

LONDA

DIGITAL RIGHTS AND INCLUSION IN AFRICA REPORT

ANGOLA



2022

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Angola



▶ Executive Summary

Access to the internet in Angola remains very low but has been increasing steadily. With a population of about 30 million, more than half of Angolans do not have internet access. While the occasional arrest of protesters who started online and took to the streets negatively impacted the growth of digital activism and mobilisation in the past, the use of social media to garner support for various causes has become common in recent years. The Constitution enshrines freedom of expression and of the Press and the right to privacy. There are pieces of legislation that regulate the use and services of the internet such as the Electronic Communications and Information Companies Services Act of 2011 which, for instance, provides for the right to privacy and online security.

This report demonstrates that although progress has been recorded in some instances, a number of violations occur while using technology or in internet-facilitated digital spaces such as social media platforms. Violations against freedom of expression are examples of this. Journalists and activists are subjected to legal proceedings in Angola, and during the period under review, members of the press and civil society were charged for various reasons. Generally, association and assembly rights are regularly subject to interference and prone to government restrictions. Citizens and associations that criticise the government do not exercise these rights freely. Equally, internet access is still prohibitively expensive for most people, especially in rural areas. A number of stakeholder-specific recommendations are proposed for enhancing the protection and promotion of digital rights.



Introduction

Angola is a Southern African Portuguese-speaking country with an estimated population of 31 million.¹ It is ranked 99 out of 180 countries in the 2022 World Press Freedom Index.² Also, investigative reporting on subjects involving politics and the judicial system often leads to prosecutions and sometimes heavy sentences. Despite this low ranking, no reporters/journalists were killed in 2022. However, journalists Daniel Fernandes and Romão De Jesus, who were reporting on the demolition of homes in Luanda, lost their equipment after being assaulted by military and police officers for reporting on the demolition of homes to make way for a new airport in the city.³ Following three assaults on media organisations in Angola,⁴ the Union of Angolan Journalists (SJA) called for a protest against restrictions on Press freedom in December 2022.⁵

More than half of the population does not have internet access. Data from the *Digital 2022* report indicates that in January 2022, there were 12.41 million internet users. At the start of 2022, the internet penetration rate was at 36.0 per cent of the total population.⁶ Kepios analysis indicates that internet users increased by 389,000 (+3.2 per cent) between 2021 and 2022.⁷ There are four mobile telecommunication companies: Movicel, Unitel, Angola Telecom and Africell. Africell started operations in April 2022. Angola is ranked 61 out of 100 in the *Freedom on the Net* report (2022).⁸ The Internet is still only accessible to a small number of people in Angola, as shown in the graph below. This partly inhibits Internet accessibility and does not contribute to the enjoyment of digital rights.

1 <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/angola/> (accessed on 30 December 2022). Since independence in 1975, it has been governed by the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA). The current President, João Lourenço, was elected in August 2022, after more than 30 years of governance by the previous head of state, José Eduardo dos Santos, who died in September 2022. See Angolan President Joao Lourenco wins re-election bid <https://www.dw.com/en/angola-incumbent-president-joao-lourenco-wins-reelection/a-62963836> (accessed 30 December 2022) & José Eduardo dos Santos: State funeral for Angola ex-president <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-62705492> (accessed 30 December 2022).

2 Reporters Without Borders 'Press freedom still fragile despite the old dictator's departure' <https://rsf.org/en/angola> (accessed on 31 December 2022).

3 Angolan journalists attacked by security forces <https://ifex.org/angolan-journalists-attacked-by-security-forces/> (accessed 31 December 2022).

4 Journalists march on the 17th against attacks on the class <https://www.verangola.net/va/en/122022/Telecommunications/33603/Journalists-march-on-the-17th-against-attacks-on-the-class-after-a-new-assault-on-the-Union.htm> (accessed 27 December 2022).

5 <https://crisis24.garda.com/alerts/2022/12/angola-unionized-journalists-members-likely-to-protest-in-luanda-dec-17> (accessed 28 December 2022).

6 Hootsuite, Digital in Angola, Data Reportal, 2022 <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2022-angola> (accessed 16 January 2022).

7 *Op cit*, Hootsuite.

8 Freedom House 'Freedom on the Net 2022: Angola' <https://freedomhouse.org/country/angola/freedom-net/2021> (accessed on 28 December 2022).

