

ARTIFICIAL ELECTIONS 2.0

Exposing the Use of Generative AI Imagery in the 2026 French Municipal Election campaigns

AI FORENSICS

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Disclaimer

This report presents analyses and conclusions based on our specific research and publicly available data as of March 2026.

Any statistics or content numbers we refer to are valid only for the specific research we have carried out. Different statistics can be found by conducting data searches on the same platforms using different criteria.

This report is by no means exhaustive and only provides an overview for a given period. We selected our field of research with the aim of being as representative as possible; however, this report does not draw any legal conclusions from this analysis and is not intended to make any accusations against the platform concerned. We have explained and detailed our specific methodology and limitations in the relevant sections of this report.

Sporadic mistakes may be present due to manual annotation. Datasets and analysis codes supporting our research conclusions are available upon request.

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Executive Summary

- AI Forensics conducted a cross-party, cross-platform analysis of the use of AI-generated images by parties running for the 2026 French Municipal Elections. **We identified 38 instances of generative AI imagery across Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and X** shared by political parties through their official social media accounts.

- We found **Renaissance and Reconquête using generative AI imagery as part of a larger campaigning strategy**, and an isolated use case by Parti Communiste Français.

- Only **one of the AI-generated images carried an AI-use label** at the time of writing this report, and only three posts contained other disclosures signalling the use of AI in making the images.

- **Several posts uploaded by Renaissance contained a SynthID**, Google's invisible AI watermark integrated into Google AI tools, yet the AI-generated posts remained unlabeled for their AI use on the social media platforms.

- This investigation was a follow-up to our previous study on the use of generative AI in the 2024 French elections. **Compared to our 2024 study, we see two major shifts in the current use of generative AI by French parties in political campaigns**:

    - AI-generated content is now being **used as an alternative to human-designed content in political campaign materials**. Instead of using stock photos or on-demand images, **Renaissance** turned to generative AI image-generation models.

    - Rather than attempting to share photorealistic AI-generated imagery, **parties share highly stylized content with cartoon aesthetics to depict their main program points**. For example, **Reconquête reposted cartoon-like AI clips depicting** crime, the housing crisis, and garbage problems in Paris.

Introduction

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools have significantly reduced the cost and time required to create synthetic content, posing significant risks to electoral processes. These tools have been found to exhibit cultural biases and discrimination, and compromise users' privacy and security. In today's information ecosystem, characterized by the widespread circulation of fake news, increasing sophistication of deepfakes, and heightened polarization through algorithm-driven content recommendations, it is crucial to examine how these tools continue to be used in political campaigning and outreach.

AI Forensics conducted a cross-party, cross-platform analysis of the use of AI-generated images in political campaigns during the 2026 French Municipal Elections. We identified 38 instances (19 unique pieces) of generative AI imagery across Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and X shared by political parties through their official social media accounts. This analysis is a follow-up to the 2024 study, in which AI Forensics identified 51 instances (25 unique pieces) of generative AI imagery across Facebook, Instagram, and X, shared by official French political accounts during the 2024 European Parliament and legislative elections in France.

The results of the current investigation should not be read as a direct comparison to the previous study. Each set of results is reflective of the political spectrum and context of the election period it represents. Instead, the current investigation should be treated as a further analysis illuminating the patterns, risks, and shortcomings of the use of AI-generated imagery in official political campaigning, using the 2024 and 2026 election campaigns in France to highlight trends and shifts.

Research Questions

This study conducts a cross-party, cross-platform analysis to verify the extent to which generative AI imagery has been used in official campaign materials shared by political parties in France during the 2026 Municipal Elections. More specifically, we examine the authenticity of image content posted on the official social media channels of selected French parties. We ask the following research questions:

1. Which French political parties use AI-generated images in their official political campaigns on their social media channels?
2. What topics are covered through AI-generated images in the various French political campaigns, and what narratives do they convey?

3. How do the platforms that co-host AI-generated campaigns moderate such content? Do they flag it as such?

Methodology

We replicated the methodological approach executed in our 2024 study, which we also describe below, with a major difference in the selection of political parties. In our 2024 study, we analyzed all official social media accounts of all existing parties and coalitions in France, resulting in a significantly larger list than the current investigation, which focused only on parties competing in the 2026 Municipal Elections (see Data collection section for details). Furthermore, some political parties from the 2026 context did not exist in 2024. We have indicated this difference in the list of all political party accounts analyzed (see Appendix). These differences limit the ability to draw inferences from a direct comparison of the data between the two studies.

In this follow-up study, we also focus solely on visual content, meaning AI imagery such as still images and videos (rather than, e.g., text-based campaign materials) in order to determine whether parties shared visual content that shows a high likelihood of having been produced with generative AI tools.

Data collection

To systematically analyze the use of generative AI content in political campaigning in France, we collected and examined content shared by political parties on their official accounts on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X, and YouTube between January 14, 2026, and March 14, 2026. This timeframe covered the period leading up to the day of the first round of the 2026 French Municipal Elections (March 15, 2026).

To comprehensively account for the whole political spectrum, we compiled a list of 16 political parties in France based on their relevance in the 2026 Municipal Elections, relying on parties' parliamentary presence and representation in the government.[1] For the list of all parties considered, see Table 1. For the list of the parties' social media accounts, see Appendix.

Political leaning	***Primary Parties***			
EG (Far-Left / NFP)	La France Insoumise (LFI)	Parti Communiste Français (PCF)		
G (Left)	Parti Socialiste	Parti Radical de	Place Publique	Les

[1] This was done by turning to relevant documentation published on sources such as the French government's website, Wikipedia, and Le Monde.

	(PS)	Gauche (PRG)		Écologistes
C (Center / Horizons)	Horizons	Renaissance	Mouvement Démocrate (MoDem)	
D (Right / LR)	Les Républicains (LR)	Nouvelle Énergie (NE)	Nous France (NF)	
ED (Far-Right / RN-UDR)	Rassemblement National (RN)	Union des Droites pour la République (UDR; Ciotti),	Reconquête (RECO)	

Table 1. A list of political parties whose social media accounts were analyzed in the context of the 2026 Municipal Elections in France

We identified the parties' official social media accounts through the hyperlinks included on each party's official website. This resulted in data collection and analysis of parties' feeds across the following platforms: Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X (formerly Twitter), and YouTube. In total, we analyzed 15 Facebook accounts, 15 Instagram accounts, six TikTok accounts, 15 X accounts, and 14 YouTube channels.

