

OORSIG VAN GELD- EN BANKWESE

Die uiteenlopende neigings in die verskeie sektore van die Unie se ekonomie, wat veral gedurende die tweede kwartaal van 1956 merkbaar was, het gedurende die derde kwartaal van die jaar nog duideliker kenbaar geword.

Soos blyk uit die onderstaande tabel, het uitvoere skerp gestyg in die derde kwartaal, terwyl toenames ook aangeteken is in bankdebette, spoorweginkomste en kleinhandelsverkope. Aan die ander kant was daar 'n aansienlike daling in diskonteringe en voorskotte van die handelsbanke, en kleiner afnames in invoere, effektebeursomset, bouplanne goedgekeur en eiendomstransaksies. Werkverskaffing in die mynwese en in die fabriekswese het relatief stabiel gebly, maar dié in die boubedryf het verder afgeleem.

*Indekse — Aangesuiwer vir Seisoenskommelings
(1948 = 100)*

	1955	1956		
	4de Kw.	1ste Kw.	2de Kw.	3de Kw.
Bankdebette	190	202	198	204
Effektebeursomset	44	72	49	42
Diskonteringe en voorskotte van handelsbanke	199	209	212	195
Waarde van invoere	136	150	141	133
Waarde van uitvoere (uitgesonderd goud)	265	258	306	344
Spoorweginkomste	196	200	196	197
Waarde van kleinhandelsverkope*	121	125	122	123
Waarde van eiendomstransaksies	98	82	86	82
Waarde van bouplanne goedgekeur†	123	131	130	123
Werkverskaffing:				
Mynwese	119	122	124	124
Fabriekswese	129	130	130	129
Boubedryf	103	103	101	98

* Vier stedelike gebiede.

† Agtien stedelike gebiede.

Inagnemende die maandelikse skommelings in die verskeie indeksz ná aansuiwering vir seisoensbewegings, wil dit voorkom asof daar gedurende die eerste nege maande van 1956 'n afwaartse neiging was in diskonteringe en voorskotte van die handelsbanke, bouplanne goedgekeur, invoere, effektebeursomset en eiendomstransaksies, in teenstelling met 'n opwaartse neiging in minerale produksie, uitvoere en bankdebette, terwyl spoorweginkomste en kleinhandelsverkope geen duidelike opwaartse of afwaartse neiging getoon het nie.

BETALINGSBALANS

'n Paar noemenswaardige veranderings het gedurende die derde kwartaal van 1956 in die Unie se betalingsbalans plaasgevind. Vir die eerste maal

in die na-oorlogse tydperk, indien nie in sy geskiedenis nie, het die Unie 'n aansienlike netto surplus in lopende rekening in die derde kwartaal van 'n jaar getoon. Hierdie surplus is egter nie ten volle weerspieël in die toename in goud en buitelandse valutareserwes nie, aangesien die land terselfdertyd 'n netto uitvloei van private kapitaal ondervind het.

Goedereinvoere het van £128 miljoen in die tweede kwartaal tot omtrent £122 miljoen in die derde kwartaal gedaal, d.w.s. met ongeveer £6 miljoen, wat ietwat meer as die gewone seisoensaftname was. In teenstelling met die gewone seisoenspatroon egter, het goedereinvoere, uitgesonderd goud en skeepsvoorrade, van £98 miljoen tot ongeveer £101 miljoen toegeneem, met die gevolg dat die Unie se handelstekort van £30 miljoen in die tweede kwartaal tot ongeveer £21 miljoen in die derde kwartaal gedaal het, d.w.s. met omtrent £9 miljoen. Boonop het die Unie se netto goudproduksie met omtrent £4 miljoen gestyg, sodat, met insluiting van die toename van omtrent £1 miljoen in netto lopende onsigbare betalings, die land se netto balans in lopende rekening 'n verbetering van omtrent £12 miljoen getoon het, d.w.s. vanaf 'n tekort van omtrent £2 miljoen in die tweede kwartaal tot 'n surplus van ongeveer £10 miljoen in die derde kwartaal.

