

Italy

Business Travel Guide

Compiled by:

Swiss Business Hub Italy

Milano, February 2025

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Swiss citizens residing in Switzerland can enter Italy with a valid national ID card or passport. A visa is not required to access the country. Please check the interactive website for further details:

<https://vistoperitalia.esteri.it/home/en>

Please mind, that posting of workers is subject to registration on the [Ministry of Work Homepage](#).

As a neighboring country, Italy can be reached by car, railway and flight. Please check relevant websites for detailed information:

- CAR – highways require toll payments <https://www.autostrade.it/en/home>
- RAILWAY – www.sbb.ch www.trenitalia.com
- FLIGHT – Main international airports with permanent connections to Switzerland are:
Roma Fiumicino (FCO)
Milano Malpensa (MXP)
Bologna (BLQ)
Firenze (FLR)

This list is not exhaustive as some flight companies may offer seasonal flights and indirect flights (via). Companies with direct flights are: [Swiss Intl. Air Lines](#) and [ITA Airways](#).

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

Mandatory and recommended vaccinations: N

Mandatory medical insurance: Medical assistance is guaranteed. For any medical treatment, you must present your [European Health Insurance Card](#).

Other mandatory health requirements: None

PUBLIC SECURITY / RECOMMENDED PRECAUTIONS

Business permanence in Italy does not require any specific security precautions.

Please check the below link for updated information:

<https://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/dfda/representations-and-travel-advice.html>

<https://www.fdfa.admin.ch/countries/italy/it/home/consigli-di-viaggio/consigli-di-viaggio.html>

Please check national police website for general advice:

<https://www.poliziadistato.it/articolo/view/20909/>

TIME ZONE

There is no time difference between Switzerland and Italy

BUSINESS HOURS

	Weekdays	Saturdays	Sundays and Nationals Holidays
Government Offices	8:30-15:30	Closed	Closed
Banks	8:30-16:00	Closed	Closed
Shops	07:30-21:00	07:30-21:00	07:30-20:00

Since 2011, shops are free to determine their business hours. Business hours may vary according to function and may vary from region to region, so it is recommended to check beforehand in case of urgent issues.

The standard working day in Italy starts at around 09:00–09:30 and finishes at around 18:00–18:30, with a lunch break starting around 13:00 and lasting up to two hours.

Pharmacies are normally open each day from 8:30 to 19:30.

OTHER BUSINESS HOURS MAY VARY ACCORDING TO FUNCTION AND MAY VARY FROM REGION TO REGION, SO IT IS RECOMMENDED TO CHECK BEFOREHAND IN CASE OF URGENT ISSUES. PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

01.01.2025	New Year's Day (Capodanno)
06.01.2025	Epiphany
20.04.2025	Easter Sunday
21.04.2025	Easter Monday

25.04.2025	Republic Day
01.05.2025	Labor Day
02.06.2025	National Day (Republic Day)
15.08.2025	Ferragosto/Midsummer
01.11.2025	All Saints' Day
08.12.2025	Immaculate Conception
25.12.2025	Christmas Day
26.12.2025	St Stephen's Day

*Each city celebrates an additional day ("Santo Patrono") in which businesses are normally closed, for instance:

Milano 7th December

Rome 29th June

NATIONAL TRADE FAIR CALENDAR

A selection of the most relevant international trade events are:

SALONE DEL MOBILE Furniture Milano <https://www.salonemilano.it/en>
08.04.2025 – 13.04.2025

SPS PARMA Electric Automation Parma www.spsitalia.it
13.05.2025 – 15.05.2025

WE MAKE FUTURE Digital Innovation Bologna <https://www.wemakefuture.it/>
04.06.2025 – 06.06.2025

CPHI Pharma Industry Milano <https://www.cphi.com/en/home.html>
28.10.2025 – 30.10.2025

The dates of the main trade fairs can be obtained from: <https://www.aefi.it/>

COMMUNICATION: TELEPHONE AND INTERNET

Italy's country code is: +39

Local SIM card can be bought at: Vodafone, TIM, Wind Tre, Illiad, Fastweb

Important phone numbers:

National emergency number	112
Police	113
Fire department	115
Medical emergency	118

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

Electricity plug and socket:



The voltage in Italy is 220 V with a frequency of 50 Hz.

