

Vote shifts in Rome and Milan confirm the frame of Renzi's victory

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On the basis of electoral data for some regional capitals that were already made available a few hours after the end of the ballots, in a previous article, we have tried to reconstruct the movements of voting occurred between the European elections of May 25 and the general elections of February 2013 (D'Alimonte, 2014). With this article, we extend the same type of analysis to Rome and Milan, the two largest Italian cities. Together, the two “capitals” of Italy—the financial and political—sum up to approximately 7% of Italian voters. These two cities are different on various aspects, especially in terms of their electoral history. Milan—since 1994—has been the capital of the phenomenon that Berselli (2007) called “forzaleghismo” that (used to) bring together politically and electorally the Northern League (LN) and *Forza Italia* (Go Italy, FI). And Rome has more often exhibited a situation of greater balance between the two political sides and where the traditional right-wing represented for many years by National Alliance (AN) had greater weight compared to the capital of Lombardy as represented by the candidature of Fini and its access to the second round against Rutelli in 1993. Also, to remain in more recent years, it is sufficient to remind Alemanno's victory in 2008.

Between 2013 (House of Deputies) and 2014 (European Parliament), the Democratic Party (PD) is the only one (along with FDI) to increase its votes in absolute terms in both cities. In terms of percentages, Renzi's party—who started with the same share of votes in both capitals—ends up reporting two additional percentage points in Milan.

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A significant difference that is found between the two capitals can be detected instead in the votes that have converged on the Five Star Movement (M5S) and (of course) on the Northern League. In Italy's capital, the party led by Grillo and Casaleggio has been voted by one voter out of four (24.9%). This confirms its second rank behind the Democratic Party. In Milan, the M5S reaches 15%, almost 11 percentage points less than in Rome, outvoted also by *Forza Italia*. In fact, it should be kept in mind that—with the exception of Trentino Alto Adige—Lombardy had been the Italian region in which the M5S had already got fewer votes in the general elections of 2013. Since then, it further loses 40,000 votes passing from 17% to 14.2%. In Rome, the decline in percentage points compared to 2013 is roughly in line with that of Milan.

As for FI, we have said that in Milan, it gets the second place; this is not only due to the weakness of the M5S but also to the better result registered in Rome (+3 points).

The left, united in support of Tsipras as the candidate to the Commission, get good results in both cities reaching over 6%. Finally, it is interesting to note that the New Centre-Right (NCD) led by Alfano exceed 5% in Milan while in Rome, it achieves a much more modest result (3.7%) outperformed by *Fratelli d'Italia* (Brothers of Italy, FDI), with their 5.3% in the capital.

Turning now in detail to the analysis of vote shifts, we first show how the structure of the movements of voters occurred in the two cities between 2013 and 2014 appears very similar.

The first thing that you notice is the high loyalty of the Democratic Party's voters. As can be seen in Tables 1 and 2, the rate of those who confirmed their vote for the PD is about four out of five voters in both cities. Both in Milan and Rome, we note the same defections, all rather small but still significant: towards the Tsipras list, towards abstention, and also towards the M5S. This first element, i.e., the significantly higher loyalty of the voters of the Democratic Party, is in line with what was observed in the other cities for which we have presented the vote shifts as the rate varies between 70% and 90%.

Still referring to the centre-left coalition—and always in continuity with other cases already analysed—it looks like voters of Left, Freedom and Ecology (SEL) have chosen the list of Tsipras much more than the PD while a share even more significant has taken refuge in the abstention.

The differences between the two cities are also minimal as for the M5S. Grillo's voters in 2013 are split quite evenly: about half confirmed his 2013 voting decision while the remaining decided instead to abstain. The lack of any significant electoral shift towards the other political forces, even towards the real winner of these European elections, i.e., the Democratic Party, should be emphasised. Only in Milan can we observe a barely significant vote shift from the Movement towards the Northern League. As regards to the Grillo's party, the vote shifts in the two major Italian cities confirm what has been pre-

viously observed: loyalty rates between 40% and 50% of the voters in 2013 and sizable loss towards the abstention (30%–45%). In some cities, such as Florence and Turin, the Movement has also succumbed to the Democratic Party. Here is a difference with respect to Milan and Rome where the electorate of the M5S was particularly recalcitrant to Renzi's pledges.

