

Migration to Kuwait: Trends, Patterns and Policies

**By
Nasra M. Shah**

Paper Prepared for the

Migration and Refugee Movements in the Middle East and North Africa

**The Forced Migration & Refugee Studies Program
The American University in Cairo, Egypt**

October 23-25, 2007

Discussion Paper

Migration to Kuwait: Trends, Patterns and Policies

I. Introduction

This paper outlines the major trends in migration to Kuwait and describes the salient characteristics of the foreign population in comparison with the nationals. It also highlights the past and current policies of the country to manage and regulate migration. The paper is organized as follows. It begins with an overview of the population growth disaggregated by nationality, focusing especially on the growth in trends of Arabs vs. Asians. This section also describes the demographic structure of the population in terms of age, sex, and educational characteristics. The second section looks at the trends in the contribution of non-Kuwaitis to the labor force activity within the country and discusses their occupational distribution in comparison with Kuwaiti nationals. The final section examines the policies the country has had in place during the various phases of its development and comments on the likely future trends.

II. Population Growth and Structure

Kuwait is one of the three Gulf countries, other than Qatar and UAE, where non-nationals have outnumbered the nationals for several decades. (Shah, 2007; UN, 2006a) At the time of its independence in 1961, Kuwaiti nationals comprised about half of the total population, numbering only about 0.32 million (Table 1). Kuwaiti population has historically been comprised of three broad groups including the ones with official Kuwaiti nationality, those with a specified non-Kuwaiti nationality and a third group that resides in Kuwait but does not have any nationality (i.e. the Bidoon). Prior to 1989, the Bidoon were counted as Kuwaiti for Census purposes and also in terms of eligibility for many social services such as free education and health care. Since 1989, all Census and Civil Registration publications count the Bidoon as non-Kuwaiti, following the political decision to do so. According to the revised Census tabulations excluding the Bidoon, available since 1965, the percentage of nationals in

1965 was only about 36 %. This percentage declined steadily and Kuwaitis comprised about 28 % before the Iraqi occupation of 1990. A very large number of non-Kuwaitis left the country during the Iraqi occupation resulting in a relative increase of Kuwaiti nationals to 37 % in 1995. A small downward trend was again witnessed during the next decade when in 2005 the percentage of Kuwaitis in the population was about 34 %, testifying to the continued significance of migrants to the country. According to the latest available data, the trend in the declining percentage of Kuwaiti nationals has continued since the nationals comprised only 31 % of the population in mid 2007. (PACI, 2007)

During the 45 year period from 1965 to 2005, the number of Kuwaiti nationals increased 5.8 times from 0.17 to 0.97 million, amounting to an annual growth rate of 3.9 % per year. A high growth rate in the Kuwaiti population has been enabled by a fairly high level of fertility and a rapidly declining rate of mortality. The total fertility rate for Kuwaiti women is now about 4.1 which declined from a rate of 7.5 children in 1965. At the same time, the crude death rate in the country is now only around 2.5 per 1000 while the life expectancy is 76.9 years. (MoH, 2005) Additions to the Kuwaiti population due to naturalization of other citizens is a fairly rare event and may account for only a meager part of the population increase that has occurred among Kuwaiti nationals. However, some Bidoons have been given Kuwaiti nationality during the last decade and even though reliable estimates are not available in published form, it is estimated that about 103,000 persons still belonged to the category of Bidoon in November 2006. (Kuwait Times, November 6, 2006) The high rate of population growth has been accompanied by a youthful population in which sizeable numbers are entering the labor force every year necessitating the rapid creation of new jobs which in some cases has been quite difficult, as discussed in a later section.

The population pyramids for Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis are shown in Figures 1 and 2. The pyramid for Kuwaiti nationals has a typical developing country triangular shape reflective of its relatively high fertility. In 2007, about 40 % of the population consisted of children aged less than 15 while about 5 % were aged 60 and above. The population pyramid for the non-Kuwaitis, on the other hand, had a very irregular shape with a major concentration of persons in working ages and a preponderance of males over females. Among non-Kuwaitis, about 86 % were aged 15-59. Also, the relative sex ratios were 96 males per 100 females among Kuwaitis and 220 males per 100 females among non-Kuwaitis. (PACI, 2007) Figure 2 shows that migration to Kuwait is highly selective and many males are present in the country without

their families even though many of them are likely to be married. About 47 % of the non-Kuwaiti migrants age 15 and over were currently married in 2007: the relative percentages among male and female non-Kuwaitis were 45 % and 52 %.(PACI, 2007).

