

— Key people, polling trends and latest news



EMMANUEL MACRON
La République en Marche

The current President still dominates the voting intentions. After building a new and disruptive party in 2017, he will now be expected to concretely demonstrate the relevance and legitimacy of his political statement.

25%



ERIC ZEMMOUR
Reconquête !

Political journalist and columnist in major French newspapers and TV channels, Eric Zemmour is a political novice in the **far-right** fringe. He is considered a good orator and is famed for his provocations on immigration and Islam.

14%

Not running anymore



CHRISTIANE TAUBIRA
Withdrew from the race on March 2nd

Former Minister of Justice under Socialist President Hollande from 2012 until 2016, Christina Taubira launched her own left-leaning political movement for this election. Following a successful launch, her movement struggled and she withdrew from the race on the 2nd of March.

2%



VALÉRIE PÉCRESSE
Les Républicains

The current President of the Ile-de-France region, Valérie Pécresse represents the traditional right-wing party. She is currently struggling to revitalize her campaign, caught between the centrism of Emmanuel Macron and far-right pressures.

14%



JEAN-LUC MÉLENCHON
La France Insoumise

Hard-left candidate Jean-Luc Mélenchon is making his third run for the Elysée. Though considered a great speaker, he struggles to unite the whole left-wing electorate even though he secured the hard-left around him.

10%



ANNE HIDALGO
Parti Socialiste

Current Mayor of Paris Anne Hidalgo is running for the traditional Socialist party. Her campaign is struggling and is clearly not creating adhesion by the left-wing voters outside of urban areas. Several observers are stating that she could withdraw to do not financially harm her party.

3%



MARINE LE PEN

Rassemblement National

Marine Le Pen, far-right candidate, succeeded her father as leader of the Front National (now Rassemblement National). She was the party's candidate in the 2017 election and got to the second round facing Emmanuel Macron.

17%



YANNICK JADOT

Europe Ecologie Les Verts

Former director of campaigns for Greenpeace, environmentalist Yannick Jadot was also a Member of the EU Parliament and is now the key representative for the French Green party.

5%



FABIEN ROUSSEL

Parti Communiste Français

Former journalist, Fabien Roussel has managed to double his score in the polls since the beginning of 2022. Leader of the French Communist Party since March 2021, he is at the heart of a legal case for fictitious employment between 2009 and 2014 but has managed a good adhesion considering the electoral base of the communist Party.

4%

Source: Opinionway, Baromètre 2022, 28th February

Candidates position about the situation in Ukraine: Most of the presidential candidates are aligned with **Emmanuel Macron's** position on the Ukrainian crisis, apart from **Eric Zemmour** (far-right) who refuses to welcome Ukrainian refugees in France and advocated that France should act as a balancing power to negotiate a treaty between the European States and Russia that would put an end to the expansion of NATO.

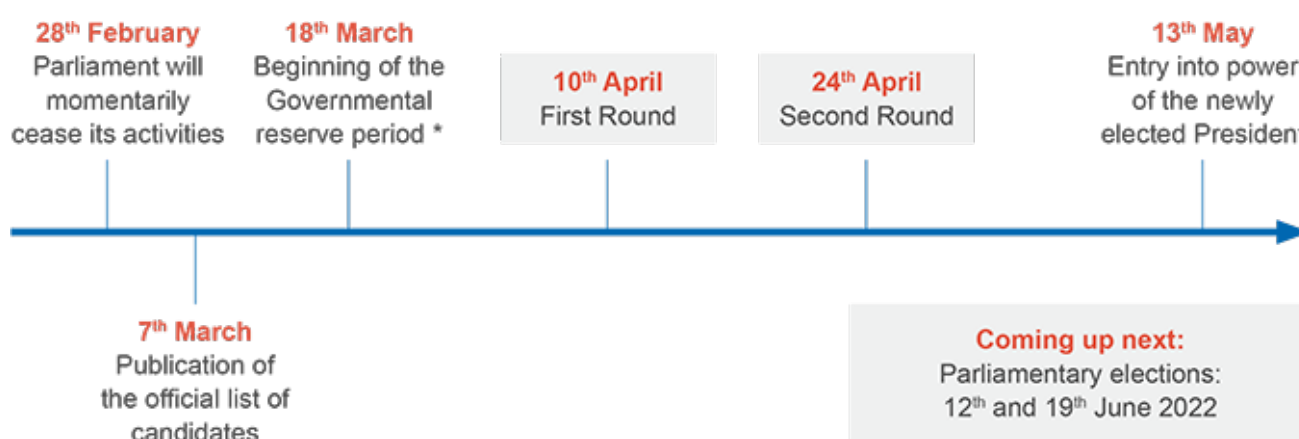
Jean-Luc Mélenchon (far-left), who advocates for negotiations and a cease-fire, proposed to establish a "*border conference*" within the framework of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Like **Marine Le Pen**, he is considered to have been complacent with Putin's regime and has been struggling to justify this for the last few days.

