Data & Trends

EU Food and Drink Industry

2024 Edition

FOODDRINK EUROPE

EU Food and Drink Industry Figures

Turnover
€1,196 billion
Leading manufacturing sector in the EU

Value added
1.9%
of EU gross value added

Consumption
21.8%
of household expenditure on food and drink products

Employment
4,7 million people
Leading employer in the EU

Number of companies
304,120

R&D expenditure
€2.1 billion

Sales within the EU Single Market
87%
of food and drink turnover

Small and medium-sized enterprises
40.1%
of food and drink turnover

56.7%
of food and drink employment

External trade

€182 billion
Exports

€102 billion
Imports

€80 billion
Trade balance

#1
Exporter of food and drinks

Sources: Eurostat; Joint Research Centre; UN COMTRADE

Contents

Introduction

The 2024 edition of the 'Data & Trends of the EU Food and Drink Industry' report offers a comprehensive picture of the structure and economics of Europe's food and drink sector, the largest manufacturing industry in the EU in terms of turnover, value added and employment.

The report provides in-depth analysis of the Single Market, world markets, and a global ranking of food and drink companies. Most of the data related to the structure of the food and drink sector date back to 2021-2022 and 2023 for trade figures. To grasp the latest development of the sector, refer to FoodDrinkEurope Quarterly Economic and Trade Bulletins, including bulletins on the Input Costs.

This report covers the EU-27 food and drink industry, which is identified by the NACE Rev2 codes C10 (food products) and C11 (drinks).

All figures presented here come from official sources and have been elaborated by FoodDrinkEurope.

EUROPEAN UNION

Contribution to the EU economy

A leading manufacturing sector in terms of turnover, value added and investment

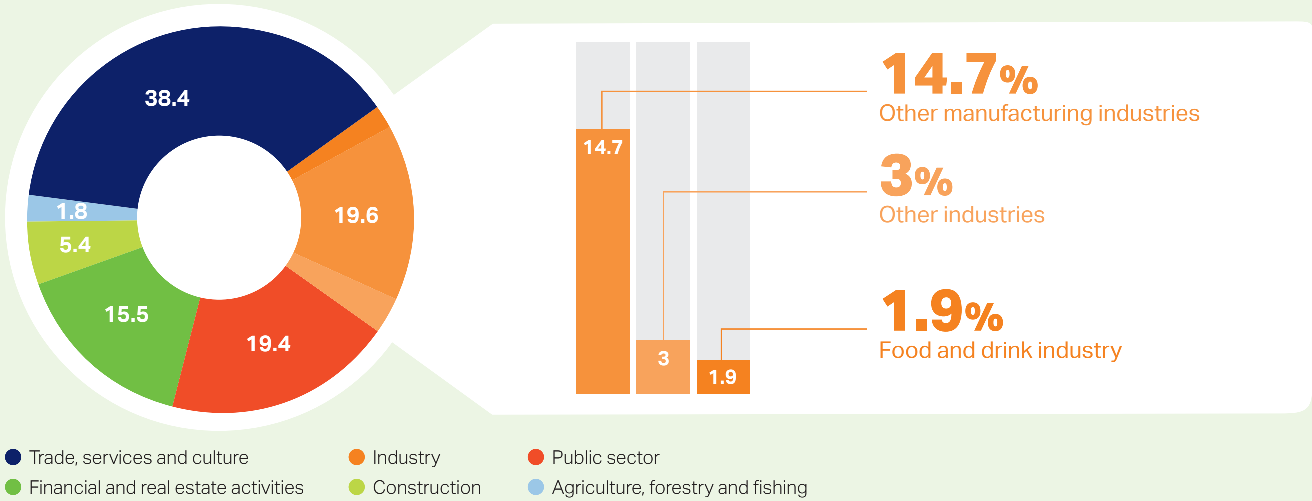
1.9%
Contribution of the food and drink industry to the EU gross value added (2021)

14.5%
Share of food and drink turnover in the EU manufacturing industry (2021)

11.4%
Share of food and drink value added in the EU manufacturing industry (2021)

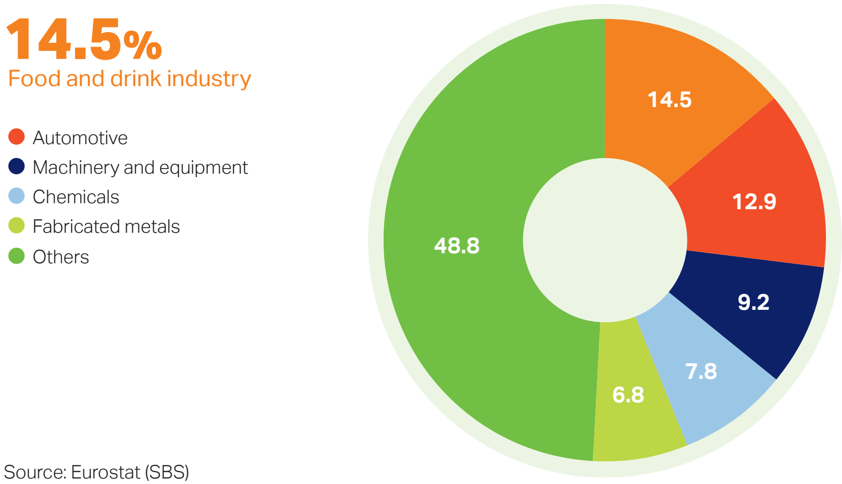
- The food and drink industry is a prominent contributor to the European economy, along with the automotive and machinery and equipment industries.
- In 2021, the EU food and drink industry generated a turnover of €1,196 billion and a value added of €249 billion.
- With €45 billion invested in 2021, the food and drink industry is the manufacturing sector with the highest capital spending.
- The industry maintains the characteristics of a stable, resilient and robust sector.

Contribution of the food and drink industry to the EU economy (2021, %)



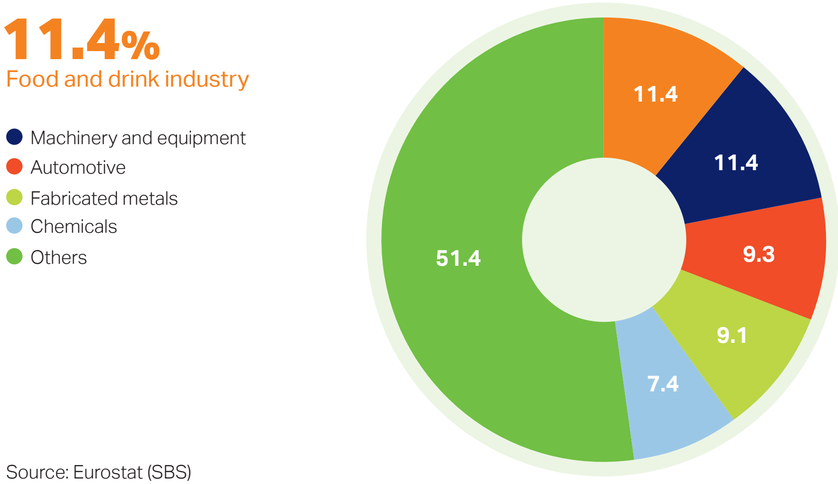
Source: Eurostat (National accounts)

Turnover in the EU manufacturing industry (2021, %)



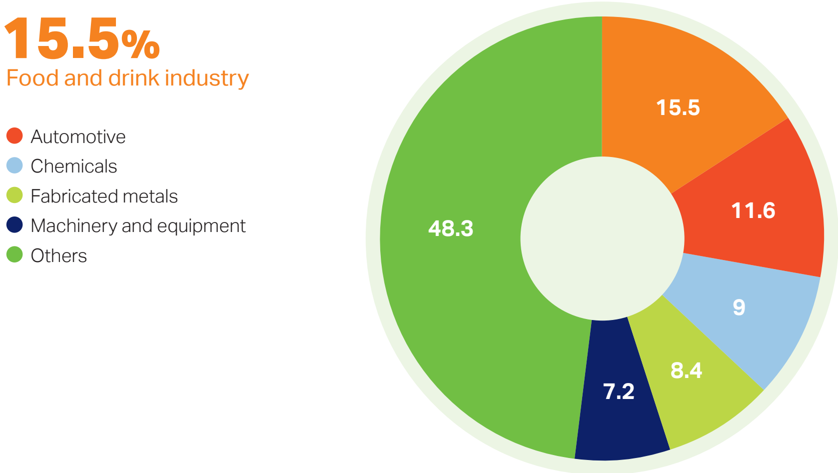
Source: Eurostat (SBS)

Value added in the EU manufacturing industry (2021, %)



Source: Eurostat (SBS)

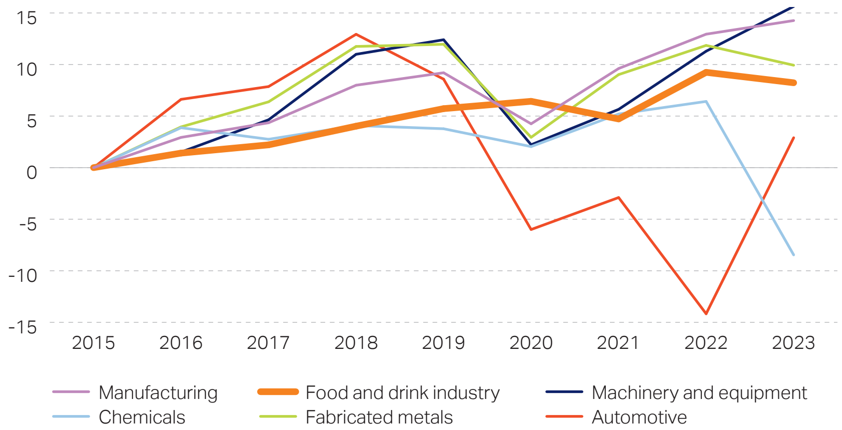
Investment in the EU manufacturing industry (2021, %)



Source: Eurostat (SBS)

Volume of production in the EU manufacturing industry

(% change relative to the first quarter of 2015)



Source: Eurostat (STS)

Employment

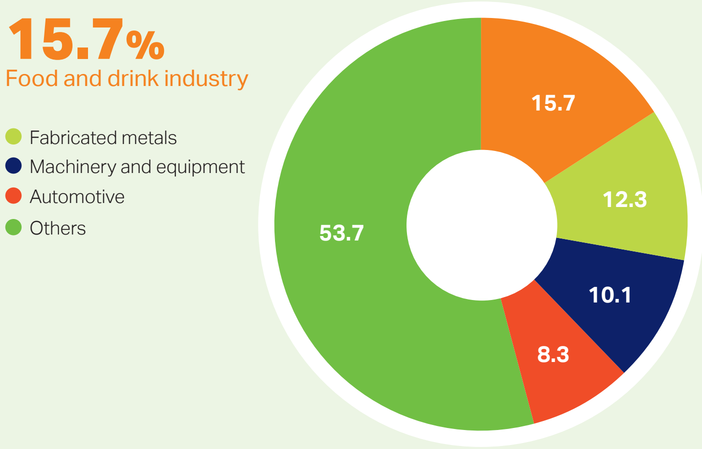
Leading employer in the EU

4.7 million
Total number of persons employed in the EU food and drink industry

€116 billion
Wages and salaries paid by the EU food and drink industry

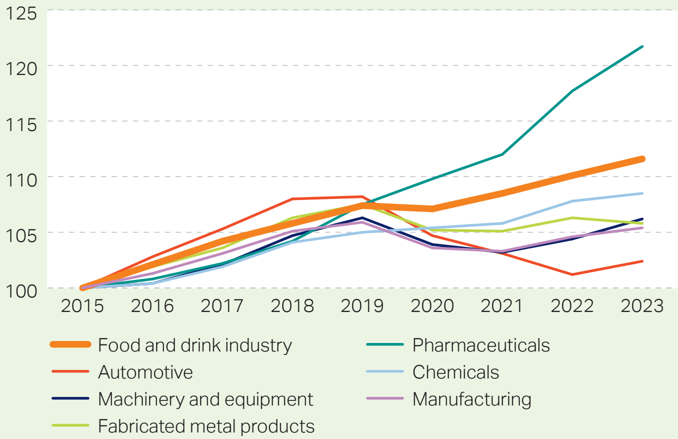
- Compared to other manufacturing sectors, the EU food and drink industry is a key job provider and a stable employer.
- Around 16% of employees in the manufacturing sector work in the food and drink industry in 2021.
- On average, labour productivity in the food and drink industry is lower than in manufacturing as a whole (53 and 74 respectively).
- In the sustainability field, the top skills' needs were the efficient use of resources and logistics, and good agricultural practices.

