
European elections: media, headlines and comments. France to the polls. Le Monde, “great manoeuvres begin”. La Croix, far-right comes out stronger

To find Europe on French websites this morning, you have to “scroll” down quite a bit, so to speak. Grabbing the headlines in the French news is the chaos into which the election result has plunged France, with the victory of the Rassemblement National that gained 30% of support and the announcements, by a defeated Macron, of the dissolution of the National Assembly and snap elections on 30 June. Today, therefore, the focus is on France’s fate: Le Monde headline reads “After the announcement of the dissolution, great manoeuvres begin”, because there is only “three weeks left to avoid the worst”. On the one hand, France Insoumise “has already proposed to the other left-wing parties to meet this afternoon and form a popular front against the far-right”; on the other hand, Rassemblement National has gone “from euphoria to astonishment” as Macron’s decision “took the leaders of the extreme right by surprise; indeed, their enthusiasm hides a bit of anxiety in the face of this leap into the unknown”. Only further down the page is a reference to the 81 French deputies, including 35 from the far-right, who will be going to the European Parliament, and to the fate of Parliament, with a focus on the Greens, their defeat, and their hope to still influence the European agenda. Libération, too, focuses on French current affairs with an editorial entitled: “Dissolution of the National Assembly: who can believe that Macron knows what he is doing?”; the stakes are very high in that, “in the run-up to these unexpected but crucial elections, the French left must become aware of its historical role: to assure the French, like their republican ancestors did, that fascism will not pass”. On Le Figaro's website, in addition to the news of today's political turmoil, two things stand out: on the one hand, the hourglass marking -46 days to the start of the Games and, in the centre of the page, the live streaming of Emmanuel Macron shaking hands and sometimes smiling among a crowd this morning, in Tulle, a city that suffered a massacre at the hands of the Nazis 80 years ago. Among the “main news” in the La Croix newspaper is that with the headline “far-right parties across Europe come out stronger”, alongside a piece of news from the Netherlands, where “The GreenLeft–Labour Alliance defeated the far-right”. The homepage is, of course, dedicated to the Pope visiting the Capitol this morning, and to the “subliminal message” that the Pope allegedly sent, according to the French newspaper, by talking about “refined civilisations that can present cultural elements so deeply rooted in the mindset of people and the entire society that they are no longer perceived as being contrary to the dignity of the human being”.

Sarah Numico