

IOA | 2019 | ACBR

AFRICA COUNTRY BENCHMARK REPORT



The Gambia Profile



The placid waters of a fog-shrouded lake at sunset symbolise the calm that has returned to The Gambia after years of brutal dictatorship. With democracy has also returned improved economic prospects.



Image courtesy of Göran Höglund (Kartläsarn)



THE GAMBIA

#20

THE GAMBIA

OVERVIEW ANALYSIS

The small sliver-shaped country, extending from the Atlantic into the heart of Senegal, has been invigorated during the first full year of democracy under President Adama Barrow. Barrow replaced Yahya Jammeh, after an alliance of West African states forced the dictator to honour the results of an election he lost. The new government faces great challenges but has international backing to provide basic services and employment. The agricultural sector can be revived from its previous foundation as a peanut exporter, and tourism can further utilise spectacular white sand beaches. The Gambia's ranking on the ACBR 2019 Overall Country Index is lower by two country positions. From 18 in 2017, The Gambia is ranked 20 in 2019, which is an improvement over 24 in 2016.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

- Democracy and hope for a better nation have returned
- Atlantic coastline good for fishing and tourism
- In its infancy, the services industry has much room for growth

KEY CONCERNS

- Government has little money to rebuild the country after decades of economic mismanagement
- A small population offers a limited market
- Lingering distrust exists for security forces

COUNTRY HIGHLIGHTS

PREDOMINANT
RELIGION



Islam

PREDOMINANT
LANGUAGE



English

POPULATION
WITHOUT
ELECTRICITY



52.2%
(#25) ▼³

LITERACY
RATE



55.5%
(#40) ▼¹

PRIMARY
ELECTRICITY
SOURCE



Oil

IMPORT/
EXPORT



Cotton/Wood

EXTERNAL
DEBT



US\$ 6.197
billion
(#50) ▼¹

ACTIVE
CONFLICT



No

LAND
SIZE



11,300 km²
(#49)

INTERNET
PENETRATION



18.5%
(#28) ▼¹

20.4%



AGRICULTURE

14.2%



INDUSTRY

65.4%



SERVICES

37.4%



0-14

20.5%



15-24

34.4%



22-54

7.7%



55+



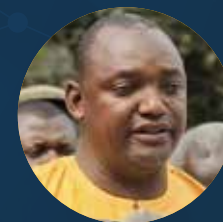
Term:
19/01/2017 - present
5 years (no term limits)



Political Party:
Coalition 2016



Recent Electoral Information:
01/12/2016
227 708 Votes
43.3%
Voter turnout: 59.3%



