



Middle East
Centre

LSE MIDDLE EAST CENTRE ANNUAL REPORT 2020 | 21



WELCOME

The LSE Middle East Centre is an extended community, gathering together permanent and visiting staff, colleagues near and far, advisors, supporters and other friends. In line with the ethos of the School, we generate evidence-based knowledge about societal challenges in the Middle East and North Africa, guided by an ambition to make suggestions for the betterment of people and their lived environments. Our practical and policy engagement as a Centre is undertaken with critical reflection (as social scientists our claims are there to be tested) and humility (we speak from a privileged position, though we strive to reach out to those who are marginalised). As for so many during the global pandemic, the 2020–21 academic session at LSE was very challenging for our community, throwing into perspective those life priorities and choices that often get crowded out by career demands. I am blessed to work alongside colleagues in the Centre who, in the midst of the COVID-19 turmoil, excelled in adapting their work patterns and continuing to deliver outstanding work.

The Centre is framed by its research, which encompasses the range of social scientific (inter)disciplinary work associated with LSE. As summarised in this report, the original research undertaken and facilitated by the Centre relies on external funding, so credit is due to colleagues awarded grants from the Council for British Research in the Levant, Ethar Relief, the Leverhulme Foundation and the Luce Foundation. In spring 2021, the UK Government-funded Conflict Research Programme (CRP) at LSE finished. For three years, the Centre hosted

CRP research on Iraq, drawing in multiple partners and independent researchers from Iraq. I want to express my gratitude to Professor Toby Dodge who directed this research on the drivers and dynamics of violent conflict in Iraq. Anyone who knows Toby will not be surprised by the exceptional results – some 30 papers (in English and Arabic) and a series of high-level seminars, workshops and briefings.

The annual report also gives details of ongoing and new projects under our long-running collaboration programmes funded by the Emirates Foundation and the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences. Again, the breadth of topics studied attests to vibrant interest from LSE colleagues in working with regional partners on MENA-related research. We are currently exploring options to extend such collaborative research, which has done so much to nurture networks across the region, especially for early career researchers. Many of our research findings are published first in the peer-reviewed series of Centre papers, although colleagues also contribute to academic journals and books. With IB Tauris, we are delighted to have started a book series on Kurdish Studies that will consolidate and expand Centre expertise on Kurdish politics and society.

Unsurprisingly, our online communications and events have become even more significant over the past academic session. The report gives data on increased interest across our multiple social media platforms, including a 34% increase in blog views and a 58% increase in podcast

listens. For the Centre, this scaling up of online content is here to stay, and we are supporting it further. The MEC blog continues to thrive as a highly regarded online space for commentary and analysis. Our Instant Coffee podcast, also designed as an accessible vehicle for MENA-related content, completed its second series celebrating regional cuisine and exploring the cultural politics of food. In 2020–21, we also undertook Arabic translation of Centre publications, blogs and a number of events, as well as posting original Arabic content. At the end of 2021 we launched a new Arabic-language MEC website.

Engagement with students continues to be a priority for the Centre. Hosting events online (made available as podcasts) has some advantages for accessibility, but LSE students appreciate the opportunities afforded by our popular in-person events, and we plan to resume these as soon as possible. In 2020–21 we were still able to run our master's dissertation prize competition and successfully applied for School funding to support two undergraduate internships in the Centre (starting in the 2021–22 academic session). Funding to facilitate more students from MENA studying at LSE is always welcome. We were delighted last session that the Chair of our External Advisory Board, Mohammad Abdul Jalil Al Fahim, donated funds to create a Master's scholarship at LSE for a student from the MENA. This was an act of great generosity for which we are deeply grateful.

Michael Mason
Centre Director

ABOUT THE MIDDLE EAST CENTRE

The Middle East Centre builds on LSE's long engagement with the Middle East and provides a central hub for the wide range of research on the region carried out around the School. LSE is one of the world's leading social science institutions and comprises departments covering all branches of the social sciences. The Centre taps into this expertise to promote both public understanding and innovative interdisciplinary research on the region, with foci on history, political economy, society and international relations.



OBJECTIVES

- Promoting independent and critical research on the Middle East and North Africa;
- Fostering open and critical debate about the politics, societies and economies of the region;
- Disseminating knowledge about the Middle East through the Centre's events, digital resources and publications and through LSE's community and media activities;
- Providing a rich research environment for scholars and students;
- Establishing and cultivating ties with colleagues in the Middle East and international institutions.

FUNDERS

In 2020–21, the Centre's work was generously supported by:

- Emirates Foundation
- Aman Trust
- Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences
- UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)
- The Leverhulme Trust
- The Henry Luce Foundation
- Ethar Relief
- Council for British Research in the Levant

CENTRE STAFF

Taif Alkhudary

Research Officer

Nadine Almanasfi

Events Coordinator

Dr Nesrin Alrefaai

Arabic Tutor and Content Editor

Abrar Alshammari

Research Assistant

Iván Cano-Gomez

Research Assistant

Professor Toby Dodge

Kuwait Professor

Dr Courtney Freer

Assistant Professorial Research
Fellow

Kanwal Tareq Hameed

Research Assistant

Mariam Ghorbannejad

Kuwait Programme Publications
Editor

Dr Athanasia Kalaitzi

Research Officer

Yasmine Kherfi

Assistant Editor

Kendall Livingston

Projects Coordinator

Robert Lowe

Deputy Director

Diala Makki

Research Assistant

Dr Michael Mason

Director

Jack McGinn

Communications Coordinator

Dallas O'Dell

Research Assistant

Nilesh Raut

Research Assistant

Ian Sinclair

Kuwait Programme
Administrator

Dr Spyros Sofos

Research Officer

Dr Jessica Watkins

Research Officer

Dr Polly Withers

Research Officer

Sepehr Zhand

Research Assistant

VISITING FELLOWS

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Dr Hanaa Almoaibed

Professor Madawi Al Rasheed

Dr Talal Al-Rashoud

Dr Aniseh Bassiri Tabrizi

Dr Hannes Baumann

Dr Ahmad bin Touq

Dr Ian Black

Dr Andrew Delatolla

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Dr Raphaël Lefèvre

Dr Davide Luca

Dr Toby Matthiesen

Dr Souad Mohamed

Dr Aitemad Muhanna

Dr Harry Pettit

Professor Elie Podeh

Dr Benedict Robin-D'Cruz

Greg Shaplund

Dr Mac Skelton

Dr Ghoncheh Tazmini





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RESEARCH PROJECTS

The Middle East Centre conducts and facilitates original research on the politics, societies and economies of the Middle East and North Africa. Research is conducted by Centre staff and by academics based in LSE departments and the region.

