

Consultation on a potential local authority Cruise Ship Levy in Scotland

February 2025

Ministerial foreword

In 2024 the Scottish Parliament passed the now Visitor Levy (Scotland) Act, which for the first time gave local authorities the power to introduce a visitor levy on overnight accommodation in their area. As the Act was being considered by Parliament, calls were made for a similar levy power to be given to local authorities in relation to cruise ship passengers.

The Scottish Government has therefore committed to exploring such a levy, and this consultation is the latest part of that work. We have already held roundtable events to hear the views of the cruise ship industry, local government, and others. We want to continue the helpful dialogue begun at those events, and explore further what a cruise ship levy could mean in a Scottish context.

We want to hear from those with views and knowledge in this area, including local authorities, those involved with the cruise ship sector, ports, island communities, those involved with tourism and others, including businesses large and small.

I strongly encourage everyone to respond to this consultation and I would like to thank you in advance for taking the time to do so. I look forward to hearing your views.

Shona Robison MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government

1. Introduction

The creation of a cruise ship levy for Scotland was first raised during work to explore levies for tourists. The possibility of applying a levy to cruise ships therefore featured in the public consultation on visitor levies that was held in 2019. At that time the Scottish Government decided to focus on a visitor levy that applied only to overnight accommodation, in light of consultation responses and given the complexity that would have arisen with trying to create one levy that applied to both overnight accommodation and cruise ships passengers. During the passage of the now Visitor Levy (Scotland) Act 2024, which gave local authorities the power to introduce a visitor levy on stays in overnight accommodation, the issue of a potential cruise ship levy was raised again by members of the Scottish Parliament, local authorities, and others. In response the Scottish Government indicated it was open to exploring a potential cruise ship levy in the future.

With the successful passage of the Visitor Levy (Scotland) Act in summer 2024 the Government began to take forward work to explore a cruise ship levy in more detail. This was reflected in the Scottish Government's Programme for Government 2024-25, which committed the Government to intensifying work on a potential cruise ship levy and undertaking a public consultation on the matter.

1.1 Roundtable events

Following the announcement in the Programme for Government the Scottish Government, with input from industry bodies and COSLA, arranged four roundtable events on a potential cruise ship levy. The purpose of these events was to bring together representatives of cruise ship operators, ports, local authorities, tourism organisations, and other bodies, to explore the merits and issues around a potential cruise ship levy. The events were chaired by a range of Ministers whose portfolios were relevant, including the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government and the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands.

The events took place in Greenock, Inverness, Kirkwall, and Edinburgh, near parts of the country that receive a considerable number of cruise ships and cruise ship passengers. The discussions were wide ranging, but some common themes emerged at all the events. These included:

- the need to be clear on the purpose and rationale of any cruise ship levy;
- noting the potential deterrent effect a cruise ship levy could have on port calls by cruise ships;
- how any funding raised by a cruise ship levy should be used, and what restrictions (if any) should be placed on how a local authority could use such funds;
- noting the benefits and pressures that cruise ship passengers brought to the areas they visited.

The roundtable events were well attended, and were a useful opportunity to explore some of the issues around a potential cruise ship levy.

1.2 This consultation

This public consultation process is the next part of the Government's work on considering a cruise ship levy. It seeks views on the benefits and problems a cruise ship levy could bring, the potential impacts (both positive and negative), and practical questions about how any such levy could best work. The public consultation on the visitor levy in 2019 asked a question about applying a levy to cruise ships. This elicited a variety of views, with some groups supporting such a levy, whilst business organisations and port operators were opposed. Local authority respondents to that consultation were fairly evenly divided.

This consultation paper recognises the responses on that question in the earlier consultation, and explores the issues in greater depth. It also reflects that over 5 years have passed since the visitor levy consultation took place, the context is different (such as the increase in the number of cruise ship calls in Scotland), and views may have changed. In line with the principles of New Deal for Business the Scottish Government is seeking input from a range of businesses of different sizes and across sectors as policy is developed. This will help with understanding any direct and indirect impacts of a levy, positive, negative, intended, and unintended.

The Scottish Government has not made a final decision on whether or not to give local authorities the power to introduce a cruise ship levy in their areas. This consultation paper discusses and seeks views on a number of practical questions about how any cruise ship levy in Scotland would best work. That is because such questions about the practical working of such a levy are a necessary part of considering such a levy. We are aware that a cruise ship levy in Scotland would be first such levy in the United Kingdom, and we will need to carefully consider market implications and the effect on local economies and communities of such a levy.

Throughout this document we have used the term 'cruise ship levy' to refer to a potential levy to be applied in relation to cruise ships visiting ports where there is the opportunity for passengers to disembark. One of the consultation questions asks for views on what name should be used for such a levy.

As part of work on a potential cruise ship levy the Scottish Government is carrying out research on cruise ship levies in other parts of the world. That work is ongoing and will result in a published paper in the future. However, Annex A of this consultation paper sets out the interim findings of research on cruise ship tourism and cruise levies in four jurisdictions: Amsterdam, Barcelona, Dubrovnik, and Venice. This paper also refers to the partial Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment (BRIA) carried out on a potential cruise ship levy. This has been published alongside this consultation paper, and is available on the Scottish Government website.

2. The Policy context

There are several elements to the policy context around a potential cruise ship levy in Scotland. These include the shape and size of the cruise ship sector in Scotland; the importance of tourism in Scotland; the Verity House Agreement with local government; the principles underpinning the Scottish Government's approach to taxation; and island communities. All of these aspects are an important part of the overall context, and they are covered in turn below.

2.1 Cruise ship visits in Scotland

Analysis carried out by the Scottish Government has identified approximately 1,000 cruise visits to Scottish ports in 2024, with a combined passenger capacity of 1.2 million¹. This is an increase from 2019, when there were an estimated 893 cruise ship calls bringing 817,000 passengers (Ekosgen, 2020). The areas scheduled to welcome the most passengers were Invergordon, Orkney, Edinburgh, Lerwick, and Greenock, and the average ship in the five busiest ports carried over 1,000 passengers.

The number of passengers who disembark from a ship will vary by ship and port, and will be influenced by multiple factors such as the attractions available on shore and even the weather that day.

Cruise passengers make up approximately 2% of the total number of overnight stays by visitors in Scotland ('visitor nights')². However, it is worth noting that in some parts of Scotland cruise passengers make up a much higher percentage of the number of visitors. For example, in 2018 84% of overnight visitors in Orkney, and 79% of those in Shetland, were cruise ship passengers (Ekosgen, 2020, Table 3.3).

The sector is also highly seasonal, as shown in the chart overleaf. Arrivals start from March and extend to November, but 97% of passengers in 2024 were scheduled to arrive between April and September, with 60% in the busiest three months of June to August.

¹ Based on an analysis of the cruise schedules for 2024. Where ship passenger capacities were not given by the port, they were matched with capacity figures from operators to provide an estimate of total passenger capacity on cruises scheduled to arrive in Scotland on each day in 2024. Where one ship makes multiple calls, each visit is counted as equal to that ship's passenger capacity. Where a call was cancelled, the passenger capacity was taken to be zero. Full calendar year schedules for some ports were not able to be located.

² 'Visitor nights' means the number of nights spent by visitors, e.g. two people staying for five nights would make ten visitor nights. International visitors spent approximately 34.4 million nights in Scotland during 2023 (Visit Scotland, 2024); British residents spent approximately 35.4 million nights in Scotland during 2023 (Visit Scotland, 2024a). Combined, this makes 69.8 million overnight visitor nights.

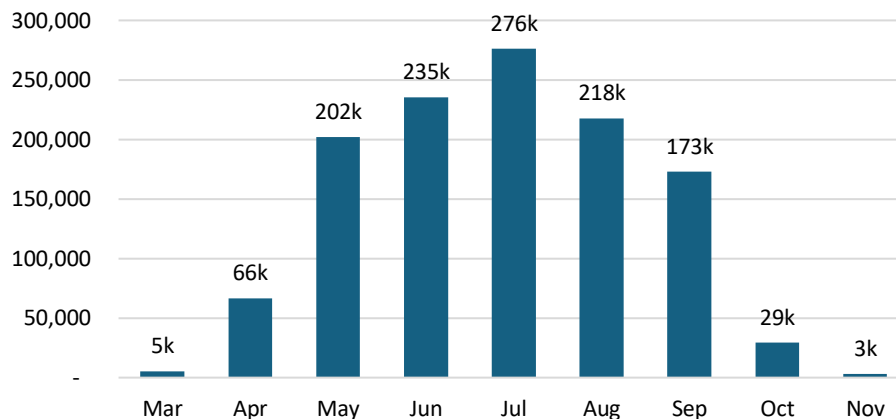


Figure 1: Scheduled Passenger Capacity for Scottish Cruise Ports, 2024

Source: Scottish Government Analysis of Cruise Schedules

The arrivals are therefore unevenly spread over time. One large cruise ship can bring several thousand people at once, and the ship generally departs on the same day. The busiest day identified at a single port in 2024 was in Invergordon, where 9,600 people were due to arrive on one day in September.

The cruise sector was severely affected by COVID, with a large reduction in passengers in 2020-2021. Since 2022 the sector has enjoyed a rapid recovery. Industry figures from 2023 show that cruise tourism around the world has recovered more quickly than other forms of international tourism (CLIA, 2024a), and the number of cruise passengers in north Europe was around 30% higher in 2023 than in 2019 (CLIA, 2024a). Cruise operators have increased orders for new ships to meet the growth the sector expects to continue, and these ships are generally larger than those that have come before (CLIA, 2024a). It is not known exactly how this will affect the size of ships visiting Scotland, but the general trend is towards larger vessels.

2.2 Tourism in Scotland

The tourism sector is a crucially important part of the Scottish economy. It creates jobs, sustains communities and local economies, and enables visitors and residents alike to experience the strong tourism offer we have here in Scotland. In 2023, domestic and international overnight visitors made 16.4 million visits to Scotland, spending 69.8 million visitor nights here (Visit Scotland, 2024; Visit Scotland, 2024a). In addition Scotland's tourism sector makes a significant contribution to the economy, comprising around 16,000 businesses (9% of all businesses) and employing 245,000 people (9% of all employment) in 2023 (Scottish Government, 2024).

