

Réaction du Club suédois au vote sur le péage de Stockholm

The Swedish Automobile Association believe the congestions charges system a drastic and bad solution, to solve the traffic problems in long term. The Swedish Automobile Association's policy is to say no to all forms of road taxes that further charges the motorists and we are therefore against a congestions charge system. No matter how the solution comes out on Sunday - we stand firm in our position.

For now, the readings are that it will be a vote for the system, i.e. a yes.

Traffic facts in short:

In the Stockholm City area (Sthlm) lives about 760 000 people in the county about 1.8 mil.

Every day about 650 000 people in the county travel by bus, subway, train or boat/ferries.

73% of the inhabitants that passes the citylimits (custome zones) in the morning uses public transportation.

63% of the working places in the city of Sthlm lies within the congestion charge boundaries.

71% of those who passes the boundaries passes them to go to work.

In the city of Sthlm there are 364 cars on every 1000 inhabitants, in the county 403 cars on every 1000 inhabitant (2005). Sthlm is one of the cities that has the fewest number of cars in the country related to it's inhabitants. (Sources: The city of Sthlm)

The only way to pass Stockholm (from north to south or vice versa) by car is by Essingeleden, or by going through the city core.

Essingeleden is the most heavy loaded road in the whole country. As a ship (tug boat) collided with the traffic route last summer the road had to be shut off and car travellers had to take re routes of more than one hour to pass from north to south. It's a very very sensitive traffic situation with a very heavy loaded road that the Sthlm county is depending on.

Facts about the congestion trials:

Half of the income in a forthcoming congestion charge system will go to running the system!

Due to juridical laws the congestion charges has to be a charge of taxation. (Our comment: Therefore it's also a problem that a congestion charge system will charge taxes that only the national government can make decisions of. It's therefore not really up to the Sthlm city-residents to make a decision of an issue that belongs to the national government. Also, the residents cannot by voting in this matter make decisions that the (national) congestion taxes paid in Sthlm should go back to Sthlm and definitely not that they should be reinvested in the Sthlm public transport system, as said now. All those decisions are to be made by the government!)

N.B. The city council has decided that only the Sthlm city area can vote in this matter – not the county inhabitants - who probably are more dependant of the car (to get to work) then the people living in the city area! Because of that some other municapalities within the county have decided to vote too... even if their vote won't be counted for in Stockholm city.

Scientifically the measuring period has been too short to be able to make all the conclusions. (In reality only 4 mths has been comparible with the year before and for these kind of trials you at least a trial period of 12 -18 mths.)

Our opinion:

The Swedish Automobile Association's policy is to say no to all forms of road taxes that further charges the motorists.

The Swedish car owners (4 million out of 9 million inhabitants) yearly pay 80 milliard SEK to the government in car taxes and only 16 milliard SEK is re invested in road infrastructure and safety.

Therefore we also say no to congestion charges in the Swedish cities. We believe that more of the motorist paid tax money should be invested in road systems and traffic safety.

Stockholm needs to address the traffic situation and our demand is to build the ring roads that have been discussed for about twenty years.

In the short perspective we, among other things, suggest a dynamic traffic signal system, a net of entrance parking combined with shuttle buses and a functional and expanded public transport system. An analysis that we (a professor in traffic planning) have made of the system also shows that when you convert saved time vs invested money from motorists they will benefit the least.

Also worth noting is that the traffic situation, counted in cars passing the inner city, hasn't really changed since the early nineties – despite the fact that the number of inhabitants and cars have increased. (See enclosed pdf, page 9-11, from The Sthlm Yearbook for 2006)

Also, the socialists (s) were at first against the congestion charge system and promised the voters last election that no such things would come to Sthlm. Later in charge in the city council they had to agree with the environmental party (mp) to try this congestions charge system in order for themselves to get majority in the city council. So it's also a very complex question in Sthlm since the (socialist) (s)-promise became a lie and a democratic betrayal..... Later on they ran over the opposition in choosing election notes with texts that where favorising a yes – when there in a democratic system only should be a simple yes note and a no note. It's up to the coming government to make the final decision. The right hand side ("the blue side") has already declared that if they win the national election they also will include the votes of all municipalities voting within the county. (The municipalities run by the "red" side won't vote....). So even a yes in the city might not be a yes on a national level.... As you probably can tell – it's all a mess.

You will find more information on this link beneath. Our analysis of this information is that it is influenced by the political majority of the city council (who wants a congestion charge system).
<http://www.stockholmsforsoket.se/templates/page.aspx?id=183>

<http://www.rtk.sll.se/english/>

The office of regional transportation and urban planning.

With best regards,
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