

UK UPDATE

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The UK Update provides up-to-date information on UK-EU, and UK-Ireland relations, bringing together relevant statements and policy positions from key players in Ireland, the UK and the EU.

The Update 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.iea.com)

Introduction

Immigration has been an ongoing political issue of great concern in both the UK and Ireland. The Rwanda deportation saga continues to divide opinion in London and to cost the UK taxpayer huge amounts, while demonstrations against proposed locations for immigrant accommodation have escalated to dangerous levels in Ireland.

Now the issue of immigration has produced an unhelpful diplomatic row between the two governments, overshadowing the first meeting of the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference (BIIC) since the Stormont restoration. Arguments about cross-border movements of asylum seekers seen to be avoiding the Rwanda plan, honouring of agreements on return of such asylum applicants, and questions about the working of the UK/Ireland Common Travel Area have seen sharp exchanges between ministers and unhelpful headlines. In addition to this, the introduction of emergency legislation in Dáil Éireann to give legal effect to what Dublin insists is an existing arrangement on applicant return has not pleased London.

When asked by *BBC News Northern Ireland* following the BIIC conference in London about a 'developing row' between the two governments, Tánaiste Micheál Martin said: "The language being used - 'developing row', 'accused', 'snub' - that wasn't the spirit in which we conducted our discussions today, I assure you. It was a very constructive meeting and a warm meeting."

Northern Ireland Secretary Chris Heaton Harris said the UK must deal with the European Union as a "whole entity" and not just with Ireland. He said the government's Rwanda law was "clearly working and having some impact already" as a deterrent, and that the UK did not want to "upset" relationships with Ireland.

We're bound to have politics and various debates, but I'd like to think our relationship is strong enough to deal with all those issues. If this legislation is, as I believe it is and I've been assured it is, just setting us back in time to where we were and what we were dealing with, then I'm comfortable with that.

Section One: State of Play

Taoiseach Nomination Speech

Simon Harris addressed Dáil Éireann on 9 April 2024, informing the House that he had been appointed by President Higgins as Taoiseach in succession to Leo Varadkar.

Mr Harris highlighted the key issues that his government faces, including housing and healthcare. The new Taoiseach also announced his government ministers following his appointment and emphasised the importance of Ireland's place in the EU and as peacekeepers.

Extract from Mr Harris' speech:

I beg leave to announce, for the information of the Dáil, that I have informed the President that the Dáil has nominated me to be the Taoiseach and that he has appointed me accordingly.

This government will need to be both energetic and laser-focused on delivery: on housing on health on helping families, farmers and small businesses equality of opportunity for all and empowering people with disabilities security exerting our influence in the world.

Our relationship with the European Union and role within the EU is more important than ever at this time of geopolitical uncertainty.

With these appointments, I believe we have a team with the right mixture of experience and new talent, to build the new social contract I talked about earlier – one which renews our promise as a Republic to: create equality of opportunity support those who need the State the most protect our hard-earned economic success, and use its benefits to deliver tangible outcomes to society.

The Irish State has a proud history of peacekeeping and making our mark in the world. We punch above our weight, and we have a responsibility to bring our influence to bear on global issues like migration, climate, international conflicts, and human rights. We have built strong relationships with our European neighbours and will continue to work in partnership to uphold our shared values and objectives.

I am proud of the partnership which has been built by the three parties in coalition since 2020. This new government will be founded on that mutual respect and together we will work, day and night, to fulfil the ambitious agenda we set out in the programme for government, Our Shared Future.

[Click here to read Simon Harris' full statement.](#)

British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference 29 April 2024

The British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference (BIIC) met in London on 29 April 2024. This was the first since power sharing at Stormont was restored. Ministers discussed and welcomed the restoration of the Northern Ireland Executive, Assembly and North South Ministerial Council. The evolving issues between London and Dublin surrounding immigration were addressed and dominated media coverage of the event.

The Government of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was represented by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, the Rt Hon Chris Heaton-Harris MP; the Minister of State for Northern Ireland, the Rt Hon Steve Baker MP; and the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, the Lord Caine. The Government of Ireland was represented by the Tánaiste, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence, Micheál Martin TD.

