

DIGITAL TRADE REGULATORY INTEGRATION

COUNTRY PROFILE

ANGOLA



INTRODUCTION

The African Trade Policy Centre of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa has embarked on a Digital Trade Regulatory Integration initiative with four primary objectives. First, the initiative provides information on digital services trade regulations that has the potential to facilitate the negotiation and implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) protocol on Digital Trade. Second, it intends to inform the development of a digital trade integration index which could then become a component to possible future editions of the Africa Regional Integration Index.¹ Third, it will also inform the addition of African countries to the Digital Services Trade Restrictiveness Index (Digital STRI) as developed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Fourth, data from the DTRI and tools derived from it will offer a solid basis for further analytical work by ECA and others on digital trade.

The initiative covering the legal and regulatory environment associated with digital trade will help African countries better understand and address barriers to the growth and development of digital trade and e-commerce. Addressing the issues identified will help promote digital trade and e-commerce and underpin continent-wide commercial transactions between businesses and consumers.

This country profile presents the key findings for Angola and is based on observations from two datasets developed under the DTRI initiative. The first dataset, modelled on the OECD Digital STRI, compiled information on restrictions to digital services trade from 2014 to 2023. The second covers measures related to digital trade integration, beginning with the effective date of each measure and reflecting the latest available information. The legal and regulatory measures researched in the initiative are categorized into various policy areas in both digital services trade restric-

tions and digital trade integration. This country profile's two sections correspond to the two datasets. To avoid repetition

where there is overlap between the indicators, attempts are made to present results only once, to the extent possible.

RESTRICTIVENESS OF THE REGULATORY REGIME FOR DIGITAL SERVICES TRADE

To assess the degree of restrictiveness among digital services trade in Angola, an in-depth review of policies, legislation, and regulations on digital services trade restrictions was conducted under the five pillars of the OECD Digital STRI:

- Infrastructure and connectivity.
- Electronic transactions.
- Payment systems.
- Intellectual property.
- Other barriers affecting trade in digitally enabled services.

Each pillar is explained below.

Pillar 1: Infrastructure and connectivity

Angola's evolving legal framework has been assuring greater levels of guarantees for interconnecting communication infrastructure. Law No. 23/11 defines the interconnection of electronic communications infrastructure and, though not explicitly

mandating interconnectivity, emphasizes the need for connectivity and interoperability. The regulatory framework was strengthened in 2014 with Presidential Decree No. 166/14,² which explicitly mandates infrastructure sharing. The General Regulation of Electronic Communications further clarified that interconnection is mandatory, ensuring a fully integrated national communications network and requires transparency in cost calculations setting interconnection prices.³

Angola Telecom EP, a fully state-owned company that manages the country's basic infrastructure, is the dominant firm in the fixed market segment. UNITEL SARL, the largest mobile operator in Angola, was initially incorporated as a public-private joint venture, but it is currently fully controlled by the government, with 50% ownership held directly and 50% indirectly through the state-owned company Sonangol. In addition, the Angolan Government owns 90% of the shares of Multitel, Lda., an internet service provider, and 49.3% of TV

Cabo Angola. Further, MS Telcom, the third telecommunication company in Angola, is indirectly controlled by the government through Sonangol.

The General Regulation of Electronic Communications requires that operators with significant market power provide interconnection and access services with transparent, non-discriminatory conditions. The regulatory body is responsible for ensuring that these offers are publicly disclosed. For vertical separation of both mobile and fixed operations, the regulation imposes specific accounting separation requirements on operators with significant market power to ensure transparency in cost calculations and prevent anti-competitive practices.

The General Regulation of Electronic Communications ensures that electronic communication networks and services provide non-discriminatory access, equal treatment of internet traffic, and universal accessibility. According to a 2023 Freedom House report, there have been no significant restrictions or blocking of communication services such as virtual private networks (VPNs) or social media. However, operators are required to allow access to state agencies for the lawful interception of communications.

