



CBI
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

CBI Product Factsheet:

Bridge Jewellery in France

Introduction

The French consumer's buying preferences are shifting towards more affordable bridge jewellery, such as silver, lower carat gold and other jewellery made from better-priced alloys, as a result of the fragile economy in Europe. Bridge jewellery is the biggest, fast-growing jewellery segment in France and is therefore an attractive market for jewellery exporters from developing countries (DCs). To compete with French producers of bridge jewellery, DC exporters should capitalise on lower production costs compared to Europe, optimise the use of resources and differentiate themselves through the use of innovative alloys and catchy designs.

Product Definition

Bridge jewellery is so called because it bridges fine jewellery and costume jewellery. Most bridge jewellery is artisan-made, but it can also be mass produced.

Bridge jewellery is made of the following materials:

- gold and silver metals
- Rhodium/Gold/Rose Gold plated silver
- various alloys (such as Silvadium, Argentium Silver)

Bridge jewellery is typically made with:

- semi-precious stones such as jade, topaz, turquoise, amethyst, citrine, garnet
- other stones such as cubic zirconia, fresh water pearls and Swarovski Elements
- with the exception of ruby, emerald, diamond and sapphire

Photo examples:



Bracelet, [Ofée](#)



Necklace, [Ofée](#)

Bridge jewellery is medium-priced jewellery, ranging from € 100 to € 400 depending on the metals and stones used and on the product type (earrings, necklaces, rings, bracelets etc.). Typically jewellery made of silver, alloys and gold-plated silver materials falls into the lower end of this price range, while jewellery pieces made of gold and precious stones fall into the mid- to high-end of the price range. Often the price depends on the brand positioning and the (marketing) statement of the jewellery, as well as the design and the jeweller's craftsmanship.

Some well-known French bridge jewellery brands are [Ofée](#) and [Histoire d'Or](#). There are also many international brands on the market.

Bridge and fine jewellery are grouped together under [Harmonised System](#) (HS) codes 711311, 711319, 711320.

Product Specifications

Quality

Jewellery quality is determined by the materials used and the jeweller's craftsmanship. The choice of metal and gemstones is important; depending on the choice, the product can be more or less robust and resistant to scratches and other damage. Typically precious metals and stones are more robust and damage-resistant.

All manufacturers and exporters of jewellery to Europe must meet the European quality standards. The use of lead, cadmium, nickel and other hazardous metals is regulated in Europe. For more information, see the [Buyer Requirements](#) in this document.

Labelling

Products marketed in France must be labelled in accordance with the EU requirements. Labels must include a description of the content, including the following information:

- Type of product
- Net and gross weight (in kilograms)
- Supplier/manufacturer name and location (optional)
- Serial number
- Environmental logos if applicable

Label information must be electronically readable through the use of [barcodes](#).

Some European companies prefer to disclose only selected information about the manufacturer, for example avoiding disclosure of the manufacturer name and location. In this case the European company will be re-labelling products under its own name or specifying these requirements to the DC exporters. Consult the European buyer to find out what information needs to be displayed on the product and what the particularities are with regard to labelling in France.

Photo example:



Labels

Packaging

In wholesale, jewellery is packaged in exclusive plastic bags or in bulk and cardboard boxes. Very often jewellery is shipped in bulk to Europe and is not packaged in individual bags or boxes. Once it has arrived in Europe, jewellery gets repackaged for retail.

In retail, higher priced jewellery is packaged in special cardboard jewellery boxes, textile or organza bags, for sale to the end-consumer. Gift boxes are only used in retail, not in wholesale. Gift boxes are not supplied by the manufacturer and are typically ordered separately by the European buyers. However, if your stock also includes retail packaging, feel free to offer it to the European buyer. Be prepared to put your European customer's brand on the packaging if required.

Photo examples:



Gift box, [link](#)



Organza bag, [link](#)

Packaging must protect products from damage and protect the buyer from possible injury. Packaging for products marketed in France must meet the EU requirements. As per the [general European requirements for packaging](#), make sure that your packaging:

- has minimal weight and volume;
- has a reduced content of hazardous substances and materials in the packaging material;
- is recyclable (optional, but very much valued by the European customer) and is labelled with a recycling symbol.

Buyer Requirements

All products that are exported to and sold in Europe *must* comply with the relevant EU regulations and standards. Compliance with 1) *must* requirements, 2) *common* requirements and 3) *niche* requirements is a basic necessity for *all exporters* of jewellery. *Must* requirements are the minimum requirements the exporters must meet, and products that fail to meet these are not allowed on the EU market. *Common* and *niche* requirements are additional requirements that are typically set by the European buyer and are also of importance among consumers.

