
FRANCE BRACES FOR MORE CHAOS AS STRIKE OVER PENSIONS REFORM ENTERS DAY TWO

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France braced for more disruption on Friday as the country's largest strike in years entered its second day.

An estimated 806,000 people across France took part in demonstrations on Thursday against President Emmanuel Macron's proposed pension reforms.

Meanwhile, a nationwide strike by transport workers, teachers and other professionals brought the country to a near standstill.

Police said 65,000 marched in Paris but Union leaders claim that numbers were higher, over 250,000 people, according to the CGT (General Confederation of Labour).

As the Paris demonstrations began on Thursday afternoon, French police fired tear gas and charged hooded protesters. Trouble broke out near the capital's Place de la Republique, when some protesters set fire to a truck trailer. 71 people were taken in for questioning on the sidelines of the protests, the Paris Police Department said.

Tear gas was also fired in the western cities of Nantes and Bordeaux, French network BFM reported, while Euronews reporters Sofia Sanchez Manzanaro and Natalia Liubchenkova felt the effects in Lyon.

Video circulated on social media showed clashes between protesters and security forces in Lyon.

The strike -- which is open-ended and could last several days -- has drawn comparisons with the struggle between government and unions in November-December 1995 when the country was paralysed for around three weeks.

Many workers across France have to stay at home or find novel ways to access their offices using car-sharing services, rental bikes or e-scooters.

Some 90 per cent of high-speed trains have been axed, most of the Paris metro is shut, hundreds of flights cancelled and the majority of schools closed in the strike.

Meanwhile, the French Civil Aviation Authority has confirmed a fifth of flights will be cancelled throughout the country on Thursday.

State carrier Air France has said 30% of its domestic flights and 15% of its medium-haul flights would be affected.

British low-cost carrier EasyJet has cancelled 223 domestic and short-haul international flights and warned others risk being delayed.

To read the rest of the article, please click <https://www.euronews.com/2019/12/04/france-to-come-to-a-standstill-on-thursday-as-90-of-trains-and-20-of-flights-cancelled-in>

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