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# Introduction

When studying a city’s well-being quality of life plays a large role. There are many different categories within quality of life that determine the dynamics of a city. These studies are important because they highlight the positive aspects while exposing areas where improvements need to be made. Quality of life can also be measured by the physical and psychological well being of a citizen. Quality of life is very specific to each city, Hong Kong has different positive and negative qualities than Chicago, but both prosper. Introduce broad factoids/topics under quality of living. Italy is a modern, developed country and because of this, many of its citizens have the luxury with a certain standard of living that many people around the world are forced to live without. However, Italy is a country with a long and complex history with a rich, living culture. Life in Italy is unique. Yet Italy’s growth rate in 2005 was a low 0.1%. In addition to that

Italy is currently undergoing a population crisis. The natural rate of growth for a nation is commonly between 0.1% and 3% annually with the world’s current growth rate being 1.14%. Though most European countries have low growth rates, Italy’s in particular demands attention. In 2005, Italy’s growth rate was at a mere .1%. However, estimated projections for Italy’s population predict that the growth rate will drop to -0.2% by 2015 and then drop further to -0.3% by 2025. A large number of the population lost simply left the country. Between the years 2007 and 2008 a total of 65,000 people emigrated from Italy to other countries.

In Venice, this situation is even more pronounced. The population in Venice in the year 2002 was 270,963, and in 2007 the population was 268,934. On average, the net loss of Venetians to other cities in Italy is 4.2 people for every 1000 Venetians. In addition to that, around 5,500 people left the province of Venice between 2007 and 2008. People are simply leaving Venice in droves and with 25.7% of Venice’s population being over 65 years old and only 8.8% being under 14, Venice’s population is in crisis.

Currently, the situation in Venice remains unchanged. Between 2006 and 2007, the population of Venice decreased by 0.8% of its current total. Three main factors have been raised as points of interest. The first and possibly most important determinant of Venetian life is that each year over 12,000,000 tourists visit Venice and of those visitors 3,000,000 stay for one day or more. Secondly, Venetians must deal with an exceedingly high cost of living. Citta di Venezia compared food prices over the last year and found that prices are consistently increasing. The third most important factor is the high cost of housing in Venice. A news article dated April 5, 2007 stated that a 100 sq meter apartment in the middle of Venice costs approximately €1,000,000, which equals about $1.4 million. These are all possibly the main influences that control life in the City of Venice.

The government of Venice has initiated program and taken measures to improve the quality of life of its citizens in an effort to keep so many of them from leaving. Past IQP’s and other organizations have already made numerous attempts to research the unique social dynamics of the city. Unfortunately, the information that they have unearthed is scattered across various sources and is not available in all languages. The situation lacks a comprehensive collection of information for those trying to solve Venice’s problems to consult for guidance. If a central database, or at least report, was issued with a collection of all of the relevant information gathered so far, it would be easier for those working on the situation to try and provide solutions based on the information available.

Our research so far has been into different standards by which quality of life is measured around the globe. Currently we are looking into such models as the Mercer’s Quality of Living standard, the Economist’s Intelligence Unit’s Quality of Life Index, and the United Nation’s Human Development Index. The goal of our project is to gather all information relevant to these standards of living together and to make the information available in English in a centralized source. Hopefully, gathering such a wide amount of important information on the city of Venice into a single place will provide politicians and social engineers of Venice a valuable resource in determining ways to improve and expand the city.

# Background

## Quality of Life

### Different Methods of Measuring Quality of Life

* Mercer’s Quality of Living
* Economist’s Intelligence Unit’s Quality of Life Index
* United Nation’s Human Development Index

## Population Shifts

### Italy’s Population Shifts

* Low growth rates
* Immigration to other countries

### Venice’s Population Shifts

* Tourists Visiting the Commune
* Immigration to Venice by Foreigners
* Emigration from Venice to other parts of Italy

### Emerging Trends in Population Demographics

* Aging Population
* Low Percentage under 14
* Low birth rates

## Possible Important Factors

### Property Costs

* Average Cost of Property
* Comparisons to Other Cities in Italy
* Comparison to Other Cities in the World

### Cost of Living

* Consumer Price Index
* Tax Burden
* Average Wages

### The Effects of Tourism

* Percentage of Jobs in Service Fields
* Percentage of Jobs in Other Fields
* Rising Number of Hotels

## Information Gap

### Other Organizations Dedicated to Helping Venice

* Venice in Peril
* The WPI Venice Project Center
* The Government of Venice

### The Need for a Centralized Source of Information

* Scattered Sources in Multiple Languages
* No Main Source

# Methodology

## Mission Statement

To investigate the determining factors of the quality of life of the Venetians and to compile our findings into an accessible form for future projects.