Queer(y)ing Palestine's Future

This explores processes of gender and sexuality whose privileging of hetero-colonising authority shaped and continue to define both the Israeli-Zionist conquest of Palestine and the Palestinian struggle for liberation, and thus future imaginings of 'free Palestine.'

Supported by the Council for British Research in the Levant (CBRL)

Principal Investigator

Dr Walaa Alqaisiya, LSE Gender

Understanding Barriers and Enablers to Women's Leadership in Sudan

Analyses the development of female leadership by looking at the major barriers women face in rising to senior positions, as well as proven useful practices in the development of Sudanese female leaders.

Supported by Ethar Relief

Principal Investigator

Dr Souad Mohamed, LSE Middle East Centre

Managing Religious Diversity in the Middle East: The Muhasasa Ta'ifia in Iraq, 2003–2018

This examines the efforts of Iraq's post-2003 ruling elite to build a democratic system to manage religious and ethnic diversity, investigating the creation and evolution of the Muhasasa Ta'ifia through interviews with senior Iraqi officials, public opinion polls, election data and detailed sociological research. It also examines the system's influence on Iraq's politics, society, government incoherence and the high levels of violence since regime change.

Supported by the Henry Luce Foundation

Principal Investigator

Professor Toby Dodge, LSE Middle East Centre

Whose Revolution? Re-assessing the Impact of the 1979 Iranian Revolution on Sunni Islamism

This project looks at the Iranian Revolution's impact on the evolution of Sunni Islamism in the Arab world, using four case studies deemed representative of its regional, organisational and ideational diversity: Tunisia's Ennahda movement, Morocco's Muslim Brotherhood-aligned PJD, Lebanon's 'Sunni Khomeinist' Tawheed militia and Palestine's 'Islam-Marxists', Islamic Jihad.

Supported by the Henry Luce Foundation

Principal Investigators

Dr Toby Matthiesen & Dr Raphaël Lefèvre, LSE Middle East Centre

CONFLICT RESEARCH PROGRAMME

IRAQ AND THE WIDER MIDDLE EAST



Research at LSE ■

**CONFLICT
RESEARCH
PROGRAMME**

The Conflict Research Programme was funded by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office to provide research and policy advice on how the risk and impact of violent conflict might be more effectively reduced through development and governance interventions. The Middle East Centre led the research on drivers of conflict in Iraq and the wider Middle East in partnership with the American University of Iraq, Sulaimani, and Al-Bayan Center for Planning and Studies, Baghdad.

Undemocratic Parties in a 'Democratic' System: The Formation and Function of Political Parties in post-2003 Iraq

This project examined the formation and internal functioning of Iraq's political parties.

Principal Investigator

Omar Al-Jaffal, Iraqi journalist and researcher

Disinformation in Iraqi Media

This project examines the key narratives of disinformation that are prevalent in the Iraqi media and identifies the impact they have on policy debates and political legitimacy.

Principal Investigator

Aida Al-Kaisy, SOAS

Patriarchal Norms and Legal Discrimination Against Women and Girls in Iraq

This project examined legal discrimination against Iraqi women in theory and practice.

Principal Investigator

Taif Alkhudary, LSE Middle East Centre

A Locality in Crisis: A Study of the Local Governance Crisis and Public Protests in Basra

This project analysed the role of, and challenges facing, local governance in the Basra district of Iraq in light of the ongoing crisis in service provision.

Principal Investigators

Omar Al-Jaffal and Safaa Khalaf, Iraqi journalists and researchers

Baghdad's Market Spaces and the Politics of Urban 'Renewal'

This project investigated the political economy of space in Baghdad's marketplaces and aims to highlight the deeply political nature of Baghdad's 'renewal'.

Principal Investigator

Omar Sirri, University of Toronto

After the Uprising: Post-Mobilisation Strategies in Southern Iraq

This project examined factors shaping protest dynamics in Basra province and their relationship with potentially destabilising violence between protesters, the state and non-state armed groups.

Principal Investigator

Benedict Robin-D'Cruz, LSE Middle East Centre

From Green to Blue? Local Policing in Iraq After ISIL

This project sought to contextualise internationally-backed centralised efforts to demilitarise the local Iraqi police post-2017.

Principal Investigator

Dr Jessica Watkins, LSE Middle East Centre

Insights into the 2021 Iraqi Federal Elections

This project analysed the upcoming federal elections and their potential impact on the political order in Iraq.

Principal Investigator

Dr Sajad Jiyad, The Century Foundation

Water Governance in Basra

This project focused on the extent to which water infrastructure interventions by international donors are sustainable and meet the water supply expectations of Iraqis.

Principal Investigator

Dr Michael Mason, LSE Middle East Centre





ACADEMIC COLLABORATION WITH ARAB UNIVERSITIES PROGRAMME

Supported by the Emirates Foundation, the Academic Collaboration Programme strengthens the Centre's role as the principal hub for Middle East Studies within the School as well as a key partner to institutions in the region. The Centre has so far run 38 projects, working with 22 different partners in Arab states. Funded by the Emirates Foundation, the programme supports collaboration and knowledge exchange between LSE and Arab universities through research and academic capacity building.



ONGOING PROJECTS

Lebanon Unsettled

This project will establish, through student workshops and collaborative research, a publicly accessible archive of the recent urban protests in Lebanon. It will place the 2019 uprisings in their larger historical and geographical context.

