

THE EUROPEAN POLICIES OF ITALY

INTRODUCTION



It is within the European institutions that "Italy will make its voice heard, loud and clear, as it should be for a great founding nation" (general policy speech of Giorgia Meloni in October 2022)

→ Reflects the evolution of EU/Italy relations

INTRODUCTION

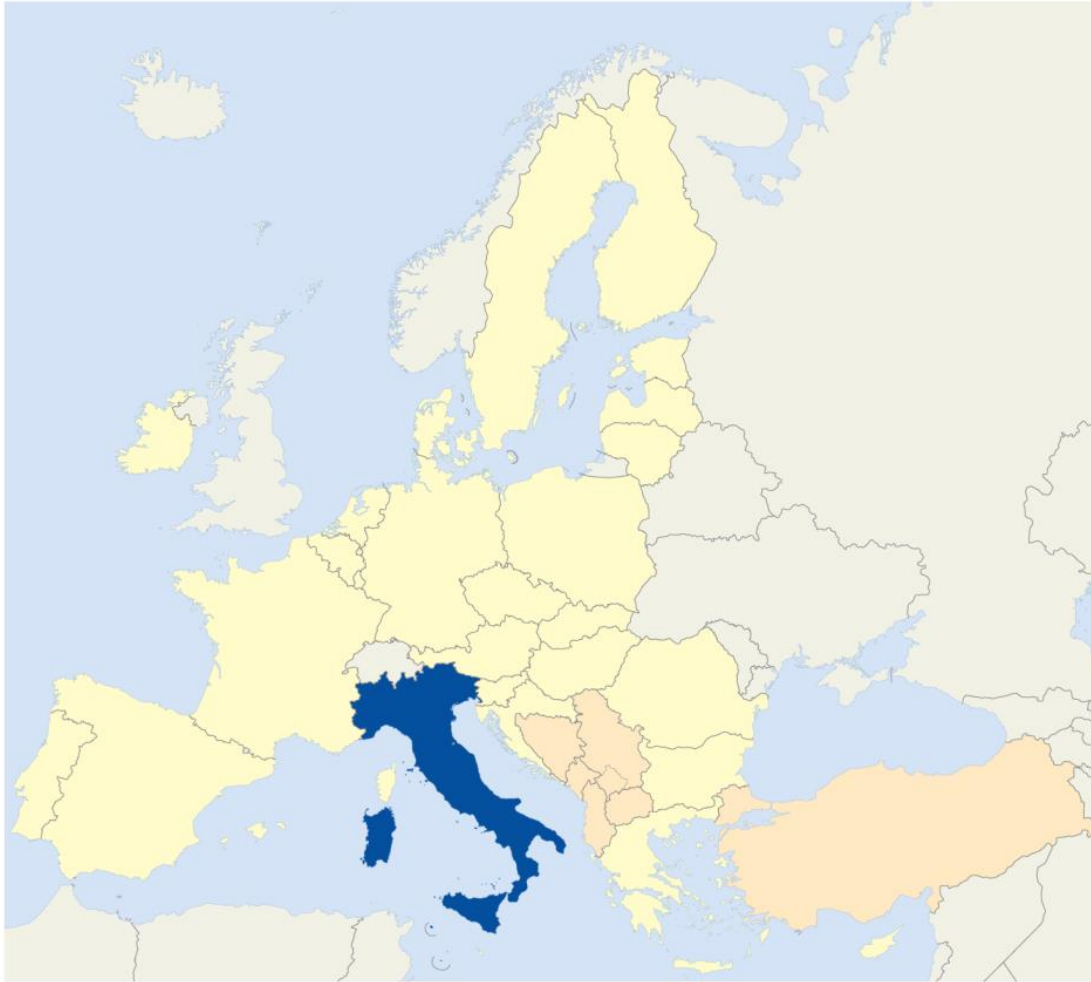
I - Factors shaping the European policies of Italy

II – The European policies of Italy

III – Major consecutive crises and rise of Euroscepticism

I - Factors shaping the European policies of Italy

A – *The place on map*



→ **Peninsula (wide access to the sea) + 4 land borders = strategic position and trade facilitation**

