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# UK fisheries statistics



## Summary

- 1 Fishing industry
- 2 Fleet size and employment
- 3 Trade and exports
- 4 Landings
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## Summary

This briefing paper examines trends in the UK fisheries industry, including landings, employment, fleet size, trade, economic output and comparisons with EU countries up to the end of 2021. This is the first data reflecting the impact of the UK leaving the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) CFP on the fisheries industry. However, comparisons with 2020 will be impacted by the pandemic which disrupted both fishing activity and the UK and export markets, especially the hospitality sector.

The commercial fisheries industry in the UK is made up of three sectors: fishing (inshore and offshore fishing), aquaculture (fish farming) and fish processing (preparing fish for food consumption).

### Economic output

Official statistics on economic output of the fishing industry are volatile and can be significantly revised from year to year. According to the ONS, in 2021, the sector contributed around 0.03% of total UK economic output and around 5% of the broader agriculture, forestry and fishing sector.<sup>1</sup>

In 2020, just under 70% of economic output from the fishing and aquaculture industry was generated in Scotland.

Seafish, a non-departmental public body representing the seafood industry, estimated that [economic output in the sector](#) was £483 million in 2021, up from £458 million in 2020, but lower than the £538 million reported in 2019.

Seafish explained that fishing businesses' operating profits rose in 2021 compared to 2020, but remained lower than profits recorded in 2019.

### Employment and fleet size

The total number of fishers in the UK was around 11,000 in 2021, down from around 20,000 in the mid-1990s. In 2021, 53% of fishers were based in England and Wales, 40% in Scotland and 8% in Northern Ireland.

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<sup>1</sup> Measured in terms of Gross value added (GVA), a measure of economic output similar to gross domestic product (GDP). Source: ONS dataset: [GDP output approach – low-level aggregates](#), 30 September 2022 release; series KL4Y. Revisions due to technical changes in ONS methodology in 2020 meant that economic output for the sector is lower than in previous years.

The number of fishing vessels in the UK fleet has fallen by 33% since 1996.

### **Landings**

UK vessels land around 400,000 tonnes of fish each year in the UK, and between 200,000 and 300,000 tonnes abroad.

Landings by the UK fleet were higher in 2021 than in 2020 (+5%) after falling by about 11% between 2018-2019. This initial reduction was mostly explained by reduced landings of pelagic fish, which have recovered since. Shellfish landings dipped in 2020 but increased again in 2021. The value of landings by the UK fleet increased in recent years to just over £1 billion in 2018, before falling to £831 million in 2020 and increasing again to £921 million in 2021.

### **Trade**

The UK is a net importer of fish and related products, with net imports of around 427,000 tonnes in 2021, worth £1.7 billion.

### **International comparisons**

In 2019, the UK fleet had the second-largest total catch (in terms of landed weight) and the second-largest fleet size (in gross tonnage terms) compared with EU countries.

### **Fish processing**

There were 348 fish processing sites in the UK in 2020. Fish processing sites accounted for 17,988 full-time equivalent jobs. The fish processing industry is concentrated in the Humber and the Grampians.

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# 1 Fishing industry

## 1.1 UK fisheries sector

The commercial fisheries industry in the UK is made up of three sectors:

- the fishing industry, which encompasses the collection for human consumption of all wild aquatic life, including fish, crustaceans and molluscs.
- the aquaculture or aquafarming sector, which is the farming of aquatic life, including fish, molluscs, crustaceans and aquatic plants such as seaweed.
- the fish processing industry, which is a food manufacturing industry that prepares and preserves fish for food consumption and animal feed.

Sections 3-5 of this paper focuses on the commercial fishing industry (the first two listed above). Section 6 of this paper covers fish processing.

The fishing sector is very diverse, with both a significant inshore and offshore fleet. There are also differences in the size and type of fishing vessels across the devolved administrations.<sup>2</sup> Both quota species and non-quota species are important for different parts of the sector.<sup>3</sup>

The UK is no longer part of the EU Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) since January 2021. Under the [UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement](#), 25% of the overall EU quota in UK waters will be transferred to the UK over a 5½ year period to 30 June 2026, with specific percentages agreed for each fishing stock. Some stocks will see higher transfers, and some will not change at all. This is reflected in data from 2021 onwards.

The management of fishing effort for non-quota species did not fall under the CFP. Non-quota species include most shellfish, which is often high value and exported from the UK rather than consumed domestically.

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<sup>2</sup> MMO, [UK Sea Fisheries Statistics 2016](#), 28 September 2017

<sup>3</sup> MMO, [UK Sea Fisheries Statistics 2016](#), 28 September 2017

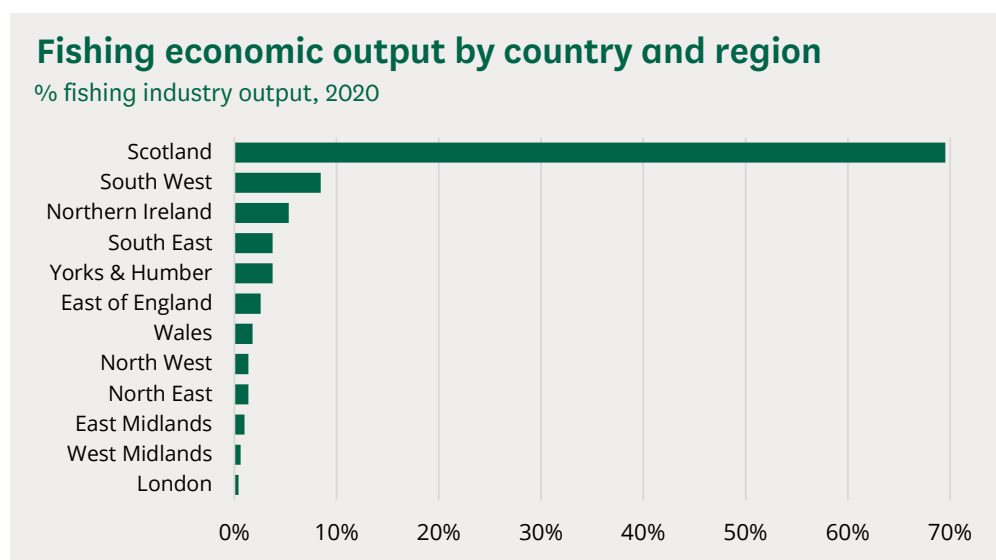
Further details on UK fisheries can be found in the Library Briefings on [Fisheries Management in the UK](#), The [Fisheries Bill \[HL\] 2019-21](#), [Fisheries and Brexit](#), and [Fisheries and the future UK-EU relationship negotiations](#).

## 1.2 The fishing sector

Official statistics on economic output of the fishing industry are volatile from year to year and can be significantly revised. According to the ONS, in 2021 the sector contributed around 0.03% of total UK economic output and just over 4.5% of the broader agriculture, forestry and fishing sector.<sup>4</sup>

Seafish, a non-departmental public body representing the seafood industry, estimated that economic output in the sector was £483 million in 2021, up from £458 million in 2020, but lower than the £538 million recorded in 2019.<sup>5</sup>

The following chart shows the breakdown of UK economic output of the fishing and aquaculture industry in 2020 by nation and region. The fishing and aquaculture industry in Scotland contributed just under 70% of the UK industry total in 2020. The South-West had the second largest output (8%) followed by Northern Ireland (5%).



Source: ONS, [Regional gross value added \(balanced\) by industry](#), 30 May 2022. Includes aquaculture

<sup>4</sup> Measured in terms of Gross value added (GVA), a measure of economic output similar to gross domestic product (GDP). Source: ONS dataset: [GDP output approach – low-level aggregates](#), 30 September 2022 release; series KL4Y. Revisions due to technical changes in ONS methodology in 2020 meant that economic output for the sector is lower than in previous years.

<sup>5</sup> Seafish, [Economics of the UK Fishing Fleet 2021](#), September 2021, pg. 4

## 1.3 Businesses

In March 2021, there were 4,150 fishing businesses registered in the UK.<sup>6</sup> This figure excludes small fishing businesses with no employees and turnover below the VAT threshold of £85,000 per year and therefore is likely an underestimate.

The fishing sector is characterised by a higher-than-average proportion of businesses with under 5 employees: 90% of fishing businesses have fewer than 5 employees, compared to 78% in the UK economy as a whole. This may be explained by the large number of vessels that are registered as businesses with their crew as the only employees.

Research conducted by Greenpeace in 2018 into fishing businesses in England and Wales found that although there are many small businesses involved in the fishing industry, over two thirds of the UK's fishing quotas are controlled by 25 companies.<sup>7</sup>

## 1.4 Fishing fleet operating profit and impact of Covid-19

A report by Seafish estimated the total turnover of the UK fishing fleet was £923 million in 2021, a 7% increase compared to 2020, but lower than the 2019 total of £1,014 million.<sup>8</sup>

Seafish forecast that operating profit (income minus operating costs) of the UK fishing fleet would be £240 million in 2021, a 5% increase on 2020, though lower than the £265 million achieved in 2019.

The increase in operating profit in 2021 compared to 2020 is partly due to figures for 2020 being lower than average – between 2019 and 2020 average operating profit in the UK fishing fleet fell by between 5% and 64%, depending on the fleet segment.<sup>9</sup> This was as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, which led to reduced levels of fishing activity compared to 2019, as well as a fall in demand for fish and lower than average market prices.

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<sup>6</sup> Source: ONS, [Business activity, size and location: 2022](#), via [NOMIS](#) database. Note this excludes small businesses with no employees and turnover below the VAT threshold (£85,000).

