

# DPOLITIK

Edition 5 (2024/1), year III

## THE EXTREMIST THREAT

In a year of important elections in the world, Europe sees an enemy that brought it to ruins less than a century ago resurfacing and gaining strength



# preface

DPolitik is a magazine written by international analysts and political scientists for students of International Relations and Political Science, as well as for future students, future international analysts, future political scientists or anyone who has an interest in issues involving national and international politics and wants to have access to analyses of these internal and external scenarios. We try to bring you the most pertinent topics of the moment, keeping our readers well informed, but also in a light-hearted way! That's why we use lots of graphics, images and tips so that you can have fun while being informed!



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**D**emocracy is shrinking around the world. Indexes show that more countries have become autocracies than democracies in recent years. In countries like Brazil or France, it has been possible to prevent authoritarianism from continuing to grow. The question, however, is: until when? In this edition of DPolitik, we look at the threats to democracy in three European countries, where the conservative and authoritarian wave has taken root in societies once seen as pillars of Western democracy. On the other hand, we also bring a different view of the concept of democracy and an alternative proposal to the state as we know it. We hope that this issue will provide you with new insights in this period of change that the world is going through.

**Caio Ponce de Leon R F**  
DPolitik's editor

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# table of contents

See below the topics and where to find them in this issue of DPolitik!

## 4 theories

Democratic Confederalism

*Bianca Mendes Araújo*

## 6 cover section

internal threats to European democracies

### 8 GERMANY

*Caio Ponce de Leon R. F.*

### 10 ITALY

*Maria Mont' Serrat Bomfim*

### 12 PORTUGAL

*Barnabé Lucas de Oliveira Neto*

## 14 IR beyond IR

The Expanse: Interplanetary Relations

*Caio Ponce de Leon R. F. & Maria Mont' Serrat Bomfim*

## 16 blzarRe

## 17 there's life beyond papers

## 18 sources



# The Democratic Confederation

Formulated by Kurdish political leader Abdullah Öcalan, Democratic Confederation is a theoretical paradigm that brings together all the ideas developed by Öcalan since his imprisonment in 1999. Of great importance to the Kurdish movement in Syria and Turkey, this perspective is the product of more than 30 years of experience by the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and the Kurds in the struggle for a freer society<sup>1</sup>. With strong influences from the anarchist theorist Murray Bookchin and his work on social ecology and libertarian municipalism, Democratic Confederation is part of a broader theoretical conception, critical of the state and capitalist society, representing a re-examination of the theoretical and strategic bases of the PKK and the creation of a new proposal for the Kurds.

In his historical analysis of civilisation and the process that culminated in what he calls "Capitalist Modernity" and its problems, Öcalan tries to demonstrate what he considers to be the problematic aspects of the nation-state which, in the service of capital, creates a link with power and multiplies social problems, being responsible for the ills of minority peoples - especially ethnic Kurds - and the Middle East. In this vein, aspects such as culture, language, religion, the market, history and political borders, once seen as part of a nation's identity, are seen as structures appropriated

by the state to homogenise and repress citizens, artificially made equal by law, resulting in assimilation and genocide in the process. In his critique, Öcalan states that the mixture of nationalism, religiosity, positivist science and sexism constitute the ideological pillars used for the state's purposes of preserving its monopoly of power in society and serving the capitalist processes and interests of exploitation<sup>2</sup>. It is worth highlighting the criticism of sexism, which contributes to preserving the power of the nation-state by fuelling all power relations and ideologies, imposing the exploitation and use of women as a reserve of cheap labour.

He then proposes a "Democratic Modernity", based on an economy free of monopolies, an ecology that is harmonious with the environment and a technology that is friendly to nature and humanity. As properties, it aims to be open to different political formations, multicultural, closed to monopolies, ecological and gender-equal, creating an economic structure that is based on satisfying society's fundamental needs.

## Capitalist Modernity versus Democratic Modernity

Capitalist Modernity	Social Model	Democratic Modernity
Nation-State	Organisation Form	Democratic Confederation
Nationalism	Mentality	Freedom and democracy
Individualising Liberal Ideology	Structuring Perspective	Communalism and federalism
Capitalism	Economy	Economic autonomy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A strong and homogeneous nation</li> <li>Godified State</li> <li>Artificial equality</li> <li>Bureaucracy to regulate society</li> <li>Laws to legitimise capitalism</li> <li>Women exploited</li> </ul>	Main Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Radical democracy and consensus</li> <li>Multicultural</li> <li>Anti-state and anti-nationalist</li> <li>Anti-capitalist and anti-monopolist</li> <li>Self-determination and self-defence of peoples</li> <li>Women and ecology as central</li> </ul>

Along these lines, just as the nation-state is part of Capitalist Modernity, in Democratic Modernity the alternative would be Democratic Confederation<sup>3</sup>.

Thus, the proposal of Democratic Confederation as a social model of plurality and community of equally free people involves a radical democracy, orientated towards consensus and exercised by the vote and direct participation of individuals, with autonomous institutions in various spheres of society. Such an alternative is anti-nationalist, seeks to promote the right to self-determination and self-defence of peoples, as well as the advancement of democracy for all Kurds, regardless of existing political borders. Öcalan makes it clear that the aim is not to create a Kurdish state and that this alternative does not impose conflict on existing nation states, proposing peaceful coexistence. However, this possibility is supported as long as state actors do not interfere in the internal self-administration of society, as assimilation efforts will not be accepted<sup>4</sup>.

It is also based on two main pillars: the promotion of equality between men and women, recognising the significant role of women in Kurdish culture and criticising the subordination of women by the West; and ecology, defending a conscious approach to production and exploitation of nature, as opposed to excessive production and consumption without environmental considerations, taking an anti-capitalist stance.

With this, the economic model proposed is that of “economic autonomy”, involving the self-administration of an autonomous and communal economy, promoting the increase of society’s resources - not their exploitation - minimising the accumulation of capital and rejecting monopoly and domination for the sake of profit.