The primary reason for the presence of non-Kuwaitis in the country is employment. In many cases, the worker is not accompanied by his family, since a minimum income level is required prior to such permission being granted. In December 2004, the Interior Ministry lowered the minimum income required of a non-Kuwaiti in order for them to be granted family visas to KD 250. In addition, the worker should have lived in Kuwait for at least three years. (Kuwait Times, December 9, 2004) Prior to this, the salary cap for family visas was KD 450 for government employees and KD 650 for private sector employees. A majority of the migrants earn less than the specified income and therefore leave their families in the home country. Existing data shows that the predominance of family migration is higher among Arabs than Asians, judging from the percentage of persons who were born in Kuwait among the two groups. Among all non-Kuwaitis, 372,194 persons (16.2 %) were born in Kuwait in 2007. Of all those born in the country, 81 % were Arab, 17 % were Asian and the remaining 2 % belonged to other nationalities. (PACI, 2007) According to Kuwaiti laws those born in Kuwait do not have a right to apply for Kuwaiti nationality, unlike the USA.

The educational level of Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis is shown in Table 2. Since its independence Kuwait has laid a great deal of emphasis on improving the educational level of its population, focusing on both sexes. As a result, almost all Kuwaiti nationals aged less than 40 are literate (PACI, 2007). Among all those aged 10 and over, 12 % of the men and 20 % of the women are illiterate or can only read or write. These are typically older persons. About 34 % of the men and 39 % of the women age 10 and over had attained a secondary or higher level of education in 2007. A larger percentage of Kuwaiti women than men have completed an educational level up to university degree or higher (8 % and 14 %). The educational attainment profile of non-Kuwaitis is very different compared to Kuwaitis. More than half of male as well female non-Kuwaitis were illiterate or could only read or write and less than 5 % of each had completed a university degree or higher level of education. About 18 % of men as well as women had completed a secondary or higher level of education indicating that the average educational level of non-Kuwaitis was much lower than that of Kuwaitis.

Origin of Migrants

At the time of its independence, Kuwait was host to many different nationalities. It had Indian, European and other nationals engaged in the development of its oil industry and other infrastructures. Also, it had a large number of Palestinians who were residing in Kuwait in order to assist in the development of its educational, health and other sectors. Typically, Palestinians were in Kuwait along with their families and had become a fairly “permanent” part of the migrant stock by the time of the Iraqi occupation. Many of the Palestinians in fact had Jordanian nationality. During the Iraqi occupation when Jordan supported Iraq against Kuwait, several Palestinians left Kuwait for Jordan or other destinations. After the liberation of Kuwait in February 1991 Palestinians were among the five nationalities who were not allowed to re-enter Kuwait. The other four nationalities consisted of Jordanians, Sudanese, Yemenis and Iraqis. The above historical circumstances have led to major changes in the nationality composition of foreign residents, as discussed below.

At the present time, nationals from various Asian countries constitute the main region of origin (Table 3). In 2007, about 59 % of all non-Kuwaitis belonged to Asian countries while 39 % belonged to Arab countries. Less than 2 % of the migrants belonged to Africa, Europe, America or Australia. Data disaggregated by detailed nationality of the migrants was published in the early Censuses until 1975. Starting with the Census of 1980, however, data on the specific nationality of non-Kuwaitis was no longer published. Also, detailed nationality information is not published in the Civil Registration documents. The nationality-wise trends shown in Table 4 indicate that Arab nationals constituted two-thirds of the non-Kuwaitis prior to the Iraqi invasion. In 1975, Jordanians and Palestinians were the predominant category comprising about 40 % of the total non-Kuwaiti population, followed by about 12 % Egyptians and 9 % Iraqis. Asians from Iran, India and Pakistan constituted only about 18 % of the non-Kuwaiti population. The Asian presence in Kuwait increased significantly during the late 1970s and early 1980s, resulting in 35 % of the non-Kuwaitis being Asian. After liberation of Kuwait, the percentage of Asians increased further and in 1995, Arabs and Asians each constituted about half of the total non-Kuwaiti population. During the decade of 1995-2005, Arabs lost ground to Asians with the latter comprising almost 59 % of the non-Kuwaiti population in 2007.

