



Rome solar energy for the environment

Large-scale integration of solar energy technologies in Rome's built environment epitomizes the needed general adoption of distributed generation via functionalization of buildings of all size and end use across the world, to become active energy generators and no longer energy users only.

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Policies and ethics

Integrating solar energy in the built environment of cities like Rome has a huge potential, but needs guidelines for realization. Our guest authors Francesco Meneguzzo, Mario Pecoraino and Mario Pagliaro describe the concept and implementation steps for a solar city in a series. (Part two of our series, further articles will follow soon).

When dealing with historic cities large-scale adoption of solar energy requires systematic architectural integration of the solar energy technology to combine historic preservation with efficient generation of renewable energy. Preserving the architectural integrity and historic value of old buildings, indeed, historic preservation is as important as the generation of clean energy.

Yet, still today neither the city of Rome nor Italy's central or regional governments have published guidelines with the criteria for incorporating solar PV and solar thermal (ST) technologies in the built environment. As a result, the use of solar modules and thermal collectors in the historic center of cities like Rome, Florence, Venice, Catania and Naples is practically nihil. For comparison, in order "to find a proper balance between technical and aesthetic requirements", several Swiss Cantons have guidelines for the integration of solar technologies in the building environment.



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On the other hand, Italy''s new energy strategy for the period 2020-2030 (Strategia Energetica Nazionale - SEN) has identified PV as one of the best options for increasing the share of renewable energy in the country, and to eliminate coal power production by 2025 by increasing the share of renewable energy sources to 27% in 2030. In detail, power production from PV is expected to increase from 21.104 TWh in 2016 to 72 TWh by 2030: an energy production target which requires new solar installations to exceed 3 GW per year.

For comparison, since the end of the Feed-in-Tariff (FiT) incentives in mid 2012, Italy which had gone from 3 to 17 GW installed PV capacity in just 2 years, has installed only 2.7 GW while Australia, with a population about 35% of Italy's, has over the same five years installed around 6 GW of rooftop PV.

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