Regarding the Berlusconi's 2013 political coalition, the loyalty rate is really low. In Milan, about four out of 10 voters have chosen FI in 2014, in Rome, only one out of three. In the latter case, the larger group of centre-right voters decided to abstain in 2014: 42%. In Milan, "only" 30% of 2013 Berlusconi's voters decided to abstain. In addition, both cities register significant losses towards the Democratic Party of Renzi, as well as towards the NCD of Alfano (that has led the scission with FI), and also towards the League in Milan. Even in this case, Milan and Rome are in line with the rest of the vote shifts presented. Loyalty is always between 30% and 45% of the vote in 2013. We observe a greater variability in the coefficients towards abstention: between 20% and 60%. Milan and Rome are consistent also on this aspect, given the significant difference observed. Finally, even spills of votes toward the Democratic Party had already been found almost everywhere: between 6% and 17% of the vote for Berlusconi in 2013.

Voters who had chosen at the general elections the area amalgamated around the candidacy of former Prime Minister Mario Monti have moved in majority (more than half) towards the party of Matteo Renzi. Both in Rome and Milan, the second largest group—following the one that voted for the Democratic Party—is the one of those who abstained although with significant differences: in Milan, about one out of four voters, in Rome one out of seven. A very small proportion of these 2013 voters—between 10% and 13%—has chosen in 2014 the NCD of Alfano. It has to be kept in mind that this party presented himself together with the UDC, one of the members of the Monti's coalition in 2013. Also, with regard to the behavior of Monti's voters, Milan and Rome report the same phenomena already observed in the previous analyses. The only city in which less than 40% of this group has converged towards the Democratic Party is Florence where the largest group chose FI.

Let's now look at the sources—expressed in terms of 2013 electorates—of the various parties' electorates for the European elections (Tables 3 and 4). As can be seen—and easily expectable at the light of the polls' results—between the three main parties, the Democratic Party is the one that has been better able to go beyond its original 2013 pool of voters. In both cities, approximately one-third of this sub-electorate is not constituted by voters for the Bersani coalition last year. The more sizable inflows were recorded from the Monti coalition, which are estimated between one-sixth and one-fifth of the Democratic Party in 2014. Approximately one voter of the Democratic Party out of 15 had voted for the Berlusconi's coalition in 2013.

Table 1 – Vote shifts in Rome: Destinations of the electorates of the 2013 general elections in the 2014 European elections

European elections 2014	General elections 2013							
	RC	SEL	PD ¹	Monti	PDL ²	M5S	Others	Nonvote
Tsipras	24%	43%	4%	4%	0%	0%	1%	0%
PD	12%	14%	77%	52%	10%	1%	6%	1%
NCD	3%	1%	1%	13%	4%	0%	1%	0%
FI	3%	2%	3%	4%	32%	0%	5%	2%
FDI	4%	2%	2%	8%	7%	2%	6%	0%
M5S	17%	5%	6%	1%	3%	50%	14%	2%
Others	9%	5%	1%	4%	2%	1%	7%	0%
Nonvote	28%	29%	6%	14%	42%	46%	59%	94%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

¹ PD included also the 2013 votes for Democratic Center.

²PDL included also the votes for the other components of the coalition: Northern League, FDI, The Right, Big South-Mpa, Mir, and the List of Retired.