President
Adama Barrow

CONTRIBUTIONS TO GDP BY SECTOR

POPULATION AGE BREAKDOWN

NATIONAL GOVERNANCE

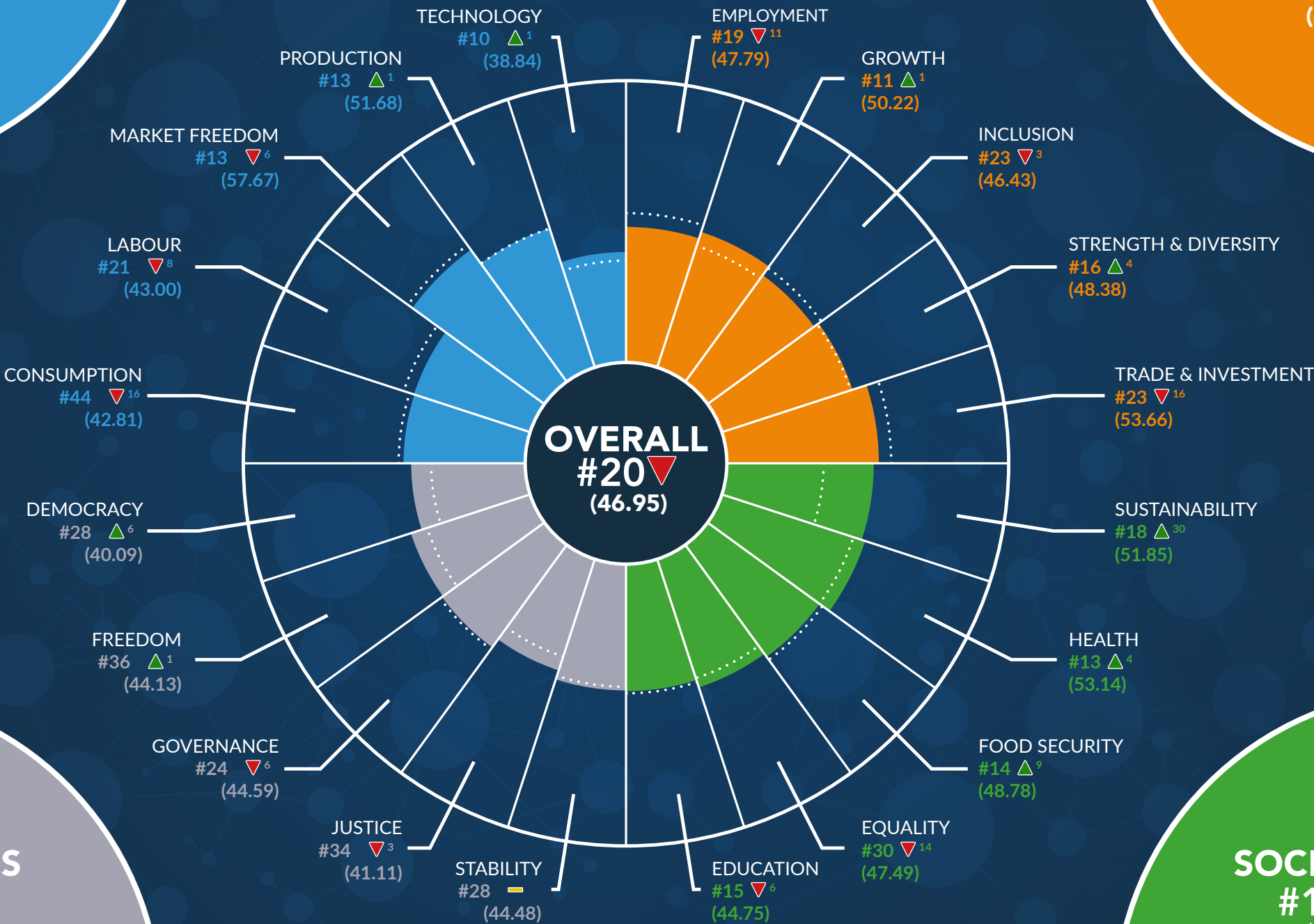
BUSINESS

#16
(46.8)

THE GAMBIA PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

ECONOMICS

#17
(48.21)



POLITICS

#32
(42.88)

SOCIETY

#16
(49.93)

