acquedotto pugliese

l'acqua, bene comune

Press kit

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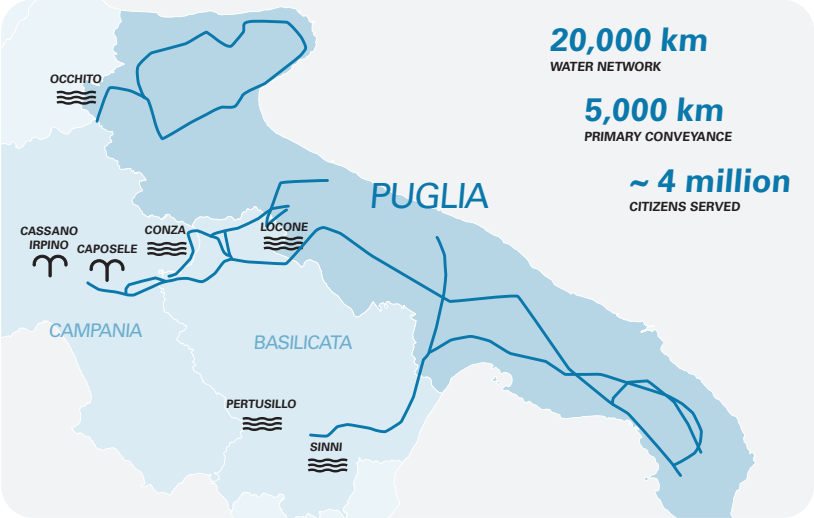
A nationally strategic company

Acquedotto Pugliese SpA (AQP) is a public utility with over a century of service to the region and one of the leading players in integrated water services management in Europe. The system AQP operates is a one-of-a-kind undertaking in terms of scale, complexity and interconnectedness, and the company has been formally recognised by an Act of Parliament as being of "strategic relevance to the national interest".

Serving 4 million people

AQP manages the integrated water service in Puglia and in 12 municipalities in Campania, serving a total of more than 4 million people across an area of 20,000 square kilometres encompassing two Optimal Territorial Areas (ATOs), including the ATO Puglia — one of the largest in Italy.



34,000 kilometers of network

The network spans more than 20,000 kilometres of water infrastructure (including 5,000 km of primary transmission mains), over 5,000 km of service connections, 1,500 assets including reservoirs, distribution chambers and pumping stations, as well as 14,000 kilometres of sewer network and 700 pumping stations. The company also operates 5 drinking water treatment plants across three regions (Fortore, Sinni, Pertusillo, Locone and Conza della Campania), 10 analytical laboratories, 185 wastewater treatment plants, 56 water reclamation facilities and 1 composting plant for the processing of sewage sludge and the organic fraction of municipal solid waste.

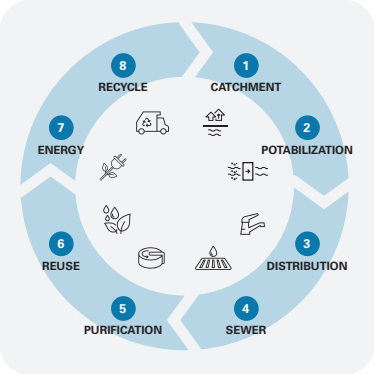
Investing in communities and territory

In 2025, Acquedotto Pugliese once again demonstrated its role as a catalyst for the local economy. Over the past three years, capital investment has reached a combined total of €1.46 billion,

of which €532.9 million was deployed in 2025 alone. These figures place AQP among the leading operators in the sector, with an average investment of €138 per capita — well above the national average and in line with the best-performing European utilities — underscoring the company's capacity to drive development in the communities it serves.

The integrated water cycle

Acquedotto Pugliese manages every stage of the integrated water cycle: from abstraction, treatment and distribution of drinking water through to sewerage services, wastewater treatment and the potential reuse of treated effluents.
The geological nature of the region's soil and subsoil has never permitted the natural accumulation or storage of water.



