



The News

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by Emma Phillips

Three days of national mourning have been declared in Spain as 95 people are now confirmed dead in the flooding in the south-east of the country. The flooding is the worst natural disaster to hit Spain in the past 30 years. As searches go on for the missing and firefighters continue with rescuing people trapped inside their homes, prime minister Pedro Sanchez is expected in the area offer support to victims. Last night, Bruno Retailleau, the French minister of the interior, announced that France is ready “to send fire department units” to Spain to bolster rescue efforts.

5,000 hospital beds were scrapped in 2023. In a study published today, the DREES, the Directorate for Research, Studies, Evaluation and Statistics has given a run-down of France's healthcare provision. The study notes the reduction in hospital beds that has been ongoing for several years. The past 10 years have seen almost 43,000 hospital beds scrapped, as a result of a shortage in nursing staff and the political decision to prioritise outpatient care.

As the ongoing discussions in the Assemblée Nationale on the 2025 budget are focusing on ways to save money, the universal national service scheme stands to be scrapped. The voluntary civic service scheme for teenagers was the birthchild of Emmanuel Macron and one of his 2017 election pledges. However, the finance committee with representatives from the lower house and the senate has branded the scheme costly and ineffective.

And finally, with the long Toussaint weekend set to get underway this evening, just watch out for heavy traffic on the roads. Traffic website the Bison Futé is indicating at least orange levels of traffic across the country, rising to red levels in the Paris region.