

Sicily

Overview:

Sicily (Sicilia) is the largest island in the Mediterranean and an autonomous region of the Republic of Italy. It lies southwest of mainland Italy, north of Malta and Tunisia.

Territory:

Sicily consists of the main island as well as the Egadi Islands, Aolian Islands, Pelagie Islands, Pantelleria, and Ustica. The main island is separated from mainland Italy by the narrow Strait of Messina which is 3km wide. Sicily represents 8.5% of national land area. 85% of Sicily is mountainous, the highest point being Mount Etna, Europe's largest active volcano which is 10,902 feet (3,323 metres) high. The central plateau slopes to coastal lowlands which are fertile areas drained by small seasonal rivers and streams. The two main rivers on the island are the Salso and the Simeta.

Location:

Sicily is surrounded by the Mediterranean Sea to the west and south, the Ionian Sea to the east, and the Tyrrhenian Sea to the north.

Latitude and Longitude:

48 00' N, 13 30 E

Time Zone:

GMT +1

Total Land Area:

25706

EEZ:

Climate:

In 2005, the island was experiencing a drought. Desertification is a problem in internal areas of the island where agricultural and pasture land is being abandoned. Rainfall is 400-1,000 mm annually.

Natural Resources:

Sicily is most famous for its colourful volcanic landscape, especially Mt.Etna, Europe's largest active volcano. Stromboli, in the Eolie islands, is also active. Sicily is also home to a diverse population of birds and many migrating species at certain times of the year.

ECONOMY:

Total GDP:	
2003	86,900,000,000.00 USD

Per Capita GDP:	
2003	17,488.00 USD

% of GDP per Sector:			
	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
2000	4.6%	16.4%	69.7%

% of Population Employed by Sector			
	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
2001	9.5%	15.7%	55.3%
2002	7.3%	17.1%	55.3%

External Aid/Remittances:

Growth:

Between 1995 and 1999 the island's GDP increased by an average of 2.2% annually in comparison to 1.5% for north-central Italy, and 1.9% for southern Italy. Sicily has the highest unemployment rates in Italy. In 2000, 23.8% of those employed were doing irregular types of work. Agriculture composed 41.4% of these, and industry 25.2%.

Labour Force:	
2000	1,777,000
2002	1,761,000
2003	1,760,000

Unemployment	
Year:	Unemployment Rate (% of pop.)

1998	24.2%
2000	24%
2002	20.1%

Industry:

Main industrial products are processed foods, chemicals and fertilizers, refined petroleum, textiles, leather goods, wine and forest products. Petroleum fields exist in the southeast, and natural gas and sulphur are also produced. Oil refinery is big business on the island and large amounts are exported. Other occupations include manufacturing wine and olive oil, canning fruit and vegetables, and preparing citric acid. Some glassware, metalware, and matches are produced in the larger cities.

Niche Industry:

Sicily has been promoting its strategic location for banking services for some time, and is a central location between Europe and Africa for offshore companies to set up offices. It is also taking advantage of its location to be a centre for the production of electronic goods. The parts are imported and final product exported. Petroleum refining is another big business. Sicily exports petroleum mainly to Italy.

Tourism:

Tourism is a large component of the tertiary sector and one that grows annually. Italians make up 57.3% of tourists in Sicily. In 1999 there were 12,041 visitors recorded on the island; in 2000 that number rose to 13,415 and in 2001, it was 13,737. [check units: 000s?]

Imports and Exports:	
Sicily's imports exceeded exports by 17.8% in 2003 making it one of the regions with the highest levels of dependence in the central-south of Italy. Main Imports: Minerals (energy producing and non): 70.4%; Industrially transformed products: 27%. Main Exports: Refined petroleum products and manufactured goods, 90%; Agricultural products, 6.2%.	
Tot. Value of Imports	2,147,483,647.00 Euro (2005)
From Eu:	
Import Partners (EU:)	
Partners Outside EU:	
Import Partners:	
Tot. Value of Exports	2147483647 Euro (2005)
To Eu:	
Export Partners:	
Partners Outside EU::	
Export Partners:	
Main Imports:	
Main Exports:	Sicily exports sulfur, fruits and vegetables, sumac, salt, wine, oil, and fish, and imports mainly grain, coal, and iron.

TRANSPORTATION/ACCESS

External:

Number of Airports: 5

The three main airports are Filippo Eredia, in Catania (% of all traffic); Falcone-Borsellino, in Palermo (%); and Sen. Vincenzo Florio, in Trapani (%). There are also two smaller airports situated on Pantelleria, and the Pelagie Islands, at Lampedusa. The island is connected to major Italian and European airports by Meridiana, Alitalia, Volare, Air One, and most recently Ryan Air which offers a direct flight from London to Algero's Fertilia airport.

