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QNI Quality of
Nationality
Index

2nd Edition • 2016

EXPERT COMMENTARY

Africa and South Africa

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Africa today comprises 54 countries and is the world's second-largest and second-most-populous continent. Currently there are 1.2 billion people living in Africa and 50% of Africans are aged under 25. This fact is of particular interest to migration, because people tend to migrate in young adulthood.

Africa, and in particular Central Eastern Africa, is the cradle of humanity in the literal sense and is home to many ethnicities, cultures and languages. Present states originate from a process of decolonization in the 20th century. In 1963, 32 African states established the supranational Organisation of African Unity (OAU). The OAU was disbanded in 2002 and replaced by the African Union (AU). The AU now counts 54 states with Morocco rejoining most recently in January 2017, after it had left in 1984.

Unfortunately, within the last 50 years, the AU is lagging behind the EU and Latin America regarding the development of free travel and free settlement. In 2016 the overall ranking of the QNI was led by European nationalities: German, French and Danish nationalities. Similarly, the Extremely High Quality nationalities tier is exclusively occupied by the Member States of the EU, the European Economic Area and Switzerland.

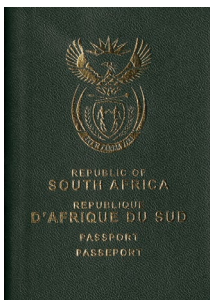
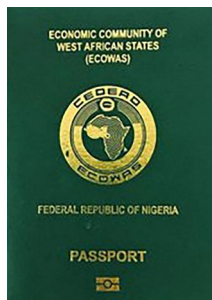
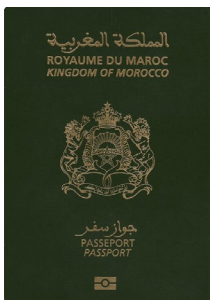
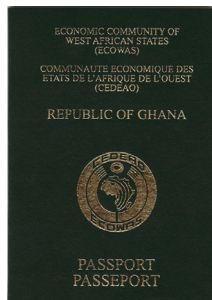
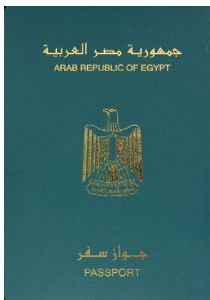
In contrast, most African nationalities are still ranked in the second half of all participating states as nationalities of only Medium Quality: the Cape Verdean nationality ranked 86th in the QNI General Ranking, followed by South African (87th), Ghanaian (89th), Botswanan (91st) and Gambian (94th) nationalities.

Only the nationalities of small insular African states – that of Mauritius, ranked 54th, and that of the Seychelles, ranked 55th, which are both of High Quality – are better off than the nationalities of all other African countries. The nationalities of other popular African states are ranked even lower, for instance Nigerian nationality is of Medium Quality and is ranked 112th; Kenyan nationality, which is also of Medium Quality, is ranked 127th; and Ethiopian nationality, which is of Low Quality, is ranked 151st.

Travel Freedom and Current Approaches for Improvement

With regard to Travel Freedom, African nationalities are stagnating in their rankings. The Seychelles (42nd) and Mauritian (47th) nationalities are again positive exceptions, allowing their holders to freely travel to 137 and 130 states respectively, including quite unique combinations of visa-free destinations rarely seen elsewhere, such as China, the Russian Federation and the Schengen Area (Serbia is the only other nationality which allows visa-free travel to all these destinations). The South African nationality is ranked 74th in the Travel Freedom Ranking. South Africans can visit 98 countries in the world. For other African nationalities, the ranking is much lower.

For a long period, most first-world passports were granted visa-on-arrival in most African countries, while their neighbors had to apply for visas before they could travel. The negative impact on business travel and therefore inter-continental trade cannot be underestimated. However, during the past three to five years, considerable political efforts were made to address this problem. The most recent and promising step towards improvement of the travel freedom of individuals on a continental level was the launch of the African passport. The African passport is one of the key parts of the Agenda 2063 – a program designed in 2013 by the AU to push the ‘African countries [...] amongst the best performers in global quality of life measures’.



