

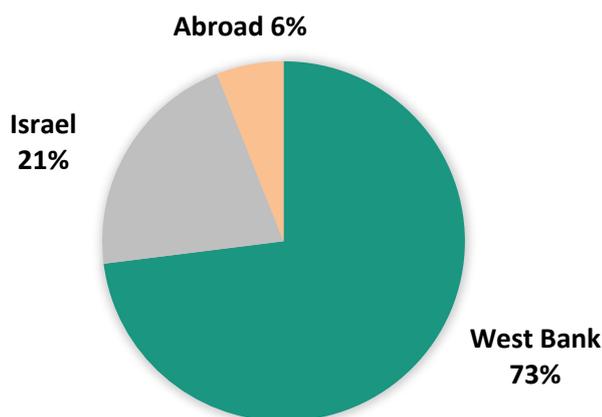
GAZA IN NUMBERS

EXIT OF GOODS

Since November 2014, Israel has allowed limited sale of Gaza-grown and produced goods in the West Bank. Since March 2015, Israel has also allowed an even smaller number of products from Gaza to be sold in Israel. From 2007-2014, only export abroad had been permitted. **The monthly average** number of truckloads of goods exiting Gaza to all destinations in 2018 was about 20 percent of the **monthly average** in 2007, before the closure was imposed.

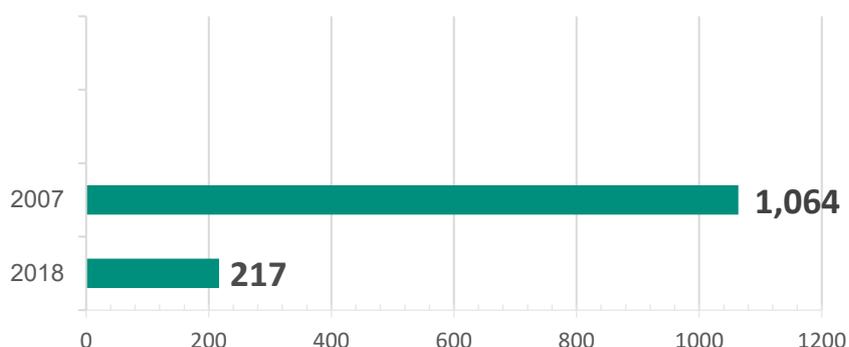
Sale of Gaza goods by destination

Percentage based on number of truckloads to exit Gaza during 2018



Exit of truckloads carrying goods from Gaza

Monthly average of truckloads in 2007, compared to 2018

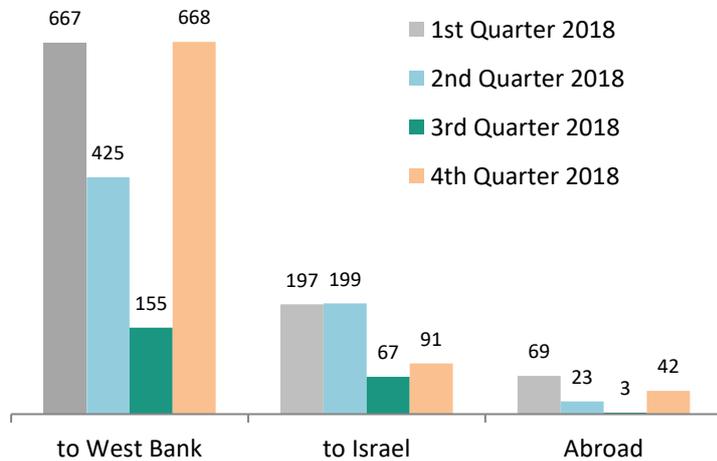


20%

Percent of truckloads carrying goods from Gaza in 2018, compared to 2007.

Truckloads of goods exiting Gaza in the last year

By destination



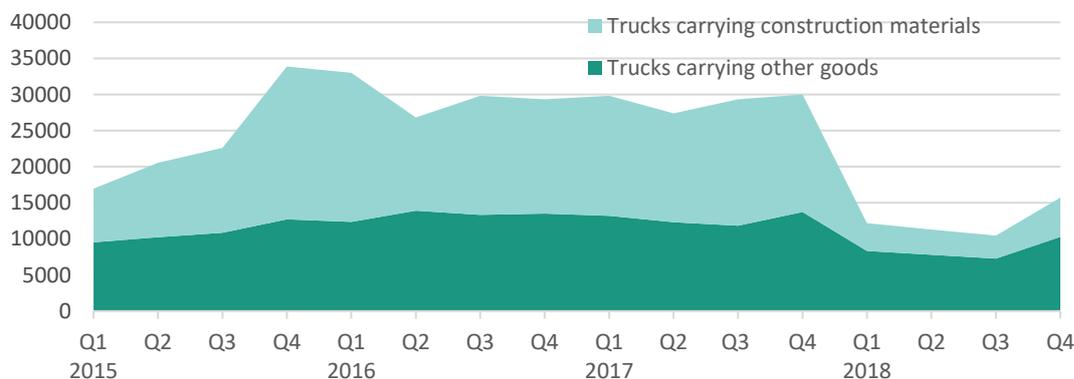
Most of the goods exiting Gaza are agricultural produce. Israel dictates what produce can be sold, where and when. Israel allows limited sale of textile and furniture in the West Bank, and limited sale of eggplant, tomatoes, furniture, textile and scrap metal in Israel. The units in the table represent truckloads.

