



# Italy

## A European Cultural Center

As the heart of the Roman Catholic Church and witness of the birth of Christendom, Italy has deep religious roots.

Despite this heritage, the vast majority of Italians today are more likely to engage in pagan practices linked to the New Age movement, cults or the occult rather than read a Bible. They identify with Catholicism culturally but not at the heart of daily life.

Truly an unreached nation, only about 1.5% of Italians have found new life in Jesus Christ. The need for new Bible-based churches is staggering.

# World Team

[us.worldteam.org](http://us.worldteam.org)

[mobilize.us@worldteam.org](mailto:mobilize.us@worldteam.org)

800.967.7109



### Culture

Known worldwide for its food, arts, sports cars, people, fashion, culture, traditions and breathtaking landscapes, Italy entices personal experiences beyond compare. Italy takes great pride in its influence on other cultures while maintaining high traditions of close family ties that often create difficult barriers for others to cut across.

On the surface, Italians are outgoing and fun people, but just underneath lurks a sense of fear woven into the very fabric of life and culture. The absence of hope looms large in this highly fashioned society where the irrelevance of the Catholic Church, an ineffective and factionalized government, and an attachment to tradition give rise to lack of trust in people and institutions.

### Location

The famous 'boot' of Italy extends from western Europe into the waters of the Mediterranean Sea. World Team's ministry is focused in the northern city of Milan, Italy's great financial and fashion center.

### Religion

While as little as 3% of Italy's 60.5 million people attend Catholic Mass on a regular basis, only 1.5% are evangelical believers. The vast majority is atheistic or adheres to Eastern religions.

### Economy

While the Mafia and black market still largely affect the economy in southern Italy, unemployment is unacceptably high in the south, causing southerners to emigrate north or abroad to find work and sometimes sustain loved ones back home. Italy boasts the eighth-largest economy in the world.

# Movement of Culturally Relevant Churches

## Italy Today

Italians esteem beauty in nature, the arts and people. Ironically, with such a rich appreciation for their environment, the Italians live in spiritual darkness. Most know little to nothing of the Scriptures.

The majority of Italians culturally observe the main Roman Catholic rites while freely living and believing their own version of spirituality. Some worship materialism, Buddhism, New Age, meditation, fortunetellers, or just their own idea of spirituality.

Indeed, there are three times the number of practicing magicians or spiritists than Catholic priests in Italy, revealing a significant hunger for something spiritual.

While much of the traditional spiritual and political life in Italy flows out of the capital, Rome, the real hotbed of national influence is found in the economic, banking, fashion and industrial-rich urban sprawl of Milan. Milan leads Italy in virtually every aspect of modern life except the evangelical witness.

## World Team's Vision to Expand

Because of its socio-economic influence and great spiritual need, World Team's focus is northern Italy and the city of Milan. Workers are building relationships and laying foundations for two communities of believing Italians to grow and worship together.

The vision is to expand these efforts by establishing three new church planting teams. In response to the growing immigrant crisis, we desire to minister to the needs of these dear people and establish communities of believers among them.

A second team will focus on the university students where there is a population of almost 200,000 students and little to no evangelical witness taking place.

Another team will serve in the Brianza area just north of Milan. It is one of the most densely populated areas in all of Europe, and there are very few evangelical

churches.

People	Italians
Language	Italian
Location	Milan, Italy
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Evangelism:</b> primarily focusing on those aged 15 to 35 and young families</li><li>• <b>Training:</b> practical, hands-on training to develop Italian leaders to lead and multiply churches</li><li>• <b>Networking:</b> bringing together other evangelical churches and ministries for leadership training and to foster church multiplication</li></ul>

## Ministry Overview

*Michele gave his life to the Lord after his daughter attended an English camp put on by World Team missionaries. He says that the Bible used to be just another book on the shelf, but now he has such a thirst for God's truth that he cannot put it down. He will tell you that more missionaries are needed in Italy!*

World Team's desire is to see a movement of culturally relevant churches that provide a positive experience of the love and authority of Christ and the Scriptures.

**Join the Team!**

**US.WorldTeam.org**

**Mobilize.US@WorldTeam.org**