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Newsletter

The *french* Dispatch

- *The key takeaways*
- *The political balance of power at national level*
- *What's at stake for the current government*
- *What happened to the key political figures?*

A photograph showing a hand in a dark suit jacket placing a white ballot into a slot on a ballot box. The scene is dimly lit, with a blueish tint. The text 'The key takeaways' is overlaid in white, serif font on the left side of the image.

The key takeaways

An inflection point for France's constitutional and political framework

Against a backdrop of chronic instability in the Parliament, the French Fifth Republic was built on one key principle: a stable and strong majority supporting the President of the Republic. The traditional sequence of voting would be along left and right political lines in the first round, with alliances being made within these political lines in the second round, between a leading party and its junior coalition partner. Yesterday's vote clearly ended this pattern.

The newly re-elected president Emmanuel Macron seems unable to secure an absolute majority. Only a few weeks after his Presidential success, it is becoming clear that Emmanuel Macron's coalition has not benefited enough from his initial win to gain decisive momentum to support his government's agenda. The left alliance, Nupes (*Nouvelle Union Populaire Ecologique et Sociale*), is on par with its own coalition. Two options are foreseen for the current Government: either Emmanuel Macron will rely on the conservative party to secure a majority in a hung parliament, or, in the more positive scenario, he will have to deal with the deputies who are supporters of his former Prime Minister Edouard Philippe, who even then never joined the ranks of Presidential party.

That being said, **the final outlook of the future assembly remains difficult to predict.** The Left was fully united in the first round of the elections, as was the outgoing majority. Therefore, the usual alliance game which takes place within each camp will not happen. How the electorate will behave remains a crucial question. With a low turnout and a loss in voters' support, Emmanuel Macron's position has been weakened ahead of major milestones for the country's economic and social policies.

A setback for Emmanuel Macron

In Sunday's French election: the presidential majority (25,75%) and the Left-alliance Nupes (25,66%) came neck to neck out of the ballots. As expected, France is going to experience a frantic final week between the two major political forces ahead of the second round.

Even though Macron's centrist alliance is still set to be as the leading force to predicably win the greatest share of seats in the next parliament, this election remains a setback for the President. Compared to 2017, the presidential majority has lost more than 6 points in the votes. Given the Ensemble!-alliance did not gain enough momentum in the first round to dispel doubts and secure an absolute majority, everything will be decided in the second-round next Sunday.

Oppositions: United we stand...

The Left has been stable in terms of their voter support, compared to a much more divided position in 2017. Now united under the banner Nupes, the Left have succeeded in placing their candidates at the forefront in 2022. As a result, contenders of the left coalition will be battling in approximately 400 constituencies for the second round. This is a symbolic second success for Jean-Luc Mélenchon. He succeeded in uniting the Left under his leadership, and he will now at the very least be able to claim the position of first opponent to the President. The extent to which he will achieve this will be confirmed next Sunday.



... *divided we fall*

Sunday's results confirmed that the backlash against the Right, especially the conservative party *Les Républicains*, is still ongoing, after an extremely poor outcome in the presidential election. The former strong opposition group in Parliament is expected to receive half of its previous share of the representatives in the Assembly. However, despite a lack of momentum and leadership, some conservative candidates took advantage of their local deep roots to qualify for the second round. Leadership even claimed yesterday that the party could play a pivotal role in the next term should the President be unable to secure an absolute majority next week.

The far-right is the only political force to have significantly gained voters' support since 2017. Marine Le Pen's National Rally and Eric Zemmour's *Reconquête!* increased their score by 10 points in the first round in comparison with the National Rally's performance five years ago. However, because of the far-right's difficulty in gathering votes from disqualified candidates, such a push might not translate into a sharp increase in seats. That being said, this time, they should be able to at least form a parliamentary group and gain more influence in the National Assembly.

A historical low turnout

Against a backdrop of an ever-decreasing voter turnout over the last twenty years, the turnout in this first round, with 47,5%, has reached a record-low (-1.2 point compared to 2017).

Parliamentary elections are often seen as 'second-class' elections as they generally only reinforce the position of the newly President-elect, providing them with a clear majority. This traditionally has led to the lack of interest of voters.

This low turnout is also the consequence of the relative absence of public debates between the different political coalitions. The late appointment of the government, the reluctance of Marine Le Pen and her supporters to campaign, and the avoidance of the party in power to enter in the political battle contributed to this absence of campaign and made it difficult to spark the interest of people generally uninvolved with politics.