ENTRY OF TRUCKS TO GAZA

In 2018, an average of about 8,424 truckloads of goods entered Gaza each month (excluding fuel), via Kerem Shalom Crossing. More than half the trucks entering carried “basic construction materials,” that is, cement, steel and gravel.¹

Entry of truckloads of goods via Kerem Shalom

By quarter



¹ On November 1, 2017 there was a formal handover of Gaza’s crossing to the Palestinian Authority. Since then, data Gisha receives reflects the number of Israeli truckloads entering Kerem Shalom rather than Palestinian trucks exiting the crossing into Gaza. This has a slight impact on the methodology for calculating the comparative average.

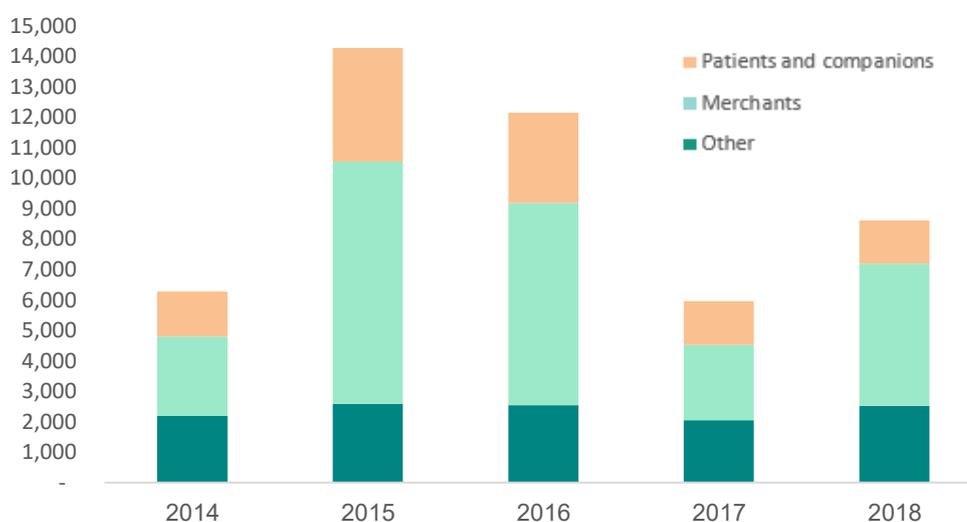
ENTRY OF CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS

In 2018 there was a drop of 27 percent in the number of truckloads of construction materials entering Gaza via Kerem Shalom Crossing compared to 2017 and 2016. Almost all construction materials entering Gaza today go through the Gaza Reconstruction Mechanism (GRM). The GRM was established after the most recent military operation in 2014 (Operation Protective Edge). Decisions made in the framework of this complex mechanism are lacking in transparency. Many projects dependent on the GRM are significantly delayed. In late 2015, gravel was removed from the list of “dual-use” materials, and can now be purchased and brought into Gaza without restrictions or dependency on the GRM. Small quantities of construction materials enter occasionally from Egypt via Rafah Crossing. As the above table shows, much of the increase in the volume of goods entering Gaza since 2014 is attributed to the entry of construction materials via the GRM, while the volume of other goods entering remained largely unchanged.

MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE THROUGH EREZ CROSSING

Israel limits the exit of Palestinians via Erez Crossing to three main categories: merchants, patients and their companions, and exceptional humanitarian cases. In 2016, an average of 12,000 exits of Palestinians was recorded per month, less than 2.5 percent of the monthly average of exits in 2000, before the Second Intifada. The monthly average of exits dropped a further 51 percent in 2017. The monthly average number of exits of Palestinians via Erez in 2018 was 8,607, an increase of 44 percent compared to 2017, but a drop of 29 percent compared to 2016.

Monthly average of exits



In 2018, movement through Erez Crossing was blocked or heavily restricted on 44 days: Nineteen days due to Jewish holidays, 14 days following punitive closures imposed by Israel, one day due to the Islamic New Year, and ten days due to the decision of de facto authorities in Gaza following the assassination attempt against Palestinian Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah and after a covert Israeli military operation was exposed in Khan Younis.

Merchants make up the largest category of people exiting Gaza, at 54 percent of all exits of Palestinians via Erez in 2018. Given that Rafah Crossing has been mostly closed since mid-2013, the need to travel through Erez Crossing has increased. This need was only partially met by an increase in exits through Erez Crossing. In 2018, the monthly average number of exits of merchants was 4,673 exits, an increase of 89 percent compared to the monthly average in 2017, when the monthly average was only 2,477.