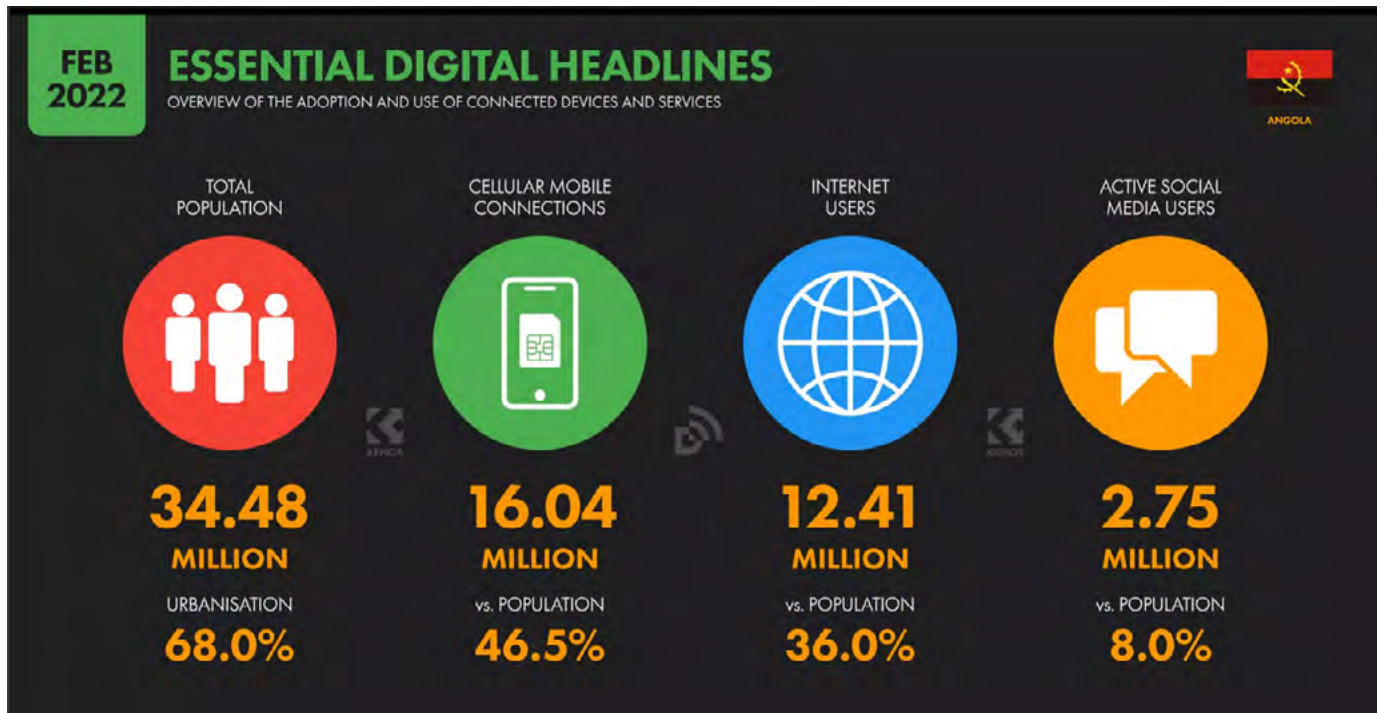


Figure 1: Digital in Angola (Hootsuite, 2022)

Country Analysis

INTERNET FREEDOM



According to Freedom House, internet freedom in Angola remained under threat as the country prepared for General Elections in August 2022.⁹ Network challenges make it difficult for users to access the internet without interruptions, as well as infrastructure deficits in rural areas. Internet access is still prohibitively expensive for many people (only 36 per cent have access)¹⁰, especially in rural areas. The government and some private companies have made efforts to install free wireless access points. For example, Angola Online, a project promoted by the government, installed several wireless posts aimed at expanding internet availability and accessibility. In Luanda and other cities, private companies have gradually installed free wireless hotposts in public spaces.¹¹

There were no connectivity restrictions on fixed and mobile telephone networks during the period under review. Social media and communication applications such as YouTube, Facebook and Twitter, and the services

9 *Op cit.* (Freedom House 2022)

