

# Frozen fish and crustaceans in Finland



**Frozen fishery market in Finland is a relatively small European Union market as the population of the country is only 5.5 million people. However, Finns love fishery products and you can catch fish and crustaceans in natural waters in Finland as well. This product factsheet will provide you with information on product specifications, price information, important requirements for promotion and statistics about frozen fish and crustaceans in the Finnish market.**

## Contents

A. Product specifications.....	3
1. Harmonized System (HS) codes and product words in Finnish language.....	3
2. Product description.....	5
B. Frozen fish and crustaceans market .....	9
1. Finnish fishery market in general.....	9
C. Retail price .....	13
D. Channels to find buyers for frozen fish and crustaceans .....	14
1. Identify your channels to the market .....	14
2. Tips for success.....	15
3. Trade fairs .....	16
E. Requirements for frozen fish and crustaceans .....	16
1. EU legislation on frozen fish and crustaceans .....	17
2. Finnish legislation and authorities .....	21
3. Non-legal requirements .....	21
F. Finnpartnership's Matchmaking Service.....	23
G. Useful links and references .....	24

## A. Product specifications

- For importing frozen fish and crustaceans in Finland, you need to know the Harmonized System codes for your products;
- Products must be labelled both in Finnish and Swedish languages;
- Consumer packaging is usually a plastic bag or in some cases a cardboard box;
- Most Finns speak good English but it is useful to know some words (e.g. words for your products) in Finnish language.

### 1. Harmonized System (HS) codes and product words in Finnish language

The table below provides you with the corresponding [World Customs Organization Harmonized System codes](#) for frozen fish product group.

**Table 1. HS codes for frozen fish**

HS code	Code description
<b>030311</b>	Frozen sockeye salmon [red salmon] "Oncorhynchus nerka"
<b>030323</b>	Frozen Tilapias
<b>030324</b>	Frozen Catfish
<b>030331</b>	Halibut, frozen, excluding edible fish offal of subheadings 0303 91 to 0303 99
<b>030332</b>	Plaice, frozen, excluding edible fish offal of subheadings 0303 91 to 0303 99
<b>030333</b>	Sole, frozen, excluding edible fish offal of subheadings 0303 91 to 0303 99
<b>030334</b>	Frozen Turbots
<b>030339</b>	Flatfish not else specified, frozen, excluding edible fish offal of subheadings 0303 91 to 0303 99
<b>030341</b>	Tunas, albacore or long finned, frozen, excluding edible fish offal of subheadings 0303 91 to 0303 99
<b>030342</b>	Tunas, yellowfin, frozen, excluding edible fish offal of subheadings 0303 91 to 0303 99
<b>030343</b>	Skipjack or stripe-bellied bonito, frozen, excluding HS Code heading 0304, livers & roes

<b>030353</b>	Frozen Sardines, sardinella, brisling or sprats, excluding edible fish offal of subheadings 0303 91 to 0303 99
<b>030363</b>	Frozen Cod, excluding edible fish offal of subheadings 0303 91 to 0303 99
<b>030366</b>	Frozen Hake, excluding edible fish offal of subheadings 0303 91 to 0303 99
<b>030367</b>	Frozen Alaska Pollack, excluding edible fish offal of subheadings 0303 91 to 0303 99
<b>030354</b>	Mackerel, frozen, excluding edible fish offal of subheadings 0303 91 to 0303 99
<b>030381</b>	Frozen Dogfish and other sharks, excluding edible fish offal of subheadings 0303 91 to 0303 99
<b>030389</b>	Frozen fish, not else specified
<b>030432</b>	Fresh, chilled fillets: Catfish
<b>030461</b>	Frozen fillets, Tilapias
<b>030462</b>	Frozen fillets, Catfish
<b>030463</b>	Frozen fillets, Nile Perch
<b>030469</b>	Frozen fillets, carp and eels
<b>030472</b>	Frozen fillets, Haddock
<b>030487</b>	Frozen fillets, Tunas, skipjack or stripe-bellied bonito
<b>030493</b>	Frozen meat, whether or not minced, Tilapias, catfish, carp, eels, Nile perch and snakeheads
<b>030494</b>	Frozen meat, whether or not minced, Alaska Pollack

Source: World Customs Organization Harmonized System

The table below provides you with the corresponding [World Customs Organization Harmonized System codes](#) for frozen crustaceans' product group.

**Table 2. HS codes for frozen crustaceans**

<b>HS code</b>	<b>Code description</b>
<b>030611</b>	Rock lobster & other sea crawfish, frozen in shell/not incl. boiled in shell
<b>030612</b>	Lobsters (other, not else specified) frozen, in shell or not, including boiled in shell
<b>030614</b>	Crabs frozen, in shell or not, including boiled in shell
<b>030615</b>	Frozen Norway lobsters

<b>030616</b>	Frozen cold-water shrimps and prawns
<b>030617</b>	Other frozen shrimps and prawns
<b>030619</b>	Crustaceans not else specified, frozen, in shell or not including, boiled in shell

Source: World Customs Organization Harmonized System

Below in table 3 are listed some translations from English to Finnish language in order to help you to communicate with potential buyers. Even though Finns usually speak very good English, sometimes it is helpful to know some words of your products in Finnish.