→ **At the heart of migration routes**

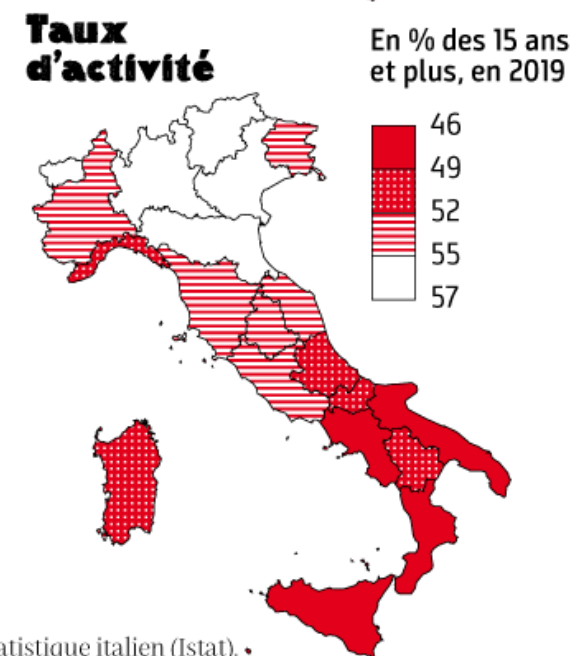
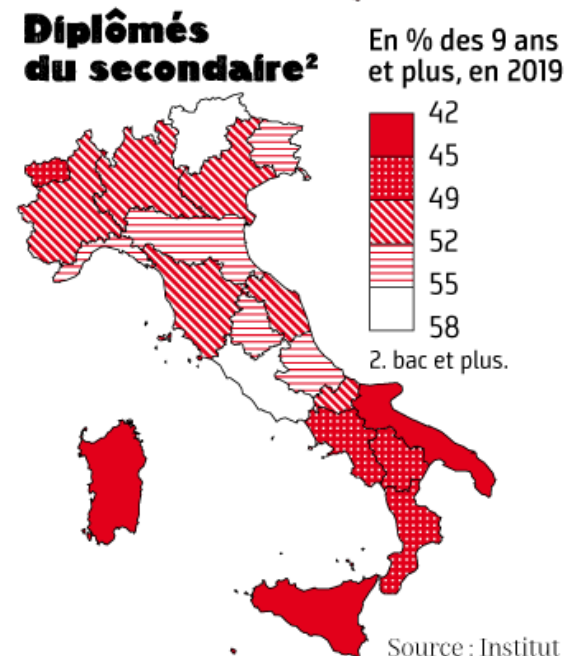
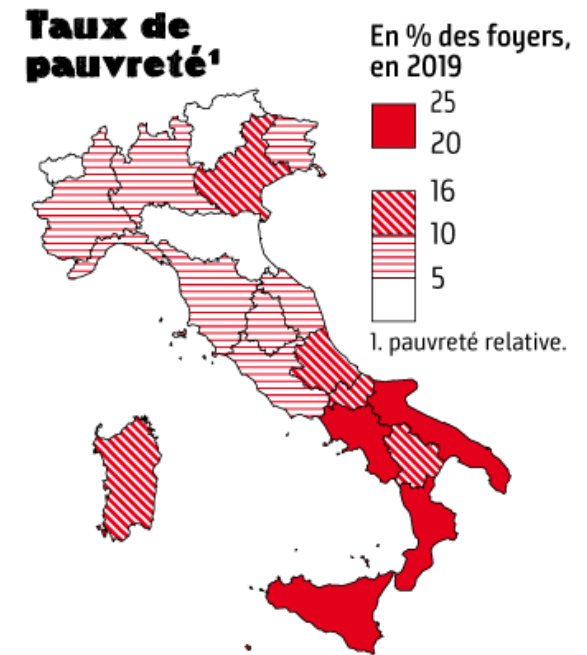
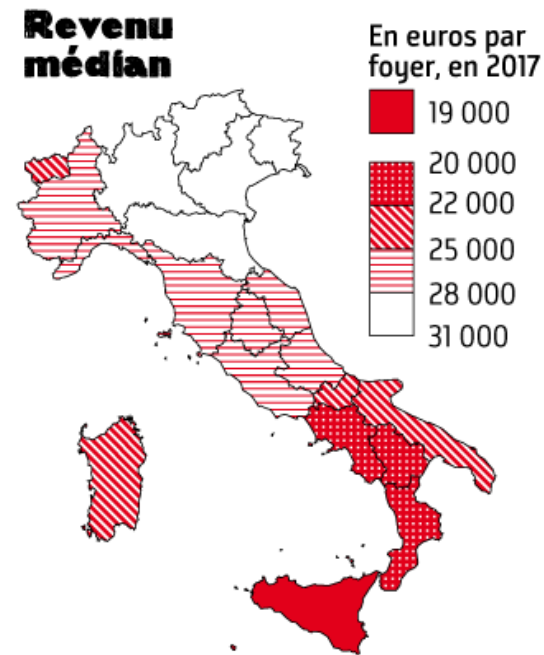
→ **Between Northern and Southern Europe: geostrategic position**

I - Factors shaping the European policies of Italy

B – The Italian population

‘There are two kinds of Italians: Italians from the North who live in the North and Italians from the South who die in the South’. (Pierre Desproges, 1990).

→ **Major inequalities** (economic, social, etc.) between the north and south of the country



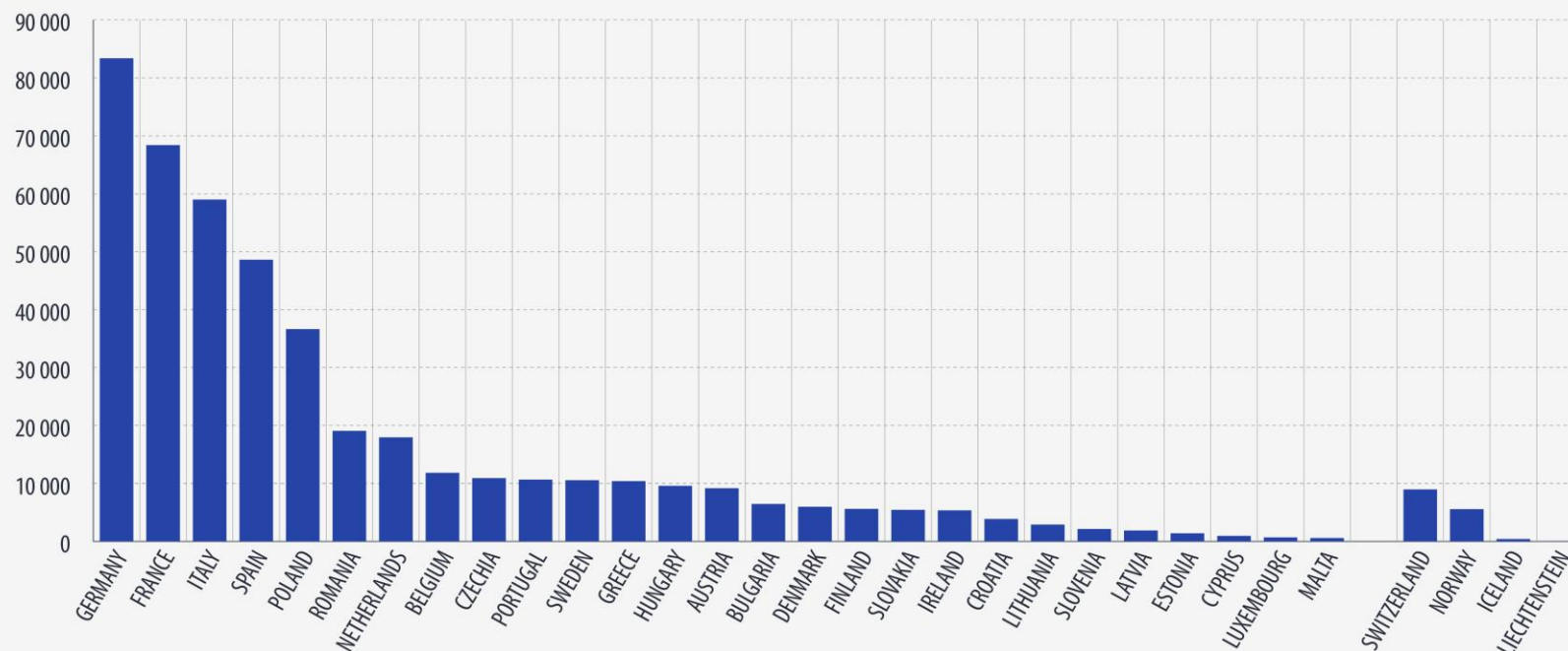
Source : Institut statistique italien (Istat).

