
EU Commission: legal action against UK for “breaching Ireland and Northern Ireland Protocol”

The European Commission has today launched a legal action against the UK for “breaching the substantive provisions of the Protocol on Ireland and Northern Ireland” as well as “the good faith obligation” under the Agreement that regulates the UK’s withdrawal from the EU. The statement, in which the EU explains that “it is the second time in the space of six months that the UK government is set to breach international law”, is accompanied by a letter addressed by Vice-President for Inter-institutional Relations Maroš Šef?ovi? to the new Minister for Brexit David Frost. The letter calls on the UK to rectify and refrain from putting into practice the decision taken on 3 March 2021 to unilaterally extend a grace period, until October, on checks for UK goods entering Northern Ireland. The grace period was due to expire at the end of March coinciding with the creation of a new trade border between the UK and Northern Ireland. “The Protocol on Ireland and Northern Ireland is the only way to protect the Good Friday (Belfast) Agreement and to preserve peace and stability, while avoiding a hard border on the island of Ireland and maintaining the integrity of the EU single market”, the European Commission explains in the statement. “The EU and the UK agreed the Protocol together”.

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