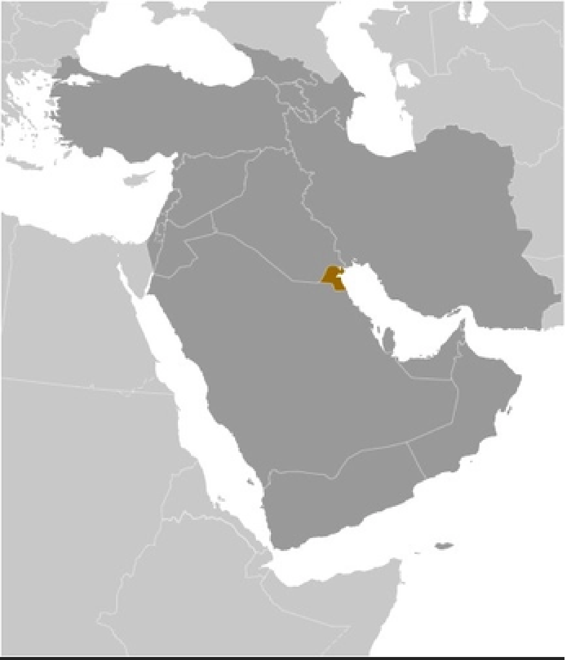
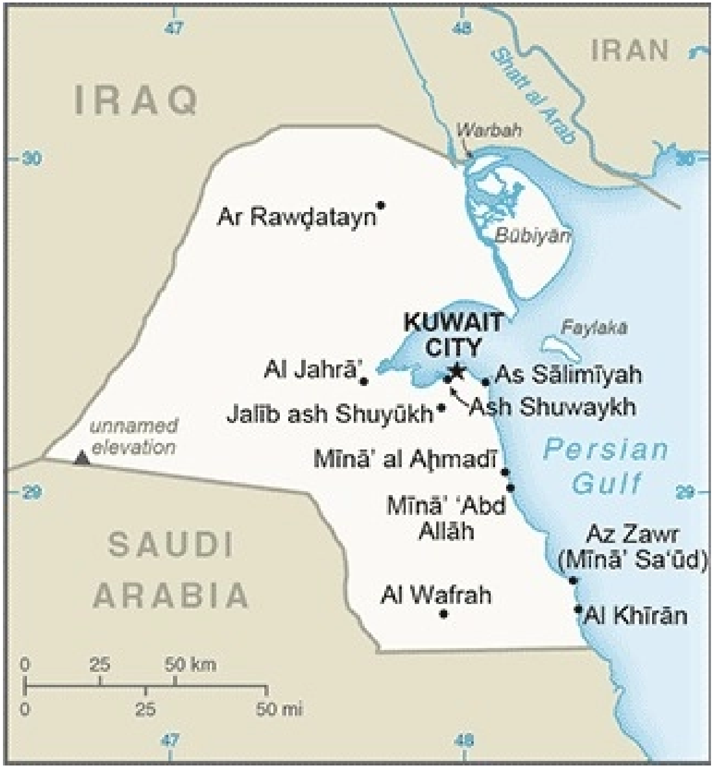




The State of Kuwait

MAL FACT SHEET

SUMMARY

The State of Kuwait, a sovereign Arab nation, is strategically positioned in the Middle East, nestled between Iraq to the north and Saudi Arabia to the south. It boasts a significant coastline along the Persian Gulf. This geographical advantage has allowed Kuwait to flourish as a vital conduit for trade and commerce in the region. The nation gained independence from British protection in 1961, marking the beginning of a new era of sovereignty and self-governance.

Chief of State: Amir Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah (since 16 December 2023).

Capital: Kuwait City
Other notable cities: Al Ahmadi, Hawalli
Gov Type: Unitary semi-constitutional monarchy
Population: 5,237,000 (2026 est.)

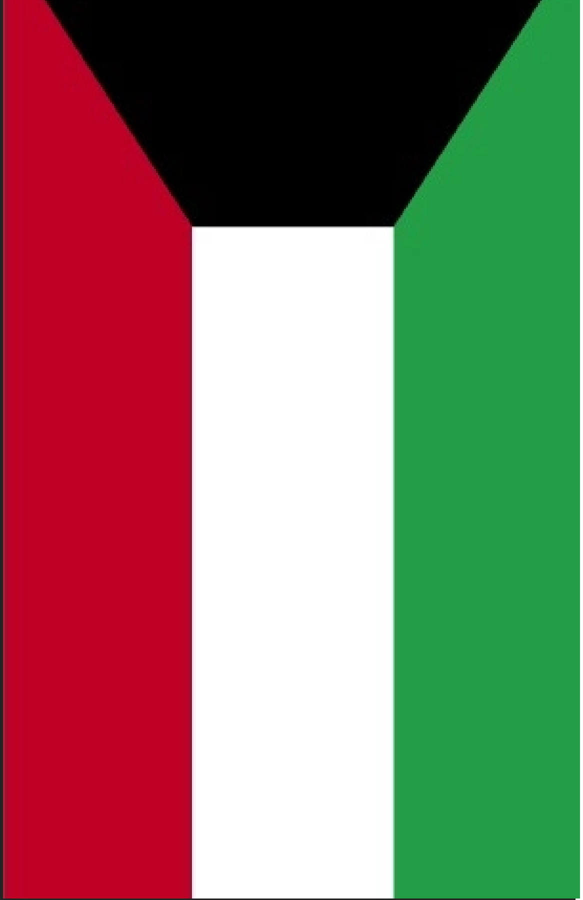
History: Kuwait has been ruled by the Al-Sabah dynasty since the 18th century. The threat of Ottoman invasion in 1899 prompted Amir Mubarak AL-SABAH to seek protection from Britain, ceding foreign and defense responsibility to Britain until 1961, when the country attained its independence.

GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Kuwait is about 17,818 square kilometers in total area and has zero square kilometers of water but has 499 kilometers of coastline.

The climate primarily involves intensely hot summers and short, cool winters. The terrain is flat to slightly undulating desert plain.

Main natural resources include petroleum, fish, shrimp, natural gas.



Economy and Politics

DEMOGRAPHICS

Noun: Kuwaiti(s)
Adjective: Kuwaiti
Ethnic Groups: Kuwaiti 30.4%, other Arab 27.4%, Asian 40.3%, African 1%, other 0.9% (includes European, North American, South American, and Australian)
Languages: Arabic (Official), English widely spoken
Religion: Muslim (official) 75%, Christian 18%, other and unspecified 7%
Literacy: 96.5% (Male 97.1%, 95.4% Female)
Population growth is at 1.1% (2024 est.)

ECONOMY AND GDP

Kuwait's economy is described as a small, high-income, oil-based Middle East economy. It is a renewable energy proponent and a regional finance and investment leader. It maintains the oldest sovereign wealth fund and has emerging space and tourism industries.

Real GDP (Purchasing Power Parity): $283.13 billion (2026 est.)
Real GDP Growth Rate: -0.6% (2026 est.)
Real GDP Per Capita: $54,300 (2026 est.)
GDP (Official Exchange Rate): $172.92 billion (2026 est.)
Inflation Rate (Consumer Prices): 2.6% (2026 est.)
GDP - composition, by sector of origin: agriculture: 0.4% (2017 est.), industry: 58.7% (2017 est.), services: 40.9% (2017 est.)
Unemployment Rate: 2.2% (2026 est.)
Youth Unemployment: 15.1% (2026 est.)

MAIN POLITICAL CONTENTIONS

Kuwait, under the Al-Sabah dynasty since the 18th century, gained independence from British protection in 1961. The country faced a significant challenge in 1990 when Iraq invaded, leading to a US-led UN coalition liberating Kuwait in 1991. The Amir reconstituted the dissolved parliament in 1992.

During the 2010-11 Arab world uprisings, stateless Arabs known as Bidoon demanded citizenship and jobs, leading to growing protest movements. This resulted in the resignation of the prime minister amid corruption allegations and renewed demonstrations in 2012.

An opposition coalition largely boycotted the 2012 and 2013 legislative elections, leading to a government-friendly legislature. Despite subsidy cut threats, oppositionists and independents actively participated in the 2016 election, winning nearly half the seats.

The Amir, who assumed his role in 2020, launched a "National Dialogue" in 2021 to resolve political gridlock. This initiative included pardoning several exiled opposition figures. Despite these efforts, legislative challenges persist, and the cabinet has been reshuffled multiple times since 2020. In 2024, the Chief of State dissolved parliament, claiming it was necessary for political and economic progress.

In the wake of the U.S.-Iran conflict, Kuwait's alliance with the United States led to Iran bombing several infrastructure and military targets. The consequences of an alliance with the United States has been an ongoing geopolitical discussion in the region.

Kuwait: A Timeline

1961
Kuwait gains independence. Britain recognized Kuwait as an independent state on the 19th of June 1961.

1990
After successfully invading the State of Kuwait on the 4th of August 1990, Iraq occupied the country for seven months.

1991
A US-led UN coalition began a ground assault that liberated Kuwait within four days.

1992
The Amir reconstituted the parliament that he had dissolved in 1986. In the same year, a United Nations commission formally delimited the Iraqi-Kuwaiti border in accordance with a resolution of the UN Security Council.

2010-11
Amidst the Arab Spring, stateless Arabs known as Bidoon staged small protests demanding citizenship, jobs, and other benefits available to Kuwaiti nationals.

2012
Demonstrations renewed in response to a decree amending the electoral law that lessened the voting power of the tribal blocs. In February, Islamist-led opposition won majority in parliamentary elections

2020
The current Amir, who assumed his role, launched a "National Dialogue" in 2021 meant to resolve political gridlock. Sheikh Nawaf took over as Amir upon the death of his half-brother Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmed al-Jaber al-Sabah.

2021
As part of the "National Dialogue," the Amir pardoned several opposition figures who had been living in exile.

December 16, 2023
Emir Sheikh Nawaf al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah passed away at the age of 86. His half-brother, Sheikh Mishal al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah, was named as his successor.

10 May 2024
Emir Sheikh Nawaf al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah dissolves the National Assembly on grounds of political and economic stagnation, causing mass uproar.

June 2024
Ruling party begins crackdown on opposition to media and free speech criticizing the government.

Januar 1, 2025
15% corporate tax goes into effect, reflecting a longer term strategy to use government funds to diversify its economic portfolio.

January 17, 2026
Khor Abdullah conflict reignited with Iraq after it submitted a territorial report to the United Nations, claiming contested maritime areas.

June 2026
As Iran retaliates against the United States, Kuwait, an ally of the U.S., has its infrastructure targeted.