

Political Reform in Kuwait: Current Status and Prospects

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ABSTRACT

Kuwait occupies a unique position among the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states due to its relatively vibrant parliamentary life and constitutional framework. Since the enactment of the constitution in 1962, Kuwait has maintained a semi-democratic political system that combines hereditary rule with elected representation. Despite this distinction, political reform in Kuwait has remained a contentious process, shaped by tensions between the executive authority and the elected National Assembly, social demands for participation, and regional and global political pressures. This article reviews the current state of political reform in Kuwait and examines its future prospects. It analyses the historical foundations of Kuwait's political system, recent reform initiatives, key challenges such as conflicts between executive and legislative, electoral disputes, and the limitations of political organization, and emerging opportunities for reform. The study argues that Kuwait has achieved remarkable progress compared to its regional peers, but sustainable political reform depends on institutional support, legal reforms, and inclusive governance that balances stability with democratic aspirations.

Keywords: Kuwait, Political reform, National Assembly, democracy, Gulf politics, Prospects

INTRODUCTION

Political reforms in the Arab Gulf states have remained an important topic of academic and policy discussion for a long time. These debates mainly focus on issues such as the promotion of democracy, constitution-making, and public participation in politics. In most of these states, political power has been concentrated in limited circles, which has made the process of political reform slow and cautious. In this context, Kuwait emerges as a significant example. Kuwait is considered a partial exception because it has an elected parliament, a relatively active civil society, and political rights guaranteed by the constitution. Despite this, the path of political reform in Kuwait has not been straightforward or continuous, nor has it progressed without opposition. At different periods, political conflicts, institutional constraints, and tensions among centers of

power have influenced the pace and direction of reforms.

Since gaining independence in 1961 and adopting its constitution in 1962, Kuwait has developed a political system that stands out in the Gulf region for its constitutional foundations and representative institutions¹. The coexistence of hereditary leadership with an elected National Assembly has created a unique model that allows for meaningful political participation and parliamentary debate. This constitutional arrangement has provided Kuwait with a flexible political structure that is capable of adjustment and reform, reflecting the country's long-standing commitment to political dialogue and institutional development.

At present, the status of political reform in Kuwait demonstrates both flexibility and adaptability. Despite repeated challenges such as parliamentary dissolution and electoral adjustment, the constitutional system has remained intact and is functioning. These developments

1. The Embassy of the State of Kuwait. (n.d.). *Political system*. <https://kuwaitembassy.lk/about-kuwait/political-system/>

can be seen as part of an emerging reform process rather than a reversal of democratic principles. Public engagement, parliamentary oversight, and legal mechanisms continue to play important roles in shaping governance, indicating that further reforms can be expected.

While some challenges remain, the political developments achieved so far have also encouraged deeper reflection on institutional balance and political accountability. Kuwait's vibrant civil society, vibrant parliamentary culture, and constitutional guarantees provide a solid foundation for future progress. Looking ahead, the prospects for political reform look promising, especially if ongoing efforts focus on strengthening institutions, increasing political inclusion, and reinforcing constitutional principles. In this context, Kuwait represents a meaningful path toward sustainable political reform in the Gulf region.

This research paper attempts to assess the current state of political reform in Kuwait and analyse its future prospects. It examines how institutional structures, political roles, and social factors interact to shape the outcomes of reform. This study is important not only for understanding Kuwait's internal political developments but also for understanding broader trends in governance and reform in the Gulf region.

Political System of Kuwait: A Background

Kuwait has developed a constitutional framework that allows for public representation, parliamentary debate, and political accountability. Since gaining independence in 1961 and adopting its constitution in 1962, Kuwait has followed a political path that combines monarchical rule with elements of parliamentary government. This combination has made Kuwait one of the most politically dynamic states in the Gulf region.

