



COI QUERY

Country of Origin/Topic	Nigeria
Main subject	Identification documents system in Nigeria
Question(s)	<p>1. Is there a documents identification system in Nigeria? At which level? Is it mandatory to have an identification document? From what age? Which data (biometric, photo, finger prints) is registered?</p> <p>2. Information on the existence of a civil registration system in Nigeria, what events (e.g. birth, marriage, death) are registered, at which level (LGA, state, federal), if it is mandatory and which authorities have access to this system</p> <p>3. Information on the existence of a system for registering current residence, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- which authorities have access to this system and whether it is a mandatory procedure- whether the registration occurs when a Nigerian national moves from one place to another within the same state or from one state to another state, or whether the authorities can become aware by other means
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The target audience is caseworkers, COI researchers, policy makers, and decision making authorities. The answer was finalised on 22 January 2019. Any event taking place after this date is not included in this answer.

COI QUERY RESPONSE

1. Is there a identification documents' system in Nigeria? At which level?

All consulted and used sources in this query indicate there is an identification documents' system in Nigeria.

1.1. Organisational structure

The Nigerian identification document system is managed at federal level by the National Identity Management Commission (NIMC).¹ The NIMC was established in 2007 and is mandated to 'create, manage, maintain and operate the National Identity Database'.²

According to Banwo & Ighodalo's law firm 'the NIMC operates administrative and monitoring offices in all States, Local Government Areas (LGAs) and Area Councils'.³

According to Aluko & Oyeboade law firm, the NIMC is responsible for the issuance of

'1) The National identification Number (NIN), a unique number assigned to

- a) Any person who is a citizen of Nigeria
- b) Any person, whether or not he is a citizen of Nigeria, who is lawfully and permanently resident in Nigeria and
- c) Any non-citizen of Nigeria who is lawfully resident in Nigeria for a period of two years or more (Registrable Persons) upon successful enrolment into the National Identity Database

and

2) The National Electronic Identity Card (The National e-ID card) issued to persons who have attained the age of 16 years and above upon a successful enrolment into the National Identity system.⁴ The National e-ID card is also named General Multipurpose Identity Card.⁵

¹ Belgium: CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [sources: Aluko & Oyeboade, Strachan Partners], 8 January 2019. Strachan Partners is a law firm with offices in Lagos and Abuja, commissioned by the BE COI Unit (Cedoca) to provide information pertaining to the current COI query. Aluko & Oyeboade is a law firm with headquarters in Lagos, commissioned by the BE COI Unit (Cedoca) to provide information pertaining to the current COI query.

² Nigeria, National Identity Management Commission Act No. 23 of 2007, 25 May 2007, [url](#), Part II, 5 (a)

³ Belgium: CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Banwo & Ighodalo], 9 January 2019. Banwo & Ighodalo is a law firm with offices in Lagos and Abuja, commissioned by the BE COI Unit (Cedoca) to provide information pertaining to the current COI query.

⁴ Belgium: CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Aluko & Oyeboade], 9 January 2019. Nigeria, National Identity Management Commission Act No. 23 of 2007, 25 May 2007, [url](#), Part II, 5 (a)

⁵ Nigeria, National Identity Management Commission Act No. 23 of 2007, 25 May 2007, [url](#), Part II, 5 (d)



1.2. Is it mandatory to have an identification document? From what age?

The National Identity Management Commission Act, 2007, 'makes it mandatory for registerable persons to obtain the NIN', according to Aluko & Oyebode.⁶ Section 27 makes the use of the NIN mandatory for some transactions, including to apply and be issued a passport, opening a bank account, and purchase, transfer and register land.⁷

On 26 October 2017, the approval and entry into force of the Mandatory Use of the National Identification Number Regulations⁸ added a long list of additional transactions that require the use of the NIN, such as: the use of health or medical services, adoption of a person, purchase and registration of various transport means; purchase of travel tickets and boarding of planes, trains, commercial vehicles, boats, enrollment in schools, tenancy agreements, filing and registration of criminal and civil acts in courts, and many more.⁹

Several sources indicate that it is not legally mandatory to have an identification document.¹⁰ Strachan Partners notes that 'there is no penalty for not being in the possession of one'.¹¹

