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BULGARIA IN THE WORLD AND IN THE EU

2023, sources: Eurostat and FAO

Bulgaria is a minor EU producer of fishery products. As for aquaculture production, in 2023 it ranked 18th among EU-27 producing countries.

(1.000 tonnes)	World	EU-27	Bulgaria	% world	% EU-27
Catches	91.681	3.555	7	0,01%	0,2%
Aquaculture	136.140	1.043	10	0,01%	1,0%
Total	**227.821**	**4.598**	**17**	**0,01%**	**0,4%**

FISHING FLEET

Fleet: 2024, source: EU fishing fleet register – Eurostat Employment: 2023, source: JRC

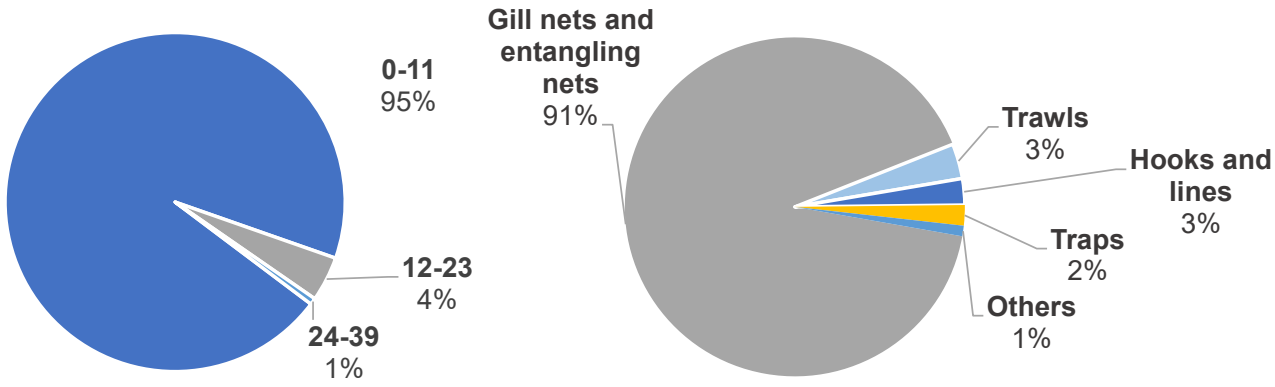
Vessels (2024)	Capacity (2024)	Power (2024)
Number: 1.794	GT: 5.830	KW: 52.944
TOTAL FTE: 575 (2023, source: JRC)		

0-11 m	12-23 m	24-39 m	>40 m
Jobs (FTE): 70%	Jobs (FTE): 22%	Jobs (FTE): 9%	Jobs (FTE): 0%

GT: Gross tonnage - KW: Kilowatt - FTE: Full Time Equivalent

The Bulgarian fishing fleet by length and gear

(% of total number of vessels)



