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The context and consequences of 2024 early parliamentary election in France: the rise of actors from the right and left spectrum of political action

Abstract: After the poor electoral result of his political option in the European Parliament elections, President of France Emmanuel Macron decided to call an early parliamentary election. This move is unusual in the functioning of the French political system because early parliamentary elections are quite rare in this country. The voters' dissatisfaction with various decisions of Macron during his two presidential mandates were used by the political options from the right and left spectrum of political action for increasing their own rating. However, owing to the electoral system and post-electoral calculations, the political movement led by Macron kept a sort of political power in the Parliament; namely, the opposition actors are not able to form the majority that would lead to cohabitation, which has not been recorded since 2000, when the shortening of the presidential mandate from seven to five years led to the merging of presidential and parliamentary elections in the same year. Such calling of early parliamentary elections, in case they are held at their regular time in the future, separates elections while increasing the possibility of cohabitation being established in the forthcoming period. This paper will analyze and explore the manner in which the French political system will function in that situation, as well as the direction in which further growth of political options on the right and left spectrum.

Keywords: political system of France, parliamentary elections in France, Emmanuel Macron, Rassemblement national, Marine Le Pen, Jean-Luc Mélenchon

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Introduction

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The legal organization of the current Fifth Republic has defined the political system as semi-presidential, with the president as the dominant political figure who, therefore, is entitled to dissolve the Assembly and to call early parliamentary election (Knapp and Wright, 2006, pp. 88–89). The reasons for changes in the political and electoral systems should be sought in the fact that during the Fourth Republic the proportional electoral system was in force, which called for establishing coalition governments which were unsteady (Petrović, 2013, p. 96). In that period of the Fourth Republic, in 13 years (1945–1958) as many as 23 governments were changed (Vasović, 2008, p. 119). Early parliamentary elections were not a frequent characteristic of the Fifth Republic, and that option was particularly reduced to minimum after the adoption of the constitutional amendment in 2000, which shortened the presidential mandate from seven to five years, and this system led to the overlapping of presidential and parliamentary elections in the same year, within only several weeks. It suited the political option whose candidate won in the presidential election because, on the wave of such popularity, he managed to achieve a sufficiently good electoral result for his political option, thus reducing the probability of cohabitation to minimum, regardless of the two-cycle majority electoral system and depersonalized voting. However, after the European Parliament elections held on 9th June, the current President of France, Emmanuel Macron, because of the poor election results of his political option Renaissance, decided to call

an early parliamentary election. Macron was criticized because of this move because he was considered to introduce further instability in that way, having in mind that the election was called only several weeks before the beginning of the Olympic Games in Paris, when the whole social focus was on that event. The first cycle was held on 30th June and the second on 7th July. As it has already been said, the electoral system is two-cycle majority in one-mandate electoral units (577 in total), and, in case no candidate has won in the first cycle with the absolute majority, all candidates who had a share in the electorate larger than 12.5% pass to the second cycle. This is exactly one of the key specific features of the electoral system in France because it makes it possible for more than two candidates to pass to the second cycle in one electoral unit, and such a balance of power may lead to a certain type of cooperation between candidates, i.e., to candidates' inter-electoral positioning. That is why for all candidates passing to the second cycle it is important to what extent they will win the support of those who are out of the race, or who have minimal chances for a good electoral result in the second cycle (Orlović, 2011, p. 37). That is the reason why electoral success of a political option in the first cycle does not mean that it will be repeated in the second cycle and ensure a certain number of mandates won.

The 2024 early parliamentary election was held in the period when France, just as many other West European countries, was affected by the economic crisis and when there were two ongoing conflicts in the world: one in the territory of Ukraine, and the other in the Gaza Strip. Moreover, it should be kept

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The banners with candidates for elections legislative Versailles, France - June 26, 2024.

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in mind that, after winning the second presidential mandate, Macron conducted a pension reform by increasing the retirement age from 62 to 64 years, which caused huge dissatisfaction of some citizens and united political options on the left spectrum, but the whole situation, just as other crises, enabled Rassemblement national led by Marine Le Pen to position itself as a strong party of the right centre

and, through less stringent attitudes, to cover a large range of the electorate. Due to the entire context of election and its importance, the voter turnout of 66% was recorded, which may be considered one of the highest turnouts at parliamentary elections in France. In comparison, at the previous parliamentary election in 2022, voter turnout was under 50% or, more precisely, about 47%.^[2] The change in the

[2] <https://data.ipu.org/parliament/FR/FR-LC01/election/FR-LC01-E20220612/> (Accessed on 16 August 2024)

balance of power on the French political scene was indicated by the European Parliament elections, when the greatest support was given to Rassemblement national, and then the United Left led by Jean-Luc Mélenchon. It was exactly the cause for the early parliamentary election in France.

