



# A TAXING DECISION:

There is a division of opinion amongst Scots about the merits of the introduction of a tourist tax. And without clear messaging of how the income would be applied to benefit the local tourism economy, there is a threat that tourists may choose to visit alternative destinations

With the potential for a tourist levy - or 'tourist tax' - being considered in several parts of Scotland in the next few years, the Scottish Tourism Alliance commissioned 56 Degree Insight to investigate the views of the Scottish population on the introduction of such a tax. Asked as part of the October 'Scottish Tourism Index', a nationally representative sample of 1,000 Scots were surveyed to provide their opinions.

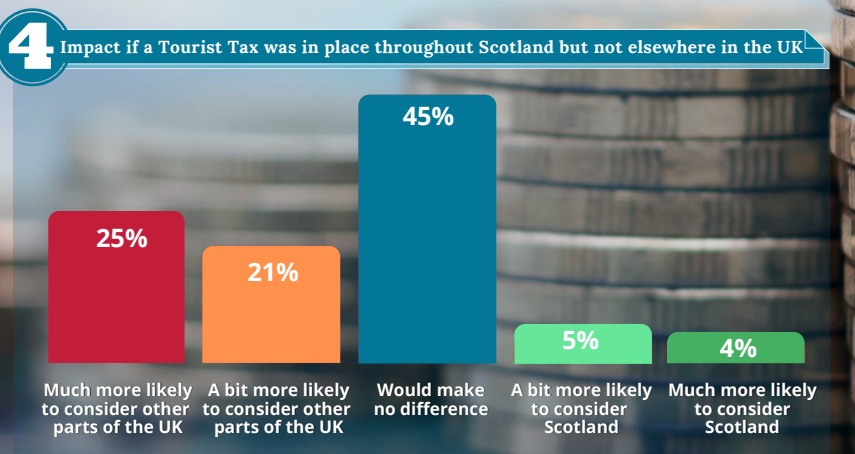
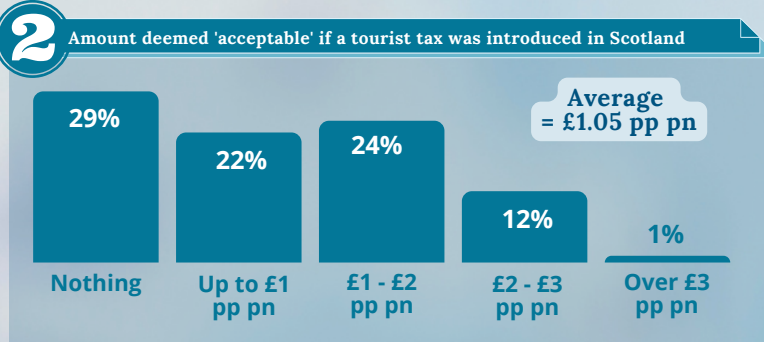
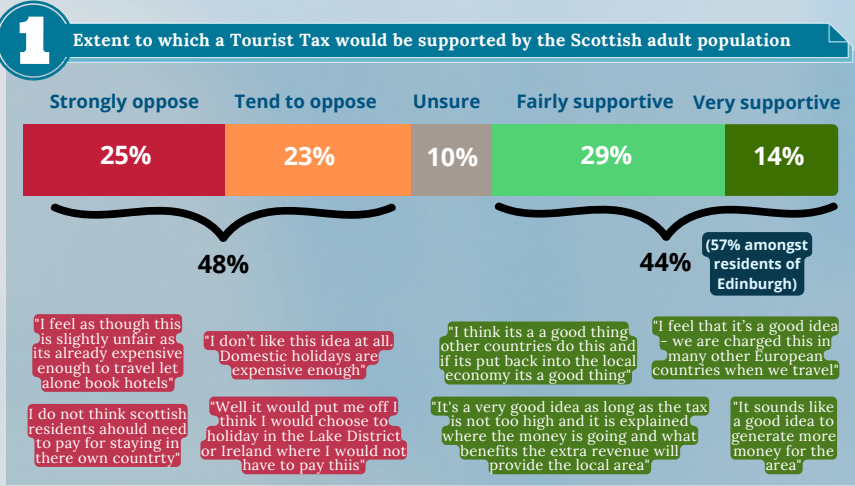
1 A description of the proposed tax was provided (see right) and based on this description, there is a clear division of opinion amongst those who would oppose its introduction (48%) versus those who would support it (44%). Interestingly support was highest among Edinburgh residents (57%) - the city most advanced in its plans for such a tax. Objections tended to focus on additional costs being added to domestic holidays, whilst supporters saw it as a good means of generating additional revenue to reinvest in the local area with several citing personal experience of paying local taxes abroad.

2 Although some would be against paying anything at all, generally there would be a willingness to pay just over £1 per person per night for such a tax - an amount that is lower than the levels currently being considered.

3 There is also the potential threat that some would choose to avoid destinations with a tourist levy in place. Whilst a tourist tax would not impact on the decision to visit for the majority (58%), over a third claim they would be less likely to visit that destination (37%).

4 And if tourist taxes were in place throughout Scotland, 46% claim they would be more likely to consider other parts of the UK instead if such taxes were not in place there: only 9% would be more likely to consider Scotland.

In summary, if tourist levies of the type proposed are to be introduced, clear communication of how the income would be reinvested in the local economy will be required, if it is not to act as a potential barrier to taking home holidays.



Legislation has been passed which means that in the next 4 or 5 years (unless the legislation is subsequently reversed), Scottish local authorities will be able to introduce a Visitor Levy - also known as a 'Tourist Tax'. This is an additional charge to people visiting (staying overnight) in a destination as tourists.

It is anticipated that the revenue generated from such a visitor levy would be reinvested by Local authorities into the local public realm, local tourism infrastructure and promotion of the destination. This is similar to how the local visitor taxes charged in hotels and in other types of accommodation across much of Europe and the US are spent.



Scotland's Viewpoint is a regular survey of 1,000+ Scots - statistically representative of the Scottish population and undertaken by 56 Degree Insight. It is conducted online over a two-day period on a quarterly basis. The results displayed here are taken from the 4th wave of the survey which ran over the 26th-27th October - 1,000 Scots were interviewed. For further information visit: [www.56DegreeInsight.com](http://www.56DegreeInsight.com)