Electric sockets (C, F, L) comply with European regulations.

METHODS OF PAYMENT

National currency in Italy is the Euro.

Exchange rate as of February 1, 2025: CHF 1 = EUR 1.06.

Exchange rates can be checked on the official source (European Central Bank)

https://www.ecb.europa.eu/stats/policy_and_exchange_rates/euro_reference_exchange_rates/html/index.en.html

When entering or leaving the country with EUR 1'000 or more in cash or other monetary instruments, the money must be declared in writing to the custom office.

Tips are not compulsory in Italy and hence less common. However, there are no generally established rules and you can leave a sum amounting 10% of the bill if you are satisfied with the service.

Acceptance of methods of payment:

	everywhere	almost everywhere	limited	not accepted
Cash (national currency)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cash (EUR)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MasterCard	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visa	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
American Express	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Apple Pay	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Google/Samsung Pay	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Foreign currencies and cash in big banknotes are hardly accepted except for limited range of businesses such as international hotels and similar. It is therefore advisable to convert currencies in Euro or use credit cards.

DOMESTIC TRAVEL, LOCAL TRANSPORT

The most commonly used kind of public transport is train. The quality of the services is good. Public transport is available everywhere in Italy. The whole transport infrastructure is generally well developed in Italy with some differences according to regions.

The rail network is extensive and covers the whole country. Recent years have seen a significant growth of high-speed network (alta velocità AV) with new projects in planning.

The basic charge during the day is € 3.70, the **price** per kilometer is € 1.80 - € 1.20. Standing and waiting time is charged at € 31.30 per hour.

Main ride hailing apps: FreeNow and Uber.

Main method of payment for taxi and subways: cash or card (also contactless)

Useful links may be:

Roads – www.autostrade.it – www.stradeanas.it

Railway – www.trenitalia.it – www.italotreno.it

Main public transport app in Milano – www.atm.it

Car rental:

It is very simple to rent a car or a motorbike, but it is best to check in advance, which are the requirements of the different agencies. Age generally must be 23 or over (sometimes 25), but some agencies allow younger people to rent a vehicle. A credit card is generally necessary, plus a driving license. Nationals of Non-EU countries (except CH) should also possess an International Driving Permit (IDP).

ACCOMMODATION, TEMPORARY OFFICE SPACE

Accommodation of any sort is extremely easy to find all over the country through common channels as hotel chains and online providers.

Long rental for business purposes are available in all the main business and touristic cities (Milan, Rome, Turin, Naples, Florence, Venice etc.)

Co-working spaces are widely available in all major business centers. You may also contact Swiss Business Hub Italy for proposal (ie. Centro Svizzero, Milano).

Useful link: www.italiancoworking.it

LANGUAGES USED FOR BUSINESS

Italian is the language mainly used also for business. However, English is also standard within the business community.

BUSINESS PRACTICES

Tips for initiating business contacts

It is normally good norm to start a business contact formally that is by e-mail or phone call.

It can be very useful to be introduced by somebody who knows you already in order to create a sense of trust. After first contact, a face-to-face relationship is preferred.

Scheduling Meetings:

Appointments are mandatory and can also be done on short-notice.

It can be useful to reconfirm the meeting by telephone a few days before the set date. Avoid organizing meetings in August and during public holiday.

Business attire:

It is advisable to pay attention to the dress code, as it may represent your lifestyle, your status and your skills. Italy has generally elevated standards in dressing.

Depending on the company and business circumstance, a smart-dress code may be accepted without problems.

Introducing yourself:

In business environment introduction always start with hands shaking. Hugs or two kisses on each cheek may not be unusual once the relationship is established and there is mutual trust.

Building trust and personal relationships:

A certain formality is common and appreciated.