<sup>7</sup> Greenpeace, [Revealed: the millionaires hoarding UK fishing rights](#), 10 October 2018

<sup>8</sup> Seafish, [Economics of the UK Fishing Fleet 2021](#), October 2022, pg. 2

<sup>9</sup> Seafish, [Economics of the UK Fishing Fleet 2021](#), October 2022, pg. 40



Despite an overall increase in operating profit in 2021, only around half of the segments of the UK fishing fleet saw their average operating profits increase compared to 2020, while operating profits for the remaining segments continued to fall. Of those segments that saw increased average profits in 2021, their profits were on average 20% lower than they had been in 2019.<sup>10</sup>

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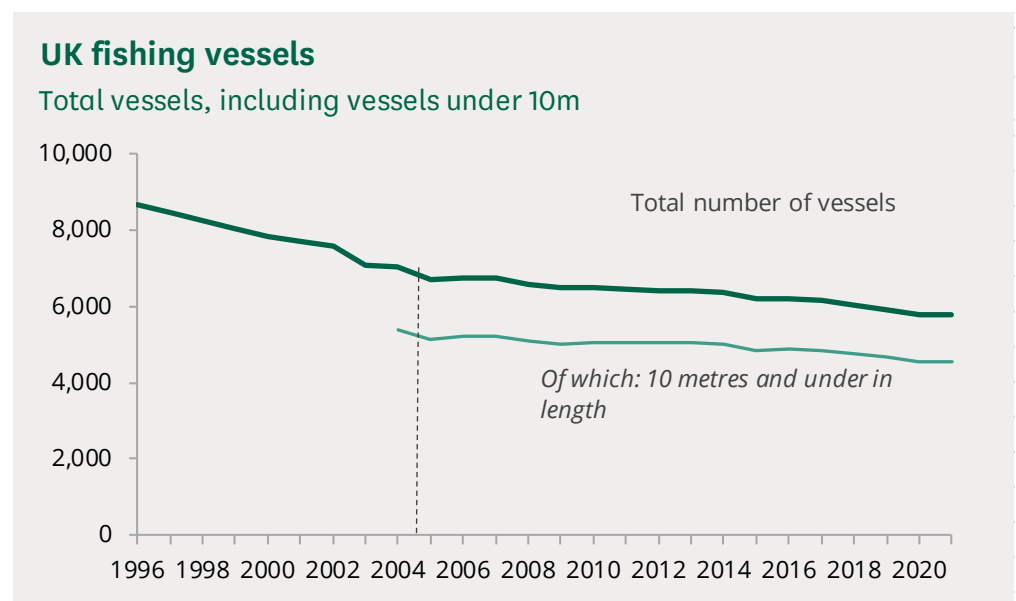
<sup>10</sup> Seafish, [Economics of the UK Fishing Fleet 2021](#), October 2022, pg. 40

## 2 Fleet size and employment

### 2.1 Fishing fleet and boat size

The size of the UK fishing fleet has declined since 1996, as shown in the chart below. At the end of 2021, the number of registered vessels stood at **5,783**, the same number as in 2020 but a 11% fall since 2010. Of these:

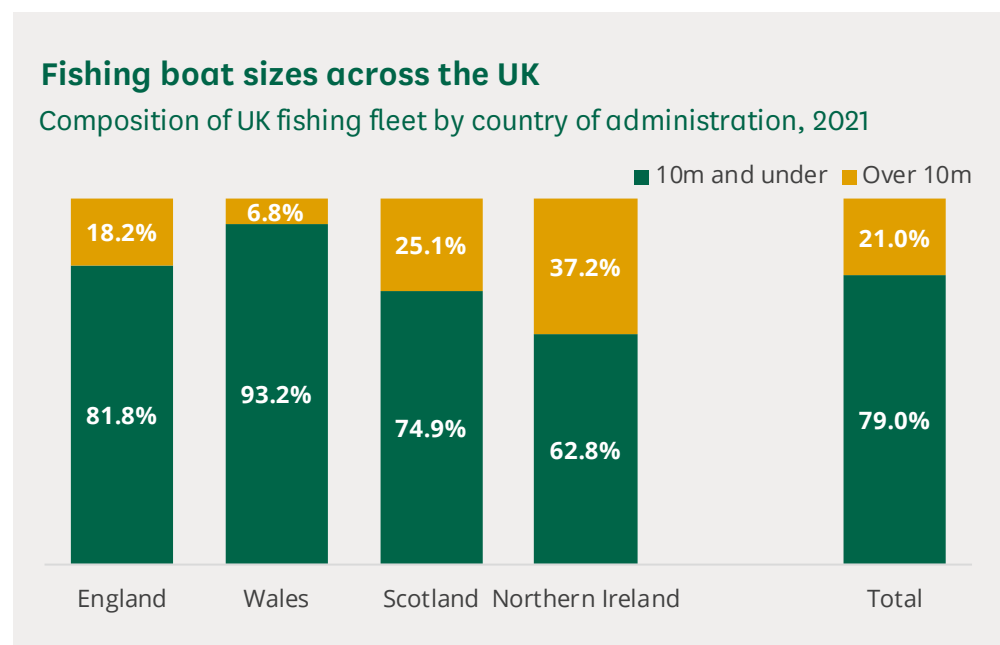
- 4,568 vessels (79%) are 10 metres or under in length (u-10m);
- 1,215 vessels (21%) are over 10 metres.



Source: Marine Management Organisation, [UK Sea Fisheries Statistics](#) (various years)

The above chart hides significant variation in the composition of the fishing fleet across the different parts of the UK. While u-10m vessels are the largest group in all parts of the UK, England has the largest number of u-10m vessels, 2,255, and Northern Ireland the smallest, 203. Scotland has the largest number of over 10m vessels, 533, and Wales the smallest, 27 – which is one fewer than in 2020. The size of the vessels is reflected in the gross tonnage of each fleet: in 2021 it was 60,286 gross tonnes in England (+1% compared with

2020); 2,206 in Wales (-46%); 120,242 in Scotland (-0.5%) and 16,584 in Northern Ireland (+1%).<sup>11</sup>



Source: Marine Management Organisation, [UK sea fisheries statistics, 2021](#), table 1.2

## Landings by boat size

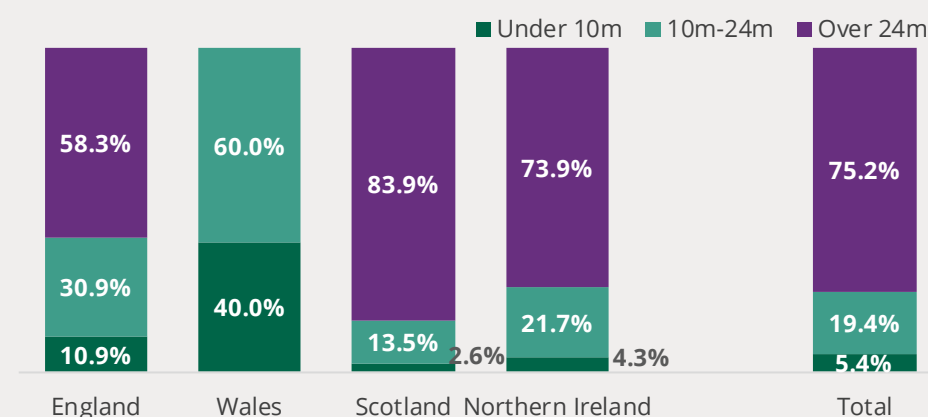
Despite the UK fleet being composed mainly of u-10m vessels, they only land around 5% of the UK catch by weight. For example, in England the 1,594 active u-10m vessels that made up just under 80% of the fleet landed 11% of the total catch by weight (19,000 tonnes) in 2020. In Scotland the landings were overwhelmingly from the largest vessels.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Marine Management Organisation, [UK sea fisheries annual statistics 2021](#), Table 1.2

<sup>12</sup> Seafish, [Economics of the UK fishing fleet, 2020](#), p13

## Landings by boat size

Weight of landings of UK fishing fleet by vessel length and country of administration, 2020



Notes: vessels administered by UK Crown Dependencies not included

Source: Seafish, [Economics of the UK fishing fleet, 2020](#), p13

## Box 1: International comparison - fleet size

At the end of December 2019, the number of vessels in the UK's fishing fleet was the seventh largest in the EU after Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Croatia and France. The UK's fishing fleet was second largest in the EU in terms of gross tonnage, after Spain. This latter measure is a better indicator of fishing capacity.<sup>13</sup>

Within EU Member States in the North East Atlantic area, there is significant variation in countries' average vessel weight. Some countries (including Lithuania and Belgium) have relatively few but very big boats, including super-trawlers (over 100 meters long), pushing up their average weight. The average vessel weight for UK boats was 38.0 tonnes, similar to that of Poland (39.1) and Spain (37.4).

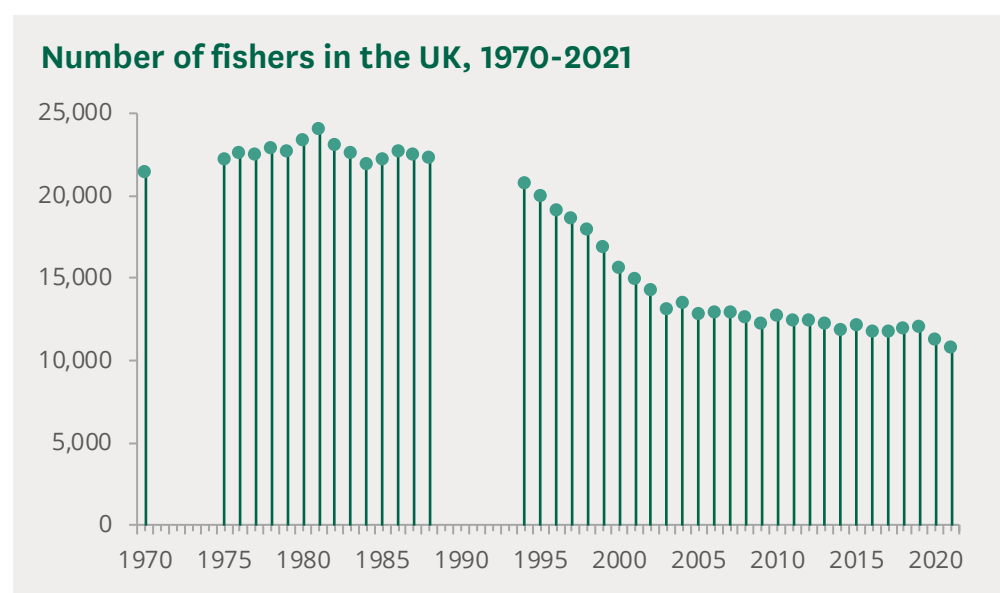
<sup>13</sup> Eurostat, [fishing fleet by type of gear and engine power](#)

## 2.2

## Employment

The total number of fishers employed in the UK has fallen from just over 21,000 in 1970 to 10,724 in 2021 (down from 11,298 in 2020). The chart below shows the total number of fishers in various years since 1970. The full data table including regional breakdown is provided in the appendix.

