

The Oil Drum: Europe

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Post Peak Italy

Posted by [Ugo Bardi](#) on December 12, 2007 - 1:03pm in [The Oil Drum: Europe](#)

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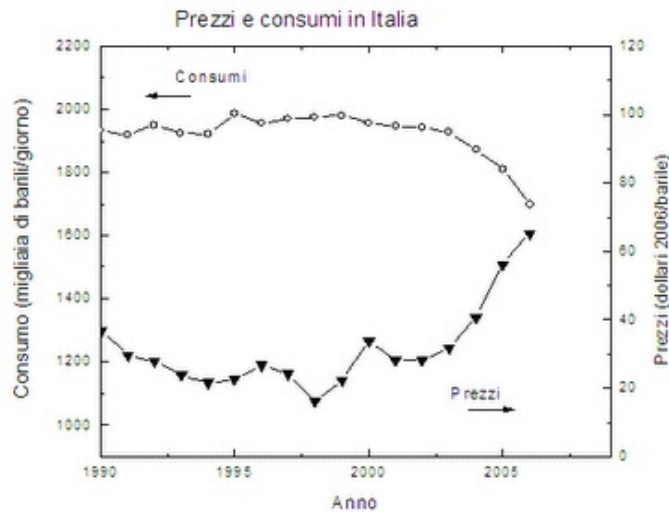
Today (12/12/07) is the third day of lorry driver strikes in Italy. They are protesting over high fuel prices and threatening to bring the country to a halt. As of yesterday [Reuters](#) were reporting 80% of gas stations were without fuel.



The effects are already visible. This morning, Florence was eerily quiet, nothing of the usual traffic jams - no trucks whatsoever to be seen. Driving my electric motorcycle, I passed in front of many gas stations, all those I saw were displaying the sign "esaurita" ("out of gas").

Reports are coming that [the situation is becoming ugly in southern Italy](#). (in Italian). Those lorry drivers who refused to go along with the blockade saw their tires punctured when they stopped at service stations. On the highway near Naples plenty of trucks are reported to be stuck with flat tires and broken windows. The press reports that supermarkets are running out of food.

The mainstream Italian press is not linking these events to the high prices of fuel, preferring to focus on other issues, such as the request that Italian truckers are protected from foreign competition. But there is no doubt that the main issue here is the price of fuel. Despite an old tradition of small and efficient cars, recently, Italians have been embracing the "SUV culture" with great enthusiasm. The country's transportation system is mostly based on fuels derived from imported crude oil. Italy is also something of a weak link among industrialized countries and the high prices of oil appear to have caused a reduction in consumption, as seen in the following graph (sorry, it is in Italian; "prezzi" = "prices", "consumi" = consumption")



Source: [ASPO-Italia blog](#)

So far, nothing special had happened, probably people had cut their fuel use for non essential needs. But, at present, the high prices are starting to be felt also in essential services, such as goods transportation. The problem takes the shape of a truckers' blockade, but it is a symptom of a much deeper problem.

The government has issued an injunction to force lorry drivers to stop the blockade. Very post peak, indeed.



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