

# BREXIT BRIEF

Brexit Brief Issue 115  
28 July 2021



Tony Brown

## Introduction

The Brief seeks to provide up-to-date information on the progress and content of the UK-EU negotiations, and bring together relevant statements and policy positions from key players in Ireland, the UK and the EU.

The Brief is part of a wider communications programme covering the work of the IIEA's UK Project Group – including commentaries, speeches, texts and event reports – which are highlighted on the Institute's website. ([www.iiea.com](http://www.iiea.com))

## Section One: State of Play

The UK Government introduced its Command Paper on the 'way forward' for the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland (the Protocol) on the last day of the Westminster parliamentary term and days before the annual Brussels August shutdown. An early exchange showed little prospect of agreement. It appears that there will be no substantive discussion of the detailed British proposals until September. That said, there have been clear signals that renegotiation of the Protocol text is not an option for the EU and its institutions. The British have called for a 'standstill' period to permit talks on options other than full renegotiation to be given serious consideration when the holiday break ends.

Meanwhile the divisions and uncertainties surrounding the Protocol continue to damage the political situation in Northern Ireland with the DUP, under its new leader, Sir Jeffery Donaldson MP, taking a particularly hard line on future implementation of any of the Protocol provisions as it faces challenges from more extreme versions of loyalism less than a year away from critical Assembly elections.

### UK Command Paper 'Northern Ireland Protocol: the way forward', 21 July 2021

The UK Government published its Command on the Protocol on Wednesday, 21 July 2021 with the relevant ministers – Lord Frost in the House of Lords and Brandon Lewis MP in the House of Commons – making formal

statements and engaging in debate. The Paper includes a discussion of the origins of the Protocol and how it is working, an assessment of Article 16 and sets out the UK's alternative way forward to an agreed new balance. Section Five contains the UK proposals in the areas of Trade in Goods within the United Kingdom, Circulation of Goods within Northern Ireland and Governance.

The Paper lists several key proposals:

- Extending the 'goods at risk principle' implies that checks and controls will only apply to goods destined for the EU (in effect, Ireland). Products made to UK rules and regulated by UK authorities will be admitted freely to Northern Ireland. The regulatory environment in Northern Ireland should tolerate different rules for goods remaining in Northern Ireland.
- Food products destined for consumers in Northern Ireland should not face mandatory SPS checks.
- More flexible arrangements on VAT and Excise rules would give the UK greater freedom in setting rates but with some safeguards to avoid distortions on the island of Ireland.
- Provisions on issues such as documentation requirements for pets, plants seeds, etc would be removed with some restrictions on 'high-risk' items (weapons, endangered animals).
- The governance of the Protocol should be changed. The European Court of Justice would be removed from the whole process and the role of the EU institutions would be reduced, with an arbitration mechanism as provided in the Trade and Cooperation Agreement introduced.

- There should be deep reciprocal sharing of data on trade, inspection processes and analysis of trade flows and close co-operation between authorities. The UK is prepared to bring in laws to deter any threats to the protection of the EU Single Market and to ensure that there are no infrastructures or checks at the Ireland/Northern Ireland border.

- Several commentators have remarked that the UK proposals closely reflect the 'Alternative Arrangements' approach suggested by Brexit enthusiasts, including Lord Frost, during the EU-UK negotiations but ruled out by the Commission.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson contributed a foreword dealing with the problems associated with the Protocol:

*It is increasingly clear that we cannot solve the problems simply by a rigid and unpurposive application of the Protocol in its current form. Indeed, the difficulties are so profound that I have had to consider whether safeguarding action is necessary under the Article 16 framework which the Protocol provides. My conclusion is that the circumstances in which we find ourselves would justify such an approach. But I also conclude that there is still an opportunity to proceed differently and to agree with the EU a new balance in how the Protocol operates because I believe that there is still political will to address shared problems on all sides. The same sense of responsibility that brought the Protocol into being must be summoned again, in recognition of the fact that it is failing to deliver on what it set out to achieve.*

*This paper sets out our proposals. They are necessarily ambitious. I make no apology for that: the spirit of the peace process has always required adaptation and evolution of solutions to meet the unique circumstances of Northern Ireland. If we can work on them together, I am convinced we can find a settlement that can endure.*