However, the country is currently working on the introduction of a mandatory identification document (e-ID cards). As of 10 January 2018, the National Identity Management Commission (NIMC) had enrolled in its National Identity Database about 28 million Nigerians and foreigners with valid residence permits. These persons received a National Identification Number (NIN), which is aimed to be used mandatorily for registrations in public and private domains. The NIMC aims to have enrolled 78 million persons by the end of 2018.¹² However, this does not mean that all these people have an ID-card already, according to a June 2018 country report by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA).¹³

In September 2018, it was reported that the federal government approved the mandatory use of the NIN beginning January 2019.¹⁴ According to Banwo & Ighodalo, 'any registrable person without the NIN may be unable to carry out the above-listed transactions, as well as several others listed under the NIN Mandatory Use Regulations [2017], as from the 1st day of January, 2019'.¹⁵

The Belgium Embassy in Abuja indicates that the 'biometric ID card with photo and fingerprints' is 'one of the major means of valid identification in Nigeria. It is not yet mandatory but everyone is encouraged to obtain one. The idea is that in future all bank transactions and medi-care will be accessible only to those who have obtained their cards.'¹⁶

⁶ Belgium: CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Aluko & Oyebode], 9 January 2019

⁷ Nigeria, National Identity Management Commission Act 2007, 25 May 2007, [url](#), 5 b, c

⁸ Nigeria, NIMC, Mandatory Use of the National Identification Number Regulations, 20 October 2017, [url](#)

⁹ Nigeria, NIMC, Mandatory Use of the National Identification Number Regulations, 20 October 2017, [url](#); Belgium: CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Strachan Partners], 8 January 2019

¹⁰ Norway: LandInfo, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, 9 January 2019; Belgium: CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Strachan Partners], 8 January 2019; Belgium: CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Embassy of Belgium in Nigeria], 11 January 2019. The Belgium Embassy responded to the BE COI Unit (Cedoca) and provided information pertaining to the current COI query

¹¹ Belgium: CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Strachan Partners], 8 January 2019

¹² Nigeria, NIMC, NIMC enrolls over 28m Nigerians and Legal Residents, [10 January 2018], [url](#)

¹³ Netherlands (The), MFA, Algemeen Ambtsbericht Nigeria, June 2018, [url](#)

¹⁴ PUNCH, FG approves mandatory use of national ID number from Jan 1, 2019, [url](#)

¹⁵ Belgium: CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Banwo & Ighodalo], 9 January 2019.

¹⁶ Belgium: CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Embassy of Belgium in Nigeria], 11 January 2019



There is no age limitation for requiring a NIN. To obtain an identification card, the minimum age is 16¹⁷. The birth certificate is one of the documents accepted for NIN enrolment.¹⁸

1.3. Procedure

According to a European Return Liaison officer with the Finnish embassy in Abuja, the procedure of issuing an ID-card is as follows:

- 1) 'Filling up the application at National Identity Management Commission NIMC (application includes identity particulars as d.o.b., state of birth, address etc.) This is done through frontend enrollment software at NIN Registration centers.
- 2) Inserting the details into database, simultaneously NIMC officer prove the applicants identity by e.g driver's license, school diploma, passport. The identity documents required are used as a "source" documents for the person's identity. Any one of these documents are acceptable: Immigration document, National Health Insurance, Driver's License, International passport, previous National Identity Card, other government issued ID card (e.g. Voter's Card)
- 3) Photo and fingerprint records were taken. If the applicant's biometrics (fingerprint/face) is already in the database, a backend process detects this and generates a report. Such a record would not be further processed to get a NIN. Signature is also captured although not mandatory
- 4) The applicant gets a unique National Identification Number (NIN) if there is no prior enrollment
- 5) NIMC back office does BIO check towards bank data system and harmonizes photos and Fingerprint data with them. NIMC does not send photos nor fingerprints to any other agencies.
- 6) The ID card will be printed and delivered to the customer within months up to 3 years.¹⁹

Citizens can apply for an identification card online, however they have to appear at the NIMC office for the finger prints.²⁰