Requirements you must meet

General product safety

- General product safety requirements are applicable to all consumer goods that are not explicitly described in other legislation directives. For jewellery the safety requirements mean that there should be no sharp edges, the product should not break easily, and it should not cause any other danger during normal use.
- Imports of skins of certain seal pups (raw furskins and furskins, tanned or dressed) are prohibited. See the [EU Export Helpdesk](#) for a more detailed overview of these requirements.

Tips:

- Familiarise yourself with the [General Product Safety Directive in the EU Export Helpdesk](#).
- Use common sense to ensure that products are safe for consumers and can be sold on the European market.
- Consider checking the [RAPEX database](#) used by EU Member States to exchange information on unsafe products, to get an idea of possible non-compliances.
- Consider consulting with your buyer to find out more about specific requirements in terms of product safety. Some buyers (typically smaller ones) will just ask for compliance with EU legislation, not elaborating on specific requirements, while other buyers can provide you with information about specific substances that are not allowed in France.

Chemicals

The use of chemicals such as *lead*, *cadmium*, *nickel*, *AZO dyes* and Chromium VI is restricted by the EU and is regulated through several Directives and Regulations.

The use of lead and its compounds in jewellery is restricted by REACH (Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals) regulation. Jewellery with a concentration of lead that is equal to or greater than 0.05% by weight is not allowed on the EU market. The regulation applies to metallic and non-metallic parts of jewellery and hair accessories, including bracelets, necklaces and rings, piercing jewellery and earrings, wrist-watches and wrist-wear, brooches and cufflinks.

The use of cadmium and its compounds is restricted by REACH regulation. Jewellery articles with a concentration of cadmium that is equal to or greater than 0.01% by weight are not allowed on the EU market. The regulation applies to metal beads and other metal components for jewellery making and to metal parts of jewellery and imitation jewellery items and hair accessories, including bracelets, necklaces, rings, piercing jewellery and earrings, wrist-watches and wrist-wear, brooches and cufflinks.

The use of nickel and its compounds may cause allergic contact dermatitis and is therefore restricted by REACH regulation. Nickel and its compounds shall not be used in any post assemblies that are inserted into pierced ears and other pierced parts of the human body unless the rate of nickel release from such post assemblies is less than 0.2 µg/cm²/week (migration limit), and in items intended to come into direct and prolonged contact with the skin such as: earrings, necklaces, bracelets and chains, anklets, finger rings, wrist-watch cases, watch straps and tighteners, rivet buttons, tighteners, rivets, zippers and metal marks, when these are used in garments, if the rate of nickel release from the parts of these items when coming into direct and prolonged contact with the skin is greater than 0.5 µg/cm²/week. The European consumer is particularly concerned about the nickel content in jewellery. Many European buyers require nickel-free jewellery.

AZO dyes is a group of synthetic dyestuffs based on nitrogen often used in the textile industry. Leather and textile components used in jewellery made of coloured leather or other synthetic materials should contain less than 30 mg/kg (0.003% by weight) of the AZO dyes listed in [Appendix 8](#) and [Appendix 10](#) of REACH. The use of AZO dyes/Azocolourants is regulated by REACH regulation. Azo dyes/Azocolourants that are listed in [Appendix 9](#) of REACH shall not be used for colouring textile and leather articles in concentrations higher than 0.1% by mass. No other toxic substances than Azo dyes should be used when colouring jewellery.

Chromium VI in Leather

If your jewellery has leather elements, make sure that the chromium VI content does not exceed 3.0mg/kg. This is a new legislation adopted in March 2014 and although it is officially valid as of May 1, 2015, buyers already require compliance with the legislation.

Tips:

- Before approaching a European buyer, gather more information on relevant REACH requirements. Be aware that REACH applies to several sectors; for jewellery exporters to Europe, the following regulations are of significant importance:
 - Consult [Regulation EU No. 836/2012](#) for lead content restrictions in jewellery;
 - Consult [Regulation EU No 494/2011](#) for cadmium content restrictions in jewellery;
 - Consult [Regulation EC No 552/2009](#) for nickel content restrictions in jewellery;
 - Consult [Annex XVII of REACH](#) for Azo dye restrictions in jewellery.
- Make sure that the lead, cadmium, nickel or Azo dye content does not exceed the permitted level in all your jewellery products, metal parts and beads used in the final product.
- To verify compliance with the restriction of Chromium VI in Leather, consider using the test method described in [EN ISO 17075](#).
- Make sure that the chemicals content does not exceed the set limits, since European manufacturers and importers are obliged to meet the above-mentioned requirements. Consult your potential buyers to find out if test reports are required. Typically larger retailers either require test reports from importers/manufacturers or they test products themselves. Smaller buyers typically expect DC exporters' products to comply with the chemicals requirements.

