

Peace Agreement Access Tool PA-X <https://pax.peaceagreements.org/>

Country/ entity	Ireland United Kingdom Northern Ireland
Region	Europe and Eurasia Europe and Eurasia Europe and Eurasia
Agreement name	Northern Ireland: Ground Rules for Substantive All-Party Negotiations
Date	15 Mar 1996
Agreement status	Multiparty signed/agreed
Interim arrangement	Yes
Agreement/ conflict level	Intrastate/intrastate conflict (Northern Ireland Conflict (1968 - 1998))
Stage	Pre-negotiation/process
Conflict nature	Government/territory
Peace process	Northern Ireland peace process
Parties	British and Irish Governments
Third parties	-
Description	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.

Agreement document [UK_IE_960315_Ground Rules for Substantive All-Party Negotiations.pdf](#) | [Download PDF](#)

Groups

Children/ youth	No specific mention.
Disabled persons	No specific mention.

Elderly/age	No specific mention.
Migrant workers	No specific mention.
Racial/ethnic/national group	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...
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 No specific mention.

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.

Governance

Political institutions (new or reformed) No specific mention.

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 No specific mention.

Power sharing

Political power sharing No specific mention.

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	<p>Page 1, Agenda, 3. ...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. 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>
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	No specific mention.
Regional or international human rights institutions	No specific mention.

Justice sector reform

Criminal justice and emergency law No specific mention.

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 No specific mention.

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 No specific mention.

Environment No specific mention.

Water or
riparian
rights or
access No specific mention.

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 Fein, 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.

Transitional justice

Transitional
justice
general No specific mention.

Amnesty/
pardon No specific mention.

Courts No specific mention.

Mechanism No specific mention.

Prisoner
release No specific mention.

Vetting No specific mention.

Victims No specific mention.

Missing
persons No specific mention.

Reparations No specific mention.

Reconciliation Page 1, Agenda, 4.

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.

Implementation

UN
signatory No specific mention.

Other
international
signatory No specific mention.

Referendum for agreement Page 5, Validation, 22.
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.

International mission/
force/similar No specific mention.

Enforcement mechanism No specific mention.

Related cases No specific mention.

Source CAIN Web Service - Conflict and Politics in Northern Ireland.
<https://cain.ulster.ac.uk/events/peace/docs/cp15396.htm>