1.4. Which data (biometric, photo, finger prints) is registered?

Data included in the National e-ID card include: Passport photograph, date of birth, sex, height, issue date, nationality, unique ID number, fingerprints (10 fingers²¹), signature, document number and date of expiry. The card will also be made usable as a payment tool.²²

Other relevant data may also be obtained and stored in the National Identity Database, including:

- 'Full name;
- Other names by which the person is or has been known;
- Date of birth;
- Place of birth;
- Gender;
- The address of the individual's principal place of residence in Nigeria;
- The address of every other place in Nigeria where the individual has a place of residence'.²³

¹⁷ Nigeria, National Identity Management Commission Act No. 23 of 2007, 25 May 2007, [url](#), section 18

¹⁸ Nnamdi Ifeanyi Maduekwe, et al., The Nigerian Civil Registration and Vital Statistics System, September 2016, [url](#)

¹⁹ Finland, Ahola, Toni, EURLO, Embassy of Finland in Abuja, Nigeria, 17 January 2019

²⁰ Nigeria, National Identity Management Commission Act No. 23 of 2007, 25 May 2007, [url](#), section 18; Netherlands, MFA, Algemeen Ambtsbericht Nigeria, June 2018, [url](#)

²¹ Finland, Ahola, Toni, EURLO, Embassy of Finland in Abuja, Nigeria, 17 January 2019

²² Nigeria, NIMC, About the e-ID Card, n.d., [url](#)

²³ Nigeria, National Identity Management Commission Act 2007, 25 May 2007, [url](#), Section 17, 1



When referring to an individual's residence status, their nationality and entitlement to remain in Nigeria may also be recorded in the database. ²⁴

1.5. Which authorities have access to the database?

Access to data or information contained in the National Identity Database is restricted to any other person and corporate entities, unless under authorisation of the Commission and with the permission of the registered individual. Data and information about a registered person can be disclosed without the registered individual consent only in case when such disclosure serves the interest of national security, or the prevention and detection of crime. ²⁵

1.6. Other types of identification documents

Apart from the National Identity Database, there are more registration systems with biometric data, such as driver's license, bank identification, electoral voters card, all with different registration systems. ²⁶

There is a central database for electronic passports in which all travel documents are supposed to be registered. The Dutch MFA however indicates concerns on the reliability of such a database. ²⁷

According to Landinfo's information dated June 2016:

'The first time someone is registered in the NIMC database, they are assigned a National Identity Number (NIN). Though this seems intended for general use and identification purposes, neither [the] Nigeria Immigration Service nor the National Population Commission (which registers births and deaths ²⁸) use them in their registers or the documents they issue, and had no concrete plans to start doing so'. ²⁹

Indeed, the website of the Nigerian Immigration Service does not mention the NIN as a requirement for passport application. ³⁰

Landinfo notes that 'there are several types of identity documents issued in Nigeria by different public authorities. However, no identification document is mandatory' (see also section 1.2), and 'none of the public authorities mentioned below cooperate closely, they have partly overlapping responsibilities and they are organised under different ministries'. ³¹

According to Strachan Partners' law firm, the following are 'acceptable means of identification' in Nigeria:

- National identity card;
- Permanent voters card;
- Birth certificate;

²⁴ Nigeria, National Identity Management Commission Act 2007, 25 May 2007, [url](#), Section 17, 3

²⁵ Nigeria, National Identity Management Commission Act, 2007, 25 May 2007, [url](#), Sections 26(2) & (3)

²⁶ Nnamdi Ifeanyi Maduekwe, et al., The Nigerian Civil Registration and Vital Statistics System, September 2016, [url](#)

²⁷ Netherlands, MFA, Algemeen Ambtsbericht Nigeria, June 2018, [url](#)

²⁸ Norway: LandInfo, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: fact finding mission interview, Abuja, June 2016], 9 January 2019. By June 2016, there was no compulsory registration of marriages and divorces, only preliminary planning projects. No more recent information was found.

