

Coronavirus response

EUMOFA's weekly data and trends analysis

Weeks 24 - 25

The fishery and aquaculture sectors are among the most immediately impacted by the crisis. Over the last weeks, EUMOFA has released weekly bulletins in order to inform these sectors as quickly as possible on the impact of COVID-19 on the evolution of the markets along the entire value chain, based on the most recent data on first sales, production and trade. 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.

As several Member States have been gradually lifting restrictions, this is the last release of a regular bulletin. Starting from July, relevant updates will be included in the Monthly Highlights.

Most of countries have already opened kindergartens and schools. With continued distancing measures, larger gatherings start to be allowed, leading restaurants, cafes, schools and shops to re-open but still with relatively low activity. Prospects of increased demand from HORECA gives rise to cautious optimism throughout the value chain.



FISHERIES

FISHING ACTIVITIES SLOWLY RECOVERING DUE TO MODERATE INCREASE OF DEMAND FROM HORECA¹

In five auctions in **Denmark** (Hanstholm, Hirtshals, Strandby, Grenaa and Skagen), first sales increased in both week 24 and 25. Volumes increased by 14% from week 23 to week 24, mainly due to higher sales of saithe. In week 25, 191 tonnes of Atlantic herring were sold, causing overall volumes to increase 16% from week 24 and reach its highest level since March (1.217 tonnes). The value increased by 15% and 9% in weeks 24 and 25 respectively. However, due to the increased sales of the lower valued Atlantic herring in week 25, the overall average weekly price (total value/total volume) decreased by 6%. The overall average daily prices showed an increasing trend during week 24 and 25 and increased 21% from Monday 5th June to Thursday 18th June. However, all the 191 tonnes of Atlantic herring were sold Friday 19th June, causing the overall average daily price to drop by 35%.

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 **France**, fishing activities and fresh fish markets have been recovering especially since the reopening of restaurants. However, sales and prices for some species are still low and POs have sometimes to [limit catches to maintain profitable prices](#). [FranceAgriMer data on weekly auction sales](#) (excluding the Mediterranean seaboard) show that for the 31 main species, first-sales volumes decreased in week 24 (-11% against week 23, mostly due to saithe and to a lesser extent mackerel, hake and whelk) and significantly increased in week 25 (+25% from week 24, mostly due to monk, hake and sardine). However, average first-sale price slightly decreased by 3% in week 24 compared with week 23 (mostly due to the increasing share of sardine) and increased by 11% from week 24 to week 25 (thanks to higher volumes of valuable species such as monk, hake and rays). [In Normandy, the whelk fishery is suffering](#) from the slow recovery of demand from the HORECA sector, keeping prices low, whereas prices for all other major species have recovered. The closure of restaurants had already led whelk fishers to reduce their activities and to store a significant share of their landings in freezers. Now that freezers are full, a promotional campaign has been launched to try to increase the demand from consumers.

In **Spain**, in **Galicia**, [Rosa Quintana \(Councillor of the sea in Galicia\) estimated the economic losses](#) of the fishing sector due to the COVID-19 crisis: EUR 25 million were lost at first-sale level, circa EUR 60 million were lost due to the lack of activity, and the whole maritime industry decline represents more than EUR 500 million loss.

Fishing activities in **Ireland** have increased over the last weeks and fish is currently sold at reasonable prices. The demand for fish sold in retail is decent, meanwhile the HORECA segment is quiet. Market conditions for shellfish has to some extent improved. Market conditions and prices for high priced demersal fish species (species exported to continental EU for the restaurant segment) are still poor, while conditions for demersal species normally achieving lower prices in the market such as haddock and whiting, have improved. The summer fishery for Albacore tuna will start in week 27. A significant share of the demersal fishing fleet participates in the fishery, leading to reduced fish efforts for demersal species in the upcoming weeks.

In the **Netherlands** the herring season (*“hollandse nieuwe”*) started on June 12th. According to the Dutch Fish Marketing Board the first catch of herrings traditionally auctioned off for charity at a major public event — would instead be presented as a gift to the neighbouring German state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW). Some 4.000 new-season herrings are to be delivered to German medics as thanks for treating Dutch COVID-19 patients.



AQUACULTURE

EU-COUNTRIES SOUGHT TO EASE COVID-19 MEASURES, CHINA TO INTENSIFY

Italy, which has been severely affected by the pandemic, has throughout week 23 gradually eased its social distancing measures. This implies that consumers now can consume Atlantic salmon through both restaurants and retailers. This has indeed caused an increase in demand and subsequently the [export volumes of fresh Atlantic salmon from Norway](#) have increased by roughly 60% during the last three weeks.

In **France**, the **shellfish** sector has been faced with diminishing demands due to COVID-19. Although restaurants have reopened in France, the **oyster** sector currently deals with overstock issues, leading to an increased risk of pathogens proliferation in farms and resulting in lower prices. The sector is trying to find alternative outlets such as processing (especially for bigger oysters) or new export markets. For the **mussel** sector, restaurants account for about 20% of mussel sales at national level. However, the lack of demand from this side has had a destabilizing effect on the market, pushing the prices low (source: Cultures marines, June 2020 #337).

