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Foreign Exchange Regime in Romania between 1929 and 1939

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1. Reasons, Goals, Specifications

The relationships between a national currency and foreign currencies and the manner in which they are governed by the state show to a great extent the economic situation of that country, the position of the domestic economy in the international economic context and the relationships between the concerned country and the other worldwide political partners. This was reason enough for us to start analysing the foreign exchange regime in the inter-war Romania, namely all the legal regulations and principles established by the Romanian government in the above-mentioned period with regard to the use of currencies, as well as of the other foreign means of payment[2].

The reasons for which we chose the second inter-war decade are to be found in the dramatic changes that marked this period both internationally and domestically. This paper begins with the completion of the process that aimed at regaining convertibility of the Romanian currency, the *leu*. During the First World War, the loss of the National Bank of Romania's (NBR) cover stock, which was sent to Moscow, the suspension of convertibility and the devaluation in relation to the other European currencies left their mark on the *leu*.

Under such circumstances, the Monetary Reform in 1929 was an attempt for Romania to return to normality in terms of money circulation. The events

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[1] The paper presents the views of the authors, without involving or engaging the National Bank of Romania.

[2] Gheorghe D. Bistriceanu, *Lexicon de finanțe bănci asigurări,* vol. III, Editura Economică, 2001, p. 217.

following the reform, particularly the outset of the Great Depression with all the consequences upon the worldwide monetary system, had a natural bearing on the money circulation in Romania.

Our approach ends with the year 1939, given that the outburst of the Second World War, although it did not imply Romania's immediate involvement in the conflict, brought about new disruptions to the world money circulation, with inherent implications for the Romanian space.

This analysis aims not only at chronologically emphasizing the main stages of this foreign exchange regime, but also at establishing its underlying principles and, even more, at specifying the factors that led to the passage from one stage to another.

2. The Free Convertibility Stage 1929–1932

This first stage, referred to as the *leu* free convertibility, covers the 1929–1932 period and starts with the Monetary Act of 7 February 1929, according to which the Romanian currency, the *leu*, the equivalent of 10 milligrams of 9/10 fineness gold, regained convertibility "into gold coins (legal tender), into gold bullions or into foreign currencies convertible into gold". As concerns the third case, the legal text set forth that „foreign currencies shall be assigned at a price not exceeding the theoretical parity, as increased by the gold consignment costs"[3].

Although the law provided for several convertibility possibilities, in practice, the *leu* could be converted only into gold currency, the rate between foreign currencies and the *leu* being established according to the parity with gold and floating based on demand and supply.

The *leu* regained its convertibility and started being listed on the currency exchange after the NBR replenished its cover stock through a massive foreign currency amount following a foreign borrowing, the 7% Stabilisation Loan.

The outset of the Great Depression in 1929 called into question these achievements. The entire Romanian economy was affected. Prices of agricultural produce dropped owing to bumper domestic crops. Later on, under the influence of the worldwide depression, the phenomenon spread out to other products as well. Export-oriented goods were particularly affected, which led to an increase in the amount exported. At the same time, prices of imported products went up.

However, the decline in imports and the increase in exports helped maintain a surplus trade balance. Such excess could not always be turned to good account for the benefit of Romania, given the existence of other drivers of the crisis. Foreign currency inflows could not cover the outflows generated by the payment of foreign

[3] Monetary Act No. 359 of 7 February 1929 in *Official Gazette* No. 30 bis of 7 February 1929.

debt, the imports and the massive capital withdrawals caused in 1931 by the outburst of the banking crisis on the European market. Such massive capital withdrawals resulted in the weakening of the entire credit system in Romania. Between November 1929 and May 1930 inclusively, the foreign and Romanian capital outflow amounted to approximately *lei* 8.1 billion[4]. Public debt repayment and the other foreign expenditures exceeded steadily the trade balance surplus, which pushed Romania's balance of payments into deficit (table 1).

The situation was all the more difficult as the outcomes of the monetary stabilisation had not been consolidated. According to a renowned Romanian economist, Virgil Madgearu[5], one of the conditions for Romania to maintain the results of the Monetary Act of 1929 was that the implementation of the Act should be followed by a foreign capital inflow boosting the standing of domestic credit institutions and balancing the very fragile equilibrium of the balance of payments[6].

