Global Firepower 2025, Italy is the second military power in the European community and the tenth in the world

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According to the 2025 report by Global Firepower, Italy ranks tenth among the world's military powers, surpassing many other European nations and positioning itself just after France in the European community. This position reflects a balance between land, naval, and air forces, combined with a solid defensive strategy and steadily increasing military spending. According to the Mil€x Observatory, in 2024 the Ministry of Defense's budget exceeded 29 billion euros for the first time, with an increase of 1.438 billion euros (+5.1%) compared to 2023, which itself had seen a growth of about 1.8 billion euros compared to 2022. Overall, between 2022 and 2024, the increase was over 3.2 billion euros, equivalent to 12.5%.

Let's analyze together the factors contributing to this positioning.

The Global Firepower Ranking

The **Global Firepower** ranking represents one of the most in-depth and recognized analyses worldwide of military powers, examining 145 countries through over 60 parameters. These criteria provide a detailed view of each nation's overall capacity to sustain military operations in complex scenarios.

Among the key factors considered are:

- **Available manpower**: includes not only active members of the armed forces but also the mobilizable human potential in case of conflict.
- **Strength of the military arsenal**: includes the number and quality of tanks, aircraft, ships, and other strategic means.
- **Logistical and industrial capabilities**: analyzes the capacity for military equipment production, infrastructure, and transport.
- **Financial resources allocated to defense**: evaluates the military budget and long-term economic sustainability.
- **Technological advancement and production autonomy**: measures access to advanced technologies, such as air defense systems and space programs, and the independent production capacity of strategic equipment.

The ranking stands out for its balanced approach, which does not merely consider the numerical size of the armed forces but also analyzes fundamental aspects such as **economic resilience** and the **ability to sustain a prolonged conflict**. Another crucial element is **technological autonomy**, which determines a country's level of dependence on imports of **armaments** and **strategic components**.

The **Global Firepower Index (GFP)** assigns a specific score to each country, where a lower value indicates a greater overall military capacity:

Source: https://www.globalfirepower.com/countries-listing.php

The Crucial Role of the Italian Navy

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Italy, recognized as the tenth global military power and second in Europe according to Global Firepower 2025, owes part of its strength to the **Italian Navy**, which plays a strategic role in the Mediterranean. Thanks to its geographical position and a modern and versatile fleet, the Italian Navy ensures the defense of the coasts and the protection of national interests, contributing to regional and global security.

With over 7,500 kilometers of coastline, the Navy manages a fleet of **8 submarines, 2 aircraft carriers, 3 amphibious assault ships, 4 destroyers, 10 frigates, 13 offshore patrol vessels, and other units**. These resources enable it to address threats such as piracy, illegal trafficking, and natural disasters, as well as support humanitarian and international operations.

Iconic and a pioneer of modern maritime special forces, the Underwater and Incursion Command "Teseo Tesei", known as **COMSUBIN**, is recognized as one of the most prestigious naval special forces globally.

Composed of two main components, the **Operational Incursion Group (GOI)** and the **Operational Underwater Group (GOS)**, COMSUBIN, heir to the MAS Flotillas framed in the Royal Italian Navy already in the First World War, excels in a wide range of special operations. The GOI specializes in raids, direct actions, counter-terrorism, and unconventional warfare, while the GOS handles complex underwater missions such as mine clearance, demolition, and technical support.

The tradition of excellence and innovation of COMSUBIN, developed through more than a century of experience, makes it an absolute reference point for contemporary special forces, consolidating Italian leadership in the field of maritime special operations.

The Italian Air Force: technology and innovation for air defense

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With over 500 operational aircraft, including **Eurofighter Typhoon**, **F-35 Lightning II**, and advanced transport aircraft, the **Italian Air Force** stands out for technological innovation and international projection capability. The Italian aerospace industry, with **Leonardo** at the top, plays a fundamental role in the modernization of the national and international fleet. A significant example is the **FACO di Cameri** (Final Assembly and Check Out), where **F-35** are

assembled. At this facility, the first wing box intended for an **F-35A** for the **US Air Force** was completed, later sent to the final production line of Lockheed Martin in Fort Worth, Texas.

