



Regulations Governing Micro-Importation in Algeria: A Legal Perspective in Light of David Hume's Theory of Commerce and Executive Decree No. 25-170

Réglementation de la micro-importation en Algérie: Une perspective juridique à la lumière de la théorie du commerce de David Hume et du décret exécutif n° 25-170

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Abstract:

Micro-importation is an economic activity that has recently been regulated under Algerian legislation. Its integration into the status of the self-employed entrepreneur aims, in particular, to formalize this activity and place it within an organized legal framework. From the philosophical and economic perspective of David Hume's theory of commerce, this study analyzes the legal rules governing the practice of micro-importation by self-employed entrepreneurs in light of Executive Decree No. 25-170 of June 28, 2025, which establishes the conditions and procedures governing its practice. It examines the main conditions and procedures provided for by this decree while clarifying the key legal concepts related to this activity. The study also seeks to highlight the regulatory and control mechanisms established by the legal framework, as well as certain gaps that may affect its implementation. It concludes with proposals aimed at strengthening the coherence of the legal framework and facilitating the regular practice of this activity.

Keywords: Micro-importation; Self-employed entrepreneur; David Hume; Commerce; Law.

Résumé:

La micro-importation constitue une activité économique nouvellement encadrée par la législation algérienne. Son intégration dans le statut de l'auto-entrepreneur vise notamment à formaliser cette activité et à l'inscrire dans un cadre juridique organisé. À travers la perspective philosophique et économique de la théorie du commerce de David Hume, la présente étude analyse les règles juridiques régissant l'exercice de l'activité de micro-importation par l'auto-entrepreneur, à la lumière du décret exécutif n° 25-170 du 28 juin 2025, qui fixe les conditions et les modalités de son exercice. Elle examine les principales conditions et procédures prévues par ce texte, tout en clarifiant les notions juridiques essentielles relatives à cette activité. L'étude vise également à mettre en évidence les mécanismes d'encadrement et de contrôle prévus par le dispositif réglementaire, ainsi que certaines lacunes susceptibles d'affecter sa mise en œuvre. Elle aboutit à des propositions visant à renforcer la cohérence du cadre juridique et à faciliter l'exercice régulier de cette activité.

Mots-clés: Micro-importation ; Auto-entrepreneur ; David Hume ; Commerce ; Droit.

Introduction:

Informal micro-importation, popularly known as “caba trade” or “suitcase trade,” has long been practiced outside legal frameworks, placing a strain on the national economy. Consequently, the Algerian authorities have decided to undertake a definitive settlement of the situation of young micro-importers holding self-employed status, in an effort to regulate this economic activity and stimulate domestic trade.

Within this context, Executive Decree No. 25-170 was issued to define the conditions and modalities governing the practice of micro-importation by self-employed entrepreneurs¹. This new executive decree may help restore balance to the import sector and open the way for a new commercial dynamism that contributes to price stability for various imported goods, while ensuring greater availability of foreign products. It is also expected to reorganize the micro-importation market and put an end to the disorder that has characterized this activity in recent years.

However, the success of this reform remains contingent upon its proper implementation and strict enforcement, in a manner that serves the national economy and protects the domestic market.

Micro-importation has been restricted to individuals holding the status of self-employed entrepreneur. According to Article 02 of Law No. 22-23, which establishes the legal framework for the self-employed entrepreneur², the latter is defined as “any natural person who independently carries out a profit-generating activity included in the list of eligible activities under the self-employed status, and whose annual turnover does not exceed a threshold determined in accordance with the applicable legislation.” Among these eligible activities is micro-importation.

The rationale for selecting this topic lies in highlighting the efforts undertaken by the Algerian legislator—and, by extension, the Algerian state—in establishing a set of legal provisions and rules aimed at activating and implementing micro-importation as a viable economic activity for unemployed youth. This is achieved through the legal framework set out in Executive Decree No. 25-170, issued in application of paragraph 03 of Article 02 of Law No. 22-23 concerning the self-employed entrepreneur.

The significance of this research stems from the major role that micro-importation plays in eliminating the parallel import market and, consequently, reducing youth unemployment. Moreover, the micro-importation system represents a transitional stage for self-employed individuals aspiring to become importers, as the new framework enables them to gradually acquire experience before evolving into professional importers.

This research paper aims to simplify the concepts and procedures related to the conditions and requirements for practicing micro-importation, with the objective of enhancing the value of research outcomes. It also seeks to analyze the legal texts governing this activity, thereby providing a reliable reference for individuals interested in engaging in micro-importation. Furthermore, the study proposes solutions intended to consolidate, promote, and develop this activity, with the aim of increasing its dissemination and encouraging greater participation among unemployed youth.

Based on the foregoing, the following research problem is raised:

To what extent has Algerian legislation effectively regulated micro-importation by self-employed entrepreneurs in light of economic philosophy, and what legal and economic consequences result from its implementation?

To address this research problem, the study adopts the descriptive method when dealing with certain concepts related to the subject, particularly micro-importation activity. In addition, the legal analytical method is employed to analyze the legal texts governing micro-importation, with the aim of examining their structure and assessing the extent to which they contribute to containing and regulating informal import practices, thereby enabling their integration into the formal national economy.

