

# Chapter 2: France

— — — — —  
Anne Jadot and Alexandre Borrell

## Introduction

France is one of the founding members of the European Economic Community, often presented as a leader, together with Germany, in the European building process. Several French political personalities have played a prominent role within it. These include Robert Schuman, famous for his Declaration on May 9th 1950 (later chosen by the EEC as its 'European Day'), advocating practical economic steps towards a broader cooperation building, starting with the pooling of coal and steel productions so that France and Germany would never again fight a war against each other. Jacques Delors, also, was the head of the Brussels Commission between 1985 and 1995, playing a significant role in the Maastricht Treaty's negotiations and adoption. Simone Veil was the first European Parliament (hereafter EP) Speaker in 1979 and ran again as a list head in 1989. In this respect, the French case is an interesting one. But has Europe played an important role in French politics, as an issue and within the parties' strategies and communication choices? How has the European building process affected French politics, as studied here, through the lenses of EP elections? How did parties try to get French MEPs elected by running national election campaigns? Did the media pay sustained or secondary attention to these issues and campaigns?

Since the publication of Karlheinz Reif and Hermann Schmitt's seminal article (1980), EP elections are considered 'simultaneous national second order elections' rather than a pan European contest *per se*. Two facts are decisive in this reasoning: the same main parties compete against each other in both their respective national arena and in the lists they present within their country (and not on a Europe wide scale) for the EP; there is far less at stake in these direct EP elections. On the one hand, who holds the national power is independent from them. On the other hand, the European policies—at least at first—were largely independent from the EP composition, both the European Commission and the European Council being the key players in Europe. Reif and Schmitt thus predicted that European elections would display several main features: turnout would be lower; mainstream parties, especially the ones in power at times of the EP elections, would fare worse than usual; new, small and more radical parties would seize these EP elections as an opportunity, also thanks to the proportional rule, to surge and to take political stances, helping to build their

electorate for subsequent national or local elections. Has this analytical view, labelled the Second Order Elections Model (hereafter SOEM) been confirmed when applied to France? How do the characteristics of its institutional, electoral, and political system possibly help us refine the model? To what extent do parties' communication and media coverage of these European campaigns also reveal a secondary interest and investment from the involved actors?

## Are EP elections in France second order, mid-terms, or even secondary?

In the SOEM, the EP elections, even though always less important, still have a varying saliency depending on their timing within the respective national electoral cycles (Reif, 1984). It is coherent with a pattern, well documented in many countries, about governments' popularity cycle, as measured by regular opinion polls about power holders: there is an initial 'honeymoon', lasting at most for a few months after a win in a national election. Popularity declines, when difficult political measures are enforced, which can both disappoint the government's supporters and further antagonise its opponents, down to a low point, usually reached in the second or third year of the cycle. Incumbents' popularity starts to improve at least a bit when the next national election approaches because citizens resume comparison between parties, considering their alternative political options, and acting less as if elections were a mere referendum on the governmental performance. In this respect, the timing of EP elections within a national electoral cycle affects the prospects for both incumbent and opposition parties. To operationalise timing, researchers usually calculate a percentage of the length of the national cycle spent until the EP elections. But in order to do so, the starting point of the cycle needs to be clear, i.e. when the previous national elections were held.

In most EEC/EU member countries, there is no doubt about which are these national elections, i.e., those for the main legislative body. France is also, from an institutional point of view, a Parliamentary system where the party which has the most seats in the National Assembly governs and where the government can be forced to resign if an absolute majority of MPs vote in order to oust it. But there are also presidential elections, which attract huge attention from political actors, medias and citizens alike, are the most mobilising ones in terms of turnout, and

are usually perceived as the most important ones given the President's major powers and its role as embodiment of the country. Hence, there are somewhat 'two-tier national principal elections,' making the French electoral cycle a bit more complex to decipher. All the more since, from 1958 until 1995 included, the president was elected for seven years (reduced to five years from 2002 onwards) whereas the MPs have a theoretical mandate of five years. And the National Assembly has been dissolved several times, with General Elections called in advance, after a president was (re)elected (to try to adjust the two majorities, presidential and legislative), for strategic considerations or to put an end to a social or political crisis. Hence it is a bit difficult to locate each of the nine EP elections within a French cycle.

The European results can also be interpreted in France in light of the *forthcoming* presidential election, when the EP elections happen not too long before one, especially when there still was a seven-year mandate. In this respect, it is the time remaining until the next presidential election which would become a key element, a French deviation from the SOEM. In this framework, the EP elections can boost a politician's image, as if it was a rehearsal for prospective presidential candidates who choose to be heads of list for the EP. Sometimes, EP successes are also used to claim the position of the main party contender within a political bloc (between e.g., socialists and communists, or between centre right UDF and right RPR), which can in turn influence future negotiations about common candidacies (either in some legislative constituencies or with a candidate endorsed by more than one party at the following presidential election). All these strategic anticipations are a concern for political actors and media commentators alike. The average French voter probably does not pay enough attention to the EP elections to decide to use them consciously as a way to promote a future national candidate, or to put a blow to his/her presidential prospects.

Another French characteristic, which does complexify the perception of the electoral cycle and the importance of EP contests within it, is the fact that there are numerous sub-national elections. All the more since whenever some local administrative level became fully political, there was no concurrent suppression of another political tier. For instance, when Regions' representatives became elected by direct suffrage, from 1986 on, the Departmental ones were kept; where inter-municipality were installed, the communal level was maintained. On top of those several opportunities to vote locally, all French citizens were invited to vote in referendum on internal institutional features (the independence of New Caledonia in 1988, the length of the presiden-

tial mandate in 2000) or even directly on European issues (the Maastricht treaty in 1992, the Constitutional Treaty in 2005). Sometimes a referendum is treated by voters more as a plebiscite, providing a 'yes' or a 'no' to the incumbent President rather than a direct answer on the issue. From a strictly institutional point of view, all of these elections are 'non-national principal' in so far as the national power is not directly at stake, just like for the EP ones. However, in several cases, poor performance by the incumbent President's party have triggered a change of Prime Minister, acknowledging the discontent of voters. Thus, EP elections in France are directly in competition with several other types of contests for fulfilling the role of a quasi-referendum on the current national power, which we could label for the sake of this chapter 'midterms' (whereas French psephologists call them 'intermediary').

Since 2002 and the five year-term enforcement, no president resigned or died, neither has the National Assembly been dissolved, hence their respective mandates were not shortened. The EP elections thus happened systematically two years after what we can define as the new 'key national sequence', i.e., the two rounds of the presidential contest and the two rounds of the General Elections held within a few weeks, all mandates starting (in theory) for five years. The beginning of the national cycle is, in this respect, clearer now, and one could assume the EP elections would become, in essence, midterms in the long run, always happening two years after such a national sequence. However, even under these conditions, the European elections are not necessarily the first opportunity for voters to punish national incumbents, with the wealth of various types of elections and their respective pace. Since 1979, EP elections were the first non-national principal contest after a national election only in 2019. This was also the case in 1979 if one takes the GE of 1978 as the starting national point, but not if one considers the 1974 presidential election as the relevant previous national reference. EP elections have indeed been preceded by municipal elections in 1977, 1983, 1989, 2008, and 2014; they have been preceded by elections for Departments' representatives in 1988, 1994, and 1998; and there were before them regional elections both in 1998 and 2004. One can note that some of these local elections were held concurrently, during spring, and others postponed by a few months or even by a whole year to avoid voters' fatigue (otherwise there would have been up to six different rounds in a short time span). In other words, most often, either one year or just a few months before electing their MEPs, French citizens were called to vote, reducing the midterm prospective nature of these European contests.

