

9. Landscape and cultural heritage¹

The Landscape and cultural heritage indicators show, in most cases, an improvement or a stable situation if compared to the previous year, while comparing with the pre-pandemic benchmark most of them show signs of worsening (Table 1). However, the heterogeneity of the measures, not all sensitive to social dynamics or the economic cycle, and of the available updates (referring to different years, from 2021 to 2023) limits the possibility of an overall assessment of the domain's trend in terms of recovery and resilience². Among the indicators that refer to cultural heritage, municipalities' expenditure on culture regains part of what was lost in 2021 (+8.7% compared to 2020, but still 5.5% below 2019 data), while showing also signs of a consolidation of regional inequalities. Not even the indicator related to museum heritage in 2022 returned to its pre-pandemic level (1.46 exhibition facilities open to the public per 100 km², compared to 1.62 in 2019) and, although visitors more than doubled if compared to 2021, the comparison with 2019 has still a negative value (108 million against 130). As regards the indicators related to the situation of the landscape, the pressure of mining and guarrying activities has already exceeded 2019 levels by 8%, in the wake of the post-pandemic economic recovery. The only signs of improvement compared to the situation in 2019 come from the measures of illegal building (remained stable after the decline of recent years) and from the spread of agritourism farms (whose growth trend was not interrupted by the pandemic). The two perception indicators (concern about landscape deterioration and dissatisfaction with the landscape of the place of living), once the disruption of the pandemic has been overcome, return, in 2023, to almost the same values as in 2019, with a slight increase in dissatisfaction, expression of a discomfort felt by just over one out of five people.

Table 1. Landscape and cultural heritage indicators: value for the latest available year and percentage changes compared to the previous year and 2019 (a)

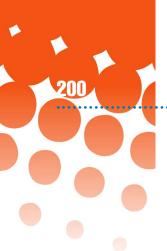
					Percentage changes	
INDICATORS	Year	Value	Unit of measure	Polarity	compared with previous year	compared with 2019
Current expenditure of Municipalities on culture	2021	18,8	Euro per capita	+		
Density and importance of musems' heritage	2022	1,46	Per 100 km ²	+		
Illegal building rate	2022	15,1	Per 100 building permits issued	-		
Pressures of mining and quarrying activities	2021	310	m ³ per km ²	-		
Impact of forest fires	2022	2,4	Per 1,000 km ²	-		
Spread of agritourism farms	2022	8,6	Per 100 km ²	+		
Density of Historic Parks/Gardens	2021	1,7	Per 100 m ²	+		
Dissatisfaction with the landscape of the place of living	2023	21,3	Percentage values	-		
Concern about landscape deterioration	2023	12,3	Percentage values	+		

Source: Istat, Bes indicators

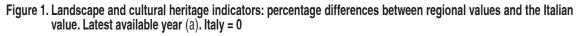
Source: Istat, Bes indicators Note: The green colour indicates improvement, red worsening and grey stability, taking into account the polarity of the indicator. The indicators have po-sitive polarity if the increase in their value shows an improvement in well-being, negative polarity if the increase in their value shows a deterioration in well-being. For variations within ±1% the indicators are considered stable in the reference period. Indicators of Erosion of farmland (*from urban sprawl* and *from abandonment*) are not represented in this table because comparison is not available for the reference periods.

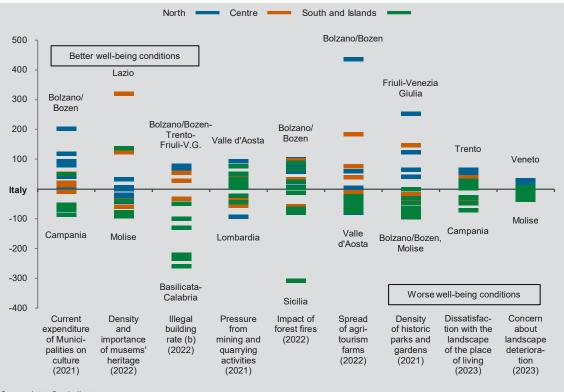
1 This Chapter was edited by Luigi Costanzo and Alessandra Ferrara, with contributions from Elisabetta Del Bufalo, Alessandra Federici, Antonino Laganà, Stefano Tersigni, Francesco G. Truglia and Donatella Vignani.

² Indicators not influenced by the pandemic crisis include the Impact of forest fires, which variability over time depends above all on meteorological and climatic factors, and the Density of historic parks and gardens, an indicator of cultural heritage endowment that is not very dynamic by definition. Furthermore, the two indicators of farmland erosion were not considered, because no comparisons are available for the reference periods.



Almost all the indicators of this domain are characterised by a wide territorial variability: only for three of them (pressure from mining and quarrying activities, dissatisfaction with the landscape of the place of living, and concern about landscape deterioration) the difference between the extreme values and the Italian average lies within an interval of $\pm 100\%$. Furthermore, a geographical polarisation is evident, with a clear prevalence of negative placements for the regions in the South and Islands (Figure 1).





 Source: Istat, Bes indicators
 Nota: The values represented on the graph are calculated as 100 × (Vreg – Vita) / Vita, where Vreg is the value of a region and Vita is the Italy value. The calculation shall take into account the polarity of the indicator. Values greater than zero indicate a better state of well-being than the average Italy; on the other side, values lower than zero indicate a worse condition. The indicators of *Erosion of rural space (from urban sprawl* and *from abandonment*) are not represented as no comparisons are available for the reference periods. For greater usability of the Figure, please visit https://www.istat.it/it/archivio/296050 (in Italian).
 (a) Aggregate estimates for Bolzano, Trento and Friuli-Venezia Giulia, and for Basilicata and Calabria.

The values of municipal expenditure on culture reach the maximum in the Autonomous Province of Bolzano (57 euros per capita, three times the Italian average) and the minimum in Campania (2.7 euros per capita, 1/7 of the average). Furthermore, among the South and Islands regions, only Sardegna exceeds the national average, while none of the others reaches half that value. The illegal building rate shows the maximum values in Campania, Calabria and Basilicata (over 50 unauthorised buildings for every 100 authorised) and the minimum values in Friuli-Venezia Giulia and in the Autonomous Provinces of Bolzano and Trento (about 1/5 of the average). The impact of forest fires reaches its maximum level in Sicilia (2.4 per thousand of the regional territory, 4 times the national average) and the minimum (zero) in the Autonomous Province of Bolzano. The only indicator that sees the South and Islands regions positioned a little more favourably is the pressure of mining and quarrying activities, which has generally higher values in the Centre-North of the country, with its maximum level in Lombardia (598 m³ per km², almost twice the Italian average).



