REGISTRO .IT press kit

Registro .it

The Registro manages **the Registry of .it Internet domains,** "dot it" is the domain extension for Italy, and is a service of the CNR Institute of Informatics and Telematics in Pisa (CNR-IIT). Only here can you request, modify or delete one or more .it domains.

At the request of users, the Registro, through the management of the primary DNS (Domain Name System) service for Italy, associates the numeric addresses needed to move around the network (which are long and difficult to memorise) with a name. The DNS transparently regulates the functioning of the Internet and the web, e-mail and, in general, all Internet services are based on it. Information on the domain name, its contacts and DNS servers are stored in an archive (DBAN – Data Base of Assigned Names), which is also managed by the Registro.

From September 2019 the Registro .it will also handle the registration and maintenance of the domain names **edu.it**, reserved for the names of Italian public and private schools and, from July 2022, the registration service for the names **gov.it**, reserved for the central State Public Administrations and the National Welfare and Assistance Bodies, indicated in the list of public administrations identified pursuant to Article 1, paragraph 3, of Law no. 196 of 31 December 2009, as amended.

The Rules of the Internet

The rules of the Net are set by an international organisation, ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers). In December 1987, ICANN instructed the National Research Council of Italy (Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, CNR) to manage Internet domains with the .it registration number. This led to the creation of the Registro .it, based at the CNR-IIT in Pisa.

Some history: cnr.it, the first Italian domain name

In December 1987, IANA (Internet Assigned Numbers Authority) recognised the Country Code Top-level Domain (ccTLD) .it, assigning its management to the CNR in virtue of the technical and scientific skills acquired by its researchers, who were among the first in Europe to adopt the IP protocol. The registration and maintenance service for Italian domains was initially provided by the CNR's CNUCE Institute. Since 1997, this competence has passed to the Institute for Telematics Applications (CNR-IAT) and then to the Institute of Informatics and Telematics (CNR-IIT), which was created in 2002 through the merger between CNR-IAT and the Institute of Computational Mathematics (CNR-IMC).

How domains and domain names work

Domain names arise from the need to simplify the memorisation of the sequence of digits that characterises IP addresses (unique addresses linked to any device on the Internet), by assigning

a textual name to the numeric string, which is easier to remember. The system adopted is called **DNS** (Domain Name System).

Each domain name consists of several levels. Taking *chosenname.it* as an example, "chosenname" is the second-level domain, and '.it' the top-level domain or TLD - Top-Level Domain (also called extension) which can be of various types:

- **ccTLD** (Country Code Top-level Domain), used by a state or territorial dependency. It consists of two letters, e.g. 'it' for Italy or 'eu' for the European Union;

- **gTLDs** (Generic Top-Level Domain), generic top-level domains such as .com or .net, consisting of at least three letters. The .gov, .mil and .edu are reserved for US governments, armed forces and educational institutions. Then there are the **new gTLDs** (New Generic Top-Level Domain), such as .paris, .berlin, .xyz, ...

At the operational level, the operating model for registering a domain name involves 3 subjects:
- **Registro**: approximately 50 people work in Registro .it
- **Registrars***: domain name operators accredited by the Registro who provide Internet services, including the registration and maintenance of a domain.it name.
- **Registrants**: companies, organisations, associations, natural persons who have been allocated domain names.

The Registrar is an Internet service provider that has a contract with the Registro to manage .it domains. The Registro does not, in fact, directly register domains on behalf of end users. Each Registrar, in complete autonomy, offers services at all levels and prices, from the simple registration of a domain name to the creation of websites, the provision of Internet connectivity, and the provision of highly specialised services. Each Registrar also independently determines the costs of registering and maintaining .it domains.

Figures and rankings
According to the latest CENTR report (Council of European National Top-Level Domain Registries) with European/world-wide data updated to July 2024: **the total number of domains registered in all known TLDs is estimated at 372 million.**

In recent years, the average 12-month growth (top 30 TLDs) peaked at 7.5% at the end of 2021, followed by a steady decline to 1.3% in May 2024. The last two months (June and July) show the first signs of a recovery, with 2.0% in July 2024.

In the 12 months leading up to July 2024, the top-level domains with the highest growth in absolute terms were .shop, .in, .online, .top, .ru.

The total number of .com domains has steadily decreased since the end of 2023, with -2.3% recorded in July 2024. With 161 million domains, .com accounts for about 43% of the global domain market.

In Italy
Ranking as of September 2024: based on statistics provided by CENTR in the ccTLD ranking,

Italy ranks 6th within the European continent, with almost **3.5M .it domain names per 49M inhabitants** (figure for the population of age).

According to **data** collected in December 2024, in relation to the overall market for domains (not just .it) registered by residents in Italy:

- the .com holds 37% of the market
- **the .it domain holds 47% of the market**
- the .eu holds 4% of the market
- the other ccTLDs (.es, .fr...) hold 2% of the market
- other gTLDs (net, org, biz, mobi, info) hold 10% of the market

.it domains

Overall, more than 3.495M .it domain names were assigned as of 31/12/2024, 457,345 new .it domains were registered in 2024 (of which 290 .it IDN and 435 EDU.it).

.it domain registrants

In 2024, **457,343** domains were registered, of which more than **390,000 were by Italian registrants (86%) and almost 64,000 by foreign registrants (14%).**

Registrars under contract with the Registro .it

As of 31 December 2024, there are just over 1,000 Registrars, 89% of which are Italian (59% located in the North, 24% in the Centre and 17% in the South) and 11% foreign.

Renewals and cancellations

In 2024, the .it registers a renewal rate of 86.9%.

In contrast, the median renewal rate for the top thirty European ccTLDs (top 30) increased steadily from 84.6% at the beginning of 2018 to a peak of 87.4% in mid-2022 but has since declined gradually to settle at 85.9% in October 2024.

The slowdown in the European renewal rate is due to cancellations, which had remained stable until the beginning of 2023, but have since shown an upward trend.

Growth rate of .it

The .it growth rate in 2024 showed stability compared to the previous year: at the end of the year, there were 457,345 new domains, compared to 459,935 cancellations

Growth rate of European ccTLDs

The average growth rate of the top thirty European ccTLDs (top 30) is 0.5%.

All information on the evolution of registrations in the .it (data updated in real time) is available on the Registro's website in the [Statistics Section](#).