

Proposed Right to Food (Scotland) Bill

Introduction

A proposal for a Bill to incorporate the human right to food into Scots Law The consultation runs from 24 June to 15 September 2020. 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. 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 attached to this consultation which explains how my personal data will be used

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".)

Professional with experience in a relevant subject

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

Farmer

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 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).

Martin Charlton

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

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view on enshrining the human right to food into Scots law?

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

No one should go hungry

Q2. Which of the following best describes your view on the creation of an independent statutory body with responsibility for the right to food?

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response

An independent body can analyse and report on the situation with regard to food, and hold government to account.

Q3. What do you think would be the main practical advantages and disadvantages of the proposed Bill?

Advantages:

Establishes the right to food

Setting up independent body

Forces government to set targets and report on them

Disadvantages:

Not much mention of food quality, either nutritional, environmental, social and animal welfare

Q4. Which of the following expresses your view of enshrining a right to food into Scots law as a priority in advance of any further Scottish Government legislation on wider human rights?

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

The right to food is not a free meal ticket, it is a good measure of how things are going, and helps government put in place policies which help people access nutritious ethically produced food. For example a Universal basic income would have many positive effects.

Q5. What advantages or disadvantages would there be to establishing a statutory body with responsibility for the right to food?

It can hold government to account for its actions
It can analyse and report
It can advise Government
Do not put food and poverty professionals on the statutory body
Do not put big food manufacturers or retailers anywhere near this statutory body
Put people with experience of food poverty and smaller producers on the body

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

Fully supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response.

The Westminster government is not going to do this
Charities can only pick up the pieces
Come on Scottish government, Pick up the ball and run with it

Q7. What impact do you believe bringing the right to food into law would have on:

	Significant impact	Some impact	No impact
(a) Reducing food insecurity	X		
(b) Improving people's health	X		
(c) Workers in the food sector			

Please explain the reasons for your response

All government policies should be made with regard to the right to food. In this way food becomes a given, not an extra.
Good quality nutritious ethically produced food is good for health, hunger and cheap food is not.

Financial Implications

Q8. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have on:

	Significant increase in cost	Some increase in cost	Broadly cost-neutral	Some reduction in cost	Significant reduction in cost	Unsure
(a) Government and the public sector		X				
(b) Businesses			X			
(c) Individuals				X		

Please explain the reasons for your response

There will be increased costs of running the statutory body and possibly in policy areas such as universal basic income (which isn't part of this bill, but would be a significant increase in cost for government), and there may be some reduced costs due to better health and mental health.

For business there may be higher wages and higher tax, but more productive healthier and happy staff.

Q9. Are there ways in which the Bill could achieve its aim more cost-effectively (e.g. by reducing costs or increasing savings)?

No. This is a good start. If the right to food is put into law all government policy should be made with regard to the right to food, policy which does not support the right to food should be questioned, and any policy which does should be encouraged

Equalities

Q10. 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.

Reducing food poverty, and poverty in general, through better wages, employment practices and access to land is empowering

Q11. In what ways could any negative impact of the Bill on equality be minimised or avoided?

Don't let big business or big government get all the benefit.
Get cash to the people who need it.

Sustainability

Q12. Do you consider that the proposed Bill can be delivered sustainably, i.e. without having likely future disproportionate economic, social and/or environmental impacts?

Yes

Please explain the reasons for your response.

If the policies the bill leads to go to promote innovation, production, food research and richer more involved public, then it will be delivered sustainably.

If the government just takes over the food banks it will not

General

Q13. Do you have any other comments or suggestions on the proposal?

I'm generally against single issue policies like Period poverty when the real issue is poverty. I'm for this bill because it is a measure of a complex problem, and a marker for the health and wellbeing of our population.

I am even more in favour of a Universal basic income, which would have an effect not only on the right to food, but on the rights of producers, processors, marketers and consumers of food, and the right to have a life worth living.