



The Court rejects requests for interim measures by individuals occupying trees in a wood located on the construction site of France's A69 motorway

The European Court of Human Rights has today refused to grant interim measures in the case of **Viard-Seifert and Others v. France** (application no. 6024/24). The request was made by individuals occupying trees in a wood located on the site of roadworks for the A69 motorway in France. They requested the adoption of measures aimed, in particular, at securing their supply of food and water and ensuring their safety.

Under Rule 39 of the Rules of Court, the Court may indicate interim measures to any State Party to the European Convention on Human Rights. Interim measures are urgent measures which, according to the Court's well-established practice, apply only where there is an imminent risk of irreparable harm.

The applicants are four individuals who are protesting against the A69 motorway development in the Tarn *département*. As part of their protest, they have been occupying trees in the Tarn village of Saix for more than two weeks, at a height of nearly 15 metres, to prevent them from being felled.

Relying in particular on Article 3 of the Convention, they complained of the police measures being used to force them down from the trees. Their main argument was that the fact of depriving them of water, food and sleep amounted to inhuman and degrading treatment. They alleged there was an imminent risk of irreparable harm to their lives and health.

On 29 February 2024 the applicants had lodged an application with the European Court of Human Rights under Rule 39 of its Rules of Court, requesting the adoption of a series of measures aimed, in particular, at securing their supply of food and water and ensuring their safety.

The initial request was adjourned while the Court put questions to the parties, indicating time-limits for their replies.

On 6 March 2024 the duty judge decided, having regard to the circumstances and after receiving each party's replies, not to indicate the requested interim measures to the Government under Rule 39.

The applicants were informed that they could lodge a new request for interim measures with the Court if there was an imminent risk of irreparable harm to their Convention rights.

Measures under Rule 39 of the [Rules of Court](#) are decided in connection with proceedings before the Court, without prejudging any subsequent decisions on the admissibility or merits of the case. The Court grants such requests only on an exceptional basis, when the applicants would otherwise face a real risk of irreparable harm. For further information, see [the factsheet on interim measures](#).

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The European Court of Human Rights was set up in Strasbourg by the Council of Europe member States in 1959 to deal with alleged violations of the 1950 European Convention on Human Rights.