Seafish reported that there were 6,835 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs aboard UK fishing vessels in 2021, after accounting for hours worked.<sup>14</sup>



Source: Marine Management Organisation, [UK Sea Fisheries Statistics](#) (various years).

The number of fishers declined by 26,000 (55%) between 1948 and 1970. There was relatively little change in numbers between 1970 and the mid-nineties, but the downward trend subsequently resumed up until the early noughties. The number of fishers fell by 41% between 1988 and 2003. Since then the number of fishers has stabilised. It has remained around 12,000 since 2009, although it dropped to 10,724 in 2021. In 2021, 46% of fishers were based in England, 40% in Scotland, 8% in Northern Ireland and 7% in Wales.<sup>15</sup>

The following table shows the number of fishers based at the 20 largest ports in the UK in 2021. The largest UK port in terms of fishers was Fraserburgh in Scotland with 791 fishers, 7% of the UK total and 19% of fishers in Scotland.

<sup>14</sup> Seafish, [Economics of the UK Fishing Fleet 2021](#), p8. Based on the MMO figures and data on hours worked by crew reported to Seafish by UK fishing vessel owners (including vessels registered on the Islands)

<sup>15</sup> Marine Management Organisation, [UK Sea Fisheries Statistics 2021](#), Table 1.6a

Milford Haven, the largest fishing port in Wales, had the second highest number of fishers in the UK (785, or 7%). The largest fishing port in England was Newlyn (780, 7%), which in 2020 had been the largest port in the UK with 961 fishers. Kilkeel accounted for 53% of fishers in Northern Ireland and 4% of UK fishers.

Number of fishers by port, 2021			
Top 20 ports, UK			
Port	Country	Fishers	% UK total
Fraserburgh	Scotland	791	7.4%
Milford Haven	Wales	785	7.3%
Newlyn	England	780	7.3%
North Shields	England	668	6.2%
Plymouth	England	647	6.0%
Brixham	England	605	5.6%
Hastings	England	567	5.3%
Shetland	Scotland	469	4.4%
Lowestoft	England	454	4.2%
Kilkeel	Northern Ireland	430	4.0%
Grimsby	England	378	3.5%
Peterhead	Scotland	370	3.5%
Poole	England	361	3.4%
Ayr	Scotland	316	2.9%
Scarborough	England	311	2.9%
Stornoway	Scotland	290	2.7%
Orkney	Scotland	268	2.5%
Campbeltown	Scotland	241	2.2%
Lochinver	Scotland	209	1.9%
Oban	Scotland	201	1.9%

Source: Marine Management Organisation, [UK Sea Fisheries Statistics 2021](#), table 1.6b

## 3 Trade and exports

The UK was a net exporter of fish in 1983 but has been a net importer since 1984. This is because imports grew faster than exports between 1984 and 2006. Since then, both imports and exports have remained relatively stable, despite year-on-year variation. **In 2021, the UK:**

- **Imported 791,000 tonnes of fish and related products (worth £3.3 billion)**, more than double the total in 1983; and
- **Exported 363,000 tonnes of fish and related products (worth £1.6 billion).**<sup>16</sup>
- This amounts to a trade deficit of £1.7 billion, up slightly from -£1.6 billion in 2020.
- It is estimated that between 60-80% of UK domestic landings are exported. Meanwhile, five species (cod, haddock, tuna, salmon and prawns) account for 60-80% of all fish consumption in the UK.<sup>17</sup> These species represent a significant proportion of the UK's fish imports.

In 2021, imports were highest for salmon (117,500 tonnes, 17% of all fish imports excluding fish products); tuna (113,500 tonnes, 16%); and cod (85,400 tonnes, 13%). In terms of value, salmon was again the largest import category (£672 million, 21% of all fish imports), followed by shrimps and prawns (£623 million, 20%) and cod (£428 million, 14%).

Main exports were salmon (113,200 tonnes, 32% of all fish exports excluding fish products), mackerel (54,100 tonnes, 15%) and herring (15,600 tonnes, 12%). The highest value exports in 2021 were salmon (£723 million, 45% of all fish exports), nephrops (£112 million, 7%), and mackerel (£96 million, 6%).

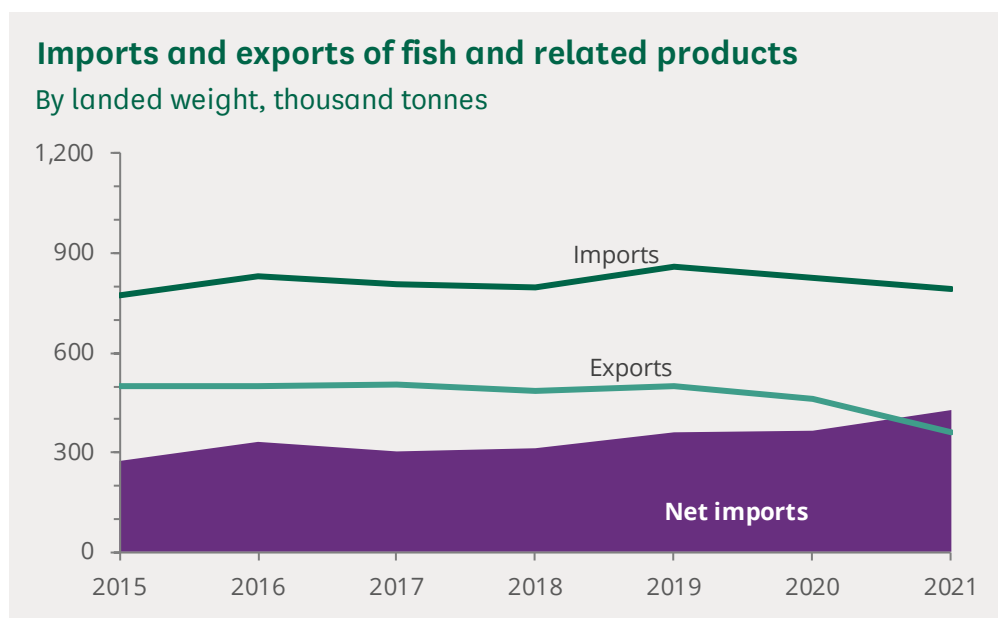
Shellfish (all types combined) accounted for 17% of fish exports out of the UK by weight (58,200 tonnes), but for 27% of exports in terms of value, given their higher price per tonne on average than other sea fish.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Marine Management Organisation, [UK Sea Fisheries Statistics 2021](#), tables 4.2 and 4.3

<sup>17</sup> Sarah Tetley, [Why the Big 5? Understanding UK Seafood Consumer Behaviour](#), PhD thesis, University of Kent (2016); British Sea Fishing, ['The Big Five Fish Species'](#)

<sup>18</sup> Marine Management Organisation, [UK Sea Fisheries Statistics 2021](#), chapter 4

The chart below shows trends in imports and exports of fish and related products since 2015. In 2021, net imports were greater than exports.



Source: Marine Management Organisation, [UK Sea Fisheries Statistics](#), 2021

## Trade in 2021

The following table summarises the UK's trade in fish and related products in 2021.

UK trade in fish, 2021			
£ millions			
	Exports	Imports	Balance
EU	1,163	794	369
Non-EU	463	2,372	-1,909
World	1,627	3,166	-1,540

Source: HMRC, [UK Trade Info](#)

In 2021:

- The UK exported fish and similar products worth £1.6 billion and imported £3.2 billion, resulting in a trade deficit of -£1.5 billion; a surplus with the EU of £0.4 billion was more than outweighed by a deficit -£1.5 billion with non-EU countries



- Fish exports to the EU were worth £1.2 billion (72% of all UK fish exports from the UK by value); fish imports from the EU were worth £0.8 billion (25% of all fish imports to the UK by value).

## Which countries does the UK trade with?

The following table shows the UK's largest trading partners for fish and related products.

UK trade in fish by country, 2021			
Exports	% total	Imports	% total
France	46.3%	Norway	15.6%
USA	12.8%	Iceland	8.1%
Spain	4.9%	Vietnam	7.1%
China	4.6%	China	6.2%
Netherlands	3.9%	Faroe Islands	5.4%
Ireland	3.7%	Ecuador	4.8%
Poland	2.6%	Denmark	4.8%
Italy	2.2%	India	3.6%
Lithuania	2.0%	Germany	3.6%
South Korea	2.0%	Turkey	3.4%

Source: [UNCTAD](#)

The UK's biggest export market for fish and fish products is France - exports to France accounted for around half of the UK's fish exports in 2021, compared to just over 30% in 2020. The value of UK fish exports to France increased by 60% in cash terms between 2020 and 2021, following a fall of 9% between 2019 and 2020.

Seven of the UK's ten largest export markets for fish in 2021 were EU member states.

The UK's biggest source of imported fish was Norway, with £497 million worth of imports in 2021, followed by Iceland. Vietnam was the UK's largest non-European source of imported fish in 2021 - the UK imported £202 million worth of fish and fish products from Vietnam, 40% of which was frozen shrimps and prawns.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Trade data is from the [UK Trade Info database](#) and the [UN Conference on Trade and Development \(UNCTAD\) database](#), downloaded in October 2022, using product code SITC 03 - 'Fish, crustaceans, molluscs & aq. inverts & preps thereof'

Eight of the UK's ten largest sources of imported fish in 2021 were non-EU states.

## Trade in 2022

The value of UK trade in fish fell notably in 2020 and 2021, owing to disruptions to international trade caused by the Coronavirus pandemic, as well as disruptions to UK-EU trade following the end of the Brexit transition period in January 2021.

