



**Learn Your World: Italy**

**Skills and Professional Development**



To support your global practice, *ACC Docket* offers country-specific fun facts from your peers who've been there — literally.



**Economy**

GDP (purchasing power parity in USD)

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<b>Population</b>	\$2.174 trillion 60,674,003 (2015 estimate)
<b>Corruption</b>	According to Transparency International's "2015 Corruption Perception Index," Italy was the 61st "cleanest" (i.e., least corrupt) country out of the 168 surveyed.
<b>Economic Forecast</b>	GDP growth is expected to rise to 1.4 percent in 2016 and 2017. The labor market is improving, helping to drive private consumption higher. However, bank credit remains constrained due to the large and still rising amount of non-performing loans, hampering investment growth. Sluggish export market growth is hindering exports. Large, although declining, economic slack will contain consumer price and wage inflation, according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.
<b>Additional Resources</b>	<a href="#">Italian tourism official site</a> <a href="#">The Local</a> , English language Italian newspaper

As a tourist in Italy soon discovers, there is no one "Italian experience." A traveler in Sicily seeks shade to enjoy a *granite*. A visitor to Rome relaxes on the Spanish Steps with a gelato. Hikers in the north eat polenta with gorgonzola before climbing the Dolomiti.

This diversity makes sense when you consider that despite millennia of history, Italy has been a modern federal state for only 150 years. A lawyer in Italy should not be surprised to find the same variety of professional experience.

The north of Italy, characterized by the major cities of Turin, Milan, and Venice, is the industrial belt and services zone. The pace is lightning fast with a focus on efficiency. Dress code is formal; jackets stay on. Greet professionals with a firm handshake and a confident smile. Business cards are a must, but are handed out informally. Be early or on time. Do not drink wine at lunch.

Heading south, you find an alternative mix of fashion, industry, and engineering. Gucci and Ferragamo labels are based in Florence. The Marche region is famous for "made in Italy" shoes. The university town of Bologna is also home to Technogym and Lamborghini. The focus is on craftsmanship. Wear your best shoes, carry a leather bag, and travel in style.

Toward Rome, the pace of business and administration becomes very slow, always running late. Rome is unlike any other city, but has the exaggerated bureaucracy of any capital. The weather and greetings are warmer. Kisses are reserved for social acquaintances, but men will embrace in greeting. Wine with a long lunch is acceptable. Attire is elegant, but ties are optional unless in government meetings.

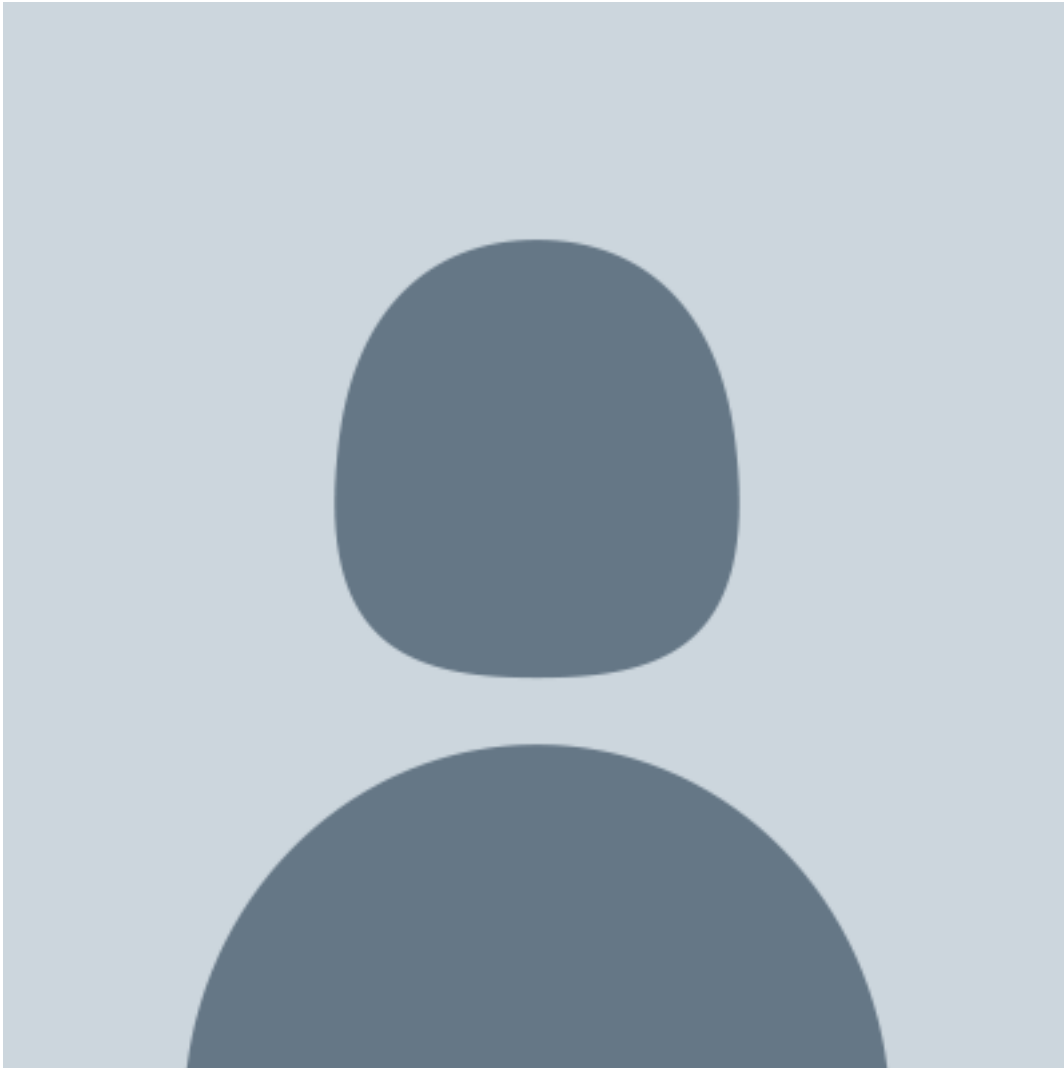
The weather and local temperament get hotter as you move south through Napoli, Bari, and the cities of Sicily. Here you find tourism but also high tech R&D. A lawyer in this area should be ready for anything and surprised by nothing.

While diverse, there is one common Italian rule a lawyer must observe: Never be the first to leave a

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meeting. It is only when the formal agenda is over that the real business of lawyering is done in Italy.  
Buon viaggio e buon coraggio!

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