**Table 3. Useful words in Finnish language:**

English	Finnish	English	Finnish
Frozen	Pakaste	Hake	Kummeliturska
Fish	Kala	Pollack	Lyrraturska
Crustacean	Äyriäinen	Mackerel	Makrilli
Salmon	Lohi	Dogfish	Piikkihai
Tilapias	Tilapia (kirjoahven)	Shark	Hai
Catfish	Monni	Nile Perch	Niilinahven
Halibut	Ruijanpallas	Carp	Karppi
Plaice	Punakampela	Eel	Ankerias
Sole	Meriantura	Haddock	Kolja
Turbot	Piikkikampela	Snakehead	Käärmeenpää
Flatfish	Kampela	Rock lobster	Langusti
Tuna	Tonnikala	Norway lobster	Merirapu
Skipjack	Boniitti	Lobster	Hummeri
Stripe-bellied bonito	Boniitti	Crab	Rapu (taskurapu)
Sardine	Sardiini	Shrimp	Katkarapu
Cod	Turska	Prawn	Katkarapu/ Jättikatkarapu

## 2. Product description

### Weight classes per portion

Frozen fish:

Weight classes per portion: Between 250 gr and 1 kg depending on the packaging. Net weight is between 250 gr and 1 kg.

Frozen crustaceans:

Weight classes per portion are between 180 gr and 1 kg depending on the packaging. Net weight is between 180 gr and 1 kg.

### Labelling

The obligatory items must be mentioned on the label of fishery products in 2 mandatory languages Finnish and Swedish. When importing fishery and aquaculture products into the EU, the following information must be provided on the labelling or packaging of the fishery product, or by means of a commercial document accompanying the goods (see for general rules [EU Regulation No 1169/2011](#)):

- The name under which the product is sold;
- The net weight of pre-packaged products;
- The date of minimum durability consisting of day, month and year in that order and preceded by the words "best before" or "best before end" or the "use by" date according to product characteristics;
- For unprocessed frozen products, the date of freezing must be indicated as follows: 'Frozen on day/month/year';
- Any special conditions for keeping or use;
- The name or business name and address of the manufacturer, packager or seller established in the EU. If the operator is not in the EU, the name and address of the importer must be shown;
- Lot marking on pre-packaged product with the marking preceded by the letter "L" (a lot is a batch of sales units of food produced, manufactured or packaged under similar conditions);
- Commercial and scientific designation of the species: for this purpose, Finland publishes a [list of the commercial designations](#) accepted in its territory;
- Production method (caught at sea or in freshwater, or resulted from aquaculture). Mixed products of the same species must display the production method for each batch;
- The fishing gear used to catch the fish. Mixed products of the same species caught with different categories of fishing gear must display the gear category for each batch;
- Catch area:
  - Caught at sea: reference to the [FAO area](#), sub-area or division where the fish were caught;
  - Caught in freshwater: reference to both the body of water (river, lake, etc.) and to the country of origin;
  - Aquaculture: reference to the country in which the product is farmed;
  - Mixed product: Products caught in different catch areas or fish farming countries must display the area/country that represents the majority of the batch, as well as indicate that the products come from different countries;
- Identification mark: name of the country and the approval number of the establishment are mandatory;
- Nutrition must be mentioned, including the energy value, fat content, saturates, carbohydrates, sugars, protein and salt per 100 g or per 100 ml. Nutrition information can also be expressed as 'per portion' or as a percentage of the 'reference intake';

- **Ingredients:**

The list of ingredients is mandatory, including additives and added water. These should be listed in descending order according to weight;

An ingredient must be expressed as a percentage if it appears in the name of the food, is emphasised on the labelling, and/or is an essential characteristic of the food product;

There is an exception for foods consisting of a single ingredient, where the name of the food is identical to the name of the ingredient or allows consumers to easily identify the nature of the ingredient;

- **Allergens:**

For prepacked products, a clear reference to the name of any allergens should be included in the list of ingredients;

For non-prepacked products, products pre-packed for direct sale or on sales premises at the consumer's request, information on allergens is also mandatory;

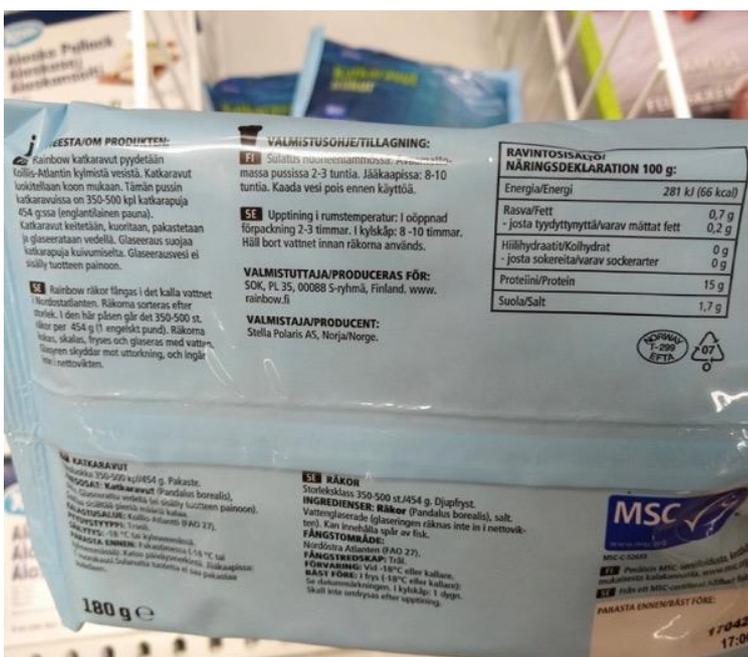
- **Barcode:** the label must contain a barcode which provides information about the transport of the product. With a barcode the product can be tracked and traced;

- In addition, labelling can contain voluntary information regarding e.g. the date of catch, date of landing, port of landing, more details about fishing gear, Vessel's flag state, production techniques and practices, nutritional content, as well as ethical, social and environmental considerations.

