

# Coronavirus response

## EUMOFA's weekly data and trends analysis

### Week 16

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.

#### Easter Holidays

First sale and trade data for week 14 and 15 in 2020 are to various degrees influenced by the Easter holidays. In countries regarded as suppliers, supply may vary due to the number of public holidays and to which segment suppliers are selling. Furthermore, the length of public holidays varies between different countries. In 2019, the Easter holidays occurred in week 16. Consequently, comparisons of weekly volumes and prices, both week-over-week and year-over-year, should be "handled with care".



#### FISHERIES

#### FISHING ACTIVITY AND LANDINGS SLOWLY RECOVERING, BUT STILL LOW PRICES:<sup>1</sup>

In several Member States, fishing activity and landings are increasing slowly. As there is still a lack of demand, the prices are generally low. However, trends vary a lot across different species.

In **France**, weekly auction sales data from [FranceAgriMer](#) (excluding the Mediterranean seaboard) show a 22%-increase in volume and 17%-decrease in prices for 31 main species. However, there were also significant price increases for some species, despite increasing volumes (+36% for mackerel, +14% for saithe).

In **Italy**, the fishery sector experienced a major setback during the first three weeks of March. Since the beginning of April, [there has been a recovery in activity levels in some ports](#), although very slow and progressive; first-sale prices are higher than in mid-March, when they collapsed following the fall in supply and demand. The small pelagics fishery is almost completely stopped due to the high volumes of landings, the high perishable nature of the product and the poor functioning of export markets.

<sup>1</sup> 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](#).

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In week 16, [five auctions](#) in Denmark (Hanstholm, Hirtshals, Strandby, Grenaa and Skagen), recorded the highest total volume since restrictions were imposed, mainly driven by hake and cod but also by relatively high volumes of saithe, ling and pollack. Although with large variations across species, the high volumes affected the overall weekly average price which decreased almost down to the levels of week 12 and 13.

In the Netherlands, the daily auction prices of brill, turbot and sole showed a downward trend in both week 15 and the beginning of week 16. During week 16, the prices stabilized and on Friday they increased a bit. However, on Monday this week (week 17), the prices were down again to around the same level as the week before. In week 16, about one third of both the flatfish and Norway-lobster fleet and one fourth of the shrimp fleet ceased fishing and stayed in port supported by the EMFF through the fisheries part of [the Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative of the Commission](#), regarding compensation for the temporary cessation of fishing activities<sup>2</sup>.

In Spain, many vessels are going back at sea, all seaboard included. [The anchovy campaign](#) started on 20 April. [Daily quotas have been lowered](#) by producer organizations to test the market (demand and prices). Moreover, [all long-distance fishing vessels are active](#), except for pole and line Basque vessels fishing in Senegal still stopped due to the closures of airports and harbors in Senegal and to prohibition of crew turnover in Mauritania. [Galician auctions](#) are reporting a stabilization of prices for hake, anglers and megrims. However, prices are still low for swordfish and sharks. Low prices for tuna are also reported due to the comeback of Chinese tuna exports.

In Germany, the shrimp fishermen association report a [sharp drop of demand and prices for brown shrimp combined with strong difficulties to get them peeled in Morocco](#) due to restrictions measures. The financial situation of companies, already weakened by low sales in 2019, is considered at risk.

## Production in relevant non-EU countries

In India, fishing, aquaculture and related activities are exempted from the prolonged lockdown until 3<sup>rd</sup> May. Some shrimp processors are reopening but due to social distancing measures, operating capacity is reduced by up to 70%. Trade might also pick up when official laboratories now open again. During the lockdown, obtaining product export certificates has been one of the major bottle necks for trade<sup>3</sup>.

