



Bologna

The Ecoguide



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The Project

Youth Participation against Climate Change

RYCA is a 2 year project aims at fostering youth networking, participation and action on the matter of Climate Change. This contributing on one hand, to the general goal of the European Youth Together call to increase youths engagement in the European political debate and on the other, to the broader goals indicated in the European Green Deal to address the imminent danger represented by the global climate crisis.

The rationale of the project sees the two streams of general objectives as complementary and intersected with each other:

- Increasing the youth ability to participate in the social and political life, locally and transnationally, in Europe both as a way to reconcile its often disrupted relations with grassroots, informal political streams of action
- and as a way to bring the European Green New Deal to the more capillary level of local actions and debates, where often the Europeans institutions are felt at their farthest from the EU citizen.

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Check out the online version of the Bologna Ecoguide [HERE](#)

Intro to Bologna

Bologna is a city of contrasts, where layers of history and modernity overlap like a palimpsest. On its streets, the ancient and the innovative, the lush green and the gray concrete, coexist in a dance of negotiation and resistance.

Here, sustainability is not just a practice; it's a choice that resists the tide of unchecked consumption and envisions an alternative way of living. Bologna's compact urban design encourages cycling and walking, while its vibrant markets, community gardens, and activist collectives celebrate connection to the land and to one another. Yet the boundaries between these worlds blur. The forces of concrete and consumerism often threaten to engulf the colorful, life-affirming side of the city, but they never fully succeed.

This EcoGuide is a map for navigating this complex, evolving landscape. Rooted in Bologna's unique character, it explores sustainability on three levels: individual action, to inspire personal accountability; community collaboration, to amplify collective impact; and institutional engagement, to drive systemic change. It is both a practical manual and a testimony to the vibrant, contested spirit of this city—a guide to cultivating what remains, resisting what consumes, and reimagining what could be.

In a city where the lines between past and future, gray and green, resistance and surrender are ever-shifting, the EcoGuide invites you to join a growing movement: to follow paths less traveled, to sow seeds of change, and to dream of a different kind of celebration—one where everyone has a place at the table. Because in Bologna, the battle for sustainability isn't a clash of armies; it's a story of choices, imagination, and the everyday acts that shape the future.



1. Food production and consumption



I. Food production and consumption

Our food choices significantly impact the environment, health, and the local economy. From production to distribution to consumption, food is a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions, natural resource consumption, and waste generation. Promoting a sustainable diet based on local, seasonal, and environmentally friendly products reduces the individual's ecological footprint, supports local communities, and preserves biodiversity. Consciously choosing what to eat is crucial to a more sustainable future.

Local Opportunities in Bologna for Food perspective

1. Bulk stores:

- a. **La Bottega di Silvia - alimentari sfusi e biocosmesi** in Via Vittorio Veneto, 16/d, 40131 Bologna BO

Il bio sfuso in Via S. Felice, 101b, 40122 Bologna BO

Camilla, emporio di comunità in Via Vincenzo Casciarolo, 8d, 40127 Bologna BO

1. Organic and fair trade shops:

- a. **Altromercato Bottega**, Via Altabella, 7/b, 40125 Bologna BO
- b. **La Saponaria** - Biostorie Bologna, Str. Maggiore, 35/C, 40125 Bologna BO

2. Sustainable purchase groups (In Italian, "GAS" means "Gruppo di Acquisto Solidale"): The goal is to purchase goods and services of common use according to the criteria of the solidarity economy. Respect for the environment, fair trade, natural products, the quality of the product and of the production process are only some of the values of this good opportunity. This opportunity brings minor prices for neighbourhood/community buyers. This helps the producers sell more quantity products and the collective buyer to save money. Some purchasing groups in Bologna and its surroundings are:

- a. **ilPOPOLOdelleARANCE** for the purchase of excellent citrus fruits and many other products. It has distribution points in Ozzano Dell'Emilia and many others in Bologna.
- b. **Camilla** it's a consumer cooperative. Camilla was born within GAS Alchemilla, a solidarity purchasing group in Bologna, from the desire to extend the management of product purchasing to a greater number of people.
- c. **GasBO**
- d. **GASBOSCO**
- e. **ZolArancio** (Zola predosa)
- f. **GAS C'è** (Castelfranco emilia)
- g. **Rastignano Solidale**
- h. **GAS LA FILANDA** (Casalecchio di Reno)

4. Local Markets:

Campi aperti: almost every day in a different location in Bologna. Campi Aperti is an association of producers and citizens that supports organic peasant agriculture and the right of communities to decide on their own food production, nutrition and land management. Their production is strictly organic and local, linked to the territoriality and seasonality of the product and controlled through a participatory guarantee system.

Monday in Via Piave (di fronte al parco del velodromo, in Piazza VIII Agosto e in Piazza Verdi); Tuesday (in Cirenica); Thursday (in Piazza Lucio Dalla); Friday (in quartiere Savena e a Casalecchio); Saturday (in Pratello)

Mercato Ritrovato in Via Azzo Gardino 65, BO, on Wednesday and on Saturday. It is a farmers' market managed by an association of over 50 producers, with values and rules shared in a strict disciplinary approach. Only local and seasonal products, presented only by those who produce, for zero km shopping and street food.

Covered Market Campagna Amica - Via Galliera, 60c, Bologna BO. Campagna Amica by Coldiretti connects cities with the countryside through markets where farmers sell directly, ensuring fair prices and transparency. Consumers can buy fresh, seasonal products with guaranteed origin and clear labelling. Campagna Amica also organises markets in other spaces in the city.

5. Waste diving in Bologna (and in Italy) is an accepted social practice

- a. After a local municipality market, it's easy to ask the vegetable vendors for free unsold fruits and vegetables, and they are usually very open to give them for free to avoid food waste.
- b. Informal networking is an essential part of the Italian proximity economy. Sustainable practices could come from proximity networking and organising to avoid food waste or the reuse of goods. You should start to know, ask, and organise. Sustainable practices are an intrinsic part of everyone's family history, and there is an excellent opportunity to leverage them.

