

Mediterranean fisheries

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Historical catches in the Mediterranean.

The total catches in the Mediterranean by all countries rose from 1.1 million tonnes in 1970 to a maximum of 2.0 million tonnes in the mid-1980s (Figure 1). Catches decreased from that time but staged a minor recovery in the mid-1990s only to fall back to 1.5 million tonnes in 1999, the latest year for which full data are available. By comparison the catches of the EU Member States (EU-15) have fluctuated little, remaining between 520 thousand and 710 thousand tonnes throughout the 30 year period 1970-99. In this period the EU-15 catches averaged 41% of the total catch. By contrast the catches of the EU candidate countries*, although only averaging 24% of the total catch in the period 1970-99, followed the pattern seen in the total catches with the maximum catches being recorded in the 1980s.

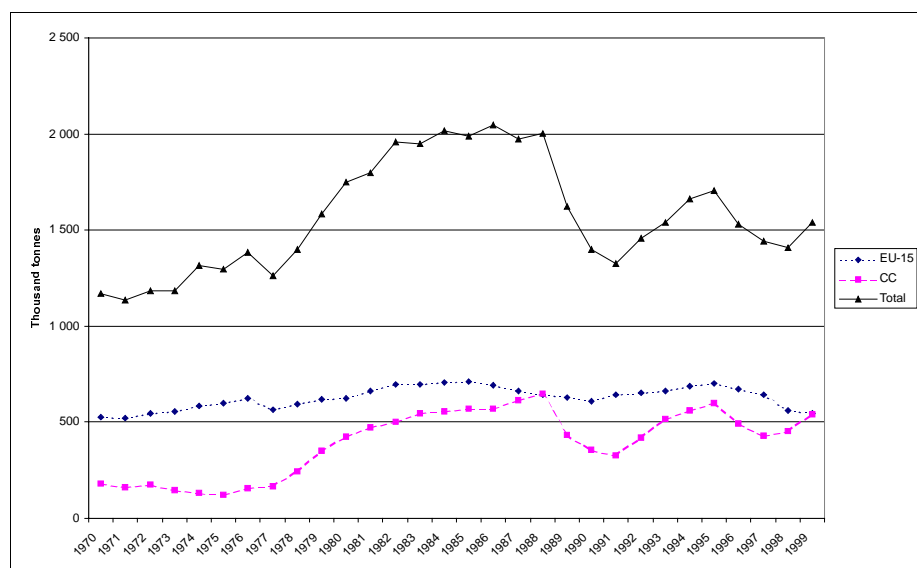


Figure 1: European Union (EU-15), EU Candidate Countries (CC) and total catches in the Mediterranean, 1970-99

Catches by individual countries.

In 1999, Italy (277 984 tonnes) recorded the largest catch among the EU Member States (see Table 1), more than twice as much as the next two countries, Spain (122 359 tonnes) and Greece (109 558 tonnes). The only EU-15 country for which any trend may be detected is for Greece where the catch of around 50 thousand tonnes in 1970 has increased to at least double that in recent years. Portugal has only a very limited interest in the fisheries of the Mediterranean: the catch of 76 tonnes in 1999 was all of the Northern bluefin tuna.

Turkey is by far the major fishing nation among the EU candidate countries, its 524 907 tonnes in 1999 being 97% of the total catch for the group of countries and being roughly equivalent to the Mediterranean catch of all the EU-15 member countries together.

* See the Methodological Notes for the list of these countries.

Statistics in focus

AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES

THEME 5 – 21/2001

FISHERIES

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	Catch
EU-15	547 520
GR	109 558
ES	122 359
F	37 543
I	277 984
P	76
BG	8 081
CY	2 241
MT	1 033
RO	2 507
SI	1 783
TR	524 907
CC	540 552
World	1 538 308

Table 1: Mediterranean catches by country, 1999 (tonnes)

	EU-15	CC
Fish	380 304	522 718
Molluscs	138 857	15 513
Crustaceans	25 724	1 118
Other products	2 635	1 203
Total	547 520	540 552

Table 2: Catches of major species groups, 1999 (tonnes)

Catches by major species groups.