The tourism sector in Scotland is aligned around Scotland Outlook 2030, the national tourism strategy. Launched in 2020, Scotland Outlook 2030 outlines a clear vision for the future of the tourism industry. The Scottish Government worked closely with the sector to develop the strategy, and it sets out the shared ambition for Scotland to be

the world leader in 21st century tourism and to be one of the most economically, environmentally and socially sustainable destinations in the world.

2.3 Verity House Agreement

In June 2023 local and national government signed the Verity House Agreement. This Agreement sets out principles for the Scottish Government and COSLA to support work together on a number of issues, including the economy, public service, and tackling poverty. The Agreement is part of the New Deal with Local Government, which includes a commitment to provide greater flexibility for local authorities over financial arrangements. This commitment includes consideration of further revenue raising powers for local government, including a potential cruise ship levy.

2.4 The Scottish Government approach to taxation

The Scottish Government's approach to taxation has developed over time following the devolution of tax powers in 2012. The Framework for Tax sets out the principles and strategic objectives that underpin the Scottish Approach to Taxation, as well as our approach to decision making, engagement and how we manage and sequence tax policy and delivery (Scottish Government, 2021). Building on the Framework for Tax principles, Scotland's Tax Strategy sets out medium-term ambitions for how the tax system will develop to support the delivery of our four government priorities: eradicating child poverty, growing the economy, tackling the climate emergency, and ensuring high quality and sustainable public services (Scottish Government, 2024a).

These principles will support delivery of a fair and progressive tax system, which aligns policy aims with outcomes, is informed by robust evidence and engagement with others and takes a strategic view of the tax system. The development of any cruise ship levy will follow the principles and strategy set out by the Scottish Government in the documents referred to above.

2.5 Island Communities

Our islands bring a crucial contribution to Scotland's society, culture and economy. Every island is different, with its unique set of challenges, opportunities and ambitions. Under the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018, the Scottish Government and 70 other relevant bodies have a duty to consider issues that affect island communities in the development and delivery of their policies, strategies and services.

A potential cruise ship levy has a particular relevance to island communities, given that cruise ships calls at islands can bring both benefits and pressures to island communities in a way that differs from port calls on the mainland. As noted above cruise ship passengers also form a large percentage of visitors to some islands. To reflect the prominence of cruise tourism in island communities one of the four national roundtable discussion events was held in Kirkwall, and we look forward to hearing the views of island communities in response to this consultation.

3. A potential cruise ship levy power for local authorities

As discussed above during work to develop and consider a visitor levy on overnight accommodation calls were made for there to be put in place a similar levy that would apply to cruise ships and their passengers. Several parts of the world already have such levies, and some organisations believed that such a levy would also be appropriate in Scotland.

The Scottish Government has no plans to introduce a nationwide cruise ship levy. This consultation is about potentially giving local authorities the power to introduce a cruise ship levy in all or part(s) of their area, if they wished to do so. If such a power was given to local authorities there would be no requirement for them to introduce a cruise ship levy. It would be for each local authority to decide whether or not it wished to use the power.

At the roundtable events those in support of a cruise ship levy argued that such a levy would provide a means of raising revenue from the cruise ship industry, reflecting the impact that they believed it had on communities and local authority services. A view was also expressed that where a local authority had decided to introduce a visitor levy those using overnight accommodation would have to pay to stay in a local authority area, but without a cruise ship levy there would be no equivalent levy that could be used in relation to cruise ships. The Scottish Government is interested in the rationale that those who support a cruise ship levy put forward, and what the purpose and goals of any such levy would be.

Arguments that were made against a cruise ship levy at the roundtable events were that cruise ships and their passengers have, on balance, a positive economic impact on the areas they visit. Some attendees argued that passengers have very limited impact on local infrastructure as they do not use public services such as buses or health services, though other attendees took the view that passengers do bring pressure on local services. Attendees at the roundtable events also raised the potential deterrent effect of any cruise ship levy, and the reduction in the number of port calls that it could possibly lead to. The potential positive and negative economic and other impacts of any such levy, including any deterrent effect, are discussed later in this consultation paper.

The Scottish Government would welcome views on whether or not local authorities should be given the power to introduce a cruise ship levy in their areas. We are also interested in any alternatives there could be to such a levy, and how these could work in practice.

Question 1: Do you support giving local authorities the power to create a cruise ship levy in their area, if they wish to do so?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Please provide the reasons for your answer.

As set out above those who support a cruise ship levy argue it would reflect the impact cruise ships and their passengers have on local communities and services, and would allow a local authority to apply a levy to cruise ship passengers in a way that similar to those using overnight accommodation.

Question 2: What alternatives (if any) do you think would achieve the same goals as a cruise ship levy? Please provide details of any alternative option(s).

4. Basis of the charge

The intention behind any cruise ship levy would be to have the levy apply to those ships that are carrying paying passengers, on a journey involving two or more nights on the ship, and which give the passengers the option to disembark from the vessel onto the Scottish mainland or a Scottish island. It is not intended that a cruise ship levy would apply to ferry services in Scotland, or to those visiting Scottish waters in private boats or yachts and which are not carrying paying passengers. As mentioned above, it would be for a local authority to decide whether or not to introduce any cruise ship levy in its area.

In considering the potential options for the basis of any cruise ship levy it is important to note the fact that, legally, the boundary of a local authority ends beyond the foreshore (with only three exceptions of which we are aware³). It would therefore usually not be possible to apply a levy directly to an activity that takes place beyond the foreshore, e.g. to a cruise ship dropping anchor off the coast of a local authority. The Scottish Government has taken that into account when putting forward the possible options below.

There are a number of possible activities that could form the basis of a cruise ship levy in Scotland. Four of these are set out and discussed in turn below, and we would welcome views on the advantages and disadvantages of each. They are:

- basing the level of levy paid on the gross tonnage of a vessel;
- basing the level of levy to be paid on the total passenger capacity of a vessel;
- basing the level of levy to be paid on the total number of passengers on board a vessel when it moors at a port;
- basing the level of levy to be paid on the number of passengers that disembark at a port.

4.1 Gross Tonnage of Vessel

One approach to a cruise ship levy would be to use the gross tonnage (GT) of the vessel as the basis for calculating a levy. All vessels that operate in UK waters must declare their gross tonnage. Ships over 24 metres in length are issued with international tonnage certificates by a certifying authority, and all ships operating in UK waters are required to hold an international tonnage certificate (Merchant Shipping (Tonnage) Regulations 1997; United Nations, 1969).

The levy could be based on a cost per GT, could be a flat fee that applied to all cruise ships, or could be a varying levy based on bands linked to the gross tonnage of a ship. In this approach the event that triggered the levy would be the ship mooring at the relevant port (one at which a local authority had decided to apply a cruise ship levy), and with the option for passengers to disembark from the ship. Such an approach would have the advantage of being clear, and potentially reflect the size of a cruise ship, and therefore the number of passengers it would be likely to disembark.

³ The local authority boundary has been extended to include a specified area of inshore waters in relation to Inverclyde Council, Aberdeen City Council, and Shetland Islands Council.

Available research suggests that this approach is currently being practiced in a limited number of jurisdictions and under specific circumstances. As of 2016, Greenland moved from a per passenger tax of 525 DKK (Danish Krone) to charging 1.1 DKK per gross tonnage of vessels (which means a 4,200 ton vessel pays around £4,730 DKK which is approximately £530) (Bogason et al., 2021). This fee is charged at each port of call within the jurisdiction. Greece has also applied a cruising tax based on vessel size on all private and commercial leisure crafts since 2014. However, it should be noted that the Greek Government has also recently announced changes to its practice where cruise ships are concerned, and will now be applying a per passenger fee of 20 euros to all cruise ship visitors stopping at the islands of Santorini and Mykonos, and a 5 euro fee at all other islands and destinations within the country (Reuters, 2024).

4.2 Passenger capacity

Another possible approach to a cruise ship levy would be to use a ship's total passenger capacity as the basis for calculating a levy. In this approach the levy could be set at a figure per passenger (in terms of capacity), or could be set in broad capacity bands. This approach would need to require cruise ship operators to declare the passenger capacity of the relevant ship. It is also worth noting that the passenger capacity of a ship can change over time, as space on board on a vessel can be reconfigured.

In this approach the event that triggered the levy would be the ship mooring at the port at which a local authority has decided to apply a cruise ship levy, and with the option for passengers to disembark from the ship.

Available evidence from international examples suggests that this is the most common approach, used in locations including Dubrovnik. However, there is significant variation in how fees are applied. For example, in Dubrovnik, a lump sum fee is applied based on the passenger capacity within set ranges (e.g. a ship with a capacity between 1001-2000 passengers would be charged a lump sum fee of approximately 2700 euro) (Republic of Croatia: Ministry of Tourism and Sport, 2019). Further examples and details on these cases are available in Annex A of this paper, and the partial BRIA published alongside this consultation paper.

4.3 Number of passengers on board

Another approach to a cruise ship levy would be to base it on the total number of passengers on board a vessel when it moors at a port. This is an approach taken in a number of parts of the world, such as Amsterdam where cruise ships must register with the Passenger Terminal Authority and provide a manifest of passengers. This manifest has to distinguish between those who are continuing with the cruise from Amsterdam, known as transit passengers, and those starting or completing their cruise in the city, known as turnaround passengers. The cruise ship tax is then calculated based on the total number of transit passengers.

Advantages of this approach are that passengers would not need to be counted as they disembarked, reducing the potential administrative burden, and the level of

cruise ship levy to be paid could be calculated as soon as a ship moored in a port. A levy could potentially be based on a per passenger basis, or in bands depending on the number of passengers.

4.4 Disembarking passengers

A fourth possible approach to a cruise ship levy would be to use the number of passengers disembarking from a ship as the basis for calculating a levy. This would have the advantage of aligning the level of cruise ship levy paid with the number of passengers physically being in the area. Disadvantages of this approach would be that the level of cruise ship levy to be paid could not be calculated in advance, and it would be likely that passengers would need to be counted on and off the ship, with any exemptions (see below) applied. A range of approaches could be taken to who would pay or collect the levy in this scenario. It could be that the cruise ship operator counted the number of passengers to leave the ship (or use tendering boats), and then paid the appropriate level of cruise ship levy; alternatively the local authority, port operator, or another body could count the number of passengers and then bill the cruise ship operator.