CITES

If used in bridge jewellery, parts of wild plants and animals (e.g. shells, coral, leather and wood) should not be from endangered species and not fall under the restrictions of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

Tip:

- Make sure that your products or product elements do not fall under CITES. Check the [EU Export Helpdesk](#) for more information on the regulation and consult the list of restricted species in [Annexes A, B, C](#) and [Annex D](#). The EU Export Helpdesk also provides information on the different procedures applicable to such products.

Hallmarking

Jewellery hallmarking is compulsory in France and there is a hallmarking and monitoring system in place to verify the precious metal content in gold and silver jewellery. Please note that the rules on precious metals control are not harmonised in the EU.

Tip:

- For more details, see the summary of compulsory and voluntary hallmarking systems for precious metal jewellery in Europe [here](#).

Common Buyer Requirements

Sustainability

Sustainable products offer things such as recycling and a choice of sustainable materials (see Niche requirements), as well as improved social conditions. EU buyers increasingly look for products that have been manufactured with due respect for human rights, labour conditions and the environment. This is particularly important for the textile and apparel industry, in mining and jewellery, but also in many other industries. There are two retail initiatives that have gained ground in Western European countries: the [Business Social Compliance Initiative \(BSCI\)](#) and the [Ethical Trading Initiative \(ETI\)](#). Bigger EU companies have even developed their own Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policies and require suppliers to conform to these requirements. Workers' health and safety in particular are sensitive topics in Europe, and buyers want to prevent damage to their reputation.

Tip:

- Understand how you can improve your sustainability performance. This will not necessarily mean immediate certification. Nevertheless, it is important to familiarise yourself with the issues included in the initiatives. Consult the [Standards Map database](#) for the different labels and standards relevant for jewellery. Consider doing a company self-assessment, available on the [BSCI website](#).

Niche Buyer Requirements

Fairtrade labelling

Fairtrade-labelled products are an initiative that supports fair pricing, improved social conditions for producers, and guaranteed fair and responsible practices in the entire jewellery supply chain. Sustainability initiatives are important for manufacturers of jewellery that contains precious metals and precious stones, which are associated with the welfare of miners and the effect of mining activities on the environment. They force the jewellery sector to provide more transparency and accountability in terms of the materials used. Many jewellery manufacturers apply for transparency and accountability certificates at Fairtrade, the Responsible Jewellery Council and other international organisations to demonstrate their ethical practices. For more information, refer to the [EU Buyer Requirements for Jewellery](#).

Tips:

- The actual use of Fairtrade labels is still a niche in this sector, but familiarising yourself with the initiatives and how they work is an initial step.
- Familiarise yourself with the programmes offered by the [Responsible Jewellery Council](#), [Fairgold](#), [Fairmined](#), and other initiatives.
- It is clearly an advantage to demonstrate your engagement and to state your ethical principles in all your marketing materials and your website.

Macro-Economic Statistics

France is one of the leading European countries with a positive outlook for the next 5 years in its economic development. It is also the second-biggest market in terms of the population. Due to the difficult economic situation over 2010-2013 (incl. tax raises and high inflation), consumers tend to prioritise their spending and buy more essential goods or shift to more affordable products, for example silver jewellery and more affordable gold jewellery (375/1000). The recovering economy and the shift to more affordable jewellery is favourable for DC exporters whose competitiveness is driven mainly by (but not limited to) low production costs.

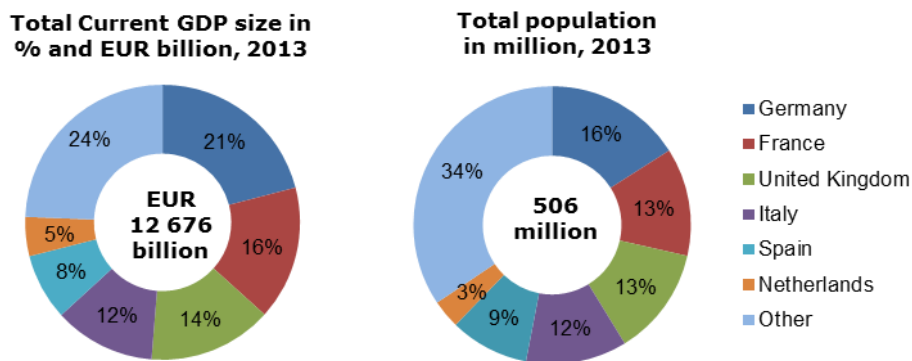
Population

The population of the EU was estimated at 506 million in 2013, and France constitutes 13% of the total EU population (approximately 63.7 million people).

Economy size

France is the second largest country in Europe (after Germany) based on the current GDP size, holding a share of 16% of the total GDP.