Data analysis

To detect AI-generated content, we used AI Forensics' Human Guide to Detecting AI Imagery, a resource we also relied on in previous investigations[2] of AI imagery on social media. The guide provided a consistent coding scheme for detecting AI-generated content shared on parties' social media accounts. Two researchers annotated content on each party's official social media accounts. Each disagreement between the two annotators was discussed on a case-by-case basis. This resulted in a total of 38 instances of content labeled as most likely AI-generated, of which 19 were unique (i.e., the unique count excluded repeated instances of the same image/video across multiple social media platforms).

After labeling pieces of content as plausible AI-generated images, we turned to Google's Gemini to verify the presence of SynthID, a watermarking technique that Google introduced to all its AI models. While invisible to the human eye, SynthID can be detected by Gemini upon uploading any media object, such as an image or a video. We also considered voluntary disclosures and obligatory AI labels that the account and the platform could include in the post.

[2] See AI Forensics' reports: AI-Generated Algorithmic Virality: How synthetic AI imagery and agentic
AI accounts try to game TikTok and Instagram and Prompt, Upload Repeat: How Agentic AI Accounts Flood TikTok With Harmful Content.

Further, we considered engagement metrics to measure the post's reach, including the number of views (where applicable), likes, shares, and comments, collected at the time of finalization of the data analysis (March 20, 2026).

Limitations

We turned to independent manual analysis performed by two coders to detect AI content, as no automated tool can guarantee 100% accuracy. Still, some of the analyzed content (18 instances in total) was ambiguous to both researchers. We did not include this content in the final list, which only contains content we could assess as AI-generated with a good degree of certainty. This is a growing limitation given the increasingly photorealistic outputs that AI tools can generate, especially for still images, making it more difficult to assess AI use. While we took a conservative approach regarding unclear content, we acknowledge an unavoidable margin of error in the manual coding of the data.

Further, we faced a limitation in analyzing the feed of the party Rassemblement National on X. In 2023, X introduced daily limits on the number of tweets displayed, ranging from 600 to 800 tweets per day for unverified accounts. This has impacted the possibility of viewing older tweets, especially when an account shares a large amount of content, as X's view of a feed orders the content from newest to oldest. This prevented us from analyzing the posting history of Rassemblement National's X account prior to February 20, 2026.

Findings

In 2026, we continue to see generative AI use in political campaigning in France, but with several changes compared to 2024. In total, we found 38 instances of generative AI imagery shared by official party accounts across social media platforms, which included 19 unique pieces of content. Out of these 38 instances, 32 constituted original content (content published directly by the party on its official account), while six were reposts (content reposted by the party's official account but originally shared by someone else).

Legend:	Unambiguous generative AI content found	No unambiguous generative AI content found	No official political party account available

Party Name	Facebook	Instagram	X (Twitter)	TikTok	YouTube	Total
Horizons						0
La France Insoumise						0
Les Écologistes						0
Les Républicains						0
Mouvement Démocrate						0
Nous France						0
Nouvelle Énergie						0
Parti Communiste Français	2	2	2	2		8
Parti Radical de Gauche						0
Parti Socialiste						0
Place Publique						0
Rassemblement National						0
Reconquête			5			5
Renaissance	4	11	10			25
Union des Droites pour la République						0

Table 2. AI-generated imagery detected per platform and party in the context of the 2026 Municipal Elections in France

As mentioned above, the results of the current investigation should not be read as a direct comparison to the previous study, and the lower numbers shouldn't be seen as a direct trend. Each set of results is reflective of the political spectrum and context of the election period it represents. Instead, the current investigation

should be treated as a further analysis illuminating the patterns, risks, and shortcomings of the use of AI-generated imagery in official political campaigning, using the 2024 and 2026 election campaigns in France to highlight trends and shifts.

Two parties that had a record of using generative AI in their campaign materials in 2024, Reconquête and Rassemblement National, limited their use of AI in this year's campaign (see Table 2). We observed a marked shift in the case of Reconquête, from 33 instances of AI-generated imagery in 2024 to only five in 2026. All of these five cases were reposts (content from other accounts shared by the party on their own account) rather than original posts (content directly uploaded by the party on their official account) (see figures 4-7). For Rassemblement National, we noted seven instances of AI-generated imagery in 2024 but 0 unambiguous instances in 2026. On the other hand, we noted at least 25 instances of AI-generated imagery used in campaign materials by Renaissance, a party for which we had observed no cases of AI content in 2024 (see figures 1-3). We also noted instances of AI-generated images shared by the Parti Communiste Français across its social media accounts.







Figures (from left to right) 1-3. Examples of AI-generated images uploaded by Renaissance

In terms of themes and use cases, we see two major shifts. First, we note a trend of using AI-generated content as an alternative to human-designed political messaging and symbolism in campaign materials. Instead of using stock photos or on-demand human-designed imagery, parties turn to generative AI models provided by, e.g., Google. Second, we observe a turn toward cartoon-like aesthetics rather than photorealism. Parties use generative AI models to depict the dystopia of present-day France and contrast it with a promised utopian vision of future France – if the party posting the content wins the election – using highly stylized, animation-inspired aesthetics.



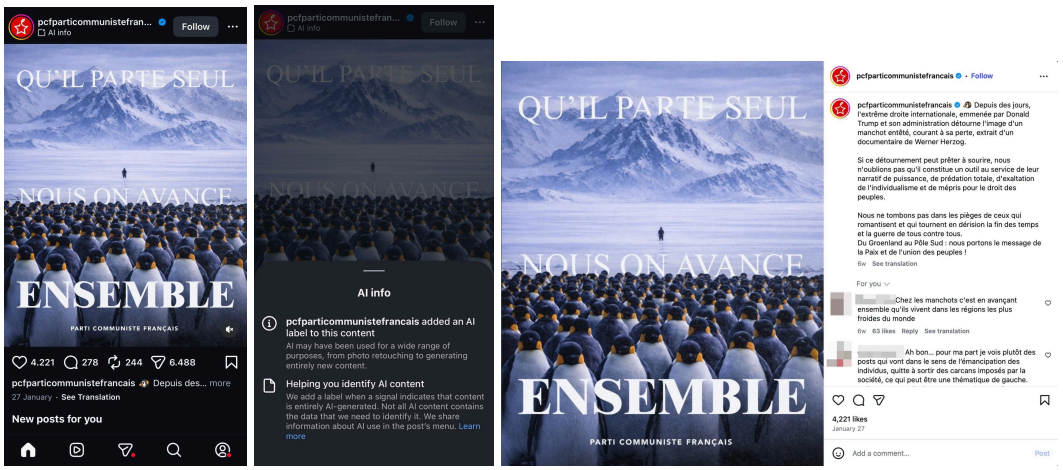
Figures (from top left to bottom) 4-7. Screenshots from examples of AI-generated videos reposted by Reconquête

Finally, only one of the posts we identified as AI-generated contained the official AI labels offered by the respective platform, and a further three, though lacking a label, contained some form of disclosure informing the image was made using AI. While this remains a low number, it is still an improvement compared to our 2024 study findings, where none of the identified AI-generated imagery was labeled as such.

