

Duties on goods already produced in Ecuador can reach as high as 125 per cent of the assessed value. Rates of duty on goods not produced in Ecuador average approximately 25 per cent. Vehicles are generally considered prohibited imports. Importers must make a deposit equal to the F.O.B. value of the goods in order to clear the goods through customs.

For products originating from countries in the Andean Pact or Latin American Integration Association (ALADI) of which Ecuador is a member, duties and certain restrictions are considerably reduced for many commodities.

v) Packaging and Labelling

Special packaging and labelling requirements exist for certain goods such as food products. These should be clarified with the importer in advance to ensure compliance.

Transportation and Communications

The road transportation system handles movement of most freight and passengers throughout the country with railroad transportation playing a smaller role. The country has approximately 24 000 km of all-weather roads with highways connecting all major ports and towns. Ecuador has a small narrow-gauge railroad system with 1 160 km of track; the principal line is Guayaquil-Quito-San Lorenzo. Improvements have been made in the seaport facilities for loading, unloading, and warehousing. The alternative ports of Esmeraldas and, in particular, Manta tend to ease somewhat the traditionally heavy traffic handled by the port of Guayaquil. Two international airports (in Quito and Guayaquil) handle normal international traffic through national and international airlines, and a number of local airports and airlines adequately handle domestic air traffic.

Public transportation within cities is provided by privately owned buses at relatively low fares. Taxi service is also readily available. Rates are not always uniform, and taxi meters are generally used in Quito but not available in other cities.

Good telephone service is available within the major cities, with automatic, long-distance dialing between Quito, Guayaquil, and Cuenca. Good communications also exist with foreign countries by way of telegram, telephone,