

Blue whiting (*Micromesistius poutassou*) in subareas 1–9, 12, and 14 (Northeast Atlantic and adjacent waters)

ICES advice on fishing opportunities

ICES advises that when the long-term management strategy agreed by Norway, the European Union, the Faroe Islands, Iceland, and UK is applied, catches in 2026 should be no more than 851 344 tonnes.

Non-fisheries conservation considerations

Conservation aspects and associated management measures may exist at a national or regional level but were not reviewed by ICES.

Stock development over time

Fishing pressure on the stock is above F_{MSY} and F_{PA} ; spawning-stock size is above $MSY B_{trigger}$, B_{PA} , and B_{lim} .

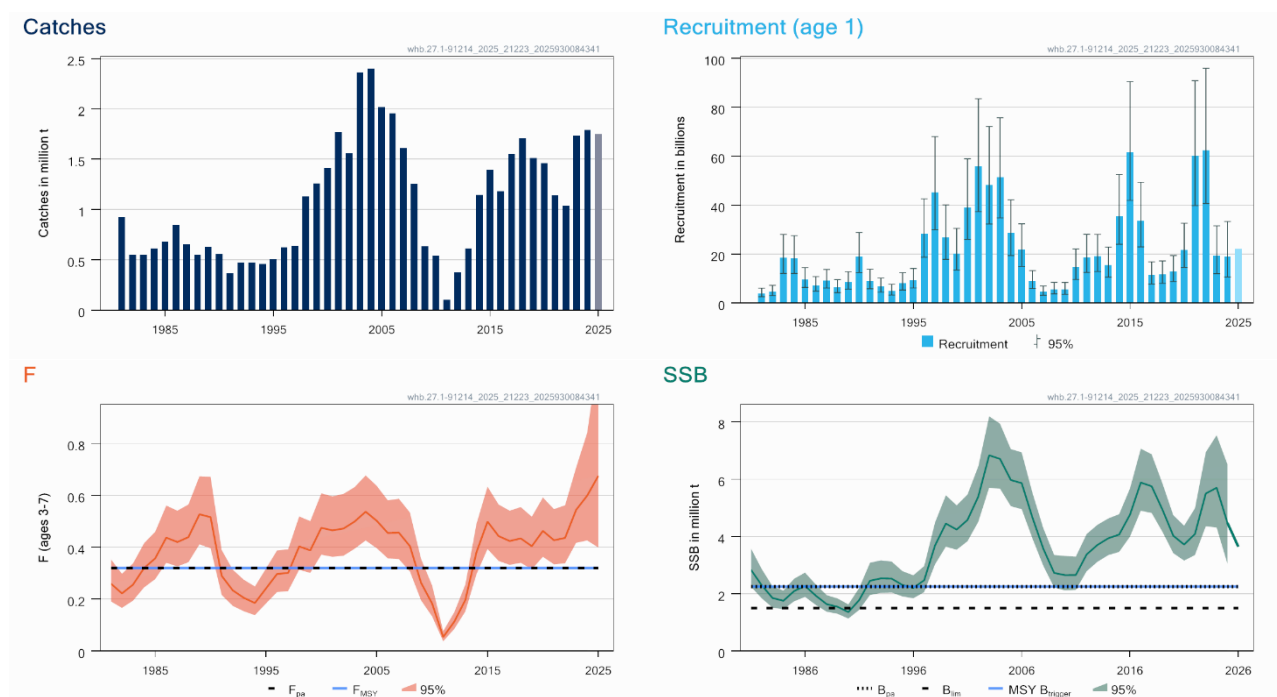


Figure 1 Blue whiting in subareas 1–9, 12, and 14. Summary of the stock assessment. The catch estimate for 2025 is preliminary. The assumed recruitment value for 2025 is shaded in a lighter colour.

Catch scenarios

Table 1 Blue whiting in subareas 1–9, 12, and 14. Values in the forecast and for the interim year.

Variable	Value	Notes
$F_{ages\ 3-7}$ (2025)	0.68	From the assessment (based on assumed catches in 2025)
Spawning-stock biomass (SSB; 2026)	3645041	From the forecast; in tonnes
$R_{age\ 1}$ (2025)	22062028	GM (1996–2024); in thousands
$R_{age\ 1}$ (2026–2027)	22062028	GM (1996–2024); in thousands
Total catch (2025)	1751013	As estimated by ICES, based on declared national quotas and expected uptake; in tonnes

Table 2 Blue whiting in subareas 1–9, 12, and 14. Annual catch scenarios. All weights are in tonnes.

