Hunting for lost churches
on Wikimedia projects with OpenRefine

a personal project - Marco Chemello (Wikimedia Italia) 2023

short URL:
https://w.wiki/8WHC

Photo: Wikigita in Calabria primavera 2022 partecipanti f05
by Marco Chemello (Wikimedia Italia) 2022
CC BY-SA 4.0 on Wikimedia Commons

Wiki Loves Monuments: a lot of church buildings in Italy…

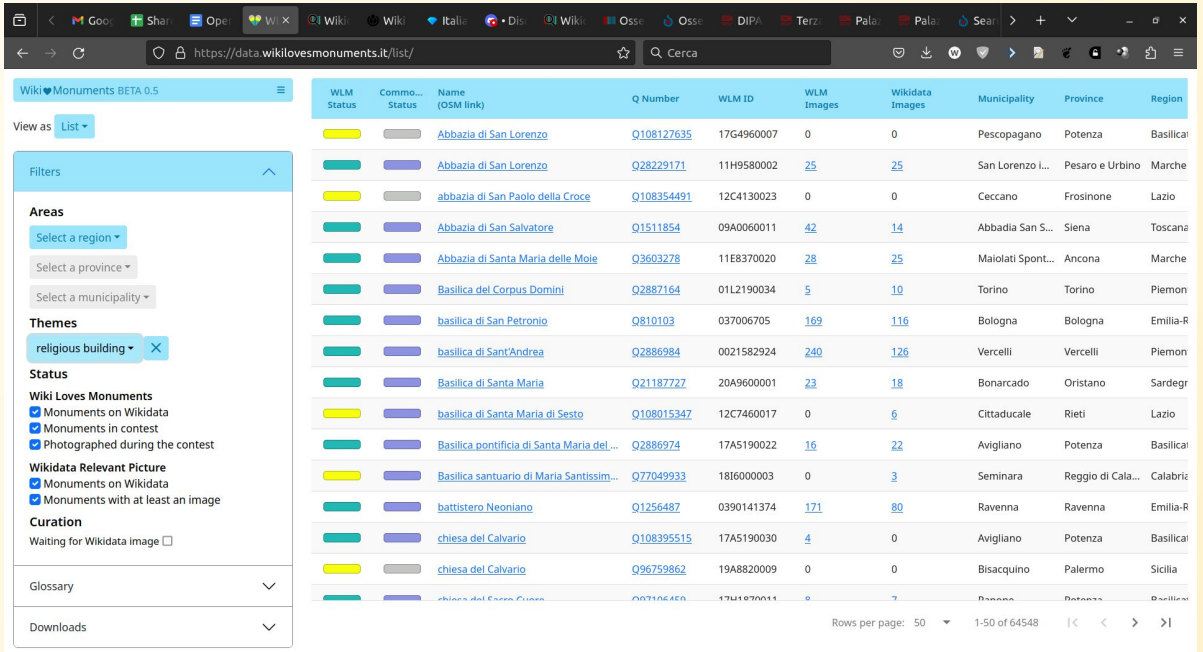
From the results of the 2023 edition of Wiki Loves Monuments Italy:

64 555 religious buildings in Italy present in the WLM lists

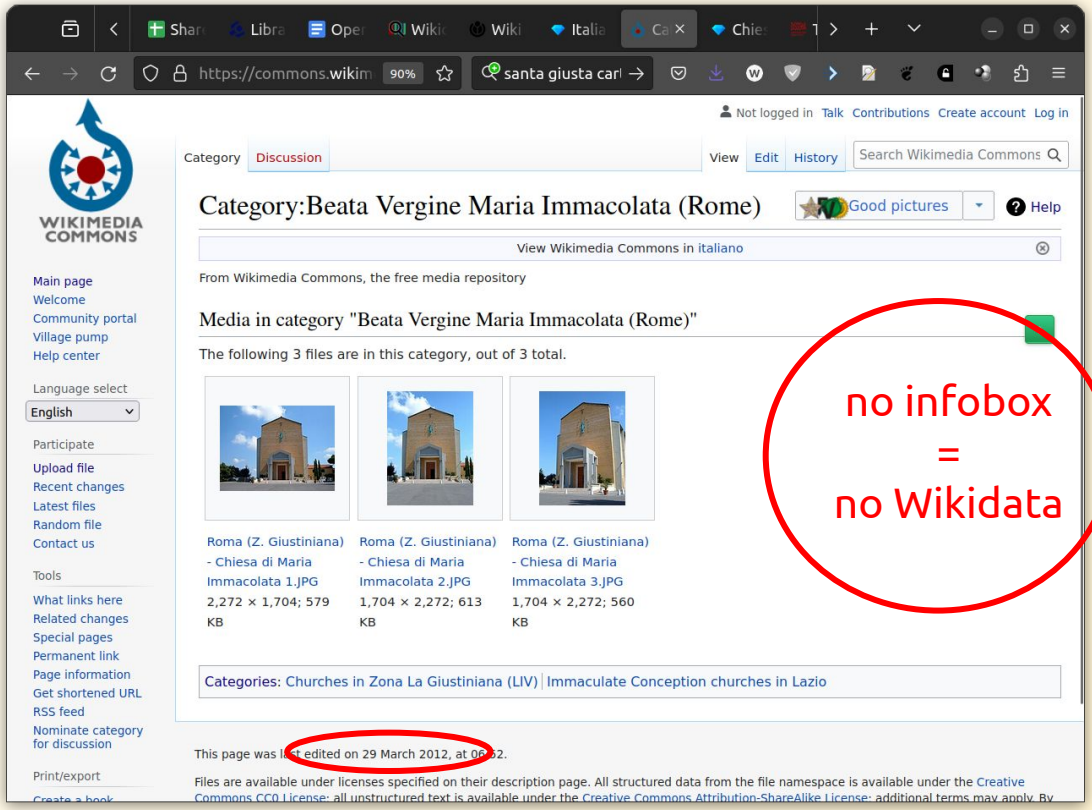
The list is based
on Wikidata
(now the most comprehensive database on this topic!)

