EUROPEAN UNION
ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION
THE GAMBIA PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION 2026

What is the mandate of the EU EOM?

In response to a formal invitation from the Gambian authorities, the European Union (EU) has deployed an Election Observation Mission to The Gambia to observe the presidential election scheduled for 5 December 2026. The EU has previously deployed EOMs to The Gambia in 2017 and 2021, and Election Follow-up Missions in 2019 and in 2024, reflecting the EU's long-term commitment to supporting democracy in the country.

The mission's mandate is to observe all aspects of the electoral process and to assess the extent to which the elections comply with The Gambia's national laws and the regional and international standards the country has committed to uphold. It is important to note that the EU EOM does not certify or validate election results, as this is the sovereign responsibility of the national authorities.

The European Union Election Observation Mission is led by Chief Observer and Member of the European Parliament Reinhold Lopatka, and it will comprise observers from EU Member States and its partner countries Canada, Norway, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. The EU Election Observation Mission will also be joined by a seven-member European Parliament Delegation closer to the election day.

The EOM is independent in its findings from the EU Delegation in The Gambia, EU Member States, and any other EU institutions.

The mission will assess all aspects and stages of the electoral process, including:

- legal framework, principle and implementation
- performance of the election administration
- role of relevant national institutions
- voter registration
- campaign activities and campaign finance
- use of election technology
- overall election environment, including respect for fundamental freedoms, and civil and political rights
- participation of women, youth and disadvantaged groups, including people with disabilities
- role of the media, including online information sources and social media
- role of civil society
- voting, counting and tabulation
- complaints and appeals processes
- announcement of results

Independence, impartiality and non-interference

The EU has a well-established methodology for observing elections, which has been consistently applied, in different countries, for over 25 years. Observers do not interfere in the electoral process and have no authority to change or correct any possible deficiencies. All EU election observers are bound by a strict code of conduct and ethical guidelines that guarantee their neutrality and impartiality. The EU EOM operates in accordance with the 'Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation' adopted at the United Nations in 2005 by a number of international bodies involved in election observation.

The mission's Core Team consists of eight analysts and the Deputy Chief Observer. The Core Team arrived in Banjul on 21 October. The Core Team assesses all aspects and stages of the electoral process, including political, electoral and legal matters, and is supported by logistics, operations and security experts.

Sixteen long-term observers will be deployed across The Gambia on 5 November to cover the whole country. They will observe the electoral process in their areas and report back to the Core Team based in the capital.

The mission will be reinforced with 20 short-term observers just before election day, and a number of locally recruited short-term observers from EU Member States' and partners' diplomatic missions accredited to The Gambia. They will observe voting, counting and tabulation of results.

EU EOM reports

In accordance with the EU election observation methodology, the mission will issue a preliminary statement and hold a press conference in Banjul two days after election day, on 7 December 2026.

A final report, which will include a set of recommendations for future electoral processes, will be presented to national authorities and other stakeholders 1-3 months after the finalisation of the entire electoral process.

How do I contact the EU EOM?

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