Trade in fish has increased in 2022 - in January-July 2022 (the most recent data that is available), the value of UK fish exports were 12% higher in cash terms than in the equivalent period of 2021, while the value of imports were 20% higher.

UK Trade in fish						
£ millions						
	Exports			Imports		
	EU	Non-EU	Total	EU	Non-EU	Total
Jan-Jul 2019	745.7	368.2	1,113.9	725.3	1,318.3	2,043.6
Jan-Jul 2020	651.4	262.3	913.7	686.8	1,214.1	1,900.9
Jan-Jul 2021	587.5	276.1	863.6	421.0	1,301.7	1,722.7
Jan-Jul 2022	663.5	306.8	970.3	424.4	1,645.9	2,070.3

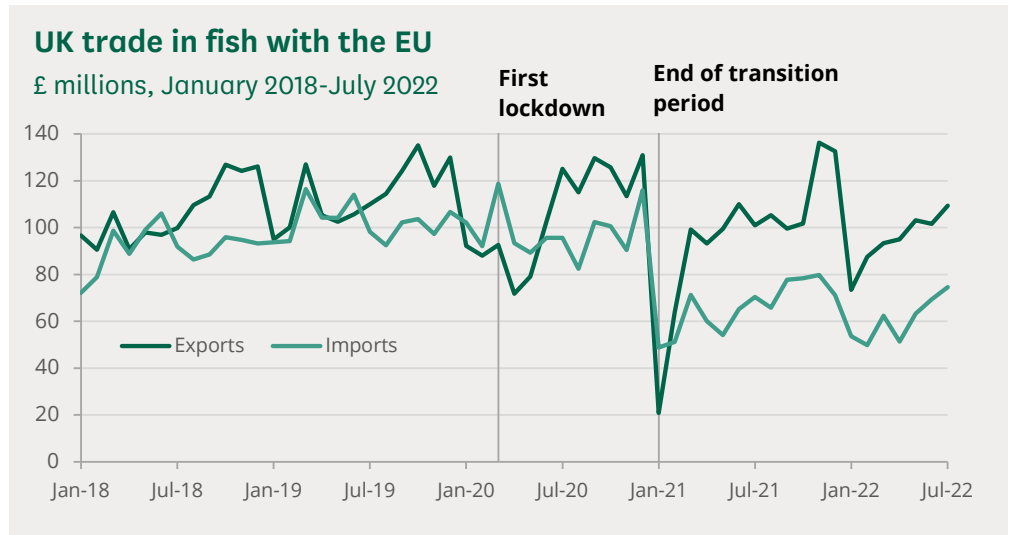
Source: HMRC, [UK Trade Info](#)

The increase in trade in 2022 has largely been driven by an increase in the value of fish imports from non-EU countries – the value of UK fish imports from outside the EU were 25% higher in cash terms in January-July 2022 than the equivalent period in 2019. Exports and imports of fish from the EU were both lower in January 2022 than the equivalent period of 2019 – the value of fish imports from the EU were 41% lower in cash terms, while the value of exports were 11% lower.

The contraction in UK trade in fish with the EU was most pronounced between December 2020 and January 2021, following the end of the Brexit transition period (combined with ongoing disruptions to trade caused by the Coronavirus pandemic).

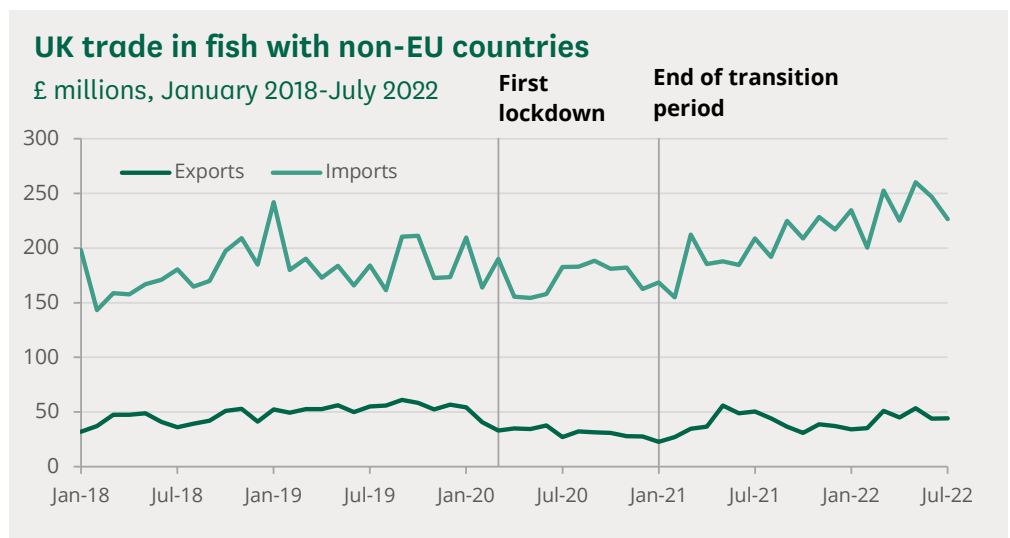
The value of UK's fish exports to the EU fell by 84% in cash terms between December 2020 and January 2021, while the value of imports from the EU fell by 58%. While UK-EU trade in fish has generally increased in 2022 compared

to 2020 and 2021, it remains below levels for the equivalent periods of 2018 and 2019, with the value of imports being notably lower.



Source: HMRC, [UK Trade Info](#)

By contrast, UK trade in fish with non-EU countries has increased since January 2021 – the value of UK fish imports from non-EU countries has increased notably, while exports to non-EU countries have largely returned to pre-pandemic levels of trade.



Source: HMRC, [UK Trade Info](#)

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## 4 Landings

### 4.1 Fisheries management

Under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), coastal states have sovereign rights to explore and use the marine resources within their Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), defined as extending up to 200 nautical miles (nm) from the country's coast (or, where this leads to overlap, the median line between sovereign coastlines).

The EU's [Common Fisheries Policy](#), which still applied to the UK up to the end of 2020, sets out the rules applicable to commercial fisheries within in the EEZs of Member States. It sets total allowable catches (TAC) in each fishing area for each quota stock, which is then divided between Member States using a fixed calculation based on share of historical fishing activity in that area, or so called "relative stability". This means that fishing boats from one Member State can fish in the waters of another EU Member State as long as they have quota allocated under relative stability.

Non-quota species, which are outside of the CFP, and include the majority of shellfish, are managed at UK level, through a licencing scheme and the use of byelaws to manage individual fisheries and fishing gear use.

Since the end of the Brexit transition period (1 January 2021), the UK is no longer part of the CFP and is an [independent coastal state](#). As such the Government has full responsibility for managing fisheries in the UK's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of 200 miles.<sup>20</sup> The UK Government is responsible for setting TACs within its waters. [Catch limits](#) are agreed with the EU on an annual basis.

As fisheries management is devolved, each devolved administration (and the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) for England) is responsible for distributing fishing quotas to its licensed fishing vessels, within the allocation from the UK's overall TAC. A fisheries [Concordat](#) sets out a common agreed approach for all four nations to do this.

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<sup>20</sup> Article 61(1) of the [UN Convention on the Law of the Sea \(UNCLOS\)](#) states that: "The coastal State shall determine the allowable catch of the living resources in its exclusive economic zone."

TACs for each Member State are divided between vessels. These must have a licence that entitles them to a share of fishing quota allocations (FQAs), based on historical fishing effort. There are separate pools for those vessels over 10 meters and for 10m and under vessels (u10m). Fishing quota can be bought, leased or borrowed independently of fishing licences, but all vessels using quota must also have a licence. Further details on UK fisheries can be found in the Library Briefings on [Fisheries Management in the UK](#), [The Fisheries Bill \[HL\] 2019-21](#), [Fisheries and Brexit](#), and [Fisheries and the future UK-EU relationship negotiations](#).

The 2021 figures shown in this section are the first to reflect the post-Brexit fishing order. However, comparisons with 2020 will be impacted by the pandemic which disrupted both fishing activity and the UK and export markets, especially the hospitality sector.

## 4.2 Landings in the UK and abroad by UK vessels

The UK fishing fleet catches and lands different types of fish. Pelagic fish make up the largest part of their landings, while the volume of demersal fish landings has declined in recent years.

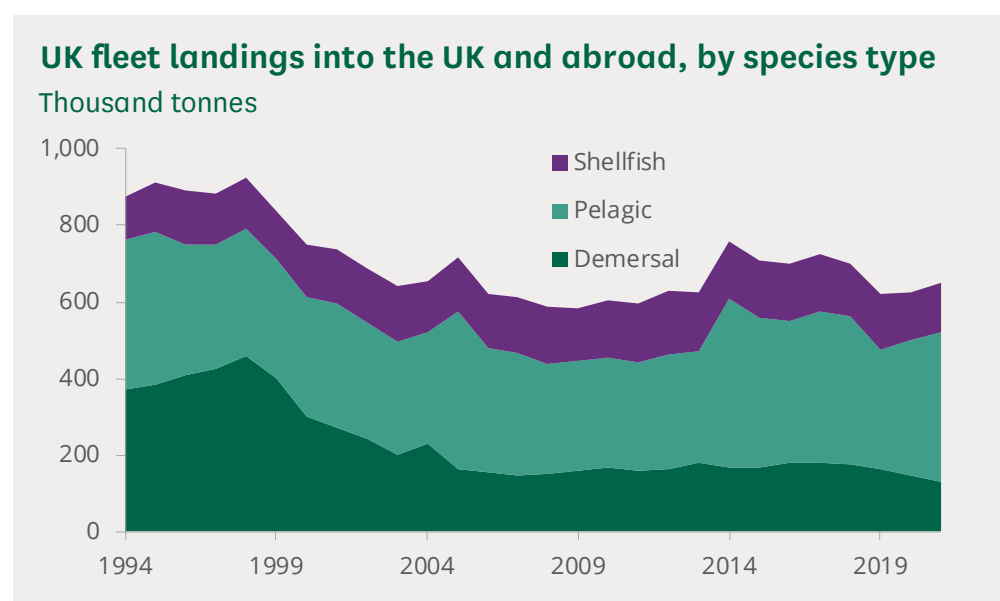
### Box 2: Types of fish

**Demersal:** Refers to fish, such as cod, haddock, plaice and turbot, which live and feed primarily on or near the seabed, called the demersal zone. Commercial species are covered by fishing quota

**Pelagic:** This refers to fish that live above the sea floor, in the pelagic zone. Species include herring, sardine, mackerel and tuna. Commercial species are covered by fishing quota.

