Northern Ireland Act 1998

1998 CHAPTER 47

PART I

PRELIMINARY

1 Status of Northern Ireland.

(1) It is hereby declared that Northern Ireland in its entirety remains part of the United Kingdom and shall not cease to be so without the consent of a majority of the people of Northern Ireland voting in a poll held for the purposes of this section in accordance with Schedule 1.

(2) But if the wish expressed by a majority in such a poll is that Northern Ireland should cease to be part of the United Kingdom and form part of a united Ireland, the Secretary of State shall lay before Parliament such proposals to give effect to that wish as may be agreed between Her Majesty’s Government in the United Kingdom and the Government of Ireland.
**Changes to legislation:**
There are outstanding changes not yet made by the legislation.gov.uk editorial team to Northern Ireland Act 1998. Any changes that have already been made by the team appear in the content and are referenced with annotations.

View outstanding changes

**Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:**


**Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):**

- s. 6(2)(ca) inserted by [2020 c. 1 Sch. 3 para. 2](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/archive/2020/1/amendments/2020-1-1#part3)
- s. 20(7)-(9) inserted by [2020 c. 4 (N.I.) s. 1(4)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/archive/2020/4-ni/amendments/2020-4-ni-1#part1)
- s. 24(1)(aa) inserted by [2020 c. 1 Sch. 3 para. 3](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/archive/2020/1/amendments/2020-1-1#part3)
- s. 27(4A) inserted by [2018 c. 16 Sch. 3 para. 56(5)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/archive/2018/16/amendments/2018-16-1#part56)
- s. 31(2)-(2D) substituted for s. 31(2) (cond.) by [2006 c. 17 Sch. 3 para. 2(1)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/archive/1998/47/amendments/2006-47-17#part2) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Conditional amendment never in force)
- s. 31(2)-(2D) substituted for s. 31(2) (cond.) by [2006 c. 53 Sch. 3 para. 2(1)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/archive/2006/53/amendments/2006-53-3#part2) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk to legislation.gov.uk. It is a conditional amendment that was never brought into force. Sch. 3 repealed (10.5.2007) by Northern Ireland (St Andrews Agreement) Act 2006 (c. 53), s. 2(5) (as amended by 2007 c. 4, s. 1(1)); S.I. 2007/1397, art. 2)
- s. 31(2E) inserted (cond.) by [2006 c. 17 Sch. 3 para. 3(1)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/archive/1998/47/amendments/2006-47-17#part3) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Conditional amendment never in force)
- s. 69(10A) inserted by [2020 c. 1 Sch. 3 para. 4](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/archive/2020/1/amendments/2020-1-1#part3)
- s. 74(7) inserted by [2020 c. 1 Sch. 3 para. 6](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/archive/2020/1/amendments/2020-1-1#part3)
- s. 78A-78E and cross-heading inserted by [2020 c. 1 Sch. 3 para. 7](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/archive/2020/1/amendments/2020-1-1#part3)
- Sch. 2 para. 9B inserted by [2009 c. 8 s. 27](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/archive/2009/8/amendments/2009-8-27#part27) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. The amending provision was repealed (16.2.2011) without ever being in force by 2010 c. 36, ss. 2(1), 4(2))
- Sch. 3 para. 42(ba) inserted by [2020 c. 1 Sch. 3 para. 8](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/archive/2020/1/amendments/2020-1-1#part3)