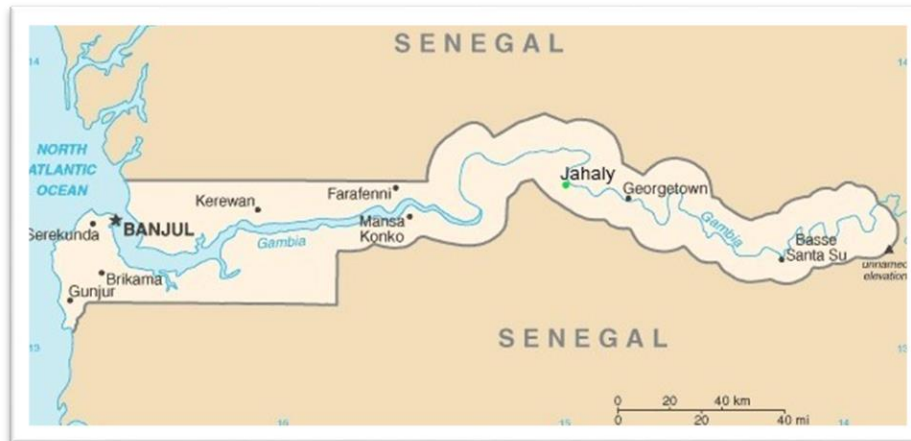


## Gambia. The political situation.



Gambia declared independency from the UK on February 18<sup>th</sup>, 1965, and is a presidential republic since 1970.

In December 2016, a party alliance around the current President Adama Barrow defeated the long-time ruler, President Yahya Jammeh, in free and fair elections. Jammeh had come to power in a military coup in 1994 and had ruled the country increasingly autocratic for 22 years. In January 2017, Jammeh was forced into exile in Equatorial Guinea. After the peaceful change of power, the human rights conditions have improved. Democratic freedoms have been restored. A Truth and Reconciliation Commission investigates the crimes of the Jammeh dictatorship. A new constitution should come into force in 2020.

The Gambia is a largely safe and peaceful country. In the [Global Peace Index](#) with 163 countries, The Gambia has improved significantly from 111th place (2017) to 60th place (2020).

The Gambia has a low crime rate and is considered a relatively safe country even for solo travelers. Police and military checks can be expected on the roads. Several national Foreign Offices publish regularly updated travel and safety information on The Gambia.

The legal system is - like the school system - very similar to the British, in particular, insist on the upcountry village's own systems. The council of elders in a village has a lot of power and decision making. A village chief ("Alkalo") bringing a concern to the authorities, is attributed to the much importance. The Alkalo and the Imam (leader of the Islamic village community) can also certify documents, such as birth and marriage certificates.



Projekthilfe Gambia e.V.

Corruption at all levels remains a major problem and is almost ubiquitous, even under the democratically elected new government. There has only been a slight improvement in recent years - clearly visible in the [corruption index](#) from Transparency International. Many high offices in ministries (ministers, state secretaries) or in the higher service are characterized by high staff turnover.

The country is dependent on international development aid because their own agriculture system can not produce sufficient staple.

The main reasons for that are - in addition to the rural exodus of young people - droughts and desertification as a result of climate change. The World Food Programme for example is supporting the governmental schools in Gambia in school meals.

Another problem are EU subsidies. European products such as eggs or chicken are cheaper than local products in The Gambia. In addition, fishing fleets from Europe, Japan etc. allowed by international agreements have overfished the Atlantic Ocean off the Gambia and so the local fishermen are deprived of their livelihood.