As already stated, the context was not favourable, calling for the intervention of the NBR in order to rescue the credit system and ensure the liquidity required by the Romanian economy. In the first quarter of 1931, the NBR turned into gold currencies *lei* 550 million worth of gold bullions, as illustrated by the decline in the cover stock from *lei* 9,275,434,874 in February to *lei* 8,811,108,137 in May 1931[7]. During the same year, the portfolio rediscounted by the NBR surged by *lei* 6.2 billion in April-November 1931, being accompanied by a *lei* 4.9 billion pick-up in money circulation[8]. A partial solution was the resort to new foreign borrowings, the most significant of which was the 7.5% Development Loan of 1931. Although the loan was earmarked for streamlining certain economic sectors and domestic credit institutions (the Agricultural Credit, railway and agriculture investments), it was used by the NBR in order to maintain the *leu* stability and convertibility, given the crisis situation. "It is doubtful whether our issuing institution – says the Romanian economist Victor Slăvescu – would have been able to control the harsh circumstances in the summer of 1931 and thereafter, unless the equivalent in foreign currency of that loan had been available"[9].

However, the NBR cover stock posted a new drop, the cover of commitments decreasing from 44.75% at the beginning of 1931 to 35.14% at the end of the same

[4] Virgil N. Madgearu, *Evoluția economiei româneşti după Războiul Mondial*, Editura Ştiințifică, Bucharest, 1995, p. 228.
[5] Virgil N. Madgearu (1887–1940), a Romanian economist, sociologist and politician, theoretician of agrarianism and of the doctrine of "the peasants' state", member of the Romanian Academy.
[6] Virgil N. Madgearu, *op. cit.*, p. 226–227.
[7] Victor Slăvescu, *Curs de monedă, credit, schimb*, Editura Scrisul Românesc, Craiova, 1932, p. 367.
[8] Virgil N. Madgearu, *op. cit*, p. 229–230.
[9] Victor Slăvescu, *op. cit.*, p. 373.

year[10]. Victor Slăvescu[11] mentioned also that only by comparing the two readings one can understand very well "to what extent the ground of the stabilised *leu* was shaken up"[12].

3. The Stage of State – Controlled Foreign Exchanges

The first stage ended in the course of 1932 when, considering the developments in world economy, the Bucharest authorities found themselves in a position to choose between the imposition of a restrictive regime concerning the trade in currencies and the exhaustion of all Romania's international means of payment in order to maintain the free movement of currencies and the *leu* convertibility.

During the stage preceding the introduction of the state control over the foreign exchange mechanism, attempts were made to regulate financial relationships with those countries having imposed restrictions to the repayment of debts to the Romanian exporters, by the implementation of similar measures as of 18 December 1931. The direct payment of goods purchased from traders of those countries was forbidden. Payments had to be made in advance in *lei* at the NBR, into the account of the Clearing Office, the import of goods becoming possible only thereafter[13].

The low levels of foreign currency receipts and the heavy capital withdrawals led the NBR to impose monopoly on the trade in foreign currencies on 18 May 1932[14]. According to the new foreign currency regime, all the means of payment in foreign currencies: cheques, bills of exchange, foreign currency accounts, foreign banknotes and coins available to the banks, traders and private persons could only be sold to the issuing institution or to the banks authorised by it. All the foreign currencies resulting from exports, credits etc. were to be assigned to the National Bank. Foreign currencies were purchased and sold only at the exchange rates established by the NBR.

The control over foreign exchanges was extended to all the categories of foreign payments, whether they arose from the state's obligations, from trade relationships, or they represented spending on education, healthcare treatments, tourism etc. The

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[10] Virgil N. Madgearu, *op. cit.,* p. 231

[11] Victor Slăvescu (1891–1977), a Romanian economist and politician; professor at the Academy of High Business and Industry Studies of Bucharest; he wrote numerous monographs dedicated to various Romanian banking institutions; member of the Romanian Academy.

[12] Victor Slăvescu, *op. cit*, p. 371–372.

[13] Law on the regulation of payments in relation with the countries which introduced restrictions on foreign currencies in Official Gazette of 29 February 1932.