In Morocco, after the implementation of strict restriction measures retaining crew on land, the seiner vessels fishing sardines have gone back fishing<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Source: personal communication.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.undercurrentnews.com/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://leseco.ma/peche-les-sardiniers-reprennent-la-mer/>



## PROCESSING

### POSITIVE SIGNALS BUT UNCERTAINTY IS HIGH

The processing industry of both salmon and whitefish in **Poland, Lithuania and the Netherlands** shows a positive trend compared to the same period last year, [according to the latest export data from the Norwegian seafood council](#). Comparing the Easter week in 2020 (week 15) with 2019 (week 16), export of fresh whole salmon increased by 63% to Lithuania, 10% to Poland and 8% to the Netherlands.

Supply chain disruption could lead to **issues regarding labelling of processed products**. Due to a potential scarcity of some specific raw materials, the use of substitutes could lead to changes in the formulas of the processed products. Consequently, pre-printed labels may no longer correspond to the actual recipe used.



## WHOLESALE

### STABILITY IN PRICES WITH SOME SIGNS OF RECOVERY

After the Easter-related demand, prices seem to decrease in **Italy**. In week 16, prices were down in [Rome wholesale market](#) compared to week 15, especially for clam (-14%) and anchovy (-30%), but up for domestically farmed gilthead seabream. Despite the prolonged closure of restaurants, thanks to a slight increase in demand, [salmon prices are starting to recover](#) even though still lower than usual.

In **Spain**, in [Madrid wholesale market](#), prices have been stable for mussel, anchovy, sole and turbot but decreasing for several important commercial species: -20% for both hake and swordfish, -12% for monkfish.

In [Rungis wholesale market](#), in France, prices were stable in week 16 compared to week 15.



## RETAIL & CONSUMPTION

### INCREASING ONLINE SALES AND NEW DIGITAL MARKETPLACES

In **Italy** the Covid-19 outbreak continues to negatively affect demand for fresh fish products; in large retail chains, consumers are still currently oriented towards products known as "Free service" (packaged), or products with a longer shelf life (canned and ready-to-use products).

Several innovative solutions are being developed or expanded to promote fresh and local seafood consumption and facilitate direct sales from fishers, wholesalers and producers to consumers. E.g. online sales from fishers in [Italy](#), [Germany](#) and [the Canaries](#) or a [vending machine system for fresh fish](#) in a market in Krško, Slovenia. In the **Netherlands**, a [temporary](#)

[non-profit digital marketplace](#) has been established to facilitate direct sales from HORECA suppliers to consumers.

In Spain, [FEDEPESCA reported an increase of online/phone sales](#): 20% of fish sales are made in physical shops and 80% are delivered at home. The most consumed species have not changed: hake, anglers and megrims.



