

Italy

	PO	FL	FR	EU	Best %	Last %	Government
DLSI	X				0.7 (2022)	0.7 (2022)	no
FdI	X		X	X	25.9 (2022)	25.9 (2022)	2022-today
FI	X			X	29.4 (2001)	8.1 (2022)	1994-1995 2001-2006 2008-2011 2021-2022 2022-today
LeU		X			3.4 (2018)	3.3 (2018)	2021-2022
LN/L	X		X	X	17.4 (2018)	8.7 (2022)	1994-1995 2008-2011 2018-2019 2022-today
M5S	X			X	33.3 (2018)	15.4 (2022)	2018-2019 2019-2021 2021-2022
AN			X	X	15.7 (1996)	12.3 (2006)	1994-1995 2001-2006
IdV	X				4.0 (2001)	4.0 (2001)	1996 2006-2008
LAM	X		X	X	0.2 (1996)	0.4 (2018)	no
LD-FT	X		X	X	2.4 (2008)	2.4 (2008)	no
LR	X				1.8 (1992)	42.2 (2006)**	no
MSFT	X		X	X	2.5 (2008)	0.3 (2018)	no
MSI-DN	X		X	X	5.3 (1992)	5.3 (1992)	1994
PDCI		X		X	2.3 (2006)	2.3 (2006)	1998-2000 2000-2001 2006-2008
PRC		X		X	8.6 (1996)	5.8 (2006)	2006-2008
RC	X	X			2.2 (2013)	2.2 (2013)	no
SEL /SI		X			3.2 (2013)	3.6 (2022)	no

* Results for the Elezioni Politiche at the Camera dei Deputati (Lower Chamber), 1989-2022

** In Ulivo coalition with: Partito Democratico della Sinistra (PDS) (until 1998), Movimento per l'Ulivo or Comitati Prodi (until 1999), Partito Popolare Italiano (PPI) (until 2002), Socialisti Italiani (until 1998), Patto Segni (until 1996); Alleanza Democratica (AD) (until 1996), Federazione dei Verdi, Partito Repubblicano Italiano (PRI) (until 2001), Federazione dei Liberali, Federazione Laburista (until 1998), Movimento dei Comunisti Unitari (until 1998), Cristiano Sociali (until 1998).

Parties represented in parliament:

De Luca Sindaco d'Italia (De Luca Mayor of Italy, DLSI) was founded in 2022 by Cateno de Luca and gained popularity during the first wave of COVID19 containment measures in Italy. Despite the poor electoral results in the 2022 general elections, the list appointed two MPs. DLSI is considered populist, because it voices a flamboyant anti-establishment rhetoric. Its positions on EU integration remain unclear.

In 1993, Silvio Berlusconi, a media tycoon, founded **Forza Italia (Let's Go Italy, FI)** as a response to the collapse of the party system following a significant corruption scandal (*tangentopoli*). The party is highly personalized, with both its structure and ideology revolving entirely around its leader, deceased in 2023. FI enjoyed great success throughout the 1990s and 2000s, with Berlusconi serving as Italy's prime minister on multiple occasions. In 2007, Berlusconi established **Il Popolo della Libertà (The People of Freedom, PDL)**, which emerged from the merger of FI (previously known as *Casa delle Libertà* (House of Freedoms, CdL)) and *Alleanza Nazionale* (National Alliance). The PDL was dissolved in 2013 and is considered borderline populist throughout its existence. Since 2011, when the Monti government was established, FI has displayed a borderline Eurosceptic profile, with Berlusconi openly criticizing the EU but not supporting Italexit. However, when the Lega-M5S government took office in 2018-2019, Berlusconi began to moderate the Eurosceptic stances, trying to set FI apart from populist parties.

Fratelli d'Italia (Brothers of Italy, Fdi) was founded in 2012 and it is headed by Georgia Meloni. It originated from a fringe of PDL's MPs contesting the Monti technocratic government that governed Italy during the Great Recession. The symbol of the party is the tricolour flame, which was also the symbol of the extinct MSI and AN. In the 2013, 2018 and 2022 general elections, the party ran as part of a centre-right coalition, together with the League and Forza Italia. At the outset, Fdi concentrated on socio-economic and civil rights issues, with no significant traces of populism in its campaigns. However, starting from 2014, the party began exhibiting more apparent traits of populism, nativism, and Euroscepticism in its platform and it now undoubtedly qualifies as a far-right and populist party. Despite this evolution, Fdi still upholds its dedication to social conservatism, family policies, and the advocacy of small and medium-sized enterprises. This preserves its unique profile, not just within the right-wing coalition, but also when contrasted with the League.