[14] Ministers' Council Journal No. 591 of 17 May 1932 in Official Gazette No. 113 of 18 May 1932, Law on the trade in currencies in Official Gazette No. 230 of 1 October 1932, Rules for the enforcement of the Law on the trade in currencies in Official Gazette No. 250 of 25 October 1932.

declared goals of the new foreign exchange regime were the removal of fund transfers masking capital flight and the provision of liquidities to cover the rate of public debt and the amounts necessary for imports. The other foreign payments, including the repayment of private debts, were made only within the affordable limits established by the NBR[15].

Another aspect worth mentioning is that of the NBR's institutional condition. According to its statute, the NBR was a bank with both private and state-run capital, with private capital accounting for the largest part, i.e. 90%[16]. According to the law, the NBR was entitled to issue money. The pieces of legislation governing the control over foreign exchanges granted special powers to the NBR as proxy of the state towards the other credit institutions and private persons. It held the monopoly on currency trade, established the official exchange rate, and approved the transfers abroad in *lei* or foreign currencies. Furthermore, the NBR was entitled to exercise a preventive control over foreign currency operations by checking out the relevant documents (import licence, certificate issued by the Chamber of Commerce, other documentary evidence) submitted by the applicant for the transfer endorsement, through the notifications of the customs authorities regarding the exports performed, through checking out the special foreign currency registers where the banks and the companies had to write down the foreign account balances. All the commitments in foreign means of payment of the other state institutions were subject to the endorsement by the Ministry of Finance, which in its turn had the obligation to consult with the NBR. Such exceptional state of affairs was perceived with high intensity at the time and the management of the issuing institution itself found it compulsory to explain the new status as follows:

"Of course, the imposition of a control over the use of foreign currencies is not an advisable measure within a normal exchange system, but this solution was the only one and, unless resorted to in due time, a real disaster would have occurred for the entire national economy.

The measure was adopted as a result of, on the one hand, the heavy deposit withdrawals from banks, which went out or became internal hoard, and the rushing demand for coverage of foreign loans and, on the other hand, the impossibility of recovering the capitals of the Romanian exports, which were blocked in many countries by various restrictions".

"The control over the use of foreign currencies was organised directly by the National Bank of Romania through centralisation. The bank assumed a very

[15] Virgil N. Madgearu, *op. cit*., p 232–233.
[16] The National Bank of Romania Statute in Official Gazette No. 30 bis of 7 February 1929.

difficult task which could not be avoided, given the importance of the matter, with direct regard to the currency stability"[17].

The introduction of the foreign exchange restrictions was followed by a downfall in the *leu* exchange rate in a range between 5% and 15%. On the other hand, the NBR witnessed an increase in foreign currency inflows from *lei* 410 million in May 1932 to *lei* 970 million in June 1932[18]. The upward trend maintained in the course of the year. As concerns the demand for foreign currency, the NBR approved almost 100% of the requests of state institutions and of *régies autonomes*, and a large part of the requests coming from traders, industrial entrepreneurs etc. (table 2). In spite of the foregoing, in 1932 the foreign currency deficit saw an increase. In May and August 1932, the NBR had to sell gold in amount of *lei* 547 million out of its stock in order to replenish the foreign currency stock. The cover of the sight commitments at the end of 1932 almost reached the limit of 35.84%[19].

Mention should be made that the control over the trade in foreign exchange is connected to the supervision of foreign trade. The regulation of imports was adopted in 1932 in order to meet the measures establishing quotas imposed on Romanian goods by other countries. The clearing exports were regulated as well. As far as the control over the currency circulation is concerned, clearing exporters had to surrender to the NBR, at the official exchange rate, between 20% and 40% of the hard currencies obtained[20].

However, the control over foreign exchanges was imposed without establishing a direct relationship with the supervision of foreign trade. The control was aimed at preventing the movement of capitals without ensuring a permanent surplus of the trade balance. As a consequence, in 1933, Romania had to reduce the exports and diminish the trade balance to a half (table 3), which soon resulted in a substantial deficit of hard currencies available at the NBR. This development had negative effects, which translated in the following year into a built-up of trade arrears and the impossibility to ensure the transfer of financial tasks set forth in the agreements concluded by the Romanian government and foreign creditors. Under such circumstances, the regulation of foreign trade and that of currency movements had to be strictly defined.