More information about the consumer information can be found on European Commission's [pocket guide to fishery and aquaculture consumer labelling](#).

You can find detailed information of requirements for importing your product to the EU on [EU Trade Helpdesk](#) website. [Here you can find an example](#) of requirements related to importing shrimps to the EU area.

Below a picture as an example of a label.



## Packing

Frozen fish is sold in all supermarkets and even in smaller grocery stores (e.g. K-market, Alepa) and hypermarkets, (e.g. Prisma) as frozen filets, frozen fish mix and frozen fish products e.g. fishfingers. Consumer packaging usually is a cardboard box or a plastic bag. In B2B sales products are packaged in trays and cartons in various sizes depending on the product and requirements of the buyer.

For frozen crustaceans, the consumer packaging is usually a plastic bag or a cardboard box, sometimes a vacuum, sometimes with a cardboard box as a secondary packaging. In B2B sales products are packaged in trays and cartons in various sizes depending on the product and requirements of the buyer.

Below pictures as examples of packages.



## Terms of payment

Terms of payment may vary. Sometimes there is an initial payment, sometimes products are sent on consignment. Different terms of delivery, such as FOB, CIF, EX-WORKS and FAS, are commonly applied. The importer often pays for the transport.

## B. Frozen fish and crustaceans market

- The food retail market in Finland is highly concentrated. Almost all fishery products are sold through a few retail chain groups. Finnish retail is vertically integrated with sourcing (wholesale) and distribution companies;
- In 2018, 117 million kilogrammes of fish and fishery products were imported to Finland;
- In 2018, the value of frozen fish and fishery product import to Finland was €32.6 million.

### 1. Finnish fishery market in general

Fresh fish is popular and widely available in Finland. Most fresh fish concerns domestically produced species and imported species such as Norwegian salmon and rainbow trout and fish of the North Sea. Finnish consumer market for fish and seafood from developing countries is focused on processed/preserved and frozen products. Fresh (not defrosted) fishery products imported from developing countries are hardly sold.

The food retail market in Finland is highly concentrated. Almost all fishery products, including processed, are sold through the supermarkets, hypermarkets and other stores that belong to one of the few retail chain groups. Finnish retail is vertically integrated with sourcing (wholesale) and distribution companies.

Only a few fish stores exist and usually they operate in food markets, for example in Helsinki, the capital city, there are fish stores in bigger food market halls, such as [Hakaniemen Kauppahalli](#) and [Vanha Kauppahalli](#).

The three major retail chains in Finland are [S-Group](#) (46% food retail market share in 2017), [Kesko Oy](#) (or K-Group) (36% food retail market share in 2017) and [Lidl Ky](#) (website only in Finnish) (9% food retail market share in 2017). The Finnish grocery market totalled €17.6 billion in 2017 (source: PTY ry, Nielsen Suomi). Almost all food is sold through the supermarkets, hypermarkets and other stores that belong to one of the retail chain groups.

The major retail chains are vertically integrated with sourcing (wholesale) and distribution companies. That makes it possible to maintain an efficient delivery system and Finland-wide network of supermarkets and other stores in a country that is populated with a very low density, especially in the northern parts.

Due to the relatively small size of the market, the volatility of trade and production statistics is high. One cancelled batch of goods or a change in the administrative period can significantly influence

total country's statistics. During the recent years, particularly the trade in salmon market has become even more price sensitive than before. Farmers and processors take advantage of high price fluctuations by waiting for prices to rise before selling. At the same time, when prices are low, retailers increase price campaigning and the demand grows. This sharpens the price fluctuations even more (source: Luke).

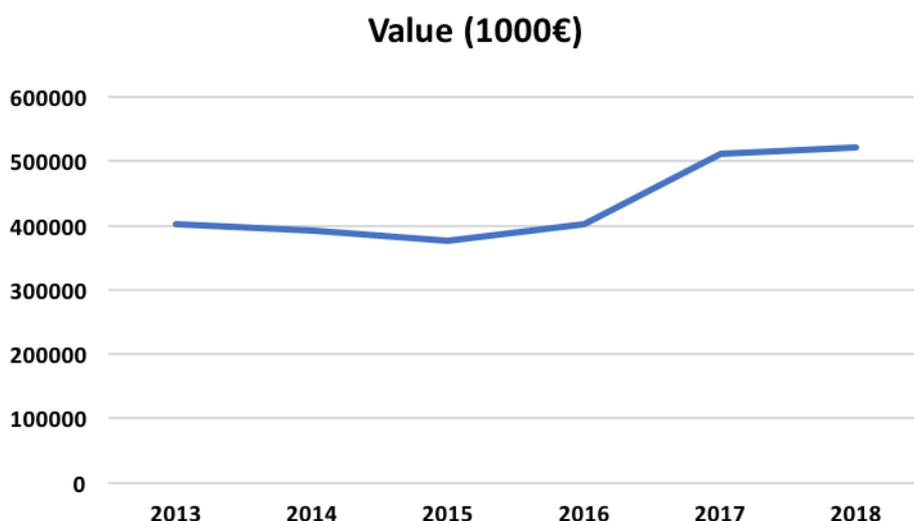
## 2. Statistics

In early 1980's, half of fish and fishery products in Finland were produced in Finland. Imports have increased rapidly and in 2017, 82% of fish and fishery products was imported from other countries. This has created opportunities for fish importers, however, mainly from other European countries (source: Luke).

