



## The News

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*by Emma Phillips*

Six men are on trial this afternoon at the Paris Criminal Court for illegally confining Paul Pogba on the night of March 19<sup>th</sup> – March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022. The footballer was held by two men who were masked and armed. These men have never been found. Mr Pogba says he had been set up by childhood friends who demanded that he pay several million euros in exchange for his own safety. Today's defendants deny the accusations but could face up to 10 years in prison.

More than 4,000 sexist and sexual assaults were recorded on public transport last year, with the vast majority of the assaults directed at women and a large number in the Paris urban area. The ministry of transport says that the number of assaults rose by 15% in 2023 compared to 2022.

The mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo, will not be standing for re-election. Ms Hidalgo, who has held office since 2014, says she reached the decision some time ago. She is putting forward Rémi Féraud to succeed her, who is the former mayor of the 10<sup>th</sup> arrondissement and is head of the majority group on the Paris council.

Farmers are currently gathered in front of the European Parliament in Strasbourg, where the free-trade agreement with Mercosur is currently the subject of debate. Another debate on the Mercosur agreement is also scheduled to begin shortly in the Assemblée Nationale, followed by a non-binding vote. Farmer action is also taking place elsewhere in the country, including in Arras, Châteauroux and Rouen.

And finally, the 2025 Social Security budget will be put to the vote this afternoon in the Senate. The text has remained faithful to the version put forward by the government. Tomorrow, it will be debated in a joint committee of elected representatives from the Senate and the Assemblée Nationale. Prime minister Michel Barnier has not ruled out adopting the budget by force, through using article 49-3 of the constitution.