

# EU FISHERIES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

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## Introduction

In 1996 the total catch of all fishery products in the Mediterranean by all countries was 1.5 million tonnes (see table 1). The largest catches were by the European Union (648 thousand tonnes, 43% of the total), Turkey (472 thousand tonnes, 31%), Algeria (100 thousand tonnes, 7%) and Tunisia (83 thousand tonnes, 6%). Only 2 thousand tonnes (0.1% of the total) were caught by countries which are not Mediterranean coastal states.

	Catch
EU-15	648 435
Turkey	472 055
Algeria	99 665
Tunisia	82 861
Total	1 500 176

Table 1: Total catches on the Mediterranean in 1996 (tonnes)

## Catches by EU Member States

After the Northeast Atlantic (where the EU catch in 1996 was just under 5 million tonnes) the Mediterranean is the second most important fishing region for the European Union with 10% of its total catches coming from this region (see Table 2). Of the individual Member States, Italy, with 346 thousand tonnes (53% of the EU total), had the greatest catch, followed by Greece (140 thousand tonnes, 22%), Spain (137 thousand tonnes, 21%) and France (25 thousand tonnes, 4%). Portugal was the only non-coastal EU Member State fishing in the region. Its catches were relatively small (only 274 tonnes) and were based on a recently developed fishery for tuna species.

For Italy and Greece, the only Member States without a coastline on another fishing region, the Mediterranean accounts for the major part of their total catch (96% and 85% respectively). The remaining Member States depend very much less heavily on this region for their catches.

	Code	All areas (tonnes)	Mediterranean (tonnes)	% of total
EU-15	EU-15	6 607 419	648 435	10
Spain	E	1 063 015	136 910	13
France	F	626 636	25 190	4
Greece	GR	165 646	140 285	85
Italy	I	359 337	345 776	96
Portugal	P	260 915	274	0

Table 2: EU catches in 1996.

## Statistics in focus

### AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES

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### FISHERIES

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## Trends in catches for the period 1971-96

In the period 1971-96 the total catch in the Mediterranean increased by 27% from 1.2 million tonnes in 1971 to 1.5 million tonnes in 1996. However there were considerable annual variations with the maximum catch of 2 million tonnes being recorded in the period 1982-86 (see Figure 1).

The EU-15 catches although also subject to annual variations (less marked than for the total catches) showed an increase of about 20% over the period, from around 550 thousand tonnes in 1971 to around 650 thousand tonnes in 1996.

Annual fluctuations tend to mask the trends in catches of the individual EU Member States but Greece and Italy recorded increases, Spain had steady catches of around 150 thousand tonnes and France recorded a decrease in catches from around 50 thousand tonnes in the first half of the period to 25 thousand tonnes in 1996.