In this approach the event that triggered the levy would be:

- (a) passengers setting foot on land in the area where a cruise ship levy applied, whether that be from leaving a cruise ship via a gangway; or
- (b) where a cruise ship is at anchor off the coast, stepping off a boat tendering passengers to and from a cruise ship.

This approach is similar to that adopted in Venice, where a “Day Visit” fee is applied to all tourists visiting the city centre who are not booked into accommodation in the city. (The “Day Visit” fee is not technically a cruise ship levy as it is applied not only to those visitors arriving by cruise ship, but also those who arrive by car, train, or other means of transport.) In this case, cruise ship passengers wishing to visit the city are required to either pay the fee individually online in advance or remit the fee via their carrier, whether that be a cruise line or other means of transport. The details of this case can be found in Annex A, and in the partial BRIA being published alongside this paper.

Question 3: What should the primary basis of a Cruise Ship Levy charge be, if introduced in Scotland?

Select one

- Tonnage of a ship
- Passenger capacity of a ship
- Number of passengers on board a ship
- Number of passengers to disembark from a ship
- Other (please specify)
- Don't know

Please provide the reasons for your answer.

4.5 Environmental Aspects

The environmental performance and impact of cruise ships has been an area of increasing focus over recent years. In the past it has therefore been suggested that a potential cruise ship levy in Scotland should have some element linked to the environmental impact of cruise ships. This could be some increase in the level of levy paid if a ship had poor environmental credentials, or a reduction if it has positive ones (such as being equipped to use shore power, where it was available). We would be interested in views on this aspect, and on how best any environmental element of a cruise ship levy could be calculated.

In cases such as Barcelona, concerns around the environmental impact of cruise ships were one reason for the introduction (or increase) of cruise ship levies. In Barcelona's case some funds from the levy are used to mitigate the industry's environmental impacts. Furthermore, cruise ship operators docking in Barcelona can apply for a rebate to taxes applied to the vessels (not the passenger levy) based on meeting certain environmental requirements. Ships using liquefied natural gas (LNG) for propulsion are eligible for a 10% rebate, while those ships using it for hotelling systems are eligible for 30%. Newer ships and those able to demonstrate certificates for good environmental management are also eligible for further rebates of 12% and 5% respectively. The maximum possible rebate on all taxes is 40%.

However, much of the international evidence available suggests that in jurisdictions where cruise ship levies have been applied, environmental impacts and fees are handled separately. For example, in Norway an Environmental Port Index was implemented to differentiate pricing for cruise ship based on how 'clean' the ships are (Sandven, Jørgensen, and Wassler, 2024). These economic incentives are only applied to mooring and berthing fees, rather than to the cruise ship levy.

Alternatively, some jurisdictions apply an additional fee to passengers that is distinct from but charged at the same time as the levy. For example, in addition to their cruise ship levy, the Bahamas also charge a \$5 US dollar "tourism sustainability levy" to all passengers arriving or leaving the islands by cruise ship (The Parliament of the Bahamas, 2023). Similarly, in 2025 Iceland will be introducing an "infrastructure fee" of 2500 Icelandic Króna (approximately £15) that will be applied to each passenger on any docking cruise ships. This will be in addition to its cruise ship levy (Cruise Iceland, 2024).

Question 4: In addition to the main basis of the charge, should any cruise ship levy also take into account the environmental impact of a cruise ship?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

5. Calculation and Collection

Whilst connected to the issue of the basis of any cruise ship levy charge, there is a separate consideration about who would be best to calculate and collect a cruise ship levy. A cruise ship levy could be a self-assessed tax, where the calculation is carried out by the organisation liable for paying it. Alternatively, it could be calculated by another organisation and then billed to the body liable for paying the levy.

If a cruise ship levy is self assessed then the cruise ship operator could be responsible for assessing the level of cruise ship levy to be paid, and paying that to the local authority at set intervals (e.g. annually). Another potential approach would be to require another body, such as the relevant port operator, or a national body such as Revenue Scotland, to collect a cruise ship levy, and then remit it to the local authority at set intervals. In many cases port operators will already collect fees and levies from cruise ship operators that use their port.

A further option could be for the local authority itself to be responsible for calculating and collecting a cruise ship levy. Under this arrangement the levy would not be self assessed but calculated and then billed by the local authority. If someone other than the local authority collects a cruise ship levy there will need to be appropriate arrangements for remitting (passing on) the levy to the local authority. Potentially the body responsible for collecting the levy could arrange for a third party (such as a shipping agent) to do so. All of the options would bring an additional administrative burden on the body involved, though the Government would seek to minimise any such burden.

Question 5: Who should collect any cruise ship levy? Select one

- Cruise ship operator
- Port operator
- Local authority
- Other (please specify)
- Don't know

Please provide the reasons for your answer.

6. Administration and Compliance

Any cruise ship levy would bring administration costs for the body or bodies that were required to administer it, including around collection and remittance. The Scottish Government's objective would be to seek to minimise administration costs, and we will further develop our understanding of the compliance costs as we continue work on the BRIA. It is possible that administration costs for any cruise ship levy could be recouped from the levy payment itself, either in full or up to a limit.

There appears to be limited available evidence from international examples regarding the administrative costs of operating cruise ship levies. The Scottish Government is not aware of evidence that specifically states that administrative costs for cruise ship levies in other parts of the world are being recouped via the levies themselves. However, there are several examples where the funds from the levies are either wholly or at least partially allocated to the organisations directly involved in managing and administering the levy. In the case of the Bahamas, the Passenger Tax Amendment dictates that the passenger tax be charged, levied, collected and paid into the Tourism Development fund that is managed by the state's Tourism Development Corporation (Parliament of the Bahamas, 2023). Another example is in Barcelona where legislation states that 50% of all collected funds from the levy and their separate visitor levy are allocated to the city's destination marketing organisation, Turism de Barcelona, who are one of the groups responsible for overseeing the management of the funds (Ajuntament de Barcelona Direcció de Turisme, 2017).

Whatever body is required to administer a cruise ship levy the relevant local authority will need to have appropriate powers to investigate, and if necessary, apply sanctions as part of any legal framework for a cruise ship levy. Other local taxes, such as Council Tax and the Visitor Levy, include provision for:

- penalties for delayed or non-payment;
- powers to require certain information related to a levy to be provided to the local authority;
- applying a fine related to non or late payment of a tax.

We would expect similar powers would be necessary in relation to a cruise ship levy (if local authorities were to be given the power to introduce one), for them to use in situations where it is necessary.

Question 6: What enforcement powers should a local authority, or other relevant body, have to ensure compliance (and prevent avoidance and evasion) by those required to pay a cruise ship levy? Please select all of the powers you think the body should have.

- powers to request, and obtain or inspect, the information necessary to assess the cruise ship levy liability of a body;
- power to apply a penalty (e.g. a fine) if a cruise ship levy is not paid when it is required to be;
- power to apply a penalty (e.g. a fine) if a body provides inaccurate information in relation to a cruise ship levy, or destroys requested information.

7. Rate of any cruise ship levy

In chapter 4 above we sought views on what should be the basis for the charge of any cruise ship levy. This chapter explores who should set the rate of any cruise ship levy.

As discussed earlier in this paper the potential cruise ship levy would be a local tax, with the decision on whether or not to introduce one for their area one taken by a local authority. The basis of the charge, however, would be decided nationally.

One aspect that could be decided nationally or locally is the rate of any cruise ship levy. This could be set at a national level, or could be decided locally by local authorities. Having a rate set nationally would have the advantage of simplicity for those paying and collecting the levy, and allow for clear communication on the rate that applied in Scotland. Having the rate set locally would enable local authorities to set rates that reflected local circumstances, and take account of views expressed in any local consultations.

Question 7: Do you think the rate of any cruise ship levy should be set at a national level or should it be for a local authority to decide?

- Set at the national level
- Decided by local authorities
- Don't know

Please provide the reasons for your answer.

One further option in relation to the rate of any cruise ship levy would be for an upper limit to be put in place nationally. Under this arrangement if a local authority decided to introduce a cruise ship levy they would be able to decide the rate, but it could not be higher than an upper limit set out a national level. This option would give local authorities flexibility to set a rate that reflected local circumstances, but would also put in place a national upper limit to any cruise ship levy introduced.

Question 8: If the rate of any cruise ship levy were to be set by individual local authorities, should an upper limit be set at a national level?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

8. Process a local authority should follow before introducing a cruise ship levy

If local authorities are given the power to introduce a cruise ship levy in all or part(s) of their area consideration needs to be given to what process a local authority should follow before it can put such a levy in place. A rigorous process would ensure that a local authority had given the decision full consideration.

A number of steps must be completed by a local authority before it can introduce a visitor levy on overnight accommodation in its area. These include an assessment of the impacts of a visitor levy, and a requirement to consult those who would be affected by a visitor levy. Any visitor levy has to be established as part of a visitor levy scheme, with requirements around reporting and ongoing engagement with stakeholders, and in using funding a local authority has to have regard to any local tourism strategy.

We want to explore whether a local authority considering introducing a cruise ship levy should be required to follow a similar process to that for the overnight accommodation visitor levy. These are reflected in the possible requirements for a cruise ship levy set out below, and we would welcome views on these requirements.

Question 9: Which (if any) of the following proposed actions do you believe local authorities should be required to undertake before being able to introduce a cruise ship levy? Please choose yes, no, or don't know for each proposed action below.

- Have held a consultation to gather views from all those who will be affected by a cruise ship levy.
- Have conducted relevant impact assessments, e.g. impact on business, equality impacts, etc.
- Have set and published objectives for any cruise ship levy and what it was seeking to achieve (either directly and/or through the use of revenue raised).
- Have assessed and documented the administrative burden from a proposed cruise ship levy and any steps taken to minimise this.
- If a cruise ship levy rate is set locally, demonstrated why the chosen rate is suitable for that area.
- Have appropriate mechanisms in place to allow for collection (and if necessary remittance) of a cruise ship levy.
- Have made information about the cruise ship levy and how to pay it available in the public domain, for businesses and others.
- Established an approach to monitoring and publicly reporting on revenues raised and their use on an annual basis.
- Established an approach to monitoring and publicly reporting on the impact of a cruise ship levy on an annual basis.

