

Biography

Nicolas Sarkozy was born in Paris 52 years ago, of a French mother and a father who chose to immigrate to France when his country, Hungary, was invaded by the communist Soviet Union. He grew up in Paris, then in Neuilly-sur-Seine, a suburb of Paris, where he still lives. His family taught him the values of Gaullism: love of France and the refusal of defeat.



After graduating in Law and Political Science, he became a lawyer at the age of 26. For more than twenty years, he practised Law, and during that period became more and more involved in political activities. All this gave him the opportunity to develop many contacts with French society.

He has been a Gaullist since childhood, and it is in the Gaullist Party that he has always pursued his political career. He was still a young party militant when he was elected town councillor in Neuilly, in 1977. Six years later, he was elected Mayor, and kept being reelected to this post for 19 years. He was also elected Regional councillor for Ile-de-France, and Member of the National Assembly and of the European Parliament. Since 2004, he has served as President of the council of the Département des Hauts-de-Seine.

Sarkozy entered the Government for the first time in 1993, as Minister for the Budget and Spokesman of the Prime Minister, Edouard Balladur. After Jacques Chirac's victory in the Presidential election in 2002, he returned to the Government first as Minister of the Interior, then Finance Minister in 2004. In these two posts, he endeavoured to show that, with determination, that which seemed out of reach, was in fact possible. He increased police presence on the streets of France, thus reducing delinquency. He saved Alstom, a then ailing French conglomerate, from bankruptcy, helped EDF and GDF to privatise part of their capital, and forced big retailers to lower consumer prices.

When the UMP Party militants elected him to the head of the party in November 2004, he left the Government. He returned in May of 2005, at President Jacques Chirac's request, as Secretary of State for the Interior and Regional Planning .

He has been married twice, and has three sons. Pierre and Jean will vote for the first time this year in the Presidential and Legislative elections. Their support, along with that of his wife and their young son Louis, will be most precious to him in the months to come.

