

Will other cities copy Paris decision to hike parking charges for SUVs?

Level 1: Elementary / Pre-Intermediate

1 Warmer

a. Match the capital cities with the countries.

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1. Turkey | a. Seoul |
| 2. Egypt | b. Bucharest |
| 3. Canada | c. Wellington |
| 4. Norway | d. Ankara |
| 5. Peru | e. Ottawa |
| 6. South Korea | f. Lima |
| 7. New Zealand | g. Oslo |
| 8. Romania | h. Cairo |

2 Key words

a. Fill the gaps in the sentences using these key words from the text.

charge

lungs

payment

referendum

triple

1. A _____ is an occasion when everyone in a country can vote to decide on one particular subject.
2. A _____ is an amount of money you pay or receive.
3. If you _____ something, you increase it three times.
4. Your _____ are the two organs in your body that fill with air when you breathe.
5. A _____ is the amount of money that you have to pay, especially when you visit a place.

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emissions

myth

polling station

proposal

tabloid

6. _____ are gases that go into the air.
7. A _____ is a building where people go to vote.
8. A _____ is a newspaper with small pages, stories about famous people and not much serious news.
9. A _____ is something that people wrongly believe to be true.
10. A _____ is a plan or suggestion that people have to consider.

b. Complete the sentences below using some of the words from task A.

1. It gets so hot in the summer that our electric bill _____ from having the air conditioning on all day.
2. The government will install 100 temporary _____ for the next election.
3. I forgot to cancel my streaming subscription, so I got an automated _____ of £10 to my credit card.
4. Joan presented her _____ to make the company greener to the board of directors.
5. Many countries are trying to implement new regulations for companies to reduce _____.

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- 1 Tens of thousands of people in Paris recently voted in a referendum about whether owners of big cars should pay more to park in the city. They voted to triple payments.
- 2 Many people think this can be a model for cities across Europe. They are trying to make their streets safer and their air cleaner while sales of heavy vehicles increase.
- 3 Big cars, the evidence shows, are more likely to kill people than small ones. They also put more dirt into people's lungs and planet-heating gas into the atmosphere.
- 4 But cities trying to cut the number of SUVs on their streets face opposition from owners. The result of the vote in Paris was that 55% supported the plan. However, the number of people voting was very low.
- 5 Outside a polling station in a wealthy district of Paris where 40% of cars are SUVs, Marie-Claire Polo, a journalist, said the rise of SUVs was bad for the environment. But she added that parking charges were too high for some people who needed a car.
- 6 Joanne Boulenger, a 33-year-old marketer, said she wanted to make Paris greener. She was also worried that the referendum would cause people to fight each other.
- 7 New cars in the EU and UK have grown 1cm wider every two years. Also, sales of large luxury cars have increased. The International Energy Agency warned that the global rise of SUVs is damaging efforts to cut emissions. However, the car industry is against efforts to reduce the number of SUVs, which is a major problem.
- 8 In Germany, the most powerful tabloid newspaper has criticised attempts to put a general speed limit on motorways as an attack on civil liberties. In the UK, some people have spread the idea that "15-minute cities" are government efforts to control the population.
- 9 Bernard, 82, coming out of the voting station, said the Parisian proposal was "discrimination". He added that it was a myth that big cars were more dangerous than small ones, despite research which shows the opposite.
- 10 Paris may become the first capital city to charge heavy cars more than lighter ones. Anne Hidalgo, the Mayor of Paris, has said she hopes other cities will follow the example of Paris. The vote could also send a signal to the car industry to stop making bigger cars.

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3 Comprehension check

a. Answer these questions about the text.

1. How many people voted in the referendum?
2. Which are more likely to kill people, big cars or small cars?
3. What percentage of the people who voted supported the plan to charge SUV owners more to park in the city?
4. What percentage of cars in the ninth district are SUVs?
5. Are new cars getting bigger or smaller?
6. Is the car industry in favour of reducing the number of SUVs or against it?
7. What does 82-year-old Bernard think about the Paris plan?
8. What does the Mayor of Paris hope?

4 Key language

a. Match the words in column A with those in column B to make compound nouns from the text.

A	B
1. clean	industry
2. polling	liberties
3. luxury	air
4. car	limit
5. speed	station
6. civil	car

b. Select three of the nouns from task A and write personalised sentences.

5 Discussion

a. Discuss these statements.

- "All city centres should be for pedestrians only."
- "It's unfair for SUV owners to pay extra to drive into or park at city centres."

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6 In your own words

- a. Use an internet search engine to find more information about different types of cars or vehicles used in your town or city (bicycles, motorbikes, cars, SUVs, etc.) Find out about:
- general information (manufacturer, size, weight, etc.)
 - their costs (including purchase, maintenance, petrol (gasoline), etc.)
 - how easy it is to use this type of transport in your city
 - what have other cities/countries done around this type of vehicle
- b. Present your findings to the class.