A one-of-a-kind national system

AQP operates a complex and advanced supply system built around six interlocking water schemes — Sele-Calore, Pertusillo, Sinni, Fortore, Locone and Ofanto — whose defining feature is a high degree of interconnection, making it unique in Italy.

Water resources are drawn from springs in Campania, from surface abstraction at artificial reservoirs and from deep aquifers via boreholes.

The interconnected design allows water to be transferred between schemes in response to changing demand patterns and varying output levels across different sources.

The Main Canal

The backbone of the Sele-Calore scheme is the Main Canal, a remarkable feat of hydraulic engineering stretching 244 kilometres and incorporating 99 tunnels and 91 aqueduct bridges.



Built between 1906 and 1918, the canal crosses the Apennine and Murge massifs, reaching Puglia near Monte Fellone in the province of Brindisi, where it supplies more than 25% of the entire region's water needs.

The Taranto desalination plant

The expertise accumulated over more than a century of water management drives AQP's approach to technological innovation, including its response to the need to diversify supply sources and safeguard aquifers. Pursuing this goal, AQP is constructing a reverse osmosis desalination plant in Taranto, part-funded by Italy's National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR), with commissioning scheduled for 2027. The facility has a production capacity of approximately 55,400 m³/day of drinking water, the equivalent of the daily water needs of more than 385,000 people.

Water quality



AQP maintains a strong commitment to water quality. In 2025, approximately 1.7 million chemical and microbiological parameters were monitored across around 55,000 samples.

Digital twin and Control Room

AQP's Control Room — the company's new digital nerve centre — uses data-driven strategies to generate predictive analytics for loss reduction, targeted maintenance management and end-to-end tracking of customer service requests. It runs the Smart Water Management platform, AQP's integrated digital operations programme drawing on Geographic Information Systems (GIS), the Internet of Things (IoT), Workforce Management (WFM), network modelling, Business Intelligence (BI) and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to create a digital twin that enables operators to simulate network manoeuvres and forecast their effects.

The Control Room harnesses data from AQP's single interconnected system (570,000 interconnections) to enable water allocation responsive to shifting demand — increasingly difficult to predict due to climate change and frequent drought periods — using technology to drive a more sustainable and circular system.

Around 11,000 sensors enable remote monitoring of 1,544 water installations across the primary, secondary and urban distribution network, 129 pumping stations, 101 wastewater treatment plants and 105 meters for large users. Integrated control systems and devices allow continuous supervision of flow across the water schemes, energy monitoring and key potability and treatment indicators, with the capacity for immediate response to anomalies and more efficient resource management.

The technology also enables automated remote regulation of flows across most of the network. AQP has developed the use of underwater drones for video inspection of the Main Canal, as

> Watch the video about AQP's Control Room (ITA): https://go.aqp.it/CR



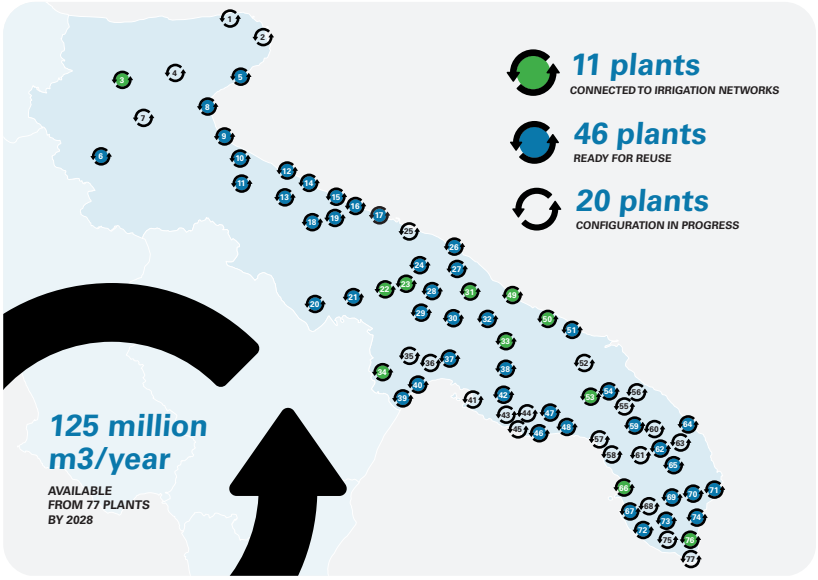
well as remotely operated robots for cleaning sewage pumping station tanks and wastewater treatment facilities, in addition to the well-established programme of inspection and maintenance work in the long-distance transmission mains.