However, the market, trade, product diversity, competition and productivity are not rejected, and financial systems become valid to the extent that they fulfil the productivity and economic functionality of the model<sup>3</sup>. Finally, the aim would then be to “establish federative structures in Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey, open to all Kurds, and create a common confederation for the four parts of Kurdistan”<sup>2</sup>, involving a common social contract with principles that establish gender, ethnic and religious equality.

The proposal of Democratic Confederation as a social model of plurality and community of equally free people involves a radical democracy, orientated towards consensus and exercised by the vote and direct participation of individuals, with autonomous institutions in various spheres of society.

### **Bianca Mendes Araújo**

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**Abdullah Öcalan** is currently a Kurdish political prisoner, held by Turkey since 1999, when he was captured in Nairobi, the Kenyan capital, in a joint operation between the Turkish National Intelligence Organisation and the CIA. He co-founded the **Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK)** in 1978. The PKK is considered a **terrorist organisation** by Turkey, the US and the European Union.

# EXTREMISM

On the verge of the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe, leaders, parties and political movements in different European countries are echoing slogans that are increasingly similar to those that succumbed the continent in a conflict that spread across the globe, scourging millions of lives.



# ON THE RISE



In this edition of DPolitik, we take a look at the situation in some EU countries, as well as the EU itself, when it comes to the rise of extreme movements that popularise discourses filled with exclusionary nationalism, racism and other forms of discrimination.

# The frightening strength of the “Alternative for Germany”

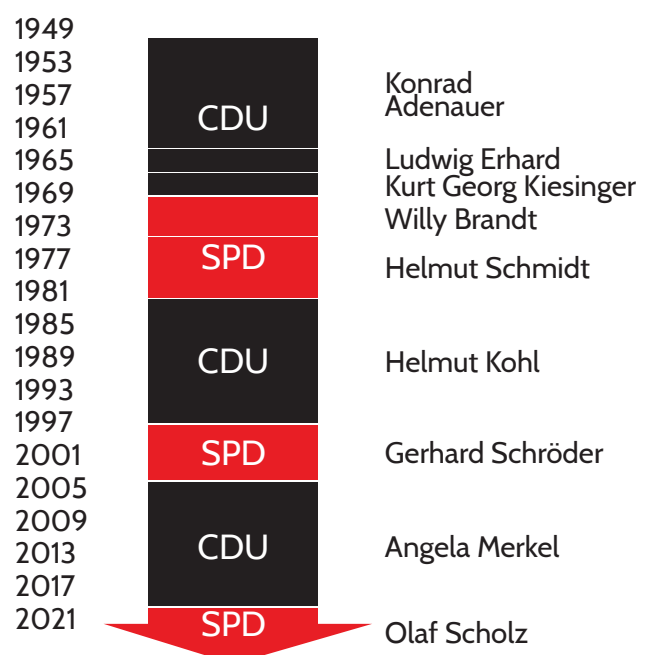
The rise of the far right is not an evil that is confined to just one country. On the contrary, there seems to be a pandemic proliferation of far-right movements that have hit the political systems of several countries around the globe hard, upsetting the balance of party power. As traditional parties lose traction with the electorate, far-right movements gain traction, reaching promising poll numbers or even government in some countries. This movement has already been seen in Europe in countries such as France, Poland and Hungary. In Germany, a country that (given its history) tends to attract more attention, it has been no different. Taking advantage of the social irritability generated after what became known as the “Refugee Crisis” in 2015, following the “open door” policy developed by then Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel of the centre-right Christian Democratic Party (CDU), a new party called “Alternative for Germany” (AfD) was founded. With recognised fascists and neo-Nazis, the party managed to enter the Bundestag for the first time in 2017, winning 12.6% of the vote and 94 seats.

With Merkel’s voluntary departure from the German Chancellery after 16 uninterrupted years at the head of the German government, the last parliamentary elections proved challenging for all parties, even the former Chancellor’s CDU. This is because, during her almost two decades in office, Merkel was responsible for absorbing most of the demands of society and the broadest political spectrum. Without getting involved in controversies or scandals, and delivering more positive than negative results during her government, the Christian Democrat politician managed to deflate the other parties for many, making it difficult for the electorate to differentiate between them<sup>1</sup>. It is no surprise, then, that the 2021 election has been labelled “the return of German ideologies”<sup>2</sup>, as the parties had to show what they were really about after a long time. The results of the 2021 election gave a slight majority to the centre-left SPD with almost 26% of the vote, while Merkel’s CDU was just behind with just over 24%<sup>3</sup>.

The two extremes of the political spectrum, represented on the right by the AfD and on the left by the far-left Left Party, suffered losses. The AfD lost eleven seats, while The Left failed to pass the minimum threshold of 5 per cent of the vote to elect MPs. The final result of the election was the so-called “Traffic Light Coalition”, named after the colours of the three parties that formed the government: red (SPD), yellow for the liberals (FDP) and green for the Greens. The chancellorship was left to Social Democrat Olaf Scholz, who had served as vice-chancellor under Merkel between 2018 and 2021.

That the post-Merkel era would be uncertain was to be expected<sup>4, 5</sup>. However, changes in the international context exposed weaknesses in the German model that Merkel had consolidated over the last 20 years. With Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, the sanctions imposed on Moscow hit Germany hard, as it relied heavily on Russian gas not only to keep its energy matrix low, but also to heat people’s homes. After low inflation in the first year of the pandemic, at around 0.5 per cent, 2021 closed with an increase of around 3.1 per cent, doubling to almost 7 per cent the following year<sup>6</sup>.

## German governments since the end of World War II per year and Chancellor’s party





The cost of living in Germany has risen sharply, jeopardising the welfare of millions of people. Furthermore, given the divergent nature of the three parties in government, miscommunication and public friction between ministers meant that the “Traffic Light” government came to be seen by 74 per cent of the population as “bad”<sup>7</sup>.

