Regional elections in Italy (2012–15):

Low turnout, tri-polar competition and Democratic Party's (multi-level) dominance

Abstract

Between October 2012 and May 2015 all Italian regions went to the polls to renew their assemblies and executives. In contrast to previous election rounds, only seven out of fifteen ordinary regions held their elections in (horizontal) simultaneity. For the first time, some ordinary regions held their elections in (vertical) simultaneity with the national or European election. The election results were somehow exceptional in three ways. First, they were affected by an extremely low level of turnout vis-à-vis previous regional elections and, in line with the second-order election model, vis-a-vis the 2013 general election. Turnout was, however, comparatively higher in the special status regions governed by dominant ethno-regionalist parties (Aosta Valley and South Tyrol); and in the regions that voted in vertical simultaneity with the national and (to a lesser extent) European elections. Secondly, in contrast to previous regional elections, competition for regional executives was (at least) tri-polar, following the pattern emerged in the 2013 general election. Thirdly, in contrast to the predictions of the second-order election model, this round of regional elections did not punish the national incumbent. Indeed, the Democratic Party (PD) won fifteen out of twenty-one regional presidencies, taking nine of them from the centre-right (CR). Finally, it is worth stressing that the combination of low turnout and tri-polar competition, in conjunction with presidential executives and majoritarian voting systems, raises serious issues of democratic legitimacy, as most regional presidents are voted in office by between a fifth and a quarter of registered voters.

Key words: Italy; regional elections; second-order elections; territorial politics; democratic legitimacy

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Introduction

This article has two main objectives. First, it reports on the overall results and outcomes of the latest round of regional elections that were held between October 2012 and May 2015, also discussing their implications for national politics. Secondly, in the light of the second order election model, it analyses the nature of regional elections in Italy. This part of the analysis will focus on turnout and on losses/gains by government/opposition or new parties. In order to provide a grounded analysis, the article starts by presenting the multi-level institutional environment and multi-level dynamics of party competition in Italy, highlighting two critical junctures. First, the passage between the so-called first Republic to the so-called second Republic in 1993, which brought about dramatic changes at institutional, electoral offer and party competition level. Secondly, the emergence of a new political actor in the 2013 general election, the Five Stars Movement (M5S), which has disrupted the bipolar pattern of competition established during the second Republic, inaugurating a new phase of, at least, tripolar competition. Section two discusses the second order election model and formulates some basic working hypotheses. The following section presents the results of the last round of regional elections. Section four investigates the second order nature of regional elections in Italy, both focusing on the last round of elections and adopting a longitudinal perspective. The concluding section summarises the main points and briefly discusses the main implications for multi-level elections in Italy.

Multi-level system and electoral politics across the First and Second Republic

First and Second Republic

The Italian political system underwent such massive (and traumatic) change in the early 1990s that observers and commentators started to speak about a demarcation between a first Republic (1946-1992) and a second Republic (1993-). The year 1993, in which the electoral system was changed from a pure form of proportional representation (PR) to a mixed member majoritarian system (MMM), is usually seen as the

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watershed (Katz, 1996). The main differences between the two Republics concerned the electoral market, including the dynamics of electoral competition, and the government/opposition relationships in the parliamentary arena (Morlino, 1996; Newell and Bull, 1997). In extreme synthesis, the first Republic was characterized by competition between rooted parties, linked to well established political traditions (Christian-democratic, socialist, communist, liberal, neo-fascist, etc.). Executives were formed out of post-election negotiations and were generally weak and short-lived, leaving some room for parliamentary compromise across the government/opposition lines. The anti-system Communist (PCI) and neo-fascist (MSI) parties were constantly excluded from government (Sartori, 1976), though not completely excluded (especially the PCI) from policy making (Pappalardo, 1980). Political stability was assured by the adoption of rather stable formulas of governing coalitions – centrism from the late 1940s to the late 1950s; centre-left in the 1960s and early 1970s; five-party coalition throughout the 1980s and early 1990s – and by the pivot role of the Christian-democratic party (DC), by far the major partner of government throughout the first Republic (Sartori, 1976). Alternation in government was, therefore, partial in periods of change and virtually null in periods of stability. This level of stability was underpinned by the rather steady levels of support of each party, also due to strong and wide-spread party identification or 'vote of belonging' (Parisi and Pasquino, 1977), which tended to perpetuate the system.

The regional and local level replicated the national dynamics in terms of rootedness of political parties, stability of the individual electorates and the post-election coalition agreements. Considering the different territorial distribution of votes for the two main parties (DC and PCI), most regional political systems tended to replicate the national model also in terms of lack of (or extremely limited) alternation in office. In particular, most northern and southern regions were governed by DC-dominated executives ('white regions'), while most central regions were governed by PCI-dominated executives ('red regions'). In this context of multi-level strong party identification, multi-party systems, lack of alternation and consociational practices, regional elections were mainly considered as 'barometer elections', where voting behaviour was mainly dictated by national politics. Voters' party preferences were replicated at both regional and national level with virtually identical levels of turnout (Ghini, 1976; De Mucci, 1987; Caciagli and Corbetta, 1987; Feltrin, 1990; D'Alimonte, 1995).

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In contrast, the second Republic was shaped by the predominantly majoritarian voting systems - the MMM used in the 1994, 1996 and 2001 general elections and the PR *cum* Majority Bonus used in the 2006 and 2008 (and the 2013) general elections. These voting systems pushed parties to form two main and often broad pre-election coalitions which competed for (and alternated in) office (Di Virgilio, 1994). The centre-left (CL) coalition was dominated by the post-communist PDS-DS and by the leftist faction of the former DC, called People's Party (PPI) and later Daisy Flower (MA). The centre-right (CR) coalition was dominated by Berlusconi's Go Italy (FI), the post-fascist National Alliance (AN) and the *Lega Nord* (LN). In time, these coalitions became at least as important as the individual parties, creating a clearly bipolar and adversarial system (Bartolini, et al., 2004). In the late 2000s there seemed to be even a push towards two-partyism (Diamanti, 2007), as the DS and MA merged to form the Democratic Party (PD), while FI and AN merged to create the People of Freedom (PDL) (Massetti, 2009).