Principal Investigators

Dr Deen Shariff Sharp, LSE
Geography & Environment
Dr May Farhat, Holy Spirit
University of Kaslik

Roads as Tools for (Dis)connecting Cities and Neighbourhoods: a socio-spatial study of Abu Dhabi

This project looks at existing and alternative design approaches that could help with the possible integration of new mobility services in Abu Dhabi, and aims to engage with international and local initiatives to understand local perspectives and draft recommendations for policymakers and relevant institutions.

Principal Investigators

Alexandra Gomes, LSE Cities
Dr Apostolos Kyriazis, Abu Dhabi
University

Export Composition and Economic Growth in the UAE

This project investigates whether a further increase in the degree of export diversification will foster further economic growth in the UAE.

Principal Investigators

Dr Athanasia Kalaitzi, LSE
Middle East Centre
Dr Samer Kherfi, American
University in Sharjah

Incentivising Acceptability of Climate Change Mitigation Measures in the GCC

This project aims to estimate the willingness to pay for emissions reduction policies, as well as the

associated willingness to adopt low-carbon lifestyles in GCC countries. It investigates how effective different behavioural mechanisms are in enhancing the acceptability of climate change policies and the willingness to adopt and pay for low carbon lifestyles.

Principal Investigators

Professor Susana Mourato, LSE Geography & Environment
Dr Davide Contu, Canadian University Dubai
Dr Ganga Shreedhar, LSE Psychological & Behavioural Science

Neoliberal Visions: Exploring Gendered Adverts and Identities in the Palestinian West Bank

This project studies the production and consumption of gendered advertisements in Ramallah, as a way of exploring how neoliberal culture constructs gendered subjectivity.

Principal Investigators

Dr Polly Withers, LSE Middle East Centre
Dr Rema Hammami, Birzeit University

Can Social Protection Empower Women? Patriarchy, Economic Agency and Redistribution Policies in Egypt

This project explores the impacts of Egypt's poverty alleviation programmes and cash transfers on gendered identities, as well as on the relationships that shape citizenship for women and families.

Principal Investigators

Dr Naila Kabeer, LSE Gender
Dr Hania Mohamed Sholkamy, American University in Cairo

Global Identity in an Uncertain World: A Study of Social Attitudes at an International UAE University

This project considers how social psychological processes are developing in the next generation of young leaders worldwide, and what kinds of environments might foster a liberal, globalist outlook, just as it shows signs of being in retreat. It focuses on high achievers from several countries studying at New York University Abu Dhabi.

Principal Investigators

Dr Jennifer Sheehy-Skeffington, LSE Psychological & Behavioural Science
Dr Christian Haerperfer, UAE University
Dr PJ Henry, NYU Abu Dhabi

Mapping Memories of Resistance: The Untold Story of the Occupation of the Golan Heights

This project documents and narrates the untold political, socio-economic and cultural story of the occupation of the Syrian Golan Heights, pertaining to the lived experience of the Syrians who remained. It will develop a teaching curriculum for Birzeit University students, as well as an interactive digital database and documentation portal on the history of Arab resistance to the occupation of the Syrian Golan Heights.

Principal Investigators

Dr Michael Mason, LSE Middle East Centre
Dr Munir Fakher Eldin, Birzeit University

Explaining the Middle Eastern Health Inequality Paradox

This project attempts to understand and explain the existence of this 'Middle Eastern Health Inequality Paradox'. In particular, it aims to identify any gaps that might exist across countries and investigate whether/ how such gaps depend on a number of determinants including but not restricted to; social norms, socio-economic factors, lifestyle and environmental characteristics, as well as food prices.

Principal Investigators

Dr Joan Costa-i-Font, LSE
European Institute
Dr Aristeidis Samitas, Zayed
University

Re-Conceptualising Health in Wars and Conflicts: A New Focus on Deprivation and Suffering

This project aims to understand the traumas and impacts of conflict and military occupation, and how people give meaning to, make sense of, and cope with various forms of deprivation. It will develop and test new metrics

to assess deprivation and its links to health outcomes. By integrating evidence from existing secondary data and primary qualitative data, the project seeks to reconceptualise deprivation and its multiple dimensions.

Principal Investigators

Dr Tiziana Leone, LSE
International Development
Dr Ernestina Coast, LSE
International Development
Professor Rita Giacaman, Birzeit
University

Palestinian Attitude Change in Response to Conflict in the Palestinian Territories

This project looks at the impact of exposure to violence on individual expectations about the future and the inclination to cooperate with others. It combines quantitative survey evidence and state-of-the-art experimental games with Palestinians to study how early life experiences of conflict shape expectations and attitudes towards cooperation across age cohorts and over time.

Principal Investigators

Dr Ben Groom, LSE Geography &
Environment
Dr Guy Burton, MBRSG, Dubai
Dr Elisa Cavatorta, King's
College London



PROJECTS COMMENCING IN 2021–22

Urbanity in the Time of Pandemic: A Study of Infrastructures of Care in Palestine during the Covid- 19 Crisis

This project seeks to explore how systems and practices of crisis and care unfold in urban life and engages with how notions of emergency and citizenship are shaped by the everyday networks of mutual aid within the brutality of the permanent crisis in Palestine in general, and during the Covid-19 pandemic in particular.

Principal Investigators

Dr Haneen Naamneh, LSE
Middle East Centre
Dr Suzi Hall, LSE Sociology
Dr Abaher El-Sakka, Birzeit
University

The Kurdistan Region of Iraq Post-ISIS: Youth, Art and Gender

In recent years, a new generation of young Kurdish artists have emerged that through their work portray issues around gender and sex-based violence (GSBV),

religious conservatism and corruption. This project maps out and portrays the main actors behind these emerging dynamics in the KRI and asks how social and political change is imagined and enacted amidst ongoing political and military conflicts in the region.

Principal Investigators

Dr Isabel Käser, LSE Middle East
Centre
Dr Bayar M. Sevdeen, University of
Kurdistan-Hewlêr
Houzan Mahmoud, Culture Project

Consociationalism and Civil Resistance in Lebanon

This project examines the reactions of the Lebanese regime towards protest movements and the resilience of the country's political system. It focuses on activists' strategies and narratives as well as the tactics deployed to thwart these mass protests and threaten collective action.

