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WORLDEUROPE

French Police Raid Offices of Macron's Political Party

Prosecutors are investigating whether presidential campaigns properly accounted for any role consulting firms played in their activities



French President Emmanuel Macron.

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By Nick Kostov [Follow](#) and Stacy Meichtry [Follow](#)

Dec. 14, 2022 11:09 am ET

PARIS—French police have raided the headquarters of Emmanuel Macron's political party, prosecutors said Wednesday, as part of two probes into possible ties between consulting firms and France's presidential campaigns in 2017 and 2022.

France's national prosecutors said police also searched the Paris offices of consulting giant McKinsey & Co. as well the headquarters of an association dedicated to funding Renaissance, Mr. Macron's party.

The prosecutors are investigating whether presidential campaigns properly accounted for any role consulting firms played in their activities. Another investigation is exploring whether campaigns concealed any improper favors.

The probes stem from prosecutors' initial investigation into suspicions of tax-fraud and money-laundering by McKinsey, which the U.S. firm has denied. Prosecutors said they were now also probing alleged campaign finance irregularities in the most-recent two presidential elections.

A spokesman for Renaissance said it was cooperating with authorities, adding that it was normal for the justice system to investigate freely and independently to shed light on the issue. McKinsey confirmed its Paris offices had been searched on Tuesday and said it too was cooperating with authorities.

Mr. Macron's office didn't immediately respond to a request for comment. Asked about the investigations last month, Mr. Macron said: "I don't fear anything...I believe the focus of the probe is not your humble servant."

Prosecutors launched the initial probe after the Senate published a report in March that detailed how the French government spent €893.9 million, equivalent to \$975.8 million, on consultants in 2021. That was a sizable increase on the €379.1 million spent in 2018, Mr. Macron's first full year in power, the report said.

Mr. Macron has said there was nothing improper about the consulting-firm contracts.

The government has said that the use of private consulting firms by governments was in line with that of other countries, pointing to a section in the Senate report that said France used them less than Germany, the U.K. and other European neighbors.

Still, the issue provided fodder to Mr. Macron's opponents during the 2022 presidential election campaign who criticized the president's use of multinational consulting firms, notably during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Mr. Macron was elected by a wide margin in April, becoming the first French president to secure a second term in office since 2002.

Write to Nick Kostov at nick.kostov@dowjones.com and Stacy Meichtry at Stacy.Meichtry@wsj.com