

EU25 fish catches in NE Atlantic decrease by 29% in the period 1995-2003

Statistics in focus

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NE Atlantic the major fishing region for the EU25 Member States

In 2003 (the latest year for which full data are available) the EU25 Member States' catch of fishery products in the Northeast Atlantic was 4.2 million tonnes (see Table 1). This region was of major importance to the EU25 accounting for 71% of its worldwide catch of 5.9 million tonnes in 2003 (see Figure 1). The EU25 catch was 40% of the total catch in the region, the other major contributions coming from Norway (2.5 million tonnes, 25%) and Iceland (2.0 million tonnes, 19%)

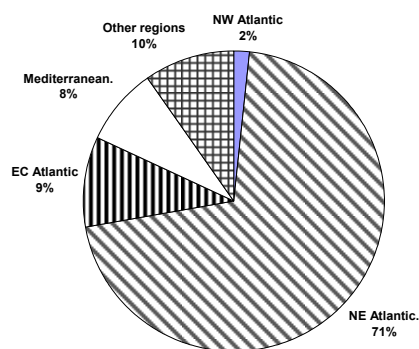


Figure 1: EU25 catches by major fishing region in 2003 (%)

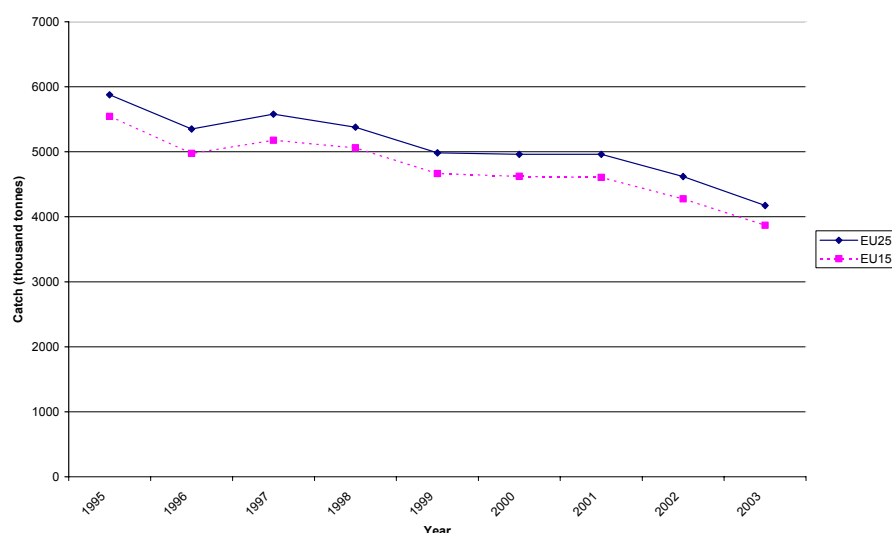


Figure 2: EU25 and EU15 catches in the Northeast Atlantic, 1995-2003 (thousand tonnes live weight)



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	% Change 1995-2003
BE	35	30	30	30	29	29	30	29	26	26	-25
DK	1,998	1,681	1,826	1,556	1,404	1,534	1,510	1,442	1,030	1,087	-48
DE	216	202	207	220	189	178	184	194	235	236	9
ES	393	393	475	470	436	417	450	323	338	:	-14
FR	449	430	451	413	465	491	495	497	487	467	8
IE	386	329	289	321	283	275	282	242	232	273	-40
NL	434	361	349	411	388	336	339	300	349	391	-20
PT	220	203	190	197	180	164	159	165	170	177	-23
FI	106	117	118	119	108	122	115	110	86	100	-19
SE	403	369	355	409	350	337	311	294	285	269	-29
UK	906	861	887	913	832	738	729	679	631	650	-30
EU15	5,545	4,975	5,177	5,060	4,664	4,622	4,604	4,274	3,869	:	-30
EE	92	95	113	97	90	96	88	82	59	68	-36
LV	63	73	86	78	78	80	77	80	72	83	14
LT	46	49	15	16	21	20	31	32	27	20	-40
PL	130	157	187	127	131	143	159	152	146	156	12
EU25	5,877	5,349	5,578	5,377	4,985	4,961	4,960	4,620	4,174	:	-29
IS	1,615	2,053	2,217	1,693	1,745	1,990	1,996	2,138	1,995	1,742	24
NO	2,506	2,634	2,852	2,848	2,623	2,693	2,672	2,725	2,523	2,509	1
EEA	9,997	10,037	10,647	9,919	9,352	9,645	9,628	9,483	8,692	:	-13

Table 1: EEA catches in the Northeast Atlantic, 1995-2004 (thousand tonnes live weight)

Denmark the major contributor to the EU25 total

The major contribution to the EU25 catch in 2003 was from Denmark (1 030 thousand tonnes, 25% of the total) followed by the United Kingdom (631 thousand tonnes, 15%), France (487 thousand tonnes, 12%) and Spain (338 thousand tonnes, 8%) (see Table 1).

The 10 new Member States, only four of which fish in the area, together accounted for 7% of the EU-25 catch.

Steady decrease in EU25 catches in the period 1995-2003

The EU25 catch has decreased in a more or less regular manner by 29% in the period 1995-2003 (see Figure 2). Although the data for 2004 are incomplete, the information available suggests that the catches in 2004 are about 3% higher than those in 2003.

