

Declassified E.O. 12356 Section 3.3/NND No. 785015

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INDUSTRY & COMMERCE, RATIONING
JAN. - APR. 1941; SEPT. 1941 - APR. 1943

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ITALY: CLOTHING RATIONING AND STANDARDIZATION.Standardization.

Preparation for rationing of textile goods on the point system began in September 1941, by that time standardized goods (virtually "utility") represented about 75% of production and the remainder were high priced "free goods" for luxury and export including goods of natural silk not required for military purposes.

Spinning mills were obligated to adopt standardized production methods and an extended list of permissible types of products was issued by the Government.

Complete standardization curtailing the 25 free production was enforced in January 1942, when existing retail stocks could still be sold, but all other stocks of "free goods" in the hands of manufacturers and wholesalers had to be held at the Government's disposal.

Shortly afterwards it became necessary to revise the quality and fixed prices of standard goods because they had proved very unsatisfactory.

The State Association of the Textile Industry now determines, in accordance with rules laid down by the Corporation Minister, the categories, types and quantities of standard textile goods for production. Standardization has been extended to cover footwear, hats, stockings, shirts, ties, tailored costumes and all women goods.

Reorganization of Distribution Methods.

The "Interministerial Committee for Supply and Prices" met in April 1943 under the personal chairmanship of Mussolini to deal with the problems of distributing textile goods to civilian consumers and to determine new measures for the organization and control of textile supplies from producers to consumer via the wholesale and retail trade. This committee also issues regulations to prevent textile goods earmarked for civilian consumption from finding their way into illegal channels for sale "under the counter" at prices such in excess of the official ones.

New regulations also arranged that manufacturers could no longer deliver direct to wholesalers and retailers but after meeting military and export priorities, goods for civilian consumption would be sent direct from the factories to the five newly appointed "National Distribution Offices" namely the Cotton, Woolen, Silk, Knitted goods, and Ready-made Garments Offices respectively.

In accordance with the General Distribution Schedule set up by the "Comitato Corporativo per la Distribuzione dei Prodotti Tessili e dell'Abbigliamento", these Offices will distribute supplies to the existing provincial centres of Merchant Associations and to special "warehouse trusts" which are identical with the "standard-

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In accordance with the General Distribution Schedule set up by the "Comitato Corporativo per la Distribuzione dei Prodotti Tessili e dell'Abbigliamento", these Offices will distribute supplies to the existing provincial centres of Merchant Associations and to special "warehouse trusts" which are identical with the "Standard-Sample-Shops" instituted a few months ago. These "Standard-Sample-Shops" it will be remembered, were those which agreed to become agents for Government standard products by displaying and selling a specified proportion of "utility goods". The "Trusts" will also supply wholesalers and private retailers. Supply quotas are based on the number of points received from retailers, as obtained by sales to consumers.

Thus it would appear that deeds of the Merchant Associations and the warehouse trusts virtually constitute a Government non-profit making mechanism whose position enables them to check the quantity and quality of goods en route from producer to consumer.

Rationing in Sicily.

Clothes rationing in Italy was not introduced until late in 1941 owing to her more favourable supply position compared with other European countries, as a result of late entry into the war and consequent ability to build up stocks.

The Italian clothes ration card is modelled on the German one and brief details are as follows:-

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Working class	4 million
Working	4 "
Middle	2 "

Prior to the introduction of clothes rationing, the middle class was the only category of consumer financially able to maintain a wardrobe reserve of clothing, while the low purchasing power of the eight million peasant and working class households did not permit them to acquire clothing reserves. It would appear that although the Italian clothes ration card has supplied the demands of the middle classes satisfactorily the needs of the agricultural and working classes have been under-estimated as stocks of goods suitable for purchase by the latter classes are almost unobtainable. The requirements of the workers and peasants and particularly town workers, consist largely of regular materials, stockings, underwear and bed clothing, especially sheets and other household textiles, as it is mainly in these items and in working clothes that the chief shortages exist not only in northern Italy, Italy etc. for again transport difficulties but also in the industrial North.

Until the end of 1942 non-standardised goods, although in paints were still obtainable in the shops at high prices. These stocks however are now almost exhausted and men appear to be the main sufferers. Socks, woollen clothing and leather footwear have almost disappeared from the market as also women's stockings.

Fashion

Although types and sizes of garments for all consumers are prescribed and all garments must now be made of utility cloth, it would appear that the section of the public which is interested in fashion finds that the "utility" clothing enables them to appear smartly dressed, smart dresses being in vogue at present presumably to save cloth.

It seems probable that the fashion element in Italian standards clothing was planned chiefly to that in Great Britain, namely by the same provision of garments based on a design by an accepted fashion expert.

It is known that as in this country the older members of a family surrender their points to the younger as female members.

The manufacture of double-breasted suits and trouser suits for men was cancelled for a short while during the period of the first card, but was later again permitted.

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1st Clothing Card (valid November 1st 1941 to October 31st 1942) (12 months)

Total Cards issued 40,000,000.
Total points covering cards 6.6 millions.

Points were classified under 6 categories of consumer goods with 5 separate types of card, including footwear, which absorbed 38,000 tons of the above total.

2nd Clothing Card (valid November 1st 1942 to December 31st 1943) (14 months)

Total Cards issued 40,000,000
Total points covering cards 6 millions.

