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Results
2nd round

The Socialist Party-led wins the absolute majority in the National Assembly

The Socialist Party (PS), which is original party of François Hollande, President of the Republic elected on 6th May last, led by Martine Aubry, won the majority in the National Assembly, the lower chamber of Parliament in the second round of voting on 17th June. The PS won 280 seats, the Radical Left, 12 and Various Left 22. Since September 2011 the left has also held the majority in the Senate, the upper chamber of parliament.

Europe Ecology-The Greens (EE-LV), led by Cécile Duflot, won 17 seats and will be able to form a parliamentary group. However the Left Front, a movement that rallies the Communist Party (PCF) and the Left Party (PG) led by Jean-Luc Mélenchon won 10 seats. The PS is therefore free to undertake its policy without having to call on the Left Front, which has radical ideas about the economy and the EU. Although it holds the majority the left does not hold the 3/5 majority of the Congress (555 seats) however, which brings together the two chambers of parliament and which would have enabled it to make constitutional reforms and even put forward a referendum without the opposition's agreement. The Union for a Popular Movement (UMP), the main opposition party of former President of the Republic Nicolas Sarkozy and led by Jean-François Copé, won 194 seats, the Radical party 6 and Various Right 14. The New Centre won 12 seats.

The Democratic Movement (MoDem) won 2 seats in the National Assembly. However its leader François Bayrou lost the seat that had been his since 1986. Finally the Front National led by Martin Le Pen and which was running under the banner "Rassemblement Bleu Marine", won 2 seats.

Turnout was the lowest ever recorded for a general election in France: 55.41%.

Finally 155 women will sit in the National Assembly (+ 48).

The general election result therefore means victory for President François Hollande and the government led by Jean-Marc Ayrault (PS). The head of State now has a "wide, strong, coherent" majority which he said he wanted so that he could implement his programme and which the French had chosen in a context of severe economic crisis. *"The French have strengthened their request for change that emerged last week in the first round of voting. I would like to thank them for the trust they have shown in us. It is an honour. It is up to us now to succeed in bringing back justice,"* declared Martine Aubry when the results were announced. All of the ministers in the government led by Jean-Marc Ayrault, who ran in the election, were elected or re-elected.

The only downside to the PS's victory was the defeat of former socialist presidential (22nd April and 6th May 2007) candidate Ségolène Royal (also the former partner of the head of State, François Hollande) because of a dissident PS member - in the 1st constituency of Charente Maritime. The latter, Olivier Falorni, who won the support of Valérie Trierweiler, took advantage of the votes on the right and won 62.97% of the vote against 37.03% for Ségolène Royal. *"This result is a political betrayal,"* declared Ségolène Royal. Martine Aubry has confirmed that Olivier Falorni, excluded from the party, will not be able to sit with the PS group in the National Assembly.

Another mainstay of the socialist party, Jack Lang, was also beaten. The former Culture Minister (1981-

1986), won 49.12% of the vote in the 2nd constituency of Vosges against Gérard Cherpion (UMP), who won 50.88%.

With 215 seats the UMP has suffered an acceptable defeat. The rightwing electorate faced a complicated choice. Indeed although they wanted their political side to win they were against cohabitation.

"It is a clear victory for the left, a defeat for the right. We shall be a constructive opposition force working for the country's well-being but we shall be extremely vigilant," declared former Prime Minister (1995-1997) Alain Juppé. *"We have to think hard about what brings us together, about the base of our common values before our congress (that will take place in the autumn),"* he added. The UMP will now re-position between a rising Front National and an apathetic centre. The UMP candidates who said they were totally against drawing closer to the FN achieved better results than those who said they felt an affinity with these ideas.

For example former Minister Nadine Morano was beaten in the 5th constituency of Meurthe-et-Moselle. She won 44.33% of the vote against 55.67% for Dominique Potier (PS).