Basis	Total catch (2026)	F _{age 3-7} (2026)	Spawning-stock biomass (SSB; 2027)	% SSB change*	% catch change**	% advice change***
ICES advice basis						
Long-term management strategy: F = F _{mgt}	851344	0.32	3838995	5.3	-51	-41
Other scenarios						
Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) approach: F _{MSY}	851344	0.32	3838995	5.3	-51	-41
F = 0	0	0	4669000	28	-100	-100
F _{PA}	851344	0.32	3838995	5.3	-51	-41
SSB ₂₀₂₇ = B _{lim} [^]	3447737	2.8	1500000	-59	97	138
SSB ₂₀₂₇ = B _{PA} = MSY B _{trigger} [^]	2556488	1.44	2250000	-38	46	77
F = F ₂₀₂₅	1561172	0.68	3162004	-13.3	-10.8	7.9
SSB ₂₀₂₇ = SSB ₂₀₂₆ [^]	1052983	0.41	3645039	0	-40	-27
Catch ₂₀₂₆ = catch ₂₀₂₅ [^]	1751013	0.79	2984052	-18.1	0	21
Catch ₂₀₂₆ = catch ₂₀₂₅ -20%	1400817	0.59	3313434	-9.1	-20	-3.2
Catch ₂₀₂₆ = catch ₂₀₂₅ +25%	2188766	1.1	2580336	-29	25	51
Catch ₂₀₂₆ = advice ₂₀₂₅ -20%	1157645	0.46	3544843	-2.7	-34	-20
Catch ₂₀₂₆ = advice ₂₀₂₅ +25%	1808788	0.83	2930237	-19.6	3.3	25

* SSB 2027 relative to SSB 2026.

** Advice value for 2026 relative to expected catch in 2025 (1 751 013 tonnes).

*** Advice value for 2026 relative to advice for 2025 (1 447 054 tonnes).

The advice for 2026 is 41% lower than in 2025 because of a decline in stock biomass and a downward revision of the perception of the stock biomass over the recent years.

Basis of the advice

Table 3 Blue whiting in subareas 1–9, 12, and 14. The basis of the advice.

Advice basis	Long-term management strategy
Management plan	A long-term management strategy was agreed by the European Union, the Faroe Islands, Iceland, and Norway (Agreed record of conclusions..., 2016) and subsequently by UK in 2021 (Agreed record of conclusions..., 2021). ICES has evaluated the strategy, including clause 6.b, and found it to be precautionary (ICES, 2016a, 2017).

Quality of the assessment

This year's assessment shows a substantial downward revision of the estimated SSB, an upward revision of fishing mortality over the recent years, and a downward revision of the 2021 and 2022 recruitment estimates compared to last year's assessment (Figure 2). These revisions are caused by the low abundance estimates in the 2025 IBWSS survey, which indicated a 34% decline in total stock abundance.

The survey index (IBWSS) indicated a low recruitment for 2025 (2024 year class). The model used for the current assessment subsequently estimated recruitment in 2025 to be 16.9 billion, which is lower than the recruitment estimates for 2023 (19.4 billion) and 2024 (18.8 billion), and the long-term geometric mean (22.0 billion; 1996-2024). This was however not corroborated by other surveys not currently used in the assessment, which point towards a higher recruitment in 2025 compared to 2023 and 2024. It was therefore decided to replace the recruitment estimate of the assessment model for 2025 with the long-term geometric mean.