The Italian Air Force is therefore an essential component of the country's defense and the international community. Thanks to a modern fleet and highly trained personnel, it is capable of carrying out a wide range of missions, ensuring the security of airspace, supporting other armed forces, and actively contributing to international security and peace operations.

Like COMSUBIN for the Navy, the Air Force boasts its own Special Forces unit, the 17º Stormo Incursori**.** This unit represents the elite of the Air Force in the field of special operations, with unique and highly specialized skills. The raiders of the 17º Stormo are trained for high-risk missions, including infiltration into hostile environments, acquisition and designation of targets for precision strikes, and close air support.

The continuous innovation and commitment to training excellent personnel make the Italian Air Force a fundamental pillar of national security and a significant player on the world stage.

The Italian Army among excellence, values, and tradition

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The **Italian Army**, while facing recruitment challenges common to many Western armies, stands out for the quality of its units and the breadth of its operational capabilities. Founded on a solid tradition, the contribution of its forces is crucial for national security and for Italy's participation in international and, in recent years, also national operations.

The largest armed force of the Italian Defense has a wide range of vehicles, including tanks like the **Ariete C-1** and the **Leopard 1**, combat vehicles like the IFV Dardo, and advanced tactical vehicles like the **VTLM Lince**. These are complemented by self-propelled artillery and specialized engineering vehicles, offering a wide range of operational options. The imminent modernization will see the introduction of the **Italian Main Battle Lynx** tank and the airdroppable vehicle GMV Flyer 72 for paratroopers and special forces, confirming the armed force's commitment to technological evolution.

Historic and specialized units

Like the other armed forces, the true protagonists of the Italian Army are the men and women who are part of it, belonging to all specialties, and bearers of deeply rooted values and traditions.

Among the excellences stand out:

- **Brigata Sassari**: historically a symbol of valor and resilience, the strong connection with the Sardinian territory and the ability to operate effectively even in the most difficult conditions.
- **Bersaglieri**: a historic corps that has adapted to modern operational contexts, maintaining agility and speed as distinctive traits.
- **Brigata Paracadutisti Folgore**: renowned for its rigorous training and high operational readiness, it represents an international benchmark for high-intensity missions, emergency operations, and rapid interventions. Its reputation confers high prestige on the international Airborne Community.
- **The Alpine Brigades**: specialized in mountain combat, they combine tradition and advanced skills to operate in extreme climatic conditions.
- **132nd Armored Brigade Ariete:** the largest armored unit of the Italian Army. A key asset for land operations, thanks to its firepower and mobility.
- **Reggimento Lagunari Serenissima:** the only amphibious assault infantry unit of the Italian Army, the Lagunari stand out for their ability to operate in complex and diverse scenarios, providing crucial tactical support in amphibious operations.

Excellence in Special Forces

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Italy was the first country in the world to experiment with elite military units, pioneers of innovative assault tactics and means, both on land with the **Arditi** and at sea with the daring **MAS** flotillas of the Royal Navy. From their origins, these units have embodied courage and the ability to anticipate new operational modes, creating a tradition that would inspire modern Special Forces worldwide.

The continuation and experience gained over more than a century of history place the Italian special forces among the most prepared, not only in Europe but in the entire NATO and global context.

The Special Forces of the Italian Army include three highly trained units, each with a specific operational vocation:

- **9th Paratroopers Assault Regiment "Col Moschin"**: the first special forces unit of the Italian Army since 1953 and direct heir of the Arditi born in World War I. Specialized in high-risk missions, it stands out for complex operations such as hostage rescue, interventions behind enemy lines, and direct and indirect action combat missions, usually in asymmetric scenarios.
- **185th Reconnaissance Target Acquisition Regiment (RAO)**: excels in special reconnaissance and target acquisition, providing high-value intelligence in conflict scenarios.
- **4th Alpine Paratroopers Regiment**: a unit that combines alpine and parachute skills, ideal for special operations in extreme climatic and environmental conditions.

