

Italy

Country name	Italy
State title	Italian Republic
Name of citizen	Italian
National official language	Italian [<i>ita</i>] ¹
Country name in national official language	Italia
State title in national official language	Repubblica Italiana [<i>ita</i>]
Script	Roman script
Romanization System	Not required
ISO-3166 code (alpha-2/alpha-3)	IT / ITA
Capital	Roma (Rome)
Area / Population	301,340 km ² / 58.95 million (2026 est.) ²

Introduction

Italy occupies a peninsula in south-central Europe and includes multiple islands in the Mediterranean Sea, most significantly Sardinia and Sicily. It shares land borders with France, Switzerland, Austria and Slovenia. Within the territory of Italy lie the independent states of Vatican City and San Marino. For more toponymic information on these, see the [PCGN Toponymic Factfile on European Microstates](#).

Italian regions have strong cultural identities, with widely-used regional languages, those of which derive from Latin being usually termed 'dialects'.

Geographical names policy and sources

For HMG use, geographical names should be taken from official sources from Italy. Italian series mapping is published in a geoportal available here: [Home - Geoportale MASE - Geoportale](#) and at the Istituto Geografico Militare website here: [Homepage - Istituto Geografico Militare](#). Official

¹ ISO 639 codes are given for languages mentioned in this Factfile.

² UN data

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sources use Italian with the addition of the relevant regional language in quite limited and specific instances (see *Languages* below).

To establish the appropriate names in regions where names might also appear in additional language forms, the regional geoportals are of assistance. PCGN recommends following the style presented in each of these regions' portals:

- The geoportal of Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste is available here: [RAVdA - GeoNavigatore SCT](#). Names are generally presented in a single form, which is often French (e.g. Châtillon; Saint-Vincent).
- Trentino-Alto Adige/Trentino-Südtirol has separate geoportals for Bozen/Bolzano province: [MapView - - GeoBrowser MapView](#), in German and Italian (with German appearing first, e.g. Leifers/Laives), and Trento province: [Carta Tecnica Provinciale](#), in Italian only.
- Basilicata geoportal: [GeoPortale – RSDI Basilicata](#), in Italian only, though Albanian has official recognition.
- Friuli-Venezia Giulia geoportal: [Eaglefvg - Sistema di consultazione delle banche dati territoriali della Regione Autonoma Friuli Venezia Giulia](#), has some use of Slovene and Friulian language names in addition to Italian e.g. San Giovanni al Natisone/San Zuan dal Nadison [*ita/fur*]; Piedimonte/Podgora [*ita/slv*].
- Sardinia geoportal: [Sardegna Geoportale - Sardegna Geoportale](#), which includes mapping at various scales. For instance, the mapping available at the subpage: [sitbpi 1.64.27](#) is easily usable. Names are in Italian only, though many are in an 'Italianised' form of the Sardinian name (e.g. Urzulei instead of the Sardinian spelling Orthullè).

Languages

As noted, there are many regional dialects and languages in Italy, though the geographical names in these languages are not widely used at the national level and rarely appear on national or even regional mapping.

Many of the regional languages are Romance languages, those with the highest speaker numbers including Sardinian [*srd*], Friulian [*fur*] and Ladin [*lad*]. Twelve languages are recognised as having a degree of official recognition³, though this is usually just within part of a region, in the relevant linguistic area, as determined at the provincial or municipal level: for instance, Friulian is officially recognised in the Province of Udine and other small areas of Friuli-Venezia Giulia. The five autonomous regions, see *Administrative Structure* below, give a degree of official status to toponyms of these regional languages: German in (parts of) Trentino-Alto Adige/Trentino-Südtirol, French in Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste, Slovene and Friulian in (parts of) Friuli-Venezia Giulia. The

³ Albanian [*sqi*], Catalan [*cat*], Croatian [*hrv*], Franco-Provençal [*frp*], French [*fra*], Friulian [*fur*], German [*deu*], Greek [*ell*], Ladin [*lad*], Occitan [*oci*], Sardinian [*srd*], Slovene [*slv*].

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only regions with a co-official language across the whole region are French in Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste and Sardinian in Sardinia.

This complicated minority language picture is largely not reflected on mapping and for HMG use PCGN recommends limiting bilingual or regional language naming to: Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste region; German in Bozen/Bolzano province within Trentino-Alto Adige/Trentino-Südtirol and Slovene and/or Friulian (usually only one of these is shown in addition to Italian) in Friuli-Venezia Giulia. The geoportals listed above can be used to verify the correct names.

Inventory of Characters (and their Unicode encodings)⁴

Italian contains the following letter-diacritic combinations in addition to the unmodified letters of the basic Roman script. Note that the grave accent is usually used to mark stress in Italian.

Upper-case character	Unicode encoding	Lower-case character	Unicode encoding
À	00C0	à	00E0
É	00C9	é	00E9
È	00C8	è	00E8
Ò	00D2	ò	00F2
Ù	00D9	ù	00F9

Other diacritical marks may be encountered in reflecting names from French, German, Slovene and Friulian, as described above. These should be reflected as found on the relevant geoportals.

⁴ See www.unicode.org

Map of Italy

Map produced by PCGN for illustrative purposes only, and is not to be taken necessarily as representing the views of the UK government on boundaries or political status.

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Administrative structure

Italy is divided into 20 regions, 5 of which are autonomous with special statutes (each marked with an asterisk in the table below).

