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European Regions and Their Countries: Mallorca, Normandy, Sardinia

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Three names keep tripping up students: Mallorca, Normandy and Sardinia. Each is a famous region, and each belongs to a different country. UPSC tested exactly this in 2025, and every pair in the question was wrong. This lesson fixes the map in your head, one region at a time.

Each card gives one idea, with its source.



Beach at Palma de Mallorca, Spain. Photo by Otto Domes, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons.



Normandy (France), Mallorca (Spain) and Sardinia (Italy). Base map: Alexrk2, CC BY-SA 3.0; markers added by mcqquestion.com.

At a glance

Region	Country	What it is	Capital
Mallorca	Spain	Largest island of the Balearic Islands	Palma
Normandy	France	Region on the English Channel	Rouen
Sardinia	Italy	Island region with a special statute	Cagliari
Corsica	France	Island north of Sardinia	Ajaccio

Region	Country	What it is	Capital
Catalonia	Spain	Autonomous community in the north-east	Barcelona

Autonomous region is a region that runs many of its own affairs inside a larger country. Spain and Italy both use this idea.

Balearic Islands are an island group in the western Mediterranean. They form one autonomous community of Spain.

Duchy is land ruled by a duke. Normandy was a duchy before it joined the French crown.

Corsica is the French island just north of Sardinia. Students often confuse it with Sardinia.

Mallorca belongs to Spain

Mallorca is an island. It lies in the western Mediterranean. It is the largest island of the Balearic Islands. The Balearic Islands form one autonomous community of Spain.

Their capital is Palma, on Mallorca. The group has four main islands. Menorca, Ibiza and Formentera are the other three. The islands got their Statute of Autonomy in 1983.

So Mallorca is not Italian. It is Spanish. Remember it as Spain’s island.

Sources: britannica.com

> **Quick check 1.** Mallorca is the largest island of the Balearic Islands. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Normandy belongs to France

Normandy is a region of France. It lies in the north. It faces the English Channel. Its capital is Rouen.

The region has five departments: Seine-Maritime, Eure, Calvados, Orne and Manche. Upper and Lower Normandy merged into one region in 2016.

So Normandy is not Spanish. It is French. Think of the French coast.

Sources: britannica.com; herodote.net

Normandy in history: Vikings and D-Day

Vikings settled the area in the ninth and tenth centuries. In 911 the French king gave land to the Viking chief Rollo. That gift is the start of the duchy of Normandy. In 1066 Duke William of Normandy invaded England and won.

In 1204 the French king Philip II took the duchy. On 6 June 1944 Allied forces landed on Normandy beaches on D-Day. There were five landing beaches. Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword were their names.

Sources: herodote.net; dday-overlord.com

Sardinia belongs to Italy

Sardinia is the second-largest island in the Mediterranean, after Sicily. It lies west of the Italian mainland. It is a self-governing region of Italy. Its capital is Cagliari.

The Italian Constitution gives it a special statute in Article 116. Italy has five such special regions. Sardinia and Sicily are two of them.

So Sardinia is not French. It is Italian. Think of Italy’s big island.

Sources: britannica.com; senato.it

Quick check 2. Sardinia is an autonomous region of Spain. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Sardinia and its own language

Sardinia has its own language. It is called Sardinian. Italian law recognises it as a protected minority language. That law is Law 482 of 1999.

The same law also protects Catalan, which is spoken in the town of Alghero. So language gives Sardinia a separate identity, but it does not change the country.

Sources: gazzettaufficiale.it; britannica.com

Quick check 3. Italian law recognises Sardinian as a protected minority language. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Why these regions get mixed up

Mallorca and Sardinia are both islands. Both sit in the Mediterranean. Both are holiday spots, so students link them to the wrong country. Sardinia sits close to Corsica.

The two islands lie about 11 km apart. Corsica is French. Sardinia is Italian. Catalan is spoken in Catalonia, in the Balearic Islands and in Alghero in Sardinia.

That shared language can mislead you about borders. Here is a trick. Link each region to its country by one famous fact.

- Mallorca: Palma, the Balearic Islands, Spain
- Normandy: D-Day, William of Normandy, France
- Sardinia: Cagliari, special statute, Italy

Sources: britannica.com

> **Quick check 4.** Corsica is part of Italy. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Other regions to know

Exams like to ask about regions. Learn these five.

- Catalonia is an autonomous community of Spain.
- Sicily is a special-statute region of Italy.
- Scotland is a country within the United Kingdom.
- Flanders is the Dutch-speaking region of Belgium.
- Bavaria is a state of Germany.

Learn each region with its country in one line. That habit wins marks on pair questions.

