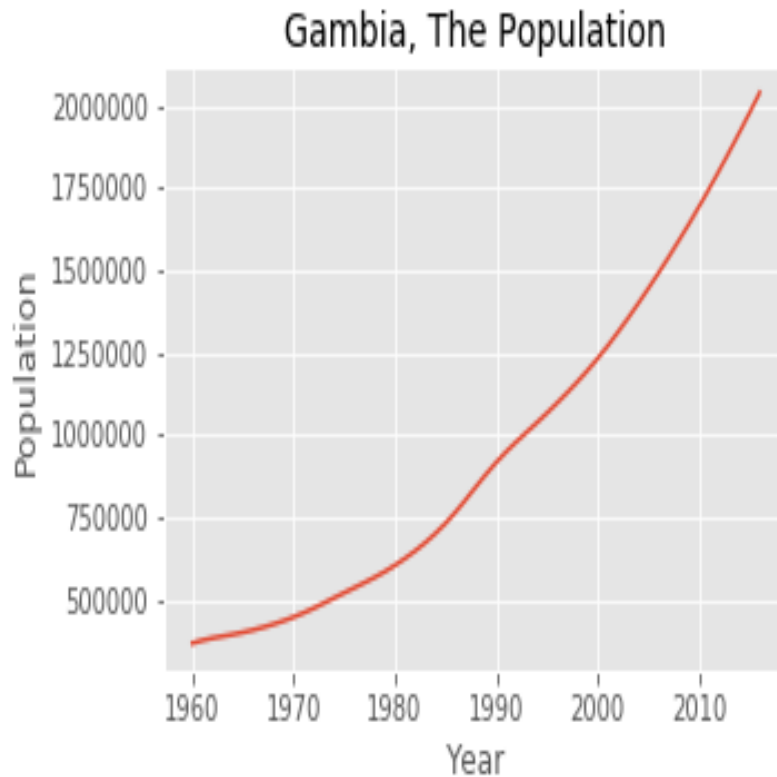


Gambia, The



The Gambia (/ˈɡæmbi/ (listen)), officially the Republic of The Gambia, is a country in West Africa that is entirely surrounded by Senegal except for its coastline on the Atlantic Ocean at its western end. It is the smallest country on mainland Africa. The Gambia is situated on either side of the Gambia River, the nation's namesake, which flows through the centre of The Gambia and empties into the Atlantic Ocean. Its area is 10,689 square kilometres (4,127 sq mi) with a population of 1,857,181 as of the April 2013 census. Banjul is the Gambian capital and the largest cities are Serekunda and Brikama. The Gambia shares historical roots with many other West African nations in the slave trade, which was the key factor in the placing and keeping of a colony on the Gambia River, first by the Portuguese, during which era it was known as A Gâmbia. Later, on 25 May 1765, The Gambia was made a part of the British Empire when the government formally assumed control, establishing the Province of Senegambia. In 1965, The Gambia gained independence under the leadership of Dawda Jawara, who ruled until Yahya Jammeh seized power in a bloodless 1994 coup.