

# Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee

4th Meeting, 2023 (Session 6), Wednesday 8  
March 2023

## PE1990: Introduce a Scottish Parliament question session for young people

<b>Petitioner</b>	Jordon Anderson
<b>Petition summary</b>	Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to request the introduction of a monthly chamber session to allow young people to put questions to the First Minister and her cabinet.
<b>Webpage</b>	<a href="https://petitions.parliament.scot/petitions/PE1990">https://petitions.parliament.scot/petitions/PE1990</a>

### Introduction

1. This is a new petition that was lodged on 29 November 2022.
2. A full summary of this petition and its aims can be found at **Annexe A**.
3. A SPICe briefing has been prepared to inform the Committee's consideration of the petition and can be found at **Annexe B**.
4. While not a formal requirement, petitioners have the option to collect signatures on their petition. On this occasion, the petitioner elected not to collect this information.
5. The Committee seeks views from the Scottish Government on all new petitions before they are formally considered. A response has been received from the Scottish Government and is included at **Annexe C** of this paper.

### Action

6. The Committee is invited to consider what action it wishes to take on this petition.

**Clerk to the Committee**

## Annexe A

# PE1990: Introduce a Scottish Parliament question session for young people

## Petitioner

Jordon Anderson

## Date Lodged:

29/11/22

## Petition summary

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to request the introduction of a monthly chamber session to allow young people to put questions to the First Minister and her cabinet.

## Previous action

I have written to my MSP Jackie Dunbar to raise the issue and ask for her views. She has since responded and mentioned that Cabinet Ministers are really busy, which may prevent them from meeting with young people. However, I have seen a young person's First Ministers Question Time done in the past, so I think my petition still has a standing ground.

## Background information

The Government have a very good track record of saying they care a lot about Children & Young People. However, during the course of the pandemic we have seen this to be far from true. Thousands of children and young people still live in poverty and hundreds are walking the streets due to homelessness - the list goes on! The least the Scottish Government can do is give young people the chance to put questions to them.

Young People are the future! In 15/20 years from now, young people will be running the country and making the decisions. Right now the political landscape has many significant priorities. We need certainty. Our MSPs can't give us time, so how do we ensure our voices are heard? We shouldn't have to hide behind a 3rd party organisation to be heard!

We have seen FMQ's done before by so there is no reason why the Government and organisations cannot partner up and do this type of thing again.

## Annexe B

The logo for SPICe, featuring the text 'SPICe' in white on a purple-to-blue gradient background.

**The Information Centre**  
An t-Ionad Fiosrachaidh

# Briefing for the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee on petition [PE1990](#): Introduce a Scottish Parliament question session for young people

## **Brief overview of issues raised by the petition**

- The Petition calls on the Scottish Parliament to “urge the Scottish Government to request the introduction of a monthly chamber session to allow young people to put questions to the First Minister and her cabinet.”
- The Scottish Youth Parliament established in 1999 is the “democratically elected voice of Scotland’s young people”<sup>1</sup>, representing those aged 14-25.
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is the basis for the Scottish Youth Parliament’s vision, mission and values.
- A [Working in Partnership agreement](#) between the Scottish Parliament and the Scottish Youth Parliament is in place. This is one of the ways that the Scottish Parliament is promoting young people being involved in the democratic process.
- The most recent agreement was signed by the Presiding Officer, Alison Johnstone MSP, and then Chair of the Scottish Youth Parliament, Josh Kennedy MSYP, in December 2021. [A podcast on the agreement is available](#) on the Scottish Parliament website. [A previous working agreement](#) was signed in 2018.