The 1962 Constitution forms the basis of Kuwait's political system and is considered one of the most liberal constitutions in the Gulf. It establishes Kuwait as a constitutional emirate governed by the Ali Al-Sabah family while guaranteeing basic civil liberties, political participation, and the separation of powers. Political authority is divided into three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial. The Emir remains the head of state and plays a central role in all branches. This

constitutional arrangement reflects a hybrid system that combines features of parliamentary and presidential forms of government.

The executive branch is headed by the emir, a hereditary position held by the Ali al-Sabah family, which has ruled Kuwait since the mid-18th century. The emir appoints the prime minister, who is responsible for forming the Council of Ministers, subject to the emir's approval. A major reform in 2003 separated the positions of crown prince and prime minister, reinforcing institutional clarity within the executive. The cabinet manages state affairs and implements public policy, while remaining accountable to the elected legislature. Although executive authority is strong, it operates within constitutional limits, notably through parliamentary oversight.

The National Assembly (Majlis al-Umma) is the most important representative institution in Kuwait and a key feature that distinguishes it from other Gulf states. It consists of 50 members elected by popular vote for four-year terms, along with cabinet ministers who serve as ex officio members. Elections are held across five electoral districts, ensuring broad social representation². The Assembly has extensive legislative and oversight powers, including proposing laws, approving the budget, questioning ministers, and initiating votes of no confidence. Notably, these powers apply even to ministers from the ruling family, reflecting the strength of parliamentary authority within Kuwait's political system.

Relations between the executive and the National Assembly have been marked by both cooperation and tension. Periods of strong parliamentary activism have sometimes led to executive interventions, such as the dissolution of the Assembly or amendments to electoral laws. However, these actions have generally taken place within the constitutional framework rather than through extra-legal means. The Constitution outlines clear procedures for law-making and ratification, ensuring a balance between executive authority and legislative independence. This dynamic interaction reflects a political system that is continuously negotiated rather than rigidly controlled.

The judicial branch in Kuwait is constitutionally independent and plays an essential role in upholding the rule of law. Kuwait follows a civil law system, with Islamic Sharia law applied mainly to personal status

2 Sinem Cengiz. (2016, December 27). *Political system of Kuwait and November elections*. ORSAM. <https://orsam.org.tr/en/yayinlar/political-system-of-kuwait-and-november-elections/>

matters such as family law. The judiciary includes summary courts, appellate courts, a Cassation Court, and a Constitutional Court. The Constitutional Court has the authority to interpret the Constitution and rule on the legality of laws and elections, further strengthening institutional checks and balances within the political system.

Political participation in Kuwait extends beyond formal institutions. Kuwaiti society has long been politically engaged, particularly through diwanias, which serve as informal spaces for political discussion and mobilization. Civil society organizations, professional associations, youth movements, and advocacy groups have also contributed to political discourse. Although formal political parties are not legally recognized, organized political groups function as de facto parties and form parliamentary blocs. Since 2005, women have enjoyed full political rights, further expanding participation.

Historical experiences, especially the Iraqi invasion of 1990, have played a crucial role in shaping Kuwait's political development. The occupation strengthened demands for constitutional governance and parliamentary restoration, leading to renewed political reforms in the post-war period. Since the 1990s, Kuwait has taken meaningful steps toward strengthening its parliamentary institutions and political participation.

However, Kuwait's political system represents a unique model in the Gulf region. While it remains a constitutional monarchy with strong executive authority, the presence of an elected parliament, an independent judiciary, and an active political society provides meaningful checks and balances. This combination has allowed Kuwait to sustain a relatively open and participatory political system, making it an important case for understanding political reform and governance in the Arab Gulf.

Evolution of Political Reform in Kuwait:

Early Reform Efforts:

Political reform in Kuwait began with the adoption of the Constitution, which reflected a negotiated compromise between the ruling family and merchant elites. This early period established the foundations for participatory governance but also institutionalized executive dominance.