During the second Republic, regional party systems became more heterogeneous due to the presence of strongly regionalized parties - such as the LN, the Union of Democrats for Europe (UDEUR) and the Movement for Autonomies (MpA) – and regional president lists (Wilson, 2009; Tronconi and Roux, 2009; Massetti and Sandri, 2013). However, these regional/regionalist forces were most often included in the national bipolar system, which was reproduced at regional level - with the exception of Val d'Aosta (VDA) and South Tyrol. In addition, regional government contestability and alternation increased considerably, especially in southern regions. In this context, regional elections' results started to conform rather well to the classic 'second order election model', with lower levels of turnout vis-à-vis national elections, and electoral defeats for the coalition in office at national level (Chiaramonte and D'Alimonte, 2000; Chiaramonte and Di Virgilio, 2000; Loughlin and Bolgherini, 2006; Tronconi and Roux, 2009; Legnante and Segatti, 2009). Based on patterns of alternation in office between 1995 and 2010, Italian regions can be grouped in four categories, as reported in table 1.

Table 1 to be inserted about here

Ten regions – two RSSs and eight RSOs– can be considered as 'swing regions', as their presidency have proved to be contestable between the two CL and CR coalitions. It is the outcome of elections in these regions (especially in RSOs elections held in horizontal simultaneity) that determine which of the two main coalitions can claim victory. In the remaining eleven regions, the election outcome tends to be taken for granted, as these are traditional stronghold of specific parties/coalitions. Six regions, three of whom (Emilia-Romagna, Tuscany and Umbria) constitute the traditional 'red belt' of Italy, are strongholds of the CL. Three big regions, Lombardy, Sicily and Veneto, are strongholds of the CR, while South Tyrol and VDA are dominated by ethno-regionalist parties: respectively the South Tyrolean People's Party (SVP) and the Aosta Valley Union (UV).

The 2013 general election: from bipolar to tripolar competition

The regional elections analysed in this article have taken place under the institutional setting of the second Republic. However, they were also held under very different political conditions. Indeed, the 2013 general election has been interpreted as a new turning point that, likewise the 1992 election, has opened the way for a sea-change in Italian politics (D'Alimonte, 2013; Chiaramonte, 2014). The breakthrough of the 'anti-cartel party' Five Stars Movement (M5S) has changed the system of competition from bi-polar to tri-polar (Chiaramonte and Emanuele, 2013). In addition, the CR coalition has entered a phase of crisis, with Berlusconi's party, renamed FI in autumn 2013, suffering a dramatic fall in electoral support and undergoing several splits: the right-wing Brothers of Italy (Fdi) left in 2012 and started a process of programmatic convergence with the LN; while the New Centre-Right (NCD) left in autumn 2013 to remain within the PD-led government. In addition, since late 2011, the LN and Berlusconi's parties (PDL-FI) have been often divided in Parliament, gradually developing diverging approaches to key issues, such as the EU and

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the Euro. The 2012-2015 regional elections have, therefore, represented occasions for testing the changing equilibria within the CR political area and for experimenting different CR coalitions in a view to find a strategy for the next general election.

Regional authority

The intermediate tier of government in the Italian Republic is formally made of nineteen regions and two autonomous provinces (Trento and Bolzano-Bozen/South Tyrol).¹ In terms of powers attributed to these entities, the system is clearly asymmetric. Six entities – Friuli Venezia Giulia (FVG), Sardinia, Sicily, South Tyrol, Trento Province and Aosta Valley (VDA) – have special powers, special constitutional guarantees and an independent electoral cycle. They were created after WWII, with the exception of FVG which was created in the 1960s. In this article these six entities are identified collectively as *Regioni a Statuto Speciale* (RSSs). The rationale behind the creation of special regions was that these territories had peculiar histories, locations and regional identities, whose protection required special powers (Bortolussi, 2010). Indeed, these regions are either islands (Sardinia and Sicily) or alpine border regions with larger (South Tyrol and VDA) or smaller (FVG and Trento Province) ethno-linguistic minorities. The fifteen remaining regions are collectively identified as *Regioni a Statuto Ordinario* (RSOs). Their political organs were first elected in 1970 and, until recently, their elections have always been held in horizontal simultaneity. Their powers have been largely administrative during the first Republic. However, since 1992 and more prominently since 1997, a series of legislative acts increased their powers, augmenting their financial (and spending) autonomy. In addition, an advisory body representing all regions (RSOs and RSSs) was introduced in order to interact with the national government: the state-regions conference. Moreover, a constitutional reform adopted in 2001 (Constitutional

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¹ Until 1971 there were twenty regions, with Trento and Bolzano-Bozen provinces being part of the region Trentino-Alto Adige. The constitutional reform adopted in that year (Constitutional Law 1/1971) transferred most of the region's powers to the two provinces, eventually leaving the region as a virtual 'empty shell'. In this article, the region Trentino-Alto Adige is not considered, while the two provinces are called Trento province and South Tyrol. The autonomous provinces represent two of the six special status regions (RSSs).

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Law N. 3/2001) considerably extended the legislative powers of the regions, beside introducing the possibility for further devolution of powers to individual regions and prescribing national legislation aimed at increasing regional fiscal autonomy (Baldini and Baldi, 2014; Massetti and Toubeau, 2013; Massetti, 2012; Massetti, 2017). As shown in figure 1, in the computation of the regional authority index (RAI), the regional authority of RSOs has gone up from 10 in 1988 to 18 after 2001, while the RAI of RSSs has gone from 15 to 19 in the same period (Hooghe et al., 2016).

Figure 1 to be inserted about here

Regional institutional systems and electoral laws

The first Republic was characterised by a substantive homogeneity in multi-level electoral systems. At both national and regional levels, the electoral systems were informed by the principle of pure proportional representation (PR). During the second Republic, a similar kind of homogeneity was pursued. In 1995, national legislation imposed a new electoral system to all RSOs (later adopted by some RSSs too), which assigned a bonus for the winning party/coalition, thus introducing majoritarian and presidential elements (Law No. 43/1995). The institutional presidentialization of the regions was eventually accomplished four years later with the adoption of Constitutional Law No. 1/1999 for the RSOs (Fusaro, 2007), and the adoption of Constitutional Law 2/2001 for the RSS (except South Tyrol and VDA). The interaction between constitutional and electoral reforms established a *sui generis* system in which the regional president and the assembly are elected together and are interlocked - *simul stabunt simul cadent* ([either] they stand together [or] they fall together) - and the distribution of seats in the assembly depends primarily on the outcome of the electoral context for the presidency, determining which coalition wins the bonus. In addition, regions were given the power of choosing their own electoral systems, albeit within a framework established by national legislation in 2004 (Pacini, 2007). In 2005, with