Employment in the EU manufacturing industry
(2021, %)



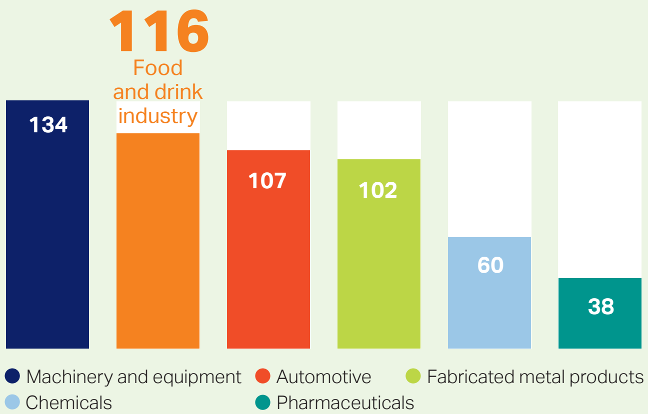
Source: Eurostat (SBS)

Employment in the EU manufacturing industry
(index, 2015=100)



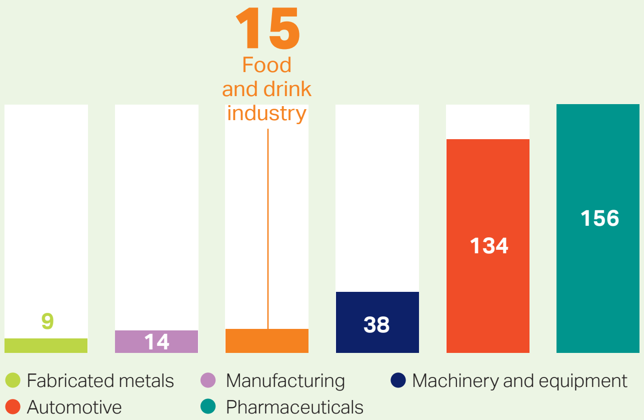
Source: Eurostat (STS)

Wages and salaries in the EU manufacturing industry
(2021, € billion)



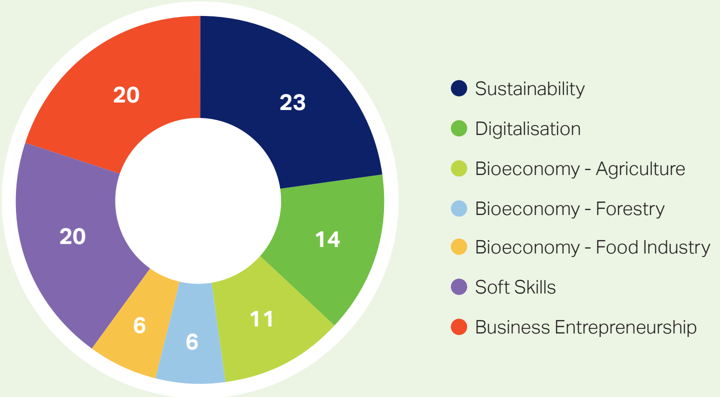
Source: Eurostat (SBS)

Average number of persons employed per company in the EU (2021)



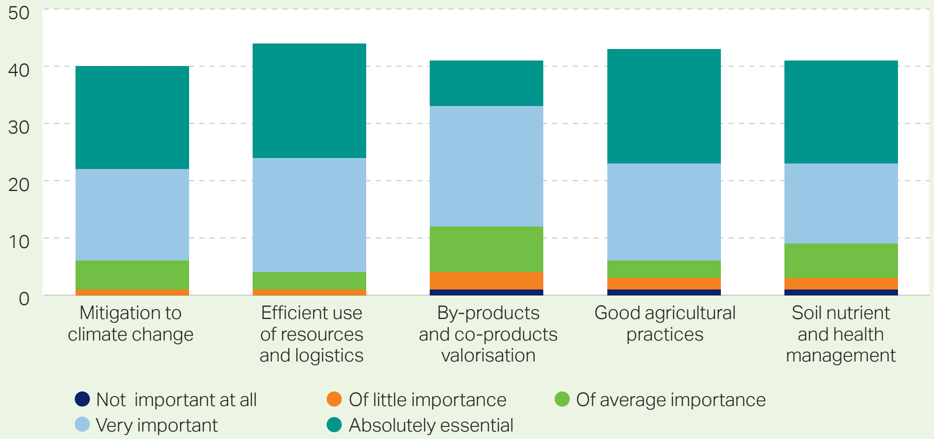
Source: Eurostat (SBS)

Distribution (in categories) of skills identified as most important for the agriculture, forestry and bioeconomy sectors (%)



Source: Mayor *et al.* (2022). Skill Needs for Sustainable Agri-Food and Forestry Sectors (I): Assessment through European and National Focus Groups. *Sustainability*, 14(15), 9607. https://doi.org/10.3390/su14159607

Importance of sustainability-related skills for agri-food companies, 2023
(n=47)



Source: Erasmus+ Project "Inclusive REskilling and upskilling Toward competitive Agrifood and veterinary sector: European agenda Strategy (I-Restart)"

Urgent skill needs in the EU, by sector

Sector	Skill needs
Agriculture	Precision farming, sustainable practices, climate resilience, pest management, biosecurity
Food Processing	Digitalisation, automation, AI-driven quality control, waste reduction, energy efficiency
Food Retail	Supply chain management, customer analytics, e-commerce logistics, food safety compliance
Packaging	Eco-design, circular economy principles, smart packaging solutions
Research & Innovation	Bioeconomy expertise, new product development (e.g., plant-based foods), data-driven innovation

Source: Erasmus+ Project "Inclusive REskilling and upskilling Toward competitive Agrifood and veterinary sector: European agenda Strategy (I-Restart)"

Key barriers to addressing skill gaps in the EU

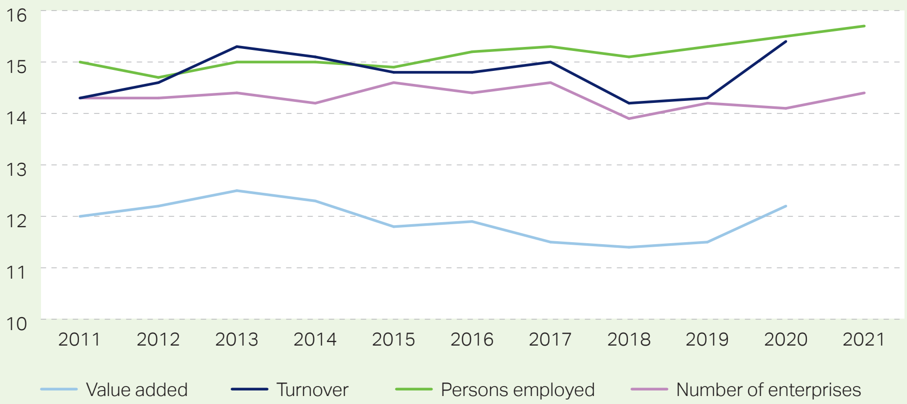
Barrier	Impact on skills development
Limited access to funding	SMEs struggle to afford training programmes
Regional disparities in training	Uneven access to resources across EU member states
Misalignment with industry needs	Training programmes do not address real-world challenges
Low digital readiness	Lack of digital infrastructure hinders e-learning

Source: Erasmus+ Project "Inclusive REskilling and upskilling Toward competitive Agrifood and veterinary sector: European agenda Strategy (I-Restart)"

Trends in turnover, value added, employment and production

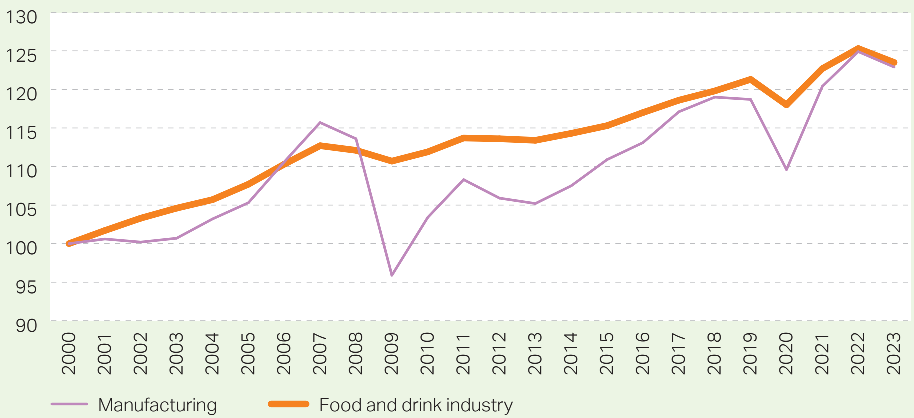
- From 2011-2021, the food and drink industry's share of turnover, employment and value added in the EU manufacturing sector remained relatively stable.
- The contribution of the food and drink industry to manufacturing employment is generally higher than its contribution to manufacturing value added, with labour productivity falling below the manufacturing industry average.
- EU food and drink industry production has a much more uniform development than manufacturing as a whole. The sharp decline in 2020 reflects the fall in demand linked to the closure of food and drink services due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Employment in the food sector is quite stable with an upward trend in recent years, whereas the drink sector's employment follows the manufacturing trend.

Share of food and drink industry's turnover, value added, employment and number of enterprises in the manufacturing industry, 2011-2021 (%)



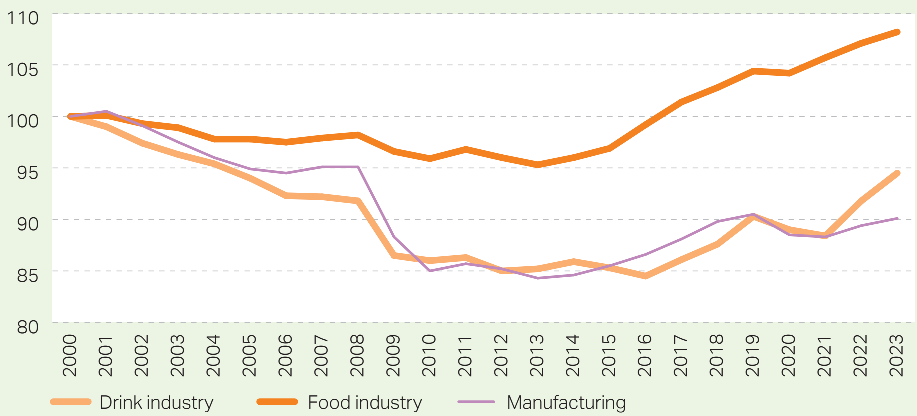
Source: Eurostat (SBS) and estimates

Volume of production in the food and drink industry and manufacturing industry (index, 2000=100)



Source: Eurostat (STS)

Employment in the food, drink, and manufacturing industry (index, 2000=100)



Source: Eurostat (STS)

Sectors at EU level

Offering a wide variety of food and drinks to consumers

20%

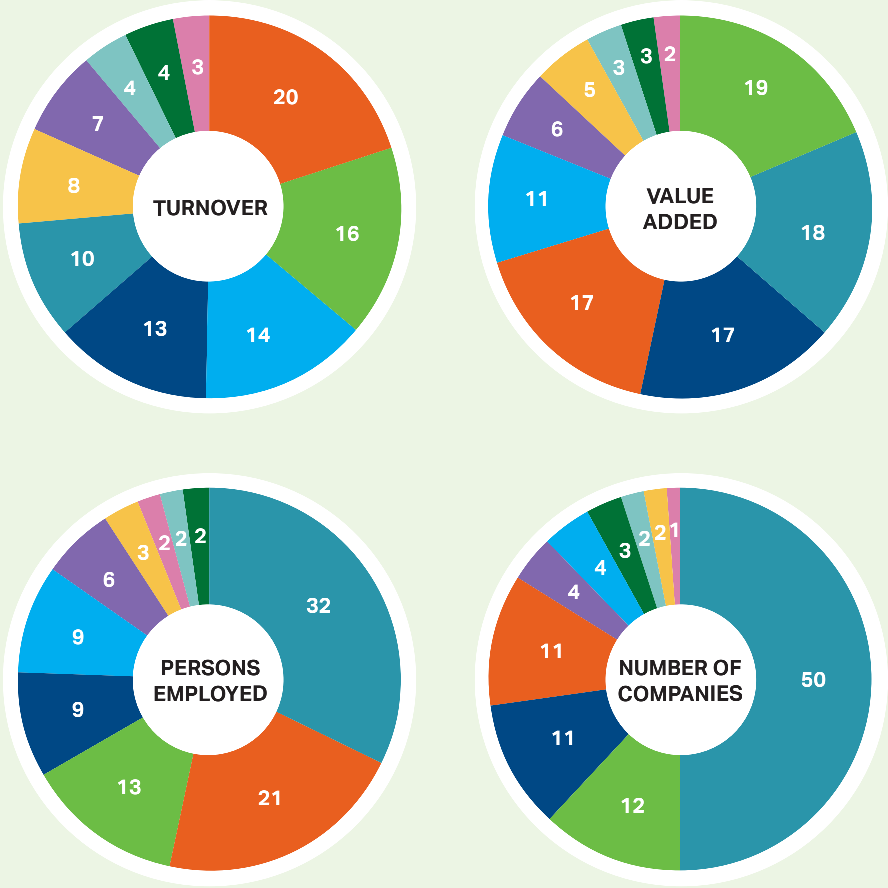
Share of the food and drink industry's turnover attributed to the meat sector

32%

Share of the food and drink industry's employment attributed to the bakery and farinaceous sector

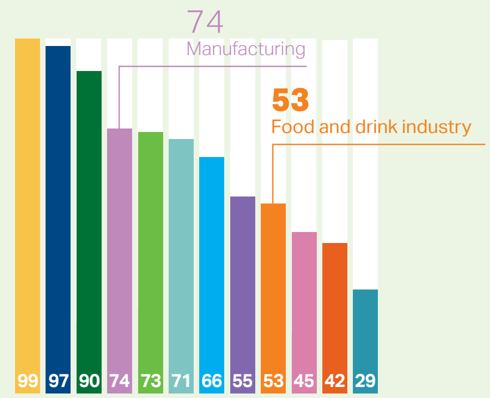
- The EU food and drink industry is diverse, with a variety of sectors ranging from fruit and vegetable processing to dairy production and drinks.
- The top 4 sub-sectors (bakery and farinaceous products, the "various food products" category, drinks and meat products) represent 84% of the total number of companies.
- Labour productivity varies by sub-sector. Animal feeds and drinks are the most productive sectors.