…but there are still many gaps to fill!

https://wiki.wikimedia.it/wiki/Wiki_Loves_Monuments/2023



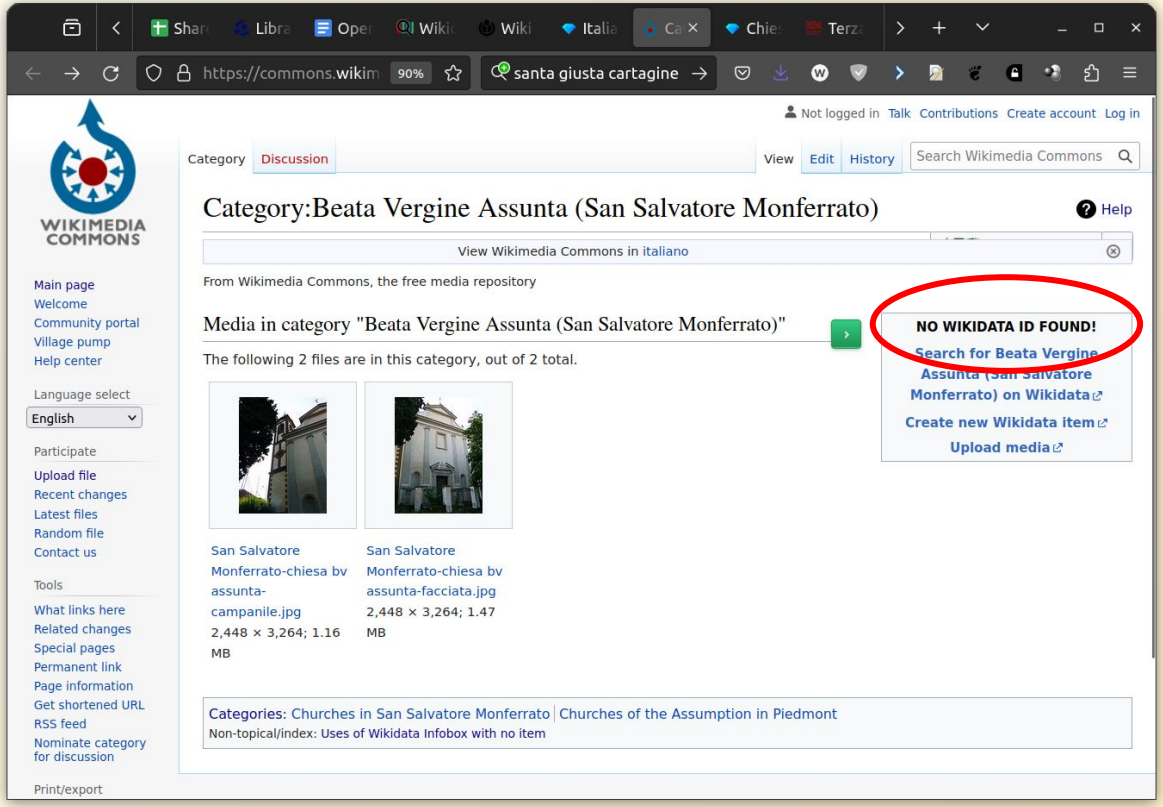
Still a lot of Commons categories not linked to Wikidata…