Rise of the right spectrum - an opportunity for Rassemblement national

24 | Political options on the right spectrum of political action are characterized by their inclination towards traditional values such as nation, state, the ideal of order, and hierarchy (Ignazi, 2020, p. 12). In their discourse during their political communication, they often use populism, but it should be taken into account that such a manner of political communication with voters has become dominant for all ideological options. The dominance of populism has been present since 2016, when Donald Trump used that electoral strategy and became president of the United States of America (Anderson and Secor, 2022, p. 3). In the past few years, there has been evident growth of popularity of political actors from the right spectrum and in the places with traditionally different political orientations; the best illustration for it is Sweden, where Swedish Democrats (the right-wing political option) is the largest ruling political party in the current coalition. What suited the growth of the right wing are different forms of crises which emerged in the territory of Europe, starting from the economic crisis in 2008 through to the migration crisis to which Europe did not have a single

answer and which lasted from 2011 to 2015, when several open conflicts occurred in the territory of the Middle East, the most intense being the civil war in Syria. Later on, this was compounded by the COVID crisis and everything related to the beginning of the conflict in Ukraine. However, it is often said in public discourse that such political options are “extreme”, which is not fully true because most of these options belong to the “moderate right”. Further moderation of the attitudes among the political actors belonging to the right spectrum is evident when they become part of the ruling authorities; the best example is Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, who was promoted as “the successor of Mussolini’s politics”, while she continued the politics similar to her predecessors, insisting even more on the NATO integrations. A similar manner of acting of the right spectrum is also visible in Sweden, which has not ceased the process of Sweden’s joining the NATO.

The public in France acts in a similar manner, ascribing the attribute of the “extreme right” to Rassemblement national. That political option, at the time when it was founded by Jean-Marie Le Pen in 1972, really had extreme opinions about certain issues. It relied on the strong leader and promoted nationalism, which is reflected in the idea that the state should turn primarily towards domicile population (Mudde, 2007); namely, this party advocated the stigmatization of certain minority groups, marked as a threat to some traditional values, first of all migrant groups (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2013, p. 166). During the economic crisis affecting France in the 1980s, Rassemblement national used criticism and proposals of idea solutions to overcoming the situation for the first time gained the

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status of a parliamentary party (Hubé and Baloge, 2021, p. 26). In that way, it was established in French political life, but never managed to achieve a serious electoral success. Most commonly it had about 15% share in the electorate, while the president of the party Jean-Marie Le Pen passed to the second cycle of the presidential election in 2002 (Perrineau, 2003, p. 27). His daughter Marine Le Pen succeeded him in the place of the president of the party in 2011 and since then the growth of popularity Rassemblement national has been recorded, but still with no electoral victory. Electoral failures motivated Marine Le Pen to alleviate her opinions before the 2022 presidential election, so that from the idea that France should leave the European Union, she came to the attitude that the European Union needs

a “sovereignist reform”. The final change in this political option occurred before the early parliamentary election in 2024, when Bardella came to the position of the president of Rassemblement national and was their candidate for the French prime minister. During the campaign, he spoke about the necessity of France’s keeping integration with the NATO and of giving up the policy of withdrawing French soldiers from the NATO’s strategic military command (RSE, 2024). From this repositioning of Rassemblement national, it can be concluded that it is impossible to speak about the “extreme” option, but about the “moderate” option instead, particularly because the position of the “extreme right” has been taken by the political movement of Éric Zemmour.



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The replacement of the leader of Rassemblement national cannot be considered an essential change, but solely a symbolic change aimed at altering the party's image and winning the voters from the younger population. At the same time, it should not be forgotten that France will have the presidential election in 2027, when Marine Le Pen's candidacy will be expected once again, and she will be able to prepare for the campaign more easily if she reduces her party duties. All these should be recognized as the reasons why the changes occurred at the head of this political option.