I - Factors shaping the European policies of Italy

C – Size of the country

Population, 1 January 2024

(thousands)



Belgium, Spain, France, Italy and Cyprus: provisional data. Germany and Greece: provisional, estimated. Romania: estimated.

→ **Population : 58,9 million = 13,1% of the total EU population. 3rd demographic power**

→ Significant weight in the European institutions : in the European Parliament, 76 seats

→ So, big country but with domestic instabilities and economic weaknesses...

I - Factors shaping the European policies of Italy

D – The Italian economy, big but weak

Big economy:

- Part of the 5 EU States in top 20 global national economies (9th position)
 - Represents 12,5% of total EU GDP
 - 3rd most touristic country in the EU
- **A major economic player in the EU**

BUT Italian economy is very weak

Dette publique au 1er trimestre 2024 (en % du PIB)



Source: Eurostat • Récupérer les données • Créé avec DataCamp

Key data:

Public debt = 137 % of the GDP

National budget deficit = 7,4 % of the GDP (currently, excessive deficit procedure in progress)

Unemployment = 6,2 % in August 2024 (7,7 % in February 2024)

→ “Tangy” is not a joke in Italy but the reality : 6/10 young adults are unable to move out

I - Factors shaping the European policies of Italy

E – Domestic politics

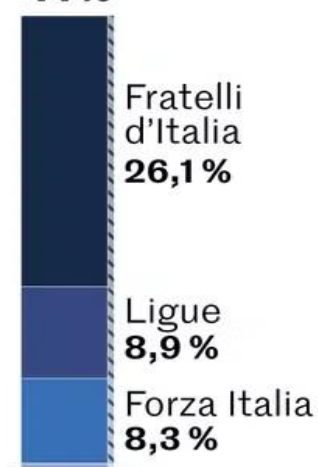
→ A parliamentary democratic republic based on the Constitution of 1948, with a bicameral Parliament (Camera dei Deputati & Senato della Repubblica)

→ Coalition government system : huge governmental instability (71 governments since 1948)

