

# GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

W.11/30/Add.1  
17 November 1956

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CONTRACTING PARTIES  
Eleventh Session

Working Party on  
Balance-of-Payments Restrictions

## COUNTRY NOTES ON THE SYSTEMS AND METHODS OF IMPORT RESTRICTIONS

Addendum

BURMA

### The System and Technique of Restrictions

All private imports are subject to licence. There are three Open General Licences permitting the free importation of ~~certain items from countries other than Canada and "American Account Countries"~~ (OGL's No. 1 and No. 3) and a few commodities from all countries (OGL No. 2). All other imports require individual licences which are issued on a currency area basis, that is, they are valid either for imports from the hard-currency area or from the soft-currency area. Licences issued for the soft-currency area as a whole are also applicable to the clearing account countries. However, a specified part of the value of these licences is to be used for imports from soft-currency countries, the rest being only valid for imports from clearing account countries. Except for this, the holder of a licence is free to import from any country in the currency area for which it is valid. The total monetary ceiling available for each area is allotted for all items to be licensed.

The clearing account system applies to eight Eastern European countries, the People's Republic of China and Israel, with which bilateral trade and payments agreements are in force. These agreements generally aim at balancing rice exports with imports from the different partners. A few other bilateral trade ~~agreements~~ provide for the delivery by Burma of US raw cotton against textiles.

### State Trading

The Civil Supplies Management Board, a State trading agency, is responsible for the importation of certain kinds of textile products, certain types of processed milk and cement which are considered essential.

### Recent Changes

Bilateral agreements, covering mainly rice and cotton textiles, were concluded with a number of contracting parties and other governments. It was decided to reserve a specified part of the soft-currency licences for imports from clearing account countries.

### FINLAND

#### The System and Technique of Restrictions

All imports are subject to licence. In the case of some goods periodic exchange allocations by the Bank of Finland and quotas agreed in bilateral agreements set limits for import licensing. In the case of other products, specified in a special list, licences are granted automatically; this list, which mainly comprises raw materials, foodstuffs and equipment, is divided in two parts, one applicable to import goods from all sources, the other to imports from non-dollar countries only. In addition, requests for licences for compensatory deals are granted according to ad hoc assessments of the merits of individual applications.

The products at present specified in the automatic licensing lists represent 45 per cent of the total imports from all sources in 1954. As only a small part of the list applies to imports from dollar sources, the corresponding import coverage for the dollar list is much lower and represents only 18 per cent of the same total imports.

Except for special cases, as a condition for receiving an import licence, all importers have to deposit with the Bank of Finland 10 or 20 per cent of the c.i.f. value of the licence depending on the type of import goods concerned. This deposit is refunded without interest not later than six months after the licence has been issued.

The policy is to consider applications for licences individually on their merits. In practice licences are allocated to individual importers primarily on the basis of past imports. The final decision is dictated by the balance-of-payments position and when the import transaction entails a settlement in non-convertible currency, the decision depends on the state of payments with the country or currency area concerned.

The major part of the import trade is carried out under bilateral trade and payments agreements. The bilateral arrangements have been entered into with a view to balancing the trade accounts so that imports from each partner are determined by the quota agreed upon or by the availability of required currencies. The bilateral agreements have been rendered more flexible by extending the scope of miscellaneous and group quotas and by allowing imports in excess of quotas.

### State Trading

The State operates monopolies on wines and spirits, sulphuric acid and super phosphates, and cereals.

### Recent Changes

A range of miscellaneous goods consisting largely of materials for industry and foodstuffs were added to the list of goods for which import licences are issued automatically.

## GREECE

### The System and Technique of Restrictions

Imports of specified luxury and a few other goods from any country are subject to special licence. Five commodities imported from Japan are subject to the same procedure. Ninety per cent of private imports from OEEC countries (1948 basis) are liberalized. Licences are required for imports from Canada and the United States, when payment is made in free dollars. Imports of goods for which payment is not effected through clearing accounts or not effected through EPU, also require licences. The free importation of unrestricted goods is, however, subject to certain payments conditions, which differentiate between countries with which payments may be made through the European Payments Union, and those with which no payments arrangements exist.

Trade agreements are in force with certain Eastern European countries and with several other countries.