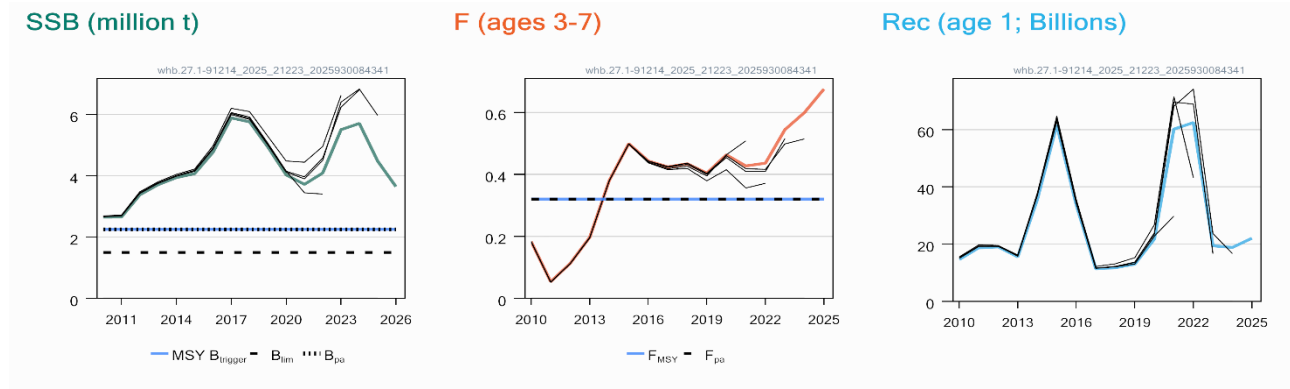


Figure 2 Blue whiting in subareas 1–9, 12, and 14. Historical assessment results.

Issues relevant for the advice

There have been consistent deviations from the long-term management strategy since 2018 as evident from the sum of unilateral quotas. During the evaluation of the management strategy (ICES, 2016a), the implementation error in the form of a consistent overshoot of the total allowable catch (TAC) was not included. Therefore, failing to adhere to the advised catches as derived from the application of the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) approach or the long-term management strategy may not be precautionary. Specifically, this may result in an increased risk for the stock to fall below B_{lim} and loss of catch in the long term.

Both the 2020 and 2021 year classes are among the highest in the time-series and were fully recruited to the fishery in 2025. In 2026, the fishery will still largely depend on these two year classes, with 18% and 37% of the catch predicted to consist of fish from the 2020 and 2021 year classes, respectively. The history of the stock shows that subsequent years of low recruitment after a period of high recruitment may cause the spawning-stock biomass (SSB) to quickly drop to lower levels and would lead to a reduction in future advice. The most recent year classes (2022, 2023 and 2024) are estimated to be small by the assessment, while recruitment survey indices not used in the assessment but used as additional indicators indicate a strong 2024 year class compared to 2022 and 2023 – though not as high as those from 2020 and 2021 (Joint Norwegian-Russian survey Barents Sea (G5348), International Ecosystem Survey in the Nordic Seas in May (A3675, [IESNS]), the Faroese bottom-trawl survey in spring (G1264 [FO-GFS-Q1]) and the Icelandic bottom-trawl survey in spring (G3239 [IS-SMB])).

Reference points

Table 4 Blue whiting in subareas 1–9, 12, and 14. Reference points, values, and their technical basis.

Framework	Reference point	Value	Technical basis	Source
Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) approach	$MSY B_{trigger}$	2 250 000 t	B_{PA}	ICES (2013a, 2013b, 2016a)
	F_{MSY}	0.32	Stochastic simulations with segmented regression stock–recruitment relationship capped to F_{P05}	ICES (2016a)
Precautionary approach	B_{lim}	1 500 000 t	Approximately B_{loss}	ICES (2013a, 2013b, 2016a)
	B_{PA}	2 250 000 t	$B_{lim} \exp(1.645 \times s)$, with $s = 0.246$	ICES (2013a, 2013b, 2016a)
	F_{PA}	0.32	F_{P05} ; the F that leads to $SSB \geq B_{lim}$ with 95% probability	ICES (2016a, 2021)
EU–Faroes–Iceland–Norway–UK long-term management strategy	SSB_{mgt_lower}	1 500 000 t	B_{lim}	Agreed record of conclusions...(2016)
	SSB_{mgt}	2 250 000 t	B_{PA}	
	F_{mgt_lower}	0.05	Arbitrary low F	
	F_{mgt}	0.32	F_{MSY}	

Basis of the assessment

Table 5 Blue whiting in subareas 1–9, 12, and 14. Basis of the assessment and advice.