In what follows, we first discuss the lack of AI labels and visibility of AI disclosures on posts. Then, we delve deeper into the main themes and use cases observed in the generative AI imagery used by parties.

Ongoing lack of AI labels

Out of the 38 observed instances of AI-generated imagery shared by political parties on their official social media accounts in the lead-up to the 2026 French Municipal Elections, only one carried an AI-generated label. This was a post by the Parti Communiste Français (see figures 8-10). However, the AI-generated image in question was not directly tied to a political campaign as such; instead, it was an engagement piece comprising a political penguin meme that was trending across social media at the time (Renaissance similarly responded to this trend by sharing an AI-generated image of the same but without any AI label or disclosure).



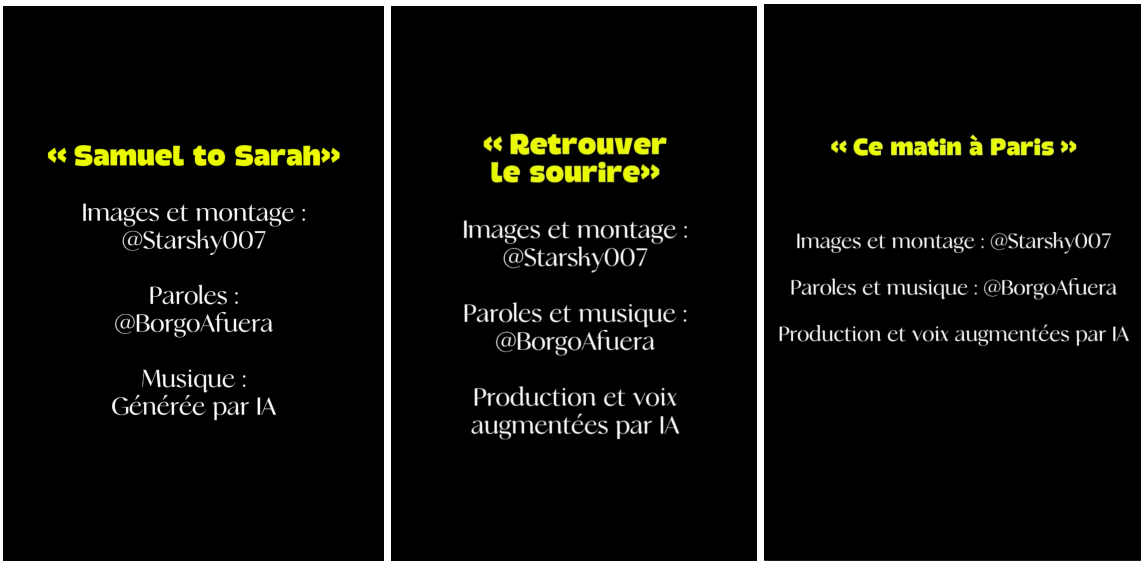
Figures (from left to right) 8-10. Visibility of Instagram's AI label "AI info" on the Instagram app interface (figures 8-9, left) and web interface (figure 10, right)

Parti Communiste Français included the AI label on their Instagram post (figures 8-9). The official AI label on Instagram (visible as "AI info" text in the top-left corner of the post, next to the account's profile image) is limited to the app version (figures 8-9) and does not appear on the web interface (figure 10). This is an ongoing, unaddressed shortcoming previously observed in AI Forensics' 2025 report on generative AI use on social media. Further, we observed that a similar AI label was missing from Parti Communiste Français' posts featuring the same image on other social media platforms (figures 11-14). While a post might contain an interface-level AI label on some platforms, the AI label might be missing when the content is posted by the same account on other platforms. This highlights the challenge of ensuring transparent and coherent AI labeling across all social media platforms for both providers and deployers of AI-generated imagery.



Figures (from top left to bottom right) 11-15. Screenshots of the same image posted by Parti Communiste Français on X (figure 11, top left), TikTok (figure 12, top right), and Facebook's web interface (figure 13, bottom left) and app interface (figures 14-15, bottom center and right)

Reconquête reposted three AI-generated clips related to their campaign on their official X account. In each of these three clips, one of the last frames includes an AI disclosure (see figures 16-18). These AI disclosures, however, are only visible if a user watches the whole video. Furthermore, in the first instance (figure 16), only the "music" is disclosed as AI-generated, whereas the other two instances (figures 17-18) disclose "AI augmentation" of the content rather than the fact that it was entirely AI-generated. This inconsistency clearly demonstrates the absence of – and need for – unified, transparent, and clear AI labeling and disclosure standards across social media platforms.



Figures (from left to right) 16-18. One of the last frames of three AI-generated video clips reposted by Reconquête on their official X account

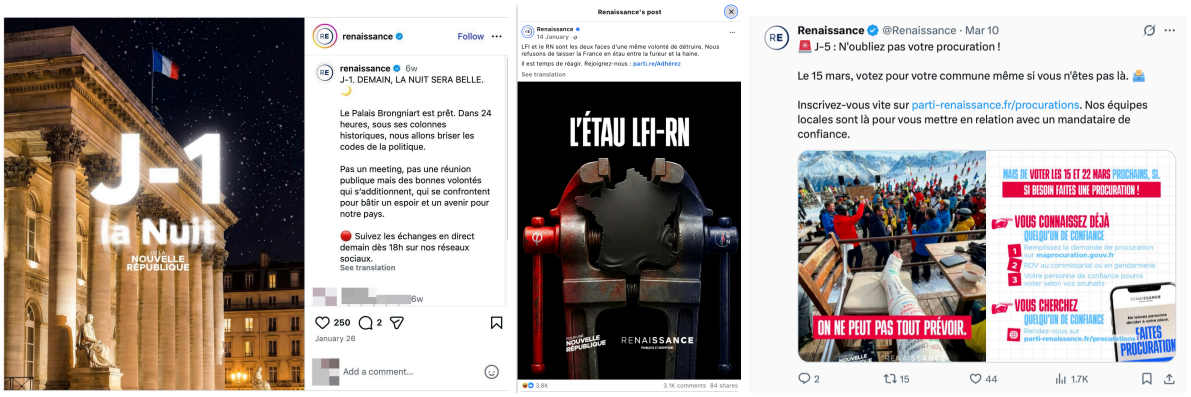
Themes in AI-generated imagery shared by French political parties

Compared to our 2024 study, we found no examples of photorealistic AI-generated imagery used to spread potentially harmful or deceptive messages. Instead, we observed the repeated use of generative AI to produce more generic campaign materials that resemble stock photos and symbolic political messaging. We also observed examples of candidates posting generative AI imagery imitating the style of animations and cartoons rather than posing as "real." These two shifts might indicate the normalization of generative AI use in political campaigning.