For cross-border data flows, Angola has a conditional flow regime, which stipulates strict data protection regulations. The law mandates authorization for data transfers to countries that do not guarantee ade-

quate data protection. Transfers can be conducted if specific conditions are met, including approval from the Angolan Data Protection Agency (APD). Authorization from the APD is essential for transfers to countries lacking adequate data protection. Certain types of data, such as sensitive personal and financial data, must be stored locally and comply with stringent consent and notification requirements.

Pillar 2: Electronic transactions

The electronic transactions framework in Angola encompasses requirements for e-commerce engagement, dispute resolution in cross-border digital trade, and licensing conditions. While no specific e-commerce regulations exist, the current legal framework can indirectly discriminate against foreign companies. For example, Commercial Law No. 26/21 allows foreign ownership but imposes specific import licenses and operational constraints for foreigners.⁴ Mandatory business permits, renewable every five years, require extensive documentation.

Import/export operations require licenses for transactions above USD 5,000, involving bureaucratic procedures that affect international sourcing. Tax registration is available only for legal residents, governed by Executive Decree N° 424/199, establishing compliance standards for tax residency and anti-tax fraud measures. Non-residents must appoint local tax

representatives to navigate legal requirements.⁵

Despite no alignment with international conventions like the UN Convention on Electronic Communications, Angola provides some legal structure for intellectual property and electronic transactions.⁶ Laws such as the Industrial Property Law criminalize trade secret violations, and electronic signature regulations grant legal validity to electronic documents. However, the country has not adopted the UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Signatures.⁷

Dispute resolution for cross-border trade relies on Voluntary Arbitration Law No. 16/03, recognizing arbitration in private investment and other sectors. Arbitration agreements require written forms, but access to court mechanisms requires local representation. Despite adopting aspects of the UNCITRAL Model Law, limitations exist, particularly for foreign participants establishing operations in Angola.

Pillar 3: Payment systems

The Angolan Payment System Law (LSPA) No. 40/20 replaced the previous legislation, establishing a new legal framework. This law regulates access to electronic payment methods such as debit cards, credit cards, internet banking, and e-wallet services. It also outlines the procedures for establishing entities involved in the payment system and sets forth regulations

governing their activities, intervention, supervision, and control.⁸

Article 63 of the new law mandates that payments must be conducted in the currency agreed upon by the parties involved, considering relevant laws and regulations regarding foreign currency usage (such as Exchange Rate Law No. 5/97) and any restrictions imposed by the National Bank of Angola (BNA). This provision broadens the scope of acceptable currencies for payments beyond the national currency, unlike the previous version of the law, which restricted payments to the local currency.

The Angolan foreign exchange system is governed by the Exchange Rate Law No. 5/97 and regulations issued by the BNA. According to Art. 10 of BNA Notice No. 5/2021, Angolan citizens and foreign residents can use foreign currency for personal expenses up to an annual ceiling of USD 250,000 but only through authorized commercial bank operators.

Angola has not adopted national legislation based on or influenced by the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) Model Law on Electronic Commerce. However, the payment system aligns with international standards. The Angolan Payment System Law sets the legal framework governing Angola's payment system, establishing a neutral infrastructure that guarantees the interoperability of various payment instruments, including debit cards, credit cards, internet banking, and e-wallet services. The pay-

ment service providers in Angola are supported by EMIS—Empresa Interbancária de Serviços, S.A.⁹

EMIS manages the MULTICAIXA Network and the Angola Automated Clearing Chamber (CCAA), which includes the Payment Card Management System (MULTICAIXA), the Credit Transfer System (STC), the Check Clearing System (SCC), the Direct Debit System (SDD), and the Instant Transfer System (STI).

