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BELGIUM IN THE WORLD AND IN THE EU

2023, sources: Eurostat and FAO

Belgium is a minor EU-27 producer of fishery and aquaculture products.

(1.000 tonnes)	World	EU-27	Belgium	% world	% EU-27
Catches	91.681	3.555	18,0	0,0196%	0,51%
Aquaculture	136.140	1.043	0,3	0,0002%	0,03%
Total	**227.821**	**4.598**	**18,3**	**0,0080%**	**0,40%**

FISHING FLEET

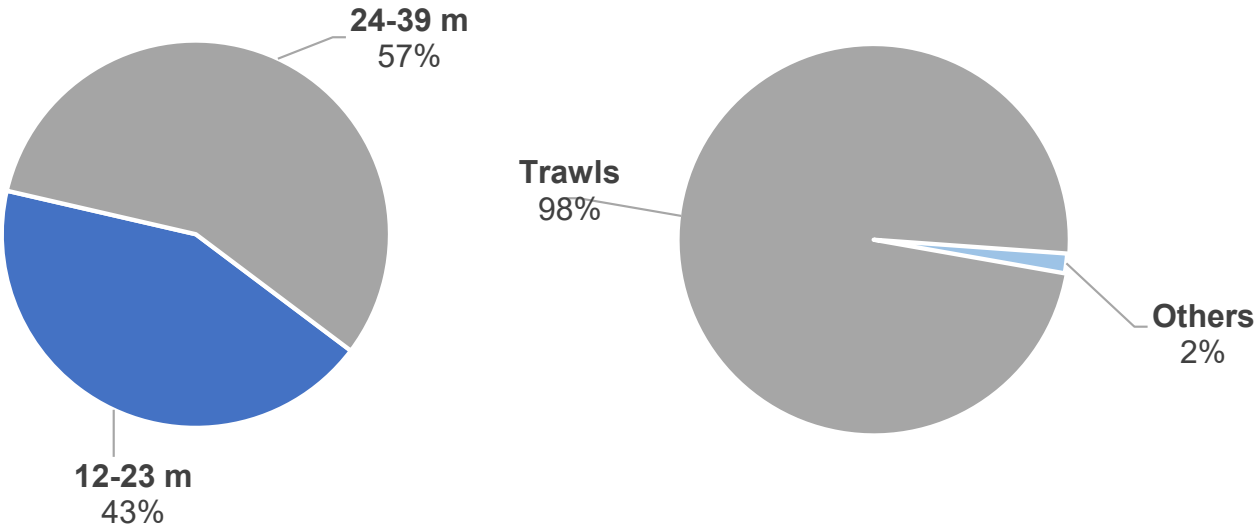
Fleet: 2024, source: EU fishing fleet register - Eurostat Employment: 2023, source: JRC

Vessels (2024)	Capacity (2024)	Power (2024)	
Number: 61	GT: 13.957	KW: 45.374	
TOTAL FTE: 233 (2023, source: JRC)			
0-11 m	**12-23 m**	**24-39 m**	**>40 m**
Jobs (FTE): 0%	Jobs (FTE): 12%	Jobs (FTE): 88%	Jobs (FTE): 0%

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

The Belgian fishing fleet by length and gear

(% of total number of vessels)