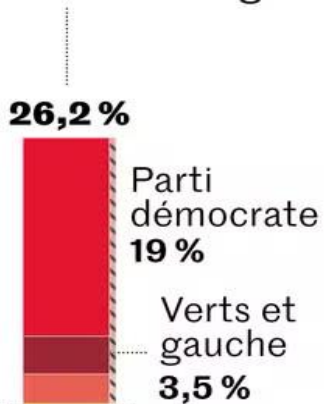
Résultats des élections en Italie, 2022

CHAMBRE DES DÉPUTÉS

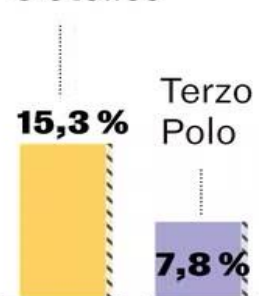
Coalition de droite 44 %



Coalition de gauche 26,2 %



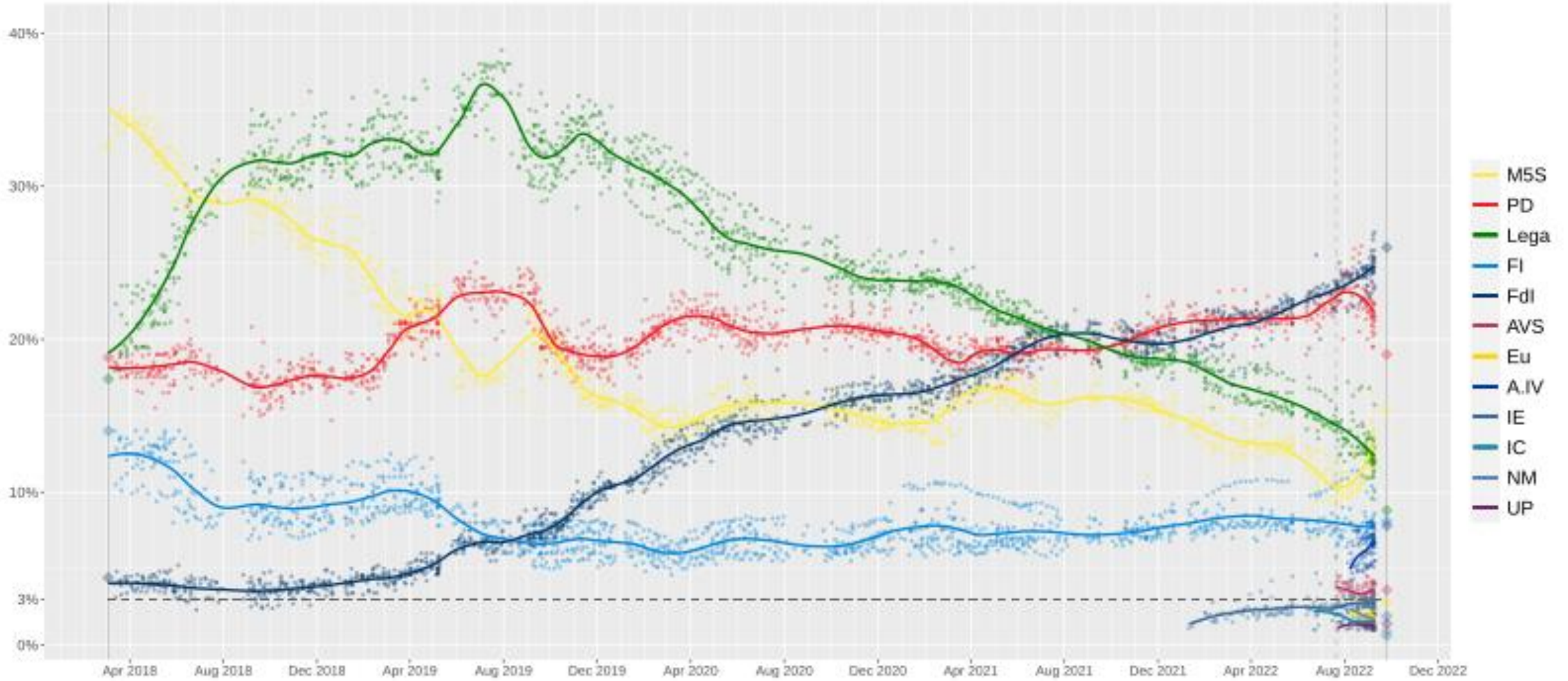
Mouvement 5 étoiles 15,3 %



→ Since 2022, coalition led by Giorgia Meloni (Fratelli d'Italia). Right & Far-right coalition.

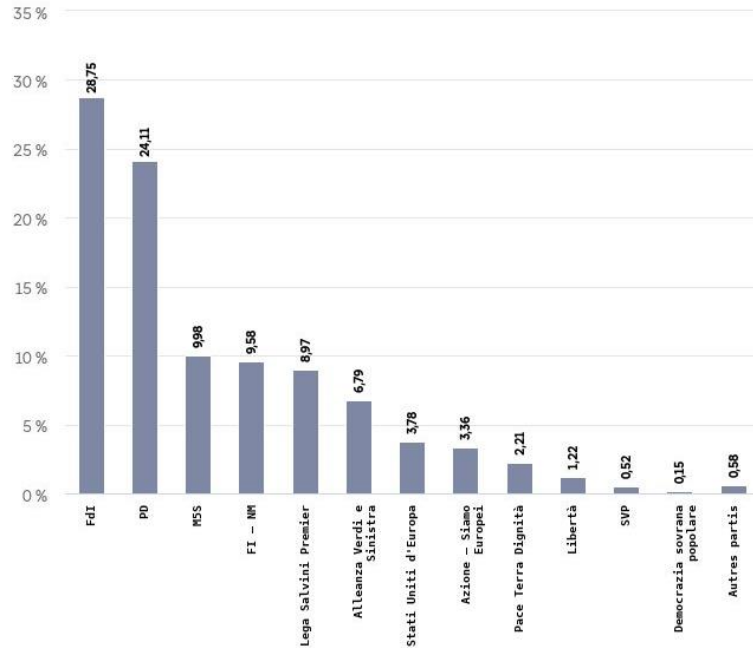
→ Coalition relatively cohesive ideologically, with strong positions on immigration, national sovereignty, and criticisms of certain EU rules. But tensions persist between the 3 parties (particularly regarding foreign and economic policy priorities).

Represents the evolution of party results from the 2018 elections to the 2022 elections



European elections 2024

Pourcentage de votes



Partis nationaux

Fdi – Fratelli d'Italia

PD – Partito Democratico

M5S – Movimento Cinque Stelle

FI – NM – Coalition Forza Italia – Noi Moderati (Forza Italia, Noi Moderati)

Lega Salvini Premier – Lega Salvini Premier

Alleanza Verdi e Sinistra – Coalition Alleanza Verdi e Sinistra (Europa Verde, Sinistra Italiana)

Stati Uniti d'Europa – Coalition Stati Uniti d'Europa (+ Europa, Italia Viva, Liberali Democratici Europei, Partito Socialista Italiano, Radicali Italiani, L'Italia c'è)

Azione – Siamo Europei – Coalition Azione – Siamo Europei (Azione, NOS, Popolari Europeisti e Riformatori, Partito Repubblicano Italiano, Movimento Repubblicani Europei, Team K, et al)

Pace Terra Dignità – Coalition Pace Terra Dignità (MERA25 Italia, Movimento equità territoriale, Partito della Rifondazione Comunista, Liberos Rispetados Uguales)

Libertà – Coalition Libertà (Sud Chiama Nord, Movimento per l'Italexit, Sicilia Vera, I civici in movimento – con Pirozzi, Grande Nord, Popolo Veneto, Capitano Ultimo, et al.)