Table 2 – Vote shifts in Milan: Destinations of the electorates of the 2013 general elections in the 2014 European elections

European elections 2014	General elections 2013								
	RC	SEL	PD ¹	Monti	PDL ²	LN	M5S	Others	Nonvote
Tsipras	31%	35%	7%	2%	0%	3%	2%	5%	0%
PD	2%	10%	81%	53%	7%	10%	2%	12%	0%
NCD	1%	2%	0%	10%	8%	6%	0%	5%	0%
FI	2%	0%	2%	3%	43%	18%	0%	2%	2%
FDI	2%	1%	1%	2%	4%	4%	1%	2%	0%
LN	7%	1%	1%	0%	6%	46%	5%	1%	1%
M5S	30%	7%	4%	1%	3%	6%	43%	2%	2%
Altri	7%	5%	1%	3%	1%	0%	1%	5%	0%
Nonvote	17%	40%	2%	26%	28%	7%	47%	66%	94%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

¹PD included also the 2013 votes for Democratic Center.

²PDL included also the votes for the other components of the coalition: Northern League, FDI, The Right, Big South-Mpa, Mir, and the List of Retired.

Votes for *Forza Italia* for more than three-quarters proceed from those of the centre-right coalition in 2013. The “new” Berlusconi’s party has not proved able to break in through other parties’ constituencies even though in both cities is

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Table 3 – Vote shifts in Rome: Sources from the electorates of the 2013 general elections of the votes in the 2014 European elections

European elections 2014	General elections 2013								
	RC	SEL	PD ¹	Monti	PDL ²	M5S	Others	Nonvote	
Tsipras	15%	45%	29%	8%	1%	1%	1%	1%	100%
PD	1%	2%	71%	16%	7%	1%	1%	1%	100%
NCD	3%	2%	5%	47%	37%	0%	2%	3%	100%
FI	1%	1%	9%	4%	78%	0%	2%	6%	100%
FDI	3%	2%	16%	20%	40%	13%	5%	2%	100%
M5S	3%	1%	10%	1%	3%	76%	2%	4%	100%
Others	11%	9%	14%	17%	23%	12%	9%	4%	100%
Nonvote	1%	2%	3%	2%	17%	21%	3%	51%	100%

¹PD included also the 2013 votes for Democratic Center.

²PDL included also the votes for the other components of the coalition: Northern League, FDI, The Right, Big South-Mpa, Mir, and the List of Retired.

Table 4 – Vote shifts in Milan: Sources from the electorates of the 2013 general elections of the votes in the 2014 European elections

European elections 2014	General elections 2013									
	RC	SEL	PD ¹	Monti	PDL ²	LN	M5S	Others	Nonvote	
Tsipras	12%	30%	41%	5%	0%	4%	6%	4%	0%	100%
PD	0%	1%	68%	22%	5%	2%	1%	1%	0%	100%
NCD	1%	2%	4%	36%	44%	9%	0%	4%	0%	100%
FI	0%	0%	6%	3%	76%	9%	0%	0%	6%	100%
FDI	1%	2%	11%	16%	44%	12%	10%	3%	0%	100%
LN	2%	1%	5%	0%	22%	49%	13%	1%	7%	100%
M5S	5%	3%	9%	1%	7%	4%	65%	1%	6%	100%
Others	6%	10%	23%	27%	12%	2%	6%	10%	5%	100%
Nonvote	1%	3%	1%	7%	12%	1%	15%	5%	56%	100%

¹PD included also the 2013 votes for Democratic Center.

²PDL included also the votes for the other components of the coalition: Northern League, FDI, The Right, Big South-Mpa, Mir, and the List of Retired.

registered a small but significant incoming flow from the 2013 vote for the Democratic Party, approximately estimated between 5% and 10% of the votes of FI.

The same applies to the M5S in Rome: three-quarters of the votes in 2014 derive from its 2013 pool. In Milan, however, is registered a deep turnover

within the Grillo's electorate. In the capital of Lombardy, in fact, over a third of the votes for the M5S do not originate from those who had already voted the Movement in 2013. These inflows derive from all the other pools of 2013 votes but the most numerically important ones derive from PD (approximately one-tenth of the 2014 votes for the M5S); followed by those coming from the centre right and from abstainers, each weighing one-fifteenth of the votes in 2014.

