

## The EU-27 fishing fleet continued to decline in 2008

In the period 2005 to 2008 the EU fleet continued the decline seen in the period 2000 to 2005. This was in spite of the inclusion of the fleets of new Member States in 2004 and 2007. The decrease in vessel numbers was 12.4% from 2000 to 2005 compared with a fall of 5.8% from 2005 to 2008.

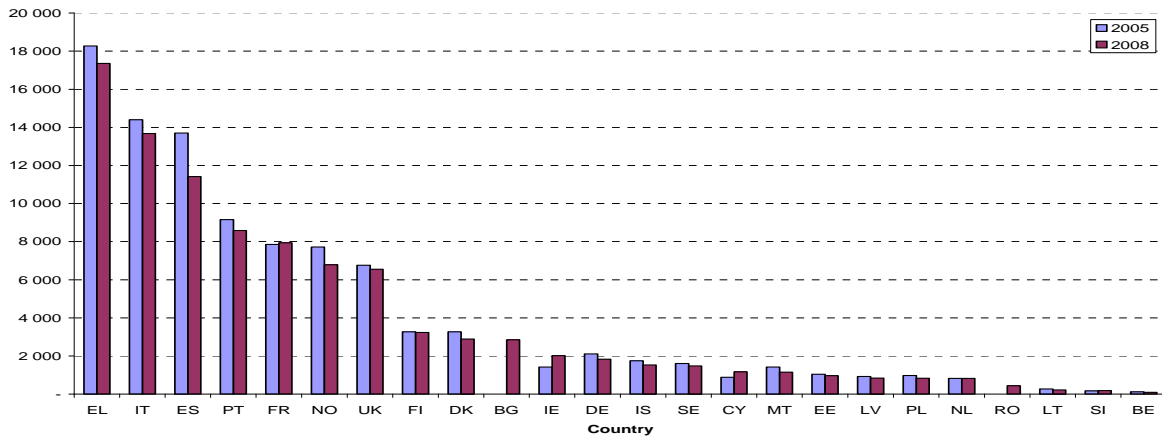
In 2008 the EU-27 fishing fleet consisted of under 87 thousand vessels with a total tonnage of nearly 1.9 million tonnes and a total engine power of 6.9 million KW (see Table 1).

Table 1: EU-25 and EU-27 fishing fleets in 2005 and 2008

Country	Total Number		Total Tonnage		Total Power (kW)		% variation between 2005 and 2008		
	2005	2008	2005	2008	2005	2008	Number	Tonnage	Power
BE	120	100	22 584	19 007	65 422	60 620	-16.7	-15.8	-7.3
BG	:	2 852	:	9 047	:	70 512	:	:	:
DK	3 268	2 895	91 469	73 040	324 865	263 914	-11.4	-20.1	-18.8
DE	2 117	1 828	64 069	69 135	159 214	161 248	-13.7	7.9	1.3
EE	1 047	966	24 219	17 808	62 039	45 974	-7.7	-26.5	-25.9
IE	1 419	2 023	87 801	69 867	216 435	193 409	42.6	-20.4	-10.6
EL	18 269	17 353	93 515	88 805	537 181	510 993	-5.0	-5.0	-4.9
ES	13 700	11 420	487 556	461 071	1 124 363	1 029 530	-16.6	-5.4	-8.4
FR	7 857	7 941	215 052	199 269	1 069 764	1 082 260	1.1	-7.3	1.2
IT	14 401	13 683	212 929	196 313	1 223 721	1 149 081	-5.0	-7.8	-6.1
CY	883	1 169	9 044	5 383	46 707	49 023	32.4	-40.5	5.0
LV	928	841	38 549	38 228	64 486	61 080	-9.4	-0.8	-5.3
LT	268	221	64 399	50 478	70 608	59 794	-17.5	-21.6	-15.3
MT	1 424	1 152	15 321	10 961	99 273	86 161	-19.1	-28.5	-13.2
NL	829	825	171 672	146 925	401 270	344 073	-0.5	-14.4	-14.3
PL	974	833	30 260	40 971	105 410	98 958	-14.5	35.4	-6.1
PT	9 155	8 585	107 566	106 516	380 521	383 099	-6.2	-1.0	0.7
RO	:	438	:	1 670	:	6 241	:	:	:
SI	171	181	1 065	983	11 119	10 653	5.8	-7.7	-4.2
FI	3 266	3 240	17 171	16 046	171 589	169 707	-0.8	-6.6	-1.1
SE	1 603	1 486	44 222	41 807	218 728	208 913	-7.3	-5.5	-4.5
UK	6 768	6 555	218 532	206 000	881 298	832 794	-3.1	-5.7	-5.5
<b>EU25</b>	<b>88 467</b>	<b>83 297</b>	<b>2 016 995</b>	<b>1 858 612</b>	<b>7 234 013</b>	<b>6 801 284</b>	<b>-5.8</b>	<b>-7.9</b>	<b>-6.0</b>
<b>EU27</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>86 587</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>1 869 329</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>6 878 037</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>:</b>
IS	1 756	1 533	181 390	160 246	526 057	477 014	-12.7	-11.7	-9.3
NO	7 723	6 790	373 282	363 169	1 272 375	1 240 252	-12.1	-2.7	-2.5
<b>EEA</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>94 910</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>2 392 744</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>8 595 303</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>:</b>