THE GAMBIA BUSINESS ANALYSIS

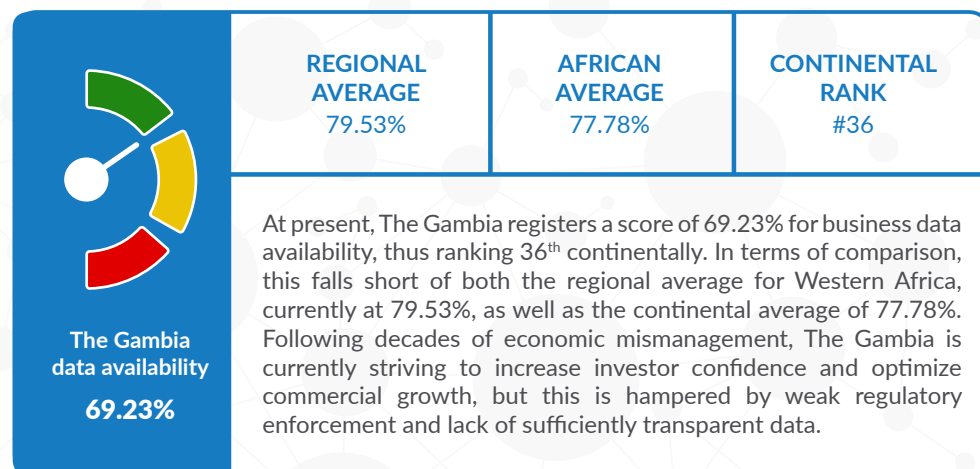
#16

BUSINESS OVERVIEW

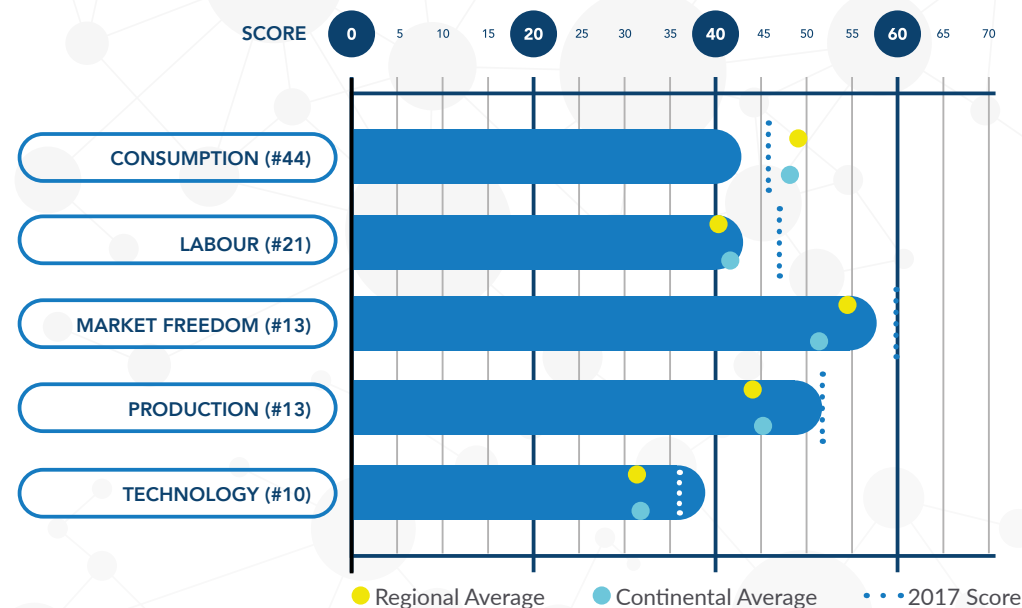
While the number of Gambians surpassed two million in 2018, half live in poverty, making job creation a priority for the new government. Cross-border trading, which must be done through Senegal, will become easier with The Gambia and Senegal enjoying better relations following Jammeh's departure. The services industry is the largest segment of the Economy, but is still small and capable of great expansion, particularly as tourism grows. Development of industry is hobbled by the small domestic market the country offers. Industrial growth actually declined in 2017 during the uncertainty of the government transitional period. However, investors are now more willing to commit to long-term growth projects.

Only 723 km of the nation's road system is paved, inhibiting car ownership and road freight transport. Roads are part of the infrastructure rebuilding that must be prioritised if the economy is to rebound. 28% of land is arable, and when this area is cultivated for agricultural production, roads will be required to bring the product to market. Given The Gambia's tropical climate, a transportation and storage cold chain will be required for perishable products, which could constitute the bulk of future agricultural exports, including cattle hides, fish and peanuts. With the business community slow to adjust to the advantages of a democratic country, The Gambia descended four country positions in the ACBR 2019 Business Quadrant, from 12th position in 2017 to 16 currently.