ICES stock data category	1 (ICES, 2023)
Assessment type	Age-based analytical assessment (SAM; ICES, 2021)*
Input data	Commercial catches, preliminary estimates of catch-at-age in the year (Q1–Q2) in which the assessment is carried out. One survey index (International Blue Whiting Spawning Stock Survey [IBWSS; A1142] ages 1–8, 2004–2025, excluding 2010 and 2020). Time invariant maturity-at-age was estimated in 1994 by combining maturity ogives from the southern and northern areas. Weight at age estimated annually from commercial data, including preliminary estimates of weight-at-age in the year of the assessment (Q1–Q2). Time invariant natural mortality fixed at 0.2 for all ages, derived in the 1980s from age compositions before the targeted fishery started.
Discards and bycatch	Discard data since 2014 have been included in the assessment
Indicators	Estimates of recruitment from surveys: Joint Norwegian-Russian survey Barents Sea (G5348), International Ecosystem Survey in the Nordic Seas in May (A3675, [IESNS]), the Faroese bottom-trawl survey in spring (G1264 [FO-GFS-Q1]) and the Icelandic bottom-trawl survey in spring (G3239 [IS-SMB])
Other information	The stock was benchmarked in 2012 (WKPELA; ICES, 2012). An interbenchmark protocol was conducted in spring of 2016 (ICES, 2016b).
Working group	Working Group on Widely Distributed Stocks (WGWIDE ; ICES 2023b)

*[View assessment in Transparent Assessment Framework \(TAF\)](#)

History of the advice, catch, and management

Table 6 Blue whiting in subareas 1–9, 12, and 14. ICES advice and catch. All weights are in tonnes.

Year	ICES advice	Catch corresponding to advice	Total allowable catch (TAC)	ICES estimated landings	ICES estimated discards [§]	ICES catch
1987	TAC for northern areas; no advice for southern areas	950000	-			655000
1988	TAC for northern areas; no advice for southern areas	832000	-			557847
1989	TAC for northern areas; no advice for southern areas	630000	-			627447
1990	TAC for northern areas; no advice for southern areas	600000	-			561610
1991	TAC for northern areas; no advice for southern areas	670000	-			369524
1992	No advice	-	-			475026
1993	Catch at status quo F (northern areas); no assessment for southern areas	490000	-			480679
1994	Precautionary TAC (northern areas); no assessment for southern areas	485000	650000*			459414
1995	Precautionary TAC for combined stock	518000	650000*			578905
1996	Precautionary TAC for combined stock	500000	650000*			645982
1997	Precautionary TAC for combined stock	540000	-			672437
1998	Precautionary TAC for combined stock	650000	-			1128969
1999	Catches above 650 000 t may not be sustainable in the long run	650000	-			1256228
2000	F should not exceed the proposed F_{PA}	800000	-			1412927
2001	F should not exceed the proposed F_{PA}	628000	-			1780170
2002	Rebuilding plan	0	-			1556792
2003	F should be less than the proposed F_{PA}	600000	-			2321406
2004	Achieve 50% probability that F will be less than F_{PA}	925000	-			2380161
2005	Achieve 50% probability that F will be less than F_{PA}	1075000	-			2034309
2006	F old management plan	1500000	2100000**			1976176
2007	F should be less than the proposed F_{PA}	980000	1847000***			1625255
2008	F should be less than F_{PA}	835000	1250000^			1260615
2009	Maintain stock above B_{PA}	384000	606000^^			641818
2010	Follow the agreed management plan	540000	548000			526357
2011	See scenarios	40100–223000	40000			103620
2012	Follow the agreed management plan	391000	391000			384021
2013	Follow the agreed management plan	643000	643000			628169
2014	Follow the agreed management plan	948950	1200000			1155279
2015	Follow the agreed management plan	839886	1260000^^^	1389953	6291	1396244