Political reform in Kuwait began with the adoption of the Constitution and the first National Assembly elections in 1963³. Although political participation was limited due to a small electorate, the early Assembly played an active role in questioning government policies and practices. Amir Abdullah al-Salim demonstrated strong commitment to constitutional governance by refusing to dissolve parliament during early political tensions and instead encouraging cooperation between the executive and legislature. Under his leadership, political reform advanced alongside administrative restructuring, including reforms in municipalities and government departments, reinforcing the principle of public participation in governance⁴.

After the death of Amir Abdullah al-Salim in 1965, the momentum of political reform slowed, particularly during the reigns of Sheikh Sabah al-Salim and Sheikh Jaber al-Ahmad⁵. Elections held in 1967 and 1971 weakened opposition representation, resulting in less effective assemblies⁶. Despite continued public calls for reform and recurring disputes between the executive and legislative branches, political participation persisted as an idea. Regional developments such as the 1973 Arab-Israeli War and the oil boom further affected Kuwait's democratic process, contributing to increased executive control and interruptions in parliamentary life⁷.

The mid-1970s and 1980s were marked by repeated dissolutions of the National Assembly and setbacks to

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3. Government of Kuwait, Ministry of Information. (n.d.). *Amending the road map* (p. 2). https://media.gov.kw/assets/img/Ommah22_Awareness/pdf/Internation_Press_Office/Amending%20the%20road%20map%20.pdf
 4. Salem, P. (2007, June). *Kuwait: Politics in a participatory emirate* (pp. 4–5). Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/157954/CMEC_3_salem_kuwait_final1.pdf
 5. Salameh, M. T. B., & Al-Sharah, M. K. (2011). *Kuwait's democratic experiment: Roots, reality, characteristics, challenges, and the prospects for the future* (pp. 65–66). *Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies* (in Asia). https://mideast.shisu.edu.cn/_upload/article/dc/a8/516b324541b397b494938cd3fd3f4/95c00e84-98d4-48d2-b4b9-375d84328a68.pdf
 6. Salameh and Al-Sharah (2011, p. 66).
 7. Salameh and Al-Sharah (2011, p. 66-67).

political reform⁸. The Assembly was suspended from 1976 to 1981, with constitutional rights and public associations curtailed. Although elections resumed, changes in electoral laws favoured pro-government forces, limiting genuine representation. Economic crises in the 1980s revived opposition strength, leading to renewed confrontations and another dissolution in 1986. The establishment of the National Council in 1990, with limited powers, reflected the constraints placed on political reform, highlighting the ongoing tension between demands for participation and executive authority in Kuwait's political system⁹.

Reform in 1991–2012:

The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 marked a decisive turning point in Kuwait's political reform and democratization process¹⁰. The occupation exposed the inability of the ruling family and existing political structures to protect the country, leading to widespread public disillusionment and a reassessment of governance. In exile, members of the ruling family and opposition groups cooperated to secure Kuwait's liberation, culminating in the Jeddah Conference of October 1990¹¹. At this conference, an implicit political bargain was reached: loyalty to the Amir and the Al-Sabah family in return for the restoration of constitutional and parliamentary life and the initiation of political reforms after liberation. Although the declaration of martial law after liberation initially delayed reform, strong domestic pressure, combined with international encouragement particularly from the United

States pushed the leadership to restore parliamentary politics. This led to the 1992 elections, signalling the revival of constitutional life and a renewed trajectory toward political liberalization¹².

The 1992 National Assembly became a cornerstone of post-liberation political reform. The opposition secured a majority, enabling parliament to play a substantive role in governance and accountability¹³. Major reforms followed, including the abolition of the State Security Court, investigations into corruption and the causes of the Iraqi invasion, expansion of voting eligibility for naturalized citizens' children, the establishment of a Human Rights Commission, and legislation to strengthen judicial independence. These developments significantly deepened Kuwait's democratic experience. However, despite continued elections between 1996 and 2009, relations between the executive and legislature remained unstable, resulting in repeated dissolutions of parliament¹⁴. Notable reform efforts during this period included the prohibition of tribal primaries to curb non-institutional political influence, debates over legalizing political parties, and growing calls to separate key executive posts¹⁵. While liberal forces often pushed reform forward, political deadlock consistently limited institutional stability.