For his part, the Green Party candidate **Yannick Jadot** urged the French president to be more transparent in his actions in support of Ukraine, especially regarding military support. As a result, a meeting has taken place yesterday with Prime minister Jean Castex and all presidential candidates.

Finally, **Valérie Pécresse**, the right candidate, called the EU to implement a humanitarian and defence aid plan for Ukraine. She also requested an immediate meeting of the National Assembly and the Senate to debate the situation, and gathered around her a "shadow" Defence committee composed of several former ministers in what appears, according to observers, as an attempt to improve her lack of Presidential stature.

Participation in the election: While today's media attention is divided between the health crisis, the diplomatic crisis around Ukraine and the ongoing presidential campaign, a large part of French people have declared that they will not be voting. In fact, the latest polls say that between 22 and 26% of the population could abstain.

2022 Electoral Timeline



* In the context of the election campaign period, an obligation of "customary reserve" was established for civil servants in the performance of their duties. It ensures that no civil servant will use his or her position for election purposes. This obligation is imposed on heads of State services and on the agents placed under their authority.

French Presidential elections: 10th and 24th April 2022

The electoral process: Candidates need to secure 500 signatures from national or local elected officials in order to run for the elections. Several candidates did not gather these signatures yet, this includes **Marine Le Pen**, **Eric Zemmour** and **Christiane Taubira** (who decided to withdraw her candidacy on March 2nd due to her inability to gather these signatures and lack of financial support for her campaign). If **Marine Le Pen** and **Eric Zemmour** were to fail to get these signatures, they would not be allowed to run and this could heavily shape the elections. But, according to political observers, they should be able to gather the necessary number of signatures before the official deadline the 4th of March.

Then, after a 5 weeks campaign, the elections will take place during two rounds, the second round (24th of April) being held two weeks after the first (10th of April) between the two candidates who received the most votes.

The weeks ahead: Today, the electoral campaign is already in full swing and will continue to intensify once **Emmanuel Macron** announces his candidacy, which will certainly happen in the coming days.

After the 7th of March, with all candidates being officially announced, several debates broadcasted on TV and radio should change the pace of the campaign and see each candidate, using the measures of their presidential programmes, promote their credentials for running the country. These debates could bring about major shifts in public opinion and will be pivotal to the outcome of the elections, especially to determine who will be able to compete during the second round of the elections. Some observers note that **Emmanuel Macron** might not take part heavily in this debating phase, focusing his attention towards the crisis in Ukraine.

Following the presidential elections, a new Government will be nominated for the interim period before Parliamentary elections. The newly/re-elected President will then enter a period which presents, following his/her victory, a good opportunity to implement new, far-reaching policies. This period is also an important campaigning period, with the President having to convince the population to give him/her a majority in Parliament.

Parliamentary elections: 12th and 19th June 2022.

The legislative work of the Parliament officially ended on February 27th. This quiet period allows MPs to join the campaign effort of their candidate for the presidential elections in April, but also, for the members of the National Assembly (lower Chamber of the French Parliament) to campaign in their constituencies for re-election in the legislative elections in June. These elections will determine a majority, which was historically always given to the elected President.