Year	ICES advice	Catch corresponding to advice	Total allowable catch (TAC)	ICES estimated landings	ICES estimated discards [§]	ICES catch
2016	Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) approach	≤ 776391	1147000 ^{^^^}	1178180	5007	1183187
2017	MSY approach	≤ 1342330	1675400 ^{^^^}	1556030	2030	1558061
2018	Long-term management strategy	≤ 1387872	1727964 ^{^^^}	1707152	4325	1711477
2019	Long-term management strategy	≤ 1143629	1483208 ^{^^^}	1512922	2604	1515527
2020	Long-term management strategy	≤ 1161615	1478358 ^{^^^}	1492420	2828	1495248
2021	Long-term management strategy	≤ 929292	1157604 ^{^^^}	1139514	3936	1143450
2022	Long-term management strategy	≤ 752736	752736 ^{§§§}	1035094	3641	1038736
2023	Long-term management strategy	≤ 1359629	1359629 ^{§§§}	1733169	3928	1733169
2024	Long-term management strategy	≤ 1529754	1529754 ^{§§§}	1794098	3162	1797260
2025	Long-term management strategy	≤ 1447054	1447054 ^{§§§}			1751013 ^{§§}
2026	Long-term management strategy	≤ 851344				

* NEAFC proposal for the northern stock component.

** Agreed TAC from the four Coastal States of 2 million tonnes and an additional allocation of 100 000 tonnes to Russian Federation in the international zone.

*** Agreed TAC from the four Coastal States of 1.7 million tonnes and an additional allocation of 147 000 tonnes to Russian Federation and Greenland.

^ Agreed TAC from the four Coastal States of 1.1 million tonnes and an additional allocation to Russian Federation and Greenland.

^^ Agreed TAC from the four Coastal States of 0.59 million tonnes and an additional allocation of 16 000 tonnes to Russian Federation.

^^^ Sum of unilateral quotas (Note: the Coastal States agree to a TAC of 1 161 615 tonnes for 2020 and 929 292 tonnes for 2021).

§ Discards estimates include below minimum size (BMS) landings.

§§ Preliminary.

§§§ Official TAC agreed between the Coastal States that have signed up to the management plan.

History of the catch and landings

Table 7 Blue whiting in subareas 1–9, 12, and 14. Catch distribution by fleet in 2024, as estimated by ICES. All weights are in tonnes.

Total catch (2024)	Landings		Discards
1 797 260	98% pelagic trawl	2% other gears	3 162
	1 794 098		

Table 8 Blue whiting in subareas 1–9, 12, and 14. History of commercial catch; ICES estimated values are presented for each country participating in the fishery. Discard data are included since 2014. All weights are in tonnes.

Country	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Denmark	18134	248	140	165	340	2167	35256	45178	39395	60868	87348	68716	58997	40321	45644	87119	101521
Estonia												0					
Faroe Islands	225003	58354	49979	16405	43290	85768	224700	282502	282416	356501	349838	336569	343372	202415	217401	394198	436591
France	11723	8831	7839	4337	9799	8978	10410	9659	10345	13369	16784	16095	13769	14612	14202	16989	9194
Germany	25259	5044	9108	278	6239	11418	24487	24107	20025	45555	47708	38244	42362	35327	21667	38718	42127
Iceland	159307	120202	87942	5887	63056	104918	182879	214870	186914	228934	292944	268356	243725	190146	191813	292853	321572
Ireland	22852	8776	8324	1195	7557	13205	21466	24785	27657	43238	49903	38836	40135	39514	28972	54396	63293
Lithuania	5338						4717		1129	5300			9543	21183	13149	32600	19532**
Netherlands	78684	35686	33762	4595	26526	51635	38524	56397	58148	81156	121864	75020	62309	62017	63249	84637	91085
Norway	418289	225995	194317	20539	118832	196246	399520	489439	310412	399363	438426	351429	354033	233968	194973	390850	388951
Poland										15889	12152	27185	47616	26077	20948	28276	41645
Portugal	4220	2043	1482	603	1955	2056	2150	2547	2586	2046	2497	3481	2819	2522	2784	3202	1737
Spain	14342	20637	12891	2416	6726	15274	32065	29206	31952	28920	24718	22782	23676	25509	26310	32870	23015
Sweden	4	3	50	1	4	199	2	32	42	90	16**	54	25	40	20	377	772
UK (England & Wales)	14147	6176	2475	27	1590	4100	11	131	1374	3447	1864	4062	7458	8783	7482	7521	3876
UK (N. Ireland)						1232	2205	1119			4508	2899	2958			5299	3088
UK (Scotland)	38150	173	5496	1331	6305	8166	24630	30508	37173	64724	66682	54040	41344	65085	42903	87332	98619
Russia	225163	149650	112553	45841	88303	120674	152256	185763	173655	188449	170892	188006	181496	133605^	128002	153830	141241
Greenland						2133				20212	23333	19753	19611	20190	19218	26031	28934
Unallocated					3499									22137			
Total	1260615	641818	526357	103620	384021	628169	1155279	1396244	1183224	1558061	1711477	1515527	1495248	1121313	1038736	1737098	1816792***

* Only landings.

