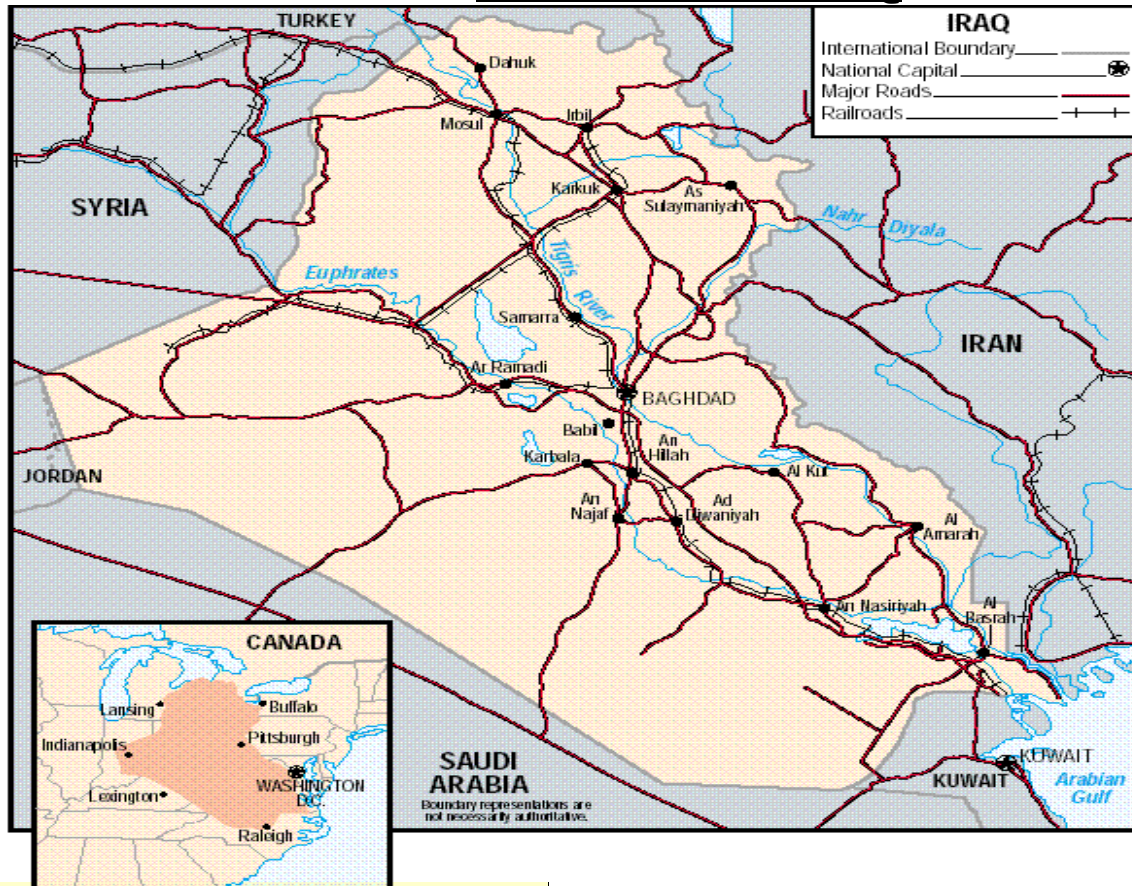


# FACTS ON IRAQ



**Population:** 22 million

**Capital:** Baghdad

**Major languages:** Arabic, Kurdish

**Major religion:** Islam

**Life expectancy:** 66 years (men), 68 years (women)

**Monetary unit:** 1 Iraqi dinar = 1,000 fils

**Main exports:** Crude oil

**Average annual income:** US \$593

**Internet domain:** .iq

**International dialing code:** 964

- **Ethnic:**
  - Arab 75%-80%, Kurdish 15%-20%, Turkoman, Assyrian or other 5%
- **Religions:**
  - Muslim 97% (Shi'a 60%-65%, Sunni 32%-37%), Christian or other 3%
- **Languages:**
  - Arabic, Kurdish (official in Kurdish regions), Assyrian, Armenian
- **Climate:**
  - The weather is dry and rainfall is low and unreliable, except in the northeast. Iraq experiences a wide range of temperatures.
  - The south has a desert climate, with hot, dry summers and mild winters.
  - The summers are also dry in the north, but in mountainous Iranian and Turkish border regions winters can be harsh, with frost and heavy snowfalls.
  - Sudden hot spells are a unique feature of winter in the center and north of the country

# FACTS ON KUWAIT



## **Introduction**

Kuwait is an oil-rich Arab country with an area of 17,818 sq km situated at the north-western tip of the Arabian Gulf. Its territorial waters include nine islands and a 290-km long coastline. The country is bordered on the north and west by Iraq, on the south by Saudi Arabia and on the east by the Arabian Gulf. Located at 30.27°N and 48.46°E, Kuwait ranks third in the Middle East in proven oil reserves (after Saudi Arabia and Iraq) and was a founding member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Its name is derived from *Kut*, an Arabic word for fort. The capital city, Kuwait, is located on an inlet of the Arabian Gulf.

## **Topography**

Kuwait is, for all practical purposes, a flat desert. Its highest point is a hill which is only about 300m high (1000ft). There are nine off-shore islands but only one of them, Failaka, is inhabited. Most of the land area of the country is below 200m (660ft) in elevation. The soil of the desert does not lend itself to agriculture. Less than 9% of the land is arable and water comes almost exclusively from desalination plants.

## **Climate**

Kuwait enjoys a variable continental climate with considerable differences in temperature. The average daily temperature is 33°C (90°F). Summer months are between May and October when the temperature is high, but humidity is less compared with other Gulf States. Annual rainfall is from 25 to 175mm annually (1 to 7in), falling mostly in the winter season. Fierce sandstorms may last several days in winter.

**Capital:** Kuwait City

**Government Type:** Constitutional monarchy

**Date of Independence:** June 19, 1961 (from the United Kingdom)

**Executive Power:** exercised by the Amir through Council of Ministers (frequently referred to as "the government") headed by a prime minister who is chosen by the Amir after traditional consultations

**Population (7/03E):** 2.2 million (includes 1.3 million non-nationals)

**Location/Size:** Middle East, northwestern corner of the Persian Gulf between Iraq and Saudi Arabia/6,900 square miles, slightly smaller than New Jersey

**Major Cities:** Kuwait City (capital), Salmiya, Hawalli

**Languages:** Arabic

**Ethnic Groups:** Kuwaiti (45%), other Arab (35%), South Asian (9%), Iranian (4%), other (7%)

**Religion:** Sunni Muslim (45%), Shi'a Muslim (40%), Christian, Hindu, other (15%)

**ECONOMIC OVERVIEW Currency:** Kuwaiti Dinar (KD)

**Market Exchange Rate (3/23/04):** US\$1 = 0.2948 KD

**Major Export Products:** Petroleum (95% of total export revenues)

**Major Import Products:** Industrial goods, consumer goods, machinery, transport equipment, food