Still a lot of Commons categories not linked to Wikidata…

Many of the building are really present on Wikidata with an item, so we need to create a link…

… but how many other are not in Wikidata?

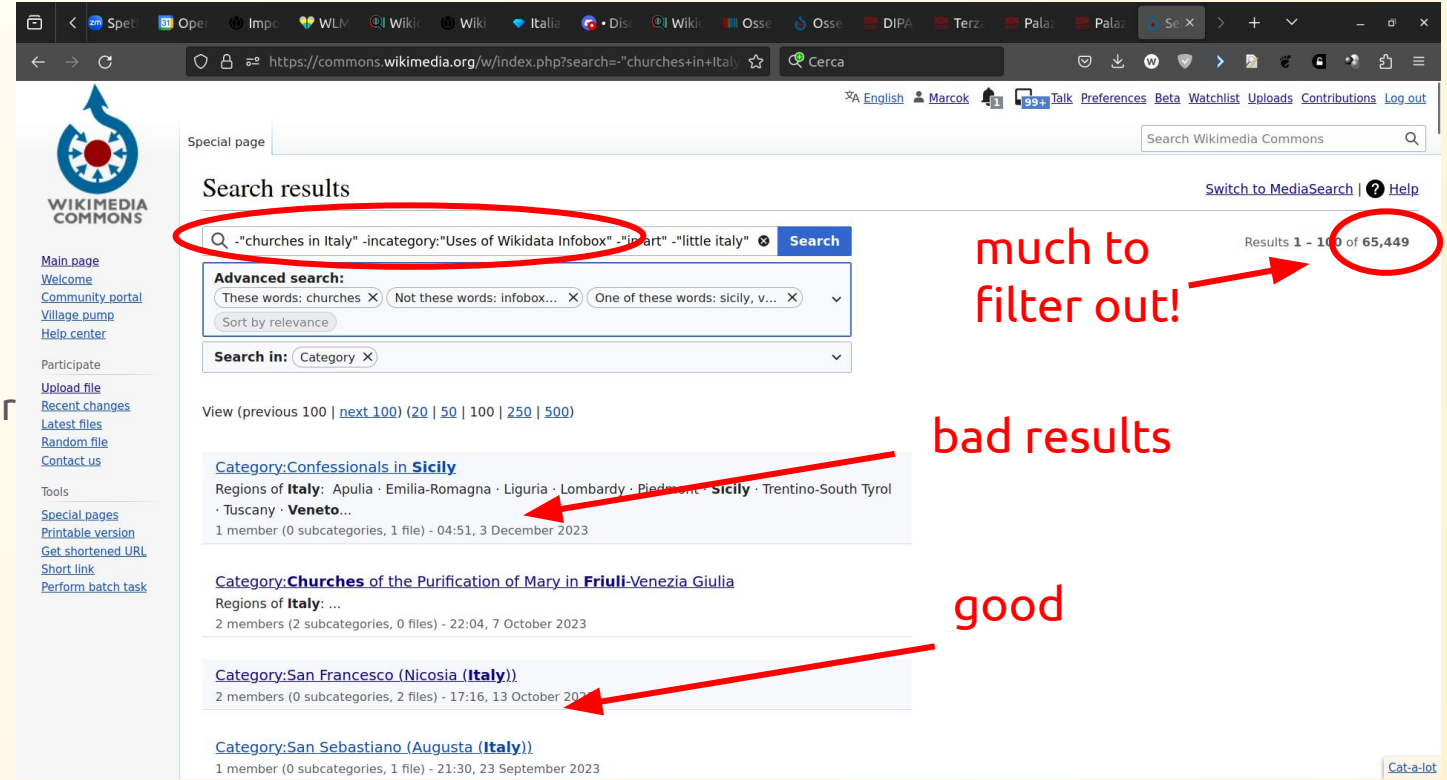


Collecting the data (roughly)

performing some search on Wikimedia Commons

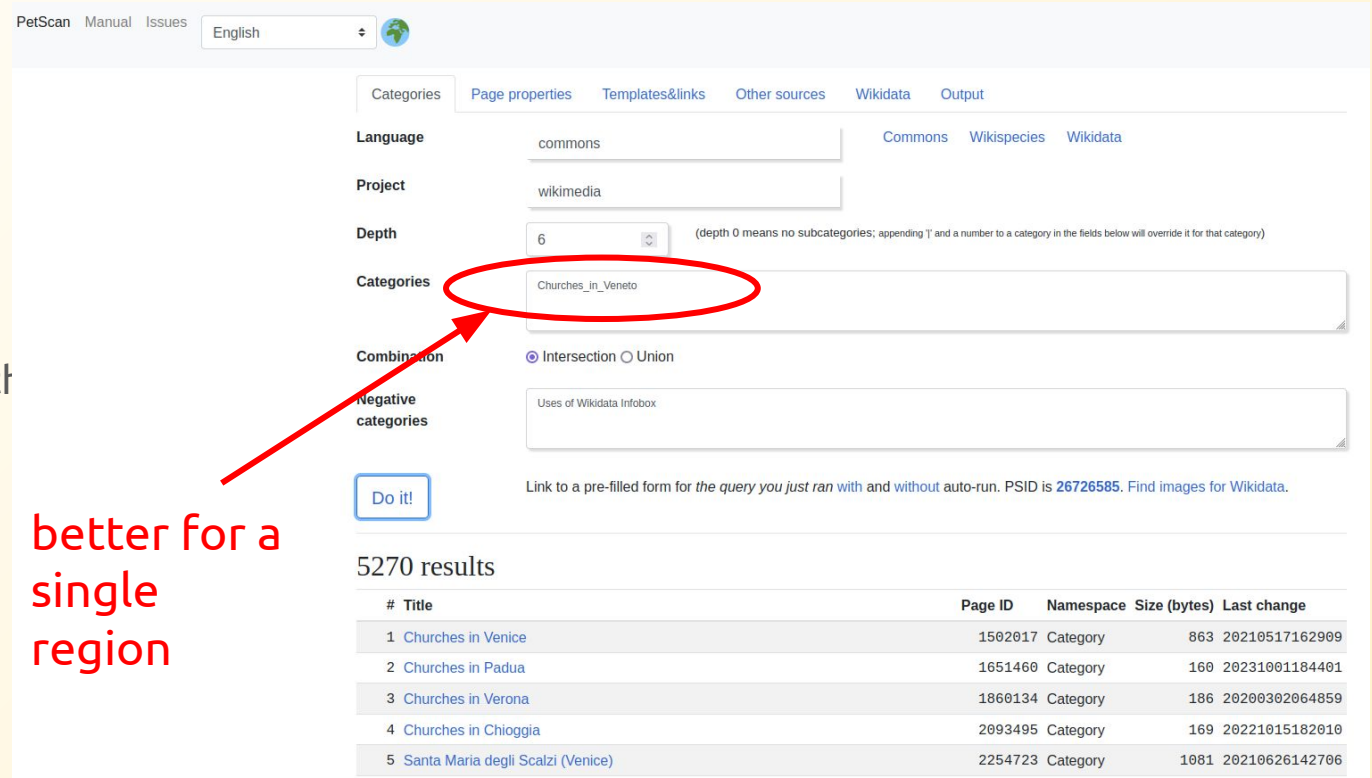
Do you know better ways to do so?