The African passport was launched in July 2016 and is a bold statement, and yet it is only available to selected AU officials and national government personnel. Even the outgoing president of the AU, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, had to convince immigration control officers in her home country (South Africa) that this passport is a real document. Therefore, it is fair to assume that it might take a while before regular Africans will obtain these passports.

According to Agenda 2063, all Member States should enable visa-free travel or rather visa-on-arrival travel for all other African states by 2018. Yet the reality looks completely different and will be so for some time. For instance, South Africa, as the biggest African economy in 2016, did ease the visa requirements for African business travelers and African academics by introducing a 10-year visitors' visa which grants the holder the right to enter South Africa multiple times over 10 years, provided that each visit does not

exceed 30, 60 or 90 days at a time. Unfortunately, in South Africa, as well as often in Africa, there is quite a difference between what government officials say and what the administration does in practice. Most business travelers from economic powerhouses such as Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco or Nigeria still have to apply for a visa each time they visit South Africa. In reality, almost no citizens from other African countries are allowed to enter South Africa visa-free, but some will be granted a visitors' visa-on-arrival, which mostly lasts between 30 and 90 days.

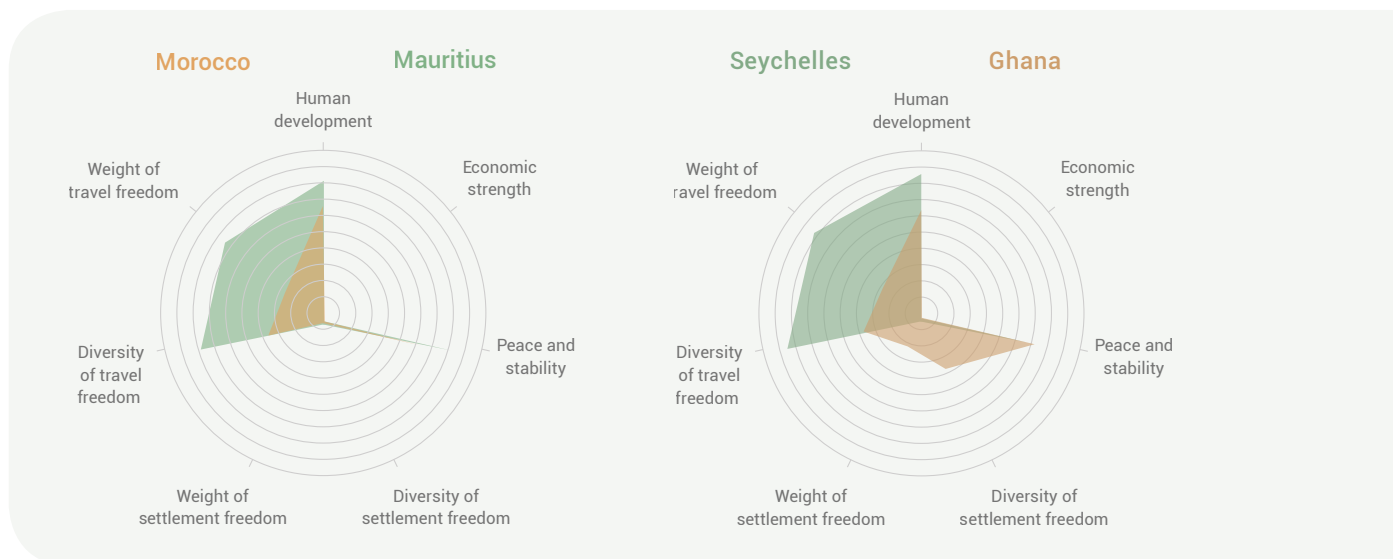
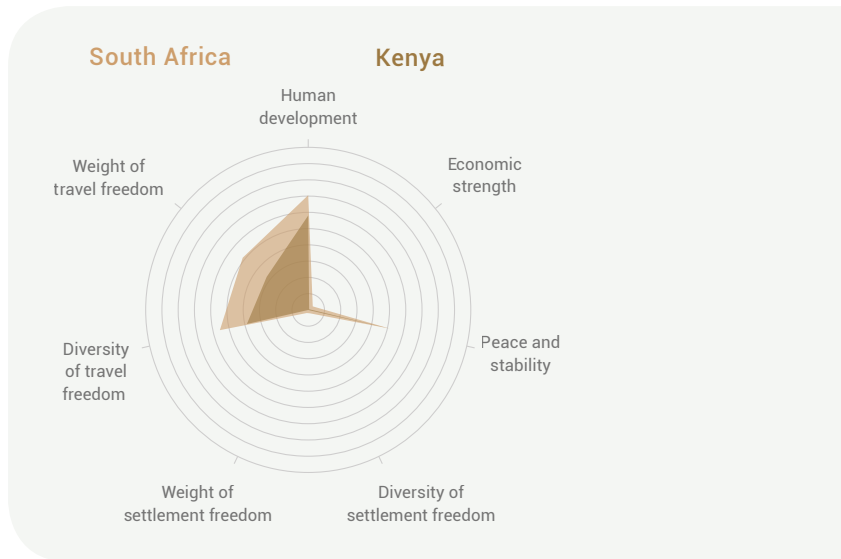
These strict regulations regarding Freedom of Travel are strongly influenced by the massive stream of refugees the country faces as a result of the uncertain political and