Figure 1: Key 2013 macroeconomic indicators for the leading European countries including France

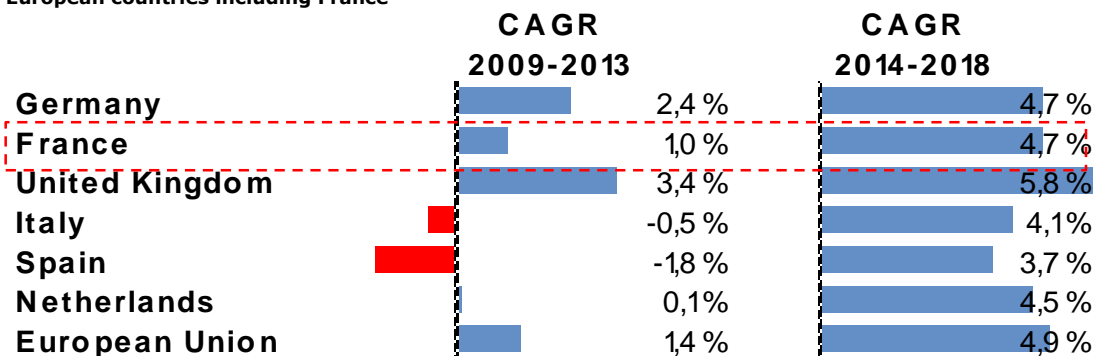


Source: IMF 2014

Economic growth

France's GDP is expected to grow annually by 4.7% in 2014 - 2018 and the year-over-year growth for 2014 is expected to be 5.4%, slightly below Europe's GDP growth (6.2%).

Figure 2: GDP (current prices) Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) for 2009-2013 and estimate for 2014-2018 for the leading European countries including France