The third French characteristic that makes the EP elections all the more interesting to study for their impact on national politics is the fact that they are held with the proportional rule (hereafter PR) and in only one round. From 1979 to 1999 included, and again from 2019 onwards, there were national lists presented by parties, with the requirement to put forth the same number of candidates as there were French seats to allocate within the EP. In 2004, 2009 and 2014, France was divided into eight big so-called 'Euro regions' used only as these constituencies for electing MEPs, without any territorial match to an administrative body. The purpose was to bring candidates closer to the citizens from a geographical point of view, so as to enhance the representative link between voters and MEPs. But the impact of this reform both on turnout and on the dynamics of electoral campaigns (that we will cover hereafter) was negative, leading to the reform's reversal and the EP lists becoming nation-wide again. Apart from this temporary technicality, the key element here is that PR rule applies for all European elections. This is in sharp contrast with the two-round majority rule applied both in Presidential contests and in GE, which has given rise to a common saying in French political science: 'in the first round, voters choose their candidate; in the second, they bar another candidate'. In other words, in national principal elections, there is a tendency for the electorate to take into account parties' or candidates' respective chances, to avoid a 'wasted vote'. If they are in favour of a small candidate without any serious chances, some voters do not necessarily choose this truly preferred option in the first round but opt for a second best, usually within a political bloc, and later decide which of the final runners in the second round they like most or dislike least. In EP elections, because there is less at stake, there is less pressure to apply such tactical concerns. As Mark Franklin states (2004), in EP elections, citizens can vote 'with the heart' (for their favourite option, however small or chanceless) or 'with the boot' (if they want to send a discontent message to the incumbents or even to the whole political system) and are less compelled to vote 'with the head' (taking into account respective chances). Expressive voting, both negative and positive, is hence maximised in EP elections. Instrumental voting, both negative (preventing a disliked candidate from winning) and positive (choosing the option with the best chances within a range of liked candidates) happens much more often in national contests. Given the structural nature and contextual salience of the various types of elections, their timing within the French electoral cycle, and the majoritarian or proportional electoral rule applied in them, political pressure can vary widely. Jean-Luc Parodi offers the

analogy of an accordion, explaining that periodically there is reduced pressure on voters, which is then increased again as constraints set back in (see Jadot, 2001). Applying this theoretical framework, and turning to the actual results of the EP elections in France since 1979, we ask: have these non-national principal elections been second order, midterms, or even secondary elections? And to what extent do citizens care about them?

### **A low and even declining turnout, until 2019**

For most of France's nine EP elections, Reif and Schmitt's prediction about them being second order and less mobilising elections is true (see figure 2.01). Admittedly, in the very first 1979 EP contest, more than 60% registered voters still went to the polls. One can assume there was a kind of enthusiasm for the first occurrence of a newly directly elected body, as in 1986 for the initial regional elections which are also held with PR (turnout of 75%, with the 'boosting' effect of being coupled to a traditionally highly mobilising local contest). But from the 1960s to the early 80s, turnout was roughly 15-20% higher in all other types of elections.

Afterwards, there has been a steady and quasi-continuous European participation decline. Even though it was in line with all the other elections also becoming less and less mobilising. It was even lower in the European contests: about 15 to 32 points less in the 1990s. This 'European turnout gap' was at its maximum when an EP election was held only a few months after another non-national principal election. In those circumstances, one can assume both a voters' fatigue and a disincentive to use the EP contest as a referendum soon after a preceding opportunity to punish the government. This is also despite the fact that, by then, French public opinion towards the European building process was broadly positive. As Eurobarometer results show, there was in the first place what Annick Percheron called a 'permissive consensus' towards European building: positive views were higher than negative ones, albeit with a high level of 'Don't Knows'. When Euroscepticism later rose in France, it was mostly due to the fall of 'Don't Knows' and the rise of negative views, not a drastic fall of positive answers (Belot & Cautrès, 2006).

From the EU and electoral rule perspectives, this turnout decline is nonetheless a double paradox. Firstly, the more the EP accrued power, given the complex balance between the European institutions and the new European Commission investiture mechanism, the fewer French people were voting for their representatives in Brussels and Strasbourg. Secondly, with PR, the fear of a 'wasted' vote is diminished, and citizens could hope to see their favourite small parties securing MEPs if the threshold of 5%



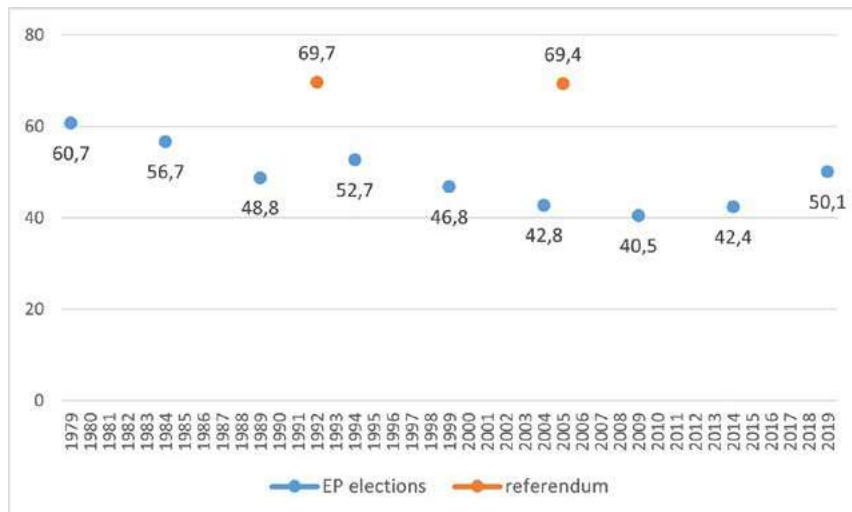


Figure 2.01: Turnout (%) at European elections and at CEE/EU referenda.  
Source: Home Office

share of the expressed votes was reached. Yet less and less people were voting, with a turnout of roughly 40% the 3 times France enforced regionalised lists, from 2004 to 2014 included. Even though the aim of this reform was to bring candidates (and, once elected, MEPs) closer to their constituents, participation was badly affected by the chosen Euro-regions boundaries—irrelevant for most citizens—and by the lack of a national campaign dynamic. Without a single list head per party well-known and identified at a national level, French voters seemed to care less and less about EP elections. The turnout gap extended to 25, 30, and 43 points, compared respectively to local, regional, and national contests.

However, European issues *per se* can mobilise French voters when the electoral question asked directly pertains to the future of the European building process, rather than to electing MEPs. In this respect, both referenda on the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 and on the European Constitution Treaty in 2005 mobilised a significant number of voters, about 70% of registered voters, as also shown in figure 2.01. Their campaigns were heated, the public debate intense, with some parties badly divided. In 1992, the ‘yes’ narrowly won by 51 vs. 49%; in 2005, the ‘no’ won by 55 vs. 45%. Especially in the latter case, it was not only, nor mainly, a question of being for or against Europe as an integration process, but of *which Europe* one was potentially in favour. Among the ‘no’ advocates, some were not long-time Euro-sceptics, and they could be from Left or Right, it cut the traditional cleavages as well as within parties. The fact that an only slightly revised Lisbon Treaty was later adopted by the French Parliament created a resentment in some citizens about the democratic process. In light of these referenda, one could possi-

bly understand the first exception within the continuous participation decline: in 1994, EP turnout rose by about four points, reaching again more than 50%. Two years after the ‘no’ at Maastricht was defeated by a very small margin, the presence of a list with prominent figures of its campaign, like Philippe Séguin and Philippe de Villiers who offered an alternative to the main Gaullist party, probably attracted to the polls many disappointed rightist voters. There was a meaningful option to them, at a time when the European building process had gained saliency through the referendum.