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LANDINGS

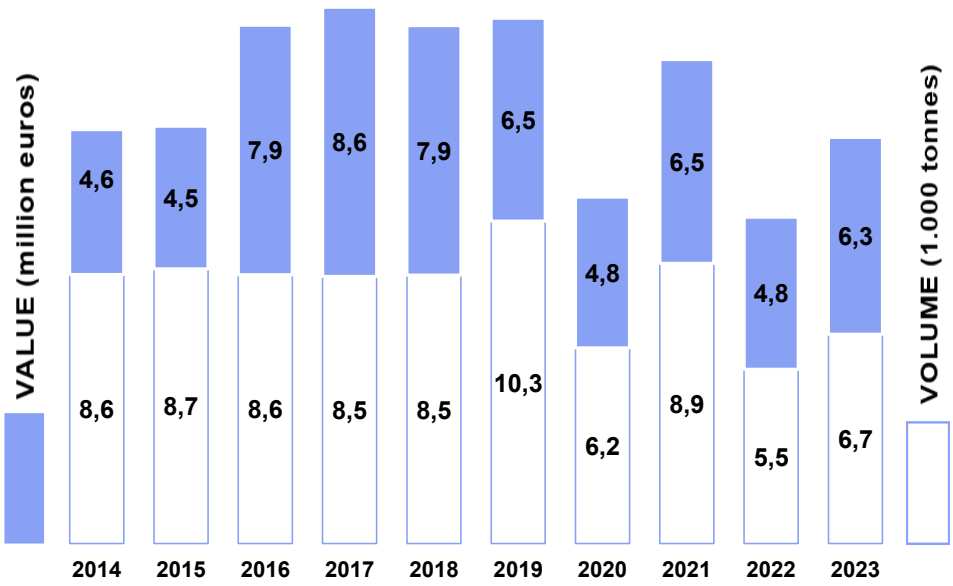
Source: EUMOFA, based on Eurostat data

Landings comprise the initial unloading of any fisheries products from on board a fishing vessel in a given Member State. They include aquatic plants and species not destined for human consumption. Landings are recorded in net weight and value, and concern landings made by vessels from EU Member States, Iceland, Norway and the UK.

Landings in Bulgaria are destined for human consumption only, and they entirely include fresh products.

There are 75 fishing ports registered in the country source: EU Master Data Register, 03 December 2025).

Total landings. Values are deflated by using the GDP deflator (base=2020)



Main commercial species landed and % of total

2023, million euros (nominal value) and 1.000 tonnes

SPRAT (= BRISLING)	1,05	34,62%	3,26	48,96%	SPRAT (= BRISLING)
TURBOT	0,87	11,35%	0,24	3,62%	RED MULLET
CLAM	0,70	8,95%	0,15	2,29%	CLAM
RED MULLET	0,30	5,80%	0,13	2,00%	MUSSEL *MYTILUS* SPP.
MUSSEL *MYTILUS* SPP.	0,22	2,07%	0,08	1,27%	TURBOT
OTHERS	1,71	37,21%	2,88	43,13%	OTHERS

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AQUACULTURE

Source: EUMOFA, based on Eurostat and FAO data

Aquaculture consists in the farming of aquatic (fresh or saltwater) organisms, such as fish, molluscs, crustaceans and aquatic plants. Aquaculture data are reported in live weight equivalent and value.

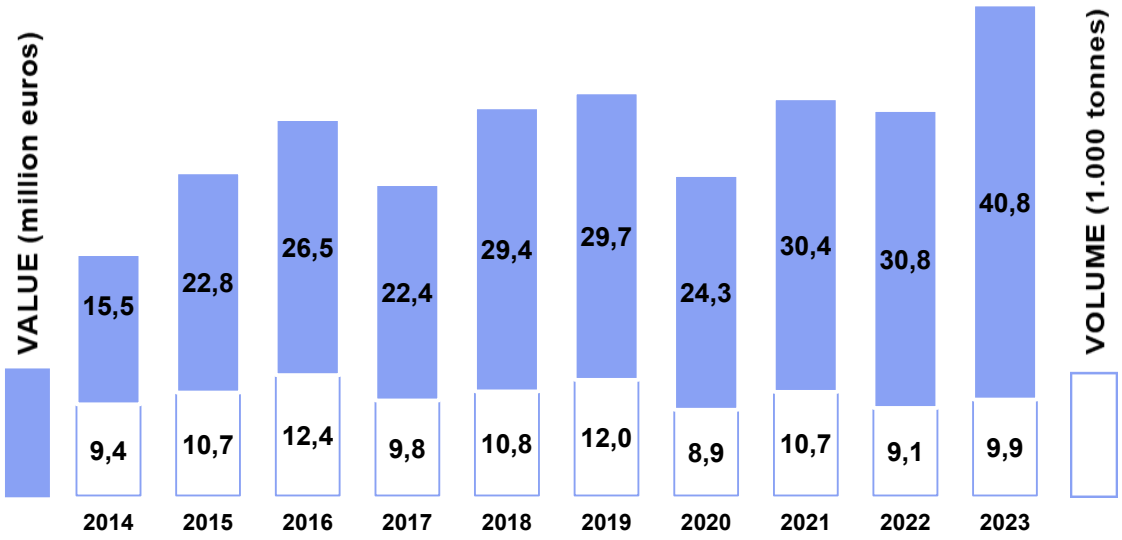
In 2023, almost 89% of Bulgarian production occurred in freshwater and the rest in marine waters.