In 2018, 117 million kilogrammes of fish and fish products were imported to Finland. The volume of imports decreased by one million kilogrammes compared to the previous year. The value of imports, €522 million, increased by €11 million. The volume of products imported for human consumption was 95 million kilogrammes. The volume of imported food products was slightly over half a million kilogrammes and the value was €11 million higher than in the previous year (source: *ibid*).



**Table 4. Value of fish and fishery product import to Finland in 2013–2018 (1000 €)**



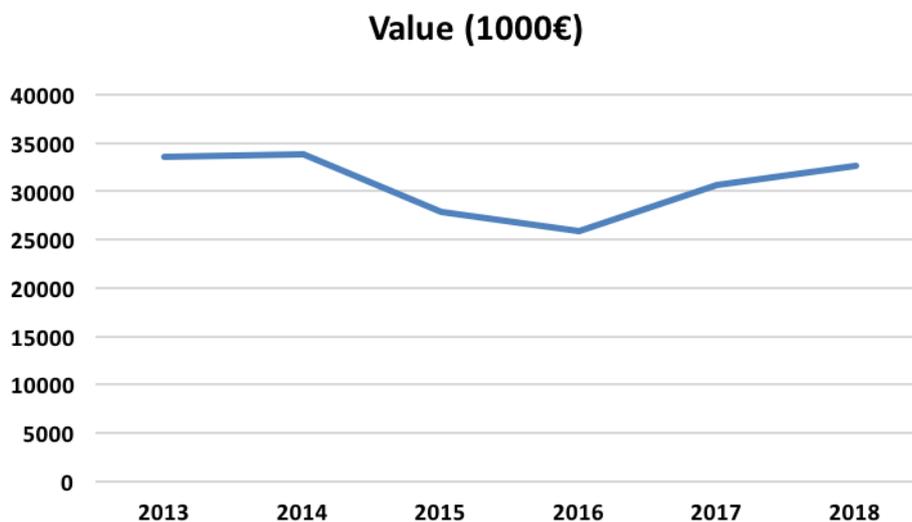
Source: Luke, Finnish Customs

The main countries importing fish and fish products to Finland were Norway (€315 million), Sweden (€68 million), Denmark (€27 million) and Estonia (€22 million) (source: Luke).

59% (69 million kg) of total imports came from Norway. Fresh whole salmon (47 million kg) was imported for human consumption, of which 23 million kg was exported as such. In addition, shrimps and herring preparations and preserves were imported (source: *ibid*).

In 2018, the value of frozen fish and fish product import to Finland was €32.6 million. The value of imports has increased from 2016 to 2018 largely due to price increase. The largest product groups for import were salmon and pollock (source: Luke, Eurostat, EUMOFA).

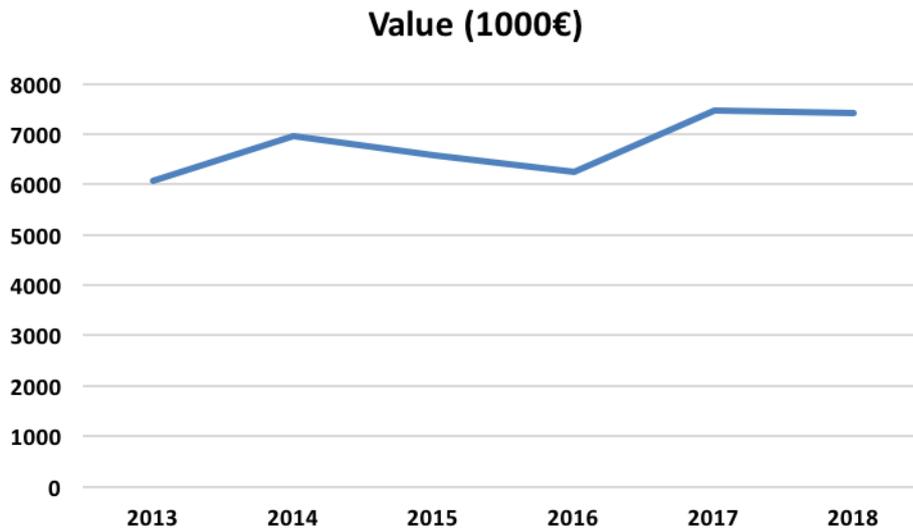
**Table 5. Value of frozen fish and fish product imports to Finland in 2013–2018 (1000€)**



*Source: Luke, Finnish Customs*

Value of frozen fish and fish product imports from outside Europe to Finland has increased significantly from 2013 to 2018, the value of imports being €7.4 million in 2018 (source: Luke).