Apart from this 1994 peculiar case, are the EP elections doomed to mobilise less and less French voters? Actually, the 2019 election registered again a turnout boost: gaining nearly 8 points, it overcame again the symbolic bar of 50%. Furthermore, for the first time, this election mobilised 1.4 points *more* than the previous GE in 2017! Admittedly, the legislative competition has suffered a lot in terms of saliency of what we could call, inspired by the US calendar’s analyses, a ‘coat-tail effect’. Since 2002, GE are indeed regularly held 5 years apart, at their regular timing and most importantly, only a few weeks after the Presidential election leading to a turnout drop between the respective first rounds of up to 29 points. Even taking this into account, it is worth exploring how the last EP election mobilised (comparatively) so much.

The answer is found in a confluence of factors. Firstly, re-establishing a nation-wide single constituency — and hence a more intense campaign — was probably decisive. Furthermore, the 2017 national sequence had been disruptive for the political system: *both* the traditionally mainstream Socialist and Gaullist parties (which had alternated



<b>Political nuances from the Home Office</b>	<b>1979</b>	<b>1984</b>	<b>1989</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2019</b>
Extreme Left	3.1	3.7	2	2.7	5.2	3,3	6.1	1.6	7.1
Communist Party	20.6	11.2	7.7	6.9	6.8	5.2	6	6.3	2.5
Socialist Party	23.7	<b>20.8</b>	<b>23.6</b>	14.5	<b>21.9</b>	28.9	16.5	<b>14</b>	6.2
Other Left	-	,-	-	16.2	1	-	0.5	3.2	3.3
Ecologists	4.5	6.7	10.7	5	11.3	7.4	16.3	8.9	13.5
Non-Gaullist Right	<b>29.3</b>	-	8.4	12.4	9.2	12	8.5	9.9	<b>22.4</b>
Gaullist Right	16.1	42.7	28.7	<b>25.4</b>	12.5	<b>16.6</b>	<b>27.9</b>	20.8	8.5
Other Right	1.4	3.8	1.3	1	14.9	8.8	6.7	6	7.1
Extreme Right	1.3	11.1	11.8	10.9	9.1	9.8	6.8	24.9	23.4
Others, unclassified	0	-	5.4	4.9	7.3	7.9	4.7	4.4	6

Figure 2.02: European elections results in France, 1979-2019. Source: French Home Office.

in power since 1981) lost as early as the Presidential first round; a new party won, built for its leader Emmanuel Macron, who claimed to be ‘both left and right’. Some disappointed voters might have been seeking revenge two years after. On top of this, a major social movement occurred from autumn 2018 to spring 2019, the ‘Yellow Vests’ (hereafter YV). Last but not least, in 2019 the European contest was the first non-national principal election since 2017 and was hence a clear opportunity for unhappy citizens to punish the incumbent (incidentally, we are in 2024 in exactly the same electoral configuration, this time following major social unrest in 2023 against an unpopular pension scheme reform). However, the 2019 turnout surge is probably not due to YV supporters turning up in high proportions to the polls: one has to be reminded that, beyond a global turnout figure, there are major sociological discrepancies. And the YV ranks were disproportionately formed from demographics experiencing social and economic hardship, such as being jobless and/or living in peri-urban or suburban areas,

anchorages which are regularly strong predictors of a smaller propensity to vote (Jadot, 2002).

The SOEM is probably too encompassing by ignoring the electorate heterogeneity, in so far as it postulates there is ‘less at stake’ in all European elections at all times and for all citizens. Our previous studies (Jadot, 2006) showed that it is the subjective nature of a given contest, perceived as (un)important (something which can evolve across time), with strong sociological and politicisation effects, that can better explain participation trajectories between diverse elections. Intermittent voting is the new norm in France, as INSEE turnout studies show (2022). And it is not only sociologically but also politically differential: from an EP election to the subsequent one, parties are more or less hindered by abstention within their own electorate, especially according to whether they are (or are not) the incumbent.

Figure 2.02 presents considerably reduced information as the numerous lists have been classified according to political nuances enforced by the Home Office, responsible both for candidacies’ regis-

trations and results diffusion. We've tried to be synthetic, without names of parties in the table since, in France, those change quite often. Highlighted in bold are the scores of those we consider as incumbent at each European election: either the party of the President, or the one holding the most seats in the National Assembly at times of divided government, called 'cohabitations'. Depending on the legislature, the leading party can either form a government on its own, or require backup from allies within a political bloc; in the latter case, their allies are not specified in figure 2.02, nor their results added up, to keep political categories constant since 1979.

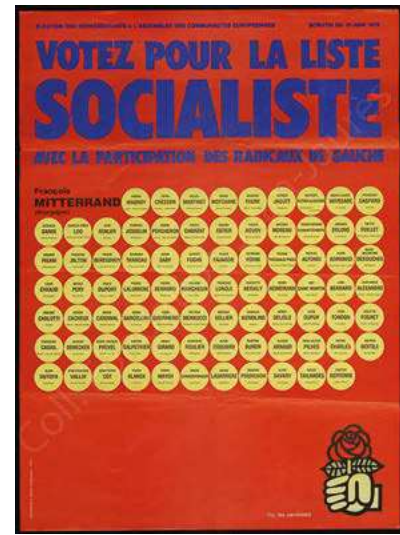
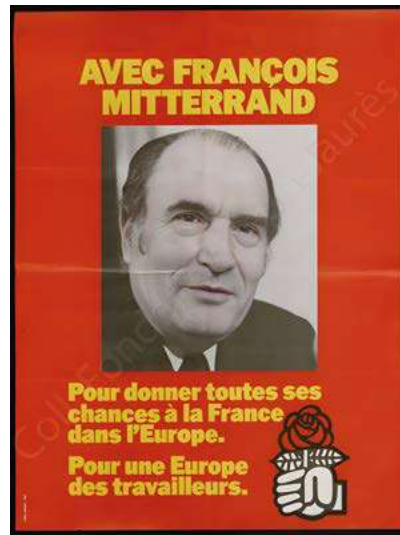
Contrary to the SOEM predictions, the incumbent party does not lose systematically: actually, it happened only four times out of nine European elections. In 2004, the Gaullist right suffered a loss while in the third year of a national electoral cycle, after social unrest following an unpopular pensions' scheme reform—a French recurrent issue. Furthermore, it was then in competition with a non-Gaullist centre right list (Modem) with clearer, and more positive, stances on European issues than its own internal divisions. But it is especially the Socialists, the left mainstream party, which have suffered European backlashes while in power, in 1984, 1989, and 2014. This is most likely because their electorate is more popular (especially so in the 1980s) and therefore less prone to vote systematically; and because European contests are not very mobilising for these categories of citizens, especially when the government disappoints them. It is also more difficult for a left government to put forth in a European campaign its record within an EP 'grand coalition' between Left and Right. It is especially true when the public policies enforced by such a European grand coalition are economically liberal, not well in line with what these left governments were advocating within France, about national policies.

In the first case when an EP election happened during a cohabitation, in 1994, both the left President and the right Prime Minister's parties regressed compared to the previous EP election, the left suffering again much more strongly. The common UDF-RPR list managed to finish first, even though Sovereignists enjoyed a good score, 2 years after the Maastricht referendum. In the left camp, former Prime Minister (1988-1991) Michel Rocard headed the PS list, with the hope of running the following year as President François Mitterrand's heir, after a long internal concurrence between these two leaders. He was hindered by a competing list from the Parti Radical de Gauche, headed by Bernard Tapie. This former businessman and football tycoon, appointed by Mitterrand as Urban Minister, scored almost as high as the Socialists' list (even overtaking

it, if we add up other various small left lists). After this deception, Rocard stepped down from the PS direction and gave up on his presidential prospects. In this respect, mostly because of political actors and medias' comments, EP elections bear a risk for leaders in so far as they have 'spill-over effects' in the national arena. For instance, the bad score of the RPR in 1999 also endangered for a while Nicolas Sarkozy, who too stepped down from his party direction, but he later bounced back and was elected President in 2007.