9. How Revenues from a cruise ship levy should be used

This consultation seeks views on giving local authorities the power to introduce a cruise ship levy in all, or part, of their area. Under the current devolution settlement receipts raised by a cruise ship levy must be used to fund local authority expenditure. We anticipate that any cruise ship levy would follow the approach of the visitor levy on overnight accommodation, in that revenues raised by a local authority choosing to apply a cruise ship levy would be retained by that local authority and not be subject to any pooling or redistribution.

However, there is merit in this issue being subject to consideration by the joint COSLA/Scottish Government Settlement and Distribution Group. This is because this would (like the visitor levy) be a further departure from the established financing mechanisms for local government in Scotland. These mechanisms have a system of equalisation at their heart, intended to ensure that all local authorities have the capacity to deliver equivalent levels of service. It is also worth noting that without any pooling or redistribution the revenue raised by a local authority would, we expect, be used in that local authority's area. This may or may not coincide with the areas affected by cruise ship passengers - for example, that would be very likely to be the case for ports on islands, but may not be the case for mainland ports where passengers leave the local authority area on shore excursions based in other local authority areas.

Given that receipts from a cruise ship levy will be raised from cruise ship operators and/or cruise ship passengers there is an argument that any revenue raised should be used to support facilities and services that are used by such passengers or the cruise ship industry. This could be linked to a requirement that a local authority set objectives (potentially connected to any relevant tourism strategy) for any cruise ship levy it puts in place. However, there is also a view that there should be no restrictions on how such funding is used, to give local authorities maximum flexibility in how the revenue raised by a cruise ship levy is spent.

Lastly we are aware of the provisions in the Harbours Act 1964 (as amended), and the need that any requirements around the use of funding do not conflict with the provisions in that Act.

Question 10: How should revenue raised by a cruise ship levy be used? Select one.

- Revenue raised by a cruise ship levy should be required to be spent on facilities and services used by cruise ship passengers and/or the cruise ship industry.
- A local authority should be able to use revenue raised by a cruise ship levy in any way it wishes.
- Don't know.

Please provide the reasons for your answer.

10. Exemptions

During the roundtable discussion events one issue raised was whether there should be exemptions from paying a cruise ship levy, and if so what they should be.

Possible exemptions that were mentioned were for passengers who were disabled, passengers 18 or under, passengers who were paid carers, and crew members. In addition in some parts of the world where a cruise ship levy is in place the levy is not paid at the port where passengers begin or end a cruise.

We would welcome views on what exemptions, if any, there should be from having to pay a cruise ship levy.

Question 11: Should any of the following groups be granted exemptions from payment of a cruise ship levy? Please choose yes, no, or don't know for each potential exemption below.

- Passengers who are 18 years or under
- Passengers who are disabled
- Passengers who are paid carers
- Crew members
- Passengers disembarking at the final port of call

There is also the issue of whether a local authority should be able to create additional exemptions at a local level. Having all the exemptions set at a national level would potentially simplify administration and communication around a cruise ship levy, but allowing some to be created locally would enable flexibility to reflect local circumstances.

Question 12: If national exemptions are introduced, do you think local authorities should be able to create additional exemptions at a local level?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

11. Implementation period and transition arrangements

11.1 Implementation period

Any new levy requires time to be properly implemented, to allow time for those paying, collecting, and remitting the levy to make the necessary arrangements. With the visitor levy on overnight accommodation there is a minimum 18 month implementation period between a local authority making the decision, after consultation, to introduce a visitor levy and the levy coming into force. Any cruise ship levy would require those affected by the levy, such as cruise ship operators, ports, local authorities, and others, to make relevant preparations. We would therefore welcome views on whether an implementation period is necessary for a cruise ship levy, and if so what length of time it should be.

Question 13: Should there be an implementation period for any cruise ship levy? (This would be a required period to run from the time a local authority formally decides to introduce a cruise ship levy to when it came into force).

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Question 14: If there should be an implementation period how long should it be? Select one.

- Less than 6 months
- 6 months
- 12 months
- One complete financial year
- 18 months
- More than 18 months

11.2 Transition arrangements

If an implementation period is put in place there will be period of time between a local authority formally deciding to introduce a cruise ship levy and that cruise ship levy coming into force. There will therefore need to be transition arrangements that sets out whether or not a cruise ship levy applies to situations where a port call has been arranged before a cruise ship levy was in place, but takes place after one has come into force.

Port calls are often arranged years in advance, and could be arranged before a local authority has decided to introduce a cruise ship levy in all or part of its area. We would therefore welcome views on whether someone should have to pay a cruise ship levy in this situation.

Question 15: What, if any, transition arrangements should apply when a cruise ship port call is arranged before a local authority chooses to impose a cruise ship levy, but the port call takes place after the levy has been put in place?

- a cruise ship levy should be paid in this situation
- a cruise ship levy should not be paid in this situation

12. Impact Assessments

As part of the Scottish Government's approach to policy making, we will be considering a number of impact assessments to explore how a potential cruise ship levy might impact on a wide range of groups, communities, and people in Scotland. These impact assessments include the Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment, Equality Impact Assessment and Data Protection Impact Assessment. A range of other impacts will also be considered including on child rights and wellbeing, human rights, sustainable development, and the environment.

The Scottish Government is interested in the impact, positive and negative, of a cruise ship levy. This includes economic impacts and wider impacts on communities, the local area, and facilities and services. Discussions at the roundtable events highlighted a number of such impacts. These included that revenues could support the visitor economy through investment in improving the local visitor offer and supporting attractions through the low season, and also on potential negative impacts from a reduction in demand for cruise visits to Scotland.

This reduction in demand refers to the possible deterrent effect a cruise ship levy could have. Cruise industry attendees at the roundtable events highlighted that a cruise ship levy could lead cruise ship operators, in light of such a levy, to adjust cruise itineraries and reduce the number of cruises to Scotland, and therefore calls at Scottish ports (including those ports that do not have a cruise ship levy). If this reduction, or lower growth, in port calls happened it would have two effects. Firstly, it would mean a cruise ship levy would not raise the revenue anticipated; and secondly it would mean any positive economic benefits from cruise ship calls were reduced. This second impact could go beyond the local authority where the port was situated, and which decided to introduce a levy, as in some parts of Scotland cruise ship passengers will visit locations in other local authority areas (for example, cruise ships calling at Edinburgh will have passengers who visit locations in East, West, and Midlothian).

Whilst the consultation is about potentially giving local authorities the power to introduce a cruise ship levy in their own area, the Scottish Government must take account of the possible national implications of a cruise ship levy introduced by local authorities. This is relevant to a possible deterrent effect from such a levy. The potential repercussions of a local authority introducing a cruise ship levy on other local authorities, and Scotland as a whole, is therefore an aspect we will explore further and on which we welcome views.

As well as ships' spending in port, such as on supplies or port services, cruise tourism mostly generates local economic activity through visitors' spending. A 2019 survey (Ekosgen, 2020) estimated that cruise tourists spend around £43 per day in Scotland, less than the average for other overseas visitors. Adjusting for changes in prices since the survey was carried out gives a figure of around £55 in 2024. That report estimated that cruise tourists contributed around 0.7% of tourist spending in Scotland in 2019. However industry estimates put the total daily onshore spending per passenger at a higher figure of around £90 for 2022 (around £95 in 2024 prices), based on survey evidence on spend per passenger across Europe, including tours, and accommodation and inbound travel spend for embarking passengers (Scotland

has a relatively low share of these embarking passengers) (CLIA, 2023). The Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment published alongside this consultation paper uses this higher figure, and estimates that cruise visitor and crew spending accounts for around 1.5% of overnight visitor spending in Scotland.

Despite this relatively small proportion of overall spend, surveys of local businesses and communities in the 2019 report found that a majority of businesses and communities surveyed in Orkney and Shetland thought that cruise tourism has increased visitor spend at attractions and in local businesses significantly, generating new employment. Survey responses from those in towns including Stornoway, Lerwick and Castle Bay also reported benefits in the summer arising from increased footfall in the town centres. Despite this, there were also reservations about the benefits from cruise passengers, who tend to spend limited time on shore, and are not able to travel far from the port in the time they have available.

The impact of a cruise ship levy on island authorities in Scotland is potentially different from those on mainland coastal authorities. On island authorities spend by cruise ship passengers who are disembarking from a cruise ship in one local authority area will occur in that same local authority area. However for some mainland ports that is not the case, with research indicating that a significant proportion of locations visited by cruise ship passengers are in other local authority areas.

In considering a potential cruise ship levy the Government is taking an evidence based approach, including in exploring and assessing the business and regulatory impact of any such levy. This is set out in more detail in the accompanying partial Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment (BRIA) which considers the possible impact of giving local authorities the power to introduce a cruise ship levy. Possible areas of impact could be in relation to employment, spending by passengers and/or crew, and local facilities and services.

The partial BRIA indicates that the main groups that could be affected by a cruise ship levy are:

- Cruise ship operators;
- Port operators;
- Cruise ship passengers;
- Other businesses supplying the cruise ship sector;
- Local businesses offering products and services to cruise passengers and crew;
- Local residents and general public;
- Local authorities.

Question 16: What impact do you think a cruise ship levy would have on the following? Please select very positive impact, somewhat positive impact, neither positive nor negative impact, somewhat negative impact, very negative impact, or don't know.

- Cruise ship operators
- Ports
- Businesses linked to cruise ship industry
- Local Communities
- Local authorities
- Scotland as a whole

Please provide the reasons for your answer(s). This helps with developing a robust BRIA which considers as wide a range of impacts as possible. If there are any other groups that would be impacted by a cruise ship levy please also list them below, together with the extent to which you believe they would be impacted.

13. Title of a cruise ship levy

This paper has used the term 'cruise ship levy' for a potential levy applied to cruise ships that visit ports in Scotland and have passengers disembark. A variety of terms are used in other parts of the world where such levies exist. We would welcome views and suggestions on other names that could be used, such as a cruise levy, a cruise ship passenger levy, a cruise industry levy, etc. We would also welcome input on whether different permutations of the name might have unintended consequences such as introducing some level of negative or incorrect inference, or being difficult to translate accurately into other languages.

Question 17: Would the name 'cruise ship levy' be appropriate for a potential levy as explored in this consultation paper?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know.

If you believe another name would be more appropriate please suggest it below.