10 See Figure 1.

11 Angola Online <https://www.menosfios.com/projecto-angola-online-com-30-mil-conexoes-no-pais/> (accessed on 28 December 2022).

of international blog hosting platforms, can be freely used. However, indirect control of telecommunications infrastructure by the Angolan government, through the state-owned company Angola Telecom, may be an alternative for the government to maintain its control in the mobile communication companies.¹²

While the government does not block or censor online content, violence against activists and journalists contributes to self-censorship and this creates a climate of fear that limits public debate on governance issues. During the period under review, there were violations against freedom of expression and other internet violations. For example, on November 7, 2022, reports indicated that one person was arrested, and two others were confirmed as wanted by police, in relation to an online video that criticised president João Lourenço.¹³ It was revealed that the individuals in question are employed by a construction company that is building the new Agostinho Neto International Airport in Luanda.¹⁴ In the video posted to Facebook and shared on WhatsApp, the trio criticised the President for prioritising the construction of the airport while many citizens were wallowing in poverty. They also alleged that construction workers were earning more than teachers.¹⁵

The Criminal Investigation Service (SIC) confirmed that the video was offensive to the State, and that social media should be used for positive purposes, although the exact charges levelled against the three individuals remain unclear.¹⁶ This development is illustrative of the limited tolerance for criticism of the

government, and the State's willingness to pursue legal action against those with dissenting views, whether expressed online or in physical spaces. There is no clarity on the legal explanation to take this action, even if the laws on State security and defamation are contrary to constitutional guarantees.

For example, Article 26 of the 2010 State Security Law punishes individuals who insult the country or the president in "public sessions or by disseminating words, images, texts or audio" with a prison sentence of up to three years. Equally, it is contrary to international standards, as the 2019 ACHPR Declaration (Part IV, Principle 38) states that "states shall not interfere with the right of individuals to seek, receive and impart information through any means of communication and digital technologies, through measures such as the removal, blocking or filtering of content, unless such interference is justifiable and compatible with international human rights law and standards."

DATA GOVERNANCE

The Electronic Communications and Information Companies Services Act of 2011 provides for citizens' rights to privacy and security online, among other legislation regulating the use and services of the internet. Regarding data protection, a distinctive dual legal structure for data protection is used in Angola. The Presidential Decree 214/2016¹⁷ effectively establishes the office of the Data Protection Agency (DPA) to ensure adherence to the data protection law, despite the Personal

12 Angola Telecom <http://www.angolatelecom.ao/> (accessed on 26 December 2022).

13 Vídeo no Tik Tok leva jovem angolano à prisão por difamar o Presidente <https://angola24horas.com/component/k2/item/25779-video-no-tik-tok-leva-jovem-angolano-a-prisao-por-difamar-o-presidente> (accessed 28 December 2022).

14 Vídeo no Tik Tok leva jovem angolano à prisão por difamar o Presidente https://www.cmjornal.pt/mundo/afrika/detalhe/video-no-tik-tok-leva-jovem-angolano-a-prisao-por-difamar-o-presidente?ref=Famosos_CmaoMinuto (accessed 26 December 2022).

15 Vídeo no Tik Tok leva jovem angolano à prisão por difamar o Presidente <https://www.lusa.pt/article/39965506> (accessed 26 December 2022).

16 Vídeo no Tik Tok leva jovem angolano à prisão por difamar o Presidente <https://www.dn.pt/internacional/video-no-tik-tok-leva-jovem-angolano-a-prisao-por-difamar-o-presidente-15446061.html> (accessed on 26 December 2022).

17 Presidential Decree 214/16 of 10 October - Organic Statute of the DPA https://www.apd.ao/fotos/frontend_1/editor2/161010_dp_214-16_de_10_outubro-estatuto_organico_apd.pdf (accessed 18 January 2022).

Data Protection Law's¹⁸ extensive procedural provisions for the observance of data protection principles and the enforcement of rights.

The data protection law regulates the processing of personal data by both public and private entities.¹⁹ It is applicable to both manual and electronic processing of personal data by controllers and processors based in the country or to processing activities by any means in the country regardless of the location of controllers. The law essentially only applies to processing carried out domestically. The Angolan DPA, known as Agência de Protecção de Dados (APD),²⁰ was founded on October 10, 2016, five years after the country's data protection law was passed. Since the DPA's founding in 2019, it has received over 100 requests and complaints about privacy invasion related to sites without privacy notices, processing of personal data without consent and lack of legalisation of personal data files. However, as of 2022, there are no verifiable reports indicating that these investigations have resulted in punishment or exoneration.

