

Mbappe's plea to stop the rise of the right

[D theday.co.uk/mbappes-plea-to-stop-the-rise-of-the-right-4](https://www.theguardian.com/sport/football/kylian-mbappe-plea-to-stop-the-rise-of-the-right) 23 June 2024



“This is a crucial time in the history of our country...We can see that the extremists are at the door of power. We have the possibility to change everything”

Kylian Mbappé

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Anti-extremist: Mbappé warned fans against voting for France's far-right party.

Should footballers stay out of politics? The French captain has faced criticism after telling young people who to vote for in the upcoming election.

What's happening?

Kylian Mbappé is a national hero. Aged just 25, he is already captain of France, a World Cup winner, a record goal scorer for his club and one of the best-paid players in history.

In a **press conference** at the Euros, Mbappé warned that “the extremes are at the gates of power... that’s why I’m calling on all young people to go out and vote”.

Find out more

He was speaking after French leader **Emmanuel Macron** called a surprise **election**. Experts think the **far-right** party National Rally could win power. Their party leader, 28-year-old Jordan Bardella, could become the next prime minister. Bardella has **anti-immigration** views. He criticised Mbappé’s comments, arguing that “we must respect everyone’s vote”.

Mbappé is not the first footballer to talk about politics. England star **Marcus Rashford** started a campaign so that children who received free school meals during term time could have the same support during the holidays.

But that does not mean footballers know more than politicians. Jordan Bardella is the son of an immigrant who grew up in a poor part of Paris. He argues that as Mbappé is a multimillionaire, and so cannot understand the worries of ordinary people.

Some experts think that the far-right is popular in France as many believe that the **elites** — whether footballers or politicians — are out of touch.

Should footballers stay out of politics?

Some say

Yes! Footballers are meant to represent the whole country — not just those who they agree with. Most are so rich that they cannot really understand the lives of ordinary people.

Others think

No! Footballers have a huge amount of power to **influence** others. They should use that power to inspire young people and make the world a better place.

Some people say

“Football is the only thing that can bring together an entire country, regardless of political or religious differences.”

Zinedine Zidane (1972 -), French footballer and manager

Empty heading

What do you think?

Six steps to discovery

1. Connect

How do you feel about this story? - Do you have a favourite sports star? Do you know any of their political views?

2. Wonder

What questions do you have? - For example: Do people criticise other celebrities – like actors, musicians or politicians – when they share political views?

3. Investigate

What are the facts? - Pick out one thing we know for certain and one thing we cannot say for sure from this story.

4. Construct

What is your point of view? - If you were Mbappé, would you share your views in an interview?

5. Express

What do others believe? - In groups, come up with two rules for all football players on what they can and can't say when speaking to the media.

6. Reflect

What might happen next? - Write an article to your favourite sports star, asking them to visit your school. Why should they choose your school to visit?

Glossary

Kylian Mbappé - A French footballer born in 1998.

Press conference - A media event in which politicians, individuals or organisations invite journalists to ask them questions.

Emmanuel Macron - The current president of France, nicknamed "Jupiter" after the chief of the Roman deities for his top-down manner of governance.

Election - A vote in which someone is chosen to represent a group of people.

Far-right - A range of ideologies that emphasise social order, racial purity and the elimination of opponents.

Immigration - The permanent movement of people into a country.

Marcus Rashford - The Manchester United player has campaigned against racism, homelessness and child hunger and promoted literacy.

Paris - The capital of France. In mythology, Paris was a Trojan prince who caused the war with the Greeks by stealing Helen, the beautiful wife of King Menelaus of Sparta.

Elites - The richest, most powerful, best-educated or best-trained members of society.

Influence - Have an effect on something else, and especially persuade them to act in your favour.