Sources: britannica.com

Regions in the news: Anatolia, Amhara, Cabo Delgado

UPSC has asked about regions in the news. Anatolia is the large peninsula that forms most of Turkey. Amhara is a region of Ethiopia. Cabo Delgado is a province of Mozambique, not Spain.

Catalonia is in Spain. The 2022 question mixed these up on purpose. So always match the region to its country, not to its sound.

Sources: britannica.com

> **Quick check 5.** Cabo Delgado is a province of Spain. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

> **Think it through: why can one language cross a border?**
>
> Catalan is spoken in Spain, and also in Alghero, a town in Sardinia.
>
> Language follows history and people. Borders follow treaties and laws.

How has this been asked in exams?

UPSC CSP 2025

The question gave three pairs: Mallorca-Italy, Normandy-Spain and Sardinia-France. It asked how many pairs were correct. The answer is none. Mallorca is in Spain, Normandy is in France, and Sardinia is in Italy.

Correct pairs: 0 of 3. See UPSC CSP 2025.

UPSC CSP 2022

The question listed regions often in the news, each paired with a country. Anatolia-Turkey and Amhara-Ethiopia are correct. Cabo Delgado-Spain is wrong, because Cabo Delgado is in Mozambique. Only two pairs were correct.

See UPSC CSP 2022.

Quick Q&A

- **Which country has Mallorca?** Spain.
- **Which country has Normandy?** France.
- **Which country has Sardinia?** Italy.
- **Which island is just north of Sardinia?** Corsica, which is French.
- **Where is Cabo Delgado?** Mozambique.

Remember This

- **Mallorca**: Spain, Balearic Islands, capital Palma.
- **Normandy**: France, capital Rouen, D-Day 1944.
- **Sardinia**: Italy, special statute, capital Cagliari.
- **Corsica**: France, not Italy.
- **2025 PYQ**: all three pairs wrong, so none correct.

Practice MCQ

Practice MCQs

1. In UPSC CSP 2025, how many of these pairs are correct: Mallorca-Italy, Normandy-Spain, Sardinia-France?

A. All three

B. Only one

C. Only two

D. None

See answer ↓

2. Which is the largest island of the Balearic Islands?

A. Mallorca

B. Formentera

C. Ibiza

D. Menorca

See answer ↓

3. Normandy is a region of which country?

A. France

B. Belgium

C. Spain

D. Italy

See answer ↓

4. Which pair is correct?

A. Mallorca-Italy

B. Corsica-Italy

C. Sardinia-France

D. Sardinia-Italy

See answer ↓

5. In the UPSC CSP 2022 pairs, which region was wrongly matched with Spain?

A. Catalonia

B. Cabo Delgado

C. Anatolia

D. Amhara

See answer ↓

6. Which strait separates Sardinia from Corsica?

A. Strait of Bonifacio

B. Strait of Gibraltar

C. Strait of Messina

D. Strait of Dover

See answer ↓

Answer Key

1. **D.**
   None of the pairs is correct. Mallorca is in Spain, Normandy is in France, and Sardinia is in Italy.
   Sources: UPSC CSP 2025 question · Britannica: Sardinia.
   ↑ Q1
2. **A.**
   Mallorca is the largest Balearic island. Its main city, Palma, is the capital of the Balearic Islands.
   Sources: Britannica: Balearic Islands · Britannica: Majorca.
   ↑ Q2
3. **A.**
   Normandy lies in northern France on the English Channel. Its capital is Rouen.
   Sources: Britannica: Normandy · Herodote: Normandy of the Vikings and dukes.
   ↑ Q3
4. **D.**
   Sardinia is an autonomous region of Italy. Corsica is French, and Mallorca is Spanish.
   Sources: Britannica: Sardinia · Britannica: Corsica.
   ↑ Q4
5. **B.**
   Cabo Delgado is a province of Mozambique, not Spain. Catalonia is in Spain.
   Sources: UPSC CSP 2022 question · Britannica: Mozambique.
   ↑ Q5
6. **A.**
   The Strait of Bonifacio, about 11 km wide, separates Sardinia from Corsica. Sardinia is Italian and Corsica is French.
   Sources: Britannica: Sardinia · Britannica: Corsica.
   ↑ Q6

Quick-check answers

1. **True.** Mallorca is the largest of the four main Balearic islands. Palma, the capital, lies on it. ↑ 1

2. **False.** Sardinia is an autonomous region of Italy, with a special statute under Article 116 of the Italian Constitution. ↑ 2
3. **True.** Law 482 of 1999 protects Sardinian. It also protects Catalan in Alghero. ↑ 3
4. **False.** Corsica is French. Sardinia, just south of it, is Italian. ↑ 4
5. **False.** Cabo Delgado is a province in northern Mozambique, in Africa. ↑ 5

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