Ministers Frost and Lewis, in an introduction, state that:

*To provide space for these discussions, the Government believes it is vital to provide certainty and stability for businesses in Northern Ireland in the short term. Accordingly, we believe we and the EU should agree a 'standstill' on existing arrangements, including the operation of grace periods in force, and a freeze on existing legal actions and processes, to ensure there is room to negotiate without further cliff edges, and to provide a genuine signal of good intent to find ways forward.*

*For this to stand a chance of success, it must be accompanied by ambition, imagination, genuine flexibility, and compromise. Accordingly, this Command Paper sets out a set of proposals which we believe will provide a stronger longer-term foundation to achieve shared interests. They will require significant change to the current Protocol. But they will not dispense with many of its concepts.*

During his statement to the House of Commons, Brandon Lewis described the UK's position as follows:

*It is a balance which needs to ensure that goods can circulate much more freely within the UK customs territory, while ensuring that full processes are applied to goods destined for the EU. It is a balance which needs to enable all in Northern Ireland to continue to have normal access to goods from the rest of the UK, by allowing goods meeting both UK and EU standards to circulate there.*

*And it is a balance which needs to normalise the basis of the Protocol's governance, so that the relationship between us and the EU is no longer policed by the EU institutions and the Court of Justice. We should return to a normal Treaty framework, similar to other international agreements, that is more conducive to the sense of genuine and equitable partnership we seek.*

*We also recognise our share of responsibility in helping the EU protect its single market. We are willing to explore exceptional arrangements around data-sharing and cooperation; and penalties in legislation to deter those looking to move non-compliant products from Northern Ireland to Ireland.*

*And I repeat – all of this is entirely consistent with maintaining an open border, without infrastructure or checks, between Ireland and Northern Ireland. These proposals will require significant change to the Northern Ireland Protocol. We do not shy away from that. We believe such change is necessary to deal with the situation we now face.*

*We look to open a discussion on these proposals urgently. At the same time,*

*we must provide certainty and stability for businesses as we do so. So we believe we should also quickly agree a "standstill" period, including maintaining the operation of grace periods in force, and a freeze on existing legal actions and processes, to ensure there is room to negotiate and to provide a genuine signal of good intent to find ways forward.*

*The difficulties we have in operating the Northern Ireland Protocol are now the main obstacle to building a relationship with the EU that reflects our strong common interests and values. Instead of that, we are seeing a relationship which is punctuated with legal challenges and characterised by disagreement and mistrust.*

*We do not want that pattern to be set – not least because it does not support stability in Northern Ireland. It is now the time to work to establish a new balance, which both the UK and EU can invest in - to provide a platform for peace and prosperity in Northern Ireland, and allow us to set out on a new path of partnership with the EU.*

*We have today set out an approach which we believe can do just that. We urge the EU to look at it with fresh eyes, and work with us to seize this opportunity and put our relations on a better footing. We stand ready to deliver the brighter future that is within reach.*

Louise Haigh MP (Labour Party Shadow Northern Ireland Secretary) argued the following:

*Today, not for the first time, the Secretary of State is back before Parliament to renege on those promises and to discredit*

*the deal that his Government were authors of and cheerleaders for, claiming that they could not possibly have known what the real-world impacts on the ground would be. The country will be asking once again: is this bad faith or incompetence.*

*Today, businesses and communities needed reassurance. They just want to see sustainable solutions. All of us want to see serious proposals that lower the barriers down the Irish Sea and protect the economic integrity of the United Kingdom.*

The DUP leader, Sir Jeffrey Donaldson MP, welcomed "the acceptance by the Government that the protocol is not working, that it is causing real harm to our economy in Northern Ireland and that it is simply not sustainable. I trust that the EU will approach new negotiations in good faith. For our part, we will apply our seven tests against any outcome of this process." He then asked: "Will the Secretary of State assure the House that these negotiations will not be dragged out, and, if unsuccessful, that the Government will invoke Article 16 to introduce measures that provide for the free movement of goods from Great Britain to Northern Ireland that the principle of consent is fully respected, and that Northern Ireland's place within the United Kingdom is properly and legally protected?"

