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# Environmental Policy as a Test of Democratic Commitment: Time Inconsistency and Conflict Avoidance in Italy under the Meloni Government

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**Abstract.** This chapter examines environmental policy under the Meloni government as a lens through which to assess the capacity of democratic systems to sustain credible long-term commitments. Focusing on Italy, it argues that recent policy developments are best understood not as simple retrenchment or policy reversal, but as the outcome of two interacting dynamics: time inconsistency and conflict avoidance. Climate policies generate concentrated short-term costs and diffuse long-term benefits, creating incentives for governments to recalibrate commitments over time. At the same time, politically sensitive trade-offs are often managed through institutional and discursive mechanisms that reduce their visibility, including multi-level governance, temporal postponement, and strategic framing. The Italian case shows how environmental commitments can be formally maintained while their substantive content is progressively reshaped in practice. This pattern allows governments to navigate distributive conflict without fully politicising it, but at the cost of reduced transparency and weakened democratic accountability. More broadly, the chapter suggests that environmental policy provides a particularly demanding test of

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democratic commitment in contexts characterised by economic constraint, electoral pressure, and complex governance structures.

**Keywords:** environmental policy; time inconsistency; conflict avoidance; democratic accountability; Italy.

## 1. *Introduction: Environmental Policy and the Limits of Democratic Commitment*

Over the past three years, environmental policy has become an increasingly salient domain through which to observe the evolving dynamics of Italian democracy. Under Giorgia Meloni's government, Italy has operated in a highly constrained context marked by geopolitical instability, energy insecurity, inflationary pressures, and the implementation of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP), the EU-funded programme designed to support post-pandemic recovery through investments and reforms. In this setting, environmental policy sits at the intersection of European constraints, domestic distributive tensions, and long-term policy commitments.

Environmental policy under the Meloni government should not be understood simply as a domain of policy inconsistency or partial retrenchment. Rather, it reveals a broader difficulty within the Italian political system in sustaining credible long-term commitments under conditions of distributive conflict, external constraint, and electoral pressure. Environmental policy is especially revealing in this respect because its intertemporal structure and uneven distributive effects make these tensions particularly visible.

Italy has formally maintained its commitment to ambitious environmental and climate objectives, largely anchored in European Union frameworks and in the ecological transition pillar of the NRRP. At the same time, however, implementation

has been marked by delays, recalibrations, and selective revisions. Developments concerning the revision of the NRRP, the political framing of the Green Deal, and the redefinition of energy priorities suggest that environmental commitments have remained formally in place while being progressively reshaped in practice.

The question, therefore, is not simply whether the current government has been more or less supportive of environmental policy, but what the Italian case reveals about the ability of democratic systems to sustain long-term commitments in contexts marked by economic constraints and political trade-offs.

The analysis developed here interprets environmental policy as a test of democratic commitment, understood as the ability of political institutions to maintain intertemporal policy trajectories despite changing incentives. As a policy domain characterised by diffuse long-term benefits, concentrated short-term costs, and high implementation complexity, environmental policy provides a particularly demanding test of this capacity.

More specifically, this chapter argues that two dynamics interact. The first is time inconsistency: policies that are optimal ex ante become politically costly ex post, once their distributive implications become salient (Kydland & Prescott, 1977). Climate policy is particularly vulnerable to this dynamic because it involves immediate and often concentrated costs, while its benefits are long-term and diffuse (Helm et al., 2003; Levin et al., 2012). The second is a logic of conflict avoidance: instead of openly politicising environmentally costly choices, political actors often displace, postpone, or technicise conflict, especially through multi-level governance and regional implementation. This pattern is consistent with broader accounts of blame avoidance and depoliticisation, in which

governments seek to minimise the visibility of politically costly decisions by shifting responsibility across institutional levels or framing them in technical terms (Weaver, 1986; Flinders & Buller, 2006). The result is not the absence of politics, but a form of attenuated politicisation in which environmentally relevant decisions are frequently recalibrated without becoming the object of clear democratic choice.

In the Italian case, this issue emerges in a particularly clear way. On the one hand, recent research points to a stable and centralised governing structure, characterised by strong leadership, limited intra-coalition conflict, and a concentration of decision-making power in the executive (Bull & Polverari, 2025; Borghetto et al., 2025; Cavalieri et al., 2024). On the other hand, environmental policy displays persistent signs of recalibration, selective implementation, and strategic ambiguity (Pizzimenti, 2024).