(yes, there are better ways to try!)



Collecting the data (roughly)
using PetScan

yes, PetScan could
do it better…
but it doesn't work with
big lists,
and/or with too much
filters

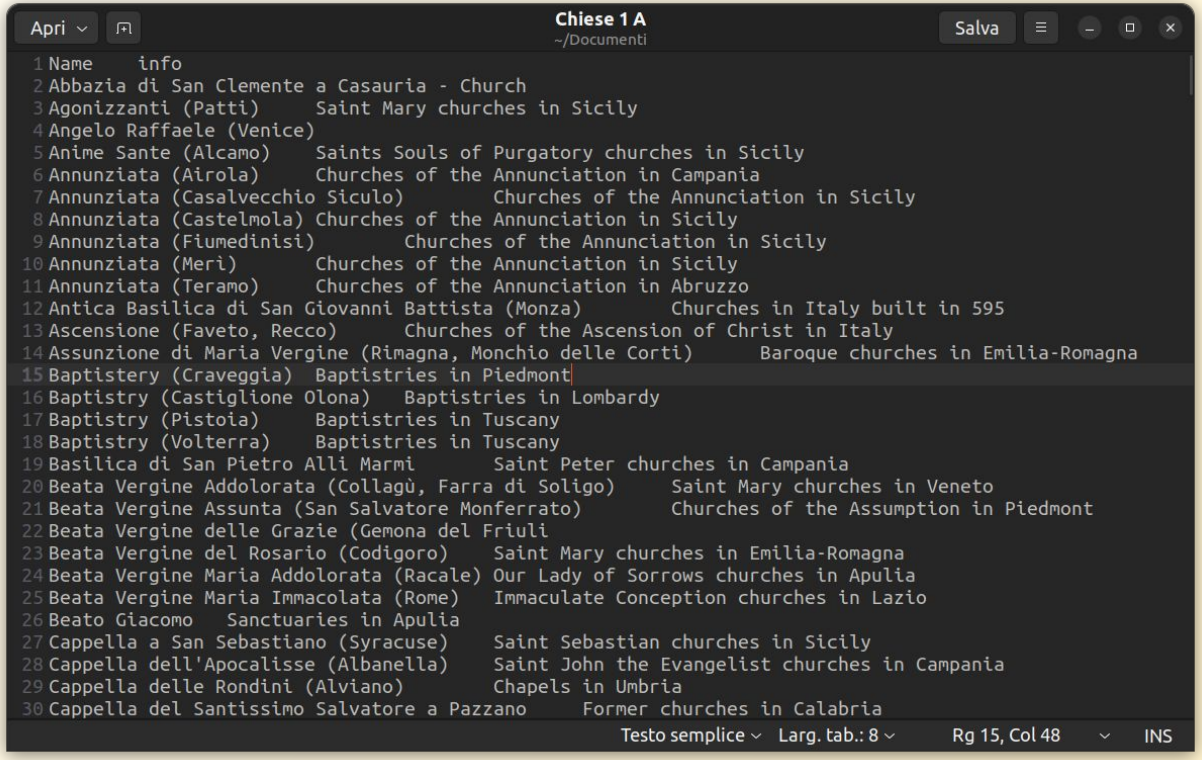


better for a single region

Filtering the data (roughly)