parties, movements and organizations. It seems that Jean-Luc Mélenchon succeeded in uniting these forces within the party La France Insoumise before the presidential election in 2022, when he was the main rival of Marine Le Pen in passing to the second cycle. Owing to the pension reform conducted by Emmanuel Macron, after getting his second presidential mandate, Mélenchon became the leader of the left wing after a large number of protests organized throughout France because of Marcon's reform-related decision. Another characteristic of Mélenchon's political communication is populism. Within the left spectrum, populism has roots in the action of different Latin American dictators, while Tsipras and his political movement Syriza can be considered the founder of populism in Europe (Jager and Borriello 2020, pp. 740–741). Spanish Podemos can be considered the “most successful” representative of left-oriented populism (Mazzolini and Borriello, 2022, p. 285). In professional literature, Jean-Luc Mélenchon is mentioned as an example of “left-oriented populism” in France (Marlière, 2019, p. 98). Having in mind the countries in which “left-oriented populism” has developed most, it can be said that it is dominant primarily in the Mediterranean countries. The main characteristic of populism promoted by the left spectrum is the argument about class struggle and criticism of the capitalist system which has grown into a neoliberal system, which in itself causes increasing class differences, i.e., the disappearance of the “middle class” (Venizelos and Stavrakakis, 2023, p. 291). That is why it reached its peak in the period of the 2008 economic crisis, but even today many politicians use this approach. Therefore, any populism seeks

The united left – a potential threat to Macron

The left spectrum in political action is considered to have its roots exactly in France and to have developed during the French Revolution in the desire to ensure equality (Venizelos and Stavrakakis, 2023, p. 290). Later on, during the 20th century, different versions of the left wing developed, from those fully radical ones, such as communism and socialism, to more moderate options such as social-democracy (Ramiro, 2016, p. 2). Today's left spectrum is increasingly getting its form in ecological political parties, popularly called “green” parties.

France has a decades-long experience with political options of socialist orientation, which is perhaps best reflected in two presidential mandates of François Mitterrand from 1981 to 1995 (Milić, 2021). With the strengthening of other political forces, the left spectrum fell into a crisis and was divided into several different

“an enemy” and finds it in corporations and other individuals who encourage capitalism and neoliberalism (Bonansinga, 2022, p. 512). Populism also draws on the Marxist teaching, which may also be observed in Mélenchon’s public action because he used to say that he had “intellectually built himself on Marxism” (Chloé, Bristielle and Chazel, 2021, p. 936).

Jean-Luc Mélenchon is a French politician of long standing, who began his career in the Socialist party, while in 2012 he participated in the presidential election for the first time on behalf of the coalition Front de gauche, but with no great electoral success (Chloé, Bristielle and Chazel, 2021, p. 934). Currently he is probably one of the most successful politicians using “left populism”, while he describes Macron as “the president of the rich” because he was a successful economist and came from the neoliberal school. Moreover, most protests organized against Macron contained the economic component, for example, the “Yellow Vest” protests against the raised price of fuel, or the recent protests against the pension reform. Based on those events, Mélenchon’s La France Insoumise maximized the number of votes. That the left wing in France has stabilized is proved by a series of electoral cycles since 2022. Namely, it was the second-ranked political option after Rassemblement national in the European Parliament elections, while it also improved its rating in both electoral processes for the French Parliament. However, Mélenchon’s inability to position himself in relation to global phenomena and challenges probably cost him a better electoral result (Venizelos and Stavrakakis, 2023, p. 292) although in a relatively short period of time he

managed to become one of the leading political figures in France.

Electoral results – (im)possibility of cohabitation

The specific nature of the French political system is also reflected in the electoral system applied in parliamentary elections. It is the two-cycle majority electoral system with one-mandate electoral units. The specific feature is that all candidates with more than 12.5% votes in the first cycle will pass to the second cycle, and not only the two best-ranking candidates, which is most commonly the characteristic of the two-cycle majority electoral system. This electoral system suits big political parties, and mandates can be won only by those political options that have a developed infrastructure throughout the country. This electoral system has been applied in France since the foundation of the Fifth Republic in 1958, while previously, in the Fourth Republic (1945–1958), the proportional electoral system was applied (Orlović, 2011, p. 37). As the French political system is semi-presidential and the most important political figure is the president, parliamentary elections cannot be considered most important (Dupoirier and Sauger, 2010, p. 26). However, regardless of that fact, every French president’s interest is to minimize the possibility of cohabitation because it affects the efficiency of decision-making in the state and may produce unwanted crises. France has negative experiences with cohabitation, from the period of Mitterrand’s mandate, when first Chirac, and

then Balladur held the prime minister’s position, as well as during Chirac’s presidential mandate, when Jospin was the prime minister. As the main reason for cohabitation, the separation of the electoral process was listed, and that is why, after constitutional amendments in 2000, the presidential mandate was shortened from seven to five years, which made it possible to hold presidential and parliamentary elections in the same year, within only several weeks (Elgie, 2001, pp. 113–114). By calling the early parliamentary election, Macron increased the probability of

cohabitation. His unpopularity has grown since 2022, when he won his second presidential mandate, because of various moves which were not welcomed by citizens. However, Macron does not seem too concerned about it because he is aware of his constitutional authorities and the impossibility of activating a mechanism that would lead to his recall while, on the other hand, he is also aware of the fact that his political career in France will be over in 2027, with the end of his mandate, when he will continue his career within some of the international institutions.

