

Right to Food (Scotland) Bill

Introduction

A proposal for a Bill to incorporate the right to food into Scots law.

The consultation runs from 25 November 2021 to 16 February 2022.

All those wishing to respond to the consultation are strongly encouraged to enter their responses electronically through this survey. This makes collation of responses much simpler and quicker. However, the option also exists of sending in a separate response (in hard copy or by other electronic means such as e-mail), and details of how to do so are included in the member's consultation document.

Questions marked with an asterisk (*) require an answer.

All responses must include a name and contact details. Names will only be published if you give us permission, and contact details are never published – but we may use them to contact you if there is a query about your response. If you do not include a name and/or contact details, we may have to disregard your response.

Please note that you must complete the survey in order for your response to be accepted. If you don't wish to complete the survey in a single session, you can choose "Save and Continue later" at any point. Whilst you have the option to skip particular questions, you must continue to the end of the survey and press "Submit" to have your response fully recorded.

Please ensure you have read the consultation document before responding to any of the questions that follow. In particular, you should read the information contained in the document about how your response will be handled. The consultation document is available here:

[Consultation Document](#)

[Privacy Notice](#)

I confirm that I have read and understood the Privacy Notice which explains how my personal data will be used.

On the previous page we asked you if you are UNDER 12 YEARS old, and you responded Yes to this question.

If this is the case, we will have to contact your parent or guardian for consent.

If you are under 12 years of age, please put your contact details into the textbox. This can be your email address or phone number. We will then contact you and your parents to receive consent.

Otherwise please confirm that you are or are not under 12 years old.

No Response

About you

Please choose whether you are responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation.
Note: If you choose "individual" and consent to have the response published, it will appear under your own name. If you choose "on behalf of an organisation" and consent to have the response published, it will be published under the organisation's name.

an individual

Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic, but not in a subject relevant to the consultation, please choose "Member of the public".)

Member of the public

Optional: You may wish to explain briefly what expertise or experience you have that is relevant to the subject-matter of the consultation:

Previously worked in community food growing projects, including the Milton and Drumchapel areas of Glasgow

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

No Response

Please choose one of the following:

I am content for this response to be published and attributed to me or my organisation

Please provide your Full Name or the name of your organisation. (Note: the name will not be published if you have asked for the response to be anonymous or "not for publication". Otherwise this is the name that will be published with your response).

David Blair

Please provide details of a way in which we can contact you if there are queries regarding your response. Email is preferred but you can also provide a postal address or phone number.

We will not publish these details.

Aim and Approach - Note: All answers to the questions in this section may be published (unless your response is "not for publication").

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposal to incorporate the right to food into Scots law?

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

Along with water, shelter and warmth, food is the most basic building block of self-sufficiency and self-determination. Children struggle to learn and adults struggle to work on empty stomachs. Poor quality foods lead to health problems down the line, which stretch our already over-burdened NHS. And unsustainable global supply chains leave us dependent on environmentally destructive practices and vulnerable to major shocks in the system. Food is sufficiently important that it deserves its own statutory commission to ensure joined-up policy making at all levels of Scottish society. The need for food security is urgent, and this right should be enshrined in Scots law now, not at an unspecified point in the future when further Human Rights legislation may or may not be introduced.

Q2. Do you think legislation is required, or are there other ways in which the proposed Bill's aims could be achieved more effectively? Please explain the reasons for your response.

I think legislation is required, in order to establish a statutory Food Commission, set measurable, binding targets, and ensure joined-up decision-making. It may be acceptable to include this legislation within another bill which has already been introduced e.g. the Good Food Nation bill. However it would not be acceptable to delay the legislation for future incorporation into a Human Rights bill for which there is no set timetable.

Q3. Which of the following best expresses your view on an independent statutory body being given responsibility for overseeing and reporting on progress towards realising the right to food?

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

An independent statutory body will be relatively free of party-political influence, and have greater public trust and ability to act. It will form part of our system of checks and balances, holding government to account for one of its most basic functions (i.e. the provision of adequate food to its citizens). It will be able to measure progress or otherwise, ensuring that the bill results in meaningful action and is not just an empty gesture.

Q4. Should an independent body be given responsibility for overseeing and reporting on the right to food, do you think it should be:

A newly created body

Please explain the reasons for your response.

I believe creating a new body will allow for fresh thinking and a clear remit, free from organisational drag or inertia of an existing body. Food issues are widespread and cut across multiple policy areas, therefore the body should not be put in a 'silo' of one existing policy area body.

Q5. Which of the following best expresses your view of enshrining a right to food into Scots law as a priority in advance of, and in a manner which is compatible with, any further Scottish Government legislation on wider human rights?

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

The need for food security is so urgent and so fundamental to almost all other human rights and government policy that it deserves immediate legislation.

Q6. Which of the following best expresses your view of placing responsibility for guaranteeing the right to food on the Scottish Government?

Partially supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

I am fully supportive of the ultimate responsibility lying with ScotGov. My only concern is if this leads to more centralising tendencies, with further power eroded from local authorities and communities. ScotGov should have ultimate responsibility, but must act in a way that properly empowers and resources LAs and communities.

Covid-19 Pandemic

Q7. What impact do you consider the effects of, and response to, the Covid-19 pandemic has had on the need for a right to food to be incorporated into Scots law?

Increased the need for the Bill

Please explain the reasons for your response.

Food bank use and food insecurity has increased during the pandemic (as a result of the economic impact), and supply chain disruptions have shown how dependent we are on unsustainable food production and transport practices.

Financial Implications

Q8. Taking into account all those likely to be affected (including public sector bodies, businesses and individuals etc), is the proposed Bill likely to lead to:

some reduction in costs

Please indicate where you would expect the impact identified to fall (including public sector bodies, businesses and individuals etc). You may also wish to suggest ways in which the aims of the Bill could be delivered more cost-effectively.

Implementing Right to Food policies should improve public health (thereby reducing future healthcare costs), create new community food growing potential (reducing costs on households) and improve our use

Q8. Taking into account all those likely to be affected (including public sector bodies, businesses and individuals etc), is the proposed Bill likely to lead to:

of local, sustainably grown produce (benefitting the Scottish economy and helping us meet climate targets).

Equalities

Q9. What overall impact is the proposed Bill likely to have on equality, taking account of the following protected characteristics (under the Equality Act 2010): age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation?

Positive

Please explain the reasons for your response. Where any negative impacts are identified, you may also wish to suggest ways in which these could be minimised or avoided.

Food insecurity is likely to be greater for marginalised groups, including older people, those with disabilities, people from BAME backgrounds, and those from lower income households. Greater food security will have a disproportionate benefit towards those groups.

Sustainability

Q10. In terms of assessing the proposed Bill's potential impact on sustainable development, you may wish to consider how it relates to the following principles:

- living within environmental limits
- ensuring a strong, healthy and just society
- achieving a sustainable economy
- promoting effective, participative systems of governance
- ensuring policy is developed on the basis of strong scientific evidence.

With these principles in mind, do you consider that the Bill can be delivered sustainably?

Yes

Please explain the reasons for your response.

One of the core purposes of the Bill is to improve the sustainability of our food systems. (Food production is currently responsible for 1/4 of all greenhouse gas emissions globally). It will therefore have a very strong positive impact on sustainable development.

General

Q11. Do you have any other additional comments or suggestions on the proposed Bill (which have not already been covered in any of your responses to earlier questions)?

I believe this Bill should be receiving strong cross-party support, and find it shocking that the previous consultation has not been accepted as still valid. I would like to see particular focus on local community food growing initiatives as these bring about additional benefits such as mental health and community cohesion.