The high cost of living, fear of rampant inflation, an openly divided government and recession for the first time in twenty years meant that various sectors of the German economy not only started protesting frequently, but went on strike constantly. Already suffering from long-standing structural problems and a growing lack of punctuality, Deutsche Bahn, the national railway company, now had to deal with yet another hindrance for German workers who need the trains to get from town to town as a result of the constant strikes. Government proposals to cut subsidies from the agricultural sector in order to fund other policies to counterbalance the losses generated by inflation caused several groups of farmers to take to the streets, closing roads around the country on several occasions. Amid the growing pressure on Europe’s leading economy, far-right groups have seized the chance to grow.

In February of this year, the AfD managed to reach almost 25 per cent of voting intentions, rising to the position of the second largest political force in the country, behind only the CDU<sup>8</sup>. Whilst the government parties melt away in the opinion polls, the CDU survives by adopting populist rhetoric that brings it ever closer to right-wing extremists. Its current president, Friedrich Merz, goes on television programmes and makes populist and false comments such as that “migrants take up Germans’ appointments at the dentist”<sup>9</sup> as well as demonising the Greens, one of the members of the

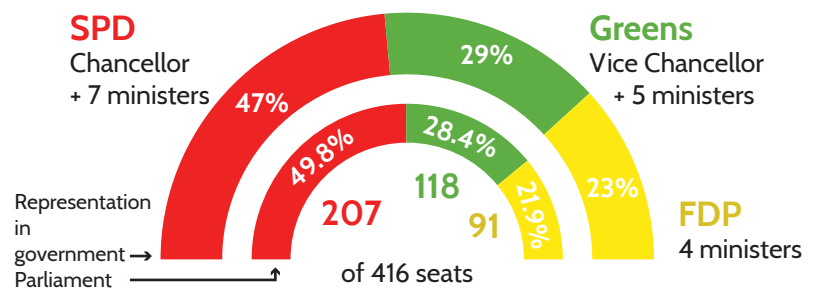
government coalition. The move of the centre-right towards the extreme right, in order not to lose votes to the latter, is nothing new either, as it has already happened in other countries.

Only after the disclosure of a meeting of AfD members (along with some from the CDU), which discussed secret plans to “remigrate” (i.e. deport) millions of people considered “foreigners” by far-right groups, even if they were born in Germany and have German citizenship<sup>10</sup>, was there a movement of the “sleeping majority” in Germany that filled the streets across the country against right-wing extremism and in favour of democracy. Since then, the party has seen a drop in voting intentions, falling below 20 per cent, but retaining its position as the second strongest party today. With the European Parliament elections coming up in June this year, the campaign could see a further rise in right-wing extremists.

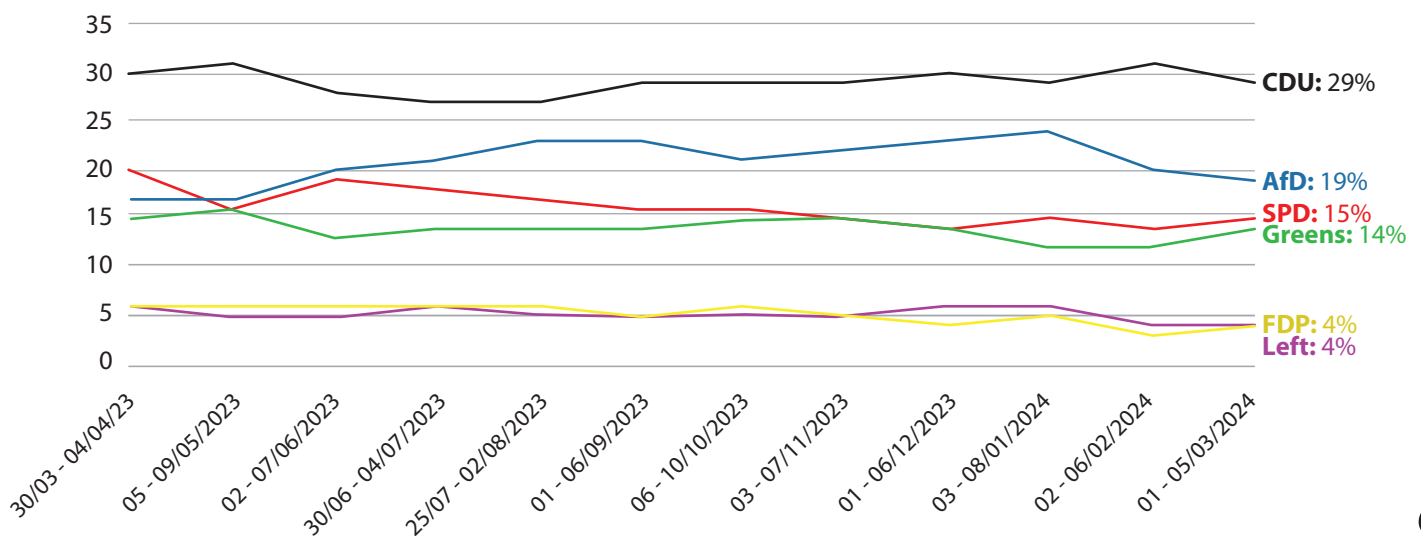
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**Composition of the “Traffic Light” Coalition and percentage of seats in Parliament**



**Changes in voting intention for the Bundestag elections**



Source: yougov.de

# Meloni: Italy, the tricolour and the Mediterranean

The first woman to become prime minister in Italy is right-wing. Silvio Berlusconi, former Italian Prime Minister and her ally during the campaign that elected her, described her as: “*Obstinate, overbearing, arrogant, offensive. You can’t agree with her*”. The Italian politician allowed his words written on a piece of paper to be filmed after the results of the 2022 elections, when Meloni (the most voted) and Salvini shared the posts to form a new government, leaving Berlusconi (already of the old guard) out. Meloni paid back her ally Berlusconi, leader of *Forza Italia* (Forward Italy), in a complimentary way in his obituary. Through her social network Instagram, Meloni described him as: “Combatant, courageous, determined” and continued: “Thank you, Silvio. We won’t forget you”. The Prime Minister had been Youth Minister during Berlusconi’s government.