pasting, ordering and manually filtering the list of categories

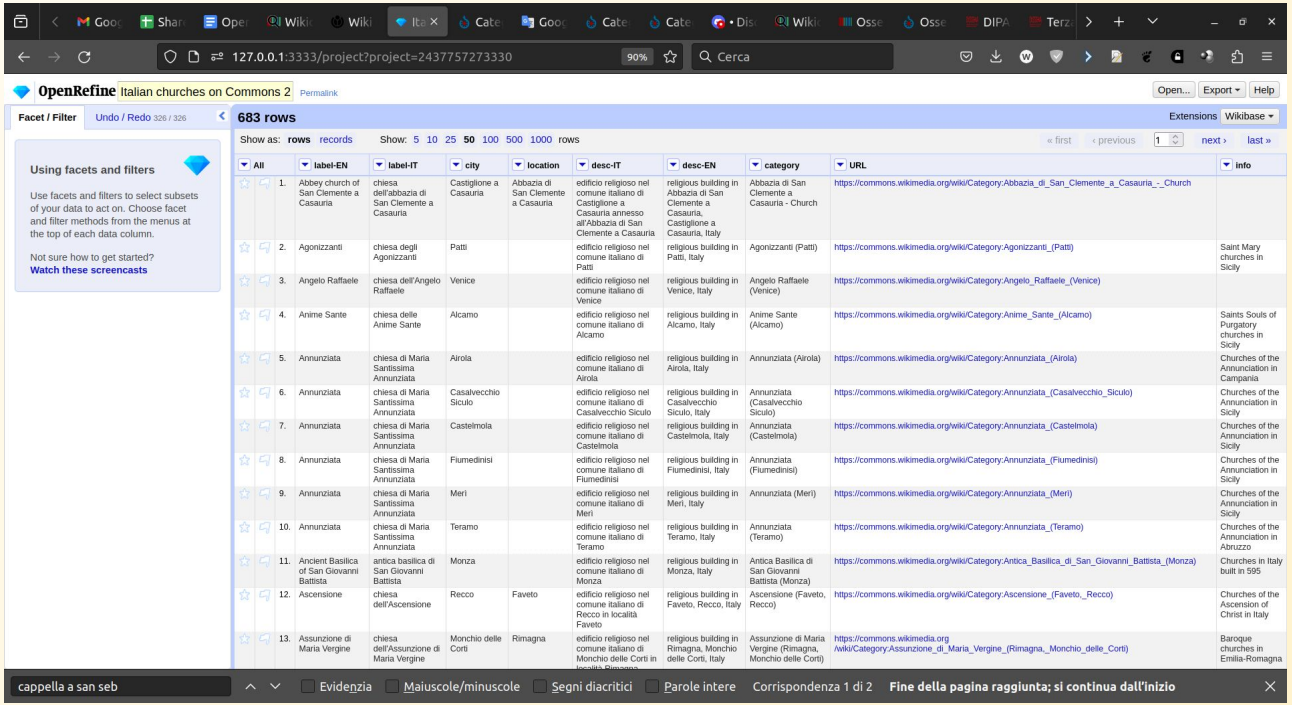
excluding categories
of paintings, interiors,
architectural elements etc.




```
Name    info
Abbazia di San Clemente a Casauria - Church
Agonizzanti (Patti)     Saint Mary churches in Sicily
Angelo Raffaele (Venice)
Anime Sante (Alcamo)    Saints Souls of Purgatory churches in Sicily
Annunziata (Airola)     Churches of the Annunciation in Campania
Annunziata (Casalvecchio Siculo)        Churches of the Annunciation in Sicily
Annunziata (Castelmola) Churches of the Annunciation in Sicily
Annunziata (Fiumedinisi)        Churches of the Annunciation in Sicily
Annunziata (Meri)       Churches of the Annunciation in Sicily
Annunziata (Teramo)     Churches of the Annunciation in Abruzzo
Antica Basilica di San Giovanni Battista (Monza)        Churches in Italy built in 595
Ascensione (Faveto, Recco)      Churches of the Ascension of Christ in Italy
Assunzione di Maria Vergine (Rimagna, Monchio delle Corti)      Baroque churches in Emilia-Romagna
Baptistery (Craveggia)  Baptistries in Piedmont
Baptistry (Castiglione Olona)   Baptistries in Lombardy
Baptistry (Pistoia)     Baptistries in Tuscany
Baptistry (Volterra)    Baptistries in Tuscany
Basilica di San Pietro Alli Marmi       Saint Peter churches in Campania
Beata Vergine Addolorata (Collagù, Farra di Soligo)     Saint Mary churches in Veneto
Beata Vergine Assunta (San Salvatore Monferrato)        Churches of the Assumption in Piedmont
Beata Vergine delle Grazie (Gemona del Friuli
Beata Vergine del Rosario (Codigoro)    Saint Mary churches in Emilia-Romagna
Beata Vergine Maria Addolorata (Racale) Our Lady of Sorrows churches in Apulia
Beata Vergine Maria Immacolata (Rome)   Immaculate Conception churches in Lazio
Beato Giacomo   Sanctuaries in Apulia
Cappella a San Sebastiano (Syracuse)    Saint Sebastian churches in Sicily
Cappella dell'Apocalisse (Albanella)    Saint John the Evangelist churches in Campania
Cappella delle Rondini (Alviano)        Chapels in Umbria
Cappella del Santissimo Salvatore a Pazzano     Former churches in Calabria
```

