In a historic first, Meloni’s government becomes Italy’s longest-serving postwar administration

Giorgia Meloni’s government is set to become Italy’s longest-serving postwar administration, marking a historic milestone as the 2027 election approaches



Italy's Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni. (AFP)

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In a historic milestone, Giorgia Meloni’s government will become Italy’s longest-serving postwar administration on Friday, completing 1,413 days in office and surpassing the previous record held by Silvio Berlusconi during one of his four terms as prime minister.

The milestone comes as Italy prepares for national elections in 2027, with Meloni’s far-right Brothers of Italy (FdI) party continuing to lead opinion polls. The achievement is expected to strengthen her political standing, although recent setbacks have raised questions over her coalition’s record in government.

“It is certainly a point of pride,” Marco Osnato, a prominent FdI lawmaker, told *AFP*.

Record stability, limited gains

Meloni’s administration has benefited from a degree of political continuity that has been unusual in Italy, which has had almost 70 governments over the past 80 years.

But analysts say that stability has not necessarily translated into the progress many voters expected. Lorenzo Pregliasco of the YouTrend polling institute said a defeat in a justice reform referendum this year suggested there “may be an alternative majority” to the coalition currently in power.

The referendum setback was particularly significant because the proposed reforms were among three flagship commitments made by the governing coalition. Plans to strengthen the powers of the prime minister and expand regional autonomy have also yet to be delivered.

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Chiara Braga, who leads the centre-left Democratic Party’s parliamentary group, said the government had failed to make sufficient use of its political stability.

“This stability was not capitalised upon,” she said.

“It did not lead to any significant improvement in people's living standards or business competitiveness”.

Italy’s economy is expected to grow by 0.6 percent in 2026, while real wages have remained almost unchanged since the early 1990s.

Unemployment has declined from above 7 percent to around 5 percent over the past four years. However, the number of economically inactive people, those able to work but not seeking employment, remains high.

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Economist Tito Boeri of Milan’s Bocconi University said the government had mainly focused on remaining in office, “doing as little as possible”.

Supporters of Meloni’s administration point instead to tax cuts, higher tax revenues and greater fiscal discipline in a heavily indebted country. They also argue that Italy has assumed a more influential position internationally during a period of geopolitical tension.



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"When it comes to foreign policy, Italy has never been so central, particularly in Europe," Osnato said, pointing to migration policy and energy policy as areas in which Rome is now regarded as a driving force in Brussels.

Opposition faces its own challenges

Meloni's coalition also faces a potential challenge from Roberto Vannacci, a former general whose newly created Futuro Nazionale party has been polling at around 7 per cent. Vannacci has regularly criticised migrants and LGBTQ+ people, and his party could become a kingmaker in next year's election.

The governing alliance, which also includes Matteo Salvini's far-right League and conservative Forza Italia, continues to benefit from divisions within the left-leaning opposition and rising voter abstention, analysts say.

Turnout in the 2022 election stood at about 64 per cent, its lowest level on record, before falling below 50 per cent in the 2024 European elections.

"A sizable share of voters is really disappointed and angry," said Giovanni Orsina, a political scientist at Rome's Luiss University.

Italy's persistent problems have left many people believing that "no one can solve their problems," he added.

Cost of living and public services remain concerns

Public dissatisfaction was visible in August when Meloni was loudly booed at a sporting event in Taranto, a southern city dominated by a giant steel plant facing economic and environmental difficulties that the government is struggling to keep afloat.

Surveys identify the cost of living, a deteriorating public health system, security and immigration among Italians' leading concerns.

Those frustrations are particularly visible in Tor Bella Monaca, a working-class eastern district of Rome characterised by rundown apartment blocks, cash-for-gold shops and discount stores. The area is governed by Meloni’s party and regularly records some of the lowest voter turnout levels.

Maurizio, an IT worker who has lived through 45 years of Italian politics, said he saw little prospect of change.

“Nothing has changed in Italy over the 45 years I've been on this planet and nothing will,” he said, declining to give his surname.

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He said he was tempted to support Vannacci but would not vote next year, citing what he saw as a lack of long-term vision for the country.

Others remain more optimistic about Meloni’s record.

“People expect to see improvement overnight,” said Annamaria, a 67-year-old local pensioner and supporter of the prime minister who also declined to give her surname.

“It takes time, but things are getting better,” she added, saying she believed crime — and migrants — had become less visible recently.