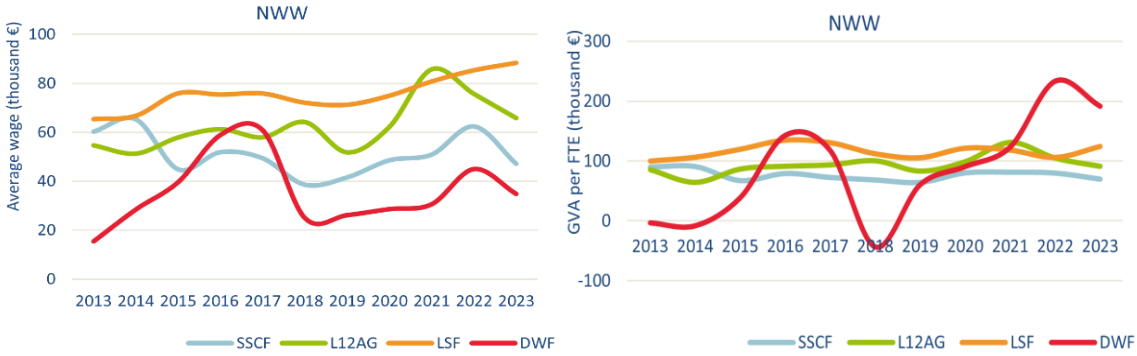
Employment, wages, and labour productivity

Total employment in the region in 2023 was estimated at 7,773, with the number of FTEs at 5,450, reflecting a decrease of 5% in terms of FTE from 2022. The most significant fleets in terms of overall employment correspond to those fisheries that have the highest dependency on this area. In 2023, France had the highest level of total employment with 2,360 FTE, followed by Ireland with 1,659 FTE, and Spain with 900 FTE. These three Member States combined accounted for 90% of all FTE and 93% of the total employment in the region in 2023.

Total employment within the LSF in 2023 stood at 4,532, indicating a decrease of 4% compared to 2022. France, Ireland, and Spain had the highest levels of total employment in the LSF with 2,073, 1,054, and 892, respectively, mirroring the high number of active LSF vessels from these Member States.

Employment in the SSCF was estimated at 2,328 in 2023, marking a 16% increase from 2022. Over the period from 2013 to 2023, employment figures fluctuated, peaking at 2,333 jobs in 2016 and showing a 26% decrease over the decade. Similar to the LSF, Ireland (1,242) and France (1,086) reported the highest numbers of employed in the SSCF, reflecting their substantial SSCF vessel operations in the NWW. This difference indicates that many SSCF workers are seasonal, part-time, or casual employees.

Figure 3.4.4. Trends on average wage and GVA per FTE by fishing activity for MS fleets operating in the NWW.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

The figures for total employed and FTEs in the LSF are closer in value, suggesting a higher level of full-time employment compared to the SSCF. For Spain, a higher level of FTE than total employment can be explained by the fact that one FTE equals 1,800, whereas fishers in Spain work 2,000 hours, resulting in higher FTE than total engaged crew.

Total employment in the L12AG in 2023 was estimated at 883, reflecting a 21% decrease from 2022 (1,113). Conversely, the total number of FTEs in 2023 was estimated at 438, representing an increase of 2%. Between 2013 and 2023, total

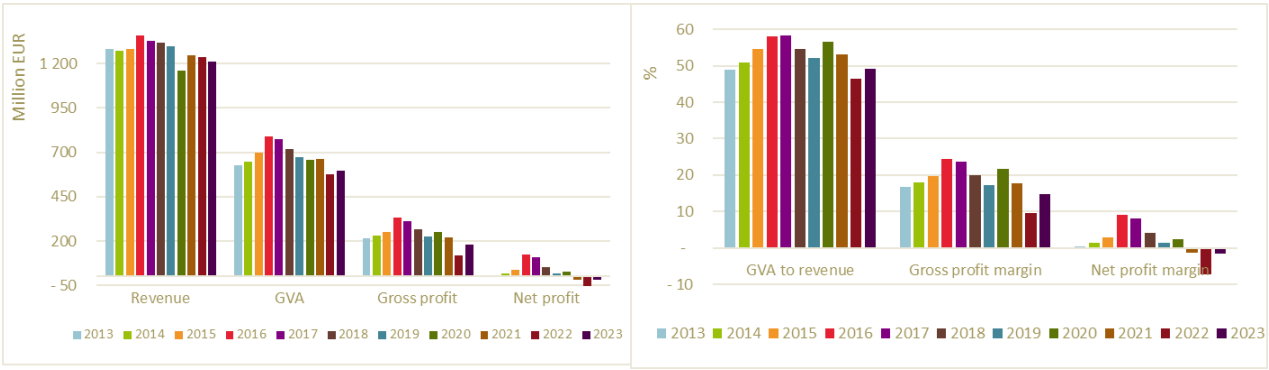
FTEs peaked in 2017 at 605 and reached the lowest figures in 2021 at 386. From 2021 to 2023, there has been a 13% increase in FTEs.

The average labour costs per FTE for the SSCF decreased by 24% in 2023 to EUR 47,100. For the LSF, the average wage per FTE increased by 4% to EUR 88,400. The average wage per FTE for the L12AG segment decreased by 13% to EUR 65,800.

Economic performance

The revenue generated by the NWW fleet in 2023 was estimated at EUR 1.21 billion, accounting for 20% of the total revenue of the overall EU fleet. This indicates a decrease in revenue of –2% for the NWW from 2022. GVA was estimated at EUR 595.7 million, reflecting an increase of 3.5% compared to the previous year and a decrease of –25% from a peak of EUR 790 million in 2016. The fleet achieved a gross profit of EUR 179.3 million, which is an increase of 51% compared to 2022 (EUR 119.1 million). The net profit at -EUR 17.6 million increased by 80% compared to -EUR 90.2 million in 2022 but is significantly lower than the peak of EUR 122.6 million in 2016 (see Figure 3.4.5).

Figure 3.4.5. Trends on revenue and profits for MS fleets operating in the NWW.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

3.4.3 Trends by Member State fleet

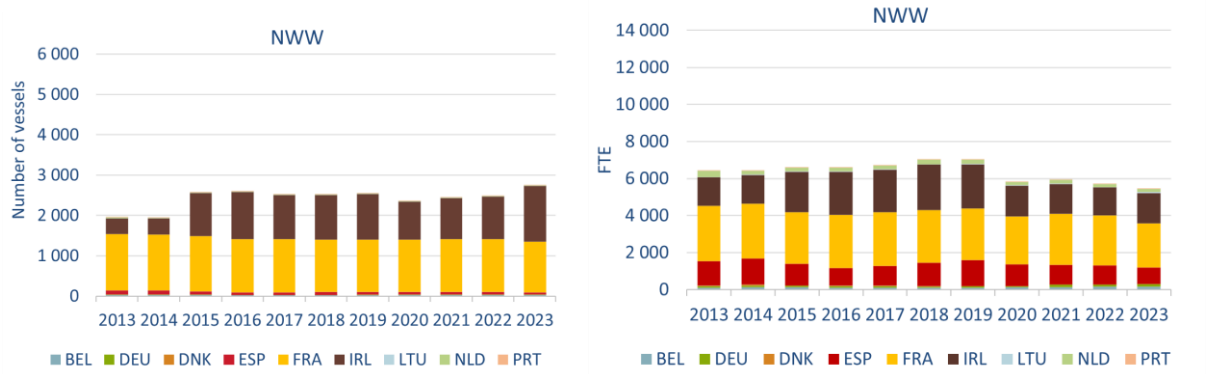
Fleet capacity and employment

In 2023, the fleets of the nine Member States operating in the NWW collectively comprised over 2,743 active vessels, representing a 10% increase from 2022. The French and Irish fleets together accounted for 96% of the total vessels in 2022, amounting to 2,634 vessels. The number of vessels has remained relatively stable over the past decade, even excluding the UK throughout the entire time series. An observed increase in vessel numbers in 2015 was primarily attributed to Ireland; however, this was largely due to improved data reporting that accurately assigned vessels, particularly within the SSCF, to a fishing region (see Figure 3.4.6).

The highest FTE levels in recent years were recorded at 7,034 FTE in 2019. In 2023, employment in the region was estimated at 5,450 FTE, reflecting a 4% decrease from 2022 and a 23% decline from pre-COVID-19 levels in 2019. The French fleet

contributed 43% of the total FTE, amounting to 2,360 FTE in 2023, followed by the Irish (30%) and Spanish (17%) fleets. Employment trends in the region mirrored the increase in fleet capacity from 2013 to 2019, peaking at 7,034 FTE (a 10% increase). However, between 2019 and 2023, total FTEs have decreased by 23%.

Figure 3.4.6. Trends on the number of vessels and employment (in FTE) for MS fleets operating in the NWW.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fishing effort

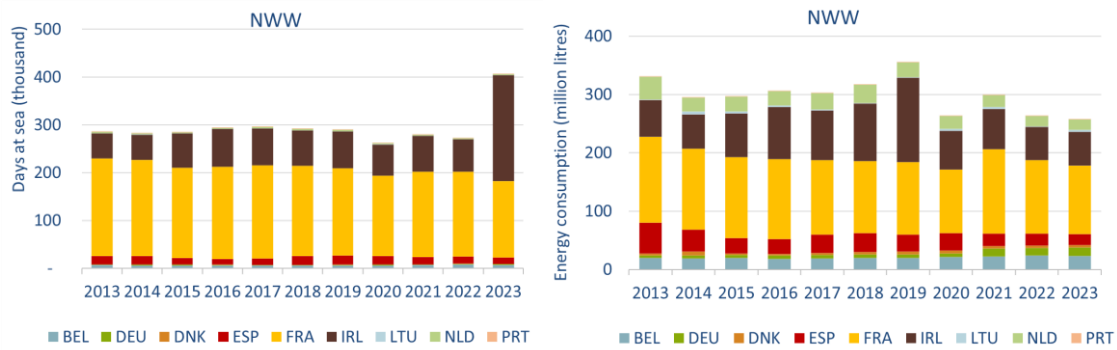
The EU NWW fleet spent over 406,649 DaS in 2023 corresponding to a 49% increase from 2024[4]. French and Irish fleets represented the majority of effort in the region (94% of total) in 2023 (see Figure 3.4.7).

Energy consumption for the EU NWW fleet totaled 257.4 million litres in 2023, which represents a 2% decrease from 2022. The French and Irish fleets accounted for 68% of this total consumption. The Spanish, Belgian, and Dutch fleets combined made up 23% of the overall energy consumption due to significant LSF activity in these Member States within the region.

From 2013 to 2019, fishing effort and energy consumption exhibited similar trends. However, in 2020, there was a 10% decrease in fishing effort (DaS) and a 26% reduction in energy consumption, largely due to COVID-19 restrictions. In 2021, both effort and energy consumption increased by 6% and 13%, respectively, as COVID-19 restrictions were eased. In 2022, both metrics declined. By 2023, fishing effort increased, linked to the previously mentioned methodological changes, while fuel consumption decreased by 2%. For the French fleet, fishing effort increased slightly by 0.3%, whereas energy consumption saw a 13% decrease compared to 2021.

[4] It is important to note that 2023 marks a break in the regional time series as Ireland has for the first time provided effort data estimates for all SSCF segments. In addition, there has been a change in the methodology for calculating effort data for vessels using pots and traps under 10 m LOA (refer to section 4.6, the Ireland chapter, for further details). This methodological change was essential to ensure effort data was being estimated for all SSCF segments. Conclusions regarding effort at the regional level over the 2013- 2023, thus, needs to be taken with caution.

Figure 3.4.7. Trends in fishing effort (in DaS) and energy consumption MS fleets operating in the NWW.



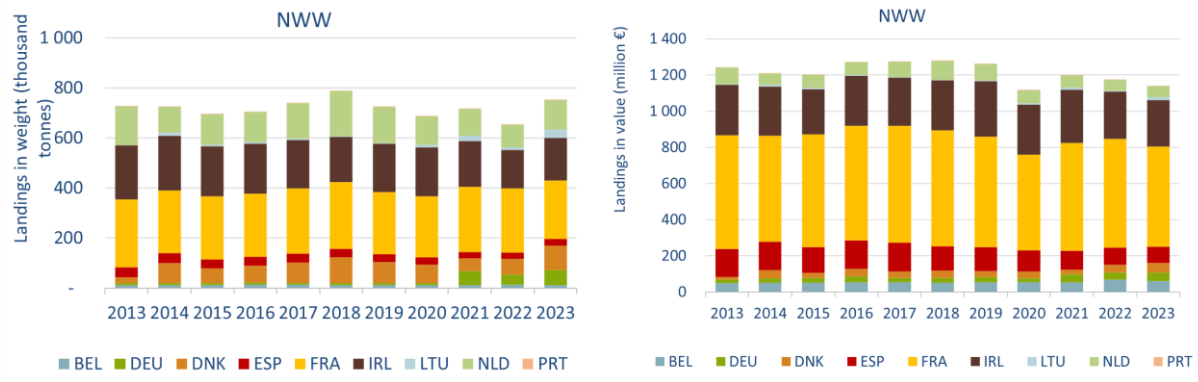
Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Landings and top species

The weight and value of landings in 2023 amounted to over 777,800 tonnes and EUR 1.14 billion, respectively, representing increases of 15% and 1% from 2022. In terms of landed weight, the French, Irish, Spanish, Dutch, and Belgian fleets were the top five, together accounting for 90% of the total weight landed (see Figure 3.4.8).

The French and Irish fleets contributed 49% and 23%, respectively, to the total NWW fleet landed value in 2022. Spain (8%), Belgium (5%) and the Netherlands (5%) contributed in a smaller capacity to the overall landed value.

Figure 3.4.8. Trends on landings in weight and value from MS fleets operating in the NWW, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

From 2013 to 2023, the NWW fleet saw varying landings in weight and value, peaking at 787,300 tonnes and EUR 1.28 billion in 2018. French landings decreased by 14% in weight and 12% in value. Irish landings dropped by 21% in weight and 8% in value. Belgian landings remained stable at 55,000 tonnes until 2021, then rose to 71,200 tonnes in 2022, a 19% increase from pre-Brexit averages, settling at 65,600

tonnes in 2023. The value of Belgian landings peaked at EUR 116 million, fell by 27% until 2021, increased to EUR 98.4 million in 2022, and then decreased to EUR 88.5 million in 2023.

In 2023, the two main species landed by weight were small pelagic species, including blue whiting (337,300 tonnes) and Atlantic mackerel (67,500 tonnes), representing 52% of all landings by weight in the region and 18% of the landing values (Figure 3.4.9). The top 10 species in value included Atlantic scallop and European hake, which together represented 21% of the total value. Other significant species included pelagic species such as Atlantic mackerel and blue whiting, and high-value species such as Norway lobster, European lobster, monkfish, common sole, whelk, and common cuttlefish.

The fishing possibilities of key species (through TACs and quotas), and fish market prices are significant factors in the performance of the NWW fleets. Regarding the share in landed values of crustaceans, Ireland accounts for the majority of Norway lobster and edible crab. France leads in Atlantic scallop and whelk landings by value. Ireland and France are prominent in Atlantic mackerel landing values. Spain and France have a significant share in the landed values of European hake, while Belgium and France continue to lead in common sole.

Figure 3.4.9. Top 10 species in landed weight and value for Member States fleets operating in the NWW, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Temporal trends in the value and weight of landings have been notably affected by variations in TAC and quotas for blue whiting, Atlantic mackerel, and European hake (see Figure 3.4.10).

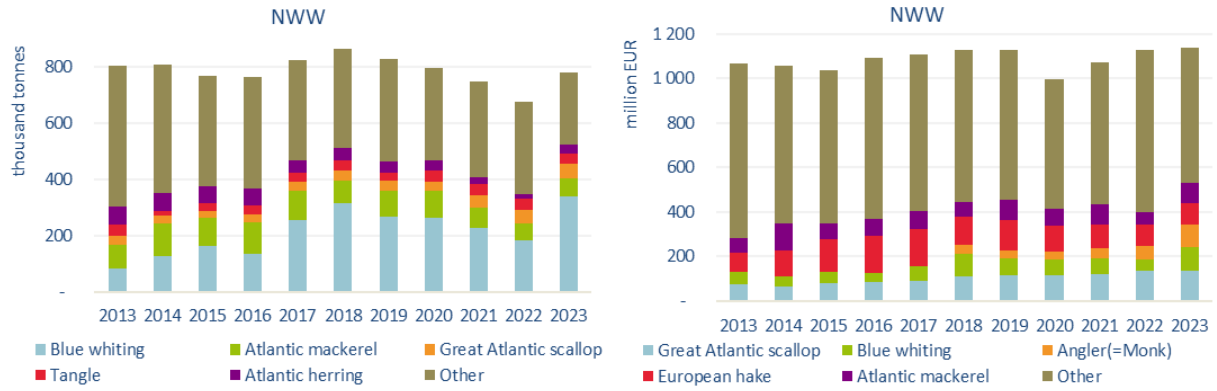
Blue whiting landings exhibited significant fluctuations between 2013, with 84,500 tonnes, and 2023, peaking at 337,000 tonnes and EUR 109.4 million. From 2018 to 2022, landings by weight decreased on average by 42% and in value by 46%. In 2023, there was an increase in landings by weight of 83% and by value of 104%.

Atlantic mackerel landings also fluctuated from 2013 to 2023, reaching their peak in 2014 with 120,000 tonnes and EUR 118.7 million. Between 2015 and 2022, landings decreased on average by 50% in weight and 52% in value. However, in 2023, landings by weight increased by 12.5% and by value by 105%. This trend indicates the region's vulnerability to quotas and TACs.

Great Atlantic scallop landings by weight decreased by 10% from 2013 to 2016, followed by a significant average increase of 67% from 2016 to 2022 as TACs were raised during this period. The value of Great Atlantic scallop landings decreased by 10% from 2013 to 2014, then saw a substantial average increase of 94% from 2014 to 2022, reaching a peak value of EUR 135.7 million in 2022. Despite an 8% increase in landings by weight to 50,100 tonnes in 2023 from 46,600 tonnes in 2022, the value of landings marginally decreased by 0.5% to EUR 135 million.

European hake landings by weight experienced a significant upward trend from 2013 to 2016, increasing by 61% to a peak of 51,300 tonnes. This was followed by an average decrease of 51% between 2016 and 2023, culminating in 25,100 tonnes in 2023, the lowest during this period. The landed value of European hake peaked at EUR 164.8 million in 2017, an increase of 99% compared to 2013 (EUR 83 million), followed by a downward trend of 42% to EUR 95.9 million in 2023. Landings of European hake in 2023 decreased by 10% in weight and 1% in value compared to 2022.

Figure 3.4.10. Trends on landings of the top six species landed value for MS fleets operating in the NWW, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Economic performance

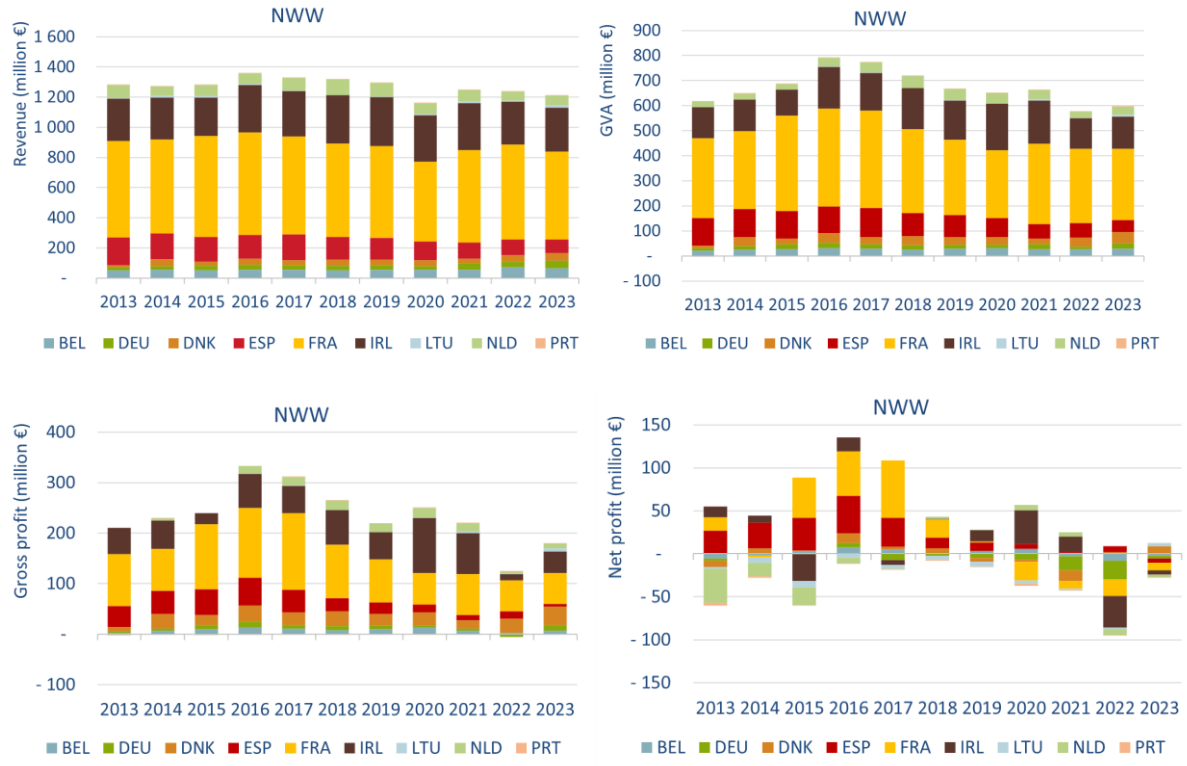
In 2023, the NWW fleet generated EUR 1.21 billion in revenue, with 80% from France (EUR 583.3 million), Ireland (EUR 290.8 million), and Spain (EUR 90.1 million). This marked a 2% decrease from 2022. Economic performance varied; Ireland, Germany, the Netherlands, Lithuania, and Portugal saw revenue increases. GVA increased by 4% to EUR 595.7 million, despite decreases for Spain (-20%) and France (-4%). Energy consumption dropped by 2% and energy costs fell by 18%, leading to a 7% reduction in operating costs and higher GVA. However, GVA is down 14% compared to averages from 2013-2021.

The NWW fleet reported a gross profit of EUR 179.3 million in 2023, which is a 50% increase compared to 2022. Seven out of nine Member States experienced an increase in gross profit: Denmark (307%), Lithuania (278%), Ireland (260%), Belgium (126%), the Netherlands (116%), Denmark (34%), and France (0.1%). Conversely, Portugal saw decreases of -66% and -13%, respectively. In 2023, France (EUR 61.6

million), Ireland (EUR 42.7 million), and Denmark (EUR 37.7 million) contributed to 79% of the total gross profit.

Net profit for the NWW fleet remained negative for the second consecutive year (-EUR 15.4 million), although it showed a notable improvement from 2022 (-EUR 86.3 million). Only two Member States recorded positive net profits: Denmark (EUR 9 million) and Lithuania (EUR 3.7 million). The Member States most impacted by the decline in net profit were France (-EUR 9 million), Ireland (-EUR 5.3 million), Spain (-EUR 4.6 million), Belgium (-EUR 7 million), France (-EUR 4 million), and the Netherlands (-EUR 3 million). The variations in annual revenue are mainly attributed to changes in TACs, quotas, fish prices, and fuel prices, along with a decrease in the weight of landings by -9% and the value of landings by -2% in 2022.

Figure 3.4.11. Trends on revenue and profit for MS fleets operating in the NWW, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

3.4.4 Main factors affecting the performance of the fleet

Main drivers affecting fleet performance in the region

The following factors may have contributed to the situation in 2023:

- An overall increase in landings by weight by 15% in the region.
- An overall increase in the value of landings by 1% in the region.
- Energy costs decreased by -18% for the NWW fleet reflecting the reductions in fuel prices that year. The two main fleets operating in the NWW, France and

Ireland, both had decreases of –16% in terms of energy costs. This had positive effect on the overall performance of the NWW fleet.
- An increase in quotas for some key species: Blue whiting, Norway lobster.
- Fish prices for certain key species increased in 2023: Atlantic mackerel and blue whiting.
- Recovery of some stocks, e.g., the biomass of horse mackerel has recovered, and Norway lobster stock continues to follow a positive trend in the areas off the west and southwest of Ireland and the Porcupine Bank (7.b. 7.c. 7.j. and 7.k. Functional Unit 16).

Factors that may have hindered the region's economic performance include:

- Following the UK's departure from the EU (Brexit), the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) sets out the terms under which the EU and the UK can determine their individual rights to catch fish in their respective waters. Under the agreement, 25% of the EU's fishing rights in UK waters are to be transferred progressively to the United Kingdom's fleets between 2021 and 2026. The UK waters are a significant fishing area for both the French and Irish fleets but particularly the Irish as 98% of their effort (DaS) occurs in the NWW. Subsequently, the most direct effects were expected for the pelagic fleets of Ireland and France due to the reduction of the EU share in TACs of Atlantic mackerel and herring. Atlantic mackerel quota for Ireland has decreased by –32% between 2020 (78,000 tonnes) and 2023 (53,400 tonnes).
- Fish prices for certain high-value species decreased in 2023, e.g. Norway lobster, Atlantic scallop, and European hake.
- A decrease in quotas for certain key pelagic species including mackerel and horse mackerel.
- The Irish fleet experienced a more positive economic performance in 2023 (gross profit and net profit up by 179% and 88%, respectively) compared to the severe deterioration in 2022. It is worth noting that that the Irish fleet (99% of which operate in the NWW) received EUR 70.9 million in operating subsidies financed under the Brexit Adjustment Reserve (BAR) fund and European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) grant assistance in 2023. However, the income from direct subsidies is not factored into gross profit or net profit calculations for Ireland or the NWW in this report. This has impacted the overall performance of the NWW fleet.

Regulation and Fisheries management in the region

- The TCA which entered into force on 1 May 2021 between the UK and the EU includes the objective of cooperating with a view to ensuring that fishing activities for shared stocks in their waters are environmentally sustainable in the long term and contribute to achieving economic and social benefits, and requires the Parties to hold consultations annually to agree the total allowable catches (TACs) for the following year for the stocks listed in Annex 35 to the TCA. The agreement established the parties (UK and EU) share of the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for 124 stocks of common interest, including changes to the shares in each of the years 2021 to 2025 and 2026 onwards. These TAC changes include 55 stocks where the United Kingdom share has increased and the total share available to the EU has reduced accordingly. This has had an impact on many remaining EU Member States operating in

the NWW, and particularly for Ireland and France. A series of meetings took place between November and December 2021 to consult on fishing opportunities for 2022 in accordance with Article 498 (Fishing Opportunities) of the TCA. The results of these negotiations were documented in Annex 1 of 21 December 2021: fisheries consultations between the UK and the EU for 2022. Under the existing TCA (2021–2026 adjustment period), the UK's share of Total Allowable Catch (TAC) has incrementally grown, notably in pelagic species like mackerel. In May 2025, the UK and the EU agreed to roll over the current fisheries regime, allowing EU vessels continued access to UK waters until 2038. This maintains the status quo. This upholds the current access arrangements, with no annual renegotiation required in the interim. The current extension locks in access to 2038, but quota shares will continue to be negotiated annually during TAC rounds. After June 2026, the UK and EU could choose to renegotiate quota shares or move to multi-year deals, though access terms are fixed until 2038 unless re-opened by mutual consent.

- Regulation (EU) 2019/472 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 March 2019 establishing a multiannual plan for stocks fished in the Western Waters and adjacent waters, and for fisheries exploiting those stocks- This regulation covers a range of demersal species and deep-sea stocks fished primarily by the Irish and French fleets and also by the other Member States that typically operate in the NWW, including for example:
- Norway Lobster (ICES subareas 5, 6, 7) of particular importance to the Irish and French fleets.
- European Hake (ICES subarea 7) of particular importance to the Irish, French and Spanish fleets.
- Cod (ICES divisions 7a, 7e-k) of particular importance to the Irish and French fleets.
- Haddock (ICES divisions 6b, 7a, 7b-k) of particular importance to the Irish and French fleets.
- Whiting (ICES divisions 7b, 7c, 7e-k) of particular importance to the French, Irish and Dutch fleets.
- Megrim (ICES divisions 6b, 7b-k) of particular importance to the Spanish, Irish, French, and Belgian fleets.
- Plaice (ICES divisions 7d, 7e) of particular importance to the Belgian, French, Irish and Dutch fleets.
- Common sole (ICES divisions 7d, 7e, 7f, 7g, 7hm 7j, 7k) of particular importance to the Belgian and French fleets.
- Measures for the recovery of eel. Area covered includes EU estuaries and rivers that flow into seas in ICES areas 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9 and the Mediterranean (Council Regulation (EC) No 1100/2007 of 18 September 2007). In the NWW region, this management plan applies primarily to France.
- Other management measures that may affect economic performance of the fleets operating in the NWW include the EU's Marine Strategy Framework Directive which provides a binding legal obligation to establish marine protected areas (MPAs) in 30% of Member States waters by 2030. It stipulates that spatial protection measures such as MPAs shall be put in place to conserve biodiversity as part of national programmes of measures, to contribute to the achievement of good environmental status.

Status of important stocks

Fishing mortality rates for shellfish, demersal, and pelagic fish have decreased since the late 1990s. However, pelagic stocks now exceed the reference point according to ICES Advice 2023. In the Celtic Seas ICES Ecoregion, mean fishing mortality is nearing the MSY. Of the 43 stocks evaluated against MSY, 33 are now fished at or below this level.

TAC development of main species

Demersal species:

- After a peak in 2019, Hake TAC decreased from 2019 to 2022 and increased by 4% in 2023.
- Common sole TAC decreased in 2023 in all areas of the NWW.
- Norway lobster TAC in NWW had been quite stable until 2019, since then TAC has decreased each year up to 2023.
- TAC of anglerfish increased by 28% from 2008 to 2019, remained stable in 2020, and then decreased in 2021 by -16%. TAC has increased in both 2022 (7%) and 2023 (10%).

Pelagic Species:

- TACs for pelagic species in the Northeast Atlantic region have varied especially for blue whiting and mackerel with very high values in 2005, 2014 and 2018.
- After a peak in 2014, mackerel TAC has been decreasing overall except for 2017 and 2020. In 2023, there was a further reduction of –5% of TAC. This downward trend is having a negative impact on the overall revenue of the NWW and particularly for the Irish and French fleets.
- Horse mackerel TAC decreased significantly by –80% in 2023.
- Blue whiting TAC increased each year since 2009, reaching a peak in 2018 following by reductions each year until 2022. In 2023, there was an 80% increase in TAC which positively affected the most important Member State fleets in the NWW.

3.4.5 Description of relevant fisheries in the region

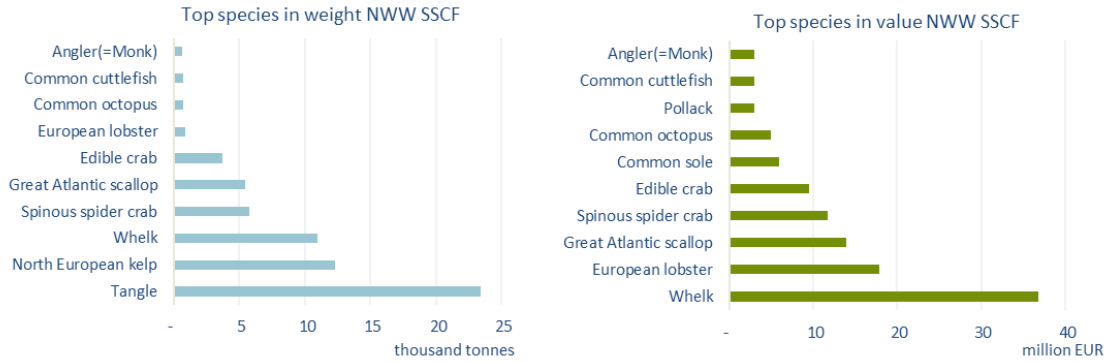
Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

- In 2023, two Member States (France and Ireland) had SSCF operating in the NWW in 2023 with a total of 1,589 vessels. While 100% of Irish SSCF fished in the region, SSCF fishing activity by France in the NWW represents only a proportion (37%) of their overall activity, as they were also active in the Mediterranean Sea and North Sea.
- In terms of vessel numbers, Ireland had the highest number of active SSCF vessels with 995 and France, with 594 vessels.
- Total employment for the SSCF is highest for Ireland totalling 1,241 jobs, followed by France with 1,086 jobs, reflecting the largest number of their active vessels in the region. These Member States fleets demonstrated a lower FTE

figure in comparison with total employed indicating that a large majority of those employed in the SSCF fish part-time or seasonally.

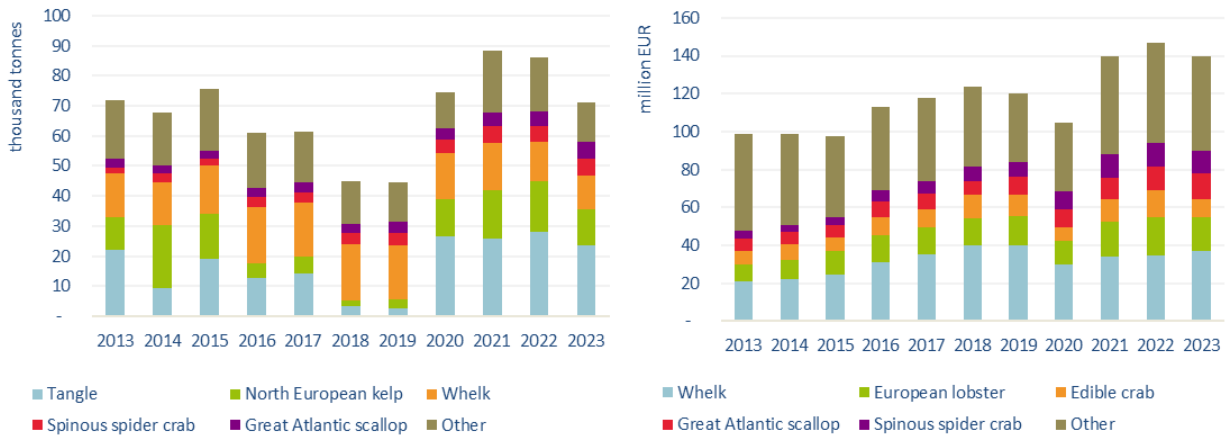
- Overall, the SSCF was profitable in 2023, totalling EUR 90.6 million in GVA (a -2% decrease) and EUR 29.5 million in gross profit (an increase of 44%). However, there was a significant difference between the economic performance of the Irish and French fleets, the two key players in this region. While the French SSCF achieved a gross profit of EUR 17.4 million (up 27% from 2021), a gross profit margin of 16% and a net profit of 9%, the Irish SSCF fleet achieved a gross profit of EUR 17.1 million (down -92% on 2021), a gross profit margin of 4% and a negative net profit of -6%.
- In terms of main species landed by weight, tangle (23,400 tonnes) and North European kelp (12,300 tonnes) were the top two species. The main species by landed value were whelk and European lobster, valued at EUR 36.8 million and EUR 17.9 million, respectively.

Figure 3.4.12. Top 10 species landed by SSCF operating in the NWW, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.4.13. Trends in landings of top species landed by SSCF operating in the NWW.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

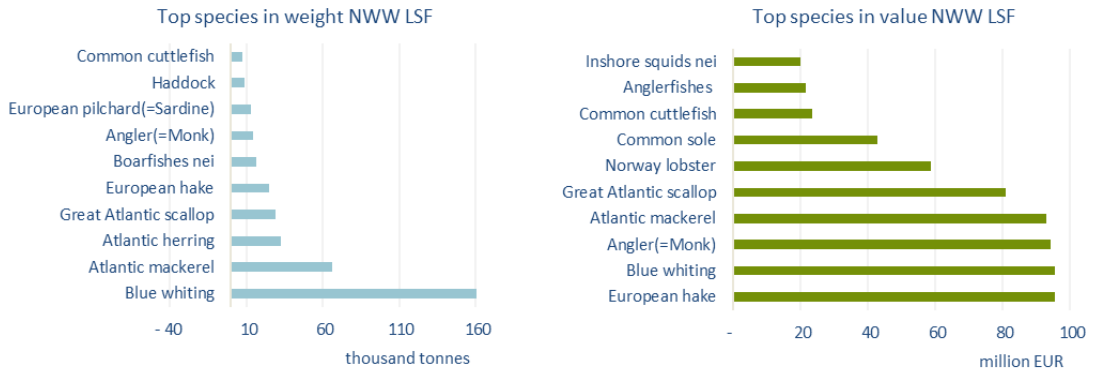
Vessels under 12 metres using active gears fleet (L12AG)

- In 2023, two Member States had vessels in the L12AG fleet operating in the NWW region (Ireland and France) totalling 809 active vessels. France had the largest number with 640 vessels, followed by Ireland with 169. However, in terms of dependency, the region is more important for the Irish L12AG, with 100% of their vessels active in the NWW.
- Overall, the L12AG was profitable in 2023, totalling EUR 40 million in GVA and EUR 11 million in gross profit. The French NWW L12AG generated the highest revenue with EUR 63 million (EUR 10 million for Ireland).
- The highest valued species landed by the fleet was Atlantic scallop totalling 81% of the total value of landings at EUR 40.4 million.
- For France, there was a more diverse landing composition, with Atlantic scallop and tangle representing 81% of the total weight of landings.
- The primary species landed by the Irish L12AG in terms of value were clams and sword razor shell (i.e. razor clam) totalling 70% of the total value of landings at EUR 2.8 million.

Large-scale fleet (LSF)

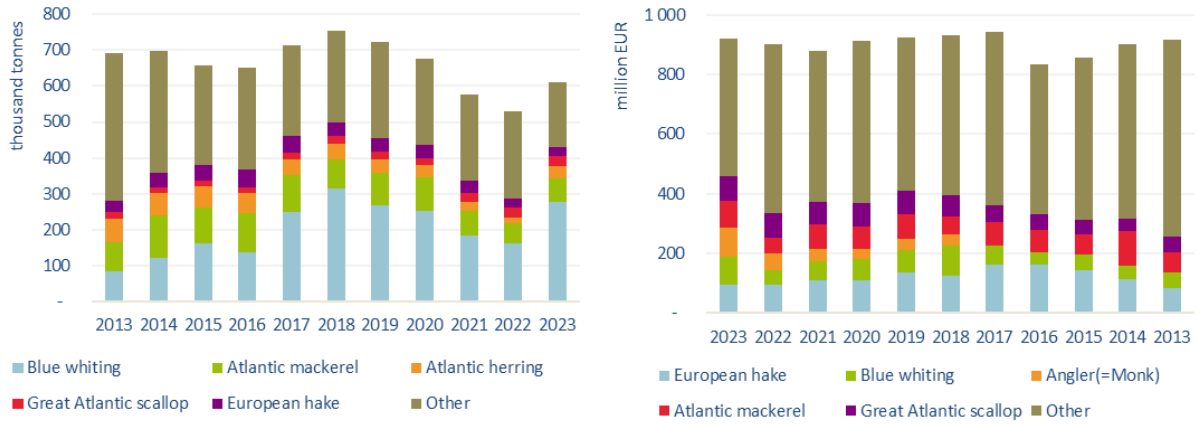
- In 2023, eight Member States had LSFs operating in the NWW region totalling 705 active vessels. France had the largest number with 386 active vessels. However, in terms of dependency, the region is more important for the Irish LSF with 209 vessels or 91% of their LSF active in the NWW. Total employment for the LSF is highest for France totalling 2,073 jobs, reflecting their high number of active vessels in the region, followed by the Irish LSF with 1,054 jobs.
- Overall, the LSF was profitable in 2023, totalling EUR 458 million in GVA and EUR 133 million in gross profit. The French NWW LSF, generated the highest revenue (EUR 412 million), followed by Ireland (EUR 232 million) and Spain (EUR 90 million).
- At a Member State level, all LSF generated gross profits in 2023. Additionally, one DWF vessel form the Lithuanian fleet was also active in the region in 2023 contributing EUR 16 million in revenue and EUR 3.6 million in gross profits. It should be noted that data on the EU DWF operating in the region is limited and the economic indicators are to be interpreted with caution. Member States can be classed into different categories according to their dependency which is representative of their LSF landings composition in the NWW.
- The highest valued species landed by the Irish LSF were Atlantic mackerel and Norway lobster totalling 52% of the total value of landings. These two species had landing values of EUR 112 million.
- In the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark, the most frequently fished species were blue whiting with a total value of EUR 70 million.
- For Spain and France, there was a more diverse landing composition, with European hake playing a key role for both Member States. The top species by landing value for France were monkfish (22%), Atlantic scallop (17%), and European hake (10%).

Figure 3.4.14. Top 10 species landed by LSF operating in the NWW, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.4.15. Trends in landings of top species landed by LSF operating in the NWW.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

3.4.6 Performance by fleet segments

In 2023, there were approximately 80 segments operating in the NWW. At a fleet segment level, the French demersal trawlers 24-40m generated the highest revenue (EUR 141 million), followed by the Irish demersal trawlers over 40m (EUR 72 million), the French demersal trawlers between 18-24m (EUR 65 million), and the French dredgers 12-18m (EUR 56 million).

52 fleet segments from Ireland and France operated in the NWW region for over 65% of the year, accounting for 96% of vessels, 94% of total effort (DaS), and 74% of FTE. These fleets represented 71% of landings by value and 54% by weight.

Key economic indicators for the top revenue segments:

- French demersal trawlers (24-40m): GVA EUR 60 million, gross profit EUR 11 million, labour productivity EUR 147,000 per FTE.
- Irish pelagic trawlers (>40m): GVA EUR 41 million, gross profit EUR 21 million, labour productivity EUR 367,000 per FTE.

- French demersal trawlers (18-24m): GVA EUR 25 million, gross profit EUR 4 million, labour productivity EUR 107,000 per FTE.
- French dredgers (12-18m): GVA EUR 31 million, gross profit EUR 9 million, labour productivity EUR 157,000 per FTE.

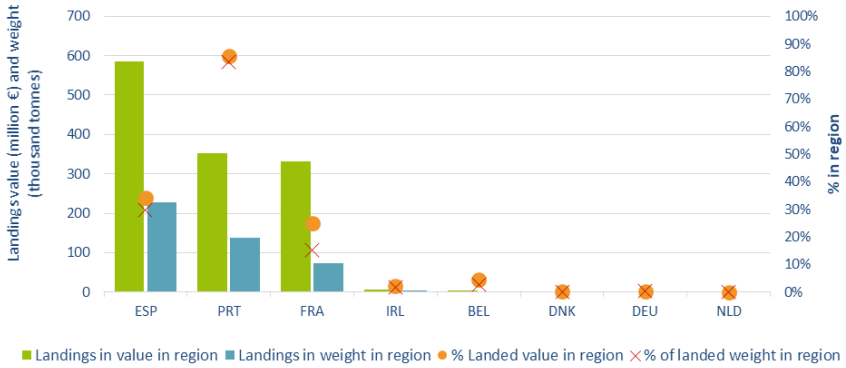
3.5 South Western Waters

3.5.1 Regional Details

The South Western Waters (SWW) encompasses the Atlantic zone extending from Brittany in the north to the Strait of Gibraltar in the south, and includes the outermost regions of Madeira, the Azores, and the Canary Islands. These areas correspond to ICES areas 8, 9, and 10, as well as COPACE divisions 34.1.1, 34.1.2, and 34.2.0. For simplicity, EU vessels operating within these fishing areas are referred to as the EU SWW fleet.

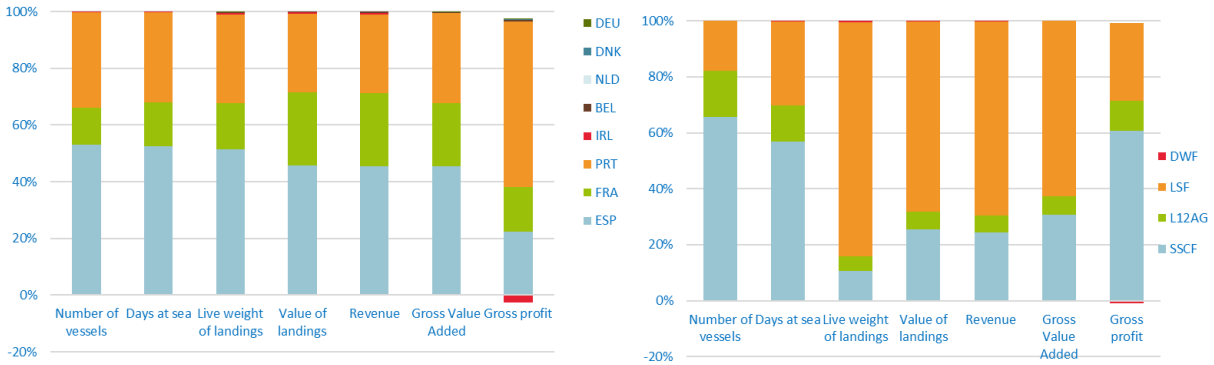
The primary fleets active in this region are Spanish, French, and Portuguese. Additionally, five other EU fleets—Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, and the Netherlands—were operational in 2023, albeit with limited fishing activity (their collective effort share was 0.2% and landings constituted 0.8% in value and 1.2% in weight of the regional totals). Among these, Ireland and Belgium were the Member States that spent the most days at sea in the SWW.

Figure 3.5.1. Importance of the SWW for MS fleets in terms of landings in weight and value, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.5.2. Share of MS fleets and fishing activity in the SWW, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Based on the value of landings, Spain produced the most from the region (46%), followed by Portugal (28%) and France (26%). Spain has the highest percentage of landed weight from the region (51%), followed by Portugal (31%) and France (16%). Portugal is the Member State that most depends on these waters: 98% of the Portuguese fleet effort occur in the SWW, producing 86% and 83% of the total value and weight of landings, respectively.

SSCF dominates in number of vessels (66%) and effort (57%) while the LSF is the main segment in terms of production (84% in weight and 68% in value) (see Figure 3.5.2).

3.5.2 Overview of the main results for EU fleets in the SWW

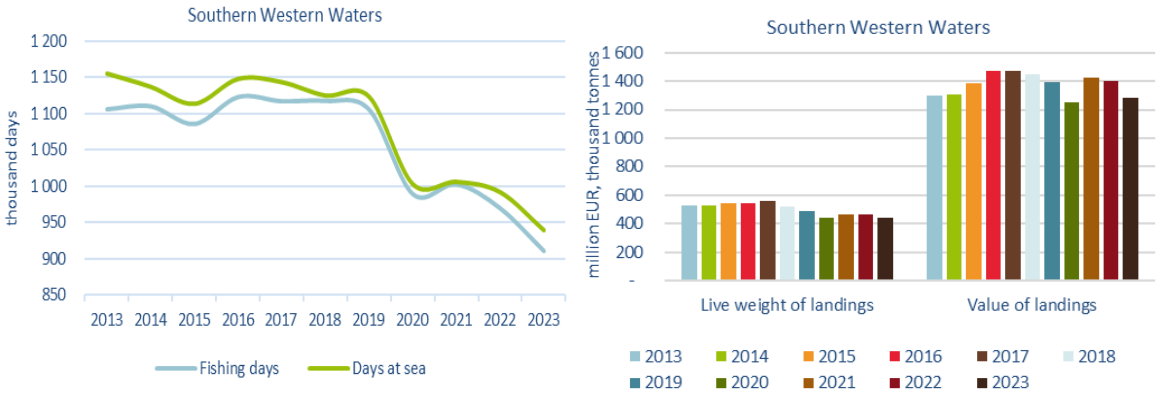
Fishing effort and landings

Fishing effort had been decreased from 2017 to 2020 at the same time than weight of landings and value of landings. However, in 2021 there was an upward trend, with stabilisation in 2022. In 2023, the weight of landings fell by 6%, in line with the 5% decrease in effort (DaS), while the value of landings fell more sharply (-8%). (see Figure 3.5.3).

The main species landed were sardine, anchovy, chub mackerel, blue whiting, hake and horse mackerel. In terms of value, the main species were hake, anchovy, octopus, albacore and sardine. Among these species, it is particularly important the price as in the case of the octopus, whose landings were 10,943 tonnes and the value of landing reached EUR 83.83 million (7.7 euro/kg).

Fishing opportunities and prices are major drivers of revenues, but also operational costs, as fuel, whose prices averaged 0.83 euro/litre.

Figure 3.5.3. Trends on effort and landings for MS fleets operating in the SWW.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Employment, wages and labour productivity

Total employment in the region was estimated at 32,429 fishers and 18,558 FTE, highlighting the prevalence of part-time work. The number of engaged crew decreased from 2016 to 2020, with an increase in 2021. Since then, FTE has been declining. In Portugal, employment levels decreased by 3% from 2022 to 2023, while FTE increased by 1%. Conversely, Spain saw a 3% increase in total employment

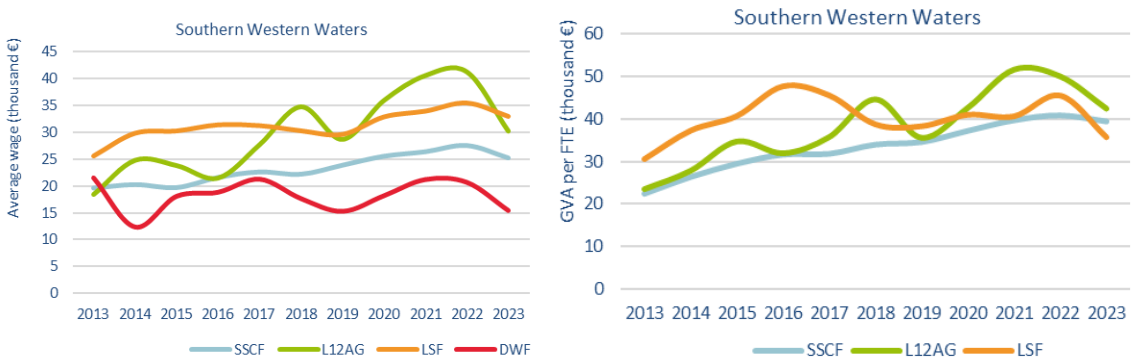
and a 4% decrease in FTE. This indicates that in Portugal, remaining workers became more engaged or worked more intensively, possibly through longer hours or more stable contracts. In Spain, the data suggests a rise in part-time or seasonal work, with lower average engagement per worker. France experienced decreases in both employment (-5%) and FTEs (-9%), indicating a general reduction in labor within the sector, possibly due to reduced activity or restructuring.

Average labour costs per FTE in the SSCF have declined 8% in 2023, in line with the reduction of the value of landings. Nevertheless, in 2023, the average salary was 10% above the average of the period 2013-2022. The LSF also showed a negative trend from 2022 to 2023 (-7%). Currently, the LSF labour cost is 6% above the average of the period 2013-2022. The activity with the largest decline in labour costs was L12AG, where the average labour cost fell by 27% from 2022 to 2023, 10% more than the drop in the value of landings.

The difference in labour cost between SSCF and LSF has been variable, being almost EUR 8,000 in the last two years. In 2023 the average labour cost in the SSCF was around 76% of the labour cost in the LSF. The difference in average labour cost between fishing activity over time can be seen in Figure 3.5.4. Labour cost at DWF is the lowest, followed by those at SSCF. The LSF activity is often the one with the highest labour cost. In the case of L12AG, there is a great fluctuation over the period analysed, and in 2023 they were slightly lower than those of LSF.

During the period 2013-2022 the labour productivity (GVA per FTE) was higher in the LSF than in the SSCF. However, in 2023 the opposite was observed and the SSCF had more EUR 3,615 GVA per FTE than the SSCF, which was due to the weak results of the LSF (less income from landings, lower fish prices and higher costs). In fact, from 2022 to 2023, labour productivity fell by 21% in LSF, 15% in L12AG and only 4% in SSCF.

Figure 3.5.4. Trends on average labour cost and labour productivity (GVA per FTE) by fishing activity for MS fleets operating in the SWW.



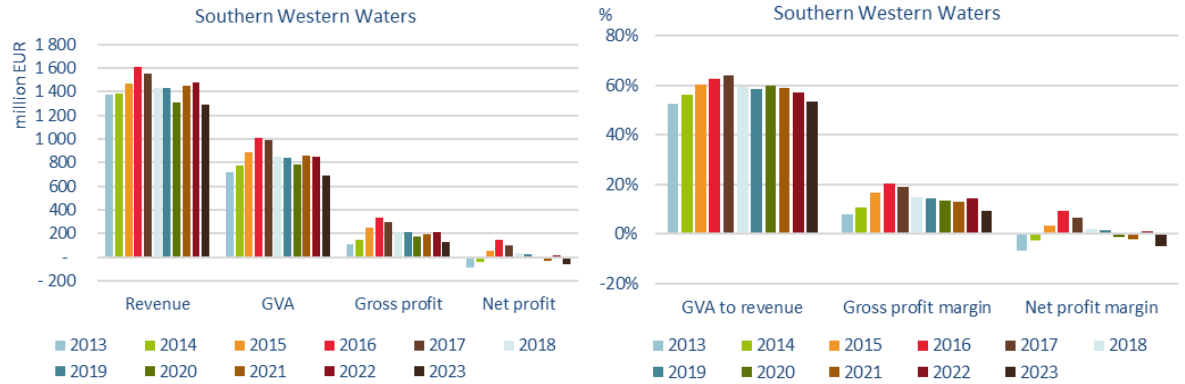
Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Economic performance

In 2023, the fleet operating in the SWW generated over EUR 1.3 billion in revenue, EUR 689 million in GVA and EUR 123 million in gross profits. Overall, revenue and profits decreased from 2022 to 2023. Although the fleet showed operational

profitability, the net profit remained at a negative level (-EUR 61 million) (see Figure 3.5.5).

Figure 3.5.5. Trends on revenue and profits for MS fleets operating in the SWW.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

The personal costs are the most important expenditure for the fleet operating in the SWW (41%), followed by the energy costs (17%). The cost structure has remained relatively stable over time. However, energy costs increased sharply by 81% between 2020 and 2022. Despite this short-term spike, energy costs in 2022 were only 22% above the average for the period 2013–2020, suggesting that the long-term variation is less significant. However, in 2023, the energy cost decreased 13%. On the other hand, the personal costs have decreased by 12% since 2021 and when comparing with the 2013-2020 average it has increased by 7%.

3.5.3 Trends by Member State fleet

Fleet capacity and employment

The Member States fleets operating in the SWW collectively numbered approximately 9,958 vessels. Spain, Portugal, and France accounted for 99.9% of these vessels. The Spanish fleet was the largest, with 5,273 active vessels in the region, followed by Portugal with 3,366 vessels, and France with 1,308 vessels.

From 2013 to 2022, fleet capacity and employment in the region generally declined. The Portuguese fleet decreased by 9% and the Spanish fleet by 8%. Full-time equivalent (FTE) for the Spanish fleet dropped by 21%, while for Portugal, it declined by 10% (see Figure 3.5.6).

In 2023, the SWW fleet employed around 32,430 jobs, equivalent to 18,558 FTE. The fleets with the highest production also had the most significant employment rates. The Spanish fleet accounted for 53% of the SWW crew (55% FTE), and the Portuguese fleet constituted 38% of the jobs (36% FTE), highlighting more part-time work in Portuguese fisheries. Spain, Portugal, and France nearly covered all the employment in the region.

Total employment for the SSCF was highest in Spain and Portugal reflecting their high number of SSCF vessels in the region. Around 48% of the vessels in this fleet

belong to Spain, 41 are under Portuguese flag and the remaining are French. The SSCF, for these two Member States, demonstrates a marked difference between the number of totals employed and total FTE indicating that a large number of those employed are part-time employees. Compared to 2022, while in Spain, the FTE decreased 20% (despite the fact that the total employees have nearly remained the same), in Portugal the value kept relatively stable (-1.6%). It should be noted that in Spain, the number of people employed in small-scale fishing felt by 37% compared to the average for the period 2013-2022, while FTE felt by just 1%. This discrepancy suggests a reduction in the importance of small-scale fishing as a part-time occupation, with less involved workers leaving and possible intensification of activity by those who remained. In Portugal, this less pronounced: the 16% reduction in the number of employees corresponded to a 12% drop in FTEs, indicating that the exit of workers affected both part-time and full-time occupations more proportionally.

Spain owns the majority of LSF vessels operating in the SWW, accounting for 58% of the fleet, while 27% belong to Portugal and 14% to France. Employment for the LSF is also the highest for Spain and Portugal, 59% and 32% of the LSF FTE, respectively, reflecting the high number of active vessels of these Member States in the region, especially the Spanish fleet. LSF figures for engaged crew and FTE are closer in value in the LSF fleet, indicating a high level of full-time employment. Compared to the 2013-2021 average, total employment in this fishing fleet increased by 11% in Spain. Despite this, FTE decreased by 7%, indicating a growing reliance on part-time or seasonal labour.

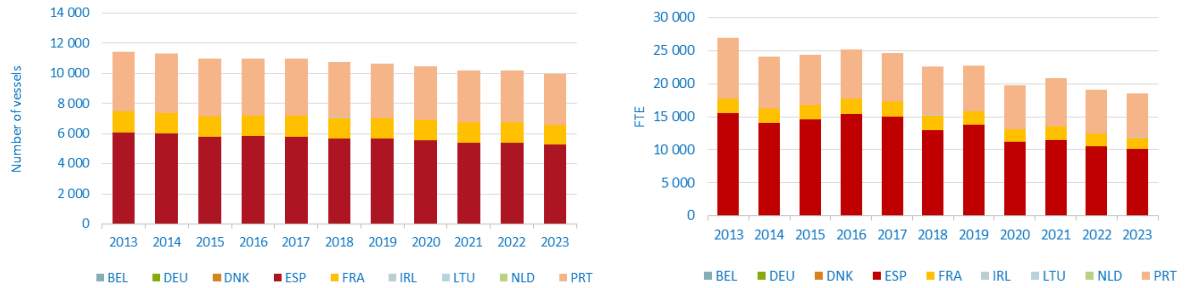
In contrast, Portugal recorded a 12% reduction in the number of people employed in this fleet compared to the 2013-2022 average, which corresponded to a 7% decline in FTE, a more proportional decrease, suggesting a more stable employment structure. When comparing with 2022 specifically, both total employment and FTE increased in Spain (by 11% and 6%, respectively), whereas in Portugal, a 2% decrease in the number of employees coincided with a 2% increase in FTEs, suggesting a shift toward more full-time or intensive engagement among fewer workers.

The L12AG fleet segment is mainly composed by 1,650 vessels, most of them belonging to the Spanish fleet (67% of the vessels). 65% of the L12AG vessels are Spanish vessels under 10 metres, operating with dredgers and essentially catching shellfish. France owns 22% of the L12AG vessels operating in SWW. 40% of them are small demersal trawlers targeting lobster and the others operates with diverse active gears. The Portuguese L12AG fleet (11% of the L12AG vessels) is mostly composed by dredgers under 12 metres catching shellfish (4% of the L12AG fleet), but also small purse seiners (under 12 metres), targeting small pelagic (4% of the L12AG fleet).

Employment for the L12AG is also the highest for Spain (58% of the engaged crew and 46% of the L12AG FTE) and for Portugal (27% of the engaged crew and 35% of the L12AG FTE), reflecting the high number of active vessels of these Member States in the region, especially the Spanish fleet. The ratio Engage crew/FTE is higher in the in the Spanish fleet (40) than in the French and Portuguese (around 40%), indicating that Spain is more dependent on crew that is part-time or less actively engaged. Compared to the 2013-2022 average, total employment and FTE decreased in this fleet by 25% and 50%, respectively. This sharp decline in both total employment and FTE suggests not only a contraction in the workforce, but also a

significant shift towards more part-time or seasonal work within the fleet. This was particularly marked in the Spanish fleet, with a 31% reduction in crew and a 64% reduction in FTEs. In Portugal the reduction was 18% on crew and 24% on FTE. When comparing with 2022 specifically, both total employment and FTE decreased in Spain (by 11% and 30%, respectively). In Portugal, a 6% decrease in the number of employees coincided with a 1% increase in FTEs, indicating a move towards more full-time or intensive engagement among fewer employees.

Figure 3.5.6. Trends on the number of vessels and employment (in FTE) for MS fleets operating in the SWW.

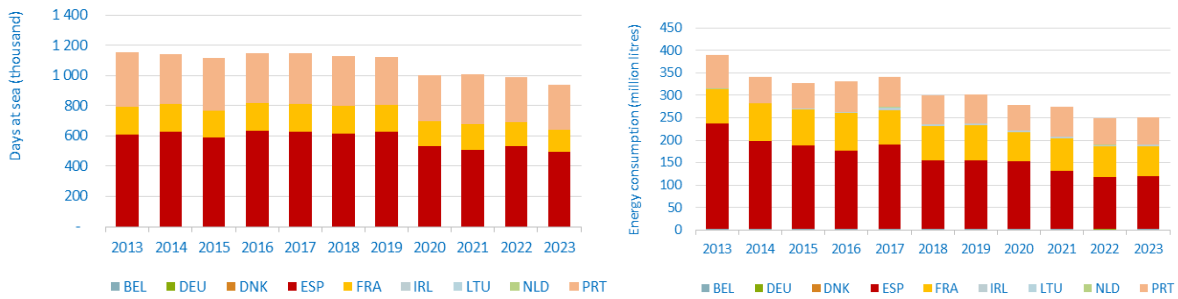


Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fishing effort

SWW fleet spent around 0.938 million DaS in 2023, 52% of which were deployed by the Spanish fleet and 32% by the Portuguese fleet (see Figure 3.5.7). It is important to note that, while the Spanish fleet spent 8% fewer days fishing in the SWW compared to 2022, the Portuguese fleet maintained nearly the same level of activity. Furthermore, when compared to the 2013-2022 average, the number of fishing days by the Spanish SWW fleet decreased by 17%, whereas the Portuguese fleet saw a more moderate decline of just 9%. The number of DaS per Member State (considering the three main countries in this region) has remained quite constant along the time: the Spanish accounting with 51-56% of the DaS, Portugal with 28-33% and the French with 16%.

Figure 3.5.7. Trends on fishing effort (in DaS) and energy consumption for MS fleets operating in the SWW.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fishing effort has decreased more than the capacity in terms of vessels number, with a 13% decrease in the number of vessels from 2013 and a 19% decrease in DaS. In 2023, there were around 1,480 fewer vessels fishing in the region compared to 2013, with the Spanish fleet accounting for half of this decrease. The decreasing trend in vessel number and also in engine power and gross tonnage is expected to continue for the coming years, even though the Spanish fleet slightly increased in 2022.

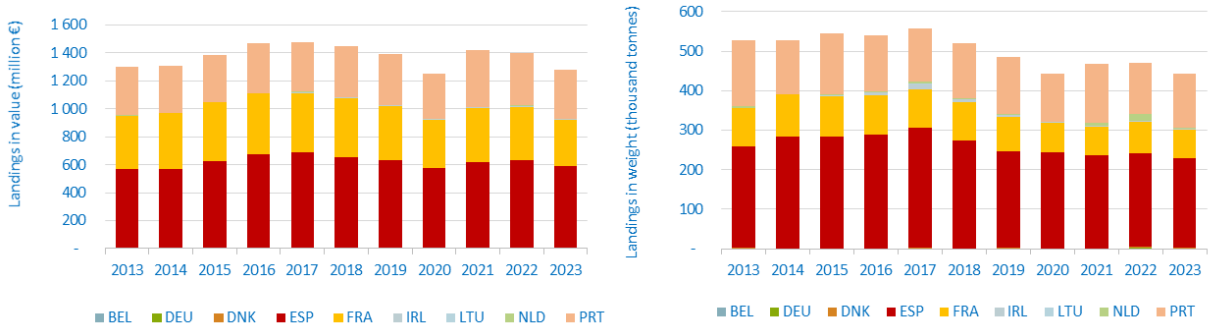
Energy consumption has also followed a general decreasing trend from 2013 to 2022, with an overall reduction of 20% when comparing consumption in 2023 with the average for the period 2013-2022. However, from 2022 to 2023 Portugal and Spain increased its energy consumption by 4% and 2%, respectively.

Landings and top species

The weight and value of landings generated by the SWW fleets amounted to approximately 443,096 tonnes and EUR 1.28 billion, respectively. In terms of landed weight, the Spanish (51% weight, 46% value), the Portuguese (31% weight, 28% value) and French (16% weight, 26% value) were the most important national fleets, and together accounted for over 99% of the total value and 95% of the landing weight.

Although the negative trend from 2017 to 2020, landings in weight have increased by 5% in 2021 compared to 2020, and 1% in 2022 when compared to 2021. Also, the value of landings has been decreasing from 2017 to 2020 but, it had an increase of 14% in 2021 when compared to 2020. In 2022 the value of landings dropped slightly compared to 2021 (-1%), remaining 2% above the 2013-2023 average (see Figure 3.5.8). In 2023, the weight and value of landings decreased by 6% and 8%, respectively, compared to 2022.

Figure 3.5.8. Trends on landings in weight and value from MS fleets operating in the SWW.

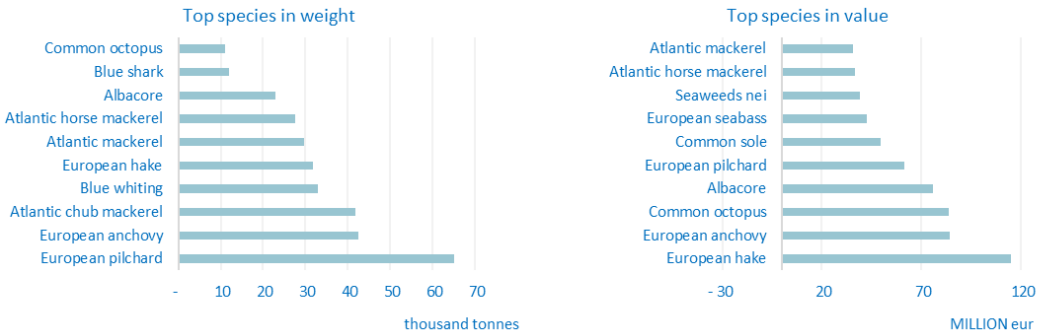


Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

In 2023, the primary species landed by the SWW fleet by weight included European pilchard (65,133 tonnes), anchovy (42,396 tonnes), Atlantic chub mackerel (41,775 tonnes), blue whiting (32,969 tonnes), hake (31,867 tonnes), Atlantic mackerel (29,696 tonnes) and Atlantic horse mackerel (27,520 tonnes). Together, these species accounted for 61% of the total landing weight in the SWW. In terms of value,

European hake was the most significant species in 2022 (EUR 115 million), followed by anchovy (EUR 84 million), octopus (EUR 83 million), albacore (EUR 76 million), and European pilchard (EUR 61 million).

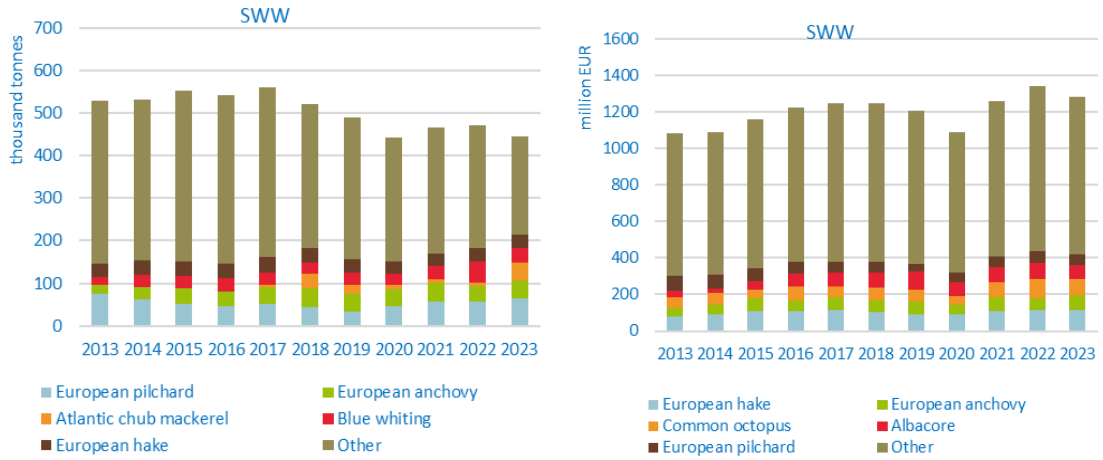
Figure 3.5.9. Top 10 species in landed weight and value for MS fleets operating in the SWW, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

The top species can be seen as drivers for this region's fleets. The share of landed value of European hake is dominated by Spain and France (95%). Norway lobster, common sole and European seabass landings values, were dominated by France, with 85%, 80% and 69% of the total, respectively. Albacore landed values were dominated by Spain (80%). Regarding small pelagic fishes, European pilchard landings were led by Portugal (44% share) and Spain (32%). For European anchovy and Atlantic mackerel, Spain was the main Member State dependent on these species with 78% and 82%, respectively. Finally, common octopus is led by the Portuguese (58%) and followed by the Spanish fleet (31%).

Figure 3.5.10. Trends on landings of the top species in landed weight and value for MS fleets operating in the SWW.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Temporal trends in the value and weight of landings have been affected by changes in TAC and quotas for main species in the region, such as mackerel, hake, anchovy, and sardine. Specifically, the TAC for mackerel decreased in 2019, increased in 2020, but has been decreasing since then, impacting the total value of landings for Member States targeting this species. In 2023, the landings decreased, though the price rose by 21%. For hake, the TAC for 2023 was the highest in recent years, which resulted in an increase in both the weight and value of landings. For European anchovy, there has been an increase in the weight and value of landings in 2023, accompanied by a slight continuous rise in price over recent years. Lastly, European pilchard has shown significant regional importance, with its biomass improving over the past years, leading to increased landings from 2019 to 2023 (see Figure 3.5.10).

Economic performance

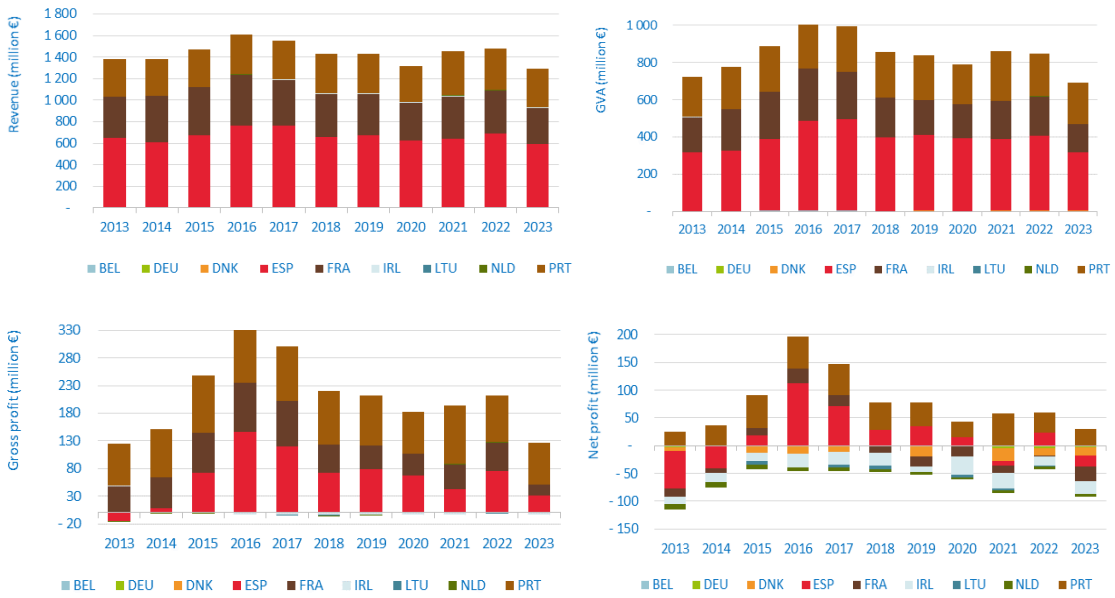
In 2023, the SWW fleet generated EUR 1.3 billion in revenue, with Spain, France, and Portugal contributing 99% of this total. Revenue dropped by 13%, notably in Spain (-14%) and France (-16%), while Portugal saw a 7% decline.

The GVA amounted to EUR 689 million, down 19% from 2022. French and Spanish fleets experienced significant decreases of 26% and 22% respectively, whereas the Portuguese fleet had a 4% reduction.

Gross profit for the fleet was EUR 123 million, a 42% drop from 2022. The Portuguese fleet led with EUR 78 million, while Spain and France achieved EUR 29 million and EUR 21 million, respectively.

Net profit was negative at -EUR 61 million, with only the Portuguese fleet showing a positive result of EUR 30 million.

Figure 3.5.11. Trends on revenue and profit for MS fleets operating in the SWW.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

3.5.4 Main factors affecting the performance of the fleet

Main drivers affecting fleet performance in the region

Factors that may influence fleet performance in the region include:

- The management plan for western waters was based on the possibility of using catch bands around MSY (Art. 4), in order to take account of the complexity of managing mixed fisheries, which are particularly present in south-western waters. In this sense, the setting of fishing opportunities could not exceed the value of the TAC associated with the median F_{MSY} for all stocks.
- TACs variations for a number of stocks, e.g., hake, anchovy or mackerel.
- The landing obligation creates an incentive to develop more selective fishing gear and reduce unwanted catches, while on the other hand, the lack of quota for some species caught in mixed fisheries forces the premature closure of some fisheries (the "choke effect").
- The variation of the prices for the main species such as European pilchard, blue whiting, albacore or octopus.
- Although fuel prices have fallen compared to 2022, they remain one of the fleet's main expenses, affecting its profitability.

Regulation and fisheries management in the region

- Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/2015 of 21 August 2020 specifying details of the implementation of the landing obligation for certain fisheries in Western Waters for the period 2021-2023.
- Regulation (EU) 2019/1241 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on the conservation of fisheries resources and the protection of marine ecosystems through technical measures, amending Council Regulations (EC) No 1967/2006, (EC) No 1224/2009 and Regulations (EU) No 1380/2013, (EU) 2016/1139, (EU) 2018/973, (EU) 2019/472 and (EU) 2019/1022 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 894/97, (EC) No 850/98, (EC) No 2549/2000, (EC) No 254/2002, (EC) No 812/2004 and (EC) No 2187/2005.
- Regulation (EU) 2019/472 establishing a multiannual plan for stocks fished in the Western Waters and adjacent waters, and for fisheries exploiting those stocks.

Status of important stocks

Fishing has generally progressed towards MSY in all areas of the Northeast Atlantic since 2006 and specifically in the SWW region. Some important stocks in this area are:

- Hake, the problems detected in the southern hake (ICES divisions 8c and 9a) assessment in 2020 led ICES to reject the mathematical model with which the stock had been assessed in recent years, and to give management advice based on abundance indices. In 2021, the status of the stock in relation to candidate reference points was unknown, therefore, the precautionary buffer was applied to the ICES 2021 advice. However, this situation improved with the new advice of ICES in 2022, given that the advice incorporated a change

in the assessment model. As a result of the update, 2021 marked the first year with catches within the MSY limits. The adopted TAC for 2023 was the best in the last years with 15,554 tonnes, increased for 2024 up to 17,065 tonnes.

- For mackerel in subareas 1-8 and 14, and in Division 9a, fishing pressure on the stock is above F_{MSY} but below F_{pa} and F_{lim}; spawning-stock size is above MSY $B_{trigger}$, B_{pa}, and B_{lim}.
- The southern Atlantic albacore is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring that is why ICCAT that the next stock assessment of southern Atlantic albacore shall be conducted in 2026.
- Anchovy has two separate stocks, one for ICES division 9a and another one for ICES sub area 8. The one in Division 9a is divided in two components, for the southern component, the spawning-stock size is above B_{pa} and B_{lim}. Likewise, the one in ICES area 8 the SSB has been above B_{lim}. The advice for 2023 is unchanged from the advice for 2022. In both years the SSB is above the upper trigger in the management plan, resulting in the maximum allowable catch under the management plan harvest control rule.
- Finally, for Iberian sardine in divisions 8c and 9a, ICES considers that fishing pressure on the stock is below F_{MSY}, and stock size (ages 1+) is above MSY $B_{trigger}$, B_{pa}, and B_{lim}. On that basis a management plan for 2021-2026 was agreed between Portugal and Spain that includes the HCRs assessed by ICES as precautionary. In this new plan, according to the stock management measures such as an HCR; fishing activities are limited for a maximum of 9 months.

TAC development of main species

The impact of changes in TACs and prices at Member State level varies as their species composition and species dependency of the fleets can differ considerably. In the SWW, the main fishing Member States, Spain, France and Portugal, relay on a diversified group of species.

Concerning the year 2023, it is important to highlight the following quotas:

Demersal species:

- In 2023, the TAC for southern hake increased by 10%, following a nearly 70% increase in 2022.
- TAC of common sole (ICES divisions 8a and 8b) increased in 2023 but remains lower than the TAC for 2021.
- Norway lobster has some different stocks covering SWW. The stock in ICES dvisions 8abde has increased in 2023 compared to 2022. The stock in sub areas 9 and 10; EU waters of CECAF 34.1.1 has decreased by 16%.

Pelagic Species:

- TAC for mackerel had a peak in 2014 and, from then it has tended to decrease. It is important to notice that due to its wide distribution, this TAC is one for the whole area and it is agreed at the level of coastal states of NEAFC. The TAC in 2020 increased compared to 2019, however since then has been decreasing being the TAC in 2023 at 35,719 tonnes.
- TAC for horse mackerel (ICES division 9a) has been increasing since 2018, however in the division 8c has decreased in 2023 by 78%.

- TAC for anchovy in ICES sub-area 9 has almost tripled from 2021 to 2022 and has continued to increase in 2023 to 20,555 tonnes.
- TAC for anchovy in sub-area 8 (shared by France and Spain) has remained stable at 33,000 tonnes since 2016 (except for 2020 that was lower).
- The ICES recommendation for Iberian sardine in divisions 8c and 9a of 8 December 2023 limits the maximum catch to 38,992 tonnes under the application of maximum sustainable yield criteria, due to low recruitment of juveniles. However, based on this scientific recommendation and taking into account the precautionary approach of the exploitation rule for Iberian sardine assessed by ICES, Spain has agreed with Portugal to limit the maximum catch for the 2024 season to 44,450 tonnes.

3.5.5 Description of relevant fisheries in the region

Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

Three Member States have SSCF in the SWW: Spain, France and Portugal. The dependency of these fleets of this area is different. While 100% of the Portuguese SSCF fished in the area in 2023, it represented 76% of the SSCF fishing activity for Spain and 19% for France. In terms of vessel numbers, Spain and Portugal had the highest number of active SSCF vessels (around 3,140 and 2,700 vessels, respectively).

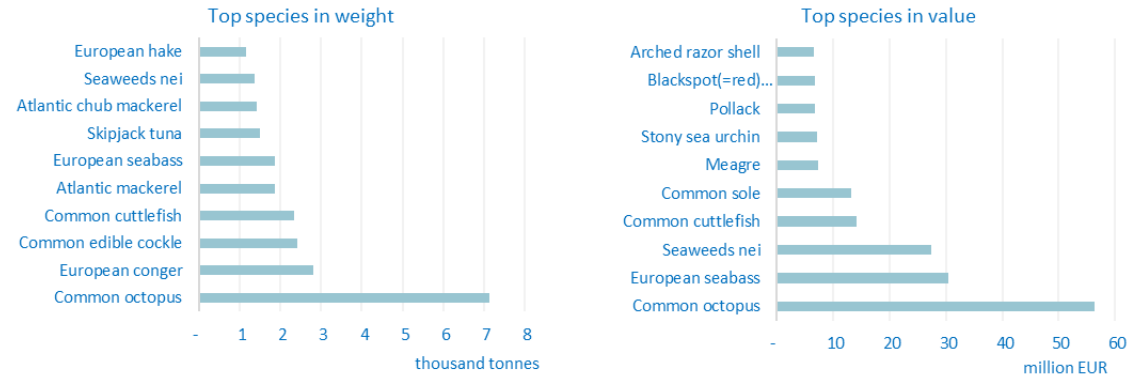
Overall, the SSCF was profitable in 2023, totalling EUR 211 million in GVA and EUR 76 million in Gross profit. The most profitable in terms of gross and net profit margins was the Portuguese SSCF with 39% and 28%, respectively. In terms of labour productivity, the GVA per FTE varied from EUR 31,751 (Spain) to EUR 112,492 (France), being the Portuguese EUR 32,808.

Total employment for the SSCF is highest for Portugal and Spain, totalling 6,445 and 6,213 jobs, respectively, reflecting the high number of active vessels in these Member States. All fleets in the SWW demonstrated a much lower FTE figures than total employed (about 37-42% of the total jobs) indicating that a large part of those employed in the SSCF are part-time employees. Employment, both in terms of engaged crew and FTE, have decreased when compared with 2022 and with the average of the period 2013-2022 in the two main countries operating in the SWW. However, while in Portugal the decrease was more significant in total employment than in FTE, in Spain the opposite occurred, demonstrating a rise in part-time or less stable employment within the Spanish fleet, whereas in Portugal the remaining workers may be more engaged or working longer hours.

The most important species caught by this fleet are the common octopus (17% of the landed value) followed by the European seabass (9%).

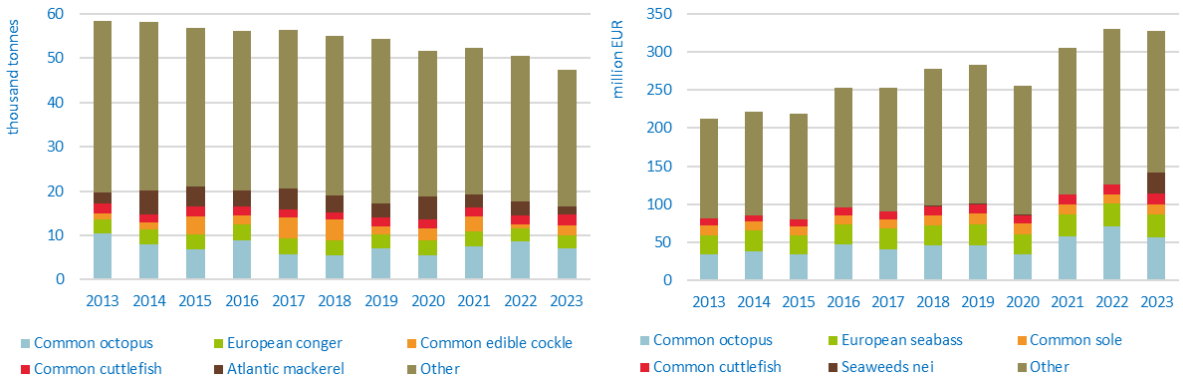
The quantities caught in the SWW have shown a decreasing trend over the period 2013 to 2023. The weight of landings fell by 6% compared to 2022 and is now 15% below the 2013-2022 average. In contrast, the value of landings registered only a slight decrease (-1%) from 2022 to 2023 and is 18% above the 2013-2022 average. This combination of reduced supply and rising costs has led to an increase in sales prices, with the average price in 2023 standing 28% above the average for the 2013–2022 period.

Figure 3.5.12. Top 10 species landed by SSCF operating in the SWW, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.5.13. Trends in landings of top species landed in weight and value by SSCF operating in SWW.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Vessels under 12 metres using active gears fleet (L12AG)

Three Member States have L12AG fleet in the SWW: Spain, France and Portugal. The dependence of these fleets of this area is different. While 100% of the Portuguese L12AG fished in the area in 2023, it represented 90% of the L12AG fishing activity for Spain and 50% for France. In terms of numbers of vessels, Spain had the highest number of active L12AG vessels (1,113 vessels) followed by France (356 vessels) and Portugal (181 vessels).

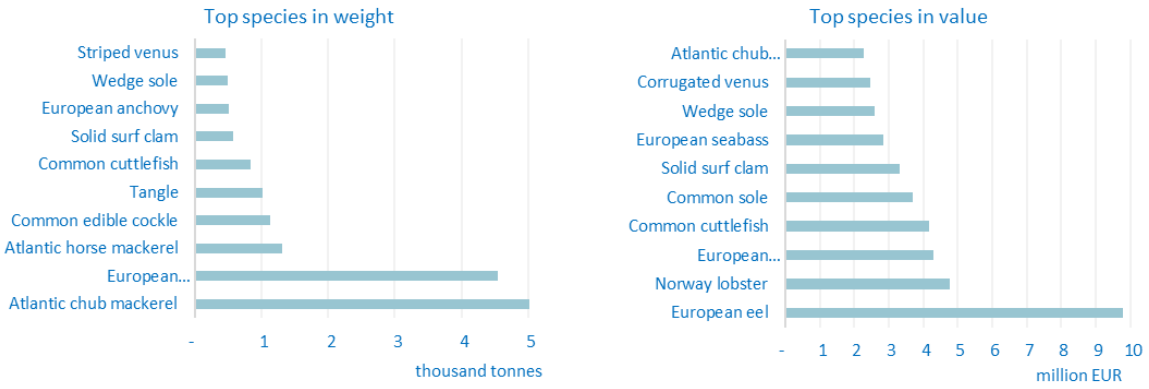
Overall, the L12AG fleet was profitable in 2023, totalling EUR 46 million in GVA and EUR 13 million in gross profit. The most profitable in terms of gross and net profit margins was the Spanish fleet with 23% and 15%, respectively. In terms of labour productivity, the GVA per FTE varied from EUR 110 558 (France) to EUR 25,038 (Spain), being the Portuguese EUR 29,190.

Total employment for the L12AG is highest in Spain, followed by Portugal, with 2,049 and 929 jobs, respectively. While the Spanish and French fleets operate with an average of 0.4 and 0.6 FTE per vessel, respectively, the Portuguese fleet employs significantly more crew, averaging 2.1 FTE per vessel. This difference is likely related

to the type of fishing gears used, as the Portuguese fleet tends to operate with more labour-intensive methods (as purse seiners). All L12AG fleets operating in the SWW reported lower FTE figures compared to total employment, from about 24% in Spain to around 40% in Portugal and France, indicating that a large proportion of those employed in the L12AG segment work part-time, particularly in the latter two countries. Employment, both in terms of engaged crew and FTEs, decreased in 2023 compared to 2022 across all three countries operating in the SWW: by 11% in Spain, 6% in Portugal, and 4% in France. However, the decline was more pronounced when looking at FTEs: a 30% drop in Spain and 13% in France, while in Portugal FTEs remained almost stable. When compared with the 2013-2022 average, the reduction in employment was even sharper, with an overall decrease of 25% in engaged crew and 50% in FTEs, Spain being the most affected fleet.

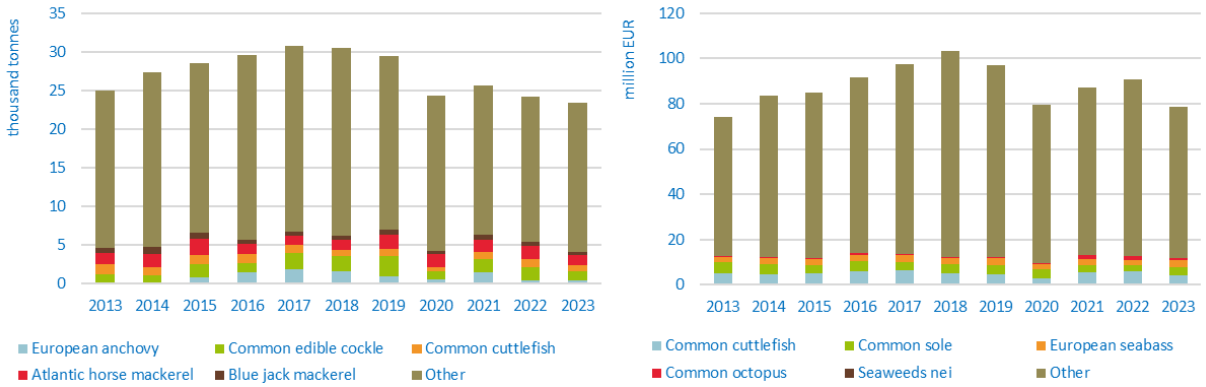
The most important species caught by this fleet were the European eel (12% of the landed value) followed by the Norway lobster (6%).

Figure 3.5.14. Top 10 species landed by L12AG operating in the SWW, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.5.15. Trends in landings of top species landed in weight and value by L12AG operating in the SWW.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

The quantities caught in the SWW have shown a decreasing trend over the period 2018 to 2023. The weight of landings fell by 3% compared to 2022 and is now 15% below the 2013-2022 average. The value of landings registered a decreased of 17% from 2022 to 2023 but is 28% under the 2013-2022 average. The price of fish has fluctuated over time, but there was a fairly sharp drop from 2022 to 2023. Compared to the 2013-2022 average, it is currently 10% lower.

Large-scale fleet (LSF)

There were eight Member States LSF operating in SWW totalling 1,763 active vessels. Spain, Portugal and France had the majority of active vessels and together accounted for 99% of the total number of LSF vessels in the region.

The LSF was profitable in 2023, totalling EUR 433 million in GVA and EUR 35 million in gross profit. The Portuguese fleet LSF was responsible for more than 90% of the gross profit of the LSF in the SWW region, whereas the Spanish fleet showed a very low gross profit in these waters. This is because the most important segments in this region (trawlers, hooks and purse seine vessels measuring 24-40 metres) experienced a decline in the landing value of around 9%. Trawlers also showed a 9% increase in expenses, mainly due to non-variable costs. Meanwhile, purse seine vessels experienced a 27% increase in expenditures due to an increase in unpaid labour variable. Therefore, these results for 2023 should be treated with caution, pending next year's results. Regarding profitability, the gross profit margins were 14% for the Portuguese fleet and 1% for Spanish and French fleets.

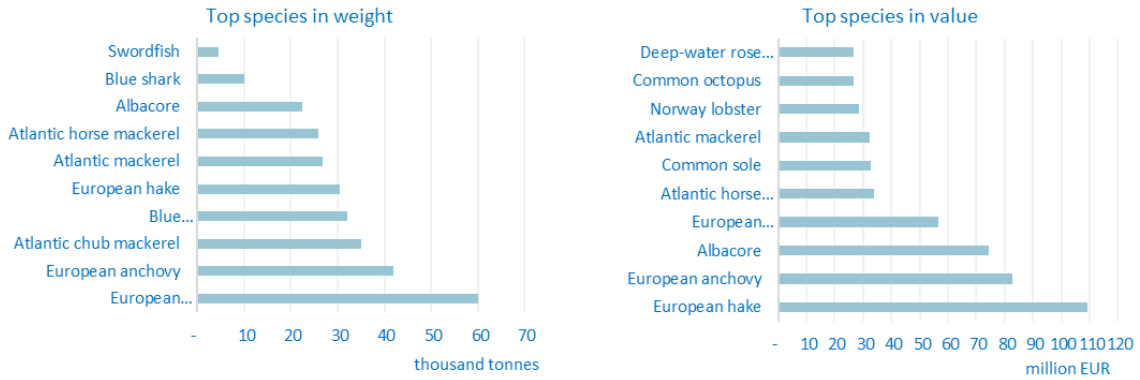
The average GVA per vessel was around EUR 309,000 for the French fleet, EUR 270,000 for the Portuguese fleet and EUR 217,000 for the Spanish fleet.

Total employment for the LSF for Spain and Portugal totalled 8,955 and 4,813, respectively, reflecting the high number of active vessels of these two Member States in the region. While the SSCF, for all Member States, demonstrates a considerable difference between the numbers of total employed and total FTE, the LSF figures for total employed and FTE are closer in value indicating the high level of full-time employment in this segment.

Member States can be classified into two categories according to their dependency which is representative of their LSF landings composition in SWW:

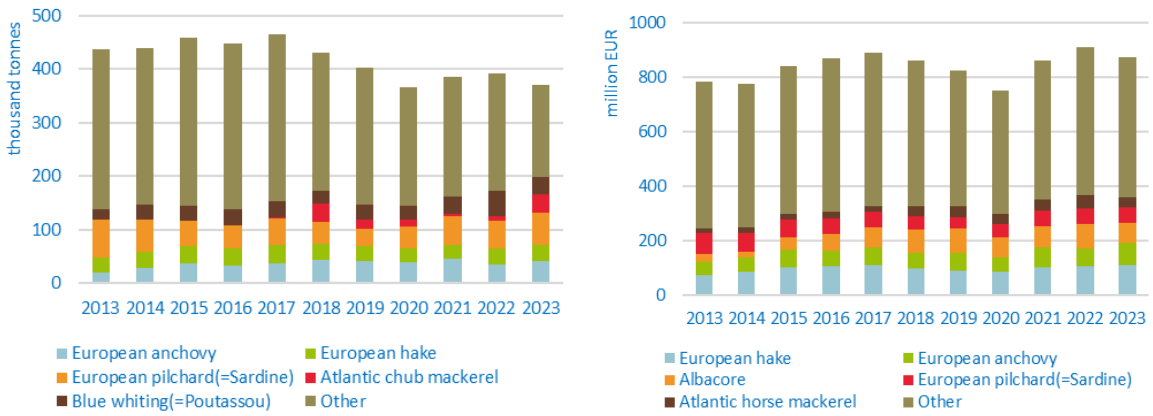
- Three Member States had a high dependency on one specie in the region. For the Belgian fleet common sole constituted 87% of value of landings. Albacore represented 94% of the landing value of the Irish fleet. The German and the Danish fleets target blue whiting.
- For Spain, France and Portugal, the landing composition was more diverse, with hake playing a key role. The main species by landing value for Spain were anchovy (15%), hake (14%) and albacore (14%). For France, hake (21%), sole (13%) and Norway lobster (12%). Finally, the main species by landing value for Portugal were sardine (11%), Atlantic horse mackerel (9%), octopus (8%) and black scabbardfish (7%).

Figure 3.5.16. Top 10 species landed by LSF operating in the SWW, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.5.17. Trends in landings of top species landed in weight and value by LSF operating in the SWW.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Distant-water fleet (DWF)

Additionally, two distant water fleets (Portuguese and Spanish fleets) had some activity in the region in 2022 and 2023. The EWG-25-07 notes, however, that data on the EU DWF operating in the region is limited and that economic indicators should be interpreted with caution given the high intra-annual variations that have been observed.

3.5.6 Performance by fleet segments

In 2023, 50 fleet segments out of the 134 identified in the area represented 92% of the vessels, 72% of the landed weight, and 73% of the value generated by fleets in the region. At the fleet segment level, Spanish demersal trawlers between 24 and 40 metres generated the highest revenue (EUR 80 million), followed by Spanish vessels using active and passive gears under 10 metres (EUR 75 million), Spanish vessels

using hooks between 24 and 40 metres (EUR 60 million), and Spanish purse seiners between 24 and 24 metres (EUR 56 million).

The segments within the top 50 with the highest profitability were Portuguese vessels under 10 metres using pots and/or traps (319 vessels achieving a 36% overall net profit margin), Madeira vessels under 10 metres using hooks (53 vessels achieving a 34% overall net profit margin), Portuguese vessels between 10 and 12 metres using pots/traps (46 vessels achieving a 30% overall net profit margin), and Portuguese vessels under 10 metres using polyvalent passive gears only (1,488 vessels achieving a 28% overall net profit margin).

Regarding labour productivity within the top 50 fleet segments, the most productive were French vessels under 10 metres using drift/fixed netters (EUR 139,000 GVA per FTE), followed by French vessels under 10 metres using hooks (EUR 135,000 GVA per FTE). For the Spanish fleet, mainland vessels using hooks between 24 and 40 metres (EUR 61,442 GVA per FTE) and Canarian vessels between 10 and 12 metres using hooks (EUR 50,755 GVA per FTE) were the most productive. Among the Portuguese fleet, the most productive segments were vessels using pots and/or traps under 10 metres (EUR 44,000 GVA per FTE) and purse seiners between 12 and 18 metres (EUR 41,600 GVA per FTE).

There is a significant disparity in efficiency between the fleets within the top 50, measured by gross profit margin. The most efficient are Portuguese vessels under 10 metres using pots/traps (46% GRPm), while the least efficient are Canarian vessels between 12 and 18 metres using hooks (-25% GRPm).

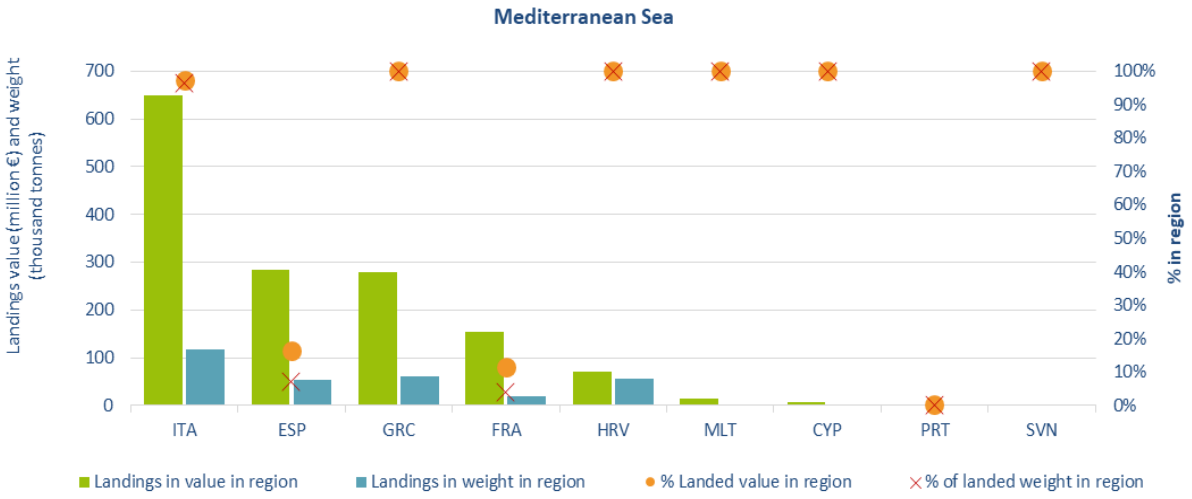
3.6 Mediterranean Sea

3.6.1 Regional Details

The Mediterranean region includes FAO fishing areas 37.1, 37.2, and 37.3, and nine Member States: Croatia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia, and Spain. These fleets rely primarily on the Mediterranean for their fisheries. Nearly all landings by Croatian, Cypriot, Greek, Italian, Maltese, and Slovenian fleets come from this region. For Spain and France, less than 10% of landings come from Mediterranean waters, and it is marginal for Portugal.

In 2023, the Mediterranean fleet made up 58% of all EU vessels and accounted for 47% of EU employment (FTE). It contributed 4% to the EU's weight of landings and 11% to its value. Due to incomplete data, Greece has been included in trend analyses only since 2018.

Figure 3.6.1. Importance of the Mediterranean Sea for MS fisheries in terms of landings in weight and value, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

The Greek and Italian fleets are the main contributors to the number of vessels (35% and 31%, respectively) and DaS (46% and 31%, respectively). The Italian fleet is the dominant fleet in terms of landings (38% in weight and 44% in value), revenue (42%), gross value added (42%), and gross profit (48%) (see Figure 3.6.2).

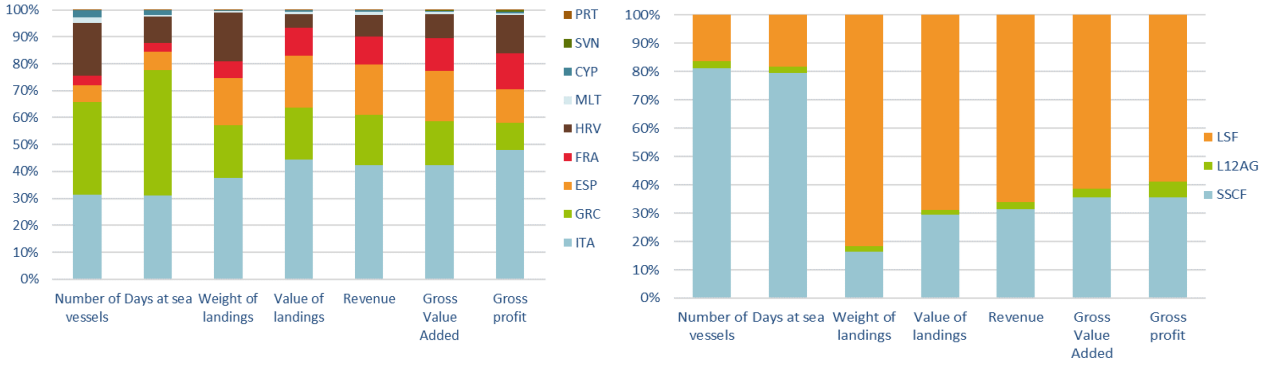
Regarding landed weight, Italy caught 38% of the Mediterranean landings, followed by Greece (20%), Croatia (18%), and Spain (17%). In terms of employment, Italy (37.9%), Greece (33.8%), Spain (12.5%), and Croatia (9%) accounted for 93% of it.

The economic performance was mostly driven by the LSF, which contributed 69% of the Mediterranean landings' value and 82% of the landings' weight in 2023. In contrast, 81% of the vessels operating in the region belong to SSCF.

Around 79% of the DaS were undertaken by SSCF vessels. LSF accounted for 18% of the DaS, of which most were undertaken by the demersal fleet.

In 2023, the Mediterranean SSCF generated 31% of revenue, up 0.3% from 2022. LSF earned EUR 1.03 billion, a 13% decrease compared to 2022. The largest SSCF fleet segments were Greek Drift and/or fixed netters 6-12m (5,061 vessels) and Italian polyvalent passive gear vessels 6-12m (4,515 vessels), making up 31% of the Mediterranean fleet. The main LSF fleet segments included Italian demersal trawlers between 12-40m, Spanish demersal trawlers 18-24m, and Greek demersal trawlers 24-40m, contributing to 26% of total revenue and covering 6.7% of the fleet.

Figure 3.6.2. Share by MS fleets and fishing activity in the Mediterranean Sea, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

3.6.2 Overview of the main results for the EU Mediterranean Sea fleet

Fishing effort and landings

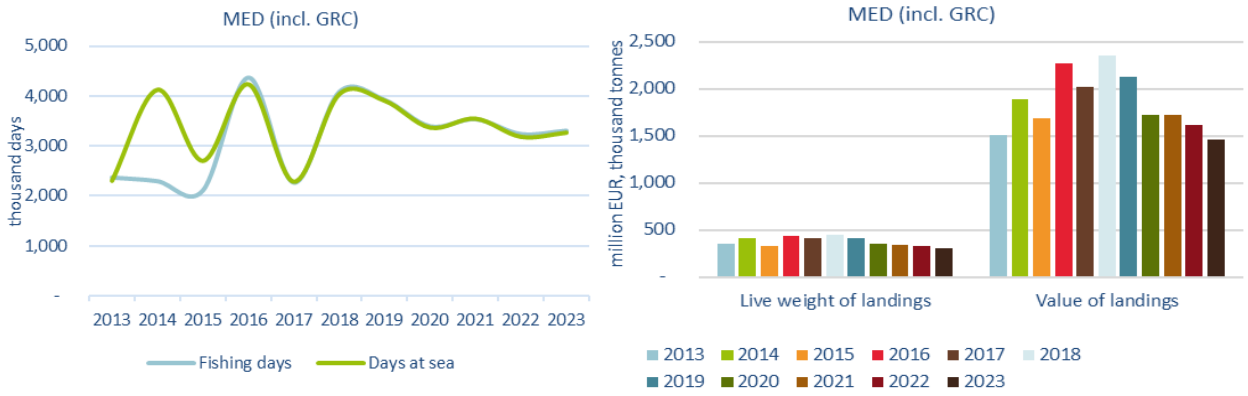
Fishing effort slightly increased compared to 2022 (see Figure 3.6.3) (3.27 million DaS and 3.30 million fishing days in 2023, including Greece). Landings in weight and value decreased by 7% and 9% between 2022 and 2023, mostly due to a decrease in the landings of Italian, Croatian and Spanish fleets. The weight and value of landings were approximately 308,742 tonnes and EUR 1.46 billion in 2023.

Employment, wages and labour productivity

In 2023, the Mediterranean fishing fleet provided 57,616 jobs or 35,256 FTEs, a 3% increase from 2022 due to a 15% rise in Greek fleet FTEs. The SSCF created over half of these jobs, with 34,921 positions and 18,708 FTEs. Each vessel employed an average of 1.9 persons.

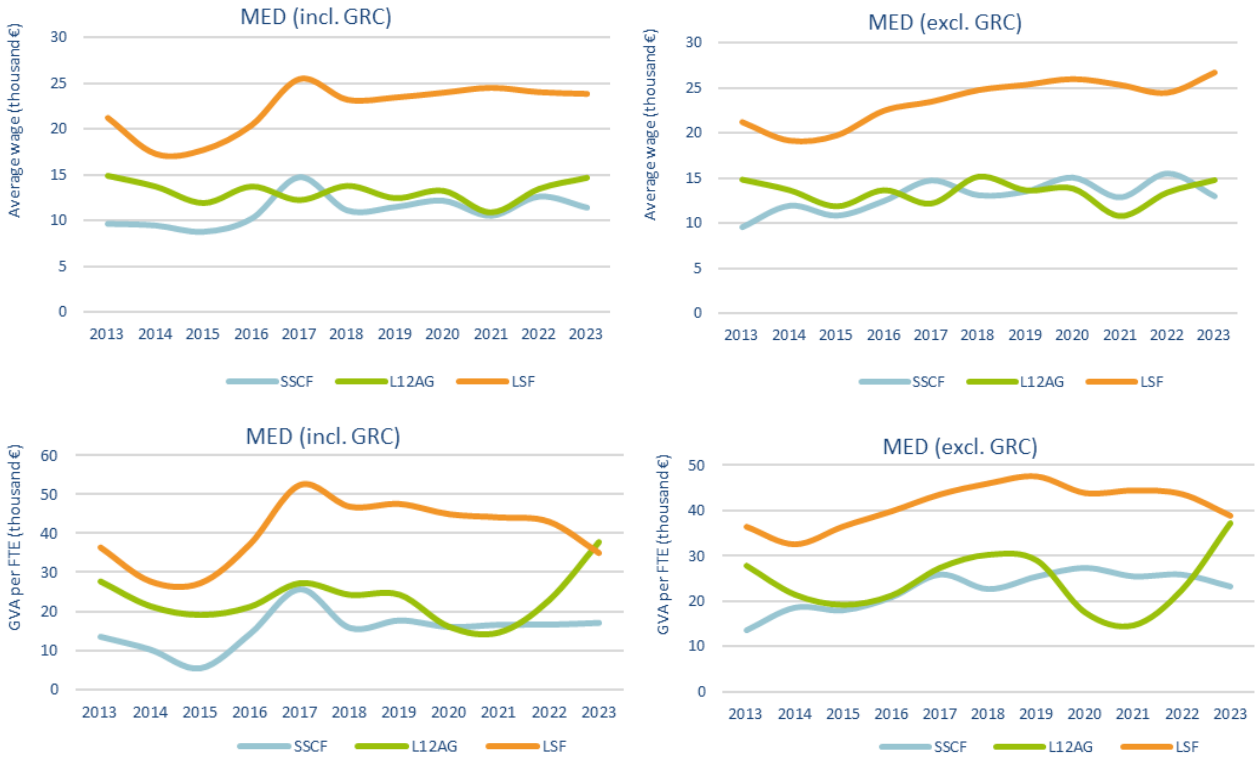
Annual wages were EUR 11,407 for SSCF, EUR 14,662 for L12AG, and EUR 23,825 for LSF fishers. Wages in SSCF and LSF decreased by 10% and 1%, respectively, while L12AG saw a 9% increase. Labour productivity (GVA per FTE) was EUR 35,031 for LSF (a 19% decrease), EUR 17,153 for SSCF (up 3%), and EUR 37,921 for L12AG (up 65%).

Figure 3.6.3. Trends on effort and landings for MS fleets operating in the Mediterranean Sea.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.6.4. Trends on average wage (up) and labour productivity (down) by fishing activity for MS fleets operating in the Mediterranean Sea.

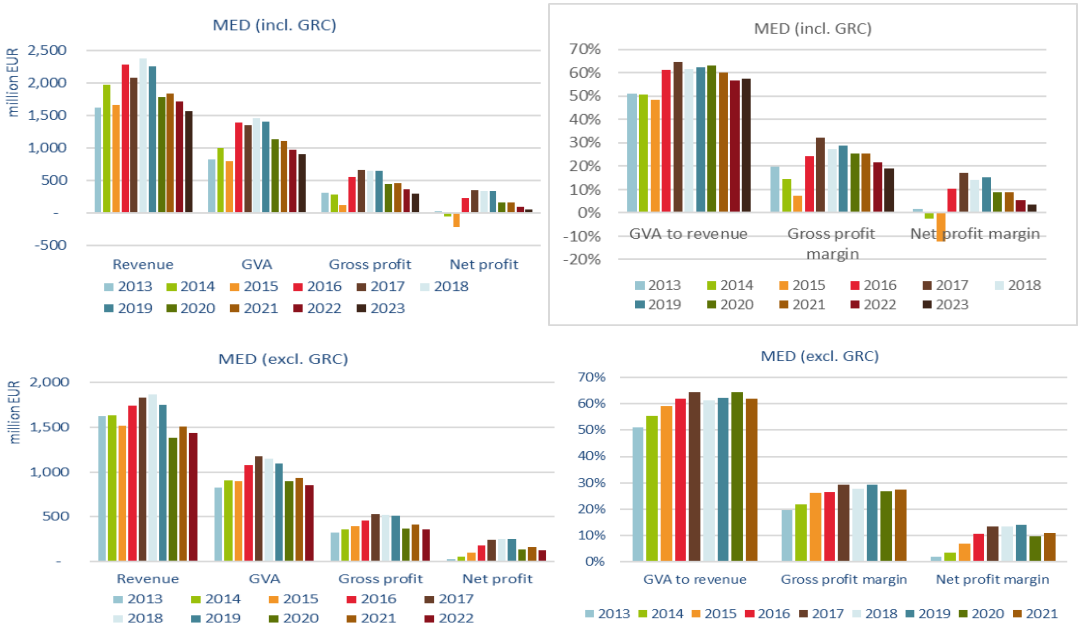


Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Economic performance

In 2023, the Mediterranean fleet's revenue dropped to EUR 1.56 billion, down 8.8% from 2022. GVA was EUR 0.9 billion, an 8% decline from 2022. The fleets made a gross profit of EUR 301 million, 19% less than in 2022, and net profit was EUR 57 million, a 41% decrease. Gross profit margin fell by 11%, while net profit margin decreased by 35%. GVA to revenue increased by 1% during this period.

Figure 3.6.5. Trends on revenue, profits and profit margins for MS fleets operating in the Mediterranean Sea.



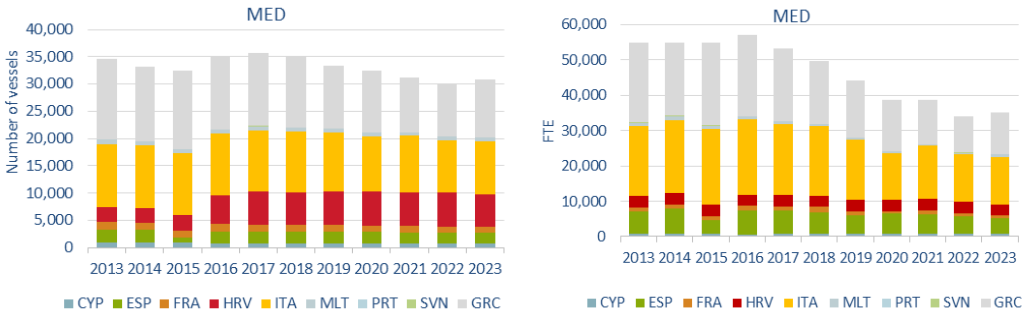
Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

3.6.3 Trends by Member State fleet

Fleet capacity and employment

The SSCF included 24,009 vessels (81% of the regional fleet), the LSF had 4,999 vessels (16%), and the L12AG had 795 vessels (3%). In the Mediterranean, Greece, Italy, and Croatia have the largest fleets, making up over 85% of the total regional fleet, with Greece at 35%, Italy at 32%, and Croatia at 20%. Total employment was estimated at 57,616 jobs, equal to 35,256 FTEs in 2023.

Figure 3.6.6. Trends on the number of vessels and employment (in FTE) for the MS fleets operating in the Mediterranean Sea.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

The number of vessels has followed a decreasing trend; since 2017, when it reached its peak in the observed period, the regional fleet has declined by 14%. However, compared to 2022, both the number of vessels and FTEs increased by 3% in 2023, mainly due to a rise in the Greek fleet, which saw an 11% increase in vessel numbers and a 15% increase in FTE.

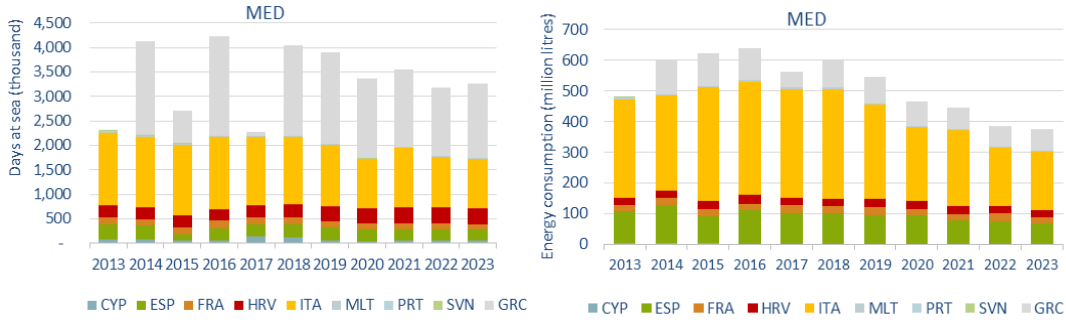
Fishing effort

Fishing activity has decreased overall. After stable years from 2013 to 2018, a decline continued till 2022. In 2023, days at sea reached 3.27 million, a 3% increase from 2022 mainly due to the Greek fleet. The number of Greek vessels grew by 11%, along with a 9% rise in their days at sea, while other Member States in the region saw declines.

The Greek fleet accounted for about 46% of total days at sea, followed by Italy (31%) and Croatia (10%). The SSCF segment contributed 79% of these days, while the LSF and L12AG segments contributed 18% and 2%, respectively.

Energy consumption in 2023 was 375 million litres, 2% lower than in 2022 and 30% below the 2013-2022 average. Decreases were noted in Spanish (-9%), French (-20%), and Croatian (-7%) fleets, while the Greek fleet's energy use rose by 6%. The Italian fleet led regional energy consumption at 51%, followed by Greece and Spain at 18% each.

Figure 3.6.7. Trends on fishing effort (in DaS) and energy consumption for MS fleets operating in the Mediterranean Sea.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Landings and top species

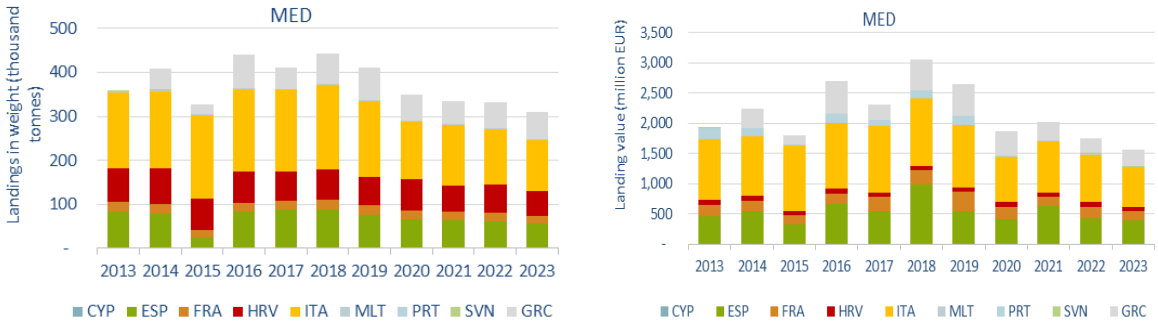
In 2023, the regional fleet generated approximately 308,742 tonnes in landings (-7% compared to 2022) with a total value of EUR 1.46 billion (-9% compared to 2022). The overall decrease in landings was primarily driven by reductions in the Italian, Croatian, and Spanish fleets, whose landings in weight declined by 8%, 12%, and 11%, respectively, compared to 2022.

Regarding landed weight, the leading countries were Italy (116,351 tonnes or 38%), Greece (60,217 tonnes or 20%), Croatia (55,217 tonnes or 18%), Spain (53,983 tonnes or 17%), and France (19,358 tonnes or 6%), together accounting for 99% of the total landed weight. In terms of value, Italy generated the highest landed vale with EUR 649.2 million (44%), followed by Spain with EUR 282.7 million (19%), Greece with EUR 279.3 million (19%), France with EUR 153.9 million (11%), and Croatia with EUR 71.1 million (5%), together representing over 98% of the total value of landings from the EU Mediterranean basin (see Figure 3.6.8).

In 2023, the top five species landed in the Mediterranean by weight were European anchovy (55,482 tonnes), European pilchard (sardine, 51,655 tonnes), striped Venus clam, Atlantic bluefin tuna, and European hake. Other notable species included deep-water rose shrimp, common octopus, round sardinella, red mullet, and Atlantic chub mackerel. European anchovy and sardine continued to lead.

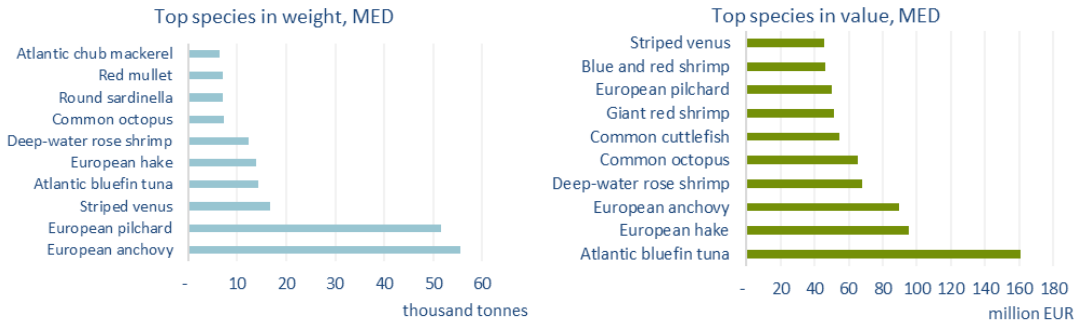
For landing value, the highest were Atlantic bluefin tuna (around EUR 161 million), European hake (EUR 95.6 million), European anchovy (EUR 89.8 million), deep-water rose shrimp (EUR 68.1 million), and common octopus (EUR 65.4 million). Other valuable species were common cuttlefish, giant red shrimp, European pilchard (sardine), blue and red shrimp, and striped Venus clam. Bluefin tuna remains dominant in value, with anchovy and hake also contributing significantly in volume and market impact.

Figure 3.6.8. Trends on landings in weight and value by MS fleets operating in the Mediterranean Sea.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.6.9. Top 10 species in landed weight and value for MS fleets operating in the Mediterranean Sea, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Between 2013 and 2018, the landings of small pelagic species, particularly European pilchard (sardine) and anchovy, increased significantly, reaching a peak in 2018. However, since 2019, a notable declining trend has been recorded. In 2023, the combined landed weight of sardine and anchovy dropped to 107,137 tonnes, which is 19% lower than in 2022, and 33% below the 2013-2022 average. In terms of value, the decline was even sharper, as combined landings of sardine and anchovy generated EUR 140.2 million, a 34% drop

compared to 2022, and 36% below the 2013-2022 average. This reduction is largely attributed to management measures in the Adriatic Sea, affecting key fleet segments such as purse seiners in Croatia and pelagic trawlers in Italy, as well as stock status concerns and changing market conditions.

In contrast, the value of Atlantic bluefin tuna has shown a continuous increase, reaching EUR 161 million in 2023, the highest in the time series, despite relatively stable landings in the last 5-year period (on average 13 274 tonnes in 2019-2023). This confirms the high market demand and price of tuna.

Among the main demersal species in the Mediterranean, European hake and deep-water rose shrimp remain the most significant in terms of both landed weight and economic value. In 2023, landings of European hake amounted to 13,879 tonnes, which is 3% higher than in 2022, but 6% below the 2013-2022 average. Its value decreased slightly, reaching EUR 95.6 million, down 3% from 2022, and 14% below the 2013-2022 average.

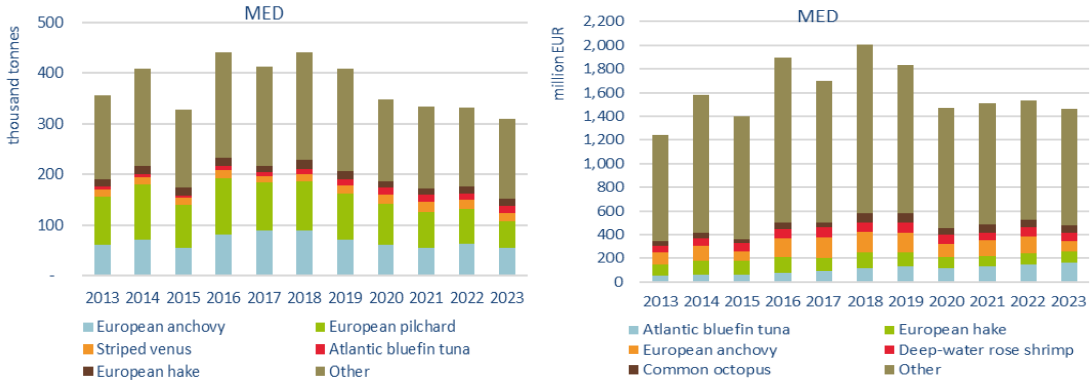
Deep-water rose shrimp maintained stable landings (12,274 tonnes), on par with 2022, and slightly above the 2013-2022 average (+2%). However, its value decreased by 5% compared to the previous year, amounting to EUR 68.1 million, and remained 9% below the 2013-2022 average.

Red mullet continued its declining trend in both volume and value. In 2023, 6,990 tonnes were landed (-2% vs 2022, -24% vs 2013-2022 average), generating EUR 41.8 million (-4% vs 2022, -22% vs 2013-2022 average).

Norway lobster, although of relatively low volume (1,572 tonnes), increased slightly in both weight and value (+8% and +4%, respectively, compared to 2022), yet it remains far below the long-term average (-28% weight, -23% value).

Common octopus displayed a more resilient performance. With 7,250 tonnes landed in 2023, its volume slightly declined compared to 2022 (-2%), while its value also fell to EUR 65.4 million (-5%). However, in contrast to other species, its value was 21% above the 2013-2022 average, indicating increased market demand and price (Figure 3.6.11).

Figure 3.6.11. Trends on landings for the top species in landed weight and value for MS fleets operating in the Mediterranean Sea.



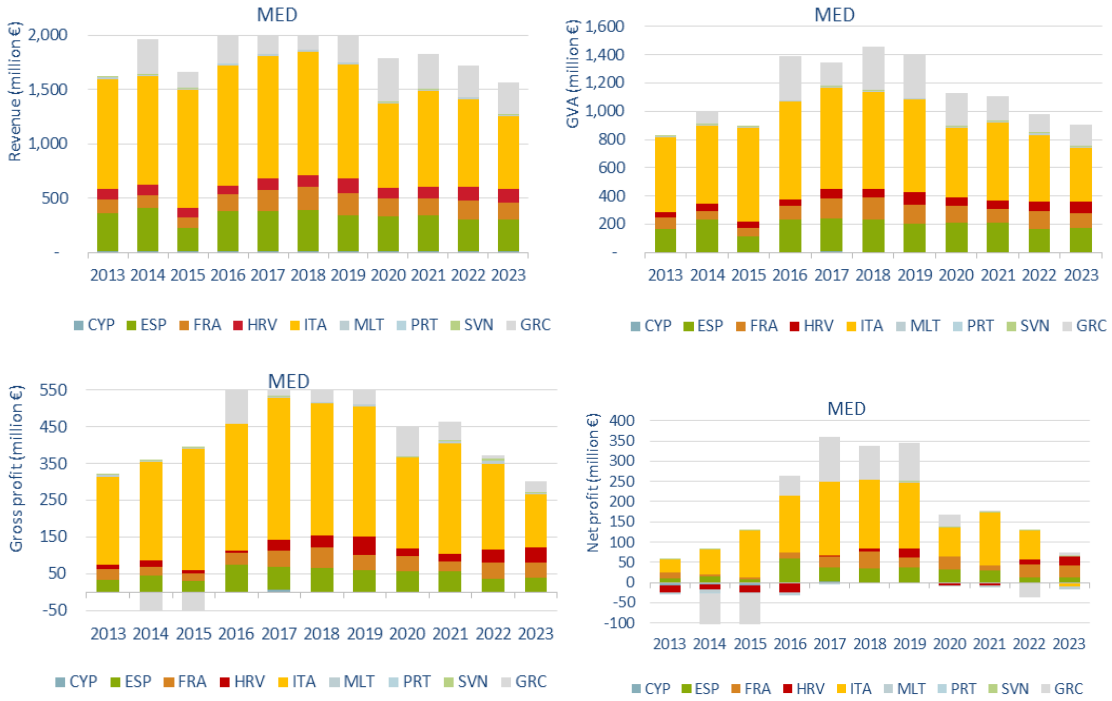
Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

The observed trends in the landings and value of key demersal species are consistent with the implementation of the regional multiannual management plans for demersal fisheries in the Adriatic and western Mediterranean. In both areas, progressive reductions in fishing effort and technical measures have influenced the catches of commercially important species such as European hake, deep-water rose shrimp, and red mullet.

Economic performance

The revenue (income from landings and other income) generated by the Mediterranean fleet in 2023 was over EUR 1.6 billion, 98% of which was provided by five Member States: Italy (EUR 662 million), Greece (EUR 296 million), Spain (EUR 292 million), France (EUR 162 million) and Croatia (EUR 126 million) (see Figure 3.6.12).

Figure 3.6.12. Trends on revenue and profits for MS fleets operating in the Mediterranean Sea.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Total revenue of the fleets operating in the region decreased by 9% in 2023 compared to 2022. Most Mediterranean Member States experienced a decline in revenues; however, Greece and Croatia recorded increases of 4% and 6%, respectively.

The GVA produced by the Mediterranean fleet covered in the analysis was over EUR 903 million in 2023, a decrease of 8% compared to 2022. The largest decrease in GVA was recorded in Malta, Slovenia and Italy. For Cyprus, Greece, and Croatia, the increase in revenues was also reflected in the GVA, which increased by 32%, 19%, and 14%, respectively. The fleets operating in the region made almost EUR 301 million in gross profit, an estimated 19% decrease compared to 2022.

The Mediterranean fleet generated total net profits (net amount between profits and losses) in 2023 equal to around EUR 57 million, with a decrease of 41% compared to 2022. All Member States reported profits in 2023, except for Italy, Cyprus and Malta.

3.6.4 Main factors affecting the performance of the fleet

In 2023, the regional fishing fleet's economic performance worsened with decreased gross profit and net profit, even if variation across Member States can be observed (Greece, Croatia and Spain showed an improving pattern in the net profit over the period). The overall negative trend was driven by the Italian and French fleets.

A different trend can be observed for LSF and SSCF. SSCF continued to improve on all the economic performance indicators, while LSF registered a decreased trend in GVA and gross profit, mainly due to a 13% reduction in the value of landings. The positive trend in SSCF can be attributed to an increase in other income, particularly in Greece and Croatia, driven by related activities such as fishing tourism and a rise in the average price of landings. The SSCF achieved higher sales prices compared to the large-scale fleet, thanks to a shorter supply chain, including direct sales to end consumers and restaurants. Additionally, the target species are among the most commercially valuable, resulting in consistently high average prices.

The increasing restrictions on fishing effort in various fishing areas — including the Western Mediterranean, the Adriatic Sea and the Strait of Sicily — along with the introduction of new TACs for demersal species in the Western Mediterranean (such as red shrimp), and the enforcement of several Fisheries Restricted Areas (FRAs), have impacted the economic profitability of the large-scale fleet. Meanwhile, the pelagic fleet is facing a decline in the availability of key target species, particularly sardine and anchovy, whose stocks in the Adriatic Sea show signs of poor health. The demersal trawlers experienced a reduction in days at sea, which negatively affected the fleet's overall economic performance. In 2023, there was an increase in the payments of operating subsidies. To counteract the effects of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine on the fishing sector, several countries introduced targeted support measures. These subsidies were designed to ease the economic strain on fishers and help ensure the continuity of fishing operations during the crisis. When these subsidies are included under other income, the economic performance of the fleet segment in 2023 improves further.

Factors that may negatively influence fleet performance in the region include:

- Overexploitation: Many assessed key demersal and small pelagic stocks in the Mediterranean remain overexploited (FAO, 2024). This aligns with observed declines in both landings and economic value of these species in 2023. For instance, hake landings decreased by 6% compared to the 2013-2022 average, and red mullet by 24%, while their values dropped by 14% and 22%, respectively. Similarly, European anchovy and sardine, especially in the Adriatic Sea, remain overexploited and/or outside safe biological limits. Landings of anchovy decreased by 21% compared to the 2013-2022 average, and sardine by 43%, while their values dropped by 34% and 40%, respectively.
- Energy crisis: the effects of the energy crisis triggered by Russia's invasion of Ukraine continued into 2023, significantly impacting the operational costs of the fishing sector.

Fuel prices, while lower than the peak levels reached in 2022, continued to exceed pre-crisis levels. The sharp rise in global energy prices strained the profitability of fishing activities, particularly in fuel-intensive segments such as bottom trawlers and purse seiners.

- The marine resources and ecosystems of this region have come under increasing pressure in recent years, driven by diversification and intensification of marine and maritime activities. In addition, competition between EU fishing vessels and vessels from other countries that do not have to follow EU legislation is perceived to be growing by fishers.
- Labour costs decrease, mainly in LSF; the reduction can be linked to the negative trend in revenues as, in most countries, labour costs are directly related to revenues and variable costs as the traditional based income sharing system between the ship-owner and the crew is the most prevalent.
- Fishing sector is losing social and economic importance at the local level: factors such as the high average age of fishers, the difficulty in attracting the younger generations, the poor working conditions and low wages severely affected the fishery sector in the region. Inefficient vessels with poor economic performance, exit the sector or stay inactive. EMFAF introduced permanent cessation measures by scrapping the fishing vessel or by decommissioning it; the implementation of this instrument will lead to an additional reduction of the active vessels in the short period.
- Labour challenges: many fleet owners are currently facing serious labour challenges, particularly related to generational turnover and a growing shortage of skilled workers. As older workers retire, there is an urgent need to replace them, but finding qualified personnel has become increasingly difficult. To help address this gap, the employment of workers from third countries is on the rise, especially in LSF. However, integrating foreign workers into the workforce is not always straightforward. Major obstacles include complex bureaucratic procedures, high administrative costs and the lack of recognition for skills and qualifications obtained abroad.

Factors that may positively influence fleet performance in the region include:

- Diversification of sales channels: looking at single species, besides the standard market effect on prices due to the decrease in the landed volume (supply) of some species (e.g. anchovies, pilchards, giant and red shrimps), other factors appear to be key in the valorisation of supply. The role of Producer Organizations has improved in recent years, with the adoption of initiatives aimed at improving the control of the supply as well as at adding value to landings. For the giant red shrimps, introducing innovative market strategies, including the implementation of labelling and certification schemes, helped the demersal trawlers add value to the fishery product. Similar initiatives are underway for deep-water rose shrimps and some large pelagic. Despite this, there were still a highly fragmented sales channels dominated by regional wholesalers and traditional fishmongers; small-scale fisheries are improving their ability to sell directly in local markets, supported by the use of new technologies
- Investment in more energy-intensive fishing gear and equipment: in 2023, energy costs equal to 21% of the revenues in the fishing sector, highlighting a persistently high level. In response to these persistent energy pressures, there is a growing focus on investing in more efficient engines and selective fishing gear. These improvements are crucial for strengthening the sector’s economic resilience. This investment trend is expected to accelerate, supported by funding from the EMFAF.

- Despite the overall prevalence of overexploitation, some stocks in certain areas have shown signs of improvement in recent years (FAO, 2024). This includes deep-water rose shrimp in the central Mediterranean and Atlantic bluefin tuna, supported by stable or increasing landings and values in 2023, indicating a positive response to management measures.

Regulation and fisheries management in the region

The management of Mediterranean fisheries was mainly based on technical measures that control fishing effort by limiting the capacity and the activity of the fleet. Since 2019, significant advances have been made in terms of managing fisheries resources, with the adoption of several multiannual management plans. One of the direct impacts of these MAPs has been the reduction of effort (expressed in sea days) in LSF (-19% in 2023 compared to 2013-2022 average). As a consequence of the entry into force of MAPs, Mediterranean fisheries improved their biological sustainability; in 2023, for the first time, average fishing mortality was below the target reference points (COM(2025) 296 final).

Fishing opportunities are fixed annually for vessels in the Alboran Sea, in the Ionian and Levant Sea, in the Strait of Sicily, in the Adriatic Sea and in the Western Mediterranean Sea. Through the fishing opportunities for 2025 (Council Regulation (EU) 2024/259), the EU has continued to implement related measures stemming from the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) multiannual plans.

In the Western Mediterranean, a MAP for demersal stocks was in place starting in June 2019. After a five-year transition period, further reductions in effort for trawlers and longliners, plus lowered catch limits for deep-water shrimps and hake caught by netters, were introduced. To promote sustainable good practices and help hake stock recovery, the compensation mechanism established in the Western Mediterranean since 2022 was expanded in 2025 to encourage further voluntary measures such as increased selectivity and closure areas. This mechanism will reward fishermen and fisherwomen for implementing conservation measures, such as reducing bycatch and protecting vulnerable species, with additional fishing days.

Regarding spatial management measures, as of today, the GFCM has established ten Fisheries Restricted Areas (FRAs) to protect vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) and essential fish habitats (EFHs). In 2022, a recommendation was adopted to standardize the establishment and monitoring of FRAs (Recommendation GFCM/45/2022/11). The new framework introduces two zones—Zone A (permanent closure) and Zone B (temporary closure or buffer)—and includes mandatory scientific monitoring, public records of authorized vessels, and data collection on fishing activities and sensitive species. These measures are intended to strengthen conservation, align regional efforts, and promote greater transparency. In light of the potential socio-economic implications associated with spatially based management strategies, fishers are increasingly advocating for a more comprehensive understanding of the economic impacts these measures may have on their livelihoods and local economies (FAO, 2023).

Status of important stocks

Fishing pressure in the Mediterranean continues to decline, accompanied by gradual improvements in the status of certain stocks. According to the most recent validated

assessments performed in 2023 and 2024, 63 out of 89 assessed stocks remain outside safe biological limits, while 26 are considered sustainably or possibly sustainably exploited. This represents a continued positive trend, with the share of sustainably exploited stocks increasing from 22% in 2021-2022 and 24% in 2022-2023 to 29% in 2023-2024, while European hake remains the most exploited species with overexploitation ratios ($F_{current}/F_{REF}$) spanning between 0.87 and 9.11 depending on subregion (GFCM, 2024[5]).

In the Adriatic, Ionian, and Aegean Seas, assessments show a mixed picture. For the Adriatic, some improvement has been observed in the status of key demersal stocks such as European hake and deep-water rose shrimp, likely due to the implementation of the multiannual management plan and spatial measures like the Jabuka/Pomo Pit FRA. However, European hake remains among the most exploited species in the region, with exploitation ratios ($F_{current}/F_{REF}$) spanning between 0.87 and 9.11 depending on subregion (GFCM, 2024).

In the Western Mediterranean, the overexploitation of European hake and blackspot seabream persists. The new benchmark assessment for blackspot seabream in the Alboran Sea found the stock depleted and overexploited, prompting the adoption of new remedial measures in 2024, including catch limit reductions and seasonal closures. Small pelagics in the same area also remain in overexploitation (GFCM, 2024).

These trends reflect the ongoing need for reinforced and coordinated fisheries management efforts, despite recent signs of progress.

TAC development of main species

The current management of highly migratory species in the Mediterranean includes bluefin tuna, swordfish, and albacore. EU quota for these species was set according to Council Regulation (EU) 2023/194 for 2023, and Council Regulation (EU) 2024/257 for the period 2024-2026.

According to the ICCAT multiannual recovery plan and regulations above, in 2023 and 2024, Atlantic bluefin tuna quota was set at 21,503 tonnes and 21,960 tonnes in 2023 and 2024, respectively, allocated among Member States (except Slovenia). The purse seine and longline fleet segments targeting this stock continued to benefit from increase in quota, high average prices and strong demand, maintaining the economic relevance of this fishery. The average price of bluefin tuna remained stable, reaching 11.3 euro/kg in both 2022 and 2023.

For Mediterranean swordfish, a 15-year recovery plan remains in place (ICCAT Recommendation 16-05 and subsequent updates). The annual EU quota for 2023 and 2024 was set at 6,364 tonnes, as per regulations above, with allocations for all EU Mediterranean Member States except Slovenia. Swordfish remains one of the most valuable commercial species in the region, with a stable average price of 9 euro/kg in the period 2021-2023.

In the Adriatic Sea, Council Regulation (EU) 2023/195 set the total catch limits for sardine (Sardina pilchardus) and anchovy (Engraulis encrasicolus) at 84,676 tonnes, allocated with 61% to Croatia and 39% to Italy; Slovenia's quota remained capped at 300 tonnes. For 2024,

[5] GFCM. 2024. *Report of the twenty-fifth session of the Scientific Advisory Committee on Fisheries, Marseille, France, 24–27 June 202/Rapport de la vingt-cinquième session du Comité scientifique consultatif des pêches, Marseille, France, 24-27 juin 2024.* [Cited DD Month 20YY]. https://www.fao.org/gfcm/statutory-meetings/detail/en/c/1712734/

Council Regulation (EU) 2024/259 implemented GFCM's updated measures by applying a 9% reduction in the sardine TAC and a 5% reduction in the anchovy TAC relative to 2023 levels. These adjustments reflect the Adriatic small pelagics management plan's harvest control rules. Small pelagics remain the main resource in the Adriatic, generating the majority of landings and income for pelagic fleets; however, catch limit reductions introduced under the Adriatic multiannual management plan, applied by species, have a direct impact on fleet activity and revenue generation. As a result, these fleet segments are increasingly dependent on public support schemes to maintain economic viability.

Since 2023, the Mediterranean demersal fleets active in the Strait of Sicily, Ionian Sea and Levant Sea have been subject to annual catch limits on landings of deep-water rose shrimp, blue and red shrimp, and giant red shrimp, in line with the multiannual management plan implemented through Council Regulations (EU) 2023/195 and 2024/259.

Catch limits for 2024 remain largely consistent with 2023 levels, with specific quotas allocated per species and area, reflecting both biological advice and past catch trends. The plan includes provisions for the adjustment of limits based on scientific advice and aims to gradually reduce fishing mortality to sustainable levels. The new restrictions introduced have affected important operational and economic constraints for demersal trawl fleets, which now need to adapt to quota availability by species and area. However, the approach is seen as a necessary step toward long-term sustainability of deep-sea shrimp fisheries in the central and eastern Mediterranean.

Landing obligation (LO)

The landing obligation, progressively introduced from 2015 and fully applicable since 2019, requires the retention and landing of species subject to minimum conservation reference sizes (MCRS) as per Annex IX of Regulation (EU) 2019/1241. In the Mediterranean Sea, implementation relies heavily on Joint Recommendations, which enable a wide range of exemptions (e.g., de minimis, high survivability), due to the complexity of multispecies fisheries and the implementation of technical measures aimed at increasing gear selectivity, reducing unwanted catches, and eliminating discards (EC, 2025[6]).

However, recent evaluations by the European Commission, STECF and supporting studies (EC, 2022[7], Davie et al., 2025[8]) indicate a limited measurable impact of the landing obligation in the region.

Compliance is particularly difficult for small-scale coastal fleets, which dominate in the Mediterranean and often lack infrastructure and market incentives to utilise low-value species. Economic losses, logistical barriers, and weak enforcement further hinder implementation. Concerns also remain about the potential development of illegal markets for

[6] Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council - *Sustainable fishing in the EU: state of play and orientations for 2026* (COM(2025) 296 final) https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52025SC0149.

[7] Synthesis of the Landing Obligation Measures and Discard Rates for the Mediterranean and the Black Sea Final Report. European Commission. 2022. doi: 10.2926/237700

[8] Davie, S., Wakeford, R.C., Whitley, C., van den Berg, P., Rimpler, A., Burke, A., Verschuur, X., Oudmaijer, S., Kraan, M., Chai, S.M., Pearce, J., Peat, W., Stacy, R., Ligas, A., Sartor, P., Pulskens, A., Aranda, M., and Basterretxea, M. Study supporting the evaluation of the landing obligation – Common Fisheries Policy, Publications Office of the European Union, 2025, doi:10.2926/5282226

undersized fish, and limited uptake of selective gear due to economic and technical constraints (Davie et al., 2025).

3.6.5 Description of relevant fisheries in the region

Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

The SSCF in the Mediterranean represents 81% of the total fleet by the number of vessels and 60.6% of the employment (53% of the FTE). In 2023, 25,060 small-scale vessels followed a decreasing trend (Greece 32.5%, Italy 20.8%, and Croatia 17.1%) with a combined gross tonnage of 50,335 GT and total power of 681,538 kW active in the region.

Although the SSCF deployed over 79.4% of the effort (DaS), these vessels landed only 16.3% by weight and 29.5% by value, following an increase compared to 2022. The Greek SSCF deploys 43.2% of the effort (DaS) and follows the Italian SSCF with 21%. The average landing weight per fishing day was 19.4 kg for SSCF compared to 423 kg for LSF.

SSCFs are essential from a social perspective. In 2023, 34,921 fishers were directly employed in the Mediterranean SSCF, corresponding to 18,708 FTEs, presenting an increase (3%) compared to 2022. Most of them are family-based enterprises. Two Member States represented major employers: Greece with 9,004 FTEs and Italy with 5,602 FTEs. The annual average wages and salaries in 2023 for fishers in the SSCF were EUR 11,407, and for LSF, they were EUR 23,825. Average wages in SSCF decreased by 10%, while for LSF increased by 9%, relative to 2022. Moreover, it is crucial to mention the role of women, often through unpaid labour, that supports the SSCF.

The SSCF in the Mediterranean involves a significant number of fishing techniques (static nets like trammel nets, gillnets, set longlines, pots, and traps) targeting a variety of species, including common octopus (mainly Italy, Croatia, Greece, Spain, France, and Malta), Common cuttlefish (mainly Italy, Croatia, Greece, and Spain), Gilthead seabream (primarily France, Italy, Greece, Spain, and Croatia), European hake (mainly Italy, Croatia, Spain, and France), surmullet (mainly Cyprus, Greece, Italy, France, Malta, and Spain), and red mullet (mostly Italy, Spain, France, Greece, and Croatia). The main SSCF fleet segments, in terms of vessels, are the Greek DFN and HOK, as well as the Italian and Croatian PGP, which account for more than 64%. In terms of FTEs, these segments comprise more than 40%.

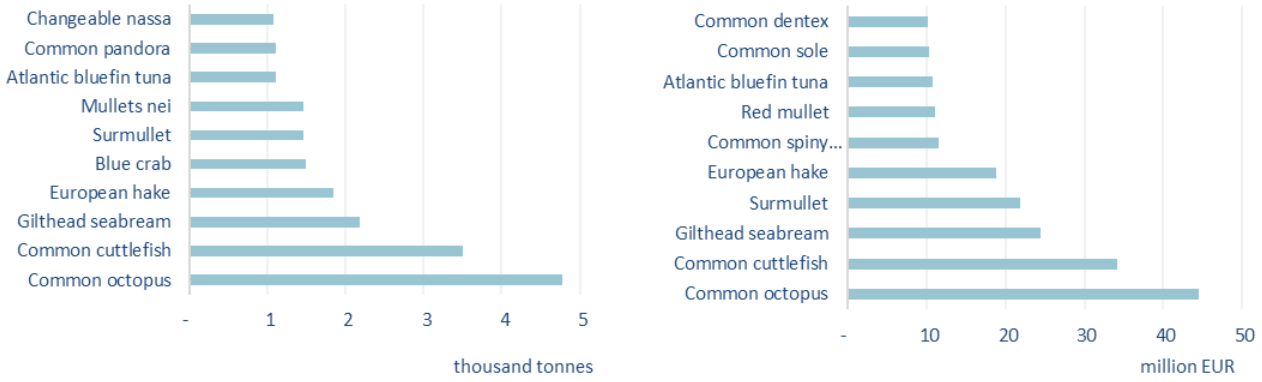
The higher value achieved by the SSCF (compared to the LSF) appears to reflect higher prices associated with differences in quality, freshness, product size, and various marketing channels. Additionally, the SSCF typically operates through very short supply chains.

In 2023, SSCF vessels generated 16.3% of the landed weight and 29.5% of the landed value. The landed weight increased by 3.1%, while the value increased by 6.3% compared to 2022. The total weight landed by the SSCF was 50 million kg. The weight of landings had a decreasing trend for many of the top species in 2023, like European hake (-5%), mullets nei (-27%), common octopus (-1.2%), changeable nassa (-17.7%), gilthead seabream (-6%), and surmullet (-16.8%) compared to 2022. The value of landings has also faced a decreasing trend, but in 2023 there is an increase of 6.2% some species had an significant increased value, like Atlantic bluefin tuna (+31%), red scorpionfish (+13%), swordfish (+9%) and greater amberjack (+7%), while others went down like surmullet (-28%), European seabass (-20%), common cuttlefish (-16%), European hake (-12%), and common sole (-14%) (see Figure 3.6.13).

The Mediterranean SSCF generated 31.5% of the revenue (EUR 493 million) in 2023. GVA was around EUR 320 million (35.5% of the region), with a gross profit of EUR 107 million (36% of the region) and a net profit EUR 37 million. The economic performance of SSCF in the Mediterranean improved. Labour productivity (GVA per FTE) was EUR 17 153, a slight increase (3%) compared to 2022. GVA to revenue reached 65%, gross profit margin 22%, and net profit margin 8%.

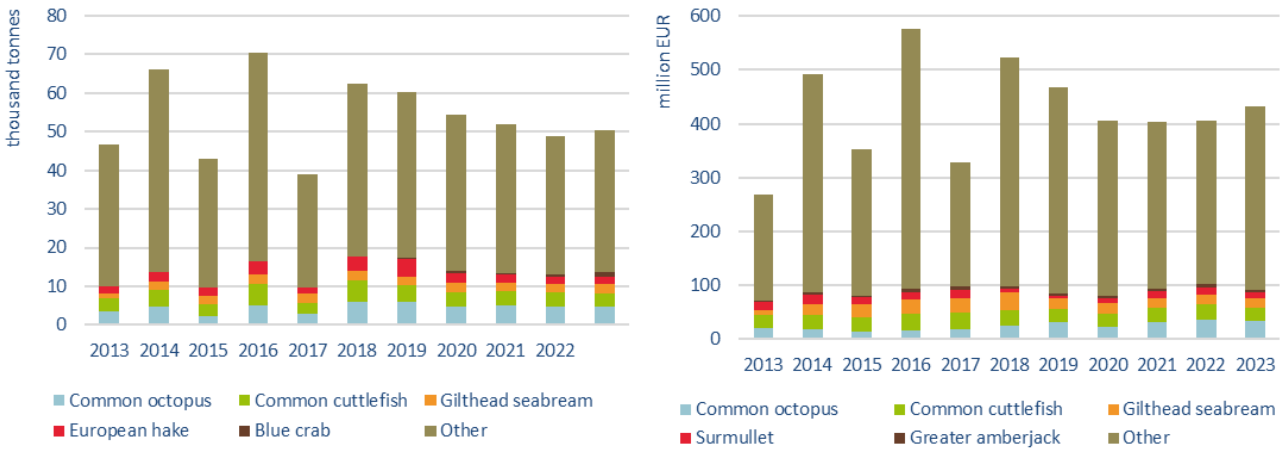
Overall, the economic performance of the SSCF made gains with a positive net profit margin in the region. Five of eight Mediterranean SSCF segments provided positive economic performance (Italian, French, Spanish, Croatian, and Slovenian SSCF), while the Greek, Cypriot and Maltese SSCF faced losses. The Italian SSCF generated the highest net profit at EUR 14 million unless the deteriorated performance was faced during the last years.

Figure 3.6.13. Top 10 species landed by SSCF in the Mediterranean Sea, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.6.14. Trends on landings for the top species in landed weight and value for SSCF operating in the Mediterranean Sea.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Higher average prices drove the increased value of landings, thanks to market channels like short supply chains and interactive websites with real-time sales updates.

Small-scale fishers still face economic challenges, including:

- Competition with an increasing number of recreational fishers usually fish in coastal areas and sometimes illegally sell their catch at low prices.
- The conflict between the small-scale and large-scale fleet.

Vessels under 12 metres using active gear fleet (L12AG)

In 2023, the Mediterranean L12AG fleet consisted of 795 vessels (3% of the overall Mediterranean fleet) across six Member States, with a total tonnage of 3,291 GT and engine power of 41,993 kW, representing 1.2% and 2.4%, respectively. Croatia and Italy have the most important fleets in terms of the number of vessels (81%), total tonnage (80%), and engine power (85%). These two Member States also had the region's largest number of active vessels, with 452 and 197, respectively. Cyprus and Slovenia reported no activity for this fleet segment.

This segment included 222 trawlers and seiners, 150 purse seiners, 103 dredgers, and 320 vessels utilizing other active gears (MGO).

