

France

# Dissolution of the National Assembly – the “Mozart of finance” plays with fire

by Yann Le Houelleur,\* Paris



Yann Le Houelleur.  
(Picture ma)

The millions of French people who went to the polls to elect their 79 representatives to the European Parliament did not know that they would have to go to the polling stations again on 30 June. On Sunday, 9 June 2024, a clap of thunder rang out in Europe's largest country:

With a serious voice and deepened features after his seven years in the Elysée Palace characterised by constant turbulence, *Emmanuel Macron* gave a short, televised speech as soon as the projections of the election results were known:

“The most important lesson from these elections is that it is not a good result for the presidential majority. The far-right parties have resisted all progress in Europe in recent years [...] and they are on the rise everywhere on our continent. Their representatives reach 40 per cent of the votes cast.”

Referring to the constitution, the head of state made “a grave decision”, namely:

“I have decided to dissolve the National Assembly.”

## France is at the mercy of its creditors

The polls were hardly wrong when they gave the *Rassemblement National* (RN) 33 per cent of the vote. Everything now points to the RN achieving just over 30 per cent. *Renaissance*, the party founded by supporters of Emmanuel Macron,



French President Emmanuel Macron wants to dissolve the National Assembly. (Picture YLH)

has around 15 per cent. It is followed by *Place Publique*, a left-wing grouping that emerged from the remnants of the Socialist Party.

For Emmanuel Macron, this is a serious blow in a country that is more fragmented than ever before. The French have experienced an extremely tough election campaign, partly due to the current economic crisis and partly due to the strong tensions triggered by a large part of the left, mainly the representatives of *La France Insoumise* (LFI), following the Israeli airstrikes in the Gaza Strip.

The cherry on top of this indigestible cake is the downgrading of France's credit rating by the rating agency *Standard & Poor's*. Macron used to be known as the “Mozart of the financial world”. It has taken seven years of “Macronism” to come to the sobering realisation that Europe's second-largest economy is at the mercy of its creditors.

“At the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2023, France's debt amounted to more than 3100 billion euros and the number of corporate insolvencies is increasing,” a member of the RN expressed his

\* Yann Le Houelleur was for many years a correspondent in Brazil (where he lived for around 17 years) for several newspapers in Switzerland and France, including the now defunct *Journal de Genève* and the still current regional daily *La Liberté*. Parallel to this correspondent mandate, he built up a French-language newspaper for almost the entire period, which was printed in São Paulo, the city in which he had settled.

*Franc-Parler* [Free Speech], the name of this newspaper, has had a second life: For the past four years, he has been developing a digital magazine almost single-handedly from Gennevilliers, a town in the Hauts-de-Seine department just a few metro stops from Paris. And this magazine, which was created during the Covid lockdown, is of course called *Franc-Parler* again.

concern in a panel discussion broadcast by CNews. Regardless of their political colour, MPs are making themselves the representatives of the suffering people in their constituencies who are affected by the slowdown in the French economy.

### Growing insecurity

Added to this is a fear that is intensifying throughout the country: insecurity and the increase in extreme acts of violence that are leading to numerous deaths. For some, the civil war heralded by the greatest pessimists – “the clearest heads”, as some say – has already begun. However, the issues at stake at continental level have mostly been pushed into the background by the EU parliamentary candidates and voters have spoken out on national issues. The issue of immigration was very often raised in the TV debates. RN leaders emphasised that 500,000 migrants arrive in France every year and that most of them are willing to sleep in the open, beg or even be recruited by brutal mafias, especially drug traffickers.

Yet, due to current legislation and allocated resources, the authorities are unable to deport them. For the first time in an election campaign, the uncertainties brought about by this increased immigration have preoccupied many political parties. At the time of writing, the end results for the whole of France were not yet available. Journalist *Charlotte d'Ornellas* commented: “What is certain, however, is that there has been a tidal wave in favour of the Rassemblement National (RN) in countless constituencies.”

### An RN prime minister?

The question inevitably arises as to whether Emmanuel Macron is not playing a double game by secretly hoping for an RN victory. If the Rassemblement National wins more than the current 88 seats in the National Assembly, the president would have to entrust the office of prime minister to a leading representative of the RN, probably the young 29-year-old *Jordan Bar-*



A citizen in front of election posters for the EU parliamentary elections. (Picture YLH)

*della*, who heads this party. Emmanuel Macron could thus gamble on the failure of his prime minister, who comes from the radical right, to dissolve the National Assembly a second time a year later (which he is allowed to do under the constitution). Is the French president a Machiavellian? This is the opinion of many observers who believe that he is playing with fire.

Finally, it should be added that the renewal of the National Assembly will take place just a few days before the opening ceremony of the *Olympic Games*, which can only add to the general confusion.

If the parties supporting Emmanuel Macron do not achieve a majority of seats, the new government is unlikely to be able to control the situation, while the staff of France's Central Intelligence Service are predicting Islamist attacks. – There is no doubt that the head of state is playing with fire.

Source: <https://www.infomeduse.ch/2024/06/09/dissolution-de-lassemblee-nationale-en-france-le-mozart-de-la-finance-joue-avec-le-feu/>, 9 June 2024

(Translation “Swiss Standpoint”)