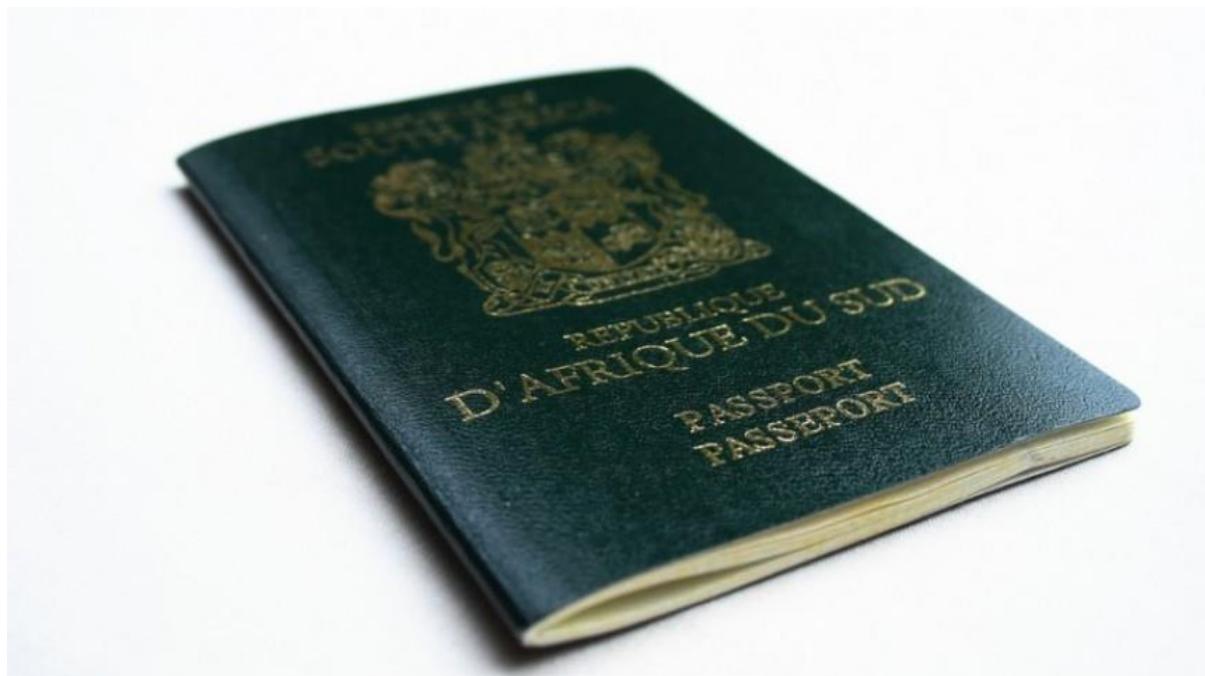


Henley & Partners Report: Global Businesses Could Suffer from African Passport Power Decline

By Matthew Staff, 28. August 2014



The strength of tourism on the African continent has led to only isolated improvements for certain countries in terms of global passport rankings, according to the Henley & Partners Visa Restrictions Index 2014.

[The 2014 Index](#) revealed that tourism-rich Seychelles (129 countries visa free), Mauritius (125) and South Africa (97) have all improved their positions in the rankings, although the vast majority of African countries have experienced a decline in the power of their passports.

The fourth most powerful African passport is that held by citizens of Botswana, which is ranked 58th in the Index. However, the Botswana passport only offers visa-free entry to 73 countries, which makes it 57 percent poorer in terms of access than the five highest-ranked passports: citizens of Finland, Sweden, the UK, Germany and the United States are able to travel visa-free to 174 destinations around the globe.

Economic powerhouse Nigeria (49 visa-free destinations available to its citizens) has less than one-third of the visa-free options of the world's top passports.

Mauritius was the biggest individual winner this year, adding three extra countries to its total of visa-free destinations, while the Central African Republic, Algeria and Ethiopia each lost visa-free access to three countries compared to their 2013 ranking.

“Visa requirements continue to play an important role in controlling the movement of individuals across borders,” said Andrew Taylor, Vice Chairman of Henley & Partners. “Visa policies are also an expression of the relationships between individual nations and generally reflect the relations and status of a country within the international community.”

The Index is an annual global ranking of countries based on the freedom of travel enjoyed by their citizens and lists 199 countries and territories. In terms of African passports, the continent has seen a nett increase of 76 visa-free destinations added in the past year, although African passports as a whole dropped a total of 25 spots in the rankings.

Taylor continued: "Citizens from developed countries have more freedom to travel compared to developing countries and countries that are suffering from political instability.

"The bottom four spots remain the same as in 2013, with citizens from Pakistan (32), Somalia (32), Iraq (31) and Afghanistan (28) enjoying the least freedom of travel.

"The effects of holding a passport that is ranked low on the Index can provide considerable obstacles to individuals who operate a global business. We regularly run seminars to inform high net worth individuals about the various options available to them."