

《French Constitutional Council proclaims official results of》

PARIS, April 26 (Xinhua) -- According to the official results proclaimed Wednesday by the French Constitutional Council, the leader of "En Marche" Emmanuel Macron led the first round of French presidential election with 24.01 percent of the votes, ahead of the far-right candidate Marine Le Pen who received 21.30 percent.

These results are without substantial modifications in regards to the numbers published Monday by the Ministry of the Interior.

The two candidates who led, Macron and Le Pen will face each other in a runoff on May 7.

The candidate for the right-wing party Francois Fillon got the third place in the voting, gathering 20.01 percent of the votes, just ahead of the leader of the hard-left Jean-Luc Melenchon, with 19.58 percent. Socialist candidate Benoit Hamon finished with only 6.36 percent of the vote.

No other candidate broke through the 5 percent barrier. Sovereignist Nicolas Dupont-Aignan received 4.70 percent of the vote ahead of Jean Lassalle (no affiliation) at 1.21 percent, Philippe Poutou (New Anti-Capitalist Party) at 1.09 percent, Francois Asselineau (Popular Republican Union) at 0.92 percent, Nathalie Arthaud (Worker's Struggle) at 0.64 percent and Jacques Cheminade (Solidarity and Progress) at 0.18 percent.

The rate of abstention rose to 22.23 percent. Out of 47,582,183 registered voters, 37,003,728 voted. The number of abstaining votes was 659,997 and that of votes "validly expressed" was 36,054,394.

The vote under high security was held "without notable incident," said the president of the Constitutional Council, Laurent Fabius, during a press conference.

"We have annulled the votes expressed in the voting stations where there substantial irregularities were produced, which remained very low," he declared.

In total, "4,691 votes have been annulled, against 2,541 in the first round of voting in 2012," he clarified.

In several large French cities, some citizens discovered Sunday on the verge of voting that they were no longer registered on the electoral lists. The cause: forgetting to notify officials of a change of address or an error from the local town hall. Many have filed a plea in district courts since Sunday.