

In-class exercise – 30 January 2023

A climate protest was held in Amsterdam by students demonstrating against the government's continuous lack of action on climate change. The demonstration was mostly peaceful, with protesters marching, holding signs, and chanting. However, a small minority of individuals among the protesters turned violent, damaging property and throwing objects in the channels and at police officers. In response, the police took decided to take measures to control the situation and disperse the crowd.

However, during the altercation, it was reported that both more violent and peaceful protesters were subjected to rough handling by the police, including the use of physical force, being pushed and dragged away. Some protesters were also temporarily detained and not informed of their rights or given access to legal counsel. Additionally, the police prohibited the use of loudspeakers, which the protesters had intended to use for amplifying their message and speeches. Several students claimed that the police confiscate their posters and signs.

1. Which rights under the European Convention on Human Rights were violated by the actions of the police?
2. Considering the actions of the police in response to the violent minority of protesters, what arguments could the government make to justify their actions? What limitations, if any, to the rights of the peaceful protesters under the ECHR are permissible in this situation?

Please submit your answers to m.baumgartel@ucr.nl by the end of the class.