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Italy

# Introduction

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[IMG/jpg/rcposter.jpg]

**The Fifth Congress of the Italian Partito della Rifondazione Comunista (PRC) which took place in Rimini from April 4th-7th 2002 was an extraordinary event, which cemented the transformation of the party that has been taking place over the last year. Through its key involvement in the massive demonstrations in Genoa and the consolidation of Social Forums across Italy, the PRC has not only championed the anti-globalisation cause but at the same time questioned key aspects of the political tradition from which the majority of its members come.**

At a moment when the old European Communist Parties are reeling from the rout of the PCF in the first round of the French Presidential Elections, a discussion on the way the PRC under the leadership of Fausto Bertinotti has made this shift could not be more timely.

In the pages that follow, [Livio Maitan assesses the key dynamics of the Congress](#) and we carry major [extracts from Bertinotti's speech](#) together with shorter [extracts from the main Congress resolution](#). We also carry [an article on the extraordinary general strike](#) on April 16, in which once again the PRC played an important role.