In our 2024 study, we found that messages of anti-immigration, lack of safety, freedom of expression, a flawed justice system, and poor agricultural protections were among the repeated themes in AI-generated campaign materials. These themes were used to produce dramatized narratives and functioned as a means of exaggerated storytelling. The local context of the municipal elections draws emphasis to different topics and issues in the campaigns. We observe that generative AI can still be used for exaggerated storytelling tactics; however, the content no longer attempts to appear photorealistic.

AI-generated cost cuts? AI imagery as a replacement for stock images and human-designed content

Renaissance, a party for which we observed no instances of AI-generated imagery in 2024, shared at least 25 posts containing AI-generated imagery in 2026. In these instances, Renaissance used AI imagery to replace more "traditional" campaign materials, in which messages are symbolically represented (figure 20) or photorealistic landscapes serve as generic backgrounds (figures 19 and 21). Renaissance decided to create some of its campaign materials using generative AI, which might suggest an economic choice of outsourcing creative labor to AI models.



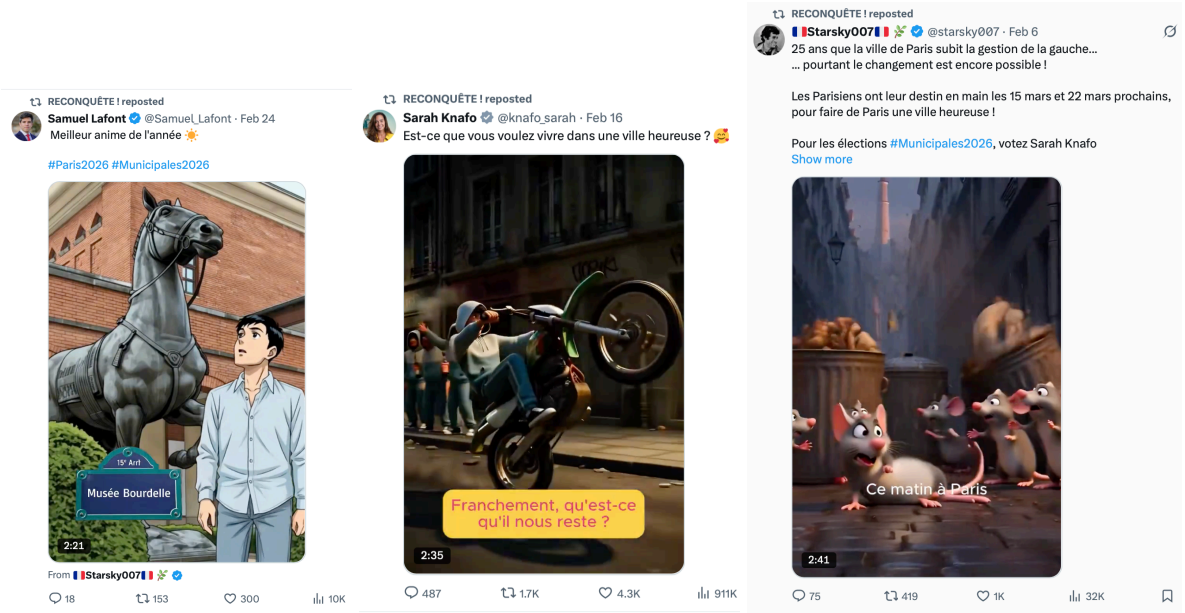
Figures (from left to right) 19-21. Examples of posts containing AI-generated imagery uploaded by Renaissance (from left): on Instagram, Facebook, and X.

From dystopia to utopia, from photorealism to cartoons

While we could detect no telltale signs of AI use in any of the original posts uploaded by Reconquête, we did identify AI-generated content on Reconquête's feed comprising reposts of content shared by other accounts, such as official accounts of Reconquête candidates on X (figures 22-23). The reposted AI content was stylized to resemble animated, cartoon-style videos rather than photorealistic imagery. Nonetheless, it echoed a tactic similar to that used in 2024, with generative AI serving as a means for exaggerated storytelling. We describe these cases and storytelling tactics in detail below.

We observed two cases of AI-generated videos shared on official accounts of Reconquête candidates (figures 22-23) and one by a non-official, politically active user on X (figure 24), which were reposted by Reconquête. These three AI-generated videos appropriate a particular animation style based on anime aesthetics, likely

related to the 2025 Studio Ghibli AI trend (figures 22; 25-27), and stylized "round" 3D animations (figures 23-24; 28-39) characteristic of modern Disney and Pixar productions. These stylistic appropriations are also reflected in the accompanying AI-generated music, where the anime-like video is paired with an "anime-like song," "sung" in Japanese, praising the depicted Reconquête candidate, in this case Samuel Lafont.



Figures (from left to right) 22-24. Screenshots of AI-generated videos reposted by Reconquête on their official X account



Figures (from left to right) 25-27. Screenshots of some frames from an AI-generated video reposted by Reconquête on their official X account

In the case of Samuel Lafont's AI-generated video, it can be argued that a series of short scenes combined together is yet another stylistic appropriation of the anime genre, alluding to the opening credits at the beginning of each anime series where the main character(s) is depicted in several different scenes. In fact, we observe the same format in the other two AI-generated videos. The reason is likely that most generative AI models are unable to produce longer, more consistent videos. Due to this limitation, as well as the cost, several short clips can be prompted and then combined to produce a few-minute-long video. While this limitation affects the quality and coherence of the output, it suits the exaggerated storytelling tactic, in which several unrelated situations can be depicted consecutively in a short but attention-grabbing manner.

