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# Chapter 1

## 117

### 1.1 117.guide

Texified version of data for Israel.

Texified using wfact from

Gerhard Leibrock  
Neuhäuselerstr. 12  
D-66459 Kirkel  
Germany

Tel.: 06849 / 6134  
INTERNET: leibrock@fsinfo.cs.uni-sb.de  
fach5@cipsol.cs.uni-sb.de

Project Gutenberg

P. O. Box 2782

Champaign, IL 61825

When all other email fails try our Michael S. Hart, Executive Director:

hart@vmd.cso.uiuc.edu (internet) hart@uiucvmd (bitnet)

We would prefer to send you this information by email (Internet, Bitnet, Compuserve, ATTMAIL or MCI mail).

Israel

### 1.2 117.guide/Israel

Israel  
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Header (Israel)  
 Geography (Israel)  
 People (Israel)  
 Government (Israel)  
 Government (Israel 2. usage)  
 Economy (Israel)  
 Economy (Israel 2. usage)  
 Communications (Israel)  
 Defense Forces (Israel)

### 1.3 117.guide/Header (Israel)

Header (Israel)  
 =====

Affiliation:

(also see separate Gaza Strip and West Bank entries)

Note:

The Arab territories occupied by Israel since the 1967 war are not included in the data below. As stated in the 1978 Camp David Accords and reaffirmed by President Bush's post-Gulf crisis peace initiative, the final status of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, their relationship with their neighbors, and a peace treaty between Israel and Jordan are to be negotiated among the concerned parties. The Camp David Accords further specify that these negotiations will resolve the location of the respective boundaries. Pending the completion of this process, it is US policy that the final status of the West Bank and Gaza Strip has yet to be determined (see West Bank and Gaza Strip entries). On 25 April 1982, Israel relinquished control of the Sinai to Egypt. Statistics for the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights are included in the Syria entry.

### 1.4 117.guide/Geography (Israel)

Geography (Israel)  
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Location:

Middle East, bordering the eastern Mediterranean Sea, between Egypt and Lebanon

Map references:

Africa, Middle East, Standard Time Zones of the World

Area:

total area:

20,770 km<sup>2</sup>  
land area:  
20,330 km<sup>2</sup>  
comparative area:  
slightly larger than New Jersey  
Land boundaries:  
total 1,006 km, Egypt 255 km, Gaza Strip 51 km, Jordan 238 km, Lebanon 79 km, Syria 76 km, West Bank 307 km  
Coastline:  
273 km  
Maritime claims:  
continental shelf:  
to depth of exploitation  
territorial sea:  
12 nm  
International disputes:  
separated from Lebanon, Syria, and the West Bank by the 1949 Armistice Line ←  
;  
differences with Jordan over the location of the 1949 Armistice Line that separates the two countries; West Bank and Gaza Strip are Israeli occupied with status to be determined; Golan Heights is Israeli occupied; Israeli troops in southern Lebanon since June 1982; water-sharing issues with ←  
Jordan  
Climate:  
temperate; hot and dry in southern and eastern desert areas  
Terrain:  
Negev desert in the south; low coastal plain; central mountains; Jordan ←  
Rift  
Valley  
Natural resources:  
copper, phosphates, bromide, potash, clay, sand, sulfur, asphalt, manganese ←  
,  
small amounts of natural gas and crude oil  
Land use:  
arable land:  
17%  
permanent crops:  
5%  
meadows and pastures:  
40%  
forest and woodland:  
6%  
other: 32%  
Irrigated land:  
2,140 km<sup>2</sup> (1989)  
Environment:  
sandstorms may occur during spring and summer; limited arable land and natural water resources pose serious constraints; deforestation  
Note:  
there are 175 Jewish settlements in the West Bank, 38 in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, 18 in the Gaza Strip, and 14 Israeli-built Jewish neighborhoods in East Jerusalem

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## 1.5 117.guide/People (Israel)

### People (Israel)

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#### Population:

4,918,946 (July 1993 est.)

#### note:

includes 102,000 Jewish settlers in the West Bank, 14,000 in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, 4,000 in the Gaza Strip, and 134,000 in ←  
East

Jerusalem (1993 est.)

#### Population growth rate:

3.08% (1993 est.)

#### Birth rate:

20.72 births/1,000 population (1993 est.)

#### Death rate:

6.45 deaths/1,000 population (1993 est.)

#### Net migration rate:

16.51 migrant(s)/1,000 population (1993 est.)

#### Infant mortality rate:

8.9 deaths/1,000 live births (1993 est.)

#### Life expectancy at birth:

total population:

77.77 years

male:

75.72 years

female:

79.93 years (1993 est.)

#### Total fertility rate:

2.86 children born/woman (1993 est.)

