The Impact of the EU 2023 “Green Homes” Directive on Italian Building Heritagea

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SUMMARY

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Pietro CAPAI – Italy

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Commission 10, 9, 8

With the entry into force of the EPBD – Energy Performance of Buildings Directive, better known as the “Green Homes” Directive – aiming to achieve climate neutrality by 2050, each EU Member State, including Italy, must adapt to the new energy efficiency standards for buildings. The first definitive National Building Renovation Plan (covering residential, non-residential, and public buildings) must be submitted to the European Commission by December 31, 2026.

The Green Homes Directive sets targets to reduce average primary energy consumption (compared to 2020 levels) by 16% by 2030, and by 20–22% by 2035.

Thanks to energy efficiency improvements carried out between 2020 and 2024, Italy has

already

achieved a 9.1% reduction in energy consumption, against the 16% target by 2030. The remaining goal, therefore, is a 6.9% reduction. The residential building stock affected by the 2030 renovation plan comprises just over 3 million homes (around 505,000 to be renovated each year).

From an environmental perspective, investments made during 2025–2030 are expected to reduce CO_2 emissions by 4,681,505 tons per year.

Considering that the Italian building stock is largely outdated, the directive's impact will be significant both on the national economy and on property values, which are expected to increase depending on the level of energy adaptation. However, this growth will not be uniform across the territory, as strong differences persist between Northern, Central, and Southern Italy, similar to what occurs across Europe.

Italy's building heritage is largely old: around 24 million homes were built before 1980, representing 68.3% of the total residential stock. Over 52% of national residential buildings are energy-inefficient (classified F and G), accounting for just under 18.5 million dwellings, about 13.5 million of which are permanently occupied. These are mostly large condominium buildings constructed before 1980.

Data on the Built Environment: Quantification of Energy Consumption and Emissions

- The national built stock consists of 14.8 million buildings, responsible for 42% of the total final energy demand at national level in 2022 (equivalent to 46,359 Ktoe). - Over the last 10

years,

energy consumption from the built environment has decreased by 8.1%. Between 2020 and 2022 (latest available data), the reduction was 1.9%. - The entire built environment accounts for 18.8% of greenhouse gas emissions, equivalent to 73.5 Mt CO2-equivalent per year in 2022.

It will be crucial to identify effective and sustainable strategies to meet the goals set by the Directive. Among these, targeted incentives, administrative simplifications, and smart planning of interventions should be considered.

Although the required adjustments are numerous and complex, swift and visionary action is essential, as time is limited and environmental challenges can no longer be postponed