Defending the famous slogan “God, Country and Family”, Meloni won support for her incisive speeches and led her young party, *Fratelli d’Italia* (Fdi) or Brothers of Italy, to the highest office in the Italian executive. After years in opposition to Mario Draghi (former prime minister), with 26 per cent of the vote, Meloni led her party from an insignificant acronym in Italian politics in 2012 to the head of government in 2022.

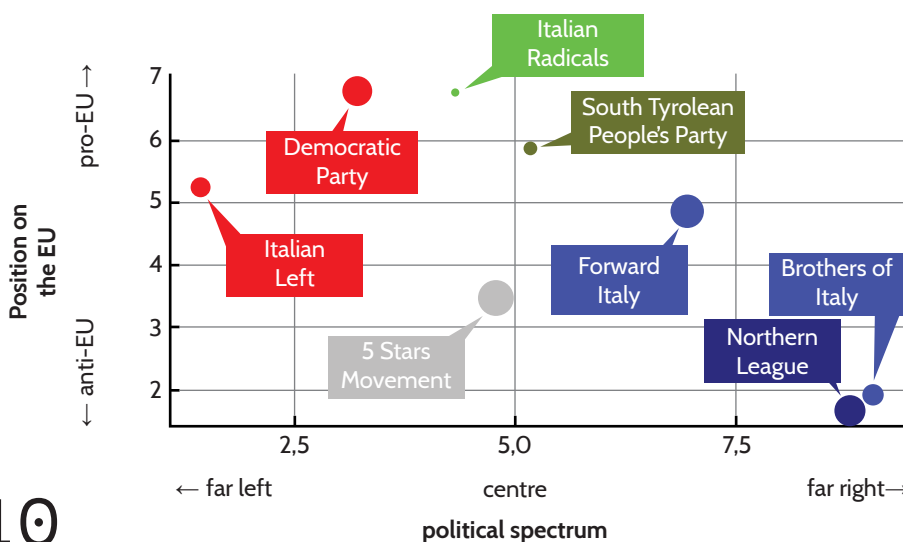
The origins of the Fratelli d’Italia are somewhat controversial. The party has its roots in the Italian Social Movement (MSI), founded in 1946 by members of Mussolini’s fascist regime and dissolved in 1995. From the MSI, which in the 1990s became the National Alliance, the Fdi kept the tricolour flame (green, white and red, like the colours of the Italian flag), a symbol sometimes associated with fascism.

Furthermore, the participation of people linked to Italy’s fascist past in Meloni’s government is causing distrust among the opposition. An example of this was the appointment of Ignazio La Russa to the presidency of the Senate, which was not supported by Berlusconi and his party, *Forza Italia*, but passed with opposition votes. Ignazio La Russa is the son of a secretary of Mussolini’s fascist party.

After almost a year and a half in office (starting in October 2022), one could say that Meloni has changed the tone of her rhetoric. This is because, of course, the rhetoric of an election campaign is different from that needed to govern, even in a coalition with a majority.

Italy has had 68 governments since the fall of fascism, which is an average of almost one government a year. It is no coincidence that Italian politics has gone through many periods of instability. Although the volatility of parliamentary governments may be greater than that of presidential ones, this average reveals an unusual rate of government change, even compared to other parliamentary models, such as the German one. This model was chosen in order to avoid the concentration of power that could occur in a presidential system, for example. Meloni therefore has the challenge of staying in power for five years in order to achieve the reforms, or at least part of them, that she promised in her campaign.

## Ideological division of Italian parties between left-right and position in favour of or against the European Union



According to data from the Chapel Hill Expert Survey database (last updated in 2019). The size of the bubbles represents the strength of the parties at the time the levels were measured.

### Party families

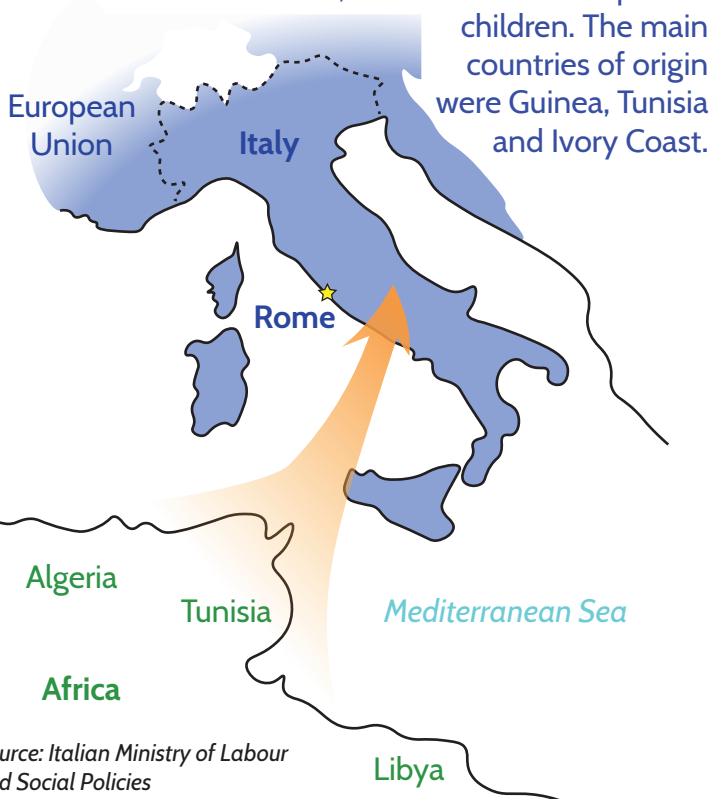
- Radical right
- Conservative
- Liberal
- Socialist
- Regional
- No family

Meloni was elected promising to fight illegal immigration and even spoke of a naval blockade of Libya during the campaign. “I won’t allow Italy to become Europe’s refugee camp”, said Meloni after the arrival of 10,000 people on Lampedusa beach in southern Italy in 2023. But after more than a year in office, the Prime Minister admitted that she had hoped to do more.

