

---

May Day riot in Paris: Masked protesters torch cars, police deploy tear gas

01/05/2018



Police in Paris have used water cannons to break up a tumultuous rally. Amid May Day demonstrations, hooded individuals have been throwing smoke bombs and setting vehicles on fire in the French capital.

Live feeds from Paris showed chaotic scenes, as police attempt to disperse violent protesters while redirecting crowds of peaceful marchers to side streets. Loud bangs are heard in the background as smoke and tear gas billow down the streets.

Police pushed back against the rioters, peppering the crowd with tear gas grenades from behind riot shields and hitting the crowd with water cannon. Protesters lobbed firecrackers at the advancing force, as well as picking up and throwing back some of the gas canisters. Armored police vans and fire trucks are backed up advance.

Earlier, law enforcement [tweeted](#) there were around 1,200 “hooded and masked” individuals among the May Day demonstrators at the Pont d’Austerlitz bridge in central Paris.

The rioters have torched several vehicles and vandalized shop fronts, including reportedly throwing a petrol bomb through a McDonald's window.

France marks Labor Day as President Emmanuel Macron finds himself in a protracted battle with unions and students over his reform plans. Railroad workers have been striking since mid-April, angry at plans to freeze salaries, cut over 120,000 jobs, and employ more private contractors.

Students have previously occupied several universities across France, protesting Macron's move to reform the education system, including introducing new admissions criteria and ranking young people who apply to public universities.

Emmanuel Macron, who has remained unmoved by the protests and vowed to proceed with the reforms, is not in Paris to witness the unrest, having flown to Australia for a state visit.

---