

MPs repositioning in the Senate in view of decisive July

Italy is the only EU Member State that has not yet sent its National Reform Plan (NRP) to Brussels, a prerequisite to gain access to the multi-billion-euro resources promised by European authorities to tackle the Covid-19 crisis. And of which, to put it very simply, our country is in desperate need. As always happens when it deals with Europe, the Italian political debate has become hot and ideologized, with fault lines that go well beyond the typical division between government and opposition forces, fueling a climate of continuous postponements that envelops practically every dossier in the hands of Premier Giuseppe Conte's Cabinet. In addition to the NRP, the last to slip in chronological order was the go-ahead for the highly anticipated 'Simplification' decree, with all due respect for the measures that could have shaken up Italy's intricate bureaucracy and therefore contribute (perhaps) to a partial restart of the country. Meanwhile, the parties' pastiche on ESM continues, as if Rome exhausted by the economic consequences of the coronavirus is in a position to be able to reject with disdain and pride the 36 billion euro (at almost zero cost) allocated by the fund to rebuild its health system after the pandemic and with an eye to future viral catastrophes. An attitude that says a lot about the fiber of our current ruling class, totally unaccustomed to following a strategic line of thought and on the contrary perfectly at ease in the most inconclusive rearguard and / or position battles. This is one of the main fuses capable of precipitating the events during the crucial month of July. Especially in the Senate, where the government has something to fear given the nar-

row numbers of its ruling coalition. In addition to the possible vote on the mid-month ESM bailout fund coinciding with the Prime Minister's intervention on the eve of the European Council, the hall of Palazzo Madama could face potentially explosive issues, such as the 'Relaunch' and 'Simplification' decrees or the end of the month's vote on budgetary gap. The problem for the executive is that during the current legislature 33 senators have already changed their membership group, mainly affecting the two main shareholders of the M5S-PD administration. The M5S lost 13 senators, mostly merged into the Mixed Group (8) and the League (4), while the Democratic Party ceded 14 senators to Renzi's IV-PSI, resulting in the creation of a new junior partner in the ruling coalition featuring a relevant interdiction power over the whole government. In the opposition center-right the League was reinforced thanks to 5 new entries and the possibility of announcing three more arrivals from former M5S MPs already in the next few hours. The executive is certain that it still retain a parliamentary majority well above the 161 votes needed to keep afloat, also counting senators for life and a few independent senators, but it is a fact that the coming week's votes will be lived with apprehension. League leader Matteo Salvini could take the opportunity to attack and sink the government in the Senate, although the latest comments by his fellow Forza Italia ally Silvio Berlusconi have certified that not even the center-right is so united. Former premier said he was willing to participate in a new political phase, without dissolving the doubt whether through elections or the birth of a new parliamentary coalition.