In order to answer the research problem, the topic will be discussed through the following axes:

1. The concept of micro-importation
2. The conditions for practicing micro-importation
3. The implications resulting from the practice of micro-importation

1. The Concept of Micro-Importation

Micro-importation is considered a newly introduced economic activity established by the Algerian state as part of its efforts to support unemployed youth on the one hand, and to promote economic liberalization and regulate the import market on the other. Accordingly, addressing the concept of micro-importation requires defining it, identifying its characteristics, and highlighting its importance.

1.1 Definition of Micro-Importation

Before defining micro-importation, it is necessary to first address the concept of traditional importation in order to provide a clearer understanding. In this regard, two definitions will be considered: the first relates to traditional importation, while the second focuses on micro-importation.

1.1.1 Definition of Traditional Importation

Importation is the process of bringing goods from outside the national territory into the country through customs entry points. These goods are registered in accordance with customs procedures in order to be released after the payment of the prescribed duties and taxes.

This process aims to meet the needs of individuals for goods and commodities, and may take place through free markets, international fairs and exhibitions, or licensed trade channels in accordance with general import regulations.

Thus, importation includes any goods entering the country by sea, land, or air, provided that a customs declaration is submitted. Such goods are subject to customs duties and applicable taxes unless exempted under the provisions of the unified customs legal system or relevant economic agreements³.

These goods are imported to satisfy the needs of countries that lack their availability. This may be due to several factors, including the absence of suitable climatic conditions for producing such goods domestically, or the fact that these goods are produced locally in

insufficient quantities or with lower quality standards compared to imported products. Moreover, domestically produced goods may not be sufficient to meet the overall level of local consumption⁴.

1.1.2 Definition of Micro-Importation

Unlike general importation, micro-importation constitutes a subsidiary or partial form of commercial activity within the broader and more diverse range of activities that may be undertaken by young individuals holding the status of self-employed entrepreneurs. This activity is conducted on a relatively small and clearly defined scale, characterized by the importation of goods and merchandise in limited quantities. Typically, such imports are intended either for personal use or for use within a narrowly defined scope, rather than for large-scale commercial distribution.

Micro-importation, in its precise legal and practical sense, refers to the operations carried out individually by natural persons during their personal travels abroad, with the specific purpose of importing goods for resale in their original, unaltered state and in quantities that remain within the legally prescribed limits. The total value of the imported goods must not exceed 1,800,000 Algerian dinars (DZD) per trip, with a maximum of two trips permitted per month.

In addition to that, it is important to note that this value limit does not include goods covered under the annual tourism allowance stipulated in the relevant executive decree.

Furthermore, the practice of micro-importation is reserved exclusively for natural persons who personally engage in this activity and who have formally acquired the status of self-employed entrepreneur in accordance with the legislative and regulatory provisions currently in force.⁵

1.2 Characteristics of Micro-Importation

Micro-importation has emerged as one of the contemporary concepts that has significantly transformed the landscape of global trade, particularly for individual participants. This form of trade is distinguished by a set of characteristics that make it an ideal avenue for unemployed youth who aspire to operate as self-employed entrepreneurs and enter the commercial arena. Based on the specific definition of micro-importation, the following attributes can be derived:

1.2.1 Micro-Importation as an Individual Activity

Micro-importation is an economic activity that is exclusively reserved for individuals, meaning that it is strictly limited to natural persons and cannot be conducted by legally structured entities such as corporate bodies or commercial companies, including both partnerships and joint-stock companies. According to the provisions outlined in Article 03 of Law No. 22-23, which establishes the basic legal framework for self-employed entrepreneurs⁶, the individual engaging in this activity must either be an Algerian national residing in Algeria or a foreigner with legal residence in the country.

Additionally, the activity they undertake must be listed among those recognized as eligible under the legal framework governing self-employment.

In this case, the legislator's rationale for restricting micro-importation solely to natural persons lies in the inherently personal nature of this activity. By focusing on individuals

rather than corporate entities, micro-importation is designed to empower personal initiative, thereby offering a practical avenue to reduce youth unemployment and promote entrepreneurial engagement among young people⁷.

1.2.2 Sale in the Original Condition of Imported Goods

Practitioners of micro-importation must ensure that the imported goods and merchandise are not subjected to any form of transformation or industrial processing, meaning that they must be sold in their original, unaltered state.

Indeed, this requirement distinguishes micro-importation from other production-related activities or industrial transformation processes. The primary objective behind this stipulation, as set by the Algerian legislator, is twofold: on one hand, to regulate and structure the micro-importation process, and on the other, to safeguard the national consumer while preventing any forms of illegal or unauthorized practices.

1.2.3 Importation through Personal Travel

Micro-importation activities carried out by a self-employed entrepreneur must be limited to the scope of their personal trips abroad, specifically for the purpose of selling the imported goods and merchandise in their original, unaltered state. These goods must be acquired for the individual's own account and not on behalf of a third party. Furthermore, the merchandise must be physically in the possession of the entrepreneur upon entering Algerian territory and airspace, as it cannot be sent via mail or transported by another person. The Algerian legislator has specifically limited the number of such personal trips to a maximum of two per month.