Geographic polarisation is less defined among endowment indicators. The density and relevance of the museum heritage exceeds the average four times in Lazio (6.13 exhibition facilities per 100 km²) and twice in Campania and Toscana (3.46 and 3.28 facilities per 100 km², respectively), while the distribution over the rest of the country spreads between the minimum value of Molise (0.12 facilities per 100 km²) and that of Lombardia (1.55 facilities per 100 km², slightly above the average). Friuli-Venezia Giulia, the richest region in parks and historic gardens in cities (Provincial capitals), exceeds the average by 3.5 times with 6 m² per 100 of built-up area, while at the other side there are Molise and the Autonomous Province of Bolzano (0.1 m² per 100 of built-up area). The territorial variety for what concerns concentration of agritourism farms is also high: if we do not consider the outlier of the Autonomous Province of Bolzano (46.1 farms per 100 km², more than five times the average), the range of variation is between the maximum of Toscana and Umbria (24.5 and 15.3 farms per 100 km², approximately twice the average) and the minimum of the Valle d'Aosta (1/5 of the average). The two perception indicators reproduce the North-South contrast in regional distributions, although with a more limited variability. Dissatisfaction with the landscape of the place of living – a subjective measure of the perception of degradation – reaches the maximum in Campania (36.5%) and the minimum in the Autonomous Province of Trento (9.4%), while the concern about landscape deterioration - an indicator of the level of social attention to the protection of the territory – reaches the maximum in Veneto (16.0%) and the minimum in Molise (8.0%).

New acknowledgements for Italian heritage by UNESCO

In 2023, Italy confirms its first place in the UNESCO World Heritage List, with the 59th inscription: *Evaporitic Karst and Caves of Northern Apennines*, referring to nine different areas located in Emilia-Romagna³. Among the Italian properties registered in the List, 53 belong to the category of cultural heritage and six (including the latter) to that of natural heritage⁴. The second country by number of registered properties remains China (57), followed by France and Germany with 52 and then by Spain with 50 (Figure 2a). Among the Italian cultural heritage properties, 29 refer to the theme of Cities and eight to that of Cultural landscapes⁵. There are currently 32 properties proposed for registration by Italy, including five cultural landscapes⁶.

³ *Upper Secchia Valley* and *Lower Collina Reggiana* in the Province of Reggio Emilia; *Gypsum Outcrops of Zola Predosa, Gypsum Outcrops of Bologna, Vein of the Romagna Gypsum Outcrop* (sites of *Monte Penzola, Monte Casino* and *Monte Mauro*) in the Metropolitan City of Bologna; *Evaporites of San Leo and Gypsum of Onferno* in the Province of Rimini.

⁴ The count includes seven transnational properties, which ownership is shared with other countries. There are 1,199 properties inscribed on the World Heritage List in 168 countries, of which 933 are classified as cultural heritage, 227 natural heritage and 39 mixed heritage (source: UNESCO, data referring to 31/12/2023).

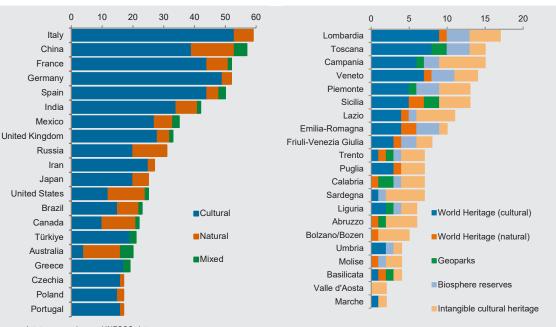
⁵ The theme of Cultural Landscapes was introduced in 1992. The currently recognised Italian cultural landscapes are: *Amalfi Coast* (1997); *Portovenere, Cinque Terre and Islands* (1997); *Cilento and Vallo di Diano National Park, with the archaeological sites of Paestum, Velia and the Certosa di Padula* (1998); *Sacri Monti of Piedmont and Lombardy* (2003); *Val d'Orcia* (2004); *Medici villas and gardens in Tuscany* (2013); *Vineyard Landscape of Piedmont: Langhe-Roero and Monferrato* (2014); *Prosecco Hills of Conegliano and Valdobbiadene* (2019).

⁶ Two nominations were submitted in 2023: *Evidence of Italo-Greek Culture between the Early and Late Middle Ages* and *The system of the Ville-fattoria in Chianti Classico*.



Figure 2a. Properties inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage List, by category and country (top 20 countries by number of inscribed properties). Year 2023. Absolute values

Figure 2b. Properties inscribed in the World Heritage List, by category and other elements recognised by UNESCO, by region (a). Year 2023. Absolute values



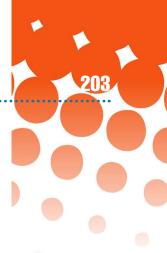
Source: Istat, processing on UNESCO data (a) Elements located in more regions are counted more times. Three intangible cultural heritages, not located in a specific territory (Art of Falconry, Tocatì and The practice of opera singing) are not represented on the chart.

In the framework of other UNESCO initiatives that contribute to the protection and promotion of cultural heritage and landscape, Italy has so far obtained the recognition of 20 Biosphere Reserves⁷, 11 Geoparks⁸ and 19 Intangible Cultural Heritages⁹. Among the latter,

⁷ The Biosphere Reserves (or MAB-Unesco, from the acronym of the Man and the biosphere programme) are 748 in 134 countries, gathered in the *World Network of Biosphere Reserves*. These are areas that host terrestrial and/or marine-coastal ecosystems, managed in such a way as to combine the conservation of biodiversity with the sustainable use of natural resources for the benefit of local communities, through the carrying out of research, control, education and training activities. The Italian Reserves are: *Circeo* (Lazio, 1977), *Collemeluccio-Montedimezzo* (Molise, 1977), *Miramare* (Friuli-Venezia Giulia, 1979), *Cilento e Vallo di Diano* (Campania, 1997), *Somma-Vesuvio e Miglio d'Oro* (Campania, 1997), *Ticino e Val Grande Verbano* (Lombardia and Piemonte, 2002 and 2018), *Arcipelago Toscano* (Toscana, 2003), *Selve costiere di Toscana* (Toscana, 2004), *Monviso* (Piemonte, 2013), *Sila* (Calabria, 2014), *Alpi Ledrensi e Judicaria* (Trentino-Alto Adige, 2015), *Appennino Tosco-Emiliano* (Toscana and Emilia-Romagna, 2015) and 2021), *Delta del Po* (Emilia-Romagna and Veneto, 2015), *Collina Po* (Piemonte, 2016), *Tepilora, Rio Posada e Montalbo* (Sardegna, 2017), *Monte Peglia* (Umbria, 2018), *Valle Camonica-Alto Sebino* (Lombardia, 2018), *Alpi Giulie* (Friuli-Venezia Giulia, 2019), *Po Grande* (Lombardia, Veneto and Emilia-Romagna, 2019) e *Monte Grappa* (Veneto, 2021). Source: UNESCO, data referring to 31/12/2023.

⁸ The UNESCO Global Geoparks (199 in 48 countries, gathered in the *Global Geoparks Network*) are sites characterised by the presence of geological landscapes of particular value for scientific interest, rare occurrence and aesthetic or educational value, managed according to an integrated approach to the protection and promotion of knowledge and sustainable development of the territory. The Italian Geoparks are: *Madonie* (Sicilia, 2004), *Beigua* (Liguria, 2005), *Rocca di Cerere* (Sicilia, 2008), *Adamello-Brenta* (Trentino-Alto Adige, 2008), *Cilento, Vallo di Diano e Alburni* (Campania, 2010), *Tuscany mining park* (Toscana, 2010), *Alpi Apuane* (Toscana, 2011), *Sesia-Val Grande* (Piemonte, 2013), *Pollino* (Basilicata and Calabria, 2015), *Aspromonte* (Calabria, 2021) and *Majella* (Abruzzo, 2021). Source: UNESCO, data referring to 31/12/2023.