6. Other

- **Request a Community Garden Plot** - Adults residing in Bologna can apply for a community garden plot, provided they don't own or use any arable land. This initiative started in the 1980s, promotes social interaction and community engagement, particularly for seniors.
- **Home Delivery by La Boutique del Biologico** - La Boutique del Biologico delivers certified organic products across Bologna with temperature-controlled transport and a pre-delivery call. Custom orders for special diets are also available.
- **Pasto Nomade**: This restaurant serves vegetarian, vegan, and organic dishes. You can eat on-site or order takeaway. It also organises shared cooking workshops and offers a vegetarian event catering service. The "Pasto Nomade" cuisine is based on solid principles: no waste, no plastic, seasonality, and a short supply chain for its raw materials. It's a great option if you want to order takeout. Even if you are not vegetarian, their dishes will amaze you!
- **TooGoodToGo** - Download the app to connect with local restaurants, supermarkets, and more to buy unsold food at low prices, preventing waste. Log in, get geolocated, and find nearby markets to pick up a surprise bag at the set time.



2. Sustainable Fashion



2. Sustainable Fashion

Fashion is a powerful form of self-expression to convey identity and creativity. However, behind the allure of trendy garments and stylish designs lies a global industry with significant environmental and social impacts. The fashion sector, which drives billions in economic activity, is also one of the most significant contributors to environmental degradation and social injustice. As the demand for fast fashion – cheap, rapidly produced clothing – continues to grow, so does its impact on the planet and the lives of millions of workers in the supply chain.

The environmental footprint of fashion is staggering. The industry is responsible for around 10% of global carbon emissions, more than all international flights and maritime shipping combined. The production of textiles requires immense amounts of water; for instance, it takes approximately 2,700 litres of water to produce just one cotton t-shirt, which could meet a person's drinking needs for over two years. Furthermore, toxic chemicals in dyeing and finishing processes pollute water bodies, threatening aquatic life and contaminating drinking water for local communities. The rise of synthetic fibres like polyester, which shed microplastics during washing, adds another layer of environmental harm, contributing to the ever-growing issue of plastic pollution.

Beyond its environmental toll, the fashion industry is deeply intertwined with social issues. Many of the world's garments are produced in developing countries with weak labour laws, and workers, predominantly women, are often subjected to poor working conditions, long hours, and meagre wages. The quest for low production costs frequently leads to exploiting these workers, who are denied fundamental rights and live in constant precarity.

On the other hand, Italy, with Milan, is a globally recognised capital of world fashion. Milan's contribution to the Italian economy should lead to a comprehensive analysis of the luxury economy of Italy. The city's economy contributes to worldwide fashion waste.

However, despite this, as citizens, understanding the far-reaching implications of our clothing choices is crucial. By becoming more informed about the fashion industry's impact, we can make more conscious decisions that support sustainability.



This chapter will provide practical guidance on how we can all contribute to a more sustainable future, one that values both people and the planet.

Don't buy fast fashion: this is the first step to getting closer to a more sustainable approach. There are no more excuses. Buying fast fashion has no positive aspects. Those clothes are not made well or have cool fabrics. Their poor quality is immediately noticeable. They aren't cheap either. Where you are saving is on product material and working conditions costs.

Moreover, they are mass-produced so you will find many other people on the street with the same item. And I haven't yet mentioned the most established reasons why you shouldn't even walk into fast fashion shops: the environmental one and the social one because they come from the exploitation of people and children in other parts of the world. So here is a list of some of the most famous fast fashion brands you should strictly avoid: Shein, Zara, H&M, Forever 21, Primark, Urban Outfitters, Mango, Temu, Aliexpress, Nike, Adidas, Topshop, Pull & Bear, Bershka, Stradivarius, ASOS, Boohoo, Emmiol, Missguided, Fashion Nova, PrettyLittleThing, American Eagle, Divided, Espirit, Lefties, Gap, Monki, Ovs, Benetton, New Look, Guess, Nasty Gal, Brandy Melville, Suite Benedict, Subdued, Pimkie, Tezenis, Calliope, Terranova. But maybe you didn't know that fast fashion is also these: & other stories, COS, Oysho, ARKET, Carhartt, Weekday, Uniqlo, Massimo Dutti, Levis, River Island, Victoria Secret and many other brands. In the following paragraphs, you will find lots of suggestions on how to experience fashion more sustainably and circularly :)

Check your grandparents' closets: There's always an unexpected surprise; you might be amazed at how well your grandmother's coat fits you! Moreover, it is known that once upon a time clothes had a much better quality... if you are so lucky that your grandparents, parents, relatives have kept their clothes for so long, why not use those garments and give them a new life?

Prefer natural fibers: Opt for materials like cotton, linen, wool, silk, cashmere, alpaca, hemp, jute, mohair. These fibers are generally considered more sustainable than synthetic ones because they are biodegradable, recyclable and come from renewable resources. Avoid synthetic materials such as polyester, nylon, acrylic, spandex (elastane), polypropylene, polyurethane, polyvinyl chloride (PVC), acetate. Modal and lyocell are semi-synthetic and, while marketed as eco-friendly, can still contribute to microplastic pollution when blended with other synthetic fibers.) These synthetic materials deteriorate quickly and are not healthy for your skin. In addition, synthetic fibers are not recyclable and release huge amount of microplastics when washed or thrown into landfill.

When shopping, you should therefore avoid all clothes that contain such synthetic materials, even in small quantities. In fact, a 95% cotton and 5% elastane shirt will not be recyclable or completely biodegradable.

Clothes swapping and recycling

We often overlook and underestimate the potential of our clothes. What you throw in the bin might be perfect for your uni friend. If you don't know who to give your sweater you haven't used for years, don't worry! There are many associations that organize swap parties where you can exchange anything for something else that you like more.

Another option is to think about how to modify the garment so that you'll love it again. You can hire a seamstress or take the dress to a creative reuse workshop!

However, if you realize that for some garments, there is nothing to be done after trying the previous options, you can take them to the recycling bin (in which case the materials will be recycled to make new raw materials) or, if they are still in excellent condition, donate them to associations that collect them and distribute them to those in need. In the section "Opportunities in Bologna," we will mention the specific points in Bologna.

Thrift shops and vintage shops

Finally, genuine thrift shops are popping up, where you can score amazing deals for just a few euros! Try searching for them in your city and visiting them with your friends. Vintage shops are perfect for finding unique and eccentric garments, but also good-quality basics.

Clothing rental: Why spend 800 euros on a Valentino dress for prom if you only wear it once? Clothing rental is the solution for cases like this. By renting, you'll save a lot of money throughout the year and still make an impression on that cute guy you like, haha!