14. A possible 'point of entry' levy

During discussions with local authorities around a cruise ship levy, and in the visitor levy consultation in 2019, it was suggested that local authorities with islands could be given the power to charge a levy on those arriving to visit an island, regardless of the means of transport by which they arrived. This could, for example, apply to those getting off a ferry for a day trip to an island, or coming on a longer holiday. A levy such as this could be used by island local authorities including those local authorities which have both islands and Scottish mainland within their local authority area.

There are some international examples where specific islands within a country have been their own specific levies. For example, the Greek islands of Santorini and Mykonos will charge a 20 euro levy on cruise ship visitors from 2025, whereas all other Greek islands are to continue to charge a 5 euro levy (Reuters, 2024).

As part of this consultation on a potential cruise ship levy we would like to provide the opportunity to express views on this 'point of entry' levy.

Question 18: Do you believe local authorities with islands should be given the power to create a broader 'point of entry' levy for one or more islands in their area, if they wish to do so?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

Please provide the reasons for your answer.

Thank you for your interest in a potential cruise ship levy, and in this consultation. To provide you with the opportunity to express any points or views that you have not been able to earlier in this consultation there is one final question below.

Question 19: If there any other points you would like to make in relation to a potential cruise ship levy that you have not been able to make elsewhere in this consultation, please add them below.

Annex A: International Examples

International Evidence on Cruise Ship Tourism and Cruise Ship Levies

Introduction – Cruise Tourism in Context

This annex synthesises some of the available research on cruise ship tourism and cruise levies in four jurisdictions: Amsterdam, Barcelona, Dubrovnik, and Venice. The cases reviewed herein are the interim findings from a rapid review of available evidence as part of a larger ongoing review. Evidence was gathered through searches of academic databases and peer-reviewed sources, followed by sweeping and snowballing searches of grey sources, including government publications and online media. The search was informed by a range of key words including the destination name combined with:

- Cruise tourism
- Tourist Tax
- Cruise
- Cruise Levy

Both peer-reviewed publications as well as other source material were assessed for relevant content. The table below provides a summary of the inclusion and exclusion criteria applied to the selection of the studies.

Table 1: Inclusion and exclusion criteria

	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Aim of Study	Studies exploring cruise ship levies or taxation and key issues surrounding the economic, social and environmental impacts of cruise tourism on jurisdictions, governments and residents	Studies exploring other issues related to cruise tourism such as: cruise line operations, and cruise tourist experiences
Language	Written or available in English	Not written or available for translation to English
Publication date	2010-2024	Pre-2010
Publication Type	Journal articles, peer-reviewed materials, working papers, evaluation, government reports, discussion papers, books and book chapters, digital news articles and other academic research	Student paper, conference paper, news articles without clear indication of source

Cruise tourism is a significant sub-sector of the tourism industry. In 2021, global revenues from cruise tourism were estimated at 134 billion USD annually (Vega-Muñoz, et al., 2021). A study published in 2019 estimated that cruise tourism was growing three times faster than the rest of the tourism sector (Wondirad, 2019). Forecasts indicate that in 2025, cruise ship travellers will amount to 36.3 million people (Deloitte Consulting BV, 2023). Europe is the second most popular cruising destination after the Caribbean (Urban and Radas, 2021). In 2019, 25% of global cruise passengers cruised in European waters, primarily visiting destinations bordering the Mediterranean and in the northern part of Europe (Deloitte Consulting BV, 2023).

Alongside the continued growth of cruise tourism, there has been a growing recognition of the need for tourism management strategies in specific contexts, which has resulted in a range of policy and operational responses including in the form of taxation (Andrade, Costa, and Jiménez-Morales, 2021; Nepal and Nepal, 2021). Cruise tourism is part of this broader tourism management dialogue and in some destinations, such as Amsterdam, Barcelona, Lisbon and Venice, where cruise tourism is viewed as distinct from other forms of tourism city administrations have recognised the need for specific management and planning practices related to it (Kizielewicz, 2019; Pasma, 2022) .

Management strategies for cruise tourism and responses to its impacts vary heavily from jurisdiction to jurisdiction depending on the social, political, and institutional setting (Ren et al., 2021). These four cases were selected because they are amongst the most popular cruise destinations in Europe, as shown in Table 1 (Andrade, Costa, and Jiménez-Morales, 2021). Additionally, all four cities have recently made the news for both anti-tourism protests and/or for their local governments' responses to both tourism generally and cruise tourism specifically, partially via cruise ship levies and/or other methods (Sandven, Jørgensen, and Wassler, 2024; Tovar, Espino, and López-del-Pino, 2022).

Table 2: Cruise Ship Visitation versus Population Data c. 2018

City	Population (Metro Area)	Population (City Area)	Tourists	Cruise Passenger s	Cruise Pass./Tourists
Amsterdam	1,132,000	854,000	8,354,200	425,700	5.10%
Lisbon	2,927,000	517,800	7,620,800	577,600	7.58%
Venice	635,000	51,300	5,255,000	1,561,000	29.71%
Barcelona	5,494,000	1,620,100	7,016,600	3,041,900	43.35%
Dubrovnik	37,000	28,400	1,271,600	732,400	57.60%

Source: Andrade, Costa, Jiménez-Morales, 2021

The following cases are intended to provide a summary of available evidence, identified through an ongoing rapid evidence review, in relation to the rationale for introducing cruise ship levies, details about the levies and their collection in each jurisdiction Each case will also provide an overview of any changes to the levies since their introduction, information on how jurisdictions are utilising funds and if any other management strategies are being employed concurrently.

It should be noted that these are interim findings from an ongoing review of evidence on the topic of cruise ship levies. These findings are based on our initial analysis and therefore do not necessarily reflect the positions we will reach in our final report. A wider review of international evidence relating to cruise ship tourism and cruise ship levies in these and other global jurisdictions is underway and will be delivered following this work.

A period of 13 weeks was available for completion of this review; consequently, a rapid review of the evidence rather than a full systematic review has been conducted. The evidence review is also limited by the nature of the evidence being sought out – specifically, cruise ship levies are part of a developing policy landscape and only recently introduced in many jurisdictions (Biagi, Brandano, and Pulina, 2020). As a result, in some jurisdictions they have not been in operation long enough for data on their impacts to be available. Additionally, in some cases, evidence was limited as data was not available in English. Due to the timeline for this review, this resulted in a bias towards those cases where all documentation was available in English. Where applicable, these limitations have been acknowledged in the cases below.

Case 1: Amsterdam, the Netherlands

Amsterdam is one of the most visited cities in Europe and it is also a popular cruise destination with two nearby ports: the Port of Amsterdam and IJmuiden, located just outside the city (Hospers, 2019; Pasma, 2022). The city has been managing the impacts of overtourism, particularly in its city centre (City of Amsterdam, 2019). In 2005, Amsterdam recorded 11 million visitors; by 2017, that number had grown to 18 million, and projections indicate that, without policy action, this number could grow to nearly 30 million by 2025 (Hospers, 2019).

Research conducted by the City of Amsterdam in 2017, via the ‘City Questionnaire: Bustle and Balance – second measurement highlighted that 55% of residents in Amsterdam’s city centre found their neighbourhood ‘very crowded’, and when asked ‘Do you think the municipality does enough to manage overcrowding?’, 27% thought the city did enough while 73% thought that the municipality did ‘absolutely nothing’ or ‘not enough’ to manage that overcrowding (as cited in Gerritsma, 2019). As a response to citizens’ requests for restrictions on tourism including the introduction of a maximum number of tourists (Nientied and Toto, 2022), the city introduced its “City in Balance” program in 2018, which aimed at striking a balance between visitors and residents and ensuring that resident quality of life always came first (City of Amsterdam, 2019).

Since introducing this program in 2018, the city of Amsterdam has implemented over 70 different policies and practices aimed at addressing overcrowding and other tourism-related issues. These include:

- Regulating traffic flows not only on roads, but of boats in the canals,
- Increasing the standard tourist tax from 5% to 7%,
- Charging those who stay in hotels in the wider Amsterdam area (outside the city centre) pay a lower tourist tax and

- Setting a maximum threshold for visitor numbers at 20 million a year (inclusive of both day and overnight visitors), and a threshold of 18 million visitors, at which point the municipal government will act. (Nientied and Toto, 2022; Gerritsma, 2019)

Further steps were taken in 2019, when Amsterdam introduced its cruise ship levy. According to media reports, the levy was announced in the autumn of 2018 and took effect on January 1st, 2019 (Featherstone, 2019).

Table 2 below outlines key information about the levy at the time of its introduction:

Table 2

Heading	Details
Amount:	8 euro per passenger per 24-hour period
Applies to:	Only passengers from ships “transiting” or moored within Amsterdam’s municipal boundaries
Does not apply to:	Visitors who embark or disembark their cruises in Amsterdam OR those whose ships are moored outside of the City’s boundaries

(Source: Port of Amsterdam, 2024)

The levy is commonly referred to as the “day tripper tax” and, though the fees are charged by the municipality, the collection of the fees is handled through the Port of Amsterdam (City of Amsterdam, 2024). There are two distinct processes for their collection, one for river cruises and one for sea cruises. The process for sea cruises is outlined below.

The Process for Sea Cruises:

1. The Passenger Terminal Amsterdam (PTA) submits a declaration within 5 days of departure of a cruise ship using a separate form called the ‘invoicing purposes’ form.
2. This form is signed by both the cruise ship operator and the PTA for charging the terminal fee.
3. The cruise ship operator will then receive a confirmation of the declaration from the agent at the PTA containing the amount of the day tourist tax to be paid. This is paid online, via their CruiseDock login.
4. The PTA will then enter the visitor numbers into CruiseDock.

(Port of Amsterdam, 2024)

The Port of Amsterdam provides several examples for how the tax is calculated for each of these processes and those examples can be found here: [Calculation examples day tourist tax river cruise | Port of Amsterdam](#) and here: [Calculation examples day tourist tax sea cruise | Port of Amsterdam](#)

According to the City of Amsterdam’s City in Balance Policy (2019), the aim of increasing tourist taxes, both via the cruise ship levy and accommodation taxes was

to “place a fairer charge on visiting the city” (p.18) and with the aim to promote more sustainable forms of visitor travel, including sustainable cruises (p. 20). However, Amsterdam has continued to see high tourist numbers generally across the city and in the city’s Vision on Tourism in Amsterdam 2035 (no date) it states that “the balance between the influx of tourists and the quality of life experienced by residents... is completely disturbed.” (p. 2), and that there is therefore a need to curb growth in favour of generating a more sustainable visitor economy. News reports forecast that the total amount raised by tourist taxes (including both the cruise levy and the tourist tax applied to overnight visitors) will be approximately 65 million euro in 2024 (Mayntz, 2023) and that these fees are used by the municipality to fund local resource and quality of life improvements for residents, such as poverty initiatives, healthcare, street cleaning and as a strategy for raising funds for the city administrations general use (O’Connell, 2024).

