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Impact of COVID-19 on the European recreational boating industry

Study for European Boating Industry



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Survey type	Online survey generated with EFS Survey (Questback)
Survey period	21 October 2020 – 27 November 2020
Sample	n = 279 (European companies in the boating industry)
Presentation of results	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Percentages are rounded up.• Results from companies in Portugal, The Netherlands, Ireland, Cyprus, Slovenia and Croatia are not shown due to the low number of responses.
Additional information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Results have been validated through expert interviews and the presentation contains quotes from these interviews.• Some questions are only aimed at certain groups of respondents, which reduces the underlying sample. The respective sample size (n) is indicated on the slides at the bottom left.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



General information:

- The study about the impact of COVID-19 on the boating industry in the European Union was developed in cooperation with European Boating Industry, Bundesverband Wassersportwirtschaft e. V. and boot Düsseldorf.
- The main goal is to display the opportunities and challenges that the industry is facing due to COVID-19 in 2020 and beyond.

The respondents:

- The largest share of responding companies comes from Spain, Germany and France with around 20 % each.
- 96 % of companies that answered the survey are SMEs.
- 79 % of responding companies' revenues are generated in domestic markets.

Impact of COVID-19 on revenues:

- A third of companies indicated an increase in revenues while more than half recorded a drop in revenues. 45% of companies that have seen a drop in revenues consider a recovery within 2 years to be realistic.
- Companies with their main activity in tourism and production have been hit harder financially than companies in the distribution sector and service / other sectors.
- The main reasons for a drop in sales were a lower demand and the temporary closure of businesses. On the other side, higher demand had a positive impact on the production sector in particular.

Impact of COVID-19 on employment:

- 23 % of companies had to lay off employees. The impact of COVID-19 on employment may be more significant in the long-term.
- Charter companies and service providers were particularly affected and to lay off up to 60 % of their staff.

Other aspects concerning the impact of COVID-19:

- COVID-19 led to a postponement of investments.
- The interest in boating is seen as increasing in the short- as well as in the long-term.
- Companies increasingly focus on digitalisation and environmental sustainability.

Support by government:

- In all countries, the government supported companies in distress caused by COVID-19. However, around half of all respondents did not need any government assistance.
- Companies need governments' support on a national and European level with a focus on financial support, effective legislation and promotion on a national and European level.

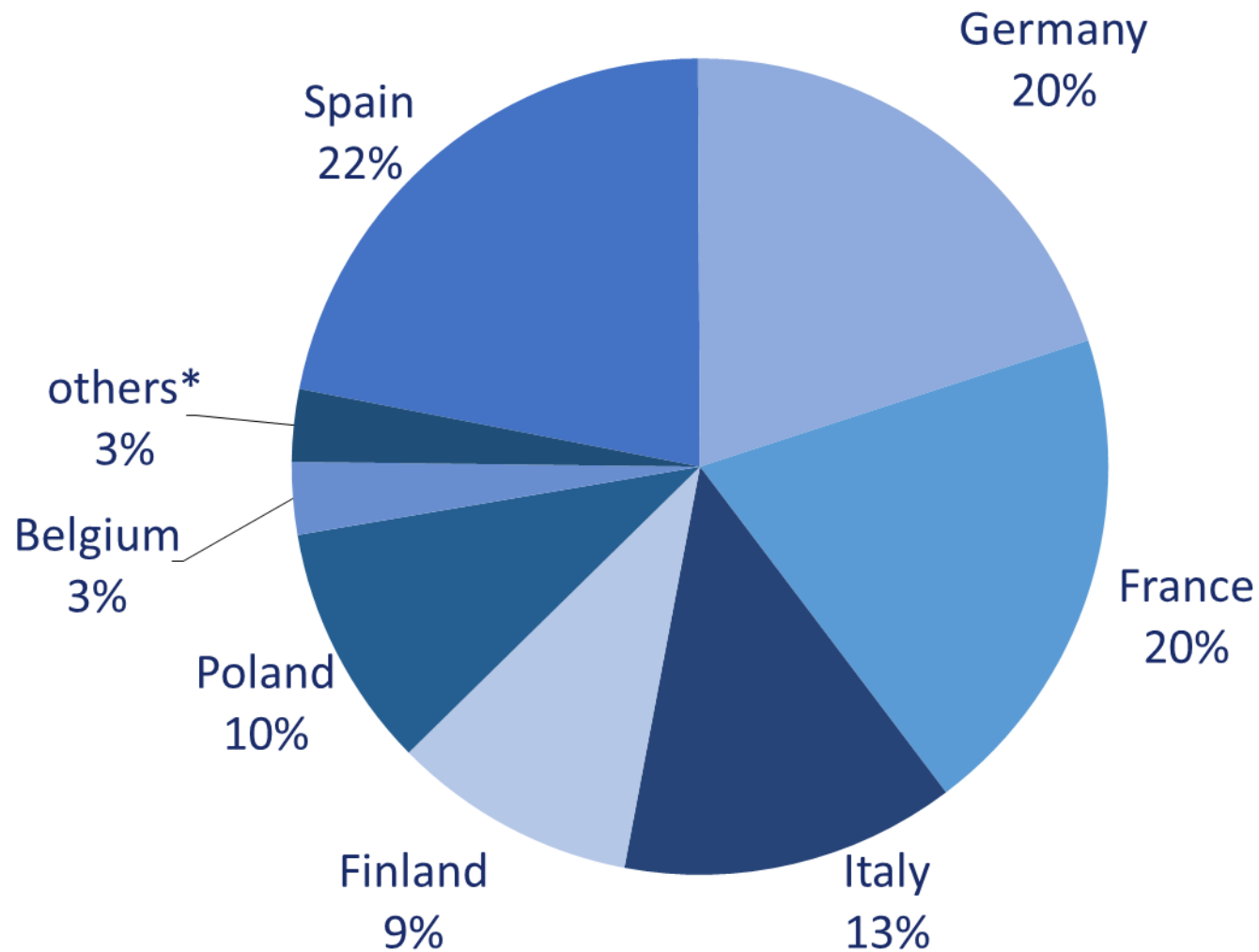
Outlook for 2021:

- The outlook for businesses in the boating industry is perceived as rather positive for the year 2021.

FACTS ABOUT THE RESPONDENTS



Geographical location

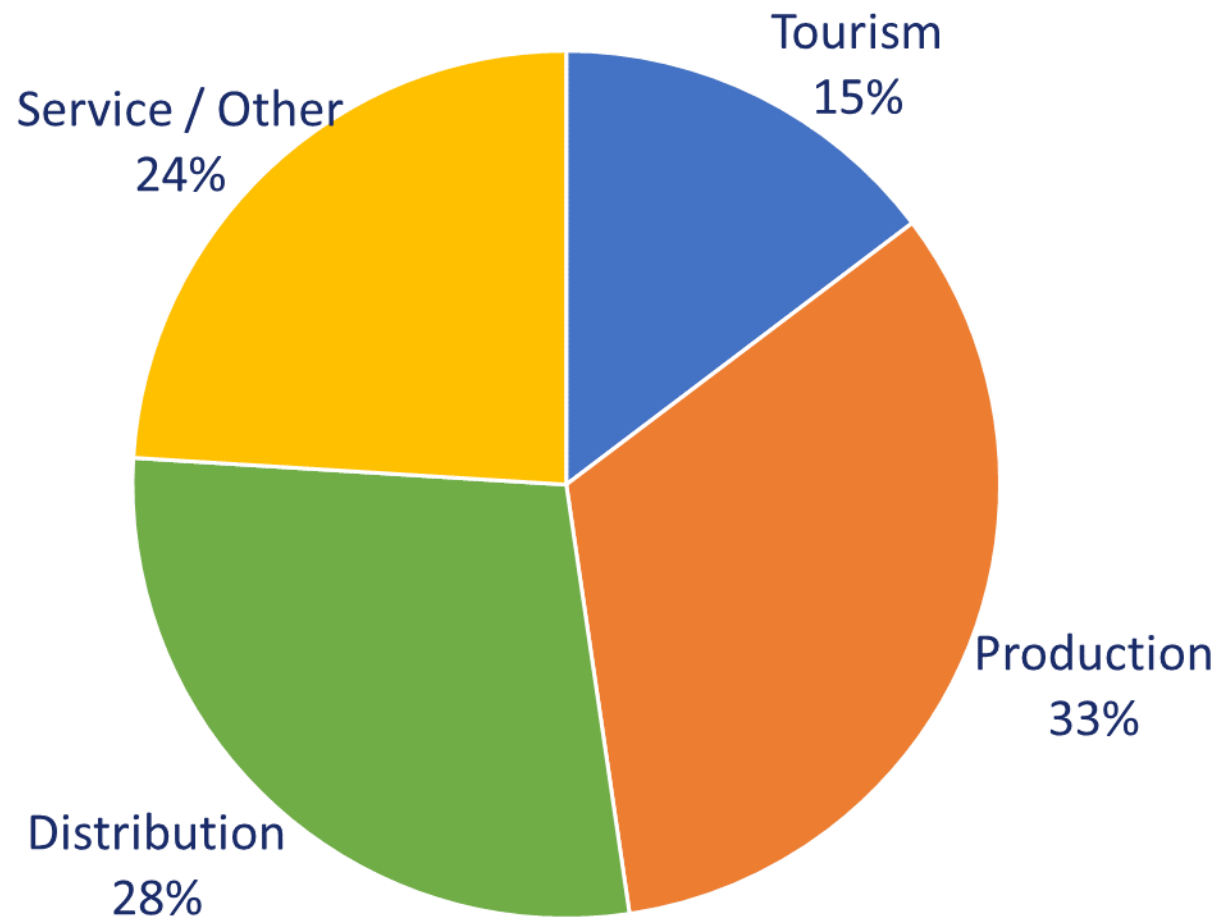


*Portugal is represented by three answers; The Netherlands, Ireland, Cyprus, Slovenia and Croatia were represented by one answer each.

n = 279

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Types of companies by industry sectors based on the main activity by revenue



Groups of sectors include:

Tourism: charter, marina, non-motorised water sport rental

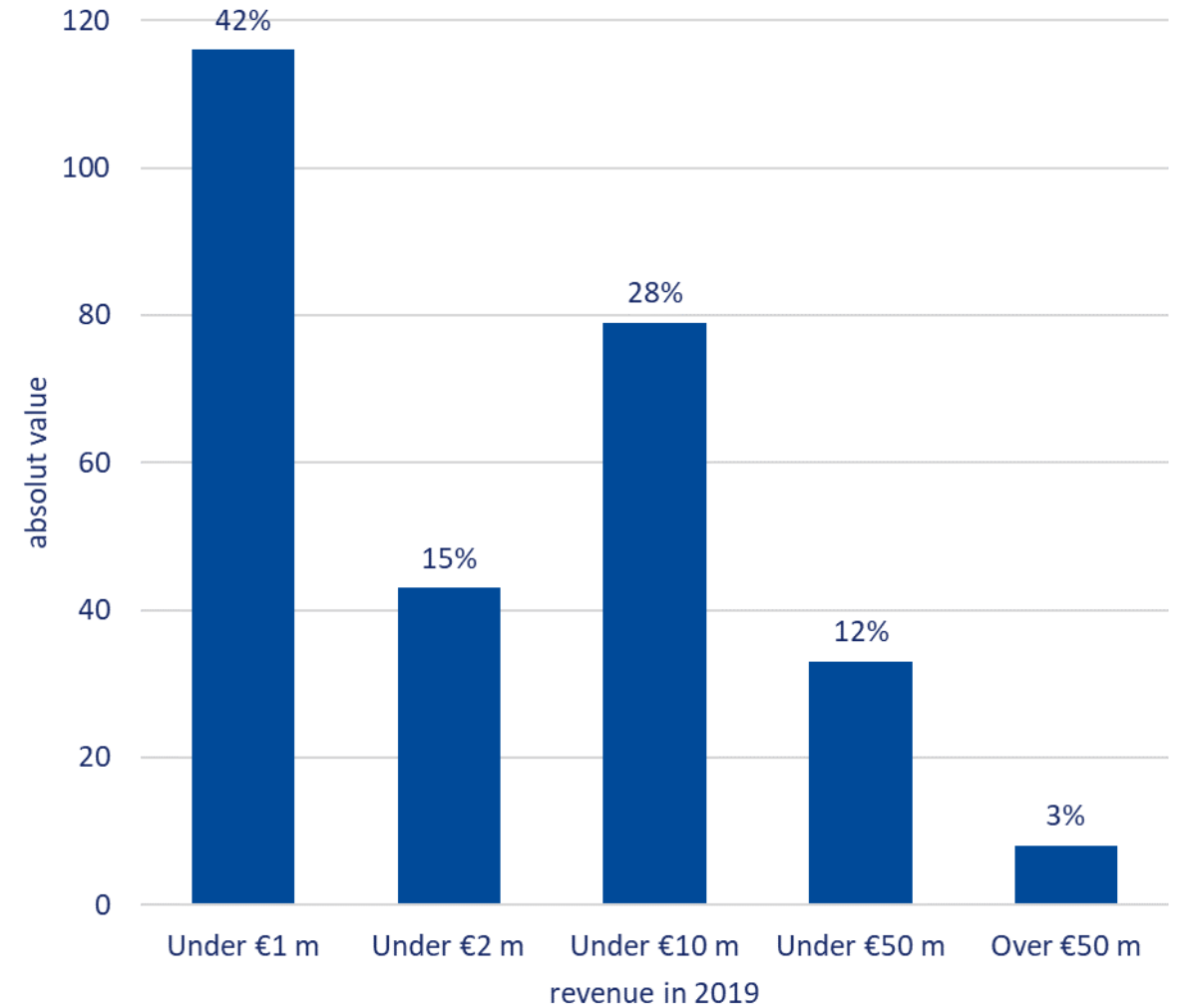
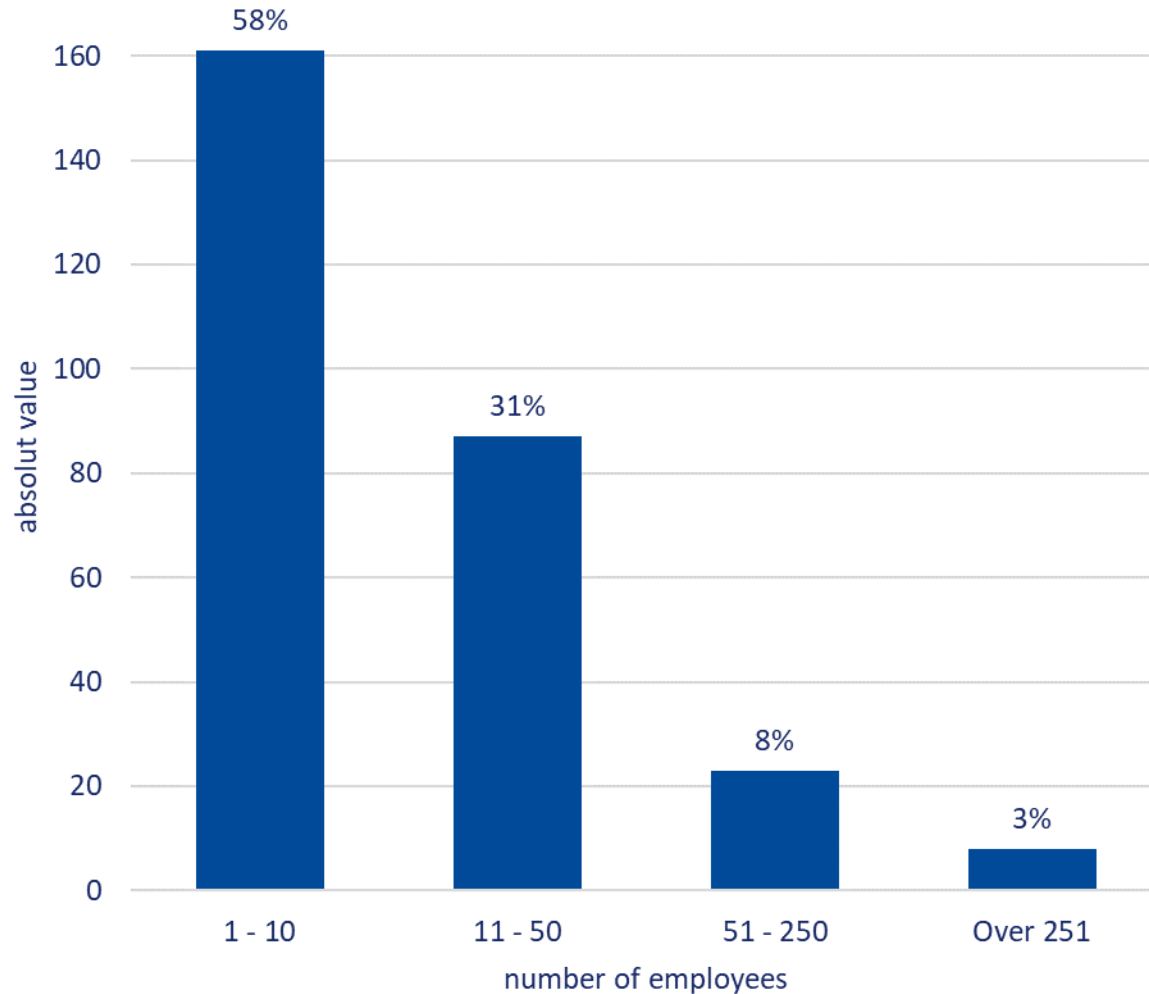
Production: boat builder, equipment manufacturer, refit yard

Distribution: boat distributor, equipment distributor, water sport equipment distributor

Service / Other: service providers, other

→ Representativeness was achieved because all four relevant sectors of the industry are represented in sufficient proportions.