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LANDINGS

Source: EUMOFA, based on Eurostat data

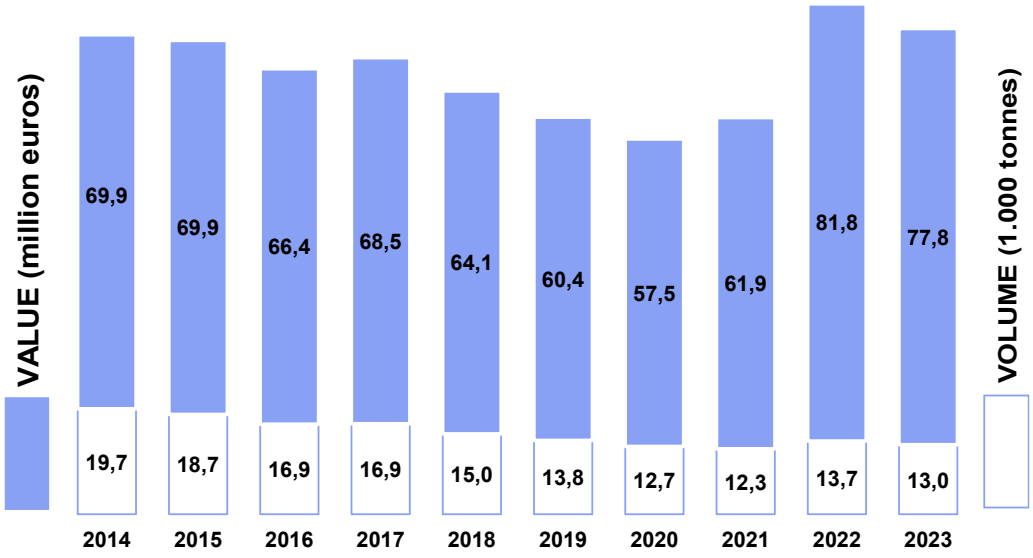
Landings comprise the initial unloading of any fisheries products from on board a fishing vessel in a given Member State. They include aquatic plants and species not destined for human consumption. Landings are recorded in net weight and value, and concern landings made by vessels from EU Member States,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

In 2023, 98% of landings in Belgium included fresh whole/gutted products, the rest mostly consisting of cooked products.

Almost all landings are destined for human consumption, the rest being used for industrial purposes.

There are 7 fishing ports registered in Belgium (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

COMMON SOLE	37,9	48,8%	2,2	16,7%	COMMON SOLE
CUTTLEFISH	5,7	7,4%	1,8	14,0%	CUTTLEFISH
SQUID	5,4	6,9%	1,2	9,0%	EUROPEAN PLAICE
MONK	4,7	6,1%	1,1	8,6%	RAY
EUROPEAN PLAICE	3,6	4,6%	0,8	6,1%	GURNARD
OTHERS	20,4	26,2%	5,9	45,7%	OTHERS

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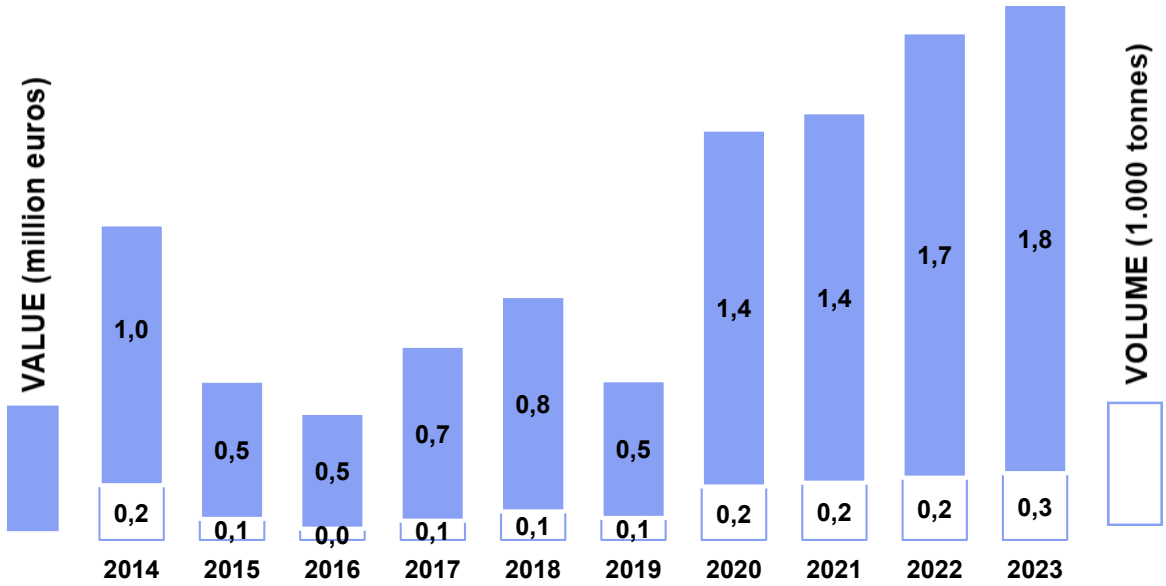
AQUACULTURE

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.

