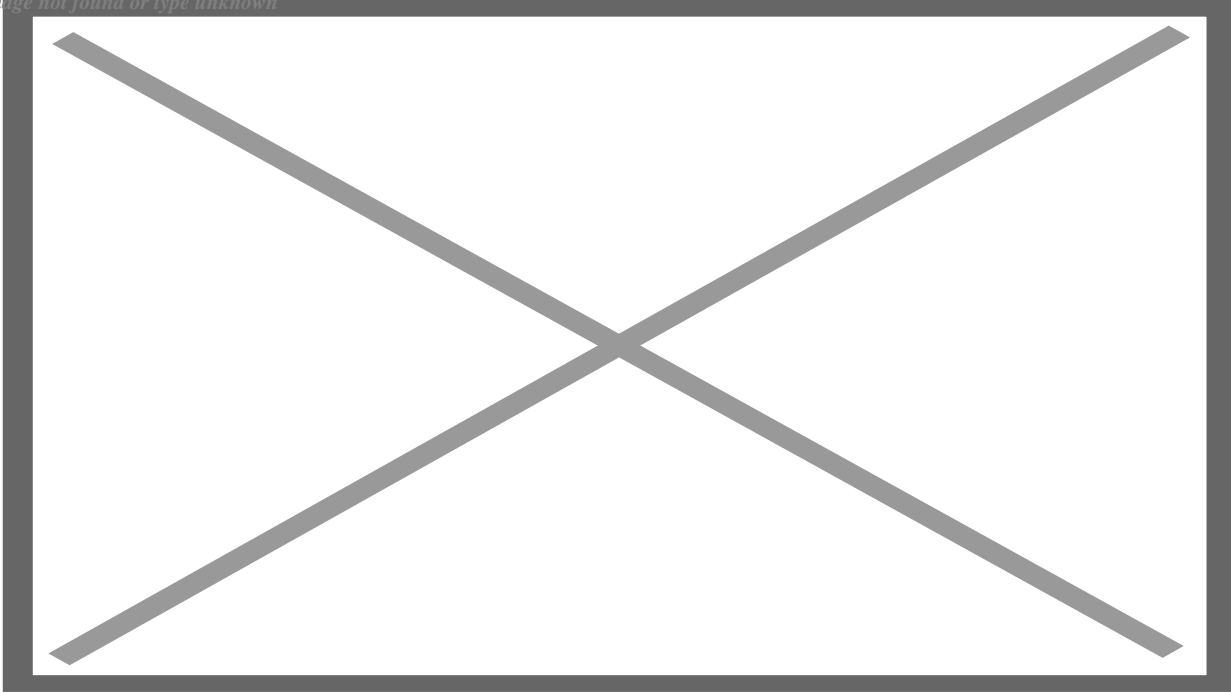


Uncertainty in France

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By Guillermo Alvarado

This Sunday in France, the people are called to the polls again to hold the second round of the legislative elections, where the most important thing at stake is to finally know whether or not the extreme right reaches an absolute majority in the National Assembly.

The first round resulted in the victory of National Reunification, an ultra-nationalist, xenophobic, anti-immigrant and deeply anti-communist party with just over 33% of the votes, an alarming figure, but not surprising.

Long before the votes, there was warning of the growth in membership of this far-right political group, a trend that is common in several European countries, mainly due to the population's disenchantment with the performance of traditional politicians.

The left-wing and progressive alliance New Popular Front came in second place with 28% of the vote and third and furthest away was the coalition led by President Emmanuel Macron.

For those constituencies where there was no winner, the second round will be held, from which the final results will come out.

Over the course of this week, hurried negotiations were held between the left and the so-called “Macronism”, to try to avoid the debacle that a crushing victory for Marine le Pen's party would bring.

It is not a minor danger, because if the National Reunification reaches an absolute majority it could name the new prime minister, as well as his government council, leaving the president almost like a decorative figure in a room of the Elysee Palace.

The strategy is that in those places where the extreme right competes and there are two more candidates, one from the left and the other from Macronism, one of them resigns to avoid the dispersion of the vote and prevent the election of those abandoned by Mrs. le Pen.

Whether this is going to work remains to be seen, although a survey released the day before stated that in fact, the extremists would come in first place, but without an absolute majority.

In elections, however, opinion polls are only a reference, a kind of snapshot of the voters' mood at a given moment, but the vote count gives the definitive truth.

This will be known during the last hours of the night or the first hours of Monday, but the wake-up call has already been raised for progressive and centrist politicians to pay more attention to the needs of the people.

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