Avoid trends and overconsumption: Focus on what you like and what makes you feel good, regardless of what your friends or society think. You need to feel good in your clothes. Once you've decided, buy high-quality items so you don't have to replace them soon, and they fit your body better. Avoid impulse buying, try to think before buying a new dress: do you need it? Do you already have something similar? Is it an item that has been very popular lately but you never thought you would want it? Let's start to know a little better our own tastes, our style, what we like and why we like it :)



Opportunities in Bologna

Clothing Swaps

In Bologna there are a number of organisations that periodically organise small events where you can bring in clothes you no longer wear and exchange them with other people's clothes. This is a great way to avoid piling up unused clothes in your wardrobe which, if thrown away, would most likely end up in landfills. So take a look at these profiles to find the next swap party in bologna!

Le Gazze Bo, on instagram: @le.gazze.bo

Recycling

In Bologna, textile waste recycling is managed by Hera, which has placed a large number of containers in the city. They are anthracite grey with yellow decorative designs. You can bring in clothes, shoes and accessories that you no longer use (cleaned and placed inside tightly closed bags).

[Here](#) you can check where all the recycling bins are located.

And [here](#) is a list of associations that collect used clothes in good condition in Bologna.

In addition, rifò is an Italian company that creates clothes from 100% regenerated fabrics. Rifò also has collection points for wool or cashmere jumpers and denim trousers. You can bring them to the collection points or have them collected directly from your home and in return you will receive a discount on your next purchase. [Here](#) you can find all the info.

Festival della moda etica e delle economie sostenibili "Rivestiti!" on insta @rivestiti_terraequa. Every year the association Terra Equa organizes a festival in bologna and several regional events dedicated to ethical fashion and sustainable economies. Various workshops and lectures await you there

Thrift and Vintage shops

Here are some of the best spots in bologna.

Bancarelle dell'usato ai piedi della montagna e Mercato vintage della montagna (Friday to Sunday, 8am to 5pm)

La Leonarda in Via San Vitale 36EF, 40126 Bologna BO

Crocevia Mercato dell'Usato in Via Santa Croce, 11/A/B/C, 40100 Bologna BO

Vintage Soul in Via S. Felice, 61, 40122 Bologna BO

Griffe e Vintage in Via S. Felice, 101/C, 40122 Bologna BO

Friperie in Via S. Vitale, 49/A, 40125 Bologna BO

Online apps for selling and buying second-hand clothes

There are so many, for example, Vinted, Wallapop, Deepop, Vestiaire Collective, Ebay...etc

Vinted is one of the best mobile applications used by millions of users. There, you can find any garment, from the simplest to the most sought-after, for any price range.



3. Waste, Recycling and Upcycling



3. Waste, Recycling and Upcycling

As our world continues to consume at an ever-increasing rate, the need for effective waste management has never been more critical. Adopting mindful practices like recycling and upcycling can significantly reduce our environmental footprint. The guiding principle is simple yet powerful: the best waste is the waste that isn't created in the first place!

As individuals, we can make a difference by integrating these habits into our weekly routines:

- **Reduce Unnecessary Purchases**

One of the most effective ways to minimise waste is to buy less. Before purchasing, ask yourself if you truly need the item or if it's just a trend. Reducing the number of items you buy will help you focus on quality over quantity.

- **Be a Conscious Consumer**

Every purchase decision has an impact, so prioritise products that align with your values. Avoid impulse buying and choose products with minimal or recyclable packaging.

- **Recycle well.** Also, think about how many things you throw away when you are out in the unsorted bin. Bring a bag to put your waste in and throw it home by sorting it. If you are a smoker, always bring a portable ashtray with you!

- **Zero Waste Kit**

Carry a zero-waste kit with you wherever you go. This might include essentials like a reusable water bottle, bamboo cutlery, reusable shopping bags, and a small container for leftovers. Remember, using what you already have is always more sustainable than buying new. You can find ideas for replacements [here](#).

- **Compost Food**

Setting up a compost bin for food scraps such as fruit peels, coffee grounds, and eggshells is a great way to reduce landfill waste while creating compost for your garden!

- **Get Creative**

Before throwing something away, consider how it might be repurposed. For instance, glass jars can be used as storage containers. Other ideas here: [Reduce, Reuse, Recycle: Eco-Friendly Activities During School Closures](#)

- **Plan Your Meals**

Planning meals helps you use up leftovers, avoid overbuying perishable items and [adopt healthy eating habits](#).

- **Buy, Sell or Donate Used Items**

Instead of discarding clothes, electronics or household items that are still in good condition, sell them through online marketplaces (like [Vinted](#) or [Depop](#)) or donate them to local charities or thrift stores. Likewise, when you need something, explore these platforms to prevent buying new stuff!

Or organise building or community libraries of the most common tools.

Opportunities in Bologna:

- **Waste Sorting Guidelines**

Get informed with clear, local guidelines on how to properly sort your waste. Keep in mind that even non-recyclable items have specific disposal rules.

- **Second Life - Area del Riuso di Bologna**

It is the place where used items gain a new life: if what you want to throw away still works or has value, why not give it a second chance? If you no longer need something, it doesn't mean that others won't need it and if you need something, it's not always necessary to buy it! If you are a resident of Bologna, you can freely and free of charge exchange any household item in good condition at Second Life. The service is also available to schools, associations, and non-profit organisations authorised by the Municipality of Bologna.

- **Leila Bologna**

Leila is a space where items can be borrowed for free, reducing the need to purchase them. It represents a way of life, a practical approach to transforming everyday habits. This is achieved by saving money, fulfilling your needs, reducing your ecological footprint by minimizing waste and overproduction and fostering trust and a sense of community through the principle of sharing, thereby encouraging active citizenship.

- **Rusko Repair Cafè**

It is a group of people who organise self-repair events. You can bring any type of object (even electronics and clothing), and the guys from the association will help you repair it thanks to their knowledge, experience and tools. All accompanied by Spritz and Crescentine! In fact, one of their most common formats is the ape-repair. Follow them on instagram to find out where the next one will be!

- **Facebook Groups for Trading/Gifting Items**

Follow Facebook groups that facilitate exchanging or donating clothes and other items that might otherwise be discarded.



Here's where you can buy and exchange used items:

- **La Piazzola Market** (Piazza VIII Agosto)

In Montagnola Park and Piazza VIII Agosto, a weekly market occurs every Friday and Saturday. This market, recognised as one of the most distinctive in Italy, has been officially designated as a Historic Market of Emilia Romagna. It is one of the largest markets in Italy, with 450 stalls. Here, you can discover various exciting items, including new products, vintage treasures, second-hand goods, affordable finds and high-quality items.