Turnover, value added, persons employed and number of companies in food and drink industry sectors (2021, %)



Source: Eurostat (SBS)

Labour productivity
(2021, €1,000/person)



- Meat products
- Various food products
- Dairy products
- Drinks
- Bakery and farinaceous products
- Animal feeds
- Processed fruits and vegetables
- Grain mill and starch products
- Oils and fats
- Fish products

Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

Small scale, big impact

€468 billion
Turnover

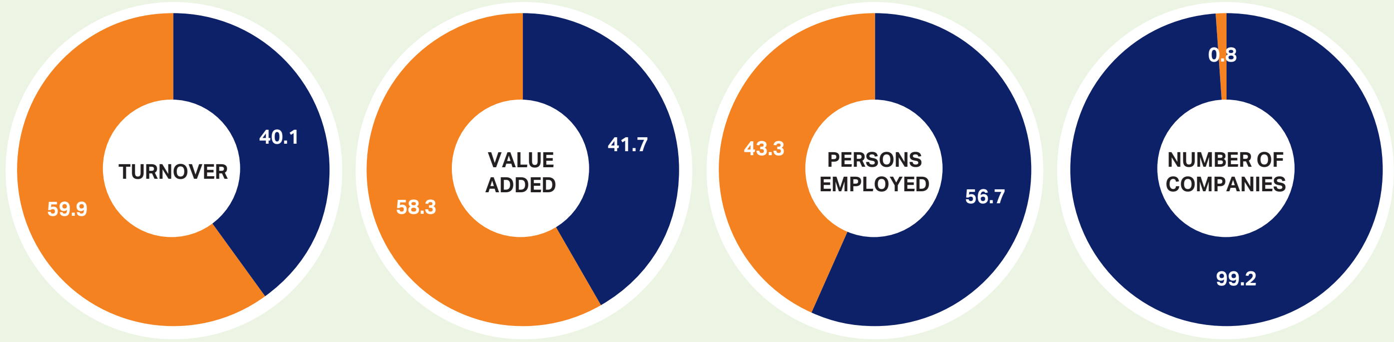
€104 billion
Value added

2.6 million
Persons employed

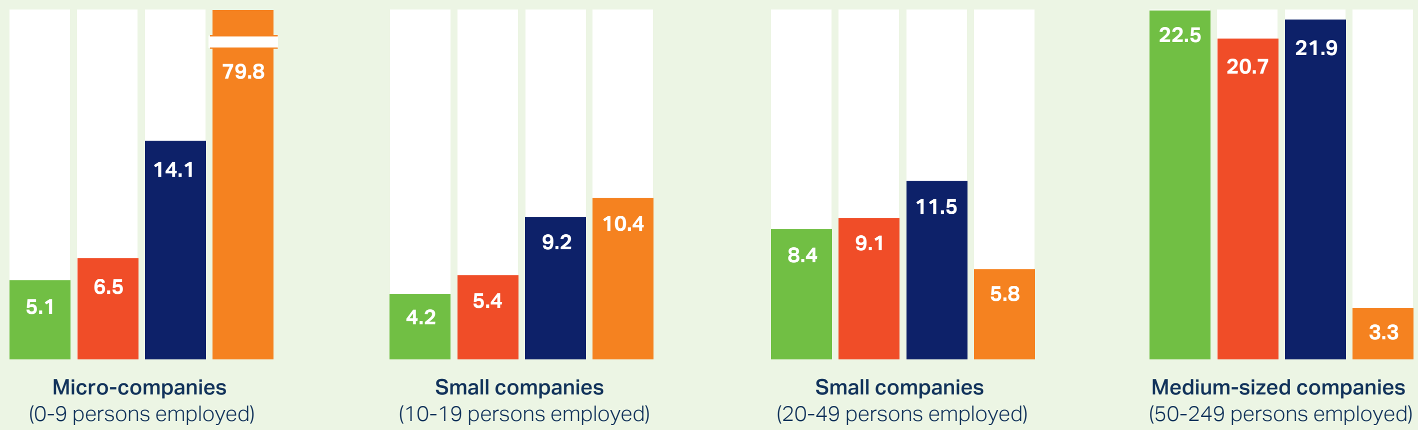
99.2%
of food and drink companies

- The food and drink industry is a highly diversified sector with many companies of different sizes.
- SMEs generate 40.1% and 41.7% of the food and drink industry turnover and value added respectively and provide more than half of jobs in the sector.
- The food and drink industry accounts for almost 300,000 SMEs.

Contribution of SMEs and large companies to the EU food and drink industry (2021, %)



SMEs in the food and drink industry (2021, % by company size)



Source: Eurostat (SBS)

The national picture

A key industry in the economies of the EU Member States

#1 employer

The food and drink industry is the biggest employer in manufacturing in numerous Member States

60%

Share of turnover of the EU's 4 largest food and drink producing countries

- The food and drink industry ranks among the top three manufacturing industries in terms of turnover and employment in most Member States.
- France, Germany, Italy, and Spain are the largest EU food and drink producers by turnover.

Food and drink industry data by Member State[1] (2022)

	Employment ranking in manufacturing	Turnover (€ billion)	Value added (€ billion)	Number of employees (1,000)	Number of companies
Austria	2	35.1	8.4	96	4,913
Belgium	1	71.9	11.2	110.6	7,941
Bulgaria	1	9.9	1.6	88.3	5,895
Croatia	1	6.5	1.5	58.7	3,482
Cyprus	1	2.1	0.5	15	958
Czech Republic	4	20.7	4	116.3	13,027
Denmark	2	34.1	4.9	60.6	1,731
Estonia	3	2.8	0.5	14.9	1,023
Finland	3	13	2.6	38.5	2,566
France	1	254.1	49.9	752	60,107
Germany	2	265.8	56.2	990.5	27,607
Greece	1	21.7	3.9	140.9	15,903
Hungary	1	18.8	3.4	110.8	7,120
Ireland	1	39.1	11.3	60	2,372
Italy	3	179.4	30.7	468.4	52,414
Latvia	2	2.6	0.6	22.8	1,377
Lithuania	1	6.5	1.3	41.9	2,298
Luxembourg	-	1	0.3	5.1	149
Malta	-	0.5	0.1	4.1	413
Netherlands	1	114.8	17.1	144.4	9,145
Poland	1	96.6	15.9	462.9	19,170
Portugal	1	22.4	3.9	112	11,372
Romania	1	20.4	3.4	186.9	14,754
Slovakia	4	6.5	1.4	45.1	6,012
Slovenia	4	3.2	0.8	-	2,905
Spain	1	168.2	26.4	493.1	30,056
Sweden	4	22.9	4.2	56.9	4,335

[1] As published by Eurostat (SBS)

Food supply chain

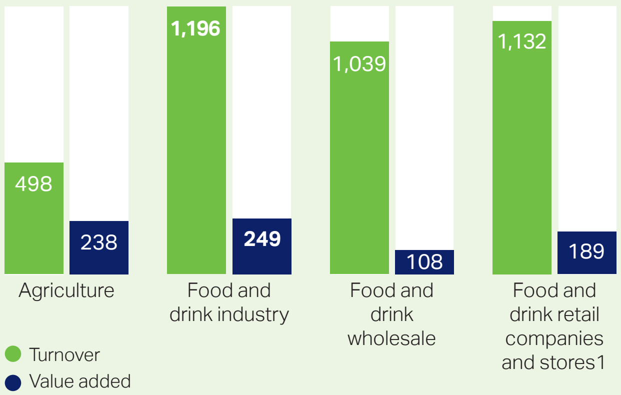
Diverse economic operators with specific business models

6%
Share of the food supply chain in EU gross value added

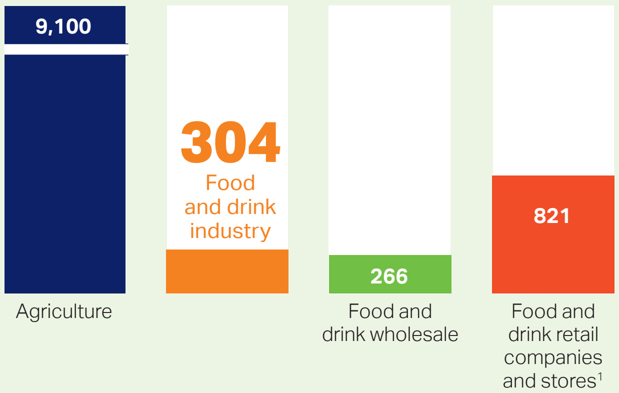
10.5%
Share of the food supply chain in EU employment

- The food supply chain employs 20.8 million people.
- The total turnover amounts to €3.8 trillion and the value added to €785 billion.
- The EU extensive food supply chain, from agriculture and the input industry to food and drink services, employs 29.2 million workers.

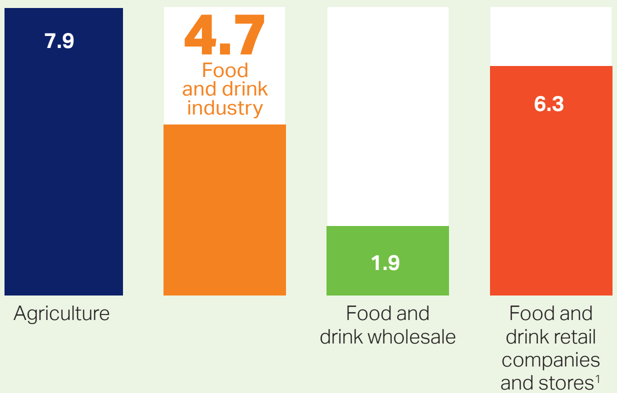
Turnover and value added in the EU food supply chain
(2021, € billion)



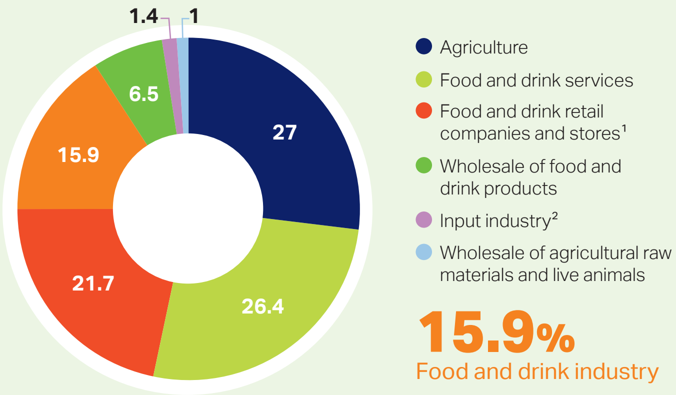
Number of companies in the EU food supply chain
(2021, 1,000 units)



Persons employed in the EU food supply chain
(2021, million)



Employment in the extensive EU food supply chain
(2021, %)



15.9%
Food and drink industry

[1] Specialised and non-specialised stores with food and drinks predominating
[2] 2017 data for fertilisers industry

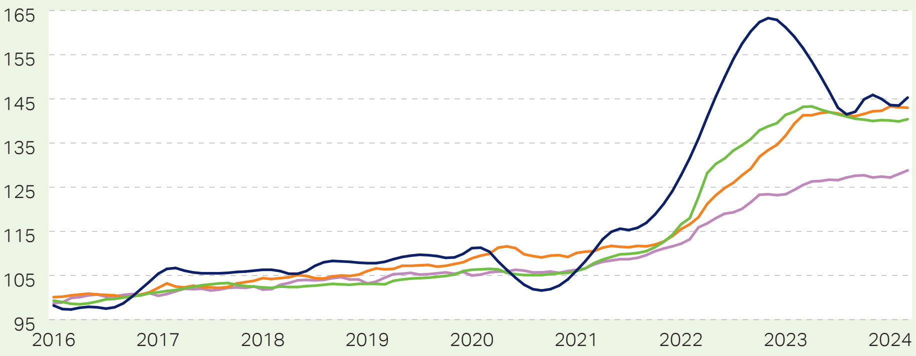
Source: Eurostat (Agriculture, National Accounts, SBS)

Price and input cost developments in the EU food supply chain

Complex environment shaped by recent crisis

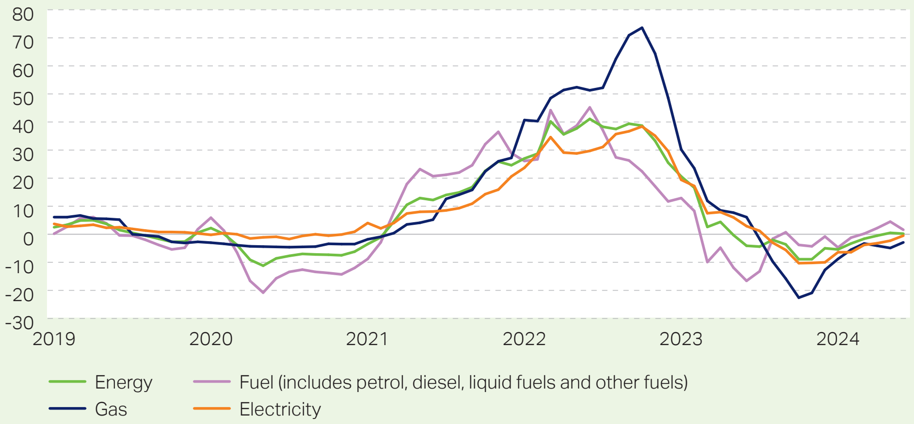
- In January 2024, price developments in the EU food supply chain showed a mixed picture compared to the same month in 2023: agricultural prices (-10.9%), food manufacturing prices (-0.9%), general inflation (+3.1%) and food consumer prices (+4.8%).
- Energy annual inflation was down by 5.4% in January 2024. The sub-components showed a similar trend, with gas at -8.8%, electricity at -6.4% and fuel (including petrol, diesel, liquid fuels and other fuels) at -4.7%.
- Packaging prices decreased over the same period. They remain significantly above pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels.
- Although inflation in input costs has steadily declined since its peak in 2022, most input prices remain significantly above pre-crisis levels. This is especially true for packaging materials (such as metal, wood, and plastic), machinery for the processing industry, transportation, and certain agricultural raw materials.

