

Italy



Introduction

Officially called the Republic of Italy, Italy is located in southern Europe, and has a population of roughly 58.2 million. Italy has much to offer its citizens and visitors. Surrounded by the four seas of the Mediterranean, Italy is famous for its coastline activities. Italy also has a mountain range with elevations over 13,500 feet for the skiing and hiking enthusiast. Italy has no official religion, though the majority of Italy's citizens are Roman Catholic.

Fun Fact

Italy is currently the home of three active volcanoes; Stromboli, Vesuvius, and Etna.

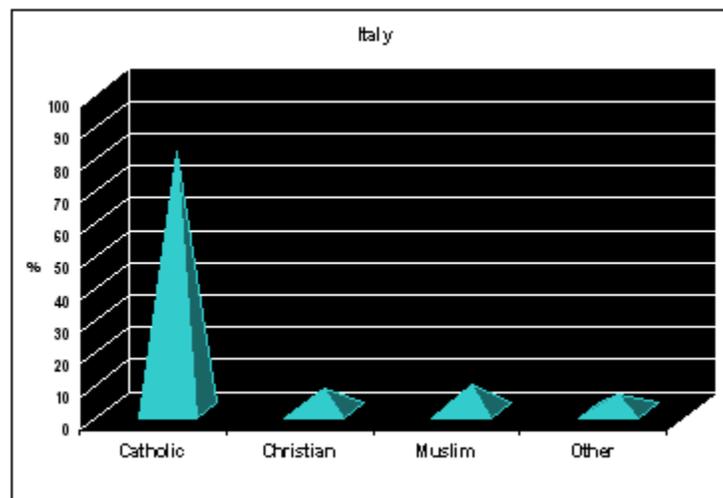
The Vatican City, the home of the Pope and the Roman Catholic Church, is located within the city of Rome and is considered a separate state completely. The Vatican has its own currency, flag, and stamps, although Italian money can be used.

Geert Hofstede Analysis Italy

[Click Here for Geert Hofstede country scores](#)

The Hofstede Analysis for Italy is very similar to Germany's Analysis. Great emphasis is placed on individualism, masculinity, and uncertainty avoidance, while power distance is ranked considerably lower than the others. Italy's lower power distance score shows that Italy is working to de-emphasize the differences between its citizen's power and wealth. [More Details](#)

Religion in Italy



* WORLD FACTBOOK 2002

Appearance

- Fashions and fashion design are trademarks of Italy. Therefore, in the business world, good clothes are a signature of success.
- Men should wear fashionable, high quality suits.
- Shirts may be colored or pin-striped, and they should be paired with an Italian designer tie.
- Women dress in quiet, expensive elegance.
- Slacks are generally not worn by either sex.
- Quality accessories such as shoes and leather goods will make a good impression with the Italians.

Behavior

- Italian history has played a crucial role in the modern business world.
- Some of their contributions include banking, insurance, and double-entry bookkeeping.
- "Time is money" is not a common phrase in Italy.
- Foreign businessmen/women should be punctual for business appointments, although the Italian executive may not be.
- Handshakes are common for both sexes, and may include grasping the arm with the other hand.
- Do not expect quick decisions or actions to take place, as the Italian bureaucracy and legal systems are rather slow.
- Italian companies often have a rigid hierarchy, with little visible association between the ranks.
- It is common for everyone to speak simultaneously at Italian gatherings. This applies to business meetings as well as social events.
- Do not exchange business cards at social occasions; but it is the norm at business functions and meetings.
- Italians often have two different business cards, one with business credentials for formal relationships, and another with personal information for less formal relationships.
- Italian cards are often plain white with black print.
- When entering a business function, the most senior or eldest person present should always be given special treatment.
- When invited to someone's home, bring gift-wrapped chocolates, pastries, or flowers. Flowers *must* be given in even numbers, except for a dozen (12) or half-dozen (6), especially if roses.
- If you bring wine as a gift, make sure that it is of excellent vintage, as many Italians are wine connoisseurs.

• Avoid giving anything in a quantity of 17, as 17 is considered to be bad luck, or a doomed number.

Communications

- Italian is the official language, although there are many diverse dialects.
- English is spoken by many businesspeople.
- Avoid talking about religion, politics, and World War II.
- At social gatherings, it is considered insulting to ask someone you have just met about their profession.
- Good conversational topics include Italian culture, art, food, wine, family, and films.