1.2.4 Legally Capped Value of Imported Goods

The term “value of imported goods and merchandise” refers to the total monetary worth of goods imported through micro-importation activities, which is legally capped at 1,800,000 DZD per trip, with a maximum of two trips per month. Under no circumstances can this limit be exceeded, as doing so would result in the goods being seized. This provision is designed to integrate unemployed youth into the formal economy in a straightforward and transparent manner, facilitating their entry into commercial activity without unnecessary complications.

1.3 The Importance of Micro-Importation

Executive Decree No. 25-170, which defines the conditions and modalities for practicing micro-importation by self-employed entrepreneurs, established new legal rules for this activity. The importance of micro-importation can be summarized as follows:

1.3.1 Legal Importance

Micro-importation is considered a modern activity in the context of Algerian legislation. Previously, this activity was unstructured and was popularly known as “caba trade.” Providing an appropriate legal framework through Executive Decree No. 25-170 allows the state to recover tax revenues and ensure a new financial source for the public treasury. Moreover, establishing micro-importation within a regulated legal framework helps to reduce bureaucratic obstacles associated with traditional importation, particularly for unemployed youth wishing to enter this activity. This includes access to legal advantages such as obtaining a self-employed entrepreneur card, transportation facilities,

and protection from seizure, and freedom of access to markets within a transparent legal environment, which also contributes to protecting consumer health by specifying the origin of imported goods⁸.

1.3.2 Economic Importance

The economic importance of micro-importation lies in its role as a genuine added value, primarily through diversifying supply sources in the local market and providing certain high-demand goods with technological or quality advantages. Micro-importation also allows for the investment of even small savings into economically beneficial projects, helping to grow capital, generate profits, stimulate economic activity, and enhance competition in specific sectors such as mobile phones, computers, and cosmetic products. Furthermore, formalizing micro-importation contributes to transparency and accountability in the sector, strengthening the legitimacy and sustainability of this economic activity⁹.

1.3.3 Social Importance

Practicing micro-importation by self-employed entrepreneurs has social dimensions, as it enables participants in this activity to integrate into the formal national economy. Regulating micro-importation reflects a strategic approach by the Algerian state to manage parallel importation and reduce unemployment by supporting the work dynamics of youth, particularly the unemployed. This activity is an important tool for combating unemployment and provides these young people with an opportunity to improve their social conditions and integrate legally and formally into the national economy¹⁰.

1.4 David Hume's View of Commerce and Its Relevance to Micro-Importation

David Hume regarded commerce as an important factor in the development of economic and social life. In his essay "Of Commerce," he argued that commerce contributes to the expansion of industry by facilitating the movement of economic activity among members of society and by encouraging individuals to engage in productive occupations. He also emphasized the relationship between private economic activity and the strength of the state, noting that the prosperity generated by trade can contribute to public power when supported by an appropriate institutional framework.¹

From Hume's perspective, commerce is therefore not merely an individual pursuit of profit; it can also perform a broader social function by creating employment, stimulating industry, encouraging the circulation of goods, and contributing to the accumulation of wealth. He further associated commercial development with the emergence of a more economically independent social group, particularly merchants and other economically active individuals, whose prosperity may contribute to social stability and greater economic independence.²

These ideas provide a useful theoretical perspective for understanding the rationale behind the Algerian legislator's regulation of micro-importation. By transferring a previously informal commercial activity into a legally recognized framework, the legislator seeks not only to regulate the movement of goods but also to channel individual economic initiative

¹ - Hume, David, "Of Commerce," in *Essays, Moral, Political, and Literary*, Part II, first published in 1752.

² - Hume, David, "Of the Origin of Government," in *Essays, Moral, Political, and Literary*, Part I, first published in 1777.

toward the formal economy. In this respect, the legal organization of micro-importation may be understood as an institutional mechanism for reconciling private economic interest with broader public objectives, including employment, market regulation, transparency, and the protection of the national economy.

Hume's political philosophy also highlights the importance of rules and institutions in ensuring that individual interests remain compatible with the general interest. In "Of the Origin of Government," he explains the necessity of government and positive law where individuals may be guided by immediate interests rather than by their longer-term common interests.[2] Applied cautiously to the present subject, this perspective helps explain why the Algerian legislator has established limits concerning the value of imported goods, the frequency of trips, the categories of permissible goods, prior declaration, financing, and compliance with consumer-protection and security requirements. Such restrictions can be viewed as legal mechanisms intended to reconcile individual commercial initiative with the wider requirements of economic order.

Accordingly, Hume's reflections on commerce do not constitute a direct analysis of contemporary micro-importation, but they provide a relevant philosophical background for examining the relationship between individual economic initiative, commercial activity, regulation, and the public interest. His approach supports the broader idea that commerce can contribute to economic dynamism when individual interests operate within stable rules and institutions.

