

June 17, 2024

Focus on...Italy

The second country in the world for padel clubs and courts

The **FIP World Padel Report**, presented at the last **FIP General Assembly** in **Asunción**, gave a fact. **Italy** has become, within a few years, the second country in the world, after Spain, in terms of number of facilities, courts, players and padel fans. A real boom that has crossed the whole country and that will bring thousands of fans to the **Foro Italico**, home from today of the **BNL Italy Major Premier Padel**, the second Major of the season after the one in **Doha**. According to the latest data from the **FIP Research & Data Analysis Department**, in Italy there are 9,300 courts distributed over 3,495 facilities that allow more than one and a half million people to play padel.

The region with the most facilities is **Lazio**, which hosts the **BNL Italy Major Premier Padel** (587 clubs, 1,942 courts), followed by **Lombardy** (400, 1,252) and **Sicily** (328, 848). In Lazio, which has more than 20 per cent of the courts in all of Italy and has a ratio of 3,000 inhabitants per padel court (one of the lowest in the world), it is possible to play in more than 120 municipalities, including **Rome**, which obviously has the largest number of facilities (253), with 1050 courts, which become 405 facilities and 1,510 courts considering its entire province.

A big 'boost' to the sport is due to the **Italian Tennis Federation**, which, after including this discipline in 2011 among those under its rule (previously there was the Italian Paddle Game Federation, established in 1991 and then incorporated into the FIT), changed its name to the **Italian Tennis and Padel Federation** (FITP) as of 1 January 2023, demonstrating the growth of padel in Italy. At the end of 2023, the FITP had as many as 1,682 affiliated clubs (the first padel federation in the world in terms of membership) and almost 74,000 members.

Other significant data on the explosion of padel in the 'Stivale' is the presence of more than 400 players in the men's category (including five in the top 100 and 27 in the top 300 of the FIP ranking) and 150 in the women's category (seven in the top 100 and 22 in the top 300), and the organisation of tournaments in the two FIP circuits for professionals. To date, as many as 41 have been played (27 of them in 'combined' mode) in the **CUPRA FIP Tour** circuit and four (including two 'combined') in the **Premier Padel** circuit. The Rome event will be only the first of three Premier Padel events in 2024: after **Rome**, the P2 in **Genova** (in the first week of July) and the P1 in **Milan** in December will be played.

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