Only limited freshwater production exists in Belgium, mainly consisting in trout farming.

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



PRODUCER ORGANISATIONS

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

In Belgium, **1 producer organisation (PO)** is formally recognized, operating in the fishery sector. Its 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 its members' activities.

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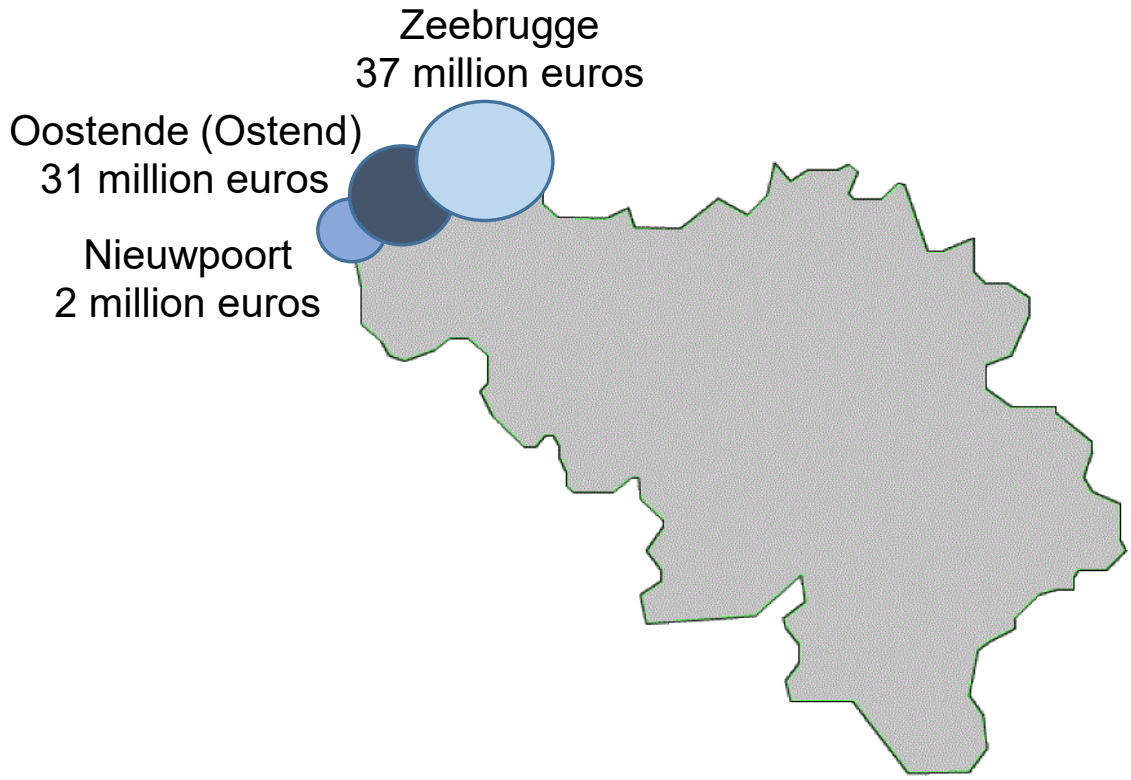
FIRST SALES

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 Belgium, there are three auctions, all located in the North Sea: Oostende (Ostend), Zeebrugge and Nieuwpoort.

In 2025, total first sales amounted to 11.105 tonnes and 69 million euros.