“I expected more on immigration. We are working hard, but the results are not what we expected, because the issue is very complex. This issue deserves a second phase of efforts”, said the Italian PM. Her electorate is certainly not satisfied with the figures that indicate an increase in the arrival of immigrants in the country between 2022 and 2023, totalling 132,867 immigrants who landed in Italy last year, reports the Portuguese *Diario de Noticias*. UN figures indicate that the majority of the almost 261,000 migrants who crossed the Mediterranean from North Africa in 2023 entered Europe via Italy, points out Euronews.

In addition, debates on the migration issue revolve around the need for more labour in the face of low birth rates, as well as the cultural compatibility of migratory waves. It is not just about whether or not to welcome immigrants, but also which immigrants. In this sense, a bill presented by Senator Roberto Menia, from Meloni’s party, could have an impact on the process of obtaining Italian citizenship - even for Brazilians.

In 2023, 158,000 refugees arrived in Italy, 50 per cent more than in 2022 and 130 per cent more than in 2021. 17,000 were unaccompanied children. The main countries of origin were Guinea, Tunisia and Ivory Coast.



Source: Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Policies

According to the Brazilian newspaper *Gazeta do Povo*, if approved, the proposal would mean that in order to be recognised as an Italian citizen without the need to live in the country, which can be done up to the third generation (great-grandchildren), it would be necessary to prove that the applicant speaks the Italian language. The level required would be B1, which indicates an ability to converse and write about general subjects, for example.

However, in an increasingly globalised world, many people - it is estimated that there are more than 30 million descendants of Italians in Brazil alone - seek Italian citizenship as a way of diversifying their businesses, expanding their travel possibilities, or even as an alternative way of living in retirement. In other words, the granting of citizenship does not necessarily have to do with the applicant’s permanent move to Italy.

In the words of Senator Roberto Menia, who proposed the law: “Citizenship is a serious thing, just like national belonging and Italianness. It means adhering to a series of unwritten principles that include the way you are, the values you believe in and the language you speak”. In the same vein, Francesco Lollobrigida, Minister of Agriculture and Food Security, went so far as to say: “We should support more births, not ethnic replacement”, referring to the low birth rates in contrast to the arrival of immigrants. The comment was heavily criticised as “racist” and “xenophobic”. In any case, it reveals a sentiment that is not as uncommon as once thought, that nationality is also related to ethnicity. In other words, for some, being Italian means speaking Italian, having Italian values and culture, but also looking a certain way.

However, this simplistic categorisation ignores the differences within Italy itself. Italian is derived from Fiorentino and became the country’s lingua franca after unification, but there are thousands of dialects present in Italy. An Italian from Sicily certainly recognises themselves culturally differently from an Italian born in Milan. Most of the population communicates on a day-to-day basis using dialects and it is not uncommon for people from different regions to be unable to understand each other due to the differences in dialects or even the use of other languages, as is the case in South Tyrol, for example, where German is mostly spoken.

**Maria Mont’ Serrat Bomfim**

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# The case of Portuguese “Chega”

The democratisation process in contemporary Portugal was marked by the Carnation Revolution, which took place on 25 April 1974 after 48 years of authoritarianism led by the Portuguese Estado Novo. In the period between 1974 and 1976, the country experienced a pre-constitutional transition marked by an ideological environment aligned with the conceptions of the political left in reaction to the almost five decades of predominance of the logic of the non-liberal and ultra-conservative right.

After the turmoil of the political regime transition period, Portugal began its journey towards democratic consolidation and the establishment of the Third Portuguese Republic, which continues to this day. Internally, the constitutional moment was a central element in the process of structuring the political regime. Externally, Portugal moved towards the European option, expressed through the country's application to join the Council of Europe and its integration into the European Economic Community.

In the field of political disputes over the centres of power, the dynamic established in the new democratic period was almost completely restricted to the following parties: the Socialist Party (PS) and the Social Democratic Party (PPD/PSD). The record of representatives elected to the Assembly of the Republic, the legislative body of the Portuguese state, exemplifies the centrality assumed by these parties in the period after the fall of the Estado Novo.

The first parliamentary term of the Third Portuguese Republic (1976 - 1980) had 263 elected deputies, almost 70 per cent of whom were affiliated to the PS (107 deputies) or the PPD (73

deputies). In the fifth parliamentary term of the Third Portuguese Republic (1987 - 1991), the Assembly of the Republic had just over 83 per cent of elected MPs from these two parties, with the PPD/PSD clearly dominating with 148 elected MPs. In any case, what we see throughout the period after the fall of the Estado Novo is a dynamic of struggle for the central arenas of political power centred on these two political parties, with a greater dominance throughout the period of the PPD/PSD, the party with the largest number of governments under its initiative throughout the Third Portuguese Republic.

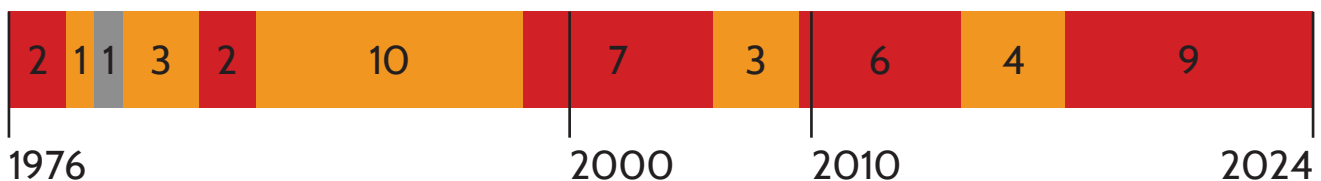
Despite the widespread dominance of the PPD/PSD and PS, in recent years the country has seen the growth of the local far right, symbolised by the rise of the Chega Party, founded in 2019. In its very first election, the party won a seat in parliament, with its president and founder André Ventura elected as a member of parliament for the Lisbon constituency, the largest in the country.

