6th February — Pegida take to the streets of Europe.

From [The Local](#) and others

Pegida and fellow anti-Muslim groups called the rallies following last month's signing of an agreement to create a "Fortress Europe" coalition against a backdrop of Europe's worst refugee crisis since World War II.

France

Police in Calais have dispersed a rowdy anti-migrant protest with tear gas after clashes with protesters and detained several far-right demonstrators. Around 150 militants from the anti-Islam, anti-immigration group PEDIGA gathered Saturday at the northern French city chanting slogans like: "We must not let Calais die!" The protesters Saturday had ignored a ruling by the local prefect to ban such demonstrations. One of them, former soldier Christian Piquemal, said he was "shocked by the behavior of police forces."

Another rally in the southern city of Montpellier drew barely 200 people by mid-afternoon.

Czech Republic at half past 4

The main anti-migrant rally Saturday, part of Europe-wide protests in cooperation with Germany's anti-Islam, anti-immigrant group PEGIDA, is taking place in front of Prague Castle, the presidency seat. Czech President Milos Zeman is known for his anti-Muslim rhetoric.

Martin Konvicka, a leader of the anti-Muslim movement, is calling the influx of refugees an "invasion" that poses a "huge threat for us all."

Two other anti-migrant groups are rallying in Prague and

another in the second-largest Czech city of Brno. Two demonstrations in favor of immigration are also going on in Prague.

Netherlands

Riot police have clashed with demonstrators in Amsterdam as supporters of the anti-Islam, anti-migrant group PEGIDA tried to hold their first protest in the Dutch capital as part of a series of demonstrations in Europe. A square near Amsterdam city hall that had been earmarked for the PEGIDA demonstration had to be shut down shortly before the gathering as police and explosives experts examined what police called a "suspect package." Only about 200 PEGIDA supporters were present, outnumbered by police and left-wing demonstrators who shouted, "Refugees are welcome, fascists are not!"

Germany

Several thousand Pegida supporters turned up in Dresden under clear blue skies in the early afternoon to march along the banks of the River Elbe, which flows through the city, to protest against mass immigration and the "islamisation" of Europe. Police, who deployed around 1,000 officers for the occasion, said Thursday they expected some 15,000 marchers to show up.

 An AFP reporter said several thousand had answered the rallying call an hour after the event began at 1400 GMT.

Many held aloft banners criticising German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who is in the firing line for her liberal stance towards refugees, now increasingly coming in for criticism after Germany took in more than a million migrants last year.

Around 2,000 people — less than the 10,000 expected by police — meanwhile joined an anti-Pegida rally at which participants urged tolerance towards migrants. Anti-Pegida marchers chanted slogans including "no place for Nazis" and "we don't need

xenophobia, demagoguery or Pegida."

Ireland *From the*[Birmingham Mail](#) *and*