The lack of published data makes it hard to analyze the origin of non-Kuwaitis according to specific country. Occasional newspaper reports provide some insight into the numbers from

various countries. Egypt, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and the Philippines are currently the major senders. While India exports a wide range of migrant workers, a majority of those from Sri Lanka are women employed primarily as housemaids.

Migration researchers have offered several reasons for this changing nationality pattern among migrants to Kuwait. It has been suggested that Asians are willing to work for relatively lower wages than Arabs, they are easier to control and manage and may have a wider variety of skills. (Kapiszewski, 2001; Shah and Al-Qudsi, 1989; Shah, 2004) Another reason appears to be the relatively high efficiency of the network connections that Asians have developed within the Kuwait market. They have been resourceful in terms of learning the Arabic language and developing informal ties that enable them to aid the sponsorship of additional migrants from their home countries. An efficiently functioning system of chain migration has thus been established. (Shah, 2000)

III. Non-Kuwaitis in the Labor Force

As pointed out in the previous section, the central reason for the presence of non-Kuwaitis in the country is their participation in the labor force. Since 1975, non-Kuwaitis have consistently comprised more than 80 % of the labor force (Table 5). The predominance of non-Kuwaitis in the labor force has not declined appreciably despite the high population growth rate of Kuwaiti nationals as well as the increasing percentage of Kuwaiti females entering the labor force. In 1965, only about 2 % of the Kuwaiti women age 15+ were in the labor force but their participation increased to 41 % in 2007. (PACI, 2007) The most recent data in fact indicates a relative decline in the contribution of Kuwaitis to the total labor force, from 18.1 % in 2005 to 15.2 % in 2007. The above pattern is consistent with the relative increase in the percentage of non-Kuwaitis, shown in Table 1.

An analysis of the type of occupations that Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis are engaged in helps one to understand some of the reasons for the continued reliance of the country on foreign workers. Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis fill very different segments of the labor force. In 2007, 56 % of Kuwaiti males and 49 % of Kuwaiti females were concentrated in clerical and related occupations (Table 6). Professional and technical occupations constituted the second major occupation for Kuwaitis, especially women. Of all Kuwaiti women in the labor force, 86 % were concentrated in only two categories, performing either professional or clerical jobs.

Kuwaiti men were slightly more diversified in their participation, with 9 % employed in services and 7 % in production related occupations.

Among non-Kuwaitis, a similar concentration in a few occupations exists. About 54 % of non-Kuwaiti men were engaged in production, labor and related occupations, followed by 17 % in service occupations and 10 % in clerical and related occupations (Table 6). Of the 729,463 males in the production sector, 329,024 (45 %) were engaged in unskilled general labor. Among non-Kuwaiti women, 72 % were concentrated in the services sector, employed primarily as domestic workers, while 9 % were working in professional and technical occupations and 6 % in clerical and related ones.

Reliance of Kuwaiti households on domestic workers deserves special comment. While the richest members of society probably had domestic workers traditionally, the presence of housemaids, cooks and drivers has now become a prominent feature of Kuwaiti life. Domestic workers have come to constitute an increasingly larger segment of Kuwait's population, from only 2.1 % in 1980 to 12.2 in 2007. (PACI, 2007) In 2007, 409,126 of all non-Kuwaiti workers were employed in domestic service constituting 24 % of the non-Kuwaiti labor force. Of those in domestic service, 34 % were men and 64 % were women. A majority of the female domestic workers come from Sri Lanka, India, and the Philippines. Drivers, house boys, and gardeners come largely from India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