L12AG vessels generated the lowest landed weight and landed value in the Mediterranean region, 2% of the total, respectively. The total weight landed by the L12AG in 2023 was 5,903 tonnes, with a value of landings estimated at EUR 22 million. Among the Member States, Croatia recorded the highest contribution within the L12AG segment, landing 2,136 tonnes (36% of total L12AG landings) with a corresponding value of EUR 8.8 million (40% of total L12AG value). Italy followed, with its L12AG fleet landing 1,450 tonnes (25%) worth EUR 6.0 million (27%). The Italian L12AG segment, although smaller in terms of vessel numbers compared to Croatia, makes a substantial contribution in both volume and value, underscoring its role in diversifying local fisheries. In contrast, France reported a relatively low share in this segment, with 199 tonnes landed (3%) and a value of EUR 1.3 million (6%). Although limited in scale, the French L12AG fleet (85 L12AG vessels) still contributes to high-value local fisheries, particularly in southern coastal regions.

Regarding the fishing activity, the L12AG fleet segment spent 75,212 DaS in 2023, representing 2.3% of the MED DaS. Croatia spent 46,770 and Italy 12,682 DaS.

The revenue was estimated at EUR 37 million, GVA recorded at almost EUR 26 million, and the gross profit was EUR 16 million. In addition, GVA to revenue and GVA per FTE reached 71% and EUR 39,481, respectively. In 2023, the economic results for L12AG improved; revenue, GVA, and gross profit increased by 17%, 40%, and 104%, respectively, compared to 2022.

Employment in the L12AG fleet was estimated at 1,630 jobs, corresponding to 701 FTEs in 2023. The main fleet segments, in terms of the number of employees, were the Croatian (437 FTEs) and Italian (183 FTEs) segments, which together represented 75% of the overall L12AG FTEs.

Large-scale fleet (LSF)

In 2023, the LSF fishing in the Mediterranean consisted of 4,999 vessels (16% of the overall Mediterranean fleet), with a total tonnage of 223,758 GT, representing 81% of the total. Italy, Spain, Croatia, and Greece have the most important fleets in terms of the number of vessels and total tonnage and engine power. These four Member States also had the region's largest number of active vessels, with 3,041, 829, 608, and 334 active vessels, respectively. Between 2022 and 2023, the number of active vessels decreased by 2%.

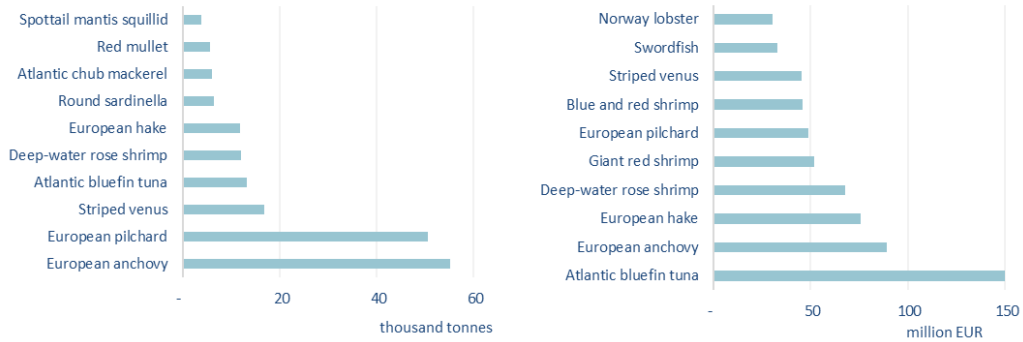
LSF vessels generated, by far, the highest landed weight (82% of the total) and 69% of the landed value. The total weight landed by the LSF in 2023 was 252,488 tonnes (-9% compared to 2022). With an estimated revenue of EUR 1.01 billion, these fleets recorded almost EUR 555 million in GVA and a gross profit of EUR 178 million. In addition, GVA to revenue and GVA per FTE reached 54% and EUR 35,031, respectively. In 2023, the economic decline of LSF continued; GVA decreased by 16% and gross profit by 39%.

The main fleet segments regarding the number of employees were the Italian demersal trawlers from 12-18m, 18-24m and 24-40m, the Italian dredgers from 12-18m, the Greek purse seiners from 18-24m and demersal trawlers 24-40m, the Italian longliners from 12-18m and the Spanish purse seiners 18-24m. These segments represented 23% of the overall LSF-FTEs.

Small pelagic species accounted for 42% of the weight of the total landing of the area and 14% of the landings value in 2023. The majority of the catches of sardine were produced by Croatia, Italy and Greece, while anchovies were mainly landed by the Italian pelagic fleet, followed by the Spanish and Greek fleets.

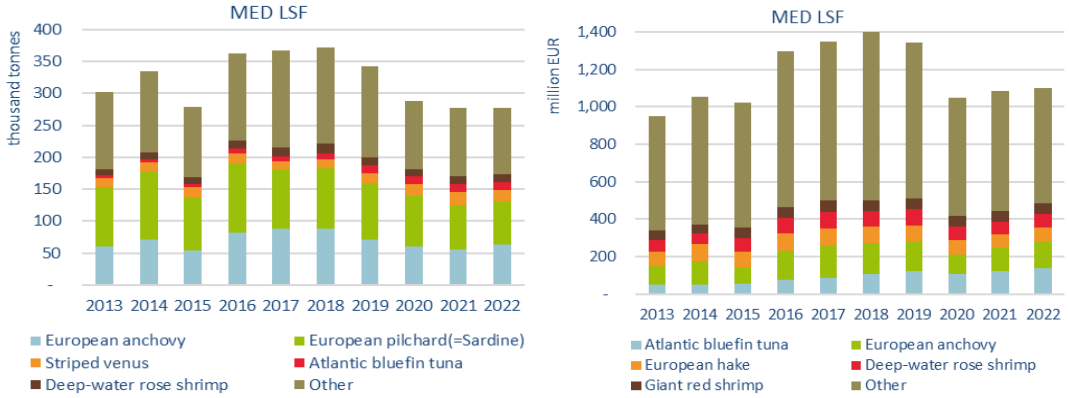
European hake, deep-water rose shrimp, giant red shrimp, blue and red shrimps, and red mullet combined accounted for 27% and 13% of total landings value and weight, respectively, in 2023. In addition, large pelagic fish, including Atlantic bluefin tuna and swordfish, targeted by authorised purse seiners and pelagic longliners, represented 18% and 7% of the total landings value and weight, respectively (see Figure 3.6.15).

Figure 3.6.15. Top 10 species landed by MS LSF operating in the Mediterranean Sea, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.6.16. Trends on landings for the top species in landed weight and value for MS LSF operating in the Mediterranean Sea.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Mediterranean EU fleets with dependency on ICCAT species

The Mediterranean EU fleets dependent on ICCAT species were identified by selecting fleet segments over 18 metres in length with a dependency of at least 20% of their landings value on ICCAT major species, namely Atlantic bluefin tuna and swordfish (see Table 3.6.1). Based on this criterion, 19 fleet segments were excluded from the analysis. For this reason, the Greek and Croatian fleet segments, although registering significant landings of bluefin tuna and swordfish, were not included in the analysis.

Purse seines targeting Atlantic bluefin tuna and longliners targeting swordfish are two distinct and significant fishing activities occurring in the Mediterranean.

In 2023, out of 179 vessels, 90% (161 vessels) met the selection criteria for high dependency on ICCAT species, representing a 24% increase compared to 2022 (**Error! Reference source not found.**), generating 906 FTEs. The highest landing values were recorded by large purse seiners from France, Spain and Italy, notably the French purse seiners between 24 and 40 metres with EUR 62.1 million in landings and EUR 24.3 million in net profit. The purse seiners of the same length class reported EUR 31.4 million in landings and EUR 10.9 million in net profit, while the Italian large purse seiners (ITA MBS PS 40XX NGI) also reported strong performance, with EUR 31 million in landings and EUR 13.1 million in net profit.

Conversely, some hook-and-line segments, such as Spanish longliners (ESP MBS HOK1824 LLD) and Maltese hook/line vessels (MLT MBS HOK1824 NGI), operated at a financial loss, reflecting economic challenges for smaller, less efficient fleets. Overall, segments targeting Atlantic bluefin tuna and swordfish showed varying profitability, with larger purse seiners remaining the most economically viable.

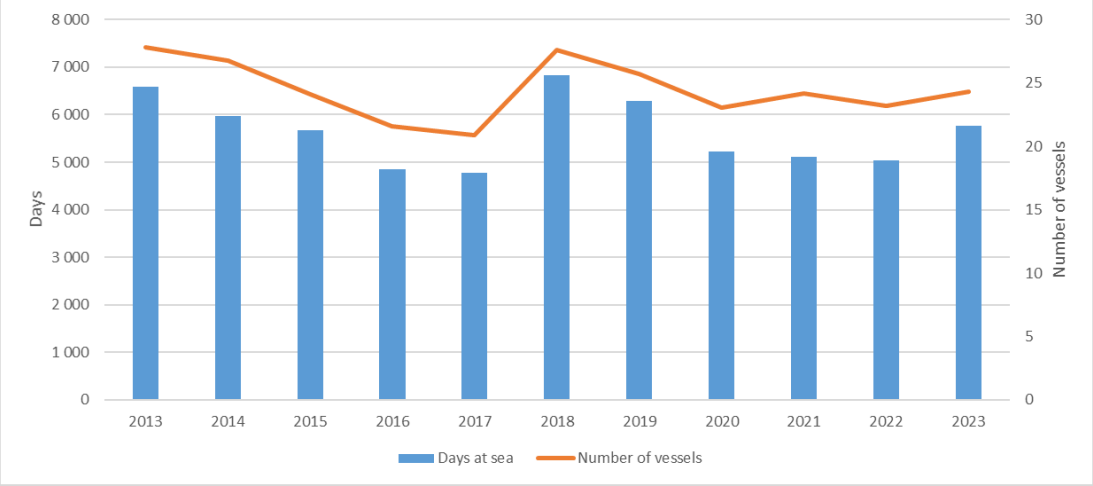
Table 3.6.1. Summary of estimated results for the Mediterranean EU ICCAT fleet, highlighting segments with high dependency on activity in the ICCAT RA, 2023.

Fleet segment	Number of vessels	FTE	Value of landings (Million EUR)	GVA (Million EUR)	Gross Profit (Million EUR)	Net profit (Million EUR)
CYP MBS PS 1824 NGI	1		0.8	-	-	-
ESP MBS HOK1824 LLD *	15	66	4.6	1.6	-1.5	-2.1
ESP MBS PS 2440 NGI *	18	146	31.4	24.0	12.9	10.9
FRA MBS DTS1824 NGI *	11	15	4.6	1.5	0.3	0.1
FRA MBS PS 2440 NGI *	22	231	62.1	59.5	27.3	24.3
ITA MBS HOK1824 NGI *	52	114	11.2	8.1	4.0	0.1
ITA MBS PS 2440 NGI	13	113	6.4	4.2	2.1	-0.0
ITA MBS PS 40XX NGI	11	166	31.0	27.1	17.1	13.1
MLT MBS HOK1824 NGI *	15	45	1.4	0.4	-0.2	-0.8
MLT MBS PS 1824 NGI *	4	10	2.9	3.3	3.1	2.1

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Between 2013 and 2019, both the number of vessels and days at sea in the ICCAT-dependent Mediterranean fleet showed a generally increasing trend, with days at sea peaking in 2019 at 385 thousand and vessel numbers reaching 172. However, from 2020 onward, the number of DaS declined steadily, reaching 299,000 in 2023, the lowest value in the series. In contrast, the number of vessels increased, reaching a maximum of 179 in 2023, suggesting a shift towards shorter operational periods per vessel or changes in activity patterns (see Figure 3.6.17).

Figure 3.6.17. Trends on DaS and number of vessels for the EU Mediterranean ICCAT.



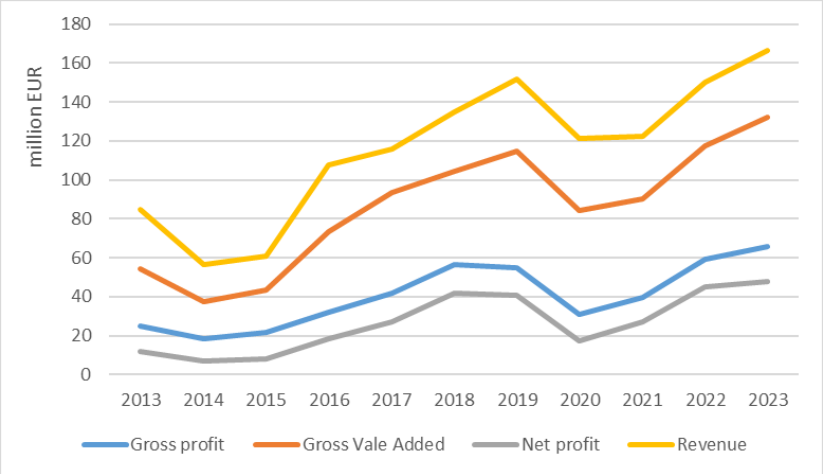
Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Between 2013 and 2023, the ICCAT fleet in the Mediterranean EU countries showed a strong upward trend across all key economic indicators. Revenue almost doubled over the period, increasing from EUR 84.7 million in 2013 to EUR 166.5 million in 2023. Gross value added (GVA) followed a similar pattern, rising from EUR 54.2 million to EUR 132.2 million. Gross profit also grew steadily, reaching EUR 65.8 million in 2023, the highest value recorded in the

time series. Net profit improved substantially as well, increasing from EUR 12.1 million in 2013 to EUR 47.7 million in 2023 (Figure 3.6.18). In 2023, the revenue, GVA, Gross profit, and net profit increased by 11%, 12%, 11% and 6%, respectively, compared to 2022.

After a temporary decline in 2020, likely associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, the economic performance rebounded strongly in subsequent years. The 2023 values confirm the continued growth and profitability of the fleet, particularly for segments targeting Atlantic bluefin tuna and swordfish.

Figure 3.6.18. Trends economic indicators for the EU Mediterranean ICCAT combined.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

3.6.6 Performance by fleet segment

In terms of economic performance, the Mediterranean fleet's demersal trawler and purse seiner segments are the most significant. They account for 12% of the total number of vessels and 15% of the fishing effort (measured in DaS), generating 57% of the total landing value (EUR 833 million), 50% of the GVA (EUR 451 million), and 45% of the gross profit (EUR 136 million). Italy and Spain have the largest demersal trawlers and purse seiner fleets based on the number of vessels, landing value, and GVA, followed by Greece and France.

At the fleet segment level, Italian polyvalent passive gear vessels from 6-12m, with 15% of the number of vessels, generated the highest revenue, EUR 119 million, or 7.6% of the total from the Mediterranean region in 2023. Italian demersal trawlers from 18-24m followed in importance with 7.4% of the total revenue produced (EUR 116 million). Italian demersal trawlers from 12-18m produced 6.4% of the revenue (EUR 100 million), and Greek netters from 6-12m produced 5.6% of the revenue (EUR 88 million).

Purse seiners lead in terms of GVA per vessel. The top two segments, French purse seiners 24-40m and Italian purse seiners over 40m LoA, amounted to EUR 2.7 and EUR 2.5 million GVA per vessel, respectively; a contributing factor in higher economic results in these segments is the inclusion of vessels involved in bluefin tuna fishing operations. Other segments showing high profitability in terms of GVA per vessel include French and Italian demersal trawlers 24-40 m and Italian beam trawlers 24-40 m, with GVA per vessel

amounting to EUR 309,980, EUR 118,847, and EUR 183,101 respectively. The average GVA per vessel of all Mediterranean segments was EUR 29,255.

Conversely, 32 out of 117 segments with negative gross profit represented 43% of the number of vessels and 32% of the number of jobs (18,704 jobs and 10,132 FTEs). Most of these vessels are included in segments using passive gears, such as drift and/or fixed netters, pots and traps, hooks, and polyvalent passive gears (13,279 vessels) mainly concentrated in Greece and Croatia.

3.7 Black Sea

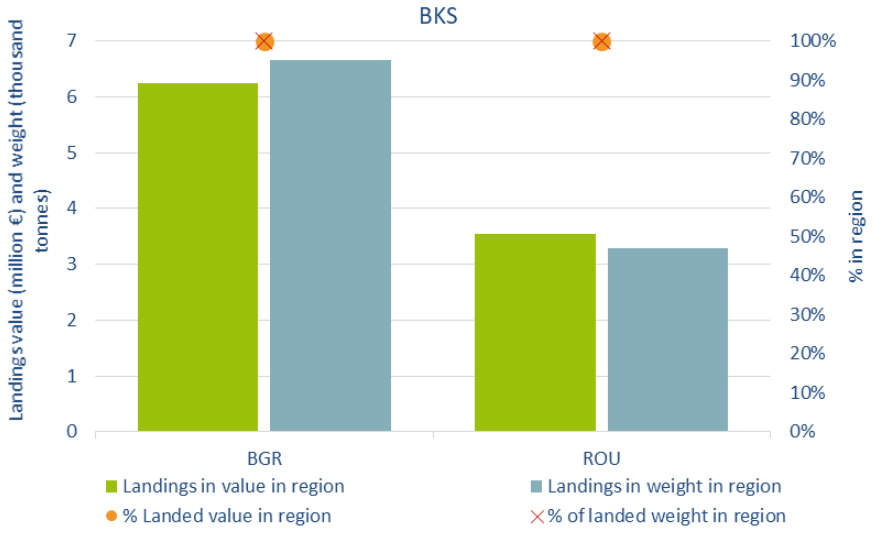
3.7.1 Regional Details

The Black Sea (BKS) region covers FAO fishing area 37.4. Two Member States were involved in the BKS fisheries in 2023: Bulgaria and Romania. All landings by the Bulgarian and Romanian fishing fleets originated only from the BKS, and both fleets operate mainly in waters under their respective national jurisdictions.

A comprehensive economic analysis, including both coastal Member States fishing fleets, was completed using data on the structure, activity, and production of all vessels collected by Bulgaria and Romania. The data collection program in place includes all economic and social variables. A trend analysis is provided for the period 2013–2023.

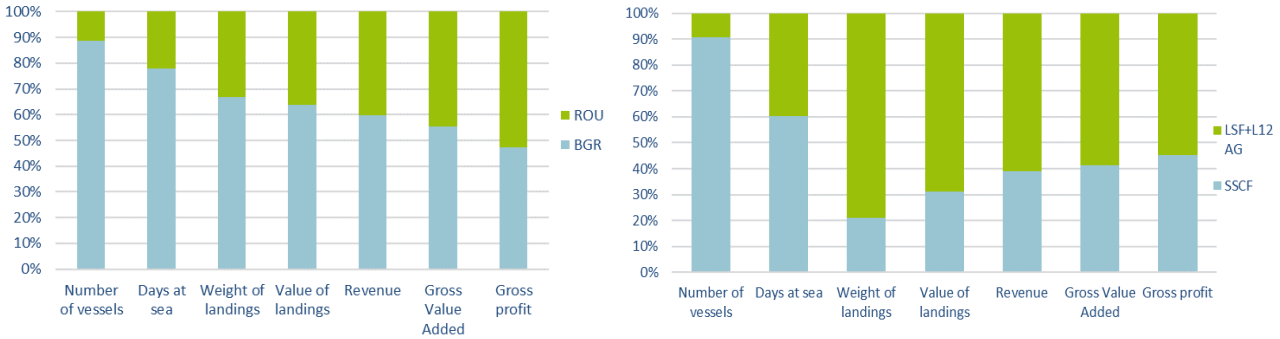
There are two TAC species in the Black Sea: turbot and sprat. The quota for turbot is divided equally between Bulgaria and Romania. For sprat, Bulgarian and Romanian national quotas are set at 70% and 30% of the total EU quota, respectively.

Figure 3.7.1. Importance of the Black Sea for MS fleets in terms of landings weight and value, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.7.2. Share of MS and fishing activity in the Black Sea, 2023.



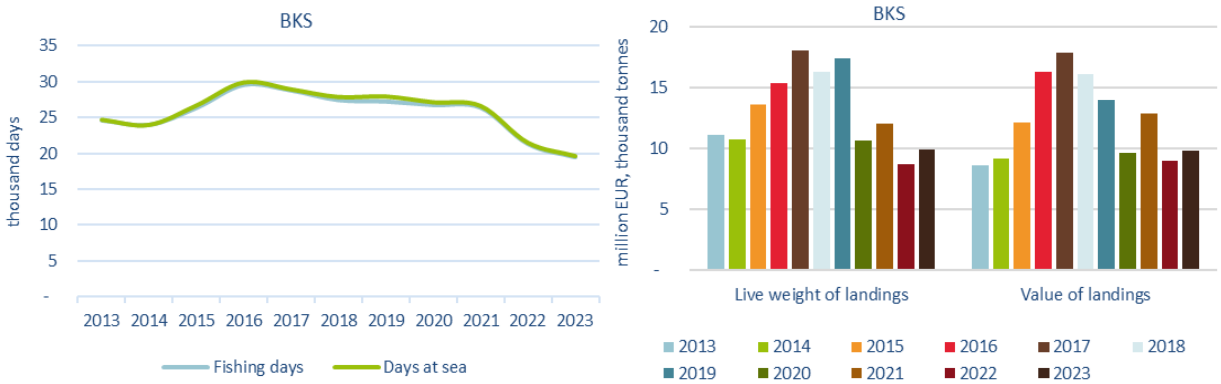
Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

3.7.2 Overview of the main results for EU Black Sea fleet

Fishing effort and landings

Fishing effort in the Black Sea fleet decreased by 9% in 2023, compared to 2022. The increase in the number of days-at-sea from 2014 to 2017 corresponds to the gradual growth in the weight and value of landings during those years. Since 2018, the overall trend for landings, in terms of both weight and value, has declined. Although there was an increase of 13% and 34% in weight and value respectively in 2021 compared to 2020, the figures fell again in 2022, dropping below the levels of 2020, which had the lowest numbers in the past five years. In 2023, the number of days-at-sea continued to decrease, but the volume and value of landings improved by 14% and 8%, respectively, compared to 2022 (see Figure 3.7.3).

Figure 3.7.3. Trends on effort and landings for MS fleets operating in the Black Sea.



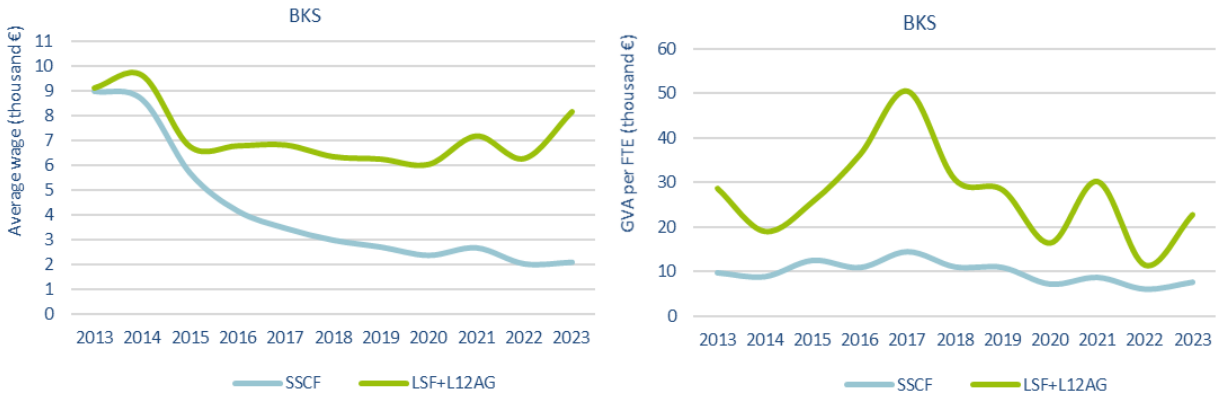
Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Employment, wages and labour productivity

In 2023, the average labour costs per FTE in the SSCF increased by 3% compared to 2022 but decreased by 52% compared to the period from 2013 to 2022. Wages for the LSF+L12AG rose by 30% in 2023 compared to 2022, with the average wage being EUR 8,144, which was 15% lower than the highest level observed in 2014. However, it showed a 15% increase compared to the average for the period from 2013 to 2022. The average wages in 2023 for both LSF+L12AG and SSCF improved compared to 2022, but only the LSF+L12AG showed improvement over the period from 2013 to 2022 (see Figure 3.7.4).

Labour productivity (GVA/FTE) in the LSF+L12AG segment gradually increased from 2014 to 2017, reaching its highest value around EUR 50,603. From 2017 to 2022, it fluctuated within wide ranges, and in 2023, it reached EUR 22,730, representing a 100% increase compared to 2022 but an 18% decrease compared to the period from 2013 to 2022. The situation for the SSCF segment differed; labour productivity fluctuated within much narrower ranges during the period from 2013 to 2022. In 2022, labour productivity significantly decreased, reaching the lowest value up to that year, while in 2023, it increased by 26% compared to 2022, reaching a value close to the one observed in 2020. However, compared to the period from 2013 to 2022, the labour productivity in 2023 decreased by 25%.

Figure 3.7.4. Trends on average wage and GVA per FTE by fishing activity for MS fleets operating in the Black Sea.

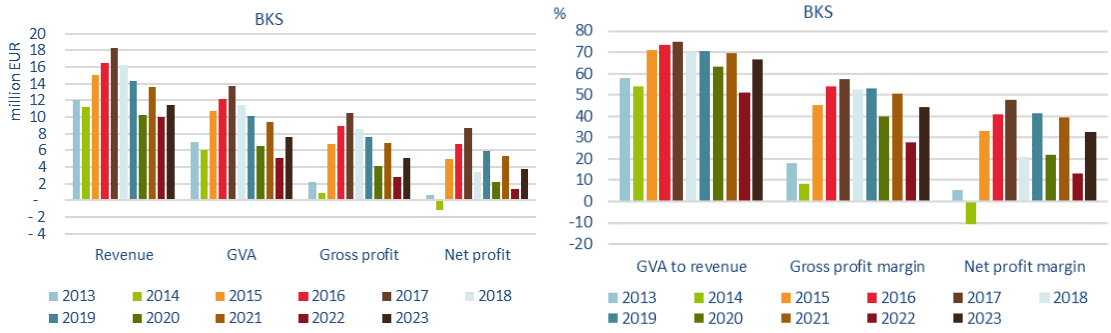


Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Economic performance

Revenue in 2023 was estimated at EUR 11.5 million, up 15% from 2022 but down 17% from the 2013–2022 average. GVA was EUR 7.6 million, a 49% increase from 2022 and a 17% decrease from the 2013–2022 average. Gross profit stood at EUR 5.1 million, an 83% rise from 2022. Net profit reached EUR 3.76 million in 2023, up 181% from 2022 (see Figure 3.7.5).

Figure 3.7.5. Trends in revenue and profits for MS fleets operating in the Black Sea.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

3.7.3 Trends by Member State fleet

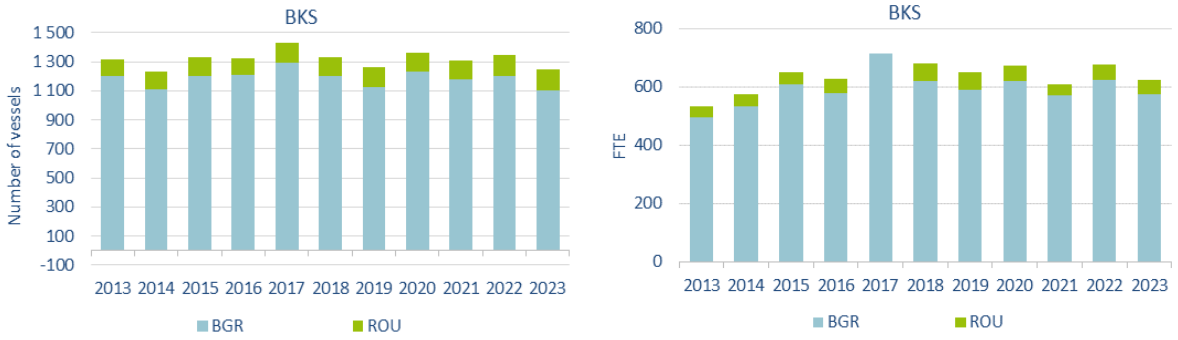
Fleet capacity and employment

The number of vessels in the Black Sea has remained relatively stable. The lowest count was recorded in 2014, while the highest occurred in 2017. In 2023, there was a 7% decrease in the number of vessels, primarily attributed to an 8% reduction in Bulgarian vessels. Correspondingly, the DaS for 2023 declined by 9%, continuing the trend of decreasing sea days in the region since 2019 (Figure 3.87).

Total employment in 2023 was estimated at 2,003 jobs, equivalent to 623 FTEs. Employment is higher in the SSCF due to a greater number of vessels. However, the FTE per vessel ratio is lower at 0.37 compared to 1.77 in the Large-scale fishery (LSF+L12AG), owing to the seasonal nature and lower effort of small-scale fisheries.

There was a 7% reduction in total employment between 2022 and 2023, resulting from a decrease in the number of employees in the fleets of both Member States. Despite this, the FTE increased by 11%, indicating a rise in the average work intensity.

Figure 3.7.6. Trends in the number of vessels and employment (in FTE) for the MS fleets operating in the Black Sea.

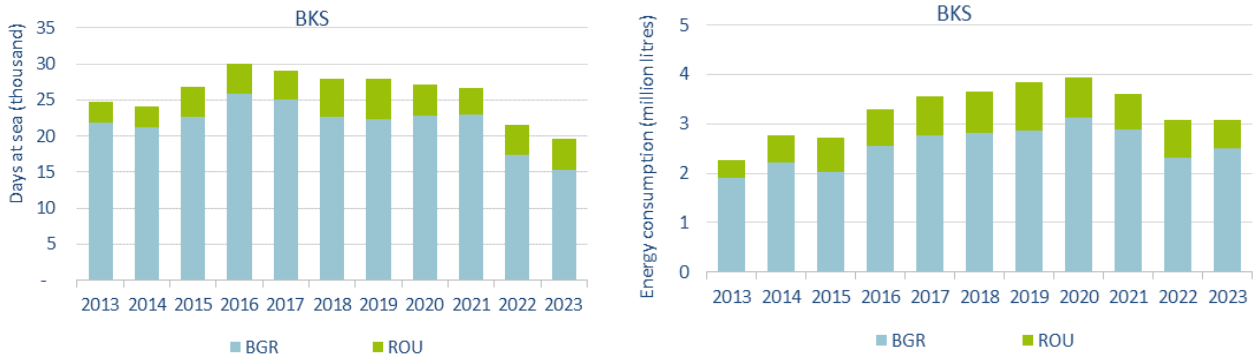


Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fishing effort

In 2023, the EU Black Sea fleet spent 19,684 DaS, down 9% from 2022 and 26% below the 2013–2022 average. This decline is mainly due to a 12% decrease in Bulgarian days, despite a 7% increase for Romania. The Bulgarian fleet contributed 78% of the days, with Romania at 22% (see Figure 3.7.7).

Figure 3.7.7. Trends on fishing effort (in DaS) and energy consumption for MS fleets operating in the Black Sea.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

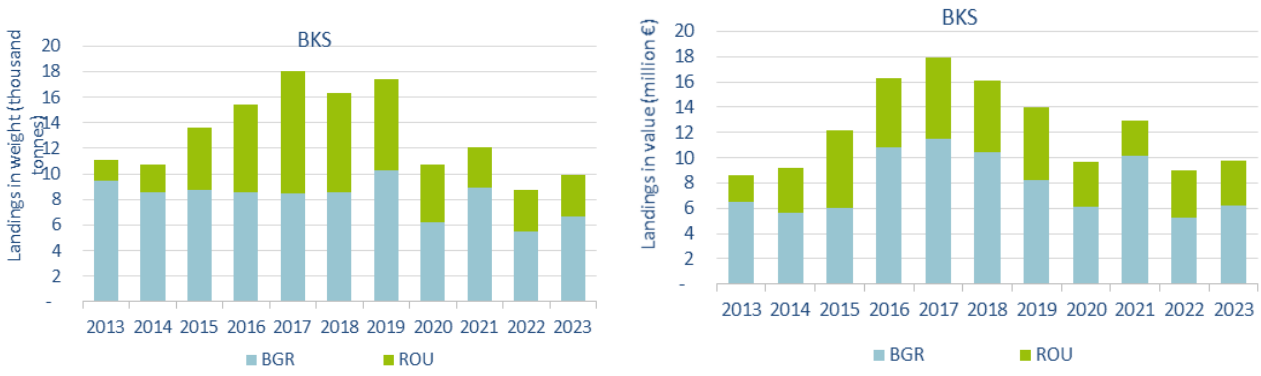
The number of DaS remained stable between 2010 and 2014, followed by a gradual increase in 2015 and 2016. The consistent number of days at sea in 2016 and 2017 can be attributed to an increased interest in harvesting sea snails. The decrease over the last five years was primarily due to the reduction in the number of vessels in Bulgaria and the stable days at sea in Romania.

Landings and top species

In 2023, the Black Sea EU fleet landed approximately 9,961 tonnes, valued at EUR 9.79 million. Bulgaria's share was 6,665 tonnes (EUR 6.24 million), while Romania's was 3,295 tonnes (EUR 3.55 million). Figure 3.7.8 shows the distribution of landings by country.

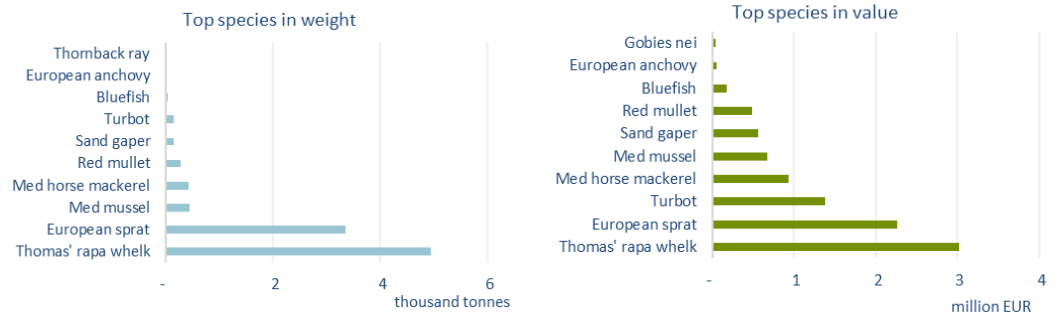
That year, LSF+L12AG made up 79% of the weight and 69% of the value of all landings. Although SSCF deployed over 61% of the effort, they accounted for only 21% of the weight and 31% of the value. Socially, SSCF is more significant, representing nearly 84% of employment and 67% of FTEs.

Figure 3.7.8. Trends on landings in weight and value by MS fleets operating in the Black Sea.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

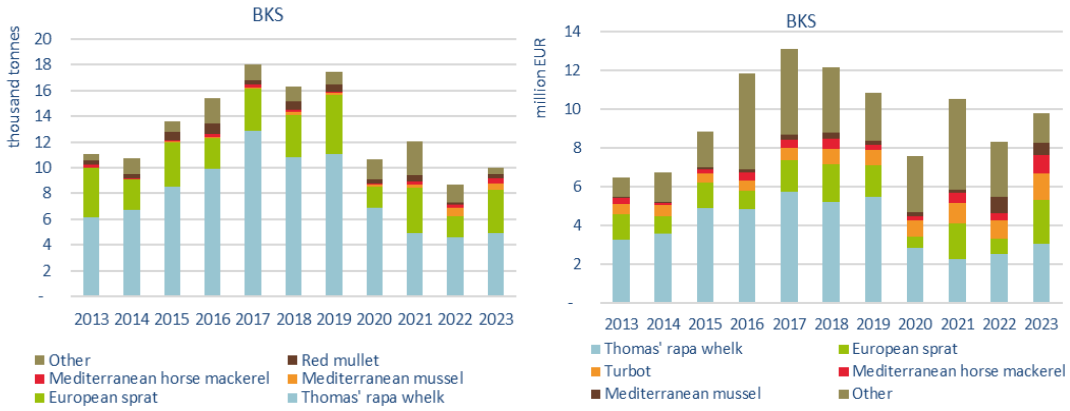
Figure 3.7.9. Top 10 species in landed weight and value for MS fleets operating in the Black Sea, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

In 2023, the main species by weight were sea snails (4,960 tonnes), European sprat (3,357 tonnes), Mediterranean mussel (450 tonnes), and Mediterranean horse mackerel (427 tonnes). In terms of landing value, sea snails led with EUR 3.03 million, followed by European sprat (EUR 2.26 million), turbot (EUR 1.38 million), Mediterranean horse mackerel (EUR 0.93 million), and Mediterranean mussel (EUR 0.67 million).

Figure 3.7.10. Trends in landings of the top species in landed weight and value for MS fleets operating in the Black Sea.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Economic performance

In 2023, revenue reached EUR 11.5 million, with the Bulgarian fleet contributing EUR 6.8 million (60%). GVA was EUR 7.6 million, shared between the Romanian fleet (EUR 3.4 million) and the Bulgarian fleet (EUR 4.2 million). The region's total gross profit was EUR 5.1 million, with the Romanian fleet generating EUR 2.7 million.

Five segments (one Romanian, four Bulgarian) reported losses, representing 809 vessels (65%) of the Black Sea fleet, due to low fishing activity and landings, totaling -EUR 0.3 million. The overall net profit was EUR 3.66 million, generated by the remaining 16 segments with 436 vessels (35% of the fleet).

Among operating costs, energy and crew wages were the major expenses, amounting to EUR 2.3 million and EUR 2.17 million, respectively. Bulgaria led in crew costs with EUR 1.45 million, while Romania's were EUR 0.72 million. Energy costs were EUR 1.6 million for Bulgaria and EUR 0.7 million for Romania.

The SSCF comprised 91% of the fleet (1,129 vessels) and accounted for 60% of the effort (11,900 days), but only landed 21% by weight (2,090 tonnes) and 31% by value (EUR 3.06 million).

Bulgaria's LSF+L12AG was more profitable than Romania's, with a gross profit margin of 49% compared to 36%. Conversely, Romania's SSCF had a higher gross profit margin at 75%, while Bulgaria's SSCF had 18%.

Net profit margins were 71% for Romania's SSCF and 4% for Bulgaria's SSCF. For the LSF+L12AG, Bulgaria reported a 30% margin, compared to Romania's 16%.

Figure 3.7.11. Trends in revenue and profit by MS fleets operating in the Black Sea.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

3.7.4 Main factors affecting the performance of the fleet

After improving from 2015 to 2017, the fleet's economic performance declined in 2018 and 2019, continuing until 2020 with significant losses. In 2021, profitability recovered to near 2019 levels. However, 2022 saw a sharp decline, dropping below 2020 levels. In 2023, there was an improvement in economic profitability.

Factors that may positively influence fleet performance in the region include:

- An additional increase in the turbot quota for both Bulgaria and Romania over the last three years, along with a management plan for third-country fishing in the Black Sea.
- The rise in average prices for some key species with significant landings, such as sea snails, and the maintenance of stable average prices for other species.
- The sea snail stock in GSA 29 being fished near F_{MSY}, allowing fishing vessels and processing plants utilizing this species to continue providing employment in the region.
- The trend of almost stable or decreasing fuel costs at the regional level, which is directly connected with energy costs, continues to represent a major percentage of expenses.

Factors that may negatively impact fleet performance in the region include:

- Adverse weather conditions in the Black Sea, including strong winds and large temperature differences between winter and summer, have significantly affected fishing activities by the SSCF, leading to a reduction in DaS and a consequent negative impact on total employment.

- The LSF+L12AG fleets of both countries are primarily composed of vessels equipped with trawls and polyvalent active and passive gears. As trawling is fuel-intensive, maintaining a stable level of days-at-sea results in consistently high energy costs.

Other factors affecting fleet performance in the region include:

- The Black Sea fishery's high dependency on a limited number of valuable species. In terms of landing weight and value, sea snails are the most profitable species. According to the latest available data from 2023, their stock in the Black Sea is considered to be around reference biological points. Sprat, typically the second most important fishery, is evaluated as sustainably exploited. The turbot stock also shows improvement, primarily due to the implementation of management measures.
- The GFCM has established a set of emergency measures for stocks in the Black Sea region to ensure alignment in the implementation of management measures by all countries operating in the region.

Regulation and fisheries management in the region

In the past five years, the GFCM has adopted emergency measures to align management by countries in the region. During its 46th session in 2023, four recommendations were made for the Black Sea fisheries, focusing on sustainable stocks, a multiannual management plan for turbot, and a research programme for rapa whelk fisheries.

The EU led an amendment to the 2019 recommendation, maintaining fishing mortality for turbot within agreed precautionary limits to achieve MSY. The 2017 recommendation established fleet management, fishing effort control, and an MCS programme.

The main amendment increased the total allowable catch for 2020–2022 based on scientific advice and socio-economic factors. The quota for 2023 and 2024 remained the same as in 2022, with unused quotas carried over due to underexploitation by EU Member States amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Status of important stocks

In 2023, the commercially significant species for the Black Sea fisheries remained consistent with those of previous decades: turbot, sea snails, sprat, and picked dogfish.

During 2020, the turbot stock in GSA 29 exhibited a positive trend in biomass evolution and experienced an improved or unchanged status regarding overexploitation. In 2021, the Working Group on the Black Sea under the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) confirmed that the stock trajectory continued its upward trend observed in recent years. The 2023 stock assessment indicated that the spawning stock biomass and recruitment had demonstrated an increasing pattern in recent years. However, the turbot stock remains overexploited, despite low fishing mortality.

Sea snails represent the most profitable species in terms of landing weight and value. No stock assessment was conducted until 2020. Given the consistent and deteriorating signals, qualitative advice was provided in 2021. By 2022, the Black Sea rapa whelk stock was considered slightly above the reference point, with recommendations to avoid increased fishing mortality. In 2023, however, the stock was deemed overexploited, and immediate reductions in fishing mortality were advised.

Sprat, the second most important fishery, was assessed in 2021 and found to be sustainably exploited. The 2023 stock assessment was subjected to a benchmark process, which concluded that the stock is sustainably managed. Both Bulgaria and Romania are fishing below their European sprat quotas; in 2023, the Bulgarian fleet landed 41% of its quota while the Romanian fleet landed less than 3%.

For picked dogfish in the Black Sea, there is an established catch limit agreed upon by both countries and the European Commission. While it is mainly bycatch for the Romanian fleet, it constitutes a target fishery for the Bulgarian fleet. Both countries limit their catches to the 2015 levels and provide quarterly reports to the European Commission on the measures taken to adhere to this objective.

TAC development of main species

Quotas for turbot and sprat were introduced in 2008 after Bulgaria and Romania joined the EU. Turbot quotas were evenly split between them, while Bulgaria received 70% of the EU's sprat TAC and Romania got 30%. From 2011 to 2017, the EU set annual TACs at 86.4 tonnes for turbot and 11,475 tonnes for sprat.

The GFCM adjusted the turbot TAC for 2018 and 2019, setting the EU share at 114 tonnes each year. In 2019, an amendment increased Bulgaria's turbot quota to 75 tonnes and set the total EU Black Sea quota at 150 tonnes. Turkey was allocated 497 tonnes, Ukraine 160 tonnes, Georgia 20 tonnes, and others 30 tonnes.

Council Regulations in 2021 and 2022 kept these quotas for 2021-2024. Due to exceptional regional circumstances, unused quotas from 2022 and 2023 could be carried over by Member States.

3.7.5 Description of relevant fisheries in the region

Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

The Black Sea fishery is predominantly composed of SSCF vessels, which are distributed across 76 landing sites (18 in Romania and 58 in Bulgaria). These vessels employ various fishing techniques, including set gillnets, hand-lines, pole-lines (both mechanised and hand-operated), set longlines, drifting longlines, pots and traps, as well as vessels without gear (divers). These methods are tailored to the fishing seasons and variations in species abundance.

The SSCF fleet consists of 1,129 vessels with a combined capacity of 1,980 GT and 23,535 kW. In 2023, the number of vessels increased by 8% compared to 2022, while GT decreased by 4% and kW decreased by 6%. This segment is crucial to the region, representing 91% of the total fleet by number and 84% of total employment (67% of FTE). In 2023, 1,674 fishers were directly employed, corresponding to 417 FTEs. Typically, these vessels are operated by the owner or a family member.

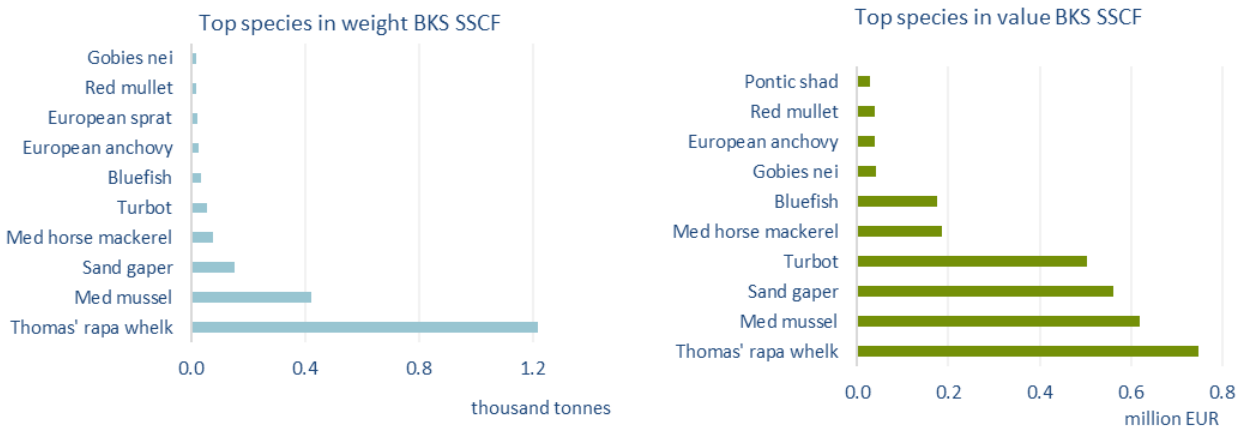
Landings by the Black Sea SSCF accounted for 21% of the total landed weight in the region and 31% of the total value. The lower value achieved by the SSCF, compared to the LSF+L12AG, likely reflects the use of different marketing channels. Generally, the SSCF operates through very short supply chains.

Despite their small size, SSCF vessels hold significant local importance in the Black Sea. Beyond generating revenue for the owners, some vessels with low activity levels provide catches that are not intended for market distribution but are consumed directly by the owners and their families.

The SSCF represented 61% of the total DaS in the region, generating revenues of EUR 4.5 million. The GVA was estimated at EUR 3.2 million, with a gross profit of EUR 2.3 million and a net profit of EUR 1.9 million. In 2023, labour productivity (GVA per FTE) increased by 26% compared to 2022 but showed a 25% decrease relative to the average from 2013 to 2022, reaching EUR 7,584.

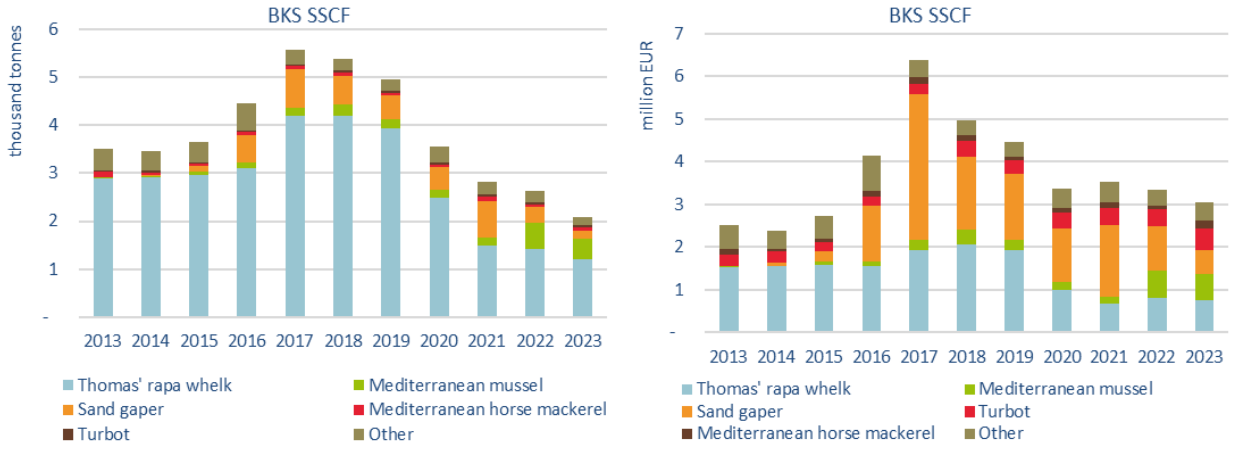
The SSCF focuses on several species, including sea snails, Mediterranean mussel, sand gaper, Mediterranean horse mackerel, turbot, European anchovy, European sprat, bluefish, pontic shad, and gobies. In terms of value, the most significant species for the SSCF were sea snails, followed by Mediterranean mussel, sand gaper, and turbot (see Figure 3.7.12).

Figure 3.7.12. Top 10 species landed by SSCF operating in the Black Sea, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.7.13. Trends in landings of top species landed by the SSCF operating in the Black Sea.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

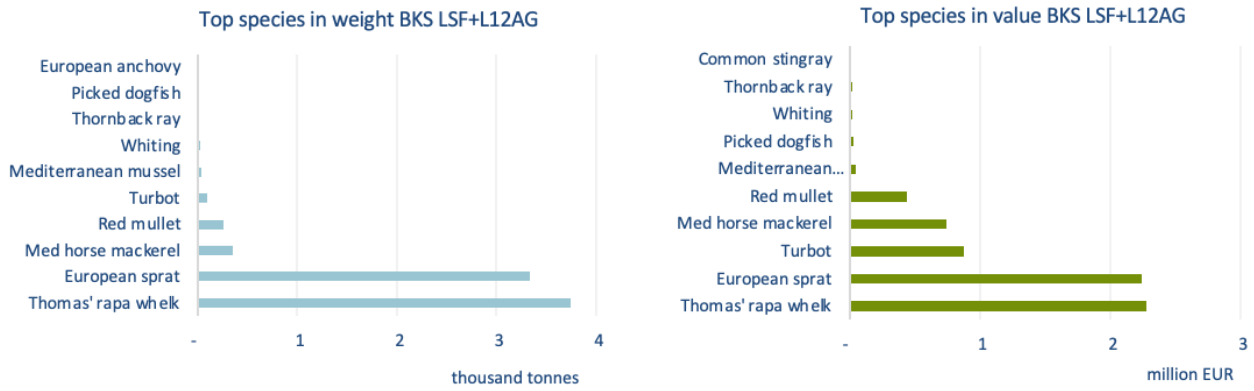
Large-scale fleet (L12AG+LSF)

In 2023, the LSF+L12AG in the Black Sea comprised 116 vessels, accounting for 9% of the entire fleet. These vessels had a total capacity of 4,099 GT and 19,289 kW. The Bulgarian LSF+L12AG made up 79% of the EU Black Sea LSF+L12AG with 92 vessels, while the Romanian LSF+L12AG consisted of 24 vessels. The primary gears used were pelagic trawls, with some vessels also employing passive and active gears throughout the year, as well as beam trawls.

The LSF+L12AG employed a total of 329 people, equivalent to 205 FTE. In 2023, total labor costs amounted to EUR 1.67 million, and labor productivity (GVA per FTE) increased to EUR 22,730—a 100% increase compared to 2022, and an 18% decrease compared to the 2013-2022 average.

Until 2018, the LSF+L12AG accounted for 30-37% of the total DaS for the entire Black Sea fleet. Despite the relatively constant proportion, the total number of days decreased in 2017 compared to 2016 and 2015. However, in 2018 and 2019, they increased again to 10,300 and 11,300, respectively. In 2020, the DaS for the LSF+L12AG decreased by 10% (10,200) and in 2021, they decreased by 2% (9,930) compared to 2020. In 2022, the DaS further decreased by 24% to 7,595, while in 2023, they slightly increased to 7,787.

Figure 3.7.14. Top 10 species landed by LSF+L12AG operating in the Black Sea, 2023.

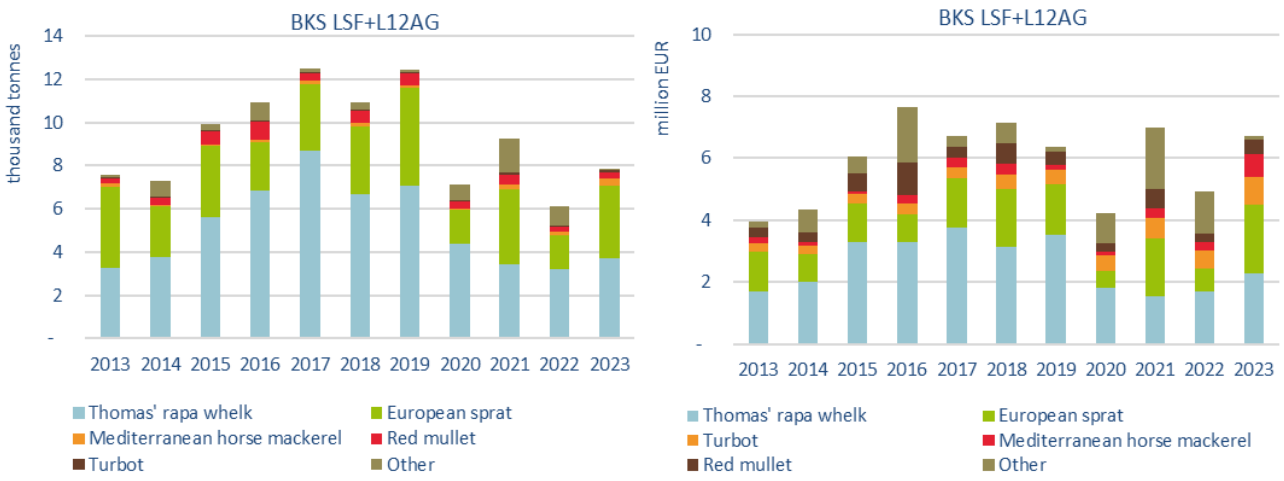


Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

The LSF+L12AG targets the same species as the SSCF, with sea snail constituting the highest proportion by both value and weight. Other significant species for the LSF+L12AG include European sprat, Mediterranean horse mackerel, and turbot.

In 2023, the LSF+L12AG accounted for 79% (7,871 tonnes) of the total landed weight in the region, valued at EUR 6.7 million, or 69% of the total value. This produced EUR 4.5 million in GVA and a net profit of EUR 1.8 million. Two segments within the LSF+L12AG (one Bulgarian and one Romanian) reported a net loss in 2023. The LSF+L12AG typically operates through longer supply chains than the SSCF, although its marketing channels are more developed. In 2023, pelagic trawlers achieved the highest landings by weight, while polyvalent vessels with both active and passive gears had the highest landings by value.

Figure 3.7.15. Trends in landings of top species landed by the LSF+L12AG operating in the Black Sea, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

3.7.6 Performance by fleet segment

In terms of revenue, live weight, and value of landings, the top five fleet segments operating in the Black Sea (out of 21 active fleet clustered segments) represented 20% of the total number of vessels. These five segments (three LSF+L12AG segments and two SSCF segments) landed 73% of the fish, corresponding to 72% of the value of landings and revenue. These segments provided employment for 569 individuals, equivalent to 179 FTEs.

There were seven segments, with a total of 854 vessels that generated a net loss; six of these segments were from the Bulgarian fishing fleet. They accounted for 38% of the total days at sea for the fleet but landed 10% of the fish, corresponding to 13% of the value. These seven segments employed 1,208 individuals, or 353 FTEs.

At a fleet segment level, Romanian vessels measuring 06 to 12 metres with passive gears generated the highest revenue from the Black Sea region in 2023 (EUR 2.5 million). This was followed by Romanian vessels using polyvalent active and passive gears for vessels measuring 12 to 18 metres (EUR 1.9 million), Bulgarian vessels using pelagic trawls measuring 24 to 40 metres (EUR 1.8 million), and Bulgarian vessels measuring 18 to 24 metres with pelagic trawlers (EUR 1.2 million).

3.8 EU Outermost Regions (OMR)

The EU Outermost Regions (OMR) refers to the nine remote territories belonging to three Member States: six French territories – Guadeloupe, Saint-Martin, Martinique, French Guiana, Mayotte and La Réunion; two Portuguese autonomous regions - Azores and Madeira and one Spanish territory - Canary Islands. All the outermost regions are islands, archipelagos except for one land territory (French Guiana), and are located in the western Atlantic Ocean, the Caribbean and Amazonian basins, and the Indian Ocean.

Under the fleet economic data call, Member States identify fleet segments based in the OMRs by allocating a geographical indicator to the fleet segment definition, as provided in Table 3.8.1. All fleet segments identified with a geographical indicator pertaining to one of the OMRs are considered.

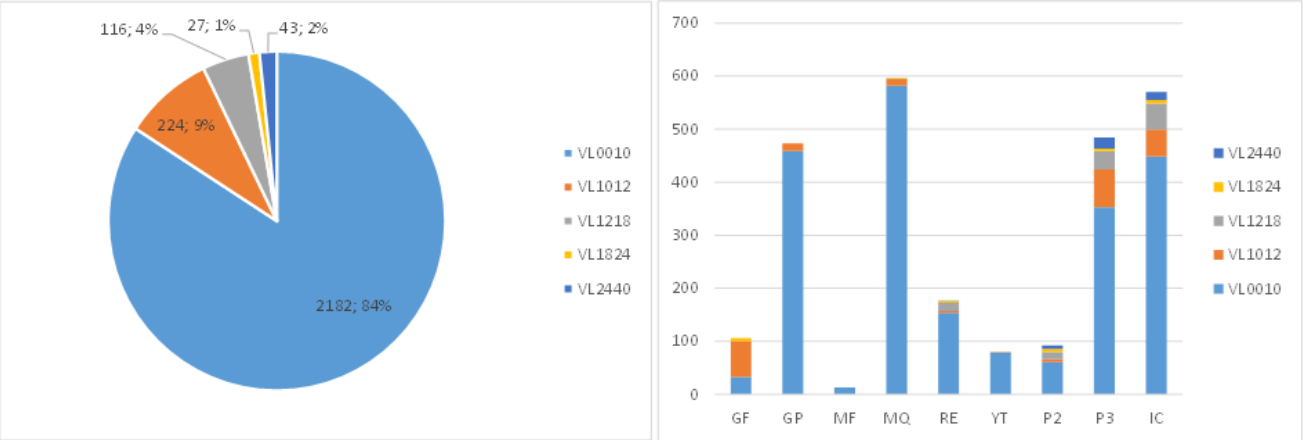
Table 3.8.1. Geographical indicator codes used in the EU-MAP data calls to identify OMR fleet segments.

Geo Code	Name	Definition
P2	Madeira	Portuguese outermost region (autonomous region)
P3	Azores	
IC	Canaries	Spanish outermost region (autonomous community)
GF	French Guiana	French outermost region (overseas department)
GP	Guadeloupe	
MQ	Martinique	
RE	La Réunion	
YT	Mayotte	
MF	Saint-Martin	French outermost region (since 2009) (overseas community)

Source: EWG 25-07

In 2023, the number of active vessels was 2 592, although, in some regions, significant parts of the registered fleet were inactive. Most of the OMR fleet is small scale and labour intensive with 93% of the vessels under 12 metres LOA. Vessels over 12 metres operate mainly in Canaries Islands, Azores and Madeira, La Réunion and to lesser extent in French Guiana.

Figure 3.8.1. Number of active vessels per length categories (left) and per OMR (right), 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

In 2023, the total engaged crew comprised 6,510 individuals, averaging 2.5 per vessel, which corresponds to 3,285 FTEs. The fleet accumulated approximately 186,000 DaS, consuming an estimated 20.1 million litres of fuel, equating to 108 litres per DaS. On average, the energy consumption figures were 1.6 kilograms of fish and EUR 7.4 worth of fish landed per litre of fuel used, although there were variations across outermost regions (OMRs) and segments.

The combined landings from OMR fleets amounted to 31,597 tonnes, valued at EUR 149.4 million, with an average price of 4.7 euro/kg. The GVA and Net Value Added (NVA) were EUR 98.9 million and EUR 84.6 million, respectively. Gross profit and net profit, including subsidies, were estimated at EUR 20.4 million and EUR 13.1 million. Per crew member, GVA was calculated at EUR 15,882.

In terms of regional distribution, the French OMR had 1,446 vessels and 2,580 crew members actively engaged, averaging 1.8 per vessel. The Portuguese OMRs reported 576 vessels and 2,361 crew members (4.1 per vessel), while the Spanish OMR had 570 vessels and 1,569 crew members (2.8 per vessel).

The French OMR fleets contributed 44% of the total landing value (EUR 65.5 million) and 29% of the weight (9,214 tonnes), with an average price of 7.1 euro/kg. The Portuguese OMR fleets accounted for 38% of the total value (EUR 57.3 million) and 46% of the weight (14,462 tonnes), with a 4.0 euro/kg average price. The Canary Islands contributed EUR 26.5 million in landing value for 7,922 tonnes, achieving an average price of 3.3 euro/kg, representing 25% and 18% of the total OMR weight and value, respectively.

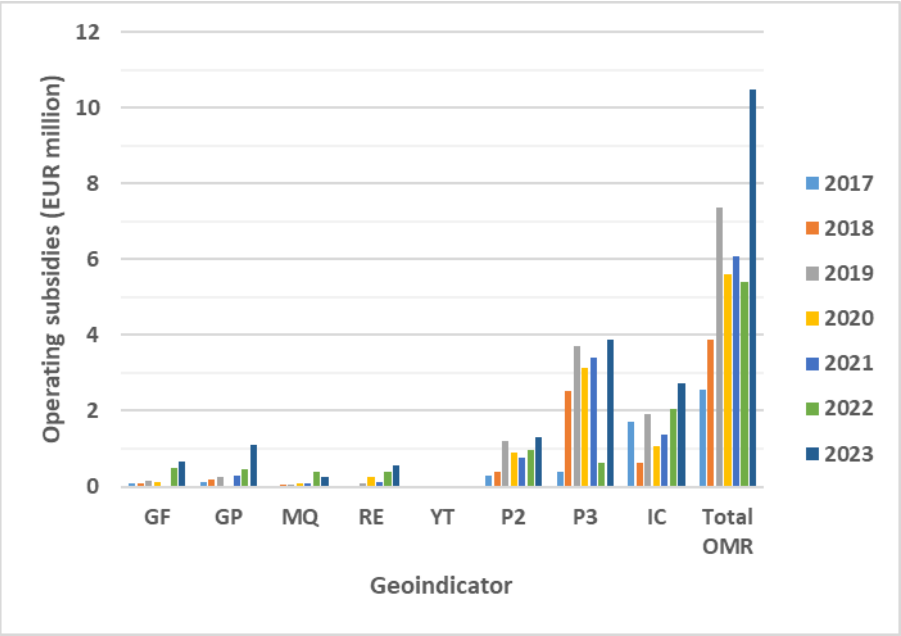
Most landings are sold in local markets; however, significant portions are exported in some regions, such as Reunion and the Azores. In 2023, GVA for the French, Portuguese, and Spanish OMRs was estimated at EUR 43.9 million (44%), EUR 38.9 million (39%), and EUR 16 million (16%) respectively. Net profits, including EMFAF compensation costs, were positive for all regions except the Canary Islands.

Table 3.8.2. Summary results for the EU OMR fleet by region and Member State, 2023.

MS	OMR Geo indicator	Number of vessels	Engaged crew	FTE national	Days at sea	Energy consumption (million litres)	Weight of landings (thousand tonnes)	Value of landings (million EUR)	Revenue (million EUR)	Gross Value Added (million EUR)	Net Value Added (million EUR)	Gross profit (million EUR)	Net profit subsidised (million EUR)	Operating subsidies (million EUR)
France	GF (A)	72	238	185	10 120	0.5	1.5	5.0	8.0	4.6	4.2	0.3	0.3	0.5
France	GF (L)	28	82	18	1 057	0.1	0.3	1.0	1.3	0.8	0.6	0.1	0.2	0.2
France	GF	6	30	18	652	0.0	0.1	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
France	GF (A)	223	393	300	32 056	2.7	1.9	17.9	17.9	12.5	11.2	3.7	2.9	0.8
France	GF (L)	250	410	59	7 164	0.7	0.4	3.9	3.9	1.9	0.4	0.0	-1.5	0.3
France	MQ	597	889	186	22 444	2.4	1.2	14.2	14.5	9.9	8.8	3.0	2.0	0.3
France	RE	177	323	304	16 997	2.4	3.2	18.6	22.3	12.1	10.6	4.8	3.7	0.6
France	YT	80	194	83	6 139	0.7	0.6	3.6	3.1	2.2	1.9	0.8	0.4	0.0
France	MF	13	21	4	276	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
France Total		1 446	2 580	1 158	96 905	9.4	9.2	65.5	71.0	43.9	37.7	12.7	8.1	2.6
Portugal	P2	92	428	351	7 275	1.8	4.5	17.1	17.5	12.9	11.8	4.3	4.2	1.3
Portugal	P3	484	1 933	1 068	38 873	5.0	9.9	40.1	40.2	26.0	20.9	8.6	5.5	3.9
Portugal Total		576	2 361	1 419	46 148	6.8	14.5	57.3	57.7	38.9	32.7	12.9	9.7	5.2
Spain	IC	570	1 569	708	43 385	3.8	7.9	26.5	30.6	16.0	14.1	-5.2	-4.7	2.7
Spain Total		570	1 569	708	43 385	3.8	7.9	26.5	30.6	16.0	14.1	-5.2	-4.7	2.7
Grand Total		2 592	6 510	3 285	186 438	20.1	31.6	149.4	159.3	98.9	84.6	20.4	13.1	10.5

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.8.2. Operating subsidies by OMR between 2017 and 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

In 2023, operating subsidies reached EUR 10.5 million, having increased over the past seven years due to factors such as improved reporting, better allocation of EMFAF compensation plans, and rising fuel subsidies in France and the Canaries. These subsidies accounted for 6.6% of OMR total revenue, with significant variations: 9.0% in Portuguese OMRs, 8.9% in the Canaries, and only 3.5% in French OMRs. Variations also existed between regions within countries and between segments within the same region.

3.8.1 Background and regional details

Trends in the OMRs

The number of active vessels in the OMR fleet experienced a decline of 21.6% between 2013 and 2023 (excluding the Canary Islands and Mayotte), and a reduction of 13.2% between 2017 and 2023 for the entire OMR fleet (totalling eight OMRs). However, there has been a stabilization observed since 2020. The trend in engaged crew and DaS followed similar mid-term trajectories, albeit with notable variations among the different OMRs, as detailed in the comparison below. Energy consumption did not decrease significantly, indicating that the vessels which left the active fleet were low fuel consumers.

Although the live weight of landings varied over the period, with a notable decrease in 2020 due to the COVID-19 crisis, the aggregate weight of landings from six OMRs (French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Reunion, Madeira, and Azores) did not show a significant trend. The average total weight was approximately 25,300 tonnes over the 2013-2023 period (35,726 tonnes for the eight OMRs between 2017 and 2023). In these six regions, there were increases in the total gross value of landings (+7%), revenue (+8%), and GVA (+6%). Indicators of gross and net profit showed a positive trend until 2019, a significant decline in 2020, but progressively recovered to previous levels by 2022. Including the Canary Islands and Mayotte, trends for the total eight OMRs become more varied. GVA remained stable

since 2018 and the contribution of these regions to total gross and net profit was limited except in 2023, where the Canary Islands contributed to the deterioration of results.

Several factors may explain these changes, including the exit of non-active or less active vessels, decommissioning schemes, resource evolution, operating subsidies, among others, at either the OMR or segment levels.

Figure 3.8.2. Trends in key indicators for EU OMR.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

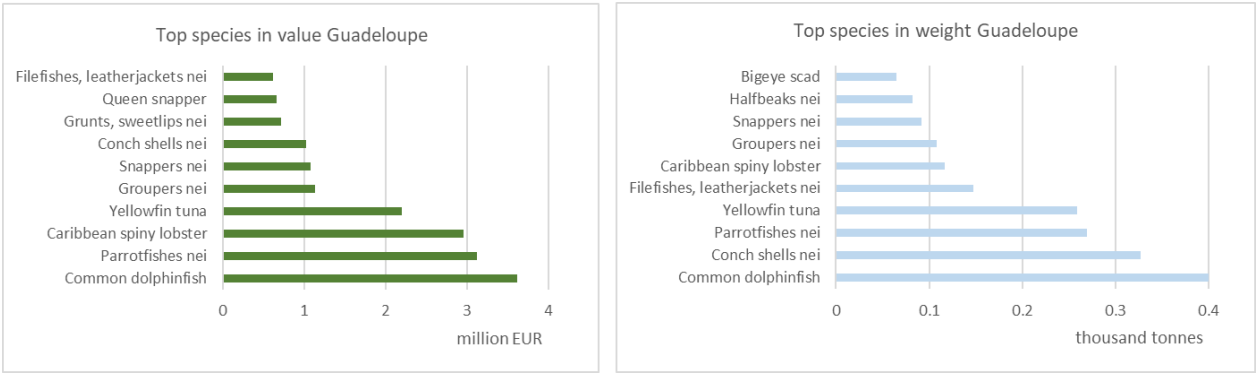
3.8.2 France

For France, fishing activity of the OMR fleet is spread out in the Atlantic and Indian oceans. 98% of the active vessels are small scale (under 12 metres LOA). Only French Guiana, Martinique and Reunion fleets have vessels between 12 and 24 metres. The main fishing zones in terms of operation are in the Western Central Atlantic areas 31 (French Antilles), 31 and 41.1.1 (French Guiana), in the Western Indian Ocean 51.6 and 51.7 (Reunion and Mayotte). In 2023, landings from the OMR fleets combined (1 446 vessels) amounted to 9 214 tonnes valued at around EUR 65.5 million. The crews engaged was 2 580 (1 158 FTEs), GVA and NVA were respectively EUR 43.9 (60% of revenue) and EUR 37.7 million (51%). Gross and net profit subsidized EUR 12.7 million (17%) and EUR 8.1 million (11% margin), respectively, and operating subsidies were EUR 2.6 million (3.5% of revenue). The top species landed in value were large pelagic species (yellowfin tuna and other tunas, common dolphinfish, swordfish and blue marlin) but also coastal species (parrotfishes, spiny lobster, conchs and acoupa).

Guadeloupe (GP)

In 2023, the Guadeloupe fleet was composed of 473 active vessels (97% under 10 metres LOA). Engaged crew was 803 (359 FTE). Total effort expressed in DaS was around 40,000 for a total fuel consumption of 3.4 million litres (86 litres/DaS). Total landings in weight and value were 2 373 tonnes for EUR 21.8 million, respectively and average price was 9.2 euro/kg. GVA was EUR 14.4 million (63% of the revenue), NVA EUR 11.6 million (51% of the revenue) and gross profit EUR 3.7 million (16% margin). Net profit subsidized was EUR 1.5 million (6% margin) and operating subsidies were EUR 1.1 million. Indicators are also provided (see below) based on activity threshold giving a different comprehension of fleet structure and evolution. The main species in value were common dolphinfish, yellowfin tuna, parrotfishes, spiny lobster and filefishes. Snappers, groupers and conchs are also key species for the fleet. This landings composition reflects the different fisheries in which the vessels operate. All the landings are sold locally directly to consumers or fishmongers and restaurants. It is important to note that the Guadeloupe fleet is highly dependent on species assessed or managed by the ICCAT (yellowfin tuna, blue marlin, etc.) and the WECAFC (dolphinfish, conchs, spiny lobster, etc.).

Figure 3.8.3. Top species landed in value (left) and weight (right) in Guadeloupe, 2023



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

The fleet is mainly composed of non-decked vessels with outboard engines operating on a one-day trip basis. Average crew is two members with some exceptions for vessels using encircle nets. Crew members are from Guadeloupe. However, the fleet includes decked vessels, some of them operating longer trips on the Saint-Barthelemy and Saint-Martin insular shelf. The level of activity is very variable within the fleet and segments.

Vessels operate in the different following fisheries around Guadeloupe archipelago.

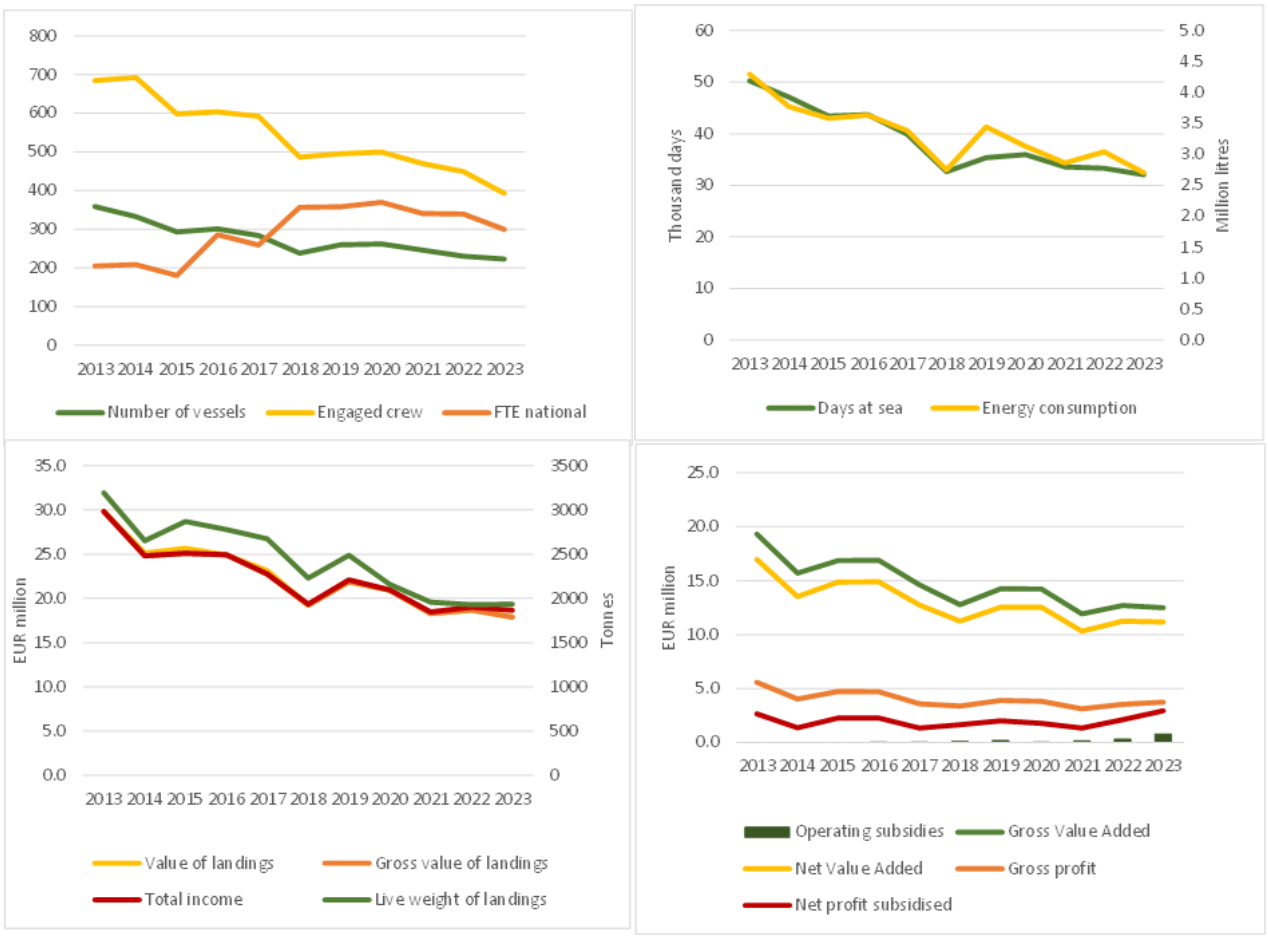
- Coastal insular shelf fisheries: vessels use mainly traps, gillnets, hand line to catch a great diversity of demersal and benthic species, trammel nets to target spiny lobster or stromboïd conch, and encircle nets to target small pelagic species and demersal species. Snorkelling is also practiced.
- Slope fishery: vessels mainly targeting snappers mainly using small set-longlines and traps.

- The large pelagic fishery: vessels operate hand lines and trolling lines to target large pelagic species (dolphinfish, yellowfin tuna, blue marlin, wahoo, etc.) around mainly private Moored Fishing Aggregating Devices (MFADs) or on free schools.

Most of active vessels are polyvalent and may operate in the different fisheries using several combinations of gears. However, the EU segments are not always relevant to differentiate the main fishing strategies in the fleet. Moreover, the level of activity is very heterogeneous within the fleet and segments. The fleet segments were sub-segmented in low active (L) segments and normal active (A) segments considering the 75 DaS per year threshold.

Based on this sub-segmentation, different trends appear. Between 2013 and 2023, the number of normal active vessels and related engaged crew decreased by –38% and –43%, respectively. This evolution was combined with a change in the structure of the fleet with vessels of larger size and engine power in the less than 10 metres category. The decrease in DaS and energy consumption was around -36% and –37% with no significant change in fuel consumption per DaS. The landings in weight and value followed quite the same trend with average price which has remained almost stable over the period except for the four last years. Other economic indicators such as total GVA, NVA, gross profit and net profit subsidized (which remained positive at EUR 2.9 million) decreased. Operating subsidies increased to reach EUR 0.784 million in 2023. The number of low active vessels was quite stable over the same period (-1%) but the days at sea, landings in weight and value reduced by around -20%. Given their low activity levels, averaging just 30 days at sea per year, these vessels exhibited low productivity. GVA was low and, even if gross profit indicator remains positive, depreciation and opportunity cost of capital of these low active vessels yield significant negative net profits subsidized.

Figure 3.8.4. Trends on capacity, effort, landings, GVA and profit for the Guadeloupe active (A) fleet (GP). Vessel activity threshold equal or more than 75 days at sea per year.

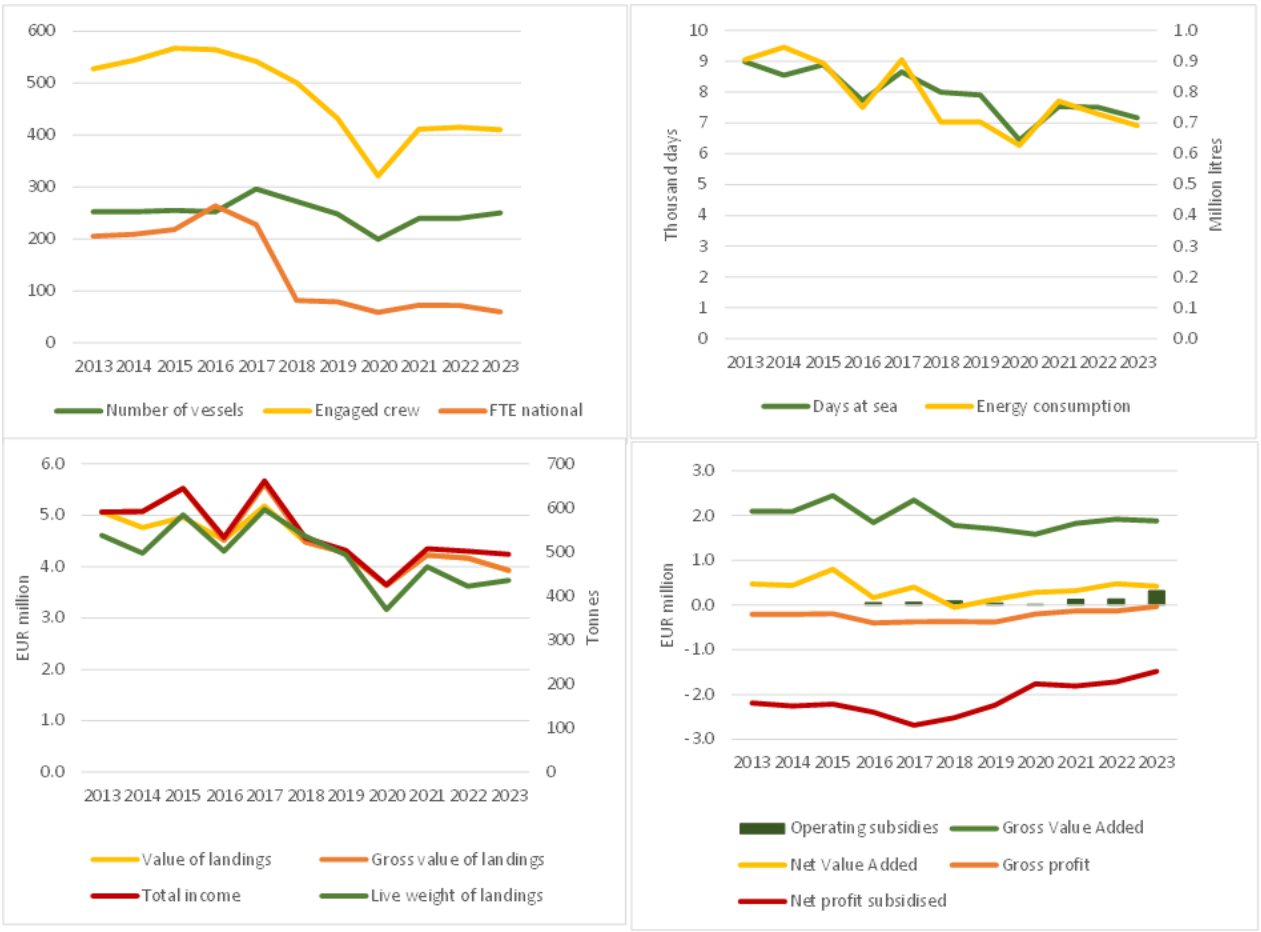


Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

In 2023, energy costs for the A segment were 14% of total costs, but fuel dependency varies by segment. Vessels targeting large pelagic species near MFADs are more fuel-dependent than those in coastal areas. Non-variable costs averaged 16%, largely influenced by gear expenses. Personnel costs made up 57%, with reduced social security contributions compared to mainland France.

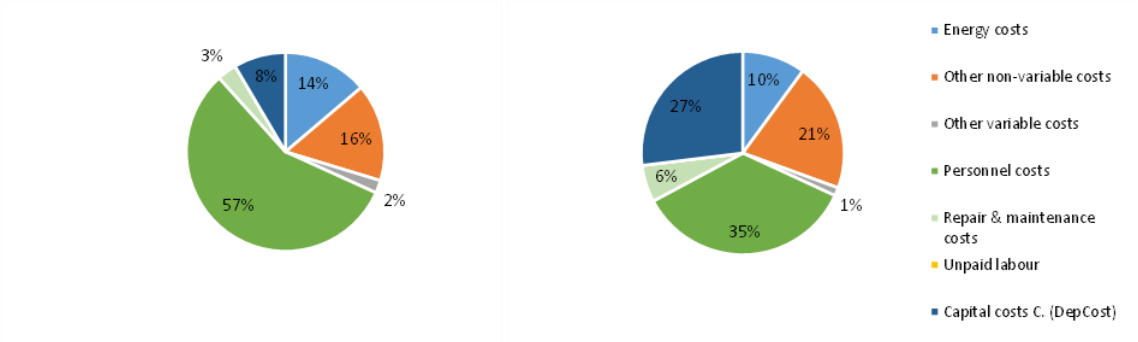
The L segment, characterized by low activity, had relatively lower variable costs (10% energy, 35% crew) and higher fixed costs (21% other non-variable, 27% capital) compared to the A segment.

Figure 3.8.5. Trends on capacity, effort, landings, GVA and profit for the Guadeloupe low active (L) fleet (GP). Vessel activity threshold under 75 days at sea per year.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.8.6. Cost structure for the Guadeloupe OMR fleet with normal activity (A) *-left-* and low activity (L) *-right-* in 2023. Vessel activity threshold at 75 days at sea per year.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure and key results in Guadeloupe

Fleet structure is characterised by a high level of gear polyvalence that the main gear based DCF segmentation imperfectly represents. The fleet segments were sub-segmented in low active (L) segments and normal active (A) segments considering the 75 DaS per year threshold. According to this sub-segmentation, 244 vessels (47%) were in the A segments and 275 vessels (53%) were in the L segments but the A segments accounted for 83% of the FTE, 82% of DaS and landings (in weight and value) and 87% of the GVA (EUR 12.5 million) in 2023. Net profit subsidized was around EUR 3 million for the A segments and -EUR 1.5 million for the L segments.

Table 3.8.3. Summary results for the French OMR fleet segments in 2023: Guadeloupe (GP).

fs_name	Number of vessels	Engaged crew	FTE national	Days at sea	Energy cons. (Million litres)	Live weight of landings tonnes)	Value of landings (Million EUR)	Revenue (Million EUR)	Gross Value Added (Million EUR)	Net Value Added (Million EUR)	Gross profit (Million EUR)	Net profit subsidised (Million EUR)	Operating subsidies (Million EUR)
Normal activity fleet segments													
FRA OFR PGP0010 GP A*	93	167	132	13 941	1.32	868	8.02	8.02	5.33	4.76	1.41	1.17	0.46
FRA OFR DFN0010 GP A*	43	83	67	6 731	0.32	349	3.51	3.51	2.78	2.54	0.98	0.74	0.06
FRA OFR PS 0010 GP A*	8	23	17	990	0.06	79	0.59	0.59	0.46	0.42	0.17	0.12	0.00
FRA OFR HOK0010 GP A*	42	63	44	5 296	0.75	433	3.55	3.54	2.41	2.16	0.80	0.72	0.22
FRA OFR FPO0010 GP A*	37	57	40	5 098	0.26	209	2.24	2.24	1.50	1.30	0.38	0.19	0.05
Total of normal active fleets	223	393	300	32 056	2.70	1 938	17.90	17.89	12.49	11.18	3.74	2.95	0.78
Low activity fleet segments													
FRA OFR FPO0010 GP L*	53	83	13	1 567	0.08	56	0.66	0.66	0.28	-0.01	-0.06	-0.33	0.07
FRA OFR DFN0010 GP L*	53	84	14	1 418	0.09	76	0.74	0.74	0.38	0.08	-0.01	-0.33	0.03
FRA OFR HOK0010 GP L*	69	103	15	2 277	0.34	176	1.43	1.43	0.80	0.38	0.15	-0.24	0.13
FRA OFR PGP0010 GP L*	67	117	17	1 783	0.18	121	1.02	1.02	0.41	0.00	-0.10	-0.52	0.08
FRA OFR PS 0010 GP L*	8	23	1	119	0.01	7	0.07	0.07	0.02	-0.02	-0.02	-0.06	0.00
Total of low active fleets	250	410	59	7 164	0.69	435	3.93	3.92	1.88	0.42	-0.03	-1.48	0.32
Total GP	473	803	359	39 220	3.39	2 373	21.83	21.82	14.37	11.59	3.71	1.46	1.10

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

In 2023, the main segments were:

- PGP0010A: 93 vessels (42% of the active fleet, 43% of sea days, 45% of landing value).
- DFN0010A: 43 vessels (19%, 21%, 20%).
- HOK0010A: 42 vessels (19%, 17%, 20%).
- FPO0010A: 37 vessels (17%, 16%, 12%).
- PS0010A: 8 vessels (4%, 3%, 3%).

Average landing price was higher for the FPO0010A (10.7 euro/kg) than other segments for which prices were between 7.5 euro/kg and 10.1 euro/kg. The HOK0010A is the most energy dependent (141 litres/DaS) followed by PGP0010 (94 litres/DaS), DF00100A and FPO0010A (around 50 litres/DaS) but remained one the most performant fleet in terms of fleet and average economic indicators followed by PGP0010. Improving performance seemed to be driven by segments operating in the large pelagic fishery.

Main factors affecting the performance of the fleet in Guadeloupe

- The lack of suitable and accessible training for the fishers at regional level is a key issue for the sustainability and attractiveness of the sector. The recent digitalisation of

administrative procedures is also a significant constraint for fishers. Moreover, the cost of entry (capital cost) to the sector has increased over the last 10 years due to the increase of vessels characteristics (size, engine power) and unit capital price.

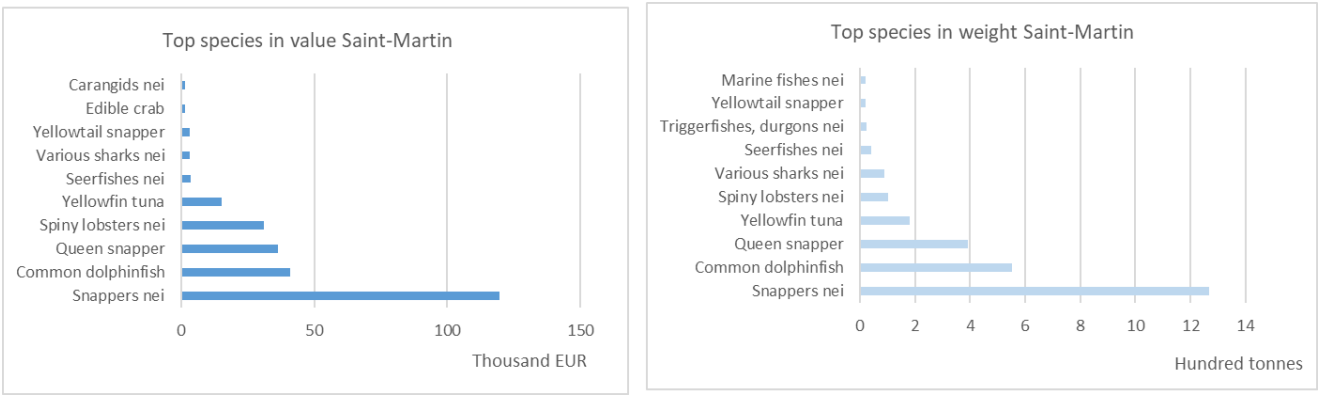
- Guadeloupe like other OMRs is geographically far from sources of supply. These constraints generate additional costs for the local economic operators, compared to the mainland. These additional costs have undermined the competitiveness of the fishing sector since 2021, driven by rising fuel prices, increased transportation costs for materials (such as gears and engines) to Guadeloupe, and, more recently, supply chain disruptions. A compensation scheme for the additional costs was established and funded by EMFAF but the returns and benefits for local fishers were still limited in scope.
- In 2022, average annual fuel price reached more than 1 euro/litre. Different measures including a tariff shield were adopted by national authorities at the end of the first quarter 2022 to attenuate the impact of these increases for fishing companies including a discount at pump and/or direct additional aids (from 0.25 euro/litre to 0.35 euro/litre depending on the period) in France mainland, and in outermost regions. Since March 2022, an economic and social resilience plan including different phases was put in place to deal with the economic consequences of the Ukraine crisis on the fleets' economic situation. The support to the fishing vessels applying to the schemes was 0.2 euro/litre.
- The increase in landing prices over the past ten years has been very limited in scope. One of the reasons given is the importation of seafood from international markets in a context of region's high dependence on imports. However, the supply chain of local products is considered by local operators as not well organized.
- The number of landings points is very important in Guadeloupe. The quality of port infrastructure is heterogeneous over the territory and a key factor for maintaining fishing activity and attracting young fishers.
- A prefectural decree on fisheries management, covering technical measures such as gear regulations and species-specific mesh sizes, is currently under revision; however, internal competition within the SSCF sector remains a major challenge in Guadeloupe. The main reason is the lack of regulation for access to the fishing stocks and fishing grounds. Except the entry permit to the fleet, there are few licences schemes with fixed numbers (numerus clausus) for the different fisheries. Moored Fishing aggregating devices (MFADs) regulations are also poorly respected. However, new regulations for commercial fishers have been subject to discussion notably for the regulation of the number of MFADs per vessel. Local illegal fishing and recreational fishers are also serious competitors and a new regulation for recreational fisheries was set up in 2019. The conch stocks being subject to worry, the fishery was closed for the 2020-2021 season and re-opened in October 2021.
- Several no take zones were set up within the National Park area. However, the sustainability of the sector is threatened by the quality of habitats environment dependent on coastal development and agriculture. Permanent pollution of coastal habitats by pesticide (Chlordecone) used by agriculture led to the ban of coastal fishing areas in the southern part of the island (Basse-Terre). At present, no viable solution is in sight to address these issues, apart from providing financial compensation to fishers for the loss of access to fishing areas closed due to pesticide contamination.

- Since 2011, massive Sargassum algae inflows (stranded and floating blankets) in the Caribbean led to massive changes in the pelagic and coastal ecosystems with impacts on the fishing stocks. Fishing activity in Guadeloupe is also significantly impacted by these events (difficulties to operate vessels and fishing gears). Dedicated projects are aiming to prevent harbours clogging but with limited effectiveness.
- Marine ecosystems and fishing activity are subject to the occurrence of extreme events. Ten hurricanes occurred between 2004 and 2017.

Saint-Martin (MF)

In 2023, the Saint Martin fleet comprised 13 active vessels all under 10 metres. Total crew was 21 persons corresponding to 4 FTE. Total effort expressed in DaS was around 276. Total landings in weight and value were, respectively 28 tons for EUR 0,3 million. No economic figures were provided. The main species in value and weight were snappers, spiny lobster and large pelagic species (dolphinfish, yellowfin tuna). This landings composition reflects the different fisheries in which the vessels operate. All the landings are sold locally directly to consumers or fish mongers.

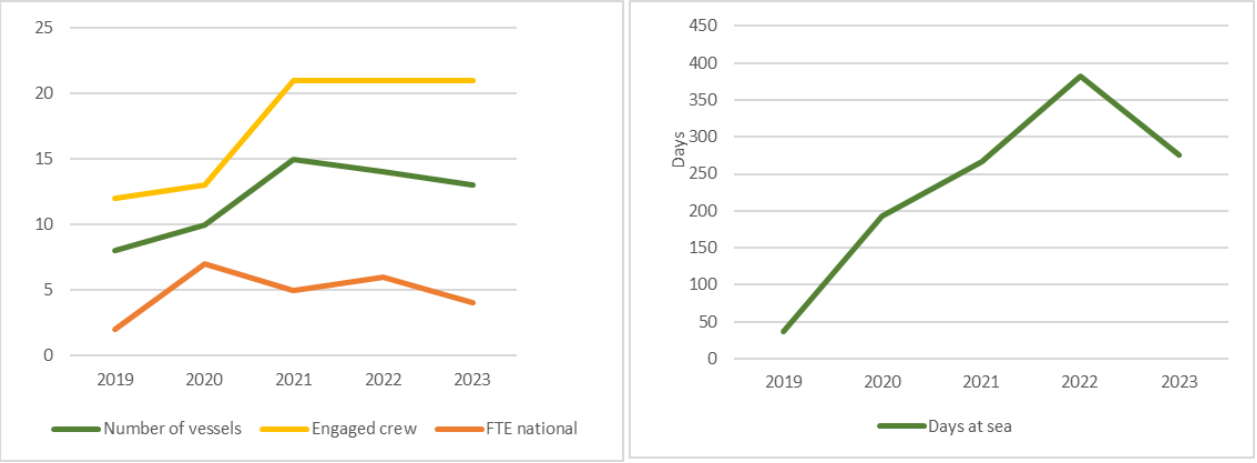
Figure 3.8.7. Top species landed in value (left) and weight (right) in Saint-Martin, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Between 2019 and 2023, the active fleet increased as well as the landings in weight and value. This improvement is probably due to better reporting by fishers

Figure 3.8.8. Trends on capacity, effort, landings, GVA and profit for the Saint-Martin fleet (MF).



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure and key results in Saint-Martin

Within the HOK0010 MF* cluster, 7 vessels operate in the HOK0010 segment, 3 in PGP0010 and 3 in FPO0010.

Table 3.8.4. Summary results for the French *OMR fleet segments in 2023: Saint-Martin (MF).*

fs_name	Number of vessels	Engaged crew	FTE national	Days at sea	Energy cons. (Million litres)	Live weight of landings (tonnes)	Value of landings (Million EUR)	Revenue (Million EUR)	Gross Value Added (Million EUR)	Net Value Added (Million EUR)	Gross profit (Million EUR)	Net profit subsidised (Million EUR)	Operating subsidies (Million EUR)
FRA OFR HOK0010 MF *	13	21	4	276	NA	28	0.3	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Total	13	21	4	276	NA	28	0.3	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Main factors affecting the performance of the fleet in Saint-Martin

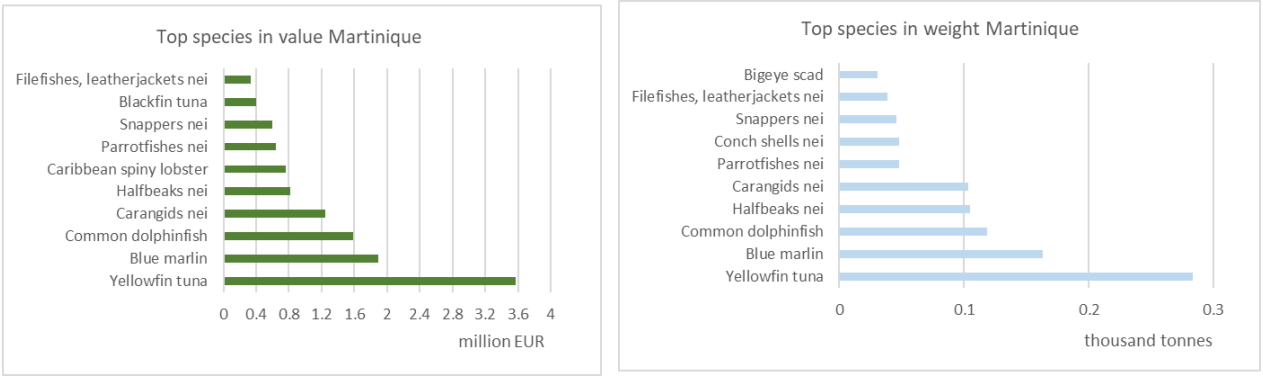
Most of the factors are similar to the Guadeloupe region. However, *ciguatera toxins* impact certain fish species for which harvesting is prohibited due to public health concerns.

Martinique (MQ)

In 2023, the Martinique fleet consisted of 597 active vessels, with 97% being under 10 metres in length. The total crew numbered 889 individuals, corresponding to 425 FTEs. The total effort, expressed in DaS, was approximately 22,444, with an estimated fuel consumption of 2.37 million litres (105 litres/DaS). Total landings were recorded at 1,212 tonnes, valued at EUR 14.2 million, with an average price of 11.7 euros per kilogram. GVA was estimated at EUR 9.9 million, accounting for 67% of the revenue; Net Value Added (NVA) reached EUR 8.8 million (60%), and gross profit stood at EUR 3.0 million (20.0% margin). Net profit, including subsidies, amounted to EUR 2.0 million (22% margin), with operational subsidies limited to EUR 0.26 million.

The primary species in terms of value and weight included large pelagic species such as yellowfin tuna, blue marlin, and dolphinfish, as well as coastal species like conches, spiny lobster, eggs from urchins, and coral reef fishes. This composition reflects the various fisheries in which the vessels operate. All landings are sold locally either directly to consumers or fishmongers. It is noteworthy that the Martinique fleet relies on species assessed or monitored by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) for yellowfin tuna and blue marlin, and by the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC) for dolphinfish, conches, spiny lobster, among others.

Figure 3.8.9. Top species landed in value (left) and weight (right) in Martinique, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Vessels operate in the different following fisheries around Martinique:

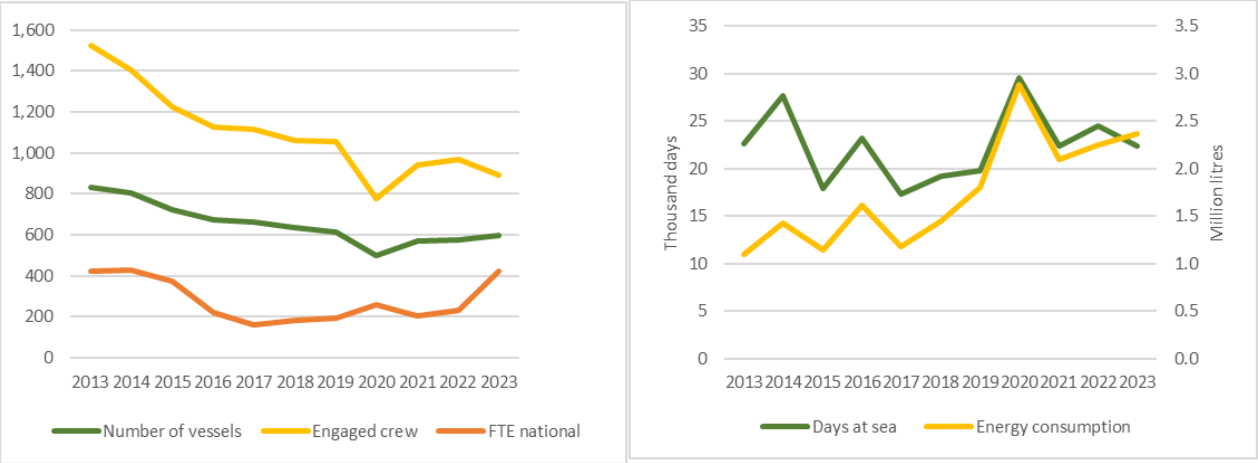
- Coastal insular shelf fisheries primarily employ traps, gillnets, and hand lines to capture a wide range of demersal and benthic species. Trammel nets are utilized specifically for spiny lobster or stromboid conch, while encircle nets target small pelagic species, including beach seine operations. Snorkeling is also prevalent.
- The large pelagic fishery operates with hand lines and trolling lines targeting large pelagic species such as dolphinfish, yellowfin tuna, blue marlin, and wahoo. These operations occur both in open waters and around Moored Fishing Aggregating Devices (MFADs).

Most active vessels in the fleet are polyvalent, operating across various fisheries using multiple gear combinations. The majority of the fleet comprises non-decked vessels with outboard engines, conducting one-day trips. Additionally, there are decked vessels capable

of longer voyages. A few vessels, exceeding 12 metres in length, operate within the French Guiana Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) targeting snappers with pots. On average, crews consist of two members, except for vessels utilizing encircle nets or beach seines, which may require additional personnel. Crew members predominantly hail from Martinique.

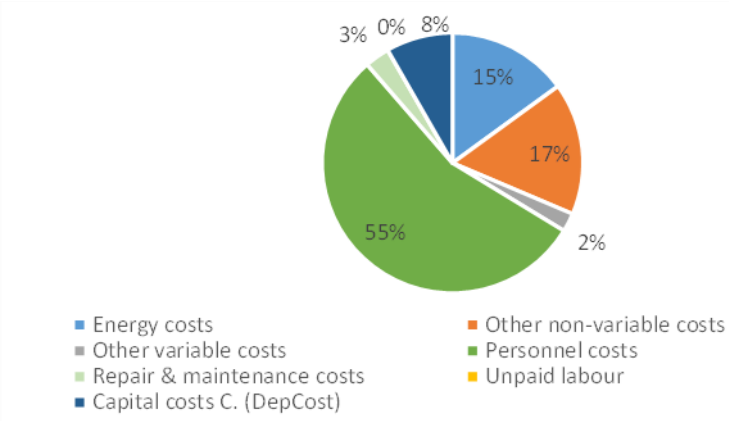
Between 2013 and 2022, the active fleet decreased by -28%, engaged crew (-42%) but FTE was quite stable. The days at sea and energy consumption decreased by -1% and increased by 91% respectively. Landings in weight and value increased by respectively 91%. Therefore, GVA also improved from EUR 4.3 million to EUR 9.9 between 2013 and 2022 with 2020 as an exceptional year. Even low, gross profit and net profit also increased over the same period. Part of these improvements may be explained by the exclusion of a significant part of inactive vessels from the fleet over the recent years.

Figure 3.8.10. Trends on capacity, effort, landings, GVA and profit for the Martinique fleet (MQ).



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.8.11. Cost structure for the Martinique OMR fleet, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

In 2022, the cost of energy represented 15% but the dependence to fuel is highly variable depending on the segment considered. Vessels targeting large pelagic species with hooks and line around MFADs are more sensitive to the cost of energy than vessels operating in coastal areas. Non-variable cost represented on average 17% of the total costs. This cost is highly dependent on gear costs and the gears used. Personnel costs (55%) include social security costs, which contribution rates are reduced compared to France mainland.

Fleet structure and key results in Martinique

The fleet structure is characterised by a high level of gear polyvalence that the main gear based DCF segmentation imperfectly represents. According to this segmentation, the main fleets are the PGP0010 (244 vessels representing 41% of the active fleet, 62% of the days at sea and 64% of the landings in weight), the FPO0010 (151 vessels representing 25%, 15% and 7% of the previous indicators), followed by the HOK0010 (133 vessels, 22%, 17% and 21%) and DFN0010 (69 vessels 12%, 6%, 7%). Average landing price were quite similar between the segments (11.5 euro/kg for the whole fleet). The HOK0010 and PGP0010 were the most energy dependent fleet (from 5,000 to 6,000 litres per vessel). The gross and net profit subsidized and without subsidies were positive for the fleet in 2023 and for each segment. It is important to note that average figures which can be derived from aggregates are difficult to interpret as it includes a significant part of the vessels for which the level of activity (days at sea) is low. Between 2013 and 2023, the reduction in the number of vessels concerned all the segments, the PGP0010* (-39%), FPO0010 (-22%), DFN0010 (-19%) and to a less extent the HOK0010 (-13%).

Table 3.8.5. Summary results for the French *OMR fleet segments in 2022: Martinique (MQ).*

fs_name	Number of vessels	Engaged crew	FTE national	Days at sea	Energy cons. (Million litres)	Live weight of landings tonnes)	Value of landings (Million EUR)	Revenue (Million EUR)	Gross Value Added (Million EUR)	Net Value Added (Million EUR)	Gross profit (Million EUR)	Net profit subsidised (Million EUR)	Operating subsidies (Million EUR)
FRA OFR FPO0010 MQ	151	206	25	3 297	0.1	89	1.2	1.3	0.9	0.8	0.3	0.2	0.04
FRA OFR HOK0010 MQ	133	189	24	3 827	0.7	258	3.2	3.2	2.2	2.0	0.8	0.6	0.10
FRA OFR PGP0010 MQ *	244	400	127	13 922	1.5	781	9.1	9.2	6.1	5.5	1.7	1.0	0.10
FRA OFR DFN0010 MQ	69	95	11	1 398	0.1	83	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.02
Total	597	889	186	22 444	2.4	1 212	14.2	14.5	9.9	8.8	3.0	2.0	0.26

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Main factors affecting the performance of the fleet in Martinique

- Fuel price and large pelagic species availability are one of the main factors affecting the performance of the fleet. Fuel price reached 1.02 euro/litre in 2023. Different measures including a tariff shield were adopted by national authorities at the end of the first quarter 2022 to attenuate the impact of these increases for fishing companies including a discount at pump and/or direct additional aids (from 0.25 to 0.35 euro/litre depending on the period) in France mainland, and also in outermost regions. Since March 2022, an economic and social resilience plan including different phases was put in place to deal with the economic consequences of the Ukraine crisis on the fleets' economic situation. The support to the fishing vessels applying to the schemes was 0.2 euro/litre.

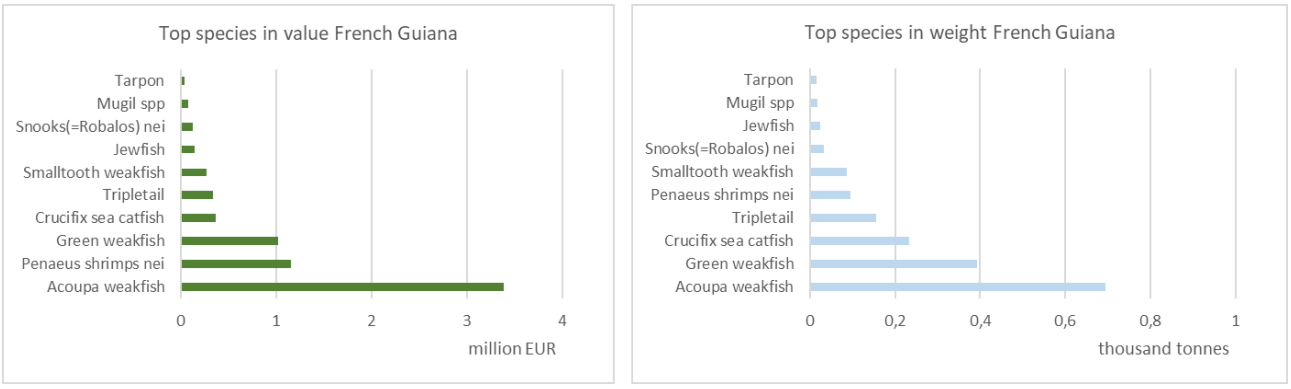
- Martinique like other OMRs is geographically far from sources of supply. This constraint generates, for the local economic operators' additional costs compared to mainland. These additional costs increase the final price of inputs, which may undermine the competitiveness of the fishing sector. A compensation scheme for the additional costs was established and funded by EMFAF but the returns for local fishers are still limited in scope.
- Even if average landing prices increased over the last decade, the supply from the sector seems to subject to the competition from imports from international markets and from few foreign vessels (Venezuela) landing in Martinique.
- Internal competition within the SSCF sector is a key issue in Martinique. The main reason is the lack of regulation for access to the fishing stocks and fishing grounds. Except the entry permit to the fleet, there are few licences schemes with fixed numbers (numerus clausus) for the different fisheries. Local illegal fishing and recreational fishers are also serious competitors. A natural marine park was established in 2017 covering the entire Martinique EEZ.
- The sustainability of the sector is also threatened by the quality of habitats environment dependent on coastal development (e.g., wastewater treatment plant not up to standards) and agriculture. Permanent pollution of coastal habitats by pesticide (Chlordecone) used by agriculture (banana plants) led to the ban of coastal fishing areas in the western part of the island. Currently, no solution is within sight to resolve these issues except fisher’s financial compensation for the prohibited fishing areas due to pesticides.
- Since 2011, massive Sargassum algae inflows (stranded and floating blankets) in the Caribbean led to massive changes in the pelagic and coastal ecosystems with impacts on the fishing stocks. Fishing activity in Martinique is also significantly impacted by these events (difficulties to operate vessels and fishing gears). Dedicated projects are aiming to prevent harbours clogging but with limited effectiveness.
- Marine ecosystems and fishing activity are subject to the occurrence of extreme events. Moored fishing aggregating devices and pots fishing were especially subject to currents over the last years.
- Landings are distribution over many landings' points. The quality of port infrastructure and services is also an important element for maintaining fishing activity and attracting young fishers.

French Guiana (GF)

In 2023, the French Guiana OMR fleet comprised 107 active vessels. Within this fleet, 33 vessels from 00-10m and 67 vessels from 10-12m use drift nets. 6 trawlers from 18-24m targeted tropical shrimps. Total crew was 355 persons corresponding to 224 FTE. Total effort expressed in DaS was around 11,900 for a total fuel consumption of 605,000 litres. Total landings in weight and value were respectively 2 060 tonnes for around EUR 5.9 million and average price was 2.9 euro/kg. Total revenue including the sale of fish swim blades was EUR 10.0 million. Economic indicators concerned only the small-scale fleet under 12 metres. In 2023, GVA excluding the trawlers fleet was EUR 5.3 million (54% of the revenue), NVA was EUR 4.8 million (48%) and gross profit EUR 0.3 million (4% margin). Net profit subsidized was EUR 0.5 million and operating subsidies were EUR 0.7 million. Indicators are also provided based on activity threshold (see below) giving a different comprehension of fleet structure and evolution.

The main species in value and weight were Acoupa. Acoupa weakfish swim blades are also highly value and contribute the revenue of fishers. Penaeus shrimps nei are harvested by trawlers and mostly exported. Snappers are also exploited in the French Guiana EEZ but by foreign Venezuelan fleet and thus not reported here. For some shared species (especially snappers), there were attempts to follow stock status by the WECAFC.

Figure 3.8.12. Top species landed in value (left) and weight (right) in French Guiana, 2023 (GF).



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

A significant part of the driftnet small scale fleet is based around the main city of Cayenne with 36 vessels in Cayenne and 18 vessels in Rémire Montjoly the neighbouring city. The other part of the fleet is distributed along the coast in harbours located in the river mouths. These vessels operate on coastal areas and mainly use driftnets to catch demersal species. Even if vessel operators are French, most of these non-EU fishers involved the crews are from Brazil. For the segment composed of bottom shrimp trawlers, all the crew members are from Brazil and Guyana. The driftnet fishery is subject to high competition from foreign IUU in French Guiana EZZ. The fleet segments were sub-segmented in low active (L) segments and normal active (A) segments considering the 75 DaS per year threshold.

Based on this sub-segmentation, different trends appear. Between 2013 and 2023, the number of A vessels and related engaged crew increased by 7% and 18%, respectively. Note that COVID-19 pandemic reduced the number of active vessels in this category. This

evolution was combined with a change in the structure of the fleet with vessels of larger size. There was no clear trend in DaS and energy consumption. However, landings in weight and value, revenue and GVA followed a decreasing trend (-33%, -33%, -12%, -29%, respectively). Gross and net profit subsidized also decreased significantly but remained positive the last three years. Operating subsidies increased in 2022 and 2023, but the A segment was characterized by declining economic performance to be placed in a context of illegal fishing (see below). The number of L vessels oscillated over the same period with no significant trend. The trend for the other indicators were similar to the A segment. Considering the low activity of these vessels (35 days per year on average), these vessels were poorly productive. GVA was low and declined as well as gross profit indicator (negative at the end of the period except for 2023). Increased subsidies improved economic performance of the sub-segment. In the context of French Guiana, owner of A vessels could also be owner of L vessels and economic performance should be considered as a whole.

Figure 3.8.13. Trends on capacity, effort, landings, GVA and profit for the French Guiana active (A) fleet (GF). Vessel activity threshold equal or more than 75 days at sea per year.

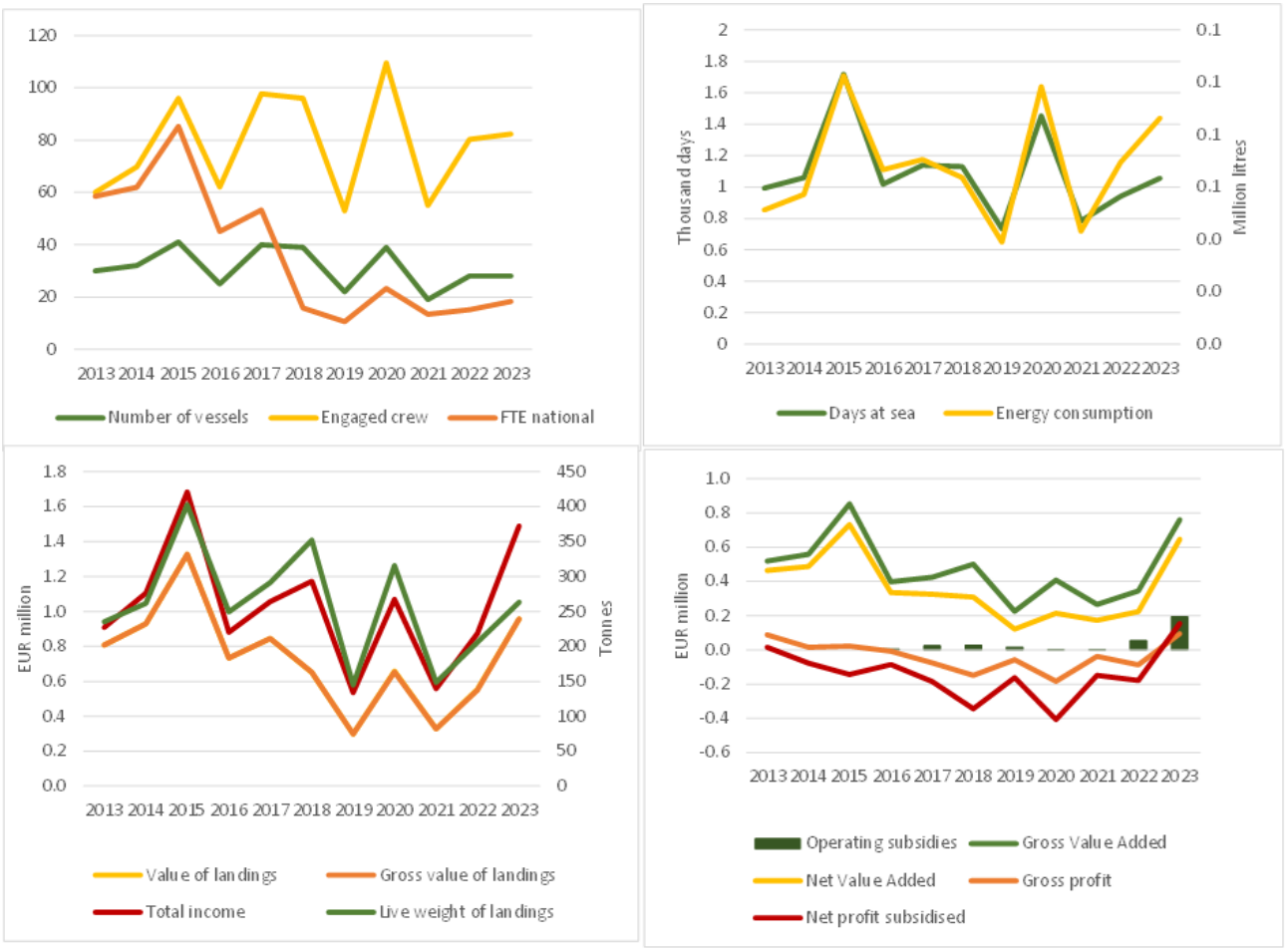


Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

In 2023 and for the A segment, the costs of energy for the driftnet segment represented 5% of the total costs which was quite low compared to other French OMRs segments (see also fuel consumption per day per segment). Variable costs represented on average 12% of the

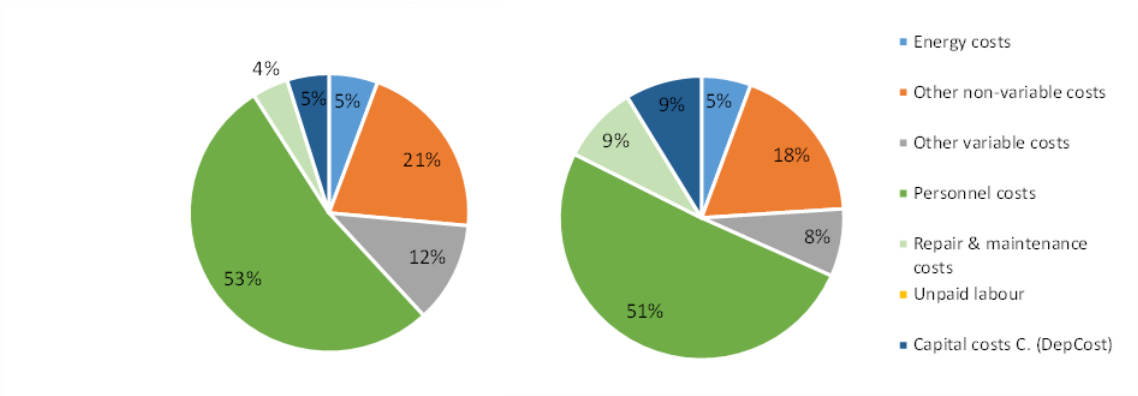
total costs. This so-called non variable cost is highly dependent on gear costs and the gears used. Personnel costs (53%) based on a share remuneration system include social security costs for which contribution rates are reduced compared to France mainland. As mentioned before, the L segment is characterised by low level of activity, meaning relative lower variables costs (5% Energy costs, 8% variable costs, and 51% crew costs) and relative higher fixed costs (9% capital cost) compared to A segment.

Figure 3.8.14. Trends on capacity, effort, landings, GVA and profit for the French Guiana low active (L) fleet (GF). Vessel activity threshold under 75 days at sea per year.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.8.15. Cost structure for the French Guiana OMR fleet with normal activity (A) *-left-* and low activity (L) *-right-* 2022. Activity threshold at 75 days.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure and key results in French Guiana

Fleet segments were sub-segmented in low active (L) segments and normal active (A) segments considering the 75 DaS per year threshold. According to this sub-segmentation, 72 vessels (72%) were in the A segments and 28 (28%) in the L segments but the A segments accounted for 91% of the FTE, 91% of DaS and around 85% of landings (in weight and value) and 86% of the GVA (EUR 4.57 million) in 2023. Net profit subsidized was EUR 0.32 million for the A segments and EUR 0.16 million for the L segments. Operating subsidies were EUR 0.474 and EUR 0.194 million, respectively.

Focusing on A segments in 2022, the main was DFN1012A* including 53 vessels representing 73% of the active fleet, 77% of the days at sea and 78% of the landings in value. 182 crew members were engaged (146 FTE), DaS were 7,760 and total fuel consumption 414,813 litres (53 litres per DaS). Total landings in weight and value were 1,148 tonnes for EUR 3.88 million (3.4 euro/kg average price). Total revenue including revenue from fish swin blades was EUR 8.47 million for a GVA of EUR 4.57 million (54% of revenue). Gross and net profit subsidized were respectively positive EUR 0.27 million (3.8% margin) and EUR 0.35 million (3.8% margin) in a context in which operating subsidies reached EUR 0.435 million. Average GVA per FTE and per vessel were respectively EUR 25,067 and GVA EUR 69,100.

The other A segment was DFN0010A* including 19 vessels representing 26% of the active fleet, 23% of the days at sea and 22% of the landings in value. 56 crew members were engaged (39 FTE), DaS were 2,360 and total fuel consumption 104,339 litres (44 litres per DaS). Total landings in weight and value were 322 tonnes for EUR 1.08 million (3.4 euro/kg average price). Total revenue including revenue from fish swin blades was EUR 1.69 million for a GVA of EUR 0.91 million (54% of the revenue). Gross profit was positive at EUR 0.04 million (2.3% margin) but net profit subsidized was slightly negative at -EUR 0.03 million (-2% margin). Operating subsidies reached EUR 0.039 million for this segment. Average GVA per FTE and per vessel were respectively EUR 24,269 and GVA EUR 47,885.

In 2023, six trawlers targeted shrimps with a crew of 30 (18 FTEs). They spent 652 DaS, landed 98 tonnes worth EUR 1.16 million. No economic indicators were available.

Table 3.8.6. Summary results for the French OMR fleet segments in 2023: French Guiana (GF).

fs_name	Number of vessels	Engaged crew	FTE national	Days at sea	Energy cons. (Million litres)	Live weight of landings tonnes)	Value of landings (Million EUR)	Revenue (Million EUR)	Gross Value Added (Million EUR)	Net Value Added (Million EUR)	Gross profit (Million EUR)	Net profit subsidised (Million EUR)	Operating subsidies (Million EUR)
Normal activity fleet segments													
FRA OFR DFN0010 GF A*	19	56	39	2 360	0.10	322	1.08	1.65	0.91	0.82	0.04	-0.03	0.04
FRA OFR DFN1012 GF A*	53	182	146	7 760	0.41	1 148	3.88	6.34	3.66	3.36	0.27	0.35	0.44
Total of normal active fleets	72	238	185	10 120	0.52	1 470	4.96	8.00	4.57	4.18	0.30	0.32	0.47
Low activity fleet segments													
FRA OFR DFN1012 GF L*	14	49	13	638	0.03	92	0.32	0.51	0.22	0.14	-0.06	0.05	0.19
FRA OFR DFN0010 GF L*	14	33	6	419	0.06	171	0.63	0.78	0.55	0.51	0.15	0.11	0.00
Total of low active fleets	28	82	18	1 057	0.09	263	0.96	1.29	0.76	0.65	0.09	0.16	0.19
Fleet segment without activity level													
FRA OFR DTS1824 GF *	6	30	18	652	0.00	98	1.16	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*
Total GF	106	350	222	11 829	0.6	1.8	7.1	9.3	5.3	4.8	0.4	0.5	0.7

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Main factors affecting the performance of the fleet in French Guiana

- The increase in demand of Asian market for Acoupa weakfish swim blades has put significantly pressure on the resources and the artisanal fishing activity in French Guiana, especially. This product which was, for the past decade a source of additional income for the French Guiana crew members is now subject to an organized foreign IUU piracy activity to provide Chinese buyers through Brazilian and Surinamese retailers. Acoupa weakfish is now targeted specifically for the value of the swim bladder in a context where the landing price of demersal species are low. This product yields additional and significant incomes for the small-scale fleets in French Guiana. However, due to IUU activities from Brazil, Suriname and Guiana Acoupa weakfish are subject to concern with recent IUCN red list assessment indicating that the species is considered to the be ‘vulnerable’ on its entire range. In terms of fisheries management, illegal harvesting is reported for these species and is the major concern on its entire range.
- Additionally, illegal fishing (IUU) is observed on both the west and east side of the coastal shelf it is also reported well within the French Guiana EZZ using serious hardship for local fishers. In terms of number of vessel number and harvesting (take and gillnet length) IUU from neighbouring countries is considered to represent at least three times the effort of French Guiana legal fleet, creating serious issues in terms of conflicts at sea, socioeconomic consequences, and fisheries management.
- Landing site infrastructures, especially for the 00-10m and 10-12m are practically inexistent in number and the quality of equipment not even measurable. Landings in some places can only happen at high tide time. There are less than ten landing points for all the SSCF that are sometimes also used by recreational fishers. This situation is source of conflict with sport fishing and in general marine leisure sectors since there are barely any infrastructures to share.
- Most of the crew members in the small-scale fleet 00-12m are foreign fishers. The crew turnover is considered high and difficulties in regularizing the residence permits of crew members do not allow all vessels operators to activate their very rudimentary vessels. The lack of attractiveness of the fishing sector does not allow, under the current conditions, to positioning of French crews on board. There is a shortage of around 130 fishers in order the tire Guyanese coastal fishing fleet can be fully

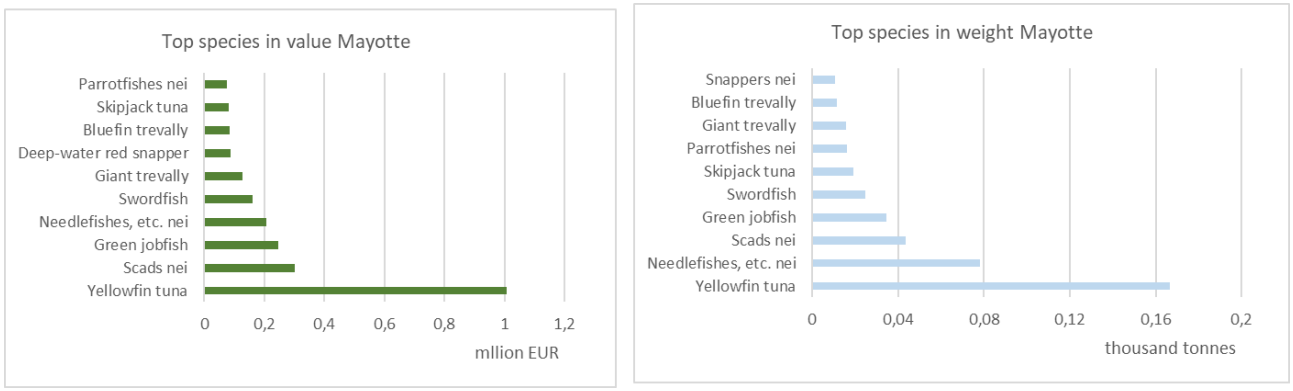
operational. The small-scale fleet is, for the most part, unsuited to the requirements of living conditions on board in terms of safety, hygiene, and reporting under EU norms.

- Shrimp landings from the trawlers operating on the shelf have strongly decreased in the last decade. Various factors could explain this evolution: the increase of the fuel price and relative high level of fuel consumption by shrimp trawlers, in a context of global environmental changes; the decrease of shrimp price in international market and competition aquaculture products is certainly a factor. The extremely humid and oxidizing equatorial climate makes it difficult to maintain the fleet operational. These combined effects of various factors have probably contributed the decline in the economic performance of the segment and the decline in attractiveness of the fishery. At the same time, bycatch reduction and collaborations with NGOs and scientific entities aimed at reducing environmental impacts of French Guiana fisheries.
- French Guiana like other OMRs is geographically far from sources of supply. These constraints generate, for the local economic operators' additional costs compared to mainland. These additional costs increase the final price of the products, which may undermine the competitiveness of the fishing sector. A compensation scheme for the additional costs was established and funded by EMFF but the returns for local fishers are limited in scope.
- In 2022, different measures including a tariff shield were adopted by national authorities at the end of the first quarter 2022 to attenuate the impact of these increases for fishing companies including a discount at pump and/or direct additional aids (from 0.25 to 0.35 euro/litre depending on the period) in France mainland, and in outermost regions. Since March 2022, an economic and social resilience plan including different phases was put in place to deal with the economic consequences of the Ukraine crisis on the fleets’ economic situation. The support to the fishing vessels applying to the schemes was 0.2 euro/litre.
- The vast majority of companies in the fishing sector experience difficulties in accessing bank financing, mainly for the following reasons: under-capitalization, difficulties of pre-financing of investment, etc.

Mayotte (YT)

In 2023, the registered fleet from Mayotte was composed of 80 active vessels and 99% were under 10 metres. Engaged crew was 194 (83 FTEs). Total effort expressed in DaS was around 6,139 for a total energy consumption of 686,885 litres (111 litres per DaS). Total landings in weight and value were respectively 605 tonnes for EUR 3.6 million and average price was 5.2 euro/kg. Most of the species are sold locally. GVA was EUR 2.2 million (71% of the revenue), NVA was EUR 1.9 million (59%). Gross profit was EUR 0.8 million (25% margin) and net profit was EUR 0.4 million (13% margin). No operating subsidies were reported. The main species in value and weight were yellowfin and scads, needlefishes and green jobfish. Large pelagic species are followed and/or assessed by the IOTC.

Figure 3.8.16. Top species landed in value (left) and weight (right) in Mayotte, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

The primary gears used are hand lines, trolling lines, nets (gillnets and encircling gillnets), drifting longlines, and diving. Vessels operate in various fisheries:

- In coastal (lagoon) areas, demersal species are harvested mainly by hand line. A few boats use nets to target small pelagic fish.
- Demersal species are also harvested offshore.
- Outside the lagoon, large pelagic species are targeted by trolling liners on free schools or around MFADs. A few boats target swordfish and tuna (bigeye and yellowfin tuna) using longlines within the 20 nautical miles around the barrier reef with extension to 75 nautical miles for some vessels.

Figure 3.8.17. Trends on capacity, effort, landings, GVA and profit for the Mayotte fleet (YT).

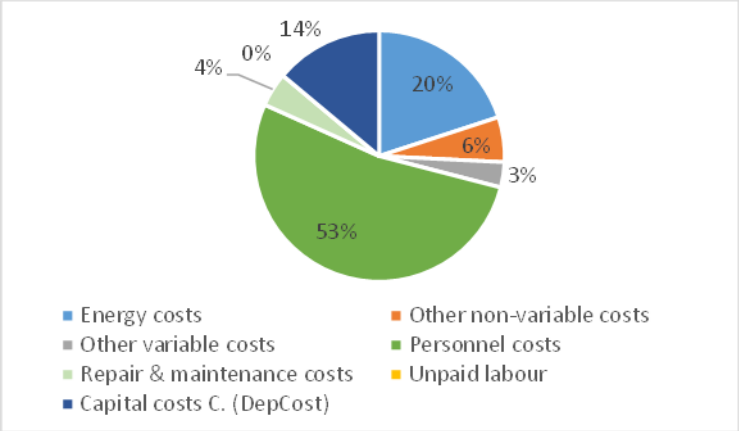


Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

In 2023, the cost of energy represented 20% of the total costs. Personnel costs (53%) include social security costs for which contribution rates are reduced compared to France mainland.

The trips are usually daily but can reach 4 to 5 days for the fleets operating on the outer reefs. Between 2015 and 2022, the active fleet and crew decreased by –36% and –41%, respectively. Fishing activity expressed in DaS decreased after 2019 to reach 9,500 days in 2022 but decreased in 2023 to 6,139 days. Landings in weight and value increased over the period from 500 to 1,100 tonnes but dropped to 600 tonnes in 2023.

Figure 3.8.18. Cost structure for the Mayotte OMR fleet, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure and key results in Mayotte

Hooks and lines and netters were clustered in 2020 meaning that there is now only one segment in the fleet.

Table 3.8.7. Summary results for the French OMR fleet segments in 2022: Mayotte (YT).

fs_name	Number of vessels	Engaged crew	FTE national	Days at sea	Energy cons. (Million litres)	Live weight of landings tonnes)	Value of landings (Million EUR)	Revenue (Million EUR)	Gross Value Added (Million EUR)	Net Value Added (Million EUR)	Gross profit (Million EUR)	Net profit subsidised (Million EUR)	Operating subsidies (Million EUR)
FRA OFR HOK0010 YT *	80	194	83	6 139	687	606	3.6	3.1	2.2	1.9	0.8	0.4	0.0
Total	80	194	83	6 139	687	606	3.6	3.1	2.2	1.9	0.8	0.4	0.0

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Main factors affecting the performance of the fleet in Mayotte

- The registered fishing fleets coexist with a subsistence fishing fleet and recreational fleet (around 1,500 vessels) operating in the inner lagoon and barrier reef demersal resources. Even if difficult to estimate, illegal fishing is considered to be around 40% of total fishing pressure. Part of these fleets also operate unfair competition with registered vessels through the informal sale of their catches on local markets. One of the objectives of the authorities and stakeholders is to improve the structuration of the sector with a gradual transition from an informal/illegal activity to a professional activity, more monitored and regulated.
- One of the major problems for the fleet is the lack of suitable infrastructure. Even if there are some exceptions, this current situation does not allow fishers to operate their vessels to land their products in suitable conditions. The objective of the authorities is to create a limited number of landings points in order to provide a correct upstream environment (ice – fuel – bait – fishing equipment) and a better organisation of the local supply chain respecting health and safety rules. These infrastructures are supposed to facilitate the renewal of the fleet.

- Young fishers face difficulties for starting fishing activity (absence of second-hand vessels, reduced financial capacities, lack support of banks) and the EMFAF is often considered as not adopted to the case of Mayotte.
- The coral reef of Mayotte is subject to high fishing pressure. The lack of reef resources represents an obstacle to the development of the sector, thus making a transition to large pelagic fishing necessary. However, only 0.1% of the Mayotte fleet is able to operate offshore. In order to try to address the demersal resources decline, local authorities and marine Natural Park covering the entire EEZ encouraged fishers to exploit pelagic species, by settling a park of MFADs around the island.
- Only vessels registered in Mayotte and the European flag vessels can obtain authorization to fish in waters less than 100 nautical miles from Mayotte. However, access to Mayotte waters by non-EU fishing vessels is possible subject to fishing agreements concluded with the EU. Mayotte EEZ is also exploited by French, Spanish purse seines (1,000 tonnes in 2019) and Seychelles purse-seiners (2,600 tonnes in 2019) targeting tropical tunas with mainly drifting fishing aggregated devices (DFADs).
- In 2022, different measures including a tariff shield were adopted by national authorities at the end of the first quarter 2022 to attenuate the impact of these increases for fishing companies including a discount at pump and/or direct additional aids (from 0.25 euro/litre to 0.35 euro/litre depending on the period) in France mainland, and in outermost regions. Since March 2022, an economic and social resilience plan including different phases was put in place to deal with the economic consequences of the Ukraine crisis on the fleets' economic situation. The support to the fishing vessels applying to the schemes was 0.2 euro/litre.

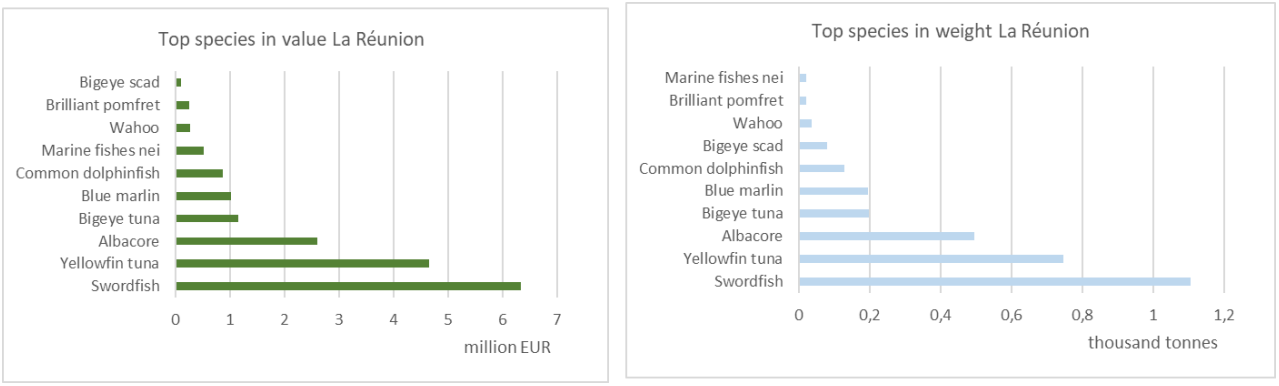
La Reunion (RE)

In 2023, the Reunion fleet comprised 177 active vessels, with 87% measuring under 10 metres. The total crew consisted of 323 persons, equivalent to 304 FTEs. The overall effort, expressed in DaS, was approximately 17,000. Fuel consumption amounted to 2.36 million litres, averaging 138 litres per DaS. Total landings in weight and value were 3,163 tonnes and EUR 18.6 million, respectively, with an average price of 5.85 euro per kilogram.

In 2023, total revenue was estimated at EUR 22.8 million, with GVA amounting to EUR 12.1 million, representing 53% of the revenue, and Net Value Added (NVA) standing at EUR 10.6 million, accounting for 44%. The gross profit was EUR 4.8 million (21%), while net profit, including subsidies, was EUR 3.7 million (16%). Operating subsidies totaled EUR 0.56 million.

The primary species in value and weight included large pelagic species such as swordfish, yellowfin tuna, albacore, bigeye tuna, blue marlin, common dolphinfish, and wahoo, which are monitored by the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC). Additionally, demersal species, including snappers, were harvested. Swordfish is predominantly exported, while other species are sold locally.

Figure 3.8.19. Top species landed in value -left- and weight -right- in la Reunion, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Vessels operate in the different following fisheries around Reunion Island:

- Coastal insular shelf fisheries: insular shelf is very limited in size. Gears used by small scale vessels are hand line to target demersal stocks and small pelagic species, beach seines, and various nets to target small pelagic species. The use of pots and traps is limited in scope.
- Slope fishery: small scale vessels mainly target a diversity of deep-sea species including snappers. The gear used is mechanized hand line.
- Coastal large pelagic fishery: vessels operate hand lines and trolling lines to target large pelagic species on free schools or around Moored Fishing Aggregating Devices (MFADs). In The Reunion, MFADs are organized collectively by the regional fisheries committee.
- Offshore large pelagic fishery: vessels operate longlines to target swordfish around Reunion Island and in western waters up to Madagascar.

Between 2013 and 2023, the active fleet and days at sea decreased by -16% and -22% respectively, engaged crew by -6%. Year 2018 excluded energy consumption decreased by -6%. Landings in weight and value increased by 32% and 13%, respectively but discrepancies between revenue times series before 2019 makes analysis difficult. It is important to underline that price transfers mechanisms within the longliners supply chain may influence price evolution.

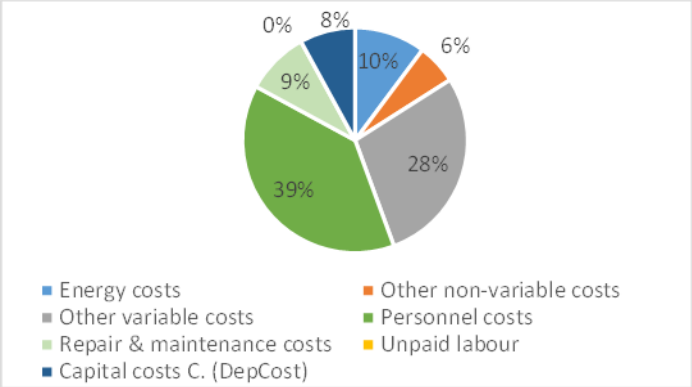
Figure 3.8.20. Trends on capacity, effort, landings, GVA and profit for the Reunion fleet (RE).



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

In 2023, the cost of energy represented 10% but the dependence to fuel is highly dependent on the segments considered. The share of other variable cost is very high (28%) and seems to be mainly explained by the cost of bait for longliners. Non-variable costs represented on average 6% of the total costs. This cost is highly dependent on gear costs and the gears used. Personnel costs (37%) include social security costs for which contribution rates are reduced compared to France mainland.

Figure 3.8.21. Cost structure for the Reunion (RE) OMR fleet, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure and key results in la Reunion

In 2023, the segment HOK0010* concerned 157 vessels (88% of the active fleet) with 205 crew members engaged (187 FTE). Total effort expressed in DaS was around 13 407. Fuel consumption was 0.9 million litres (69 litres/DaS). Total landings in weight and value were respectively 1,114 tonnes for EUR 7.1 million and average price was 6.3 euro/kg. In 2023, GVA and NVA were EUR 5.4 million and EUR 4.5 million (68% and 56%), respectively. Gross profit and net profit subsidized were EUR 2.2 million and EUR 1.5 million (27% and 19%), respectively. The fleet benefited from operating subsidies. The main landed species in value were large pelagic species such as yellowfin tuna, common dolphin, swordfish, wahoo, blue marlin and albacore. This segment included vessels using trolling and hand lines but also some small longlines vessels targeting swordfish.

Table 3.8.8. Summary results for the French *OMR fleet segments in 2022: La Reunion (RE).*

fs_name	Number of vessels	Engaged crew	FTE national	Days at sea	Energy cons. (Million litres)	Live weight of landings tonnes)	Value of landings (Million EUR)	Revenue (Million EUR)	Gross Value Added (Million EUR)	Net Value Added (Million EUR)	Gross profit (Million EUR)	Net profit subsidised (Million EUR)	Operating subsidies (Million EUR)
FRA OFR HOK0010 RE *	157	205	187	13 407	0.9	1 114	7.1	7.7	5.4	4.5	2.2	1.5	0.28
FRA OFR HOK1218 RE *	20	118	118	3 590	1.4	2 049	11.5	14.6	6.7	6.1	2.7	2.2	0.28
Total	177	323	304	16 997	2.4	3 163	18.6	22.3	12.1	10.6	4.8	3.7	0.56

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Two segments HOK1218 and HOK1824 using longlines were merged in a cluster. In 2023, 20 vessels (12% of the active fleet) made up this segment with 118 crew members engaged (118 FTE). Total effort expressed in days at sea was 3,590 days for total fuel consumption of 1.4 million litres (398 litres/DaS). Total landings in weight and value were respectively 2,049 tonnes for EUR 11.5 million and average price was 5.6 euro/kg. Total revenue was EUR 14.8 million. The segment benefited from EU EMMF aids for the exportation of the landings and compensation of costs. GVA and NVA was respectively EUR 6.7 million (45% of revenue) and EUR 6.1 million (41%) and gross profit and net profit was EUR 2.7 million (18%) and EUR 2.2 million (15%), respectively. In 2023, the main species in value were swordfish, yellowfin tuna and albacore.

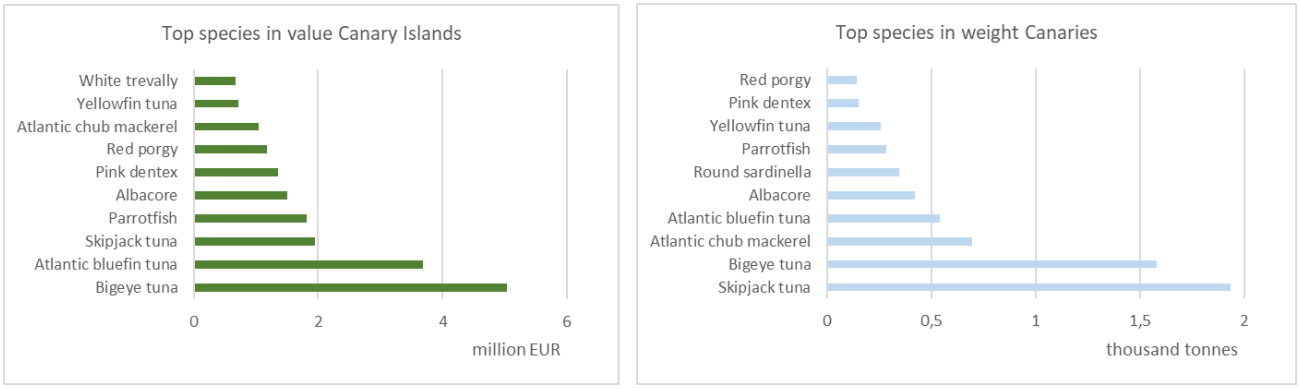
Main factors affecting the performance of the fleet in la Reunion

- Fuel price and large pelagic species availability are one of the main factors affecting the performance of the fleet. However, La Reunion like other OMRs is geographically far from sources of supply. These constraints generate, for the local economic operators' additional costs compared to mainland. These additional costs increase the final price of the products, which may undermine the competitiveness of the fishing sector. A compensation scheme for the additional costs was established and funded by EMFAF as well as EMFAF contribution to fish exports which has a significant impact on fleet performance especially for vessels over 12 metres.
- In 2022, average annual fuel price reached more than 1 euro/litre. Different measures including a tariff shield were adopted by national authorities at the end of the first quarter 2022 to attenuate the impact of these increases for fishing companies including a discount at pump and/or direct additional aids (from 0.25 to 0.35 euro/litre depending on the period) in France mainland, and in outermost regions. Since March 2022, an economic and social resilience plan including different phases was put in place to deal with the economic consequences of the Ukraine crisis on the fleets' economic situation. The support to the fishing vessels applying to the schemes was 0.2 euro/litre.
- Competition with recreational fishing is particularly high for the small-scale segment. It encompasses different practices, both fishing by vessel or on-foot. There is no recent study on recreational fishing vessels activities in Reunion but an assessment carried out in 2006 estimated at 320 the number of recreational fishing vessel. Recreational fishing includes spearfishing and all fishing practices on demersal and pelagic fishes (beach seine, fishing rod, octopus on reef flat and shoreline fishers). This competition exists both to access fishing areas and for targeted stocks, such as pelagic fishes on MFADs and the demersal fishes on the insular shelf or on reef flats. Even if sometimes difficult to distinguish recreational and illegal fishing, illegal fishing can be considered as significant and concerns such species as spiny lobsters, and more generally all species with high commercial values.
- If difficult to quantify, the level of competition with sharks has to be considered with potential interaction with sharks' depredation, mostly on demersal fishery using handline seasonally, exceptionally on moored FAD.

3.8.3 Spain

In 2023, Spain's OMR fleet fished in FAO 34.1.2, with 570 active vessels from the Canary Islands, 87% of which were under 12 metres LOA. The fleet employed 1,560 crew members (708 FTE). Total effort was 43,385 DaS with a fuel consumption of 3.8 million litres (87.7 litres/DaS). Landings totaled 7,922 tonnes worth EUR 26.5 million, at an average price of 3.35 euro/kg. GVA and NVA were EUR 20.5 million (67% of revenue) and EUR 18.7 million respectively. Key species by weight included tuna varieties and Atlantic chub mackerel, while by value they included bigeye tuna, Atlantic bluefin tuna, and skipjack tuna. Most landings are sold locally to consumers or fishmongers. The fleet relies on species assessed by ICCAT.

Figure 3.8.22. Top species landed in value (left) and weight (right) in Canary Island, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Vessels operate in two different fisheries:

- Coastal fisheries: vessels use small gears, such as pots, gillnets, and hooks to target small pelagic and demersal species.
- The large pelagic fishery: vessels operate with hand lines and trolling lines to target large pelagic species (tunas). Here there are also purse seiners catching for bait.

Most of active vessels are polyvalent and may operate using several combinations of gears targeting more than one specie. Moreover, the level of activity is very heterogeneous within the fleet and segments, so we can find vessels fishing less than 50 days/year to vessels that fish 250 days/year. For most of the fishers, fishing is a complementary activity that is carried out part-time. The main problem for this fleet is the inactivity; 25% of the Canary Island fleet is inactive. The fleet is mainly composed of non-decked vessels with outboard engines operating on a one-day trip basis.

Between 2017 and 2023, the active fleet decreased by 5.8%, however, crew and FTE decreased by 16.5% and 45%, respectively. This drop means that most fishers had other activities and that therefore, income from the fishing activity is just a complement. DaS decreased by 3.15% however, energy consumption decreased by 59% showing a significant change in fuel consumption per DaS. The landings in value decreased by 19% and weight

decreased by 39.8%, it means that the average price has increased in the last years. Taking everything into account total GVA and NVA increased by 32% compared to 2018.

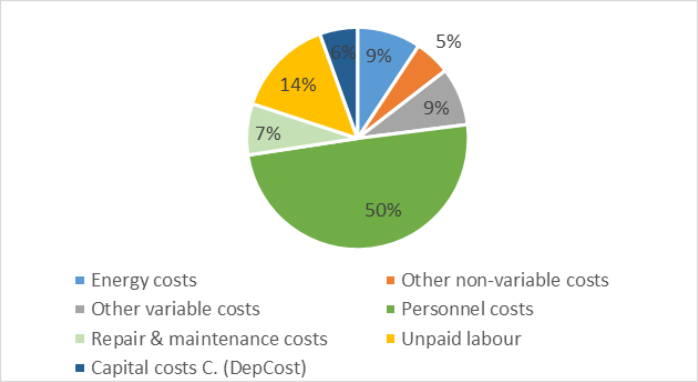
In 2023, the cost structure of the Canary fleet is dominated by wages and salaries (50%) followed by unpaid labour and energy costs (14% and 9%, respectively).

Figure 3.8.23. Trends on capacity, effort, landings, GVA and profit for the Spanish OMR fleet in Canary Island.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.8.24. Cost structure for the Spanish Canary Island OMR fleet, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure and key results in the Canary Islands

In the Canary Islands, there are six clustered segments. The most significant segment by number of vessels is PMP0010, which comprises 444 vessels. This segment provides employment for 311 full-time equivalents (FTEs), accounting for 44% of the total jobs generated by the Canary Island fishing fleet. Additionally, it contributes 45.7% of the total landings value and 33% of the total weight of the fleet's catches. Alongside segment FPO1012, which consists of 13 vessels, PMP0010 primarily operates along the coast, targeting small pelagic species.