The chapter proceeds by first reconstructing the trajectory of environmental policy under the Meloni government, focusing on patterns of policy adjustment and implementation. It then situates these developments within the broader political economy of climate policy, before examining how distributive conflict translates into political pressure through voter preferences, organised interests, and public narratives. The final step of the analysis shows how these pressures are mediated through governance practices that reduce the visibility of conflict, with implications for democratic accountability.

## 2. *Environmental Policy in Italy under the Meloni Government: Recalibration, Drift, and Strategic Ambiguity*

Italy's environmental policy trajectory under the Meloni government is best understood as a process of progressive recalibration rather than abrupt policy change. Long-term commitments are formally maintained, but their substantive content is reshaped through implementation choices, resource allocation, and political framing. This dynamic reflects the interaction between structural features of Italian governance, European constraints, and the increasing political salience of environmental issues.

A key element of this configuration is the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP), which combines substantial financial resources with a dense system of conditionalities, timelines, and targets defined at the European level. Rather than a purely external constraint, the NRRP is better understood as a jointly constructed commitment device, combining European conditionality with prior national negotiation. In principle, such a framework should strengthen policy commitment by limiting the scope for subsequent discretionary change. In practice, however, the Italian case reveals a more ambivalent outcome.

While the government has formally reaffirmed its commitment to the NRRP and its ecological transition component, it has simultaneously engaged in a process of selective revision and reallocation of priorities. Investments related to environmental protection, particularly those concerning ecosystem resilience, hydrogeological risk, and territorial prevention, have been scaled back, postponed, or restructured (Pizzimenti, 2024). These adjustments have taken place in a context characterised by inflationary pressures, energy price volatility, and broader economic uncertainty,

which have increased the salience of short-term constraints relative to long-term planning.

This dynamic is also visible in the government's response to sectoral pressures. During the protests of agricultural workers in early 2024, explicitly mobilised against the perceived costs of European green policies, the Prime Minister acknowledged that "European agricultural policy had to change" and announced an increase in NRRP resources for the sector from five to eight billion euros (Sky TG24, 2024a). This episode illustrates more broadly how distributive pressures translate into immediate policy adjustments, reinforcing a pattern in which environmental commitments are maintained formally but recalibrated in practice.

Environmental shocks further reinforce this pattern. Flood events across northern and central Italy have exposed long-standing vulnerabilities in territorial governance. Recent research on the Marche and Emilia-Romagna floods suggests that extreme weather events have increased media attention to climate change, but also that their interpretation remains politically contested, with different actors emphasising climate causes, land management, or territorial vulnerabilities in different ways (Imperatore & Frazzetta, 2023). While such events could strengthen support for preventive environmental policies, they also generate immediate demands for compensation and reconstruction, shifting attention toward short-term responses and reinforcing a reactive policy style (Pizzimenti, 2024). More generally, such dynamics point to a reactive policy style – rooted in longer-standing features of Italian governance – in which environmental shocks do not necessarily strengthen long-term commitment but instead reinforce the salience of short-term responses and resource reallocation.

Energy and industrial policy provide an even clearer illustration of these tensions. The government has maintained formal commitments to decarbonisation while simultaneously emphasising energy security, technological neutrality, and the protection of industrial capacity. This shift is also reflected at the institutional level, most notably in the renaming of the Ministry of Ecological Transition into the Ministry of Environment and Energy Security (MASE), which signals a rebalancing of priorities and a more explicit integration of energy security concerns within environmental policy. This positioning has been articulated explicitly in public discourse. Speaking at the 2024 Confindustria assembly, Prime Minister Meloni warned that "decarbonisation pursued at the cost of deindustrialisation is a debacle" and that the ecological transition cannot come at the expense of employment and industrial production (Energia Italia News, 2024).

These concerns are not abstract. The automotive sector alone employs over one million workers across the Italian value chain and accounts for a substantial share of industrial output and national income, making it one of the most economically sensitive sectors to climate policy (ANFIA, 2025). In this context, policy choices concerning decarbonisation are inevitably tied to employment, competitiveness, and territorial stability. Taken together, these developments suggest that, in the Italian case, as in other European contexts where climate policies generate distributive pressures, environmental policy is continuously reshaped through the interaction between external constraints and domestic distributive pressures, rather than through explicit policy reversal.

