

HOME | LATEST NEWS | TOPICS | IN DEPTH | MULTIMEDIA

BANKS IN TURMOIL » Desarrolladora Homex Ordered to Pay \$26.7M to Credit Suisse | SOCHI 2014

VOTERS' CHOICE

Abortions to remain covered by health insurance

National February 9, 2014 vote Direct democracy

Reuse article

EU DEAL-BREAKER?
Swiss vote on bringing back immigration quotas

Costs of abortion

February 9 vote: issues at stake

INTERACTIVE GRAPHIC
Vote results

comments

Readers Recommend

Like 45

by Susan Misicka, swissinfo.ch
February 9, 2014 - 14:12

Near-final poll results show that Swiss voters have rejected an initiative to drop abortions from basic health insurance. The vote came after conservatives launched an initiative to make the funding of abortion a "private matter".

On Sunday afternoon, the GfS Bern research and polling institute predicted that just 30% of voters, +/- 3%, would vote in favour of the initiative. Backed by an inter-party committee made up essentially of conservative Christians, the people's initiative was signed by about 110,000 voters – making it eligible for a popular vote.

It called for the introduction of a new article in the federal constitution and stated that abortion and foetal reduction (the elimination of one or more embryos in a pregnancy) should not be included in compulsory health insurance, apart from "rare exceptions concerning the mother".

The "no" committee welcomed the provisional results on Sunday.

"I'm very, very happy," committee president Babette Sigg Frank told the Swiss News Agency. "I didn't expect such a strong rejection. The results are as clear as they were in the vote 12 years ago."

Familiar territory

In 2002, the Swiss electorate approved the so-called first-trimester solution – which made abortion legal in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy. (Before 2002, women needed to have a professional verify that the procedure was necessary for mental health reasons.) That initiative, which passed with 72% of the votes, also established that private health insurance would cover the cost of voluntary terminations.

"I'm sure they'll be back in a few years," Sigg Frank said, noting that the initiative demonstrated a "worrying" return to conservative values.

"The aim of those who launched this initiative was to prohibit abortion. They will try to approach it in other ways, using other methods," she said.

Parliamentarian Barbara Schmid-Federer, also a member of the "no" committee, agreed with Sigg Frank.



In Switzerland, 75% of abortions are carried out before the eighth week, via pills rather than surgery (Keystone)

INTERACTIVE GRAPHIC
Vote results

Check the details of the three nationwide ballots on the updated graphic chart. It gives a breakdown from each of the 26 cantons and also shows the overall results. [...]

National

“The result is a clear vote of confidence in the current policy. But the abortion issue will remain controversial, and it is an emotional issue,” she told swissinfo.ch.

Opponents say a change in policy would undermine the principle of solidarity enshrined in the mandatory health insurance system, whereby annual premiums are pooled to finance everybody’s needs.

“A private matter”

Proponents of the initiative argued that it was unfair for people who object to abortions for moral reasons to have to help finance them.

“To me, abortion is a private matter – just like contraceptives. That doesn’t bother anybody. But suddenly the health insurance is supposed to pay for abortions,” Peter Föhn, member of the initiative committee, told swissinfo.ch prior to the vote. Föhn is a senator and member of the Swiss People’s Party.

Like every constitutional change, the initiative would have required a majority both of the nation’s people and of the cantons to pass.

Switzerland is fairly typical for Europe, but abortion policies around the world are quite varied.



EU DEAL-BREAKER?

Swiss vote on bringing back immigration quotas



Near final results in a Swiss referendum on curbing immigration show it will be a close finish on Sunday. The bid by rightwingers aimed to halt an “excessive influx” of foreigners. But the government and business leaders warned it would affect economic prosperity. [...]

🇨🇭 National 📅 February 9, 2014 vote 🗳️ Direct democracy 💬 2 comments

Costs of abortion

According to government figures, the cost of a termination of pregnancy ranges from CHF600-3,000. (\$670-3,350). The average cost of a pharmacological termination is CHF650 and a surgical termination comes to CHF1,000.

Overall, the costs are estimated at about CHF8 million a year. If treatment following an abortion is included, they are

CHF10-12 million. This represents about 0.05% of all the costs that are covered by compulsory health insurance. However, a part of the cost is assumed directly by the pregnant women (deductible and percentage of costs to be paid) and is thus not incurred by the health insurance fund.

It is thought that these costs correspond to an average charge of CHF0.05-0.06 a month per insured person, as health minister Alain Berset told parliament.

February 9 vote: issues at stake

Swiss voters decided on three separate issues:

An initiative by the rightwing Swiss People's Party for the re-introduction of annual immigration caps – also for asylum seekers

A proposal by a group of conservatives that abortions no longer be covered by the mandatory health insurance

A constitutional amendment defining the financing of railway infrastructure projects

At the same time, elections and votes on a variety of issues took place at cantonal and local levels.

READERS RECOMMEND is a beta test, in cooperation with EPFL Artificial Intelligence Laboratory (LIA).



Moving towards the UN in slow motion



Young illegal immigrants receive job boost



TIGHT QUARTERS

Prisons are more crowded than ever

FAMILY PLANNING CLINIC

To abort or not, helping women figure it out



Deciding whether to go through with an unplanned pregnancy can be difficult. Staff members at a clinic in Bern offer support to women of all ages and walks of life.

[...]

[National](#) [February 9, 2014 vote](#) [Direct democracy](#) [5 comments](#)

ANTI-IMMIGRATION

Protest vote could be decisive at ballot box



A proposal to re-introduce immigration quotas has been winning ground over the past few weeks, according to the latest opinion poll. The outcome of the vote on February 9 may be decided by protest voters. [...]

[National](#) [February 9, 2014 vote](#) [Direct democracy](#) [5 comments](#)

Links

- [↗ Site of "yes" committee for the initiative "Funding of abortion is a private matter" \(German, French, Italian\)](#)
- [↗ Site of the "no" committee \("No to the attack on the first-trimester rule"\) \(German, French, Italian\)](#)
- [↗ Initiative "Funding of abortion is a private matter", dossier at the site of parliament \(German, French, Italian\)](#)
- [↗ Peter Föhn's website](#)
- [↗ Anne-Marie Rey's website \(German, French, Italian\)](#)

Place your feedback

SWISSINFO.CH

Free mobile and TV apps allow you to access our highlights. You can also keep up with the latest Swiss news via a widget, or consult RSS feeds in your favorite reader.



RSS

Keep in touch

ANDROID

Android app with selected highlights

IPHONE & IPAD

iOS app with selected highlights

CONNECTED TV

Highlights for TV

WINDOWS 8



FACEBOOK

Curated content, by region



TWITTER

Global news feed



YOUTUBE

Video channel



GOOGLE+

Experimenting on G+

© swissinfo.ch

World partners: Radio Netherlands Worldwide | Radio Sweden | Radio Canada International | NHK World | Radio Australia International | Radio Praha

RTS | RSI | RTR | SRF

SWI

swissinfo - a branch of the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation **SRG SSR**