



European
Commission

PROTOCOL ON IRELAND/NORTHERN IRELAND

ENGAGEMENT WITH STAKEHOLDERS

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What would the European Commission do to increase engagement with stakeholders¹?

What already exists in the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland?

- The Joint Consultative Working Group on the implementation of the Protocol was established and serves as a forum for the exchange of information and mutual consultation²;
- Northern Ireland authorities actively participate in the meetings of the EU – UK Joint Committee on the Withdrawal Agreement, the Specialised Committee on issues related to the implementation of the Protocol and the Joint Consultative Working Group;

- The EU – UK Joint Committee has a role under Article 13(4) of the Protocol regarding new Union acts that fall within the scope of the Protocol; and
- The Protocol provides for democratic consent in Northern Ireland to the continued application of Articles 5 – 10 of the Protocol.

On top of that, the European Commission's non-paper on engagement with businesses, civil society, as well as institutional and other actors in Northern Ireland, suggested the following ideas to the UK side:

<p>STRUCTURED DIALOGUE <i>Between the EU, the UK and Northern Ireland stakeholders</i></p>	<p>Involving stakeholders on the island of Ireland in the implementation of the Protocol and listening to their voices in a structured and regular way.</p>
<p>STRENGTHEN ENGAGEMENT <i>Joint Committee / Specialised Committee</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More structured engagement on a regular basis with the Co-Chairs of the Joint Committee. • Participation of Northern Irish stakeholders in Specialised Committee meetings.
<p>JOINT CONSULTATIVE WORKING GROUP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Joint Consultative Working Group on the implementation of the Protocol serves as a forum for information exchange and mutual consultation. The Northern Ireland Executive actively participates in these meetings. • New structured sub-groups within the Joint Consultative Working Group would facilitate information exchange. • Increased transparency – publication of summary minutes of the meetings.
<p>INCREASED TRANSPARENCY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A dedicated page on the European Commission's website with a clear and comprehensive overview of EU legislation applicable to and in Northern Ireland. • Includes information on pending public consultations for measures applicable to and in Northern Ireland. • Primarily for stakeholders, but also relevant for Northern Irish authorities as a source of information.
<p>STRENGTHEN PARLIAMENTARY LINKS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater engagement between the Northern Ireland Assembly and the EU-UK Parliamentary Partnership Assembly – for the respective constituting bodies to discuss.

¹ Protocol on Ireland and Northern Ireland - Non-Paper - engagement with Northern Ireland stakeholders and authorities, 13 October 2021 https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/protocol-ireland-and-northern-ireland-non-paper-engagement-northern-ireland-stakeholders-and-authorities_en

² Article 15 of the Protocol.