

Transportation and Communications

Israel has an extensive modern road network joining all parts of the country. The state-owned railway provides single-track line services to the north and centre, connecting the three major cities of Haifa, Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. It is mainly used for freight thus far. The southern section of the railway serves the phosphate mines in the Negev and facilitates exports through the port of Ashdod. The main ports of Israel, in order of size, are Ashdod, Haifa and Eilat. Israel's international airport, Ben Gurion Airport, is located between Jerusalem (40 minutes away) and Tel Aviv (15 minutes away). The main internal air services operate from Tel Aviv to Eilat. El Al, Israel's national airline, provides modern jet service to major international destinations.

The telephone directory is printed in Hebrew, with some books now being printed in English (Jerusalem, Tel Aviv). Most public telephones use tokens which can be bought at any post office and at some kiosks. Overseas calls can be placed from Israel through the international operator by dialing 18. Direct dialing is available to most intercontinental points and telex services are also available. Fax is fast becoming the leading means of business communication.

Industry

The Israeli industrial sector has quickly transformed itself from labour-intensive production to high-capital, export-oriented production. In order to compete with countries with much larger industrial sectors, and in the absence of extensive domestic natural resources, industry has had to concentrate on high value-added products and the development of new technologies.

Israeli industry is composed of four major branches: metal, electrical and electronics industries; textiles and clothing; chemicals and pharmaceuticals; and food industries.

Metal, Electrical and Electronics Industries

This is the largest branch of Israeli industry, accounting for 34 per cent of total industrial production by value, over 40 per cent of the country's industrial exports and employing nearly 40 per cent of the country's industrial work force. Many of Israel's highly trained engineers and scientists work in this sector. Many companies have established worldwide reputations for excellence in quality, research and innovation. Some are traded on U.S. stock exchanges.