



OYSTERS (OSTREIDAE)



© Scandinavian Fishing Year Book

Magallana gigas

BIOLOGY AND HABITAT

- **Species description** ([Read more](#))

Oyster is the common name for many salt-water bivalve molluscs living in marine or brackish waters. Most are part of the family *Ostreoidea*.

The main species produced in Europe is *Crassostrea gigas*.

- **Geographical distribution and habitat** ([Read more](#))

Oysters have a worldwide distribution and can be found in all seas and oceans, from saltwaters to brackish waters.

RESOURCE, EXPLOITATION AND MANAGEMENT

- **Production methods and fishing gears** ([Read more](#))

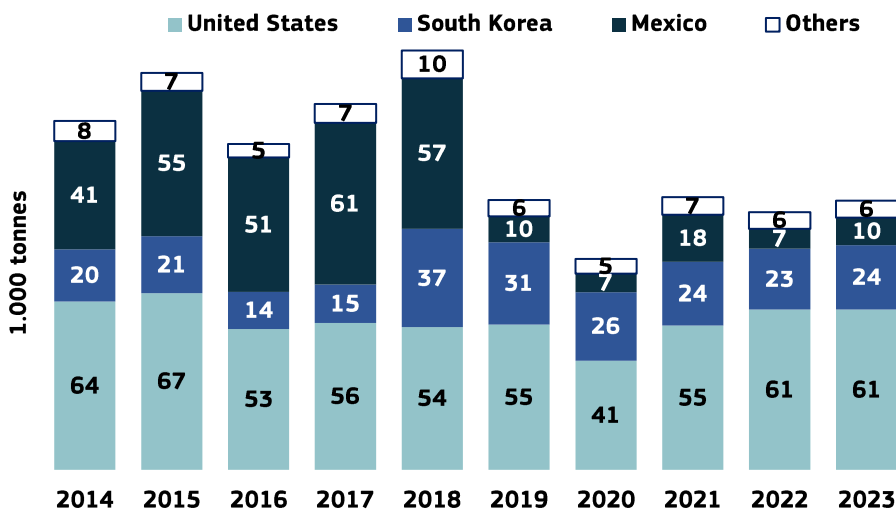
Oysters can be caught in the wild but are mainly farmed. The main fishing gears used are dredges and trawls.



CATCHES

Evolution of world catches

- Oysters' production amounted to circa 101.676 tonnes in 2023, i.e. **0,1%** of the total global fisheries production. The leading producers are the USA and South Korea amounting to respectively 60% and 24% global production. Most of the world's remaining wild capture of native oysters comes mainly from ecoregions on the East and Gulf coasts of North America (mainly Virginian to Southern Gulf of Mexico). Mexican catches of oysters experienced a strong decline over the decade, they only accounted for 10% of the world catches in 2023 (against 31% in 2014). Global catches decreased by 40% between 2014 and 2020 and remained stable since 2021 (around 100.000 tonnes).

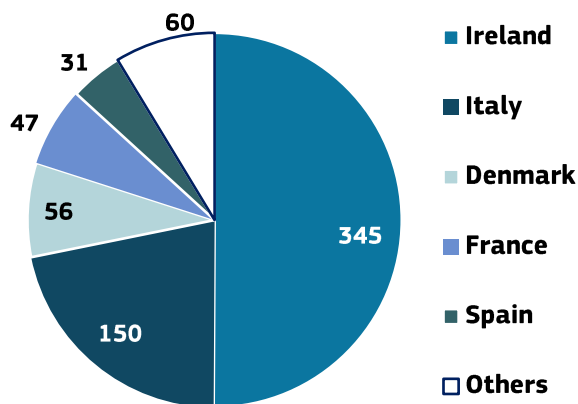


Source: FAO

Evolution of EU catches (tonnes)

- EU catches, which were above 10.000 tonnes at the end of the 1960s, followed then a decreasing trend to less than 1.000 tonnes since 2018. In 2023, EU catches amounted to 689 tonnes and represented only 0,7% of global oyster catches. The **European flat oyster** (*Ostrea edulis*) is the main caught species within the EU. It represented 73% of the total EU oyster catches in 2023. Ireland, Italy and Denmark were the main producers. These countries accounted for 80% of the EU catches in 2023.