SVP – Südtiroler Volkspartei (Popolare Sudtirolese)

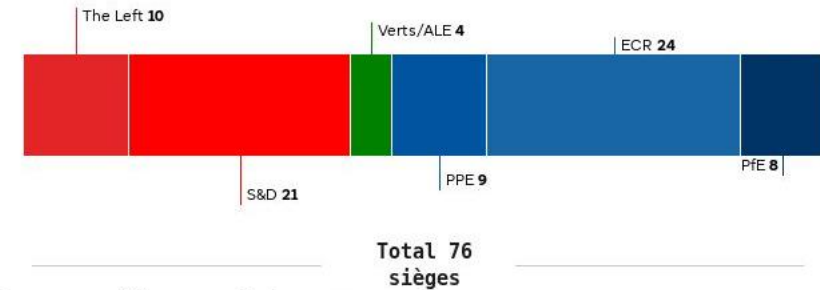
Democrazia sovrana popolare – Coalition Democrazia sovrana popolare (Partito Comunista, Ancora Italia sovrana e popolare)

Autres partis – Autres partis

→ National party election results

Sièges par groupe politique – 2024-2029

Italie – Session constitutive



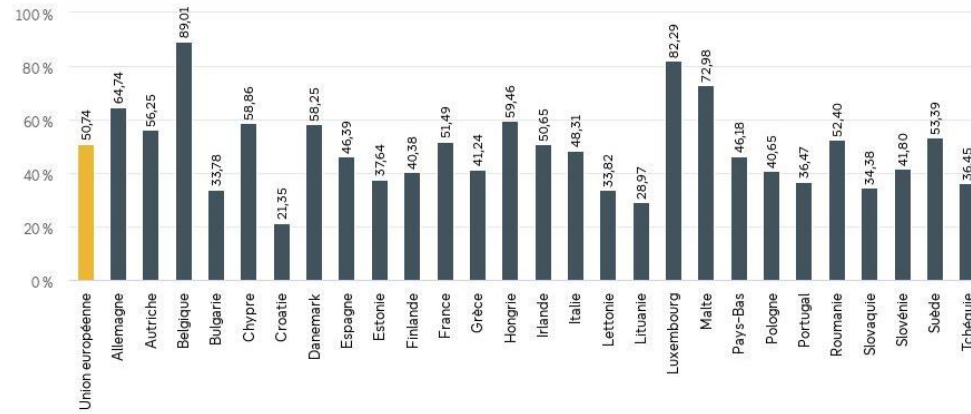
Groupes politiques au Parlement européen

- **PPE** – Groupe du Parti populaire européen (Démocrates-Chrétiens)
- **S&D** – Groupe de l'Alliance Progressiste des Socialistes et Démocrates au Parlement européen
- **PfE** – Patriots for Europe
- **ECR** – Groupe des Conservateurs et Réformistes européens
- **Renew Europe** – Groupe Renew Europe
- **Verts/ALE** – Groupe des Verts/Alliance libre européenne
- **The Left** – Le groupe de la gauche au Parlement européen – GUE/NGL
- **ESN** – Europe of Sovereign Nations
- **NI** – Non-inscrits

→ Seats by political groups

Participation par pays (%)

