



Country Report – Kuwait

Overall rating 3 Significant	Sub-Ratings	1	2	3	4	5
	Political situation	3				
	Terrorism	3				
	Crime	2				
	Health / Natural Risks	1				
Risk Rating: 1: Low; 2: Moderate; 3: Significant; 4: High; 5: Very High						

General situation

Overall	Head of State: Sabah IV (since January 29th, 2006)
	Capital town: Kuwait City
	Total population: 3.89 million residents in 2014
	Official language(s): Arabic
	Time zone(s): UTC +3
	International code: +965
	Emergency contacts: 112 (Police/Emergency)
Economic data	GDP : 163.61 billion USD in 2014
	Currency: Kuwaiti dinar (KWD)
	Exchange rate: 1 dollar = 0.301 KWD at 2016/09/08
Administrative	Passport: Should be valid at least 6 months after the entry date
	Visa: Conditions may be eased depending on nationality and/or period

Political situation

The Iraqi invasion during the First Gulf War has deeply affected the Kuwaiti population. Nevertheless, the relations between these countries have clearly improved, especially since the official meeting between the former Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri el-Maliki and the Emir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in Baghdad on June 12th, 2013, to discuss the development of bilateral relations between them through new cooperation agreements. However, the deterioration of the internal situation in Iraq during these last years is now likely to have an impact on the security environment in Kuwait, particularly through the border province of Basra. The relations with Iran are said to be marked by distrust. Tehran could block the Strait of Hormuz, through which Kuwaiti oil - one of the country main revenue sources – circulates. Besides, an agreement on the exploitation of the Arash oil field was signed by both countries in Kuwait City in 2003.

- Since May 2006, the Kuwaiti political system has shown...
- The early elections which took place on February 2nd 2012 saw the Islamists win greater acceptance within Kuwaiti political scene. With 24 out of the 50 seats in Parliament, the Salafist parties and the Muslim Brotherhood benefited from the sanction vote against the pro-Emir former government. Following this result, the Constitutional Court invalidated the election on June 20, 2012...
- Despite the ban on political parties, the Kuwaiti regime is indeed...

Risk Watch and Analysis Department

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- On a social level, the relative degraded economic situation in Kuwait, due to the decrease in oil prices since summer 2014, has also favoured tensions...

Terrorism

The terrorist threat remains latent in Kuwait notably due to the particularly degraded regional security situation. Indeed, the porosity of the border with Saudi Arabia and Iraq, where jihadist organisations such as the Islamic State (IS) and affiliated groups are present, favors the risk of incursion of terrorist elements in the Kuwaiti territory. Besides the pro-western positions generally adopted by Kuwait also contribute in making it a potential target for terrorist groups.

- As such, a suicide attack claimed by Wilayat Najd, an Islamic State affiliated group, targeted on June 26th 2015, the Imam Sadeq' Shia mosque in Sadawer district, Kuwait City downtown, resulting in 27 individuals killed and 225 others injured...
- Terrorist attacks could target Western or government strategic sites. The capital, Kuwait City, constitutes indeed a privileged target...
- ...

Crime

Even if the crime rate remains low in Kuwait, national authorities indicate it has known a constant growth since 2014. However, incidents targeting or involving foreign nationals remain rare. Pity crime is the most common threat in the country. As an example, cases of snatching are regularly reported in the...

- ...

Calendar

Major events

- **July 2nd, 2016:** Arrest of 7 individuals suspected of having planned several terrorist attacks in the country.
- **April 17th-19th, 2016:** Deployment of the National Guard on oil facilities in the South and increased security measures due to a strike by oil sector unions.
- **January 4th, 2016:** Rupture of diplomatic relations with Iran in retaliation of the attack against Saudi diplomatic representation in Tehran on 01/03.
- **August 13th, 2015:** Dismantling of a terrorist cell in Abdali (Province of Jhara, East). Arrest of three Kuwaitis and seizure of 19 tons of ammunitions, 144 kg of explosives, 204 grenades and 68 firearms.

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Upcoming events

- **February 25th and 26th (yearly):** National Day and celebration of the liberation of Kuwait in 1991. Closure of public administrations and risk of economic disruption. Rallies to expect throughout the country.

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Legend

Low

Moderate

Significant

High

Very high





Regional situation

Kuwait City: The capital city is a potential target for terrorist acts, due to its symbolic nature and to the presence of an important Shiite community and occidental expatriates. A suicide attack targeting the Imam Sadeg Shia mosque in Sadawer district, Kuwait City downtown claimed by Wilayat Najd, has resulted in 27 casualties and 225 injured. It is also recommended to avoid gatherings and sensitive locations (such as Ali Al Salem air base, embassies and government buildings).

Borders with Saudi Arabia: ...

Borders with Iraq: ...

Sea area: Kuwaiti territorial waters are closely watched and remain subjected to potential tensions in the Gulf, where the Iranian navy's presence is strong. In addition, the Kuwaiti Coast Guard regularly intercept Iranian or Iraqi boats...

Health/Natural Risks

Health risks

Vaccinations: The update of diphtheria-tetanus-polio vaccinations are recommended, as well as vaccines against typhoid fever, viral hepatitis A and B.

Coronavirus: Coronavirus MERS-CoV (formerly NCoV for novel coronavirus) is a highly pathogenic variant of coronavirus which appeared in 2012 in Saudi Arabia, and spread as a deadly epidemic over several continents. The acronym stands for Middle East Respiratory Syndrome, because of its provenance. At least 1638 confirmed cases of MERS-CoV including 587 deaths were reported by the World health organization (WHO) between April 2012 and February 2016. All of the patients were coming back from the Arabian Peninsula or had been in contact with an infected person in the area. In Kuwait, 1 death related to this virus was reported so far, 3 contracted the disease...

Natural Risks

Seismic risks: Earthquakes are rare in Kuwait. However, on August 2nd, 2012, a moderate earthquake whose epicentre was located in the desert was felt 31km North-west of Kuwait City. In addition, an earthquake measuring 6.1 on the Richter scale, which killed 3 people in southern Iran on April 9th, 2013, was also felt in the Arab Gulf countries including the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Kuwait without causing any injuries. In case of preventive alert, please keep informed of the authorities' recommendations.

Sandstorms: These are common in Oman during sudden temperature changes, mainly during the summer and winter periods. It is recommended to be careful when driving and to provide for an extended journey time. In case of leaving make sure to check if you flight is still schedule before leaving the hotel. In addition, it is advised to stay confined for people with lung or heart problems.

Recommendations

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