The CCAA Payment System is based on financial market infrastructure whose main mission is to provide interoperability between bank and non-bank payment service providers, and to ensure the respective clearing of operations, with settlement the responsibility of the central bank. This shared infrastructure is essential for the development of payment services and takes advantage of economies of scale. Accordingly, with EMIS, this infrastructure fully complies with the principles defined by the BIS (Bank for International Settlements) for financial market infrastructures, ensuring neutrality.

The maximum amount that can be paid by electronic payment methods and the requirements mandating the use of specific intermediaries for online payment and credit services are determined by the BNA.¹⁰ The mandates include:

- Card payments: the maximum amount for card payments is Kz 19,999,999.99.
- ATMs (Caixas Automáticas—CA) and Automatic Payment Terminals (Terminais de Pagamento Automáticos—TPA): the maximum daily cumulative withdrawal amount is Kz 150,000.00.
- Transfers initiated by payment card: the maximum daily amount is Kz 5,000,000.00 per payment card.
- Purchases at automatic payment terminals: the maximum daily amount for purchases using a payment card is Kz 10,000,000.00

Pillar 4: Intellectual property rights

Internationally, Angola has not signed the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Copyright Treaty,¹¹ nor has it signed the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Performances and Phonograms Treaty.¹² But Angola is a party in the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT).¹³

Domestically, it is reported that Angola legal structure for protecting and enforcing intellectual property rights (IPRs) is weak, if developing, and enforcement can be difficult due to lack of resources and competing priorities.¹⁴

Angola has a copyright regime under Law No. 15/14. But the exceptions do not follow the fair use or fair dealing model limiting the lawful use of copyrighted work by others. Section V lists the exceptions, which include:

- For research or private study by the person using the work; for use in private places in which entry is not paid and non-profit.
- For review or news reporting.
- For reproduction by photographic or similar processes, when carried out for didactic purposes by public or private libraries, centers or documentation files of general interest, public institutions with a scientific or technological vocation, or an educational establishment.
- For reproducing works, permanently exposed to the public through images, reports.
- For educational use, reproduction of arrangement or translation exclusively for individual and private use.
- For quotations from copyright works and critics; speeches and lectures in front of the media.
- For performing hymns, as well as works of a religious character.

The enforcement of copyright online in Angola is reported to be considered weak, as reflected by the high levels of software and other digital piracy. The government established a new copyright enforcement unit in 2016, through the publication of the Presidential Decree No. 114/16 on the Regulation on the Organization and Exercise of the Activities of the Collective Management of Copyright and Related Rights.¹⁵

The mechanism of patent protection is covered under chapter 2 of the Industry Property Law No. 3/92.¹⁶ Arts. 5 and 67 show that foreign patent owners need a local representative to defend patent rights. There have been reports about procedural complexities, such as the intricate and time-consuming judicial processes in Angola, which could pose challenges for foreign patent holders. It is also reported that the shortage of judges proficient in patent law further exacerbates these barriers, impeding the efficient adjudication of patent-related disputes.

Art. 5 of the Industrial Property Law states that patent applications must be written in the Portuguese language and that foreign applicants must appoint a legal local representative. There have been reports of practical and legal barriers in the patent application process in Angola, including high direct and indirect registration costs and a lack of transparency throughout the process.

Angola lacks a comprehensive framework for the protection of trade secrets, but limited measures address some related issues. Art. 73 of Law No. 3/92 defines the unauthorized use of trade secrets as criminal offenses. So, though limited to industrial property, there is some legal protection against the infringement of trade secrets.¹⁷

Pillar 5: Other barriers affecting trade in digitally enabled services

Until 2021 the legal framework to differentiate between domestic and foreign trade—Art. 15 No. 2 a and b of the commercial Law No. 1/07—required foreigners residing in Angola to have a large business establishment and prioritize hiring Angolan employees. The commercial law was amended in 2021 with Law No. 26/21,¹⁸ which revoked the requirement that foreigners residing in Angola have a large business establishment but maintained the provision on the priority to hire Angolan employees.

