



## Left Win French Parliamentary Elections

Amanda Dziubińska

On 7 July, the second round of snap elections for the French National Assembly (AN) took place. The New Popular Front (NFP), a coalition of left-wing parties, secured the most seats. No party obtained an absolute majority in the chamber, significantly complicating and prolonging the formation of a new government.

### What were the results of the National Assembly elections?

Despite receiving the most votes in both rounds (32%), the far-right National Rally (RN) will only hold 125 seats in the 577-seat Assembly. The result is significantly lower than the poll predictions leading up to the second round. With the RN-supporting faction of the Republican party, the far-right will become the third-largest force in the Assembly, comprising 143 MPs. The NFP, which consists of the far-left La France Insoumise (LFI), the Socialist Party (PS), the Ecologists, Place Publique, and the Communist Party, secured the highest number of seats in the election, winning 25.7% of the second-round vote, resulting in 182 seats. President Emmanuel Macron's centrist Ensemble camp won 168 seats, claiming second place with 23.2% support. The Republicans (LR) took a total of 46 seats, which represented 5.4% of the vote. The results mean no single party obtained the majority of 289 seats. Voter turnout was similar to that of the first round, at 66.6%.

### Why did the left win?

In France, elections for the National Assembly are conducted in single-member constituencies through a two-round voting system. The transfer of support from voters, especially moderate ones, to the opponents of the far-right was the deciding factor in the second round. The NFP attributed their victory to the efforts of the Republican Front, an informal coalition of centrist and left-wing parties formed to defeat the RN. Before the second round, more than 200 candidates withdrew to avoid splitting voters. The Republican Front also helped the presidential camp reduce its losses. For the NFP,

the issue of leadership was important—less media exposure for LFI leader Jean-Luc Mélenchon in favour of more moderate politicians, such as Marine Tondelier (Ecologists), Olivier Faure (PS), or Raphaël Glucksmann (Place Publique) attracted centrist voters. The RN's performance, which fell below expectations, was also impacted by errors made in the final week of the campaign, for instance, raising the issue of restricting certain professions for people with dual citizenship may have discouraged potential voters.

### Who will form the government?

The absence of a clear majority in the Assembly heightens the risk of institutional deadlock. This will require parties to engage in coalition talks, which will extend the period of government formation. [Macron's decision to dissolve the Assembly](#) undermined the president's political standing and eroded support for his camp, resulting in a substantial loss of more than 80 seats. The new Assembly will convene on 18 July, and the president is responsible for appointing a prime minister. The president's camp seeks a wide coalition of major parties, excluding the LFI and the RN. The current prime minister, Gabriel Attal, offered his resignation but was invited to continue to serve until a stable majority is established. Attal has ruled out an alliance with extreme parties. However, the LFI is the strongest party within the NFP (74 seats) and Mélenchon has firmly rejected the prospect of working with Macron's MPs. Other left-wing parties do not support Mélenchon taking the office of prime minister. The left is heterogeneous, which undermines the stability of a possible minority government. The

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appointment of an interim technocratic government cannot be ruled out until a coalition is formed.

## **What could be the consequences of the election results for French foreign policy?**

The appointment of a prime minister from the left will lead to cohabitation with the president, with the government determining and conducting state policy. Depending on the balance of power within the ruling party or coalition, foreign policy may be slightly modified, but its main directions will most likely remain the same. The government, regardless of its political composition, will last until the presidential elections in 2027 at the longest, so a significant shift in

foreign policy by then is unlikely. Most left-wing parties present a pro-European agenda. The Socialists support rearming Ukraine and funding the defence industry from the European Defence Fund. The existing policy of support for Ukraine, if not blocked by the LFI, would remain in force. With the prolonged stalemate in France's domestic politics likely, a proactive attitude on the part of Poland by proposing new joint initiatives within the main areas of cooperation (including financial and military support for Ukraine, strengthening European defence and arms cooperation, fighting disinformation, or strengthening European industry) will be important for maintaining a good dynamic in Polish-French cooperation and within the Weimar Triangle.