

COURTESY TRANSLATION

FAQ

Below is a list of frequently asked questions by patrons and our answers to these questions. We invite you to read them carefully.

1. What is the Beninese citizenship by recognition for Afro-descendants (honorary citizenship)?

The recognition of the Beninese citizenship for Afro-descendants is a means by which Afro-descendants can acquire the Beninese citizenship.

2. Who is an Afro-descendant under the legislation in the Republic of Benin?

Under the Beninese law, an afro-descendant is any person who, according to his/her genealogy, has a sub-Saharan African ancestor deported outside the continent as part of the slave trade and triangular trade.

People of sub-Saharan Africa descent born prior to 1944 in the states or territories of deportation as part of the triangular trade are deemed to be afro-descendants.

3. How is the Afro-descent determined?

The petitioner shall provide proof of Afro-descent by means of an official document or civil status documentation, any testimonials established by an acknowledged instrument or any technical or scientific means, such as a DNA test performed by an entity recognized by the Republic of Benin.

Proof of African descent may be provided by the determination of parentage with a person recognized as an afro-descendant.

4. What are the required documents to apply?

- A written application stating the applicant's full name, as well as their full address and place of residence;
- A form which must be completed on the website;
- Proof of the petitioner's occupation;
- An extract from the birth certificate no older than three months or the birth certificate of the applicant or any other substitute;
- The citizenship certificate of the applicant's country of origin or any other substitute;
- Any document proving the African descent of the applicant;
- A criminal record issued by the relevant authorities in the applicant's country of origin;
- Any document proving the residence or legal domicile of the applicant;
- One (01) passport-size photo with a white background;

- A copy of a valid form of identification.

The person who applies from within Benin should add a justification of residence in Benin to the abovementioned documents.

5. What are the requirements regarding the documents to provide?

a- The vital records shall be provided in full copy accompanied, where appropriate, by the decision pursuant to which they were established, rectified or amended as well as a certificate of non-appeal.

b- The documents issued by the administrative authorities in the applicant's country of origin shall be notarized except in a case of an apostille, a mutual exemption, or as laid down by a bilateral convention between the foreign country and the Republic of Benin;

c- All documents in foreign language shall be accompanied by their translation in French by a certified translator or a representation of Benin abroad;

d- A proof of identity is any document issued by a public administration of the foreign state containing the full name of the applicant, his/her date and place of birth, an ID photograph, his/her signature, his/her personal identification number, where appropriate, the name of the authority that issued the document, the date and place of issuance, a code of reference of the document;

e- The proof of residence is a written document issued by the administrative authorities of the country of residence;

f- The criminal record issued by the administration or judicial authorities of the foreign country shall be no older than three (03) months at the time of submission of the application;

g- Justification of residence in Benin shall be proven by the entry and exit stamps in the passport or the provisional certificate of citizenship or an entry visa and stay in Benin, a standardized hotel invoice, or a notarized rental agreement for a house that is dated later than the enactment of Act No. 2024-31 on the recognition of the Beninese citizenship to Afro-descendants in the Republic of Benin.

The issuing authority of instruments pertaining to the citizenship may request the submission of the original of any supporting document provided by the applicant.

6. Who is eligible?

a. Any afro-descendant who so requests can obtain the Beninese citizenship by recognition provided that they meet the following requirements:

- The applicant must be at least 18 years old;
- Be a national of a non-African state or territory;
- Provide evidence establishing their ancestry.

b. People of sub-Saharan Africa descent born prior to 1944 in the states or territories of deportation as part of the triangular trade are deemed to be afro-descendants.

7. Who should the application be addressed to?

Any application for the Beninese citizenship by recognition shall be addressed to the Minister of Justice by the applicant. It shall be processed by the issuing authority of instruments pertaining to the citizenship.

8. How to apply?

Applicants must apply online.