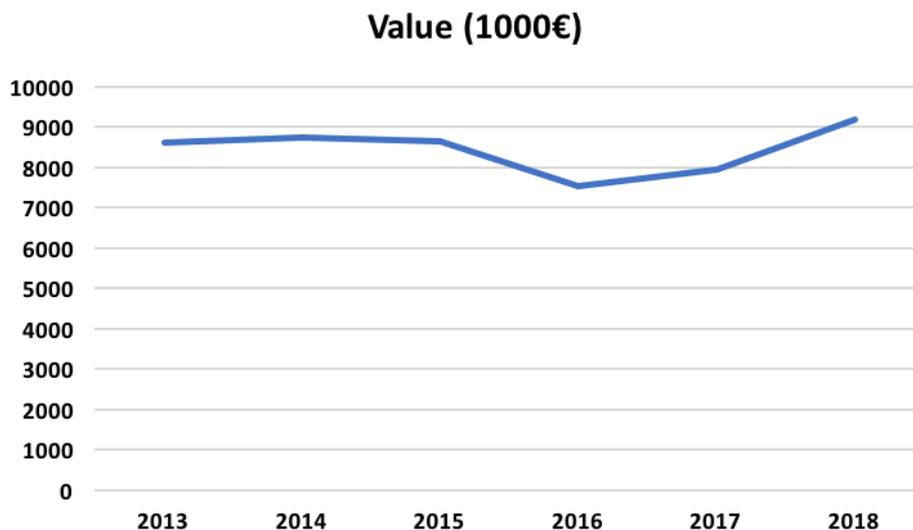
**Table 6. Value of frozen fish and fish product imports from outside Europe in 2013–2018 (1000€)**



Source: Luke, Finnish Customs

Value of frozen crustacean imports to Finland has also increased since 2016 being €9.2 million in 2018. The largest product group was frozen shrimps/prawns.

**Table 7. Value of frozen crustacean imports to Finland in 2013–2018 (1000€)**



Source: Luke, Finnish Customs

## C. Retail price

- White fish products, such as pollock and Alaskan pollock fish sticks, are very popular in Finland, and can be found in all grocery stores. Prices vary but when compared to other fish products, they are from the cheapest end;
- Salmon is very popular in general, however, frozen salmon is not as common as fresh. Frozen filet prices are relatively high when compared to fresh fish;
- Among other fishery products, shrimps are popular and when compared to other crustaceans can be found for a relatively low price.

**Table 8. Consumer prices for frozen fish and crustaceans in the Finnish market in 2019**

Product and weight	Price (€) in S-Group in 2019	Price (€) in K-Group in 2019
Frozen white fish products, mainly pollock and Alaska pollock based (fishfingers, fish sticks, mixed fish filet), 1 kg	€3.67–€11.93	€2.94–€11.96
Frozen pollock filets, 1 kg	€7.13–€14.62	€7.23–€9.23
Frozen perch filets, without skin 1 kg	€25.50–€27.83	€28.12–€29.97
Frozen salmon filets, 1 kg	€20.83–€23.24	€20.16–€39.99
Frozen Baltic herring filets, 1 kg	€7.50–€8.27	-
Shrimps, 1 kg	€11.80–€23.61	€12.58–€21.94
Tuna filets, 1 kg	-	€23.96–€24.99
Plaice filets, 1 kg	-	€13.97–€14.50
Lobster, 1 kg	€43.17–€45.62	-
Cod, 1 kg	€18.13–€20.19	-
Crayfish, 1 kg	€13.50	€11.95–€14.95

Prices are based on semi systematic shop checks and interviews. Be aware that these figures are just indications due to price volatilities. Prices depend on volumes supplied, season, type of shipment, quality, country of origin and type of retail outlet.

## D. Channels to find buyers for frozen fish and crustaceans

- As the majority of fish is sold in a few retail chains, the potential buyers for your products are very few. In order to be successful, you need to have a good quantity of quality product, and usually on a lower price than your competitors;
- Environmental and social issues are becoming more and more important for consumers and the retailers and attention given to sustainability might be a good selling point for your product;
- Trade fairs are good places to meet potential buyers because many buyers visit them to find new products and to explore new trends.

In order to succeed in importing to Finland, you need to know the Finnish market and potential customers. It is worth the effort to make a proper market analysis before heading to the Finnish market.

[Suomen Kalakauppiasliitto ry](http://Suomen.Kalakauppiasliitto.ry) is an association of fish processing, fish wholesale and retail trade organisations. The association can be a good channel to find more information about local wholesalers and retailers.

[Here](#) you can get to know Finnish customs and manners, see [here](#) for business etiquette and visit [here](#) for some basic facts about Finland.

### 1. Identify your channels to the market

Depending on the type of your business or willingness to adapt your business to emerging opportunities, there are a few channels of getting in contact with buyers in Finland. As the majority of fish is sold in a few retail chains, the buyers for your products are very few. In order to be successful, you need to have a good quantity of quality product, and usually on a lower price than your competitors.

The major Finnish retail chains are vertically integrated with Finnish sourcing (wholesale) and distribution companies, which also supply the catering services. Buying is centralised nationally for large (mainstream) product volumes from countries of origin directly. [Inex](#) is the importer/wholesaler for S-Group; [Kesko Food](#) is the importer/purchaser for K-Group; German based Lidl has its own European purchase and distribution network.

In many cases buying is centralised at the European level. Kesko Food is a member of Associated Marketing Services (AMS), a strategic buying alliance based in the Netherlands. The S-Group has its own channels through CoopNorden. Some purchasing decisions are made in such buying alliances.

Emphasise your ability of being able to provide very large volumes at a consistent quality in time when supplying to an alliance.

Supermarkets sell both fresh and processed products under their private label next to other brands (e.g. S-Group's "Rainbow" and "X-tra"; K-group's "Pirkka"), which demands maintaining a certain level of quality when supplying a private label. Emphasise your ability of being able to provide large volumes at a consistent quality in time when aiming at private label supply.

