CBI
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CBI Trade Statistics:

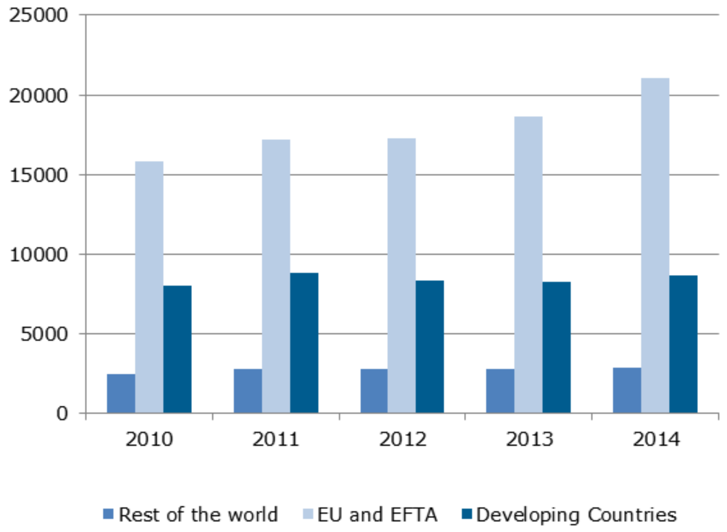
Fish and Seafood

Introduction

Seafood consumption and production in Europe is relatively stable. The largest seafood consumers live in France, Spain and Italy: the Southern part of Europe. The largest growth market is Eastern Europe where seafood is increasingly accepted by consumers. Spain is the largest importer of seafood from developing countries but countries in Western Europe like the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and the United Kingdom are increasingly important partners for exporters from developing countries.