The application for the recognition of the Beninese citizenship for Afro-descendants shall be filed with the supporting documents through the following platform: <https://afrodescendant.gouv.bj>

Process:

- On the platform, click on the “Afro-descendant recognition” tab
- Click on “submit an application” and then on “Start now”
- A setup window for your application should appear
- Fill in and confirm your email address then press “send”
- You should instantly receive an email entitled “Naturalization of Afro-descendants”
- Open the email and press the “proceed with my application” tab
- Read carefully the instructions in the email and prepare the required supporting documents
- On the next page after clicking the “proceed with my application” tab, fill the form by following the different steps indicated
- Once you have entered the appropriate information, submit your application

9. What’s the process to obtain the Beninese citizenship by recognition?

a- For any application filed in person by an applicant from within Benin

Any petition for Beninese citizenship by recognition shall be addressed to the Minister of Justice by the petitioner himself or herself when physically present on the territory of the Beninese Republic.

The Beninese citizenship by recognition shall be granted by decree of the Council of Ministers upon proposal by the Minister of Justice.

The certification of Beninese citizenship under this Act shall be issued by the issuing authority of certificates of nationality following the service of administrative acts by the Minister of Justice.

b- For any application filed from abroad

The Beninese citizenship by recognition shall be granted on a provisional basis for a duration of three years to petitioners who applied from abroad.

The provisional certificate shall be issued by the issuing authority of certificates of nationality.

The Beninese citizenship by recognition granted on a provisional basis shall become permanent upon justification by the applicant of a stay on the Beninese territory within three years starting from the date such provisional citizenship was granted.

10. How quickly can I get my provisional certificate?

The provisional certificate shall be issued within one (01) month.

11. How to apply for a permanent certificate of Beninese citizenship?

Any petition for permanent Beninese citizenship by recognition shall be addressed to the Minister of Justice by the petitioner himself or herself when physically present on the territory of the Republic of Benin.

12. Which Authority is entitled to grant Beninese citizenship by recognition to Afro-descendants?

The Beninese citizenship by recognition shall be granted by decree by the council of ministers upon proposal by the Minister of Justice.

13. How quickly can I get the Beninese citizenship by recognition?

The certificate of Beninese citizenship by recognition shall be issued within six (06) months from the notice of registration of the application.

14. What rights are attached to the provisional certificate of citizenship?

This provisional certificate grants the beneficiary free entry to, sojourn in, and exit from the Beninese territory.

15. What are the effects of the Beninese citizenship by recognition?

The Beninese citizenship by recognition grants the beneficiary:

- Free entry to, sojourn in, and exit from the Beninese territory;
- The beneficiary is entitled to the issuance of a certificate of Beninese citizenship by recognition and a Beninese passport;
- The Beninese citizenship by recognition is transmittable to the descendants.

The beneficiaries of the Beninese citizenship by recognition may, at any time, obtain full citizenship and all associated rights, in accordance with the citizenship legislation.

16. Can the Beninese citizenship by recognition be revoked?

Upon proposal by the Minister of Justice, the Beninese citizenship by recognition shall be revoked by decree adopted by the Council of Ministers from the beneficiaries who failed to meet the requirements provided for in section 15 of this Act:

- a- If it was established that the Beninese citizenship by recognition was obtained by falsehood or fraudulently and that since its issuance, no possession of Beninese citizenship or assimilation into the Beninese community can be determined;
- b- If the beneficiary was convicted for an act considered as a crime or an act compromising the interior or exterior State security, the nation's fundamental interests or an act of terrorism;
- c- If the beneficiary engaged in acts for the benefit of a foreign state incompatible with his or her status as a Beninese.

17. Can I renounce the Beninese citizenship by recognition granted under Act 2024-31 on the recognition of the Beninese citizenship to Afro-descendants in the Republic of Benin?

The Beninese citizenship by recognition can be renounced by lodging a declaration with the issuing authority of instruments pertaining to the citizenship and shall be addressed to the Minister of Justice.