Hence, in France, the most frequent case so far is the incumbent party winning the EP elections. It happened once in 1999 while in a cohabitation between the Gaullist president Jacques Chirac and the 'pluralist left', a legislative coalition in power for 2 years by then, under Lionel Jospin's leadership. The government had already suffered adverse results one year prior, despite positive economy statistics, especially in terms of declining unemployment rates. The right in turn managed to win in 2009, during President Sarkozy's term, also after suffering some losses a year before in municipal elections, somehow deflating again the referendum nature of the EP contest. But, most probably, it is sociology which helped them: their electorate is generally older, more affluent, more likely to be practising Catholics, and habitual voters, who possess a perception of voting as a civic duty. These wealthy categories of citizens were also possibly approving how the EU dealt with the beginning of the 2008 financial crisis.

But the two most relevant victories, in our view, were probably experienced by the centre right. In 1979, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, elected President in 1974, was not in a strong position within the National Assembly, because his ally/competitor RPR won more seats than his own UDF party in the 1978 GE. However, he was very keen on the European building process, part of his party's political identity, and the enthusiasm of the first direct EP election may have helped him manage a clear victory. One of his prominent ministers, Simone Veil, became the first EP Speaker. In 2019, Renaissance (the third name in two years for Macron's party) was symbolically 0.9 points *behind* the Rassemblement National alone in vote shares, but both parties equally won 23 MEPs seats. It is more 'damage control' than a clear victory, but it is noteworthy at a time when the EP election was widely perceived (and fought as such by several opposition parties during the campaign) as a referendum on the national incumbent, which enjoyed by then an absolute majority in the National Assembly. Macron holds strong positions in favour of the UE, symbolised by his singled-out use of both national and European flags during his 2017 presidential meetings. In 2019, he decided his Minister of Europe-



Promoting front runners in 1979.

Image 2.01: Front page of a leaflet for the list led by Simone Veil (UDF). Source: Sciences Po - Fonds Cevipof.

Images 2.02a, 2.02b: The Socialist Party puts forward its leader, François Mitterrand, a front-runner who will not be taking a seat. Source: European Election Monitoring Center.

an Affairs, Nathalie Loiseau, would be the list head for Renaissance. Even though she is not considered very charismatic, it did not result in a patent defeat, almost a draw. 2024 might very well be strikingly different for him.

It is not only the incumbent/opposition status of a party which matters when an EP election comes. Parties' stances on European issues matter too. New, (previously) small and/or radical parties can benefit from holding a clear position about the European process, whether negative or positive. Actually, the EP elections and its PR rule have been an opportunity for the surge of the Front National (later called RN) from 1984 on, and for the Ecologists (various names) from 1989 on. They fared relatively well in some later EP contests, as figure 2.02 shows. It provided them with seats, political credit, and a position within European alliances—all of which helped them at subsequent elections in the national arena, be they national, regional or municipal. In this regard, Reif and Schmitt's prediction was given credibility, as was Parodi's analogy of the 'opening up of the accordion'. However, if good EP elections scores have helped build political careers for some leaders, such as the Le Pen family's, they do not necessarily predict later successes for what matters most for French politicians, i.e., the Presidential contest. The Sovereignist de Villiers fared well in 1994, together with Séguin, but his presidential score one year after was very small; the Ecologist Yannick Jadot, whose party came third in 2019—even overtaking the PS endorsed Raphael Gluckmann's list—did not translate to the 2022 Presidential election.

Another European paradox is that Eurosceptic parties took advantage of the EP elections to get

seats, financial means, and a political tribune while criticising a lot the European building process. But it isn't only the extreme right which behaved cynically with the EEC/UE. Across the political spectrum, most parties chose prominent politicians as list heads (and sometimes up to several candidates below them), assuming that national figures might attract voters. These were never intended to occupy an MEP seat, which can be considered as misleading voters and contributing to the EP election's reputation as having 'less at stake'. They indeed already had a national parliamentary mandate and holding both would be legally impossible. Since the national arena offered them, in their views, better prospects, they chose not to seat in Brussels and Strasbourg, letting less well-placed candidates step in since elected French MEPs had, until 2014, a whole month after the EP elections to choose between their two non-compatible mandates. From 2019 on, the situation changed: it is no longer their choice, the oldest of the incompatible mandates is automatically taken from them. That's why prominent figures, such as Jean-Luc Mélenchon or Marine Le Pen, both French MPs by then, were deliberately not in European eligible positions in 2019; and, instead, most of the 2019 EP election lists' heads were young and relatively unknown (Borrell et al., 2019 EEMC report).

French parties have also a somewhat cynical use of the European elections in so far as the candidates who would actually hold a seat in the EP were often seeking this mandate as a refuge after a loss in other French elections. They were sometimes better placed on their respective European lists than incumbent MEPs, who were not put forth in assured eligible positions despite hard work within the EP. This cre-



ated a turn-over among French MEPs, not in favour of France's standing within this parliamentary arena, since holding key positions, such as being a law or report rapporteur, or a (vice) president of a commission, is most often a reward for long-term investment in EP matters, in a second or third term. Even if a few French 'backbenchers' did build strong European careers, they were seldom promoted within the first ranks of their lists at the following EP election.

Taking all these turnouts, results and list features into account, the SOEM is only partially true in France since 1979. What seems to matter a lot is the pro or anti-European stance, internal divisions within parties and blocs, referendum aftermaths, and the timing within the national electoral cycle, bearing losses or successes for incumbent and opposition parties. But the results we briefly commented upon are also the outcome of other campaigns' features: their saliency (or lack of) within media coverage; and the contrasting political communication strategies by parties.

### Growing media coverage

The EU itself occupies very little space in the news media outside election or referendum campaigns (Peter & de Vreese, 2004). For instance, in non-election years, the evening newscasts of France's six historical channels devote fewer items to European institutions (from 2.2% to 2.7% in 2000, 2007 and 2018) than to their closest and most populous European neighbours Germany and Great Britain (INA, 2008; 2019).

Despite their novelty, the first EP elections in 1979 were virtually absent from national TV news before the start of the campaign, which turned out to be longer (four weeks) in France than in three of the other eight countries. Overall, with more than 200 minutes devoted to it in the news and 520 minutes to debates, press conferences, and interviews, it was nonetheless one of the four most heavily televised campaigns in the EEC (Kelly & Siune, 1983). Speaking time was almost exclusively divided between

national players: adding evening news and TV ads, journalists occupied 50% of it, the European parliamentary candidates 38%, giving only a minimal amount of coverage for other national politicians (4%). Just like the official campaign, TV news had a particularly personalised focus compared to other countries, and 42% of issues were framed in a mostly domestic way by journalists (Siune, 1983). In 1984, these trends were repeated, albeit with less television coverage (Siune, McQuail and Blumler, 1984). As a relative newcomer to national politics (JM Le Pen had been able to run for president in 1974 but not in 1981), the FN advertised its spots' slots on TV (image 2.03).

A detailed examination of the television agenda and the place occupied by election campaigns in the evening newscasts of the two main TV channels shows that European elections are the contest that occupies the least time on the news. On average, from 1981 to 2007, in the ten weeks leading up to any election, these JTs devoted 10.7% to an EP campaign, compared to 24.8% when it's presidential elections, 22% for GE, 17.2% for referendums on EEC/EU and 12.4% for regional elections. Coverage was stable from 1984 to 1999 but interest dropped in 2004 (5.8%), i.e., the first occurrence of the eight Euro-constituencies (Piar 2012).

