

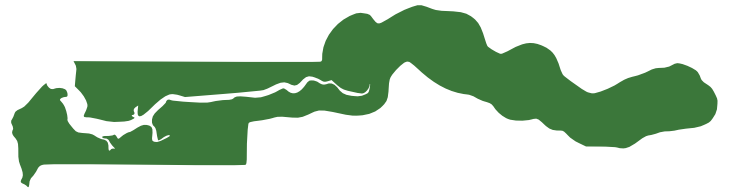


Country Information Sheet
for Return and Reintegration Counsellors



The Gambia





Country Information Sheet

for Return and Reintegration Counsellors



The Gambia



The enclosed content has been researched, evaluated and processed using open, publicly available sources. While every effort has been made to ensure that the data is reliable and up to date at the time of publication, Frontex does not retain responsibility or liability for any omissions or inaccuracies of the information provided.

Users are advised, where necessary, to verify critical content independently.

European Border and Coast Guard Agency – Frontex

Plac Europejski 6 • 00-844 Warsaw • Poland
frontex@frontex.europa.eu • www.frontex.europa.eu

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2026

©European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex), 2026

FPI-25.0204

Warsaw, May 2026

Reproduction is authorised provided the source is acknowledged.

PRINT	ISBN 978-92-9411-565-2	DOI: 10.2819/5733997	TT-01-25-075-EN-C
PDF	ISBN 978-92-9411-564-5	DOI: 10.2819/1267002	TT-01-25-075-EN-N

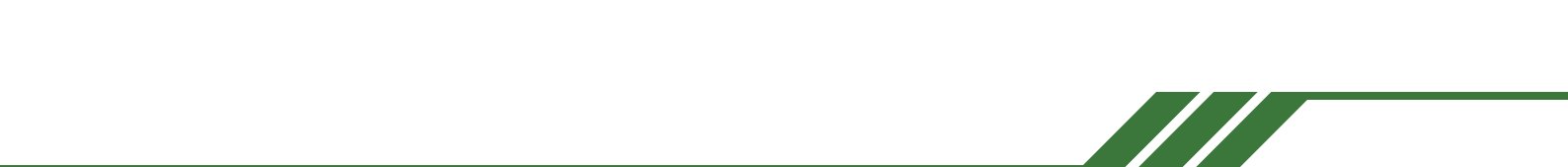
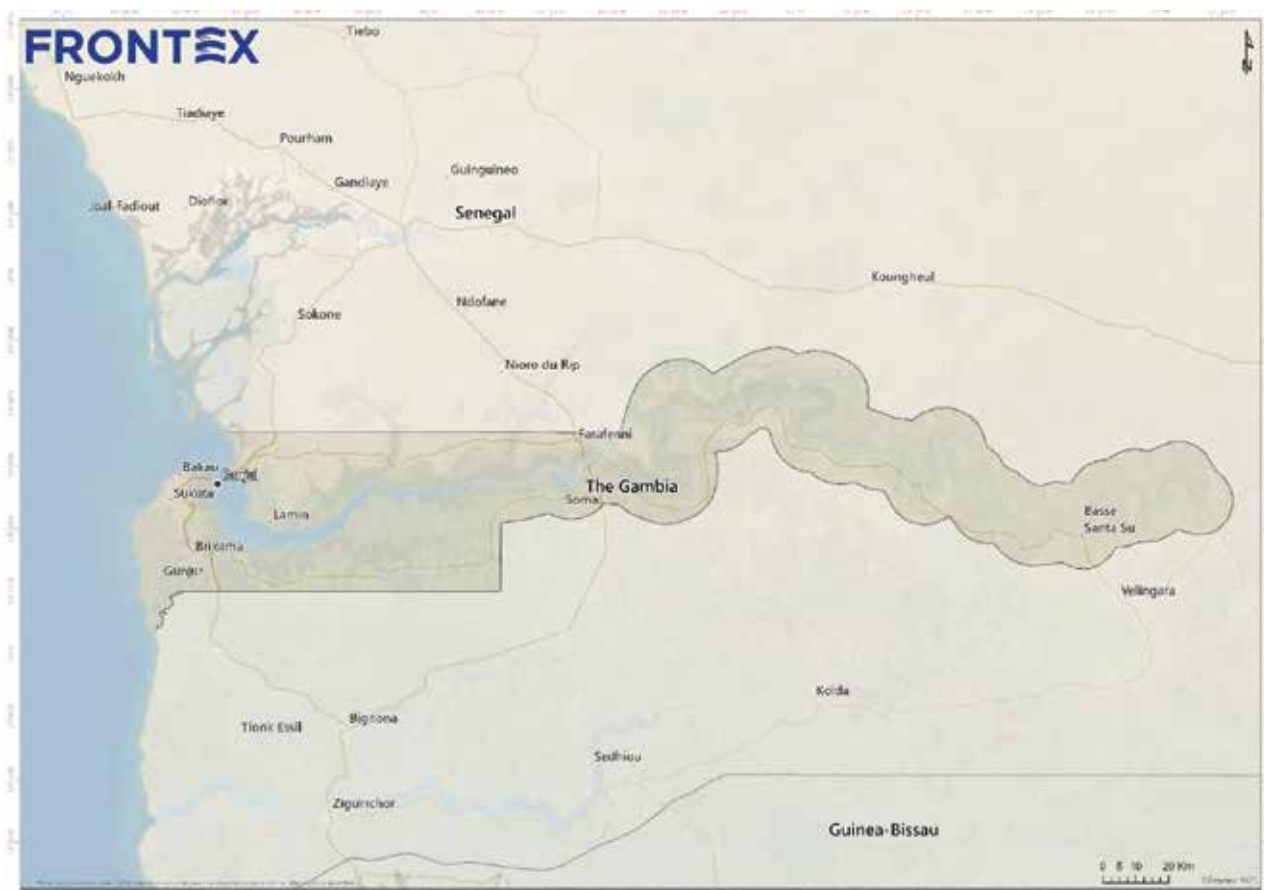