Résultats définitifs

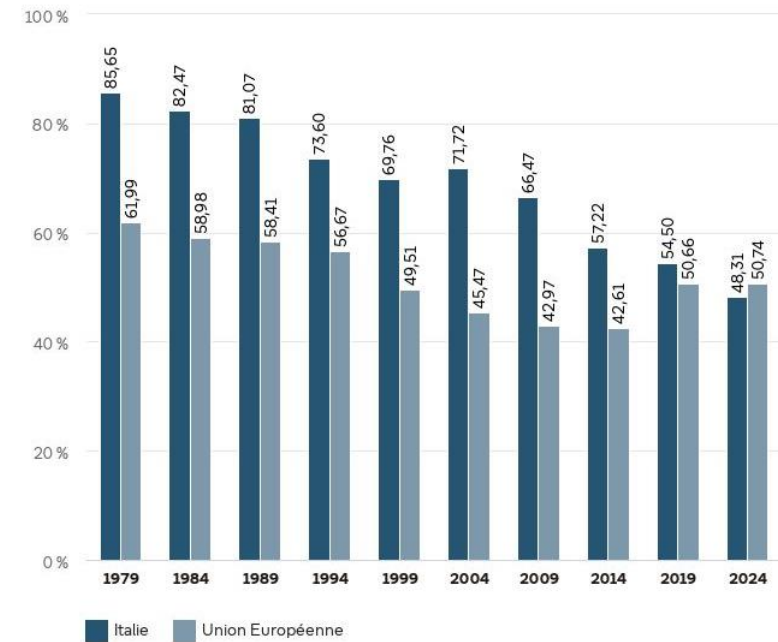


Source : Verian, pour le Parlement européen



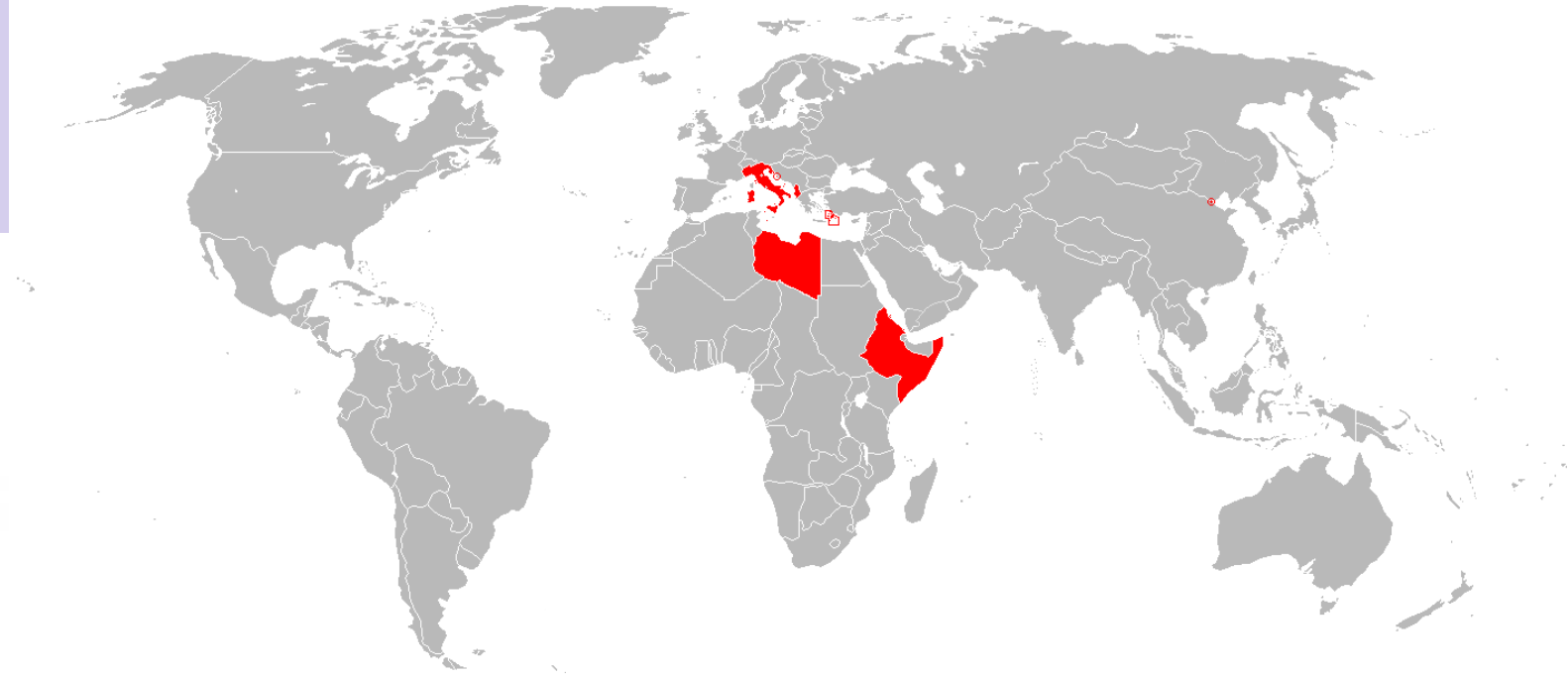
Participation par année

Italie - Résultats provisoires



I - Factors shaping the European policies of Italy

F – The history of the country



→ Recent unification of Italy (1870): before it was just a ‘geographical expression’
→ ‘Italy is done, the Italians have yet to be done’.

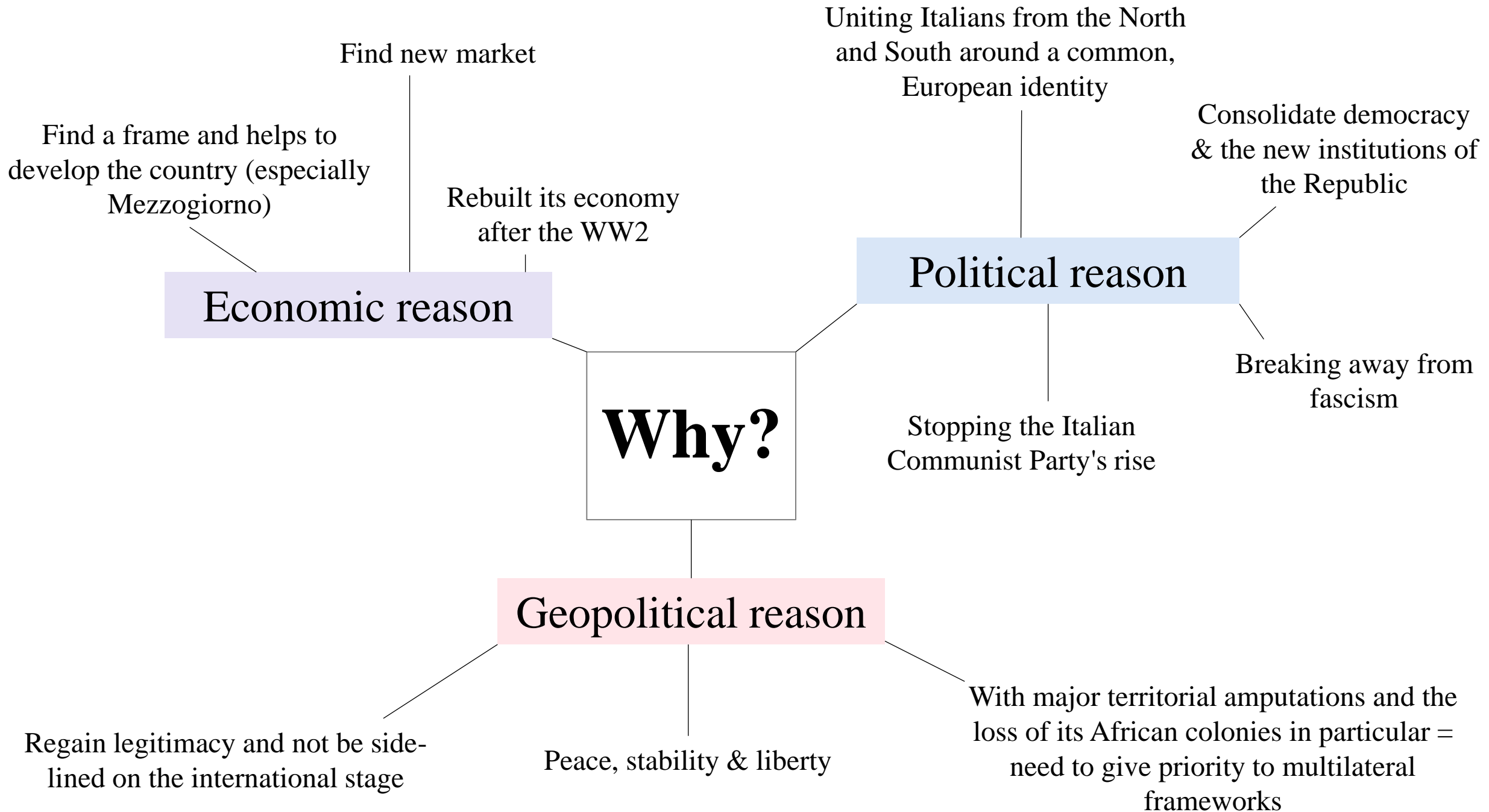
→ Mafias and organised crime, a part of the history of the country

