

JUN 19, 2022

# What's NUPES?

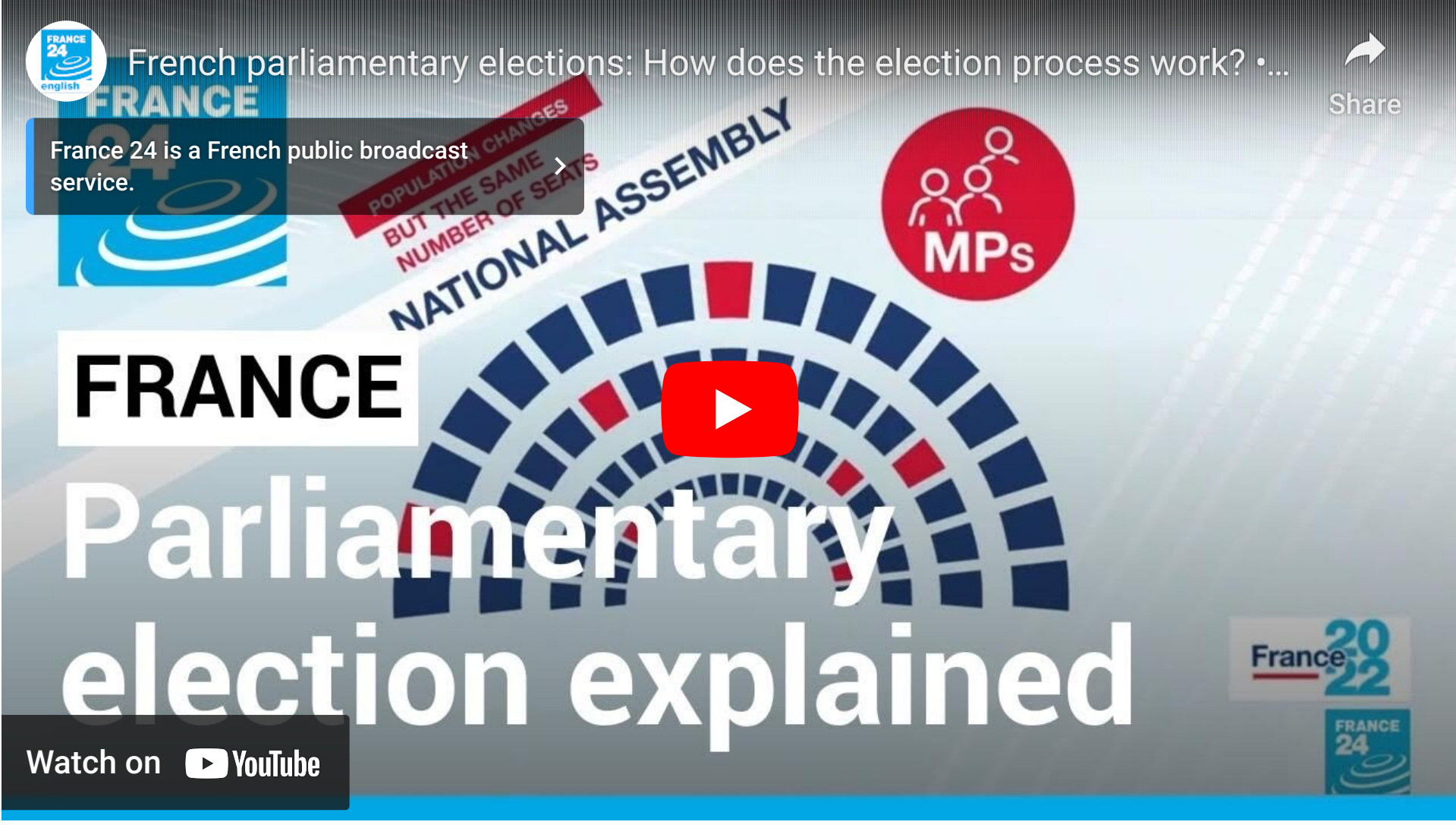
Happy Juneteenth! This is The Weekly Letter for June 19, 2022. [About this newsletter](#)

## Big Story

The campaign for the French presidential election—held in April of this year—resembled a slow-motion train wreck for the left. Despite some efforts to achieve unity, in the end no fewer than six candidates to the left of incumbent President Emmanuel Macron qualified for the first round of the election (half of all qualified candidates). Remarkably, despite the split vote leftist Jean-Luc Mélenchon came within 1% of taking second place in the election's first round and thereby qualifying for the second round.

Then, ahead of this month's elections for the National Assembly, four left-wing parties that fielded candidates in the presidential election—Mélenchon's France Unbowed, the Greens, the Communist Party, and the Socialist Party—formed an electoral coalition. This coalition is called the New Ecologic and Social People's Union (or NUPES, its French acronym).

In the [first round](#) of the parliamentary elections on June 12, NUPES took just over 26% of the total vote to just under 26% for Macron's centrist Together coalition, 19% for the far-right National Rally, and 11% for the right-wing Republicans. However, each member of the National Assembly is elected by their own constituency on a winner-take-all basis (similar to how members of the U.S. House of Representatives are elected). The Together coalition is expected to ultimately win the most seats, but it all depends on the results of the second round of the elections, which is taking place today.



NUPES has called on voters to grant the left-wing a majority in parliament in order to force Macron to appoint a Prime Minister from outside of his coalition (preferably Mélenchon), thereby blunting Macron's power. In an opinion piece, Cole Stangler [writes](#), the "two signature economic policy proposals" of NUPES are "a hike in the minimum wage to 1,500 euros, or about \$1,560, a month and a cap on the prices of essential goods...." With free market economic reforms central to Macron's domestic program, NUPES provides a stark contrast.

The Together coalition has argued that giving Macron's allies a majority in parliament is necessary to combat political extremes and ensure [national stability](#). Their case is that NUPES is as dangerous as the far-right National Rally. Mélenchon's view on foreign policy has also come under fire. Current Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne, an ally of Macron, [said](#) in her speech following the election's first round, "National sovereignty is not a break with Europe, a fascination for authoritarian regimes and an alignment with Russia, but rather a strong nation within a more independent Europe."

[Le Monde/Le Monde in English](#) and [France 24](#) are two sources where you can find the results of the election's second round after the polls close today.

## Opinion

- Robinson Meyer:** What the U.S.—and the world—will look like if Congress fails to pass a [climate bill](#) ASAP. (The Atlantic, 6/15)
- Heove ve 'keso (Yellowbird), Chief Phillip Whiteman Jr:** [Love vs. the genocidal mindset](#). (The Guardian, 6/17)
- Tim Miller:** [Mike Pence should testify](#) before the January 6 Committee. (The Bulwark, 6/16)
- Sue Halpern:** The [unorthodox political efforts](#) to defeat extreme Republicans. (New Yorker, 6/9)

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