Table of Contents

1. General information	6
2. Reintegration partner	7
3. Travel documents	8
3.1 Types, procedure and required documents	8
3.2 Fees	9
4. Transport	10
5. Emergency contacts	10
6. Health-care	12
6.1 Overview	12
6.2 Health insurance	13
7. Education	14
7.1 Overview	14
7.2 Education system structure	14
7.3 Enrolment procedure for public education	14
8. Economy	15
9. Labour market	16
9.1 Overview	16
10. Housing	17
11. Security situation	18
12. List of official representations in Europe	18
13. Operational details	19
14. Cultural tips	20

1. General information



Population

total: 2,822,093

Ethnic groups

Mandinka/Jahanka 33,3%, Fulani/Tukulur/Lorobo 18,2%, Wolof 12,9%, Jola/Karoninka 11%, Serahuleh 7,2%, Serer 3,5%, other 4%, non-Gambian 9,9%

Languages

English (official), Mandinka, Wolof, Fula, other indigenous vernaculars

Religions

Muslim 96,4%, Christian 3,5%, other 0,1%

Population growth rate

2,20%

Government type

presidential republic

Capital name

Banjul

Telephone code

220

2. Reintegration partner

Caritas Gambia also known as the Catholic Development Office (CaDO), is the development wing of the Catholic Diocese of Banjul, The Gambia. This organisation was established in 2001 and charged with of co-ordinating all economic, socio-pastoral and relief activities that aim at attaining a more humane and just society, irrespective of creed, skin colour, race or ideology.

Over the years, Caritas Gambia has been an active actor in the fight against HIV & AIDS, malaria, and other diseases in the country. Other projects are geared towards poverty

alleviation and capacity strengthening, assistance with primary health care, early childhood, and sustainable livelihood development.