In January 2020, the agency announced that it had a strategic plan for the years 2020 to 2024.²¹ However, little is known about how it was implemented because it has not been made available to the public. In 2022, the work consisted of monitoring some complaints, but the lack of information makes it difficult to understand the outcome of cases. In June 2022, the DPA became, along with five other authorities from five countries on the continent, a member of the African Network of Personal Data Protection Authorities (RAPDP).²² This

was one of the few public actions that can be highlighted in 2022. In December 2022, the DPA announced that there is a proposal to review the Law on the Protection of Personal Data in 2023, as current legislation is outdated in its ability to protect data.²³ However, the APD has not specified which provisions need to be modified in the current law.

Angola does not have a consolidated digital identity (ID) mechanism. However, the National Directorate of the Angolan Civil and Criminal Identification Archive provides Computerised Identity Cards. The Computerised Identity Card is issued within 72 hours upon payment of 15 Kwanzas (USD 0.030). The service is provided by the electronic government system (official government portal) called 'sete.gov.ao'.²⁴ It is unknown how closely this digital identification adheres to the legal requirements for the security and privacy of the data it collects or keeps on file in terms of data protection as the platform is silent on this matter.

CYBERSECURITY AND DATA PRIVACY

Another important topic for this report is cybersecurity and personal data. Although the government has not yet adopted a cybercrime strategy, a new Penal Code was approved by the National Assembly. It includes a few provisions on cybercrime. Regarding the protection of critical infrastructure, Law no. 7/2017 provides for the protection of networks and computer systems. Article 444 stipulates that "if access is obtained by violation of security rules or to a protected service, the punishment is imprisonment for two to eight years".²⁵

18 Data Protection Law Decree 214/2016 https://www.apd.ao/fotos/frontend_1/editor2/110617_lei_22-11_de_17_junho_proteccao_dados_pessoais.pdf (accessed 18 January 2022).

19 Paradigm Initiative: Data Protection Authorities in Africa <https://paradigmhq.org/report/data-protection-authorities-in-africa-dpas-report/> (accessed on 17 January 2023).

20 Agência de Protecção de Dados (APD) <https://www.apd.ao/> (accessed on 17 January 2023).

21 APD aprimora estratégia de actuação para 2023 <https://www.apd.ao/ao/noticias/apd-aprimora-estrategia-de-actuacao-para-2023/> (accessed on 17 January 2023).

22 Agência de Protecção de Dados (APD) eleita membro da Rede Africana de Autoridades de Protecção de Dados pessoais (RAPDP) <https://www.apd.ao/ao/noticias/agencia-de-proteccao-de-dados-apd-eleita-membro-da-rede-africana-de-autoridades-de-proteccao-de-dados-pessoais-rapdp/> (accessed on 17 January 2023).

23 APD aprimora estratégia de actuação para 2023 <https://www.apd.ao/ao/noticias/apd-aprimora-estrategia-de-actuacao-para-2023/> (accessed on 17 January 2023).

24 Government Portal <https://www.sepe.gov.ao/ao/catalogo/mais-servicos/pessoa-familia-e-sociedade/pedido-de-bilhete-de-identidade-informatizado/> (accessed on 28 December 2022).

25 Protection of critical infrastructures, Law no. 7/2017 https://minttics.gov.ao/fotos/frontend_10/gov_documentos/redes_e_sistemas_informaticos_20864175955f109a14374be.pdf



The government has been raising awareness on the need for individual attention over their privacy and security online. For example, on April 28, 2022, Secretary of State for Telecommunications and Information Technology Mário Oliveira, announced²⁶ the government's work on promoting responsible use of the internet, with specific focus on the protection of women and girls online. However, the meaning of "responsible use of the Internet" has not been adequately explained by the Executive. At the 'Girls in ICT Day 2022' celebrations, the Secretary of

State also highlighted the importance of young people using the internet in their personal and professional life.²⁷ He also underscored the need to refrain from sharing personal and other information that may undermine human dignity.

