

Dr. Bronwen Manby, Senior Visiting Fellow, LSE Human Rights and Senior Visiting Fellow, Firoz Lalji Institute for Africa— Written evidence (LTN00011)

1. I am an independent consultant and senior policy fellow at the London School of Economics and Political Science. My principal area of expertise is in comparative citizenship law and statelessness, especially in Africa.
2. Among the 54 states in Africa, there are only one or two where the citizenship law specifically mentions a test in relation to proof of civic integration in order to naturalise, usually in relation to language knowledge.
3. However, requirements to show assimilation into the national community are common: see the table below, which is taken from my report [Citizenship Law in Africa: A Comparative Study](#) (Open Society Foundations, 3rd edition, 2016).
4. I don't have detailed comparative knowledge of the ways in which these requirements are applied, but in most cases naturalisation is within the discretion of the executive – although in some cases courts are involved in certifying that the conditions are fulfilled (eg Guinea, Liberia), or citizenship boards advise or decide on naturalisation (eg Uganda, Ghana), or officials from local government structures at different levels must indicate their consent (eg Nigeria, Tanzania). Proof of integration would in most cases include statements in support from community leaders, etc.
5. Naturalisation is very rare in practice in all African states, largely due to the common requirement to prove 'legal' residence. A substantial proportion of those residents who are considered to be non-citizens (many of them born in the country) do not have such documents, and therefore cannot fulfil the conditions. Fees also place naturalisation out of reach.¹
6. I maintain the [Citizenship Rights in Africa](#) website, which consists of a database of news stories, reports, legislation, court judgments, and other documents relating to nationality and statelessness in Africa, including resources relating to acquisition of nationality by naturalisation: please see the "search the database" menu tab.
7. The Global Citizenship Observatory (GlobalCit), a project of the European University Institute, has developed a [database on modes of acquisition of citizenship](#) (to which I contributed), which provides comparative information from across the world. If you search mode of acquisition A06d – ordinary (residence-based) naturalisation / civic integration – you will find listed all those countries that have such a condition for naturalisation. You can [download a version of the database in Excel](#), for easier manipulation.

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¹ See Bronwen Manby, ["Naturalisation in African states: Its past and potential future"](#), *Citizenship Studies* Vol.25, No.4, 2021, pp.514-542.

Extracted, updated and adjusted version of table 6 in [Citizenship Law in Africa: A Comparative Study](#) (Open Society Foundations, 3rd edition, 2016).

Country	Language / cultural requirements for naturalisation
Algeria	Assimilation into Algerian community
Angola	Civic and moral guarantees of integration into Angolan society; sufficient knowledge of Portuguese as shown in a test; show a sufficient link to the national community through knowledge of the people and the nation, as shown in a test; and adequate knowledge of the rights and duties of citizens in the constitution
Benin	assimilation into Beninois community, in particular sufficient knowledge of a Beninois language or French
Botswana	Sufficient knowledge of Setswana or any language spoken by any "tribal community" in Botswana
Burkina Faso	
Burundi	Attachment to Burundi and assimilation with Burundian citizens
Cameroon	Cameroon the centre of his/her principal interests
Cape Verde	
CAR	
Chad	
Comoros	Assimilation into the Comorian community
Congo Re pu bli c	Assimilation into the Congolese community
Côte d'Ivoire	
Dem. Rep. Con go	Speak one of the Congolese languages; must maintain clear cultural, professional, economic, emotional or familial links with the DRC
Djibouti	Assimilation, in particular sufficient knowledge of one of the languages used
Egypt	Knowledge of Arabic; preferential access if of Arab and Muslim heritage
Equatorial Guinea	
Eritrea	Understand and speak one of the languages of Eritrea
Ethiopia	Able to communicate in any one of the languages spoken by the nations/nationalities of the Country
Gabon	
Gambia	
Ghana	Speak and understand an indigenous language; assimilated into Ghanaian way of life

Guinea	Assimilation to the Guinean community, including knowledge of a national language, as well as Guinean history, culture and society, and adhesion to the values and essential principles of the republic (assessed by a first instance tribunal)
Guinea Bissau	Basic knowledge of and identification with Guinea-Bissau's culture
Kenya	Adequate knowledge of Kenya and of the duties and rights of citizens; able to understand and speak Kiswahili or a local dialect
Lesotho	Adequate knowledge of Sesotho or English
Liberia	No person shall be naturalised unless he is a Negro or of Negro descent
Libya	
Madagascar	Assimilation into the Malagasy community, including sufficient knowledge of Malagasy language
Malawi	Knowledge of prescribed vernacular language or English
Mali	Assimilation into the Malian community
Mauritania	Must speak fluently one of: Arabic, Pulaar, Soninké or Wolof
Mauritius	Knowledge of English or any other language spoken in Mauritius, and of the responsibilities of a citizen of Mauritius
Morocco	Sufficient knowledge of Arabic
Mozambique	Knowledge of Portuguese or a Mozambican language
Namibia	Adequate knowledge of the responsibilities and privileges of Namibian citizenship
Niger	-
Nigeria	Acceptable to and assimilated into the way of life of the local community in which he is to live permanently
Rwanda	Knowledge and respect for Rwandan culture and traditions; knowledge of civic values; good social relations within the Rwandan society; preferential access for people of "Rwandan origin"
São Tomé and Príncipe	Knowledge of Portuguese or another national language; civic and moral guarantees of Integration into STP society
Senegal	
Seychelles	Obtains at least 80 per cent of marks in 1 of the 3 national languages in a citizenship qualifying examination
Sierra Leone	Adequate knowledge of indigenous language ; preferential access if "of Negro African descent"
Somalia	Preferential access if "Somali"
South Africa	Communicate in one of 11 official languages
South Sudan	
Sudan	
Swaziland	Adequate knowledge of siSwati or English
Tanzania	Adequate knowledge of Kiswahili or English

Togo	Assimilation to the Togolese community, including sufficient knowledge of a Togolese language
Tunisia	Sufficient knowledge of Arabic
Uganda	Adequate knowledge of a prescribed vernacular language or English
Zambia	
Zimbabwe	