According to Eurostat, in 2023 the following main production methods are used in the country:

- Around 11% of production: off bottom in brackish water;
- Around 2% of production: in tanks and raceways in freshwater;
- Around 1% of production: in recirculation systems;
- Less than 1% of production: in cages in freshwater.

The rest has been classified under fresh water using other methods for which no detail is available.

Total production. Values are deflated by using the GDP deflator (base=2020)



Main commercial species farmed and % of total

2023, million euros (nominal value) and 1.000 tonnes

TROUT	25,3	62%	4,7	47%	TROUT
CARP	10,5	26%	3,5	36%	CARP
MUSSEL *MYTILUS* SPP.	1,7	4%	1,1	11%	MUSSEL *MYTILUS* SPP.
FRESHWATER CATFISH	0,9	2%	0,1	1%	FRESHWATER CATFISH
OTHERS	2,5	6%	0,5	5%	OTHERS

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PRODUCER ORGANISATIONS

Source: European Commission, List of the recognised producer organisations in the fishery and aquaculture sector

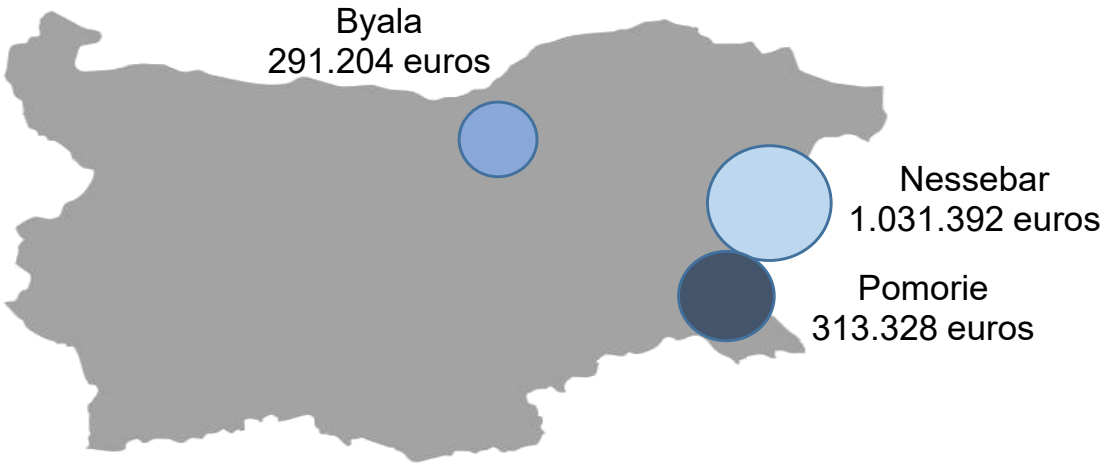
In Bulgaria, **2 producer organisations (PO)** are formally recognized, operating in the fishery sector. Their role is to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and of the Common organisation of the markets (CMO) through the collective management of their members' activities.

FIRST SALES

2025, source: EUMOFA

First sales concern the fish that is sold or registered at an auction center or to registered buyers or to producer organizations (PO). First sales may differ from landings since the former do not cover fish that is landed by vessels owned by processing companies or direct sales to processors.

In 2025, total first sales in Bulgarian places of sale amounted to 3.083 tonnes and 2,7 million euros. The top-3 places of sale covered 72% and 61% of total first sales, respectively in volume and value terms.



Top-3 places of sale	Volume (tonnes)	Value (euros)	Top-3 main commercial species (in value)
Nessebar	1.717	1.031.392	Sprat (=brisling), red mullet, clam
Pomorie	360	313.328	Red mullet, sprat (=brisling), clam
Byala	145	291.204	Clam, other molluscs and aquatic invertebrates, red mullet

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WHOLESALE

Wholesale is an intermediary stage in the distribution channel that buys in bulk and sells to resellers (e.g. retailers) rather than to consumers. In Bulgaria, there is only one wholesale market, namely Bourgas (source: Eurofish).

PROCESSING

According to Eurostat-SBS, 1.766 persons were employed in the Bulgarian fish processing industry in 2023. The sector recorded a value added of 31,7 million euros, covering 2% of the value added of total manufacture of food products.