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the adoption of a system with a majority bonus at national level (Massetti, 2006), cross-level homogeneity in electoral systems was further increased. Since then, several regions have marginally amended their electoral laws, producing considerable variation. Yet, with the exception of South Tyrol, which has maintained a pure PR system, the electoral systems of all other regions are based on party lists that are encouraged to form coalitions in order to win a bonus. This bonus is assigned to the coalition/party linked to the candidate that wins the race for the regional presidency. As shown in table 2, as far as the bonus is concerned, there are three main typologies of voting systems. First, in some regions the bonus is fixed: up to 10% of extra seats in Sicily; up to 20% extra seats in Basilicata, Lazio, Liguria, Molise and Piedmont. No minimum threshold is required to trigger the assignment of the bonus. So far, the 20% bonuses have always provided elected presidents with a majority in the assembly. Yet, in theory, these systems do not guarantee that the coalition supporting the elected president will have a majority (i.e. the bonus is not a 'majority bonus'). Secondly, in some regions the bonus guarantees a majority to the coalition of the elected president (i.e. it is a 'majority bonus') but the assignment of the bonus is conditional on the overcoming of a certain minimum threshold by the winning candidate for president: 25% of votes in Sardinia and 34% in Marche. Finally, all the other regions have a majority bonus which is unconditionally applied to the coalition supporting the elected president. In the specific case of Tuscany, the election of the president and, therefore, the assignment of the majority bonus, might require a second-round runoff.

Table 2 to be inserted about here

Electoral calendar: the sharp decline of horizontal simultaneity

While the six RSSs have always had their own autonomous electoral calendar, all fifteen RSOs have held their elections simultaneously every five years from 1970 to 2000. However, due to irregularities in regional elections or, more often, to political scandals that led to early resignation of

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regional presidents, horizontal simultaneity amongst RSOs has marginally diminished up to the 2010 elections, dropping sharply before the last round of elections. The first RSO to de-align in term of electoral calendar was the very small region of Molise, which held an early election in 2001. The small region of Abruzzo was the second, holding an early election in 2008. Yet, until 2010, thirteen RSOs representing well over 95% percent of all RSOs' population and over 85% of the Italian population, were still holding their elections simultaneously. The RSOs' round of elections could well represent, therefore, a sort of test for national politics. By 2015, however, the number of RSOs maintaining the traditional electoral cycle dropped from thirteen to seven; involving about 37% of the Italian population. Table 3 reports the electoral calendar of the regions in the 2012-15 round of elections.

Table 3 to be inserted about here

The new electoral calendar has introduced cases of vertical simultaneity both with national (Lazio, Lombardy and Molise) and European elections (Abruzzo and Piedmont). These elections, as explained in the following section, acquire a particular interest in the light of the second order election model.

Political scandals and decline in trust for regional institutions

The main reason behind the substantive decrease in horizontal simultaneity in RSOs' elections has been an impressive series of political scandals, particularly on corruption and/or mismanagement of public resources, which has severely undermined the reputation of regional institutions and the regional political class. These scandals, far from representing isolated episodes, confirm established research pointing to the fact that

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political corruption has largely moved from the national to the regional (and local) level (Repubblica, 16 December 2016, reporting the results of a research commissioned by the Res Foundation). Inevitably public opinion has lost a lot of trust in regional institutions, possibly with some consequences on the level of turnout in regional elections. As shown in figure 2, the year 2014 appears to have been the 'nadir' of trust in regional institutions.

Figure 2 to be inserted about here

The 'second order election model' and the Italian case: working hypotheses

The core idea behind the second order election theory is that there is a simple (two-tier) hierarchy in the perceived importance of elections: elections that determine the national executive - i.e. parliamentary elections in parliamentary systems and presidential elections in presidential systems - are 'first order'; while all the other elections, such as parliamentary elections in presidential systems, European, regional, local, etc., are subordinate elections (Reif and Schmit, 1980). The logic of the model is that, since voters' attention is mainly devoted to the politics of national government and since there is less at stake in local/regional/European elections, the latter are seen by voters as less important (i.e. second order) events. Lower importance means, first of all, a lower will to bother voting. In addition, deciding not to vote might also be an intentional way to send a signal of dissatisfaction to the national incumbent (Reif, 1997). In particular, some of those who supported the incumbent parties at national level might decide to abstain either for avoiding concentration of power across levels of government or for disappointment towards the government's initiatives; and some of them can even decide to vote for other parties. In contrast, supporters of opposition parties, and particularly of new or fringe parties, are expected to be more motivated to turnout and sustain their parties/candidates.

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Since the literature on regional elections has generally accepted the approach proposed by the second order election model (Pallares and Keating, 2003; Jeffery and Hough, 2003), the above considerations lead to the adoption of two basic hypothesis:

H1: in regional elections, the levels of turnout will be lower compared to national elections

H2: in regional elections, incumbent parties will lose in vote share compared to national elections, while opposition and new/fringe parties will gain

However, the combination between some contextual factors of the Italian case and some insights coming from the comparative literature requires to add a few caveats to these two hypotheses. For instance, some comparative studies have, pointed out that some cases deviate from (or conform to a much lesser extent to) the second order election model because elections in these regions are not, in fact, 'second order'. This appears to be the case in regions with various blends of the following ingredients: strong ethno-regional identities, high levels of self-government, dominant ethno-regionalist parties and strongly regionalized party systems. These regional elections might acquire a quasi-first order character in the eyes of many voters, due to the importance they attach to defending a particular ethno-national identity and/or due to the greater powers that have been devolved to the regional government. For instance, Cutler (2008) maintains that the 2003 election in Ontario province displayed all the characteristics of a first order election. A conclusion that Jeffery and Hough (2009: 231) extended to elections in most Canadian provinces. In addition, it has been observed that the level of turnout is about the same (or even higher) as in national elections in the regional elections of some Swiss cantons, in the ethnically distinct regions of Denmark (i.e. Faroe Islands and Greenland), in Belgian regions/communities and in some RSSs in Italy (Bochsler and Wasserfallen, 2013; Bhatti and Hansen, 2013; Dandoy, 2013; Massetti and Sandri, 2013). The implications for the Italian case are two-fold. Indeed, not only Italian regions are divided in terms of formal institutional powers

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(between RSSs and RSOs), not only all the regions have considerably increased their powers in time (especially during the second Republic), but the presence of dominant ethno-regionalist parties produces completely regionalized party systems in two RSSs: Aosta Valley (VDA) and South Tyrol (Sandri, 2012; Massetti and Sandri, 2012; Scantamburlo and Pallaver, 2014). On the basis of these considerations, it is possible to add two sub-hypotheses to hypothesis 1:

H1a: turnout differentials (in absolute values) will be lower in regions with dominant ethno-regionalist parties and regionalised party systems (i.e. South Tyrol and VDA)

