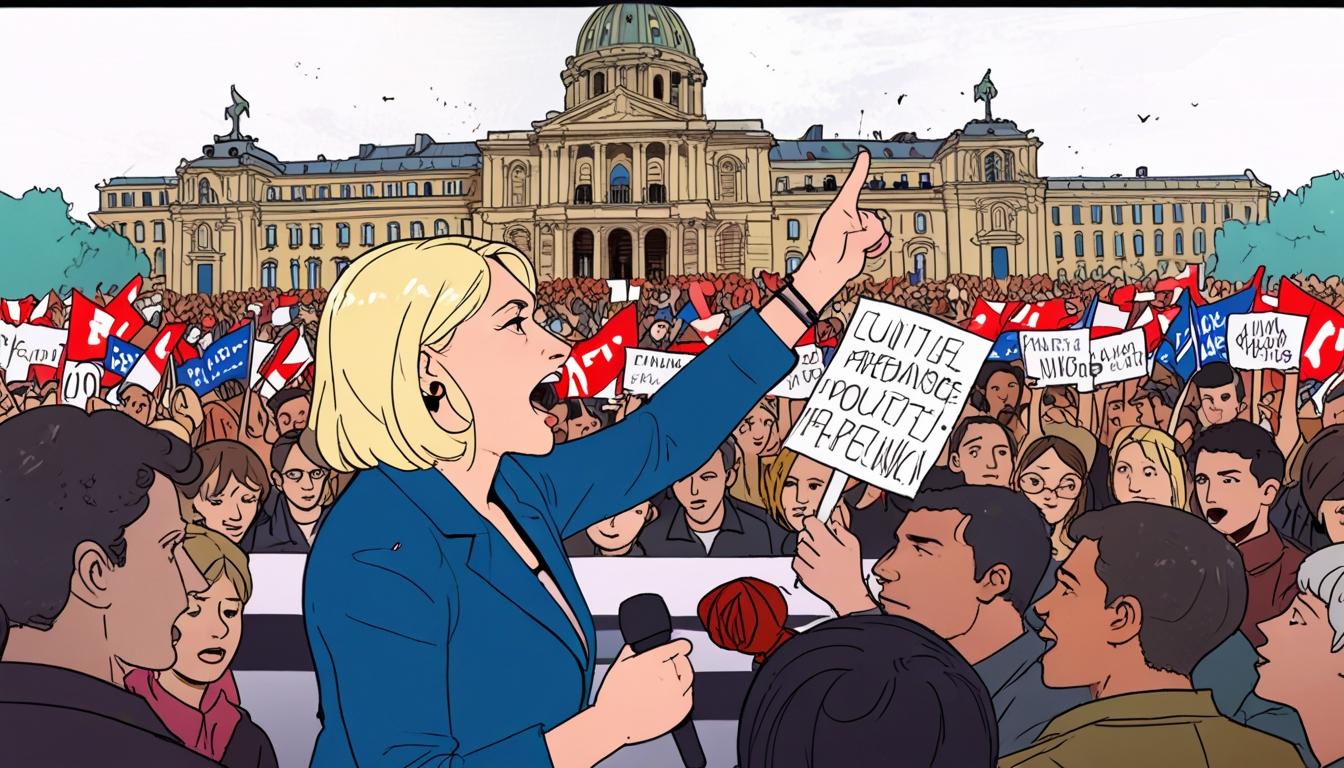
# Marine Le Pen rallies support amid court conviction



Marine Le Pen, leader of France's far-right National Rally (RN), delivered a defiant rallying cry in Paris on Sunday, as she continues to navigate the repercussions of a recent conviction for embezzlement. Speaking to thousands of supporters at Place Vauban near the iconic Hôtel des Invalides, Le Pen asserted her intention to “not give in” after being barred from running in the 2027 presidential election due to a court ruling she is appealing.

Le Pen's conviction, which sentenced her for improperly using over €4 million of European Parliament funds—intended for parliamentary assistants in Brussels—has raised serious questions about justice in France. During her rally, she portrayed the court’s decision as a politically motivated attack against her character and political ideology. “This decision has trampled on everything I hold most dear: my people, my country and my honour,” she proclaimed to a crowd that swelled to nearly 7,000, according to police estimates.

In her charged address, Le Pen embodied her role as the so-called defender of democracy, stating, “I will continue to fight. For 30 years I have fought against injustice.” She drew unflattering comparisons to historical figures like Martin Luther King Jr., suggesting her struggle is noble, despite the mounting evidence against her. Le Pen is committed to appealing the ruling, which includes a four-year sentence and a €100,000 fine, alongside an immediate five-year ban from public office.

Jordan Bardella, president of the RN and Le Pen’s protégé, was by her side during the rally, calling the court's verdict a "dark day for France" and framing it as an **assault on democracy itself**. His rhetoric resonated with the audience, many of whom carried placards reading “Justice taking orders” and “Stop the judicial dictatorship,” echoing the party's outrage towards the legal proceedings against Le Pen.

In stark contrast, a left-wing rally occurred a few kilometers away at Place de la République, where over 5,000 protesters voiced their stark opposition to Le Pen and the RN’s ideology. Green Party leader Marine Tondelier articulated that Le Pen’s views undermine judicial independence and pose a significant risk to the rule of law. She firmly stated, “This is about defending the rule of law from people who think justice is optional,” emphasising the need for a serious political reckoning in light of the RN's recent rise.

While police maintained a firm presence throughout the day, the peaceful coexistence of the two rallies belied the intense tensions simmering between opposing factions. The sight of Le Pen's supporters arriving by bus, organised by the RN, further illustrated the party's robust grassroots infrastructure and mobilising power.

As France's political landscape shifts dramatically in response to this ruling, Le Pen remains an influential figure, retaining a loyal base that challenges the established narratives. Her legal team prepares for the appeals process, with a verdict expected by the summer of 2026, a timeline that casts a shadow over her future prospects in politics.

Despite the weight of her conviction, Le Pen's resolute support base remains undeterred, underscoring a remarkably fractured political climate in France where the ramifications of judicial decisions are vigorously debated through the prism of partisan allegiance. This division serves as a reminder of the urgent need for comprehensive reforms to restore trust in political institutions and uphold the principles of accountability that are increasingly becoming endangered.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://verfassungsblog.de/marine-len-pen-verdict/> - This URL supports the claim regarding Marine Le Pen's conviction for embezzlement and the ongoing debate about justice and political motives in France.
* <https://www.rfi.fr/en/france-politics/20230402-marine-le-pen-backers-rally-after-embezzlement-conviction> - It corroborates Marine Le Pen's defiant response to her conviction, including her stance against the court's decision.
* <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-65437585> - This URL provides information on the conviction's impact on Le Pen's political future, including the ban from public office and her intention to appeal.
* <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2023/04/02/france-marine-le-pen-embezzlement-conviction> - It details the specifics of Le Pen's conviction, including the misuse of European Parliament funds.
* <https://www.france24.com/en/france/20240402-france-politics-marine-le-pen-conviction-rally> - This link describes the rallies held in support of and against Marine Le Pen in Paris, highlighting the intense political divide.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/apr/02/marine-le-pen-france-conviction-far-right-politics> - It covers the reactions of both Le Pen's supporters and her critics, including the elements of judicial backlash.
* <https://www.independent.co.uk/tv/news/france-marine-le-pen-speaks-after-ban-presidency-b2728392.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
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