⁹ The elements referable to one or more of the five areas of human creativity and diversity considered by the 2003 Convention for the Protection of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (*Oral expressions including language; Performing arts; Social practices, rites and celebrations; Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; Traditional craftsmanship*), recognised by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, are 730 in 145 countries. Of these, 611 are registered in the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage, 82 in the Urgent Safeguarding List



in 2023 the registration in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity was obtained for *The practice of opera singing in Italy* and the *Traditional irrigation: knowledge, technique and organization*¹⁰. All Italian regions are represented with more than one element in the different UNESCO lists (Figure 2b).

Italian public spending on culture and landscape is among the lowest in Europe in relation to GDP

Despite a heritage of recognised universal value, in Italy the general public spending for functions related to *Cultural services* (which include the protection and enhancement of cultural heritage) and the *Protection of biodiversity and landscape* is significantly lower than the EU average¹¹. In 2021, Italy's spending for the whole of these two functions is 7.3 billion euros: a sum slightly higher than that of Spain, among the largest economies in the Union, but significantly lower than those of France and Germany (equal to 20.1 and 17.5 billion respectively). In particular, the expenditure on cultural services amounts to 5.04 billion, which corresponds to 2.8 per thousand of GDP (compared to 7.2 in France and 4.3 in Germany), while the expenditure on the protection of biodiversity and landscape is 2.26 billion, equal to 1.2 per thousand of the GDP (more than in France or Germany, 0.8 and 0.6 per thousand respectively)¹².

Compared to 2019, the overall sum committed by Italy for these two functions increased by 3.6%, compared to an average growth of 6.3% in the EU-27, and remains among the lowest in Europe in relation to the Gross Domestic Product, despite Italy being the country that spends the most in the Union on protection of biodiversity and landscape. In 2021, the sum of the two expenditure items is worth 4.0 per thousand of GDP, against an EU average of 5.7 per thousand. This value, which refers to a much broader area of intervention than that strictly related to the protection and promotion of cultural heritage and landscape¹³, places Italy only in 23rd place among the 27 countries of the Union (Figure 3).

and 37 in the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices. The Italian intangible heritage recognised before 2023 are: the *Sardinian Canto a tenore* (Sardegna, 2008), *Opera dei Pupi, Sicilian puppet theatre* (Sicilia, 2008), *Traditional violin craftsmanship in Cremona* (Lombardia, 2012), *The Mediterranean diet* (Campania, 2013), the *Celebrations of big shoulder-borne processional structures* (more regions, 2013), *Traditional agricultural practice of cultivating the "vite ad alberello" head-trained bush vines*) of the community of Pantelleria (Sicilia, 2013), the *Art of falconry* (2016), the *Art of Neapolitan "Pizzaiuolo"* (Campania, 2017), the *Art of dry stone walling* (multiple regions, 2018), the *Celestinian Forgiveness* (Abruzzo, 2019), *Mountaineering* (various regions, 2019), *Transhumance* (multiple regions, 2019), *The art of glass beads* (Veneto, 2020), *The musical art of Hunting Horn Players* (Piemonte, 2020), *Truffle hunting and extraction in Italy* (multiple regions, 2021), *Lipizzan horse breeding traditions* (Lazio, 2022) and *Tocati, a shared programme for the safeguarding of traditional games and sports* (2022) – all registered in the Representative List except the latter, registered in the Register of Good Safeguarding Practices. Source: UNESCO, data referring to 31/12/2023.

¹⁰ Referring to traditional practices preserved in some areas of the Autonomous Province of Bolzano.

¹¹ General public expenditure (Central Administrations + Local Administrations) for classes 08.2.1 and 05.4.1 of the International Classification of Government expenditure by functions (Cofog).

¹² Source: Eurostat, *Government finance statistics*.

¹³ The international comparison can only be carried out on the basis of the Cofog, which, however, does not allow to identify clearly an aggregate of expenditure corresponding to that of the protection and promotion of cultural and landscape heritage and activities, identified by the national classification of expenditure by missions. The latter is referred to, later, in the analysis of State (i.e. Central government) expenditure by type of expenditure and, above all, for the calculation of the Bes indicator, which refers to the expenditure of municipal administrations on protection and promotion of cultural and landscape heritage and activities.

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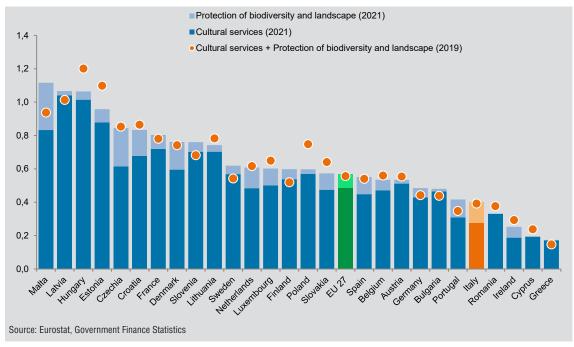


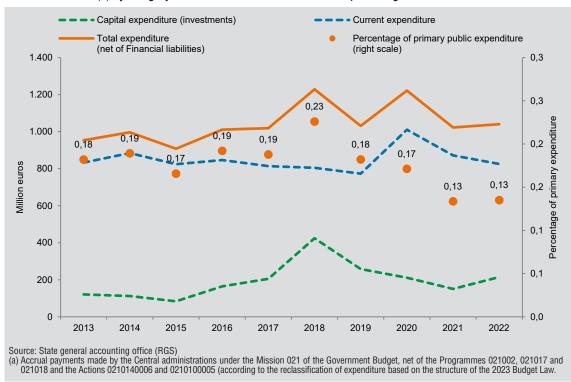
Figure 3. General government expenditure on Cultural services and Protection of biodiversity and landscape in the EU countries. Years 2019 and 2021. Percentage of GDP

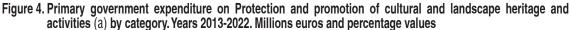
The impact of public spending on culture and landscape in the State Budget remains unchanged

The classification of public expenditure by missions allows identifying more precisely, in the State Budget, the expenditure related to the management of cultural heritage and landscape¹⁴. In 2022, primary expenditure for Protection and promotion of cultural and landscape heritage and activities marks only a slight increase (+1.7%) after the rather large fluctuations recorded in the previous four years¹⁵, in line with the trend of the last decade. The increase in 2022, however, results from a reduction in current spending (-5.3%) and an increase in investment spending (capital expenditure, +42.4%): a combination that has not occurred since 2018. However, the impact on overall primary expenditure, which in 2021 reached the lowest level in the last ten years, remains unchanged (Figure 4).

¹⁴ This aggregate corresponds to Mission 021 of the State Budget, net of Programmes 021002 and 021018 and Actions 021014006 (related to the entertainment sector) and 0210100005 (related to the publishing sector), according to the reclassification of expenditure based on the Budget Law 2023. It is not comparable with the sum of expenditure for Cultural Services and Protection of Biodiversity and Landscape, which includes a broader scope of activity and refers to the classification of expenditure by function (Cofog), used in international comparisons. Furthermore, in the international comparison, the overall expenditure of the public administration is taken into account and not just that of the central administrations.

¹⁵ Payments on account of the Central State Administrations, net of financial liabilities.