2. Conditions for Practicing Micro-Importation

Acquiring the status of a micro-importer is not available to everyone. Executive Decree No. 25-170, which defines the conditions and modalities for practicing micro-importation by self-employed entrepreneurs, establishes precise requirements to ensure that this activity effectively targets unemployed youth seeking employment and wishing to engage in this field. The decree also specifies how these young unemployed individuals can conduct micro-importation activities. Accordingly, the following sections detail the objective and procedural conditions:

2.1 Objective Conditions for Practicing Micro-Importation

According to Article 5 of Executive Decree No. 25-170, several objective conditions must be met to practice micro-importation. These conditions are detailed as follows:

2.1.1 Unemployment Requirement

Exclusivity in practicing micro-importation means that the micro-importer cannot engage in any other professional activity, whether paid or unpaid. This condition ensures that micro-importation becomes a primary source of income for unemployed youth rather than a supplementary activity. Practitioners must devote all their time to this activity. Accordingly, participation in micro-importation results in exclusion from unemployment benefits, as stated in Article 5 of Executive Decree No. 25-170.

2.1.2 Legal Working Age

Article 5 of Executive Decree No. 25-170 refers to the term "work" and requires that practitioners meet the legal working age. According to Article 15 of Law No. 90-11¹¹ on labor relations (amended), "under no circumstances can the minimum employment age be

less than sixteen (16) years, except in cases of apprenticeship contracts governed by applicable legislation and regulations.” Therefore, the minimum age to practice micro-importation is 16 years.

It should be noted that if the legislator had referred to the age of majority instead of the legal working age, we would apply Article 40 of the Algerian Civil Code, which states: “Every person who has reached the age of majority, is of sound mind, and is not under guardianship, has full capacity to exercise civil rights. The age of majority is nineteen (19) years.” Since Algerian commercial law does not establish a specific age of majority for commercial activities, general legal principles are applied¹².

2.1.3 Nationality and Residency in Algeria

According to Article 5 of Executive Decree No. 25-170, beneficiaries of the self-employed entrepreneur system must be Algerian citizens residing in Algeria. Foreigners wishing to benefit from this system must have legal residency in the country, in accordance with labor laws and regulations concerning foreigners¹³.

The requirement of residency ensures that this activity supports domestic employment and provides economic and social benefits within Algeria. It also helps maintain the activity within a limited and manageable scope, facilitating government monitoring of funding sources, which would be more difficult if participants resided abroad.

2.1.4 Enrollment in the National Social Security Fund for Non-Salaried Workers

Based on constitutional principles and social security laws, social coverage in Algeria is a fundamental right that provides protection against risks such as illness, aging, disability, death, and workplace accidents. This coverage is embodied in the Algerian Social Insurance Law (amended)¹⁴.

Article 5 of Executive Decree No. 25-170 requires enrollment in the National Social Security Fund for Non-Salaried Workers to practice micro-importation. This requirement is also reflected in Law No. 22-23 on the basic law for self-employed entrepreneurs, which mandates registration with the social security fund to obtain self-employed status, enabling the practitioner to conduct micro-importation¹⁵.

Requiring registration with the social security fund ensures health and social protection for practitioners. Additionally, it provides the Algerian state with a financial resource for the public treasury, as micro-importers maintain bank accounts in Algeria, allowing authorities—represented by the Ministry of Commerce and Customs Administration—to monitor their activities, verify the value of imported goods, and track the permitted number of trips.

2.1.5 Opening a Foreign Currency Bank Account

Article 05 of Executive Decree No. 25-170 stipulates that any individual wishing to engage in small-scale importation must hold a foreign currency bank account with the Algerian External Bank. All import operations must be funded exclusively from the self-employed entrepreneur’s own funds deposited in this account.

Opening a commercial bank account generally requires submitting a copy of the commercial register or, if available, a copy of the accreditation. In the absence of the commercial register document, an individual cannot open a commercial bank account.

However, for a person wishing to engage in temporary importation, this document is exempted, given that they hold the status of a self-employed entrepreneur¹⁶. This status exclusively entitles them to open a commercial bank account, allowing them to benefit from the advantages and facilities associated with this account, in addition to carrying out all financial operations related to small-scale importation¹⁷.

2.2 Procedural Conditions for Practicing Small-Scale Importation

In addition to the substantive conditions set forth in Article 05 of Executive Decree No. 25-170, a small-scale importer must comply with certain administrative procedures that enable them to practice this activity. Among these procedures are obtaining the self-employed entrepreneur card and acquiring a general license to engage in small-scale importation. The following details these procedures:

2.2.1 Obtaining the Self-Employed Entrepreneur Card

According to the provisions of Executive Decree No. 25-170, specifically Article 06, Paragraph 01: “In addition to the conditions set forth in Article 05 above, the small-scale importer must hold a valid self-employed entrepreneur card specifying the field, activity, and small-scale importation. This card is issued by the National Agency for Self-Employed Entrepreneurs in accordance with the applicable legislation and regulations.”