The law also criminalises computer crimes, for example, illegitimate access to information systems. There seems to be an increase in cybercrime attacks in Angola.²⁸ This information was revealed during a workshop promoted by the Ministry of Telecommunications, Information Technology and Media (MINTTICS) to discuss issues related to information and cybersecurity. The director in the Ministry, Hectiandro Men, also stressed that Angola cannot ignore threats such as online child pornography and drug trafficking on social media networks.²⁹ In response to these crimes, the government introduced legislative initiatives such as the Protection of Personal Data, Electronic Communications, and Information Society Services and the Law of Industrial Property and Copyright, to protect citizens.

In addition, Angola Cables³⁰ introduced a new tool to prevent and fight against internet crimes.³¹ The initiative is called "Shields2Africa" – a security service that protects structures against cyberattacks. According³² to Angola Cables Product Manager, Crisóstomo Mbundu, the innovation is envisaged to revolutionise the technology sector in Angola, as it protects infrastructures against DDoS-type³³ cyberattacks on Layers 3 and 4 of the OSI

26 MINTTICS apoia envolvimento de meninas as TIC <https://minttics.gov.ao/ao/noticias/minttics-apoia-envolvimento-de-meninas-as-tic/> (accessed on 28 December 2022).

27 *Op cit.* MINTTICS apoia.

28 MINTTICS realiza palestra sobre crimes na internet e segurança da informação <https://minttics.gov.ao/ao/noticias/minttics-realiza-palestra-sobre-crimes-na-internet-e-seguranca-da-informacao/> (accessed on 27 December 2022).

29 Crimes informáticos estão a aumentar anualmente em Angola <https://pti.ao/crimes-informaticos-estao-a-aumentar-anualmente-em-angola/> (accessed on 28 December 2022).

30 Angola Cables is a multinational company operating in the global ICT marketplace providing tailored connectivity solutions for the wholesale and corporate segments.

31 Angola Cables desenvolve solução para mitigar ataques cibernéticos <https://pti.ao/angola-cables-desenvolve-solucao-para-mitigar-ataques-ciberneticos/> (accessed on 28 December 2022).

32 *Op cit.* (Angola Cables).

33 It occurs when a group of systems flood a server with fraudulent traffic. Eventually, the server is overwhelmed, causing it to either go down, or become unresponsive, even to legitimate requests.

model,³⁴ a reference model for the exchange of information at the internet level. Angola Cables also presented another service, "Clouds2Africa", a cloud computing solution that is aimed at promoting small technological ideas at reduced costs. The initiative is designed to scale up robust technology solutions to connect businesses. The objective is to reduce costs and increase the adoption of technological solutions through the internet.³⁵

On 14 November 2022, President João Lourenço inaugurated³⁶ the first Huawei Technology Park in Angola. It is located in the Talatona urban district and is the third in Africa, after Egypt and South Africa. According³⁷ to the Minister for Telecommunications, Information Technologies and Media, Mário Oliveira, the Huawei Technology Park is equipped with the latest technology in line with the international standards on data privacy and artificial intelligence. The Minister also noted³⁸ that the facility will be used to provide training to Angolans and staff from other African countries, particularly from those from the SADC region, given its technological potential. It is targeted at training over 10,000 Angolans, as well as teachers of technical and technological courses at Angolan universities by 2027. The Park is a significant advancement in boosting the technology sector in Angola.

REVIEW OF THE UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND

Presently, Angola does not have the Universal Access Fund (UAF). Some initiatives such as Angola Online³⁹ that are aimed at promoting digitalisation and massification of internet

access are carried out by the government and cooperation partners. The project is an initiative of the National Institute for the Promotion of the Information Society (INFOSI) approved by the Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technology. Each access point, where the educational institutions are located, has the capacity to support 60 simultaneous users up to two hours a day. Once this time has



elapsed, the user no longer has access, and this allows others to enter the network. Although it is considered an interesting project, the limitation of access time and the restriction to the main urban centres compromise meaningful access to the Internet for many Angolans. Several criticisms have been made about the poor quality of the signal, as well as the deactivation of access points in urban centres, and power cuts in places where

34 It describes seven layers that computer systems use to communicate over a network. It was the first standard model for network communications, adopted by all major computer and telecommunication companies in the early 1980s.

