

SWISS LUCERNE INITIATIVE LEADS TO AIRBNB BAN



Airbnb is currently an emotional topic in the city of Lucerne. Airbnb stands for a worldwide popular and highly demanded accommodation offer for short stays as a supplement to the classic accommodation options such as hotels.

The business model is an attractive part of the Swiss tourism offer, which is central for a tourist city like Lucerne. **Airbnb is particularly popular with individual tourists, who stay in the city significantly longer than car tourists.**

Initiative Leads to Airbnb Ban

The SP's initiative "Protect living space - regulate Airbnb" calls for apartments in the city of Lucerne to be rented out to tourists or business travelers for a maximum of 90 days per year only. The initiative is restrictive and in effect a ban on the Airbnb business model.

Enable Supply and Avoid Pessimism

It is clear that the living space for Lucerne residents should be secured. At the same time, however, locals should take care of their business and tourism location. For many people within the residential offer of the city of Lucerne, a certain amount of apartments for short-term rental should be possible. This is because there is a demand for this specific supply category from vacationers and business people.

Actually, the initiators should have communicated honestly that they do not want Airbnb per se in the city. Even when it comes to tourism in general in the city of Lucerne, the SP is at odds. Be it with advertising bans of Luzern Tourismus AG or with unrealistic approaches in the area of car tourism. Moreover, it is pure pessimism. Of the 45,000 apartments in the city of Lucerne, only 330 apartments are currently used for Airbnb. This means that the city is still a long way from problems like those in other cities.

Counter-proposal as a Solution

The city has therefore drawn up a counter-proposal. It states that owners of second homes without a permit may rent them out for a maximum of 90 nights per year. A limited number of second homes per neighborhood may be rented out more often, but this exception is subject to a permit requirement.

How many Lucerne apartments qualify for the exception would depend on the neighborhood. FDP has supported this counter-proposal, as it lends the necessary weight to the concern of securing living space, but also ensures an important tourist offer in the future. Locals will probably be able to vote on the initiative and the counter-proposal in March 2023.

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