In 1999, this visibility was concentrated in the last four weeks of the campaign (18 minutes per day, rising from eight minutes during the previous six weeks) (Gerstlé et al. 2000; Gestlé et al. 2004). The main evening news (on TF1 and France 2) devoted 10% of its airtime to the campaign in 1999 and 6% in 2004, during the two weeks before the vote, and 8.5% during the last three weeks in 2009. For the same three elections, the European average on comparable evening news was 7, 9 and 16.3% respectively, placing France successively in 4th, 18th and 24th place in Europe (De Vreese et al., 2006 ; Schuck et al., 2011). Once again in 2004, TV news showed a late interest in the campaign, giving the floor mainly to candidates and their supporters in the last two weeks,



Image 2.03. FN 1984. Source: Belhaïdi (2022).

		1999	2004	2009	2014	2019
		(JT + mag)	(JT + mag)	(all prog)	(all prog)	(all prog)
		10 weeks	7 weeks	7 weeks	6 weeks	6 weeks
generalist	speaking time	6h40 + 25h18	4h25 + 16h	20h	14h	28h
TV channels	Airtime	19h56 + 30h22	9h18 + 20h			
all-news channels	speaking time		12h	45h	73h	162h
generalist radios	speaking time			47,5h	68h	104h
total	speaking time			112h	155h	294h

Figure 2.03: Television and radio speaking time and airtime for candidates and their supporters (1999-2019). Source: Author's own figure based on data from CSA (2004; 2009; 2019).

accounting for 71% of the speaking time allocated to them on TF1, 63% on France 2 and 44% on France 3 (CSA, 2004). By then, television seemed to be gradually abandoning these elections.

Data collected by the Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel (the independent agency supervising the entire audiovisual sector) from 1999 onwards show changes in the distribution of speaking time (figure 2.03). All channels are obliged to declare several times during the campaign the airtime they devote to it and, among it, the speaking time they granted to candidates and their supporters. The fall in airtime allocated to the campaign in 2004 is confirmed, and figures would be even lower in 2014 if they weren't compensated by the all-news channels, newcomers which have become numerous, and which devote more and more time to it (twelve to seventeen hours of airtime on each of the three channels concerned in 2009). On the other hand, the amount of time devoted to European campaigns on general-interest radio stations increased significantly from 2009 to 2019, while the number of stations concerned by declarations' rules remained unchanged.

At least from 1994 onwards, the general-interest channels organised two or three debates, with one representative from the left and one from the right, and debates with up to seven candidates at the top of their respective list (Gerstlé, 1995; Gerstlé et al., 2000). The shortfall in 2004 can be partly explained by the absence of debates organised by TF1, the leading private channel in terms of audience. The public channel France 3, on the other hand, devoted several editions of its magazine 'France Europe Express' to the campaign. And its 24 regional

editions (evening news and specific programs broadcast by each regional station) doubled the speaking time it allocated to the candidates and their supporters. However, this attention was focused on the national players, who accounted for 94.5% of TV and radio airtime in 2014, even at a time of regionalised Euro-constituencies. National newscasts do not cover all the lists: four lists were not mentioned once by TF1, six by France 2, twelve by France 3's national newscasts in 2004 (CSA, 2004).

In 2014, while the public France Télévisions group had planned to broadcast the May 15 debate between the *Spitzenkandidaten* only on its website, a letter from the Minister of Culture and Communication led LCP, the public parliamentary channel, to broadcast this debate live on its airwaves, eventually followed by two private all-news channels. In 2019, in addition to a duel between the heads of the Renaissance and RN lists, nine televised debates bringing together six to twelve guests were organised, including five debates between top list candidates during the week preceding the election.

While private channels had partly abandoned the European campaign in the early 2000s, they (along with all-news channels) have since boosted its visibility to an unprecedented degree. The debates between the candidates, which are potentially more spectacular, contribute significantly to this. On the whole, television focuses its attention on the front-runners, reducing their active campaign coverage to the two or three weeks preceding the vote, assuming voters would 'tune in' to EP elections only in the last phases, which is in line with parties' own strategies in terms of intensification (Borrell et al., 2022).

		1979	1989	1994	1999	2004	2009	2014	2019
parties with a parliamentary group*	number of parties:	4	4	3	4	5	6	6	13
	allocated airtime:	30'	30'	40'	30'	24'	20'	20'	3'58 to 55'33
other parties	number of parties:		11	17	15	16	17	21	21
	allocated airtime:	< 5'	2'45	1'25	1'52	3'45	3'32	2'52	3'33

\*Including the European Parliament in 2019

Figure 2.04: Allocation of airtime per party. Source: Author's own figure based on data from Gerstlé et al. (2004) and CSA (2004; 2009; 2019).

In the press, which is not governed by equitable coverage rules, the editorial long-term line prevails in campaign editorial choices. The three national dailies studied (*Le Monde*, *Libération*, *Le Figaro*) mentioned these elections on 12% of their front pages in 1999 and 9% in 2004 during the last fifteen days of the campaign, and 12% during the last three weeks in 2009, placing them respectively in second, fifth, and fourth place in Europe, well above coverage in other countries (De Vreese et al. 2006 ; Schuck et al. 2011). Adding *Les Echos* to his analysis, J. Gerstlé notes that these titles mainly cover the campaign in the three weeks leading up to the vote in 1999. And while the articles are very clearly focused on national considerations, the last two weeks see the appearance of articles devoted to European institutions and issues, as well as to the campaign in other EU countries (Gerstlé et al. 2000). This observation also applies to the people mentioned. European players—including MEPs candidates—accounted for around 5% of those mentioned in 1999, compared with 70% from national political life; by contrast, the former was more numerous than the latter (45% versus 30%) in 2004 (De Vreese et al., 2006), a fact also confirmed in other European countries. In 2009, conversely, the same three titles focused two-thirds of their articles on national players in the current campaign. But 38% of articles were mainly devoted to European issues, three times as many as articles on strictly national issues, and 17% dealt with the campaign in other countries (Brack et al., 2010).

Media coverage of EP campaigns thus contributes to their Europeanisation in a moderate way, more strongly on newspapers than on TV news, but through different channels. While non-national players are given little space, there are also many articles devoted to European issues, or campaigns in other countries. But the dynamics of a campaign also depends on parties' strategies.

### Campaigns' communication opportunities: visibility, personalisation, nationalisation of European issues

Our view of the French European campaigns since 1979 is mainly based on monographic or comparative studies examining specific formal or strategic aspects of TV spots, and more recently party communication via posters or social networks. They do provide an outline of the general features of political communication implemented by French parties for the EP elections.

Political parties' activists put posters up—rather anarchically—, on walls and roadsides. There are also two official posters, whose size and placement are precisely ruled, the smaller one meant to announce public meetings or advertise links to a website. Local authorities set up notice boards in front of all polling stations, allowing two slots for each list, free of charge. However, only the lists getting more than 3% of the votes are later reimbursed for their posters' costs (paper and printing). Hence small parties with limited financial means are not necessarily able to support costs for a nation-wide coverage and can't even provide their ballot papers to all stations! Those are less visible, and part of their communication effort is actually devoted to explaining to potential voters how to print their own ballot.

Regarding audiovisual official campaign spots, rules differ: they are aired for free on public television and radio during the two weeks preceding voting day. Allocation criteria changed over time. From 1979 to 2014, parties holding seats in the National Assembly or Senate shared altogether two hours of free airtime, with or even without an EP list; all other parties shared one hour (Figure 2.04), provided, from 2004 to 2014, that they presented lists in at least five of the eight Euro-constituencies (Borrell & Dakhliya, 2017). In 2019, the number of seats at the European Parliament was also taken into account to allocate share of airtime, to ensure a more equita-





Images 2.04a, 2.04b 2.04c. Thematic lists in 2019. Source: European Election Monitoring Center.

ble distribution. Furthermore, no list would benefit from less than three minutes of airtime (CSA, 2019). Macron’s Renaissance and the extreme right RN mainly benefited from this shift from the principle of equality to fairness.

