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REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL

on the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1921/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on the submission of statistical data on landings of fishery products in Member States

1 BACKGROUND

The Commission (Eurostat) receives statistical data on landings of fishery products under Regulation (EC) No 1921/2006 ('the Regulation')[1]. According to Article 2 of the Regulation, fishery products are deemed to be landed on a Member State's territory if landed at its ports by EU and European Free Trade Association (EFTA) fishing vessels, or if landed on non-EU territory by EU fishing vessels and then imported[2]. Article 10 of the Regulation requires the Commission to submit a report to the European Parliament and the Council every 3 years assessing, in particular, the quality and relevance of the statistical data collected. The report must also analyse the cost-effectiveness of the system for collecting and processing statistical data on landings and propose any best practices to lessen the workload at national level and produce more useful, higher-quality statistical data.

The Regulation applies to EU Member States and is relevant for all EEA countries. However, as it relates to landings of marine fishery products, five landlocked Member States are exempted from the data reporting obligation (Czechia, Luxembourg, Hungary, Austria and Slovakia).

In addition to landings statistics, Eurostat also receives data related to catches, fleet and aquaculture. To manage the common fisheries policy, other Commission departments, mainly the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE), also collect data under three other regulations: Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009[3] which puts in place a control system to ensure compliance with fisheries rules; Regulation (EU) 2017/1004[4] on the collection, management and use of fisheries data; and Implementing Regulation (EU) 2017/218[5] on the EU fishing fleet register.

Every 3 years the Commission collects national quality reports[6], on which this report is based. The national reports include detailed information on the data quality and on the methods used to collect

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1 Regulation (EC) No 1921/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on the submission of statistical data on landings of fishery products in Member States and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 1382/91 (OJ L 403, 30.12.2006, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2006/1921/oj).

2 This means that these statistics are not comparable to landing data collected under Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009, where data are collected by a vessel's flag country.

3 Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 of 20 November 2009 establishing a Union control system for ensuring compliance with the rules of the common fisheries policy, amending Regulations (EC) No 847/96, (EC) No 2371/2002, (EC) No 811/2004, (EC) No 768/2005, (EC) No 2115/2005, (EC) No 2166/2005, (EC) No 388/2006, (EC) No 509/2007, (EC) No 676/2007, (EC) No 1098/2007, (EC) No 1300/2008, (EC) No 1342/2008 and repealing Regulations (EEC) No 2847/93, (EC) No 1627/94 and (EC) No 1966/2006 (OJ L 343, 22.12.2009, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2009/1224/2024-10-11).

4 Regulation (EU) 2017/1004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2017 on the establishment of a Union framework for the collection, management and use of data in the fisheries sector and support for scientific advice regarding the common fisheries policy and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 199/2008 (OJ L 157, 20.6.2017, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2017/1004/oj).

5 Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2017/218 on the Union fishing fleet register

6 https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/metadata/en/fish_ld_esms.htm

them. The national quality reports follow the European Statistical System (ESS) guidelines and are collected using the ESS Metadata Handler.

This report is based on: (i) the quality reports on landings submitted to Eurostat by the reporting Member States for the reference year 2022; (ii) compliance analysis; and (iii) cost data collected by Eurostat.

The Commission adopted previous assessment reports concerning statistics on landings submitted under the Regulation in November 2010[7], April 2014[8], May 2016[9], February 2019[10] and December 2021[11].

This report covers annual data on total quantities and unit prices of the fishery products landed in 2022 on the territory of the Member States. The data collected by Eurostat are broken down by species, vessel flag, presentation and intended use.

2 MAIN FINDINGS

2.1 Timeliness and punctuality

Most Member States met the data submission deadlines for the period covered by this report. The compliance assessment for the landings of fisheries products statistics for the reference year 2022 was compared with that of previous years. Compared with the data collection for the 2019 reference year, punctuality improved, with only one country delivering the data slightly late.

As per the usual procedure, data were subjected to an automatic pre-validation of their structure and content, and countries received a report flagging any errors. Countries resubmitted their data, as necessary, until no further errors were reported. Eurostat then carried out additional checks and

7 Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1921/2006 on the submission of statistical data on landings of fishery products in Member States, COM(2010) 675 final.

8 Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1921/2006 on the submission of statistical data on landings of fishery products in Member States, COM(2014) 240 final.

9 Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1921/2006 on the submission of statistical data on landings of fishery products in Member States, COM(2016) 239 final.

10 Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1921/2006 on the submission of statistical data on landings of fishery products in Member States, COM(2019) 47 final.

11 Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1921/2006 on the submission of statistical data on landings of fishery products in Member States, COM(2021) 789 final.

when it spotted inconsistencies it asked reporting countries to correct the data and submit revisions. For the 2022 reference year, the data submitted by one third of the reporting countries needed some clarifications and corrections. However, significant efforts have clearly been made by the reporting countries and Eurostat to improve the quality of the data over time.

The Commission (Eurostat) released the data immediately after validation, in line with its usual practice. Although it rarely proves necessary, data may be revised at any time.

2.2 Accuracy and comparability

According to the quality reports received from Member States, users rate their accuracy as good or very good and their reliability as stable or improved.

In October 2019, Eurostat published a revised version of a handbook dedicated to catch and landings statistics[12]. By using the revised handbook, further improvements have been made to the comparability of statistical data across countries.