Italy's positioning at the European level provides a clear illustration of these dynamics. In late 2025, Meloni joined other European leaders in calling for a revision of EU automotive regulation to preserve hybrid technologies and biofuels beyond

2035, arguing against what was described as "ideological dogmatism" in climate policy and warning that "there is nothing green in an industrial desert" (Corriere della Sera, 2025). This stance reflects a broader attempt to reconcile environmental objectives with industrial competitiveness. More broadly, it is embedded in a public discourse that has increasingly framed the European Green Deal as excessively rigid or "ideological", emphasising its perceived risks for industrial competitiveness and economic sustainability (Il Sole 24 Ore, 2025b).

A similar pattern emerges in Italy's opposition to specific European measures. In June 2024, Italy voted against the Nature Restoration Law, a central component of the Green Deal, in a context marked by agricultural protests and concerns over the economic impact of environmental regulation (Sky TG24, 2024b). Here again, environmental commitments were evaluated through the lens of their distributive consequences.

These dynamics are further reinforced by the increasing – though still partial – politicisation of climate change in Italy. Recent research points to rising salience and broader actor involvement, but also to uneven patterns of polarisation and the persistence of depoliticizing tendencies in parts of the debate (Biancalana et al., 2023). Government discourse has consistently framed climate measures in terms of economic costs and social impact, emphasising risks for households, firms, and employment. At the same time, this politicisation does not necessarily lead to open confrontation. Political actors often combine discursive contestation with practical conflict containment.

A central role in this process is played by multi-level governance. The interaction between European obligations, national decision-making, and regional implementation creates multiple arenas in which policy choices can be adjusted, delayed, or reframed. Regional governments, in particular, have

played an active role in shaping how environmental measures are applied.

Policies related to air quality and mobility provide a clear example. Restrictions on Euro 5 diesel vehicles in the Po Valley – measures with significant distributive implications – were postponed from 2025 to 2026, their scope reduced, and regions were allowed to adopt alternative measures to meet EU targets (Fratelli d'Italia, 2025; Il Sole 24 Ore, 2025a). The decision was explicitly justified in terms of protecting families, workers, and small businesses from disproportionate costs.

Tensions between the central government and northern regions over air-quality governance further illustrate these dynamics. In 2025, Piemonte, Lombardia, and Veneto – regions governed by centre-right coalitions – challenged national implementation measures before the Constitutional Court, opposing a framework that assigned them primary responsibility for meeting EU standards while exposing them to potential sanctions. As reported by Il Sole 24 Ore, this dispute was closely linked to the politically sensitive issue of emission limits and traffic restrictions in the Po Valley (Il Sole 24 Ore, 2025a).

Taken together, these developments point to a pattern of structured policy drift. Environmental commitments are not abandoned, but they are progressively reshaped through recalibration, selective implementation, and strategic ambiguity, reflecting the interaction between external constraints, domestic political pressures, and institutional characteristics, while reducing the visibility of political choices and complicating processes of accountability.

## 3. *Time Inconsistency and the Political Economy of Climate Policy*

The concept of time inconsistency provides a useful framework for interpreting the patterns observed in the previous section, particularly the recurrent adjustment of environmental policy commitments. Policies that are optimal when adopted may become politically costly once their distributive implications become visible (Kydland & Prescott, 1977). In the case of environmental policy, this dynamic is particularly pronounced due to the asymmetry between immediate costs and long-term benefits.

Climate policies generate uneven effects across sectors and regions. While their aggregate benefits are broad, their costs are concentrated among specific groups. In Italy, this asymmetry is especially evident in sectors such as automotive and energy, where large numbers of workers and firms are directly exposed to the transition. As noted above, the automotive sector alone involves more than one million workers and represents a substantial share of national output (ANFIA, 2025), making it a focal point of political sensitivity. More broadly, these dynamics are consistent with findings showing that the political contestation of climate policy is not driven only by the material concentration of costs, but also by how these costs are interpreted and framed, often as imposed by external or elite-driven agendas (Lockwood, 2018). As these costs become visible, political incentives shift. Under the Meloni government, this has translated into repeated adjustments to policy trajectories, particularly in areas affecting mobility, energy pricing, and industrial regulation. The postponement of diesel restrictions, the recalibration of NRRP measures, and the emphasis on technological neutrality all reflect this shift.