There are three segments that fish with hooks (HOK1012, HOK1218, HOK2440), consisting of 103 vessels and employing 334 FTEs, which is 47% of the total jobs in the Canary Island fishing fleet. This segment accounts for 45% of the fleet’s landing value and 51% of its weight, primarily targeting tunas.

In Spain, the geoindicator (IC) was introduced in 2017. Since then, PMP0010 saw an 8.4% decrease in vessels and a 4% decline in sea days, while landing weight dropped by 28.7%. However, landing value remained stable. GVA and NVA increased since 2018, except in 2022 when both decreased by around 20%, maintaining similar levels in 2023.

For hook segments, vessel numbers have risen as purse seiners declined. Compared to 2017, landing weight has decreased by 44% and landing value by 31%. GVA and NVA have shown significant year-to-year variability.

Table 3.8.9. Summary results for the Spanish *OMR fleet segments in 2023: Canary Islands (IC).*

	Number of vessels	Engaged crew	FTE national	Days at sea	Energy cons. (Million litres)	Live weight of landings (tonnes)	Value of landings (Million EUR)	Gross value of landings (Million EUR)	Revenue (Million EUR)	Gross Value Added (Million EUR)	Net Value Added (Million EUR)	Gross profit (Million EUR)	Net profit subsidized (Million EUR)	Operating subsidies (Million EUR)
ESP NAO FPO1012 IC *	13	44	15	1,132	0.1	142	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.07
ESP NAO HOK1012 IC *	46	120	43	2,555	0.3	969	2.5	3.3	3.3	2.2	2.0	0.0	-0.1	0.10
ESP NAO HOK1218 IC	35	213	54	2,409	0.4	1,223	3.2	3.7	3.7	2.3	2.0	-0.9	-0.7	0.55
ESP NAO HOK2440 IC *	22	281	237	2,799	1.7	1,831	6.3	7.9	8.0	4.3	3.6	-2.9	-3.7	0.09
ESP NAO PMP0010 IC *	444	841	311	33,189	1.1	2,619	12.1	12.8	13.2	10.0	9.4	2.9	4.0	1.79
ESP NAO PS 1218 IC *	10	70	48	1,301	0.2	1,138	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.3	1.2	0.2	0.3	0.14
Total	570	1,569	708	43,385	3.8	7,922	26.5	30.2	30.6	20.5	18.7	-0.7	-0.2	2.74

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Main factors affecting the performance of the fleet in the Canary Islands

- The variations in TACs and Quotas of the main tuna species (BET, BFT, ALB, YFT) are one of the main factors affecting the performance of the fleet. The closure of the fisheries for tunas affects also the profitability of pole-and-line tuna fishers.
- The landing prices has an important impact in the performance of the fleet. In this way we can observer an increase in the prices of the main species catches such as Bigeye tuna and Atlantic chub mackerel. However, lower prices for other species of tuna and demersal fish have resulted in reduced revenue from fish sales in 2023.
- Fuel price is one of the main factors affecting the performance of the fleet. In 2023, aid was granted to vessels-owning companies to compensate for the increase in production costs caused by the increase in fuel prices resulting from the situation created by the invasion of Ukraine. The aid was granted according to the average annual consumption figures established in the Economic Survey of Fisheries, which vary depending on the type of fishing, the length of the vessel and the area of activity (fishing grounds).
- A compensation scheme for additional OMR costs was established and funded by the EMFAF (Article 24). According to the Canary Islands' financial plan, 58 million has been allocated for the entire period. Additionally, EUR 4.9 million has been allocated for participatory local development (Priority 3).
- Operating subsidies to producers is an important factor to take into account for the performance of the fleet, assuming around 10% of the value of landing.
- Given the age of the vessels, the operational efficiency, productivity, and competitiveness of artisanal fishers is being affected.
- There is also a need to involve a new generation in the fishing activity to ensure the continuity of the sector and his competitiveness. The tourism sector has been considered an influential factor in the low rate of people choosing to pursue a career in fishing. Also, conflicts in fishing areas involving various groups, such as artisanal and recreational fishermen, fishing and aquaculture, and fishing and other nautical activities or offshore wind energy, greatly affect the recruitment of young people to the fishing sector.
- Environmental degradation in fishing areas is also influenced by the impact of other human activities on the coastline (pollution, waste disposal and uncontrolled actions) and, of course, the effects of climate change.

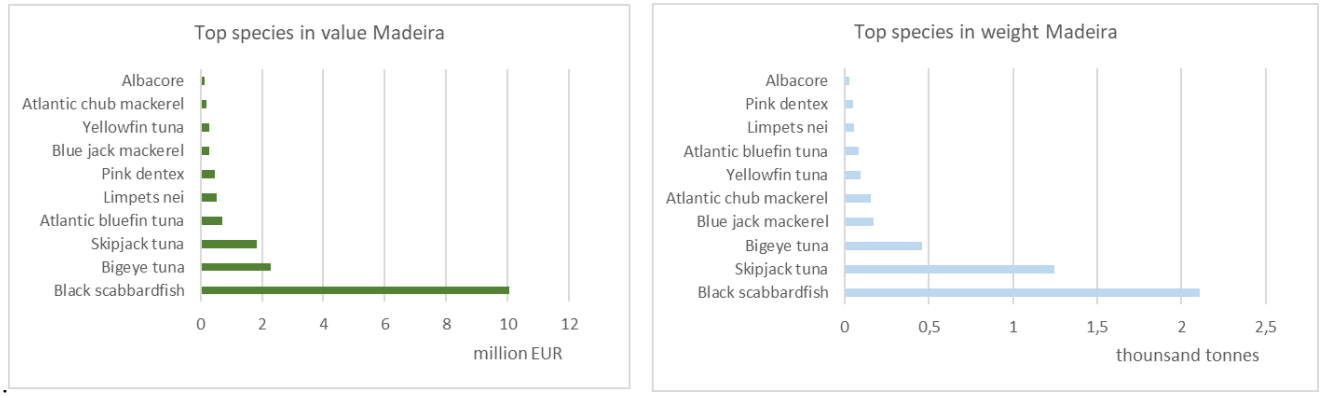
3.8.4 Portugal

In 2023, the Portuguese OMR fleet had 576 vessels, mainly operating in FAO 27.10.a and FAO 34.1.2. Of these, 80% were SSCF vessels. In Madeira and the Azores, 5% of vessels were over 24 metres. The fleet's landings totaled 14,462 tonnes, valued at EUR 57.3 million. The crew provided 2,361 jobs, equating to 1,419 FTEs. GVA and NVA were EUR 38.9 million and EUR 32.7 million, respectively. Gross profit and net profit (subsidized) were EUR 12.9 million and EUR 9.7 million. Key species by value included black scabbardfish (17.5%), bigeye tuna (14.6%), and blackspot seabream (13.0%).

Madeira (P2)

The Madeira fleet was composed of 92 active vessels in 2023. Overall, 66% of the vessels are less than 10 metres LOA and 87% are less than 18 metres LOA. The total number of jobs created by this fleet was 428, corresponding to 351 FTE. In terms of effort, all these vessels together spent 7 275 DaS and used up 1.8 million litres of fuel (253 litres/DaS). The total live weight of landings was 4,532 tonnes generating an income of EUR 17.1 million, which means an average price of 3.78 euro/kg. Regarding the fleet performance, revenue was EUR 17.5 million and GVA and NVA were EUR 12.9 million and EUR 11.8 million, respectively. Gross profit and net profit subsidised were EUR 4.3 million and EUR 4.2 million. The active vessels operated mainly with longlines and the most representative species was the black scabbardfish, with 2,109 tonnes landed (46.5% of the total landings of these OMR) and a yield of EUR 10 million (58.6% of the total value of landings). Tunas are also representative of the fishing activity in Madeira and the main species (bigeye tuna, skipjack tuna and Atlantic bluefin tuna), accounted for around 28.0% of the total value and 39.5% weight landed.

Figure 3.8.25. Top species landed in value (left) and weight (right) in Madeira, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Vessels of the Madeira fleet operate in the different following fisheries around Madeira archipelago:

- Slope fishery: vessels using set-longlines, mainly targeting black scabbardfish and tuna species (skipjack tuna and bigeye tuna).
- The large pelagic fishery: vessels using polyvalent active gears to target large pelagic species (skipjack tuna, bigeye tuna, yellowfin tuna, Atlantic bluefin tuna and albacore).

Between 2013 and 2023, the number of active vessels was stabilised, while FTE and crew decline -13% and –27%, respectively. Compared with the previous year, the Madeira active fleet was registered an increase in terms of number of vessels (+2%), but total vessel power remained very similar and total vessel tonnage registered a slight decrease (-2%).

Figure 3.8.26. Trends on capacity, effort, landings, GVA and profit for the Portuguese OMR fleet in Madeira.



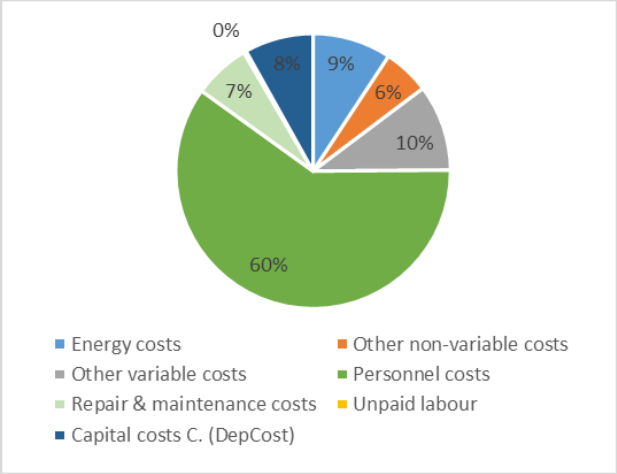
Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Despite a decrease in days at sea (-15%) compared to 2013, since 2020 the DaS values have been stabilized, registering variations of less than 5%. Compared with 2022, the energy consumption and operating subsidies increased 2% and 34%, respectively.

The landings in weight increased 13% while the value of landings increased by 22%, compared to last year. Total GVA and NVA was EUR 12.9 and EUR 11.8 million in 2023. Despite a significant increase compared with the previous year (+70% and 88% respectively), the GVA and NVA were similar to the values recorded before the covid period.

In 2023, the cost structure of the Madeira fleet was dominated by wages and salaries (60%) followed by other variable costs (10%) and energy costs (9%).

Figure 3.8.27. Cost structure for the Portuguese OMR fleet in Madeira, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure and key results in Madeira

The fleet structure is characterised by a dominance of vessels using longlines (88% of the Madeira vessels) and polyvalent vessels, targeting deep-sea species such black scabbardfish and large pelagic species (skipjack tuna and bigeye tuna). This fleet represents 91% in terms of weight of landings and 93% of the value of landings. Also represents 87% of the DaS and 86% of FTE.

The most relevant segment in terms of number of vessels is the HOK0010 with 53 vessels representing vessels representing 58% of the active fleet, 28% of the DaS and 14% of the value of landings. This fleet targets mainly deep-sea species (black scabbardfish represents 24% in weight and 20% in value) and also tunas (bigeye tuna and skipjack tuna together represents 37% and 32% in weight and value of landings, respectively). The fleet segment employed 64 FTEs (18% of the total). Economic indicators for this fleet reported a gross profit of EUR 0.99 million.

The HOK1218 segment is composed by 14 vessels, representing 15% of the active fleet, 38% of the days at sea and 53% of the value of landings. The fleet targets mainly deep-sea species (black scabbardfish represented 79% in weight and 87% in value). The fleet segment employed 134 FTEs (38% of the total). Economic indicators for this fleet reported a gross profit of EUR 2.5 million.

Segment HOK2440 is composed only by six vessels and represents 7% of the active vessels, 7% of the DaS and 11% of the value of landings. The fleet targets mainly large pelagic species (skipjack tuna represents 75% in weight and 57% in value and bigeye tuna represents 21% in weight and 36% in value). The fleet segment employed 56 FTEs (16% of the total). Economic indicators for this fleet reported a negative gross profit of -EUR 0.2 million.

Table 3.8.10. Summary results for the Portuguese *OMR fleet segments in 2023: Madeira (P2).*

fs_name	Number of vessels	Engaged crew	FTE national	Days at sea	Energy cons. (Million litres)	Live weight of landings (tonnes)	Value of landings (Million EUR)	Revenue (Million EUR)	Gross Value Added (Million EUR)	Net Value Added (Million EUR)	Gross profit (Million EUR)	Net profit subsidised (Million EUR)	Operating subsidies (Million EUR)
PRT NAO MGP0010 P2	8	31	20	435	0.02	70	0.63	0.64	0.54	0.53	0.21	0.22	0.02
PRT NAO HOK2440 P2	6	71	56	522	0.77	993	1.92	2.02	0.76	0.16	-0.21	-0.61	0.35
PRT NAO HOK1218 P2	14	134	134	2 792	0.61	2 145	9.13	9.29	7.42	7.22	2.48	2.81	0.57
PRT NAO HOK1824 P2	3	33	28	413	0.17	455	1.89	1.89	1.49	1.37	0.61	0.59	0.13
PRT NAO HOK1012 P2	5	24	21	577	0.08	113	0.63	0.63	0.48	0.44	0.23	0.22	0.04
PRT NAO HOK0010 P2	53	105	64	2 034	0.12	422	2.44	2.48	1.90	1.80	0.98	0.94	0.09
PRT NAO MGP1824 P2	3	30	28	502	0.07	335	0.50	0.51	0.36	0.27	0.02	0.01	0.10
Total	92	428	351	7 275	1.84	4 532	17.14	17.46	12.95	11.78	4.31	4.19	1.31

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

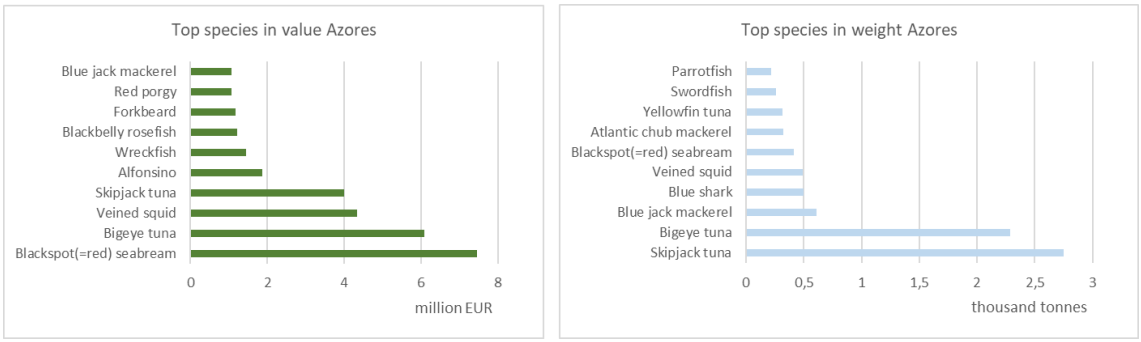
Main factors affecting the performance of the fleet in Madeira

- The crew costs, which represents the main operational costs, may increase in order to keep and recruit crew to operate the fleet. The fleet faced the lack of incentives to attract young fishers to the sector. In addition to this constraint, there is a lack of available labour in the region.
- The ageing and outdated fleet also affects the results of the activity in terms of efficiency, productivity, and competitiveness of artisanal fishers. It is important to note that the average age of active vessels is 33 years.
- The stocks operated by the Madeira fleet, which are subject to periodic analytical assessments, are those managed at Atlantic level by ICCAT. The variations in TACs and Quotas of the main tuna species may not allow the fleet to work all year round.
- The number of days at sea is strongly influenced by the different weather conditions, which affects the regular fishing activity. Some vessels are characterised by seasonal activity and for a target species, while other vessels are operating all year.

Azores (P3)

The Azores fleet was composed of 484 active vessels in 2023. Overall, 73% of the vessels are less than 10 metres LOA and 95% are less than 18 metres LOA. The total number of jobs created by this fleet was 1,933, corresponding to 1 068 FTE. In terms of effort, all these vessels together spent 38,873 DaS and used up 5.0 million litres of fuel (128 litres/DaS). The total live weight of landings was 9,930 tonnes generating an income of EUR 40.1 million, which means an average price of 4.04 euro/kg. Regarding the fleet performance, revenue was EUR 40.2 million and GVA and NVA were EUR 26.0 million and EUR 20.9 million, respectively. Gross profit and net profit subsidized were EUR 8.6 million and EUR 5.5 million. Like in Madeira, also the Azorean fleet was dominated by longliners (HOK), which in 2023 represented 89% of the active vessels. 95% of the Azorean fleet operates using passive gears only. The remaining fleet (5%) were purse seiners. The Azores OMR is very rich in biodiversity and fishing fleets target cephalopods, demersal fishes and large pelagic species. The main species landed, by value, were blackspot seabream (18.6%), bigeye tuna (15.1%) and veined squid (10.8%).

Figure 3.8.28. Top species landed in value (left) and weight (right) in Azores, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

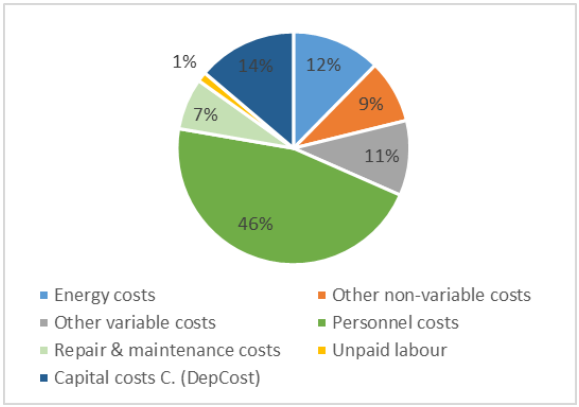
Between 2013 and 2023, the active fleet decreased by -19%, while FTE and crew decline 19% and 45%, respectively. The decrease in DaS and energy consumption was 48% and 52%, from 2013 to 2023. The landings in weight decreased 17% from 2013 to 2022 and value increased 15%. In 2023 there was a decrease of 12% and 13% in terms of weight and value of landings, compared to the previous year. GVA and NVA decreased 8% and 4%, respectively, in time series 2013-2023.

Figure 3.8.29. Trends on capacity, effort, landings, GVA and profit for the Portuguese OMR fleet in Azores.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.8.30. Cost structure for the Portuguese OMR fleet in Azores, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

In 2023, the cost structure of the Azorean fleet is dominated by wages and salaries (46%) followed by capital costs C. (14%) and energy costs (12%).

Fleet structure and key results in Azores

The Azorean fleet consists of nine segments, mainly using longlines to target pelagic species, cephalopods, and deep-sea species. The HOK0010 segment, operating in FAO area 27.10.a (Azores), comprises 309 vessels (64% of the active fleet) and targets blackspot seabream and veined squid. This segment had a landing value of EUR 12.6 million in 2023, similar to 2022, employing 265 FTEs and generating 725 jobs, with a gross profit of EUR 4.6 million.

The HOK2440 segment includes 25 vessels, primarily operating in FAO areas 27.10.a (Azores) and 34.1.2 (Madeira), targeting tuna species such as bigeye and skipjack, blue shark, and swordfish. It represents 5% of vessels but contributes significantly to landings value and weight. In 2023, the landing value was EUR 9.6 million, a decrease from 2022 due to reduced landings weight. This segment employed 219 FTEs and generated 305 jobs, reporting a negative gross profit of -EUR 0.4 million.

Table 3.8.11. Summary results for the Portuguese *OMR fleet segments in 2023: Azores (P3).*

fs_name	Number of vessels	Engaged crew	FTE national	Days at sea	Energy cons. (Million litres)	Live weight of landings (tonnes)	Value of landings (Million EUR)	Revenue (Million EUR)	Gross Value Added (Million EUR)	Net Value Added (Million EUR)	Gross profit (Million EUR)	Net profit subsidised (Million EUR)	Operating subsidies (Million EUR)
PRT NAO HOK2440 P3 *	25	305	219	2 332	2.24	4 221	9.59	9.63	5.07	2.57	-0.38	-2.80	1.37
PRT NAO PGP0010 P3 *	6	28	16	725	0.04	55	0.34	0.34	0.21	0.18	0.04	0.05	0.05
PRT NAO HOK0010 P3	309	725	265	19 512	0.79	1 484	12.66	12.67	9.05	7.85	4.61	3.89	0.80
PRT NAO PS 0010 P3	13	39	13	911	0.05	117	0.34	0.34	0.23	0.20	0.10	0.11	0.05
PRT NAO PS 1218 P3	3	12	9	422	0.06	134	0.18	0.18	0.10	0.08	0.02	0.04	0.04
PRT NAO HOK1218 P3	32	273	194	4 121	0.67	1 826	6.89	6.89	4.36	3.89	1.11	1.24	0.71
PRT NAO DFN0010 P3	26	71	27	2 076	0.05	259	1.10	1.10	0.82	0.76	0.43	0.47	0.12
PRT NAO HOK1012 P3	63	447	298	7 408	0.91	1 408	8.42	8.42	5.71	5.07	2.40	2.19	0.58
PRT NAO PS 1012 P3	7	33	27	1 366	0.17	425	0.62	0.62	0.44	0.35	0.27	0.29	0.13
Total	484	1 933	1 068	38 873	4.99	9 930	40.14	40.19	25.99	20.94	8.61	5.47	3.86

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Main factors affecting the performance of the fleet in Azores

- The crew costs, which represents the main operational costs, may increase in order to keep and recruit crew to operate the fleet. The fleet faced the lack of incentives to attract young fishers to the sector. In addition to this constraint, there is a lack of available labour in the region.
- Some owners of smaller vessels have more than one professional activity or work seasonally as a fishing professional on board other vessels (for example, during the tuna season).
- The geographical location of the Azores archipelago and the migratory nature of tuna, related to the abundance of food available and ocean currents, mean that this fishery has large fluctuations in annual catches and a strong seasonality.
- The stocks operated by the Azorean fleet, which are subject to periodic analytical assessments, are those managed at Atlantic level by ICCAT. The variations in TACs and Quotas of the main tuna species may not allow the fleet to work all year round.

- There is a considerable heterogeneity in terms of the use of the vessels throughout the year, mainly due to adverse weather conditions, which affect the activity of the vessels, especially the small-scale ones. Within the Azores archipelago, conditions can be quite diverse (e.g. Western Group vs Eastern Group; North coast vs South coast).

3.8.5 Data issues for the OMR fleet

- Economic data are missing for French Guiana segment DTS1824 GF.
- New data was provided for Saint Martin with update since 2018. It concerns only the number of vessels, engaged crew and FTE, Landings in weight and value but ni other economic information was provided. Economic data are missing for HOK0010 MF
- Data for Canaries islands and Mayotte have been only available since 2017 and 2015, respectively.
- For the ESP NAO HOK2440 IC* from Canaries Islands segment, significant inconsistency in non-variable cost value in 2023 compared to previous years led to replace the 2023 by the 2022 value.
- Data sets have improved over the last years although improvements should still be considered regarding indicators for specific segments (effort and energy consumption, coherence between landings value and gross value of landings, structure of costs, capital value and depreciation, FTE, operating subsidies related to EMFAF or other public organizations,).
- The level of activity is very heterogeneous within the segments in outermost regions. According to data collection guidelines, segments for Guadeloupe and French Guiana regions were sub-segmented in low active (L) segments and normal active (A) segments, considering vessel activity threshold at 75 DaS.

3.9 Distant Water Fleet (DWF)

3.9.1 Fleet selection

To analyze the economic performance of the EU DWF at the regional level, the economic data provided by fleet segment at the supra-region level are disaggregated based on transversal data (effort and landings) provided at the sub-region level (FAO level 3 or 4) (see the 2021 AER Annex report for more details on the methodology used).

Additionally, fishing activity in these areas is assessed by fleet segments and presented as flag states in the context of DWF. The refinements proposed for the current methodologies, considering the granularity of DWF and EU-MAP data, acknowledge that not all fishing fleets operating in RFMOs are necessarily DWF.

According to the fleet selection criteria used in the AER to define fishing activity, the DWF includes EU-registered vessels over 24 metres LOA flying the flag of a Member State and fishing predominantly in non-EU waters. However, other fleet segments under 24 metres that also have significant activity in certain RFMOs are considered in the analysis to provide a comprehensive picture of the extent of the EU fleet's overall activity.

Due to the specific characteristics of the RFMOs, some adaptations from the standard regional disaggregation methodology are required. Consequently, the definitions and criteria used to select fleets for the OFR analysis have evolved over the years, informed by expert knowledge regarding both fleet length and percentage of high dependency. The aim of this exercise is to provide an accurate description of the fleets' economic activity as close to reality as possible, ensuring all relevant fleet segments are included. However, there is a need for a more standardized and refined approach as well as extending the geographical coverage in future years to include more RFMOs where EU fleets are present (e.g., Pacific RFMOs such as NPFC and SPRFMO or Indian Ocean ones like SIOFA). It would also be beneficial to consider the Economic Exclusive Zones of third countries' waters where the EU has signed Sustainable Fishing Partnership Agreements (SFPAs).

Table 3.9.1 outlines the criteria for fleet selection in this report.

Table 3.9.1. Overview of the definitions and criteria used to assess the performance of the EU fleets operating in the RFMOs.

RFMO		Geographical coverage	Vessel lenght	Target species	Degree of dependency
ICCAT	EU Fleet	Atlantic Ocean and adjacent seas	>18m (to include vessels targeting ALB in bay of Biscay)	ICCAT major species and stocks	All segments
	High dependency fleet				Fleet segments >=20% of total landed value
IOTC	EU Fleet	Indian Ocean (FAO major fishing areas 51 and 57)	>24m	IOTC major species and stocks	All segments
	High dependency fleet				Fleet segments >=20% of total landed value
NAFO	EU Fleet	Atlantic Northwest (FAO major fishing area 21)	>24m	All species excluding the ICCAT major species	All segments
	High dependency fleet				Fleet segments >=40% of total landed value
CECAF	EU Fleet	Atlantic Eastern Central (FAO major fishing area 34)	>24m	All species excluding the ICCAT major species	All segments
	High dependency fleet				Fleet segments >=20% of total landed value
NEAFC	EU Fleet	Atlantic Northeast (FAO major fishing area 27)	No quantitative analysis is possible, as data is not available at the proper level of disaggregation and cannot be used to distinguish		

Source: EWG 25-07.

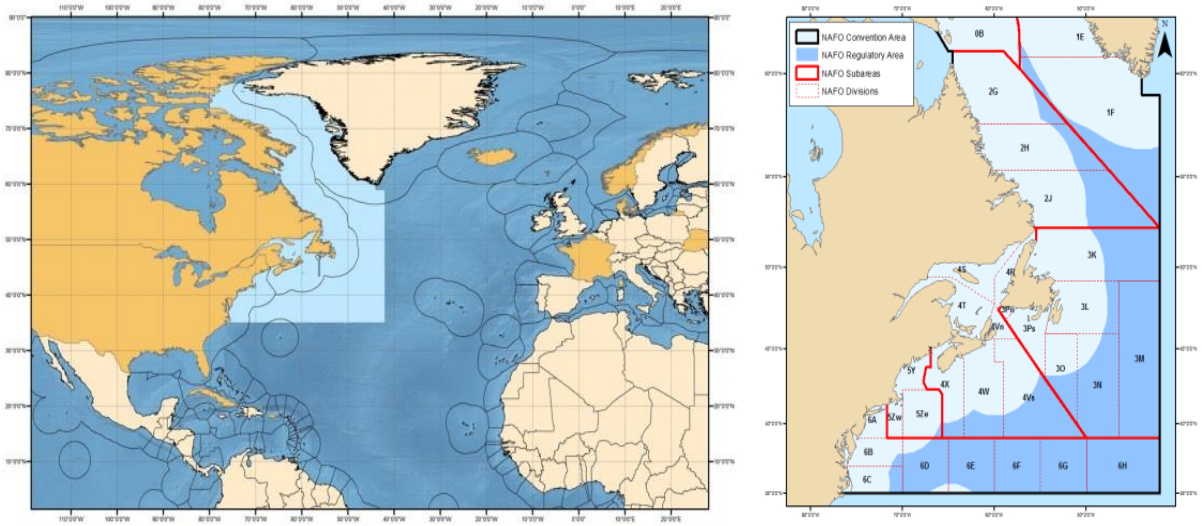
3.9.2 NAFO - Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization

Background

Fisheries in the Northwest Atlantic are performed in the exclusive economic zones of the coastal states and on the high seas where fishery is regulated by the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO). NAFO was founded to manage most fishery resources in the EEZs of Contracting Parties (straddling stocks) and outside the national jurisdiction in the NAFO Regulatory Area (RA). Currently NAFO has 13 Contracting Parties with the entry of UK in 2020[9].

The NAFO Regulatory Area (RA) is defined in the NAFO Convention as that part of the Convention Area, which lies beyond the areas in which Costal States exercise fisheries jurisdiction (outside of the Exclusive Economic Zones) (Figure 3.9.1).

Figure 3.9.1. The scientific and statistical subareas, divisions and subdivisions are outlined in Annex I of the NAFO Convention.



Source: NAFO, GEOMAR http://www.marineplan.es/ES/fichas_kml/rfbs.html

The three main fisheries regulated in the NAFO area are Atlantic cod, Greenland halibut, and pelagic and golden redfish. The three main fisheries regulated in the NAFO area are Atlantic cod, Greenland halibut, and pelagic and golden redfish. NAFO does not manage sedentary species (e.g., shellfish) and species managed by other fishery bodies such as salmon (NASCO), tunas/marlins and tuna-like stocks (ICCAT), and whales (NAMMCO).

The ground fish (Atlantic cod, Greenland halibut and shrimp) fishery occurs mainly in NAFO. In 2020 the moratorium on 3M shrimp was ended. Since there were no signs of improvement

[9] Canada, Cuba, Denmark (in respect of Faroe Islands and Greenland), EU, France (in respect of St. Pierre et Miquelon), Iceland, Japan, Norway, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Ukraine, United Kingdom and the Unites States of America.

in the stock biomass, the NAFO Commission followed the Scientific Council advice and closed the fishery (no catches of this species) from 2023.

Fleet selection and data limitations of the EU NAFO fleet

In previous editions of the AER (since 2019), all effort and landings of all species by fleet segments operating within the NAFO RA were considered considering the following criteria:

- Only fleet segments over 24 metres LOA were included.
- High dependency on NAFO CA was set at 20% of landings value.
- To refine results to the activity of the RFMO and avoid overlapping with the ICCAT analysis, since the AER 2021 an updated definition was adopted excluding the ICCAT major species.

The EWG 25-07 decided to increase the dependency threshold from 20 to 40%. Therefore, the modified approach combines a description of the overall activity of the EU fleet segments with presence in NAFO showing very low dependency (below or near 10%) with providing an in-depth analysis of the three fleet segments having a high dependency above the 40% value of landings, namely the Danish, Portuguese and Spanish demersal trawlers over 40 metres LOA. This represents a modification of the dependency threshold in relation to the previous years (20%).

Brief description of the EU NAFO fleet

In 2023, ten fleet segments from four Member States showed some activity in NAFO (excluding ICCAT major species). All ten fleet segments were over 24 metres LOA, but only three of them showed high dependency, which in this case is 40% or more of the total value of landings in the CA: the demersal trawler segments over 40 metres from Denmark, Spain and Portugal. It is worthwhile to note that Denmark had 1 demersal trawler, Spain had 7 demersal trawlers and 8 longliners with reported days at sea in NAFO RA and Portugal had 6 demersal trawlers and 2 longliners.

Regarding high dependency, there are only 13 estimated vessels, namely 1 vessel from Denmark, 7 vessels from Spain and 6 from Portugal.

Activity of the EU NAFO fleet was composed of an estimated number of 24 vessels which produced 33 500 tonnes valued at EUR 87.4 million. The total number of active vessels has been stable in the previous years. The main fishing nations are Portugal and Spain. Estonia did not report data of activity to EU-MAP for 2023, as was the case in 2022.

The vessel from Denmark has shown a high dependence compared to the previous year. The German fleets included one demersal trawler that fished seasonally in the region. France, regarding St. Pierre et Miquelon, and Denmark, in relation to the Faroe Islands and Greenland, are not included in the analysis due to a lack of data provided under EU-MAP, as they are independent contracting parties of NAFO.

According to the proposed criteria described above, the three industrial demersal trawler segments from Denmark, Spain, and Portugal identified for the EU NAFO DWF (i.e., high dependency on NAFO excluding ICCAT major species) landed a total of 31,801 tonnes valued at EUR 77.2 million in 2023, representing 97% of the volume and 93% of the value produced by these three fleets collectively. This is a slight decrease in the volume of landings

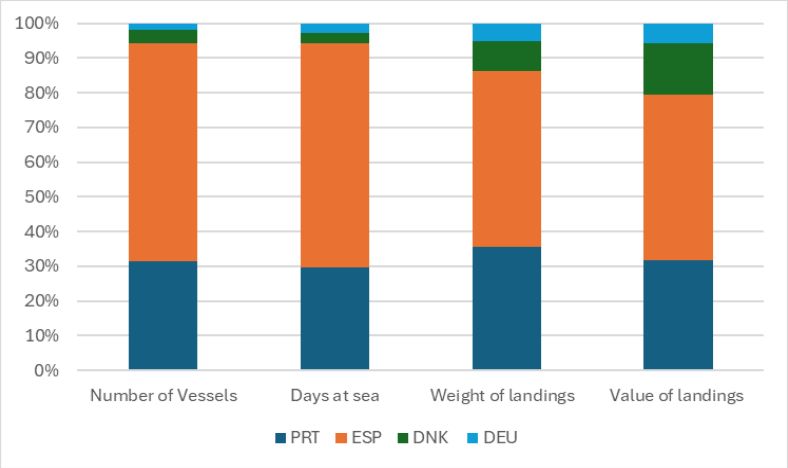
compared to 2022 (32,487 tonnes), but this decrease is mitigated by a slight increase in the value of landings (EUR 77.9 million).

Table 3.9.2. Member State's fleets with activity in NAFO (excluding ICCAT species), 2023.

NAFO	Estimated no. of vessels	% of total NAFO active vessels	as a % of NAFO DAS	Weight of landings	as a % of NAFO landings	Value of landings	as a % of NAFO value	as a % of NAFO revenue
	2023 number	(%)	(%)	tonnes	(%)	Thousand €	(%)	(%)
PRT	7.5	31	31	11,949	36	27,658	32	34
ESP	15	58	58	16,939	51	41,629	48	44
DNK	1	4	4	2,916	9	13,040	15	16
DEU	0.5	4	4	1,702	5	5,050	6	6
EU NAFO	24	100	100	33,506	100	87,377	100	100

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.9.2. Member State fleet percentage in NAFO (excluding ICCAT species), 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

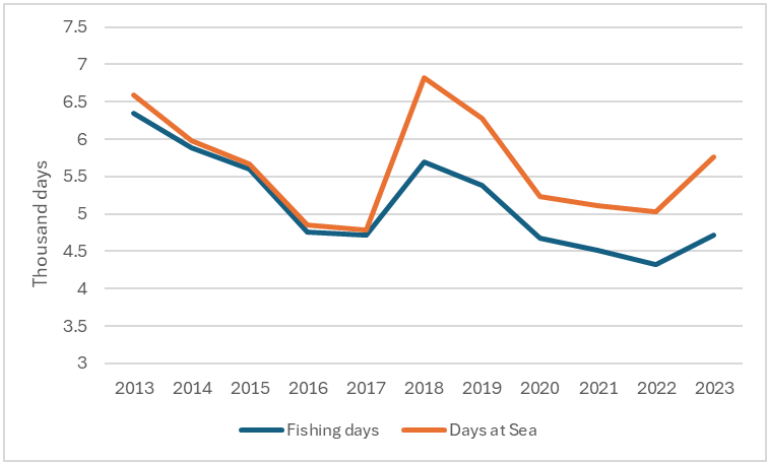
Capacity

Regarding fishing capacity, the Portuguese demersal trawlers fleet has a higher tonnage than the Spanish fleet (12,476 vs. 11,147 GT), despite having fewer vessels. This is attributed to the higher average capacity of the Portuguese demersal trawlers (1,642 vs. 743 GT). However, the total power of the Spanish fleet exceeds that of the Portuguese fleet (14,354 vs. 13,805 Kw). Both segments together account for 91% of the total fishing capacity in the area by the EU fleet.

The EU fleet in NAFO has maintained stable fishing efforts from 2020-2023, with 5,000 to 5,800 DaS annually. The fleet consisted of 23-24 vessels, each averaging 220-240 DaS. Spain led

with 3,718 DaS, followed by Portugal with 1,702 DaS. Other segments contributed less than 200 DaS, showing minor activity.

Figure 3.9.3. Trends on fishing effort by the EU fleet operating in NAFO targeting non ICCAT major species: 2013- 2023.



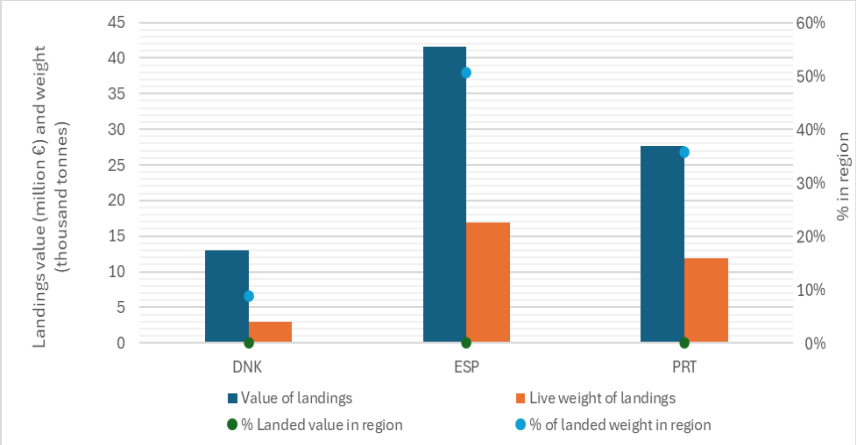
Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Comparison of economic performance between EU NAFO fleet with high dependency

In 2023, Spanish demersal trawlers led landings with EUR 41.6 million and 16,929 tonnes, followed by Portuguese trawlers at EUR 27.6 million and 11,946 tonnes. This contrasts with 2022 when Portugal was first and Spain second, due to an increase in Spanish vessels (from 12 to 15) and a decrease in Portuguese vessels (from 10 to 7.6). The Spanish fleet over 40 metres reported 1,636 DaS, while the Portuguese fleet reported 1,274 DaS.

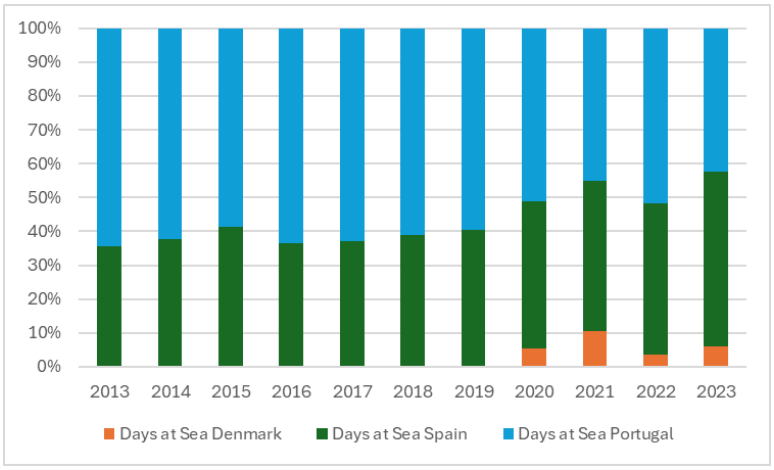
Danish demersal trawlers landed about 3,000 tonnes in 2023, up 1,800 tonnes from 2022, linked to increased activity and an additional 181 DaS. The value of these landings rose to EUR 13 million from EUR 7.6 million in 2022.

Figure 3.9.4. Landings and value of landings of Spain and Portugal in NAFO targeting non ICCAT major species: 2023.



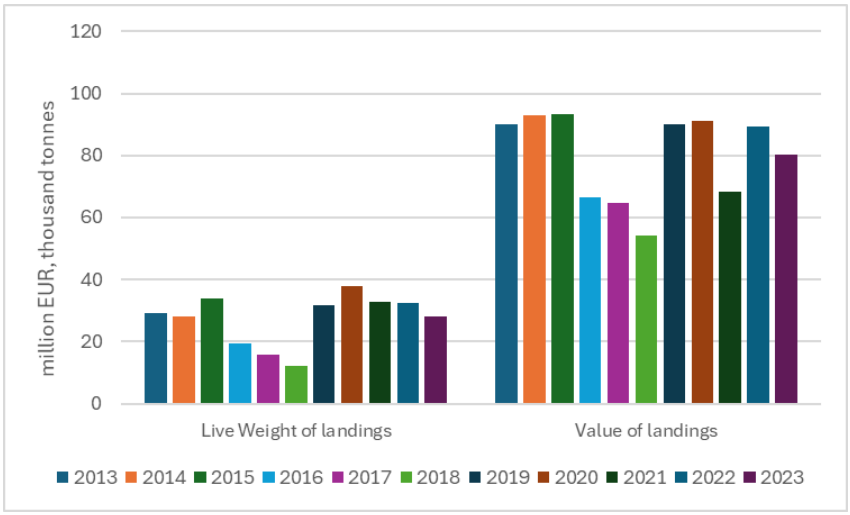
Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.9.5. Trends on fishing effort by the *EU NAFO fleet with high dependency*: 2013- 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.9.6. Landings and value of landings trends in NAFO targeting non ICCAT major species: 2013-2023.

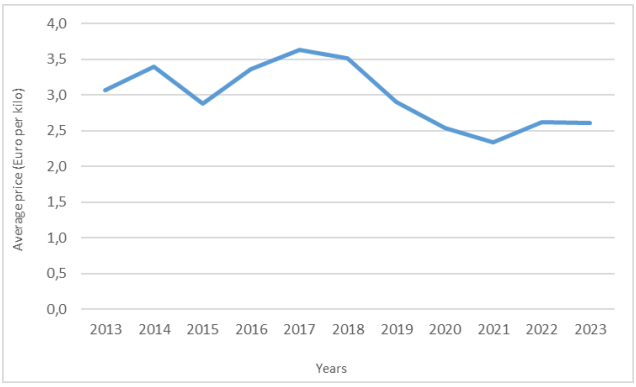


Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

In 2023, landings dropped to EUR 87.4 million and 33,506 tonnes from EUR 94.7 million and 37,700 tonnes the previous year. In Spain, average prices fell from 2.60 euro/kilo to 2.46 euro/kilo, while in Portugal, they rose from 2.25 euro/kilo to 2.31 euro/kilo.

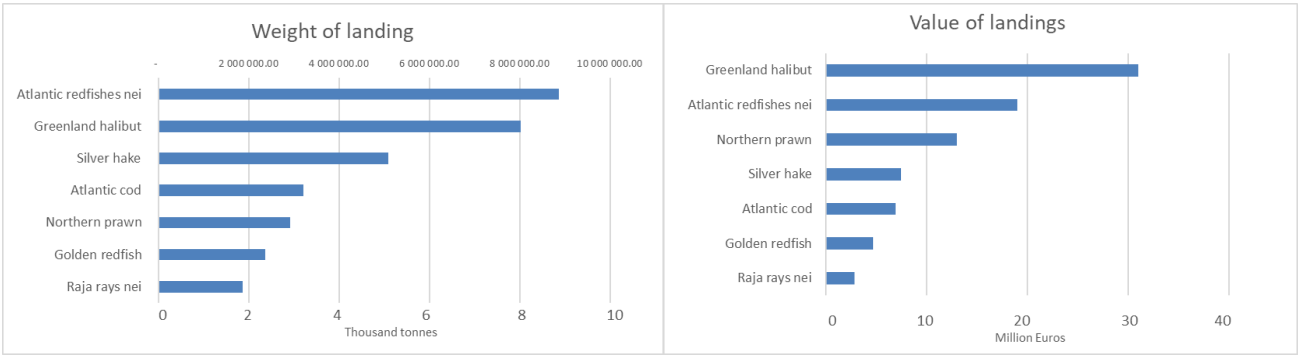
From 2013 to 2023, landings (excluding ICCAT species) ranged between 27,000 and 44,000 tonnes, peaking at 43,500 tonnes in 2020. The value fluctuated between EUR 85 million and EUR 117 million, with a peak in 2016. Average prices varied from 2.2 euro/kilo to 3.6 euro/kg, hitting a low of 2.34 euro/kg in 2021 after a decline from 3.63 euro/kg in 2017.

Figure 3.9.7. Average price for fleets operating in NAFO (excluding ICCAT major species), 2013-2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.9.8. Top species landed in weight and value by EU fleets operating in NAFO (excluding ICCAT major species), 2023.

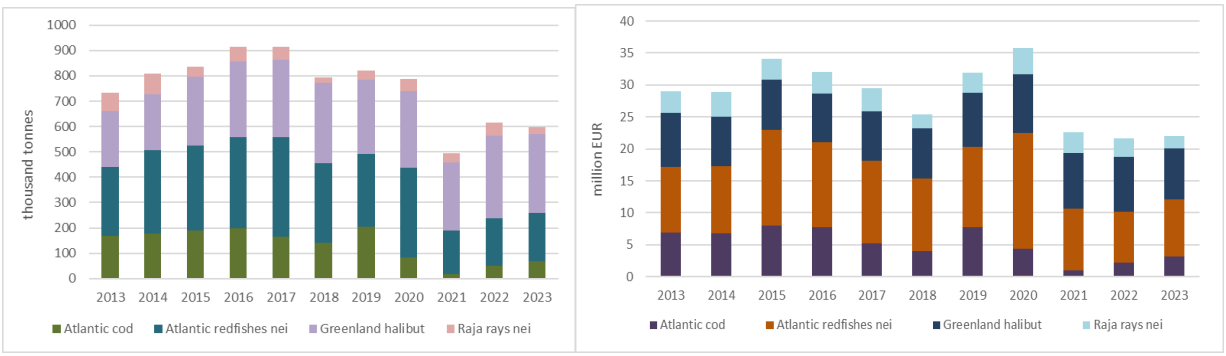


Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

In 2023, the main species landed from NAFO in terms of volume were Atlantic redfish (8,860 tonnes), followed by Greenland halibut (8,023 tonnes), silver hake (5,091 tonnes), Atlantic cod (3,218 tonnes), Northern prawn (2,916 tonnes), golden redfish (2,374 tonnes), and rays (1,865 tonnes). In terms of value, the primary species were Greenland halibut (EUR 31.0 million), Atlantic redfish (EUR 19 million), Northern prawn (EUR 13 million), silver hake (EUR 7.5 million), Atlantic cod (EUR 7 million), golden redfish (EUR 4.7 million), and rays (EUR 3 million).

The catch of cod increased by 47% compared to 2022 due to higher quota availability for the EU in Div. 3M. The slight decrease of 4.5% in landed halibut was attributed to a similar decline in the 2023 EU quota. The significant rise in catches of cod and other species such as Northern prawn (61.3%) and Atlantic redfish (11.3%) may explain the sharp decline in other complementary lower-value species such as golden redfish (-63%), rays (-37%), and silver hake (-21.3%).

Figure 3.9.9. Trends on landings in weight and value by EU fleet operating in NAFO targeting non ICCAT major species, 2013-2023.



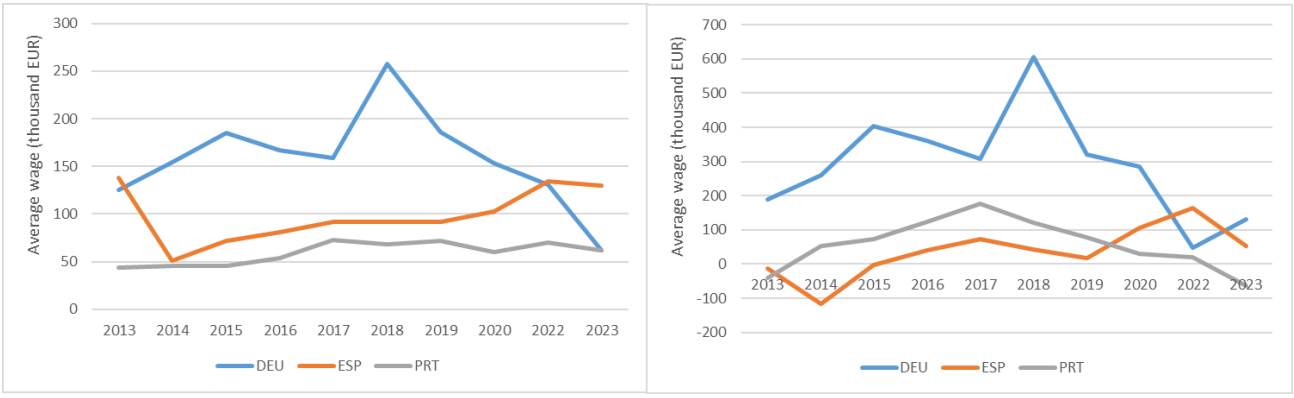
Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Economic performance of the EU NAFO fleet

The downward trend in number of vessels and employment, which started in 2012, seems to have transitioned into a phase of stability, with alternating number of vessels of 23-24 during the period 2020-2023. This is also reflected in the number of days at sea, which show an average value of 5,280 during this period. The volume of catches in 2023 (33,506 tonnes) is only slightly below the 2013-2023 average (35,014 tonnes), but the turnover (EUR 87.4 million) shows the lowest value of the decade, far away from the 2013-2023 average value of EUR 103.2 million. The average price (2.61 euro/kg) is also far below the 2013-2023 period average (2.99 euro/kg).

Energy consumption, in both volume and value terms, is lower compared to the previous year (23.8 million litres and EUR 20.0 million in 2023, compared to 27.3 million litres and EUR 28.6 million in 2022). Average fuel prices have decreased (0.84 euro per litre in 2023 compared to 1.05 euro per litre in 2022), but not to the levels seen before the Russian-Ukrainian conflict (0.53 euro per litre in 2021). The impact of this conflict on fuel prices continues to be evident in 2023, prompting energy savings.

Figure 3.9.10. GVA per FTE and average wage per FTE of EU fleet operating in NAFO targeting non ICCAT major species, 2013- *2023*.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

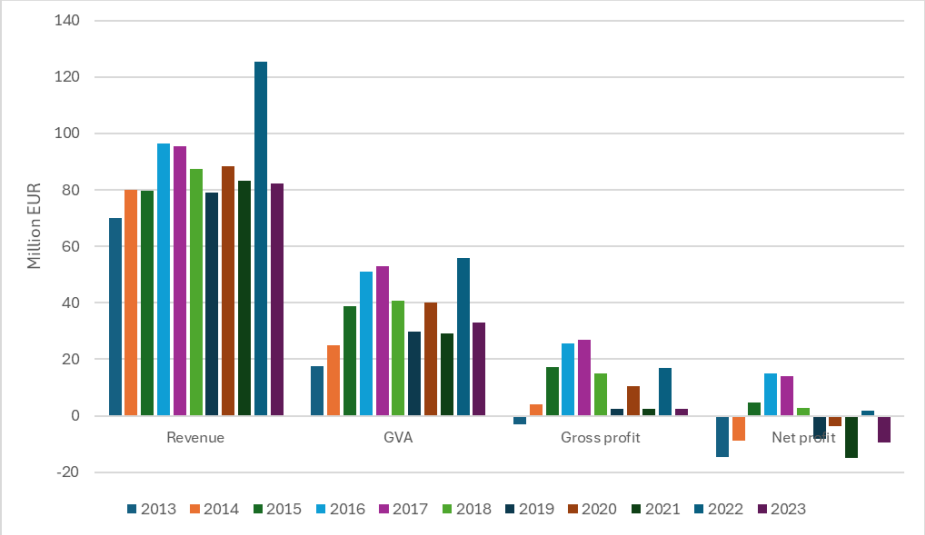
In terms of labour productivity, when comparing GVA generated per unit of labour (FTE) among the top three flag states over the period 2013 to 2023, the results vary significantly (Denmark is excluded from the analysis due to confidentiality reasons). Both Spain and Portugal show a considerable decrease in 2023 compared to the increasing trend since 2019. Spain reports in 2023 a value of EUR 53,658 (compared to EUR 162,853 in 2022), while Portugal shows a negative value of -EUR 62,710 (compared to EUR 19,565 in 2022). In contrast, Germany shows a value of EUR 130,989 (compared to EUR 47,780 in 2022).

Overall, there is no clear trend in labour productivity, with significant fluctuations and changes in values between years and countries. Spain displays the highest decline after a steady increase since 2019, reaching a peak value in 2022 (EUR 407,113). The historical data from 2013-2021 shows a decreasing trend for Portugal since 2017 and for Germany since 2018, where it reached a peak value of EUR 605,312. In Germany's case, this is due to the sharp decline in GVA since 2018 related to lower sales values, combined with a continued increase in FTE since that year. The Portuguese fleet also experiences a significant decrease in GVA since 2017, alongside an increased intensive use of crew since 2018, leading to a lower value of the GVA per FTE indicator. As for Spain, although there has been a rise in GVA since 2019 (with the lowest value of EUR 18,198 reported in 2019), the trend reversed again in 2023.

The economic results for 2023 indicate a considerable decrease in revenue, GVA, and gross profit of the fleet fishing in the area compared to those in 2022. Despite the interruption of the downward trend observed since 2018 during the pandemic due to cost-cutting fishing strategies and partial recovery in 2021, the decrease seems to continue in 2023 after growth in 2022. Total revenues were EUR 82.2 million (down from EUR 125.2 million in 2021), similar to the 2018-2021 values. The Portuguese (34%) and Spanish (40%) demersal trawler fleets together represented 74% of the total revenue with EUR 61.3 million. In 2023, GVA of the EU NAFO fleet was EUR 33 million (down from EUR 55.9 million in 2022), gross profit was EUR 2.5 million, and net profit was -EUR 9.6 million.

At the fleet segment level, the Portuguese and Spanish demersal trawler fleets show opposite behavior. Portugal reduced its landings from 18,339 tonnes in 2022 to 11,946 tonnes in 2023, while Spain increased them from 14,148 tonnes in 2022 to 16,929 tonnes in 2023. This dynamic is the reverse of what was observed in the previous year and reflects the variations in the number of vessels in both fleets. Regarding the value of the landings, the Spanish fleet increased the turnover from EUR 38.0 million to 39.7 million, while the Portuguese fleet experienced a sharp decline from EUR 43.4 million to 27.7 million. The average price obtained for the catches of both fleets does not vary greatly, suggesting a similar composition of the catches in 2022 and 2023.

Figure 3.9.11. Trends on revenue, profits for the fleets operating in the NAFO.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Gross profit for Portuguese trawlers was -EUR 2.1 million (down from EUR 0.6 million in 2022), while Spanish trawlers generated EUR 2.4 million (down from EUR 16.5 million in 2022). Both countries had similar labour intensity (200 FTEs for Portugal and 202 for Spain), but Portugal's wage expenditure was 27% higher. Spain's energy consumption was higher in volume (10.9 vs 10.1 million litres) but lower in value (EUR 8.6 million vs EUR 9.3 million), due to fuel price differences (0.78 euro/litre in Spain vs 0.92 euro/litre in Portugal).

Portuguese demersal trawlers averaged 36.3 FTE per vessel, compared to 28.8 FTE for Spanish trawlers. In 2023, Spanish vessels had higher labour productivity (EUR 78,919) than Portuguese (EUR 47,765), despite decreases from 2022 (-48% for Spain, -34% for Portugal). Net profit for Portuguese trawlers was -EUR 7.3 million, with a net profit margin of -1.9%, while Spanish trawlers achieved a net profit of -EUR 0.6 million, with a margin of -26%.

Result by Member State of the EU NAFO fleet

Denmark

Denmark currently operates one active vessel with significant dependency in the region. Due to confidentiality concerns, economic data have not been analyzed.

Estonia

Estonia has not reported activity in NAFO for 2023. However, 76 tonnes are reported at NAFO STATLANT for 2023 with main targeted species being Atlantic halibut (61t). These discrepancies in data, already existing in previous years (with catches around 3,000t in the period 2021-2022) need to be further explored.

France

No data are reported for France on behalf of St. Pierre et Miquelon fleet under the DCF. The NAFO official statistics report a notoriously decreasing trend in the 2019-2023 period on total landings in weight for all species combined: 76,2 tonnes in 2023, 52 tonnes in 2022, 308 tonnes in 2021, 535 tonnes in 2020 and 729 tonnes in 2019.

Germany

In 2023, the German fleet segment with presence in NAFO (Demersal trawlers and seiners >40m) did not show high dependency, with only 12% of the value of landings reported coming from the area, compared to 8% in 2022. This fleet segment mainly targets Greenland halibut (5,046 tonnes) and minor quantities of beaked redfish (2 tonnes), roughhead grenadier (1.3 tonnes), and roundnose grenadier (0.7 tonnes) in the NAFO CA.

Portugal

The Portuguese fleet operating in NAFO consists mainly of demersal trawlers over 40 metres in length, targeting Atlantic redfish, cod, and halibut. There are also some longline vessels in the region, primarily catching blue sharks and swordfish.

In 2023, this segment included eight vessels. Total landings (excluding ICCAT species) amounted to 12,946 tonnes, valued at EUR 27.7 million, representing a decrease of 35% in weight and 36% in value compared to 2022. The weight of landings in 2023 was 32% below the 2013-2022 average, and their value was 47% below the same period's average.

In 2023, Portuguese trawlers in NAFO accounted for 22% of the trawl catches and 36% of the value of landings. In 2022, these percentages were 44% and 49%, respectively. This change is attributed to both a reduction in the activity of the Portuguese fleet in the area and an increase in the Spanish fleet's activity.

Since 2013, the fleet's reliance on activity in NAFO has varied. Between 2018 and 2022, dependence decreased from 88% to 76% of DaS in the area. By 2023, this dependence increased to 80%, with 79% of the weight and 82% of the value of the PRT NAO DTS40XX IWE segment's catches coming from its activity in NAFO.

The fleet mainly operates in NAFO Divisions 3LMNO, focusing on Atlantic redfish (37%), Atlantic cod (22%), golden redfish (20%), Greenland halibut (14%), and silver hake (7%).

Economically, due to the significant decrease in the weight of landings, the trawlers experienced a gross profit loss of EUR 2.15 million in 2023.

Spain

The Spanish demersal fleet operating within the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) predominantly consists of freezer trawlers (ESP NAO DTS VL40XX). These vessels primarily operate in the NAFO region (FAO Area 21) and the Barents Sea (cod trawlers operating in FAO Area 27).

In 2023, the segment of demersal trawlers greater than 40 metres accounted for 52% of the high dependency fleet's fishing effort (DaS) within NAFO, securing 49% of the landed value and 52% of the weight. The fleet's reliance on activities within NAFO saw an increase in 2023 following a decrease in 2022, and it has exhibited a steadily rising trend since 2017, with a 50% increase from 2017 to 2021.

Within NAFO, this fleet primarily targets Greenland halibut, Atlantic redfish, silver hake, Atlantic cod, and rays in the Flemish Cap (3M) and Grand Bank (3LNO) areas. In 2023, landings, excluding ICCAT species, amounted to 16,197 tonnes, valued at EUR 39.72 million.

Specifically, landings of key species included 4,449 tonnes of Greenland halibut valued at EUR 20.646 million, followed by Atlantic redfish (4,362 tonnes) and silver hake (4,143 tonnes), which had significantly lower values in relative terms (EUR 7.6 million and EUR 5.0

million, respectively). First sale prices reflected these differences, with halibut at 4.6 euro/kg compared to 1.4 euro/kg and 1.2 euro/kg for redfish and hake, respectively.

In terms of economic performance, the segment's GVA amounted to EUR 16 million, representing a reduction from 2022 but remaining consistent with previous years.

Of the total 21 NAFO-authorized Spanish vessels, this segment comprises all the most active vessels in the area. In 2023, 8 out of the 12 vessels in this segment reported their presence in the NAFO Regulatory Area, contributing a combined effort of 1,560 fishing days.

Main drivers and factors affecting the performance of the EU NAFO fleet

- There is a stable activity of the EU fleet in NAFO area with capacity well adjusted to the fishing possibility. The total number of vessels have remained in 23-24 vessels during the period 2020-2023. This is also reflected in the number of DaS, which show an average value around 5,300 during this period for all vessels operating in NAFO, with changes mostly occurring in presence between Spanish and Portuguese demersal trawlers segments.
- The volume of landings for the demersal trawler fleets in 2023 (33,506 tonnes) is only slightly below the 2013-2023 average (35,014 tonnes), but the turnover (EUR 87.4 million) shows the lowest value of the decade, far away from the 2013-2023 average value of EUR 103.2 million. The average price (2.61 euro/kg) is also far below the 2013-2023 period average (2.99 euro/kg).
- The economic results for 2023 show a considerable decrease in economic performance of the EU fleet in NAFO in terms of revenue, GVA and gross profit of the fleet fishing in the area compared to those of 2022. The downward trend observed since 2018 in all variables, interrupted during the pandemic thanks to cost-cutting fishing strategies and partially recovered in 2021, seems to continue in 2023 after a growth in 2022. Total revenues were EUR 82.2 million, very similar to the 2018-2021 values. The Portuguese (34%) and Spanish (40%) demersal trawlers fleet combined represented 74% of the total revenue with EUR 61.3 million. In 2023, GVA of the EU NAFO fleet was EUR 33 million (from EUR 55.9 million in 2022), gross profit was of EUR 2.5 million, and net profit was of -EUR 9.6 million.
- At the fleet segment level, the Portuguese and the Spanish demersal trawlers fleets show remarkably different behaviours. Portugal reduced its landings from 18 300 tonnes in 2022 to near 12,000 tonnes in 2023, while Spain increased them from above 14 000 tonnes in 2022 to near 17,000 tonnes in 2023. This dynamic is exactly the opposite of that observed in the previous year and reflects the variations in the number of vessels in both fleets which can be partly attributed to quota transfers. Regarding the value of the landings, the Spanish fleet increased the turnover from EUR 38 million in 2022 to near EUR 40 in 2023, while the Portuguese fleet experienced a sharp decline from EUR 43 in 2022 to EUR 28 million in 2023. However, the average price obtained for the landings of both fleets does not vary greatly, suggesting a similar composition of the catches in 2022 and 2023.
- The main species landed from NAFO in 2023, in terms of volume, were Atlantic redfish (8,860 tonnes, compared to 7,962 tonnes in 2022), closely followed by Greenland halibut (8,023 tonnes, a decrease of 550 tonnes with respect of 2022), silver hake (5,091 tonnes), Atlantic cod (3,218 tonnes, an increase of over 1000 tonnes with respect of 2022), Northern prawn (2,916 tonnes, also with a 1,000 tonnes increase).

The highest decrease in landings has been for golden redfish (2,374 tonnes) and rays (1,865 tonnes). In terms of value, the main species were Greenland halibut (EUR 31.0 million), Atlantic redfish (EUR 19 million), Northern prawn (EUR 13 million), silver hake (EUR 7.5 million) Atlantic cod (EUR 7 million), golden redfish (EUR 4.7 million) and rays (EUR 3 million).

- The main species landed from NAFO in 2023, by volume, were Atlantic redfish (8,860 tonnes), followed by Greenland halibut (8,023 tonnes), silver hake (5,091 tonnes), Atlantic cod (3,218 tonnes), Northern prawn (2,916 tonnes), golden redfish (2,374 tonnes), and rays (1,865 tonnes). By value, the leading species were Greenland halibut (EUR 31.0 million), Atlantic redfish (EUR 19 million), Northern prawn (EUR 13 million), silver hake (EUR 7.5 million), Atlantic cod (EUR 7 million), golden redfish (EUR 4.7 million), and rays (EUR 3 million). The catch of cod increased by 47% compared to 2022, due to higher quota availability for the EU in Div. 3M. The slight decrease of 4.5% in landed halibut was attributed to a similar decline in the 2023 EU quota. The rise in cod catches, along with increases in other species such as Northern prawn (61.3%) and Atlantic redfish (11.3%), may explain the decline in other lower-value species such as golden redfish (-63%), rays (-37%), and silver hake (-21.3%).
- The economic performance of the fleets is driven and conditioned on the value of key commercial species caught by the Spanish and Portuguese demersal trawlers. Despite its recent high volume of landings, silver hake shows a remarkably lower price than other species caught such as Greenland halibut or Atlantic Redfish.
- Capacity, effort, and landings in weight have decreased in general since 2013 although it seems to be quite stable and even slightly increasing in recent years. This seems to be consistent with the adaptive fishing strategies and business plans of the concerned fleets due to lower availability of fishing opportunities in the convention area, particularly for Cod, Redfish, and Northern Prawns. In recent years, demersal fishing trawlers targeting cod and redfish have increased their annual level of catch either in other species within the NAFO RA (e.g. silver hake) or fishing grounds such as the North-East Atlantic (FAO 27) or the South-West Atlantic (FAO 41), targeting other demersal species. This factor could partially explain the oscillations in days at sea in the area.
- The trend in FTE has been quite stable since 2018 for the EU NAFO fleet, within the region of 550-590 FTEs. This stability of number of employed persons might be partially explained by the small variation in number of vessels coupled with a rotation system of the employed full-time staff on several fishing trips.
- The annual labour costs per FTE show striking fluctuations depending on the year without a clear explanation. A plausible reason might be linked to the number of fishing trips where the crew is hired. Portugal seems to show high fluctuations on average wages depending on the year with values from EUR 41 500 to EUR 72,400 in the last decade. Spain, however, shows an increasing trend from EUR 72,000 in 2015 up to over EUR 130,000 in 2023, a slight decrease in comparison to previous year with a peak of EUR 134,400. The differences in wages can be partially explained by the way the fixed salary is reported without considering in kind contributions or bonus linked to catch. Germany and Denmark are excluded fro this analysis for confidentiality reasons as they only operate with one vessel each in the area each.
- On 1 January 2021, the UK withdrew the EU, becoming an independent coastal state. This involved renegotiating the country's membership of regional fisheries management organisations in which it was integrated as an EU member. On 3 April

2020, the United Kingdom notified the European Commission of its intention to express its consent, in its own capacity, to be bound by five international agreements establishing five regional fisheries management organisations including NAFO, in the area of the Union's exclusive external competence on fisheries. As a result, the UK joined NAFO as a new independent member in September 2020, becoming NAFO's 13th contracting party. According to NAFO STATLANT 21A, in 2024, the reported landings of UK for 3M Atlantic cod were 856 tonnes of a total quota of 1,091 tonnes, being the remainder transferred to Norway and Faroe Islands as part of bilateral quota transfer deals. They also reported around 50 tonnes of catch of Atlantic Redfish.

Outlook for 2024 and beyond of the EU NAFO fleet

- The NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures (CEM) incorporate all NAFO measures presently in force as adopted by the NAFO Commission in accordance with provisions of Articles VI and XIV of the Convention on Cooperation in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries. Every year the NAFO CEM is revised by the Commission. These measures shall, unless otherwise provided, apply to all fishing vessels used or intended for use for the purposes of commercial fishing activities conducted on fishery resources in the RA as defined in Article 1 of the NAFO Convention.
- The 46th Annual Meeting of the NAFO took place in September 2024 in Halifax (Canada). The meeting focused on the sustainable management of key fish stocks for the EU operating in the Northwest Atlantic, including those of cod and Greenland halibut.
- For Greenland halibut, it was agreed to adopt as a new methodology for the management of the stock, and to set fishing opportunities according to the new Harvest Control Rule.
- For Cod, NAFO increased the fishing opportunities for cod in Flemish Cap (Subdiv. 3M) with a TAC of 12,613 tonnes for 2025, with the continuation of the existing technical measures for the protection of the cod stock, including a seasonal closure of the directed fishery from January to March 2025, coupled with mandatory use of sorting grids for all trawlers with a directed fishery on cod, and 100pc control of landings for vessels engaged in this fishery.
- In Cod for Divisions 3NO, the moratorium was upheld, while in Divisions 2J3KL, the Northern cod fishery was re-opened after more than 30 years, with similar precautionary measures than those of 1991 and a revised sharing arrangement increasing the EU share to reflect the current composition of the EU under the 5% TAC allocation amongst non-Canadian fleets with historical fishing rights in the area.
- For redfish, differentiated TACs were established: 17,503 tonnes in 3M for 2025 and 15,636 tonnes for 2026; 6,000 tonnes in 3LN for 2025, with commitment to progress on management strategy evaluations. In 3O, the TAC of 20,000 tonnes was maintained. For pelagic redfish (Subarea 2 + Divisions 1F and 3K), a TAC of 0 tonnes was set for 2025, and control measures were adopted to prevent landings or transshipments of targeted catches when the TAC is zero.
- Regarding shrimp, moratoria were maintained in both Division 3M and Divisions 3LNO for 2025 and 2026 due to the critical state of the stocks. For Greenland halibut, a new management strategy was adopted based on a harvest control rule, with a TAC of 14,791 tonnes for 2025, of which 10,960 tonnes correspond to 3LMNO. This strategy includes protocols for exceptional circumstances and updated calculation formulas.

- For yellowtail flounder in 3LNO, the measures adopted in 2023 were extended for another year, including a bycatch limit of 2,900 kg or 15%, flexibility during the first 9 days of fishing, and mandatory 100% inspection of landings. Moratoria were also maintained for American plaice in 3LNO and 3M, and for capelin in 3NO. For whitch flounder, TACs of 1,395 tonnes for 2025 and 1,461 tonnes for 2026 were set. White hake maintained its TAC at 1,000 tonnes, and skates in 3LNO retained a TAC of 7,000 tonnes.
- Regarding Control measures, NAFO adopted control measures to support the sustainable management of the Irminger Sea redfish. These measures are aimed at ensuring that contracting parties do not contribute to unsustainable fishing in case of a moratorium. Parties will have to ensure that their vessels do not participate in transhipments and that any landings and transhipments of catches of this stock will be denied in their ports, unless in case of distress. The measure mirrors similar measures already adopted in the NEAFC.
- Regarding the EU's obligations under the NAFO Convention, the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) coordinated joint control, inspection, and surveillance activities. As of June 2025, data is only available from January to September 2024, and these are the figures referenced in the following paragraphs. Thirteen Member States participated, including Spain, France, Portugal, Germany, Ireland, and the Baltic countries, among others. Activities were carried out using aerial, maritime, and land-based means, with a total of 81 days of sea patrols, 168 days of land-based personnel deployment, and 13 sightings from patrol vessels with no apparent infringements.
- In terms of future trends, it is of concern that the 5% automatic in year decrease of the TAC has led to an accumulated decrease in the level of catches from the starting point of 17,500 tonnes in 2017 to slightly over 15,000 tonnes for 2+3KLMNO 2025, resulting in a TAC of 10,960 tonnes for 3LMNO for 2025. This represents the minimum ever set to date and might have long term implications in the economic viability of the fishery, with need to look for additional species or fishing grounds.
- The economic impact of the recent increase of TAC for cod in 3M in recent times is likely to benefit the Portuguese and Spanish demersal trawlers, as they have already adapted to change their fishing strategies in the North Atlantic in the first quarter of the year and look for alternative fishing grounds, during the time of the closure. This will help in particular those operators more reliant or with higher dependency on this fisher, the Portuguese demersal trawlers.
- The 3M shrimp fishery had a high importance and commercial and socioeconomic value for many EU fishing vessels in the past, but it was under a moratorium from 2011 to 2019. The EU was by far the largest NAFO CPC in terms of quota share for this stock, which was the most valuable one in terms of landings during the period 1995-2010. Within the EU, Estonia is the largest fishing nation of 3M shrimp followed by Lithuania, then Latvia and, to a lesser extent, Denmark, Poland, Spain and Portugal. During the period of closure, there was a slow and gradual improvement of the biomass and in 2019 it was above B_{lim}. The commercial shrimp fishing was reopened in 2020 and 2021 in 3M, with an effort scheme based on allocation by CPCs, corresponding to the EU, 823 out of the total 2,640 fishing days. However, it was closed again with effect January 2022 because of catch limits being exceeded with only 20% of the fishing effort allocated for 2021. At the 2021 annual meeting, it

was agreed to continue the moratorium on the fishing of this stock for 2023 and it has remained since then.

- The uncertainty on both the biological state of the stock and the lack of progress on agreeing a management regime (moving from an effort based on fishing days to either a quota or mixed system) prevents any future reopening of the fishery. This situation has already caused the loss of significant incomes for the specialised demersal trawl fleet from Estonia and Latvia. There is no date planned for intersessional work to review the current management approach for shrimp in Division 3M and agree on modalities for transition from an effort to a TAC and quota system, as there is not agreement between the contracting parties in terms of allocation keys based on reference periods of historical catches.
- Apart from proposals to potentially close certain fishing areas, the NAFO RA will also likely be affected by other human economic activities that impact the seabed; these include oil and gas drilling and deep-sea mineral mining in the continental platform of Canada. Indeed, any licence to prospect or commercially extract known deposits in the seabed might have an adverse effect on the fishing activities of EU fleets operating in the area. In 2021, the Commission requested the Secretariat and the Scientific Council with other international organizations, such as FAO and ICES, to inform the Scientific Council's work related to the potential impact of activities other than fishing. The NAFO Secretariat has also been mandated to conduct outreach with other international organizations to ensure that NAFO's efforts to protect marine biodiversity are known. NAFO and Canada as Coastal State have also established an arrangement to exchange information concerning fisheries and oil and gas activities in the NAFO RA.

3.9.3 ICCAT - International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas

Background

The International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) is an intergovernmental organization that conserves tunas and related species in the Atlantic Ocean and adjacent seas.

ICCAT's jurisdiction includes all Atlantic waters and adjacent seas. It oversees around 30 species, including the southern bluefin tuna, though this is primarily managed by the CCSBT. In 2019, ICCAT's mandate extended to managing pelagic oceanic sharks and rays, such as shortfin mako and blue shark.

ICCAT conducts regular stock assessments to ensure sustainable fishing practices. Key species targeted by EU vessels under ICCAT regulation include:

- Tuna: Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin, albacore, skipjack, yellowfin, bigeye
- Billfish: Swordfish, blue marlin, white marlin, sailfish
- Sharks: Blue shark, shortfin mako, porbeagle
- Others: Bullet tuna, Atlantic bonito, frigate tuna, little tunny, common dolphinfish

Fleet selection and data limitations of the EU ICCAT fleet

The EU fleet fishes in both the Atlantic and Mediterranean Seas, targeting ICCAT species with artisanal, small-scale vessels and larger vessels over 24m. Thus, the EU fleet in the ICCAT RA includes more than just long-distance fisheries.

To understand the full scope of their activity, it's divided into two parts: (1) ICCAT major-species fleet and (2) ICCAT LDF fleet:

- The EU ICCAT major-species fleet includes all fleet segments with reported landings of one or more of the major species or stocks (as listed in Table 3.15 in the ICCAT RA (Atlantic and/or Mediterranean Sea) in 2023. Due to the low dependency of some of these fleet segments on these stocks, only a general overview of the activity will be assessed, i.e., the economic performance by fleet segment will not be considered.
- To analyse the EU ICCAT major-species LDF fleet, all fleet segments over 18 metres LOA and with 20% or more of their landings in value obtained in 2023 from one or more of the major species or stocks in the ICCAT RA are selected. This method is the same than the one adopted in AER 2021 and it has remained unaltered since then. However, it differs to that used in previous AERs in three aspects: (1) only the major ICCAT species and stocks are considered, (2) vessel length group 18-24 metres is included and (3) high dependency on the ICCAT RA in terms of value of landings is set at 20%, as opposed to 40% used in the AER 2020 (and 60% used in the AER 2019).

Table 3.9.3. List of major species or stocks covered by ICCAT.

Tuna (major sp.)		Tuna (small t)		Sharks (major sp)	
Albacore	ALB	Atlantic bonito	BON	Blue shark	BSH
Atlantic bluefin tuna	BFT	Atlantic Spanish mackerel	SSM	Porbeagle	POR
Atlantic sailfish	SAI	Blackfin tuna	BLF	Shortfin mako	SMA
Atlantic white marlin	WHM	Bullet tuna	BLT		
Bigeye tuna	BET	Cero	CER		
Blue marlin	BUM	Common dolphinfish	DOL		
Longbill spearfish	SPF	Frigate tuna	FRI		
Skipjack tuna	SKJ	King mackerel	KGM		
Southern bluefin tuna	SBF	Little tunny(=Atl.blackskipj)	LTA		
Swordfish	SWO	Plain bonito	BOP		
Yellowfin tuna	YFT	Seerfishes nei	KGX		
		Serra Spanish mackerel	BRS		
		Slender tuna	SLT		
		Wahoo	WAH		
		West African Spanish mackerel	MAW		

Source: EWG-25-03.

In many instances, as the effort deployed is 100%, and considering that the ICCAT RA encompasses the Atlantic Ocean, the value of landings (provided by sub-region) is utilized to disaggregate economic data at the fleet segment level by supra-region. This approach is taken instead of using a combination of effort and landings variables by fleet segment, as is done in other regional analyses. Typically, effort (measured in days at sea) is employed to disaggregate the number of vessels in a fleet segment by region. Consequently, estimations of capacity (number of vessels, GT, kW), economic variables (revenue, GVA, etc.), and employment metrics (FTE, etc.) may be subject to over or underestimation.

The EWG 25-07 has agreed to retain the ICCAT fleet selection criteria, which has remained unchanged since 2021. This selection excludes both the Mediterranean Sea and the EU Outermost Regions (OMR) from the analysis. The rationale for this exclusion is that fleet segments targeting ICCAT species in these areas are now included in the Mediterranean Sea EU Regional Analysis and the EU Outermost Regions regional chapters, respectively.

Based on the data submitted, the estimated number of vessels in the EU ICCAT fleet was 202 in 2023, compared to 214 in 2022. The total reported EU landings in weight for the main species regulated by ICCAT in the Atlantic Ocean amounted to 156,706 tonnes in 2023, representing an 11% decrease compared to 2022 (175,800 tonnes). The value of landings was EUR 311 million, reflecting a 27% reduction compared to 2022 (EUR 425 million).

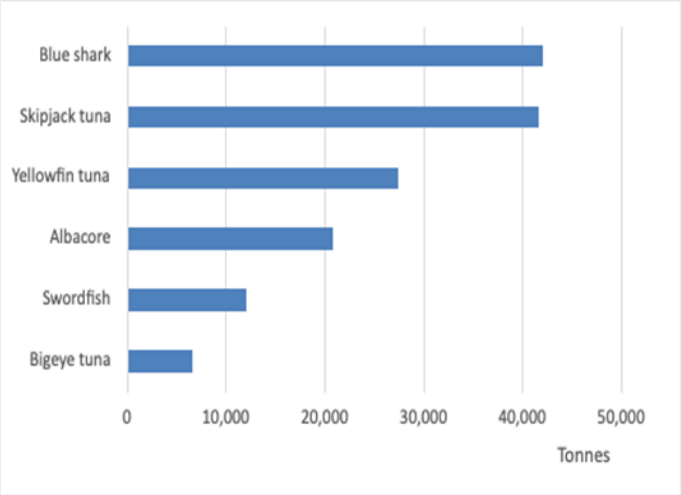
As a result of the decrease expressed above in number of vessels and landings, the economic indicators have experienced a remarkable decline in 2023 with respect of those of 2022:

- The revenue was EUR 328 million (-20% compared to 2022)

- The GVA was EUR 133 million (-23%)
- The gross profit was 33 million (-46%)
- There was a loss in net profit of EUR 10 million in 2023.

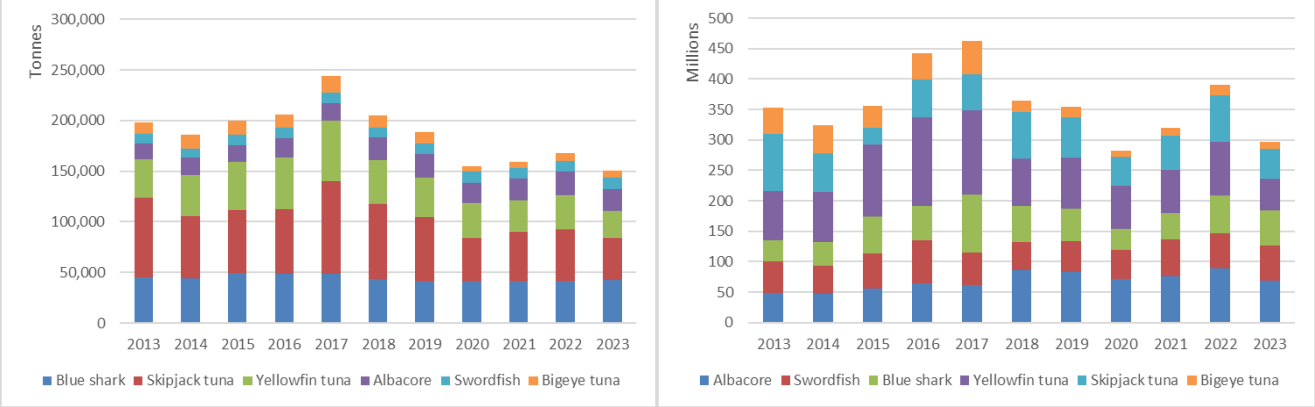
In 2023, the primary species landed were blue shark (42,100 tonnes, a 2% increase from 2022), skipjack (41,600 tonnes), yellowfin tuna (27,400 tonnes), albacore (20,900 tonnes), swordfish (10,158 tonnes), and bigeye tuna (6,600 tonnes). The tropical tuna stocks (skipjack, yellowfin, and albacore) saw a 20% decrease in landings compared to 2022, while albacore tuna specifically decreased by 10%. Swordfish landings increased by 20%.

Figure 3.9.12. Landings in weight by the EU fleet of ICCAT major species,2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.9.13. Trends on landings in weight and value by the EU fleet of ICCAT major species.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

The top five species in weight show a significant decrease in their value of landings for the case of albacore and tropical tunas, with an average reduction above 20% (albacore) and 30% (tropical tunas), respectively.

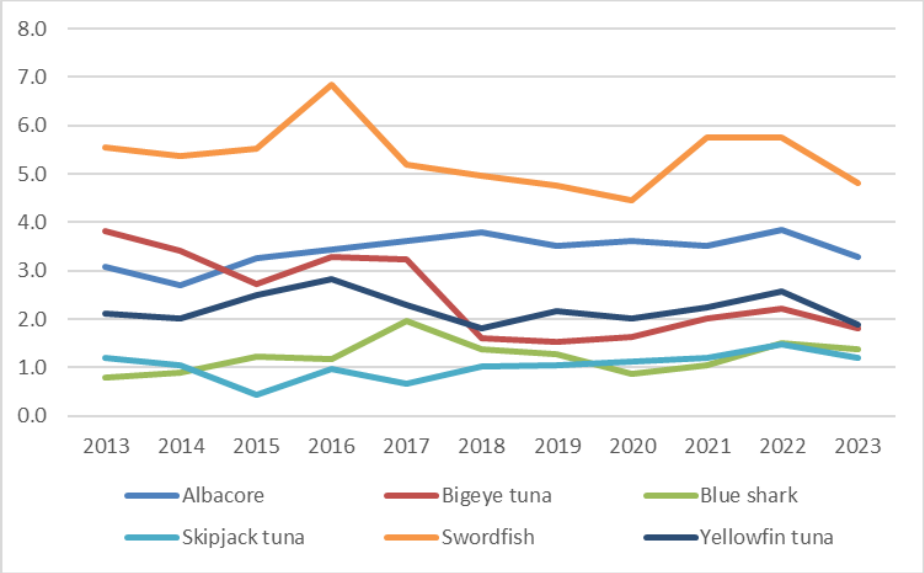
The first species in absolute value is albacore tuna, with EUR 68 million (compared to EUR 89 million in 2022), followed by swordfish and blue shark, with an identical value of

EUR 58 million each (very similar to 2022). These are two species mainly targeted by longliners.

On tropical tuna stocks, yellowfin tuna had a total value of EUR 52 million, while skipjack had EUR 50 million and bigeye tuna had EUR 12 million, with a decrease of 41, 34 and 32%, respectively.

Looking at first sale price per species, all of them have experienced a decrease: swordfish comes first with 4.8 euro/kg (5.8 in 2022) followed by albacore tuna with 3.3 euro/kg (3.8 in 2022) and yellowfin tuna with 1.9 euro/kg (2.6 in 2022). Both skipjack and blue shark are around 1.3 euro/kg (versus 1.5 in 2022).

Figure 3.9.14. Evolution of prices of the main ICCAT targeted species.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

EU fleet with high dependency on ICCAT species

The activity of the EU LDF in the Atlantic primarily targets tropical tuna using purse seiners and longliners. This year, the main change is the absence of the Spanish purse seine fleet segment above 40m (ESP OFR PS 40XX NGI), as their dependency is 17%, which is below the 20% threshold. Detailed information about this fleet segment can be found in the section on Spain.

Table 3.9.4 outlines the key trends for the selected fleet segments representing the LDF (over 18 metres with a >=20% landings value dependency on ICCAT major species) in the Atlantic. In 2023, the number of selected vessels is 178, compared to 202 in 2022. This difference is partly due to the absence of three fleet segments this year, which have a dependency above 15% but below the 20% threshold: Spanish longliners (ESP OFR HOK2440 NGI), Spanish purse seiners (ESP OFR PS 40XX NGI), and Irish pelagic trawlers (IRL NAO TM 2440). The EU LDF vessels in ICCAT accounted for EUR 227 million in the value of landings and 102,100 tonnes in weight.

Table 3.9.4. Estimated summary results for the Atlantic EU ICCAT fleet, highlighting segments with high dependency on activity in the ICCAT RA, 2023

ICCAT EU Fleet segments with high dependency	Number of vessels	Revenue (M EUR)	GVA (M EUR)	Value of landings (M EUR)	Landings in Weight (thousand tonnes)
ESP NAO DFN1824 NGI *	6	3.41	1.84	3.33	0.87
ESP NAO HOK1824 NGI	15	5.82	3.3	5.59	1.48
ESP NAO HOK2440 LLD *	37	36.05	13.4	36.36	15.1
ESP NAO HOK2440 NGI	31	38.31	28.23	33.58	9.51
ESP NAO PS 2440 NGI	15	14	9.21	13.1	3.78
ESP OFR HOK2440 LLD	29	50.98	11.44	49.06	25.99
FRA NAO TM 1824 NGI *	6	5.01	1.67	5.81	1.29
FRA OFR PS 40XX IWE *	7	53.46	14.72	54.52	32.74
PRT NAO HOK1824 NGI	13	6.87	3.38	6.89	1.53
PRT NAO HOK2440 NGI	13	8.27	2.26	8.24	2.68
PRT OFR HOK2440 IWE	7	8.85	2.56	8.76	5.41
PRT OFR HOK40XX IWE	1	1.89	0.57	1.89	1.7
TOTAL	**178**	**232.92**	**92.58**	**227.13**	**102.07**

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Results by Member State fleet

France

The French industrial fleet of Purse Seiners over 40 metres comprised 19 vessels in 2023, including four vessels registered on the island of Mayotte and grouped with one vessel HOK VL2440. The number of fishing vessels in this fleet has remained relatively stable over the years, although changes are anticipated in the coming years for various reasons discussed below. The majority of this fleet consists of freezer tuna seiners operating in both the Indian Ocean and Atlantic Ocean, with approximately half of the fleet active in the Atlantic Ocean.

In 2023, the French industrial fleet of Purse Seiners operating in the Atlantic Ocean included nine vessels out of the total 19 vessels in this segment, clustered with one vessel HOK VL2440. One vessel operates in both zones, primarily in the Atlantic.

The average age of these nine active vessels was 24 years in 2023, with an average length of 74 metres. Onboard employment averaged around 24 FTEs per vessel in 2023, with fishers hailing from France and foreign countries, predominantly African nations.

Regarding landings, the total weight for this fleet segment in the region reached 32,700 tonnes in 2023, a decrease of 24% compared to the previous year, with an estimated value of EUR 54.5 million.

At the global level for the segment (19 vessels), the predominant tuna species caught were skipjack (55%), yellowfin tuna (36% of total landing volumes), and bigeye tuna (6.8%). In the Atlantic Ocean, yellowfin and skipjack constituted nearly 91% of the catches, followed by

bigeye tuna (6%) in 2023. Overall, combining all species, the Atlantic Ocean accounted for 36% of the volumes caught by this fleet segment, while the Indian Ocean accounted for the remaining 64%.

Total landing income for the entire fleet segment amounted to nearly EUR 151 million in 2023. According to collected economic data, the two main cost items in 2023 were energy costs and crew wages, each representing approximately 32% of the total income.

Consequently, the operating profitability of the first segment of the French fishing fleet, in terms of landed value, was negative in 2023, as in the previous year. The deterioration in macroeconomic conditions has led to a significant increase in operating costs over the past few years (fuel, logistics, etc.), while prices have risen only marginally. Simultaneously, demand for canned tuna has declined between 2020 and 2023.

Spain

From June to September, various Spanish fleets target albacore, including longliners like NAO HOK 18-40m and other gear users like DFN 18-24m and PS 24-40m. They all use hooks for catching this species. These segments contributed EUR 43 million, or 32% of the GVA of the EU ICCAT fleet.

Two surface longliner segments over 24 metres mainly target blue shark and swordfish: NAO 24-40m and OFR 24-40m. They contributed EUR 25 million, accounting for 19% of the GVA of the EU ICCAT fleet.

Additionally, nine industrial purse seiners over 40 metres target tropical tuna. Although their presence decreased this year, with DaS falling to 17%, their landings made up 28% of the weight and 24% of the value of the ICCAT high-dependency fleet. This segment's estimated GVA is EUR 30 million, or 23% of the ICCAT EU fleet.

Portugal

As a result of the location of Portuguese territories (outermost and mainland), a significant part of the fleet from Portugal operates in waters regulated by the ICCAT and catch species assessed by this organization.
In 2023, 13 vessels belonging to PRT NAO HOK 1824 NGI and 13 vessels belonging to PRT NAO HOK 2440 NGI segment have operated in the ICCAT area, having 20% or more of their landings in value obtained from one or more of the species or stocks in the ICCAT RA.
This fleet targets mainly blue shark (452 and 68% of their landings in weight and 27% and 42% in value, respectively) and swordfish (46% and 31% in weight and 70% and 56% in value, respectively).
Regarding OFR longliners, o vessels from the segment PRT OFR HOK 2440 IWE and one from the PRT OFR HOK 40XX segment have operated in the ICCAT area in 2023. This fleet targeted blue shark (88% and 99% of their catches, respectively, corresponding to 7,100 tonnes that valued at EUR 10.7 million).
Gross profit was positive for all flee segments considered in the ICCAT RA, apart the PRT NAO HOK2440 NGI. Net profit was negative in all fleet segments considered in the ICCAT RA. Overall gross profit and net profit were -EUR 669,201 and -EUR 4,993,661.

Ireland

In 2023, two Irish trawlers operated in ICCAT RA, targeting albacore and bluefin tuna in the Bay of Biscay with trips lasting 4-6 weeks. They landed about 1,810 tonnes of catch worth EUR 3.5 million. Economic data for 2023 is not disclosed for confidentiality reasons.

Main drivers and limiting factors affecting fleet performance in the ICCAT RA

The main drivers are:

- It is noticeable that there is almost a linear relation between two correlated factors: an estimated 20% reduction of landings in weight of two tropical tuna stocks (skipjack and yellowfin) when compared to 2022; the implementation of the 72-days fishing closure for EU purse seiners in the Atlantic Ocean. In terms of the bigeye tuna, the EU quota has also not been fully utilised.
- In terms of trade, Spanish and Portuguese surface longliners resumed in 2023 trade relations after the COVID-19 crisis period (2020-2022) with countries with high level of demand of swordfish and frozen sharks such as Italy, Brazil or Senegal. The building and modernisation of storage and freezing facilities managed by some POs representing the fleets have also allowed partly to reduce operational costs to some companies from Galicia.
- Regarding variable operational costs, the energy price for the EU DWF remains quite high in 2023 (0.81 euro/litre) with respect of the historical average. However, this represents a reduction of 18% with respect to the peak of 2022 (0.99 euro/litre).
- For the case of the French freezer tuna purse seine fishing fleet over 40m (in terms of landed value), operating profitability indicators show a negative trend both in 2022 and 2023. The deterioration in macroeconomic conditions has led to a sharp rise in operating costs over the last few years (fuel, logistics, etc.), while prices rose only slightly. At the same time, demand for canned tuna has fallen between 2020 and 2023.

The main limiting factors are:

- On tropical tunas, as highlighted above, stringent management measures in force such as the time closure for FADs (Fish Aggregating Devices) in the Atlantic Ocean have had a significant negative economic impact in terms of fleet activity and level of catch of French and Spanish purse seine active vessels in ICCAT RA. This closure has caused effort displacements to Indian Ocean and, to a less extent, the Pacific Ocean as well as compromised the short-term economic viability of some companies whose vessels have traditionally operated in those fishing grounds.
- A reduction of the FAD closure was agreed at ICCAT Annual Meeting 2024 from 72 to 45 days starring in 2025. This decision was made at political level, with no scientific evidence supporting it given the inability from SCRS to assess the effectiveness of the closures for the recovery of the stocks.
- On sharks, the restrictions imposed by ICCAT for vessels to catch and retain on board, tranship or land North Atlantic shortfin mako have had a direct affectation in the catch of the EU surface longliners, with a considerable decrease in landings in this area reported by Spanish and Portuguese surface longliners. Given that mako is a commercially targeted species in addition to swordfish, tropical tunas and blue shark, it has had an impact on the business plans of the companies.
- The above referred trade measure was adopted because of the inclusion of shortfin mako under CITES Appendix 2. The need to issue a non-detrimental findings

document by trade authorities coupled with increase in observer coverage have already reduced reported catch of this species while increasing fishing pressure on other target species such as blue shark or swordfish as well as a displacement of effort to other areas (Indian and Pacific Ocean).

Outlook for 2024 and beyond

- The Spanish and French tropical purse seine fleets have reduced its operational activity in number of vessels in 2023 and 2024 as a result of the combined effect of the management measures adopted, namely the drifting FAD closure in the Atlantic Ocean for a duration between 72 and 90 days and also the proliferation and increase in competition from Asian owned purse seine fishing fleets flagged in African coastal countries such as Ghana, Senegal, Guinea, Republic of Guinea and Liberia. Should this situation continue, it is likely that there will be further reductions in activity and presence in the Atlantic Ocean and effort displacement to other fishing grounds in the Indian and Pacific Oceans.
- A decision was adopted at the ICCAT Annual Meeting in 2024 to reduce the FAD fishery closure from 72 to 45 days starting on January 2025. This will be accompanied by the strengthening of the scientific work to inform future decisions on the appropriate length of the FAD closure. This measure might help both to create a level playing field in terms of compliance between EU and non-EU fleets; and to partially mitigate the detrimental socio-economic effects for the EU purse seine fleet in the Atlantic.
- The entry into force of the EU Revised Fisheries Control Regulation on January 2024 contains specific rules for the DWF to be implemented in a phased approach that will be applied from 2025 onwards on aspects such as control of tuna landings and monitoring of transhipments at ports; derogation of 15pc margin of tolerance, or inclusion of some fleet segments as reference fleets for Electronic Monitoring Systems. This will likely create increased bureaucratic requirements and operational burden affecting performance for the activity of this segment.
- The French purse seine fishing segment targeting tropical tunas is going through a period of crisis, and important decisions are being taken by the owners of the vessels concerned: cessation of activity and sale of vessels, observed in 2023 and 2024. The survival of vessels in this fleet segment (and all jobs on board and ashore affected by this activity) will depend on improved competitiveness in the years ahead. Only good news is that the professional organization representing French frozen tuna producers has been certified to the MSC Fisheries Standard (a set of requirements for sustainable fishing) for Atlantic tuna in 2024, for a period of 5 years.

Regulatory framework

- In total, 20 new Recommendations and four Resolutions were adopted in the ICCAT 28th Regular Meeting of Commission covering relevant issues on Atlantic tuna and tuna-like species conservation and fisheries management.
- ICCAT agreed new protection measures for cetaceans, whale sharks and mobulid rays, which prohibit these species being retained on board, transhipped, or landed, in whole or in part.
- It also agreed new conservation and management measures for Atlantic blue shark, swordfish and North Atlantic albacore. It also set minimum standards for the optional implementation of Electronic Monitoring Systems.

- ICCAT has also planned the adoption in 2024 of a management procedure for northern Atlantic swordfish; and has advanced on plans for and to respond to Climate Change and biodiversity impacts.
- In 2023, full scientific stock assessments were carried out for three species: Atlantic blue shark (Prionace glauca), the most common shark species caught in ICCAT fisheries; eastern and western Atlantic sailfish (Istiophorus albicans), and northern Atlantic albacore (Thunnus alalunga).
- The effectiveness of the management measures adopted for North Atlantic albacore in recent years resulted in an increase in abundance, allowing ICCAT to set a new TAC of 47,251 tonnes for this stock for 2024 to 2026.
- On North Atlantic blue shark, an annual TAC of 30,000 tonnes was established, whereas in the case of the southern stock the TAC was set as 27,711 tonnes, which corresponds to reductions of 23.3% and 4.2%, respectively. It was agreed that, by 2025, the Scientific Committee shall inform on the feasibility, cost, options and tentative roadmap for developing a Management Strategy Evaluation framework (including inter alia candidate Harvest Control Rules) for the management of these stocks in the ICCAT Convention area.
- On North Atlantic swordfish, the Commission agreed to review at the 2024 Annual Meeting the final Candidate Management Procedures and select one for adoption and application to establish the TAC for 2025-2027 and future years.
- On tropical tunas, albeit the extensive discussions regarding the multi-annual conservation and management programme for these stocks, no progress was achieved. Therefore, an agreement was reached for a simple rollover of the current measures, which implies a Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for bigeye tuna of 62,000 tonnes for 2024, while the annual TAC for yellowfin will remain at 110,000 tonnes. In addition, to reduce the fishing mortality of juvenile bigeye and yellowfin tuna, a 72-day fishing closure and the limitation on the use of FADs in 2024 were also kept. Finally, it was agreed a roadmap for the work to be done next year to review existing measures and, inter alia, develop catch limits and associated catch verification mechanisms for 2025.
- The Commission also took some steps to reinforce and ensure the effective implementation of conservation and management measures. ICCAT adopted recommendations establishing minimum standards and programme requirements for the use of Electronic Monitoring Systems in ICCAT fisheries and a Resolution on core principles on Labour Standards in ICCAT fisheries. Amendments were also made to strengthen ICCAT’s existing port inspection and Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) vessel listing measures, and a Standing Working Group on Catch Document Schemes was established.
- On monitoring, control and surveillance, the ICCAT Compliance Committee focused on a more in-depth review of Contracting Parties and Cooperators implementation of ICCAT requirements and of the Schedule of Actions to address compliance issues. A more comprehensive approach was also agreed to encourage the use capacity building as a tool to improve compliance in ICCAT.
- In the ICCAT Annual Meeting in November 2024 (Limassol, Cyprus), an agreement was reached for the sustainable management of tropical tunas. This agreement includes a TAC increase for bigeye tuna, both for the European fleet and mainly to the benefit of developing coastal states.

- The agreement also defines a roadmap and pathway for the mandatory use of biodegradable and non-entangling Fish Aggregation Devices (FADs).
- Another important element for the EU fleet is the reduction of the FAD fishery closure to 45 days, and the strengthening of the scientific work to inform future decisions on the appropriate length of the FAD closure.
- Science-based management measures were reinforced with a recommendation for a Management Strategy Evaluation for tropical tunas. This will allow ICCAT to develop a long-term science-based approach to managing bigeye, skipjack and yellowfin tuna populations, ensuring that these species are healthy and abundant.
- ICCAT adopted a management procedure for North Atlantic swordfish, which will define a TAC for that species. In addition, the agreement on the allocation of catch limits ensures that catches align with the TAC. The new EU yearly catch limit represents an increase of 1,569 tonnes in comparison to the previous year.
- The EU also tabled several proposals aimed at protecting sharks and led the process to kick-off a blue shark Management Strategy Evaluation.

3.9.4 IOTC - Indian Ocean Tuna Commission

Background

The Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) is the RFMO responsible for managing fisheries targeting tuna and tuna-like species in the Indian Ocean and adjacent seas. Established in 1993 and coming into force in 1996, IOTC is an intergovernmental organization comprising countries bordering the Indian Ocean as well as those with interests in the region's tuna fisheries. The IOTC aims to foster cooperation among its members to conserve and utilize tuna stocks optimally while ensuring the development of sustainable fisheries in the area. To meet these objectives, IOTC members convene annually to discuss and adopt measures for the conservation and management of tuna and tuna-like species.

The EU became a member of IOTC in 1995. Other IOTC members include Australia, Bangladesh, China, Comoros, France on behalf of its overseas territories, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Kenya, Korea, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Seychelles, Somalia, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Thailand, the United Kingdom, and Yemen.

The IOTC's area of competence covers the Indian Ocean (FAO statistical areas 51 and 57) and adjacent seas north of the Antarctic Convergence. This jurisdiction ensures the effective conservation and management of fish stocks that migrate into or out of the Indian Ocean. The species under IOTC management include tropical tuna stocks (such as skipjack, yellowfin, and bigeye), albacore tuna, frigate tuna, and swordfish. Additionally, the IOTC Secretariat collects data on non-target, associated, and dependent species affected by tuna fishing operations, including marine turtles, marine mammals, seabirds, sharks, and other incidental bycatch species.

Table 3.9.5. List of major species or stocks covered by IOTC.

Tropical tuna		Temperate tuna		Neritic tuna		Billfish		Sharks	
Bigeye tuna	BET	Albacore	ALB	Bullet tuna	BLT	Black marlin	BLM	Blue shark	BSH
Skipjack tuna	SKJ			Frigate tuna	FRI	Blue marlin	BUM	Oceanic whitetip shark	OCS
Yellowfin tuna	YFT			Kawakawa	KAW	Indo-Pacific sailfish	SFA	Scalloped hammerhead	SPL
				Longtail tuna	LOT	Striped marlin	MLS	Shortfin mako	SMA
						Swordfish	SWO	Silky shark	FAL

Source: EWG 25-07

Fleet selection and data limitations

The EU fleet targeting IOTC species, excluding the Outermost Regions (OMR), is entirely a distant-water fleet (DWF). The EU IOTC fleet includes all segments with reported landings of major species or stocks in the IOTC region in 2023. Due to low dependency on these stocks by some segments, only a general overview will be assessed, excluding economic performance.

To analyze the EU IOTC DWF, segments over 24 metres LOA with at least 20% of their landing value from IOTC species in 2023 are selected. Segments targeting IOTC species in Outermost Regions (Reunion and Mayotte) are covered in the EU Outermost Regions chapter.

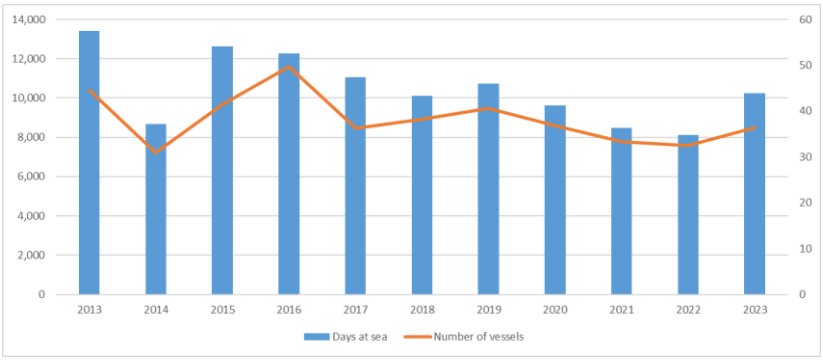
This year's fleet selection excludes vessels in the 18-24 metres category due to their absence but maintains other criteria: consideration of major IOTC species and setting high dependency on IOTC stock value at 20%.

EU IOTC Fleet

In 2023, four Member States operated in the IOTC Convention region, consistent with 2022: Spain, France, Portugal, and Italy. The EU fleet active in 2023 included approximately 36 vessels: 24 from Spain (21 in 2022), 9 from France (11 in 2022), 2 from Portugal, and 1 from Italy.

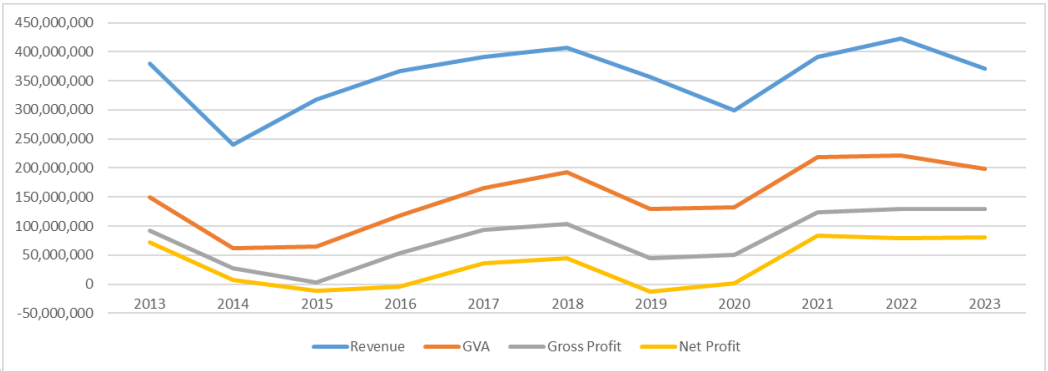
Economic performance in 2023 was mixed. Profitability indicators, such as gross and net profit, matched or exceeded 2022 levels, but revenue and GVA dropped significantly due to lower energy costs and crew wages. The GVA was EUR 198 million and the gross profit was around EUR 129 million, showing small variations and a stable trend over the past two years.

Figure 3.9.15. Trends on total number of vessels and Days at Sea for the EU Atlantic DWF on IOTC.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.9.16. Trends of economic indicators (Revenue, GVA, Gross profit and Net profit) for the EU Atlantic IOTC DWF on IOTC species in 2023.



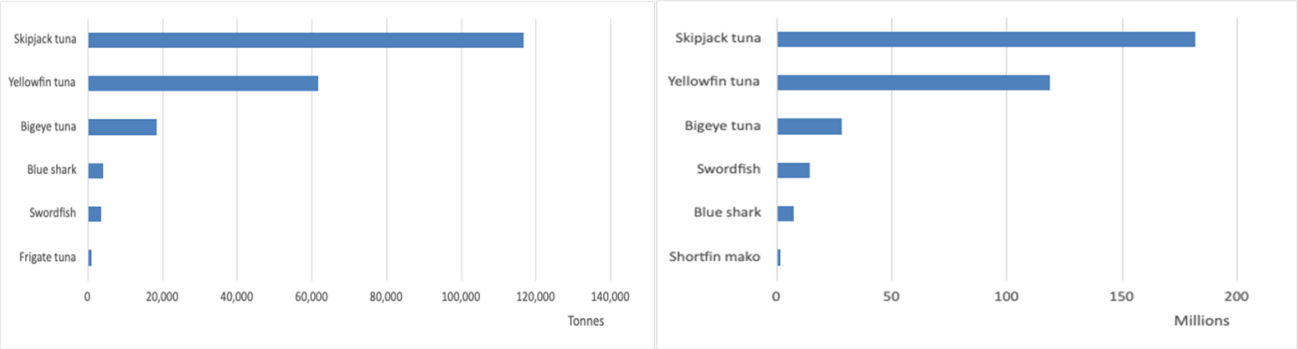
Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

The top species in landings were the tropical tuna species targeted by purse seiners, which have decreased in volume and value compared to 2022. Skipjack landed 116,700 tonnes (130,663 tonnes in 2022) and EUR 182 million in value (EUR 219 million in 2022), followed by yellowfin with 61,800 tonnes (66,269 tonnes in 2022) and EUR 119 million (EUR 179 million in 2022), and bigeye with 18,600 tonnes (19,955 tonnes in 2022) and EUR 29 million (EUR 47 million in 2022).

In contrast, the main commercial species targeted by surface longliners have experienced an increase compared to 2022. Blue shark accounted for 4,300 tonnes (2,798 tonnes in 2022) and EUR 8 million in value (EUR 6 million in 2022), while shortfin mako recorded 500 tonnes (475 tonnes in 2022) and EUR 2 million (EUR 1.7 million in 2022). Landings of swordfish amounted to 3,700 tonnes (2,292 tonnes in 2022) and EUR 15 million in value (EUR 12 million in 2022).

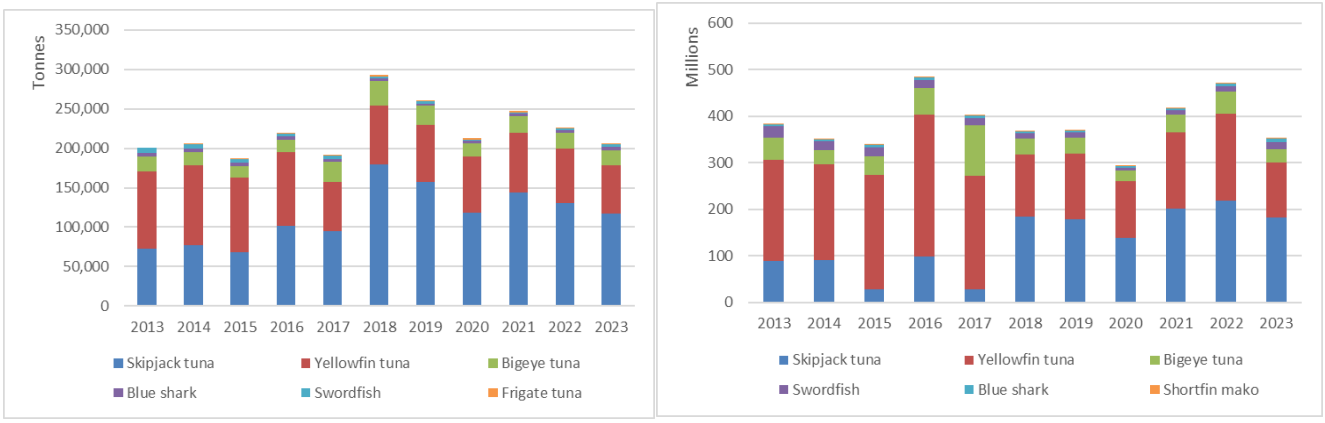
There has been an upward trend in the value of landings from 2020 to 2022 due to increased first sale prices of all species of tropical tuna and swordfish, as indicated in the figure below.

Figure 3.9.16. Landings in weight and value by the EU fleet of IOTC major species,2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.9.17. Trends on landings in weight and value by the EU fleet of IOTC major species.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

EU IOTC fleet with high dependency

In 2023, four EU IOTC DWF fleet segments over 24 metres showed high dependency on IOTC activity with 24 vessels (down from 27 in 2022). These segments include Spanish, French, and Italian purse seiners above 40 metres LOA, and Portuguese longliners above 40 metres. Landings for these fleets amounted to 199,300 tonnes, valued at EUR 334 million, covering 96% of the region's landings by weight and 94% by value.

Table 3.9.6. Selected IOTC fleet with high dependency, 2023.

Year	MS	Fleet Segment	Number of vessels	Dependency (% of value of landings)	Landings in weight (kg)	Landings in value (EUR)
2023	PRT	PRT OFR HOK40XX IWE	1	46	971,747	3,166 ,015
2023	ITA	ITA OFR PS 40XX IWE	1	96	3,314,458	12,923,376
2023	ESP	ESP OFR PS 40XX NGI	13	66	134,963,061	218,979,538
2023	FRA	FRA OFR PS 40XX IWE *	9	64	60,083,243	98,761,458

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Results by Member State fleet

France

As of 2023, the French industrial fleet of Purse Seiners over 40 metres comprised 19 vessels, including four vessels registered on the island of Mayotte, clustered with one vessel HOK VL2440. The number of fishing vessels in this fleet has remained relatively stable over the years; however, the situation is anticipated to change in the coming years for various reasons outlined below. The majority of this fleet consists predominantly of freezer tuna seiners operating in both the Indian Ocean and the Atlantic Ocean. Approximately half of the fleet operates in the Indian Ocean, while the other half operates in the Atlantic.

In 2023, the French industrial fleet of Purse Seiners operating in the Indian Ocean consisted of 10 vessels out of the total 19 vessels in the segment (including 4 vessels registered on the island of Mayotte). Regarding catch composition, yellowfin and skipjack tuna accounted for 58% and 34% of the total landings by volume, respectively, followed by bigeye tuna at 6%.

The average age of these 10 active vessels reached 20 years in 2023, with an average length of 80 metres. The FTE onboard was approximately 27 employees per vessel in 2023, with fishers hailing from France and several foreign countries, primarily African nations.

The total volume of landings by weight of tropical seiners amounted to approximately 60,000 tonnes in 2023 for vessels within the fleet segment, reflecting a decrease of 10% compared to the previous year. The estimated value of these landings stood at EUR 100 million.

Despite these figures, the economic performance of the entire fleet segment demonstrated negative profitability in 2023. The overall French tuna purse seiner fleet segment, encompassing activity across three oceans, reported a gross profit deficit of -EUR 2.4 million and a net profit deficit of -EUR 66 million.

Italy

In 2023, one Italian purse seine vessel over 40 metres targeted tropical tuna (skipjack and yellowfin) in the IOTC area, landing around 3,534 tonnes. Economic data for 2023 is confidential and not reported.

Portugal

An estimated one out of two vessels in the region targeted large pelagic species in the Pacific Ocean, within the IOTC RA. This fleet consists of longliners up to 24 metres. Due to confidentiality, detailed activity in this area cannot be disclosed. Key species include blue shark and swordfish.

Spain

The Spanish industrial fishing fleet in the IOTC RA consists of 13 large purse seine vessels (over 40 metres), 12 longline vessels (24-40 metres), and 2 longline vessels over 40 metres. The purse seiners target tropical tuna, while longliners focus on swordfish and blue shark. Purse seiners depend heavily (66%) on this region for their landings by weight and value. Longliners have a lower dependency, averaging a 10% share in value (16% for 24-40 metres, 5% for over 40 metres).

The Spanish industrial purse seiner fleet also operates in the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, and Pacific Oceans. This segment is the most significant EU fleet in the IOTC RA, landing approximately 135,000 tonnes worth EUR 219 million. The fleet was profitable in 2023, similar to 2022 and 2021, though GVA decreased by 14% compared to 2022.

Drivers and limiting factors affecting the economic performance of the EU fleet

The main drivers are:

- The Spanish and French purse seiners above 40 metres LOA show both a high degree of dependency in this area. The Spanish purse seine fleet degree of dependency is above 66% in terms of value of landings looking at the last five-year period analysed (2020-2024); while the French purse seiners degree of dependency is above 60% for the same period. This confirms that the Indian Ocean is currently the main fishing ground for both fleet segments followed by the Atlantic Ocean, where they have over 20% of their shared value of landings. There is also one Italian purse seiner above 40 metres consistently showing almost a 100% dependency in this fishing ground for the last years.
- There seems to be stability in the profitability reported by the EU purse seiner fleet in 2023 despite the decrease in value of species in particular for the tropical tuna stocks in comparison with the previous three years (price per kilo). However, the profitability between the Spanish and the French tuna purse seine vessels appears to be very uneven. Despite operating under similar conditions and with similar numbers in the region (13 Spanish vessels and 9 French), the Spanish PS vessels land more than double both in weight (135,000 tonnes vs 60,000 tonnes) and value (EUR 219 million vs EUR 99 million) than the French ones.
- The current trade restrictions adopted by CITES and the corresponding limitation in catch in ICCAT RA for Northern Atlantic Shortfin Mako might have partially influenced in the market behaviour for shortfin mako stock in the Indian Ocean, reaching a first

sale price above 4 euro/kilo in 2023 and 2024, almost double than in the period 2017-2022.

The main limiting factors are:

- Yellowfin tuna's quota in the Indian Ocean, implemented since 2017, has had an impact on purse seine fishing activity. The EU adopted catch limits assigned to purse seine fleet from Italy, France and Spain. The implementation of the catch limits by each Member State imposed more stringent management to reduce in average 17% of the catch from the period 2014-2016. If it is considered the EU catch for the reference year (2014), the effective reduction by EU flag states differed markedly, with Spain assigned the highest reduction, at 21%, while such reduction was at 4% for the French fleet (Italy had no activity in 2014). In 2019 the Spanish government also implemented a limit on total tropical tuna catch that reduced fishing opportunities for the Spanish fleet since that year, while such arrangement does not exist for other fleets. The IOTC also imposed enhanced reporting and control obligations coupled with a reduction in the ratio of one supply vessels for two purse seiners. This ratio was then revised to two supply vessels for five purse seiners.
- The measures adopted in 2018 to reduce 15% average catch of yellowfin tuna have been reflected in the DCF data with a proportional decrease in landings for the EU purse seiner fleet, and a corresponding sudden increase in skipjack caught in recent years caught. Skipjack has a lower market value then yellowfin and bigeye, resulting in lower profit margins in overall terms.
- Regarding estimate of total catch, including target species and non-target species (by-catch and discards), there are data deficiencies and gaps that need to be addressed. Currently there is a non-existing level of reporting of by-catch data by most CPCs, with only EU purse seiners and long liners collecting this sort of information systematically. This ends up in a rough estimation of nominal discards. There is a need to fill this gap to improve knowledge for sensitive species such as turtles or silky sharks.
- Regarding fishing effort, more information is needed in the way it is accounted for and reported for all gears in the IOTC area. Overfishing and IUU fishing by non-EU fleets undermines conservation and management of tuna stocks and puts in risk the future economic viability of the fishery for the EU fleet, due to the deterioration of the stock and a decrease of quotas due to the lack of level playing field between all concerned CPCs.
- Overall, the reduction of purse seiner’s fishing opportunities is already creating negative socio-economic consequences for the economies and livelihoods of some coastal countries in the Indian Ocean where these companies have investments and work with supply chains. Some of the detrimental effects are reduced access fees, lack of raw material at canning factories, and economic loss due to a drop of services and economic activity in several coastal countries.

Outlook for 2024 and beyond

In recent years, the IOTC adopted management measures including catch and effort limits for purse seine and other fisheries. For tropical tunas, the measures adopted include Harvest Control Rules for skipjack, catch limits for yellowfin tuna and measures to limit fishing effort for purse seine fisheries as a whole; as well as procedures on a fish aggregating devices (FADs) management plan, including a limitation on the number of FADs, more detailed specifications of catch reporting from FAD sets, and the development of improved FAD

designs to reduce the incidence of entanglement of non-target species. It also includes a resolution for the conservation of albacore caught in the IOTC area of competence, observer schemes and regional programme for monitoring transhipments at sea.

- The 28th Annual Meeting was hosted by the EU and took place in La Réunion, France, from 13 to 17 April 2025. There were a record number of 26 proposals, of which 11 were introduced by the EU. A total of 14 proposals were adopted. This meeting delivered some important results for sustainable fisheries in the Indian Ocean and concluded in the adoption of several crucial conservation and management measures grouped within the following themes:
- For the first time, IOTC set specific and binding catch limits for the three main species of tropical tuna, i.e. yellowfin tuna, bigeye tuna and now skipjack tuna. In relation to the later, following the introduction of management procedures for skipjack tuna in May 2024, IOTC members have reached a significant agreement. Major fishing parties (such as the EU, Indonesia, and the Maldives) will now have their own binding catch limits, while other countries that wish to develop their fisheries are encouraged to do it in a responsible manner, with the goal of maintaining catches to sustainable levels before being allocated their own catch limit.
- On yellowfin tuna, the latest assessment of the stock estimates that the species is no longer overfished or subject to overfishing. This positive development is a result of the rebuilding plan adopted by IOTC in 2021, to which the EU has been the most important contributor by significantly reducing its catches over the last five years.
- There were improved opportunities for the bigeye tuna, following the EU-Japan initiative to increase the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) by 15%, in line with the scientific advice.
- A major achievement was the adoption of the EU's proposal to reduce the mortality of shortfin mako shark through a retention ban. The new measure requires the release of all live specimens immediately, reducing mortality rates. To avoid wasteful discarding practices, which provide no ecological benefits, retention of dead specimens in the presence of a human or electronic observers, who can verify the status of the animal, will still be possible.
- Furthermore, there was an additional proposal to strengthen conservation efforts for these species.
- Although the EU's proposal to introduce the principle of 'fins naturally attached' could not be adopted as such due to renewed opposition from some countries (including China), important improvements were achieved to control and prevent the unacceptable practice of finning.
- This approach of comprehensive management of tuna stocks with precise catch limits for the major harvesters is expected to benefit both the biological sustainability of the tuna stocks and provide clarity and stability for fishing operators, allowing them to plan better their business strategies.
- While the IOTC’s Scientific Committee new stock assessment (2024) provided a more accurate picture of the yellowfin stock's health, it also advised caution given the overfished situation of the stocks in recent years. Therefore, SC recommended to wait to decide on a possible increase in catch levels until an additional review of the existing data is carried out later this year. As a result, the IOTC decided to postpone any substantive decisions on the total allowable catch for yellowfin tuna until 2026.
- The EU remains committed to continuing to promote the principle of ‘fins naturally attached’ for the protection of sharks across the Ocean to prevent illegal and

unsustainable practices by tabling new proposals in the coming years until a fully comprehensive measure is adopted.

- The number of Spanish French purse seine fishing vessels in this fleet has remained relatively stable over the years, but the situation is set to change over the next few years, for different reasons including rising operational costs, TAC reductions and technical measures (e.g. limitation in the number of FADs that can be used) affecting the economic performance of the fleet.
- There are two major problems for the long term-viability of those segments, namely:
- The ever-increasing regulations targeted mainly on limiting and reducing the use of drifting FADs with the aim to reduce fishing mortality of overfished yellowfin and bigeye stocks.
- This regulatory pressure in practice affects almost exclusively the EU purse seine fleet segment, which represents less than 20% of the total catch for those stocks. The other gears and fleet segments contributing fishing mortality such as non-EU longliners, pole and line, seiners using anchored FADs and driftnets do not have any specific management measures. Furthermore, exemptions have been granted to Small Island Developing States and countries with a limited number of purse seiners, such as Korea, but not to other developing or less developed states. This creates a significant disparity, disadvantaging notably EU fleets and disrupting level playing field.
- Additionally, IOTC continues to reduce the number of supply vessels allowed per flag state. This policy discriminates against shipowners with only one or two purse seiners within the same flag state, as they may lose their supply vessels. Coupled with the prohibition on registering new supply vessels in the IOTC's authorized vessel register this measure also hinders developing states from expanding their fleets. Supply vessels are crucial for the purse seine fishery, as they help manage and recover deployed FADs and reduce fleet fuel consumption, which is a vital factor given the current surge in global fuel prices.
- The IOTC has shown some governance structural deficiencies as well as inability to implement effective measures to enforce proper monitoring, control and surveillance of key commercial stocks. Other measures proposed to improve transparency and better data for scientific analysis were either rejected or weakened, including proposals to improve data collection and reporting, catch and effort, tropical tuna discard ban, the EU’s High Sea Boarding and Inspection Scheme and observer coverage increase.
- The above factors combined are threatening the economic viability of the EU purse seine fleet in the Indian Ocean, causing operational constraints, increasing fuel costs and reducing in volume of catch for the main tropical tuna stocks over the last years. This might have a spillover effect on changes in business strategies and effort displacements to other oceans to adapt to this stringent regulatory scenario.
- Operating profitability of the purse seine segment of the French fishing fleet (in terms of landed value), is negative in 2023, as in the previous year. The deterioration in the macroeconomic conditions has led to a sharp rise in operating costs over the last few years (fuel, logistics, etc.), despite prices have risen. At the same time, the demand for canned tuna has fallen between 2020 and 2022.
- The French tropical purse seine fishing segment is going through a period of crisis, and important decisions are being taken by the owners of the vessels concerned: cessation of activity and sale of vessels, observed in 2023 and 2024.
- The survival of vessels in this fleet segment (and all jobs on board and ashore affected by this activity) will depend on improved competitiveness in the years ahead. Some

good news is that the professional organization representing French frozen tuna producers has been certified to the MSC Fisheries Standard (a set of requirements for sustainable fishing) for Atlantic tuna in 2024, for a period of 5 years, giving fishing companies hope that their catches will be better valued.

3.9.5 CECAF - Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic

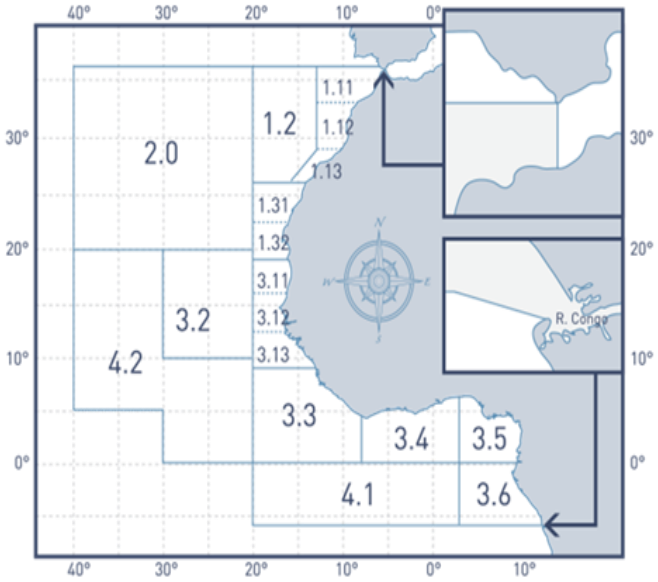
Background

The Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic Fisheries (CECAF) was established in 1967 by Resolution 1/48 adopted by the FAO Council. It serves as an advisory body without any mandate for fisheries management within its area of competence (Figure 3.9.15). The Committee's purview encompasses all living marine resources within its designated region.

The Committee comprises Member Nations and Associate Members of the Organization, selected by the Director-General of FAO. The members include: Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Equatorial Guinea, EU, France, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Liberia, Mauritania, Morocco, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Poland, Romania, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Spain, Togo, and the United States of America.

The majority of the EU fleet activities in this area are conducted under the framework of six tuna Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (SFPAs) in West Africa, including Cape Verde, Ivory Coast, Gabon, Liberia, Sao Tomé e Principe, and Senegal, as well as three Multi-species SFPAs with Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, and Morocco. These mixed or multi-species agreements provide fishing opportunities for demersal and pelagic species, tuna, cephalopods, and shrimp, primarily involving trawlers, purse seiners, and longliners.

Figure 3.9.15. Map of the CECAF Area of Competence.



Source: FAO http://www.fao.org/figis/geoserver/factsheets/rfbs.html

Fleet selection and data comparisons/limitations

The CECAF region's activity largely involves tuna fishery, overlapping with ICCAT. To minimize this overlap, since AER 2022, three criteria are used: (1) Focus on fleets targeting small pelagic and demersal fisheries by excluding major ICCAT species; (2) Select vessels

over 24 metres LOA to exclude OMR local fleets in national waters; (3) Analyse fleet segments predominantly catching from Outermost Regions under the EU Outermost Regions chapter. Consequently, landings include only demersal and small pelagic species, excluding tropical tuna and big pelagics within ICCAT's remit.

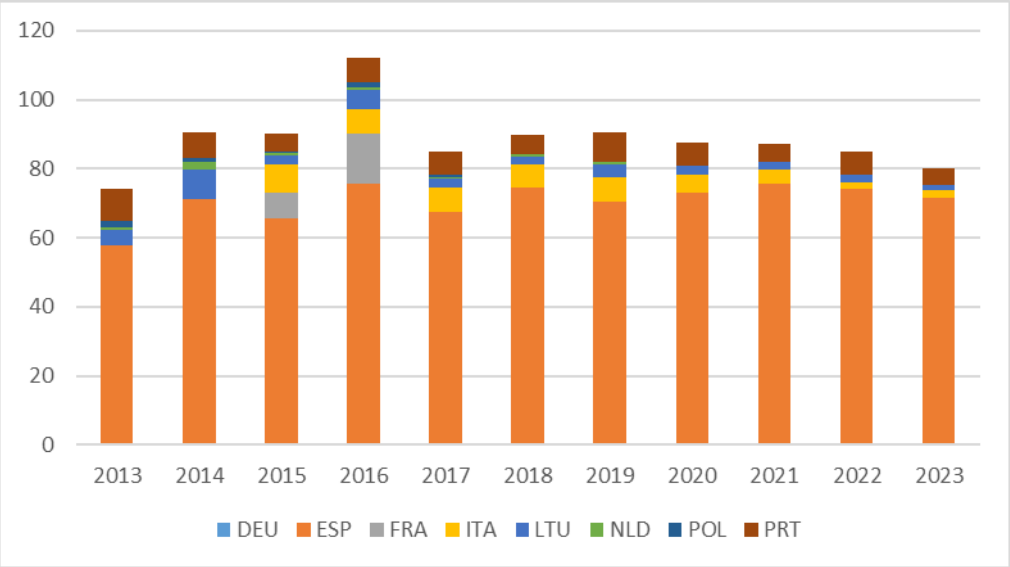
EWG 25-07 emphasizes the need for an in-depth assessment of the economic performance of EU fleets in CECAF to understand its importance for small pelagic and demersal stocks. Despite current data limitations, disaggregated data will be available for future analysis. This will help assess the economic dependence and performance of EU fleets accessing fishing stocks under SFPAs in third countries' EEZ waters.

France primarily targets tuna in the area, with no CECAF non-ICCAT data. Italy and Poland have low activity. Portugal has some activity outside its OMRs, while Germany's dependency is very low.

General description of the EU fleet activity in CECAF

The EU distant water fleet defined here as over 24 metres LOA with some activity in CECAF in 2023 comprised an estimated 80 vessels from four Members States in 2022: Spain, Portugal, Italy, and Lithuania.

Figure 3.9.16. Estimated vessels by MS for the EU fleet active in CECAF Area of Competence.

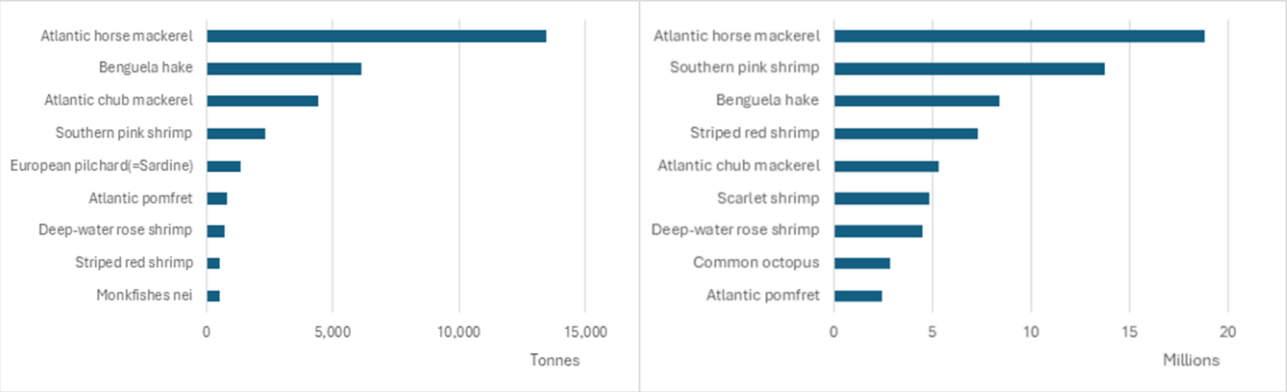


Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Historically, the main species landed in terms of value are tropical tunas (yellowfin, skipjack, and bigeye tuna), chub mackerel, and Senegalese hake. Excluding the ICCAT major stocks, the top species landed by weight are Atlantic horse mackerel (HOM) with 13,500 tonnes, Benguela hake (HKB) with 6,100 tonnes, Atlantic chub mackerel (VMA) with 4,400 tonnes, and southern pink shrimp (SOP) with 2,400 tonnes.

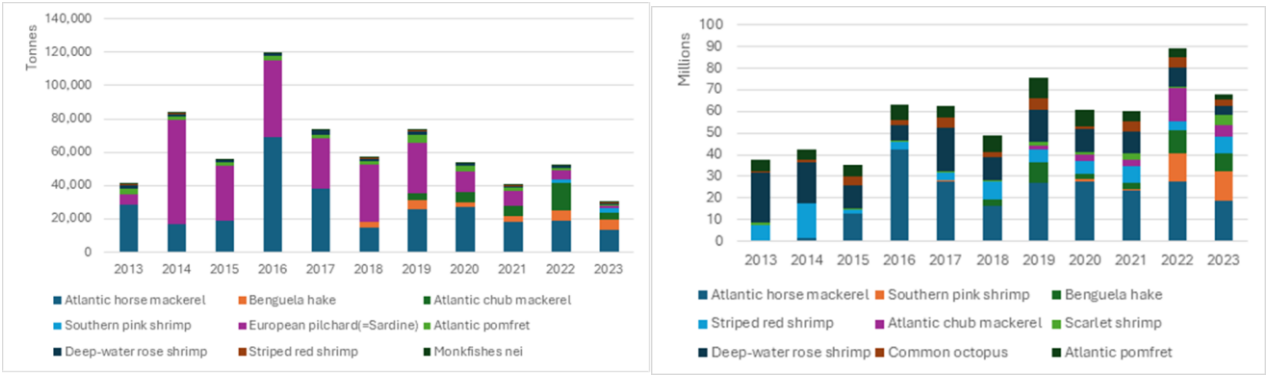
These species were also significant in terms of landed value. Atlantic horse mackerel amounted to EUR 19 million, followed by southern pink shrimp (EUR 14 million), Benguela hake (EUR 8 million), stripped red shrimp (EUR 7 million), Atlantic chub mackerel (EUR 5 million), and scarlet and deep-water rose shrimps (around EUR 5 million each).

Figure 3.9.17. Landings in value and weight by EU DWF activity in the CECAF Area of Competence, 2023.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Figure 3.9.18. Trends on landings in value and weight by EU DWF activity in the CECAF Area of Competence.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Description of the EU CECAF DWF with a high dependency on the area

In 2023, the distant water fleet, defined as vessels over 24 metres LOA with high dependency on CECAF excluding ICCAT species, comprised approximately 40 vessels from three Member States: Spain, Italy, and Lithuania. Notably, Portugal is absent from the list of member countries with a high dependency on CECAF since 2022.

Based on the aforementioned criteria, only four fleet segments were identified with a dependency greater than 20% on CECAF activity for both 2022 and 2023. Total landings in 2023 amounted to 35,000 tonnes, valued at EUR 86 million, with an estimated employment of 1,150 FTEs.

Spain accounted for the highest number of vessels, with 37 vessels (93% of the total) including demersal trawlers and longliners ranging between 24-40 metres. Italy followed with 2 demersal trawlers over 40 metres, and Lithuania had one pelagic trawler over 40 metres.

Among these four fleet segments, two exhibited a very high degree of dependency on this area (close to 50% or more of the total share of value of their landings): Spanish demersal trawlers (24-40 metres) and Italian pelagic trawlers (over 40 metres). The other two fleet segments showed relatively lower dependency: Lithuanian pelagic trawler (30%) and Spanish longliners (24-40 metres) (24%).

Table 3.9.7. Summary results for the 4 long distance fleet segments over 24 metres LOA operating in the CECAF area with high dependency on non-ICCAT species (EU-MAP).

CECAF EU Fleet segments with high dependency	Number of vessels	Revenue (M EUR)	GVA (M EUR)	Value of landings (M EUR)	Landings in Weight (thousand tonnes)
ESP OFR DTS2440 NGI	30	57.59	4.37	54.54	14.25
ESP OFR HOK2440 NGI *	7	4.79	-5.86	2.64	0.70
ITA OFR DTS40XX IWE	2	-	-	4.09	0.84
LTU OFR TM 40XX NEU *	1	28.49	7.68	25.00	19.20

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

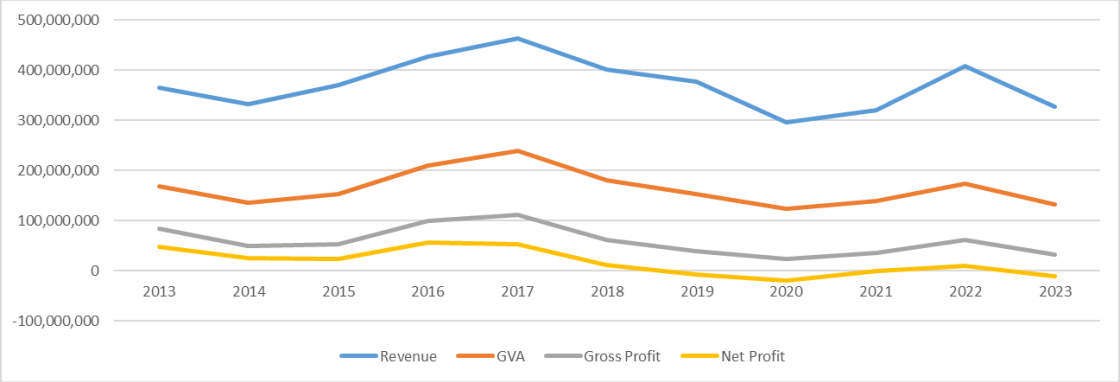
The Lithuanian pelagic trawlers over 40 metres recorded the highest landing weight at 19,200 tonnes, although this represents a significant decrease compared to previous years when the figure was reported at approximately 38,000 tonnes. Next, the Spanish demersal trawlers between 24-40 metres landed 14,300 tonnes, a value consistent with the landings reported in 2021 and 2022.

Italian demersal trawlers over 40 metres achieved the highest value-to-weight ratio of 4,846 euro/tonne, which marked a substantial decline from previous years (8,744 euro/tonne in 2022 and 6,950 euro/tonne in 2021). They were followed by Spanish demersal trawlers of 24-40 metres (3,829 euro/tonne), and Spanish longliners of 24-40 metres (3,754 euro/tonne). The robust performance of these three fleets can be attributed to factors such as proximity to fishing grounds, the high value of targeted species, and reduced operational costs related to landing in home ports and marketing.

Lithuanian pelagic trawlers over 40 metres presented the lowest value-to-weight ratio at 1,302 euros per tonne, which may be partially explained by the relatively lower market price of small pelagic fish compared to demersal species.

The figures below illustrate the main economic indicators for selected fleet segments representing the distant-water fleet (DWF) sector (over 24 metres with a >=20% landing value dependency on non-ICCAT major species).

Figure 3.9.19. Trends on economic indicators for the EU fleet with high dependency in CECAF (excluding ICCAT species).



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Results by Member State fleet

Italy

In 2023, two Italian trawlers over 40 metres operated in FAO 34 (CECAF Divisions 34.3.3 and 34.3.1), targeting demersal species. The fleet, fully dependent on CECAF, landed about 843 tonnes worth EUR 4.1 million. Although landings increased by 16%, value dropped by 39% due to a higher proportion of lower-value species. The common octopus was the most valuable catch. Economic data for 2023 remain confidential.

Lithuania

In 2023, Lithuanian DWF landed 19,000 tonnes of seafood in the CECAF area, down from 44% of total landings in 2022 to 22%. This decline resulted from ending the fisheries agreement with Morocco, limiting fishing to Mauritanian waters. The number of sea days dropped by 39%, totaling 377. Key species landed were Atlantic horse mackerel (61%) and Chub mackerel (22%). FTE in CECAF operations decreased by 12%, reaching 93. Despite reduced activity, the DWF segment still generated EUR 7.7 million in gross value added and EUR 5.4 million in gross profit, a 39% decrease from the previous year, while maintaining a stable gross profit margin of 19%.

Spain

Spanish Hook and line 24-40 segment (ESP OFR HOK 2440 NGI*)

The Spanish hook and line 24-40m segment is a heterogeneous and clustered fleet segment that includes vessels starting from 18m. It is important to note that some of these vessels did not operate in CECAF waters. Overall, the dependency on FAO area 34 constitutes 19% of the landed weight and 24% of the landed value. The primary species targeted by this fleet segment in CECAF waters is Atlantic pomfret (POA), which accounts for 16% of the landing weight and 20% of the landing value.

Spanish Demersal trawler 24-40 segment (ESP OFR DTS 2440 NGI)

The Spanish demersal trawlers, measuring 24-40 metres, reported 30 active vessels out of 40. The activity level remains stable at 75% of the days at sea, but economic dependency has decreased by 28% since 2017, despite increases in FAO area 47. This segment landed nearly 14,000 tonnes for the second consecutive year, slowing the decline seen since 2019.

Landings were valued at EUR 55 million in 2023 (3% less than in 2022). However, profitability has deteriorated, resulting in losses in both gross and net profit.

Main drivers and factors affecting the performance of the fleet

Overview of SFPAs between the EU and African partner countries:

The EU has currently 11 SFPA protocols in force with third countries. There are two main types of agreements**:** tuna agreements that allow EU vessels to pursue migrating tuna stocks as they move along the shores of Africa and through the Indian Ocean, as well as in the Pacific Ocean; and mixed agreements that provide access to a wide range of fish stocks in the partner country's exclusive economic zone.

- As of June 2025, the EU has 7 tuna agreements in force: Cabo Verde, Gabon, Kiribati, Seychelles, Mauritius, Madagascar and The Gambia (with a hake component for the last two); and 3 are mixed agreements: Greenland, Guinea Bissau and Mauritania.
- For the CECAF area specifically, the EU has in force bilateral Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (SFPA) with the following 5 countries: Cabo Verde, Gabon, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania and The Gambia.
- The EU has “dormant” agreements with Morocco, Senegal, Guinea Equatorial, and Liberia. "Dormant agreements" stand for countries that have a fisheries partnership agreement which is still in force but there is no implementing protocol in force. EU vessels are therefore not allowed to fish in waters under the regime of the dormant agreements.
- The Morocco agreement expired in July 2023 and the ECJ ruling in October 2024 dismissed the appeal and ratified the sovereignty of Western Sahara over its EEZ on the legal dispute between Morocco and Western Sahara (rulings T-344/19 and T-356/19) in relation to the 2019 EU-Morocco trade agreements regarding fisheries and agricultural products. Almost 90% of the catch from EU fishing fleets in the SFPA with Morocco took place in the now acknowledged as waters under the control of Western Sahara.
- The SFPA with Senegal expired in November 2014 and was not renewed due to the identification as non-cooperating country with IUU fishing (“yellow card”). The fisheries agreement had allowed in the past NO EU vessels from Spain and France to fish in the Senegalese waters as a part of the tuna network fisheries agreements in West Africa with a limited demersal hake component.

Summary of non-tuna or mixed fisheries agreements in CECAF area in force:

- The EU and Mauritania have signed a sustainable fisheries partnership agreement (SFPA) on 15 November 2021, for a duration of six years, tacitly renewable. The new protocol to the SFPA was signed the same day and entered into provisional application on 16 November 2021 for a duration of 5 years, i.e. until 15 November 2026. Under the protocol, the EU fleet is allowed to fish in Mauritanian waters for shrimp, demersal fish, tuna and small pelagic fish, up to a total of 287,050 tonnes a year, under improved operational conditions. In addition to the fees paid by the European fleet (tonnage fees and para-fiscal taxes), the EU pays a financial contribution of EUR 57.5 million per year for the access to waters. EU also pays EUR 16,5 million for the whole period of application of the protocol to support local

fishing communities in Mauritania and to improve fisheries governance. This is a multi-species agreement with eight categories depending on a combination of parameters including target species and fleet segments. Each has a reference tonnage and a different fee per tonne, with percentage of by-catch allowed for certain species.

- The SFPA with Cabo Verde has been tacitly renewed since 2007. The current protocol has a duration of 5 years (23.07.2024-22.07.2029). This is part of the tuna network fisheries agreements in West Africa with a reference tonnage of 7,000 tonnes per year and fishing opportunities for 56 EU vessels from Spain, Portugal and France. In terms of fleet segments, it has 24 freezer tuna seiners, 10 pole and line tuna vessels, and 22 surface longliners. The financial contribution amounts up to EUR 780,000 per year depending on utilisation, out of which EUR 430,000 to support the fisheries sector of Cabo Verde.
- The SFPA with Guinea Bissau is a multi-species agreement covering tuna as well as cephalopods, shrimps, demersal species and small pelagic fishing categories. The agreement is part of the tuna network of fisheries agreements in West Africa and is one of only 2 active multi-species agreements in the region (the other being Mauritania). The current protocol applies provisionally as of 18 September 2024 for a duration of 5 years. The protocol allows EU vessels from Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece and France to fish in Guinea-Bissau's EEZ waters subject to surplus. The financial contribution is EUR 17 million/year, including EUR 4.5 million per year to support the fisheries sector. In terms of fishing opportunities, it has a reference tonnage for the following species: Cephalopods and fish: 3,500 GRT per year; Shrimps: 3,700 GRT per year; and small pelagics: 0t per year with possibility of revision pending favourable scientific assessment. On fleet segments, it has license for 13 Pole and line tuna vessels and 28 Freezer tuna seiners and longliner vessels.
- On July 2025, the SFPA with The Gambia will expire pending of renewal. The protocol allows EU vessels from Spain, Greece and France to fish in the Gambian waters, and is part of the tuna network fisheries agreements in West Africa. This 6-year agreement was signed on 31 July 2019, covering the period 31.07.2019 – 30.07.2025 with a financial contribution of EUR 550,000 per year for six years, out of which a specific contribution of EUR 275,000 is dedicated to the support of the fisheries policy of Gambia.
- The SPFA concluded between the EU and Gabon on 29 June 2021 and has a duration of 6 years, being tacitly renewable. The duration of the protocol is five years expiring in June 2026. This fisheries agreement allows EU vessels from Spain and France to fish in the Gabonese waters and is part of the tuna network fisheries agreements in West Africa with a reference tonnage of 32,000 tonnes per year. Although the main species is tuna, there is an optional deep-sea crustacean under exploratory fishery. The financial contribution is of EUR 2.6 million per year, out of which EUR 1 million has been earmarked for the promotion of sustainability through Gabon’s national fisheries policy.

State of play of scientific assessments and advice in CECAF

During the last few years there have been several CECAF actions aimed at assessing and implementing agreements, and to improve knowledge about the state of the stocks which are of key commercial interest for fisheries.

- The FAO-ECAF Working Group for the Assessment of Small Pelagic Fish off Northwest Africa has met annually to update stock assessments and advice on the

management of key small pelagic species and stocks in the region. Four meetings have been held between 2019 and 2024 since the last meeting of the scientific subcommittee in 2018. This group did not meet in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- The following species were analyzed and evaluated by this group: sardine (*Sardina pilchardus*), sardinella (*Sardinella aurita* and *Sardinella maderensis*), horse mackerel (*Trachurus trecae, Trachurus trachurus* and *Caranx rhonchus, Trachurus spp.),* mackerel (*Scomber colias*), bonga (*Ethmalosa fimbriata*) and anchovy (*Engraulis encrasicolus*) in the region between the southern border of Senegal and the northern Atlantic border of Morocco, including the Canary Islands.
- The FAO Working Group on the Assessment of Small Pelagic Fish off Northwest Africa, held its twenty-third meeting in Dakar, Senegal, in June-July 2024. The overall objective of the Working Group is to assess the state of the small pelagic resources in Northwest Africa and make recommendations on fisheries management and exploitation. The group assessed key species including sardine, round and flat sardinella, European horse mackerel, Cunene horse mackerel, chub mackerel, anchovy and bonga, in the region between the northern border of Senegal and the southern Atlantic border of Morocco. The Canary Islands fisheries are also considered by the group. The assessments revealed that four out of nine stocks were within biologically sustainable limits (status of fully exploited) (Zone A+B sardine, Cunene horse mackerel, chub mackerel and anchovy) while five stocks were overexploited (Zone C sardine, round and flat sardinella, European horse mackerel and bonga), prompting urgent recommendations such as reducing fishing mortality, protecting juvenile fish, and enhancing regional cooperation. The results and management advice are applicable to the whole subregion excluding the Canary Islands. The total catch of small pelagics in 2023 was 2.0 million tonnes, lower than the five-year average for the period 2019-2023 of 2.4 million tonnes.
- The FAO-CECAF working group on the assessment of demersal resources off Northwest Africa analysed in 2024 a total of 31 stocks and/or species groups and presented the preliminary results in a meeting held in Agadir, Morocco, in June 2024. Overall, 8 out of 31 stocks were found to be within biologically sustainable limits (5 not fully exploited and 3 fully exploited) and 15 stocks were found to be overexploited (including white hake, black hake, octopus, cuttlefish and squid) in different areas ranging from Morocco to Senegal and Gambia. No formal assessment could be conducted for 8 of the stocks due to a lack of data. The total catch of demersal resources analysed by the 2024 Working Group was around 287,000 tonnes in 2023. Compared to 2022 (239,000 tonnes), demersal resources total catch has increased by 20%. The 5-year average catch, from 2019 to 2023, was 256,000 tonnes.
- The FAO-CECAF working group on the assessment of demersal resources Subgroup South held a meeting in Kribi, Cameroon, in September 2024. The working area of the Working Group is defined as the waters between the southern border of Senegal and the southern border of Angola and includes the islands of Cabo Verde and Sao Tome and Principe. A total of 61 stocks were analysed by the Working Group when data were available. Twenty-seven stocks could not be assessed using any of the models because the data available to the Working Group was not in the correct format and/or was not sufficient to be used in assessment models. The results of the evaluations show that 15 stocks are considered overexploited, 6 stocks are fully exploited, and 13 stocks are not fully exploited. Since most stocks are shared by at least two countries in the region, the Working Group strongly recommends strengthening regional

cooperation in research and management. Fishing effort should be reduced for overexploited stocks or not increased for other stocks, in order to avoid further depletion. The total catch of demersal resources for 2023 analysed by the Working Group in 2024 was approximately 198,003 tonnes. From 1990 to 2021, the catch of demersal resources has fluctuated around an average of 216,127 tonnes.