The Conference was established under Strand Three of the Good Friday (Belfast) Agreement “to promote bilateral cooperation at all levels on all matters of mutual interest within the competence of the UK and Irish Governments”.

A [joint communiqué](#) was issued outlining what was discussed at the Conference. Points of discussion included the following:

1. Legacy

In a wide-ranging discussion of legacy matters, the UK Government and the Government of Ireland considered ongoing domestic and interstate legal proceedings in relation to the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act 2023, including the recent Northern Ireland High Court judgment. The UK Government set out current progress on the implementation of the Act, including the establishment of the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery.

UK and Irish Ministers discussed the publication of the terms of reference for the UK Omagh Bombing Inquiry, and the importance of both governments facilitating the full provision of answers for the families affected.

Finally, the UK Government and the Government of Ireland discussed issues of concern in respect to individual legacy cases including the Dublin/Monaghan bombings.

2. Political Stability

The UK Government and the Government of Ireland welcomed that the Northern Ireland Executive, Assembly and North South Ministerial Council have been restored to operation. They agreed it is important for the people of Northern Ireland to have a stable, locally-elected and accountable government.

Both Governments agreed to continue working together to support stability in Northern Ireland in accordance with the three stranded approach established in the Belfast / Good Friday Agreement.

3. Security Co-operation

The UK Government and the Government of Ireland discussed the current security situation including the reduction of the threat level in Northern Ireland to SUBSTANTIAL in March 2024. This shows the progress that Northern Ireland has made, and continues to make, towards a more peaceful, more prosperous and safer society. They welcomed the excellent ongoing cooperation between the PSNI and An Garda Síochána in tackling terrorism, paramilitarism and associated criminality.

The UK Government and the Government of Ireland discussed how further progress could be made towards ending paramilitarism and gave consideration to the recommendations made by the Independent Reporting Commission and others including in evidence to the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee on this issue. Both Governments agreed to take forward work, including through joint support for independent scoping and engagement, to assess whether there is merit in and support for a formal process that ensures the transition to disbandment of paramilitary groups given the continuing impact of violence and harm in communities.

The UK Government and the Government of Ireland also discussed the issue of irregular migration. Both Governments agreed to monitor this issue closely and noted the importance of continuing to work together on these matters.

4. Future Meetings

It was agreed that the Conference would meet again in autumn 2024.

North South Ministerial Council 8 April 2024

The Northern Ireland Executive hosted the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) Twenty-Seventh Plenary Meeting which was jointly chaired for the first time by First Minister Michelle O’Neill MLA and Deputy First Minister Emma Little-Pengelly MLA. The Government of Ireland was led by Taoiseach Leo Varadkar TD, in his last official engagement on the day before his formal resignation and replacement by Simon Harris.

A joint Communiqué was issued following the Council meeting:

The NSMC received updates on the NSMC meetings which had taken place since the previous Plenary meeting and noted the work taken forward in each of the NSMC sectors, including the North South Bodies. Ministers discussed the fiscal outlook for each jurisdiction. Promoting economic growth, skills and job creation are key priorities for both Administrations and Ministers discussed relevant areas relating to trade and business.

The NSMC agreed that, building on the learning from the response to the pandemic, officials in both jurisdictions should continue to consider civil contingency planning and resilience arrangements across both jurisdictions and that an update should be provided to a future meeting.

Ministers noted the significant challenges faced in both Administrations in addressing climate change and loss of biodiversity and agreed that all NSMC sectoral meetings consider these issues, so that a report of these discussions can be brought to the next plenary meeting.

The NSMC noted that this year marks the 25th Anniversary of the establishment of the North South Ministerial Council and the North South Bodies and that this will be commemorated during the year.

The NSMC welcomed the positive developments in delivery of the commitments under New Decade, New Approach and noted that the Government of Ireland and the Northern Ireland Executive will continue to work together, including through the North South Ministerial Council, to deliver key infrastructure projects which will deliver social, environmental and economic benefits improving the lives of people across the island.

Ministers welcomed the announcement in February by the Government of Ireland of funding of €800 million for Shared Island investment priorities including €600 million for the A5 Western Transport Corridor, as well as funding for the Narrow Water Bridge, an hourly-frequency rail service between Belfast and Dublin, and completion of the cross-border Carlingford Greenway.