The SDLP leader, Colum Eastwood MP said that "this statement is the second attempt in one week that this Government have made to distance themselves from agreements they have negotiated". "Why does the Secretary of State think that any other country, or any person in Northern Ireland, would trust anything that this Government say from this day forward?", he asked.

The Alliance Party MP, Stephen Farry, commented that “the statement creates more uncertainty and instability. The Government are choosing confrontation rather than adopting the obvious solution on the table, which is a comprehensive veterinary agreement”. Does he recognise that achieving that requires trust to be built and sustained, but all the Government’s actions around the Protocol this year have undermined that, including, today, the empty threat around article 16?”, he added.

The veteran Eurosceptic MP, Sir William Cash MP, asked “does my right hon. Friend agree, that given the unique circumstances of Northern Ireland, as set out in the Protocol, the EU must understand that the UK, having recently and democratically left the EU, rejects the EU’s legalistic intransigence but will continue to negotiate in the short term, on the clear understanding that our national interest requires equal reasonableness and realism from the EU, or the Government will take the necessary steps that my right hon. Friend just outlined —and that they mean what they say?”

The SDLP MP, Claire Hanna, expressed the hope that “he will soon begin to listen to other parties to the agreement, as well as to businesses in Northern Ireland”. She continued:

*A recent Northern Ireland business survey found that two thirds of companies would like to take advantage of the opportunities of the Protocol. Invest Northern Ireland has reported many expressions of interest, and companies such as Arla and Dale Farm have agreed on major investment thanks to our unique dual market access. Where there*

*are practical issues of course they need to be resolved, but in his statement the Secretary of State referred to the potential of partnership, while in the same breath undermining it with uncertainty.*

Secretary Lewis responded: “Let me point out to the hon. Lady that there are two parties to the agreement, the UK and the EU. I can only assume from her suggestion that we should take more notice of other parties that she is joining some others in backing the EU over the people of the United Kingdom and, therefore, the people of Northern Ireland.”

## **Minister for Foreign Affairs: Statement on UK Government Paper, 21 July 2021**

A statement from Iveagh House followed shortly thereafter. It said the following:

*We note the publication of the UK Government paper on the Protocol on Ireland / Northern Ireland. We will analyse this paper closely, together with our EU colleagues.*

*The Protocol is the agreed solution between the UK and the EU to the problems caused by Brexit for the island of Ireland. The Protocol safeguards the Good Friday Agreement, avoids a hard border on the island of Ireland, and protects the Single Market, and Ireland’s place in it. The Protocol was jointly agreed by this UK Government and the European Union. It is jointly owned by them, and must be jointly implemented by them. We will continue to encourage the UK to work in partnership with the EU to identify realistic solutions in a spirit of positive and constructive engagement.*

*We must also bear in mind the significant opportunities the Protocol presents for business and employment in Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland is the only place in the world whose goods have free and full access to both the EU single market and the rest of the UK internal market. Surveys show that two-thirds of NI businesses see the opportunity in this – and we are seeing historically high FDI interest in the North. We need to use the Protocol to deliver on a prosperity agenda for the people of Northern Ireland. Realising these opportunities, as our economies build back from the impact of Covid, should be the focus of our energy at this time.*

## **European Commission Responses from Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič and President von der Leyen, 21 July 2021.**

Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič also issued a statement on behalf of the European Commission:

*The EU has sought flexible, practical solutions to overcome the difficulties citizens in Northern Ireland are experiencing regarding the implementation of the Protocol. For example, on 30 June, the Commission tabled a package of measures to address certain pressing issues, including changing our own rules to ensure the long-term supply of medicines from Great Britain to Northern Ireland. These solutions were brought about with the core purpose of benefitting the people in Northern Ireland.*

*We take note of the statement made by Lord Frost today.*

*We will continue to engage with the UK, also on the suggestions made today. We are ready to continue to seek creative solutions, within the framework of the Protocol, in the interest of all communities in Northern Ireland. However, we will not agree to a renegotiation of the Protocol. Joint action in the joint bodies established by the Withdrawal Agreement will be of paramount importance over the coming months. We must prioritise stability and predictability in Northern Ireland. I look forward to speaking to Lord Frost soon.*

The Commission position was further outlined in remarks by President Ursula von der Leyen who remarked that while Brussels will “be creative and flexible” in discussions with the UK. “We will not renegotiate”, she maintained.