Price developments in the EU food supply chain
(index, 2015 = 100)



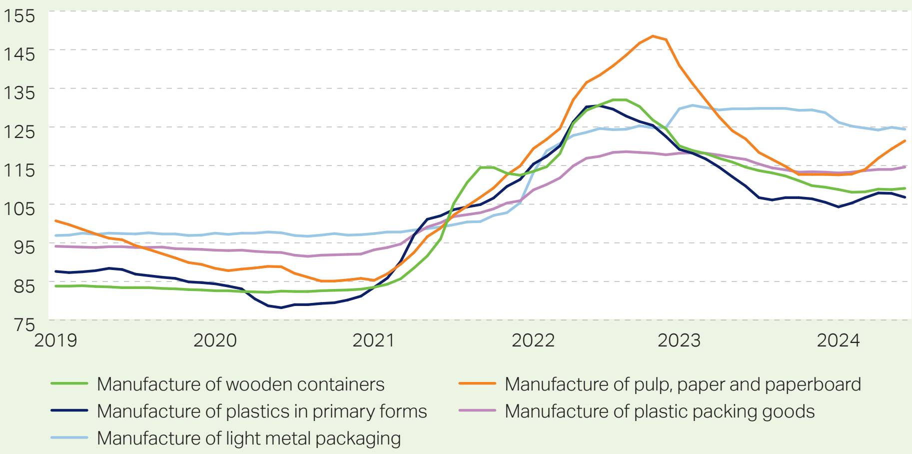
Source: Eurostat (Prices); DG Agriculture and Rural Development

Evolution of energy prices in the EU January 2019 – June 2024
(% annual rate of change)



Source: Eurostat

Producer prices for different types of packaging, January 2019 – June 2024
(index, 2021=100)



Source: Eurostat (STS)

Financing gap and support for investment in the EU agri-food sector

Unmet financing demand from SMEs and cost of the transition in agriculture

€5.5 billion
SME financing gap

€28-35 billion
Cost of EU-wide transition to more sustainable agriculture (1st year)

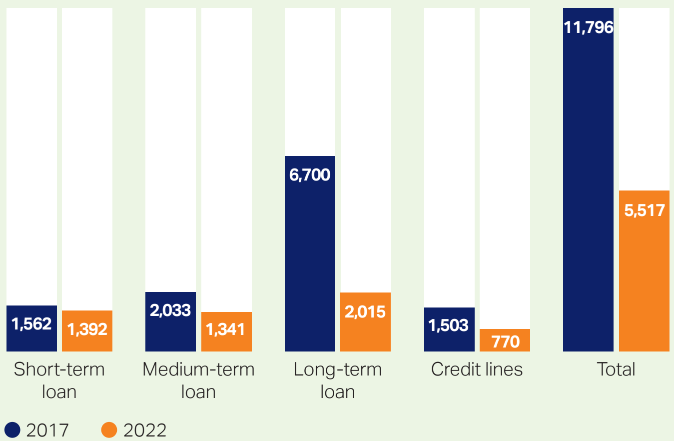
- In 2022, there was a €5.5 billion financing gap for EU-24 agri-food enterprises. Out of this financing gap, €4 billion or 73% corresponds to small enterprises.
- The financing gap was 53% lower than in 2017. It declined more for small companies (-59%) than for medium-sized ones (-25%). The decrease is mostly driven by lower demand for long-term loans (-70%) with reduced average loan size.
- In 2022, the financing gap for agri-food SMEs who intended to invest for green purposes accounted for €1.3 billion, 24% of the total. The activities targeted for investment were, in the first place, increasing energy efficiency.
- An EU-wide transition to more sustainable agriculture, based on improved soil health, will cost around €28-35 billion for the first year. Costs are expected to decrease in the long term and will be lower than the cost of no action. The EU estimates that soil degradation already costs around €50 billion per year due to the loss of essential services that good quality soils provide.

Financing gap by enterprise size and financial product
(2022, € million)

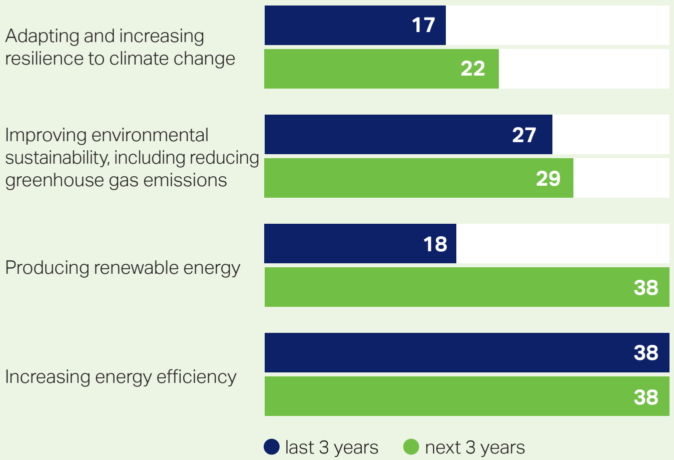
	Total	Short-term loan	Medium-term loan	Long-term loan	Credit lines
Small	4,029	805	908	1,880	435
Medium	1,489	587	432	134	335
Total	**5,517**	**1,392**	**1,341**	**2,015**	**770**

Note: short-term loans (less than 18 months); medium-term loans (between 18 months and 5 years); long-term loans (above 5 years); credit lines (bank and credit card overdraft)

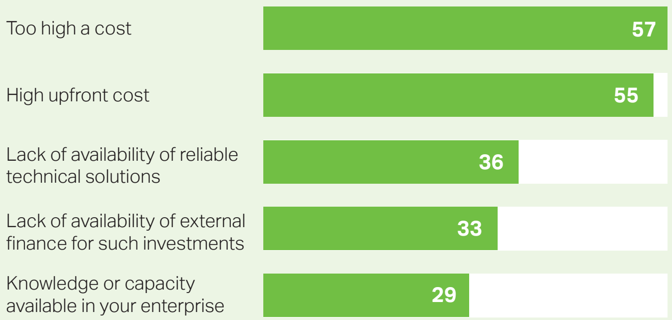
Financing gap by financial product
(€ million)



Frequency of green investment by categories
(2022, %)



Main obstacles to green investments
(2022, %)



Note : 'Other' 5% ; 'Don't know' 4% ; None 7%

Source: fi-compass, 2023, Survey on financial needs and access to finance of EU agri-food enterprises (24 EU Member States)

Total estimated costs for the first year of transition to three different sustainable agricultural practices (€ billion/year)

Sustainable agricultural practice(s)	Lower limit	Upper limit
Reduced tilling	2.88	7.76
Cover crops	6.02	8.89
Combination of sustainable agriculture practices	28.53	35.69

Examples of funding mechanisms (existing or to be potentially built) to help cover the cost of the transition of European agriculture

Common Agricultural Policy	Main financial support mechanism for many farmers
Climate fund	A separate fund to support the short-term capital investment required for the transition, and act as an insurance policy
Private sector funding	Funding through banks (e.g. EIB), premium payments, contracts with the food and drink industry
"Polluter pays" principle	Establish financial mechanisms that incentivise reduction in emissions from agriculture in the long term
Consumer pays	Consumers to pay more for more sustainably produced products, creating a virtuous cycle of continuous improvement at farm level
Public/Private Partnership (PPP)	Instrument used to pool resources between private companies and governments to promote a common goal
Voluntary carbon markets	Financial incentive mechanism for reduction, avoidance, or removal of carbon from key value chains
Monetisation of wider eco-system services	Capitalise on a wider scope of nature and biodiversity
Environmental taxes	Revenues from environmental taxes for supporting the transition

Source: Funding the EU transition to more sustainable agriculture: discussion paper; FoodDrinkEurope and Anthesis, December 2023.

15 Member States with highest share of land area at risks and total estimated costs associated with implementing a combination of sustainable agricultural practices

Member State	Land area classed as moderately high- or high-risk	Combination of sustainable agricultural practices	
		Low value (€/year, million)	High value (€/year, million)
The Netherlands	77.5%	578	723
Belgium	65.9%	370	463
Hungary	64.9%	1,310	1,639
Ireland	62.3%	1,271	1,590
Croatia	55.7%	344	430
Spain	54.1%	5,307	6,641
Greece	53.2%	855	1,069
Denmark	52.2%	564	705
Italy	51.9%	2,665	3,335
France	49.5%	5,557	6,953
Germany	49.4%	3,364	4,209
Luxembourg	47.7%	26	32
Romania	46.6%	2,437	3,049
Czechia	46.4%	665	832
Cyprus	41%	23	28

Note: The European Soil Observation (EUSO) considers soils to be unhealthy and land at risk when the threat to biological function reaches moderately high and high.

Bioeconomy

The food and drink industry: a main contributor to the bioeconomy

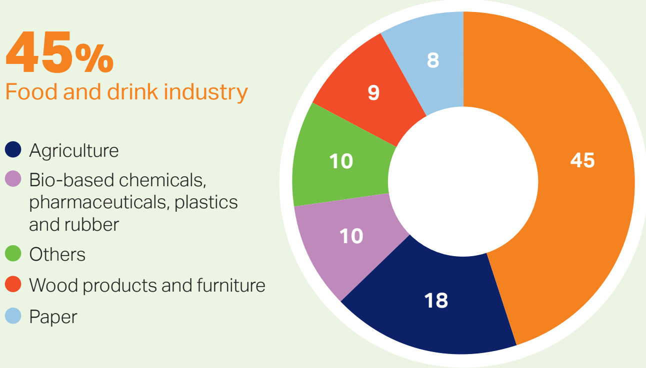
5%
Contribution of the bioeconomy to the EU gross domestic product (GDP)

8.3%
Share of the bioeconomy in European labour force

- The EU bioeconomy generated a turnover of €2.5 trillion and a value added to €728 billion in 2021. The food and drink industry contributes to roughly half and one-third respectively.
- In 2021, the bioeconomy employed 17.2 million people in the EU, of which more than one quarter was in the food and drink industry.
- During the last decade, the value added of the EU bioeconomy and the value added of the food and drink industry contribution have been steadily increasing.

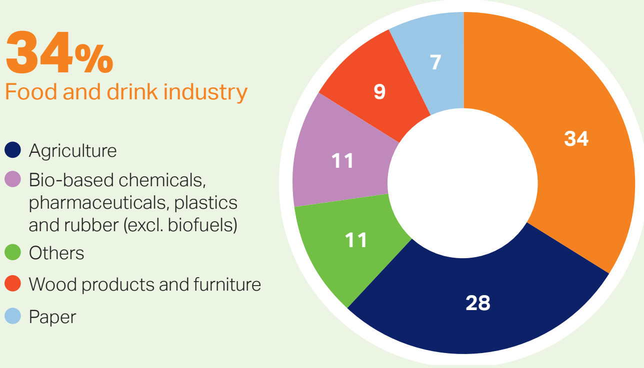
Turnover in the EU bioeconomy (2021, %)

45%
Food and drink industry



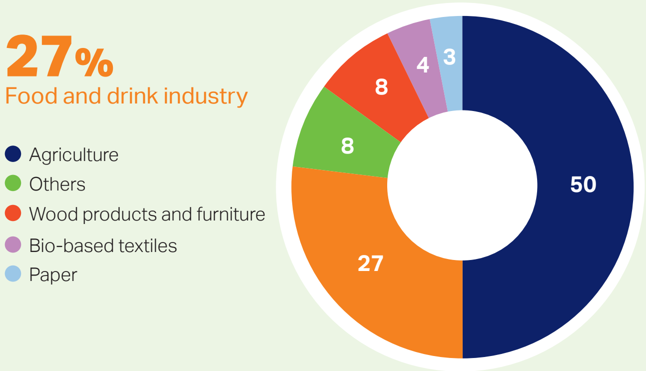
Value added in the EU bioeconomy (2021, %)