The **Lega Nord/Lega (Northern League/League, LN/L)** was founded in 1991 by Umberto Bossi as a federation of several regional parties and movements, including the Liga Veneta. Bossi established the LN as a secessionist party, in favour of autonomy for the north of Italy. After a major corruption scandal in 2011, Roberto Maroni became the new chairman of the party until Matteo Salvini took over in 2013. Salvini changed the party name into *Lega per Salvini Premier*. Scholars agree that under Salvini's leadership the party expanded at the national level and became more radical, increasingly emphasising more classical forms of nativism and populism. Despite this radicalization, the party can be classified as populist and far right since its conception. In the 1994, 2001, 2008, 2018 and 2022 general elections the LN/L ran in alliance with Berlusconi's coalitions.

The electoral list known as **Liberi e Uguali (Free and Equals, LeU)** was established in 2013, comprising the political parties "Article 1" and "Italian Left". In 2021 LeU appointed a minister in Prime Minister Mario Draghi's government and remained in Parliament before the 2022 elections when the two main components separated and LeU disappeared. Classifying LeU as a far-left party is challenging because it included both moderate factions from the Democratic Party (Pierluigi Bersani

and Roberto Speranza) and more radical factions from the Italian Left (Nicola Fratoianni), making it borderline far left. LeU did not hold Eurosceptic views.

In 2009, comedian Beppe Grillo and entrepreneur Gianroberto Casaleggio founded the ***Movimento 5 Stelle (Five Star Movement, M5S)***, which capitalises on the public's discontent and distrust in politics. The party can be classified as populist given its flamboyant and anti-establishment rhetoric. After initially forming a government with the far-right League (2018-2019), the M5S joined an alliance with the centre-left Democratic Party. The M5S has previously endorsed Eurosceptic stances, but it supported the pro-EU Draghi government in 2021 before withdrawing its support in July 2022. Since the election of Giuseppe Conte as chairman in 2021, the M5S has adopted a clearer and more progressive socioeconomic and cultural profile, which was evident during the 2022 election campaign.

Parties not represented in parliament:

Alleanza Nazionale (National Alliance, AN) was founded in 1995 from a splinter within the MSI and dissolved in 2009, when it merged in Berlusconi's coalition The People of Freedom (PDL). Its leader was Gianfranco Fini. Despite AN's historical and cultural links to the MSI, Gianfranco Fini had progressively adopted a liberal conservative approach, distancing AN from the fascist legacy, with the goal of transforming AN into a credible governing party. Overall, AN was far right even if in the last years of its existence this classification was more dubious. Initially blatantly Eurosceptic, AN gradually moderated its stances but continued to express criticism towards the EU.

La Destra - Fiamma Tricolore (The Right - Tricolour Flame, LD-FT) was a coalition merging two far-right parties: La Destra (The Right), headed by Francesco Storace, and Fiamma Tricolore (Tricolour Flame). It was created in the run-up to the 2008 general elections and it was dissolved in 2009. LD-FT was a far-right party emphasizing nativism and authoritarianism. Classifying it as populist is more complex, as the coalition included extreme-right elements (Luca Romagnoli) openly emphasizing the principles of Italian Fascism. Whether extreme-right parties can be considered populist is still a matter of debate among scholars, hence we consider LD-FT a borderline case of populism. LD-FT was Eurosceptic.

La Rete - Movimento per la Democrazia (The Network- Movement for Democracy, LR) was a political party founded in 1991 by antimafia activist Leoluca Orlando and dissolved in 1999. LR included former members from the Christian democratic and the communist party. The platform was mostly centred around anti-Mafia and anti-corruption, calling to end parliamentary immunity, to expand judicial powers to counter the Mafia, and to reduce the number of MPs in parliament. LR described itself as a "civic movement". It was populist but not Eurosceptic.

The ***Lega d'Azione Meridionale (Southern Action League, LAM)*** was founded in 1992 by Giancarlo Cito, who was expelled from the MSI for his extreme views. Cito later became a member of the group of the *Federalisti alla Camera* (created in 1994). The group supported the Berlusconi I government until its demise in January 1995, but without any ministers or officials. In 2014, LAM joined FI, but it later became autonomous again. The party campaigns heavily on anti-immigration and law & order policies. LAM managed to obtain 1 seat in parliament in 1994 (Maggioritario), thanks to the popularity of his leader in his hometown Taranto. Since then, it remains a fringe party at the national level, mostly active in Apulia. The party is far-right, and it stands out for its bold anti-LN campaigns. LAM can be classified as borderline populist as it also includes more extreme-right elements. LAM is Eurosceptic.