Through its activities, the Mission contributes to the Catholic Diocese's social development agenda through a charitable and complimentary system to evangelisation in the pursuit of holistic human development.



Roman Catholic Mission (Catholic Secretariat)
1 Kairaba Avenue
P.O. BOX 2366, Serrekunda,
The Gambia



+220 718 3119



info@caritasgambia.gm



Monday-Friday 9am-4pm (local time)



www.caritas.org
www.returngambia.caritasint.be

3. Travel documents

3.1 Types, procedure and required documents

Emergency passport

When a Gambian citizen loses his or her passport or becomes a destitute, to enable him or her return to the Gambia, the Gambia diplomatic or consular service in

that country shall issue him or her Emergency Passport to travel back to the Gambia.

Ordinary passports (including Machine Readable Passport and Biometric Passport)

The management, control, processing, issuance and approval of ordinary passports, which include Machine Readable Passport and Biometric Passport, are vested in the Director General of Immigration. Ordinary Passport is for any person whose citizenship as a Gambian is confirmed under the citizenship and nationality act and other laws of the Gambia.

To apply for an ordinary passport, the applicant must prove first that he or she is Gambian by birth, descent, naturalisation and or marriage or registration in case of a person who was born before his or her parents naturalised to become Gambian. Upon establishing these facts, the following procedures are followed for the Machine Readable Passport:

1. Applicant purchases passport application form at a cost of GMD100 at the Immigration Head Office. Thereafter, the form is filled in by the applicant and notarised by a notary officer in section 15 in the application form.
2. The application file is then taken to one of the prescribed banks such as EcoBank, GT Bank, Vista Bank or AGIB Bank for payment of the passport cost stated above.
3. Upon payment, the application file and payment receipt are submitted to the MRP Submission Office for necessary processing and guidance.

The applicant must provide and attached at least two passport size photos, birth certificate, national ID card and or Alkalis or chief's attestation and the signature of the applicant with proof of residence abroad.

For the biometric passport, the following procedures are involved:

1. Applicant purchases and obtains a biometric passport form at any EcoBank branch upon paying the prescribed fees.
2. The applicant fills out the form and has it notarised by a notary officer in section 15 of the application form.
3. Upon completion, the application file and payment receipt are submitted to the Biometric Passport Processing Centre.



Note: All first-time applicants for ordinary passports are subjected to vetting and interview procedures before approval. For renewal, applicants may submit only a copy of the expired passports with application with the application form.



The Gambia Embassies do not issue or renew passports. All passports are issued in Banjul, by the Gambian Immigration Department (GID).

Gambians living in the Diaspora can request a family member living in The Gambia to submit their application for a Machine Readable Passport in The Gambia whilst providing the GID with substantial evidence that they are living abroad.¹

Gambian citizens resident abroad may apply for passport replacement or first issuance.

Where the application is on first instance in respect of a child below 18, the application shall, in addition to the childbirth certificate, also contain the parent(s) supporting document(s).

Two passport size photos of the child applicant shall be provided and where applicable, signature and a document proving that the child is resident outside Gambia.

Where the applicant is applying for their first passport and is an adult, he or she shall produce his or her ID Card, birth certificate, proof of residence abroad, specimen of signature, and two passport size photos. Where either the birth certificate or ID card is not available, the applicant's parent's supporting document must be provided; and the parent shall submit an affidavit of support of birth as an evidence of close affinity to the applicant. The parent who submits such an affidavit may, be called to appear for interview on behalf of the applicant.²

3.2 Fees

Biometric Passport: GMD 5100

Emergency Travel Certificate: GMD 1100

Machine Readable Passport (MRP): GMD 3100

¹ [Frequently Asked Questions – Gambia Embassy](#)

² [Passport – The official Website of Gambia Immigration Department](#)

4. Transport

By air

The only international airport in The Gambia is [Banjul International Airport](#) (BJL), also known as Yundum International Airport. It is the primary gateway for air

travel in the country, located in Yundum, about 25 kilometres from the capital city of Banjul.