**Shellfish:** A collective term used for commercial molluscs (e.g. scallops, whelks and clams) and crustacea (lobster, crab, prawns and nephrops) fisheries. Other than for nephrops, fishing activity is usually inshore and is licenced rather than falling under the quota system.

The chart below (and table 2 in the appendix) provides a breakdown of the UK fleet's landed catch, showing landings by broad type of fish since 1994.



Source: Marine Management Organisation, [UK Sea Fisheries Statistics](#) (various years)

The largest species group fished by the UK fleet is **pelagic** fish. From a low point in 2011 (282,000 tonnes), landed catches of pelagic fish increased to **392,200 tonnes in 2021** (60%). This was 11% more than in 2020.

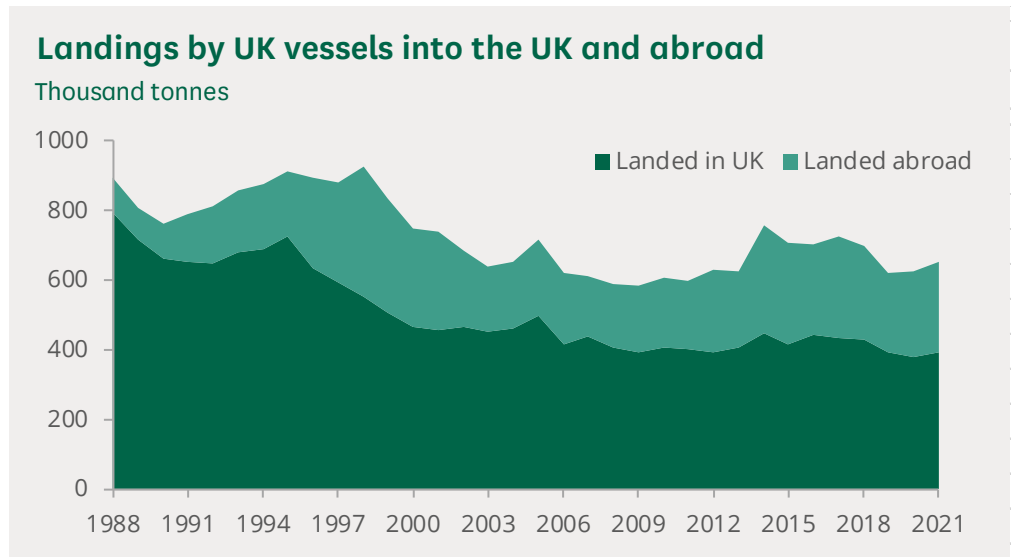
Catches of **demersal** fish fell by two thirds from 456,700 tonnes in 1998 to a low of 148,800 in 2007. Landings increased to 182,300 tonnes in 2017 (25% of the total landed catch by weight), before decreasing again to **128,700 tonnes in 2021** (24%), the lowest figure since 1994. This was 13% lower than in 2020.

**Shellfish** catches were **121,100 tonnes** (20% of the total landed catch by weight). This was 8% more than in 2020.

Pelagic fish was the largest group in terms of weight and second largest by value (£315 million in 2021, down from £298 million in 2020). Demersal fish was worth £275 million in 2021 (down from £361 million in 2020). Shellfish had been the largest species group in terms of value between 2017-2019 and became the largest again in 2021, worth £331 million in 2021 (up from £262 million in 2020).

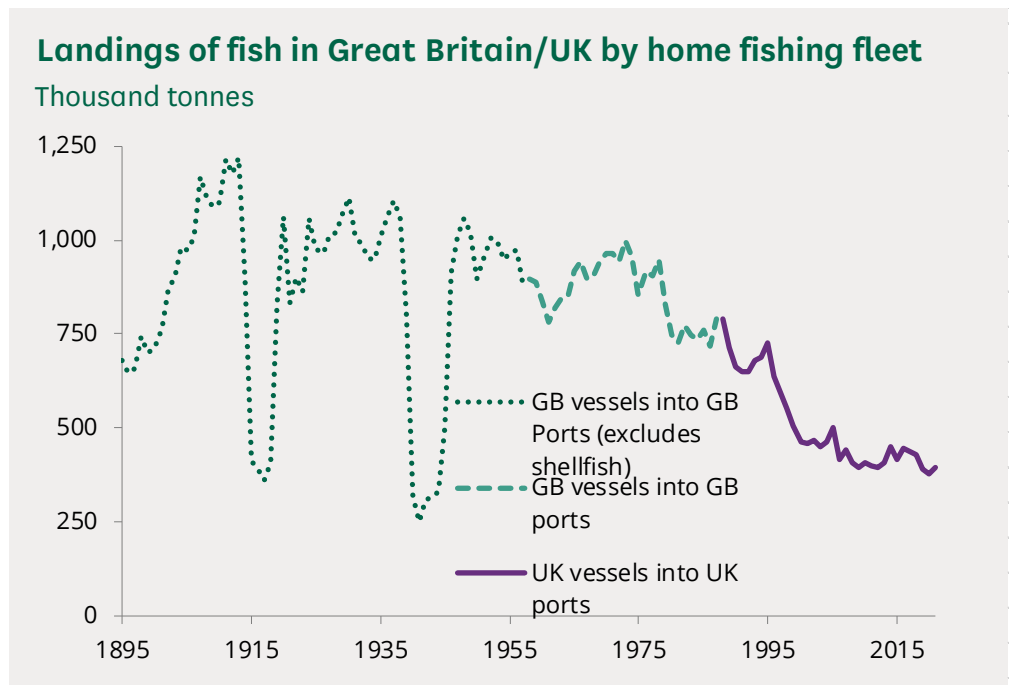
## Fish landed in the UK and abroad

Most of these fish are landed in the UK, but a substantial proportion is landed at foreign ports. In 2021, the total weight of fish landed by UK vessels in the UK and abroad was 651,800 tonnes, of which 257,600 tonnes (40%) were landed abroad. The chart below shows that landings fell in 2020, because of the coronavirus pandemic, but recovered in 2021.



Source: Marine Management Organisation, [UK Sea Fisheries Statistics](#) (various years)

The chart above shows that the proportion of fish landed abroad has increased since the 1980s, while landings in the UK have decreased. This decrease is part of a longer-term trend: the amount of fish landed in Britain/ the UK by the home fishing fleet has seen an overall decline since 1895. The chart below and table 1 in the appendix show the long-term trend, displaying a clear pattern, despite breaks in the series and substantial variation.



Sources: B R Mitchell, British Historical Statistics; OPCS, Annual abstract of statistics (various years); Marine Management Organisation, [UK Sea Fisheries Statistics](#) (various years)

The tonnage of fish landed increased sharply from 553,000 tonnes in 1887 to 1.2 million tonnes in 1913. Following the disruption of the First World War, landings did not recover to their earlier levels, varying between 0.9 and 1.1 million tonnes in the period to 1938. Landings stayed around this level after 1945 until the early 1960s, when landings declined to below 0.8 million tonnes. They subsequently increased to peak at 1.0 million tonnes in 1973. Following this, landings had been in steady decline until they stabilised at around 0.4 million tonnes in 2009; the lowest levels of any years outside the two world wars. In 2021, UK vessels landed 394,200 tonnes of fish in the UK.

The context for UK long-term landings is an overall expansion in fishing activity and mechanization in the 19th and early 20th century, followed by a fall in catches in the wider North Atlantic since the 1950s. This fall was due to fishing stocks reducing while fishing effort tripled.<sup>21</sup> At the same time, a higher proportion of the overall catch was made up of more abundant low value stocks, as the availability of higher value species declined.<sup>22</sup> More recently there has been an increased focus on high value shellfish in part driven by loss of fish stocks and lack of quota, but also the availability of export markets. The stabilisation since 2009 coincides with reform of the Common Fisheries Policy aimed at controlling fishing efforts and returning commercial stocks to sustainable levels by 2020.<sup>23</sup>

Despite the decrease in the weight of landings, the value of landings by the UK fleet continued to increase up until 2018. The total value of landings was £921 million in 2021, an increase of 11% compared with 2020. The chart below shows the trend in the value of total landings by the UK fishing fleet, compared to the volume of total landings.