Wastewater treatment: setting the standard

The absence of major rivers in Puglia means AQP must meet more stringent treatment standards than most other utilities in Italy — a challenge met daily through ongoing investment in state-of-the-art wastewater treatment infrastructure.

AQP operates 185 wastewater treatment plants using advanced, sustainable technologies. Eleven of them currently supply reclaimed water for agricultural irrigation: Acquaviva delle Fonti, Cassano delle Murge, Castellana Grotte, Corsano, Fasano-Forcatella, Gallipoli, Martina Franca, Ostuni, San Pancrazio Salentino, San Severo and Ginosa. For each of these facilities, AQP — one of the first utilities in Italy to do so — has developed Environmental and Health Risk Management Plans as required under national and European water reuse legislation. AQP has combined the qualitative risk assessment required by the regulations with a quantitative assessment based on three years of water quality data, a dual approach that enhances the plan's predictive and preventive capacity.

A further 46 plants managed by AQP are already equipped with water reclamation systems: as irrigation operators progressively complete distribution connections, these facilities will be able to meet increasing agricultural water demand. AQP also has works under way that will enable a further 20 treatment plants to supply reclaimed water by 2028.



In total, the AQP-managed plants currently supplying water for reuse, those already configured to do so and those that will be ready by 2028 amount to 77 out of 185, with a reclaimed water volume of approximately 125 million m³/year out of 250 million m³ treated overall.

Twenty-nine plants discharge to land via drainage trenches, subject to the most stringent emission limits in current regulations, with consistently positive results that have led to the creation of new green areas.



A notable case is the constructed wetland at Melendugno (LE): covering approximately eight hectares, with five hectares of open water and six phyto-treatment/lagooning basins, it is one of the largest facilities of its kind in Italy. Constructed wetlands offer an alternative to conventional treatment systems, with advantages both in economic terms (reduced electricity consumption, lower operating costs) and environmental terms (elimination of disinfection treatments and associated by-products, better integration into the landscape). The project won first place at the 2011 national Pianeta Acqua award, promoted by the National Forum for Water Conservation and Savings.

Italy's cleanest sea

AQP's commitment to wastewater treatment is also reflected in the outstanding condition of the Apulian coastline. In 2026, for the sixth consecutive year, Puglia ranked first in Italy for bathing water quality, with 99.9% of sites rated excellent in microbiological analyses conducted by SNPA, the national environmental protection network coordinating regional environmental agencies.

100% sludge recovery

With the aim of reducing sewage sludge volumes, AQP has purchased 66 high-performance mechanical dewatering units and is completing a new contract for the installation of a further 57 machines. It has also begun construction of solar drying greenhouses for natural sludge desiccation at 13 wastewater treatment plants: the greenhouses — a sustainable choice running entirely on solar energy — will increase the dry solids content of the sludge to at least 75%, significantly reducing the volumes requiring transport and disposal.

Sludge is also a resource. The biogas produced at 37 treatment plants is used in cogeneration units to generate both electricity and heat, with further plants coming on stream by the end of 2026. Bisulphate production — an organic fertiliser and soil amendment already operational at Foggia and Barletta with an annual capacity of 5,000 tonnes — is set to expand with eight additional plants planned. Agricultural soil amendment production is also handled by AQP's subsidiary ASECO.

Thanks to these investments, in 2025 100% of the 167,197 tonnes of sewage sludge produced was sent to recovery facilities.

ASECO

ASECO S.p.A. is an associate company of Acquedotto Pugliese SpA, subject to joint analogous control by AQP and AGER Puglia — the Apulian Regional Agency for Waste Management. ASECO operates the composting plant at Marina di Ginosa in the province of Taranto. In 2025, it accepted over 22,000 tonnes of sludge suitable for recovery.