In 2024, the main products sold were “Fresh or chilled fish fillets and fish meat (including shark fins), whether or not minced” and “Smoked trout (incl. fillets, excluding heads, tails and maws)” (source: Eurostat-PRODCOM).

47 companies
Net turnover: 142,8 million euros
(2024, source: Eurostat - SBS)

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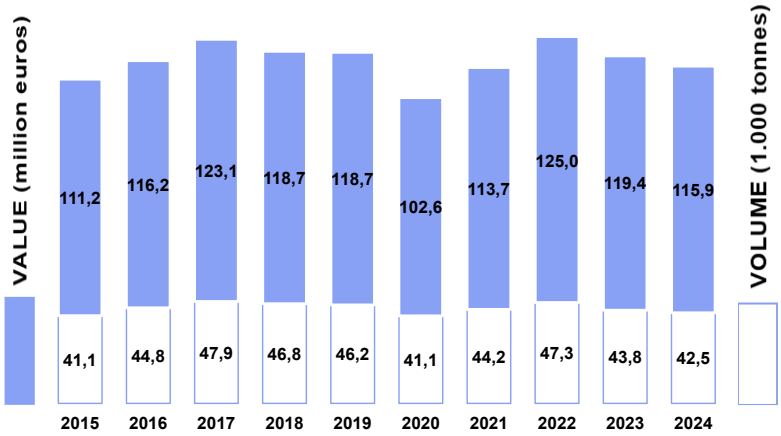
IMPORT – EXPORT

Source: EUMOFA, based on Eurostat-COMEXT data

Values in the bar charts are deflated by using the GDP deflator (base=2020)

IMPORT

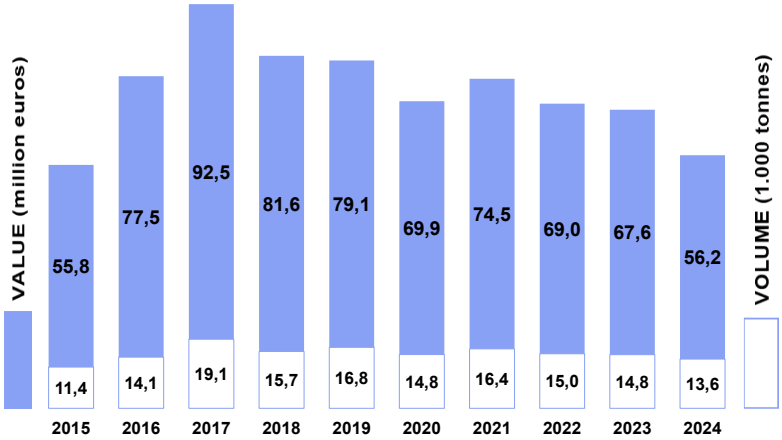


Main commercial species imported and % of total imports

2024, million euros (nominal value)

