

VareseNews

“Vignetta” increased to SFr 100, to pay for new roads

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Travelling on the Swiss motorways may become even more expensive, because it is drivers, including the border workers, who may have to **“pay” the cost of managing the road network**. Today, the Federal Council, that is, the Swiss Government, has proposed raising the price of the “vignetta”, the sticker costing **SFr 100**, that must be displayed on a car, for the driver to be allowed to use it, and there are plans to introduce a new permit, costing SFr 40, which will last only 2 months. This increase might just provide the alternative income needed to pay the growing costs of maintaining and extending the infrastructure. According to the government, the problem has arisen from a difference between the estimated costs and the available resources. The **maintenance costs are currently paid by the “road fund”**, but this is decreasing and, according to government estimates, it would not be sufficient to pay for the future interventions that have been planned. In particular, Switzerland will have to find a way to pay the additional **annual costs that amount about to SFr 275 million**, of which approximately SFr 30 million must be paid by the Cantons.

The last increase was in 1995 – Thus, the Federal Council has put forward a proposal to increase the price of the motorway sticker to SFr 100, and, in the meantime, to introduce a sticker that will last two months, costing SFr 40. The document that explains the proposal says, “A short-lasting sticker is necessary because experience shows us that the drivers who use the national motorway network only for a short period, are not prepared to purchase a high-priced sticker and they prefer, instead, to take a longer route.” **The last increase in the price of the sticker was in 1995**. The note of the Federal Council explains, “The price will go up when the allocated reserves of the road fund fall below the threshold of SFr 1 billion, and greater financial security is inevitable. **This should happen in 2015.**”

The history of the “vignetta” – The sticker system is simple and generally well accepted. This is why the Federal Council wants to keep it. The annual sticker, which was **introduced in 1985 and whose price was increased in 1995 from SFr 30 to SFr 40**, should now cost SFr 100. In addition, a sticker valid for two months should be introduced, with a price of SFr 40. The beginning of validity will be indicated by a hole. Introducing a two-month sticker will require a number of traffic management measures to be adopted at border crossings. Foreign drivers will be expected to buy the short sticker at the border. Today, they usually buy it beforehand, at one of the approximately 12,000 sales points that exist abroad.

The electronic sticker – With this system, the registration number will be recorded into a database. The sticker will no longer be physically present on the vehicle, but will

be electronically recorded and the checks will be made using video systems. Consequently, it will be possible to purchase the sticker over the Internet, or from automatic distributors, or in manned outlets.

More border checks – Today, the presence of the sticker on the car is normally checked only during general traffic and border checks. If the annual price is increased, the checks will be intensified.

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