Foreign e-commerce service providers are required have a local presence to obtain a separate license or business registration authorization. Private Investment Law No. 10/21 eliminated the previous requirement for foreign investors to establish a partnership with an Angolan entity with at least a 35% stake in the capital structure of investments in several key sectors: electricity and water, hospitality and tourism, transportation and logistics, construction, telecommunications and information technology, and media.

Furthermore, the investment code mandates that investors establish a training plan from onset for gradually replacing foreign workers with national, as outlined in Art. 45, which states that investors must employ Angolan workers, provide them with professional training, and offer

comparable salary and social conditions, prohibiting discrimination. It also allows hiring qualified foreign workers if a rigorous training plan for national technicians is implemented to eventually replace these foreign workers with Angolan employees.

While Angola currently lacks specific legislation regulating digital commerce, the existing laws suggest that commercial activity is restricted to licensed operators with an established commercial presence within the country.

Freedom House has reports that, despite a history of censorship in print and broadcast media, there have been no known incidents of the government blocking or filtering online content in Angola, and there are no restrictions on the type of information that can be exchanged through digital media technologies.¹⁹ A set of media laws that took effect in 2017 has been criticized as restrictive, but no websites have been censored to date. Social media and communications apps—such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter (X), and international blog-hosting services—are freely available.

There are no specific regulatory requirements on online advertising. The Advertising General Law No. 9/17 from March 13th doesn't specifically cover online advertising. Although in 2023, Freedom House reports that state agencies and private sector actors often deny advertising revenue to media outfits that criticize the political-military elite.

In Angola, measures to address instances where business practices impede competition are implemented through a multifaceted approach. The Institute of Asset Management and State Holdings (IGAPE)²⁰ oversees mergers and acquisitions, including those involving state-owned assets. The Competition Regulatory Authority (CRA), established in 2018, introduced the Competition Law and created the Competition Regulatory Authority (ARC) to prosecute offenses related to anti-competitive behaviour.²¹

Under the Competition Law, cartels and monopolistic practices are prohibited, and a formal merger control regime is established, mandating prior notification of mergers meeting specific thresholds (chapters II and III). A leniency regime introduced in September 2020 incentivizes the disclosure of anti-competitive conduct by offering reduced fines for the first disclosing party under certain conditions (Art. 3). Despite lacking specialized courts for competition matters, the appeal pro-

cess ensures the review and potential revision of CRA decisions.

According to the Investment Policy Review of UNCTAD, the «ARC succeeds the Institute of Pricing and Competition. Its sanctioning powers include proposing laws, issuing regulation, initiating procedures, conducting investigations, carrying out inspections, monitoring prices, imposing penalties, adopting interim safeguard measures, and issuing decisions regarding competition procedures.»²² Challenges facing investors in the country include a complex and burdensome tax regime with numerous incentives and exemptions negotiated individually, potentially deterring investment. Restrictions on the transfer of investment-related funds, bureaucratic administrative procedures, customs delays, poor transport infrastructure, and governance concerns further compound the challenges for investors. These factors affect doing business in Angola and its ranking on international business climate rankings.

RESTRICTIVENESS OF THE REGULATORY REGIME FOR DIGITAL TRADE INTEGRATION



This section discusses measures related to the level of digital trade integration in Angola. The regulatory regime of digital trade integration was assessed under 12 pillars.

- Tariff and trade defense on measures applied to intraregional imports of ICT goods.
- Public procurement for digital goods and services.
- Foreign direct investment for digital trade.
- Intellectual property rights.
- Telecommunications infrastructure and competition.
- Cross-border data policies.
- Domestic data policies.
- Intermediary liability.
- Content access.
- Quantitative trade restrictions for ICT goods and online services.
- Technical standards applied to ICT goods and online services.
- Online sales and transactions.

Since the findings for some of these pillars were discussed in the section on the Digital STRI, a duplicative discussion is avoided here to the extent possible.