- In September 2024, the first meeting of the Research and Management Working Group of the Subregional Fisheries Commission (CSRP) was held in Dakar, Senegal. Its main purpose was to propose management options for the sardinella fishery, in response to the recommendations of the Committee for Eastern Central Atlantic Fisheries (CECAF). This meeting brought together scientific experts and marine resource managers from Mauritania, Senegal, Gambia and Guinea-Bissau, together with specialists from the EAF-Nansen Program, with the aim of designing concrete measures to preserve shared sardinella stocks through an ecosystem approach. Among the agreements reached were proposals such as the reduction of fishing effort, spatial and temporal closures, zoning, regulation of minimum catch sizes and fishing gear, which will be presented to the Ministers of Fisheries for their coordinated adoption at the regional level.
- The research expedition on board the vessel Dr. Fridtjof Nansen started on 21 January 2024 and lasted more than 50 days, traveling along the northwest African coast from Morocco to Gambia. The mission focused on the study of transboundary demersal fishery resources in the waters of Morocco, Mauritania, Senegal and The Gambia. Conducted within the framework of the EAF-Nansen Program, the study aimed to support sustainable fisheries management in the region. Key activities included assessing the abundance, distribution and biology of commercially and ecologically important species such as hake (Merluccius merluccius, M. senegalensis, M. polli), white grouper (Epinephelus aeneus), octopus (Octopus vulgaris), spiny lobster (Palinurus sp.) and deepwater shrimp. The expedition also collected data on benthic ecosystems and seafloor conditions to support one of the first large-scale benthic diversity mapping projects in the region.

Outlook for 2024 and beyond

- The EU is one of the international actors that has signed the most agreements with CECAF countries. In the Atlantic façade of Africa riparian to CECAF area, the EU has 5 SFPAs currently in force, in the second half of 2025, namely Mauritania, Gabon, Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau and the Gambia. The Gambia SFPA expires in July 2025.
- At present, two out of the five protocols embedded in multi-species agreements with partner countries in the West African region, i.e. Morocco and Senegal (tuna SFPA with a hake component). The SFPA with Sao Tome and Principe also expired in 2024 and has not been renewed as of June 2025.
- The situation of the dormant agreements is of concern for the EU fleets as they cannot operate either through public or private agreements in the EEZs of those countries by virtue of the exclusivity clause.
- For the specific case of Senegal, before the expiration of the protocol it had up to 45 EU vessels authorised to operate in their waters, of whose 29 are Spanish including longliners, shrimp trawlers and demersal trawlers. One specific fleet segment, the Spanish and French tuna pole and line vessels relying on live bait, were directly affected and had to cease their activity due to the lack of alternative fishing grounds in the area as well as non-supply of bait due to area closure. The interruption of this

agreement also affects logistic hubs, as there is currently a regular shipping line for cargo between Dakar and Las Palmas.

- The consequences of the temporary or permanent cessation of the fishing activities by EU distant water fleets in the EEZs of third African countries due to stand-by situations between the renewal of agreements, as well as dormant agreements or denunciation of some, can be twofold:
    - Some of the affected fleet segments or vessels will have to look for alternative fishing grounds in other EEZs (e.g. Mauritania) or international waters to minimise losses in catch and landings. However, stock distribution for several demersal, shrimp and small pelagic stocks is discrete and located in grounds where the EU fleet has no access to. Some alternative fishing grounds for these fleets in the future might be Angola (where there is no public agreement, but they operate under direct authorisations or private agreements), Conakry or Eastern African countries such as Mozambique, Kenia or Tanzania, subject to biological state of the stocks and surplus availability.
    - Some fleets segments which are highly dependent to certain fishing grounds with no alternatives (e.g. hook and pole and line vessels in Senegal or shrimp trawlers in West Africa) will have to tie-up and cease their activity until the SFPA comes into force, given their high dependency on this ground.
- In 2023, the European Commission published a comprehensive report on the "Evaluation and analysis of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (SFPAs) between the EU and third countries including an in-depth analysis of the sectoral support component of the SFPAs". The objective of this study was to provide DG MARE with an overall analysis of the SFPAs features, content, implementation, results and impacts. The results of this study are feeding the ongoing discussion on a new generation of SFPAs, in line with the mission letter of Commissioner Kadis for its term of mandate 2024-2029. The mission letter asks to work to ensure that the SFPAs are in line with the EU wider regional strategies and priorities for Africa; and to promote a coherent approach in all multilateral fora and bilateral dialogues. Some of the elements that will be analysed and considered in the new SFPAs will be: Environmental sustainability and focus on implementation of surplus; overcome challenges to ensure a level playing field and transparency of fishing activities in the beneficiary country; review structure of the financial contribution in SFPAs between EU and fishing operators; existence of dormant agreements; perception of EU fleet and EU's role in global fisheries and ocean governance; and challenges with the implementation of sectoral support.

3.9.6 NEAFC - The North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission

Background

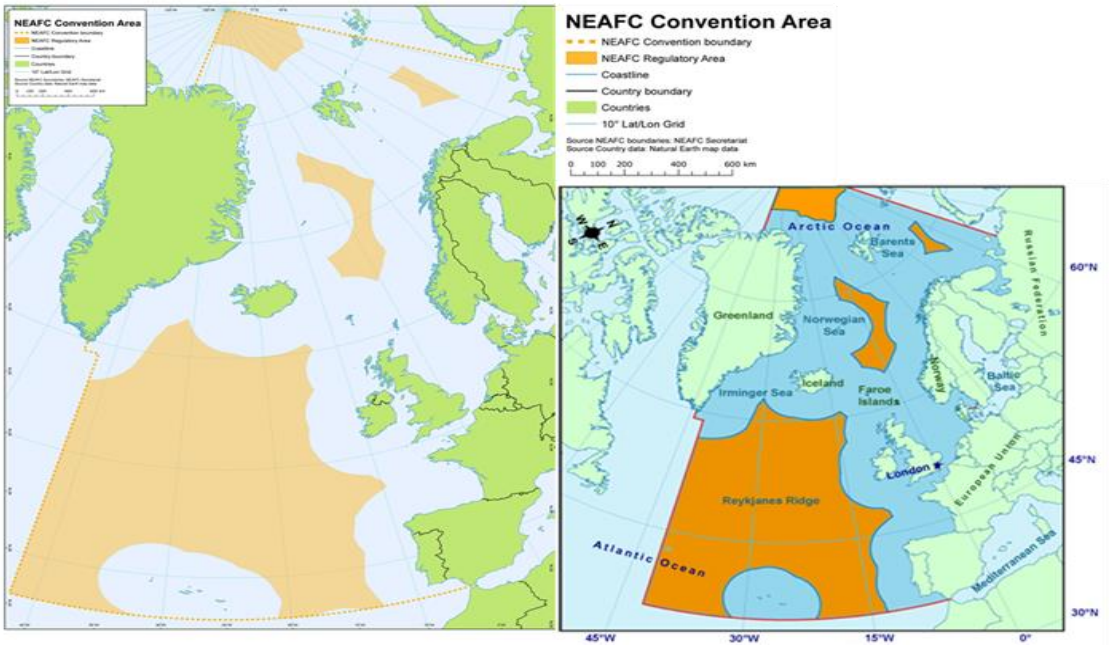
The North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) is the Regional Fisheries Management Organisation for the North East Atlantic. Its Regulatory Area (RA) covers FAO statistical Area 27.

NEAFC is responsible for managing fisheries in the high seas portion of one of the most abundant fishing areas in the world. The objective of the NEAFC Convention is “to ensure the long-term conservation and optimum utilisation of the fishery resources in the Convention Area, providing sustainable economic, environmental and social benefits”. The Convention highlights the need to safeguard the marine ecosystems in which the resources occur, and to encourage international cooperation and consultation with respect to these resources.

NEAFC is comprised of six Contracting Parties, namely: Denmark (in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland), EU, Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation and UK (since 2020). They signed up to the Convention on Multilateral Cooperation in North East Atlantic Fisheries, which entered into force in November 1982. In adittion there are three cooperating non-contracting parties, namely Bahamas, Canada and Panama.

The area covered by the NEAFC Convention stretches from the southern tip of Greenland (42° W), south to Spain (36° N) and west to the western tip of Russia at Novya Semlya (51° E). The Convention area does not include the Mediterranean Sea and the Baltic Sea (Figure 3.9.6.1).

Figure 3.9.6.1. Map of the NEAFC area of competence.



Source: NEAFC (2024).

NEAFC’s objective is to ensure the long-term conservation and optimum utilisation of the fishery resources in the Convention Area, providing sustainable economic, environmental

and social benefits. To this end, NEAFC adopts conservation and management measures for various fish stocks and control measures to ensure that they are properly implemented. NEAFC also adopts measures to protect other parts of the marine ecosystem, in cooperation with OSPAR, from potential negative impacts of fisheries. All these objectives are channelled through the implementation of the NEAFC Scheme of Control and Enforcement (NEAFC Scheme) and NEAFC Recommendations.

The institutional framework for EU member countries is completed with the Joint Deployment Plan (JDP). This implements both the NEAFC guidelines as well as the EU conservation and control measures applicable to EU fishing vessels in the NEAFC RA, in accordance with Article 17 of Regulation (EU) No. 1236/2010. The NEAFC JDP has been applicable since 2009 and involves Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain and Sweden.

According to the reported species to NEAFC, the main fisheries for this area are:

- Pelagic fisheries: Mackerel, blue withing, herring (Norwegian Spring – Spawning Atlanto-Scandian).
- Demersal fisheries: Redfish (both oceanic and pelagic deep-sea) and haddock.
- Deep-sea fisheries: Greenland halibut, ling and tusk.

Total catches reported in the North East Atlantic RA (FAO Area 27) are approximately 10.5 million tonnes[10]. The four main fisheries regulated in the NEAFC RA amount to a level of catches of approximately 3.3 million tonnes, which represent 31% of the total catch.

Fleet selection and data limitations

It is not feasible to provide an analysis of the performance and activity of the EU fleet in the NEAFC RA due to the granularity of the spatial (transversal) data. In the fleet economic data call, effort and landings data are called for at FAO fishing area level 3 (Division) in the North Atlantic, and at level 4 (Sub-division) for the Baltic Sea.

Main drivers and factors affecting the performance of the fleet

The regional and international contexts have evolved considerably since the NEAFC Convention was amended for the last time in 2006 (and entered into force in 2013).

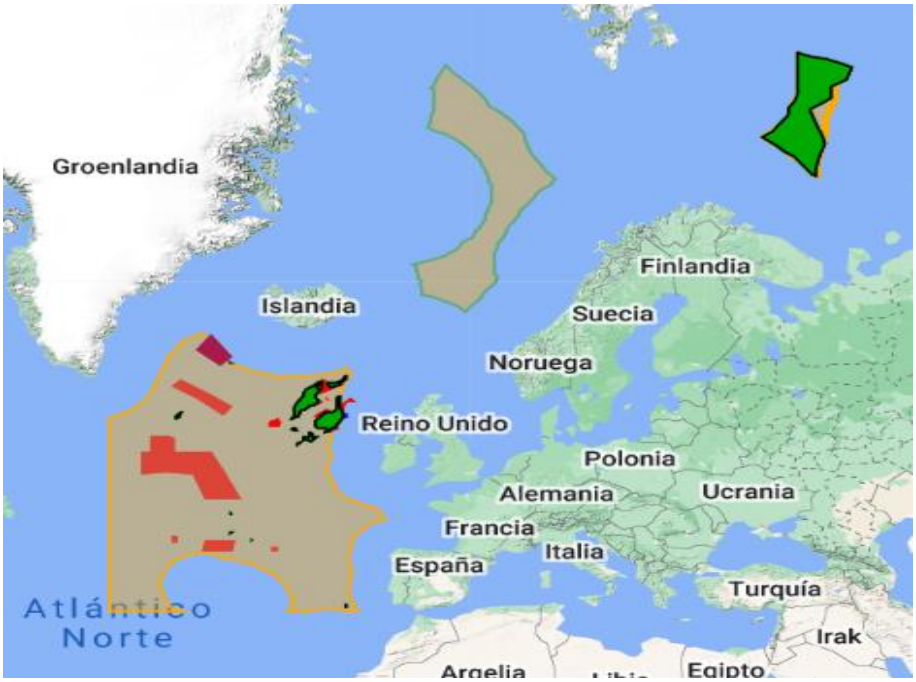
- At regional level, the entry into force of the Withdrawal Agreement of the United Kingdom from the EU in 2020 created a new situation for fisheries management in the North-East Atlantic (NEA), with changes in the balance of powers and in the relative positioning of Coastal States and fishing nations. The weight of the EU became relatively lower and shifts in fisheries governance have occurred due to bilateral and trilateral negotiations with third countries including Norway, UK or Faroe Islands.
- At global level, a number of international law instruments were recently adopted on protection of biodiversity in international waters such as the UN BBNJ treaty (2023), and the Kumming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), providing a pathway to countries and

[10] https://www.neafc.org/catch.

Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) to establish meaningful protections for biodiversity in the high seas. These developments can open avenues for cross-sectoral engagement and NEAFC could play an important role to play in implementing these decisions for the NEA region in partnership with OSPAR.

- Effects of climate change and global warming of waters is already producing shifts of migratory patterns of key commercial stocks to the north and east. This is turning into unilateral increase of fishing opportunities for those coastal states in where these stocks fall within their EEZ waters (Iceland or Greenland). This might create frictions in the shared stocks with non-EU countries because of divergence in the interpretation of allocation of historical fishing rights.
- Unilateral decisions in the management of joint and shared stocks from coastal states arrangements can undermine the conservation and sustainability efforts and objectives at regional level, particularly when fishing opportunities exceed the scientific recommendations and lead to overfishing in relation to the state of the stock.
- Political instability within the region can lead to market restrictions and/or sanctions and indirect effects between coastal states ending in conflicts (i.e. blocking access to ports, setting additional landing and operational fees, etc.).
- NEAFC has implemented several ecosystem-based approach related measures in relation to conservation of habitats and stocks. In this regard, the closure of areas to fishing for the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) is increasingly significant over time. The closures in the Mid-Atlantic and Hatton and Rockall areas are two examples extended for this purpose, both extended until 2027.
- The protection of certain stocks also determines the closure of fishing areas, as in the case of haddock (closure on Rockall Haddock Box), redfishes (closure of Irminger Sea) or blue ling, and even the prohibition of fishing certain species of elasmobranchs. These closures have been overall monitored and complied with by the affected fleets demonstrated to be effective and relevant in terms of protetion based on recent scientific evaluation carried out by ICES.
- However, in 2024 there was evidence of Russian vessels engaging in bottom fishing outside the designated bottom fishing areas, and without notifying NEAFC. Fishing outside those areas is prohibited under the NEAFC recommendation aimed at protecting vulnerable marine ecosystems, with no enforcement actions executed.

Figure 3.9.6.2. Map of NEAFC Regulatory Area VME Closures and Existing Fishing Areas.



Source: NEAFC (2024).

Outlook for 2024 and beyond

- Regarding regulatory changes, in 2022 and 2023, adjustments were made to the NEAFC Control and Enforcement Regime. This is a relevant change in the management of the organization, as fishing vessels must comply with both the applicable management measures and the NEAFC Scheme of Control and Enforcement when fishing in the NEAFC Regulatory Area. Failure to do so may be considered illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.
- The 43rd annual meeting of the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) - which includes the European Union, representatives from Denmark in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland, Iceland, Norway, the United Kingdom and the Russian Federation - took place from 11 to 15 November. The meeting faced challenges in achieving consensus on the sustainable management of fish stocks, on the control and monitoring of fishing activities, and on how to tackle illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.
- For the first time in NEAFC history, there was an absence of a compliance report, meaning that serious infringements to the NEAFC rules involving vessels from some NEAFC parties have not been formally recognised by the organisation and will not be followed up. Infringements of other fleets operating in the NEAFC area will also face no sanctions.
- The EU opposed granting the status of cooperating non-contracting party to Panama and Bahamas and proposed listing several vessels from those countries in the NEAFC IUU list due to detected infringements and insufficient enforcement measures.
- NEAFC adopted several key recommendations to protect fish stocks, including:

- Setting catch limits for mackerel, blue whiting, and Atlanto-Scandian herring, in line with scientific advice from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES). Despite agreeing on the commitment to set catch limits, there was a lack of comprehensive sharing arrangements mainly due to the non-cooperative attitude on coastal states' consultations for Atlanto-Scandian herring.
- Prohibiting directed fisheries on stocks of redfish in the Irminger Sea from 2025 to 2027 to allow this stock to recover. Despite previous prohibitions, Russia has undertaken directed and unsustainable fishing activities on these stocks. NEAFC decided to continue restricting port services for vessels carrying redfish catches.
- However, the current measures have not proven to be restrictive. NEAFC decided that Russian vessels fishing for Irminger Sea redfish would lose the right to access the ports of the EU. The EU urged NEAFC parties to introduce the same measures as soon as possible, and to restrict Russian vessels fishing for Irminger Sea redfish access to their waters to prevent unsustainable fishing.
- Implementing measures to protect porbeagle, spurdog, and orange roughy, which are vulnerable to overfishing. These measures include prohibiting directed fisheries for porbagle and orange roughy in certain areas and setting catch limits for spurdog, to prevent overfishing.

Outlook for 2025 and beyond

- Greater cooperation and compliance will be needed from all parties to address the challenges and concerns raised during the meeting. Decisions on whether it is appropriate to grant the status of cooperating non-contracting parties to Panama and Bahamas and amending the NEAFC IUU list would be taken in the first half of 2025.
- Regarding VMEs, the regulation in force has a ban on bottom fishing in certain areas until the end of 2027.
- Reinforced and comprehensive control measures will be implemented for mackerel, horse mackerel, blue whiting and Atlanto-Scandian herring fisheries in the NEAFC RA for 2024. These measures, stemming from Coastal State consultations, aim to prevent non-Coastal States or fishing parties from exploiting these stocks. One of the measures adopted requires the use of camera and sensor technology for monitoring at landing and processing facilities if landings exceed 10 tonnes and if more than 3 000 tonnes of those pelagic species are weighed per year.
- Regarding stock-specific management measures, there is a prohibition on directed fisheries for basking sharks, porbeagle, deep-sea rays, deep-sea sharks and chimaera species for the period 2024-2027.
- Recognising the significant challenges posed by climate change to ocean environments and ecosystems, NEAFC committed to addressing the issue through its management and science processes. The organisation aims to reduce the environmental impacts of NEAFC meetings while navigating the complex landscape of regional fisheries management in the face of climate change.
- NEAFC showcased its commitment to effective monitoring, control, and enforcement by setting a launch date of January 15th, 2024, for its modernised electronic reporting system. This system provides detailed information on fishing gear and haul-by-haul fishing activity. The online interface aids national inspectors and the NEAFC secretariat in instantly accessing vessel activity data in high seas, facilitating enforcement and enhancing scientific advice on ecosystem-based fisheries management and biodiversity protection.

- In practical terms, the EU DWF targeting small pelagic, demersal and deep-sea species are facing an increasing number of cross-sectoral, environmental and fisheries legislation together with enhanced monitoring, control and enforcement and the challenge of decreasing fishing opportunities as a result of geopolitical changes and climate change. This will likely exacerbate conflicting interest with neighbouring countries at Coastal States negotiations. This might have negative consequences in terms of access to the fishing grounds and quota availability in fishing grounds of high socio-economic and historical interest for the EU fleet.
- Fisheries negotiations between the EU and non-EU coastal states are often directly and consequently linked with the wider negotiations on trade and market access. The EU is globally the largest and most attractive import seafood market, and this could be used as a tool to prevent and deter coastal states from breaching any international commitments or agreements.

4. EU NATIONAL CHAPTERS

4.1 2023 EU Member State Fleet Summary Results

The following table presents an assessment of each Member State fleet considering the 2023 net profit indicator value in relation to the one calculated for 2022:

Table 4.1.1. EU Member States at a glance.

MS	2023 vs 2022
Belgium	Improved
Bulgaria	Improved
Denmark	Deteriorated
Germany	Improved
Estonia	Improved
Ireland	Improved
Greece	Improved
Spain	Deteriorated
France	Deteriorated
Croatia	Improved
Italy	Deteriorated

MS	2023 vs 2022
Cyprus	Improved
Latvia	Improved
Lithuania	Improved
Malta	Deteriorated
Netherlands	Deteriorated
Poland	Improved
Portugal	Deteriorated
Romania	Improved
Slovenia	Deteriorated
Finland	Deteriorated
Sweden	Improved

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

The following paragraphs present the concise summary of each the national chapter containing results for the main economic performance indicators in 2023 and developments in relation to the previous year (2022):

BELGIUM: In 2023 an improved performance was noted. Although operating at a net profit of -EUR 2.4 million (73%), yet this presents an improvement over 2022. Both the small beam trawler and demersal trawler fleets had a better long term economic development. Revenue decreased by -4%, amounting to EUR 97.5 million; GVA estimated at EUR 41.7 million (2%) and gross profit EUR 10 million (93%). The 2023 year was socio-economically not as good as 2022 but not as bad as expected. Rather a stable situation occurred during 2023.

BULGARIA: Economic performance improved but remained weaker relative to the 2013–2022 period. Revenue increased by 20%, reaching EUR 6.8 million. GVA was estimated at EUR 4.23 million, a 63% increase over 2022. Gross profit rose to EUR 2.4 million (up 139%), while net profit reached EUR 1.56 million, reflecting a 1 202% increase. One contributing factor to this volatility was the sharp decline in the volume and value of landings in 2022, followed by a significant rebound in 2023.

DENMARK: Long term Economic performance deteriorated. Revenue in 2023 was EUR 442 million, +5% higher than in 2022. GVA increased 10% to EUR 278 million, gross profit increased 24% to EUR 168 million. However, net profit decreased 191% to -EUR 10.8 million in 2023 compared to 2022.

GERMANY: Economic performance improved although fleet still operating at a net loss (-EUR 10.3 million). Revenues decreased to EUR 192 million (-10%), GVA was estimated at EUR 81.7 million (+3%), gross profit EUR 27.8 million (+202%). Profitability slightly increased

in 2023, but still negative due to decreased revenues while energy costs (-40%) and, to a lesser extent, crew cost (-30%) decreased.

ESTONIA: Overall improved performance. Revenue increased by 34%, amounting to EUR 23.9 million; GVA was estimated at EUR 16.5 million (+70%), gross profit EUR 10.6 million (+188%) and net profit EUR 7.7 million (+1 434%). The growth in revenue and profit was mainly driven by a rise in average first-sale prices of the key species (sprat and herring).

IRELAND: Economic performance improved. Revenue was estimated at EUR 323.6 million (-1%) with increases in GVA EUR 144.5 million (1%), gross profit EUR 48 million (179%) and net profit -EUR 4.4 million (+88%). 2023 brought more stability as fuel prices eased. Key drivers affecting the performance of the national fleet in 2023 included the ongoing impacts of quota reductions resulting from Brexit coupled with volatile changes in fish prices (-21% on average) and reduced operating costs (-12%).

GREECE: Economic performance improved in 2023. Revenue is estimated at EUR 296 million (+4%), GVA at EUR 149 million (+19%), gross profit at EUR 30 million (+236%), and net profit at EUR 7.4 million (+123%). The outcome for 2023 revealed a significant improvement compared to the previous difficult period. In 2024 and 2025, the economic indicators will remain at the same levels as in 2023.

SPAIN: Economic performance deteriorated in 2023 compared to 2022. GVA, gross profit and net profit were estimated at EUR 841 million (-21%), EUR 216 million (-35%) and EUR 82 million (-57%), respectively. Although almost all costs have decreased in total by 11% compared to 2022, revenues have decreased to a greater extent, by 15%, which justifies the loss of economic profitability of the Spanish fleet.

FRANCE: Economic performance deteriorated in 2023. Revenue decreased by 11%, amounting to EUR 1.37 billion; GVA estimated at EUR 660 million (-13%). Gross profit EUR 138 million (-22%) and negative net profit -EUR 55 million (compared to -EUR 35 million in 2022 and –EUR 58 million in 2021, respectively). For 2024 and 2025, a greater deterioration of all economic indicators is expected.

CROATIA: Improved performance in 2023. Revenue increased by 6%, amounting to EUR 126.7 million; accompanied by increases in GVA EUR 80 million (+14%), gross profit EUR 43.4 million (+27%) and net profit EUR 23.8 million (+100%). In 2023, the estimated value of landings decreased to EUR 71.1 million (-10%), but performance improved as other income increased to EUR 55.6 million (+40%), while operating costs decreased (-2%).

ITALY: Economic performance deteriorated. Revenue decreased by -18%, amounting to EUR 662 million; GVA EUR 382 million (-19%), gross profit EUR 145 million (-38%) and net profit decreased to -EUR 8 million (-112%).

CYPRUS: Total fleet performance improvement in 2023 although with negative net profitability. Although revenue decreased to EUR 6.7 million, GVA increased to EUR 3.3 million (+32%), gross profit to EUR 1.5 million (+112%) and a net profit improved by 57% although still with a net loss of -EUR 0.4 million.

LATVIA: Total fleet performance improvement in 2023 with negative segment profitability VL1218. Revenue up 7% to EUR 25.3 million, GVA up 29% to EUR 19.3 million and net profit up 27% to EUR 11.6 million. Fishing effort increased by 17% in terms of days at sea.

LITHUANIA: Improved economic performance. In 2023 fleet generated EUR 29.2 million GVA with 22% increase compared to 2022, whereas gross profit surged by 50% to EUR 19.9

million. However, days at sea and weight of landings declined by 5% and 6%, respectively. In 2024, fishing effort in days at sea increased by 3%, whereas weight and value of landings dropped by 25% and 20%, respectively.

MALTA: Total fleet performance deteriorated. Revenue decreased to EUR 17 million; GVA decreased to EUR 8.1 million (-44%), gross profit EUR 1.6 million (-84%) and a net loss decreased by 757% and still with a net loss of -EUR 9 million.

NETHERLANDS: An overall deteriorated economic performance operating at a net loss of -EUR 18.6 million in 2023 (-EUR 3.8 million in 2022). The number of employees (as FTE) was 1 226 (-10%). The fuel costs dropped by 35% to EUR 85 million, but the total revenue dropped even more, by 21% (to EUR 307 million). GVA decreased by 18% (to EUR 111 million).

POLAND: Improved economic performance. Gross profit was positive at EUR 5.2 million, representing an increase of almost 80% compared to 2022 but remained around 50% lower than the long-term average. The total value of Baltic fish landings increased to EUR 42.8 million (7% increase). GVA was estimated at EUR 27.9 million, up (+24%) from EUR 22.4 million in 2022. Net profit remained negative, at -EUR 2.5 million, an improvement from -EUR 4.8 million in 2022. Fishing effort declined again by 8%. Vessels belonging to two pelagic segments reported again high profitability, while three other segments achieved a negative gross profit margin, and one was stable.

PORTUGAL: Deteriorated economic performance in 2023. Compared to 2022, revenue decreased 10%, amounting to EUR 414.4 million; GVA estimated at EUR 238.2 million (-6%), gross profit EUR 73.3 million (-16%) and net profit EUR 18.5 million (-31%).

ROMANIA: Improved economic performance in 2023. Compared to 2022, revenue in 2023 was EUR 4.6 million (+7%), GVA EUR 3.41 million (+35%), gross profit EUR 2.69 million (+51%) and net profit EUR 2.19 million (+80%). The reason for the positive trend is primarily due to higher income from landings, other sources and due to the decrease in operational costs.

SLOVENIA: Deteriorated economic performance. Compared to 2022, revenues decreased 37%, amounting to EUR 3.24 million; GVA estimated at EUR 2.5 million (-43%), gross profit EUR 2.2 million (-47%) and net profit EUR 2.0 million (-49%). The major driver for deteriorated performance is the lower value of other income in 2023 compared to 2022.

FINLAND: Deteriorated economic performance. The GVA of the national fleet in 2023 was EUR 20 million representing an increase of 23%. The gross value of landings increased by 25%, totalling EUR 37 million. FTE decreased by 13 (-7%). The gross profit increased by 3% and was around EUR 8 million. There was significant divergence between fishing techniques: the gross profit of the LSF+L12AG increased by roughly EUR 3.9 million while the gross profit of the SSCF declined by approximately EUR 3.7 million. The net profit decreased by 4% compared with the previous year and was negative at -EUR 3 million. The LSF+L12AG managed to record a positive net profit of EUR 400 000.

SWEDEN: Improved economic performance in 2023. Compared to 2022, revenue increased by 4% amounting to EUR 126.4 million. GVA, gross profit and net profit all increased, amounting to EUR 59.6.0 million (+4.6%), EUR 37.8 million (+18.1%) and EUR 13.5 million (+1 120%), respectively. The most important driver for the economic performance in 2023 were higher value of landings.

4.2 Belgium

4.2.1 Short description of the national fleet

In 2023, the Belgian national fleet comprised 65 registered vessels with a capacity of 13,668 GT or 44,789 kW; 58 (89%) of these vessels were active. This represents a 3% decrease in the number of active vessels compared to 2022 and a 14% decrease over the entire time series. In 2024, the number of active vessels in the Belgian fleet further declined to 52.

Table 4.2.1. Belgium at a glance.

Belgium		2023				%Δ 2023-2022			
Indicator	Units	Overall	SSCF	L12AG	LSF	Overall	SSCF	L12AG	LSF
Active vessels	Number	58	0	0	58	-3%	-	-	-3%
FTE	Number	223	-	-	223	0%	-	-	0%
Gross Value of landings	Million €	88.5	-	-	88.5	-10%	-	-	-10%
GVA	Million €	41.7	-	-	41.7	2%	-	-	2%
Gross profit	Million €	10.0	-	-	10.0	93%	-	-	93%
Net profit	Million €	- 2.4	-	-	- 2.4	73%	-	-	73%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure

The Belgian fleet is small, mainly consisting of demersal and beam trawlers. Few other fishing gears are used, such as seiners, dredges, pots, gill nets, and trammel nets. Key segments include large demersal trawlers (DTS VL2440) and beam trawlers (TBB VL1824 and TBB VL2440). Due to GDPR, Belgium hasn't reported on a segment using mixed passive and active gears in 2022 and 2023. Belgium lacks vessels over 40 metres or under 12 metres with active gears.

Fishing activity and production

Belgian vessels primarily operate in the North Sea, English Channel, Bristol Channel, and other North Atlantic areas. In 2023, they spent a total of 12,250 days at sea, which is 4% less than in 2022 and 11% below the average from 2013 to 2022. This shows a clear decreasing trend in effort from 2013, though it seems to be stabilizing recently.

Despite fewer vessels, landed weight increased between 2008 and 2016 but has since declined. The value of landings remained stable before 2016 but dropped afterward. In 2023, the fleet landed over 17,400 tonnes of seafood worth EUR 88.5 million, a 5% drop in landings compared to last year. Demersal species are the primary target, with sole generating the highest landed value (EUR 39.4 million), about 47% of the total value. European plaice led in weight (2,429 tonnes or 17% of the total).

In 2023, common shrimp catches fell by 75%, partially offset by an increase in value but still resulting in a 61% decrease in landing value. The Eastern Channel (23%) and the North Sea (26%) were the top areas for total landed value, together accounting for 49%, followed by the Celtic Sea (17%) and the Bristol Channel (11%). These areas were also the most important in terms of landed weights.

Employment and average salaries

In 2023, the crew on board totaled 263, equating to 223 FTEs. The highest employment was in the TBB VL2440 segment (66% of the national fleet) with an average of 5.7 FTE per vessel. The DTS VL2440 segment had 3.5 FTE per vessel and the TBB VL1824 segment had 1.7 FTE per vessel. These values have been rising since before 2018, continuing into 2023.

4.2.2 Economic results for 2023 and recent trends

The economic results pertain solely to the Belgian fishing fleet active in 2023.

National fleet performance

The economic performance of the overall fleet has been declining in recent years. After several years of operating at a loss, net profit turned positive between 2015 and 2020. However, net profit began to decrease during this period, becoming negative again by 2020. This trend shows signs of recovery in 2023, with only one of the three fleet segments (i.e., TBB 24m-40m) experiencing negative profitability. Both the DTS VL2440 and the TBB VL1824 segments reported profitability, although the TBB VL2440 segment did return a negative net profit.

In 2023, Gross Value Added (GVA), Gross profit, and Net profit were estimated at EUR 41.7 million, EUR 10 million, and -EUR 2.4 million, respectively. Over the entire time series, these values represented decreases of 15% for GVA, 29% for gross profit, and 265% for net profit. Compared to 2022, GVA increased by 2%, while gross profit and net profit increased by 93% and 73%, respectively. These observations indicate an overall reduced economic condition, with 2023 data continuing the downward trend observed since 2016. Nonetheless, the Belgian fleet performed better in 2023 compared to 2022.

In 2023, total income (excluding fishing rights) rose nearly 5% to EUR 109 million. Revenue saw a decline of over EUR 16 million, reaching EUR 80.8 million, as income from landings decreased by 10%. Direct income subsidies experienced a significant increase of 632% compared to 2022, and 663% compared to the average of previous years. This substantial increase in 2023 can be attributed to subsidies aimed at addressing the fuel crisis of 2022-2023 and supporting the construction of vessels with advanced engine and fishing technology. The Brexit Adjustment Reserve (BAR) was the primary source of these subsidies, compensating for additional costs and losses associated with landings in British ports and Brexit-related policies. October 2023 marked the final reporting date for such subsidies, which have been included in the financial accounts for 2023. The BAR fundings were allocated to vessels to mitigate reduced income due to closed fishing areas, reduced fishing opportunities, increased operation costs due to longer steaming distances, and administrative burdens related to applying for BAR funding. It is noteworthy that the total operating subsidies in 2023 were lower than the total BAR funds received by Belgian fishers, likely due to some BAR-funding already being declared in 2021 (45% higher value compared to the timeseries average).

Total variable costs (excluding unpaid labor) increased by 4% from 2022 to 2023. Energy costs decreased by 15% but increased by 13% compared to the average since 2013 (EUR 25 million). Personnel costs decreased by 11%, while repair and maintenance costs increased by 18%. Energy and crew costs represented the largest expenses, accounting for 53% in 2019 and 2020. Although the share of energy costs had been decreasing since 2014,

it rose again in 2021 and further increased in 2022, jumping from 19% in 2021 to 27% in 2022. In 2023, the share of energy costs decreased again to 20% of total costs. Labour costs remained relatively stable over the years, with a slight increase in 2023.

Contrary to some other Member States, the crew's share in Belgium is directly proportional to the gross value of landings (without deducting variable costs first). The crew share typically amounts to around 30% of the value of landings. The value of landings decreased by 10% in 2023. Labour costs also decreased in 2023 compared to 2022, despite a 5% increase in total full-time equivalent (FTE) employment. Caution should be exercised when translating this into crew earnings, as payroll-related social insurance taxes are not considered. Labour costs accounted for 33% of the value of landings in 2023.

The physical capital value of the Belgian fleet was estimated at approximately EUR 68 million. The average age of the vessels is high, though it decreased by 2 years as new vessels joined the fleet. Despite this, newly built or younger vessels rarely replace older ones. Investments increased by 2% in 2023, having risen sharply in 2016 and 2017 before declining in 2018. Investments have remained relatively high in recent years compared to pre-2016 levels.

Resource productivity and efficiency indicators

The gross profit margin in 2023 was 10.2%, comparable to the margin in 2021. This figure is challenging to interpret, as the Belgian fleet received significant subsidies, potentially contributing to an increase in net profit margin for 2023. Additionally, recurrent high fish prices may have positively impacted the net profit margin. The net profit margin was estimated at nearly -2.5% in 2023, which represents an improvement from 2022. Although the gross profit margin was positive and possibly inflated by subsidies, the negative net profit indicates ongoing economic difficulties for the fleet. Nonetheless, the fleet performed better in 2023 compared to 2022.

Return of fixed tangible assets (RoFTA) increased substantially in 2015 (13%) and 2016 (52%) compared to previous years. Although RoFTA decreased in 2017 (23%), it remained higher than in all preceding years. In 2018, RoFTA further declined to 8%, and then to 5% in 2019. RoFTA rose again in 2020 to 14%, aligning closely with the RoFTA of 2012. However, it dropped by 3% in 2021 and further to 8% in 2022, before recovering somewhat in 2023 to -0.1%.

Landings per unit of fishing effort (kg per day at sea) demonstrated an increasing trend until 2016, followed by a continuous decline. This trend persisted until 2021, with a cautious emergence of an increasing trend in 2022. This upward trend did not continue, nor did a further decline occur in 2023; thus, landings per unit of fishing effort stabilized.

Energy consumption per landed tonne has generally shown a decreasing trend since 2008, reaching its lowest value in 2016 at 1,393 litres per landed tonne. From 2013 to 2017, energy consumption stagnated around 1,500 litres, rising to 1,600 litres in 2018 and 1,760 litres in 2019. The increasing trend continued into 2020 and 2021, reaching 1,800 and 2,004 litres per landed tonne, respectively. Although energy consumption per landed tonne decreased in 2022, it increased again in 2023 to 1,954 litres per tonne, similar to the level in 2021. Total energy consumption by the fleet decreased by 3% in 2020 compared to 2019, and by another 2% in 2021 and 4% in 2022. In 2023, total energy consumption was nearly identical to that of 2022, despite a 5% decrease in landings, closely resembling the figures from 2021.

Since the 2008 fuel crisis, efforts have been made to use more fuel-efficient engines, incorporate fuel monitoring systems, and adopt more efficient fishing techniques, including lighter gears. Fuel prices were notably high in 2008 and 2012. High fuel consumption persists due to the spread-out fishing grounds, often distant from the Belgian coast, and the continued use of trawling gear for catching demersal species. Despite this, the fleet continues to make efforts to reduce fuel consumption and improve overall efficiency.

The three most significant segments of the Belgian fleet are all relatively fuel-intensive. Energy efficiency was lowest for both the demersal trawler/seiner fleet (VL2440), which includes 15 vessels, and the larger beam trawler fleet (VL2440), including 27 vessels, with an energy efficiency of 28.5%. Energy efficiency was highest for the small beam trawl segment (VL1824), encompassing 16 vessels, at 31.4%. Although the demersal trawler segment had the lowest energy efficiency, it exhibited the highest energy intensity (1,620 litres/landed tonne), while the small beam trawl segment had the lowest energy intensity (2,196 litres/landed tonne). Considering the fuel price break-even results for these fleet segments in 2023, short-term break-even values were much higher compared to long-term break-even values due to the high mixed capital consumption for each fleet segment, thereby reducing the operation profit value used for calculations.

Labour productivity (GVA/FTE) also significantly increased over the years, peaking in 2016 and remaining high in subsequent years, albeit with reduced values in recent times. A new peak was observed in 2023. Overall income from landings has either increased or remained stable while energy costs have decreased (other operational costs included in GVA are less significant), and the number of FTE has shown a decreasing trend. This indicates that a unit of labour input is producing more output or that the same amount of output is being produced with fewer units of labour. Labour productivity may also be indicative of worker wellbeing or living standards, assuming increases in productivity correspond with wage increases, which appears to be the case. Since 2016, a decreasing trend in labour productivity has been noted, though this decline seems to lessen from 2018 onwards. A potential turning point was reached in 2021 when, for the first time since 2013, the energy cost per landed tonne exceeded the landed weight per sea day. It remains to be seen if this trend, where more energy per unit of landed weight is spent compared to the effort involved in catching that weight, will continue in future years. In 2022, maximum efficiency appeared to be attained with high landed weight per sea day and low energy consumption per tonne. These values converged again in 2023.

4.2.3 Performance by fishing activity

Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

In 2014, there was one active fishing vessel under 12 metres long, but no vessels met the European definition of SSCF. In 2016, a vessel was introduced that complied with the SSCF definition used in this report (vessel under 12 metres using passive gears). Currently, this vessel is no longer active.

Vessels under 12 metres using active gears fleet (L12AG)

Belgium's fleet is entirely large scale, with no vessels under 12 metres. The smallest vessel measures 17 metres.

Large-scale fleet (LSF)

The Belgian fleet is mainly a large-scale fleet, with its single vessel under 12 metres previously mentioned. The overall performance of this fleet was discussed earlier, while specific segments will be covered next.

4.2.4 Performance of selected fleet segments

The Belgian fishing fleet is primarily composed of trawlers, including beam, shrimp, and otter trawlers. In 2023, when comparing performance data from 2022, larger beam trawlers (TBB VL2440) exhibited lower GVA to revenue ratios and profit margins compared to smaller beam trawlers (TBB VL1824). Similarly, demersal trawlers (DTS VL2440) demonstrated lower profitability than their smaller counterparts, despite having a comparable number of vessels. While profit margins for these segments were higher in 2017 and 2018, they experienced losses in 2019 and maintained stable levels in 2020 relative to 2019. Both vessel categories incurred losses again in 2021 and 2022. Notably, in 2023, both demersal trawlers and smaller beam trawlers (TBB VL1824) showed positive profit margins and net profit margins, indicating an improved economic trend over the observed period.

This national division of fleet segments based on engine power serves as the foundation for management measures such as effort limitations and quota distribution. The TBB VL2440 segment roughly aligns with the nationally defined "large-fleet segment" (engine power of >221 kW), which includes vessels undertaking longer trips to distant fishing grounds. Conversely, TBB VL1824 falls within the "small-fleet segment" (engine power of ≤221 kW). This segment comprises Eurocutters and other vessels permitted to fish within 12 nautical miles of the coast.

Beam Trawl 24-40 metres

In 2023, there were 27 active vessels in FAO fishing area 27, primarily in areas 27.7, 27.4, and 27.8. These vessels often fish in distant campaigns, landing their catch in foreign ports. The value of landings exceeded EUR 63 million, representing 72% of the total landed value. Key species included common sole (37%), cuttlefish (6%), anglerfish (5.5%), European plaice (5%), and lemon sole (3%).

Despite reporting a gross profit of EUR 5.3 million, the fleet had a net loss of nearly EUR 3.9 million in 2023, showing an improvement over 2022. Crew wages were highest in this segment, though labor productivity was lowest. Profitability has fluctuated, being weak in recent years after reasonable returns in 2016 and 2017.

Energy consumption per tonne landed slightly decreased from about 2,042 liters/tonne in 2022 to 2,025 liters/tonne in 2023, nearing 2010 levels when more vessels were active.

Beam trawl 18-24 metres

In 2023, there were 16 active vessels operating predominantly in the North Sea, Eastern and Western English Channel, employing a little over 12% of total FTE. The value of landings amounted to EUR 8.2 million, about 9% of total national landings, which is a decrease compared to 2022. These vessels target various species including common sole (4% of total

value of landings), common shrimp (2.5%), great Atlantic scallop (~0.5%), plaice (~0.5%) and cuttlefish (0.3%), as the top five species.

Gross profit increased significantly in 2023 compared to 2022, reaching EUR 5.3 million, resulting in a positive net profit (fixed indexation) of approximately EUR 1.2 million. This shows a substantial increase from 2022. The GVA was EUR 5.4 million (~13%). While the profitability of this fleet segment was considered reasonable in 2016, it was weak in 2017, reasonable in 2018, and weak again in 2019. Profitability remained weak from 2020 to 2023, though the economic development trend appears positive. The gross and net profit margins were 18% and 9%, respectively, in 2023, reflecting an improvement compared to 2022.

This fleet segment includes part of the smaller-scale coastal section of the Belgian fleet. These vessels are less efficient than those in the larger fleet segment as they make short coastal trips and land low volumes. However, they are likely more vulnerable. Nonetheless, this fleet segment performed the best compared to other segments in 2023.

Demersal trawlers

This segment primarily operates in the North Sea (27.4) and Eastern Channel (27.7d), employing 22% of the total FTE. The value of landings amounted to EUR 16.8 million, representing 19% of the totals, similar to 2022. Targeted species include common sole (4% of the total value of landings), Norway lobster (3%), common squid (~3%), plaice (~3%), and turbot (1.2%) as the top five species.

Profitability in 2023 showed a positive net profit of EUR 0.3 million, an improvement compared to 2022. The gross and net profit margins were 13% and 2%, respectively. Energy consumption per landed tonne was the lowest for this fleet segment (1,620 litres/tonne). This fleet segment performed the best in both 2016 and 2017 but saw a decline during 2018 to 2020. In 2021, it deteriorated the most compared to the beam trawler segments, a trend that continued in 2022 but showed an improved economic development in 2023.

4.2.5 Drivers affecting the economic performance trends

Since 2013, fuel prices have been rising, prompting efforts to reduce fuel consumption and energy costs. Fish prices also increased, boosting crew wages and improving overall economic performance between 2015 and 2017. Although profitability decreased in 2018 and continued this trend through 2019, 2020 saw a brief growth in profit. However, profits fell again in 2021 and 2022, especially for the DTS and large TBB fleet segments. The trend persisted into 2023, though the DTS and smaller TBB fleets showed improved profitability.

Despite higher fish prices in 2018, total landings value dropped, and fuel costs rose. By 2019, landings value hit its lowest since 2014 and fell further in 2020. The value increased in 2021 despite the lowest landing weights since 2013. In 2023, landings weight was similar to 2021 but lower than 2022, with landings value decreasing yet remaining higher than in 2021.

Challenges such as the full implementation of the LO, Brexit-associated fishing ground losses, fluctuating fuel prices due to the Russia-Ukraine crisis, and volatile fish prices suggest a less optimistic outlook. Nevertheless, high fish prices in 2022 and 2023 helped mitigate economic impacts, and significant subsidies in 2023 buffered fleet income deterioration.

Markets and Trade (including fish price)

The average landed prices of sole decreased in 2017 but increased again in 2018. In 2019, the highest yearly average of the time series was reached: 14.1 euro/kg. This value dropped slightly in 2020 but regained the high 14.1 euro/kg price in 2021. In 2022, the average fish price for sole reached an all-time high of 16.9 euro/kg, a strong price that continued into 2023. The value of landings for sole decreased slightly compared to 2022 (~47% of the total value of landings).

Plaice prices have been increasing since 2013 and reached the highest yearly average in 2018: 2.9 euro/kg. This partly accounts for the profitability of TBB VL2440 and TBB VL1824. Prices slightly decreased in 2019 to 2.8 euro/kg and again in 2020 to 2.5 euro/kg but regained the 2.6 euro/kg price in 2021. Also, for plaice, the fish price reached an all-time high of 3.1 euro/kg in 2022 and remained strong in 2023. Both the value of landings and landed weight were lower in 2019 and 2020, a trend that strengthened in 2021 and continued in 2022 and 2023; however, the weight of landings increased by about 10 tonnes in 2023.

Furthermore, the average landed prices of common shrimp increased by 50% in 2016 compared to 2015. This led to an increase of 146% in the value of landings of shrimp, making the fleet segment targeting common shrimp (TBB VL1824) profitable for the first time in the time series. They remained profitable in 2017 and 2018, even though shrimp prices decreased by 47% in 2018 as landed weight increased by 112% and value of landings by 10% compared to 2017. In 2019, the prices were slightly lower than in 2018, and this fleet segment was not profitable. In 2020, the average landed price for common shrimp increased again (by 20%), 7% in 2021, and a significant 54% in 2022. Additionally, the landed weight doubled in 2022, resulting in this fleet segment being economically weak but showing a positive economic trend. The importance of common shrimp completely disappeared in 2023 with a 75% decrease in landed weight and a 61% decrease in landed value. It should be noted that the price for common shrimp was at an all-time high in 2023, even higher than in the record year of 2016.

Prices for Norway lobster increased considerably between 2014 and 2016 but decreased in 2017, 2018, 2019, and again considerably in 2020 (-30% compared to 2019). In 2021, the price restored somewhat with an increase of 30% and continued rising in 2022 with another 12%. The price for Norway lobster remained stable in 2023. The value of landings and landed weight was restored to values comparable to those in 2018. However, 2018 and 2019 were difficult years for DTS VL2440 and they were not profitable in 2019. Although still non-profitable in 2020, the DTS VL2440 fleet managed to reduce its non-profitability. However, in 2021 and 2022, this fleet segment's non-profitability increased again, despite the value of landings and landed weight of Nephrops increasing. This could be due to a higher common sole catch, which retained a high yearly average price. The continued strong prices of common sole allowed the DTS VL2440 fleet segment to remain focused on sole catches in 2023; therefore, the landed weight of Nephrops declined in 2023 compared to 2022, correlated to the reduced catch, and the value of landings further decreased in 2023.

Over the years, common squid has become more important, reaching the highest landings and value of landings in the time series in 2019 (516 tonnes; EUR 3.7 million). By 2022, squid species are now the second most important group of fished species representing a landed value of EUR 8.9 million, which represents just over 10% of the total value of landings of the Belgian fleet. These species do not fall under quota measures and their introduction may be a response to policy measures such as the LO. By 2023, the landed value of squid species became EUR 9.3 million, representing 11% of the total value of landing. Interestingly,

this value is mostly fueled by increasing catches of common cuttlefish, with 1,819 tonnes caught in 2023, an amount that has been increasing since 2015.

The dependency on the Netherlands markets was remarkable in previous years but decreased significantly in 2020 and remained similar in 2021. The contribution of the Netherlands markets decreased to a small extent in 2022. In 2023, 49% of landings in foreign harbors occurred in Dutch ports in the Netherlands. Also, 40% was landed in Denmark, no landings were made in France (0%) while more catch was landed in Spain (11%) (Scherrens et al., 2024). The increased landings in Denmark are a direct effect of the weighing obligation in their ports. No landings were made in the United Kingdom in 2021, 2022, and 2023, as a direct consequence of Brexit, and remarkably, no landings were made in Germany, although those landings were very small even in previous years. Almost 40% of the fleet is also owned by Dutch nationals (Scherrens et al., 2022). These tend to land in their home ports, where the price for plaice is generally higher than in Belgium (higher demand). Sole tends to remain more valuable on internal Belgian markets. Belgium is a net exporter of plaice. France (shellfish) and the Netherlands (fish and crustaceans) are important trading partners. Exports to Spain and Italy, either directly or indirectly (through the Netherlands), have also become important.

Management instruments and regulation (policy)

The fleet is managed primarily through TACs for certain species, along with various effort limitations. Fishing rights are collectively overseen by the Flemish authorities in Belgium. Several complex mechanisms have been established to regulate catches. Species, area, and nationally defined fleet segments (mainly based on engine power) are typically used as parameters. Occasionally, gear specifications and exceptions exist, particularly for passive gears. Quota allocation and effort restrictions apply at the vessel level rather than the company level. Leasing or hiring fishing rights is not permitted.

The Landing Obligation

The Landing Obligation (LO) was gradually implemented, and as of 2019, it prohibits discarding all species with a Total Allowable Catch (TAC). Measures such as quota uplifts were introduced to allow for some *flexibilit*y. In Belgium, a de minimis exemption was established for sole fisheries. In 2020, this exemption amounted to 105 tonnes of sole distributed across various areas, with 51 tonnes allocated to the North Sea (Scherrens et al., 2020). Once this amount was exceeded, sole below the minimum conservation reference size were landed and deducted from the national quota.

In 2023, maximum *de minimis* values were set at a total of 317 kg of plaice, 115 kg of sole, and 6 kg of anglerfish below the minimum conservation reference size, which were landed in Belgian harbours. Of these *de minimis* values, none were used for plaice, 17% were used for sole, and 108% were used for anglerfish.

In certain cases, exemptions based on high survivability are permitted. For 2023, the *de minimis* exemption was granted for plaice using beam trawlers with mesh sizes between 19 and 80 mm in all fishing areas (except 27.7.h, j, k), turbot in the North Sea using beam trawlers with mesh sizes smaller than or equal to 80 mm, and for rays and Norway lobsters in all areas (Scherrens et al., 2024).

Stock status, TACs and quotas

In 2020, the initial quota for Norway lobster and sole decreased (-8% for sole) but increased in 2020 (+34%) and 2021 (+8%). The plaice quota declined yearly from 2017 to 2021 but remained relatively high. Cod quotas significantly dropped in 2019 (-32%), 2020 (-59%), and 2021 (-29%), stabilizing in 2022 (-1.5%). North Sea cod's unfavorable stock status caused this decline. In 2023, Belgian quotas for cod, haddock, and whiting rose by 60%, 25%, and 20%, respectively, while European plaice decreased slightly by almost -2%. A severe reduction occurred for common sole with a -40% decrease in the North Sea and -28% in the eastern English Channel.

Belgium uses quota swaps for better management and year-round fishing. In 2023, the total sole quota was set at 3,196 tonnes after swaps, with 74% caught. Sole stocks in the Western and Eastern English Channel, Celtic Sea, and Bay of Biscay are sustainably exploited, though some SSB levels have dropped below precautionary limits. The North Sea and Irish Sea sole stocks face high fishing pressure, with the former below sustainable levels.

The plaice quota was 6,581 tonnes after swaps in 2023 (-11% compared to 2022), with 37% caught. Plaice stocks in various regions are at sustainable levels, but fishing pressure is high in the English Channel, and the Celtic Sea SSB is unsustainable. Discard rates for North Sea plaice were high (51% in 2021).

For cod, the 2023 quota was 639 tonnes after swaps, with 91% caught. North Sea cod has been harvested unsustainably for years, despite a management plan since 2003. Stock recovery signs are evident, but reproductive capacity remains low. Fishing pressure is currently sustainable due to reduced TAC and additional measures. Improved TAC was suggested in 2023, but 2024 advice reversed the relaxed TAC for Southern substocks.

Operational costs (external factors)

Crew and fuel costs represent the most significant operational expenses. Minimum crew shares are legally fixed, limiting savings through reduced crew numbers due to safety regulations.

Fuel prices have fluctuated since 2013; they increased in 2017 and 2018, decreased in 2019 and 2020, then rose again from mid-2020 onwards, reaching levels comparable to economic crises in 2008 and 2012. In 2022, fuel prices peaked in Belgium, making it a major cost for the fishing fleet. Although 2023 saw lower fuel prices than 2022, they remained high, impacting operating costs. The Belgian fleet, mainly composed of beam and demersal trawlers, is fuel-intensive, so even small drops in fuel prices affect profitability. Consequently, fluctuations in fuel prices are crucial for the fleet's profitability.

Innovation and Development

Research on technical innovations and alternatives for beam trawlers in the flatfish and shrimp fisheries is ongoing. The fuel crisis of 2008 prompted the fleet to adapt to rapidly increasing fuel costs. Several vessels transitioned from traditional beam trawling to alternative methods, such as introducing a beam on wheels (Ecoroll) or replacing the beam with a wing (SumWing). Some vessels adopted a combination of both. Other adjustments included reducing the overall weight of gears and replacing old engines, nozzles, and propellers. Subsidies were provided to encourage these measures. Currently, investments

are being made in modern engines for new ships, which can run on both fossil and hydrogen fuels with additional investment. Efforts are also focused on investing in engines that are particularly fuel-efficient under load, during trawling, which is a relevant investment for the Belgian fishing fleet. Recently, research has been undertaken to obtain reliable and accurate live tracking values of fuel consumption of main and auxiliary engines of certain vessels in the Belgian fleet. If successful, live tracking of fuel consumption could inform skippers to increase the efficiency of steaming and fishing, thereby reducing fuel consumption.

In light of the implementation of the LO, research on gear selectivity is also ongoing. Selectivity can be improved by using more selective gears or reallocating activities to areas with different catch compositions. Therefore, devices such as cut-away top panels, square mesh top panels, benthos release panels, T-90 cod-ends, square mesh cod-ends, narrow cod-ends, and tunnels in square meshes are being developed and tested in Belgium. Additionally, collaborative projects on technological innovations aimed at reducing the bottom impact of trawling are ongoing.

Socioeconomic impact

Specific programs of the EU Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) aimed at decommissioning have led to a significant reduction in the number of active vessels. In 1992, there were 205 fishing vessels, whereas by 2002 this number had decreased to 130, representing a 37% decline. This figure remained relatively stable for several years. The fuel crisis in 2008 resulted in a further substantial reduction in capacity and adversely affected economic performance. Additionally, the commercial market significantly influences fish prices, which have been low, leading to decreased revenue from landings. The declining number of vessels has impacted job availability on board, presumably making the fishing profession less attractive compared to other economic activities.

In comparison to 2020, fuel prices peaked in 2022, while crew costs increased due to indexation measures in Belgium. Despite these negative impacts on the socio-economic performance of the fleet, strong average fish prices mitigated some adverse effects. Nevertheless, 2022 was characterized by reduced profitability for the fleet. Annual fluctuations in socio-economic performance are expected. Based on the socio-economic results observed in 2022, it was anticipated that a stabilizing effect might occur in subsequent years. As 2023 did not present significant new challenges for the Belgian fishing fleet and Brexit negotiations neared concrete measures associated with substantial subsidies, the stabilization of the socio-economic performance of the Belgian fleet appears to be progressing. It is possible that this stable situation will continue in the coming years.

4.2.6 Assessment of the economic performance for 2024 and 2025 (nowcasts)

Model results

Expected profitability for 2024 and 2025 is slightly higher than in 2023, driven by cost reductions and stable high fish prices. However, geopolitical tensions (Russia/Ukraine, Palestine/Israel, Israel/Iran) add uncertainty. Costs may rise due to seven new vessels joining the Belgian fleet from 2023, but this impact remains uncertain.

Outlook

The initial quota for 2025 has decreased for several key species of the Belgian fishing fleet. Nevertheless, 2025 has seen increased activity due to dense cephalopod stocks. Future normal fishing activities may be affected by geo-political conflicts and environmental measures taken under climate change initiatives. Average fish prices remain strong, indicating sustained demand for fishing products. However, it is uncertain how long this positive trend will persist in 2025, given current stable but high interest rates and financial inflation. The value of landings is projected to decrease by 15% in 2025 compared to 2023.

Increasing fuel prices

Fuel prices rose in 2021 and continued into 2022, worsened by the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Despite fluctuations, high fuel prices impact the Belgian fishing fleet, which manages some bulking to mitigate costs. The industry feels immediate effects through higher operational costs for vessel owners, affecting financial reserves, maintenance, and loan repayments.

Compounding challenges from Brexit and new landing regulations decrease the profession's attractiveness. However, higher average fish prices and subsidies from Brexit negotiations helped sustain operations in 2023. Future investment in personnel and tech innovations will be crucial for the sector.

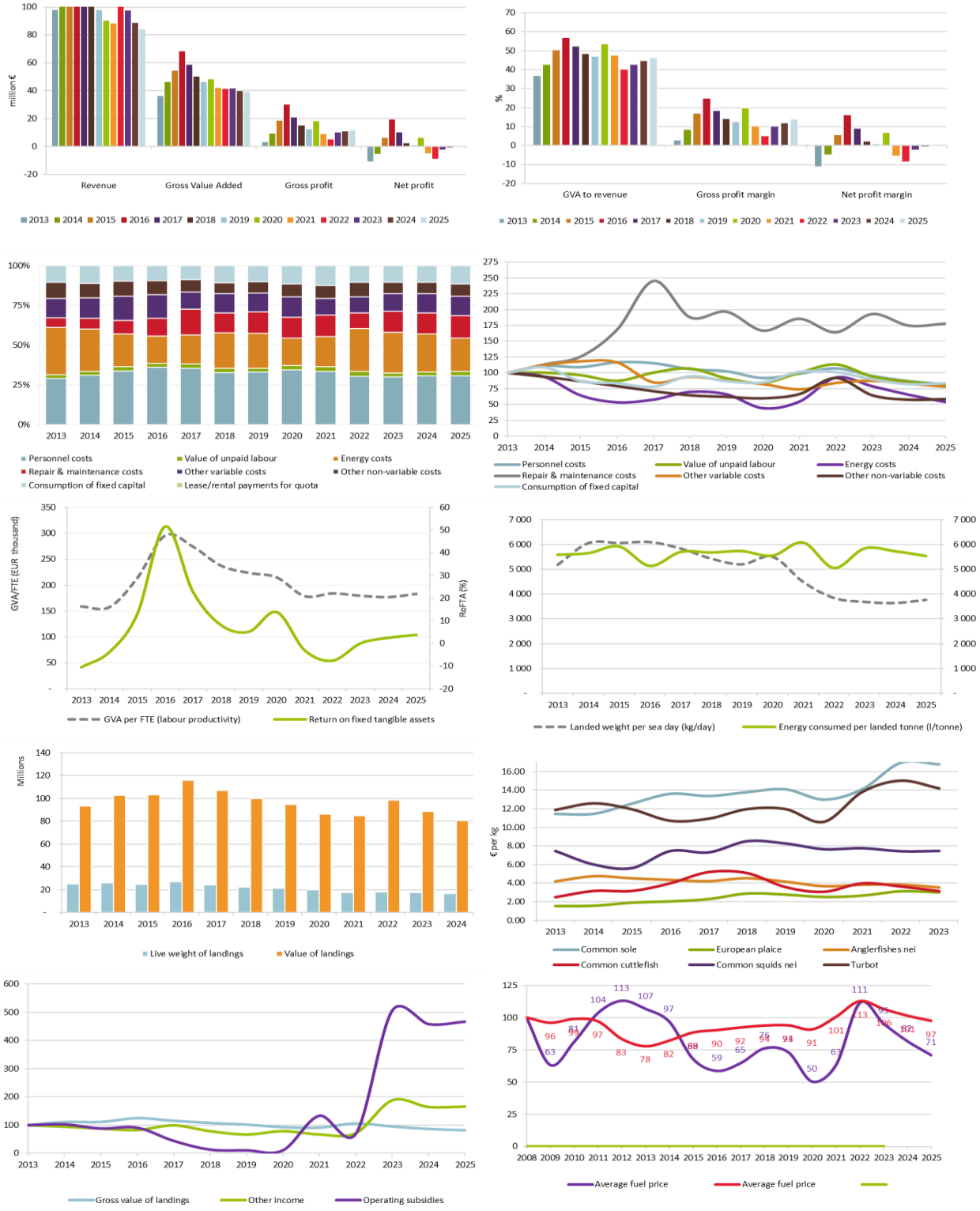
4.2.7 Methodological considerations and data issues

Data comes from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries of the Flemish Government, responsible for data collection. The questionnaire was updated in 2017 and refined in 2018 to comply with the 2016 EU Decision, impacting time series for some variables. For instance, investments saw a significant rise due to different interpretations, and subsidies were split into various categories, causing unusual trends. Direct income subsidies fell by 51% in 2017.

In 2017 and 2018, low response rates for unpaid labor and total hours worked hindered reliable estimates. Annual estimates began in 2019, yet they may not be representative. Capital value and cost variables for inactive vessels remain unknown, with a 100% refusal rate. Inactive vessels represented about 8% of the fleet in 2022 (five vessels) and 11% in 2023 (seven vessels).

Due to the small size of the Belgian fleet, aggregation of fleet segments was necessary. The fleet mainly consists of demersal and beam trawlers. Other gear types like seiners, dredges, gill nets, trammel nets, pots, and traps were used by a minimal number of vessels, grouped into the PMP VL1824 segment. This segment was omitted from reports in 2022 and 2023 due to low vessel numbers breaching GDPR measures, and all related socio-economic data was excluded.

Figure 4.2.1. Belgium: Main trends in (from top to bottom, left to right): economic performance indicators (absolute value and relative values); cost structure and variation in main cost items; productivity and efficiency indicators; landings (in weight and value) and average price (euro/kg) of op species; variation in income variables and average prices of key input/outputs (2013=100). Nowcast figures for 2024 and 2025.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

4.3 Bulgaria

4.3.1 Short description of the national fleet

As of 2023, the Bulgarian fishing fleet comprised 1,782 registered vessels. Of these, 1,102 were active while 680 remained inactive. The active fleet had a total gross tonnage (GT) of 4,571 tonnes, engine power amounting to 37,083 kW, and an average age of 28 years.

Table 4.3.1. Bulgaria at a glance.

Bulgaria		2023			%Δ 2023-2022		
Indicator	Units	Overall	SSCF	LSF+L12AG	Overall	SSCF	LSF+L12AG
Active vessels	Number	1,102	1,010	92	-8%	-9%	-7%
FTE	Number	576	396	180	-8%	-7%	-9%
Gross Value of landings	Million €	6.2	1.5	4.7	19%	-22%	43%
GVA	Million €	4.2	1.9	5.0	63%	-10%	38%
Gross profit	Million €	2.4	0.3	2.1	139%	-52%	635%
Net profit	Million €	1.6	0.1	1.5	1202%	-81%	547%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure

In 2023, the Bulgarian fishing fleet comprised 1,010 SSCF vessels (92% of the total) with an engine power of 21,849 kW, and 92 LSF vessels (8%) with an engine power of 15,126 kW. The fleet size decreased by 5% from 2022 to 2023 and by 7% compared to the 2013-2022 average.

The fleet's physical capital was valued at EUR 19.36 million, with 84% belonging to the active fleet. From 2022 to 2023, inactive vessels rose by 1%, while active vessels fell by 8%. The active SSCF shrank by 9%, and the active LSF by 7%. GT in the active SSCF dropped by 4% and kW by 6%; in the LSF, both GT and kW fell by 5% and 8%, respectively.

Employment and average salaries

In 2023, total employment was estimated at 1,620 jobs or 575 FTEs, averaging 0.52 FTE per active vessel. Employment fell by 6% from 2022 to 2023, and was 5% lower compared to the 2013-2022 average. This decline may be due to fewer active vessels in the SSCF. The employment figures include unpaid labor, as many fishers reported being unpaid once this option was added to the questionnaire. Notably, 77% of active vessels had between 1 and 10 days at sea, and 10% had 11 to 20 DaS, mostly operated by owners or their family members.

Fishing activity and production

The Bulgarian fleet spent 15 304 DaS in 2023, a -12% decrease compared to 2022 and a -32% decrease over the period 2013-2022. The DaS marked the highest decrease during the analysis period, and the number is the lowest since 2010.

Compared to 2021, which was the year with a positive sign in terms of landings, compared to 2020, which was the year with the lowest landings volume for the period 2008-2020, in 2022 there was again a significant decrease of the live weight and value of landings, followed by significant increase in 2023. Compared to 2022, the total weight increased by +20% and the value by +19%. The total landed weight was 6 665 tonnes of seafood, with a landed value of EUR 6.2 million. Compared to the analysed period (2013-2022), the total weight of landings decreased by -20% and the value decreased by 23%.

Regarding the top species in terms of value, the price of sea snails for 2023 changed significantly compared to the decreased value from 2022. In 2023 it increased by 26% but still remains lower than that the average for the period 2013-2022 by 9%. The average first sale price for 2023 for European sprat also increased, by 55% compared to 2022, and compared to the period 2013-2022, increased by +20%. The price of Mediterranean horse mackerel increased by 25% compared to 2022 and decreased by -5% compared to the period 2013-2022. In 2023, the price of sand gaper increased by -9% compared to 2022, and the price of turbot, that continued to be very important due to the quota increased by +44% compared to 2022.

While in 2022 the main landed species for the Bulgarian fleet as a percentage of the total weight and value were the sea snail with 39% in terms of weight and 18% in value, followed by the European sprat, with 28% in weight and 15% in value, and sand gaper represented only 6% in terms of weight and 21% in value, the situation in 2023 was different. In 2023, the European sprat represented 49% of the landings in weight and 35% of the value. The sea snail represented 34% in terms of weight and 20% in value. The sand gaper was in fourth place in terms of weight, with 2% in terms of weight but taking the fifth place with 9% in terms of value.

4.3.2 Economic results for 2023 and recent trends

The economic results pertain solely to the Bulgarian fishing fleet active in 2023.

National fleet performance

In 2023, income generated from landings amounted to EUR 6.25 million, while non-fishing income contributed another EUR 0.6 million, making the total income EUR 6.85 million. This represents a 19% increase in income from landings compared to 2022, although it is 33% lower than the average for the period 2013-2022. The increase in income was due to higher total landings and an increase in the first sale price of key commercial species. Non-fishing income, primarily from tourism activities, increased by 38% compared to 2022 but remained well below the 2013 level, when it exceeded EUR 3.5 million.

Overall, total costs decreased by 4% between 2022 and 2023. Personnel costs rose by 15% in 2023 compared to 2022 but remained 37% lower than the average for the period 2013-2022. Energy costs, which are the most significant cost item, decreased by 13% in 2023 compared to 2022.

Operating costs in 2023 were EUR 4.4 million. Energy costs and crew costs were the two major expenses, amounting to EUR 1.63 million and EUR 1.45 million, respectively. Notably, EUR 0.38 million of crew costs were attributed to unpaid labour, retained by the fishers as working capital. Operating costs showed no significant changes between 2022 and 2023.

In terms of economic performance, the Gross Value Added (GVA), gross profit, and net profit in 2023 were estimated at EUR 4.23 million, EUR 2.41 million, and EUR 1.58 million, respectively. Despite a decline in net profit in 2019 and 2020 compared to previous years, 2023 saw a notable increase over 2022. However, it remains 40% lower compared to the average for the period 2013-2022.

The Bulgarian fleet's physical capital in 2023 was valued at EUR 16.33 million, with investments amounting to EUR 0.18 million—an 11% decrease in the value of physical capital and a 48% increase in investments compared to 2022. The total assets were estimated at around EUR 19 million in the past four years, decreasing to EUR 17.7 million in 2023.

The fleet distribution has remained relatively stable over time. The SSCF is the main fleet in Bulgaria, with 1,010 active vessels in 2023. These vessels spent 8,640 Days at Sea (DaS) and landed 979 tonnes of fish, generating EUR 1.5 million. The LSF comprised 92 vessels, which spent 6,664 DaS and landed 5,686 tonnes of fish, generating EUR 4.73 million.

The limited access to funding through the Operational Program under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) for SSCF, political instability, and significant inflation due to regional crises have been the primary reasons for the low investment values in recent years. Fishers often relied on personal funds or additional financing, leading to debts of nearly EUR 0.1 million.

Resource productivity and efficiency

In 2023, the gross profit margin was 35%, reflecting a 99% increase in operating efficiency compared to 2022. However, when considering the period from 2013 to 2022, there is a decline of 9%. This trend is also evident in the net profit margin for 2023, which saw a substantial increase of 981% compared to 2022, but a 10% decrease over the 2013-2022 period. The Return on Fixed Tangible Assets (RoFTA) stood at approximately 11% in 2023, representing a 199% increase from 2022, driven by a significant rise in net profit.

Labour productivity in 2023 experienced a notable increase of 77% compared to 2022. Nevertheless, this figure was 28% lower than the average during the period from 2013 to 2022.

Fuel consumption per landed tonne has shown variability since 2019, with a marginal decrease observed in the last year. In 2023, fuel consumption reached 376 litres per landed tonne, which is 42 litres less than in 2022, but 52 litres more than in 2021. Compared to the period from 2013 to 2022, fuel consumption per landed tonne in 2023 increased by 18%.

The weight of landings per unit of effort (measured in Days-at-Sea, DaS) has followed a fluctuating trend since 2020, after a steady increase from 2016. Following a 42% rise in 2021 against 2020, there was an 18% decrease in 2022 compared to 2021. In 2023, landings saw an increase of 37% compared to 2022 and an 18% rise relative to the average from 2013 to 2022.

4.3.3 Performance by fishing activity

Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

In 2023, most of the 1,010 active vessels (out of 1,102) were under 12 metres long, used passive gears, and engaged in small-scale coastal and seasonal fishing. Gillnets and scuba diving for sea snails were common methods. The workforce included 1,397 individuals, with 1,283 being unpaid labor. For many, this fishing is a seasonal hobby or small family business, with catches often used for personal consumption or sold in their own restaurants.

The live weight of landings was 979 tonnes, a decrease of 23% from 2022 and 57% from the period 2013-2022. The value of landings also fell by 22% compared to 2022 and by 51% compared to the 2013-2022 average. Net profit in 2023 dropped by 81% from 2022 and was 93% lower than the 2013-2022 average. The net profit margin in 2023 was 22.9%, down 10% from the 2017 average. The variability in these figures is partly due to a net loss in 2014 when expenses exceeded revenue.

Large-scale fleet (LSF+ L12AG)

In 2023, the Bulgarian LSF had 92 vessels, including 15 from the L12AG fleet under 12 metres with active gears. The FTE was 180, a 9% decrease from 2022. The LSF produced 5,686 tonnes of landings (85% of the whole fleet), valued at EUR 4.53 million (76% of total value).

Income from landings increased by 42%, matching 2019 levels post-2020 decline. Other income decreased by 17% from 2022 yet rose by 10% over the 2013-2022 period. Personnel costs grew by 23% from 2022 and 25% compared to 2013-2022. Unpaid labor decreased by 2% from 2021, with 53 unpaid workers representing 4% of the total. Energy costs dropped by 28%, repair/maintenance costs by 37%, while other non-variable and variable costs increased by 4% and 3% respectively.

4.3.4 Performance of selected fleet segments

The fleet operates only in the Black Sea and comprises a diverse range of vessel types, each targeting different species. In 2023, the national fleet was composed of 24 active fleet segments and 4 inactive segments, with 680 vessels classified as inactive. The clustering scheme was revised in 2017, resulting in the identification of 17 segments/clusters based on the low number of vessels in certain fleet segments. It is important to note that these clusters are utilized solely to ensure data confidentiality and not for data collection purposes. The data collection methodology applied is a census that includes all vessels.

In 2023, specific segments of the Bulgarian fleet were grouped into eight clusters: drift net vessels (12-18m) with 20 vessels; hook-and-line vessels (6-12m) with 32 vessels; purse seiners (0-6m) with 12 vessels; vessels using both active and passive gears (12-18m) with 14 vessels; pots and traps vessels (6-12m) with 31 vessels; passive gear-only vessels (6-12m) with 17 vessels; beam trawls (12-18m) with 11 vessels; and pelagic trawlers (12-18m) with 19 vessels. Notably, within the hook-and-line vessels (6-12m) cluster, there was only one segment, but the cluster name was retained for consistency.

The profitability analysis for 2023 indicated that eight fleet segments, encompassing 227 vessels, achieved high profitability, while six segments, involving 852 vessels, displayed weak profitability. One fleet segment reported landings of 2,280 tonnes in live weight, another

segment exceeded 1,200 tonnes, followed by one segment with over 800 tonnes, and three segments with more than 500 tonnes each.

Pelagic trawlers 24-40 metres

In 2023, this segment comprised 10 vessels that targeted various species, particularly European sprat and sea snail. Some of these vessels also used beam trawl as a secondary fishing gear. The total live weight of landings in 2023 was 2,280 tonnes, valued at EUR 1.82 million, representing a 43% increase compared to 2022. This fleet segment employed 49 full-time equivalents (FTEs). The segment's profitability is considered reasonable; however, the economic trend has shown deterioration. In 2023, the net profit margin decreased by 78% compared to the period from 2013 to 2022.

Pelagic trawlers 12-18 metres

In 2023, 19 vessels targeted European sprat, sea snail, and red mullet. The fleet segment landed 1,205 tonnes worth EUR 1.07 million and employed 37 FTEs. Despite high profitability, economic development estimates were impossible due to a lack of prior segmentation data.

Polyvalent active and passive gears 6-12 metres

In 2023, 85 vessels made up the segment that targets mainly sea snails, sand gaper, red mullet and Mediterranean horse mackerel. In 2023, the total live weight of landings was 592 tonnes with a value EUR 0.82 million, and the fleet segment employed 47 FTEs, corresponding to 191 employees. The net profit margin in 2023 decreased by 44% compared to the period 2013-2022.

Beam trawlers 12-18 metres*

In 2023, 11 vessels made up this clustered segment that targets sea snail. In 2023, the total live weight of landings was 807 tonnes with a value EUR 0.53 million and 16 FTEs were employed in this fleet segment. The profitability was reasonable, but it was not possible to estimate the economic development trend because the segment was missing in the recent years.

4.3.5 Drivers affecting the economic performance trends

In 2023, Bulgarian catches increased by 20% compared to 2022. However, when compared to the average for the period from 2013 to 2022, the total catches decreased by 20%.

The prices of fish and fuel continue to be the primary factors influencing the overall sustainability of the fleet. The rise in the average price of key species with significant landings for the Bulgarian fleet, such as sprat and sea snail, coupled with increased landings, had a positive impact on the profitability of almost all segments of the fleet.

Despite the improvement in the fleet's economic performance in 2023, fishing activities may have remained constrained due to the ongoing war in Ukraine, which continued to pose significant risks to the safety and security of fishing operations.

Markets and Trade

The annual consumption of fish and fish products increased slightly from 6.1 kg per capita in 2022 to 6.2 kg in 2023. Local products continue to face competition from imported fish, particularly from supermarket chains that offer a broad range of species, including oceanic fish, farmed salmon, mackerel, bream, trout, and other seafood, at competitive prices.

According to data from the National Statistical Institute, total imports of fish and fishery products in Bulgaria reached 40,402 tonnes in 2023, a decrease of 8.6% compared to 2022. Notable declines were seen in imports of frozen fish (excluding fillets), which fell by 17.1%, crustaceans by 9.6%, fresh or chilled whole fish by 8.0%, and aquatic invertebrates other than crustaceans and molluscs by 6.9%. There was an increase in imports of live fish (+16.8%), molluscs (+5.2%), and dried, salted, or smoked fish (+9.5%). Imports of fish fillets and other fish meat rose by 3.4%, while canned fish products and preserved crustaceans and molluscs showed minimal growth.

In 2023, approximately two-thirds of the total fish and fishery product imports into Bulgaria originated from EU member states, amounting to 27,317 tonnes, representing a 6.1% decrease compared to the previous year. The main trading partners within the EU were Spain (5,100 tonnes), Greece (4,800 tonnes), the Netherlands (3,900 tonnes), and Denmark (3,100 tonnes), followed by Romania (1,800 tonnes) and Poland (1,500 tonnes). Imports from non-EU countries decreased more sharply by 13.5%, reaching 13,085 tonnes. Leading sources among third countries were Norway (3,200 tonnes), Morocco (1,700 tonnes), China (1,500 tonnes), Canada (1,300 tonnes), as well as Turkey and Iceland, each supplying just over 1,000 tonnes.

Data from the National Statistical Institute indicates that Bulgaria exported a total of 14,650 tonnes of fish, other aquatic organisms, and fishery products in 2023, a slight decrease of 1.9% compared to the previous year. This decline was mainly due to reductions in exports of ready-to-eat fish products and canned fish (-25.8%), dried and salted fish (-23.8%), and preserved crustaceans and molluscs (-8.4%).

Despite the overall drop, several categories registered growth. Exports of crustaceans increased by 43.7%, frozen fish (excluding fillets) by 36.4%, and fish fillets and other processed edible parts by 41.4%. Live fish exports rose by 12.5%, fresh or chilled fish (excluding fillets) by 4.7%, and molluscs by 21.0%. A small quantity of aquatic invertebrates other than crustaceans and molluscs (0.058 tonnes) was also exported; this category had no recorded exports in the previous year.

Exports to EU member states totaled 11,407 tonnes, accounting for 75.4% of Bulgaria’s total fish and seafood exports, representing a 7.5% decline compared to 2022. The largest volumes were directed to Romania (5,942 tonnes) and Sweden (2,159 tonnes), followed by Belgium (537 tonnes), Germany (470 tonnes), Greece (464 tonnes), and Spain (403 tonnes). Conversely, exports to non-EU countries grew significantly by 20.5%, reaching 3,603 tonnes. Major destinations included Serbia (1,665 tonnes), Bosnia and Herzegovina (631 tonnes), South Korea (383 tonnes), Japan (338 tonnes), the United Kingdom (162 tonnes), Ukraine (83 tonnes), and Moldova (73 tonnes).

The Bulgarian market faces challenges due to the large quantities of imported fish and fish products available at lower prices compared to local catches from the Black Sea. As a result, local fisheries struggle to compete, even after processing and adding value.

Operational costs (external factors)

From 2008 to 2017, personnel costs were the primary cost item. However, starting in 2018, energy costs began to comprise a significant portion of operational expenses, accounting for 37% in 2018 and 36% in 2019. In 2020, both personnel and energy costs each accounted for 30% of the total expenses. Energy costs then increased to 34% in 2021 and remained significant in 2022 and 2023, representing 38% and 34%, respectively. The sector continues to offer lower wages compared to other sectors in the country. As a result, many vessel owners view fishing as a family livelihood rather than a business venture.

Status of key stocks, TACs and quotas

In Bulgaria, two species are subject to quotas: turbot and sprat. The implementation of a TAC (Total Allowable Catch) system for the Black Sea began in 2008 following Bulgaria's and Romania's accession to the European Union.

During its 41st Annual Meeting in 2017, the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) adopted Recommendation GFCM/41/2017/4 concerning a multiannual management plan for turbot fisheries in the Black Sea. This recommendation established a TAC for turbot for the years 2018-2019, with a temporary allocation of quotas. Subsequently, the Council Regulation (EU) 2017/2360 of 11 December 2017 set the quota for sprat at the same level as in 2017, while the quota for turbot was increased to 57 tonnes for Bulgaria, representing a 32% increase compared to 2017.

Following amendments to the multiannual management plan for turbot based on decisions made during the Working Group on the Black Sea (WGBS) in September 2019, the Council Regulation (EU) 2019/2236 of 16 December 2019 fixed the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea for 2020. Under this regulation, the sprat quota remained unchanged, while the turbot quota for Bulgaria was raised to 75 tonnes, a 32% increase compared to the previous year. The total turbot quota for EU Black Sea countries was set at 150 tonnes, constituting 17.5% of the overall basin quota. The other quotas were allocated as follows: Turkey - 497 tonnes (58%), Ukraine - 160 tonnes (18.7%), Georgia - 20 tonnes (2.3%), and other countries - 30 tonnes (3.5%).

Council Regulations (EU) 2021/90 of 28 January 2021 and 2022/110 of 27 January 2022 maintained the same fishing opportunities for 2021 and 2022 in the Black Sea.

The number of vessels engaged in turbot fishing in Bulgaria has remained relatively stable over recent years. In 2019, there were 116 vessels, which increased to 124 in 2020, marking a 7% rise that contributed to enhanced fleet performance. This upward trend continued in 2021 and 2022, with 126 vessels allocated to catch turbot each year. However, in 2023, the number of vessels decreased to 119.

Management instruments

As an EU Member State and a contracting party to the GFCM, Bulgaria is implementing monitoring, control, and surveillance (MCS) activities to combat Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing. Consequently, Bulgaria is working in close cooperation with the EFCA to enhance fisheries management and strengthen the control and monitoring of landings for all species, particularly turbot. Measures such as designating specific ports for

turbot landings, equipping all turbot fishing vessels with tracking devices, and introducing minimum size regulations for turbot have positively impacted the reduction of IUU fishing.

Additionally, an international scheme for joint inspection and surveillance in the Black Sea has been established. To minimize the risk of IUU turbot fisheries, all vessels permitted to catch turbot must be equipped with tracking devices regardless of their length. The fleet is primarily managed through Total Allowable Catches (TACs) in conjunction with various input controls. The GFCM Recommendation GFCM/43/2019/3, which outlines the multiannual management plan for turbot fisheries in the Black Sea and includes measures and total allowable catches for 2017-2019, was amended for the period 2020-2022. Furthermore, during the forty-sixth session of the GFCM, Recommendation GFCM/46/2023/7 on the extension of the multiannual management plan for turbot fisheries in the Black Sea (geographical subarea 29), amending Recommendation GFCM/41/2017/4, was adopted for 2023 and 2024.

Innovation and development

Under the Operational Programme for support from the EMFF for the development of the Bulgarian fisheries sector for the Programming period 2014-2020, EUR 25.5 million was allocated to ensure the viability and sustainable development of the Bulgarian fisheries sector as well as the protection of its fishing/marine resources. The amount represents 22.47% of the total OP financial support.

In 2020, EUR 9,000 in subsidies for investments were provided to Bulgarian fishers. In 2021 and 2022, no subsidies for investments were provided. In 2023, the subsidies for investments amounted to EUR 105,000. The recent trend has focused on basic development such as gear or engine repairs, as well as improving methods of fish preservation or processing. This is aimed at increasing product quality and value.

4.3.6 Assessment of the economic performance for 2024 and 2025 (nowcasts)

Model results

Based on the available data, model results for 2024 indicate a slight increase in both the volume and value of landings compared to 2023. Despite this modest improvement, the economic performance of the Bulgarian fishing fleet in 2024 continued to decline, reflecting a downturn similar to that experienced in 2020. However, this performance still represents a marginal improvement over 2023.

Looking ahead to 2025, the overall economic condition of the Bulgarian fishing fleet is expected to remain at the same deteriorated level as in 2024. This projection is largely driven by the stagnation in the volume and value of landings, which remains the primary factor contributing to reduced revenue. Fuel prices, another key influence, showed a decrease in 2024 and 2025, which could have helped mitigate some of the negative trends.

The persistent geopolitical tensions and ongoing military activity in the Black Sea region, combined with the broader difficult regional context and long-term economic pressures, continue to pose significant challenges and weigh heavily on the sector.

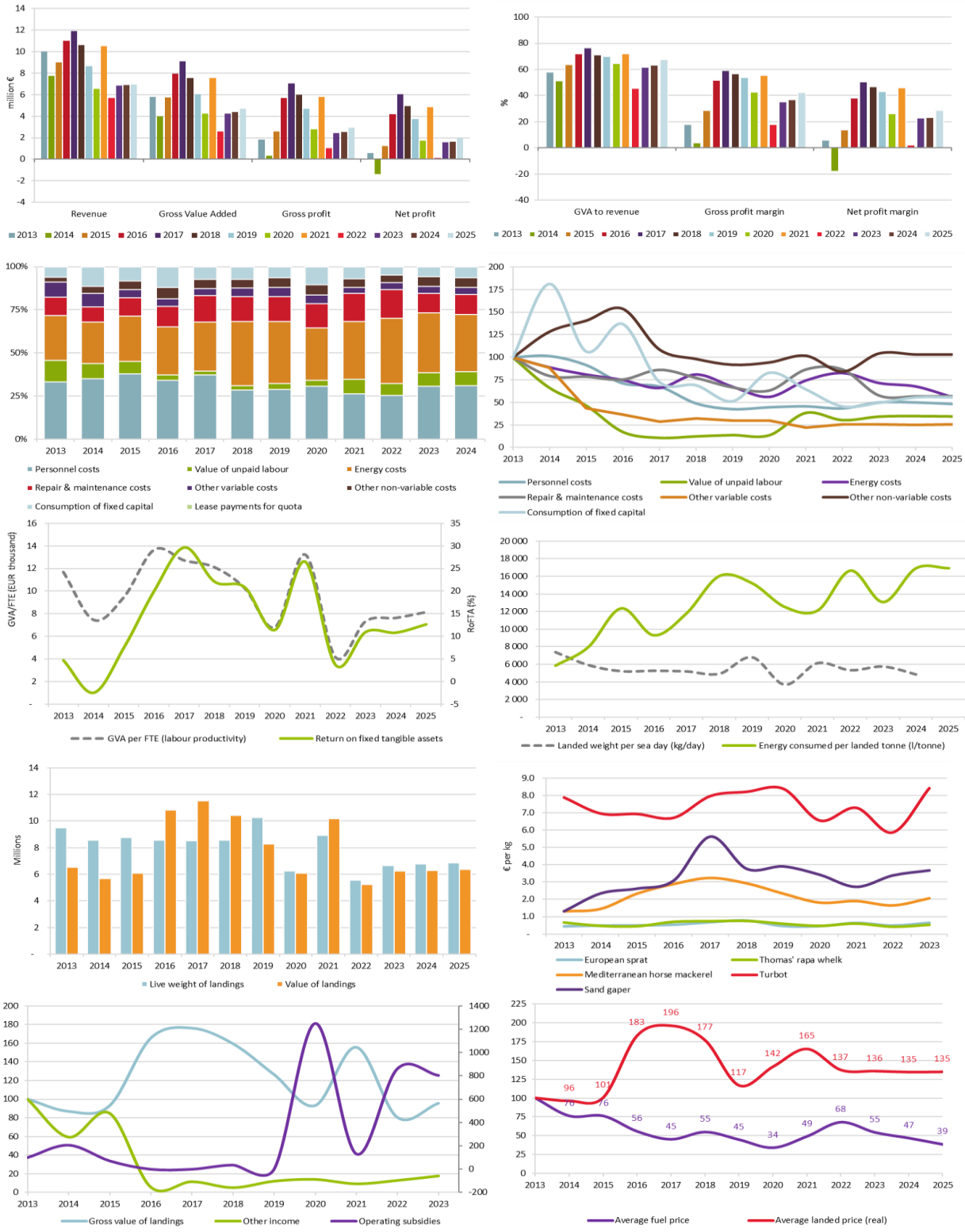
Outlook

According to the available data, in 2024 the Bulgarian fleet landed 6,784 tonnes of seafood, valued at EUR 6.29 million, which is a 19% increase from the value of landings in 2023. The consistent landings of rapa whelk along with a substantial rise in sprat landings, compared to the previous year, combined with stable landings and average prices, are the main factors contributing to the improved profitability in 2023 and 2024.

4.3.7 Methodological considerations and data issues

There were no changes compared to previous years. All clusters were utilized solely for data reporting, not for data collection, as data was gathered through questionnaires from all vessels. No significant improvements were made during the last year, and no data issues were noted.

Figure 4.3.1. Bulgaria: Main trends in (from top to bottom, left to right): economic performance indicators (absolute value and relative values); cost structure and variation in main cost items; productivity and efficiency indicators; landings (in weight and value) and average price (euro/kg) of top species; variation in income variables and average prices of key input/outputs (2013=100). Nowcast figures for 2024 and 2025.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

4.4 Denmark

4.4.1 Short description of the national fleet

In 2023, the Danish fishing fleet included 1,911 registered vessels, with a total vessel tonnage of 74,444 GTs and engine power of 224,500 kW. Of these, 1,159 were active, and 752 were inactive. Previously, vessels were counted as production units, but from 2022 onwards, counting is done at the vessel level. This new method has not been applied to previous years, making it impossible to compare capacity measures from past years with the 2022 data.

Table 4.4.1. Denmark at a glance.

Denmark		2023				%Δ 2023-2022			
Indicator	**Units**	**Overall**	**SSCF**	**L12AG**	**LSF**	**Overall**	**SSCF**	**L12AG**	**LSF**
Active vessels	Number	1,159	793	74	292	-5%	-5%	-8%	-7%
FTE	Number	762	60	30	672	-14%	-43%	7%	-11%
Gross Value of landings	Million €	430.0	11.8	4.6	413.6	4%	-22%	-19%	6%
GVA	Million €	277.9	6.1	1.7	270.1	10%	-17%	-37%	11%
Gross profit	Million €	168.2	- 0.9	- 0.7	169.8	24%	58%	-347%	23%
Net profit	Million €	- 10.8	- 2.9	- 2.2	- 5.8	-298%	48%	-187%	-262%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure

In 2023, approximately 75% of the active fleet comprised vessels under 12 metres in length. Including inactive vessels, this proportion was even higher because many inactive vessels are also under 12 metres. Vessels between 24-40 metres and those over 40 metres constituted less than 3% of the total number of active vessels in 2023 but represented 70% of the total landings value. Among the active fleet, 71% used passive gears only, 18% utilized demersal trawls or seine or both, while a small percentage (5%) employed dredge, pelagic trawl, or beam trawl. The largest landings in terms of value and weight in 2023 were made by pelagic trawlers over 40 metres in length, targeting species for human consumption (Atlantic herring, Atlantic cod, and Atlantic mackerel) and species for fishmeal and fish oil production (sprat, sandeel, and blue whiting).

Fishing activity and production

In 2023, the Danish fleet spent a total of 62,500 days at sea (DaS). The total number of DaS decreased by 7% between 2022 and 2023. Fuel consumption was 79 million litres in 2023, an increase of 6% compared to 2022.

In 2023, the total weight landed by the Danish fleet was 495,000 tonnes of seafood with a real landing value of EUR 430 million, representing an increase of 4% compared to 2022. Compared to 2020, the total weight and value of landings have decreased by 40% and 16%, respectively.

The primary species driving the increase in total weight landed in 2023 were industrial species, primarily sandeels and blue whiting. Additionally, landings of central consumption

species such as cod increased by 48%, mainly due to the improved biological situation in the North Sea.

Employment and average salaries

Total number of employees in 2023 was estimated to be 1 645 jobs, which is a decrease compared to 2022 by 7%. Converting into FTEs there were 889 FTEs employed in 2022, but 762 FTEs in 2023. This decrease of -14% is primarily considered to be due to the difficult biological situation in the Baltic Sea, which has not improved.

Average crew costs per FTE increased +5% from EUR 92 200 in 2022 to EUR 97 168 in 2023.

4.4.2 Economic results for 2023 and recent trends

The economic results pertain solely to the Danish fishing fleet active in 2023.

National fleet performance

The total income generated by the active Danish fleet in 2023 was EUR 460 million, reflecting a 6% increase compared to 2022. Income from direct fishing activities amounted to EUR 430 million, slightly higher (+4%) than the 2022 level. Non-fishing income was EUR 12 million (+16% compared to 2022), and income from leasing out fishing rights reached EUR 18 million (+47% compared to 2022).

The three primary variable costs included labour (excluding the value of unpaid labour), energy, and repair and maintenance. Crew costs were EUR 74 million, representing a 10% decrease from 2022. Energy costs stood at EUR 60 million, down 17% compared to 2022, while repair and maintenance costs increased by 17%, reaching EUR 43 million compared to 2022.

Annual depreciation costs, which are the major component of capital costs, saw a slight increase of 1% compared to 2022, amounting to EUR 153 million.

With respect to economic fleet performance, gross value added (GVA) decreased by 9%, gross profit declined by 10%, and net profit increased by 40% compared to 2022.

In 2023, the Danish fleet's physical capital (estimated depreciated replacement value) was valued at EUR 751 million, with an estimated value of fishing rights around EUR 2.8 billion. Compared to 2022, the value of physical capital decreased by 11%, whereas the estimated value of fishing rights rose by 81%.

Resource productivity and efficiency

The Danish fleet achieved a gross profit margin of 38% in 2023, which represents an increase compared to 32% in 2022. However, the net profit margin was -2.5% in 2023, nearly 2 percentage points lower than in 2022, marking the lowest value for the entire period from 2013 to 2023.

Labour productivity, measured as GVA against FTE, increased by 28% compared to 2022, reaching its highest level since 2013.

Total energy consumption was 79 million litres in 2023, reflecting a 6% increase from 2022. The fuel use per landed tonne averaged 158 litres/tonne in 2023, compared to 181 litres/tonne in 2022.

The weight of landings per unit of effort (measured in DaS) in 2023 increased by 16% compared to 2022. On average, almost 7 tonnes were landed per day at sea in 2022, which rose to 8 tonnes in 2023.

4.4.3 Performance by fishing activity

Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

The Danish SSCF primarily operates in the Baltic Sea, the Sounds, and Kattegat. In 2023, the fleet comprised 793 vessels, which represents a reduction of 40 vessels compared to 2022. The total vessel tonnage for the SSCF fleet was 2,561 GT, marking a 3% decrease, and the total engine power was 33,400 kW, reflecting a 4% decline from the previous year. Compared to the average for the period 2013-2022, the number of vessels decreased by 14%, total vessel tonnage decreased by 25%, and total engine power decreased by 14%.

The value of landings decreased by 22% from 2022 to 2023, amounting to EUR 12 million in 2023, which represents 3% of the national landings value for fisheries, down one percentage point from 2022. Total costs, including crew costs, were reduced by 29% from 2022 to 2023, primarily due to reductions in labour payments as well as energy and other non-variable costs. Labour payments, including the value of unpaid labour, decreased by 26% to EUR 6.9 million, while energy costs fell by 45% to EUR 0.7 million. Other non-variable costs decreased by 55%. Crew costs and particularly the value of unpaid labour remain significant expenses for the SSCF.

Economic performance indicators showed an improvement in gross profit from -EUR 2.0 million in 2022 to -EUR 0.9 million in 2023. Although net profit remains negative for this fleet, there was an improvement of 48% in 2023 compared to 2022. In 2023, net profit was -EUR 2.9 million, an improvement from -EUR 5.5 million in 2022.

Vessels under 12 metres using active gears fleet (L12AG)

In 2023, the L12AG fleet decreased by 8% to 74 vessels. The fishing activity generated a GVA of EUR 1.7 million (-37%), a gross profit of -EUR 0.7 million (-347%), and a net profit of -EUR 2.2 million (-187%), reflecting worsening economic performance.

Large-scale fleet (LSF)

The Danish LSF operates in various waters around Denmark, including the Baltic Sea, the Sounds, Kattegat, Skagerrak, the North Sea, and occasionally in the Norwegian Sea, Faroese waters, the Bay of Biscay, and the English Channel. In 2023, the LSF consisted of 292 vessels, a decrease of 7% compared to 2022, with a total vessel tonnage of 63,843 GT, a decrease of 4%, and a total vessel power of 146,690 kW, a decrease of 9%. Compared to the average for the period 2013-2022, the number of vessels has decreased by 18%, total vessel tonnage has increased by 2%, and total vessel power has decreased by 3%.

The value of landings increased by 6% to EUR 414 million, accounting for 97% of the national landings value for Danish fisheries. Total costs, including crew costs, increased by 10% to EUR 431 million in 2023. For the LSF, crew costs are the primary expense, followed by energy costs. Crew costs decreased by 5% to EUR 100 million (including unpaid labor value) in 2023. Energy costs decreased by 17% to EUR 59 million, maintenance costs increased by 18% to EUR 40 million, while other variable costs increased by 16% to EUR 40 million.

For key economic performance indicators, gross profit increased by 23% to EUR 170 million in 2023, while net profit decreased to -EUR 5.8 million in 2023 from EUR 3.6 million in 2022.

4.4.4 Performance results of selected fleet segments

The Danish fleet is notably diversified, encompassing a wide range of vessel types that operate across various regions, primarily in the North Sea, Skagerrak, and North Atlantic. In 2023, the national fleet was composed of 26 DCF fleet segments. From a financial perspective, half of these segments incurred losses, while the other half reported a positive gross profit. The significance of each fleet segment can be evaluated based on several indicators, such as the number of vessels within the segment, their contribution to the total value of Danish landings, significant management impacts, or a combination of these factors.

The following fleet segments have been selected for a more comprehensive analysis of their economic performance:

- DFN 00-10m: This segment is selected due to the high number of vessels and their primary fishing activities being conducted near Denmark.
- DTS 12-18m: This segment represents a diversified fishery operating in multiple waters, including the Baltic Sea. It accounts for a substantial share of the total value of Danish landings and involves approximately one hundred fishing vessels.
- TM 40XXm: This segment is chosen because it captures a significant portion of the total value of Danish landings, primarily within the United Kingdom's exclusive economic zone.

Drift and fixed netters (DFN) below 10 metres

DFN 0010m (drift and/or fixed netters 00-10m) consisted of 384 vessels in 2023. Their overall contribution to the Danish fishery was limited, accounting for around 1% of the total Danish landings value in 2023, which was lower than in 2022. Most of these vessels have historically relied on fishing in waters close to Denmark, such as Skagerrak, Kattegat, and the Baltic Sea. The Baltic Sea had been more important for this segment in the past, but its significance has decreased due to the deteriorating biological conditions there. Consequently, the vessels must either find other quotas to fish on or cease fishing, leading Denmark to initiate a decommissioning scheme for vessels with major Baltic Sea fishing dependency from 2023.

In 2023, the total value of landings for this fleet was EUR 5.7 million compared to EUR 7.2 million in 2022. There were 28 FTEs employed in this fleet segment in 2023, a significant reduction from 51 FTEs in 2022. The total gross profit was -EUR 0.5 million and the net profit was -EUR 1.3 million in 2023, compared to -EUR 1.4 million and -EUR 3.2 million in 2022.

The economic situation for this fleet shows some signs of improvement, but it remains fragile. The decommissioning scheme implemented in 2023 is anticipated to lead to further improvements; however, there are no positive indications regarding the biological situation.

Demersal trawl (DTS) 12-18 metres

The DTS1218m fleet (demersal trawl 12-18m) included 113 vessels in 2023, down from 122 in 2022. These vessels accounted for about 8% of Denmark's total landings value in 2023, down two percentage points from 2022. They primarily fished in Skagerrak (49%), Kattegat (35%), and the North Sea (13%), with minimal activity in the Baltic Sea (3%).

Lobster was the main species, representing 54% of their landings value. European plaice, sandeel, and Atlantic cod contributed 11%, 8%, and 6%, respectively. Other notable species included haddock (3%), sole (2%), and European sprat (2%). This fleet demonstrates the multispecies and multiarea fishery common among Danish vessels, offering some economic stability.

In 2023, this fleet's landings were valued at EUR 36 million, employing 170 FTEs. The gross profit fell to EUR 1.4 million in 2023 from EUR 3.1 million in 2022, and the net loss increased from -EUR 4.4 million to -EUR 6.8 million. The decline in economic performance is likely due to reduced lobster landings and prices.

Pelagic trawl (TM) above 40 metres

TM 40XXm (Pelagic trawl >40m) consists of 18 vessels operating mainly in the North Sea and the Norwegian Sea. The fleet targets pelagic species for consumption, such as mackerel and herring, as well as reduction species, including sandeel, European sprat, and blue whiting. These vessels have been impacted by Brexit and the resulting reduced fishing opportunities for their key species.

This fleet segment accounts for the highest share of the total Danish landings value, which was 49% in 2023, significantly higher compared to 37% in 2022. In 2023, the total value of landings was EUR 211 million, and 109 FTEs were employed within this fleet segment. This segment reported a total gross profit of EUR 133 million and a total net profit of EUR 13 million in 2023.

Brexit has decreased the fishing opportunities for these vessels. Following the formal implementation of Brexit, there has been an ongoing process regarding the allocation and distribution of compensation for these lost opportunities to the affected vessels. Compensations were paid out at the end of 2023, with substantial amounts awarded to the vessels in this fleet segment. It will be noteworthy to observe how this influences the behavior of the compensated vessels, particularly within the TM 40XXm segment due to the significant compensations received.

This segment will also be significantly affected if the access to UK waters remains restricted in 2024, particularly concerning the fishery directed towards sandeel.

4.4.5 Drivers affecting the economic performance trends

Markets and Trade

The average landed fish price of the five most economically significant species in the Danish fishery in 2023 showed an overall increase. For the leading species, herring, the price rose by 15% from 0.73 euro/kilo in 2022 to 0.84 euro/kilo in 2023. The price of European sprat increased by 44% from 0.35 euro/kilo to 0.50 euro/kilo, Atlantic mackerel saw a rise of 4% from 1.50 euro/kilo to 1.57 euro/kilo, and sand eel prices went from 0.26 euro/kilo to 0.31 euro/kilo. In contrast, the price of Norway lobster declined by 6% from 8.78 euro/kilo to 8.27 euro/kilo.

Management instruments

Most of the Danish fishing fleet is managed through variations of individual property rights schemes. These schemes have gradually been introduced since 2003, with most of the demersal fishery from 2007, and this has implied an increase in the capacity reductions observed in the Danish fishing fleet in number of vessels, tonnage and engine power.

The schemes have generally been in place for more than 20 years, where a lot of restructuring took place due to the new incentives structure. Restructuring is still occurring, but now it is not due to introducing the scheme, but driven by access to quotas, biological challenges as observed in the Baltic Sea and due to Brexit-effects. New vessels are being built, and generally these are larger with more fuel-efficient engines. In addition, focus is towards making the work environment and work safety conditions better for the crew to make the fishery an attractive workplace.

Given that the system is generally considered to be well functioning, there are no current plans regarding changing the system fundamentally. However, adjustments are sometimes made to account for unwanted situations, such as quota concentration.

Also, major ‘shocks’ such as Brexit and the deteriorating stock situation in the Baltic Sea have required considerations about how to assist fishers with adapting to these situations. Given that these are ‘shocks’ have an effect within a short time, the fleets have potential problems with adapting to this without, at least from a political perspective, severe negative effects.

Therefore, as mentioned, a decommissioning scheme has been effectuated in the Baltic Sea targeted the vessels with a high dependency on quotas in this fishing area. In total, 31 vessels have been scrapped.

Regarding Brexit, a compensation scheme for the loss of future fishing opportunities combined with a scrapping scheme has also been implemented. In total, 28 vessels have been scrapped and around EUR 150 million have been paid to vessels as compensation for lost fishing opportunities.

Status of Key Stocks, TACs and quotas

In 2023, Denmark's quotas for key fish species were: Atlantic herring 86,000 tonnes, European sprat 212,000 tonnes, Atlantic mackerel 20,000 tonnes, sandeel 161,000 tonnes, and Norway lobster 7,200 tonnes.

Compared to 2022, quotas for Atlantic herring, Norway lobster, and Atlantic mackerel decreased by -7%, -20%, and -9%, respectively. Quotas for European sprat and sandeel increased by +57% and +108%.

The quota for Atlantic cod rose from 3,800 tonnes in 2022 to 6,000 tonnes in 2023 (+58%). Historically, Danish quotas for Atlantic cod exceeded 22,000 tonnes, but reductions are due to poor biological conditions in the Baltic Sea and Kattegat. The North Sea cod quota also dropped from 6,300 tonnes in 2019 to 3,000 tonnes in 2023, but this was a 1,000-tonne increase from 2022.

Innovation and Development

Danish fishers work in a competitive environment, where focus is on delivering a high-quality product and making an economic outcome securing a profit for the owner(s) and an attractive salary for the crew.

A range of initiatives can contribute to this. High product quality will also have an influence on the price obtained for the landed fish. Danish fishery is focused on this together with the processing industry to find innovative solutions to get the best product and the highest price. In addition, using invasive species and landings because of the landing obligation has been investigated, but it takes time for such innovations to be analysed and potentially put into a production process.

An important part of the economic outcome comes from the cost side. For instance, optimising the fuel use, sometimes by installing new engines, improving the engine technology etc. will have a direct effect on the cost of any fishing activity. Also, improving selectivity will reduce the cost of sorting and handling the fish afterwards. All such initiatives are ongoing in partnerships between the fishers, processors, gear technologists, researchers etc. to identify, test and implement the most promising ideas.

Also, the first experiments with electric propulsion are initiated due to the governmental decision of having a CO_2 tax of EUR 100 per tonne of CO_2 emission, being gradually implemented from 2025 to 2030. However, the government decided to wait with implementing this tax to give the fishery the possibility to investigate further alternative possibilities for reducing fuel use. However, given that the fishing sector is generally of a minor importance in the Danish shipping fleet, the sector will be highly dependent of other actors taking the lead regarding development of future propulsion techniques, fuel types and engines. Especially, the container shipping sector is in focus here. Therefore, much of the focus within fisheries are towards gear inventions that reduce fuel consumption.

4.4.6 Assessment of the economic performance for 2024 and 2025 (nowcasts)

Model results

Preliminary results for 2024 forecast an improvement after years of a relatively stable situation. This occurs despite various uncertainties in Danish fisheries, notably the deteriorating situation in the Baltic Sea and the controversy with the United Kingdom regarding the sandeel fishery in the UK's Exclusive Economic Zone. However, the forecast predicts an increase in revenue for Danish fishers that surpasses the expected cost increases, leading to positive developments in Gross Value Added, Gross Profit, and Net Profit.

The 2025 projections anticipate a return to 2023 levels due to decreased landings and revenue.

Outlook

The TACs and thus quotas continue to be one of the most important factors that influence the Danish fleet performance, and the unclear situation regarding the Baltic Sea and now also the sandeel fishery combined with the gradual implementation of the Brexit-agreement are expected to put pressure on the Danish fishers and their economic performance.

4.4.7 Methodological considerations and data issues

Identify changes in respect to previous years.

Previously, the number of vessels was counted as production units. However, from 2022, this method changed to counting at the vessel level, which means all vessels within a production unit are now included. This change has not yet been implemented for previous years, making it impossible to compare the capacity measures from previous years with the 2022 figures.

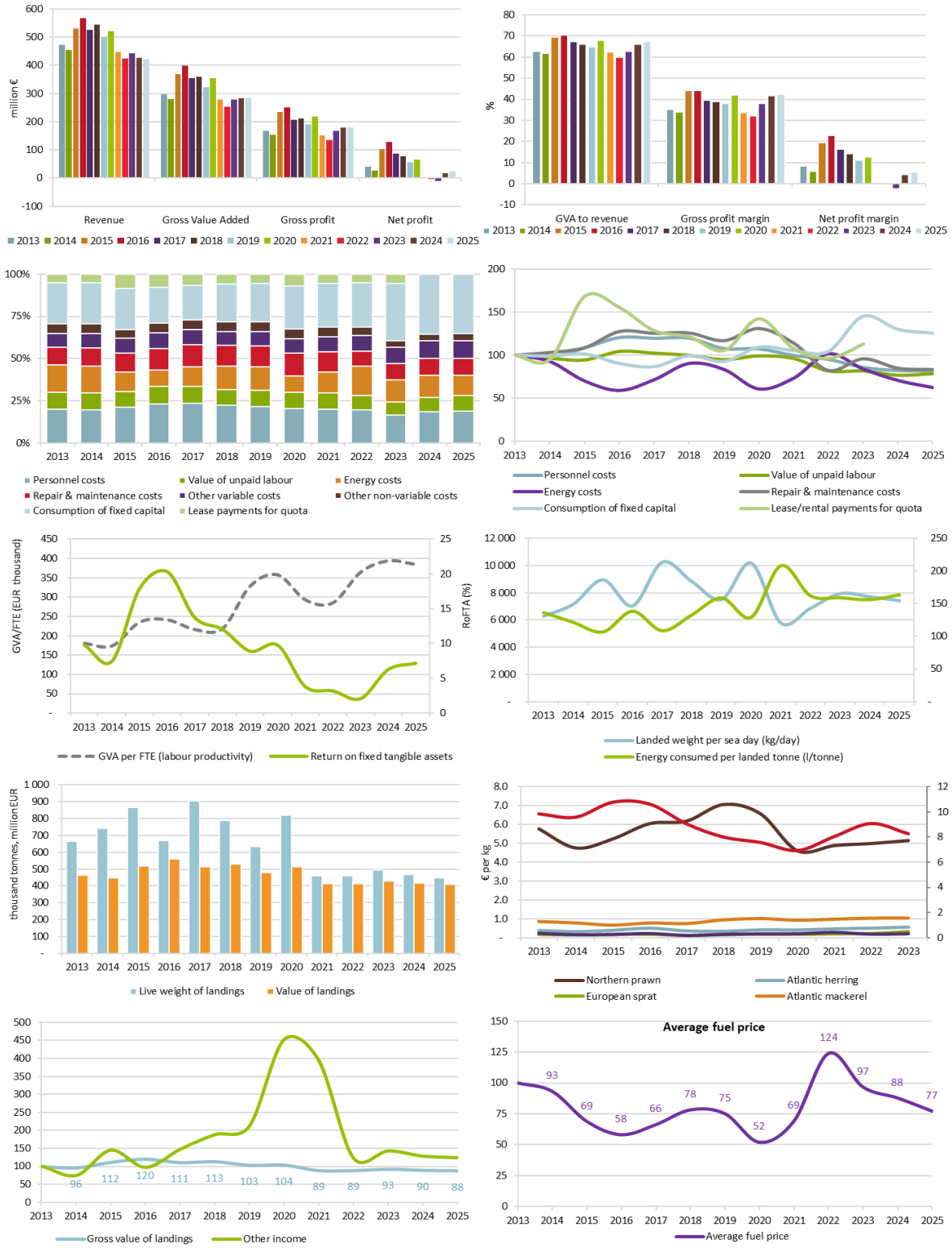
Improvements achieved

The above-described change will improve the fleet segmentation in future data calls.

Problems identified

No operating subsidies are reported for the Pelagic trawl (TM) above 40 metres segment.

Figure 4.4.1. Denmark: Main trends in (from top to bottom, left to right): economic performance indicators (absolute value and relative values); cost structure and variation in main cost items; productivity and efficiency indicators; landings (in weight and value) and average price (euro/kg) of top species; variation in income variables and average prices of key input/outputs (2013=100). Nowcast figures for 2024 and 2025.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

4.5 Germany

4.5.1 Short description of the national fleet

In 2023, the national fleet capacity declined to 1,138 vessels, with 300 inactive. The fleet had a combined GT of 54,132 tonnes and engine power of 120,742 kW. Compared to 2022, the number of vessels decreased by 36. Of the inactive vessels, 278 were under 12 metres in length, and about 30% of these small vessels reported no activity in 2023 (31% in 2022). Inactive percentages decrease with vessel length; only 11 vessels over 18 metres were inactive. Note that vessels targeting blue mussels are excluded from this analysis and covered in the aquaculture report.

Table 4.5.1. Germany at a glance.

Germany		2023				%Δ 2023-2022			
Indicator	**Units**	**Overall**	**SSCF**	**L12AG**	**LSF**	**Overall**	**SSCF**	**L12AG**	**LSF**
Active vessels	Number	1,138	625	15	198	-3%	0%	0%	-8%
FTE	Number	702	234	3	465	-8%	-4%	-40%	-10%
Gross Value of landings	Million €	183.7	4.5	0.0	178.9	-11%	-4%	-58%	-11%
GVA	Million €	81.7	2.8	0.0	78.9	3%	437%	-100%	0%
Gross profit	Million €	27.8	0.1	0.0	28.2	202%	95%	-101%	155%
Net profit	Million €	-10.3	-1.6	-0.4	-8.3	73%	52%	325%	76%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure

In 2023, the German LSF comprised 213 active vessels, representing 25% of the active fleet, whereas the SSCF accounted for 625 active vessels, or 75% of the active fleet. The reduction in the number of active vessels predominantly affected the inactive vessels (36 vessels less), while the number of active LSF (two vessels less) and SSCF vessels (three vessels less) remained nearly unchanged. This overall decline in vessel numbers was consistent with trends observed in previous years. Notably, the focus on LSF over time is significant, showing a reduction of 31% compared to a 25% reduction in SSCF over ten years. Both the total engine power and gross tonnage of active vessels decreased slightly, by approximately 6% and 7%, respectively, in 2023, while their overall number decreased by about 2%.

The estimated value of physical capital of the German fleet was EUR 229 million, of which 27% pertains to the inactive fleet. This figure is influenced by a one-time effect due to a high seas trawler that entered the fleet but did not engage in any fishing operations in 2023.

The fleet of vessels below 12 metres utilizing active gear holds minor significance within the German fleet. It consists of 15 vessels with an annual turnover of less than half a million euro. These vessels are therefore amalgamated into the LSF. Approximately half of them are beam trawlers operating in the North Sea, while the remaining are demersal trawlers operating in the Baltic Sea.

Fishing activity and production

In 2023, the German fleet spent about 70,500 DaS, a decrease from 74,000 days in 2022. Energy consumption increased by 8% to 62.5 million litres, while energy costs dropped 38%

due to lower fuel prices, from EUR 54.6 million to EUR 36.3 million. The pelagic fleet's fuel cost was approximately EUR 12.0 million.

German SSCF operates mainly in the Baltic Sea, while cutters above 12 metres fish in both the North Sea and Baltic Sea. High seas trawlers mostly operate in the North Atlantic and Eastern Arctic, with some activity in African waters and occasional Southern Pacific areas.

Total production rose from 219,000 tonnes in 2013 to 258,000 tonnes in 2018 but has since declined sharply to 165,500 tonnes in 2023. The main species caught are herring, blue whiting, cod, mackerel, common shrimp, and Greenland halibut, with blue whiting being the most abundant and common shrimp generating the highest revenue.

Employment and average salaries

In 2023, the German fishing fleet employed 1,114 people, equating to 702 full-time equivalents (FTEs). This follows a decreasing trend. Average crew costs per FTE are EUR 85,000. It should be noted that job data were estimates until 2019, but official totals are available from 2020, causing a discontinuity in the time series.

4.5.2 Economic results for 2023 and recent trends

The economic results pertain solely to the German fishing fleet active in 2023.

National fleet performance

For confidentiality reasons, data on the German fleet do not include cost data for the pelagic fleet until 2021. This should be considered when interpreting time series. The German non-pelagic fleet generated a net profit from 2013 to 2018. In 2019, however, the economic performance resulted in a significant loss. The situation improved slightly in 2020, but the result remained negative. In 2023, the active German fleet again faced a net loss amounting to -EUR 10.3 million. Of this, the net losses of the high seas fleet amounted to -EUR 18 million in 2023. Net profits were also negative for other segments of the German fleet, except for beam trawlers between 24 and 40m.

The total revenue of the German fleet, excluding direct income subsidies, was estimated at EUR 184 million for 2023 – an increase of 2% compared to 2022, but a decrease of -22% compared to the 2013-2022 average. Direct income subsidies accounted for about EUR 14.6 million in 2023, a 382% increase compared to 2022. Figures were high compared to preceding years, mainly due to payments for temporary cessation in the Baltic Sea.

In 2023, total operating costs of the German fleet decreased considerably (-19%) with EUR 164 million in 2023 compared to EUR 203 million in 2022. From 2022 to 2023, only repair and maintenance costs increased by 13% for the German fleet, while fuel costs decreased significantly (-37%), other variable costs decreased by -16%, and crew costs decreased by -25%. For the entire fleet, GVA, gross profit and net profit in 2023 were estimated at EUR 81.8 million (+3%), EUR 28.0 million (+204%) and -EUR 9.9 million (+74%), respectively. Since 2017, there was only one year (2018) when the net profit of the German fleet was not negative.

The depreciated replacement value of the German fleet was estimated at EUR 229.3 million in 2023, about 19% more than in 2022: one large trawler left the fleet in 2022, and the replacing vessel was registered in 2023. This affected investments, which amounted to EUR 50.5 million (+20%) in 2023. Overall, the cost structure has undergone some changes,

mainly due to fluctuating energy costs. Personnel costs typically develop proportionally to the value of landings as wages are often paid as crew share.

Resource productivity and efficiency indicators

In 2023, the gross profit margin increased to 15%, while the net profit margin slightly improved but remained negative at -5%. The RoFTA rate also stayed negative at -5%. Labour productivity rose by 12% from 2022, reaching EUR 116,330 per FTE.

The fuel consumption rate for the German fleet in 2023 was around 377 litres/tonne of catch, varying widely between fleet segments. This rate shows no clear trend and is influenced by vessel characteristics and catch per unit of effort, which depends on stock status. Figures up to 2020 exclude the pelagic fleet, known for high fuel efficiency, making the national total appear high compared to other fleets during that period.

Figure 4.5.1. Germany. Weight of landings per unit of effort and energy efficiency (Pelagic Trawlers available only from 2021 onwards)



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

The weight of landings per unit of effort (in days-at-sea) has varied significantly since 2013, ranging from 2028 kg/day in 2013 to 2,677 kg/day in 2018. The value for 2023 was 2,347 kg/day. This figure is largely influenced by the segment of vessels below 10m, which accounted for more than 60% of the total days but less than 5% of the catch.

4.5.3 Performance by fishing activity

Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

In 2023, 625 active vessels (almost unchanged from 2022) were assigned to the small-scale fleet. These vessels almost exclusively operate in the Baltic Sea, targeting mainly herring and cod and also freshwater species which are not managed under a TAC regime.

The weight of landings of the SSCF decreased by approximately 5% from 2022 (1,901 vs 1,995 tonnes) while the value of landings dropped by 8% from EUR 4.9 million to EUR 4.5 million. Compared to the 2013-2022 average, the decrease is even more evident: -65% in weight and -47% in value. The estimated total effort in terms of days-at-sea decreased from 48 000 days in 2022 to 46 000 in 2023. The overall operating costs for the SSCF decreased by about -13% in 2023. Personnel costs (+50%) increased substantially, while other variable

cost (-55%), energy costs (-25%) and other non-variable costs (-23%) decreased sensibly. Repair and maintenance costs increased only slightly (+9%).

In 2023, the SSCF ended up with a gross loss of -EUR 0.1 million and a net loss of -EUR 1.6 million.

The number of people engaged on-board, including the skippers, was estimated at 451 in 2023, a slight decrease of -6% since 2022.

Vessels under 12m using active gears fleet (L12AG)

In 2023, 15 vessels were part of this section of the German fleet. This included eight demersal trawlers in the Baltic Sea and seven beam trawlers in the North Sea. These groups perform different fisheries, generating less than half a million euros annually, making them of minor biological and economic importance. The large vessels of this type are listed in the LSF, so the figures for the L12AG fleet are included in the LSF.

Large-scale fleet (LSF+L12AG)

In 2023, 213 active vessels were assigned to the LSF, including 15 vessels <12m using active gears. These vessels mainly operate in the North Sea and the Baltic Sea, while the large trawlers fish also in the North Atlantic, Eastern Arctic and in distant areas. Economic data for pelagic trawlers are only included from 2021 onwards. The cutters (<500 GT) target mainly brown shrimp, cod and saithe while the high seas trawlers fish herring, cod, Greenland halibut and other small pelagic species like mackerel.

The value of landings of the LSF+ L12AG decreased from 2022 to 2023 by about -12%. This is -27% below the 2013-2022 average. The weight of landings increased by 2% compared to 2022. This is -22% compared to the average 2013-2022.

Labour costs decreased -27% in 2023 as well as energy costs which decreased considerably by -37% but were still 33% above the average of 2013-2022. and other variable costs decreased by -13%, while consumption of fixed capital dropped by -22% and other non-variable costs dropped by -4%. Repair and maintenance costs increased 14%. Gross profit increased considerably (155%) to EUR 28.2 million, but overall, the German large-scale fleet faced a net loss of -EUR 8.3 million. The difference of these two indicators reflects depreciation and opportunity cost.

The number of people employed in the LSF+L12AG was estimated at 663 in 2023, a decrease of 43 persons (-6%) since 2022.

4.5.4 Performance results of selected fleet segments

The German cutter fleet (below 500 GT) is dominated by beam trawlers and, to a lesser extent, demersal trawlers.

Beam trawlers

German beam trawlers operate in the North Sea. Vessels up to 27 metres target almost exclusively brown shrimp. There are a few large beam trawlers over 27 metres targeting mainly flatfish. Thus, the beam trawler segment 24-40 metres contains both types of vessels. However, in 2023, only one shrimp trawler was in that group, and only two flatfish beam trawlers were left.

The owners of the brown shrimp beam trawlers are usually also the skippers. They operate in coastal waters: smaller vessels with shallow draught can fish in the tide-ways and the Wadden area between the islands and the coast. These vessels depend on the tide and return to the port daily. These vessels usually do not fish in winter as the target species migrates to deeper areas. Larger vessels operate in greater depths and can also fish year-round. They stay at sea for several days.

The brown shrimp fishery is the backbone of the German cutter fleet. Shrimp prices and fuel costs are the crucial elements for the economic performance of shrimp beam trawlers. The fishery was severely hit by both a price drop and a decrease in landings in 2019 already (54% of average weight 2008-2018, 48% of value). In 2020, the catch could be increased only slightly (60% average weight, 70% average value). In 2021 the situation did not improve sensibly (75% average weight 2013-20, 78% average value 2013-2020). After this series of unprofitable years, catches increased slightly in 2022 (5%), while revenues (+25%) increased sensibly due to increased prices.

Even though energy costs decreased considerably from 2022 to 2023, brown shrimp landings dropped -32%. Prices did not compensate for this reduction. Hence, revenues dropped -29% for brown shrimp in 2023. Overall, out of the last five years, shrimp fishery was profitable only in 2022. As consequence, the number of shrimp beam trawlers decreased by 14 vessels (-9%) in 2023.

In 2023, the fuel consumption in the brown shrimp fishery increased 10%, while fuel costs decreased substantially (-32%). After an economically weak year 2021 (net loss -EUR 2.1 million) the fleet of shrimp beam trawlers up to 24 metres faced a net profit of EUR 4.9 million in 2022 which was still below the average net profit during the period 2013-2021. In 2023, the shrimp fleet again faced a net loss of -EUR 1.9 million.

Flatfish beam trawlers flying the German flag are owned and operated by Dutch fishers. They target mainly sole, plaice, and turbot. All of them were equipped with pulse gear. In 2021, a ban of this technique has become effective, thus increasing the energy consumption considerably. Therefore, this fleet shrunk to four vessels in 2023. The catch is landed exclusively in the Netherlands. In 2023, the value of landings was EUR 6.9 million for beam trawlers >24m (including one shrimp trawler), a 63% increase from 2022. The segment of beam trawlers above 24 metres (including one shrimp trawler) experienced a net profit of EUR 6 000 in 2023, after a net loss of -EUR 1.3 million in 2022.

Demersal trawlers

The German demersal trawler fleet can be divided into high seas trawlers above 80 metres, large cutters between 23 and 38 metres and smaller cutters below 23 metres. The four high seas trawlers target mainly Greenland halibut, cod and redfish in Eastern Arctic and Greenland waters, the large cutters target saithe, cod, hake and haddock, the ones around 24 metres (eurocutters) also fish Nephrops. These vessels fish almost exclusively in the North Sea and Skagerrak. Some eurocutters shift temporarily to shrimp beam trawling or pelagic trawling for herring. The vessels of 20 metres and below almost exclusively fish in the Baltic Sea, targeting mainly cod, flatfish and – seasonally switching to pelagic gear – herring and sprat. It has to be pointed out that in 2022 and beyond the quota of these Baltic stocks has been too low for a targeted fishery.

The DCF length thresholds divide the demersal fleet into segments with heterogeneous fishing patterns. Thus, the performance indicators in most cases represent a mixture of different fisheries. For 2023, a net profit for high seas demersal trawlers over 80 metres was

estimated at EUR 2.3 million after a net loss of -EUR 17.1 million in 2022. As two of these four vessels are rather new, depreciation and opportunity costs are relatively high. Nevertheless, this segment was the only one in the German fleet generating a positive net profit in 2023.

For 2023, a net loss of -EUR 1.3 million was estimated for the ten demersal trawlers between 24 and 40 metres after a net profit of -EUR 3.1 million in 2022.

The profitability of the high seas vessels is partly estimated upon internal prices as the vessels are part of companies that also operate in fish processing. This means that the profit is not necessarily assigned to the vessels only but may be made at an advanced stage of the value chain as well. Two new high seas' demersal trawlers of 80 metres entered the fleet in 2017. Two newly built vessels slightly below 40 metres entered the fleet in 2019. These investment activities are a clear indication of long-term profitable fisheries. However, due to uncertainties in the context of Brexit and negotiations with Greenland and Norway one of the newly built large trawlers was sold in 2021 and replaced by a smaller, but older trawler. This trawler was replaced by a newly built larger trawler in 2024. One more newly built high-seas demersal trawler entered the fleet in early 2024, thus replacing an older one. Meanwhile, the oldest vessel in this segment is from 2014.

For the segment with eight medium sized demersal trawlers (18-24m) net losses of -EUR 1.2 million were determined for 2023. As mentioned, this is a mixture of North Sea and Baltic Sea vessels. For the 16 vessels between 12 and 18 metres, net losses were estimated at -EUR 1.0 million. In both cases, the poor status of Western Baltic cod had a negative impact on the profitability.

Vessels using fixed nets and other passive gears 24-40 metres

Larger fixed netters and potters, ranging between 26 and 32 metres, primarily operate in Western waters, targeting species such as anglerfish or red crab. In contrast, a limited number of smaller vessels over 12 metres that use passive gear operate almost exclusively in the coastal areas of the Baltic Sea. Their main target species are cod, herring, and freshwater species in the brackish Bodden areas. However, all smaller vessels fishing in the Baltic Sea faced significant challenges due to very low Total Allowable Catches (TAC) for Western Baltic cod and herring, rendering targeted fisheries unfeasible.

Additionally, two former beam trawlers transitioned to pot fishery for lobster and brown crab in the North Sea. As the number of vessels across all related segments continued to decline, they have been consolidated into a single segment for confidentiality purposes. This resulting cluster is quite heterogeneous. It is estimated that this cluster will achieve a net profit of EUR 270,000 in 2023, following a net loss of EUR 35,000 in 2022.

4.5.5 Drivers affecting the economic performance trends

As the German fleet is dominated by trawlers, the fuel price always has a major impact on the overall economic performance. In 2023, fuel expenses of the total fleet decreased considerably (about -25%) from 2022 due to both decreased prices (-11%), and a -16% decrease in consumption.

Prices for brown shrimp have a significant influence on the performance of the national fleet, as it has been the most important species of the German fleet in terms of value (except for 2019). In 2019, landings decreased considerably by about 51% from an average level, while prices per kg also dropped (-25%), and thus the total value of brown shrimp landings decreased dramatically by about 63% compared to 2018. In 2020, both prices and landings

increased slightly, but due to still low catches the revenues remained very low compared to years prior to 2019. In 2021, slightly higher average prices could be achieved (+10%). This trend continued in 2022 (+28%). In 2023, landings dropped by -32%, while prices changed only slightly (+5%). As a result, revenues dropped by -29%.

Cod prices increased -6% in 2023. Prices for Greenland halibut remained almost stable in 2023, after a -24% drop in 2021 and a 13% increase in 2022. Both herring and mackerel prices dropped about 7% in 2023. For all other species with major importance only minor price alterations could be observed.

The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification remains important for sales of fish. Certification results in stable or higher prices. In several cases it has become a prerequisite for sales due to market requirements. For the high-seas fisheries, important pelagic fisheries (North Sea herring, Atlanto-Scandian herring, blue whiting), were MSC-certified until the end of 2020. In March 2019, the mackerel certificate was suspended due to a lack of comprehensive international agreement on quotas (according to MSC), while by the end of 2020, MSC certificates on Atlanto-Scandian herring and blue whiting were suspended, due to an insufficient stock management (according to the MSC). Before the suspension, the Atlanto-Scandian herring catches accounted for about 50% of the total MSC-certified herring catches. In March 2020, the European South Pacific mid water trawl jack mackerel fishery was certified for five years. In 2020, the Baltic sprat fishery was certified. North Sea herring was the only pelagic high seas fishery in European waters with relevance for the German fleet which was MSC certified in 2023.

All demersal roundfish fisheries of the high seas fleet are MSC certified (cod, haddock, saithe in Norwegian waters, North Sea saithe). In 2019, certification of Western Greenland halibut was finalised. All 2023 audits were successfully finalised. The North Sea cod certification was suspended in 2019 as the stock dropped below safe biological limit.

Since 2017, the cutter fishery on brown shrimp is MSC-certified.

Markets and Trade

Brown shrimp has been the most important species. It is mainly landed in Germany, to some extent also in the Netherlands. The wholesale market is dominated by two companies which have a huge influence on the price. However, as fishers formed a producer organisation to gain market power the detrimental results of 2011 did not repeat. Just to the contrary, prices for brown shrimp developed favourably until 2019, thus increasing the profitability of the related fishery. However, in 2019 the market was saturated as a considerable amount of the catch had been deposited in cold storage. Consequently, priced dropped considerably, even though the catch dropped as well. In summer 2019 there was a temporary closure of the shrimp fishery.

Overall, in 2023 only about 14% of the total catch was landed in German ports, corresponding to about 33% of the total value, a sharp decrease since 2020 (-28% and -50%, respectively). Almost the entire catch of pelagic species, with high volume, but low price, is landed abroad, mainly in the Netherlands. About 52% of the catch was landed in the Netherlands, and about 19% in Denmark. The degree of self-sufficiency for fish is rather low in Germany, about 16%. Thus, international trade plays a crucial role for the supply of the German market with fish products.

Management instruments

The predominant management measure are TACs.

The introduction of the Landing Obligation (LO) was implemented with little extra effort in the pelagic as well as in the saithe fisheries as these fisheries traditionally have had low bycatch rates. In the case of cod and flatfish fisheries serious problems have been reported. In the Baltic Sea high amounts of undersized cod were observed. According to the industry no technical measures are available to solve that problem. However, the Baltic cod fishery practically came to an end due to the low quotas and the poor stock status. Therefore, the LO is currently not an issue in the Baltic anyway.

In 2023, the closure of fisheries due to choke species could again be avoided by quota exchange, to a considerable amount with the UK. The initial ban of quota exchange with the UK in 2021 was a problem for certain fisheries in the North Sea.

The pelagic industry is striving for EU membership in the North Pacific Fisheries Commission in order to complement fishing activities in the Southern Pacific with fishing activities in the Northern Pacific and thus increase the overall efficiency. The EU application was launched in 2018, the contract was finally concluded in spring 2021, suggesting extended catch opportunities for the high seas pelagic fleet in the future. In 2023, this had not yet become effective.

Status of key stocks, TACs and quotas

Several stocks targeted by the German high seas fleet, e.g. Arctic and Greenland cod, Arctic haddock and saithe are managed at MSY level. However, the certificates for Atlanto-Scandian herring and blue whiting were suspended by the end of 2020 due to an insufficient stock management, according to the MSC. In 2023, only about 41% of the catch of the German high seas fleet in the Northern Atlantic was MSC certified (2020: 67%; 2021: 33%; 2022: 43%).

High seas pelagic fisheries targeted herring, mackerel, horse mackerel and blue whiting in European waters as well as chub mackerel and Chilean jack mackerel in South Pacific waters. Quota for 2023 decreased -9% for the most important herring stocks -5% for mackerel while the blue whiting increased substantially by about +70%. Horse mackerel quota dropped considerably by about -80%, as consequence, no targeted fishery took place. In 2023, the fishery in South Pacific waters was performed for four months by one vessel with full exploitation of the German quota. According to the industry, high seas pelagic catches in European waters increased slightly (+5%) in 2023. Fishing activities in Moroccan waters could not take place as the fishing agreement with Morocco could not be extended-.

In 2023, the demersal sector was affected by reduced Arctic cod quotas (-23%), while the Greenland cod quota remained almost unchanged. Quota on redfish stocks in Greenland waters targeted by the high seas fleet were lowered -26%. The quota for Greenland halibut remained unchanged. With an overall decrease of catches by -15% in 2023 fishing results were regarded mediocre by the industry in 2023.

In 2023, the high seas fleet performed no saithe fishery in the North Sea. Greenland halibut fisheries in Eastern and Western Greenland waters suffered from lowered catches per unit of effort. Moreover, due to poor weather conditions and the delayed begin of the season the Greenland halibut quota could only be fully exploited with an extension of the fishing season until December 31. Therefore, the fishery on redfish in the NEAFC area had to be skipped. For the first time, the newest high seas demersal trawler performed fishing on shrimp (Pandalus ssp.) in the NEAFC area.

Brown shrimp, for most years the most important species of the German fleet, is not subject to TAC. Catches depend mainly on abundance, effort and prices. Catches in 2023 decreased even further (-32% from 2022, i.e. only 55% of the 2013-2022 average). As prices increased only slightly (+5%), revenues decreased -29% (67% of 2013-2021 average).

Most relevant North Sea stocks (herring, saithe, plaice, haddock, sole and Nephrops) are managed at MSY level. In 2023 North Sea herring quota decreased -9%, while North Sea cod quota increased 37%. North Sea plaice quota was cut by -2%, but this quota has never been fully exploited in the recent past. Haddock quota increased substantially (+60%), and saithe quota increased by +17%.

The quota for Eastern Baltic cod stock was kept at a pure bycatch level (54 tonnes in 2023), thus resulting in a continuation of the moratorium for the targeted fishery. The same approach was applied to the Western Baltic cod stock (104 tonnes), based on a -88% quota cut in 2022. In the past, the Western cod stock has provided substantial amounts to the income of coastal fisheries and the continuing decline of quota over the last years caused a tense economic situation. Alternative fishing options, e.g. on herring or freshwater species, are limited and do not allow for a full compensation of losses in the cod fishery. Moreover, the Western Baltic herring quota was cut by -50% in 2022, thus amounting to less than 500 tonnes. This quota was rolled over in 2023. The sprat quota decreased slightly in 2023 (-11%). Baltic plaice quota increased +25% in 2023. Overall, the ongoing unfavourable development of the Baltic Sea stocks is seriously threatening the existence of commercial fisheries. Several fishers have quit the business in recent years.

In 2017, management measures for the recreational cod fishery (western Baltic stock) were introduced in the Baltic Sea to share the burden of rebuilding the western Baltic cod stock. These included a bag limit of three cod per day and angler in the closed season (February and March) and 5 cod per day and angler during the rest of the year. For 2020 the bag limit was set at 5 fish per day. Conditions for the closed season were kept constant. For 2021, the bag limit for western cod was set at 5 fish per day, and 2 fish during the spawning season. Corresponding with the poor stock status, the bag limit for cod was set to one fish per day in 2023.

Innovation and development (role of EMFAF)

For the German fleet, only limited initiatives for innovation can be observed. Most of the large vessels have been replaced in recent years or will be replaced by newly built vessels, all of which are equipped with cutting edge technology. This investment was not eligible for co-funding by public money. Due to this investment the depreciation costs have increased in the related segments. Yet the return on the investment in modern equipment has not fully become effective as external impacts, especially Brexit consequences, have outweighed these benefits. However, all these vessels are more fuel-efficient than their predecessors and thus help reducing energy cost.

The group of vessels <35m is overaged. Investment in new vessels is scarce and can be observed only in the small-scale range. In general, the industry is reluctant to invest in new vessels as recent years were economically detrimental for most enterprises while the outlook remains uncertain. The amount of subsidies used for investment in innovation is very limited. According to the industry, the funding conditions are too restrictive to be attractive.

4.5.6 Assessment of the economic performance for 2024 and 2025 (nowcasts)

Overall catches decreased slightly by about 4% in 2024 (163,400 tonnes) compared to 2023, with an 8% nominal decrease in landed value (EUR 170 million). Projections suggest that operating costs of the German fleet decreased by 3% in 2024. Thus, the decrease in value of landings in 2024 was only partly compensated by lower operating costs. Therefore, gross value added decreased -17%, while gross profit decreased even further to EUR 15 million in 2024 (-31%). Net profit remained negative (-EUR 32 million). Projection results, suggesting that the German fleet operated at a net loss in 2024, are in line with recent statements from the industry.

One main driver for an ongoing low profitability in 2024 was the continuing low level of revenues, particularly in the brown shrimp fishery, combined with still high fuel cost.

This is due to a decrease in quota for important stocks, e.g. mackerel (-9%), while quota for North Sea herring (+30%), North Sea saithe (+18%), North Sea cod (+12%) and haddock (+66%) were substantially increased.

The high seas fishery suffered from consequences of the Brexit which consist not only of quota cuts, but also of difficulties in renewing fisheries agreements especially with Norway and to a lesser extent with Greenland. The German high seas fleet adjusted to the loss of quota in British waters by reducing the pelagic fleet. In 2024, the agreement with Greenland could finally be accomplished, providing reliable catch opportunities for the next six years. It is expected that two demersal trawlers are going to be used to capacity, thus targeting Greenland halibut, redfish and cod in Greenland waters. Negotiations with Norway, however, did not fully meet the expectations of the German high seas fleet. While cod, haddock, saithe and redfish quota in Norwegian waters were regarded satisfactory, details are still to be finalised on the Arctic shrimp fishery.

Parts of the fleet were suffering from uncertain fishing opportunities in Norwegian and Svalbard waters. Some fisheries highly depend on quota exchange with the United Kingdom. This applies in particular to Norway lobster. The industry welcomed this option becoming effective in 2024 again. Revenues from the brown shrimp fishery further dropped in 2024, resulting in an increased number of bankruptcies or cessation. Brown shrimp is a species without TAC and the most important species for the cutter fleet.

Fuel prices had increased sharply in 2022 as consequence of the Russian invasion to the Ukraine. These peak prices could no longer be observed in 2023, and prices further decreased in 2024. Yet, prices and thus cost were still about 10% higher than before 2022.

As quota for 2025 have decreased for most important stocks and as there are no signs of improvement for the brown shrimp fishery, 2025 is expected to be another year with increasing net losses. Relatively high fuel prices and increasing operating costs are to further exacerbate the economic situation.

High seas fleet

Overall, 2024 was regarded positive by the high seas fisheries sector. Overall landings slightly increased about 12% from 2023, with prices remaining rather stable. The catch of the demersal sector decreased, while pelagic landings increased. On the long perspective, consequences of Brexit on quota play an important role for the pelagic fishery. Therefore, one high seas pelagic trawler was decommissioned in 2023, hence the fleet is going to consist of only two large pelagic trawlers. It is stressed that third country agreements, which

play an important role for the high seas fleet, could be renewed in 2024, thus providing stable fishing opportunities in particular for the demersal fleet.

The results of the four German high seas demersal trawlers were mixed. Main target species are cod, Greenland halibut and redfish.

Catches of Barents Sea saithe and redfish were reduced, partly due to delays in the commissioning of two newly built demersal trawlers. No directed fishery on saithe took place in the North Sea and in the Barents Sea, nor redfish in the NEAFC zone. The Greenland halibut fisheries in Eastern and Western Greenland waters were characterised by decreased efficiency. Due to the aforementioned delays the Eastern Greenland halibut quota could not be fully exploited by the end of the year. The new vessels started fishery on Northern shrimp and achieved promising results.

After one vessel was decommissioned in 2023 due to the reduction of quota following Brexit, the two remaining German high seas pelagic fisheries targeted herring, mackerel, and blue whiting in European waters. In some years, jack mackerel in the South Pacific is targeted by one vessel, this was not the case in 2024. Fisheries in Moroccan waters did not take place as the fishing agreement could not be extended.

As in previous years the LO was not a limiting factor for the high seas fleet.

As MSC certificates on Atlanto-Scandian herring and blue whiting were suspended in 2022 due to the unilateral claim of extra quota by Norway and Faroe, the only pelagic fishery with certificate was the one on North Sea herring. All demersal whitefish fisheries (cod, haddock, saithe) in Norwegian and Svalbard waters as well as the Greenland halibut fishery and the North Sea saithe fishery were certified. The European South Pacific mid water trawl jack mackerel fishery is MSC-certified as well. All annual audits were finalized successfully in 2024.

Cutter and small-scale fleet

After five subsequent challenging years the cutter and small-scale fleet was again facing economically severe circumstances in 2024. Still high fuel prices as consequence of the Russian war in the Ukraine as well as increased prices on equipment continued to be a challenge for the industry.

The brown shrimp fishery, backbone of the cutter fleet, faced another substantial drop in landings (-29%). Slightly increased prices (+11%), could not fully compensate for the decreased landings, so that the value of landings decreased -22%. Overall, 2024 was regarded unsatisfactory by the industry after this fishery had seen three detrimental years in a row (2019-21) with 2022 and 2023 having been mediocre.

The action plan of the Commission to impose a ban on demersal trawls in Natura 2000 and National Park areas was released in 2023. It created high uncertainty amongst fishers and caused substantial opposition from the industry across borders. A consequence of that plan would have been the cessation of the entire shrimp fishery. Due to that uncertainty, fishers stopped any investment, and young fishers reconsidered changing their profession. With some relief fishers received the information that the action plan was changed to a discussion paper. Nevertheless, the uncertainty with alle negative consequences has remained.

The North Sea roundfish fishery (mainly saithe and cod) was regarded satisfactory by the industry. The North Sea flat fish fishery is affected by the ban of pulse fishing, as fishing with traditional gear is very fuel intensive. Even though the sole quota dropped by 60%, only 30%

of the sole quota was exploited. The plaice quota was exploited only 26% in 2024. As the German Nephrops quota is very low, the fishery has been based grossly on quota exchanges with the United Kingdom. This mechanism could be applied again in 2024, and this fishery was regarded satisfactory.

Baltic fisheries suffered from another year with quotas remaining at very low level for all relevant species. In 2024, the moratorium on targeted cod fisheries was extended, all the quota for cod and herring was used for bycatch only. Plaice quota remained unchanged and sprat quota decreased -10%. The decreased plaice quota further aggravated the detrimental conditions resulting from the low cod and herring quotas. Payments for temporary and permanent cessation have been carried out by the German authorities.

Model results and outlook for 2025

In general, the major factors influencing the profitability of the German fisheries are fuel price and revenues. With few exceptions (e.g. brown shrimp) fish prices do not fluctuate considerably. Thus, the volume of catches is the main factor which determines the revenues. Most important species targeted by the German fleet are managed under a TAC regime. The fuel prices showed a substantial increase in 2022 because of the Russian invasion in the Ukraine and have dropped since, but not to the initial level. An unfavourable quota development affects the performance of the German fisheries in 2025. The pelagic fleet has been suffering from quota reductions due to the Brexit. As a consequence, the fleet was reduced by one vessel.

The quota exchange opportunities with the United Kingdom have been an issue for the German fleet in 2021 as these exchanges have been to mutual benefit for both parties. However, these opportunities were effective again also in 2025.

As far as the model results are concerned, they might be partly biased by some changes in the underlying data. Mainly the introduction of a complete dataset for the German pelagic fleet may cause some inconsistency in time series as well as in model results. Therefore, the figures for 2022 and the model results for 2024 and 2025 should be used with caution.

High seas fisheries

In 2025, the North Sea herring quota decreased by 27% after a 30% rise in 2024. Mackerel in the North-Eastern Atlantic dropped by 32%, and Arctic cod fell by 26%. The quotas for cod in Greenland and Norwegian waters remained unchanged, as did the Greenland halibut quota. Redfish quota in Greenland waters increased by 10%. Two new demersal high seas vessels joined the fleet in late 2024, replacing older ones.

Cutter and small-scale fleet

The quotas for North Sea stocks relevant for the German cutter fishery underwent some changes in 2025. The demersal North Sea quotas on saithe and plaice were increased by 11% each, whereas cod (-22%) and haddock (-8%) dropped. Brown shrimp being the most important species for the German cutter fishery is not managed by TAC. As there is no stock assessment the abundance and thus the catches of brown shrimp cannot be properly forecasted. Almost all enterprises managed to survive three detrimental years in a row (2019-2021) and, concerning catch and revenues, average years 2022 and 2023. 2024 was another critical year for the brown shrimp fleet, and several enterprises went bankrupt.

The Western Baltic cod further dropped -22% in 2025 at a very low level which is barely sufficient for bycatch in flatfish fisheries. A directed fishery on cod and herring has been

ceased. Plaice and herring quotas remained unchanged, while sprat quota dropped -22%. Overall, the German fishery in the Baltic remains at stake.

Payments for temporary and permanent cessation by the German authorities are likely to be continued but can only compensate for a fraction of the loss due to the quota cuts.

4.5.7 Methodological considerations and data issues

General remarks

Capacity, logbook and landings data are derived from sources which are covered by different legislations. All these data are available exhaustively. That means that all capacity, landings and effort data are represented at 100%.

The only exception is the group of vessels below 8 metres without logbook obligation. These vessels are sampled for effort data. The remaining variables (cost, employment, fuel consumption) are estimated based on results from an accountants' network and from surveys with questionnaires.

All data on the high seas fleet were requested exhaustively (100%). The data basis for fleet segment level estimations has become broad over the years. All fleet segments with major contribution to the total catches of the German fleet have been sampled with satisfactory response rates. As segments are not necessarily homogeneous, the results can be quite variable which is reflected in higher coefficients of variation.

The German fishing fleet contains a small number of pelagic vessels which are owned mainly by one company and are hence subject to confidentiality. In 2023, the related company gave permission to publish the data for 2021 onwards. Therefore, the data for recent years are comprehensive, but the time series is interrupted.

As up to 2020 most data for the pelagic fleet are excluded from the dataset, the regional analysis for that time is affected as well. The pelagic fleet mainly operates in the North Sea and North Atlantic (herring, mackerel, blue whiting). Data on pelagic fisheries in the Baltic are hardly affected, as they are performed on a seasonal basis, and vessels are assigned to the DTS segment, which reflects their major activity during the year.

Vessels which targeted blue mussels were excluded from the analysis because they are defined as operating in the aquaculture sector. Not all the participating vessels can be identified by the first gear entry in the fleet register as some vessels are using beam trawls. Instead, the relative catch of blue mussel was used, thus allowing an unambiguous identification of aquaculture vessels. Usually, the only catch of these vessels are blue mussels.

For the year 2020 and beyond the total number of jobs will be available exhaustively (see below under "Changes…"). On this basis, fulltime equivalents are estimated with reference to the days-at-sea and the crew size. This information is also used to estimate the figures by fleet segment.

It has to be pointed out that German employment data follow the approach of minimum requirement of activity, i.e., a person that goes fishing for 20 days or less during the year is not accounted for one employed person. If one day at sea would qualify for counting a "person employed" figures would exceed official statistics by at least 50%.

Changes in respect to previous years

From 2020 onwards, employment and demographic data are exhaustively available from the totals from the Employer's Liability Insurance Association. This results in a break in the time series as data from former years were estimated with reference to days at sea and crew size, thus resulting in some cases in an over-estimation. Insurance Association data are not resolved at fleet segment level. Therefore, the figures are assigned proportional to effort and vessel information.

From 2021 onwards, all data could be provided for the segment of pelagic trawlers due to permission from the company owner. This will result in a completed picture for the national fleet. However, consistency in time series could not be achieved for all data. Therefore, some figures and data should be taken with care.