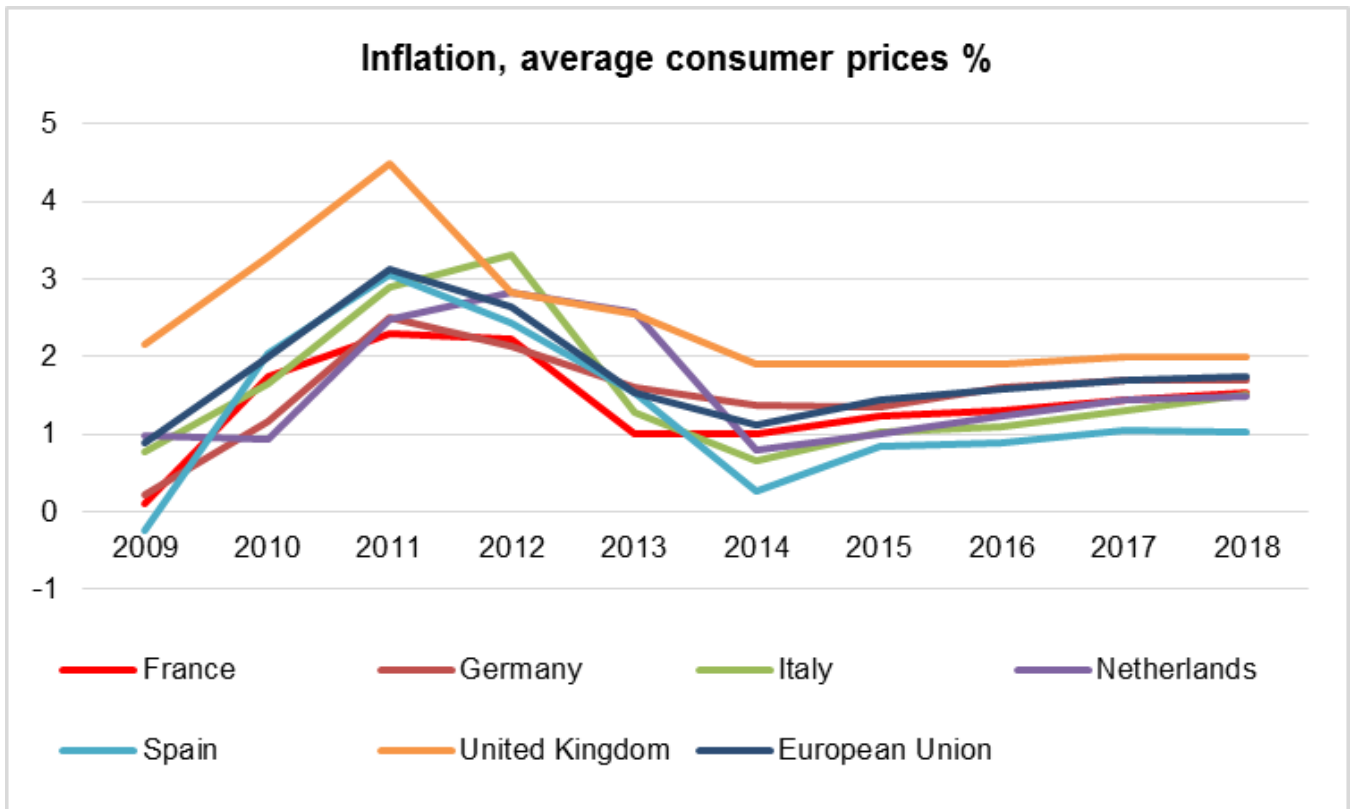


Source: IMF 2014, World Economic Outlook Database

Consumer prices and inflation

High inflation over the past 4 years, driven by tax increases and price hikes on raw materials, has negatively impacted consumer confidence in France. In 2013, the average consumer price change was about 1% and is expected to remain at this level in 2014. In 2014-2018, France’s consumer prices are expected to increase by 1.3% per year on average, below the average EU inflation level (1.5%).

Figure 3: Consumer price change in 2009-2013 and expected inflation rate for 2014-2018 in the leading European countries including France and the EU, in %

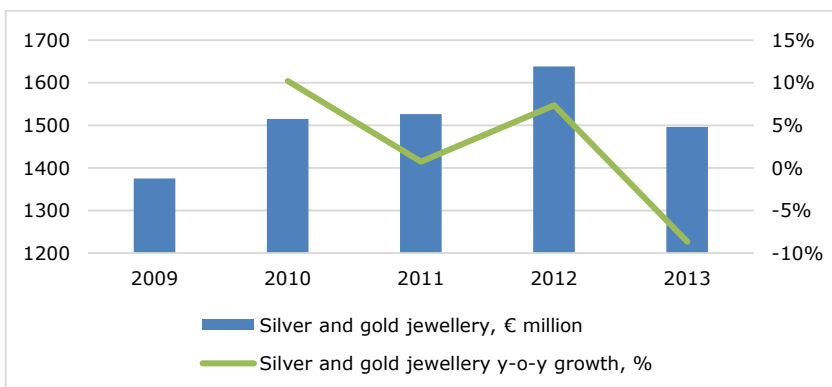


Source: IMF 2014

Trade Statistics

Production and consumption

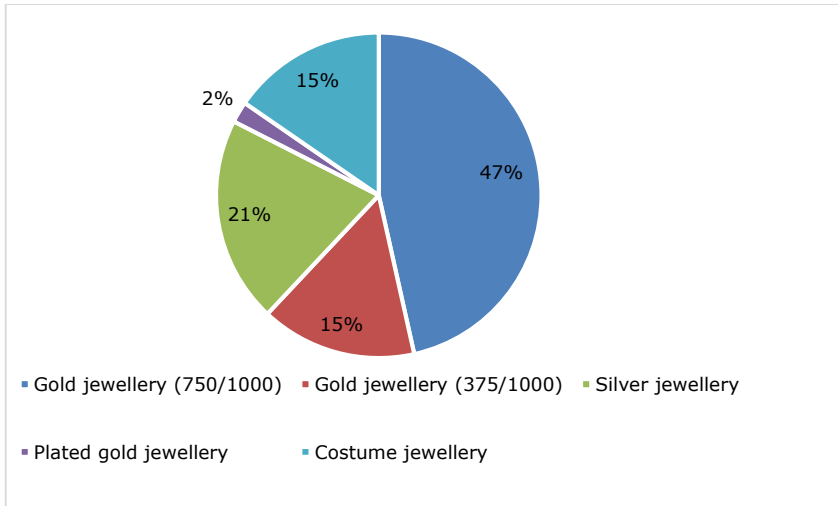
Figure 4: Production of jewellery* in France in 2009-2013, value in millions of € and growth in %



Source: Comité Francéclat, 2013 Chiffres Clés Horlogerie, Bijouterie, Joaillerie

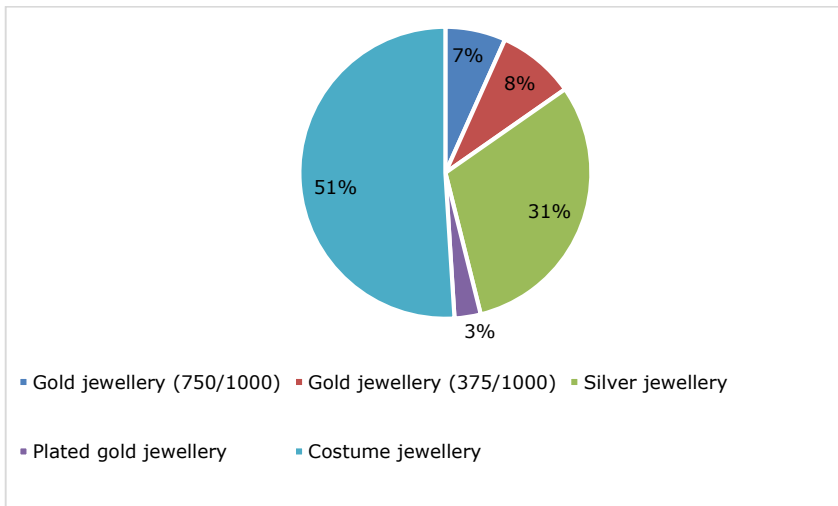
*All silver and gold jewellery (fine + bridge jewellery)