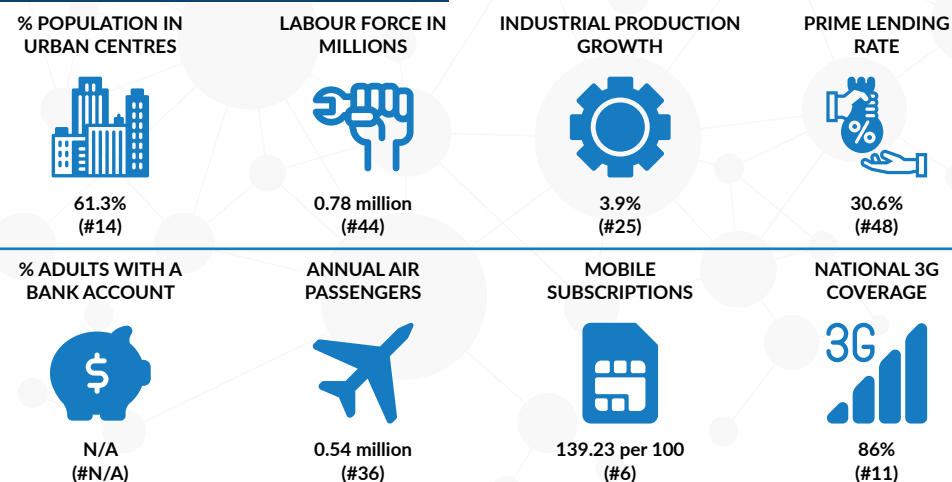
BUSINESS DATA COMMENTARY



BUSINESS SCORES & RANKINGS



BUSINESS STATISTICS



THE GAMBIA ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

#17

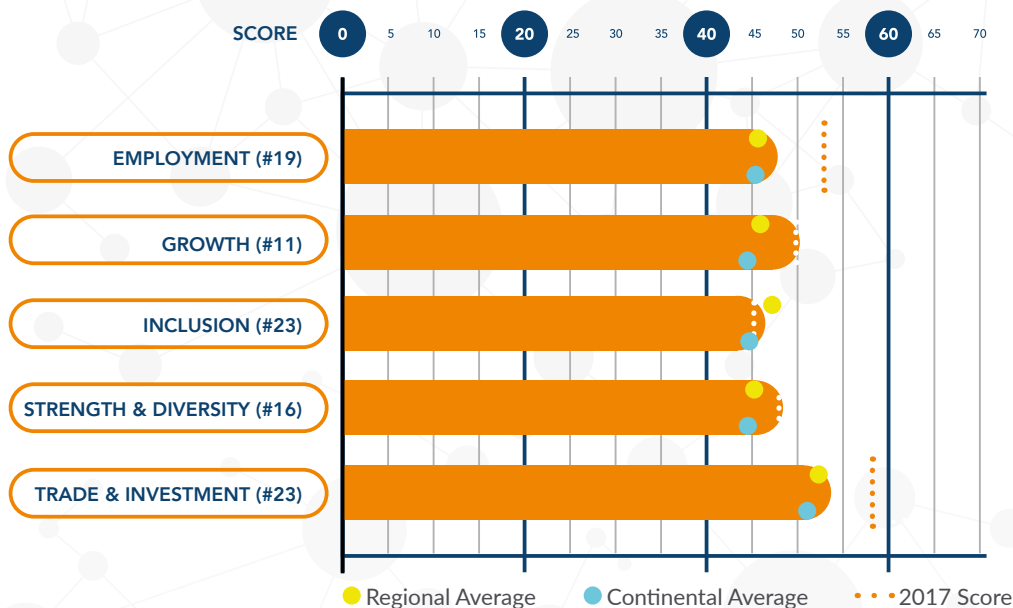
ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

With few local opportunities for employment, many Gambians secure work overseas and send money back to their families. Still, half of Gambians live below the poverty line, and three-quarters of the population engage in low-earning agricultural work. This poverty has not allowed a modern consumer culture to take root, and accounts for retail sector and non-tourism services being in their infancy. The services sector comprises only 6% of the economy. Industry accounts for 19% of GDP, but exports are largely unprocessed agricultural products, like fish, peanuts, and cotton lint and palm kernels.

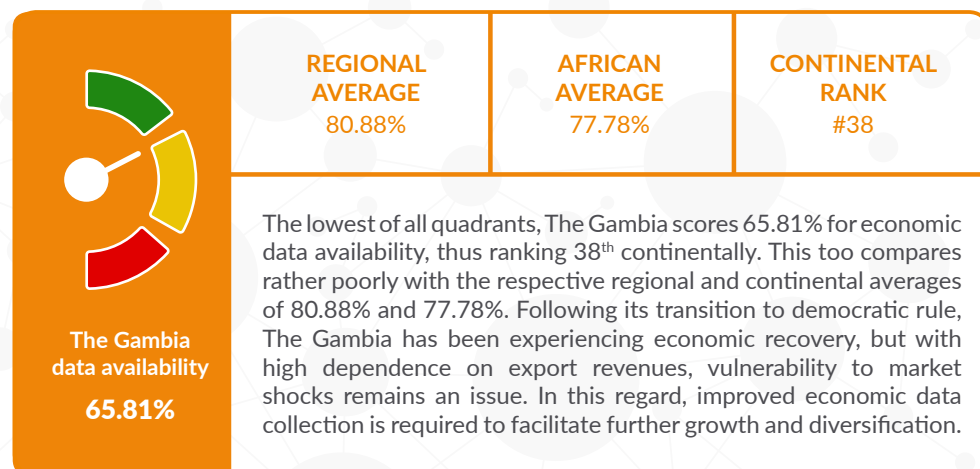
Trade links with African and in overseas markets are established and can be used for boosting exports. Half (51%) of The

