

RESTRICTED

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Questionnaire by the Government of

F R A N C E

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This report is designed to supplement and bring up to date the information already communicated in 1953 and 1954 to the CONTRACTING PARTIES on the application of import restrictions by France.

LIBERALIZATION OF TRADE

During the year 1955, France pursued its policy of progressively liberalizing its imports from Member countries of the OEEC. On 1 April 1955, the liberalization measures already introduced affected 75 per cent of French imports from OEEC countries. (Basis: Private Trade 1948). Further liberalization measures affecting a certain number of products, the list of which is contained in Annex I, have recently been taken (Journal Officiel of 2 September 1955), thus bringing the total percentage of liberalization to 77.5 per cent.

STATE TRADING

The list of products coming under state trading or imported by enterprises having an import monopoly, remain the same as given in the report by the French Government of July 1954.

THE TECHNIQUE OF RESTRICTIONS

In principle, all imports are subject to licensing.

(a) Liberalized Imports - Products in respect of which all quantitative import restrictions have been eliminated, either within the scope of the common market for coal and steel, or within the OEEC, benefit by the automatic issuing of unrestricted licences. In the case of a certain number of liberalized items originating in, and coming from, Member countries of the OEEC, the licensing formality was abolished as of 20 April 1955. These products are once more subject to the procedure of import certificates which was in force before the measures of withdrawal of liberalization took place in 1952.

(b) Imports subject to Restrictions - All these imports are subject to the licensing system.

Import licences are issued:

- under supply and equipment programmes. These programmes, drawn up periodically in accordance with the requirements of French economy and in the light of the situation of monetary reserves, relate essentially to imports from the dollar and sterling areas; or
- under quotas fixed under bilateral trade agreements. The list of countries with which France has concluded bilateral agreements is unchanged.

Certain non-liberalized products under the OEEC come, however, under global import quotas applicable to all EPU countries. The list of these products is given in Annex II.

IMPORT DEVELOPMENTS ACCORDING TO CURRENCY AREAS

International payments for trade between the French franc area and foreign countries have been as follows between 1953 and 1954:

Unit: 1 million accounting

<u>IMPORTS</u>			
Currency Areas	1953	1954	Variations in %
Dollar area	632	753	+ 19.1
EPU Area	1,889	2,017	+ 6.77
including Sterling Area	863	862	-
Other	437	494	+ 13
TOTAL	2,958	3,624	+ 10.34

POLICY OF DISCRIMINATION

As shown in the above table, any discrimination resulting from the import system has been appreciably mitigated between 1953 and 1954. Between 1953 and 1954 international payments relating to imports from the dollar area, being those essentially subject to discrimination, have increased at a clearly higher rate than total imports from all areas.

Parallel to its policy of trade liberalization under the OEEC, and taking into account the improvement in the position of its monetary reserves, France intends progressively to apply a more liberal import system vis-à-vis non-Member countries of the OEEC, in particular with the dollar area . Thus, the programme of dollar supplies, drawn up for the metropolitan territory of France in respect of the second half of 1955, shows a sizeable increase of about 15 per cent, in comparison with the currency budget for the previous programme in respect of the corresponding period of 1954, taking account of adjustments made for seasonal imports.

The two lists annexed to this statement showing OEEC liberalized items and global quotas for EPU countries, as of 2 September 1955, are on file at the secretariat.