

## Italy keeps faith with coal

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### **ITALY'S final coal import figures for 2015 are stable compared to 2014: the country imported 16 million tonnes of steam coal and 3.5Mt of both coking coal and PCI in 2015.**

Fossil fuels, especially natural gas, resumed growing, while renewable energy decreased by 5.9%, driven by a reduction in hydroelectric production back to average levels after last year's record high and lower precipitations in 2015. Oil confirmed as the first energy source with 36%, followed by natural gas with 33.3% and renewables with 17.5% (30% of which from hydroelectric).



Italian manufacturing companies pay the electricity 50% more than the European average, as the country depends on imported natural gas from Russia and Algeria and subsidised renewable energies, which together account for over 70% of the national electricity mix.

Whilst the European energy mix is still based on coal and nuclear, the share of coal in the Italian electricity mix is stable at 13%, the lowest percentage compared to the European average (28%).

"Coal is not the enemy to fight and electricity production from coal has an environmental impact in its lifecycle similar to natural gas, taking into account the efficient curb-emissions systems developed in recent years," declared, President of the Italian coal industry association Assocarboni Andrea Clavarino said.

"Assocarboni thus proposes to use more coal – through the implementation of the best combustion technologies – and renewables, and less gas, which is expensive and has serious supply security issues, following what developed and emerging countries like South Korea, Germany, Japan, Taiwan, Turkey, USA and Vietnam are already doing.

"Nowadays, coal guarantees low costs and energy security, as reserves are equally distributed across the world, and therefore is, together with renewables, the best combustible to support economic and industrial development across the world, including Italy."

Italy's largest coal operators are at the forefront of technological innovation within the sector. Compared to the most obsolete and inefficient technologies used in the past, the modern coal power plants in Italy are environmentally-friendly, as they emit between 25 and 33% less CO<sub>2</sub>, and highly efficient, with an average 40% efficiency rate and peaks of 46% in Torrevaldaliga Nord, which is only reached in Japan and Denmark in the world.

According to European Power Plant Suppliers Association's (EPPSA) forecasts, high efficiency technologies would eliminate 1.5 billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year, 2.5 times the emissions reduction already achieved by renewable energies (excluding hydroelectric), if they were to be introduced in emerging markets, where the average efficiency rate is 33%, and would cost approximately 120 billion dollars to implement.