- **Ruggine** (Vicolo Alemagna, 2c)

This unique store and workshop focuses on upcycling and vintage items. Ruggine offers a variety of furniture and home decor made from reclaimed materials, giving new life to old objects. They also host workshops on how to upcycle and repurpose items yourself.

- **Humana Vintage** (Via Augusto Righi, 16)

- **Era Ora Market** (Vicolo Bolognetti, 2)

Vintage clothing, crafts, accessories, handmade goods and much more.

- **La Leonarda** (Via San Leonardo, 2\2A)

In the shop featured in The New York Times there's a constant rotation of second-hand clothes and accessories, all available at very affordable prices.

- **Vinokilo**

A sustainable fashion event where you can purchase vintage clothing by the kilo.

- **Libraccio** (Via Oberdan, 7)

Located in the city centre, this bookstore offers the opportunity to buy and sell used books.

- **Stoviglioteca**

Stoviglioteca is a service that lets you borrow washable dishes, perfect for throwing the wildest parties at your place while reducing waste, especially plastics and single-use products.



4. Transportation & Travel



4. Transportation & Travel

Every travel choice, from daily commutes to long-distance journeys, significantly impacts the environment. This section provides practical tips to make your travel choices more eco-friendly. We need to start by pointing out that the Municipality is trying to make Bologna an unfriendly city for car drivers. The city centre is focused on pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport users. Despite that, cars are always around, and local transportation is usually considered not enough and still in an evolution process. The night lines are fresh new and still considered unreliable. The Municipality rules set the speed limit to 30 km/h to reduce casualties and pollution, but the measure is not widely supported. The Municipality is building a city tram line and a wide motorway junction outside of it. These measures are considered controversial and not widely supported. The mobility framework of the city is evolving but in a weak background that may be subject to national policies already characterised by political disagreement.

Opportunities in Bologna:

- Bologna 30

Starting July 1, 2023, the speed limit on most urban roads in Bologna will be reduced from 50 to 30 kilometres per hour, except on major roads where it remains 50. This change makes 30 kilometres per hour the new standard, covering 70% of city streets and 90% of the most populated areas. Discover why this matters for the environment at this [link](#).

- TPER

Bologna's public transportation system continuously improves to offer more efficient and accessible services. Recent enhancements include better integration of bus and train services with the “Mi Muovo” integrated ticketing system, which allows seamless transfers between different modes of transport within the urban area and the introduction of the Marconi Express monorail, which connects the airport to the city centre in just seven minutes.

- Bike sharing

Bologna offers a bike-sharing service called RideMovi, which provides a convenient and sustainable way to travel around the city. Users can pick up and drop off bikes at various locations, promoting cycling as a practical alternative to driving.

- Carpooling and Car Sharing Services

BlaBlaCar is the world's leading community-based travel network. Whether you're traveling by bus or carpool, BlaBlaCar has the perfect ride for you from a wide range of destinations and routes at low prices.

Furthermore, to move around the city, you can count on the 100% electric car sharing of the Tper group, called Corrente. It is a very useful service that has been around for 5 years now and is a sustainable and safe way to get around Bologna and beyond (in fact the service is also active in Ferrara, Imola and Casalecchio di Reno). You can also rent an e-scooter with this sharing service.

In Bologna, the same type of car sharing service is also offered by Enjoy.

- San Luca Express and City Red Bus

These services offer convenient and sustainable ways for tourists and residents alike to explore Bologna. The San Luca Express connects the city centre with the Basilica of San Luca. At the same time, the City Red Bus provides a hop-on, hop-off service that allows for easy exploration of the city's main attractions.

5. Water



5. Water

Water is the essence of life. Covering over 70% of our planet's surface, it is a fundamental resource that underpins every aspect of our existence, from the air we breathe to the food we eat and the energy we consume. Yet, despite its abundance, only a small fraction of the world's water is accessible and suitable for human use. This makes water an incredibly precious resource, one that should be conserved and used wisely.

Yet, despite its abundance, only a small fraction of the world's water is accessible and suitable for human use: only 0.5% of the Earth's water. Alarmingly, this small fraction is becoming even more scarce due to a combination of factors such as population growth, climate change, pollution, overconsumption and waste. As these pressures mount, the availability of clean, fresh water is diminishing, turning what should be a readily available resource into one that is increasingly at risk.

In many parts of the world, water scarcity is a daily reality. Droughts, over-extraction of groundwater, and pollution are turning what was once an abundant resource into a dwindling commodity. Even in regions where water seems plentiful, it's often taken for granted, leading to wasteful habits that contribute to larger environmental and social challenges.

The importance of water extends beyond just our immediate needs. It plays a critical role in sustaining ecosystems, regulating climate, and supporting economic activities. Without careful management, the effects of water depletion can ripple through society, affecting food production, health, and even geopolitical stability.

As citizens, our actions matter. Each drop we save contributes to a larger effort to ensure that future generations have access to this vital resource. Understanding why water is valuable and how we can conserve it daily is the first step toward making a meaningful impact.

The most crucial problem of waste supply in Italy is the very high infrastructure dispersion. Italy is the third largest European Union country regarding drinking water abundance, after Finland and France. Despite that, its facilities are inefficient and known for their excellent water dispersion. According to the Italian National Institute of Statistics, Italy wastes enough water in a year to meet the needs of 43 million people. The region of Emilia-Romagna, the best case in Italy, loses almost 30% of transported waste from its waste supply facilities. Furthermore, the Italian market is known for its significant consumption of bottled water (the biggest in the European Union). After that, Italians are the most significant tap water users, with 220 litres per capita daily, against the average of 123 per day in the European Union. The governments have made some regulations about the water supply but are still not focused on reuse, facility improvements, and user awareness. These measures are still focused on emergency management.