## 2. Tips for success

Cold water species, like Pollock, are the main competitor of tropical species, e.g. pangasius and tilapia. The Finnish market for white fish traditionally has a strong focus on Pollock. Competition is mainly based on price. Currently, Pollock is often preferred over other white fish because of stable catches and therewith also a constant price, higher quality of the meat and a better consumer perception. At the same time, Finnish consumers have a large interest in increasing variety of available products. For stimulating better perception of your product, promotion material, such as recipes, that are published in the media with a big exposure in the country are able to boost the consumption of a product in a fast pace.

The supply chain of food in Europe and in Finland in particular develops towards a more sustainable approach of production and handling. Environmental and social issues are becoming more and more important for consumers and the retailers. In S-group's grocery stores, the largest sellers of organic products in Finland, sales of all organic products increased by 50% in 2011. In 2010, the global supply from organic aquaculture totalled was only 0.1% of total world fisheries (source: Organic Services). The supply of imported organic fish in Finland is limited compared to other certification schemes. If applicable, emphasize your ability to deliver your fishery products according certification schemes, i.e. organic, MSC and ASC.



Finnish consumers have a large interest in increasing variety of available products. Increased global mobility and internet make it able for the Finns to travel to the countries of origin of tropical fish products species and learn about new products. Yet, products like shelled frozen crab are relatively unknown products when it comes to how to prepare them in the kitchen. Promotion material, such as recipes, that are published in the media with a big exposure in the country are able to boost the consumption of a product in a fast pace.

Among Finnish households in 2017, only 16% of total household expenditure is for food and non-alcoholic beverages (source: Statistics Finland). This share is relatively low. Yet, Finnish consumers perceive food prices as high and will mostly choose lower prices given preferred product characteristics such as quality and sustainability. In addition, fishing in domestic waters for leisure is widely popular among Finns and is a way to provide the households with fresh fish at very low costs. This has an effect on willingness to pay for fishery products. If applicable, emphasise your ability to compete on lower prices.

Crustaceans are perceived as exquisite products by Finnish consumers, mainly because of a relatively high price. If applicable, emphasise your ability to compete on lower prices.

### 3. Trade fairs

Trade fairs are good places to meet potential buyers because many buyers visit them to find new products and to explore new trends. Many important EU buyers of seafood products, including Finnish buyers, are attending the annual [European Seafood Exposition in Brussels](#). More than 29,200 buyers, suppliers, media and other seafood professionals from 155 countries attended the fair in 2019. The fair features more than 2,007 exhibiting companies from 88 countries. A visit to this exhibition provides you with relevant information about trends in the seafood market and interesting contacts with potential buyers.

## E. Requirements for frozen fish and crustaceans

- See a list of EU legislations and import requirements relating to your products on [EU Trade Helpdesk](#);
- The authority in supervising the food product quality and requirements in Finland is [the Finnish Food Authority](#);
- The main authority to supervise import and a source of information for import requirements is [The Finnish Customs](#);
- Many buyers search for products with additional certificates, which are not required by legislation.

Fish and aquaculture industry faces a number of legal requirements when aiming at the European market. In addition to the legal requirements, your buyer might have other requirements for suppliers for example regarding sustainability of production. Make sure to ask your buyer about their requirements at an early stage in order to ensure smooth cooperation.

As a first step, companies wishing to export seafood or other fishery products to the EU should contact the relevant competent authorities in their country.

## 1. EU legislation on frozen fish and crustaceans

See a list of EU legislations and import requirements relating to your products on [EU Trade Helpdesk](#). On the Trade Helpdesk, you can also find more information about import tariffs and import regulations.

[Here you can find an example](#) of requirements relating to imports of fishery products to the EU (in the example shrimps).

Information about EU import conditions for seafood and other fishery products can also be found in [the EU Commission fact sheet](#).

If your country does not have an approval to export aquaculture products to the EU area, check the [reports of the EU inspection of the competent authority](#) in your country.

See the [list of EU approved fishery establishments for your country](#) to check which of your competitors have access to the EU.

European Commission publishes a list of safeguard measures for imports of certain products from particular countries. See a [list of restrictions for imports here](#).



### General Food Law and Food safety regulation

The EU has various regulations that are implemented at the national and company level in third countries that need to be complied with when exporting products to Finland:

- [The General Food Law](#) is the base for legislation with respect to food safety in the EU ([General Food Law Regulation EC No 178/2002](#)). The EU Food Law is supplemented by other EU legislation regarding hygiene and the use of forbidden substances such as hormones, contaminants and pesticides;
- Country health approval: The European Commission's Directorate General for Health and Consumers (DG SANCO) applies a procedure to assess the candidate's third country compliance with EU Public and Animal Health conditions in which one of the steps is an on-site review by a team of experts of the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO). For the exports of fish, it is crucial that your government has implemented a Monitoring Residue Plan which is required for approval of exports of aquaculture products;

- Approved establishments: In addition to country approval, fishery and aquaculture products may only be imported into the EU if they have been dispatched from, and obtained or prepared in, establishments that appear on [a list approved by the Directorate General for Health and Consumers](#). When the establishments are approved, they will receive an EU approval number which needs to be mentioned at the label. The competent authorities of third (exporting) countries are the only bodies entitled to officially declare that establishments fully comply with EU legislation requirements;
- Health certificates: Imports of fishery and aquaculture products into the EU must be accompanied by a health certificate signed by the representative of the competent authority of the country of origin certifying that the products in question are suitable to be exported to the EU. There are different models of certificate set forth in EU legislation which vary according to each category of products, animal species concerned and/or special health conditions that may be laid down for those particular products;
- [European Food Safety Authority \(EFSA\)](#) is the authority to give advice for EU decision makers regarding e.g. food safety.