Principal Investigators

Dr Jinan Al-Habbal, LSE Middle
East Centre
Dr Carmen Geha, American
University of Beirut

Researching the Quality of Employment in the Middle East

This project seeks to identify potential informational gaps in the UAE, Egypt, Jordan and Tunisia and to develop a multidimensional index of the quality of employment to examine how the quality of employment has developed in the MENA region in recent years and to illustrate how policymakers can target resources and policies to the most vulnerable workers.

Principal Investigators

Professor Kirsten Sehnbruch,
LSE International Inequalities Institute
Dr Samer Atallah, American
University of Cairo
Dr M. Azhar Hussain, University
of Sharjah

Arab News Futures

Through interviews and focus groups with students and journalists in London and Dubai, this project seeks to examine how Arab journalists conceive of their audience, how they reach out to young people and how Arab students engage with news media.

Principal Investigators

Dr Omar Al-Ghazzi, LSE Media &
Communications
Dr Abeer Al-Najjar, American
University of Sharjah



KUWAIT PROGRAMME

Established in 2007, the Kuwait Programme is a world-leading hub for research and expertise on Kuwait. The Programme is funded by the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences and directed by Toby Dodge, Kuwait Professor. Kuwait Programme Research Grants support LSE colleagues to conduct policy-relevant research on contemporary Kuwait. LSE–Kuwait Academic Collaboration projects enable Kuwait and LSE academics to run collaborative research.



Public Space in Kuwait: From User Behaviour to Policy-making

Building upon the 'Resource Urbanisms' project, this exploration is the result of early investigations on the relationship between the built environment and the use of public space. With the World Health Organization appealing for an increase in physical activity of individuals, this project will explore the impact neighbourhood layout and urban design elements have on outdoor activities and individual behaviour.

Principal Investigators

Alexandra Gomes, LSE Cities
Dr Asseel Al-Ragam, Kuwait University

Evaluating Digital Skills and Tangible Outcomes (DiSTO) in Kuwait

This project consists of the translation, adaptation, validation and implementation of the global DiSTO methodology within a Kuwaiti context. The DiSTO methodology utilises an inclusive approach to measure people's digital media use and their outcomes across four domains: Economic, Cultural, Social and Personal.

Principal Investigators

Professor Ellen Helsper, LSE
Media & Communications
Dr Fahed Al-Sumait, Gulf University for Science and Technology

Empowering Democratic Citizenship through Education

Using focus group, surveys, media content analysis and critical discourse analysis, the project explores the tensions and challenges of 21st century citizenship identity and practice formation in Kuwait, attempting to understand how schools as sites of citizenship formation reflect, resist or assimilate different and sometimes competing conceptions of citizenship across Kuwaiti society.

Principal Investigators

Dr Sam Mejias, LSE Media & Communications
Dr Rania Al-Nakib, Gulf University for Science and Technology

Towards an Equitable Transport System in Kuwait

The project aims to investigate the issues of transport equity in Kuwait from a social justice perspective through both quantitative and qualitative aspects. Building on LSE Cities' research project 'Resource Urbanisms', the study will conduct a comprehensive GIS analysis of Kuwait's built environment to highlight the cross sectional inequalities in access to the transport system in Kuwait's metropolitan area.

Principal Investigator

Dr Muhammad Adeel, University of Leeds

Beyond Oil: Trade Diversification and Economic Growth in Kuwait

This project is intended to inform policy discussions around how to foster sustained economic growth as the export demand for oil peaks and begins to decline by examining the causal relationships between disaggregated exports, disaggregated imports and economic growth in Kuwait over the period 1980–2018.

Principal Investigators

Dr Athanasia Kalaitzi, LSE Middle East Centre

Dr Ahmad Al-Awadhi, Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research

Sustaining Kuwait in Unsustainable Times

This project is dedicated to illuminating the global linkages and local specificities around the socio-economic and ecological challenge that Kuwait faces in relation to climate change. It will emphasise the specific urban challenges for Kuwaitis in relation to climate change and efforts—or lack thereof—toward sustainable urbanisation.

Principal Investigator

Dr Deen Shariff Sharp, LSE Geography & Environment

Asian Capital and the Rise of Smart Urbanism in Kuwait

This project looks at South Korean state investment in a new city project in Kuwait and asks: how do different institutional and political configurations affect the outcomes of urbanism export and import? How does a variety of governance dynamics shape exchange value extraction and its processes through new city construction? Finally, to what extent do foreign developers' participation in destination country's urban and housing development reflect their own visions of urbanism, accumulated through their participation in urban and housing development in their countries of origin?

Principal Investigator

Professor Hyun Shin, LSE Saw Swee Hock Southeast Asia Centre

Kuwait National Election Study

The Kuwaiti National Election Study (KNES) will collect data on the voter behaviour, socio-economic features, and political attitudes of citizens of Kuwait. The project will contribute to the advancement of evidence-based policymaking in Kuwait, with a face-to-face survey of 1,500 individuals implemented immediately after elections are held for the Sixteenth Session of the Kuwaiti National Assembly.

Principal Investigator

Dr Courtney Freer, LSE Middle East Centre

Governance of Spatial Change: Shaping urban policies and investments in Kuwait

In Kuwait, past decisions have led to a city characterised by low-density urban sprawl, heavy reliance on private cars, spatial segregation and limited use of public space. To analyse the governance framework underpinning these decisions, the project looks into the relevant laws and institutions, public finance mechanisms, and norms, traditions, aspirations and informal relationships shaping urban governance in Kuwait.

Principal Investigators

Dr Nuno F. da Cruz, LSE Cities
Dr Dhari Alrasheed, Kuwait
University

Tackling Water Scarcity in Kuwait: Promoting sustainable household consumption

This project aims to provide a robust assessment of attitudes, beliefs (including faith), and willingness to pay related to water conservation in Kuwait by employing a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods, including real time measurement of water consumption. It also aims - within this framework - to test the effectiveness of different behavioural interventions to encourage water conservation in the region, and to investigate the heterogeneity of preferences between different population groups.