Some spots are particularly short, compared to other French electoral campaigns, hence focus on a single and straightforward message. In 2014, twelve of the campaign spots were 3:45 minutes long, while the remaining 104 were shorter, lasting less than 1:30 minutes each. The spots enjoy significant visibility: they broadcast once on each of the public television and radio stations, i.e. the only three existing TV channels in 1979 and 1984, but four national channels (France 2, France 3, franceinfo:, France Ô), nine overseas regional stations, and three national radios (France Inter, France 24, RFI) in 2019. While some slots attract small audiences, the shortest spots aired after the France 2 evening news gathered daily more than 3 million viewers in 2014 and almost 2.5 million (11% of the audience share) in 2019 (CSA, 2014; 2019).

These spots are especially strategic for small lists: their posters are barely visible in public spaces; they are somehow lost among a high number of lists running; they often have no prior notoriety; main TV evening news do not even mention them. We hypothesise that the assurance of national visibility through these spots created vocations—once a cause or political movement manages bringing together the required number of candidates to fill an EP list, it benefits from several minutes of national airtime, without journalistic mediation, which constitutes for them an un hoped-for audience considering their results. Indeed, in 2019, twenty-three of the thirty-four lists won less than 1% of the expressed votes, including twelve that did not even obtain 10,000 votes nationally. The primary goal of these smaller lists in participating in an EP election is likely more focused on promoting a cause rather than securing seats.

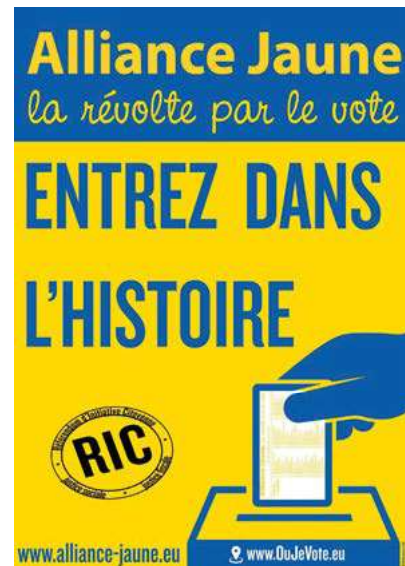
Several examples highlight the diversity of causes seeking visibility through this medium. In 1994, in reaction to the Sarajevo siege and for supporting Bosnians, public figures filed a ‘Europe begins in Sarajevo’ list with significant media coverage (Gerstlé 1995). The Natural Law Party promoted transcendental meditation and yogic flight for establishing peace and prosperity, which attracted amused media attention. Other lists correspond to identified, albeit marginal, political ideologies: in 2009, an ‘anti-Zionist’ list was led in the Ile-de-France region by comedian Dieudonné and far-right activist Alain Soral. In 2014 and 2019, some lists advocated specifically feminism, animal rights, royalty, Esperanto, or the legal acknowledgement of blank votes as expressed ballots (Images 2.04). In 2019, the Yellow Vest mobilisation led to two

dedicated lists, while several others welcomed YV figures, sometimes focusing their communication on this point (images 2.05).

Even among the ‘thematic’ lists, some mainly promote a personality while others primarily advocate a cause. Hints of these contrasted strategies can be found in the presence or absence of portraits on posters, and in the distribution of speaking time within the spots (monopolisation by a single person or fairer distribution between several EP candidates). For the bigger parties, especially those alternating in power, the question of the personalisation of campaigns is salient, especially with the issue of who is the head of the nationwide list, sometimes in the perspective of the forthcoming presidential election, as explained earlier.

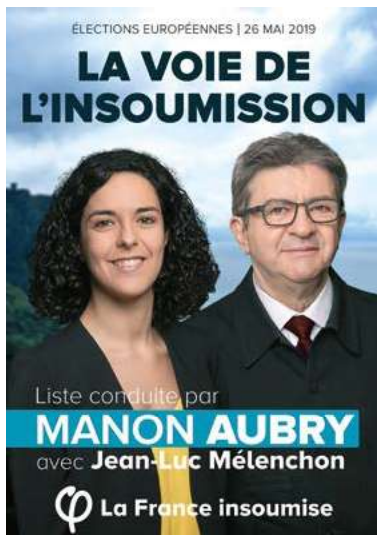
As soon as the first 1979 European elections, Suine underlined that ‘the overall level of personalization was low everywhere except in France, where it was markedly higher than average’ (1983, p. 235). In the spots aired in 2004 and 2009, again, authors noted the significant presence of leaders, although they were not necessarily EP candidates themselves (Bras and Maarek, 2007; Maarek et al., 2012). More precisely, party representatives or candidates appeared in 61% of the sequences of the French spots but there were only a few different persons implied, leading to the conclusion that French spots had ‘the highest amount of personalization’ among the four studied countries (Holtz-Bacha et al., 2012). If the ads’ personalisation varied across parties, it was notable for the leaders of the Modem (François Bayrou) and the Socialist Party (Martine Aubry), who systematically appeared in their party ads—even though the latter was not running. They were both preparing their potential 2012 presidential candidacy: any visibility seems worthwhile, at the risk of a poor result compromising future national ambitions, as explained earlier. In 2014, French parties were still at the upper end of the scale, with 83% of spots featuring national leaders (74% at EU level), accompanied in only 13% of cases by European personalities (Borrell et al., 2017). This is particularly true for right-wing parties, such as the UMP, whose president, J. F. Coppé, contested internally and not a candidate himself, appeared in all twelve of the party’s spots, while the regional heads of list shared the remaining speaking time. EELV, the main ecologist party, reflected the horizontality of its internal structure in its audiovisual communication, giving the mic to a large number of leaders and candidates, even if it meant only having them say part of a sentence.

Some posters also illustrate this personalisation strategy, for instance when the party majoritarian in the National Assembly promotes its incum-



Images 2.05a, 2.05b, 2.05c. Visibility of ‘yellow vests’ in 2019. Source: European Election Monitoring Center.





Images 2.06a, 2.06b, 2.06c, 2.06d. Visibility for leaders who are not eligible or not even candidates. Source: European Election Monitoring Center.



bent President (N. Sarkozy in 2009, E. Macron in 2019, images 2.06a and 2.06b), who is obviously not running himself, with the risk of reinforcing the national referendum rationale of those EP elections. In 2019, there were dual portraits (images 2.06c and 2.06d): a still little-known head of list was shown with the longtime famous party leader, who was on purpose in a non-eligible place, as explained earlier. Both J-L. Mélenchon and M. Le Pen thus endorsed their young choices for leading their respective list, but also maintained their saliency in light of their next repeated presidential bid in 2022.

The Franco-centric focus also applies to the topics addressed in the spots and the way in which they are considered. Already by 1979, only a third of the themes were presented from a European perspective; 52% of issues were framed in a mainly or purely domestic way by politicians. France was the exception, along with Ireland (Siune, 1983). In the spots aired in 2004 and 2009, again, a majority of parties dealt with national issues much more than European ones (Bras & Maarek, 2007; Maarek et al., 2012). With the 2008 financial crisis, a third of the footage was devoted to the economy in 2009. But a national agenda can have a European framework: topics about France (43% of the sequences) were often discussed from a European perspective, yet a mixed perspective could also be observed in a notable portion of sequences (Holtz-Bacha et al., 2012).

We cannot detail quantitatively the evolution of the degree of negativity towards European construction or institutions, as this has been assessed using very different and hardly comparable methods over the decades. The most we can say is that two thirds of the sequences contained negative evaluations in 2009 (Holtz-Bacha et al., 2012). In 2014, negativity towards EU characterised very little of the spots but there was still a dominant tone against European institutions on posters, as if the more European the campaigns are, the more negative they go (Raycheva and Šuminas, 2017).