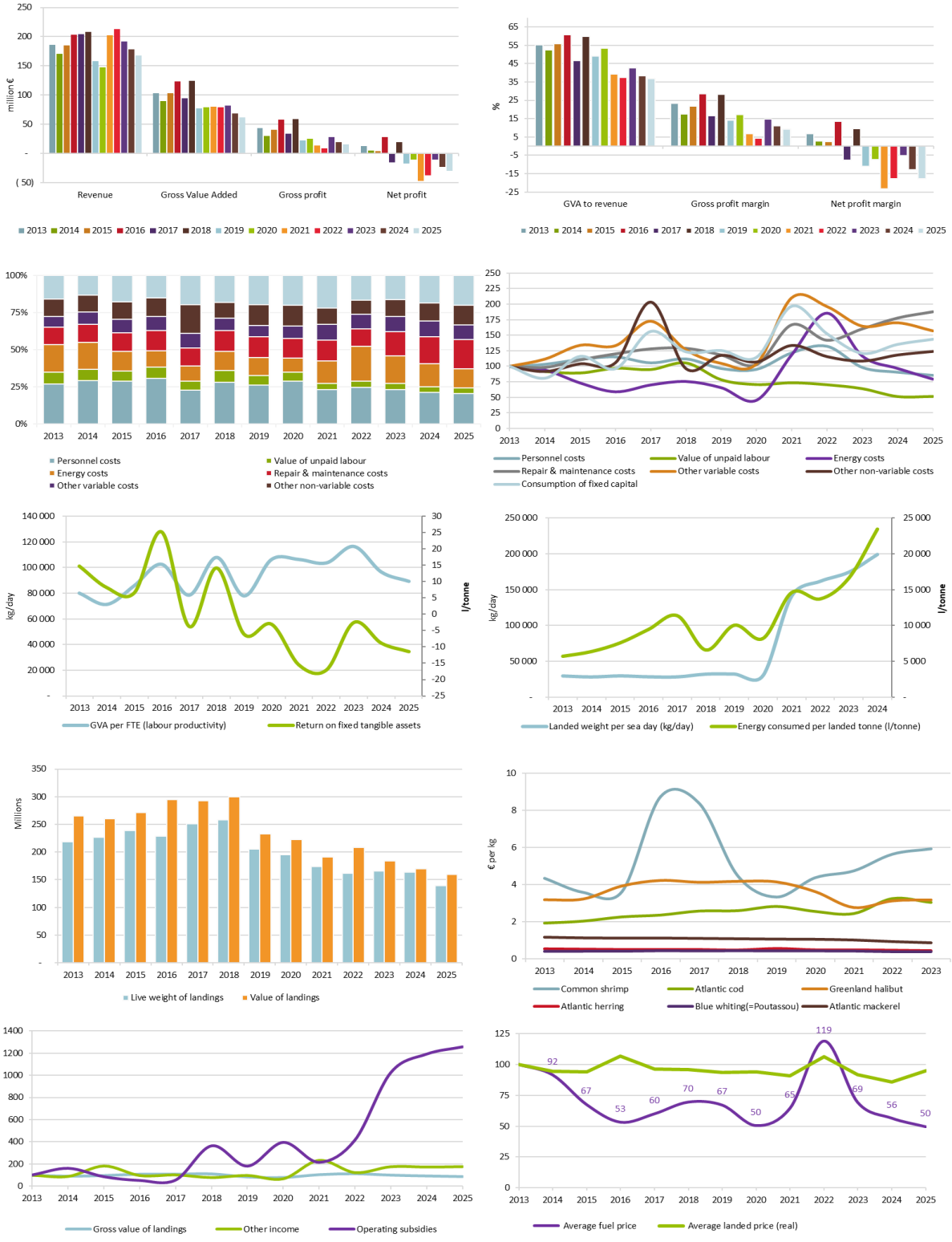
Improvements achieved within data collection for 2023

The aforementioned change in data availability for employment and demographic data is a step forward in quality. Moreover, the inclusion of the pelagic fleet results in a complete overview for the German fishing fleet from 2021 onwards.

Problems identified

An increasing reluctance of responding to questionnaires had to be observed. This applies in particular to small-scale vessels. The received data are highly scattered. In these cases, estimation and raising procedures are based on few responses and are thus limited in robustness.

Figure 4.5.2. Germany: Main trends in (from top to bottom, left to right): economic performance indicators (absolute value and relative values); cost structure and variation in main cost items; productivity and efficiency indicators; landings (in weight and value) and average price (euro/kg) of top species; variation in income variables and average prices of key input/outputs (2013=100). Nowcast figures for 2024 and 2025.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

4.6 Estonia

4.6.1 Short description of the national fleet

In 2023, Estonia's fishing fleet had 1,235 active vessels with a capacity of 11,862 GT or 35,737 kW, a 1% decrease from 2022.

Table 4.6.1. Estonia at a glance.

Estonia		2023				%Δ 2023-2022			
Indicator	Units	Overall	SSCF	L12AG	LSF	Overall	SSCF	L12AG	LSF
Active vessels	Number	1,235	1,210	0	25	-1%	-1%	-	-17%
FTE	Number	214	137	-	77	-4%	2%	-	-14%
Gross Value of landings	Million €	23.3	7.7	-	15.6	43%	35%	-	47%
GVA	Million €	16.5	4.8	-	11.6	70%	45%	-	81%
Gross profit	Million €	10.6	2.6	-	8.1	196%	225%	-	189%
Net profit	Million €	7.7	1.4	-	6.3	1434%	567%	-	688%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure

The fleet comprised 2% large-scale trawlers (25 vessels) mainly operating in the Baltic Sea and 98% small-scale coastal vessels (1,210 vessels) using passive gears in Estonian waters.

Fishing activity and production

In 2023, an estimated 55,876 days were spent at sea, a 1% increase from 2022.

The Estonian Baltic Sea fleet landed 57,491 tonnes of seafood, valued at EUR 24 million. Landings weight rose by 4%, while the value surged by 43%.

Atlantic herring was the most valuable (EUR 9.5 million), followed by European sprat (EUR 9.1 million) and European perch (EUR 2.4 million). Landings were 29,356 tonnes for Atlantic herring, 25,365 tonnes for European sprat, and 793 tonnes for European perch.

Employment and average salaries

Employment was estimated at 964 jobs, equivalent to 214 FTEs in 2023. The significant difference between the total number of employed individuals and FTEs is due to the fact that many people in the sector do not rely solely on fishing for their income. This primarily pertains to the SSCF. Compared to 2022, the number of engaged crew members and FTEs decreased by 3% and 4%, respectively, in 2023. The average labour cost per FTE was EUR 27,246, representing a 2% increase from 2022.

4.6.2 Economic results for 2023 and recent trends

The economic results pertain solely to the Estonian fishing fleet active in 2023.

National fleet performance

The fleet was profitable in 2023, showing better economic performance than in 2022.

Revenue reached EUR 23.9 million in 2023, up 34% from 2022.

GVA, gross profit, and net profit were EUR 16.5 million, EUR 10.6 million, and EUR 7.7 million, respectively, marking decreases of 70%, 188%, and 1248% from 2022.

Total costs totaled EUR 16.3 million, down 5% from 2022.

The fleet's replacement value was EUR 17.4 million in 2023, with investments at EUR 1.2 million, 37% less than in 2022.

Resource productivity and efficiency indicators

The gross profit margin in 2023 was 44%, and the net profit margin was 32%, up from 2022.

RoFTA rose to 48% in 2023 (from 6% in 2022). Labour productivity (GVA/FTE) was EUR 76,970, up 78% from 2022.

Fuel consumption per landed tonne remained stable at 50 litres per tonne in 2023. Landings in weight per unit of effort (in DaS) increased by 1,029 kg per sea day in 2023, continuing an upward trend since 2013.

4.6.3 Performance by fishing activity

Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

The SSCF operates in Estonian coastal waters. In 2023, it landed 12,003 tonnes of seafood, valued at EUR 7.7 million, mainly herring, perch, and smelt. Compared to 2022, landings increased by 29% in weight and 34% in value. GVA was EUR 4.8 million, gross profit EUR 2.6 million, and net profit EUR 1.4 million. Total costs were EUR 6.8 million, driven by higher maintenance and variable costs. The replacement value was EUR 7.3 million, with investments of EUR 0.8 million (down from EUR 1.2 million in 2022).

Vessels under 12 metres using active gears fleet (L12AG)

There is not an L12AG fleet operating in Estonia.

Large-scale fleet (LSF)

The LSF of the Baltic Sea uses pelagic trawls outside the coastal zone to catch sprat and herring. In 2023, the fleet landed 45,487 tonnes of seafood worth EUR 15.6 million. This was a 1% decrease in weight but a 47% increase in value compared to 2022, due to higher first-sale prices for sprat and herring. The fleet remained profitable, with GVA at EUR 11.6 million, gross profit at EUR 8.1 million, and net profit at EUR 6.3 million, reflecting significant increases from 2022. Total costs dropped to EUR 9.4 million from EUR 10.7 million in 2022, mainly due to lower energy costs. The LSF's depreciated replacement value was estimated at EUR 10.1 million, with investments of EUR 0.4 million in 2023, down from EUR 0.7 million in 2022.

4.6.4 Performance of selected fleet segments

Pelagic trawlers (TM) 24-40 metres

The 24-40 metres pelagic trawlers are the key segment of the Estonian Baltic Sea fishing fleet. In 2023, this fleet had 22 active vessels, down from 24 in 2022. The sector employed 110 people (77 FTEs). Targeting sprat and herring, the total landing value reached EUR 15.6 million. Profitability was strong with GVA at EUR 11.6 million, gross profit at EUR 8.1 million, and net profit at EUR 6.3 million, indicating positive economic growth.

Passive gears (PG) below 8 metres

The largest segment of the Estonian fleet is the 0-8 metres passive gears segment in coastal fishery. In 2023, it had 1,043 active vessels and 653 jobs (95 FTEs). This fleet primarily targets freshwater species like perch and pikeperch, and marine species such as flounder. Landings were valued at EUR 3.5 million in 2023. However, the segment's profitability was weak, with GVA at EUR 1.9 million, gross profit at EUR 0.4 million, and a net loss of EUR 0.2 million.

4.6.5 Drivers affecting the economic performance trends

In 2023, revenue and profit growth were primarily driven by an increase in the average first-sale prices of key species: 57% for sprat and 41% for herring, reaching 0.36 euro/kg and 0.32 euro/kg, respectively.

Energy costs saw a reduction, mainly due to the decrease in fuel prices. The average fuel price in 2023 was 0.96 euro/litre, which is 0.52 euro/litre lower than in 2022.

Markets and Trade

According to the data from the Commercial Fishing Register of Estonia, sprat and herring were mainly landed at Estonian ports by the Estonian Baltic Sea trawlers, where the catch was sold to fish freezing or processing companies, unless the fishing company itself was engaged in the processing and marketing of fish. Fish was also landed at ports in Latvia. The proportion of catch landed at foreign ports remained the same as the previous year and reached 7% in 2023.

According to Statistics Estonia’s foreign trade data, the export volume of frozen fish (sprat and herring) of Estonian origin decreased by 24% in 2023, but the total value only dropped by 8%. The main export market for this product continued to be Ukraine, but declining export indicate the impact of the war. Larger quantities of sprat and herring were also exported to Latvia, Belarus and Moldova.

Operating costs (external factors)

Energy costs decreased by 37% in 2023 compared to 2022, primarily due to falling fuel prices.

Status of key stocks, changes in TACs and quotas

Herring, sprat, and cod are the primary internationally regulated/managed fish species targeted by the Estonian Baltic Sea fishing fleet.

In its 2024 Baltic Sea ecoregion fisheries overview, the ICES classifies the current exploitation level of the Baltic sprat stock as unsustainable. Unlike sprat, treated as a single stock unit across the Baltic Sea, herring stocks are assessed, and exploitation advice is provided for four different stock units in various Baltic Sea subdivisions. Of these, only two stock units—Central Baltic herring and Gulf of Riga herring—are of significant interest to Estonian fishers. The status of Gulf of Riga herring is regarded as relatively good. Conversely, although the Central Baltic herring stock is fished below F_{MSY}, its spawning-stock biomass remains below the reference limit.

According to data from the Agriculture and Food Board of Estonia, the final sprat and herring quotas (after exchanges and transfers) for the Estonian trawl fleet were 26,406 tonnes and 19,481 tonnes in 2023, respectively. The sprat quota increased by 13% from 2020 to 2022

but then decreased by 8%. Similarly, the herring quota experienced major growth in 2022 (25%) but fell by 17% in 2023. The quota uptake for both species stood at 96%. In contrast, there was no directed fishing for cod in 2023.

Management instruments

In Estonia, the primary management tools include landings volume quotas (ITQs) for offshore fisheries (trawling) and gear usage quotas (ITE - Individual Transferable Effort) for coastal fisheries. Since 2015, an annual allowable catch for herring has been established per pound net in coastal fisheries. Fishing quotas are distributed based on historic fishing rights.

Estonia's experience shows that ITQs effectively allocate fishing rights to efficient enterprises and reduce fleet capacity. The Baltic Sea trawling fleet decreased by 66% from 64 to 22 vessels between 2008 and 2023, mainly to balance fleet size with fishing opportunities.

Innovation and development (role of EMFAF)

Innovation and development of the Estonian fishing fleet were supported through EMFF for three actions in 2023:

- Support for gear improvement. The support was used for reduction of unwanted by-catches and mitigation of negative impact of seals.
- Support for innovation in fishing. The purpose of the support is to maintain the good state of fish stocks, to develop sustainable and environmentally friendly solutions for fishing, to develop innovative technologies to add value throughout the supply chain and to make efficient use of new, untapped living aquatic resources.
- Support for cooperation between scientists and fishers. The purpose of the support is to increase the competitiveness and economic performance of the fisheries sector.

4.6.6 Assessment of the economic performance for 2024 and 2025 (nowcasts)

Model results

For 2024, the model predicts slightly lower profitability as was obtained in 2023. However, for 2025 all the profit margins are projected to improve compared to both 2024 and 2025.

Outlook

Due to reduced fishing opportunities of sprat and herring the total catches of the Estonian Baltic Sea fleet fall by 17% in 2024, according to the data from the Agriculture and Food Board of Estonia. However, the average first-sale prices of the key species as sprat, herring and perch continue to rise in 2024 (+38%, +19% and +4%, respectively) preventing a major decline in the value of the total landings. Based on fishing opportunities, total landings should remain broadly the same in 2025. According to EUMOFA, fuel prices should be rather stable in 2024 and early 2025 and should not increase operating costs. Based on the preliminary data, it can be assumed that 2024 and 2025 can be considered good for the Estonian fishing fleet.

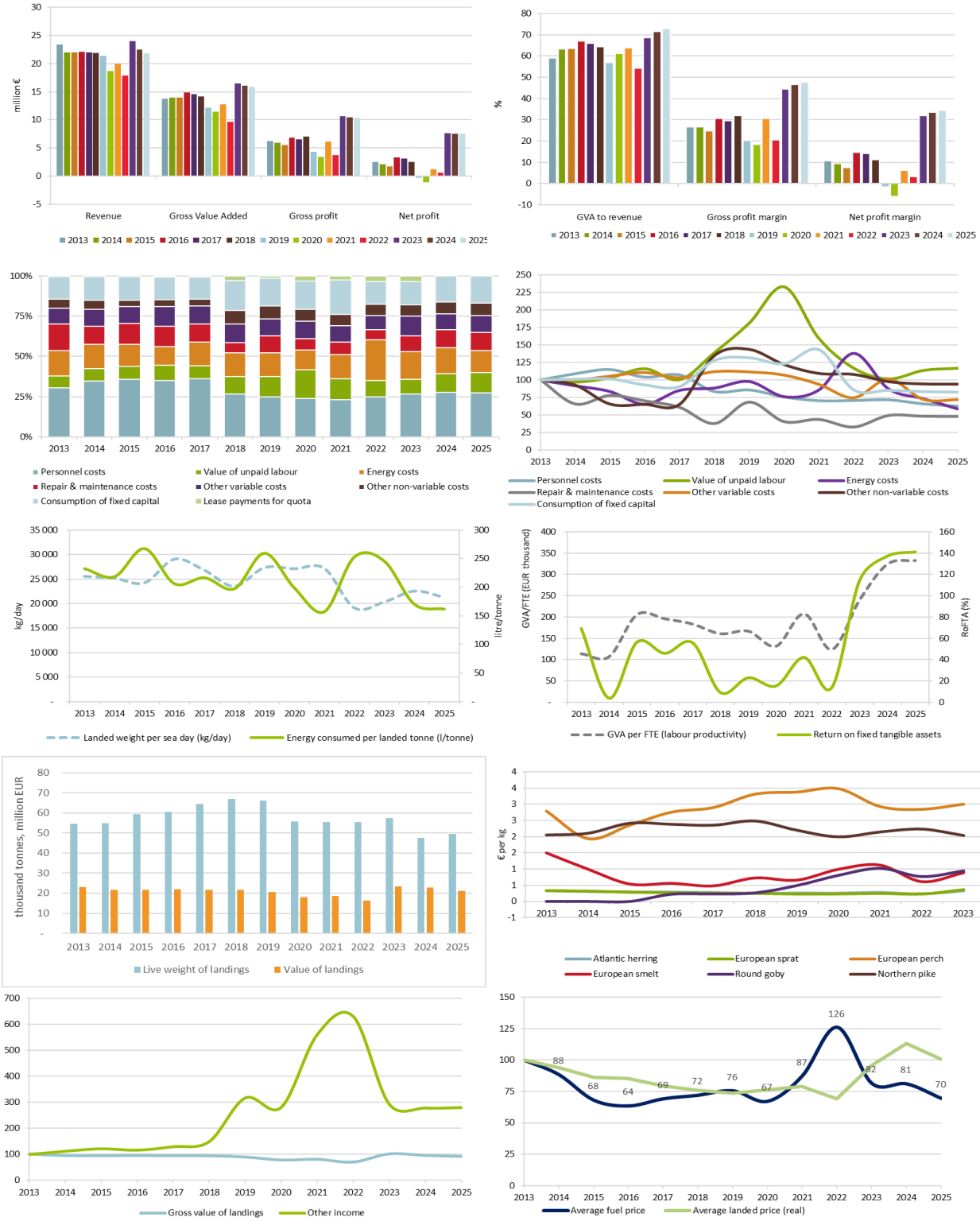
4.6.7 Methodological considerations and data issues

From 2018 onwards, changes in data collection improved data availability for SSCF. Due to low response rates in past voluntary surveys, Estonia appointed Statistics Estonia as the

data collector in 2019. This transition allowed for better economic data collection and more precise information on coastal fishing vessel activity.

For confidentiality reasons, only capacity data was submitted for the three vessels operating in the Eastern Arctic.

Figure 4.6.1. Estonia: Main trends in (from top to bottom, left to right): economic performance indicators (absolute value and relative values); cost structure and variation in main cost items; productivity and efficiency indicators; landings (in weight and value) and average price (euro/kg) of top species; variation in income variables and average prices of key input/outputs (2013=100). Nowcast figures for 2024 and 2025.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

4.7 Ireland

4.7.1 Short description of the national fleet

In 2023, there were 1 993 registered vessels (excluding those registered in the aquaculture segment), with a total capacity of 65 728 GT and 182 975 kW. The capacity of the national fleet has remained relatively stable since 2013. The estimated total number of inactive vessels in 2023 was 600, the majority of which (85%) are in the less than 10m segments. While inactivity for vessels over 10m LOA is known from logbook data, inactivity in the less than 10m LOA fleet has been estimated using data from sales notes and survey returns.

Table 4.7.1. Ireland at a glance.

Ireland		2023				%Δ 2023-2022			
Indicator	Units	Overall	SSCF	L12AG	LSF	Overall	SSCF	L12AG	LSF
Active vessels	Number	1,993	995	169	229	-2%	16%	-24%	-4%
FTE	Number	1,743	807	167	769	0%	4%	30%	-8%
Gross Value of landings	Million €	286.4	36.0	8.4	241.9	-5%	-18%	-25%	-2%
GVA	Million €	144.5	25.0	4.8	114.7	1%	-3%	-31%	4%
Gross profit	Million €	48.0	10.0	0.9	37.1	179%	528%	-61%	179%
Net profit	Million €	- 4.4	5.5	0.3	- 10.3	88%	254%	-81%	70%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure

National segmentation of the Irish fishing fleet does not match DCF segmentation in every case. For example, the polyvalent segment (see below) includes a variety of vessel lengths and fishing techniques. Nationally, the fishing fleet is divided into five segments:

- Refrigerated Seawater (RSW) Pelagic segment: This segment is engaged predominantly in fishing for pelagic species such as herring, mackerel, horse mackerel, blue whiting, and boarfish.
- Beam Trawler segment: This contains vessels dedicated to beam trawling, a simple trawling method used predominantly in Irish inshore waters except in the southeast, where it is used to catch flatfish such as megrim, sole and plaice as well as species such as monkfish and rays.
- Polyvalent segment: This segment contains the vast majority of the fleet. These vessels are multi-purpose and include small inshore vessels (netters and potters), along with medium and large offshore trawlers and gillnetters targeting whitefish (e.g., haddock, hake, monkfish, whiting) prawns, and pelagic fish such as mackerel, herring, and albacore tuna on a seasonal basis.
- Specific segment: This segment contains vessels which are permitted to fish for bivalve molluscs and aquaculture species.
- Aquaculture segment: These vessels are used exclusively in the management, development, and servicing of aquaculture areas. They collect spat from wild mussel stocks as part of a service to aquaculture installations. The aquaculture segment, while on the fleet register, is excluded from analysis in this report.

Employment and average salaries

In 2023, 2,681 jobs were supported by the Irish fleet. While there is a minimal difference from 2022 (2,687 jobs), this value represents an average decrease of 12% since 2013. The fleet FTE[11] is estimated to be 1,743, with an average of 4 and 1 FTE per vessel for the LSF and SSCF, respectively (excluding inactive vessels).

Average crew wage for the entire fleet and per FTE decreased in 2023. Average crew cost fell by -24% to EUR 34,416 per job and average crew cost per FTE by -23% to EUR 55,340 compared to the median national annual earnings of EUR 43,221[12]. A fall in average crew costs can be attributed to decreases in landings by value as a large proportion of crew members are employed under shared remuneration systems based on landings. It is also important to note the average crew and FTE figures mask considerable variations in the average wage depending on the size and gear of the vessel, target species, and the systems of crew share in place. As such these figures should be used with caution.

Fishing activity and production

The Irish fishing fleet operates primarily in the North Atlantic, Celtic, and Irish Seas. In 2023, the fleet recorded 223,704 Days at Sea (DaS) and 214,813 fishing days[13].

Landings by weight increased by 6% to almost 186,340 tonnes compared to 175,302 tonnes in 2022. The 2023 landings were valued at EUR 286.4 million, a decrease of -5% from 2022 (EUR 301.3 million). Adjusting for price errors in the landings data and including improved estimates for income for the less than 10m segments, revenue for 2023 is estimated at EUR 323.6 million. Provisional figures for 2024 indicate that total landings will be close to 202 660 tonnes, with an associated landings value of approximately EUR 250.7 million reflecting the continued downward trend in fish prices and quota.

Production trends are highly influenced by quota changes for pelagic species, particularly mackerel. Indeed, many of the historical fluctuations in the national value and weight of landings have been driven by mackerel, as mackerel quota accounted for approximately 34% of the total Irish quota from 2015 to 2023. Quota reductions of 26% for mackerel as a result of Brexit from 2021 onwards continue to impact production trends in Ireland.

In 2020, the mackerel quota was 78,000 tonnes. By 2021, the quota decreased by -22% to 61 850 tonnes in line with the quota reductions as a result of Brexit. In 2022, there was a further decrease of 10% to just under 55,000 tonnes. The downward trend continued in 2023, a decrease of -5% to just under 53,400 tonnes. Despite this, mackerel was the top species by value in 2023 with an estimated value of EUR 78.3 million.

[11]From 2020 onwards, FTE was calculated based on the number of average daily hours worked and total annual sea days which reflects a change in methodology in the estimation process. Previously, a self-reported indicator of full-time, part-time, or casual status was requested in the economic survey to calculate FTE. Therefore, FTE figures since 2020 represent a break in the time series.

[12] Source: CSO Ireland, Earnings Analysis using Administrative Data Sources (2023).

[13] The methodology was estimating DaS for vessels under 10m was revised in 2025, this has impacted the Member State's effort time series. Further details are available in 4.7.7.

4.7.2 Economic results for 2023 and recent trends

The economic results refer to the 1,393 active vessels in the Irish fishing fleet in 2023.

National fleet performance

In 2023, the Irish fleet recorded a gross profit. GVA was estimated at EUR 144.5 million, gross profit at EUR 48 million and a net profit of -EUR 4.4 million. These values represent a slight increase in GVA (+1%) an increase in gross profit (+179%) as well as net profit (+88%) compared to 2022. It should be noted that these figures are strongly influenced by the larger pelagic vessels (TM VL40XX). The value assigned to its cost structures and capital values along with fish prices can greatly affect their total landings revenue and profit due to the large volumes of their catches on an annual basis.

Total landed values for the SSCF have decreased by -9% and increased by 1% for the LSF with values of EUR 36.0 million and EUR 241.9 million, respectively.

Overall, the cost structure of the fleet in 2023 has decreased across most operating costs, with the exception of other non-variable costs. Operating costs totalled EUR 304.7 million representing a decrease of -12% from 2022. Energy costs decreased in 2023 by approximately 17% to EUR 52.4 million.

Resource productivity and efficiency

The fleet average gross profit margin in 2023 was 15% representing an increase of +183% from 2022. The net profit margin was -1% representing a significant increase from -11% in 2022, and the RoFTA at 3%, was an increase from -3% in 2022.

In 2023, fuel consumption was estimated to be 339 litres per tonne landed; the corresponding figure for 2022 was 349 litres per tonne landed, representing a -3% decrease. In terms of a time series trend, the data demonstrates a sharp increase in fuel consumption each year from 2014 until 2019 (141%) from 245 litres per tonne landed to 591 litres per tonne landed. There was a decrease of -45% in 2020, followed by an increase of 12% in 2021, falling by -4% in 2022 and again in 2023, by -3%.

Energy consumption for the fleet rose from 61.1 million litres in 2022 to 63.1 million litres in 2023, an increase of 3%. In terms of trends, whilst fuel prices fell for a period in 2020 due to the reduction in demand as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, overall, there was an increase of approximately 54% in the cost of fuel in between 2019 and 2021 from 0.35 euro/litre to 0.54 euro/litre. After the fuel price spikes of 2022 (1.03 euro/litre), 2023 fuel prices decreased by an average of -19% reaching an average fuel price of 0.83 euro/litre which contributed to an improvement in the overall economic performance of the national fleet.

Total average fleet Landings per Unit of Effort (LPUE) (i.e., DaS) have fluctuated since 2013. In 2023, the fleet LPUE was estimated at around 0.8 tonnes/day[14]. This average fleet figure may mask performance in specific segments.

[14] Caution should be taken with this data. Thie sharp decrease can be explained by the change in methodology for calculated effort data for one segment that was introduced in 2025. Further details are available in 4.6.7.

4.7.3 Performance by fishing activity

Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

There were an estimated 995 active vessels registered in the SSCF in 2023, an increase of +16%. Overall, the number of active vessels in this fleet indicate an increase of 15% on average since 2013. However, this is likely linked to significant increases in survey returns from the SSC in recent years which has allowed the Member State to more accurately calculate the number of active vessels.

In 2023, the SSCF activity recorded a GVA of EUR 25 million (-3%), gross profit of EUR 10 million (528%) and net profit of EUR 5.5 million (254%), demonstrating a significant recovery in these economic indicators since the unprecedented challenges experienced in 2022. While the SSCF makes up 15% of the total revenue of the Irish fleet in 2023, its socio-economic importance to local coastal communities should not be underestimated.

SSCF offer employment in often deprived, peripheral areas and bring much needed money to local communities and their hinterlands. Estimates for total jobs indicate there was an increase of 11% to 1 242 in 2023, however there was a -12% decrease in total hours worked. Similarly, the number of FTEs increased by +4% from 779 in 2022 to 807 in 2023.

Vessels under 12 metres using active gears fleet (L12AG)

The operational definition of SSCF used in this report excludes a large part of the Irish fleet in vessel numbers as they are below 12 metres in length and use active gears and thereby excludes important economic data for the small-scale inshore fishery which instead are added to the large-scale fishery. This is the first year that economic data for these vessels has been differentiated as part of the L12AG category. This development represents a positive deviation from previous years and allows for a more comprehensive economic analysis of the national fleet reflecting the nuances of the type of gears used by vessels of different lengths.

In 2023, there were an estimated 169 vessels under 12 metres using active gears (L12AG fleet) a decrease of -24% from 2022. Overall, the number of vessels in this fleet has decreased steadily with a change of -28% on average since 2013. In 2023, the L12AG fleet activity recorded a GVA of EUR 4.7 million (-31%), gross profit of EUR 0.9 million, -61%) and net profit of EUR 0.3 million (-61%) demonstrating a deteriorating economic performance.

Estimates for total employment indicate there was a decrease of -46% to 256 jobs in 2023 coupled with a +38% increase in total hours worked. However, the number of FTEs increased to 167, up by 30% from 128 in 2022.

Large-scale fleet (LSF)

There were an estimated 229 active vessels registered in the LSF in 2023. Long-term data highlights a -6% decrease in active vessels in the LSF on average since 2013. 39 vessels from the LSF were decommissioned at different stages in 2023 under the Brexit Adjustment Reserve (BAR) fund. Further details are presented in Section 4.6.5.

Landings by weight increased significantly by +12% since 2022 to 172,000 tonnes, whilst landings by value decreased by -2% to almost EUR 242 million. This was largely driven by significant reductions in prices for high value demersal species such as Nephrops (-39%).

In 2023, the LSF recorded a GVA of EUR 114.7 million, gross profit over to EUR 37 million and net profit of -EUR 10.3 million, demonstrating a significant increase in these economic indicators. This fleet category contributed 82% of the total revenue of the Irish fleet in 2023.

Estimates for total employment for the LSF indicate there was an increase of +9% to 1,182 representing 44% of the total employment of the national fleet.

4.7.4 Performance of selected fleet segments

The national fishing fleet is highly diversified with a broad range of vessel types targeting different species or species groups often in mixed fisheries. The fleet operates from as far north as Norway and Iceland, south to the coast of Africa but carries out the bulk of its operations in area 27.6 (i.e., Rockall, Northwest Coast of Scotland, and North Ireland) and 27.7 (Irish Sea, West of Ireland, Porcupine Bank, Eastern and Western English Channel).

In 2023, the national fleet consisted of 20 EU MAP/DCF fleet segments, for which there were 19 segments (both clustered and un-clustered) that had sufficient data to calculate profitability. Overall, a long-term deteriorating economic development trend is emerging for 11 of these segments of the industry since 2013. Four fleet segments combined represent 69% of the total revenue and 83% of total employment of the national fleet in 2023. These key segments are presented below.

Pelagic Trawl over 40 metres

Pelagic Trawlers over 40 metres (TM VL40XX) are part of the, nationally defined, RSW segment. Ireland's pelagic fleet tends to operate seasonally (i.e., January to early April and in the autumn months), reflecting both the annual distribution patterns of the target species as well as quota limitations. In 2023, there were 20 vessels classified as TM VL40XX and typically, these are generally considered to be amongst the best performing segments of the national fleet.

These vessels land large quantities of pelagic fish (e.g., Atlantic mackerel, horse mackerel, herring, blue whiting, albacore tuna, and boarfish) and operate mainly in ICES divisions 6a and 7b, 7c, 7j, 7k. Mackerel constitutes 27% of the total value of landings and 28% of the total landings by weight in 2023. In 2023, landings (all species) by pelagic trawlers over 40m amounted to just over 99,000 tonnes, up 14% from 2022 and valued at EUR 79.2 million, representing a sharp increase of 50%. This is linked to drastic price increases for certain species (e.g., mackerel prices have increased by +61% since 2022). GVA for the segment in 2023 was EUR 49.6 million (up 83%) generating a gross profit of EUR 24.9 million, a significant increase of 398% from 2022. Total revenue for the 20 vessels in this segment was EUR 88.9 million (up by 68%) and accounted for 27% of the total revenue of the fleet. Total employment is estimated at 218 jobs in 2023 or 8% of the total fleet employment nationally.

Demersal Trawl 18-24 metres

In 2023, there were 51 polyvalent vessels (down from 57 in 2022) classified as Demersal Trawlers 18-24m. They target a wide variety of species including Nephrops, whiting, and monkfish. In 2023, the total value of landings for this segment was EUR 44.9 million (down from EUR 50.9 million in 2022) contributing 16% of the total income from landings. Landings by weight were up +12% to 11,500 tonnes in 2023. Total employment is estimated at 259 jobs or 10% of the total fleet employment nationally.

This fleet segment recorded a gross profit of EUR 1.3 million (up from -EUR 1.2 million) and net profit of -EUR 3.3 million in 2023 (up from -EUR 5.4 million) representing an increase in profitability since 2022.

Demersal Trawl 24-40 metres

In 2023, there were 43 polyvalent vessels classified as Demersal Trawlers 24-40 metres. They target a wide variety of species including Nephrops, Atlantic herring, whiting, and European sprat. In 2023, landings by weight were down by -5% on the previous year to 14,900 tonnes. The total value of landings was EUR 50 million (down by -31%), generating EUR 52.6 million (down by -34%) and representing 16% of the total revenue of the national fishing fleet. This segment was the one of the highest contributors to revenue in 2023, second only to the Pelagic Trawl over 40m.

The fleet segment generated a gross profit of EUR 2 million, a decrease of -62% from 2022, and net profit of -EUR 4.3 million (down from -EUR 4.1 million). This indicates a decrease in profitability for 2023 compared to 2022. Total employment is estimated at 285 jobs with 185 jobs or 10% of the total fleet employment nationally.

Potters below 10 metres

There are currently an estimated 807 active polyvalent and polyvalent potting vessels classified as Potters 0-10 metres. They make up a large and important segment within the SSCF and target a wide variety of high value non-quota species including brown crab, lobster, and whelk.

This segment provides an estimated total employment of 1,480 (55% of the national fleet) and 609 FTEs (35% of the national fleet) demonstrating the economic significance to coastal regions. In 2023, the total value of landings was EUR 22.1 million (a decrease of -1%) contributing 61% of the total value of the SSCF landings. There was a significant improvement in economic performance in 2023 generating a gross profit of EUR 10.7 million in 2023 compared to -EUR 5.0 million in 2022 and a net profit of EUR 9 million compared to -EUR 7 million in 2022.

4.7.5 Drivers affecting the economic performance trends

In 2023, Ireland experienced an annual average rate of inflation of 6.3%. This was a decrease from the 7.8% increase in 2022 and a significant rise from the 2.4% increase in 2021. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) dropped steadily over the course of 2023, from a high of 8.5% in February to 3.9% in November (Central Statistics Office, 2023). Subsequently, while 2023 brought more stability as fuel prices eased, the performance of the national fleet is yet to return to pre-pandemic levels. Key drivers affecting the performance of the national fleet in 2023 included the ongoing impacts of quota reductions resulting from Brexit coupled with volatile changes in fish prices and operating costs.

Brexit and the impacts on the Irish fleet

The withdrawal of the United Kingdom (UK) from the EU has reshaped fisheries relations in the North-East Atlantic to an unprecedented degree, with far-reaching consequences for the fishing sector in the region and beyond and most acutely for Ireland as the UK’s closest neighbour. The EU/UK Trade & Cooperation Agreement (TCA) brought a sudden and dramatic shift in the landscape for the entire Irish seafood sector from 2021 onwards. The deal saw quota transfers across EU Member States to the UK, totalling almost EUR 200 million. The Irish fleet lost access to 15% of its annual quota with the largest impact on two key fisheries –Atlantic mackerel and Nephrops– which saw quota reductions of -26% and -14%, respectively, the results of which have been demonstrated by the overall deteriorating

economic performance of some segments of Ireland's LSF in recent years: Demersal Trawl 24m-40m (DTS VL2440), Demersal Trawl 18m-24m (DTS VL1824) and to a lesser extent, Pelagic Trawlers over 40 metres (TM VL40XX).These three segments combined make up 58% of the total revenue of the national fleet.

Following the departure of the UK from the EU, the EU Commission established the BAR. The BAR aimed to mitigate the economic impacts of the withdrawal of the UK on Member States across multiple sectors including the seafood sector. Ireland was the biggest beneficiary of BAR funding, receiving just over EUR 1 billion, just over 20% of the entire BAR budget. Significant funding from the BAR came on stream from late 2022 to 2023.

In terms of mitigation of the Brexit impacts, at a national level, the Irish Government set up a Seafood Task Force to examine the implications of the TCA for the fishing industry and coastal communities and to consider initiatives to address those implications. The Task Force recommended a suite of initiatives15 including 16 funding schemes, with a proposed overall funding requirement of EUR 423 million. Amongst the recommendations were longer-term fleet re-structuring measures in the form of a Voluntary Permanent Cessation ("Decommissioning") Scheme to restore balance between fishing capacity and available fishing opportunities. following the quota reductions arising from the TCA. The scheme was to support demersal trawlers and beam trawlers and a target of approximately 60 vessels with a total capacity of 8,000 GTs was agreed to ensure the future profitability of the Irish whitefish fleet, with approximately 170 vessels remaining in the fleet.

Applications to the scheme closed in late 2022 and a total of 57 vessels with an associated total gross tonnage of 8,700 applied to decommission. While 43 originally accepted offers, ultimately 39 LSF vessels with a gross tonnage of 6,289 (79% of the target) were decommissioned at different stages in 2023. 38 of these were demersal trawler segments ranging from 12-18m (6 vessels), 18-24m (19) and 24-40m (13) and one beam trawler 18m, at a cost of EUR 59.3 million under the BAR.

In terms of the overall economic impact of the decommissioning programme, the potential economic effects are, as yet, unknown and are likely to emerge from 2025 onwards once financial data from the vessel owners becomes available. However, it could be inferred that the programme will lead to higher relative shares of quota for whitefish and Nephrops quota per vessel around the coastline. There are early indications that the availability of crew that formerly worked on decommissioned vessels have, as expected, begun to alleviate the difficult sourcing of crew in the sector to a certain extent. In addition, the higher quota share may lead to higher turnover and hence a higher crew share for the LSF fleet that may furthermore alleviate problems with sourcing crew.

The Brexit Off-Register Capacity Buy-out Scheme was also administered in 2023. The purpose of this scheme was to minimise the risk to the voluntary decommissioning scheme from re-entry of vessels after decommissioning by buying out a proportion of off-register capacity in the under 18m and over 18m polyvalent fleet. A total of 22 vessels participated in this scheme at a cost of EUR 2.6 million under the BAR.

Launched in the summer of 2023, the Brexit Inshore Fisheries Business Model Adjustment Scheme aimed to provide assistance to inshore fishers in adjusting their business operations

[15] Report of the Seafood Task Force. Navigating Change: The way forward for our Seafood Sector and Coastal Communities in the wake of the EU/UK Trade & Cooperation Agreement October 2021. https://bim.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Report-of-the-Seafood-Taskforce.pdf.

as a result of the impacts of Brexit. The scheme provided a payment to active vessels below 18m Length Overall (LOA) operating in the inshore sector ranging from EUR 2,700 (vessels under 8m) and EUR 4 000 (vessels over 8m). A total of 737 vessels participated in this scheme at a cost of EUR 2.3 million under the BAR.

Markets and Trade (including fish price)

During 2023, significant price pressures were seen for many leading species landed by the Irish fleet. Average prices for many species experienced varied changes with an overall decrease of -21%. In terms of quota species, prices for pelagic species tend to have a dramatic effect on the total income given the scale of the pelagic TAC and the landed weights. The average prices indicated from the national regulatory authority (Sea Fisheries Protection Authority) responsible for landings declarations indicate that the average prices of Atlantic mackerel (27% of total value of landings in 2023) increased significantly by 61% to 1.51 euro/kg from 0.94 euro/kg in 2022. The average prices for blue whiting increased slightly by +2% from 0.27 euro/kg in 2022 to 0.28 euro/kg in 2023. Conversely, the higher value demersal species saw varied decreases in 2023. Nephrops (27% of total value of landings) decreased by -39% in value from 12.36 euro/kg in 2022 to 7.55 euro/kg in 2023. Haddock decreased by -10% from 2.27 euro/kg in 2022 to 2.02 euro/kg in 2023 and hake decreased by -19% from 3.47 euro/kg in 2022 to 2.80 euro/kg in 2023.

Compared to 2022 average prices, high value non-quota species caught by the SSCF such as scallop decreased sharply by -48% from 4.42 euro/kg to 2.31 euro/kg in 2023. Edible crab decreased by -22% from 3.60 euro/kg in 2022 to 2.81 euro/kg and European lobster decreased by -10% from 20.60 euro/kg to 18.49 euro/kg in 2023.

Operating costs (external factors)

In 2023, total operating costs incurred by the Irish fleet were EUR 304.7 million, a decrease of -12% compared to EUR 345.9 million in 2022. Energy costs accounted for 17% of total operating costs in 2023 at EUR 52.4 million, a decrease of -17% from 2022 (EUR 63 million). This decrease was a key driver of the improved economic performance of the Irish fleet in 2023.

Personnel costs at EUR 92.2 million accounted for 30% of total operating costs in 2023, a decrease of -5% from 2022 (EUR 122 million). The average personnel costs from 2013- 2023 were EUR 99.3 million with a peak of EUR 122 million in 2022 reflecting the increased inflation rate. Other variable costs decreased in 2023 by -7% to EUR 53.2 million, while non-variable costs increased by +40% to EUR 32.9 million.

Status of some key stocks, TACs and quotas

Ireland’s State agency for marine research, technology development and innovation, The Marine Institute, publish an annual report which provides the latest impartial scientific advice on the commercially exploited fish stocks of interest to Ireland. The Stock Book 2023: Annual Review of Fish Stocks in 2023 with Management Advice for 2024 provides advice on 74 stocks.

Several of the stocks of interest to Ireland are or have been at one time managed under long term management plans. The number of sustainably fished stocks has declined from 40 (in 2022) to 38 (in 2023): 51% of 74 reference stocks. The number of stocks with biomasses higher than sustainable trigger levels has increased from 36 (in 2022) to 38 (in 2023): 51% of 74. There is a long-term trend towards increasing sustainable use of these resources since 2012.

Ireland's quota total share of TACs in 2023 amounted to 164 990 tonnes valued at an estimated EUR 210 million. Some of the key stocks saw significant changes in quotas in 2023 compared to the previous year. Examples include mackerel down by -15% to 52,385 tonnes (in addition to the -10% decrease between 2021 and 2022), Horse mackerel down by -44% to 3,213 tonnes. Conversely, blue whiting increased sharply by 70% to 48,761 tonnes, monkfish increased by 10% to 3,283 tonnes and Nephrops increased by 6% to 6,027 tonnes. The volatility in mackerel quotas, in particular, highlights the sector's vulnerability to changes in stock availability.

Management instruments

Under the remit of Ireland's Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM), fishery management policy is developed through a transparent system that includes a quota management regime agreed with the Producer Organisations and other key stakeholders. Monthly allocation arrangements are designed to be responsive to criteria such as stock availability, remaining quota, market demand and other marketing initiatives.

The strengths of the fleet management system include a strict entry/exit regime that ensures the fleet remains within its prescribed reference levels. It also delivers a practical segmentation of the fleet along traditional fishing line and ensures that monthly vessel catch limits are respected.

In Ireland, quota is a public resource and is managed to ensure that property rights are not granted to individual operators. This is seen as a critical policy in order to ensure that quotas are not concentrated into the hands of large fishing companies whose owners have the financial resources to buy up such rights. In Ireland, any movement towards privatisation and concentration of rights into the hands of large companies would seriously risk fishing vessels losing an economic link with Ireland's coastal communities and undermining the socio-economic importance of the fishing industry in the coastal communities dependent on fishing. The result of this long-standing policy is that the Irish fishing fleet involves a balanced spread of sizes and types of fishing vessels who have retained a strong economic link with our coastal communities and have delivered economic activity including vital employment in these communities, where there are limited alternative economic activities.

Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), Ireland's Seafood Development Agency, in partnership with other marine-focused state agencies, the Marine Institute and the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority developed an online Fisheries Management Platform for different species to accommodate the significant amount of legislation, which a paper chart in terms of space, is limited. The development of this online platform overcomes this and allows the presentation of technical measures at a fishery and area level. This permits users to access the

information they require easily and efficiently. The chart is a user-friendly guide which informs users about options available to reduce unwanted catches and promotes sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources. A pdf version of the chart is also available.

Innovation and development (role of EMFAF)

In 2023, the European Maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF) Operational Programme was drawing to a close and the European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) 2021- 2027 became operational with EUR 258m of funding available to the seafood sector which built on other investments made provided under the BAR. Support from EMFAF along with a national investment programme contributed to a wide range of projects including the improvement of infrastructure in fishing ports and harbours, grant aid for fishers, R&D and innovation projects.

In terms of R&D into gear technology and conservation, BIM on behalf of Ireland, have worked closely with the Irish fishing industry to develop technical solutions that reduce unwanted catches. This helps address challenges posed by the EU landing obligation and boost fisheries sustainability and marine biodiversity by decreasing landings of small (juvenile), over-quota and non-target species.

During 2023, Ireland administered several grant aid schemes targeted at the fishing sector, drawing down EUR 3.5 million. These schemes were co-funded 50:50 by the EMFAF and the National Exchequer. Examples include the Sustainable Fisheries Scheme Part B which provides support for on-board capital investment on fishing vessels; the Inshore Fisheries Conservation-V-Notching Scheme for fishing vessels under-12m using passive gear; and the Producer's Organisation Scheme which provides supports to groups of fisheries producers working to achieve EU recognition as a Producer Organisation.

In terms of innovation, a new study was launched by BIM in 2023, Analysis of Resilience of the Seafood. Working with industry, this study aims to review the resilience of the Irish seafood sector to shocks like COVID-19, Brexit, the conflict in Ukraine, climate change. It will determine the lessons learned from current and past shocks and help the sector understand the routes to increased resilience, sustainability, and the security of the Irish seafood sector in the future. It aims to inform the Irish seafood sector and place structures on how to achieve the goals of maintaining the sustainability and social and economic resilience of fishers, aquaculture growers, the wider seafood industry, and coastal communities reliant on seafood in Ireland in response to future largescale disturbances. The findings will be published in 2025.

In addition, another significant study commenced in 2023, "The economic impact of the seafood sector at Ireland's main fishing ports". The main objectives of this project to collect (i) social statistics of key Irish ports and hinterlands (ii) updated detailed economic and social statistics for seafood sectors in key Irish ports (iii) updated data on economic structure of focus areas and contribution of seafood sectors to overall economy; re-calculate downstream economic multipliers for key ports; and produce time series port and hinterland datasets to track temporal economic trends. The findings were published in June 2025.

4.7.6 Assessment of the economic performance for 2024 and 2025 (nowcasts)

Model results

Estimations for 2024 based on preliminary data suggest a deteriorating economic performance compared to 2023 with an expected decreased in gross profit combined with a decrease in revenue. This is primarily driven by fluctuations in fish prices and the ongoing impact of reduced quotas linked to Brexit. In 2024, the 11% increase in landed weight is counteracted by low fish prices for certain key species, resulting in a -12% decrease in value. Although the key demersal fleet segments (DTS1824 and 2440) have shown improved economic performance post-2023, likely aided by capacity adjustments from the decommissioning scheme, the key Irish pelagic segment (TM40XX) has experienced a decline in economic performance.

Data projections for 2024 indicate decreasing revenue (-12%) to EUR 286 million and GVA is predicted to decrease (-16%) to EUR 121.7 million. In addition, Gross profit in 2024 is predicted to decrease (-25%) from EUR 48 million compared to EUR 36 million. There is an estimated negative net profit of -EUR 12.8 million compared to -EUR 4.3 million in 2023. It is important to note that these figures do not include operating subsidies financed through BAR or EMFAF.

Nowcast for 2025 suggest an overall higher economic performance compared to 2024 driven by a reduction in operating costs despite a predicted decrease in landings by weight and value compared to 2024. The upward trend of the demersal fleet segments from 2024 is likely to continue in 2025. In terms of economic indicators, revenue is predicted to increase marginally (1%) combined with increases in GVA (4%), gross profit (14%) and an estimated negative Net profit of -EUR 7.9 million (62%).

Based on current projections and underlying trends, the Irish fishing industry is positioned to achieve several positive outcomes by the end of 2025 and into the future. A key factor driving this progress is the continued reduction in operating costs, most notably in energy and personnel costs, which is expected to significantly enhance profitability across the sector. At the same time, targeted strategic initiatives focused on boosting efficiency and sustainability, including the adoption of advanced management practices and innovative technologies, are set to further strengthen the industry's economic performance. Together, these developments present a strong case for renewed growth and long-term resilience

The government's commitment to the fishing sector, through supportive policies, sustained funding, and the strategic deployment of BIM-administered EMFAF support grants continues to lay a solid foundation for recovery and future growth. Encouragingly, global market indicators point to a potential rebound in fish prices. When coupled with expanding export opportunities, this creates a favourable environment to strengthen the sector's revenue base. Taken together, these developments signal a more robust and sustainable trajectory for the Irish fishing industry as it continues to recover from a period of significant economic disruption since 2020.

4.7.7 Methodological considerations and data issues

Identify changes in respect to previous years

The survey returns for the 2023 reference year were considerably higher than recent years, particularly for the SSCF segments. This was aided by an EMFAF supported Inshore Fisheries Scheme: Inshore Fleet Economic Assessment Scheme for vessels up to 18m LOA. This scheme built on the data collected under the Inshore Census conducted the previous year. These developments have significantly improved the precisions of many of the variables and indicators.

Based on the higher response rates from the SSCF and as highlighted in the methodology section of Ireland's Work Plan for DCF, income data for under 10m segments was sourced from the survey rather than Sales Notes. Given the response rates, the survey provided more reliable data for the income variable. For this reason, total income for some segments does not align with landed value.

Previously, effort data was only available for two segments in the SSCF (FPO and DRB). From 2023, in the absence of logbook data, the Member State has developed a methodology to ensure effort data is estimated for all SSCF segments. However, this has resulted in a break in the effort time series. For FPO, a raising factor of 8.7 has been used to convert sale days to DaS. Vessels under 10m using FPO gears target lobster and crab and they collect, and store catch for a number of days prior to sale. The number of sales is thus expected to be much less than the number of days at sea. To account for this, the ratio of landings to DaS in a sample of vessels was estimated from DCF survey data (i.e. 8.7). Sales days were therefore raised to days at sea by multiplying by 8.7. This relationship between sales and DaS is specific to FPO gears. For DRB gears the catch is usually sold on the day of landing. The above changes have increased the under 10m effort values compared to previous years.

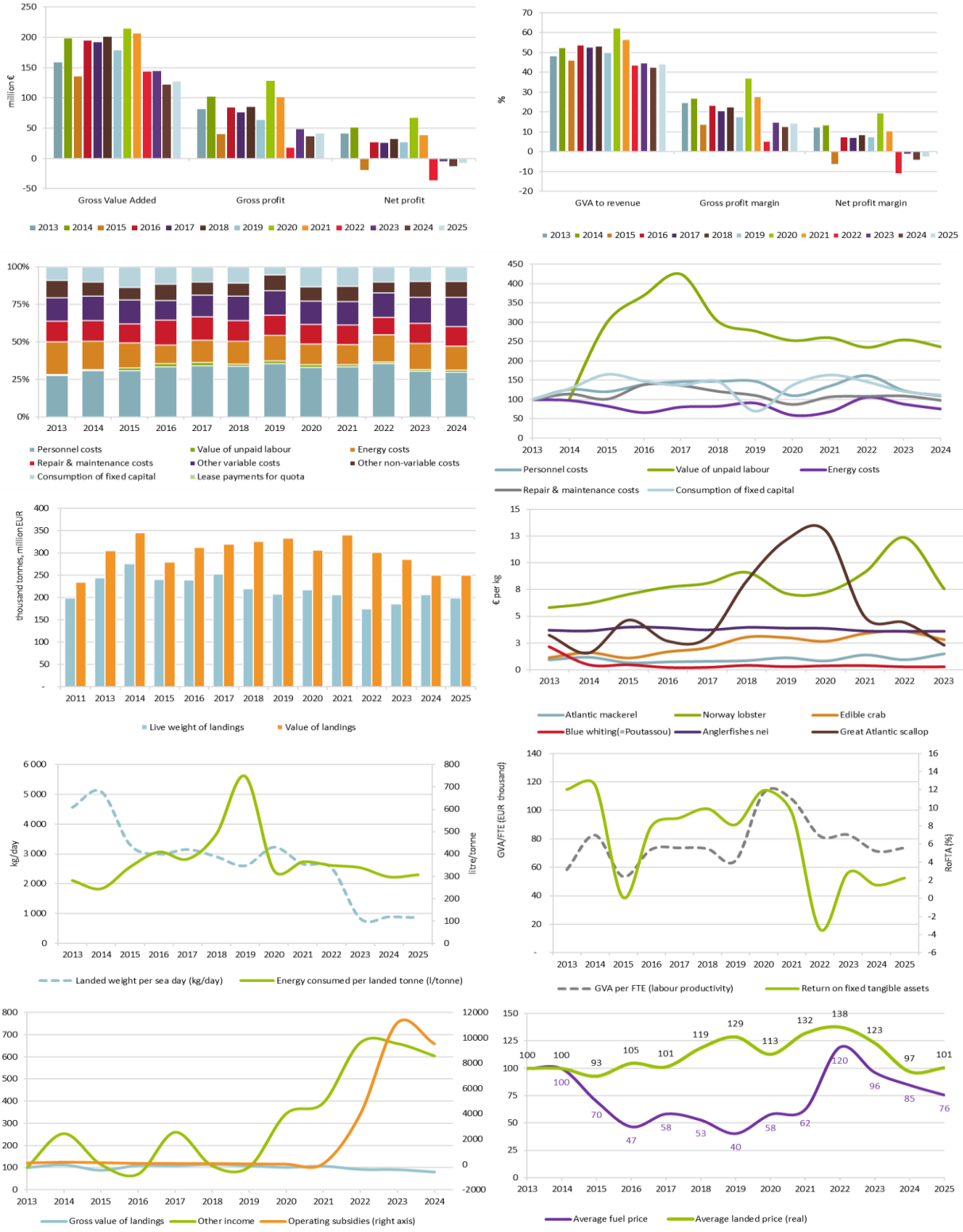
Improvements achieved

Data collected from the Inshore Fleet Economic Assessment Scheme has enabled the calculation of economic indicators for all but one minor (HOK 10-12m) segment for the first time. In particular, this scheme allowed the Member State to address previous data gaps for certain variables for the following segments: HOK under-10m, DFN under 10m, DTS under 10m and FPO 10-12m. Increased survey returns has also allowed the Member State to more accurately assign a gear type for vessels in the SSCF which has improved the accuracy of the fleet segmentation.

Remaining and novel issues

Subsidies data includes EMFAF funding programmes administered by BIM, Ireland's Seafood Development Agency, including programmes on sustainability, safety grants, and assistance to young fishers. Fishers may also be receiving subsidies from other state agencies such as Enterprise Ireland or Údarás na Gaeltachta, but these are unknown and not reported.

Figure 4.7.1.Ireland: Main trends in (from top to bottom, left to right): economic performance indicators (absolute value and relative values); cost structure and variation in main cost items; productivity and efficiency indicators; landings (in weight and value) and average price (euro/kg) of top species; variation in income variables and average prices of key input/outputs (2013=100). Nowcast figures for 2024 and 2025.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

4.8 Greece

4.8.1 Short description of the national fleet

In 2023, the Greek fishing fleet had 12,116 registered vessels with a total of 62,624 GT and 359,594 kW. The average vessel is 33 years old and 7.6 metres long. The fleet is decreasing: vessel numbers fell by 7%, tonnage by 8%, and power by 10%. This decline is due to both large-scale (-9%) and small-scale (-3%) vessels aging without new successors. Additionally, in 2020, 751 vessels were removed from the registry under EMFAF Measure 6.1.10 for permanent cessation.

Table 4.8.1. Greece at a glance.

Greece		2023				%Δ 2023-2022			
Indicator	**Units**	**Overall**	**SSCF**	**L12AG**	**LSF**	**Overall**	**SSCF**	**L12AG**	**LSF**
Active vessels	Number	10,664	10,022	34	608	11%	12%	113%	-2%
FTE	Number	12,456	9,004	31	3,420	20%	3%	82%	110%
Gross Value of landings	Million €	279.0	157.0	1.2	120.0	11%	33%	20%	-10%
GVA	Million €	149.0	96.0	1.6	51.0	18%	55%	129%	-19%
Gross profit	Million €	30.3	9.2	1.3	19.7	237%	142%	160%	-35%
Net profit	Million €	7.4	-3.4	1.3	9.5	123%	92%	159%	-6%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure

In 2023, the Greek fleet comprised 10,664 active vessels, with the SSCF owning 10,022 of them. The SSCF's vessels had a combined gross tonnage of 20,820 GT and total power of 191,610 kW. The LSF owned 608 vessels with a combined 33,600 GT and total power of 118,351 kW. Additionally, 34 vessels under 12m (L12AG) used active gears like DRB, totaling 837 kW and 74 GT.

The Greek fleet's physical capital was valued at EUR 202 million, including 13% for the inactive fleet. In 2023, investments in physical capital were approximately EUR 27.8 million.

Employment and average salaries

Employment was estimated at 17,232 jobs or 11,916 FTEs, with low average labour costs per FTE and total employed (EUR 9,958 and EUR 6,886). Despite a downward trend in employment, 2023 saw a 6% increase in total jobs and a 20% rise in FTEs compared to 2022.

Fishing activity and production

In 2023, the Greek fleet accumulated 1.53 million days at sea (DaS), marking a 10% increase compared to 2022. Of this, 6.5% relates to the LSF and 93.2% to the SSCF. The energy consumption was estimated at 69 million litres, reflecting a 6% rise from 2022. On average, each vessel consumed 6,489 litres of energy. Energy costs remained stable at EUR 67 million in 2023, consistent with the previous year. The fishing effort was predominantly concentrated in the Aegean Sea (GSA 22) at approximately 69%, with the remainder allocated to the Ionian Sea (GSA 20) at 28% and Crete (GSA 23) at 3%.

The Greek fishing fleet targets a variety of species. The leading species by landing weight include European anchovy (11.4 million kg), European pilchard (7.7 million kg), European hake (3.6 million kg), red mullet (1.7 million kg), common cuttlefish (1.4 million kg), common octopus (1.3 million kg), surmullet (0.93 million kg), gilthead seabream (0.66 million kg), and red porgy (0.48 million kg). Correspondingly, the core species by landing value are European hake (EUR 29 million), European anchovy (EUR 17.4 million), red mullet (EUR 17 million), surmullet (EUR 15.4 million), European pilchard (EUR 13.6 million), common octopus (EUR 11.3 million), common cuttlefish (EUR 10.4 million), red porgy (EUR 9.3 million), and gilthead seabream (EUR 7.2 million).

4.8.2 Economic results for 2023 and recent trends

The economic results pertain solely to the Greek fishing fleet active in 2023.

National fleet performance

In 2023, the Greek fleet's total revenue, comprising income from landings and other sources, was estimated at EUR 296 million, representing a 4% increase compared to 2022. Of this revenue, 56.8% (EUR 168 million) was generated by the SSCF, while the LSF contributed 42.5% (EUR 125 million). The primary income sources for Greek fishing vessels included landings and financial compensation payments from the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) due to the military aggression of Russia against Ukraine. Some segments also received direct subsidies from duty refunds. Recently, fishing tourism activities have become increasingly significant as new income streams emerge. However, there were no income sources from fishing rights or recreational fishing.

In 2023, the income generated from landings covered the expenses incurred by the Greek fleet, resulting in a GVA, gross profit, and net profit of EUR 148 million, EUR 30 million, and EUR 7.44 million, respectively. Overall, the Greek fleet experienced positive gains. Including the imputed value of unpaid labor further enhanced the economic sustainability for fishers in 2023. Given that most Greek fishing vessels rely primarily on family labor, this figure highlights the sector's improvement in economic sustainability. It is important to note that this figure is estimated based on the opportunity cost of labor, using the average daily wage per fisher. However, due to the ongoing financial recession and lack of labor demand in local economies, the opportunity cost of labor is often lower or even zero.

The Greek fleet's total expenses amounted to EUR 282 million in 2023, marking a decrease compared to 2022. Personnel costs constituted the majority of these expenses at 42%, specifically personnel costs at 19% and the imputed value of unpaid labor at 23%. Energy and other variable costs followed with a 24% share each. Energy costs totaled EUR 67 million, maintaining stability compared to 2022. Personnel costs, primarily derived from the LSF, amounted to EUR 52 million, while imputed labor costs, mainly from small-scale vessels, were estimated at EUR 65 million. Other variable costs, including commercial and operating expenses, slightly decreased compared to the previous year, totaling EUR 51 million. Non-variable costs were EUR 8.9 million, representing only 3% of total expenses, whereas repairs and maintenance costs reached approximately EUR 19 million, showing a decline compared to 2022. Finally, annual depreciation costs accounted for 6% of total expenses (EUR 40 million). Overall, operational costs decreased, with the exception of personnel costs, which increased.

Resource productivity and efficiency

In 2023, the fleet average gross profit margin was 10%, showing a significant improvement from 2022 and indicating reasonable operating efficiency. The net profit was 3%, rebounding from previous years' declines due to COVID-19 and Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Labour productivity (GVA/FTE) was EUR 12,503 per FTE, indicating a slight rise from 2022 but continuing a decreasing trend since 2018. Crew costs per FTE were EUR 15,759. Fuel consumption per landed tonne was 1,149 litres/tonne, varying with energy prices. Landed weight per sea day increased by 20% since 2018, reaching 40 kg/day in 2023./

4.8.3 Performance by fishing activity

Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

In Greece, 94% of the vessels (10,022) were classified as SSCF, with a combined 20,820 GT and a total power of 191,610 kW. The number of SSCF vessels has decreased, following the general trend of the Greek fishing fleet. However, in 2023, the inactivity of the SSCF decreased significantly compared to 2022. The value of landings of the SSCF was estimated at EUR 157 million, an increase of 33%, accounting for 56.2% of the value of the Greek landings. The revenue accounted for EUR 168 million, which was higher by 20% compared to the previous unstable period due to COVID-19 or the effects of the energy crisis.

In 2023, SSCF spent 93.1% of the Greek days at sea and consumed 25.2 million litres of fuel, an increase of 6% from 2022. The fishing activity for SSCF improved after years of high instability. Nevertheless, the corresponding energy costs continue to be significant for Greek fishers. This is because SSCF fishers, due to their limited access to credit, do not have the flexibility to buy their fuel in advance; instead, they buy a limited amount to cover only their very short-term needs. This factor contributes to increases in energy costs because they are unable to take full advantage of reduced fuel prices.

The income generated from landings exceeded the expenses for the SSCF fleet, presenting an improvement in economic performance. The amount of GVA and the gross profit generated by the SSCF fleet in 2023 were EUR 96 million and EUR 9.2 million, respectively. Resource productivity and efficiency indicators are low compared to those calculated for all Greek fleets. The labour productivity indicator (GVA/FTE) was EUR 10,685, lower than the national average labour productivity (EUR 11,962), and the revenue per vessel was EUR 16,803, indicating an increase of 10% compared to 2022.

The SSCF employs a total of 13,635 engaged crew and 9,004 FTEs, contributing to 79% of the total national employment of the sector and 75% of the total national FTEs of the sector. Most of the engaged crew consists of unpaid labour, mainly members of the captain’s family. This result highlights the significant contribution of the SSCF to local employment.

The SSCF primarily exploits the extensive Greek coastline using polyvalent passive gears such as nets, longlines, pots, and traps. The vessels are mainly family-owned and characterized by low-invested capital. Furthermore, their landings are sold at higher prices than those of the LSF and are mainly directed to the market through very short supply chains. Although the vessels of this segment are small, they are vital for local economies regarding job opportunities and have strong ties to them. They typically provide income and employment to poor, isolated areas with few alternative economic activities. Therefore, this segment greatly contributes to the social and economic sustainability of coastal communities.

Vessels under 12 metres using active gears fleet (L12AG)

The L12AG comprised 34 vessels, a minor one Greek fleet segment, with a combined 74 GT and a total power of 837 KW. These vessels use the DRB gear in shallow waters, specifically hand dredges (DRH), focusing on shellfish species, mainly mussels, oysters, scallops and clams. The L12AG employed 51 crew members corresponding to 31 FTE. The L12AG spent 4,967 DaS, 0.3% of the Greek DaS and consumed 0.11 million litres of fuel. The L12AG landed 1.16 million kg with a value of EUR 1.2 million. The amount of GVA, the gross profit and the net profit by the LSAG fleet in 2023 were EUR 1.5 million, EUR 1.3 million, and EUR 1.2 million, respectively. The labour productivity indicator (GVA/FTE) for L12AG was EUR 54 244, and a net profit margin of 63% reveals the high profitability of the fleet segment.

Large-scale fleet (LSF)

The LSF comprised 608 active vessels with a total of 33,600 GT and an aggregate power of 118,351 kW. Larger vessels, equipped with higher engine power levels, are capable of conducting more extensive fishing operations in deeper waters. However, these vessels predominantly utilize active gears such as bottom trawlers and purse seiners, which are associated with high operating costs. The LSF fleet experienced a slight reduction (-2%) in the number of vessels compared to 2022.

The LSF employed a total of 3,546 crew members, contributing to 20% of the overall national employment in the sector, with 2,880 FTE representing 24% of the national total. In 2023, the LSF consumed 6.6% of the Greek DaS and 43 million litres of fuel. The revenue generated from landings was sufficient to cover the expenses of the LSF fleet. The GVA, gross profit, and net profit for the LSF fleet in 2023 amounted to EUR 51 million, EUR 19 million, and EUR 9.5 million, respectively, indicating a significant decline. Despite this, the Greek LSF achieved a positive profit. Nevertheless, economic performance was impacted by the extraordinary event of Russian military aggression against Ukraine and the considerable market disruption due to substantial cost increases.

Resource productivity and efficiency indicators remained favourable. The labour productivity indicator (GVA/FTE) for the LSF stood at EUR 17,740. Profitability, measured in terms of net margin, was higher for the fleet segment PS24-40 and weaker for DTS24-40m, PS18-24m, and DTS18-24m.

4.8.4 Performance of selected fleet segments

The Greek fleet is diverse, with various vessel types targeting different species. In 2023, it consisted of 14 segments and 10,664 active vessels. Overall, the fleet was profitable: four segments were highly profitable, one was moderately profitable, and nine had weak profitability. Below are the performance results for selected segments.

Netters 6-12 metres

This segment of the Greek fishing fleet includes 5,061 vessels with a combined gross tonnage of 13,940 GT and a total power of 119,264 KW. The average vessel age is 32 years, and the mean length overall (LOA) of vessels is 7.8 metres. The total value of landings was EUR 84 million, which constitutes 30% of the Greek total landings value. The DFN 06-12m segment employed 5,613 full-time equivalents (FTEs), representing 47% of the Greek fishing fleet.

This segment also produces the highest gross value added (GVA) among fleet segments, equal to EUR 45 million in 2023, an increase compared to the previous year. Given that most of these vessels operate in poor and isolated areas with limited alternative economic activities, this sector's importance to local economies is significant. Unpaid labour represents 35.3% of total expenses, indicating the family contribution to labour. In 2023, the DFN 06-12m fleet segment experienced weak profitability and losses. This segment spent an average of 152 days at sea (DaS) per year, reflecting an increase of 6.5% compared to 2022. The labour cost per total employment is EUR 4,061, and the labour productivity is EUR 8,022. Additionally, the profit and the imputed value of labour provide substantial income to families in many coastal areas.

Netters below 6 metres

Greece's second most significant fleet segment consists of 2,532 small vessels targeting multiple species like *Mullus barbatus*, *Mullus surmuletus*, and *Merluccius merluccius*. The total landing value reached EUR 16.8 million, a 26% increase from 2022. This segment employed 1,236 FTEs (average FTE: 0.49) and averaged 95 fishing days with 8.5 kg/day landings worth 70 euros/day. Mostly family-owned and operated, this segment contributes 6% to the national landing value and 10.3% to employment.

The main cost is unpaid labour (46.3%), followed by labour costs (16.5%) and energy (16%). Despite its small vessel size, it significantly impacts the national economy (GVA: EUR 8.8 million) and supports coastal livelihoods. While economic performance is weak with negative net profit, its social contribution includes providing jobs for coastal families. Average wage per FTE was EUR 12,748, and labour productivity improved to EUR 7,133.

Longliners 6-12 metres

The longliner fleet predominantly comprises small vessels shorter than 12 metres, totaling approximately 2,249 vessels. This segment significantly contributes to both landings and employment, with 2,177 FTEs, accounting for 17% of the Greek fishing fleet. These figures underscore the vital role played by local rural economies. The imputed cost of labour is the primary type of expense, representing the family contribution to the workforce. This has a considerable impact, especially in coastal areas with limited job alternatives.

The HOK 06-12m fleet is the third largest segment of the Greek fishing fleet, consisting of 1,326 vessels. The total value of landings amounted to EUR 33.5 million, employing 1,349 FTEs, which represents 10.8% of the Greek fishing fleet. These statistics emphasize the significance of this segment to local and rural economies. The imputed value of unpaid labour constituted the primary type of cost, accounting for 29% of total expenses, highlighting the family contribution to the workforce. On average, this segment spent 171 DaS per year. Energy costs are also substantial, comprising 19.4% of the total expenditures. It is important to note that this segment achieves a GVA of EUR 26.3 million, indicating its crucial importance to rural economies. Moreover, economic results improved considerably in 2023, transitioning from losses in 2022 to gains. Labour productivity enhanced, reaching EUR 19,502.

Bottom trawlers 24-40 metres

The bottom trawlers' fleet segment included 208 active vessels with a total value of landings of EUR 62 million, following an increase compared to 2022 and total employment corresponding to 1,275 FTEs. Bottom trawlers have multi-species characteristics and capture numerous fish species, such as *Penaecus kerathurus*, European hake, deep-water rose

shrimp, red mullet, surmullet, *Pagellus erythrinus*, picarel, common octopus, bogue, and others. This segment spends, on average, 198 DaS per year. Management regulations include seasonal (June 1-September 30) and spatial closures, net size changes, and a minimum landing size. Overall, bottom trawlers had positive profitability and followed an improved economic development trend.

The DTS 24-40m segment had 130 vessels, with 17,356 GT and a total power of 41,503 kW. The average age of these vessels is 31 years. They spent, on average, 211 DaS per year with a total value of landings of EUR 45 million. The total FTEs is 865, representing around 7.3% of the FTEs in the sector. The main expenses are energy costs (45%), wages and salaries (17%), and other variable costs (17%). Regarding the value of physical capital, it represents 20.4% of the total national value of physical capital, while it represents 12.3% of the total national investment for 2023. This segment has a low net profit margin (6.1%) and returns on fixed tangible assets (16.3%), which affects this fleet segment's profitability. Landings contributed 16.3% to the national economy and 15.4% to the total revenue. The labour productivity equals EUR 17,957, following a decreasing trend. Overall, the DTS 24-40m segment showed weak profitability development.

Purse seiners 18-24 metres

This segment included 184 vessels operating mainly in the Aegean (GSA 22) and Ionian (GSA 20) areas. The Aegean accounts for 82.5% of the fishing effort, and the Ionian 17.5%. Purse seiners, targeting European anchovy and pilchard, make up about 97% of the landings' weight and volume. These vessels conduct nightly fishing trips with 8–10 crew members each and average 183 DaS annually. Current regulations include a 14 mm mesh size, seasonal closures (15 December–February), and area restrictions.

The PS18-24m segment includes 100 vessels with landings valued at EUR 25 million, contributing 9.2% of national totals but showing a 31% decrease compared to 2022. Vessels average 180 DaS per year, employing 418 full-time equivalents (FTEs) and making up 3.5% of the national total. Variable costs, wages, and salaries represent 69% of total costs. This segment's economic performance was reasonable, with a net profit margin of 9.12%, high labor productivity (EUR 30,030), and labor cost per FTE at EUR 20,982.

Pots and Traps 6-12 metres

This fleet consists of 312 vessels, mainly categorized in the 6-12m class (265 vessels). It provides 281 FTEs, making up 3.2% of the Greek fishing sector's workforce. Although targeting multiple species, 90% of Pots and Traps landings come from common octopus, alongside common cuttlefish, Norway lobster, black seabream, and picarel. Each vessel averages 316 DaS yearly with a high average vessel age of over 30 years. The main cost is unpaid family labor. In 2023, the FPO0612 segment was highly profitable, landing EUR 12 million worth of fish, 4.5% of Greek landings value, with GVA at EUR 10 million, gross profit at EUR 7.9 million, and net profit at EUR 7.4 million. Labor productivity was high at EUR 41,637, with a net profit margin of 58.9%.

4.8.5 Drivers affecting the economic performance trends

The Greek fishing sector's economic performance is primarily influenced by significant market disruptions due to rising energy costs, the general economic environment characterized by inflation, and specific sector characteristics. The overall economic performance of the Greek fleet has been notably impacted by Russia's military aggression against Ukraine and

increased energy prices. Specifically, part of the Greek fleet has limited its fishing activities due to decreased profitability. After an unremarkable three-year period, the sector began to transition towards normality, marked by slight increases in first sale prices for certain species, reduced inactivity among the small-scale fleet, and a minor decrease in fuel prices, indicating improved economic development.

Numerous challenges remain, including cash flow shortages, limited access to credit, increased social security contributions, taxation, and climate change effects, all of which create unfavorable conditions for fishers and their operations. Additionally, low prices for key target species and inflation are associated with the reduced spending power of Greek households.

Fishers also face problems with damage to fishing gear caused by protected species such as dolphins, seals, sea turtles, and seabirds. These damages elevate repair and maintenance costs for vessels and adversely affect overall economic performance, as fishers do not receive compensation for their losses. Moreover, the invasion of alien species like *Lagocephalus sceleratus* can damage fishing gear and negatively impact Greek sea biodiversity, leading to significantly lower catches and income for fishers.

Furthermore, the reduction of fishing stocks in the Mediterranean Sea affects the Greek fishing sector's economic performance. Pressure on stocks has intensified due to competition from Greek vessels with those from other countries not subject to EU legislation and restrictions, such as Turkey. Various vessels operate in the same fishing areas, potentially causing conflicts. Significant conflict exists between the small-scale and large-scale fleets, identified by fishers as a major factor affecting their financial performance. There is also conflict between professional and recreational fishers, who typically fish in coastal areas and illegally sell their catch at reduced prices.

Markets and Trade

In terms of market structure, fishers have reported that, on average, 33% of their catch is directed to wholesalers and fish auctions, whereas 35% involves direct sales to consumers. Direct sales typically pertain to small-scale vessels. Conversely, for large-scale vessels (bottom trawlers and purse seiners), approximately 87% of the catch is channelled to wholesalers and fish auctions.

From the consumer's perspective, specifically regarding preferences for purchasing channels, Greek consumers predominantly buy from fishmongers or specialist shops (68%), followed by grocery stores, supermarkets, or hypermarkets (56%). At the EU level, consumers primarily prefer grocery stores, supermarkets, or hypermarkets (79%) and secondarily fishmongers or specialist shops (43%) (EUMOFA, 2025). Regular consumers, those who consume fishery and aquaculture products at least once a month, mainly belong to the age groups 40-54 and over 55 (EUMOFA, 2025). Younger individuals (15-24) are less inclined to consume fish both in Greece and at the EU level (EUMOFA, 2025). Nonetheless, regular consumers in this category constitute 70% of the total, which is higher than the EU level at 67% (EUMOFA, 2025).

Moreover, Greek consumers predominantly consume fresh products, with loose fish being consumed much more frequently (92%) compared to the EU level (68%) (EUMOFA, 2025). Regarding the factors influencing the purchase of fish, Greek consumers place greater emphasis on product appearance (73% vs. 58%), cost (68% vs. 54%), and origin (67% vs. 49%) compared to other EU consumers (EUMOFA, 2023). However, they place less importance on factors such as brand or quality labels (19% vs. 26%), convenience and speed

of preparation (11% vs. 24%), and environmental, social, or ethical impact (10% vs. 16%) (EUMOFA, 2025).

Additionally, Greek consumers exhibit a stronger preference for wild products over farmed products (53% vs. 4%), while a significant percentage (22%) are indifferent between wild and farmed products (EUMOFA, 2025).

Operational costs (external factors)

In 2023, the Greek fleet's economic performance improved due to lower operating costs but increased energy and personnel expenses. Fewer inactive vessels led to more fishing efforts and landings, particularly in small-scale fisheries. Energy costs and repair expenses declined by 4%, 13%, and 12%, respectively, while fuel prices slightly dropped. Small-scale vessels had higher fuel prices than larger ones. Personnel costs rose by 15%, though unpaid labour decreased by 7%. Damage from marine life to fishing gear remains a common issue without compensation. Extreme weather in September around Pagasitikos Gulf halted fishing activities and caused damage to vessels and gear.

Innovation and development

The Greek fleet primarily comprises small-scale, family-owned vessels that employ traditional fishing gear. Additionally, investments in the sector are constrained by the economic crisis, and the average age of the vessels is increasing. This environment limits opportunities for introducing new and innovative techniques in both small-scale fisheries and large vessels, as the latter also encounter high operational costs. Nonetheless, the Greek Operational Program for 2014-2020 aimed at modernizing the fisheries sector and enhancing its sustainability, primarily through encouraging the use of more selective fishing equipment and other on-board investments and upgrades, improving infrastructure, and advancing fisheries monitoring and control.

As part of the Greek Operational Program for 2014-2020, funding was provided to modernize fishing vessels through supportive investments, ensuring higher levels of hygiene, safety, and energy efficiency of these vessels (Measures 3.1.8 and 4.1.20). Furthermore, the European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF), through the Greek Operational Program, offered financial resources under measure 3.1.9 to fishery sector operators to compensate for income forgone and additional costs incurred due to market disruptions caused by Russia's military aggression against Ukraine.

Moreover, significant emphasis has been placed on integrating innovation within the fishing sector during the 2014-2020 period, particularly through measures 3.1.1: Innovation in the fishing sector and 6.1.16: Innovation linked to the conservation of marine biological resources. Respectively, 11 and 4 projects were included (OPFS, 2023). These initiatives aim to develop or introduce new or improved fishery products, techniques, and management systems. Some notable projects include the development of an innovative bottom trawl method utilizing pelagic doors to enhance handling and durability while reducing strain on vessel equipment; the use of impregnated nets to deter cetaceans in small-scale fisheries; the creation of an innovative cuttlefish fishing method using traps; minimizing the environmental impact of driftnet fishing; and experimental testing of devices designed to reduce ghost fishing and increase trawl selectivity towards undersized bycatches (OPFS, 2023).

Furthermore, within the framework of the National Fisheries Data Collection Program for 2023, most fishing enterprises surveyed expressed willingness to participate in modernization

measures related to vessels and fishing gears and compensation for gear damage caused by mammals. These enterprises also demonstrated substantial interest in educational seminars covering topics such as sustainable fishing, sustainable fish stock management, new fishing technologies, Common Fisheries Policy, and input reduction techniques.

Additionally, the Greek Fisheries Institute, the Hellenic Centre for Marine Research, and the Greek Agricultural Economics Research Institute provide essential scientific expertise for successful management instruments and policies that can promote sustainability and development within the fisheries sector.

4.8.6 Assessment of the economic performance for 2024 and 2025 (nowcasts)

Model results

Projections indicate an improvement in 2024 and 2025 results compared to 2023, due to the decreasing inactivity of the small-scale fleet, leading to increased landings in weight and value. In 2023, the rise in landed weight and value will contribute to a higher overall economic performance for the sector. Economic indicators for 2024 and 2025 suggest further enhancement in economic performance compared to previous years of uncertainty faced by fishers.

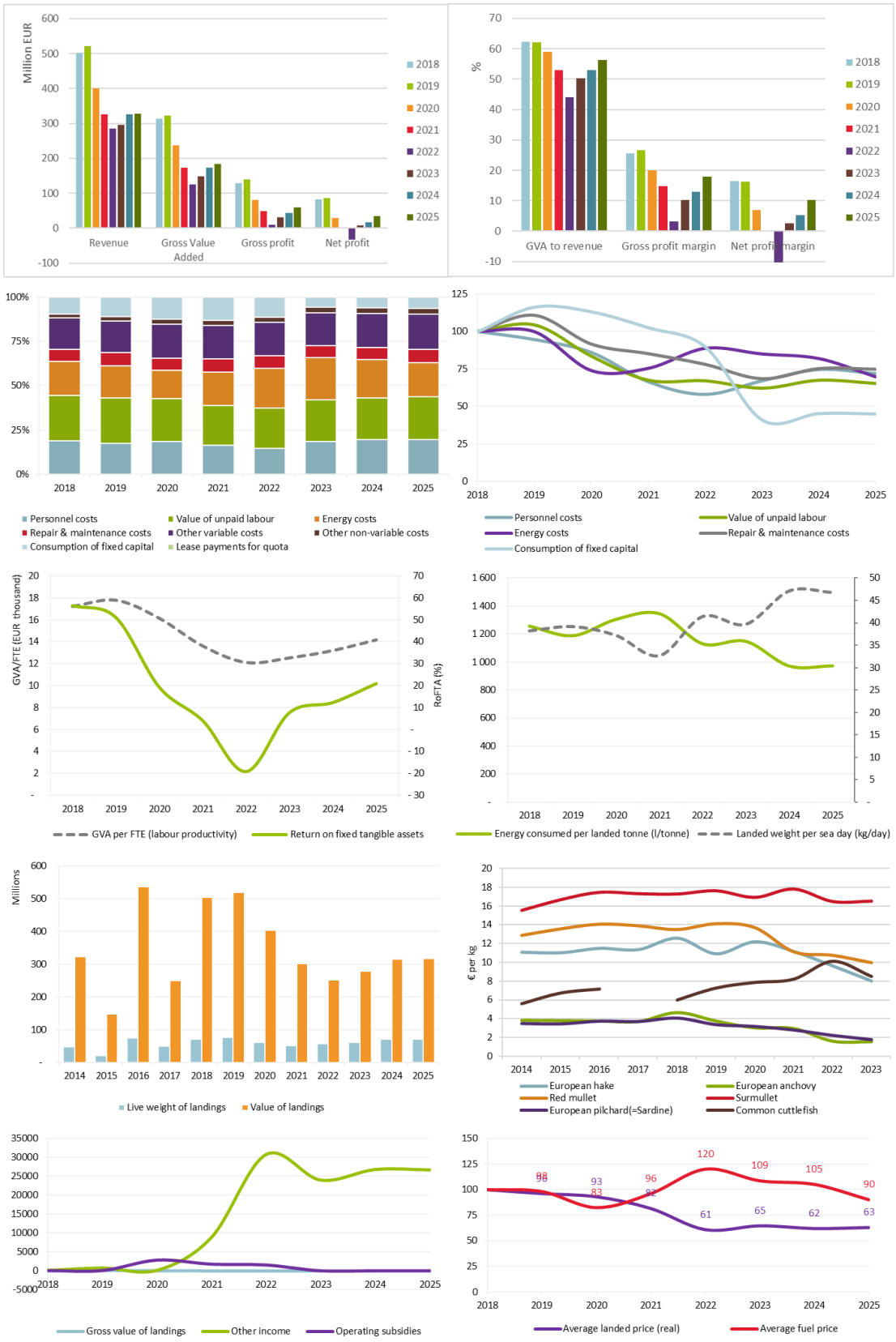
Estimates for 2024 show improved economic performance over 2023, with increases in revenue, gross profit, and net profit. This improvement is mainly driven by reduced energy costs and higher landings in weight and value compared to 2023. Data projections for 2024 forecast revenue increasing by 9.9% to EUR 325 million, and GVA rising by 15% to EUR 172 million. Additionally, Gross profit in 2024 is expected to grow from EUR 30.3 million to EUR 42.3 million. Net profit is estimated to increase to EUR 17 million, compared to EUR 7.4 million in 2023. The projection for 2025 suggests a higher overall economic performance compared to 2023, driven by reduced operating costs and a slight increase in the value of landings compared to 2023.

4.8.7 Methodological considerations and data issues

There were no major data issues. The 2023 implementation of the DCF National Work Plan ran smoothly, unlike previous years. The cost figures are based on a probability sampling survey with satisfactory response rates for 2023.

Figure 4.8.1.Greece: Main trends in (from top to bottom, left to right): economic performance indicators (absolute value and relative values); cost structure and variation in main cost items; productivity and efficiency indicators; landings (in weight and value) and average price (euro/kg) of

top species; variation in income variables and average prices of key input/outputs (2018=100). Nowcast figures for 2024 and 2025.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

4.9 Spain

4.9.1 Short description of the national fleet

In 2023, Spain's fishing fleet had 8,711 vessels with a combined GT of 321,136 tonnes and engine power of 768,768 kW. Since 2013, the fleet has reduced by 14.33% in vessels, 16.57% in engine power, and 12.03% in GT. In 2023, 14.75% of the fleet was inactive, mostly small coastal vessels under 12 metres LOA.

Table 4.9.1. Spain at a glance.

Spain		2023					%Δ 2023-2022				
Indicator	**Units**	**Overall**	**SSCF**	**L12AG**	**LSF**	**DWF**	**Overall**	**SSCF**	**L12AG**	**LSF**	**DWF**
Active vessels	Number	7,426	4,119	1,198	1,918	191	-0.1%	0.5%	-12%	-3%	-4%
FTE	Number	21,172	3,474	612	11,690	5,397	-9%	-15%	-26%	-3%	-17%
Gross Value of landings	Million €	1,723.7	168.5	20.6	837.1	697.4	-19%	8%	-33%	-8%	-31%
GVA	Million €	841.0	111.2	15.3	436.1	278.8	-21%	-11%	-42%	-24%	-18%
Gross profit	Million €	216.0	33.8	3.7	44.0	134.3	-35%	74%	289%	-72%	-15%
Net profit	Million €	82.0	23.6	2.1	-16.3	72.7	-57%	135%	-44%	-117%	-20%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure

The Spanish fleet is one of the largest in the EU and operates in many fishing regions. The estimated value of the physical capital of the Spanish fleet was EUR 591.7 million, with 5.3% attributed to the inactive fleet. Over 71% of the active Spanish fleet consists of vessels under 12 metres LOA, operating primarily within national waters such as the Atlantic, Mediterranean, and Canary Islands. In 2023, the number of fishing enterprises reached 7,048. Compared to 2013, small enterprises known as “oneves” decreased by 20.2%.

Fishing activity and production

In 2023, the Spanish fleet spent 792,382 DaS and 766,744 fishing days, a decrease of 6.31% and 7.6% from 2022. Fuel consumption rose by 1.4%, but fuel costs fell 14.20% with prices at 0.8 euro/litre, making up 20.75% of total expenditures. Production weight dropped by 15% and landing value decreased by 5%. The top species by live weight were skipjack tuna, Argentine hake, yellowfin tuna, blue shark, and European anchovy. By landing value, they were skipjack tuna, swordfish, European hake, yellowfin tuna, and European anchovy.

Employment and average salaries

Total employment in the Spanish fishing fleet for 2023 was estimated at 29,964 jobs, corresponding to 21,172 full-time equivalents (FTEs). The average crew wage per FTE was EUR 26,896, which is 1.7% lower than in 2022. Additionally, the value of unpaid labor increased by 1.65% compared to 2022.

4.9.2 Economic results for 2023 and recent trends

The economic results pertain solely to the Spanish fishing fleet active in 2023.

National fleet performance

In 2023, the Spanish fleet's economic performance worsened compared to 2022. Income from landings fell by 15% to EUR 1,832 million. GVA, gross profit, and net profit were EUR 841 million (-21%), EUR 216 million (-35%), and EUR 82 million (-57%), respectively. These figures indicate a decline in economic performance indicators from 2022. However, this decrease should be considered carefully, as some expenditures have shown an unusual increase this year.

Resource productivity and efficiency

The gross profit margin in 2023 was 11.8%, down 23% from 2022. Net profit margin was 4.5%, a 49% decrease. Labour productivity (GVA/FTE) fell to EUR 39,743, which is 12% less than in 2022. Fuel intensity rose to 593 litres/tonne (+6.6%), while fuel efficiency remained at 21%, despite the fuel price drop to 0.8 euro/litre from 0.94 euro/litre in 2022. In Spain, fuel prices vary significantly across regions.

4.9.3 Performance by fishing activity

The Spanish fleet is diverse, both in species caught and fishing methods used. It consists of 79 segments clustered into 58 fleet segments for statistical purposes. The SSCF makes up 55.47% of the fleet, L12AG 16.12%, LSF 25.83%, and DWF 2.6%. Despite this, vessels from the DWF and LSF segments account for higher landing weights (55.9% and 40.4%, respectively) compared to SSCF (3.1%) and L12AG (0.6%). Income from landings follows a similar distribution: DWF 40.5%, LSF 48.6%, SSCF 9.8%, and L12AG 1.2%.

Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

In 2023, 4,199 vessels were involved in the SSCF fishing activity. Economic data should be treated with caution, as a significant portion of this fleet operates on a part-time basis. The number of vessels, engine power, and GT remained similar to 2022.

The value of landings increased by 8%, while the weight of landings decreased by 9% compared to 2022. Additionally, the number of DaS decreased by 2%.

Total employment increased by 1%, resulting in 8,212 jobs (27% of the total jobs in the Spanish fishing fleet). However, FTE decreased by 15% compared to 2022 due to part-time activity. It is noteworthy that in the SSCF, 33% of the jobs constituted unpaid labor.

Regarding energy consumption, it increased by 2%, whereas the energy cost decreased by 9% compared to 2022.

SSCF remains an economically profitable segment: the GVA in 2023 was EUR 111 million and NVA was EUR 102 million, although these values have decreased by 11% and 12% compared to 2022, respectively.

Vessels under 12 metres using active gears fleet (L12AG)

In 2023, 1,198 vessels joined this new segment. The DaS were 83,357. Landings totaled 4,616,420 kg, valued at EUR 20,631,145.

There were 8,212 jobs, with 612 FTE due to part-time work. This segment includes 1,094 dredges for catching shellfish like oysters, prawns, and crabs using small dredgers.

The highest expenditure was on salaries, followed by fuel costs. Energy consumption rose by 2%, while energy costs fell by 14% compared to 2022.

Economic profitability showed GVA at EUR 15 million and NVA at EUR 14 million.

Large-scale fleet (LSF)

In 2023, there were 1,918 vessels in the LSF segment, a 3% decrease from 2022. The number of DaS was 283,561. Landings weighed 309,522 tonnes and were valued at EUR 837.1 million, showing decreases of 3% and 8%, respectively, compared to 2022.

Employment rose by 4%, but the number of FTE decreased by 3%. Non-variable costs increased by 27%. This was mainly due to increased costs for water, gas, electricity, transport and land freight, as well as equipment maintenance and repairs. Finally, energy costs fell by 16%.

In terms of economic profitability, GVA dropped by 24%, Gross profit by 72%, and Net profit by 117% compared to 2022. This decline may be attributed to reductions in landing value for key segments of this fleet, specifically trawlers and hook vessels measuring 24-40 metres. These segments experienced a decrease of approximately 11% in the Atlantic and 7% in the Mediterranean, coupled with an increase in expenditures. Atlantic trawlers reported a 9% rise in costs, primarily due to non-variable expenses. Conversely, Mediterranean trawlers saw a 13% increase in expenditure, driven by an unusual rise in unpaid labour costs. Consequently, the results for 2023 should be interpreted with caution, pending the outcome of next year's data.

Distant water fleet (DWF)

In 2023, 191 vessels participated in the DWF, with significant involvement from the Spanish fleet. This number decreased by 4% compared to 2022. DaS dropped by 2%, while both the weight and value of landings declined by 6% and 31%, respectively. Energy costs for the fleet also decreased by 20%. Economic profitability measures showed declines: GVA by 18%, Gross profit by 15%, and Net profit by 20%, all relative to 2022.

Outermost regions (Canary Islands)

Fishing activity in the Canary Islands OMR occurs in FAO area 34.1.2. In 2023, there were 713 vessels, with 570 active, indicating that 20% of the fleet is inactive. The active fleet mainly consists of small vessels under 12 metres LOA (87.5%), engaging in part-time polyvalent fishing.

Landings' weight and value dropped by 5% and 12%, respectively, from 2022 levels. The number of DaS remained almost unchanged. Economically, GVA fell by 20% in 2023 after a 30% rise in 2022.

4.9.4 Performance of selected fleet segments

Active and passive gear vessels in the North Atlantic, Mediterranean purse seiners, and those under SFPA and RFMO's represent key fleets in each region.

Vessels using active and passive gears (PMP) below 10 metres in the North Atlantic Ocean

The largest segment of the Spanish fleet includes 2,333 vessels and 1,660 FTEs, accounting for 15.6% of NAO FTEs excluding Canary Islands. This segment mainly uses small-scale, traditional fishing methods and operates part-time, averaging 90 days at sea per vessel.

In 2023, landing weight and value dropped by 16% and 12%, respectively, compared to 2022. Despite this, Gross Profit and Net Profit improved even as GVA decreased by 3.6%.

Purse seiners (PS) in the Mediterranean Sea 24-40 metres

The 22 seiners make up 10.72% of the landing weight and 13.35% of the landing value of the Spanish Mediterranean fleet. They primarily catch small pelagic species, like European Anchovy (43% of the segment's landing weight) and European pilchard. This fleet is efficient, contributing 17% of the GVA and 41.6% of the Gross Profit of the Spanish Mediterranean fleet.

Purse seiners (PS) above 40 metres in Other Fishing Regions

This segment consists of 25 active vessels, with an average of 302 DaS. These seiners operate globally, with the Indian Ocean being the primary area of operation (53% of DaS for the segment), followed by the Atlantic Ocean (33% of DaS) and the Pacific Ocean (14% of DaS).

This segment accounts for 21% of the total revenue generated by the Spanish fleet. It also contributes 28.2% to the total weight of landings and 19.4% to the total value of landings within the Spanish fleet.

4.9.5 Drivers affecting the economic performance trends

The average first sales price increased in 2021 and 2022, but decreased by 14% in 2023 compared to 2022. Regarding the main species targeted by the Spanish fleet, yellowfin tuna, skipjack tuna, and swordfish saw their prices decrease by 42%, 21%, and 25%, respectively. Conversely, European hake and European anchovy experienced an increase in price by 3% and 6%, respectively.

The most notable Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (SFPA) in social and economic terms were:

In the Atlantic Ocean:

- Mauritania: This is the primary SFPA and a major recipient of EU funds. It is a key agreement for shellfish and demersal species, particularly hake. The trawl fleet is the main fishing fleet here.
- Morocco: With 92 possible licenses, this agreement is significant for the artisanal fleet of the Canary Islands and the Gulf of Cádiz, which have limited alternative fisheries access.

In the Indian Ocean:

- Seychelles: With 19 active licenses in 2023, this SFPA is crucial for tropical tuna fishing (bigeye, skipjack, and yellowfin). It is important not only for the Spanish fleet but also for the industrial development of the area. This region represents the purse seiner fleet, economically significant for Spain.
- Mauritius: This agreement is key in terms of landings, due to the substantial processing plants in the country.

In the Pacific Ocean, in 2023, there were two active SFPA:

- Cook Island: This agreement plays a significant role in the landings of catches for the fleet in the Pacific.

- Kiribati: This agreement is more critical for the catches made within its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

In 2023, there were two active Northern Agreements (Greenland and Norway) for demersal species fishing. Four vessels operated under the EU/Norway fisheries Agreement in Svalbard waters.

Regarding Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMO), Spain participated in those concerning tuna and similar species:

- IOTC, 31 active domestic vessels reported in 2023;
- WCPFC, 11 vessels were reported to have fished in the area in 2023;
- IATTC, 42 active vessels in 2023;
- ICCAT, 1 442 active vessels in 2023;
- CCSBT, Spain did not reported catches in this area in 2023.

Straddling stocks RFMOs:

- SIOFA, 1 vessel has presence in SIOFA in 2023;
- SEAFO, 1 vessel fishing in the area waters not covered by any demersal RFMO in 2023;
- SPFRMO: 1 vessel fishing in the area in 2023;
- NAFO 8 vessels reported to have presence in the NAFO area;
- NEAFC just 1 vessel reported presence in this area in 20223 fishing for blue whiting.
- CCAMLR, 1 vessel operating in the area in 2023.

In addition, 26 vessels operated in international waters. In 2023, the Spanish fleet was present in the following SPFAs: Morocco, Mauritania, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Ivory Coast, Cabo Verde, Senegal, Cook Islands, Kiribati, Sao Tomé y Príncipe, Gabon, Seychelles, and Mauritius.

During 2023, 1,569,000 tonnes of processed, preserved, and seaweed fishery products were imported, valued at EUR 8,242 million. The majority consisted of prawns, prepared and preserved tuna, octopus, and salmon, with 71% originating from third countries including Morocco, Ecuador, Argentina, China, Mauritania, and Namibia. Among EU suppliers were Sweden, Portugal, France, the Netherlands, and Greece.

Approximately 1,086,000 tonnes were exported, with a value of EUR 5,346 million. Key exports included tuna preparations and preserves, frozen cuttlefish, octopus, and prawns. The primary market was the EU (77%), especially Italy, Portugal, France, and Germany. Significant third-country destinations included the United States, Morocco, China, and Japan.

The foreign trade balance for fishery products concluded with a deficit of EUR 2,895 million.

Operating costs (external factors)

In 2023, personnel costs were the primary operational expense at 32.7%, maintaining their historical significance. Energy costs were the second highest, accounting for 20.75% of operational expenses. Other variable costs made up 19.98% of total costs, ranking third. Overall, costs decreased by 8.25% compared to 2022.

Status of Key Stocks. TACs and quotas

The Spanish fleet operates in various fishing grounds, including agreements with Third Countries (SFPAS), under RFMOS, and within EU and national waters. These fishing grounds vary in importance:

- The long-distance fleet is highly developed, investing in new technologies for sustainable practices.
- Collaboration with Third Countries offers benefits such as employment and training, contributing to development through EU agreements.
- The national fishing fleet is the largest in number and impacts coastal populations significantly. The small-scale fleet faces challenges due to its dependence on traditional species and lower social indicators, requiring efforts towards social sustainability as outlined in the CFP.

Spanish TACs and quotas are distributed among fishing grounds and gears, and sometimes among individual vessels within gear groups. A recovery plan for the Iberian sardine, updated in 2021, aims for stock management until 2026 with a nine-month fishing limit.

Spain aims to achieve MSY for all stocks. For southern hake, 2021 marked the first year with catches within MSY limits, and the 2023 TAC was the highest in recent years. Horse mackerel quotas have decreased due to biological status, with 2023 and 2024 fisheries allowed only for by-catch.

In 2023, multiannual quotas for nine stocks in EU waters were adopted (PLE/7BC, PLE/8/3411, WHG/08, POL/8C, POL/9/3411, NEP/8CU25, SOL/7BC, SOL/8CDE34 and NOP/2A3A4), providing stability and economic certainty for the fleet. This approach may expand to more stocks in the future.

Management instruments

The Spanish fleet is regulated by licenses, engine power limits, time at sea, TACs, quotas, and fishing effort regimes like those in the Mediterranean for trawlers. National management plans detail permitted species, gears, technical requirements (power, vessel tonnage, length), and additional measures beyond EU law.

Innovation and development (role of EMFAF)

No new technological development and innovation projects are currently underway in the Spanish fishing sector under the EMFF. However, eleven aquaculture innovation projects were approved in 2023 under the EMFF, and one under the EMFFA, with total funding of EUR 1,808,577.

4.9.6 Assessment of the economic performance for 2024 and 2025 (nowcasts)

Model results

Preliminary results for 2024 indicate that the structural policy aimed at reducing the number of vessels will continue, taking into account both the number of vessels and their tonnage and power. Out of a total of 8,603 vessels, 7,104 were active during 2024. Most of the inactive vessels (85.6%) are less than 12 metres LOA.

Estimates for 2024 suggest an overall decrease in revenue which does not negatively impact profitability due to the projected increases in GVA, gross profit, and net profit. The nowcast

model for 2025 predicts a slight increase in revenues compared to 2024 estimates and better economic outcomes than those seen in 2023 and 2024.

The positive economic results are attributed to higher first sale prices in 2024 and 2025 compared to 2023, along with a reduction in fuel prices, which have been decreasing since reaching their peak in 2022. However, fuel prices remain 55% higher than those observed during the 2015-2021 period.

These results should be approached cautiously as they are based on data from the first four months of 2025, and the ongoing geopolitical situation must be monitored.

Outlook

Operational costs impact the profitability of the fleet, which is significantly affected by fuel prices and wages. First sale prices are also important since they are the primary source of income for the fishing sector.

The implementation of agreements with third countries significantly impacts the sector's revenue. Notably, the expiration of the Morocco Agreement is a key factor to consider.

The closure of VMEs in 87 Atlantic areas since 2022 significantly impacts some fleets, particularly longliners targeting hake in non-Spanish EU waters, as well as trawlers and netters.

The distribution of TACs and quotas, the VMEs closed areas and specially the reduction of effort (fishing days) in the Mediterranean Sea for trawlers is having a significant impact on the profitability of the sector. On this regard, the achievement of the MSY is better fulfilled for many of the stocks in the Atlantic waters, but in the Mediterranean, it will be needed some more time after 2025 for some demersal resources, mainly hake, even with the high reductions in the fishing effort for trawlers since 2020 (with the implementation of the multiannual plan). Council Regulations on fishing opportunities for the Mediterranean in 2023 and 2024 continued the gradual reduction in the fishing days, and they also establish catch limits for blue and red shrimp (since 2022), with reductions each year, that also mean important economic losses for the sector as it is a very valuable and highly appreciated resource. An important measure that allows the recovery of a certain percentage of fishing days is the “compensation mechanism”, firstly established in 2022, with different criteria each year. Spain has adopted several of these criteria each year, as four weeks closures or voluntary selectivity measures and flying doors. On this regard, the change of the nets codend for the whole trawling fleet to more selective ones will be made compulsory in 2025 (45mm for coastal fisheries and 50mm for deep fisheries targeting blue and red shrimp).

The fleet's competitiveness is primarily hindered by the high age of its vessels, which limits innovation.

4.9.7 Methodological considerations and data issues

Improvements achieved within 2023 data collection

In its second year, the survey gathered data from ships under 12m across various activities for better consistency. Vessels were categorized by activity duration: less than 50 days, 50-100 days, 100-150 days, and over 150 days. Efforts are ongoing with the statistical unit to enhance coherence between Value of landings and Gross value of landings.

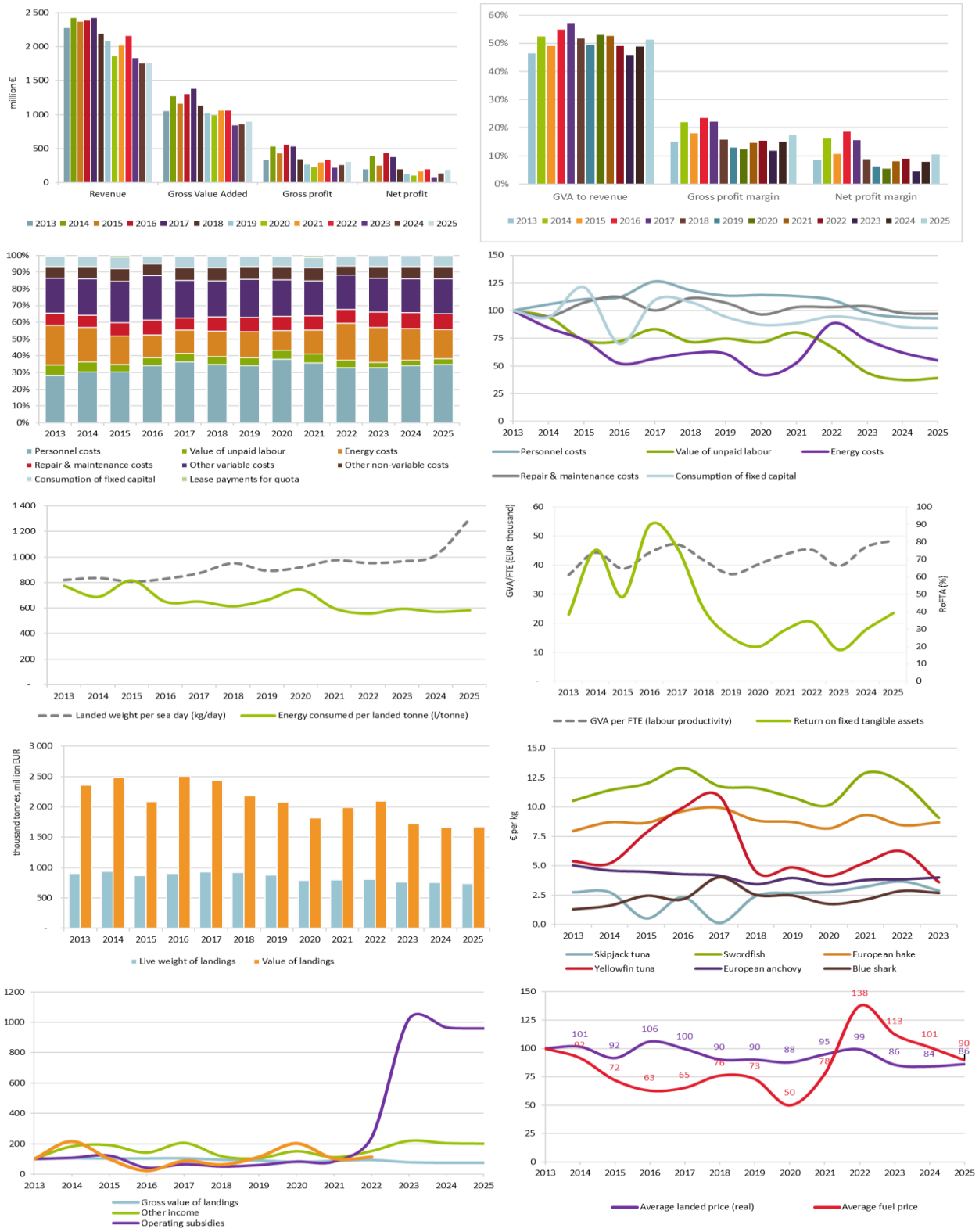
Remaining issues

Significant differences between the value of landings and gross value of landings in some segments can be observed. This is due to the fact that the gross value of landings is obtained from statistical sampling, where the results from a limited number of vessels are extrapolated to represent the entire fleet segment. On the other hand, the value of landings is derived from sales notes declared by the vessel owners.

In certain instances, specific fishing segments may exhibit a higher number of fishing days compared to sea days. This discrepancy arises because some vessels utilize both active and passive fishing gears, leading to a calculation result that exceeds the total number of sea days. The calculations follow the fecR effort criteria, which refer to the algorithm used for fishing effort calculations developed during the 2nd Workshop on Transversal Variables in Nicosia, Cyprus, held from February 22-26, 2016.

For some Spanish fleets, it is possible to find that the number of jobs is greater than the number of employees. This is not an error; rather, to calculate FTEs, the hours worked are divided by a reference number of annual hours. In Spain, the reference value is set at 1,800 hours per year. However, part of the sector works up to 2,000 hours per year (on board), so the ratio may exceed 1.

Figure 4.9.1.Spain: Main trends in (from top to bottom, left to right): economic performance indicators (absolute value and relative values); cost structure and variation in main cost items; productivity and efficiency indicators; landings (in weight and value) and average price (euro/kg) of top species; variation in income variables and average prices of key input/outputs (2013=100). Nowcast figures for 2024 and 2025.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

4.10 France

4.10.1 Short description of the national fleet

In 2023, the national fleet comprised 6,203 vessels, including 1,025 inactive ones, with a total gross tonnage of 176,082 tonnes and an engine power of 974,498 kW. The number of active vessels decreased by 1% compared to 2022 and by 12% compared to 2013.

Table 4.10.1. France at a glance.

France		2023					%Δ 2023-2022				
Indicator	Units	Overall	SSCF	L12AG	LSF	DWF	Overall	SSCF	L12AG	LSF	DWF
Active vessels	Number	5,178	3,712	677	769	20	-1%	0%	-1%	-4%	-5%
FTE	Number	6,914	2,665	507	3,331	410	-7%	-4%	-15%	-10%	0%
Gross Value of landings	Million €	1,307.9	304.6	10.6	746.4	154	-12%	-10%	-91%	-12%	-17%
GVA	Million €	660.2	192.5	59.1	367.0	41.5	-13%	-11%	-19%	-12%	-18%
Gross profit	Million €	138.2	51.3	16.5	72.9	- 2.4	-22%	-7%	-21%	-30%	30%
Net profit	Million €	- 55.0	25.8	5.9	- 25.4	-61.2	-56%	-6%	-35%	-312%	7%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure

The French fishing fleet includes:

- SSCF: 72% of vessels (mainly less than 10 metres) but only 9% of gross tonnage, operating in diverse areas.
- L12AG: 13% of vessels, under 12 metres using active gears.
- LSF: 15% of vessels, over 12 metres, primarily demersal trawlers and dredgers, covering 66% of gross tonnage.
- DWF: 20 large purse seiners catching tuna, generating 11% of fleet income.

In 2023, there were 3,913 active fishing companies, with 85% owning a single vessel. The sector saw a slight decrease in individual companies (-3%), indicating increased concentration.

Fishing activity and production

In 2023, the entire fleet operated 518,600 days at sea (DaS), which was an 8% decrease from 2022. The number of fishing days also reflected this trend, reaching 501,000 days. Following a significant increase in fuel consumption by 21% in 2021 after the low levels observed in the COVID year 2020, there was an 8% decrease in both 2022 and 2023. This reduction was fairly consistent across the fishing fleet, with the majority of fuel consumed by large-scale fisheries (LSF), accounting for 64% of the total fleet consumption. After a drop in 2020, the average fuel price increased in 2021 and 2022 (0.56 euro/litre and 0.9 euro/litre, respectively) and reached 0.8 euro/litre in 2023. Consequently, energy costs significantly decreased in 2020 and reduced by 18% in 2023 despite the increases in 2021 and 2022.

Following two years of growth in 2021 and 2022, national production value decreased by 10% between 2022 and 2023, amounting to EUR 1.32 billion. Landings by weight also saw a 10% decrease in 2023, totaling 477,000 tonnes. In 2023, great Atlantic scallop landings generated the highest value within the national fleet (EUR 121 million), marking a 9% decrease compared to 2022, while the weight of landings decreased by 1%. The price of

great Atlantic scallop slightly declined to 2.8 euro/kg compared to 2022. Monkfish (EUR 107 million), European hake (EUR 93 million), and yellowfin tuna (EUR 79 million) followed in terms of value. The high average landed prices of common sole and European seabass (17.5 euro/kg and 14.8 euro/kg, respectively) allowed these species to reach values of EUR 58 million and EUR 40 million, respectively. SSCF landings amounted to 84,723 tonnes with a value of EUR 304 million, representing 18% of the volume and 23% of the value of the national production. The total production landed by the French LSF decreased by 7% in weight and 8% in value from 2022 to 2023, reaching EUR 758 million in 2023. This represented 54% of the total landings weight and 57% of the total landings value of the national fleet.

Employment and average salaries

In 2023, there were 11,625 crewmembers distributed as follows: SSCF (50%), LSF (36%), L12AG (11%), and DWF (4%). The SSCF had about 2 jobs per vessel, LSF had 4, and DWF had 25. Employment fell by 6% compared to 2022, continuing a decline since 2013. From 2013 to 2022, average wages decreased by 17%, with another 10% reduction in 2023.

4.10.2 Economic results for 2023 and recent trends

The economic results pertain solely to the French fishing fleet active in 2023.

National fleet performance

In 2023, the French fleet's economic performance dropped by 11% from 2022, following two years of growth around 8%. Revenue reached EUR 1.37 billion, mainly from landed value (96%) and other income (4%), which rose by 14% from 2022. Operating subsidies remained at EUR 40 million, a significant increase from EUR 7 million in 2019, driven by COVID-19 related vessel stops and fuel compensation plans due to the Ukraine crisis. These subsidies accounted for 3% of total revenues. Other income increased from EUR 40 million in 2021 to EUR 60 million in 2023, partly due to compensations for reduced fishing activity.

Operational costs were 90% of total income, with fuel costs at 17% of revenue in 2023, compared to 18% in 2022. The cost structure has been stable since 2018. GVA and Gross profit in 2023 were EUR 660 million and EUR 138 million, respectively, down 13% and 22% from 2022. The Net profit was negative at -EUR 55 million, a 56% decrease from 2022. These figures indicate a decline in the French fleet's economic performance after improvements in 2021 and 2022.

Resource productivity and efficiency

At the national level, the weight of national landings decreased by 10% in 2023 compared to 2022. Energy consumption per landed tonne increased by 2% in 2023 after a 10% decrease in 2022. As a result, the gross profit margin has stabilised around 10% and 11% since 2020 (a 12% decrease compared to 2022), indicating an operating profitability of the French fisheries sector that is closer to 2021 than to 2022 but lower compared to the period from 2015 to 2018. The net profit margin was -4% in 2023, which is a 75% decrease compared to 2022. This indicator is also lower compared to the 8% recorded in 2017.

4.10.3 Performance by fishing activity

Small-scale coastal fleet

The French SSCF fleet, with 3,712 active vessels, made up nearly 72% of the national fleet in 2023. It accounted for 49% of total horsepower, 9% of total tonnage, and 50% of crew members. Spread across the NE Atlantic (35%), Mediterranean Sea (27%), and outermost regions (38%), SSCF operated for 313,670 days at sea, landing 84,723 tonnes worth EUR 304.6 million, and generating EUR 192 million in gross added value. Operating subsidies amounted to EUR 7.6 million. The number of vessels stayed stable from 2022 to 2023, although days at sea decreased by 8%. Since 2013, vessel numbers dropped by 14%, horsepower by 1%, and tonnage by 7%. Crew and FTEs fell by 20% and 7% respectively, while the value of landings rose by 6%. GVA indicators improved over time with operating subsidies increasing significantly.

In 2023, the Atlantic region had 1,301 vessels and 2,336 crew members, landing 71,160 tonnes worth EUR 199 million. Fuel consumption per vessel averaged 13,823 litres, with energy efficiency at 7.6%. The Mediterranean had 1,007 vessels and 1,206 crew members, landing 6,583 tonnes worth EUR 54.1 million, with fuel consumption per vessel at 4,852 litres and energy efficiency at 6.7%. The outermost regions saw 1,404 vessels and 2,386 crew members, landing 6,351 tonnes worth EUR 51.5 million, with average fuel consumption per vessel at 5,645 litres and energy efficiency at 12.3%.

Vessels under 12 metres using active gears fleet (L12AG)

In 2023, this segment consisted of 677 vessels, representing 13% of the entire national active fleet. These vessels accounted for 9% of total horsepower (kW), 4% of total tonnage (GT), and 11% of total crew members (7% of FTE). This fleet primarily operated in the NE Atlantic (95%), with a significant presence of dredgers in the Channel, 3% in the Mediterranean Sea, and 2% in the outermost regions. The number of vessels remained relatively stable between 2013 and 2023, showing an increasing trend in the NE Atlantic and decreasing trends in other regions.

In 2023, the L12AG fleet operated for 62,979 DaS (12% of the total). Total landings amounted to 43,670 tonnes, valued at EUR 106.3 million (an average price of 2.4 euro/kg), and the gross value added was EUR 192 million, representing 9%, 8%, and 9% of the national totals, respectively. Operating subsidies (EUR 3.7 million) constituted 3.5% of the landed value. GVA per vessel was EUR 87,359, while GVA per crew member and FTE were EUR 47,807 and EUR 116,559, respectively. Average fuel consumption per vessel was 22,603 litres, or 243 litres per day at sea. Energy efficiency was recorded at 12%, significantly higher than that of the SSCF fleet.

Distant-water fleet (DWF)

The French industrial fleet of purse seiners comprised 20 vessels in 2023, including four registered on the island of Mayotte, with one vessel identified as HOK VL2440. Predominantly composed of freezer tuna seiners, this fleet operated evenly in the Indian Ocean and Atlantic Ocean. The fleet size has remained fairly stable over the past decade, reaching a peak of 24 vessels in 2016. However, significant changes are anticipated for 2024-2025 due to various reasons delineated below.

In 2023, the DWF conducted operations for a total of 4,484 DaS. A workforce consisting of 410 full-time equivalent (FTE) crew members included both French nationals and foreign personnel, primarily African. Compared to 2022, total landings in weight and value saw a

decline of 15% in 2023, amounting to 93,400 tonnes and EUR 150 million (1.61 euro/kg). This segment represents the leading sector of the French fishing fleet in terms of landed value. At a global level, the primary tuna species caught were skipjack (55%), yellowfin tuna (36%), and bigeye tuna (7%). Over 60% of skipjack catches occurred in the Indian Ocean. In the Atlantic Ocean, yellowfin and skipjack constituted nearly 91% of the catches, followed by bigeye tuna at approximately 6%. Overall, considering all species, the Indian Ocean zone accounted for 65% of the volumes caught, while the Atlantic zone comprised the remaining 35%.

Economic data from 2023 indicated that the main cost components included energy costs, personnel costs, and repair and maintenance costs, representing 31.9%, 29.2%, and 17.1% of the total landing value, respectively. Energy costs decreased by 25% in 2023, and gross value added (GVA) reduced by 18%, reaching EUR 41.5 million. Personnel costs decreased by 19%, yet gross profit remained negative at EUR 2.5 million, consistent with previous years. Macroeconomic deterioration has led to increased operating costs (fuel, logistics, etc.), while prices have risen marginally. Concurrently, demand for canned tuna declined between 2020 and 2023.

Under these circumstances, cessation of activity and sale of vessels were observed in 2023, 2024, and early 2025. By the end of 2024, only 12 vessels operated under the French flag. The survival of vessels in this segment (along with associated jobs on board and ashore) will hinge on improved competitiveness in the coming years. Remuneration conditions for crews were also under discussion. The professional organization representing French frozen tuna producers was certified to the MSC Fisheries Standard (a set of sustainable fishing requirements) for Atlantic tuna in 2024, valid for five years, raising expectations among fishing companies that their catches will be better valued in the future.

4.10.4 Performance results of selected fleet segments

The French fleet is spread across the Atlantic and Mediterranean coasts. It consists of varied vessel types, gears, and species landed. Here is a brief overview of five key segments, some of which include clustered smaller segments. These smaller segments have minimal impact on economic indicators.

Drift and fixed nets (DFN) 10-12 metres in NE Atlantic

129 vessels and 378 engaged crew (206 FTE) made up this segment which operated 17,568 DaS in the NE Atlantic. Landings were composed of a large variety of species including common sole, spinous spider crab, common spiny lobster, monkfish, European seabass, and great Atlantic scallop accounting for 23%, 14%, 8%, 8%, 6% and 5% of the total value of landings of this fleet segment, respectively. In 2021, 2022 and 2023 the total value of landings recovered to pre-COVID situation with around EUR 48.1 million but with reduced landings, 8,297 tonnes compared to 9,377 tonnes over the period 2017-2019. In 2023, operating subsidies reached EUR 1.6 million. GVA was EUR 27.2 million and gross profit EUR 6.9 million. Net profit was EUR 3.6 million and 5.2 including operating subsidies. The fleet decreased by –30% between 2013 and 2023 but average annual landings per vessel remained relatively stable (60 tonnes for a value of EUR 0.329 million). GVA per vessel and per crew member were EUR 208,980 and EUR 66,903 on average over the same period. In 2023, annual fuel consumption and cost were 31,130 litres and EUR 25,558 per vessel, respectively, representing 228 litres per DaS. Despite fuel price increase, fuel efficiency

remained at low levels (8%). Landed weight and value per energy consumed was at 2.1 kg/litre of fuel and around 11 euro/litre of fuel, respectively.

Drift and fixed nets (DFN) 6-12 metres of the Mediterranean Sea

In 2023, this fleet segment operated with 458 vessels and 549 engaged crew members (223 full-time equivalents), achieving 46,561 Days at Sea (DaS), which equates to approximately 102 DaS per vessel. The primary species landed were gilthead seabream (26% of the total landing value), along with various other species contributing between 9% to 2% of the total value, including spiny lobster, European seabass, scorpionfishes, common octopus, common sole, surmullet, European hake, urchin, and bluefin tuna.

The total landings for 2023 amounted to 2,735 tonnes, valued at EUR 23.6 million, reflecting a declining trend in value since 2017. GVA also decreased by 60%, reaching EUR 13.1 million in 2023. Financial metrics indicated gross profit, net profit, and net profit subsidized at EUR 2.66 million, EUR 0.83 million, and EUR 1.02 million, respectively. A significant reduction in the number of vessels (-13%) was observed between 2017 and 2023.

Despite the decrease in revenue (-29%), average annual landings per vessel increased by 20% since 2017, reaching around 6 tonnes and EUR 51,370 in value. GVA per vessel and per crew member were EUR 28,560 and EUR 23,808, respectively. Annual fuel consumption and costs per vessel were 4,931 litres and EUR 3,629, representing 48 litres (EUR 35) per DaS, with an increasing trend compared to previous years. Fuel efficiency remained low at 8.2%, with landed weight and value per energy consumed recorded at 1.2 kg/litre of fuel and approximately 10 euros/litre of fuel, respectively.

Demersal trawlers & seiners (DTS) 12-18 metres

In 2023, 123 vessels comprised this segment, primarily operating in the Northeast Atlantic. Nearly half of these vessels were based in the two ports of Lorient and Guilvinec in Brittany. The fleet experienced a decline of 32% between 2013 and 2023. A total of 386 crew members (equivalent to 314 FTEs) worked 24,992 DaS in 2023. Landings amounted to 15,433 tonnes, reflecting an 11% reduction compared to 2022.

In terms of landed value in 2023, the top three species were Norway lobster, monkfish, and great Atlantic scallop, comprising 27%, 9%, and 8% of the total landing value, respectively. The gross value of landings was EUR 64.8 million, which represents a 19.2% decrease from 2022. The total income for this fleet segment was EUR 73.7 million, accounting for 5.2% of the national fleet income. GVA also decreased, reaching EUR 31.7 million, and Gross profit was EUR 7.5 million. Despite these reductions, net profit remained positive at EUR 1.3 million with a 2% profit margin.

However, operating subsidies increased in 2022 and 2023 compared to previous years, resulting in a subsidized net profit of approximately EUR 5.0 million. After considering labor costs (37% of the gross value of landings), energy costs were the most significant expense for these vessels, with a high level of energy efficiency (26%). Annual fuel consumption averaged 171,500 litres per vessel, representing 844 liters per day at sea and 0.73 kg/litre of landings in 2023.

Demersal trawlers & seiners (DTS) 18-24 metres

In 2023, the fleet consisted of 153 vessels, including 14 new MGP1824 vessels in the Atlantic. Most operate in the Atlantic, North Sea, and Channel, with some in the

Mediterranean Sea. The fleet size decreased by 26% between 2013 and 2023 due to decommissioning in 2022 and 2023.

The Atlantic, North Sea, and Channel vessels target monkfish (18%), squids (13%), and common cuttlefish (9%). These species comprised 13%, 8%, and 7% of the total volumes landed in 2023, respectively. In the Mediterranean, vessels focused on hake and common octopus, accounting for 11.5% and 10.5% of the total landings value, while octopuses and hake made up 10.2% and 9.6% of the volume.

With 659 crew members (479 FTE), this segment operated 22,650 DaS in 2023. The gross value of landings was EUR 119.5 million, contributing 8.5% of the national fishing fleet's income. From 2022 to 2023, the gross value of landings and added gross value dropped by 23% and 27%, respectively. Fuel costs fell by 23%, but other operating cost reductions were modest. Gross profit plunged from EUR 10.7 million to EUR 4.4 million (-59%), and net profit was negative at -EUR 8.6 million (-6% net profit margin), compared to -EUR 4.5 million (+88%). Operating subsidies remained stable, leading to a subsidized net profit of around -EUR 0.250 million.

Profitability declined sharply in the Atlantic area, with gross profit dropping from EUR 9 million to EUR 3 million (-65%) and subsidized net profit moving from EUR 2.3 million to -EUR 2.1 million. Despite lower fuel prices, the impact on profitability was limited. Fuel efficiency was 29% in the Atlantic and 33% in the Mediterranean. Average annual fuel consumption per vessel was 350,000 litres and 139,000 litres, respectively (1,801 litres and 1,210 litres per DaS).

Dredgers 12-18 metres

In 2023, a fleet of 101 vessels targeted great Atlantic scallop in the North-east Atlantic, with operations highly regulated at various levels. The French scallop season spans October to May, with strict rules on fishing areas, catch sizes, quotas, times, days, gear, and vessel operations. This segment, with 410 crew members operating 11,240 DaS, saw declines in both volume and value compared to 2022, landing 19,209 tonnes (-18%) worth EUR 54.5 million (-13%). Despite reduced fuel costs, gross profit was EUR 9.0 million (-4%) with net profit at EUR 4.0 million. Annual fuel consumption per vessel was 73,173 litres costing EUR 57,592, achieving 10.7% energy efficiency. While economic performance dipped slightly, profitability remained good since 2021.

4.10.5 Drivers affecting the economic performance

Operational costs (external factors)

In 2023, major cost items for the French fleet were labour (38.2%), energy costs (16.9%), non-variable costs (10.5%), and variable costs (8.6%). The fleet, especially large-scale and distant ones, are sensitive to fuel price increases due to their dependence on fuel. The gross profit margin in 2023 was 10.1%, down from the 11.3% average between 2019 and 2022. These five years marked the lowest margins since 2013, with the highest margins reached in 2016 and 2017 at 19.5% and 21.6%, respectively.

In mainland France, the annual average fuel price (diesel fuel) increased from 0.35 euro/litre in 2020 to 0.51 euro/litre in 2021 to reach a maximum of 0.85 euro/litre in 2022. In 2023, fuel price remained very high with 0.78 euro/litre with a reduction observed in 2024 at 0.71 euro/litre. The beginning of 2025 highlighted a limited decrease to 0.69 euro/litre with a

decreasing trend between January and March. Different measures including a tariff shield were adopted by national authorities at the end of the first quarter 2022 to attenuate the impact of these increases for fishing companies including a discount at pump and/or direct additional aids (from 0.25 to 0.35 euro/litre depending on the period) in France mainland and also in outermost regions. Since March 2022, an economic and social resilience plan including different phases was put in place to deal with the economic consequences of the Ukraine crisis on the fleets' economic situation. The support to the fishing vessels applying to the schemes was 0.2 euro/litre.

Markets and trade

In mainland France, fish landings occur in 60 ports and are processed in 35 auction halls along the coastline. These facilities are responsible for sorting, inspecting, weighing, and storing the catch in cold rooms while awaiting their initial sale. The marketplaces, including remote sales platforms, contribute positively to fish pricing. In 2023, the top three species in terms of value landed were great Atlantic scallop, monkfish, and common sole, constituting 11.5%, 9.0%, and 7.7% of the total landed values sold at auctions, respectively.

However, direct sales remain prominent for certain species such as the great Atlantic scallop and various crustaceans. For species like whelks, horse mackerel, or anchovies, off-auction sales can account for more than half of the total quantities sold. In outermost regions, most of the landings are sold locally to consumers or fishmongers, as the ports lack auction halls. Many vessels opt out of using this sales method depending on the target species or markets. For instance, companies may sell their fishing products directly under contractual agreements (e.g., tropical tuna, which is sold via private contracts to supply the canning industry without going through the auction process).

Regarding foreign trade, total seafood imports amounted to approximately EUR 7.25 billion in 2023, while seafood exports reached EUR 2.19 billion, resulting in an overall trade deficit of -EUR 5.06 billion, a reduction compared to 2022. The primary imported species included salmon (from Norway and the United Kingdom), shrimp (from Ecuador, India, Venezuela, etc.), tuna (from Spain, Seychelles, Ghana, Ecuador, and Mauritius), and cod (from Iceland). The main exported species were tuna to African countries, smoked salmon, frozen shrimp, and fresh species such as cuttlefish and squid to Italy, Spain, Germany, Belgium, etc. In 2022, average consumption of aquatic products per inhabitant was 32 kg.

Other external drivers

Brexit has imposed constraints on certain segments of the fleet operating in the Atlantic region. Additionally, the development of wind farm parks poses a potential threat to vessels operating in coastal areas affected by these projects. Specific fleets, particularly those involved in harvesting scallops or shellfish, may face fishery bans due to phytotoxin blooms, predominantly in the Channel. In some outermost regions, such as Guadeloupe and Martinique, fishing areas were permanently closed in the 2010s due to pesticide contamination from agricultural practices, which hindered their operations or forced fishers to exit the affected sector.

Stock status, TACs and quotas

Status of Key Stocks Evaluated in 2023:

- Common Sole (8 stocks, 4 main stocks for France): Stocks largely remain degraded. The North Sea stock (IV) is not deemed overfished; biomass levels are below MSY thresholds, yet F<Fmsy. The Eastern English Channel stock (VIId) remains degraded

with biomass levels under MSY thresholds, though F=Fmsy. The Western English Channel stock (VIIe) is classified as overfished due to fishing mortality exceeding Fmsy, despite biomass being above reference points and showing a slight decline. Preventative measures are advisable as biomass is decreasing. For the Bay of Biscay stock (VIIIabd), biomass has dropped below reference levels, while fishing mortality remains below Fmsy – hence the stock is considered degraded.

- Pollack (2 main stocks for France): The Bay of Biscay stock (VIII-IXa) continues to be degraded, with biomass levels below MSY thresholds and showing a declining trend, despite F<Fmsy. Enhanced data availability has facilitated an adjustment in the ICES stock category and the application of a new assessment methodology. The Celtic Sea and West Scotland stock (VI-VII) underwent benchmarking in 2023, resulting in a revised ICES category classification. This stock is considered collapsed, exhibiting fishing mortality significantly above Fmsy and a steady decline in biomass over the past decade.
- Rays (3 stocks: SRX/2AC4C; SRX/67AKXD; SRX/89C): Improvement observed in multispecific ray TAC in the North Sea. Advice on single species stocks has led to increased multispecies (SRX) TAC for the three stocks. A method for calculating the final TAC for these multispecific stocks was implemented from 2023, incorporating dead discards into the establishment of the final TAC.
- Gadoids in the Celtic Sea (VII e-k, 3 stocks): Cod stock remains in a troubling condition with biomass below reference points and F higher than Fmsy, leading to its classification as collapsed. Whiting stock is also considered collapsed, confirmed by inter-benchmarking assessments; fishing mortality is above Fmsy and Fpa, with biomass levels stable at a critically low and unsustainable level. Haddock stock continues to be categorized as overfished, with recruitment levels substantially lower than predicted by prior assessments.
- European Seabass (2 stocks, 2 main stocks for France): Fishing pressure for the North Sea / Irish Sea / English Channel / Celtic Sea stock (IVbc,VIIa,d-h) significantly declined between 2012 and 2019 and is currently well below Fmsy and stable. Biomass remains below MSY but has shown recent increases. The Bay of Biscay stock (VIIIab) experiences fishing pressure below Fmsy and remains stable, with biomass within MSY ranges.
- Horse Mackerel (1 stock): Fishing mortality is within the range of Fmsy, although the biomass is still below the MSYBtrigger threshold.

Total available quota (TAC) for the French fleet in 2024 was 384,594 tonnes.

According to FIDES/Oceanstore in 2023, the top five stocks by tonnage, excluding tuna species, were:

- HKE (8ABDE) 9,414 tonnes.
- HER (4CXB7D) 7,924 tonnes.
- ANF (07) 7,643 tonnes.
- HKE (571214) 6,667 tonnes.
- MAC (2CX14) 6,222 tonnes.

As of 2023, the five primary stocks in terms of quota uptake, each exceeding 1,000 tonnes, according to FIDES/Oceanstore, were as follows:

- COD (1N2AB) 100%.

- COD (1/2B.) 100%.
- WHB (1X14) 99.65%.
- BET (IOTC) 95.21%.
- BFT (AE45WM) 94.84%.

Management instruments

Various management tools such as TACs, quotas, fishing licenses, and multiannual plans regulate fisheries. Fishers' representatives also help set catch limits and authorizations. Fishing authorizations (assigned to the pair “vessel*owner”) specify species, gear type, area, and technical requirements like gear dimensions, vessel size, depth, exemptions, prohibited areas or seasons, and maximum yearly catches.

In 2022-2023, decommissioning schemes affected fleets in the North Atlantic and Mediterranean Sea. The first plan, linked to Brexit, involved 86 vessels, mainly VL1824 demersal trawlers, impacting supply chains. The second scheme in the Mediterranean aimed to restore stocks of hake and red mullet, affecting 14 trawlers.

Additionally, temporary stops were implemented in the Atlantic for the Bay of Biscay common sole fishery due to a TAC reduction. In 2024, a closure was established under the Action Plan to reduce accidental small cetacean catches, with 288 vessels receiving compensation for ceased activities.

Innovation and development

Several recent R&D projects aim to advance knowledge in various areas:

- Stocks assessment (RECCRU, DREAM, etc.).
- Fishing gear selectivity and discards (Game of Trawls, CASEP, etc.).
- Impact of fishing gear on habitats (REIP PECHE, CONTRAST, etc.).
- Interaction with marine mammals and birds (DELMOGES, HYDROPHIN, etc.).
- Reducing vessel footprint and energy costs (AREC, AMAREE).
- Value chains and fish product quality (DEFIPEL, PSG).

These projects were funded by sources including EMFAF and France Filière Pêche. In 2023, a decarbonization roadmap for the fishing fleet was established under the national "Climate and Resilience" law.

4.10.6 Assessment of the economic performance for 2024 and 2025 (nowcasts)

Model results

The economic performance for 2024 is affected by the reduction in the French fleet due to the decommissioning scheme of fishing vessels, also known as the "individualized support plan" (Brexit plan). Compared to 2023, forecasts indicate a 10% decrease in the number of active vessels, with a more significant impact on DWF vessels (with vessels sold or transfered to non-EU countries.), and a 13% reduction in crew members, particularly affecting DWF and LSF vessels (-20%). Consequently, the model predicts a 5% decline in revenue in 2024, attributed to a reduction in both the weight and the value of landings. Similar trends in revenue and landings are forecasted for 2025.

All costs are projected to decrease in 2024, based on lower price assumptions. Energy costs are expected to decline significantly by 15%, while personnel costs are anticipated to reduce by 5%. As a result, GVA is projected to increase by 2%, and Gross profit is expected to rise

substantially by 26%. Despite a decrease in revenue, the economic performance indicators for 2024 show significant improvement.

For 2025, the model results suggest a continuation of the trends observed in 2024, with an increase in revenue and further enhancement of the economic performance indicators.

Outlook

The French fishing industry is currently going through a major crisis. The global economic context, particularly in terms of price levels, is having a major impact on the fishery sector, as well as the consequences of Brexit, not to mention space-time closures due to cetacean by catches in 2024 and 2025. In 2024, the reduction of landings in weight and value was respectively –28% and 11% for the fleet concerned by this ban.

The quota for stocks as hake, anglerfish, herring, blue whiting increase in 2024. The drastic reduction in pollack quotas for 2024 will penalise the Finistère coast, and especially the hooks at the tip of Brittany, who are highly dependent on this species.

Initial results from the French information system indicate a 4% decrease in the weight of landings by 2024 in the Atlantic. Vessels more than 18 metres long will experience the largest declines (between 7% and 9%) in the weight of landings. This decrease in activity could result in reduced revenue.

4.10.7 Methodological considerations and data issues

Data source: effort and production data

In France, detailed landings and effort data per vessel are available through the SACROIS platform. SACROIS[16] is a cross-validation tool for the fisheries statistics, aiming at providing the best possible fishing statistics data by cross-checking available data from the different declarative control regulation sources, as requested in article 145 of the EU control Regulation (EC Reg. 404/2011). The application is crossing information, at the most disaggregated level, from the fishing fleet register, logbooks and coastal logbooks, sales notes data, geolocation data (VMS) and vessel fishing activity calendar census survey (VFACCS), in order to build the most accurate and complete dataset compiling French fleet' fishing trips with their associated features (dates, fishing area, metier, gear and mesh size, total weight and value of landings by species). Additional data collection is currently

[16] IFREMER SIH (2022). SACROIS - Algorithme de consolidation des données déclaratives. IFREMER https://doi.org/10.12770/6510e8e0-788d-45ba-9792-3d0585fe1009IFREMER SIH (2022). https://sih.ifremer.fr/Debarquements-effort-de-peche/Sacrois.

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Sébastien DEMANECHE, Eric BEGOT, Antoine GOUELLO, Claude MERRIEN, Jérôme WEISS, Emilie LEBLOND, Céline VIGNOT, Armelle ROUYER (2021**).** Rapport d'activité Sacrois - Valid & Expertise sur les données d'activité de pêche. Convention Socle Halieutique DPMA-Ifremer 2020. Article 3.3 Accompagnement de la maîtrise d'ouvrage de la DPMA, relatif à son expertise halieutique, dans le cadre des projets Sacrois et Valid.

implemented for fleets for which coverage of declarative data is considered as insufficient. This is the case of the less than 12 metres length fleets operating in A) the Outermost regions (French Guiana, Guadeloupe and Martinique, La Réunion and Mayotte) for which complementary on-site sampling data are collected and calculation of their reference fishing activity' estimates is applied on this basis and B/ the supra-region Mediterranean for which a re-evaluation methodology[17] on the basis of the annual fishing activity calendars survey is applied to calculate their reference fishing activity' and landings estimates.

Survey for economic data

A probability sampling method has been used for the 2023 data, continuing the approach since 2012. Vessels were selected using systematic random sampling and classified by length and maritime district to ensure representation of the French fleet's diversity. Non-responses were handled using statistical methods and imputations for costs and earnings.

In 2023, the distant water fleet included 19 purse seiners over 40 metres, operating in the Indian and South Atlantic Oceans. Data for these vessels was unavailable; thus, economic variables were estimated using past effort data and cost structures.

Economic data from 2011 to 2023 is available for French hooks (12-24m) in the Indian Ocean, while data for smaller vessels (<12m) in Guadeloupe and French Guiana dates back to 2010. In Reunion and Martinique, estimates have been made since 2019 and 2010, respectively. Mayotte has data from 2015 to 2023.

Personnel costs data covers all sampled vessels, representing crew labour costs, with unpaid labour considered negligible. Crew numbers and full-time equivalents are underestimated for vessels with rotating crews.

Identified changes in respect to previous years

Since 2017, direct margin calibration has been used to process non-response, with new weights showing similar dispersion properties to the old ones. This had little impact on macroeconomic results.

In 2023, IFREMER couldn't survey small vessels due to a lack of human resources, leading to an estimation method based on effort and production data. Consequently, discrepancies over 5% occurred between landings and income in several segments.

The French fleet saw changes, particularly for vessels over 40 metres, which belong to fewer, smaller companies. To maintain statistical secrecy, demersal trawlers/seiners and pelagic trawlers were grouped together. Additionally, economic data for vessels over 40 metres in the Atlantic and DWF were unavailable, so estimates were made using previous years' effort data and cost structures.

Improvements achieved

Due to the aforementioned methodological changes, the discrepancy between the Value of landings and Gross value of landings (Income) from two distinct sources has been minimized for the NE Atlantic and Mediterranean Sea supra regions. The data series for the Outermost regions are now complete. Nevertheless, the estimation of economic data has been

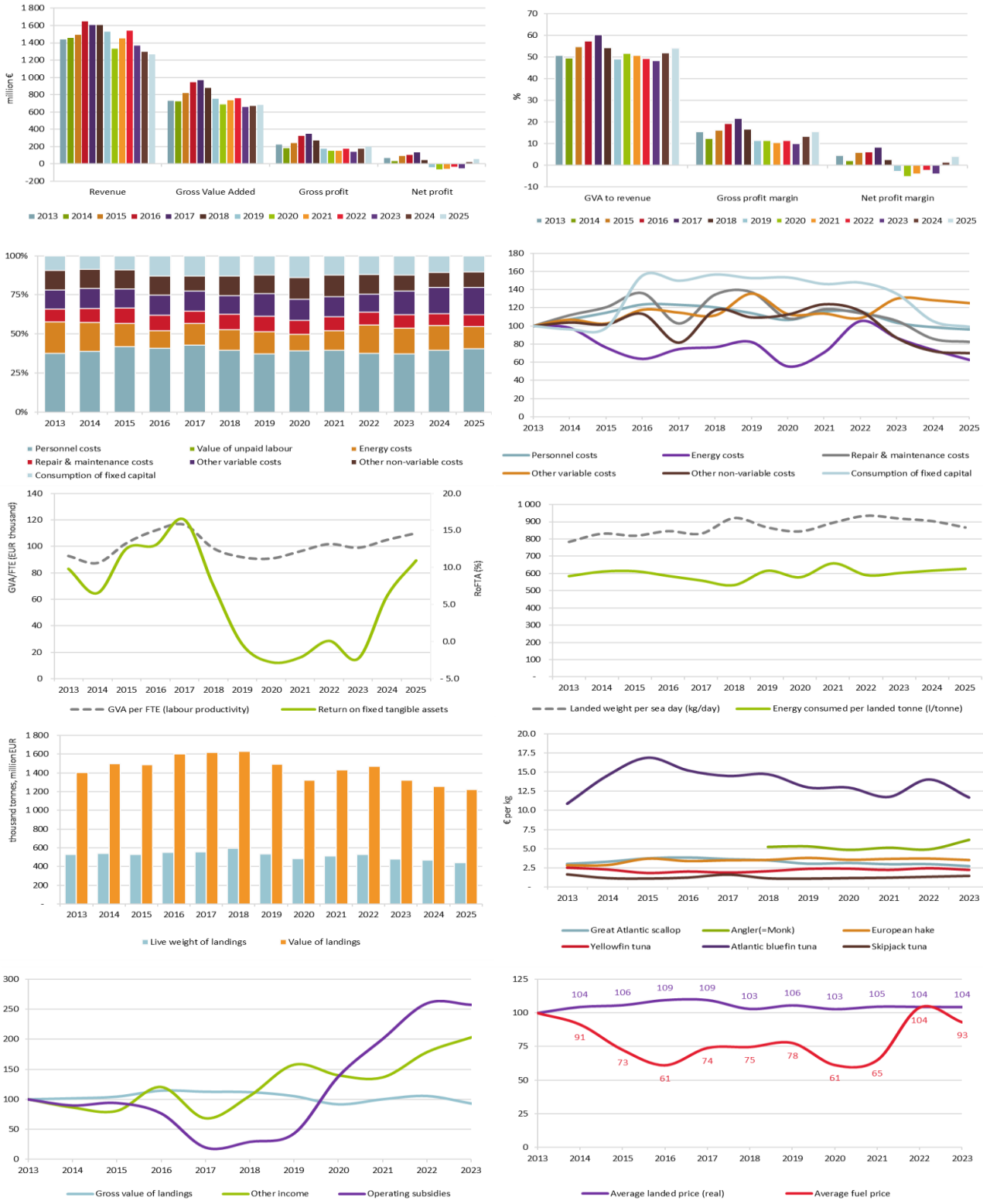
[17] Details about the re-evaluation methodology applied is described in the 9th IFOMC proceedings p°105-108, https://digital.csic.es/bitstream/10261/325646/1/23532.pdf

conducted for vessels less than 10 metres in Martinique between 2010 and 2023 and in Mayotte from 2015 to 2023. Additionally, the estimation for the fleet under 12 metres in La Reunion Island has been calculated since 2019.

Remaining issues

The economic data are incomplete due to missing information for a fleet segment in French Guiana. This pertains to six vessels over 18 metres in 2023.

Figure 4.10.1.France: Main trends in (from top to bottom, left to right): economic performance indicators (absolute value and relative values); cost structure and variation in main cost items; productivity and efficiency indicators; landings (in weight and value) and average price (euro/kg) of top species; variation in income variables and average prices of key input/outputs (2013=100). Nowcast figures for 2024 and 2025.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

4.11 Croatia

4.11.1 Short description of the national fleet

In 2023, the Croatian fishing fleet consisted of 7,595 vessels with a capacity of 43,242 GT and 346,989 kW; 6,047 vessels (80%) were active. Capacity of active fleet is decreasing since 2013; combined gross tonnage and total engine power decreased by 13% and 8% in 2023 compared to 2017. Reduction in fishing fleet is due to permanent cessation of LSF vessels.

Table 4.11.1. Croatia at a glance.

Croatia		2023				%Δ 2023-2022			
Indicator	**Units**	**Overall**	**SSCF**	**L12AG**	**LSF**	**Overall**	**SSCF**	**L12AG**	**LSF**
Active vessels	Number	6,047	5,261	452	334	-2%	-2%	-7%	-6%
FTE	Number	3,201	1,488	347	1,367	-4%	3%	-7%	-10%
Gross Value of landings	Million €	71.1	14.4	8.8	47.9	-10%	-1%	-10%	-13%
GVA	Million €	80.0	37.9	17.8	24.3	14%	81%	97%	-39%
Gross profit	Million €	43.4	29.4	13.5	0.5	27%	107%	166%	-96%
Net profit	Million €	23.8	22.6	12.1	- 10.9	100%	238%	260%	-697%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure

The Croatian fleet operates in the Northern Adriatic Sea; according to national legislation the fleet is divided into main commercial fleet and a category of small-scale artisanal coastal fisheries for personal needs consisting of some 3,500 vessels (i.e. mali obalni ribolov, MOR). From 2015 to 2017, these MOR vessels were gradually introduced into the commercial SSCF pursuant to Croatia's Accession Treaty; still, they continue to operate as a distinct legal category under specific rules and restrictions and gradually decrease naturally because their special licences are non-inheritable and non-transferable.

In 2023, the active fleet consisted of 87% SSCF, comprising 5,261 vessels, and 13% LSF, with 786 vessels. Within the LSF, 7% belonged to L12AG, totalling 452 vessels. Decline in fleet capacity is evident since 2013 due to reduction of LSF. Compared to 2013, LSF was reduced by 27% in number of vessels, 22% in GT and 24% in kW in 2023, mostly due to scrapping of purse seiners, bottom trawlers and dredgers during this period.

The number of fishing enterprises totalled 5,325 in 2023, with the majority (89%) owning a single fishing vessel, as is typical of artisanal fleets. Between 2013 and 2023, the number of fishing enterprises declined at an average annual rate of 3%. More than 45% of Croatia’s fishing vessels are registered as multipurpose vessels with a possibility to use different gears over the course of the year.

The estimated value of physical capital of the Croatian fleet in 2023 was EUR 269 million of which 29% corresponds to the inactive fleet. The total investments in physical capital in 2023 were estimated at EUR 16.5 million (+16% compared to estimated investments in 2022).

Fishing activity and production

In total around 318,000 days were spent at sea in 2023 (-3% compared to 2022) of which 72% in SSCF. In line with the limitation of effort for purse seiners and bottom trawlers, reduction of effort (expressed in sea days) is evident in LSF which is continued in 2023 (-10% compared to 2022 and -23% compared to 2013-2022 average). In contrast, effort in SSCF remained stable, and increased by 34% compared to 2013-2022 average, which is consistent with the inclusion of small-scale artisanal coastal vessels to the commercial fleet in the period 2015-2017.

The overall landing of sea products has been gradually decreasing since 2014 due to management measures at the level of the Adriatic Sea. In 2023, landings decreased by -30% to 55,217 tonnes of landed seafood products compared to 2014, the peak year of the period. Followed by a decrease in landings in 2023 by -12% compared to 2022, the estimated landed value has decreased by -10% amounting to EUR 71 million in 2023.

More than 140 species are caught commercially in Croatia as is typical of Mediterranean multispecies fisheries. However, small pelagic species targeted in purse seine fisheries, of which sardine and anchovy are most important, by far dominate the overall catch structure and accounted for 77% of total volume and 37% total value of products landed in 2023. Higher value species targeted by demersal fisheries, hake, red mullet, Norway lobster and deep-water rose shrimp, accounted for 6% in terms of quantity, and 19% in terms of the value.

Prices obtained for the key species targeted by the fleet generally remain stable in the period 2013-2023, increasing gradually until 2023. Slight annual variations of the prices are mostly due to the market effect, i.e. resulting from changes in volume of landings over the period. Annual variations in prices are more evident for higher value demersal species and for species for which temporal closures are established.

In 2023, as in previous years, purse seiners from 24-40m LoA contributed for most landed weight and value, 50% and 26%, respectively. Overall, purse seine segments amounted to 89% of volume and 47% of value of products landed; small-pelagic fishery is managed under the provisions of a multiannual management plan for small pelagic fish in the Adriatic Sea as adopted under the GFCM. In turn, bottom trawlers contributed to 7% of landed volume and 25% of landed value in 2023.

Employment and average salaries

Employment in 2023 was estimated at 8,987 jobs, or 3,201 FTEs. SSCF engaged crew accounted for 73% (46% FTEs) and LSF for 27% (54% FTEs). Employment levels have remained stable since 2016, with the increase then due to the activation of special SSCF vessels in 2015. Compared to 2022, engaged crew increased by 14%, while FTEs decreased by 4%. This suggests higher crew turnover, difficulty in finding qualified labour, and increased competition from other sectors like marine transport and tourism. The annual average per FTE was 11,432 in 2023, up 6% from 2022, but lower than the EU Mediterranean region's average crew cost per FTE.

4.11.2 Economic results for 2023 and recent trends

The economic results pertain solely to the Croatian fishing fleet active in 2023.

National fleet performance

In 2023, the economic performance of the active fleet improved compared to previous years, despite the decrease in LSF catches. Total revenue (income from landings and other income) generated by the Croatian fleet, estimated at EUR 127 million, increased by 6% compared to 2022 and by 22% compared to 2013-2022 average revenue. The major factor for the economic improvement is higher revenues from other income, which increased by +40% in relation to 2022, representing 44% of revenues in 2023. Volume and value of landings decreased in 2023, by -12% and -10%, respectively, compared to 2022, while the average landed price (real) 1.29 euro/kg increased by +2%.

In comparison to 2022, the active fleet's gross value added (GVA) and gross profit increased by +14% and +27%, reaching EUR 80 million and EUR 43.4 million, respectively. Net profit doubled, rising to EUR 23.8 million (+100% compared to 2022).

Total operating costs decreased by 2% compared to 2022 and amounted to EUR 83.3 million. Labour costs represented the largest share (38%), followed by energy costs (21%), repair and maintenance costs (13%) and other variable costs (13%).

Labour costs have a general increasing trend in the period; labour costs in 2023 (EUR 31.6 million) increased by 5% compared to the 2013-2022 average, but only by 1% compared to 2022.

Fuel consumption amounted to 22.367 million litres a -7% decrease compared to 2022. Additionally, as fuel prices dropped by 19% from 0.97 euro/litre in 2022 to 0.79 euro/litre in 2023, fuel costs declined to EUR 17.7 million, representing a 24% reduction relative to 2022.

In 2023, the total operating and investment subsidies allocated to the active fleet amounted to EUR 17.3 million, contributing 12% to total income (including subsidies). This aligns closely with the average annual subsidy share of 10% observed over the past five years.

The declining trend in the value of physical capital, which began in 2016, continued into 2023, with an estimated depreciated replacement value of EUR 190 million, 65% of which was attributed to the LSF. The estimated consumption of fixed capital (annual depreciation) amounted to EUR 13 million, representing a 12% decrease compared to 2022.