By means of several legal acts adopted in October-November 1934, it was established that every import operation could be performed only on the basis of a previous export operation and that imports could not exceed in any way 60% of the

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[17] National Bank of Romania, Report of the Board of Directors submitted to the Ordinary General Meeting of Shareholders, 1933, p. 5–6.

[18] Gh. N. Staicu, *Schimburile cu străinătatea în regim restrictiv*, Bucharest, 1944, p. 101–104.

[19] *Ibidem*.

[20] Ministers' Council Journal No. 1234 of 22 November 1932 in Official Gazette No. 276 of 24 November 1932.

value of the exported products, in order to prevent the accumulation of trade arrears. The transfer endorsement on the import license was introduced, in the absence of which the license was not valid, and the import quotas depended therefore on the NBR's currency holdings. The exportable products were divided into two categories: the first category included the oil products, wood, grains and vegetables which were to be exported only for hard currencies, whereas the second category included all the other products. All the currencies resulting from exports had to be assigned to the NBR at the official exchange rate. This time the lawmaker also established the currency percentage (40%) the NBR was to keep for the State's needs and for its own operations. The remaining 60% were to be allotted to cover the imports of goods, being distributed to the traders according to the legal provisions[21]. The mechanism linking the distribution of currencies to the foreign trade through the NBR was complicated. The customs authorities issued import certificates for 60% of the export value, which were distributed to the traders by the Board for Guidance and Supervision of Foreign Trade. The actual reception of the aforementioned documents was the responsibility of the NBR, which authorized several banking institutions for the negotiation thereof[22].

In addition to the possibility of negotiating the value of import certificates by means of the authorized banks, the new regime also introduced the foreign exchange premiums in order to cover the differential between external and domestic prices and to provide incentives for exports. Hence, as of December 1934, the NBR paid a 6% premium calculated for the value of the exports in the first category (oil, grains, vegetables), which added to the supplementary premiums paid for the exports of grains and vegetables. Such premiums were designed to indemnify the exporters for the losses they incurred from assigning currencies to the NBR at an official exchange rate lower than the real one. Moreover, attempts were made to reorient the clearing exports to the foreign exchange payment exports[23].

The NBR's receipts in foreign exchange did not improve during 1934. That year ended with a decrease in the surplus of the foreign trade balance and a minimum positive balance of hard currencies for the NBR, which affected the balance of payments by perpetuation of trade arrears. Under such circumstances, new changes were implemented with a view to liberalizing the foreign exchange regime. In order to stimulate the assignment of currencies to the NBR and reduce the

[21] Royal Decree No. 2871 of 25 October 1934 in Official Gazette No. 247 of 26 October 1934 and Royal Decree No. 3067 of 14 November 1934 in Official Gazette No. 267 of 19 November 1934.

[22] The English-Czechoslovakian Bank, the Italian and Romanian Commercial Bank, the Romanian Commercial Bank, the Romanian Credit Bank, Bank of Roumania Ltd., *Romanian Bank*, Urban Bank and the Romanian Banking Society.

[23] Gh. N. Staicu, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

differential between the official exchange rate and the free market exchange rate, the principle of partial negotiability for trade in currencies was adopted in March 1935. Thus, the currencies resulting from exports were to be assigned at the official exchange rate to the NBR in proportion of 60% in case of oil products and 40% of the export value of the other products. Such currencies were designed to cover the foreign payments of the Romanian government and public institutions. The rest of the currencies resulting from exports could be negotiated by traders through the authorized banks according to the rules established by the NBR[24]. Those currency holdings were earmarked for the importers who proved they had the import license issued by the Foreign Trade Directorate within the Ministry of National Economy or for other persons' requests (for travelling, studying, dealing with health problems etc.), which were endorsed by a special inter-ministry board attached to the Directorate for Regulation of Foreign Trade.