Ministers noted that the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and the Department for the Economy continue to work closely with Atlantic Technological University and Ulster University on the potential for future collaboration, skills provision, and research and innovation; and that there is a particular focus on the key drivers of human capital and innovation in driving strong economic development in the North West region.

The NSMC agreed that commitments under New Decade, New Approach should remain on the agenda of relevant NSMC sectoral meetings and that further updates will be provided to future NSMC plenary meetings.

British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly

The 66th plenary meeting of the British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly took place in Wicklow from 15 to 16 April 2024. The Assembly was established in 1990 as a link between the Houses of Parliament and the Houses of the Oireachtas. Its stated mission is “to promote co-operation between political representatives in Britain and Ireland for the benefit of the people they represent.”

According to the plenary meeting report, the assembly began with an address from Simon Harris, the newly appointed Taoiseach. Mr Harris stated that the island of Ireland has not yet seen the full benefits of the Good Friday (Belfast) Agreement, he said: “We’ve seen the peace element, now we must see the prosperity element.”

Thomas Byrne, Minister for the Gaeltacht and Minister for Sport also spoke during the meeting, highlighting the importance of the Euro 2028 Championship as a chance for both the UK and Ireland to “showcase our sports offering” to the world. Minister Byrne also noted that this collaboration between Ireland and the UK regarding tourism and connections adds “value to the marketing of the island” and to visitors coming from abroad. However, it was not all positive, CEO of Northern Ireland Tourism Alliance Joanne Stuart pointed out that the Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) now needed for tourists from outside Ireland to travel to the UK is “disastrous” for cross-border travel. Both Alice Mansergh of Tourism Ireland and Eoghan O’Mara Walsh from the Irish Tourism Industry Federation agreed that the ETA introduction has caused problems for visitors.

British Ambassador to Ireland Paul Johnston defended the policy, with Martin Fraiser, the Irish Ambassador to Britain, in agreement.

British Ambassador to Ireland, Paul Johnston, accepted the challenges but defended the policy, stating that it was needed to help monitor those coming into the UK, adding that would lead to no border checks and the UK would make it obtaining an ETA “as easy as possible”. Broadly, on the matter of bilateral relations, Johnston said that relations had come “a long way” in the last couple of years. Martin Fraser, the Irish Ambassador to the UK, agreed, stating that he couldn’t think of a significant global issue on which the UK and Ireland would disagree.

The Assembly also reflected on energy security and building a workforce that can retrofit buildings to be more energy efficient. Finally, the Assembly also addressed the Israel-Hamas war.

The Assembly’s Economic Committee published a report on energy security which sought to learn from the mistakes made on energy support during the Covid pandemic. The report argued that Governments should use all available information to identify households that do not have direct relationships with suppliers or that use alternative fuels, to get help to them in future shocks more effectively. It also called on the governments to come up with clear plans to recruit and train a sufficient workforce to retrofit buildings to help them meet each country’s respective decarbonisation goals.

The Assembly also adopted two resolutions; one calling for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in the Gaza conflict and another calling for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in the Gaza conflict.

You can read the full plenary meeting report [here](#).

In his address at the Assembly, the Taoiseach argued that “we really have to challenge ourselves” to build interpersonal relationships on the island” and that “probably people of my generation are familiar now with London, and Berlin, and Paris than they might be with Belfast or Derry.” Mr Harris pointed out that he was too young to vote in the referendum on the Good Friday (Belfast) Agreement and that younger voters would not have been born when it was signed.

Simon Harris said that Britain and Ireland face a period of “extraordinary geopolitical uncertainty”, referencing the meetings he had held with European leaders last week following his election as Taoiseach. He said that it was “certain that in the coming years, we’re going to have to navigate the same geopolitical uncertainty whichever part of this island or these islands we live on”. Pointing to the backdrop of the ongoing war in Ukraine, the Israel-Hamas war and heightened tensions between Jerusalem and Tehran, Mr Harris insisted that “the global context is more relevant to our relations than it has been in generations.”