Despite global adverse economic influences, overall Croatian fishers maintained their economic performance primarily through reduced energy consumption, higher fish prices, and financial support from the EMFAF. However, the continued high pressure on resources underscores the ongoing need for strict management measures already in place.

In 2023, the sector showed divergent trends:

- SSCF: In this segment, profitability is supported by income diversification (e.g. tourism, transport, services). Despite being more resilient due to multi-activity income, this segment remains structurally underinvested and is often excluded from value chains beyond first sale.
- LSF: Although a few fleet segments dominate overall landings and revenue (large purse seiners and bottom trawlers), they are increasingly unprofitable due to catch and effort restrictions and low margins. These segments are facing deteriorating economic performance and demonstrate a high reliance on subsidies and dependency on a few key species (sardine, anchovy, hake, Norway lobster, deep-water rose shrimp, bluefin tuna).

Resource productivity and efficiency

In 2023, the gross profit margin reached 34%, up from 29% in 2022, reflecting improved operating efficiency within the sector. The active fleet also recorded a net profit margin of 19%, marking an increase compared to the previous year. The Rate of Return on Fixed Tangible Assets (RoFTA), used as an indicator of capital productivity, was estimated at 16% in 2023, including inactive vessels.

In 2023, labour productivity, measured as GVA per FTE, increased by +19% compared to 2022, reaching EUR 24,997. This was driven by a +14% rise in GVA and a -4% decline in FTEs. In the LSF, however, labour productivity declined by -32%, amounting to EUR 17,807 per FTE. In contrast, the L12AG segment recorded a +112% increase, with GVA per FTE reaching EUR 51,247, while the SSCF saw a 77% increase in productivity, reaching EUR 25,487 per FTE.

In 2023, the average wage FTE was EUR 11,432, representing a 6% increase compared to 2022. Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, both the Rate of Return on Fixed Tangible Assets (RoFTA) and GVA per FTE were on an upward trend. However, both indicators saw a significant decline in 2020 due to the pandemic's impact, before resuming an upward trend in 2021.

Resource productivity and fleet efficiency depend on numerous external factors, including weather conditions, resource availability (such as fish migration), and spatio-temporal closures. They are also influenced by the fleet’s structure—particularly the presence of ageing, inefficient vessels in key segments like bottom trawlers, which are also associated with fuel-intensive fishing operations.

In 2023, fuel intensity (measured as fuel consumption per tonne of landed catch) was estimated at 405 litres per tonne, continuing an overall upward trend. In contrast, fleet productivity has declined steadily since 2014, when it peaked at 329 kg per fishing day, dropping to 174 kg per day in 2023. The fleet operated most efficiently in 2014, largely due to high catches of small pelagic fish by purse seiners. Since then, the ratio of landed weight per sea day to fuel consumed per sea day has significantly decreased. A key driver of this decline is the reduced availability of key target species, particularly sardine and anchovy, whose stocks in the Adriatic Sea have shown signs of poor status. As a result, fishing vessels, especially purse seiners, are catching less and are forced to spend more time at sea searching for fish. This not only affects productivity but also increases fuel consumption, disproportionately impacting the most fuel-efficient segment and, in turn, the overall efficiency of the fleet.

In 2023, the Croatian fishing fleet operated at 25% fuel efficiency (fuel costs as a proportion of income from landings). Structural changes in the fleet, due to the scrapping of LSF vessels, and restrictions on purse seiners and bottom trawlers, led to reduced fuel consumption and landings in commercially most important segments. Although these changes initially improved fuel efficiency, the effect was negated in 2022 by soaring fuel prices due to the consequences of the war in Ukraine, with only partial compensation from rising fish prices. In 2023, a 19% drop in average fuel price (to 0.79 euro/litre) and a 2% increase in average fish price (to 1.29 euro/kg) are indicative of a recovery in fuel efficiency and a renewed positive trend in the fleet’s economic performance. Compared to 2022, average fuel efficiency in 2023 decreased by -16%, primarily due to lower fuel costs. However, average fuel intensity increased by +5% as a result of reduced landing volumes,

indicating a shift in fishing operations, namely, longer trips and more time spent at sea in search of fish, in an effort to compensate for reduced fishing opportunities.

Bottom trawlers and dredgers demonstrated the lowest fuel efficiency in 2023, ranging from 40% to 44%, with fuel intensity between 1,906 and 2,942 litres of fuel per tonne of landed catch. This high fuel consumption is primarily due to the nature of bottom trawling, which is inherently fuel intensive. In contrast, purse seiners showed significantly better performance, with fuel efficiency ranging from 10% to 23%, and the lowest fuel intensity, ranging between 75 and 152 litres per tonne, due to the large volumes of small pelagic fish landed. For purse seiners, most of the fuel is consumed during the search for fish and suitable fishing grounds.

Due to the small quantities landed, small-scale fleet segments showed lower productivity and fuel efficiency. However, when considering the value of landed products, their performance surpassed that of some large-scale fleet segments. The most favourable energy efficiency results were observed in the segment using other mobile gears (MGO), which also stands out for its more favourable social indicators and a higher share of modern, newer vessels (MA-DoF, 2023).

4.11.3 Performance by fishing activity

The Croatian fleet comprises a variety of vessel types that employ different fishing gears and target diverse species, operating exclusively in the Northern Adriatic Sea. In 2023, the fleet was divided into 23 active segments under the DCF classification:

- 10 segments within the SSCF, including DFN, FPO, HOK, PGP, and PMP vessels under 12 metres.
- 5 segments comprising vessels within the L12AG, including MGO, DTS, PS, and DRB vessels.
- 8 segments within LSF, consisting of DFN, DRB, DTS, and PS vessels over 12 metres.

Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

In 2023, the SSCF constituted 87% of the active fleet, encompassing 5,261 vessels. This segment contributed 3% of the total landed weight and 20% of the total landed value. The number of fishers in SSCF increased by 14% from the previous year, reaching 6,525 individuals, which corresponds to 1,488 FTEs.

The average age of SSCF vessels was 41 years, with 68% of vessels measuring between 6 and 12 metres in length. Fishing activities were typically confined to nearshore areas and conducted as one-day trips. The primary fishing gears used included set gillnets, trammel nets, set longlines, hooks and lines, pots, traps, and harpoons (mainly for targeting common octopus).

Key target species comprised European hake, gilthead sea bream, common sole, bluefin tuna, mullets, Norway lobster, common octopus, common cuttlefish, and red scorpionfish. Most catches were sold locally through markets or directly to restaurants.

To supplement their income, many SSCF fishers engaged in additional activities using the same vessel, such as fishing tourism, passenger transport, diving, or underwater works. Other common sources of income included tourism, aquaculture, and agriculture. On average, income from these supplementary sources accounted for 58% of total SSCF revenue (including subsidies) over the past five years.

In 2023, the SSCF generated EUR 49 million in revenue, representing 39% of the total fleet revenue. The estimated value of landings accounted for 27% of total SSCF revenue (including subsidies), remaining relatively stable compared to 2022 (-1%), amounting to EUR 14.4 million. The largest share of SSCF revenue came from other sources, totaling EUR 34.7 million in 2023, or 65% of overall revenue. Operating subsidies increased by 6% compared to the previous year, reaching EUR 4 million.

The estimated depreciated replacement value of the SSCF fleet was EUR 6.3 million in 2023, with 36% attributed to low-activity polyvalent passive gear vessels (PGP). Fleet investments increased by 20% compared to 2022, reaching EUR 8.7 million.

Expenditure in 2023 amounted to EUR 24.1 million, of which 82% were operating costs. Fishing effort, energy consumption, and landings in the SSCF remained at similar levels to those recorded in the previous year. The fleet operated for approximately 230,600 days at sea, accounting for 72% of the total fishing effort of the Croatian fleet and consumed 7,137,000 liters of fuel.

Since 2019, labour costs have gradually declined until 2022, but in 2023 labour costs increased by 26%, amounting to EUR 6.3 million. personnel costs per FTE remain relatively low compared to those in the LSF and in relation to minimum wage levels. This is largely because most fishers in SSCF are also vessel owners, who do not receive a wage but are instead remunerated from net revenue after operating costs are deducted. The share of unpaid fishers, such as self-employed individuals, family workers, or retirees, is considerably higher in SSCF than in LSF. In 2023, 71% of SSCF fishers (4,630 individuals) were unpaid. The estimated value of unpaid labour accounted for 26% of the total labour costs in the SSCF.

Following the transition from non-commercial to commercial fisheries, Croatia integrated approximately 3,500 small-scale vessels designated 'for personal needs' (*mali obalni ribolov*, MOR) into the commercial polyvalent passive gear (PGP) segment between 2015 and 2017. This segment is characterised by low fishing activity, as most MOR vessel owners are retired and engage in fishing only occasionally. Due to legal restrictions, MOR vessels can only be owned by natural persons who are not permitted to participate in first sales and are exempt from paying social security contributions. As there is no landing income or formal wages, all MOR vessel owners are considered unpaid labour, contributing significantly to the high proportion of unpaid workers in the SSCF. Despite their low economic activity, this category, due to its size and demographic structure, holds considerable social significance and plays a role in local food security.

Overall, the small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF) remained economically profitable. After the challenges faced in 2022, a positive trend was reestablished in 2023. Compared to the previous year, Gross Value Added (GVA) reached EUR 37.9 million (+81%), gross profit increased to EUR 29.4 million (+107%), and net profit rose to EUR 22.6 million (+238%), surpassing 2021 levels. This growth was driven by a 51% increase in total revenue.

These results highlight the dual significance of the SSCF, as a vital source of income and employment, and as a contributor to food security, especially for the PGP segment.

Vessels under 12 metres using active gears fleet (L12AG)

In 2023, the L12AG segment included 452 vessels with a capacity of 1,592 GT and 22,564 kW. This segment made up 58% of vessel numbers, 20% of kW, and 7% of GT in the Croatian LSF. It comprised 113 trawlers and seiners, 18 purse seiners, 7 dredgers, and 314

vessels using other active gears (MGO). MGO segments, mainly targeting high-value species like sponges and octopus, accounted for 1% of landing volume but 7% of landing value.

There were 46,770 fishing days in 2023, down 10% from 2022, averaging 103 days per vessel. Revenue totaled EUR 23 million, representing 12% of national landing value, despite a 10% decrease from 2022. GVA reached EUR 17.8 million, and gross profit was EUR 13.5 million, both showing positive economic trends.

L12AG's depreciated replacement value was EUR 14.3 million, with fleet investments amounting to EUR 1.7 million.

Large-scale fleet (LSF)

In 2023, the LSF comprised 334 vessels. Since 2013, the LSF has experienced a gradual reduction, decreasing by 6% compared to 2021 and by 29% (163 vessels) compared to 2013. This reduction is primarily due to the permanent cessation of fishing activities supported through the EFF, EMFF, and EMFAF programs. Between 2013 and 2023, the number of vessels decreased at an average annual rate of 3%, while total gross tonnage and engine power were reduced by 21% and 24%, respectively, over the same period.

In 2023, the number of engaged crew (1,589 individuals) increased by 7%. However, the estimated number of full-time equivalents (FTE) declined by 10% compared to 2022, reflecting the overall reduction in vessel numbers. Unlike the SSCF, the ratio between paid and unpaid workers is reversed in this segment, with 87% of crew members in 2023 being paid workers.

The majority of the LSF in Croatia consists of highly active purse seiners and bottom trawlers over 12 metres in length. These vessels are subject to strict catch and effort management regimes, contributing 93% to the overall volume and 66% to the value in 2023.

The fleet recorded approximately 41,000 DaS in 2023, representing an 11% decrease compared to 2022. On average, vessels operated 122 DaS, reflecting effort restrictions applied to purse seiners and bottom trawlers. Total fuel consumption was approximately 13.026 million litres (primarily diesel), 10% less than the previous year. Fuel costs, amounting to EUR 13.1 million, decreased by 24% compared to 2022, largely due to a reduction in blue diesel fuel prices.

The main target species in LSF are small-pelagic species such as European pilchard (sardine), European anchovy, and Atlantic chub and horse mackerels. Additionally, species caught in demersal fisheries include European hake, Norway lobster, deep-water rose shrimp, red mullet, and musky and horned octopus.

The volume of landings totalled 51,288 tonnes in 2023, while landing income reached EUR 48 million, both marking a 13% decrease compared to 2022. This decline aligns with long-term management objectives aimed at achieving sustainable exploitation levels of small pelagic and demersal resources in the Adriatic Sea. Landings volume in LSF has decreased by 32% compared to 2014.

In terms of revenue composition in 2023 (total EUR 66 million, including subsidies): landing income accounted for 73%, income from other sources for 10% (EUR 6.8 million), and operating subsidies for 17% (EUR 11 million). Due to strict management measures and reductions in both effort and catch, the viability of the large-scale fleet (LSF) increasingly depends on financial support. In 2023, operating subsidies rose by 94% compared to 2022.

Total expenditure in 2023 amounted to EUR 61.8 million, of which 88% were operating costs. Operating costs in LSF totalled EUR 54 million, representing a 5% decrease compared to 2022 and a 3% reduction relative to the 2013-2022 average. This decline was primarily driven by lower fuel costs.

In 2023, revenue (excluding subsidies) amounted to EUR 54.7 million, declining by 24% compared to 2022. GVA amounted to EUR 24.3 million, gross profit dropped to EUR 0.5 million, while the fleet recorded a net loss of EUR 11 million, indicating a negative trend in economic performance.

The LSF had an estimated (depreciated) replacement value of EUR 109 million. Investments by the fleet amounted to EUR 6.1 million in 2023.

4.11.4 Performance of selected fleet segments

The Croatian fishing fleet is highly diversified due to the wide range of fishing techniques used to target various species and assemblages. Active fishing gears, primarily used in the LSF and in L12AG fleet, include mobile hand-held tools for harvesting sponges, molluscs, and sea urchins, harpoons for targeting common octopus and cuttlefish, as well as industrial gears such as purse seiners, bottom trawlers, seiners, and dredgers. Passive gears, predominantly used in the SSCF, include gillnets, trammel nets, pelagic and set longlines, pots, traps, and hooks and lines. This gear diversity reflects the structural complexity of the Croatian fleet, which is organized into 23 distinct fleet segments, according to DCF classification.

In 2023, based on the net profit margin nine fleet segments showed high profitability. These include vessels using fixed nets under 18 metres (DFN 0006, DFN 0612 and DFN 1218) dredgers under 12 metres (DRB 0612), bottom trawlers between 24 and 40 metres (DTS2440), vessels using pole lines, troll lines, longlines and other hook-based gears between 6 and 12 metres (HOK 0612), vessels using other mobile gears (MGO 0006, MGO 0612), and purse seiners between 12 and 18 metres (PS 1218). In contrast, weak profitability was indicated for 14 fleet segments, with economic performance deteriorating in eight of them compared to 2022. This is particularly concerning, as the underperforming group includes the segments generating the highest revenues—purse seiners over 18 metres (PS 1824, PS 2440) and bottom trawlers between 12 and 18 metres (DTS 1218). Net losses are registered for 14 segments, while only 12 segments showed an improved economic development trend.

Considering fishing technique, in 2023, the most important fleet segments in terms of landings were purse seiners (PS), comprising 149 vessels—or just 2% of the active fleet—yet contributing 89% of the total landed volume and 47% of the total value. Excluding the PGP segment (MOR vessels), the largest number of vessels operated in the DFN segment (1,044 vessels, 17% of the active fleet), which includes gillnets and trammel nets. This segment contributed 2% to the total volume and 11% to the total value of landings. Bottom trawlers, demersal seiners, and dredgers, falling into DTS and DRB segments (310 vessels, 5% of the active fleet) accounted for 7% of the total landed volume and 26% of the value.

In terms of contribution to total revenue in 2023, the most important fleet segments were fixed netters under 12 metres (DFN 0006 and DFN 0612), purse seiners between 24 and 40 metres (PS2440), vessels using other mobile gears under 6 metres (MGO 0006), and bottom

trawlers from 12 to 24 metres (DTS 1218), accounting for 29%, 17%, 11%, and 7% of total revenue, respectively.

Fixed netters under 12 metres

In 2023, this fleet segment included 1,031 vessels, representing 17% of the active fleet, and employed a total of 831 FTEs. Despite comprising the largest share of active commercial vessels (43%, excluding the PGP segment), its contribution to total landings was relatively modest, 2% of the overall volume and 11% of the value.

Fishers in this segment primarily operate in coastal areas, using a variety of passive gears such as gillnets, trammel nets, hooks and lines, pots and traps, and longlines. The catch is highly diverse, with 123 species recorded in 2023. Fishing activities follow a pronounced seasonal pattern, peaking in spring (April-June) and autumn (October-December), influenced by species migration as well as the integration of other income-generating activities such as tourism, maritime transport, and agriculture.

During the summer season (June-September), although catch volumes typically decline, landing income remains stable due to rising fish prices. Income from other sources also tends to increase during this period. Over 60% of the landings are made up of species such as gilthead sea bream, European hake, common sole, red mullet, common cuttlefish, red scorpionfish, European spiny lobster, John dory, common dentex, common octopus, and commercial sharks. On average, these vessels operated 125 DaS in 2023.

In 2023, landings income for this fleet segment amounted to EUR 7.6 million, representing only 21% of its total revenue of EUR 36.7 million, reflecting a high reliance on income from other sources. The segment contributed 29% to the total revenue of the Croatian fishing fleet.

With a gross profit of EUR 26.4 million and a net profit of EUR 23.8 million, the segment demonstrated high profitability in 2023, and its economic performance showed a positive and improving trend.

Purse seiners 24-40 metres

In 2023, this fleet segment included 59 vessels, representing 1% of the active fleet, and employed a total of 509 FTEs. On average, purse seiners operated 147 DaS. Landings income totalled EUR 18.2 million, accounting for 86% of the segment’s revenue. This segment had the second highest contribution to the overall revenue of the Croatian fishing fleet, representing 17% in 2023.

Purse seiners targeting small pelagic species predominantly landed European pilchard (sardine) and European anchovy, which together made up 93% of the segment’s landed volume and 94% of its value in 2023. Compared to 2022, landings declined by -12% in volume and -8% in value. While there were no major fluctuations in nominal prices, the real average price of anchovy decreased by -10% to 0.92 euro/kg, and sardine by 3% to 0.58 euro/kg.

In 2023, a total of 18 purse seiners were authorised to participate in the ICCAT bluefin tuna purse seining fishery, each with allocated individual quotas. Of these, 15 vessels were over 24 metres in length. The majority of Croatia’s BFT purse seine quota is designated for farming purposes; therefore, there are no landings in the traditional sense, as all bluefin tuna caught is transferred directly to farming cages. Estimating the catch value based on average market price is not appropriate in this context, as the quota is harvested through joint fishing operations and is largely owned by farming companies rather than the vessels themselves.

Most vessels involved are either owned by farming companies or operate under contractual arrangements with them (MA-DoF, 2024).

Overall, purse seiners between 24 and 40 metres reported a gross loss of EUR 1.2 million and a net loss of -EUR 6.5 million in 2023. The segment showed weak profitability, with a deteriorating economic trend compared to 2022.

Bottom trawlers 12-18 metres

In 2023, this fleet segment comprised 142 vessels and employed a total of 283 FTEs, averaging 2 FTEs per vessel. Landings income totalled EUR 7.2 million, accounting for 81% of the segment's revenue. In 2023, this segment contributed 7% to the total revenue of the Croatian fishing fleet.

Bottom otter trawlers between 12 and 18 metres spent an average of 104 DaS, primarily targeting demersal species such as European hake, red mullet, deep-water rose shrimp, musky and horned octopus, common squid, and Norway lobster, which together accounted for nearly 80% of the landings. Compared to 2022, the value of landings decreased by -5%, mainly due to a -14% reduction in effort (measured in sea days). Fuel consumption and costs dropped by -8% and -23%, respectively.

In 2023, the segment recorded a gross loss of EUR 0.4 million and a net loss of EUR 2 million, indicating weak profitability and a deterioration in economic performance. Despite this, fuel-related indicators showed some improvement following the 2022 energy crisis. While still high, fuel intensity decreased to 2,000 litres per tonne, and fuel efficiency improved to 43%.

4.11.5 Drivers affecting the economic performance

From 2017 to early 2020, the Croatian fisheries sector experienced a steady increase in GVA, gross profit, and net profit. However, the onset of the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020 led to significant losses. In 2021, with the recovery of revenues, economic performance rebounded, surpassing pre-2020 levels. This positive trend did not continue in 2022, as a new crisis emerged due to Russia's military aggression against Ukraine. This had a substantial impact on the sector, particularly because fuel, after labour, is the second most significant component of operating costs.

In addition to external shocks, the continued overexploitation of many key target species also negatively affects the sector's economic sustainability (FAO, 2024).

At the fleet segment level, the overall economic performance declined again in 2023, as 14 out of 23 active segments reported net losses, involving 4,048 vessels and 1,771 FTEs, representing 67% of the active fleet and 55% of total employment in the sector.

First sale prices

In 2023, the average real landed price of 1.29 euro/kg increased by +2% compared to 2022 (1.26 euro/kg), and by +17% compared to the 2013-2022 average.

Seasonality plays a significant role in first sale price fluctuations, driven by several factors. Firstly, the availability of resources varies seasonally. Secondly, fisheries management measures, particularly spatio-temporal closures, affect market supply and influence first sale prices for specific species, such as European lobster, spinous spider crab, common spiny

lobster, and groupers. Lastly, increased demand during the tourist season typically leads to seasonal price increases at first sale.

Considering total landed value, five species dominate, including European pilchard (sardine), European anchovy, European hake, Norway lobster, and deep-water rose shrimp, together around 87% and 62% of total landing volume and value in 2023, respectively. Of the top five commercially most important species, Norway lobster, European hake and deep-water rose shrimp had higher prices (16.7, 4.2 and 3.6 euro/kg, respectively) in 2023.

Prices of small pelagic species in Croatia, 0.58 euro/kg for sardine and 0.92 euro/kg for anchovy, are significantly lower compared to EU averages. This pricing reflects a reliance on high-volume, lower-priced species and is influenced by several factors:

- Market Destination: A significant portion of sardine and anchovy catches are directed to bluefin tuna farms as feed, which typically commands lower prices than fish sold for direct human consumption.
- Local Market Demand: Domestic consumption patterns and limited processing infrastructure constrain the potential for higher pricing.
- Fleet Composition: The prevalence of purse seiners targeting small pelagic species contributes to high supply volumes, impacting market prices.
- Processing and Export Activities: Limited value-added processing and export diversification reduce opportunities for higher revenue streams.

Markets and trade

The domestic market for products from marine capture fisheries in Croatia is highly diverse and fragmented. Approximately 1,300 registered first buyers operate in the country, including fish storage and processing facilities, traders, fishmongers, producer organisations, and fisheries cooperatives with approved establishments.

Channels for sale are different for small pelagic fish, large pelagic fish, and demersal fish. The largest share of marine capture fisheries of demersal fish is intended for placing on markets outside Croatia (export) and placement at local restaurants and markets, whereas large quantities of small pelagic fish are destined as raw material for the fish processing sector and in the aquaculture as animal feed, exclusively in bluefin tuna farming.

Croatia remains a net exporter of fisheries and aquaculture products. Both import and export have increased in terms of value and volume in the period 2013-2023.

In 2023, the total export value of marine fish and aquaculture products was approximately EUR 313 million (94% of total exported value), with a volume of 87,795 tonnes (95% of total exported volume). Imports in 2023 totalled around EUR 231 million (nearly 90% of total imported value), amounting to 89 066 tonnes (94% of total imported volume).

Fresh and chilled fish accounts for the highest value in exports, primarily including farmed European seabass, gilthead seabream, and bluefin tuna. Japan is the main export market outside the EU for bluefin tuna, while within the EU, Italy, Slovenia, and Spain are leading destinations for fresh, chilled, dried, salted, or brined fishery and aquaculture products. Cephalopods (mainly squid) and demersal fish (fresh/chilled) are also predominantly exported to Italy. In terms of imports, the most represented commodities are cephalopods (squid), skipjack tuna, salmon, and others, primarily originating from Spain, Italy, Slovenia, and the Netherlands (MA-DoF, 2024).

Consumption

Fish consumption in Croatia is slightly higher than the EU average (23.51 kg per capita in 2022) with a highly seasonal demand. Apparent consumption was estimated at 23.71 kg per capita in 2022, a 7% increase compared with 2021 (EUMOFA, 2024). Between 2022 and 2023, Croatia experienced a decline in both the net supply and per capita consumption of fishery and aquaculture products. This trend is largely due to reduced landings of small pelagic fish. However, the increased consumption of aquaculture products suggests a shift towards farmed fish to compensate for the lower availability of supply from the marine fisheries (MA-DoF, 2024[18)].

Operating costs (external factors)

Implications of the energy crisis precipitated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022 continued onto 2023. The sharp escalation in global energy prices, significantly increased operational costs for fishing vessels. This surge in expenses strained the profitability of the sector, especially for fuel-intensive segments like bottom trawlers and purse seiners[19]. In response, the Croatian government implemented financial compensation measures for vessel owners. These subsidies aimed to alleviate the economic burden on fishers and maintain the viability of fishing operations during the crisis period. Beyond immediate cost concerns, the energy crisis underscored the sector's vulnerability to external shocks.

With the drop in fuel prices in 2023, the structure of operational costs, totalling EUR 83.3 million, returned to more sustainable levels. Fuel costs accounted for 21% of overall operating costs and decreased by -24% compared to 2022, due to drop in fuel price and fuel consumption in 2023 by -19% and -7%, respectively, compared to 2022. In contrast, repair and maintenance costs, representing 13% of operating costs, increased by +31% in 2023.

Despite a 24% increase in the estimated number of paid workers (3,845 individuals), both the estimated full-time equivalent (FTE) employment (3,201) and total labour costs (38% of operating costs) declined, by -4% and -1%, respectively. This suggests greater crew turnover and more part-time employment.

To mitigate the effects of the energy crisis in 2022-2023, financial compensations were provided to vessel owners, calculated based on fishing days and adjusted according to monthly fuel price fluctuations.

Fisheries have also been increasingly impacted by broader external pressures. Climate change and shifting environmental conditions are affecting the sector both directly and indirectly altering species productivity and distribution, heightening safety risks due to operating in bad weather conditions, reducing fishing opportunities and income, and increasing operational costs. The loss of fishing days due to more frequent and severe extreme weather events is particularly problematic for purse seiners and bottom trawlers, whose activity is managed through effort-based regimes.

In addition, damages to fishing gears and operations caused by protected marine species, such as dolphins, seabirds, and sea turtles, are frequently reported. To address this, vessel

[18] MA-DoF. 2024. Availability and visible consumption of fishery and aquaculture products in the Republic of Croatia in 2022 and 2023. Link

[19] MA-DoF. 2024. Availability and visible consumption of fishery and aquaculture products in the Republic of Croatia in 2022 and 2023. Link

owners are eligible for State Aid compensations covering income loss and increased costs resulting from gear damage caused by marine mammals.

Status of Key Stocks, changes in TACs and quotas

Fishery in Croatia is based mostly on catch and effort management, spatio-temporal closures while only Bluefin tuna and swordfish fishery is restricted by TACs:

- Bluefin tuna: National quota was set at 950.3 tonnes of which up to 855.27 tonnes for farming purposes (Council Regulation (EU) No 2023/194). Quota was nationally allocated to commercial fleets: PS and HL fleet, by-catch and non-commercial fleets (sports, recreational and scientific). After PS fishing season 25 tons were transferred to Greece through swap mechanism. Total amount of catch was 992,029 tonnes (94% of total quota), by which 971,969 tonnes was utilized by PS and HL fleet. The entire catch of purse seine fisheries in 2023 was transferred to farming cages.
- Swordfish: National quota was set at 13.74 tonnes (season from 1 April to 31 December) by way of Council Regulation (EU) No 2023/194, and additional amount was transferred from Greece by swaps. The adjusted Croatian swordfish quota was 48.7 tonnes for 2023. Individual quota per vessel was allocated per vessel for swordfish LL fishery, while swordfish HL fishery operates under the “Olympic” system with only the overall quota for the segment set. Total amount of catch in 2023 was 40.9 tonnes (84% of adjusted quota).
- Small pelagic species in Adriatic Sea: National maximum catch limit for sardine and anchovy in 2023 set to 51 735 tonnes (Recommendation GFCM/43/2021/20, Council Regulation (EU) No 2023/195).

The status of key stocks in demersal fisheries has been assessed according to scientific advice validated in 2024 by the GFCM within the framework of the Adriatic demersal management plan (Rec. GFCM/43/2019/5). The findings indicate varied progress among these stocks. Common sole and red mullet have achieved levels consistent with sustainable exploitation. Conversely, deep-water rose shrimp remains at heightened risk and is currently overexploited, with fishing pressure still excessive, despite the reproductive stock demonstrating some resilience. European hake continues to be overexploited, though fishing pressure has gradually decreased. However, the stock is recovering at a slow pace, indicative of a delayed biological response. Norway lobster is overexploited in the northern central Adriatic, and its overall status across the broader region is considered uncertain, yet likely unfavourable under precautionary assessment (FAO, 2024). The gradual improvement in the condition of demersal resources is anticipated to positively impact all DTS and DRB segments, as well as the DFN and FPO segments.

Both small pelagic stocks in the Adriatic Sea (GSAs 17–18) showed a reduction in fishing mortality. For anchovy, fishing mortality was close to sustainable levels, while sardine biomass continued to decline despite catch reductions. In 2024, European anchovy was assessed as biologically above precautionary biomass levels but remained in a state of overexploitation due to elevated fishing pressure. European sardine, meanwhile, was found to be at increased risk of overexploitation, with declining biomass and continued excessive fishing pressure, indicating a need for further management action to support stock recovery (FAO. 2024).

Management instruments

Management measures introduced in response to unsustainable exploitation have had a significant impact on the economic performance of the fisheries sector in Croatia. A wide range of spatial and temporal restrictions have been implemented, including a complex combination of closed areas, seasonal closures, and varied technical measures. These efforts are part of a broader framework aimed at controlling fishing effort across all fleet segments aiming to reduce pressure on overexploited stocks and support the recovery of key marine resources.

Since 2013, sardine and anchovy fisheries in the Adriatic have been managed under a GFCM management plan, updated in 2021. While the new plan removed direct effort limits, previous rules (GFCM/37/2013/1) remain in effect. Regulation (EU) 2023/2124 caps fishing at 20 days/month and 180 days/year, with national rules limiting vessels to 144 days, while Regulation (EU) 2023/195 set the maximum level of catches of sardine and anchovy. On national level in 2023, temporal closures included a total of 83 days of closure for entire purse seiners targeting sardine and anchovy. As a result of these measures—and reflecting the poor status of small pelagic stocks—fishing days in the purse seine fleet fell by 16% compared to 2022 and 34% compared to 2014 (baseline year), while catches of sardine and anchovy have dropped by 36% since 2014.

In 2019, Recommendation GFCM/43/2019/5 on a multiannual management plan for sustainable demersal fisheries in the Adriatic Sea was adopted. It introduced a comprehensive set of measures, including an effort regime requiring countries to reduce fishing effort in proportion to their impact on the status of demersal resources. This provision was incorporated into EU law through Regulation (EU) 2023/195, which set Croatia's maximum allowable fishing effort (in fishing days) for bottom trawling in 2023. At the national level, a temporal closure for bottom trawlers was implemented from 15 September to 14 October (30 days). In 2023, the number of fishing days for the DTS fleet reached its lowest level in the 2013-2023 period, down 14% compared to 2022 and 30% compared to the 2015 baseline. Consequently, total catch of demersal species in the bottom otter trawl nets (OTB) decreased by 17% compared to 2015.

To mitigate the economic impact of these restrictions, accompanying support measures were provided through the EMFF and EMFAF.

Innovation and Development (role of the EMFF and EMFAF)

One of the key challenges in the Croatian fisheries sector is ensuring the competitiveness and sustainability of enterprises, particularly within the SSCF, while considering the fleet structure and the sector's social dimension.

In 2023, the average fishing vessel in the Croatian fleet was 41 years old. Traditionally, vessels were constructed from wood, while metal vessels—introduced more recently—are on average 29 years old. In small-scale fleet segments, newer fibreglass vessels dominate, especially those using hooks and lines, as well as pots and traps. A specific vessel type within the L12AG activity, is the fibreglass boat with a glass bottom, specifically designed for highly selective harpoon fishing targeting species such as common octopus and common squid.

Diesel engines are the most common across the Croatian fleet, whereas gasoline-fuelled engines are more prevalent in the small-scale segments, particularly among vessels under 6 metres in length. In terms of energy consumption, trawlers and purse seiners are the most

demanding, with differing consumption patterns throughout fishing trips and contributing significantly to total fuel use and energy costs.

Considering the fleet structure and energy demands, investments across fleet segments have focused on improving engine performance, enhancing gear selectivity, and upgrading on-board systems for fish preservation and processing, all aimed at increasing product quality and market value. This investment trend is expected to continue in line with the objectives of the EMFF and EMFAF.

In 2023, total investments amounted to EUR 16.5 million, marking a 16% increase compared to 2022. However, average investment per vessel remained relatively low, at EUR 1,659 in the SSCF, EUR 3,651 in the L12AG segment, and EUR 18,263 in the LSF. Subsidies on investment totalled EUR 0.6 million in 2023.

Improving safety and working conditions on board remains a high priority, particularly as fishers are increasingly forced to operate under unfavourable weather conditions due to spatial-temporal closures and restrictions on catch and effort, which reduce the number of available fishing days. The sector’s strong dependence on sardine and anchovy, both in poor stock status, highlights the urgent need for diversification to stabilise and increase fishers' income, especially as annual catch limits continue to be decreased.

At both national and regional levels, numerous projects are underway to improve gear selectivity, conduct mitigation trials to reduce bycatch of vulnerable and protected species, and develop technical innovations aimed at lowering fuel intensity. These efforts are supported through cooperation between scientists and fishers, with financial backing from the EMFF and EMFAF. However, the practical impact on improving the viability of fishing operations remains limited in the face of declining stocks and restrictive management measures. Despite innovation and funding, many fishers continue to struggle with reduced income and fewer fishing opportunities.

Social impact

The social characteristics of fisheries in Croatia present several challenges for the Croatian fishing fleet, including a shortage of skilled fishers, the ageing of vessel owners, and decreasing intergenerational succession. Multiple factors contribute to this situation, including non-competitive fish prices, insufficient infrastructure, limited investment capacity for new businesses, harsh working conditions, unpredictable or irregular income, uncertainty caused by management measures (such as spatio-temporal closures), global disruptions and shocks (e.g., COVID-19, the war in Ukraine, climate change), difficulties in recruiting skilled crew, and competition from other economic sectors and recreational fisheries.

In 2023, the average age of vessel owners in the Croatian fishing fleet was 53 years, excluding those operating in the small-scale artisanal fisheries segment intended 'for personal needs' (MOR vessels). In this segment, which includes approximately 3,668 individuals, 99% of whom are unpaid, and collectively represent only 206 FTEs, socially sensitive criteria are applied in the licensing process. Priority is given to older applicants, resulting in an average vessel owner age of over 65 years. According to the DCF’s age classification (excluding MOR vessels), 37% of vessel owners were aged between 50 and 64, 30% between 40 and 49, 12% over 65, and only 21% under 40 years (MA-DoF, 2023).

4.11.6 Assessment of the economic performance for 2024 and 2025 (nowcasts)

Model results and outlook

Preliminary data for 2024 indicate a 3% decrease in the number of active vessels compared to 2023, totalling 5,892 active vessels. Both landed weight and value declined, by 24% and 13% respectively. The Croatian fleet landed approximately 41,950 tonnes of fish in 2024, valued at over EUR 62.2 million (provisional).

Total fishing effort, measured in days at sea, decreased by 2% to 310,950 days, accompanied by a 5% reduction in energy consumption and a 23% drop in energy costs, which fell to EUR 13.7 million.

According to the nowcast model, Revenue and GVA declined in 2024 due to reduced landings. Revenue is estimated at EUR 117.5 million (-9%) and GVA at EUR 77.7 million (-4%). In contrast, gross and net profits increased, reaching EUR 45.6 million (+4%) and EUR 27.8 million (+13%), respectively. As a result, profit margins improved, indicating greater operational efficiency and lower input costs, particularly for fuel.

This positive trend is expected to continue in 2025, despite a projected decline in revenue to EUR 107.2 million. Gross profit is forecast at EUR 47.3 million and Net profit at EUR 31.5 million, resulting in further increases in profit margins to 44.1% and 29.4%, respectively. These developments reflect increased operational efficiency, cost control (particularly fuel), and fleet restructuring measures introduced through Croatia's Action Plan to align fleet capacity with available resources (including scrapping and buy-off of fishing rights for certain fishing gears). These actions are expected to mitigate economic impacts of reduced fishing opportunities by improving the performance and viability of the active fleet segments that remain.

Looking ahead to 2025 and beyond, the implementation of management measures in the Adriatic Sea is expected to significantly shape economic outcomes. Catch and effort restrictions will particularly affect purse seiners targeting small pelagic fish and bottom trawlers targeting demersal species.

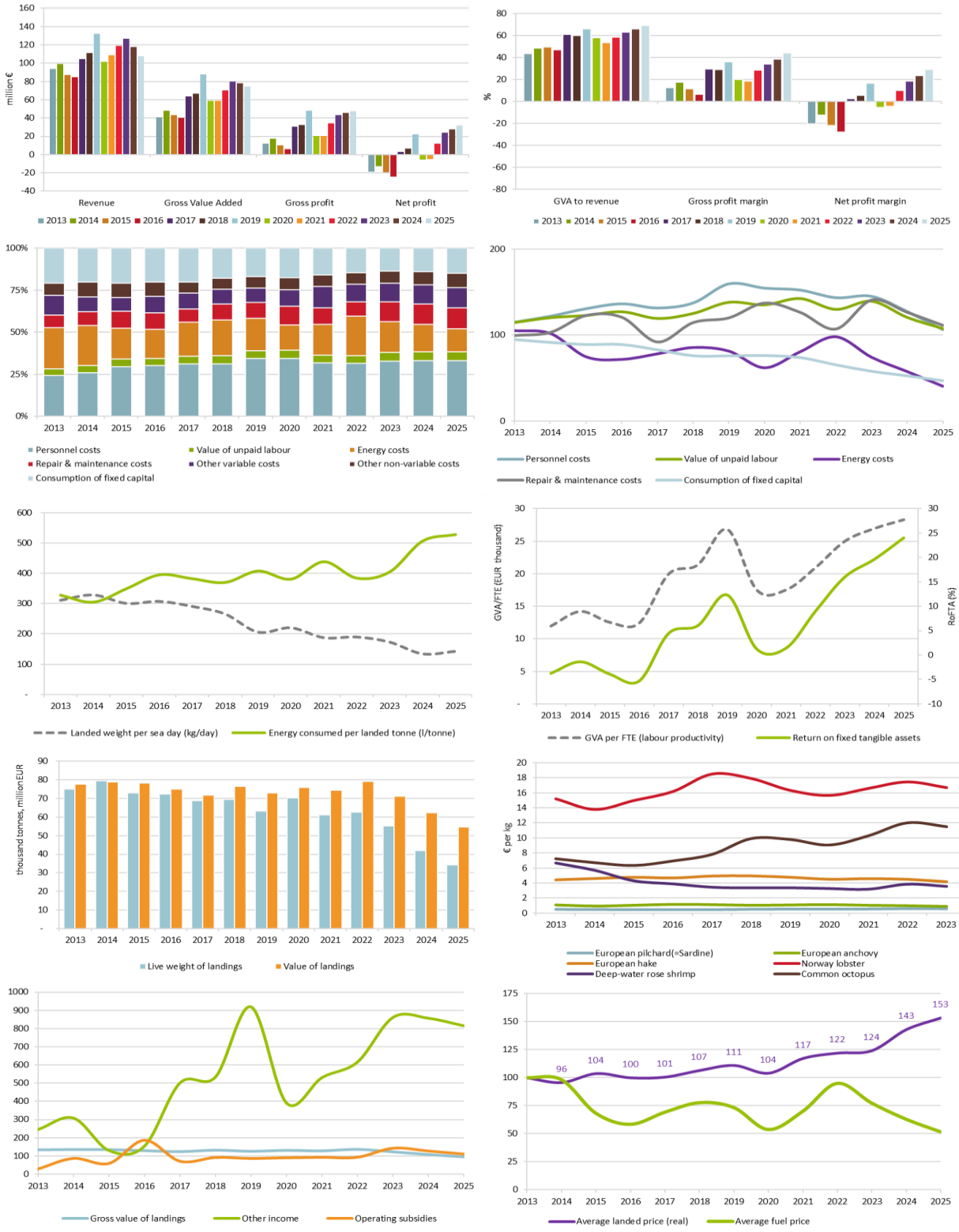
4.11.7 Methodological considerations and data issues

All fleet segments contributing significantly to the total catch of the Croatian fleet have been sampled with satisfactory response rates. Where possible, administrative sources were utilized to include data for all vessels, including information on energy consumption, energy costs, and subsidies. Capacity, effort, and landing data are collected for the entire fleet in accordance with the Control Regulation and national legislation. Fishing reports are used for documenting fishing activity for vessels below 12 metres in length overall (LoA) that use passive gears.

Most small-scale vessels in the PGP segment, numbering around 3,500 vessels transferred into commercial SSCF during 2015-2017, belong to a special commercial category called *mali obalni ribolov* (MOR) under national legislation. Fishers operating MOR vessels typically do not engage full-time in fishing and have limited activity due to specific gear restrictions and daily catch limits. Although landing values for these vessels are estimated, most MOR vessels are unable to market their catch due to existing national regulations. Therefore, economic indicators for the PGP segment should be interpreted cautiously.

Historical economic data collected under the DCF, originally expressed in Croatian kuna (HRK), were converted to Euros using the average annual exchange rates for the reference years 2013-2022 and the fixed conversion rate for 2023.

Figure 4.11.1.Croatia: Main trends in (from top to bottom, left to right): economic performance indicators (absolute value and relative values); cost structure and variation in main cost items; productivity and efficiency indicators; landings (in weight and value) and average price (euro/kg) of top species; variation in income variables and average prices of key input/outputs (2013=100). Nowcast figures for 2024 and 2025.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

4.12 Italy

4.12.1 Short description of the national fleet

In 2023, the Italian fleet had 11,689 registered vessels with a capacity of 141,364 GT or 915,926 kW; 83% of these vessels were active. This is a 12% decrease compared to the period between 2013 and 2023.

Table 4.12.1. Italy at a glance.

Italy		2023					%Δ 2023-2022				
Indicator	**Units**	**Overall**	**SSCF**	**L12AG**	**LSF**	**DWF**	**Overall**	**SSCF**	**L12AG**	**LSF**	**DWF**
Active vessels	Number	9,645	6,404	197	3,041	3	0%	2%	-25%	-1%	-
FTE	Number	13,367	5,602	183	7,582	-	-1%	1%	-38%	0%	-
Gross Value of landings	Million €	649.2	158.3	6.0	484.9	-	-17%	-15%	-32%	-18%	-
GVA	Million €	381.6	116.1	3.3	262.1	-	-19%	-17%	-37%	-20%	-
Gross profit	Million €	144.7	49.1	1.2	94.4	-	-38%	-17%	-39%	-45%	-
Net profit	Million €	- 8.4	14.3	- 0.5	- 22.3	-	-112%	-41%	-78%	-147%	-

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure

The Italian fishing fleet is nationally divided into:

- a small-scale coastal fleet (66% of total active vessels, but 9% of the whole active gross tonnage)
- vessels less than 12 metres using active gears (2% of total active vessels)
- a large-scale fleet (32% of total active vessels), which was mainly made up of vessels using active gears, especially demersal trawlers
- a distant water fleet of three active vessels: two trawlers operating in the Eastern Central Atlantic and one vessel operating as a purse seiner in the Indian Ocean.

By the end of 2023, the number of fishing enterprises totaled 7,052, with 83% owning a single vessel. The percentage of individual companies decreased slightly over the years, averaging a rate of 2% between 2013 and 2024, while the number of fishing enterprises with 2 to 5 vessels steadily increased since 2017, indicating growing concentration in the sector.

The estimated value of physical capital of the Italian fleet was EUR 582 million, with 12% corresponding to the inactive fleet.

Fleet activity and production

In 2023, the fleet spent a total of around 1.0 million days-at-sea (DaS). Effort, in DaS, decreased by 22% between 2013 and 2023. The reduction over the last 10 years is linked to the entry into force of several national and European regulations enforcing an effort regime which aims to reduce the fishing days for certain fleet segments in different fishing area (DTS in Adriatic and Tyrrhenian Sea, PS and TM in Adriatic Sea, DTS in the Strait of Sicily). The reduction has been larger for LSF (-27%) than for SSCF (-19%), over the period 2013-2023. In 2023, the average days-at-sea per vessel has been 106 (over the period 2013 to 2022, the average DaS per vessel was 119).

In 2023, the total volume of landings declined by -9% compared to the previous year. The overall value of landings also dropped, though more significantly, by -17%. Despite the reduction in local production, ex-vessel prices experienced a decrease.

Giant red shrimp, striped venus, European hake, Atlantic bluefin tuna and common cuttlefish, contributed more than a third to the total value of landings. The landings of European anchovy and European pilchard —historically among the most heavily harvested fish species—experienced a significant decline in 2023, with production volumes decreasing by -19% and -43%, respectively.

Employment and average salaries

In 2023, the Italian fishing sector employed 20,745 people (13,367 FTEs). Small-scale fishing operations accounted for 47% of these jobs. Between 2013 and 2023, total employment fell by 15%, FTEs dropped by 27%, and GVA per FTE decreased by 15%.

4.12.2 Economic results for 2023 and recent trends

The economic results pertain solely to the Italian fishing fleet active in 2023.

National fleet performance

The economic performance of the Italian fleet deteriorated in 2023, primarily due to a reduction in the volume and value of landings. With the exception of longliners and the tuna purse seine fleet, all segments of the fishing fleet experienced a consistent decline in production value (-17% in 2023 compared to 2022), despite the fishing effort remaining largely stable in terms of both the number of active vessels and days at sea.

The total income generated by the national fleet in 2023 amounted to EUR 687.5 million, representing a decrease of 16% compared to 2022. Income from direct fishing activities was EUR 649 million, non-fishing income was EUR 13 million (a 50% decrease compared to 2022), and income from leasing out tuna fishing rights was EUR 2.6 million (an increase of 142% compared to 2022). Operating subsidies totaled EUR 23 million, reflecting a 100% increase in 2023 compared to 2022. Regulation (EU) 2022/1278 introduced specific measures to mitigate the impact of Russia’s aggression against Ukraine on fishing activities. In 2023, new public calls were launched under the EMFF operational program, providing monthly compensation to each vessel. The amount of compensation was based on fishing technique, vessel length (LOA class), and number of operational days. Although payments began in 2023, most fishing enterprises received compensation in 2024.

The three major cost components included labour, energy costs, and consumption of fixed capital. Labour costs amounted to EUR 209 million (a 3% increase compared to 2022), energy costs were EUR 166 million (a 17% decrease compared to 2022), and consumption of fixed capital (annual depreciation) decreased by 5% compared to 2022, amounting to EUR 135 million.

In terms of economic fleet performance, GVA and gross profit generated by the national fleet in 2023 were EUR 382 million and EUR 145 million, respectively. These figures corresponded to decreases of 37% and 53%, compared to 2022. Net profit, which had exceeded EUR 110 million on average during the period 2013-2022, consistently fell year after year, with the fleet segment registering a net loss of EUR 8 million in 2023. Including operating subsidies, the profit for 2023 would remain overall positive, with a net profit of EUR 15 million. These results indicate a significant declining trend in the economic

performance of the Italian fleet, which began in 2020. By 2023, all economic indicators had fallen to the lowest levels observed during the period 2013-2023.

Resource productivity and efficiency

In 2023, the gross profit margin was 22%, down from 29% in 2022, suggesting reduced operating efficiency. Factors such as fishing effort limitations and lower productivity affected profitability.

The Rate of Return on Fixed Tangible Assets (RoFTA) was 2%. Labour productivity decreased to EUR 28,546 per FTE, with a 1% decrease in FTE and a 19% drop in GVA.

Fuel efficiency for the Italian fleet worsened, with fuel costs making up 27% of revenue in 2023, compared to 22% from 2018-2022. Despite higher fuel prices, fuel intensity decreased to 1,581 litres per tonne of landed fish, due to reduced fishing effort and more sustainable practices. Fuel consumption was estimated at 191 million litres, a 38% reduction from the average of the 2013-2022 period.

4.12.3 Performance by fishing activity

Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

The Italian SSCF includes 6,404 active vessels, representing almost 66% of the total fleet. In 2023, it generated EUR 158 million, or 24% of Italy's landing value. The fleet is primarily in the 06-12m length class (73%) and uses gears like set gillnets, trammel nets, pots, traps, and longlines. Employing 9,687 crew members, it accounts for 47% of the sector's national employment, with around 2,000 being unpaid labor, often owners themselves.

Fishing is becoming secondary to tourism, with many fishers being retirees supplementing their income. Despite stable sea days, 2023 saw a -7% decline in landing volume and a -15% drop in value, impacting labor costs as wages are tied to income. Most fishers are vessel owners, earning revenue minus operational costs, with unpaid labor at 20% of total labor costs.

The SSCF remained profitable with a net profit of EUR 14 million due to high market value species, selective fishing practices, and low operating costs. Products are mainly sold locally. However, net profits continued to decline, and productivity indicators were lower than the national average. In 2023, labor productivity was EUR 20,726 per FTE, below the national average of EUR 28,546, and revenue per vessel was approximately EUR 24,726.

Vessels under 12 metres using active gears fleet (L12AG)

In 2023, L12AG fleet included 197 vessels with a capacity of 1,034 GT and 13,061 kW. This segment comprises 103 purse seiners and 94 trawlers. Hydraulic dredges under 12 metres are excluded as they were aggregated in the DRB 1218 cluster.

The segment is highly heterogeneous. Vessels employing purse seines are predominantly located in the Southern Tyrrhenian Sea, with many using the lampara net—a surrounding net combined with a powerful lamp to attract fish at night. Small trawlers are prevalent in nearly all fishing ports; however, their numbers are gradually decreasing due to rising production costs and restrictions on fishing effort, leading to ongoing activity reductions.

In 2023, a total of 120,682 fishing days were recorded, indicating a 31% decrease compared to 2022. On average, each vessel operated for 62 days throughout the year. Fishing effort is significantly influenced by seasonality—especially for purse seiners—and by weather and

marine conditions. These factors critically impact small trawlers, which can operate only during periods of favorable weather and sea conditions.

The revenue for 2023 amounted to EUR 6 million. Landing income represents 1% of national income and has decreased by EUR 32 million compared to 2022. Both GVA (EUR 3.3 million) and Gross profit (EUR 1.2 million) declined in 2023, reflecting a negative trend in economic performance.

Large-scale fleet (LSF)

The LSF segment, comprising 3,041 active vessels, accounted for almost 32% of the active vessels in 2023. They represent a significant portion of the active fleet in terms of gross tonnage (87%) and engine power (76%). The LSF predominantly consists of vessels using active gears, especially demersal trawlers and beam trawlers.

Employment remained stable in 2023 with 10,610 jobs; approximately 8% of the employed individuals were estimated to be unpaid labour (vessel owner's own labour, considered self-employed). The sector faces considerable challenges in recruiting fishermen, with an increasing demand each year for labour from Southeast Asian countries such as Indonesia and Bangladesh.

From 2013 to 2023, the number of vessels belonging to the LSF decreased by 14%; over the same period, there was a significant reduction in activity (27% fewer fishing days). Demersal trawlers experienced the greatest reduction in fishing days, which can be attributed to regulations limiting fishing efforts.

As a result of reduced effort, both the volume and value of landings decreased by 32% and 36%, respectively, compared to the average from 2013-2022. Total costs decreased by 7% compared to the previous year, with the largest reduction in energy costs, which accounted for 29% of total LSF costs and decreased by 17% in one year due to lower fuel prices. Despite the cost reduction, the LSF recorded a net loss of EUR 22 million in 2023.

4.12.4 Performance of selected fleet segments

In 2023, the Italian fleet consisted of 24 fleet segments. Economic performance for two segments has not reported for confidentiality (OFRPS 40XX and OFRDTS 40XX).

Based on the net profit margin, three fleet segments showed high profitability, nineteen a weak profitability. Net losses are registered for fourteen segments.

Both in terms of number of vessels and production value, the fleet is dominated by polyvalent passive segments, large demersal trawlers, and dredgers. The performance of the polyvalent passive vessels is described in the section on the SSCF, which includes the fleet segments PGP 0006m, PGP 0612m and HOK 0612m.

Demersal trawlers 18-24 metres

In 2023, this fleet segment consisted of 516 active vessels, which contributed to the total value of landings for EUR 116 million. The fleet segment employed 2,099 persons, equivalent to a total of 1,885 FTEs.

Demersal trawlers have a multi-species landings composition. The species contributing the most to the total landings value of this fleet segment are European hake, deep-water rose shrimp, blue and red shrimp and Norway lobster.

Compared to 2022, the value of landings decreased by -9%. Even though the total costs registered reductions over the same period (-2%), these were not sufficient to counterbalance the declined income. In 2023, the fleet segment registered a gross value added of EUR 55 million, -6% compared to the previous year, a gross profit of EUR 25 million, 54% lower than the value registered in 2022, and a net loss of -EUR 9 million.

Demersal trawlers 24-40 metres

In 2023, this fleet segment included 166 active vessels producing a total value of landings of EUR 66 million and employing a total of 927 FTEs. This fleet segment is concentrated in the GSA 16 (Strait of Sicily) and mainly in the port of Mazara del Vallo.

In 2023, the fleet segment registered a gross value added of EUR 31 million, a gross profit of EUR 3.7 million. The fleet segment produced net losses of EUR 19 million in 2023 compared to net losses of EUR 8 million in 2022. The fleet segment showed a weak profitability and a deteriorated economic development trend.

There are several reasons behind this negative trend. First, the significant decline in the value of landings, driven by a sharp decrease in the prices of target species. Giant red shrimp, blue and red shrimp and deep-water rose shrimp are the main target species representing 64% of the landings in value. The gap between landing prices and final consumer prices continues to widen. In addition, many Sicilian harbours are experiencing fierce competition from the Tunisian fleet, as fresh Tunisian products enter Sicilian markets at prices nearly half of those of local products.

Additional factors are linked to management measures aimed at regulating fishing effort, which have resulted in a gradual reduction in the allowed number of fishing days (-21% compared to compared to the average 2013–2022 period). In 2023, the GFCM adopted the Recommendation GFCM/45/2022/5 on a multiannual management plan for the sustainable exploitation of giant red shrimp and blue and red shrimp stocks in the Strait of Sicily; 94% of fishing vessels authorized for deep-water shrimp fisheries in the Strait of Sicily belong to Italian fleet. A TAC of 942 tonnes for giant red shrimp was set for 2023.

Hooks 12-18 metres

In 2023, 207 vessels operated mainly in GSA 10 (Southern and Central Tyrrhenian Sea) and GSA 19 (Western Ionian Sea). This segment provided 752 jobs, equivalent to 396 FTE.

The fleet targets a variety of species; surface long-liners target mainly large pelagic species such as Atlantic bluefin tuna, swordfish and albacore, while bottom long liners target demersal species such as hake and Atlantic chub mackerel.

The most important target species is the swordfish with a value of landing of EUR 9.2 million and average landed price of about 9.85 euro/kg. Swordfishes are sold for domestic consumption and exported in other EU countries, mainly Spain. Mediterranean swordfish is subject to a multiannual recovery plan aimed at rebuilding the stock, adopted by ICCAT. The plan provides for a closure period (from 1 January to 31 March of each year), Minimum Conservation Reference Size (MCRS) and technical characteristics of the fishing gear; a list of authorized vessels is updated every year.

Atlantic bluefin tuna is subject to quota; the value of landings for this species for the HOK 1218, was EUR 2.6 million with an average landed price of 9.22 euro/kg. The greatest part of the landed tuna is sold on domestic market.

In 2023, the total value of landings was about EUR 11 million. The main expenses are labour costs (35%), consumption of fixed capital (22%) energy cost (18%) and other variable costs (12%, mainly composed by hook and baits). This last cost item has significantly decreased in recent years due to the introduction of a new fishing gear, which does not fit into any previously known category. The hooks were partially substituted by a new gear (PLEN 25-01), called “trapline”. The CPUE with this technological improvement increased, positively impacting the economic profitability of the fleet segment (Garibaldi, 2024).

In 2023, this segment recorded a net profit of EUR 1.7 million; profitability was deemed weak with an improved economic trend.

4.12.5 Drivers affecting the economic performance

Almost all economic indicator worsened in 2023. Lower income from landings was the main driving force behind the overall deterioration in the economic performance. LSF suffered a major decrease compared to SSCF.

The effort reduction was proportionally lower than the decline in the volume of landings and this led to a decrease in productivity. The landings per unit of effort (LPUE) recorded the lowest level since 2013. LPUE was around 119 tonnes per DaS in 2023, a decrease of -8% compared to 2022. The status of certain stocks improved in the last years, even if the achievement of a long-term sustainable exploitation of the resources is still far for the majority of the stocks exploited (STECF, 2024). In particular, a severe crisis has been recorded in the landings of small pelagic fish, with a significant decline in sardine landings and the presence of undersized anchovies.

Markets and Trade (including first sale prices)

In 2023, a slight decrease in the average price is detected (-5% compared to long term average 2013-2022); the first sale prices of the most important target species showed a negative trend, compared to 2022. Giant red shrimp and Norway lobster were the two species with the highest prices (27.00 euro/kg and 24.00 euro/kg, respectively). The price of bluefin tuna reached 11.30 euro/kg and remained quite stable in the last three years.

In recent years, there have been many cases of local operators adopting quality brands, quality certification or undertaking direct sales activities in local markets. Nevertheless, the fishing sector is negatively affected by the structural problems related to the small size of the vessels and scarce ability to concentrate and promote production. There were still a highly fragmented sales channels dominated by regional wholesalers and traditional fishmongers with some exceptions in some fishing harbours in Northern Adriatic Sea and fishing techniques (TBB and TM). The role of Producers Organizations in supply concentration and marketing is increasing, especially in DRB and Hook fleet segments.

Regarding foreign trade, Italy is a net importer of fish and seafood; due to decreased imports, the trade balance deficit in 2023 improved (EUR 2.25 billion, 7% lower than in 2022).

Household expenditure on fish in 2023 reflected the trends of previous years. According to EUMOFA (EUMOFA, 2024), Italy, historically having the highest total expenditure on fishery and aquaculture products, experienced the largest absolute increase in household spending, with a rise of over EUR 783 million in 2023, representing a +6% relative increase. Despite easing slightly, inflationary pressures remained elevated in 2023, contributing to higher household expenditures (EUMOFA, 2024).

Operating costs (external factors)

In 2023, total operating costs incurred by Italian fleet were EUR 655 million, a decrease of 8% compared to 2022. The most important operational costs are the labour costs and the fuel costs. The operational cost structure changed slightly between 2013 and 2023. The incidence of labour costs on total operational costs remained stable to 32% while the incidence of fuel costs decreased from 28% to 25% in 2023 compared to 2022.

Energy costs amounted to EUR 166 million in 2023. Although this represents a decrease compared to 2022, they remain significantly higher than the 2013–2022 average. Fuel prices, while substantially lower than the peak levels reached in 2022, continue to exceed pre-Ukraine crisis levels, with an average price of 0.87 euro/litre in 2023 compared to 0.70 euro/litre over the 2013–2021 period.

To mitigate the impact of rising fuel costs, financial support measures were introduced for vessel owners. These included a one-off compensation based on vessel size and a tax credit equal to 20% of fuel expenditures incurred during the first half of 2022 and throughout the entirety of 2023.

Status of Key Stocks, changes in TACs and quotas

The majority of assessed fish stocks with validated evaluations continue to be exploited beyond biologically sustainable limits. Nevertheless, recent trends indicate gradual improvements. According to the GFCM Working Groups on Stock Assessment, both the proportion of overexploited stocks and the level of fishing pressure have declined in recent years. Notably, the F/F_{MSY} ratio has decreased by 31% since 2012 (FAO, 2023).

Based on the STECF analysis, F/F_{MSY} values in the Mediterranean Sea have shown a marked decline over the past three years (STECF-Adhoc-25-01). In the Western Mediterranean, STECF stock assessments highlight a positive trend in the sustainable exploitation of several demersal stocks—particularly deep-water rose shrimp and red mullet. However, European hake remains the most overexploited species, with the highest F/F_{MSY} ratio (STECF, 2024).

In 2023, several fisheries in Italy were managed through TACs and quotas. The quota for bluefin tuna is allocated among purse seines, longlines, cages, a quota set aside for compensations (slightly less than 5%), and recreational fishing (0.5%). A TAC of 4,745 tonnes was established in 2023.

Based on fishing opportunities for 2024 (Council Regulation 2024/259), maximum catch levels were set for small pelagic species in the Adriatic Sea (30,672 tonnes); blue and red shrimp and giant red shrimp in the Ligurian Sea, Tyrrhenian Sea, and Sardinia Island (580 tonnes); deep-water rose shrimp in the Strait of Sicily (2,083 tonnes); blue and red shrimp and giant red shrimp in the Strait of Sicily (942 tonnes); and blue and red shrimp and giant red shrimp in the Ionian Sea (545.5 tonnes).

Management instruments

The Italian fisheries management system focuses on regulating fishing effort through measures like closed areas, temporal closures, and limitations on fishing capacity. In 2023, Italy approved a plan to permanently reduce fleet segments not balanced with fishing opportunities, aiming for a 10-20% reduction per segment by gear type.

Annually, bottom trawlers face a mandatory 30-day cessation of activities, with dates varying each year. Further temporary cessations align with fishing opportunity reductions (Council

Regulation 2024/259). The West Med Plan targets a 10% reduction in demersal fleet fishing effort in GSAs 9, 10, and 11 for the first year, reaching up to a 30% cumulative reduction from the second to fifth years.

New management measures have been adopted over the last three years, including TACs for valuable species like shrimp. Spatial management includes restrictions in areas such as the Adriatic Sea and Tyrrhenian Sea, impacting fishers socio-economically and requiring adaptations. These closures highlight the need for thorough socio-economic impact assessments to ensure sustainability goals are met (Hogg, 2024).

Innovation and Development (role of the EMFF)

In 2023, investments were stable at EUR 17 million, averaging just EUR 1,800 per vessel despite the aging fleet. Large-scale operations received 66% of investments, while the small-scale fleet saw little due to financial constraints and low risk tolerance. The most profitable segments, like the tuna purse seiner fleet and segment DTS2440, continued investing in R&D, including onboard freezing technologies and improved packaging for giant red shrimp.

The EMFAF supports energy transition projects aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and promoting sustainability. In 2024, several grants were approved to help fishing vessels reduce energy consumption through engine replacement or modernization, with a particular interest from trawlers in hybrid systems.

4.12.6 Assessment the economic performance for 2024 and 2025 (nowcasts)

Model results

Model results indicate the Italian fleet is expected to be more profitable in 2024 than in 2023, primarily due to lower energy costs (a decrease in the fuel price of around 6% in 2024 compared to 2023). The model forecasts a 2% increase in GVA and a 7% increase in gross profit for 2024. It is estimated that GVA will reach EUR 388 million and Gross profit EUR 154 million; Net profit is projected to turn positive in 2024, reaching an estimated EUR 2.9 million, following the loss incurred in 2023. Increase in all the economic margins are also expected.

Nowcast for 2025 suggest a still positive and almost stable (if compared to 2024) economic performance, driven by a slight increase in total revenues and in the still lower level of operational costs, compared to 2024. Gross profit is forecast at EUR 182 million and net profit at EUR 30 million, resulting in further increases in profit margins to 27.7% and 4.6%, respectively.

Another key factor expected to affect the performance of the Italian fisheries sector is the sharp decline in the average price of bluefin tuna, which fell by more than 50% in 2024. This drop is largely attributed to reduced demand from the Japanese market and the depreciation of the yen against the euro. The heavy reliance on the Japanese market will adversely affect the purse seine tuna segment, which is expected to experience a 50% drop in revenues in 2024.

4.12.7 Methodological considerations and data issues

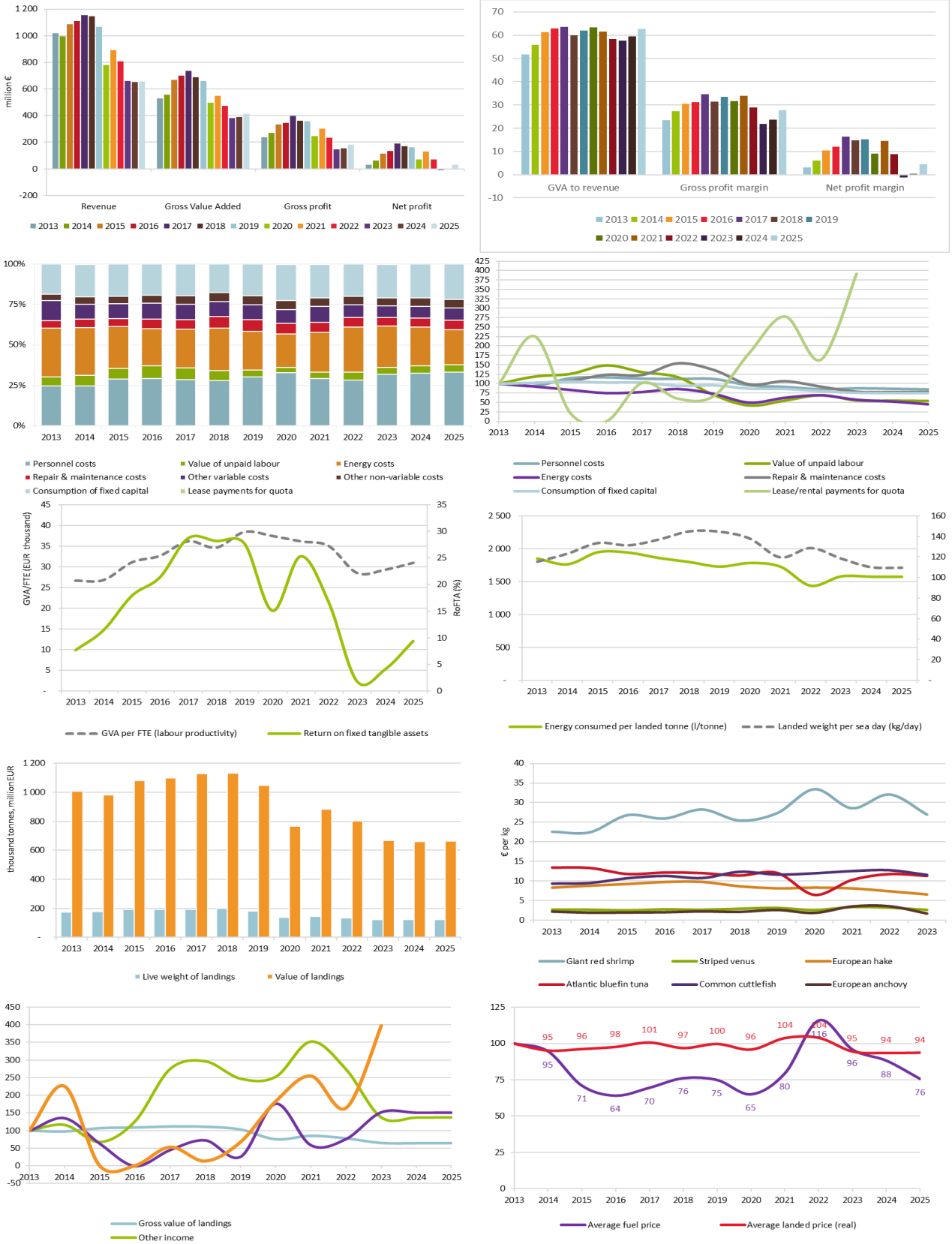
All fleet segments have been sampled with satisfactory response rates.

Economic data for the segments OFRPS 40XX and OFRDTS 40XX have not been provided for confidentiality reasons (only one and two active vessels, respectively, were operative in 2023).

The value of quota and other fishing rights and lease/rental payments for quota have been estimated applying the methodology suggested by the SECFISH Project, but further methodological refinement will be investigated in order to produce more reliable estimations in line with RCGECON 2023 recommendation n.7.

Figure 4.12.1.Italy: Main trends in (from top to bottom, left to right): economic performance indicators (absolute value and relative values); cost structure and variation in main cost items; productivity and efficiency indicators; landings (in weight and value) and average price (euro/kg) of top species;

variation in income variables and average prices of key input/outputs (2013=100). Nowcast figures for 2024 and 2025.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

4.13 Cyprus

4.13.1 Short description of the national fleet

The Cypriot fishery sector is characterized by small-scale vessels distributed across numerous landing sites, employing various fishing gears often within a single trip. The Mediterranean Sea fisheries operate on a mixed-species basis, where multiple species are present in the fishing area and are incidentally caught by the gear, regardless of whether they are the targeted species.

Table 4.11.1. Cyprus at a glance.

Cyprus		2023				%Δ 2023-2022			
Indicator	Units	Overall	SSCF	L12AG	LSF	Overall	SSCF	L12AG	LSF
Active vessels	Number	774	740	0	34	-1%	-1%	-	-15%
FTE	Number	737	599	-	138	-2%	3%	-	-17%
Gross Value of landings	Million €	7.5	3.7	-	3.8	-4%	7%	-	-14%
GVA	Million €	3.3	1.9	-	1.4	32%	21%	-	51%
Gross profit	Million €	1.5	0.8	-	0.7	112%	25%	-	1190%
Net profit	Million €	- 0.4	- 0.3	-	- 0.2	72%	37%	-	85%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

In 2023, fleet capacity experienced a slight decrease of 1% compared to the previous year, continuing the declining trend observed from 2013 to 2022. The fleet comprised 774 registered active vessels with a combined gross tonnage of 3,331 GT and a total engine power of 36,203 kW. This reduction reflects a 4% decline in the number of vessels relative to the 2013-2022 period, resulting in a corresponding decrease of 1% in both gross tonnage and engine power.

Large-scale vessels saw a 6% reduction during the 2013-2022 period, which had a minor negative impact of 1% on the total vessel tonnage. However, the total engine power increased by 4%, indicating that some vessels were removed from the Fleet Vessel Register while others replaced their engines with more powerful units, contributing to greater gross tonnage.

The decline in SSCF vessels by 4% over the same period resulted in a 2% decrease in total engine power but did not affect the combined gross tonnage. It is noteworthy that vessels that ceased fishing activities were scrapped in 2013 and at the end of 2015 under structural aid programs within the frameworks of the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) 2007-2013 and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) 2014-2020. All scrapped vessels belonged to the SSCF category.

Fleet structure

In 2023, LSF's engine power decreased by 12% from 2022, totalling 7,155 kW, while SSCF's engine power slightly reduced by 1%, totalling 29,047 kW.

LSF includes polyvalent vessels with passive gears and few trawlers operating in international and territorial waters. Most LSF vessels are 12-18 metres long and target

pelagic species like swordfish and bluefin tuna using drifting longlines, and demersal species using set nets and set longlines. Annual licenses for this segment are limited.

Demersal trawlers range from 19-27 metres. To protect confidentiality, vessels under 24 metres are grouped with those over 24 metres despite targeting the same species with similar gear. Licenses for trawlers in territorial waters are limited to two per year with a closed season from June 1 to November 7.

SSCF mainly uses bottom set nets and longlines for demersal species. Licenses are categorized into A (full-time), B (part-time), and C (periodic). Category C, introduced in 2008, allows fishing for only about 100 days per year, resulting in low income. Categories A and B include vessels 0-6m and 6-12m, while category C includes vessels PGO 0-6m and PGO 6-12m.

Fishing activity and production

An estimated 53,510 days were spent at sea in 2023, showing a rise of 14% compared to 2022 (47,099 DaS) but still demonstrating a decrease of 2% when compared to the period from 2013 to 2022. The SSCF followed the same pattern as the whole fleet, indicating a significant increase of 16% in 2023 (50,630) compared to 2022 (43,814), but showed a reduction of 2% compared to the period from 2013 to 2022. On the other hand, the LSF showed a considerable reduction of 7% between the current year 2023 (2,880) and the previous year (3,106). However, LSF indicated an increase of just 1% when compared to the period from 2013 to 2021. The main reason for the reduction in fishing days was that Cyprus implemented a voluntary scheme of temporary cessation of fishing activities for three months for the polyvalent vessels fleet segment in 2023 within the framework of the multiannual plan for albacore tuna, resulting in the reduction of fishing effort and thus, of fishing days.

The reduction in fishing days in 2022 compared to 2021 is explained by the measures taken due to the COVID-19 pandemic to stem the spread of the virus, such as lockdowns that significantly reduced the demand. In particular, Cyprus implemented a scheme of voluntary temporary cessation of fishing activities for three months for the large-scale fleet segment in 2022 as a measure to alleviate the economic consequences to fishers, resulting in the reduction of fishing effort and thus, of fishing days in 2022 for this particular segment.

The SSCF performs shorter (closer to the shore) fishing trips than the LSF and thus consumes a lower amount of fuel on each trip. Following the significant increase in effort by the small-scale fleet segment by 16% between the current year 2023 and 2022, the amount of energy consumed increased but by a lower percentage of about 4%. This implies that the vessels were performing shorter fishing trips. Nevertheless, the energy cost reduced by 11% in 2023 compared to 2022. The decrease in energy cost is explained by the fact that fuel prices dropped from 1.267 euro/litre in 2022 to 1.127 euro/litre in 2023.

For the LSF, the DaS and fishing trips performed decreased by 6% and 2%, respectively compared to the previous year 2022. It is noted that the active population of this segment in 2023 was much lower (30 vessels) than in 2022 (35 vessels). Also, it is important to note that Cyprus implemented temporary cessation schemes for this fleet segment in both years although for different purposes. The reduction in fishing effort and the smaller active fleet in 2023 compared to 2022 resulted in the significant reduction of energy consumption by 37%. The energy cost decreased remarkably by 46% in comparison to 2022 due to the fall in fuel prices, resulting in the current energy cost being 33% lower than the average of the period from 2013 to 2022.

The total weight of seafood landed, including production from the bluefin tuna purse-seiner, reached 1,190 tonnes, a decrease of 6% (1,269 tonnes in 2022), with a value of EUR 7.51 million in 2023 (EUR 7.85 million in 2022), representing a decrease of 4% compared to 2022. The landed weight per sea day (kg/day) decreased to 22 kg/day in 2023 (nearly 27 kg/day in 2022), continuing its declining trend (34 kg/day in 2017).

The bottom trawl fishery in the territorial waters and the inshore fishery with polyvalent passive gears target a mix of demersal species, typical of all Mediterranean demersal fisheries. The exploited stocks are not shared with other countries' fleets. Landings of both fisheries are mainly composed of picarel bogue, red mullet, surmullet, common pandora and cephalopods: common octopus, musky octopus, European squid, and common cuttlefish. The inshore fishery with polyvalent passive gears also catches relatively large quantities of parrotfish, blotched picarel, and spinefeet or rabbitfishes.

Concerning the large pelagic fishery, polyvalent vessels operate in the Eastern Mediterranean, catching primarily swordfish, albacore, and Atlantic bluefin tuna with drifting longlines. For the first time in 2017, Atlantic bluefin tuna were caught by a purse seiner.

Employment and average salaries

Employment was estimated at 1,217 jobs in 2023, reflecting a modest increase of 7 jobs compared to 2022. However, this represents a minor decrease of 1% when compared to the period from 2013 to 2022.

In 2023, total employment corresponded to 737 FTEs, representing a slight decrease of 2% compared to 2022, which had 750 FTEs. This indicates that there were more part-time employees in 2023 than in the previous year. Over the period from 2013 to 2022, there was an overall minimal decrease of 1%.

4.13.2 Economic results for 2023 and recent trends

The economic results pertain solely to the Cypriot fishing fleet active in 2023.

National fleet performance

In 2023, the Cyprus national fleet reported a net loss of -EUR 0.42 million, a significant improvement over the -EUR 1.51 million loss in 2022 (over 70% improvement). Compared to the 2013-2022 period, performance improved by +76%. The total revenue for 2023 was EUR 6.69 million, down 4% from EUR 6.94 million in 2022. This figure excludes revenue from purse-seiners.

Subsidies in 2023 included direct operating aids, such as the 2022 fuel subsidy scheme (EUR 0.679 million) to offset increased fuel prices due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Fishers received payments for the price difference between 2021 and 2022 (0.732 euro/litre vs. 1.267 euro/litre). Additionally, five LSF fishers participated in a temporary cessation scheme within the albacore tuna plan, pausing activities for three months without income during that period. These subsidies were excluded from other income calculations.

Gross Value Added (GVA) increased by +32% to EUR 3.3 million (from EUR 2.5 million in 2022), showing a +15% rise compared to the 2013-2022 period. Gross profit surged by +112% to EUR 1.48 million (from EUR 0.698 million in 2022), and net profit improved by over +70%.

In 2023, the main cost items for the Cyprus national fleet were energy costs (22.5%), depreciation (22%), unpaid labour (17.4%), and variable costs (17%). Energy costs dropped to EUR 1.5 million from EUR 2.1 million in 2022, a -28% decrease due to lower fuel prices. Depreciation costs also decreased to EUR 1.46 million from EUR 1.7 million. Unpaid labour costs increased to EUR 1.165 million from EUR 1.0 million, while variable costs fell by nearly -26% to EUR 1.15 million from EUR 1.55 million. Personnel costs, contributing 10% of total expenditures, decreased by around -17%.

The total expenditures in 2023 were significantly lower than the ones in 2022 by -16%, having significant positive impact on the profitability of the sector, despite the decrease of -4% in total value of landings in 2023 which had a negative effect on the profitability of the fleet leading to an improved economic performance. Nevertheless, the Cyprus fleet is still at a net-loss making position.

Resource productivity and efficiency

The gross profit margin in 2023 was approximately 22%, indicating operating efficiency of the fisheries sector, which is significantly higher than last year's figure of 10%. The net profit margin in 2023 was estimated at -6%, showing a substantial improvement of 71% compared to 2022's -22%. Additionally, it shows a 72% improvement compared to the period from 2013 to 2022.

The Return on Fixed Tangible Assets (RoFTA) turned to 0% in 2023, indicating a significant improvement compared to 2022, which was estimated at -7%. Moreover, it shows a notable increase when compared to the entire period from 2013 to 2022. Except for the years 2017, 2018, and 2019, when RoFTA was positive, it has been negative throughout the period from 2013 to 2022.

There is an overall upward trend in comparison to the previous year, 2022, across all indicators, and most of them also show improvement when compared to the period from 2013 to 2022. Labour productivity (GVA/FTE) improved the economic performance by increasing by 34% in 2022 to EUR 4,506 per FTE, compared to EUR 3,355 per FTE in 2022. Additionally, in 2023, GVA was estimated at EUR 3.32 million, representing a 32% increase from the previous year (EUR 2.5 million in 2022), and GVA to revenue was estimated at 50%, showing an increase of 36% in 2022.

Furthermore, in 2023, the total number of people employed was estimated at 1,217 persons (1,210 in 2022). However, the number of FTE decreased by 2% to 737, compared to 750 in 2022.

Fuel consumption per landed tonne continued its decreasing trend in 2023, reducing to 1.121 litres/tonne from 1.255 litres/tonne in 2022, positively impacting the profitability of the Cyprus fleet. In 2018, this indicator was at 1.179 litres per landed tonne, reaching the lowest value for the whole period from 2013 to 2023.

In 2017, the landed weight per sea day peaked at 34 kg/day. The upward trend of landings in weight per unit of effort (in weight per DaS) during the period from 2013-2017 followed a declining trend from 2018 onwards. In 2023, landings decreased to 22 kg/sea day (compared to 27 kg/sea day in 2022).

Socioeconomic Impact

The fishery sector contributes minimally to the Gross National Product of Cyprus. Nonetheless, it plays a crucial role in fisheries-dependent regions by providing direct

employment opportunities for vessel owners and crew members, as well as auxiliary services such as fishmongers, gear repair, vessel repair and construction. Additionally, families of fishers assist in netting the catch, and fishery tourism is particularly prominent during the summer season. The sector also significantly supports related activities, including fish taverns and restaurants.

4.13.3 Performance by fishing activity

Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

The Cyprus fleet is primarily composed of SSCF, accounting for about 95% of vessels and employment in both 2022 and 2023. In 2023, SSCF represented 40% of the total weight and 49% of the total value of landings due to higher production prices compared to LSF. This price difference stems from better freshness, size quality, and marketing channels.

SSCF typically consists of small family-owned businesses operating within 12 nautical miles of Cyprus waters, using passive gears like trammel nets, set gillnets, and set longlines. The number of active small-scale vessels remained steady from 2020 to 2023, with a minor decrease of five vessels in 2023. These vessels had a combined gross tonnage of 1,754 GT and an engine power of 29,047 kW.

In 2023, SSCF spent an estimated 50,630 DaS, a 16% increase from 2022, representing about 94% of the total days at sea for the Cyprus fleet. SSCF consumed over 60% of the fleet's energy, around 0.837 million litres of fuel, a 4% rise from 2022.

Income from SSCF landings covered all operating expenses, resulting in a Gross profit of EUR 807,688 in 2023, up 25% from 2022. However, considering all expenses, the sector experienced a net loss of -EUR 263,125, an improvement from the -EUR 419,672 loss in 2022. The economic performance improved due to a 7% increase in the value of landings and an 11% reduction in energy costs despite higher fuel consumption. The GVA increased by 21%, reaching EUR 1.9 million in 2023.

Operating subsidies further boosted the 2023 economic performance of this fleet segment.

Large-scale fleet (LSF)

The LSF comprises polyvalent passive gear vessels and trawlers ≥12m in length. In 2022, the number of vessels decreased to 34 (5 fewer than in 2021) with a combined gross tonnage of 1,577 GT (-16%) and total engine power of 7,155 kW (-12%).

In 2023, days at sea reduced by 6%, totaling 3,073 days, and fishing trips decreased by 11% to 1,694 trips. Energy consumption fell by 37%. Landings weight dropped by 12%, while their value declined by 14%, with notable price drops in bluefin tuna (8.52 euro/kg from 10.08 euro/kg) and albacore (2.48 euro/kg from 2.29 euro/kg).

The total value of landings decreased by 14%, leading to a net loss of EUR 162,086. However, economic performance improved as net losses were reduced by 85% compared to the previous year. Profitability increased by 84% compared to the period 2013-2022 due to reduced expenditure.

Energy costs dropped by 46% to EUR 0.56 million, variable costs by 39% to EUR 0.649 million, and fixed capital consumption by 28% to EUR 0.63 million. Personnel costs decreased by 17% to EUR 0.68 million. Non-variable costs saw a 39% reduction, contributing minimally at around EUR 100,000. Repairs and maintenance costs fell by 6%.

4.13.4 Performance results of selected fleet segments

Polyvalent ‘passive’ gears 6-12 metres

The most significant segment of the SSCF comprises Polyvalent 'passive' gears with lengths ranging from 6-12 metres, representing 37% of the total active vessels and employment. In 2023, there were 289 active vessels in this small-scale division operating within territorial waters (less than 12 nautical miles), marking a slight decrease from 290 vessels in 2022. Notably, 66 vessels in this category were permanently withdrawn in 2015, and their licenses were cancelled through structural aid provided under the EMFF 2014-2020 framework. The FTEs for this segment increased by nearly 5%, reaching 446 in 2023, up from 426 in 2022.

In 2023, the value of landings amounted to EUR 2.84 million, accounting for 38% of the total landing value of the Cyprus fleet (excluding bluefin tuna purse-seiner landings). This was a decline from EUR 3.0 million in 2022. Despite a 5.4% reduction in landing value compared to 2022, the income generated was sufficient to cover all operating expenditures, resulting in a gross profit of EUR 0.644 million (down from EUR 0.817 million in 2022). Consequently, although revenue deterioration impacted profitability, the segment remained in a net-profit position with a modest Net Profit of EUR 19,312 (compared to EUR 186,284 in 2022).

The net profit margin for 2023 was 0.7%, showing a decline from 6% in the previous year. However, when compared over the period from 2013 to 2022, there has been a significant improvement in economic development trends. The overall economic indicators for 2023, when juxtaposed with 2022, clearly demonstrate a deterioration primarily due to reduced revenues.

Additionally, the substantial increase in the value of unpaid labour by approximately 25%, amounting to EUR 1.01 million, significantly impacted the segment's profitability. Energy costs, the second most crucial expenditure item, were reduced by approximately 9% against 2022, standing at EUR 0.7 million due to lower fuel prices between the two years (1.267 euro/litre in 2022 and 1.127 euro/litre in 2023). Variable costs, however, increased by around 7%, reaching EUR 303,653.

The GVA remained stable at EUR 1.66 million in 2023, consistent with the figure for 2022. However, the GVA to revenue ratio increased from 55.4% in 2022 to 58.4% in 2023.

Several economic indicators reflect a decline in performance for the current year compared to the previous year. Fuel consumption was estimated at 1,556 litres per tonne of landed fish in 2023, exceeding the 1,482 litres recorded in 2022. Additionally, the landed weight per sea day significantly decreased from 12.13 kg/DaS in 2022 to 9.97 kg/DaS in 2023. Another critical indicator highlighting the deterioration is the drop in labour productivity (GVA per FTE), which fell from 3,904 in 2022 to 3,726 in 2023.

The segment saw an increase in overall days-at-sea, with vessels recording 33,726 DaS in 2022, which rose to 40,097 DaS in 2023. This uptick in fishing activity is corroborated by the fact that fuel consumption in 2023 halted its declining trend observed since 2016, showing a slight increase of 2.5% compared to 2022. Conversely, energy costs decreased by 8.7% due to lower fuel prices despite the higher number of fishing trips.

Overall, the primary economic indicators for 2023 showed a downturn compared to 2022. Nonetheless, the economic development trend over the period 2013-2022 has improved. It is

noteworthy that operating subsidies increased significantly, from EUR 0.23 million in 2022 to EUR 1.25 million in 2023 for this fleet segment.

Vessels using Polyvalent ‘passive’ gears with length above 12 metres

The most significant segment of the LSF is the Polyvalent ‘passive’ gears with lengths of 12m or more. This segment is the second most important part of the Cyprus fleet in terms of revenues, accounting for 30% of the total value of landings, including the value from the bluefin tuna purse-seiner, following the Polyvalent 'passive' gears with lengths between 6-12m. Vessels in this category range from 12 to 26 metres (with the majority being 12-18 metres) and are engaged in two fisheries: primarily in the large pelagic fishery using drifting longlines around Cyprus waters and the eastern Mediterranean (targeting swordfish, bluefin tuna, and albacore), as well as in the inshore demersal fishery using set nets and set longlines. A limited number of licenses are issued for this segment annually.

In 2023, this fleet segment comprised 30 active vessels, five fewer than in 2022, which led to a reduction in FTEs from 143 in 2022 to 125 in 2023. It should be noted that the vast majority of the crew members come from third countries (mainly Egypt) for the duration of the albacore fishery season.

In 2023, the value of landings amounted to EUR 2.29 million, representing a 7% decrease compared to 2022 (EUR 2.46 million), and accounted for 30% of the total value of landings of the Cyprus fleet (including landings from the bluefin tuna purse-seiner). The income generated from landings was sufficient to cover all operating expenditures, resulting in a gross profit of EUR 433,158 for 2023, a significant improvement in economic performance compared to the gross loss of EUR 165,814 in 2022. However, the fleet segment operated at a net loss of EUR 218,801 in 2023, an improvement over the net loss of EUR 1 million in 2022. The principal factor behind this economic improvement was the significant decrease in certain cost items, such as the notable 40% reduction in energy costs compared to 2022, mainly due to lower fuel prices, totaling EUR 353,501. The variable consumption of fixed capital decreased considerably by 24% from 2022 to 2023, amounting to EUR 501,348, while unpaid labor was significantly reduced by approximately 17%, totaling EUR 38,121. Variable costs were the only expense significantly higher than the previous year, increasing by around 20% to EUR 1.1 million. Repair and maintenance costs remained relatively stable between 2022 and 2023, at approximately EUR 199,000.

4.13.5 Drivers affecting the economic performance trends

The favourable condition of some key commercially exploited fish stocks may positively influence the sector's revenue. In 2017, the presence of invasive species such as Lagocephalus sceleratus and the newly reported lionfish in Cypriot waters significantly affected biodiversity, subsequently impacting the economic performance of the fisheries sector.

Moreover, protected species like dolphins and sea turtles, which damage fishermen's nets and catches, can negatively impact the already limited fishing income. This situation threatens the economic sustainability of certain fleet segments, particularly small-scale inshore fleets and polyvalent 'passive' gear vessels with lengths of 12 metres or more.

Recreational fishing also poses a challenge to the professional fisheries sector. The large number of sport fishers can lead to substantial catches, including those of overfished species, which further strains the economic performance of commercial fishers.

A notable reduction in the number of SSCF vessels, from 107 in 2013 to 66 by the end of 2015, due to decommissioning schemes supported by structural funds, has been a driving force for the overall improvement in the economic performance of the Cyprus fleet, especially for the SSCF segment over time.

The only species managed in the Mediterranean by quotas until 2016 was the bluefin tuna. Cyprus after many years has issued a purse seiner license for bluefin tuna. Thus, from 2017 a new fleet segment, with only one vessel, exists. Since 2017, swordfish is the second species that it is managed by quotas. The allocation of quotas between the EU countries and the recovery plan for the species has been implemented since 2017. This fact could have a negative impact on the activities and economic performance of the Polyvalent 'passive' gears with length ≥12m fleet segment at least in the short run. From 2022 onwards, albacore, the most important species of Cyprus pelagic fishery, is also managed by quotas. The annual quota allocated to Cyprus is much less than the average quantity fished by the Polyvalent 'passive' gears with length ≥12m fleet segment the last five years and thus, it is expected to seriously affect the income of this specific fleet segment.

Markets and trade

In Cyprus, fish is primarily sold fresh. The fish processing industry is still developing. Cyprus has a negative trade balance in fresh fishery products, resulting in higher prices compared to other Mediterranean countries. Small-scale fisheries have small but high-quality daily catches, allowing for higher selling prices than trawlers. There are no auctions; about 30% of small-scale fishers' catch is sold directly to consumers, while the rest goes to wholesalers. Large-scale vessels' catch is distributed to domestic wholesalers or exported if it includes large pelagic species.

Operational costs (external factors)

The most important operational costs are the personnel and the fuel costs. Personnel costs include all the expenditures paid by the employers, including social security. The SSCF employs only individuals and their assistants. Neither the vessels' owners-fishers nor their assistants are paid any wages nor salaries. They get share of the value of landings. Consequently, for the SSCF the value of the unpaid labour (for example the vessel owner's own labour) is estimated based on a minimum wage. Thus, this amount per vessel is fixed according to the number of assistants.

On the other hand, the LSF fleet owners (trawlers and polyvalent passive gears with length ≥12m) employ crew from third countries and these crew members are paid based on an agreed salary. It includes temporary, seasonal as well as rotation crew. These wages can vary from year to year but not remarkably. Currently, the crew wages are much higher during the period of the albacore fishing season, which it is the main fishing activity of the LSF and the vessels' owners hire a significant number of fishers from Egypt.

Fuel prices, from 2015 follow an upward trend with the exception of 2020 and 2021 that declined significantly during the COVID-19 outbreak. There has been a significant increase in fuel prices from to 0.732 euro/litre in 2021 to 1.267 euro/litre in 2022. However, the prices fell in 2023 by -11% to 1.127 euro/litre.

Status of key stocks, TACs and quotas

In 2017, Cyprus conducted a stock assessment for two of the main commercially significant demersal stocks in GSA 25: bogue and stripped red mullet. Both were found to have a low overexploitation status. The assessment of stripped red mullet was labeled as 'accepted with

qualitative advice,' providing only qualitative information regarding the stock status. The time series used for these assessments spanned from 2005 to 2016. These findings were presented and endorsed by the relevant scientific group of the GFCM.

In 2018, Cyprus performed a stock assessment for common pandora (Pagellus erythrinus), another key demersal stock in GSA 25, which was found to be sustainably exploited with high spawning stock biomass (SSB). The time series for this assessment covered 1975 to 2017, and it received endorsement from the relevant scientific group of the GFCM.

In 2019, two stock assessments were presented and validated by the GFCM WGSAD using various methods. The red mullet (Mullus barbatus) was assessed using Extended Survivor Analysis (XSA) and was observed to have slight over-exploitation with intermediate SSB. A cross-validation exercise using four other models (LB-SPR, LBB, AMSY, and CMSY BSM) produced similar qualitative results. The common pandora (Pagellus erythrinus) was assessed using the Surplus Production in Continuous Time method (SPiCT) and was found to be sustainably exploited with relatively high biomass. Additional runs with JABBA, LiME (length-based), LBB (length-based), LBSPR (length-based), AMSY (survey-based), CMSY BSM, and an empirical indicator from the length trend of the 95th percentile of larger individuals from MEDITS survey data yielded comparable results.

In 2020, an assessment of red mullet transitioned from XSA to the SCAA model, revealing over-exploitation with high SSB based on the SAM SCAA model. Various methods (XSA, LBSPR, LBB, Empirical Indicators) were presented.

In February 2022, GFCM WGSAD's online meeting reviewed four stock assessments. The alien species SRI showed steady biomass despite high exploitation. CBR was assessed as sustainably exploited (F/F_{MSY}=0.669, B/B_{MSY}=1.28), while MUR showed over-exploitation (F/F_{MSY}=3.48). SBA had low overfishing status (F/F_{MSY}=1.05) with intermediate biomass levels.

In 2023, three stock assessments were validated by GFCM WGSAD. Etmopterus spinax advice suggested not increasing fishing mortality. Spicara smaris and Octopus vulgaris both showed unsustainable exploitation, with recommendations to reduce fishing mortality.

In 2016, Cyprus managed only bluefin tuna quotas, totaling around 98 tonnes for their fleet. The quota was allocated to Polyvalent 'passive' gears ≥12m using drifting longlines. Bluefin tuna TACs increased over the years, with Cyprus receiving 117.7 tonnes in 2017, reaching 168.94 tonnes by 2021, and rising to 188 tonnes in 2023. A purse seiner vessel was introduced in 2017, receiving a quota of 60 tonnes initially and rising to 96 tonnes by 2023.

Swordfish became another quota-managed species in 2017. Cyprus received 59 tonnes initially, decreasing annually to 50.66 tonnes by 2022 and 2023. This management measure is expected to impact the Polyvalent 'passive' gears ≥12m fleet segment negatively.

During the ICCAT annual meeting in November 2021, a new multiannual plan was adopted for the restoration of the albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*) reserve in the Mediterranean (ICCAT Rec.21-06). The plan commenced implementation in 2022 and includes measures such as the adoption of a species quota. The quota allocated to the Republic of Cyprus for the year 2022 amounted to 431.94 tonnes, which corresponds to 19.9% of the EU's total quota of 2,169.68 tonnes. In 2023, Cyprus was allocated 430.99 tonnes. This species is of significant importance for the LSF, and the reduced quota is anticipated to adversely impact its viability, at least in the short term. Consequently, Cyprus implemented a voluntary scheme for the

temporary cessation of fishing activities for three months for the polyvalent vessels fleet segment in 2023 within the framework of the albacore tuna multiannual plan.

Management instruments

The fleet management in Cyprus primarily relies on effort limitations and technical measures. Annual restrictions include a limited number of licenses for each segment. Additionally, the implementation of closed seasons, gear restriction measures, and Minimum Conservation Reference Sizes (MCRS) align with both national and European regulations.

For the SSCF, vessels operating with polyvalent passive gears measuring less than 6 metres and between 6 to 12 metres (license categories A' and B') are permitted to operate year-round, subject to gear usage restrictions and MCRS requirements, per national and community law. In 2015, 66 vessels from these categories were decommissioned with public aid under the Scheme of Permanent Cessation, co-funded by the EMFF 2014-2020, resulting in the cancellation of their licenses and a notable reduction in the number of licensed vessels. A positive development for these segments was the decision by the Cyprus Department of Fisheries and Marine Research to allow fishers within these groups to use nets up to 600 metres in length with lower mesh sizes for targeting the species Spicara smaris from February 25th until the end of April, thereby enhancing their landing value and income.

Vessels with Polyvalent passive gears measuring less than 6 metres and between 6 to 12 metres (license category C') are restricted to a maximum of 100 working days annually, with stringent gear usage regulations.

A limited number of trawler licenses (two per year) are issued for fishing in territorial waters, accompanied by an extended closed season from June 1st to November 7th. Trawlers must also adhere to specific trawl net usage and minimum landing size restrictions, according to national and community law.

For vessels using Polyvalent passive gears with a length of 12 metres or more, a closed period for swordfish fishing is enforced as mandated by EU law.

In the 2020 Balance Report, Cyprus proposed an action plan for demersal trawlers operating in territorial waters, focusing on the permanent cessation of fishing activities. This plan targets the two trawlers currently operating in Cypriot waters and is expected to be implemented in 2024, funded by the European Fund 2021-2027. The intended outcome is a capacity reduction of 218 GTs and 696 kWs. The plan stipulates that if the permanent cessation does not occur due to the trawler owners' unwillingness, alternative management measures will be taken, such as replacing the diamond meshed trawl net of 50 mm with a square meshed net of 40 mm.

Innovation and development

The SSCF and polyvalent segments are not technically advanced. Only the trawler segment uses more advanced technology, though not extensively. Investing in new technology requires capital with uncertain returns.

Vessels can receive 100% funding for modernization related to hygiene and safety from the European Fund 2021-2027. The Operational Program 'Thalassa' has created artificial reefs to improve biodiversity and protect fish stocks. Enhancing the marine environment will boost fish stocks, thereby increasing fishers' income and economic sustainability.

Fishers can attend seminars funded by structural funds to enhance their skills and fishing knowledge. There is significant interest among fishers in sustainable fishing practices and new technologies.

4.13.6 Assessment of the economic performance for 2024 and 2025 (nowcasts)

Model results

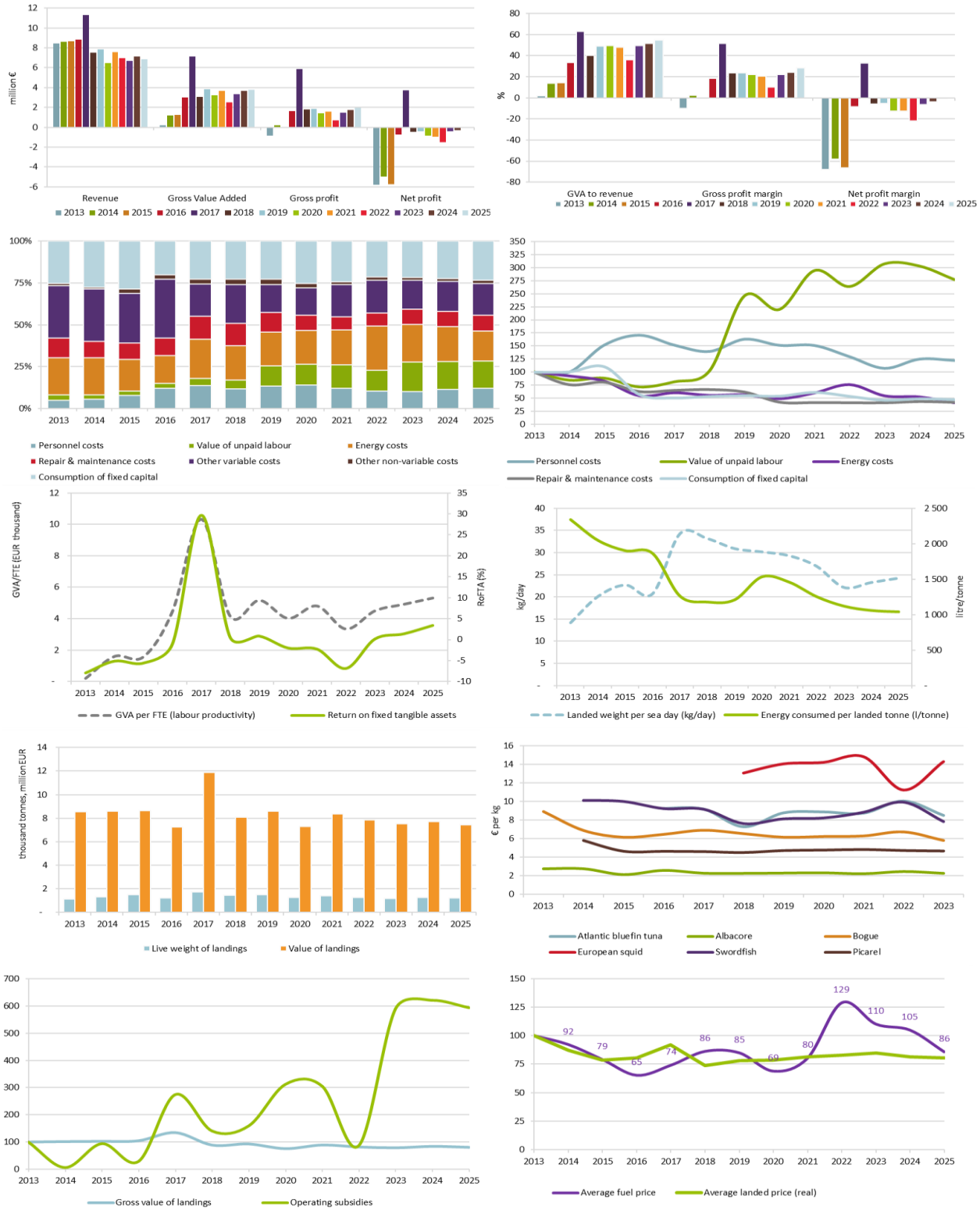
Nowcasts suggest improvement in the economic performance for the entire fleet segment for 2024 and 2025 compared to 2023, driven by the reduced fuel prices. Gross profit is significantly improved for 2024 and especially for 2025. However, Net profit is still projected to be negative for 2024 and close to posstive values for 2025.

4.13.7 Methodological considerations and data issues

In 2017, Cyprus introduced a new fleet segment targeting bluefin tuna with one purse seiner vessel. Although included in data collection, it was excluded from economic analysis for confidentiality reasons. Cyprus provided landings and effort details but not expenditures.

In 2022, due to rising fuel prices from Russia's invasion of Ukraine, an important fuel subsidy was granted to professional fishers through the Fisheries Fund. This subsidy covered the fuel price difference between 2021 (0.732 euro/litre) and 2022 (1.267 euro/litre), totaling EUR 0.679 million. Payments were made in 2023, reflected in that year's operating subsidies which were significantly higher compared to previous years for the Cyprus fleet.

Figure 4.13.1.Cyprus: Main trends in (from top to bottom, left to right): economic performance indicators (absolute value and relative values); cost structure and variation in main cost items; productivity and efficiency indicators; landings (in weight and value) and average price (euro/kg) of top species; variation in income variables and average prices of key input/outputs (2013=100). Nowcast figures for 2024 and 2025.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

4.14 Latvia

4.14.1 Short description of the national fleet

In 2023, the Latvian Baltic Sea fishing fleet had 261 registered vessels, including 65 inactive ones, totaling 5,157 GT and 16,442 kW engine power, with an average age of 36 years. Between 2014 and 2023, the fleet size decreased, with gross tonnage reducing by 26% and engine power by 17%. These changes resulted from vessel scrapping under multi-annual management plans to balance fishing capacity with resources. Some vessels were reassigned to non-fishing activities through scrapping or sale.

Table 4.14.1. Latvia at a glance.

Latvia		2023				%Δ 2023-2022			
Indicator	**Units**	**Overall**	**SSCF**	**L12AG**	**LSF**	**Overall**	**SSCF**	**L12AG**	**LSF**
Active vessels	Number	196	161	0	35	↑ 4%	↑ 5%	-	↑ 0%
FTE	Number	190	56	-	134	↑ 3%	↑ 6%	-	↑ 3%
Gross Value of landings	Million €	24.7	1.3	-	23.3	↑ 14%	↑ 5%	-	↑ 14%
GVA	Million €	19.3	1.2	-	18.1	↑ 29%	↑ 5%	-	↑ 30%
Gross profit	Million €	12.1	1.2	-	10.9	↑ 25%	↑ 15%	-	↑ 26%
Net profit	Million €	11.6	1.0	-	10.6	↑ 27%	↑ 19%	-	↑ 28%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure

The Latvian fishing fleet is categorized into several segments based on vessel length, fishing gear, and area of operation. These segments include the Baltic Sea fleet (trawlers VL24-40 m), the fleet primarily operating in the Gulf of Riga (trawlers VL12-18 m), the two segments of the small coastal fleet (operating with polyvalent fishing gear VL00-08 m and VL08-12 m), and the distant water segment (trawlers VL40+ m operating in the Atlantic NEAFC Barents Sea FAO area 27 and CECAF Mauritania FAO area 34).

Since 2011, a number of small coastal vessels less than 12 metres in length have been excluded from economic analysis. In 2023, 339 small vessels from segment VL00-08 and 11 from VL08-12 were licensed and required to maintain coastal logbooks; however, these vessels fished exclusively for personal consumption and were not engaged in commercial fishing. The excluded volume represents 0.24% of the gross tonnage and 0.7% of the main engine power for segment VL00-08, and 1.03% of the gross tonnage and 3.3% of the main engine power for segment VL08-12 of the total Latvian fleet in 2023. The exclusion of recreational vessels does not impact the overall engine power and gross tonnage of the fishing fleet.

The estimated value of the physical capital of the Latvian fleet was EUR 3.9 million, with 27% attributed to the inactive fleet.

Fishing activity and production

In 2023, the Baltic fleet spent around 12,843 days at sea (DaS) with 12,016 fishing days. DaS increased by 17% and fishing days by 12% from 2022 to 2023; however, live weight per

day at sea decreased by 14%. Fuel consumption rose by 25% to 52 litres per tonne landed due to increased fishing activity.

The total weight landed was 61,446 tonnes of fish valued at EUR 24.7 million. The weight increased by 0.5% while the value rose by 14% between 2022 and 2023, driven by higher fish prices for European sprat (+32%) and Atlantic herring (+18%).

European sprat and Atlantic herring were the most landed species, with 28,820 tonnes and 30,293 tonnes respectively. European sprat generated almost EUR 13 million in landing value, followed by Atlantic herring at EUR 10 million. Together, these species accounted for the majority of landings by both weight and value.

Employment and average salaries

Most Baltic Sea fishers are local Latvians, while distant water vessels often have crew from developing countries. In 2023, the Baltic Sea fleet employed approximately 440 people (190 FTE). From 2022 to 2023, total employment fell by 7%, while FTE rose by 3%. GVA per FTE increased by 25%, and average crew cost per FTE reached EUR 38,337.

4.14.2 Economic results for 2023 and recent trends

The economic results pertain solely to the Latvian fishing fleet active in 2023.

National fleet performance

The Latvian fleet's economic performance improved in 2023, with revenues reaching EUR 25.3 million (EUR 24.7 million from fish sales and EUR 0.64 million from non-fishing revenues), marking a 7% increase from 2022. Operating costs dropped by 6%, due to significant reductions in other non-variable costs (75%) and other variable costs (27%), despite rises in personnel costs (34%) and repair/maintenance costs (21%).

The fleet's profitability saw notable gains: GVA was EUR 19.3 million (+29%), gross profit was EUR 12.1 million (+25%), and net profit was EUR 11.6 million (+27%). From 2014 to 2023, the Baltic Sea fleet maintained positive profitability.

Resource productivity and efficiency indicators

The gross profit margin increased by 17%, reaching 48% in 2023, indicating the sector's high operating efficiency. The net profit margin was estimated at 46% in 2023 (an increase of 19%), and the share of GVA to revenue is estimated at 76% in the same year (an increase of 20%). Labour productivity (GVA/FTE) increased by 25% between 2022 and 2023, while the number of FTE increased by 3%.

Capital productivity, as measured by the return on fixed tangible assets of the Latvian fleet, increased by 49% compared to 2022. In 2023, this increase was driven by LSF segment growth of 55% and SSCF growth of 29%.

The following RoFTA values are given for 2023: 594% (increase of 89% compared to 2022) and 194% (decrease of 143% compared to 2022) for the Baltic Sea trawlers VL2440 and trawlers VL1218 operating in the Gulf of Riga, respectively. In the coastal area, the RoFTA values for the segments VL0008 and VL0812 were 86% and 457%, respectively, an increase of 21% and 6% compared to 2022. The positive RoFTA and the low-risk long-term rate indicate that fishing was profitable in the long term for three segments, except for VL1218 where a negative RoFTA was observed in 2023 due to a 60% increase in total costs resulting from a two and a half times increase in personnel costs.

The main impact on the productivity of the Latvian fleet is exerted by the available fish stocks for the two main target species: European sprat and Atlantic herring.

In 2022-2024, the capacity of the entire Latvian fleet engaged in commercial fishing is reported, including all inactive vessels, as well as distant-water fisheries. There is a 4% increase in the number of vessels between 2022 and 2023, while the increase in engine power and gross tonnage are 1.3% and 0.1%, respectively, due to the increase in the number of vessels in the SSCF. The number of DaS increased by 17% in 2023, while the number of fishing days increased by 12%, mainly due to the increased activity of the SSCF. In 2023, the fishing efficiency in terms of weight landed per sea day (kg/day) decreased by 14% but is 17% higher than the multiannual average for 2014-2022. In 2023, the fishing efficiency of the VL2440 segment decreased by 16% to 13,930 kg/day, while that of the VL1218 segment increased by 3% to 5,710 kg/day.

4.14.3 Performance by fishing activity

Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

The number of SSCF vessels grew by 5% between 2022 and 2023. These vessels, split into VL0008 and VL0812 segments, use polyvalent or passive gear to target species like Atlantic herring and European flounder. Their catch is mainly for local markets, with trips lasting under 24 hours. Weather impacts turnover significantly. Coastal species fetched the highest average price (3.35 euro/kg) but represented only 4% of the total weight and 5% of the value of landings in 2023. The SSCF segment’s landings increased by 15% in weight and 5% in value, totaling about 2,536 tonnes and EUR 1.32 million. Employment in coastal regions was approximately 213 jobs (56 FTE). The segment's GVA and gross profit rose by 5% and 15%, respectively, with a net profit around EUR 1 million in 2023.

Vessels under 12 metres using active gear fleet (L12AG)

In 2023, no vessels under 12 metres in length used active gears in Latvia.

Large-scale fleet (LSF)

An increasing trend was observed for the LSF operating in the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Riga. The LSF targets at European sprat and Atlantic herring and consists of 38 vessels divided into two segments, VL2440 and VL1218 metres. These segments contributed 95% of total revenue and 91% of net profit in 2023. Total employment was estimated at 227 jobs in 2023, equivalent to 134 FTE. Total employment remained the same between 2022 and 2023, while FTE increased by +3%. Revenue from landings increased by 7% between 2022 and 2023, while net profit increased by 28% over the same period. The improvement in the LSF was observed through a 9% increase in total income of the VL2440 segment and an -18% decrease in total costs, despite the negative profit of the VL1218 segment due to a +60% increase in total costs (personnel costs increased two and a half times).

Distant-water fleet (DWF)

In 2023, there were five active distant water vessels in the segment of vessels over 40 metres with a total of 14 418 GT, a total engine power of 17 604 kW and an average age of 33 years, owned by four Latvian companies. Three vessels with an average length of 64 metres were mainly active in the NEAFC area, targeting Northern prawn and Atlantic cod. Another two vessels with an average length of 105 metres operated in the CECAF area, targeting Atlantic horse mackerel and mackerel. In 2023, the main landing ports for these

vessels were Båtsfjord, Tromsø and Nouadhibou. In 2023, the total weight of catches in the Atlantic was 43 590 tonnes of fish with an estimated value of landings of EUR 39.9 million.

4.14.4 Performance of selected fleet segments

The Baltic Sea fleet in 2023 consists of four active fleet segments. A brief description of the segments is given below.

Pelagic trawl 24-40 metres

In 2023, 26 vessels operated solely in the Baltic Sea, targeting species like European sprat and Atlantic herring. The total landings value was EUR 20 million with around 99 FTE employed, contributing 81% of income and 52% of employment in the national fleet. The segment was profitable, achieving a gross profit of EUR 11.3 million and a net profit of EUR 11 million.

Pelagic trawl 12-18 metres

In 2023, nine vessels exclusively operated in the Gulf of Riga, targeting Atlantic herring with by-catches of European sprat, fourhorn sculpin, and European smelt. The landings totaled EUR 3.3 million, supporting 35 FTEs, which contributed 13% to income and 18% to FTEs in the national fleet. Despite this, the segment was unprofitable, with a gross profit of -EUR 0.38 million and a net profit of -EUR 0.42 million.

Polyvalent or passive gears below 8 metres

In 2023, there were 120 vessels operating mainly in the coastal zone of the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Riga. These vessels targeted various species including Atlantic herring, round goby, and other coastal freshwater species. The total value of landings was EUR 0.76 million, supporting 40 FTEs in 2023. This contributed to 3% and 21% of the total income generated from landings and FTEs in the national fleet, respectively. The segment achieved profitability in 2023, with an estimated gross profit of EUR 0.7 million and a net profit of EUR 0.6 million.

Polyvalent or passive gears 8-12 metres

In 2023, 41 vessels operated in the Baltic Sea and the Gulf of Riga, targeting Atlantic herring, round goby, European flounder, European smelt, and other coastal freshwater species. The total value of landings was EUR 0.56 million, supporting 16 FTE, which contributed 2% and 8%, respectively, to the national fleet's total income from landings and FTE. The segment was profitable with a gross profit of EUR 0.48 million and a net profit of EUR 0.46 million.

4.14.5 Drivers affecting the economic performance

Markets and Trade (including first sale prices)

The average price of European sprat increased by 32% between 2022 and 2023, while the price of Atlantic herring increased by 18%. This has affected the economic performance of the fleet since these species account for 96% of the total catch. The fisheries sector in Latvia relies on the economic conditions of foreign markets and the turnover of fish processing enterprises. The primary buyers of fresh fish are fish processing companies in Latvia and neighboring countries. The main products produced are fresh or frozen fish and prepared or canned fish. The total export value of production to EU countries increased by 9%, reaching EUR 185.2 million in 2023, although the exported volume decreased by 5%, approximately

4,349 tonnes, between 2022 and 2023. Exports to non-EU countries remained unchanged from 2022 at EUR 95.5 million, despite a decrease in the volume of exported production by 3,900 tonnes, reaching 40,000 tonnes.

In 2023, Lithuania ranked first in terms of the value of Latvia's total exports with a share of 14%, followed by Germany, Denmark, Estonia, and the United States with shares of 13%, 11%, 10%, and 10%, respectively. In terms of the volume of Latvia's total exports, Ukraine, Germany, Lithuania, Estonia, and Poland were significant, with shares of 25%, 11%, 9%, 8%, and 7%, respectively, in 2023.

Operating costs (external factors)

Between 2022 and 2023, the total operating costs of the Latvian fishing fleet decreased by -6% to EUR 13.2 million. Other non-variable costs decreased by 75%, other variable costs by 27%, while personnel costs and repair and maintenance costs increased by 34% and 21%, respectively. The average fuel price decreased by 21% to 0.86 euro/litre in 2023, while energy costs decreased by only -1% due to a -25% increase in energy consumption.

Status of key stocks, changes in TACs and quotas

The Latvian fishing fleet's economic efficiency relies on quotas for European sprat and Atlantic herring. From 2022 to 2023, the European sprat quota dropped by 11% to 31,005 tonnes. The Atlantic herring quota fell by 4% in the Gulf of Riga but rose by 32% in the Central Baltic. In 2023, the Gulf of Riga herring quota is 24,565 tonnes, and the Central Baltic herring quota is 1,964 tonnes. Latvia has historically nearly fully utilized its yearly quotas for these species.

Management instruments

Due to reduced quotas for European sprat and herring, a scrapping program began in 2023 to balance fleet capacity and fishing opportunities. Several active vessels will be withdrawn by the end of 2024.

4.14.6 Assessment of the economic performance for 2024 and 2025 (nowcasts)

In 2024, the number of active vessels increased by 12%, primarily due to increased activity among SSCF fishing vessels. Compared to 2023, the national fleet spent 4% more days at sea, while the weight and value of landings both decreased by 15%. A 20% decrease in effort was observed in the LSF in 2024, while the SSCF saw a 21% increase in days at sea.

The LSF fleet effort decreased in 2024 due to the decline in TAC of sprat and herring, the main target species of the large-scale fleet. The total landed weight fell by 17% in 2024, and a further decline is predicted for 2025 due to the subsequent decrease in TAC for these stocks. Despite the decline, the LSF fleet remained profitable in 2024, with Revenue, GVA and Gross profit all falling by 17%. A decline in costs is expected in 2024, with reductions in energy, personnel, and other variable costs resulting from reduced activity. According to the forecast model, the LSF fleet is expected to generate EUR 15 million GVA and EUR 9 million Gross profit. The outlook for 2025 indicates a further decline in profitability.

In terms of the SSCF fleet segments, the weight and value of landings increased by 21% and 26%, respectively, in 2024. This was primarily due to a 15% increase in the landings of herring and round goby, as well as a 55% increase in the value of landings for these species. This had a positive effect on the fleet profitability. Based on the results of the forecast model,

GVA increased by 27% to EUR 1.55 million and while gross profit increased to EUR 1.47 million. The outlook for economic indicators in 2025 shows a slight increase.

4.14.7 Methodological considerations and data issues

Identify changes in respect to previous years

Cost estimates from 2015 and 2023 have been used, with costs restructured across fleet segments based on the value of landings. This restructuring is necessary because data from vessel-owning companies are included in different segments. In some cases, landing values and volumes match the segment, but expenses are allocated to the largest segment.

Improvements achieved

A R script is used from the year 2020 for the more accurate method of calculating days at sea and fishing days for the SSCF segments. This approach does not allow to the values for fishing days to be higher than the values for days at sea. The algorithm is based on the following formulas:

- Day at sea = 1/maxGears;

The days at sea are counted for each vessel (a day is divided proportionally between all the fishing gears used on that day).

- Fishing day = 1/maxVessels.

Fishing days are counted for each gear (one day is shared proportionally among all vessels involved in fishing activity on that day).

Latvia uses the Integrated Control and Information System (ICIS) to manage fishing licences and enforce the National Fisheries Policy. The database includes data from electronic logbooks for LSF vessels and declarative forms for SSCF vessels.

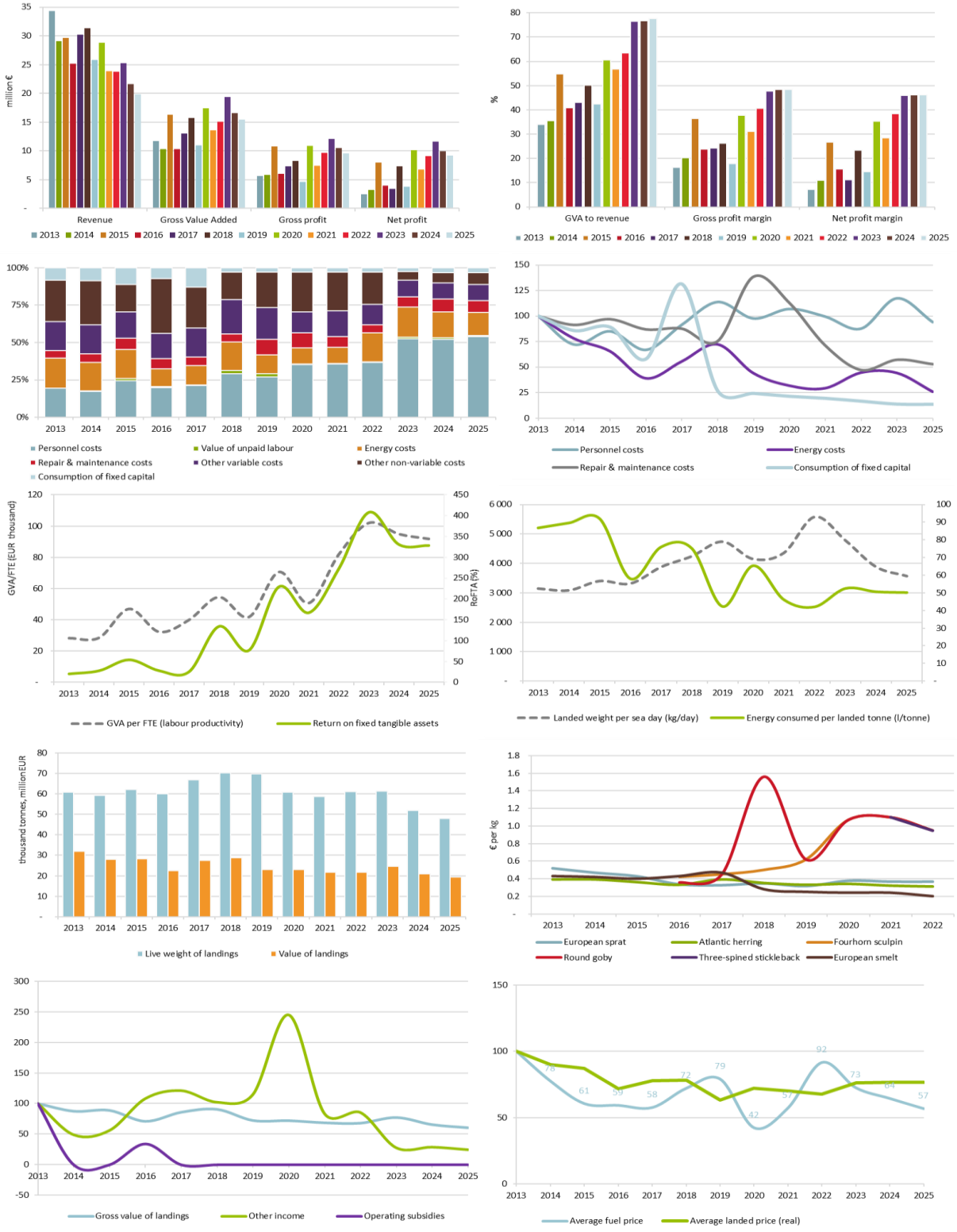
Problems identified

Data on depreciated replacement value were gathered from the 2011-2017 questionnaire. The PIM method has been used since 2018 for fixed capital consumption and physical capital value.

Remaining issues

Data for the distant water fleet (segment VL40XX) operating in the Atlantic Area 27 (NEAFC) and Area 34 (CECAF) have been collected but have not been submitted to maintain data confidentiality. The requested format requires the data to be disaggregated by supra region and fishing technique. In 2023, two segments were operating in the Atlantic: VL40XX TM NEAFC AREA 27, with three vessels, and VL40XX TM CECAF AREA 34, with two vessels. It is important to note that economic data cannot be provided for individual vessels or for vessels belonging to a single enterprise (four enterprises in 2023).

Figure 4.14.1.Latvia: Main trends in (from top to bottom, left to right): economic performance indicators (absolute value and relative values); cost structure and variation in main cost items; productivity and efficiency indicators; landings (in weight and value) and average price (euro/kg) of top species; variation in income variables and average prices of key input/outputs (2013=100). Nowcast figures for 2024 and 2025.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

4.15 Lithuania

4.15.1 Short description of the national fleet

In 2023, Lithuanian fishing fleet consisted of 127 vessels and compared to 2022 it decreased by 6%. From total fleet population, 65 (51%) vessels were active during 2023, and it decreased by 13% from 2022. Concerning capacity indicators of nation fleet in terms of GT and kW it shows an annual decrease by 8% and compared to the 2013-2022 multiannual average, GT and kW declined by 27%. In 2023, the Lithuanian fleet generated EUR 93 million from landings, a -21% decrease from 2022. The fleet achieved EUR 29.2 million in GVA and EUR 13.1 million in net profit.

Table 4.15.1. Lithuania at a glance.

Lithuania		2023					%Δ 2023-2022				
Indicator	Units	Overall	SSCF	L12AG	LSF	DWF	Overall	SSCF	L12AG	LSF	DWF
Active vessels	Number	65	53	-	7	5	-13%	-5%	-	-46%	-17%
FTE	Number	381	28	-	28	324	5%	-18%	-	-29%	13%
Gross Value of landings	Million €	90.63	0.58	-	5.21	84.84	-20%	10%	-	25%	-22%
GVA	Million €	29.22	0.32	-	2.20	26.69	22%	20%	-	93%	19%
Gross profit	Million €	19.90	0.03	-	1.18	18.69	50%	212%	-	12462%	40%
Net profit	Million €	13.12	-0.02	-	0.75	12.40	458%	79%	-	183%	269%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure

The Lithuanian fishing fleet includes SSCF segments in the Baltic Sea's coastal area, LSF segments in the Baltic Sea, and LDF segments in CECAF, SPRFMO, North Sea, and East Arctic regions. SSCF accounts for 81% of vessels but only 0.3% of total GT, with small coastal vessels using passive gears. In 2023, LSF had seven pelagic trawlers after discontinuing demersal trawlers in 2019 due to cod fishery closures, representing 11% of vessels and 6.7% of GT. DWF dominated in landings and capacity, with two demersal trawlers/seiners and three pelagic trawlers over 40 metres.

The fleet's physical capital was valued at EUR 66.5 million, with 17% in inactive vessels. In 2023, the active fleet's capital value dropped by 37% from 2022 and was 57% lower than the 2013-2022 average, mainly due to reduced fleet capacity in the LSF and LDF segments.

Fishing activity and production

The Lithuanian fishing fleet is highly diversified. In 2023, the largest share of seafood landings came from Area 27 (excluding the Baltic Sea) with 51% of the total weight of landings, followed by Area 34 with 20%, Area 87 with 16%, and the Baltic Sea including coastal area with 13%. In 2023, the distribution of landings from different regions shifted. Previously dominant landings from Area 34 declined, and Area 27 (excluding the Baltic Sea) emerged as the leading source of landings.

In 2023, the total effort of the fleet was 5,491 days at sea (DaS), decreasing by 5% from 2022. Compared to the 2013-2022 multiannual average, the DaS dropped by 32% to the lowest level in the overall time series, mostly driven by a substantial decline in fishing effort in the Baltic Sea and a temporary decrease in Distant Water Fishing (DWF) effort. In 2023, the

value of landings of the Lithuanian fleet decreased by 21%, and compared to the 2013-2022 multiannual average, it was 12% lower.

Northern prawn fisheries generated the largest part of the landings' value, contributing 25% of the total value of landings, followed by Atlantic horse mackerel at 19%, blue whiting at 15%, Chilean jack mackerel at 10%, and Atlantic herring at 8%.

Regarding large-scale fisheries in the Baltic Sea, the weight of landings decreased by 6% to the lowest level in the overall 2013-2023 period, corresponding to 12,700 tonnes. For the LSF fleet, both target species had lower landings in comparison to 2022, with a 5.7% decline in sprat and a 13.2% drop in Baltic herring landings. The decrease in the weight of landings was mainly influenced by significant reductions in herring and sprat quotas in 2023.

Despite the declining weight of target species, due to significantly improved prices, the total value of LSF landings increased by 38%, enhancing the economic efficiency of the pelagic trawler fleet in the Baltic region. The largest share of the LSF landings' value in 2023 came from Baltic sprat, which accounted for 87% (EUR 4.8 million) of the total value from the Baltic Sea, indicating a strong dependency of LSF fisheries on sprat fishing opportunities. Landings of Baltic herring contributed 13% (EUR 0.7 million) to the total value of landings.

In 2023, the SSCF landed 311 tonnes of seafood production, corresponding to EUR 0.57 million. Compared to 2022, the weight and value of landings increased by 19% and 20%, respectively. The largest part of income was generated from European smelt landings (63%), with Baltic herring and round gobies each contributing 8%.

Employment and average salaries

In 2023, the total number of employees in the Lithuanian fishing fleet decreased by 8% to 390 fishers, representing the lowest level observed during the entire period. Compared to the 2013-2022 multiannual average, the number of FTEs declined by 3%, and total jobs were 24% lower. The Lithuanian fishing fleet is highly diversified, with average salaries varying depending on the type of fisheries and region where activity takes place.

The average labour cost in the Lithuanian fishing fleet depends on the operating region and significantly varies from coastal fleets to long-distance vessels. Different trends in labour costs were observed among the main fishing segments during the 2013-2023 period. During this period, the highest labour costs were paid to the long-distance fleet. In 2023, the average annual labour costs for long-distance fisheries were EUR 24,700 per FTE. However, due to significantly increased working hours for long-distance fleet fishers in 2023, crew costs declined by 23% and were 31% lower compared to the LSF Baltic fleet.

The Baltic pelagic trawler segment paid the highest crew cost per FTE in 2023, amounting to EUR 36,000 per FTE, which is a 26% increase from 2022. The rise in LSF crew costs was related to low FTE and significantly increased GVA and remuneration. In 2023, the crew costs paid in the LSF fleet were 52% higher than the average annual (gross) crew costs of the Lithuanian private sector with individual enterprises, and 82% higher than the average annual (gross) crew costs of the agriculture, forestry, and fisheries cluster in Lithuania.

Although the average annual (gross) crew costs in the SSCF segments showed a growth trend from 2013-2023, similar to other Lithuanian business sectors, the crew costs remained close to the minimum monthly wage throughout the comparison period. Compared to 2022, the annual crew costs in SSCF increased by 23% to EUR 10,100 and were 72% lower than in the LSF fleet. Compared to the average crew costs in the agriculture, forestry, and fisheries cluster and the total average crew costs in the Lithuanian private sector with

individual enterprises, the remuneration in SSCF was 46.6% and 55.4% lower, respectively. The SSCF sector is characterized by a partial wage system, in which wages depend on the economic performance of the fishery and the fishing season, resulting in greater wage volatility during the year and lower average salaries.

4.15.2 Economic results for 2023 and recent trends

The economic results pertain solely to the Lithuanian fishing fleet active in 2023.

National fleet performance

All economic indicators presented in the national chapter are closely tied to the DWF segments. Factors affecting other fleet segments have a minimal impact at the national level. The DWF fleet plays a significant role, contributing approximately 95% of the total national revenues.

In 2023, total revenue decreased by 15% (EUR 105.4 million) compared to the previous year and was 4% lower than the 2013-2022 multiannual average. Approximately 86% of the total revenue came from landings, while the remaining 14% was derived from other income, including fishing rights. Much of this other income was generated by leasing vessels to other operators. The DWF segments held the largest share of revenues and other income within the overall fleet revenue, accounting for 94%.

In 2023, all profitability indicators generated by the Lithuanian national fleet saw an increase compared to 2022. For the national fleet, GVA in 2023 increased by 22%, reaching EUR 29.2 million, and was 37% higher compared to the 2013-2022 average. Gross profit surged by 50% to EUR 19.9 million, whereas net profit experienced a 458% increase compared to 2022.

Resource productivity and efficiency

In 2023, national fleet labour productivity increased by 16% to EUR 76,740 per FTE, 41% higher than the 2013-2022 average. The efficiency indicators depend heavily on DWF's volatile performance. The largest impact on 2023 productivity came from LSF pelagic fisheries in the Baltic Sea. GVA/FTE in DWF fleet rose by 5% to EUR 82,333; in LSF, it improved by 170% to EUR 77,380; SSCF reached EUR 4,614 per FTE. Despite a significant increase in 2023, the long-term trend shows growth from 2014 to 2019 and consolidation during 2020-2022, affected negatively by COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine.

Capital productivity, measured as ROFTA, increased by 21 percentage points to 27% in 2023 for the Lithuanian fleet. LDF fleet generated a 27% return on fixed tangible assets compared to 8% in 2022. LSF fleet improved capital productivity to 25%, recovering from a negative return in 2022. SSCF fleet slightly improved to -4%. The rise in ROFTA resulted from net profit growth and reduced fleet capital value due to capacity reduction and depreciation.

Fishing efficiency, measured as CPUE, increased by 0.2%, 65% higher than the multiannual average for 2013-2022. Compared to 2022, DWF’s CPUE improved by 13% to 76,700 kg/day, LSF’s by 44% to 30,400 kg/day, and SSCF’s recovered by 10% to 124 kg/day.

4.15.3 Performance by fishing activity

Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

SSCF comprises two fleet segments – NAO PG 0-10 and NAO DFN 10-12, representing 53 active vessels in 2023. The number of vessels in the SSCF fleet decreased by 5% compared to 2022. Fishing effort, after a decline in 2022, recovered by 7%, reaching 3,523 DaS and 2,500 fishing days. From 2019 to 2021, the reduction in effort within SSCF was attributed to the COVID-19 impact, whereas the decline in 2022 was more related to poor stocks of key species for coastal fisheries, resulting in the lowest landings of such species during the 2013-2022 period.

European smelt fisheries follow seasonal patterns, with activities primarily concentrated in late autumn and winter periods. Weather conditions and water temperature are significant factors in harvesting European smelt. In 2022, unfavorable water temperatures led smelt to migrate northward in the Baltic Sea for spawning, thereby reducing fishing opportunities for Lithuanian SSCF fisheries. Nevertheless, in 2023, European smelt landings weight increased by 11%, and total revenues improved by 10% compared to 2022. The sustained high selling price resulted in a 9% rise in income from European smelt fisheries, leading to a 37% higher value of landings compared to the 2013-2022 multiannual average.

Increased revenues were also driven by a 25% increase in the average price of Baltic herring, which was the second-highest species landed by SSCF. In 2023, GVA in SSCF fisheries increased by 20% to EUR 324,450 compared to 2022 and was 28% below the average of 2013-2022. Gross profit transitioned from negative to EUR 28,657, albeit still being 48% below the 2013-2022 multiannual average. However, SSCF continued to generate net losses from fishing activities, sustaining operations through operating subsidies, with net profit subsidized in 2023 increasing by 47% to EUR 146,473.

Employment indicators reflect a downward trend. In 2023, the SSCF fleet employed 102 fishers, including crew members and shore-based personnel related to fisheries, corresponding to 28 FTE—a decline of 5% and 18%, respectively, compared to 2022.

Vessels under 12 metres using active gears fleet (L12AG)

The Lithuanian fleet does not include any vessels belonging to the L12AG segment. All vessels under 12 metres use passive fishing gears.

Large-scale fleet (LSF)

In 2023, the Lithuanian LSF fleet only had pelagic trawlers as demersal fisheries were closed due to insufficient cod stocks. The fleet shrank to seven active vessels, a 46% decrease, and 2,130 GT, a 25% decline from 2022. Fishing effort dropped 18% to 659 DaS, hitting the lowest level since 2013, driven by reduced Baltic herring TAC and cod fishing limits. Despite lower effort and fewer landings, revenue rose by 10%. Fixed costs fell by 30%, and energy costs declined by 10%, boosting economic performance. GVA increased by 93% to EUR 2.2 million and gross profit to EUR 1.18 million. Employment also dropped, with employee numbers and FTE decreasing by 43% and 29%, respectively, to the lowest levels on record.

Distant-water fleet (DWF)

In 2023, the DWF comprised five active vessels, amounting to 29,581 GTs and 28,427 kWs. Compared to 2022, the number of vessels and GT declined by 17% and 6%, respectively, reaching the lowest levels observed within the analyzed period. The fishing effort, measured in days at sea, decreased by 21% from 2022. Lithuanian DWF segments operate primarily in

the CECAF, SPRFMO, North Sea, and East Arctic regions, with a predominant focus on SECAF and SPRFMO, targeting small pelagic species such as Atlantic horse mackerel and chub mackerel. The demersal fleet segment generated the largest share of landings for northern prawn fisheries in the Barents Sea.

Following the trend of declining effort and capacity, the weight and value of landings in 2023 decreased by 6% and 24%, respectively. This decline was associated with the expiration of the SFPA agreement between the EU and Morocco in July 2023. Despite this reduction, a significant 35% decrease in total variable costs sustained a high profitability level for the long-distance fleet. Compared to 2022, GVA increased by 19% and was 42% higher than the 2013-2022 multiannual average. Gross profit rose by 40%, reaching EUR 18.7 million in 2023.

The total number of employees remained consistent with 2022 levels; however, FTEs saw a 13% increase due to extended working hours related to the reallocation of the fleet to the SPRFMO region. Over the 2013-2023 period, the number of employees remained stable. Due to the specific nature of the DWF segment, the number of FTEs is consistently higher than the average number of employees.

4.15.4 Performance of selected fleet segments

In 2023, the national fleet comprised four primary segments, representing different types of fisheries: SSCF, LSF pelagic trawlers operating in the Baltic Sea, and the DWF.

Passive Gears (PG) below 10 metres

In 2023, the segment NAO PG 00-10 comprised 49 active vessels that exclusively operated in the coastal area of the Baltic Sea using passive gears. This segment accounted for 75% of the total active vessels and 0.2% of the total gross tonnage in the national fleet. Compared to 2022, the total vessel tonnage decreased by 8% and was 19% lower than the multiannual average for 2013-2022. The primary species for this segment was European smelt, which represented 62% of the total value of landings.

In 2023, total revenue increased by 6% to EUR 0.55 million, although it was 12% lower compared to the multiannual average for 2013-2021. A decline in energy costs by 19% and other variable costs by 48% contributed to a rise in profitability indicators, with the GVA increasing by 17% and the gross profit reaching EUR 46,414, a positive turnaround from the negative values reported in 2022. The total number of employees and FTEs decreased by 2% and 14%, respectively, marking the lowest levels observed in the 2013-2023 period.

Pelagic Trawlers (TM) 24-40 metres

In 2023, the pelagic trawler segment comprised seven active vessels, a decrease of 46% compared to 2022. This segment represents the large-scale fleet operating in the Baltic Sea, with the main economic indicators detailed in the "Performance by fishing activity" section under the Large-scale fleet category.

Pelagic Trawlers (TM) above 40 metres, distant water fleet

This fleet segment represents Lithuanian long-distance fisheries. Economic indicators are detailed in the "Performance by fishing activity" section under Distant Water Fleet.

4.15.5 Drivers affecting the economic performance trends

Markets and trade

All production from the long-distance fleet, which primarily operates in CECAF, SPRFMO, the North Sea, and the East Arctic, is exported. Since 2023, the largest quantities of seafood caught by DWF pelagic trawlers have been landed in West African ports, specifically in Mauritania and Morocco. For instance, in 2013, approximately 82% of DWF catches were landed in West African ports. This figure declined to 44% in 2022 and further decreased to 22% in 2023. These changes in small pelagic landings are linked to the termination of the agreement with Morocco in 2023 and uncertainties regarding future opportunities in the region. After a break in the 2019-2020 period, DWF resumed fishing in the SPRFMO area, accounting for 21% of total DWF landings in 2023. The largest portion of DWF catches in 2023 were landed in the port of the Netherlands. In 2023, the average price for the main pelagic species had varied trends. Prices of Horse mackerel decreased by 13% compared to 2022, whereas Chilean jack mackerel and blue whiting increased by 7% and 5%, respectively. The average price of Northern prawn in 2023 saw an 18% decline to 3.08 euro/kg live weight. Norway and Iceland are the principal markets for Northern prawn landed by the Lithuanian fleet.

In 2023, landings of sprat and Baltic herring by the Lithuanian LSF fleet decreased by 5.7% (11,213 tonnes) and 13.2% (1,456 tonnes), respectively, as a result of reduced TAC for key species in Baltic Sea fisheries. All landings from the LSF fleet were exported, with Denmark being the main market—accounting for 45% of total landings by LSF—followed by Estonia and Latvia with 26% and 20%, respectively. Minor quantities were landed in Poland. Exported sprat landings in Denmark and Estonia are utilized in the fish processing industry for fishmeal and fish oil. The growth of global fishmeal production for the aquaculture industry and livestock farming has increased the demand for small pelagic species. While Denmark was the main market for sprat with almost 50% of total sprat landings, Baltic herring was predominantly landed in Latvia and Estonia, together accounting for 76% of total Baltic herring landings. Baltic herring and sprat landings at Estonian and Latvian ports are used for fish processing, mainly into frozen blocks, with a significant portion exported to Ukraine. According to Ukraine's largest importer of sprat and herring, sprat is imported from Baltic countries, including Estonia, Lithuania, Finland, and Sweden. Sprat and herring are mostly imported as frozen blocks and sold to local producers who manufacture a wide range of products, including marinated, salted, smoked and oiled, and smoked and spicy varieties, among others. In 2023, the price of sprat increased by 59% to 0.43 euro/kg, while the price of Baltic herring surged by 66% to 0.50 euro/kg.

The primary species provided by SSCF include European smelt, which accounts for 63% of the total coastal value of landings. This is followed by Baltic herring, round goby, and turbot, which together contribute 21% of coastal landings. All SSCF seafood production is landed at local ports and sold in the internal market for fresh production, including buyers from Latvia. In 2023, the supply of fresh seafood from SSCF increased by 19% in volume compared to 2022. The average price for European smelt remained stable at 4.2 euro/kg. According to LAFPMIS data, the average retail price for fresh European smelt in the local market increased by 25% to 7.5 euro/kg (excluding VAT) in 2022 compared to 2021.

Baltic herring, primarily landed by SSCF for fresh consumption in the local market, saw its average landing price increase by 25% to 0.47 euro/kg in 2023. Landings and sales of Baltic herring by the SSCF fleet rose by 27% to 94.3 tonnes. The retail price for fresh Baltic herring in the local market increased by 7% to 2.32 euro/kg per kilogram.

Coastal fisheries currently lack the logistics facilities and infrastructure needed to store landed production for distribution to local markets and to ensure a steady supply of fresh seafood to the internal market. Investments in the infrastructure of landing sites are planned, as foreseen according to EMFAF funding.

Operational costs (external factors)

In 2023, the total operating costs of the Lithuanian fishing fleet decreased by 23%, reaching EUR 85.5 million compared to 2022. Energy costs and other non-variable costs (including fishing rights costs) accounted for 38% and 18% of the total operating costs, respectively. Expenditures on energy products, after reaching a record high in 2022, declined by 51% in 2023 and were 32% lower than the multiannual average for 2013-2022. Labour costs decreased by 12% in 2023 and were 21% lower compared to the multiannual average for 2013-2022. The largest share of the cost structure in 2023 was for other non-variable costs (including fishing right costs), which slightly increased by 2%. The structure of operating costs varies considerably among different types of fisheries within the Lithuanian fleet.

In the SSCF fleet, wages and salaries had the largest share of operational costs, contributing 50%, followed by non-variable costs (including fishing right costs) at 28% and energy costs at 10% of the total operational cost structure. Compared to 2022, SSCF personnel costs and other non-variable costs increased by 1% and 13%, respectively, whereas energy and other variable costs declined by 9% and 38%. Overall, total operating costs remained at the same level as in 2022.

In 2023, LSF non-variable costs (including fishing right costs) constituted the largest share in the operational cost structure at 32%. Non-variable costs declined by 30% compared to 2022 when costs related to the acquisition of fishing rights and quotas were much higher than in 2023. As expected, energy costs declined by 10%, at the same rate as personnel costs. Overall, in 2023, total operating costs showed a 12% decrease and were 31% lower than the 2013-2022 multiannual average.

The DWF fleet benefited from the decline in energy costs, which is one of the major cost items affecting profitability indicators. In 2023, energy costs for the DWF fleet decreased by 52%, other variable costs and personnel costs decreased by around 12% each, whereas other variable costs slightly increased by 4%. Overall, in 2023, total operating costs declined by 24%, positively affecting profitability and productivity indicators when effort and landings decreased.

Status of Key Stocks, changes in TACs and quotas

In 2023, the LSF fishing fleet operating in the Baltic Sea focused on catching sprat and herring, as cod fisheries have been closed since 2020, leaving only bycatch as an option. Cod bycatch in the Baltic Sea in 2023 increased by 32% to 2.0 tonnes. The bycatch limits of cod in Subdivisions 25-32 for Lithuania are set at 33 tonnes. The sprat quota for the Lithuanian fleet continues to decline due to the deterioration of spawning stock biomass in the Baltic Sea (Subdivisions 22-32), which in 2025 dropped to the lowest levels since 2004. In 2023, the decreased sprat quota decreased by 11% to 11,216 tonnes, then declined by 10% to 10,059 tonnes in 2024 and dropped by 31% to 6,981 tonnes in 2025. This quota reduction is expected to impact the economic viability of the Baltic fleet and could lead to an imbalance between fishing effort and fleet capacity.

Baltic herring biomass in Subdivisions 25-27, 28.2, 29, and 32 shows a moderate recovery from the decline since 2017, followed by the stabilization of TAC. In 2023, the Baltic herring quota increased by 32% to 2,068 tonnes. In 2024, it declined by 43% to 1,178 tonnes but

surged by 107% to 2,449 tonnes in 2025. The increase in the Baltic herring quota in 2025 provides an important fishing opportunity for the pelagic fleet, particularly after the reductions in the sprat quota. Fishing opportunities for key species targeted by the DWF experienced a significant decline in 2023. For example, the TAC in the CECAF and SPRFMO regions decreased by 23% to approximately 71,000 tonnes following the termination of the SFPA agreement with Morocco. From 2023 to 2025, quotas for small pelagic species remained stable at around 70,000 tonnes. Similarly, quotas for Northern prawn remained stable during the 2023-2025 period.

Management instruments

In 2020, fishing rights through individual transferable quotas (ITQs) were granted to fishing companies in the coastal Baltic Sea, open Baltic Sea, and long-distance fisheries for 2020-2034. For the coastal fleet, specific fishing gear usage was allocated per coastal bar. The Baltic large-scale fleet received ITQ allocations for sprat, Baltic herring, cod (bycatch), and salmon for 2020-2034. To address the imbalance between fishing opportunities and fleet capacity for cod-dependent segments, a vessel scrapping program began in 2021, leading to the termination of some 24-40 m vessels.

Innovation and development (role of EMFAF)

The 2021-2027 Operational Programme for the Lithuanian fisheries sector outlines the development and implementation of innovations and advancements in fisheries through specific actions:

- Investing in sustainable fishing businesses is key. The programme will enhance the value of catches through processing, marketing, and direct trade; improve catch quality; manage unwanted by-catches; ensure better health, hygiene, safety, and working conditions for fishers; and boost energy efficiency with advanced technologies like innovation, digitalisation, and circular economy. These measures benefit the SSCF segments, the sustainable Baltic Sea segment, and the distant-water fishing fleet.
- Collaborative efforts between scientists and fishers will test and implement advanced technologies and techniques to protect aquatic life, decarbonize operations, and reduce environmental impacts. This will support the European Green Deal, the EU's Biodiversity Strategy, and the CBSS objective of sea protection.

4.15.6 Assessment of the economic performance for 2024 and 2025 (nowcasts)

Model results

In 2024, the number of active vessels decreased by 10.8% as part of an effort to optimize the fishing fleet due to declining fishing opportunities. However, capacity in terms of GT increased by 3.7% because of the introduction of a new large-scale vessel to the Baltic Sea LSF fleet. Fishing effort for the national fleet remained stable in 2024, with a 2.6% increase in days at sea and a 3.7% increase in fishing days. However, the weight and value of landings declined by 25% and 20%, respectively, mainly due to a 28% reduction in the weight of landings from the DWF segments and a 5% decrease in Baltic Sea landings. Although the SSCF fleet increased its landings by 6%, this did not significantly impact the national level.

Fishing effort of the DWF fleet in 2024 increased by 5.8%, but the weight and value of seafood production dropped by 28% and 20%, respectively. Based on forecast model results, the LDF fleet is expected to generate EUR 12.6 million GVA and EUR 4.6 million gross profit

in 2024, representing declines of 53% and 76%, respectively, compared to 2023. During the January-May period of 2024-2025, the weight and value of landings in the LDF fleet increased by 20% and 22%, respectively.

In 2024, DWF fishing effort decreased by 2%, resulting in a 5% and 7% decline in the weight and value of landings, respectively. The average price for key species in Baltic Sea fisheries showed a modest increase, with sprat prices rising by 5.6% and Baltic herring prices by 12.5% compared to 2023. Average marine fuel prices in 2024 decreased by 11%, reducing energy costs for the pelagic trawler fleet. Crew wages remained at the same level as in 2023. Based on forecast model results, the Baltic Sea pelagic trawlers fleet is expected to generate EUR 1.7 million GVA and EUR 0.8 million gross profit in 2024. In 2025, the weight and value of landings for the Lithuanian DWF fleet are projected to decline by 13%, reaching their lowest levels ever recorded. While energy costs and crew wages are expected to remain relatively stable compared to 2024, high non-variable costs are likely to exert significant pressure on profitability.

In 2024, fishing effort and the weight of landings in the SSCF segment increased by 2% and 5.8%, respectively, whereas the value of landings decreased by 11%. Based on forecast model results, GVA is expected to decline by 7% to EUR 0.3 million in 2024. The average landing prices for European smelt, round goby, and Baltic herring remained relatively stable in the first half of 2025 compared to 2024. Fishing income will largely depend on market demand, prices in the internal market, and the volume of landings, which are influenced by external factors such as weather conditions and European smelt migration patterns for spawning. In 2024, the average retail prices of European smelt in local markets increased by 17% to 9 euro/kg compared to 2023. However, in the first half of 2025, they declined by 7.7% to 8.3 euro/kg.

4.15.7 Methodological considerations and data issues

Improvements achieved

The variable “value of quota and other fishing rights” for 2017-2023 was estimated using an established and tested methodology. The estimation of the variable utilized the modified Discounted Cash Flow method, drawing on data sources such as LAFPMIS, FDIS, and the Fleet register. The new methodology was developed in accordance with PGECON 2019 Recommendations 1.1 and 1.4, as well as conclusions from Tor 4 of the PGECON Workshop on Capital Value Estimations (Salerno, 2019).