H1b: turnout differentials between regional and national elections (in absolute values) will be lower where/when regional powers are higher

In addition, the second order election model places a lot of importance on the electoral cycle. In this respect, we have seen that the de-alignment in the electoral calendar of RSOs has created interesting cases of vertical simultaneity with national and European (EP) elections. Another sub-hypothesis can, therefore, be added, based on the assumption that simultaneity between two second order elections (i.e. regional and European) will have a positive effect on turnout, albeit not as much as the simultaneity of a regional elections with the national one:

H1c: turnout differentials will be comparatively lower in regions where elections were held together with national and (less so) European elections

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As far as caveats to H2 are concerned, it is just worth pointing out that, in the Italian case, it is not possible to undertake proper comparisons between parties' electoral scores across national and regional elections. This is due to the different political systems (parliamentary at national vs. presidential at regional level) and, crucially, to the presence of president lists in regional elections. H2 is, therefore, reconceptualised and tested in a more rudimentary way:

H2bis: the party/coalition that is incumbent at national level will tend to lose regional presidencies in regional elections

Before moving to the analysis of electoral results and hypotheses testing, it is important to note that, for long time, regional elections in Italy have been rather considered to be as 'barometer elections' (Feltrin, 1990). This interpretive model, which accepts that idea that other elections (including regional ones) are sub-ordinate to national election but rejects both H1 and H2 (Anderson and Wards, 1996), will be therefore kept as an alternative to the second order election model.

Electoral results

Table 4 provides an overview of the most important data concerning the latest round of regional elections (2012-15).² The first point to be made is the impressive swing of regional presidencies from the centre-right (CR) to the centre-left (CL). Leaving aside South Tyrol and VDA, which are

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² For details on the 2012 Sicilian elections see Emanuele (2013). For details on the 2013 elections in Lazio, Lombardy and FVG (as well as some coverage of election results in Basilicata, Trento province and South Tyrol) see Massetti and Sandri (2014). For details on the 2013 elections in South Tyrol see Scantamburlo and Pallaver (2014). For details on the 2014 elections in Emilia Romagna see Maggini (2015). For details on the 2014 Calabrian elections see Emanuele and Marino (2016). For details on the simultaneous 2015 regional elections (Apulia, Campania, Liguria, Marche, Tuscany, Umbria and Veneto) see Bolgherini and Grimaldi (2016). For an analysis of the latest round of RSO elections (2013-2015), see Tronconi (2015) and Bolgherini and Grimaldi (2017a).

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ruled by pre-dominant ethno-regionalist parties - the *Südtiroler Volkspartei* (SVP) and *Union Valdôtaine* (UV) respectively -, the CR controlled eleven out of nineteen regions before the last round of elections, while it now controls only three of them: Liguria, Lombardy and Veneto. It is also interesting to note that all these regions are in northern Italy and were gained thanks to the very good performance of the LN, which holds the regional presidency in two of them: Lombardy and Veneto. In contrast, the CL (*de facto* the PD) has doubled the number of regions that it controls from eight to sixteen, being in office in all central and southern regions (including the two island RSSs Sardinia and Sicily). This level of predominance at regional level by the CL and the PD is unprecedented, and it is even more surprising given the fact that the PD has been the main party of government throughout the considered period. The second point is about the weakness of Berlusconi's party PDL-FI and the shifting power relationships between the PDL-FI and LN within the CR political area. Not only the PDL-FI lost eight regional presidencies, gaining only one (Liguria), but it did not manage to come on top as the most voted party in any region, while ranking in second place only in seven regions. Crucially, the PDL-FI has also lost the presidency of Lombardy (the largest and richest Italian region) in favour of the regional coalition partner LN. Clearly, the results of the regional elections have contributed to the launch of a serious challenge by the LN to the PDL-FI for the leadership of the CR coalition at national level (Ignazi, 2016: 155).

Table 4 to be inserted about here

Thirdly, the M5S had mixed results. It became the most voted party in Sicily and the second most voted party in seven regions. In addition, its candidates for president came second in Apulia and Marche. Indeed, as reported in figure 3, the rise of the M5S has contributed to a substantive increase in total volatility (TV) and in the effective innovation rate (EIR), which (in conjunction with the results of the 2013 general election) reinforces the claim that the party system of the second Republic does not exist anymore (Bolgherini and Grimaldi, 2017a). In addition, together with the fragmentation of the CR, the rise of the M5S has determined an impressive decrease in the average level of bi-polarism and, to a lesser

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extent, two-partysim in regional party systems (Tronconi, 2015; Bolgherini and Grimaldi, 2017a). As shown in figure 4, the level of bi-polarism has dropped down to 75%, while the level of two-partysim has gone below 40%. However, the M5S did not manage to win any regional presidency and in the overwhelming majority of regions, the contest for controlling regional administrations has remained a matter of competition between PD-dominated CL coalitions and different sorts of CR coalitions. Arguably, this outcome is not only the consequence of a voting system that gives an advantage to parties willing to form coalitions but also of the (non-sufficient) popularity, experience and appeal of M5S's candidates for president.

Figure 3 and 4 to be inserted about here

Last, but definitely not least, it should be noticed the dramatically low levels of turnout, with eleven regions experiencing falls over 10 percentage points vis-à-vis the previous regional election, three of which (Sicily, FVG and Emilia-Romagna) experiencing falls around or over 20 percentage points (table 3). Figure 5 puts the average level of turnout in the seven RSO elections held in 2015 in a longitudinal perspective, showing the steady decrease in voters' participation in the second Republic and the dramatic fall in the last round of simultaneous RSO elections. These data can be interpreted as a sign of dissatisfaction with politics in general and regional politics in particular. Surely, the numerous scandals that have hit regional institutions in the last few years might have played an important role in the disillusionment and disengagement of voters at regional level. The low levels of turnout are particularly worrying because, in conjunction with the application of *de facto* majoritarian voting systems to (at least) tri-polar party systems, they can raise issues of systemic legitimacy. Indeed, elected presidents were voted in executive office (triggering a bonus for their coalitions in the assemblies) by just about a quarter of registered voters in Molise, Sardinia, Abruzzo, Calabria, Apulia, Campania,

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Marche, Tuscany and Umbria. In the extreme cases of Liguria and Emilia-Romagna, the new elected presidents were voted in office by less than a fifth of registered voters, while in the even more extreme case of Sicily the elected president received less than 15% of the registered electorate's support.