Gambia's exports go to Guinea-Bissau, and the rest are mostly sold to Vietnam, Senegal and Mali. Imports are also derived from a mix of African and overseas suppliers, in order of volume: Côte d'Ivoire, Brazil, Spain, China, Russia, the Netherlands and India. The Gambia's membership with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) can be exploited for additional access to lucrative regional markets. Exports in 2017 worth US\$ 73 million were a fraction of the cost of imports, which stood at US\$ 377 million. With its economic fundamentals still unfavourable, The Gambia dropped four country positions in the ACBR 2019 Economics quadrant, descending from 13th position in 2017 to the 17th spot currently.

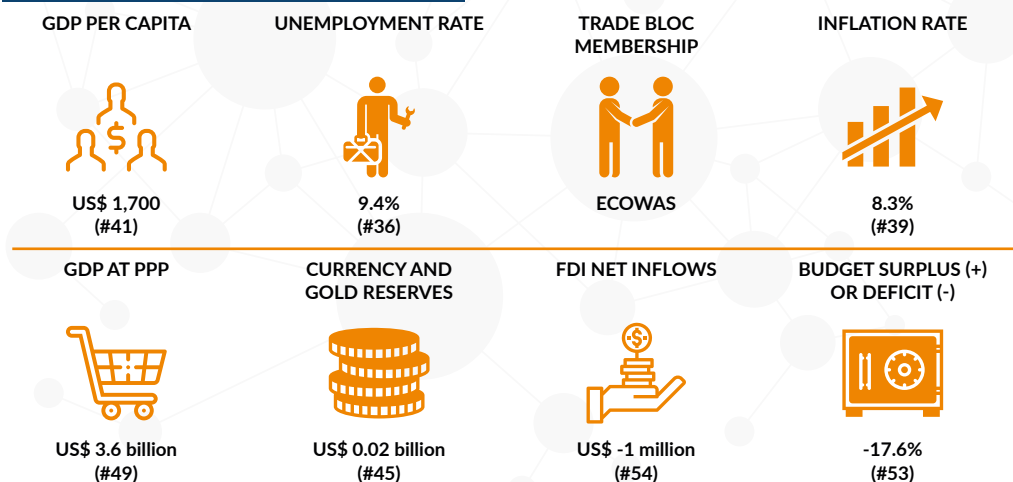
ECONOMIC SCORES & RANKINGS



ECONOMIC DATA COMMENTARY



ECONOMIC STATISTICS



THE GAMBIA POLITICAL ANALYSIS



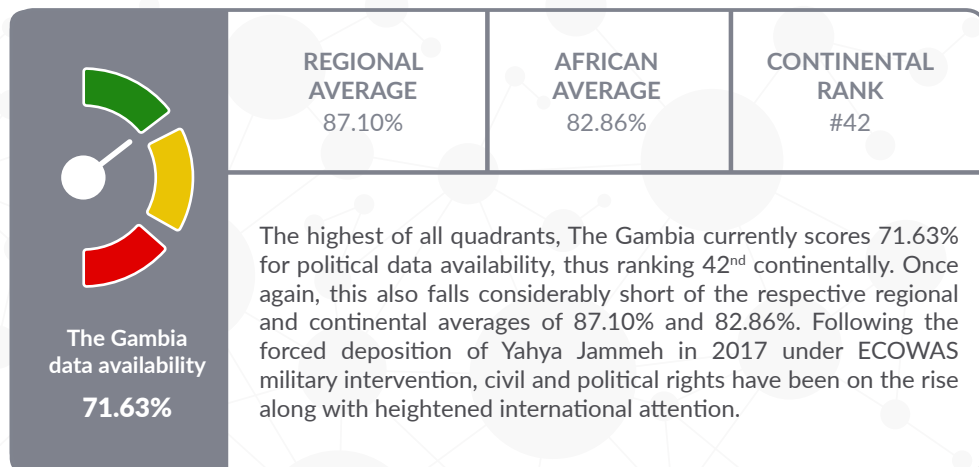
POLITICAL OVERVIEW

A reservoir of international good will exists for The Gambia's political rehabilitation following the Jammeh dictatorship, from neighbouring ECOWAS nations to foreign donor countries. One year passed between The Gambia's initiation to regain its membership to the