

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.

on behalf of an organisation

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".)

No Response

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

Third sector (charitable, campaigning, social enterprise, voluntary, non-profit)

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).

The Scottish Co-operative Party

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.

In one of the wealthiest countries in the world it is a disgrace that people are going hungry in 2022. The Right to Food exists in International Law but this does not stop people going hungry in Scotland in 2022.

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

The Second UN Sustainable Development Goal of 'Zero Hunger by 2020' applies in Scotland as much as anywhere else. It is clear that action is required to make this right meaningful in Scotland. Enshrining the Right to Food in Scots Law should be a catalyst for action to eradicate food poverty.

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.

We believe that legislation is required. As stated previously the current situation does not prevent hunger, food insecurity or food poverty. The pandemic has made clear a situation which has sadly existed in Scotland for many years access to food is not fairly distributed. Whilst some people struggle to feed their families others are able to stockpile food.

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.

A statutory body should be created which could ensure a holistic approach to the food system, including things like the food distribution system and issues around poverty and low wages. It should also look at the links between poor health and poor nutrition.

A statutory body would provide a focus and provide scrutiny and promote joined up thinking across all levels of government and public bodies. A statutory body would be able to hold the Scottish Government and other public bodies to account.

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.

There should be a newly created body which has a clear focus on delivering the Right to Food.

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 Scottish Government has indicated that it may legislate in this area over a number of years and still there is no clear timescale for Scottish Government legislation. As has been highlighted the situation in 2022 where people are going hungry calls out for action now and not at some indeterminate point in the future. There is a need to legislate on the Right to Food now.

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

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

We recognise that all levels of government, UK, Scottish and local have a role to play in the eradication of food poverty. In the Scottish context it makes most sense for the responsibility to rest on the Scottish Government.

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.

The Covid-19 pandemic has increased the need for the Bill, it has exposed how vulnerable the UK's food supply system is to shocks and demonstrated a rise in Food Insecurity. The reality is that the pandemic has exposed an already broken system and made clear that action is required to deliver food justice and the right to food.

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:

no overall change 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.

Whilst we understand that delivering the Right to Food and a new statutory body to oversee it will lead to additional costs we believe in the long term costs could be neutral. A food system which gives people the right to access good quality, nutritious, sustainable and culturally appropriate food has the potential to lead to reductions in other areas of public spending such as the NHS.

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

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?

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 inequality is linked to poverty. The main way to deal with food inequality is to tackle poverty. There is evidence also that food poverty impacts more on disabled people and people from a BAME background.

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.

We believe that the Right to Food would lead to access to healthy, locally sourced food which, in turn, will lead to a sustainable food system. This should lead to a healthier population. This would also lead to an improved environment with a reduction in food waste and a reduction in food miles by the promotion of local production.

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)?

The UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs or Global Goals) are well-known and form part of our obligations to support developing countries. Less well-known is that they apply domestically. The second SDG is 'zero hunger by 2030'.

Despite this obligation, food poverty appears to be increasing not decreasing: 8 million people in the UK have trouble putting food on the table; over 500,000 people used food banks last year; over 1 million people live in food deserts and 10% of the NHS budget goes on treating diabetes. Incorporating SDG2 into domestic law would send a powerful signal about the UK's commitment to addressing food poverty.

In a recent poll for the Co-operative Party 81% of Scots supported the Right to Food being enshrined in Scots Law.