Gambia: Whether the National Identity Number, NIN, is permanent or may be modified

The website of GAMBIS, the Gambia Biometric Identification System, states that the National Identification Number (NIN) is an 11-digit number listed on the Gambian national identity card (Gambia n.d.a). The GAMBIS website explains that the first six digits of the NIN are taken from the identity card bearer's birthday (ibid.). During a telephone interview with the Research Directorate, a representative of the Gambia Immigration Department [1] also stated that the card bearer's birthday is part of the NIN (ibid. 24 Oct. 2014). According to the GAMBIS website, the NIN is linked to the card bearer's thumbprint (ibid. n.d.a).

Two official sources stated that the only official document on which the NIN appears is the national identity card (ibid. 24 Oct. 2014; ibid. 22 Oct. 2014). The national identity card is used as proof of identification during administrative procedures with the state (ibid.; ibid. 24 Oct. 2014), such as applications for passports and driver's licences (ibid. 22 Oct. 2014). During a telephone interview with the Research Directorate, a representative of the Embassy of Gambia in Washington, DC stated that the number on the national identity card changes each time the card is renewed or replaced (ibid.). However, the representative of the Gambia Immigration Department stated that, since 2009 [when the biometric national identity cards were introduced (Gambia 24 Oct. 2014; US 14 June 2010; The Point 27 July 2009)], the NIN on the biometric national identity cards is permanent: it does not change upon renewal or replacement of the card (Gambia 24 Oct. 2014). The representative of the Immigration Department added that the NIN only changed in exceptional circumstances; for example, if it is determined that the NIN was created based on the wrong date of birth, it will be corrected (ibid.).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

Note

References
Additional Sources Consulted

**Oral sources:** The Canada Border Services Agency National Document Centre was unable to provide information within the time constraints of this Response. Attempts to contact the following people and organizations within the time constraints of this Response were unsuccessful: Gambia – Gambia High Commission in the United Kingdom; GAMBIS.

**Internet sites, including:** Agence de presse africaine; AllAfrica; ecoi.net; EdisonTD database; Factiva; France – Cour nationale du droit d'asile; Gambia – Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, State House Online; Jeune Afrique; Keesing Reference Systems; Radio France Internationale; SecurLinx; Today; United Kingdom – Home Office; United Nations – Integrated Regional Information Networks, Refworld.

Tips on how to use this search engine.