Pillar 1: Tariffs and trade defense

Angola does not impose restrictions on imports of information and communication technology (ICT) goods and digital services, including the quantity or volume of ICT goods or services that can be imported. In addition, the country's effective tariff rate on ICT goods (applied weighted average) is 8.28, and its coverage rate of zero tariffs on ICT goods is 44.5%.²³

Angola is not a signatory to the 1996 World Trade Organization (WTO) Information Technology Agreement (ITA I) or the 2015 expansion (ITA II).²⁴ It has no domestic legal instruments on anti-dumping, countervailing or safeguard measures, and it has never imposed such measures.²⁵

Likewise, Angola has not included the WTO Telecom Reference Paper in its list of scheduled telecommunications commitments.²⁶

Pillar 2: Public procurement for digital goods and services

Angola is not a signatory to the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA), nor does it have observer status.²⁷

No law was found mandating the surrender of patents, source codes, or trade secrets in order to win tenders, nor does any law require the use of a certain type of encryption to win tenders.

According to Art. 54 of Law No. 41/20 (The Public Procurement Law)²⁸, foreign firms are only allowed to participate in bids for public contracts in Angola if they have a legal presence in Angola and meet one of the following specific conditions:

- The value of the contract must be equal to or greater than the amount specified in Annex III of the law—Kz 182 million (approx. USD 220,000) for goods and services and greater than Kz 500 million (approx. USD 600,000) for public works. Below these values, foreign companies can participate in government procurements only as a supplier or subcontractor to an Angolan company fulfilling a government contract.

- The contract must be for a service that is technically complex or specialized, and it must be reasonable to expect that no Angolan firm can provide the service adequately.
- The contract is for a conceptual project unless the contracting authority explicitly restricts foreign participation in the terms of reference.

Furthermore, Art. 13 determines that government suppliers must be registered in the centralized Angolan Government Databank.

Under Art. 53 of the Public Procurement Law, the contracting authority is required to include specific rules in tender documents that promote the preferential contracting of Angolan companies—including micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). These rules include provisions such as preferential access to the negotiation phase, a margin of preference for the prices proposed by Angolan companies, an increase in the overall score awarded to the proposals of Angolan companies, a higher score for goods produced, extracted, or cultivated in Angola, a requirement that a percentage of the sub-contracted work be reserved for Angolan companies, and preferential treatment for domestic suppliers to limit foreign participation in public procurement.

The Public Procurement Law No. 41/20, in effect since January 2021, revoked Law No. 9/16 on Public Procurement in Angola

but kept the previous restrictions on foreign participation.

Pillar 3: Foreign direct investment for digital trade

This pillar covers restrictions on foreign direct investment (FDI) in sectors relevant to the digital economy, such as telecommunications and telecommunications-related services, computer services, internet publishing services, manufacturing of telecommunication facilities, and electronic retail. Because a healthy investment landscape is a catalyst for digital trade, it is imperative that countries enact enabling legislation for sustainable investment promotion.

According to Art. 18 of the Telecommunication Law No. 8/01, foreign capital in telecom operators should not exceed 50%, allowing only minority participation for foreign investors in this sector.²⁹

There is no requirement for the members of the board of directors or managers to be residents of Angola or to hold Angolan citizenship. But foreign members of the board of directors or managers are required by migration laws to obtain the necessary work permit or investor visa before completing registration with the Commercial Registrar.³⁰

The Private Investment Law No. 10/21 established the Angolan Investment Promotion Agency (AIPEX) as the primary entity responsible for promoting and regulating

private investment.³¹ AIPEX serves as a one-stop shop for investment approvals. The regulations for the Private Investment Law No. 250/18 outline the steps for registering and approving private investment projects, with AIPEX overseeing the process.³² Art. 6 specifies the investment project documentation, including a plan for gradually replacing foreign labor with national labor, and the procedures for registration.