Figure 5: Sales structure of jewellery* in terms of value in France in 2013, in %



Source: Comité Francéclat, 2013 Chiffres Clés Horlogerie, Bijouterie, Joaillerie
 *All silver and gold jewellery (fine + bridge jewellery)

Figure 6: Sales structure of jewellery* in terms of volume in France in 2013, in %



Source: Comité Francéclat, 2013 Chiffres Clés Horlogerie, Bijouterie, Joaillerie
 *All silver and gold jewellery (fine + bridge jewellery)

According to the Comité Francéclat, the production of gold and silver jewellery in France amounted to € 1.5 billion in 2013, down by 9% year-over-year. In 2013, total jewellery sales also declined significantly by 4.4% in 2013, totalling € 3.5 billion. Jewellery made of 750/1000 gold saw the strongest decline in sales, down by 15% in terms of value in 2013 and nearly 30% in terms of volume. On the other hand, jewellery made of more affordable 375/1000 gold registered a sales growth of 27% in terms of value and 28% in terms of volume in 2013. Silver jewellery sales remained relatively stable in 2013, while plated gold jewellery recorded a 9% decline in 2013 sales.

The jewellery market, especially the more expensive fine jewellery market in France, is suffering from the negative impact of the fragile economic climate. Tax hikes have had a negative impact on local retailer and producer performance. Bridge jewellery benefited from this economic situation as consumers started prioritising their spending and shifting more towards affordable products.

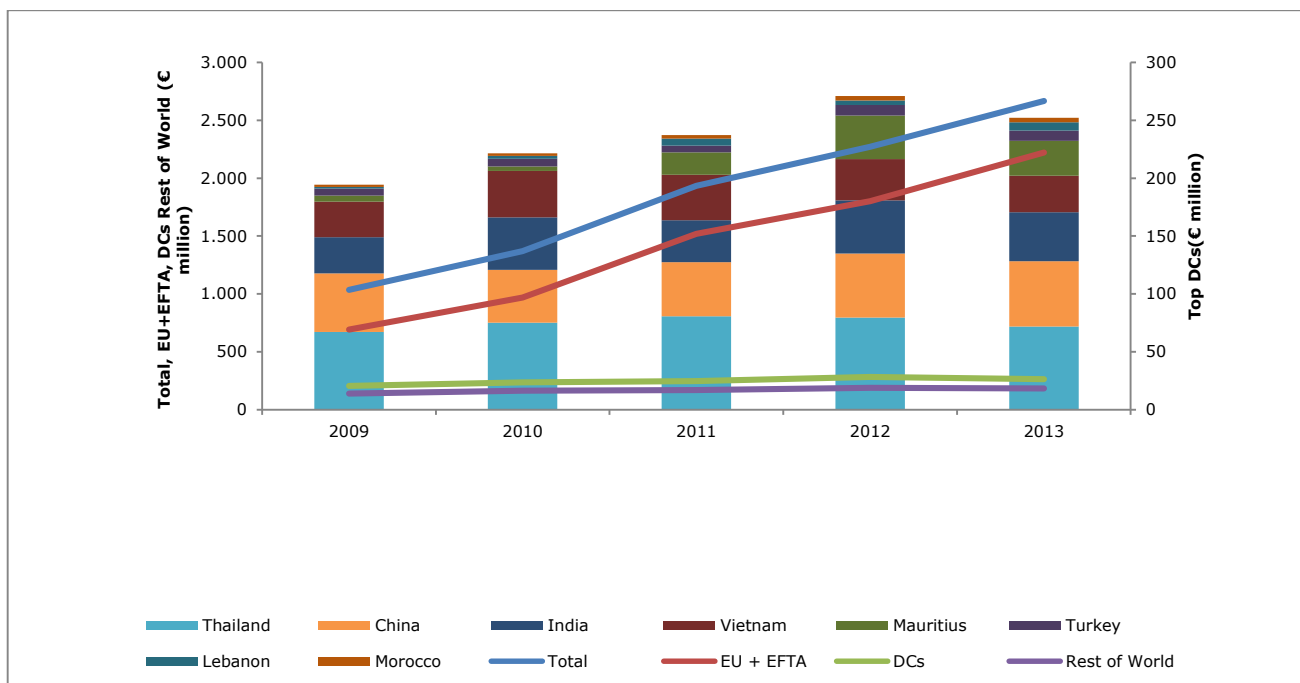
The outlook for bridge jewellery in France remains positive, while fine jewellery is expected to see only marginal growth due to the still-low purchasing power.

