

## ITALY

**Dates of Elections:** 14 and 15 June 1987

### **Purpose of Elections**

Elections were held for all the elective seats in Parliament following premature dissolution of this body on 28 April 1987. Previous general elections had taken place in June 1983.

### **Characteristics of Parliament**

The bicameral Parliament of Italy consists of a Chamber of Deputies and a Senate.

The Chamber of Deputies comprises 630 members elected for 5 years.

The Senate is composed of 315 members elected for 5 years, 6 members appointed by the President of the Republic chosen from among persons who have brought honour to the nation in the fields of literature, art, science and social science, and, as *ex-officio* members, former Presidents of the Republic (currently 3). Persons belonging to the last two categories are members of the Senate for life.

### **Electoral System**

All citizens at least 18 years of age and residing in Italy can vote for Deputies if they have not been convicted of crime or found morally unworthy under a legal provision; the minimum age of electors for the Senate is 25.

Electoral registers are compiled at the constituency level and revised annually between December and March. Voting is considered a civic duty; failure to vote without a justifiable reason is noted for five years in the public record.

Qualified electors at least 25 years old are eligible to be candidates for the Chamber of Deputies; the minimum age for the Senate is 40 years. Membership of Parliament is incompatible with a number of public posts (including judgeship of the Constitutional Court and the *Consiglio Superiore della Magistratura* and membership of the National Council of Economy and Labour), as well as with the post of executive of a State enterprise or State-assisted company.

Candidates for the Chamber of Deputies appear on lists of political parties, which must be supported by 350 to 700 electors, depending on the size of the constituency. Senate candidates are nominated as individuals but group with other candidates of the same region for purposes of distribution of seats.

Deputies are elected in 31 constituencies by a party-list system of proportional representation. In accordance with the Constitution, division of seats among the constituencies is based on population. Within each constituency, seats are distributed among the parties on the basis of an electoral quota determined by dividing the total number of votes by the

number of seats to be filled, plus two. Remaining seats are distributed on the national level according to the method of the greatest remainder, taking into account only those party-lists which have won at least one seat and 300,000 valid votes cast. Within each list, candidates are elected on the basis of preferential votes; each elector can express three preferences in a constituency with less than 16 seats, four in a constituency with 16 or more seats.

The Senate is elected on a regional basis. Each of the country's 20 regions is allotted a number of Senators proportionate to its population, and is divided into as many single-member districts as there are seats. Each elector votes for a single candidate of a party in his district. A 65% majority of votes cast is required for a candidate to win the district seat. If this qualified majority is not attained, the seats concerned are distributed on the regional level according to the d'Hondt method of proportional representation.

The Aosta Valley, which elects a single Deputy and Senator by simple majority vote, is the one constituency with an electoral system differing from the ones described above.

If a seat becomes vacant in the Chamber of Deputies between general elections, it is filled by the individual who is "next-in-line" on the list of the party which formerly held the seat. Senate vacancies are filled by the "next-in-line" regional candidates of the party which formerly held the seat.

### **General Considerations and Conduct of the Elections**

On 28 April 1987, President of the Republic Francesco Cossiga dissolved Parliament and called early elections for June (one year ahead of schedule) after the 10-day-old Government of Mr. Amintore Fanfani (Christian Democratic Party - DC) lost a vote of confidence in which many DC members deliberately abstained. The five-party coalition (consisting of DC, the Socialist Party (PSI), the Social Democrat Party (PSDI), the Liberal Party (PLI) and the Republican Party (PRI) that had governed since August 1983 under the leadership of Prime Minister Bettino Craxi (**PSI**) had collapsed earlier in April.

The sometimes acrimonious 40-day campaign was largely devoid of dominating issues and focused as much on personalities (particularly the opposition between Mr. Craxi and DC leader Ciriaco De Mita) and speculation on post-election coalition possibilities. Mr. Craxi defended his record in office (especially in the economic sector) while DC emphasized its ties to the Roman Catholic Church and support for traditional family values. The Communist Party (PCI) stressed its dedication to women's issues and the newly-formed environmentalist Greens called for a national referendum on the question of banning nuclear power in the country. Altogether 10,906 candidates contested Parliament's 945 elective seats.

On polling day, DC and PSI registered gains while PCI lost ground in both Chambers but remained the second largest party in Parliament. Results pointed to a new center-right coalition, which was formed by the same five partners as before following several weeks of negotiation. Prime Minister Giovanni Goria (DC) heads the new Council of Ministers, which was sworn in on 29 July.

*1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats  
in the Chamber of Deputies*

Number of registered electors	46,000,000	(approx.)
Voters . . . . .	88.5%	

Political Group	% of Votes obtained	Number of Seats
Christian Democratic Party (DC)	34.3	234 (+ 9)
Communist Party (PCI) . . . . .	26.6	177 (- 21)
Socialist Party (PSI) . . . . .	14.3	94 (+ 21)
Italian Social Movement - Na- tional Right (MSI-DN) . . . . .	5.9	35 (- 7)
Republican Party (PRI) . . . . .	3.7	21 (- 8)
Social Democrat Party (PSDI)	3.0	17 (- 6)
Radical Party (PR) . . . . .	2.6	13 (+ 2)
Greens* . . . . .	2.5	13 (+ 13)
Liberal Party (PLI) . . . . .	2.1	11 (- 5)
Proletarian Democracy (DP) . . . . .	1.7	8 (+ D)
South Tyrol People's Party (SVP)	0.5	3 ( = )
Others . . . . .	2.8	4 (+ 1)
		<b>630</b>

\* New party.

*2. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats  
in the Senate*

Number of registered electors. . . . . 38,000,000 (approx.)

Political Group	% of Votes obtained	Number of Seats
Christian Democratic Party (DC)	33.6	125 (+ 5)
Communist Party (PCI) . . . . .	28.3	100 (- 7)
Socialist Party (PSI) . . . . .	10.9	36 (- 2)
Italian Social Movement - National Right (MSI-DN) . . . . .	6.5	17 (- 1)
Republican Party (PRI) . . . . .	3.8	8 (- 2)
Social Democrat Party (PSDI)	2.4	6 (- 3)
Liberal Party (PLI) . . . . .	2.2	3 (- 3)
Radical Party (PR) . . . . .	1.8	3 (+ 2)
Greens . . . . .	2.0	1 (+ 1)
Proletarian Democracy (DP) . . .	1.5	1 (+ 1)
South Tyrol People's Party (SVP)	0.5	2 (- 1)
Others . . . . .	3.5	3 (+ 2)
		315

\* There are, moreover, nine Senators for life.

*Distribution of Members of Parliament  
according to Sex*

	Chamber of Deputies	
Men	549	304
Women	81	20
	630	324