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NAME OF THE POLITICAL PARTY	PERCENTAGE OF VOTES WON
Rassemblement national – Marine Le Pen	33.2%
Left Front coalition – Jean-Luc Mélenchon	28%
Renaissance – Emmanuel Macron	20%
Republicans	6.6%
Far Right – Éric Zemmour	0.7%

Table 1. Overview of the results in the first cycle of the parliamentary election in France in 2024^[3]

The first cycle of the parliamentary election in France was held on 30th June. According to the data from Table 1, it can be concluded that Rassemblement national won the largest number of votes in the first cycle of the parliamentary election. The results were somewhat surprising because they were not

fully in compliance with the European Parliament elections held in France only three weeks earlier. That is when Le Pen’s Rassemblement national won 31,9%, Emmanuel Macron’s Renaissance 14.6%, and Mélenchon’s Left Front coalition 9,89%^[4]. A similar electoral result was achieved by Republicans who

[3] The results were downloaded from: <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2024/07/01/french-election-results-winners-and-losers-in-paris> (Accessed on 14 August 2024)

[4] <https://results.elections.europa.eu/en/france/> (Accessed on 16 August 2024)

had 7.25%, while a much better result as compared to the June parliamentary election was achieved by Socialists – 13.83%^[5]. However, it should be kept in mind that the European Parliament elections have the status of “second-class# elections and voters do not feel such a degree of responsibility as when voting in republic elections (Samardžić, 2015, p. 11). Voter turnout was relatively high for parliamentary elections with as many as 67% registered voters. To what extent the electoral process was uncertain is corroborated by the fact that in 306 electoral units (which is almost half of the total number of electoral units) more than two candidates passed to the second cycle. This situation is believed to suit the political parties which won the greatest support in the first cycle of the parliamentary election. On the other hand, in 76 electoral units, the mandates were allotted after the first cycle, 38 of which went to Rassemblement national. In comparison to the 2022 election, it may be seen that during that electoral process, only five mandates were allotted in

the first cycle. This difference between the two electoral processes within only two years should be explained by the fact that the turnout in the 2024 election was much higher and that the voters clearly expressed their preferences for one of the three strongest political blocs (right, centre, and left). However, after the first cycle, public negotiations were conducted between Emmanuel Macron’s Renaissance and the leader of the left, Jean-Luc Mélenchon. French Prime Minister Attal, who comes from Macron’s party, said that in the second cycle “no one must give a single vote to Marine Le Pen”. It was fully in line with what Macron said at the end of the first cycle – that broad cooperation is necessary to stop the growth of Rassemblement national. Sharper rhetoric before the second cycle of the parliamentary election led to the cooperation between the candidates representing the political options of Macron and Mélenchon respectively in many electoral units.

NAME OF THE POLITICAL PARTY	PERCENTAGE OF VOTES WON	NUMBER OF MANDATES WON
Rassemblement national – Marine Le Pen	33.35%	143
Left Front coalition – Jean-Luc Mélenchon	28.28%	182
Renaissance – Emmanuel Macron	21.79%	168
Republicans	7.25%	60

Table 2. Overview of the results in the second cycle of the parliamentary election in France in 2024^[6]

[5] <https://results.elections.europa.eu/en/france/> (Accessed on 14 August 2024)

[6] The results were downloaded from: <https://www.france24.com/en/france/20240704-2024-french-legislative-elections-results-of-the-second-round> (Accessed on 14 August 2024)

