



FREEDOM IN THE WORLD 2025

The Gambia

PARTLY FREE

50
/100

<u>Political Rights</u>	22 /40
<u>Civil Liberties</u>	28 /60

LAST YEAR'S SCORE & STATUS

50 /100 Partly Free

A country or territory's Freedom in the World status depends on its aggregate Political Rights score, on a scale of 0–40, and its aggregate Civil Liberties score, on a scale of 0–60. See the methodology.



Overview

After over two decades of restrictive rule under President Yahya Jammeh, respect for political rights and civil liberties has improved under the administration of Adama Barrow, who took office following a surprise electoral victory in 2016. However, his administration has faced criticism for continued corruption, and journalists, civil society groups and others continue to face some pressure. LGBT+ people face severe discrimination, and violence against women remains a serious problem.

Key Developments in 2024

- In August, the government released a draft constitution, prompting criticism from opposition parties, civil society groups, and the country's bar association, who said the text was developed without adequate public consultation. Among other changes, the draft removed the parliamentary approval process from key presidential appointments, including cabinet members and the chair of the Independent Boundaries Electoral Commission (IBEC). It was also vague on whether language introducing term limits applied to Barrow.
- In July, the National Assembly (the Gambia's unicameral legislature) voted to reject a bill that would have repealed a 2015 ban on female genital mutilation. Separately, in September, the National Assembly voted to increase the minimum criminal penalty for "homosexual acts" from two years to five years.
- Several developments raised concern about the government's respect for free association and press freedom. In April, eight members of the civil society organization Gambia Participates were arrested and detained for several hours after organizing a sit-in to protest alleged corruption and mismanagement at the Gambia Ports Authority. In September, the Information Ministry suspended the issuance of new radio licenses, prompting concern among journalists. In October, two journalists were arrested and charged with "false news" over reporting that President Barrow had a plan to appoint a successor to stand in the 2026 presidential election. The arrests drew concern from international media freedom advocates.
- The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in December announced that it would establish a court to try crimes committed in

Gambia under military dictator Yahya Jammeh. Jammeh lives in exile in Equatorial Guinea, which is not an ECOWAS member.

This report has been abridged for Freedom in the World 2025 due to ongoing budget constraints. Freedom in the World is entirely funded by nongovernmental sources such as private foundations, corporations, and individuals like you. Please consider making a [donation](#) to support future editions of this vital resource.

For additional background information, see last year's [full report](#).

Political Rights

A. Electoral Process

A1 0-4 pts

Was the current head of government or other chief national authority elected through free and fair elections?

3/4

A2 0-4 pts

Were the current national legislative representatives elected through free and fair elections?

3/4

A3 0-4 pts

Are the electoral laws and framework fair, and are they implemented impartially by the relevant election management bodies?

2/4

B. Political Pluralism and Participation

B1 0-4 pts

Do the people have the right to organize in different political parties or other competitive political groupings of their choice, and is the system

2/4

free of undue obstacles to the rise and fall of these competing parties or groupings?	
---	--

B2 0-4 pts

Is there a realistic opportunity for the opposition to increase its support or gain power through elections?	3/4
--	------------

B3 0-4 pts

Are the people's political choices free from domination by forces that are external to the political sphere, or by political forces that employ extrapolitical means?	2/4
---	------------

B4 0-4 pts

Do various segments of the population (including ethnic, racial, religious, gender, LGBT+, and other relevant groups) have full political rights and electoral opportunities?	2/4
---	------------

C. Functioning of Government

C1 0-4 pts

Do the freely elected head of government and national legislative representatives determine the policies of the government?	2/4
---	------------

C2 0-4 pts

Are safeguards against official corruption strong and effective?	1/4
--	------------

C3 0-4 pts

Does the government operate with openness and transparency?	2/4
---	------------

Civil Liberties

D. Freedom of Expression and Belief

D1 0-4 pts

Are there free and independent media?	2 / 4
---------------------------------------	-------

D2 0-4 pts

Are individuals free to practice and express their religious faith or nonbelief in public and private?	2 / 4
--	-------

D3 0-4 pts

Is there academic freedom, and is the educational system free from extensive political indoctrination?	3 / 4
--	-------

D4 0-4 pts

Are individuals free to express their personal views on political or other sensitive topics without fear of surveillance or retribution?	2 / 4
--	-------

E. Associational and Organizational Rights

E1 0-4 pts

Is there freedom of assembly?	2 / 4
-------------------------------	-------

E2 0-4 pts

Is there freedom for nongovernmental organizations, particularly those that are engaged in human rights– and governance-related work?

2 / 4

E3 0-4 pts

Is there freedom for trade unions and similar professional or labor organizations?

2 / 4

F. Rule of Law

F1 0-4 pts

Is there an independent judiciary?

2 / 4

F2 0-4 pts

Does due process prevail in civil and criminal matters?

2 / 4

F3 0-4 pts

Is there protection from the illegitimate use of physical force and freedom from war and insurgencies?

2 / 4

F4 0-4 pts

Do laws, policies, and practices guarantee equal treatment of various segments of the population?

1 / 4

G. Personal Autonomy and Individual Rights

G1 0-4 pts

Do individuals enjoy freedom of movement, including the ability to change their place of residence, employment, or education?

2 / 4

G2 0-4 pts

Are individuals able to exercise the right to own property and establish private businesses without undue interference from state or nonstate actors?

2 / 4

G3 0-4 pts

Do individuals enjoy personal social freedoms, including choice of marriage partner and size of family, protection from domestic violence, and control over appearance?

1 / 4

G4 0-4 pts

Do individuals enjoy equality of opportunity and freedom from economic exploitation?

1 / 4



On The Gambia

See all data, scores & information on this country or territory.

See More >

Country Facts

Population

2,706,000

Global Freedom Score

50/100 **Partly Free**

Internet Freedom Score

56/100 **Partly Free**

Other Years

2024

Be the first to know what's happening.

Subscribe

Join the Freedom House weekly
newsletter

ADDRESS

1850 M St. NW Floor 11
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 296-5101

GENERAL INQUIRIES

info@freedomhouse.org

PRESS & MEDIA

press@freedomhouse.org

@2025 FreedomHouse