Pillar 4: Intellectual property rights

See pillar 4 in the preceding section.

Pillar 5: Telecom infrastructure and competition

The Angolan legal framework has progressively enhanced guarantees for interconnecting communication infrastructure. Law No. 23/11 outlines the interconnection of electronic communications infrastructure, stressing the importance of connectivity and interoperability without explicitly mandating interconnectivity. In 2014, Presidential Decree No. 166/14 strengthened this by mandating infrastructure sharing. The General Regulation of Electronic Communications further solidified interconnection as mandatory, promoting a fully integrated national network and enforcing transparency and cost-oriented pricing in interconnection services.

Art. 19 of the Telecommunication Law³³ pertains to the concession and licensing of telecom operators to cover the national territory. The issuance of licenses in this sector is defined as «relatively reserved,» limiting the number of licenses available to private entities. Art. 17 determines conditions for accessing the concession or license for the provision of public telecommunications services and states that legal persons providing communication services must be fully incorporated in Angola. According to the Angolan Commercial Code, the entity has to be registered with the Angolan government and to meet all of the requirements for incorporation, including having a registered office.

Angola's telecommunications authority, INACOM (Instituto Angolano das Comunicações), operates under government oversight, with reports indicating that its decision-making process is not entirely independent.³⁴

Pillar 6: Cross-border data policies

Angola's Data Protection Act provides a comprehensive regime for data protection in Angola. Data interconnection may be carried out only with the authorisation of the Data Protection Agency (DPA), unless otherwise provided by law (Art. 24).³⁵ The DPA authorises such interconnection only if it is appropriate for the pursuit of the lawful purposes of data processing. Interconnection of data is defined as a form of

processing of personal data consisting of the possibility of linking the data in one file with the data in other file(s) kept by another controller or by the same controller for other purposes. As a result, this requirement likely affects cross-border transfers.

Angola has not joined any agreement with binding commitments to open transfers of data across borders.³⁶

Pillar 7: Domestic data policies

Angola's Data Protection Act³⁷ governs the dispositions of privacy and data protection previewed in the Constitution of the Republic of Angola.³⁸ Telecommunication operators are required to retain traffic and location data for a minimum of one year for the «investigation, detection, and suppression of crimes.» Under Art. 23, in accordance with Articles 24-31, operators must retain the following data:

- Information needed to identify the source of a communication.
- Information needed to identify the destination of a communication.
- Data to determine the date, time, and duration of a communication.
- Information specifying the type of communication.
- Data to identify users' telecommunications equipment or devices attributed to them.
- Data to locate the mobile communication equipment.

- Information to determine the IP address location.

Additionally, Art. 32 stipulates that operators must retain data even if communications do not originate or terminate within the national territory.

The concept of a data protection officer (DPO) does not exist in Angola's Data Protection Law, so there is no obligation to appoint one. But if a data processing operation falls under the scope of the Data Protection Law, the data controller, through communication with the Angolan Data Protection Agency, must nominate a representative established in Angola in order to delegate all of its rights and obligations under the Data Protection Law, as stated in Art. (4). This representative is a mere point of contact and not similar to a DPO.

The Electronic Networks and information System Protection Law, in its Art. 37, establishes the obligation of publicly accessible electronic communications operators to install, at their own expense, legal interception systems, by means of a reasoned order of the competent magistrate.³⁹ Art. 39 establishes that publicly accessible electronic communications operators must ensure access to state intelligence and security agencies, upon prior authorization of the competent magistrate, to carry out interception of communications, in accordance with Art. 212 of the Constitution of the Republic of Angola.