The Front National can be proud of its result in this election, whose voting method (majority in two rounds) does not work in its favour. The election of 2 MPs is a success for Marine Le Pen even though she failed to win her own seat by 118 votes in the 11th constituency of Pas-de-Calais, where she took 49.89% of the vote against 50.11% for her socialist rival Philippe Kemel. *"Apart from my own personal case, we only have reason to be pleased because in dozens of constituencies we have achieved some spectacular results in this, the second round of voting, showing that the voting advice of the main parties did not achieve any great following and that the re-organisation of political life is on its way,"* declared Marine Le Pen. *"There are only two of us in Parliament but we represent over 6 million voters, and we have made it!"* said the new FN MP Gilbert Collard. The 2nd MP in the constituency of

Vaucluse, is Marion Maréchal-Le Pen, Marine Le Pen's niece and grand-daughter of Jean-Marie Le Pen, with 42.24% of the vote. Aged 22, Marion Maréchal-Le Pen is the youngest MP ever to be elected during the 5th Republic. Although the FN is still isolated in the political arena it has been progressing and has asserted itself in these general elections as it did in the presidential election on 22nd April and 6th May, as the third political force in France. The FN had not managed to win a seat in the National Assembly since 1988.

The election sounded the death knell for the Democratic Movement, whose leader François Bayrou was beaten in the 2nd constituency of Pyrénées-Atlantiques. He won 30.17% of the vote against 42.76% for Nathalie Chabanne (PS) and 27.04% for Eric Saubatte (UMP). MoDem won 2 seats: Jean Lasalle in the 4th constituency of Pyrénées-Atlantiques (50.98% of the vote) and Thierry Robert in the 7th constituency of Reunion Island (66.90% of the vote).

Finally the left won 8 of the 11 seats reserved for the French living abroad, who were called to vote for the first time in the history of the 5th Republic; the UMP won in three constituencies: the 6th (Switzerland, Liechtenstein), the 10th (the southern part of Africa) and the 11th (Asia-Australasia).

The long electoral period is now over in France. Strengthened by its absolute majority in the Assembly, the left, led by François Hollande and Jean-Marc Ayrault, will now be able to govern. Its first goal to bring order back to public finance can no longer be delayed. The socialists have said they will undertake the country's recovery "fairly and without austerity." Economy, Finance and Foreign Trade Minister Pierre Moscovici revealed on 14th June that the growth forecasts were going to be adjusted. Economic slowing will force the government to announce cuts in public spending. Parliament will have to approve a draft corrective finance law rapidly (the reform of the Wealth Tax, the raising of

inheritance tax, the introduction of a surtax on banks and oil companies, the re-arrangement of tax niches), which according to forecasts, should bring in around 10 billion € into the State coffers. A report by the Inspectorate General for Finance indicated that the French state had to save on 5 billion euros yearly in order to consolidate its national accounts.

One thing is certain. With François Hollande in the Elysée (the seat of the President of the French Republic), with the absolute majority in the National Assembly, the Senate and in most of the regions (24 out of 26), the departments and the country's main towns, the French left, now in an hegemonic position, cannot afford to make any mistakes.

General Elections Results in France on 10th and 17th June 2012

Turnout: 57.23% (1st round) and 55.60% (2nd round)

Parties	Votes	%	Number of MPs
Left Front (FG)	249 525	1.08	10
Socialist (SOC)	9 420 426	40.91	280
Radical Left (RDG)	538 324	2.34	12
Various Left (DVG)	709 409	3.08	22
Europe-Ecology-the Greens (VEC)	828 916	3.60	17
Regionalist (REG)	135 354	0.59	2
The Centre for France (CEN)	113 196	0.49	2
Centrist Alliance (ALLI)	123 352	0.54	2
Radical Parti (PRV)	311 211	1.35	6
New Centre (NCE)	568 288	2.47	12
Union for a Popular Movement(UMP)	8 740 625	37.95	194
Various Right (DVD)	418 135	1.82	15
Front National (FN)	842 684	3.66	2
Far Right (EXD)	29 738	0.13	1

Source : <http://elections.interieur.gouv.fr/LG2012/FE.html>

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