In the second cycle, there was similar large voter turnout of over 66.5%, which is the largest turnout in the second cycle of parliamentary elections ever since 1997. In Table 2 it can be seen that there was no great percentage change in the results between three most popular political options in France. Nevertheless, there is a huge disproportion in Rassemblement national between the number of votes and the mandates won. It is one of the negative consequences of the majority electoral system because it is not enough to have the voters' large support; namely, such support needs to be distributed as evenly as possible within electoral units in order to maximize the number of votes (Nohlen, 1992, p. 89). The negative campaign against Rassemblement national produced results and, when complemented by various associations of other electoral participants, it led to the electoral defeat of this party. However, the problem arises as to the direction which the formation of the new government will take in the future. According to the current constellation of power, no one has the majority of its own, not even in a sort of coalition with smaller political parties. That is why Macron is prolonging the formation of the new government since there is no specific legal deadline. It is clear that new election will be avoided because many people expected that he would be defeated in this election as well, but he still survived "politically". However, instability in the political life France remained. First, in September 2024 (more than two months after the election), Michel Barnier was elected president of the government – in two mandates, he had been the European commissioner for regional politics and home market, and one of the main

negotiators on the occasion of Great Britain's exit from the European Union in 2016, while he also performed several different ministerial duties in the periods when major state functions were held by politicians such as François Mitterrand, Jacques Chirac and Nicolas Sarkozy. Barnier became prime minister as a member of the Republican Party and his political positioning can be characterized as moderately right-wing, which was used by many as an argument that Macron had made a certain concession to the right wing. The members of his political option often described him as "a disappointed Macronist" who had frequently criticized Macron in the previous years, but the public consensus was that, when it came to many key questions such as economy and perspectives of the functioning of the European Union, it was necessary align with Macron's solutions. The conflicts with Macron began in 2019, when Macron did not support him in becoming the president of the European Commission, and in 2020, when Macron's condition was that he had to leave the republicans in order to become the prime minister instead of Édouard Philippe.

However, this government was soon voted out of office on 4th December. As many as 351 MPs voted, which is a large and steady majority because the minimum majority is 289 MPs. The government was overthrown together by the political options from the left and right spectrum, while the trigger for such voting was the adoption of the Law on the Budget. Only several days later, Macron proposed a new candidate for the president of the government – it was François Bayrou, the leader of the centrist Democratic Movement, one of the minor political parties in France. Furthermore, he has a decades-

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French newspaper Le Monde, French map elections result, PARIS APR 24, 2017

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long political experience in different French governments and in the European Commission. The need for a longer-standing government is reflected in the fact that Bayrou appointed former prime ministers Élisabeth Borne and Manuel Valls for the members of his government. The government was elected thanks to the minority support, which means that at any moment the issue of voting the government out of office may easily be put on the agenda. In this way, Bayrou became the fourth French prime minister in the course of 2024, and the sixth during Macron's presidency, or since 2017. Exactly this matter of trust in the

government in the French parliament was raised at the beginning of February 2025. The parliament's agenda included the question of the budget which had not been adopted by the assembly in 2024, but the left-wing parties, led by La France Insoumise, managed to include voting for the trust in the government. A total of 128 MPs voted against the government, which was insufficient to "overthrow" this government. Bayrou kept his position as the prime minister thanks to the fact that Rassemblement national and the socialists did not support the proposal for voting the government out of office.

Although the image is created in the public that with Bayrou the stability of political action has been established in France, it is clear that the government may collapse at any moment. In particular, increasing tensions between political actors are expected as the 2027 presidential election comes closer. That is why it would not be unexpected if by the end of Macron's mandate some more changes occurred at the head of the party. Yet another factor to be taken into account is the redistribution of political power at the geopolitical level with Donald Trump becoming president of the United States of America and his wish to limit the power of the European Union and the leading EU member-states, including France. That is why Macron is preoccupied with foreign policy topics, which could lead to neglecting the government's status, and experienced politicians such as Marine Le Pen and Jean-Luc Mélenchon will try to use. That is how De Gaulle's observation is fully proved – that it is difficult “to run the state that produces 246 different kinds of cheese” (Vasović, 2008, p. 534).

What might have the greatest and far-reaching consequences to the future functioning of France's political life is the separation of presidential and parliamentary elections. For more than 40 years, French experts have tried to find a solution as to how to merge electoral processes and to reduce the possibility of cohabitation. If France enters the regular electoral course, the separation of electoral processes may increase the probability of cohabitation in the oncoming period, which may affect the efficiency of deci-

sion-making and the positioning of France within the European Union, as well as decision-making about other major geopolitical topics, where France is expected to play a proactive role. At the same time, cohabitation may increase the level of the political crisis in France and lead to frequent changes of the government.