Catches (2023, tonnes)



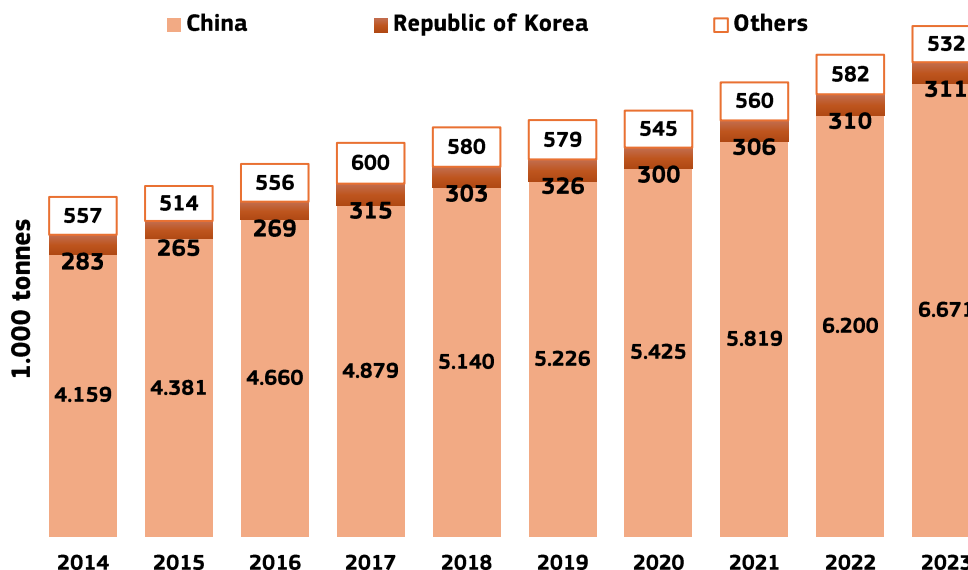
Source: FAO



AQUACULTURE PRODUCTION

Evolution of world aquaculture production

- The global production reached over 7,5 million tonnes in 2023. From 2014 to 2023, the world oyster's production experienced an increase by **50%**, mostly attributable to Chinese production which provided 89% of the global production in 2023. Other producers worldwide include to lesser extent the Republic of Korea (4%), the United States and Japan (2% each).

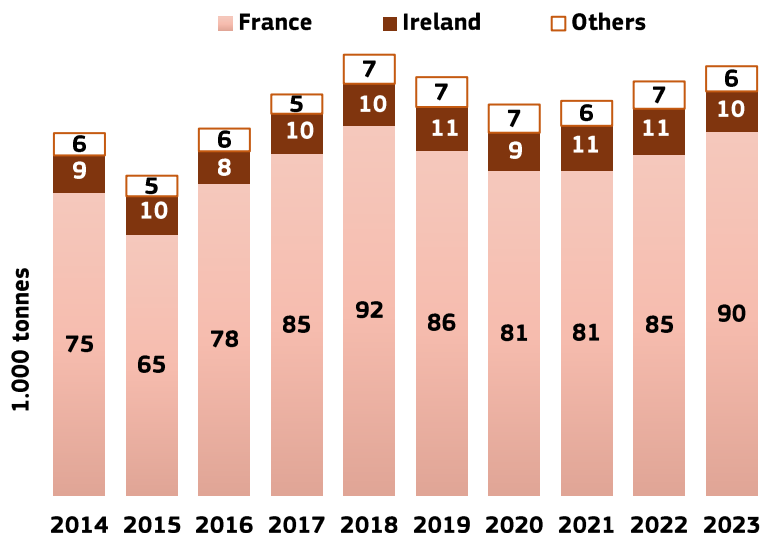


Source: FAO

Evolution of EU aquaculture production

- With a total EU production of 106.817 tonnes, the EU provided only 1% of the global oyster's aquaculture in terms of volume in 2023. Although small, the EU production from aquaculture has increased by **18%** over the last decade (2014-2023).

- The main species produced in the EU is the **Pacific cupped oyster** (*Magallana gigas*) with 96% of volumes in 2023. The European flat oysters (*Ostrea edulis*) only accounts for 2% of the volume. The same year, France alone represented 85% of EU production.



Source: FAO



PROCESSING

- No significant processing activity exists for oysters. Yet canned and smoked oysters' industry is developed in Asia and America.

TRADE

- Combined nomenclature ([Read more](#))

Most of the oyster trade is intra-EU, and it mostly concerns live products. France and Ireland (the main producers) are the main intra- and extra-EU exporters of live oysters. Main importers of live oysters are France and Ireland, for products originating from Ireland and France, respectively.

