



Diaspora engagement mapping

REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Facts & figures

Terminology: The Republic of the Congo refers to its diaspora as '*Congolais de l'extérieur*', but also uses the term diaspora in some contexts.

Political rights



Dual citizenship¹



Right to vote in national elections for citizens residing abroad²



Voting from abroad³



Remittances



Remittances as a share of GDP: **0.29%**
Remittances inflow (USD million): **43.96**

Data disclaimer

As diaspora definitions vary widely, we have chosen to use comparable data on emigration as a proxy. This does not include all who consider themselves diaspora and is not necessarily aligned with national definitions of diaspora. Emigration data comes from UNDESA (2024) and remittances from the [World Bank](#) (2023).

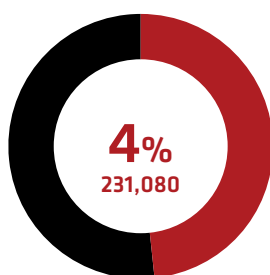
Emigration



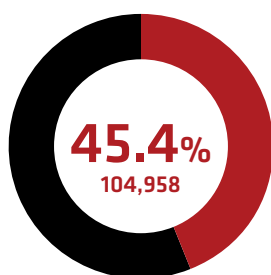
% of emigrants in total population



% of which in the EU



♂ 48.4%
♀ 51.6%



♂ 44%
♀ 56%

Top countries of destination



France	94,890
South Africa	29,093
United Republic of Tanzania	24,189
Gabon	17,698
Zambia	13,869

¹ Loi n° 35-1961 du 20 juin 1961 portant le Code de la nationalité congolaise sets out citizenship of the Republic of Congo, which does not permit dual citizenship. Full text available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b4db4.html>

² Loi n°9-2001 du 10 décembre 2001 portant loi électorale sets out that any Congolese citizen abroad may vote in elections if they are registered on the electoral register. French text available at : <https://economie.gouv.cg/sites/default/files/Documentation/Lois/2001/n%C2%AF9-2001%20du%2010%20d%C3%87cembre%202001.PDF>

³ Ibid.

Overview of the policy and legislative framework



There is a paucity of official information from the government of the Republic of Congo on its migration policy frameworks.

- 2012** ● **Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper 2012 (DISCERP 2012-2016)** ⁴ sets out a range of areas that are of relevance to diaspora engagement. These include the restructuring of diplomatic missions to attract foreign direct investment in addition to an easing of legal and tax constraints to benefit the diaspora to encourage their active involvement in the country's development⁵.
- The plan further states that a comprehensive approach must include the integration of migration in development frameworks and strategies against poverty, and the involvement of diaspora and transnational networks in development strategies. There is also an acknowledgement of the need to improve management of remittances, along with comprehensive and targeted assistance programmes for labour-focused migration, facilitating the return and reintegration of migrants.⁶ It is not clear how these policy intentions have translated into formal migration and development policy frameworks.
- 2022** ● **The new National Development Plan (NDP)** is based on six pillars that constitute growth-generating activities: agriculture in the broad sense, industry, special economic zones, tourism, the digital economy and real estate. While diaspora are not specifically mentioned the areas of focus are in line with diaspora interests particularly tourism and real estate.⁷
- 2025** ● In March 2025, the Parliament's Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and Congolese Abroad Committee placed the "**Recognition, Reconciliation and Return bill**" on the legislative agenda aimed at addressing historical questions affecting the diaspora, including recognition of historic injustices, establishing commemorative dates and promoting a "Year of Return" to encourage connections and potential return by Afro-descendants.

Practices

Explore 520+ practices by country, SDG or sector of engagement in the [interactive database!](#)



MIDA Congo-Brazzaville

The main objective of the Migration for Development in Africa programme was to strengthen the capacity of the Government of the Republic of the Congo to mobilise the Congolese diaspora's skills for a beneficial contribution to the development of the country. MIDA aimed to respond to the challenges of human resource shortages facing Congo-Brazzaville in two priority sectors: health and higher education.

In order to achieve this objective, IOM undertook two parallel processes:

- Strengthening the capacity of the government in the mobilisation and management of the Congolese diaspora through its *Cellule de Mobilisation de la Diaspora* (Diaspora Mobilisation Unit) based at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation, and Congolese Abroad.
- Implementation of an effective mobilisation of the Congolese diaspora in France, in close collaboration with the Forum of International Solidarity Organisations for Migration (FORIM), to contribute to the development of health and higher education sectors in Congo-Brazzaville.

⁴ Full text available at: <https://www.greengrowthknowledge.org/sites/default/files/downloads/policy-database/CONGO%29%202009-2016%20National%20Development%20Plan.pdf>

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ <https://gouvernement.cg/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/CSD-PND-2022-2026.pdf>

DiasporaEngager Platform

This global online platform aims to connect Congolese diaspora members, encouraging them to contribute to the development of their home country. It offers services like a diaspora directory, a skills database, and facilitates networking among professionals.