Nevertheless, several political observers are evaluating that there is a stronger probability than in the past elections, even if still low, that the elected President might not have a majority in the National Assembly. His/her ability to rule would severely be impaired, a new Government with a new Prime Minister and a new balance of power would need to be appointed and approved by the Parliament. The Prime Minister determined by the Majority in National Assembly would be the effective leader on all national affairs, the President keeping the military and diplomatic scope of powers.

Even with a majority in Parliament, the Government could still be changed, as it has happened often before in order to broaden the political scope of the Government or integrate specific ministers who were not previously involved.

Parliament will convene immediately after the elections and should hold a particularly long session (named "exceptional session") lasting until the beginning of August, usually dedicated to enforce the first set of measures decided by the elected President.

— Focus on Climate & Sustainability candidates' proposals

While the environment is a topic considered as a "priority" by 31% of French people, they seem disinclined to vote for the green candidate, **Yannick Jadot**, considering him to "lack the stature of a president".

The green candidate wants to invest massively to address issues like housing, healthcare and environmental development. His aim is to spend 50 billion euros per year, accounting for 2% of France GDP. To do so, he would re-implement wealth tax (ISF) and fossil energy tax to promote investment in clean energy and green companies.

Recently, he stated that the investment of nearly 100 bn€ into the upgrading of nuclear reactors is contributing to the "near bankruptcy" of EDF (the national electricity company), which has just announced its need for partial bailout by the state. Yannick Jadot reaffirmed that his programme would include the renationalisation of EDF, which is already 84% owned by the State, "to save it from shareholder pressure, but above all to redirect EDF's activity towards an energy transition with less nuclear power and more renewable energy".

Struggling to pass the 2% voting mark, **Anne Hidalgo**, from the Socialist party, also wants to re-implement and modify the ISF for it to become a "ISF Climatique", reinvesting all the funds collected from this into ecological initiatives.

Jean-Luc Mélenchon, the far-left candidate with the highest predicted votes so far among the left (8-13%), aims to modify the French Constitution and put ecology and biodiversity at the centre of the State's initiatives. His program will focus on providing sustainable food, renewable energy, animals right, and anti-pollution schemes, with heavy state subsidies helping him to achieve these goals.

The right-wing candidates orient their sustainable development measures primarily around the issue of energy.

Eric Zemmour, one of the 2 far-right candidates running, wants to rebuild the nuclear sector in France. In the past, he has expressed his desire to do away with wind turbines,

stating that these "damage the appeal and aesthetic value of the French countryside". He also stated that "the environmental crisis is largely a demographic crisis".

For her part, in order to protect France against social and environmental pollution, **Valérie Pécresse** wants to create a carbon tax on all products coming from outside of the EU. She would like to establish a European preference by generalizing carbon content clauses in all public and private contracts to promote short agricultural and industrial circuits. Regarding the decarbonization of French society, she would rather develop financial incentives than increase and introduce new taxation.

Marine Le Pen, the other far-right candidate, wants to establish an environmental referendum based on 15 key points, including: protection and responsibility, a focus on food labels, nuclear energy, punishment of players in the private sector and their subsidiaries for environmental damage.

Finally, in the center, **Emmanuel Macron** wants to use the French Presidency of the European Union (FPEU) to raise carbon prices and engage in a discussion among European countries concerning the human impact on the environment.

— Events

21th February – MEDEF (the union representing entrepreneurs and businesses) gathered the presidential candidates to assess their economic and business measures.

23rd and 24th February – The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) organized a debate with the main presidential candidates on democratic issues.

26th February to 6th March – The famous "Salon de l'Agriculture" (Agriculture fair), taking place in the Paris region hosted a discussion with several presidential candidates. Emmanuel Macron also attended this fair very briefly early Saturday morning, mentioning that the French agricultural exports might slightly suffer because of the situation with Russia.

1st March – All candidates or their representatives were invited to discuss their healthcare programs at the "Mutualité", an event which was broadcasted live on placedelasante.fr and Twitch.

9th March – All candidates or their representatives are invited to present their digital and tech programs during an event hosted by "France Digitale" (French association representing digital companies and start-ups).

March TBD – "Confédération des petites et moyennes entreprises" (Organization representing all SMEs and VSEs in France) will organize a hearing involving all candidates.

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