## **Phone call between the Prime Minister and Taoiseach, 20 July 2021**

The Prime Minister Boris Johnson and the Taoiseach Micheál Martin spoke by phone on 20 July, the day before the publication of the UK Paper. The Prime Minister’s Office reported that the two leaders “updated one another on the current coronavirus situation in their respective countries and agreed to continue to work together to bring an end to the pandemic.” The statement then read as follows:

*The Prime Minister emphasised that the way the Protocol is currently operating is causing significant disruption for the people in Northern Ireland. He made clear the UK Government’s commitment to protecting the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement in all its dimensions. He said the EU must show pragmatism and solutions needed to be found to address the serious challenges that have arisen*

*with the Protocol. The Prime Minister said that the UK Government would outline its approach on the Northern Ireland Protocol to Parliament tomorrow.*

*The leaders also discussed the UK's proposals, published last week, on addressing the legacy on the Troubles in Northern Ireland. The Prime Minister stressed that the current focus on criminal justice is not working for anyone and looked forward to further engagement with the Irish Government, parties in Northern Ireland and others on the UK's proposals.*

The Taoiseach's Office reported that the leaders "exchanged views on the current COVID-19 situation, especially in regard to the Delta variant". It also stated the following:

*They discussed the Northern Ireland Protocol. The Taoiseach said that the UK Government's statement on the Protocol, to be made at Westminster tomorrow, would be carefully considered and he stressed the EU-UK framework for issues related to the Protocol. The Taoiseach also raised legacy issues, including serious concerns at the British Government's proposals. He emphasised that there can be no pre-determined outcome to the consultation process currently underway.*

## **Commission President von der Leyen in Dublin**

European Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen, visited Dublin on Friday, 16 July 2021 to make the formal announcement of Commission approval for the country's Recovery and Resilience (RRF) post-COVID-19 investment and reform package and the associated €1 billion financial aid package.

When the President and the Taoiseach, Micheál Martin, met for talks on a range of issues, including the Northern Ireland Protocol, they suggested it was for Britain rather than Europe to display flexibility on these issues. President von der Leyen emphasised that the Protocol was the only solution to mitigating the impact of Brexit on Northern Ireland and also on the single market. "It is certainly not the problem, but it is the solution. It's the only solution to protect peace and stability on the island of Ireland, and to protect the integrity of the Single Market", she stressed.

The Taoiseach agreed that flexibility had been shown by the Commission, as had "generosity of spirit". He went on to say:

*Where there's a will there's a way, in our view. The mechanisms are there to resolve any outstanding issues and we believe the mechanisms should be used to the full by the UK Government and indeed the EU, and we believe the generosity that has been shown by the European Union should be reciprocated.*

## **House of Commons Debate on Protocol Resolution, 15 July 2021**

On Thursday, 15 July 2021 the House of Commons debated a Resolution, tabled by Sir Bernard Jenkin MP, on the Northern Ireland Protocol. Sir Bernard Jenkin indicated the purpose of the debate was for the House to agree on how the Government should approach the issues that have arisen in Northern Ireland since the UK left the European Union and, in particular, the implications of the Protocol. He argued that the "debate is about looking forward, about what we must now agree to do to set things right."

The debate was notable for the contribution of the newly ratified DUP leader, Sir Jeffrey Donaldson, who said that “much has been said about how we got here, but, today, I want to set out where we need to go from here”. “That is why, today, I am setting out seven tests that I believe are important for any new arrangements. Our tests are grounded not in a Unionist wish list, but in promises that have already been made in one form or another to the people of Northern Ireland. It is not too much to ask that the Government stand by these promises”, he added.