Figure 5 to be inserted about here

Analysis of 'second-orderness' in 2012-2015 regional elections in Italy

As explained above, the standard second order election model has two main postulates: H1) lower levels of turnout vis-à-vis national elections and, H2) a punishment for national incumbents. Table 5 provides information for a basic test of both hypothesis. Starting from H1, the seventh column clearly shows that all regional elections have had a lower turnout vis-à-vis the 2013 general election, thus substantiating the first basic hypothesis. However, the same column also shows huge differences in turnout differentials across regions.

Table 5 to be inserted about here

In order to test the three sub-hypotheses related to H1, some of the information contained in the last five columns of table 5 is reproduced in table 6. In the latter table, regions are placed in different rows depending on the level of turnout differential vis-à-vis the 2013 national election. They are placed in different columns depending on whether they are dominated by ethno-regionalist parties (ethnic regions), whether they held regional elections at the same time as national elections (vertical simultaneity national), whether they held regional elections at the same time as European (vertical simultaneity European), whether they are (in the absence of previous characteristics) RSSs or RSOs. These categories were

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selected on the bases of sub-hypotheses H1a, H1b and H1c, and trying to minimize overlaps between the categories. The categories related to differences in regional powers (RSSs and RSOs) are here treated as residual, in the sense that, in case of overlaps (e.g. South Tyrol would be both and ethnic region and an RSS), regions are placed in the categories that appear to yield more explanatory power.

Table 6 to be inserted about here

The distribution of regions in table 6 provides some indicative patterns. First, regional elections in ethnic regions (South Tyrol and VDA) appear not to be second order, as the level of turnout is very similar to national elections, thus substantiating hypothesis H1a. Secondly, with the exception of Molise, vertical simultaneity with national elections appears to have a strong invigorating effect on turnout in regional elections. In Lazio and, even more, in Lombardy the difference between national and regional election is rather marginal, while the deviant case of Molise can be partially explained by a special disaffection with regional elections after two cases (in 2000 and 2012) of annulment of electoral results. In addition, the two regions – Piedmont and Abruzzo – that held their elections at the same time with European (and local) elections also boast higher levels of relative turnout than all the other regions. In this case, it is not clear whether it was the European election that pushed up turnout in regional elections or vice versa. Although, the turnout for the European election was slightly higher in both regions than the turnout in the respective regional election, it was also higher than the turnout in the European election both nationwide and in the respective constituencies (North-Western Italy for Piedmont and Southern Italy for Abruzzo). Therefore, it is plausible to deduct that there was a mutual reinforcement. Overall, the empirical evidence appears to be in support of a positive effect of vertical simultaneity both with national and (less so) European elections, as expected in H1c. Finally, differences in turnout differentials between RSSs and RSOs appear to be not strongly patterned. Leaving aside the cases of South Tyrol and VDA, the other RSSs have similar turnout differentials as most of the RSOs. Only three RSOs (Marche, Tuscany

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and Emilia-Romagna) are in a separate category of lower relative turnout. The evidence is, therefore, rather inconclusive and would suggest a rejection of hypothesis H1b. The conclusion that the amount of regional powers do not crucially affect the level of relative turnout can also be reached by the means of a longitudinal perspective. Indeed, limiting the analysis to RSOs, figure 6 shows that relative turnout has fallen dramatically precisely during the two decades (1995-2015s) in which the powers of these regions increased substantively.

Figure 6 to be inserted about here

Concerning the expected punishment for national incumbents, which is the second leg (H2) of the second order election model, the fourth column of table 5 provides information that suggest an outright rejection of H2bis. Regional presidencies, rather than migrating from national incumbent to opposition parties, have been overwhelmingly captured by the hegemon party party of the CL, the PD, which has been part of the parliamentary majority since November 2011 and has been, by far, the dominant party in the national executive since 2013. As shown in table 5, out of ten changes of regional presidencies from one coalition to another, only in one case (Liguria) the CR, which is largely in opposition at the national level, gained the presidency from the CL. In addition, this exception was largely due to a division amongst CL political forces (including within the PD), which presented two separate candidates for president (Ignazi, 2016). In contrast, as it can be observed from the second and third column in table 5, the PD captured nine regions from the CR, including Sicily: a traditionally CR stronghold region. It is important to note that, besides winning presidencies from the competing CR coalition, the PD has also captured the presidency of Apulia, previously held by regional coalition ally (but opposition party at national level) Left Ecology and Freedom (SEL). Moreover, in further contradiction to H2, a new and (at least initially) protest party like the M5S has performed worse in regional elections than in national elections, including the cases of vertical simultaneity (Massetti and Sandri, 2014).

Several contextual factors can be invoked in order to explain this evident mismatch between the results of 2012-2015 regional elections and the second basic hypothesis of the second order election model. First, the de-structuration of the party system (which has become at least tri-polar, fragmented and less integrated across the national-regional level of electoral competition) can inhibit a clear punishment/reward intent in multi-level voting behaviour. Secondly, the main opposition forces (CR and M5S) boasted evident weaknesses because of their divisions (CR) and their unwillingness to create coalitions (M5S). Thirdly, although the PD had been in office since spring 2013, it entered most regional elections while it was in phase of exciting renewal, with a new and young leader, Matteo Renzi, elected in late 2013 and becoming PM in February 2014. In other words, it can be argued that most regional elections (like the 2014 European elections) fell under the 'honey moon' period between the electorate and the new Renzi government.

However, the latter point can also be an occasion to shift the discussion from strictly *ad hoc* explanations to more general ones. Indeed, it should also be noted that the 2012-2015 round of elections repeats, albeit in a more extreme way, the pattern observed in the 2008-2010 regional elections, when the national incumbent CR coalition (elected in 2008) won five regions from the CL coalition without losing any of those it controlled before. This calls for a reconsideration of the thesis that regional elections in the second Republic have started to follow a classic second order election pattern in which the national incumbent is systematically punished. Out of five rounds of elections held since 1995, only two (2000 and 2005) delivered an evident punishment for the national incumbent. It would, therefore, make sense to develop a more sophisticated analysis of regional elections in the second Republic, which takes into consideration the process of bipolarization (1994-2006) and de-bipolarization (2008-2013), as well as the electoral cycle. In particular, we should distinguish between regional elections that follow rather closely the previous national election (1995, 2008-10, 2013-15) and those that are held after more than three years from the previous national election (2000 and 2005). At the moment, what emerges from the analysis is that regional elections in Italy fall in between the second order election model, in so far as levels of turnout are substantively lower than in national elections, and the barometer election model, in so far as

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they signal how the electorate would vote in a national election rather following a systematic and coherent pattern of punishment/reward for government/opposition parties or coalitions.

