



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

<b>Stage</b>	Implementation/renegotiation
<b>Conflict nature</b>	Government/territory
<b>Peace process</b>	Northern Ireland peace process
<b>Parties</b>	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.

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**Agreement document**

[UK\\_IE\\_990401\\_Declaration Issued by the British and Irish Governments, Hillsborough.pdf \(opens in new tab\)](#) | [Download PDF](#)

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**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.

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## 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...

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## 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**

<b>Political institutions (new or reformed)</b>	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...
<b>Elections</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Electoral commission</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Political parties reform</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Civil society</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Traditional/religious leaders</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Public administration</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Constitution</b>	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...

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## Power sharing

<b>Political power sharing</b>	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...
<b>Territorial power sharing</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Economic power sharing</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Military power sharing</b>	No specific mention.

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## Human rights and equality

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

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## Rights related issues

<b>Citizenship</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Democracy</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Detention procedures</b>	No specific mention.

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

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## **Rights institutions**

<b>NHRI</b>	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...
<b>Regional or international human rights institutions</b>	No specific mention.

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## **Justice sector reform**

<b>Criminal justice and emergency law</b>	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...
<b>State of emergency provisions</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Judiciary and courts</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Prisons and detention</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Traditional Laws</b>	No specific mention.

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## **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.

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## **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.

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**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.

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## **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...

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**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

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