The above analysis clearly indicates that the nature of work that the two nationality groups engage in is very different and there is relatively little room for easy replacement of one group by the other, as is further illustrated by the sector of activity where the two groups work. Table 7 shows the participation of the two groups in public or private sector. It indicates a very marked difference with a large majority (about 80 %) of the Kuwaitis employed in the public sector and very few non-Kuwaitis engaged in this sector (about 6 %). Historically, Kuwaiti nationals have favored the public sector with about three-fourths of them concentrated in this sector in 1975. During the 1980s and 1990s, 90 % or more of the Kuwaiti workers were engaged in the public sector. A slight downward trend occurred during the 1995-2005 period, with 87 % of Kuwaiti males and 85 % of Kuwaiti females concentrated in the public sector. During the period covering 2005-2007, the percentage of Kuwaitis concentrated in the public sector declined further, which is in line with governmental efforts to encourage the participation of nationals in the private sector. In comparison with Kuwaitis,

only about a quarter of the non-Kuwaiti males as well as females were working in the public sector in 1985 and this percentage has consistently declined over time.

Some of the reasons why Kuwaitis prefer to work in the public sector are as follows. Once a Kuwaiti is hired for a job in the public sector, it is very difficult (if not impossible) for the employer to fire him/her. A partial reason for the above is that the Government is considered to hold a major responsibility for providing gainful employment to any Kuwaiti seeking it. Also, the Government has an explicit policy to replace non-Kuwaitis with Kuwaitis that is more easily accomplished in the public than the private sector. Another reason for Kuwaiti preference for public sector jobs is the fact that most public sector jobs require the employee to work during the day usually from 7:30-2:00. Most private sector establishments, on the other hand, work during the morning as well as evening. Public sector jobs carry attractive retirement benefits. Kuwaitis can retire from a government job after 15 or 20 years of service and earn almost their full salary as retirement income. Finally, private sector jobs are likely to be more demanding in terms of expected efficiency and productivity than public sector jobs.

IV. Kuwaiti Government Policies on Regulating and Managing Migration

In response to the UN survey asking about Kuwait's migration policies in 2005, it stated that it considers its immigration level to be too high and would like to lower it. It has a policy to lower permanent settlement as well as the number of temporary workers, while maintaining the level of skilled immigrants and family re-unification of non-nationals. No intervention is planned in emigration or the return of nationals. (UN, 2006b) For a discussion of their actual implementation, the various migration policies in Kuwait may be broadly grouped into three categories: (1) those designed to regulate routine migration matters; (2) those aimed at restricting legal as well as illegal migration, and (3) those aimed at protection of migrant workers. A brief discussion of each of these types of policies follows.

Regulatory Policies

An elaborate administrative mechanism exists to regulate the inflow and residence of migrant workers to Kuwait. All migrant workers and their dependents (if eligible) are issued a resident visa for the number of years stipulated in the work contract. All such visas are issued under the authority of a sponsor (*kafil*) who wishes to hire the foreign worker. The above rule applies to those hired to work in the public as well as private sector. In case of the public

sector, the concerned Government agency (e.g., the Kuwait University) is the sponsor. In the case of the private sector, a company that has the license for the business or service enterprise where the employee works acts as the sponsor. The migrant worker is legally allowed to take up employment only with the sponsor and cannot easily transfer from one employer to another without permission of the initial sponsor.

Kuwait's policy of family re-unification is conditional upon the salary level of the migrant worker, discussed in the first section of this paper. Kuwait claims to have a policy of integration of non-nationals. However, the limited contractual nature of jobs offered to non-Kuwaitis does not seem to support integration. Migrants are viewed primarily as temporary workers who are in the country on renewable contracts that are awarded generally for about 2 years at a time. Contracts for a majority of workers are, however, usually renewed for several years thus providing a certain degree of continuity of workers in the labor market. In some cases, residents in Kuwait are in fact second generation migrants who were born in the country and have lived here all their lives. Family re-unification and relative permanence seems to be higher in case of Arabs than Asians, as indicated by the number of persons born in Kuwait, discussed in an earlier section.

Kuwait plans to maintain its policy of importing skilled workers. However, a description of the non-Kuwaiti labor force, shown in Table 6, does not seem to uphold this policy since a majority of the migrants are performing either unskilled or fairly low skilled tasks. Also, the educational level of non-Kuwaitis is fairly low with half of them without formal schooling.