Number of Main Ports: 3

The chief ports are Palermo, Catania, and Messina. Other ports on the island are Trapani, Eolie Islands, Licata, Marsala, Mazara del Vallo, Milazzo, Porto Empedolce, Pozzallo, Termini Imerese. Port with the most passengers is Messina, while the port with the most cargo is Augusta, and then Santa Panagia.

Internal:

Air

Road:

Sicily is well-connected, with a series of highways and motorways. In 2001 there were a total of 139 private and public bus lines on the island. Bus travel is dependable and affordable. The island is well-connected by rail also, although slower. Both bus and train lines connect Sicily to the mainland and there is a plan to construct a bridge between the island and mainland southern Italy in the near future. In October of 2006 the Italian Parliament voted against the plan despite support in Sicily.

Sea:

Other Forms of Transportation:

There are many independent car-rental dealerships as well as moped agencies on the island.

Economic Zones:

Fiscal incentives introduced by the Regional government and available qualified manpower who are willing to work for low wages have attracted both Italian and Foreign firms. Some examples are St.Micro Electronics, Air Liquid, Marzotto, Enel, Valtur, Omnitel, Nokia, Alitalia, Blutel, Nortel Networks.



etc.

Energy Policy:

Sicily produces a surplus of electricity. In 2003 it produced 24,308 thousand kwh, and it consumed only 18,283.2 of this. Only 741 thousand kwh were generated by hydroelectric, and a small percentage by photovoltaic electricity. The remaining 23,567 thousand kwh were produced by thermolectric power. While it would seem that they are producing enough to cover their needs most of the thermolectric power is being generated by imported crude oil.

Year	Total Energy Production (Mwh)	Type			Total Energy Consumption (Mwh)	Sector				
		Thermic (Mwh)	Geothermic (Mwh)	Other (Mwh)		Domestic (Mwh)	Commercial (Mwh)	Public Service (Mwh)	Industry (Mwh)	Public Lighting (Mwh)



Official Currency:

Banking and Insurance:

Number of Banks and Credit Unions:
Number of Agricultural Credit Unions:
Number of Insurance Companies:

Financial services is also growing. In September 2002, 40 different banks were present on the island, with more than 1,683 branches, mostly principal Italian banks, followed by credit unions, and small and medium sized banks.

Financial Services:

Communications/E-Commerce:

Public Ownership:

Land Use:

Sicily has 4 natural parks (Alcantara, Nebrodi, Etna, and Madonie); 4 marine reserves; 78 regional natural reserves; and 1 swamp. Sicily has 8.9% of Italy’s protected areas, and this represents 0.9% of the Regional territory.

Agriculture/Forestry:

Sicily’s wonderful climate does not just make it an excellent tourist destination; it is also responsible for the development of a healthy agriculture industry in the region. The agriculture industry in Sicily is worth more than 3.9 billion euro (5 billion dollars), accounting for 8.5 percent of Italy’s total agricultural production. In 2005, the region exported 294 million euro in agricultural products against imports of only 144 million euro. In total, 108,000 businesses operate in Sicily’s agriculture industry. The most important area of agricultural production is in the cultivation of fruit, specifically citrus fruits, olives and grapes. Agriculture, while still utilizing large areas of land, has been decreasing annually for years. It is characterized by small-scale farming (50.2% of plots in use are less than one hectare). In 2002, 20.9% of farming in Sicily was either organic or transferring to organic practices. Main products are grains and cereals, vegetables, olives, butts, citrus and other fruit, legumes, cotton, oil and wine. Animal husbandry is also important for local supply of dairy products and meat, but is being phased out due to migration from central to coastal urban areas.

Marine Activity:

Fishing:

The tuna and sardine fisheries as well as other smaller fisheries are important on a local level, and for canned products which are exported.

Marine Life:

fisheries (tunny, sardine, coral, and sponge) are extensive; one-fourth of Italy’s fishing vessels sail from Sicily.

Critical Issues:

JURISDICTIONAL RESOURCES

Capital:

Capital: Palermo. Sicily is divided into nine provinces and 390 municipalities. Agrigento has 43 municipalities; Caltanissetta has 22; Catania has 58; Enna has 20; Messina has 108 (largest Sicilian province); Palermo has 82; Ragusa has 12; Siracusa has 21; and Trapani has 24.