In 2022, the party became the third political force in the Portuguese parliament, electing 12 deputies. Consequently, the recent trajectory of “Chega” has provoked much debate about the growth of the far right in Portugal.

The party's meteoric trajectory is directly associated with the figure of its leader, André Ventura. Like other politicians who have recently become popular and carry the outsider label, Ventura rose to prominence in the Portuguese media because of his provocative opinions about Portuguese football clubs on sports programmes.

## Portuguese governments of the Third Republic by party of the prime minister

*How many years each party spent in government...*



■ Socialist Party (PS)  
*centre-left*

■ Social Democratic Party (PSD)  
*centre-right / right*

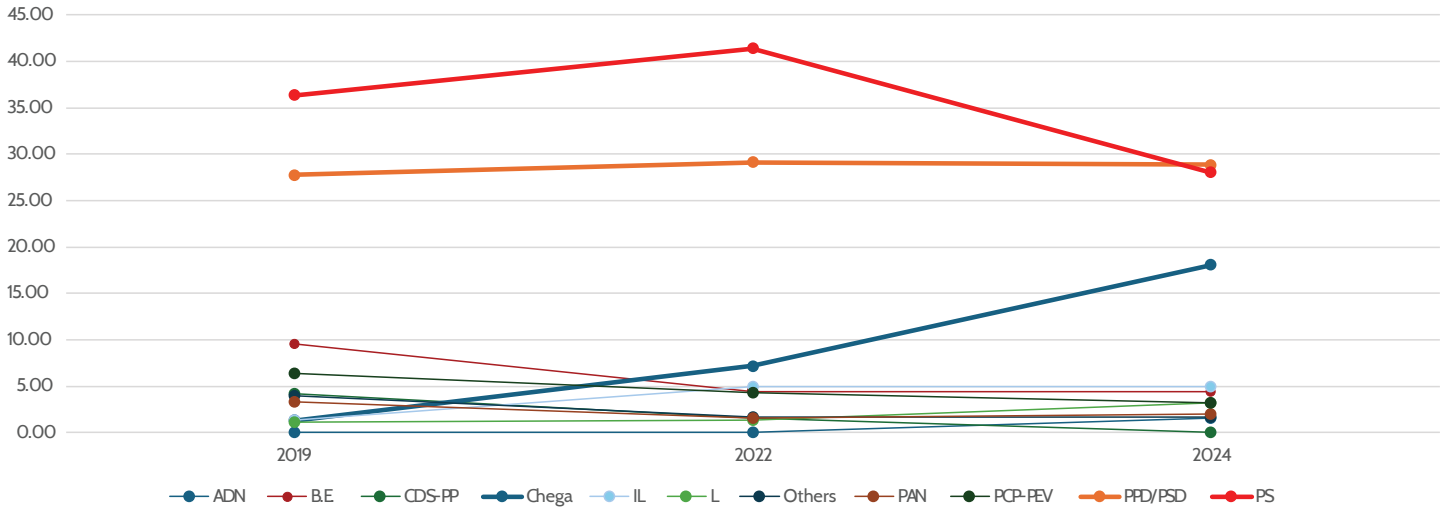
■ Independent

Although Ventura had been involved in politics, this aspect of his career was largely unknown to the general public.

Like other controversial far-right figures, André Ventura's rise comes in the wake of a process of political erosion of traditional political actors and, in the specific case of Portugal, the impacts of the 2008 financial crisis and the increase in migratory flows. In its Founding Political Manifesto, it is possi-

In any case, the rise of Chega has been a vector for the consolidation of extremist movements, according to a report by the Global Project Against Hate and Extremism (GPAHE). The organisation identified a gradual dominance of the party on the Portuguese far right, especially through the work of "poisoning" the national discourse with racist, anti-LGBTQIAP+, anti-immigration and anti-Gypsy rhetoric.

### Changes in the percentage of votes for parties in the last Portuguese parliamentary elections



Source: General Secretariat / Ministry of Internal Affairs

ble to see propositions that run counter to the quest to build a democratic, open and diverse Portugal. The document states that the party will propose the "prohibition of political and religious practices that offend the Portuguese legal system and European cultural roots".

Next, the Founding Political Manifesto states that the Party clearly and assertively rejects "all forms of racism, xenophobia and any form of discrimination contrary to the fundamental values by which European societies are guided". Despite this, in 2020, with the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, André Ventura even advocated a specific lockdown plan for the Roma community.

The Founding Political Manifesto also defends notions of breaking with the existing political system by stating that the party will not be just "one more" party to be part of the political system "that is suffocating us", specifying that "Chega is not the life jacket of the Third Republic. On the contrary, Chega brings with it the Fourth Republic".

Thus, although on the surface the party has traits typical of far-right populist parties in Europe, Chega has also carried with it radicalised far-right movements of a nationalist, identitarian, conspiracist and supremacist nature.

### Barnabé Lucas de Oliveira Neto

*Master in Political Science and International Relations.*

“The Expanse” is a series originally produced by the American channel SyFy, but continued by Amazon, based on the series of books by James S. A. Corey. The story takes place some 300 years in the future, around 2350. In that time, humans have expanded into the inner solar system, colonising the moon (Luna), Mars and asteroids in the Asteroid Belt. Earth no longer lives under disputes between various powers, since it is under the tutelage of the UN, in a kind of world government. On the other hand, power struggles have been transferred to space, where every drop of water and particle of oxygen is valuable.

Mars, on the other hand, has become independent and lives in a "cold war" with Earth. This reality underpins life on the planet, with a very war-mongering culture and compulsory military service

for at least 20 years.