After the pandemic, the North-South gap in municipal spending on culture is widening

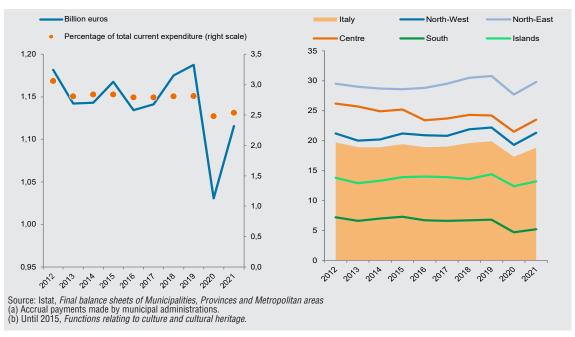
In 2021, the current expenditure of municipalities for management of cultural heritage and activities only partly recovers the sharp decline of the previous year, standing at an average value of 18.8 euros per capita (+1.5 compared to 2020, but still far from the 19.9 euros per capita of 2019)¹⁶. This expenditure item grows in the same proportion as the overall current expenditure, of which it accounts for 2.5%. From 2013 to 2019, however, its share of the budget of municipal administrations remained stable at 2.8% (Figure 5a). Furthermore, inequalities show no signs of reduction. Compared to the previous year, in fact, per capita spending on culture increased by 2 euros in the Centre-North (where municipalities spend on average 24.5 euros per capita) and by only 0.6 euros in the South, where spending is 7.7 euros per capita (Figure 5b).

¹⁶ The indicator considers current expenditure (accrual payments) for the mission Protection and promotion of cultural and landscape heritage and activities.

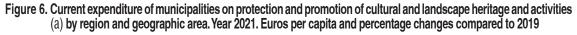


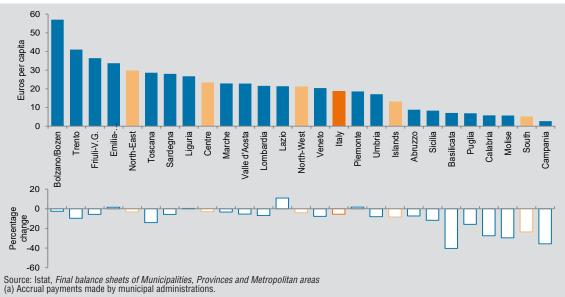
Figure 5a. Current expenditure of municipalities (a) on Protection and promotion of cultural and landscape heritage and activities (b). Years 2012-2021. Absolute values and percentage points Figure 5b. Current expenditure of municipalities (a) on Protection and promotion of cultural and landscape heritage and activities (b), by geographic area. Years 2012-2021. Euros per capita

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A comparison at a regional level between per capita spending in 2021 and its change compared to 2019 shows how there were most marked reductions on average where spending was already lower (Figure 6). The distance between the extremes therefore widens, with the maximum value of the Autonomous Province of Bolzano (57 euros per capita) exceeding the minimum of Campania by more than 20 times (2.7 euros per capita). Among the regions with ordinary statute, Emilia-Romagna and Toscana maintain the top positions with 33.7 and 28.6 euros per capita respectively, while all the South and Islands regions, except Sardegna, remain well below the Italian average.





Museum visitors close to pre-pandemic levels

In 2022, there was a significant recovery in visiting museums, galleries, monuments and archaeological sites, which hosted nearly 108 million visitors during the year. After two years of decline (with a minimum of 36 million in 2020) the number of visitors seems to be close to fully recovering the pre-pandemic level (in 2019 visitors were close to 130 million). However, in particular in Central regions, which attract the largest share of visitors (44.0%), the recovery appears to be slower (with the exception of Umbria, where the number of visitors exceeds that of 2019). This resulted, over a period of three years, in a loss of about 2.5 percentage points of the flow share intercepted by this geographic area, mainly in favour of the northern regions (where Piemonte and Emilia-Romagna have almost fully recovered the values of 2019), while the South and Island regions, as a whole, maintained their share almost unchanged (from 20.0% in 2019 to 20.3% in 2022). The decrease in the number of exhibition facilities open to the public has had a limited influence on the dynamics of visitors. In 2022, the number of facilities is still almost 10% lower than in 2019, but it is also progressively recovering, with an increase of 2.9% compared to 2021. In this regard, the recovery seems to be faster in the North (that in 2022 reached 93.0% of the 2019 benchmark) compared to the Centre (90.2%) and the South and Islands (which reached 86.5% in 2021, but does not record further progress in 2022) (Figure 7a).

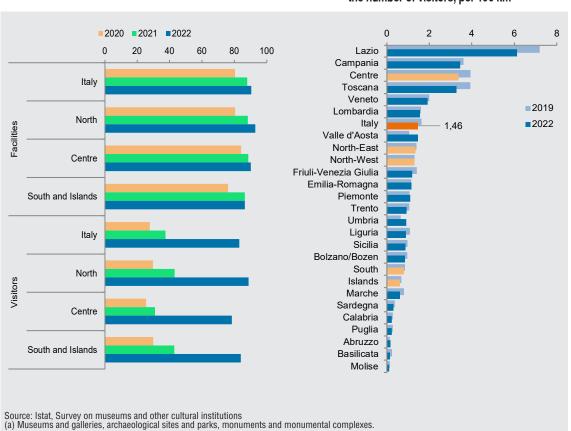
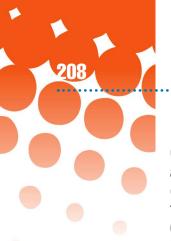


Figure 7a. Exhibition facilities (a) and visitors by F geographic area. Years 2020-2022. Fixed base index numbers, 2019=100

Figure 7b. Density and importance of museums' heritage, by region and geographic area. Years 2019 and 2022. Exhibition facilities (a) weighted by the number of visitors, per 100 km²







Compared to 2019, there is a significant decrease in the number of museums (-13.6%) and archaeological areas open to the public (-8.9%), while the number of monuments open to the public (+16.2%) is increasing. Among the heritage sites, museums remain the main category by far (76.8% of the total, compared with 16.4% of monuments and 6.7% of archaeological sites). Moreover, compared to 2019, there is a 3.0% increase in State structures, compared to a 10.8% decrease in non-State structures (private or public, much more numerous and on average smaller)¹⁷.

The post-pandemic recovery also interrupts a weak tendency to rebalance the flow of visitors, as it was in the two-year period 2020-2021. The first three regions by number of visitors (Lazio, Toscana and Campania) absorbed 54.0% of the flow in 2019, but their share had fallen to 49.4% in 2020 and 45.4% in 2021, while in 2022 it rose to 51.7%. A wide diffusion over the territory remains a characteristic feature of our museum system, with 32.5% of the exhibition facilities located in small municipalities (up to 5 thousand inhabitants), 20.4% in internal areas¹⁸ and 36.3% in rural areas¹⁹. Moreover, in these same contexts, the number of facilities open to the public is stable or growing compared to the previous year, which shows the liveliness of this widespread heritage, which intercepts comparatively small shares of the flow of visitors, but not marginal for local economies: more than 6 million visitors in inland areas (compared to 5.4 million residents), 9.4 million in municipalities up to 5 thousand inhabitants (9.7 million residents) and 10.9 million in rural areas (10 million residents)²⁰.

The indicator of the density and relevance of the museum heritage, proposed to assess the endowment and activity of this important component of the cultural heritage, is equal in 2022 to 1.46 facilities per 100 km² (substantially stable if compared to the previous year and still lower than the 2019 value of 1.62)²¹. Values above the average are found in Lazio (6.13), followed by Campania and Toscana (between 3 and 3.50), Veneto and Lombardia (between 1.50 and 2).

