


# Short biography of Hubert Védrine

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Hubert Védrine was born on 31 July 1947 in Creuse. He studied at the Paris Institute of Political Studies and also obtained a degree in history. He joined the French National School of Administration (ÉNA) and graduated in 1974 (known as the ‘Simone Weil’ year).

Following his appointment to the French Ministry of Culture, he joined the Directorate-General for Cultural, Scientific and Technical Relations of the French Foreign Ministry in 1979. He was elected deputy MP for Nièvre on 31 July 1978. He became Diplomatic Adviser to François Mitterrand, who had known his father since the war, during the Socialist President’s first seven-year term (1981–1988), then spokesman for the Élysée (1988–1991), after a period spent at the French *Conseil d’État* (Council of State) in 1986, where he was *Maître des Requêtes* (legal adviser). In 1991, he replaced Jean-Louis Bianco as Secretary-General for the Presidency of the Republic.

He worked with François Mitterrand and witnessed three French Presidencies of the European Community and the European Union, in 1984, 1989 and 1995. He also took part in the preparations for the Fontainebleau and Strasbourg European Councils (1984 and 1989 respectively) and was involved in developing Franco–German relations during their most prolific years.

After Jacques Chirac was elected President of the Republic in 1995, Hubert Védrine returned to the *Conseil d’État* and then joined the law firm, Jeantet et Associés, in 1996. Following Jacques Chirac’s decision to dissolve the French National Assembly, Védrine was appointed to the government of Lionel Jospin, First Secretary of the French Socialist Party, after the party’s victory in the 1997 parliamentary elections. Hubert Védrine was therefore Minister for Foreign Affairs in an unusual configuration, that of a cohabitation government, which lasted from June 1997 to May 2002. During this period, France held the Presidency of the European Union (in 2000). This Presidency ended with the signing of the much-criticised Treaty of Nice, which still governs the European Union in 2008.

In 2002, Jacques Chirac was re-elected to the Presidency of the Republic and his new party, the UMP, won the parliamentary elections. In 2003, Hubert Védrine founded *Hubert Védrine Conseil*, a geopolitical strategy consultancy firm that has worked with several major French companies, as well as the law firm, Gide Loyrette Nouel.

Hubert Védrine has been head of the François Mitterrand Institute since 2003. He teaches at an international relations seminar in the Paris Institute of Political Science. He joined the Board of Directors of the LVMH group in 2004.

Since 1995, alongside his professional and political activities, he has regularly published books and articles on France’s foreign policy. *Les Mondes de François Mitterrand* outlines the Socialist President’s foreign policy. *Face à l’Hyperpuissance* is a collection of texts and speeches from the period 1995–2003. *Les Cartes de la France à l’Heure de la Mondialisation* is a dialogue with the French researcher and specialist in international relations, Dominique Moïsi. More recently, Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the French Republic with a background in the UMP party, asked him to write a report on France and globalisation, which he submitted to the President in September 2007.