→ 1922: Mussolini takes power, then establishes a fascist regime

→ Colonial empire (Somalia, Libya, Eritrea, Albania, etc.)

II – The European policies of Italy





II – The European policies of Italy

- ▶ Supports initiatives: CAP, Customs Union, Single European Act (+ Member of the Schengen area and the euro zone)
- ▶ Big support of enlargement (particularly of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe)
- ▶ Defends a defence and security policy (NATO member)
- ▶ Against the budgetary austerity imposed by the Maastricht Treaty



The war in Ukraine and Italy's position:

The government in power (under Mario Draghi) at the start of the war: firm condemnation of Russian aggression, full support for Ukraine, demand for Ukraine's rapid integration into the EU, sending arms to Kiev.

The Meloni government subsequently followed these positions.

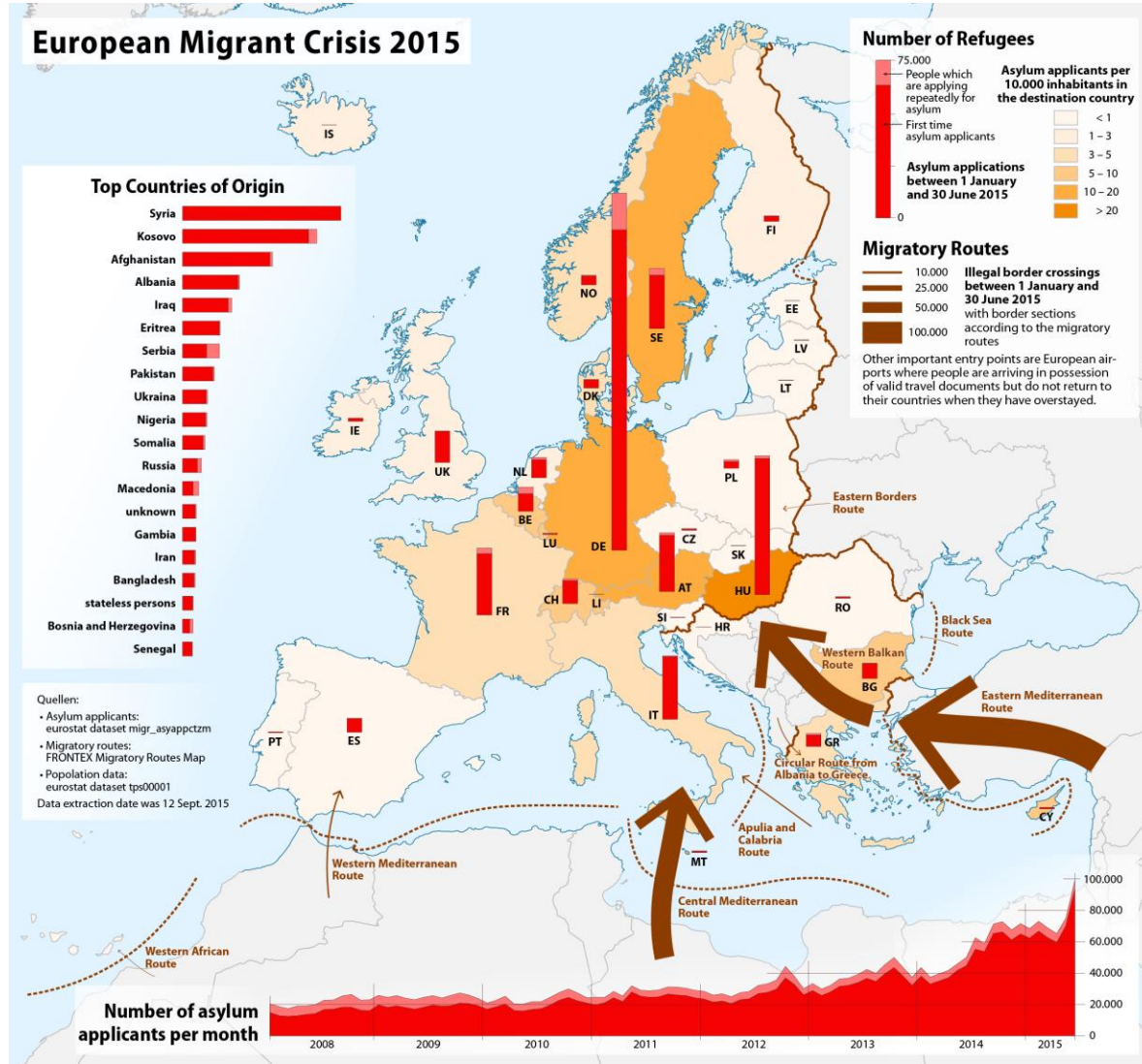
But the other two leaders of parties in power (known for their pro-Russian stance) are more ambiguous.