To illustrate this Europeanisation issue, with a pro or anti stance, a selection of posters (images 2.07 to 2.13) highlights a continuum of communication. At one end, there has been a long-running euro-enthusiasm from ecologists (images 2.08) and centre-right parties (images 2.09), with a message distinctively optimistic, even idealistic in the 1980s (images 2.07). At the other end, some parties rejected the EU and its construction as a whole (images 2.10), or criticised specific policies such as the Schengen area or the Euro currency. In 2019, leaving the EU altogether was the purpose of the UPR, a party founded on a simple slogan, 'Frexit', modelled upon Brexit (image 2.11b). Between these two ends of the continuum, a wide range of positions exist, synthe-



Images 2.07a, 2.07b, 2.07c. The 1980s: an abstract or an idealised approach of Europe? PS (1984; 1989) and PCF (1989). Source: European Election Monitoring Center



Images 2.08a, 2.08b, 2.08c. The Ecologist and Left for Europe. Les Verts (1989, 1994), PRG (2004). Source: European Election Monitoring Center

2.09a, 2.09b, 2.09c. A Euro optimistic and wilful centre-right. Modem (2009, 2014), Renaissance (2019). Source: European Election Monitoring Center





Images 2.10a, 2.10b, 2.10c, 2.10d. A variety of specific or global 'NOs'. PCF (1984), FN (1992 (Maastricht treaty's referendum campaign, source Belhaïdi), 2004 and 2014). Source for 2.10a, 2.10c and 2.10d: European Election Monitoring Center

Images 2.11a, 2.11b. Two other forms of EU rejection in 2014: abstention (MRC) or Frexit (UPR). Source: European Election Monitoring Center



sised in slogans that prioritise French or European issues (images 2.13), or call for a more or less radical ‘alternative’ to the current EU construction (images 2.12).

Ambivalence also sometimes characterises the two main governing parties (PS and Gaullists) which took part in coalitions in the EP and shared positions within the Commission since 1979. Concerns about the consequences of the EU process on France were strong in 1979 for the list led by Gaullist and former Prime Minister Jacques Chirac (who was in fierce competition with the UDF pro-European President Giscard d’Estaing), with its motto ‘Defending French interests within Europe’. Negativity later declined, down to 10% of items in their parties’ manifestos from 1989 on. These shades of doubt became more frequent and pronounced from 1994 onwards, after the Maastricht Treaty was only narrowly ratified by referendum in 1992. It is nowadays mostly sovereignist and extreme right parties that mobilise such a negative European scheme (Reungoat, 2011; 2012).

As covered by the EEMC project, campaign strategies have expanded to digital platforms, as evident in a study of the Facebook accounts of the seven French parties with the best results in 2019, confirming previous findings in this complementary arena of controlled political communication. Europe was not the main focus in many cases, with the exception of right-wing LR. A national dimension in posts seemed to prevail during this EP campaign—except again for LR. This referendum focus was especially true for LFI which often attacked the President and ended up calling to say ‘(Ma)non to Macron’, a play on words incorporating the first name of their list leader, Manon Aubry. In contrast, the PS and EELV

did not participate in this nationalised view, and focused on their own agenda: their candidates, their campaign events and also, for EELV, past achievements of their MEPs and pledges for the next European legislature (Borrell et al., 2019).

Since negative ads are forbidden during the official televised campaign for any election, French political parties have not really developed a tradition of formal and organised attack against their opponents. Renaissance stands out as a Europeanist party that repeatedly claimed its love for the EU. Such a positive tone also prevailed over the PS account, while the LFI account was clearly negative, proposing to renegotiate the European treaties, as the LR and RN accounts, even though the latter somehow mitigated its 2017 elections call for France to leave the Eurozone. Environmental issues (biodiversity, climate change, air pollution, and their impact on health) were especially salient. As well as the EELV, several parties now also present themselves as ecologist, combining these issues differently with social and economic stands for PS and LFI. Some parties, especially LREM and RN, also devoted numerous posts to brief biographies of their candidates. Except for EELV, few parties used FB to develop specific programmatic points: they mainly used it to report on the campaign as it was being carried out, whether to announce or report on an event (field visit, meeting) or a media intervention (radio, TV), so that European issues would very likely be at the heart of the candidates’ statements they promoted (Borrell et al., 2022). Facebook was used to call for online interactions (liking, sharing a publication, and so on) in 10% of posts, the highest average of all the 12

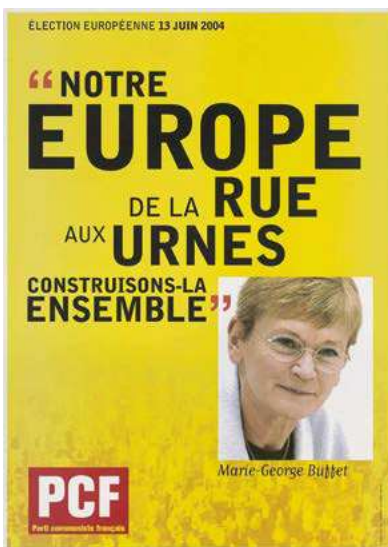
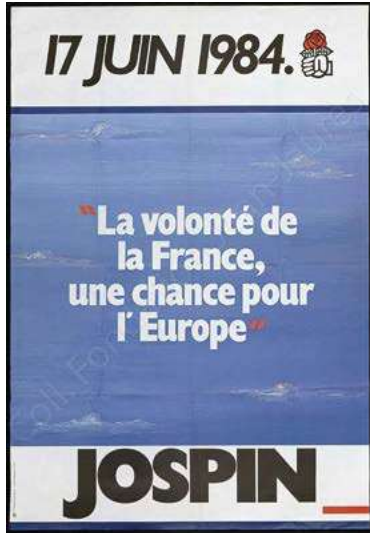


Image 2.12a, 2.12b, 2.12c. Building an alternative Europe. PCF (2004), PS and allies (2009, 2014). Source: European Election Monitoring Center



Images 2.13a, 2.13b, 2.13c, 2.13d. A dialectical relation between France and Europe. PS (1984, 1994), UMP (2004), LR and allies (2019). Source: European Election Monitoring Center

countries studied, or to target a repertoire of offline actions (attending a public meeting, donating money, voting) in 32% of posts (Maurer & Bellanger, 2021).

## Conclusion

As we have shown, there has been a growing media coverage of EP elections, without any systematic consequence on turnout. Beyond saliency, it is the framing of the EP campaigns which matters a lot. In this respect, media and political actors alike have developed frames, which evolved across time, in terms of Europeanisation, negativity, and personalisation. Europe represents opportunities for its opponents as well as its supporters. Small parties and causes' promoters can even seize these campaigns as opportunities to advocate for a topic or ideology, without any hope of getting seats, taking advantage of the official campaign. Whereas mainstream parties—those seeking as many MEPs as possible and alternating in power in the French arena—can be ambivalent in their communication when EP elections are held. They are sharing power in Europe, with the culture (estranged from the French political habits) of building coalitions within the EP, but do not fully endorse their common incumbents' record when competing against each other.

More generally, we postulate that, although secondary, these elections have intensely divided political blocs and parties themselves, and durably affected the substance of French public debate. It has become more Europeanised, including beyond EP elections, even if the organisation of EP campaigns and forms of political communication, the framework for interpreting issues and results—both for parties and national political leaders competing—have remained fundamentally national.

