The French Union Movement in the crisis

Jean-Marie Pernot
Politologue
GDP: level and growth rate

(Sources: INSEE, IMF April 2014 WEO, Macrobonds, Ires)
Overview on the economic situation
Governement net lending and gross debt

(Sources: INSEE, Macrobonds, Ires)
Harmonised unemployment rate

(Sources: Eurostat, Macrobonds, Ires)
Wage and Productivity developments

Sources: Eurostat, INSEE, Ires

- Real average gross wage (consumer prices)
- Real average gross wage (Value added price deflator)
- Per head productivity
Gross wage (per head), France and Europe

Gross nominal wage (per head)
(Sources: Eurostat, Ires, last quarter: Q3 2013)

Gross real wages (per head)
(Sources: Eurostat, Ires, last quarter: Q3 2013)
Share of industry in total value added and employment 1980-2013

(Source: INSEE, quarterly accounts, Ires)
Brief political background
Popularity of F. Hollande, since his election (rate of good opinion)
# Votes for the National Front in last polls

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>polls</th>
<th>millions of votes</th>
<th>in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Européennes 2014</td>
<td>4,710</td>
<td>24.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Présidentielles 2012</td>
<td>6,421</td>
<td>17.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Européennes 2009</td>
<td>1,092</td>
<td>6.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Présidentielle 2007</td>
<td>3,835</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Européennes 2004</td>
<td>1,685</td>
<td>9.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Présidentielle 2002</td>
<td>4,805</td>
<td>16.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Influence of NF among workers

NF vote of workers according to their proximity to the Unions
Survey for the European election in May 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>close to</th>
<th>NF Vote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CGT</td>
<td>22 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFDT</td>
<td>14 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FO</td>
<td>33 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solidaires</td>
<td>27 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autres syndicats</td>
<td>29 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Workers saying they are close to a union NF, Vote is 25%
Workers saying they are not close to any union, NF Vote is 34 %
Main unions in France

- CGT Confédération générale du travail
- CFDT Confédération française démocratique du travail
- Force ouvrière
- CFTC Confédération française des travailleurs chrétiens
- CFE-CGC Confédération française de l’encadrement
- UNSA Union nationale des syndicats autonomes
- Solidaires
Union density in France (1949-2005)

en % active population

2005 → 2012, stability
Social background 2007-2013
Three stages

- 2007-2008, consultation/national collective agreements
- 2008–2011, occupying the streets, union unity
- 2011 till now, division and weak social movements
2007-2008, first steps in the crisis

Loi de janvier 2007

« Tout projet de réforme envisagé par le Gouvernement qui porte sur les relations individuelles et collectives du travail, l'emploi et la formation professionnelle (...) fait l'objet d'une concertation préalable avec les organisations syndicales de salariés et d'employeurs (...) en vue de l'ouverture éventuelle d'une telle négociation ».

Some « National general agreements » (NGA)

- NGA of January the 13th of 2008, about labour market reform
- Common point of view (20th of August 2008) between employer organisations and some unions (CGT and CFDT) about the modification of union representativity and the rules of collective bargaining.
2008-2011, Time for rallying

- Large demonstrations in 2009 and 2010

  Joint program against the economic and social crisis between CGT, CFDT, FO, CFTC, CFE-CGC, Solidaires, UNSA, FSU (5th January of 2009), demonstrations in January and March 2009

  Several massive demonstrations in the fall of 2010 against the pension reform of N. Sarkozy
Since 2011, the stage setting of social dialogue

- Birth of the Social Agenda and flowering of General Agreements
- The Social conferences of F. Hollande governments

NGA new way = classical GA on a single topic + social pact
The Social Conferences

- 9-10\textsuperscript{th} of July 2012, 300 participants, 7 workshops
  → roadmap, method and schedule

- 20-21\textsuperscript{th} of June 2013, 300 participants, 6 roundtables
  → roadmap, method and schedule

- 7-8\textsuperscript{th} of July 2014?
The neo corporatist hypothesis?

- Dispersion and Union weakness
- Lack of real employers partnership
- The heavy hand of the State
- The nearly complete décentralisation of collective bargaining in the companies
Collective bargaining at company level

Number of collective agreements 1983-2012
Likelihood of double integration

- Advantage: Social dialogue before the establishment of the law is more effective

- Two dangers:
  
  - gives a veto power to employers organisations against the promotion of new rights for workers
  
  - danger of a double integration: on top, in the making of the law; at the bottom, in a managerial oriented social dialogue at company level
The union division

Some strategical oppositions

- going along or not with the government
- accepting or not the european constraint
- dealing or not with the employers
Hard times...

Which have not strengthened the French union movement