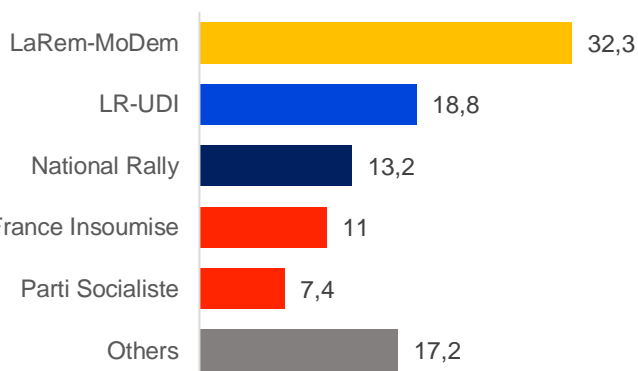
The political balance of power at national level

The shape of the new National Assembly will be clearer after second round. **President Macron's alliance is predicted to attract the highest share of seats** (between 260 and 295, according to Elabe estimates). These predictions suggest that **the President could fall short of an absolute majority**, standing at 289 seats. If Macron's alliance only secures a relative majority, his ability to deliver his domestic policies could be partially compromised. The government would then be required to negotiate bill-by-bill deals with other political forces seating in parliament.

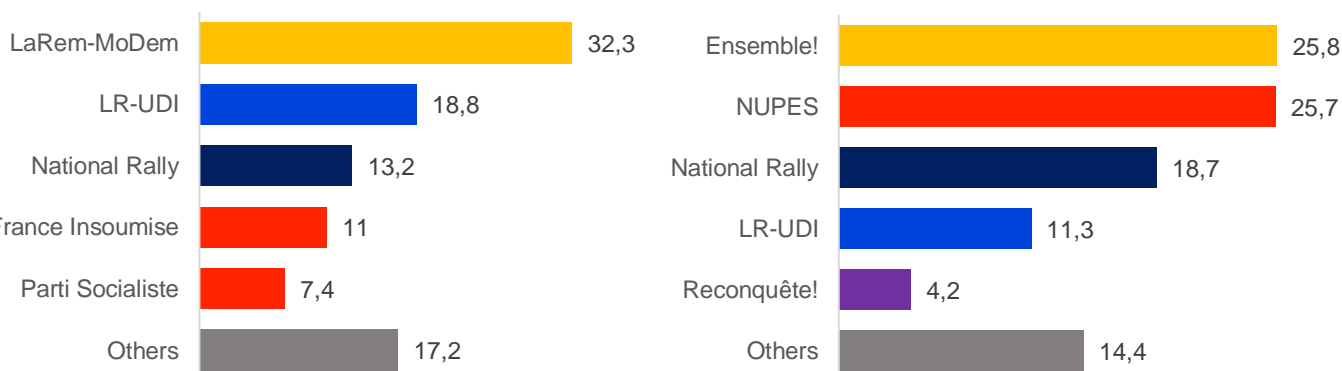
The Left is set to secure between 167 and 223 seats and the Nupes would become the leading opposition coalition in the National Assembly. The right coalition *Les Républicains-UDI* should come in third position, with 52 to 70 seats. The likelihood of the National Rally to get 15 seats and thus constitute a parliamentary group is high: up to 35 seats could be won by Le Pen's party.

While we can expect the 2022 National Assembly to lean more to the left, it should remain under the control of a centrist coalition.

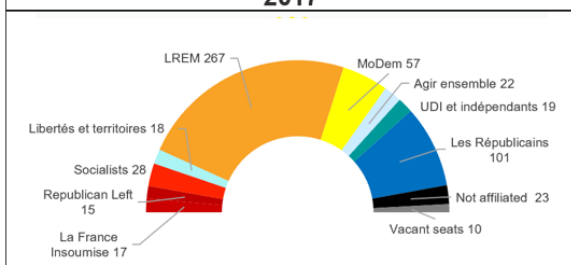
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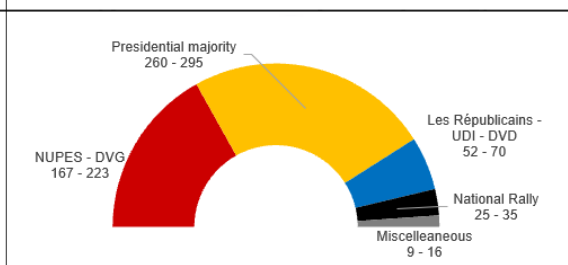
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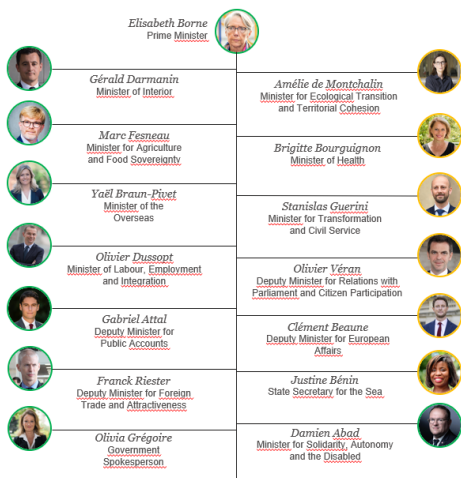
Configuration of the National Assembly in 2017



