



UK Science & Innovation Network Country Snapshot:

Kuwait

Kuwait position in Global
Innovation Index:

72

UK position in Global
Innovation Index:

4

Economic and Science & Innovation Landscape in Kuwait

(Global R&D and innovation rankings from GII 2021)

Kuwait is currently the 30th richest country in the world measured by nominal Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita, at USD 29,266 (International Monetary Fund).

Kuwait has a predominantly oil based economy. The oil and gas sector accounts for about 60 percent of its gross domestic product and about 95 percent of export revenues. It is also a founding member of the [Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries](#) (OPEC).

Kuwait's national vision 2035 underpins its research and development priorities, and is driven by seven key pillars detailed in the governments National Development Plan, each of which contains a number of research elements:

- (i) Global Position (i.e. reputation. +1.5% GDP for Humanitarian assistance).
- (ii) Human Capital (education & training)
- (iii) Healthcare
- (iv) Living Environment (+15% in renewable energy)
- (v) Infrastructure (+11% investment increase)
- (vi) Economy (diversified economy +3500 small businesses)
- (vii) Public Administration (reduce bureaucratic/administration business burdens e.g. 20 days to obtain a business license)

Kuwait's national vision also places a strong emphasis on a greater role for the private sector, thus the private sector are seen as integral to the nations plans for economic diversification, particularly those that can play a key role in aiding in the development of the country's knowledge-based economy.

Although R&D spend is only around 0.08% of GDP, Kuwait has potentially large sums to invest via its foreign investment funds. Kuwait also scores well in its Innovation Output Sub-Index and Innovation Efficiency Ratio, along with strong performance in the categories of Knowledge & Technology Outputs and Infrastructure.



UK Science and Innovation in Kuwait

The UK and Kuwait signed an MoU on research and education in June 2014, which was subsequently renewed in 2019. The establishment of a quarterly UK-Kuwait Science and Innovation technical dialogue, and the signing of the cooperation agreement between the British Council in Kuwait and the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, provides yet further opportunities for continued scientific engagement between the UK and Kuwait.

The national funding body in Kuwait is the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science (KFAS) which was established in 1976. KFAS aims to support efforts for modernization and scientific development within Kuwait by:

- Sponsoring basic and applied research
- Awarding grants to support and encourage research
- Awarding grants, prizes and recognition to enhance intellectual development.
- Providing scholarships and fellowships for academic or training purposes
- Holding symposia and scientific conferences
- Encouraging, supporting and developing research projects and scientific programmes.

In 2022, the KFAS priority thematic areas are on Health, Food Security, and Education.

One of the largest grant recipients from KFAS has been London School of Economics (LSE) who in 2017 has their Kuwait Programme renewed thanks to a £2.7 million award.

The Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences has a number of funding partnerships with UK institutions and each year KFAS funds around KD 50-70 million (£130-£183 million) in new research projects.

Recent bilateral priority areas between the UK and Kuwait has focused on cyber security, clean and renewable energy, waste management and food security.

Key research institutions and local partners in Kuwait include (but are not limited to): Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR), Kuwait University, Kuwait College for Science and Technology (KCST), Communication & Information Technology Regulatory Authority (CITRA), the Environment Public Authority (EPA), Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) and the Ministry of Education.



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