## References

- Algava, E. & Bloch, K. (2022). 20 ans de participation électorale. *INSEE Première*, vol. 1929.
- Belhaidi, M. (2022). *L'affiche politique en France : vers une esthétique populiste ? Une approche iconographique comparée. FN, RN, Front de gauche, France insoumise* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation], Université Sorbonne Nouvelle.
- Belot, C. & Cautrès, B. (2006). *La vie démocratique de l'Union européenne*. La Documentation Française, vol. 5236.
- Blumler, J. G. (Ed) (1983). *Communicating to Voters: Television in the First European Parliament Elections*. Sage.
- Borrell, A. & Dakhlija, J. (2017). Political Advertising in France: The Story and Effects of a slow Liberalization. In C. Holtz-Bacha, & M. Just (Eds.), *Handbook of Political Advertising* (pp. 123–138). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315694504.ch11>
- Borrell, A., Dakhlija, J. & Holtz-Bacha, C., (2017). Candidate-oriented but no European Spitzenkandidaten. The role of candidates in the electoral advertising, In C. Holtz-Bacha, E. Novelli, & K. Rafter, (Eds.), *Political Advertising in the 2014 European Parliament Elections* (pp. 169–189), Palgrave. [https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-56981-3\\_11](https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-56981-3_11)
- Borrell, A., Jadot, A., & Lefébure, P., (2022). Getting more intense: Quantitative and qualitative dynamics of political communication on Facebook, In E. Novelli, B. Johansson & D. Wring (Eds.), *The 2019 European Electoral Campaign. In the Time of Populism and Social Media* (pp. 43–61). Palgrave Macmillan. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-98993-4\\_3](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-98993-4_3)
- Borrell, A., Jadot, A., Lefébure, P. & Wojcik, S. (2019). National report on France. In E. Novelli & B. Johansson (Eds.), *2019 European Elections Campaign. Images, Topics, Media in the 28 members states* (pp. 109–115). Public Opinion Monitoring Unit, Directorate-General for Communication, European Parliament.
- Borrell, A., Jadot, A., Wojcik, S. & Lefébure, P. (2022, July 7). La communication des partis sur Facebook pendant les élections européennes de 2019, entre contenus originaux online et chambre d'écho de la campagne offline. AFSP Congress, Lille, France.
- Brack, N., Rittelmeyer, Y., & Stanculescu, C. (2010). L'Europe en campagne électorale : une analyse croisée des médias nationaux. *Politique européenne*, 31, 173–203. <https://doi.org/10.3917/poeu.031.0173>
- Bras, A., & Maarek, P. J. (2007). Les spots audiovisuels électoraux français de 2004: un refus inconscient de l'Europe, In P. J. Maarek (Ed.), *Chronique d'un non annoncé: La communication politique et l'Europe (juin 2004- mai 2005)* (pp. 55–81). L'Harmattan.
- Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel. (2004). *Rapport sur la campagne en vue de l'élection des représentants au Parlement européen 13 juin 2004*. Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel.
- Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel. (2009). *Rapport sur la campagne électorale en vue de l'élection des représentants au Parlement européen. 6 et 7 juin 2009*. Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel.
- Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel. (2019). *Rapport sur les élections européennes des 25 et 26 mai 2009*. Conseil supérieur de l'audiovisuel.



- De Vreese, C., Banducci, S., Semetko, H. & Boomgaarden, H. (2006). The News Coverage of the 2004 Parliamentary Election Campaign in 25 Countries. *European Union Politics*, 7, 477–504.
- Franklin, M. (2004). *Voter Turnout and the Dynamics of Electoral Competition in Established Democracies since 1945*. Cambridge University Press.
- Gerstlé, J. (1995). La dynamique nationale d'une campagne européenne, In P. Perrineau (Ed.), *Le vote des Douze: Les élections européennes de juin 1994* (pp. 203–228). Presses de Sciences Po. <https://doi.org/10.3917/scpo.perri.1995.02.0203>
- Gerstlé, J., Semetko, H., Schoenbach, K. & Villa, M. (2000). L'européanisation défailante des campagnes nationales. In G. Grunberg, P. Perrineau & C. Ysmal (Eds.), *Le vote des Quinze: Les élections européennes du 13 juin 1999* (pp. 95–118). Presses de Sciences Po. <https://doi.org/10.3917/scpo.grunb.2000.01.0095>
- Holtz-Bacha, C., Johansson, B., Leidenberger, J., Maarek, P. J. & Merkle, S. (2012). Advertising for Europe: TV ads during 2009 European election campaign in four countries. *Nordicom Review*, 33(2), 77–92.
- Holtz-Bacha, C., Novelli, E. & Rafter, K. (Eds.) (2017). *Political advertising in the 2014 European Parliament elections*. Palgrave.
- INA 2008, L'Europe loin des projecteurs, *Ina'stat. Le baromètre thématique des journaux télévisés*, 9, Institut National de l'Audiovisuel.
- INA 2019, L'Europe, entre Brexit et élections, In *Le baromètre thématique des journaux télévisés*, 53, Institut National de l'Audiovisuel.
- Jadot, A. (2001). Election intermédiaires. In P. Perrineau, D. Reynié (Eds.), *Dictionnaire du vote* (pp. 368–371). PUF.
- Jadot, A. (2002). (Ne pas) être un électeur européen. Une analyse multiniveaux des déterminants individuels et contextuels de l'abstention en 1999. *Revue Internationale de Politique Comparée*, 9, 31–45.
- Jadot, A. (2006). *Le rapport des citoyens aux différents types d'élections en France et en Grande-Bretagne. Contribution à une sociologie compréhensive de la participation électorale* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation], Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris.
- Kelly, M., & Siune, K. (1983). Television Campaign Structures. In J. G. Blumler (Ed.), *Communicating to Voters: Television in the First European Parliament Elections* (pp. 41–64). Sage.
- Maarek, P. J., Pourtier-Tillinac, H., & Sebbah, B. (2012). Les spots de la campagne officielle des élections européennes de 2009. In P. J. Maarek (Ed.), *La communication politique européenne sans l'Europe. Les élections au Parlement Européen de 2009* (pp. 17–44). L'Harmattan.
- Maurer, P., & Bellanger, S. (2021). France: Parties' Communication Strategies After the 2017 Earthquake, In J. Haßler, M. Magin, U. Russmann & V. Fenoll (Eds.), *Campaigning on Facebook in the 2019 European Parliament Election* (pp. 87–102), Palgrave Macmillan.
- Parodi, J-L. (1983). Dans la logique des élections intermédiaires. *Revue Politique et Parlementaire*, 903, 42–70.
- Peter, J., & de Vreese, C. (2004). In search of Europe: A Cross-National Comparative Study of the European Union in National Television News. *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics*, 9, 3–24.
- Raycheva, L., & Šuminas, A. (2017). A Negative Touch in Posters and Spots. In C. Holtz-Bacha, E. Novelli & K. Rafter (Eds.), *Political advertising in the 2014 European Parliament elections* (pp. 81–96). Palgrave.
- Reif, K., & Schmitt, H. (1980). Nine Second-Order National Elections. A Conceptual Framework for the Analysis of European Election Results. *European Journal of Political Research*, 8, 3–44.
- Reungoat, E. (2011). L'européanisation dans le texte : la place et le traitement de l'Europe dans les euromanifestes des partis français (1979-2009). In M. Petithomme (Ed.), *Européanisation de la compétition politique nationale* (pp. 49–65). PUG.
- Reungoat, E. (2012). Changes in discourse and resistance positions toward Europe in French Political Parties (1979-2009). In D. Pasquini & D. Preda (Eds.), *Consensus and European Integration. An Historical Perspective* (pp. 165–180). Peter Lang, Euroclio.
- Schuck, A. R. T., Azrout, R., Boomgaarden, H., Elenbaas, M., van Spanje, J., Vliegthart, R., de Vreese, C. (2011). Media Visibility and Framing of the European Parliamentary Elections 2009: A Media Content Analysis in 27 Countries. In M. Maier, J. Strömbäck & L. L. Kaid (Eds.), *Political Communication in European Parliamentary Elections* (pp. 175–196). Routledge.
- Siune, K. (1983). The Campaigns on Television: What Was Said and Who Said It., In J. G. Blumler (Ed.), *Communicating to Voters: Television in the First European Parliament Elections* (pp. 223–257). Sage.