34%
Food and drink industry

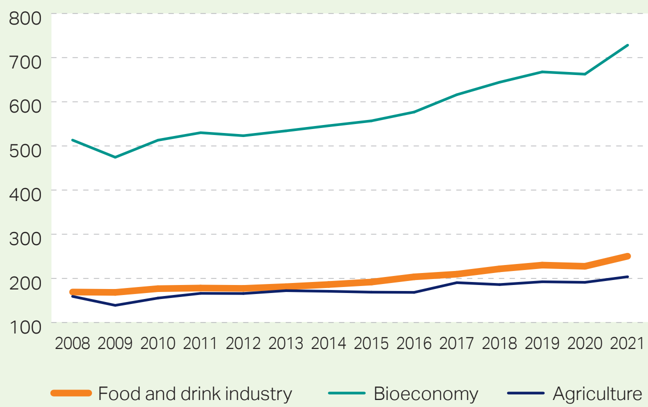


Employment in the EU bioeconomy (2021, %)

27%
Food and drink industry



Value added in the EU bioeconomy (billion €)



Source: Joint Research Centre

Sustainability

Delivering more sustainable food systems

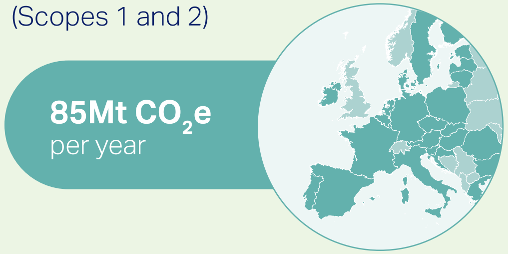
5th

Rank of the food and drink industry[1] in terms of GHG emission in manufacturing

- Scope 1 and 2 emissions make up for 11.5% of the total EU food and drink industry emissions. Scope 3 represents 88.5% of the total emissions, out of which 82% come from the primary production of agricultural raw materials.
- Around 59 million tonnes of food were lost or wasted in the EU in 2022, which corresponds to 16% of the total GHG impact resulting from the EU food system.
- In the EU, 41% of plastic packaging waste was recycled in 2022, 8 percentage points more than in 2010. Spain, Italy and Slovenia lead the way, with over half of the packaging waste recycled, closely followed by Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany.
- More than 10% of the EU utilised agricultural area was managed under organic farming in 2022.

[1] Including tobacco industry
[2] Based on available data

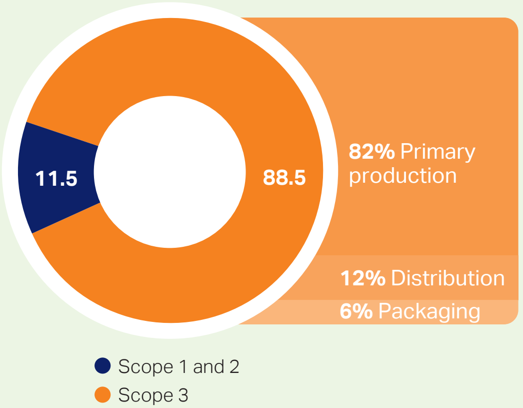
The EU food and drink industry emits (Scopes 1 and 2)



It represents

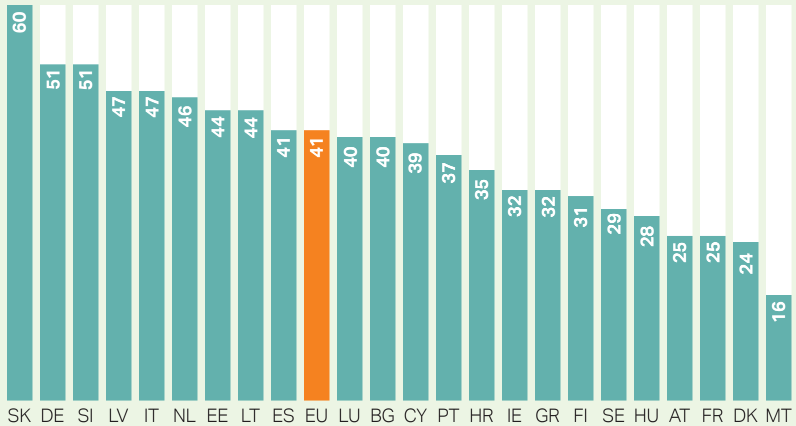
Source: Decarbonisation road map for the European food and drink manufacturing sector, Ricardo, July 2021

Share of emissions within scope 3 of the food and drink industry (%)



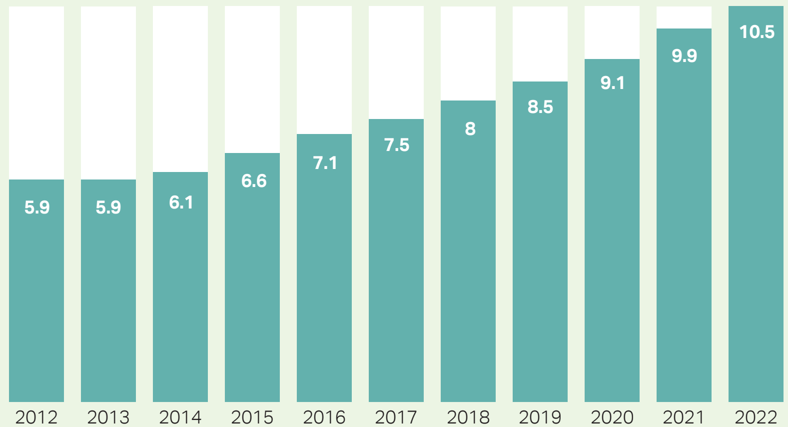
Source: Anthesis and FoodDrinkEurope, Net Zero Pathway for the European Food and Drink Sector, 2025

Recycling rate of plastic packaging waste by Member State (2021, %)[2]



Source: Eurostat

Agricultural area under organic farming in the EU
(% of total utilised agricultural area)



Source: European Environment Agency

Consumption

Food and drinks[1]: the second largest household expenditure

€1,778bn

EU household expenditure on food and drinks[1]

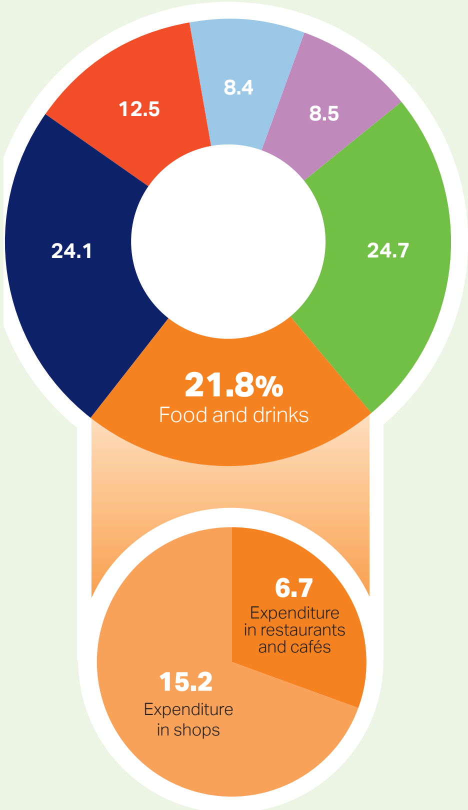
21.8%

Average share of EU household expenditure on food and drinks

- In 2022, EU consumers spent €1,778 billion, or 21.8% of their budget, on food and drinks, either purchased in shops or consumed in restaurants and cafés.
- Out-of-home consumption represents almost a third of total consumer spending on food and drink products.
- Across Member States, the share of overall household expenditure on food and drink products varied from 17% to 30% (11% to 27% when considering only food and drinks purchased in shops).

[1] Either purchased in shops or consumed in restaurants and cafés

Breakdown of EU household consumption expenditure (2022, % of total expenditure)



Source: Eurostat (National Accounts)

Household consumption expenditure on food and drinks by Member State (2022, % of total expenditure)

Trade within the Single Market

The first market for EU food and drinks

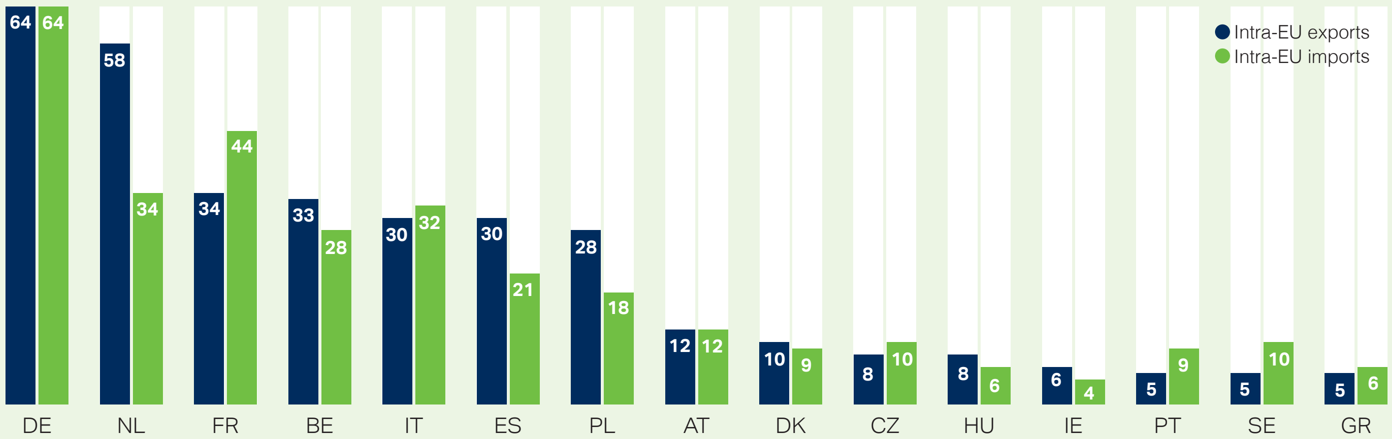
€357 billion
Intra-EU exports

€182 billion
Extra-EU exports

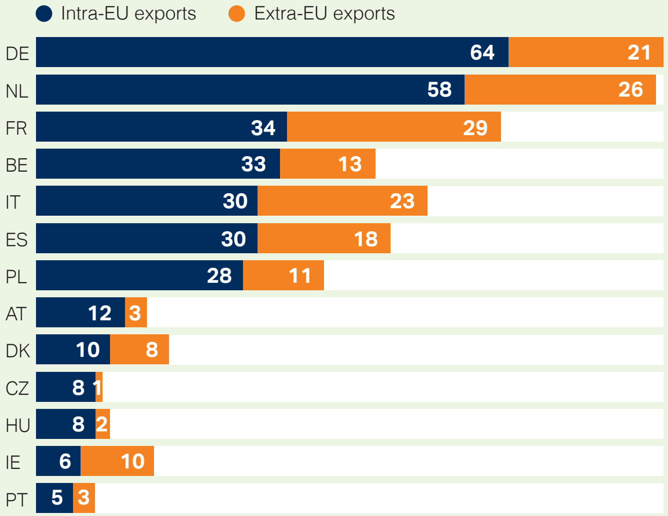
€539 billion
Total EU exports

- More than 65% of EU food and drink exports are destined for the Single Market.
- Germany is the EU Member State with the highest value of intra-EU trade in food and drinks.
- Except for drinks, the exports of most sectors to the Single Market exceed those to third countries.

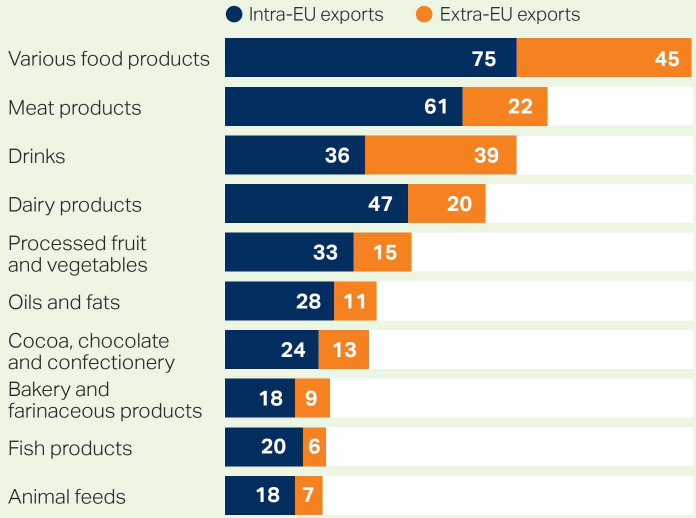
Intra-EU food and drink trade for the top 15 exporters (2023, € billion)



Intra and extra-EU food and drink exports for the top 15 intra-EU exporters (2023, € billion)



Intra and extra-EU food and drink exports of main sectors (2023, € billion)



Source: Eurostat (Comext)

WORLD MARKETS[1]

Trade Figures

International trade: creating new market opportunities and unlocking opportunities for diversification