Pillar 8: Intermediary liability and content access

A basic legal framework on intermediary liability for copyright infringement is absent in Angola's law and jurisprudence.⁴⁰

It is reported that SIM card registration is mandatory, hampering the ability of mobile phone users to communicate anonymously. SIM cards must be registered directly with INACOM (Angolan National Regulatory Institute for Communications), the ICT regulator that operates under government oversight. The process requires an identity card or driver's license and tax card for national citizens, or a passport with a valid visa for visitors.⁴¹

Pillar 9: Content access

Indicator 6.2.4 of the V-Dem Dataset—Government Internet shut down in practice—measures whether the government has the technical capacity to actively make internet service cease, thus interrupting domestic access to the internet or whether the government has decided to do so. Angola's score of 4 means «The government does not typically interfere with the domestic access to the Internet.»⁴²

Despite a history of censorship in print and broadcast media, it is reported that there have been no known incidents of the government blocking or filtering online content, and there are no restrictions on the type of information that can be exchanged

through digital media technologies. A set of media laws that took effect in 2017 has been criticized as restrictive, but no websites have been censored under their provisions to date. Social media and communications apps, such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter (X), and international blog-hosting services, are freely available.⁴³

Pillar 10: Quantitative trade restrictions for ICT goods and online services

Law No. 26/21 amending Law No. 1/07 on Commercial Activities⁴⁴ maintained the licensing requirements and procedures for importers, who must be registered with the Ministry of Industry and Trade for the category of product they are importing. Moreover, importers and exporters of goods exceeding USD 5,000 must obtain an import/export license. The process of importing goods into Angola is reported to be time-consuming and highly bureaucratic.⁴⁵ The Import procedures require an estimated USD 460 and 96 hours for import document compliance.⁴⁶

Pillar 11: Technical standards applied to ICT goods and online services

While certification is not explicitly required in Angola, there are reports of many products distributed in the country with ISO and CE markings. In 2015, the Angolan government, through the Ministry of In-

dustry, established the Angolan Institute of Accreditation (IAAC), which recently merged with IANOQQ (Angolan Institution of Standardization and Quality) to form a new accreditation body—INIQ (National Institute of Quality Infrastructures). Foreign entities can also provide accreditation services.⁴⁷

INIQ is the point of contact for Southern African Development Community Accreditation Services (SADCAS), a multi-economy accreditation body established under Art. 17 of the Standards and Technical Regulation on Trade to the SADC Protocol on Trade. Its primary purpose is to ensure that conformity assessment service providers—such as calibration/testing/medical laboratories, certification, and inspection bodies—operating in SADC member states that do not have national accreditation bodies, are subject to oversight by an authoritative body.

In practice, foreign entities can participate in standard-setting only through national technical committees and regionally through the Southern African Development Community standards working groups.⁴⁸

Pillar 12: Online sales and transactions

As the world becomes more interconnected, digital trade needs to increase through online sales and transactions. This pillar covers restrictions related to online sales

and transactions, such as restrictions on online payments.

Presidential Legislative Decree No. 10/19, also known as the Customs Tariffs Law, specifies in Art. 13 the eligibility criteria for personal goods shipped through postal services that are exempt from tariffs under certain circumstances.⁴⁹ It states that goods for personal use sent through the post office, couriers, or express cargo operators are exempt from the dispatch

procedure and payment of customs duties as long as they cumulatively are below the limit per traveler's remittance, set at 2,640 Fiscal Correction Unit (UCF), the equivalent of Kz 232,320 (approximately USD 200). More recently, Art. 15 of the State Budget (Law No. 31/21)⁵⁰ introduced changes to the Custom Tariffs Law, and the threshold for personal goods was raised to Kz 1,000,000 (approximately USD 1,200).⁵¹

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The objective of this study was to determine Angola's legislative standpoint on digital trade services and digital trade integration. The findings reveal that while Angola has made significant progress in establishing a legal framework that supports digital trade, gaps and limitations need to be addressed to optimize its participation in the digital economy. Angola has demonstrated its commitment by signing international treaties, such as those on intellectual property, and adopting domestic laws to promote digital services. But challenges remain, particularly in aligning with international standards and enhancing enforcement mechanisms.