The law of the time set forth special arrangements regarding the payments to the countries with which Romania had entered into payment agreements. The provisions of such arrangements concerning payment priorities prevailed over the aforementioned regulations or other domestic priorities. Moreover, the currencies referred to in the payment agreements, even if they were hard currencies, were not converted into *lei* at the official exchange rate plus foreign exchange premiums, but at the exchange rates established through bilateral agreements[25].

The arrangements on the currency partial negotiation did not have the expected results since the currency inflows with the NBR were not sufficient. In the second half of 1935, the NBR had to pay *lei* 2,857 million in hard currencies on the account of government debts, while it could only rely on approximately *lei* 1,420 million[26] representing hard currency inflows; moreover, at mid-1935, trade arrears amounted to *lei* 7,404 million in hard currencies[27].

Under such circumstances, the Romanian authorities decided to revert to the previous arrangements as of 11 June 1935. The law reinstated the NBR's monopoly on the entire currency trade, thus putting an end to the currency partial negotiability, while reorganizing the foreign exchange premium system. The issuing institution had to pay "for the purpose of maintaining and stimulating exports" a premium higher than the official exchange rate of each currency. At first, the percentage of the premium was set on a discriminative basis, according to the category of goods to be exported, within the range of 10% for oil products and

[24] Ministers' Council Journal No. 429 on foreign trade arrangements in Official Gazette No. 56, Part I of 7 March 1935.

[25] Ministers' Council Journal No. 969 in Official Gazette No.130, Part I of 11 June 1935 and Decision of the Ministers' Council Presidency No. 2532 on the premiums for imports and exports of goods in Official Gazette No. 130, Part I of 11 June 1935.

[26] NBR Archives, Secretariat Division archives, file 4/1934, sheet 92–93.

[27] NBR Archives, Research Division archives, file 4/1931–1940, sheet 751.

40% for wheat and wheat derived products[28]. It is worth mentioning that the premiums were granted only for the exports of the goods paid in hard currencies[29], whether they were placed in current accounts or in clearing accounts. By contrast, the importers and the individuals who obtained currencies from the NBR for other types of foreign payments had to pay a 44% premium[30], in addition to the official exchange rate of the required currency.

Given that hard currency outflows exceeded inflows and Romania's trade balance posted significant deficits, the Romanian government deemed necessary to unify the foreign exchange premiums, whether it concerned the settlement of currencies bought from exporters or arising from other operations: when selling foreign currencies, the NBR charged a flat premium higher than the official exchange rate. Starting with 1 December 1935, the percentage of the premium was set at 38% of the official exchange rate of the currency concerned[31].

This regime was in place until 30 August 1938, when, given a new fall in prices on world markets, particularly in prices for grains and grain derived products, it was found that the 38% premium was no longer sufficient to stimulate the exports of such products. Under such circumstances, the principle of currency partial negotiability was applied again, the official exchange rate and the foreign exchange premium being preserved in the case of currencies assigned to the NBR.

On 31 August 1938, legal grounds were provided for the partial negotiation of currencies arising from normal exports of grains and grain derived products, leguminous plants, oil-bearing seeds and other seeds. From the amount resulting from such exports, 70% was to be assigned to the NBR at the official exchange rate plus the 38% premium, the remaining 30% being left available to exporters, who could trade such amounts through the authorized banks[32].

The use of several exchange rates arising from payment agreements, the clearing trade, the 30% negotiable quota and the 38% foreign exchange premium,

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[28] Wheat and wheat derived products 40%, barley, oat and rye 30%, maize 15%, livestock and animal products, food products (except poultry) 30%, wood and wood derived products 25%, oil products 10%, other products 25%.

[29] French francs, Swiss francs, Belgian francs, Italian liras, pesetas, Dutch florins, pounds sterling, Egyptian or Palestinian pounds, US or Canadian dollars, Czechoslovakian *koruna*, Danish, Norwegian or Swedish *krona*.

[30] Ministers' Council Journal No. 969 in Official Gazette No.130, Part I of 11 June 1935 and Decision of the Ministers' Council Presidency No. 2532 on the premiums for imports and exports of goods in Official Gazette No. 130, Part I of 11 June 1935.

[31] Ministers' Council Journal No. 2234 on changes in foreign trade arrangements in Official Gazette No. 272, Part I of 26 November 1935 and Ministers' Council Journal No. 1173 on foreign exchange premium for exports and imports of goods in Official Gazette No.147, Part I of 27 June 1936.

