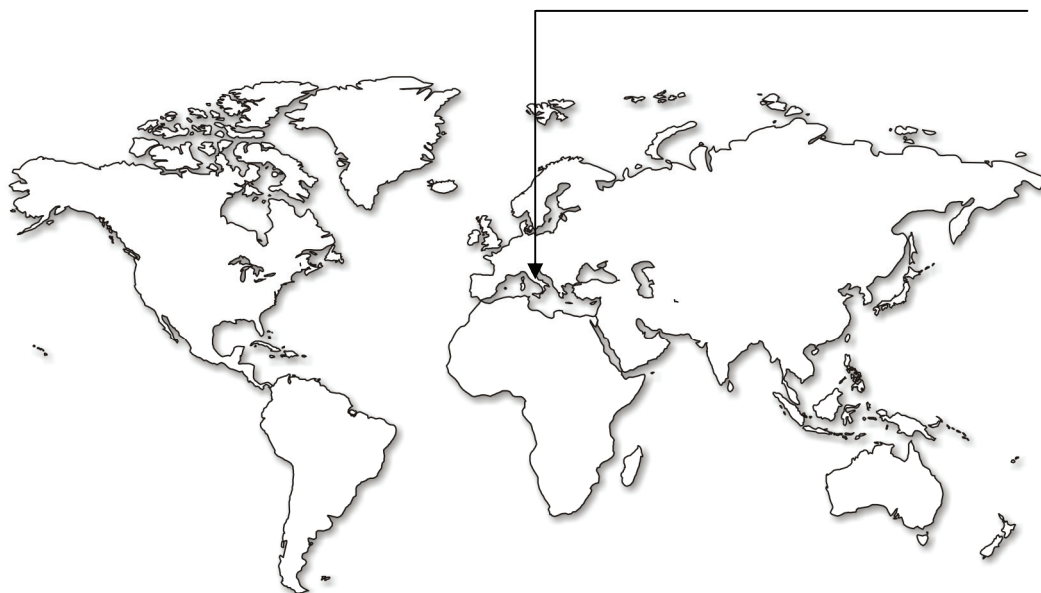


## Italy




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### Responding institution:

The respondent has requested to remain anonymous.

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Italy responded to the IFLA/FAIFE questionnaire in 2001, 2003 and 2005. There are an estimated number of 6 642 public libraries, as well as 1 800 school libraries and 2 563 university libraries. The number of government-funded research libraries is given as 698. The source for the data is the Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo Unico (ICCU).

Internet penetration is fairly high in Italy, with 51.7% of the population being Internet users. Levels of access in the country's libraries are correspondingly high, as 81-100% of public and university libraries, 61-80% of government-funded research libraries and 41-60% of school libraries offer Internet access to their users. Internet access is provided free of charge in all school, university and public libraries (libraries whose financial budget is covered by central or local government). The state has made no extra funding available to improve Internet access during the last two years.

An average amount of local content is available on the Internet, and an average amount is available in local languages. The literacy rate is given as 80% (98.4% in the 2007 *CIA World Factbook*).

The respondent has indicated that the library association is in favour of filtering information to a certain extent (e.g. for children), and that filtering software is used on certain terminals for the protection of children.

The respondent has also indicated that the media in Italy is largely owned by a strong financial trust, which makes it difficult for independent media houses to break into the market. On the other hand, the new minor and medium independent publishing houses serve to aid freedom of expression through their different cultural approaches and the access to publications by young national and international writers. A new book fair (*Più Libri, Più Liberi*) has been taking place in Rome since 2002 and is dedicated especially to such publishers. Turin and Rome were World Book Capitals 2006–2007 and libraries were strongly involved in a new approach to enhance cooperation among role-players in the book chain. During this year, strong attention was paid to the connection between the press and cultural diversity. The Italian government promised renewed attention to this part of the cultural industry.

The library association has adopted both the IFLA Internet Manifesto and the Glasgow Declaration, and a code of ethics was adopted in 1997.

### User privacy and anti-terror legislation

Anti-terror legislation has been passed (L 1155/2005). Libraries have to make and keep photocopies of users' IDs and access dates. Although the respondent has indicated that the anti-terror legislation does impact on user privacy, it is noted that Italian users have not expressed reluctance or refused to use library materials since the legislation was passed. It is felt that keeping user records will affect the freedom of expression of the individual Internet library user, as the

legislation requires user data to be kept for at least one year.

### **Reported incidents/violations of intellectual freedom in the past two years**

The 2005 IFLA/FAIFE report for Italy reported, inter alia, on the issue of the book *Scopami* by Viregnie Despentès loaned to a 15-year-old girl. The book in question was a legally published work recommended for teenagers by the Italian Ministry of Work and Welfare as part of an anti-drug campaign. The final verdict on 17 June 2005 declared the librarian not guilty of the charge of disseminating an obscene document.

Reporters Without Borders has reported on some incidents of violation of freedom of expression in the last two years. A blogger was convicted of defamation in June 2006 after he apparently wrote several articles directly attacking local figures (<http://www.ifex.org/fr/content/view/full/75183/>). A Bill on telephone tapping, which regulates the publication of phone call intercepts in the news media, was passed in April 2007 and raises concerns about freedom of expression (<http://www.ifex.org/fr/content/view/full/84523/>). As of February 2006, Internet service providers in Italy are not allowed to provide access to websites that offer online gambling (<http://opennet.net/research/regions/europe>).