Impacts of and Changes to the Levy

According to news reports (Featherstone, 2019) and further documented by Nientied and Toto’s (2022) research, when it was first introduced, the levy caused many ships to transfer to Rotterdam harbour instead of Amsterdam. Rotterdam is within a one-hour driving distance of Amsterdam and cruise lines were able to arrange buses to transport visitors to the city instead (reference). In total, the number of cruise ships mooring in Amsterdam shrank from 180 in 2018 to 128 in 2019 (Nientied and Toto, 2022). Two companies, Cruise and Maritime Voyages (CMV) and MSC Cruises, chose to cancel their stops in the city for 2019 (reference). Cruise lines often plan and price their voyages two to three years in advance of embarkment (Featherstone, 2019). At the time the tax was announced, the CEO of CMV cited the short notice as the rationale for cancelling proposed stops (Featherstone, 2019).

In 2023 the per passenger fee was increased from 8 euro to 11 euro (Fox, 2023), which was followed by another increase to the levy in 2024, to its current rate of 14 euro per passenger per day (Port of Amsterdam, 2024). There are also plans, as outlined on the City of Amsterdam’s website (City of Amsterdam, 2024), to increase this fee again in 2025 to 14.50 euro per passenger.

In addition to the cruise ship levy, other management strategies for cruise tourism have been introduced in Amsterdam. Firstly, the city currently caps cruise ship visits at a maximum of 190 per year, and this will decrease to 100 in 2026 (Wong, 2024). This reduction is part of a phased approach to decreasing cruise tourism and a planned closure of the Passenger Terminal for Amsterdam in 2035, as city officials have claimed that the cruise vessels are not aligned to the city’s sustainability ambitions (Wong, 2024). The City of Amsterdam is also considering moving the Passenger Terminal for Amsterdam and the main mooring point for Sea Cruise ships further from the City Centre to Coenhaven, an area in the city’s northwest (McGarvey and Leonardo, 2023; Wong, 2024). A future feasibility study has been proposed to determine if this will be possible by the date of the proposed passenger terminal closure in 2035.

Case 2: Barcelona, Spain

Barcelona, like Amsterdam, has been a popular cruising destination for at least the past ten years (Andrade, Costa, and Jiménez-Morales, 2021; Vaya et al., 2018). In 2014, the city was the leading port in Europe for cruise visitation with over two million recorded passengers (Vayá, et al., 2018). There has also been ongoing media attention in relation to the impacts of overtourism more broadly on the city (Hughes, 2024; Poirot, 2024) and, according to Brandajs and Russo (2021), this has led to 15% of the resident population leaving the Old City district in the period from 2010-2015. The number of tourists and cruise tourists has continued to grow through to 2019, when 3.1 million cruise passengers visited Barcelona, accounting for nearly 10% of all visitors to the city (Pasma, 2022). These numbers can be at least partially attributed to the fact that Barcelona is a “home port” for many cruise lines, meaning that nearly half of the passengers on Mediterranean cruises either begin or end their journeys in the city (Ros Chaos, 2018).

Barcelona has a significant number of one-day visitors, of which approximately 20% are cruise ship passengers, however research found that single-day visitors generated less tourist spend on average than overnight visitors (Brandajs and Russo, 2021; Pasma, 2022). This, combined with increasing concern from residents about the environmental impact of the cruises, led to an expansion of the city’s tourist tax in 2017 to include cruise passengers staying in the Port of Barcelona for 12 hours or less (Pasma, 2022). This charge was in addition to a previous tax created in 2012 and applied to those cruise passengers who stayed in port longer than 12 Hours (Featherstone, 2019). The details of the levy at the time of its expansion in 2017 are outlined in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Heading	Details
Catalan Region Amount:	2.25 euro per passenger for those staying 12 hours or more 2.90 (a surcharge of 0.65) euro per passenger for those staying less than 12 hours
City Surcharge (as of 2022):	3.25 euro per day up to a maximum of 7 days 4 euro per person for cruises staying less than 12 hours
Applies to:	All cruise passengers, based on duration of cruise
Does not apply to:	Applies to all cruise passengers, however, from 2023 cruise ship operators have been able to apply for a rebate of fees for turnaround passengers (those embarking or disembarking at Barcelona). These rebates are as follows: From pax 10.001 to pax 20.000 - 5% From pax 20.001 to pax 30.000 – 10% From pax 30.001 to pax 40.000 – 15% From pax 40.001 up - 20% These rebates are calculated using the total turnaround passengers annually.

(Sources: Port of Barcelona, 2023; Barcelona City Council, 2023; Featherstone, 2019)

The City's sustainable tourism policy, Barcelona: Tourism for 2020 (2017) framed the tax as a tool for managing the tourism in the city with special attention given to economic activities that threaten quality of life for citizens (e.g. housing, activities that overload public spaces, or activities that are harmful to the environment). This policy also established the City and Tourism Economic Fund, an economic source which could be used to invest in or fund activities to help mitigate the worst effects of tourism (Ajuntament de Barcelona Direcció de Turisme, 2017). As outlined in recent press releases by the City of Barcelona in addition to funding the plan for High Influx Spaces (those parts of the city most affected by tourism), funding has also been given to organisations and groups seeking to use the tax revenue for the purposes of

projects that bring diversity, value and vitality to the city's economy (Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2024).

The tourist taxes, both from cruise ship visits and overnight stays are collected into the fund and used to fund activities to mitigate the effects of tourism on the worst affected areas of the City (Ajuntament de Barcelona Direcció de Turisme, 2017). It should be noted, that as per the city's own Tourism for 2020 outline, Barcelona's administration mandates a participatory approach to decision-making (Ajuntament de Barcelona Direcció de Turisme, 2017; Nepal and Nepal, 2021). As part of this public participation, the fund is overseen by a monitoring committee where the districts and areas involved in the tax collection decide jointly, both in the political and technical arenas, on the projects or activities to be funded by any of the monies collected. Once decisions about the fund are made, Barcelona City Council is then responsible for facilitating and coordinating the plans. Currently, 50% of the funds are being directed to the city's destination marketing organisation (DMO), Turism de Barcelona (Ajuntament de Barcelona Direcció de Turisme, 2017).

The tax is collected by the Port of Barcelona who invoice cruise ship operators directly. Operators must then pay outstanding fees as follows:

- Notification of invoices made (to operators) between the 1st and 15th of each month, should be paid by the 5th of the following month or the immediately following working day.
- Notification of invoices made between the 16th and the last day of the month must be paid by the 20th of the following month, or the immediately following working day, unless the contract specifies other different deadlines.
- Debts not paid within the established period are subject to late payment interest that is assessed by applying a surcharge of 4 points on the legal interest rate in force to the amounts owed, during the period in which the delay has been incurred.

(Port of Barcelona Electronic Office, 2024)

Impacts of and Changes to the Levy

A 2019 report, produced by the City of Barcelona, on Environmental Externalities of Tourism in Barcelona city identified the continued oversaturation of public spaces and challenges due to cruise visitation. These challenges included traffic congestion in the neighbourhoods bordering the port, due to significant coach bus traffic and queues for taxis and environmental issues such as noise pollution and increased waste in tourist traffic areas (City of Barcelona, 2019). Rico et al (2019) estimate that despite their comparatively small numbers (2.6 million out of an estimated 33 million) cruise tourists in Barcelona account for the largest unitary emissions among all categories of daily visitors. This was matched by a comparatively small economic contribution of an estimated 62 euro per day compared to almost 200 euro per day by overnight visitors (Brandajs and Russo, 2021). To address this, Barcelona City Council and the Port of Barcelona drafted several agreements on Port activity which:

- Limited docking of international cruise ships to a max of 7 at one time and at Adossat Wharf

- Freed up space at the Drassanes wharf and Barcelona wharf for public use
- Required the Port to create a programme to reduce the environmental externalities of cruise ship traffic and develop a sustainable management plan for addressing passenger mobility (Environmental Externalities of Tourism in Barcelona city, 2019)

In 2022, a joint Commission of Barcelona's city council and Catalan government agreed to create an institutional board comprised of representation from the city council, the Catalan government and the Port of Barcelona to assess the situation with cruise ships in the city and agree on actions needed to further regulate it (City of Barcelona, 2022). Data from the Report on Externalities from that same year reported that Barcelona was seeing approximately 15,000 passengers per day on fifty days of the year and that without regulation the city could reach 3.5 million passengers per year by 2030 (City of Barcelona, 2022).

The study board evaluated some of the following strategies:

- Limiting ship arrivals to 3 per day
- Halving passenger numbers in high seasons with a limit of 200,000 passengers a month
- Reducing by 20% the number of ships spending 4 hours or less in the city
 - It was noted that these visits accounted for between 40-50% of all port calls
- Limiting access to cruise ships drawing shore power only from 2030 (the point at which Barcelona's port is forecasted to be working solely on electric power) (City of Barcelona, 2022)

While there was no evidence to suggest these strategies had progressed to policy or practice, it was announced in 2022 that the City of Barcelona would add a "surcharge" or "city tax" to the existing tourism taxes, including cruise tourism (Hughes, 2024). Table 4 outlines the amounts as they were initially set. More recent industry articles have outlined that, despite the application of the levy and other measures, Barcelona continues to be a popular port of call (Hughes, 2024; Poirot, 2024). In 2023 Barcelona welcomed 803 cruise ships and nearly 3.6 million passengers; this surpassed pre-pandemic levels by 13.7% and projected numbers not anticipated until 2030: a trend that appears to be continuing as in the first six months of 2024, the city received over 530 ship calls (Statistics Service, 2024; Poirot, 2024).