The labour market constitutes a key channel through which these dynamics operate. The green transition creates both winners and losers, and individuals exposed to the risks of decarbonisation are less likely to support environmental policies (Cavallotti et al., 2025). In the Italian context, this dynamic is amplified by regional disparities and limited opportunities for economic adjustment, particularly in industrial areas.

The persistence of the so-called "job-killing argument" is therefore not surprising. As Vona (2019) shows, concerns about employment losses have a disproportionate impact on political acceptability. In Italy, these concerns have been explicitly articulated in political discourse, particularly in relation to industrial policy and energy transition, reinforcing the salience of short-term costs.

Compensation mechanisms can mitigate these dynamics, but their effectiveness depends on their design and credibility. While the increase in NRRP funding for agriculture in response to protests suggests a recognition of distributive pressures, compensation has remained uneven and often reactive rather than systematic. This limits its ability to stabilise long-term political support for environmental policies.

Taken together, these elements suggest that time inconsistency in environmental policy is not simply a technical problem of commitment, but a structural feature of democratic governance. In the Italian case, the interaction between distributive conflict, electoral considerations, and institutional constraints has produced a policy environment in which long-term commitments are continuously adjusted in response to short-term pressures.

## 4. *From Distributive Conflict to Political Pressure*

The distributive dynamics described above become politically consequential when they are translated into public debate, electoral considerations, and pressure from organised interests. In Italy, this translation does not take the form of a fully structured political cleavage, but it is clearly visible in the way environmental policy has been framed and managed under the Meloni government.

Environmental policy has been increasingly politicised through its association with economic costs and social impact. More broadly, recent research shows that Italian parties frame the energy transition through competing discursive logics aligned along the left-right spectrum, with environmental, economic, and national-security considerations combined in different ways and further sharpened by the war in Ukraine (Campolongo et al., 2023). Government discourse has emphasised risks to industrial competitiveness, employment, and household purchasing power, framing environmental policy as a domain of trade-offs rather than purely technical necessity. Statements such as Meloni's warning against "deindustrialisation" linked to climate policy illustrate how these concerns are articulated at the highest political level (Energia Italia News, 2024).

This framing is reinforced by broader political and economic pressures. The protests of agricultural workers, the sensitivity of energy prices, and the importance of sectors such as automotive all contribute to shaping the political environment in which decisions are made. Policy choices in areas such as mobility restrictions and energy policy are therefore influenced not only by environmental objectives, but also by their potential electoral impact. This is consistent with evidence showing that support for climate policies in Italy varies significantly by policy instrument,

with taxes proving much less acceptable than subsidies, which helps explain why distributive concerns quickly become politically salient (Cabeza et al., 2023).

A similar dynamic can be observed in the energy domain. In response to energy price volatility, the government has adopted a range of measures within the so-called "Decreto Bollette" (Il Sole 24 Ore, 2026), including the extension of the coal phase-out timeline to 2038 beyond the targets set in the national energy and climate plan. This indicates that distributive conflict does not remain confined to sectoral dynamics but is translated into broader political pressure through its potential electoral and economic implications.

In this context, electoral considerations operate less through direct ideological confrontation and more through anticipatory adjustment. The postponement of diesel restrictions in the Po Valley and the recalibration of NRRP measures can be interpreted as responses to anticipated opposition in socially and economically vulnerable areas.

Organised interests play a complementary role in shaping these dynamics. Firms and industry associations have actively contributed to framing environmental policy debates, particularly by emphasising competitiveness and cost concerns (see also Errichiello et al., 2025; Errichiello et al., 2026). The position expressed by Confindustria in 2024, and supported by the government, highlights how economic actors influence both the substance and the narrative of environmental policy (Energia Italia News, 2024). In this sense, organised interests do not simply react to policy change but actively contribute to shaping both the substance and the framing of environmental policy.

At the same time, political narratives influence public perception and behaviour. As recent research suggests, trust in government and the consistency of policy signals affect pro-

environmental behaviour (Duradoni et al., 2025). In the Italian case, the emphasis on pragmatism and economic caution may contribute to shaping citizen expectations and reinforcing the broader dynamics of policy adjustment.

Taken together, these elements show how distributive conflict is translated into political dynamics in Italy. Environmental policy is shaped by a combination of electoral sensitivity, organised interests, and political narratives, resulting in a pattern of continuous adjustments. These dynamics reinforce the incentives for policy adjustment identified in the previous section and help explain why environmental governance under the Meloni government is characterised by adaptation rather than stable long-term commitment.