Sir Jeffrey’s seven tests may be summarised as follows:

1. Any new arrangement must respect the 1800 Act of Union which says that all parts of the United Kingdom are entitled to the same privileges when it comes to trade.
2. There should be no diversion of trade away from Great Britain to the Republic.
3. There should be no border in the Irish Sea.
4. The people of Northern Ireland must have a say in making the laws that govern them.
5. There must be no checks on goods between Great Britain and Northern Ireland in either direction.
6. Any new regulatory barriers must be approved at Stormont.
7. The consent of the people in the North must be secured in advance of any new arrangement coming into place.

“There is no practical or pragmatic reason why arrangements cannot be put in place that satisfy those tests and prove no meaningful threat to the integrity of the EU single market.”, he stressed.

Replying to the debate, the Cabinet Office Minister Penny Mordaunt, said the following:

*We need an approach to implementation that respects the delicate balance between the interests of all communities in Northern Ireland, and the economic and cultural links, east and west, as well as north and south. That is the thrust of the motion that we have been debating. The Government are ready to do that, and colleagues will not have long to wait. My Hon. Friend Sir Bernard Jenkin who opened the debate, and all Members who have spoken, have done a service by demonstrating that support for such an ambition is the overwhelming mood of this House.*

## **Section Two: The Evolving Debate**

### **House of Commons Select Committee on Northern Ireland, 15 July 2021**

The House of Commons Select Committee on Northern Ireland met on Thursday, 15 July 2021 with Simon Hoare MP in the chair. The committee heard evidence from representatives of the Ulster Farmers Union, the Northern Ireland Retail Consortium, Manufacturing NI, the Port of Larne, P&O Ferries and the transportation company AM Nexday.

The representatives updated the Committee on emerging problems following Brexit and reflected on a variety of issues that included delivery delays and regulatory checks as the new UK-EU relationship kicked off. Businesses faced uncertainty from the end of grace periods for checks on certain products that enter Northern Ireland under the terms of the Protocol. Although food suppliers and retailers welcomed the extension of the grace period for certain products, they emphasised



the need for the certainty of a permanent solution. Simon Hoare MP cited both Aodhán Connolly from Northern Ireland Retail Consortium, and Victor Chestnutt, President of the Ulster Farmers' Union who both called out the lack of political will to find solutions even though they were evidently apparent.

In a separate move, the six leading Northern Ireland supermarkets have written to the UK Government and the EU authorities calling for action to avoid trade disruption when a range of further checks on goods arriving in the North from Britain are enacted in October under the terms of the Northern Ireland Protocol. They called on Lord Frost and Maroš Šefčovič to show real ambition to provide a compromise that benefits those most impacted: the people of Ireland.

## Lord Frost on 'Alignment' in House of Lords, 15 July 2021

In a House of Lords debate on Thursday, 15 July 2021 the issue of alignment of agri-food standards and regulations gave rise to the following exchange of views. Responding to a question from Lord Trenchard on alternatives to alignment on EU regulations, such as a veterinary agreement based on mutual recognition of underlying product regulations, as the EU has agreed with New Zealand, when it comes to reducing administrative controls between Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Lord Frost said the following,

*My Lords, I have said it before and I will say it again: we will not align dynamically with the rules of the EU on agri-food or in other areas. That was the approach that we took into the negotiations last year and that is the consistent approach now. My noble friend is absolutely right*

*that there are other ways of doing this and he is absolutely correct to point to an equivalence-based veterinary agreement as the way forward. That is exactly what we have proposed to the European Union.*

## Further Causes of Friction

The Protocol is not the only issue causing friction between the UK and its neighbours.

The Northern Ireland Assembly was recalled from its summer recess to discuss the UK Government's proposals on dealing with legacy issues arising from the years of the Troubles. The UK Government had proposed that all criminal prosecutions relating to the Troubles and future attempts to take civil actions would be blocked. The proposals provoked immediate opposition from the Irish Government and from all five Northern Ireland Assembly parties.

The UK and EU also face a difficult negotiation on the future position of the British Overseas Territory of Gibraltar. A Commission paper on the mandate for talks has been heavily criticised by the UK Foreign Secretary, Dominic Raab, as seeking to undermine the UK's sovereignty.