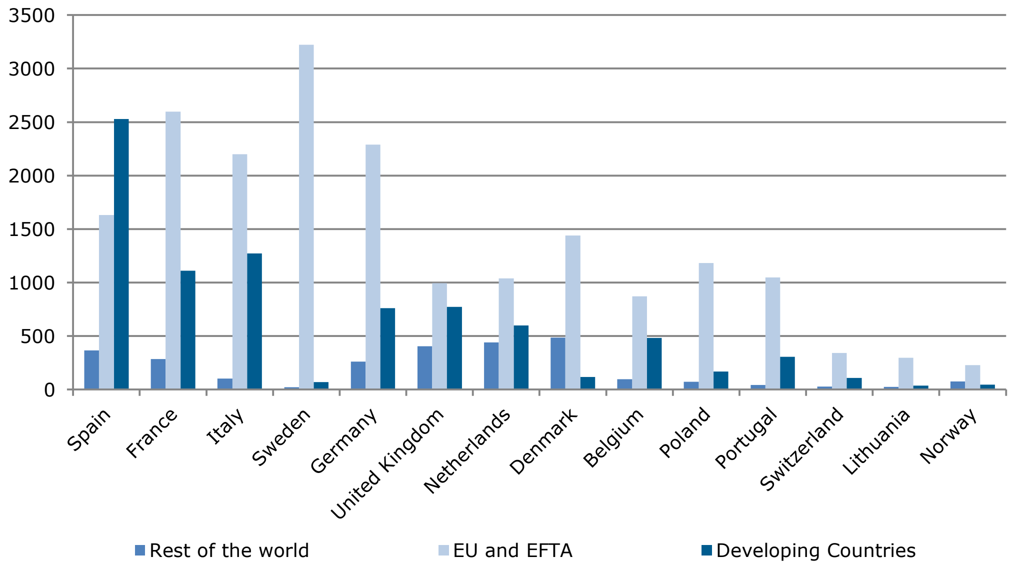
Imports

Figure 1: European imports, by main origin, € million



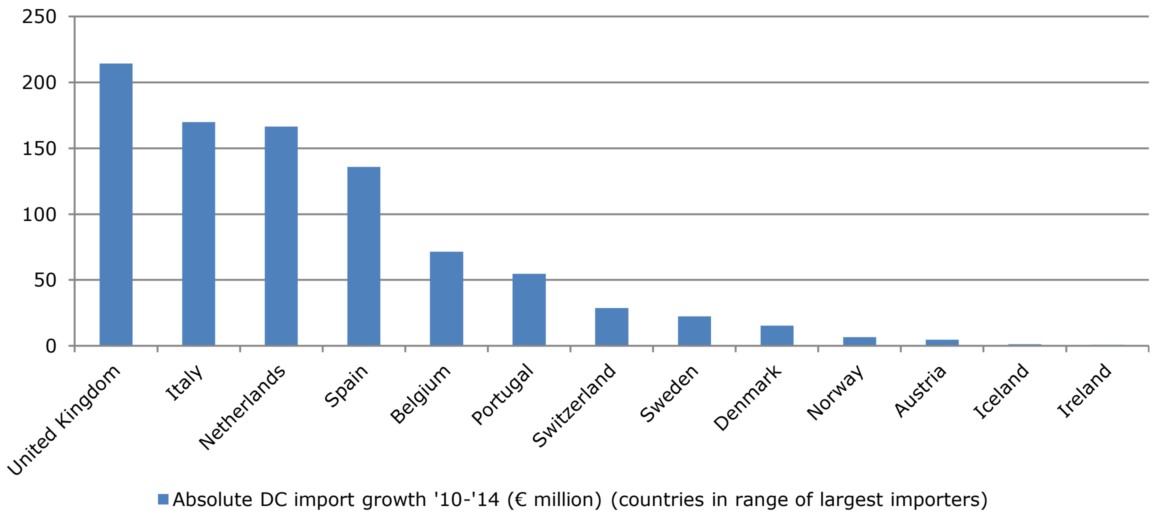
Source: Trademap

Figure 2: Main importers, 2014, € million



Source: Trademap

Figure 3: Absolute import growth '10-'14 (€ million) from developing countries (countries in range of largest importers)



Source: Trademap

From a long-term perspective, seafood prices on the global market have been increasing gradually. This trend reflects long-term developments in the European seafood market. For example, import volumes increased by a total of about 25% in the period 2000-2007, while total import volumes have remained relatively stable since 2007. Import values show a different pattern, exhibiting a constant increase until 2000 (40% in the period 2000-2007 and 25% in the period 2007-2014). Prices for seafood imports to Europe therefore increased gradually as well (16% in the period 2000-2007 and more than 20% in 2007-2014).

Europe is the largest seafood market and importer in the world. Even excluding intra-EU trade, Europe accounts for some 20-25% of the global seafood market.

Spain and France are the largest importers of seafood (Figure 2). More than half of Spanish imports originate from developing countries; for France, this figure is less than 30%. Other large European seafood importers, such as Italy, Germany, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, import between 20-40% of total imports directly from developing countries. In the list of largest importers, Sweden is a notable exception, consuming predominantly regional fish and importing hardly any seafood from developing countries (2% share).

It is particularly interesting to note that, while Asian shrimp (predominantly from Vietnam, India, Thailand and Bangladesh) are imported primarily by North-Western EU countries (e.g. UK, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany), South American shrimp (predominantly from Ecuador, Argentina and Mexico) are imported primarily by Spain, France and Italy. France and Greece are the only two European countries whose imports are divided nearly equally across the two regions.

More than 99% of frozen Pangasius comes from Vietnam. The largest pangasius importers in the EU are Spain, the Netherlands and Germany. The Netherlands plays an important role in seafood trade, as it is home to several large seafood traders that import through the Port of Rotterdam and sell all over Europe.

The largest importers of frozen yellow fin tuna in the EU are Spain and Italy who together account for more than 85% of total imports. Frozen yellowfin tuna is sourced predominantly from Mexico (more than 10% share in imports), although it is also sourced from the Philippines, Vietnam, Senegal, Seychelles, Guatemala, Thailand and Panama. It is important to note that part of the total import amount is captured by European vessels in the Pacific.

