
Brexit: London, Von der Leyen and Sunak signed “Windsor Framework” to ensure peace in Northern Ireland

An agreement that could mark a turning point in the relations between the UK and the European Union after the damage caused by Brexit in 2016. This is how European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak presented the Windsor Framework at a press conference in Windsor. The new pact we have signed, they said, is “an important milestone” that will ensure peace in Northern Ireland, since “it protects the very hard-earned peace gains of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement”, of which we celebrate the 25th anniversary this year. The new agreement reduces red tape and customs checks, allowing goods travelling from the UK to Northern Ireland to arrive more easily, through a Green Lane, thus eliminating the Irish Sea Border with the UK, which has always been unacceptable to Northern Ireland Protestant MPs from the DUP party. Although European legislation will continue to apply in Northern Ireland, there will also be a new mechanism, the so-called “Stormont Brake”, which will allow the Northern Ireland Parliament to suspend the application of some EU single market rules. The good news for UK universities is that teachers will be allowed to join the European Horizon Program, which guarantees important funds for research. For the new agreement to work, however, it is now essential that it receives the backing of Protestant MPs from the DUP party and the approval of Parliament in Westminster.

Silvia Guzzetti