

Coronavirus response

EUMOFA's weekly data and trends analysis

Week 18

The fishery and aquaculture sectors are among the most immediately impacted by the crisis. EUMOFA is releasing a weekly COVID-19 bulletin in order to inform the sector as quickly as possible on the evolution of the markets along the entire value chain, based on the most recent data on first sales, production and trade of fishery and aquaculture products. The data and analyses proposed are accurate to EUMOFA experts' best knowledge but are of course subject to availability of information in the short-term and to intrinsic volatility of the current situation.



FISHERIES

LOWER PRODUCTION IN WEEK 18:¹

In several Member States, fishing activity and landings decreased in week 18. Impacts on first sales prices vary across countries:

[GFCM](#) reports moorings of 80% of the operating **Mediterranean fleet** and a general drop in first-sale prices (between -20% and -70%). The small-scale coastal fleet is the most affected by the crisis while the large-scale fleet has managed to maintain its activity in a range that varies between 40% and 100%. This reduced fish production by 75% in most countries.

In **Italy**, the [current situation](#) is heterogeneous and represents an exception: hardest impacts on trawler fleet, whereas small-scale fleet can survive through direct sales and local fishmongers. The sector fears that some fishing companies may request support for scrapping of fishing vessels by the end of the year due to economic difficulties.

In **France**, first sales in Atlantic auctions decreased in week 18. Auction sales data from [FranceAgriMer](#) (excluding the Mediterranean seaboard) show a 29%-decrease in volume and 9%-increase in prices for 31 main species over week 17. Saithe, scallop, whelk and sardine drove this drop in volume whereas significant price increases were reported for sardine, ray, whiting and monkfish.

For the third week in a row, the average prices decreased in [five auctions](#) in **Denmark** (Hanstholm, Hirtshals, Strandby, Grenaa and Skagen). From week 17 to week 18, sales decreased by 17% and their value dropped by 35%. The prices were at their lowest in the beginning of week 18 - mainly caused by large landings of saithe, hake, cod and pollack - then started to increase towards the end of the week, together with lower volumes.

¹ Weekly data on first sale are conceived to be disseminated as rapidly as possible. For this reason, they only cover some representative products in a selection of locations in some countries. They do not aim to give complete coverage of the market, and so it is recommended to use them as a mere indication of ongoing trends. For more information on species, countries and locations covered, please see [here](#).

In Spain, the fishing fleet activity is slowly recovering. For the anchovy campaign, [week 18 has been more positive](#) with increased prices due to the localization of bigger-size anchovy banks and lowered quota. [Bigger anchovy average prices reached 2,00 EUR/kg](#), which is above profitability threshold. However, on top of EUR 40 million temporary cessation measures, EUR 10 million funding will be granted for Producer Organizations for [supporting storage costs](#).



AQUACULTURE

LOW DEMAND LEADS TO STOCK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

In Spain, the farmed seabass and seabream sectors were already affected by low prices and Storm Gloria, leading to reduced production and stocking in 2019. The COVID-19 crisis will drive this trend further. Then in 2020, a contraction of the supply is expected, leading to increased imports from Greece. Seabass and seabream farmers are not selling as much as they used to, and once restrictions lift, will be selling only slightly larger fish. Typically, the larger sizes have gone into the HoReCa channel, which is not going to recover as fast as retail. Companies already producing processed and frozen products are better positioned.

According to industry sources, several companies in Denmark, including newly established RAS² farms, selling to the HoReCa segment, are severely impacted by the crisis. Steep fall in revenues increases pressure on farmers' liquidity, and several companies are struggling for survival.



PROCESSING

EQUIPMENT SUPPLIERS INVEST ON ONLINE SERVICES

The [seafood industry's major processing equipment suppliers](#) are stymied by global travel bans, lockdowns and other restrictions, making critical repairs and updates more complex than ever. Even though travels for technicians are still possible, as the suppliers of food processing equipment are regarded as vital for the supply chain, companies have invested and shifted to online services.

The Portuguese tuna and seafood processing company A Povieirais is expanding its production in the middle of the covid-19 pandemic. The company is the 3rd largest processing company in Portugal and sells 8 brands including the tuna and seafood brands Alva, Ala Arriba and Minarva. The company have invested EUR 20 million in the expansion which started in March. 42 new workers have been employed in the plant. The goal of the expansion is to increase production for the export markets (source: ATUNA).