[32] Ministers' Council Journal No. 2064 in Official Gazette No.201, Part I of 31 August 1938.

along with the rise of domestic prices, aggravated the depreciation of the national currency.

In order to put an end to speculations, as of 1 October 1939, the free partial negotiation of currencies resulting from exports was extended to all categories of goods. Moreover, the percentage was increased, 30% were assigned to the NBR at the official exchange rate plus the 38% premium, while the remaining 70% could be freely negotiated on the stock exchange through the authorized banks and could only be used for the transfers that had received authorisation from the Office of Exchanges with Foreign Countries[33].

The aim was to foster exports, direct them towards hard currency countries, unify the multiple exchange rates of the *leu* and strengthen its position, cut domestic prices and lower the cost of living. However, the measure was not suitable, as the world war burst out, which caused the introduction in other countries of guidance and rationalisation measures that increased the role of the state in the economy. In addition, there were numerous clearing and payment agreements which regulated the use of currencies resulting from the exchanges between Romania and other countries, and established fixed conversion rates as well. There were also the clearing arrangements, as well as the hard currency accounts blocked by agreements for certain purposes. This state of affairs made the free negotiation of currencies ineffective in proportion of 70%. Actually, the free partial negotiability of foreign currencies was not applied for a long period, as in 1940, the full assignment of currencies to the NBR was resumed, concurrently with the increase of the payable foreign exchange premium above the official exchange rate.

4. Conclusions

Leaving aside the changes occurring from a period of time to another, the foreign exchange regime in Romania after 1932 may be characterized in institutional terms and in terms of goal fulfilment.

In institutional terms, the organisation of control over the trade in currencies was based on the following principles: the assignment to the NBR of the currencies resulting from exports of goods or obtained otherwise, focusing the currency operations at the NBR, imposing the State's control over the currency operations either directly or through its proxies[34].

As concerns the fulfilment of goals, the State's control over the trade in currencies was aimed at protecting the stability of the national currency and ensuring the hard currency needed for the payment of the country's foreign debt,

[33] Decree-Law No. 3418 regulating the exchanges with foreign countries in Official Gazette No.215, Part I of 17 September 1939.
[34] NBR Archives, External Accounting Division archives, file 13/1946, unnumbered.

whether it arose from public debt or represented arms costs. In addition, it is worth mentioning the payments arising from Romania's foreign trade.

The attempts at ensuring the currency holdings necessary to the State and the Romanian economy were not always successful. The recurrent changes in the foreign exchange regime during 1934–1935, as well as during 1938–1940 reflect the criticality of the situation. In those periods of time, a sudden passage was made from the NBR's monopoly on the purchase of currencies to the possibility of partial negotiation thereof, just to revert to the previous state of affairs later on. The aforementioned changes were accompanied by the introduction of payable foreign exchange premiums above the official exchange rate of the currencies assigned to the NBR.

At the same time the stability of the national currency, the *leu*, could not be fully ensured. A proof is given by the introduction of the free negotiable quotas for the currencies resulting from exports, as well as by the introduction of foreign exchange premiums, which diminished the value of the *leu*. The devaluation thereof was officially admitted by the revaluation of the gold stock of the NBR in November 1936 at the price of *lei* 153,333.33/kg of fine gold. It was determined by adding the 38% premium (*lei* 42,222.22/kg of fine gold) to the stabilisation price used in 1929 (*lei* 111,111.11/kg of fine gold)[35].

Overall, the real value of the Romanian *leu* at that time could not, however, be determined for sure. Such a confusing situation was generated by the control the State imposed over the trade in currencies. The large number of regulations governing the foreign exchange and foreign trade regimes, the recurrent change thereof within short periods of time, the coexistence of several exchange rates for the same currency (the rates resulted from payment and clearing agreements, the official exchange rate plus the foreign exchange premiums, the exchange rates used on the free market) resulted in the distortion of relations between the Romanian *leu* and the foreign currencies.

[35] Decree No. 2504, published in Official Gazette No. 260 of 7 November 1936.