35 Angola Cables on Facebook https://web.facebook.com/AngolaCables/posts/5367723523265342/?_rdc=1&_rdr (accessed on 27 December 2022).

36 Presidente da República inaugura Parque Tecnológico da Huawei <https://www.jornaldeangola.ao/ao/noticias/presidente-da-republica-inaugura-parque-tecnologico-da-huawei/> (accessed on 28 December 2022).

37 Parque Tecnológico da Huawei vai formar com qualidade de padrão internacional <https://www.jornaldeangola.ao/ao/noticias/parque-tecnologico-da-huawei-vai-formar-com-qualidade-de-padrao-internacional/> (accessed on 28 December 2022).

38 Parque Tecnológico da Huawei em Angola vai formar com qualidade de padrão internacional <https://www.plataformamedia.com/2022/11/14/parque-tecnologico-da-huawei-em-angola-vai-formar-com-qualidade-de-padrao-internacional/> (accessed on 29 December 2022).

39 Angola Online <https://www.menosfios.com/projecto-angola-online-com-30-mil-conexoes-no-pais/> (accessed on 27 December 2022).

access points are located.⁴⁰

Though there is no Universal Access Fund in the country, it is important to highlight that on 10 August 2022, the local press reported⁴¹ that the capital of Angola will have the first Luanda Science Centre (CCL). This is a public institution with the mission⁴² of spreading scientific and technological knowledge in the country. During the visit to the headquarters, President João Lourenço was apprised of the progress at the institution and the commencement of operations that is anticipated in July 2023. The Centre will have administrative and financial autonomy and may contribute to managing Angola's natural resources, environmental and health issues. According⁴³ to the Minister of Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, Maria do Rosário Bragança, the CCL is the first network of science and technology centres that will be built in the country to increase digital literacy in Angola. This is an exciting effort which should complement USF ideally, as it is private sector led and can inspire other telecommunications companies to be as proactive in advancing the use of ICTs and Internet access.

DEVELOPMENTS IN ICT AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

Angola does not have a policy on Artificial Intelligence (AI). Generally, there is no public debate on emerging technologies. In 2022, a satellite that is expected to enable the country to enter the new sphere of research

and development of emerging technologies was launched.⁴⁴ In February 2022, the former Minister of Telecommunications, Information Technologies and Media, Manuel Homem, visited the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to discuss the proposal for the Digital Transformation Programme (Digital Angola 2024).⁴⁵ It is a programme for the digital revolution in the country, especially for the implementation of an AI plan. However, such a plan was never made available for public discussion, and was only known from the interview given by the Minister in 2022. In addition, it is important to note that new companies like Africell have chosen Angola as their preferred market for telecommunications, given that there are only two mobile companies and it seems to be an apparently free and open market for competition.

Another highlight is that, on April 7, 2022, Africell launched⁴⁶ its operations in Angola. Since then, Africell has invested⁴⁷ more than \$150 million in the telecoms market to build a high-quality 5G-capable network with an initial capacity of over six million subscribers. The telecom company has enlisted the expertise of international and local technology providers such as Nokia, Oracle, MSTelcom and Angola Cables. It has also set up a data centre in the capital Luanda.⁴⁸ Africell will be the first fully foreign-owned service provider – and the fourth overall – to operate in Angola. The firm's entry should improve⁴⁹ competitiveness, and possibly prices in the local market (which is

40 Projecto Angola Online quase sempre em offline <https://valoreconomico.co.ao/artigo/projecto-angola-online-quase-sempre-em-offline> (accessed on 27 December 2022).

41 Luanda contará com um centro dedicado à ciência e tecnologia a partir de 2023 <https://pti.ao/luanda-contara-com-um-centro-dedicado-a-ciencia-e-tecnologia-a-partir-de-2023/> (accessed on 28 December 2022).

42 Centro de Ciências pode entrar em funcionamento em Julho de 2023 <https://www.tpa.ao/ao/noticias/centro-de-ciencias-pode-entrar-em-funcionamento-em-julho-de-2023/> (accessed on 28 December 2022).

43 *Op cit.* Luanda contará.

44 Angola Launches its Second Satellite, Angosat-2 <https://africanews.space/angola-launches-its-second-satellite-angosat-2-today/> (accessed on 27 December 2022).

