

Reflections from Mars Italy 2008: User's guide



Is it game over for Italy? As I keep hearing from many foreign friends and foreign journalists? As Berlusconi may have thought for a second, when the results of the election progressively showed that - this time - there will be no excuse for not rescuing the country? I do not think this is the case. I believe Italy still has some important cards to play and that it is not excluded that we will see a new "miracolo". The kind of miracles that Italians tend to display just when they seem totally lost.[...]

Next Newsletter - Call for ideas on globalization



Is politics about "hope" or "fear"? Is it true that globalization losers are exceeding winners? Is there

something that we can do to tame the monster? **"The demons of globalization"** is the title of next Vision newsletter that will start gathering the ideas that are necessary to better understand a dream that is turning itself into the political nightmare for many. Anyone interested to respond to this call for paper please do send comments or a short paper to valentina.cucci@vision-forum.org by the 16th of May.

Vision News

The Kyoto of the Cities



As a follow up on the Vision project on

"Climat Change and Democracy" as well as the participation in the Bali conference, Vision is about to launch "The Kyoto of the Cities" a project with the objective to explore the possibility of engaging major cities in an international agreement on environment - related goals and explore strategies for CO2 emissions in housing, waste management and urban transportation. The project's results will be delivered at a conference taking place on the 5th - 7th of October in Milano. Anyone interested in the project can have further information by writing to info@vision-forum.org.

The most beautiful game



Football is a powerful metaphor of Italian life and also how certain opportunities

can be missed. The study that Vision will present together with Bocconi shows how the opportunity of the World Cup was totally missed, but also how the problem can still be turned on its head and become a possibility to deliver social value and promote club revenues and the entire "Made in Italy". The **draft paper** positions the new project and sport managers, journalists and supporters that are interested can join the work group or ask information to giovanni.dazzo@vision-forum.org

If you want to join Vision projects or be author of Vision web magazine write to: info@vision-forum.org.

Mamma mia? Vision, Demos and The Economist on the outcome of the Italian political election.



The world's most prestigious weekly newspaper's **editorial** on the Italian political election reports most of the analysis of Vision **position paper**. However, The Economist's conclusions are different from those of the Italian think tank. The next seminar, **"How to make change popular?"** will tackle the issue that will determine the success of whoever is trying to govern any of the countries of old Europe.

The safety ghost



A spectre is haunting Europe - the spectre of criminality and immigration. And, although the entire Europe is living into this new/ ancient psychosis, Italy is the country that the ghost appears to favour. Monsters, roms

raping Italian women, people from Romania ready to drink the blood of people in Rome like their ancestor of Transylvania. Italians, Italian media and Italian politicians alike behave and talk as they desperate need some enemies to materialize. However, numbers say that the gap between reality and perceptions has never been so wide. Last year Vision **paper** (still in Italian) is now to be expanded on deeper analysis of criminality, immigration, economic growth and the relationship amongst them.

Italy's elections: A Black & White outcome

By Alessandro Santo

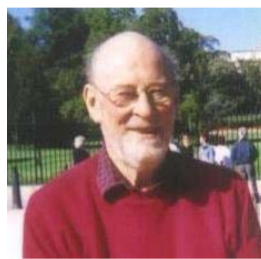


I can't be happy for the Italian elections outcome but I can't be happier for the outcome. How can you explain these contrasting sentences? As most of the political analysts already pointed out, Italians radically chose their favoured party which is,

unfortunately, the PDL. Berlusconi and his allies, with a strong majority in the lower and upper chamber, now have a, possibly striking, 2nd chance to change Italy innovating its politics and economy (after not having executed on their 1st tentative). I don't think they'll succeed as PDL mainly collected votes from people who desire a change but really don't want to lose their own privileges. Berlusconi's first statement about "expected painful reforms" might be signalling he's on the right path but will he be able to execute on his words? [...]

Is the "paese reale" any closer to being the "paese legale"?