In this chapter, we will explore some practical ways you can contribute to its sustainable use:

- First of all: **reduce** your direct water consumption. It may seem obvious but you must turn off the tap quickly, take short showers, when you soap up (hands or body) the tap must be turned off. Up to 6 liters of water per minute can be wasted if the tap is left running.
- **Install water-saving devices:** the use of flow reducers or aerators in taps and showers can significantly reduce water consumption without compromising efficiency. They can save 30% of water every year! This is a simple solution and very effective in reducing water consumption. If you don't have them yet, you should install them in every tap in your home right away!
- **Don't buy plastic bottled water!** It contributes to plastic waste, pollution, and unnecessary carbon emissions from production and transportation. In Italy, there is a widespread false myth that tap water quality is inferior to bottled water. However, this is an unfounded assumption: chemical analyses conducted by Hera on Bolognese water show that tap water values are not only consistently well below legal limits but are also of the same order of magnitude as bottled water values. Check [this page](#) for updated values and the '[Altroconsumo](#)' site for further advice and explanations. I hope that these data have convinced you that tap water has nothing to envy bottled water. However, if you need a little more time, I suggest you switch to returnable glass bottles (look at these links: [Acquavino](#), [drink service](#), [san lazzaro acque minerali](#)) or to purifying filters/jugs. Another option is to self-refill the bottles you already have. In Bologna city centre, there are two municipal "cassette dell'acqua" that dispenses fresh still (5 cents/litre), lightly sparkling, and sparkling water (10 cents/litre) and work with coins or rechargeable cards. For more info, click [here](#). Until now, we have mainly talked about how to avoid bottled water at home, but it is equally important to avoid it when you're out. The best thing you can do is always take a reusable water bottle with you. It's just a matter of habit, and you'll see that if you start, you won't be able to separate yourself from your water bottle in your tote bag :). Metal bottles are less prone to the proliferation of mould and bacteria than plastic ones; aluminium ones are lighter than steel ones but dent more easily. You can refill your bottle from any tap sink or public fountain. In the latter case, you can even rely on an app that tells you where the nearest fountain is; it's called "[Fontanelle](#)," and it's advantageous, particularly when travelling.



- **Optimise domestic water use.** When washing fruit and vegetables, use a basin and leave them to soak; use running water only to rinse. Water plants can reuse the water you collect in the basin. Use appliances such as dishwashers and washing machines only when fully loaded. If the dishes are filthy, remove the residue by hand, wiping them with paper towels (those used during dinner) or a wet sponge to avoid wasting water unnecessarily. Hand washing dishes is not more effective than washing them in the dishwasher. The amount of water used in hand washing is always significantly higher. Remember that you shouldn't rinse the dishes before putting them in the dishwasher. So, if you find yourself having to do this, there is a chance that your dishwasher needs a little maintenance.
- **Choose an energy-save or eco-program.** By washing your items at a lower temperature, the washing machine/dishwasher uses less water during each cycle, helping you save water and cut energy costs. If you are an out-of-town student or simply don't have a dishwasher, it is better to wash the dishes by hand by collecting the right amount of water in the sink and washing with that. In this way, several thousand litres are saved per year. The water you use to cook pasta is an excellent cleaning solution for washing dishes, and unsalted cooking pasta water is great for your plants.
- **Choose efficient appliances:** If you have to buy new appliances, prefer models with a high energy class, which consumes less water and energy. In fact, washing machines and dishwashers are not all the same! The amount of water used per wash can vary greatly between them. In addition, keep in mind that it's always better to use low-temperature programmes, as mentioned before.
- **Repair leaks and dripping taps:** take early action on water leaks in your home! It may seem that the single drop of water down the drain is pretty insignificant, but if you look at drop after drop, you will realise that you are dealing with a significant flow of wasted water. [Here](#), it is a simple tool to calculate how much water a leaking faucet wastes. After all, every single drop of water counts! To check if you have leaks in the pipes, you can read the meter in the evening before going to sleep, do not open the taps all night and check the meter the following day.
- **Choose products with less water impact.** This means opting for items that require minimal water use in their production and have a lower water footprint. This includes selecting goods made with sustainable materials, reducing consumption of water-intensive products like certain textiles and foods (for example, meat, animal products, almonds, coffee), and supporting brands that prioritize water conservation. By making these choices, you help reduce the strain on global water resources.
- **Recover and reuse rainwater:** If possible, install a rainwater collection system on your roof/balcony/garden for non-potable uses, such as garden watering or cleaning.

6. Energy



6. Energy

Energy is the lifeblood of modern society, powering everything from our homes and businesses to transportation and technology. However, how we produce and consume energy has profound implications for environmental sustainability. The energy sector is one of the largest contributors to global environmental issues, including climate change. In fact, the majority of the world's energy is still derived from fossil fuels like coal, oil, and natural gas, which emit greenhouse gases and are associated with environmental degradation, including deforestation, water contamination, and air pollution.

Renewable energy sources like solar, wind, and hydroelectric power offer a more sustainable alternative, producing electricity without the harmful emissions of fossil fuels. However, transitioning to renewable energy requires significant infrastructure, technology, and policy changes. It also demands a collective effort from individuals, communities, and governments to reduce energy consumption, increase efficiency, and support clean energy initiatives.

By understanding the connections between energy use and environmental impact, you can make informed choices that contribute to a healthier planet for future generations.



Our Tips:

- Reduce your electricity consumption: Be mindful of your energy use by turning off lights, electronics, and appliances when not in use. Unplug devices to avoid phantom power usage, and consider air-drying clothes instead of using a dryer. In addition to that, remember to reduce hot water usage, which saves both water and the energy needed to heat it.
- Switch to a renewable energy plan: Opt for electricity from renewable sources like solar, wind, or hydropower. Many utility companies offer green energy plans, or you can even consider installing solar panels at home! A correctly dimensioned photovoltaic system allows a payback of the investment within approx. 10 years (in northern Italy).
- Improve the efficiency of your electric appliances: Upgrade to energy-efficient appliances and light bulbs (like LEDs), and use smart thermostats to optimize heating and cooling. Insulate your home to reduce energy loss and lower your heating and cooling needs.
- Support sustainable businesses: Choose products and services from companies that prioritise sustainability and have lower carbon footprints. Look for eco-friendly certifications and support businesses committed to reducing their environmental impact.
- Optimise heating and AC: use it less and better, make do with a reasonable temperature (18-20 °C for the heating) and improve home insulation. Improper maintenance and intensive use increase air conditioning consumption and bill costs. When used correctly, high-energy class models make a difference in costs and energy expenditure. Regular cleaning of air conditioning filters and grilles is essential not only for healthy air, but also to keep consumption. It costs down, as does keeping the windows closed inside the air-conditioned/heated room.
- Try to Improve your house's energy efficiency: Improving your home's energy efficiency is a crucial step toward a more sustainable lifestyle. Enhancing insulation, upgrading to energy-efficient appliances, and sealing windows and doors can significantly reduce the energy needed to heat, calm, and power your living space. This lowers your utility bills and decreases your carbon footprint by reducing greenhouse gas emissions from energy production.

