According to site coordinator Fabio Lugano, Scenari Economici is owned by Antonio Maria Rinaldi, although that is not disclosed on the site. Rinaldi is an economist, member of the European Parliament representing the right-wing League party, and has authored several books, including “Il Fallimento dell’Euro?” (“The failure of the Euro?”) and “Europa Kaputt, (s)venduti all’euro” (“Europe finished, sold out to the Euro”).

Scenari Economici runs advertising. The site also solicits donations, although Lugano told NewsGuard in a phone interview that “donations are nonexistent” (“le donazioni sono inesistenti”).

The site’s tagline is “The world seen from a different angle” (“Il mondo visto da un’altra angolazione”). Scenari Economici covers international and national news, and offers analysis and commentary on economics and politics, often expressing criticism of the European Union and the euro. Content is produced by a network of bloggers who, according to Lugano, share “very similar views” and “are not paid by anyone.”

According to the site’s About US (Chi Siamo) page, “Scenarieconomici.it is a site that deals with economic, macroeconomics, financial statistics, and political and economic current affairs…. Our main goal is to provide data, analyses, studies, points of view and ideas to readers, analyzing the problems in a unique and original way.” (“Scenarieconomici.it è un sito che si occupa di temi Economici, Macroeconomia, statistica finanziaria, attualità politico-economica. Siamo nati a Marzo 2013. L’obiettivo di fondo è fornire dati, analisi,
Credibility

The site's original content largely consists of opinion articles. News articles generally rely on reporting from national and international media outlets, including Italy's national public broadcaster Rai, national newspapers la Repubblica and Libero Quotidiano, and pan-European media network EURACTIV.

Typical articles have run under headlines such as: “THE LEAGUE OF EVIL: Bloomberg and Clinton united” (“LA LEGA DEL MALE: Bloomberg e Clinton uniti”); “THE NEW FASCISM IS ANTI-FASCISM” (“IL NUOVO FASCISMO È L'ANTIFASCISMO”); and “Endless public debt, when will it stop rising?” (“Debito pubblico senza fine, quando smetterà di aumentare?”).

ScenarioEconomici.it does not disclose that it is owned by Antonio Maria Rinaldi, a member of the European Parliament representing the right-wing League party, which the site frequently promotes, along with the party's anti-European Union and anti-immigration agenda.

For example, the site's coverage of the Government crisis in August 2019 regularly supported the League's leader Matteo Salvini and criticized his rivals, including Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte and Five Star Movement's former deputy prime minister Luigi Di Maio. An August 2019 article called remarks by Conte criticizing Salvini “a terrible speech.” Another August 2019 article described Di Maio's positions as “shameful” (“vergognoso”).

A third article that month stated: “Let us make our voice heard, as strong as possible, to prevent the repugnant ploy between the Democtraric Party and the Five Star Movement” (“Facciamoci sentire con tutta la forza democratica possibile per impedire l’abominevole INCLUSIONE DEI NANI fra M5S – PD”).

None of these articles disclosed that the site's owner is a League politician who currently serves in the European Parliament.
The site has published multiple distorted and misleading claims. A February 2020 article included the unsubstantiated claim that the coronavirus outbreak in China started in a military laboratory, stating that “it is known that this type of accident occurs in China 10 times more frequently than in the USA, and 20 times more frequently than in Europe” (“Del resto è noto che questo tipo di incidenti avviene in Cina 10 volte più frequentemente che negli USA, e 20 volte più frequentemente che in Europa”).

The article’s only support for this claim was a link to a report titled “Global Estimates of Occupational Accidents and Work-related Illnesses 2017,” published in September 2017 by the Workplace Safety and Health Institute in Singapore. The report concluded that “Asia was the highest contributor and constituted about two-thirds of the global work-related mortality, followed by Africa at 11.8% and Europe at 11.7%.” The report did not include any specific data about China, so it is not clear where the article’s comparison of occupational accidents in China, Europe, and the U.S. come from.

Moreover, experts believe that the virus likely originated in bats. Other than the lab’s proximity to the outbreak’s epicenter in Wuhan, China, there is no evidence that the virus was manufactured and originated in the lab.

A December 2018 article raised the prospect of military action by the EU to suppress dissent in France. According to the article, “the Euronazi criminals are deploying their resources to fight millions of French people who are united against Macron in order to defend their families, their values, and their culture” (“i criminali euronazisti stanno dispiegando le loro risorse per combattere i milioni di francesi che si sono sollevati contro Macron in difesa delle loro famiglie, dei loro valori e della loro cultura”). The site backed this claim with a photograph of a French Gendarmerie armored vehicle displaying the EU flag. The vehicle was used in Paris in preparation for demonstrations protesting a proposed gas tax hike.
According to the French newspaper Liberation, the EU flag likely appeared on a French armored vehicle because the vehicle was among those used during European partnership training exercises in Saint-Astier (Dordogne), where a Gendarmerie training center is located. It was also possible that the European flag on that vehicle stemmed from France’s participation in the EU Eulex mission, a legal initiative launched in 2009 in Kosovo, Liberation reported. There is no evidence that the EU is using the military to intimidate or silence French citizens who oppose President Macron.

The site has published numerous articles espousing the Great Replacement theory, popularized by right-wing French philosopher Renaud Camus, which holds that there is plot to substitute the white population of Europe and the U.S. with non-whites from Africa, amid a declining white birth rate. For example, a July 2018 article, headlined “AN ITALIAN PROPOSAL FOR AFRICA by Francesco S. Bovi” (“UNA PROPOSTA ITALIANA PER L’AFRICA di Francesco S. Bovi”), referred to “a clear ethnic replacement project that will inevitably push Italy towards a civil war” (“un evidente progetto di sostituzione etnica che spingerà ineluttabilmente l’Italia verso una guerra civile”).

