

SWITZERLAND: PEOPLE WILL DECIDE ON THE PRICE OF MOTORWAY VIGNETTE



On the 24th of November, Swiss voters will vote on the price increase of their motorway vignettes. At the end of July, twice as many signatures as needed were submitted for the referendum.

105,822 authenticated signatures were registered at the Chancellery, said the committee, with an additional 20,000 which had not yet been authenticated. In total, approximately 125,000 people supported the referendum against the price increase of the vignettes from 40 to 100 Swiss Francs.

Parliament had decided on the price increase in its spring session. The increased profit is to finance the federal takeover of cantonal roads.

No to more taxes

Under the leadership of SVP-MP Walter Wobmann and Nadja Pieren, the referendum committee is contesting the price increase with the slogan "No to more duties, fees and taxes on the back of private transport."

The government takes 9.5 billion Francs per year from private transport. The committee argues that this could finance the takeover. Yet 70% of the money was "misappropriated". Money from motorists and bikers mainly flows into the general government coffers and into public transport.

A large uprising

In the opposition's view, a motorway vignette priced at 100 Francs is especially unfeasible for companies with many vehicles. The committee presents field workers, farmers and insurance firms who rely on cars as cases to consider. Their increased spending would be shifted onto the consumer.

The committee is also bothered by the fact that tourists who drive through Switzerland would be able to buy a vignette valid for two months for 40 Euros. Tourists would thus be given preferential treatment to Swiss people who only rarely use the motorway, but still have to buy a 100 Euro vignette. The large amount of signatures shows that the "resistance of motorists" is huge, writes the committee.

The VCS collects too

The Swiss Motoring Club (VCS) is also collecting signatures against the more expensive vignette, yet with a different justification: the environmental organisation is worried that the extra money will be used to finance new motorways, such as a second tunnel through the Gotthard Mountain. According to a representative, less than 2000 people have signed.

The people will vote on the price increase on the 24th of November. The Swiss Federal Council had set the date with the provision that the referendum would be concluded.

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