Restrictive Policies

Statements about the need for indigenization of the labor force and a reduction in the percentage of the expatriate population and workers have been made for many years. (Al-Ramadhan, 1995; Winckler, 1997) During the last decade or so, concrete policies aimed at enhancing indigenization and reducing the numbers of foreign workers have begun to be implemented with a great deal of seriousness. An example of such policies is the restriction on the percentage of public sector occupations that may be manned by non-Kuwaitis. After the liberation of Kuwait from Iraqi occupation in 1991, guidelines were issued whereby a ceiling was set for the percentage of the public sector employees who could be non-national at 35 %. (Al-Ramadhan, 1995) Another strategy was to pinpoint the occupations where phasing out of expatriates would be done on the priority basis. In March, 2006 sixteen occupations that

would no longer be open for non-Kuwaitis were specified. Such jobs include computer programming, computer operation and data entry, secretarial, typing and clerical jobs, cashiers, drivers, etc. (Kuwait Times, March 4, 2006, p.2)

A specified policy of limiting illegal migration is in place. A resident may enter the country illegally or become illegal by overstaying the duration of a valid visa. Overstay accounts for a majority of illegal residents; the numbers of which are unknown, but have sometimes been estimated to be more than 80,000. (Kuwait Times, April 8, 2007) Kuwait has tried to limit illegal entry by controlling its borders on land as well as the Arabian Gulf. As a means of reducing the number of illegal residents, the country has occasionally declared periods of amnesty through which illegal residents are allowed to leave the country without paying heavy fines or being imprisoned. The last amnesty period was held from May 1 to June 30, 2007. (Kuwait Times, April 25, 2007, p. 1)

A more subtle mechanism by which a non-Kuwaiti may reside in the country illegally is through employment with a person who is not the sponsor. As mentioned earlier, all non-Kuwaitis must have a sponsor to obtain residency status. All workers are sponsored by their employers, usually Kuwaiti, and must work only for them, while dependents within the family are sponsored by the employed household head. Kuwaiti sponsors can sometimes sell a work visa to migrant workers on the basis of obtaining a license from the government for starting, or expanding, a business that entitles the employer to bring in more workers. The employer may or may not start or expand the business but can sell the work visa for a fair amount, ranging from KD 100-200 per year (US \$ 340-680). The employer is not legally allowed to charge for the visa but the practice is quite widespread. This practice has been recognized by the government as a problematic feature within its overall development. (Ministry of Planning, 1997) While it is not possible to estimate the number of non-Kuwaitis who are in the country on the basis of a purchased visa, observation and experience of the Kuwait labor market suggests that the practice continues to be rampant.

Devising better strategies for sponsorship have been the subject of an active debate at recent international meetings dealing with migration to the Gulf. A suggestion has been made by some human resource experts in the region that the government, rather than an individual, should act as the sponsor of workers to the Gulf. (The Peninsula, April 18, 2007) Bahrain's labor minister, Majeed Al-Alawi, recently proposed that a six-year residency cap should be

placed on foreign workers in the Gulf. He is hopeful that this proposal will be adopted by the GCC countries during their annual summit in December to be held in Doha, Qatar. (Kuwait Times, October 2, 2007) Kuwait is also in the process of reviewing its current sponsorship system.

Protection Policies

As part of the routine regulatory policies the country has tried to provide some mechanisms for protecting the migrant worker by issuing licenses to companies and individuals who might import workers. Guidelines are provided in terms of minimum wages, and living as well as working conditions. However, these guidelines are not always respected by prospective employers. GCC countries, including Kuwait, have been faced with repeated criticism in terms of their treatment of foreign workers, especially female domestic workers. Stories of mistreatment, abuse and sexual harassment of housemaids are routine features in the newspapers. One response by sending countries has been the establishments of shelters for runaway housemaids at their embassies. Sri Lanka, Philippines and India have all had shelters to house runaway housemaids in Kuwait. (Shah and Menon, 1997) Recently, the Kuwait government has opened a shelter for runaway maids which can house 50 persons. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor is in the process of constructing a shelter that can house 700 such persons. (Kuwait Times, September 27, 2007) The objective of this shelter is to provide legal as well as other assistance to victims of abuse.