Most regions still have indicator values below those of 2019 in 2022. Significant advances are observed only in Valle d'Aosta, Umbria, and Abruzzo (with values more than 20% higher than the 2019 benchmark), while, on the contrary, Marche, Puglia, and Basilicata seem to be the regions that struggle the most to reach the pre-pandemic levels. If we compare distributions, however, the distances between the Centre (3.35), the North-West and the North-East (1.29 and 1.33), the South and the Islands (0.80 and 0.61) remain very wide.

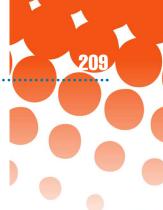
¹⁷ In 2022, non-state structures (private or public not belonging to the Ministry of Culture) accounted for 89.2% of the total but they hosted only 28.5% of visitors.

¹⁸ National Institute of Statistics - Istat. 2022. "Peripheral and ultra-peripheral municipalities according to the Istat classification of internal areas". *Focus Statistics*. Rome, Italy: Istat. <u>https://www.istat.it/it/archivio/273176</u>.

¹⁹ Rural areas or sparsely populated areas according to the Eurostat classification of municipalities by degree of urbanisation (DEGURBA). <u>https://www.istat.it/it/archivio/156224</u>.

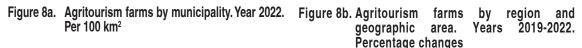
²⁰ Population resident in peripheral and ultra-peripheral municipalities (inland areas) as at 31/12/2020; population resident in municipalities up to 5 thousand inhabitants and population resident in rural or sparsely populated areas according to the DEGURBA classification at 31/12/2022.

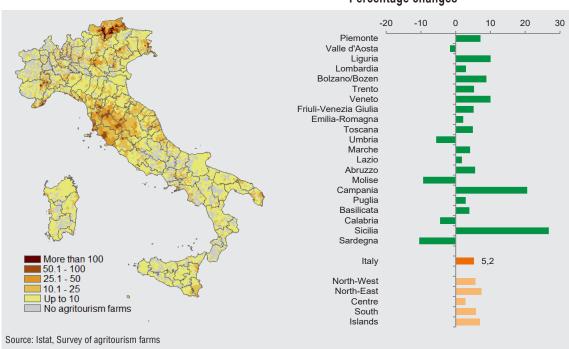
²¹ Territorial density of museum structures, weighted by the number of visitors. For each region and each year, the number of visitors is divided by the national average value (visitors/facilities). The value obtained is then compared to the territorial area. Therefore, the Italian value of the indicator corresponds to a simple territorial density (average number of structures per 100 km²), whereas regional values could be defined as an average number of structures per 100 km².



The growth of agritourism continues, without interruption from the pandemic crisis

In 2022, the number of agritourism farms is still growing (+1.8% compared to the previous year and +5.2% compared to 2019). The average annual growth rate has been 3.8% since 2004²², and their presence on the territory is constantly growing: the municipalities that host at least one agritourism farm are more than 5 thousand (almost 64% of the total) and their number rises, on average, by 2.2% per year since 2004. However, there are strong concentrations in some areas, particularly in Toscana and in the Autonomous Province of Bolzano, where more than a third of these farms are located (Figure 8a). These regions, together with Liguria and Umbria, are also those where the proportion of agritourism farms to the total number of farms is far higher than the national average²³, and where agritourism probably contributes more to the value added of local agriculture - given that the output of agritourism farms²⁴ has grown by 4.2% on average per year since 2004, while the average growth of the entire agricultural sector was 0.5% per year.





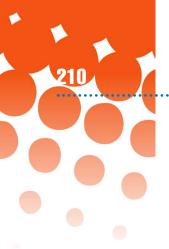
In 2022 there are 8.6 agritourism farms in Italy every 100 km², but much higher densities are found in the Centre (16.1) and in the North-East (12). Among the regions, values well above the Italian average are observed in Marche (12), Liguria and Umbria (between 13 and 16), but above

²² Starting year of the dedicated statistical survey.

²³ Values ≥ 2 of a specialisation ratio calculated in each region as $(A_{ti}/A_t) / (A_{gi}/A_g)$, where Ati is the number of agritourism companies in the region and A_t is the corresponding national total, A_{gi} is the number of agricultural businesses in the region and A_g is the corresponding national total.

²⁴ The value of farm production also includes the value of the production of recreational and social activities, educational farms and other minor activities, part of the services provided by companies.





all in Toscana (24.5) and in the Autonomous Province of Bolzano, which reaches a maximum of 46.1 farms per 100 km². In the South and Islands, the average value is 4.1 farms per 100 km², with higher values in Campania (6.6), Abruzzo (5.4) and Puglia (4.9). In general, the regions with the highest densities also show a strong growth in agritourism farms in 2022: +6.6% compared to the previous year in Liguria, +4.8% in the Autonomous Province of Bolzano, +4.7% in Toscana. In comparison with the 2019 pre-pandemic benchmark, however, the highest growth rates are found in South and Islands regions (+20.6% in Campania, +26.8% in Sicilia), where agritourism still has much room for growth (Figure 8b). Like the peripheral museum heritage, agritourism farms also represent a valuable resource to counteract the abandonment and economic decline of inland areas. More than 80% of the farms are located in hill or mountain areas and, compared to 2019, their number is growing in both altitude zones (by 5.3 and 5.8% respectively). Furthermore, the presence of a thriving agritourism offer in a territory can be considered a sign of a widespread recognition of the landscape value in the perception of users and operators: as a factor of well-being by the first ones, as an economic resource by the latter and, consequently, as cultural heritage by local communities. The geography of agritourism shows, in a way, how much such recognition makes the landscape an asset for visitors and residents, regardless of its actual historical or ecological value.

The economic viability of the agritourism farms – which represent about 2% of Italian farms, but achieved in 2022 a value of production equal to 4.4% of the entire agricultural sector – is also evidenced by the diversification of the services offered. The accommodation is provided by about four farms out of five, half of the farms offer restaurant services, 24.3% tasting of their products and 49.6% other activities (hiking, nature observations, sports activities, educational farms, courses, etc.), either on an exclusive basis or in conjunction with other services. This offer of services, together with the assets related to local amenities of the land-scape, cultural and natural heritage, supports a strong growth of the tourist flow, which in 2022 exceeds 4 million arrivals (+35.0% compared to the previous year and +8.5% compared to 2019) with over 15.5 million of presences (+29.2% compared to 2021) and a significant contribution of foreign guests (58.0% of presences, against 47.0% of the previous year).

New entries in the National Register of Historic Rural Landscapes

In 2023, there were five new entries in the National Register of Historic Rural Landscapes and Traditional Agricultural Practices, namely three rural landscapes (*Heroic vineyards of Meana Sardo* and *Agro-silvo-pastoral systems of Marghine-Goceano* in Sardegna, *Terraced landscape and viticulture of the Cinque Terre* in Liguria) and two agricultural practices (*Alberata di Asprinio* and *Vite a raggiera del Taburno*, both in Campania). There are currently 30 historic rural landscapes in 13 regions and six traditional agricultural practices listed in the Register. The most represented region for landscapes is Toscana, with six sites, followed by Veneto and Lazio, both with four sites²⁵.