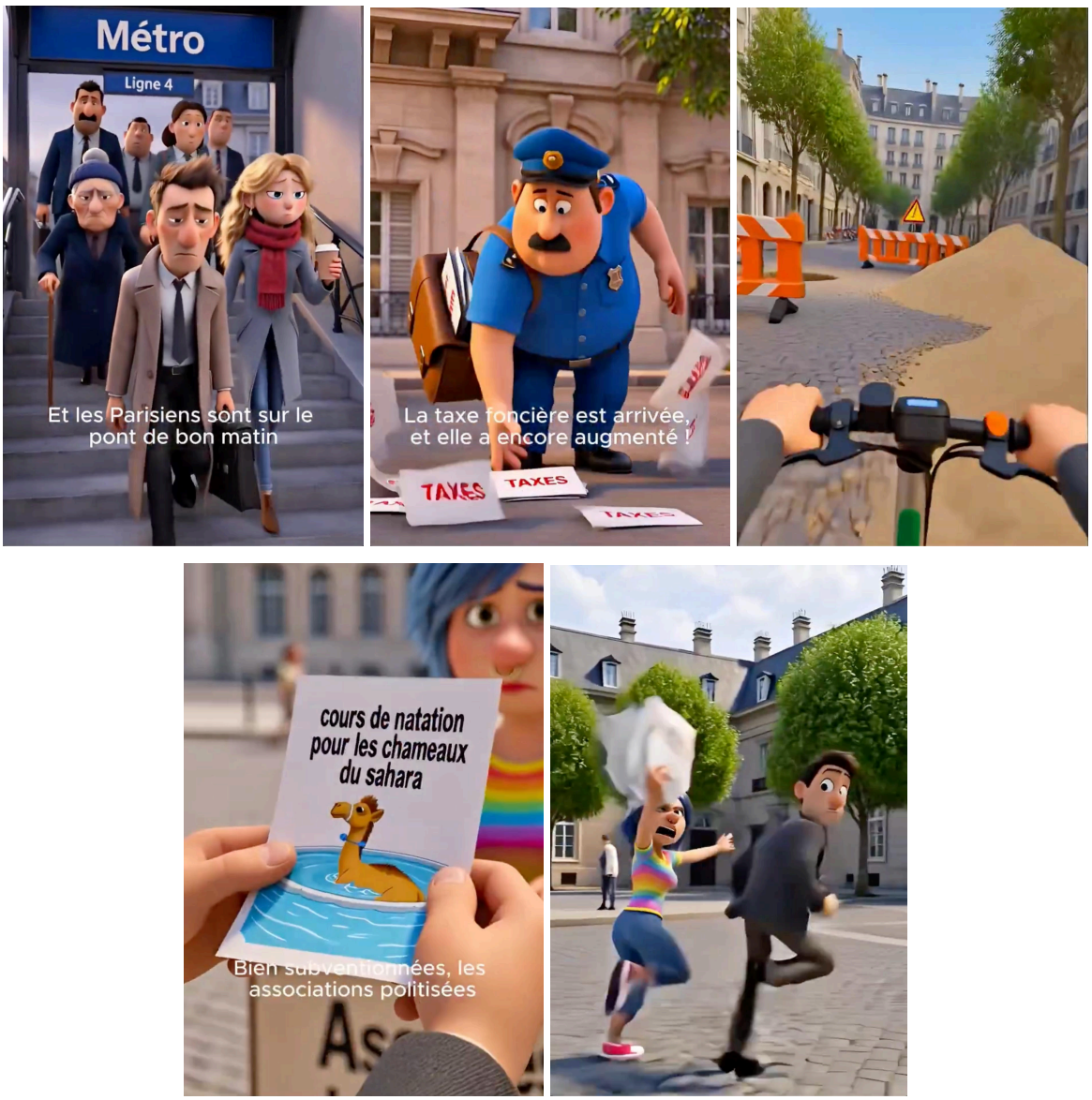


Figures (from top left to bottom right) 28-33. Screenshots of some frames from an AI-generated video reposted by Reconquête on their official X account

The other two AI-video examples (figures 28-39) appropriate the stylized "round" 3D animation aesthetics. Both AI videos follow the same narrative pattern: first, several scenes depict crime, fear, the housing and parking crises, the garbage problem, or other issues, in (a dystopian) Paris. In one of the AI videos, we also observed a seemingly derogatory depiction of a protester wearing a shirt in the LGBTQ+ flag colors, advocating for nonsensical actions (figure 38-39). Then, the problems disappear thanks to the elected candidate (Sarah Knafo), and Paris becomes a utopia.

The Reconquête's move away from directly uploading or posting AI-generated imagery (or at least to reposting such content from others) for political purposes, especially during election campaigns, can be motivated by several reasons. We speculate that the choice of non-photorealistic content may be deliberate. Non-photorealistic AI imagery could be seen by the parties as a more "responsible" choice with less potential for deception. Visual AI content that appears cartoon-like or resembles a stock image can arouse similar emotional reactions and spread relevant political messages, while being effective, cheaper (compared to human-made imagery), and "safer" than the photorealistic AI imagery we observed in our 2024 investigation. The choice to limit the use of AI-generated imagery could also be a response to AI backlash and criticism that parties such as Reconquête and Rassemblement National faced after creating photorealistic campaigns in the 2024 elections. It is also likely that AI-generated content for parties that actively used it in 2024 was not as fruitful as they had hoped, leading them to employ a different strategy in 2026.

The use of non-photorealistic AI-generated imagery is not uncommon in political contexts and is not unique to the French campaigns. Appropriated stylistic features of cartoons, art movements, movie posters, and other similar genres have also been observed in official and unofficial posts shared by Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) in Germany, and were popularized by the social media activity of Donald Trump and the US government in the past year. Speaking on a practical level, it is also possible that candidates may have used the animation style to direct the AI model to create a character that closely resembled (or could be identified as) them (the candidate), because some AI models are moderated to ban the creation of videos from the original image. It is the case that some AI models are restricted from recreating images of existing people; however, other AI models exist that lack this basic safeguard.