** Data not available in the InterCatch.

*** ICES estimated values including Lithuania

^ Russia 2021 preliminary data (Q1+Q2) submitted to Working Group on Widely Distributed Stocks (WGWiDE) 2021.

Table 9 Blue whiting in subareas 1–9, 12, and 14. ICES estimated catches by main fishing areas. All weights are in tonnes.

Area	Norwegian Sea fishery (subareas 1 and 2; divisions 5.a and 14.a–b)	Fishery in the spawning area (Subarea 12; divisions 5.b, 6.a–b, and 7.a–c)	Directed and mixed fisheries in the North Sea (Subarea 4; Division 3.a)	Total northern areas	Total southern areas (subareas 8 and 9; divisions 7.d–k)	Total
1988	55829	426037	45143	527009	30838	557847
1989	42615	475179	75958	593752	33695	627447
1990	2106	463495	63192	528793	32817	561610
1991	78703	218946	39872	337521	32003	369524
1992	62312	318018	65974	446367	28722	475026
1993	43240	347101	58082	448423	32256	480679
1994	22674	378704	28563	429941	29473	459414
1995	23733	423504	104004	551241	27664	578905
1996	23447	478077	119359	620883	25099	645982
1997	62570	514654	65091	642315	30122	672437
1998	177494	827194	94881	1099569	29400	1128969
1999	179639	943578	106609	1229826	26402	1256228
2000	284666	989131	114477	1388274	24654	1412928
2001	591583	1045100	118523	1755206	24964	1780170
2002	541467	846602	145652	1533721	23071	1556792
2003	931508	1211621	158180	2301309	20097	2321406
2004	921349	1232534	138593	2292476	85093	2377569^
2005	405577	1465735	128033	1999345	27608	2026953^
2006	404362	1428208	105239	1937809	28331	1966140^
2007	172709	1360882	61105	1594695	17634	1612330^
2008	68352	1111292	36061	1215704	30761	1246465^^
2009	46629	533996	22387	603012	32627	635639^^
2010	36214	441521	17545	495280	28552	523832^^
2011	20599	72279	7524	100401	3191	103592^^
2012	24391	324545	5678	354614	29402	384016*
2013	31759	481356	8749	521864	103973	625837**
2014	45580	885483	28596	959659	195620	1155279
2015	150828	895684	44661	1091173	305071	1396244
2016	59744	905087	55774	1020604	162583	1183187***
2017	136565	1284105	45474	1466144	91917	1558061
2018	143204	1445957	43484	1632646	78831	1711477
2019	68593	1271883	44856	1385333	130194	1515527
2020	92084	1059197	64327	1215608	279640	1495248
2021	112082	801768	39509	953359	190091	1143450
2022	105752	724086	59371	889209	149527	1038736
2023	112352	1115090	99955	1327396	409702	1737098
2024	122317	1384345	44864	1551526	245734	1797260

^ Official catches by area from UK (England + Wales) are not included for this year.

^^ Official catches by area from Sweden and from UK (England + Wales) are not included for this year.

* Official catches by area from Sweden are not included for this year.

** Official catches by area from Sweden and Greenland are not included for this year.

*** The total includes only 1 336 tonnes from UK (England + Wales; 2016 total catch from UK [England + Wales] = 1 374 tonnes).

Table 10 Blue whiting in subareas 1–9, 12, and 14. Landings inside and outside the NEAFC regulatory areas (RAs), as estimated by ICES, as well as total landings. Weights are in tonnes.

Year	Inside the NEAFC RAs	Outside the NEAFC RAs	Total catches	Percentage inside the NEAFC RAs
2017	263019	1295042	1558061	17
2018	176399	1535078	1711477	10
2019	340062	1175465	1515527	22
2020	246412	1248836	1495248	16
2021	154661	833047	987708*	16
2022	85618	953119	1038736	8
2023	370280	1366819	1737098	21
2024	544002	1253258	1797260	30

* Without the Russian 2021 preliminary catch data (quarter 1 and 2) submitted to ICES Working Group on Widely Distributed Stocks (WGWIDE) and the area unallocated catch data.