Opportunities in Bologna:

- [ènostra](#) is a cooperative supplier of renewable, sustainable, ethical electricity. It is very innovative because it allows you to participate in the implementation of collective renewable plants and choose the prosumer tariff. This cooperative is a non-profit. Joining ènostra means becoming a partner of the company that supplies you with energy. If you want to simulate your bill with ènostra: [here](#).
- [WeForGreen](#) is another energetic cooperative very similar to ènostra. It allows you to produce your own energy to cover your electricity consumption completely or partially, with the solution "remote" photovoltaic without the need to install photovoltaic panels on the roof of your house.
- [Alperia](#) is an electricity and gas supplier. The electricity provided is renewable energy (certified with Guarantees of Origin) and is produced by 35 hydroelectric power plants in Alto Adige managed by Alperia. Furthermore, Alperia supplies gas on which it counterbalances by compensating for greenhouse gas emissions and by financing projects to protect the environment.
- [NeN](#) is an electricity and gas supplier who buys "green" energy on the market and resells it to you at a fixed price. If you're interested, upload your current bill on their website and calculate the 100% green electricity rate tailored to your consumption.



7. Biodiversity



7. Biodiversity

The wide variety of life on Earth, from the smallest microorganisms to the largest animals, is essential for the health and balance of our ecosystems. However, human activities are causing rapid loss of biodiversity, threatening the stability of the natural world and the resources it provides. This section offers practical steps to protect and preserve biodiversity daily.

- **Reduce Pesticide Use:** Minimize or eliminate chemical pesticides and fertilisers in your garden. These chemicals can harm beneficial insects, pollinators and other wildlife, disrupting natural ecosystems and reducing biodiversity.
- **Create Wildlife Habitats:** Set up bird feeders or bat houses to create safe places for local wildlife. Providing food, shelter and water in your garden encourages diverse species to thrive in your area.
- **Conserve Water:** Use water wisely in your home and garden to reduce the impact on local water sources. Overusing water can deplete rivers, lakes, and wetlands, harming the plants and animals that depend on these habitats.
- **Support Sustainable Products:** Choose products from sustainably sourced materials, such as FSC-certified wood, organic cotton or fair-trade goods. Sustainable products are less likely to contribute to deforestation, habitat destruction, and the exploitation of natural resources.
- **Get Involved in Conservation Efforts:** Volunteer with local conservation groups, participate in habitat restoration projects, or support organisations dedicated to protecting endangered species.



Opportunities in Bologna:

- Volunteer with Local Conservation Organizations

Like **WWF Bologna** or [Legambiente Emilia-Romagna](#)

- [Giardini Margherita](#) (Viale Giovanni Gozzadini)

One of Bologna's major parks, Giardini Margherita, often hosts sustainability and nature conservation events, including workshops on creating wildlife-friendly gardens.

- [Mercato Ritrovato](#)

This local farmer's market in Bologna focuses on sustainable and organic products. Supporting vendors here promotes agricultural practices that protect biodiversity.

- [Slow Food Bologna](#)

Join or support Slow Food initiatives that preserve traditional and sustainable farming practices supporting local biodiversity.

- [Ente di Gestione per i Parchi e la Biodiversità Emilia Orientale](#)

Find out which parks to visit and which initiatives on biodiversity protection are underway through this organisation. Ente di Gestione per i Parchi e la Biodiversità Emilia Orientale manages five Parks in the Province of Bologna (Abbazia di Monteveglio, Corno alle Scale, Gessi Bolognesi and Calanchi dell'Abbadessa, Laghi Suviana and Brasimone, Monte Sole), a nature reserve (Contrafforte pliocenico) and seven Natura 2000 Network sites!

- [Emilia-Romagna Biodiversity Monitoring](#)

Some universities and local organisations run citizen science projects where residents can help monitor local wildlife and plant species. Participation not only contributes valuable data but also raises awareness about local biodiversity.

- [Arpae Projects](#)

Since 1999, Arpae has led efforts on "Nature and Protected Areas," in line with the European Environment Agency's focus on conservation and biodiversity. Collaborating with local authorities and the region, Arpae drafts reports, disseminates information, participates in [LIFE projects](#), and manages regional databases. They also work with ISPRA on inter-agency projects and collaborate with the Department of Nature Protection on scientific initiatives.

- [Museo di Zoologia di Bologna](#)

The museum often organises exhibitions workshops and talks about biodiversity and conservation.

- [Comune di Bologna - Environmental Initiatives](#)

Get involved in city planning efforts that prioritise green spaces, including creating more parks and reducing car parks. Participate in public consultations and planning sessions to advocate for urban development that supports biodiversity and enhances the natural environment.

- [Università di Bologna](#)

The University hosts seminars, courses and public lectures on ecology, biodiversity and sustainability. Its policy laboratory of sustainable development is called Green Office Alma Mater.