Tip:

- Due to the unstable economic situation in France, DC exporters will have better opportunities to offer affordable jewellery instead of upscale fine jewellery. Carefully consider which metal and stones to use and try to keep the total production cost low. Consider shifting from higher-priced gold to lower priced gold in your production and focus on jewellery collections made of better-priced silver, Rhodium/Gold/Rose Gold plated silver and various alloys.

Import and export

Figure 7: Import of silver and gold jewellery* to France, value in millions of €



Source: Eurostat (October 2014)

*All silver and gold jewellery (fine + bridge jewellery)

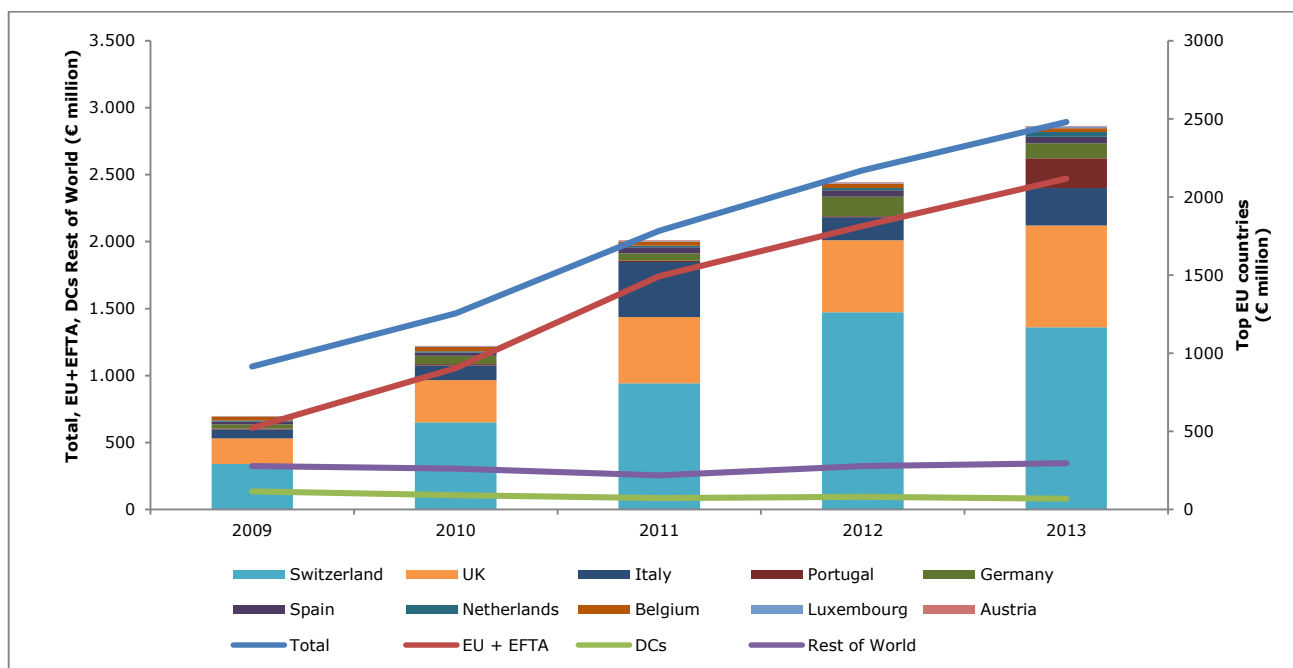
In terms of value, imports of gold and silver jewellery were up by 26.7% CAGR in 2009-2013. More than 80% of gold and silver jewellery was exported from Europe to France, while the DCs' share in imports was almost 10%. Both European and DC imports enjoyed a positive performance over the past five years. The outlook for gold and silver jewellery exports to France remains positive. Higher demand for more affordable silver and gold jewellery will drive imports from DCs and other countries.

Europe remains the leading exporter of gold and silver jewellery to France. Out of the DC countries, China, Thailand and India are the leading exporters of gold and silver jewellery to France, holding a cumulative share of 6% of total imports. Import from these top 3 countries grew over the past 5 years. The highest growth rates for imports were registered by Mauritius, Lebanon, Morocco and Turkey – countries with an inspiring cultural heritage that is easily reflected in the jewellery design. Mauritius, Lebanon and Morocco, being Francophone countries, have probably benefited from the ability to communicate in the same language.

