



NORTHERN IRELAND
HUMAN RIGHTS
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Commissions launch Windsor Framework Article 2 Report

The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) and the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI) today launched their 2023-24 Annual Report on the Implementation of Article 2 of the Windsor Framework.

The report outlines the Commissions' views on the Government's compliance with Article 2 and makes recommendations to ensure the continued protection and enhancement of human rights and equality standards in Northern Ireland.

Article 2 of the Windsor Framework provides legal protections that certain equality and human rights in Northern Ireland are not reduced after Brexit.

The report highlights key developments over the past year, including significant court judgments that have confirmed the Commissions' analysis and clarified the scope of the UK Government's commitment to non-diminution of rights under Article 2.

It also includes the Commissions' research findings which provide a strong basis for recommendations to government.

While the government has made progress in certain areas, many of the recommendations made by the Commissions since Brexit remain unaddressed.

Speaking about the report, Alyson Kilpatrick, Chief Commissioner of NIHRC, and Geraldine McGahey, Chief Commissioner of ECNI, said:

"We are delighted to present this year's report, which underscores our unwavering commitment to safeguarding the rights of everyone in Northern Ireland. The legal developments over the past year have reaffirmed the broad scope of protections under Article 2, ensuring that the fundamental rights of all individuals in NI are upheld post Brexit.

"However, we remain concerned about the roll-back of rights across a range of areas by the previous UK Government, and the lack of formal responses from either the UK Government or the Northern Ireland Executive to our previous recommendations. Urgent action needs to be taken to address the issues we have identified including ensuring that NI keeps pace with EU developments that strengthen equality and human rights for individuals here.

"We will continue to use our full range of powers to oversee the effective implementation of Article 2 and to advocate for the rights and equality of all communities in NI," concluded the Commissioners.

Over the past year, under Article 2 commitments, the Commissions have intervened in cases before the High Court and the Court of Appeal, to assist the

courts in their interpretation of Article 2, including the Legacy Act and NIHRC's challenge against the Illegal Migration Act.

The Commissions have continued to provide key policy recommendations and advice to government and have launched research on a range of issues including the impact of loss of EU funding on equality groups; the impact of Brexit on women; divergence of rights on the island of Ireland; rights of frontier workers; and Article 2 and people seeking asylum.

The NIHRC and ECNI will continue to provide advice to the UK Government and Northern Ireland Executive, and advocate for necessary legislative changes. Public support for Windsor Framework Article 2 remains strong, and the Commissions are committed to ensuring that this momentum is maintained in the coming year.

The full report is available on [online](#)