8. Education

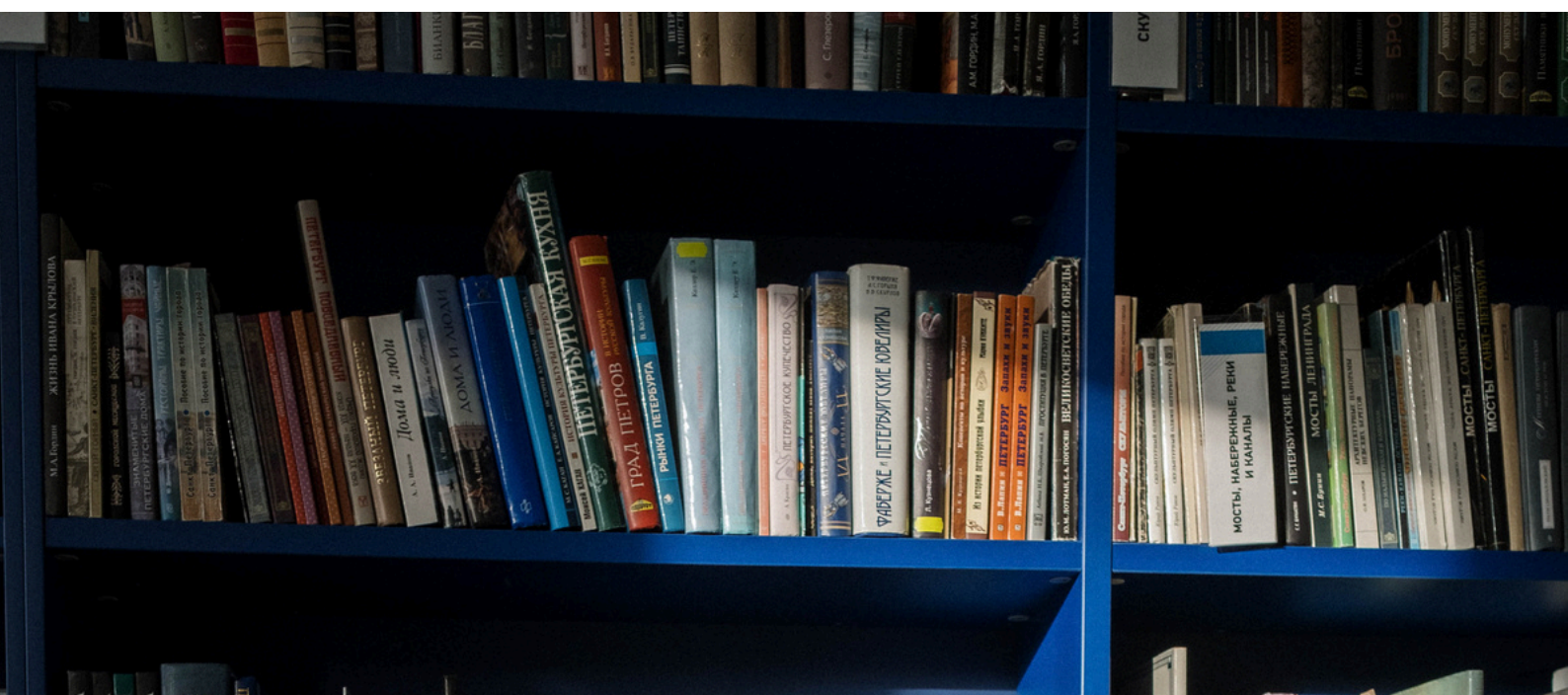


8. Education

Understanding our impact on the environment can help us make more responsible, eco-friendly choices. This section focuses on the role of education in promoting sustainable practices offering tools and resources to empower people of all ages. Whether in universities, workplaces, or communities, education is the key to driving positive change for our planet.

Here are some general suggestions you can implement in your weekly routine:

- **Stay Informed:** Stay up-to-date with environmental issues and solutions by reading articles and watching documentaries. PRO TIP: When researching environmental issues, always verify the credibility of your sources! Use trusted organisations, academic journals, and government publications for accurate information.
- **Expert Discussions:** Follow expert discussions and stay informed about current debates to identify false claims better.
- **Spread Awareness:** Discuss sustainable practices with friends and family to spread awareness and encourage collective action.
- **Support Sustainable Companies:** Support companies prioritising sustainability and eco-friendly practices in their operations and products.
- **Research Before Purchasing:** Research companies must ensure they align with sustainable values before purchasing.
- **Community:** Engage in community discussions and advocate for policies that support sustainability and environmental protection.
- **Be aware of yourself:** Denialist positions are increasingly common. Learn to identify biases to be an aware actor on climate and sustainability issues.



Opportunities in Bologna:

- [**L.E.A. - Laboratorio Educazione Ambientale**](#) (Via Scandellara, 50).
The L.E.A. is a local educational service designed to stimulate curiosity about the natural environment and to promote the development of a balanced relationship between children and the environment.
- [**Fondazione Villa Ghigi**](#) offers a wide range of initiatives, events, and educational programs for all ages.
- [**Centri di Educazione sul Territorio**](#) Centri di Educazione alla Sostenibilità in Emilia-Romagna, coordinated by Arpae, currently consist of 38 specialized facilities distributed throughout the region. The Ceas carry out educational activities aimed at increasing knowledge, promoting sustainable behaviors, and enhancing the ability to take action on both global and local sustainability issues among young people and adults.
- [**Centri di Educazione Ambientale**](#) (Via Massimo Gorki, 6) Centro di Educazione Ambientale is managed by Legambiente Emilia-Romagna and has been promoting environmental awareness and education projects since 1998, with a particular focus on schools across the province and region. The center's goals are to promote and disseminate "best practices" related to environmental sustainability, which it strives to achieve through educational programs and the organization of initiatives and events for the public.
- The [**University of Bologna**](#), the oldest in the Western world, is renowned for its outstanding academic programs. Keeping pace with evolving global challenges, it offers a diverse range of courses focused on sustainability, including:
 - [Resource Economics and Sustainable Development](#)
 - [Global Change Ecology and Sustainable Development Goals](#)
 - [Greening Energy Market and Finance](#)
 - [Scienze e Tecnologie per la Sostenibilità Ambientale](#)
 - [Scienze Naturali](#)
 - [Scienze e Tecnologie per il Verde e il Paesaggio](#)
 - [Tecnologie per il Territorio e l'Ambiente Agro-forestale](#)

