

Seafood imports double in value compared to exports

Until July of this year, the trade balance of fishery products was negative for Portugal at almost EUR 668,000 according to data compiled by the European Fisheries and Aquaculture Market Observatory.

Portugal has imported more than 300,000 tonnes of fish this year, for a total value of EUR 1.29 million, while exporting 152,786 tonnes of fish (130,279 tonnes within the European Union and 22,507 tonnes outside the EU), for EUR 627,292.

Within the EU, Portugal imported 204,479 tonnes of fish for EUR 867,101, to which 116,791 tonnes of imports from non-EU countries valued at EUR 428,059 were added. According to the Observatory report, 126,949 tonnes were imported from Spain, 25,028 tonnes from Sweden, 24,699 tonnes from the Netherlands and 20,003 tonnes from China, Agência Lusa reported.

By species, imports of groundfish fish, such as blue whiting, cod, grenadier and hake stand out, with 72,089 tonnes, within the EU. They were followed by purchases of marine fish, such as tamboril, stingray and sea bass, which totalled 28,480 tons.

The most imported species from countries outside the EU were the groundfish (31,727 tonnes) and the cephalopods (22,142), including cuttlefish, octopus and squid.

Among the main countries to which Portugal exported fish are Spain (89,698 tonnes), Italy (16,143 tonnes), France (13,615 tonnes) and Brazil (6,914 tonnes).

By species, the Portuguese exports of small pelagic species (30,086 tonnes), tuna and similar fish (18,394 tonnes) as well as cephalopods (17,692 tonnes) stand out within the EU.

Meanwhile, to other markets what was exported included groundfish (6,841 tonnes), small pelagic fish (4,326 tonnes) and other marine fish (3841 tonnes).

Throughout the year 2017, Portugal imported a total of 359,660 tonnes of fish from EU countries for EUR 1.47 million, and 168,391 tonnes for EUR 633,269 from other countries, mainly China and Vietnam.

In that same year, exports within the EU totalled 130,279 tonnes for EUR 519,471, and sales to markets outside the bloc totalled 22,507 tonnes for EUR 107,826.