Organic salmon farming in **Ireland** has managed fairly well during the pandemic, as market demand has maintained relatively strong. As demand from retail increases, there has been a noticeable switch to frozen fillets.

On Thursday 11 of June in **China**, several Chinese media sources reported that a new eruption of COVID-19 cases was linked to a Beijing's largest food market, Xinfadi. In the act of tracing the source of infection, imported goods was designated as a plausible source. Atlantic salmon of **Norwegian** origin was one of the products that was hypothesized as a potential carrier of COVID-19 after the disease was detected on a cutting board used on imported fish in Xinfadi. In the aftermath of the allegations, Chinese restaurants put serving of salmon to a halt and salmon products were removed from major supermarkets, which ultimately led to cancellations upon exporters. On Wednesday, 17 of June, the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention deemed that [imported salmon was not the source of infection in the new outbreak in the region](#). It appears as Atlantic salmon of all origins sold on the Chinese market has suffered from the incident. [Exports of fresh whole salmon from Norway to China decreased by 34%](#) in week 24 compared to week 23. Recently, **Chinese** authorities introduced COVID-19 certifications for imports of shellfish and fish. The FAPs must be tested of the COVID-19 virus before being exported to China.



PROCESSING

HALTING PROCESSING SECTOR

In **the Netherlands**, the [shrimp industry is still facing challenges](#) due to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis in Morocco. Morocco has been in a state of emergency from 20th March, a situation which will last until July 10. The North Sea shrimp captured by Dutch fishermen is primarily peeled in Morocco, and in order to balance supply to the peeling capacity, fishermen are on a weekly basis instructed on the number of hours they are permitted to fish, which can vary from closure to 72 hours per week.

In **Scotland**, the Scottish Government scheme, funded by the EMFF, has decided to compensate businesses for the cost of transporting, freezing and storing salmon, trout and shellfish until the end of 2020. As aforementioned, there has generally been a [switch from fresh to frozen products](#). The cost of storage is relatively cheap, at £5-£10 per tonne for a 10-week period, whereas the initial blast freezing can cost up to £300 per tonne. According to the Scottish Salmon Producers' Organisation (SSPO), salmon farmers have been able to find new markets for some of their stock but there was still a need for some of them for temporary storage, until overseas markets start to normalise again.



WHOLESALE

GENERALLY STABLE PRICES ALTHOUGH INDIVIDUAL FLUCTUATIONS

In **Rungis wholesale market** in **France**, the [market keeps recovering](#) with increased supply and demand especially from restaurants. Prices have been relatively stable over the last two weeks (week 25 compared to week 23) except fluctuations for some major commercial species: increasing prices for 4-5 kg cod (+67%), whiting (+27-44%), sole (+13-42%), mackerel (+30%), and rays (+14-38%), whereas decreasing prices for sardine (-4-10%), bluefin tuna (-19%) and lobster (-6-13%).

In **Rome wholesale market** in **Italy**, prices have been relatively stable over the last two weeks (19.06 against 05.06) except increasing trends for anchovy (+50%, back to April level) and 4-5 kg Norwegian salmon (+14%).

In **Spain**, in **Mercamadrid wholesale market**, [prices have been fluctuating](#) over the last two weeks (23.06 against 09.06): increases for hake, sole, turbot and small horse mackerel and decreases for anchovy, swordfish and mussel.



RETAIL & CONSUMPTION

RETAIL SECTOR TO ADAPT

In **Germany**, [the COVID-19 crisis consolidated the Fisch vom Kutter portal](#), allowing the online sale of freshly landed catches from the German Baltic Coast vessels directly to consumers, which has become more popular in the area. The crisis enabled an increase of users, from 500 to 700 users checking the portal daily. Compared to March 2020, the number of visitors increased by 80% at the end of April, and the fishers reported a 10-20% increase in direct sales; the portal now includes a fish farm.

In **France**, fishmongers have specifically suffered from the drop of the demand and the closure of some open markets. The drop of turnover is estimated around 30% over the last three months. [Some of them have tried to adapt and diversify their activities](#): delivery services, and catering services for consumers to eat seafood on the spot.

In **Italy**, according to Coldiretti, although restaurants have been reopened for three weeks, [their activity is still below 50% of the “normal level”](#) especially due to the absence of foreign tourists.

In **Ireland**, restaurants re-open in week 27. There are expectations that the opening will have positive effect on demand.

