
ITALIAN COALITION SPLIT ON EU ELECTIONS

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Italy's 5 Star Movement (5MS), which has 14 MEPs in the European Parliament (EP), has ruled out an alliance with the far right after next year's elections.

"There is no doubt that the Movement will never sit together with [Marine] Le Pen," the party's Roberto Fico, who is the current speaker of the Italian parliament, told press in Brussels on Tuesday (9 October), according to the Reuters news agency.

Fico spoke in the margins of an EP hearing on migration.

He also met European Commission president Jean-Claude Juncker the same day.

5MS sits in the populist European Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD) group in the EP, together with Ukip, a British eurosceptic party.

French politician Le Pen's National Rally party sits in the far-right Europe of Nations and Freedom (ENF) group, together the League, an Italian party.

5MS and the League currently rule Italy in a coalition government.

They share anti-immigration views and have jointly defied the EU on fiscal discipline.

The Italian central bank, which is, like Brussels, more prudent on spending, should "try to get itself" elected with those measures, 5MS deputy prime minister Luigi Di Maio said on Twitter on Tuesday, amid market volatility on Italian assets.

Di Maio also distanced the 5MS from a far-right alliance in the EU parliament in remarks earlier the same day, however.

"We are neither a right-wing, nor a left-wing group," Di Maio, whose party once held talks to join the pro-EU Liberal group in the EU assembly, told press in Rome on Tuesday, Italian news agency Ansa reported.

"Orban and Le Pen have nothing to do with us ... Orban and Le Pen are right-wing and they are the League's partners, not ours," Di Maio added, referring to Hungarian leader Viktor Orban.

Orban's Fidesz party currently sits with the European People's Party (EPP) group - the heart of the EP's conservative establishment.

But the EPP has threatened to kick him out due to abuse of EU values and rule of law in Hungary, prompting his counter-threat to help form a new anti-EU axis in 2019.

The axis, with Le Pen and Salvini, as well as populist-nationalists from further afield in the EU, could hamstring EU legislation in the EP if it got more than a third of deputies next year.

Kaynak/Source: