



## The News

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*by Sarah Heath*

The showdown continues between the government and the unions today with a new wave of protests against proposed pension reforms. More than 200 demonstrations have been planned throughout the day and according to Benoit Teste, Secretary General of the FSU, this industrial action will continue to gain momentum.

As announced by unions, half of all teachers will strike today to contest the plans to amend current legislation for those reaching retirement age. Disruption will also be felt across transport systems: SNCF have reduced services to only 1 out of 3 TGVs, 1 TER out of 5, and almost no Intercity trains.

However, despite these waves of protest, President Macron remains inflexible. He claimed yesterday that this reform is "indispensable" while on an official visit to the Netherlands.

Another concern for the Head of State is the war in Ukraine. Today he will welcome the President of the Ukrainian Parliament and the Ukrainian Minister of Defense to the Elysée. This meeting will be an opportunity for Macron to show that France is ready to meet the military needs of the Ukrainian armed forces. This is not a position shared by the American allies: Joe Biden said last night that the United States would not send combat aircraft to Kyiv to help the Ukrainian war efforts.

And finally to football news albeit off the pitch: Noel Le Graet is no longer the chief of the French Football Federation according to initial conclusions of an audit on the management of the FFF. The report focuses on the behaviour of Le Graet, after his public statements on Zinedine Zidane and the testimonies of several women who accuse him of harassment, in particular sexual harassment.