



## The News

**December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 9am**

by Emma Phillips

The head of the SNCF will be meeting with union representatives tomorrow in order to try and find a way out of the crisis which has sparked a series of strike notices over the Christmas weekend. Tomorrow, two thirds of trains will be running and then only two out of every five trains are set to run over the weekend itself. The new CEO of the railway operator, Jean-Pierre Farandou, is hoping that the conflict can be resolved in time for the New Year's weekend.

A white march is organised in Vaux en Velin near Lyon today to remember the ten people, including four children, who died in a fire in a residential building a week ago. For now it seems that the fire was not a criminal act.

Pap Ndiaye wants to reform the country's schools. The Minister of Education has published a column this morning in *Le Monde*, setting out his priorities. Soon, Ndiaye is due to announce a series of measures to tackle the lack of teachers in schools and the drop in education level of students.

Ukraine will never surrender. These were the words of Volodymyr Zelensky last night in his speech before US congress. In his first trip outside of the country since the war began, the Ukrainian president insisted that there would be no compromises ahead and that US aid was not charity. Zelensky also held long discussions with his US counterpart Joe Biden at the White House yesterday. The US president has pledged more weapons and an anti-missile defense system to help Ukraine.

The government is giving households that heat themselves with wood a helping hand this winter. Wood heated households are eligible for a cheque of up to 200 euros. If you think you are concerned you can put in your request online at [monchèqueénergie.fr](http://monchèqueénergie.fr). More than two million French people are concerned.

And finally to rugby and the "Boxing Day" derby of the top 14 teams gets underway this evening. Toulon play Lyon at 9pm.