Conclusions

The nature of regional elections in Italy is still a debated issue. In the first Republic regional elections, particularly the horizontally simultaneous RSO elections, were conceived as 'barometer elections' that signalled how voters would cast their ballot paper in a national election at that particular point in time. They could be considered as particularly reliable opinion polls on national politics also due to the fact that the level of turnout was virtually the same as in national elections. During the second Republic, regional elections appeared to have gradually conformed to the classic second order election model, with increasingly lower levels of turnout and disappointing results for the parties/coalition that were/was in office at national level. This thesis was primarily advanced on the basis of the outcomes of the 2000 and 2005 rounds of RSO elections. The results of the latest round of elections and its analysis in a longitudinal perspective call, however, for a reconsideration of such a thesis. While the trend on the declining level of turnout has continued, the main party of the national government, the PD, has been the absolute winner of this round of regional elections in terms of number of won regional presidencies, establishing an unprecedented level of multi-level dominance (European, national and regional elections). Arguably, this could be the result of the fading away of key features of the second Republic, such as an established bipolar party system across the various tiers of government with a clear pattern of alternation in office. It could also be the result of a contingent weakness/fragmentation of the traditional CR coalition and/or of the persisting difficulty of the M5S to prevail in regional elections. Yet, together with the election rounds in 1995 and 2008-2010, this is the third one that (except for the low level of turnout) does not conform to the second order election model, leaving the 2000 and 2005 rounds of elections look more like exceptions than the rule. In this respect, more research is needed, which pays more attention to the electoral cycle. Indeed, it may be hypothesised that regional elections

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in the second Republic can still be considered as opinion polls on national politics, like in the first Republic, although less reliable ones due to the much lower levels of turnout.

The analysis presented in this article has also shown that the level of turnout depends on the presence/absence of a strong ethno-territorial cleavage and on vertical simultaneity with national and, surprisingly, European elections. In particular, regional elections in South Tyrol and VDA, where there are regionalized party systems dominated by ethno-regionalist parties, appear to be as first order elections, with levels of turnout just marginally lower than in national elections. Similar levels of relative turnout were found in two of the three regions that held their elections at the same time as the national elections. Perhaps more interestingly, in the two regions where regional elections coincided with the European election there appeared to be a process of mutual reinforcement in the level of turnout. In contrast, vertical simultaneity with local elections does not seem to affect regional elections' turnout, possibly due to the fact that local elections involve only part (sometimes a small part) of the regional electorate.

As for the political implications of this round of regional elections for Italian politics, several considerations are in order. First, the victory of the PD should not be downplayed. In the considered period, the PD has been the most competitive party across all types of elections, accumulating an unprecedented amount of power in the Italian multi-level system. However, its victories should not be overplayed either, especially in the perspective of the next general election. Besides the fact that many regional elections fell in a period of 'honey moon' of the new Renzi government, the PD prevailed in a context of extremely low turnouts and thanks to the distorting effects of the *de facto* majoritarian regional voting systems. These distorting effects have been further exacerbated by the (at least) tri-polar dynamics of competition. Secondly, as far as the CR political area is concerned, regional elections appear to have triggered processes that require a special care for the persistence of the coalition. On the one hand, the retention of the northern stronghold regions Lombardy and Veneto, as well as the unexpected victory in Liguria, came thanks to the coalition between FI and the LN. On the other hand, the mere fact that the LN has largely overtaken FI in the north and has reached the same (if not a slightly higher) electoral weight nation-wide opens up a thorny issue of national leadership. The leadership issue is

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further exacerbated by increasingly diverging policy positions on key areas, such as the EU and the Euro. Overall, the likelihood that FI and the LN will be able to form a coalition will probably depend on the incentives posed by the (still uncertain) voting system. Thirdly, although the M5S has made good breakthroughs in some regions and has largely improved its scores in the few regions where it had already competed before, it keeps underperforming vis-à-vis its results in the 2013 national election. Arguably, this is not only due to regional voting systems favouring coalitions (rather than standing alone parties) but also to the non-sufficient appeal of its candidates for regional president. The forthcoming Sicilian election (November 2017) appears to be a propitious occasion to win the first regional government but the election outcome remains highly uncertain. Finally, in the context of a never-ending debate on institutional reforms - reinvigorated by the December 2016 referendum on constitutional reform followed by a second intervention of the Constitutional Court on the national electoral law – it would make sense to open a debate and reconsider at least the 'national framework' within which regions can legislate on their voting systems. Indeed, the bonus-based systems in conjunction with the presence of (at least) tri-polar party systems and extremely low levels of turnout are increasingly raising issues of democratic legitimacy: elected presidents are granted wide executive powers and a majority in the regional assemblies, despite being voted in office (in most cases) by between a fifth and a quarter of the registered voters.

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Table 1. Typology of regions according to alternation in regional office (1995-2010)

<i>Centre-Left stronghold</i>	<i>Centre-Right stronghold</i>	<i>Regionalist stronghold</i>	<i>'swing regions' (number of swings)</i>
Basilicata Emilia-Romagna Marche Tuscany Trento Province* Umbria	Lombardy Sicily Veneto	South Tyrol VDA	Abruzzo (3) Apulia (1) Calabria (2) Campania (2) FVG (2) Lazio (3) Liguria (2) Molise (2) Piedmont (2) Sardinia (2)

- Trento Province has been traditionally dominated by the Christian Democratic party (DC). When this party collapsed in the early 1990s, its heirs joined either the centre-left (PPI, MA) or the centre-right (CCD-CDU, UdC). In Trento province, the component that joined the centre-left remained dominant and underwent a process of regionalization, culminating in the formation of Union for Trentino (UpT) in 2008. In addition to the autonomist tendencies of UpT, the centre-left coalition in Trento province also includes the regionalist Tyrolean Trento Autonomist Party (PATT), which led the provincial executive in 1994-1999 and in 2013-present.