²⁹ Norway: LandInfo, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: fact finding mission interview, Abuja, June 2016], 9 January 2019

³⁰ Nigeria, Immigration Service, Passport Application Guidelines, n.d. [url](#)

³¹ Norway: LandInfo, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, 9 January 2019



- International passport; and
- Drivers' license.³²

The permanent voters card, the national identity card, the international passport, and drivers' licenses are all processed at federal level, while the birth certificate is processed at local government level.³³

According to the EURLO liaison officer, 'ID database and Passport database are not linked to each other yet. Passport database is upheld by a different actor.' The EURLO further states: 'About 13 or more Federal agencies, and another 3 or more state agencies offer ID services in Nigeria. Each governmental agency collects the same biometric information of people. A face photo and fingerprint can [be taken]'.³⁴

The source mentions amongst others the Central Bank of Nigeria which registers people who use banking services, the Independent National Election Commission which registers people who are eligible to vote, and the National communication commission which registers mobile phone users. In addition, national services on prison, immigration, police and road safety all have ID registration systems.³⁵

2. Information on the existence of a civil registration system in Nigeria, what events (e.g. birth, marriage, death) are registered, at which level (LGA, state, federal), if it is mandatory and which authorities have access to this system.

2.1. Organisational structure

The National Population Commission (NPC) is the entity responsible for the production of demographic and vital statistics³⁶ in Nigeria that together with the 'universal, compulsory and continuous civil registration' composes the Nigerian Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) system.³⁷ The NPC is also responsible for conducting demographic and health surveys in collaboration with the USAid-run Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) Program.³⁸

On the process of civil registration, Landinfo notes:

'[National Population Commission] registration takes place at the civil registrar's office, of which there are some 3000 in Nigeria, several in each LGA. These enter the data in manual registry books, copies of which are sent to NPC HQ in Abuja regularly.

Digitalisation of the central population register has started, and by June 2016, some 30 million people's data had been entered into the central database. However, this is less than 1/6 of the current population.

Local civil registrar's offices have no equipment to look up data entered in the database, so access to the database is limited to NPC HQ. In order to verify information entered manually, one must contact the particular civil registrar's office by phone and know the exact date the life event registered took place, as well as the time of registration (births etc. are entered

³² Belgium: CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Strachan Partners] 8 January 2019

³³ Belgium: CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Strachan Partners], 8 January 2019

³⁴ Netherlands, MFA, Algemeen Ambtsbericht Nigeria, June 2018, [url](#)

³⁵ Netherlands, MFA, Algemeen Ambtsbericht Nigeria, June 2018, [url](#)

³⁶ Vital registration is 'the formal recording of vital events such as births, deaths, marriages, divorce, migration'. Okereka, Onofere Princewill, Vital Civic Registration System as a Tool for Development Planning in Nigeria, 2015, [url](#)

³⁷ Nnamdi Ifeanyi Maduekwe, et al., The Nigerian Civil Registration and Vital Statistics System, September 2016, [url](#)

³⁸ Norway: LandInfo, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, 9 January 2019



chronologically according to when they were registered, a result of people often don't register life events ahead of formal registration deadlines)³⁹.

2.2. Is registering at the civil registration system mandatory? Which events are registered, at which level?

The Nigeria, Births, Deaths, Etc. (Compulsory Registration) Act, 14 December 1992, regulates the registration of birth, death, customary marriage and divorce in Nigeria. According to section 1 of the said Act, the registration of births and deaths is compulsory.⁴⁰ The 1992 Act also foresees that customary marriages and divorces 'shall' be registered within 60 days of their occurrence.⁴¹

Births and deaths registration (and cause of death) are mandatory.⁴² Landinfo also notes that only birth and death registration are formally required.⁴³

Birth registration is mandatory within 60 days of birth⁴⁴, in the area of birth. Registration is free of charge. A birth certificate is issued by the register, free of charge. Not registering a child 'is an offence punishable by law'.⁴⁵ Late registration of birth is also foreseen by the 1992 Act, requiring an affidavit to accompany the application.⁴⁶

The Belgium Embassy in Abuja notes that 'for all official documentation especially in dealing with a foreign mission, it is mandatory to obtain birth and death certificates from the National Population Commission'. The Embassy further adds that 'Birth and Death can be registered at Local Governments, or State Governments or the National Level. However, as of 1992 only certificates issued by the National Population Commission (NPC) are the legal and official documents for birth and death registrations in Nigeria.'⁴⁷

According to the EURLO Liaison Officer, when an adult has lost his or her birth certificate, a new one can be issued (called 'Attestation letter'). In order to get this, 'the person has been interviewed and a legalised Age Declaration Affidavit provided by the high court of Nigeria. A person can be issued one Birth Certificate. Duplicates of each birth certificate are kept in each state's liaison office.'⁴⁸

2.3. Level of registration of births and deaths

The level of registering of births and deaths in Nigeria is low, according to various studies.