Summary of the assessment

Table 11 Blue whiting in subareas 1–9, 12, and 14. Assessment summary. The low and high values indicate the 95% confidence intervals.

Year	Recruitment age 1 (thousands)			Spawning-stock biomass (SSB; tonnes)			Catches (tonnes)*	F ages 3–7		
	Low	Value	High	Low	Value	High		Low	Value	High
1981	2560733	3939691	6061220	2252142	2843972	3591327	922980	0.191	0.260	0.354
1982	2997613	4654551	7227368	1840207	2297533	2868514	550643	0.166	0.222	0.298
1983	12083460	18416221	28067886	1515509	1852455	2264316	553344	0.194	0.256	0.338
1984	12059905	18224483	27540165	1457529	1755006	2113199	615569	0.245	0.320	0.416
1985	6386519	9615504	14477045	1737088	2096350	2529914	678214	0.277	0.357	0.460
1986	4832283	7228446	10812783	1890198	2276606	2742006	847145	0.340	0.437	0.561
1987	6106371	9150810	13713109	1607341	1932922	2324452	654718	0.326	0.420	0.541
1988	4260238	6388402	9579671	1372470	1637416	1953507	552264	0.342	0.439	0.565
1989	5649558	8504294	12801535	1300198	1546386	1839188	630316	0.411	0.527	0.674
1990	12407122	18916096	28839781	1133286	1359259	1630290	558128	0.396	0.516	0.672
1991	5813077	8961887	13816334	1435286	1779343	2205876	364008	0.216	0.290	0.390
1992	4396126	6703233	10221120	1956815	2457377	3085984	474592	0.174	0.234	0.314
1993	3229540	4976337	7667944	2029010	2536514	3170956	475198	0.153	0.205	0.275
1994	5320277	8127693	12416532	2044129	2528472	3127577	457696	0.138	0.185	0.249
1995	6147826	9301009	14071440	1905021	2305713	2790685	505176	0.183	0.241	0.318
1996	18686627	28218692	42613074	1842049	2208446	2647723	621104	0.227	0.297	0.388
1997	29976746	45157783	68026910	2056831	2471692	2970230	639681	0.231	0.301	0.392
1998	17854208	26757284	40099918	3025391	3686245	4491454	1131955	0.313	0.403	0.519
1999	13460170	20252915	30473656	3642643	4453039	5443727	1261033	0.301	0.388	0.501
2000	25955352	39112927	58940486	3537602	4243985	5091417	1412449	0.371	0.475	0.608
2001	37318888	55819717	83492326	3834472	4580040	5470575	1771805	0.363	0.465	0.596
2002	32284877	48273348	72179805	4515399	5401613	6461760	1556955	0.367	0.472	0.606
2003	34776219	51316123	75722564	5703596	6839438	8201476	2365319	0.394	0.499	0.632
2004	19397020	28595612	42156426	5669865	6711654	7944862	2400795	0.426	0.537	0.677
2005	14937580	21988288	32367009	5058314	5974618	7056909	2018344	0.396	0.502	0.637
2006	5980536	8897990	13238652	4956660	5867072	6944705	1956239	0.357	0.455	0.581
2007	3150185	4680714	6954857	3923802	4656773	5526663	1612269	0.354	0.456	0.587
2008	3725628	5610274	8448287	2973053	3573977	4296362	1251851	0.306	0.404	0.534
2009	3526949	5452063	8427963	2215926	2727634	3357507	634978	0.195	0.263	0.356
2010	9619647	14587776	22121728	2116822	2652233	3323067	539539	0.133	0.183	0.253
2011	12470889	18715371	28086619	2135683	2654782	3300052	103771	0.037	0.054	0.077
2012	12886753	19020408	28073474	2785721	3375645	4090495	375692	0.085	0.113	0.150
2013	10567274	15544186	22865097	3116036	3707535	4411315	613863	0.152	0.197	0.257
2014	24012188	35518806	52539386	3349990	3940046	4634034	1147650	0.295	0.380	0.490
2015	41926681	61604941	90519178	3460736	4068434	4782842	1390656	0.393	0.499	0.634
2016	22960977	33665082	49359299	3992764	4764351	5685044	1180786	0.347	0.443	0.565
2017	7702318	11381798	16819006	4900190	5886534	7071415	1555069	0.332	0.424	0.541
2018	8006740	11748402	17238593	4819546	5756364	6875279	1709856	0.340	0.434	0.555
2019	8724980	13001545	19374277	4160063	4937145	5859382	1512026	0.315	0.404	0.518
2020	14512222	21755724	32614683	3416909	4027164	4746410	1460507	0.363	0.463	0.592
2021	39852541	60179132	90873201	3158242	3719745	4381078	1139531	0.334	0.427	0.547
2022	40660627	62458426	95941831	3352390	4090814	4991889	1035891	0.338	0.436	0.562
2023	11941801	19403589	31527846	4356146	5502534	6950613	1735017	0.417	0.544	0.708
2024	10641616	18832298	33327217	4315112	5705454	7543769	1789724	0.426	0.599	0.842
2025		22062028**		3039038	4479189	6521967	1751013***	0.399	0.675	1.143
2026		22062028**			3645041^					

