

## INFOCUS

### 2024 European Elections outcome and implications

C4EP analysis on the subject – *In whose favour were the odds during the 2024 European Parliamentary elections?*

„In our previous analysis we tried to make predictions about the 2024 European Parliamentary elections. Now we take the opportunity to check our predictions and also to draw some conclusions, envision a possible future for the European Parliament, taking into consideration the actual results.

In general, we can say that our statement about the 2024 European Parliamentary elections being influenced by “numerous variables and uncertainties” have been found correct. Also, most of the polls we have used to predict results were correct as well in calculating approximate results: the political centre has somewhat weakened and the far-right/extreme parties have grown, but this has not led to a breakthrough or a landslide that would seriously change the course of European politics for the next five years.”

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National results

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## C4RECAP

*War in Gaza: The European Union's diplomatic failure*

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*In the French legislative elections, the far right will probably fall short*

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*Eight years on: Academic reflections on Brexit*

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*Poland moves closer to easing abortion laws*

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*Von der Leyen lined up for second term under EU top jobs deal, sources say*

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*Statement by President von der Leyen on opening accession negotiations with Ukraine and Moldova, via video message*

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*Russia bans distribution of dozens of EU news outlets in retaliatory step*

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*Reynders defeated in race to lead Council of Europe*

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*Mark Rutte can't rescue Nato*

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## C4REPORT

*C4EP: Elections Roundtable: How can the youth shape the EU? – 12 June 2024*

„C4EP has organised a more informal, roundtable-like event to evaluate not only the results of the EP elections, but also to take a look at the opportunities of politically active and interested youth to participate in European politics, either by activism or by gaining positions and influence within the existing political infrastructure. The invited speakers – two individuals from active youth communities – and the audience have engaged in a highly informative and entertaining exchange of opinions and ideas in the framework of this event, hosted by the Press Club, Brussels, just a few days after the elections, when the campaign guns have already become silent, but the smoke and the mist still has not evaporated from the field.”

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*EPC: EU elections 2024: The Member States' perspective – 13 June 2024*

„Corina Stratulat opened the panel saying that in the aftermath of the 2024 European elections, this event does not aim to recap what had happened, but to shift the attention to the national dimension. After all, there were twenty-seven electoral races, and the national context is not always clear outside the concerned member state.

Before the discussion, Sophie Pornschlegel, strategic lead of the project on the 2024 European elections with Open Society Foundations shortly talked about the comparative analysis they have been working on with Maria Skóra, Daniel Schade and Marc-Olivier Padis, stating that the final report is expected to be published in September.”

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*EUISS: Unveiling Türkiye's strategy in MENA & Africa – 13 June 2024*

„The aim of this policy dialogue organized by EUISS was to explore Turkey's evolving role in the Middle East, MENA, and Africa, focusing on its strategic deployment of soft power and economic engagement. Under President Erdoğan's leadership, Turkey has employed a multifaceted approach encompassing cultural diplomacy, economic initiatives, and security partnerships to expand its influence in these regions. This event's goal was to analyze the implications of Turkey's regional strategies for its relations with traditional Western allies and the European Union, emphasizing opportunities for cooperation amidst evolving geopolitical dynamics.”

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*CEPS: The NATO Washington Summit: Reinforcing NATO, supporting Ukraine, strengthening Europe – 17 June 2024*

„James Moran opened the panel about the NATO Washington Summit which will take place from the 9th to the 11th of July. Sweden will attend for the first time as a member, and NATO could finally invite Ukraine to accession talks.

Rachel Ellehuus reminded us that 2024 marks the 75th anniversary of the creation of NATO which will be reflected in the Summit. But the occasion is not just about celebration. Ukraine is now among the top priorities of the US besides responsibility sharing, and deterrence and defence. Since 2014, NATO has been undergoing a significant strengthening in the last field which took the organisation “back to basics” such as Article 5. But an even stronger defence needs to be adopted to the current cyber and hybrid challenges.”

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*EPC: What is next for the Middle East: moving beyond cycles of war and instability? – 20 June 2024*

„The aim of this conference, organized by the European Policy Centre, was to discuss the future of the Middle East, focusing on overcoming the cycles of war and instability and delve into several key topics: the current situation in the Middle East, Biden’s ceasefire plan, the implications of the Iranian presidential elections, the role of the European Union, and the potential impact of a possible Trump administration.”

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## C4EPOSITION

Juliane Barboni, Senior Policy Advisor, European Partnership for Energy and the Environment (EPEE), ex-journalist for Euradio

Now that the dust has settled after Macron’s unexpected announcement on June 9, many are still speculating about the reason for such a decision, which will push the French to vote twice again on June 30 and July 7, effectively choosing a new Prime Minister alongside their elected representatives in the Assemblée Nationale.

For those in the back and individuals who might be lucky enough to not be familiar with the French system, let’s rewind a bit, just in time before the first round of the elections.

Under the 5th Republic, the State of France is supposedly governed by a bicameral system, topped by an executive power, owned by the President, or more precisely put into force by the Prime Minister in charge of appointing the Ministries. A subtlety which usually goes unnoticed since most of the time both entities come from the same party. However, calling for new elections in the middle of a mandate will surely result in a “cohabitation” – meaning the President will lose a good deal of its power, in favor of the Prime Minister, able to set the country’s political direction for the rest of his term.

If Emmanuel Macron's attitude during his first mandate has been compared to being "monarch-like", his second election has already stripped him of the privilege of ruling with an absolute majority in the Parliament. Since 2022, some degree of political diversity has had to be reached for laws to pass. Unsurprisingly the man who prided himself as a true centrist in the beginning of his presidential agenda in 2017, reached out to the right on numerous occasions, furthering the ostracization of the left, while berating both ends of the political spectrum as "extremists".

Today, the previously called Front National has gained its legitimacy from its long-standing strategy of "dediabolisation" but also thanks to a tendency from the president to open the door to certain far-right "philosophy": one may remember the "yellow vests" debacle in 2018 which has been met with unprecedented police brutality or even recently the immigration law which largely pleased the right as well as far-right fringe of the Parliament.

A state of play which culminates today in a tremendously polarized media coverage and, as a result, public opinion. For instance, traditional news outlets, a good portion of them being ruled under a monopolistic group owned by far-right millionaire Vincent Bollorés, as well as social media have helped promote right-wing party-leader Jordan Bardella. A strategy that has secured more than 30% of the vote for the Front National during the last European elections (and more than 35% when grouped with Reconquête, another far-right party which thrives on the Great Replacement theory).

In the landscape where the presidential party has been normalizing right-wing ideas since its re-election, and where a strong portion of the country resents the ruling class as being "elits", calling for legislative elections is equivalent to grand-opening the door to Hôtel Matignon (the office of the Prime Minister) for the Front National.

A fact that is not lost on Emmanuel Macron, as some speculate it is the very reason he has called for a new vote. Indeed, in 2027 the French will need to decide for a new President, and Macron will be unable to run for a third time. "Cohabiting" with a far-right Prime Minister while demonstrating his "supposed" lack of knowledge and inability to strategically rule the country could theoretically deter people from rooting for them during the next presidential elections. However, if this plan goes through, the country will still be left under two years of far-right rule, casting a menacing shadow on many minorities and possibly furthering the normalization of fascist-adjacent ideas throughout the French political landscape.