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Fisheries

Census of Fisheries 2006

A Census of Fisheries was undertaken in September 2006 to obtain structural and economic information on the fisheries sector in Malta. At the time of enumeration, 1,421 commercial fishing vessels were registered. 1,092 fishing vessels (76.8 per cent) were active while 329 fishing vessels (23.2 per cent) were found inactive. 5 fishing vessels, although active, were not taken into consideration as 2 of these vessels operate outside of the Mediterranean and 3 other fishing vessels are used as workboats. 816 active fishing vessels were found in Malta while 276 active fishing vessels were found in Gozo and Comino. 88.6 per cent of all active vessels are less than 10 metres long. The fishing fleet is characterized by different types of fishing vessels. 42.0 per cent of the active fishing fleet is Multi-purpose vessels (MPV's), while 34.4 per cent is the Kajjik. The majority of the active fishing vessels operate with an MFB license (68.3 per cent) while MFA licensed fishing vessels account for 31.7 per cent of all active fishing vessels.

Output of open sea fishing

In 2005, 1,921 tonnes of fresh fish yielding a total of Lm3.8m were landed. Dolphin fish (29.1 per cent), Swordfish (17.7 per cent) and Blue Fin Tuna (17.1 per cent) were the major species landed. These three species accounted for 63.9 per cent of all landings by open sea vessels. The catch depends on the type of license, and the type of vessel. MFA licensed vessels landed 87.2 per cent of all landings while MFB licensed vessels landed 12.8 per cent of the total catch.

Aquaculture and tuna farming

A total of 80 cages, with a surface area of 78,773 metres squared and a capacity of 1,758,534 cubic metres were revealed. The total production of farmed fish in 2005 amounted to 5.1 million kilograms yielding a value of Lm21.1m. Blue Fin Tuna, which accounted for 82.6 per cent of all farmed fish in weight, yielded Lm19.0m in 2005.

Employment in the fisheries sector

1,466 fishermen worked a total of 1.4 million hours in open sea fishing. 240 fishermen (16.4 per cent) worked on a full-time basis, working a total of 874,000 hours (62.4 per cent), an average of 3,642 hours per fisherman. On the other hand, 1,226 fishermen (83.6 per cent) worked a total of 525,568 hours (37.6 per cent) or on average 429 hours per fisherman. The majority of fishermen employed were males (98.8 per cent).

192 workers were employed in fish farming, of which 130 worked on a full-time basis and the remaining 62 workers employed on a part-time basis. In fish farming, 93.2 per cent of those employed were male.

Economic accounts for fisheries

Gross Fisheries Production in 2005 amounted to Lm25.7m. Open sea fishing and fish farming accounted for Lm25.0m (97.5 per cent) of all output while contractual services accounted for 2.5 per cent of the total output of the fisheries sector. Total intermediate consumption of the fisheries sector in 2005 amounted to Lm16.3m. The structure of intermediate consumption differs from open sea fishing to fish farming. Whereas purchases of live fish, mainly tuna, accounted for 38.9 per cent of total intermediate consumption of fish farming, fuel and lubricants accounted for 50.1 per cent of the total intermediate consumption of open sea fishing. The gross value added of the fisheries sector amounted to Lm9.4m in 2005, with open sea fishing contributing Lm1.9m in value added (20.4 per cent) while fish farming contributed Lm7.5m (78.1 per cent) to the gross value added of the sector ■

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Table 1. Distribution of fishing vessels by status by region

Type of vessel	MALTA	%	Malta	%	Gozo and Comino	%
Total fishing vessels	1,421	100.0	1,087	100.0	334	100.0
<i>of which:</i>						
Active	1,092	76.8	816	75.1	276	82.6
Inactive	329	23.2	271	24.9	58	17.4

Table 2. Distribution of active fishing vessels by type by region

Type of vessel	MALTA	%	Malta	%	Gozo and Comino	%
Total fishing vessels	1,092	100.0	816	100.0	276	100.0
<i>of which:</i>						
Open sea	1,087	99.5	811	99.4	276	100.0
Other	5	0.5	5	0.6		0.0

Table 3. Distribution of active open sea fishing vessels by vessel length (m) by region