Companies' size by number of full-time employees and by revenues in 2019

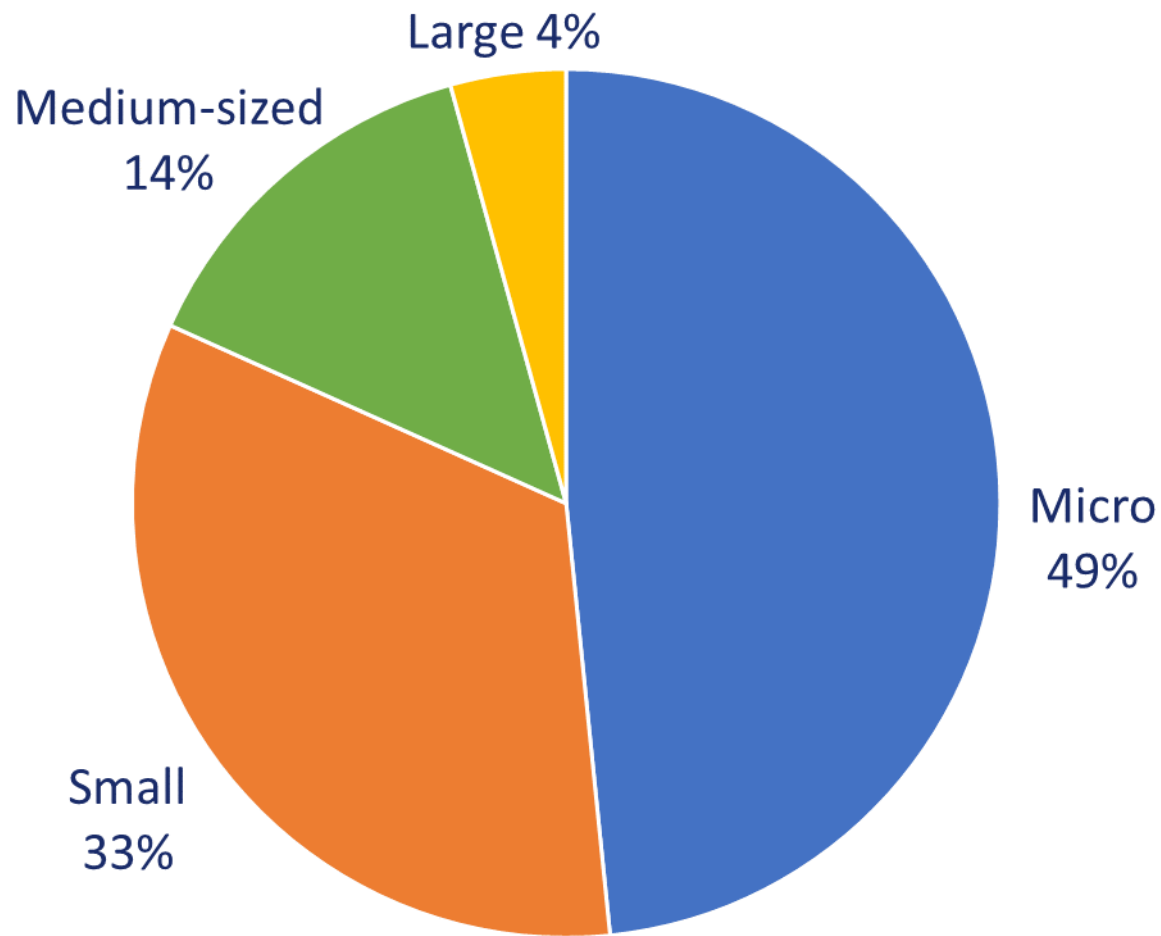


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Size of companies based on EU SME definition



- The European Commission defines small, medium-sized and large companies by the number of employees and revenue (for further information click [here](#)).
- The percentages shown in the graph are coherent with the structure of the companies in the boating industry in Europe.

SUPPORT BY POLICY- MAKERS



At national level, the governments should...

- ... facilitate access to financial support.
- ... clarify communication about legal and health regulations.
- ... introduce a long-term recovery plan.
- ... help promote boating as a safe activity.
- ... allow businesses to reopen and leisure activities when sanitary regulations are being followed.