Principal Investigators

Professor Susana Mourato, LSE
Geography & Environment
Dr Ganga Shreedhar, LSE
Psychological & Behavioural
Science

Examining and Informing Public Policy to Meet the Challenge of Global Warming in Kuwait

The project aimed to deepen the evidence base in Kuwait via two interrelated activities: (a)

constructing a wealth (and natural capital) account for Kuwait including a thorough country level inventory of greenhouse gas emissions, and (b) developing an economy-wide model to be used to simulate economy-environment-society interactions.

Principal Investigators

Dr Giles Atkinson, LSE
Geography & Environment
Dr Ayele Gelan, Kuwait Institute
for Scientific Research

Estimating the Burden of Diabetes in Kuwait

This project had a three-fold objective: (i) to analyse the link between diabetes and health-care utilisation (both, outpatient and inpatient); (ii) based on (i), to determine the total (direct and indirect) cost of diabetes in Kuwait by providing a static measure of the cost of diabetes; and (iii) to critically evaluate the existing preventive measures (by also doing a comparative analysis with the rest of the Gulf region) aiming at reducing the overall economic burden of diabetes in Kuwait.

Principal Investigators

Dr Zlatko Nikoloski, LSE Health
Dr Fahd Al-Mulla, Dasman
Diabetes Institute

Towards Promoting Private R&D Investment in Kuwait

The project focuses on the private sector and identify the barriers and enablers of private R&D investment in Kuwait, while developing policy recommendations to help stimulate private sector R&D investment.

Principal Investigators

Dr Neil Lee, LSE Geography &
Environment
Dr Husam Arman, Kuwait
Institute for Scientific Research

The Impact of Women's Political Participation on Kuwaiti Politics

This research project seeks to understand the structural, political and gender-related obstacles facing: (1) female candidates seeking election to the Kuwaiti National Assembly, and (2) those female politicians who do get elected when trying to influence the legislative process and governmental oversight.

Principal Investigator

Dr Zeynep Kaya, LSE Middle
East Centre

PROJECTS COMMENCING IN 2021–22

Surveying Kuwaiti Worldviews to Promote Science Culture in Kuwait

This project investigates the relationship between generalised worldviews and perspectives on a culture of science in Kuwait. The overarching aim is to identify worldviews that are receptive and conducive to a science culture and to promote a culture of science by designing communication strategies that both resonate with receptive worldviews and that appeal to the individual's own generalised mental framework.

Principal Investigators

Dr Martin W. Bauer, LSE
Psychological & Behavioural Science
Dr Mohammad Sartawi, Kuwait University

Breaking the Internal Combustion Engine Reign: A Mixed-Methods Study of Attitudes Towards Electric Vehicles in Kuwait

The research project addresses a broad gap in electric vehicles (EV) research in settings like Kuwait,

namely a lack of attitudinal and customer preference research into perceptions of EVs. Research into the technical and infrastructural dimensions of EV-adoption in GCC countries is well underway, including research funded by KFAS and KISR in Kuwait. Much less well understood, however, are social attitudes towards EVs and EV-use in Kuwait, and how best to market EVs there once those attitudes are better understood.

Principal Investigators

Dr Alasdair Jones, LSE
Methodology
Dr Andri Ottesen, Australian College of Kuwait

Learning from the Past to Build a Better Future: Supporting Urban Flood Resilience in Kuwait Through a Forensic Analysis of the 2018 Flash Floods

The main objective of this project is to analyse the current and future flood resilience of urban areas in Kuwait including the expected

increase in flood hazards as a result of climate change. Based on a forensic analysis of the 2018 flash flood in Kuwait, we focus on two specific aspects: 1) challenges and opportunities of flood risk governance and decision-making, and 2) the role of urban development and planning trends, in increasing or decreasing urban flood resilience in Kuwaiti cities.

Principal Investigator

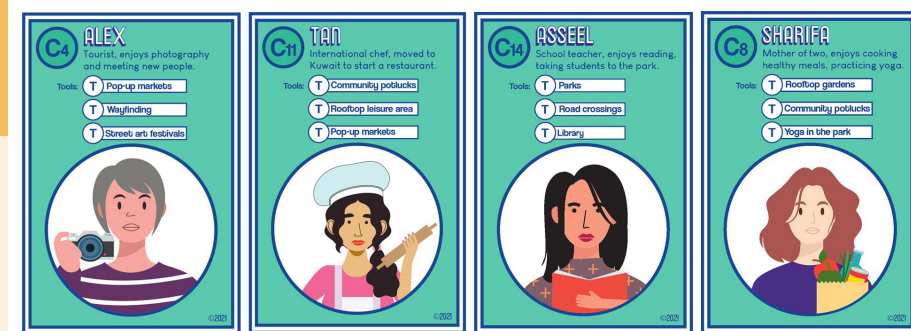
Dr Swenja Surminski, LSE
Graham Institute

Ecologies of Belonging and Exclusion: An Intersectional Analysis of Urban Citizenship in Kuwait City

The project maps aspects of contemporary urban citizenship in Kuwait City from an intersectional perspective and explores how political and economic actors produce or mitigate power and inequalities that, in turn, give shape to Kuwait City.

Principal Investigator

Dr Nazanin Shahrokni, LSE
Gender



A card game exploring urban issues, one of the 'Public Space in Kuwait' project's outputs.

PUBLICATIONS

The Centre's research is published as part of our flagship, peer-reviewed Paper Series, which disseminates substantive, original research in an accessible and policy-relevant format. Many of our papers are now translated into Arabic, with all executive summaries rendered in both English and Arabic.