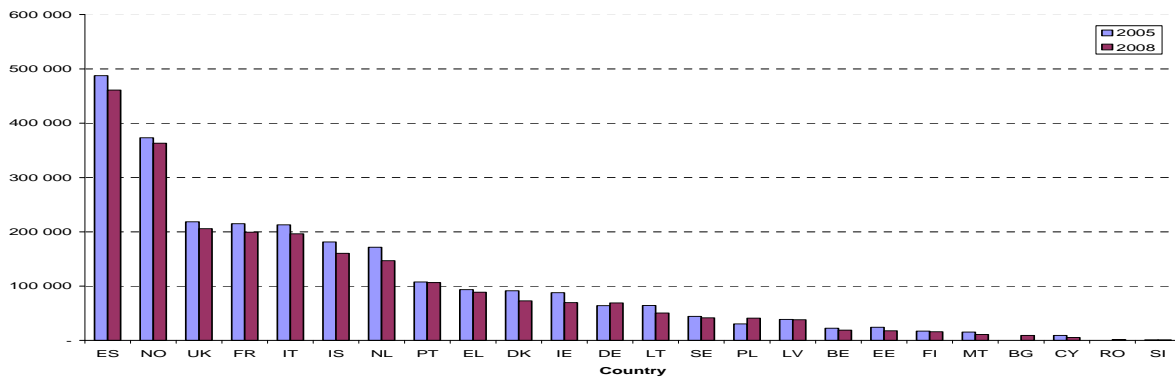
# EU and EFTA fleet in 2005 and 2008

## Total No. Vessels



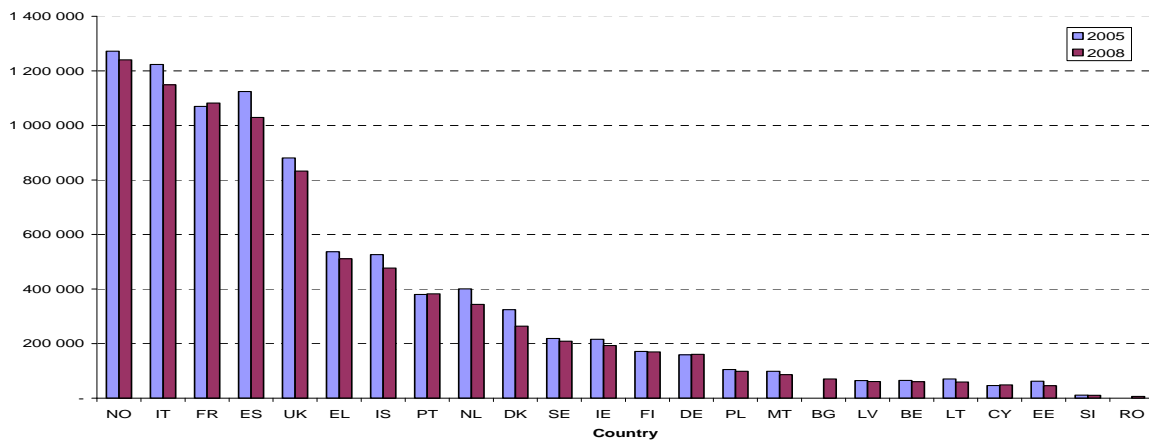
Source: ESTAT

## Tonnage (GT)



Source: ESTAT

## Engine Power (Kw)



Source: ESTAT

## EU-27 fishing fleet in constant decline since 2005

From 2005 to 2008, the number of EU-25 vessels fell nearly 6% from over 88 thousand to over 83 thousand. The number of vessels fell particularly sharply in Belgium (-16.7%), Denmark (-11.4%), Germany (-13.7%), Spain (-16.6%), Lithuania (-17.5%), Malta (-19.1%) and Poland (-14.5%).

