

The wealth tax

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Ticino levies a progressive cantonal wealth tax on net wealth, to which the communes add their own share through their communal multiplier. The fiscal and social reform put to the voters on 29 April 2018 stretched the brackets, with a phase-in up to 2024, so that the maximum cantonal rate of 3 per mille applies only to net wealth above about CHF 3.5 million. It also introduced a wealth tax brake (*freno all'imposta sulla sostanza*). Under the brake, the cantonal and communal taxes on income and wealth are reduced on application to 60 per cent of the taxpayer's total taxable income.¹ For wealthy families with low income relative to their assets, which is typical of portfolios invested for capital growth, the brake can reduce the effective wealth tax substantially. Real estate is valued at its official estimate, and listed securities at their market value at the end of the year. Persons taxed according to expenditure also pay the wealth tax, and the method by which Ticino determines its basis for them should be confirmed with the cantonal tax administration in each case.²

The 2024 tax reform continued the policy of making Ticino more competitive for high-income residents. Approved by the voters on 9 June 2024 with 56.89 per cent, it took effect retroactively from 1 January 2024.³ It reduces the maximum cantonal income tax rate by half a percentage point a year from 2025, from 15.076 per cent to 12 per cent in 2030. It also caps the tax on capital withdrawals from pension schemes at 3 per cent and lowers several inheritance tax rates.⁴ The left contested the reform, which therefore came before the voters in a referendum. The episode shows that the attraction of wealthy residents remains a live political question in the canton.

1 Inheritance and gift tax in Ticino

Ticino levies an inheritance tax and a gift tax under the LT, whose provisions on these taxes include Arts 142 to 170. The tax is due if the

deceased had his or her last domicile in Ticino, or if the donor was domiciled there, and on real estate situated in Ticino irrespective of the domicile.⁵ The most important rule for families is the exemption in Art. 154(1)(f) LT, which covers "il coniuge, il partner registrato, gli ascendenti e discendenti in linea diretta, compresi gli adottivi". The first CHF 10,000 of net value received each year by a beneficiary from the same donor is exempt under Art. 155(2) LT. Art. 156a LT, introduced in 2024, grants a reduction of 50 per cent for the gratuitous transfer of a business or of a controlling interest of at least 51 per cent to a person who takes on a management role. The reduction is recaptured if the conditions cease within five years.⁶ For other beneficiaries the rates are progressive and depend on the degree of kinship. The 2024 reform reduced the maximum rate for cohabiting partners from 41 to 15.5 per cent and for half-siblings from 27 to 18.5 per cent. It arranged the tax in four tiers with maximum rates between 15.5 and 35 per cent.

Category of beneficiary Coefficient Maximum rate
Siblings, step-siblings, cohabiting partners 1.0 15.5%
Half-siblings, nephews and nieces 1.3 18.5%
Uncles and aunts, cousins, in-laws 1.8 27.0%
Other relatives and unrelated persons 3.0 35.0%

Table: Ticino inheritance and gift tax rates from 2024 (Art. 164 LT).⁷

The comparison with Italy is instructive. Within the nuclear family both states tax lightly: Ticino not at all, Italy at 4 per cent above EUR 1 million per child. For siblings the Italian tax is 6 per cent above EUR 100,000, while Ticino reaches up to 15.5 per cent. For unrelated persons Italy charges a flat 8 per cent, while the Ticino rate can reach 35 per cent. A family whose estate plan includes significant gifts to nephews, partners or friends may therefore pay more in Ticino than in Italy, which should be considered before the move.

2 Notes

1. Repubblica e Cantone Ticino, Votazione cantonale del 29 aprile 2018 , explanatory brochure C, https://www4.ti.ch/fileadmin/GENERALE/DIRITTIPOLITICI/votazioni/pdf/2018/29-04-2018_Opuscolo-C.pdf (consulted 5 October 2026): maximum rate of 3 per mille for wealth above CHF 3,481,000 from 2024; "Le imposte cantonali e comunali sul reddito e sulla sostanza sono ridotte, su richiesta del contribuente, al 60 per cento del reddito imponibile complessivo". Result of the vote of 29 April 2018. ↩

2. Determination of the wealth tax of persons taxed according to expenditure in Ticino. ↩
3. Steimle & Partners Consulting, "Ticino tax reform 2024 to increase fiscal attractivity: an overview", published by the British Swiss Chamber of Commerce, 12 March 2025, <https://bscc.co.uk/2025/03/12/ticino-tax-reform-2024-to-increase-fiscal-attractivity-an-overview> (consulted 5 October 2026). ↩
4. Repubblica e Cantone Ticino, presentation "Votazione del 9 giugno 2024", 7 May 2024, <https://www3.ti.ch/COMUNICAZIONI/239691/20240507%20-%20Presentazione%20-%20Votazione%20del%209%20giugno%202024%20-%20v4.pdf> (consulted 5 October 2026). ↩
5. Bollettino ufficiale No 26/2024 (below), amending Arts 142, 154, 155, 156a, 164 and 170 LT. Provisions on the territorial scope of the tax. ↩
6. Bollettino ufficiale delle leggi No 26/2024, 23 August 2024, 186–189: law of 12 December 2023 amending the LT, in force 1 January 2024, https://www4.ti.ch/fileadmin/DFE/DC/DOC-TRIBUTARIA/2024/Bollettino_ufficiale_26-_2024.pdf (consulted 5 October 2026). ↩
7. Bollettino ufficiale No 26/2024 (above), Art. 164(1)(b) LT; presentation "Votazione del 9 giugno 2024" (above), on the earlier maximum rates. ↩

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