In addition to this, Mr Harris described the Northern Ireland peace process having been described to him as a “frosty” one. The Taoiseach added that he is more hopeful and optimistic following the restoration of power sharing in Northern Ireland, but that “the challenge for all of us now is to warm things up.” Martin Fraser, Irish Ambassador to the Great Britain, argued that, in a rapidly changing world, there was a risk that relationships could become “diluted” between the UK and Ireland as the forums they partake in as part of their international engagements were different. Offering the example of Ireland being in the EU and the UK being in NATO, he said that “some of our principal fora for international engagement are different.” He remarked that generational change brought different perspectives and were sometimes “less worried” about historical issues in the relationship between Britain and Ireland. Mr Fraser stated that it was incumbent on older generations to bring their experience to bear while also listening to younger voices.

Read the full *Irish Times* article [here](#).

UK rejects EU Mobility Scheme

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has rejected an EU offer to strike a post-Brexit deal to allow young Britons to live, study or work in the bloc for up to four years. The prime minister declined the European Commission’s proposal of a youth mobility scheme for people aged between 18 and 30.

The EU Commission president, Ursula von der Leyen, suggested the scheme, which would also have allowed young people from within the EU to stay in the UK to work or study for the same period of time, would have been an area in which there could be “closer collaboration.”

The topic of youth mobility is in both our interests, because the more we have youth mobility being on both sides of the Channel, the more we increase the probability we will be on good terms because the next generation knows each other very well.

The UK government responded that Brexit had ended free movement, and it had no desire to reopen that conversation, even with strict conditions on length of stay. “We are not introducing an EU-wide youth mobility scheme – free movement within the EU was ended and there are no plans to introduce it,” a London spokesperson said. However, it was indicated that the government would be happy to organise deals with individual member states.

Our aim is to rebuild human bridges between young Europeans on both sides of the Channel. We have successful schemes with 13 countries, including Australia and New Zealand, and remain open to agreeing them with our international partners, including individual EU member states, where it’s in the UK’s interest and supports the skills and opportunities of our youth.

One source said the UK wanted to “cherry-pick” which countries it wanted such programmes with. Labour also ruled out an EU-wide deal, while Liberal Democrat leader Sir Ed Davey said such an agreement would be a “win-win”.

Read the full *Guardian* article [here](#).

Hilary Benn in Northern Ireland

Labour’s Shadow Secretary for Northern Ireland Hilary Benn visited Stormont with a cross-party delegation of Westminster MPs. The parliamentarians had a two-day schedule of meetings in Northern Ireland as part of a fact-finding initiative.

Hilary Benn welcomed the restoration of the Executive and commented that it was an “exciting time for Northern Ireland”. The Shadow Secretary also commended the leadership of Michelle O’Neill and Emma Little-Pengelly as First Minister and Deputy First Minister.

Northern Ireland has so much potential – rich history, its culture, its tourism, its engineering expertise, in financial services, the new sectors of the economy, what a wonderful place to come and invest when you’ve got access both, of course, to the UK market as part of the UK, but also to the EU market. I think what the restoration of the Executive has given is a sense of stability and you talk to investors and they will often say to you ‘the most important thing for us is – is the place we’re going to put our money into stable?’ That’s why having restored the institutions, it’s really important that that endures, because that is the bedrock on which economic success and growth is going to be built.

Mr Benn was asked for his views on potential reform of the power sharing rules to prevent future collapses of the institutions, to which he insisted the responsibility for stability lay with locally-elected politicians.

You can read more of Hilary Benn’s commentary [here](#).

Chris Heaton-Harris in the House of Commons

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Chris Heaton-Harris discussed progress and hope in Northern Ireland following the restoration of Stormont in the House of Commons on 24 April.

DUP MP Gregory Campbell asked for reassurance that areas of concern will be addressed for all citizens of Northern Ireland, which was overall positive from both sides.

Excerpt from the debate in the House of Commons:

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Chris Heaton-Harris:

I am sure that my hon. Friends will welcome the fact that, once again, Northern Ireland has local politicians taking decisions in a local Assembly that is accountable to local people. With a funding package worth over £3 billion, the Executive are taking forward the vital work of public service transformation and delivering sustainable finances and are ensuring better outcomes for the people of Northern Ireland in their daily lives. The impact of all this has been unbelievably positive.

