

# Kate Hoey : “Northern Ireland is now a foreign country, they do things differently there”

## The noble Baroness – patron of CIBUK – calls out Rishi Sunak’s disastrous ‘Windsor Framework’ for what it is

Kate Hoey proves that the constitutional status of Northern Ireland has changed

To paraphrase the words of L.P.Hartley in his excellent novel ‘The Go-Between’, Northern Ireland is now a foreign country. They do things differently there. Unfortunately this is not by choice.

In her article below, the highly-respected Baroness Kate Hoey summarises the chilling effects of Rishi Sunak’s and the EU Commission’s ‘Windsor Framework’ – a shameful agreement which finally cuts off Northern Ireland from the mainland and divides the United Kingdom permanently.

At first sight the focus of her attention sounds highly technical and unlikely to be interesting – which is probably why the mainstream media have not given this much coverage. However, **do not be fooled** by mention of the “Postal Packets (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2023”, nor of the “Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee”. **Read on and you will find that Baroness Hoey explains in common language why this is so important to the Union.**

---

## Postal Packets Regulations change status of Northern Ireland

By Baroness Hoey, courtesy of the Centre for the Union



**This week has seen a total disaster** on the Second Delegated Legislation Committee on the Postal Packets (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2023, members being removed for even considering voting against it. It is a serious matter and **people need to realise how much of an impact these Regulations will have.**

In as short a time as a few months, people will realise just how serious the Postal Packets Regulations are. It will be the first of many statutory instruments that result from the Windsor Framework or, indirectly or directly, from the European Union's attitude to it. As we all know if we read the Windsor Framework, and what the Government and the EU said, they are very different. Even on these postal packets regulations, it is very different.

## Why is Rishi in such a rush?

A number of Lords referred to what the Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee said about why there is a rush – why the hurry? Why the Government want to rush this through is very straightforward. They know that, as time goes on and there is more detail, scrutiny and need to work with this in, for example, sub-post offices across the country or through customs officials, we will see that this is not right. It is not going to work. They want to get it through.

It has been mentioned, so I do not want to go into what happened in more detail. I sat through the committee on this SI in the other place, and it is absolutely shocking that our Government have so little confidence in their own Members that they had to remove five of them because they knew that they would not get their support. That was because those Members had read it. They had read it and listened, and they knew what they needed to do, because what the Government had decided was not right or good for the people of Northern Ireland and certainly not for the union.

## N.I. now being treated as a foreign country

These regulations are, without doubt, **changing the status of Northern Ireland such that it is being treated as a foreign country** and a foreign part of the administration of the United Kingdom. For some people, that is fine. Some people do not really care about Northern Ireland. Let us face it: there are an awful lot of Members, not necessarily in this House but in Parliament generally, who probably think, *“Oh, Northern Ireland – what a nuisance. If only we could forget about it”*. This is precisely what many people who do not care about Northern Ireland want to see happening – this dividing, this moving, this drip, drip, drip taking Northern Ireland further and further from the rest of the United Kingdom.

Imagine a young person coming to this country as a student, sending a parcel. The Government are saying that it will not be very different, but we know that the European Union will eventually decide whether even individual parcels from person to person will need authorisation from somewhere. That is not for the person at the moment, but someone in the sub-post office will have to get the authorisation and that is going to cost money. Who is going to pay for that? There are business-to-business costs from that. More and more costs mean more businesses in Great Britain being clear that they will not bother sending things to Northern Ireland. This is happening already and is going to happen even more.

Imagine a young student coming over here to England and deciding to send a parcel to their grandfather. They will be told that they are sending it to a foreign country. That is quite outrageous. The instrument has the same instruction for Regulations 5, 6, 9, 15, 20 and 21, namely to insert

*“and all GB-NI postal packets”*

after “foreign postal packets”. It is quite outrageous that people in Northern Ireland who have given so much loyalty to this country – so many people died during world wars – are now being repaid by this glibness around how they are treated.

## **Waffly answers from the Sunak government**

Many of my colleagues from Northern Ireland, from all parties, have put down lots of questions. I find it shameful that, every time, **we get waffly answers that do not tell the truth**. The Government skim around the issue. They will not answer in black and white because they know that answering in black and white tells us the truth. When I asked a Written Question some weeks ago about parcels to Northern Ireland, the Minister, Baroness Penn answered me very clearly. She said:

*“The Windsor Framework safeguards parcel movements and maintains business as usual for Northern Ireland consumers, removing any need for international customs processes”.*

**That is typically deceptive**, we can use that word here, because it is not saying that the Government have removed customs. Contrary to what is claimed, they have not done so. They have further embedded the Irish Sea customs border because they have removed international customs processes. That is almost inaccurate as well because, in the 2023 regulations, trade from GB to NI is now to be treated as the equivalent of exporting to a foreign country. Therefore, how can the customs declaration required even for goods that are not at risk of entering the EU be described as anything other than the international customs process?

## **The Sunak Government intends to ram this through**

I could go on for a long time but I appreciate that that will make no difference as the Government have decided to ram this through. However, I have three questions for the Minister. First, can she confirm that the legal reality via the regulations is that Northern Ireland will be treated in the same category as a foreign country?

Secondly, can she confirm that goods moving from GB to Northern Ireland will be treated as exports leaving GB and imports arriving in Northern Ireland, in the same way that foreign exports and imports are treated? One has only to read the regulations to see that that is obvious so, thirdly, **how can the Government argue with any semblance of credibility that they have removed the Irish Sea border?**

– By Baroness Hoey of Lylehill and Rathlin, first published by the Centre for the Union, 20 Jul 2023

---

**Please support our work today if you can, to enable us to carry on:**

**Please donate today**

*You can make a difference*

---

## **Observations**

**Fundamentally this is not about Brexit, it's about the vindictive actions of the EU empire**

Rejoiners point to stories like this and blame Brexit. As usual they are wrong.

The EU Commission set out to penalise the British people for having voted to leave its empire. In a hostile and entirely vindictive move they chose to weaponise Northern Ireland as an easy target. Theresa May went along with this in a typically weak response, instead of laughing it out of court.

In the latest twist, Rishi Sunak has agreed a version of the Northern Ireland Protocol called 'the Windsor Framework' which solidifies Northern Ireland's status as a foreign country in our own land.

It is quite clear that none of the Commission's actions were necessary. As we have shown countless times, there are simple solutions to the question of the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The fact that the Republic's government have been fully complicit in this

disgraceful set of actions should be a cause of shame for the Irish people.

As for Rishi Sunak, (or Rasheed Sanouk as the dodderly US President called him), he has a a very poor deal to answer for.

---

The original article can be found [here](#).

CIBUK thanks its Affiliated Organisation [Brexit Facts4EU.Org](#) for permission to republish this article.

Main image: Montage © [Facts4EU.Org](#) 2023