

Import Requirements in Cabo Verde

Trade Barriers

Cabo Verde has a liberal trade framework. Foreign investors and companies receive the same treatment as Cabo Verdean nationals regarding taxes, licenses and registration, and access to foreign exchange. Import and export operations need to be accredited through the issuance of a commercial operator certificate. There are three import licenses: imports exempted from license (including those without commercial value), imports subject to automatic licensing, and imports subject to non-automatic licensing. The general principle is that all goods are subject to automatic licensing. The exception – non-automatic licensing – applies to goods subject to sanitary, phytosanitary, and safety controls, as well as goods subject to legal restrictions such as medicines, fuel, and weapons.

Import Requirements and Documentations

Import operations need to be accredited through the issuance of a commercial operator certificate. It is also necessary to have an import license, depending on the categories and the goods. Both the commercial operator certificate and the import license are issued by the Chamber of Commerce. Import requirements and documentation include the bill of lading, commercial invoice, and certificate of origin when required by the importer. Depending on the product, the exporter may be required to present health or phytosanitary certificates. There are registered agents who can help navigate the procedures and required documents.

Labeling and Marking Requirements

Labeling requirements are enforced by the Independent Health Regulatory Agency (ERIS) that establishes the labeling/marking requirements for the pharmaceutical, cosmetic, and food sectors. There are special formalities to comply with to import

food products. Food and pharmaceutical products imported into Cabo Verde must abide by international norms and include the date of manufacture, the validity period, composition, trademark, and manufacturer's name. The information must be presented in Portuguese.

Customs Regulations

Cabo Verdean customs falls under the National Directorate of State Revenues (DNRE), which is responsible for taxes and customs duties. As a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), Cabo Verde has adopted a liberal framework for processing and taxing goods. This process is only available to duly licensed importers and exporters, supported by accredited brokers.

Standards for Trade

Cabo Verde does not develop unique national standards unilaterally or with a company. Cabo Verde is in the process of joining the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), of which the United States is also a member, and largely uses its standards. The country is a member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which also develops standards and has a body responsible for the regional normalization of standards (ECOSHAM). Cabo Verde is bound by the ECOWAS treaty to apply European Union (EU) standards through the EU's Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), an association agreement with ECOWAS. The body responsible for standardization in Cabo Verde is the Institute of Quality and Intellectual property (Institute de Gestao da Qualidade Eda Propriedade Intelectual; IGOPC).

Standards

The Cabo Verdean normative documents include all Cabo Verdean standards, technical specifications, technical reports, guides, and technical agreements and are

published in the official gazette as adopted. Also included are all regional and international normative documents that Cabo Verde has adopted. In addition to the published or adopted standards, Cabo Verde may adopt additional standards from recognized international entities responsible

Testing, Inspection, and Certification

The Multisectoral Regulatory Agency for the Economy (ARME) and the Regulatory Agency for Health (ERIS) are responsible for inspections and certification of products entering the market. The Institute of Quality and Intellectual Property supports national inspection authorities' efforts to guarantee best international practices, ensuring that the National Quality System and the Conformity Assessment System adhere to international standards. In June 2020, the government created a National Certification Commission (CONCERT) to develop and implement certification processes for products and services and to promote national private initiatives in the field of certification. CONCERT includes representatives of the Institute for Quality Management and Intellectual Property; General Directorate for Agriculture, Forestry and Livestock (DGASP); the Institute for Research and Agrarian Development (INIDA); National Directorate of Industry, Commerce, and Energy (DNICE); Chamber of Commerce of Barlavento (CCB); Chamber of Commerce of Sotavento (CCISS); Cabo Verdean Quality Association (ACQ); Association for Defense of Consumers (ADECO); and the Independent Health Regulatory Authority (ERIS).

Licensing Requirements for Professional Services

The Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Energy is the authority on licensing requirements, and the Cabo Verdean Investment and Export Promotion Agency (Cabo Verde TradeInvest) can provide useful assistance. Additionally, the Chambers of Commerce have resources related to licensing requirements.

Prohibited and Restricted Imports

Goods subject to legal restrictions include medicines, fuel, and weapons, among others. These goods are under non-automatic licensing and require prior authorization of relevant authorities. Businesses should contact Cabo Verdean customs authorities for more information on licenses for restricted goods at General Directorate of Customs.