Categories remain as before, but are covered by only two types of card namely one for persons under five and the other for persons over 5 years old.

Special regulations exist for the supply of State and public institutions as well as hospital requirements.

The number of households covered by the clothing card is approximately 10 million, divided as follows:-

Agricultural class	4 million
Working	4 "
Idle	2 "

Prior to the introduction of clothes rationing, the middle class was the only category of consumer financially able to maintain a valuable reserve of clothing, while the low purchasing power of the eight million peasant and working class households did not permit them to acquire clothing reserves. It would appear that although the Italian clothes ration card has supplied the demands of the middle classes satisfactorily the needs of the agricultural and working classes have been under-estimated as stocks of goods suitable for purchase by the latter classes are almost unobtainable. The requirements of the workers and peasants are particularly torn workers, cannot largely of repair materials, stockings, underwear and bed clothing, especially sheets and other household textiles and it is said in these items and in working clothes that the chief shortages exist not only in northern Italy, Sicily etc, but also in transport difficulties but also in the industrial north.

Until the end of 1942 non-standardised goods, although no points were still obtainable in the shops at high prices. These stocks however are now almost exhausted and now appear to be the main sufferers. Socks, woollen clothing and leather footwear have almost disappeared from the market as also women's stockings.

Footwear

Although types and sizes of garments for all consumers are prescribed and all garments must now be made of utility cloth, it now appears that the section of the public which is interested in fashion finds that the utility clothing does not appear exactly dressed, short dresses being in

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Until the end of 1942 men standardized goods, although on points were still obtainable in the shops at high prices. These stocks however are now almost exhausted and men appear to be the main sufferers. Socks, woollen clothing and leather footwear have almost disappeared from the market as also women's stockings.

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Middle "	2 "

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It seems probable that the fashion element in Italian standards clothing was planned similarly to that in Great Britain; namely by the mass production of garments based on a model designed by an accepted fashion expert.

It is known that as in this country the older members of a family surrender their points to the younger and female members.

The manufacture of double-breasted suits and trousers turn-ups for men was cancelled for a short while during the period of the first card, but was later again permitted.

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FOOTWEAR: RATIONING AND STANDARDIZATION.Rationing.

Ever since she entered the war Italy seems to have been making singularly unsuccessful attempts to control her dwindling leather supplies. At first there was little control of any kind, but by January 1941 shortages became apparent and the use of sole leather was restricted to the essential parts of shoes. For footwear with the usual double or treble sole, the use of leather was restricted to the outer sole; for inner soles and decorative parts, leather substitutes were made obligatory.

By autumn 1941, substitute materials appeared such as wooden and cork soled footwear with textile uppers; and an attempt was made to control retail sales by making footwear purchases subject to the production of identification or party cards. These were, however, not permits, but shop keepers entered the purchaser's name and nature of purchase on a special list for regular submission to the authorities.

At the end of 1941 footwear became rationed with clothing and the number of points for a pair of boots or shoes varied between 20 and 30 according to whether leather or substitute sole materials were used and whether the uppers were of leather or cloth.

In November 1942 complicated regulations were issued making all types of footwear from substitutes subject to permission by the Technical Commission of the National Fascists Federation of Footwear and Leather Work Industry and providing guiding principles for the construction of such footwear.

The press reported that boots manufactured from the limited leather quotas for civilian use were to be reserved exclusively for agricultural labourers in the Alps or marshy zones, and for certain categories of industrial workers. Other workers were recommended to use footwear with wooden soles and military rejects were reserved for miners.

Standardization.

Italy introduced standardized footwear in April, 1941. Leather was reserved for the 9 standardized types but fancy shoes could be made up as the manufacturer liked.

The various standard types were as follows:—

Men's Footwear.

Type A. Uppers of good quality leather, carefully finished soles of reconditioned rubber or crests leather. Price 150 lire per pair.

Type B. Same materials as for type A but in poorer quality with soles possibly of wood-grains. Price 134 lire per pair.

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Men's Footwear.

Type A. Uppers of good quality leather, carefully finished soles of reconditioned rubber or ersatz leather. Price 150 lire per pair.

Type B. Same materials as for type A but in poorer quality with soles possibly of wood segments. Price 134 lire per pair.

Type C. Uppers of leather-waste or ersatz leather soles of reconditioned rubber or wood (in this case the wood is made of one piece). Price 81 lire per pair.

Women's Footwear.

Type A. Uppers of best quality leather (including exotic leathers). Soles of reconditioned rubber or ersatz leather.

Type B. Same materials as Type A, but poorer quality.

Type C. Uppers of ersatz leather, soles of wood, or at best, ersatz rubber.

The prices range from 67 - 150 lire per pair.

Children's Footwear.

Type A. Uppers of good leather - soles of ersatz leather or reconditioned rubber. With a doctors certificate soles may be of real leather. Prices 80 - 130 lire per pair.

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Type E. Case materials as in type A, but excluding use of real leather.
 Prices 65 - 96 lire per pair.

Type G. Uppers of crease leather and sole of wood. Prices 25 - 5 lire
 per pair.

Notes: Footwear.

One type only. Uppers of thin leather unsuitable for other purposes. Leather
 waste or crease soles if available. Prices 30 - 45 lire per pair.

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