



The News

February 1st 12pm

by Noele Bouazouni-Prier

Brussels is blocked by farmers. A thousand tractors went to the Belgian capital this morning on the sidelines of the European Council. They want to put pressure on the leaders of the 27 to ask for a relaxation of fallow obligations and the cessation of negotiations on the Europe-Mercosur agreement.

In France, the mobilizations continue today with around a hundred blockades throughout the country. Around 300 tractors are also trying to enter the cities of Angers and Rennes. In Paris, 8 highways leading to the capital are also blocked. Reinforced security also around Rungis, where demonstrators entered on foot yesterday a storage area of the market. The custody of 79 farmers was however lifted this morning.

Teachers are called to strike today to demand in particular better salaries. The union, the SNUipp, predicts a rate of strikers of 40% on average. In Paris a demonstration will start at 2 p.m. from the Luxembourg district towards the Ministry of the National Education.

The number of road deaths is down by 3% compared to 2022 according to road safety figures published today. Nearly 3,170 people died on the roads in 2023. In addition, 42 people using motorized personal travel devices, such as scooters for example, died last year, which represents an increase of 7% compared to 2022.

And today is February 1st and as with every new month, there are changes in prices: The price of gas looks set to fall, but the electricity bill is increasing from today, between by 8.6 and 9.8%. The rate of the *Livret d'Epargne Populaire* goes from 6 to 5% but remains above inflation and the *Livret A* is maintained at 3%. As for the good news: Internships of 2 months are now paid at least 50 euros.

And then it's a first in France: Patients suffering from vitiligo will be able to benefit from treatment reimbursed by the *Sécurité Sociale*. They will have access to a cream to treat this autoimmune disease which causes progressive depigmentation of the skin and affects nearly a million people in France.