British Commonwealth in February 2017, and the country's official rejoining of that body in February 2018. The first British Foreign Secretary to visit The Gambia since the country gained its independence from Britain in 1965 arrived on 14 February 2017 to champion the cause of Commonwealth membership that had been forfeited by Jammeh. President Adama Barrow also notified the UN of his administration's reversal of Jammeh's dictate that Gambia would leave the International Criminal Court (ICC). The ICC

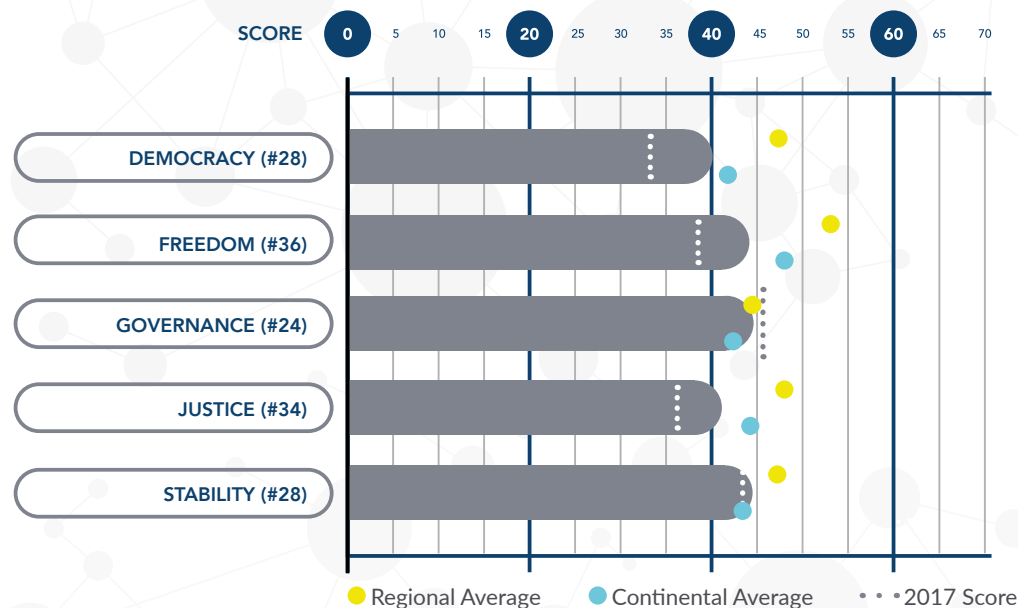
can be used to prosecute Jammeh for his crimes while in office.

Each of the seven political parties that formed the coalition that contest Jammeh in the 2017 election received a cabinet post under Barrow, with Barrow's United Democratic Party holding three posts. The Barrow government must also carefully accommodate ethnic groups. The public's trust in political institutions must be restored via an anti-corruption drive, and fear of security forces must be mitigated. Evidence of improved political conditions is found in the rise by The Gambia of one country position in the ACBR 2019 Politics country rankings, moving from 33 in 2017 to 32 currently.