## Section Three: Background Material and Further Reading

### Background Material

**HM Government** Command Paper (CP502) Northern Ireland Protocol: the way forward, July 2021. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/northern-ireland-protocol-next-steps>

**GOV.UK** Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Brandon Lewis MP, Oral Statement: Wednesday 21st July 2021. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/secretary-of-state-for-northern-ireland-brandon-lewis-mp-oral-statement-wednesday-21st-july-2021>

**European Commission** Statement by Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič following today's announcement by the UK government regarding the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland, 21 July 2021. [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/STATEMENT\\_21\\_3821](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/STATEMENT_21_3821)

**Merrion Street** Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs on the UK Government Paper on the Protocol, 21 July 2021. <https://merrionstreet.ie/en/news-room/news/statement-by-minister-for-foreign-affairs-on-the-UK-government-paper-on-the-protocol.170611.s...>

**GOV.UK** PM call with Irish Taoiseach Micheál Martin: 20 July 2021. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-call-with-irish-taoiseach-micheal-martin-20-july-2021--6>

**Department of the Taoiseach** The Taoiseach and Prime Minister Johnson spoke by telephone this afternoon, 20 July 2021. <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/6c2af-the-taoiseach-and-prime-minister-johnson-spoke-by-telephone-this-afternoon/>

**GOV.UK** Government to set out way forward on the Northern Ireland Protocol to Parliament, 8 July 2021. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-to-set-out-way-forward-on-the-northern-ireland-protocol-to-parliament>

**GOV.UK** Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Brandon Lewis MP, Oral Statement: Wednesday 14th July 2021. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/secretary-of-state-for-northern-ireland-brandon-lewis-mp-oral-statement-wednesday-14th-july-2021>

**Hansard** (House of Commons) Debate: Resolution on Northern Ireland Protocol, 15 July 2021. <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-07-15/debates/65E91ED8-A873-4858-836F-DDB48C5C97AA/NorthernIrelandProtocol>

**Hansard** (House of Lords) Debate on Northern Ireland Protocol, 14 July 2021. <https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2021-07-14/debates/853E7176-BBA9-40CE-8A88-049CD7AECCB1/NorthernIrelandJewishCommunity>

**Hansard** (House of Lords) Debate on Trade Agreements, 15 July 2021. <https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2021-07-15/debates/C652C2A2-0A84-4C6E-8B54-1A20068C513F/TradeAgreements>

**House of Commons** Northern Ireland Affairs Select Committee, 15 July 2021. <https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/120/northern-ireland-affairs-committee/news/156564/northern-ireland-protocol-six-months-on-committee-to-take-stock>

**House of Lords** European Affairs Committee, 14 July 2021. <https://committees.parliament.uk/event/5030/formal-meeting-oral-evidence-session/>

**Houses of the Oireachtas** Joint Committee on the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement. Meeting, 13 July 2021. <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/committees/33/committee-on-the-implementation-of-the-good-friday-agreement/>

**The Irish Times** Brexit: EU 'will not renegotiate' Northern Ireland protocol as UK demands changes. *IT*, 23 July 2021. <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/brexit-eu-will-not-renegotiate-northern-ireland-protocol-as-uk-demands-changes-1.4626719>

**The Irish Times** Brexit: EU chief rejects Johnson's plea to renegotiate NI protocol. *IT*, 23 July 2021. <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/world/europe/brexit-eu-chief-rejects-johnson-s-plea-to-renegotiate-northern-ireland-protocol-1.4627717>

**The Financial Times** Boris Johnson has made a Brexit offer the EU can only refuse. *FT*, 22 July 2021. <https://www.ft.com/content/7ee27e99-1f13-4ca3-a7da-93248a32c078>

**The Telegraph** The EU's purblind legalism has rendered the Northern Ireland Protocol status quo unsustainable. *The Telegraph*, 21 July 2021. <https://www.co.uk/opinion/2021/07/21/eus-purblind-legalism-has-rendered-northern-ireland-protocol/>

**BBC** Brexit: Stormont Parties divided on UK call to amend NI Protocol. *BBC*, 22 July 2021. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-57901928>

**The Guardian** UK's Northern Ireland protocol demands sap Brussels' goodwill. *Guardian*, 21 July 2021. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2021/jul/21/uks-northern-ireland-protocol-demands-sap-brussels-goodwill>

