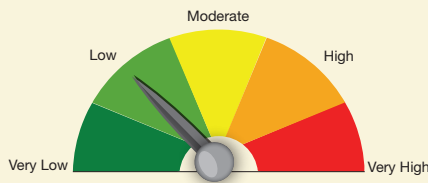


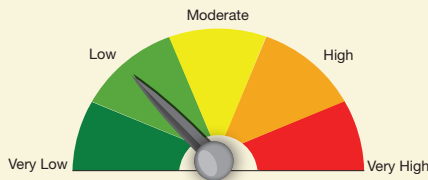
## Country Risk Tier

CRT-2

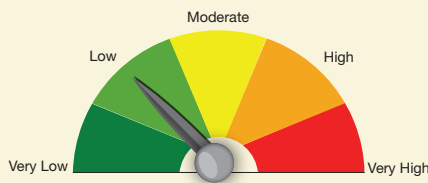
### Economic Risk



### Political Risk



### Financial System Risk



[For information on companies followed](#)

[Market Outlooks](#)

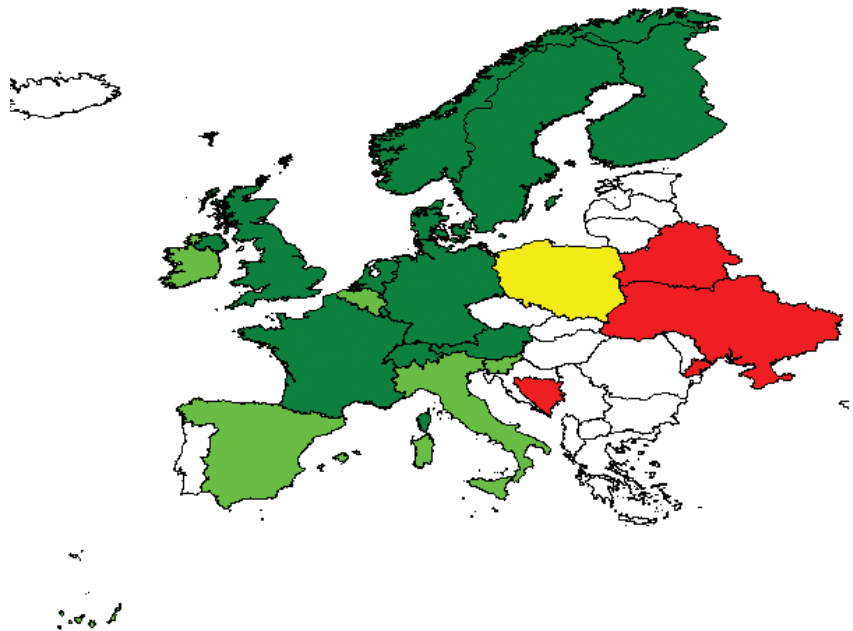
# Italy

- The Country Risk Tier (CRT) reflects A.M. best's assessment of three categories of risk: Economic, Political and Financial System Risk.

- Italy, a CRT-2 country, is a founding member of the European Union (EU) and of the euro-zone. As in the rest of the EU, economic growth has been sluggish with contraction in 2009.

- Italy's financial services sector fared relatively well during the global financial crisis, and Italian banks have been growing into the markets of the newer EU members in Eastern Europe.

- The majority of countries pictured below are categorized as CRT-1 and CRT-2. The exception are the Eastern European countries of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Belarus, Ukraine and Poland.



CRT 1 2 3 4 5



### Regional Summary: Western Europe

- Western Europe is a highly developed and affluent region. The European Union (EU) is an economic and political union of 27 countries that accounts for 30% of world gross domestic product (GDP). The EU is facilitating a single European market with standardized regulatory systems and free movement of people, goods, services and capital. The euro-zone is made up of the 16 EU members that have adopted the euro as their currency.

- Most, if not all, of Western Europe is experiencing a severe economic slow-down and many countries are in an official recession. While the European Central Bank has cut interest rates to spur demand, economic growth in the region has stagnated.

### Economic Risk: Low

- Italy, a founding member of the European Union (EU) and the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), houses a large, modern economy with an affluent and educated population.

- Italy's market economy is highly developed and supports one of the largest manufacturing sectors in the world. However, industrial investment and restructuring is necessary to be competitive in Europe.