importing & deriving informations on OpenRefine
(with a lot of fixing) from category name

- ➔ Commons category
- ➔ name (label)
- ➔ description (English / Italian)
- ➔ city
- ➔ location
- ➔ titular saint

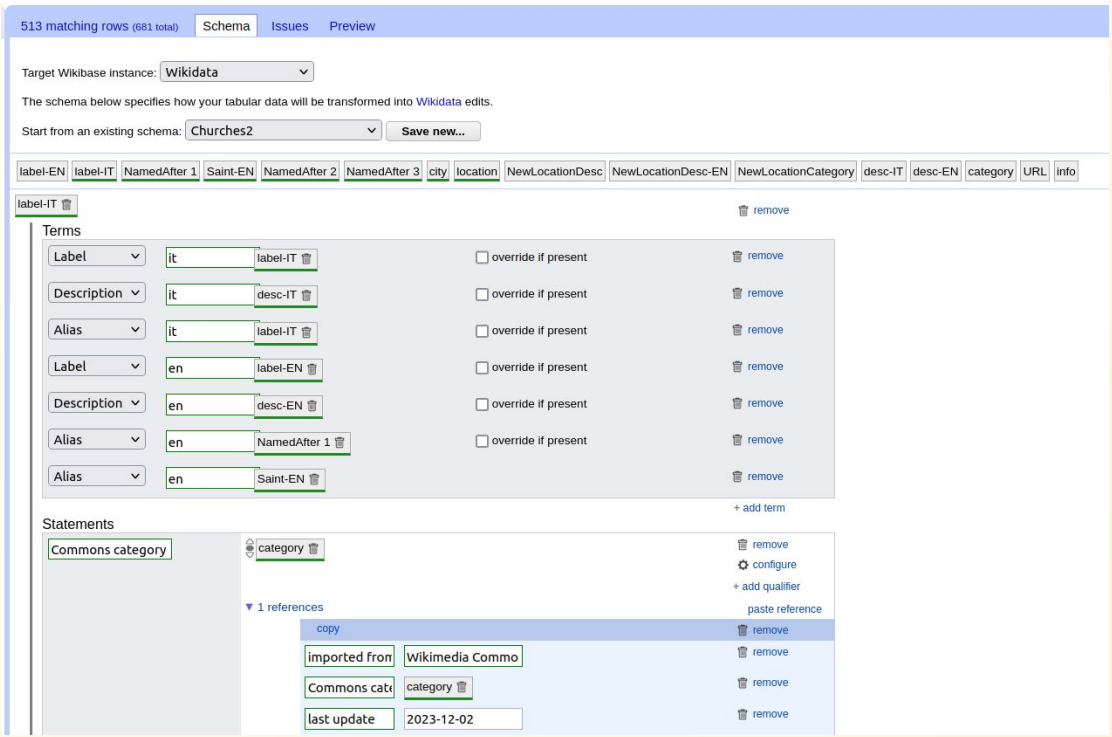


reconciling to Wikidata with existing items of churches

(tried different ways to match better, as the name variants are a lot)

creating missing items of churches and hamlets

and updating many more



results (after 3 months)

6500+ categories found (with no link in Wikidata)

3000+ new items created on Wikidata
(previously unknown religious buildings = +5%)

updated 3500+ existing items on Wikidata
(category link, descriptions, aliases, locations, titular saints)

(as of 5 Jan. 2024)

Photo: Rovine Condolima Monterosso Calabro Wikigita Calabria 2022 f02
by Marco Chemello (Wikimedia Italia) 2022
CC BY-SA 4.0 on Wikimedia Commons

Thank you all!

Presentation made by Marco Chemello in 2023
Wikimedia Italia - associazione per la diffusione della conoscenza libera.

Texts distributed in CC0 1.0 Universal.
Images by the author are distributed with CC BY-SA licenses (see captions).
Some trademarks and logos cited are not owned by Wikimedia Italia.

marco.chemello@wikimedia.it
www.wikimedia.it

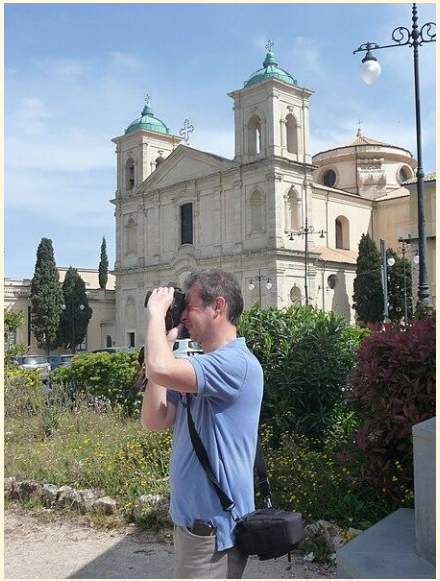


Photo: Wikigita in Calabria primavera 2022 partecipanti f00 by Marco Chemello (Wikimedia Italia) 2022
CC BY-SA 4.0 on Wikimedia Commons

Marco Chemello

GLAM specialist and trainer (Wikimedia Italia)

An active contributor to Wikipedia since 2004, he is one of the administrators of the Italian edition of the free encyclopedia since 2005. As a Wikipedian in residence he collaborated on many OpenGLAM projects for sharing the contents of cultural institutions, including the National Museum of Science and Technology Leonardo da Vinci in Milan and the Central Institute for Archives (ICAR) of the Italian Ministry of Culture (MiC). Having joined the Wikimedia Italia staff as a trainer and GLAM specialist, he was a Wikimedian in residence at the BEIC Foundation, the Academy of Sciences of Turin, the Ricordi Historical Archive of Milan, the Polo del '900. He collaborates with various universities, including the Politecnico and the Statale of Milan; since 2021 he has been among the first two Wikipedians in residence at an Italian university, the University of Padua. With Unipd he created 3 MOOCs for students, teachers and cultural institutions on EduOpen.