SALMON	35	21%
MACKEREL	19	12%
COLDWATER SHRIMPS	10	6%
SKIPJACK TUNA	8	5%
EUROPEAN SEABASS	7	4%
OTHERS	87	53%

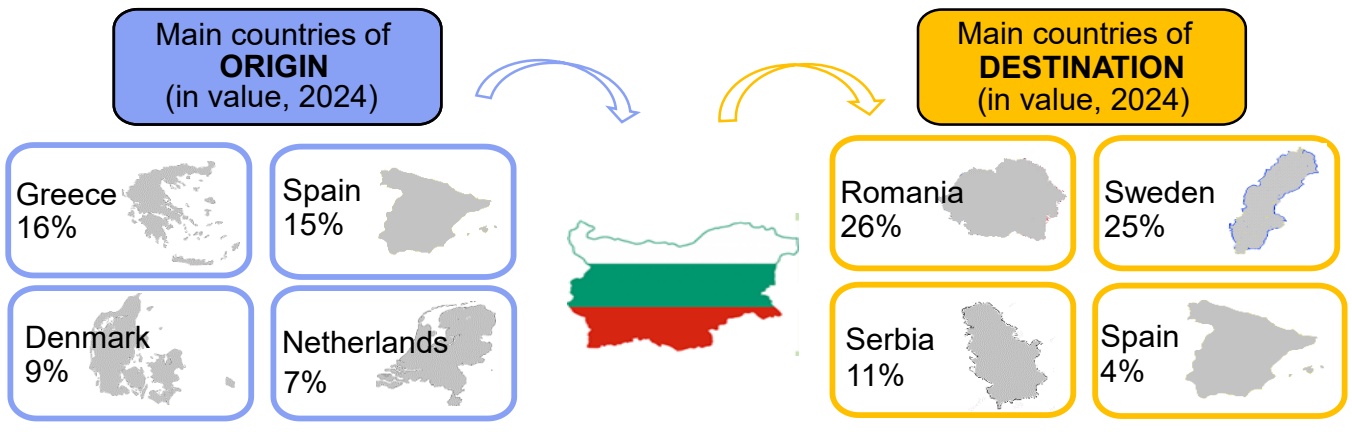
EXPORT



Main commercial species exported and % of total exports

2024, million euros (nominal value)

MISCELLANEOUS SHRIMPS	18	23%
SALMON	9	11%
TROUT	6	8%
CAVIAR, LIVERS AND ROES	6	8%
MACKEREL	6	7%
OTHERS	35	43%



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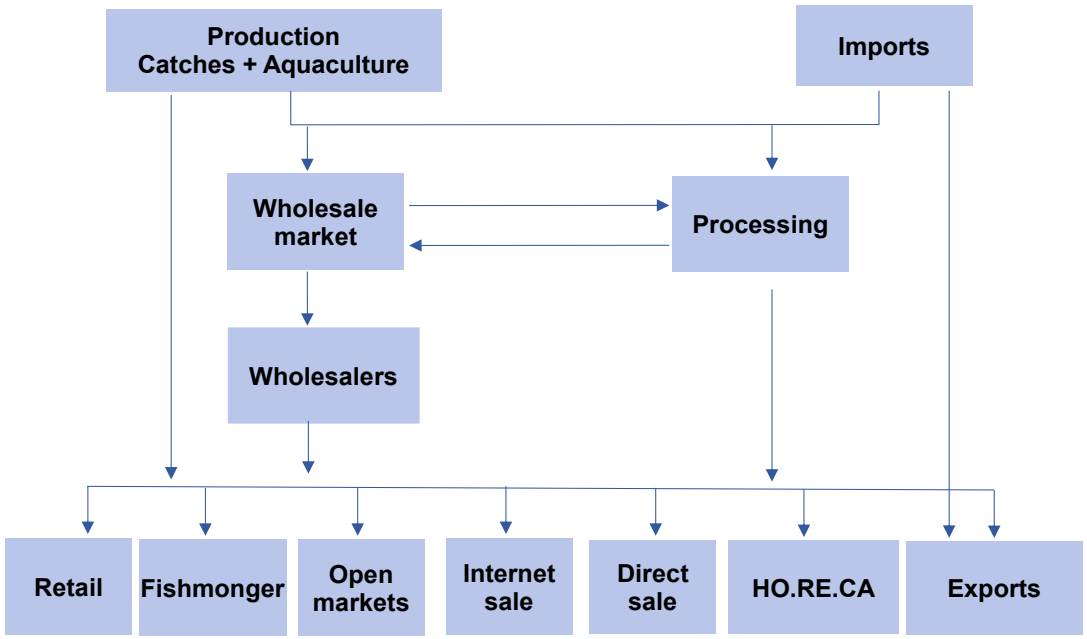
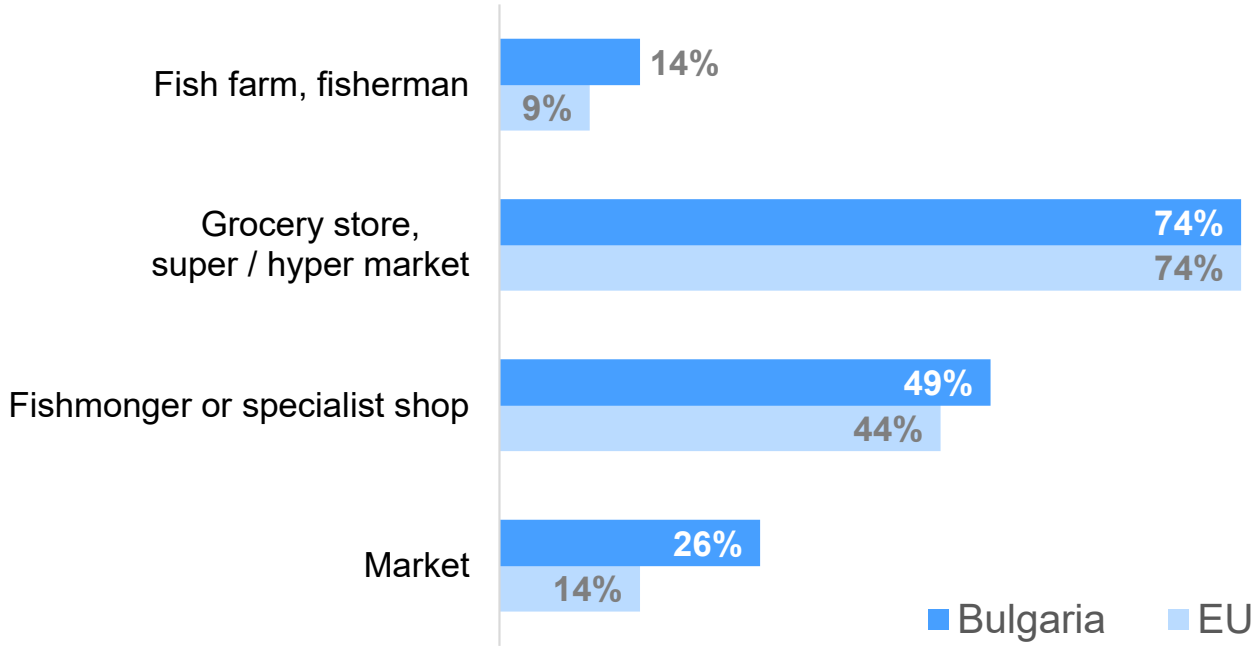
DISTRIBUTION

