

# USING YOUR PHONE IN ITALY

## Important Pre-Departure Phone Decisions

During your time in Italy, you are **required to have an operating smartphone that can make/receive calls, send/receive text messages, and that has a [data plan](#)**. This is important so that Verto is able to contact you in the event of an emergency and you are able to get in contact with the Verto staff without relying on wi-fi connection that in some cases might not be available. This is mandatory – as outlined in the [Cell Phone Requirements Policy](#) – and is in the interest of your safety and well-being while abroad.

### **PLEASE NOTE:**

If you plan on using your current phone, **your phone MUST be unlocked by your current cell phone provider prior to arriving abroad**. Unlocking your phone in Italy is not possible – this is **best done well in advance of your departure**. *If you do not unlock your phone prior to arrival, you will be required to purchase a second smartphone for use abroad.*

Here are your phone plan options for Florence:

## Option 1:

### Prepaid Local SIM Card (Cheapest Option)

With a prepaid local SIM card you will get your own Italian phone number for texting and calling, and you can connect on apps like iMessage, Facetime, and the internet. Your old number will still work on your phone for contacting friends and family back home via iMessage, Whatsapp, or other messaging platforms.

Steps to obtain a prepaid Italian SIM card:

1. **Your phone MUST be unlocked** prior to departure to be able to use a new SIM card.
2. Once in Florence, **your Care Team Leader will help you purchase** a prepaid SIM card and a package which you can top up as needed with a local provider (we recommend TIM, Vodafone, or WindTre for a pay-as-you-go plan).
  - a. The best deal with local SIM cards is to purchase a monthly allowance (typically no more than 20 Euros a month), which includes between 70GB or 100GB a month depending on the cost of the plan and the company chosen for it and will last 30 calendar days. You can 'top up your phone' at any Tabacchi store around the city or at the phone provider stores.

## Option 2:

### International Phone Plan with Home Carrier

Although not recommended due to high cost, you may choose to purchase an international phone plan with your current at-home phone provider prior to your departure to Italy. This option allows you to keep your current phone number. You must ensure that your plan will have both data and calls/texts available internationally. Please note, you will need to switch on the data plan every day therefore keep in mind the daily fee and budget accordingly. Keeping the data plan switched off is not an option due to communication and safety best practices that every Verto student needs to follow.

### Please note: In case you phone is misplaced or broken you will be able to purchase an Italian Smartphone On-site

Steps to obtain a local smartphone:

1. Once in Italy, **your Care Team Leader will help you purchase a local smartphone** or you may choose to buy and have it delivered to the Verto Florence Study Center.
2. Basic smartphones range from about 80-150 Euro from either a local shop or the main phone provider stores: TIM, Vodafone, and WindTre.

**IMPORTANT:** Regardless of which option you choose, it is wise to make sure you have comprehensive insurance for your phone in case it gets broken, lost, or stolen.

**You must give your cell number to Verto staff during the first few days in Florence and always keep your data switched on so that you can be contacted in an emergency.**

**Add Verto Florence's phone number to your contacts so that we can reach you during an emergency.**