Nieteenstaande hierdie surplus van omtrent £10 miljoen in lopende rekening, het die Unie se goud en buitelandse valutareserwes slegs 'n toename van ongeveer £1 miljoen getoon, waaruit dit wil voorkom asof daar 'n netto uitvloei van kapitaal, insluitende handelskrediete, van omtrent £9 miljoen was. Aangesien ontvangste in die vorm van offisiële lenings ooreengeskou het met terugbetalings gedurende hierdie tydperk, wil dit voorkom asof die netto uitvloei van kapitaal plaasgevind het met betrekking tot private langtermyn en korttermyn fondse, en die beskikbare rekord van buitelandse valutatransaksies dui aan dat 'n aansienlike deel daarvan waarskynlik bestaan het uit handelskrediete wat aan buitelandse kopers toegestaan is gedurende 'n tydperk van hoë uitvoere.

Geneem oor die eerste nege maande van 1956, het die Unie se netto lopende tekort teenoor die buiteland slegs omtrent £13 miljoen beloop, wat gelyk was aan die afname in sy goud en buitelandse valutareserwes. Gedurende dieselfde tydperk 'n jaar gelede, het die netto lopende tekort £39 miljoen beloop, toe daar 'n daling van £36 miljoen in die reserwes was.

Gedurende Oktober en November 1956 het die Reserwebank se goud en buitelandse valutareserwes verder van £114.2 miljoen tot £125.2 miljoen gestyg. Hierdie styging van £11 miljoen blyk 'n verdere

verbetering in die Unie se netto balans in lopende rekening te weerspieël gedurende 'n tydperk wanneer uitvoere gewoonlik 'n seisoensstyging en invoere 'n seisoensafname vertoon.

GELD IN OMLOOP

Ná 'n daling vanaf £448.6 miljoen aan die end van 1955 tot £408.6 miljoen aan die end van Julie 1956, het die totale hoeveelheid geld in omloop tot £432.2 miljoen aan die end van September gestyg, maar toe weer tot £423.4 miljoen aan die end van Oktober gedaal. Daar was dus 'n netto afname van omtrent £25 miljoen gedurende die eerste tien maande van die jaar, wat bestaan het uit afnames van £14 miljoen en £11 miljoen in die bedrae in besit van die Regering en die private sektor, onderskeidelik, en wat gunstig vergelyk met die daling van ongeveer £40 miljoen gedurende dieselfde tydperk 'n jaar gelede.

Die faktor wat die meeste bygedra het tot die afname in die geldhoeveelheid gedurende die eerste tien maande van 1956 was 'n verdere verskuiwing van omtrent £34 miljoen vanaf onmiddellik opeisbare na termyndeposito's by die handelsbanke, alhoewel die land se ongunstige betalingsbalans gedurende hierdie tydperk ook 'n negatiewe invloed uitgeoefen het. Boonop het Reserwebankkrediet 'n klein afname van omtrent £4 miljoen getoon, maar, aan die ander kant, het handelsbankkrediet met meer as £20 miljoen gestyg as 'n netto gevolg van 'n afname van ongeveer £8 miljoen in die banke se diskonteringe en voorskotte, en toenames van £11 miljoen in hulle beleggings en £17 miljoen in hulle saldo's by die Nasionale Finansiekorporasie.

'n Kenmerk van die monetêre ontwikkelings in die Unie gedurende die afgelope paar maande was die verhoogde likwiditeit van die handelsbanke. Ná 'n afname vanaf £212 miljoen aan die end van

1955 tot £202 miljoen aan die end van Junie 1956, het hulle totale likwiede bate tot £250 miljoen aan die end van Oktober gestyg. Sodoende het hulle verhouding van likwiede bate tot verpligtings teenoor die publiek, wat van 45.7 persent aan die end van 1955 tot 44.0 persent aan die end van Junie 1956 afgeneem het, tot 51.5 persent aan die end van Oktober gestyg, terwyl hulle verhouding van diskonteringe en voorskotte tot verpligtings teenoor die publiek, wat van 59.0 persent tot 61.1 persent toegeneem het, gedaal het tot 54.7 persent.