#### Nationality:

noun:

Israeli(s)

adjective:

Israeli

#### Ethnic divisions:

Jewish 83%, non-Jewish 17% (mostly Arab)

#### Religions:

Judaism 82%, Islam 14% (mostly Sunni Muslim), Christian 2%, Druze and other 2%

#### Languages:

Hebrew (official), Arabic used officially for Arab minority, English most commonly used foreign language

#### Literacy:

age 15 and over can read and write (1983)

total population: 92%

male:

95%

female:

89%

#### Labor force:

1.4 million (1984 est.)

by occupation:

public services 29.3%, industry, mining, and manufacturing 22.8%, commerce

12.8%, finance and business 9.5%, transport, storage, and communications 6.8%, construction and public works 6.5%, personal and other services 5.8%, agriculture, forestry, and fishing 5.5%, electricity and water 1.0% (1983)

## 1.6 117.guide/Government (Israel)

Government (Israel)

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### Names:

conventional long form:

State of Israel

conventional short form:

Israel

local long form:

Medinat Yisra'el

local short form:

Yisra'el

### Digraph:

IS

### Type:

republic

### Capital:

Jerusalem

### note:

Israel proclaimed Jerusalem its capital in 1950, but the US, like nearly all

other countries, maintains its Embassy in Tel Aviv

### Administrative divisions:

6 districts (mehozot, singular - mehoz); Central, Haifa, Jerusalem, Northern, Southern, Tel Aviv

### Independence:

14 May 1948 (from League of Nations mandate under British administration)

### Constitution:

no formal constitution; some of the functions of a constitution are filled by the Declaration of Establishment (1948), the basic laws of the parliament

(Knesset), and the Israeli citizenship law

### Legal system:

mixture of English common law, British Mandate regulations, and, in personal

matters, Jewish, Christian, and Muslim legal systems; in December 1985, Israel informed the UN Secretariat that it would no longer accept compulsory

ICJ jurisdiction

### National holiday:

Independence Day, 14 May 1948 (Israel declared independence on 14 May 1948, but the Jewish calendar is lunar and the holiday may occur in April or May)

### Political parties and leaders:

members of the government:

Labor Party, Prime Minister Yitzhak RABIN; MERETZ, Minister of Education Shulamit ALONI; SHAS, Minister of Interior Ariele DERI

opposition parties:

Likud Party, Binyamin NETANYAHU; Tzomet, Rafael EITAN; National Religious Party, Zevulun HAMMER; United Torah Jewry, Avraham SHAPIRA; Democratic Front

for Peace and Equality (Hadash), Hashim MAHAMID; Moledet, Rehavam ZEEVI; Arab Democratic Party, Abd al Wahab DARAWSHAH

note:

Israel currently has a coalition government comprising 3 parties that hold 62 seats of the Knesset's 120 seats

Other political or pressure groups:

Gush Emunim, Jewish nationalists advocating Jewish settlement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip; Peace Now, critical of government's West Bank/Gaza Strip and Lebanon policies

Suffrage:

18 years of age; universal

Elections:

President:

last held 24 March 1993 (next to be held NA March 1999); results - Ezer WEIZMAN elected by Knesset

## 1.7 117.guide/Government (Israel 2. usage)

Government (Israel 2. usage)

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Knesset:

last held June 1992 (next to be held by NA); results - percent of vote by party NA; seats - (120 total) Labor Party 44, Likud bloc 32, Meretz 12, Tzomet 8, National Religious Party 6, Shas 6, United Torah Jewry 4, Democratic Front for Peace and Equality 3, Moledet 3, Arab Democratic Party 2

Executive branch:

president, prime minister, vice prime minister, Cabinet

Legislative branch:

unicameral parliament (Knesset)

Judicial branch:

Supreme Court

Leaders:

Chief of State:

President Ezer WEIZMAN (since 13 May 1993)

Head of Government:

Prime Minister Yitzhak RABIN (since July 1992)

Member of:

AG (observer), CCC, CERN (observer), EBRD, ECE, FAO, GATT, IADB, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICC, ICFTU, IDA, IFAD, IFC, ILO, IMF, IMO, INMARSAT, INTELSAT, INTERPOL, IOC, IOM, ISO, ITU, OAS (observer), PCA, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNIDO, UPU, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

Diplomatic representation in US:

chief of mission:

Ambassador Itamar RABINOVICH

chancery:

3514 International Drive NW, Washington, DC 20008

telephone:

(202) 364-5500

consulates general:  
 Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New York,  
 Philadelphia, and San Francisco  
 US diplomatic representation: chief of mission:  
 Acting Ambassador William BROWN  
 embassy:  
 71 Hayarkon Street, Tel Aviv  
 mailing address:  
 APO AE 09830  
 telephone:  
 [972] (3) 654338  
 FAX:  
 [972] (3) 663449  
 consulate general:  
 Jerusalem  
 Flag:  
 white with a blue hexagram (six-pointed linear star) known as the Magen  
 David (Shield of David) centered between two equal horizontal blue bands  
 near the top and bottom edges of the flag

## 1.8 117.guide/Economy (Israel)

### Economy (Israel)

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#### Overview:

Israel has a market economy with substantial government participation. It depends on imports of crude oil, grains, raw materials, and military equipment. Despite limited natural resources, Israel has intensively developed its agricultural and industrial sectors over the past 20 years. Industry employs about 20% of Israeli workers, agriculture 5%, and services most of the rest. Diamonds, high-technology equipment, and agricultural products (fruits and vegetables) are leading exports. Israel usually posts balance-of-payments deficits, which are covered by large transfer payments from abroad and by foreign loans. Roughly half of the government's \$17 billion external debt is owed to the United States, which is its major source of economic and military aid. To earn needed foreign exchange, ←

Israel

has been targeting high-technology niches in international markets, such as medical scanning equipment. The influx of Jewish immigrants from the former USSR, which topped 400,000 during the period 1990-92, has increased unemployment, intensified housing problems, and widened the government budget deficit. At the same time, a considerable number of the immigrants bring to the economy valuable scientific and professional expertise.