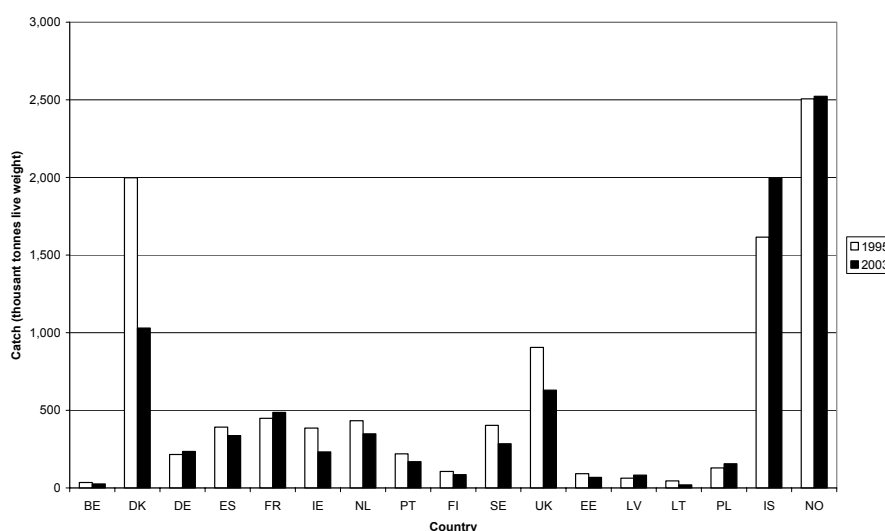


Figure 3: Catches in the Northeast Atlantic, 1995 and 2003 (thousand tonnes live weight)

Of the EU25 Member States the major decrease was recorded in Denmark where the 2003 catch of 1,030 thousand tonnes was only 52% of the 1,998 tonnes caught in 1995. The other country recording a substantial decrease was the United Kingdom where the 2003 catch of 631 thousand tonnes was 70% of the 906 thousand tons caught in 1995. Other countries recording appreciable decreases in percentage terms over this period,

though of lesser impact on the total in absolute terms, were Belgium, Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Lithuania, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden.

Iceland reported a significant increase in catches over the period 1995-2003 while Norway's situation was more one of stable catches.

Pelagic fish predominant in EU25 catches

Pelagic fish were predominant in the catches of the EU25 countries in the Northeast Atlantic in 2003, with 5 species in the top 10 contributing 53% to the total catch (see Table 2). Traditional food groundfish were only represented in the top 10 species by the Atlantic cod and the European plaice.

English name	3-alpha code	Scientific code	Catch (0000 tonnes)
Atlantic herring	HER	<i>Clupea harengus</i>	673
European sprat	SPR	<i>Sprattus sprattus</i>	535
Atlantic mackerel	MAC	<i>Scomber scombrus</i>	377
Blue whiting(=Poutassou)	WHB	<i>Micromesistius poutassou</i>	334
Sandeels(=Sandlances) nei	SAN	<i>Ammodytes spp</i>	306
Atlantic horse mackerel	HOM	<i>Trachurus trachurus</i>	177
Atlantic cod	COD	<i>Gadus morhua</i>	139
European pilchard(=Sardine)	PIL	<i>Sardina pilchardus</i>	137
Blue mussel	MUS	<i>Mytilus edulis</i>	95
European plaice	PLE	<i>Pleuronectes platessa</i>	83

Table 2: Major species caught by EU25 countries in NE Atlantic in 2003 (thousand tonnes Live weight)

Main fishing grounds are in the North Sea and in Southern and Western waters

72% of the catches by the EU25 in 2003 were taken from the North Sea or from waters to the south and west of the continent (see Table 3). Only 6% were taken from Northern waters (off Iceland, Greenland, the Faroe Is and the Norwegian coast), waters which in the past were favoured grounds for European fishing vessels but now offer fewer fishing possibilities.

Region	Catch	%
Northern waters	267	6
North Sea	1,328	32
Baltic Sea	830	20
Southern & Western waters	1,664	40
Others/unknown	85	2
Total	4,174	100

See "Methodological Notes" for description of regions

Table 3: EU25 catches by region of Northeast Atlantic in 2003 (thousand tonnes live weight)

➤ ESSENTIAL INFORMATION – METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

Under Council Regulation no. 3880/91 EU and EEA countries are required to submit to Eurostat statistics on their annual catches of fish, molluscs crustaceans and other fishery products in the Northeast Atlantic by 30 June of the following year. The catches are expressed in terms of the live weight equivalent of the landings and thus exclude all quantities which are caught but not landed.

The EU countries that have fished in the Northeast Atlantic in the period covered by this report are Belgium (BE), Denmark (DK), Germany (DE), Spain (ES), France (FR), Ireland (IE), Netherlands (NL), Portugal (PT), Finland (FI), Sweden (SE), United Kingdom (UK), Estonia (EE), Latvia (LV), Lithuania (LT) and Poland (PL).

For the purposes of this report Northern waters (Table 3) have been defined as Divisions I, II, V and XIV of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), the North Sea as ICES Division IV, the Baltic Sea as IBSFC Divisions 21-32 and the Southern and Western Waters as ICES Divisions VI, VII, VIII, IX, X and XII.

Since the data for 2004 are incomplete (the data for Spain not having been submitted by the national authorities) the analysis in this report concentrates on the data for 2003.

More detailed fishery statistics with methodological notes are available for consultation on the Eurostat web-site.

Further information:

Reference publications

Title [Pocketbook of Fishery Statistics \(2004 edition\)](#)
Catalogue No KS-DW-04-001-EN-C
Price EUR 10

Databases

[EUROSTAT Website/Agriculture, forestry and fisheries/Fisheries/Catches by fishing region/Catches - Atlantic ocean and adjacent seas/Catches - North-east Atlantic: 1985 onwards](#)

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