Length of vessel	MALTA	%	Malta	%	Gozo and Comino	%
Total fishing vessels	1,087	100.0	811	100.0	276	100.0
<i>of which:</i>						
<5	307	28.2	190	23.4	117	42.4
5 - <10	657	60.4	519	64.0	138	50.0
10 - <15	78	7.2	68	8.4	10	3.6
≥15	45	4.1	34	4.2	11	4.0

Table 4. Distribution of active open sea fishing vessels by type of vessel by region

Type of vessel	MALTA	%	Malta	%	Gozo and Comino	%
Total fishing vessels	1,087	100.0	811	100.0	276	100.0
<i>of which:</i>						
Trawler	12	1.1	9	1.1	3	1.1
MPV	456	42.0	358	44.1	98	35.5
Luzzu	200	18.4	159	19.6	41	14.9
Kajjik	374	34.4	252	31.1	122	44.2
Firilla	9	0.8	9	1.1	0	0.0
Bimbu	20	1.8	18	2.2	2	0.7
Other	16	1.5	6	0.7	10	3.6

Table 5. Distribution of active fishing vessels by license by region

Type of license	MALTA	%	Malta	%	Gozo and Comino	%
Total active fishing vessels	1,087	100.0	811	100.0	276	100.0
<i>of which:</i>						
MFA	345	31.7	260	32.1	85	30.8
MFB	742	68.3	551	67.9	191	69.2

Table 6. Distribution of fisheries labour force by sex by region

Sex	MALTA	%	Malta	%	Gozo and Comino	%
Total labour force	1,466	100.0	1,121	100.0	345	100.0
<i>of which:</i>						
Male	1,449	98.8	1,106	98.7	343	99.4
Female	17	1.2	15	1.3	2	0.6

Table 7. Distribution of fisheries labour force by worktime by region

Worktime	MALTA		Malta		Gozo and Comino	
	No	Hrs worked	No	Hrs worked	No	Hrs worked
Total labour force	1,466	1,399,568	1,121	1,112,810	345	286,758
<i>of which:</i>						
Part-time	1,226	525,568	934	394,297	292	131,271
>0 - <25%	812	144,923	618	106,465	194	38,458
25% - <50%	231	141,170	181	110,486	50	30,684
50% - <75%	98	106,789	71	77,886	27	28,903
75% - <100%	85	132,686	64	99,460	21	33,226
Full-time	240	874,000	187	718,513	53	155,487
≥100%	240	874,000	187	718,513	53	155,487

Table 8. Distribution of catch (Kg) by license by region

License	MALTA		Malta		Gozo and Comino	
	Kg	Lm	Kg	Lm	Kg	Lm
Total catch	1,921,251	3,879,008	1,442,398	3,168,121	478,853	710,887
<i>of which:</i>						
MFA	1,675,910	3,450,460	1,245,866	2,819,979	430,044	630,480
MFB	245,341	428,548	196,532	348,141	48,809	80,407

Table 9. Distribution of catch (Kg) by species by region

Species	MALTA		Malta		Gozo and Comino	
	Kg	Lm	Kg	Lm	Kg	Lm
Total catch	1,921,251	3,879,008	1,442,398	3,168,121	478,853	710,887
<i>of which:</i>						
Shrimp	133,402	808,416	113,055	685,113	20,347	123,303
Stone bass	27,179	83,521	24,211	74,400	2,968	9,121
Dorado (Dolphin Fish)	559,201	452,953	299,918	242,934	259,283	210,019
Sword fish	340,524	806,701	323,160	765,566	17,364	41,135
Blue fin tuna	328,883	776,822	305,509	721,612	23,374	55,209
Other species	532,062	950,595	376,545	678,495	155,517	272,100

Table 10. Distribution of cages by surface area of cages

Surface area (m ²)	Number of cages	%	Surface area of cages	%	Volume of cages	%
Total	80	100.0	78,773	100.0	1,758,534	100.0
<i>of which:</i>						
<1000	52	65.0	10,591	13.4	100,341	5.7
1000 - <5000	25	31.3	49,094	62.3	1,146,911	65.2
≥5000	3	3.8	19,088	24.2	511,282	29.1