Lista Di Pietro - Italia dei Valori (Di Pietro's list - Italy of Values, IdV) is a party founded in 1998 by former *Mani Pulite* prosecutor Antonio Di Pietro. Although the party was overshadowed by the emergence of the Five Star Movement, which also campaigned on similar issues, IdV still exists. In the 2022 elections, IdV joined the electoral alliance *Noi Moderati* (We the Moderates) and elected 7 MPs and 2 Senators. The party is considered populist but does not hold Eurosceptic views.

The **Movimento Sociale Fiamma Tricolore (Social Movement Tricolour Flame, MSFT)** was established in 1995 by Pino Rauti and other more extreme members of the Italian Social Movement. These individuals refused to align with National Alliance and refused to disregard the legacy of historical Italian Fascism. MSFT appointed two senators in 1996 and 2001 as part of larger coalitions. In the 2018 election, MSFT joined the *Italia agli Italiani* (Italy to Italians) list, which included Fiamma Tricolore and Forza Nuova. MSFT closely associates itself with the legacy of the Italian Social Republic (RSI) and Third Positionist ideology. It can be classified as an extreme and racist party falling in the neo-fascist spectrum, and hence as a far-right party.. Whether extreme-right parties can be considered populist is still a matter of debate among scholars, hence we consider MSFT a borderline case of populism. Furthermore, MSFT is Eurosceptic.

The **Movimento Sociale Italiano - Destra Nazionale (Italian Social Movement - National Right, MSI-DN)** was founded in 1946 by supporters nostalgic of former dictator Benito Mussolini. It ceased to exist in 1995 when it was transformed into the National Alliance (AN). The MSI-DN emphasised traditional social values, law and order, and hostility towards migrants. MSI-DN has openly emphasised its rooting in Italian Fascism. It can be classified as an extreme and racist party falling in the neo-fascist spectrum. Whether extreme-right parties can be considered populist is still a matter of debate among scholars, hence we consider MSI-DN a borderline case of populism. MSI-DN was far right and Eurosceptic.

The **Partito dei Comunisti Italiani (Party of Italian Communists, PDCI)** was founded in 1998, following an internal division within *Partito della Rifondazione Comunista* (see above). It dissolved in 2016. According to the party statute, it aimed to “transform Italy into a socialist society based on political democracy”. PDCI supported the D’Alema I and Amato II governments (in 1998 and 2001) BUT by then the party had not received parliamentary representation as a result of the elections (was a splinter of PRC). At subsequent elections, the PDCI obtained representation as an independent party. PDCI can be classified as a far-left party as it interpreted society along a Marxist lens but not populist. PDCI endorsed Eurosceptic stances.

The **Partito della Rifondazione Comunista (Communist Refoundation Party, PRC)** was founded in 1991. After 2006, PRC ran for the general elections in coalitions with La Sinistra l’Arcobaleno, Lista Comunista e anticapitalista, Rivoluzione Civile, Potere al Popolo and La Sinistra. PRC is mostly inspired by Marxist philosophy and pursues the realisation of a modern socialist society, opposing neo-liberalism, exalting the anti-fascist Resistance, and supporting the democratic constitution. The party openly opposes authoritarian, bureaucratic and “Stalinist degenerations” of socialism. PRC is far left but not populist. PRC is Eurosceptic.

Rivoluzione Civile (Civil Revolution, RC) was founded in 2012 by Antonio Ingroia, a former anti-mafia prosecutor. RC dissolved in 2013, after the general elections when the party obtained 2.2% of the vote but no seats. RC’s ideological platform was inspired by anti-corruption policies, communism, and environmentalism. RC was far left and populist in that it integrated several ideological tropes from the former *Italia dei Valori* (*giustizialismo* against ‘corrupt elites and a simplified vision of society’). RC referred to a poorly defined ‘civil society’ that comes closer to the definition of ‘the pure people’ used in the Populist. RC was not Eurosceptic.

Sinistra Ecologia e Libertà (Left Ecology and Freedom, SEL) was a party founded in 2009 by Nichi Vendola. In 2015, SEL joined the newly born parliamentary group Italian Left (*Sinistra Italiana, SI*), and the party dissolved in 2016. SEL's worldview was inspired by democratic socialism. It opposed capitalist economy and called for peace, non-violence, social justice, and ecological transition of the economy and society. SEL was far left but not populist. SEL is not Eurosceptic.