By bus

National bus routes are available to connect major towns and cities and the capital with surrounding areas, including Banjul, Brikama, Giboro, Dimbaya, Tipper Gararge, Turntable, Sukuta, Bakau Sinchu, and Sanyang.

GTSC (Gambia Transport Service Company) does not have a single fixed ticket price because it operates various

routes, but it has moved towards digital payments. Passengers can buy tickets using digital platforms like the Wave app, Yonna Wallet, or the GTBank Mobile App. The company has also partnered with mobile money providers to enable cashless transactions.

By train

There are no passenger train services in The Gambia.

By taxi

Two types of taxis are available in The Gambia: the regular ones (yellow) and the tourist taxis (green), which are more expensive. Neither are metered.

Bush taxis are called gelli-gellis. They are similar to vans and minibuses and serve as public transport to between

villages and towns. They have their own stations where they wait for passengers and leave only when they're full. Bush taxis follow a fixed route, but they can drop off anywhere. Take note though, they are off-limits in some areas such as Cape Point and the busy coastal areas.

Tuk-tuks

Like taxis, tuk-tuk provide two types of service. Shared transport on certain routes for GMD 10, a hop-on-hop-off way of commuting, and town-trips, where as with

taxi drivers, you agree on a price before the trip. You can also arrange for tuk-tuk pick-up. The three-wheelers are designed for 3-6 passengers.

5. Emergency contacts

Ambulance: 16; Fire: 18; Police: 17



6. Health-care

6.1 Overview

The healthcare system in The Gambia is built around three levels Primary, Secondary and Tertiary. There are to date six referral hospitals which are operated by the government.

In addition, there are eight main health centres and a further 16 smaller centres, 200 plus mobile clinic unit teams and the Medical Research Council which is funded by the UK Government.

Primary Health Care:

This is focused on villages with a population of over 400 individuals where a village health worker and traditional midwife are initially trained then assigned to deliver primary health care to their village of responsibility. They are responsible for providing out-patient care, community health education, ensuring there is a sufficient level of essential medicines and home visitations. Apart from the assisting mothers to be in home births the mid-wife would refer any mothers who seem to be at risk to the local health centres.

Secondary Health Care:

At this level medical care is provided health centres. There are around seven main government-run and private health centres, 12 smaller centres, with each providing in-patient and out-patient treatment. Each has its resident nurses, doctors and ancillary staff.

Tertiary Health Care:

Tertiary healthcare services are delivered by the six referral hospitals. In addition to the public health facilities, there are other NGOs/ private institutions providing health services including the Medical Research Council (MRC), Medicare clinic and Africmed clinical services.

There are also several privately run clinics as well as a few health focused NGOs operating in Gambia.

The Gambia has seven health regions and each health facility falls under a designated health region.

The main referral hospital in The Gambia is in Banjul, and the other five referral hospitals are Bansang General Hospital, Farafenni General Hospital, Bwiam General Hospital, Kanifing General hospital, and Bundung Maternal and Child Hospital.

As part of efforts to revitalize and implement the concept of Primary Health Care in the country, the PHC unit under the ministry witnessed a significant increase of PHC in key villages from 722 to 942.

However, PHC coverage in rural areas is still low, with an average coverage of 40% nationally.

Secondary care is provided through health centres (minor and major), which deliver up to 70 percent of the Essential health care package, including emergency obstetric and neonatal care.

They deliver up to 70 percent of the Essential health care package, including emergency obstetric and neonatal care.

Tertiary health care centres consist of the hospitals (District and General), including the teaching hospital, which is the highest level of the referral system.