* Catches presented are the sum of product (SOP) values from catch- and weight-at-age used in the assessment model.

** Geometric mean (1996–2024).

*** Preliminary catches.

^ SSB calculated from the assessment and assumed recruitment for 2025 and 2026.

Sources and references

Agreed record of conclusions of fisheries consultations between the European Union, the Faroe Islands, Iceland and Norway on the management of blue whiting in the north-east Atlantic in 2017. 2016. 6 pp.
<https://d3b1dqw2kzexi.cloudfront.net/media/8742/agreed-record-blue-whiting-2017.pdf>

Agreed record of conclusions of fisheries consultations between the European Union, the Faroe Islands, Iceland, Norway and UK on the management of blue whiting in the north-east Atlantic in 2022. 2021.
<https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/2ea04e97a8fd45c2b1758e2602e79c46/blue-whiting-agreed-record-october-2021.pdf>

ICES. 2012. Report of the Benchmark Workshop on Pelagic Stocks (WKPELA 2012), 13–17 February 2012, Copenhagen, Denmark. ICES CM 2012/ACOM:47. 572 pp.

ICES. 2013a. NEAFC request to ICES to evaluate the harvest control rule element of the long-term management plan for blue whiting. *In* Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2013. ICES Advice 2013, Book 9, Section 9.3.3.1. 13 pp.

ICES. 2013b. NEAFC request on additional management plan evaluation for blue whiting. *In* Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2013. ICES Advice 2013, Book 9, Section 9.3.3.7. 8 pp.

ICES. 2016a. Report of the Workshop on Blue Whiting Long Term Management Strategy Evaluation (WKBWMS), 30 August 2016, ICES HQ, Copenhagen, Denmark. ICES CM 2016/ACOM:53. 104 pp.

ICES. 2016b. Report of the Inter-Benchmark Protocol for Blue Whiting (IBPBLW), 10 March–10 May 2016, by correspondence. ICES CM 2016/ACOM:36. 118 pp.

ICES. 2017. Report of the Working Group on Widely Distributed Stocks (WGWIDE), 30 August–5 September 2017, ICES Headquarters, Copenhagen, Denmark. ICES CM 2017/ACOM:23. 1111 pp.

ICES. 2021. Working Group on Widely Distributed Stocks (WGWIDE). ICES Scientific Reports. 3:95. 874 pp.
<http://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.8298>

ICES. 2023. Advice on fishing opportunities. *In* Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2023. ICES Advice 2023, section 1.1.1. <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.22240624>

ICES. 2025. Working Group on Widely Distributed Stocks (WGWIDE). ICES Scientific Reports.
<https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.30233824>

[Download the stock assessment data and figures](#)

Recommended citation: ICES. 2025. Blue whiting (*Micromesistius poutassou*) in subareas 1–9, 12, and 14 (Northeast Atlantic and adjacent waters). *In* Report of the ICES Advisory Committee, 2025. ICES Advice 2025, whb.27.1-91214, <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.27202938>