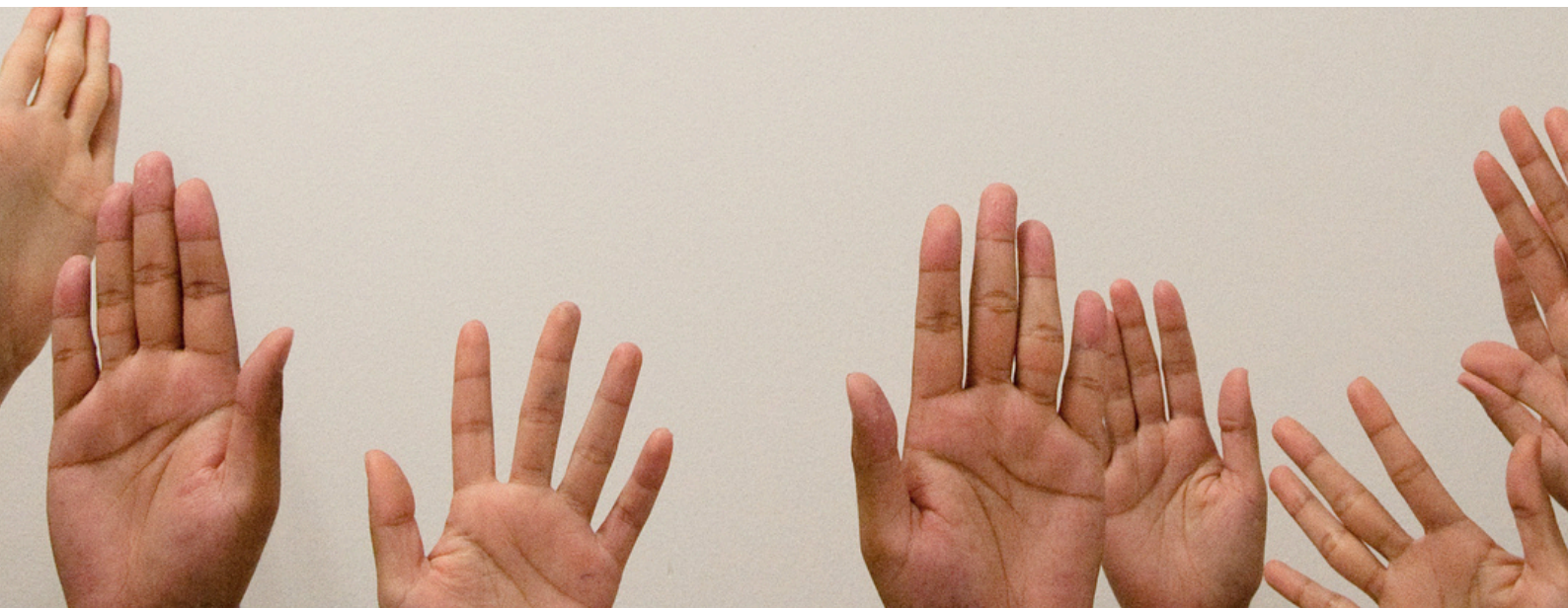
9. Participation



9. Participation

Active engagement in environmental and community efforts is crucial for driving meaningful change. By participating in initiatives that promote sustainability, conservation and social responsibility you can make a significant impact on the world around you.

- **Join Local Environmental Groups:** Become a member of local environmental organizations or community groups focused on sustainability. These groups often organize clean-up events, tree planting activities and educational workshops, giving you the opportunity to take direct action in your area.
- **Participate in Public Consultations:** Get involved in public consultations or town hall meetings where decisions about local development and environmental policies are made. Your voice can help shape policies that protect the environment and promote sustainable practices in your community!!
- **Support Sustainable Businesses:** Choose to shop at businesses that prioritize sustainability and ethical practices. By supporting companies that care about their environmental and social impact you encourage more businesses to adopt sustainable principles.
- **Advocate for Change:** Use your voice to advocate for environmental policies and regulations that promote sustainability. Whether it's through writing letters to your representatives, signing petitions or participating in peaceful protests, your advocacy can help push for necessary changes at the local, national and even global level.
- **Inspire Others:** Share your knowledge about sustainability and environmental issues with friends and family. You can help build a community of motivated individuals working towards a common goal.
- **Participate in Events:** Attend and support events like farmers' markets and eco-fairs. These events not only offer education and resources but also connect you with like-minded individuals.



Opportunities in Bologna:

Local authorities have long been dedicated to raising public awareness about environmental issues. For those interested in deepening their knowledge and accessing reliable information, the websites of the Emilia Romagna Region and the Municipality of Bologna are invaluable resources.

- [Emilia-Romagna Ambiente](#) The website offers a comprehensive view of environmental sustainability, addressing topics such as energy, waste management, education, agriculture, food, health, mobility and tourism. It also highlights efforts to protect the environment through initiatives focused on parks, forests, water, air, soil and more.
- On the [Iperbole website of the Municipality of Bologna](#) you can find: The [Ambiente e Sostenibilità](#) section and the [Città Sostenibile](#) section;
- [Bologna Partecipa](#) Bologna Partecipa is the digital platform of the Municipality of Bologna designed to encourage citizen participation, civic collaboration and the care of common goods. Every citizen can propose collaboration initiatives, participate in the participatory budget with the possibility of digital voting and project proposals, discover Neighborhood Houses, review signed collaboration pacts and access all active participatory processes, from neighborhood workshops to thematic and zonal ones;
- Did you know that depending on the neighborhood you live in, the municipality offers different activities and regulations? Find yours at the section "[Your neighborhood](#)".
- [Fondazione Innovazione Urbana](#) is a multidisciplinary urban regeneration research, development, co-production and communication center working to build the city of the future. FIU aims to promote relationships between local government, universities, firms, the tertiary sector and citizens. Its work is designed to foster, guide, facilitate and experiment city transformation processes in both policy planning-civic governance and design terms. It does so by introducing process and design innovation to administrative mechanisms, shining the spotlight on neighborhood, environmental transition and cultural democracy.
- Join [Fridays for Future Bologna!](#)

10. Laws and regulations



10. Laws and regulations

Local, National, Regional Regulations and Initiatives

- Since 2023, environmental protection has become part of the principles of the Italian constitution because Article 9 was expanded.
- Legislative Decree n. 152/2006: Known as the Environmental Code, this decree establishes rules on environmental protection, waste management, remediation of contaminated sites, and water and air protection.

<https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/dettaglio/codici/materiaAmbientale>

- The Region of Emilia Romagna and the Municipality of Bologna put in place plans and measures to control air quality and air pollution.

The national legislation, which implements European Directive 2008/50/EC, assigns the regions the task of adopting regional air quality plans, with the main objective, in order to protect collective health, of identifying concrete actions to comply with air quality standards and to reduce polluting emissions in regional territories.

On 6 February 2024, the new Integrated Air Plan (Pair 2030) came into force. The Plan's strategy is Regional o achieve compliance with the limit values of the most critical pollutants set by the regulations as soon as possible, by acting simultaneously on the main emitting sectors with the following principles:

1. reducing emissions of both primary pollutants and precursors of secondary pollutants (PM10, PM2.5, NOx, SO2, NH3, VOCs);
 2. acting both on a local scale and on the extended spatial scale of the Po basin with intervention by the ministries on the sources of national competence;
 3. prevent acute pollution episodes in order to reduce local peaks.
- For more information click [here](#).

- The Municipality of Bologna joined the Covenant of Mayors for Energy and Climate in April 2019 and approved the Energy and Climate Action Plan (Paesc) in April 2021. For further information click [here](#).
- Incentives for Renewable Energy: The Italian government offers various incentives for the installation of renewable energy systems, such as photovoltaic and solar thermal systems, which are also applicable to Bologna. These include tax deductions and grants.
- Standards for Building Energy Efficiency: The Minimum Requirements Decree (D.M. June 26, 2015) sets criteria for the design and renovation of buildings to improve their energy efficiency. This includes the obligation to use insulating materials and high-efficiency systems.

https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2015/07/15/15A05198/sg_



**Co-funded by
the European Union**

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.