



Mediterranean and National Strategies for Sustainable
Development
Priority Field of Action 2: Energy and Climate Change

Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Italy - National study's summary

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Italian priorities in the energy field are strictly related to the main issues of securing energy supply, reducing GHGs and pollutant emissions and assuring competitiveness in the energy sector. To this end, renewable energies and energy efficiency represent the key tools able to address simultaneously all the above mentioned topics.

In this field, the main targets are the 6,5% of GHGs reduction with respect to 1990 levels under the Kyoto Protocol and the national indicative objective of 22% of electricity from renewable energy sources in the gross electricity consumption in 2010 under the EU Directive 2001/77/CE.

Total primary energy supply will increase in the next years, but the policies adopted to promote renewable energy and energy efficiency will lead to a constant slow decrease of energy intensity. Anyway, Italy will remain dependent on fossil resources in the next future and, consequently, strongly dependent on external resources (almost 91% of natural gas and 93% of oil are expected to be imported in 2020).

Renewable energy will continue to increase in time, above all in the electricity sector. The 2005 renewable energy electricity gross production (almost 50 TWh) represents 16,4 % of total gross production, 14,1% of gross inland consumption (352,8 TWh) and 15,1 % of total electricity demand (net consumption + network losses = 330,4 TWh).

The main tool to support renewables will remain the “Green certificate” market-based mechanism. In parallel, the feed-in tariff scheme for photovoltaic and the recent legislation on the energy efficiency in the building sector will contribute to accelerate the increase of renewables in the energy mix.

Another market-based mechanism, “White Certificates”, is also used to support energy efficiency and energy saving measures to reduce consumption to the end-use. The aim is to achieve, by the end of the five-year period 2005-2009, a total energy saving of 2.9 million tep.

In terms of policy priorities, the building sector has been considered a relevant sector in which it is crucial to intervene to reduce energy consumption and related emissions. Among several standards, conditions and modalities to improve the energetic performance of the buildings, the recent legislation (Legislative Decree 29th December 2006, n.311) foresees also that in all new buildings, or in case of restoration of existing thermal plants, at least 50% of the annual primary energy necessary to produce hot sanitary water should be provided using renewable energy sources. This limit is reduced to 20% for buildings located in historical centres.

For new buildings, or in case of restoration, it is foreseen the obligation to install photovoltaic for electricity production with a power capacity to be defined in ministerial decree.

Furthermore, for new buildings, or in case of restoration, it is obligatory to foresee the setting of all necessary works related to the connection to the district heating network, if this is located nearby.

Energy saving and renewable energy are also boosted through specific fiscal and administrative measures, generally introduced each year with the Financial Law, such as:

- deduction from taxes of a certain % of total cost of the interventions devoted to the increase of the efficiency or to the installations of renewable energy equipments;
- reduced taxation (such as VAT) for clean technology equipments and systems
- reduction/rationalization of administrative procedure and cost

Capital incentive are also available, but the adoption of market-based mechanisms at national level leave them mainly as regional and local measures.

To support measures to reduce GHGs emissions from energy sources, a Rotation Fund, with a size of 200 M€ for each year from 2007 to 2009, has been established to support a number of priority actions such as "high-performance distributed micro-cogeneration plants for electricity and heat generation" and other interventions (including pilot projects) utilizing renewable energies.

Italy is also very active in promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency at international level through the implementation of cooperation projects and programmes. Among multilateral activities, a special mention has to be made on the active involvement in the field of renewable energies: in 2002 Italy launched the Type II Initiative “Mediterranean Renewable Energy Programme (MEDREP)” with the aim to promote renewable energies in the Mediterranean region and in 2006 the international partnership on Bioenergy (GBEP) with the aim to promote a sustainable use of biomass and biofuels.

Furthermore, Italy is carrying out a relevant bilateral cooperation on sustainable energy with China, Balkan countries and USA, mainly devoted to research and development on clean and innovative energy technologies and applications.

As for the Mediterranean Region, Italy is further committed in increasing neighbourhood cooperation to improve regional energy infrastructures, such as the electrical interconnections North-South, that are crucial means to improve security in the electrical system.

As for awareness raising in the field of clean energy, the Italian Ministry for the Environment Land and Sea is associated to the European Commission for the implementation of the Sustainable Energy Europe (SEE) Campaign in Italy. The aim is to raise public awareness and promote sustainable energy production and use among individuals and organisations, private companies and public authorities, professional and energy agencies, industry associations and NGOs across Europe.