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**PARTNERSHIPS IN FRANCE IN THE SEVENTEENTH
AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES – THE CLASH OF STATUTORY
REGULATION AND MERCHANT REALITY**

In the practice of Old Regime France there were mainly three types of partnerships: a traditional general partnership (*société générale*), a limited partnership imported from Italy (*société commandite*) and an anonymous society (*société anonyme*). In 1673 Louis XIV issued the Ordinance on Trade (*Ordonnance du commerce*) which was the world's first commercial code that included, among others, provisions on company law. Its promulgation was a part of a general trend of codification undertaken at the request of the absolutist monarch in many different areas of law in order to move the central point of their regulation from previously existing sources of law to national legislation adopted at the central level. However, in case of commercial law certain practices were sanctioned by the long applied merchant customs that appeared to be too difficult to overcome. The Author presents the ways of responding to the existing reality in the field of commercial partnerships by the legislator and the effects of its actions as well as the reaction of the representatives of practice.