## Traceability

See the general principles and requirements of the General Food Law in [Regulation \(EC\) No. 178/2002](#) on traceability.

Traceability is defined by the EU as the ability to trace and follow any food, feed, food-producing animal or substance that will be used for consumption, through all stages of production, processing and distribution:

- Traceability is necessary to be able to respond to potential risks in food and feed, to target withdrawals of unsafe food from the market, and to provide accurate information to the public;
- EU operators of seafood products, including Finnish, ranging from EU importers to retail or foodservice companies, need to be able to identify the immediate supplier of the product and the immediate buyer (“one step back-one step forward” principle).

Companies in the EU, including Finland, are also required to have systems and procedures in place that allow for information regarding traceability to be made available to the Competent Authorities upon request. To be able to do this, traceability in the country of origin needs to be ensured. Although traceability provisions do not apply outside the EU, the requirement does extend to the EU importer since he must be able to identify from whom the product was exported in the third country.

## Catch certificate

A catch certificate is one of the documents attached to a customs declaration when importing into the EU fishery products that fall within the scope of the catch certification scheme. With an appropriately validated catch certificate, an importer can prove that the fish have been caught in accordance with the fishing provisions and regulations in force in the fishing area in question.

If the EU does not yet accept catch certificates validated by your country's competent authority, check [here](#) the regulations that the competent authority needs to comply with. Discuss with your sector association how you can lobby for action from the side of your country's competent authority.

Discuss with your buyer whether s/he has a format for the catch certificate or that you need to use the standard format as provided [here](#).

Since 2010 your fishery products need to be accompanied by a catch certificate, with the exception of products listed in [Annex I of the Commission Regulation No 86/2010](#):



- Fishery products must be accompanied by a catch certificate, drawn up in accordance with Annex II of the [Illegal Unreported Unregulated \(IUU\) Regulation](#) or Annex IV of the Regulation (for small scale fisheries fulfilling the requirements of Article 6 of this Regulation), in order to demonstrate that the products concerned do not originate from IUU fishing;
- Catch certificate should be validated by a public authority of the flag State of the fishing vessel which caught the fish concerned, in line with its duty under international law to ensure that fishing vessels flying its flag comply with international rules on conservation and management of fisheries resources;
- The certificate should be submitted by the importer to the competent authorities of the Member State in which the product will be imported at least three working days before the estimated time of arrival at the place of entry into the territory of the EU. You are responsible for delivering the catch certificate to the importer;
- In Finland, the competent authority for checking catch and process certificates concerning fishery products imported into the EU is the [Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for Southwest Finland](#) (ELY Centre for Southwest Finland). The ELY Centre for Southwest Finland is responsible for checking the catch

certificates of fishery products imported into the EU in all parts of the Finnish territory;

- A catch certificate needs to provide the following information: 1) Product name, code, volume landed, 2) List of vessels names and/or registration numbers, 3) Flag state authority validation, 4) Transport details, 5) Importer declaration.

### Import controls

Check [the EU Trade Helpdesk](#) for more information about import tariffs and import regulations. In addition, more information can be found in the [Exporting to the Nordic countries guide](#) at the Finnpartnership website, or at the site of [the Finnish Customs](#).

Import process for cases where your country/establishment is not already on the European Commission list of approved countries or approved establishments (source:

[https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/safety/docs/ia\\_trade\\_import-cond-fish\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/safety/docs/ia_trade_import-cond-fish_en.pdf)):

- 1) The competent authority of the country must submit a written request to the DG for Health and Food Safety of the European Commission to export fish or fishery products to the EU;
- 2) DG for Health and Food Safety sends a general and/or product-specific questionnaire (regarding national legislation, structure of the competent authorities etc.) to the competent authority which should be completed and returned;
- 3) A residue monitoring plan of the exporting country must also be submitted to the Commission;
- 4) After the evaluation of the information provided, an audit by the Commission's Health and Food Audits and Analysis Directorate may be carried out to assess the situation on the spot;
- 5) If the results of the evaluation / audit, and the guarantees given by the exporting country are deemed to be sufficient, the Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety proposes the listing of the non-EU country and any specific conditions under which imports from that country will be authorised. In parallel it will draft a list of approved establishments in the country. These are then discussed with representatives of all EU Member States;
- 6) If the Member States have a favourable opinion on the proposal, the European Commission will list both the non-EU country and any specific import conditions which apply. Lists of eligible establishments can be amended at the request of the exporting country and are made available for the public on the internet, [see here](#).

Imports of fishery products from non-EU countries must enter the EU via an approved Border Inspection Post (BIP) under the authority of an official veterinarian in the EU Member State in question.

Each consignment is subject to a systematic documentary check, identity check, and possibly a physical check. The frequency of physical checks depend on the risk profile of the product and also on the results of previous checks.

After allowance, products are free by customs to circulate between EU member states. Development country import controls can be undertaken in any one member state before the product is allowed to circulate freely to other member states.

## 2. Finnish legislation and authorities

The EU legislation is the applicable legislation in most cases when importing fish products. In addition to the EU legislation, there are some national legislations that need to be taken into account when importing to Finland. For example, labelling must be done in two languages, Finnish and Swedish.

[Ruokavirasto](#) is the Finnish Food Authority that is entrusted to ensure food safety in Finland. Check the website of Ruokavirasto for information about its activities, research reports, guides and brochures on food safety issues.

[The Finnish Customs](#) is the authority to supervise the implementation of the EU regulation in cases of fish and fishery product import outside of the EU and the European Economic Area (EEA). The Finnish Customs is the relevant authority if you seek advice on requirements for importing products outside of the EU or the EEA.