Despite all the technological advances, The Expanse shows that, even centuries into the future, human nature remains the same. That is, self-interested. Transposing this interpretation to the international stage or, more precisely in the case of the series, interplanetary, we see a very realistic vision of space expansion. It is in this context that a scientific discovery increases the tension between the actors. Everyone wants exclusive access to the new discovery, since each actor also considers it dangerous for the others to control something powerful that they cannot access.

Here's some information about the places where the adventures of Holden, the main character, and his partners on the Canterbury ship take place.

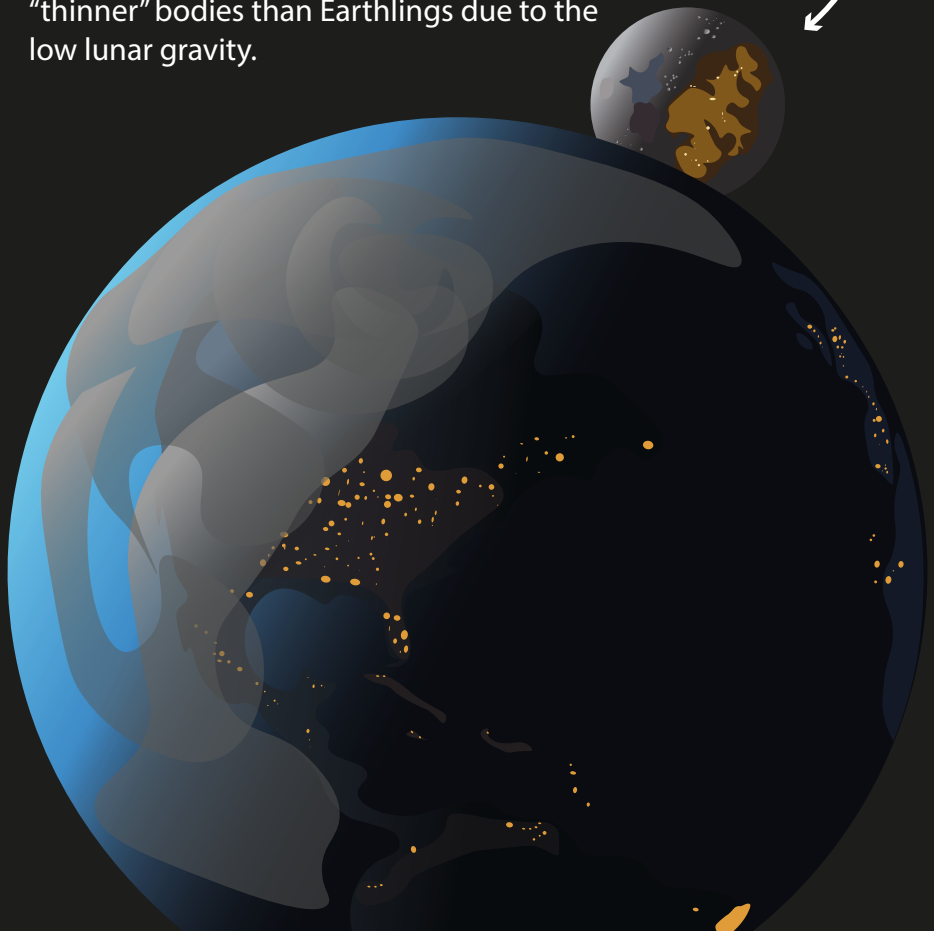


## Earth

Governed by the UN, the planet is experiencing a population explosion. In this context, natural and social resources are becoming increasingly scarce. Without work for everyone, unemployed earthlings have access to the basic universal income, which, however, does not guarantee them a dignified life. Having or not having a job is not a personal decision, but the result of a global lottery where everyone competes - not always on an equal footing. Earth, as the cradle of humanity, is trying to maintain its political preponderance in the Solar System, exploiting resources in the Asteroid Belt and trying to undermine Martian autonomy.

## Luna

Earth's natural satellite has been extensively colonised and has a population of around one billion people. Its citizens are under UN jurisdiction and have rights and responsibilities as UN citizens. The welfare state on Earth does not extend to Luna, as its inhabitants are generally better off than those living on Earth. Most of the population have "thinner" bodies than Earthlings due to the low lunar gravity.



# etary relations

## Mars

Officially the “Martian Congressional Republic” (MCP), the planet has a population of four billion people. The harsh conditions on the planet, which include a lack of fresh air for example, make the Martian population despise Earthlings, as they see them as people who have destroyed a perfect planet. To maintain its independence, Mars invests heavily in its armed forces. Its space navy, although smaller than Earth’s, is considered more technologically advanced. The MCP also seeks political preponderance in the Solar System and thus, together with Earth, oppresses the inhabitants of the Belt.



## Asteroid Belt

Among the thousands of celestial bodies in the Belt, some are home to important bases. These are Ceres, Vesta, Pallas and Hygiea. There live the so-called “Belters”, people who were born and live forever in this corner of the Solar System. The conditions in the Belt are the worst in the System, with its cities resembling large slums. Due to the lack of gravity, Belters have weaker, curvier bodies and are unable to withstand Earth’s atmospheric conditions. As a result, the Belters live in a segregated way and end up developing their own language (a kind of Creole) and culture. Divided into factions and without a centralised government, they are the apparently most vulnerable actors in the dispute between Earth and Mars for dominance of the System.

Based on what we see in *The Expanse*, the war of the future is not very different from that of the present or the past. As the Prussian Clausewitz emphasises in his book *Vom Kriege*, the nature of war is immutable. Clausewitz (1984) emphasises the rational and irrational elements of war, which is summarised in his Trinitarian analysis. For him, war is a phenomenon of human relations, characterised by the interaction between passions (intense emotion), chance (luck) and objectives. In this analysis, passions are naturally associated with people, chance is associated with what cannot be controlled and objectives refer to rational calculations formulated by the government. In other words, rational and irrational elements interact. In this way, the general and military strategist realises that there are countless factors that cannot be controlled in a war.

