

Italian election results in rise of anti-science political parties opposed to GMOs, vaccines, animal testing

The outcome of ... parliamentary elections in Italy was a stunning victory for populist and nationalist parties, and a clear warning to Italy's political establishment and the European Union. But some in Italy worry that the results may also have a negative impact on science.

There were two big winners: the populist, web-based Five Star Movement (M5S) and the hard-right, anti-immigrant League.... Both have come under fire for taking antiscientific positions on issues such as vaccination and animal testing.

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M5S's program includes some environmental positions, including economic "degrowth," a focus on renewable energy, and a complete ban on the cultivation of genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

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M5S senators have ... clashed on several occasions with [Elena Cattaneo](#), a stem cell scientist at the University of Milan in Italy and senator for life who often acts as a spokesperson for the scientific community in the Senate. Cattaneo compiled a 1500-page [dossier](#) for all parliamentarians on GMO research and used it in a number of debates to fight unsubstantiated claims by M5S about the risk posed by transgenic crops. She has also investigated the work of Federico Infascelli, an animal nutritionist who's close to M5S, after he claimed in a parliamentary hearing that GMOs are dangerous to human health. (Cattaneo's investigation eventually led to the [retraction of one of Infascelli's papers](#).)

Read full, original post: [Rise of nationalist and populist parties has Italian scientists worried](#)