II – The European policy of Italy

An important point to remember is that the country's problem is its internal instability, its volatility and the unpredictability of Italian politics. **So, Italy remains ambivalent about its relationship with the EU depending on the political party in government.**

III - Major consecutive crises and rise of Euroscepticism

A – Migrant and refugee crisis



III - Major consecutive crises and rise of Euroscepticism

B - From Europhilia to Euroscepticism



1945 – 1990's : very Europhile country, one of the most fervent supporters of European integration

2000's: rise of Eurosceptic parties (major development of the Northern League)

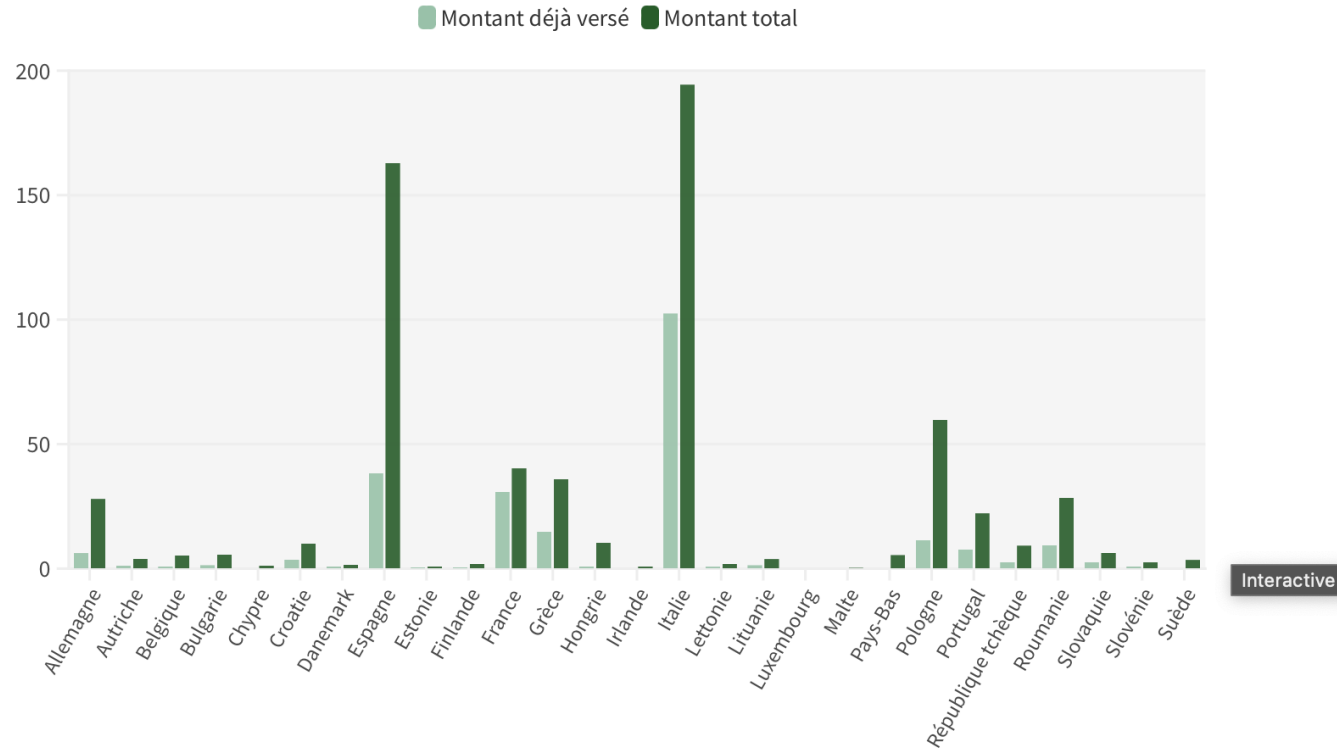
Mitigation of Euroscepticism post-Covid: Italy is the first beneficiary of the recovery plan

First turning point:
Maastricht treaty & integration of zone Euro

2015: refugee & migrant crisis led to a high Euroscepticism

European recovery plan: amounts received by each Member State

Plan de relance européen : montants perçus par chaque Etat membre en milliards d'euros



Source: Commission européenne • Montants au 5 juin 2024

CONCLUSION



Giorgia Meloni  · 3 mai 2022

@GiorgiaMeloni · [Suivre](#)

Questa Unione Europea è inadeguata a fronteggiare le grandi sfide dei nostri tempi. Serve una profonda revisione dei Trattati e una diversa Europa che si occupi dei grandi temi: sicurezza, immigrazione, energia, visione di politica estera. Quante volte lo abbiamo ripetuto?



⇒ Seek to reform certain aspects of the European Union, especially migration policies and budgetary criteria, but without questioning Italy's membership of the EU = Soft Euroscepticism