Since 2023, the city has taken ongoing action by implementing a partial ban on cruise ships docking at the docks located in the World Trade area and Muelle Barcelona Norte from October 2023, thus dictating that ships had to dock at the Moll d'Adossat pier farther from the city's central tourist areas. Reports from Euronews also outlined that the city surcharge would increase first from 2.75 to 3.25 euro per person from the start of 2024, then to 4 euro per person as of October 2024 in addition to the regional tourist taxes (Barcelona City Council, 2023; Hughes, 2024). At the City's 2024 Budget proposal, this increase was forecasted to increase the City's income by 314 million euro, making it Barcelona City Council's third largest revenue stream (City of Barcelona, 2024).

To date, this rapid review has been unable to identify any available evidence on There does not appear to be any available evidence the response to these changes or their impact on cruise visitation. This is likely due to the recent nature of the increase. However, some cruise industry publications have referenced negative responses from Cruise Lines International Association. For example, Poirot (2024) stated that the Cruise Lines International Association had threatened that these increases and bans may lead cruise lines to boycott Barcelona and other Spanish cities.

Case 3: Dubrovnik, Croatia

As in the previous two cases, Dubrovnik has faced challenges in managing the levels of tourism it experiences, particularly in recent years (Hospers, 2019; Urban and Radas, 2021). In 2019, the city received 1.4 million total visitors (Nientied and Toto, 2022). Table 2 also highlights that unlike the previous two cases where cruise tourism represented less than half of total visitation, in 2018, cruise tourism accounted for roughly 57% of the city's total tourist visits (Andrade, Costa, and Jiménez-Morales, 2021). Furthermore, Urban and Radas (2021) outlined that cruise tourism also accounts for nearly 80% of the economic turnover in Croatia's Adriatic coast. The City's popularity as a cruise destination can be attributed to its location, ideally positioned between other popular cruising destinations and its designation as a UNESCO World Heritage Site (Danilović Hristić, Pantić, and Stefanović, 2024). However, mass tourism in the city has resulted in a decrease in the number of residents in the old town, gentrification of the area, and a high dependence on tourism (Danilović Hristić, Pantić, and Stefanović, 2024). In 2017, this resulted in UNESCO issuing a warning to the city about the possible loss of its World Heritage Status (Hospers, 2019). Data gathered for the development of the Croatia government's Sustainable Tourism Strategy for 2030 (2023) also indicated that the volume of tourism was affecting resident populations negatively, with 55% of respondents reporting that tourism development had increased the cost of living for the local population.

Dubrovnik began to take steps to address issues surrounding cruise tourism in 2017 (Featherstone, 2019). The city's first step was to set a daily cap on cruise tourists by limiting disembarkation from cruise ships to a maximum of 8,000 passengers daily (Danilović Hristić, Pantić, and Stefanović, 2024; Dubrovnik Port Authority, 2024). The city also engaged directly with the cruise industry from 2017, via the Cruise Lines International Association, to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with interested cruise companies to protect the cultural heritage of Dubrovnik through responsible tourism management strategies (Franković, and Tepšić, 2023). One of the measures in this approach was a planned tourist tax for cruise ships. The tax was first introduced by the national Ministry for Transport in 2019 but did not come into effect until January 1st, 2021 (Franković, and Tepšić, 2023). Table 5 below outlines the structure of the cruise levy and its application according to a Croatia's Ministry of Tourism and Sport (2019).

Table 5

Heading	Details
Amounts:	<p>Ships with a capacity of 50-200 passengers: HRK 2,000 (approx. £235)</p> <p>Ships with capacity of 201-500 passengers: HRK 5,000 (approx. £587),</p> <p>Ships with capacity of 501-1000 passengers: HRK 10,000 (approx. £1173)</p> <p>Ships with capacity of 1001-2000 passengers: HRK 20,000 (approx. £2346),</p> <p>Ships with capacity of 2001-3000 passengers: HRK 30,000 (approx. £3519)</p> <p>Ships with a capacity of 3001 or more passengers: HRK 40,000 (approx. £4692)</p>
Applies to:	All foreign cruise lines berthing in Croatia's ports
Does not apply to:	N/A

(Source: Republic of Croatia: Ministry of Tourism and Sport, 2019)

According to the Ministry's report, the funds were to be used to improve municipal infrastructure (Republic of Croatia: Ministry of Tourism and Sport, 2019). More specifically, funds were earmarked for investment in transportation infrastructure that would improve the overall standard of Dubrovnik as a destination, including things like electric ferries and digital signs to the City's popular tourist attractions. In the longer term the funds may be used to develop new roads, tunnels, or other urban design elements (Franković and Tepšić, 2023).

Impacts of and Changes to the Levy

This review has been unable to identify available evidence to suggest that the cruise levies have changed since their introduction. However, as of 2023, Dubrovnik have introduced other restrictions or requirements for visiting cruise ships. Firstly, Dubrovnik Port Authority and the Dubrovnik County Port Authority have signed a joint booking agreement to abide by the 2+1 principle, meaning they will allow two large cruise ships to berth at the Port and one large cruise ship in front of the old city at any given time (Dubrovnik Port Authority, 2024).

The Dubrovnik Port Authority's Cruise Ship Berthing Policy (2023) also outlines the following restrictions on vessels with over 500 passengers:

- Eight hours as the minimum stay in Dubrovnik,
- Vessels carrying more than 4,000 passengers have a minimum stay of 12 hours and
- The maximum number of cruise passengers visiting the inner City of Dubrovnik cannot exceed 4,000 visitors simultaneously.

Unlike in the previous cases, the introduction of Dubrovnik's cruise tax was backed by Cruise Lines International Association who are continuing to work with Dubrovnik's administration on other strategies for improving the sustainability of cruise tourism in the city (Republic of Croatia: Ministry of Tourism and Sport, 2019). These strategies have included the following:

- Conducting the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) Destination Assessment for Dubrovnik 2023
- Development of a dedicated working group for sustainable destination management
- Implementation of Dubrovnik's 2020 cruise ship berthing policy
- Development of the "Respect the City" visitor campaign.

There are further proposals, based on suggestions from the GSTC Assessment in 2023, including that the City work towards a better ratio for the total number of visitors across all forms of tourism by 2025 by continuing to improve inter-agency cooperation between the City's administration, the Port Authorities, and the Cruise Lines International Association, and to work on building the city's position as a homeport for smaller ships rather than just a port of call (Pappas, 2023).

Case 4: Venice, Italy

Venice is the final case explored here, and of the four cases, it is the one where the impacts of and negative responses to tourism have received the greatest media attention (Tovar, Espino, and López-del-Pino, 2022). The city is one of the most tourism-dependent economies in the world (Nientied and Toto, 2022), and though it is only Italy's second busiest port, it is the only one where most of those tourists that disembark remain within the centre of the city (Mangano, and Ugolini, 2020; Vayá et al., 2018).

It is important to note that overtourism in Venice is not solely the result of the cruise ships, as approximately 30 million people visit each year, and only 2.5 million of them are cruise travellers (De Giorgi, 2024). However, the city's small geographic footprint, narrow streets, walkways and bridge space mean that visitors are concentrated within the same places at the same times (González, 2018). According to Kryczka (2019), the historical centre of Venice can often see between 70 to 80,000 visitors per day compared to its 55,000 residents. The volume and impact of tourism levels on the city's population led to UNESCO adding Venice to its list of World Heritage sites in danger in 2016 (González, 2018).

Cruise tourism has been a particular target for protests from Venetian residents for several reasons:

- The cruise ships visiting Venice were and are typically larger than the Venetian buildings, threatening the aesthetics of the city’s architecture.
- The ships themselves posed an ecological threat to the city and its lagoon.
- They release several thousand passengers at once.
(De Giorgi, 2024)

Since 2012, Venice has taken a number of reported actions to curb cruise tourism. One of the earliest actions was to ban cruise vessels of over 40,000 gross tons from entering the lagoon, however according to De Giorgi (2024) and González (2018) there was no alternative safe landing point, so ships continued to park in the Riva dei Sette Martiri in Venice. After 2018, ships over 55,000 tonnes were directed to dock in the Port of Marghera, in Mestre, and tourists were transferred to the city by bus (González, 2018). Two other actions were introduced from 2017. Firstly, the city launched its #EnjoyRespectVenezia campaign aimed at promoting responsible tourist behaviour (Kryczka, 2019). Secondly, in 2019, the local authorities set up gates to regulate traffic to sensitive parts of the city. However, research found that residents did not support their introduction (Kryczka, 2019) and the gates were removed again at the end of that year, following the protests claiming that the gates were ugly, inconvenient, and contributing to the “museum-afication” of the city (Bertocchi, 2020; Kryczka, 2019).

In 2018, the Italian government granted permission for Venice’s local authority to tax visitors on entering the city. Though there was already a tourist tax on those staying overnight (introduced in 2020) Venice’s magistrate decided to introduce a fee that would cover all single or day visitors. The first trial of this fee was launched in 2024. According to Visit Venezia, the first test of what is referred to in many news reports as the “day-tripper tax” ran from the 25th of April until the end of July 2024 (Visit Venezia, 2024). Details of the tax, its applications and exemptions are outlined in Table 6.

Table 6

Heading	Details
Amount	5 euro per person for day-trippers over the age of 14.
Applies to:	All day visitors including cruise passengers visiting between 8am and 4:30pm.
Does not apply to:	Those who work in the city of Venice, tourists spending at least one night in the city (as they are subject to the tourist tax via the accommodation provider), students and people who are visiting family that live in Venice.

(Sources: City of Venice, 2023; Visit Venezia, 2024)

The access fee is paid directly to the Municipality of Venice, via one of two routes:

- Individuals may pay their access fee online, where they will be issued a QR code to be presented upon arrival at one of the eight entry points to the city (Visit Venezia, 2024).
- OR the fee may be collected by their carrier or means of arrival. Certain carriers including railway carriers, shipping companies inclusive of cruise line, air carriers arriving at Venice Lido airport and any public land and waterborne transport services (City of Venice, 2023).