Methodological considerations

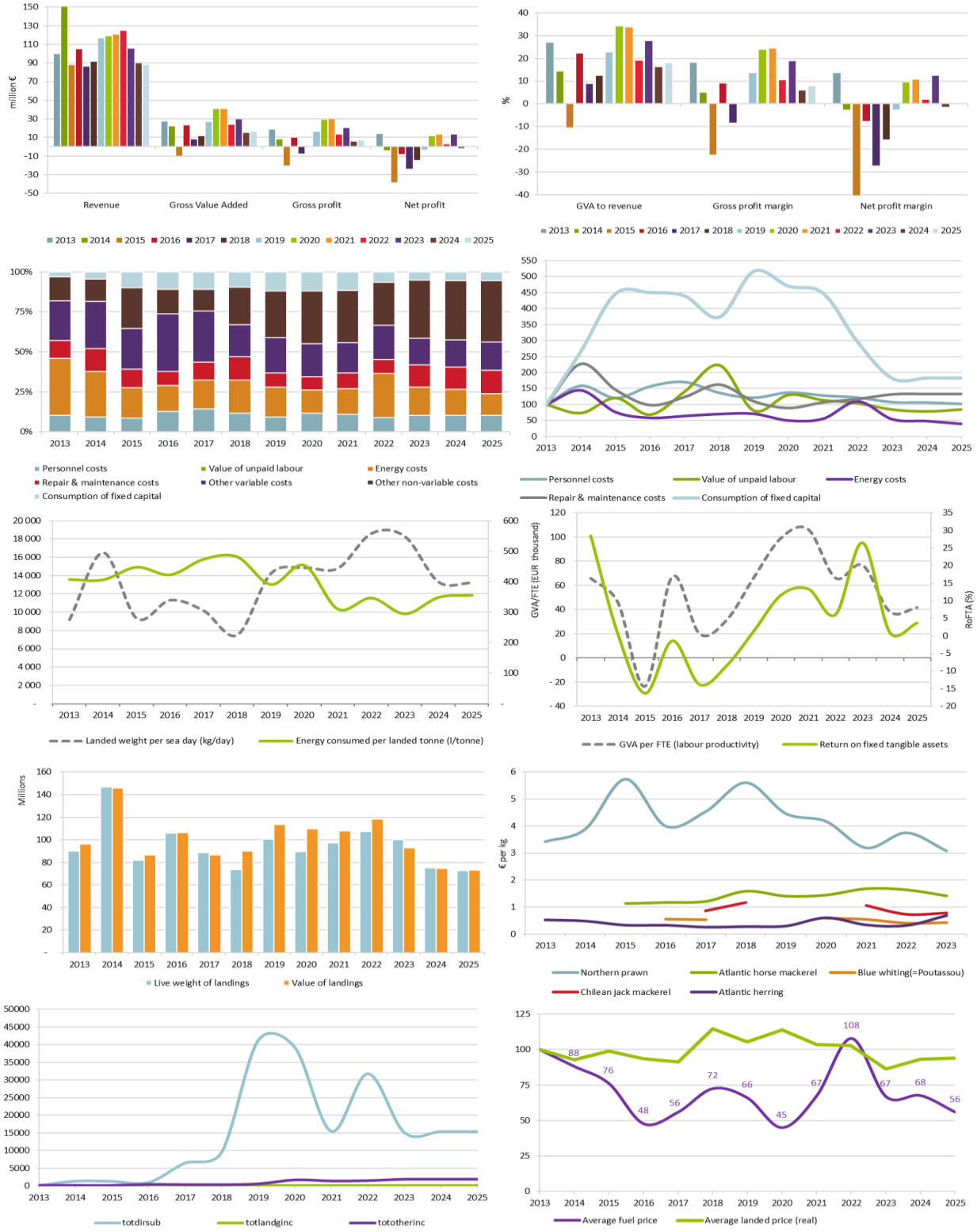
Revenues and value of landings are reported from two separate data sources. The value of landings is estimated by multiplying the weight of landings from logbooks by the average price, whereas income from landings is collected from fishing enterprise accountancy. In Lithuania, income from landings along with other socio-economic indicators, such as expenditure, employment, and capital value, are collected through a census survey with a one-year lag, while the estimated value of landings is available one year prior to economic data.

Depreciation costs of capital and capital value at the Member State level are recalculated for the total dataset from 2008 to 2017 after the PIM method was revised and updated. However, data for capital depreciation costs and capital value from 2008 to 2016 at the fleet segment

level remains unchanged. The previous data were retained because historical data were used for fleet management with appropriately addressed management measures.

For DWF in 2023, FTE was higher than the number of employees, which is a sector-specific deviation. According to national law, one person can be employed for 1.5 FTE, and converting to 1 FTE per employed person when it exceeds would misrepresent the employment statistics for the national fleet.

Figure 4.15.1.Lithuania: Main trends in (from top to bottom, left to right): economic performance indicators (absolute value and relative values); cost structure and variation in main cost items; productivity and efficiency indicators; landings (in weight and value) and average price (euro/kg) of top species; variation in income variables and average prices of key input/outputs (2013=100). Nowcast figures for 2024 and 2025.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

4.16 Malta

4.16.1 Short description of the national fleet

The Maltese fishing sector is relatively small and consists predominantly of Mediterranean artisanal or small-scale fishing operations. It is best characterised as a multi-species, multi-gear fishery, in which most fishers shift between different gears multiple times throughout the year. Most of the Maltese active fishing fleet is composed of SSCF vessels (91% of total active fleet) with an engine power of 39,289 kW and a combined 1,558 GT (28% of the total active gross tonnage).

Table 4.16.1. Malta at a glance.

Malta		2023				%Δ 2023-2022			
Indicator	**Units**	**Overall**	**SSCF**	**L12AG**	**LSF**	**Overall**	**SSCF**	**L12AG**	**LSF**
Active vessels	Number	641	584	6	51	-5%	-4%	-40%	-9%
FTE	Number	728	515	17	196	136%	162%	-22%	118%
Gross Value of landings	Million €	14.7	6.0	0.2	8.5	-17%	-10%	-67%	-20%
GVA	Million €	8.1	1.7	0.0	6.4	-44%	-55%	-75%	-40%
Gross profit	Million €	1.6	- 1.9	- 0.02	3.5	-84%	-220%	-74%	-59%
Net profit	Million €	- 9.0	- 9.3	- 0.08	0.4	-757%	-48%	44%	-92%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure

As of 2023, the Maltese fishing fleet comprised a total of 828 registered vessels, a 3 % decrease compared to 2022 and a 14 % decline from 2013. This continues a long-term contraction of the fleet, which has seen vessel numbers fall steadily from over 1,300 in 2008.

Out of the total fleet, 641 vessels were active in 2023, accounting for approximately 77 % of the registered fleet. This share is comparable to previous years, confirming a stable proportion of inactive vessels, which are primarily under twelve metres.

The total engine power registered across the fleet amounted to 70,772 kilowatts, of which 55,305 kilowatts were attributed to the active fleet. This indicates that around 22 % of the registered engine power was held by inactive vessels. Similarly, the fleet's total gross tonnage was 6,805 tonnes, with 5,421 tonnes belonging to active vessels—implying 20 % of capacity remains idle.

While the reduction in vessel numbers and capacity continues, 2023 saw a modest uptick in gross tonnage (+5% from 2022), primarily driven by a substantial increase in the GT of inactive vessels (+52%). In contrast, the gross tonnage of the active fleet declined slightly by 3 %, suggesting that the observed growth in capacity stems not from expanded fishing effort but rather from a shifting composition within the fleet.

Similarly, total engine power registered across the fleet decreased marginally by 1%, with a 4% drop in active engine power, partially offset by an 11 % rise among inactive units. This pattern—combined with the reduction in overall number of vessels—may indicate structural consolidation or the decommissioning of less efficient units, with some capacity remaining idle pending refurbishment or sale.

The Maltese Fishing Vessel Register remained closed to new commercial registrations in 2023, although entries for recreational vessels continued. The steady decline in both total and active fleet size, as well shifts in capacity indicators, supports the view that Malta's fishing sector is undergoing structural adjustment, with a likely shift toward smaller, more selective, and seasonally active operations.

Fishing activity and production

In 2023, the Maltese fleet spent a total of 22,182 days at sea, of which 19,876 were fishing days. This represents a 5% decrease in both metrics compared to 2022. The reduction follows a similar decline in vessel numbers and aligns with the overall contraction in fishing effort.

Effort is primarily driven by the SSCF, with the LSF showing proportionally larger reductions. The SSCF registered smaller declines in days at sea compared to the LSF, emphasizing its role as the primary contributor to effort.

In 2023, SSCF vessels averaged approximately 29 fishing days, showing a stable pattern with only a 0.3% decline compared to 2022. The L12AG fleet, despite being small in size, experienced a sharper contraction, averaging 23 fishing days, down 37% year-on-year. Conversely, the LSF vessels saw a modest increase, averaging 59 fishing days, which is 3% higher than in 2022. This disparity highlights the varying operational intensity across fleet fisheries, with the LSF remaining the most active on a per-vessel basis.

The total live weight of landings by the Maltese fleet amounted to 2,266 tonnes, a decrease of 19% from 2022. The landed value declined in parallel, reaching EUR 14.7 million, down 18% compared to the previous year. This contraction was observed across all three fisheries.

The SSCF saw its landed weight fall by 7%, while the landed value dropped by 10%. The LSF experienced a sharper reduction in both quantity (–22%) and income (–20%). This indicates that the downturn in 2023 was more significantly influenced by the LSF, with the SSCF demonstrating greater relative resilience. The L12AG fleet recorded the steepest contraction, with a 73% decline in landed weight and a 67% drop in value.

The SSCF's smaller reduction in landing volume, along with a less pronounced drop in landed value, suggests price stability or a focus on high-value species, rather than regulatory restrictions. This trend may also indicate increased selectivity or efficiency in targeting commercially important demersal or pelagic species.

The main exploited species, in terms of live weight, continue to include Atlantic bluefin tuna, swordfish, and common dolphinfish, all of which are key components of Malta's pelagic fisheries. Together, these species account for the majority of landings and landed value, particularly for vessels over 12 metres. Additionally, the fleet records consistent landings of giant red shrimp, red porgy, and red scorpionfish—species that, despite lower volumes, command high market prices and contribute significantly to the overall landed value. This combination of high-volume pelagics and high-value demersals underscores the dual nature of Malta's fishing activity, balancing both bulk landings and targeted selective fishing for better market returns.

Employment and average salaries

The Maltese fishing sector employed 919 fishers in 2023, a marginal increase (1%) compared to 2022, though employment levels remain 21% below the 2013–2022 average, continuing a long-term downward trend. In terms of full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs, the sector

recorded a notable recovery, doubling from 309 in 2022 to 728 in 2023 (+136%). This sharp rebound suggests either improved reporting or a genuine return to more intensive engagement post-pandemic.

Employment remains heavily concentrated in the small-scale coastal fishery (SSCF), which engaged 706 individuals (77% of the total). The large-scale fishery (LSF) followed with 196 fishers (21%), while the L12AG fishery recorded only 17 workers (2%). FTE figures reflect a similar hierarchy: SSCF accounted for 515, LSF for 196, and L12AG for 17. Compared to 2022, the SSCF more than doubled its FTE (+162%), LSF also saw a significant increase (+118%), whereas L12AG halved its FTE (–22%).

Average employment per vessel varied considerably across fisheries: SSCF vessels had roughly 1.2 crew per vessel, L12AG vessels averaged 2.8, and LSF vessels maintained an average of 3.8—underscoring the predominantly single-operator structure of the SSCF.

Despite the FTE surge, average earnings per FTE dropped across all fisheries. National gross value added (GVA) per FTE fell by 54% in 2023 to EUR 380,931. This included an 83% drop in SSCF, 68% in L12AG, and 72% in LSF. These declines may point to increased effort not matched by proportional revenue gains, operational inefficiencies, or higher costs in 2023.

4.16.2 Economic results for 2023 and recent trends

The economic results pertain solely to the Maltese fishing fleet active in 2023.

National fleet performance

The total revenue generated by the Maltese national fleet through fishing activities in 2023 was estimated at EUR 17.4 million, marking a 15% decrease from the previous year. When including non-fishing revenue streams (such as fish tourism, towing, and support operations), the total revenue falls in line with a downturn following an exceptional year in 2022. This decline in income coincided with reduced landings in both volume (–19%) and value (–18%), although the latter still remained 5% above the 2013–2022 average, reflecting relatively stable market prices.

In terms of profitability, economic indicators saw a significant deterioration in 2023. Gross value added (GVA) fell to EUR 8.1 million, a 44% drop from 2022, returning to levels observed in the pre-recovery phase of 2020. Gross profit plummeted by 84%, and net profit swung sharply into the negative at –EUR 9 million, compared to near break-even in 2022. This dramatic reversal pushed the return on fixed tangible assets to –423%, down from –132%, highlighting eroded capital productivity.

Despite this, the fleet’s FTE-adjusted productivity remains above average: GVA per FTE stood at EUR 380,931, which is still 10% above the 2013–2022 average. This suggests that those retained in the sector generated comparatively higher value, pointing to persistent structural improvements even during downturns.

The deterioration in performance appears to be driven primarily by a surge in operating costs, which increased by 54% between 2022 and 2023, rising to EUR 15.8 million—the highest recorded since 2010. While revenue declined by 15%, total costs rose by 10%, climbing to EUR 25.4 million, thereby exacerbating the negative profitability outcomes. Notably, repair and maintenance costs more than doubled (+97%), reaching EUR 3.2 million, while energy costs spiked by 31%, indicating exposure to volatile fuel prices and aging fleet infrastructure.

These dynamics highlight a supply-side squeeze, where escalating input costs outpaced any efficiency gains or price premiums. This amplified the negative impact of demand-side stagnation, particularly for high-volume species that dominate landings. All fleet segments were affected, but the LSF, typically more capital-intensive, bore the brunt—recording a 92% collapse in net profit. Although the SSCF maintained relative resilience, cost inflation across the board pressured the entire fleet, leading to the worst financial outcome since the COVID-19 shock of 2020.

Resource productivity and efficiency indicators

In 2023, the Maltese fleet recorded a gross profit margin of -228% and a net profit margin of -1,007%, indicating a sharp deterioration in profitability compared to 2022. This represents a significant collapse when compared to the 2013–2022 average of approximately -34%, indicating intensified cost pressures or depressed revenue recovery. The Return on Fixed Tangible Assets (RoFTA) also declined to -423%, marking a continued drop in capital productivity and confirming an intensifying contraction in economic viability.

Labour productivity, measured as GVA per FTE, stood at approximately EUR 11,271 in 2023, a decline of 33% from the previous year. This reflects a decrease in GVA to EUR 6.3 million, while the number of FTEs remained nearly constant at 559. The drop in value-added suggests increased inefficiencies or revenue compression per unit of labour, particularly under cost pressure from operational inputs.

Landed weight per sea day remained constant at 35 kg/day, unchanged from 2022, but this stagnation occurred despite a 19% increase in fuel consumption, hinting at underlying vessel inefficiencies or potential shifts toward lower-yield fisheries for the year. Fuel costs, driven by both consumption and prices, rose 31% over the previous year, amounting to over EUR 3.5 million, making it one of the largest operational cost items.

In summary, 2023 data suggest a systemic erosion in economic and resource efficiency within the Maltese fleet, driven by a dangerous mix of cost inflation, declining value generation, and stagnant productivity across key indicators.

4.16.3 Performance by fishing activity

Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

Fisheries in Malta remain a relatively small sector in economic terms, yet its social and cultural value is disproportionately significant for coastal communities. The SSCF continues to represent the artisanal core of Maltese fisheries. As of 2023, 584 vessels were active vessels. These vessels are predominantly under 12 metres in length, with a fairly even split between those below 6m (51%) and 6–12m (48%). Common gear types include trammel and gillnets, pots and traps, bottom longlines, and Fish Aggregation Devices (FADs). The bulk of the SSCF continues to be found within the PGP and PMP segments.

Employment within the SSCF increased substantially in 2023. Total FTE nationals rose by 162% year-on-year, recovering from very low levels in 2022. The number of jobs in this segment remained stable (706 in 2023), but total hours worked per year more than doubled compared to 2022 (+170%). This shift suggests a notable re-engagement of seasonal or part-time workers during peak fishing periods, likely in response to demand side shifts or management decisions by small scale fishers.

From an effort perspective, days at sea and fishing days both slightly decreased in 2023 (-3% and -4%, respectively). However, GT fishing days increased by 2% over 2022 and by 28% compared to the 2013–2021 average, reflecting more active engagement by heavier vessels. Despite this, number of fishing trips fell by 4%, indicating either longer trips or a concentration of effort per trip.

Landings performance weakened in 2023. The value of landings dropped by 10% year-on-year, but remained 16% higher than the 2013–2021 average. In physical terms, landed weight fell 7% from 2022, though again still above the long-term average. These declines occurred despite broadly stable energy consumption (–1%), implying a deterioration in physical and economic efficiency.

The economic picture in 2023 worsened significantly. Gross profit fell by 220%, swinging back into negative territory (–EUR 1.9 million), and net value added plunged by 44%, following a temporary recovery in 2022. GVA fell 55% to EUR 1.67 million, one of the lowest levels since 2013. Despite increasing effort, return on fixed tangible assets collapsed to –126%, its worst level in a decade.

Cost pressures were clearly a central driver. Crew costs rose 40%, unpaid labour surged 87%, and energy costs climbed 35%. Repairs and variable costs also increased sharply (+25% and +126%, respectively). These contributed to a heavy deterioration in profitability ratios: gross profit margin fell to –28%, compared to +22% in 2022 and an average of –9% over 2013–2021.

On the efficiency side, fuel consumption per day at sea increased slightly (+3%), while fuel efficiency (kg/litre) improved by 51% over 2022, hinting at a positive operational adjustment. Nevertheless, value per litre of fuel declined (–10%) and energy consumed per euro earned rose, implying that input-output efficiency continued to deteriorate.

Overall, 2023 marks a return to structural challenges in the SSCF, with rising costs, flat productivity, and falling returns.

Vessels under 12 metres using active gears fleet (L12AG)

In 2023, the L12AG fishery comprises of vessels using “Other active gears”only. With this fishery consisting of 6 vessels, down from 10 in 2022. Total vessel power fell by 52% to 830 kW, and gross tonnage dropped 38% to 60 GT. This substantial reduction in fleet capacity is a fundamental driver behind the declines observed across employment, effort, and economic performance indicators. Importantly, the MGO 0612 cluster is a composite segment defined through Malta’s fleet segmentation methodology. As such, its composition may vary over time depending on the clustering approach and changes in the structure of the national fishing fleet.

Effort by the fleet declined in 2023. DaS dropped to 207, down 58% from the 2013-2022 average, while fishing days also fell to 140. The number of trips fell sharply to 97, the lowest since 2008. Notably, energy consumption was maintained at 225,801 litres, consistent with 2022, but concentrated into fewer operational days, driving energy consumption per sea day to 1,091 litres/day, more than double the previous year and the highest in the time series.

Landings also deteriorated. The live weight of landings decreased to 30,014 kg, a 73% decline from the 2013–2022 average, and value of landings dropped to EUR 170,034, a 61% reduction from the long-term average. Despite these reductions, gross income totalled EUR 198,395, including EUR 28,336 in other income, with no subsidies or quota leasing income recorded in 2023.

The segment’s economic indicators reflect significant strain. GVA fell by 75% year-on-year to EUR 39,674, and net value added (NVA) turned negative at -EUR 1 468. Gross profit remained negative for the third consecutive year at –EUR 20 576, and net profit subsidised was -EUR 80,073, significantly below the 2013–2022 average of approximately -EUR 124,000.

Despite maintaining energy use, fuel efficiency (kg/litre) stagnated at 44%, with landed value per litre at just EUR 0.75, both below historical averages. The gross profit margin was –10%, slightly improved from 2022 (-15%) but far from break-even. Return on fixed tangible assets worsened to -12%, continuing a decade-long trend of negative returns.

On the labour side, total employment fell to 17 persons, with FTEs also at 17, indicating single-crew operations. Average wage per FTE dropped dramatically to EUR 2,393, the lowest recorded since 2012, and 75% below the segment’s 2021 peak. This likely reflects both declining revenues and tighter cost controls by vessel owners.

Large-scale fleet (LSF)

In 2023, Malta's large-scale fleet (LSF) consisted of 52 active vessels — a slight decline from 2022 (-9%) but still 3% higher than the 2013–2021 average. This fleet includes trawlers, purse seiners, and a subset of vessels deploying hooks-and-lines or mobile gears, all operating on a full-time basis. Vessel tonnage and engine power remained relatively stable, decreasing by 3% respectively over 2022, indicating a modest contraction in capacity without significant structural changes.

The LSF contributed to 23% of all fishing jobs in 2023, employing 196 crew members (engaged) and 43 unpaid workers, equivalent to 196 FTEs — a dramatic 118% increase from the previous year. Total hours worked surged by 368%, signalling a full post-pandemic return to activity. These employment figures placed the LSF 3% above its 2013–2021 average in terms of labour engagement.

Fishing activity indicators paint a mixed picture. The fleet recorded 3,914 days at sea and 3,014 fishing days, both marginally lower than in 2022. However, GT-fishing days and kW-fishing days showed relative stability, with a slight year-on-year decrease of 1% and 2%, respectively. The number of fishing trips dropped by 6%, potentially reflecting either a shift in targeting strategy or operational constraints.

The live weight of landings in 2023 dropped by 22% year-on-year to 1,414 tonnes, 10% below the decadal average. Similarly, the value of landings fell by 20%, reaching EUR 8.5 million. Despite this, the LSF still performed slightly above its 10-year average (+1%), indicating resilience in market value retention per kg landed. Landed value per litre of energy consumed fell by 37%, suggesting weakening efficiency returns relative to energy inputs.

Energy consumption rose sharply by 28%, reversing the contraction seen in 2022. This increase — alongside a 46% surge in energy costs and a sharp rise in repair and maintenance exerted downward pressure on profitability. The GVA dropped by 40% and NVA by 51%. Net profit (including quota rights) reached EUR 1.94 million — down 53% from 2022 but still 436% above the 2013–2021 average, indicating a recovery trend from pandemic-era lows.

While income from leasing out quota rights grew by 9% to EUR 1.54 million, other income decreased by 7%. Expenditure categories beyond energy and repairs remained relatively stable, though the dramatic rebound in the imputed value of unpaid labour (+293%) and consumption of fixed capital (only slightly down at -5%) added further cost layers.

Overall, the 2023 performance of the LSF reflects a fleet in transition: operationally re-engaged and labour-intense, yet challenged by input cost inflation and weaker returns per unit of energy. Future sustainability may hinge on reinvestment efficiency, targeted energy reduction, and continued quota-based income diversification.

4.16.4 Performance of selected fleet segments

The Maltese fishing fleet is highly diversified with a broad range of vessel types targeting different species in the Mediterranean. The Maltese national fleet consisted of 19 active (DCF) fleet segments in 2023, which were clustered into 10 fleet segments.

Out of the 10 clusters, 1 cluster had positive profitability indicators and an improving economic development trend. This being PS 1824. With respect the rest of the fleet segments, all 9 left recorded weak profitability margins and deteriorating economic development trends.

Below are overviews of the performance of key segments. Their importance is based either due to the number of vessels present in the segment or their contribution to the sector overall.

Vessels using polyvalent passive gears only below 6 metres

Comprising 273 vessels, this segment accounts for 43% of Malta's fleet but only 4% of total revenue and landings. With 98 FTEs, it represents 15% of national fleet FTE. In 2023, effort was extensive, 6,377 sea days and 6,352 trips, yet landings remained modest at 110,366 kg, generating just EUR 741,283. Fuel consumption totalled 225,567 litres, with negligible efficiency at 0.5 kg landed per litre consumed. The majority of these vessels operate within the Maltese coastal waters and use different metiers based on the fishing season throughout the year.

Revenue reached EUR 744,594, but the segment recorded a gross loss of -EUR 267,703 and a severe net loss of -EUR 1.96 million, reflecting ongoing structural unprofitability. Average GVA per FTE was EUR 983, while wage per FTE stood at EUR 3,713. The segment's low landed weight per sea day (17 kg/day) and negligible fuel efficiency further reinforce its classification as a "low activity" component of the fleet. Economic development is declining.

Vessels using polyvalent passive gears only 6–12 metres

This segment, comprising 175 vessels, accounts for 27% of the fleet, 25% of revenue, and 28% of landings, employing 283 FTEs. In 2023, these vessels reported 6,976 sea days and 4,762 trips, landing 472,784 kg worth EUR 3.6 million. Fuel consumption was 805,001 litres with a 29% fuel efficiency indicator.

Total revenue was EUR 4.3 million, but gross and net profits were negative at –EUR 874,526 and –EUR 4.9 million, with weak return on assets and profit margins. GVA per FTE stood at EUR 4,611 and wage per FTE at EUR 7,702. Despite the large fleet scale, profitability and efficiency remain low.

Vessels using active and passive gears 6–12 metres

This 107-vessel segment represents 17% of the fleet, employing 115 FTEs, and contributes 9% to total revenue and 13% to landings. This fleet segment targets various species,

including common dolphinfish, common octopus, Atlantic Bluefin tuna, and swordfish by using fish aggregating devices (FADs) and drifting long-lines (LLD).

In 2023, effort data showed 3,801 sea days, with 3,499 being fishing days. Landings were approximately 224,794 kg, generating EUR 1.56 million in value. Fuel usage was 443,051 litres, with an efficiency of 1 kg/litre. Revenue reached EUR 1.6 million, but losses increased: gross profit was –EUR 550,847 and net profit –EUR 2.1 million, indicating structural unprofitability. Labour indicators reflect a GVA per FTE of EUR 2,719 and wage per FTE of EUR 7,513. The economic viability remains poor, despite moderate scale and effort.

Vessels using hooks 12–18 metres

This fleet targets a variety of species primarily using surface and bottom longliners. Surface long-liners mainly catch large pelagic species such as Atlantic bluefin tuna, swordfish, and common dolphinfish, whereas bottom long-liners focus on demersal species like bluntnose sixgill shark, red scorpion fish, and silver scabbardfish among others. With 13 vessels, this segment represents 2% of the fleet and 6% of employment (38 FTEs), generating 9% of total revenue and landings.

In 2023, it registered 1,178 sea days and 287 trips, landing 146,251 kg valued at EUR 1.1 million. Vessels consumed 175,570 litres of energy and achieved a 29% improvement in fuel efficiency. Despite revenues amounting to EUR 1.53 million, the segment recorded a gross loss of –EUR 20,991 and a net loss of -EUR 180,983, continuing a trend of limited profitability. Productivity remains steady, with GVA per FTE at EUR 19,980 and wage per FTE at EUR 20,533. Various external factors are impacting effort levels, which are not resulting in sustainable profit margins, thus while the operational scope remains broader than other SSCF segments, its economic viability is increasingly restricted.

Vessels using hooks 18–24 metres

This segment, with 16 vessels and 49 FTEs, accounts for 10% of revenue and landings but only 3% of the fleet. In 2023, 210 trips resulted in 1,083 DaS (763 fishing), landing 188,001 kg worth EUR 1.55 million. Energy consumption was 615,729 litres, with a yield of 0.3 kg per litre. Revenue was EUR 1.7 million, but the segment incurred a gross loss of EUR 232,024 and a net loss of EUR 888,548. Labour productivity was EUR 8,689 per FTE, with an average wage of EUR 13,424. Despite good scale and species mix, profitability is declining.

Demersal trawlers 24–40 metres

This segment has 14 demersal trawlers, contributing 18% of total revenue and employing 88 FTEs (13% of the workforce) and representing 2% of the fleet. They target species like deep water rose shrimp, giant red shrimp, and red mullets. In 2023, they had 1,222 DaS across 362 trips, landing 201,425 kg worth EUR 2.3 million. Energy consumption was 793,631 litres, with low efficiency. Revenue reached EUR 3.1 million, gross profit was EUR 246,957, but there was a net loss of -EUR 782,845, indicating ongoing challenges. GVA per FTE was EUR 14,975 and wage per FTE was EUR 12,168, showing economic fragility despite high landings value.

Purse seiners 18–24 metres (PS 18–24)

This segment includes 5 vessels and 12 FTEs. In 2023, it contributed 23% of revenue and 50% of landings. Operating 310 sea days (240 fishing days) over 216 trips, it landed 854,119 kg worth about EUR 3.5 million. Fuel consumption was efficient at 34,004 litres with 25 kg/litre. Revenues reached EUR 4 million, with strong gross and net profits of EUR 3.6 million

and EUR 2.5 million. Labour productivity was high with EUR 323,416 GVA per FTE and EUR 16,282 in wages per FTE. This is Malta’s most efficient and profitable fleet segment for 2023.

4.16.5 Drivers affecting the economic performance trends

Markets and trade (including fish price)

Over the past decade, Malta's fisheries sector has continued to be defined by a handful of core species that dominate both landed weight and economic value, though subtle shifts in market dynamics have shaped their relative importance.

Landings data show that the fleet landed 2,266 tonnes of fish in 2023 with a value of EUR 14.66 million, down from EUR 17.79 million in 2022—indicating reduced volume but sustained overall value (6.47 euro/kg average, compared to 6.37 euro/kg in 2013–2022 average).

Zooming further into specific market dynamics, in 2023, Malta’s fisheries sector remained dominated by a handful of high-volume and high-value species. Atlantic bluefin tuna led in both landed weight (424,039 kg) and value (EUR 4.2 million), with an average real price of 9.91 euro/kg—indicative of continued strong international demand, particularly from East Asian markets and the price inelastic nature of the BFT. Swordfish followed closely, generating EUR 3.06 million from 359,690 kg, at 8.51 euro/kg, underscoring its resilience in premium seafood markets despite quota limitations.

Common dolphinfish held third place in both weight (275,635 kg) and value (EUR 1.43 million), confirming its seasonal importance and cultural relevance. Giant red shrimp, though only eighth in volume (66,737 kg), ranked fourth in value (EUR 1.4 million) due to its premium price point of 21.04 euro/kg—reflecting its niche luxury status in Mediterranean cuisine.

Interestingly, Atlantic chub mackerel and European sprat, despite landing over 250,000 kg and 125,078 kg respectively, yielded significantly lower economic returns (EUR 0.21 million and EUR 0.08 million), pointing to their role as low-value bulk species, often utilized in fishmeal or aquaculture feed chains. Meanwhile, species like red porgy, Red scorpionfish, and Common octopus, though modest in volume, commanded high average prices (19.45 euro/kg, 16.11 euro/kg, and 10.61 euro/kg, respectively), signaling their importance in targeted artisanal fisheries and gastronomic markets. Across the EU a number of pelagic fish and shrimp species have also recorded dips in values but rebound in values due to existing inflation and supply constraints.

The Maltese fisheries market operates within a dual dynamic of modest domestic production and heavy trade flows, particularly centred on high-value species such as bluefin tuna. Apparent per capita consumption of fishery and aquaculture products in Malta is estimated between 30–40 kg/year, a level shaped significantly by imports for tuna fattening operations and tourism-related demand. This figure aligns Malta with mid-tier EU consumption rates, below countries like Portugal or Spain, but notably above Eastern European averages.

Malta’s nominal household expenditure on fishery products reached EUR 74 million in 2023, registering a 16% year-on-year increase—among the highest growth rates in the EU. Per capita expenditure followed suit at EUR 135, also up 12%, reflecting elevated consumer spending power and stable price levels. However, the comparative gap with meat

expenditure remains stark; Malta's fish spending remains the lowest in the EU when compared to meat, illustrating a cultural and structural dietary bias.

From a trade standpoint, Malta’s fish economy is predominantly outward-facing. Extra-EU imports in 2023 totalled 33.6 tonnes, up 68% year-on-year—an indication of intensified input flows, particularly frozen bait and feedstock. Yet, the country exported EUR 230.4 million worth of fishery products beyond EU borders, underlining its specialised role in value-added exports such as farmed tuna. This dual orientation—low domestic reliance but high export output—makes the Maltese market highly sensitive to global price signals and logistical constraints, such as feedstock costs, energy inputs, and external demand volatility.

Operating costs (external factors)

In 2023, Malta’s fishing fleet experienced a notable increase in operational expenditure, with total costs reaching EUR 21.6 million, a 12 % rise from EUR 19.3 million in 2022. This expansion reflects a combination of inflationary pressures, structural fleet demands, and external shocks. Personnel costs rose to EUR 3.37 million, up 12 %, paralleled by a dramatic 125 % surge in the value of unpaid labour (EUR 3.07 million), indicating either heightened engagement of family crew or methodological reporting changes. Energy expenditure rose sharply by 31 %, from EUR 2.69 million to EUR 3.53 million, despite Malta benefiting from energy subsidies that capped electricity prices since 2022; this suggests that fuel-dependent offshore operations bore the brunt of global energy volatility.

Repair and maintenance costs nearly doubled, from EUR 1.60 million to EUR 3.16 million, highlighting ageing fleet conditions and rising input costs. Other variable expenses, including gear and provisioning, followed suit with an 84 % increase, reflecting widespread inflation. Notably, the cost of leasing quotas plummeted from EUR 2.68 million in 2022 to just EUR 20,000 in 2023—a near 99 % drop—likely tied to pre-purchased quota allocations or shifts in procurement strategy. Depreciation of fixed capital marginally declined by 5 % to EUR 9.61 million, maintaining its status as the largest single cost item. Collectively, these dynamics underscore a sector under strain, where input costs continue to rise despite policy buffers, and capital intensity remains a defining feature of economic performance.

Status of key stocks. TACs and quotas

Bluefin tuna (BFT) is managed under ICCAT’s ITQ system. The 2024 eastern Atlantic–Mediterranean quota is set at 21,503 tonnes with a carry-over of 1,075 tonnes from 2023. Malta's national share is maintained through an equitable distribution framework supporting long-line, small-scale and youth vessels. This in continued efforts to implement a robust distribution plan each year with the aim of securing the sustainability of the resource, and the resilience and the regeneration of the fishing sector. The vision of the Government is to distribute new fishing opportunities across the fishing sector to incentivise further investment by existing fishers as well as providing new opportunities to fishers who have to date been unable to benefit from this fishery. Such avenues are entrenched in the principles of equity to resource access and the rewarding of hard work amongst the artisanal fishing fleets, in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Swordfish (SWO) quotas have remained capped since 2017. Following initial declines, landings have rebounded post-2018 (excluding 2020), even as TAC tightened in 2022–23. However, Maltese revenues from swordfish have stayed above pre-TAC levels, signalling economic resilience despite quota constraints.

Management instruments

While Malta continues to rely on its three established management plans for the lampara purse seine fishery, bottom otter trawler fishery, and the Lampuki FAD fisheries, recent developments indicate an increasingly spatial and ecosystem-based approach to fisheries governance. In the Strait of Sicily, recent assessments (Di Maio, 2022) recommend enhanced spatial zoning to mitigate bottom trawling impacts, especially on overexploited stocks like deep-water rose shrimp and European hake. Regional pressure has grown for stricter temporal and spatial fishing controls, supporting nursery zones and reducing bycatch, which complements Malta's precautionary lampara vessel freeze and 20% capacity reduction.

Additionally, the emphasis on co-management and the involvement of artisanal fleets is gaining traction, reflecting a broader shift noted by Laspina & Said (2022). This aligns with the GFCM's push for participatory governance models, where data collection, monitoring via VMS, and stakeholder feedback loops are crucial pillars. While no new official Maltese plans have been published post-2021, these external shifts indicate that the national strategy is increasingly being steered by regional obligations and evidence-based management priorities.

Innovation and development (role of EMFAF)

Innovation and development within Malta's fisheries sector remains a strategic priority, though investment dynamics shifted notably in 2023. Total investments halved to EUR 1.46 million, marking the lowest level since 2016 and continuing a downward trend post-2021. Average per-vessel investment dropped to EUR 66,986, further diverging from 2021's post-COVID peak of EUR 181,269. The SSCF, while traditionally absorbing the lion's share of funding due to its vessel count, also experienced a sharp contraction in investment intensity—falling to EUR 1,468 per vessel in 2023, nearly half the 2022 level. Subsidies on investments remained modest at EUR 93,097, potentially reflecting lower uptake or delays in EMFAF programming.

Despite this contraction, the EMFAF Programme 2021–2027 outlines a comprehensive suite of modernisation pathways—ranging from energy efficiency (hull design, LED retrofitting, alternative refrigerants), to decarbonisation (engine replacement), and digital innovation. These ambitions target both ecological resilience and operational efficiency, especially in light of a fleet with an average vessel age of 35 years and limited physical expansion capacity. EMFAF further supports skill-building, diversification into eco-tourism and educational services, and port infrastructure upgrades—offering a critical bridge to transition Malta's ageing fleet toward a more productive, climate-resilient future.

4.16.6 Assessment of the economic performance for 2024 and 2025 (nowcasts)

Model results

Forecasted data for 2024 to 2025 suggests a modest but consistent level of activity in Malta's fisheries, with subtle improvements across most macroeconomic and operational indicators. The total number of vessels is projected to rise from 641 in 2023 to 681 in 2025, driven primarily by incremental growth in the SSCF segment.

Revenue across all fleets is projected to climb from EUR 17.4 million in 2023 to EUR 16.6 million in 2025. Although this appears contradictory, the slight dip in 2024 reflects a

momentary cost or market adjustment, with full recovery expected the following year. GVA follows a similar path, recovering from EUR 8.1 million in 2023 to EUR 7.9 million in 2025, albeit not enough to reverse longstanding negative net profit levels, which are expected to remain deep in the red at around -EUR 9.4 million in 2025. The net profit margin, persistently negative, is expected to improve slightly from -60.7% in 2024 to -56.9% in 2025, underscoring a system still recovering from structural inefficiencies and rising cost pressures.

Breaking the outlook down by segment:

- SSCF remains the dominant segment in vessel count and employment. Revenue is expected to rise from EUR 6.7 million in 2023 to over EUR 7.1 million in 2025, with gradual gains in GVA and modest reductions in gross losses. However, net losses are expected to remain severe at - EUR 9.2 million by 2025, suggesting the cost structure (especially unpaid labour and repairs) remains too high relative to revenues. Despite improvements in GVA per FTE (from EUR 3,248 in 2023 to EUR 4,348 in 2025), the segment's long-term sustainability hinges on deeper reforms and cost-efficiency measures.
- L12AG, a small yet targeted segment, exhibits marginal improvements. Revenue grows from EUR 198 000 in 2023 to EUR 274 000 in 2025, with net losses expected to shrink significantly from - EUR 80,000 in 2023 to just - EUR 79,000 by 2025. GVA shows a slight recovery, suggesting improved productivity per unit of labour and capital, though absolute figures remain modest due to the scale of the fleet.
- LSF maintains high revenue share, with projections rising from EUR 10.5 million in 2023 to over EUR 9.1 million by 2025. While gross profits remain positive, indicating commercial viability, net profits turn negative again, suggesting increasing fixed and variable cost pressures. The segment continues to outperform in GVA per FTE (from EUR 32,400 in 2023 to EUR 27,000 in 2025), despite declining marginal returns.

Collectively, the outlook remains cautious. Despite signs of economic recovery and operational stability, profitability remains elusive for the sector as a whole. Ensuring data consistency, especially regarding unpaid labour, repair and maintenance costs, and employment figures, remains critical for robust forecasting and policy response.

4.16.7 Methodological considerations and data issues

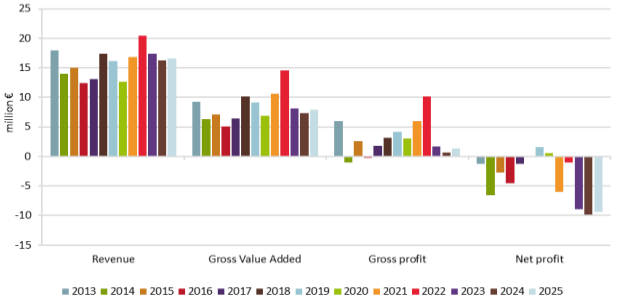
As with previous years, Malta’s small-scale fisheries composition presents inherent challenges in data collection and quality assurance. The predominance of owner-operated vessels, many lacking formal accounting practices, often results in reliance on declarative financial and operational data. While no systemic irregularities were detected, several methodological issues emerged in the current reporting cycle that warrant attention.

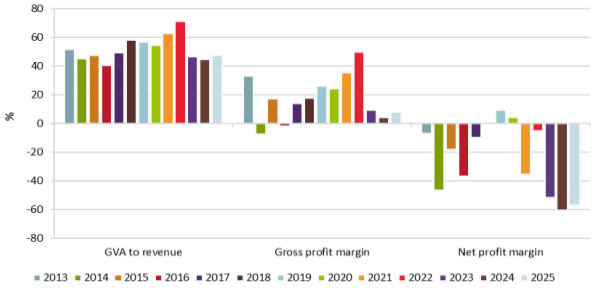
Firstly, specific cost categories such as repair and maintenance expenditures recorded unusually high figures in 2023, potentially signalling inclusion of capital investment items -a classification discrepancy that could distort profitability indicators. Similarly, reported figures for FTEs and unpaid labour valuation both showed abrupt increases that appear inconsistent with fleet structure and activity trends, suggesting possible overestimation or data entry anomalies.

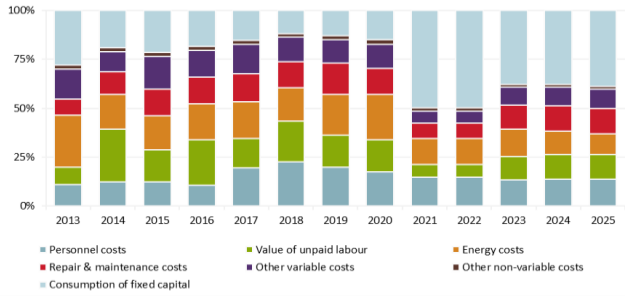
At the structural level, several clustering decisions applied in 2023 raise questions regarding their statistical justification. Specifically, segment consolidations (e.g. HOK 12-18, PMP 0006, MGO 06-12) occurred despite fleet sizes remaining relatively stable, and in most cases the

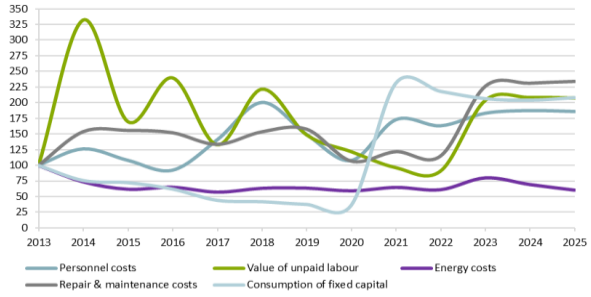
cluster composition was restricted to single gear-length combinations. Additionally, the segment previously identified as MLT MBS MGO1824 NGI * was reclassified in 2023 as MLT MBS MGO1218 NGI * though vessel composition remained largely unchanged. This reclassification should be reviewed for potential inconsistencies in fleet segmentation logic and nomenclature to avoid breaking timeseries in the data which impedes in-depth analysis of trends.

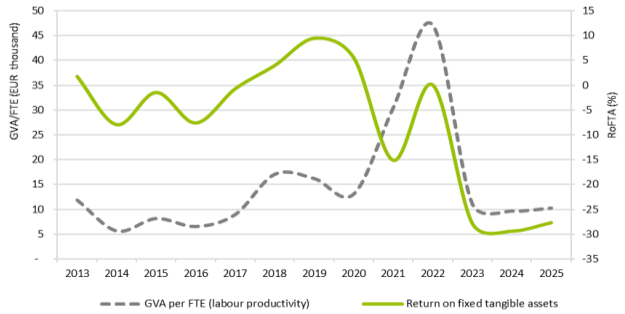
Figure 4.16.1.Malta: Main trends in (from top to bottom, left to right): economic performance indicators (absolute value and relative values); cost structure and variation in main cost items; productivity and efficiency indicators; landings (in weight and value) and average price (euro/kg) of top species; variation in income variables and average prices of key input/outputs (2013=100). Nowcast figures for 2024 and 2025.

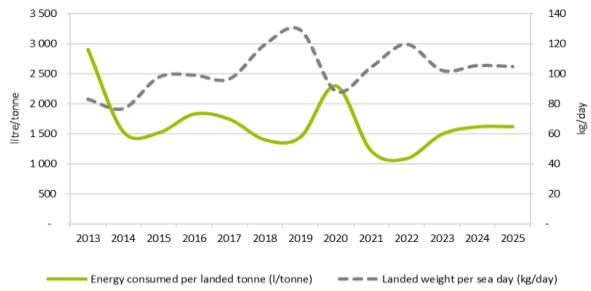


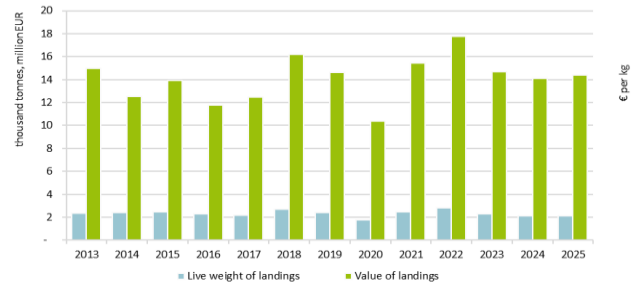


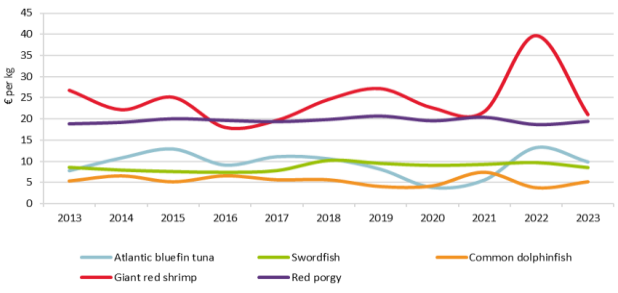


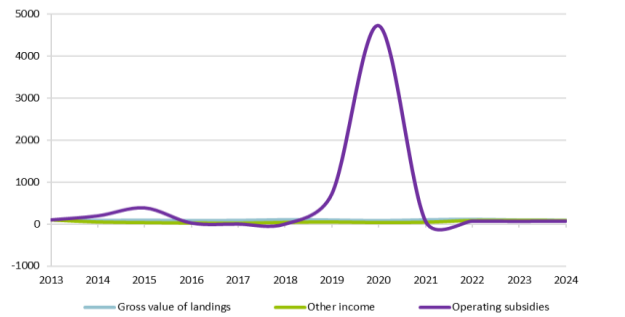


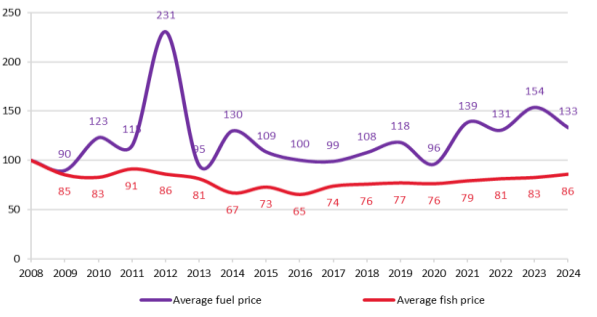












Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

4.17 Netherlands

4.17.1 Short description of the national fleet

In 2023, the Dutch fishing fleet comprised 680 registered vessels, representing a reduction of 34 vessels compared to 2022. This marks the largest annual decrease in recent years, surpassing the cumulative decline observed over the previous five-year period (in 2017, there were 738 vessels). The average age of the vessels has gradually increased from approximately 31 years in 2018 to 34 years in 2023. Of the registered vessels, 69% (468) were operational, which is lower than the figures reported in 2022, both in absolute terms (512 vessels) and relatively (72%). Employment within the sector decreased by 5%, resulting in a total of 1,680 jobs, with a corresponding 10% decrease in full-time equivalents (FTE), totaling 1,226. Additionally, the total vessel power of the fleet declined by 16%, amounting to 206,965 kW, while total tonnage reduced by 13%, reaching approximately 87,693 GT last year.

Table 4.17.1. Netherlands at a glance.

Netherlands		2023				%Δ 2023-2022			
Indicator	Units	Overall	SSCF	L12AG	LSF	Overall	SSCF	L12AG	LSF
Active vessels	Number	468	161	21	286	-9%	-9%	0%	-9%
FTE	Number	1,226	34	5	1,187	-10%	31%	-62%	-10%
Gross Value of landings	Million €	304.1	2.5	0.6	300.9	-21%	-20%	14%	-21%
GVA	Million €	111.5	1.1	0.2	110.1	-18%	-52%	20%	-18%
Gross profit	Million €	19.4	0.1	-0.1	19.5	-35%	-96%	24%	-31%
Net profit	Million €	-18.6	-1.0	-0.4	-17.2	-391%	-254%	-66%	-315%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure

In 2023, the number of fishing enterprises totalled 477, which is 11% lower than in 2022 (533). The majority (75%) of enterprises owns only a single vessel. Around 24% of the enterprises owned two to five fishing vessels and 2% of them owned more than five vessels.

The 468 active vessels in 2023 can be grouped into the following categories:

- Small scale coastal fleet (SSCF): under 12 metres using passive gears (161 vessels, -9% compared to 2022).
- Small active fleet (L12AG): under 12 metres using active gears (21 vessels, same as in 2022).
- Large-scale fleet (LSF): vessels over 12 metres (286 vessels, -9%).

LSF can be subdivided in vessels targeting demersal species, the cutter fleet, and vessels targeting pelagic species, the pelagic freezer trawler fleet. The mean length of SSCF and L12AG was around over 7 to 8 metres. In the cutter fleet the mean length was around 26 metres, and for the pelagic freezer trawler fleet it was almost 102 metres. Just as in 2022 and 2021, no vessels were newly built. The last newly build vessels were built between 2015 and 2020, which were modern vessels often combining demersal trawl and Danish/Scottish seines (DTS2440), so called fly shoot or purse seine. Due to huge challenges and lack of perspective for the fishing fleet most demersal trawling enterprises are not able to invest in

new, smaller, more innovative and sustainable fishing vessels. High fuel prices, decreases in landing volumes, spatial planning issues at the North Sea (expansion of wind farms, closed areas due to nature protection, and Brexit), and lack of sufficient crew are the most important issues, but also lack of opportunities to innovate and funding of capital (to invest) frustrate the process and progress to renew the fleet.

Fishing activity and production

In 2023, the Dutch fleet spent a total of 35,711 days-at-sea (DaS), a 16% decrease from 2022 (42 279), and even 27% lower than the average in 2013-2022. The decrease was largest among the larger (>18 metres) beam trawl vessels (6,558 DaS fewer than in 2022). The main cause of this decrease was the decommissioning scheme (developed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food and Nature and funded by the Brexit Adjustment Fund) that took effect in 2023, in which 51 vessels, mainly cutters targeting flatfish (larger beam trawlers), were decommissioned.

Fuel consumption was estimated around 121 million litres, a decrease of 14% from 2022 caused by lower effort of the fleet in 2022, mainly lower by large vessels which consume rather high quantities of fuel.

The total live weight of landings in 2023 was 261,000 tonnes, with a value of EUR 297 million. In 2022, this was still 299,000 tonnes and EUR 400 million. The decrease in weight was caused by less landed volumes for some important species in 2023 compared to the previous year, while weight of some other species increased. The top seven species in volume were the following (between brackets the volume in 2023 and the change compared to 2022):

- Blue whiting: 85,037 tonnes (+35% compared to 2022).
- Atlantic herring: 74,229 tonnes (-3%).
- Atlantic mackerel: 21,588 tonnes (-20%).
- European pilchard: 10,349 tonnes (-40%).
- Atlantic horse mackerel: 9,592 tonnes (-64%).
- European plaice: 8,718 tonnes (-31%).
- Common shrimp: 7,462 tonnes (-54%).

The average weight of landings per day at sea increased for the Dutch LSF and was estimated around 7.6 tonnes, an increase of 4% compared to 2022.

Demersal cutter fleet

The demersal fleet targets mainly flatfish and common shrimp. In terms of economic value, in 2023, the most important landed demersal species were:

- Common sole: EUR 50 million (-24% compared to 2022).
- Common shrimp: EUR 39 million (-46%).
- European plaice: EUR 22 million (-32%).

The reason for the decline in Plaice and Sole landings is largely unknown. ICES assessments indicate both species' biomass are well above safe limits. Except for beam trawlers between 24 and 40 metres, all cutter segments used more DaS in 2023 than in 2022.

Pelagic freezer trawler fleet

For the pelagic freezer trawler fleet (TM40XX), the following species were the most important in terms of economic value:

- Atlantic herring: EUR 33 million (-3% from 2022)
- Blue whiting: EUR 29 million (+35%)
- Atlantic mackerel: EUR 16 million (-16%)
- Atlantic horse mackerel: EUR 6 million (-63%)

Employment and labour costs

Expressed in FTE, approximately 97% of the jobs originated from the LSF, about 3% from the SSCF, and 0.4% from the L12AG. The SSCF was the only activity that increased in FTE, rising from 26 to 34. The L12AG decreased from 13 to 5, and the LSF decreased from 1,322 to 1,187. Total crew costs declined from EUR 90 million in 2022 to EUR 81 million in 2023. The average crew costs per FTE remained around EUR 66,000.

Although the number of vessels has been decreasing over the past few years, there are ongoing concerns regarding the availability of qualified crew. Due to the continuing decline in economic performance, primarily driven by high costs (e.g., fuel), more crew members are transferring to other maritime jobs such as offshore and inland shipping, or even leaving the maritime sector entirely.

4.17.2 Economic results for 2023 and recent trends

The economic results pertain solely to the Dutch fishing fleet active in 2023.

National fleet performance

The economic performance of the Dutch national fleet has been deteriorating over the last few years, and in terms of net profit, 2023 was even the worst year in the last decade, with a net loss of -EUR 19 million. This makes 2023 the second consecutive year with a net loss (2022: -EUR 4 million). The decline started around 2019, when pulse fishing was banned from European waters. Before the ban, the Dutch fleet had highly profitable years (on average EUR 84 million between 2016 and 2018). After the ban, the Dutch fleet still managed to remain profitable in 2019-2021 (partly) due to relatively low fuel prices, but after the rise of the fuel prices in 2022 the Dutch fleet has performed at a net loss ever since.

In 2023, the total amount of revenue generated by the Dutch national fleet decreased by 21% to EUR 307 million. Total costs in 2023 decreased by 17% to were EUR 320 million. The energy costs decreased the most, by 35%, due to the very high fuel prices in 2022. The sum of labour and energy costs, the two major operational expenses, amounted to EUR 177 million in 2023, considerably lower than in 2022 (EUR 236 million). In 2023, GVA and gross profit decreased for the Dutch national fleet. Respectively, GVA decreased from EUR 136 million to EUR 111 million (-18%) and gross profit decreased from EUR 29.9 million to EUR 19.4 million (-35%) compared to 2022. The net profit decreased from -EUR 3.8 million to -EUR 18.6 million. One of the main causes is that the landings of the most important species were low: plaice, common sole, and common shrimp. Total investments (in assets in general) by the Dutch fleet are estimated to be around EUR 7 million in 2023, which was slightly higher than in 2022 (EUR 6 million).

Dutch vessels are becoming older, and the average age was 34 years old in 2023. Just like in 2022, no new vessels were built in 2022. The pessimistic outlook for economic performance in the future does not stimulate further fleet renewal in the cutter fleet nor in the pelagic fleet. Investments in new vessels is stagnating the last few years. Uncertainties like negative effects of Brexit, implementation of more spatial multi-use of the North Sea (e.g.

offshore wind parks), the landing obligation, the ban on pulse fishery (while energy costs are rising to an extremely high level and are very volatile) and a shortage of qualified crew have stopped fleet renewal. Besides that, obtaining finances for investments (even for more sustainable and fuel-efficient fishing) is difficult. Confidence and trust in the fishing industry is at a very low level. In 2022, a decommissioning scheme was published in the Netherlands and, ultimately, around 51 vessels (mainly cutters targeting flatfish) were decommissioned. In 2025, a new decommissioning scheme for shrimp trawlers was announced that will likely be completed in 2026.

Resource productivity and efficiency

The gross profit margin in 2023 was 6%, which made 2023 the third year in a row with decreasing gross profit margin, and the lowest since 2011. Lower value of landings of the demersal fleet and still high fuel prices are the main factors causing this. Net profit margin decreased from -1% to -6%. The return on fixed tangible assets (RoFTA) decreased in comparison with 2022 (2%) to -4%.

Labour productivity (GVA/FTE) decreased in 2023 to a total of EUR 91,000 per FTE (-9% compared to 2022). The lowest in the last 12 years. For the second consecutive year, fuel consumption in litres per landed tonne of fish decreased. In 2021 the fuel consumption was 608 litres per tonne of fish, 472 litres per tonne of fish in 2022, and 462 litres per tonne of fish in 2023.

4.17.3 Performance by fishing activity

Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

The Dutch SSCF reported a net loss of EUR 1.0 million in 2023, marking the second year within the last decade with a negative economic outcome. This decline resulted from a combination of reduced revenue and increased costs. Total revenue declined by 19% to EUR 2.7 million, while total costs increased by 36% to EUR 3.4 million. Consequently, gross profit fell sharply to EUR 69,000, representing a 96% decrease from 2022 and the lowest value in over ten years. The average revenue per vessel decreased from EUR 19,000 to EUR 17,000.

The SSCF fleet comprised 161 vessels in 2023, reflecting a continuous decline since 2020 when there were 192 vessels. Fuel consumption for 2023 was 340 thousand litres; however, due to reduced landings, the fuel consumption per landed tonne increased from 534 to 715 litres per tonne. Labour productivity also saw a downturn, with GVA per FTE decreasing from EUR 91,000 to EUR 33,000 -the lowest since 2010. Similarly, net value added per FTE dropped significantly from EUR 67,000 to EUR 12,000, indicating a substantial decline in labour efficiency.

Vessels under 12 metres using active gears fleet (L12AG)

In 2023, the L12AG segment recorded a net loss of EUR 426,000, the worst result since 2016. Despite a 22% increase in total revenue (EUR 692,000), costs rose by 26% to over EUR 1.0 million, pushing the profits further into the negative. While landings per vessel increased to the highest level since 2017 (2.6 tonnes in 2023), profitability remained structurally low. Overall, the segment continues to struggle with high costs and limited economic viability.

Large-scale fleet (LSF)

The net profit of the LSF dropped to the lowest in the last decade, at -EUR 17 million, with an average net profit per vessel of -EUR 60,000. Despite slightly lower fuel prices and lower total fishing effort, operating costs remained high (EUR 992,000 per vessel), and revenues per vessel fell by 13% to EUR 1 million.

Although average landed weight remained relatively high at 911 tonnes (-4% compared to 2022), the average value of landings dropped more significantly, by 19% to EUR 1 million. Labour costs decreased slightly, but GVA per FTE fell to EUR 92,000 (the lowest since 2011), indicating declining productivity.

4.17.4 Performance of selected fleet segments

Pelagic freezer trawlers (TM 40XX)

The net profit of the pelagic freezer trawlers (part of LSF) remained negative in 2023 at -EUR 13 million 2022: -EUR 14.4 million). Average revenue per vessel declined by to EUR 12 million, while costs dropped proportionally to EUR 13.4 million, keeping margins tight. Labour productivity remained relatively stable, with GVA per FTE increasing slightly to EUR 129,000.

Beam trawlers 18-24 metres in length (TBB 1824)

This segment is the largest segment (in number of vessels) of LSF, and it mainly targets the Common shrimp. The shrimp fleet experienced a severe downturn, recording a net loss of -EUR 10.8 million in 2023, compared to a profit of EUR 0.3 million in 2022. Revenue was nearly halved, falling by 46% to EUR 40.1 million, while costs decreased less sharply to EUR 50 million. Labour productivity also dropped significantly, with GVA per FTE down to EUR 34,000 (from EUR 11,000 in 2022). Investments remained similar, at EUR 1.1 million.

Beam trawlers above 40 metres (TBB40XX)

The second largest segment of LSF are the large beam trawlers, which mainly target flatfish. This segment realised an economic improvement in 2023, with net profit increasing to EUR 3.2 million, up from just EUR 500,000 in 2022. The main cause was the decreased total costs, as the revenue did not increase. The total costs dropped from EUR 103 million to EUR 73 million, while revenue dropped by 27% to EUR 76 million. Labour productivity improved, with GVA per FTE rising to EUR 85,000 (+29%). Investments were slightly lower at EUR 1.1 million, compared to EUR 1.5 million in 2022.

4.17.5 Drivers affecting the economic performance trends

The economic performance of the Dutch fisheries further deteriorated in 2023. Although fuel prices were slightly lower than in 2022, operational costs remained high, and most fleet segments operated at a net loss. The Dutch fishing fleet is typically fuel-intensive, especially beam trawlers and demersal trawlers, making it particularly vulnerable to fluctuations in fuel prices and consumption. Since the ban on pulse fishing, many vessels returned to conventional beam trawling, which increases energy use by 40–50%. As a result, energy costs remain a major pressure point, despite some easing in fuel prices.

At the same time, landings volumes continued to decline for many key species, which limited the sector’s ability to offset higher costs. While the stock status of several important demersal

and pelagic species (such as sole and plaice) remains relatively healthy to ICES, this has not translated into increased landings or revenues. For some species like sole, price increases may provide partial compensation, but not enough to offset the decreased landings and increased prices.

Markets and trade (including first sale prices)

The overall challenge for the Dutch fisheries in recent years was to meet the demand of raw materials (in volume) from market. More specific, due to decreasing landed weight for flatfish species after the year 2016, it was difficult for the processing and trade industry to keep their customers satisfied. They were hardly able to meet the demanded volumes during specific seasons. European plaice for instance generally competes with other (non-) European flatfish species e.g., Pacific plaice, European plaice products also compete with whitefish species on the similar international market in and outside Europe. Competition on price in the whitefish market is heavy and just relatively high import prices for fish outside the EU can give Dutch fishers some relief to obtain a good price for the plaice. On the other hand, the total availability of (non-) European flatfish species and substitutes for these species dropped also in previous years while volume was needed by the industry. Due to pending contracts from last year rather high prices were paid to fulfil the contracted volumes. The plaice processing companies were willing to pay these higher prices to a certain extend for this scarcer raw material so they could fulfil the supply contracts with their customers (wholesale, retail, etc.).

More and more plaice processors from origin have been diversified their production and shifted to other species like salmon, often imported from aquaculture in Norway and Scotland. Many Dutch processors introduced new salmon processing machinery (e.g. filleting and packaging) to remain profitable and to optimize utilisation of production and labour capacity. Due to the growing international market demand of salmon for many Dutch fish processors this species has become more important now in sales value and production volume than plaice and also other fish from the North Sea. Processing and trade of North Sea fish species is just for a few companies in the Dutch processing and wholesale industry still the core business. The industry is changing very quickly.

Most flatfish like common sole and plaice, caught by the Dutch fishing fleet is consumed in countries like Italy, Spain and France. In northern Europe, Germany is an important country for the consumption of flat fish fillets and Belgium (and France) for the peeled common shrimp (Crangon crangon).

In 2023, prices went up again after risen prices in 2021. Common sole price increased from 15.95 euro/kilo in 2022 to 16.15 euro/kilo in 2023, after having already increased from 12.40 euro/kilo in 2021. For plaice the price decreased from 2.97 euro/kilo (2022) to 2.81 euro/kilo (2021). Common shrimp increased from 4.70 euro/kilo to 5.27 euro/kilo.

After COVID-19 pandemic the fish processing and trade companies the demand for frozen and canned fish products increased by the EU retail. Costs did raise like prices for transport (containers) but also for personnel.

Operating costs (external factors)

Another relevant external factor for operating costs is the price of steel, particularly in cases of renovation or the construction of new vessels. Most of the Dutch fleet consists of vessels with hulls older than 35 years, making them susceptible to costly repairs or the need to replace broken engines or components. Full replacement of these vessels with newly built

ones does not appear feasible at present, nor is it likely to become feasible in the foreseeable future.

Another external factor is quota prices which hardly can be influenced by an individual company in a market with many actors. Lease prices have decreased for many target species (e.g. sole and plaice) in the last six years, however before that time it was very hard to lease or purchase quota because of scarcity and therefore high market prices.

Status of key stocks. TACs and quotas

Most of the imported stocks fished by the Dutch fleet such as sole and plaice in the North Sea were fished at sustainable levels, far below or at MSY. But last year the predictions for fish stocks turned into red. Some other stocks (like cod) are also still vulnerable in terms of biomass below sustainable yields, but these stocks look like to restore slowly somehow. These species (like cod) are only caught as bycatch or are targeted by only a couple of Dutch fishing vessels with substantial quota for these species during spring/summertime.

The Netherlands conducts quota swaps with other Member States. This, together with the transferable quota from previous year, allowed for enough quota for all important commercial interesting fish species like sole, plaice and Norwegian lobster (nephrops) in 2023.

The quota for sole is very important for the Dutch fleet and a valuable target species. However, the uptake of quota for this specie is again far from 100%.

For pelagic species, just like other species, quotas are going up and down every year. Sometimes, for some species, the quota differs a lot from year to year. For the Dutch fleet herring, mackerel, horse mackerel and blue whiting are the most important species. These quotas are subject to negotiations of EU with other non-EU countries and management of the stocks in the right and scientific responsible way is not quite easy to do. To reach to a solid agreement is very difficult every year. Uncertainty about quota, especially at the beginning of the year, is businesswise not quite preferable.

Management instruments

The Dutch fleet is mainly managed through ITQs for the most important species, together with a range of input controls.

In the context of the recovery of cod stocks, several effort measures (including real time closures) were implemented depending on the fishing gear in the North Sea, the Irish Sea, Skagerrak and west of Scotland. Many additional yearly restrictions exist, depending on the fleet segment, the species and area. In 2015, the North Sea cod management plan was discontinued and limits on days-at-sea in the North Sea stopped.

Due to Natura 2000, demersal and pelagic trawl fisheries are facing many closed areas. Third countries such as Norway and United Kingdom (UK) can decide to implement certain restrictions for their waters, for instance, Norway and the UK are planning closed areas for beam bottom trawl as indicated as marine protected areas (MPA). Besides that, other activities in the North Sea such as windmill parks claim more and more space. As a result, fisheries are forced to change their fishing areas or even techniques. Displacement of fisheries is becoming more and more an issue. It is suggested now to do some experiments with passive gear in wind farms and to allow fisherman to be a co-user of windmill areas. This is in an experimental phase and active gear is forbidden to use within wind farm areas.

The EU (Green Deal) plans closure for fishing activity to 30% of EU waters, to safeguard the biodiversity of these envisaged marine protected area. This ambition is valid for the entire EU

fisheries fleet. Among the Biodiversity Strategy plan there is legislation named Fit-for-55 which means EU shipping industry (including fisheries) must reduce their emission with 55% relatively to 1990.

Specifically for the Dutch coastal fleet (e.g. shrimp and mussel cutters) there is a strict nitrogen emission regulation in place. The fisheries vessels operate in Natura 2000 areas where a nature protection permit is required. These permits are only (bi)annually obtained if nitrogen emissions are not exceeding a certain level. In 2022 and 2023, the current permits were still valid. The permits were also still valid (as an exemption) in 2024, but it was uncertain whether the government was going to permit another six years. The vessel owners were, therefore, hesitant about investing in so called scrubbers (to filter the CO_2). A subsidy of 50% will be given up to 50% (EUR 51,000) on an investment of EUR 102,000. Time to invest in this is very limited now and availability of the equipment for the fleet is scares. If fishing companies cannot fulfil the law in this respect (because of financial issues or else) and no other solution is found, it could result into no extension of the nature protection permits which means no allowance to fish in the Dutch Natura 2000 waters. It is important to mention that the Dutch government is planning a decommissioning scheme for shrimp vessels, which will be effective in the year 2025 at the earliest.

Innovation and development (role of the EMFAF)

In 2021, the new programme EMFAF has started as the successor of EMFF. In 2022 the EMFF was still utilized as support scheme for Dutch demersal fisheries, again mainly due to the COVID-19 outbreak when fishing vessels were forced to stay in port. In 2022 there was no temporary aid scheme[20] anymore from the EMFF. After the ban on pulse mid-2021, some Dutch fishers started testing alternative fishing techniques to put in place for the pulse gear. Currently, alternative techniques are not very successful.

New projects focus more on the fisheries' selectivity approach of the landing obligation and innovative fishing gear (less energy consumption). The Dutch fisheries and scientific researchers are exploring opportunities for zero emission fisheries vessels. However, this will be a long-term innovation ambition as many technical and economic hurdles need to be overcome before it its marketable.

The government has set up a new instrument and organisation to bring people together who can contribute to fleet innovation. At the end of 2022 this so called 'VIN' (Fishery Innovation Network) started activities and some meetings are organised together with fishers. To be considered necessary innovation options has been identified and in the next few years an innovation stimulation programme will be further developed and implemented. This is still going on.

4.17.6 Assessment of the economic performance for 2024 and 2025 (nowcasts)

Model results

According to the nowcast model, a net profit of EUR 16 million is expected in 2024, and even EUR 31 million in 2025. In 2024, it is estimated that the total number of vessels in the fleet will decrease by 4%, while the number of DaS will increase by 4%, and that the total number of jobs will decrease by 6%. It is estimated that the total fuel consumption will increase by 1%

[20] Regulation (EU) No 1379/2013 and Regulation (EU) No 508/2014.

higher and that the total weight, as well as the value of landings will increase by 13%. Fuel cost in 2024 is estimated to be 13% lower than in 2023 due to the 14% lower fuel price. The sum of the wages is estimated to be approximately 11% higher. The Gross profit is estimated to increase from EUR 19 million (2023) to EUR 54 million.

Outlook

Several key factors could affect the future performance of Dutch fisheries.

Firstly, there is an ongoing tendency of closing areas in the North Sea for fishery because of marine nature protection and offshore wind farms. Most of these closed areas are important fishing spots for Dutch vessels. This will limit effort and catchability and therefore, likely the performance (e.g. landings). The Dutch fisheries sector is one of the stakeholders which signed a so called 'North Sea Agreement' about the future spatial planning for the Dutch waters of the North Sea. Together with all other important users of the North Sea, like green energy (offshore wind parks) and oil companies, nature and environmental protection (including animals, like bird protection) organizations, marine navy (defence) and merchant navy. In 2021 the POs of Dutch fisheries signed the agreement under protest due to lacking future perspective (e.g. space to fish at sea). Spatial plans continue and space for other important economic activities is expanding.

Secondly, the Dutch fleet already felt the impact on performance by Brexit, but in 2026 a new agreement has to be reached with the UK. In 2025, a next round of negotiations will start, and it is likely that outcomes will have even more impact on the economic performance of the fleet. Fishing area in the North Sea will decrease significant because of no allowance of Dutch vessels in British waters anymore while in the recent past, in general, up to 60% of the landing volume by demersal trawlers and pelagic freezer trawlers (TM40XX) was from those waters.

Thirdly, the LO (Landing Obligation) can have big impact on the Dutch fishing sector when this regulation will become effective without exemptions anymore. Due to multiple de minimis exemptions in certain Member States including the Netherlands, the impact of the LO on social economic performance of the Dutch fleet is still limited. There are several studies conducted to calculate the impact of the LO when there are no exemptions for quota species. Without adaptions the extra costs for demersal trawlers targeting common sole and nephrops will range between EUR 6 and EUR 28 million per year.

Fourthly, fuel prices will be crucial for the economic performance of the beam trawl fleet. Since the EU ban of pulse technique many demersal trawlers now rely on the conventional beam trawling technique. The pulse technique reduced 40-50% fuel consumption compared to the beam trawling technique. Fuel prices are expected to be still on a rather high level. In 2023 and 2024, the fuel prices declined from historically high prices in 2022. It is however uncertain how fuel prices will develop in the (near) future.

Fifthly, the Dutch fleet structure has changed considerably in the year 2023. 51 trawlers (mainly beam trawlers) stopped fishing and are decommissioned. Some of them already stopped fishing in 2022. Very high fuel prices, disappointing catches, less space at sea, the landing obligation, no alternatives in use of fishing gear and in saving fuel, old vessels and high costs of maintenance, lack of skilled crew, financial problems and other reasons has driven entrepreneurs to scrap their vessel. This has economic impact on total size of the fleet, catches and landings of fish, total revenues, costs, number of crew and many other parameters, as well as social impact for local communities. In 2025, a new decommissioning scheme was announced for shrimp trawlers which will likely be completed in 2026. This

decommissioning scheme will also have significant impacts on the Dutch fleet, as the shrimp fleet has the highest number of vessels of all segments.

4.17.7 Methodological considerations and data issues

Most of the segments in the Dutch fishing fleet were well covered. In some of the smaller segments (DRB 0-10 m, DRB 24-40 m, DTS 0-10 m and TBB 12-18 m) variation in activity levels was high resulting in high uncertainty in the economic indicators estimates and large fluctuations from year to year. Moreover, the smaller fleet segments are clusters of vessels using different fishing techniques:

- Drift and/or fixed netters 12-18m include drift and/or fixed netters 12-18m and vessels using pots and/or traps 12-18m.
- Drift and/or fixed netters 18-24m include drift and/or fixed netters 18-24m, vessels using pots and/or traps 18-24m and vessel using other active gears 18-24m.
- Dredgers 24-40m include drift and/or fixed netters 24-40m, dredgers 24-40m and dredgers 40m or larger.
- Beam trawlers 0-10m include demersal trawlers and/or demersal seiners 10-12m, purse seiners 0-10m, beam trawlers 0-10m, beam trawlers 10-12m, pelagic trawlers 0-10m and pelagic trawlers 10-12m.

Beam trawlers 12-18m include demersal trawlers and/or demersal seiners 12-18m, beam trawlers 12-18m and pelagic trawlers 12-18m. Because of low response rates for the data collection in the segments above in 2016, clusters were combined to estimate the economic parameters: Demersal trawlers and/or demersal seiners 0-< 10 m, Beam trawlers 0-< 10 m and Beam trawlers 12-< 18 m were combined and Dredgers 24-< 40 m and Drift and/or fixed netters 12-< 18 m were combined. Therefore, these figures should be viewed as indicative for the size of the sector rather than describing the exact trends. Currently, work is being carried out to improve the estimation procedures.

In the capital variables for segment TM40XX (the pelagic freezer trawler vessels), no data was collected for investments, assets or debts due to privacy restrictions (too few vessels), in line with the National Plan and Annual Report.

In employment data for segment TBB1218 for the year 2021, the ratio of total employed crew (totjob = 61.4110) to national full-time equivalent (totfte = 101.4763) was below 1, which is not realistic and likely indicates quality issues in the reporting. Therefore, data quality for this segment and year is rated as low. It is intended to correct this in the future.

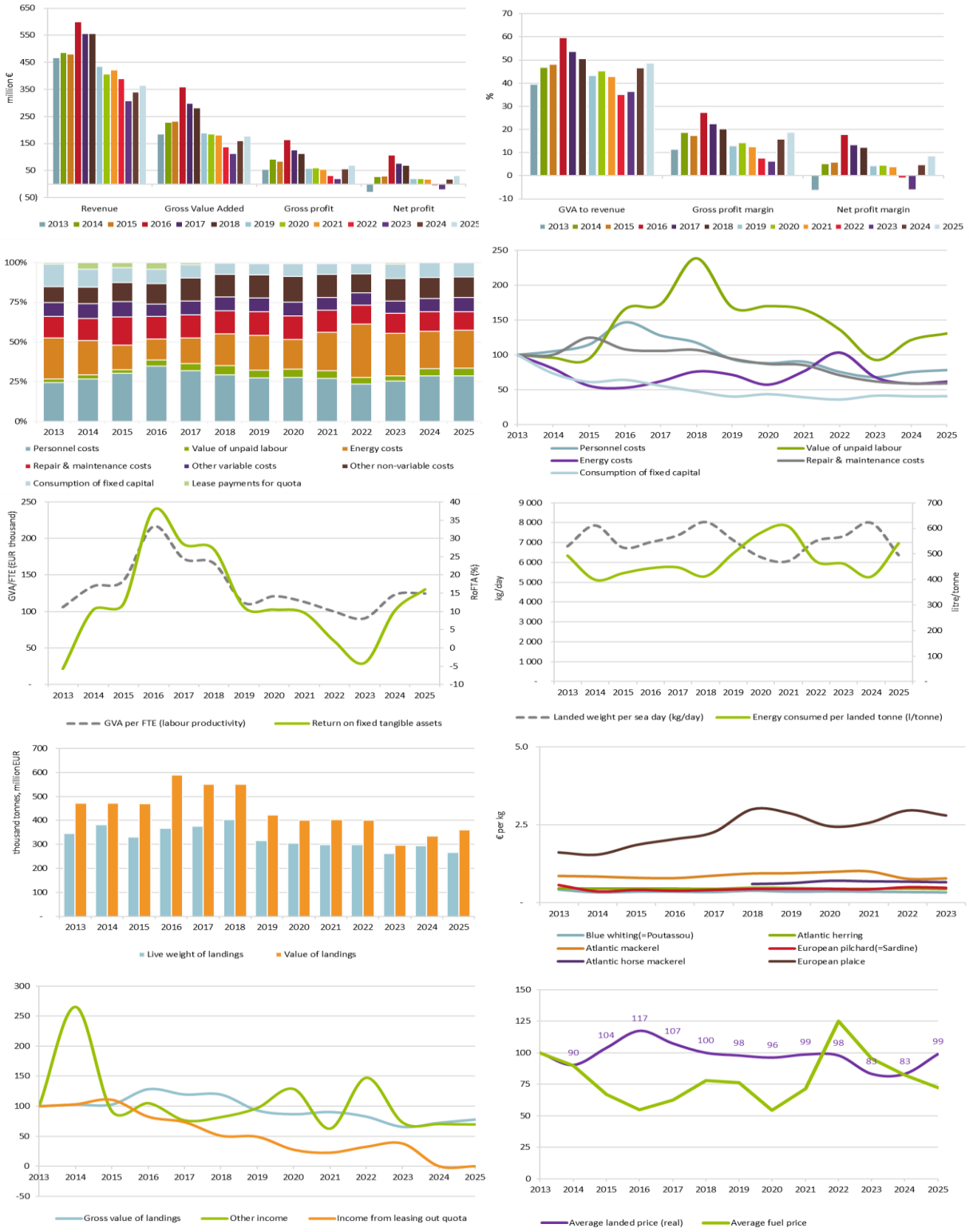
Prices of pelagic fish

The prices of pelagic fish used to calculate the fishing revenue of the pelagic trawler fleet are not actual prices. They are internal prices used within the fishing companies to calculate the wage of the fishing crew. The integrated companies cover the whole production chain from fishing to the consumer and there are no real ex-vessel prices available. Those prices probably underestimate the value of landings of pelagic fish.

Renovation costs of pelagic trawler(s) in 2015

In 2015, renovation costs for pelagic trawler(s) have been administered as investment (in 2021) instead of costs. Therefore, this modification has reduced the total costs with EUR 12 million in 2015. The net profit of the pelagic fleet segment (TM40XX) changed therefore, from -EUR 24 million to -EUR 12 million in 2015.

Figure 4.17.1.Netherlands: Main trends in (from top to bottom, left to right): economic performance indicators (absolute value and relative values); cost structure and variation in main cost items; productivity and efficiency indicators; landings (in weight and value) and average price (euro/kg) of top species; variation in income variables and average prices of key input/outputs (2013=100). Nowcast figures for 2024 and 2025.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

4.18 Poland

4.18.1 Short description of the national fleet

In 2023, Poland's fishing fleet stayed at 825 vessels, with engine power and capacity nearly unchanged from 2022. The number of inactive vessels rose slightly to 35, making up 3% of the fleet, mostly in the smallest length classes. The long-term trend in fleet capacity remained stable.

Table 4.18.1. Poland at a glance.

Poland		2023				%Δ 2023-2022			
Indicator	Units	Overall	SSCF	L12AG	LSF	Overall	SSCF	L12AG	LSF
Active vessels	Number	790	636	-	152	-1%	-1%	-	-3%
FTE	Number	2,066	1,394	-	672	0%	3%	-	-6%
Gross Value of landings	Million €	42.9	9.6	-	33.3	7%	9%	-	7%
GVA	Million €	27.9	6.4	-	21.5	24%	23%	-	25%
Gross profit	Million €	5.2	-5.6	-	10.7	79%	-6%	-	32%
Net profit	Million €	-2.5	-8.5	-	6.0	48%	-14%	-	127%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure

In 2023, the Polish fishing fleet's structure remained mostly unchanged. The LSF; vessels decreased to 152 vessels from 156 in 2021, while SSCF dropped to 636 vessels from 644 in 2022. This reflects a 13% decrease for the LSF and a 3% decrease for the SSCF over the full time series. Larger vessels were converted into smaller ones within capacity limits. The Baltic fleet's physical capital value (excluding distant-water vessels) was EUR 149.7 million.

Fishing activity

In 2023, fishing effort measured in days-at-sea and fishing days decreased by 8% and 7%, respectively, compared to the previous year. The LSF efforts dropped by 8%, continuing a long-term decline of 43% in days at sea and 31% in fishing days since 2013–2022. This reduction is due to Baltic cod stock conditions necessitating quota cuts. SSCF efforts also declined by 8% but only 4% compared to the long-term average.

Production

Total production in 2023 decreased by 1%, from 162,600 tonnes in 2022 to 160,845 tonnes. This decline was primarily due to a 13% reduction in the Baltic sprat quota allocated to Poland and lower catches of flatfish. On the other hand, catches by the distant-water fleet (operating outside the Baltic Sea) increased by 23%, from 52,850 tonnes to 65,500 tonnes, driven by higher landings of blue whiting and Chilean mackerel.

Landings by the SSCF decreased in volume by 17% year-on-year, or by 34% compared to the long-term average. Despite the decrease in volume, the value of SSCF landings rose by 9% compared to 2022, although it was still 23% lower than the 2013–2022 average. The LSF recorded a 22% decline in production volume, while its landing value increased by 7%.

European sprat remained the most important species by landed volume, followed by Atlantic herring and European flounder in the Baltic Sea. Sprat landings declined by 15% in volume and also decreased in value, partly due to the reduced Baltic Sea TAC. In contrast, Baltic herring catches—second in importance—rose by 10%.

The total value of Baltic fish landings increased from EUR 40.0 million (constant prices) in 2022 to EUR 42.8 million in 2023 (a 7% increase). In current prices, the increase was more pronounced—from EUR 35.8 million to EUR 42.3 million (18%).

Employment and Salaries

Employment in the fishing sector remained stable in 2023, with 2,270 individuals employed and 2,070 in FTEs, matching the figures from 2022. Compared to the long-term series, these numbers show a 7% decline in total employment and an 8% decrease in FTE. Average real wages rose by 13% compared to 2022 but were still 11% below the long-term average for 2013–2022.

4.18.2 Economic results for 2023 and recent trends

The economic results pertain solely to the Polish fishing fleet active in 2023.

National fleet performance

The Polish fishing fleet's economic performance has been heavily affected by the Baltic cod crisis, which led to the closure of the cod fishery in mid-2019 and continued restrictions through 2021. Despite almost unchanged vessel numbers due to subsidies, fleet overcapacity persists. The herring TAC reduction by nearly 50% further impacted fisheries.

In 2023, estimated income (excluding subsidies) hit EUR 44.3 million, a 7% increase from 2022, driven by higher market prices. Total costs were EUR 41.7 million, down 1% from 2022, with fuel and personnel expenses accounting for around 70% of costs. Crew costs rose by 14% to EUR 12.7 million, energy costs increased by 17% to EUR 7.3 million, and unpaid labour value grew by 20% to EUR 10 million.

GVA rose to EUR 27.9 million in 2023, up from EUR 22.4 million in 2022, due to higher landings income and lower variable costs. Gross profit increased by almost 80% to EUR 5.2 million, though still 50% below the long-term average. Net profit improved but remained negative at -EUR 2.5 million, compared to -EUR 4.8 million in 2022.

Total investments plummeted by 68% to EUR 0.8 million in 2023, reflecting low profitability and exhausted EMFF funding from the 2014–2020 period.

Resource productivity and efficiency indicators

The gross profit margin increased by 7% in 2022 compared to 2021, and by 12% in 2023 compared to 2022. However, it was still 22% below the average for the 2013–2022 period. The GVA-to-revenue ratio improved in 2023, rising by 9 percentage points and exceeding the long-term average by 15%. GVA per FTE also increased significantly in 2023, by 35%, but remained 14% below the 2013–2022 average. Return on fixed tangible assets went from –18% in 2022 to a positive value of 7% in 2023.

4.18.3 Performance by fishing activity

Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

In 2023, the SSCF consisted of 636 vessels, a slight decrease from 644 vessels in 2022 (a 1% drop year-on-year), but a 3% increase compared to the average for the entire time series. The SSCF operates exclusively in the Baltic Sea and two adjacent brackish water lagoons, targeting primarily Atlantic herring, European flounder, and various freshwater species such as freshwater bream, roach, perch, and others.

In 2023, landings volume decreased by 17% compared to 2022 and was 34% lower than the 2013–2022 average. The value of landings reached EUR 9.6 million, representing a 9% increase compared to 2022, but a 23% decline relative to the 2013–2022 average.

The SSCF continues to feel the effects of the Baltic cod stock crisis, which led to the closure of directed cod fisheries in 2019. As a result, the fleet shifted its effort toward alternative, though lower-value, species such as Atlantic herring and flounder. In 2023, Atlantic herring landings volume dropped by 45%. However, the fleet benefited from a recovery in freshwater bream and pike-perch catches, which increased by 30% and 48%, respectively, compared to 2022.

In previous years, the SSCF benefited from substantial EMFAF subsidies — for instance, EUR 29 million in 2020 — which supported activities such as temporary cessation of fishing due to the COVID-19 pandemic, collection of lost nets, and monitoring of bird bycatch. In 2022, operating subsidies dropped to EUR 2.3 million, consisting mainly of “war-aid” compensation, but increased again to EUR 7.3 million in 2023, driven by temporary cessation support and further “war-aid” compensation.

In terms of economic performance, the fleet’s GVA fell sharply in 2020 to EUR 3.0 million, primarily due to the collapse in landings income. It recovered in 2021 to EUR 6.0 million (still 31% below 2019 levels), dropped again in 2022 to EUR 5.2 million, and rose to EUR 6.4 million in 2023, a 23% increase compared to the previous year. However, when compared to the 2013–2021 average, GVA remained 21% lower.

Despite the increase in GVA, the SSCF posted a negative gross profit of EUR 5.6 million in 2023, representing a 6% decrease from EUR 4.09 million in 2022.

Finally, the number of crew members engaged in the fleet increased by 3% compared to 2022, and by 7% relative to the 2013–2022 average.

Vessels under 12 metres using active gears fleet (L12AG)

Due to the limited number of vessels under 12 metres employing active fishing gear in Poland (seven vessels in 2023), a separate analysis was deemed unnecessary.

Large-scale fleet (LSF)

In 2023, 152 active vessels were assigned to the LSF — a 3% decrease compared to 2022 and 12% below the long-term average (2013–2022). The fleet operates primarily in the Baltic Sea, with the exception of two vessels fishing in the North and Central Atlantic. There was no overlap in operations between the Baltic and other sea areas.

In the Baltic, vessels primarily targeted European sprat and Atlantic herring. Outside the Baltic, catches included blue whiting in the North-Western Atlantic and brown crab in the North Sea.

In 2022, Baltic LSF vessels landed 102 100 tonnes of fish, worth EUR 28.2 million (in constant prices). In 2023, landings decreased by 13% to 89 000 tonnes, while the value increased by 18% to EUR 33.3 million. The main reason for the lower volume was the reduction in the European sprat TAC, which led to a 15.4% drop in sprat landings. Meanwhile, Atlantic herring landings increased by 7% following an increase in its TAC.

European sprat accounted for 67% of the total volume and 60% of the total value of Baltic Sea LSF landings in 2023.

The profitability of the Baltic LSF improved significantly. Gross profit increased by 32% compared to 2022, driven by lower operating costs (notably for energy and repairs) and higher landing revenues. Net profit more than doubled, rising from EUR 2.6 million in 2022 to EUR 6.0 million in 2023.

Over the long term, however, profitability trends remain negative — with gross profit down 41% and net profit down 57% compared to the 2013–2022 average. The fleet generated EUR 21.5 million in GVA in 2023, an increase of 25% over 2022, but still 36% below the long-term average.

Energy costs in 2023 were 16% lower than in 2022, reflecting a 13% reduction in fuel consumption and a drop in fuel prices. In contrast, labour costs increased by 15%, which can be attributed to a general rise in average wages across the economy. The total number of DaS for LSF vessels in 2023 was 8% lower compared to the previous year.

4.18.4 Performance of selected fleet segments

Pelagic trawlers 24-40 metres

This has been the most important fleet segment in terms of economic output (landings volume and GVA). In 2023 the segment contribution to the total value and of landings and GVA generated by the Polish Baltic fishing fleet amounted to 48%. The segment targets pelagic species, such as European sprat and Atlantic herring. The vessels belonging to the segment operate exclusively in the Baltic Sea. In 2022, 42 vessels make up this segment (no change compared to 2022). Employment (FTE) in the segment remained almost unchanged.

In 2023, the total value of landings for the segment amounted to EUR 21.1 million, representing a 7.9% increase compared to 2022. This growth was mainly driven by higher fish prices, particularly for European sprat (+24%) and Atlantic herring (+6%).

Available herring quota in 2022 to the segment was about 40% smaller than in 2021 while sprat quota increased by about 10%. Fishing opportunities deteriorated further in 2023 following cuts in the TAC for European sprat slightly compensated by higher Baltic herring quota.

The economic performance of the segment, despite decreased landings value remained satisfying. This can be explained by good production efficiency. Labour productivity and ROFTA indicators improved (by 127% and 18%, respectively), profitability of the segment remained “high”. In 2023, the net profit margin of the segment was approximately 54% higher than the 2013–2022 average, indicating a significant improvement in profitability compared to the long-term trend.

Gross profit generated by the segment in 2023 rose by 22.5%. Favourable costliness was the explanation for the improvement. Total costs of the segment decreased by 3% what can be attributed to 7% reduction of fuel costs and 14% reduction of other non-variable cost. On the

other hand, labour costs increased by 15%. The net profit margin doubled from 12% to 24% in 2023, indicating a substantial improvement in the segment's financial performance. This positive development was primarily driven by a combination of lower operating costs and higher fish prices, especially for key commercial species.

Passive gears below 8 metres

The passive gears <8 m segment constituted of 328 in 2023 vessels (in 2022, 326 fishing units) operating in the Baltic Sea including lagoon brackish waters. The segment represents small scale artisanal fisheries and is one of the two most important from the social point of view. In 2023 there was 658 FTE people employed on board of vessels (+4%) belonged to the segment (32% of the total Polish fisheries employment). The boat crews spent on board almost 27,300 DaS in 2023 (50% of the total effort of Polish Baltic fishing fleet).

The fleet targets a variety of saltwater species like Atlantic herring, European flounder and a variety of freshwater species such as freshwater bream, pike perch, perch and pike. In 2023 the total volume of landings were 3,000 tonnes (+3% compared to 2022) worth EUR 5 million which is 27% more than in 2022.

Pike perch was the most important from the economic point of view species for the segment with landings accounted for 36% (EUR 1 million) of the total value (29% in 2022), following by European eel (20%) and freshwater bream (10%).

The segment's gross result was highly negative at -EUR 1.3 million, though it improved from -EUR 1.7 million in 2022. The gross profit margin stayed negative at -26%, better than -40% in 2022. The segment's profitability remained weak. GVA increased by 40% to EUR 3.8 million from EUR 2.7 million in 2022. However, the GVA to revenue indicator worsened from 64% in 2022 to 74% in 2023.

The segment has been primarily impacted by the collapse of the Eastern Baltic cod stock, which had been one of the most valuable species in terms of landings before 2012. Additionally, the segment is highly dependent on variable weather conditions — for instance, the icing period on the Vistula Lagoon affects the availability of Atlantic herring — as well as environmental changes, which have deteriorated particularly in shallow waters.

In 2023, total segment costs increased by 9%, driven mainly by higher personnel costs (+1%) and a 13% rise in the estimated value of unpaid labour. On the other hand, lower fuel prices led to an 11% decrease in fuel costs compared to 2022.

4.18.5 Drivers affecting the economic performance trends

The most significant factor that continued to negatively affect the Polish Baltic fishery in 2023 was the collapse of Atlantic cod stocks. Due to the poor recruitment of Eastern Baltic cod, the European Commission decided to close the targeted fishery at the end of July 2019. The restriction, with a little exception for bycatch, has been further prolonged and were still in use in 2023. The closure negatively influenced the performance of the demersal fleet segments targeting cod (i.e. DTS, DFN, HOK as well as PG). Additionally, the SSCF was affected by the limited abundance of this stock in coastal waters which is commonly attributed to environmental changes in the Baltic Sea.

Another driver that negatively affected the economic performance of the Polish fleet in 2023 was the European sprat quota cut (-12%).

Restriction imposed on Salmonidae catches in 2020 and straightened in 2021 (see subsection Management instruments) caused that sea trout and Atlantic salmon catches slumped down to a very low level. This affected PG0008, PG0812, DFN1218 segments mainly. Combined landings value of sea trout and Atlantic salmon amounted to EUR 0.2 million in 2023 (EUR 2 million in 2019).

In 2020, the industry received EUR 34.7 million (EUR 12.4 million in 2019) of operating subsidies paid for mitigating negative COVID-19 effects or for temporary cessation of fishing activity. This contributed to decreased fishing effort mainly for the SSCF vessels. The subsidies were withdrawn in 2021 and not available in 2022 what resulted in increased fishing effort and landings compared to 2020. In 2023, operating subsidies (including temporary cessation and “war aid”) increased significantly, reaching EUR 10.6 million (+140%). These subsidies contributed to a reduction in fishing effort and an increase in net profit. The subsidised net profit amounted to EUR 20.7 million (+67%), while the unsubsidised net profit remained negative at -EUR 4.8 million. This clearly highlights the sector’s continued dependence on public support, without which it remains structurally unprofitable.

Markets and Trade

Fish and fish products consumption in Poland increased in 2023, reaching 13.68 kg per capita (live weight), compared to 13.39 kg per capita in 2022 (+2.1%). Among the most consumed species were imported ones, such as Alaska pollock – 2.54 kg (3.30 kg in 2022), Atlantic herring – 2.78 kg (1.78 kg in 2022), and Atlantic mackerel – 0.98 kg (0.90 kg in 2022).

The value of fish processing production in Poland reached EUR 3.9 billion in 2023, compared to EUR 3.6 billion in 2022 (current prices). The production volume was 635,000 tonnes, an increase from 604,000 tonnes in 2022. Processed and preserved products remained the dominant output, including those based on species caught by the Polish fleet (such as European sprat and Atlantic herring) and imported raw materials (primarily Atlantic herring and Atlantic mackerel).

The Polish domestic market continues to rely significantly on imports. In 2023, fish product imports increased by 2.6%, reaching 1.014 million tonnes, up from 988,600 tonnes in 2022 (live weight equivalent). Atlantic salmon, mainly imported from Norway, was the largest species in the import structure at 235,000 tonnes, followed by Atlantic herring (91,000 tonnes), Alaska pollock (55,000 tonnes), Atlantic mackerel (42,500 tonnes), and Atlantic cod (38,000 tonnes).

The retail price index for fish and fish products in 2023 was 115.5 (compared to 117.3 in 2022), so was higher compared to the index for consumption goods and services, which was 111.4. The producer price index for fish and fish products was 108.7 in 2023, compared to 114.4 in 2022.

Operating costs (external factors)

Continued decrease of world oil prices in 2023 was the most important factor positively influenced energy costs of the fishing fleet. The supplier fuel price in Poland in 2022 was about 15% lower than in 2022. Consequently, estimated total energy costs decreased in 2023 by 17% with -12% energy consumption. In 2022, the gross minimum wage increased in Poland by 16% and average salary by 13% which may cause expectation for pay increase in fishery. The inflation rate decreased to 11.4% in 2023 (14.4% in 2022).

The exhaustion of EMFAF funds resulted in a decrease in vessel investments, which in turn led to a reduction in repair and maintenance expenditures.

Status of key stocks. TACs and quotas

ICES reports that the biomass of Eastern Baltic cod has fallen to just 5% of its 2010 level. Recruitment remains extremely low, and despite reduced fishing mortality, ICES recommended a complete fishing ban based on the precautionary principle.

The Western Baltic cod stock is assessed as having reduced reproductive capacity. Biomass for 2021–2023 is only 20% of the long-term average and three times below the reference point, due to weak year classes (2015–2020) and high fishing pressure. ICES recommended maintaining the very low 2024 quota of 24 tonnes.

Western Baltic herring biomass increased by 10% in 2023 but remains at its lowest since the 1990s, with only 3,300 tonnes caught compared to over 200,000 in 1990. Due to low recruitment and high mortality, ICES advised a full fishing closure for 2025.

Central Baltic herring stock received a recommended 45% quota cut for 2024, as it has been below Blim for most of the past 30 years due to overfishing. ICES suggests increasing the TAC to 125,300 tonnes for 2025 after biomass growth observed following 2024 catch reductions.

Baltic sprat stock was sustainably exploited in 2023 and 2024 despite weak recruitment in 2021-2022. ICES advised a minor 3% TAC cut based on fluctuating biomass from variable recruitment and fishing pressure. Sprat catches in 2023 were 270,000 tonnes, 10% less than in 2022, with a recommended limit of 165,000 tonnes for 2025, 32% below 2024.

ICES advice for salmon remains unchanged: a total ban on fishing in 2024 and 2025 in areas where weak river populations, especially in the Central Baltic, are present.

The plaice stock remains in good condition, supported by strong recruitment in 2019–2021.

Management instruments

The Polish Baltic fleet is managed mainly through TACs and subsequently - individual quotas imposed for all TAC species (sprat, herring, cod, and salmon) except for plaice.

Cod, sprat and Central Baltic herring quotas are allocated to fishing vessels operators based on the vessel size (there are seven vessel’s length groups) or based on historical rights (in case of salmon and Western Baltic herring). Small-scale fisheries (vessels under 8 metres length or 12 metres in sprat fisheries) are exempted from the quota system.

LO in the Baltic Sea came into force since 1 January 2015 for salmon, sprat, cod, and herring and, since 1 January 2017 also for plaice. The regulation did not affect the fisheries. Fish below MLS/MCRS are directed mostly for reduction to fishmeal since (they are usually handled with no special care (no chilling on board). No special solutions related to the LO were implemented in Poland. In 2024 the exemption from the landing obligation as regards Atlantic salmon caught in the Baltic Sea was implemented.

A multiannual plan for the stocks of cod, herring and sprat in the Baltic Sea and the fisheries exploiting those stocks was adopted by European Parliament and the council on 6 July 2016. According to this regulation, a target fishing mortality for the stocks concerned shall be achieved as soon as possible and, on a progressive, incremental basis, by 2020. The regulation set up mortality ranges for six Baltic fish stocks while left undefined for two (Eastern Baltic cod and Bothnian Bay herring).

Considering the critical condition of the two cod stocks, the EU Commission announced emergency measures for eastern Baltic cod on 23 July 2019. Emergency measures banned, with immediate effect, commercial fishing for cod in most of the Baltic Sea until 31 December 2019. The decision affected all fishing vessels and applied in all areas of the Baltic Sea where the largest part of the stock is present (i.e. subdivisions 24-26), except for some specific targeted derogations. The measures were extended to 2020 and onwards.

In 2023 fishing for Atlantic cod in eastern Baltic (ICES 25-32) were limited to bycatches only, moreover with intention to protect cod during the spawning season fishing with any type of gear it is strictly prohibited from 1 May to 31 August.

The restrictions imposed in 2020 on Atlantic salmon and sea trout as a response to the high level of misreporting in salmon catches were maintained. Fishing for sea trout beyond four nautical miles measured from the baselines in ICES subdivisions 22-32 was prohibited for fishing vessels. When fishing for salmon in those waters, by-catches of sea trout shall not exceed 3% of the total catch of salmon and sea trout at any moment on board or landed after each fishing trip. In 2023 according to TAC regulation (2023/2638) fishing for salmon was reduced exclusively for by-catches. No directed fisheries were permitted under this quota.

Innovation and development (role of EMFAF)

By the end of 2023, under measure 1.3 "Innovations related to the protection of marine living resources," of the Polish Operational Programme 2014-2020, three projects had been completed or were ongoing, with a total value of approximately EUR 1.5 million:

- Development and use of trapping fishing tools adapted to the conditions of the Polish coastal zone of the Baltic Sea, EUR 450,000.
- Reducing the negative impact of inland fishing on the aquatic environment through innovative management of low-value fish species, worth EUR 440,000.
- Protection of natural resources of dual-environment fish species, endangered and economically valuable – the migratory species, the sea trout and the salmon, through the application of innovative methods supporting natural reproduction, worth EUR 480,000.
- Under measure 1.13 "Scientific or technical innovations" in 2023, the following projects related to fisheries or fish resources were completed:
- Experimental stocking with pike raised in RAS as a method of managing the crisis of coastal fisheries (PIKE) – EUR 400,000.
- Reduction of energy consumption to decrease the negative environmental impact of inland and marine fishing – EUR 850,000.

4.18.6 Assessment of the economic performance for 2024 and 2025 (nowcasts)

Model results

According to preliminary figures landings volume and value decreased by 19% and 10% respectively in 2024 compared to 2023. Baltic Sea landings decreased by 21% and deep-sea fleet landings by 15%. All economically important fish species have experienced a decline in value. European sprat (-12%), Atlantic herring (-19%) European flounder (-42%) and European Perch (-46%) contributed the most to the landings decline. On the other hand, the increase in prices of sprats (+24%) and herrings (11%) partially offset the decline in catch volume.

TM2440 (the most important segment from the economic output point of view in the Polish Baltic fleet) landings weight decreased by 22% however, due to price increases, revenues fell by only 7%. According to model results the economic output the segment will improve in 2024. Gross profit is expected to rise by 1%, net profit by 2% and gross as well as net profit margins improve from 35.4% to 38.2% and from 24.0% to 26.5% respectively.

Number of days at sea my decrease by 11% however energy consumed per landed tonne is expected to rise by 14%, which may contribute to fuel savings (energy cost are expected to be 16% lower than in 2023). 41 vessels belonged to the segment in 2024 compared to 42 in 2023. The model forecasted decreased number of FTE employment for the segment from 240 in 2023 to 214 in 2024.

PG0008 (the segment belonging to small scale fisheries) value of landings decreased in 2024 by 23% while fishing effort as well as number of vessels belonging to the segment changed slightly by -10% and -2% respectively. The negative net profit of the segment according to the model equals to EUR 2 million in 2024 (compared to EUR 2.2 million).

Outlook

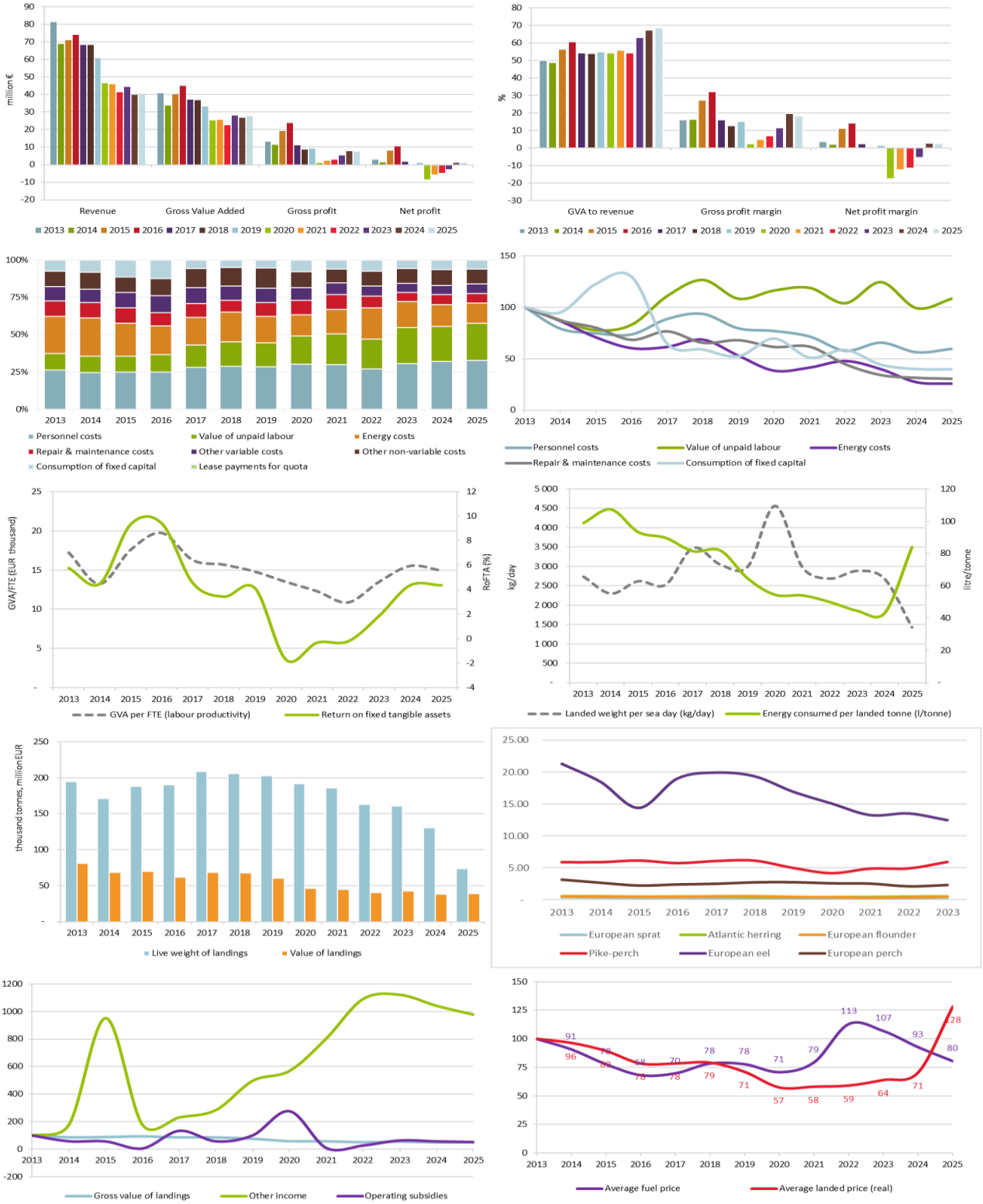
The available fishing quotas for Poland in 2025 is lower again by 31% for European sprat and 36% for Atlantic salmon however 108% higher for Central stock of Atlantic herring as well as 15% for Atlantic salmon, while the quotas for Western stock of Atlantic herring and plaice remained unchanged.

Especially the reduction in the European sprat will have a negative impact on the pelagic vessel segments. The closure of targeted cod fisheries (in 2018) and the declining fishing quotas for pelagic fish have led to an excess fishing capacity in the Polish Baltic fleet. According to the Polish report on efforts to achieve a balance between fleet capacity and fishing opportunities (2024), it is expected that the number of vessels in permanently inefficient and imbalanced segments will be reduced to a level that ensures increased efficiency in segments operating at a deficit and stabilizes the financial condition of those segments. By the end of May 2025 138 vessel had been decommissioned and permanently removed from the Polish fishing vessel register. In the two most numerous segments, the reduction levels reached 37% and 43% for VL0008 PG and VL0812 PG, respectively. In the VL1218 DFN segment, 67% of the vessels were scrapped in relation to the planned reduction. In the VL1218 DTS segment, the reduction level was exceeded several times (8 vessels were withdrawn compared to 2 originally planned for reduction). According to model results value of Polish fish landings will increase in 2025 by 2% and gross profit by 16% compared to 2024.

4.18.7 Methodological considerations and data issues

Due to confidentiality reasons, distant water fleet (vessels over 40 metres fishing outside Baltic Sea) were excluded from the economic analysis. However, transversal data (except for value of landings) and employment data were provided for all fleet segments. In order to ensure consistency with data provided for previous years, premiums paid by government for scrapped vessels were taken into account when calculating invested capital (not the PIM method). Because change in methodology of reporting capacity, 2017 onwards figures are not fully comparable with the earlier years.

Figure 4.18.1.Poland: Main trends in (from top to bottom, left to right): economic performance indicators (absolute value and relative values); cost structure and variation in main cost items; productivity and efficiency indicators; landings (in weight and value) and average price (euro/kg) of top species; variation in income variables and average prices of key input/outputs (2013=100). Nowcast figures for 2024 and 2025.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

4.19 Portugal

4.19.1 Short description of the national fleet

In 2023, the national fleet had 6,878 vessels with a total gross tonnage of 84,863 tonnes and engine power of 343,506 kW, distributed among the Mainland Fleet, Azores, and Madeira. That year, 47 vessels joined the Portuguese fleet, while 788 were withdrawn[21].

Table 4.19.1. Portugal at a glance.

Portugal		2023					%Δ 2023-2022				
Indicator	Units	Overall	SSCF	L12AG	LSF	DWF	Overall	SSCF	L12AG	LSF	DWF
Active vessels	Number	3,390	2,699	181	494	16	-2%	-2%	-5%	-3%	33%
FTE	Number	7,225	2,401	373	4,195	256	2%	-2%	1%	2%	45%
Gross Value of landings	Million €	413.3	104.2	16.2	268.6	24.4	-10%	-13%	-4%	-9%	-12%
GVA	Million €	238.2	76.2	10.9	144.8	6.2	-6%	-14%	3%	0%	-33%
Gross profit	Million €	73.3	40.4	3.7	29.0	0.1	-16%	-22%	-6%	6%	-98%
Net profit	Million €	18.5	28.9	1.7	- 9.1	- 2.9	-31%	-26%	-6%	42%	-264%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure

The Portuguese fishing fleet includes the mainland fleet and two outermost regions (Azores and Madeira), which manage the national fleet according to their respective areas of competence. The national fleet includes vessels from small-scale, large-scale, and those that operate in distant waters, grouped into 11 major segments (DFN, DRB, DTS, FPO, HOK, MGO, MGP, PGP, PMP, PS, and TBB). Segments contributing significantly to the value of landings are NAO DTS2440 NGI, NAO PGP0010 NGI, NAO PS 1824 NGI, NAO DTS40XX IWE, and NAO PS 2440 NGI, together representing 44.5% in value of landings.

The Portugal fleet's estimated physical capital is EUR 423.99 million, with 27.2% for inactive vessels. The active fleet includes 49.3% of the total vessels (3,390), mainly small fishing vessels under 12 metres, making up 85.0% of the active fleet, 12.1% of GT, and 43.6% of kW. The average vessel length is 9 metres, and the fleet's average age is 27 years. Despite 50.7% of vessels being inactive, they account for only 24.8% of total kW, 24.7% of total GT, and have an average LOA of 6 metres.

Fishing activity and production

In 2023, there was a slight reduction of approximately 0.6% in the number of fishing days and Days at Sea (DaS) observed compared to the previous year. The observed value for 2023 stood at 90 days per vessel, which is an increase of 2 days from 2022. The landed weight per sea day was 544 kg/sea day, reflecting a 1.7% increase compared to 2022. Notably, energy consumption saw a rise of 2.5% compared to the previous year.

Fishing operations were predominantly conducted in the Northeast Atlantic, Azores grounds, coastal waters of Madeira, and also extended to the NAFO and Svalbard/Irminger areas

[21] According to Portuguese annual report 2023 (2024). The report also mentioned that the high number of withdrawn is related to the conclusion of a process to withdraw from the fleet file 704 vessels with prolonged inactivity.

(demersal trawlers), as well as the South Atlantic, Indian Ocean, and Pacific Ocean (surface longliners).

The total landings weight in 2023 experienced a 1.1% increase from 2022 but showed a 4% decrease when compared to the average from 2013 to 2022. In contrast, the value of landings decreased by 10% compared to 2022, and by 7% when compared to the average for the same period. The mean price of fish recorded was 2.5 euro/kg, representing an 11% decline from 2022 (a reduction of 0.3 euro/kg).

The common octopus emerged as the most significant species in terms of landing value, constituting 11.8%, followed by the European pilchard (6.6%), Atlantic horse mackerel (5.7%), swordfish (4.6%), and blue shark (4.5%). Collectively, these five species represented 38.6% of the total weight and 33.1% of the total value of Portuguese landings.

Regarding the common octopus, both the weight and value of landings witnessed a decline of 20% and 26%, respectively, compared to 2022. The average landed price also decreased from 8.44 euro/kg in 2022 to 7.84 euro/kg in 2023.

The average price of the European pilchard exhibited notable fluctuations over the past decade, peaking in 2015 and experiencing a steady decline beginning in 2018. This downward trend continued in 2023, with the price falling to 1.04 euro/kg, the lowest value recorded in the 2013-2023 series, primarily due to increased supply.

Both the Atlantic horse mackerel and blue shark saw declines in their value and weight of landings (-9% and -26% in value; -10% and -6% in weight, respectively). While the average price of mackerel rose by 1% (from 1.43 euros/kg in 2022 to 1.45 euro/kg in 2023), the blue shark's average price dropped by 22% (from 2.14 euro/kg in 2022 to 1.68 euro/kg in 2023). Additionally, the price of swordfish decreased by 7% (from 4.8 euros/kg in 2022 to 4.53 euros/kg in 2023).

In terms of landed weight, the Atlantic chub mackerel was the most representative species, accounting for nearly 20% of total catches, followed by the European pilchard (15.9%) and the Atlantic horse mackerel (9.8%). These three species together constituted 45.2% of the total weight and 16.2% of the total value of Portuguese landings.

Employment and average salaries

Employment was estimated at 12,746 jobs (7,225 FTEs) with an average of two FTE per vessel. In 2023, crew costs per FTE averaged 21,901 euros, lower than in 2022. Portuguese statistics categorize fishers by age: below 35 (21%), 35-55 (55%), and over 55 (24%).

The average crew wage per FTE have decreased from EUR 22,360 to EUR 21,900 (-2%) representing a smaller contraction than those observed in landings value (-10%) and gross profit (-16%).

4.19.2 Economic results for 2023 and recent trends

The economic results pertain solely to the Portuguese fishing fleet active in 2023.

National fleet performance

In 2023, the Portuguese national fleet worsened its economic performance compared to 2022 by 16% and 31% in gross profit and net profit, respectively. The reason for that was mainly due to the EUR 45 million decreased in revenue.

The total costs also decreased in 2023, approximately EUR 35.2 million. Compared to the previous year, the other variable costs decreased by 4% and the fuel costs decreased 20%. The personnel costs are slightly lower than in 2022 (-0.4%), amounting EUR 158.2 million.

Revenue decreased 10% compared with 2022 and it is 7% below the average of (2013-2022). GVA in 2023 decreased 6% and 16%, respectively compared to 2022 and over the 2013 to 2022 period. Gross profit decreased by EUR 14.3 million, reaching the lowest value in the 2013-2022 series. The net profit decreased EUR 8.5 million, also reaching the lowest value registered in time series.

Resource productivity and efficiency indicators

Compared to 2022, the gross profit margin decreased by 7% (16% in 2023), falling to an even lower value than that recorded in 2022, which was the lowest value in the 2013-2022 series.

Between 2018 and 2022, the RoFTA indicator showed a fluctuating downward trend, influenced by changes in capital consumption estimates, the pandemic, and rising energy costs. In 2021, there was a partial recovery to pre-pandemic levels, but the indicator dropped again in 2022. From 2022 to 2023, RoFTA dropped 16%, reaching its lowest level in the entire series (9.5%), reflecting continued economic challenges faced by the fleet.

After falling in 2020, labour productivity (GVA/FTE recovered in 2021, but fell again by 14% in 2022 end 7% in 2023.

Fuel consumption was 481 litres per tonne landed (+1.4% compared to 2022). Landings in weight per unit of effort (in DaS) were 544 kg/day (+1.7% compared to 2022).

4.19.3 Performance by fishing activity

Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

In 2023, the SSCF consisted of 2,699 vessels, representing 80% of the active Portuguese fleet. These vessels accounted for a gross tonnage (GT) of 6,583 (10%) and a total power of 101,551 kW (39%). Nearly all SSCF vessels operated along the mainland coast, utilizing various fishing gears such as nets, longlines, pots, and traps to catch a diverse range of species. Cephalopods, including octopus and cuttlefish, constituted the primary group of catch species, contributing to 36% of the SSCF's landing value. The common octopus was notably the most frequently caught species by weight, comprising 21% of the total catch. Overall, cephalopods, molluscs (such as edible cockle), and pelagic species like chub

mackerel accounted for 48% of the SSCF's weight landings. The Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) for the SSCF represented 33% of the national FTE. In 2023, the average fleet activity reached a value of 72 Days at Sea (DaS) per vessel.

Landings in weight increased 2% compared to 2022, but when compared it with the period 2013-2022, decreased 10%. The value of landings decreased 13% compared with 2022 and it is 2% below the average of 2013-2022 period.

In 2023, SSCF landings accounted for 11% in weight and 25% in value of total Portuguese landings, indicating high-quality catches. Gross profit dropped by 22% from the previous year, while net profit peaked in 2021 but fell to EUR 28.9 million by 2023. Energy costs decreased by 11% compared to last year but rose 1% over the 2013-2021 period. Labour costs and salaries, the main operating expense, decreased by 4% from 2022.

Vessels under 12 metres using active gears fleet (L12AG)

The L12AG category includes dredgers, seiners, trawlers and other polyvalent gears. It consists of 181 vessels, accounting for 5% of the active Portuguese fleet, 4% of total vessel power (10,960 KW), and 2% of GTs (1,131 GT). The FTE of L12AG is 5% of the national total. In 2023, production saw a 16% increase in landing weight but a 4% decrease in landing value compared to the previous year. Economic performance worsened in 2023, with gross profit and net profit dropping by 6% and 5%, respectively, from 2022. Major species caught include Atlantic chub mackerel, European pilchard, and Atlantic horse mackerel, making up 71% of the weight and 33% of the value of landings.

Large-scale Fleet (LSF)

The LSF included 494 vessels, making up 15% of the active Portuguese fleet, with 52% of the total vessel power (135,547 KW) and 78% of GT (49,922 GT). About 67% of LSF were purse seiners, hook-and-line vessels, and demersal trawlers. The LSF accounted for 58% of national FTE. In 2023, landings decreased by 1% in weight and 9% in value compared to 2022. Despite this, gross profit and net profit improved by 6% and 42%, respectively. The main species caught were Atlantic chub mackerel, European pilchard, and Atlantic horse mackerel, which together comprised 53% of landing weight and 22% of landing value.

Distant-water fleet (DWF)

The DWF consists of 16 vessels, with a gross tonnage (GT) of 6,305 and a total power of 10,196 kW. This segment of the fleet primarily comprises longliners and involves 256 FTEs. In 2023, the average fleet activity reached 250 days at sea per vessel.

In recent years, fluctuations in economic performance have been observed. In 2023, there was a significant decline in both gross profits (-98%) and net profit (-264%) compared to the previous year. Personnel costs and repair and maintenance expenses increased by 32% and 10%, respectively. The gross value of landings decreased by 12%, amounting to EUR 24.3 million in 2023.

The blue shark is the predominant species caught, accounting for 63% of the weight and 49% of the value of landings for the distant water fleet.

Outermost region fleets (OMR)

Madeira

In 2023, the Madeiran fleet comprised 92 active vessels, with a gross tonnage of 1,830 and an engine power of 9,970 kW. A majority of this fleet (63%) is categorized under SSCF. The fleet primarily operates in Subarea 34.1.2 EEZ-Madeira, with some vessels also operating seasonally in the Azorean subarea and the Canary Islands, as per Reciprocity Agreements, and in international waters of CECAF. Most active vessels use longliners, with black scabbardfish and skipjack tuna being the most represented species, accounting for 74% and 69% of weight and value landings, respectively.

Azores

In 2023, the Azores fleet had 484 active vessels, totaling 6,060 GT and 36,050 kW of engine power. About 83% of this fleet belongs to SSCF. The fleet mainly operates in the Azores EEZ, primarily using longliners (89%). Passive gears and purse seiners are also used. The top species by landing value are blackspot seabream (19%), bigeye tuna (15%), veined squid (11%), skipjack tuna (10%), and alfonsino (5%), making up 60% of total landing weight.

4.19.4 Performance of selected fleet segments

The Portuguese fleet is highly diversified with a broad range of vessel types targeting different species predominantly in the Portuguese EEZ (27.9a for the mainland fleet, 27.10 for the Azores's fleet and CECAF 34.1.2 for the Madeira's fleet). The national fleet consisted of 54 (DCF) fleet segments in 2023 and 6 inactive length classes. Short descriptions of the most important segments are provided below.

Demersal trawl (DTS) 24-40 metres (mainland fleet)

55 vessels made up this segment in 2023, which operates in area 27 (27.9.a and 27.8c); the fleet targets a variety of species but in particular, Atlantic horse mackerel (22%), deep-water rose shrimp (19%), European squid (9%) and Atlantic mackerel (6%) of the total value of landings. In 2023, the value of landings represented 12% of the total landings value and the FTE 7% of the national value. In 2023 the gross profit decreased 46% and net profit increased 12% compared to previous year.

Passive Gear Polyvalent (PGP) below 10 metres (mainland fleet)

This fleet segment represents the major one with 1,488 vessels and operates exclusively in FAO 27.9. The fleet targets a large variety of species, such as common octopus (16%), common cuttlefish (15%) and European seabass (10%) and edible cockle (8%). In 2023, the value of landings represented 11% of the total landings value and the FTE 15% of the national value. Net profit reached EUR 12.4 million (-0.1% in comparison with the previous year) and gross profit increased 0.1% compared with 2022.

Purse Seiners (PS) 18-24 metres (mainland fleet)

50 vessels made up this segment in 2023 and operates exclusively in FAO 27.9. The fleet targets small pelagic fishes, such as European pilchard (38%), European anchovy (24%), Atlantic chub mackerel (19%) and horse mackerel (14%). In 2023, the value of landings represented 9% of the total landings value and the FTE 9% of the national value. The gross profit and net profit increased compared with the previous year (+30% and +204%, respectively).

Demersal trawl (DTS) over 40 metres – International Waters Exclusively (mainland fleet)

Seven vessels made up this segment which operates predominantly in Area 21 and 27 (NAFO, Spitzbergen and Bear Island and Norwegian Sea). The fleet targets a variety of species, in particular, Atlantic redfishes nei (36%), Atlantic cod (28%), golden redfish (14%) and Greenland halibut (13%) of the total value of landings. In 2023, the value of landings represents 8% of the total landing value and the FTE 3% of the national value. In 2023 the gross profit decreased 48% and net profit increased 15%, in comparison with the previous year.

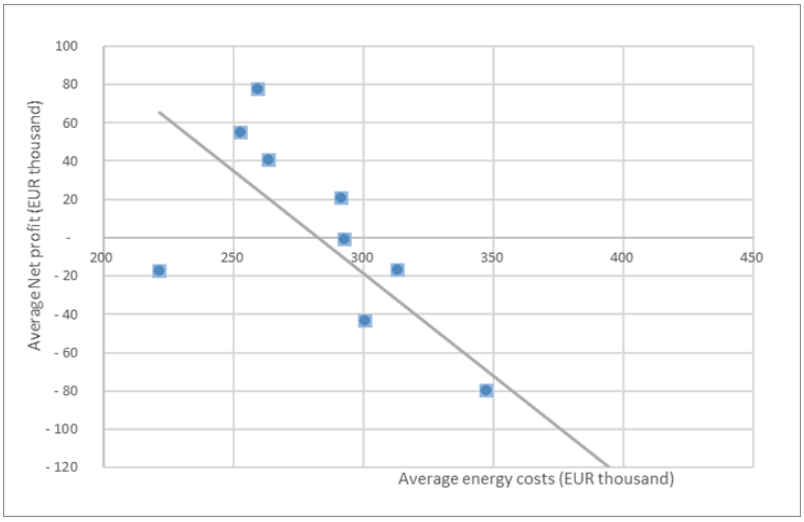
Purse Seiners (PS) 24-40 metres (mainland fleet)

21 vessels made up this segment in 2023 and operates exclusively in FAO 27.9. The fleet targets small pelagic fishes, such as European pilchard (41%), European anchovy (20%), Atlantic chub mackerel (17%) and horse mackerel (15%). In 2023 the value of landings represented 5% of the total landings value and the FTE 4% of the national value. The gross profit and net profit increased compared with the previous year (+41% and +151%, respectively).

4.19.5 Drivers affecting the economic performance trends

Fish prices, fuel costs and effort are the main driving forces behind the overall fleet performance. Historical correlation between energy costs and net profit can be found, especially in DTS and HOK LLS (surface long lines) segments.

Figure 4.19.1. Portugal: Average energy costs and net profit relationship in DTS2440 mainland fleet (2013-2023).



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

In general, the decrease in the average prices was a consequence of the higher supply of fish.

For example, in the case of European pilchard, there was a large increase in landings since 2021 as a result of the increase in fishing opportunities, which resulted in a decrease in prices.

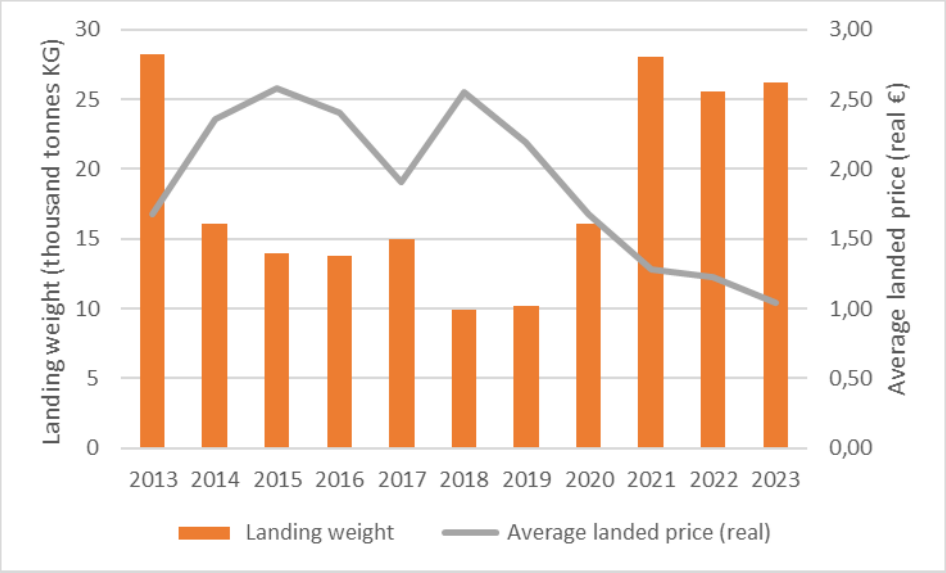
Markets and trade

According to organisation responsible for collecting fishing data from the Portuguese fleet under the DCF, the landings in foreign harbours represent around 16% of the total landings. The most important countries in value of landings are Spain (52%), Uruguay (18%), Germany (7%), Namibia (5%) and Panamá (5%).

In accordance with the Portuguese official statistics (INE), in 2023, 17 Producers Organisations (PO) were recognized, in which 14 were based on the mainland. These POs account for 48.6% of total active vessels. Purse seiners is the most represented segment in those structures and European pilchard, chub mackerel and horse mackerel the main species landed. Around 98.6% of European pilchard, 85.6% of horse mackerel and 46.8% of chub mackerel landed in Portugal were accounted for the producers' organisations.

The average annual price of fresh fish landed in 2023 in national harbours decreased 6.6% in relation to 2022, from 2.65 euro/kg to 2.47 euro/kg.

Figure 4.19.2. Portugal: Landing weight and value relationship for the European pilchard (2013-2022).



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Operating costs (external factors)

Operating costs dropped by EUR 30.8 million from 2022, totaling EUR 341.1 million in 2023. Personal costs, the largest expense at 41.1%, fell by 0.4%. Despite a 3.1% employee reduction, FTEs rose by 1.7%, indicating less part-time work.

Energy costs made up 19.6% of total costs, heavily influenced by international traders. These costs decreased by 20% from 2022 but were 11% higher than the 2013-2022 average.

Other variable costs, including consumables, were 11.7% of the total. Unpaid labor accounted for 1.7% of costs and was the only category that increased compared to 2022.

Status of key stocks. TACs and quotas

Fishing quotas for Portugal increased slightly in 2023 to over 199,000 tonnes. About 60% consists of horse mackerel, followed by anchovy, blue whiting, mackerel, blue shark, hake, redfish, and bigeye tuna black scabbardfish. The horse mackerel stock in ICES division 9a saw a 15% increase from 2022, representing the dominant stock in Portuguese quotas. Managed using the MSY objective, fluctuations in reference levels significantly impact fishing opportunities.

The exploitation state of resources captured by the Portuguese fleet continues to show positive trends, with fluctuations aligning with the natural evolution of stocks managed at the MSY level.

Considering the overall species under EU capture restrictions in 2023, the relevant increases of national quota were for blue whiting (80%), followed by megrims (33%), anchovy (30%), horse mackerel (15%) and anglerfishes (12%), which offset the generalised decrease in the quotas of other species of which the most significant are ling (-20%) and Norway lobster (-16%).

For deep sea species, fishing opportunities, which are set biennially (2023-2024), maintained the reduction already established in the previous biennium for almost all stocks (alfonsino -18%, black scabbardfish -6%, and red seabream in area 27.9 -4%). This decrease in deep sea species quota is related to the application of the precautionary principles, since for stocks without information on abundance or exploitation, ICES considers that a precautionary reduction in catches should be applied.

As is commonly done, during 2023, there were several fishing opportunity swaps with other Member States sharing the same management units. The quotas available for undulate ray, megrim, anglerfishes, red seabream and swordfish (Atlantic Ocean, north of 5° N) increased through the mechanism of exchange quotas between Member States, as provided for in Article 16(8) of the Regulation (EC) Nº 1380/2013. An additional increase in quotas was also possible for horse mackerel (FAO 27.8c and 27.9), anglerfishes, megrims, mackerel, and blue whiting, from the quantities initially allocated, through the mechanism provided for in Article 4 (2) of Regulation (EC) No 847/96, allowing the transfer to the following year of up to 10% of the allocated and unused quota of units subject to an analytical assessment.

Portugal also has fishing possibilities in international waters in the framework of the Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs), the North Atlantic Fisheries Agreements and the Southern Fisheries Agreements, known as Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (SFPAs) between the EU and third countries for the access to EEZs.

In terms of RFMOs, the activity carried out by the national fleet in 2023 focused mainly on the areas of North West Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO), the International Commission

for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC), despite the existence of fishing activity in other RFMOs, which is the case of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), which had two longliners flying the national flag involved in catching tuna and tuna-like fish, the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), with one vessel operating shrimp traps, and the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), with four fishing units involved in catching tuna and tuna-like fish.

It should be emphasised that the national tuna fleet in external fishing grounds operates exclusively with surface longlines.

Regarding the North Atlantic Fisheries Agreements, the activity of the national fleet maintained the pattern of activity it has seen in recent years in the EU/Norway Fisheries Agreement, including the waters around Svalbard.

As for the national fleet’s activity under SFPA, only one longliner was active under the São Tomé and Príncipe Agreement.

As for the stocks managed by ICCAT, in 2023, most of the stocks of interest to Portugal, such as bluefin tuna, swordfish, bigeye tuna and blue shark, maintained the TACs agreed for 2022 and, consequently, the Portuguese quotas.

Swordfish continues to be the main target species for the surface longline fleet, while bigeye tuna is the main target species for the artisanal fleet of Azores and Madeira.

In 2023, under the NAFO jurisdiction, 10 bottom trawlers actively fished and, under the ICCAT jurisdiction, 54 longliners actively fished in the area. In NAFO's regulatory area, the highlight goes to 3M cod, one of the most important species for Portugal, whose TAC increased 53%, which for Portugal resulted in 410 tonnes more quota than in 2022, while maintaining the three technical measures to avoid catching juveniles. Regarding the other NAFO TACs where the national fishing fleet has fishing opportunities, Portugal maintained the same fishing quotas for 2023 as in 2022, except for a slight decrease in the Greenland halibut quota. In the North-East Atlantic, the focus continues to be on the absence of a TAC for redfish in the Irminger Sea, given the ICES advice of a zero TAC. Regarding the other species regulated by NEAFC, there was a 68% increase in the blue whiting TAC and a 15% decrease in the herring TAC compared to the TACs set for 2022. Cod in Norwegian waters and Cod in Svalbard waters, had a decrease in 2023.

Management instruments

The Portuguese administration uses various tools to manage national fisheries and comply with international fishing agreements. The main goal is to achieve the MSY in all fisheries where Portugal has commercial interests, within or outside the EU.

Licenses are decreasing annually, along with the fishing fleet. New licenses are rarely granted, but under certain circumstances, the administration allows the transfer of gear authorization between vessels, supporting multispecies fisheries' economic viability without increasing authorized effort.

Most EU stocks, especially in the SW Atlantic, have improved due to strict management, which has enhanced fishing opportunities and commercial profitability.

In 2023, the following measures and management plans/adjustment of fishing effort or capacity control schemes were in force:

- The multiannual plan for stocks caught in Western Atlantic and adjacent waters, which applies to demersal stocks (hake, Norway lobster, megrims, anglerfish and common sole) and deep-sea stocks (black scabbardfish and red seabream) was followed. The plan, implemented on an ecosystem-approach to fisheries management, aims to maintain these stocks above levels which can produce MSY (or within the MSY ranges).
- All vessels fishing for deep-sea species as a directed fishery or as by-catch (in accordance with EU Regulation 2016/2336) were subject to license restrictions, depending on their individual catch history. These restrictions limited the species and quantities allowed, but did not increase the total number of licenses.
- During the year, amendments and adjustment decrees were published, both for sardines and anchovy, in order to adapt the fishing effort to the rules of the Iberian sardine management plan 2021-2026, as well as to the multiannual management model adopted for anchovy. The objective of reducing the capacity of the surface longliner fleet targeting swordfish in the North Atlantic is maintained, with a view to the sustainability of the fishery, allowing for an appropriate balance between fishing effort and available quotas, although it is still necessary to ensure additional quota exchanges with Spain.
- An eel management plan is still being followed, including fishing gear restrictions, limited catching seasons and a complete ban on recreational fishing. Some concerns about the state of other migratory species like lampreys and shads, led to the reduction of the fishing season in some of the mainland estuaries. Eight regulations on fishing gear were adopted, repealing those previously in force, with the aim of implementing more sustainable fishing practices through effective regulations, fishing quotas, protected areas and more selective fishing gear, while safeguarding an increase in fishing effort and fleet capacity.

Innovation and development (role of EMFAF)

The Portuguese fishing fleet is made up of small, wooden-hulled vessels averaging 36 years old, with an active fleet age of around 27 years. Under the EMFF, investments continue to improve vessel conditions and selectivity. Portugal’s Recovery and Resilience Plan (Next Generation EU) focuses on energy transition and reducing environmental impact in the fisheries sector. Supported projects include:

1) Modernisation and digitalisation;

2) Energy efficiency;

3) Emission reduction, safety, and habitability on board;

4) Use of new materials and efficient, eco-friendly designs;

5) Circular economy in fisheries and aquaculture.

4.19.6 Assessment of the economic performance for 2024 and 2025 (nowcasts)

Model results and outlook

Projections for 2024 indicate a continued decrease in the number of fishing vessels, although the total power and gross tonnage is expected to register a slight increase. It is also estimated that there will be a similar effort in terms of the number of DaS, which, according to

the national administration, has apparently been confirmed. Projections indicate a decrease of around 1% in DaS in 2024 and 2025.

Preliminary results for 2024 suggest that the decrease in energy costs for 2024 will improve profitability (gross profit). The model further estimates that in 2024 the live weight and value of landings will decrease by 6.5% and 2.3%, respectively. This downward trend in landings is mentioned in the National Fishing Statistics of Portugal for the year 2024 (INE).

Following a significant decrease in Gross profit and Net profit in 2022, reaching the lowest values in 2023 (2013-2023 period) with EUR 73.3 million and EUR 18.5 million, the results for 2024 and 2025 project a recovery of these indicators.

4.19.7 Methodological considerations and data issues

Identify changes in respect to previous years

Since 2021, the response to the survey to collect socio-economic data on fishing became mandatory by law to renew the fishing licence, which led to a higher response rate within the active fleet segments.

Problems identified

One of the difficulties encountered is linked to the fact that in many cases the surveys are answered by accountants who, in many cases, bias the answers once they have a different view from that of economists.

Since the weight of landings was reported in live weight in 2020 and in landed weight in the years before, this variable, and some species prices and indicators, are not comparable with the time series.

Fleet structure

According to the 2023 Fleet Report (2024), since 2005 (the year when the public support to new vessel construction stopped) the investment costs with new vessel construction have been very low. However, in 2023 the vessel construction represents 68.1% of the total new entries into the Portuguese fishing fleet (32 vessels), 86.2% GT and 72.7% in terms of engine power, demonstrating an effort to renew the fleet.

The Report also reveals a high number of vessels withdrawn (788), which are related to the conclusion of a process to withdraw from the fleet file 704 vessels with prolonged inactivity.

It is observed also that the average age of vessels has increased since 2013 (30 years), presenting an average of 36 years in 2023. The ship-owners tend to keep the vessel to an over age limit, making only some repairs, as they are mostly small vessels, whose ship-owners doesn't have the economic capacity to invest in fleet replacement.

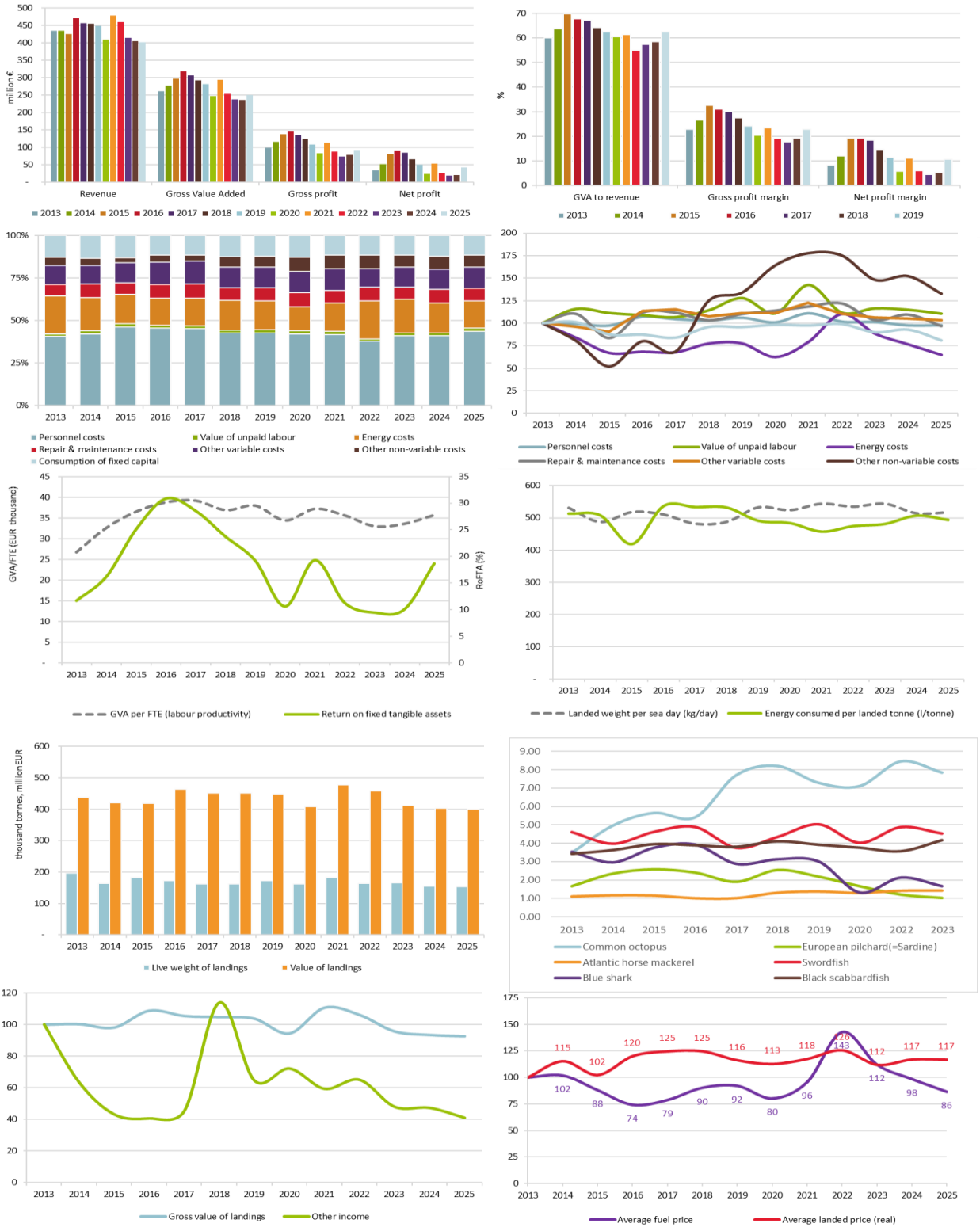
In 2023, Portugal complied with the fishing capacity ceilings laid down in Annex II to the CFP Regulation, in the case of the fleet registered on the mainland (MFL) and the fleets registered in the outermost regions.

Improvements

It is intended to improve the survey in order to adapt it according to the vessel's fleet segment and thereby obtain better answers.

A project is being implemented to restructure the databases in order to integrate and harmonise all data sources. Data processing and analysis will be performed on a new platform. It is expected that the methodological procedures will be revised and improved when the operationalisation takes place.

Figure 4.19.3. Portugal: Main trends in (from top to bottom, left to right): economic performance indicators (absolute value and relative values); cost structure and variation in main cost items; productivity and efficiency indicators; landings (in weight and value) and average price (euro/kg) of top species; variation in income variables and average prices of key input/outputs (2013=100). Nowcast figures for 2024 and 2025.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

4.20 Romania

4.20.1 Short description of the national fleet

In 2023, Romania's fishing fleet had 173 registered vessels, a 1.17% increase from 2022. The fleet had a gross tonnage of 1,633 GT and a total power capacity of 6,348kW, both similar to the 2022 values. There were 143 active vessels, 2 more than in 2022, while 30 remained inactive due to repairs, refurbishments, ownership transfers, new equipment purchases, or lack of staff.

Fishing occurs along the coast with five main ports: Sulina, Midia, Tomis, Constanța, and Mangalia. There are 14 landing sites for turbot and dogfish and 45 for other species from the Black Sea. Commercial catches are sold at first-sale points, 34 for other species and 21 for turbot and dogfish, spanning from Sulina to Vama Veche.

Table 4.20.1. Romania at a glance.

Romania		2023				%Δ 2023-2022			
Indicator	Units	Overall	SSCF	L12AG	LSF	Overall	SSCF	L12AG	LSF
Active vessels	Number	143	119	-	24	1%	2%	-	0%
FTE	Number	48	22	-	26	-11%	-8%	-	-13%
Gross Value of landings	Million €	3.55	1.54	-	2.01	-6%	-10%	-	-3%
GVA	Million €	3.41	2.23	-	1.17	35%	59%	-	6%
Gross profit	Million €	2.69	1.95	-	0.74	51%	82%	-	5%
Net profit	Million €	2.19	1.86	-	0.34	80%	93%	-	31%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure

In 2023, the fishing fleet primarily consisted of small-scale vessels up to 12 metres long, with 119 active vessels making up 83% of the total fleet. These belonged to the SSC) segment, divided into four categories: PG VL0006, PMP VL0006, PG VL0612, and PMP VL0612, with a combined capacity of 1,578 kW and 315 GT.

The LSF segment, comprising vessels between 12 and 40 metres, accounted for the remaining 17% with 24 vessels across three categories: VL1218 PMP, VL1824 PMP, and PMP VL2440, contributing 4,163 kW and 1,193 GT.

The number of fishing vessels slightly increased from the previous year, indicating a growing interest in fishing. The Romanian fleet's estimated physical capital was EUR 9.542 million, with inactive vessels accounting for 6%.

Romanian authorities aim to maintain the fleet at a "minimum Vitalis" level per Regulation EC no. 1378/2013, Annex 2, to comply with capacity limits.

Fishing activity and production

In 2023, the Romanian fleet spent approximately 4,380 days at sea (DaS), compared to 4,078 days in 2022. This represents a 7% increase from 2022 and an 8% increase compared to the average for the period 2013-2022. This increase may be attributed primarily to the easing of COVID-19 restrictions and more favorable weather conditions in 2023 than in 2022.

Effort tends to increase during successful fishing seasons for species with high market value, such as turbot, bluefish, horse mackerel, or anchovy.

Several factors influenced the number of days at sea, including:

- Adverse weather conditions: The limited number of favourable days for fishing directly impacted fishing hours.
- An aging fishing fleet: Older vessels experienced frequent technical failures and malfunctions during fishing operations.
- Staff shortages and the presence of sea mines: Issues related to the ongoing war in Ukraine further restricted fishing activities.
- Seasonality of fishing: Fishing activities are seasonal, and the number of trips made depends on the availability of migratory fish species, which varies significantly from year to year.

Small catches of pelagic species occur due to high demand for Rapa whelk and EU TACs limitations on turbot, aimed at increasing biomass in Romanian Black Sea waters. Romania has the second smallest fleet among Black Sea countries in terms of GTs and kW totals. The national authority addressed this issue with the GFCM-WGBS and EU Commission to balance fleets and fishing efforts across riparian countries.

In 2023, fish landings totalled 3,295.47 tonnes, a 4% increase from 2022. These landings were valued at EUR 3,547,227, marking a 6% decrease from the prior year. The volume rise is due to landing more economically valuable fish and higher sales prices for all species in 2023.

Fishing activities in Romania are confined to the waters of the Black Sea under Romanian jurisdiction, with no fishing occurring in other regions or for species outside this area. Landing trends have remained relatively stable, with small pelagic species comprising an increasing share of the total landings in 2023. This shift is due to a decrease in rapa whelk catches in recent years. The small pelagic species that contributed significantly to the landings include sprat, anchovy, horse mackerel, and bluefish.

In 2023, the main catches landed consisted of 24 different species, with the following breakdown: rapa whelk (RPW) 81.01%, mussels (MSM) 9.62%, sprat (SPR) 2.80%, turbot (TUR) 2.12%, horse mackerel (HMM) 1.65%, red mullet (MUT) 1.10%, anchovy (ANE) 0.80%, gobies (GPA) 0.26%, common stingray (JDP) 0.14%, and golden grey mullet (MGA) 0.10%. Other species landed made up less than 0.10%. In terms of their value in euros, the distribution was as follows: RPW 50.42%, followed by TUR 19.16% due to its high first-sale price, MSM 15.20%, HMM 4.51%, SPR 3.00%, and ANE 1.19%.

Landings of rapa whelk, the most significant species for the Romanian fleet, increased in 2023, accounting for 81.01% of the total landings. This represents a decline from 2017 when rapa whelk accounted for 96.77% of the total volume landed. Mussels made up 9.62% of the landings in 2023, compared to 14.04% in 2022. Turbot, which is subject to approved TACs, accounted for 2.12%, a slight decrease from 2.36% in 2022. Sprat's share increased to 2.80% in 2023, up from 1.94% the previous year. Additionally, horse mackerel (HMM) saw an increase in its share, rising to 1.65% in 2023 from 0.64% in 2022.

The vessels operate up to 30-35 marine miles offshore. The climate conditions have a big influence on the presence of living aquatic resources in the area. Fishing activity is seasonal because of the strict dependence on specific conditions and the general poor technical conditions of the fleet. It could be considered that the fishing fleet activity is dependent on the

TACs under EU regulation for turbot and sprat, and, also on Rapa whelk and mussels, based on the stock abundance, and annual ministerial order establishing annual national limits, as quotas for all other commercial fish species. As above mentioned, the abundance of stock during the fishing season offers better opportunities for fishers. The other significant conclusion is that the national fleet is 100% dependent on catches in waters under the national jurisdiction of Romania, due to the limited capacity for navigation of the vessels.

The quantity of fuel consumed in 2022 was 577 942 litres and decreased by 24% compared to 2022. This may be due to the intensity of fishing in the coastal area by observing the positions of vessels over 12 m through VMS, hence reducing fuel consumption. The average final price of diesel fuel in 2023 was 1 euro/litre (same as in 2022).

The average prices for red mullet and Mediterranean mussels increased in 2023 compared to 2021, but for the other four important species the average price remained constant or even decreased slightly for the Mediterranean horse mackerel and turbot.

The turbot registered an increasing trend in price starting since 2016, by achieving the highest value of 15.1 euro/kg. Since 2017 the price decreased constantly until 2023, when it reached the value of 9.7 euros/kg. Turbot represents the most valuable stock among the five key stocks exploited by the Romanian fleets. However, the other four fish species have lower-level prices. The average price of red mullet has increased from 1.5 euro/kg in 2019 to 3.3 euro/kg in 2023, because there is market demand for this tasty fish. The quantities of red mullet have also increased year by year, as has the number of vessels fishing with pelagic trawls. Also, the price of European sprat increased from 0.8 euros per kg in 2019 to 1.2 euro/kg in 2022 and 2023.

The demand for rapa whelk in the fresh market increased, with first sale prices rising from 0.5 euro/kg in 2021 to 0.7 euro/kg. Marine fish prices in Romania can be influenced by regulations, fish populations, fuel costs, and competition from imports.

Despite the Romanian fishing fleet's poor condition due to outdated equipment and reduced catches, economic indicators show a positive trend. This is mainly due to higher revenues from landings of high-value fish and operating subsidies.

Employment and average salaries

In 2023, the total number of engaged crew amounted to 383 jobs, representing a decrease from 422 jobs in 2022, which translates to a 9% reduction. From 2013 to 2020, employment levels saw an upward trend, rising from 304 jobs in 2013 to 439 jobs in 2020; however, this was followed by a decline culminating in 383 jobs in 2023. When compared to the average number of jobs during the period 2013-2022, the employment level in 2023 remained relatively stable. On a national scale, Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) positions decreased by 11% in 2023 compared to 2022 but remained consistent with the average for the period 2013-2022.

Within the SSCF segment, total employment in 2023 stood at 277 jobs, equivalent to 22 FTEs. The SSCF employment levels experienced a downward trend between 2018 and 2023, decreasing from 310 jobs in 2018 to 277 jobs in 2023. Relative to the average for the period 2013-2022, employment in the SSCF segment in 2023 declined by 4%, while FTEs decreased by 1%.