€182 billion Exports

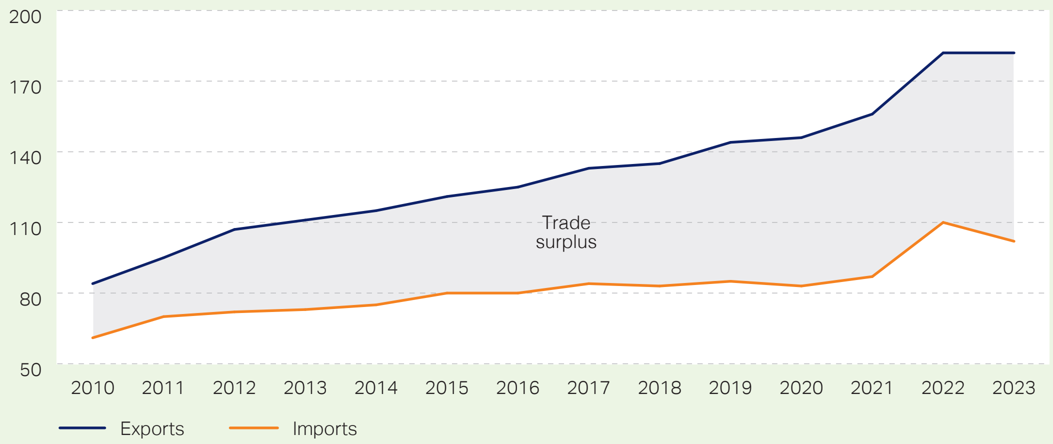
€102 billion Imports

€80 billion Trade balance

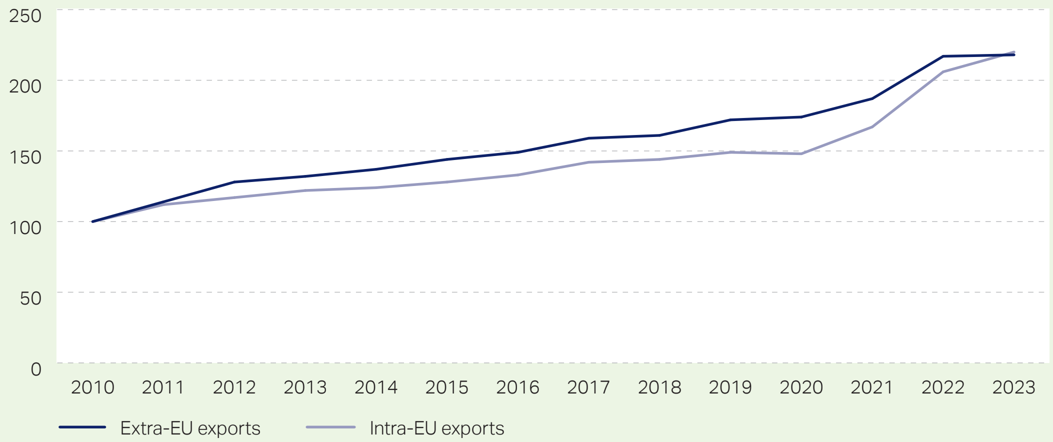
- A third of EU total food and drink exports were sold to non-EU markets. During the 2014-2023 period, intra-EU exports increased on average by 6% per year and extra-EU exports by 5% per year.
- EU food and drink exports increased for the 13th consecutive year (+0.3% compared to 2022), representing 7% of total EU goods exports. Imports amounted to €102 billion (-7.4% compared to 2022). This makes the EU a net exporter with a trade balance of €80 billion.
- Export growth for 11 out of the EU's top 20 markets was positive (2022-2023 period). Import growth for 11 out of the EU's top 20 sourcing markets was negative.
- USMCA countries (US, Canada, Mexico) remain by far the EU's largest trading partner by region, followed by the EFTA states (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland), and the Greater China region.

[1] Exports and imports refer to extra-EU trade, unless otherwise specified

Evolution of extra-EU food and drink trade (€ billion)

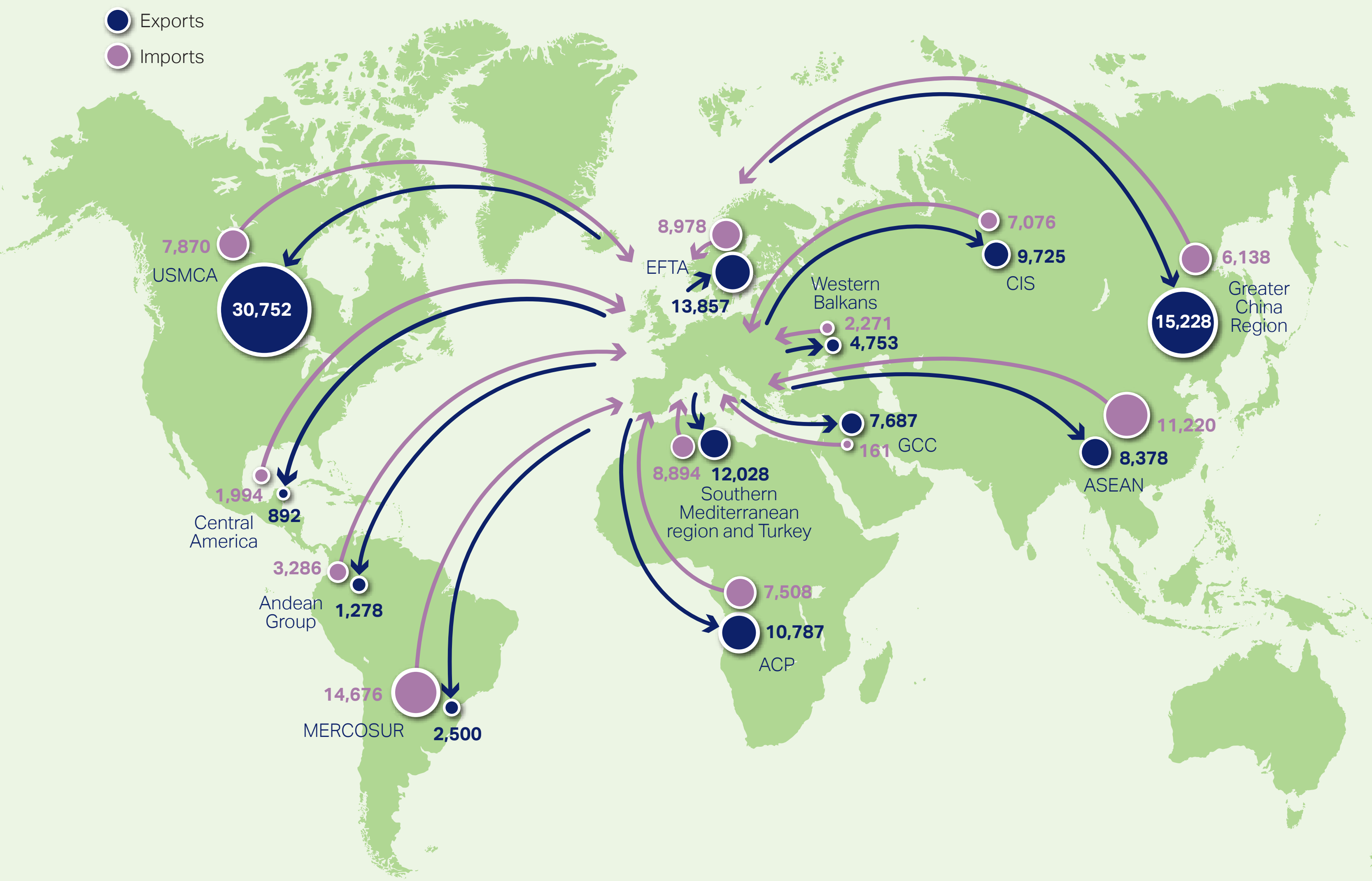


Evolution of extra and intra-EU exports (index, 2010=100)



Source: Eurostat (Comext)

EU food and drink trade flows with key regions (2023, € million)



Top EU trading partners

Export markets	2023 € million	% change 2022-2023
UK	42,602	▲9
US	24,957	▼7
China	12,022	▼14
Switzerland	8,388	▲4
Japan	6,001	▼10
Russia	4,989	▼1
Norway	4,917	▲5
Canada	4,087	▼6
South Korea	3,815	▼11
Australia	3,688	▼1

Import origins	2023 € million	% change 2022-2023
UK	13,483	▲2
Brazil	8,119	▲10
US	6,104	▼7%
China	5,909	▼14
Ukraine	4,611	▼10
Switzerland	4,594	0
Türkiye	4,537	▲9
Argentina	4,452	▼31
Indonesia	3,669	▼11
Norway	3,093	▲1

Source: Eurostat (Comext)

Trade figures by sector

International trade success backed by strong EU food and drink sectors

44%

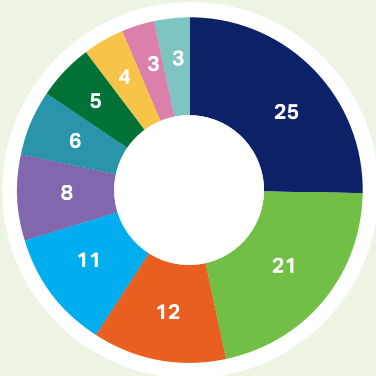
Combined export market share of the drinks, meat and dairy sectors

56%

Combined import market share of oils and fats, fish products, and processed fruits and vegetables sectors

- Sectors with the highest growth in exports: chocolate and confectionery, bakery and farinaceous products, processed fruits and vegetables.
- Sectors with the highest growth in imports: chocolate and confectionery, bakery and farinaceous products, mineral waters and soft drinks.
- The combined exports of the EU drinks, meat, and dairy sectors totalled €81.2 billion in 2023. The "various food products" category, which includes goods like chocolate, biscuits, confectionery and food preparations, generated exports worth €45.2 billion.

Sectors in EU food and drink exports (2023, %)



- Various food products
- Drinks
- Meat products
- Dairy products
- Processed fruits and vegetables
- Oils and fats
- Bakery and farinaceous products
- Animal feeds
- Fish products
- Grain mill and starch products

Source: Eurostat (Comext)

Exports and imports by sector (2023, € million)

	Exports		Imports	
	2023 € million	% change 2022-2023	2023 € million	% change 2022-2023
Drinks	38,924	-3	8,713	-2
of which: wine	17,045	-4	1,558	-13
spirits	9,064	-7	4,502	2
beer	3,840	-2	766	-5
mineral waters and soft drinks	6,574	0	1,784	4
Various food products	45,220	4	17,948	4
of which: chocolate and confectionery	12,815	12	4,947	13
homogenised food preparations and dietetic food	5,160	-6	67	-10
processed tea and coffee	4,069	5	2,902	-1
Meat products	22,419	-8	7,994	-6
Dairy products	19,815	-2	2,385	-13
Processed fruits and vegetables	15,322	9	15,305	-5
Oils and fats	11,062	-2	21,567	-18
Bakery and farinaceous products	9,347	9	1,678	10
Animal feeds	7,425	-1	2,527	-11
Grain mill and starch products	6,312	9	3,766	1
Fish products	6,038	3	20,350	-9

Trade figures by product

Providing high-quality, value-added food and drinks worldwide

>100

EU food and drink product categories exported

>200

Export markets

- Wine and food preparations are the EU's key exports by product, with a value exceeding €17 billion and €9 billion respectively in 2023.
- Exports increased for 4 out of the EU's top 10 product categories, whereas the most significant decline was registered for pork meat, spirits, infant food and wine.
- Imports increased for 3 out of the EU's top 10 product categories, whereas the most significant decline was registered for palm oil, frozen fish, and prepared or preserved fruits and nuts.

Top 10 EU food and drink exports and imports by destination and origin (2023)

Exports

	€ million	% change 2022-2023	Top 3 destinations
Wine	17,732	-4	US, UK, Switzerland
Food preparations, not specified	9,553	5	UK, US, China
Bread, pastries and biscuits	8,587	12	UK, US, Switzerland
Animal feeds, pet foods	9,713	-2	UK, Norway, Switzerland
Spirits	9,751	-7	US, UK, Singapore
Infant food and other preparations	9,009	-4	UK, US, Switzerland
Cheese	7,726	5	UK, US, Switzerland
Chocolate	7,253	12	UK, US, Russia
Pork meat fresh, chilled and frozen	8,063	-22	China, UK, Japan
Waters and soft drinks	5,669	-3	UK, US, Switzerland

Imports

	€ million	% change 2022-2023	Top 3 origins
Fish fillets	5,976	-3	Norway, China, Iceland
Palm oil	4,753	-26	Indonesia, Malaysia, Guatemala
Spirits	4,502	2	UK, US, Mexico
Food preparations, not specified	3,154	-2	UK, US, Switzerland
Prepared or preserved fish	3,080	0	Ecuador, Morocco, Seychelles
Fruit juices	2,304	4	Brazil, Vietnam, Costa Rica
Beef meat fresh, chilled and frozen	2,219	-5	Argentina, UK, Brazil
Frozen fish	2,167	-12	Norway, Russia, Greenland
Cane or beet sugar and chemically pure sucrose	2,067	48	Brazil, Ukraine, Mauritius
Prepared or preserved fruits and nuts	2,045	-9	Turkey, China, India

Source: Eurostat (Comext)

EU position in global food and drink trade

A leading player on the world stage

#1

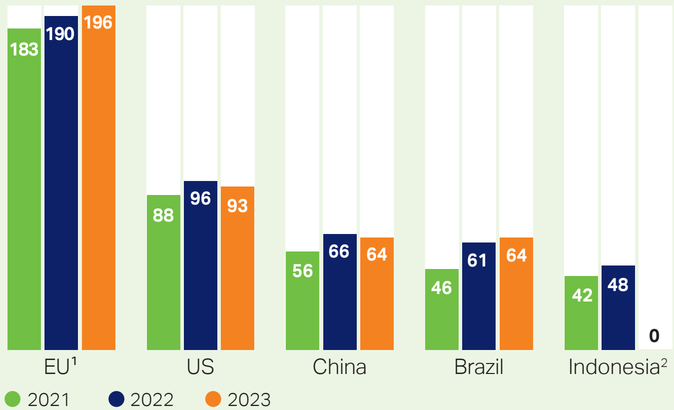
exporter of food and drinks

#2

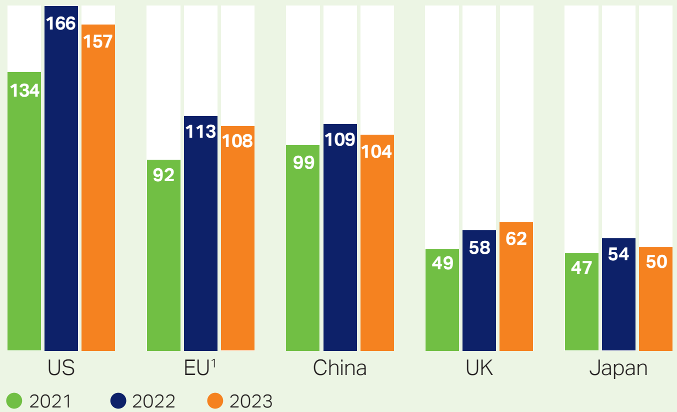
importer of food and drinks

- The EU is the world's largest exporter of food and drinks, ahead of the US, China, Brazil.
- The EU ranks in second place in terms of imports from the rest of the world, after the US and ahead of China, the UK and Japan.
- The EU share in total food and drinks imported by selected third countries showed a mixed five-year performance (2019-2023 period). Brazil (+2.7%), Australia (+1.7%), Switzerland (+1.5%), Norway (+0.5%), Japan (-1%), Canada (-1.1%), UK (-3.5%), US (-4.3%), China (-6.1%).