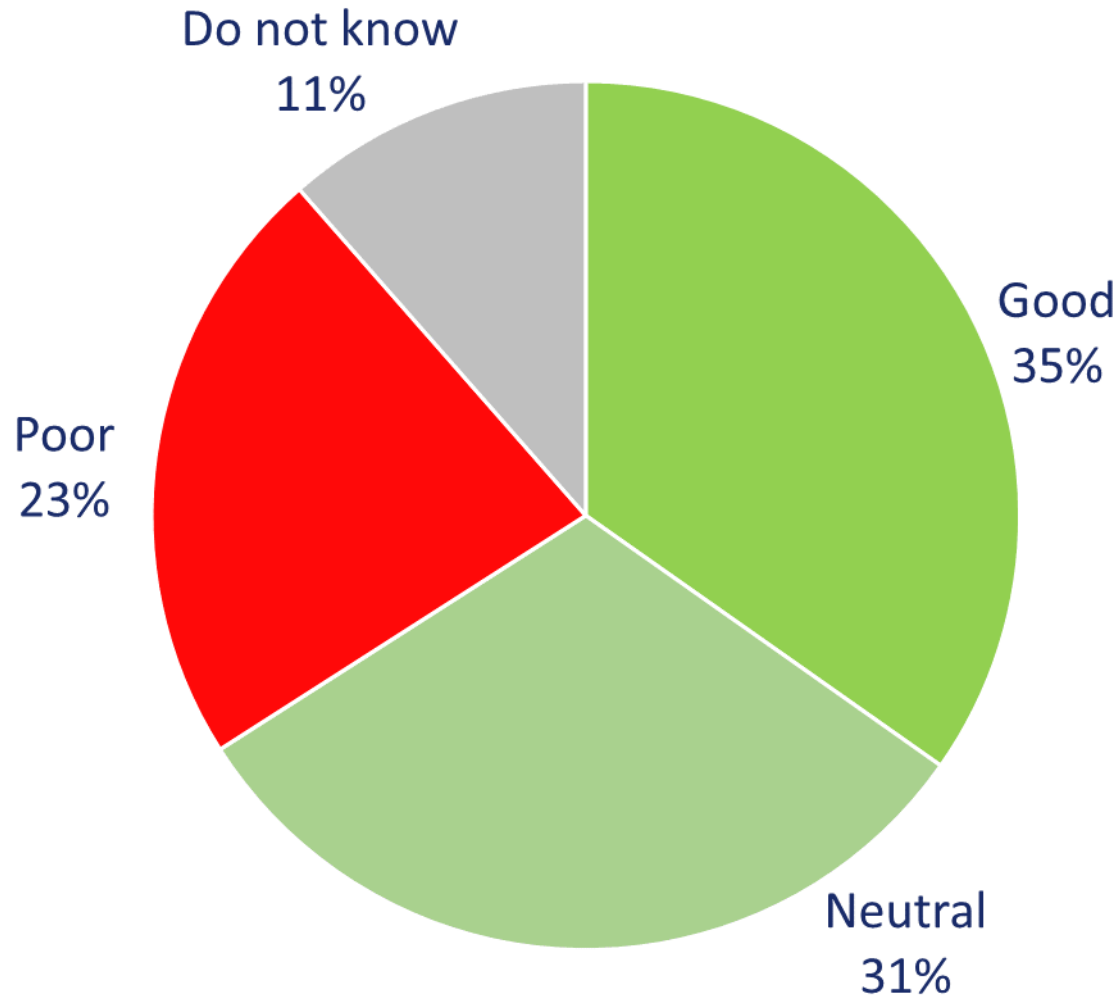
At European level, the governments should...

- ... support companies financially.
- ... introduce a long-term recovery plan.
- ... help promote boating as safe activity.
- ... set up a common database showing the regulations in the different countries.
- ... unite by developing the same protective measures, policies and regulations.

OUTLOOK FOR 2021



Estimated outlook for the boating industry



- The outlook for businesses in the boating industry is considered as rather positive for the year 2021.
- 35 % of companies are optimistic compared to 22 % of companies which indicated a poor or very poor outlook for their businesses.
- 31 % see the outlook for 2021 as neutral despite the current challenges, which is a good sign.
- 11 % of companies are confronted with uncertainty for the year 2021.

n = 279

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“You have to adapt to the context and I think our companies have the capacity to do that. In any case they have shown it. They hold up well.”

Maud Dugourd (Secretary-General)



“The water sports industry in Europe is very well positioned and I believe that growth will be very strong in the next few years”.

Karsten Stahlhut (Secretary-General)



For more information



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