Failing Flows: Water Management in Southern Iraq
[Azhar Al-Rubaie, Michael Mason & Zainab Mehdi, July 2021](#)

Sustainability, Natural Capital and Climate Change in Kuwait
[Giles Atkinson & Ayele Gelan, July 2021](#)

Local Policing in Iraq Post-ISIL: Carving Out an Arena for Community Service?
[Jessica Watkins, Falah Mubarak Bardan, Abdulkareem al-Jarba, Thayer Shaker Mahmoud, Mahdi al-Delaimi, Abdulazez Abbas al-Jassem, Moataz Ismail Khalaf & Dhair Faysal Bidewi, July 2021](#)

Women's Electoral Participation in Kuwait
[Zeynep N. Kaya, June 2021](#)

In-Between Identities and Cultures: Ms. Marvel and the Representation of Young Muslim Women
[Jennifer Jackson-Preece & Manmit Bhambra, May 2021](#)

Basra Governorate: A Locality in Crisis – Local Government Crisis and Conflict with the Federal Government
[Omar al-Jaffal & Safaa Khalaf, May 2021](#)

Beach Clean-Ups and Other Civic Engagement for the Protection of the Environment in Kuwait
[Nele Lenze, April 2021](#)

Protest Vote: Why Iraq's Next Elections are Unlikely to be Game-Changers
[Sajad Jiyad, April 2021](#)

Conflict Research Programme Iraq: A Summary of Research
[March 2021](#)



Redefining Deprivation in a Conflict Area: Learning from the Palestinian Experience Using Mixed Methods

Tiziana Leone, Weeam Hammoudeh, Susan Mitwali, David Lewis, Rawan Kafri, Tracy Lin, Rita Giacaman & Ernestina Coast, March 2021

Breaking Out of the Innovation Trap? Towards Promoting Private R&D Investment in Kuwait

Husam Arman, Simona Iammarino, J. Eduardo Ibarra-Olivo & Neil Lee, March 2021

Revolution in Parallel Times: An Egyptian Village's Lived Revolution

Heba M. Khalil, March 2021

Reclaiming Public Space in Kuwait's Residential Neighbourhoods: An Applied Policy-Oriented Approach

Alexandra Gomes, Asseel Al-Ragam & Sharifa Alshalfan, March 2021

Destructive Creations: Social-Spatial Transformations in Contemporary Baghdad

Omar Sirri, February 2021

Confusion and Contention: Understanding the Failings of Decentralisation in Iraq

Ali Al-Mawlawi & Sajad Jiyad, January 2021



Uncovering Progress of Health Information Management Practices: Evidence from Kuwait's Public Healthcare System

Dari Alhuwail, January 2021

Praetorian Spearhead: The Role of the Military in the Evolution of Egypt's State Capitalism 3.0

Yezid Sayigh, January 2021

North Africa's Export Economies and Structural Fragility: The Limits of Development through European Value Chains

Shamel Azmeh & Abeer Elshennawy, December 2020

Is Demography Destiny? The Economic Implications of Iraq's Demography

Alexander Hamilton, November 2020

Strikes, Riots and Laughter: Al-Himamiyya Village's Experience of Egypt's 1918 Peasant Insurrection

Alia Mossallam, September 2020

Whose Story? Narratives of Nationalism in Heritage Production of the Arabian Peninsula

Courtney Freer & Yasmine Kherfi, August 2020

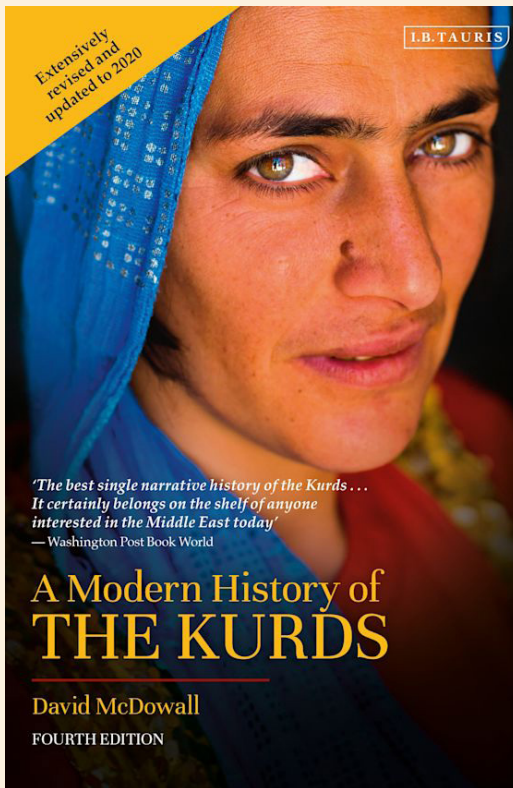
Determinants of Diabetes in Kuwait: Evidence from the World Health Survey

Zlatko Nikoloski, August 2020

KURDISH STUDIES SERIES

Convened by Zeynep Kaya and Robert Lowe, this series encourages dissemination and discussion of new research on Kurdish politics and society and provides a network for scholars, students and practitioners. Public events are held throughout the year and a new publications series has been launched with IB Tauris. Publication highlights in 2020–21 included the long-awaited 4th edition of *A Modern History of the Kurds*, by David McDowall, and *The Political Representation of Kurds in Turkey* by Cengiz Günes.

IB TAURIS PUBLICATIONS SERIES



The Kurds in a Changing Middle East: History, Politics and Representation

Edited by Faleh A. Jabar & Renad Mansour, 2019

The Kurds of Northern Syria: Governance, Diversity and Conflicts

Harriet Allsopp & Wladimir Van Wilgenberg, 2019

Kurdish Nationalism on Stage: Performance, Politics and Resistance in Iraq

Mari Rostami, 2019

Kurds and the Politics of Turkey: Agency, Territory and Religion

Deniz Çifçi, 2019

A Modern History of the Kurds, fourth edition

David McDowall, 2021

The Political Representation of Kurds in Turkey: New Actors and Modes of Participation in a Changing Society

Cengiz Gunes, 2021

Kurds and Yezidis in the Middle East: Shifting Identities, Borders and the Experience of Minority Communities

Edited by Günes Murat Tezcür, 2021

ISIS and the Kurds: The Roots of Conflict in Syria and Iraq

Deniz Çifçi, forthcoming 2022

INSTANT COFFEE PODCAST

Set up by Nadine Almanasfi and Ribale Sleiman Haidar in 2020, *Instant Coffee* is a podcast featuring 20-minute conversations with activists, artists, journalists and more from the Middle East and North Africa. There have been two seasons, the first being a general overview of exciting media, activist and cultural production in the region, the second season focused on food and drink, delving deeper into the politics, history and culture of ingredients and dishes loved by the region.