Forecasts for the 2022 National Assembly



What's at stake for the current government



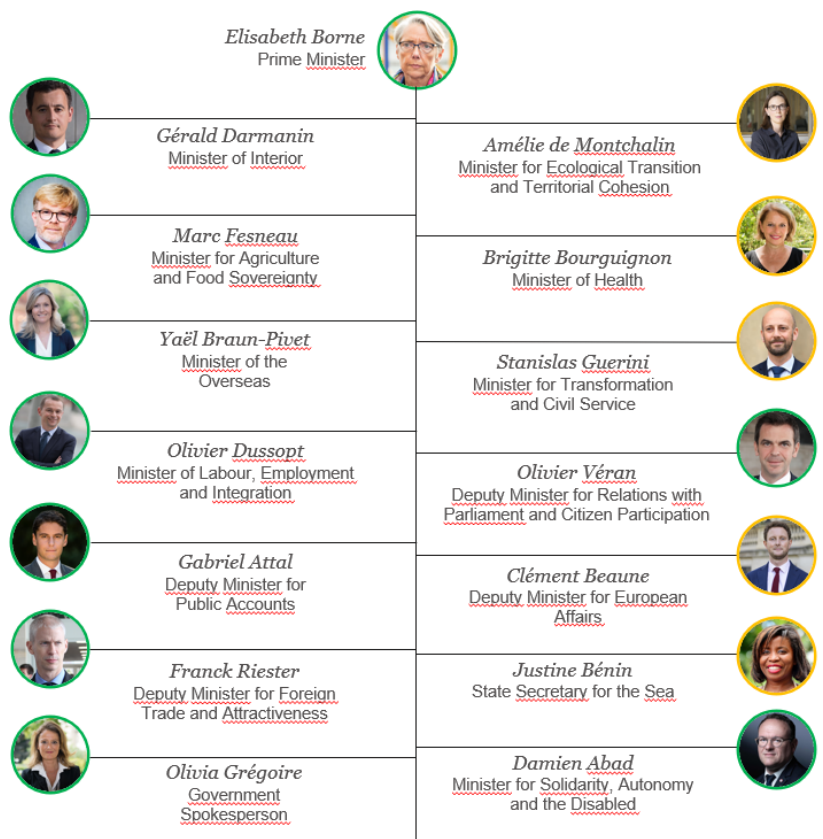
- Election probability : High
- Election probability : Uncertain

What happened?

All ministers who were candidates qualified for the second round. As expected last week, Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne, a novice to the election campaign trail, should be elected without difficulty. Gabriel Attal, Deputy Minister for Public Accounts can also expect to be re-elected, having obtained the highest score of all ministers in the first round. The picture is not so rosy for all ministers however, with some ministers, especially **Amélie de Montchalin**, Minister for Ecological Transition and Territorial Cohesion, and **Clément Beauce**, Deputy Minister for European Affairs likely to face difficulty in getting the necessary votes in the second round.

What was the projection?

Fifteen of twenty-eight ministers are running for parliamentary elections this year. Though on paper ministers do not need to be elected at the Parliament to become a member of the Government, it is an unwritten rule that those ministers who fail to find a seat in Parliament must step down from ministerial responsibilities.



What happened to the key political figures?

If the first round confirmed that leading voices of all parties are well placed to be elected, some contenders have to face unexpected challenges. Richard Ferrand, current President of the National Assembly, has a narrow lead over his Nupes challenger. Fabien Roussel, former communist candidate during the presidential election, is neck and neck with a far-right candidate. Worthy of note, Eric Zemmour, who came 4th in the presidential election, has been rejected and has not qualified for the second round, as has also been the case for former Education Minister Jean-Michel Blanquer.