Due to the differing EU accession dates of Member States, the length of the available time series data differs, resulting in varying degrees of comparability over time. However, when considering only the period covered by this report, data are comparable.

2.3 Relevance

The development, monitoring and evaluation of the common fisheries policy requires a lot of detailed data and information. Therefore, the statistical data collected under the Regulation are essential for informed, evidence-based policymaking at both national and EU level. The data on production levels and trends are important for analysing the development of the fisheries sector as part of the common fisheries policy. They provide policymakers and industry with solid foundations on which to build the sector's future.

2.4 Accessibility

Statistical data on landings of fishery products are available in the Eurostat database[13], both in detailed country tables and in an overall summary table displaying EU and national data at a more aggregated level.

[12] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/metadata/Annexes/fish_ld_esms_an_3.pdf (available only in English).

[13] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database

In addition, the Member States publish the data in national online databases or in the form of electronic publications. Access to these products is always free of charge.

The European reference metadata, including an EU-level quality report on landings statistics[14], are published on Eurostat's public database. Eurostat publishes data and articles on landings of fishery products in its online 'Statistics Explained'[15] collection and in overview publications[16].

There is also a single-entry point for all data, methodology and publications on the Eurostat website[17].

2.5 Data confidentiality

Countries submitted only non-confidential data on landings at the time the Regulation was adopted in 2006. However, since 2012, a few countries have started to send confidential figures to protect the data of single companies. This is in line with Regulation (EC) No 223/2009[18] on the transmission of data subject to statistical confidentiality. Although still quite low, the proportion of confidential data points reported by the countries is growing steadily, having increased from 2% to 4% of total landings data between 2019 and 2022.

When countries started reporting confidential data, it was agreed that Eurostat would apply a strict rule when calculating EU aggregates. This rule provides that an aggregate is confidential if a single value included in it is confidential. Eurostat acknowledges that while this approach protects confidentiality, it also excessively limits the publication of data. Eurostat is therefore working with the countries to find ways of publishing more national and EU-level aggregates while still ensuring data confidentiality.

14 https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/metadata/en/fish_ld_esms.htm

15 https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Fisheries_-_catches_and_landings

16 The most recent is 'Key figures on the European food chain – 2023 edition', ISBN 978-92-68-07811-2. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/15216629/18054337/KS-FK-23-001-EN-N.pdf/048e130f-79fa-e870-6c46-d80c9408620b?version=7.0&t=1707290893751 (available only in English).

17 https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/fisheries/overview

18 Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2009 on European statistics and repealing Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1101/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the transmission of data subject to statistical confidentiality to the Statistical Office of the European Communities, Council Regulation (EC) No 322/97 on Community Statistics, and Council Decision89/382/EEC, Euratom establishing a Committee on the Statistical Programmes of the European Communities (OJ L 87, 31.3.2009, p. 164).

3 BURDEN AND COST-EFFECTIVENESS

Eurostat assessed the cost-effectiveness of data collection on landings under the Regulation using the quality reports for 2022, together with the cost analysis based on a survey targeted at national statistical institutes. The cost analysis was based on costs for 2023 and covered the landings data collection for the 2022 reference year. A total of 19 countries replied to the cost survey. The total direct and indirect costs for all countries providing the figures was roughly EUR 3.0 million annually. It remained at the same level as for reference year 2019.

The 2022 quality reports submitted by 23 EU Member States and EEA countries showed that the majority of countries collect the data using administrative data sources. In total, 11 countries use it as the only source, 4 in combination with a census, 3 in combination with a census and sample surveys, 2 in combination with sample surveys, 1 in combination with consultation with experts and 1 in combination with other sources. Only one country uses a census as the only method of data collection. A number of countries reported efficiency gains, mostly linked to further automation (6 countries), training (3 countries), increased use of administrative data (3 countries) and the introduction of online surveys (1 country).

4 CONCLUSIONS AND WAY FORWARD: STREAMLINING AND SIMPLIFYING EUROPEAN FISHERY STATISTICS

Eurostat strives to continuously improve the quality and availability of European statistics while minimising the reporting burden.

To that end, in 2018 Eurostat launched the project 'Streamlining and simplifying European fishery statistics'. The project consists of: (i) an evaluation of the current aquaculture, catch and landing statistics; and (ii) an impact assessment of future policy options and possible future legislation. The evaluation, which also covered the functioning of the Regulation, was concluded in 2019[19]. The EFS impact assessment was launched in early 2020 and finalised in November 2021.

Landing statistics are robust in terms of punctuality, completeness and consistency. The countries provide reliable information on the volume and value of fishery products landed in the EU and detailed data at species level that can be used for analysing the EU fish market.

The coherence and comparability of the data collection is enhanced by Eurostat's technical guidelines and validation procedures.

Access to the statistical data is public and free of charge. The metadata accompanying the statistics produced includes national and EU-level quality reports.

[19] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52019SC0425

Only a few reporting countries face problems dealing with confidentiality issues, either regarding the quantity or the price of the landed products. A viable approach needs to be found to limit the impact of confidentiality on EU aggregates.

As mentioned above, opportunities exist to enhance the relevance of European fisheries and aquaculture statistics, simplify the current system and modernise data collection, for instance by drawing on administrative data sources more effectively at EU level.