In 2021, the density of historic parks and gardens (specifically protected by the Cultural Heritage and Landscape Code) is 1.7 m² per 100 m² of built-up area in the Provincial capitals (2.3 in the North, 1.4 in the Centre and 0.9 in South and Islands), with values stable over the last decade.

²⁵ The Register is maintained by the National Observatory for Rural Landscape, established at Mipaaf in 2012. Entries in the Register are made following the evaluation of applications proposed by local players and may be withdrawn when the characteristics that motivated them no longer exist (source: Mipaaf, National Rural Network - data referring to 31/12/2023).



Pressure of mining and guarrying activities at its peak since 2013

After the decline in the 2014-2017 period and the setback in 2020, connected to the effects of the pandemic, the pressure of extractive activities on the landscape is growing again, measured by the intensity of extraction of non-energy mineral resources in units of volume per unit of land area. The value of the indicator calculated at national level stands at 310 m³ per km² in 2021, compared to 274 in the previous year, the highest reached since 2013²⁶ (Figure 9a). In the North-West, the level is significantly higher than in the other areas (437) m³ per km², with a maximum of 598 in Lombardia). In the North-East and the Centre, where average values are close to the national level (respectively 301 and 339 m³ per km²), Umbria shows a more intense extraction activity (483 m³ per km²), as well as Veneto and Lazio (around 415 m³ per km²), while in the South and Islands (241 m³ per km²) the highest values can be found in Molise and Puglia (448 and 378 m³ per km²).

Compared to the previous year, the extraction intensity is increasing in 2021 in almost all regions (by over 20% in Piemonte, Valle d'Aosta, Marche, Puglia, Sicilia and Sardegna) and decreasing only in the Autonomous Province of Trento and Abruzzo. In comparison with the pre-pandemic benchmark (2019), the most significant increases are found in the South and Islands regions (+29.5% in Campania, +22.9% in Basilicata, +21.5% in Sardegna), where, however, there is also a 22.3% drop in Abruzzo. Compared to 2019, the pressure of mining and guarrying activities increased mainly in Valle d'Aosta (by more than 40 %, from 14 to 20 m³ per km²), which remains in the last place among the Italian regions for the value of this indicator (Figure 9b).

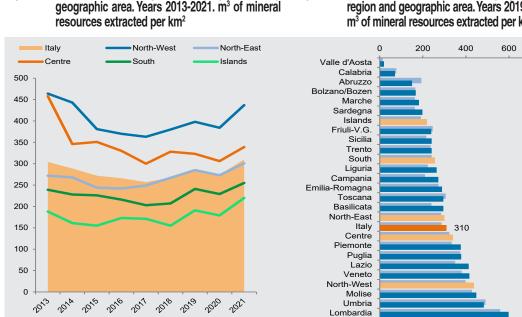


Figure 9a. Pressure from mining and quarrying activities by geographic area. Years 2013-2021. m³ of mineral

Source: Istat, Anthropic pressure and natural hazards

2019

2021

Figure 9b. Pressure from mining and quarrying activities by

region and geographic area. Years 2019 and 2021. m³ of mineral resources extracted per km² 800

²⁶ The indicator is based on the results of the Istat survey Anthropic pressure and natural hazards, with a time series available from 2013.



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For 2022, Eurostat estimates a further increase in the extraction of non-energy minerals, by 2% in the EU-27 countries as a whole and by 8.7% in Italy, compared to 2021²⁷, confirming a renewed growth in the pressure of extractive activities, interrupted only in 2020.

Fires rising in the Centre-North in the record year for drought and high temperatures

In 2022, the impact of forest fires was significantly lower than in the previous year, interrupting a three-year growth phase. Across Italy, approximately 6,500 fires were recorded for a total area of 725.7 km², equal to 2.4 per thousand of the national territory (just under half of 2021, despite a 9% increase in the number of fires)²⁸. In the Centre-North, however, as a result of a particularly dry year with high temperatures²⁹, the proportion of surfaces affected by fire, although more limited, increased significantly compared to 2021 (from 0.3 to 1 per thousand in the North-West, from 0.1 to 0.5 per thousand in the North-East and from 1.6 to 2 per thousand in the Centre). In southern Italy, however, where the values are structurally higher, 2022 marks a clear improvement compared to the previous year, with a proportion falling from 7.4 to 2.3 per thousand in the South and from 17.2 to 7 per thousand in the Islands.

Even in 2022, despite the improvement, the most affected region remains Sicilia with 9.8 per thousand of the regional territory (23.2 in 2021), followed at a long distance by Calabria, Sardegna and Lazio with values around 4 per thousand. Apart from the Autonomous Province of Bolzano, where the incidence of fires was negligible as in 2021, all the regions of central and northern Italy, except Lazio and Marche, recorded an increase in the indicator in 2022, particularly marked in Friuli-Venezia Giulia (from 0.1 to 1.7 per thousand), Toscana (from 0.4 to 1.7 per thousand) and Umbria (from 0.5 to 1.6 per thousand).

Italy's figure is in contrast with the average for the other EU countries in the Mediterranean area, for which 2022 was among the worst years of the last decade for the extent of burnt areas³⁰, second only to 2017 (Figure 10). Throughout the EU-27, fires covered an area of approximately 8,800 km², of which more than 40% were in protected areas of the Natura 2000 network. Even in Italy, almost 25% of the area covered by the fire in 2022 (just under 180 km²) falls within the boundaries of these areas of remarkable value, established to preserve the natural environment and the landscape.

²⁷ Source: Eurostat, *Environmental Statistics: Material Flow Accounts*. Estimates shall relate to the internal extraction of non-energy, metallic and non-metallic minerals, measured in units of mass (tons). The Bes indicator, on the other hand, is measured in units of volume per unit area (m³/km²).

²⁸ Source: Processing of data collected by Arma dei Carabinieri, Forestry, Environmental, Food and Agriculture Unit Command; Valle d'Aosta Forestry Department; Autonomous Province of Bolzano, Forestry Department; Autonomous Province of Trento, Department of Civil Protection, Forestry and Fauna; Friuli-Venezia Giulia Region, Directorate of Agri-food, Forestry and Fish Resources; Sicily Region, Forest Service; Sardinia Region, Forestry and environmental surveillance body.

²⁹ In Italy, 2022 turned out to be the hottest and driest year in the national climate dataset (CNR-ISAC) with new records for the annual average temperature and the annual average of daily maximum and minimum temperatures, and persistent drought, which mainly affected the Central-Northern regions (SNPA, Report 36/2023).

³⁰ Data available since 2006. Source: European Commission Joint Research Centre, Effis - European Forest Fire Information System (2023), Forest fires in Europe, Middle East and North Africa 2022.

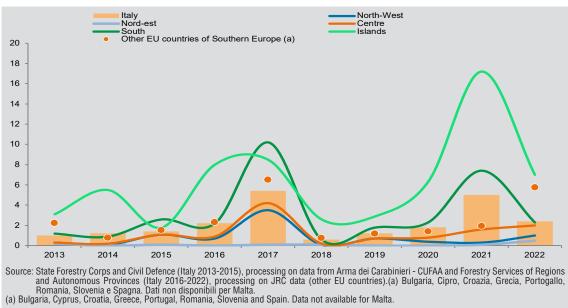


Figure 10. Area covered by forest fires in Italy, by geographic area, and in Southern Europe. Years 2013-2022. Km² per 1,000 km² of total land area

Illegal building rate stable in 2022

Even in 2022, more houses were built than those authorised by the municipalities. According to Cresme estimates³¹, the ratio between new illegal and authorised houses (15.1 every 100)³² is basically unchanged compared to the previous year, as its territorial differences (Figure 11). Illegal building remains a marginal phenomenon in the northern regions, but it still has a significant weight in the rest of the country and especially in the South and Island regions, where the index is much higher (42.1 illegal homes per 100 allowed in the South and 36.3 in the Islands)³³.