A major political reform in Kuwait in the 2000s saw the separation of the positions of Crown Prince and Prime Minister, reducing the concentration of executive power¹⁶. Another historic reform was the granting of full political rights to women in 2005, allowing them to vote and run

8. Alhajeri, A. (2004). *Citizenship and political participation in the State of Kuwait: The case of National Assembly (1963–1996)* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Durham University, pp. 243–246). Durham e-Theses Repository. <https://etheses.dur.ac.uk/1261/1/1261.pdf>
9. Alhajeri, (2004, pp. 243–246).
10. United Nations Peacekeeping. (n.d.). *UNIKOM: United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission – Background*. United Nations. <https://peacekeeping.un.org/mission/past/unikom/background.html>
11. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. (n.d.). *How the Gulf crisis began and ended — Chapter II: The Gulf crisis and Japan's foreign policy* (Section 1). <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/1991/1991-2-1.htm>
12. Inter Parliamentary Union. (1992). *Kuwait (Majles Al Ommah) – election archive report* [Data set]. PARLINE database archive. http://archive.ipu.org/parline/e/reports/arc/2171_92.htm
13. (Inter Parliamentary Union, 1992)
14. Albloshi, H. H. (2018). *Social activism and political change in Kuwait since 2006* (Issue Brief). James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy. <https://www.bakerinstitute.org/research/social-activism-and-political-change-kuwait-2006/>
15. Al Mulla, Y. (2020, September 7). *Unauthorised, informal primary elections held in Kuwait*. *Gulf News*. <https://gulfnews.com/world/gulf/kuwait/unauthorised-informal-primary-elections-held-in-kuwait-1.73684411>
16. (Albloshi, 2018)

for office, and in 2009, women won seats in parliament for the first time¹⁷. Kuwait went through a major constitutional transition in January 2006 when the Emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, was unable to conduct state affairs due to a prolonged illness¹⁸. At this critical juncture, he voluntarily abdicated, resolving a potential succession crisis in a peaceful and dignified manner. The National Assembly ensured an orderly transition of leadership within the constitutional framework, reflecting Kuwait's constitutional consciousness and institutional strength.

However, between 2006 and 2012, political life remained volatile. Nevertheless, this period was evidence that the process of political reform in Kuwait had not been abandoned; the activity of civil society, the active role of parliament, and the continuity of elections demonstrate a continued but controversial commitment to democratic values and political inclusion.

Reform since 2012-2020:

Since 2012, political reform in Kuwait has taken place amid continued tension between the government and the National Assembly. The Fourteenth Assembly functioned largely as a pro-government body due to opposition boycotts, yet political conflict persisted and led to its dissolution in 2016¹⁹. The 2016 elections marked an important shift when opposition groups returned to parliamentary politics and secured nearly half of the seats. This Assembly completed its full term for the first time since 2003 and witnessed renewed debate on political reform, including accountability through interpellations, reconsideration of political party legalization, limited easing of restrictions on freedom of expression, the creation of the Anti-Corruption Authority (Nazaha), and government signals toward addressing the Bidoon issue²⁰.

However, reform momentum weakened after 2019 due to overlapping political, economic, and health crises. The 2020 elections brought a stronger opposition and youth presence, intensifying demands for reform, but also triggered renewed confrontations, cabinet resignations, and parliamentary suspensions²¹. Economic pressures, disputes over fiscal policy, corruption allegations, and unresolved social issues further deepened political deadlock. Despite proposals for electoral reform, judicial independence, expanded political freedoms, and national reconciliation, sustained executive-legislative conflict has limited progress, leaving political reform in Kuwait marked by cautious advances alongside recurring instability.