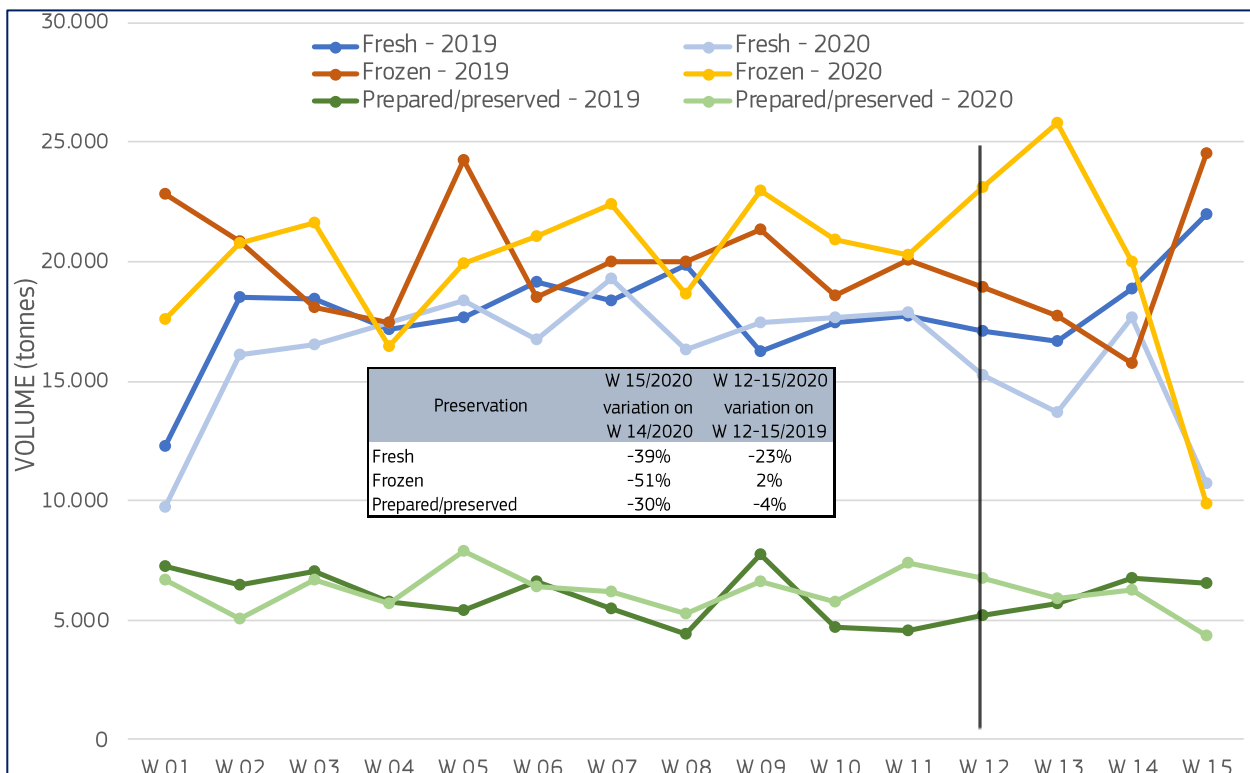
**TRADE AND LOGISTICS**

**SIGNIFICANT DROP IN IMPORTS DURING EASTER HOLIDAYS**

Compared with week 14, both volumes and values of extra-EU imports dropped significantly, mainly due to Easter holidays: **volumes decreased by 43%** and **values declined by 40%**. All main preservation categories (fresh, frozen and prepared/preserved) registered significant drops. Among fresh, whole products were the most affected.

The volume of fresh products (mainly salmon and cod) imported in the last 4 weeks of 2020 was 23% lower than in the same period of 2019.

Imports of frozen and prepared-preserved products in weeks 12-15 of 2020 were almost stable compared with the same period last year, the first slightly higher (+2%), the latter 4% lower.



5 products accounted for 61% of the decrease in terms of volume: salmon from Norway (29%), coldwater shrimp from Greenland and Alaska pollock from China (9% each), cod from Norway (8%) and warmwater shrimp from Ecuador (6%).

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The effects of increased demand due to stock-piling of durable seafood products is observed in Norwegian exports of salted cod and clip fish. Norwegian export of clipfish to Portugal in 2020-Q1 increased by 41% in volume and by 62% in value compared to the same period last year, while salted cod increased by 30% in volume and by 45% in volume<sup>5</sup>. As Italy is the major market for Norwegian export of dried cod, this has had large effects on Norwegian exports, which decreased by 27% in volume and 41% in value in March this year compared to March 2019.

According to the Vietnamese Association of Seafood Exporters and Producers (VASEP), Vietnam exports to the EU decreased by 40%, to China by 25%, to South Korea by 24% and to Japan by 19%<sup>6</sup>.

As regards currencies of top suppliers, between 22<sup>th</sup> of March and 12<sup>th</sup> of April, EUR depreciated against USD (-2%), NOK (-4%), CNY (3%) and GBP (-3%) and appreciated against ISK (+1%).

In addition, in March marine fuel prices at EU level drop by 26% compared with previous month and by 35% compared with the same period in 2019. Belgium and the Netherlands showed the highest decreases (-40% from February)<sup>7</sup>.

To learn more about the situation on the market, [you can access most recent weekly data \(up to week 16 of 2020\) for extra EU imports in Europe](#).

**For any question or comment, do not hesitate to contact EUMOFA ([contact-us@eumofa.eu](mailto: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.

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<sup>5</sup> Norwegian seafood council

<sup>6</sup> Source: FischMagazin 15.04.2020

<sup>7</sup> Source: MABUX