Tip:

- Enter the French market with well-priced silver and gold jewellery to meet the consumer demand for affordable jewellery.
- Maximise your competitiveness vs. mass production markets by focusing on a value proposition – well-priced jewellery with an intriguing design and a clear statement.
- Consider hiring a French-speaking sales person to drive your sales to get your foot in the door.

Figure 8: Export of silver and gold jewellery* from France, value in millions of €



Source: Eurostat (October 2014)

*All silver and gold jewellery (fine + bridge jewellery)

Exports of gold and silver jewellery from France grew significantly over the past five years, up by 28% CAGR in 2009-2013. 85% of gold and silver jewellery goes to Europe. In 2013, French exports of gold and silver jewellery to Europe were up by 17% year-over-year, while the CAGR was 42% over 2009-2013. France’s exports to Portugal (132%), the Netherlands (48%), Italy (43%) and the UK (41%) increased most in 2013, followed by exports to Germany (32%). Switzerland, the UK and Italy are the leading export destinations for French jewellery companies.

Tip:

- Consider targeting other European countries through indirect exports when cooperating with French retailers of bridge jewellery, since France is a significant European exporter of jewellery.

Market Trends

The French consumer (similar to many other European consumers) is increasingly interested in sustainable products and putting pressure on unethically operating companies. The awareness of social imbalance and environmental issues make consumers think 'ethically' and go for Fairtrade and recycled products. Globally the combined sales of diamonds, gold and platinum group metals in the jewellery supply chain by RJC Members grew by 8.5% in 2013, and RJC members’ combined sales accounted for about 26% of global jewellery sales. JEM and APRIL Paris, for example, have been successfully positioning their brands as a Fairtrade. The number of companies focusing on sustainable jewellery is growing. Sales of sustainable and recycled products are still negligible in France, but it is a powerful marketing tool for new market entrants such as DC exporters.



Nodova Necklace, [link](#)

Tip:

- Consider operating on the niche market for sustainable or recyclable jewellery. To offer such jewellery, carefully source your materials and pay attention to the certification and ethical principles of your suppliers and partners.

The ongoing global personalisation trend has raised consumer interest in charms and other customisable jewellery. Customisable jewellery gives customers the opportunity to create individual designs. Not just costume jewellers tend to focus on charms and beads; bridal jewellers are also increasingly adding charms to their collections (for example: Histoire d'Or)

Tip:

- Depending on your specialisation and your jewellery statement, consider offering customisable jewellery collections along with your key jewellery lines.

French and other European jewellers are increasingly using alloys in jewellery to keep the production costs low and meet consumer requirements for more affordable jewellery. Besides cost efficiency, new alloys such as Silvadium and Argentium Silver make jewellery designs look more innovative, creative and high-value.

Tip:

- Consider using lower-priced alloys for your jewellery collection to keep the production cost low. Using some of the modern alloys, you'll be able to keep up with competitors by adding a modern touch to your collections. Continue working on the creativity of your designs.

For more information on market trends, please refer to CBI Trends for Jewellery.

Market Channels and Segments

For more information, please refer to CBI Market Channels and Segments for Jewellery.

Price

Figure 9: Price structure



Your Free On Board (FOB) Price must be calculated in such a way that all costs are covered: production costs (raw materials, labour costs), administration costs (rents, electricity and other fixed costs) and marketing costs (expenses for marketing materials, catalogues, website, travel costs to European trade shows and other related costs). If you're using Alibaba, Google, Amazon or other online marketing tools, be prepared to also pay a fee for these tools and add it to your calculation.

Be aware of different costs and value chain margins that add to the product price. Logistics costs for bridge jewellery are higher than for fine jewellery, as the total order value is typically smaller (compared to fine jewellery).

Tip:

- Carefully estimate all your costs and select the preferred European buyer. Working directly with a retailer you can have higher profit margins, but be aware that your costs will increase as well. Logistics costs will be higher, as the order volume will tend to be smaller when compared to collaboration with a wholesaler. Besides, travel costs (part of marketing costs) may be higher when working with independent retailers.

Field of Competition

For more information, please refer to CBI Field of Competition for Jewellery, as the market competitiveness of Bridge jewellery in France does not differ significantly from this general overview.

Main Sources

- Eurostat, URL: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/eurostat/home/>
- International Monetary Fund (IMF), URL: <http://www.imf.org/external/index.htm>
- Comité Francéclat, URL: <http://www.ecostat-franceclat.fr/>

Trade Shows

- The International Fine Fashion Jewellery & Watch Show, URL: <http://www.bijorhca.com>



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