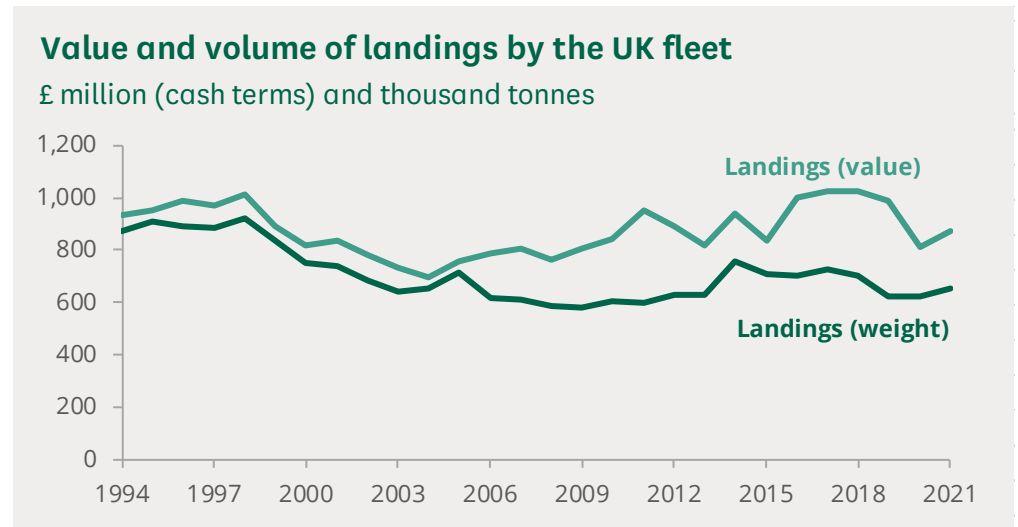
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<sup>21</sup> New Scientist, [Complete collapse of North Atlantic fishing predicted](#), 18 February 2002

<sup>22</sup> FAO, [Review of the state of world fishery resources: marine fisheries](#), 1997

<sup>23</sup> Paul G. Fernandes, Robin M. Cook, [Reversal of Fish Stock Decline in the Northeast Atlantic](#), Current Biology, Volume 23, Issue 15, 2013



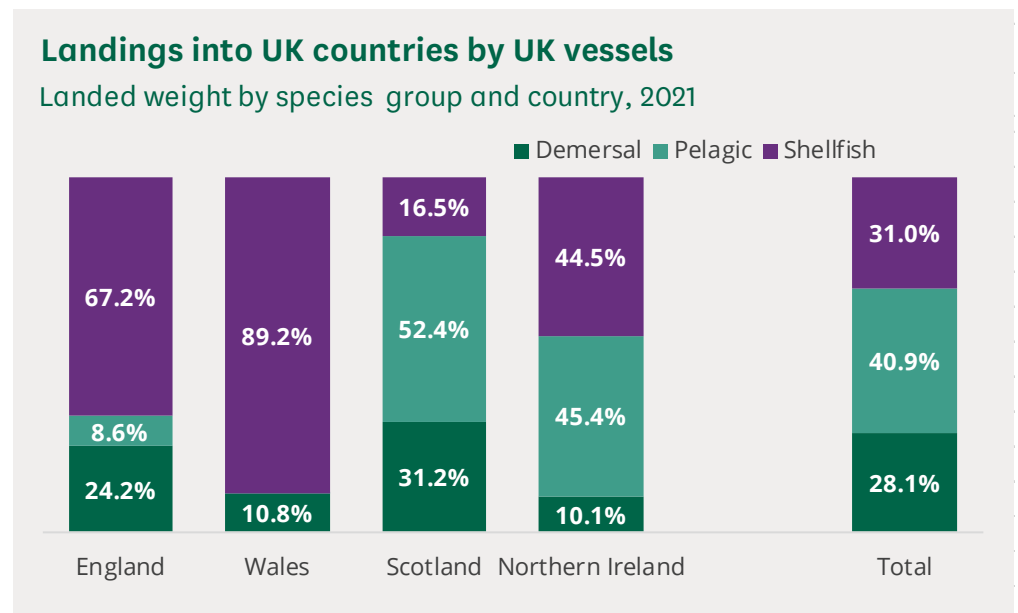


Source: Marine Management Organisation (MMO), [UK Sea Fisheries Statistics](#), various editions

## 4.3

### Landings in different parts of the UK

There is substantial variation in the type of fish landed in different parts of the UK, reflecting differences in their fishing industries. The chart below shows the types of fish landed in different parts of the UK in 2021 (by ships from all parts of the UK).



Source: Marine Management Organisation, [UK Sea Fisheries Statistics](#), 2021, table 2.2a-d

Landings in Wales are mostly shellfish (such as crabs, scallops and whelk; 4,900 tonnes), while English landings also include a substantial proportion of demersal fish (22,400 tonnes) and Northern Irish landings include a substantial proportion of pelagic fish (9,600 tonnes). Scottish landings are mostly pelagic fish (142,100 tonnes) with a substantial amount of demersal fish and some shellfish.

## 4.4 Fish caught by UK and EU member states in each other's waters

The UK's Marine Management Organisation has analysed the weight and value of fish caught (for subsequent landing) by the UK and the EU's member states (MS) in each other's EEZ waters in the [North East Atlantic area](#). Comparative data is only available for the **period 2012-16**; during this time, it is estimated that:

- Vessels from **EU member states** landed an annual average of **739,000 tonnes** of fish (worth **£521 million** p.a.) from the **UK EEZ**, accounting for 35% of their NE Atlantic catch by tonnage (23% by value). For comparison, UK vessels landed 546,000 tonnes of fish in UK waters, worth £633 million;<sup>24</sup>
- **UK vessels** landed **94,000 tonnes** of fish (worth **£106 million** p.a.) from **EU member states' EEZs**, accounting for 14% of their NE Atlantic catch by tonnage (13% by value).<sup>25</sup>

Historically, there is variation between different national fleets, with some Member States focusing on lower value stocks that the UK fishing fleet has not been particularly active in. More than 80% of shellfish by weight caught in the UK's EEZ was landed by UK boats, reflecting the fact that most shellfish are caught within the 12nm exclusion zone. Non-UK boats landed three-quarters of all pelagic fish and half of demersal fish by weight within UK waters. The top three fish landed from UK waters are Atlantic herring (26% of which was caught by UK vessels, and 74% by EU-27 vessels), Atlantic mackerel (57% UK

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<sup>24</sup> This means UK vessels catch fewer fish but they are of higher value than the fish caught by vessels from EU countries

<sup>25</sup> Marine Management Organisation (MMO), [Exclusive Economic Zone Analysis: UK commercial sea fisheries landings by EEZ of capture 2012 to 2017](#), published as a supplement to the Marine Management Organisation [UK sea fisheries annual statistics report 2017](#).

vessels, 43% EU-27 vessels) and sandeels (1% UK vessels, 99% EU-27 vessels).<sup>26</sup>

The average value of fish caught by EU Member states from UK waters was £705 per tonne. The average value of fish caught from EU waters by UK vessels was £1,127 per tonne. The average value of fish caught by UK vessels in UK waters was £1,159 per tonne.

In 2019, UK vessels landed 502,000 tonnes of fish (worth £851 million) from UK waters, 81% of all their landings from North-East Atlantic waters (87% by value). They landed 91,000 tonnes of fish (£81 million) from EU waters, representing 15% of all landings from these waters (8% by value).<sup>27</sup>

Other than UK vessels, Dutch vessels caught the highest weight of fish in UK waters (237,000 tonnes and 8% of value). French vessels had the highest value of catch and third highest weight (121,000 tonnes and 14% of value).

The table below sets out the tonnage and value fished by the UK and other member states in their own and each other's EEZs.

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<sup>26</sup> Marine Management Organisation (MMO), [Exclusive Economic Zone Analysis: UK commercial sea fisheries landings by EEZ of capture 2012 to 2019, p19](#)

<sup>27</sup> Marine Management Organisation (MMO), [Exclusive Economic Zone Analysis: UK commercial sea fisheries landings by EEZ of capture 2012 to 2019](#)

## UK and the EU's Member States (MS) landed fish catches from each other's Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) (a) in the North East Atlantic (b)

by landed live weight tonnage and £ value

	Caught in UK EEZ					
	2019		2012-16 average			
Nationality of vessel	tonnes	£m	tonnes	%	£m	%
UK	502,000	851	546,000	42%	663	56%
MS	..	..	739,000	58%	521	44%
of which: top five						
Denmark	..	..	237,000	18%	90	8%
Netherlands	..	..	177,000	14%	92	8%
France	..	..	120,000	9%	171	14%
Ireland	..	..	85,000	7%	75	6%
Germany	..	..	75,000	6%	30	3%
	Caught in MS' EEZs					
	2019		2012-16 average			
Nationality of vessel	tonnes	£m	tonnes	%	£m	%
UK	91,000	81	94,000	7%	106	6%
MS	..	..	1,220,000	93%	1540	94%
	Total from EU EEZs (UK and MS combined)					
	2019		2012-16 average			
Nationality of vessel	tonnes	£m	tonnes	%	£m	%
UK	593,000	932	640,000	25%	769	27%
MS	..	..	1,959,000	75%	2,061	73%
<b>Percent of UK catch from:</b>	tonnes	£m	tonnes		£m	
UK EEZ	85%	91%	85%		86%	
MS EEZ	15%	9%	15%		14%	
<b>Percent of MS catch from:</b>	tonnes	£m	tonnes		£m	
UK EEZ	..	..	38%		25%	
MS EEZ	..	..	62%		75%	

### Notes:

'..' denotes figures not available

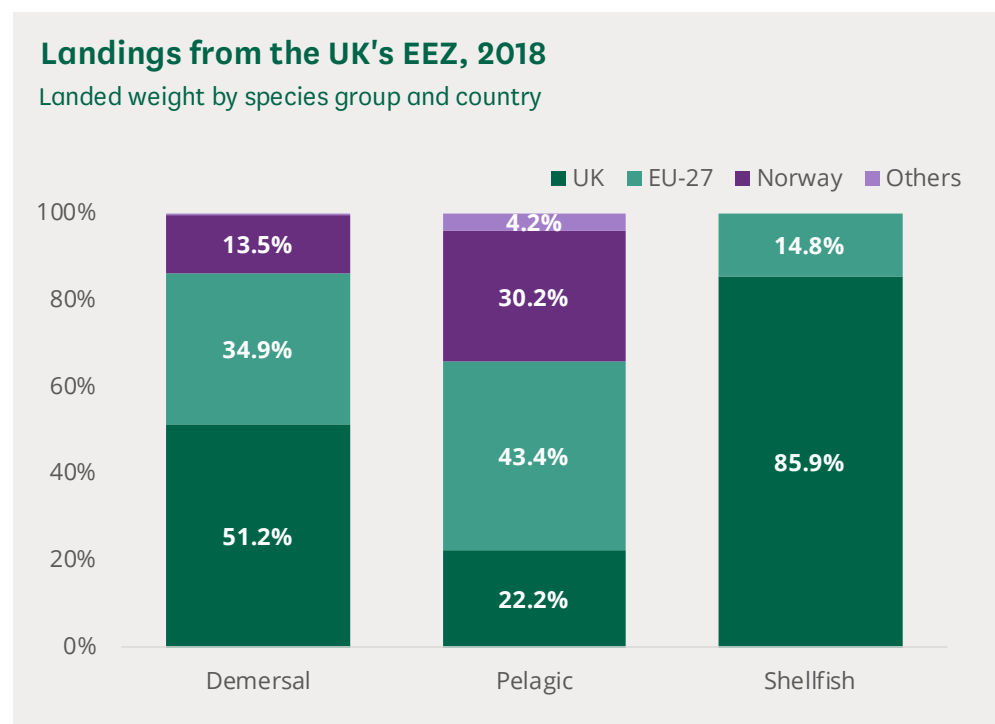
(a) EEZs cover waters 200 nautical miles from coast (or median line between coasts)

(b) Figures here only include fish caught and landed by EU member state vessels in EU EEZ waters in

Source: Marine Management Organisation (MMO) Exclusive Economic Zone Analysis: UK commercial sea fisheries landings by EEZ of capture, 2012 to 2017 (2012-16); 2012 to 2019 (2019)

Norway, which is not part of the CFP, also has access to EU waters, as part of a [bilateral fisheries agreement](#). This also allow EU vessels and UK vessels access to a number of stocks in Norwegian waters. Quota shares are agreed on a [yearly basis](#).