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Table 2. Electoral systems currently in use in Italian regions

<i>Region</i>	<i>Region Type</i>	<i>Direct election of President</i>	<i>Electoral system</i>	<i>Threshold for Majority bonus</i>	<i>2nd round runoff</i>	<i>Level of majority provided by majority bonus (depending on vote % thresholds)</i>	<i>Thresholds for parties not in coalitions</i>	<i>Voter preferences on party lists</i>	<i>Possibility of split vote</i>
FVG	RSS	yes	PR + Majority Bonus	no	no	60% (vote% > 45%) 55% (vote% ≤ 45%)	4% region-wide or 20% province-wide	1	yes
Sardinia	RSS	yes	PR + Conditional Majority Bonus	25%	no	60% (vote% > 40%) 55% (25% < vote% ≤ 40%)	5% region-wide	1	yes
Sicily	RSS	yes	PR + 10% bonus	-	no	-	5% region-wide	1	yes
South Tyrol	RSS	no	PR	-	no	-	no	4	-
Trento Province	RSS	yes	PR + Majority Bonus	no	no	60% (vote% ≥ 40%) 51% (vote% < 40%)	no	3	no
VDA	RSS	no	PR + Majority Bonus	no	no	60% (vote% > 50%) 51% (vote% ≤ 50%)	no	3	-
Abruzzo	RSO	yes	PR + Majority Bonus	no	no	60%	4% region-wide	1	no
Apulia	RSO	yes	PR + Majority Bonus	no	no	58% (vote% ≥ 40%) 56% (35% ≤ vote% < 40%) 54% (vote% < 35%)	8% region-wide	1	yes
Basilicata	RSO	yes	PR + up to 20% Bonus	-	no	-	3% region-wide	1	yes
Calabria	RSO	yes	PR + Majority Bonus	no	no	60% (vote% > 40%) 55% (vote% ≤ 40%)	4% region-wide	1	no
Campania	RSO	yes	PR + Majority Bonus	no	no	60%	3% region-wide	2	yes
Emilia-Romagna	RSO	yes	PR + Majority Bonus	no	no	60% (vote% > 40%) 55% (vote% ≤ 40%)	3% region-wide	2	yes
Lazio	RSO	yes	PR + up to 20% Bonus	-	no	-	3% region-wide	1	yes
Liguria	RSO	yes	PR + up to 20% Bonus	-	no	-	3% region-wide	1	yes
Lombardy	RSO	yes	PR + Majority Bonus	no	no	60% (vote% > 40%) 55% (vote% ≤ 40%)	3% region-wide	1	yes
Marche	RSO	yes	PR + Conditional Majority Bonus	34%	no	60% (vote% ≥ 40%) 56.6% (37% ≤ vote% < 40%) 53.3% (34% ≤ vote% < 37%)	3% region-wide	1	no
Molise	RSO	yes	PR + up to 20% Bonus	-	no	-	3% region-wide	1	yes
Piedmont	RSO	yes	PR + up to 20% Bonus	-	no	-	3% region-wide	1	yes
Tuscany	RSO	yes	PR + Majority Bonus	40%	yes	60% (vote% ≥ 45%) 57.5% (40% ≤ vote% < 45%) 57.5% after runoff	5% region-wide	2	yes
Umbria	RSO	yes	PR + Majority Bonus	no	no	60%	2.5% region-wide	2	no
Veneto	RSO	yes	PR + Majority Bonus	no	no	60% (vote% ≥ 50%)		1	yes

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						57.5% (40% ≤ vote% < 50%) 55% (vote% < 40%)	no		

Source: Cunial and Terreo (2016), for RSOs. For FVG: regional law n.17 and n.28, 2007; for Sardinia: regional law n.1, 2013; for Sicily: regional law n.7, 2005; for South Tyrol: Provincia di Bolzano (http://www.buergernetz.bz.it/vote/landtag2003/comesivota_i.htm); for Trento Province: provincial law n.3, 2013; for VDA: regional law n.3, 1993.

Table 3. Regional electoral calendar 2012-2015

<i>Region</i>	<i>Election date</i>	<i>Snap election</i>	<i>Vertical simultaneity (national election)</i>	<i>Vertical simultaneity (European election)</i>	<i>Vertical simultaneity (local elections)</i>
Sicily	28/10/2012	yes	no	no	no
Lazio	24-25/02/2013	yes	yes	no	no
Lombardy	24-25/02/2013	yes	yes	no	no
Molise	24-25/02/2013	yes	yes	no	no
FVG	21-22/04/2013	no	no	no	Yes (partial)
VDA	26/05/2013	no	no	no	no
South Tyrol	26-27/10/2013	no	no	no	no
Trento	26-27/10/2013	no	no	no	no
Basilicata	17-18/11/2013	yes	no	no	no
Sardinia	16/02/2014	no	no	no	no
Abruzzo	25/05/2014	yes	no	yes	Yes (partial)
Piedmont	25/05/2014	yes	no	yes	Yes (partial)
Calabria	23/11/2014	yes	no	no	no
Emilia-Romagna	23/11/2014	yes	no	no	no
Apulia	3/05/2015	no	no	no	Yes (partial)
Campania	3/05/2015	no	no	no	Yes (partial)
Liguria	3/05/2015	no	no	no	Negligible
Marche	3/05/2015	no	no	no	Yes (partial)
Tuscany	3/05/2015	no	no	no	Negligible
Umbria	3/05/2015	no	no	no	Negligible
Veneto	3/05/2015	no	no	no	Negligible

Source: Italian Ministry of Interior: <http://elezionistorico.interno.it/index.php>

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Table 4. Summary of regional elections' results in Italy 2012-2015 (presented in chronological order)