The Great Replacement theory is not supported by immigration data. According to the Warsaw-based European Border and Coast Guard Agency, also known as Frontex, illegal immigration in 2018 was 92 percent lower than it was in 2015. Data from Eurostat, which compiles statistics throughout the European Union, shows that 825,400 people immigrated to a European Union member state in 2017, a 17 percent decrease from the year before.

After the March 2019 massacre of 50 people in New Zealand mosques, Camus himself distanced himself from the theory, calling it the “nephew” of Nazism. “They share the same genealogy of horror. We cannot be associated with that,” he said. Before the massacre, the New Zealand attacker posted a 74-page manifesto titled “The Great Replacement.”
Because ScenariEconomici.it has published multiple stories that include inaccurate or misleading claims, and because the site does not disclose that it is owned by a member of the European Parliament from the League party, yet frequently writes about the party and its agenda, NewsGuard has determined that the site does not meet its standard for gathering and presenting information responsibly.

Asked about the lack of disclosure about Rinaldi, Lugano told NewsGuard that he plans to update Rinaldi’s profile to include that he has is a member of the European Parliament for the League party.

Commenting on the December 2018 story about France and the EU military, Lugano said, “What do you want me to say? When I saw this article, I told the author ‘You wrote a piece of s----.’ Every author is accountable for what he writes” (“Cosa vuoi che ti dica. Quando ho visto l’articolo, ho detto all’autore ‘Hai scritto una c....’ Ogni autore è responsabile per quello che scrive”).

Lugano did not respond to follow-up messages from NewsGuard seeking comment on the other articles cited above.

ScenariEconomici.it does not disclose a political or ideological orientation or label any of its content as opinion, yet its coverage typically promotes a right-wing agenda.

For example, a July 2019 article, headlined “The difficulties for an ‘exit from the euro’. It is not just a matter of issuing banknotes. What are the solutions?” (“Le difficoltà per ‘uscire dall’euro’. Non si tratta solo di mettere in circolazione delle banconote. Quali soluzioni?”), claimed that “the majority of the economic problems in Italy derive from a terrible (if not criminal) regulation and management of the European monetary system” and that “the solution to the problem seems simple: ‘let’s get out of the euro’” (“la maggior parte dei problemi economici dell’Italia derivano da una pessima (per non dire criminale) regolamentazione e
gestione del sistema monetario europeo” e quindi “la soluzione al problema sembra semplice: ‘usciamo dall’euro!’

In another July 2019 story, headlined “Let’s exit from the EU cage! Let’s retake the monetary sovereignty! Let’s reconquest democracy! Let’s implement our 1948 Constitution! Work and dignity for all!” (“Usciamo dalla gabbia della UE! Riprendiamoci la sovranità monetaria! Riconquistiamo la democrazia! Applichiamo la Costituzione del 1948! Lavoro e dignità per tutti!”), the site invited readers to sign up to attend a demonstration planned in Rome.

Because the site does not disclose its pro-League, anti-European Union agenda or label opinion, NewsGuard has determined that the site does not handle the difference between news and opinion responsibly.

Asked to comment on the favorable coverage of the League party, Lugano told NewsGuard: “Authors, personally, have positions close to that of the League party and of the center-right in general. Most importantly, each position varies depending on the author.” (“Gli autori, personalmente, hanno un sentire più vicino alle posizioni della Lega e del centro-destra in generale e soprattutto è molto diverso a seconda degli autori”).

Asked why the site does not disclose its political leaning, Lugano said: “We mostly write about Economics, even though we increased our coverage of Politics during the [government] crisis. Economy is not leftist nor rightist (“Scriviamo soprattutto di economia, abbiamo fatto più politica per via della crisi. L’economia non è né di destra né di sinistra”).

Scenari Economici does not articulate a corrections policy, and NewsGuard did not find corrections on the site.

Asked about corrections, Lugano sent NewsGuard three links to articles he said were corrected. In the same email, he stated: “As for corrections, we do not keep track of them but our authors act independently,
making the due changes, integrations and corrections.” (“Per quanto riguarda le correzioni non ne teniamo un registro preciso, ma i nostri autori, che agiscono in modo autonomo, effettuano le proprie modifiche, integrazioni e correzioni”).

However, because none of the examples supplied by Lugano include an explanation of what, if anything, was corrected in the story, only that they were updated, NewsGuard has determined that the site does not meet the standard for regularly running transparent corrections.

Headlines are typically representative of content.

The site does not disclose its ownership or editorial leadership. Lugano told NewsGuard that the “the owner of the site and of its name is professor Rinaldi, it’s not a secret” (“il proprietario del sito e il titolare del nome è il professore Rinaldi, non è un segreto”).

As for the lack of information on who manages the site, Lugano said: “I’m the coordinator but I’m not an editorial director” (“Sono il coordinatore ma non sono il direttore”). He said some of the bloggers publish articles on their own, and that he reads them once they are online. “This tells you the level of trust that exists among us,” he said. (“Questo ti dice il rapporto di fiducia che c’è tra noi”).

ScenariEconomici.it provides bylines on many articles. However, the site does not include contact or biographical information for many writers, and some use pseudonyms. Therefore, NewsGuard has determined that the site does not meet NewsGuard’s standard for providing information about content creators.

Asked about the site’s lack of information about content creators and the use of pseudonyms, Lugano said that some of the site’s contributors “are journalists from national media outlets whose names I’ll never reveal even under torture. Others are big executives who obviously prefer not to put their names out.” (“Alcuni sono giornalisti di testate nazionali e non ti dirò
Advertising is distinguished from editorial content.
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Transparency

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