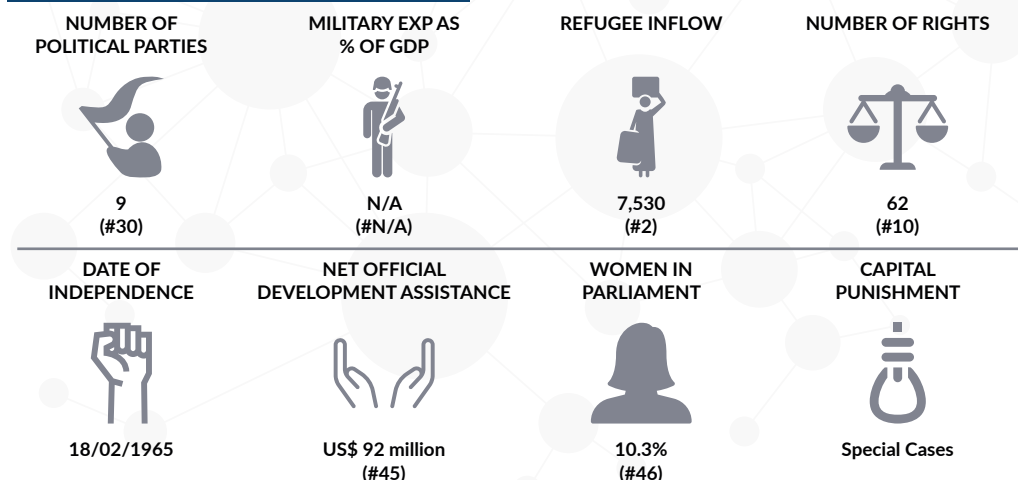
POLITICAL DATA COMMENTARY



POLITICAL SCORES & RANKINGS



POLITICAL STATISTICS



THE GAMBIA SOCIETAL ANALYSIS



SOCIETAL OVERVIEW

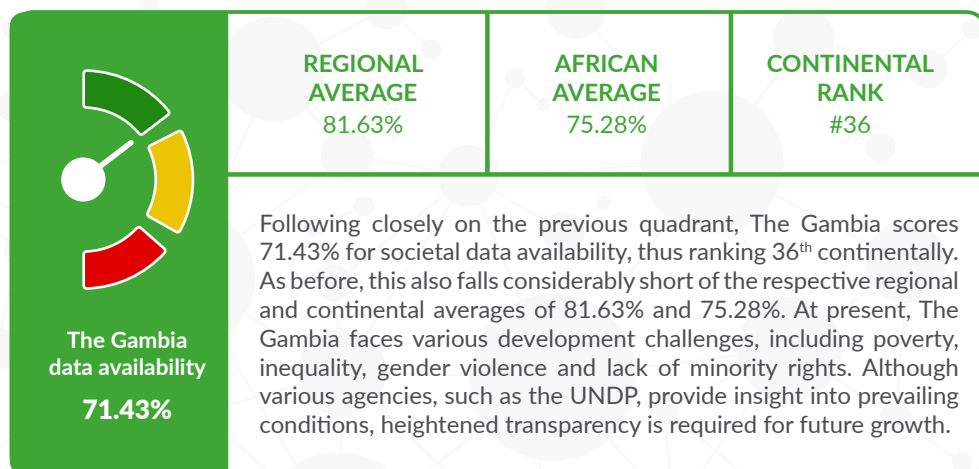
The Gambia's population is largely young, with 44% of Gambians aged 14 years or younger, and the median age of all Gambians standing at age 17. The death penalty is being abolished under President Barrow. As a first step, in May 2019 Barrow commuted the sentences of 20 death row inmates to life sentences.

Social indicators show the immensity of the job ahead to raise the population's education, health and other social welfare matters. Health care is one priority for the new government. Malaria, Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever, dengue fever and yellow fever are leading diseases. HIV/AIDS is also a contributor lowering the average life-span. Most Gambians (90%) have access to clean water, but

