

## Covid return between prevention and mediatic excesses

The sharp rise in infections occurred in the last week is a sign that Italy too is about to deal with the second wave of Covid. After having represented for weeks a sort of happy place within a continent struggling with the harsh effects of the pandemic's return, our country's exception could now vanish very quickly. Smelled the danger, the government opted for a new tightening with the obligation of outdoor masks and approved a decree extending the state of emergency until January 31 as well as the Premier's DPCM decree until October 15. At that point, the data on new infections will tell whether it will be necessary to proceed with a further tightening of anti-Covid measures, to prevent the occurrence of worrying scenarios. It is no coincidence that the resurgence of infections promptly rekindled the State-Regions row, which had remained silent in the post-lockdown months or was forced to give way to purely political issues such as the 'exciting' debate on the thaumaturgical EU resources to restart Italy and the 'decisive' September electoral campaigns. On the contrary, the whirlwind of declarations released in the last few days by some of the most vocal regional governors of the peninsula – with cross-cutting warnings to the government to be careful not to resort to easy tightening of containment measures – is the signal that the issue of managing the health emergency is ready to take back the public debate scene. If the resort to a new lockdown is still an inconceivable hypothesis given its foreseeable socio-economic effect on Italian citizens and businesses, the real question to ask while waiting for October 15 is to understand what the executive will be able to

do to face the return of a widely expected emergency. It would be a real shame if, after the direct experience of the pandemic between March and June and another four months of truce and reopening, the only recipes put in place by the system's leadership consist in the imposition of another wave of mandatory locks with the extension of outdoor masks. All in all, a move that would be easy to implement and perhaps also to be accepted by public opinion thanks to a hypertrophic management of institutional communication, yet extremely painful from an economic point of view for a country that is already weakened like ours. The attempt to steer Italy through a new kind of normality would be of course completely different, waiting for the vaccine and the arrival of better times. The basic question therefore remains the same as always, or how long can Italy afford to postpone the moment to tackle, manage and above all solve its problems? Stop ceasing to look for immediate solutions on which to shift the attention of those who, logically, are looking for answers. In this respects, the wait for the arrival of the European resources of the Recovery Fund / Next Generation EU is truly emblematic, especially if compared with the reality of the troubled (euphemism) debate underway between Strasbourg and Brussels for their allocation and the alarms of those who recall that Italy has historically proved unable to spend what it received from the EU. According to data from Confindustria Digitale, Rome spent just one third of the €76 billion received in the 2014-2020 period. Premier Conte promised that this time it will be different.