6.2 Health insurance

The Gambia's healthcare landscape has undergone significant transformation since the launch of the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) in 2021. Designed to provide universal health coverage and financial protection, NHIS complements a growing private health insurance market dominated by both international and local providers.

The NHIS, a public and mandatory scheme for all residents—including expats without private coverage—is regulated under the National Health Insurance Act. As of 2025, it is being expanded to cover over 50 additional health facilities nationwide. Its primary goal is to reduce out-of-pocket healthcare expenses and increase access to essential medical services such as maternal care, outpatient and inpatient treatments, and basic medications.

Public health insurance is significantly subsidized, making it affordable for most Gambians. However, the system

faces challenges such as long waiting times, limited provider choice, and occasional language barriers in public facilities. Still, for the average citizen, especially in rural or lower-income communities, NHIS plays a vital role in offering a safety net against medical costs.

Gambia National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) (Official Website: <https://nhia.gm/>)

The NHIS is designed to be affordable, especially for the country's low-income population. Contributions are tiered based on income levels, with subsidies provided for vulnerable groups such as pregnant women, children under five, the elderly, and people living with disabilities.

Although exact premium figures are still being finalized in some regions, the government aims to keep contributions below GMD 250 (around USD 4.50) per month for low-income earners.

Available Services :

- General outpatient and inpatient services
- Maternal and child health services
- Immunizations and preventive care
- Treatment for communicable diseases like malaria and tuberculosis
- Essential medications from a standardized list
- Referrals to secondary care facilities when necessary

As the scheme evolves, coverage may expand to include specialized treatments and diagnostic services.

The NHIS is open to all Gambian citizens and legal residents. Enrolment began with public sector employees and is gradually expanding to include informal workers and rural populations through mobile registration drives and community outreach.

7. Education

7.1 Overview

Information on The Gambia's education system and policies is available on the website of the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (<http://www.edugambia.gm/>)

The Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology covers higher education as well as technical education and vocational training (TVET).



The Gambian Constitution mandates compulsory primary education. There are no fees for the first six years of schooling. More information can be found here: <https://www.accessgambia.com/information/education.html>

7.2 Education system structure

The structure for the education system in The Gambia is 3-6-3-3-4.

- The first 3 years cover Early Childhood Development (ECD) from Level 1 to 3.
- Then, there is a 6-year span for Lower Basic Education (Grade 1 to 6/ 6 – 12 years of age) followed by
 - 3 years for Upper Basic Education (Grade 7 to 9/ 13 – 15 years).
 - 3 years for Secondary Education (Grade 10 to 12/ 16 – 18 years)
 - followed by 4 years of tertiary education.³

7.3 Enrolment procedure for public education

1. application form
2. official birth certificate
3. immunization card
4. previous school records (if applicable)

Each school may have specific requirements, so it's essential to communicate with the school administration for any additional details.⁴

³ <https://www.iicba.unesco.org/en/node/99>, <http://www.edugambia.gm/>

⁴ <https://mobse.gov.gm/>

8. Economy

In 2026, The Gambia's economy is expected to show steady growth of about **5,1%** to **5,6%**. This progress is driven by a recovery in tourism, new construction projects, and better farming seasons. Most importantly for citizens, inflation is projected to drop significantly to around **4,9%**, meaning the sharp price increases seen in previous years

are finally beginning to level off. While the government is focused on reducing national debt and improving services like health and education, many families still face high living costs, and the country remains sensitive to global changes in fuel and food prices.

Socio-economic indicators

- Total labour force: 803,080 people
- Labour force participation: 47,1%
- Employment rate: 43,2%
- Unemployment rate: 8,3%
- Youth unemployment rate: 11,5%
- Inflation rate: 7,5%
- GDP growth rate: 6%
- Currency: Gambian Dalasis (GMD)

9. Labour market

9.1 Overview

The Gambia Bureau of Statistics (GBoS) has released the results of the 2025 Labour Force Survey, revealing a rise in unemployment and persistent structural challenges in the national labour market.