The category of "Other" includes people traveling abroad via Allenby Bridge, including students, and people traveling to the West Bank or Israel to visit family in the case of a funeral, serious illness, wedding or similar humanitarian need. People from this category are often denied permits, or their applications are delayed for long periods of time. The category also includes relatives of prisoners who travel to visit them and Palestinian Authority VIPs. The monthly average number of exits in the "other" category was 1,419 exits, a slight drop compared to 2017.

SECURITY PRECLUSIONS AND PENDING APPLICATIONS

Since the end of 2015, we have been [documenting](#) an alarming increase in the trend of merchants being denied permits on 'security grounds.' This trend grew even stronger in 2017; the number of exits by Palestinians through Erez Crossing dropped by 51 percent compared to 2016. The monthly average of exits in 2017 was 5,963 exits, compared to the monthly average of 12,150 exits in 2016. In 2015, the monthly average of exits was 14,276.

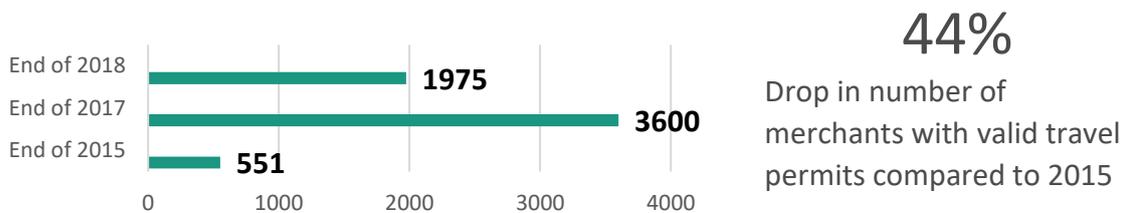
According to figures provided by the Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT), only 46 percent of permit applications were approved in 2016², compared to an 80 percent approval rate in 2013. In a response to Gisha's Freedom of Information application from September 2017, COGAT admitted that at least 16,000 applications from Palestinians were still waiting to be processed.

This phenomenon is especially detrimental to patients applying to exit the Strip for medical care, causing them to miss appointments for crucial treatments. In 2018, a total of 25,897 permit applications were submitted by medical patients in need of treatment in the West Bank or Israel. Only 61 percent of the applications were approved by Israel; eight percent were denied, and 31 percent went unanswered, causing patients to miss crucial treatment.

² The data provided by COGAT pertained to the first 10 months of 2016.

Merchant permits

Merchants are the largest category of people exiting through Erez and their work is vital for Gaza's economy. In 2018, the number of merchants with valid permits increased. According to the Palestinian Civil Affairs Committee in Gaza, as of December 2018 there were 1,975 valid merchant permits, compared to only 551 in December 2017. This figure still reflects a drop of 44 percent in the number of valid merchant permits compared to the end of 2015, when there were 3,600 valid permits.

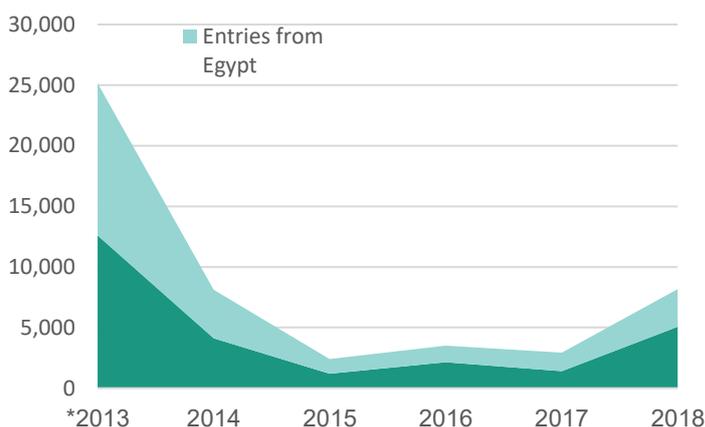


MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE THROUGH RAFAH

Egyptian-controlled Rafah Crossing was mostly closed between mid-2013 and mid-2018. From May 2018 until January 8, 2019, the crossing was open to movement in and out of Gaza five days a week, on average, the longest consecutive opening of Rafah in five years. In 2018, Rafah Crossing was open on 180 days for exit to Egypt and on 203 for entry into Gaza. During this time, the monthly average number of exits via Rafah was 5,076; the monthly average number of entries was 3,087. For comparison, Rafah was only open for exit from Gaza during 25 days throughout 2015, 42 days in 2016, and 24 days during 2017.

When the crossing is open, only people meeting stringent travel criteria are permitted to travel, subject to Egypt's permission: Egyptian or foreign passport holders, patients with referrals for treatment in Egypt, students and others with entry visas to third countries. Israel does not allow Palestinians who exited Gaza via Rafah to return to the Strip via Erez.

Monthly average number of crossings via Rafah



* During the first half of 2013, the crossing operated normally and some 40,000 entries and exits were recorded there each month. The crossing closed after the fall of the Morsi regime in Egypt. The numbers in the table represent the monthly average for each year.

For more figures on movement of people and goods, updated monthly, click [here](#).