

Dear Friends of the Swiss Sovereign Money Initiative,

In this newsletter:

- A Christmas present for us!
- Press reactions
- The process for bringing a Swiss people's initiative to referendum
- Criteria necessary for a People's Initiative to win at referendum

The full newsletter in German can be viewed [here](#).

Please note that the word "referendum" has a very precise meaning in Switzerland and here the word "referendum" is being used with the British definition: a vote on an issue in which all voters in a nation can take part.

### **A Christmas present for us!**

On 24th December the Federal Council of Switzerland has formally announced that the Swiss Sovereign Money Initiative has achieved the necessary number of signatures for a referendum. This announcement can be seen [here](#) in German, French and Italian.

### **Press reactions**

[Daily Telegraph](#) (UK)

[RT](#) (Russia)

(see the [German newsletter](#) for coverage in German)

### **The process for bringing a Swiss people's initiative (an initiative) to referendum**

**Step 1)** (After more than 100,000 valid signatures have been collected and validated). The Initiative will be discussed in the Executive - the Swiss Federal Council. They have up to a maximum of one year for this. After this they have to send a recommendation (to accept or reject the initiative with explanations) to the Legislative - the parliament.

**Step 2)** The Initiative is submitted to both houses of parliament. They have up to two and a half years to consider the Initiative, then they must make a recommendation (to accept or reject the Initiative, with explanations).

**Step 3)** The national referendum will normally take place about 10 months after parliament has made their recommendations. A booklet is sent to each eligible voter together with the ballot slips about a month before the vote. This booklet contains the proposed new text for the

constitution (as written on the forms for collecting the signatures), an explanation of the Initiative written by the people bringing the Initiative, and the recommendations from the Federal Council and both houses of parliament.

However, the Federal Council or parliament may make an alternative proposal, in which case the process is even longer! The reason for this is that initiatives in their original form are often viewed as rather extreme by mainstream politics. Therefore the Federal Council and parliament can work together to make an alternative proposal which is usually a "watered down" version of original which they hope that people will choose rather than the original (usually more extreme) version. In this case both the Federal Council and the Parliament have more time to make this alternative proposal and their recommendations.

In conclusion, it's not possible to say when the Swiss Sovereign Money Initiative will come to a referendum. The shortest time an initiative took to be voted on in a referendum was 13 months after the beginning of collecting signatures, and the longest time took 6 years.

### **Criteria necessary for a People's Initiative to win at referendum**

In the simple case (without an alternative proposal) an initiative will be enacted if it has the majority of the votes cast AND if - when the results are calculated for each canton - the majority of cantons are in favour of the initiative (the very small cantons counting only as half). In the case with an alternative proposal, people are allowed to vote for both the alternative and the original (a "double yes"), as well as being allowed to vote for one and against the other or against both. If only the alternative version satisfies the criteria above, this will be enacted, likewise for the original proposal. There is a further question on the ballot paper to choose between the alternative and original proposals should both happen to satisfy the criteria.

The campaign is starting soon!

We won't be sitting around drinking tea waiting for the initiative to get to the referendum stage! We're planning a campaign-day in March to set out our plans, get people's ideas, and to get people organised to start campaigning. We're looking forward to the start of the campaign and will publicise the date as soon as possible. All donations towards this campaign will be gratefully received! Click for [PayPal](#).

Wishing you all the best for 2016 on behalf of the campaign team at MoMo,

Emma Dawnay