## Objectives

1. To compile all relevant information pertaining to quality of life into a single form.
2. To assess the actions that the Venetian government has taken.
3. To investigate the Venetians' opinions on the quality of life in Venice.
4. To predict future trends of Venice and predict possible future situations.

## Area of Study Map: The Historical Center of Venice

As shown, we will be conducting out research in the Historical Center of Venice. Venice is a much larger city that consists of many other smaller islands and a mainland, but for the time that we spend in Venice, we will only be interested in the one specific part of the entire city. We will not be able to travel to the many other sections of the city, and since the historical center is the most well known part of Venice, we will only be studying that specific information.



Figure Map of Study Area

The Quality of Life in Venice has been evolving since the city came into existence, but we will only be studying the last 25 years of Quality of Life data. We will also be collecting Quality of Life data while we are in Venice from October 20th to December 12th 2008. Finally we will be making predictions on what some of our data trends will look like in the future.

The data that we will be studying will mainly focus on the life of a normal Venetian. Some of the topics that we will be studying are Transportation, Job Market, Commuting, Housing, Garbage and Recycling, Cost of Living, Retail, Economy/Finance, Marriage, Family Life, Public Services, Hospitals, Family Healthcare, Crime, Tourism, and Communication. We are not trying to study information that has to do with the younger or older Venetians because there are two other IQP groups that are focusing in on those topics.

## Compiling all relevant information pertaining to the quality of life in Venice into a single form

* Look through past IQP’s either similar or relevant to our topic
* Translate Italian sites, in particular Citta di Venezia
* Determine what topics we would consider to effect quality of life
* Use web-sites that we feel would make our topic stronger
* Compile all data in a wiki – For now it will be linked off of our Living in Venice wiki, but in the future we can create an separate one for quality of life topics and the information we found on them
* A big challenge with this is that not all of the data we have found is in English, so it is going to be difficult to translate it

*Defining Quality of Life*. (2008). Retrieved Sep. 8, 2013, from [www.imercer.com/uploads/common/pdfs/definingqualityofliving.pdf](http://www.imercer.com/uploads/common/pdfs/definingqualityofliving.pdf).

*2008 Quality of Life Index*. (n.d.). Retrieved Sep. 19, 2008, from <http://www.internationalliving.com/Internal-Components/Further-Resources/quality-of-life08>.

*Quality of Life Index*. (n.d.). Retrieved Sep. 14, 2008, from www.economist.com/media/pdf/QUALITY\_OF\_LIFE.pdf.

## Assessing the actions the Venetian government has taken

* Examine all relevant laws and programs the Italian and Venetian government has implemented on quality of life
* Conduct studies to measure the laws and programs effectiveness in combating Venice’s problem
* Study housing law that was implemented/still is being implemented
* Determine if other programs could have potentially been implemented and might have had a better effect
* A major challenge with this is that there many not be a lot of documentation on this and if there is it most likely will be in Italian

## Investigating the Venetians opinion on their Quality of Life

* Compile a list of quality of life topics that Venetians think affect them
* Determine what quality of life topic they think is most important
* All of this data is to be collected while in Venice
* The language barrier will be hard to overcome since we plan to interview Venetians
* Quality of life varies greatly from place to place and it would be interesting to see where Venetians place themselves

*Living in Italy* . (n.d.). Retrieved Sep. 12, 2008, from <http://www.shelteroffshore.com/index.php/living/cat/C54/>.

*EUROPA - Gateway of the European Union*. (n.d.). Retrieved Sep. 15, 2008, from <http://europa.eu/index_en.htm>.

## Predicting future trends of Venice and predict possible future situations

* Determine what past trends of Venice has been
  + Population
  + Emigration
  + Immigration
  + Cost
* Find a city or country with similar conditions as Venice
* Determine what government programs and policies have been implemented in said city or country
* Assess government programs and policies
* Determine if they could possibly work in Venice
* Predict trends for Venice from past data

*Italian Migration*. (n.d.). Retrieved Sep. 25, 2008, from <http://ideas.repec.org/p/iza/izadps/dp938.html>.

*International Data Base (IDB) - Main*. (n.d.). Retrieved Sep. 12, 2008, from <http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/idb/>

*NationMaster - Statistics on Italy. facts and figures, stats and information on Italian economy, crime, people, government, health and education. 60 maps and 2786 flags*. (n.d.). Retrieved Sep. 15, 2008, from <http://www.nationmaster.com/country/it-italy>.

*Direzione programmazione e controllo*. (n.d.). Retrieved Sep. 10, 2008, from http://www.comune.venezia.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/345

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*2008 Quality of Life Index*. (n.d.). Retrieved Sep. 19, 2008, from <http://www.internationalliving.com/Internal-Components/Further-Resources/quality-of-life08>.

*Defining Quality of Life*. (2008). Retrieved Sep. 8, 2013, from [www.imercer.com/uploads/common/pdfs/definingqualityofliving.pdf](http://www.imercer.com/uploads/common/pdfs/definingqualityofliving.pdf).