Auctions	Volume (tonnes)	Value (million euros)	Top-3 main commercial species (in value)
Zeebrugge	5.862	37	Common sole, cuttlefish, monk
Oostende (Ostend)	4.987	31	Common sole, cuttlefish, squid
Nieuwpoort	256	2	Common sole, Shrimp *Crangon* spp., European seabass

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WHOLESALE

Source: Vlaamse Visveiling

Wholesale is an intermediary stage in the distribution channel that buys in bulk and sells to resellers (e.g. retailers) rather than to consumers. There are no wholesale markets in Belgium. The three Belgian auctions (Oostende, Zeebrugge and Nieuwpoort) play an important role in the supply chain of fishery and aquaculture products. There are two auction management companies in Belgium:

- Vlaamse Visveiling (the most important): management company of the two auctions of Oostende and Zeebrugge. It gathers 170 buyers: wholesalers, supermarkets, markets and speciality stores.
- Nieuwpoortse Visveilling: management company of the Nieuwpoort auction.

PROCESSING

According to Eurostat-SBS, 1.475 persons were employed in the Belgian fish processing industry in 2023. The sector recorded a value added of 137 million euros, covering the 1,2% 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 Pacific, Atlantic and Danube salmon (including fillets, excluding heads, tails and maws)” (source: Eurostat-PRODCOM).

61 companies
Net turnover: 837,5 million euros
(2024, source: Eurostat - SBS)

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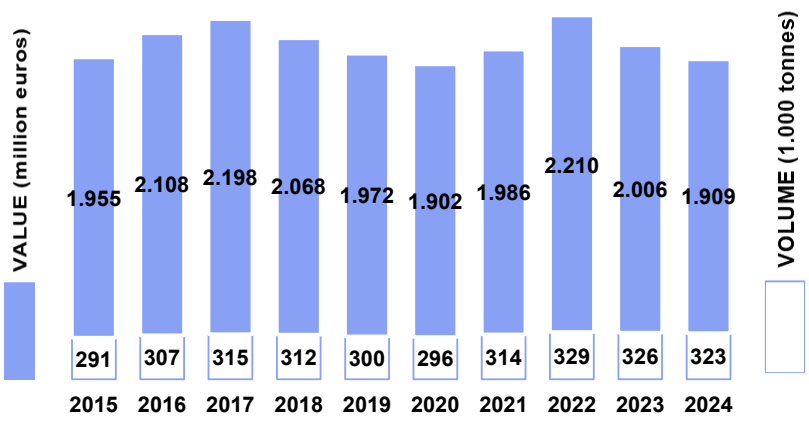
IMPORT – EXPORT

Source: EUMOFA, based on Eurostat-COMEXT data

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

IMPORT

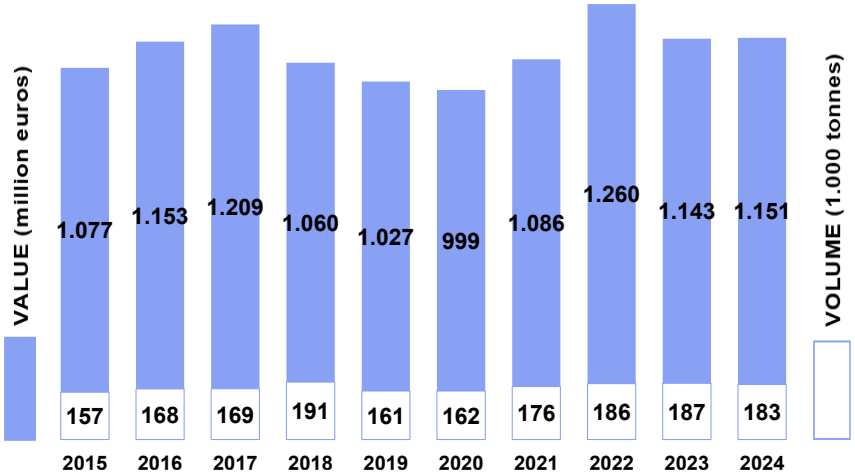


Main commercial species imported and % of total imports

2024, million euros (nominal value)

SALMON	478	21%
SHRIMPS (MOSTLY WARMWATER)	459	21%
COD	128	6%
MUSSEL *MYTILUS* SPP.	84	4%
SKIPJACK TUNA	77	3%
OTHERS	1008	45%