Iraqi Cuisine from Mesopotamia to Mosul with Nawal Nasrallah
Season 2 Episode 3



The Sudanese Kitchen(s) with Omer Eltigani
Season 2 Episode 8



Migrant Cuisine in the Expat City with Vidya Balachander
Season 2 Episode 7



Middle East
Centre



Research at LSE ■

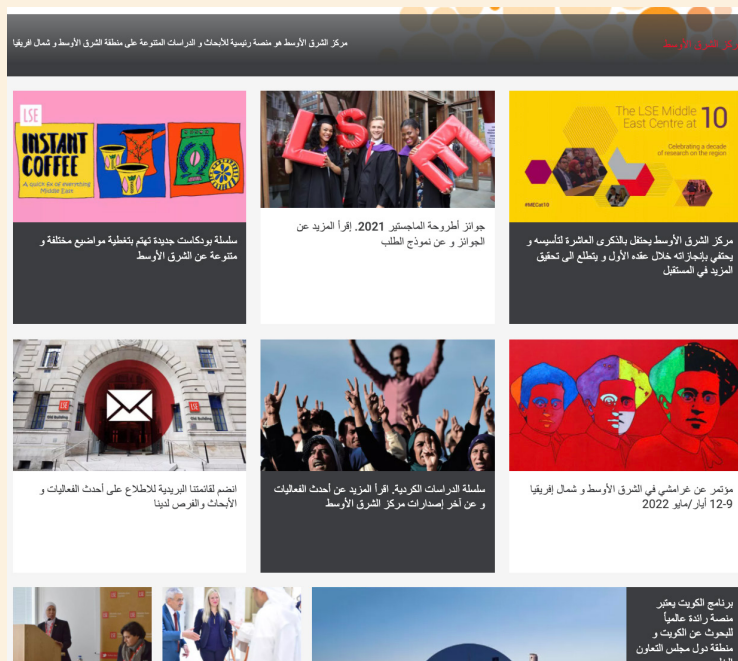
CONFLICT
RESEARCH
PROGRAMME

أزمة محافظة البصرة مشكلة الحكم المحلي والصراع مع الحكومة الاتحادية



ARABIC CONTENT PROJECT

This year, led by Arabic Content Editor and Tutor Nesrin Alrefaai, the MEC embarked on an Arabic Content Project, seeking to translate our publications, blogs and website into Arabic while also publishing original research in Arabic and translating this into English. Below are some highlights.

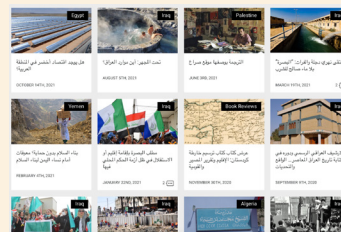


The new Arabic-language MEC website, with built-in language switch capabilities for all browsers. Launching in December 2021.

Arabic-language blog posts have received over 12,900 hits from over 190 countries.



A recent Arabic publication, Omar Al-Jaffal's 'Undemocratic Parties'



BLOG

The MEC Blog delivers accessible analysis of the Middle East and North Africa to a wide readership, drawing primarily on the community of academics and researchers at LSE, but also including outside contributors. In the past year we have published 143 pieces, attracting over 300,000 views. Below are some highlights.



The UAE's 'Foreign Talent' Dilemma
[Mira Al-Hussein, Sep 2021](#)



From Muhasasa to Mawatana:
The election boycott movement
and prospects for effective
democracy in Iraq
[Taif Alkhudary, Aug 2021](#)



Why Did They Kill Riham
Yacoub? The Murder of a Civil
Society Activist in Basra
[Benedict Robin-D'Cruz, Aug 2020](#)



The New Saudi Personal
Status Law: An Opportunity for
Meaningful Gender Reform?
[Nora Jaber, Feb 2021](#)



Revisiting the Lusitanian
Holding of Hormuz
[Ghoncheh Tazmini, Oct 2020](#)



Lockdown, Occupation, and
Palestinian Dystopias
[Sinéad Murphy, Aug 2020](#)



EVENTS

In the academic year 2020–21, the MEC hosted 29 public online events with 1920 attendees. Four events were simultaneously interpreted into Arabic. The Centre also organised workshops and research seminars bringing together academics, practitioners and experts.

September 2020

The Historical Roots of the Omani Left

Talal Al-Rashoud, LSE Middle East Centre

October 2020

Israel and the Gulf: From Secret to Open Relations

Ebtesam Al-Ketbi, Emirates Policy Centre; Clive Jones, Durham University; Elie Podeh, Mitvim Institute

Libya's Fragmentation: Structure and Process in Violent Conflict

Wolfram Lacher, German Institute for International and Security Affairs; Sherine El Taraboulsi-McCarthy, Overseas Development Institute

Environmental Justice in the Middle East: Activism, Resistance, and Decolonisation

(Part of #DecolonisingLSE 2020-21, co-organised with Jadaliyya and the Arab Studies Institute)

Carly A. Krakow, LSE; Muna Dajani, LSE; Mona Harb, American University of Beirut

November 2020

The Politics of Migration in Modern Egypt: Strategies for Regime Survival in Autocracies

Gerasimos Tsourapas, University of Birmingham; Ibrahim Awad, American University of Cairo

Political Repression in Bahrain

Marc Owen Jones, Hamad Bin Khalifa University

Mapping Kurdistan: Territory, Self-Determination and Nationalism

Zeynep Kaya, LSE Middle East Centre

The Origins of the Syrian Conflict: Climate Change and Human Security

Marwa Daoudy, Georgetown University

The Future of the (non-) Maghreb: The Least Integrated Region on the Planet (co-organised with Society for Algerian Studies)