**Politico** Brussels won't let Brexit ruin its summer holidays. *Politico*, 21 July 2021. <https://www.politico.eu/article/brussels-wont-let-boris-johnson-ruin-its-summer-holidays-brexit-northern-ireland/>

**The Telegraph** UK to make Brexit protocol ultimatum as M&S boss warns of 'gaps on shelves' in Northern Ireland. *The Telegraph*, 21 July 2021. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2021/07/21/boris-johnson-news-cummings-brexit-northern-ireland-pmqs/>

**The Irish Times** Johnson tells Martin EU must show 'pragmatism' on protocol. *IT*, 21 July 2021. <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/johnson-tells-martin-eu-must-show-pragmatism-on-protocol-1.4625952>

**The Irish Times** Dominic Cummings says he's not certain Brexit was a good idea. *IT*, 21 July 2021. <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/world/uk/dominic-cummings-says-he-s-not-certain-brexit-was-a-good-idea-1.4626025>

**BBC** Brexit: Cross-border trade rise reflects NI Protocol problem says Frost. *BBC*, 15 July 2021. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-57842316>

**The Irish Times** Von der Leyen says Ireland's pandemic response has been exemplary. *IT*, 17 July 2021. <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/von-der-leyen-says-ireland-s-pandemic-response-has-been-exemplary-1.4622273>

**Belfast Telegraph** DUP ministers may refuse to conduct NI Protocol checks if changes 'unacceptable' warns Donaldson. *Belfast Telegraph*, 23 July 2021. <https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/dup-ministers-may-refuse-to-conduct-ni-protocol-checks-if-changes-unacceptable-warns-donaldson>

**Independent** Brexit: David Frost admits it's 'too much trouble' for firms to trade with Northern Ireland. *Independent*, 15 July 2021. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-northern-ireland-david-frost-trade-b1884178.html>

**The Irish Times** British stance on food and animal standards may be hardening – Coveney. *IT*, 13 July 2021. <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/british-stance-on-food-and-animal-standards-may-be-hardening-coveney-1.4618535>

**Belfast Telegraph** Hang your heads in shame, MP Simon Hoare tells trolls who targeted loyalist women. *Belfast Telegraph*, 16 July 2021. <https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/politics/hang-your-heads-in-shame-mpsimon-hoare-tells-trolls-who-targeted-loyalist-women-40658721.html>

**The Guardian** Post-Brexit talks on City access to EU have stalled, Sunak reveals. *Guardian*, 1 July 2021. <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2021/jul/01/post-brexit-talks-on-city-access-to-eu-have-stalled-rishi-sunak-reveals-mansion-house>

**Newsletter** Alex Kane: Unionism's fight is with Boris Johnson, not the protocol. *Newsletter*, 12 July 2021. <https://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/opinion/columnists/alex-kane-unionisms-fight-is-with-boris-johnson-not-the-protocol-3303858>

**Newsletter** Peter Robinson: The story has moved on from the problems of the DUP to the problem of the Northern Ireland protocol. *Newsletter*, 2 July 2021. <https://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/opinion/columnists/peter-robinson-the-story-has-moved-on-from-the-problems-of-the-dup-to-the-problem-of-the-northern-ireland-protocol>

**Belfast Telegraph** Boris Johnson and Brandon Lewis treat NI people like fools. *Belfast Telegraph*, 18 July 2021. <https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/opinion/columnists/suzanne-breen/boris-johnson-and-brandon-lewis-treat-ni-people-like-fools-40663085.html>

**BBC** Brexit: NI Jewish community 'at risk' over chilled meat ban. *BBC*, 9 July 2021. <https://www.bbc.com/uk-northern-ireland-57765223>

**Newsletter** Alex Kane. Mainstream unionism isn't listening to many other unionist voices. *Newsletter*, 19 July 2021. <https://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/opinion/columnists/alex-kane-mainstream-unionism-isnt-listening-to-many-other-unionist-voices-3312528>

**The Financial Times** EU stance on Gibraltar provokes UK anger. *FT*, 20 July 2021. <https://www.ft.com/content/bb140624-e11b-454f-94eb-d0854a3bc504>