However, vessel numbers rose in Ireland (+42.6%), Cyprus (+32.4%) and Slovenia (+5.8%). The total number of EU-27 vessels is less than the total number of EU-25 vessels in 2005.

Tonnage decreased in Belgium (-15.8%), Denmark (-20.1%), Estonia (-26.5%), Ireland (-20.4%),

Cyprus (-40.5%), Lithuania (-21.6%), Malta (-28.5%) and the Netherlands (-14.4%). It increased in Poland (+35.4%) and Germany (+7.9%).

The engine power of vessels fell in Denmark (-18.8%), Estonia (-25.9%), Ireland (-10.6%), Lithuania (-15.3%), Malta (-13.2%) and the Netherlands (-14.3%), but rose in Cyprus (+5.0%), Germany (+1.3%) and Portugal (+0.7%).

The number of vessels and their tonnage and power also declined in Iceland and Norway between 2005 and 2008.

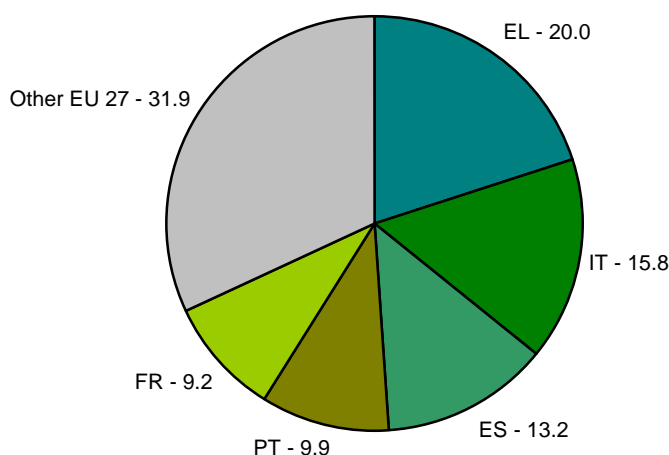
## Most vessels owned by the southern Member States of EU-27

Although the number of vessels in Greece has declined since 2005, it still had the largest fleet in 2008, with over 17 thousand vessels 20% of the total EU 27 fleet.

The other southern Member States with a large number of vessels are Italy (15.8% of the EU-27 total), Spain (13.2%) and Portugal (10.3%).

**The combined number of vessels owned by Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal and France (nearly 59 thousand) made up just over 68% of the EU-27 fleet in 2008.**

Southern Member States' vessels as a percentage of the EU 27 fleet in 2008



Source: ESTAT

## Small vessels dominate the EU-27 fleet, with nearly 82% less than 12 metres long

In 2008, nearly 82% of all EU-27 vessels measured less than 12 metres in length.

This compares to 81% in the EU 25 in 2005.

Of the EU-27 countries in 2008, Bulgaria, Greece, Cyprus, Malta, Romania and Finland had fleets in which over 90% of vessels were inshore fishing boats less than 12 metres long. Longer vessel classes predominated in Belgium and the Netherlands.

In EU-27, less than 1% of vessels (854 vessels) were more than 36 metres long. The number of vessels more than 36 metres long continued to decline, falling from 1 020 in 2004 to 967 in 2005 and to 854 in 2008, in spite of the increased number of Member States.

The change between 2005 and 2008 followed a different pattern in Germany, Ireland, France, Cyprus, Poland and Slovenia: the number of vessels did not change in line with tonnage and/or engine power.

In some countries (Germany and Poland), the fall in the number of vessels and increase in tonnage would indicate a move towards a fleet composed of larger vessels.

