

# Hundreds of cab drivers protest Uber in Warsaw

April 8 2019

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Protesters blocked one of Warsaw's main streets—this banner reads "Stop illegal transporters"

Hundreds of taxi drivers on Monday blocked downtown Warsaw in protest over a Polish draft law they see as favourable to ride-sharing app Uber as well as over US support for the American firm.

Traditional cab operators argue that the Uber app and others like it represent [unfair competition](#) because their [drivers](#) can dodge the rules and restrictions that regulate regular taxis.

"My current income is a third lower than two years ago" because of competition from Uber, Warsaw taxi driver Marek said, preferring not to give his last name.

"What we're asking for is fairness: that all (cab operators) be required to be licenced, have a taximeter, that they all pay taxes in the countries where they work and social security contributions too, that they pass exams like us," he told AFP.

The draft legislation, which would regulate the activity of ride-sharing firms and has already been approved by the government, notably states that a mobile telephone app can replace the taximeter.

The protesters blocked one of the Polish capital's main streets, stopping before the [prime minister's](#) office, then the US embassy and finally the ministry of entrepreneurship.

Their representatives notably denounced a letter sent to the Polish government by US ambassador to Warsaw Georgette Mosbacher.

According to portions of the letter leaked to the local media, Mosbacher allegedly threatened to freeze US investments in Poland if Uber were to encounter trouble in the EU member.

The cab drivers are notably calling on the Polish government to abandon

the draft law and introduce a new law that would protect traditional taxi operators.

Some protesters tossed fake money in the air. The "uberdollar" banknotes were adorned with the likeness of Mosbacher.

The spokesman for the ministry of infrastructure, which prepared the transport draft law, called the cab driver protest unfounded, saying the legislation will ensure a level playing field for all cab operators.

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