The outstanding difference between the Mediterranean fisheries of the EU member states and those of the EU candidate countries is the over-riding importance of fish to the latter (Table 2). In 1999 fish made up 97% of the catch for the candidate countries but only 69% of the catch of the EU countries. A significant proportion (25%) of the EU catch was of molluscs (bivalves and cephalopods).

Major species in the catches of EU and candidate countries.

Collectively the European anchovy (*Engraulis encrasicolus*) is by far the major species in the catches, making up 14% of the total EU catch and 65% of the total catch by the candidate countries (Table 3). Together the catch of this species was 426 350 tonnes.

Another Clupeoid fish is second in the list of important species: the European pilchard (*Sardina pilchardus*). This was predominantly caught by the EU countries, where, with a catch of 93 193 tonnes, it made up 17% of the catch. In the candidate countries the 23 614 tonnes was only 4% of the total catch.

Molluscs have been mentioned as being an important component of the EU-15 catch in the Mediterranean and two species, the Mediterranean mussel (*Mytilus galloprovincialis*) and the striped venus (*Venus gallina*) are the most prominent among these.

An interesting component of the catch by Turkey are jellyfishes (*Rhopilema* spp). Although not of major importance in terms of quantity (1 203 tonnes in 1999), Turkey is the only country in the region to fish for this seemingly unpalatable species. The product is salted and dried and exported to Far East countries.

➤ ESSENTIAL INFORMATION – METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

The data used in this report have been supplied by the national authorities of EU member countries under the terms of Council Regulation no 2597/95. Data for periods prior to the entry into force of this Regulation and the data for EU candidate countries were supplied by the national authorities to international organisations (notably FAO). Eurostat wishes to express its gratitude to all concerned for their collaboration in compiling the data.

The data are expressed in tonnes live weight equivalent of the landings.

For the purposes of this report the Mediterranean includes the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov.

The EU-15 data include those for all the current EU member states, even for periods prior to their accession to the EU.

The EU candidate countries are:

Bulgaria (BG)	Cyprus (CY)	Czech Republic (CZ)
Estonia (EE)	Hungary (HU)	Latvia (LV)
Lithuania (LT)	Malta (MT)	Poland (PL)
Romania (RO)	Slovak Republic (SK)	Slovenia (SI)
Turkey (TR)		

Note: Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and the Slovak Republic do not fish in the Mediterranean

3-alpha identifier	Species	EU-15	CC	Total
ANE	European anchovy - <i>Engraulis encrasicolus</i>	76 084	350 266	426 350
PIL	European pilchard - <i>Sardina pilchardus</i>	93 193	23 614	116 807
MUL	Mulletts - <i>Mugilidae</i>	5 332	26 000	31 332
WHB	Blue whiting - <i>Micromesistius poutassou</i>	6 554	16 975	23 529
BON	Atlantic bonito - <i>Sarda sarda</i>	4 196	17 922	22 118
HKE	European hake - <i>Merluccius merluccius</i>	19 963	17	19 980
WHG	Whiting - <i>Merlangius merlangus</i>	-	14 398	14 398
BFT	Northern bluefin tuna - <i>Thunnus thynnus</i>	11 758	1 707	13 465
MUX	Surmulletts (=Red mullets) - <i>Mullus spp</i>	13 392	13	13 405
HMM	Mediterranean horse mackerel - <i>Trachurus mediterraneus</i>	3 534	-	12 791
MAS	Chub mackerel - <i>Scomber japonicus</i>	1 892	10 222	12 114
BOG	Bogue - <i>Boops boops</i>	8 767	-	10 659
JAX	Jack & horse mackerels - <i>Trachurus spp</i>	10 347	-	10 347
MSM	Mediterranean mussel - <i>Mytilus galloprovincialis</i>	53 778	1 800	55 578
SVE	Striped venus - <i>Venus gallina</i>	36 836	3 585	40 421
OCC	Common octopus - <i>Octopus vulgaris</i>	10 313	510	10 823

Table 3: Major species caught by EU member countries and candidate countries in 1999 (tonnes)

Further information:

➤ Reference publications

Title Fisheries: Yearbook 2000
 Catalogue No KS-31-00-885-3A-C Price EUR 23.50

➤ Databases

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