The supply chain of fisheries and aquaculture products in Bulgaria (source: Eurofish):



Consumer preferences on purchasing channels (source: Eurobarometer, 2024):



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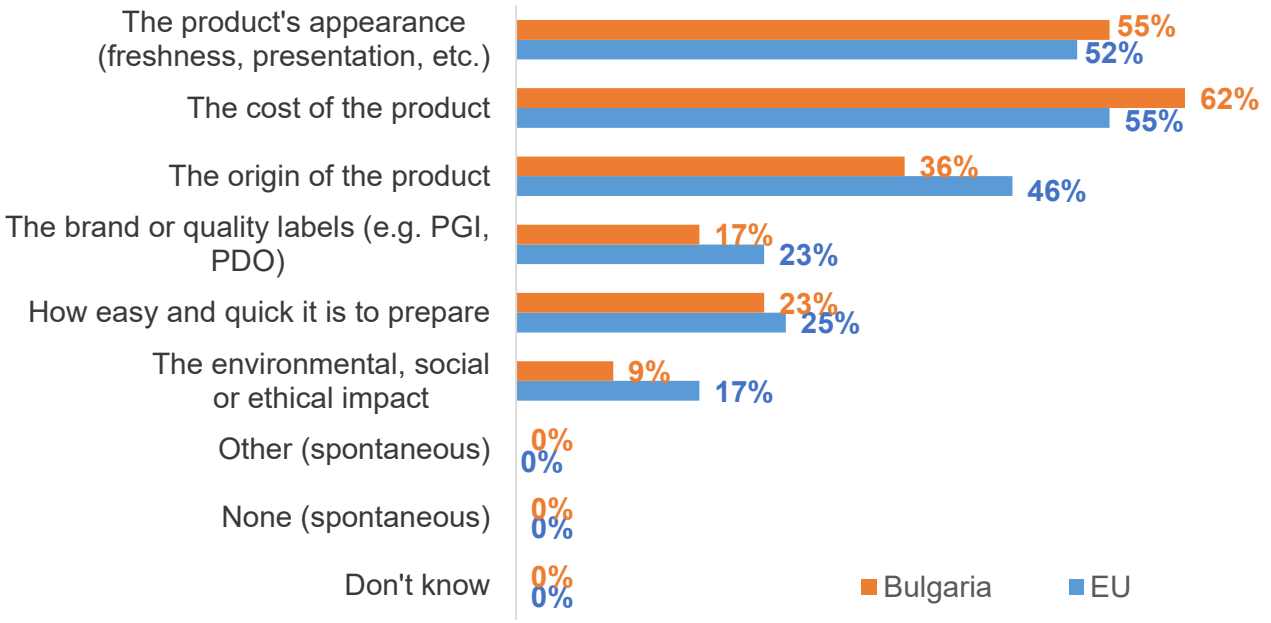
CONSUMPTION