45 Angola pretende criar uma plataforma de AI <https://pti.ao/angola-pretende-criar-uma-plataforma-de-inteligencia-artificial-para-acelerar-a-transformacao-digital/> (accessed on 29 December 2022).

46 Africell to launch On 7 April <https://www.telecompaper.com/news/africell-angola-to-launch-on-07-april-1419969> (accessed on 29 December 2022).

47 Africell a démarré officiellement ses activités commerciales en Angola <https://www.agenceecofin.com/operateur/0704-96485-africell-a-demarre-officiellement-ses-activites-commerciales-en-angola> (accessed on 29 December 2022).

48 Africell launches mobile services in Angola <https://www.totaltele.com/513006/Africell-launches-mobile-services-in-Angola> (accessed on 29 December 2022).

49 Africell becomes Angola's fourth operator <https://www.insidetelecom.com/africell-becomes-angolas-fourth-operator/> (accessed on 29 December 2022).

dominated by state-owned UNITEL).

On April 28, 2022, the National Directorate of Advertising (DNP) announced⁵⁰ plans to establish Meta⁵¹ offices in Angola, with a view to attracting digital entrepreneurship in the country. The revelation was made by José Matuta Cuato, director of DNP, who was speaking at the National Conference on Ethics and Advertising Legislation, held⁵² by the Ministry of Telecommunications, Information Technology and Media, together with the DNP.

Referring to the difficulty that digital entrepreneurs face in the current advertising scenario in Angola, José Matuta Cuato revealed that work is underway to bring platforms such as Facebook to the country, although it is in its initial phase. He said:

“It is in an embryonic phase, but we are working to bring Facebook here. We know what businesses today in the digital space go through. For example, if we have these platforms in Angola, people will be able to pay in local money Kwanzas.⁵³”

Angola may become the first country in African Portuguese-speaking countries to have Meta offices, which will enable the presence of content in Portuguese to expand to other countries in the region.

On May 18, 2022, Angola Cables announced⁵⁴ a partnership with leading US data centre owner and developer Flexential, becoming the world's first operator to guarantee the connectivity of 59 data centres from different global providers on its submarine cable network. With access to Angola Cables' MONET cable, hosted at Flexential's data centre in Fort Lauderdale, USA, this partnership will

offer the Angolan company's customers low latency, high-capacity connectivity, and cloud solutions across the 40 highly redundant data centres, seven cloud nodes and management of over 13,000 cross connects that Flexential's network offers in the USA. Ângelo Gama, CEO of Angola Cables, noted⁵⁵ that the new high-capacity connectivity is the most suitable in terms of cost and efficiency to serve multiple industries that link Africa to the US, such as the oil sector, e-commerce, scientific and academic research, among many others.

It is also important to highlight that on May 27, 2022, Unitel and Huawei signed⁵⁶ a three-year agreement to lay a solid foundation for long-term cooperation in the future. The framework agreement consists of a full range of services including Radio Access Network (RAN) solutions, transmission, and innovative services such as 'Home Service' and mobile money. In reaction, Unitel CEO Miguel Galdes said that Huawei and Unitel have maintained a long-term partnership of trust, and as digitalisation continues, this partnership will further enable Unitel to enhance user experience and improve O&M efficiency.

On July 30, 2022, the Ministry of Education and telecommunications company, Unitel, launched an initiative to promote digital literacy in Angola. The initiative intends to provide public education institutions with free access to the internet, covering and fostering digital education for teachers and students in the initiation classes. The plan was signed by the National Director for Secondary Education, Orlando Lundoloqui, and by Unitel's General Manager, Miguel Galdes, and it is planned to start in 2024. For its operationalisation, the project will also involve Huawei Angola, which

50 Direção nacional de publicidade quer trazer Meta ao país <https://pti.ao/direccao-nacional-da-publicidade-quer-trazer-escritorios-da-meta-para-o-pais/> (accessed on 29 December 2022).

51 The parent company for Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp.

52 MINTTICS realiza evento nacional sobre ética e legislação publicitaria <https://minttics.gov.ao/ao/noticias/minttics-realiza-2-conferencia-nacional-sobre-etica-e-legislacao-publicitaria/> (accessed on 29 December 2022).

53 *Op cit.*, Direção nacional de publicidade.