Table 11. Distribution of employment in fish farming

Worktime	Total		Direct labour		Indirect labour	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Total labour force	179	13	114	1	65	12
<i>of which:</i>						
Full-time	122	8	73	1	49	7
Part-time	57	5	41		16	5

Table 12. Production of farmed fish

Species	Kg	%	Lm	%
Total catch	5,125,995	100.0	21,119,866	100.0
<i>of which:</i>				
Sea bass	216,068	4.2	733,574	3.5
Sea bream	664,819	13.0	1,366,931	6.5
Other	9,058	0.2	33,405	0.2
Blue fin tuna	4,236,050	82.6	18,985,956	89.9

Table 13. Factor income of the fisheries industry: 2005

Lm 000

	Total	%	Open Sea	%	Farmed fish	%
Total gross fisheries production	25,652	100.0	3,879	100.0	21,773	100.0
Total fish	24,999	97.5	3,879	100.0	21,120	97.0
Blue fin tuna	19,763	77.0	777	20.0	18,986	87.2
Lampuki	453	1.8	453	11.7	0	0.0
Shrimp	808	3.2	808	20.8	0	0.0
Swordfish	807	3.1	807	20.8	0	0.0
Other fresh fish	3,168	12.4	1,034	26.7	2,134	9.8
Contractual work	653	2.5	0	0.0	653	3.0
Total Intermediate consumption	16,273	100.0	1,968	100.0	14,305	100.0
Purchases of live fish	5,567	34.2	0	0.0	5,567	38.9
Fuel and lubricants	1,320	8.1	986	50.1	334	2.3
Variable production costs	5,751	35.3	404	20.5	5,347	37.4
Selling costs	1,097	6.7	63	3.2	1,033	7.2
Maintenance	648	4.0	388	19.7	260	1.8
Fixed costs	1,238	7.6	127	6.5	1,111	7.8
Contractual work	653	4.0		0.0	653	4.6
Gross value added	9,379		1,911		7,468	
Fixed capital Consumption	919		622		297	
Net value added/Factor income	8,460	100.0	1,290	100.0	7,170	100.0
Compensation of employees	1,601	18.9	484	37.5	1,117	15.6
Imputed interest	490	5.8	430	33.3	60	0.8
Entrepreneurial income	6,369	75.3	376	29.1	5,993	83.6

Methodological Notes

1. The Census provides a point-in-time stocktaking of the structure of the fisheries industry in Malta together with the production, expenditure and labour force relating to this sector. These aspects, as well as tuna farming and aquaculture, have been extensively covered.
2. No thresholds were used in the census and all fishermen owning an MFA or MFB vessel were to be interviewed. These fishing vessels are considered commercial in nature. Recreational vessels (MFC) and auxiliary vessels (MFD) were not taken into consideration. The number of MFA and MFB vessels at the time of enumeration stood at 1,421. The fishing fleet register is maintained by the Department of Fisheries and is constantly monitored and updated.
3. The reference date for the Census was the 1st of September for fishing vessels and cages, while fish landings, costs and employment in the fisheries sector referred to the calendar year 2005.
4. Two questionnaires were used in the compilation of fisheries statistics. The census was split into two parts; open sea fishing and Aquaculture and Tuna farming.
5. All interviewers had to pass on the questionnaires to the staff of the National Statistics Office, where all forms were subject to a manual check for completeness. In cases where information was either missing or not clear, either the holder of the vessel was contacted to clear out the misunderstandings or in the worst case scenario, the interviewer had to go back to the holder.
6. The response rate of the census amounted to 98.5 per cent. In fact, from 1,421 vessels only 21 (1.5%) vessels failed to co-operate or could not be contacted. The main reason for the non-response was non-contact rather than refusal. These non-respondents were all operative. There were no partly completed questionnaires. The data on the structure of the vessel of those respondents who failed to co-operate was taken directly from the fishing fleet register. Data on expenditure, catch and employment were imputed. Imputation was done by using averages of data from vessels with similar characteristics (type and length of vessel).
7. The data in this release is not subject to revision.
8. The full Census of Fisheries report is available for sale at the NSO Library and Information Unit. These statistics are published and disseminated by the National Statistics Office and can also be found on the NSO website <http://www.nso.gov.mt>.