

5 July 2023

Annual report launched on the implementation of Article 2 of the Windsor Framework

The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission today launched their second Annual Report on the implementation of Article 2 of the Windsor Framework.

The report sets out the Commissions' work on advising and holding the UK Government to account on the Implementation of its no diminution commitment in Article 2 of the Windsor Framework over the last year. In December 2022 we published a working paper setting out our views on the scope of equality and human rights protected under Article 2.

Speaking about the report today, Geraldine McGahey, Chief Commissioner, Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and Alyson Kilpatrick, Chief Commissioner, Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission said:

"The UK Government made important commitments to protect equality and human rights post Brexit. This report highlights our advice to Government on the significant legislative developments that have taken place over the last year, including The Windsor Political Declaration, the Retained EU Law Bill, the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill, the Illegal Migration Bill and the potential reform of the Human Rights Act. We remain concerned about the impact of these developments on equality and human rights in Northern Ireland.

"We urge both the UK Government and the Executive Office to act on the recommendations set out in this report. Article 2 has been a binding international commitment for over two years, yet we still await guidance for officials to be finalised, training to be rolled out and parliamentary procedure changed to facilitate effective scrutiny. It must be effectively embedded in policy development and legislative processes.

"We remain committed, through our effective partnership working, to ensure these rights are protected in these challenging times" concluded the Commissioners.

Over the past year, under Article 2 commitments, the Commissions have launched research on the impact of loss of EU funding on equality groups; divergence of rights on the island of Ireland; Article 2 and access to healthcare; and Article 2 and human trafficking. They have intervened in cases before the High Court and the Court of Appeal, to assist those courts in their interpretation of Article 2. While also providing advice to individuals, engaging with stakeholders, and raising awareness and understanding of Article 2 and its scope.

Download the report: [Annual Report 2022-23: Implementation of Article 2 of Windsor Framework \(pdf\)](#)