Energy efficiency and renewables

AQP has made sustained, structured investment in developing its renewable energy generation capacity and reducing dependence on external energy supplies. In 2025, total production reached 9.41 GWh — entirely from renewable sources — representing 1.78% of the company's overall energy consumption.
During the year, AQP completed three photovoltaic installations and the revamping of two hydroelectric plants, adding a combined capacity of 5.4 MW. The Conza della Campania photovoltaic plant — 1.6 MW installed, expected annual output of 2.3 GWh



— is the first AQP site to achieve annual energy self-sufficiency, with the surplus fed into the grid through a remote self-consumption configuration. At Parco del Marchese, the upgraded 2.6 MW installation produces around 3.6 GWh per year, all self-consumed on site by the pumping station. The Gioia Opera 3 and 3bis hydroelectric plants, fitted with new 300 kW turbines each, have increased their annual generation.

The extended monitoring programme covering all phases of the integrated water service enabled AQP to renew, for the third consecutive three-year period, its ISO 50001:2018 energy management certification.

Driving territorial development

AQP's direct economic impact on the region is equally significant. In 2025, 185 contracts were awarded with a combined value of €590 million. Over the past three years, contract awards have totalled more than €2.7 billion, making AQP the leading public contracting authority in southern Italy. Approximately half of all active contracts are awarded to local businesses.

Innovation and ecological transition

AQP's actions are set against the backdrop of a global response to the climate crisis. In pursuit of its goal to safeguard water resources and improve their use, the company delivered significant results on its water balance in 2025: total abstraction from sources fell by 21 Mm³ (-4.26% on 2024), while the volume produced by drinking water treatment plants increased by 12.77 Mm³ (+4.95%).

Through operational and infrastructure innovation, AQP today meets the water needs of more than 4 million people while abstracting approximately 117 million cubic metres less from the



environment each year than it did in 2009 — the equivalent of a mid-sized reservoir.

Digitalisation

AQP is implementing an ambitious digitalisation programme spanning multiple operational areas, with the aim of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of internal processes, customer services and sustainability initiatives. Central to this is the creation of a Smart Water Grid for intelligent water resource management, integrating IT and IoT services. The programme is organised around four key workstreams: Digital Journey, aimed at streamlining and structuring operational processes and improving real-time data visibility through enterprise technology; Customer Centricity, focused on delivering positive digital experiences for customers and improving service quality; IT Stable Operation, designed to strengthen the technology infrastructure for operational continuity, compliance and cybersecurity; and Smart AI, which introduces artificial intelligence tools to make business applications more intelligent and efficient, accelerating problem resolution and simplifying critical processes.

This digitalisation programme enables AQP to improve operational efficiency and deliver a high-quality service to its customers, in full compliance with ARERA's regulatory standards.

Smart meters e smart grid



Also under way is a programme to replace one million smart meters — a strategic project to upgrade the entire meter estate with the latest generation of digital devices, at no cost to customers. The aim is to achieve continuous reading capable of flagging consumption variations and potential anomalies, enabling greater analytical capacity. Meters are georeferenced and uniquely identified, allowing them to communicate with the network and support optimised water distribution.

To date, the project has achieved significant milestones, with over 190,000 meters replaced in the provinces of Brindisi and Taranto and over 180,000 in the province of Bari. The fixed-network LoRaWAN remote reading infrastructure, live in Brindisi and Taranto with operational data since October 2024 and progressively being extended across the territory, is already delivering tangible benefits to the billing process, with a steady reduction

in estimated readings and associated disputes. Network acquisition continuity averages above 88%, with peaks exceeding 97%. Data collected via remote reading will feed new digital services for greater consumer awareness — including a web service providing access to at least weekly consumption data — and will open up significant prospects for digital transformation towards a smart water grid.

Financial results

The 2025 financial statements report a net profit of €12.8 million. Under the company's Articles of Association, net profit is reinvested in the continuous improvement of the water system and in support of capital expenditure. In 2025, total production value reached €731.2 million and EBITDA stood at €269.3 million.