The series stands out from other science fiction stories by bringing realism to the political relationships between the characters. In addition to the physical distance between the actors, physics plays an important role, as the speed of communication is limited by the speed of light. A message from Earth takes at least three minutes to reach Mars. It takes half an hour to reach Jupiter. It takes months for a fleet to reach an attacked base. This adds a new dimension to politics, diplomacy and warfare, meaning that relevant decisions with an interplanetary impact often have to be made in the “dark”. The six-season series is available on Amazon Prime.

In the world of politics (national and international) there are also many bizarre events. Here are some of the recent ones!

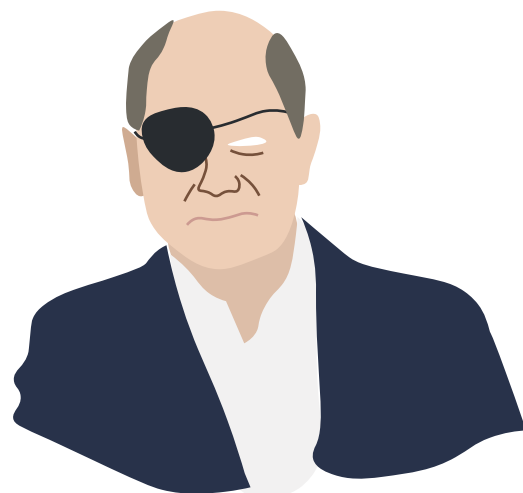
## Diplomacy too good to be true



Having as many relationships as possible with other countries is something that most countries in the world want. It can generate good agreements, advantages for both sides and put a country in a better position on the international stage. Paraguay, however, has gone one step further: it has signed a bilateral relations agreement with a country that doesn't exist! Arnaldo Chamorro, head of the office of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, lost his job after signing a document and posting a photo with representatives from the **United States of Kailasa**. Through the document, Paraguay was willing to "support the admission of the United States of Kailasa as an independent sovereign state in various international organizations such as, among others, the United Nations". In an interview with a local radio station, Chamorro said he didn't know where the country was. Even if it doesn't exist, the Kailasan diplomats seem to be quite successful in their mission, as **they even took part in two debates at the UN in 2023**.

## Are you ready, citizens?!

Accidents happen to anyone, including heads of state. The German Chancellor, Olaf Scholz, decided to get ahead of any talk of a domestic accident and posted a photo with a **pirate eye patch** - to get ahead of the memes that might appear on the internet. On his Instagram profile, Scholz said he was "excited to see the memes" that would come from his photo. Many associated him directly with the captain of the SpongeBob cartoon. The German premier appeared at several official events wearing the eye patch until his eye completely recovered.



## The president's best friend



Argentina's new president has been the talk of the town for various reasons related to his ultra-libertarian and far-right political ideology. However, it is his relationship with his dogs that is drawing the most attention (in a strange way). Not only does the president have several dogs cloned from his dog Conan, who died seven years ago, but he also claims to be in contact with the original Conan through a medium. Celia Melamed, responsible for the Argentine president's esoteric conversion, claims to have the gift of talking to animals. However, she remains professional when giving interviews, refusing to repeat what the dog told her in order to maintain "professional secrecy".



In this section, we give you some tips on what you can do to have fun while applying some of your knowledge of domestic and foreign policy! Take a look below!



## For All Mankind

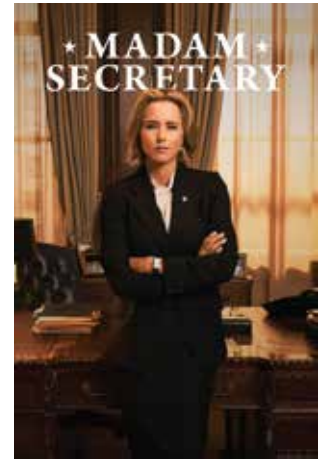
what: series      seasons: 4 (40 episodes)      year: 2019-  
where: Apple TV+      episode length: ~45 min

July 16, 1969, the first man steps on the moon. The Soviet flag is raised on Earth's natural satellite, leaving the US behind in the space race. This is the premise of "For All Mankind", Apple TV+'s science fiction series that explores an alternative Cold War reality in which the US fails to reach the moon and the Soviet Union prevails. The results of this event in human history are completely different from the developments that have taken place since the 1970s, with the USSR remaining a world power for much longer and women gaining more rights in the USA.

## Madam Secretary

what: series      seasons: 6 (120 episodes)      year: 2014-2019  
where: Sky      episode length: ~45 min

Madam Secretary is a fictional series produced by CBS that deals with the life of Elizabeth McCord, Secretary of State of the United States of America, a position equivalent to that of Minister of Foreign Affairs in Brazil. For a work of fiction, the series certainly touches on very real current issues. From the ethnic cleansing suffered by the Rohingya in Myanmar, to the nuclear agreement with Iran, to the fight against terrorism, both international and domestic. This is undoubtedly the great success of the series, bringing light to relevant issues of our time that can often go unnoticed by the news. Madame Secretary is often faced with situations in which she has to choose between the pragmatism common to Realpolitik and the interventionist idealism of American foreign policy. How idealistic can a statesman be? Or how realistic can you be without being cynical?



## The Law According to Lidia Poët (La Legge di Lidia Poët)

what: series      seasons: 1 (6 episodes)      year: 2023-  
where: Netflix      episode length: ~50 min

"The Law According to Lidia Poët" romanticizes the life of Italy's first female lawyer. The series is set in 1883, when Lidia Poët had just become the first Italian woman to graduate in law and join the bar association in Turin, northern Italy. A few months later, however, she has her registration withdrawn because the judges say that the profession of lawyer is not suitable for a woman, because of her clothes and because she may be preferred for her gender. Lidia doesn't give up and starts working through her brother, who is also a lawyer, defending people that society has already judged even before the courts.

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