*Direzione programmazione e controllo*. (n.d.). Retrieved Sep. 10, 2008, from http://www.comune.venezia.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/345.

*EUROPA - Gateway of the European Union*. (n.d.). Retrieved Sep. 15, 2008, from <http://europa.eu/index_en.htm>.

*Facts about Italy: Facts about Italy: Cost of Living in Italy*. (n.d.). Retrieved Sep. 17, 2008, from <http://facts-about-italy.blogspot.com/2008/02/cost-of-living-in-italy.html>.

*NationMaster - Statistics on Italy. facts and figures, stats and information on Italian economy, crime, people, government, health and education. 60 maps and 2786 flags*. (n.d.). Retrieved Sep. 15, 2008, from <http://www.nationmaster.com/country/it-italy>.

*Quality of Life Index*. (n.d.). Retrieved Sep. 14, 2008, from www.economist.com/media/pdf/QUALITY\_OF\_LIFE.pdf.

*Venice in Peril - The British Committee for the Preservation of Venice*. (n.d.). Retrieved Sep. 15, 2008, from http://www.veniceinperil.org/.

# Appendix A

*Allagamenti*. (n.d.). Retrieved Sep. 21, 2008, from <http://www.salve.it/uk/soluzioni/problemi/p-allagamentif.htm>.

A website that talks about Venice from a socio-economic point of view. Considers Venice to be a fragile city due to all of the floods. It also talks about tourism in Venice and what it is doing to the economy.

Fletcher, C., & Mosto, J. (2005). *The Science of Saving Venice*. zurich: Paul Holberton Publishing.

A book published by the British Committee for the Preservation of Venice. Has a lot of facts about Venice in particular and the various islands it encompasses. Mostly talks about the floods in Venice and how it is taking a major toll on the city.

*Human Development Reports*. (2008). Retrieved Sep. 18, 2008, from <http://hdr.undp.org/en/>.

This website it important because it gives statistics on many topics defined under the quality of living. It also compares Italy to other countries around the world. The data on the site is arranged many different ways, by country, indicator or table. It will also allow you to build your own tables.

*International Data Base (IDB) - Main*. (n.d.). Retrieved Sep. 12, 2008, from <http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/idb/>

Contains the US Census Bureau International Data Base system. Includes county summaries and country rankings which is important to see where Italy falls opposed to various places.

*Istat.it*. (n.d.). Retrieved Sep. 25, 2008, from <http://www.istat.it/>.

Contains general information about the Italian National Institute of Statistics. Contains population and census data as well as various data tables. The only drawback to this website is that it is in Italian so it is hard to understand.

*Italian Migration*. (n.d.). Retrieved Sep. 25, 2008, from <http://ideas.repec.org/p/iza/izadps/dp938.html>.

A good resource that describes Italian migration patterns. Breaks it down into the characteristics of an Italian migrant, their origin, and their direction of movement. Also analyzes the different reasons as to why they migrate.

*Living in Italy* . (n.d.). Retrieved Sep. 12, 2008, from <http://www.shelteroffshore.com/index.php/living/cat/C54/>.

A series of articles about living and working in Italy. Different articles include, working and living in Italy, enjoying retail therapy and shopping in Italy, things to think about before moving to Italy and relationship between education, university and jobs in Italy.

Muscara, C. (1984). The Right to Adapt and the Weight of History: Venice and the Venetians. *International Political Science Review* , 7.

This article gives a good background on the political, economic, cultural obstacles Venice had to overcome during the mid 20th century. This may give us some insight on how well Venice adapts to change. The article addresses the uniqueness of Venice and how it balances revolution and historical conservation.

Musu, I. (2001). *Sustainable Venice:Suggestions for the future.* Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

This source discusses the effects of tourism and urban planning in Venice. It is a useful source because it was published within the past 10 years. One of the major topics in the book is sustainability, which would provide possible insight to topics included in quality of living.

Shackman, G., Liu, Y., & Wang, X. (n.d.). *Social Research Update* . Retrieved Sep. 15, 2008, from sru.soc.surrey.ac.uk/SRU47.pdf.

This site provides alternate metrics for measuring quality of life and also lists a number of public domain sources which we might be able to harvest data from.

*Sustainable Venice: suggestions for ... - Google Book Search*. (n.d.). Retrieved Sep. 15, 2008, from <http://books.google.com/books?id=9z8pGLgUf7cC&printsec=copyright&dq=venice+economy#PPP8,M1>.

An online book that talks about Venice being sustainable and possible suggestions for the future. Two of the topics that are mentioned that effect Venice’s sustainability are the lagoon and tourism.

*The Contribution of UNESCO-BRESCE*. (n.d.). Retrieved Sep. 15, 2008, from unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0016/001601/160119e.pdf.