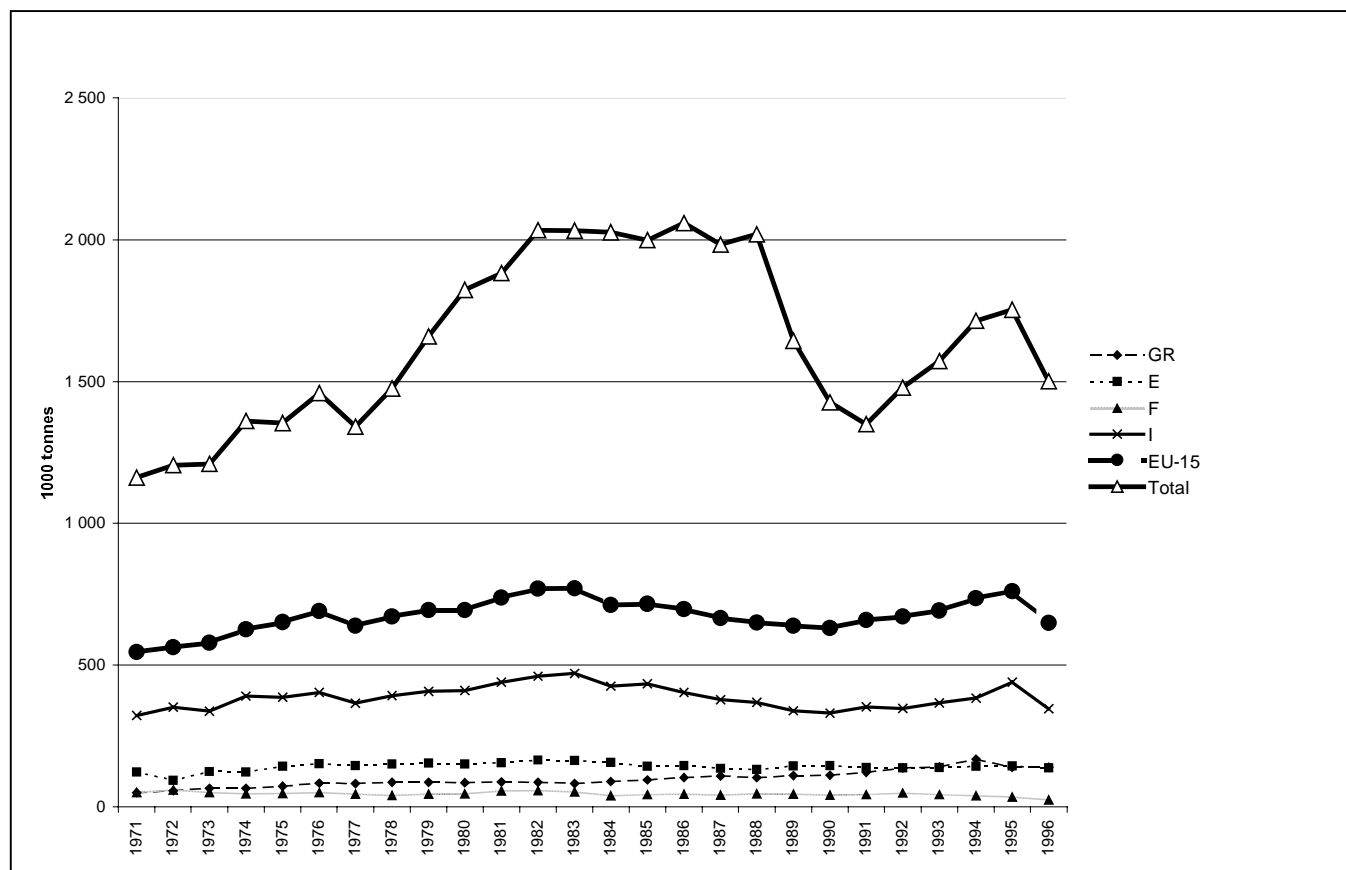


Figure 1: Catches in the Mediterranean, 1971-96

	1971	1976	1981	1986	1991	1996
EU-15	546	690	738	697	658	648
GR	51	84	88	104	122	140
E	123	152	155	145	139	137
F	50	50	56	45	43	25
I	323	404	439	404	354	346
P	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 162</b>	<b>1 459</b>	<b>1 881</b>	<b>2 058</b>	<b>1 349</b>	<b>1 500</b>

Table 3: Catches in the Mediterranean, 1971-96 (tonnes)

## Major species caught.

Two species, the European anchovy and the European pilchard (or sardine), dominate the catches in the Mediterranean, making up 41% of the total catch in 1996 (see Table 4). For the EU Member States the catches of these two species are rather less important: 197 thousand tonnes out of a total catch of 648 thousand tonnes or 30% of the total. However, the European pilchard is the major species in the catches of all the EU Mediterranean coastal states. The EU was responsible for 49% of the catches of this species in the region in 1996.

Code	Species	Catch (tonnes)	Code	Species	Catch (tonnes)
<b>EU-15</b>			<b>France</b>		
PIL	European pilchard - <i>Sardina pilchardus</i>	110 199	PIL	European pilchard - <i>Sardina pilchardus</i>	6 174
ANE	European anchovy - <i>Engraulis encrasicolus</i>	87 107	BFT	Northern bluefin tuna - <i>Thunnus thynnus</i>	6 058
HKE	European hake - <i>Merluccius merluccius</i>	41 709	ANE	European anchovy - <i>Engraulis encrasicolus</i>	3 993
SVE	Striped venus - <i>Venus gallina</i>	37 607	HKE	European hake - <i>Merluccius merluccius</i>	1 423
<b>Greece</b>			<b>Italy</b>		
PIL	European pilchard - <i>Sardina pilchardus</i>	18 896	PIL	European pilchard - <i>Sardina pilchardus</i>	42 129
ANE	European anchovy - <i>Engraulis encrasicolus</i>	15 073	ANE	European anchovy - <i>Engraulis encrasicolus</i>	40 541
MSM	Mediterranean mussel - <i>Mytilus galloprovincialis</i>	12 625	SVE	Striped venus - <i>Venus gallina</i>	36 707
PIC	Picarels - <i>Spicara spp</i>	8 307	HKE	European hake - <i>Merluccius merluccius</i>	30 707
<b>Spain</b>			<b>All countries</b>		
PIL	European pilchard - <i>Sardina pilchardus</i>	43 000	ANE	European anchovy - <i>Engraulis encrasicolus</i>	389 328
ANE	European anchovy - <i>Engraulis encrasicolus</i>	27 500	PIL	European pilchard - <i>Sardina pilchardus</i>	222 948
OCT	Octopuses - <i>Octopodidae</i>	5 800	SVE	Striped venus - <i>Venus gallina</i>	48 532
HKE	European hake - <i>Merluccius merluccius</i>	5 000	SIX	Sardinellas nei - <i>Sardinella spp</i>	46 059

Table 4: Major species caught in the Mediterranean in 1996

### ➤ ESSENTIAL INFORMATION – METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

In these statistics the Mediterranean is considered to include the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov.

The catches are recorded in the live weight equivalent of the landings. These are normally derived from the landed weight of the product by the application of a conversion factor. The catch data exclude fish and fishery products from aquaculture.

The data have generally been derived from the national submissions on the STATLANT 37A questionnaire or under EU Council Regulation no. 2597/95. Eurostat gratefully acknowledges the contribution made by FAO to the collection and compilation of the data, particularly those for non-EU Member States.

Fisheries data for the Mediterranean are generally considered to be of a lower reliability than those for other fishing areas. This is due to a number of factors:

- Mediterranean fisheries are characterised by being generally conducted by a large number of small fishing vessels operating from numerous small ports or landing places. Furthermore, much of the catch is not sold through official markets but is for local consumption. The collection of catch data is an extremely difficult task for the national authorities. Complete coverage is seldom possible: sample surveys are often used.
- Mediterranean fisheries are much less highly regulated than those of other areas (for example the Northeast and Northwest Atlantic regions) and Mediterranean fisheries are not subject to the same level of control and surveillance.

## Further information:

### ➤ Reference publications

Title European fisheries in figures  
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