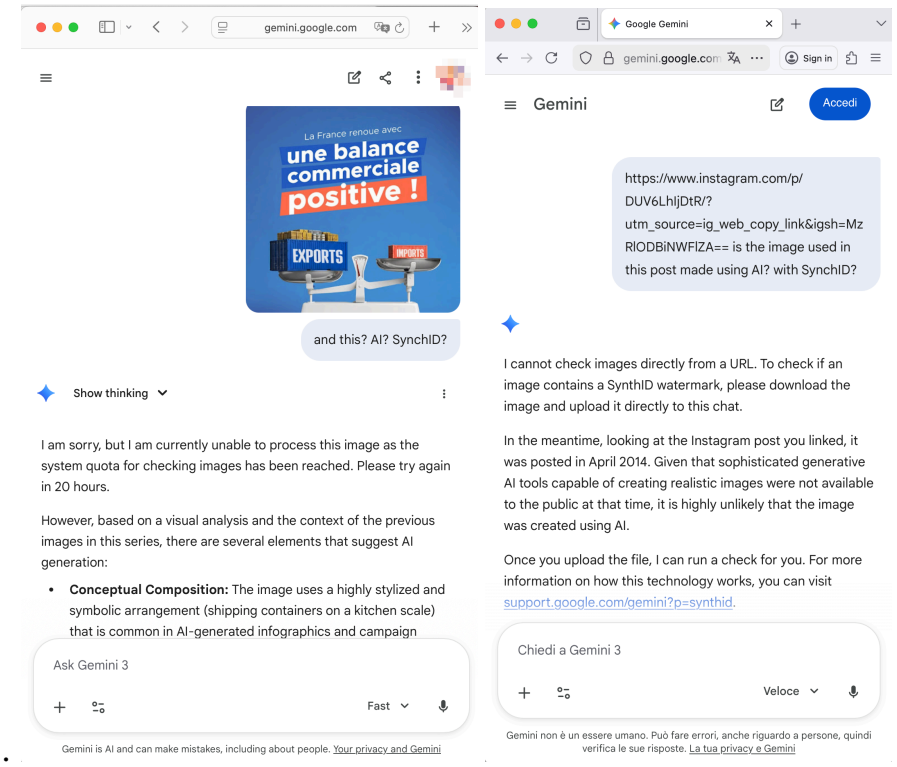
Figures (from top left to bottom right) 34-39. Screenshots of some frames from an AI-generated video reposted by Reconquête on their official X account

Google's SynthID watermark in Renaissance's AI images: invisible to both platforms and users

Even when the imagery contained AI watermarks, we observed that neither the platforms nor the parties labeled the content as AI-generated. This demonstrates that, despite the AI watermark (Google's SynthID) being machine-readable, none of the social media platforms we investigated appear to have access to or operationalized automated AI-labeling capabilities for watermarked AI-generated content.

For all instances of imagery coded as “AI-generated” (38 instances) or ambiguous (18 instances) in our study, we used Google’s Gemini to verify the presence of a SynthID, the invisible watermark applied to all media objects generated using Google’s AI tools. All examples of imagery posted by Renaissance that we initially coded as potentially AI-generated were found to contain Google’s SynthID watermark. This suggests that Renaissance relied solely on Google’s AI tools to produce a significant part of their campaign materials.

We also noted a limitation in detecting SynthIDs. Currently, the only way for a user to verify the presence of a SynthID in a piece of content is to ask Google’s chatbot Gemini to do so while they are logged in. A user cannot upload files to check for a SynthID without being logged in, and Gemini cannot access an image or a video via a link. Moreover, from our experiments, it seems that Gemini can only check for the presence of a SynthID for up to 10-12 media pieces every 20 hours for free (figures 40-41). These limitations pose a significant drawback for AI content transparency and accountability. This is all the more crucial given that none of the posts that carried a SynthID were labeled as AI-generated across the platforms we investigated. As such, both the AI tool providers (Google) and the media platforms place the burden of verifying AI-generated content on users rather than taking responsibility for ensuring a more transparent media environment.



Figures (from left to right) 40-41. Screenshots showing the use of Google’s Gemini to verify the presence of a SynthID in an image. Figure 40 depicts a screenshot of Gemini’s inability

"to verify SynthID presence in an image due to 'system quota' for checking AI images [being] reached." Figure 41 depicts a screenshot of Gemini's SynthID verification being available only to logged-in users who can upload an image to the chat.

Conclusion & outlook

This report demonstrates that the "realism" of AI imagery is not always the primary driver of AI use in political contexts. Rather, AI-generated imagery is being used to craft a set of messages that clearly resonate with the target audience and incorporate emotive or affective elements into their storytelling. The use of generative AI to produce generic campaign materials that resemble stock photos indicates a normalization of AI use in political campaigning.

As our previous investigation demonstrated, the 2024 elections marked a significant milestone as the first in France to prominently feature generative AI content. However, in 2026, AI-generated content is no longer that new. While some parties might have been more eager to experiment with generative AI in 2024, we note shifts in how parties now choose to (or not to) use AI in political campaigns. Rather than using photorealistic AI-generated content as a critical illustrative element of the campaign's central points, in 2026, AI-generated content was predominantly non-photorealistic. When used to illustrate issues and messaging central to the campaign, AI-generated content followed conventions of animated movies and cartoons. In other cases, AI tools were used to generate generic campaign materials, such as symbolic images with simple iconography. It is also possible that, compared to the European Union (EU) parliamentary elections in 2024, municipal elections might have required different strategies for different local communities, making it economically inadvisable to allocate party resources to a unified, party-level campaign driven by AI-generated content.

Our 2024 findings already revealed critical negligence on the part of both political parties and social media platforms in adhering to their commitments to label AI-generated imagery. This remains the case in 2026, despite the normalization of AI use in political campaigning. There is an urgent need for transparency, stricter content moderation, and the reinforcement of EU-wide policies on generative AI to maintain electoral integrity.

So far, the preferred way of disclosing AI content on platforms is for platforms to oblige users to add interface-level AI labels, where applicable, to their uploaded content.[3] While some platforms claim to be able to label AI content themselves, AI Forensics' previous investigations showed that in practice platforms labeled less than 1-2% of the AI-generated content that we detected. This means that, in effect,

[3] For an overview of labeling policies across leading social media platforms and their limitations, see AI Forensics' Human Guide to Detecting AI Imagery and AI-Generated Algorithmic Virality reports.

the obligation and choice to disclose and label AI-generated content is left to users, in this case, to the official political party accounts.

Aside from official AI labels, some platforms allow other AI disclosures, such as including relevant AI disclaimers in the post's description or hashtags. Such disclosures remain limited and inconsistent. Reconquête, for instance, featured an AI-use disclosure in one of the last frames within their AI-generated video clip posted on X. While adding an AI disclosure in the post's content (image or video) is a responsible choice, it lacks adequate effectiveness, as the user only sees the disclosure if the video is watched till the end. Instead of depending on such inconsistent disclosure practices, an interface-level label or disclosure would ensure that such content can be immediately recognized as AI-generated.

