

# Foreword

The OECD Review of Kuwait's Innovation Policy is part of a series of OECD country reviews of innovation policy ([www.oecd.org/sti/innovation/reviews](http://www.oecd.org/sti/innovation/reviews)). It was requested, and entirely funded, by the authorities of Kuwait, represented by the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science (KFAS) and the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development (SCPD), and was carried out by the OECD Directorate for Science, Technology and Innovation.

The purpose of the review is to obtain a solid understanding of the key elements, relationships and dynamics which drive the Kuwaiti national innovation system and the opportunities to enhance it through government policy. More specifically, the review:

- provides an independent systemic assessment of the overall performance of the Kuwaiti National Innovation System (NIS) with an international comparative perspective;
- analyses the improvements that can be made within the Kuwait national innovation system, taking into account the country's goals, resources and specific constraints;
- formulates recommendations on how government policies could contribute to such improvements, drawing on the experience of OECD members, and other economies of interest for this exercise.

The review is relevant to a wide range of other stakeholders, including government policy makers, business decision makers, the research community, the civil society and the general public.

Intermediary findings were discussed and feedback was received from various stakeholders in Kuwait, at different stages of the project execution, including the KFAS Board of Directors and Steering Committee, and the General Secretariat of the SCPD.

A preliminary draft assessment and recommendations of areas for improvement were discussed during an informal Expert Meeting in December 2019. The meeting, chaired by Göran Marklund, OECD Working Party for Innovation and Technology policies (TIP) and Deputy Director General of VINNOVA, Sweden, saw the participation of the Ambassador of Kuwait to France, Mohammad Al-Suleiman, the Director-General of KFAS, Adnan Shihab-Eldin, and the Secretary General of the SCPD, Khaled Mahdi. Fifteen TIP delegates attended and Finland representative Kai Husso, Chief Planning Officer, Innovation and Enterprise Financing Department / Business Intelligence, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland, and Malaysia delegate Mohd Zakwan Mohd Zabidi, Senior Vice President, Malaysian Industry Government Group for High Technology, Special Officer to the Science Advisor, Prime Minister's Office of Malaysia, have acted as peer reviewers of the preliminary draft assessment.

A draft of the final report was circulated to Kuwaiti stakeholders in June 2020, and the conclusions were presented in an online seminar hosted by KFAS and SCPD in July 2020.

The review was led by Alan Paic, Senior Policy Analyst (Directorate for Science, Technology and Innovation, OECD). The review report was drafted by Philippe Larrue, Alan Paic and Camille Viros (Directorate for Science, Technology and Innovation, OECD), with contributions from Erik Arnold (consultant to the OECD; Chairman of the Technopolis Group, Adjunct Professor at the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm) and Ravi Gupta (consultant to the OECD; CEO of Tambourine Ventures), and

valuable support from Panagiotis Barkas, Alpha Ouédraogo, and Blandine Serve (all from the Directorate for Science, Technology and Innovation, OECD).

We wish to acknowledge the financing provided by KFAS and the General Secretariat of the SCPD, as well as the support of the KFAS and SCPD teams, without whose valuable support this project would not have been possible. Our thanks to Adnan Shihab-Eldin, and his team, especially Abdullah Abu-Qumasha, Director of Strategy of KFAS, Bahareh Azizi, Consultant at KFAS, as well as Khaled Mahdi and his team at the SCPD.

The review draws on a Background report provided by KFAS, desk research of over 600 documents, and 4 in-country missions where 111 meetings were held with stakeholders from government, academia, businesses and civil society.

In addition, due to the lack of innovation and R&D statistics in Kuwait, the OECD team suggested the execution of a dedicated R&D and Innovation survey in Kuwait. This survey was executed during 2018 and 2019 by the Kuwait Central Statistical Bureau (KCSB) and KFAS with the support of GOPA consultants for the design and implementation of the survey.

The report has benefited in particular from comments provided by Director-General of KFAS, Adnan Shihab-Eldin, and the General Secretariat of the SCPD, Khaled Mahdi, as well as the members of the KFAS Board of Directors, who have been instrumental by providing their expertise and support. The report has also benefited from numerous Kuwaiti stakeholders, including the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, Kuwait University, the Central Bank of Kuwait, Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority, private universities, Kuwait Investment Authority, Equate, Chamber of Commerce, and other private sector entities.



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