I agree that there is a fantastic opportunity, which we are trying to take, for the UK Government to collaborate with and support the Northern Ireland Executive in transforming public services. The UK Government have high hopes that Ministers in the Executive will move quickly to deliver on their commitments to set up a transformation board, and we are excited to work with Northern Ireland Ministers to produce plans that will deliver transformation for Northern Ireland. Indeed, I met the First Minister and Deputy First Minister last week; we talked about this work and how we can further it in the very short term.

Gregory Campbell DUP MP:

The return of devolution has to be built on, particularly as there are still some issues to be resolved. While some in Northern Ireland concentrate on complaining about the outstanding problems, there are those of us who are committed to resolving them. The Secretary of State is in a better position than most to help to resolve them. Will he recommit today to our seeing further moves in the coming weeks in the direction of resolving all the outstanding issues?

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Chris Heaton-Harris:

I congratulate the hon. Gentleman on his recent honour for his many years of elected public service in this place and to his constituents. Yes, he absolutely can have that commitment from me. I am committed to delivering at great pace on all the pledges we made in the Command Paper, and I am absolutely committed to delivering the best outcomes for everyone across Northern Ireland, because that is what Northern Ireland deserves.

Read the full debate [here](#).

Section Two: The Evolving Debate

Stormont Facing Hard Choices

The *Belfast Telegraph* published an Editorial on 22 April 2024. The editorial looked at funding in Northern Ireland and the ongoing questions surrounding the rising cost of living.

The author delved into the figures of rates in Northern Ireland, where the money is coming from and where it is going:

[...] it is small wonder that when MLA Jim Allister claims that rates that haven't been paid could pay for 5,000 nurses, it comes as a surprise. As we revealed today, £180.5m was owed in rates at the end of the 2023/24 financial year — some £97.8m from households and £82.6m owed by businesses. That debt could easily have covered the 15% regional rate increase the Secretary of State called for earlier this year — and still left more than £67m to spare. Questions must rightly be raised about the ability of Land and Property Services to pursue unpaid rates bills. If 64,095 households and 79,007 businesses are defaulting, then something is fundamentally wrong with the collection system and its enforcement. There may be many reasons that people and businesses are not paying their rates, but it is clear that some simply can't pay.

The author raises the question of how the Northern Ireland government can raise more revenue “at a time when it has never been less affordable.” In reflection the author says that enforcement is one of the main necessities, however financial assistance should be in place before enforcement comes into play.

The conundrum facing our politicians is therefore how to raise more revenue at a time when it has never been less affordable. While answers may not be easy, there are some levers our councils and Assembly members must either pull or create.

Part of the solution will be better enforcement, but that could be accompanied by greater efforts to assist those in difficulty before things reach the stage where they cannot afford to pay. Likewise, there are those who can perhaps afford to pay more, but who have traditionally benefited from discounts that are far from progressive.

Finally, and probably most importantly, will be the talks between the Government and Stormont over a long-term solution. If ministers here are determined to kill off the Barnett formula and replace it with a needs-based instead that sees more money come here from the Treasury, it is unlikely to happen for some time. But when it does, it is likely to come with some strings attached. Our politicians showing how they can make tough choices in the meantime may be the best way of guaranteeing that a new method of calculating funding actually happens — something that has yet to be seen since devolution was restored.

Read the full Belfast Telegraph article [here](#).

The Crisis in Unionism

Brian Feeney wrote in *Irish News* on 24 April on “The present crisis in unionism offers the opportunity for a new beginning.”

Mr Feeney reflected on the power of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) when it comes to unionism in Northern Ireland.

You might say there's only a crisis in the DUP, and the DUP isn't unionism. Fair enough, but with the DUP outpolling the UUP almost two-and-a-half to one, and by the same ratio in numbers of council and assembly seats, and the UUP holding no Westminster seats, it's clear the DUP dominates unionism.

Unionism has always struggled to formulate, let alone express, a vision for its future. This failure has been particularly glaring since the IRA ceasefire, astonishingly described by the UUP's Jim Molyneux as "the most destabilising event since partition" and "the worst thing that has ever happened to us".