To obtain the self-employed entrepreneur card, the following procedures must be followed:

First: Submission of the Registration Request

Any individual wishing to engage in micro-importation who meets all the conditions stipulated in Article 05 above must register in the National Register of Self-Employed Entrepreneurs¹⁸. The National Agency for Self-Employed Entrepreneurs maintains this register in coordination with the relevant public institutions, notably the tax authorities and the National Social Security Fund for Non-Salaried Workers¹⁹.

Registration is carried out by submitting an application either directly to the National Agency for Self-Employed Entrepreneurs or via the dedicated digital platform, in accordance with Article 15, paragraph 02 of Executive Decree No. 23-197 mentioned above. The application is processed within a maximum period of three (3) working days from the date of submission, and the applicant is electronically notified of the acceptance or rejection of their registration request in the National Register of Self-Employed Entrepreneurs²⁰.

Second: Issuance of the Self-Employed Entrepreneur Card

Upon completion of the registration process and verification of the accuracy of the information and documents provided, the applicant is issued the self-employed entrepreneur card after their registration is approved. This card carries a unique national registration number in the National Register assigned by the National Agency for Self-Employed Entrepreneurs²¹. The card must indicate the activity of micro-importation, according to Article 06, paragraph 01 of Executive Decree No. 25-170 mentioned previously.

2.2.2 Obtaining a General License for Micro-Importation

The self-employed entrepreneur wishing to engage in micro-importation must obtain a general license to practice this activity²², referred to in the legal text as the “general

license,” which is issued by the services of the Ministry in charge of foreign trade²³. The subject can be detailed as follows:

First: Definition of the General License for Importation

Article 6 bis 01 of Order 03-04, as amended and supplemented by Law No. 15-15²⁴, concerning the rules applicable to import and export operations, defines import or export licensing procedures as any administrative procedure imposed as a prerequisite for submitting customs documentation for goods, in addition to those required for customs clearance. Accordingly, an import license is an official authorization granted by governmental authorities to importers. This document is an essential condition for introducing certain goods into a country. Its objectives are to regulate international trade, ensure that imported goods meet quality and safety standards, and support and protect domestic industries from uncontrolled foreign competition²⁵.

The Algerian state requires a general license for micro-importation to regulate the import of goods that enter the national market randomly and without restriction. This measure prevents the market from being flooded with certain goods, protects the local market by controlling the types and quantities of imported goods, and generates financial resources in the form of import taxes²⁶.

Second: Procedures for Obtaining the General License for Micro-Importation

To practice micro-importation, a general permit must be obtained. This permit allows for the import of goods in limited quantities without the need for a commercial record. The applicant submits the request through the National Agency for Self-Employed Entrepreneurs platform, which forwards it to the relevant services of the Ministry of Foreign Trade for review. The applicant is then notified of the decision through the “Talabati” platform under the general permit section²⁷.

Third: Issuance of the General License for Micro-Importation

The general license is issued by the services of the Ministry in charge of foreign trade within five (5) working days from the date of submission. The license is valid for one year and is renewable. The general license is personal and non-transferable, meaning that it is strictly linked to the individual in whose name it was issued, granting rights exclusively to the license holder. It cannot be transferred, sold, or leased to any third party²⁸.

3. Effects of Practicing Micro-Importation

Engaging in micro-importation entails obligations that the small importer must respect, under penalty of sanctions for non-compliance. In return, the importer benefits from privileges and facilities that facilitate the practice of this activity. These are detailed as follows:

3.1 Obligations of the Small Importer

The small importer must comply with a set of obligations designed to ensure transparency, public health safety, and consumer protection:

3.1.1 Obligation to Declare on the Digital Platform

A digital platform managed by the Ministry Delegate for Knowledge Economy and Startups has been established. The small importer must, before each trip, log into this

platform to submit a prior declaration detailing the nature and full description of the goods to be imported. This platform is directly linked to customs and other relevant authorities, ensuring smooth tracking and verification of the information provided by importers²⁹.

3.1.2 Obligations Regarding Products

Executive Decree No. 25-170 imposes strict rules regarding the quality and safety of imported products. For perishable goods, the remaining shelf life must exceed half of the total product shelf life. For example, a product with a 12-month shelf life must have at least six months remaining upon import³⁰.

In addition, labeling requirements ensure that the importer provides clear identification of goods, including the importer's full name and address, the precise product name, country of origin, and delivery note specifying the quantity, weight, or volume of the product³¹.

3.1.3 Obligation Not to Import Excluded Goods

According to Article 09 of Executive Decree No. 25-170, the importation field granted to the small importer is limited. The legislator explicitly excluded certain categories of goods for reasons related to security, public health, and public order. These include:

- Prohibited goods and sensitive materials
- Sensitive equipment specified in Executive Decree No. 09-410³²
- Pharmaceutical substances
- Goods subject to special import licenses
- Goods that may threaten security, public order, or public morals

3.1.4 Obligation Not to Exceed the Financial Threshold

According to Article 08 of Executive Decree No. 25-170, the micro-importer must comply with the legally established financial threshold for the importation of goods. As stipulated in Article 02 of the same decree, this threshold is set at 1.8 million Algerian dinars (180 million centimes) as a maximum per import trip.