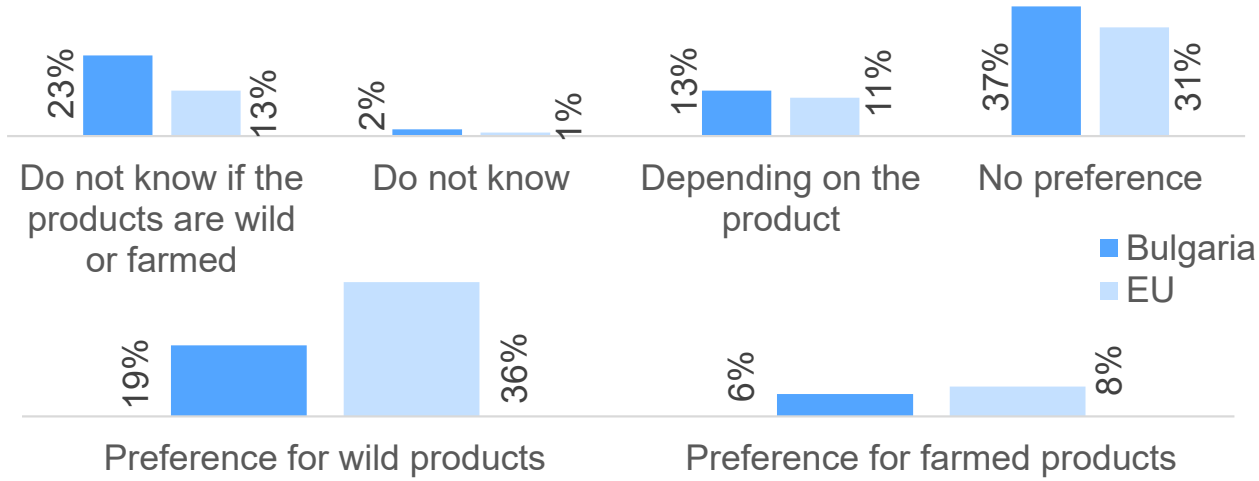
In 2023, apparent consumption was estimated at 7,64 kg per capita, a 5% increase compared with 2022. The most consumed species were mackerel, trout, hake, sprat and coldwater shrimps (source: EUMOFA).

7,64 kg
per capita in live weight equivalent
(2023, source: EUMOFA)

Purchasing factors (source: Eurobarometer, 2024)



Preferences regarding wild or farmed product (source: Eurobarometer, 2024)



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THE COUNTRY IN EUMOFA

LANDINGS

Volumes and values are collected from Eurostat – Fishery.

They are available on a yearly basis and accessible through dashboards, as well as through the bulk download facility.

AQUACULTURE

Volumes and values are collected from Eurostat – Fishery and integrated with FAO data.

They are available on a yearly basis and accessible through dashboards, as well as through the bulk download facility.

FIRST SALES

Volumes and values are collected from the Executive Agency for Fisheries and Aquaculture on a monthly basis, and cover all species sold in Bulgarian places of sale.

Data are accessible through dashboards, as well as through the bulk download facility. Data at disaggregated level are also accessible, through dashboards and the bulk download facility.

WHOLESALE

No data available

IMPORT - EXPORT

Volumes and values are collected from Eurostat – COMEXT. Data concern trade flows of all fisheries and aquaculture products as recorded by national customs.

They are available on a monthly and yearly basis and accessible through dashboards, as well as through the bulk download facility.

PROCESSING

Data are collected from Eurostat – PRODCOM. They concern ex-farm quantities and values of fisheries and aquaculture products sold in the country after being transformed from raw material into final products.

They are available on a yearly basis and accessible through dashboards, as well as through the bulk download facility.

CONSUMPTION

No data available