In other countries (Ireland, France, Cyprus and Slovenia), the increase in the number of vessels and decrease in tonnage and/or engine power would indicate a move towards a greater number of smaller vessels

**Table 2: Number of fishing vessels in EU-27 by length class, 2008**

Country	Length class (metres)										% under 12 m
	Unknown	0 - 5.9	6 - 11.9	12 - 17.9	18 - 23.9	24 - 29.9	30 - 35.9	36 - 41.9	42 or over	TOTAL	
BE	-	-	1	8	30	13	21	27	-	<b>100</b>	1.0
BG	-	907	1 832	71	30	11	-	1	-	<b>2 852</b>	96.0
DK	-	975	1 308	388	115	32	30	24	23	<b>2 895</b>	78.9
DE	-	736	709	215	90	36	14	14	14	<b>1 828</b>	79.0
EE	-	442	417	58	1	35	4	1	8	<b>966</b>	88.9
IE	-	516	1 170	132	89	58	23	14	21	<b>2 023</b>	83.3
EL	-	6 104	10 146	594	278	185	37	7	2	<b>17 353</b>	93.6
ES	-	3 743	4 315	1 378	925	546	266	116	131	<b>11 420</b>	70.6
FR	-	981	5 423	861	408	158	49	15	46	<b>7 941</b>	80.6
IT	-	2 711	6 617	2 863	965	404	77	18	28	<b>13 683</b>	68.2
CY	-	363	753	33	8	12	-	-	-	<b>1 169</b>	95.5
LV	-	488	217	28	4	88	5	-	11	<b>841</b>	83.8
LT	-	104	63	8	-	30	-	3	13	<b>221</b>	75.6
MT	-	547	505	59	26	11	2	1	1	<b>1 152</b>	91.3
NL	-	112	184	58	168	89	58	100	56	<b>825</b>	35.9
PL	-	57	500	161	36	71	4	-	4	<b>833</b>	66.9
PT	-	3 937	3 775	471	169	147	51	10	25	<b>8 585</b>	89.8
RO	-	43	380	6	3	6	-	-	-	<b>438</b>	96.6
SI	-	80	78	20	1	2	-	-	-	<b>181</b>	87.3
FI	-	1 518	1 602	85	19	2	8	5	1	<b>3 240</b>	96.3
SE	-	174	992	178	62	27	25	19	9	<b>1 486</b>	78.5
UK	-	1 556	3 870	562	283	150	48	41	45	<b>6 555</b>	82.8
<b>EU27</b>	-	<b>26 094</b>	<b>44 857</b>	<b>8 237</b>	<b>3 710</b>	<b>2 113</b>	<b>722</b>	<b>416</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>86 587</b>	<b>81.9</b>
IS	10	2	1 056	196	55	58	29	30	97	1 533	69.0
NO	-	643	4 814	802	193	115	27	38	158	6 790	80.4
<b>EEA</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>26 739</b>	<b>50 727</b>	<b>9 235</b>	<b>3 958</b>	<b>2 286</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>484</b>	<b>693</b>	<b>94 910</b>	<b>81.6</b>