economic circumstances in other African states. Despite its own problems, South Africa still has an enormous pull factor for economic refugees. Whereas the number of regular migrants is easy to obtain, the scope of irregular migration is much more difficult to measure and reliable statistics are not available. But the estimates range between 2.2 and 5 million illegal migrants in South Africa, or in percentages, between 5% and 10% of the country’s population. With an unemployment rate of over 30% (reaching over 60% in certain areas), illegal immigration is a hot topic.

The limitations to freedom of travel must be viewed in this context. Two months ago, Kenya asked South Africa to introduce visa-on-arrival for Kenyan travelers in South Africa to meet the visa-on-arrival or online 24-hour visa requirement for South Africans traveling to Kenya. South Africa indicated their unwillingness to change their current arrangements, citing illegal immigration as the main argument. Over time, however, it can be expected that the political will of the AU will lead its Member States to relax their visa requirements for other AU Member States. Ghana set an example by introducing visa-on-arrival for citizens from all African states in July 2016.

Settlement Freedom

When it comes to the freedom of settlement, some African countries have made significant progress compared to others. This is predominantly based on the achievements of regional organizations. Member States from one of the regional organizations, the ECOWAS are impressively ranked between 17th and 22nd place. Led by Niger (17th), the 2016 ranking places the nationalities of ECOWAS countries ahead of most South American states and even ahead of the US,



which is ranked 28th, which is explained by the great diversity of settlement rights which ECOWAS permits its 15 participating states. South Africa, on the other hand, is ranked 45th on the Freedom of Settlement ranking with full access to Georgia only.

What Will the Future Bring?

Another positive example of a regional organization is the East African Community (EAC). The implementation of the East African Common Market Protocol will lead, among other things, to the free movement of labor. Its third generation ID cards will significantly improve the free movement of people in the EAC.

True freedom of settlement in South Africa cannot be expected any time soon, given the strength of the push and pull factors. This could be implemented earlier in regions with more or less equal economic development, such as in Western and Eastern Africa. However, even South Africa is aware of the need for significant improvement in business travel within the continent and also to open its immigration system to accommodate easier access to its labor market for other African workers. The Green Paper on Migration, published in September 2016, contains a separate chapter dedicated to African migration. It is envisaged to prioritize African applicants over applicants from outside Africa in obtaining long-term work visas in South Africa. If South Africa follows this path, then the country would also expect reciprocal treatment of its citizens in other African countries.

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