Even when AI-generated imagery contains machine-readable AI watermarks (e.g., Google's SynthID), the platforms we examined do not implement automated labeling of such content. Moreover, Google limits users' ability to independently verify whether a piece of content contains a SynthID. These limitations make it nearly impossible for users to have transparency in an increasingly AI-generated media landscape.

The EU Digital Services Act (DSA) mandates providers of Very Large Online Platforms (VLOPs) and Very Large Online Search Engines (VLOSEs) to implement risk-mitigation measures to address systemic risks. Specifically, the guidelines on the Mitigation of Systemic Risks for Electoral Processes in Article 34.1(c) of the DSA address risks of actual or foreseeable negative effects on electoral processes arising from the design, functioning, and use of services offered by VLOPs and VLOSEs. Additionally, the guidelines insist on clear labeling of AI-generated content on platforms (3.3.40(b)).

In early March 2026, the European Commission published the second draft of the Code of Practice on marking and labeling AI-generated content. The Code distinguishes between providers of AI systems (such as Google) and deployers (political party accounts) in their professional activities, and outlines guidelines for labeling AI content for both. The Code, scheduled to take effect on August 2, 2026, promises a coherent framework for ensuring adequate AI labeling. However, as we argued in 2024, for the sake of transparency and ethical communication, stricter definitions and enforcement regarding generative AI are necessary, including non-photorealistic AI content. Platforms and political parties must comply with regulatory requirements for disclosing and labeling AI-generated content.

This investigation, similarly to previous AI Forensics reports on the generative AI imagery, calls for a more stringent application of safeguards by both providers and deployers of AI-generated content. Without the implementation of proper measures,

we could see greater misuse of generative AI, posing a more significant threat to the information ecosystem, electoral integrity, and democratic processes. It is imperative that politicians, platforms, and regulators enforce the existing guidelines rigorously and consider the ethical implications of their use of AI to prevent further erosion of public trust in the electoral process.

Appendix

Table 3. A list of all the parties and their official media channels, as listed on their websites
Links last accessed March 15, 2026

Party name	First analyzed	Website	X	TikTok	YouTube	Instagram	Facebook
Horizons	2024	https://horizonsleparti.fr	https://twitter.com/horizonsleparti		https://www.youtube.com/@horizonsleparti	https://www.instagram.com/horizonsleparti	https://www.facebook.com/horizonsleparti
La France Insoumise	2024	https://lafranceinsoumise.fr/	https://twitter.com/Francelnsoumise		https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCKHKSD-yanY2ZwwU_4Tgf0w	https://www.instagram.com/franceinsoumise	https://www.facebook.com/lafranceinsoumise
Les Écologistes	2024	https://lesecologistes.fr	https://twitter.com/eelv		https://www.youtube.com/@lesecologistesfr	https://www.instagram.com/eelvfr	https://www.facebook.com/eelv.fr
Les Républicains	2024	https://republicains.fr/	https://x.com/lesrepublicains	https://www.tiktok.com/@lesrepublicains	https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3Ma4tRFxx85oZl_XKVTPwq	https://www.instagram.com/lesrepublicains	https://www.facebook.com/les.Republicains.FR
Mouvement Démocrate	2024	https://www.mouvementdemocrate.fr	https://x.com/modem		https://www.youtube.com/@Mouvement.Democrate	https://www.instagram.com/mouvementdemocrate	https://www.facebook.com/mouvementdemocrate
Nous France	2026	https://www.nousfrance.fr	https://x.com/xavierbertrand https://twitter.com/nousfrance_fr			https://www.instagram.com/xavier.bertrand	http://facebook.com/xavierbertrand02 https://www.facebook.com/nousfrancefr
Nouvelle Énergie	2026	https://www.unenouvelleenergie.fr	https://twitter.com/nouv_energie	https://www.tiktok.com/@nouvelle_energie	https://www.youtube.com/@david_lisnard	https://www.instagram.com/nouv_energie	https://www.facebook.com/nouv.energie
Parti Communiste Français	2024	https://www.pcf.fr/	https://x.com/PCF	https://www.tiktok.com/@particommuniste	https://www.youtube.com/user/CNPCF	https://www.instagram.com/pcfpartiocommunistefrancais	https://www.facebook.com/Particommuniste/
Parti Radical de Gauche	2026	https://www.partiradicaldegauche.fr	https://twitter.com/PartiRadicalG		https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6MJlHJFWtIGJV8clS9Z9XQ	https://www.instagram.com/prg.lecentregauche	https://www.facebook.com/PartiRadicalGauche

Parti Socialiste	2024	https://www.parti-socialiste.fr/	http://twitter.com/partisocialiste		https://www.youtube.com/user/partisocialiste	https://www.instagram.com/partisocialiste	https://www.facebook.com/partisocialiste
Place Publique	2026	https://place-publique.eu	https://twitter.com/placepublique_		https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCixe3VYdKvKavOuopBxsKCw	https://www.instagram.com/mouvementplacepublique	https://www.facebook.com/mouvementplacepublique
Rassemblement National	2024	https://rassemblementnational.fr	https://twitter.com/RNational_off	https://www.tiktok.com/@rnational_off	https://www.youtube.com/user/fnofficiel	https://www.instagram.com/rassemblementnational_fr	https://www.facebook.com/RassemblementNational
Reconquête	2024	https://www.parti-reconquete.fr/	https://x.com/Reconquete_off		https://www.youtube.com/c/RECONQU%C3%8ATE	https://www.instagram.com/reconquete_officiel/	https://www.facebook.com/reconquete2022/
Renaissance	2024	https://parti-renaissance.fr/	https://x.com/renaissance	https://www.tiktok.com/@parti_renaissance	https://www.youtube.com/@parti-renaissance	https://www.instagram.com/renaissance	https://www.facebook.com/RENAISSANCE
Union des Droites pour la République	2026	https://www.udr.fr	https://x.com/partiudr	https://www.tiktok.com/@partiudr	https://www.youtube.com/@partiudr	https://www.instagram.com/partiudr	https://www.facebook.com/udrofficiel

Table 4. A list of all found instances of AI-generated imagery
Links last accessed March 15, 2025

