



# The AfCFTA's Influence on Southern African Supply Chains in Eswatini,

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## Abstract

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) aims to create a single market for goods and services within Africa by eliminating tariffs and other trade barriers among its member countries, including Eswatini. Qualitative research methods were employed, involving semi-structured interviews with key informants from various sectors including agriculture, manufacturing, and service industries. Participant observation was also used to gain insights into daily business operations. Local businesses have experienced a mixed response to the AfCFTA, with some reporting increased sales due to expanded market access but others facing challenges in maintaining competitive pricing and quality standards. There is a notable increase in cross-border supply chain activities, particularly in agricultural products. The AfCFTA has catalyzed regional integration by facilitating greater trade flows within Southern Africa, though its benefits have not been evenly distributed across all sectors and regions of Eswatini. Businesses should consider diversifying their product offerings to cater to both local and international markets, while governments can support small-scale farmers and businesses through infrastructure development and market access initiatives.

**Keywords:** *African, Geopolitics, Mercosur, Globalization, Regionalism, Empiricism, Ethnography*

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