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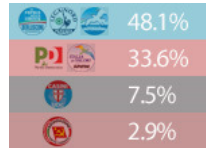
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- Global Warming
- Gordon Brown
- Hamas
- Immigration
- Iran
- Iraq War
- Kevin Rudd
- Latin America
- Nicolas Sarkozy
- North Korea
- Oil and Gas
- Same-Sex Marriage
- Silvio Berlusconi
- Stem Cell Research
- Stephen Harper
- Terrorism
- Vladimir Putin
- Yukio Hatoyama

Berlusconi's Alliance Stays Ahead in Italy April 13, 2009



(Angus Reid Global Monitor) - The governing coalition of centre-right parties remains the most popular political group in Italy, according to a poll by Arnaldo Ferrari Nasi. 48.1 per cent of respondents would vote for the Italian People of Freedom Party (PdL), the Northern League (LN), or the Movement for Autonomy (MPA) in the next legislative election.

The centre-left alliance encompassing the Democratic Party (PD) and Italy of Values (Lista di Pietro) is second with 33.6 per cent. The Union of the Centre is third with 7.5 per cent. Support is lower for the Communist Refoundation Party (PRC), The Right (La Destra), the Greens (Verdi), the Italian Communists (CI), and the Socialist Party (PS).

Italian voters renewed the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate in April 2008. Final results gave Silvio Berlusconi's right-wing coalition 344 seats in the lower house, and 174 seats in the upper house. The victory put an end to the government of the centre-left Union (Unione), headed by Romano Prodi.

Berlusconi was sworn in as the country's new head of government in May 2008. He had previously served as prime minister from May 1994 to January 1995, and from June 2001 to May 2006.

On Feb. 21, the PD elected Dario Franceschini as its new leader.

Earlier this month, the town of L'Aquila in Central Italy was hit by a devastating earthquake. The natural disaster killed more than 280 people, injured more than 1,000, and left 28,000 residents without a home.

As he visited one of the sites where tents were set up as temporary homes for earthquake victims, Berlusconi told a reporter: "They should see it like a weekend of camping."

Former Italian senator and PRC member Rina Gagliardi chided Berlusconi for his "insensitivity," adding, "He can never be negative, so his response is extreme optimism."

Polling Data

If a new election to the Chamber of Deputies took place tomorrow, which party would you vote for?

Italian People of Freedom Party (PdL) / Northern League (LN) / Movement for Autonomy (MPA)	48.1%
Democratic Party (PD) / Italy of Values (Lista di Pietro)	33.6%
Union of the Centre	7.5%
Communist Refoundation Party (PRC)	2.9%
The Right (La Destra)	2.1%
Green (Verdi)	1.5%
Italian Communists (CI)	1.1%
Socialist Party (PS)	1.1%
Other centre-left parties	1.0%
Other centre-right parties	1.2%

Source: Arnaldo Ferrari Nasi

Methodology: Telephone interviews with 1,200 Italian adults, conducted on Mar. 23 and Mar. 24, 2009. No margin of error was provided.