

Macron throws €500M at security problem

Е. Макрон кидає 500 млн євро на проблеми безпеки

За 7 місяців до президентських виборів президент Франції Емманюель Макрон відстояв свій рекорд з питань безпеки та оголосив про низку нових заходів для посилення та трансформації правоохоронних органів. У промові в Національній академії поліції в Рубе, недалеко від бельгійського кордону, Е. Макрон оголосив, що про збільшення бюджету МВС на € 1,5 млрд - майже 6 % на 2021 - в тому числі 500 млн €, щоб поставити на місце початковий комплекс заходів. Виступ ознаменував завершення семимісячних консультацій щодо підготовки правоохоронців та нагляду за їхніми діями, розпочатих після того, як поліцейські були зняті на камеру, коли вони побивали музичного продюсера М. Зеклера в Парижі в листопаді 2020 р. Е. Макрон оголосив про все частіше використання суперечливих камер, які носять офіцери, які, за його словами, захищатимуть правоохоронні органи та цивільне населення, а також про створення парламентського наглядового органу для оцінки поведінки правоохоронців.

<https://www.politico.eu/article/macron-throws-500-million-euros-at-security-law-problem/>

Seven months ahead of the presidential election, French President Emmanuel Macron defended his record on security and announced a raft of new measures to bolster and transform law enforcement.

In an hourlong speech at the National Police Academy in Roubaix, close to the Belgian border, Macron announced he was increasing the budget of the interior ministry by €1.5 billion — a nearly 6 percent bump on 2021 — including €500 million to put in place an initial range of measures.

The speech marked the end of a seven-month-long consultation exercise around the training of law enforcement and oversight of their actions, launched after police officers were filmed beating up music producer Michel Zecler in Paris in November 2020.

In what sounded like a stump speech, Macron announced the increased use of controversial body cameras worn by officers, which he said would protect both law enforcement and civilians, and the creation of a parliamentary oversight body to assess law enforcement behavior.

Macron was careful to point out that only 4 percent of complaints through a government platform concern police behavior.

“This shows that law enforcement officers, in their overwhelming majority, behave appropriately,” Macron said.

The question of police violence, how widespread it is and whether it is racially motivated has been a lightning-rod issue for years. The majority of police officers said they would vote for the far-right in the upcoming election, according to polling from earlier this year.

Macron’s speech attempted to strike a balance between standing up for his record and for law enforcement, and recognizing the hardships faced by some parts of the French population, either because of continuing insecurity or instances of police violence.

Addressing an audience of law enforcement, judges and civilians, the president highlighted all the ways he says security has improved since he took office — foiled terror attacks, reduced thefts, increased drug busts — while also recognizing that daily life in some urban areas remains a challenge. He extolled police officers for what he described as good work in difficult circumstances, while also recognizing that there were still efforts needed.

In an attempt to play up his focus on reforms until the end of his term and beyond, Macron also laid out a multiyear plan to overhaul the organization of the police and transform it to better address new forms of crime online.

“We need a true revolution,” Macron said, announcing that a new draft law will be presented at the beginning of 2022 to “conceive of law enforcement in 2030.”

This was the fourth event on security that Macron has held since January, in part an effort to counter the perception in some quarters that he has been weak on the issue.

Security — including terrorism, cybercrime, gang violence and delinquency — is already a main theme of the presidential campaign, and though Macron has not yet officially declared that he is seeking reelection, his main opponents — far-right leader Marine Le Pen and the conservative leader of the Hauts-de-France region, Xavier Bertrand — have regularly attacked him on the issue.

Macron continues to lead in the polls, ahead of both Le Pen and Bertrand, who are in second and third place, respectively.

Bertrand, who heads the region where Roubaix is located, had a short, defiant exchange with Macron ahead of the speech.

“Thank you for being here,” Macron told his rival. Bertrand responded that it was his republican duty before adding, “We will have a debate, a real debate,” in reference to their face-off in the upcoming presidential campaign. Macron retorted by highlighting the work being done, one of his favorite methods to draw a contrast between his challengers’ speeches and his government’s actions.