3.1.5 Obligation to Comply with Consumer Protection and National Security Rules

Pursuant to Article 06, paragraph 03 of Executive Decree No. 25-170, the micro-importer is required to comply with laws and regulations aimed at protecting consumers from unlawful commercial practices. This includes providing truthful and non-misleading information, ensuring that the product is free from defects, and offering it at a fair price consistent with consumers' purchasing power.

In addition, the importer must ensure consumer safety by avoiding the use of harmful materials in packaging, adhering to proper transportation and storage practices, and minimizing food-related risks through compliance with hygiene and health safety standards³³.

3.1.6 Obligation of the Micro-Importer to Self-Finance Their Activity

The micro-importer is required to finance their activity exclusively from their own funds. They must use only their personal foreign currency to carry out purchasing operations for goods intended for resale. Resorting to external sources of financing or obtaining loans is not permitted. The objective of this requirement is to ensure that micro-importation remains a personal financial activity³⁴.

3.2 Sanctions for the Small Importer's Failure to Fulfill Obligations

Removal from the National Register of Self-Employed Entrepreneurs constitutes the primary sanction established by the Algerian legislator in cases where the small importer fails to comply with the legal obligations imposed upon them, whether these obligations relate to import activity or to their status as a self-employed entrepreneur. The cases and procedures related to removal are detailed as follows:

3.2.1 Cases of Removal of the Small Importer

According to Article 15 of Executive Decree No. 25-170, in addition to the cases provided for under the legislation and regulations governing self-employed entrepreneurs, the small importer shall be removed from the National Register of Self-Employed Entrepreneurs if they:

- Fail to comply with rules related to consumer protection and national security;
- Refuse to carry out prior declaration procedures for goods;
- Submit false declarations regarding imported goods;
- Use the self-employed entrepreneur card for purposes other than those for which it was issued;
- Violate the provisions of this decree.

In addition to the cases directly related to micro-importation activity, there are other situations warranting removal, as stipulated in Article 15 of Executive Decree No. 25-170, concerning the small importer in their capacity as a self-employed entrepreneur. These are provided under Article 14 of Law No. 22-23 establishing the legal framework for the self-employed entrepreneur. These include, for example:

- Failure to declare turnover or declaring zero turnover during the three (3) years following registration in the National Register of Self-Employed Entrepreneurs;
- Exceeding the legally established annual turnover threshold for three (3) consecutive years.

3.2.2 Procedures for the Removal of the Small Importer

Executive Decree No. 25-170 does not explicitly specify the procedures for removing the small importer. However, pursuant to Law No. 22-23, the decision of removal is communicated by the competent authority, by any appropriate means, within a period of fifteen (15) days from the date of the removal decision to the self-employed entrepreneur, as well as to the tax authorities, the social security fund, and the concerned banking or postal institution.

Removal from the National Register results in the cancellation of the self-employed entrepreneur card. The small importer may re-register in the National Register of Self-Employed Entrepreneurs by submitting a new application after remedying the reasons for removal and settling any outstanding tax and quasi-tax debts, if applicable³⁵.

3.3 Advantages of Practicing Micro-Importation

In order to encourage actors in the informal import sector to integrate into the legal framework of micro-importation, the Algerian government has introduced a set of attractive incentive measures aimed at encouraging participation in this activity. These advantages are provided under Article 04 of Executive Decree No. 25-170 and may be summarized as follows:

3.3.1 Exemption from Registration in the Commercial Register

Article 19 of the Algerian Commercial Code³⁶ stipulates that any natural person engaging in commercial activities within Algerian territory is required to register in the commercial register in order to acquire the status of trader, as provided in Article 21 of the same code. However, the Algerian legislator has exempted the small importer from registration in the commercial register and, consequently, from acquiring the status of trader, despite the fact that micro-importation constitutes a commercial activity. This exemption is explicitly provided under Article 04 of Executive Decree No. 25-170.

The abolition of the requirement for registration in the commercial register for the micro-importer relieves them of legal and financial burdens. This exemption allows them to conduct their activity without the need to provide proof of property ownership or a lease agreement, making it an ideal option for young people who may lack the financial resources to secure business premises. Moreover, this measure aligns with the nature of micro-importation, which can be managed from any location and does not require a fixed place of business, thereby further facilitating the integration of these actors into the formal national economy.

3.3.2 Exemption from Prior Import Licenses

The small importer also benefits from an exemption from prior import licenses. This measure applies to self-employed entrepreneurs engaged in micro-importation of goods in limited quantities for resale in their original condition.

Unlike traditional importers, who are required to obtain prior authorizations, micro-importers are exempt from this requirement. This exemption reflects the Algerian state's intention to significantly simplify administrative procedures for small importers and provide them with favorable conditions for practicing micro-importation.

3.3.3 Simplified Accounting System

Article 04 of Executive Decree No. 25-170 provides for the maintenance of a simplified accounting system, stating that the activity must be recorded in a numbered and certified register approved by the territorially competent tax authorities. Thus, accounting obligations are reduced to their simplest form, requiring only the maintenance of this register, without the need for complex accounting systems as required for traditional importers.