To support digital trade, Angola should continue to modernize its regulatory landscape, ensuring that it is conducive to technological advancements and aligned with global norms. This includes fostering a transparent, secure, and efficient digital ecosystem that protects users while promoting cross-border trade.

In light of the foregoing findings, the following recommendations are proposed for Angola:

- To facilitate digital trade, consider joining international agreements like the United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods (CISG) and the WTO Information Technology Agreement to harmonize trade practices and facilitate digital trade.
- To enhance innovation, consider establishing robust trade secret protections to foster innovation by safeguarding proprietary business information and encouraging digital entrepreneurship.
- To address issues such as online piracy, strengthen enforcement measures, particularly for digital copyright and ISP liability.
- To foster innovation, establish robust trade secret protections by safeguarding proprietary business information and encouraging digital entrepreneurship.

- To accelerate digital trade liberalization, reduce tariff and non-tariff barriers that hinder digital services and e-commerce within the region and subregion, working with other AfCFTA and SADC members.

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Endnotes

¹ See <https://arii.uneca.org/>.

² Presidential Decree No. 166/16, Regulation on the Sharing of Electronic Communications Infrastructures, Chapter II, Art. 6, 7, 8, 9, https://inacom.gov.ao/fotos/frontend_1/editor2/decreto_presidencial_no_166_14-9_julho_de_2016-22_de_novembro_de_2017.pdf.

³ Presidential Decree No. 108/16 General Regulation of Electronic Communication - https://inacom.gov.ao/fotos/frontend_1/editor2/decreto_presidencial_no_108_16_de_2_de_maio.pdf

⁴ Law No. 26/21 amending Law No 1/07 on Commercial Activities, https://armed.gov.ao/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Lei-n.o-24_21_Do-Banco-Nacional-de-Angola.pdf, and previous law of commercial activities, <https://jomqservices.co.ao/content/artigos/Lei%201.07.%20de%2014%20de%20Maio.%20da%20Lei%20das%20Actividades%20Comerciais.pdf>.

⁵ <https://www.ucm.minfin.gov.ao/cs/groups/public/documents/document/aw4x/mjm5/~edisp/minfin1239393.pdf>.

⁶ https://uncitral.un.org/en/texts/ecommerce/conventions/electronic_communications/status.

⁷ <https://wipolex-res.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/en/ao/ao003en.pdf>.

⁸ Law No. 5/05, from July 29th.

⁹ <https://emis.co.ao/pt/emis/>.

¹⁰ <https://www.bna.ao/#/pt/sistema-de-pagamento/instrumentos-de-pagamento/detalhe/3>.

¹¹ https://wipolex.wipo.int/en/treaties/ShowResults?search_what=C&treaty_id=16.

¹² https://wipolex.wipo.int/en/treaties/ShowResults?search_what=C&treaty_id=20.

¹³ https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/treaties/ShowResults?start_year=ANY&end_year=ANY&search_what=C&code=ALL&treaty_id=6.

¹⁴ <https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-investment-climate-statements/angola/>.

¹⁵ <https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-investment-climate-statements/angola/>; <https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/legislation/details/18644>.

¹⁶ Law No. 3/92, <https://wipolex-res.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/en/ao/ao003en.pdf>.

¹⁷ <https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-investment-climate-statements/angola/>.

¹⁸ Commercial Law, <https://jomqservices.co.ao/content/artigos/Lei%201.07.%20de%2014%20de%20Maio.%20da%20Lei%20das%20Actividades%20Comerciais.pdf>.

¹⁹ <https://freedomhouse.org/country/angola/freedom-net/2023>.

²⁰ <https://igape.minfin.gov.ao/PortalIGAPE/#!/>.

²¹ <https://arc.minfin.gov.ao>.

²² Angola's Investment Policy Review, p. 37, https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/diaepcb2019d4_en.pdf.

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