

Italy

Recent policy developments

- In 2013, the Italian government, through Law 255/2013, created a new agency for territorial cohesion. The agency's mission is technical support for the use of European Union Cohesion Policy funds in Italy.
- Law 95/2012 proposes to reduce the number of Italian provinces from the current 86 to 51 through the merging of small contiguous provinces within the same region until they include at least 350 000 inhabitants or 200-500 inhabitants/km². The provinces will maintain responsibility for territorial planning, transport and schools. The political governments will be abolished and substituted by the appointment of three councillors. The reform of the provinces is currently under discussion in parliament.
- Ten of the 51 provinces will have a special institutional organisation as metropolitan areas (*Città metropolitana*): Rome, Turin, Milan, Venice, Genoa, Bologna, Florence, Bari, Naples and Reggio Calabria. Metropolitan cities have been planned since 1990 but have not yet been put into effect. Their creation was delayed until 2015 by the 2013 National Stability Law.
- In 2012, the prime minister created an Inter-Ministerial Committee for Urban Policy that addresses three main issues. First, the committee addresses the sometimes conflicting relationship between institutional boundaries and planning activities to increase effectiveness in policy making. Second, it addresses the phenomenon of urban sprawl, territorial congestion and the need for efficient infrastructure. Third, it looks at the maintenance and strategic management of the process of recovery and renewal of housing stock.

Government structure	Municipal-level governments	Intermediate-level governments	Regional or state-level governments
Unitary	8 092	110	20

Regional development policy

Lead ministry(ies) or committees	Ministry for Economic Development (Department for Development and Economic Cohesion)
Regional development framework	National Strategic Framework 2014-2020 combines both EU and domestic regional policy budgets.

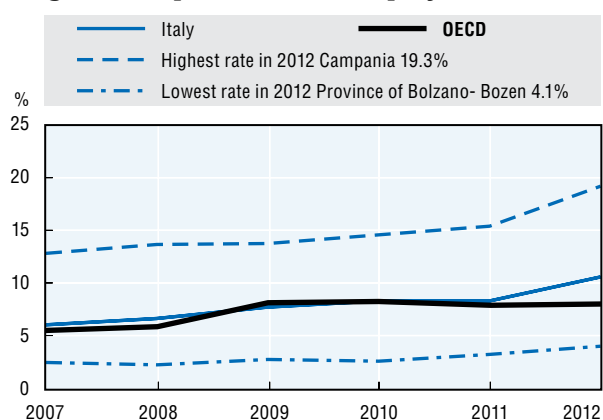
Urban development policy

Lead ministry(ies) or committees	Inter-Ministerial Committee for Urban Policy (under the Prime Minister)
Urban policy framework or strategy	No general framework (some continuing programmes for urban renewal)

Rural development policy

Lead ministry(ies) or committees	Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policies (MIPAAF); Ministry of Economic Development
Rural policy framework or strategy	The National Strategy Plan for Rural Development (NSP) for Italy provides the overall policy framework for rural development in the country. Each administrative region has a rural development programme in place.

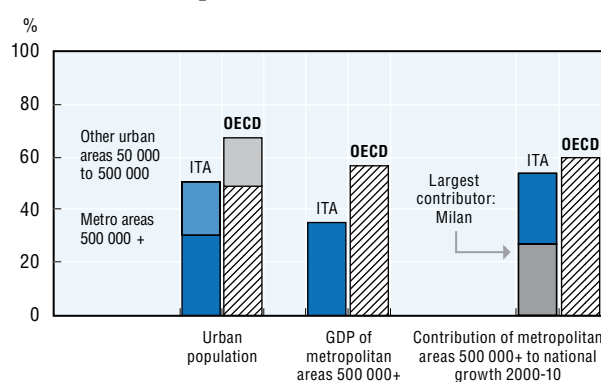
Regional disparities in unemployment trends



In recent years, the unemployment rate has soared in Italian regions such as Campania (19.3%), and the youth unemployment rate reached 53.4% in Calabria.

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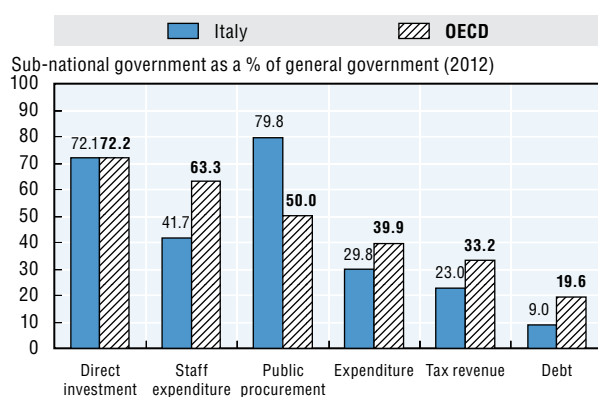
The importance of urban areas



In Italy, 51% of the population lives in cities of different sizes. The share of population in metropolitan areas (urban areas with more than 500 000 inhabitants) is 30%, compared to 49% in the OECD area.

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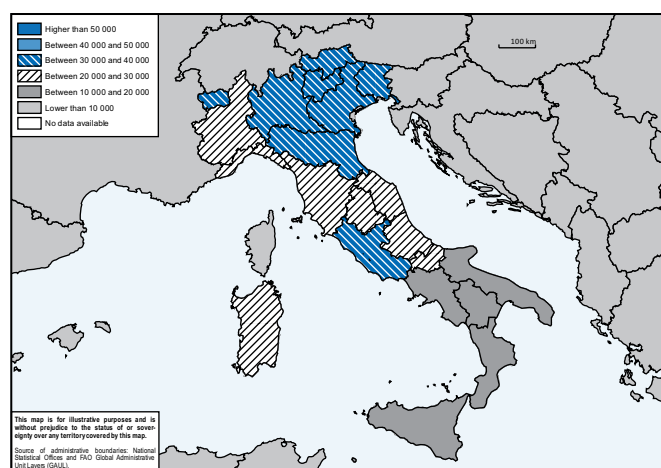
The role of sub-national governments in public finance



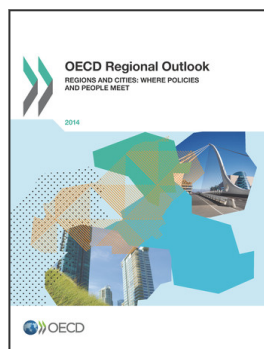
Health and economic affairs are the two largest spending items for SNGs in Italy: together they represent 61% of sub-national expenditure, compared to 32% in the OECD area.

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Regional differences in GDP per capita levels



Italy has the 12th largest regional disparities in GDP per capita. In the previous decade, regional growth varied from +1.3% annually in the Aosta Valley to -0.5% in Basilicata.



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