Sustainability

Since 2021, Acquedotto Pugliese has been a signatory to the UN Global Compact, the international initiative committing companies worldwide to ten principles covering human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption, and aligned with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN 2030 Agenda.

> Visit the website (ITA): https://reportsostenibilita.aqp.it/

In the same year, AQP established a Sustainability Committee to support the Board of Directors in defining strategies, objectives and action plans relating to environmental, social and economic sustainability; to promote the integration of ESG factors into decision-making, infrastructure and resource management, including water stewardship; and to oversee non-financial reporting, performance indicator monitoring and the identification and assessment of material topics.

The 2025–2026 Sustainability Plan is aligned with the UN 2030 Agenda, with recent EU sustainability reporting legislation and with ESRS guidelines. It is structured around 10 intervention areas, 24 objectives and 74 actions, following three main pillars corresponding to the ESG factors — Environmental, Social and Governance.

From July 2024, AQP's sustainability reports, initiatives, policies and programmes are available at reportsostenibilita.aqp.it, a dynamic online platform updated on an ongoing basis with ESG content and insights, including the 2025 Integrated Report.

The Acquedottisti: AQP's people

The Acquedottisti — as AQP's employees proudly call themselves — number more than 2,240 and each contributes, in their own specific role, to the sound management of water in all its dimensions. Every member of staff holds a permanent contract. Talent

development draws on a commitment to individual uniqueness, inclusion and continuous learning: in 2025, over 138,000 hours of training were delivered, approximately 62 per person.

The company's long-standing inclusion policies are reflected in a number of meaningful figures: women make up 21.3% of the workforce — three percentage points above the industrial sector average — and 57% of female employees are under 50. AQP is committed to ensuring gender pay equity and adopts recruitment and professional development policies aimed at equal opportunity.

Acquedotto Pugliese publishes an annual Gender Balance Report — now in its third edition for 2025 — and holds gender equality certification under UNI PdR 125, due for renewal in 2026.

> Browse the 2025 Gender Report (ITA): https://go.aqp.it/Genere

The only utility with 2 Olympic gold medals



Among AQP's distinguished employees is Francesco Martino, born in Bari in 1900. In July 1924 he achieved the extraordinary feat of winning two gold medals at the Paris Olympics: one in the individual rings event (the first Italian ever to do so) and one in the team gymnastics competition — a source of pride for the country, for southern Italy, for Bari and for Acquedotto Pugliese, where he worked until 1960.

> Watch the video about Francesco Martino (ITA): https://go.aqp.it/Martino

Martino was hired as a motor mechanic at the Autonomous Authority of the Apulian Aqueduct in February 1924 — a date that puts paid to the legend that he was taken on in recognition of his Parisian triumphs. In 1925 he was transferred to the accounts office; in 1945 he was promoted to skilled road maintenance mechanic; in 1952 to chief custodian. Throughout it all, and despite training sessions and competitions across Italy and beyond, Martino never once neglected his duties at work.

Acquedotto Pugliese preserves the memory of its Olympic champion as part of its cultural heritage: Martino's two medals, a testament to determination and pride, continue to embody the spirit and values of the company.

International activities

> Browse the 2025 Innovation and International Activities Report (ITA): https://go.aqp.it/Innovazione



AQP's international activities are centred on the Mediterranean basin and the Balkans, where the company serves as a point of reference for cooperation on sustainable water management, contributing to the development of international water policy and delivering specialist training.

Among the ongoing European collaboration initiatives is CrossWater+, an Interreg IPA programme in which AQP acts as lead beneficiary alongside Tirana Water and Wastewater Utility (Albania) and the Montenegrin Regional Water Authority (PE RWMC), with the aim of jointly developing new infrastructure, technologies and monitoring and measurement systems. The Re-Water project also merits particular mention: recognised as a "Flagship Project" by Italy's Agency for Territorial Cohesion, it was selected in 2025 as one of 25 finalists for the European Commission's RegioStars Awards — the competition for the best EU cohesion-funded projects — out of 266 submissions.