² Recirculating aquaculture systems



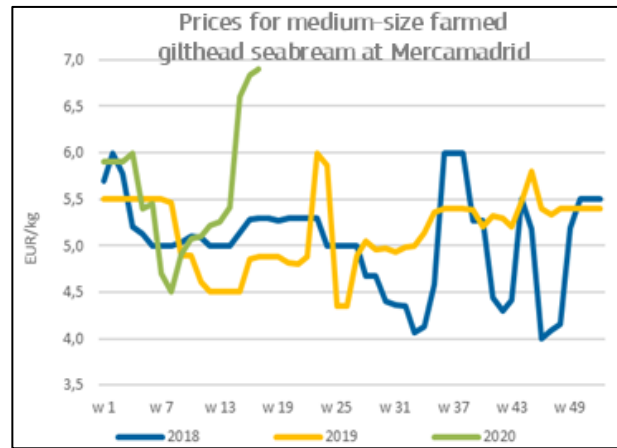
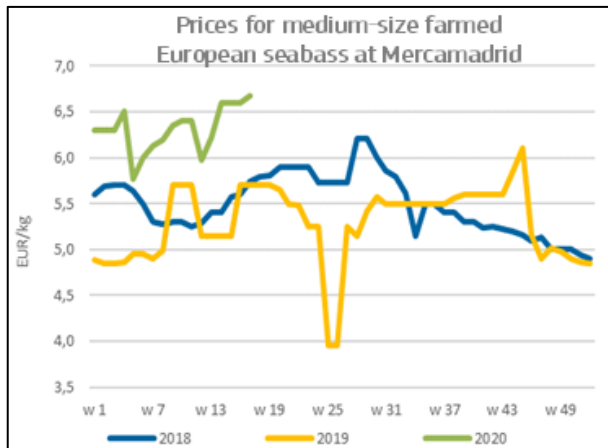
WHOLESALE

DIFFERENT TRENDS ACROSS THE EU, WITH GOOD PRICE LEVELS FOR FARMED SEABASS AND SEABREAM

In [Rungis](#) (France), prices of fresh fish have been stable in week 18 compared to week 17.

In [Rome](#) (Italy), the same price stability was observed, at the exception of the increase for Adriatic shrimps, and the sharp drop for anchovy (-39%) due to recovering supplies.

At [Mercamadrid](#) (Spain), prices decreased for several species in week 18, especially for hake (-11% to -20%), monkfish tails (-20%), and swordfish (-8%). However, anchovy price increased by 25% due to tighter supplies. In April, a steep upward price trend is observed for all sizes of farmed seabream: for medium sized (400-600gr), prices averaged 6,44 EUR/kg, +37% from 2019 and +24% from 2018.



RETAIL & CONSUMPTION

CLOSED HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS AND CHANGES IN CONSUMPTION HABITS FORCE COMPANIES TO ADAPT THEIR MARKETING STRATEGIES

In France, despite still low sales of fresh fish, [purchases of prepacked fish products are increasing](#), especially due to the strong growth of purchases through drive-through services. Thus, several companies that used to sell their product as whole fish on fish counters are moving into prepacked products.

In Italy, the [consumption of fish products is increasing](#) where people have more time to cook. The situation is more difficult on coastal regions where the fishing sector highly depends on tourism and restaurants. According to [ISMEA](#), processed fish products were more consumed during the weeks of containment.

In Spain, fishmongers have lost 20% of turnover with the closure of HORECA channels. Moreover, the species usually bought for special occasions or through “pleasure” purchases (e.g. shellfish) are the most impacted by the drop of demand. In-stores sales currently only account for 25% of sales, whereas at home delivery for 75%. This has driven the logistic costs to increase by 75% (Source: Alimarket 05.05.2020).