Also in Milan, we emphasise the Northern League's result. More than half of its votes derive from those who had not voted for this party a year ago. In particular, over a quarter of its votes come from voters of the PDL and other centre-right parties in 2013 and one out of eight from the M5S 2013.

In conclusion, we can emphasise that the framework of moving voters that we have described with reference to the two most populous cities in Italy appear in line with the one previously shown deriving from five other major cities of our country, variously characterised from the point of view of their geography and of their electoral traditions. The key points that are common to all the cities analysed can be briefly summarised as follows. The success of the Democratic Party led by Renzi derives from two elements. On the one hand, the loyalty of 2013 voters: the PD records indeed very high loyalty rates even considering the significant decrease in turnout levels (Emanuele, 2014). On the other hand, it has to be signalled its ability to intercept votes outflowing from all the other political fronts. Table 5 shows the relative weigh, in various cities, on the electorate of the Democratic Party at the European elections, of the various electoral constituencies in 2013. As you can see, about a third of those who voted for Renzi's Democratic Party had not voted Bersani a year ago. The only exception is Florence where, however, one-fifth of the votes for the party led by Renzi are new for the party. The most sizable inflow comes from Monti's coalition, whose voters have heavily moved toward the Democratic Party: so, in the various cities, between one-tenth and one-fifth of the electorate that has voted for the Democrats today had previously voted for Monti's coalition. Also, electoral shifts toward the PD are recorded from the Berlusconi's centre right although to a lesser extent. The Northern League in all the cases analysed gives at least one-tenth of its electorate to Renzi's party, but PDL also—with a few exceptions—does record significant direct outflows. In the various cases, an amount varying between 5% and 7% of the total votes for the PD comes from Berlusconi's coalition of 2013. Instead, in contrast with what was observed in other cities, in Rome and Milan, a very little share of votes comes from M5S: however, these are the only two cases in which this coefficient is smaller than 1% of voters. The electorate of the M5S proves in fact the less uniform in its flows among the various cities: its contribution for the total votes in favour of the Democratic Party is virtually nil in Milan and Rome but is about 10% in Turin, Venice, and Palermo. As easily predictable considering the low turnout,

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Table 5 – Sources from the 2013 electorates of the votes for the PD at the 2014 European elections in various cities

	General elections 2013									Non-vote
	RC	SEL	PD ¹	Monti	PDL ²	LN	M5S	Others	Non-vote	
Turin	0%	2%	63%	21%	5%	1%	8%	1%	0%	100%
Milan	0%	1%	68%	22%	5%	2%	1%	1%	0%	100%
Venice	0%	0%	65%	16%	0%	5%	11%	3%	0%	100%
Parma	0%	1%	72%	14%	4%	1%	5%	3%	0%	100%
Florence	0%	0%	81%	9%	4%		6%	0%	0%	100%
Rome	1%	2%	71%	16%	7%		1%	1%	1%	100%
Palermo	2%	3%	65%	16%	4%		9%	1%	0%	100%

¹PD included also the 2013 votes for Democratic Center.

²PDL included also the votes for the other components of the coalition: Northern League, FDI, The Right, Big South-Mpa, Mir, and the List of Retired.

there were no recoveries from the pool of abstainers. It is very interesting, however, to notice how almost none of the votes for the Democratic Party comes from SEL or Civil Revolution (RC): in Palermo, only one out of 20 of 2014 Democrats had voted for one out of the two left-wing parties at the General elections 2013.

Methodological Note

The analyses of vote shifts shown here were obtained by applying the Goodman model correct by the Ras algorithm to the election results of 2,600 electoral districts in Rome and over 1,200 in Milan. As for Rome, 10 matrices of data considering homogeneous units have been constructed, taking into account aggregations of smaller local units, and then aggregated—after proper weighing—in the city-level matrices reported. In Milan has been followed an analogous procedure constructing six separated matrices taking into account the single-member district for the Senate identified by the old Mattarella electoral law.

The VR coefficient was found to be always satisfying in all the units of analysis of the two cities, with a mean of 10.4 and 10.8 respectively in Rome and Milan.

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