³⁹ Norway: LandInfo, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, 9 January 2019

⁴⁰ Nigeria, Births, Deaths, Etc. (Compulsory Registration) Act, 14 December 1992, [url](#)

⁴¹ Nigeria, Births, Deaths, Etc. (Compulsory Registration) Act, 14 December 1992, [url](#), Part V

⁴² Nigeria, Births, Deaths, Etc. (Compulsory Registration) Act, 14 December 1992, [url](#), Part III; Netherlands, MFA, Algemeen Ambtsbericht Nigeria, June 2018, [url](#); Belgium: CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Aluko & Oyebode], 9 January 2019

⁴³ Norway: LandInfo, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: fact finding mission interview, June 2016] 9 January 2019

⁴⁴ According to the EURLO Liaison Officer, a baby is to be registered within 30 days. Finland, Ahola, Toni, (EURLO), Embassy of Finland in Abuja, Nigeria, 17 January 2019

⁴⁵ Nigeria, Births, Deaths, Etc. (Compulsory Registration) Act, 14 December 1992, [url](#), Part II; UN Stats, FAQs on Birth registration, [2015], [url](#)

⁴⁶ Nigeria, Births, Deaths, Etc. (Compulsory Registration) Act, 14 December 1992, [url](#), Part IV, 15

⁴⁷ Belgium: CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Embassy of Belgium in Nigeria], 9 January 2019

⁴⁸ Finland, Ahola, Toni, EURLO, Embassy of Finland in Abuja, Nigeria, 17 January 2019



According to the Netherlands MFA country report, birth registration is only done in 30% of all cases.⁴⁹ UNICEF data reveal that in 2007 in the whole of Nigeria birth registration was 21.2% in rural and 50.3% in urban areas.⁵⁰ Another study in Oyo State in 2006 concludes that birth and death registrations were largely incomplete in Oyo State. Death registration was 21% in 2006.⁵¹ A 2011 study, conducted in Ilife, Osun State shows a more positive result in which 'of all the respondents that were knowledgeable about vital registration system, 68.4 percent reported to have ever registered birth while 61.3 percent had ever registered death. More females than males reported registering births and deaths.'⁵²

According to a 2017 study by the African Union (AU), Nigeria scores 'weak' at overall civil registration and vital statistics system - 35-49% -, which is below the average in Africa. The country scores 'satisfactory' or 'strong' (65-79% or 80-100%) on legal framework, planning and resources, infrastructure, and civil registration processes. It scores 'very weak' at recording cause of death and certification, vital statistics quality checks & dissemination, and digitisation.⁵³

Landinfo notes that 'although there is formally a fine for late registration of births (i.e. later than 60 days after the birth), this is currently waived for anyone under 18 being registered, in a project in cooperation with UNICEF to expand birth registration'.⁵⁴

2.4. Registration of marriages

According to Landinfo 'it is not mandatory to inform NPC with changes of name'.⁵⁵ The source adds that:

'When people change names (typically women who change their surname when getting married, as well as changes for other reasons), this is either documented through the marriage certificate (for women taking their husband's surname) or through an affidavit where one states an intention to change one's name combined with a photocopy of the advertisement with a declaration of a change of name in an established newspaper'.⁵⁶

According to the EURLO Liaison Officer, 'a marriage certificate is issued by the church where the wedding is held. In order to prove the marriage status overseas this document must be legalized by the court'.⁵⁷

The Belgium Embassy notes that 'marriages can be registered at every local government that is authorised to register marriages. Since recently, there [are] federal registries in three big cities (Abuja, Lagos and Port Harcourt), and their certificate (which has security features unlike those of the LGA) is increasingly becoming the preferred option for marrying couples to register their marriage'.⁵⁸

