

WATER: NEW EUROPEAN REGULATIONS LEAD TO A 2.3% INCREASE IN BILLS

The new European directive on urban waste water was the focus of debate on the first day of Accadueo, held from October 7 to 9 at BolognaFiere, the only trade event in Italy dedicated exclusively to the civil and industrial water sector.

The European Commission estimates that almost €4 billion per year in investments will be needed to improve water quality, reduce environmental impact, and make the wastewater treatment plants of all EU member states energy self-sufficient by 2045. To cover half of the expected investments, Italy will also need to increase its rates by 2.3%, according to estimates from the latest Ref Ricerche analysis. These issues will be explored in depth during **Accadueo, Italy's international trade event dedicated exclusively to the civil and industrial water sector for over thirty years**, which will host 50 meetings, over 200 brands (present directly or indirectly), and 50 international buyers at BolognaFiere from October 7 to 9.

*"With the new rules," says **Laura D'Aprile, head of the sustainable development department at the Ministry of the Environment and Energy Security (MASE)**, one of the speakers at the 2025 edition of Accadueo, "even small agglomerations (populated areas) and systems not connected to the sewerage network will be required to install more modern systems. There will be required integrated national water management plans, implementation programs, which include rainwater management to prevent flooding and pollution after extreme weather events. Wastewater treatment plants will have to become instruments of the circular economy, ensuring the reuse of water and sludge, the recovery of nutrients and other resources, with the objectives of energy neutrality and sufficient renewable energy to meet their own needs. For the first time, the 'polluter pays' principle will also come into play with Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for industrial sectors responsible for the presence of micropollutants in wastewater, which will have to contribute to the costs of new treatments".*

A CHALLENGE FOR ITALY WITH OVER €700 MILLION IN INVESTMENTS PER YEAR.

For Italy, compliance with the new directive will require an estimated investment of around €700-1,000 million per year, due to the extension of obligations to small towns where the population and economic activity exceed 1,000 inhabitants, the so-called "agglomerations," greater commitments in the management of sewerage networks, and more demanding wastewater treatment standards. In Italy, 71% of urban sewerage networks are of the combined type, i.e., they convey both wastewater and rainwater in the same pipe, and in the event of heavy rainfall, which is becoming increasingly frequent, this leads to both the dispersion of wastewater into the environment and greater quantities of water arriving at treatment plants, increasing energy consumption and costs. Not only that, but without integrated systems for managing rainwater inflows, some of this water flows directly into rivers without being treated. On the energy front, most Italian wastewater treatment plants consume more energy than European standards and many plants operate below their



optimal capacity. *"In order to achieve the goals set by Brussels for 2045, targeted investments will therefore be needed,"* added **Laura D'Aprile**, *"in technological innovation and public financial instruments to support all players in the water service in its new, broader definition."*

"The new directive and the complex management of urban wastewater," says **Paolo Angelini, CEO of BolognaFiere Water&Energy**, *"is just one of the topics addressed in this edition of Accadueo, which brings together companies, operators, international buyers, and utilities in a unique context dedicated solely to water services: water management as a whole is a key factor for the entire country and for the stability of its economic and social fabric."*

Accadueo 2025 has been organized with the contribution of Philip Morris Italia and features Pam Saint-Gobain as Gold Sponsor and Gruppo Cap and Stantec as Silver Sponsors. All information is available on the Accadueo website: <https://www.accadueo.com/it/La-manifestazione#manifestazione>

BFWE is a joint venture founded in 2021 by BolognaFiere and Mirumir with the aim of developing a business project that contributes to the knowledge and sharing of issues related to the economic and social value of water and related new technological applications (<https://www.bfwe.it>). BFWE manages **Accadueo**, an event that has been the benchmark for the water sector at national and international level for over 30 years (<https://www.accadueo.com>). It takes place in Bari in even-numbered years and in Bologna in odd-numbered years.

For further information, please contact the administrative office Mirumir: info@mirumir.it / www.bfwe.it

Accompanying images: <https://www.bfwe.it/mirumir/download/downloader.php?id=652>

Accadueo Press Office

Lead Communication

Anita Lissona - 335 498993 - anita.lissona@leadcom.it

Lorenzo Mazzoni – 349.8450008 – lorenzo.mazzoni@leadcom.it

Chiara Venuleo - 340 7773887 - chiara.venuleo@leadcom.it