» Observations

The “Observations” and “Obstacles” sections contain additional information on the context of diaspora engagement that does not fit directly into the other sections. They are based on a combination of literature review and comments from the authors. New information is incorporated during the annual updates. Readers are invited to verify the relevance of the information at the time of reading, as the context may have evolved.

Relations between the government and its diaspora are very strained and characterised by deep mistrust. This has informed the slow development and implementation of diaspora engagement policies and programmes.

In 2013, the African Development Bank commissioned a consultant to develop a diaspora mobilisation strategy.⁸ In 2014 IOM supported the Republic of the Congo to develop a diaspora mobilisation strategy,⁹ and members of the Congolese diaspora were consulted on this.¹⁰ However, political instability in the country, and in particular the Constitutional Referendum and the 2016 elections, have hindered the Congolese government’s progress on diaspora engagement.

The Congolese government is keen to strengthen the potential for diaspora skills transfer to support the country’s development. Stemming ‘brain drain’ has been at the centre of diaspora engagement attempts. To this end, in October 2018, the Congolese government sent a delegation from the Department of Congolese Abroad (DCE) on a fact-finding mission to the *Conseil de la communauté marocaine à l’étranger* (CCME) in Rabat, Morocco. The purpose of this mission was “to benefit from Moroccan experience and expertise in the field of migration, especially in its organizational aspect,” said HE M Jean Philippe Ngakosso, specifying that the newly created DCE needed the support of a country like Morocco “which has made a long journey in this field.”¹¹ These explorations build upon the policy aims outlined in the Growth, Employment, and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (2012-2016 DSCERP), which seeks to facilitate return migration and the effective engagement of the diaspora in the country’s development.

Establishment of a Dedicated Department for Congolese Abroad: Within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a department was created to focus on the affairs of Congolese citizens living abroad. This move aims to strengthen ties between the government and its diaspora communities. A liaison office was created at the Congolese Embassy in France in January 2024, serving as an intermediary between job-seeking Congolese abroad and employers established in Congo.¹²

8 <https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Procurement/Project-related-Procurement/Congo%20-%20Elaboration%20de%20la%20strat%C3%A9gie%20de%20mobilisation%20de%20la%20Diaspora%20pour%20la%20reconstruction%20et%20le%20d%C3%A9veloppement%20du%20Congo%20-%20Contract%20Award.pdf>

9 <http://www.adiac-congo.com/content/cooperation-loim-renforce-les-capacites-du-gouvernement-congolais-dans-les-strategies-de> ;

10 <http://www.adiac-congo.com/content/diaspora-les-congolais-de-letranger-reflechissent-une-strategie-nationale-dintegration-au>

11 <https://www.ccme.org.ma/fr/activites/54017>

12 https://www.ungeneva.org/en/news-media/meeting-summary/2024/06/committee-protection-rights-all-migrant-workers-and-members?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Involvement of the diaspora in the elaboration of the National Strategy for the Development of the Digital Economy 2018-2022. Key actors and digital enthusiasts in Congo met in March 2018 in Brazzaville to validate the national strategy document for the development of the digital economy of the Republic of Congo. The strategy was developed with the aim of including the diaspora in the ICT sector in order help diversify the Congolese economy. The Ministry for Posts, Telecommunications and Digital Economy saved money by opting for a participatory approach that made it possible not only to develop local skills, but also to involve the Congolese diaspora in the process of drafting this strategy.¹³

Obstacles



- **Lack of trust:** Probably the largest obstacle to diaspora engagement is a lack of trust between the government and its diaspora. The government has viewed the diaspora as a threat to its political stability, while the diaspora is distrustful of the actions of the government.
- **Frameworks:** The Republic of the Congo has been slow to build its policy and institutional frameworks in relation to diaspora engagement; there is still no agreed upon diaspora policy, and while there are some initiatives, they risk being piecemeal and ineffective. Development and implementation of diaspora engagement policies and programmes are further hindered by deep divisions within the diaspora, which is largely perceived as being resolutely opposed to the Brazzaville government.¹⁴
- **Institutional focus on migration management:** The Republic of the Congo has been affected by regional conflicts and instability and has had to manage significant numbers of migrants and refugees from neighbouring countries whilst at the same time seeking to stem outward migration and brain-drain from its own citizens. As a result, the government's focus has tended to be on border management rather than migration and development.
- **Limited and informal remittance transfers:** The majority of remittances is sent via informal transfer pathways, making the value difficult to quantify. Moreover, these remittances tend to be small amounts intended to provide for the basic needs of family members, rather than for business investment or development projects.¹⁵

13 <https://www.digitalbusiness.africa/congo-brazza-apres-participation-public-de-diaspora-strategie-de-developpement-de-leconomie-numerique-cours-de-validation/>; www.postetelecom.gouv.cg

14 <https://blogs.mediapart.fr/jecmaus/blog/110418/congo-la-strategie-suicidaire-dune-diaspora-en-manque-dunite> ; see also L., F. Guibert, T. Jaulin, S. Mesplé-Somps (eds) (2018) *Migrants, acteurs des changements politiques en Afrique?*, Deboeck supérieur

15 <https://www.tralac.org/news/article/13218-understanding-global-remittances-corridors-in-the-democratic-republic-of-congo-drc.html>

Annex:

List of Actors

Explore the institutionalisation of diaspora engagement worldwide via the [typology of 520+ institutions](#)

Diaspora related institutions

- **At regional level**

African Union Citizens and Diaspora Directorate (AU CIDO)

Republic of the Congo is a member of the African Union and nominates a Diaspora Focal Point to attend the AU-CIDO continental meetings.