In support of developing countries, AQP provides technical assistance, technology transfer and advanced training through the International Water School, in partnership with UNIDO ITPO. In 2025, the company was also admitted as a member of GWOPA (the Global Water Operators' Partnerships Alliance, a UN-Habitat initiative), under which it has submitted a technical cooperation project proposal for Ethiopia in partnership with SMAT Torino and Hydroaid.

On the international membership front, AQP has been the first Italian company to join the World Water Council since 2024. In 2025, it also joined Water Europe, the leading European multi-stakeholder platform for water innovation and research, with its own experts admitted to the organisation's thematic working groups.

The Waterway



AQP promotes sustainability through green infrastructure and new models of slow tourism. The Acquedotto Pugliese Waterway is a unique route running along the Main Canal — a "hidden river" through Puglia's evocative Mediterranean scrubland and trulli landscape — designed to extend over the 500 kilometres con-

necting the springs of Caposele (AV) to Santa Maria di Leuca (LE). The project is in full construction: more than 127 kilometres are already open to cyclists, while work is actively under way on the northern stretch from Spinazzola to Cisternino, financed with over €42 million in PNRR funds and regional and national resources. Further sections — towards Bari and along the southern route to Nardò — are at tender or planning stage.

Certifications

Acquedotto Pugliese operates an Integrated Management System certified to international standards across Quality (ISO 9001), Environment (ISO 14001), Energy (ISO 50001), Occupational Health and Safety (ISO 45001), Information Security (ISO/IEC 27001), Gender Equality (UNI PdR 125) and Training (UNI ISO 21001). In 2025, the AQP Group once again confirmed the effectiveness of its Integrated Management System, maintaining and consolidating all certifications, issued by Bureau Veritas and accredited by Accredia.

Training and the AQP Water Academy

The wealth of professional expertise accumulated over more than a century at Acquedotto Pugliese led to the establishment of the AQP Water Academy — the company's centre of excellence for culture and training in integrated water service management.

In 2025, the Academy consolidated its strategic role in supporting the professional, technical and cultural development of AQP's people, obtaining UNI ISO 21001:2019 certification for its education management systems. The Academy operates at local, national and international level: 2025 activities included the organisation of a short course on Waste Water Treatment and Smart Management in collaboration with CIHEAM Bari and the Polytechnic University of Bari, attended by students from five Mediterranean countries.

Customer relations

Acquedotto Pugliese provides its customers with a multi-channel service and contract management system that combines a physical presence on the territory with advanced digital tools, in full compliance with ARERA's quality standards.

In person, AQP operates through 13 Front Offices and an Online Municipal Counter network, where customers can request information and handle commercial queries. The CodaQ app is available to minimise waiting times by allowing customers to book their place in the queue in advance.

Digitally, the MyAQP area (my.aqp.it), accessible via web and a dedicated smartphone app, gives customers a single point of access for full management of their service contract: from viewing

bills and consumption data to handling payments and payment plans, from self-reading to paperless billing, through to activating services such as high-consumption alerts and the social water bonus.

The commercial contact centre, staffed by specialist teams, provides structured, continuous management of customer requests, with all interactions tracked in the company's CRM system to ensure quality and transparency in response times.

AQP has also promoted the "Acqua che Ascolta" ('Water that Listens') initiative, using the Pedius app to enable customers with hearing impairments to communicate with Customer Services. AQP supports and promotes the use of PagoPA, the national platform for electronic payments to public administrations and publicly controlled entities.

Customer experience

In December 2025, as part of its ongoing customer listening programme, 18,821 customers were invited to take part in the "Water Quality" survey. Among those who responded, 76% reported a positive perception of AQP's commitment and expressed satisfaction with the company's reliability and the quality of the water supplied. The survey also revealed growing customer awareness of water sustainability and climate change issues.

In 2025, AQP also carried out a structured Customer Satisfaction survey, conducted by an independent research firm, covering a sample of over 2,400 customers across all service provinces and customer segments.