#### National product:

GDP - purchasing power equivalent - \$57.4 billion (1992 est.)

#### National product real growth rate:

6.4% (1992 est.)

#### National product per capita:

\$12,100 (1992 est.)

#### Inflation rate (consumer prices):

10% (1992 est.)

#### Unemployment rate:

11% (1992 est.)

Budget:  
revenues \$33.9 billion; expenditures \$36.8 billion, including capital expenditures of \$9.3 billion (FY93)

Exports:  
\$11.8 billion (f.o.b., 1992 est.)  
commodities:  
polished diamonds, citrus and other fruits, textiles and clothing, ←  
processed  
foods, fertilizer and chemical products, military hardware, electronics  
partners:  
US, EC, Japan, Hong Kong, Switzerland

Imports:  
\$19.6 billion (c.i.f., 1992 est.)  
commodities:  
military equipment, rough diamonds, oil, chemicals, machinery, iron and steel, cereals, textiles, vehicles, ships, aircraft  
partners:  
US, EC, Switzerland, Japan, South Africa, Canada, Hong Kong

External debt:  
\$25 billion of which government debt is \$17 billion (December 1992 est.)

Industrial production:  
growth rate 9.4% (1992 est.); accounts for about 20% of GDP

Electricity:  
5,835,000 kW capacity; 21,840 million kWh produced, 4,600 kWh per capita (1992)

Industries:  
food processing, diamond cutting and polishing, textiles, clothing, chemicals, metal products, military equipment, transport equipment, electrical equipment, miscellaneous machinery, potash mining, high-technology electronics, tourism

## 1.9 117.guide/Economy (Israel 2. usage)

Economy (Israel 2. usage)

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Agriculture:  
accounts for about 3% of GDP; largely self-sufficient in food production, except for grains; principal products - citrus and other fruits, vegetables ←  
,  
cotton; livestock products - beef, dairy, poultry

Economic aid:  
US commitments, including Ex-Im (FY70-90), \$18.2 billion; Western (non-US) countries, ODA and OOF bilateral commitments (1970-89), \$2.8 billion

Currency:  
1 new Israeli shekel (NIS) = 100 new agorot

Exchange rates:  
new Israeli shekels (NIS) per US\$1 - 2.8000 (December 1992), 2.4591 (1992), 2.2791 (1991), 2.0162 (1990), 1.9164 (1989), 1.5989 (1988), 1.5946 (1987)

Fiscal year:  
calendar year (since 1 January 1992)

## 1.10 117.guide/Communications (Israel)

### Communications (Israel)

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#### Railroads:

600 km 1.435-meter gauge, single track; diesel operated

#### Highways:

4,750 km; majority is bituminous surfaced

#### Pipelines:

crude oil 708 km; petroleum products 290 km; natural gas 89 km

#### Ports:

Ashdod, Haifa

#### Merchant marine:

35 ships (1,000 GRT or over) totaling 678,584 GRT/785,220 DWT; includes 8 cargo, 24 container, 2 refrigerated cargo, 1 roll-on/roll-off; note - ←  
Israel

also maintains a significant flag of convenience fleet, which is normally ←  
at

least as large as the Israeli flag fleet; the Israeli flag of convenience fleet typically includes all of its oil tankers

#### Airports:

total:

53

usable:

46

with permanent-surface runways:

28

with runways over 3,659 m:

0

with runways 2,440-3,659 m:

7

with runways 1,220-2,439 m:

12

#### Telecommunications:

most highly developed in the Middle East although not the largest; good system of coaxial cable and microwave radio relay; 1,800,000 telephones; broadcast stations - 14 AM, 21 FM, 20 TV; 3 submarine cables; satellite earth stations - 2 Atlantic Ocean INTELSAT and 1 Indian Ocean INTELSAT

## 1.11 117.guide/Defense Forces (Israel)

### Defense Forces (Israel)

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#### Branches:

Israel Defense Forces (including ground, naval, and air components)

note:

historically, there have been no separate Israeli military services

Manpower availability:

males age 15-49 1,240,757; females age 15-49 1,218,610; males fit for military service 1,018,212; females fit for military service 996,089; males reach military age (18) annually 46,131; females reach military age (18) annually 44,134 (1993 est.); both sexes are liable for military service

Defense expenditures:

exchange rate conversion - \$12.5 billion, 18% of GDP (1993 est.)