## 5. *Multi-level Governance, Conflict Avoidance, and the Depoliticisation of Environmental Choices*

The dynamics discussed in the previous sections suggest that environmental policy in Italy is characterised by significant distributive tensions and political pressures. Standard political economy accounts of climate policy as a source of distributive conflict would lead us to expect that such tensions translate into visible political conflict, with affected groups mobilising and policy choices becoming the object of explicit contestation (see, for example, Bechtel & Scheve, 2013; Douenne & Fabre, 2022). However, the Italian case only partially conforms to this expectation.

While environmental policy has clearly become more politically salient, the resulting conflicts do not consistently take the form of open and sustained confrontation. Instead, a recurrent pattern can be observed in which politically sensitive

issues are managed, reshaped, or displaced before they fully emerge as visible conflicts. This pattern resonates with recent work highlighting processes of strategic depoliticisation in the Italian climate field, in which intermediary actors contribute to framing climate governance through technical, financial, and managerial discourses rather than overt political contestation (Arrigoni, 2023). This pattern is particularly evident when considering how the government has dealt with policies that carry clear distributive implications.

A central role in this process is played by the multi-level structure of environmental governance. The interaction between European constraints, national decision-making, and regional implementation creates a fragmented institutional environment in which responsibilities are distributed across different actors. Under the Meloni government, this structure has not only constrained policy choices but has also provided opportunities to manage politically costly decisions in less visible ways.

In practice, policies that could generate significant opposition at the national level are often reconfigured through regional implementation or administrative adjustment. As illustrated by the air quality and mobility measures discussed in the previous section, potentially contentious policies are frequently modified in advance, reframed in technical terms, or distributed across multiple institutional levels, thereby reducing their visibility as politically salient choices.

A similar mechanism can be observed in the relationship between the central government and regional authorities on environmental policy more broadly. Disputes over air quality plans, for example, have often been shifted into legal or administrative arenas, where they are reframed in terms of competences and implementation responsibilities rather than environmental priorities.

Related dynamics are also visible in the public narration of extreme weather events, where the interpretation of floods can shift attention between climate change, territorial fragilities, and institutional responsibilities, thereby shaping which conflicts become publicly visible and which remain displaced (Imperatore & Frazzetta, 2023). This displacement reduces the visibility of underlying conflicts and makes them less accessible to direct political debate.

Temporal strategies further reinforce this pattern. Policies with significant distributive consequences are frequently postponed, phased, or implemented with flexibility**,** allowing the government to reduce immediate political costs. In the Italian case, the emphasis on gradual transition and the repeated adjustment of implementation timelines reflect a broader attempt to balance environmental commitments with short-term political constraints, particularly in a context marked not only by inflation and energy price increases, but also by frequent electoral cycles and permanent campaigning dynamics.

These strategies are closely linked to the logic of time inconsistency. As discussed in Section 3, policies that are adopted in a context where long-term objectives dominate may become politically difficult to sustain once costs become visible. In the Italian case, rather than leading to explicit policy reversal, this tension often results in incremental adjustment and delay. This allows formal commitments to be maintained while their practical implications are softened.

Another important dimension concerns the way environmental policy is framed in political discourse. Under the Meloni government, references to "realistic transition," "technological neutrality," and the need to protect economic competitiveness have played a central role. These narratives allow policy adjustments to be justified without explicitly

presenting them as responses to distributive conflict. In this sense, environmental policy is not depoliticised in the sense of being irrelevant, but it is often presented in ways that obscure the underlying political trade-offs.

Recent measures such as the 2025 Security Decree (Decreto-legge n. 48/2025), which introduced stricter penalties for forms of public protest including road blockades frequently used by environmental movements, further suggest a tendency to manage conflict not only through policy adjustment but also through the legal regulation of dissent.

Taken together, these elements suggest that environmental governance in Italy is characterised by a form of conflict avoidance through institutional and discursive practices. Multi-level governance, regional discretion, temporal flexibility, and political framing all contribute to reducing the visibility of conflict and diffusing responsibility across actors.

From the perspective of democratic accountability and political competition, this pattern has ambivalent implications. On the one hand, it allows the government to navigate politically sensitive issues while maintaining stability and avoiding sharp confrontations. On the other hand, it reduces the transparency of decision-making processes and blurs the distinction between alternative policy options. When policies are continuously adjusted, postponed, or reframed, it becomes more difficult for citizens to identify clear alternatives and attribute responsibility.