The use of professional titles is required, especially in writing. Initially, you should address people by their title and last name and wait to be explicitly invited to use other forms (first name or last name coupled with the Italian "tu").

However, depending on the company culture and personal attitudes, the switch to the colloquial forms of address and using the first-names can be adopted quite rapidly.

Offering and accepting gifts and invitations:

Gift giving is not particularly common.

After a personal relationship has been established, it may be more appropriate to give small gifts. In any case, it is better not give a business gift until you receive one first. Also non-material gifts such as small favours are highly appreciated.

Sensitive topics:

Politics, particularly national, can be a sensitive topic.

BUSINESS RISKS

Risk of fraud and corruption is low in Italy but higher compared to other neighboring countries (<https://risk-indexes.com/global-corruption-index/>) with a 29.66 it ranks 35th.

CRC risk qualification: HI – High Income / OECD. At the same time, Italy has an elevated complexity in its jurisdiction (especially fiscal law).

Swiss Export Risk Insurance SERV insures political and *del credere* risks involved in exporting goods and services.

[Products for exporters](#)

[Product for service providers](#)

[Products for financial institutions](#)

The full range of services and products offered by SERV can be obtained at www.serv-ch.com.

Your contact person in Zurich

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IMPORT OF SAMPLES AND CATALOGUES

Temporary importation of non-EU goods, for various uses is allowed with total or partial exemption from customs duties (duty and VAT) and without the application of commercial policy measures. Goods under temporary admission must be re-exported without having undergone any changes apart from the normal depreciation due to use.

Where the goods are not re-exported but have been nationalized, the relative rights (duty and VAT) must be paid, in addition to the compensatory interest accounted for from the date of placing the goods under the temporary admission regime.

Further information at the **National Customs and Monopolies Agency**: www.adm.gov.it

USEFUL LOCAL WEBSITES, ADDRESSES, EMAIL AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Business
news

<https://www.ilsole24ore.com>

Customs
hotline

<http://www.agenziadogane.it>

+39 800 257 428

<https://www.adm.gov.it/portale/contatti>

ADDRESSES OF EMBASSY AND CONSULATES OF SWITZERLAND

Embassy of Switzerland in Rome

Via Barnaba Oriani 61

00197 Roma

www.eda.admin.ch

+39 06 809 571

roma@eda.admin.ch

Consulate General in Milano

Via Palestro 2

20121 Milano

www.eda.admin.ch

+39 02 77 79 161

milano@eda.admin.ch

Opening times:

Lunedì 09:00 - 12:00

Martedì 09:00 - 12:00

Mercoledì 09:00 - 12:00

Giovedì 09:00 - 12:00

Venerdì 09:00 - 12:00

Sabato chiuso

Domenica chiuso

Opening times:

Lunedì 09:00 - 12:00
13:30 - 17:00

Martedì 09:00 - 12:00
13:30 - 17:00

Mercoledì 09:00 - 12:00
13:30 - 17:00

Giovedì 09:00 - 12:00
13:30 - 17:00

Venerdì 09:00 - 12:00

Sabato chiuso

Domenica chiuso

ADDRESSES BILATERAL, NATIONAL AND LOCAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

SWISS CHAMBER – Camera di Commercio Svizzera in Italia

Via Palestro, 2

20121 Milano

www.swisschamber.it

ADDRESSES OF THE EMBASSY AND CONSULATES OF ITALY IN OR FOR SWITZERLAND

Embassy of Italy

Elfenstrasse, 14

3006 Bern

+41 (0)31 350 07 77

Consulate General in Zürich

Tödisstrasse, 65

8002 Zürich

Tel.: +41 (0) 44 286 61 11

Consulate General in Genève

Rue Charles Galland, 14
1206 Genève
Tel.: +41 (0) 22 839 6744

Consulate General in Basel

Schaffhauserrheinweg, 5
4058 Basel
Tel.: +41 (0) 61 689 96 26

Consulate General in Lugano

Via Ferruccio Pelli, 16
6900 Lugano
Tel.: +41 (0) 91 913 30 50

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