

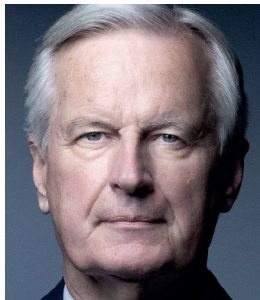
Race to lead French conservatives



Xavier Bertrand, 56

Former health minister under **Nicolas Sarkozy**, now head of industrial Hauts-de-France region. Polls show moderate right-winger is best-placed to unseat Macron

Les Républicains, France's conservative party, are to decide who will challenge President Emmanuel Macron in elections in April 2022



Michel Barnier, 70

EU's former Brexit negotiator. Betting that party loyalty will endear him to activists but lacklustre showing in TV debates may harm his chances



Éric Ciotti, 56

MP from city of Nice. Law-and-order candidate echoes views of far-right pundit **Eric Zemmour**, who is pushing for tougher measures on immigration and French identity



Philippe Juvin, 57

Mayor of residential Paris suburb and head of emergency ward at top hospital. Gained prominence during Covid-19 crisis, pledges to revitalise public services



Valérie Pécresse, 54

Head of Ile-de-France region that includes Paris. Presents herself as moderate yet effective politician who could pose genuine threat to Macron