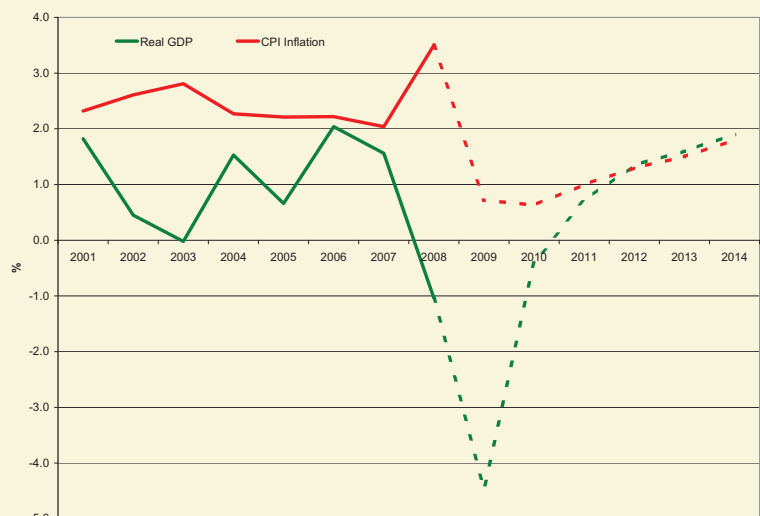
- Worse than much of Western Europe, growth in gross domestic product (GDP) has been particularly sluggish, averaging below 1.0% per year since 2002. In 2008 and 2009 the economy contracted and growth may not return until 2011. Rigidities in the labor market will prevent the country from rebounding sharply once growth returns.

Vital Statistics 2008		
Nominal GDP	USD bn	2313.89
Population	mil	59.3
GDP Per Capita	USD	38,996
Real GDP Growth	%	-1.0
Inflation Rate	%	3.5
Premiums Written (Life)	USD mil	82,623
Premiums Written (Non-Life)	USD mil	58,066
Premiums Growth (07-08)	%	-1.2

Regional Comparison	
	Country Risk Tier
Italy	CRT-2
Germany	CRT-1
France	CRT-1
Spain	CRT-2
Switzerland	CRT-1
United Kingdom	CRT-1

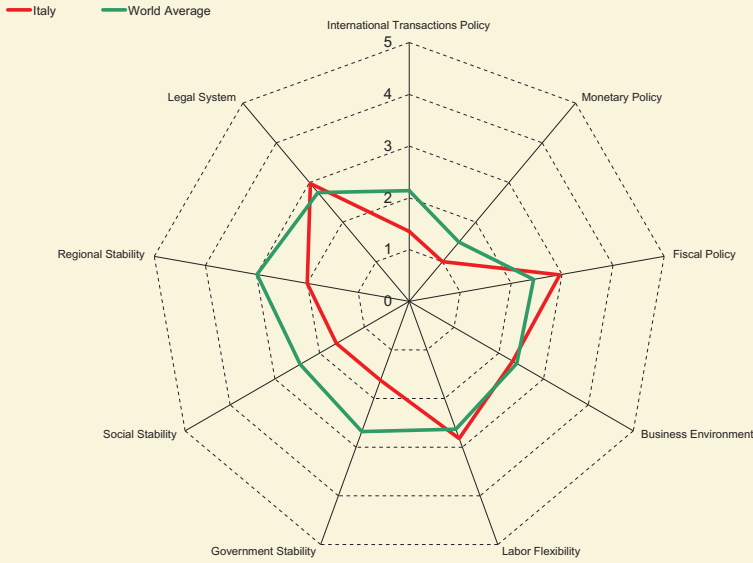
Source: IMF, Swiss Re and A.M. Best



Source: IMF World Economic Outlook (10/08) and A.M. Best

### Political Risk Summary

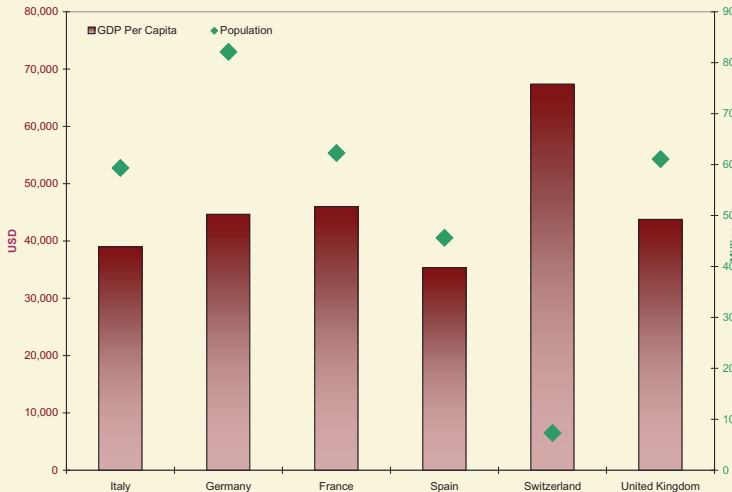
Score 1 (best) to 5 (worst)



Source: A.M. Best

### Political Risk: Low

- Italy has a stable, though large, bureaucracy supporting a modern and advanced business infrastructure.
- Italy’s structural rigidities prevent it from reaching full economic potential, including labor rigidities and income inequalities by region.
- Significant government deficits place pressure on the level of sovereign credit risk and contribute to bond spreads that exist between Italy and its EU neighbors.