In this sense, the Italian case under the Meloni government illustrates a form of democratic functioning in which politically costly decisions are not avoided but are less frequently presented as explicit choices between competing alternatives. Environmental policy remains a domain of significant political relevance, but the mechanisms through which it is governed tend to limit the emergence of visible and sustained conflict. This interaction between time inconsistency and conflict

management helps explain why policy adjustment can occur without corresponding levels of public contestation, and why environmental governance provides a particularly revealing perspective on the functioning of accountability and competition in contemporary Italian democracy.

## 6. *Conclusion*

This chapter has examined environmental policy under the Meloni government as a lens through which to assess the broader condition of Italian democracy. Moving beyond descriptive accounts of policy adjustment or political preference, it has argued that recent developments reflect a deeper structural tension inherent to democratic governance.

At the core of this tension lies the intertemporal nature of environmental policy. Climate mitigation requires governments to sustain long-term commitments in the face of immediate and unevenly distributed costs. The framework of time inconsistency helps to capture this difficulty, showing how policies that are optimal when adopted may become politically costly as their distributive consequences materialise. In this sense, environmental policy does not simply reveal shifts in political priorities; it exposes the limits of democratic systems in binding themselves over time.

At the same time, the Italian case suggests that these dynamics are not only expressed through policy reversal or open political conflict. A central finding of this chapter is that environmentally relevant tensions are often managed through mechanisms of adjustment that reduce their visibility. Policy recalibration, selective implementation, temporal postponement, and multi-level governance arrangements all

contribute to shaping outcomes without necessarily producing explicit moments of political contestation.

This combination of time inconsistency and conflict management has important implications. On the one hand, it allows governments to navigate politically sensitive policy domains while maintaining a degree of stability. On the other hand, it complicates the relationship between democratic responsiveness and accountability. When decisions are continuously reshaped or displaced across institutional levels, the capacity of citizens to identify clear alternatives and assign responsibility is reduced.

The contribution of the Italian case lies in making these dynamics visible. From this perspective, it points beyond sector-specific developments to broader challenges faced by democratic systems in sustaining credible long-term commitments under conditions of distributive conflict. It highlights, in particular, that the challenge for contemporary democracies is not only to design credible long-term policies, but also to sustain forms of political contestation that render these policies legible and accountable. Environmental policy, given its distributive and intertemporal structure, represents a particularly demanding test in this respect.

More broadly, the analysis suggests that similar tensions are likely to emerge across other policy domains characterised by long-term commitments and short-term costs. As democratic systems confront increasingly complex transformations—whether related to climate change, technological change, or economic restructuring—the question of how to reconcile responsiveness, commitment, and accountability will become ever more central.

From this perspective, environmental governance in Italy should not be seen as an isolated case, but as part of a wider pattern. It provides a useful point of observation for

understanding how democracies adapt, respond, and sometimes struggle when faced with policy challenges that require them to act not only in response to present pressures, but also with a view to long-term policy commitments.

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"If we want things to stay as they are, things will have to change." Tancredi's celebrated maxim in *The Leopard* has long served as the master key to Italian politics: a country where every rupture seems to dissolve into continuity, every revolution into restoration. But does the formula still hold?

Since October 2022, Italy has been governed by the first executive in the history of the Republic led by a party with roots in the post-fascist tradition — an experiment watched with alarm, curiosity and hope across Europe and beyond. Three years on, the balance sheet confounds both the catastrophists and the reassured. The most stable government in decades has completed none of the institutional reforms it promised; yet Italian democracy has quietly shifted — in the governance of dissent, the control of public media, the externalisation of migration, the symbolic politics of culture and memory.

Drawing on original survey research and in-depth analyses of foreign policy, environmental commitments, protest and cultural institutions, this volume charts the transformation of Italian democracy within a world in disorder: multiplying wars, a deepening global democratic recession, a transatlantic alliance in turmoil. Its thesis is captured in a single formula: hybrid Italy — a democracy in which institutional continuity and illiberal drift coexist, and in which Tancredi's maxim now runs in reverse. Everything stays the same, precisely so that things can change.

A book for anyone seeking to understand not only where Italy is going, but what its 'laboratory' reveals about the future of democracy in Europe.

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HYBRID ITALY
*A Democracy amid Global Disorder*

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