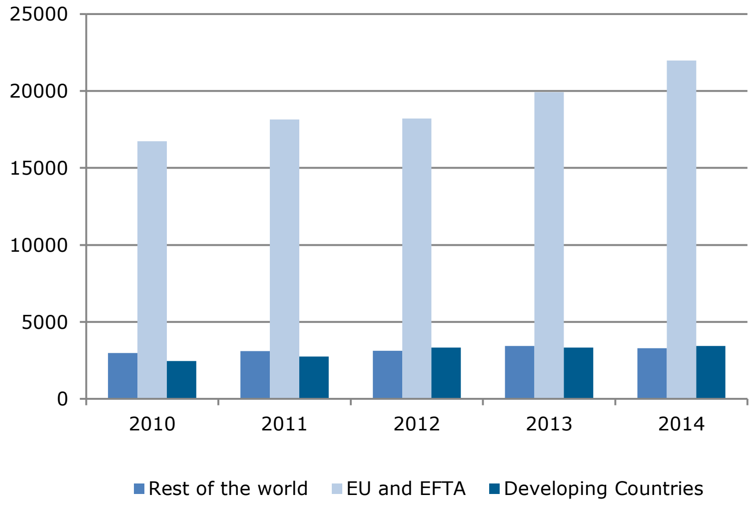
In the short term, imports from developing countries are expected to remain stable or increase slightly (in the 0-3% range). In the long term, imports from developing countries are expected to face increasing competitive pressure from locally produced fish. This expectation is based on the EU's plans for increasing its own fish and seafood production with the development of aquaculture operations in order, thereby becoming less dependent on fish and seafood imports.

Tips:

- If you want to access the Spanish market consider participating in the CONXEMAR or SEAFOOD BARCELONA trade shows which offer you the opportunity of showcasing your products and of meeting potential buyers from Spain as well as those from other Southern European countries.
- The largest European seafood show is the European Seafood Exhibition in Brussels. You need to be here if you want to do business in the European market.
- Visit the CBI Market Platform to find more information about the European market for frozen tropical shrimp, pangasius and tuna.

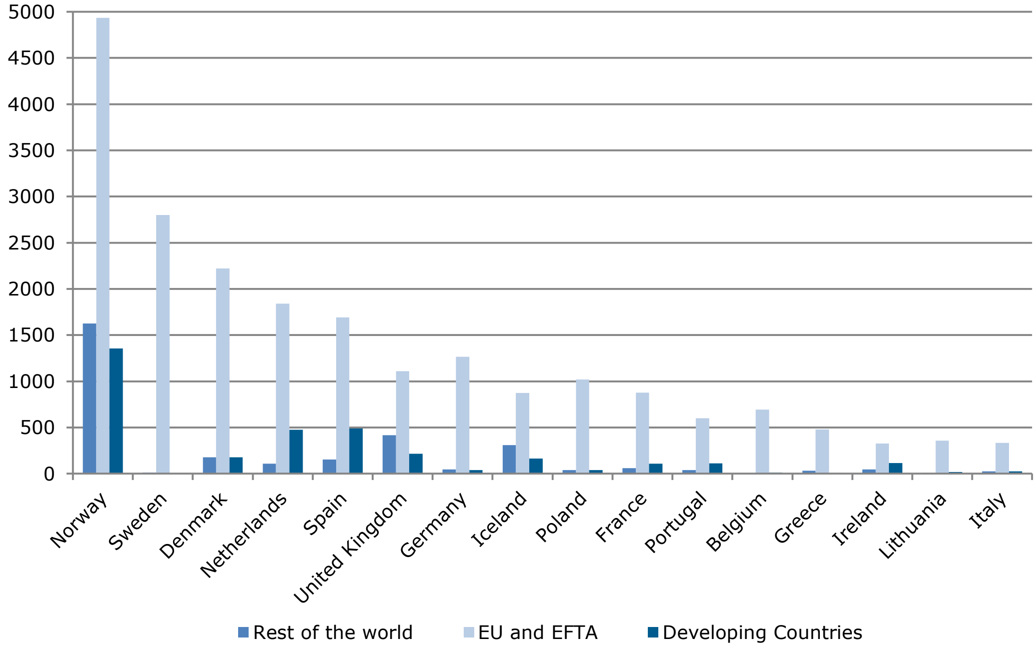
Exports

Figure 4: European exports, by main destination, € million



Source: Trademap

Figure 5: Main exporters, 2014, € million



Source: Trademap

Intra-EU trade makes up the majority of EU exports (77% in 2014). A small but increasing share of this (approximately 10-20%) is made up of re-exported products that have been imported from developing countries. The vast majority, however, is intra-EU trade of fish captured and cultured inside Europe.

The largest European seafood exporters are principally the largest producers. Norway, Sweden and Denmark are leading exporters, due to their important role as suppliers of salmon to the rest of Europe. The export-product profiles of the Netherlands and Spain are not as prominent. Dutch exports mainly go to Germany and some other Western European countries. Spain exports mainly to other Southern European countries. Exports to Central and Eastern Europe come mainly from Western Europe.

