

WHITEFISH MARKET ANALYSIS 2026: DENMARK



DENMARK MARKET ANALYSIS

WHITEFISH HAS ALWAYS BEEN A PART OF THE DANISH CULTURAL FABRIC. Whitefish are part of the Danish vocabulary, even if one is not talking about fish. Calling someone a cod is not flattery and getting haddock does not mean you get a tasty meal.

Danish consumers bought almost 6800 tons of MSC labelled whitefish products in the financial year 2025/26 and whitefish accounts for more than a third of the volume of MSC labelled seafood products sold in Denmark.

The composition of the different species of MSC labelled whitefish sold in Denmark has shifted slightly in the past six years. Products that contain a mix of different whitefish species have seen a remarkable growth, doubling in sales volume from 2021/22 to 2024/25. These are often low cost, frozen breaded fish products, that are popular among the ordinary Danes and especially busy families. Frozen products make up 63% of the MSC labelled whitefish products sold in Denmark. Inflation and rising cost of living has increased the popularity of these lower cost products. The numbers show, that retailers can still put low-cost products on the shelves, without compromising on sustainability.

Sales of mixed whitefish products dropped in the 2025/26 financial year, which was mainly due to the suspension of the MSC certificate of the North Sea Saithe fishery, since saithe was a key component of many of the mixed products. This drop in sales has been offset by an increase in sales of walleye pollock.

Atlantic cod used to make up a large proportion but has steadily decreased. Suspension of North Sea cod, lower catches of Norwegian cod and a general shift towards lower priced alternatives have all influenced this development.

Despite the challenges with suspensions and a market shifting away from cod and towards lower cost products, the volume of MSC-labelled whitefish has grown and commitments to sustainability remains strong. The key brands in the Danish market are Espersen own Rahbek brand, Amanda Seafoods different brands. The largest single brand in terms of Volume of MSC-labelled whitefish is REMA 1000 own brand.

Putting the national fish in its rightful place

Plaice has always been popular among the Danish consumers. It is a key ingredient in the famous shooting star smørrebrød and is also popular breaded and fried. In 2025 plaice was even voted as Denmark's National fish. Despite the popularity, plaice is not very prominent in the sales figures, but it presents a real opportunity for the retail market. The catches are sustainable, the stock is doing well, but in the North Sea quotas are not being fully utilised. This presents an opportunity for the retail market to put more MSC-labelled, fresh plaice in the supermarket's counters, for the segment of consumers who are not content with a frozen product but also want a tasty fish that is easy to cook and put on the table at home.

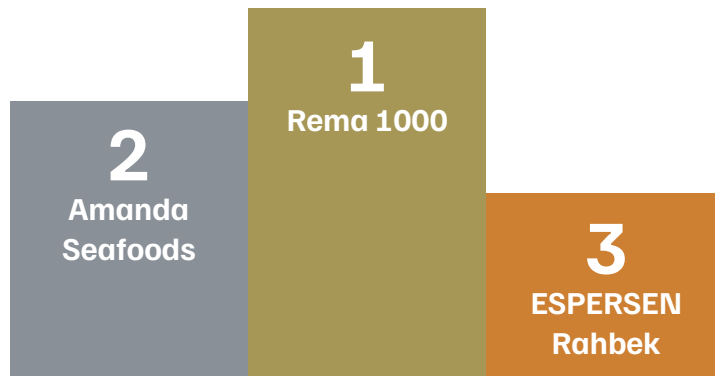
Hake is another species with potential. The stock in the North Sea is doing well and while the fish is prized in southern Europe, the Danish consumers are only beginning to open their eyes to this tasty and versatile fish.

REMA 1000 has done great work in giving the Danish consumers the choice to buy a more varied selection of fresh, MSC-labelled whitefish, as well as frozen products at a reasonable price point. The focus on fresh fish and a strong commitment to sustainability makes it no surprise that they are the retailer that sells the highest volume of MSC-labelled whitefish.

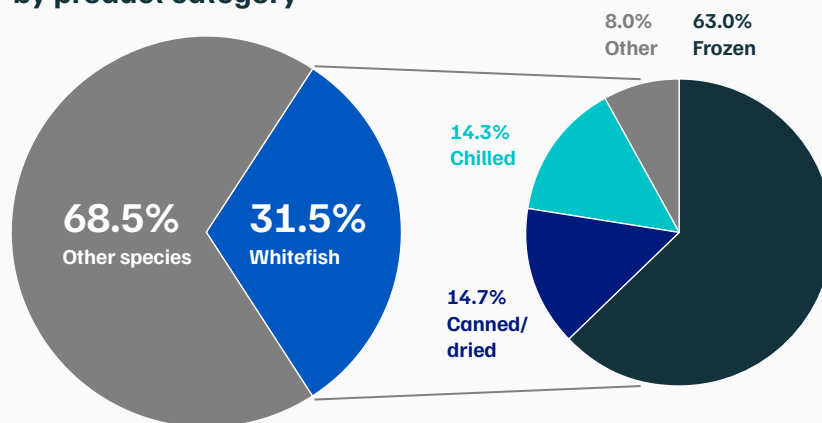


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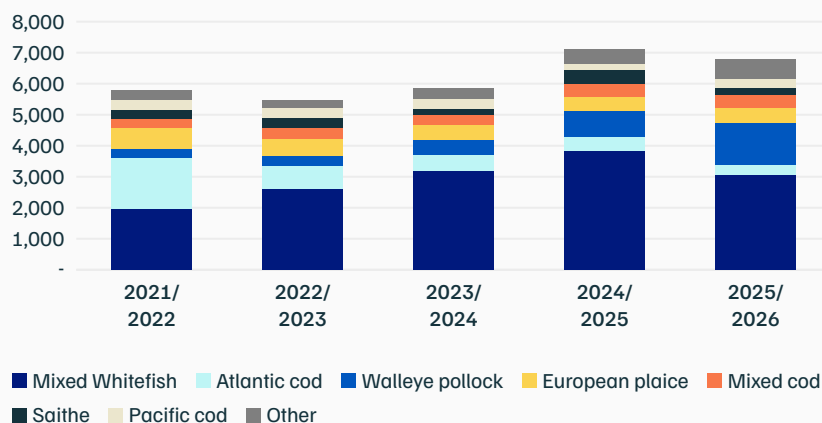
Top three Danish brands by volume sold



Volume of MSC labelled whitefish sold in Denmark by product category



MSC labelled whitefish sold in Denmark by volume (metric tonnes) and species



Find out more

<https://www.msc.org/species/whitefish-yearbook>

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