Another aspect on which the GCC countries have received criticism is the difficulty the migrant worker faces if he/she wants to transfer from one employer to another. Kuwait is currently reviewing its labor laws and will be discussing them with an ILO delegation expected to visit in November, 2007. Officials at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor are working on devising strategies to abolish the current sponsorship system and to facilitate the transfer of a worker from one employer to another. (Kuwait Times, September 17, 2007)

V. Conclusion

During the last ten to fifteen years, foreign workers have helped in the rapid transformation of the infrastructure as well as institutional development in Kuwait; they were generally welcome until a few years ago. In recent years, several policies intended to restrict the import of foreign workers have been devised and implemented. The most recent data for 2007

indicates that contrary to apparent policy, the percentage of expatriates in the population has in fact increased during the last 3 years, with nationals now comprising only about 31 % of the total population. A large percentage of foreign workers are concentrated in occupations that are not central to economic productivity within the country. About 12 % of the total population consists of domestic workers, imported primarily to provide additional leisure and comfort. Among the expatriate labor force, about 52 % are employed in production related occupations, about half as unskilled workers. Kuwaiti nationals, furthermore, continue to be concentrated primarily in the public sector occupations even though a small increase in private sector participation has occurred in recent years. With 85 % of the workforce still manned by foreign workers, a rapid reduction in the presence of foreign workers in the country is unlikely. However, increasing unemployment among the indigenous youth is raising tough questions for the government about the continued import of foreign workers. Consequently, restrictive policies are increasingly being instituted. A review of the policies relating to labor migration and protection of foreign workers is periodically undertaken and one is currently under way. Future trends in migration will be governed by several factors including diversification of indigenous work force participation both by occupation and sector, the seriousness of implementing restrictive labor import policies, and the willingness of the nation to reduce its dependence on labor that is not economically necessary. In the mean time, a relatively abundant supply of workers remains available to man the continued growth of infrastructure as well as industrial development in the Gulf.

Table 1. Total Population and Nationality Distribution in Kuwait, 1957 – 2007

	Total Population	Nationality (%)	
		Kuwaiti	Non-Kuwaiti
1957	206,473	55.0	45.0
1961	321,621	50.3	49.7
1965	467,339	47.1	52.9
1975	994,837	47.5	52.5
1985	1,697,301	40.1	59.9
1989 ^{*(PACI)}	2,014,135	28.0	72.0
1995 ^{*(PACI)}	1,881,250	37.0	63.0
2005 ^{*(PACI)}	2,866,888	33.9	66.1
2007 ^{*(PACI)}	3,328,136	31.2	68.8

*Prior to 1989, Bidoons, or those without nationality, were counted as Kuwaiti. Data for 1989 and following years count Bidoons as non-Kuwaitis

Table 2. Educational Distribution of Kuwaitis and Non-Kuwaitis (age 10+) by Sex, 2007 (%)

Educational distribution	Kuwaiti		Non-Kuwaiti	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Illiterate/can read, write	12.2	19.8	53.5	54.1
Primary	26.1	22.1	8.3	9.3
Intermediate	27.9	19.0	20.4	18.6
Secondary	18.0	16.5	10.4	10.8
Diploma	7.4	9.1	2.7	2.3
University or above	8.3	13.5	4.7	4.8
Total (Number)	364,787	391,170	1,475,683	622,086

Table 3. Origin of Non-Kuwaiti Population by Continent, 2007

Continent of origin	Number	%
Arab	893,483	39.0
Asia	1,353,973	59.1
Africa	8,261	0.3
Europe	11,893	0.5
North America	18,878	0.8
South America	1,581	0.2
Australia	1,469	0.1
Total	2,289,538	100.0

Table 4. Non-Kuwaiti Population by Nationality or Broad Category of Origin, 1965 - 2005.

