

WHAT DOES THE WINDSOR FRAMEWORK DO?

1. The Framework will restore the smooth flow of trade within the UK

For businesses:

- We've scrapped unnecessary international [customs paperwork](#) for internal UK movements, using ordinary commercial data instead in a new "green lane".
- There will be no [routine checks](#): the only checks required are those necessary to stop smugglers and criminals or protect biosecurity.
- Goods travelling to the EU remain subject to full EU law checks and controls.

For consumers:

- No customs declarations will be needed to receive [parcels](#) from friends and family or online shopping.
- An end to the ban on [chilled meats](#) like sausages and lamb joints, meaning supermarket shelves in NI stock the products consumers want.
- [Plants, seeds and trees](#) staying in NI will be able to move easily from GB to NI, increasing access and choice in garden centres.

2. The Framework will safeguard Northern Ireland's place in the Union

- The same food will be available on the shelves as in the UK - as UK food and drink safety standards will apply in the green lane.
- There will be no barriers for NI goods to move and be sold in the UK market - without forms, checks or controls.
- Patients in NI will get the [same medicines](#), on the same basis, as patients in the rest of the UK - all approved by the UK regulator.
- Straightforward travel for all [dogs and cats](#) from GB to NI and back without extra health treatments or expensive documentation.
- Northern Ireland can benefit from the same [VAT and alcohol taxes](#) as the rest of the UK.
- The only EU law that will apply in Northern Ireland under the Framework – less than 3% of EU rules overall – is the minimum necessary to allow Northern Ireland businesses to continue accessing the EU market.
- EU rules only apply to goods moving North-South - not to people.

3. The Framework gives Northern Ireland a say over new EU laws

- Alongside the existing consent mechanism, a new "Stormont Brake" gives Northern Ireland a say over amended or replaced EU laws that would have a significant impact on everyday lives of communities.
- NI's elected representatives (30 MLAs from at least two parties) can call for a rule to be suspended - with the UK Government under a duty to pull the brake and do so where a set of conditions set out in the Framework are met.
- Once the UK tells the EU that the Brake has been triggered, the rule is suspended automatically from coming into effect. It can then only be applied in Northern Ireland if the UK agrees that it should in the UK-EU Joint Committee - which it can do only if the rule would not apply new regulatory borders within the UK or there are exceptional circumstances.

FAQs:

What do the green/red lanes mentioned in the Framework look like in practice?

- The “green lane” will be a set of trusted trader schemes, with specific, highly streamlined processes for the movement of goods for those who are members. The “red lane” will be those processes that apply to those who are not part of the relevant schemes. Red and green lanes will only affect business movements of goods and there will be no checks on travellers.

What do checks or paperwork look like for items crossing the Irish Sea and remaining in NI?

- The international customs processes required under the old Protocol will be replaced with the sharing of ordinary commercial information, supported by the existing Trader Support Service. This information will be provided from sales invoices and transport contracts – information that businesses will already hold and use for the movement of goods.
- Routine checks will not be required for those goods moving in the “green lane” and remaining in Northern Ireland, with the only checks being those required to stop smugglers and criminals or to protect the biosecurity of the island of Ireland.

Will the EU have an oversight role in any internal NI affairs?

- The only EU law that applies in Northern Ireland under the Framework – less than 3% – is the minimum necessary to allow Northern Irish businesses to continue accessing the EU market. This ensures that Northern Ireland’s businesses have access not only to the UK market, but also to the European single market – something they have specifically asked us to protect.
- Crucially, the new “Stormont Brake” gives Northern Ireland a genuine and powerful role in the decision on whether or not significant new EU goods rules impacting on everyday life should apply.

How will the Stormont Brake work?

- 30 MLAs from two or more parties can come together to make a notification to the UK Government to set out that a rule has a significant impact on everyday lives and should be subject to a UK veto. The Government is under a duty to trigger the brake where that notification meets conditions set out in the Framework. Once the UK tells the EU that the Brake has been triggered, the rule is suspended automatically from coming into effect. It can then only be applied in Northern Ireland if the UK and EU both agree to that jointly in the Joint Committee.

What happens next?

- The UK Government and the European Commission will continue to take forward steps to give effect to the Windsor Framework in practice. We have already published a number of legal texts that form the details of the Windsor Agreement, and have begun to take the necessary steps domestically too.
- The UK Government will not continue with the Protocol Bill, as the Windsor Framework provides the secure and sustainable basis to address the issues with the old Protocol, and therefore the Bill is neither required nor is there a sound legal basis for proceeding with it.