## 3. Non-legal requirements

### [GlobalGAP](#)

Global Good Agricultural Practice (GlobalGAP) is a worldwide B2B standard and certification scheme for agricultural products. Finnish retailers (and food service companies) require compliance with food safety and sustainability requirements.

### [British Retail Consortium](#)

Next to GlobalGAP, BRC global standard (British Retail Consortium) is a widely applied safety and quality standard. A food safety certification is very important in the EU including Finland. Certification according to BRC global standards is somewhat stricter than GlobalGAP. It is especially a buyer requirement if you supply to large international retailers. Like IFS, SQF and several other



industry-developed standards, BRC is endorsed by the Global Consumer Goods Forum and has thus been recognised in key western markets of North-America and Europe, including Finland. Large Finnish retailers take BRC into account when choosing a supplier.

[Marine Stewardship Council](#) (MSC) and [Aquaculture Stewardship Council](#) (ASC)

MSC has developed standards for sustainable fishing and seafood traceability. They ensure that MSC-labelled seafood comes from, and can be traced back to, a sustainable fishery. MSC certification is widely required by Finnish retail.

ASC is an emerging B2C certification scheme for aquaculture products and expected to become a buyer requirement in the whole European market. If you already sell ASC fishery products or are interested to sell those, discuss with your buyer whether a premium can be paid or calculate if you can produce ASC products cost neutral. For more information about ASC standards and certification check the ASC Website and the website of the ASC accelerator support programme.

Finnish buyers apply the methodology of the [World Wide Fund for Nature \(WWF\)](#) for assessing sustainability of fish and actively follow the recommendations when purchasing. WWF applies colours green (= favour), yellow (= can consider, depends), red (= avoid) in its advice for sustainable supply. Almost all deep-sea fish gets red; almost all farmed fish gets yellow. Fish with the MSC and ASC certification is considered sustainably caught or responsibly farmed and gets the colour green. Therefore, the buyers will rather choose for fish that is either sustainably caught in the domestic, small-sized species, or MSC/ACS-labelled fish.

[Friends of the Sea](#)

Friends of the Sea (FOS) is an international certification project for products originating from both sustainable fisheries and aquaculture. Friends of the Sea criteria follow the FAO - Guidelines for the Ecolabelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Capture Fisheries. Certified products from all continents include most of the traded species, fishmeal, fishfeed and Omega-3 fish oil. Some Nordic companies have relied on Friend of the Sea's assessment to verify the sustainable origin of their products.

[Sustainable Fisheries Partnership](#)

Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP) is a marine conservation non-profit established in 2006 dedicated to helping the seafood supply chain function in an environmentally-friendly fashion. SFP aims at improving commercial fishing and aquaculture practices by working with those in the private sector that support sustainable seafood.

Organic

For exports of organic fish produced from aquaculture, all countries in the EU accept the same European regulation scheme for organic production. The S-Group grocery stores are the largest sellers of all organic products in Finland. The amount of supply of Organic certified aquaculture to the Finnish retail is still limited compared to the ASC certified aquaculture.

For more information about the regulation for organic products see [here](#).

## F. Finnpartnership's Matchmaking Service

Finding local business partners is critical when you are planning to import your products to Finland. With the help of [Finnpartnership's Matchmaking Service](#), companies in developing countries can seek out business partners from Finland. The service is free-of-charge.

Finnpartnership will provide visibility for registered companies and their business proposals in Finland. Once your company has been registered to the service, a public introduction profile is created and added on Finnpartnership's public [Matchmaking database](#). All the registered companies are also included in Finnpartnership's monthly newsletter and your business proposal can be presented at events that are attended by Finnish companies that are interested in finding new business partners. Finnpartnership may also present your company to other import/export organisations, business promotion organisations and to chambers of commerce. Also, a direct one-to-one introduction can be made if a potential partner candidate is found.

*Disclaimer: Prices and other information presented in the report might be subject to change. Finnpartnership or other parties taking part in the production of the report, do not take responsibility for possible inaccuracies in the information presented in the report.*

## G. Useful links and references

- [Aquaculture Stewardship Council;](#)
- [British Retail Consortium;](#)
- [CIA, basic facts about Finland;](#)
- [EU Health and Food Audits and Analysis;](#)
- [EU import conditions for seafood;](#)
- [EUMOFA, The EU Fish Market 2018;](#)
- [EU Trade Helpdesk;](#)
- [European Food Safety Authority \(EFSA\);](#)
- [European Seafood Exposition in Brussels;](#)
- [Eurostat;](#)
- [Finnish Food Authority;](#)
- [Finnish Customs;](#)
- [Finnpartnership's Matchmaking database;](#)
- [Finnpartnership's Matchmaking Service;](#)
- [Friends of the Sea;](#)
- [GLOBAL G.A.P.;](#)
- [Guide to exporting to the Nordic Countries;](#)
- [Guide to Finnish business etiquette;](#)
- [Guide to Finnish customs and manners;](#)
- [Guide to fishery and aquaculture consumer labelling;](#)
- [Luke, Natural Resources Institute Finland;](#)
- [Marine Stewardship Council;](#)
- [PTY, Finnish Grocery Trade Association;](#)
- [Requirements for importing shrimps to the EU;](#)
- [Statistics Finland;](#)
- [Sustainable Fisheries Partnership;](#)
- [World Wide Fund for Nature \(WWF\).](#)