The overall Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) stands at 90.9, broadly in line with the previous 2023 survey and well above the national average for the integrated water sector (74.4). The Overall score — measuring whether AQP meets or exceeds customer expectations — reaches 94% among residential customers, compared with a national average of 77.2%. The share of customers drinking tap water also continues to rise: 57.1% of residential customers do so regularly or occasionally, up from 52% in the previous survey.

History and development

Serving the Mezzogiorno

The history of Acquedotto Pugliese is closely bound up with the story of southern Italy, where the utility has played — and continues to play — a fundamental role in economic and social modernisation.

The idea of building an aqueduct to bring water from the highlands of Irpinia to Puglia was born from the vision of engineer Camillo Rosalba and the perseverance of local politicians such as the MP Matteo Renato Imbriani.

On 26 June 1902, the Kingdom of Italy passed Law No. 245 "for the construction and operation of the Apulian Aqueduct".

The first international tender

Through an international competitive tender — the first of its kind — construction began in 1906 on a canal stretching over 200 kilometres across the Apennines to carry water from the springs of the River Sele to Puglia, providing employment for more than 20,000 workers.

On 24 April 1915, running water reached Bari for the first time, flowing symbolically from the fountain in Piazza Umberto I. The occasion, celebrated with great emotion across the region, marked the dawn of a new era for Puglia and its neighbouring territories.

Autonomous Authority for the Apulian Aqueduct

In 1919, the original Consortium was transformed into the Autonomous Authority for the Apulian Aqueduct, with a mandate to accelerate the construction of pipelines and sewer networks and provide for their maintenance.

Running water reached Foggia in 1924 and Lecce in 1927. By the 1930s and 1940s, water had arrived in the homes of more than 350,000 Apulian residents — no longer just filling public fountains, but flowing into bathrooms that were appearing in homes for the first time.

The Palace of Water

Around the same time, work began on a building to serve as a permanent tribute to Puglia's conquest of water. The story of this undertaking, written in stone, was brought to life with remarkable artistry by Duilio Cambellotti, a Roman artist of international standing, through an extraordinary collection of murals, sculptures, furniture and decorative works.

Nearly 3,000 visitors a year

> Watch the video The origin of the future (ENG): https://go.aqp.it/Future



Located in the heart of Bari, the Palace of Water has become part of Italy's artistic heritage and is today one of the most visited cultural sites in the city, welcoming nearly 3,000 visitors annually.

An integrated network system

By the 1970s, Acquedotto Pugliese had grown into a complex integrated system of water supply infrastructure drawing on both spring and reservoir sources. In 1974, the Pertusillo aqueduct came into operation, extending service to Taranto, followed almost simultaneously by the Fortore aqueduct serving the northern part of the region. These years also saw the construction of the first drinking water treatment plants for the processing of reservoir water.

Incorporation as a joint-stock company

In July 1999, AQP was incorporated as a joint-stock company (SpA). In January 2002, the government transferred ownership of the Aqueduct to the Puglia and Basilicata regions. In 2011, Basilicata transferred its shares to the Puglia Region, which became the sole owner of AQP.

Nationally strategic company

Under Law No. 191 of 13 December 2024, the Italian State formally recognised Acquedotto Pugliese as a company of "strategic relevance to the national interest".

In-house company from 2026

The current ownership structure sees 80% of shares held by the Puglia Region, with the remaining 20% in the process of being transferred to Apulian municipalities. This configuration allowed the Apulian Water Authority (AIP) to award AQP the management of the integrated water service in Puglia for a further 20 years from 2026, under an in-house providing arrangement.

At a glance
AQP in numbers

Chairman and Chief Executive Officer	**Roberto Venneri**
Total production value	**€731.2 million***
Net profit	**€12.8 million***
Capital investment	**€532.9 million***
Contracts awarded	**185 contracts worth €590 million***
Research projects	**6 projects worth €6 million***
Employees	**2,242***
People served	**Over 4 million***
Customers	**Over 1 million***
Water network	**Over 20,000 km**
Sewer network	**14,000 km**
Drinking water treatment plants	**5**
Wastewater treatment plants	**185**
Water reclamation facilities	**77**

* Data from the 2025 Integrated Report