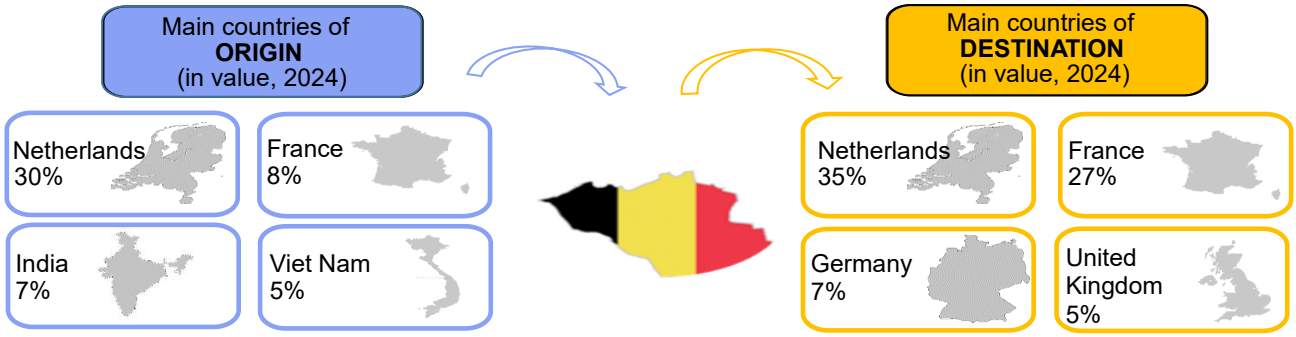
EXPORT



Main commercial species exported and % of total exports

2024, million euros (nominal value)