The most important re-exporters of tropical shrimp are Belgium, Spain and the Netherlands, each accounting for about 20% of total intra-EU trade. For pangasius from Vietnam, the leading re-exporters are the Netherlands (accounting for some 40% of all intra-EU trade), Germany and Belgium (both 10-15% share).

European seafood traders are increasingly aiming to export to emerging markets outside the EU such as Brazil, China and markets in Africa such as Egypt, Nigeria, Angola, Cameroon and Ghana. In the long term exports will, therefore, increase further.

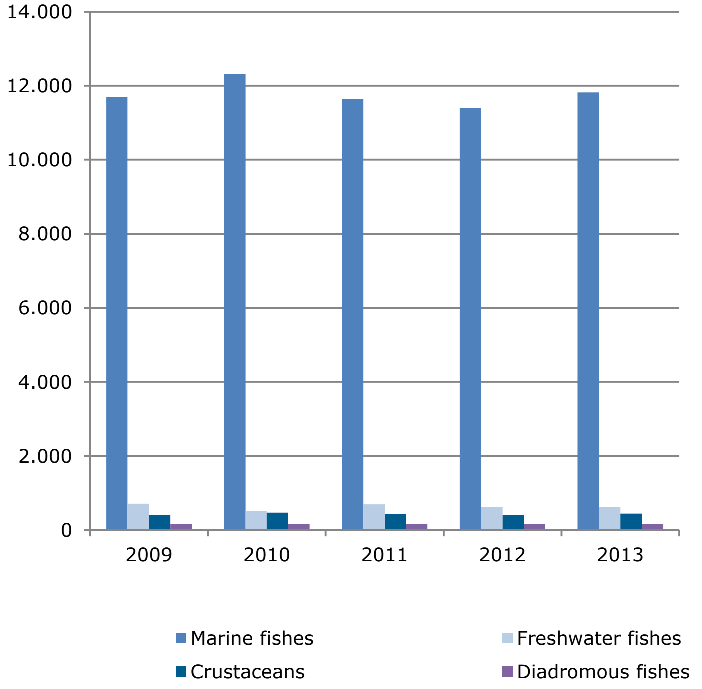
As a result of the difficult economic situation in several EU countries it is expected that fish and seafood destined for Southern European markets will be increasingly imported through North- Western European companies, which are financially stronger than those in Southern Europe. Intra-EU exports from North-Western European companies are, therefore, expected to increase in the future.

Tips:

- If there is a local demand for certain European species such as cheap pelagic fish in your country, consider discussing with your clients whether they have any products to offer that you can sell in the domestic market.
- More information about re-exports or intra-EU trade of tropical shrimp and pangasius can be found on the [CBI Market Platform](#).

