

Country/entity	Ireland United Kingdom Northern Ireland
Region	Europe and Eurasia
Agreement name	Declaration issued by British and Irish Governments, Hillsborough
Date	1 Apr 1999
Agreement status	Multiparty signed/agreed
Interim arrangement	Yes
Agreement/conflict level	Interstate/intrastate conflict(s)

Northern Ireland Conflict (1968 - 1998)

Commonly referred to as 'the Troubles', the most recent conflict over the territory of Northern Ireland can be framed as beginning in 1968 and ending with the Belfast Agreement (also known as the Good Friday Agreement) in 1998. While the genesis of the conflict was closely related to pressures for the state to reform with relation to discrimination against the (minority) Catholic population, the core issue of the conflict as it proceeded was the constitutional status of Northern Ireland, which was contested between the unionist/loyalist (mostly Protestant) majority, who wanted the territory to remain as part of the United Kingdom, and the nationalist/republican (mostly Catholic) minority, whose goal was to unite the six provincial counties with the Republic of Ireland. The thirty years prior to the Belfast or Good Friday Agreement were marked by inter-communal violence, active paramilitary groups, and the deployment of the British army in the province. Mediation by international actors, and dialogue between the British and Irish governments, and between the IRA and its representatives and the British Government eventually resulted in a ceasefire respected by the majority of combatants. Talks led to the Belfast or Good Friday Agreement which established a power-sharing system of governance between nationalist and unionist communities.

Close
Northern Ireland Conflict (1968 - 1998)

Stage	Implementation/renegotiation
Conflict nature	Government/territory
Peace process	Northern Ireland peace process
Parties	The Taoiseach, Mr Ahern, and the British Prime Minister, Mr Blair

Third parties

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Description

Declaration issued by the Taoiseach, Mr. Bertie Ahern TD, and the British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair, at Hillsborough Castle, 1 April 1999. The declaration set out the Governments' proposals for achieving full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement, including the establishment of its institutions. And reiterates the commitment to all parties of decommissioning.

Agreement document

[UK_IE_990401_Declaration Issued by the British and Irish Governments, Hillsborough.pdf \(opens in new tab\)](#) | [Download PDF](#)

Groups**Children/youth**

Groups→Children/youth→Rhetorical
Page 1,
...All parties firmly believe that the violence we have all lived through must be put behind us. Never again should we or our children have to suffer the consequences of conflict...

Disabled persons

No specific mention.

Elderly/age

No specific mention.

Migrant workers

No specific mention.

**Racial/ethnic/
national group**

No specific mention.

Religious groups

No specific mention.

Indigenous people

No specific mention.

Other groups

No specific mention.

**Refugees/displaced
persons**

No specific mention.

Social class

No specific mention.

Gender

Women, girls and gender No specific mention.

Men and boys No specific mention.

LGBTI No specific mention.

Family Page 1,
...The needs of victims of violence, and their families, including those of the disappeared, are being addressed in both jurisdictions, though we acknowledge that for many their pain and suffering will never end...

State definition

Nature of state (general) No specific mention.

State configuration No specific mention.

Self determination No specific mention.

Referendum No specific mention.

State symbols No specific mention.

Independence/secession No specific mention.

Accession/unification No specific mention.

Border delimitation No specific mention.

Cross-border provision Page 1,
...The international agreement signed in Dublin on 8 March provides for the establishment of the North-South ministerial council and implementation bodies, the British-Irish Council and the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference...

Page 2,
...The following institutions will then be established: the NorthSouth Ministerial Council, the North-South Implementation Bodies, the British-Irish Council and the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference...

Governance

Political institutions (new or reformed)	Governance→Political institutions (new or reformed)→General references Page 2, ...On [date to be set] nominations will be made under the d'Hondt procedure of those to take up office as ministers when powers are devolved...
Elections	No specific mention.
Electoral commission	No specific mention.
Political parties reform	No specific mention.
Civil society	No specific mention.
Traditional/religious leaders	No specific mention.
Public administration	No specific mention.
Constitution	Governance→Constitution→Constitutional reform/making Page 1, ...Balanced changes to both the Irish Constitution and to British constitutional legislation based on the principle of consent, have been approved and are now ready to take effect...

Power sharing

Political power sharing	Power sharing→Political power sharing→General Sub-state level Page 2, ..Around the time of the act of reconciliation, powers will be devolved and the British-Irish Agreement will enter into force... Power sharing→Political power sharing→Executive coalition Sub-state level Page 2, ...On [date to be set] nominations will be made under the d'Hondt procedure of those to take up office as ministers when powers are devolved...
Territorial power sharing	No specific mention.
Economic power sharing	No specific mention.
Military power sharing	No specific mention.

Human rights and equality

Human rights/RoL general	No specific mention.
Bill of rights/similar	No specific mention.
Treaty incorporation	No specific mention.
Civil and political rights	No specific mention.
Socio-economic rights	No specific mention.

Rights related issues

Citizenship	No specific mention.
Democracy	No specific mention.
Detention procedures	No specific mention.

