**Rise of the right-wing in Europe**

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Most of the time, politics and elections in Europe are quite orderly and safe as compared to many other parts of the world, where elections sometimes aren’t really elections, but a varnish covering up heavy-handed and unequal policies. In Europe, election frauds and counting inaccuracies are rare and they never really change the outcome of the elections. So, the Europeans can pride themselves on quite free and fair elections. Alas, recently, a couple of elections gave ‘unwanted’ results as seen from the more mainstream democratically minded people, well, those who want change and improvement within the existing political culture. Whether people are conservatives or social democrats, perhaps even socialists, they think within the same culture and paradigm with a similar world outlook and ‘Zeitgeist’.

In Sweden’s general elections on 11 September and the Italian general elections on 25 September this year, results were more dramatic than usual, and in Denmark similar changes happened half a decade and a full decade ago, notably when the far right received large proportions of votes so that they actually could influence political agendas, not just talk. Main areas still are rougher policies, especially regarding law and order, and indeed immigration and refugee policies, reducing or blocking newcomers from far away to enter their countries, targeting people from far away, including Muslims, more than others. The latter is not said, but it is often behind many policies.

[PMD predicts dry weather in most parts of country](https://www.nation.com.pk/30-Sep-2022/pmd-predicts-dry-weather-in-most-parts-of-country)

European countries know that they still have to give some development aid, but not so that it changes the world economic order, just enough not to shatter it. Rightists say that refugees should be assisted in their neighbouring countries; they should not come to the West. Those policies may be all right if actually followed, but they always lead to less assistance to the refugees; ‘out of sight’ also means ‘out of mind’.

In Sweden, the Sweden Democrats (‘Sverigedemokraterna’) got 20.5 percent of the votes in the recent parliamentary elections; in Italy, the Brothers of Italy (‘Fratelli d’Italia’) did even better with 26.4 percent of the votes. Earlier, right wing parties have done well in other countries, in Hungary, Poland, France, and Holland, and even in other European countries. Sometimes, the right-wing populist parties have quite extreme views, other times they are just very conservative and use blunt language. The latter also includes the UK, where the newly elected Prime Minister Liz Truss (47) has quite conservative views. But for her and for other right-wing politicians, it remains to be seen how much they will actually be able to implement.

[Pakistan reports 43 coronavirus cases, three deaths in 24 hours](https://www.nation.com.pk/30-Sep-2022/pakistan-reports-43-coronavirus-cases-three-deaths-in-24-hours)

The leader of the Swedish right-wing party, Jimmie Åkesson (43), will not become a minister in the new Swedish cabinet as his party will only support Ulf Kristersson (58), the PM to be of the Conservative Party (‘Moderaterna’) from outside, in spite of being the largest party on the bourgeoisie side. The reason is that the Sweden Democrats are still not quite acceptable by all politicians, noting that the party had several new-Nazi members at the time of being registration in 1988. Today, the party distances itself from any such connections, but it can’t be denied that from time to time members with such backgrounds are exposed, to party chairman Åkesson’s embarrassment every time it happens.

In Italy, the leader of the Brothers of Italy, Giorgia Meloni (45), the PM to be, makes no issue of the fact that her party has Fascist connections back to Mussolini in WWII. How concrete that should be understood, and what the Brothers of Italy members and voters really mean by it, is not quite easy to say. Especially young people would probably use such concepts more lightly than older people. In Sweden, though, to admit that one has any positive opinions about neo-Nazism or indeed Nazism would be unheard of, and it would be political suicide if any politicians admitted it.

[Govt likely to announce reduction in petroleum prices from Oct 1](https://www.nation.com.pk/30-Sep-2022/govt-likely-to-announce-reduction-in-petroleum-prices-from-oct-1)

It should be noted that during WWII Italy was ruled by the Fascist Mussolini while Sweden stayed neutral during the war and was not occupied by Nazi Germany as most European countries were. But it was only in the second half of the war that Sweden more clearly distanced itself from Nazi Germany.

Sweden is a very orderly country and political correctness is important. That also means that there are many political issues that cannot be spoken about in public, or if so, one can only say things that are acceptable in content and form. Politicians must weigh their words more than in many other countries. In neighbouring Denmark, politicians are more outspoken and direct, and even in Norway. Since Sweden’s two political blocks, the social democratic and bourgeoisie sides have been almost equal in strength in the last elections, including the recent one, it is important for all politicians not to upset the opposition too much since just a few votes decide if the government will face no-confidence votes. In spite of political differences, Swedish politics are quite stable and safe, and even when it becomes a bit ‘turbulent’, that doesn’t really mean that the level-headed Swedes change.

[BBC to cut hundreds of World Service jobs](https://www.nation.com.pk/30-Sep-2022/bbc-to-cut-hundreds-of-world-service-jobs)

In Italy, a government lasts only for a year or two; after that, a new cabinet is formed, which may only last for another few years, and then again, another government may come in, sometimes with a mixture of the same ministers. After WWII, Italy had 69 different governments; triple that of most European countries. Also, Italy has very many political parties, currently six large ones and dozens of smaller ones. Thus, if any extremist group would like to take over the land, that is actually quite impossible because smaller or bigger parties would join hands and vote against the takeover of any such group or coalition of groups. The new government that Giorgia Meloni will form is not likely to last for long either. But it should be added that the Italian civil service and institutions are strong and democracy doesn’t only have to do with the central government and general elections.

Although two recent elections in Europe have given right-wing parties major support, with a fifth or well over a quarter of the votes, it is also a fact that the social democratic centrist and leftist parties are still strong. In Sweden, the Social Democratic Labour Party is the largest party, with over 30 percent of the votes in the last elections. In the other Nordic countries and Germany, the social democrats lead the governments.

[Putin signs decrees recognizing so-called independence of Kherson, Zaporizhzhia regions](https://www.nation.com.pk/30-Sep-2022/putin-signs-decrees-recognizing-so-called-independence-of-kherson-zaporizhzhia-regions)

Generally, the right-wing winds have subsided, although popping up again from time to time. The cause can be that centrist and left-leaning parties have not renewed themselves fast enough, and it is a fact that right-wing parties sometimes have appealing alternative policy proposals and they use a language that voters can relate to more easily. It remains to be seen if the right-wingers at all can solve problems better than the centre-left parties. After all, crime and immigration are not the only areas that need new policies. It is important that policies are long-term and all-inclusive, taking into account negative direct and indirect side-effects and not making politics more confrontational. In the long run, the main problems in Europe and the world have to do with growing inequalities. We must find policies that benefit all citizens, indeed the weakest.