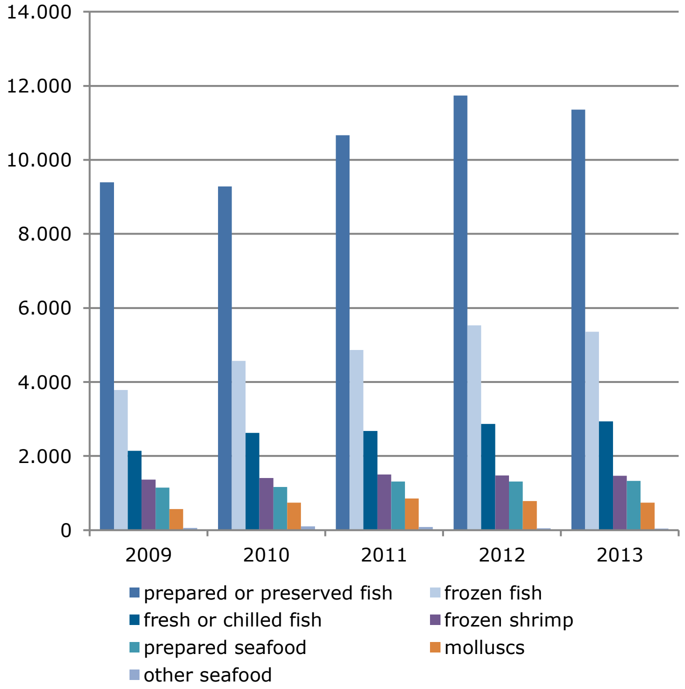
Production

Figure 6: European capture of fish and seafood, 2009-2013, by type, in tonnes



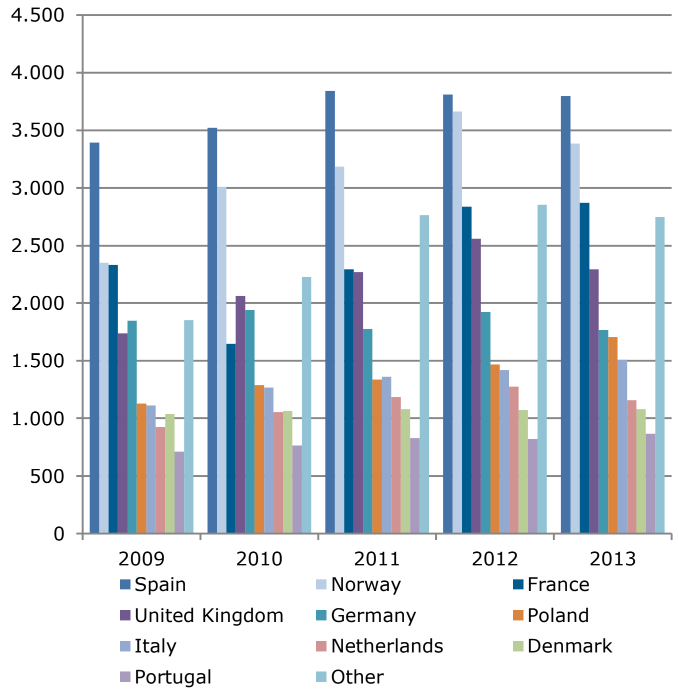
Source: FAOFish

Figure 7: European production of seafood, 2009-2013, by type, in € million



Source: Eurostat Prodcom

Figure 8: European production of seafood, 2009-2013, by country, in € million



Source: Eurostat Prodcom

European production from capture fisheries is expected to remain relatively stable over the next few years. While supplies of some fish species may show some growth, others are likely to decrease. Production from aquaculture is most likely to increase slowly (see next bullet). Therefore, both in the short term and the long term, total European production is expected to remain relatively stable.

The increase in production from aquaculture is stimulated by the European Commission which aims to increase EU aquaculture production in order to become less dependent on imports from outside the EU. The European Commission invests in research initiatives focussing on aquaculture of both local and exotic fish species.

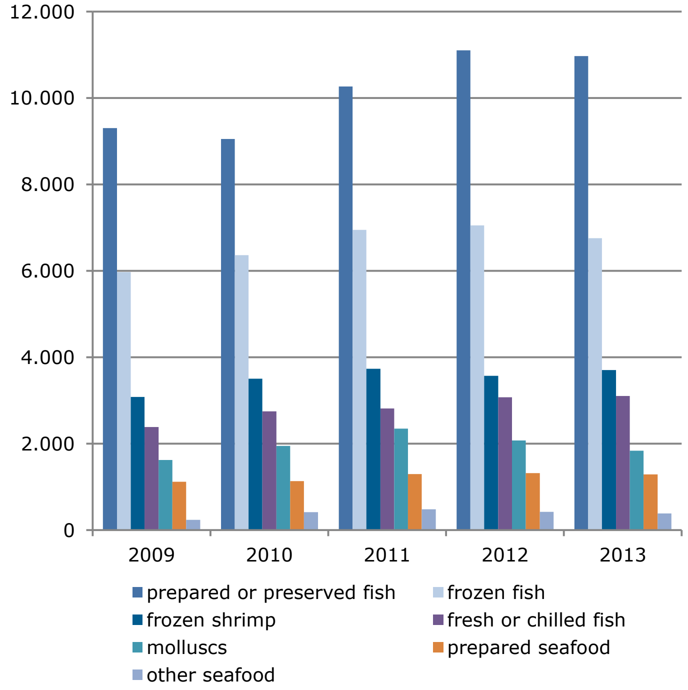
Figure 8 also includes data for Norway. In terms of capture and aquaculture output, Norway is the largest producer of fish and seafood in Europe. About 70% of Norwegian seafood comes from 'catch' (mostly Atlantic herring, Atlantic cod, and haddock); 30% comes from aquaculture (mostly salmon and trout). Figure 8 also shows the output of fish and seafood processing. In terms of processing, Spain is the largest producer in Europe, even ahead of Norway.