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* * * *NBR, Reports of the Board of Directors to the General Shareholders' Meeting***,** 1933–1936

Table 1: Romania's Balance of Payments

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Year	**Foreign trade balance**	**Loans, credits, advances**	**External public debt (amounts transferred abroad with annuity title)**	**Public régies and the state**	**Miscellaneous**	**Invisibles (capital transfers abroad, repatriations)**	**Balance (covered with gold and foreign exchange)**
	1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7=1+2+3+ +4+5+6*
1927	4,258	434	-4,279	-600	350	2,657	2,820
1928	-5,226	4,646	-4,012	-586	350	2,097	-2,731
1929	-668	13,617	-5,392	-660	350	713	7,960
1930	5,477	838	-5,032	-662	320	-4,667	-3,726
1931	6,442	3,618	-6,090	-192	-17	-7,381	-3,620
1932	4,701	1,647	-4.776	-384	-82	-1,460	-354
1933 (11 months)	2,485	-208	-2,423	-205	137	-435	-649

Source: Victor Slăvescu, *La situation économique de la Roumanie et sa capacité de paiement mémorandum,* MO Imprimeria Centrală, Bucharest, 1934, Annex 57.

Table 2: The Volume of Foreign Exchange Requests at the NBR

lei

	Year	1932	1933	1934	1935
Foreign exchange requests	Traders	3,299,954,906	3,105,012,295	10,885,316	5,942,213
	Industrial entrepreneurs	2,202,511,261	2,198,204,757	4,256,994	4,402,456
	Private agricultural companies and others	673,069,251	680,978,726	1,977,680	893,491
	Public institutions and *régies autonomes*	5,045,974,946	3,751,941,960	1,813,771	2,213,473
Total		**11,221,510,364**	**9,736,137,738**	**18,933,761**	**13,451,633**
Foreign exchange approvals	Traders	2,306,596,781	2,794,387,243	7,995,884	5,619,008
	Industrial entrepreneurs	1,494,059,578	2,044,779,306	3,098,577	4,120,630
	Private agricultural companies and others	540,467,413	552,695,241	1,431,708	552,926
	Public institutions and *régies autonomes*	5,045,657,832	3,751,030,000	1,800,497	2,197,548
Total		**9,386,781,604**	**9,142,891,790**	**14,326,666**	**12,490,112**

Table 2 Continued: The Volume of Foreign Exchange Requests at the NBR

Rejected requests	Traders	993,358,125	310,625,052	2,889,432	323,205
	Industrial entrepreneurs	708,451,683	153,425,451	1,158,417	281,826
	Private agricultural companies and others	132,601,838	128,283,485	545,972	340,565
	Public institutions and *régies autonomes*	317,114	911,960	13,274	15,925
Total		**1,834,728,760**	**593,245,948**	**4,607,095**	**961,521**

Source: NBR, Reports of the Board of Directors to the General Shareholders'Meeting, 1933–1936.

Table 3: Romania's Foreign Trade 1929–1939

Year	Exports		Imports		Balance *lei* mill.
	thousands tonnes	*lei* mill.	thousands tonnes	*lei* mill.	
1929	7,065.0	28,960.0	1,120.0	29,628.0	-668.0
1930	9,215.0	28,522.0	805.0	23,044.2	5,477.8
1931	10,047.0	22,196.9	560.0	15,754.6	6,442.3
1932	9,057.0	16,721.6	450.0	12,011.3	4,710.3
1933	8,778.0	14,710.8	467.0	11,741.9	2,428.9
1934	8,854.0	13,655.7	636.0	13,208.5	447.2
1935	9,276.0	16,756.2	533.0	10,847.5	5,908.7
1936	10,549.0	21,703.4	630.0	12,637.7	9,065.7
1937	9,637.0	31,568.4	709.0	20,248.7	11,283.7
1938	7,409.0	21,532.6	821.0	18,767.8	2,764.8
1939	7,564.0	26,809.3	739.0	22,890.5	3,918.8

Source: Victor Axenciuc, *Evoluţia economică a României, Cercetări statistico-istorice 1859-1947, vol. III Monedă credit-comerţ finanţe publice,* Editura Academiei Române, Bucharest, 2000, p. 361–362.