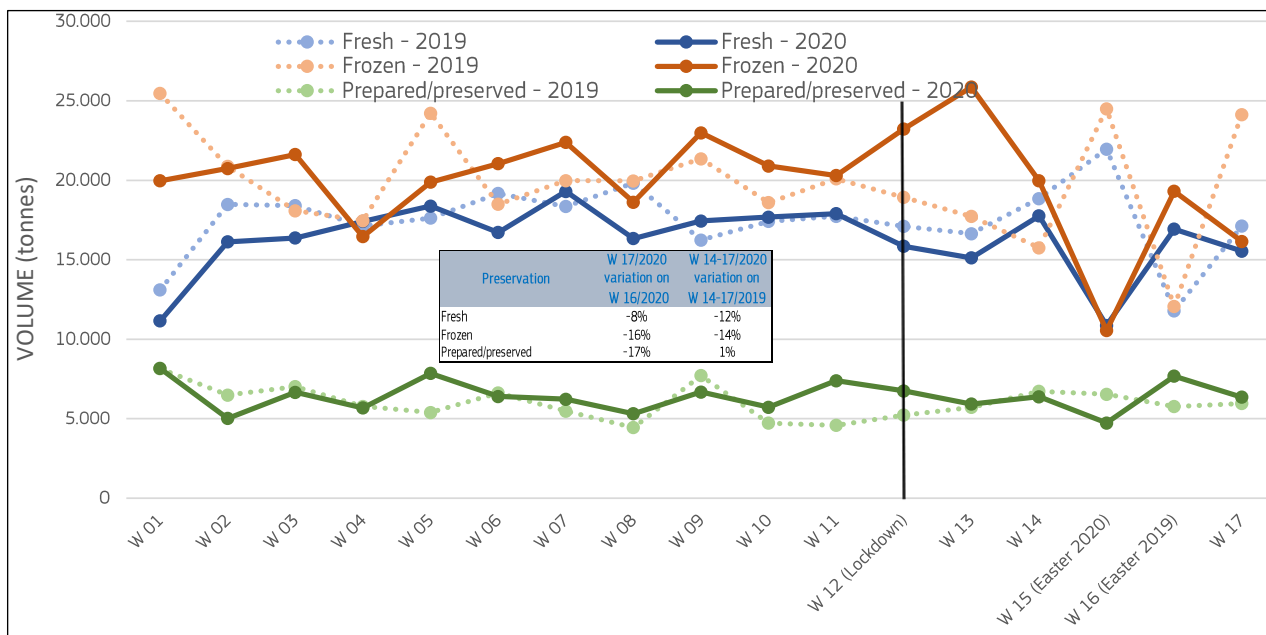


DECREASED EU IMPORTS FROM WEEK 16 TO WEEK 17

Compared with previous week, EU imports of the major species from main origins declined by 13% in both volume and value.

Differently from the same week of 2019, all main preservation categories (fresh, frozen and prepared/preserved) showed a downward trend. Nevertheless, among fresh, filleted products increased by 12% in 2020, thus exceeding by 8% the 2020-average.

- The volumes of **fresh** (mainly salmon and cod) and **frozen** products (mainly warmwater shrimp) imported in the last 4 weeks of 2020 were, respectively, **12% and 14% lower than in the same period of 2019**.
- Imports of **prepared/preserved** products (mainly skipjack tuna) in weeks 14-17 of 2020 were almost at the same level of the same period in 2019.



Five products accounted for 60% of the decrease in terms of volume: coldwater shrimp from Greenland (23%), Alaska pollock from China (13%), yellowfin tuna from Seychelles (9%), salmon from Norway (8%).

Miscellaneous shrimps: in week 17, DG TAXUD recorded that no arrival from Greenland occurred, thus making total imports dropping by more than 80% in volume and value. At the same time, the import price declined by 7% (from 7,70 to 7,18 EUR/kg), although the USD depreciation (-2%).

In the first 17 weeks of 2020, EU import prices of fresh farmed European seabass from Turkey averaged 3,86 EUR/kg, up 5% from the corresponding period in 2019. Since the lockdown, import prices have trended up and the current price level is just above 4,00 EUR/kg and imports volumes have trended up and in week 17 exceeding 400 tonnes. It is still a way up to pre-lockdown levels.

EU imports quantities of fresh whole gilthead seabream from Turkey have in the same period shown the same increasing trend as for European seabass, but volumes have been higher. In week 17, they turned 600 tonnes. EU import prices of Turkish gilthead seabream have trended on a higher level than seabass in the first 17 weeks of the year. Since the lockdown, the price gap between the species has narrowed. EU import prices of fresh gilthead seabass averaged 4,02 EUR/kg in the 17 first weeks of 2020. This represents an increase of 10% from the corresponding period in 2019. In week 17, the import price rose to 4,10 EUR/kg.

EUR exchange rates with CNY, GBP and ISK were fairly stable between 19 and 26 April. EUR appreciated against USD (+2%) and depreciated against NOK (-2%). In the same week, marine fuel prices in the EU decreased by 3% on average (from 0,37 to 0,36 EUR/litre). The highest was in Cyprus (0,54 EUR/litre) and the lowest were in Belgium and the Netherlands (both 0,31 EUR/litre).

To learn more about the market situation, [you can access the most recent weekly data \(up to week 17 of 2020\) on extra-EU imports.](#)

For any question or comment, do not hesitate to contact EUMOFA (contact-us@eumofa.eu).

ABOUT [EUMOFA](#)

The European Market Observatory for fisheries and aquaculture (EUMOFA) is a market intelligence tool on the European Union fisheries and aquaculture sector, developed by the European Commission. It aims to increase market transparency and efficiency, analyses EU markets dynamics, and supports business decisions and policy-making. EUMOFA enables direct monitoring of volumes, values and prices of fisheries and aquaculture products, from the first sale to retail stage, including imports and exports. Data are collected from EU countries, Iceland, Norway, United Kingdom and from EU institutions and updated every day.