According to the City of Venice's regulations, the carrier types outlined above are obliged to collect the fee and make a declaration by no later than February 28th of each year. These carriers are also required to perform the following actions:

- Using all the required means, including computerised or telematic solutions, to provide the necessary information to all the individuals charged with the Access Fee: the obligation of payment, the amount, the deadlines, and procedures for payment.
- To collect Access Fee payments, together with the price of the transport fare or other equivalent payment and issue a receipt for the collection of such payment, which may also be stamped on the ticket or on the payment receipt.
- Submit a notice, using the form provided by the Municipality, within the fifteen days following the end of the month, containing the data relevant for the Administration to be determined by a resolution of the Municipal Council.
- Remit the collected Access Fee payments to the Municipality (by bank transfer or other method provided by the Municipality) by the fifteenth day of the second month following the month in which the levy was paid.
- Promptly transmit to the Municipality any notices/documents received in relation to any instances of exclusion, exemption, or reduction of the Access Fee for individuals transported who are charged with the payment of the Access Fee. (City of Venice, 2023)

Impacts of and Changes to the Levy

Evidence on how the cruise industry has reacted to the access fee appears to be limited. However, according to news reports the Cruise Lines International Association was supportive of the ban on allowing cruise ships entry to the basin and Giudecca Canal (Frost, 2024). There was no data available on resident responses to the access fee, however city officials reported that the 2024 test phase for the fee generated 2.4 million euro with approximately one thousand individual entrances to the historic city on each of the twenty-nine test days (Booth, 2024). According to Booth (2024), city officials stressed that the tax aimed to help the city's (and its citizens') battle over-tourism and avoid peak visitor crowding during holidays and weekends rather than generate an income for the City.

Recently, Venice's authorities have announced changes to the day-tripper or access fee scheme that will come into effect for 2025. These changes will introduce a two-tier fee structure that will apply for 54 days during the peak tourism season, from

May through July (Buckley, 2024). The fee will remain at five euro for anyone applying four or more days in advance, however those who book within three days of their visit will pay a ten-euro fee, with all exemptions to the original access fee remaining in place (Buckley, 2024; City of Venice, 2023).

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Annex B: Responding to this Consultation

We are inviting responses to this consultation by 30 May 2025.

Please respond to this consultation using the Scottish Government's consultation hub, Citizen Space (<http://consult.gov.scot>). You can save and return to your responses while the consultation is still open. Please ensure that consultation responses are submitted before the closing date of 30 May 2025.

If you are unable to respond using our consultation hub, please complete the Respondent Information Form at Annex C and send it to:

Local Taxation Policy Unit
Local Government Directorate
Scottish Government
Area 3G North
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ

Handling your response

If you respond using the consultation hub, you will be directed to the About You page before submitting your response. Please indicate how you wish your response to be handled and, in particular, whether you are content for your response to be published. If you ask for your response not to be published, we will regard it as confidential, and we will treat it accordingly.

All respondents should be aware that the Scottish Government is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and would therefore have to consider any request made to it under the Act for information relating to responses made to this consultation exercise.

If you are unable to respond via Citizen Space, please complete and return the Respondent Information Form included in this document.

To find out how we handle your personal data, please see our privacy policy: <https://www.gov.scot/privacy/>

Next steps in the process

Where respondents have given permission for their response to be made public, and after we have checked that they contain no potentially defamatory material, responses will be made available to the public at <http://consult.gov.scot>. If you use the consultation hub to respond, you will receive a copy of your response via email.

Following the closing date, all responses will be analysed and considered along with any other available evidence to help us. Responses will be published where we have been given permission to do so. An analysis report will also be made available.

Comments and complaints

If you have any comments about how this consultation exercise has been conducted, please send them to the contact address above or to localtax@gov.scot.

Scottish Government consultation process

Consultation is an essential part of the policymaking process. It gives us the opportunity to consider your opinion and expertise on a proposed area of work.

You can find all our consultations online: <http://consult.gov.scot>. Each consultation details the issues under consideration, as well as a way for you to give us your views, either online, by email or by post.

Responses will be analysed and used as part of the decision making process, along with a range of other available information and evidence. We will publish a report of this analysis for every consultation. Depending on the nature of the consultation exercise the responses received may:

- indicate the need for policy development or review
- inform the development of a particular policy
- help decisions to be made between alternative policy proposals
- be used to finalise legislation before it is implemented

While details of particular circumstances described in a response to a consultation exercise may usefully inform the policy process, consultation exercises cannot address individual concerns and comments, which should be directed to the relevant public body.

Annex C

Responding to the Consultation

Consultation on a potential local authority Cruise Ship Levy in Scotland

Respondent Information Form

Please Note this form **must** be completed and returned with your response.

To find out how we handle your personal data, please see our privacy policy:

<https://www.gov.scot/privacy/>

Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

- Individual
- Organisation

Full name or organisation's name

Phone number

Address

Postcode

Email Address

The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:

- Publish response with name
- Publish response only (without name)
- Do not publish response

Information for organisations:

The option 'Publish response only (without name)' is available for individual respondents only. If this option is selected, the organisation name will still be published.

If you choose the option 'Do not publish response', your organisation name may still be listed as having responded to the consultation in, for example, the analysis report.

We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again

in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Yes

No

Questionnaire

Question 1

Do you support giving local authorities the power to create a cruise ship levy in their area, if they wish to do so?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Please provide the reasons for your answer.

Question 2

What alternatives (if any) do you think would achieve the same goals as a cruise ship levy? Please provide details of any alternative option(s).

Question 3

What should the primary basis of a Cruise Ship Levy charge be, if introduced in Scotland? Select one

- Tonnage of a ship
- Passenger capacity of a ship
- Number of passengers on board a ship
- Number of passengers to disembark from a ship
- Other (please specify)
- Don't know

Please provide the reasons for your answer.

Question 4

In addition to the main basis of the charge, should any cruise ship levy also take into account the environmental impact of a cruise ship?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Question 5

Who should collect any cruise ship levy? Select one.

- Cruise ship operator
- Port operator
- Local authority
- Other (please specify)
- Don't know

Please provide the reasons for your answer.

Question 6

What enforcement powers should a local authority, or other relevant body, have to ensure compliance (and prevent avoidance and evasion) by those required to pay a cruise ship levy? Please select all of the powers you think the body should have.

- Powers to request, and obtain or inspect, the information necessary to assess the cruise ship levy liability of a body.
- power to apply a penalty (e.g. a fine) if a cruise ship levy is not paid when it is required to be.
- power to apply a penalty (e.g. a fine) if a body provides inaccurate information in relation to a cruise ship levy, or destroys requested information.

Question 7

Do you think the rate of any cruise ship levy should be set at a national level or should it be for a local authority to decide?

- Set at the national level
- Decided by local authorities
- Don't know

Please provide the reasons for your answer.

Question 8

If the rate of any cruise ship levy were to be set by individual local authorities, should an upper limit be set at a national level?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Question 9

Which (if any) of the following proposed actions do you believe local authorities should be required to undertake before being able to introduce a cruise ship levy? Please select yes, no, or don't know for each proposed action below.

Have held a consultation to gather views from all those who will be affected by a cruise ship levy.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Have conducted relevant impact assessments, e.g. impact on business, equality impacts, etc.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Have set and published objectives for any cruise ship levy and what it was seeking to achieve (either directly and/or through the use of revenue raised).

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Have assessed and documented the administrative burden from a proposed cruise ship levy and any steps taken to minimise this.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

If a cruise ship levy rate is set locally, demonstrated why the chosen rate is suitable for that area.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Have appropriate mechanisms in place to allow for collection (and if necessary remittance) of a cruise ship levy.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Have made information about the cruise ship levy and how to pay it available in the public domain, for businesses and others.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Established an approach to monitoring and publicly reporting on revenues raised and their use on an annual basis.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Established an approach to monitoring and publicly reporting on the impact of a cruise ship levy on an annual basis.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Question 10

How should revenue raised by a cruise ship levy be used? Select one.

- Revenue raised by a cruise ship levy should be required to be spent on facilities and services used by cruise ship passengers and/or the cruise ship industry.
- A local authority should be able to use revenue raised by a cruise ship levy in any way it wishes.
- Don't know.

Please provide the reasons for your answer.

Question 11

Should any of the following groups be granted exemptions from payment of a cruise ship levy?

Passengers who are 18 years or under

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Passengers who are disabled

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Passengers who are paid carers

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Crew members

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Passengers disembarking at the final port of call

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Question 12

If national exemptions are introduced, do you think local authorities should be able to create additional exemptions at a local level?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Question 13

Should there be an implementation period for any cruise ship levy? (This would be a required period to run from the time a local authority formally decides to introduce a cruise ship levy to when it came into force).

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Question 14

If there should be an implementation period how long should it be? Select one.

- Less than 6 months
- 6 months
- 12 months
- One complete financial year
- 18 months
- More than 18 months

Question 15

What, if any, transition arrangements should apply when a cruise ship port call is arranged before a local authority chooses to impose a cruise ship levy, but the port call takes place after the levy has been put in place?

- a cruise ship levy should be paid in this situation
- a cruise ship levy should not be paid in this situation

Question 16

What impact do you think a cruise ship levy would have on the following?

Cruise ship operators

- Very positive impact
- Somewhat positive impact
- Neither positive nor negative impact
- Somewhat negative impact
- Very negative impact
- Don't know

Ports

- Very positive impact
- Somewhat positive impact
- Neither positive nor negative impact
- Somewhat negative impact
- Very negative impact
- Don't know

Businesses linked to cruise ship industry

- Very positive impact
- Somewhat positive impact
- Neither positive nor negative impact
- Somewhat negative impact
- Very negative impact
- Don't know

Local Communities

- Very positive impact
- Somewhat positive impact
- Neither positive nor negative impact
- Somewhat negative impact
- Very negative impact
- Don't know

Local authorities

- Very positive impact
- Somewhat positive impact
- Neither positive nor negative impact
- Somewhat negative impact
- Very negative impact
- Don't know

Scotland as a whole

- Very positive impact
- Somewhat positive impact
- Neither positive nor negative impact
- Somewhat negative impact
- Very negative impact
- Don't know

Please provide the reasons for your answer(s). This helps with developing a robust BRIA which considers as wide a range of impacts as possible. If there are any other groups that would be impacted by a cruise ship levy please also list them below, together with the extent to which you believe they would be impacted.

Question 17

Would the name 'cruise ship levy' be appropriate for a potential levy as explored in this consultation paper?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

If you believe another name would be more appropriate please suggest it below.

Question 18

Do you believe local authorities with islands should be given the power to create a broader 'point of entry' levy for one or more islands in their area, if they wish to do so?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Please provide the reasons for your answer.

Question 19

If there any other points you would like to make in relation to a potential cruise ship levy that you have not been able to make elsewhere in this consultation, please add them below.



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