Main global exporters of food and drink products ($ billion)

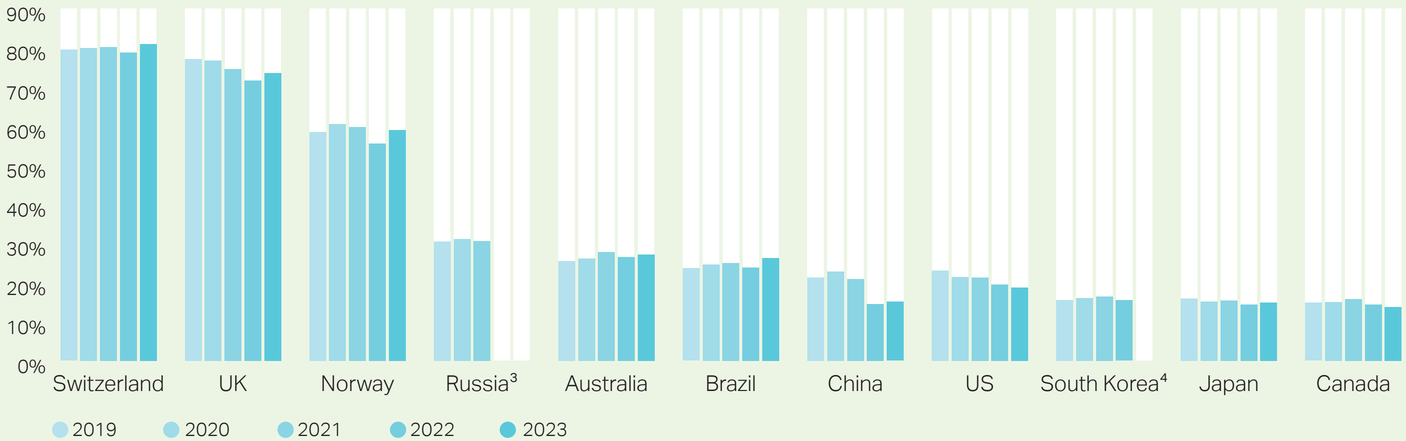


Main global importers of food and drink products ($ billion)



Source: UN COMTRADE

EU products in total food and drink imports of selected countries (2019-2023, %)



[1] Takes into account the change in Member State composition of the EU
[2] No data for Indonesia, year 2022
[3] No data for Russia, year 2022 and 2023
[4] No data for South Korea, year 2023

EU-UK Trade

Major trading partners with closely integrated supply chains

€42.6 billion
Exports

€13.5 billion
Imports

€29.1 billion
Trade balance

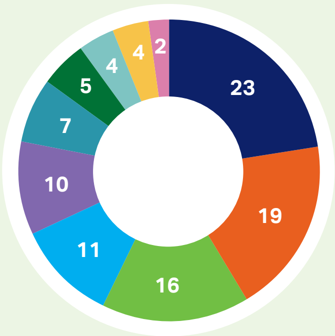
- EU exports of food and drinks to the UK amounted to €42.6 billion in 2023. The UK ranks first in terms of export market, ahead of the US (€24.9 billion) and China (€12 billion).
- Among the EU Member States, Ireland has by far the strongest trade link with the UK. 34.1% of Ireland's food and drink exports are destined for the UK and 41.2% of its imports come from the UK.
- Wine is the EU's most prominent product exported to the UK, while distilled spirits lead by far the imports of food and drinks from the UK.

Key Member State exporters of food and drinks to the UK (2023)

Member State	Exports to UK (€ billion)	Share of Member States' total exports[1] (%)	Rank of UK as export destination
Netherlands	6.6	7.8	4
France	5.7	9.1	3
Ireland	5.4	34.1	1
Belgium	5.2	11.2	4
Germany	4.7	5.5	6
Italy	4.2	7.8	4
Poland	3.6	9.2	2
Spain	2.6	5.5	6
Denmark	1.5	8	3
Greece	0.5	7	4

[1] Intra and extra-EU exports

EU exports to the UK by sector (2023, %)



Top EU-UK food and drink exports and imports (2023, € million)

Product	Exports	Imports	Trade Balance
Bread, pastry and biscuits	3,642	840	2,801
Wine	3,414	98	3,316
Chocolate and confectionery	2,415	634	1,781
Cheese	2,249	511	1,738
Animal feed, pet foods	2,230	900	1,330
Prepared and preserved meat	1,823	195	1,628
Offal, poultry meat	1,715	205	1,511
Waters and soft drinks	1,546	483	1,063
Food preparations	1,495	836	659
Bovine meat fresh, chilled and frozen	1,495	471	1,024
Prepared and preserved vegetables	1,336	55	1,281
Pork meat fresh, chilled and frozen	1,141	140	1,002
Sauce, condiments	959	366	593
Malt extract, other food preparations	925	227	699
Spirits	848	2,537	-1,689
Sausages	836	23	812
Pasta	813	51	763
Fat, meat smoked	796	42	754
Sugar confectionery	693	180	512
Fruit and vegetable juices	677	27	650

Source: Eurostat (Comext)

Innovation and consumer trends

Innovation key to greater consumer choice

Pleasure

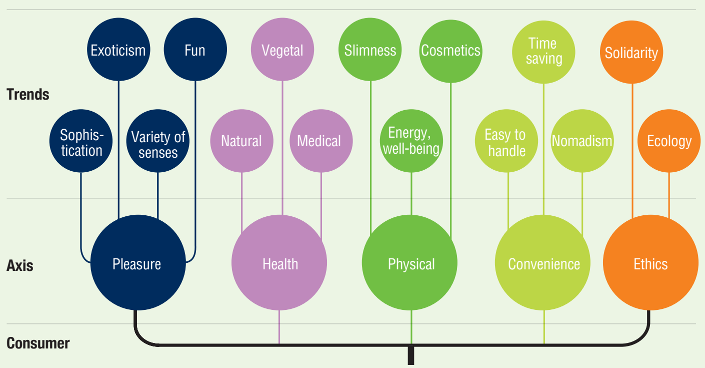
Leading driver of food innovation in Europe

#1

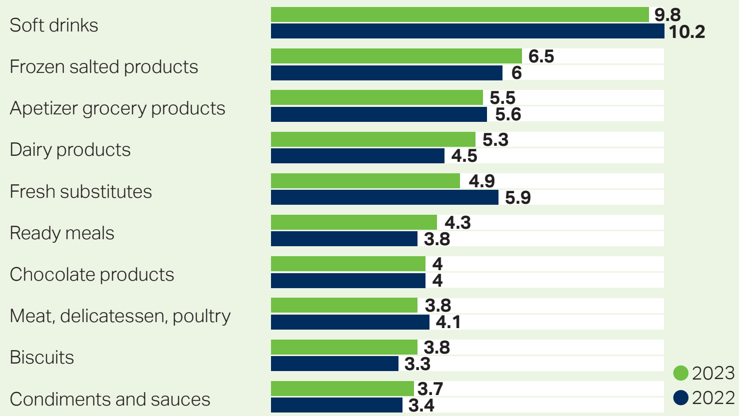
Soft drinks are the world's most innovative food sector

- Drivers of innovation can be divided into 15 trends, grouped along five axes, corresponding to general consumer expectations: pleasure, health, physical, convenience and ethics.
- Pleasure remains the leading driver of food innovation with a 53.6% relative share of the innovative offering in 2023.
- Although slightly decreasing, the health axis remains in second place.
- In 2023, the soft drinks category remains the most dynamic in terms of innovations. Frozen salted products remain in second place. The appetiser grocery products category has climbed to the third place.

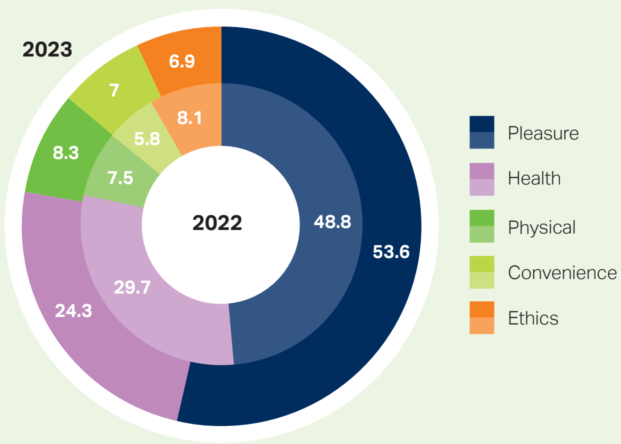
Food innovation trends



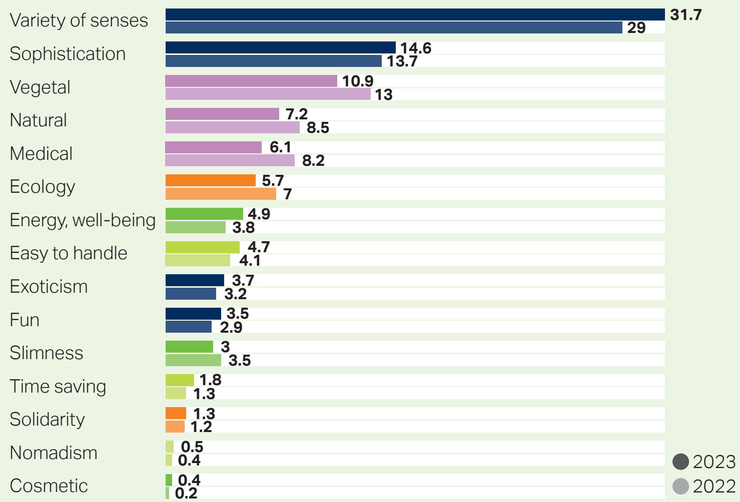
The world's 10 most innovative food sectors (%)



Drivers of innovation in Europe (%)



Food innovation trends in Europe (%)



Source: World Food Innovation Barometer by ProtéinesXTC

Global trends in R&D

Sustained levels of R&D investment

0.24%

EU[1] R&D private investment intensity

- Out of the world's top 2,500 companies for R&D private investment, 49 operate in the food and drink industry. Together, these companies invested €10.8 billion in R&D in 2022, €2.1 billion of which was invested by 9 food and drink companies based in the EU.
- These 9 EU companies are located in France, Germany, the Netherlands (2), Belgium, Denmark and Ireland (1).
- After being the first region in terms of private investment over the past years, the EU now ranks 2nd after the US.
- In 2021, the EU's food and drink industry allocated a smaller percentage of its turnover to R&D compared to China and the US.
- Across EU Member States[1], R&D investment intensity varies from 0.53% to 0.02%.