The chart below shows the proportion of different types of fish landed by boats from the UK, the EU-27 and Norway in 2018.<sup>28</sup>



Note: not including fish landed by vessels from Faroe and other countries  
Source: Dr Ian Napier, [Fish Landings from the UK EEZ 2015-2018](#) (July 2020)

## Fisheries flows

The fishing industry flows are complex, with vessels registered in one country often landing their catches at the closest ports in a different country. For example, the value of landings into Wales was almost evenly split between EU vessels, other UK vessels, and Welsh vessels in 2018.<sup>29</sup> The choice of port is based on a number of factors, including the fastest way to get fresh fish to EU export markets. Fish is also landed for processing in the UK before being exported.

The following table illustrates ‘fisheries flows’ involving the UK in 2021.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>29</sup> Public Policy Institute for Wales, [Implications of Brexit for Fishing Opportunities in Wales](#), 13 February 2018

## International fisheries flows involving the UK, 2021

UK vessel landings into foreign ports			Foreign vessel landings into UK ports		
Port nationality	Tonnes	Proportion	Vessel nationality	Tonnes	Proportion
<b>Total</b>	<b>257,628</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>19,793</b>	<b>100%</b>
Norway	122,962	48%	France	8,126	41%
Netherlands	60,192	23%	Ireland	8,018	41%
Ireland	36,056	14%	Spain	2,212	11%
Denmark	34,209	13%	Norway	658	3%
Spain	2,160	1%	Denmark	611	3%
France	1,647	1%	Germany	144	1%
Germany	300	0%	Belgium	24	0%
Belgium	2	0%			

Source: Marine Management Organisation, [UK sea fisheries statistics, 2021](#), table 2.14 and 2.15

In 2021, foreign-registered vessels landed 19,800 tonnes of fish in UK ports. This was 48% less than in 2020 and accounted for 9% of all fish landed in the UK. The largest proportion of this fish (41%) was landed by vessels registered in France.

UK-registered vessels landed 257,600 tonnes of fish into non-UK ports, 5% more compared with 2020, and accounting for 38% of all fish landed by UK vessels. The largest share of this fish (48%) was landed in Norway.

In 2019, the UK had the largest catch among EU member states (617,300 tonnes), followed by Spain (559,400 tonnes) and France (525,100 tonnes). Among European nations, Iceland and Norway tend to have bigger catches, but data on their catches is not available for 2019.<sup>30</sup>

## 4.5

### Sea angling

There is no official data on the number of recreational fishers or the level of catches from this group. The Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas) asked sea anglers to keep diaries of what they caught and surveyed 12,000 residents to get a detailed picture of sea angling in the UK between 2016 and 2019.

<sup>30</sup> Eurostat, [catches in all fishing regions](#)

The study found that there were around 800,000 sea anglers in the UK (1.6% of the adult population) in 2015-2017.<sup>31</sup> This reduced to 551,000 in 2019, but overlapping confidence intervals means this may be due to uncertainty in the estimates.

Data from the diaries was used to estimate the total amount of fish caught by sea anglers for 68 species in 2016-7. The total number of fish caught was 49.7 million in 2016 and 54.5 million in 2017. In 2018, an estimated 46 million fish were caught (total catch estimates were calculated for 55 species) and in 2019 this was 43 million (estimates for 58 species). Of these fish, around 80% were released back into the sea. The most common fish caught were whiting, mackerel, dogfish and sea bass.<sup>32</sup> Of these, seabass recreational and commercial catches are [restricted](#) due to concerns about stock levels.

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<sup>31</sup> Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas), [News: Sea angling contributes over £1.5bn to UK economy](#), 3 July 2020

<sup>32</sup> Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas), [Participation, catches and economic impact of sea anglers resident in the UK in 2016 and 2017](#), 3 July 2020; [Participation, effort, and catches of sea anglers resident in the UK in 2018 & 2019](#), April 2021

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## 5 Fish processing industry

### 5.1 Description of the industry

The fish processing industry is a food manufacturing industry involved with the preparation and preservation of aquatic life for human consumption and animal feed.<sup>33</sup> Seafood is processed in the UK using fish caught and landed in UK waters and fish imported from the rest of the world.

Fish processing plants can be divided into three categories:

- primary processors (dealing with cutting, peeling, gutting and washing fish and shellfish),
- secondary processors (dealing with brining, smoking, freezing and canning) and
- mixed processors that do a mixture of these activities.<sup>34</sup>

Typically, fish processing plants are located near major fish ports, which means that fish can be prepared before transportation to consumers.

### 5.2 Businesses and turnover

There were 348 fish processing sites in the UK in 2020.<sup>35</sup> There has been considerable consolidation in the industry since 2008 when there were 560 fish processing sites.<sup>36</sup>

In 2020, fish processing businesses had a turnover of around £3.5 billion.<sup>37</sup>

The processing industry is labour intensive and typically involves businesses with lots of employees. The fish processing industry has a much smaller than average proportion of businesses with less than five employees: 41% of fish

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<sup>33</sup> It is defined as [Standard Industrial Classification \(SIC\) code 10.2](#).

<sup>34</sup> Seafish, [UK Seafood Processing Labour](#), April 2019, pg. 19

<sup>35</sup> Sites that derived over 50% of their turnover from fish processing.

<sup>36</sup> Seafish, [UK Seafood Processing Labour](#), April 2019, pg. 6

<sup>37</sup> ONS, [Annual Business Survey 2020](#).



processing businesses had 0-4 employees in 2021, compared to 90% for fishing businesses (see section 1.3) and 78% for UK businesses overall.<sup>38</sup>

## 5.3 Employment

In 2020 fish processing sites accounted for 17,988 full-time equivalent jobs.<sup>39</sup> Depending on the type of processing, employment can vary through the year, for example increasing in the run up to Christmas.

55% of fish processing workers were UK nationals, 35% are EU nationals, and 10% other nationalities or unreported.<sup>40</sup>

The following table shows the top ten areas for fish processing sites and jobs in the UK. North-Eastern Scotland (Grampian) and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire (the Humber) are the key regions for seafood processing in the UK in terms of number of sites and number of jobs.

In the Humber and the Grampians the industry is mainly concerned with sea-caught fish and shellfish from local ports.<sup>41</sup> In other areas, such as the Scottish Highlands, the industry is focused on farmed fish and shellfish.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Note this excludes small businesses with no employees and turnover below the VAT threshold (£85,000). Source: ONS, [Business activity, size and location: 2022](#), via [NOMIS](#) database.

<sup>39</sup> Seafish, [Seafood processing industry performance data: 2012-2020](#), Issue 2 2021; accessed 9 November 2021.

<sup>40</sup> Seafish, [Seafood processing industry performance data: 2012-2020](#), Issue 2 2021; accessed 9 November 2021. For further analysis of EU workers in the industry, see Seafish's [2019 Annual Report](#).

<sup>41</sup> Seafish, [UK Seafood Processing Labour](#) 2019, April 2019, pg. 11

<sup>42</sup> Seafish,

## Fish processing sites and jobs by region

### Top ten areas for sites and jobs

	Sites		FTE jobs
North Eastern Scotland	51	The Humber	5,546
The Humber	50	North Eastern Scotland	3,563
Highlands and Islands	42	Southern Scotland	1,535
Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	23	Highlands and Islands	1,434
Eastern Scotland	19	Eastern Scotland	929
Northern Ireland	15	Devon	767
Southern Scotland	15	Cornwall and Isles of Scilly	569
Devon	14	Northern Ireland	412
Lancashire	14	Outer London - South	400
East Anglia	14	West Central Scotland	346

Source: Seafish, [Seafood processing industry performance data: 2012-2020](#), Issue 2 2021.