Administrative division	ISO 3166-2 code	Administrative centre ⁵	Centre location
Abruzzo	IT-65	L'Aquila	42°21'58"N 13°22'02"E
Basilicata	IT-77	Potenza	40°38'02"N 15°48'24"E
Calabria	IT-78	Catanzaro	38°53'54"N 16°35'03"E
Campania	IT-72	Napoli (Naples)	40°50'09"N 14°14'55"E
Emilia-Romagna	IT-45	Bologna	44°29'11"N 11°20'22"E
Friuli-Venezia Giulia ^{*6}	IT-36	Trieste	45°38'46"N 13°46'50"E
Lazio	IT-62	Roma (Rome)	41°53'36"N 12°28'58"E
Liguria	IT-42	Genova (Genoa)	44°25'00"N 08°57'00"E
Lombardia	IT-25	Milano (Milan)	45°27'49"N 09°11'27"E
Marche	IT-57	Ancona	43°35'45"N 13°30'38"E
Molise	IT-67	Campobasso	41°33'58"N 14°38'55"E
Piemonte	IT-21	Torino (Turin)	45°03'00"N 07°39'57"E
Puglia	IT-75	Bari	41°07'25"N 16°50'34"E
Sardegna [*]	IT-88	Cagliari	39°13'00"N 09°07'00"E
Sicilia [*]	IT-82	Palermo	38°07'00"N 13°21'49"E
Toscana	IT-52	Firenze (Florence)	43°45'37"N 11°14'30"E
Trentino-Alto Adige/Trentino-Südtirol [*]	IT-32	Trento	46°03'46"N 11°07'56"E
Umbria	IT-55	Perugia	43°07'50"N 12°21'45"E
Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste [*]	IT-23	Aosta/Aoste ⁷	45°44'26"N 07°19'41"E
Veneto	IT-34	Venezia (Venice)	45°26'17"N 12°19'37"E

⁵ Many Italian cities have commonly known English conventional names. These are shown in brackets and can be included in this style, if deemed useful for an HMG product.

⁶ Though often seen with a hyphen: Friuli-Venezia Giulia, a modification to the Constitution removed this in 2001: [La Costituzione - Articolo 116 | Senato della Repubblica](#)

⁷ Though the region's geoportal uses a single name, Aosta, for the city, as a bilingual region, PCGN recommends reflecting the dual language form for this administrative centre. Other names in the region can appear in their single language form as shown in the geoportal as noted above.

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Other Significant Locations

PCGN Recommended Name	English conventional name	Location	Feature Type
Alpi or Alps ⁸	Alps	46°34'48"N 08°37'12"E	Mountain range – in three sections through northern Italy: Western, Central and Eastern Alps (the Alps range also runs through Monaco, France, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Germany, Austria, Slovenia)
Appennini	Apennine Mountains	42°28'09"N 13°33'56"E	Mountain range [Italy; San Marino]
Dolomiti	Dolomites	46°26'00"N 11°51'00"E	Mountain range – within Italy's Eastern Alps
Mont Blanc/Monte Bianco ⁹	Mont Blanc	45°49'58"N 06°51'54"E	Mountain
Monte Etna	Mount Etna	37°45'18"N 14°59'42"E	Mountain/volcano
Monte Rosa	-	45°56'13"N 07°52'00"E	Mountain
Pianura Padana	Po valley	45°19'49"N 09°47'56"E	River and river valley/plain
Sardegna	Sardinia	40°00'00"N 09°00'00"E	Island
Sicilia	Sicily	37°30'00"N 14°00'00"E	Island

⁸ PCGN usually recommends conventional English names for international features, unless national variants are specifically required, or the relevant countries share an official language.

⁹ The French language name is arguably also a 'conventional' name in English and this name – Mont Blanc – can be used alone, though both names can be shown if desired. Additionally, since the feature is in the Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste region, which includes French as an official language, local sources may only use the French name even within Italy. For most purposes, therefore, the name Mont Blanc will be sufficient.

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Useful references

- BBC Country Profile (no longer updated): [Italy country profile - BBC News](#)
- Ethnologue: www.ethnologue.com (for information on languages)
- FCDO Geographical Names Index (GNI):
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/geographical-names-and-information>
- ISO Online Browsing Platform (OBP): [IT - Italy](#)
- Italy geoportal: [Home - Geoportale MASE - Geoportale](#)
- Italian Istituto Geografico Militare: [Homepage - Istituto Geografico Militare](#).
- Italian regional sources:
 - The geoportal of Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste is available here: [RAVdA - GeoNavigatore SCT](#)
 - Trentino-Alto Adige/Trentino-Südtirol – Bozen/Bolzano province: [MapView - - GeoBrowser MapView](#), - Trento province: [Carta Tecnica Provinciale](#)
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 - Friuli-Venezia Giulia geoportal: [Eaglefvg - Sistema di consultazione delle banche dati territoriali della Regione Autonoma Friuli Venezia Giulia](#),
 - Sardinia geoportal: [Sardegna Geoportale - Sardegna Geoportale](#)
- Omniglot: www.omniglot.com (for information on languages and scripts)
- PCGN Country Names list: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/country-names>
- PCGN Toponymic Factfile on European Microstates: [PCGN Toponymic Factfile on European Microstates](#)
- Unicode: www.unicode.org
- US Board on Geographic Names GEOnet Names Server: [GNS Search & Download WebApp \(nga.mil\)](#)

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