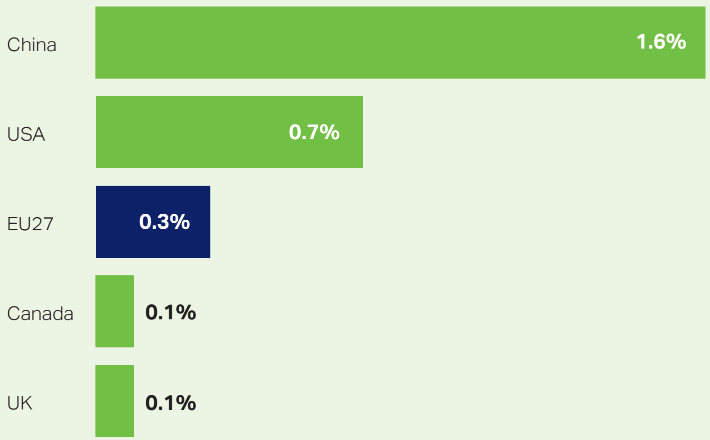
[1] Based on available data
[2] Including tobacco

R&D private investment of food and drink companies listed in the world's top 2,500 companies by R&D (2022)

	R&D investment (€ billion)	R&D investment (% of total)	Number of companies
TOTAL	10.8	100	49
US	2.4	22.2%	13
EU	**2.1**	**19.4%**	**9**
Switzerland	1.9	17.6%	1
Japan	1.6	14.8%	10
China	1.5	13.9%	11
UK	1	9.5%	3
New Zealand	0.1	1%	1
South Korea	0.1	0.6%	1

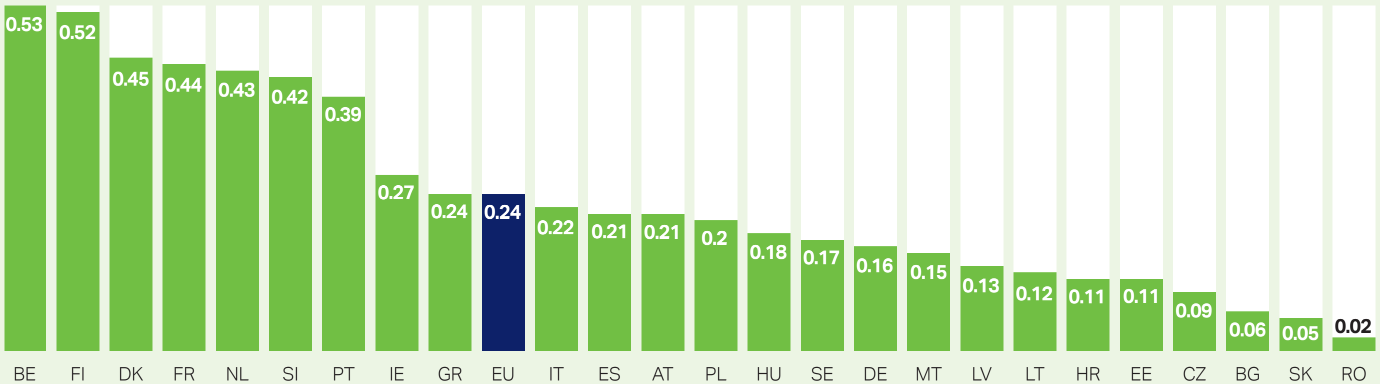
Source: Joint Research Centre

R&D expenditures in the food and drink industry as % of turnover (2021)



Source: Wageningen Economic Research

R&D private investment of the food and drink industry[1,2] by Member State (Average 2019-2021, % of output)



Source: Eurostat (BERD, National Accounts), OECD (ANBERD, STAN)

Food future

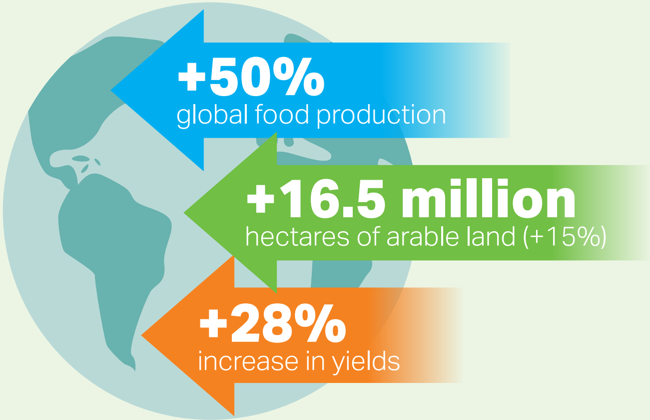
Availability of resources and sustainable production

9.7 billion
Global population in 2050

50%
Increase in global food production by 2050[1]

- Population and income growth will continue to drive food demand. Meeting the additional demand will depend on the availability of resources and capacity to boost sustainable production.
- In 2022, more than one third of people in the world could not afford a healthy diet. Women and people living in rural areas were particularly affected. The cost of a healthy diet increased globally by 11% between 2021 and 2022.
- At the global level, the water stress indicator reached an average of 18% in 2018, but this masks substantial regional variations.
- Food production is responsible for 26% of global greenhouse gas emissions, out of which 82% come from agricultural activities.

Meeting global demand for food by 2050[1]



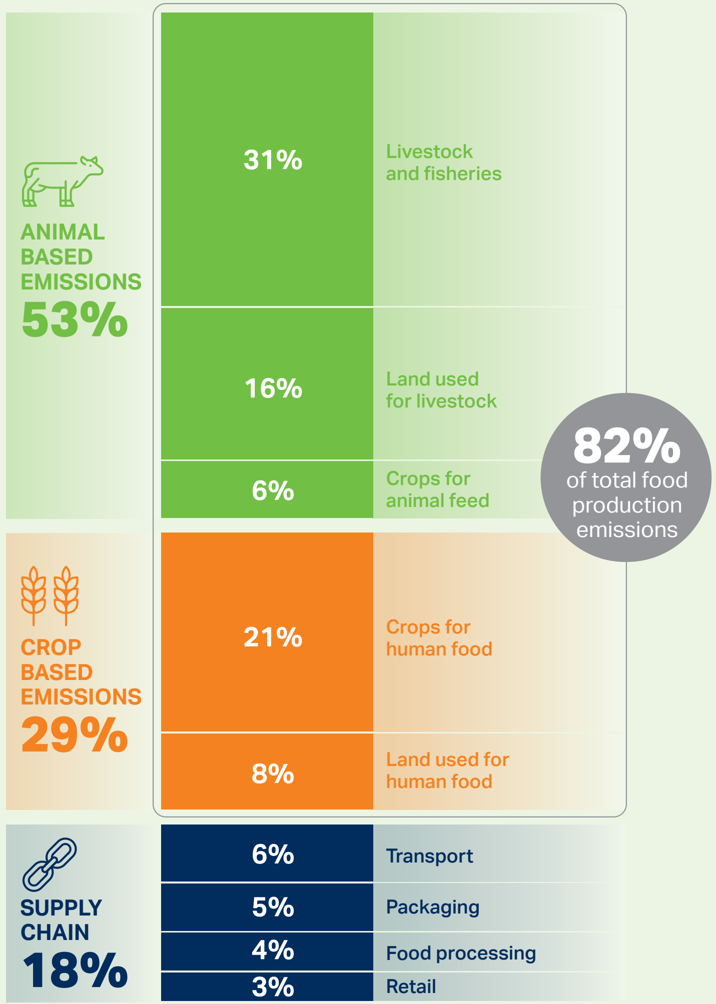
Source: FAO

Level of water stress by major regions, 2018

Regions	Level of water stress (%)
World	18
Europe	8.3
Northern America	19
East Asia and Western Asia	45-70
Central and South Asia	70
Northern Africa	> 100

Note: The indicator on water stress is taken as an overall measure of physical water scarcity. A ratio below 25% indicates no stress; 25-50%: low stress; 50-75%: medium stress; 75-100%: high stress; > 100%: critical stress.
Source: The state of the world's land and water resources for food and agriculture (SOLAW 2021)

Global greenhouse gas emissions from food production



Source: European Court of Auditors, 2021

Global food and nutrition security challenge (2022-2023)

733m
people suffered from hunger in 2023 – one out of 11 people in the world (+ 152 million 2023/2019).

29%
of the global population – 2.33 billion people – were moderately or severely food insecure (unchanged 2023/2020).

More than 1/3
of people in the world – about 2.8 billion – could not afford a healthy diet in 2022, with the cost increasing by **11%** between 2021 and 2022.

Increased prevalence
of global diabetes in adults from **7%** in 1990 to **14%** in 2022.

2.5bn
adults were classified as overweight, representing **43%** of the global adult population. **16%** of the global adult population is suffering from obesity.

37m
children under the age of 5 were overweight in 2022. The prevalence of overweight among children and adolescents (5-19 years) rose from **8%** in 1990 to **20%** in 2022.

Sources: The State of Food Security and nutrition in the world 2024; The Lancet; WHO

Key food and drink companies

Ranking of agri-food companies with operations in Europe[1], by global agri-food sales[2]

Name	Headquarters	Sales (€ billion)[3]	Main sectors
Cargill	US	147.9	multi-product
Nestlé	CH	95.3	multi-product
Archer Daniels Midland Company	US	86.9	multi-product
PepsiCo, Inc.	US	84.6	beverages, snacks
JBS	BR	74.7	meat, dairy
Bunge	US	55	multi-product
AB InBev	BE	54.9	beer
Tyson Foods	US	48.9	meat
Mars	US	46.2	prepared foods, confectionery, pet food
Olam Group Limited	SG	44.7	multi-product
The Coca-Cola Company	US	42.1	beverages
Heineken	NL	36.4	beer
Mondelēz International	US	33.3	confectionery, snacks, dairy
Lactalis	FR	29.5	dairy
Danone	FR	27.6	dairy, water, baby and medical nutrition
KraftHeinz	US	24.6	multi-product
WH Group	CN	24.3	meat
Unilever	NL/UK	21.1	multi-product
Grupo Bimbo	MX	20.8	bakery
Suntory	JP	19.5	(alcoholic) beverages and foods
Diageo	UK	18.7	alcoholic beverages
General Mills	US	18.3	multi-product
Asahi Group	JP	18.3	(alcoholic) beverages and foods
Ferrero	LU	17	confectionery
Arla Foods	DK	13.7	dairy
Keurig Dr Pepper Inc.	US	13.7	hot and cold beverages
FrieslandCampina	NL	13.1	dairy

Name	Headquarters	Sales (€ billion)[3]	Main sectors
Molson Coors	US	12.8	beer
Fonterra	NZ	12.8	dairy
Associated British Foods	UK	12.3	sugar, starch, prepared foods
Kellanova	US	12.1	prepared foods, snacks, cereals
Pernod Ricard	FR	11.6	alcoholic beverages
DSM-Firmenich	CH	10.6	multi-product
BRF	BR	9.9	meat
Carlsberg	DK	9.9	beer
McCain Foods	CA	9.6	frozen potato products and potato specialties, appetisers and snacks
Südzucker	DE	9.2	sugar, multi-product
Danish Crown	DK	9.1	meat
Barry Callebaut	CH	8.6	chocolate, cocoa
JDE Peets	NL	8.2	coffee, tea
Kirin Holdings	JP	8.1	alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages
Kerry Group	IE	8	multi-product
Savencia	FR	6.8	dairy
LVMH	FR	6.6	wines, spirits
Oetker Group	DE	6.2	multi-product
IFF	US	5.6	nutrition & biosciences
Glanbia	IE	5	nutrition, ingredients, dairy
Roquette	FR	5	ingredients
Pladis Global	UK	4	confectionery
Nomad Foods	UK	3	frozen food products
Bonduelle	FR	2.4	prepared and frozen vegetables
Tate & Lyle	UK	1.9	ingredients
The GB Foods	SP	1.4	multi-product
Paulig	FI	1.2	multi-product

[1] Operations in the EU refer to the presence of processing plants in one or more Member States
[2] Based on the most recent complete fiscal year
[3] Figures have been converted to Euro with ECB bilateral annual exchange rates series, but only figures in the original currency are relevant

Glossary

Abbreviation of world regions

ACP
African, Caribbean and Pacific countries.

Andean Group
Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.

ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)
Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Central America
Panama, Guatemala, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua.

CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States)
Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

EFTA (European Free Trade Area)
Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

EU
EU refers to EU27, unless otherwise specified.

GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council)
Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Greater China region
China, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan.

Mercosur
Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay.

Southern Mediterranean region and Turkey
Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey.

USMCA countries
US, Mexico and Canada.

Western Balkans
Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.

Emission scopes
Scope 1 emissions are direct emissions from owned or controlled sources.
Scope 2 emissions are indirect emissions from the generation of purchased energy.
Scope 3 emissions are all indirect emissions (not included in scope 2) that occur in the value chain of the reporting company, including both upstream and downstream emissions.[1]

Gross value added (GVA)
The gross value added is the value of goods and services produced by a sector minus the cost of the raw materials and other inputs used to produce them. GVA measures the contribution to the economy of each individual sector.

Investment
Investment is defined as investment during the reference period in all tangible goods. Investments in intangible and financial assets are excluded.

Labour productivity
Labour productivity provides a measure of the efficiency of the workforce to produce goods and services. Labour productivity is calculated as the gross value added (GVA) divided by persons employed.

Persons employed
The number of persons employed includes the total number of persons who work in the observation unit (inclusive of working proprietors, partners working regularly in the unit and unpaid family workers), as well as persons who work outside the unit who belong to it and are paid by it (e.g. sales representatives, delivery personnel, repair and maintenance teams).

Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)
For Eurostat's Structural Business Statistics database: micro = less than 10; small = 10 to 49; medium-sized = 50 to 249; large = more than 250 persons employed. The SBS size-class data are solely based on the definition relating to the number of persons employed and not to the turnover level.

Value added
The value added at factor costs is the gross income from operating activities after adjusting for operating subsidies and indirect taxes.

Wages and salaries
Wages and salaries are defined as the total remuneration, in cash or in kind, payable to all persons counted on the payroll (including homeworkers), in return for work done during the accounting period regardless of whether it is paid on the basis of working time, output or piecework and whether it is paid regularly or not.

[1] Source : Greenhouse Gas Protocol

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