
French Legislative Elections: Far-right Wins the First Round

By: Arnaldo Musa / Special for CubaSi
03/07/2024



Center and left-wing parties called for a common front to avoid the election of extreme-right deputies, after Marine Le Pen's National Regroupment (RN) party received the most votes in the first round of the French legislative elections held this Sunday with 33%, ahead of the left-wing coalition New Popular Front (NFP, 28.5%) and the centrist Together for the Republic (22%).

Behind the three main forces are the Republicans with 10.5%, others (regionalists, environmentalists, 2%; extreme left 1.5%; diverse left and NFP dissidents 1.5%; Recovery 0.5% , and several sovereignists and right-wingers 0.5%, the day had a high participation, 67.5%, 20 points higher than that of the first round of the 2022 legislative elections (47.51%).

Marine Le Pen thanked the votes and called for an absolute majority in the second round, scheduled for next 7: "We need an absolute majority. Such a high turnout gives particular strength to the vote, to launch France's recovery. I ask you to join the coalition of liberty, security and fraternity. "Mobilize so that the people win."

Furthermore, she has congratulated herself on the results that have "completely erased" the bloc that supported the current president, Emmanuel Macron; She asked to be careful with those who only want to perpetuate a system that has failed and stressed that "no Frenchman will lose rights. On the contrary, rights will be guaranteed and, as soon as the situation allows, new ones will be created."

The president of the National Group, Jordan Bardella, has also intervened, who has promised to be "a prime minister of coexistence, respectful of the Constitution and the role of the President of the Republic, but intransigent," according to Europa Press.

ALTERNATIVE

The leader of France Insoumise (LFI), Jean-Luc Mélenchon, stated this Sunday that the left-wing union of the New Popular Front (NFP) is the only alternative to the extreme right, but in parallel he announced that in the second

round of the elections, on July 7, will withdraw the candidacies where they have come in third place.

"In all circumstances our slogan is clear: not one more vote for the RN, not one more seat for the RN," he snapped.

Therefore, although in most of the constituencies the second round on July 7 will be a two-way duel, mostly between the NFP and RN, where three candidates advance to the next round, the leftist bloc will withdraw its own to avoid dividing the vote against the extreme right.

Mélenchon emphasized that the "trap" of the dissolution of the National Assembly and the early call of legislative elections that French President Emmanuel Macron devised has turned against him in a "hard and indisputable defeat of the president, of his candidate (the Prime Minister, Gabriel Attal) and the alleged presidential majority".

EXPLANATION

In France, voting takes place every five years in two different elections: the presidential ones, where the president is chosen, and the legislative ones, which are held right after, and are where the composition of Parliament is chosen. Depending on the political majority that emerges here, the Government is formed.

Legislative elections should have been held in 2027, like the presidential elections, but Emmanuel Macron decided to dissolve the Assembly and bring forward the elections after the victory of the extreme right in the European elections on June 9. Jordan Bardella, candidate of Marine Le Pen's party, achieved 32% support at the polls, double that of the Macronist candidate. Macron said he could not remain deaf to the verdict of the polls.

The Assembly is divided into three irreconcilable blocks. On the one hand, there are the self-proclaimed moderate forces: Macron's party and his allies (Modem and Horizons), in the center. On the other hand, there's the extreme right bloc led by Marine Le Pen's party (National Regroupment) and to which part of the Republicans have joined. This formation of the traditional right (sister of the PP in Spain) until now had not wanted to ally itself with it. Its president, Eric Ciotti, decided to do so and the party's support is divided.

At the other end of the parliamentary arc is the left bloc. These are presented jointly in these elections under the name of the New Popular Front. It's made up of socialists, environmentalists, communists and the France Insoumise party, led by Jean-Luc Mélenchon.

CONVIDED SYSTEM

In France voting is done in two rounds. The first is celebrated this Sunday, and the next, the final one, next Sunday. To be directly elected in the first round you must have at least 50% of the votes cast and at least 25% of the votes registered on the census. It's very difficult to obtain so much support, and in 2022 only five deputies won their seats in the first round.

Therefore, as a general rule, two candidates advance to the second round: those who have had at least 12.5% ??of the registered votes. If they exceed this number of supports, three or more candidates can pass; in 2022 there were eight cases among all constituencies.

And in the second round, the person with the most votes is elected deputy. Normally, candidates eliminated in the first round give a voting order for the second, opting for one of the two finalists, even if it's not of their political color.

For example, as we pointed out, the extreme left bloc has already announced that it will ask for support for whichever candidate as long as Le Pen's party does not win, which if achieved would be the first extreme right party that came to power since the Second World War.

Translated by Amilkal Labañino / CubaSí Translation Staff
