

(English version)

**Priority question for written answer P-004228/25
to the Commission
Asger Christensen (Renew)
(28 October 2025)**

Subject: Fishing opportunities for sprat in 2026

The Commission's proposal for fishing opportunities for Baltic sprat in 2026 is well below the range indicated in the advice, citing uncertainty about strong recruitment, as the current assessment is mainly based on data from a single survey. New data from an ICES survey carried out in May is now available, however, and this could contribute to a more reliable assessment of recruitment.

The Commission has a duty to act in accordance with the best available scientific advice, which means that all relevant and available data should be taken into account in setting the quota.

Will the Commission ask ICES or the relevant Member States to assess whether the May survey can verify the positive trend in sprat recruitment mentioned in the advice for 2026?

Submitted: 28.10.2025

**Answer given by Mr Kadis on behalf of the European Commission
(14 November 2025)**

The Commission bases its proposals on the scientific advice provided by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES). The Commission asked ICES about the data from the May 2025 survey in mid-October 2025. ICES informed that the data was being processed by the experts and that no compiled results were available. The quality-assured ICES survey will be available after the ICES internal review process, which is expected to take place in spring 2026.

On 28 October 2025, the Council reached a political agreement on the fishing opportunities for the Baltic Sea for 2026. The Council agreed to set the total allowable catches for sprat at the fishing mortality consistent with achieving Maximum Sustainable Yield (F_{MSY}) point value indicated in the ICES advice of 28 May 2025.
