

Anti-Uber taxi strike causes minimal disruption in Paris

December 15 2014



Taxi drivers take part in a "snail operation" after parking their cars on the Trocadero square in Paris, on December 15, 2014, during a demonstration to protest against a court's refusal to ban urban ridesharing service UberPOP

Dozens of taxi drivers held a go-slow in Paris on Monday in their latest protest against competition from the Uber taxi app.

Drivers gathered at dawn near the main airports at Roissy and Orly and headed slowly towards the city, horns blaring, hoping to force traffic to a

snail's pace—known as an "operation escargot" in French, after the word snail.

However, with France's leading [taxi](#) unions staying out of the protest, there was only minimal disruption on the roads, police said.

The latest in a string of anti-Uber protests this year was directed particularly against a service called UberPOP, which uses non-professional [drivers](#) using their own cars and charging budget rates.

On Friday, a Paris court refused to ban the service, which has built up 160,000 users since launching in France in February, according to the company.

"It is a fight against all Uber. Enough is enough. Authorising UberPOP puts 57,000 French taxis at risk, and 57,000 families with them. And that is out of the question—we won't allow it," said Ibrahima Sylla, president of Taxis of France group, one of the organisers.

However, one of the reasons the leading unions were staying away from Monday's protest was that UberPOP is about to be banned anyway.

"The law that comes into force on January 1 prescribes two years in prison and a 300,000-euro fine for anyone organising a system that puts clients together with people who are not ([professional drivers](#))," Pierre-Henry Brandet, an interior ministry spokesman, told AFP.

Uber has faced push-back in many countries around the world as it eats into traditional taxi services. But it has proved wildly popular with the public and was recently valued at \$41 billion (33 billion euros).

Spain and Holland have both banned UberPOP recently, while Norway and Denmark are also looking into restricting the service.

New Delhi suspended Uber in its entirety this month after a driver raped one of his customers.

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