54 Angola Cables firma parceria com maior operador de data center dos EUA <https://pti.ao/angola-cables-firma-parceria-com-o-maior-operador-de-data-center-dos-eua-e-passa-conectar-59-data-centers-mundiais/> (accessed on 29 December 2022).

55 *Op cit.*, Angola Cables firma.

56 Unitel e Huawei assinaram acordo quadro para fortalecer parceria <https://pti.ao/huawei-e-unitel-assinam-acordo-quadro-para-fortalecer-parceria/> (accessed on 29 December 2022).

will provide equipment and technological solutions such as computers and projectors, while Unitel intends to promote Internet access and connectivity in schools. Speaking at the protocol signing ceremony, Luísa Grilo, Ministry of Education, said that technologies are fundamental resources for education.

During that occasion, Miguel Gerales, representing Unitel, pointed out the need to renew education to face the accelerated pace of technological innovations, to make teaching more creative, stimulate the interest in learning and place the school on a platform to respond to the educational challenges necessary for future generations. This is an initiative to be considered as it promotes digital literacy and may allow more Angolans to have access to the internet. The new agreement comes at a time when the government has been implementing new initiatives to promote digital connectivity in the country.

On November 30, 2022, the State-owned telecommunications operator, Unitel, announced⁵⁷ its intention to phase out 2G and 3G network mobile phones in the country. According to Unitel, the discontinuity of such devices should expedite the development and expansion of the more advanced 4G and 5G networks. Unitel acknowledged⁵⁸ that 4G and 5G network devices are more expensive and has suggested⁵⁹ a possible subsidy or tax exemption scheme to reduce the cost and ensure consumer access. Unitel currently dominates Angola's telecommunication market with 11 million subscribers, followed by Africell with five million, and Movicell with 1.5 million.

The strategy envisaged by Unitel is prudent given that demand for more advanced networks is currently suppressed due to the high use of older generation mobile phones (anchored by their lower price and availability), which has impeded the expansion of 4G and

5G in the country. However, Unitel's success in its touted endeavour will be dependent on its ability to lower the costs of new generation devices sufficiently, as well as ensure buy-in from Africell and Movicell. The technological transition is seen as an advantage that could bring benefits to more Angolans. However, it should be a phased process so as not to create a digital divide or unequal access in Angola.

57 Unitel e Africell divergem sobre eliminação da rede 2G <https://www.angop.ao/noticias/economia/unitel-e-africell-divergem-sobre-eliminacao-da-rede-2g/> (accessed on 29 December 2022).

58 Unitel defende descontinuidade de telefones 2G para "acelerar" inclusão digital em Angola <https://www.lusa.pt/article/39927781> (accessed 27 December 2022).

59 *Op cit.*

Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, this report has shown that there are still occasional violations of internet freedom of expression. In addition, many people still cannot afford internet access, particularly in rural areas. In Angola, many cases have been launched against the press and civil society during the time period examined in this research. Journalists and activists are susceptible to legal processes. Despite the fact that there are no known instances of internet outages or access restrictions, many Angolans find the rules governing the ICT industry to be burdensome due to their ambiguous language about the exercise of digital rights. Press freedom tends to deteriorate, particularly as private and government-owned media companies are dominated by the ruling party MPLA.

GOVERNMENT	ACADEMIA	CIVIL SOCIETY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As there is confusion over the use of digital media to encourage acts of defamation or public criticism, legislation that targets public and political institutions, such as the President of the Republic, should be clarified. • To enable more people to genuinely have access to high-quality internet outside of urban areas, the government should broaden its plans for governance through “Angola Online”, as well as ensure that this programme has better signal quality. • To prevent governmental influence, it is necessary to explicitly specify the standards that have been utilised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in the development of digital literacy training and teaching curricula and the promotion of best practices in the use of emerging technologies in local communities and schools. • In order to better inform choices about the adoption of ICT strategies and best practices, it is necessary to do accurate research on the trends and evolution of the usage of digital tools in Angola. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create local efforts to encourage activism and citizenship movements using social media networks, particularly in rural areas, and take action to report violations of digital rights. • In order to prevent instances of cybercrime and other infractions in the digital sphere, establish a national movement that encourages digital literacy and aids Angolans in adopting policies that promote the responsible use of technology.

GOVERNMENT	ACADEMIA	CIVIL SOCIETY
for private and public participation in mobile communication enterprises in Angola.		



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