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For the 100th LUISS DoL Research Seminar (8.11.2021-9.12.2025)

“The Italian political system: new developments”

Speaker: Prof. Sabino Cassese (Scuola Normale Superiore)

Opening remarks: Prof. Antonio Punzi (Luiss Guido Carli)

Chair: Prof. Aldo Sandulli (Luiss Guido Carli)

Discussant: Prof. Nicola Lupo (Luiss Guido Carli)

Date and Time: December 9th, 2025, 18:00 - 19:30hrs.

Sala delle Colonne - Viale Pola

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Abstract

Italy's 2022 elections marked a sharp political shift: voter turnout fell to a historic low (63.9%), and the far-right party Fratelli d'Italia (Fdi), led by Giorgia Meloni, rose dramatically (from 4.3% in 2018 to 26%). The new government, supported by Fdi, the League, and Forza Italia, represents Italy's first extreme-right executive rooted in the post-fascist tradition.

The government's style shows continuity with past practices of transformism (rapid political adaptation) and growing political patronage. Its policies are pragmatic and cautious—pro-EU, pro-NATO, fiscally conservative—but marked by strong control over state institutions and emphasis on “national identity”. There are risks: erosion of administrative capacity (“the democracy trap”), politicization of the civil service, and a mix of corporatism and patronage bypassing political parties. The opposition remains weak and fragmented. There is continuity amid change: a right-wing government that blends realism and nationalism but faces structural democratic fragilities.

About the Speaker

Sabino Cassese (born 1935) is an emeritus judge of the Constitutional Court of Italy and emeritus professor at the Scuola Normale Superiore in Pisa. He graduated in Law in 1956 from the University of Pisa, where he was a student of the Scuola Normale Superiore. He holds honorary doctorates from the Universities of Aix-en-Provence–Marseille, Córdoba, Paris II, Castilla-La Mancha,

Athens, Macerata, and Rome “La Sapienza,” as well as from the European University Institute in Florence.

He has taught at the Universities of Urbino, Naples, Rome, New York, Paris, and Nantes, and at the Institut d’Études Politiques in Paris.

From 1993 to 1994, he served as Minister for Public Administration in the 50th Government of the Italian Republic, led by Carlo Azeglio Ciampi. From 2005 to 2014, he was a Judge of the Constitutional Court of Italy, and from 2016 to 2025, a member of the High Council of the European University Institute. Since 2000, he has been a member of the Istituto Lombardo – Accademia di Scienze e Lettere, since 2012 of the Accademia delle Scienze di Torino, and since 2011 of the Académie Internationale de Droit Comparé. He contributes regularly to *Il Domenicale del Sole 24 Ore*, *Corriere della Sera*, and *Il Foglio*. He has written numerous books and scholarly articles in Italy and abroad. His most recent works include *Miseria e nobiltà d’Italia. Dialoghi sullo stato della Nazione* (Solferino, 2024) and *Varcare le frontiere. Una autobiografia intellettuale* (Mondadori, 2024).

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