⁴⁹ Netherlands, MFA, Algemeen Ambtsbericht Nigeria, June 2018, [url](#); Nigeria, Births, Deaths, Etc. (Compulsory Registration) Act, 14 December 1992, [url](#);

⁵⁰ UNICEF, Information Sheet - Birth Registration, July 2007, [url](#)

⁵¹ Abimbola Onigbanjo Williams, Nigeria: Assessment of the completeness of births and death registration in an urban Nigerian community, March 2014, [url](#)

⁵² Adedini, S.A., Odimegwu. C.O., Assessing knowledge, attitude and practice of vital registration system in South-West Nigeria, 2011, [url](#)

⁵³ African Union, Report on the status of civil registration and vital statistics in Africa, 25 September [2017], [url](#)

⁵⁴ Norway: LandInfo, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, 9 January 2019

⁵⁵ Norway: LandInfo, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, 9 January 2019

⁵⁶ Norway: LandInfo, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, 9 January 2019

⁵⁷ Finland, Ahola, Toni, EURLO, Embassy of Finland in Abuja, Nigeria, 17 January 2019

⁵⁸ Belgium: CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Embassy of Belgium in Nigeria], 11 January 2019



2.5. Which authorities have access to the system?

The Nigerian Births, Death Etc. (Compulsory Registration) Act foresees that ‘a person shall be entitled at all reasonable hours upon payment of the prescribed fee to inspect any entry in any register and to obtain a certified copy of an entry’.⁵⁹

Banwo & Ighodalo adds that ‘the contents of any of the Registers are open to all authorized persons, agencies and institutions as well as law enforcement agents in the performance of their ministerial functions or public duties’.⁶⁰

Other sources indicate that both the NPC and Local Government offices have access to the system (the latter have access to information where registrations occur).⁶¹ The Belgium Embassy indicates that ‘only issuing authorities have access to their own register. There is no centralised register and the databases are not connected.’⁶²

2.6. Effectiveness of the CRVS

Various sources indicate that the Nigerian CRVS system is not effective. In a 2015 research paper, Okerera indicates that ‘since independence, Nigeria has not been able to implement a reliable registration system.’⁶³

A research paper (2015) on the Nigerian CRVS system indicates that the system:

‘Is built on viable statutory and institutional platforms—the constitutional enshrinement of: universal, compulsory and continuous civil registration and, a central registration institution—the National Population Commission (NPC). NPC has registration hierarchy and infrastructure deployed at every level of political administration and mechanisms for efficient coordination of registration and production of vital statistics on live-births, deaths and stillbirths amongst other vital events.’⁶⁴

However, the paper also reveals a number of weaknesses of the CRVS system, including ‘inadequate financing and deployment of registration facilities, conflicting statutes and institutional arrangements for the registration of key events like death and stillbirths’. Other weaknesses include ‘intra-organizational conflicts in resource allocation and weak ICT infrastructure within the NPC. These are compounded by overarching contextual issues namely registration unfriendly sociocultural norms, weak national data infrastructure, systemic corruption, poverty and undeveloped civic culture’.⁶⁵

Similarly, Nigerian political scientist and researcher Okerera concludes:

‘The Vital Civil Registration System is hindered by such factors as low level of literacy, inaccessibility centres influence of strong cultural belief, poor appreciation of the need for

⁵⁹ Nigeria, Births, Deaths, Etc. (Compulsory Registration) Act, 14 December 1992, [url](#). Part VI, 41, 1; Belgium: CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Banwo & Ighodalo], 9 January 2019

⁶⁰ Belgium: CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Banwo & Ighodalo], 9 January 2019

⁶¹ Belgium: CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Strachan Partners], 8 January 2019; Belgium: CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Aluko & Oyeboode], 9 January 2019

⁶² Belgium: CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Embassy of Belgium in Nigeria], 11 January 2019

⁶³ Okereka, Onofere Princewill, Vital Civic Registration System as a Tool for Development Planning in Nigeria, 2015, [url](#)

⁶⁴ Nnamdi Ifeanyi Maduekwe, et al., The Nigerian Civil Registration and Vital Statistics System, September 2016, [url](#)

⁶⁵ Nnamdi Ifeanyi Maduekwe, et al., The Nigerian Civil Registration and Vital Statistics System, September 2016, [url](#)



these data; and type of model adopted in Nigeria. [...] Another problem identified has to do with inadequate number of vital registration centres. A situation where a local government area has only one registration centres does not allow for adequate coverage of vital events’.

