

The common market

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URL: http://www.cvce.eu/obj/the_common_market-en-220de24d-86dc-4079-b380-05da48b2ad3f.html

Last updated: 08/07/2016



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Although the Six had agreed on the principle of the common market, there was wide disagreement about the procedures for its implementation. Germany and the three Benelux countries, whose economies depended heavily on exports, favoured economic liberalism and wanted a reduction in custom duties and a low common external tariff. France and Italy, whose economies appeared less competitive, were primarily in favour of a mechanism for market regulation and a certain amount of external protection. France, however, was also concerned about the future of its relations with its African colonies and called for their inclusion in the forthcoming European common market. Unable to find a solution to the common agricultural policy which satisfied everybody, the Six simply established a European organisation of the market, once a transitional phase had expired. The Treaty nonetheless provided for improvement in productivity, self-sufficiency in food for the Six and the establishment of an adequate income for farmers.