'n Ietwat soortgelyke ontwikkeling word weerspieël in die beskikbare syfers vir bouverenigings wie se deposito's, wat slegs met £3.4 miljoen en £2.4 miljoen gedurende die eerste twee kwartale van 1956, onderskeidelik, toegeneem het, met £8.5 miljoen gedurende die derde kwartaal van die jaar gestyg het. Terwyl hulle verbandvoorskotte taamlike konstante toenames gedurende die drie kwartale getoon het, nl. £4.9 miljoen, £5.9 miljoen en £5.4 miljoen, onderskeidelik, het hulle likwiede bate, wat met £2.6 miljoen en £3.1 miljoen gedurende die eerste en tweede kwartale toegeneem het, gedurende die derde kwartaal met £6.2 miljoen gestyg.

GOEDEREPRYSE

Ná 'n afname vanaf 157.3 in Desember 1955 tot 155.9 in Julie 1956, het die indeks van groothandelspryse in die Unie (basis: 1948=100) weer tot 157.8 in Oktober gestyg. Die indeks van kleinhandelspryse egter, wat geleidelik toegeneem het vanaf 137.6 in Desember 1955 tot 140.1 in Julie 1956, het daarna min verandering getoon en op 140.0 in Oktober gestaan.

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MONETARY AND BANKING REVIEW

The divergent tendencies in the several sectors of the Union's economy, which were particularly noticeable during the second quarter of 1956, became even more pronounced during the third quarter of the year.

As indicated by the table below, exports rose sharply in the third quarter, while varying increases were also registered in bank debits, railway earnings and retail sales. On the other hand, there was a substantial decrease in discounts and advances of the commercial banks and smaller declines in imports, stock exchange turnover, building plans passed and property transactions. Mining and manufacturing employment remained relatively stable, but building employment continued to decline.

*Indexes — Excluding Seasonal Movements
(1948 = 100)*

	1955		1956	
	4th Qtr.	1st Qtr.	2nd Qtr.	3rd Qtr.
Bank Debits	190	202	198	204
Stock Exchange Turnover	44	72	49	42
Discounts and Advances of Commercial Banks	199	209	212	195
Value of Imports	136	150	141	133
Value of Exports (excluding Gold)	265	258	306	344
Railway Earnings	196	200	196	197
Value of Retail Sales*	121	125	122	123
Value of Property Transactions	98	82	86	82
Value of Building Plans Passed†	123	131	130	123
Employment:				
Mining	119	122	124	124
Manufacturing	129	130	130	129
Building	103	103	101	98

* Four Urban Areas.

† Eighteen Urban Areas.

Taking account of the monthly fluctuations in the various seasonally adjusted indexes, it would appear that during the first nine months of 1956, there was a downward tendency in discounts and advances of the commercial banks, building plans passed, imports, stock exchange turnover and property transactions, as contrasted with an upward movement in mineral production, exports and bank debits, while railway earnings and retail sales showed no distinct upward or downward tendency.

BALANCE OF PAYMENTS

Some notable changes took place in the Union's balance of payments with the outside world during the third quarter of 1956. For the first time in the post-war period, if not in its history, the Union showed a substantial net surplus on current account

in the third quarter of a year. This surplus was, however, not fully reflected in the increase in its gold and foreign exchange reserves, because the country at the same time experienced a net outflow of private capital.