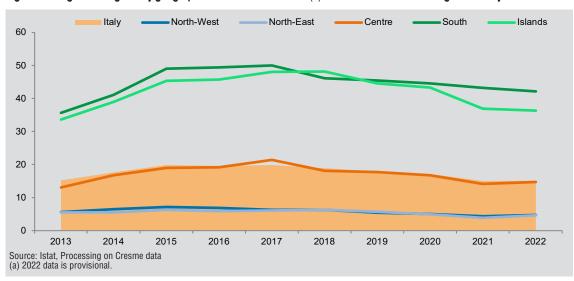


Figure 11. Illegal building rate by geographic area. Years 2013-2022 (a). New unauthorised housing units every 100 authorised

³¹ Centre for Economic, Sociological and Market Research in Construction.

³² The illegal building rate is a flow measure referring to newly built housing units. Therefore, it does not represent the number of illegal buildings compared to the total of buildings available in the territory.

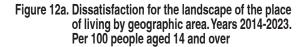
³³ The illegal building rate has no longer been available since 2023, pending a method revision. This paragraph partially reproduces the text published in the previous edition of the Report, for a complete description of the domain.

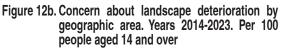


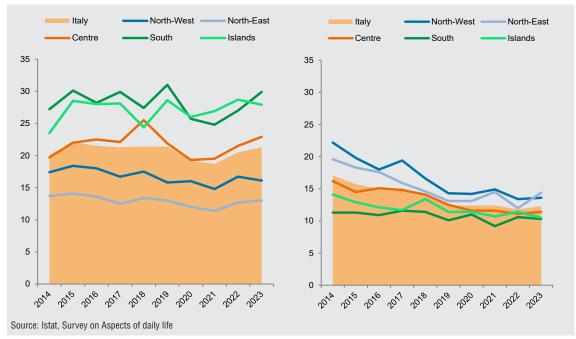
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Worsening of citizens' opinion on landscape quality of the place where they live

In 2023, for the second consecutive year, the percentage of people who express dissatisfaction with the landscape of the place where they live increases slightly, reporting that they live in places "affected by evident degradation" (21.3% of the population aged 14 and over, compared to 18.7% in 2021). Therefore, the transitory nature of the decline observed in the two-year period 2020-2021 is confirmed, when the perception of degradation had probably been downgraded by the experience of the lockdown (Figure 12a). The territorial variability of the indicator remains very marked, while no significant differences are observed in relation to the age, gender or education attainment of the respondents. The share of dissatisfied people is 14.8% in the North, with a minimum of 7.4% in the Autonomous Province of Trento, rises to 22.9% in the Centre and reaches 29.2% in South and Islands, with a maximum of 36.5% in Campania. Compared to the previous year, dissatisfaction with the landscape increases above all in Umbria and Campania (+5.2 percentage points) and to a significant extent also in Abruzzo and in the Autonomous Province of Bolzano (between 3 and 4 points); however, it decreases in Valle d'Aosta and Calabria (by approximately 3.5 points) and even more in Sardegna (-5.7 points).

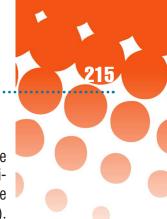






The share of those expressing concern about the deterioration of the landscape remains, instead, substantially stable. This indicator can be read as a measure of social attention paid to the protection of the territory, and in particular to the issue of land consumption³⁴. In 2023, this concern was identified as one of the five most urgent environmental concerns by 12.3% of the population aged 14 years and over, a figure that was broadly stable compared to the previous

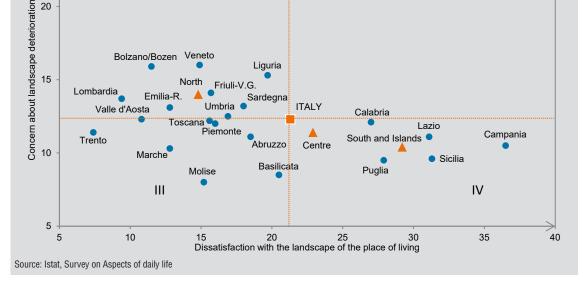
³⁴ The reference question, in the survey on *Aspects of daily life*, relates the deterioration of the landscape to the "excessive construction of buildings".



year (11.8%) and almost identical to that observed from 2019 to 2021, after the slow decline observed from 2013 to 2018³⁵. Compared to the other perception indicator, the territorial variability is lower and has been gradually reduced over the last 10 years, probably also due to the emergence of other environmental issues more represented in the public debate (Figure 12b). Nonetheless, even in this case the geographical distribution follows a clearly legible and almost specular pattern compared to that of dissatisfaction, with generally lower values in South and Islands, and higher in the North (under 10% in Molise, Basilicata, Puglia and Sicilia; above 15% in Liguria, the province of Bolzano and Veneto). A joint representation of the territorial distribution of the two perception indicators, centred on the Italian average (Figure 13), summarises the placement of the regions with respect to the two aspects considered in the relationship between landscape and well-being: the judgement on the guality of places (dissatisfaction) and the attention paid to their protection (concern). The cloud of points stretches along an axis that crosses the second and fourth quadrants while, significantly, no region is located in the first one, where the units with relatively high values of both indicators should be found. This suggests that a widespread perception of degradation weakens social attention to the landscape rather than strengthening it, alienating people from their connection to places. From this perspective, the regions that are located near the point representing the average value of the North (almost all those of the North, plus Umbria and Toscana) can be considered to be in a better situation than those around the South and Islands point (Puglia, Calabria, Lazio, Sicilia and Campania), characterised by very high dissatisfaction values and medium or low concern values. Finally, in more eccentric positions, but still united by relatively low values of both indicators, there are Abruzzo. Molise, Marche, Basilicata and the Autonomous Province of Trento.



Figure 13. Concern about landscape deterioration and Dissatisfaction with the landscape of the place of living, by region and geographic area. Year 2023. Per 100 people aged 14 and over



35 The indicator is calculated on the basis of a question from the Istat Survey Aspects of Daily Life, which lists 14 "environmental problems", among which respondents must indicate those (up to five) "that worry them most". The most frequently reported concerns are related to climate change and air pollution, expressed by more than 50% of the population







- Current expenditure of Municipalities on culture: Current expenditure for protection and promotion of landscape and cultural heritage and activities in euro per capita.
 Source: Istat - Processing of data from Final balance sheets of Municipalities, Provinces and Metropolitan areas
- 2. Density and importance of musems' heritage: Number of permanent exhibition facilities per 100 sq.km (museums, archaeological sites, and monuments open to public), weighed by the number of visitors. The weight of each facility is equal to Vi / (V/M), where Vi is the number of visitors to the facility, M is the total number of facilities and V is the total number of visitors. Source: Istat - Survey on museums and other cultural institutions
- Illegal building rate: Ratio of the number of unauthorised buildings built in the reference year to the number of building permits issued by the Municipalities.