<i>Region</i>	<i>Party (coalition) elected President</i>	<i>Party (coalition) previous President</i>	<i>Votes % for elected President</i>	<i>Most voted party</i>	<i>Votes % for most voted party</i>	<i>Second most voted party</i>	<i>Votes % for second most voted party</i>	<i>Votes % for President coalition</i>	<i>Seat share for the President coalition</i>	<i>Diff. seat/vote share</i>	<i>Turnout</i>	<i>Diff. previous reg. election</i>
Sicily	PD (CL)	MpA (CR)	30.47	M5S	14.88	PD	13.42	30.43	43.3	12.87	47.42	-19.26
Lazio	PD (CL)	PDL (CR)	40.65	PD	29.72	PDL	21.20	41.64	56.9	15.26	71.96	+11.07
Lombardy	LN (CR)	PDL (CR)	42.82	PD	25.33	PDL	16.73	43.07	61.5	18.43	76.74	+12.1
Molise	PD (CL)	PDL (CR)	44.70	PD	14.84	M5S	12.18	50.14	61.9	11.76	61.63	+1.84
FVG	PD (CL)	PDL (CR)	39,39	PD	26.82	PDL	20.0	38.98	55.1	16.12	50.48	-21.85
VDA	UV	UV	-	UV	33.47	UVP	19.2	47.90	51.4	3.5	73.03	-1.25
South Tyrol	SVP	SVP	-	SVP	45.7	DF	17.9	45.7	48.6	3.16	77.7	-2.4
Trento Pr	PATT (CL)	UpT (CL)	58.1	PD	22.06	PATT	17.55	58.1	65.7	7.6	62.82	-10.25
Basilicata	PD (CL)	PD (CL)	59.60	PD	24.84	PDL	12.27	62.75	61.9	-0.85	47.60	-15.21
Sardinia	PD (CL)	PDL (CR)	42.45	PD	22.06	FI	18.52	42.39	60.0	17.6	52.28	-2.51
Abruzzo	PD (CL)	PDL (CR)	46.26	PD	25.41	M5S	21.36	46.35	58.1	11.75	61.55	+8.57
Piedmont	PD (CL)	LN (CR)	47.09	PD	36.17	M5S	20.35	47.79	63.5	15.71	66.44	+2.11
Calabria	PD (CL)	PDL (CR)	61.41	PD	23.67	FI	12.28	61.71	63.3	1.59	44.08	-15.19
Emilia-Rom.	PD (CL)	PD (CL)	49.05	PD	44.53	LN	19.42	49.69	64.6	14.91	37.71	-30.36
Apulia	PD (CL)	SEL (CL)	47,12	PD	19.80	M5S	17.19	48.28	59.2	10.92	51.16	-12.03
Campania	PD (CL)	PDL (CR)	41,15	PD	19.49	FI	17.82	40.29	61.2	20.91	51.93	-11.04
Liguria	FI (CR)	PD (CL)	34,45	PD	25.64	M5S	22.29	37.71	51.6	13.89	50.68	-10.24
Marche	PD (CL)	PD (CL)	41.07	PD	35.13	M5S	18.89	43.57	60.0	16.43	49.78	-11.14
Tuscany	PD (CL)	PD (CL)	48.02	PD	45.93	LN	16.02	47.63	60.1	12.47	48.28	-12.43
Umbria	PD (CL)	PD (CL)	42.78	PD	35.76	M5S	14.56	43.26	61.9	18.64	55.43	-9.96
Veneto	LN (CR)	LN (CR)	50.09	LN	17.83	PD	16.66	52.19	57.1	4.91	57.16	-9.26

Source: elaborated by author on the basis of data from Italian Ministry of Interior: <http://elezionistorico.interno.it/index.php>

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Table 5. Alternation in regional presidencies, turnout, vertical simultaneity and 'ethnic regions'

Region	'Stronghold' or 'Swing' region	Confirmation of incumbent coalition (change in party)	Direction of change in incumbent coalition (party)	Turnout	Turnout 2013 general election	Turnout diff.	Vertical Simultaneity (national)	Vertical Simultaneity (European)	Vertical Simultaneity (local)	'Ethnic region' (dominant regionalist party)
Sicily	Stronghold (CR)	-	CR→CL (PD)	47.42	64.59	- 17.17	no	no	no	-
Lazio	swing	-	CR→CL (PD)	71.96	77.50	-5.54	yes	no	no	-
Lombardy	stronghold (CR)	CR (FI→LN)	-	76.74	79.61	-2.87	yes	no	no	-
Molise	swing	-	CR→CL (PD)	61.63	78.23	-16.6	yes	no	no	-
FVG	swing	-	CR→CL (PD)	50.48	77.20	-26.72	no	no	yes	-
VDA	stronghold (Reg.)	UV	-	73.03	76.96	-3.93	no	no	no	Yes
S. Tyrol	stronghold (Reg.)	SVP	-	77.7	82.08	-4.38	no	no	no	Yes
Trento	stronghold (CL)	CL (UpT→ PATT)	-	62.82	80.04	-17.22	no	no	no	-
Basilicata	stronghold (CL)	CL(PD)	-	47.60	69.50	-21.09	no	no	no	-
Sardinia	swing	-	CR→CL (PD)	52.28	68.32	-16.04	no	no	no	-
Abruzzo	swing	-	CR→CL (PD)	61.55	75.95	-14.4	no	yes	yes	-
Piedmont	swing	-	CR→CL (PD)	66.44	72.26	-5.82	no	yes	yes	-
Calabria	swing	-	CR→CL (PD)	44.08	63.15	-19.07	no	no	no	-
Emilia-Romagna	stronghold (CL)	CL(PD)	-	37.71	82.10	-44.39	no	no	no	-
Apulia	swing	CL (SEL → PD)	-	51.16	69.94	-18.78	no	no	yes	-
Campania	swing	-	CR→CL (PD)	51.93	67.87	-15.94	no	no	yes	-
Liguria	swing	-	CL→CR (FI)	50.68	75.12	-24.44	no	no	negligible	-
Marche	stronghold (CL)	CL(PD)	-	49.78	79.84	-30.06	no	no	yes	-
Tuscany	stronghold (CL)	CL(PD)	-	48.28	79.19	-31.25	no	no	negligible	-
Umbria	stronghold (CL)	CL(PD)	-	55.43	79.53	-24.01	no	no	negligible	-
Veneto	stronghold (CR)	CR(LN)	-	57.16	81.71	-24.55	no	no	negligible	-

Source: elaborated by author on the basis of data from Italian Ministry of Interior: <http://elezionistorico.interno.it/index.php>

Table 6. Turnout differentials between regional and national elections (relationship with regional powers, vertical simultaneity and ethno-regional cleavages)

<i>Turnout differential intervals (percent points)</i>	<i>Other RSOs</i>	<i>Other RSSs</i>	<i>Vertical simultaneity European</i>	<i>Vertical simultaneity National</i>	<i>Ethnic regions</i>
0 to -5				Lombardy	VDA South Tyrol
-5 to -10			Piedmont	Lazio	
-10 to -15			Abruzzo		
-15 to -20	Campania Calabria Apulia	Trento prov. Sardinia Sicily		Molise	
-20 to -30	Basilicata Liguria Umbria Veneto	FVG			
under -30	Marche Tuscany Emilia-Romagna				

Source: elaborated by author on the basis of data from Table 5

Source: author elaboration of data from Hooghe et al. (2016: Appendix)

Source: elaborated by author based on data from <http://www.demos.it/rapporto.php>.

*Percentage of respondents replying that they have a lot of trust in the Region.

Source: author's elaboration of data from Bolgherini and Grimaldi (2017b)

* TV is computed by summing the differences in vote shares for all parties between two consecutive elections

** EIR is computed by summing the vote shares of completely new parties as defined by Chiaramonte and Emanuele (2013)

Source: author's elaboration of data from Bolgherini and Grimaldi (2017b)

* Shown are the average values (for each round of RSO elections) of the sum of vote shares for the two biggest coalitions (bi-polarism) and of the sum of vote shares for the two biggest parties (bi-partyism)

Source: Italian Ministry of Interior (<http://elezionistorico.interno.it/index.php?tpel=R>)

Source: author's elaboration on data from the Italian Ministry of Interior: <http://elezionistorico.interno.it/index.php>