The labour market is dominated by informal employment, which accounts for 81% of all jobs, and overall labour underutilisation stands at 26,7%. The report also points to marked disparities across demographic groups. Young women face higher unemployment and are more likely to work in informal sectors, with limited access to formal employment. Participation among persons with disabilities has dropped significantly, from 32,8% to 20,1%.

The statutory national minimum wage in Gambia is GMD 50 per day.

While there was a recent increase in the minimum take-home pay for the lowest grade of civil servants to 6,000 GMD per month effective January 2025, this does not change the national statutory minimum wage applicable to the private sector and other areas.

This is the legally mandated minimum across all sectors and was last officially updated in 2015. It's important to understand that actual wages in formal employment often exceed this due to economic factors.⁵



Recruitment agencies:

GAMBJOBS, info@ gamjobs.com, website: <https://www.gamjobs.com/>

AmRA, info@amra. gm, website: <https://www.amra.gm/>

Outsource Recruitment Agency: <https://outsourcerecruit.gm/jobs/>

Other job openings can be found in newspapers

⁵ [Global HR Compliance in Gambia - Express Global Employment](#)

10. Housing

Finding decent accommodation in The Gambia has become a major struggle, especially for low- and middle-income earners. As the cost of living continues to rise, the housing crisis is tightening its grip on urban and peri-urban areas, with rent prices soaring beyond what the average Gambian can afford.

In urban areas like Greater Banjul, a modest two -bedroom apartment can cost between D7,000 to D15,000 monthly a figure far beyond the reach of many civil servants, low-income workers and struggling families.

Landlords are now dictating terms without regulation, often demanding six months to one-year upfront payment. Most landlord increase rent without notice or justification knowing that the tenants have no formal protection.

Several factors contribute to this worsening situation. First, there is no national rent control system or enforcement

mechanism to regulate pricing. The housing sector has been left to the free market giving landlords unchecked power.

Migration has drastically increased demand in towns and cities, there is little public investment in affordable housing. Building materials and land have made construction cost higher and landlord are simply passing that cost onto tenants.

Indicative rental prices, for a two-bedroom apartment based on recent data:

- Banjul: GMD 4000 to GMD 7000
- Serrekunda: GMD 3000 to GMD 6000
- Brikama: GMD 2500 to GMD 4000
- Farafenni: GMD 2500 to GMD 4000
- Bakau: GMD 3000 to GMD 5000



Real-estate agencies

Gambia Property Shop Ltd: [Property For Rent In Gambia - Houses, Apartments & Bungalows](#)

GamRealty: [Property for rent in Gambia | GamRealty quality real estate](#)

Global Properties: [Gambia](#)

4321 Property: [Gambia property for rent listings - direct from landlords & agents - 4321 Property](#)

Rentberry: [Apartments for rent in Serrekunda, The Gambia - Rentberry](#)

11. Security situation

According to the 2025 Global Peace Index (GPI) published by the Institute for Economics and Peace, The Gambia is ranked 55th out of 163 countries globally, indicating a high level of peace. A country's rank reflects its overall peacefulness based on an assessment of 23 indicators across three domains: societal safety and security, ongoing conflict, and militarization. A lower rank indicates a more peaceful country, with the ranking of "1" signifying

the most peaceful nation, while a higher rank indicates less peacefulness.

Due to potential changes in the security situation, it is strongly recommended to regularly consult updated sources such as [USDOS advisories](#) and [UK FCDO travel advice](#). Additionally, it is advised to verify current information directly with other Ministry of Foreign Affairs or embassy websites.

12. List of official representations in Europe



[List of Gambia Embassies and Consulates in Europe](#)

13. Operational details

EURP support in The Gambia applies to both Voluntary Returns and Forced Returns.

Both Post-Arrival and Post-Return packages are available in cash and in kind. Airport reception can be arranged by the Reintegration Partner (RP) upon request and with prior coordination.