By Roger Absalom



The best possible outcome for whom? The question is: "is the paese reale any closer to being the paese legale?" It seems to me highly unlikely that an old leopard like Berlusconi is going to change his spots so

completely - he has had two chances already and failed completely on both occasions. Wait and see how the factions emerge in the supposedly unified main parties. Will Bossi learn to love Fini and vice-versa? I doubt it! And what, seriously, is the mandate for change that Berlusconi now has? When the knots come to the comb, will he be able to force militant workers to comply with a 'modernisation' that they will see as a recipe for impoverishment? And mafia/camorra - Italy's biggest industries...? [...]

The PD's duty of care: Scrutiny of the executive

By Rachel Owens



While it is certainly true that the victory of Berlusconi's PdL party last week has bestowed the newly elected government with a strong majority which can, in theory, enable them to implement the major changes that are

necessary to render Italy better equipped to tackle the numerous challenges it faces, many questions still remain regarding the proposals the PdL is currently advocating. Firstly, given Berlusconi's poor economic track record, his repeated promises for major tax cuts including to the "Imposta Comunale sugli immobili" (I.C.I) - council taxes, coupled with higher public spending seem unfeasible, especially as they come at a time when the Italian economy is in dire need of huge influxes of money to reverse its decline and to alleviate its enormous public debt - estimated by recent figures to be the largest in Europe compared to any other economy of its size. [...]

"Berlusconismo", or "That Strange Thing That Foreign Journalists Do Not Want To Understand".

By Stefano Casertano



Let's make it clear from the beginning: this article does not have the purpose of backing an Italian political party or the other, neither to discuss the "conflict of interest" issue of the current Italian Prime Minister. This article is a

brief investigation about why the foreign press finds it so difficult to understand a phenomenon such as "Berlusconismo". The German ZDF TV News commented the last Italian election outcomes with an embarrassing "Mamma mia" by the host Marietta Slomka, introducing a report where the basic logics is the classic "Italians voting for Berlusconi because he owns a media empire and TV viewers believe in it". This thesis was completed by two "vox populi" interviews with enthusiastic fans screaming their love for the new Prime Minister. [...]

Somewhere Over the Rainbow: Arrivederci La Sinistra l'Arcobaleno.

By Giovanni Dazzo



The complete dismissal of the far-left (La Sinistra l'Arcobaleno - The Rainbow Left) was a surprising event in the recent political election here in Italy. This event was much more surprising for those politicians from

the far-left though, than for the Italian voting public. The trivial percentage of votes received by the party sent a strong message to those ruling Italy's political system. It seems that the public has grown tired of a government that is comprised of numerous, small parties touting their very specific goals. For many Italians, the instability that has marred the nation's political system can be attributed to these minor parties that, throughout their brief histories, have caused quite a bit of tension in Parliament.

The reason for this not-so-surprising exit: the new two-party system that has been established. [...]

No we can't - Italy fails to change for the better

By Stefano Fella



While in the long term the consolidation of the two party blocs seen in the April 2008 elections may bring greater stability to the Italian political system (and bring the nature of party competition closer to that found elsewhere in European democracies),

in the short term the prospects for coherent and responsible government in Italy are poor. I do not agree that the outcome of the election is a good one for Italy. If anything, it is close to the worst possible result. The right-wing parties have a clear mandate to govern Italy for the next 5 years and, as they showed between 2001 and 2006, they know how to maintain 'just enough unity' to ensure they maintain their grip in power (something the centre-left has yet to learn). [...]

Electoral defeat? Not so much, after all.

By Uberto Orlando



Although unhappy about the Centre-right success I point to a few major points which I consider a success of Italian society as a whole. The one hundred eighty something small parties that fuelled inefficiency and political patronage,

thanks their blackmailing power, have disappeared. It looks as if Italian voters to have understood that you cannot run a 21st century Democracy - and look after everybody's bread and butter - through a strictly proportional system but rather with stable governments. You can't fight today's battles with political tools from the 70's or - worst - before. [...]