



PRESS RELEASE

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Italy: EIB provides €460 million to Hera Group to boost the green transition, decarbonisation, the circular economy, and protection of water resources

- **The EIB loan will help improve the resilience of the integrated water cycle, energy efficiency and the management of environmental services in the areas served by Hera.**
- **Operations in the water sector will strengthen existing infrastructure, promote the reuse of water resources, and ensure the quality and continuity of service in the event of drought and extreme weather events.**
- **In the energy sector, the development of photovoltaic power plants — including small-scale ones — will enable renewable energy generation, while the installation of second-generation smart meters will improve energy efficiency.**
- **In the environmental sector, the construction and strengthening of plants will improve processing, recycling, and recovery capacity.**

The European Investment Bank (EIB) has granted a €460 million loan to Hera Group, one of Italy's 40 largest companies by market capitalisation (part of the FTSE MIB) operating in over 300 Italian municipalities. The main goals of the financing are to strengthen the resilience of integrated water services, increase the production of renewable energy, foster energy efficiency, decarbonisation and the circular economy, and bolster waste processing and collection, all in order to support Hera Group's areas of operation on their path to a sustainable environmental transition and help combat climate change.

This EU bank loan will finance over 60 Hera Group projects aligned with the EU taxonomy and in line with the objectives of the UN 2030 Agenda, helping the communities served by the Italian multi-utility on their path to a green transition closely connected to local society and industry. The EIB financing will therefore cover almost 60% of the total value of these investments (over €800 million) already planned by the company in its 2022-2026 industrial plan. Operations will mainly take place in Emilia-Romagna, but also in other areas served such as Veneto and Friuli-Venezia Giulia.

In concrete terms, the EU bank resources will contribute to improving integrated water services via operations to further cut losses and renew rainwater collection and wastewater treatment facilities. Hera Group will increase its capacity for processing, recycling, and recovering waste by renovating existing collection centres and building new, cutting-edge plants for recycling plastic and carbon fibre and for the pre-treatment and storage of industrial waste. The EIB financing will also enable Hera Group to install over 370 000 second-generation smart meters in the regions concerned, as well as develop district heating and combined heat and power systems and build photovoltaic plants — even small-scale ones — to increase renewable energy production.

Almost 40% of the EIB-financed investments will be made in the parts of Emilia-Romagna that were hit the hardest by the recent floods. The financed operations will **improve the resilience of water services to future extreme weather events**, including via the construction of underground rainwater collection tanks in areas of the Romagna coast subject to high hydrogeological risk. Elsewhere, a number of measures will be taken to make the sewerage network more resilient to flooding.

The financing announced today is part of the [REPowerEU](#) initiative supported by the EIB, which will invest an additional €30 billion over the next five years to unlock €115 billion, promoting the green transition and gradually reducing Europe's dependence on fossil fuels.

“This operation is a concrete example of the EIB's commitment to promoting the sustainability, efficiency, and resilience of water, energy, and waste management infrastructure in Italy and across Europe,” said **EIB Vice-President Gelsomina Vigliotti**. “The EIB loan will also back Hera Group's efforts to

strengthen the services provided in the parts of Emilia-Romagna affected by flooding to improve prevention and the resilience of water services to future natural disasters.”

“This financing from the EIB — a longstanding and steadfast partner of Hera Group — will give major impetus to our strategic plan and confirms our commitment to sustainable development in the regions where we operate, particularly with reference to the goals of decarbonisation, the circular economy, innovation, and resilience, in line with our company’s mission,” added **Hera Group CEO Orazio Iacono**. “It is a key component of our financial strategy that, as well as further expanding the range of innovative products and instruments adopted by the group, will also help support the 2022-2026 development plan, confirming the sound nature of our business and our financial flexibility.”

Strong EIB support for Italy’s water sector

The EIB is the EU climate bank and one of the world's largest lenders to the water sector, with over 1 600 projects and around €80 billion in funding granted since 1958. **Italy was the biggest beneficiary of EIB resources for the water sector from 2016 to 2022. The EIB financed 40 operations in the country during this period, providing a total of €2.9 billion and helping to unlock about €8.9 billion in investment.**

Background information

European Investment Bank (EIB)

The European Investment Bank (EIB) is the long-term lending institution of the European Union owned by its Member States. It provides long-term financing for sound investments that contribute to EU policy. The Bank finances projects in four priority areas: infrastructure, innovation, climate and environment, and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). **Between 2019 and 2022, the EIB Group provided €45 billion in financing for projects in Italy.**

Hera Group

Hera Group is a major Italian multi-utility operating in the environment, energy and water sectors. Its 9 000 employees work daily to meet the complex needs of almost 5 million residents mainly in Emilia-Romagna, Veneto, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Marche, Tuscany and Abruzzo. Listed on the stock exchange in 2003, it is one of Italy’s 40 biggest companies by market capitalisation (it is part of the FTSE MIB), and entered the Dow Jones Sustainability Index, World and Europe in 2020.

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