## 6

## Appendix: data tables

**Table 1: Landings of fish in Great Britain/UK by home fishing fleet**

Thousand tonnes

Year	Quantity	Year	Quantity
1890	598	1980	748
1895	669	1985	762
1900	698	1990	622
1905	958	1995	726
1910	1,081	2000	465
1915	405	2005	499
1920	1,046	2010	408
1925	963	2011	400
1930	1,094	2012	394
1935	993	2013	405
1940	314	2014	449
1945	492	2015	416
1950	883	2016	446
1955	953	2017	435
1960	823	2018	429
1965	902	2019	391
1970	948	2020	379
1975	842	2021	394

Notes:

Data before 1958 excludes shellfish

Data before 1988 is for Great Britain vessels and ports; data from 1988 is for UK vessels and ports

Sources:

B R Mitchell, British Historical Statistics

OPCS, Annual abstract of statistics, various years

Defra, United Kingdom Sea Fisheries Statistics 2004, Table 3.3

Marine Management Organisation, UK Sea Fisheries Statistics (various years)

**Table 2: Fish landings by the UK fleet into the UK and abroad, by vessels' country of administration**

Quantity (thousand tonnes)

	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>United Kingdom</b>	<b>911.8</b>	<b>748.1</b>	<b>715.7</b>	<b>605.3</b>	<b>708.7</b>	<b>700.6</b>	<b>726.7</b>	<b>700.0</b>	<b>621.9</b>	<b>623.2</b>	<b>651.8</b>
Demersal	386.0	301.0	165.2	169.1	169.1	180.4	182.3	176.4	164.1	147.6	128.7
Pelagic	396.3	311.8	410.6	285.6	389.8	369.8	394.9	385.3	311.0	354.5	392.2
Shellfish	129.5	135.4	139.8	150.6	149.8	150.4	149.6	138.3	146.8	121.1	131.0
England and Wales	245.9	191.8	195.2	197.7	214.4	212.0	213.1	198.2	188.3	183.0	166.5
Demersal	117.2	82.7	61.5	60.5	75.8	82.5	77.8	65.8	65.2	59.6	48.2
Pelagic	59.3	37.1	58.7	77.3	68.5	65.2	67.1	..	..	..	..
Shellfish	69.4	72.0	74.9	59.9	70.1	64.3	68.1	68.2	68.1	60.0	58.7
England			174.2	184.4	203.3	202.0	200.7	187.1	179.9	176.2	161.5
Demersal			58.4	59.1	74.4	81.4	76.7	64.8	64.1	58.6	47.3
Pelagic			58.6	77.3	68.5	65.2	67.1	64.2	55.0	63.4	59.6
Shellfish			57.2	48.0	60.4	55.5	56.8	58.2	60.8	54.2	54.6
Wales			20.9	13.4	11.1	9.9	12.4	11.1	8.4	6.8	5.0
Demersal			3.1	1.4	1.3	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.0	0.9
Pelagic			0.1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Shellfish			17.7	11.9	9.7	8.8	11.3	10.0	7.3	5.8	4.1
Scotland	635.2	521.5	483.3	367.7	440.1	453.3	465.3	445.2	386.0	391.6	435.3
Demersal	257.0	208.7	99.8	106.0	90.8	95.4	101.7	107.3	96.1	86.1	77.9
Pelagic	327.5	260.7	328.3	189.2	291.5	294.4	301.4	284.6	227.8	257.5	300.4
Shellfish	50.7	52.1	55.3	72.5	57.8	63.6	62.2	53.3	62.1	48.0	56.9
Northern Ireland	27.9	30.4	35.3	37.7	47.9	28.5	43.4	52.0	43.3	44.7	46.0
Demersal	10.9	8.8	3.6	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.6	3.1	2.6	1.8	2.4
Pelagic	9.6	14.0	23.6	19.1	29.8	10.2	26.3	36.6	28.1	33.6	32.2
Shellfish	7.5	7.6	8.2	16.2	15.8	15.9	14.4	12.3	12.5	9.3	11.4
Islands	2.8	4.5	1.9	2.2	6.3	6.8	5.0	4.7	4.2	3.9	4.0
Demersal	0.9	0.7	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1
Pelagic	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Shellfish	1.9	3.7	1.5	1.9	6.1	6.6	4.8	4.6	4.0	3.8	3.9

Source: Marine Management Organisation, UK Sea Fisheries Statistics (various years)

**Table 3: Number of fishers in the UK**

Year	United Kingdom			England and Wales			Scotland			Northern Ireland		
	Regular	Part-time	Total	Regular	Part-time	Total	Regular	Part-time	Total	Regular	Part-time	Total
1938	39,380	8,444	47,824	26,062	2,949	29,011	12,976	4,939	17,915	342	556	898
1948	38,826	8,821	47,647	25,946	3,373	29,319	12,080	5,148	17,228	800	300	1,100
1960	22,007	6,247	28,254	12,712	3,646	16,358	8,795	2,451	11,246	500	150	650
1965	19,601	6,273	25,874	11,064	4,045	15,109	8,057	2,088	10,145	480	140	620
1970	17,480	3,963	21,443	9,424	2,382	11,806	7,656	1,441	9,097	400	140	540
1975	17,061	5,073	22,134	9,016	3,447	12,463	7,507	1,341	8,848	538	285	823
1980	16,796	6,513	23,309	8,455	5,135	13,590	7,561	1,138	8,699	780	240	1,020
1985	15,962	6,262	22,224	7,984	5,036	13,020	7,170	932	8,102	808	294	1,102
1988	17,095	5,225	22,320	8,467	4,039	12,506	7,672	891	8,563	956	295	1,251
1994	15,640	5,063	20,703	7,542	3,425	10,967	7,160	1,410	8,570	938	228	1,166
1995	16,062	3,924	19,986	8,240	2,192	10,432	6,889	1,506	8,395	933	226	1,159
2000	12,399	3,250	15,649	6,193	1,868	8,061	5,594	1,308	6,902	612	74	686
2001	12,145	2,813	14,958	6,279	1,483	7,762	5,353	1,284	6,637	513	46	559
2002	11,442	2,763	14,205	6,505	1,382	7,887	4,369	1,338	5,707	568	43	611
2003	10,204	2,918	13,122	5,778	1,570	7,348	3,968	1,308	5,276	458	40	498
2004	11,023	2,430	13,453	6,364	1,195	7,559	4,124	1,151	5,275	535	84	619
2005	10,492	2,339	12,831	6,026	1,081	7,107	3,952	1,203	5,155	514	55	569
2006	10,358	2,576	12,934	5,702	1,414	7,116	4,109	1,096	5,205	547	66	613
2007	10,305	2,566	12,871	5,340	1,514	6,854	4,408	951	5,359	557	101	658
2008	10,028	2,586	12,614	4,911	1,686	6,597	4,585	807	5,392	532	93	625
2009	10,129	2,083	12,212	5,185	1,024	6,209	4,403	946	5,349	541	113	654
2010	10,172	2,531	12,703	5,380	1,509	6,889	4,257	909	5,166	535	113	648
2011	10,040	2,365	12,405	5,386	1,378	6,764	4,076	877	4,953	578	110	688
2012	10,283	2,162	12,445	5,877	1,067	6,944	3,752	941	4,693	654	154	808
2013	10,245	1,990	12,235	5,478	951	6,429	4,092	900	4,992	675	139	814
2014	9,772	2,073	11,845	5,109	1,108	6,217	3,980	816	4,796	683	149	832
2015	10,162	1,945	12,107	5,469	951	6,420	3,985	843	4,828	708	151	859
2016	9,468	2,289	11,757	4,934	1,125	6,059	3,834	989	4,823	700	175	875
2017	9,710	1,982	11,692	5,092	963	6,055	3,932	867	4,799	686	152	838
2018	9,588	2,373	11,961	4,870	1,380	6,250	4,032	825	4,857	686	168	854
2019	9,419	2,624	12,043	4,824	1,550	6,374	3,941	906	4,847	654	168	822
2020	9,023	2,275	11,298	4,548	1,113	5,661	3,765	972	4,737	710	190	900
2021	8,806	1,918	10,724	4,688	979	5,667	3,486	755	4,241	632	184	816

Note: No data is available between 1989 and 1993 because of absence of data for England & Wales.

Source Marine Management Organisation, *UK Sea Fisheries Statistics (various years)*

**Table 4: Number of vessels in the UK fishing fleet, by country of administration and size**

At year end:	United Kingdom (a)			England			Wales			Scotland			Northern Ireland			Islands (b)		
	Total	of which:		Total	of which:		Total	of which:		Total	of which:		Total	of which:		Total	of which:	
		10m & under	Over 10 metres		10m & under	Over 10 metres		10m & under	Over 10 metres		10m & under	Over 10 metres		10m & under	Over 10 metres		10m & under	Over 10 metres
1996	8,667																	
1998	8,271																	
2000	7,818																	
2002	7,578																	
2004	7,022	5,394	1,628	3,407	2,746	661	510	457	53	2,365	1,628	737	331	195	136	314	282	32
2006	6,752	5,203	1,549	3,254	2,645	609	504	465	39	2,256	1,545	711	331	194	137	288	260	28
2008	6,573	5,077	1,496	3,200	2,635	565	470	436	34	2,213	1,505	708	351	204	147	276	247	29
2010	6,477	5,047	1,430	3,121	2,569	552	483	442	41	2,157	1,491	666	379	232	147	315	291	24
2011	6,444	5,056	1,388	3,120	2,573	547	465	425	40	2,094	1,472	622	379	231	148	327	302	25
2012	6,406	5,032	1,374	3,113	2,562	551	479	440	39	2,075	1,468	607	381	232	149	344	319	25
2013	6,399	5,036	1,363	3,156	2,602	554	477	442	35	2,047	1,447	600	379	234	145	318	294	24
2014	6,383	5,026	1,357	3,128	2,573	555	466	426	40	2,048	1,458	590	368	225	143	324	299	25
2015	6,187	4,863	1,324	3,139	2,598	541	444	412	32	2,007	1,434	573	349	201	148	209	182	27
2016	6,191	4,876	1,315	3,098	2,569	529	451	419	32	2,031	1,456	575	351	202	149	208	181	27
2017	6,148	4,834	1,314	3,034	2,512	522	450	417	33	2,069	1,493	576	338	193	145	204	176	28
2018	6,036	4,760	1,276	2,923	2,409	514	440	410	30	2,083	1,527	556	332	194	138	206	173	33
2019	5,911	4,675	1,236	2,819	2,323	496	414	385	29	2,109	1,560	549	326	198	128	200	168	32
2020	5,783	4,547	1,236	2,799	2,300	499	403	375	28	2,139	1,589	550	325	199	126	78	50	28
2021	5,783	4,568	1,215	2,756	2,255	501	395	368	27	2,121	1,588	533	323	203	120	154	125	29

**Source** Marine Management Organisation (MMO), *UK Sea Fisheries Statistics* (various years)

**Notes** Breakdown by country of administration and vessel size available on a consistent basis from 2004.

(a) UK total includes Islands (see note b) plus a small number of registered vessels which are not administered by a port (and so do not appear in country breakdowns); typically new vessels or vessels that are changing administrations. (b) Islands comprises Guernsey, Jersey and the Isle of Man



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