Media and communication	No specific mention.
Mobility/access	No specific mention.
Protection measures	No specific mention.
Other	No specific mention.

Rights institutions

NHRI	Rights institutions→NHRI→Mentions of NHRI Page 1, ...The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission has been established and its members appointed, and the new Equality Commission has been legislated for. Comparable steps by the Irish Government are well under way...
Regional or international human rights institutions	No specific mention.

Justice sector reform

Criminal justice and emergency law	Justice sector reform→Criminal justice and emergency law→Criminal Justice System reform Page 1, ...Steps have been taken towards normalisation of security arrangements and practices, while the Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland and the review of criminal justice are both well advanced in their vital work...
State of emergency provisions	No specific mention.
Judiciary and courts	No specific mention.
Prisons and detention	No specific mention.
Traditional Laws	No specific mention.

Socio-economic reconstruction

Development or socio-economic reconstruction Socio-economic reconstruction→Development or socio-economic reconstruction→Socio-economic development
Page 1,
...The commitments in the Agreement in relation to economic, social and cultural issues, including as regards the Irish language, are being carried forward, though much of this work is inevitably long term...

National economic plan No specific mention.

Natural resources No specific mention.

International funds No specific mention.

Business No specific mention.

Taxation No specific mention.

Banks No specific mention.

Land, property and environment

Land reform/rights No specific mention.

Pastoralist/nomadism rights No specific mention.

Cultural heritage Land, property and environment→Cultural heritage→Intangible
Page 1,
...The commitments in the Agreement in relation to economic, social and cultural issues, including as regards the Irish language, are being carried forward, though much of this work is inevitably long term...

Environment No specific mention.

Water or riparian rights or access No specific mention.

Security sector

Security Guarantees No specific mention.

Ceasefire No specific mention.

Police Page 1,
...Steps have been taken towards normalisation of security arrangements and practices, while the Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland and the review of criminal justice are both well advanced in their vital work...

Armed forces No specific mention.

DDR

Security sector→DDR→Demilitarisation provisions

Page 1-2,

...Against this background there is agreement among all parties that decommissioning is not a precondition but is an obligation deriving from their commitment in the Agreement, and that it should take place within the time-scale envisaged in the Agreement, and through the efforts of the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning.

Page 2,

...Sinn Féin have acknowledged these obligations but are unable to indicate the time-scale on which decommissioning will begin. They do not regard the Agreement as imposing any requirement to make a start before the establishment of the new institutions...

Page 2,

...The UUP do not wish to move to the establishment of the new institutions without some evident progress with decommissioning...

Page 2,

...We believe that decommissioning will only happen against a background where implementation is actively moving forward. Continued progress in establishing the new institutions will in itself create confidence. On the other hand, it is understandable that those who take the next steps in implementation should seek to be assured that these steps are not irrevocable if, in the event, no progress is made with decommissioning...

Page 2,

...At a date to be proposed by the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning but not later than [one month after nomination date] a collective act of reconciliation will take place. This will see some arms put beyond use on a voluntary basis, in a manner which will be verified by the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning, and further moves on normalisation and demilitarisation in recognition of the changed situation on security...

Page 2,

...By [one month after nomination date], the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning will make a report on progress. It is understood by all that the successful implementation of the Agreement will be achieved if these steps are taken within the proposed time-scales; if they are not taken, the nominations mentioned above will fall to be confirmed by the Assembly.

Intelligence services

No specific mention.

Parastatal/rebel and opposition group forces

No specific mention.

Withdrawal of foreign forces

No specific mention.

Corruption No specific mention.

Crime/organised crime No specific mention.

Drugs No specific mention.

Terrorism No specific mention.

Transitional justice

Transitional justice general No specific mention.

Amnesty/pardon No specific mention.

Courts No specific mention.

Mechanism No specific mention.

Prisoner release Page 1,
...Numerous prisoners, in both jurisdictions, have benefited from mechanisms providing for their accelerated release...

Vetting No specific mention.

Victims Page 1,
...The needs of victims of violence, and their families, including those of the disappeared, are being addressed in both jurisdictions, though we acknowledge that for many their pain and suffering will never end...

Page 2,
...In addition to the arrangements in respect of military material, there will at all times be ceremonies of remembrance of all victims of violence, to which representatives of all parties and the two governments, and all churches, will be invited...

Missing persons No specific mention.

Reparations Transitional justice→Reparations→Symbolic reparations
Page 2,
...In addition to the arrangements in respect of military material, there will at all times be ceremonies of remembrance of all victims of violence, to which representatives of all parties and the two governments, and all churches, will be invited...

Reconciliation Page 2,
...At a date to be proposed by the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning but not later than [one month after nomination date] a collective act of reconciliation will take place. This will see some arms put beyond use on a voluntary basis, in a manner which will be verified by the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning, and further moves on normalisation and demilitarisation in recognition of the changed situation on security...

Implementation

UN signatory No specific mention.

Other international signatory No specific mention.

Referendum for agreement No specific mention.

International mission/force/similar No specific mention.

Enforcement mechanism No specific mention.

Related cases No specific mention.

Source Irish Department of Foreign Affairs
