

<https://internationalviewpoint.org/spip.php?article8569>



Italy

Rightwing alliance strengthened in Italy

- IV Online magazine - 2024 - IV593 - June 2024 -

Publication date: Saturday 22 June 2024

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The European election results illustrate, albeit in a distorted way, the serious social and political crisis that has followed decades of liberal austerity measures. It is above all the far right that is reaping the votes of the most disenchanting, who delusively believe that they can avoid downgrading by crushing those at the bottom and embracing the dangerous ideology of "national preference" and racism.

Italy has become a textbook case of this: under the effect of abstention, Meloni's right-wing remains hegemonic; it shows itself to be "respectable", institutional, Atlanticist, philoliberal and Europeanist. It is increasingly reassuring the bourgeoisie and the world of finance, who are ready for new alliances with the post-fascists to respond to the crisis of capital and increase exploitation.

Record abstentions, climate inaction and a climate of war

Italy also went to the polls with a record abstention rate: 6 percentage points lower than in 2019, with peaks in the south and on the islands, where only 37% of voters turned out. Like other European countries, Italy is totally powerless to respond to the conflicts and multiple crises that are sweeping across the continent. Italy's leaders are in denial about the ecological disaster, turning their backs on the new generations and sinking into a climate of war and repression of the most essential humanist values.

The vote strengthens Meloni's far right

The other essential element is the crystallisation of the vote around two poles: that of Meloni, which remains stable (28.8%), and that of Elly Schlein's Democratic Party, which, with 24% of the vote, presents itself as the most structured opposition and manages to polarise the vote of the soft anti-Meloni left. The PD was the leading party in large cities such as Turin and Milan, and emerged stronger than in the last political elections. With a meagre 10%, the Five Star Movement, now normalised, has collapsed. Its political ambiguities and weaknesses mean that it can no longer embody the protest vote against the Italian party system. Matteo Salvini's League remains below 10%, while the Berlusconi right-wing Forza Italia, with 9.6%, is recovering slightly.

Building a strong social opposition

A fairly positive result (6.8%) was also achieved by the Greens and Left alliance (Alleanza Verdi e Sinistra), thanks in particular to two symbolic candidates: Ilaria Salis, the teacher imprisoned in Hungary for taking part in an anti-fascist demonstration, and Mimmo Lucano, known for his commitment to welcoming exiles, who was also reconfirmed as mayor of the town of Riace. The brains behind the list, the Bonelli-Fratoianni duo, have already shown an openness to collaboration with the PD.

The first task is certainly to create the conditions for building a strong social opposition to the right-wing government, while at the same time encouraging the aggregation of anti-capitalist forces, drawn from social movements and young people, breaking with the current economic system. From this perspective, simply building a new alliance with the social democrats is neither sufficient nor desirable.

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20 June 2024

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