As a self-employed entrepreneur benefiting from this measure, the small importer is subject to the provisions of Law No. 07-11 establishing the Financial Accounting System³⁷, as they are classified among small economic entities whose turnover, workforce, and activity do not exceed specified thresholds. Consequently, they are allowed to maintain simplified financial accounts³⁸.

3.3.4 Reduced Customs Duties

Article 04 of Executive Decree No. 25-170 grants the small importer a customs duty rate of 5%, along with a special tax regime in accordance with applicable legislation. Furthermore, Article 16 of Law No. 22-24³⁹ (Finance Law 2023) provides that activities carried out under the legal framework of the self-employed entrepreneur are subject to a single flat tax rate of 0.5%, as also confirmed by Article 282 bis 04 of the Tax Code for 2024.

This contrasts with other activities conducted outside the self-employed framework, where tax rates are set at 5% for production and sale of goods and 12% for other activities.

These provisions demonstrate that the Algerian legislator has granted preferential treatment to self-employed entrepreneurs. The small importer benefits from a simplified and reduced tax system, facilitating the management of tax obligations. When submitting their tax declaration, the importer may opt for installment payment, paying 50% upon submission of the provisional declaration, with the remaining 50% paid in two equal installments: from September 1 to 15 and from December 1 to 15, provided that the declaration is submitted within the prescribed deadlines, in accordance with Article 365 of the Tax Code for 2024.

Conclusion:

At the conclusion of this research paper, and from the perspective of economic philosophy as highlighted by David Hume's insights on commerce, it can be stated that Algeria has taken a significant and decisive step toward regulating its economy by establishing a legal framework for the activity of micro-importation. This activity, which has historically been conducted informally, is now officially recognized and formally organized under Executive Decree No. 25-170, reflecting a conscious effort to channel private economic initiative into structured institutional channels.

On the basis of the preceding analysis, a series of findings and recommendations can be highlighted as follows:

Findings:

1. Executive Decree No. 25-170, which defines the conditions and procedures for practicing micro-importation by self-employed entrepreneurs, has provided a tangible legal framework and significant incentives, thereby opening a clear path for unemployed youth to engage in the formal economy.
2. The same decree does not include legal provisions granting small importers the right to access foreign currency financing for their activities, which inevitably contributes to the persistence of informal currency transactions in the black market.
3. By linking micro-importation activity to the self-employed entrepreneur system, the Algerian legislator has enabled participants in this sector to benefit from the privileges associated with the self-employed status.

4. Micro-importation can serve as one of the key pillars for employment generation, providing opportunities for young unemployed individuals while simultaneously promoting the growth and development of the national economy.
5. Acquiring the self-employed entrepreneur card for practicing micro-importation automatically results in the forfeiture of unemployment benefits.

Recommendations:

1. Clarify the regulatory texts related to micro-importation to make them more attractive to unemployed youth who wish to engage in this activity, particularly addressing the challenge of financing their operations in foreign currency.
2. Strengthen coordination among regulatory authorities, banks, customs, and tax agencies to ensure greater transparency and accountability in financial transactions.
3. Enhance the digital infrastructure, ensuring that the digital platform is robust, user-friendly, and widely accessible, so that it becomes a genuine interface for the activities of small importers, thereby reinforcing transparency and building trust.
4. Provide training and guidance for small importers in management and marketing skills, enabling them to develop their activities sustainably and ensure the long-term viability of their projects.
5. Adopt a forward-looking vision that encourages youth to transition from micro-importation toward establishing productive enterprises, which would allow local demand for imports to be gradually redirected toward domestically produced goods.
6. Provide financial support to micro-importers by facilitating access to funding and loans, accompanied by guidance to help them successfully manage and expand their activities.

Future Research Perspectives:

Future research could focus on assessing the practical implementation of Executive Decree No. 25-170 and its effectiveness in integrating micro-importation into the formal economy. Further studies may also examine the economic and social impact of this activity on youth employment, the development of local markets, consumer protection, and the reduction of informal trade. In addition, comparative legal studies could investigate similar regulatory models in other countries and explore possible improvements to the Algerian legal framework in light of practical developments and emerging challenges.

Footnotes:

¹ Executive Decree No. 25-170, dated, 28 June, 2025, defining the conditions and modalities for the practice of micro-importation activity by the self-employed entrepreneur, Official Gazette of Algeria, No. 40, issued on, 29 June 2025.

² Executive Decree No. 22-23, dated, 18 December 2022, establishing the legal framework for the self-employed entrepreneur, Official Gazette of Algeria, No. 85, issued on, 19 December 2022.

³ Ben Cheni, Abdelkader, Management of International Trade Operations, pedagogical handout intended for third-year students, specialization: International Trade, Faculty of Economic, Commercial and Management Sciences, Abdelhamid Ben Badis University, Mostaganem, academic year 2021–2022.

⁴ Semouk, Nawal, The Impact of Trade Liberalization on the Algerian Economy: An Econometric Study Using a Computable General Equilibrium Model, Doctoral dissertation, specialization: Quantitative Economics, Faculty of Economic, Commercial and Management Sciences, Department of Economics, University of Algiers 3, academic year 2018–2019.