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In an analysis of the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics System (CRVS), the performance of the system is criticised:

‘Nigeria has a multiplicity of registration and identification systems which is symptomatic of the poorly coordinated and weak centralized identity registry in the country. This is compounded by a lack of institutionalized arrangements for the linking of the diverse registration and identification schemes. The link between CRVS and National ID registration system on the one hand and between them and other registration schemes is weak. Existing links are nominal. For example the birth certificate is one of the credentials accepted for NIN enrolment. It is also accepted for some other registration and enrolment procedures at various levels of government. Prospects of a stronger link between the Civil Registration and ID card systems increased recently with a Presidential directive to the National Population Commission, the National Identity Management Commission and other agencies holding personal data repositories to harmonize their databases.’⁶⁷

3. Information on the existence of a system for registering current residence, including: which authorities have access to this system and whether it is a mandatory procedure; whether the registration occurs when a Nigerian national moves from one place to another within the same state or from one state to another state, or whether the authorities can become aware by other means

3.1. is there a central registration system for current residence?

Various sources state that there is no central system in place for registering current residential addresses of citizens in Nigeria.⁶⁸ The Embassy of Belgium in Nigeria noted that ‘only when one wishes to pay taxes or vote does one register one’s residence at a local tax office or election office (it is possible to live in one place, register to pay taxes in another and register to vote in a third different place)’.⁶⁹

Some states have set up agencies to establish reliable residents’ databases,⁷⁰ like Lagos State that established the Lagos State Residents Registration Agency (LASRRA).⁷¹ Established in 2011, LASRRA is responsible for the registration of all residents who currently reside in the Lagos State ‘irrespective of

⁶⁶ Okereka, Onofere Princewill, Vital Civic Registration System as a Tool for Development Planning in Nigeria, 2015, [url](#)

⁶⁷ Nnamdi Ifeanyi Maduekwe, et al., The Nigerian Civil Registration and Vital Statistics System, September 2016, [url](#)

⁶⁸ Belgium, CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Strachan Partners], 8 January 2019; Belgium, CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [sources: Aluko & Oyebode, Channings Law Firm], 9 January 2019; Norway: LandInfo, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: interview in fact finding mission, Abuja, June 2016] 9 January 2019; Belgium, CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Belgium, Embassy of Belgium in Nigeria], 11 January 2019; BFA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [sources: Austrian Embassy Abuja, Country Report covering topics relevant for asylum decisions, October 2018; German Authority, December 2018]; Finland, Ahola, Toni, European Return Liaison Officer (EURLO), Embassy of Finland in Abuja, Nigeria, 17 January 2019

⁶⁹ Belgium, CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Embassy of Belgium in Nigeria]. 11 January 2019

⁷⁰ Belgium, CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Aluko & Oyebode], 9 January 2019

⁷¹ Belgium, CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Strachan Partners], 8 January 2019; Belgium, CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [sources: Aluko & Oyebode, Channings Law Firm], 9 January 2019; Nigeria, LASRRA, About us, n.d. [url](#)



age, gender, religion, ethnic origin, nationality, economic, social or financial status'.⁷² LASRRA is a parastatal agency under the authority of the Lagos State Ministry of Science and Technology.⁷³ An article published on May 2018 by the Nigeria media outlet Vanguard informed that 4 million Lagos State residents (out of an estimated 17.5 to 21 million⁷⁴) had so far registered with LASRRA.⁷⁵

A source contacted by the Belgium Office of the Commissioner General for Refugees and Stateless Persons (CEDOCA) notes that other states in Nigeria are empowered to create such agencies, but none have taken advantage of this except Lagos State.⁷⁶ In June 2018, Kaduna State announced the introduction a Residency Card Registration Programme in collaboration with the NIMC.⁷⁷

