



Northern Ireland
Assembly

The Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee

The purpose of the Committee is to assist with the observation and implementation of Article 13(3a) and 13(4) of the Windsor Framework. These are the parts of the Framework which set out the processes for how EU acts **amending or replacing acts** which already apply in Northern Ireland under the Framework (Article 13(3a)), or **new EU acts** (Article 13(4)) which are within the scope of the Framework, may apply in Northern Ireland. The Windsor Framework (Democratic Scrutiny)

Regulations 2024 sets out the Committee's functions:

- a) *the examination and consideration of new EU acts and replacement EU acts,*
- b) *the conduct of inquiries and publication of reports in relation to replacement EU acts,*
- c) *engagement with businesses, civil society and others as appropriate in relation to replacement EU acts,*
- d) *engagement with His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom in relation to replacement EU acts,*
- e) *engagement with Ministers and Northern Ireland departments in relation to replacement EU acts,*
- f) *the collation and publication of evidence collected as part of its other activities, and*
- g) *dealing with other matters (including legislative proposals which may become new EU acts or replacement EU acts) which the Committee considers to be connected with its purpose or other functions.*

Proposed EU acts

The UK Government may notify the Committee about new or replacement EU acts which have been proposed by the European Commission. The Committee can monitor the progress of this legislation, publish interim reports, and hold inquiries.

Published EU acts

The Government may also notify the Committee about amending or replacement EU acts which have been formally agreed and published in the EU's Official Journal. Following this, the Committee has five working days to decide whether to hold an inquiry into the EU act and must publish its decision. The Committee must have regard to whether the amending or replacement EU act:

- *“significantly differs (in whole or in part) from the content or scope of the EU instrument which it amends or replaces, and*
- *would have a significant impact specific to everyday life of communities in Northern Ireland in a way that is liable to persist”*

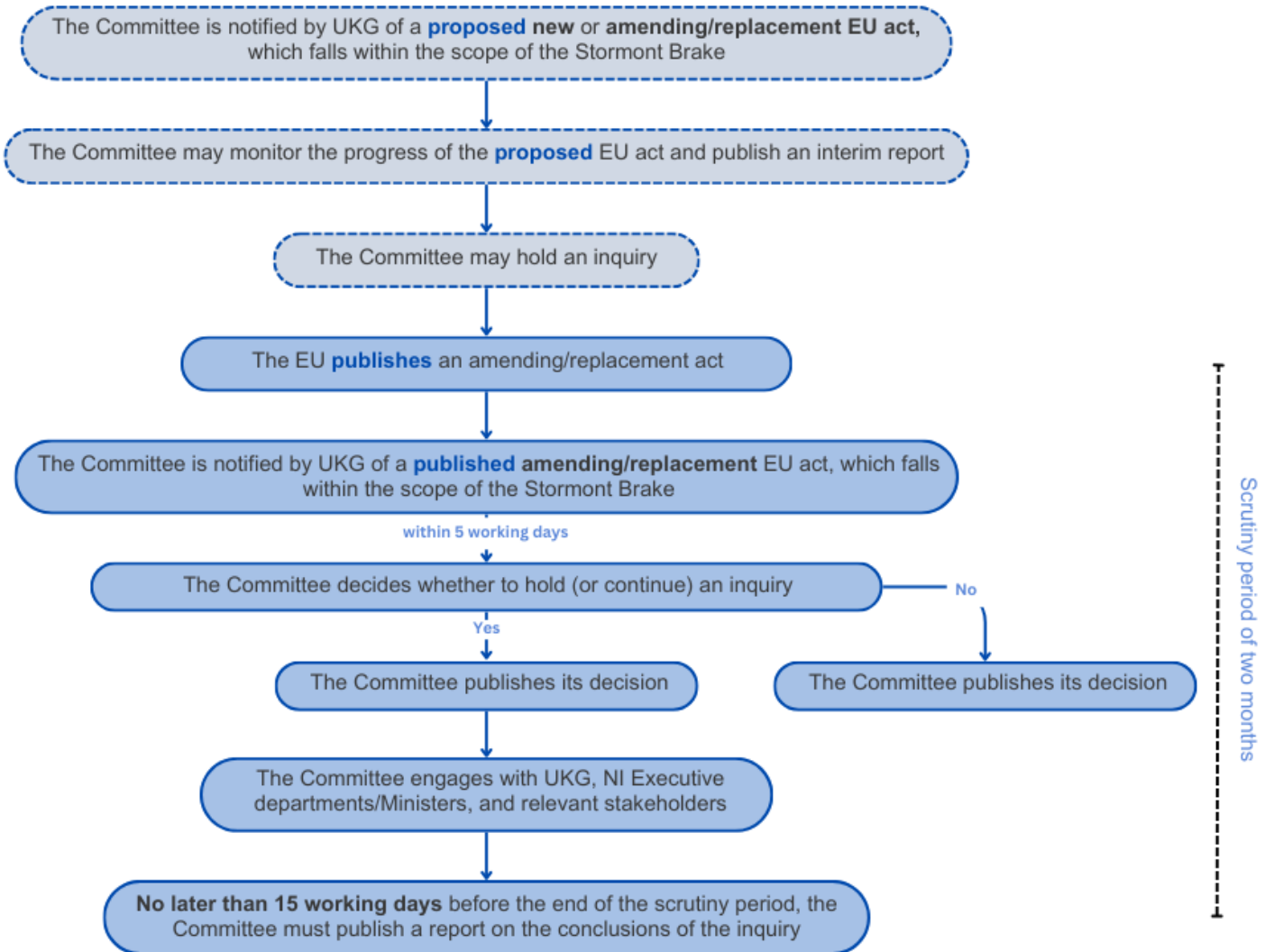
During the inquiry, the Committee must engage with the UK Government, a Minister or Northern Ireland department, and representatives of businesses and civil society potentially affected by the EU act.

The Committee must publish a report on its inquiry no later than 15 working days before the end of the two-month scrutiny period (which begins when the EU act is published in the EU's Official Journal).

The UK Government intends to notify the Committee of relevant proposed and published EU laws on a weekly basis, and to provide the Committee with explanatory memoranda on these.

The diagram overleaf sets out the process for the Committee.

Process for the Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee



References and further reading

- The UK Government legislated through the [Windsor Framework \(Democratic Scrutiny\) Regulations 2024](#) to make provision for the establishment of the Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee in the Assembly.
- A letter from the [Secretary of State for Northern Ireland to the Speaker](#) on the Democratic Scrutiny Regulations sets out the UK Government's approach to practical matters in relation to information exchange and notifications to the Committee.