Economic Commission for Central African States (ECCAS)

Republic of the Congo is a member of the Economic Commission for Central African States (ECCAS)

- **National institutions**

- At ministerial level

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Congolese Abroad

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and Congolese Abroad implements policies in the areas of foreign affairs, cooperation and the Congolese abroad, with key aims relating to promoting the interests of Congolese abroad and managing labour migration.

A Ministry of Congolese Abroad was originally established in 2010. This was absorbed into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and Congolese Abroad in 2014.

- At sub-ministerial level

Department of Congolese Abroad

The *Département des Congolais de l'Étranger* (DCE) was founded in 2011 and is headed by an Under-Secretary-General, who has the rank and prerogatives of a non-resident ambassador. The mandate of the DCE includes improving data collection relating to the skills and whereabouts of Congolese nationals living abroad, as well as identifying associations and organizations of Congolese abroad. It is also tasked with proposing strategies to encourage Congolese abroad to become involved in the national development process.

The High Representative Council of Congolese Abroad (HCRCE)

The HCRCE is the interface between the Congolese diaspora and the Government on all issues of common interest. The platform will also be responsible for monitoring and coordinating the development actions of the Congolese diaspora. The objective of this body is also to introduce this flagship project of the roadmap within the government for Congolese abroad. It aims to create a framework to better govern relations between the Congo and its diaspora.



Diaspora organisations in Europe

Association Développement Relations Nord-Sud (ADRNS)

France

Read more about diaspora organisations
in "[Starting guide: What is a diaspora
organisation](#)"



Development activities

ADRNS aims to encourage and support organizations, public and private, French, African and foreign as well as individuals in the establishment, development, production, monitoring and evaluation of projects and programmes affecting the green economy, ecological agriculture, circular economy, the knowledge economy and the men and women of the diaspora.

Coordination d'appui aux projets de solidarité internationale pour le Congo (CAPCOS) France

Development activities

CAPCOS is an association based in Paris which brings together more than 25 French international solidarity associations and organisations of migrants from Congo Brazzaville as well as individuals contributing to actions in support of the populations of Congo Brazzaville. CAPCOS provides a platform for pooling resources and skills between member organisations and works to create synergies between member organisations in order to strengthen a network of expertise, skills and know-how in the development and implementation of international solidarity projects.

Collectif des Forces Vives de la Diaspora France 2022

Integration activities

Its missions are awareness-raising, community action and civic engagement.

Diaspora Congo Brazzaville (DCB) France

Development activities

DCB is a non-profit, politically neutral association, wishing to federate Congolese abroad, wherever they are, in a dynamic that transcends all cleavages (regional, political, confessional, social...) with the aim to develop and optimise the capital represented by Congolese abroad as a lever for solidarity and development.

DCB has set up a programme for the development of family agro-pastoral farms. The project aims to raise awareness of the work of small farmers, which lacks recognition,¹⁶ as well as reduce poverty in rural areas, offering sustainable activities for the development of family agricultural production centred mainly on breeding, fishing and farming. Before the launch of the project, members of the Congolese diaspora met with the Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Rigobert Maboundou, to present the project and get the government's support in implementing it.¹⁷

¹⁶ <http://adiac-congo.com/content/un-programme-en-faveur-de-lagriculture-familiale-29186>

¹⁷ <http://www.adiac-congo.com/content/agriculture-familiale-la-diaspora-congolaise-envisage-daccompagner-les-groupements-locaux>

PRATIC (Promotion and reflection, around Information and Communication Technologies) France 2008

Development activities

The association was established in Paris with the ambition to establish a global reflection around ICT between experts, professionals, students and users of ICT in Congo in order to collect concrete proposals and bring applicable solutions for the development of ICT from different actors (State and civil society).¹⁸ The PRATIC association has organised several symposia and 'reflection days' in France and Congo on the digital economy and its potential.¹⁹

Réseau International des Congolais de l'Extérieur (RICE) France

Development activities

RICE's mission is to bring together Congolese of origin or nationality around the development of the Congo and to coordinate their associative activities around the world. RICE is strongly oriented towards the promotion and development of entrepreneurship in Congo and brings together the diaspora in all its diversity and skills.

Mpaka 120

A new structured diaspora network known as "Mpaka 120" is gaining formal traction. Established initially as an informal WhatsApp group among members of the Congolese community abroad, this network has evolved into a registered association with branches in Pointe-Noire and France. It illustrates diaspora activism translating into organised socio-economic action, including fundraising, community support and potential collaboration with consular sections and local authorities

¹⁸ <http://www.forums.congopage.com/Nouvelles-technologies-de-la>

¹⁹ <https://journals.openedition.org/rfsic/6489>

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