What dim Jim was trying to articulate was that, in the face of the IRA campaign, unionism didn't have to do anything to justify its existence or present a vision for its future: all unionists had to do was resist the republican insurgency and say no to everything except defeating the IRA. With no IRA, unionism was bereft. With no enemy, no bogeyman, the search for something positive to say drew a blank and so it remains.

In Mr Feeney's opinion one of the main downfalls of unionism is in their planning for the future and keeping a positive rise in support.

*The central problem for unionists in devising a plan for the future is that since the 18th century, even before the Act of Union, the history of unionism has been one of decline. Even the very first novel examining the Anglo-Irish condition, Maria Edgeworth's *Castle Rackrent* in 1800, recounted four generations of decline. In the past 50 years the speed of that decline has accelerated rapidly but unionism hasn't come to terms with it or its inevitable consequences.*

The signs of that unionist mindset changing are not promising. The first priority of the new DUP leader was to appeal for unionist unity, warning Jim Allister that his TUV/Reform intervention would hand Sinn Féin "a hat trick": most seats in Stormont, most seats in councils and, next, most seats at Westminster.

Unionist unity is a chimera. Gavin Robinson must know that, but it's traditional to ignore reality and summon the nostalgic faith that unionists will always outnumber nationalists.

There is only one direction of travel. Soon, perhaps after the 2027 assembly elections, by which time nationalists will be on their way to a second hat trick, the assembly will pass a resolution calling on the British and Irish governments to set out a plan for a reunification referendum. Will unionists have the numbers to constitute a petition of concern? It won't matter of course because such a resolution can't compel any action. Still, when it happens, and it will, the marker will have been set.

Finally, Mr Feeney looked at political unionism and its leaders:

One of the problems of political unionism is that its leaders have always pretended that the future will be the same as the past. For that reason they have always set their face against change. Understandable, because for unionism change inevitably means decline, decline in numbers, decline in power and influence and that has been the case since the 19th century.

So far unionist leaders have never had the wit to explain this inevitability to their supporters and the consequent necessity to sit down and negotiate with the deck of cards they hold. Instead, they've foolishly relied on British governments to defend their corner or, worse, enlisted the help of British carpetbaggers and mavericks, the latest of whom have attached Robinson described Jim Allister. (Onoda was the last Japanese soldier to emerge from the jungle after World War II).

A political leader should listen to the words of Kenny Rogers' 1978 hit. You can only play the cards you've got, but it depends how you play them: "You've got to know when to hold 'em; know when to fold 'em."

You can read the full *Irish News* article [here](#).

Further Debate in the House of Commons on 24 April

Following on from earlier questions on reassurance of commitment to Northern Ireland, which the Secretary of State replied enthusiastically to, Richard Thomson from the Scottish National Party asked for reassurance when it comes to commitments in both Scotland and Wales.

Richard Thomson MP, SNP:

The return of devolved government to Northern Ireland has been rightly welcomed across this House. Will the Secretary of State reaffirm his government's commitment to the principle of consent, not just in Northern Ireland but in Scotland and Wales? The peoples of those places should be able to choose the form of government best suited to their needs, whether that happens to be inside or outside the United Kingdom.

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Chris Heaton-Harris:

I welcome the hon. Gentleman's welcoming of the restored institutions. I am also a great respecter of referendum results, and I believe we had one in Scotland. That is probably enough said.

Section Three: Background Material and Further Reading

Background Material

Irish Times Bobby McDonagh. When it comes to the cost of Irish unity maybe it's okay if the heart overrules the head. *IT*, 10 April 2024. <https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/2024/04/10/bobby-mcdonagh-when-it-comes-to-the-cost-of-irish-unity-maybe-its-okay-if-the-heart-overrules-the-head/>

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RTE Politics has become more dangerous, warns Harris. *RTE*, 28 April 2024. <https://www.rte.ie/news/2024/0428/1446058-taoiseach-protests/>

Irish News Alex Kane. East Belfast shows that the era of safe unionist seats is over. *Irish News*, 28 April 2024. <https://www.irishnews.com/opinion/alex-kane-east-belfast-shows-that-the-era-of-safe-unionist-seats-is-over-DIUR4DPPUJBVHELIAWBWUFNGVM>

Further Reading

Lisa Claire Whitten Northern Ireland and the UK Constitution. Haus Curiosities.

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