Political System:

Sicilian Island Government: Structure and Autonomous Powers: There are three Regional bodies: the Sicilian Regional Assembly, the Regional Council, and the President of the Region. The Sicilian Regional Assembly is composed of 90 members elected for a period of 5 years. The Assembly has areas of both exclusive and shared legislative power. The exclusive legislative powers deal with agriculture, forests, commerce, industry, public works, mining, public water, hunting and fishing, beneficial/charitable institutions, tourism, protection of the countryside and art, local bodies, primary instruction, museums, libraries and academies. The shared legislative powers are communications and transport, healthcare, secondary and university education, insurance, banking activities, and social services. Laws approved by the Sicilian Regional Assembly are sent to the state board, which, in case of a violation of the constitution can contest the law at the Constitutional Court. The State Board can also recommend that the National Government dissolve the Regional Assembly if the Special Statute has been violated multiple times, but this must be approved by all branches of the National Parliament. Dissolving the Assembly has never occurred, and it would be difficult to accomplish by virtue of the uniqueness of the autonomy that has been granted by the State to the Region. The Regional Council, which has administrative and executive functions, is composed of the President of the Region and twelve councilors who are appointed by the President to the various administrative sectors. The President is elected by the Sicilian electorate. The President of the Region is the head of the Regional Council and is a participatory representative for the Region at the sitting of the Cabinet of Ministers in which material concerning the Region is being discussed. The President has the power to make decisions regarding the legitimacy of regional administrative acts after having consulted the Council of Administrative Justice. As at the national level, some regional administrative acts are subject to the control of the Court of Accounts, which has two sections in Sicily expressly deputized to deal with material concerning the Region. The resources that are the exclusive responsibility of the Regional government are the assets within the Region to be used for the public good with the exception of those assets that the state reserves for national defense and in order to provide services that are “national in character”.

Political Parties:

The Region is currently governed by a coalition of the centre-right composed of 62 members of the 90 in the Regional Assembly. The next elections are planned for 2006.

Important Legislation:

The Special Statute is the document that outlines the activities and responsibilities of the regional bodies, their respective competences, and is the principal normative text governing relations between the Region and the Italian State. The Statute confers legislative, financial, and administrative autonomy to the Region.

Principal Taxes:

In general the island retains revenues generated internally such as tax revenue, while the state transfers funds for healthcare, enacts laws pertaining to certain sectors, and oversees the use of EU Community development funds, and solidarity accounts.

Associated Power:

Republic of Italy

Citizenship:

Italian

Paradiplomacy:**HUMAN RESOURCES**

Number of Births: (2001) 51,890; (2002) 51,234. Number of Deaths: (2001) 45,043; (2002) 46,068.

2005			
Island	Area (km sq.)	Population	% of Total Population
Sicily	25,706	5,013,081	%

Population density in Sicily is 189 inhabitants per square kilometer. Palermo, Catania, and Messina have 60% of the population. Enna, the only province in Sicily that does not border the sea, has a population density of 69 inhabitants per square kilometer. It is also the region with the highest population loss to migration.

Population:	
Year	Resident Population

Age of Population:	0-14	15-24	25-49	50-64	65 and up
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Migration:

Sicily has had a negative migratory rate every year since 1996. Between 1991 and 2001 the island lost 300,000 unemployed people (21,347 in 2001). The figure grew every year until 2002 when it dropped from 21,347 to 11,693 (still a negative figure).

Crude Birth Rate:	
2005	1.04%

Life Expedtancy:

Women: 83 years / Men: 77 years

Crude Death Rate:	
2005	0.97%

Ethnicity:

Sicily's inhabitants are descended from the Greeks; Italians; Phoenicians; and pre-colonial indigenous peoples known as Sicans/Sicani (generally residing in the west of Sicily and possibly an Iberian tribe); the Elymi; and the Sicels/Siculi (residing mostly in the eastern portion of the island and probably an Italic tribe). There is also the presence of Norman and Spanish blood in some Sicilians due to conquests of the island. Sicilians residing in the east, southeast, and northeast portions of the island are primarily of Greek (and probably Sicel) descent. In the southwest, west and northwest the people are primarily of Phoenician, Arab, and Sican descent. The few Sicilians with Norman or Spanish blood are found mostly in large northern cities such as Palermo and Cefalu.

Class Division:**Languages:**

The main language in Sicily is Sicilian, or "Sicilianu". It is a separate Romance language descended from Latin with Arabic root words as well as Catalan, French, and Spanish influences. All Sicilians also speak Italian, which is the language of instruction in all educational institutions.