⁵ See Article 02 of Executive Decree No. 25-170, op. cit.

⁶ See Article 03 of Executive Decree No. 22-23, op. cit.

⁷ Ben Azzouz, Fatiha, The Self-Employed Entrepreneur System and Its Privileges in Light of the Provisions of Law No. 22-23, Journal of Legal and Social Sciences, Vol. 08, No. 03, 2023, p. 1075.

⁸ Algerian Radio, Boughadi: Council of Ministers' Decisions to Regulate Micro-Importation Activity a Positive Step for Integrating Traders into the Formal Economy, Official website: <https://news.radioalgerie.dz/ar/node/64971>, accessed on 21-08-2025 at 01:20.

⁹ El Moustakbal El Magharibi Newspaper, Micro-Importation for the Self-Employed Entrepreneur: A New Gateway for Youth Towards Economic Initiative, Official website: <https://www.elmoustakbal-elmagharibi.dz/archives/35063>, accessed on 21-08-2025 at 02:25.

¹⁰ Ben Azzouz, Fatiha, op. cit., p. 1074.

¹¹ Law No. 90-11, dated 21-04-1990, concerning Labor Relations, Official Journal of Algeria, No. 17, issued on 25-04-1990.

¹² Ben Azzouz, Fatiha, op. cit., pp. 1076, 1075.

¹³ Bouguerra, Oum El-Kheir, A Study of the Self-Employed Entrepreneur Introduced under Law No. 22-23, Journal of Research in Contracts and Business Law, Vol. 09, No. 03, 2024, p. 213.

¹⁴ Law No. 83-11, dated 02-07-1983, concerning Social Security, Official Journal of Algeria, No. 28, issued on 05-07-1983, amended and supplemented by Law No. 83-14, dated 02-07-1983, concerning the Obligations of Contributors in the Field of Social Security, Official Journal of Algeria, No. 28.

¹⁵ See Article 10 of Law No. 22-23.

¹⁶ See Article 9 of Law No. 22-23.

¹⁷ Ben Azzouz, Fatiha, op. cit., pp. 1080.

¹⁸ See Article 10 of Executive Decree No. 25-170.

¹⁹ See Article 13 of Executive Decree No. 23-197, dated 25-05-2023, which defines the list of activities eligible under the Basic Law for the Self-Employed and the procedures for registration in the National Register of Self-Employed, Official Gazette of Algeria, and No. 37, issued on 04-06-2023.

²⁰ See Articles 17 and 18 of Executive Decree No. 23-197.

²¹ See Article 20 of Executive Decree No. 23-197.

²² See Article 11 of Executive Decree No. 25-170.

²³ See Article 06, paragraph 02, of Executive Decree No. 25-170.

²⁴ Law No. 15-15, dated 15-07-2015, amending and supplementing Order No. 03-04, dated 19-07-2003, concerning the rules applied to import and export operations of goods, Algerian Official Journal, No. 41, issued on 29-07-2003.

²⁵ Zemam Amal, "The Role of the Licensing System in Protecting the National Economy," Algerian Journal of Legal, Political, and Economic Sciences, Vol. 57, No. 02, 2020.

²⁶ Al-Lahyani Leila, "Import and Export Licenses under the Constitutionality of the Principle of Freedom of Investment in Algeria," Journal of Scientific Research Notebooks, No. 11, 2017, pp. 72–73.

²⁷ Self-Employed Entrepreneur Guide in Algeria, "Micro-Import Activity – General Declaration," <https://www.moukawil.info/knowledgebase>, accessed 24-08-2025, at 18:01.

²⁸ See Article 12 of Executive Decree No. 25-170.

²⁹ See Article 13 of Executive Decree No. 25-170.

³⁰ See Article 6, Paragraph 04, of Executive Decree No. 25-170.

³¹ See Article 14 of Executive Decree No. 25-170.

³² Executive Decree No. 09-410, dated 10-09-2009, establishing security rules applicable to activities involving sensitive equipment, *Official Journal of Algeria*, No. 73, issued on 13-12-2009.

³³ Belourghi, Mounira, Consumer Protection Movement in Algerian Legislation, Journal of Rights and Freedoms, No. 04, 2017, pp. 179–180.

³⁴ See Article 07 of Executive Decree No. 25-170.

³⁵ See Articles 15 and 16 of Law No. 22-23.

³⁶ Order No. 75-59, dated 26-09-1975, containing the Algerian Commercial Code, Official Gazette of Algeria, No. 101, issued on 19-12-1975, as amended and supplemented.

³⁷ Law No. 07-11, dated 25-11-2007, establishing the Financial Accounting System, Official Gazette of Algeria, No. 74, issued on 25-11-2007.

³⁸ See Article 05, paragraph 01, of Law No. 07-11.

³⁹ Law No. 22-24, dated 25-12-2022, establishing the Finance Law for 2023, Official Gazette of Algeria, No. 89, issued on 29-12-2022.

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