SHRIMPS (MOSTLY WARMWATER)	393	29%
SALMON	214	16%
FISH OIL	85	6%
COD	49	4%
LOBSTER *HOMARUS* SPP.	32	2%
OTHERS	572	43%



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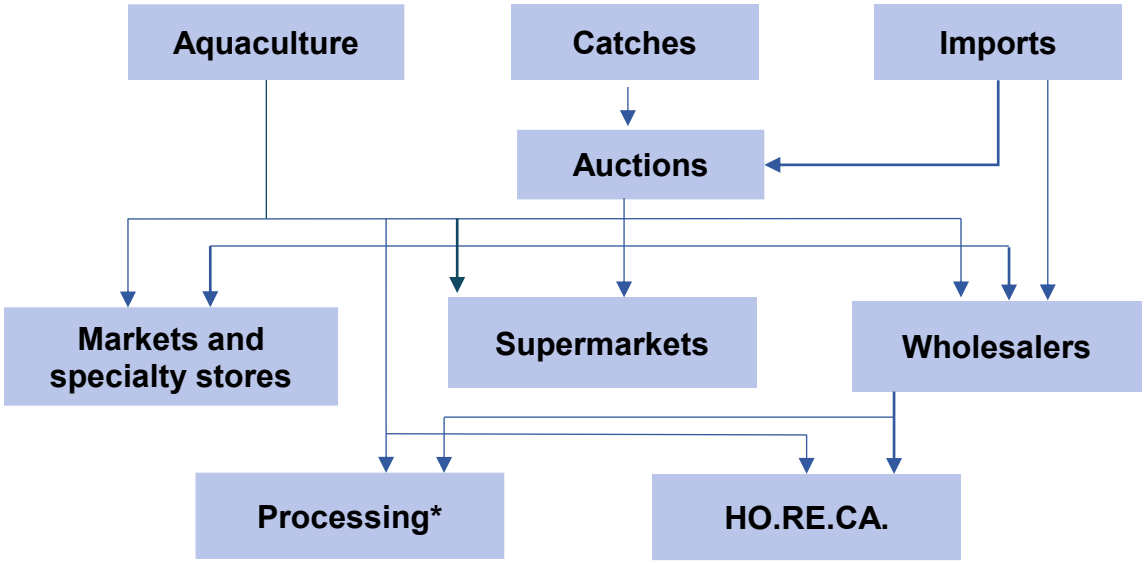
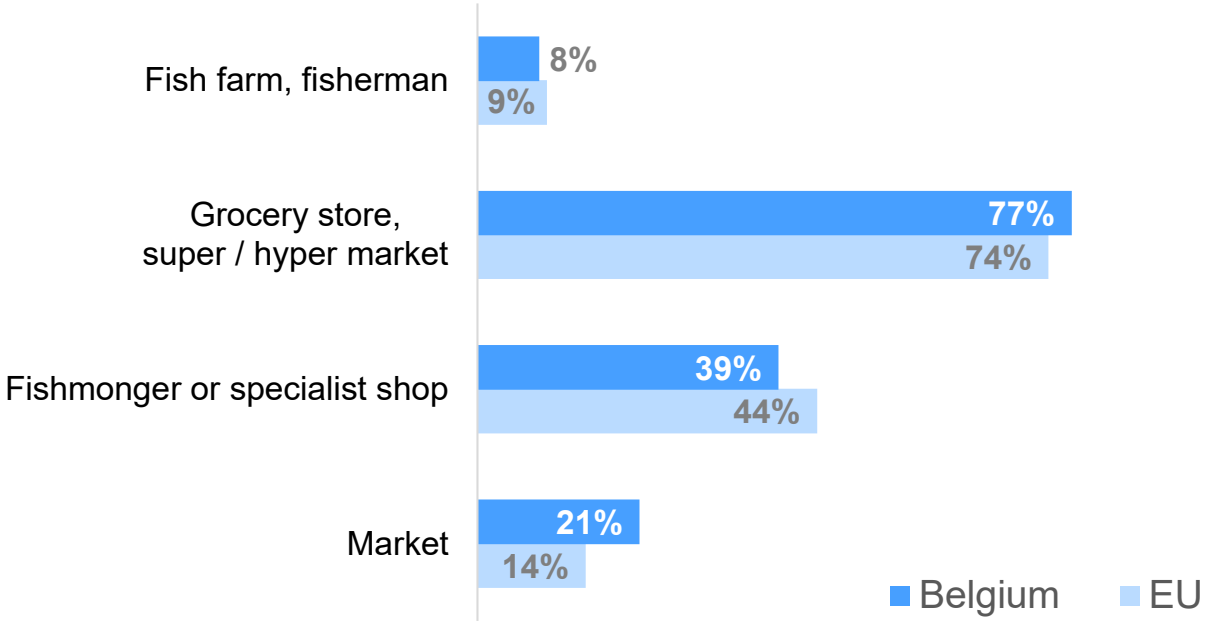
DISTRIBUTION

The supply chain of fisheries and aquaculture products in Belgium (based on the operational programme for the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund - EMFF - of Belgium):



* Processing depends heavily on imports. The majority of processed products are exported.

