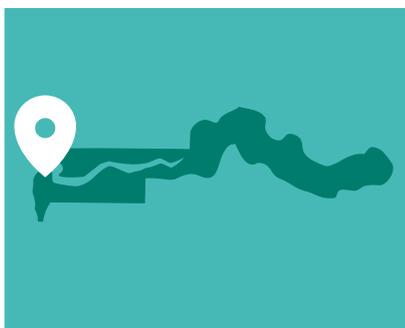


Mayors Dialogue on Growth and Solidarity

City profile: Kanifing, The Gambia



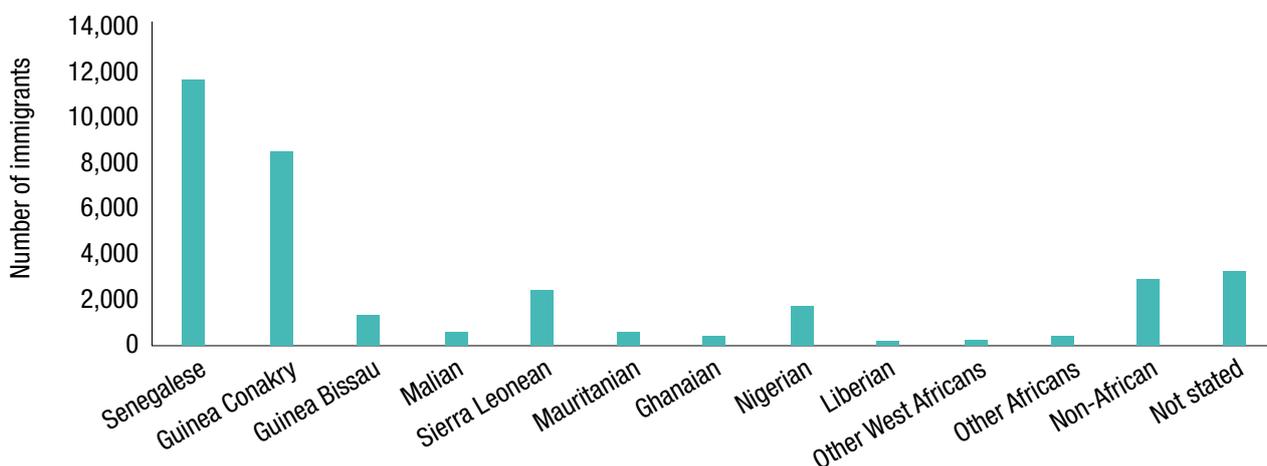
Population: 383,545 (2015/16)
GDP per capita: \$751 (national)
Major industries: tourism, trade and government administration
Percentage of migrants: 9% (2013)
Mayor's name: Talib Ahmed Bensouda

Socioeconomic profile

Kanifing, a local government area, lies to the west of Banjul, the capital. It includes Serrekunda, the largest urban area in the country. In 2015/16 the population was recorded as 383,545, constituting 20% of the national population (The Gambia Bureau of Statistics, 2017). The land surface of the city is only 75.5 km², making it the most densely populated area in The Gambia (UN Habitat, 2011). Kanifing municipality has the largest population of any administrative district in the country, as well as the highest traffic levels and concentration of industries (Ministry of Lands and Regional Government, 2015). It is an extremely youthful city; the latest census shows that 70% of the population are under the age of 30 (The Gambia Bureau of Statistics, 2013a). Kanifing hosts most of the country's Atlantic coastal resorts and has most of the region's hotels. In 2019, GDP per capita for The Gambia was \$751 (World Bank, 2019). There is little information to enable an estimate of GDP per capita for the city. In Kanifing, 50.8% of the working population are employed by private firms, a much higher percentage than for other districts (The Gambia Bureau of Statistics, 2013b).

Survey data shows that 32.5% of the workforce are employed in wholesale and retail trade, 13% in manufacturing and 17.5% in services (transport, accommodation, financial services, real estate, and administrative and support services) (The Gambia Bureau of Statistics, 2017). Youth unemployment (those aged 15–35 years) is 6.5%, lower than many districts in the country. However, unemployment rates for young people are much higher in the city for those with higher levels of education (tertiary and diploma level), at 23% and 20.8% respectively – contributing to historically high emigration rates of tertiary-educated workers (Ministry of Lands and Regional Government, 2015). This in turn makes Kanifing the recipient of higher international remittances. For instance, in 2015 it received an average monthly receipt of GMD 1,500, when the national average monthly remittance was GMD 1,100 (World Bank, 2020). In 2015, 17% of the population lived below the poverty line, compared with 48.6% nationally, reflecting Kanifing's position, along with Banjul, as an urban hub for key economic activities – including tourism, trade and government administration (ibid.).

Migration profile in Kanifing



Source: The Gambia Bureau of Statistics (2013a)

Migration profile

In the 2013 census, 33,790 external migrants were recorded in Kanifing, implying that around 30% of all immigrants in the country were settling in the city (The Gambia Bureau of Statistics, 2013b). Given the population size at the time, this means that around 9% of the population in Kanifing is foreign-born.

Immigrants in Kanifing come mainly from Senegal and Guinea Conakry – constituting 34% and 25% respectively of the settled migrant population (ibid.). Kanifing (alongside Brikama) is also a major destination for internal migrants (according to the 2013 census), attracting 35% of internal migrants (The Gambia Bureau of Statistics, 2013c). The high rate of internal migration also contributes to rapid urbanisation in the region – growing at 4.5% per year during 2000–2017 (World Bank, 2020). The Gambia is also a destination country for asylum-seekers and refugees. According to the most recent UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) data, there are currently 4,388 refugees and 211 asylum-seekers (UNHCR, 2020). Of refugees in The Gambia, 92% are from Senegal, most of them from the Casamance region. Other refugees have fled civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Rapid urbanisation alongside high rates of internal migration has contributed to pressure on housing and other resources. This has also increased the built-up area located in flood-risk zones (growing at an annual rate of 7.8%, as of 2015 data) (World Bank,

2020). The situation has been worsened by floods and windstorms in 2012 and 2016, which resulted in widespread damage to houses and shelters.

Governance structure

Local government councils came into existence in The Gambia soon after independence from the UK in 1965. Previously known as Kombo Rural Authority, Kanifing Urban District Council (KUDC), a fully autonomous local government council, was created in 1974 (Kanifing Municipal Council, 2018). In 1991, KUDC was given the status of a municipal council, becoming Kanifing Municipal Council (KMC). Kanifing and the City of Banjul together form the Greater Banjul Area. However, the two cities have their own mayors and administrative structures (Jaiteh, 2018). With its strategic location Kanifing is the dominant of the two, and hosts the country's major hotels and tourism industry. The national football stadium, the University of The Gambia and the Gambian Industrial Estate are also located within the administrative limits of KMC (ibid.). KMC has steered several initiatives, including a partnership with the European Union-funded Youth Empowerment Project and the Gambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry to launch KMC Mayor GMD1 Million Challenge to support young entrepreneurs (International Trade Centre, 2020). As part of the initiative, young Gambian entrepreneurs have the chance to win grants of up to GMD 500,000 to implement innovative solutions addressing the socioeconomic challenges KMC is facing due to the coronavirus pandemic (ibid.).

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