Party	Case Number	Platform	AI label	Post type	Link	Likes	Views	Comments	Shares	Total engagement
Renaissance	2	X	No AI label	Original post	https://x.com/Renaissance/status/2030266873682722902/photo/1	148	16000	84	71	303
Renaissance	3	X	No AI label	Original post	https://x.com/Renaissance/status/2031329739370049816?s=20	44	1812	2	15	61
Renaissance	4	X	No AI label	Original post	https://x.com/Renaissance/status/2025230572910522812/photo/1	80	3505	7	30	117
Renaissance	5	X	No AI label	Original post	https://x.com/Renaissance/status/2022729009814212699?s=20	75	5807	29	34	138
Renaissance	6	X	No AI label	Original post	https://x.com/Renaissance/status/2016172439303045376?s=20	78	5816	23	16	117
Renaissance	7	X	No AI label	Original post	https://x.com/Renaissance/status/2015837525298856173?s=20	122	8040	19	39	180
Renaissance	8	X	No AI label	Original post	https://x.com/Renaissance/status/2015472865752297856?s=20	89	4781	45	38	172
Renaissance	9	X	No AI label	Original post	https://x.com/Renaissance/status/2015114111453962479?s=20	153	4176	25	51	229
Renaissance	10	X	AI disclaimer (hashtag, description, other)	Repost of a repost	https://x.com/GabrielAttal/status/2013611559621193901?s=20	2500	763500	353	513	3366
Renaissance	12	X	No AI label	Original post	https://x.com/Renaissance/status/2011459133850227170?s=20	655	455000	1200	363	2218
Renaissance	13	Instagram	No AI label	Original post	https://www.instagram.com/p/DVs8lq1DA_F/?utm_source=ig_	279	—	1	—	280

					web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==					
Renaissance	14	Instagram	No AI label	Original post	https://www.instagram.com/p/DVIWDVPDLkz/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==	976	—	50	—	1026
Renaissance	15	Instagram	No AI label	Original post	https://www.instagram.com/p/DVBnZNAjCRC/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==	193	—	5	—	198
Renaissance	16	Instagram	No AI label	Original post	https://www.instagram.com/p/DUv1JImDHDo/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==	362	—	16	—	378
Renaissance	17	Instagram	No AI label	Original post	https://www.instagram.com/p/DUV6LhljDtR/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==	255	—	6	—	261
Renaissance	18	Instagram	No AI label	Original post	https://www.instagram.com/p/DUTdXTIDBk7/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==	619	—	57	—	676
Renaissance	19	Instagram	No AI label	Original post	https://www.instagram.com/reel/DUBOqa2jBbV/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==	291	7413	7	—	298
Renaissance	20	Instagram	No AI label	Original post	https://www.instagram.com/p/DT-2RZQjAUS/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==	251	—	2	—	253
Renaissance	21	Instagram	No AI label	Original post	https://www.instagram.com/p/DT8QaqxjKEL/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_lin	197	—	2	—	199

					k&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==					
Renaissance	22	Instagram	No AI label	Original post	https://www.instagram.com/p/DT5tbVrjEQO/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==	185	—	3	—	188
Renaissance	23	Instagram	No AI label	Original post	https://www.instagram.com/p/DTfvYlejJXs/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==	4700	—	3200	—	7900
Renaissance	24	Facebook	No AI label	Original post	https://www.facebook.com/RENAISSANCE/posts/pfbid02XZfTZaJk5jcDcsb56wj7cq6WdYJuuzdxLYQKGrv17YsMs7jqwcqkvLEK6mM7dZq3l	4	—	35	14	53
Renaissance	25	Facebook	No AI label	Original post	https://www.facebook.com/RENAISSANCE/posts/pfbid0ETvkM8pR9hnFC87rDrGKQYCQf2vs8hdVXh9o8od2dJCb5DD1akMAAEF8YX12gUzml	102	—	87	28	217
Renaissance	26	Facebook	No AI label	Original post	https://www.facebook.com/reel/1095074256033868	62		3	15	80
Renaissance	27	Facebook	No AI label	Original post	https://www.facebook.com/RENAISSANCE/posts/pfbid02eENp5DphSK3euQZpuktHY5uvdPr8HQ3F3C7NasraE3Hb8c8ao4RiAbSfBaYB7xKsl	3200	—	3100	82	6382
Reconquête	28	X	No AI label	Repost	https://x.com/LusoHerisson/status/2029151861681320375?s=20	226	2017	4	129	359
Reconquête	29	X	AI disclaimer (hashtag, description, other)	Repost	https://x.com/Samuel_Lafont/status/2026343386190401576?s=20	300	10100	18	154	472

Reconquête	30	X	AI disclaimer (hashtag, description, other)	Repost	https://x.com/knafo_sarah/status/2023449784984502322?s=20	4200	911200	487	1700	6387
Reconquête	32	X	AI disclaimer (hashtag, description, other)	Repost	https://x.com/starsky007/status/2019843008141709340?s=20	1000	32700	75	422	1497
Reconquête	33	X	No AI label	Repost of a repost	https://x.com/Samuel_Lafont/status/2018248587084271731?s=20	350	6064	27	163	540
Parti Communiste Français	51	X	No AI label	Original post	https://x.com/PCF/status/2016103298533671007?s=20	5900	1000000	266	982	7148
Parti Communiste Français	52	X	No AI label	Original post	https://x.com/PCF/status/2012203303585603850?s=20	51	1306	6	20	77
Parti Communiste Français	53	TikTok	No AI label	Original post	https://www.tiktok.com/@particommuniste/photo/7600091642426592535	92	1760	1	6	99
Parti Communiste Français	54	TikTok	No AI label	Original post	https://www.tiktok.com/@particommuniste/photo/7596004277999521046	50	0	643	—	693
Parti Communiste Français	55	Instagram	AI label	Original post	https://www.instagram.com/p/DUAux10DDFL/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==	4200	—	278	—	4478
Parti Communiste Français	56	Instagram	No AI label	Original post	https://www.instagram.com/p/DTIB4TajDnp/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==	418	—	9	—	427
Parti Communiste Français	57	Facebook	No AI label	Original post	https://www.facebook.com/Particommuniste/posts/pfbid0m0h1i8XeNaguhHUMBhFoiG4W6N9sLLHPqcLJ9zNwJU5f9HCLCfp2x5bH3a2Vm313l	258	—	21	83	362

Parti Communiste Français	58	Facebook	No AI label	Original post	https://www.facebook.com/Particommuniste/posts/pfbid02tJBP72ouy5LhY8EamJUqhuoEP5JtV3CVdmbbdNwhd7MvhquNdEaQCXJ7VNrhQw4Bml	220	—	63	154	437