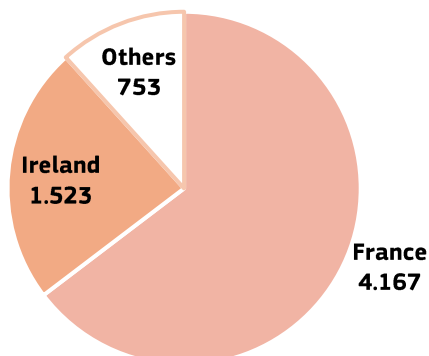
EU-27 trade of oyster products (tonnes - 2024)

| CN code | Product | EU imports | EU exports |
|--------------|---|--------------|--------------|
| 03 07 11 10 | Flats oysters (of the genus <i>Ostrea</i>), live and weighing (shell included) not more than 40 g each | 17 | 1.272 |
| 03 07 11 90 | Other oysters, live | 904 | 4.915 |
| 03 07 12 00 | Oysters, even in shell, frozen | 73 | 58 |
| 03 07 19 00 | Oysters, even in shell, smoked, dried, salted or in brine | 10 | 90 |
| 16 05 51 00 | Oysters, prepared or preserved (excl. smoked) | 17 | 109 |
| Total | | 1.020 | 6.443 |

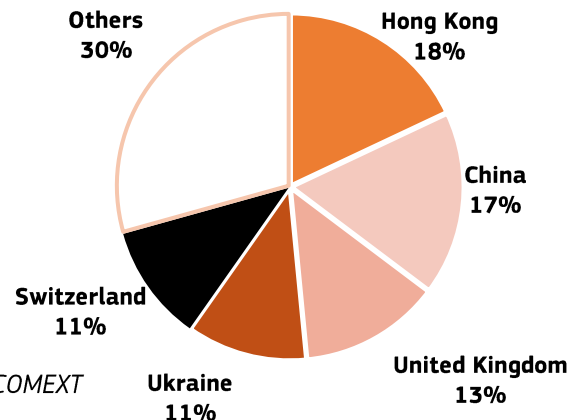
Extra-EU imports of oysters were not significant and marked a significant decrease from 1.567 tonnes in 2022 to 1.020 tonnes in 2024, in relation to the 35% decrease of imports from the UK (accounting for 90% of the EU imports in 2024).

Extra-EU exports of oysters reached 6.443 tonnes, mainly from France and Ireland (together, they contributed to 88% of the EU exports). Main destinations were Hong Kong, China, the United Kingdom, Ukraine, and Switzerland.

EU exporters (2024, tonnes)



Main destinations (2024, % in volume)