Idriss Jebari, Trinity College, University of Dublin; Amel Karboul, Former Minister of Tourism, Tunisia; Azzedine Layachi, St. John's University, New York

December 2020

Kuwait goes to the Polls: Discussing the 2020 Parliamentary Elections

Abdullah al-Khonaini, Independent Researcher; Alanoud Al-Sharekh, Ibtakar Strategic Consultancy; Michael Herb, Georgia State; Daniel L. Tavana, Yale University

The Politics of Health Care Provision Across Lebanon and Turkey

Melani Cammett, Harvard University; Asli Cansunar, University of Oxford

MEC10 Anniversary Event - The Future of the Study of the Middle East: Ecology, Health and Decolonisation

Omar Dewachi, Rutgers University; Zeina Khalil Hajj, Environmental Activist; Eve M. Troutt Powell, University of Pennsylvania; Minouche Shafik, LSE

January 2021

The Son King: Reform and Repression in Saudi Arabia

Madawi Al-Rasheed, LSE Middle East Centre

Praetorian Spearhead: The Role of the Military in the Evolution of Egypt's State Capitalism 3.0

Yezid Sayigh, Carnegie Middle East Centre

February 2021

US-Iran Relations in a Post-Trump World

Hassan Ahmadian, University of Tehran; Aniseh Bassiri Tabrizi, LSE Middle East Centre; Ali Vaez, International Crisis Group

Is Demography Destiny? The Economic Implications of Iraq's Demography

Alexander Hamilton, UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Reforming the Gulf Rentier State: From Patronage to Cash Grants?

Steffen Hertog, LSE; Yousef Al-Ebraheem, KFAS

Open Gaza: Architectures of Hope

Hadeel Assali, Columbia University; Tareq Baconi, International Crisis Group; Helga Tawil-Souri, New York University

March 2021

From Subject to Citizen – And Back: Crises of the Republic (Fred Halliday Memorial Event co-organised with LSE IR)

Charles Tripp, SOAS

Hitting the Glass Ceiling? Women's Political Participation in Kuwait

Zeynep Kaya, LSE; Lubna Al-Kazi, Kuwait University

Sino-Algerian Relations: From Anti-Colonial Allies to Strategic Partners? (co-organised with Society for Algerian Studies)

Francesco Saverio Leopardi, Ca' Foscari University of Venice; Chuchu Zhang, Fudan University; Yahia Zoubir, KEDGE Business School

Redefining Deprivation in a Conflict Area: Learning from the Palestinian Experience

Weeam Hammoudeh, Birzeit University; Tracy Kuo Lin, University of California, San Francisco; Suzan Mitwalli, Birzeit University

April 2021

Kurds and Yazidis in the Middle East: Shifting Identities, Borders, and the Experience of Minority Communities (KSS Event, co-organised with the Kurdish Studies Programme at the University of Central Florida)

Majid Hassan Ali, Ilia State University Georgia; Ohannes Kılıçdağı; Güneş Murat Tezcür, University of Central Florida; Arzu Yilmaz, University of Hamburg

May 2021

Israeli Foreign Policy Since the End of the Cold War

Amnon Aran, City, University of London

Stuck in the 20th Century? Kuwait's Urbanisation, Transport, and use of Public Space

Asseel Al-Ragam, Kuwait University; Sharifa AlShalfan, Independent Researcher; Alexandra Gomes, LSE; Adeel Muhammad, University of Leeds; Reem Alfahad, Independent Researcher

Destructive Creations: Social-Spatial Transformations in Contemporary Baghdad

Omar Sirri, University of Toronto

June 2021

A World in Revolution: Feminist Politics in Times of Social Uprisings – (two day conference co-organised with LSE Department for Gender Studies)

Key note: Envisioning Feminist Solidarities

Noura Erakat, Rutgers University; Sonia Corrêa, feminist activist and researcher; Thenmozhi Soundararajan, Equality Labs

Civilization and the Making of the State in Lebanon and Syria

Andrew Delatolla, LSE Middle East Centre; Shourideh C. Molavi, University of Basel; Mai Taha, Goldsmiths, University of London

Responding to the Challenges of Statelessness in the MENA

Susan Akram, Boston University; Zahra Albarazi, Independent Consultant; Maysa Ayoub, American University of Cairo; Lina Abou Habib, American University of Beirut

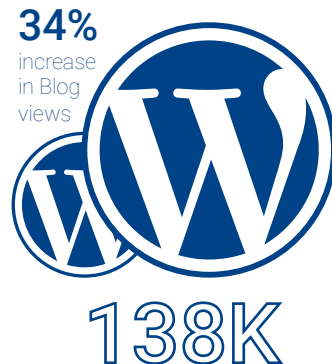
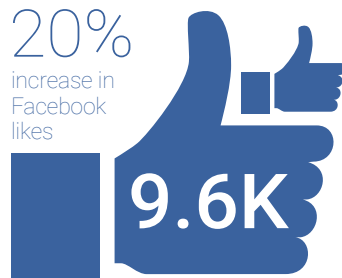
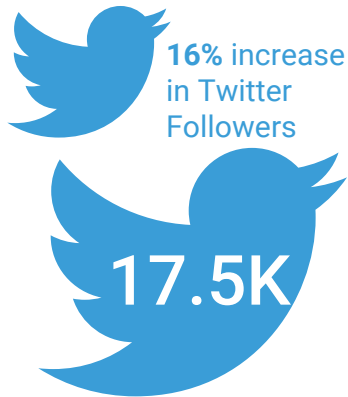
A Modern History of the Kurds

David McDowall

The Algerian War, The Algerian Revolution (co-organised with Society for Algerian Studies)

Natalya Vince, University of Portsmouth

OUR COMMUNICATIONS IN NUMBERS





Middle East
Centre

Middle East Centre

London School of Economics
Houghton Street
London, WC2A 2AE



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lse.ac.uk/mec

Cover Image

The River Nile at sunset in Khartoum, Sudan.
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