3.2. Is registration mandatory?

According to information provided by Strachan Partners, the registration to such databases is not mandatory,⁷⁸ although LASRRA's official website states that 'if you currently reside in Lagos State, you are required to register'.⁷⁹

On the contrary, the Nigerian Law Firm, Banwo & Ighodalo (B&I), claimed that there is, in fact, a system for registering current residency in Nigeria. B&I pointed out that the current residential address of a Nigerian citizen is part of the data required when registering for the National Identification Number (NIN),⁸⁰ as stipulated by the National Identity Management Commission Act 2007.⁸¹ Upon registration, this data is stored in in the National Identity Database and is encrypted on the General Multipurpose Identity Card.⁸²

3.4. Does registration occur when a Nigerian national moves from one state to another?

There is currently no system in place in Nigeria for the registration of intra and/or interstate movement.⁸³ The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria⁸⁴ provides for freedom of movement of citizens. Any restriction of movement may violate citizens' constitutional right to move from one place to place.⁸⁵

⁷² Nigeria, LASRRA, Frequently Asked Questions, n.d. [url](#)

⁷³ Belgium, CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [sources: Aluko & Oyeboode, Channings Law Firm], 9 January 2019

⁷⁴ World Population Review, Lagos Population 2019, n.d. [url](#)

⁷⁵ Vanguard, 4 million residents register with LASRRA, 11 May 2018, [url](#)

⁷⁶ CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Channings Law Firm], 9 January 2019

⁷⁷ CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Strachan Partners], 8 January 2019; Guardian (Nigeria), El-Rufai introduces residency card for citizens in Kaduna state, 29 June 2018, [url](#)

⁷⁸ CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Strachan Partners], 8 January 2019

⁷⁹ Nigeria, LASRRA, Frequently Asked Questions, n.d. [url](#)

⁸⁰ Belgium, CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Banwo & Ighodalo], 11 January 2019

⁸¹ Nigeria, National Identity Management Commission Act, 2007, [url](#), Section 31(e)

⁸² Nigeria, National Identity Management Commission Act, 2007, [url](#), Sections 26(2) & (3)

⁸³ Belgium, CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Strachan Partners], 8 January 2019; Belgium, CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [sources: Aluko & Oyeboode, Banwo & Ighodalo, Channings Law Firm] 9 January 2019; Belgium, CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Embassy of Belgium in Nigeria], 11 January 2019; Norway, LandInfo, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, 9 January 2019; BFA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [sources: Austrian Embassy Abuja, Country Report covering topics relevant for asylum decisions, October 2018; German Authority, December 2018], 11 January 2019; Finland, Ahola, Toni, EURLO, Embassy of Finland in Abuja, Nigeria, 17 January 2019

⁸⁴ Nigeria, Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999, Art. 41, [url](#)

⁸⁵ CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Channings Law Firm], 9 January 2019



According to B&I, there are, however, other monitoring frameworks in place by which the authorities can become aware of intra- or interstate movements of Nigerian citizens. For instance, data collected for the purpose of banking transactions, school enrolments, public utility bills, employments etc. are processed by government agencies (such as the National Bureau of Statistics -NBS, the Central Bank of Nigeria - CBN, and NPC among others) to determine the rates of rural-urban migration and urbanisation. 'These migration statistics are one of the tools by which the NPC, NBS and CBN advise the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) on population and national planning matters'.⁸⁶

Strachen Partners stated that the Permanent Voters Card (PVC) can also be one of the ways authorities can identify movements of Nigerian nationals, since people are required to register their PVC if they want to vote in the area where they moved.⁸⁷ However, according to the Belgium Embassy in Nigeria, authorities cannot become aware when one moves within the same state or between states, since the registration in the tax office or the election office in the new place of residency is discretionary to the individual choice.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Banwo & Ighodalo], 11 January 2019

⁸⁷ CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Strachan Partners], 8 January 2019

⁸⁸ CEDOCA, Inquiry by EASO about identification system in Nigeria, [source: Embassy of Belgium in Nigeria], 11 January 2019



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