

A few week after [Tanzania launched its Trade Information Portal](#) , inaugurated on 8 July 2021, also Burundi has inaugurated today a [one-stop platform](#) gathering all information in English and French relating to import, export and transit through the country.

Trade Information Portals are information technology tools that increase transparency in trade transactions by offering traders information on procedures for import, export and transit. These portals represent today the main modality with which the World Trade Organisation (WTO) members implement Article 1.2.1 of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA), which mandates the WTO members to make available through the internet, and update to the extent possible and as appropriate, procedures with a step-by-step description of formalities required for completing an importation, exportation, and transit operation, including the main regulation applicable and forms and documents required. Burundi has been a member of WTO since 23 July 1995.

Unfortunately, trade portals rarely include information on transport regulation, which are much needed in Africa, where cross-border transport and transit operations are regulated by a complex network of bilateral, trilateral and regional agreements, most of them not published and therefore not easily accessible to transport operators, which causes them to operate in a situation of high unpredictability. An exception is Zambia, that in its recently launched [Trade Information Portal](#) , has integrated instructions and forms for obtaining permits to be used in cross border transportation and international driving permits.

With the Burundi Trade Portal, only South Sudan in the East African Community has not yet developed such portal. The country however, is not yet a member of the World Trade Organisation. Trade portals in Burundi, Tanzania, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda have a similar architecture and are all integrated in the [Regional Trade Information Portal](#) of the East African Community.