Julien Bayou

Europe Ecologie Les Verts (NUPES)
5th constituency of Paris
First round winner with 48,88%, qualified for second round



Aurélien Pradié

Les Républicains
1st constituency of Lot
First round winner with 45,46%, qualified for the second round



Jean-Michel Blanquer

Ensemble!
4th constituency of Loiret
18,89%, not qualified for the second round



Adrien Quatennens

La France Insoumise (NUPES)
1st constituency of the North
First round winner with 52,05%, qualified for the second round



Christophe Castaner

Ensemble!
2nd constituency of the Alpes-de-Haute-Provence
First round winner with 30,16%, qualified for second round



Fabien Roussel

Parti Communiste (NUPES)
20th constituency of the North
First round winner with 34,13%, qualified for the second round



Eric Ciotti

Les Républicains
1st constituency of Alpes-Maritimes
First round winner with 31,70%, qualified for the second round



François Ruffin

La France Insoumise (NUPES)
1st constituency of the Somme
First round winner with 40,09%, qualified for the second round



Richard Ferrand

Ensemble!
6th constituency of Finistère
First round winner with 33,56%, qualified for the second round



Boris Vallaud

Parti Socialiste (NUPES)
3rd constituency of the Landes
First round winner with 40,16%, qualified for the second round



Marine Le Pen

Rassemblement National
11th constituency of Nord Pas de Calais
First round winner with 53,96%, qualified for second round



Eric Zemmour

Reconquête!
4th constituency of the Var
23,19%, not qualified for second round

Media coverage

What is France waking up to?

The duel between the Macron's centrist alliance and the Left-alliance Nupes is the main headline this morning.

French media note a weakened presidential majority, and a first victory of the Left ahead of the second round of the parliamentary elections.

LA CROIX

Religion: L'état de santé du pape au centre de toutes les attentions p. 17
 Culture: Le cinéma d'animation occupe-t-il la place qu'il mérite? p. 19-20
 Economie & entreprises: Le pari réussi d'une implantation d'usine Coltur central

Législatives Nupes/Ensemble! au coude-à-coude

Editorial
Isabelle de Gaulmy

Le retour de la politique
 C'est pour tout dire difficile de croire que le président de la République, Emmanuel Macron, ait pu être élu. Le scrutin du 17 mai 2017 a été une véritable surprise. Le président de la République a été élu avec le soutien de la droite et de la gauche. Mais il a été élu avec le soutien de la gauche et de la droite. Le scrutin du 17 mai 2017 a été une véritable surprise. Le président de la République a été élu avec le soutien de la droite et de la gauche. Mais il a été élu avec le soutien de la gauche et de la droite.

Les Echos

Asie: Tensions croissantes entre les Etats-Unis et la Chine sur l'avenir de Taiwan...
 Amérique: Face à l'immigration, les Etats-Unis se préparent à une bataille législative...

La majorité fragilisée

Le Qatar TotalEnergies un projet...

Le Monde

CAHIER RESULTATS DES ELECTIONS LEGISLATIVES - SUPPLEMENT 28 JUIN 2022

LA MAJORITE ABSOLUE DE MACRON MENACEE

L'ABSTENTION A UN NIVEAU HISTORIQUE

La Nupes et Ensemble! ont fait jeu égal au premier tour des élections législatives. La coalition présidentielle est en tête dans les projections en sièges, mais sans certitude pour la majorité absolue.

LE FIGARO

Macron vers une majorité étriquée

Avec un score inférieur à celui du premier tour de la présidentielle, le chef de l'Etat n'est pas certain d'obtenir une majorité absolue de députés.

La gauche radicale s'appête à entrer en force à l'Assemblée

l'Humanité

LE JOURNAL FONDE PAR JEAN JAURES

Première victoire pour la gauche

SPÉCIAL LÉGISLATIVES

Avec environ 26% des voix, la Nupes était au coude-à-coude avec Ensemble!, hier en fin de soirée. Une majorité est désormais à portée d'urnes pour disputer le pouvoir à Emmanuel Macron. L'abstention atteint un record dans ce type de scrutin. p. 2

LE FIGARO

PROJECTIONS EN SIÈGES, Interprétation: Page 2 (21-22)

PROJECTIONS EN SIÈGES	Interprétation
Ensemble!	257,5
Nupes	256,6
LR	16,8
LR-CE	11,29
MoDem	4,24
Droite	14,38

577 députés

50% (238) majorité absolue

50% (239) majorité absolue

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