

# COUNTRY ANALYSIS

## *Italy - Sicily*



### STRENGTHS:

Italy is a country that enjoys immense historical, cultural, landscape and culinary heritage. Each region is offering experiences that cannot be found elsewhere.

Because the area of Sicily was dominated by many different cultures throughout historical times, a huge variety of archaeological sites are located, representing mainly ancient Greek, Phoenician, Roman, Arab and Norman cultures. Noto, Caltagirone, Catania, Ragusa, Modica, Scicli and Acireale contain some of the best examples of Italian Baroque. Palermo has the second largest historical center in Italy with countless impressive architectural masterpieces. Historical villas and medieval villages can be found in nearly every areas of Sicily.

The island is world-famous about its cuisine and wines. Every part of Sicily has its specialty, such as the Granita in Catania or the Cassata in Palermo. The island is not only known about its pasta-culture, but about rice-meals such as the arancina. The Sicilian dishes are rich in taste, and use a lot of fresh vegetables and herbs, such as tomatoes, artichokes, olives and olive oil, citrus, aubergines, raisings. The fresh seafood available in nearly every coastal town, including tuna, sardines, swordfish, cuttlefish, sea bass and many others. The cheese, produced in Sicily is also very particular, such as the ricotta, the pecorino or the caciocavallo. Sicilian cuisine is considered very tasty and highly rated by people from all over the world. Several rural areas are famous about its wineries and offering high-quality wine-tasting experience, including villages and farms all around the island.

The island of Sicily is also very famous about its natural reserves and wonderful landscapes. One of the most visited areas are the Zingaro Natural Park, Vendicari, Cavagrande, Capo Gallo, which guarantees breath-taking experience for the visitors. Last, but not least, obviously Sicily is also greatly appreciated and visited for its beaches, sandy or pebbles, various longer and shorter costs are offering beautiful and relaxing experience for the visitors.



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### WEAKNESSES:

In some cases tourists might decide not to visit Sicily, because they find various obstacles, such as:

- Lack of easily available online information about public transport, trips and various tourist services.
- Several famous and attractive events' organization lacks proper marketing and communication strategies, thus less able to reach and bring foreign tourists there, who would require information and awareness about the program much in advance
- Sicilian people often do not speak foreign languages that can often result in communication issues, therefore despite of the Sicilian hospitality and friendliness, locals might not be able to share and discuss many things with visitors because of the language barrier.
- Tour operators might be lacking certain capacities to fulfil all needs of tourists (such as children, youngsters, sport lovers, old people, differently abled people)



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### OPPORTUNITIES:

The areas of Sicily where CBT projects could be initiated are numerous.

Sicily has several airports which connects with numerous Italian and European cities and with some extra-European ones as well. The airports are located near Catania, Palermo, Trapani, Comiso, on Lampedusa and Pantelleria. By the sea, Sicily is served by several ferry routes; it can be easily reached from Genoa, Civitavecchia and Naples, international routes are connecting the island with Malta and Tunisia. It is also well accessible from major Italian cities by train, such as from Naples, Rome and Milan.

In Sicily there are several economically poor areas, with high level of unemployment, but they all have high amount of cultural and natural resources they can offer, that makes Sicily unique in the world.

Opportunities can be further developed and initiated in relation to the areas of:

- Tourism that links culinary art and beautiful landscape
- Rural excursions (caves, ruins, archaeological parks and natural reserves)
- The discovery of places that recalls the historical identity of the area
- The enrichment and support of the local artistic environment (musicians, theatres, dancers etc)
- The enhancement and promotion of traditional lifestyles and professions – in the field of agriculture, fishing, folklore, crafts
- The organization of retreats and health-promotional experiences in remote ecological areas
- The enrichment of tourist services with offers for sport fans (bicycle trips, water sports, beach sports etc)



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### THREATS:

In Sicily some of the threats that can occur in the development of CBT initiatives:

- For several decades Sicily was lacking policies that could have prevented some natural resources and areas from exploitation, inappropriate constructions and use or overpopulation. For the more sustainable management of areas and communities new supportive and legislation and incentives are needed. Without them, there is a high possibility that the exploitation of resources will continue, and the growing amount of tourists travelling to Sicily will contribute to negative local impact (economical, social, environmental)
- Slow and problematic administrative and bureaucratic procedures can greatly influence the progress of the developments.
- Commercial tourism agencies and operators and other tourism-related enterprises will continue to offer their services that will keep huge amount of tourists choosing standard touristic services.
- Foreigners are often not aware of the actual local context and reality, related to social-political factors, such as the mafia or the present of migrants and refugees – in case they have false and misleading information coming from the media they are reached by, they might have irrational fears and worries about the safety of the island.



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