Source: ESTAT

**Table 3: Number of fishing vessels in EU-27 by Tonnage class, 2008**

Country	Tonnage class (GT)										TOTAL	% under 25 tonnes
	Unknown	0 - 24.9	25 - 49.9	50 - 99.9	100 - 149.9	150 - 249.9	250 - 499.9	500 - 999.9	1000 - 1999.9	2000 or over		
BE	-	4	7	27	14	10	38	-	-	-	<b>100</b>	4.0
BG	-	2 800	32	9	10	-	1	-	-	-	<b>2 852</b>	98.2
DK	-	2 497	146	117	34	39	43	9	7	3	<b>2 895</b>	86.3
DE	-	1 522	167	59	19	29	23	-	3	6	<b>1 828</b>	83.3
EE	-	914	3	9	24	6	2	2	6	-	<b>966</b>	94.6
IE	-	1 747	55	59	52	58	29	12	10	1	<b>2 023</b>	86.4
EL	-	16 761	234	193	102	44	17	2	-	-	<b>17 353</b>	96.6
ES	-	9 130	622	705	225	323	282	76	33	24	<b>11 420</b>	79.9
FR	-	6 819	309	320	216	186	52	11	17	11	<b>7 941</b>	85.9
IT	-	11 792	791	705	213	154	22	5	-	1	<b>13 683</b>	86.2
CY	-	1 145	6	7	10	1	-	-	-	-	<b>1 169</b>	97.9
LV	-	710	24	32	58	4	2	3	4	4	<b>841</b>	84.4
LT	-	175	-	5	25	-	3	3	2	8	<b>221</b>	79.2
MT	-	1 098	22	21	5	4	1	-	-	1	<b>1 152</b>	95.3
NL	-	344	92	135	49	85	88	19	2	11	<b>825</b>	41.7
PL	-	613	124	36	34	19	3	-	1	3	<b>833</b>	73.6
PT	-	8 069	174	117	50	109	42	9	12	3	<b>8 585</b>	94.0
RO	-	428	1	1	8	-	-	-	-	-	<b>438</b>	97.7
SI	-	176	3	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	<b>181</b>	97.2
FI	-	3 168	41	16	1	4	9	1	-	-	<b>3 240</b>	97.8
SE	-	1 255	66	57	35	30	30	13	-	-	<b>1 486</b>	84.5
UK	-	5 584	297	205	153	169	102	14	19	12	<b>6 555</b>	85.2
<b>EU27</b>	-	<b>76 751</b>	<b>3 216</b>	<b>2 835</b>	<b>1 337</b>	<b>1 276</b>	<b>789</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>86 587</b>	<b>88.6</b>
IS	3	1 222	56	46	16	39	57	42	41	11	1 533	79.7
NO	2 014	4 133	138	104	50	81	101	58	79	32	6 790	60.9
<b>EEA</b>	<b>2 017</b>	<b>82 106</b>	<b>3 410</b>	<b>2 985</b>	<b>1 403</b>	<b>1 396</b>	<b>947</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>94 910</b>	<b>86.5</b>

Source: ESTAT

### Median age of fishing vessels is 20 years for EU-25 in 2005 and nearly 23 years for EU-27 in 2008

The nine countries which joined the EU most recently have slightly newer fleets, with a median age of 20.0 years in 2008 compared with a median age of 23.6 in the older EU countries (see Table 4).

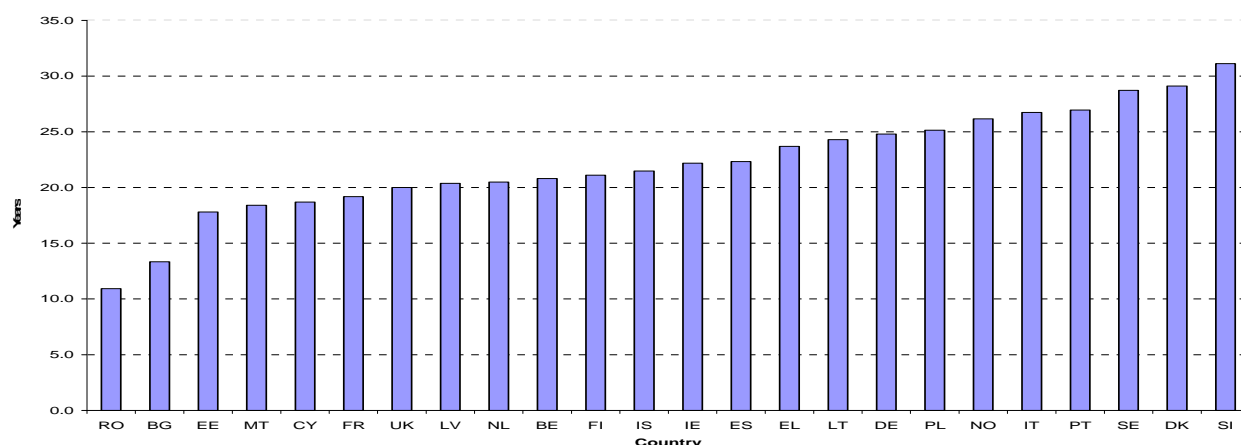
The situation was similar in 2005, with a median age of 20.0 for the new EU countries and 23.9 for the older EU countries. Seven countries have vessels with a median age of 20 years or less

(Bulgaria, Estonia, France, Cyprus, Malta, Romania and the United Kingdom).

In 2008, only one country (Slovenia) had vessels with a median age of over 30, compared to five countries in 2005.

In 2008, 73% of countries had vessels with a median age of less than 25, compared to 55% in 2005.