Source: Center for social, economic and market research for building and the territory (Cresme)

4. Erosion of farmland from urban sprawl: Percentage ratio of rural areas affected by urban sprawl to the total of rural areas ("rural areas affected by urban sprawl": rural areas with increasing population and decreasing agricultural land).

Source: Istat - Processing of data from General Census on Agriculture, General Census on Population and Housing, Census Mapping

5. Erosion of farmland from abandonment: Percentage ratio of abandoned rural areas to the total of rural areas ("abandoned rural areas": rural areas with decreasing population and decreasing agricultural land).

Source: Istat - Processing of data from General Census on Agriculture, General Census on Population and Housing, Census Mapping

6. Pressures of mining and quarrying activities: Volume of non-energy mineral resources extracted (cubic metres) per sq.km.

Source: Istat - Anthropic pressure and natural hazards. Mining and quarrying extraction activities

Impact of forest fires: Burnt forest area (wooded and non-wooded) per 1,000 sq.km.

Source: Istat - Processing of data from Carabinieri Command of Forestry, Environmental and Agri-food Protection Units; Valle d'Aosta Forestry Corps; Autonomous Province of Bolzano, Forestry Service; Autonomous Province of Trento, Department of Civil Defence, Forestry and Wildlife; Friuli-Venezia Giulia Region, Directorate for Agri-food, Forestry and Fishery Resources; Sicilian Region, Command of Forestry Corps; Sardegna Region, Forestry and Environmental Surveillance Corps

 Spread of agritourism farms: Number of farmhouses per 100 sq.km.

Source: Istat - Survey on farmhouses

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- 9. Density of Historic Parks/Gardens: Percentage ratio of the area of parks and gardens classified as "historic" and/or "of a significant public interest" by the Legislative Decree no. 42/2004 to the total area of the provincial capital Municipalities. Source: Istat Processing of data from Survey on urban environmental data and Census Mapping
- 10. Dissatisfaction with the landscape of the place of living: Proportion of population reporting that the landscape of the place where they live is affected by evident deterioration. Source: Istat - Survey on Aspects of daily life
- 11. Concern about landscape deterioration: Proportion of population reporting, among the environmental problems for which they express more concern, the decay of landscape due to overbuilding.

Source: Istat - Survey on Aspects of daily life





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Indicators by region and geographic area

REGIONS Geographic Areas	Current expenditure of Municipalities on culture (a))	Density and importance of musems' heritage (b)	Illegal building rate (c)	Erosion of farmland from urban sprawl (d)	Erosion of farmland from abandonment (d)	Pressures of mining and quarrying activities (e)	
	2021	2022	2022	2011	2011	2021	
Piemonte	18.6	1.1	4.2	18.5	41.4	376	
Valle d'Aosta/Vallée d'Aoste	22.8	1.5	4.2	-	66.5	20	
Liguria	26.7	0.9	6.4	31.8	57.4	264	
Lombardia	21.6	1.6	4.7	24.0	31.0	598	
Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol	49.0	0.9	3.3	-	28.4	201	
Bolzano/Bozen	57.0	0.8		-	31.3	167	
Trento	41.0	0.9		-	24.9	241	
Veneto	20.4	1.9	5.3	56.9	23.1	416	
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	36.4	1.2	3.3	7.0	54.2	239	
Emilia-Romagna	33.7	1.2	4.2	27.0	42.6	289	
Toscana	28.6	3.3	6.8	14.2	47.7	295	
Umbria	17.1	0.9	10.9	8.3	50.0	483	
Marche	22.9	0.6	10.9	14.7	38.8	182	
Lazio	21.4	6.1	20.0	53.6	15.4	413	
Abruzzo	8.8	0.2	30.0	16.3	43.1	150	
Molise	5.7	0.1	30.0	6.9	74.4	448	
Campania	2.7	3.5	50.4	29.6	34.2	272	
Puglia	6.9	0.2	34.8	33.1	17.1	378	
Basilicata	7.1	0.1	54.1	14.5	38.2	295	
Calabria	5.8	0.2	54.1	22.0	54.3	71	
Sicilia	8.3	0.9	48.2	16.9	29.5	241	
Sardegna	28.0	0.3	22.5	6.5	27.1	198	
North	24.9	1.3	4.6	24.3	37.5	366	
North-West	21.3	1.3	4.7	20.9	40.0	437	
North-East	29.8	1.3	4.6	27.4	35.2	301	
Centre	23.5	3.4	14.7	25.1	37.0	339	
South and Islands	7.7	0.7	40.2	18.8	34.2	241	
South	5.2	0.8	42.1	23.6	38.1	255	
Islands	13.2	0.6	36.3	11.8	28.3	220	
Italy	18.8	1.5	15.1	22.2	36.1	310	

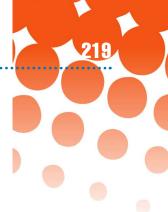
(a) Euros per capita.

(b) Number of museums and similar facilities per 100 km², weighed by the number of visitors.

(c) Illegal buildings per 100 authorised buildings (Provisional data). Values for Piemonte and Valle d'Aosta, Trentino-Alto Adige and Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Umbria and Marche, AAbruzzo and Molise, Basilicata and Calabria refer to the two regions as a whole.

(d) Percentage of total land area.

(e) Cubic metres extracted per km² of total land area. Data for Calabria are provisional and refer to 2020.



Impact of forest fires (f)	Spread of agritourism farms (g)	Density of Historic Parks/Gardens (h)	Dissatisfaction with the landscape of the place of living (i)	Concern about landscape deterioration (i)
2022	2022	2021	2023	2023
1.0	5.6	3.8	16.0	12.0
0.3	1.8	0.9	10.8	12.3
2.2	13.8	1.0	19.7	15.3
0.7	7.3	2.8	15.7	14.1
0.1	28.7	0.3	9.4	13.6
	46.1	0.3	11.5	15.9
0.3	8.0	0.3	7.4	11.4
0.6	8.8	2.4	14.9	16.0
1.7	9.0	6.0	9.4	13.7
0.2	5.4	0.6	12.8	13.1
1.7	24.5	1.3	15.6	12.2
1.6	15.3	4.2	16.9	12.5
0.1	12.0	1.4	12.8	10.3
3.8	7.6	1.0	31.1	11.1
0.3	5.4	0.9	18.5	11.1
0.8	2.6	0.1	15.2	8.0
2.7	6.6	1.7	36.5	10.5
2.3	4.9	0.6	27.9	9.5
1.8	2.1	0.2	20.5	8.5
4.3	3.6	0.5	27.0	12.1
9.8	3.8	1.2	31.3	9.6
4.0	3.2	0.3	18.0	13.2
0.7	9.5	2.3	14.8	14.0
1.0	6.8	2.8	16.1	13.6
0.5	12.0	1.9	13.0	14.4
2.0	16.1	1.4	22.9	11.4
4.2	4.1	0.9	29.2	10.4
2.3	4.5	0.9	29.9	10.3
7.0	3.5	1.0	27.9	10.5
2.4	8.6	1.7	21.3	12.3

(f) Area covered by forest fires, values per 1,000 km².

(g) Number of farms per 100 km².
(h) Square metres per 100 m² of built-up area.

(i) Per 100 people of 14 years and over.