At a time when, election after election, the rate of abstention is reaching record highs, it appears clearly / there is no denying that citizens are increasingly disinterested in politics and in politicians whom they regard with rising distrust sometimes even tinged with hostility. How can this evolution be accounted for ?

* loss of trust toward politicians and traditional parties that are seen/ perceived as more and more disconnected from people’s difficulties and preoccupations.

> indifference toward the difficulties to make ends meet that a growing number of people are faced with, including in the middle class

> disregard for climate issues that a growing number of people, particularly the younger part of the population, are concerned about and want to be addressed.

* people/citizens feel betrayed by those politicians whose electoral promises look like hot air and therefore turn away from the polls.
* This disconnection reinforces the idea – largely spread by extreme parties – that those politicians from traditional parties are part of a power-hungry political elite – so-called establishment – whose only goal is to get elected and remain in power and who have allegedly nothing left to offer to their people.
* people are disillusioned and turn to / are seduced by “outsiders” , regardless of their lack of experience in politics and of their sometimes extreme stance(s).
* Examples: Trump of course, but also Boris Johnson and Brexit in GBB, V. Orban in Hungary or G.Meloni in Italy, ...
* How did we get there ?

> the advent of social media and their growing role as media of information for a soaring number of people > polarized / reductive / distorting vision

> filter bubble

=> (risk of ) polarization and division + disinformation

=> populism is on the rise and lures more and more people into believing that the solution to their problems lies in those populist politicians who appear to be the only ones able to understand and listen to them. (*on sort un peu trop du sujet ici)*

* However, does that mean that it is the end of citizens’ political engagement ?

Maybe not > new shape : commitment in associations / in community-based groups / climate activism rather than political engagement

= new form of political engagement, closer to the Greek meaning of the term, ie participation in the decision-making process of ‘the affairs of the cities ‘ ; by citizens and for citizens. As a matter of fact, it is no accident that more and more people are favorable to what is called participatory democracy with an increasing recourse to referendums.