The respondent has also indicated that the media in Italy is largely owned by a strong financial trust, which makes it difficult for independent media houses to break into the market (see also [http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id\\_article=17379](http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id_article=17379)).

### **HIV/Aids awareness**

Public libraries keep up-to-date catalogues about HIV/Aids information. The ISS (Istituto Superiore di Sanità) has published a manifesto entitled: "The library as prevention tool for healthcare: A collaboration experience with the Aids phone line".

In response to the question on libraries' involvement in programmes for providing HIV/Aids information to members of the community who are unable to read, the respondent has indicated that the Public Libraries Commission of the Italian library association recently published a volume titled "Associazione Italiana

Biblioteche, Biblioteche per tutti. Servizi per lettori in difficoltà, a cura della Commissione Nazionale Biblioteche Pubbliche", by R. Borghi, C. Cognigni, P. Lietti & S. Parise (see p. 304).

### **Women and freedom of access to information**

Many libraries have special programmes that focus on the promotion of women's literacy. There are special catalogues, and in any Italian region there are libraries devoted to women's literature production, such as in Bologna (<http://www.women.it/bibliotecadelledonne>) and, in Calabria, the Biblioteca Delle Donne Nosside (<http://www.women.it/luoghi/luoghi-it/nosside.htm>).

There are also programmes that focus on women's access to specific topics, such as "Donne immigrate in biblioteca" by Biblioteca; "V. Joppi" by Udine (<http://www.liberweb.it/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=238&topic=22>), and "Centro condizione donna" by Napoli Public Libraries.

### **IFLA Internet Manifesto**

The IFLA Internet Manifesto has been adopted and libraries display it on their own websites. The Manifesto is presented during classes of reference services for librarians. Libraries also mention it on their sites regarding rules for Internet use, for example the Biblioteca di Rudiano (<http://www.bibliotecarudiano.it/pdf/InternetBiblioteca.pdf>) and Biblioteche di Brescia (<http://www.provincia.brescia.it/rassegna/vediarticolo.php?id=44&ida=469&idt=2302>).

### **IFLA Glasgow Declaration on Libraries, Information Services and Intellectual Freedom**

The Glasgow Declaration has been adopted and is displayed on libraries' websites.

### **Ethics**

The library association adopted a code of ethics on 30 October 1997 (see <http://www.aib.it/aib/cen/deocod-e.htm>). The code has been implemented in all libraries and the respondent has indicated that librarians know it very well. Many libraries also display the code on their own websites, for example Sistema Bibliotecario Vibonese ([http://www.sbvibonese.vv.it/sezionec/pag348\\_c.aspx](http://www.sbvibonese.vv.it/sezionec/pag348_c.aspx)) and Biblioteche di Roma (<http://www.bibliotecdiroma.it>).

### Main indicators

Country name:	Italy
Population:	58 147 733 (July 2007 est.)
Main language:	Italian (official), German (parts of the Trentino-Alto Adige region are mainly German speaking), French (small minority in the Valle d'Aosta region), Slovene (minority in the Trieste-Gorizia area)
Literacy:	98.4%
Literacy reported by respondent:	80%

Population figures, language and literacy are from the  
*CIA World Factbook*, 2007 edition  
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>.



### Libraries and Internet access

Italy contributed to the World Report series in 2005, 2003 and 2001. The following section compares data and answers from 2007 with the 2005 IFLA/FAIFE World Report and adds context from the respondent's estimates, where possible.

#### Library services

Estimated number of public libraries*:	6 642 (2005: 6 700)
Estimated number of school libraries:	1 800
Estimated number of university libraries:	2 563
Estimated number of government-funded research libraries:	698
Source of these numbers:	Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo Unico (ICCU)

#### Internet access

Population online**:	30 763 940 Internet users as of Jan. 2007 (51.7%) (2005: 49.2%)
Percentage of public libraries offering Internet access to users:	81-100% (2005: 81-100%)
Percentage of school libraries offering Internet access to users:	41-60%
Percentage of university libraries offering Internet access to users:	81-100%
Percentage of government-funded research libraries offering Internet access to users:	61-80%
In your estimate, how much local content*** is available on the Internet:	Average
To what degree is content on the Internet available in local languages:	Average
Is the library association in favour of filtering information on library Internet terminals:	Yes, to a certain degree – for the protection of children (2005: Yes, to a certain degree, motivated by the need to protect children)
Is the use of filtering software widespread in your country's libraries:	Yes, to a certain degree (2005: Yes, to a certain degree)
Is it free of charge for library users to access the Internet on library computers:	Yes, in all libraries (2005: Yes, in all libraries)
Has the state or other library authorities made any extra funding available for Internet access in the library system of your country in the last two years:	No (2005: No)

\* Public library service points, including branch libraries.

\*\* Online population numbers are from Internet World Stats ([www.Internetworldstats.com](http://www.Internetworldstats.com)).

\*\*\* Local content is defined as content that originates in the country.