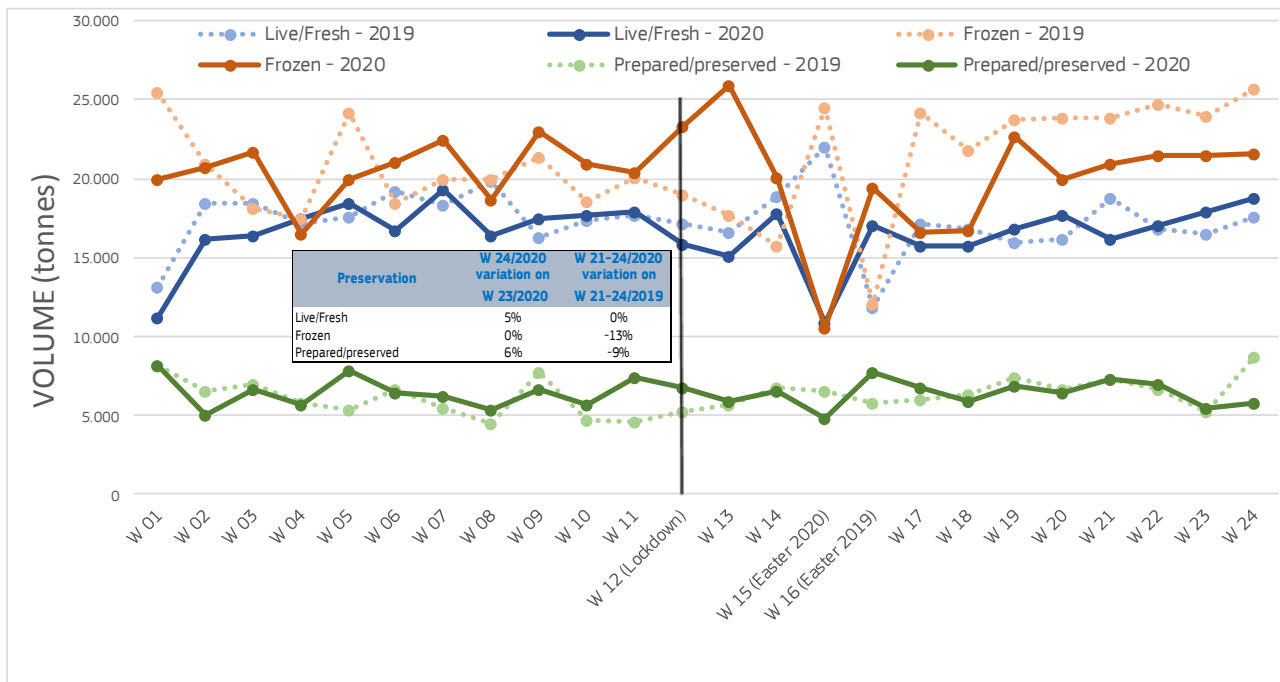


TRADE AND LOGISTICS

INCREASED SUPPLY OF MAIN SPECIES, STILL LOGISTICAL CHALLENGES

Air freight capacity remain a scarce resource in the global market. The absence of passenger flights combined with shortages of suited aircrafts in addition to lack of pilots, restrict the overall air freight capacity. [According to Accenture’s Seabury Consulting](#), the global air freight capacity in week 24 was 25% lower than corresponding week last year. Flights from North America to Latin America decreased by 8%. The Transpacific capacity grew by 3% compared to last year and flight capacity from Europe to Asia declined by 15%.

Whereas main imports of frozen products remained stable, imports of fresh products (mainly fresh/gutted) increased by 5% from week 22 to week 23 and again by another 5% from week 23 to week 24. In the same periods last year, they first decreased by 2% and then, increased by 6%. This is mostly due to increased imports of fresh salmon from Norway that could be linked to the reopening of restaurants in most EU countries.



Weeks 23-24 of 2020 vs. weeks 21-22 of 2020: most relevant trends

Salmon: driven by increased supplies from Norway, in weeks 23-24 imports grew by 7% in volume and by 14% in value terms compared with the previous two weeks. The average import price increased as well, from 6,35 EUR/kg in weeks 21-22 to 6,73 EUR/kg in weeks 23-24 (+6%), although in the same two-week period the appreciation of NOK against EUR was slight (+0,1%). Compared with 2019, imports in weeks 23-24 of 2020 were higher (+7% in volume and +1% in value), while the import price was 5% lower.

Cod: increased supplies from Russia made imports of cod in weeks 23-24 grow by 9% in volume and by 12% in value from weeks 21-22. The average import price, which reached 5,42 EUR/kg, was 3% higher than the previous two weeks. Nevertheless, imports of cod were less than those registered last year in the same period (-4% in volume and -11% in value); the average import price was 8% lower.

Alaska pollock: due to lower supplies from China, imports of Alaska pollock in weeks 23-24 dropped by 25% from weeks 21-22 (both in volume and value), and the average import price remained stable at 2,88 EUR/kg. Compared with the same weeks last year, the fall in volume and value was relevant (-46% and -39%, respectively), while the import price increased by 13%.

Squid: compared with the previous two weeks, imports of squid registered in weeks 23-24 decreased by 8% in volume and increased by 3% in value. This was mainly due to lower supplies from the Falkland Islands. The average import price grew by 12% (from 3,36 EUR/kg in weeks 21-22 to 3,75 EUR/kg in weeks 23-24). Compared with 2019, imports were stable in volume terms, while the average import price (and values) increased by 12%.

To learn more about the market situation, [you can access the most recent weekly data \(up to week 25 of 2020\) on extra EU imports in Europe.](#)

For any questions or comments, 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.