
FISHING: CATCHES AND FLEETS

The importance of the fishing sector in Spain is only in part due to the size of the maritime area over which the country exercises the right of sovereignty. Whilst the morphology of the land –long seabords giving onto the Atlantic and Mediterranean- favours access to the sea and the existence of numerous fishing ports, its waters are not very productive and productivity is unevenly distributed.

The broad image offered by the adjoining map and the accompanying data bear witness to the marked differences between the catches and fleet size in Galicia and the other autonomous communities.

The map and the statistical data do not reflect one of the most significant features of the fishing sector however, which is its dependence on fishing grounds in third countries. The catches taken by the Spanish fishing fleet in the adjoining Table therefore include both those from non-Spanish fishing grounds and those from the marine ecosystems that surround national territory up to 200 miles from the coast (adjacent waters) by fishing area (Cantabria - North West, Gulf of Cadiz, the Canary Islands and the Mediterranean). The main species caught are the sardine, the anchovy, hake, octopus, cuttlefish, shrimp and prawn.

In 2007, catches in adjacent waters fell compared to 2006, whilst overall

catches (in all fishing grounds, both Spanish and international) rose by 6.86%.

Galicia contributes a third of catches. Its major fleet means that together with the Cantabrian fleet it is involved in fishing in Spanish fishing grounds (sardine, hake), in EU grounds in the Atlantic (tuna, swordfish) and in remote waters (halibut, cod, tuna).

In Andalusia, coastal fishing has greater social than economic importance. The fleet approaches some 2,000 vessels, a large number of which are artisanal. Fishing takes place along the coast, and in Moroccan and Portuguese waters, as well as in the fishing grounds of the south east Atlantic. In broad terms, the trend has been for the fleet to shrink due to the falls in catches in an over-exploited sea and the difficulties that gaining access to foreign waters presents. The most important province as far as fishing is concerned is Huelva, followed by Cadiz due to the port of Algeciras.

In general terms, the Mediterranean fleet is geared for traditional fishing and the fishing sector is highly restricted by progressively declining resources that are being subjected to an excess of effort due to growing demand driven, to a certain degree, by the development of tourism.

BASIC DATA

Catches and fleets

Autonomous Communities	10
Total catches (t)	969 800
Average of catches (t)	96 800
Total fleet size (vessels)	10 878
Average fleet size (vessels)	1 088

Governance

Legal framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Royal Decree 1315/1997, of 1st August, establishing a Fisheries Protection Zone in the Mediterranean Sea • The common fisheries policy (CFP) • Law No. 3/2001, of 26th March, on State Marine Fisheries
Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Environment and Rural and Marine Affairs • Autonomous communities
Instruments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries • Agreement to promote compliance with international conservation and management measures by fishing vessels on the high seas (FAO)

Autonomous community	Catches (t)	Fleet size (vessels)
Galicia	710 895	5 198
Principality of Asturias	17 545	339
Cantabria	30 226	168
Basque Country	47 657	263
Catalonia	35 287	1 040
Community of Valencia	34 887	697
Region of Murcia	15 844	22
Andalusia	70 200	1 750
Canary Islands	4 044	969
Balearic Islands	3 229	432
Autonomous city of Ceuta	272	38
Autonomous city of Melilla	-	1