For the LSF segment, employment in 2023 reached 106 jobs, corresponding to 26 FTEs. Employment within the LSF segment in 2023 fell by 15% when compared to 2022 but showed a 12% increase relative to the average for the period 2013-2022.

Labour costs in 2023 decreased by 3% compared to 2022 and by 29% compared to the overall period 2013-2022. Additionally, the average labour cost per FTE in 2023 rose by 10% compared to 2022 and decreased by 29% when compared to the average for the period 2013-2022.

4.20.2 Economic results for 2023 and recent trends

The economic results pertain solely to the Romanian fishing fleet active in 2023.

National fleet performance

In 2023, revenue reached EUR 4.6 million, a 7% increase from 2022. Revenue was primarily composed of landed value (EUR 3.5 million) and other income (EUR 1.1 million), with other income rising by 104%. Total fleet expenditure in 2023 was EUR 2.14 million, with personnel and energy costs constituting 65% of expenses. Operating costs decreased by 23% from 2022 due to reduced fuel consumption, fewer crew members, and lower variable/non-variable costs.

Economic performance showed improvement with GVA at EUR 3.41 million, gross profit at EUR 2.69 million, and net profit at EUR 2.19 million, an 80% increase compared to 2022. The Romanian fleet's physical capital was valued at EUR 8.943 million and investments were EUR 141,212, reflecting decreases of 10% and 60%, respectively, from 2022. Total assets in 2023 were valued at EUR 3.659 million, a 15% decrease from 2022. Average labor costs dropped by 4%, while total landings volume increased due to higher catches of valuable species.

Resource productivity and efficiency indicators

The gross profit margin increased by 41% in 2023 compared to 2022, and by 36% when compared to the period from 2013 to 2022. Similarly, the net profit margin saw an increase of 67% in 2023 compared to 2022, and 63% relative to the period from 2013 to 2022.

Labour productivity, measured as GVA per FTE, rose by 53% in 2023 compared to 2022, and by 14% when compared to the average over the period from 2013 to 2022. However, the number of FTEs decreased by 11% in 2023 compared to 2022.

Fuel consumption per landed tonne showed an overall increasing trend from 2017 until 2022. However, in 2023, it was estimated at 175 litres per landed tonne, which is 65 litres less than in 2022, representing a 1% increase compared to the average of 171 litres per landed tonne during the period from 2013 to 2022. This trend in fuel consumption is directly proportional to the total landings in each analysed year.

Landings in weight per unit of effort (in DaS) continued their decreasing trend starting from 2017, with a 3% decrease in 2023 compared to 2022 and a 38% decrease compared to the average for the period from 2013 to 2022. The higher volumes of landings in recent years from segments engaged in Rapa whelk fishing have also contributed to improved productivity and efficiency indicators, given the significant importance of this catch type in total catches.

4.20.3 Performance by fishing activity

In 2023, Romania's Black Sea EEZ waters had a fishing fleet of 173 vessels, with 143 active and 30 inactive targeting different species.

Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

Small-scale fishing in Romania encompasses vessels under 12 metres, with or without a motor, that engage in fishing activities using both passive and active gears (polyvalent gears). Specifically, the VL0612 PMP and VL0006 PMP segments utilize polyvalent gears, while the VL0612 PG and VL0006 PG segments employ only passive gears.

In 2023, there were 119 active vessels classified within the SSCF, constituting 83% of the total number of active vessels. The SSCF's total income in 2023 amounted to EUR 2.606 million, derived from 59% landings, 40.9% other income, and 0.1% operating subsidies. Income from landings in 2023 saw a 10% decrease compared to 2022, also marking a 17% decrease relative to the average level for 2013-2022.

Regarding economic performance, the SSCF generated EUR 2.232 million in GVA, EUR 1.949 million in gross profit, and EUR 1.857 million in net profit. Compared to the 2013-2022 average, GVA increased significantly by 71% and by 51% compared to 2022. Additionally, gross profit rose by 146% compared to the reference period and by 82% compared to 2022. Net profit demonstrated an increase of 93% over 2022 and 178% compared to the 2013-2022 average.

It is noteworthy that scuba divers manually collecting Rapa whelk are also included in this fleet segment.

Large-scale fleet (LSF)

In 2023, Romania's LSF fleet had 24 active vessels, making up 17% of the total active vessels, with a crew of 106 fishers, a 15% decrease from 2022. The total revenue was EUR 2.039 million, down 2% from 2022 and 22% below the 2013-2022 average. Landed quantities and values were lower than in 2022. However, GVA rose by 58% to EUR 2.232 million, gross profit increased by 82% to EUR 1.949 million, and net profit grew by 93% to EUR 1.857 million compared to 2022, showing a 178% increase over the 2013-2022 period.

4.20.4 Performance of selected fleet segments

Romania's fishing fleet consists of seven segments in four clusters, with two clusters showing increased profitability.

Vessels using passive and active gears for segments below 6 metres

In 2023, the PG VL0006 fleet segment had seven active vessels with landings valued at 3.9 tonnes and EUR 15,798. These vessels used passive gears for catching turbot and small pelagic fish, generating a GVA of EUR 0.125 million and a gross profit of EUR 0.0121 million. The PMP VL0006 fleet segment, consisting of three active boats without motors handling Rapa whelk and mussels manually, had landings valued at 94 tonnes and EUR 128,774.

Vessels using passive and active gears for segment 06-12 metres

Segments PG VL0612 and PMP VL0612 include 109 active vessels. These vessels use passive gears (traps, gillnets for turbot and small pelagic fish, longlines) and active gears (beam trawl, pelagic trawl, scuba divers). In 2023, landings totaled 1,012 tonnes worth EUR 1.394 million and employed 21 FTEs, representing 44% of the total fleet FTEs. This segment achieved a gross profit of EUR 1.851 million and a net profit of EUR 1.760 million, making up around 68% of the gross profit and about 84% of the net profit of the entire Romanian fishing fleet. It was the most profitable segment due to its high number of vessels.

Vessels using polyvalent fishing gears PMP 12-18 metres

The segments VL1218 PMP and VL1824 PMP were grouped in the cluster PMP1218m due to the reduced number of vessels on the VL1824 PMP segment (only three vessels were active). There are 22 vessels in this cluster operating in the Romanian coastal areas of the Black Sea, targeting turbot mainly with gillnets, Rapa whelk using beam trawlers, mussels using hydraulic dredge, small pelagic fish using pelagic trawl, and dogfish using longlines. In 2023, the landings volume accounted for 2,138 tonnes and EUR 1.93 million, representing 25 FTEs, which equals 52% of the total fleet FTEs. This fleet segment made a gross profit of EUR 0.783 million and a net profit of EUR 0.451 million, around 29% gross profit, and around 22% net profit of the total Romanian fishing fleet. This segment registered a high profitability.

Vessels using Polyvalent gears (PMP) 24-40 metres

This segment consists of two vessels that landed 46,452 tonnes and generated EUR 81,756. These vessels use various gears, including hydraulic dredge for mussels, beam trawl for Rapa whelk, pelagic trawls, gillnets for turbot, and longlines for dogfish, switching based on stock abundance and market demand. This segment was not profitable, due to the small number of vessels and low quantity landed.

4.20.5 Drivers affecting the economic performance trends

The Romanian catches in 2023 increased by 4% compared to 2021. However, compared to the average for the period 2013-2021, total catches decreased by 35%, primarily due to a significant reduction in the amount of rapa whelk caught in recent years. Since 2013, rapa whelk has become the most important species in total catches. This trend is impacting the overall performance of the fleet, as well as the evolution of stocks and market demand for this species, leading to a dependency on rapa whelk catches. Additionally, the most valuable fish species caught, turbot, is subject to TACs limitations under EU regulations, resulting in limited earnings for fishers.

Markets and Trade

In recent years, as the quantities of rapana landed have decreased, fishers have shifted their focus to fish species with higher economic value, such as turbot, as well as bluefish, red mullet, and horse mackerel. Some marine fish sellers sell their catch to restaurants, while others sell directly to buyers at the landing point. Romania's trade balance for fish and seafood is negative, primarily due to the small size of the fleet and its limited total catches. Additionally, the large quantities of fish imported by supermarket chains contribute significantly to this negative balance.

The frozen fish and seafood segment is currently experiencing the strongest growth within the Romanian market. This is attributed to its longer shelf life, convenience, and affordability, making it attractive to a broader consumer base. Frozen products also allow for a wider variety of species to be offered, catering to evolving consumer preferences. Furthermore, the availability of frozen seafood year-round, irrespective of seasonal fluctuations, contributes to its market dominance. Hypermarkets and supermarkets also hold a significant market share due to their extensive reach and established distribution networks.

Simultaneously, there are weaknesses in the development of the processing sector, which cannot fully capitalize on the available domestic production. Additionally, there is notable

interest among Romanian consumers for ocean fish species and other types of fish that are not found in the Black Sea waters.

Operating costs (external factors)

Total operating costs in 2023 decreased by 23% compared to 2022. Compared to the average for the analysed period 2013-2022, the total costs of the fleet in 2023 decreased by 20%. Personnel costs and energy costs constitute significant expenditure items, with a 33.52% and 32.34% share of the operating costs, respectively. This is due to the relatively stable salary levels during this period and the rising fuel prices.

Status of Key stocks. TACs and quotas

Romania adheres to TACs for turbot and sprat in accordance with EU regulations. For other commercial fish stocks, quotas are established annually at the national level based on scientific advice from the research institute and the implementation of recommendations by the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM). This includes measures such as reducing the number of DaS and fishing days. According to data available for 2023, the weight of landings has increased by 4% compared to 2022, although the value of these landings in euros has decreased by 6%.

Management instruments

In September 2021, a new electronic fishing logbook management application (ERS) was implemented on board fishing vessels exceeding 12 metres in length. Significant progress has been achieved during the previous reporting period regarding Romania's adherence to Regulation (EU) No 1224/2009. As of March 2023, the back-office application for managing the vessels' electronic logbooks became operational, facilitating improved integration between the onboard application and the back-office system. Consequently, paper-format fishing logbooks were discontinued on 1 January 2024.

The application designed for reporting catches by vessels within fleet segments shorter than 12 metres is currently in the testing phase. In the forthcoming period, training sessions and the enrolment of vessel-owning economic operators will be conducted to ensure they have accounts in the NAFA application, enabling them to download the relevant software. An initial training session has already been conducted with a carefully selected group of vessel-owning economic operators, allowing them to contribute to the application's development. The primary objective of this initiative is to align the application's functionalities with the needs of the economic operators.

Innovation and development

In 2022, as during the entire 2014-2020 programming period, measures from the FMAOP could have been applied under Regulation (EU) No 508/2014. However, the financing conditions, particularly the intensity of public support, were challenging for fishermen and vessel owners. It is anticipated that the situation will improve under the 2021-2027 Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Programme, particularly for small-scale coastal fishing, which will benefit from a maximum aid intensity of 100%. However, calls for projects aimed at fishers will not be launched until after 2023, as work is still being done to finalize the program's implementation framework, including legislation, procedures, and guidelines.

The objective of these administrative measures is to improve fishing fleet management and achieve better control over the exploitation of fishing capacity. Implementing these measures will contribute to the specific goal of ‘Enhancing the competitiveness and viability of fisheries

enterprises, including the small-scale coastal fleet, and improving safety or working conditions,' as outlined in EU Priority 1 – 'Promoting environmentally sustainable, resource-efficient, innovative, competitive, and knowledge-based fisheries.' Upgrading infrastructure in existing ports aims to improve energy efficiency, promote environmental protection, enhance the quality of landed products, and improve the safety and working conditions for fishermen.

The procedure for designing and approving the 'Fishing Facilities for the Port of Midia' project began in 2020. The zonal land-use plan (PUZ) has been approved by the Navodari Town Council, and efforts are being made to update the technical and economic documentation during the Feasibility Study phase. However, there is a possibility that the implementation period may be extended, meaning the completion of the project could go beyond 2023 with support from the 2021-2027 Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Programme.

There is growing interest in accessing EU financial support for fishing vessels between 2021 and 2027, which could increase the fleet's profitability and reduce the environmental impact of fishing activities. By equipping fishing vessels with more selective fishing gear, unwanted and accidental catches, discards, and stock depletion can be minimized. Additionally, replacing outdated gear with newer, more environmentally friendly options will reduce the risk of gear loss or abandonment and help decrease plastic pollution in the marine environment.

Significant progress in innovation has been made within the aquaculture sector. In 2018, the National Institute for Marine Research and Development Grigore Antipa (NIMRD) in Constanta, Romania was appointed by the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), an organization operating under the auspices of the FAO, to establish a Demonstration Center for Bivalve Aquaculture in the Black Sea. The primary objective of this center is to foster the development of marine aquaculture in a region challenged by various environmental and administrative-legislative constraints.

NIMRD specialists, through activities conducted at the Demonstration Center, have successfully contributed to the regulation of the national legislative framework concerning the microbiological classification of waters designated for aquaculture and the harvesting of live bivalve molluscs. Additionally, they have organized three training courses in the field, which have included participants from all countries bordering the Black Sea.

The primary obstacle impeding the development of marine aquaculture in Romania has been the ambiguous and restrictive legislative framework. Until 2020, the absence of microbiological classification of the Black Sea waters, as mandated by Regulation (EC) No. 627/2019 (formerly 854/2004), precluded any potential economic operator from marketing shellfish products within the EU due to public health concerns. Furthermore, another significant barrier preventing the practice of offshore marine aquaculture was the inability to obtain concessions for water surface areas required for the installation of equipment and anchoring systems on the seabed.

The microbiological survey of the areas proposed for classification was completed in the fall of 2020, with the competent authority (ANSVSA) categorizing all three live bivalve mollusc production and relaying areas in the Romanian sector of the Black Sea (Chituc - Perișor, Baia Mamaia, and Agigea - Mangalia) as class A. This classification offers significant potential for bivalve aquaculture along the coast. At the end of 2023, the Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety of the European Commission (DG SANTE) audited the control system for the marine resource "live bivalve molluscs," resulting in a positive assessment for Romania.

Additionally, the concession of the Black Sea water surface for aquaculture activities became feasible through Government Decision no. 1283/2022, which amended and supplemented Government Decision no. 183/2020 regarding the approval of the lease of public real estate assets of the state, administered by the National Administration "Romanian Waters," thereby creating development opportunities. Currently, discussions are underway concerning the reduction of tariffs for leasing water surfaces and extending the concession period (currently four years) to facilitate access to European funds for investments in this sector.

The establishment of a legislative framework has also enabled the activity of fish aquaculture in floating nurseries on the Romanian coast, with several economic operators expressing interest in offshore farm locations. To support the ongoing development of marine aquaculture on the Romanian coast, INCDM experts are testing species suitable for this type of activity.

Consequently, the feasibility of alternative breeding of rainbow trout (Oncorhynchus mykiss) in seawater during the cold period of the year has been demonstrated experimentally.

In 2023, an experiment was conducted to evaluate the adaptability of sea bream (Sparus aurata Linnaeus, 1758) for marine aquaculture in Romania. The results indicate that sea bream is a viable candidate for aquaculture in floating ponds in the western Black Sea, within a rotation system complementary to cold-water species such as rainbow trout. This approach aims to advance Romanian marine aquaculture by maximizing economic profit and ensuring year-round utilization of production facilities.

Additionally, in 2023, the Draft Government Decision on the amendment of the Annex to GD 432/2020—regarding the approval of measures to achieve good ecological status of the Black Sea marine region—introduced the measure RO-MN-030, "Monitoring the impact of marine aquaculture farms on the Black Sea ecosystem." This recommendation, proposed by INCDM experts, pertains to Descriptor D1: Preservation of biological diversity, which involves maintaining the quality and quantity of habitats, as well as the distribution and abundance of species, in accordance with existing physiographic, geographical, and climatic conditions.

The specific actions outlined for this measure include the collection of detailed data on the effects of aquaculture farms on biological components and marine and coastal habitats. Furthermore, it encompasses the development of a monitoring program for biological and physicochemical components at the farm site to assess its impact on the marine ecosystem.

4.20.6 Assessment of the economic performance for 2024 and 2025 (nowcasts)

Model results

In 2024, the total number of vessels is expected to drop by 15%, leading to a 12% reduction in jobs and a 7% decrease in FTEs compared to 2023. DaS decreased by 8%, causing a 20% fall in both the volume and value of total landings. Revenue is projected to decline by 20%, affecting all economic performance indicators. The 2025 nowcast model indicates that the Romanian fleet will generate net and gross profit margins similar to those in 2024, but much worse than in 2023.

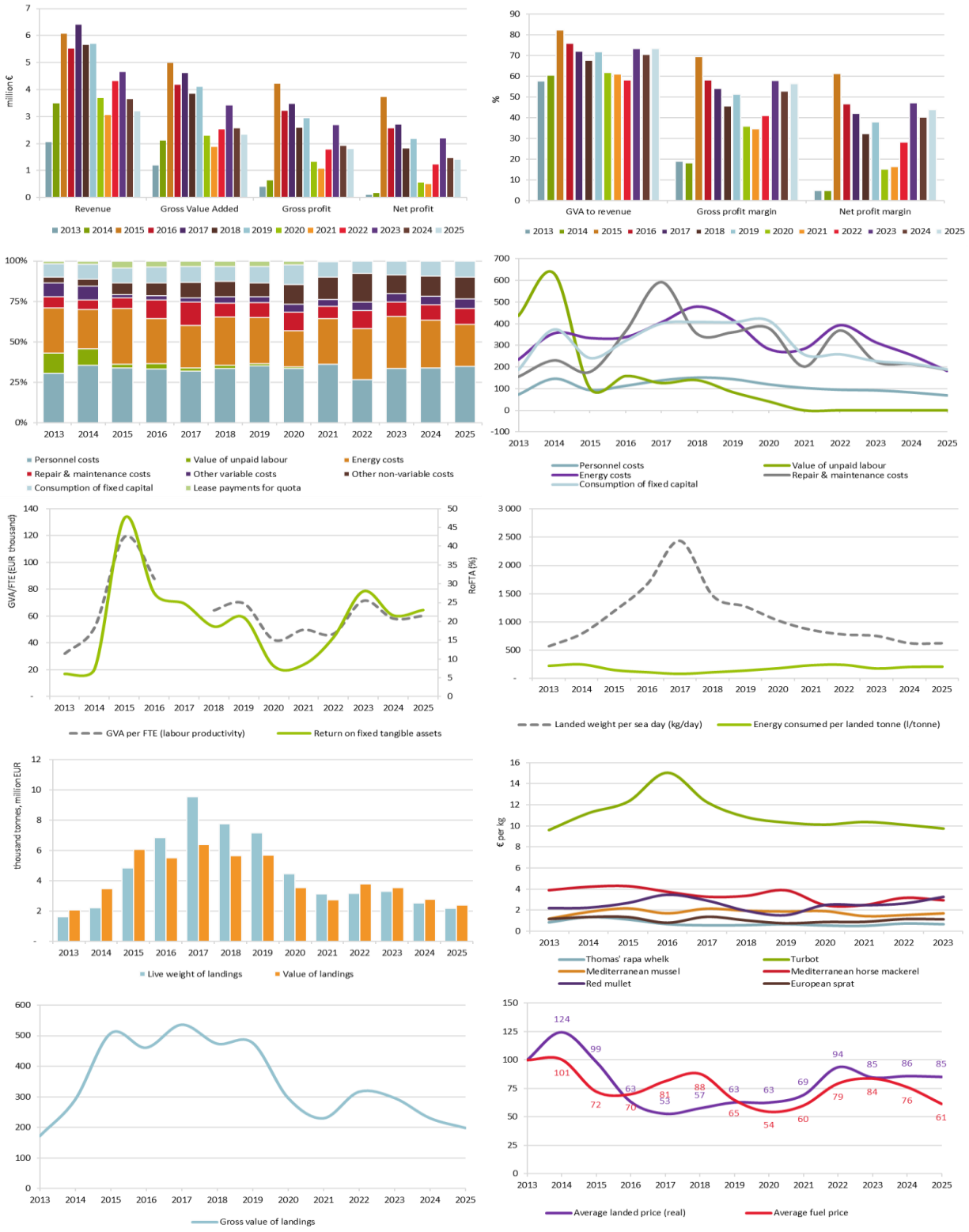
4.20.7 Methodological considerations and data issues

No major issues were found. Economic data on Romania's fishing sector were gathered via questionnaires and sales notes from 107 commercial fishing companies in 2023. In July

2024, questionnaires for 2023 were sent to all users of fishing vessels in Romania, achieving a 100% response rate.

Improving the centralized database of the national agency for Fisheries and Aquaculture will enhance data collection, storage, cross-checking, and overall quality. The member state aims to refine validation methods for better results and dynamic reports on further data analysis.

Figure 4.20.1.Romania: Main trends in (from top to bottom, left to right): economic performance indicators (absolute value and relative values); cost structure and variation in main cost items; productivity and efficiency indicators; landings (in weight and value) and average price (euro/kg) of top species; variation in income variables and average prices of key input/outputs (2013=100). Nowcast figures for 2024 and 2025.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

4.21 Slovenia

4.21.1 Short description of the national fleet

In 2023, the Slovenian fishing fleet had 136 registered vessels, a 12% decrease from 2013. The fleet had a combined 668 GT (+7% since 2013), total power of 8,442 kW (-2%), and an average age of 46.6 years. The average vessel length was 9 metres. The fleet size reduction was mainly due to vessel scrapping, including two of the largest vessels. A 22% decrease in vessels occurred in 2018 after updating the register and removing inactive vessels.

There were 73 active vessels in 2023 (54% of the total), a 4% decrease from 2022 and 8% from 2013. The peak number of active vessels was between 2014 and 2015 due to large vessel scrapping and the economic crisis. The purse seiners sector saw a significant drop from 2016 to 2018, with no vessels left by 2019.

The number of inactive vessels remains high due to their age, owners retiring without successors, fishers finding other jobs, and high operating costs. Many vessels are kept inactive until market conditions improve.

Table 4.21.1. Slovenia at a glance.

Slovenia		2023				%Δ 2023-2022			
Indicator	Units	Overall	SSCF	L12AG	LSF	Overall	SSCF	L12AG	LSF
Active vessels	Number	73	62	4	7	-4%	-5%	-	0%
FTE	Number	61	44	-	18	20%	13%	-	50%
Gross Value of landings	Million €	0.94	0.33	-	0.60	-9%	-19%	-	-2%
GVA	Million €	2.53	1.73	-	0.81	-43%	-49%	-	-26%
Gross profit	Million €	2.20	1.58	-	0.63	-47%	-49%	-	-38%
Net profit	Million €	2.05	1.50	-	0.55	-49%	-51%	-	-42%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure

The Slovenian fishing fleet is divided into SSCF (85% of all active vessels in 2023) with an engine power of 3,396 kW (-1% compared to 2022) and a LSF segment (15% of all active vessels in 2023) with an engine power of 1,916 kW (the same as in 2022). The number of vessels in the SSCF has decreased by 9% from 2013-2023, while the number of LSF vessels has decreased by 1% in the same period. Scrapping and withdrawal from fishing activities by vessels in the purse seiners segment are key factors contributing to the decrease in LSF vessels.

The estimated value of physical capital of the Slovenian fleet was EUR 5.4 million, of which 31% (EUR 1.7 million) corresponds to the inactive fleet. While the Slovenian national economy does not rely heavily on the marine fisheries sector, the sector has social implications in terms of employment. Following Slovenia's independence in 1991, the marine fisheries sector experienced a reduction in fishing regions and market loss for fish products. This decline was influenced by a high number of small-scale fishers with inadequate equipment, challenges faced by large-scale fishers, and issues related to production and

marketing coordination, leading the sector into difficulties. Landings decreased from almost 6,000 tonnes in 1990 to less than 200 tonnes in 2023.

The existence of two sea fishery reserves where all fishing activities are banned (Portorož and Strunjan fishery reserves) further limits the Slovenian fishing area. Additionally, the industrial port in the Gulf of Koper and the establishment of a common routing system and traffic separation scheme in the Northern Adriatic have impacted fisheries. This has particularly affected those engaged in small-scale coastal fishing over the last few years.

Fishing activity and production

In 2023, the fleet spent around 5,479 days-at-sea (DaS), a 20% decrease from 2013. This drop is largely due to declining fish populations in the Adriatic Sea caused by overfishing, pollution, and other factors, making fishing less profitable. Despite Slovenia's small fishing sector having minimal impact on fish stocks, it suffers from intensive regional fishing and limited marine areas, particularly affecting the SSCF.

In 2023, fuel consumption was approximately 325,000 litres, down 9% from 2013, mainly due to scrapping several vessels, including two of the largest ones. The fuel price subsidy system in Slovenia benefits larger vessels with higher fuel consumption, like trawlers. In 2023, the average diesel price was 1.54 euro/litre, with a 26% share from excise duty.

The total seafood landed in 2023 was about 107 tonnes, valued at EUR 0.94 million, reflecting a 32% and 25% decrease in weight and value over the decade. Notably, the highest landed value occurred in 2009. The reduction in landings is attributed to vessel scrapping and climate change, which reduced certain species like whiting by over 70%.

First sale prices for marine fish in Slovenia are influenced by industry health, regulations, fish populations, consumer demand, fuel costs, and competition from imports. Prices remained stable from 2013 to 2023, despite slight annual variations. Key species like European pilchard and anchovy saw negligible catches in 2023, accounting for less than 1% of landing value.

Employment and average salaries

In 2023, there were 99 fishing enterprises in total. Of these, the majority (65%) owned a single vessel, while 35% of the enterprises owned between two and five vessels. None of the enterprises owned six or more vessels. The total employment in the industry was estimated at 111 jobs, equivalent to 61 FTEs. Between 2013 and 2023, total employment increased by 7%, whereas the number of FTEs decreased by 3% over the same period. This increase in total employment is primarily attributed to occasional fishers who engage in fishing opportunistically when high-value fish species migrate into Slovenian waters. These individuals contribute to overall employment figures but have a limited impact on the number of FTE employees as their fishing activity is minimal.

In 2023, the average wage per employee was EUR 2,638 (EUR 4,801 per FTE), which was below the average Slovenian salary of EUR 27,054 for the same year (Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia). Additionally, the average wage per FTE was also lower than the Slovenian minimum wage of EUR 15,046 in 2023 (Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia). The segment comprising demersal trawlers and demersal seiners measuring 12-18 metres recorded the highest average wage of EUR 5,558 (EUR 8,488 per FTE). It is noteworthy that Slovenian fishers earn only a small portion of their income from fishing activities, with additional earnings coming from other sectors such as tourism and aquaculture.

The Slovenian fishing fleet predominantly consists of small vessels less than 12 metres in length, mainly around six metres. Self-employed fishers who own a single fishing vessel approximately six metres long represent the typical Slovenian fishing enterprise.

4.21.2 Economic results for 2023 and recent trends

The economic results pertain solely to the Slovenian fishing fleet active in 2023.

National fleet performance

In 2023, the Slovenian national fleet earned EUR 3.41 million, comprising EUR 0.94 million from landings, EUR 2.31 million from non-fishing income, and EUR 0.16 million in subsidies. From 2013 to 2023, landing income dropped by 25%, while non-fishing income rose by 10%. However, non-fishing income decreased by 43% in 2023 compared to 2022.

Many Slovenian fishers are exploring other sectors like tourism and aquaculture to supplement their income due to declining landings. Subsidies increased significantly from 2015 onwards, partly due to payments related to Croatia's EU accession.

In 2023, operating costs were EUR 1.07 million, with energy and personnel costs making up 37% and 27% of these costs, respectively. Operating costs decreased more than 20% between 2013 and 2023, mainly due to vessel scrapping.

Between 2013 and 2023, GVA fell by 9%, but gross profit and net profit increased by 7% and 13%. Despite having an aging fleet and reduced catches, economic indicators showed a positive trend due to higher revenues from other sources.

The depreciated replacement value of the fleet was estimated at EUR 5.4 million, with investments amounting to EUR 0.49 million in 2023.

Resource productivity and efficiency indicators

The gross profit margin and net profit margin also increased from 2013 to 2023 for 17% and 26%, respectively.

Labour productivity (GVA/FTE) record decrease in period 2013- 2023 for 15%: GVA decreased for 9% while the number of FTE decreased by 3% in the period analysed.

Labour productivity of the Slovenian fishing fleet was EUR 41,346 in 2023, which is above the GVA per employee average in the entire Slovenian agricultural sector (EUR 31,341) however, under the total Slovenian GVA/employee average, which amounted to EUR 57,527 in 2023 (source; SiStat Database).

Fuel consumption per landed tonne has followed an overall increasing trend since 2013 and amounted 3,024 litres per tonne landed in 2023 (an increase of more than 80% from 2013). The landed weight per sea day decreased for 13% from 2013 to 2023 and amounted 20 kg per sea day in 2023. One of the reasons for that is the scrapping of some large vessels with high volume of landings and, subsequently, changed composition of the fleet consisting now in a majority of smaller vessels with lower landed weight per sea day. Lower volume of landings of purse seiners segment in the last few years than in previous ones also affected the productivity and efficiency indicators since this segment has the best ratio between the weight of catches and fuel consumption.

Social impact

The Slovenian national economy does not rely heavily on the marine fisheries sector. The GDP contribution of Slovenian fisheries is less than 0.01% of the national GDP. Although small, the marine fishing sector has a notable social impact on employment in the Slovene coastal region. Additionally, it plays a role in maritime identity and tourism. This activity creates job opportunities directly and is connected to the regional economy, particularly tourism and catering. The value and volume of landings affect not only fishers but also people on shore.

The Slovenian fish processing industry relies less on domestic fisheries because most raw materials are imported, mainly from EU countries. However, the crisis in the purse seiners segment has negatively impacted smaller processors producing salted fillets of anchovies.

The social and cultural significance of Slovenian fisheries is rooted in their connection to local communities, traditions, and heritage. Fishing has been a key activity along the Slovenian coastline for generations, shaping the identity and livelihoods of coastal communities. Socially, fishing provides employment, sustains local economies, and fosters community among fishers and their families. It helps preserve cultural practices and traditions passed down through generations, contributing to the cultural fabric of coastal regions. Fishing communities often share knowledge, customs, and celebrations related to their maritime lifestyle.

Slovenian fisheries also play a role in local cuisine, with freshly caught seafood being part of traditional dishes. This culinary heritage reflects the coastal lifestyle and attracts tourists, adding to the cultural diversity and tourism appeal of the region.

Fisheries are ingrained in the social fabric of coastal communities, where fishing has been a longstanding way of life. The industry fosters a sense of identity and belonging, preserving maritime traditions and customs. Perceptions of fishing vary, with some viewing it as a profession rooted in tradition, while others see it as outdated or environmentally harmful. Despite its small economic footprint, fishing enjoys social legitimacy in Slovenian society, with many recognizing its cultural significance and contribution to coastal heritage. There is awareness of the importance of sustainable fishing practices and marine conservation efforts, though challenges exist in balancing economic interests with environmental concerns.

4.21.3 Performance by fishing activity

Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

In 2023, there were 73 active vessels of which 85% are classified as small-scale (a decrease of 9% from 2013). The majority of these vessels operate in the coastal waters of Slovenia.

The amount of income generated by the Slovenian SSCF in 2023 was EUR 2.04 million or 60% of all income in 2023. Landings' income decreased 44% between 2013 and 2023 while other income increased for 27% over the same period - despite a notable 49% drop in 2023 compared to 2022. Due to reduced landings, Slovenian fishers are looking for the opportunity to generate earnings in other economic sectors, such as tourism, aquaculture, etc.

Between 2013 and 2023, GVA recorded a negative trend while gross and net profit had a positive trend (although the substantial fall was recorded in 2015). The major factor causing the improvement in economic performance in period analysed include increases income from other sources. Operation costs followed mostly negative trend during the period analysed. In

2023, the SSCF had an estimated (depreciated) replacement value of EUR 1.8 million. Investments by the fleet amounted EUR 0.54 million in 2023.

Vessels under 12 metres using active gears fleet (L12AG)

Within the Slovenian fishing fleet, four vessels under 12 metres in length, classified in the DTS VL0612 segment, operate using active fishing gears. In terms of the number of vessels, kW, and GT, the L12AG segment accounts for 36%, 27%, and 18% of the total Slovenian Large-Scale Fleet (LSF), respectively. For reasons of confidentiality, these vessels are aggregated within the DTS VL1218 segment. Consequently, disaggregated economic data pertaining solely to these four vessels is not available.

Large-scale fleet (LSF)

11 vessels (15% of all active vessels) represent Slovenian large-scale sector in 2023. The majority of these vessels operate in the coastal waters of Slovenia.

The income generated by the Slovenian LSF in 2023 was EUR 1.28 million (40% of all income). Landings' income decreased for 12% between 2013 and 2023, while a decrease of almost 60% is recorded in period 2008-2012 compared to 2013. The major factor for decreased value of landings income was scrapping of some vessels and in the last few years a crisis in the purse seiner segment, which is deeper from year to year. Moreover, this segment did not operate at all beyond 2018.

Between 2013 and 2023, GVA increased by 29%, while gross profit and net profit rose by 104% and 132%, respectively. The primary drivers of the substantial growth in gross and net profit were higher levels of other income, which increased by 92% over the analysed period.

In 2023, the LSF had an estimated (depreciated) replacement value of EUR 1.9 million. Investments by the fleet amounted to EUR 0.4 million in 2023.

4.21.4 Performance of selected fleet segments

In 2023, the entire active fleet operated at an overall possitive profit. All fleet segments, except DFN VL0006, which maintained a stable trend, demonstrated improved economic performance compared to 2022 and relative to the entire time series.

Demersal trawlers and demersal seiners 12-18 metres

11 vessels based predominantly in the Adriatic. This fleet targets a variety of species, the most important being European squid (SQR), musky octopus (EDT), caramote prawn (TGS), whiting (WHG) and red mullet (MUT). The value of landings was EUR 0.60 million and 18 FTEs were employed in this fleet segment in 2023, contributing to 64% and 29% of the total income from landings and FTEs generated by the Member State's fishing fleet, respectively. This fleet segment made positive gross and net profits in 2023.

Drift and fixed netters below 6 metres

This fleet segment is composed of 22 vessels operating in the Slovenian coastal areas of the Adriatic. These vessels target demersal species, such as gilthead seabream (SBG), European seabass (BSS), common sole (SOL), mullets (MUL) and common cuttlefish (CTC).

The total value of landings was EUR 0.11 million and 17 FTEs were employed in this fleet segment in 2023, contributing 11% and 26% of the total income from landings and FTEs generated by the national fleet, respectively. This fleet segment made positive gross and net profits in 2023.

Drift and fixed netters 6-12 metres

40 vessels operating in the Slovenian coastal areas of the Adriatic. These vessels target demersal species, such as common sole (SOL), gilthead seabream (SBG), warty venus (VEV), European seabass (BSS) and common cuttlefish (CTC). The total value of landings was EUR 0.23 million and 27 FTEs were employed in this fleet segment in 2023, contributing 25% and 45% of the total income from landings and FTEs generated by the national fleet, respectively. This fleet segment made positive gross and net profits in 2023.

4.21.5 Drivers affecting the economic performance trends

Several drivers can affect the economic performance trends of the Slovenian fishing fleet. Here are some key factors that may impact the economic performance of the fleet:

- Fish stock health and availability: The health and availability of fish stocks in the Adriatic Sea can have a significant impact on the economic performance of the Slovenian fishing fleet. If fish populations are low or overfished. it can reduce the amount of catch and make it less profitable for fishers to operate their vessels.
- Fishing regulations: Changes in fishing regulations, such as quotas, catch limits, and gear restrictions, can impact the economic performance of the fishing fleet. Regulations can affect the amount of catch that fishers can harvest, the types of gear they can use, and the areas they can fish in, which can impact their profitability.
- Fuel and operating costs: The cost of fuel and other operating expenses can impact the economic performance of the fishing fleet. If fuel prices rise, it can increase the cost of operating fishing vessels, which can reduce profits for fishers.
- Competition from imports: Competition from imported fish can also impact the economic performance of the Slovenian fishing fleet. If imported fish is cheaper than domestic fish, it can reduce demand for domestic fish and reduce the profitability of the fishing industry.
- Government subsidies and support: Government subsidies and support can play a significant role in the economic performance of the fishing fleet. If the government provides subsidies or support for the fishing industry, it can help to offset some of the costs and improve the profitability of the industry.

Overall, the economic performance of the Slovenian fishing fleet is impacted by a range of drivers, including fish stock health, fishing regulations, operating costs, competition from imports, and government subsidies and support. Understanding these drivers and their impacts can help to identify ways to improve the economic performance of the fleet and ensure the long-term sustainability of the fishing industry in Slovenia.

Markets and trade

The Slovenian market for marine products is characterized by fragmentation and a lack of organization. Many producers and dealers operate individually without coordination. Most

fishing products are sold directly to known customers such as restaurants and fish markets. Some fishers also operate their own fishmongers, while smaller fishers sell the majority of their catch directly from their boats. Slovenia does not have fish auctions; the nearest is located in Trieste, Italy, where larger catches are often sold.

The Slovenian seafood trade balance has been relatively stable over the years, consistently showing a negative balance. Slovenia remains a net importer of fish and fish products. In 2023, imports were approximately four times larger than exports, totaling 14,540 tonnes (EUR 102 million) of fish and other fish products. Exports that year amounted to 4,327 tonnes (EUR 27 million). The majority of imported fish and fish products come from the EU, with the largest import partners being Italy, Spain, and Croatia. For exports, the largest partners are Croatia, Austria, and Germany. The primary imports include fresh and frozen fish and products for consumption, as well as fish and other marine organisms for the processing industry. Main export products consist of various canned fish, tuna pate, and dried cod spread.

In 2023, the volume of landings in Slovenia amounted to approximately 106 tonnes. Additionally, the Slovenian aquaculture sector produced 1,139 tonnes of fish and shellfish. The market for marine products remains fragmented and disorganized, with many producers and dealers operating independently. Most catches are sold directly to known customers, and some portion of landed catches is sold at the fish market in Trieste, Italy.

Prices for key species targeted by the fleet generally remained stable between 2013 and 2023, with slight annual variations due to changes in the volume of landings during this period.

Operating costs (external factors)

Between 2013 and 2023, total operating costs decreased by more than 20%, primarily due to the scrapping of several vessels. In recent years, particularly in 2012 and 2013, the Slovenian fisheries sector has recorded an increased value of direct income subsidies aimed at diversifying their activities. These investments have resulted in increased depreciation costs and other income. During the period from 2013 to 2016, after the scrapping, operating costs remained relatively stable with slight annual variations. Repair and maintenance costs, which represented 28% of total operating costs in 2023, are a significant factor affecting the economic situation of the fleet. It is anticipated that repair and maintenance costs will increase in the future due to the aging fleet. Energy costs are a key driver for demersal trawlers and the demersal seiner’s 12-18m segment, which has the most unfavorable ratio of fish caught to fuel consumption among all mentioned segments.

Compliance with national and international maritime standards incurs additional expenses relating to safety, environmental protection, and fisheries management. Though technological advances have the potential to reduce costs in the long term, initial investments may lead to increased short-term expenses. Market demand fluctuations and fish product prices directly affect profitability. Access to productive fishing grounds influences costs, as restrictions or changes may necessitate vessels traveling longer distances. Economic factors such as inflation rates also play a role in influencing operating costs.

Status of Key Stocks. TACs and quotas

The Working Group on Stock Assessment of Small Pelagic Species (WGSASP) was held in Rome, Italy, from 9 to 14 December 2024. The WGSASP reviewed 22 stock assessments, validating advice for 21 stocks—14 with quantitative and 7 with qualitative advice. Of these,

14 were found to be sustainably exploited and 7 overexploited. Anchovy stocks (excluding GSA 17–18) were generally sustainable, while sardine stocks showed mixed results.

An online session of the Working Group on Stock Assessment of Small Pelagic Species (WGSASP) focused on the assessment of European anchovy and sardine in the Adriatic Sea took place on 19 May 2022. Based on data provided by relevant contracting parties and cooperating non-contracting parties for 2021 (year n-1), the assessments of European anchovy and sardine were updated with two additional years of data. Anchovy in GSAs 17 and 18 was found to be in a state of overexploitation (Fcurr/F_{MSY} ratio: 1.15) with biomass above reference points (SSBcurr/Bpa ratio: 1.1), while the sardine stock was considered to be overexploited and in overexploitation, on a precautionary basis.

The Working Group on Stock Assessment of Demersal Species (WGSAD) was held in Rome, Italy, in hybrid modality, from 09 to 14 December 2024. Of the 65 reviewed stocks, 40 (61.5%) were validated for providing quantitative advice. Twenty-eight out of the 65 validated assessments indicated sustainable or possibly sustainable stock exploitation. Excluding the three complementary European hake assessments, this corresponds to 45.5% of the stocks, which is more than double the proportion observed in the previous year (22%). Approximately two-thirds of the assessments indicating sustainable exploitation referred to various red mullet and shrimp stocks.

According to the GFCM Working Group on Stock Assessment of Demersal Species (WGSAD) held in January 2022, out of the 51 stock assessments validated by the WGSAD, 10 were found to be in a state of sustainable exploitation, and 41 were assessed as being overexploited.

Slovenia does not have any TACs and/or quotas.

Management instruments

In Slovenia, the Fisheries Sector at the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food (MAFF) is currently responsible for the management and relevant legislation pertaining to fisheries. The ministry has developed an innovative information system called InfoRib, which collects data on marine species, landings, registers of fishing vessels, and socio-economic information. This data is linked to each fishing vessel and enables the assessment of the socio-economic status in marine fisheries, forming the basis for adopting measures that support sustainable development and the CFP.

Fisheries management in Slovenia is primarily regulated through capacity limitations and spatial restrictions. Capacity limitations pertain to the increase in vessel power and gross tonnage concerning the total national fleet capacity. Spatial restrictions involve the existence of two sea fishery reserves where all fishing activities are prohibited (Portorož and Strunjan fishery reserves). Additionally, the presence of a significant industrial port in the Gulf of Koper necessitates adherence to safety and international regulations, resulting in the establishment of a common routing system and traffic separation scheme in the northern Adriatic, which also significantly impacts fisheries.

Since 2014, the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) management plan for small pelagic fish in Geographical Sub-Area (GSA) 17 has been implemented. This plan includes provisions that specify the maximum number of fishing days for targeting sardine and anchovy, as well as a temporal closure period.

Below are some of the most important acts or regulations utilized in fisheries management in Slovenia:

- Marine Fisheries Act: http://www.pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO4367
- Decree on the monitoring of catches and sales of fisheries products: http://www.pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=URED8180.
- Decree on the implementation of the Regulation (EU) establishing a catch documentation programme for Bluefin tuna and the Regulation (EU) on the multiannual recovery plan for Bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean: http://www.pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=URED7497.
- Rules on the register of fishing vessels and vessels used in mariculture: http://www.pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=PRAV12636.
- Rules on licences and special licences for commercial fishing: http://www.pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=PRAV12458.
- Rules on the collecting method and daily quantity of collected bivalve molluscs: http://www.pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=PRAV12523.
- Sustainable use of fish: http://www.pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=PRAV9829.
- Rules on leisure sea Fishing: http://www.pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=PRAV8023.
- Rules on the training programme for the implementation of commercial fishing, certificate of the exam performed and records of issued certificates of exams: http://www.pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=PRAV6769.

Innovation and development (role of EMFAF)

Slovenia has a derogation regards the minimum distance from coast and the minimum sea depth for the ‘’volantina’’ trawlers; Article 13(1) of Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006 shall not apply in territorial waters of Slovenia, irrespective of the depth, between 1.5 and 3 nautical miles (nm) from the coast, to ‘volantina’ trawlers which are used by vessels:

(a) Bearing the registration number mentioned in the Slovenian management plan;

(b) Having a track record in the fishery of more than 5 years and not involving any future increase in the fishing effort deployed;

(c) Holding a fishing authorisation and operating under the management plan adopted by Slovenia in accordance with Article 19(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006.

The derogation shall apply until 27 March 2026.

For this purpose, Slovenia will have to implement a study in order to display the catch composition with ‘’volantina’’ trawlers in the zone between 1.5 and 3 nm from the coast.

4.21.6 Assessment of the economic performance for 2024 and 2025 (nowcasts)

Model results

Preliminary results for 2024 and 2025 forecast a decrease in landed weight, while the landing value is expected to increase for the Slovenian fishing fleet in both years. The number of vessels is expected to remain similar to that of 2023. In 2024, a reduction in DaS is anticipated, while, according to the model, the number of DaS is expected to increase in 2025. Projections suggest that total jobs and FTE will slightly decrease. Economic performance indicators for 2024-2025 show that GVA, Gross profit, and Net profit will all rise. The model also predicts an increase in GVA per FTE during this period.

National Fleet

Due to scrapping, the fleet decreased between 2013 and 2023. Because of that, and also due to the poor landings volume of the purse seiners segment, the weight of landings decreased in 2023 compared to 2013. Landings volume and income, which depends on the status of fish stocks, are the main drivers in Slovenian fishing fleet. They have the effect on all others economic and social indicators. If the fish stocks in the Adriatic Sea will recover in the future, an increased trend in economic and social situation of the sector can be expected.

As the fleet is generally old and poorly equipped, it can be expected that repair and maintenance costs will continue to increase in the future. Furthermore, because of old age of the fleet, an increase in inactive vessels can also be expected.

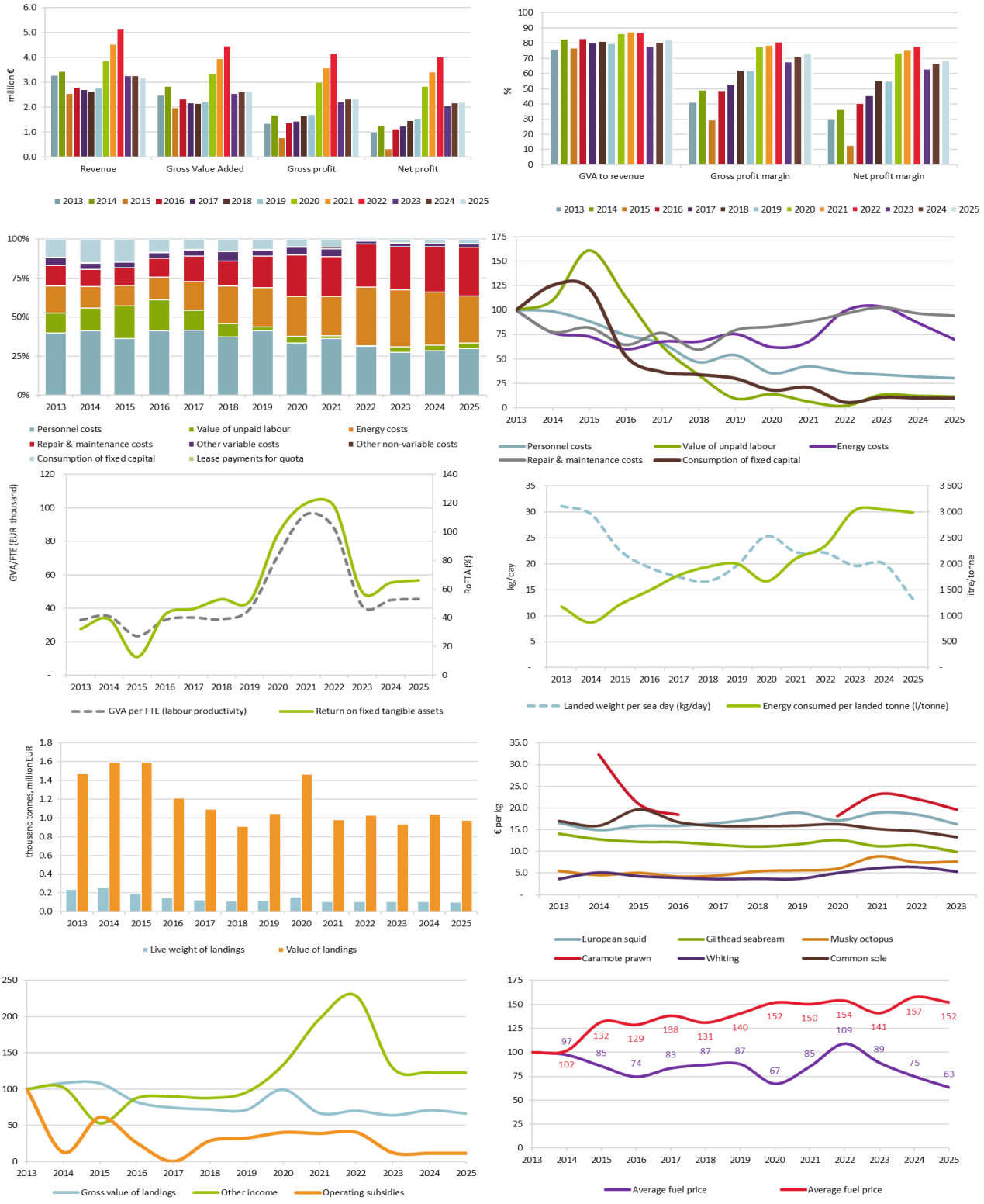
Small-scale coastal fleet

The same issues regarding age and equipment of the fleet apply also to the SSCF. The economic situation of SSCF is largely dependent on the landing volume of species, such as gilthead seabream, European seabass or common sole, so it is very difficult to predict the volume of landings. It depends on a variety of factors, such as sea temperature, other climatic factors, condition of the stock, fishing effort in neighbouring countries etc. Based on most recent data, the value of landings decreased in 2023 for 19% regarding 2022, mostly because of decreased landings of sea bream and sea bass.

4.21.7 Methodological considerations and data issues

No major issues were detected. Economic data on the fishing sector was collected from accounting records (AJPES), 'InfoRib' database, questionnaires, and sales notes. All fishing vessels were included in the monitoring programme. Data from all sources were combined to compare a complete set of accounting items for each business. The target population comprised approximately 100 commercial fishing companies in Slovenia. In May 2024, questionnaires for 2023 were sent to all vessel users, achieving a 100% response rate. Data from annual accounts also had a 100% response rate due to the mandatory economic reports for all companies or fishers.

Figure 4.21.1.Slovenia: Main trends in (from top to bottom, left to right): economic performance indicators (absolute value and relative values); cost structure and variation in main cost items; productivity and efficiency indicators; landings (in weight and value) and average price (euro/kg) of top species; variation in income variables and average prices of key input/outputs (2013=100). Nowcast figures for 2024 and 2025.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

4.22 Finland

4.22.1 Short description of the national fleet

In 2023, the Finnish fishing fleet had 3,240 registered vessels; 2,082 were inactive. The active fleet of 1,158 vessels had a combined gross tonnage of 9,111 GT and total power of 77,720 kW. This was four fewer vessels than in 2022 and a 20% decrease compared to the 2013–2022 average.

Table 4.22.1. Finland at a glance.

Finland		2023			%Δ 2023-2022		
Indicator	Units	Overall	SSCF	LSF+L12AG	Overall	SSCF	LSF+L12AG
Active vessels	Number	1,158	1,120	38	-0.3%	0%	-7%
FTE	Number	173	95	78	-7%	-3%	-11%
Gross Value of landings	Million €	36.6	10.4	26.2	25%	4%	35%
GVA	Million €	20.5	9.0	11.5	23%	-2%	54%
Gross profit	Million €	8.3	2.2	6.1	3%	-63%	184%
Net profit	Million €	- 3.0	- 3.5	0.4	-4%	-1222%	113%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure

The Finnish fishing fleet is predominantly composed of small-scale vessels, with 1,120 out of 1,158 (97%) active vessels operating within the SSCF. However, the 38 trawlers (LSF+L12AG) constitute the majority (72%) of the total fleet capacity in terms of vessel tonnage. The estimated value of the physical capital of the Finnish fleet stands at EUR 97.2 million, with 52% corresponding to the inactive fleet.

Fishing activity and production

The total effort in 2023 was 86,000 fishing days, which is 59% more than in the previous year. The SSCF accounted for 97% of the total effort. In 2023, fishing days were still 7% below the 2013–2022 average despite the notable increase. The SSCF exclusively saw growth in effort, while the LSF+L12AG continued its decline, decreasing by another 4%. This downward trend began in 2017 following the implementation of the ITQ system in pelagic fisheries. Effort recorded by the LSF+L12AG in 2023 was 40% below the 2013–2022 average.

The Finnish fleet operates exclusively in the Baltic Sea, predominantly fishing in the Bothnian Sea. Finnish vessels also fish along the Finnish coastline and in the southern Baltic Sea. One-fifth of the Baltic herring catch and over half of the sprat catch were landed abroad, in Sweden and Estonia. In Finland, the largest catch volumes were landed at the port of Uusikaupunki (19,700 tonnes) and the port of Kasnäs (14,500 tonnes). Outside Finland, significant volumes were landed in Estonia at Paldiski South Harbour (12,800 tonnes) and in Sweden at the port of Norrsundet (5,100 tonnes). One-fifth of the Baltic herring catch landed in Finland was used directly as food, over a third was used to produce fishmeal for aquaculture, 11% as feed for fur animals, and the remaining portion was exported.

In 2023, the Finnish fleet landed a total of 90,000 tonnes of seafood valued at EUR 36.6 million. The trawler fleet caught most of this, primarily consisting of Baltic herring and European sprat. Catches of these pelagic species had been increasing until 2017 due to strong herring stocks, especially in the Bothnian Bay, but TACs for Baltic herring were reduced starting in 2018, resulting in decreased catches.

The total weight of landings increased by 4% in 2023, while the value increased by 25%. Landings for the LSF+L12AG increased by 1% in weight and 35% in value. SSCF landings increased by 33% in weight and 4% in value compared to 2022.

In 2023, the live weight of Baltic herring landings increased by 1,000 tonnes, totaling 69,000 tonnes. European sprat landings increased by 1,500 tonnes to a total of 14,900 tonnes. Baltic herring had the highest landed value at EUR 21.3 million, followed by European sprat at EUR 5.5 million.

The SSCF sector focuses on various freshwater fish species, with perch, European whitefish, vendace, salmon, and pikeperch being the key species. Vendace and perch catches exceeded the 2013–2022 average, whereas pikeperch and salmon remained below average. Ice fishing during temperate winters poses challenges, affecting landings. Additionally, seals and large cormorant populations continue to impact small-scale coastal fishing efforts.

Employment and average salaries

Total employment in 2023 was estimated at 1,117 jobs, a 2% decrease from last year. The SSCF segment, which focuses on seasonal fisheries, created 91% of these jobs, mostly part-time. Employment in SSCF dropped by 1%, 12% below the long-term average. In the LSF+L12AG segment, employment fell by 10%, 25% below the long-term average.

In terms of FTE, the total fleet had 173 FTE, down 7% from last year and 41% below the long-term average. FTE decreased by 3% for SSCF and 11% for LSF+L12AG.

4.22.2 Economic results for 2023 and recent trends

The economic results pertain solely to the Finnish fishing fleet active in 2023.

National fleet performance

In 2023, the Finnish fleet generated a total revenue of EUR 40 million, reflecting a 4% increase compared to the previous year. This income comprised EUR 38.1 million from landings and EUR 1.9 million from other sources.

The gross value added (GVA) of the national fleet in 2023 amounted to EUR 20.5 million, indicating a 23% rise from the previous year. For the LSF+L12AG segment, GVA was 14% below the long-term average despite a notable 54% increase from the previous year. Conversely, the small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF) experienced a 2% decrease in GVA but remained 29% above the long-term average.

The gross profit for the national fleet rose by 3%, reaching approximately EUR 8.3 million. However, there was a significant variance between fishing techniques: the gross profit of the LSF+L12AG increased by about EUR 3.9 million, while the SSCF's gross profit declined by roughly EUR 3.7 million. The gross profit margin held steady at 21%, which is considerably below the long-term average.

Net profit deteriorated compared to the previous year, resulting in a loss of EUR 3 million. Notably, the LSF+L12AG segment achieved a positive net profit of EUR 400,000.

Resource productivity and efficiency

The energy consumed per landed tonne decreased in 2016 and has since remained consistently lower, indicating improved energy efficiency within the pelagic trawler fleet as some older vessels have exited the business. This trend continued in 2023 with energy consumption per landed tonne decreasing by an additional 10%. Energy costs declined by 12% in 2023 from the high levels recorded in 2022, which were driven by fuel price increases resulting from the war in Ukraine. However, these costs remained 8% above the 2013–2022 average. Landed weight per fishing day declined in 2023. Labour productivity (GVA/FTE) increased by nearly one-third in 2023.

4.22.3 Performance by fishing activity

Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

Since the implementation of the 2015 fishing law, commercial fishing enterprises have been categorized into two groups: the first category (I) includes enterprises subject to value-added tax with an annual turnover exceeding EUR 10,000, while the remaining enterprises are classified as second category (II) fishers. First category fishers are prioritized in fisheries management and are eligible for European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) funding. This group accounts for over 80% of the total value of landings in the SSCF segments.

The Finnish fishing fleet predominantly comprises small-scale vessels, with 97% (1,120 out of 1,158) of active vessels operating within the SSCF. In 2023, the SSCF contributed 28% of the national total value of landings, amounting to EUR 10.4 million. The SSCF segment holds significant social importance, encompassing the majority of all fishers and national full-time equivalents (FTE).

In 2023, the value of landings within the SSCF segment increased by 4%, resulting in total revenues of EUR 13.8 million. The segment generated approximately EUR 9 million in Gross Value Added (GVA) and a gross profit of EUR 2.2 million. However, after accounting for the capital consumption across all vessels, including those with low activity, the net profit was negative at -EUR 3.4 million.

Vessels under 12 metres using active gears fleet and Large-scale fleet (L12AG+LSF)

Pelagic trawlers represent a small portion of the Finnish fishing fleet, with 38 vessels out of 1,158 (3%). Most of these vessels are part of the large-scale fleet (LSF). In 2023, there were four active vessels under 12 metres using active gears (L12AG).

In 2023, pelagic trawlers contributed to 72% of the national total value of landings, amounting to EUR 26.2 million. The value of landings in this segment increased by 35% in 2023. The segment generated approximately EUR 11.5 million of GVA and a gross profit of EUR 6.1 million. Their combined net profit was about EUR 0.4 million.

4.22.4 Performance of selected fleet segments

The Finnish fleet operates exclusively in the Baltic Sea and is based on two main fisheries: pelagic trawlers (LSF+L12AG) and small-scale fisheries (SSCF). Pelagic trawlers are divided into three segments according to vessel length and operates mostly in the Bothnian Sea and Bothnian Bay. The SSCF is highly diversified with a range of vessel types mainly using nets and traps targeting various species in waters along the Finnish coastline.

Passive gears (PG) below 8 metres and 8–12 metres (SSCF)

The coastal fleet is operating mostly seasonally, and there is also a high variation in the activity of the vessels. The most active part of the segment classified as category I fishing units, covers over 80% of the total SSCF landings value.

The SSCF stands as the largest Finnish fleet segment, boasting 1,120 vessels in 2023. Comprised of diversified vessels targeting mainly freshwater fish species such as perch, European whitefish, vendace, salmon and pikeperch. In 2023, the total revenue of the SSCF was EUR 13.7 million, resulting in a gross value added of almost EUR 9 million. Despite this, the net profit was negative at -EUR 3.4 million. The segment operating vessels below 8 metres and the segment operating vessels above 8 metres both recorded negative net profits of EUR 1.7 million.

Pelagic trawlers (TM) 24–40 metres (LSF)

Pelagic trawlers 24–40m is economically the most important fleet segment in Finland targeting herring and sprat in the Baltic Sea. In 2023, these 15 vessels accounted for more than half of the total revenue of the Finnish fleet and employed 63 FTE. The fleet segment generated a GVA of EUR 9 million and the gross profit margin was 23%. Net profit amounted to EUR 0.7 million. This is a clustered segment also including pelagic trawlers over 40 metres.

Pelagic trawlers (TM) 18–24 metres (LSF)

Pelagic trawlers 18–24m segment consisted of seven vessels in 2023, also targeting Baltic herring and sprat. The average vessel revenue was EUR 385,000, second highest in the Finnish fleet and average on-board employment is 1.6 FTE. The segment generated EUR 1.9 million of GVA and made gross profit of EUR 710,000. In 2023 the segment’s profitability improved with a net profit of EUR 55,000.

Pelagic trawlers (TM) 12–18 metres (LSF+L12AG)

The Pelagic trawlers 12–18m represent the smallest trawler segment in terms of individual vessel size, comprising 16 vessels. In 2023, the segment generated EUR 616,000 of GVA and EUR 248,000 gross profit. The economic development trend of the segment deteriorated, and the profitability was weak with negative net profit of -EUR 333,000.

This is a clustered segment also including Pelagic trawlers (TM) below 12 metres, which totals four vessels. As the only active gear vessels below 12 metres in the Finnish fleet, this part of the clustered segment corresponds to L12AG.

4.22.5 Drivers affecting the economic performance trends

The most important driver for economic performance is the state of fish stocks. For several years, due to the good status of the most important fish stocks for the Finnish fleet, namely pelagic stocks, the total weight of landings broke the all-time record year after year. However, since 2018, there have been quota reductions in Baltic pelagic stocks, with significant cuts in the most important Baltic herring stocks for Finnish fisheries. In 2023, the Baltic herring quotas were cut by almost 20%.

Other main drivers for economic performance are the prices of fish and inputs, especially fuel prices. Prices for pelagic species increased in 2023. The price development of the most

important species for coastal fishing has been relatively unfavourable, however, with the prices of perch, pikeperch, and vendace all decreasing.

Fuel costs are a major expense, particularly for the trawler fleet. In 2016, fuel prices hit their lowest point in a decade, but have since risen, impacting the sector's profitability. Fuel prices increased between 2016 and 2019, but the economic slowdown caused by the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020 led to a sharp drop in global fuel prices. During that year, fuel prices reached a record low, significantly impacting the energy costs of larger vessels. However, this favourable situation has since reversed. Fuel prices rose significantly in 2022 and remained high in 2023. Increasing energy efficiency and reduced consumption in 2023 lowered energy costs, however, helping to improve the gross profitability of fisheries.

Management instruments and regulation (policy)

The offshore fleet is managed mainly through TACs that are shared between Baltic Sea countries. Apart from salmon and herring the coastal fleet target mostly freshwater species that do not have quotas but are managed with licences and other time and gear restrictions.

Starting in 2017, the Finnish pelagic fisheries and salmon fishery adopted an ITQ regime. The allocation of fishing rights was based on grandfathering. The new management regime has had a significant impact to the trawler fleet structure and performance. In 2023 there were 38 active trawlers operating under ITQ. This implies 18 vessels less than when the ITQ was introduced.

Operational costs (external factors)

Fuel prices are the most significant cost item, especially for larger pelagic trawlers. Between 2016 and 2020, fuel prices steadily increased. However, in early 2020, there was a severe decline in fuel prices due to the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak. This favourable trend in fuel prices affected the profitability of trawlers, with the energy costs of larger vessels reaching record lows. As a result of the war in Ukraine, fuel prices rose significantly in 2022. In 2023, fuel prices slightly declined but remained significantly higher than in 2021. Increasing energy efficiency and reduced consumption in 2023 lowered total energy costs, however. Labour costs represent the second major expense, closely following revenue trends.

Stock status, TACs and quotas

Pelagic fisheries are the most important for the Finnish fleet by terms of weight and value. Both Baltic herring and sprat stocks were considered to be at biomass levels compatible with producing MSY in 2017.

Baltic herring stocks have been exceptionally strong in the past especially in the most important fishing grounds in the Bothnian Sea. However, after the highest recorded catches of herring in 2015-2017 there was a cut of TACs and catches in 2018.

Since 2018, there have been reductions in Baltic pelagic quotas, including significant cuts to the most important Baltic herring stocks for Finnish fisheries. This has had a notable impact on the economic performance of the pelagic trawler segments, as well as downstream activities in the value chain. In 2023, the Baltic herring quotas were cut by almost 20%. 77% of the quota was landed.

Salmon is the main quota species for the SSCF and its TACs have been decreasing substantially since the early 20th century due to weak stocks. In 2022 and 2023, there was slight increase in the quotas. Only 45% of the quota was landed, however.

Innovation and development

The Finnish government has launched a development program aimed at promoting the use of domestic fish, with the goal of doubling the quantity of domestic fish consumed by Finns in 2027. The biggest potential for increasing the supply of domestic food fish lies in the trawler fishing of Baltic herring, although there has been downward pressure on quotas due to weaker stocks. There is also some potential among the freshwater species targeted by the SSCF.

Fishmeal factories used some one-third of the total Baltic herring catch landed in Finland in 2023. If used for human consumption the Baltic herring catch would bring more income for fishers through considerably higher prices and boost the profitability of trawlers. The price of foodstuff Baltic herring was almost 60 % higher than that of herring used for feed in 2023. An additional 11% of the herring catch landed in Finland was used for feed in fur farming in 2023.

Socioeconomic impact

The Finnish fishing industry has seen a long-term decline in fishers and an increase in their average age, particularly within the SSCF segment. The introduction of the Individual Transferable Quota (ITQ) system in 2017 led to a significant reduction in vessels and employment, similar to other Nordic countries. By 2023, the number of trawlers dropped by nearly 30%.

A fifth of the total catch was landed abroad, mainly in Estonia or Sweden, with many Finnish pelagic trawlers owned by foreign entities. The fisheries management and industry are urgently seeking ways to boost domestic demand to improve the economic situation and maintain employment.

4.22.6 Assessment of the economic performance for 2024 and 2025 (nowcasts)

Model results

The model projections for 2024 and 2025 reflect a shift from contraction to recovery. Nowcast results for 2024 suggest that the sector experiences a decline in fishing effort, accompanied by a sharp drop in landings compared to 2023. However, this downturn is partially offset by a rise in landing value, as higher prices boost revenue despite lower volumes. GVA and productivity improve due to enhanced efficiency and lower costs, particularly reduced fuel prices. Most notably, gross and net profits surge, reversing earlier trends, as the fleet transitions from losses to profitability.

The model projections for 2025 highlight the recovery phase, where landings rebound and revenue continues to grow, further strengthening profitability. However, this growth is not uniform across sectors.

SSCF faces a mixed path: in 2024, it struggles with declines in landings, landing value, and revenue, along with reduced GVA and profitability. By 2025, it recovers as landings and value rebound, enabling a return to growth and improved profitability – though it continues to make losses in the short term.

LSF, meanwhile, demonstrates improved performance. In 2024, while landings decrease, the sector benefits from higher-value catches and lower fuel prices, leading to a significant rise in profitability. This trend accelerates in 2025, as landings, value, and revenue all increase,

further enhancing profitability. Crucially, the largest trawler segment emerges as a key driver, becoming exceptionally profitable, turning the entire sector profitable.

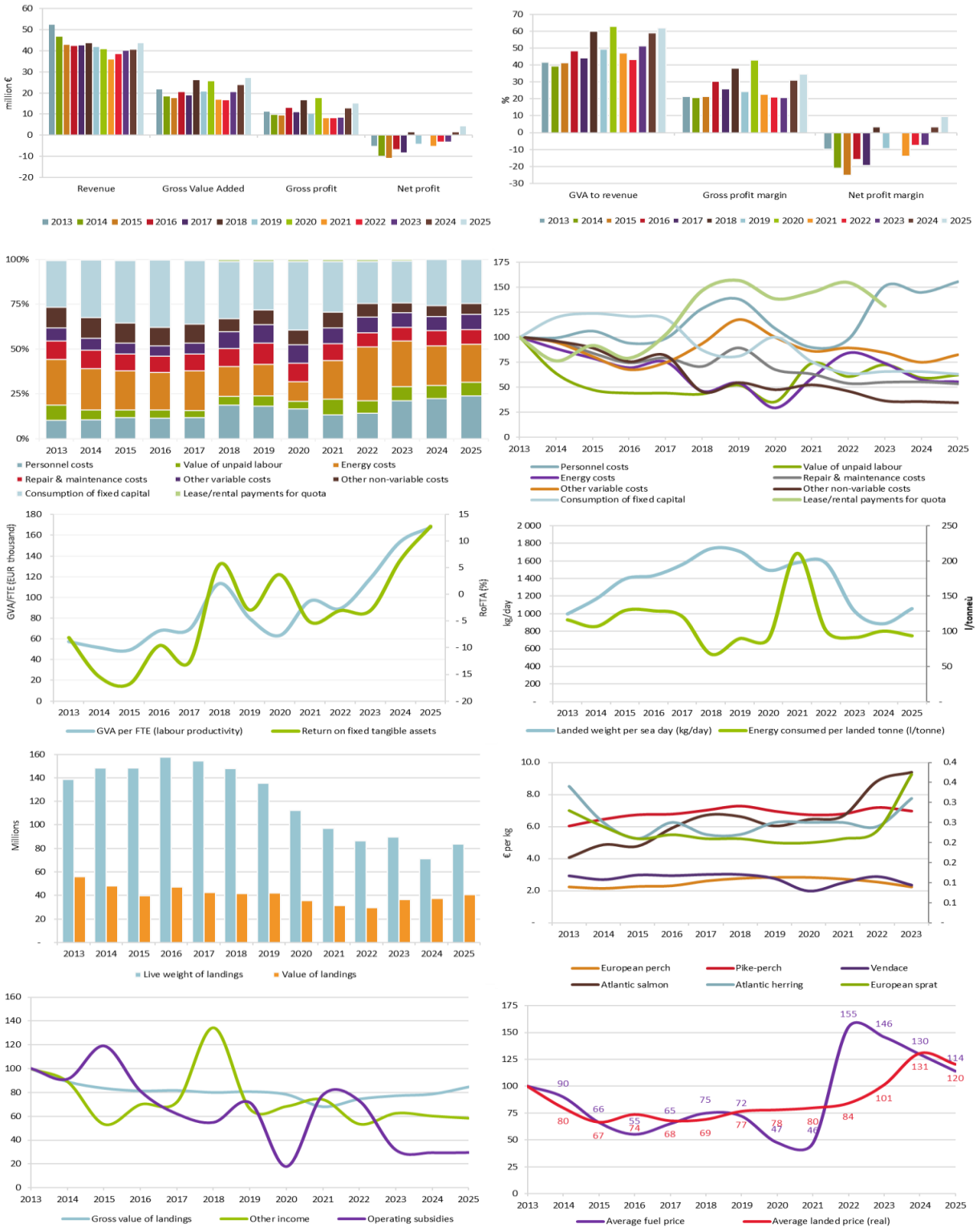
4.22.7 Methodological considerations and data issues

Capacity, logbook, and landings data come from various legislations and are comprehensively available. Larger vessels use logbooks, while smaller ones use coastal fishing reports. In 2014, the SSCF changed the non-response correction method based on a survey, and as of 2015, coastal fishing reports became mandatory, eliminating the need for non-response estimation, causing a break in the time series.

The financial results of the TM VL1824 segment in 2018 were unusually high due to the inclusion of one vessel's sales revenue and fishing rights. Economic data collection relies on a hierarchical multi-stage survey combining data from the central control register, Statistics Finland’s financial database, and additional surveys for coastal fishers and trawlers. Since 2016, account data has been collected by the Natural Resources Institute Finland.

Due to comprehensive data coverage and efficient estimation, economic variable precision is satisfactory. However, there are breaks in the time series for active small-scale fishing vessels in 2012, 2014, and 2015 due to changes in recording and methodology.

Figure 4.22.1. Finland: Main trends in (from top to bottom, left to right): economic performance indicators (absolute value and relative values); cost structure and variation in main cost items; productivity and efficiency indicators; landings (in weight and value) and average price (euro/kg) of top species; variation in income variables and average prices of key input/outputs (2013=100). Nowcast figures for 2024 and 2025.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

4.23 Sweden

4.23.1 Short description of the national fleet

In 2023, there were 1,032 fishing vessels, with 220 of these being inactive. In 2022, there were 1,060 vessels, with 219 inactive. The capacity decreased by 28 vessels compared to 2022, and in 2024, the number of vessels was 983. The overall trend for the Swedish fleet indicates a decrease in the number of vessels. In 2023, the fleet had a combined gross tonnage (GT) of 28,349 tonnes and an engine power of 146,322 kW, representing increases of 0.5% and 0.4%, respectively, since 2022. However, GTs and kWs are decreasing over time when considering a longer period.

Table 4.23.1. Sweden at a glance.

Sweden		2023				%Δ 2023-2022			
Indicator	**Units**	**Overall**	**SSCF**	**L12AG**	**LSF**	**Overall**	**SSCF**	**L12AG**	**LSF**
Active vessels	Number	812	620	78	114	-3.4%	-2.7%	-2.5%	-8.1%
FTE	Number	579	217	62	300	-4.3%	2.8%	31.9%	-13.5%
Gross Value of landings	Million €	119.2	1.97	3.3	137.0	2.4%	3.7%	0.0%	3.3%
GVA	Million €	59.6	6.40	4.6	48.6	4.6%	-5.9%	-16.4%	8.7%
Gross profit	Million €	38.2	0.22	2.1	35.5	18.1%	27.2%	-27.6%	21.6%
Net profit	Million €	13.9	-3.10	0.94	15.7	1119.7%	8.8%	-24.8%	375.8%

Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

Fleet structure

The Swedish fleet is diverse, operating various fishing vessel types mainly in the Baltic Sea, Skagerrak, and Kattegat regions. Between 2008 and 2023, there were 12 fleet segments, including nine active and five inactive length classes. In 2023, 78% of active vessels (577) used passive gears, but part-time fishers only accounted for 1.4% of landed weight and 9.9% of landing value. The average vessel age was 38 years, ranging from nearly 100 years old to new. The estimated value of the Swedish fleet's physical capital was EUR 103 million, with 1.9% attributed to the inactive fleet.

Fishing activity and production

Approximately 55,137 days were spent at sea during 2023, representing a decrease of 6.3% compared to 2022. The energy consumed by the active fleet decreased by 8% in 2023. The LSF exhibited an increasing trend in fuel consumption up to 2020. However, from 2021 onwards, energy consumption has declined, with a 12% reduction observed in 2023 compared to 2022. Both the SSCF and the L12AG experienced an increase in energy consumption compared to 2022, by 19% and 65%, respectively.

The total landed weight in 2023 was 142,000 tonnes of seafood (compared to 129,000 tonnes in 2024), with a landed value of EUR 119 million (the same as in 2024). The total weight and value of landings have fluctuated over the period analyzed due to quotas, prices, and exchange rates, particularly affecting the pelagic fleet. Despite the continued weakness of the exchange rate between SEK and EUR since 2018, higher catches in 2023 positively impacted the landed value, resulting in a net positive effect.

The Swedish fishing fleet targets both pelagic and demersal species, with herring remaining the dominant species, generating the highest landed value of EUR 31.8 million, which represented approximately 26% of the total landed value in 2023. Other significant species in terms of value in 2023 included Norway lobster (EUR 20.2 million), European sprat (EUR 19.2 million), Northern prawn (EUR 8.4 million), and Atlantic mackerel (EUR 10.0 million).

Employment and Personnel costs

In 2023, the fleet employed 1,316 workers (including owners), equating to roughly 579 FTEs or 0.71 FTE per active vessel. Employment has decreased along with overall capacity, though vessels have reduced faster than crew numbers due to mergers among older vessel owners. From 2013 to 2023, total employee numbers fell by 12%, while FTEs dropped by 19%. However, from 2022 to 2023, FTEs increased by 4%, suggesting fewer part-time fishers. The average personnel cost per employee and per FTE decreased by 25% and 19% respectively over the decade, with a 7% and 9.6% drop compared to 2022.

4.23.2 Economic performance for 2023 and recent trends

The economic results pertain solely to the Swedish fishing fleet active in 2023.

National fleet performance

In 2023, the revenue of the Swedish national fleet saw an increase of 3.6% compared to 2022, rising from EUR 122 million to EUR 126 million. This growth was driven by a 2.4% increase in the value of landings and a 2.9% rise in other income compared to the previous year. Specifically, the revenue for the LSF increased by 6% relative to 2022, while the revenue for both the SSCF and L12AG decreased by 6%.

The GVA, gross profit, and net profit in 2023 were estimated at EUR 59.6 million, EUR 37.8 million, and EUR 13.5 million, respectively. Compared to 2022, GVA increased by 4%, and gross profit saw a significant rise of 17%.

The depreciated replacement value of the Swedish fleet was estimated at EUR 102 million, representing a decrease of 27% compared to 2022. Investments in 2023 amounted to nearly EUR 4.9 million, reflecting a 13% increase from the previous year. However, compared to 2013, investments have decreased by 31% in 2023.

Resource productivity and efficiency

The gross profit margin in 2023 was 29.9%, which represents a 12% increase compared to 2022. The net profit margin was estimated at 10.7%, showing an improvement from 2022, although it remains one of the lowest since 2013.

Several indicators showed improvement compared to 2022, despite the decreasing capacity and size of the Swedish fleet over time. Labour productivity (GVA/FTE) increased by 9% in 2023; GVA rose by 5%, while the number of FTE decreased by 4%, indicating an increase in part-time fishing activities.

The energy consumption of the Swedish fleet has decreased by 32% since 2013. After an increase in 2020, the consumption level in 2023 is lower, with a 27% decrease.

Landings in weight per unit of effort (in DaS) have fluctuated since 2013, averaging around 2.7 tonnes per day. In 2023, the landed weight per unit effort was 2.6, one of the lowest since 2013, but still a 5% increase between 2022 and 2023.

4.23.3 Performance by fishing activity

Small-scale coastal fleet (SSCF)

The SSCF vessels decreased from 851 in 2013 to 620 in 2023 (599 projected for 2024), an 18% drop, mirroring the Swedish fishing fleet trend.

Employee numbers in SSCF declined by 5% from 2022 to 2023, but FTEs rose by 4%, suggesting part-time fishing decreased. Vessel tonnage dropped by 1%, while engine power slightly increased by 0.3% compared to 2022.

The SSCF is unprofitable with a net loss of EUR 3.1 million in 2023. Despite low GVA per FTE at EUR 29,453, which indicates other motivations for fishing, such as lifestyle or part-time work, these factors increase market competition, making it challenging for new entrants.

Vessels under 12 metres using active gear fleet (L12AG)

The number of L12AG vessels decreased from 80 in 2022 to 78 in 2023, representing a 3% decrease. The vessel count has exhibited fluctuations within a range of 71 to 82 vessels over the period. The full-time equivalent (FTE) employees within the L12AG segment increased by 34% and 2% in 2023 compared to 2022. However, both vessel tonnage and engine power have followed a decreasing trend similar to that of the national fleet, with reductions of 3% and 2%, respectively, compared to 2022. Overall, the L12AG segment remains profitable, recording a net profit of EUR 936,000 in 2023. The GVA per FTE is positive at EUR 74,560.

Most fishers in this segment target species that are among the highest valued for the Swedish fleet, such as Northern prawn, Norway lobster, and vendace roe. Consequently, this segment demonstrates better economic performance compared to vessels under 12 metres using passive gear. A new management system was introduced in 2017 for demersal fisheries in response to the landing obligation. While individual quotas now include some level of transferability during the year (though not permanent), the system still lacks the transferability characteristic of a fully developed individual transferable quota (ITQ) system.

Large-scale fleet (LSF)

The number of vessels in the LSF decreased from 164 in 2013 to 114 in 2023 (115 in 2024), representing an 8% decline. This reduction is largely attributed to the decrease in vessels primarily engaged in cod fishing. Employment and FTEs for the LSF declined by 20% and 13%, respectively, in 2023 compared to 2022. Additionally, vessel tonnage and engine power saw reductions of 15% and 13%, respectively, in 2022.

From 2013 to 2023, the weight and value of landings for LSF vessels increased by 3% and 5%, respectively. The LSF was more reliant on quotas than the SSCF, with landing values demonstrating similar trends but greater variation due to fluctuations in fish prices and the EUR/SEK exchange rate. This fleet segment targets both pelagic species, such as herring, sprat, and mackerel, as well as demersal species, including Norway lobster and Northern prawn. However, performance variability within this segment remains considerable.

Operational costs for the LSF were reduced by 5.8%, whereas repair and maintenance costs, along with energy costs, each increased by 4% since 2022. The ability to maintain high total income while marginally reducing operational costs has enabled the LSF to sustain its net profit. Overall, the LSF remains profitable, achieving a net profit of EUR 15.7 million in 2023, which returns to levels akin to those prior to 2022 when net profit reached its lowest since 2008. GVA per FTE stands at EUR 164,100, reflecting a 25% increase from 2022.

4.23.4 Performance of selected fleet segments

In 2023, only one out of five fleet segments using active gears incurred losses, specifically the length segment of 10-12 metres. Conversely, no segment using passive gears had a positive net profit.

Vessels with active gears contributed to the majority of the landed value and weight. Between 2013 and 2023, vessels with active gears accounted for 97-99% of the total catch by weight annually, and 85-90% of the total catch value. In contrast, vessels with passive gears accounted for only 1-3% of the total catch by weight and 10-15% by value.

Demersal trawl & seine 18-24 metres

In 2023, a segment of 34 vessels using various fishing gears operated mainly in the Baltic Sea, Skagerrak, and Kattegat. The fleet targeted demersal species like cod and Norway lobster, as well as pelagic species like herring. The total landing value was EUR 14.3 million with 88 FTEs, making up 12% of income and 15% of FTEs in the Swedish fishing fleet. This segment reported a gross profit of EUR 3.6 million in 2023, an increase from 2022.

Demersal trawl & seine 24-40 metres

In 2023, a fleet of 26 vessels operated in the Baltic Sea, Kattegat, Skagerrak, and the North Sea. This segment includes 12 pelagic trawlers (seven over 40 metres). They target species like herring, sprat, cod, and Northern prawn. The fleet's landings were worth EUR 71.3 million, accounting for 59% of total landing income and 22% of FTEs in the Swedish fishing sector. This segment dominates with 89% of the total landing weight and 60% of the value. The fleet remains very profitable, with a gross profit of about EUR 28 million, mainly from pelagic species.

4.23.5 Drivers affecting the economic performance trends

In 2023, quotas for pelagic and demersal species experienced mixed changes. High quotas remain crucial for profitability, but some quotas like cod and haddock increased, while others such as Norway lobster and mackerel decreased or stayed the same. The Swedish fleet’s income mainly comes from trawling, which is fuel-intensive, making fuel price fluctuations a significant factor in profitability. Since 2022, higher fuel prices and interest rates have caused greater economic challenges for the Swedish fleet.

Markets and trade

Good economic performance for the Swedish fishing fleet is also highly dependent on fish prices (first sale prices) for pelagic species as well as a strong national currency. High prices but more importantly, stable prices are key to good economic performance. The Swedish currency is in a declining trend, which is apparent when looking at the total value from landings in euro. In an international context, this is a vital part of their economic performance. Furthermore, changes in seasonal fishing, e.g. shorter fishing period for certain species, can influence fish prices. The regulation of shortening fishing periods or certain catch limitations can produce a sudden supply shock on the market. One example of this is the vendace fishing in northern Baltic Sea. The access to the resource is limited to a few vessels and the national catch limitation fluctuates between years, which in turn yields a high price elasticity. In 2023 the landed weight of vendace increased by 51% but the price decreased yielding similar value as previous years.

Among the top five species the price of Norway lobster has decrease in first sale average price between 2022 and 2023 with 16%. Even though the prices of Norway lobster have decreased it is still among the most valuable species when referring to the landed value. The top species, European Sprat, Atlantic herring, Sandeel, and Atlantic mackerel have increased prices of 24%, 22%, 11%, and 19%, respectively.

External factors that affect the Swedish fishing fleet is mostly quotas. During 2023 there were a still some effect of Brexit leading to more and longer negotiations, giving Sweden limited access to British and Norwegian economic zone for the first three months. Brexit also still had an impact on final TACs, which in turn had an effect on larger vessels.

Operating costs (external factors)

In 2023, total operating costs decreased by 6% compared to 2022. Personnel costs dropped by 13% and unpaid labour by 7%. However, energy costs rose by 5% and repair & maintenance by 3%. Other variable costs increased by 36%, while non-variable costs declined by 22%. Total operational costs reached EUR 88.7 million, rising to EUR 109.7 million when capital costs were included. Fuel prices significantly impact operational costs for the Swedish fleet, especially vessels using active gear.

Moreover, growing seal populations along the Swedish coast continue to reduce incomes (by consuming fish from gears) and raise costs (by damaging gears and requiring extra work).

Status of key stocks. TACs and quotas

Most of the significant fish stocks targeted by the Swedish fleet are harvested at levels compatible with producing the MSY. In 2023, many quotas in the Baltic Sea remained unchanged or experienced slight reductions.

Regarding the Skagerrak, Kattegat, and North Sea regions, the quota for herring decreased by 7%, while the mackerel quota was marginally reduced by 1% for 2023 compared to 2022. The Norway lobster quota remained unchanged for 2023. Updates to the management plan for Northern prawn resulted in a change in the quota period to 1 July - 30 June starting in 2023. This adjustment complicates the calculation of changes relative to previous reference periods; however, quotas increased slightly in the first six months of 2022, followed by a substantial decrease during the 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 quota period.

Herring and sprat are valuable stocks for the Swedish fleet. The herring quota in the Baltic Sea decreased by 9%, while the sprat quota decreased by 11% in 2023 compared to 2022. There are indications of declining biomass for both species in the Baltic Sea, leading to lower quotas that could adversely impact the economic performance of the Swedish fleet.

Since mid-2019, a decision was made to close commercial cod fishing in parts of the Baltic Sea, affecting approximately 160 vessels. This ban on commercial cod fishing continued into 2023, resulting in decreased utilisation of limiting bycatch quotas for cod.

Management instruments

In the Swedish pelagic fisheries, a system with ten-year transferable pelagic fishing rights has been in place since 2009. The Swedish pelagic quotas are allocated between fishing rights, annual pelagic fishing opportunities, regional fishing opportunities and coastal quotas.

With regard to the demersal fisheries, a system with annual individual fishing opportunities was introduced in 2017. The individual fishing opportunities can, under certain conditions, be temporarily transferred between fishermen during the year. As the pelagic system, the design of the system pays particular attention to SSCF for which unallocated quotas (costal quotas)

are reserved. Regional fishing opportunities was allocated for cod in the Baltic Sea, but since the emergency ban for targeted cod fishing in the Baltic Sea during 2019 there has however been no individual allocation of fishing opportunities for cod in the Baltic Sea.

Although the annual demersal system has increases flexibility and improved the possibilities for individual fishers to adjust their fishing opportunities during the year, there are still challenges connected to the system. For example, various “lock-in” effects can be observed. In case the system would be adjusted to allow for longer-term fishing rights, the design of the system is of critical importance to avoid unwanted effects. In 2023, the Swedish government gave Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management a project to suggest a design for a system with demersal fishing rights. However, Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management does not yet have the legal mandate to implement such a system in the demersal fisheries.

Additional to the distribution system of quota species there are many that limit both commercial fishers and recreational fishers both concerning time and space of the fishing activity but also national quotas, catch limits and size of the targeted species.

Innovation and development (role of EMFAF)

The increasing seal population around the Swedish coastline has caused a growing conflict for inshore fisheries. Seals damage the fisher’s catch and fishing gear, which causes economic losses to the fishing industry. In some areas, it is even impossible to conduct a profitable fishery because of that. Currently, the development of seal-safe fishing gear is the only long lasting and sustainable solution to this conflict. This development mainly focuses on improving traditional fixed gears, such as push-up traps for salmon and developing new alternatives to the net fisheries, such as cod pots. Parallel to this work there are projects involving protective hunting and management plans for the seal population.

In the Northern prawn and Norway lobster fisheries, research for new and more sustainable fishing techniques is on-going. In general, transition towards the implementation of these new techniques in the sector is slow as fishers are hesitant due to high investments, the uncertainty of the impact of the techniques and the possible market effects.

However, there are many initiatives that are made possible through the Swedish Marine, Fisheries and Aquaculture Programme (HFVP 2021–2027). During the current programming period (HFVP 2021–2027) there are measures such as "Investments on board" and "Innovation projects in fishing" to develop Swedish fishing that focus on innovation and development within the sector. The measure "Investments on board" has its’ focus on increased work environment safety on board fishing boats, adaptation to new target species, solutions to reduce the amount of unwanted catch through, reduce the impact of marine predators, seal and cormorant-proof bottom nets, stronger material for fishing gear to reduce damage from seals and cormorants through either investments or purchases of other gear. This measure had a budget of SEK 15 million at the beginning of the program.

Within the measure "Innovation projects in fishing" the projects are about developing various predator-proof fishing gear and solutions such as systems to prevent the loss of fishing gear, innovations to avoid jellyfish catches in coastal fishing, methods to increase the use of fish by-streams and the measure had a total budget of SEK 60 million by the beginning of the program period.

Even though there is a high use of the program, there is still a great need among commercial fishing to continue purchasing seal-proof gear in order to be able to fish and there has also

been a high demand for the measure "Innovation projects in fishing”. Sweden has submitted a programme amendment to the EU Commission, including an increased budget of SEK 15 million to meet the continued need for on-board investments in commercial fishing. The programme amendment is expected to come into effect on 1 July 2025.

4.23.6 Assessment of the economic performance for 2024 and 2025 (nowcasts)

Model results

Preliminary results for 2024 suggest an annual decrease of 9% in landed weight and a decrease in value by less than 1%. Projections for 2024 suggest a decrease in energy costs, repair and maintenance costs, variable costs and non-variable costs, and personnel costs. Economic performance will improve in 2024 with GVA and gross profit increasing by 10% and 14% in 2024 compared to 2023. The model for 2025 suggests an increase in economic performance compared to 2024 estimates due to additional decreases in costs. Further the model projects a continuation of decreasing size of the Swedish fleet during 2025.

Outlook

The economic situation for 2024 and 2025 suggests a similar economic performance as 2023 but there are still some pending issues of relevance for Swedish fishers. The biological situation in the Baltic Sea is not creating optimal circumstances for thriving fishers. The situation for both cod and, to some extent also herring, inhibit economic growth through banned cod fisheries and decreasing herring quotas in more recent years. The quotas for sprat, which have had a mitigating effect of the decreasing quotas for herring, are now expected to decrease which worsens the situation even more for fishers in the Baltic Sea. One current and topical question is the circumstances for human consumption of fish from the Baltic Sea. It is suggested that due to environmental toxins many of the species are not suitable for human consumption, although fishing for human consumption would be more profitable for the fishers. Associated with this issue is the limited accessibility to land in Swedish harbours resulting in the processing industry are to some extent restricted to grow in Sweden. In 2025 the government have more focus on this issue promoting a more domestic value chain of Swedish seafood.

Fishers depend not only on quotas but also on access to Norwegian waters for Nordic prawn and UK waters for sandeel, an issue complicated by extended Brexit negotiations.

Over the years, the Swedish fishing fleet has shown a trend of decreasing number of vessels and decreasing fleet capacity in terms of engine power and gross tonnage. Swedish fishing licenses are time-limited (up to five years) and are renewed provided that certain requirements are met, for example that fishing is carried out in business activities. At the same time, as new licenses are tested against the availability of fish, the status of several stocks has meant that it is still difficult to grant new fishing licenses.

4.23.7 Methodological considerations and data issues

There are no major data issues in the Swedish EU-MAP data. Swedish data come from logbooks, journals, surveys with a census sample with high response rate (approximately 50%), and tax declarations. The year 2008-2012 Sweden used probability sampling when sending out the questionnaires. Since 2012, the survey had a census approach resulting in

the number of data points has increased by the double and the response rate has been slowly decreasing to around 50% since 2012. Information on economics of the fleet were previously assessed at segments level but since 2018 it is assessed on micro level from the Swedish Tax Agency at firm level, which has improved the quality of the data. Information on operating subsidies is obtained from the responsible authority for the specific compensation and have coverage of around 88% and contains of subsidies for higher costs during the pandemic in 2020, for higher fuel prices in 2022, and for Brexit for the years 2020 to 2023. However, due to secrecy many of these compensations cannot be presented under operating subsidies and are therefore included in other income. During 2021 the government decided to offer to some fishers who were fishing for cod in the closed area of the Baltic Sea to scrap their vessel for a compensation.

Further, in 2019 Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Agency made it possible to fill out the survey on economic cost online instead of by hand. This improved the quality of the survey responses due to reduced missing data and miss writing or miss readings.

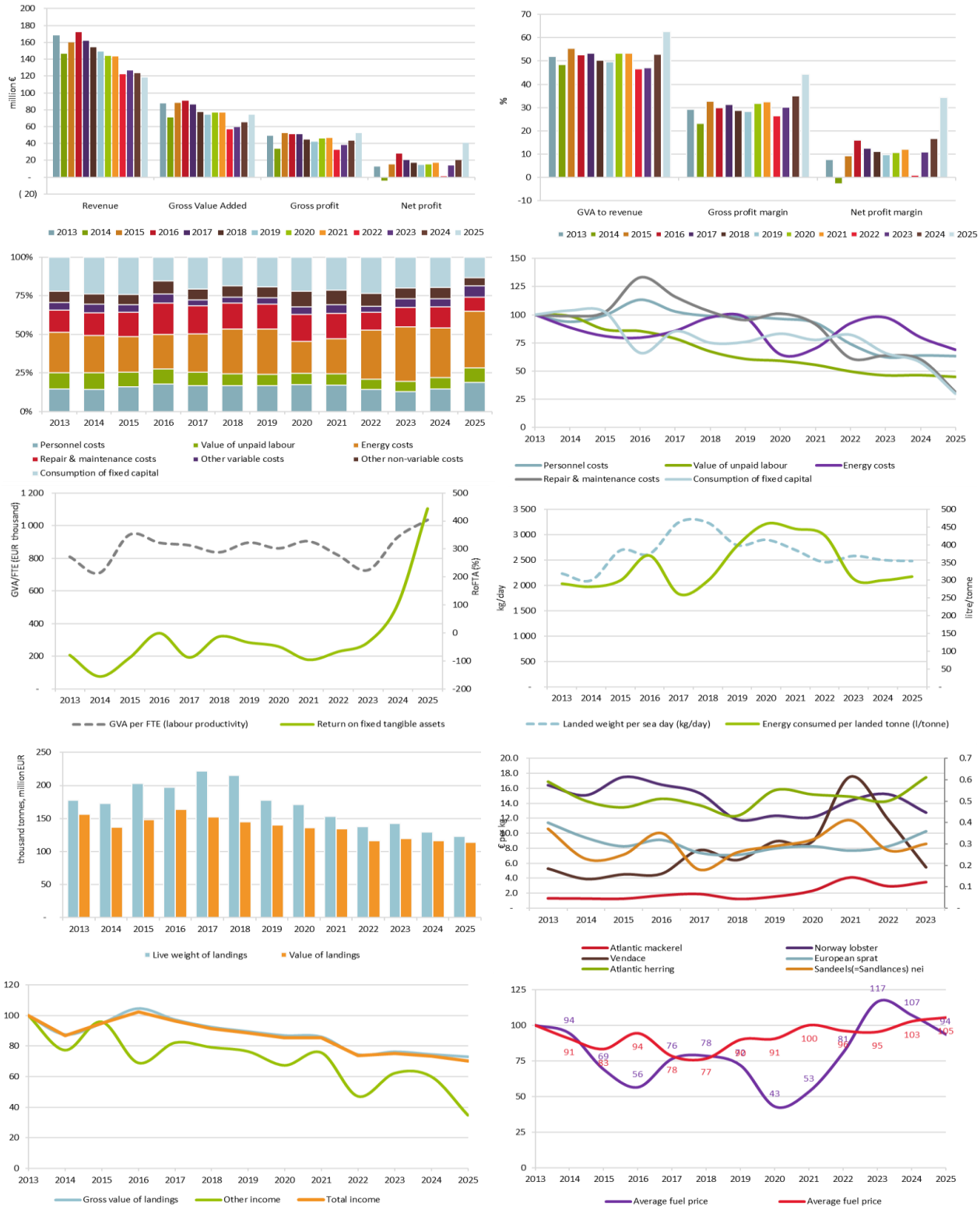
Furthermore, in 2021 Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Agency initiated a large review of the economic data collection scheme. The review included both a thorough review of methodologies and data sources. The goal of the project is to have a recent review of the full data collection scheme to facilitate future needs in both national and international contexts as well as improve the data collection and/or econometric methods. The project will result in more robust models, data collection, analysis of the data, and the work continues during 2025.

An important issue is clustering. With a small and diminishing fleet, Sweden is forced to cluster all of the economic data and also report cluster definitions. For this year report (and also for 2021 and 2022) the clustering has changed from previous reports due to the confidentiality of the economic information. The segment DFNVL1218 is included in the cluster DFNVL1012 because this cluster only contains few vessels. The same secrecy states for segment DTSVL40XX which, is included in the cluster DTSVL2440 and for DTSVL0010 which, is included in the cluster DTSVL1012. As a consequence of clustering some economic variables might be over- or underestimated.

Additionally, the information on value quotas, value of fishing rights, income from leasing out fishing rights, and costs of renting fishing rights is not reported due to the collecting authority does not have the legal support to collect this information from the fisher. Additionally, not all the fishers of the Swedish fleet have the possibility to trade with quotas due to the management system in place. Within the project of reviewing the whole data collection scheme investigating what type of estimation of this information that would be suitable is included. Moreover, since segments can contain few vessels one vessel’s activity can have a large impact on results for this specific segment. Additionally, vessels can change segment between years which, can cause large changes in numbers between years that is not due to real change but rather an effect of change in segment for vessel between the years.

Furthermore, some of the point estimates of the data in this report are accompanied by a certain uncertainty, which is not presented. One example of a misinterpretation of the data quality could be regarding energy consumption and energy cost. In some years these two variables do not align, i.e. increased energy consumption yields higher total energy cost (controlled for price). For the record, this is not a matter of bad data quality but instead how it is reported, in this case without confidence interval.

Figure 4.23.1. Sweden: Main trends in (from top to bottom, left to right): economic performance indicators (absolute value and relative values); cost structure and variation in main cost items; productivity and efficiency indicators; landings (in weight and value) and average price (euro/kg) of top species; variation in income variables and average prices of key input/outputs (2013=100). Nowcast figures for 2024 and 2025.



Source: Member States data submissions under the 2025 Fleet Economic data call.

5. DATA COVERAGE AND QUALITY

Data validation – AER Exercise

Quality and Coverage checking procedures on the data submitted under the 2023 fleet economic data call

Although the quality and coverage of the fleet economic data reported under the Data Collection Framework are a responsibility of the EU Member States, JRC undertakes systematic quality and coverage checking procedures on the data submitted, some carried out during the data uploading phase and some afterwards. The quality and coverage of the data have also been checked by national experts during the STECF EWG 25-03 virtual meeting on the 2025 Annual Economic Report of the EU fishing fleet, which took place during the week 07-11 April 2025.

Data issues on the economic variables

In terms of the completeness of the Member States data submissions, most countries submitted the majority of the parameters requested under the call.

Overall, the quality and coverage of data have been similar in the last two years. In many cases missing data relate to fleet segments with low vessel numbers for which data are hard to obtain. For confidentiality reasons, Member States may aggregate fleet segments into clusters to provide sensitive economic data. In several cases, clustering may not be enough to guarantee confidentiality, and hence, parts of Member States fleets are not completely covered. These generally relate to distant-water fleet segments and include Estonia, Italy, Latvia and Poland, and, until 2021, Germany.

In terms of data quality, inevitably some unreliable estimates for some variables were detected by the JRC or the EWGs 25-03/25-07 and in most cases rectified by the Member States. However, some quality issues remain outstanding, and they are described in the national chapters.

Incomplete time series data—due to non-submission of data, questionable data quality, and/or changes in data collection and processing methodologies—make trend analysis at the EU level impossible without excluding Member State fleets with incomplete data. In particular, the data submitted for the Greek fishing fleet for the period 2018–2023 were deemed fit for purpose; Greece is therefore included in all EU-level analyses for this period.

The main data issues relate to: i) significant differences for some fleets between the value of landings (*totvallandg*) reports by species and the gross value of landings (*totlandginc*) reported as part of the income, mainly due to different data sources and lack of national coordination; ii) discontinuity in time series for the outermost regions due to changes in methodologies and missing data collection for certain years/segments.

Member State specific data issues and developments

Although the coverage and quality of the data submitted by Member States has remained stable in the last two years, some data issues remain. These include the following:

Belgium: No major data transmission issues to report. However, anomalous trends of some variables (i.e. operating subsidies, investments) are identified due to changes in the questionnaires in 2017 and 2018. In 2017 and 2018, low response rates for unpaid labor and

total hours worked hindered reliable estimates. Capital value and capital cost variables for inactive vessels are not known (refusal respond rate of 100%).

Bulgaria: No data transmission issues to report.

Denmark: Inconsistency in the definition of production units over time. Prior to 2022, the number of vessels was aggregated by production unit, whereas from 2022 onward, all individual vessels within each unit are counted. This change has not been retrospectively applied to earlier years, preventing comparability of fleet capacity data over time. Capital value and capital cost variables for inactive vessels are not reported. No operating subsidies are reported for the Pelagic trawl (TM) above 40 metres segment.

Germany: No major data transmission issues to report. The German fishing fleet contains a small number of pelagic vessels which are owned mainly by one company and are hence subject to confidentiality. In 2023, the related company gave permission to publish the data for 2021 onwards. Therefore, the data for recent years are comprehensive, but the time series is interrupted. In addition, there is a break in the time series of employment data because from 2020 employment and demographic data are no more estimated, but they are exhaustively available from the totals from the Employer's Liability Insurance Association.

Estonia: No data transmission issues to report. However, time series are not consistent over time because of a change in the data collection which occurred in 2018. Moreover, for confidentiality reasons, Estonia only provides data for its Baltic Sea fleet. i.e., only capacity data are provided for the distant water fleet.

Ireland: total income for some SSCF segments does not align with landed value due to different data sources. A break in the effort time series is present from 2023 as previously, effort data was only available for two segments in the SSCF (FPO and DRB).

Greece: Complete data sets were provided for 2023. Major data transmission issues remain for the years before 2018.

Spain: Important differences between the value of landings and gross value of landings in some segments can be observed. The reason is because the gross value of landed is obtained from statistical sampling, while the value of landings is obtained by the sales notes.

France: Discrepancies over 5% occurred between landings and income in several segments. The data series for the Outermost regions are now complete. Nevertheless, the estimation of economic data has been conducted for vessels less than 10 metres in Martinique between 2010 and 2023 and in Mayotte from 2015 to 2023. Additionally, the estimation for the fleet under 12 metres in La Reunion Island has been calculated since 2019. The economic data are incomplete due to missing information for a fleet segment in French Guiana.

Croatia: The majority of small-scale vessels included in the PGP segment, around 3,500 vessels, transferred into the commercial SSCF during 2015-2017, fall under a special commercial category, i.e. mali obalni ribolov, MOR, according to national legislation. Although the landing value is estimated for these vessels, most MOR vessels cannot place their catch on the market due to national legislation in force. Therefore, economic indicators for the PGP segment should be taken with caution.

Italy: No data issues to report.

Cyprus: Only partial data reported for PS VL2440 due to confidentiality (one vessel). Consumption of fixed capital not reported for the inactive vessels.

Latvia: Due to methodological improvements in 2010 and 2018, a break in time series is detected for capital value and capital costs. For confidentiality reasons. Latvia does not provide economic data on its distant water fleet operating in the Atlantic Area 27 (NEAFC) and Area 34 (CECAF).

Lithuania: No major data transmission issues to report.

Malta: Repair and maintenance expenditures recorded unusually high figures in 2023, potentially signalling inclusion of capital investment items -a classification discrepancy that could distort profitability indicators. Similarly, reported figures for FTEs and unpaid labour valuation both showed abrupt increases that appear inconsistent with fleet structure and activity trends. Clustering schemes has been changed in 2023 despite fleet sizes remaining relatively stable.

The Netherlands: In some of the smaller segments (DRB 0-10 m, DRB 24-40 m, DTS 0-10 m and TBB 12-18 m) variation in activity levels was high resulting in high uncertainty in the economic indicators estimates and large fluctuations from year to year. The prices of pelagic fish used to calculate the fishing revenue of the pelagic trawler fleet are not actual prices. They are internal prices used within the fishing companies to calculate the wage of the fishing crew. Those prices probably underestimate the value of landings of pelagic fish. Some capital variables not reported for the segment TM40XX. Operating subsidies in 2023 are reported as null value, even if this is an important change compared to previous years.

Poland: No major data transmission issues to report. Due to confidentiality reasons, Poland only provides partial data on its distant water fleets (NAO DTS 40XX. NAO TM VL40XX and OFR TM40XX). Due to a change in methodology of reporting capacity, 2017 onwards figures are not fully comparable with the earlier years.

Portugal: Discrepancies over 5% occurred between landings and income are reported for the segment HOK2440 in the Azores

Romania: No major data transmission issues to report.

Slovenia: No major data transmission issues to report.

Finland: No major data transmission issues to report. However, there are breaks in the time series for active small-scale fishing vessels in 2012, 2014, and 2015 due to changes in recording and methodology.

Sweden: value quotas; value of fishing rights, income from leasing out fishing rights, and costs of renting fishing rights have not been reported. Regional analysis detected huge variations in the time series for the labour cost/FTE for the segment SWE NAO DTS0812.

6. CONTACT DETAILS OF EWG-25-03 AND 25-07 PARTICIPANTS

[1] - Information on EWG participant's affiliations is displayed for information only. In any case, Members of the STECF, invited experts, and JRC experts shall act independently. In the context of the STECF work, the committee members and other experts do not represent the institutions/bodies they are affiliated to in their daily jobs. STECF members and experts also declare at each meeting of the STECF and of its Expert Working Groups any specific interest which might be considered prejudicial to their independence in relation to specific items on the agenda. These declarations are displayed on the public meeting's website if experts explicitly authorized the JRC to do so in accordance with EU legislation on the protection of personnel data. For more information: How to get involved - European Commission

STECF members		
Name	**Affiliation[1]**	**Email**
Prellezo, Raúl	AZTI. Spain	rprellezo@azti.es
Sabatella, Evelina Carmen.	National Research Council (CNR) – Institute for Research on Population and Social Policies. Italy	evelinacarmen.sabatella@cnr.it

Invited experts		
Name	**Affiliation[1]**	**Email**
Anderesen, Jesper L.	University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark	jla@ifro.ku.dk
Avdic Mravlje, Edo	Fisheries Research Institute. Slovenia	edoavdic@gmail.com
Berkenhagen, Jörg	Thuenen Institute of Sea Fisheries. Germany	Joerg.berkenhagen@thuenen.de
Cano, Suzana	Direção Geral Recursos Naturais e Segurança Marítima. Portugal	sfcano@dgrm.mm.gov.pt
Carpenter, Griffin	Independent researcher. UK/Belgium	griffincarpenter@gmail.com
De Clercq, Adelbert	Flemish Institute for Agricultural. Fisheries and Food Research (ILVO). Belgium	adelbert.declercq@ilvo.vlaanderen.be
Díez-Astrai, Cristina	Ministry of Agriculture. Fisheries and Food. General Secretary for Fisheries. Spain	cdiez@mapa.es

Fernández-Gonzalez, Raquel	University of Vigo. Spain	raquelf@uvigo.es
Ferreira, Rita	Direção Geral Recursos Naturais e Segurança Marítima. Portugal	rlferreira@dgrm.mm.gov.pt
Guyader, Olivier	IFREMER. France	oguyader@ifremer.fr
Ioannou, Myrto	Department of Fisheries & Marine Research. Cyprus	mioannou@dfmr.moa.gov.cy
Kazlauskas, Edvardas	Agriculture Data Center. Lithuania	edvardas.kazlauskas@gmail.com
Kovsars, Maksims	Institute of Food safety, Animal Health and Environment "BIOR", Fish resources research department. Latvia.	maksims.kovsars@bior.lv
Kuzebski, Emil	National Marine Fisheries Research Institute. Poland	emil@mir.gdynia.pl
Lees, Janek	Estonian Marine Institute. University of Tartu. Estonia	janek.lees@ut.ee
Nicheva, Simona	Executive Agency for Fisheries and Aquaculture. Bulgaria	simona.nicheva@iara.government.bg
Minguez Velasco, Álvaro	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. Spain	amvelasco@mapa.es
Minne, Marie-Dominique	Ministry of agriculture. France	marie-dominique.minne@agriculture.gouv.fr
Paun, Catalin	NIMRD Grigore Antipa, Romania	cpaun@alpha.rmri.ro
Perez Perez, Marcos Iñigo	University of Vigo. Spain	marcos.perez@uvigo.es
Perry, Sarah	Bord Iascaigh Mhara. Ireland	Sarah.perry@bim.ie
Robert, Marc	Wageningen Economic Research (WEcR). Netherlands	Marc.robert@wur.nl
Rodriguez, Alexandre	Long Distance Advisory Council	alexandre.rodriguez@ldac.eu
Sabatela, Rosaria F.	NISEA. Italy	r.sabatella@nisea.eu
Sciberras, Andrew	Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture. Malta	andrew.d.sciberras@gov.mt
Toman, Daniel	Bord Iascaigh Mhara. Ireland	daniel.toman@bim.ie

Swahnberg, Hanna	Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management, Gothenburg, Sweden	hanna.swahnberg@havochvatten.se
Tzouramani, Irene	Agricultural Economics Research Institute. Greece	tzouramani@agreri.gr
Valiente Viana, Maria	Ministry of Agriculture. Fisheries and Food. General Secretary for Fisheries. Spain	mvaliente@mapa.es
Vesala, Lauri	Natural Resources Institute Finland (LUKE)	xx@luke.fi
Vukov, Ivana	Ministry of Agriculture. Directorate of Fisheries. Croatia	ivana.vukov@mps.hr
Zhelev, Kolyo	Executive Agency for Fisheries and Aquaculture. Bulgaria	kolyo.zhelev@iara.government.bg

JRC experts		
Name	**Affiliation[1]**	**Email**
Virtanen, Jarno	Joint Research Centre (JRC). European Commission. Italy	jarno.virtanen@ec.europa.eu
Guillén, Jordi	Joint Research Centre (JRC). European Commission. Italy	jordi.guillen@ec.europa.eu
Contini, Franca,	Joint Research Centre (JRC). European Commission. Italy	franca.contini@ext.ec.europa.eu

European Commission		
Name	**Affiliation[1]**	**Email**
Calvo, Ángel	DG MARE (Maritime Affairs and Fisheries). Brussels, Belgium.	DG MARE (Maritime Affairs and Fisheries). Brussels, Belgium.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX 1. ABBREVIATIONS

European Member States

BEL	BE	Belgium	IRL	IR	Ireland
BGR	BG	Bulgaria	ITA	IT	Italy
CYP	CY	Cyprus	LTU	LT	Lithuania
DEU	DE	Germany	LVA	LV	Latvia
DNK	DK	Denmark	MLT	MT	Malta
ESP	ES	Spain	NLD	NL	Netherlands
EST	EE	Estonia	POL	PL	Poland
EU	EU	European Union	PRT	PT	Portugal
FIN	FI	Finland	ROU	RO	Romania
FRA	FR	France	SVN	SV	Slovenia
GRC	EL	Greece	SWE	SE	Sweden
HRV	HR	Croatia			

Fishing Technologies – DCF categories

DFN	Drift and/or fixed netters
DRB	Dredgers
DTS	Demersal trawlers and/or demersal seiners
FPO	Vessels using pots and/or traps
HOK	Vessels using hooks
MGO	Vessel using other active gears
MGP	Vessels using polyvalent active gears only
PG	Vessels using passive gears only for vessels < 12m
PGO	Vessels using other passive gears
PGP	Vessels using polyvalent passive gears only
PMP	Vessels using active and passive gears
PS	Purse seiners
TM	Pelagic trawlers
TBB	Beam trawlers

Fishing activity – scale of fishing operations

SSCF Small-scale coastal fleet

L12AG Vessels under 12 metres using active gears

LSF Large-scale fleet

DWF Distant water fleet

Fishing regions

BS Baltic Sea

BKS Black Sea

MED Mediterranean Sea

NSEA North Sea & Eastern Arctic North Atlantic

NWW North Western Waters

OFR Other fishing regions

SWW South Western Waters

Regional fisheries

ABNJ Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction

CECAF Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic

GFCM General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean

ICCAT International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas

IOTC Indian Ocean Tuna Commission

LDF Long Distant Fisheries

NAFO Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization

NEAFC North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission

OMR EU Outermost Regions

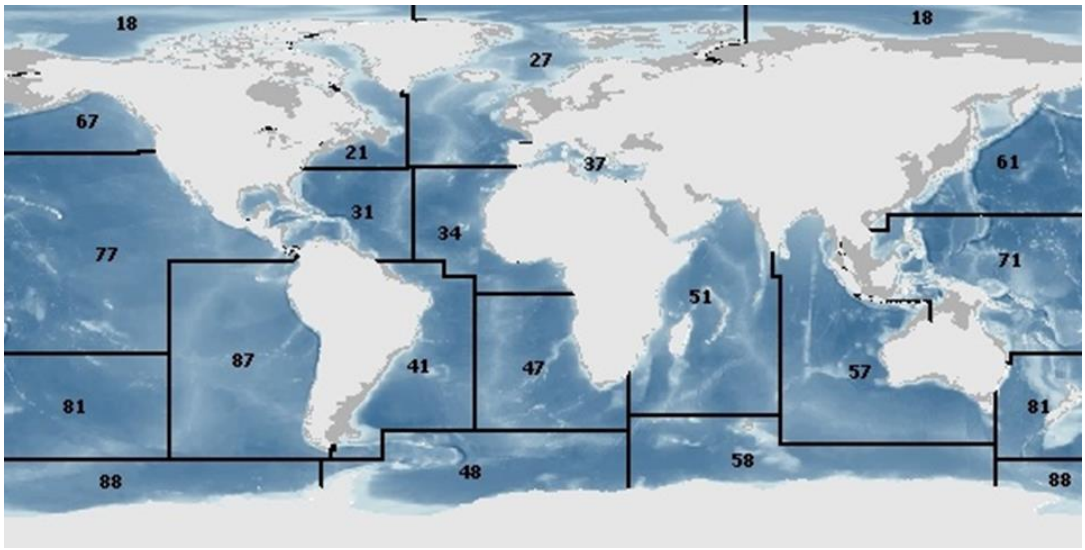
RFB Regional Fisheries Bodies

RFMO Regional Fisheries Management Organisations

SFPAs EU Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Major Fishing Areas

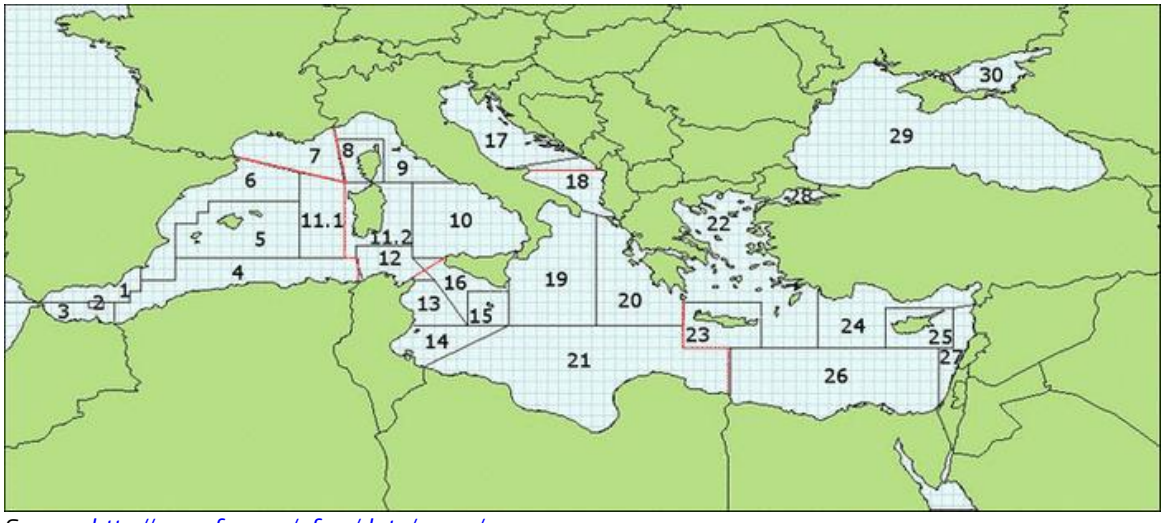
FAO area 18 Arctic Sea	FAO area 57 Indian Ocean. Eastern
FAO area 21 Atlantic. Northwest	FAO area 58 Indian Ocean. Antarctic and Southern
FAO area 27 Atlantic. Northeast	FAO area 61 Pacific. Northwest
FAO area 31 Atlantic. Western Central	FAO area 67 Pacific. Northeast
FAO area 34 Atlantic. Eastern Central	FAO area 71 Pacific. Western Central
FAO area 37 Mediterranean and Black Sea	FAO area 77 Pacific. Eastern Central
FAO area 41 Atlantic. Southwest	FAO area 81 Pacific. Southwest
FAO area 47 Atlantic. Southeast	FAO area 87 Pacific. Southeast
FAO area 48 Atlantic. Antarctic	FAO area 88 Pacific. Antarctic
FAO area 51 Indian Ocean. Western	



Source: http://www.fao.org/fishery/area/

General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) Geographical subareas (GSAs)

GSA 1	Northern Alboran Sea	GSA 16	Southern Sicily
GSA 2	Alboran Island	GSA 17	Northern Adriatic
GSA 3	Southern Alboran Sea	GSA 18	Southern Adriatic Sea
GSA 4	Algeria	GSA 19	Western Ionian Sea
GSA 5	Balearic Island	GSA 20	Eastern Ionian Sea
GSA 6	Northern Spain	GSA 21	Southern Ionian Sea
GSA 7	Gulf of Lion	GSA 22	Aegean Sea
GSA 8	Corsica	GSA 23	Crete
GSA 9	Ligurian Sea and North Tyrrhenian Sea	GSA 24	Northern Levant Sea
GSA 10	Southern and Central Tyrrhenian Sea	GSA 25	Cyprus
GSA 11.1	Western Sardinia	GSA 26	Southern Levant Sea
GSA 11.2	Eastern Sardinia	GSA 27	Eastern Levant Sea
GSA 12	Northern Tunisia	GSA 28	Marmara Sea
GSA 13	Gulf of Hammamet	GSA 29	Black Sea
GSA 14	Gulf of Gabes	GSA 30	Azov Sea
GSA 15	Malta		



Source: http://www.fao.org/gfcm/data/maps/gsas

ANNEX 2. GLOSSARY

Revenue

Revenue – the value of production (sale of landed seafood products) and income generated from the use of the vessel in other, non-commercial fishing activities, such as recreational fishing, transport, tourism, oil rig duty, research, etc., may also include insurance payment for gear damage/loss /vessel. Income from direct subsidies and fishing rights are excluded.

Gross Value Added (GVA)

GVA - net output of a sector after deducting intermediate inputs from all outputs. It is a measure of the contribution to GDP made by an individual producer, industry or sector. The GVA indicator calculated in this report is similar but does not fully correspond to the Value added at factor cost of the Structural Business Statistics.

GVA to Revenue

GVA to revenue ratio - indicates the share of revenue that contributes to the economy through factors of production (returns to labour and returns to capital). Indicator is calculated as the ratio between GVA and revenue and expressed as a percentage.

Gross profit

Gross profit – the normal profit after accounting for operating costs, excluding capital costs. Also referred to as gross cash flow, i.e. the flow of cash into and out of a sector or firm over a period of time.

Gross profit margin (%)

Gross profit margin - a measure of profitability that can be used to analyse how efficiently a sector is using its inputs to generate profit. Calculated as the ratio between gross profit and revenue. Expressed as a percentage.

Gross profit margin indicates the normal profitability of a firm and is of most interest to fishers as it represents the share of income they are left with at the end of the year. For managers, it may be used as an indication of the viability of an industry in terms of its commercial profitability by measuring the share of cash coming in and out of an industry. A high gross profit margin indicates that the sector has a low-cost operating model; reflects efficiency in turning inputs into outputs. A low percentage value can indicate a low margin of safety, i.e. a higher risk that declines in production or increases in costs may result in a net loss, or negative profit margin.

Net profit

Net profit is the difference between revenue and explicit costs and opportunity costs. Explicit costs include all operational costs, such as personnel costs, energy, repair and other variable and non-variable costs. Net profit differs from gross profit in that it includes depreciation and opportunity costs of capital. It measures the efficiency of a producer in society’s view by evaluating the total costs of inputs (excluding natural resource costs) in comparison to outputs or revenue.

Economic profit is the primary indicator of economic performance and is often used as a proxy of resource rent in fisheries. Economic profits emerge as the excess of revenue over the opportunity cost of producing the good. Also referred to as supernormal or abnormal profits. Abnormal profits in a sector is an incentive for other firms to enter the industry (if they

can). Zero or a negative profit margin may indicate high competition in the sector and can be used as one of the indicators of overcapacity.

Net profit margin (%)

Economic profit margin - a measure of profitability after all costs have been accounted for, and reflects the percentage of revenue that a sector retains as profit. It measures the relative performance of the sector compared to other activities in the economy and provides an indication of the sector's operating efficiency as it captures the amount of surplus generated per unit of production.

Operational profit

The Gross Profit minus the consumption of fixed capital is the Operational Profits. This indicator is used for the Fuel price break even calculations.

Labour productivity (GVA/FTE)

Labour productivity - defined as output per unit of labour. Calculated as GVA (measure of output) by full-time equivalent (FTE) employment (unit of labour input). Labour productivity can be used as a measure of economic growth, competitiveness, and living standards within a sector. An increase in labour productivity indicates that a unit of input labour is producing more output or that the same amount of output is being produced with fewer units of labour. Labour productivity may also provide an indicator of worker's wellbeing or living standards, assuming that increases in productivity are matched by wage increases.

Capital productivity

Capital productivity - the return of the investment divided by the cost of the investment, also referred to as ROI (Rate on Investment). It measures profits in relation to capital invested, i.e. indicates how profitable a sector is relative to its total assets. The higher the return, the more efficient the sector is in utilising its asset base.

As data on intangible assets (e.g. fishing rights, natural resource) are not always available in fisheries, the Return on Fixed Tangible Assets (ROFTA) is used as an approximation of ROI.

ANNEX 3. ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE INDICATORS ESTIMATION

In order to account for inflation over the given time-period, all nominal values (i.e., the actual price in a given year) were converted to real values before estimating indicators.

For this conversion from nominal to real values, a Harmonised index of consumer prices (HICP) 'deflator' for each MS was applied to nominal values. Annual HICP data from taken from Eurostat's time-series of harmonised HICP:

https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/prc_hicp_aind/default/table?lang=en&category=prc.prc_hicp

$$Real\ value\ _i = \frac{Nominal\ value_i}{\frac{HICP_i}{HICP_{2023}}}$$

where *i* represents the year for which the nominal value is converted into 2023 real value.

Table A.3.1 Harmonised index of consumer prices (HICP) values used in this report

MS	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Belgium	0.79	0.81	0.83	0.84	0.85	0.86	0.89	0.98	1.00	1.04
Bulgaria	0.75	0.74	0.74	0.76	0.78	0.79	0.81	0.92	1.00	1.03
Denmark	0.85	0.85	0.86	0.87	0.87	0.88	0.89	0.97	1.00	1.01
Germany	0.79	0.80	0.81	0.83	0.84	0.84	0.87	0.94	1.00	1.02
Estonia	0.67	0.67	0.70	0.72	0.74	0.73	0.77	0.92	1.00	1.04
Ireland	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.88	0.95	1.00	1.01
Greece	0.86	0.86	0.87	0.88	0.88	0.87	0.88	0.96	1.00	1.03
Spain	0.83	0.83	0.85	0.86	0.87	0.87	0.89	0.97	1.00	1.03
France	0.83	0.83	0.84	0.86	0.87	0.88	0.89	0.95	1.00	1.02
Croatia	0.79	0.78	0.79	0.81	0.81	0.81	0.83	0.92	1.00	1.04
Italy	0.83	0.83	0.84	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.87	0.94	1.00	1.01
Cyprus	0.87	0.86	0.87	0.88	0.88	0.87	0.89	0.96	1.00	1.02
Latvia	0.70	0.70	0.72	0.74	0.76	0.76	0.78	0.92	1.00	1.01
Lithuania	0.67	0.67	0.70	0.72	0.73	0.74	0.77	0.92	1.00	1.01
Malta	0.83	0.84	0.85	0.87	0.88	0.89	0.89	0.95	1.00	1.02
Netherlands	0.78	0.78	0.79	0.81	0.83	0.84	0.86	0.96	1.00	1.03
Poland	0.70	0.70	0.71	0.71	0.73	0.76	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.04
Portugal	0.84	0.85	0.86	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.88	0.95	1.00	1.03
Romania	0.71	0.70	0.71	0.73	0.76	0.78	0.81	0.91	1.00	1.06
Slovenia	0.80	0.80	0.81	0.82	0.84	0.84	0.85	0.93	1.00	1.02
Finland	0.84	0.85	0.85	0.86	0.87	0.88	0.89	0.96	1.00	1.01
Sweden	0.79	0.80	0.81	0.83	0.85	0.85	0.87	0.94	1.00	1.02

Source: Eurostat.
https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/prc_hicp_aind/default/table?lang=en&category=prc.prc_hicp

All values in this report are therefore given in real 2023 euro, rather than nominal euro.

For economic performance calculations the following formulas were used:

Total Income

Total Revenue = Income from landings + income from fishing rights + other income + direct subsidies

Revenue

Revenue = Income from landings + other income

Gross Value Added (GVA)

GVA = Income from landings + other income – energy costs – repair costs – other variable costs – non variable costs

Net Value Added (NVA)

NVA = Income from landings + other income – energy costs – repair costs – other variable costs – non variable costs – depreciation cost.

Gross Profit (GRP)

GRP = Income from landings + other income – crew costs – unpaid labour - energy costs – repair and maintenance costs – other variable costs – non variable costs

Net Profit/Loss

Net Profit = Income from landings + other income – crew costs – unpaid labour - energy costs – repair costs – other variable costs – non variable costs – depreciation cost – opportunity cost of capital

Where opportunity cost of capital = fixed tangible asset value * 3.5%

Rate of Return on Fixed Tangible Assets (RoFTA)

RoFTA = (net profit + opportunity cost of capital) / tangible asset value (vessel depreciated replacement value)

Rate of Return on Investment (RoI)

RoI = (net profit + opportunity cost of capital) / capital asset value

Where net profit is calculated as:

Net Profit = Income from landings + other income + income from fishing rights – crew costs – unpaid labour - energy costs – repair costs – other variable costs – non variable costs – fishing rights costs – depreciation cost – opportunity cost of capital

And capital asset value as:

Capital asset value = vessel depreciated replacement value + estimated value of fishing rights

Break-even revenue (BER)

BER = (Fixed costs + opportunity costs of capital +depreciation) / (1-(crew costs + unpaid labour + energy costs + repair and maintenance costs + other variable costs)/Revenue)

Revenue to Break-even Revenue Ratio (CR/BER)

CR/BER = revenue / break-even revenue = Income from landings + other income / BER

CR/BER gives an indication of the short-term profitability of the fleet/fleet segment (or over/under capitalised): if the ratio is greater than 1, then enough cash flow is generated to cover fixed costs (economically viable in the short term). If the ratio is less than 1, insufficient cash flow is generated to cover fixed costs (indicating that the segment is economically unviable in the short to mid-term).

Energy use – fuel efficiency and intensity

Fuel intensity - quantity of fuel consumed per quantity of fish landed (litre per tonne),

Fuel efficiency - ratio between fuel costs and the income from landings expressed as a percentage (%).

Activity Level Indicator

The purpose of this descriptor/level of fleet identification is to provide an additional subordinate level of fleet definition according to the individual vessel activity characteristics where necessary. This approach enables the separate analysis the economic performance of the subsegments of vessels with low activity and those with normal and high activity. The data call template includes an extra column for voluntary reporting economic data by sub-segments featuring vessels with low activity (L) and those with normal and high activity (A).

ANNEX 4. DISAGGREGATION OF ECONOMIC DATA AT SEA BASIN LEVEL

Fleet economic data cannot be collected at higher resolution than defined in the DCF. Only landings (value and weight) and effort data (days-at-sea, fishing days, etc.) are provided by MS at the sub-region level by fleet segment. Therefore, the correlation with transversal data is the only viable way for disaggregating economic data at the sea basin level (Baltic Sea, North Sea, NE Atlantic, Mediterranean & Black Sea and Other Fishing Regions).

Several assumptions can be made based on correlations between transversal and economic data, which were previously examined during the PGECON workshop in Hamburg 2012. However, these analyses are still preliminary and considered as work in progress. PCEGON (2013) strongly recommended a study on the disaggregation that delivers a comprehensive analysis of different approaches and methods, while also addressing the availability of individual data which varies by Member State.

This year, the effort-based approach was again used to disaggregate economic data. Seeing that the methodology is still to be validated, this exploratory exercise set out to estimate the economic performance indicators at the sea basin level by Member State and fleet segment.

For this exercise, transversal and economic data by fleet segment were disaggregated based on either the number of active vessels, value of landings or effort (days-at-sea), as:

(1) Number of vessels in region (N_{Reg}) – used to estimate fleet capacity, non-variable costs and capital costs (annual depreciation and opportunity costs of capital).

(2) Value of landings (VaL) – used to allocate income from landings.

(3) Effort in days-at-sea (DAS) – used to allocate all variable costs, including labour, energy, repair & maintenance, and fuel consumption. DAS was also used to estimate the number of vessels when NReg was not available.

The estimated number of vessels in the region (N_{Reg}*) was calculated based on DAS and using the total number of vessels (N_{tot}), as:

$$N_{\mathrm{Re}\,g*} = \frac{DAS_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}}{\sum DAS_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}} \times N_{Tot}$$

When available, the number of vessels operating in a given region (N_{Reg}) was used to disaggregate other capacity variables (GT and kW), as:

Gross tonnage (GT): $GT_{reg} = \frac{N_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}}{\sum N_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}} \times GT_{Tot}$, if N_{Reg} is missing, $GT_{reg} = \frac{GT_{Tot}}{N_{Tot}} \times N_{\mathrm{Re}\,g*}$

Engine power (kW): $kW_{\mathrm{Re}\,g} = \frac{N_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}}{\sum N_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}} \times kW_{Tot}$, if N_{Reg} is missing, $kW_{reg} = \frac{kW_{Tot}}{N_{Tot}} \times N_{\mathrm{Re}\,g*}$

The number of vessels in the region was also used to disaggregate employment, *other income* (*OInc*), *non-variable costs* and capital costs (*opportunity cost of capital* and *annual depreciation*), as:

Total employed (JOB): $JOB_{reg} = \frac{N_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}}{\sum N_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}} \times JOB_{Tot}$

Other income: $Other\ \ Income_{\ \mathrm{Re}\,g}(OInc) = \frac{N_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}}{\sum N_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}} \times OInc_{tot}$

Opportunity cost of capital: $Opportunity\ \ Cost\ \ of\ \ Capital_{\ \mathrm{Re}\,g}(OPC) = \frac{N_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}}{\sum N_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}} \times OPC_{tot}$

Annual Depreciation costs: $Annual\ \ Depreciation\ Costs_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}(DEP) = \frac{N_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}}{\sum N_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}} \times DEP_{tot}$

Income from Landings was disaggregated based on the value of landings (*VAL*) in the region and the total value of landings for the fleet segment multiplied by Income:

Income from landings: $Landings\ \ Income_{\ \mathrm{Re}\,g}(LInc) = \frac{VAL_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}}{\sum VAL_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}} \times LInc_{Tot}$

If N_{Reg} is missing, $Landings\ \ Income_{\ \mathrm{Re}\,g}(LInc) = \frac{VAL_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}}{VAL_{Tot}} \times LInc_{Tot}$

Crew wage (*CW*), unpaid labour, fuel costs (*FC*), repair & maintenance (*REP*) and other variables costs (*VAR*) were allocated based on effort (DAS) as:

Crew wages: $CW_{reg} = \frac{DAS_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}}{\sum DAS_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}} \times CW_{Tot}$

Unpaid labour costs: $ULab_{reg} = \frac{DAS_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}}{\sum DAS_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}} \times ULab_{Tot}$

Fuel costs: $FC_{reg} = \frac{DAS_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}}{\sum DAS_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}} \times FC_{Tot}$

Repair costs: $REP_{reg} = \frac{DAS_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}}{\sum DAS_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}} \times REP_{Tot}$

Other variable costs: $VAR_{reg} = \frac{DAS_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}}{\sum DAS_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}} \times VAR_{Tot}$

This method was also used to disaggregate fuel consumption and employment.

Fuel consumption: $FCon_{reg} = \frac{DAS_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}}{\sum DAS_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}} \times FCon_{Tot}$

Full Time Equivalent (FTE): $FTE_{reg} = \frac{DAS_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}}{\sum DAS_{\mathrm{Re}\,g}} \times FTE_{Tot}$

ANNEX 5. AER NOWCAST METHODOLOGY

Context and background

Member States submitted economic data (e.g. income from landings, fuel costs) and transversal data (e.g. number of vessels, days at sea) up to 2023 for the production of the 2025 Annual Economic Report on the EU Fishing Fleet (AER). Most MS also provided transversal data for 2024. This time-based data coverage has been the standard for the past several years of the AER, where submitted economic data has a two-year time lag and transversal data has a one or two-year time lag in relation to the publication date of the AER. This data lag occurs because data is collected, processed and quality checked at the MS level before submission to the DCF. To receive data for a particular year, for example 2023, it is necessary to wait until the end of the following year (e.g. 2024) to collect it.

To properly inform the management of EU fisheries, the most recent information on the economic performance of the EU fishing fleet is required. As such, the lag in data reporting presents a major challenge for the AER. To address this issue, estimates of recent economic performance of the EU fishing fleet are produced using 'nowcasting' techniques. This approach has been consistently used for more than a decade and follows standard practice in nowcasting by relating economic variables from the DCF with a time-lag to changes in other variables, typically from external sources, with more recent reporting.

Where no 2024 data was reported by MS, and for all 2025 data, explanatory variables that provide the most robust estimates for changes in time-lagged economic variables were used to generate nowcasts. The robustness of different transversal variables (e.g. number of vessels, days at sea, and value of landings) was investigated by a modelling sub-group during the 2017 AER EWG for their explanatory power of other, generally economic variables that are not yet reported (e.g. employment, income, and input costs). Further testing of nowcasting accuracy was conducted by a modelling sub-group during the 2018 AER EWG.

For most variables, the same nowcasting methodology was used for fleet segments operating in the Northeast Atlantic (NAO), the Mediterranean and Black Sea (MBS), and other fishing regions (OFR). However, for some variables (landings weight, energy cost, other variable costs, FTE employment) different relationships were used for the NAO fleet segments to those in the MBS and OFR. The reason for this divergence in methodology is that total allowable catches (TACs) -- a key driver for fishing behaviour in the NAO -- are reported for both t+1 and t+2. This extra information, as well as biomass estimates for t+1 and quota uptake for TAC species, are used to improve the nowcasting accuracy for fleet segments operating in the NAO. Where there was no significant difference in explanatory power across the regions, a consistent methodology was used.

In the following section, the nowcasting equations apply across all regions and fleet segments unless otherwise indicated. The nowcasts for MBS and OFR fleet segments were completed by the JRC directly through the DCF database, whereas the nowcasts for NAO fleet segments were completed using the BEMEF during the AER working group meetings. Note that in this section, 't' refers to 2023, 't+1' to 2024, and 't+2' to 2025. This typology allows the equations to follow the more familiar format for data forecasting.

Nowcasting methodology

In the general case of the nowcasting methodology, a variable “A” in year t+1 is estimated by the same variable “A” in year t and the change variable “B” between year t and t+1, when the value for variable “B” in year t+1 is known. Thus, the following general formulation is used:

$$A_{t+1} = A_t \frac{B_{t+1}}{B_t} \quad \text{(eq. 1a)}$$

Where data for variable “A” is already reported in the DCF for t+1, this data is automatically selected rather than the nowcasting estimation. Unless otherwise noted (generally for the TAC-based equations), the relation between t+2 and t+1 is identical to the relation between t+1 and t.

Nowcasting relations

Landed weight (MBS and OFR fleet segments)

$$Landed_weight_{t+1,f} = Landed_weight_{t,f} \frac{Number_vessels_{t+1,m,l}}{Number_vessels_{t,m,l}} \quad \text{(eq. 2a)}$$

$$Landed_weight_{t+2,f} = Landed_weight_{t+1,f} \quad \text{(eq. 2b)}$$

Where f represents a fleet segment

Where m represents an EU member state

Where l represents a length class

The number of vessels for t+1 is based on the change in the number of vessels from one year to the other, obtained from the evolution of active vessel in the EU Fleet Register.

Landed weight (NAO fleet segments)

$$TAC_Landings_{t+1,f} = TAC_{t+1} Relative_stability_m Swaps_{t,m} Uptake_{t+1,m} Segment_Share_{t,f}$$

(eq. 2c)

$$Non_TAC_Landings_{t+1,f} = Non_TAC_Landings_{t,f} \frac{Sea_days_{t+2,f}}{Sea_days_{t+1,f}} \quad \text{(eq. 2d)}$$

$$Landed_weight_{t+1,f} = TAC_Landings_{t+1,f} + Non_TAC_Landings_{t+1,f} \quad \text{(eq. 2e)}$$

$$Landed_weight_{t+2,f} = Landed_weight_{t+1,f} \quad \text{(eq. 2f)}$$

The TACs are reported in Council regulations and relative stability is calculated as the relative shares in year t. Quota swaps were calculated using the difference with adapted quota in the FIDES dataset, which also indicated quota uptake. However, this dataset has not been made available since 2020 and thus could not be used for the nowcasting of 2023 and 2024. Fleet segment share is calculated based on the DCF landings.

Sea days (NAO fleet segments)

$$Sea_days_{t+1,f} = Sea_days_{t,f}\left(\left(\sum\left(\frac{TAC_Landings_{t,f,a}Price_{t+1,f,s}\theta_{f,a}}{\sum TAC_Landings_{t,f,a}Price_{t,f,s}\theta_{f,a}}\left(\frac{TAC_{t+1,f,a}}{TAC_{t,f,a}}\right)^{\chi_a}\left(\frac{SSB_{t+1,f,a}}{SSB_{t,f,a}}\right)^{-\gamma_a}\right) - 1\right)\frac{TAC_Landings_{t,f}}{Landings_weight_{t,f}} + 1\right) \quad \text{(eq. 3a)}$$

$$Sea_days_{t+2,f} = Sea_days_{t+1,f} \quad \text{(eq. 3b)}$$

Where a represents a total allowable catch (TAC)

Where s represents a TAC species

Where θ represents a fleet segment effort driver for the TACs that influence fishing activity

Where χ represents an activity-landing flexibility rate (1/catch-effort coefficient)

Where γ represents an activity-stock flexibility rate (stock-catch coefficient/catch-effort coefficient)

Effort drivers were defined as a function of percentage catch composition and quota uptake and confirmed or adjusted by member state experts. Stock-catch coefficients are set at 0.8 for demersal species and 0.1 for pelagic species. Catch-effort coefficients are set at 1 as a default parameter (constant catch per unit effort). Spawning stock biomass (SSB) data comes from ICES stock assessments. For the Baltic Sea stocks, SSB is available to year t+1, whereas the North Sea and North Atlantic stocks are only available to year t.

Landed value (MBS and OFR fleet segments)

$$Landed_value_{t+1,f} = Landed_value_{t,f}\frac{Landed_weight_{t+1,f}}{Landed_weight_{t,f}}\frac{Fish_price_{t+1,m}}{Fish_price_{t,m}} \quad \text{(eq. 4a)}$$

$$Landed_value_{t+2,f} = Landed_value_{t+1,f}\frac{Landed_weight_{t+2,f}}{Landed_weight_{t+1,f}}\frac{Fish_price_{t+2,m}}{Fish_price_{t+1,m}} \quad \text{(eq. 4b)}$$

Landed value (NAO fleet segments)

$$Landed_value_{t+1,f} = Landed_value_{t,f}\frac{Landed_weight_{t+1,f}}{Landed_weight_{t,f}}\frac{Fish_price_{t+1,m,s}}{Fish_price_{t,m,s}} \quad \text{(eq. 4c)}$$

$$Landed_value_{t+2,f} = Landed_value_{t+1,f}\frac{Landed_weight_{t+2,f}}{Landed_weight_{t+1,f}}\frac{Fish_price_{t+2,m,s}}{Fish_price_{t+1,m,s}} \quad \text{(eq. 4d)}$$

Fishing income (All fleet segments)

$$Landed_income_{t+1,f} = Landed_income_{t,f}\frac{Landed_value_{t+1,f}}{Landed_value_{t,f}} \quad \text{(eq.5a)}$$

$$Landed_income_{t+2,f} = Landed_income_{t+1,f}\frac{Landed_value_{t+2,f}}{Landed_value_{t+1,f}} \quad \text{(eq.5b)}$$

Other income (All fleet segments)

$$Other_income_{t+1,f} = Other_income_{t,f}\frac{Number_vessels_{t+1,m,l}}{Number_vessels_{t,m,l}} \quad \text{(eq. 6a)}$$

$$Other_income_{t+2,f} = Other_income_{t+1,f} \frac{Number_vessels_{t+2,m,l}}{Number_vessels_{t+1,m,l}} \quad \text{(eq. 6b)}$$

For the few fleet segments that do not report costs (most notably DEU TM40XX), landings income is not reported based on landings value as it would skew the economic indicators (e.g. gross profits).

FTE (MBS and OFR fleet segments)

$$FTE_{t+1,f} = FTE_{t,f} \frac{Number_vessels_{t+1,m,l}}{Number_vessels_{t,m,l}} \quad \text{(eq. 7a)}$$

$FTE_{t+2,f} = FTE_{t+1,f}$ (eq. 7b)

FTE (NAO fleet segments)

$$FTE_{t+1,f} = FTE_{t,f} \frac{Sea_days_{t+1,f}}{Sea_days_{t},f} \quad \text{(eq. 7d)}$$

$$FTE_{t+2,f} = FTE_{t+1,f} \frac{Sea_days_{t+2,f}}{Sea_days_{t+1,f}} \quad \text{(eq. 7e)}$$

Crew costs (All fleet segments)

$$\left(Crew_wages_{t+1,f} + Unpaid_labour_{t+1,f}\right) = \left(Crew_wages_{t,f} + Unpaid_labour_{t,f}\right) \frac{Landed_value_{t+1,f}}{Landed_value_{t,f}} \text{ (eq. 8a)}$$

$$\left(Crew_wages_{t+2,f} + Unpaid_labour_{t+2,f}\right) = \left(Crew_wages_{t+1,f} + Unpaid_labour_{t+1,f}\right) \frac{Landed_value_{t+2,f}}{Landed_value_{t+1,f}} \quad \text{(eq. 8b)}$$

Energy consumption (MBS and OFR fleet segments)

$$Energy_consumption_{t+1,f} = Energy_consumption_{t,f} \frac{Number_vessels_{t+1,m,l}}{Number_vessels_{t,m,l}} \quad \text{(eq. 9a)}$$

$$Energy_consumption_{t+2,f} = Energy_consumption_{t+1,f}) \text{ (eq. 9b)}$$

Energy consumption (NAO fleet segments)

$$Energy_consumption_{t+1,f} = Energy_consumption_{t,f} \frac{Sea_days_{t+1,f}}{Sea_days_{t,f}} \quad \text{(eq. 9c)}$$

$$Energy_consumption_{t+2,f} = Energy_consumption_{t+1,f} \frac{Sea_days_{t+2,f}}{Sea_days_{t+1,f}} \text{ (eq. 9d)}$$

Energy costs (All fleet segments)

$$Energy_costs_{t+1,f} = Energy_costs_{t,f} \frac{Energy_consumption_{t+1,f}}{Energy_consumption_{t,f}} \times \frac{Fuel_price_{t+1,m}}{Fuel_price_{t,m}} \text{ (eq. 10a)}$$

$$Energy_costs_{t+2,f} = Energy_costs_{t+1,f} \frac{Energy_consumption_{t+2,f}}{Energy_consumption_{t+1,f}} \times \frac{Fuel_price_{t+2,m}}{Fuel_price_{t+1,m}} \text{ (eq. 10b)}$$

Fuel prices are obtained from EUMOFA website for each Member State.

Other variable costs (MBS and OFR fleet segments)

$$Other_variable_costs_{t+1,f} = Other_variable_costs_{t,f} \frac{Number_vessels_{t+1,m,l}}{Number_vessels_{t,m,l}} \quad \text{(eq. 11a)}$$

$$Other_variable_costs_{t+2,f} = Other_variable_costs_{t+1,f} \quad \text{(eq. 11b)}$$

Other variable costs (NAO fleet segments)

$$Other_variables_costs_{t+1,f} = Other_variable_costs_{t,f} \frac{Sea_days_{t+1,f}}{Sea_days_{t,f}} \quad \text{(eq. 11c)}$$

$$Other_variables_costs_{t+2,f} = Other_variable_costs_{t+1,f} \frac{Sea_days_{t+2,f}}{Sea_days_{t+1,f}} \quad \text{(eq. 11d)}$$

For following fixed cost relations, the same approach is taken for NAO and MBS/OFR fleet segments.

Repair and maintenance costs (All fleet segments)

$$Repair_costs_{t+1,f} = Repair_costs_{t,f} \frac{Number_vessels_{t+1,m,l}}{Number_vessels_{t,m,l}} \quad \text{(eq. 12a)}$$

$$Repair_costs_{t+2,f} = Repair_costs_{t+1,f} \frac{Number_vessels_{t+2,m,l}}{Number_vessels_{t+1,m,l}} \quad \text{(eq. 12a)}$$

Non-variable costs (All fleet segments)

$$Non_variable_costs_{t+1,f} = Non_variable_costs_{t,f} \frac{Number_vessels_{t+1,m,l}}{Number_vessels_{t,m,l}} \quad \text{(eq. 13a)}$$

$$Non_variable_costs_{t+2,f} = Non_variable_costs_{t+1,f} \frac{Number_vessels_{t+2,m,l}}{Number_vessels_{t+1,m,l}} \quad \text{(eq. 13b)}$$

Investment (All fleet segments)

$$Investment_{t+1,f} = Investment_{t,f} \frac{Number_vessels_{t+1,m,l}}{Number_vessels_{t,m,l}} \quad \text{(eq. 14a)}$$

$$Investment_{t+2,f} = Investment_{t+1,f} \frac{Number_vessels_{t+2,m,l}}{Number_vessels_{t+1,m,l}} \quad \text{(eq. 14b)}$$

Depreciation (All fleet segments)

$$Depreciation_{t+1,f} = Depreciation_{t,f} \frac{Number_vessels_{t+1,m,l}}{Number_vessels_{t,m,l}} \quad \text{(eq. 15a)}$$

$$Depreciation_{t+1,f} = Depreciation_{t,f} \frac{Number_vessels_{t+1,m,l}}{Number_vessels_{t,m,l}} \quad \text{(eq. 15b)}$$

Assets value (All fleet segments)

$$Asset_value_{t+1,f} = Asset_value_{t,f} \frac{Number_vessels_{t+1,m,l}}{Number_vessels_{t,m,l}} \quad \text{(eq. 16a)}$$

$$Asset_value_{t+2,f} = Asset_value_{t+1,f} \frac{Number_vessels_{t+2,m,l}}{Number_vessels_{t+1,m,l}}$$ (eq. 16b)

Opportunity cost of capital (All fleet segments)

$$Opportunity_cost_{t+1,f} = Asset_value_{t+1,f} 3.5\%$$ (eq. 17a)

$$Opportunity_cost_{t+2,f} = Asset_value_{t+2,f} 3.5\%$$ (eq. 17b)

Total employed (MBS and OFR fleet segments)

$$Employment_{t+1,f} = Employment_{t,f} \frac{Number_vessels_{t+1,m,l}}{Number_vessels_{t,m,l}}$$ (eq. 18a)

$$Employment_{t+2f} = Employment_{t+1,f} \frac{Number_vessels_{t+2,m,l}}{Number_vessels_{t+1,m,l}}$$ (eq. 18b)

Gross value added (GVA)

GVA = Landings income + Other Income – Energy costs – Repair and maintenance costs – Other variable costs – Non-variable costs (eq. 19)

Gross profit

Gross profit is equal to the GVA minus the labour costs:

Gross profit = GVA – crew costs (eq. 20)

Resulting in:

Gross profit = Landings Income + Other Income – crew costs – unpaid labour – energy costs – Repair and maintenance costs – Other variable costs – Non-variable costs (eq. 21)

Net profit

Net profit is equal to the gross profit minus the capital costs:

Net profit = Gross profit – Depreciation – Opportunity cost of capital (eq. 22)

Resulting in:

Net profit = Landings income + Other income – Crew costs – Unpaid labour – Energy costs – Repair and maintenance costs – Other variable costs – Non-variable costs – Depreciation – Opportunity cost of capital (eq. 23)

List of Background Documents

Background documents are published on the EWG-25-03 meeting's web site on: https://stecf.ec.europa.eu/meetings-calendar/meetings-past-future/ewg-25-03-annual-economic-report-eu-fishing-fleet-i-2025-04-07_en

Background documents are published on the EWG-25-07 meeting's web site on: https://stecf.ec.europa.eu/meetings-calendar/meetings-past-future/ewg-25-07-annual-economic-report-eu-fishing-fleet-ii-2025-06-16_en

EWG-25-03 – Declarations of invited and JRC experts (see also the section of this report 'Contact details of EWG-25-03 participants')

EWG-25-07 - Declarations of invited and JRC experts (see also the section of this report 'Contact details of EWG-25-07 participants')

Member States Annual Report on the National Data Collection Programmes https://dcf.ec.europa.eu/wps-and-ars/annual-reports_en

Data-handling procedure for STECF Expert Working Groups http://datacollection.jrc.ec.europa.eu

List of Electronic Annexes

Electronic annexes are published on the meeting's web site on: https://stecf.ec.europa.eu/reports/economic-and-social-analyses_en

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