**Median age of fishing vessels for EU 27 & EFTA in 2008**



Source: ESTAT

**Table 4: Number of fishing vessels in EU-27 by age class, 2008**

Country	Age class								Median Age
	Unknown	0 - 4.9	5 - 9.9	10 - 14.9	15 - 19.9	20 - 24.9	25 or over	TOTAL	
BE	1	2	17	11	15	25	29	100	20.8
BG	2	649	338	638	554	265	406	2 852	13.3
DK	27	147	127	190	285	397	1 722	2 895	29.1
DE	668	102	77	87	127	191	576	1 828	24.8
EE	-	37	104	197	253	168	207	966	17.8
IE	5	145	235	203	268	347	820	2 023	22.2
EL	57	1 390	1 439	2 042	1 484	3 025	7 916	17 353	23.7
ES	64	1 385	1 535	1 000	1 137	1 276	5 023	11 420	22.3
FR	224	1 005	924	805	1 328	1 312	2 343	7 941	19.2
IT	183	770	875	1 061	1 487	2 024	7 283	13 683	26.7
CY	3	65	149	207	212	167	366	1 169	18.7
LV	1	12	68	116	210	146	288	841	20.4
LT	1	6	13	23	32	41	105	221	24.3
MT	9	87	213	173	147	116	407	1 152	18.4
NL	7	52	113	100	131	111	311	825	20.5
PL	5	49	64	85	129	83	418	833	25.1
PT	83	953	1 267	678	368	605	4 631	8 585	27.0
RO	6	66	140	49	74	40	63	438	10.9
SI	2	11	4	4	16	25	119	181	31.1
FI	23	191	242	351	664	670	1 099	3 240	21.1
SE	11	62	63	70	140	270	870	1 486	28.7
UK	97	672	774	515	1 252	766	2 479	6 555	20.0
<b>EU27</b>	<b>1 479</b>	<b>7 858</b>	<b>8 781</b>	<b>8 605</b>	<b>10 313</b>	<b>12 070</b>	<b>37 481</b>	<b>86 587</b>	<b>22.8</b>
IS	8	157	164	66	276	315	547	1 533	21.5
NO	108	434	523	397	465	1 346	3 517	6 790	26.2
<b>EEA</b>	<b>1 595</b>	<b>8 449</b>	<b>9 468</b>	<b>9 068</b>	<b>11 054</b>	<b>13 731</b>	<b>41 545</b>	<b>94 910</b>	<b>23.0</b>

Source: ESTAT

## ESSENTIAL INFORMATION – METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

Eurostat keeps a database of fishing vessels which is updated each year for the EU Member States using extracts from the Community fishing fleet register as at 31 December of the reference year. The Community register is maintained by the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries under the terms of Commission Regulation (EC) No 26/2004 (as amended by Commission Regulation (EC) No 1799/2006). The register covers all fishing vessels, defined as vessels equipped for commercial fishing as under Article 3 of Council Regulation 2371/2002.

The length of a vessel is its overall length, the tonnage is its Gross Tonnage (GT) and the power is its total maximum continuous engine power (MCEP) in Kilowatts, as defined in Council Regulation (EEC) No 2930/86.

Gross Tonnage (GT) under the London Convention (1969) was adopted as the unit of tonnage measurement in the 1990s. This was a change from the previously used Gross Registered Tonnage (GRT) under the Oslo Convention (1946). Implementation of the change involved re-measurement of vessels over time.

This was carried out at different rates in different countries and was largely complete by 2003. However care should be taken when comparing

data between countries and over time since the GT of a vessel is generally significantly greater than the GRT.

The country codes used in the tables are as follows:

EU-25: BE Belgium – CY Cyprus – DE Germany – DK Denmark – EE Estonia – EL Greece – ES Spain – FR France – FI Finland – IE Ireland – IT Italy – LT Lithuania – LV Latvia – MT Malta – NL Netherlands – PL Poland – PT Portugal – SE Sweden – SI Slovenia – UK. United Kingdom (N.B. Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Luxembourg and Slovakia have no maritime fishing fleets).

EU-27: EU-25 plus RO Romania and BG Bulgaria.

Countries of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA): NO Norway and IS Iceland.

The data for France include the vessels of the French overseas departments.

The median is defined as the value of the variable where the total number of units corresponding to values of the variable below the median is equal to the total number of units corresponding to values of the variable above the median

## Further information

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Data: [Eurostat Website: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat)

Data on "Agriculture and Fisheries":

<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/fisheries/data/database>  
(Select "Fishing fleet")

More information about "Agriculture and Fisheries":

<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/fisheries/introduction>

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