Current Status of Political Reform in Kuwait:

In recent years, Kuwait has experienced continued political instability, characterized by repeated parliamentary dissolutions and cabinet resignations. Electoral laws have been amended multiple times, often generating controversy and opposition from political groups and activists. After 2020, Kuwait undertook notable political reform efforts aimed at easing prolonged political conflict and strengthening accountability. The government intensified anti-corruption measures by empowering the Anti-Corruption Authority, leading to the detention and prosecution of prominent political figures, including former prime ministers and senior officials. Alongside these actions, a national dialogue was initiated to identify the roots of political deadlock, and opposition members demanded formal investigative mechanisms to scrutinize corruption. To reduce political tensions, the Amir issued amnesty orders for political prisoners, signalling a move toward political liberalization. During this period, restrictions on media and press were relaxed,

17. (Albloshi, 2018)

18. Blumberg, F., & Yaghi, M. (2020). *Kuwait after the death of Emir Sabah* (Policy Report No. 13, pp./ 1–2). Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Regional Programme Gulf States. <https://www.kas.de/documents/286298/8668222/Policy+Report+No+13+Kuwait+after+Emir+Sabah.pdf>

19. BBC News. (2016, October 16). *Kuwait emir dissolves parliament over fuel price row*. BBC News. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-37671913>

20. Stothard, P., Karim, S., & Yong, E. (2022). *Corruption investigations in Kuwait and increasing actions against D&Os*. Norton Rose Fulbright. <https://www.nortonrosefulbright.com/en/knowledge/publications/e08c7ac1/corruption-investigations-in-kuwait-and-increasing-actions-against-dandos>

21. Segal, E. (2021, April 11). *Kuwait's new government: A political system in crisis?* Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies. <https://www.dayan.org/content/kuwaits-new-government-political-system-crisis>

social media space expanded, and cooperation between the government and civil society organizations on anti-corruption initiatives became more visible.

Despite these reform-oriented steps, political instability persisted. Parliament was dissolved again in June 2022, and subsequent elections brought a renewed opposition majority, including the election of women candidates²². However, ongoing disputes between the executive and the legislature led to another dissolution and fresh elections in June 2023, once again resulting in opposition dominance. While these repeated electoral cycles demonstrate continued political participation and pressure for reform, persistent confrontations have limited institutional stability. As a result, political reform in Kuwait remains a contested and fragile process, characterized by anti-corruption initiatives and political openness alongside recurring parliamentary dissolutions and unresolved executive–legislative conflict.

It is a fact that Kuwait has long experienced serious disagreements between the National Assembly and the executive government, which resulted in the frequent dissolution of the Assembly. This political instability negatively affected governmental performance and hindered the process of political reform. After Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah assumed power as the Emir of Kuwait in 2023, he demonstrated a firm determination to end the political deadlock and restore stability to the country's political system²³. He observed that following the 2024 elections, tensions once again emerged between the executive authority and the National Assembly, which risked undermining political reforms and disrupting effective governance²⁴. In response, he dissolved the Parliament for a period of four years and temporarily suspended certain articles of the Constitution in order to prevent further political instability and ensure that the process of political reform could proceed without obstruction.

Following these measures, a comprehensive reform agenda emerged in Kuwait, which was titled 'Kuwait

Vision 2035'²⁵. This vision outlines a set of key objectives aimed at achieving sustainable development and political, economic, and administrative modernization. The main objectives of Kuwait Vision 2035 are as follows:

- Restoration of state authority and the rule of law
- Enhancing the efficiency of legislative, executive, and oversight institutions
- Insulating development projects from political conflicts
- Diversifying the economy by reducing dependence on oil

This vision represents an effort to transform Kuwait into a modern, stable, and effective state, similar to the path already undertaken by other Gulf countries.

Following the dissolution of Parliament, Kuwait initiated a broad political reform agenda aimed at restoring state authority, ensuring institutional efficiency, and overcoming years of political deadlock. Key steps included the strategic appointment of the Crown Prince in June 2024 to ensure political continuity, the formation of a new government under Sheikh Ahmad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah, and stronger executive oversight of governance. The leadership emphasized administrative restructuring, judicial reform, transparency, and the protection of public resources in order to strengthen the rule of law and stabilize the political system.

