



The Italian Geographical Society has been a free association since its foundation in 1867. Anyone can join who endorses the objectives in its Statute, which can be summarized as promoting the advancement of geographical knowledge.

As early as in 1869, the Italian State granted it the status of "moral entity" (non-profit foundation). More recently, the Society has been officially recognized as an environmentalist association. This administrative recognition is because the Society has always sought, and still does so, to make its heritage of assets and knowledge available to the general public, directly or indirectly via the use made of it by the Society itself. A constant feature of the Italian Geographical Society's long life has been its interest in its country and citizens and in humanity as whole, within the modes and limits of a scientific-cultural association.

The Italian Geographical Society does not concern itself solely with applied research. The main goal of its policy is the advancement of geographical knowledge; expanding, updating or innovating knowledge but also fostering geographic culture and environmental awareness. The Society seeks to foster geographic culture and heritage in various ways. The first, obvious and traditional, is that of documentation: with approximately 300,000 volumes, the Society's Library conserves the most important collection of specialized documentation in Italy, and one of the most significant in the world. The Map Library holds over 50,000 modern geographical maps, which is almost complete with regard to Italy's territory and seas. There is also an Antique Collection, an Oriental Collection, more than 150,000 photographic images from the

mid-nineteenth century onwards, and the Society's Manuscript Archives. The collections are accessible to members and to all those applying to consult it; many of the works conserved are unique to the collection.

The Society also engages in activities intended to increase geographical knowledge. A wide-ranging 'diplomatic' initiative by the Society has been its invitation to the geographical associations of the EU countries to found a European Society for Geography, EUGEO. Also housed at the Italian Geographical Society is the Home of Geography, the permanent secretariat headquarters of the International Geographical Union.

Publishing activities remain essential for the exchange of ideas among scholars and for public awareness. The oldest Italian geographical magazine, and one of the oldest in the world, is the Society's *Bollettino della Società Geografica Italiana*: published since 1868. There is also a range of scientific monographs. The Society's publications aim to present the results of Italian and international scientific geography, as well as essential news on the association's activities, to members, who receive the *Bollettino* free.

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Publications

Bollettino della Società Geografica Italiana

Published uninterruptedly since 1868, it divides into two parts, the first consisting of a news section and the second of scientific articles.

Quarterly journal.

Memorie della Società Geografica Italiana

Collections of monographs on various topics, which constitute important tools for scientific investigation.

Two or three issues published a year.

Rapporto della Società Geografica Italiana

Intended to provide land management experts and professional geographers with a permanent observatory on the dynamics of Italian society and the country's landscape.

Published annually.

Studi e Ricerche seriesks.

This series comprises a section of foreign-language publications, mainly in English, in the intention of reaching a broader international readership, thereby overcoming the difficulties of disseminating the results of Italian geographical research due to relatively scant knowledge of the Italian language abroad.

One or two issues published a year.