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



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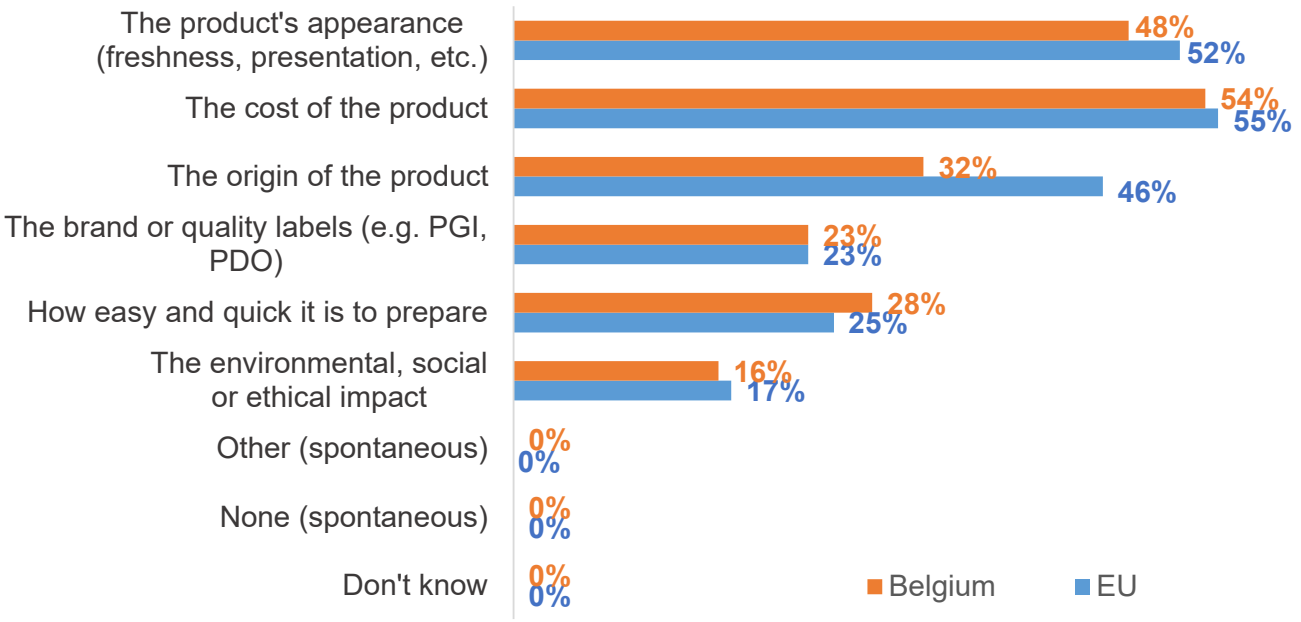
CONSUMPTION

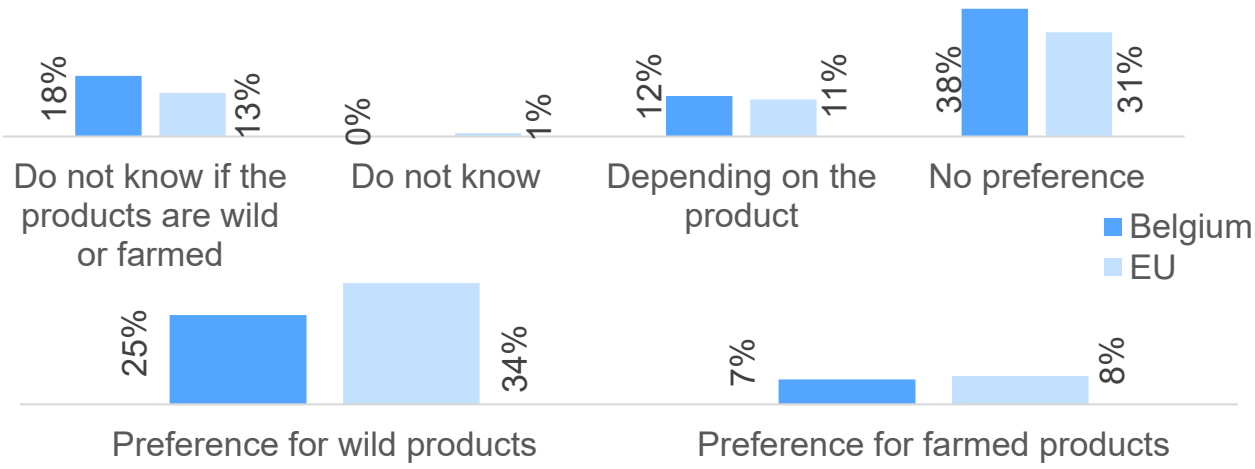
In 2023, apparent consumption was estimated at 21,77 kg per capita, a 1% decrease compared with 2022. The most consumed species were salmon, cod, mussel and skipjack tuna (source: EUMOFA).

21,77 kg
per capita in live weight equivalent
(2023, source: EUMOFA)

Purchasing factors (source: Eurobarometer, 2024)



Preferences regarding wild or farmed products (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 Department of Agriculture and Fisheries of the Government of Flanders on a weekly and monthly basis.

Weekly data are monitored for a selection of 52 main commercial species and 3 auctions. Monthly data cover all species sold in the three auctions.

Both weekly and monthly data are accessible through dashboards, as well as through 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

Retail prices from online shops are available, as collected via price-scraper.