These political reforms were closely linked to economic and administrative modernization under Kuwait Vision 2035. Major initiatives included the enactment of the long-delayed Public Debt Law, acceleration of development projects, digital transformation in partnership with global actors such as Google and Microsoft, and reforms in citizenship and judicial systems to safeguard national security and sovereignty. Collectively, these measures sought to create a stable political environment capable of supporting sustainable development, restoring investor confidence, and positioning Kuwait as a modern and effective state within the Gulf region²⁶.

If Kuwait's recent political reforms are examined

22. Reuters. (2022, September 30). *Kuwaiti opposition wins big as election standoff with government endures*. Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/kuwaiti-opposition-wins-big-election-standoff-with-government-endure-2022-09-30/>

23. Al Duwai, K. (2025, August 17). *Kuwait reforms bear fruit after decades of political deadlock*. Al Majalla. <https://en.majalla.com/node/326936/politics/kuwait-reforms-bear-fruit-after-decades-political-deadlock>

24. (Al Duwai, 2025)

25. (Al Duwai, 2025)

26. (Al Duwai, 2025)

closely, it can be argued that they do not mark the beginning of a new constitutional path but rather represent a response to a prolonged institutional crisis. Persistent legislative and administrative deadlock had seriously undermined state authority, delayed development projects, and obstructed economic reforms, prompting the leadership to adopt exceptional measures to restore governance capacity. These reforms have had a positive impact on decision-making, administrative efficiency, and economic and developmental initiatives, with expectations of further gains in the future. However, some analysts contend that the concentration of power and the suspension of elected institutions have constrained political participation and raised concerns regarding accountability, representation, and constitutional balance which have long distinguished Kuwait within the Gulf region. Nevertheless, it may also be argued that if the current political restructuring is treated as a transitional phase followed by meaningful parliamentary reforms and the restoration of representative politics, Kuwait could emerge as a more stable, resilient, and effective state, achieving a balanced harmony between political stability and constitutional traditions.

Challenges to Political Reform:

Political reform in Kuwait continues to face significant challenges rooted in the strained relationship between the executive authority and the National Assembly²⁷. Although the constitutional framework provides mechanisms for cooperation and accountability, political practice has often been dominated by confrontation rather than consensus. The frequent use of parliamentary oversight tools, combined with executive resistance to sustained scrutiny, has resulted in repeated dissolutions of parliament, policy discontinuity, and delays in reform implementation. This persistent institutional conflict has weakened governance effectiveness and contributed to growing public frustration with the political

system.

Structural features of Kuwait's political system further complicate reform efforts²⁸. The coexistence of hereditary leadership with an elected legislature creates inherent tensions, particularly in the absence of clear mechanisms for resolving executive–legislative disputes. The lack of legally recognized political parties has also limited political organization and accountability, as informal blocs shaped by tribal, sectarian, or personal interests dominate parliamentary politics. These dynamics undermine programmatic policymaking and hinder the development of a stable, reform-oriented political culture capable of supporting long-term governance reforms.

Legal, social, and governance-related constraints also pose major obstacles to political reform in Kuwait²⁹. Restrictions on public assembly, freedom of expression, and citizenship have narrowed political space and raised concerns regarding inclusion and rights, particularly for marginalized groups. While elections remain competitive and public participation is relatively high compared to other Gulf states, issues such as electoral practices, corruption perceptions, and uneven representation continue to erode public trust. At the same time, women and youth participation, though improving, remains limited by institutional and social barriers, highlighting the need for broader, more inclusive political reforms to ensure sustainable and credible democratic development³⁰. Kuwaiti politics faces several challenges ahead, but considering the political system, Kuwait's political structure and activities, civil society, youth engagement, and recent political developments, there is reason to be hopeful that further political reforms are possible in the future.