Final considerations

The early parliamentary election in France proved the existence of several trends in political processes. First of all, different social and political crises had left their trace in the functioning of the French political system and it was necessary to make a huge change. Macron's decision to call elections should be seen as courageous in the situation when he was defeated in the European Parliament elections and when these polls showed great likelihood of his facing defeat in the parliamentary election as well. Nevertheless, this decision to call the early parliamentary election should also be related to the fact that he has no political authority, so he could not solve the crisis in French society in any other way. The elections showed that the left spectrum had returned on a large scale to France, regardless of the evident crisis of that political option in many countries. With his populist discourse, Mélenchon managed to win a large number of votes. However, the direction of his political career depends chiefly on his future political positioning.

NAME OF THE POLITICAL PARTY	PERCENTAGE OF VOTES WON	NUMBER OF MANDATES WON
Rassemblement national – Marine Le Pen	17.3%	89
Left Front coalition – Jean-Luc Mélenchon	31.6%	131
Renaissance – Emmanuel Macron	38.57%	245
Republicans	7.29%	61

Table 3. Overview of the parliamentary election results in France in 2022^[7]

Another important element to be highlighted as the indicator of this election is that the right spectrum is on the rise in France as well as a trend throughout Europe. It can be best seen in Table 3, from which it is clear that support to Rassemblement national has almost doubled in only two years. It seems that such support would have affected the number of mandates even more if the votes had been evenly distributed and if there had been no inter-electoral cooperation of other political actors. What can be seen is a blatant decline in support to Emmanuel Macron who is in the “exiting” presidential mandate and such political rating clearly does not concern him. It is interesting that Mélenchon’s left spectrum won fewer votes in percentage terms in the 2024, but it used the electoral system to increase the number of mandates, and such maximization was at the expense of Rassemblement national for the above-listed reasons.

Once again, the thesis was repeated about the majority electoral system leading to a disproportionate number of mandates in relation to

the percentage of votes. It is clear that De Gaulle and legislators who created the current electoral system in France were guided by the desire to form single-party governments and to enlarge the political system (Duverger, 1964, p. 219). There is an impression that it did not contribute to more ef-

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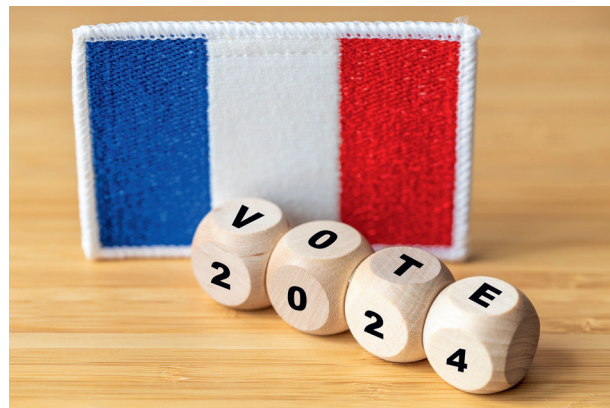


Photo: Shutterstock

efficient functioning of the French political system, given the experience with coalition governments

[6] The results were downloaded from: <https://data.ipu.org/parliament/FR/FR-LCo1/election/FR-LCo1-E20220612/> (Accessed on 14 August 2024)

in France, particularly in the past few years; for example, in the previous government, Republicans had to support Renaissance in order to get the majority, while the similar fate of the French political life could also be seen after the early parliamentary election in 2024. The positive trend is voter turnout which has substantially increased in comparison to the previous election in 2022. In various European elections, there is already a tendency of increasing electoral abstention because of mistrust and dissatisfaction with the political elites (Medel, 2024, p. 226). Nevertheless, the high level of political culture typical of France has decisively led to voters understanding the context of the electoral process and, thus, its importance, so that they participate in that activity, which is the main reason for the increase in voter turnout (Voinea, 2023, p. 2296).

Perhaps the most important effect of this electoral process is taking starting positions for the presidential election to be held in 2027. Since Macron cannot run for the position, there will be

a vacancy for a candidate on the centrist position, and Marine Le Pen and Jean-Luc Mélenchon have proved to be the most serious candidate so far. It seems that Attal, former French prime minister, who comes from Macron's political party, is a weak candidate and it is disputable whether he would ever pass to the second cycle. Therefore, Macron's further moves and turning towards more experienced politicians such as Barnier and Bayrou clearly indicate that one of them can become the presidential candidate in the 2027 election, who will be supported by Macron. Both politicians gravitate towards the centre in their political actions and have similar attitudes as Macron about major issues; these are the reasons why they can get Macron's full support, which may be an important factor of the campaign. Therefore, in the oncoming period France will certainly encounter numerous political and social challenges, and that is why the unity of the most relevant political actors is necessary regarding key issues – which does not seem achievable at the moment.

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