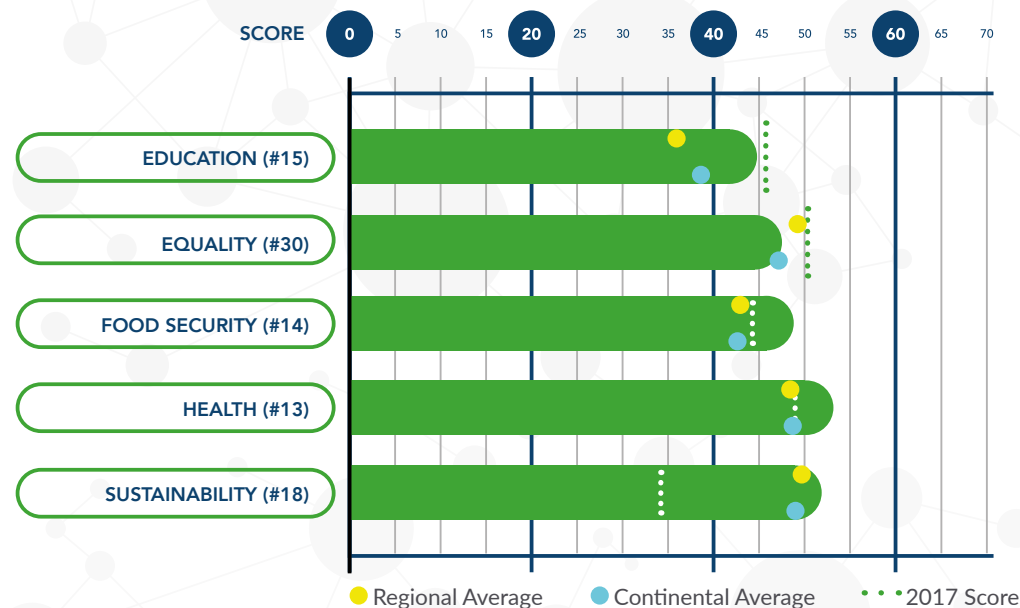
less than two-thirds have improved sanitation, like toilets. Education levels are low, and consequently, so is internet usage. Only half of Gambians (56%) are literate. The education and health sectors will require significant attention from the new government to create a healthy and educated population required for economic revival. The country's workforce potential is urbanised, with about two-thirds of Gambians (61%) living in urban areas. The rate of urbanisation stands at 4% annually.

The Gambia moved up one country position in the ACBR 2019 Societal Quadrant, remaining in the higher-ranked countries by ascending from 17th position in 2017 to the 16th spot in 2018.

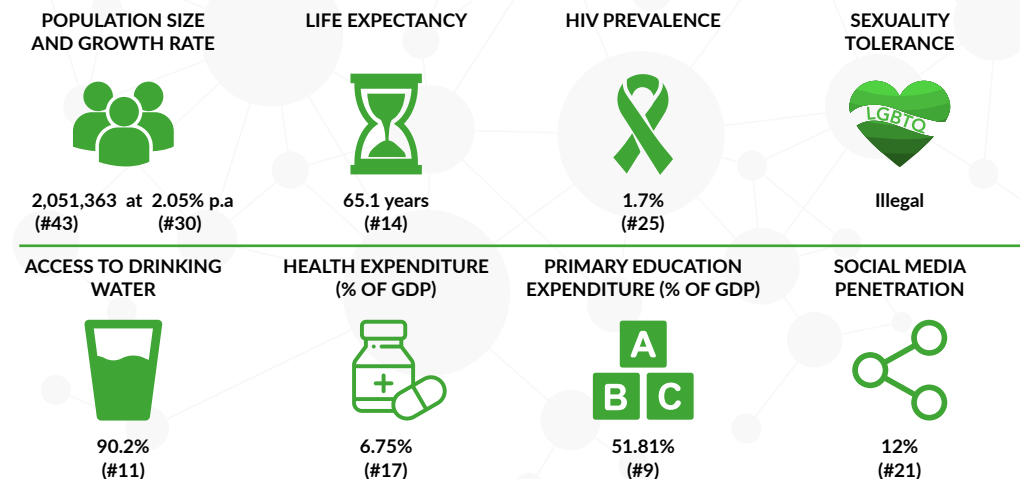
SOCIETAL DATA COMMENTARY



SOCIETAL SCORES & RANKINGS



SOCIETAL STATISTICS



CONTACT

IN ON AFRICA

PHONE: + (27) 11 027 4027

EMAIL: info@inonafrica.com

WEB: www.inonafrica.com

ADDRESS: 146 Beyers Naude Drive, Franklin Roosevelt Park, Johannesburg, 2195



@inonafrica



In On Africa



In On Africa

This IOA publication is released to the public with the understanding that it is not intended to provide implicit legal, accounting, investment or other professional advice. The information, research and opinions provided are collated and formulated by In On Africa (IOA) from its associates' understanding and knowledge of issues dealt with, as well as from a variety of open sources. Whilst IOA believes that the information and opinions contained herein are reliable, it does not make any warranties, express or implied, and assumes no liability for reliance on or use of the information or opinions contained herein. Furthermore, IOA indemnifies itself from unforeseen errors due to certain sources being gathered from third parties.

© IN ON AFRICA (PTY) LTD 2019