

A new International Trade Centre (ITC) [report](#) analyses opportunities for online marketplaces in Africa to be better integrated in African economies.

Online marketplaces are booming in Africa, where they are becoming the driving force in the growth of e-commerce, that significantly expanded the potential for remote sales as a reaction to COVID restrictions. Consumer traffic on online marketplaces in Africa is still low, but has vast untapped potential.

The ITC report describes the most used e-marketplaces in the continent, based on the information extracted from a recently launched ITC database of online marketplaces across Africa, called the “ [Africa Marketplace Explorer](#) ”.

E-commerce is still nascent in Africa – the continent’s 631 online marketplaces recorded 2.17 billion visits in 2019, a volume corresponding to only 8% of the traffic on the US-tech giant Amazon. Just 10 countries, including South Africa, Egypt, Nigeria and Algeria, are responsible for 94% of all online business in Africa.

The largest and most active sites are present only in the biggest, most advanced economies. The top challenge in accessing a marketplace, the report finds, is that it may be available just to sellers in certain locations. The report concludes with a recommendation for African policymakers to help develop cross-border e-commerce and invest in technology, pointing out how large online marketplaces can help African entrepreneurs expand their sales and adapt their products and services to the changing patterns of demand.