Prospects for Political Reform:

The prospects for political reform in Kuwait largely depend on improving cooperation between the executive authority and the National Assembly. Sustainable reform

27. Bishara, A. (2024, January 7). *A break from the past: Kuwait's path toward reform and development*. Gulf International Forum. <https://gulffif.org/a-break-from-the-past-kuwaits-path-toward-reform-and-development/>

28. Ahmed, T. A. K., & Al Zubaidi, A. A. M. (2024). *View of Kuwaiti legislation after 2020: The path of political reform and its future prospects* (p./ 250). *Tikrit Journal for Political Science*. Tikrit University. <http://tjfps.tu.edu.iq/index.php/politic/article/view/471/417>

29. (Ahmed & Al Zubaidi, 2024, p./ 250)

30. Al Jasser, O., & Brown, N. J. (2025, March 13). *Will Kuwait's parliamentary democracy be restored, reformed, or repudiated?* Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2025/03/kuwaits-parliament-suspension-emir-democracy?lang=en>

requires institutional dialogue, mutual trust, and respect for constitutional norms rather than persistent confrontation. If mechanisms for consultation and compromise are strengthened, Kuwait's political system can move away from repeated crises toward more stable and effective governance. Such cooperation would allow reforms to be implemented consistently while preserving Kuwait's constitutional identity³¹.

Legal and electoral reforms also offer important opportunities for advancing political reform. Revising electoral laws to ensure fair representation, addressing long-standing concerns related to districting, and recognizing political parties could strengthen political accountability and policy coherence. Expanding legal protections for civil liberties would further enhance public trust and participation in the political process. These reforms could help transform Kuwait's political culture from one focused on short-term conflict to one oriented toward long-term national development.

Civil society and youth engagement represent additional sources of reform momentum. Traditional forums such as diwanis, along with professional associations and civic groups, can contribute to political awareness and constructive dialogue. At the same time, the increasing political participation of young citizens through digital platforms offers new avenues for transparency and accountability. If effectively integrated into formal political processes, youth activism and digital politics could support more inclusive governance and strengthen the future prospects of political reform in Kuwait.

Conclusion:

Kuwait's political system offers a unique balance between hereditary rule and elected representation, which presents both challenges and opportunities for reform. The country has maintained a relatively open and participatory political structure in the Gulf region,

characterized by a functioning National Assembly, judicial independence, and a vibrant civil society. Despite frequent disagreements between the executive and legislature, parliamentary dissolutions, and disputes over electoral laws, the constitutional framework has remained stable, enabling the evolution of political participation and reform. Historical experiences, such as post-independence governance and the granting of full political rights to women, demonstrate that Kuwaiti institutions have the capacity to adapt and respond to social and political pressures.

However, political reform in Kuwait continues to face structural and institutional challenges. The presence of a strong executive and an elected assembly creates tensions, and the lack of legitimacy of political parties limits organizational cohesion and accountability. Additional obstacles include electoral irregularities and unequal representation, which create obstacles to participatory governance. While the active involvement of civil society and youth offers new opportunities for political engagement, institutional barriers, administrative weaknesses, and ongoing conflicts between the executive and legislature continue to hinder the sustained implementation of reform initiatives.

Looking ahead, the prospects for sustainable political reform in Kuwait are cautiously optimistic. Initiatives such as "Kuwait Vision 2035," changes to the administrative structure, judicial reform, and the promotion of digital governance are being taken to restore stability, strengthen institutions, and promote transparency. If these reforms are implemented in conjunction with improved cooperation between the executive and legislature, expanded civil liberties, electoral transparency, and active participation of youth, Kuwait can achieve a balanced political system. This path could enable the country to strike a balance between stability and democratic aspirations and serve as a model for gradual, participatory, and sustainable political reform in the Gulf region.

31. (Ahmed & Al Zubaidi, 2024, p./ 252-253)