These units represent the excellence of Italian capabilities in special operations, significantly contributing to national and international security, strengthening Italy's position as a global leader in this sector.

A Competitive Military Industry

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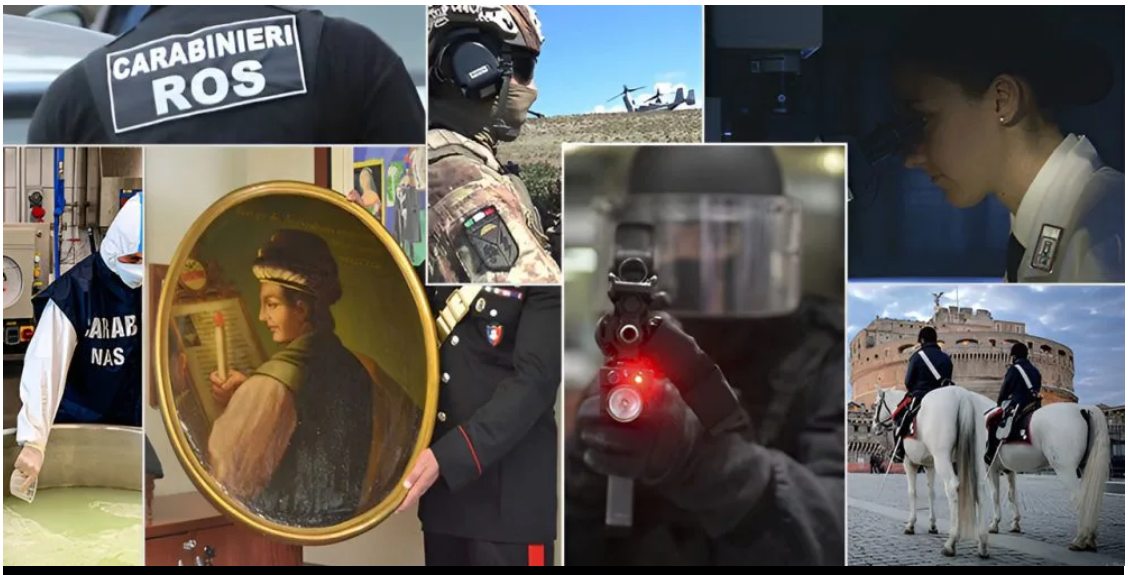
The Italian Defense benefits from advanced systems developed by the national industry, consolidating Italy's role as a technological leader in the sector. Among the main equipment are the **Beretta ARX 160** assault rifle, the **VTLM Lince** light multirole tactical vehicle, and the **A129 Mangusta** attack helicopter, designed to face complex and diverse operational scenarios.

These tools not only guarantee high performance in the field, but are also appreciated internationally, with exports to numerous countries. The reliability, construction quality, and Italian technological innovation represent a strength for the sector, as demonstrated by collaboration with global partners for strategic projects, including the development of the F-35 fighter jet.

The Italian military industry not only provides advanced solutions for the national armed forces but also contributes to the country's economy through research, development, and production of dual-use technologies. These innovations, applicable in both military and civilian fields, strengthen Italy's competitiveness in global markets and consolidate its position as a key partner in international alliances.

Carabinieri and Guardia di Finanza: guarantors of security and legality

These forces combine military and police roles, protecting the territory and countering internal and external threats. The Carabinieri are engaged in public order and international missions, while the Guardia di Finanza focuses on combating economic and financial crimes, strengthening the country's economic security.



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Italian Defense, an excellence in the world despite budget constraints

In summary, Italy, with its modern and competent Armed Forces, continues to be a key player in global security and a point of reference for stability and peace.

Italy's position among the top ten military powers in the world also testifies to the ability of its armed forces to adapt to geopolitical and technological changes.

Despite budget constraints, Italy has managed to maintain a modern military force, balancing defensive and projection capabilities, and ensuring a central role in regional and global security dynamics.