Religion:

Catholicism, Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Orthodoxy, Protestantism and even Mythology

Literacy:

The education level of adults in Italy (Sicily) between the ages of 25 and 64 is among the lowest in the European Union: 25% of the population has no more than an elementary school diploma, 30% of teenagers between 15 and 19 have already left school, as compared with a European average of 20%, and only 42% have earned a diploma, as compared with a European average of 59%. Only 10% of the population studies at university (European average 26%) and only 38 persons out of 100 read at least one book a year, compared with the European average of 70.

Education System:

Total Pre-schools:()	752
Total Primary Schools	
First Level:	



Second Level:	
Third Level:	
Total Secondary Schools:	
Total Professional Schools	
Universities:	3

Number of Schools per Island:										
	Pre-school		Elementary			High-school		Prof.	University	
	Pub	Priv	1	2	3	Pub	Priv		Pub	Priv
Sicily	752								3	

Students Enrolled:					
Year:	Pre-School	Elementary	High-school	Prof.	University

Teachers							
Year	Pre-School	Elementary			High-School	Prof.	University
		1	2	3			

There are 3 universities in Sicily: Catania, Messina, and Palermo. In 2003-2004 there were 752 pre-schools with 117,899 students; 681 elementary schools with 271,400 students. The number of high-school students is divided into two levels: the first had 197,650 students and the second 268,224 students. In 2002-2003 there were a total of 78,680 teachers on the island. In 2001-2002 there were 4,413 professional formation courses with 66,195 participants. In 2001 there were 832 libraries on the island (6.8% of total for Italy). 44.6% are managed by local entities, and 28.4% by universities.

Medical Services:

In 2000, the latest date for which ISTAT (the Italian Statistics Office) has data available, there were 130 healthcare facilities on the island. Seventy of these were public and 60 were private. There was an increase of 19,169 beds in these healthcare facilities, 79.1% in the public institutions and 20.9% in the private. In 2000, 43,682 people were employed in healthcare (of which 9.8% in private institutions). 21.8% of these employees were medical staff; 38.7% were auxiliary sanitary workers, and the remaining percentage was divided between administrative personnel and those filling other roles. Currently there are 1.6 doctors per 1,000 patients.

HISTORY AND CULTURE

History:

Sicily has been ruled by the Phoenicians, the Greeks, Byzantines, Arabs, Normans, Aragonese, Spanish, Bourbons, among others. All left cultural patrimony in the form of architecture, religion, language and social customs; introduced new technology; and transformed agricultural practices. Throughout its tumultuous history there was an underlying desire for autonomy. Whereas in ancient times southern Italy was the more prosperous region of Italy, as industry took over, the north became increasingly wealthy and migration patterns were reversed. Millions of Sicilians left for the Americas between 1890 and 1930 in search of a better quality of life. In 1946 Sicily became part of the Republic of Italy, and in 1947 the first Sicilian Regional Parliament was elected. Sicily is today one of the five regions in Italy governed by a Special Statute. The Sicilian Statute was approved by legislative decree on May 15, 1946, and converted to constitutional law on February 26, 1948. The Mafia have had a significant impact on Sicily's political and social structures. It can be traced back to the 16th century when Sicilians adopted a code of silence – omerta – as a defiance against persecution. Mafia comes from the Arabic word for refuge and was adopted during the Arab occupation. The oppressed Sicilians took refuge in the hills, forming a secret society to protect themselves against their conquerors. The Mafia still exists today and has a strong influence on local politics, although the majority of the population is tired of the violence that has characterized their power-influencing tactics, and the national government has cracked down on Mafia-connected crime significantly in the last ten years.

Referenda:

Recent Significant Events:

Music, Dance, Handicraft and Patrimony:

Archeological Sites: Sicily is covered with temples, ancient cities, tombs, and castles. Many of them have been excavated and are tourist attractions, but many remain buried. As a result of the many dominating cultures which have left their traces on the island culturally and architecturally, 50% of Italy's catalogued national cultural heritage sites are located in Sicily. Festivals: Sicily has a number of festivals and religious celebrations which draw local participation and tourism. The largest of these is Easter in which the passion, death, and life of Christ are celebrated and my mystery of the resurrection of Christ is commemorated, as in Sardinia. Christmas is also an important time for festivities, as are the thousands of Saints' days which are more localized. Handicrafts: The main handicrafts made on the island are baskets, pottery, weaving, embroidery and lace crocheting, and leatherwork.

Sources:

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