



<b>Country/entity</b>	Ireland United Kingdom Northern Ireland
<b>Region</b>	Europe and Eurasia
<b>Agreement name</b>	Northern Ireland: Ground Rules for Substantive All-Party Negotiations
<b>Date</b>	15 Mar 1996
<b>Agreement status</b>	Multiparty signed/agreed
<b>Interim arrangement</b>	Yes
<b>Agreement/conflict level</b>	Intrastate/intrastate conflict

### **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>	Pre-negotiation/process
<b>Conflict nature</b>	Government/territory
<b>Peace process</b>	Northern Ireland peace process
<b>Parties</b>	British and Irish Governments

<b>Third parties</b>	-
<b>Description</b>	The Consultation Paper sets out proposal for negotiations between the two Governments and the relevant political parties in NI on the basis, participation, structure, format and agenda of all-party negotiations. The negotiations are to operate on the basis of consensus.

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<b>Agreement document</b>	<a href="#">UK_IE_960315_Ground Rules for Substantive All-Party Negotiations.pdf (opens in new tab)</a>   <a href="#">Download PDF</a>
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## Groups

<b>Children/youth</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Disabled persons</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Elderly/age</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Migrant workers</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Racial/ethnic/national group</b>	Groups→Racial/ethnic/national group→Substantive Page 4, Format, 20. ...The rules for establishing sufficient consensus will be agreed in advance of negotiations by the participants and such rules will ensure that any departure from the rule of unanimity is within minimal limits and will, in all cases, ensure that any decision taken will be supported by a clear majority in both the unionist and nationalist communities in Northern Ireland...
<b>Religious groups</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Indigenous people</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Other groups</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Refugees/displaced persons</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Social class</b>	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** No specific mention.

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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** No specific mention.

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## **Governance**

**Political institutions (new or reformed)** No specific mention.

**Elections** 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>	No specific mention.

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#### **Power sharing**

<b>Political power sharing</b>	No specific mention.
<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>	<p>Page 1, Agenda, 3.</p> <p>...participation in negotiations is without prejudice to any participant's commitment to the achievement by exclusively peaceful and democratic means of its own preferred options...</p> <p>Page 3, Participation, 13.</p> <p>If, during the negotiations, any party demonstrably dishonoured its commitment to the principles of democracy and non-violence by, for example, resorting to force or threatening the use of force to influence the course or the outcome of the negotiations, or failing to oppose the efforts of others to do so, it would no longer be entitled to participate in the negotiations.</p>
<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>	No specific mention.
<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>	No specific mention.
<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**

<b>Development or socio-economic reconstruction</b>	No specific mention.
<b>National economic plan</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Natural resources</b>	No specific mention.
<b>International funds</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Business</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Taxation</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Banks</b>	No specific mention.

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#### **Land, property and environment**

<b>Land reform/rights</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Pastoralist/nomadism rights</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Cultural heritage</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Environment</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Water or riparian rights or access</b>	No specific mention.

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## **Security sector**

**Security Guarantees** No specific mention.

**Ceasefire** Security sector→Ceasefire→Ceasefire provision  
Page 2, Participation, 7.  
In the communique of 28 February, both Governments expressed the hope that all parties with an electoral mandate will be able to participate in all-party negotiations. However, both Governments are also agreed that the resumption of Ministerial dialogue with Sinn Féin, and their participation in negotiations, requires the unequivocal restoration of the ceasefire of August 1994.

**Police** No specific mention.

**Armed forces** No specific mention.

**DDR** No specific mention.

**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.



<b>Mechanism</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Prisoner release</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Vetting</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Victims</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Missing persons</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Reparations</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Reconciliation</b>	<p>Page 1, Agenda, 4.</p> <p>Both Governments, as signatories of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, reaffirm that they would be prepared to consider a new and more broadly based agreement, if that can be achieved through direct discussion and negotiation between all the parties concerned. They envisage that such an agreement would develop and extend their cooperation, reflect the totality of relationships between the two islands, and be dedicated to fostering cooperation, reconciliation and agreement in Ireland at all levels.</p>

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## Implementation

<b>UN signatory</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Other international signatory</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Referendum for agreement</b>	<p>Page 5, Validation, 22.</p> <p>Both Governments reaffirm their intention that the outcome of negotiations will be submitted for public approval by referendums in Ireland - North and South - before being submitted to their respective Parliaments for ratification and the earliest possible implementation.</p>
<b>International mission/force/similar</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Enforcement mechanism</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Related cases</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Source</b>	<p>CAIN Web Service - Conflict and Politics in Northern Ireland.</p> <p><a href="https://cain.ulster.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/cp15396.htm">https://cain.ulster.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/cp15396.htm</a></p>

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