Imports of merchandise declined from £128 million in the second quarter to about £122 million in the third quarter, i.e. by about £6 million, which was somewhat in excess of the usual seasonal decline. Contrary to the seasonal movement, however, exports of merchandise, excluding gold and ships' stores, increased from £98 million to about £101 million, with the result that the Union's trade deficit declined from £30 million in the second quarter to about £21 million in the third quarter, i.e. by about £9 million. In addition, the Union's net gold output increased by about £4 million, so that, with the inclusion of the estimated increase of about £1 million in net current invisible payments, the country's net balance on current account showed an improvement of about £12 million, i.e. from a deficit of about £2 million in the second quarter to a surplus of about £10 million in the third quarter.

Notwithstanding this surplus of about £10 million on current account, the Union's gold and foreign exchange reserves only showed an increase of about £1 million, from which it would appear that there was a net outflow of capital, including trade credits, of about £9 million. Since receipts in the form of official loans were offset by repayments during this period, the net outflow of capital would appear to have taken place in respect of private long-term and short-term funds, and the available records of foreign exchange transactions indicate that a substantial part thereof probably consisted of trade credits extended to foreign buyers during a period of heavy exports.

Taken over the first nine months of 1956, the Union's net current deficit with the outside world amounted to only about £13 million, which was equal to the decline in its gold and foreign exchange reserves. During the same period a year ago, the net current deficit amounted to £39 million, when there was a drop of £36 million in the reserves.

During October and November, 1956, the Reserve Bank's gold and foreign exchange reserves increased from £114.2 million to £125.2 million. The increase of £11 million over these two months, when exports as a rule show a seasonal increase and imports a seasonal decline, would appear to reflect a further improvement in the Union's net current balance with the outside world.

MONEY IN CIRCULATION

After declining from £448.6 million at the end of 1955 to £408.6 million at the end of July, 1956, the total quantity of money in circulation increased to £432.2 million at the end of September, and then declined again to £423.4 million at the end of October. There was, therefore, a net decline of about £25 million during the first ten months of the year, which consisted of declines of £14 million and £11 million in the amounts held by the Government and private sectors, respectively, and which compared favourably with the drop of about £40 million during the same period a year ago.

The biggest contributing factor to the decline in the money supply during the first ten months of 1956, was a further shift of about £34 million from demand to time deposits with the commercial banks, although the country's unfavourable balance of payments during this period also had a negative effect. In addition, Reserve Bank credit showed a small decline of about £4 million, but, on the other hand, commercial bank credit increased by over £20 million, as a net result of a decline of about £8 million in the banks' discounts and advances, and increases of £11 million in their investments and £17 million in their balances with the National Finance Corporation.

A feature of monetary developments in the Union during recent months has been the increased liquidity of the commercial banks. After declining from £212 million at the end of 1955 to £202 million at the end of June, 1956, their total liquid assets increased to £250 million by the end of October.

Thus their ratio of liquid assets to liabilities to the public, which had declined from 45.7 per cent at the end of 1955 to 44.0 per cent at the end of June, 1956, increased to 51.5 per cent at the end of October, while their ratio of discounts and advances to liabilities to the public which had increased from 59.0 per cent to 61.1 per cent, declined to 54.7 per cent.

A somewhat similar development is revealed by the available figures for building societies whose total deposits, which had increased by only £3.4 million and £2.4 million during the first two quarters of 1956, respectively, rose by £8.5 million during the third quarter of the year. While their mortgage advances showed fairly constant increases during the three quarters, namely, £4.9 million, £5.9 million and £5.4 million, respectively, their liquid assets, after increasing by £2.6 million and £3.1 million during the first and second quarters, rose by £6.2 million during the third quarter.

COMMODITY PRICES

After declining from 157.3 in December, 1955 to 155.9 in July, 1956, the index of wholesale prices in the Union (base: 1948=100) increased again to 157.8 in October. The index of retail prices, however, which had increased steadily from 137.6 in December, 1955 to 140.1 in July, 1956, showed little change thereafter, and stood at 140.0 in October.

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