Nationality	Y E A R						
	1965	1975	1985	1989*	1995*	2005*	2007*
Jordan & Palestine	31.4	39.1	63.3	66.0	49.3	40.0	B 39.0
Iraq	0.5	8.6					
Saudi Arabia	1.9	2.4					
Lebanon	8.4	4.7					
Syria	6.8	7.8					
Egypt	4.5	11.6					
P.D.R. Yemen	1.1	2.4					
Muscat & Oman	7.9	1.4					
Other Arabs	3.5	2.2					
Iran	12.5	7.8	35.0	32.9	49.2	58.5	A** S I 59.1 A N S
India	4.7	6.1					
Pakistan	4.8	4.4					
Other	2.0	1.5	1.7	1.1	1.5	1.5	1.9
Total (%)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number (thousands)	247	522	1,016	1,464	1,186	1,894	2,289

* Includes the Bidoons, or those without nationality.

** Includes all Asians

Sources: CSO (1981): 33; CSO (1987): 56,60
PACI (1989, 1995, 2002)

Table 5. Total Labor Force (age 15+) and Distribution by Nationality, 1975-2006

	Total labor force	Nationality (%)	
		Kuwaiti	Non-Kuwaiti
1975	304,582	18.2	81.8
1985	670,385	14.3	85.7
1995 ^(PACI)	1,015,729	17.0	83.0
2005 ^(PACI)	1,726,604	18.1	81.9
2007 ^(PACI)	2,047,996	15.2	84.8

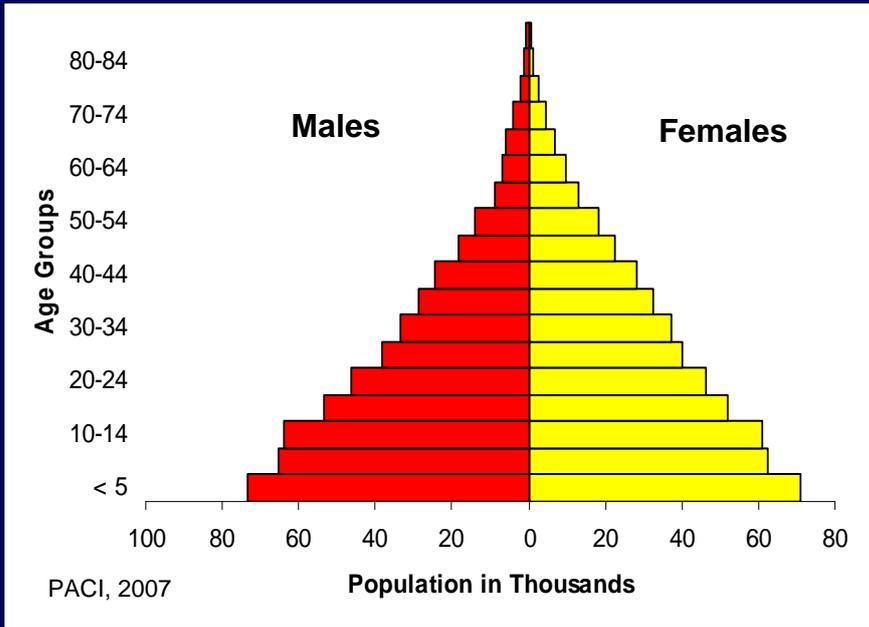
Table 6. Major Occupational Activity of Kuwaitis and Non-Kuwaitis by Sex, 2007 (%)

Occupational grouping	Kuwaiti		Non-Kuwaiti	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Professional/Technical	18.9	37.6	6.5	8.6
Administrative & Managerial	2.5	0.6	1.5	0.3
Clerical & related	56.4	48.5	9.5	5.9
Sales	1.1	0.2	5.6	2.4
Services	8.9	2.1	16.8	72.1
Agricultural etc.	0.1	0.0	1.4	0.0
Production & Labor	6.7	1.1	53.9	3.1
Not specified	5.4	9.9	4.8	7.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total (Number)	177,038	134,470	1,352,532	383,956