Tips:

- In some cases European fisheries and aquaculture companies ship whole fish to Asian countries to process the products there and then re-export it to Europe. If you have sufficient processing capacity and sufficient trained staff, consider approaching European trading companies to discuss these opportunities.
- The website of the Norwegian Seafood Council provides extensive information about the Norwegian seafood industry.

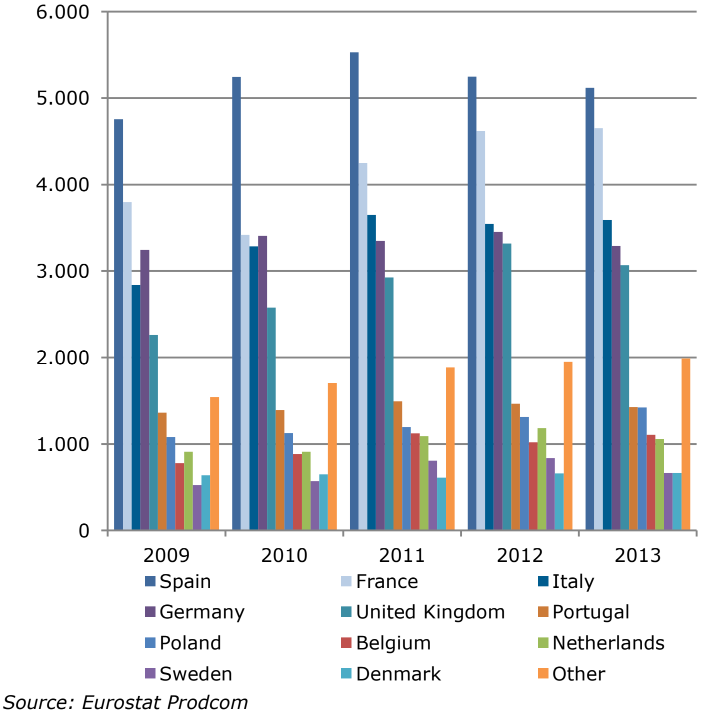
Consumption

Figure 9: European apparent consumption of seafood, 2009-2013, by type, in € million



Source: Eurostat Prodcom

Figure 10: European apparent consumption of seafood, 2009-2013, by country, in € million



Source: Eurostat Prodcom

Seafood consumption in the EU varies widely across regions and countries. Consumption is concentrated in Southern Europe, especially Spain and Portugal, where each consumer eats more than 40kg of seafood per year. In Southern Europe, consumers eat a wide variety of seafood including squid, shrimp, tropical fish and locally captured fish. In the Netherlands and other Western European countries, each consumer eats 15-25 kg of seafood per year. The variety of fish is smaller in Western Europe than in Southern Europe, but wider than in Central and Eastern Europe. Central and Eastern European consumers eat between 5-10 kg of seafood per year and tend to eat locally produced carp or imported fish such as pangasius and tuna.

The observed increase in consumption reflects the fact that consumers in European countries increasingly demand seafood as part of a modern and healthy lifestyle. Seafood is promoted as a healthy food in the media.

In the short term, as a result of the difficult economic situation in Europe, consumption of seafood is not expected to increase further in Europe as a whole. However, in the long term and if the economy recovers, seafood consumption is expected to increase. Seafood consumption volumes in Southern and Northern and Western Europe are expected to remain relatively stable. Prices of seafood are expected to stabilize.

Increases in seafood consumption are expected in Eastern Europe in the medium and long term because consumer buying power is increasing slowly and seafood is increasingly seen as a substitute for meat products. However, in the short term, demand will mainly focus on low value products such as pangasius and canned tuna.

Tips:

- Realize that German traders often also supply Eastern European markets. Discuss what products may be of interest to markets in Eastern Europe and what can be supplied through German traders.
- Discuss with your buyers how you can anticipate demand for low value products. Consider visiting seafood shows such as the European Seafood Exposition in order to discuss your value proposition with potential clients.

CBI Market Intelligence

P.O. Box 93144
2509 AC The Hague
The Netherlands

www.cbi.eu/market-information

marketintel@cbi.eu

This survey was compiled for CBI by Globally Cool
in collaboration with CBI sector expert Siegfried Bank.

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