**Irish News** NI Protocol was never going to last forever, minister says. *Irish News*, 22 July 2021. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/northernirelandnews/2021/07/22/northern-ireland-protocol-was-never-going-to-last-forever-minister-says-2>

**BBC** Brexit: Clear 'opportunities and frictions' in NI Protocol, says Invest NI. *BBC*, 23 July 2021. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-57932457>

**RTÉ** NI Protocol: Frost speech to put relations on a knife-edge. *RTÉ*, 17 July 2021. <https://www.rte.ie/news/2021/0717/1235583-brexit-ni-protocol/>

**RTÉ** The 5 Key protocol concessions Britain is seeking from EU. *RTÉ*, 22 July 2021. <https://www.rte.ie/news/2021/0721/1236521-analysis-britain-protocol/>

**The Irish Times** Brexit: EU 'will not renegotiate' Northern Ireland protocol as UK demands changes. *IT*, 22 July 2021. <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/brexit-eu-will-not-renegotiate-northern-ireland-protocol-as-uk-demands-changes-1.4626719>

**The Irish Times** London protocol move a 'significant step in the right direction' – Jeffrey Donaldson. *IT*, 22 July 2021. <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/london-protocol-move-a-significant-step-in-the-right-direction-jeffrey-donaldson-1.4626964>

**The Irish Times** Britain's demand on NI protocol is audacious and certain to be rejected. *IT*, 22 July 2021. <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/britain-s-demand-on-ni-protocol-i-audacious-and-certain-to-be-rejected-1.4626995>

**The Irish Times** Bobby McDonagh: British trend to unilateralism is a deeply unwelcome development. *IT*, 17 July 2021. <https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/british-trend-to-unilateralism-is-a-deeply-unwelcome-development-1.4621706>

**The Irish Times** Donaldson to meet EC vice-president to push NI Protocol objections. *IT*, 19 July 2021. <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/donaldson-to-meet-ec-vice-president-to-push-ni-protocol-objections-1.4624136>

**The Telegraph** Troubles 'amnesty' risks undermining the Good Friday Agreement, warns Irish leader. *The Telegraph*, 16 July 2021. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2021/07/16/troubles-amnesty-risks-undermining-good-friday-agreement-warns/>

**The Irish Times** Britain to blame for eroding trust with Ireland, says former NI secretary. *IT*, 24 June 2021. <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/britain-to-blame-for-eroding-trust-with-ireland-says-former-ni-secretary-1.4601666>

**The Irish Times** NI supermarkets call for action to prevent Brexit trade disruption. *IT*, 19 July 2021. <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/ni-supermarkets-call-for-action-to-prevent-brexit-trade-disruption-1.4623740>

**The Irish Times** Ireland's position in NI protocol row is delicate and difficult. *IT*, 24 July 2021. <https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/ireland-s-position-in-ni-protocol-row-is-delicate-and-difficult-1.4628757>

## Further Reading

**Hayward Katy** *The Irish Border*, Sage, 2021.

The Institute of International and European Affairs (IIEA) is Ireland's leading international affairs think tank. Founded in 1991, its mission is to foster and shape political, policy and public discourse in order to broaden awareness of international and European issues in Ireland and contribute to more informed strategic decisions by political, business and civil society leaders.

The IIEA is independent of government and all political parties and is a not-for profit organisation with charitable status. In January 2021, the Global Go To Think Tank Index ranked the IIEA as Ireland's top think tank.

© Institute of International and European Affairs, July 2021

Creative Commons License

This is a human-readable summary of (and not a substitute for) the license.

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike/4.0/> 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)

You are free to:

- Share - copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format
- Adapt - remix, transform, and build upon the material
- The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms.

Under the following terms:

**Attribution** — You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.

**NonCommercial** — You may not use the material for commercial purposes.

**ShareAlike** — If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original.

**No additional restrictions** — You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits.



The IIEA acknowledges the support of the Europe for Citizens Programme of the European Union



**The Institute of International and European Affairs,**

8 North Great Georges Street, Dublin 1, Ireland

T: +353-1-8746756 F: +353-1-8786880

E: [reception@iiea.com](mailto:reception@iiea.com) W: [www.iiea.com](http://www.iiea.com)