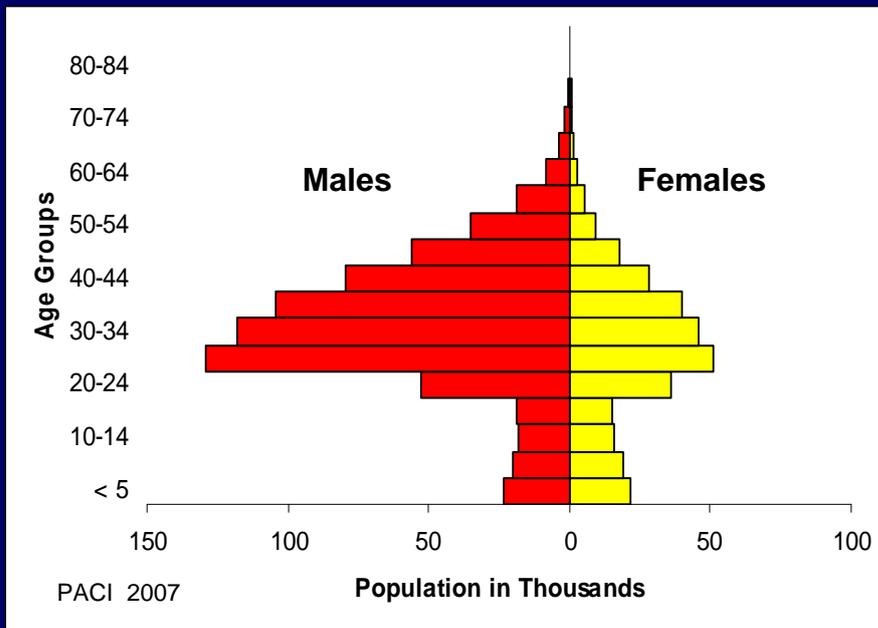
Table 7. Percentage of Employed Kuwaitis and Non-Kuwaitis Engaged in Public Sector by Sex 1975-2007

	Kuwaiti		Non-Kuwaiti	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
1975		76.2		29.7
1985	89.2	96.8	25.1	25.7
1995	92.9	95.3	11.5	10.7
2005	86.9	85.0	6.1	7.3
2007	81.4	78.7	5.4	7.0

Population pyramid for Kuwaitis, 2007



Population pyramid for non- Kuwaitis, 2007



References

- Al-Ramadhan, 1995. M. A. New population policy in Kuwait: the quest for a balance in population composition. *Population Bulletin of ESCWA*, No. 43:29-53
- Kapiszewski A, 2001. Nationals and expatriates: population and labor dilemmas of the Gulf Cooperation Council States, Ithaca Press, Lebanon
- Ministry of Planning, Kuwait, 1997. Human Development Report: the State of Kuwait. Report prepared under the technical supervision of the Ministry of Planning, in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme.
- MoH (Ministry of Health), 2005. Health Kuwait, 2005. Health and Vital Statistics Division, Department of Statistics and Medical Records, Ministry of Health, Kuwait.
- PACI (1995, 2004, 2005, 2007), Public Authority for Civil Information, Directory on Population and Labor Force, Government of Kuwait.
- Shah, NM and Al-Qudsi S.S. (1989). "The Changing Characteristics of Migrant Workers in Kuwait." *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 21: 31-55.
- Shah, NM and Menon I. (1997) "Violence Against Women Migrant Workers: Issues, Data and Partial Solutions". *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal*, Vol. 6, No. 1: 5-30
- Shah, NM (2000). "Relative success of male workers in host country, Kuwait: Does the channel of migration matter?" *International Migration Review*. 34 (1): 59-78.
- Shah NM, Shah MA, Chowdhury RI and Menon I (2002). "Foreign domestic workers in Kuwait: who employs how many". *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal*, 11 (2): 247-269
- Shah NM, 2004. 'Arab Migration Patterns in the Gulf', *Arab Migration in a Globalized World*, International Organization for Migration, pp. 91-113
- Shah, NM, 2007. 'Recent Labor Immigration Policies in the Oil-Rich Gulf: Some Difficulties in Effective Implementation. Paper presented at the Regional Symposium on Population and Foreign Workers in Arab Gulf States: Towards a Common Strategy, Doha, Qatar, April 17-19, 2007
- United Nations (UN), 2006a. International Migration in the Arab Region. Paper presented at the UN Expert Group Meeting on International Migration and Development in the Arab Region: Challenges and Opportunities, Beirut, Lebanon, May 15-17, 2006
- United Nations (UN), 2006b, *World Population Policies 2005*. Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Population Division (electronic version).
- Winckler, Onn. 1997. The immigration policy of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) States. *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 3, pp. 480-493