Source: EUROSTAT-COMEXT

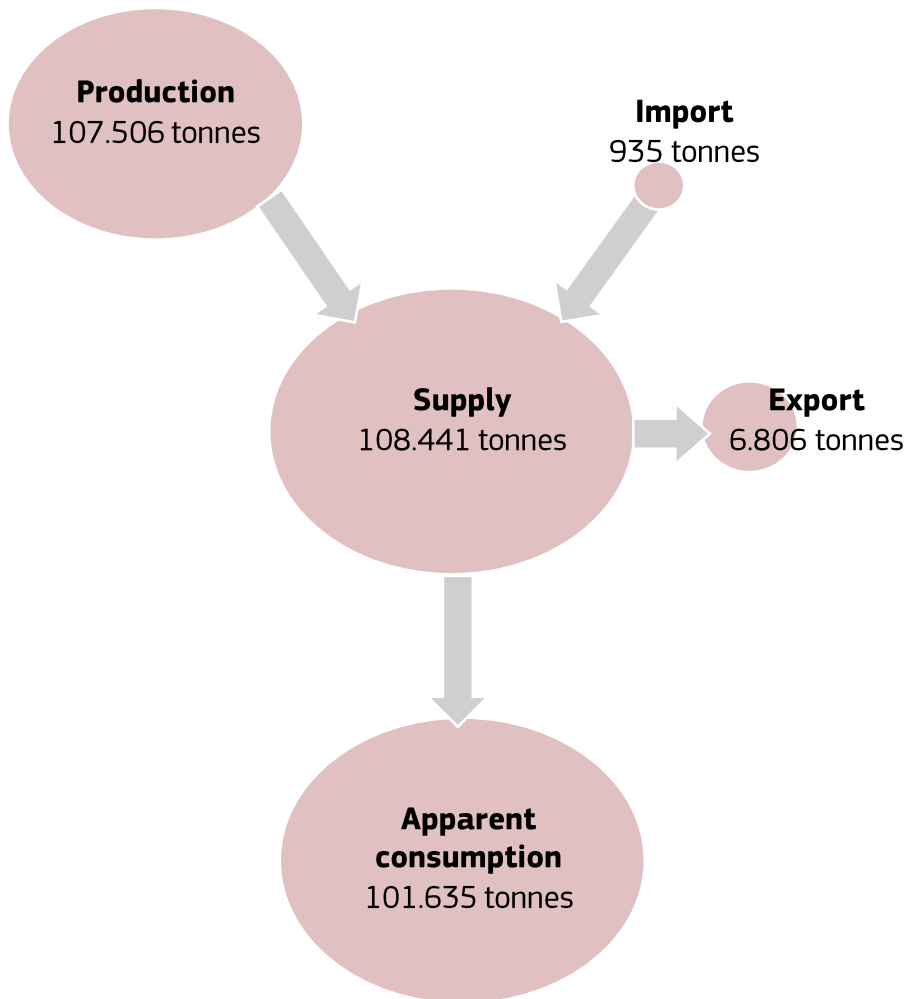


Oysters

Supply balance

EU supply balance (2023¹) – Tonnes of live weight equivalent² – Oysters

Data concern all species of oyster



Source: FAO/ EUROSTAT-COMEXT

¹ Supply balance is provided for the year 2023 (trade data for 2023 were taken into account). Detailed trade data provided in the slide 4 concern the year 2024.

² The [conversion factors](#) were used to convert net weight of imports and exports of fishery and aquaculture products into live weight equivalents.



PRICES ALONG THE SUPPLY CHAIN (EUR/kg)

Ex-farm (live/fresh - Farmed)

Ex-farm prices are presented for France and Ireland, the main EU producers.

| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022* | 2023* | Source |
|----------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|--------|
| France | 6,97 | 6,33 | 6,03 | 5,33 | 4,84 | 5,64 | 6,49 | 6,49 | EUMOFA |
| Ireland | 5,14 | 5,07 | 4,95 | 4,60 | 3,89 | 4,74 | 5,50 | 5,68 | EUMOFA |

(* last year available)

Wholesale (live/fresh)

Wholesale prices are presented for Mercabarna (Barcelona, Spain) and Rungis (Paris, France).

| Average price | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025* | Source |
|--|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------------|
| Spain | 12,43 | 11,79 | 11,83 | 12,8 | 13,42 | 14,42 | 15,54 | 18,19 | 18,57 | n.a. | Mercabarna |
| France (creuse fine calibre G2) | 6,67 | 6,67 | 6,67 | 6,67 | 6,32 | 7,17 | 7,05 | 7,53 | 8,85 | 8,33 | Rungis (RNM) |

(* From January to October 2025)

Retail/consumption (live/fresh)

Retail prices refer to France, major consumer country in the EU.

| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024* | Source |
|---------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|---------------|
| France | 8,41 | 8,36 | 7,3 | 7 | 7 | 7,3 | 7,8 | 8,3 | 7,8 | FranceAgriMer |

(* Latest available year)

Import (live/fresh)

Prices are provided for the main EU importer, France.

| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025* | Source |
|---------------|------|-------|------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|--------|
| France | 12,8 | 10,41 | 11,7 | 11,87 | 5,33 | 7,43 | 5,89 | 7,68 | 2,75 | 3,37 | EUMOFA |

(* From January to September 2025)

Export (live/fresh)

Extra-EU export prices refer to fresh/live oysters in France and Ireland, the two main exporters in the EU.

| | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025* | Source |
|----------------|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| France | 8,41 | 8,48 | 8,81 | 8,76 | 11,80 | 11,46 | 13,27 | 14,66 | 14,04 | 13,64 | EUMOFA |
| Ireland | 7,9 | 8,27 | 8,66 | 8,59 | 8,76 | 9,55 | 11,02 | 10,08 | 10,75 | 9,02 | EUMOFA |

(* From January to September 2025)

Oysters



MARKETING

- National lists of commercial designations ([Read more](#))
- Information system on commercial designations and scientific names in all EU languages ([Read more](#))
- In the EU, there is one name protected under **Protected Geographical Indication** (PGI) for fresh oysters: PGI “**Huîtres Marennes Oléron**” in France.

CONSUMPTION

- Oysters are not among the 15th most consumed species in EU (source: [The EU Fish Market – 2025 edition](#), EUMOFA)
- Apparent consumption of oysters, per capita in 2023: **0,22 kg** live weight equivalent (source: [Supply balance – 2023](#), EUMOFA).
- Nutrition values (Oyster – *Magallana gigas*, nutrition values per serving 100 g) ([Read more](#))

| Nutrition values | Oyster |
|------------------|--------|
| Energy (kcal) | 81 |
| Total fat (g) | 2,3 |
| Saturates (g) | 0,51 |
| Carbohydrate (g) | 4,95 |
| Protein (g) | 9,45 |
| Salt (mg) | 265 |