Source: IMF and A.M. Best

### Financial System Risk: Low

- The insurance market is regulated by the Insurance Supervisory Divisions of the Institute for Control of Private Insurance Companies (ISVAP).
- Italy’s Borsa Italia is large by global standards but small relative to its European neighbors. Italian banking standards are good and authorities’ response to the global financial crisis has been effective. The banking system has weathered the global financial crisis well.

## GUIDE TO BEST'S COUNTRY RISK TIERS

A.M. Best defines country risk as the risk that country-specific factors could adversely affect the claims paying ability of an insurer. Country risk is evaluated and factored into all Best's Credit Ratings. Countries are placed into one of five tiers, ranging from "CRT-1" (Country Risk Tier 1), denoting a stable environment with the least amount of risk, to "CRT-5" (Country Risk Tier 5) for countries that pose the most risk and, therefore, the greatest challenge to an insurer's financial stability, strength and performance.

A.M. Best's Country Risk Tiers are not credit ratings and are not directly comparable to a sovereign debt rating, which evaluates the ability and willingness of a government to service its debt obligations.

### Country Risk Tiers

Country Risk Tier	Definition
CRT-1	Predictable and transparent legal environment, legal system and business infrastructure; sophisticated financial system regulation with deep capital markets; mature insurance industry framework.
CRT-2	Predictable and transparent legal environment, legal system and business infrastructure; sufficient financial system regulation; mature insurance industry framework.
CRT-3	Developing legal environment, legal system and business environment with developing capital markets; developing insurance regulatory structure.
CRT-4	Relatively unpredictable and nontransparent political, legal and business environment with underdeveloped capital markets; partially to fully inadequate regulatory structure.
CRT-5	Unpredictable and opaque political, legal and business environment with limited or nonexistent capital markets; low human development and social instability; nascent insurance industry.

### Country Risk Reports

A.M. Best Country Risk Reports are designed to provide a brief, high level, explanation of some of the key factors that determine a country's Country Risk Tier assignment. It is not intended to summarize A.M. Best's opinion on any particular insurance market, or the prospects for that market.

### Categories of Risk

Country Risk Reports provide "scores" for three categories of risk for each country. These "scores" are: (1) Very Low; (2) Low; (3) Moderate; (4) High and (5) Very High.

Category of Risk	Definition
Economic Risk	The likelihood that fundamental weaknesses in a country's economy will cause adverse developments for an insurer. A.M. Best's assessment of economic risk evaluates the state of the domestic economy, government finances and international transactions, as well as prospects for growth and stability.
Political Risk	The likelihood that government or bureaucratic inefficiencies, societal tensions, inadequate legal system or international tensions will cause adverse developments for an insurer. Political risk comprises the stability of the government and society, the effectiveness of international diplomatic relationships, the reliability and integrity of the legal system and of the business infrastructure, the efficiency of the government bureaucracy and the appropriateness and effectiveness of the government's economic policies.
Financial System Risk	Financial system risk (which includes both insurance and non-insurance financial system risk) is the risk that financial volatility may erupts due to inadequate reporting standards, weak banking system or asset markets and/or poor regulatory structure. Along with the risk that the insurance industry's level of development and public awareness, transparent and effective regulation and reporting standards and sophisticated regulatory body will contribute to a volatile financial system and compromise the ability of an insurer to pay claims.

### Political Risk Summary

To provide additional detail on the political risk in a given domicile the Country Risk Reports include the Political Risk Summary. The Political Risk Summary is a radar chart that displays scores for nine different aspects of political risk scored on a scale of 1-5 with 1 being the least amount of risk and 5 being the highest amount of risk.

Category	Definition
International Transactions Policy	Measures the effectiveness of the exchange rate regime and currency management.
Monetary Policy	Measures the ability of a country to effectively implement monetary policy.
Fiscal Policy	Measures the ability of a country to effectively implement fiscal policy.
Business Environment	Measures the overall quality of the business environment, and ease of doing business.
Labor Flexibility	Measures the flexibility of the labor market, including the company's ability to hire and fire employees.
Government Stability	Measures the degree of stability in a government.
Social Stability	Measures the degree of social stability including human development and political rights.
Regional Stability	Measures the degree of stability in the region
Legal System	Measures the transparency and level of corruption in the legal system.

### Country Risk Tier Disclosure

A Country Risk Tier (CRT) is not a credit rating, rather it represents a component of A.M. Best's credit rating methodology that is applied to all insurers. A CRT is not a recommendation to purchase, hold or terminate any security, insurance policy, contract or any other financial obligation issued by a government, an insurer or other rated issuer, nor do they address the suitability of any particular policy, contract or other financial obligation for a specific purpose or purchaser.

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