---

<sup>1</sup> [Scottish Youth Parliament](#)

- The Working in Partnership agreement includes:
  - the Scottish Parliament hosting a sitting of the Scottish Youth Parliament once every two years;
  - developing relationships between MSPs and MSYPs;
  - ensuring young people can contribute to committee inquiries; and
  - providing opportunities for staff from both Parliaments to work collaboratively.
- MSYPs have provided evidence to Scottish Parliament committees on a number of issues as well as working in innovative ways together with Scottish Parliament Committees. [The Scottish Parliament's Local Government and Communities Committee, for example, attended the Scottish Youth Parliament workshop on period products which was held at Dunfermline High School](#) during its consideration of the Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Bill (now the Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act 2021).
- A Children's Parliament was established in Scotland in 1996. The work of the Children's Parliament "*supports the Scottish Government, local authorities and other public bodies to fulfill their legal obligations to promote and protect the human rights of everyone and fulfill their duty of care toward children.*"<sup>2</sup>
- Since 2017 Scottish Government Ministers have met once a year with children and young people<sup>3</sup>. In addition, the Scottish Government's Executive Team, chaired by Permanent Secretary, meets annually with the Children's Parliament, and the Scottish Youth Parliament.
- In terms of deliberative democracy and engaging young people in deliberative processes, the Scottish Government has committed to a citizens' assembly for under 16s and a Future Generations Commission. These were featured in its [2021-22 Programme for Government](#). The under 16s citizens' assembly was also mentioned in the [Scottish Government's response to the report of the Citizens' Assembly of Scotland](#).

---

<sup>2</sup> [Children's Parliament Scotland](#)

<sup>3</sup> See [Scottish Youth Parliament Cabinet Takeover 2022](#), [Cabinet Takeover 2022](#), Children's Parliament and [Key Messages](#) Annual Scottish Cabinet Meeting with Children and Young People 2022 [and Commitments agreed at annual Cabinet Meeting 2022](#).

- The [Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland](#) works to protect the human rights of children and young people in Scotland.
- [The Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee is currently undertaking an inquiry into public participation](#) in the work of the Scottish Parliament. As part of this, a Citizen's Panel was formed to answer the question "How can the Scottish Parliament ensure that diverse voices and communities from all parts of Scotland influence our work?". [One of the Panel's recommendations was](#) that the Scottish Parliament should "Schedule specific time in the debating Chamber for individual public questions to be asked.

### Scottish Parliament Action

- As above, a working in partnership agreement is in place between the Scottish Parliament and the Scottish Youth Parliament.
- Formal proceedings of the Parliament are regulated by [Standing Orders](#) as provided for in the [Scotland Act 1998](#).

**Sarah McKay**  
**Senior Researcher**  
30/01/2023

The purpose of this briefing is to provide a brief overview of issues raised by the petition. SPICe research specialists are not able to discuss the content of petition briefings with petitioners or other members of the public. However, if you have any comments on any petition briefing you can email us at [spice@parliament.scot](mailto:spice@parliament.scot) Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in petition briefings is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware however that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.

Published by the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe), an office of the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP

## Annexe C

### Scottish Government submission of 25 January 2023

#### PE1990/A: Introduce a Scottish Parliament question session for young people

Your e-mail of 30 November sought comments from the Scottish Government on a series of petitions, including the petition referenced above. This letter offers a response to the subject matter of Petition PE1990.

You noted that the introduction of a new session in the Parliament Debating Chamber would likely fall within the responsibility of the Scottish Parliament, if the session was deemed to constitute formal proceedings. However, you considered that the Committee would welcome a view on the petition in terms of any informal session which could be brought forward by the Scottish Government.

Children and young people (CYP) are engaged with the Scottish Government at the most senior level.

Cabinet Ministers hold an annual meeting with CYP, which demonstrates the Government's commitment to meaningfully and credibly engage with CYP on issues that matter most to them. In line with Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), it gives CYP the opportunity to influence national decisions, effectively participate in wider civic society and shape the future Scotland they want to live in. At this meeting, CYP have the opportunity to represent the views of their peers from across Scotland and lead discussions by raising issues that matter most to Scotland's CYP and to inform the government's agenda by collectively agreeing to actions for the coming year.

The seventh annual meeting of Cabinet with children and young people is supported by both the Children's Parliament and the Scottish Youth Parliament and is scheduled for 28 March 2023 in Bute House.

The Scottish Government Executive Team, chaired by Permanent Secretary, hold annual meetings with children from Children's Parliament, and Young People from the Scottish Youth Parliament.

These engagement provide an opportunity for CYP to engage with the most senior government officials to discuss issues of significance to CYP in Scotland. Members of the Children's Parliament (MCPs) met in June 2022, and Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs) met in November 2022.

I hope the information in this letter is helpful to the Committee.