Upon arrival at **Banjul International Airport**, the returnee is met at the arrival area by a representative of the Reintegration Partner to ensure a smooth reception and support process. The Post Arrival Assistance may be provided in cash (in Gambian Dalasi), subject to the returnee presenting a valid national ID or other accepted identification document.

The Post-Return Package is tailored according to the needs identified in the individual reintegration plan. The Reintegration Partner also provides additional support to facilitate access to employment opportunities, vocational training, education, housing, and health services in The Gambia.

Pre-departure process:

- Review and confirm valid contact details (phone number, email address, and possible residential address in The Gambia).
- Conduct a vulnerability assessment, clearly specifying the type of vulnerability to ensure appropriate reception and assistance.
- Confirm grant information. It is recommended that the returnee receives a written overview outlining the grant amount, timeline for service provision, and conditions for cash and in-kind support.
- Share and confirm the Reintegration Partner's contact details and emphasise the importance of contacting the RP within 14 working days after arrival.
- Inform the returnee about office locations and provide contact numbers to guide them to the nearest office and explain how to access services.
- For retroactive cases (where the Member State arranges travel and the returnee applies after arrival), clearly explain the eligibility period for application (up to six months after arrival).
- A pre-departure online call is recommended in cases involving vulnerabilities or urgent needs upon arrival.

- Any medical condition or medication requiring immediate attention should be reported before departure to the RP or the assigned case worker to facilitate reception arrangements.
- Conduct a preliminary assessment of skills, professional experience, and areas of interest to support appropriate case worker assignment and preparation for the first meeting.
- Confirm the Region and community of intended residence in The Gambia to facilitate geographic case allocation and preliminary labour market or business environment assessments.

Post-Arrival Package:

- Communication with the returnee begins pre-departure whenever possible, except in cases where no contact details are available.
- Airport reception is arranged for all cases unless the returnee is unreachable prior to departure.
- The cash component of the Post-Arrival Package (PAP) is provided at the airport in Gambian Dalasi, unless otherwise agreed before departure.
- If the returnee is unreachable upon arrival, the PAP remains available within 14 working days, subject to communication from the returnee.

Post-Return Package:

- A detailed needs assessment is conducted to develop an individualized reintegration plan, prioritizing sustainable income-generating activities.
- The Reintegration Partner supports market assessments and provides professional guidance on business start-up, self-employment, vocational training, or job placement.
- Where the returnee has an alternative source of income, the RP may recommend service providers (e.g., training centres, health facilities, educational institutions), without imposing mandatory providers.
- Monitoring and evaluation visits are conducted for up to one year after implementation to ensure sustainability and provide follow-up support where needed.

14. Cultural tips



Gambians tend to prefer an indirect style of communication. It would be rare to find somebody who would directly ask for something without spending some time getting to the point.



When speaking to peers of the same sex, direct eye contact is acceptable.



When speaking to elders or people of authority, indirect eye contact is the most appropriate.



In the rural areas, women, girls, and boys do not make direct eye contact with male elders. White women have honorary male status, so elder men may offer their hand to shake while greeting.



Looking elders directly in the eyes and not greeting people properly are also rude.



FRONT_{EX}



EUROPEAN BORDER AND
COAST GUARD AGENCY

European Border and Coast Guard Agency – Frontex
Plac Europejski 6 • 00-844 Warsaw • Poland
frontex@frontex.europa.eu • www.frontex.europa.eu

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2026

©European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex), 2026
FPI-25.0204

Warsaw, Mayy 2026

Reproduction is authorised provided the source is acknowledged.

PRINT	ISBN 978-92-9411-565-2	DOI: 10.2819/5733997	TT-01-25-075-EN-C
PDF	ISBN 978-92-9411-564-5	DOI: 10.2819/1267002	TT-01-25-075-EN-N



Publications Office
of the European Union