

Charles Tannock: Northern Ireland Assembly should choose economic alignment with the EU

Written by Martin Banks on 2 August 2018 in News
News

UK MEP Charles Tannock has called for the people of Northern Ireland to be allowed to choose to stay aligned with the EU and the Republic of Ireland.



Charles Tannock | *Photo credit: European Parliament audiovisual*

In a report out on Thursday, he advocates a referendum in the North to decide the post-Brexit future of the province.

Northern Ireland voted to remain in the EU referendum by a majority of 56 per cent to 44 per cent, although the UK as a whole voted to quit the EU.

The Irish border issue has remained the number one stumbling block in the Brexit talks between the

two sides.

RELATED CONTENT

- [Elmar Brok joins calls for second Brexit referendum](#) [1]
 - [MEPs stress importance of Northern Ireland issue](#) [2]
 - [EU and UK gear up for no-deal Brexit](#) [3]
 - [UK Brexit secretary threatens to withhold divorce bill](#) [4]
-

Speaking at the launch of his report, Tannock, an ECR group member, said, “Because of the importance of peace in Northern the EU has made an exception to its ‘no cherry-picking rule’ and is allowing the region to stay aligned with the single market and customs union even if the rest of the UK chooses to diverge. This Hong Kong style one country two systems model is a huge opportunity for Northern Ireland that would turn the province into a magnet for investment.

“The DUP, which only got 36 per cent of the vote at the last British general election, shouldn’t be allowed to put ideology ahead of the economic and political future of Northern Ireland because of the quirks of the British electoral system”

Tannock, a Tory MEP, added, “The joint report agreed between the EU and the UK in December last year gives Northern Ireland institutions the power to allow the island of Great Britain to have rules that diverge from those that apply in the rest of the UK so it can preserve alignment with the EU and prevent a hard border on the island of Ireland.

“Because there’s currently no Northern Ireland executive in place, I believe that the Northern Ireland Assembly should choose economic alignment with the EU to prevent a hard border, but if it can’t agree this according to its own procedures, the question should, as a last resort, be put to the people of Northern Ireland.

“It’s not true to say that this divergence puts the constitutional integrity of the United Kingdom at risk. In the past, Northern Ireland has had significant independence from Westminster, even having its own Prime Minister from 1922 to 1972. More recently even the DUP have called to align Northern Ireland’s corporation tax and air passenger duty with those of the Republic, and not those set in London.

“Rather it is the DUP that are putting the UK’s Union at risk by attempting to railroad through an unpopular hard Brexit with the support of a minority of the Northern Ireland electorate.

“The U in DUP stands for ‘Unionist’ they surely owe it to moderate Unionists throughout the UK to protect their interests, not ride roughshod over them in pursuit of an ideological hard Brexit. That’s why I argue in my report that Northern Ireland should embrace this opportunity. It is the way to preserve the UK’s Union after Brexit and something the DUP should be strongly in favour of,” said Tannock, a member of the foreign affairs committee.

About the author

Martin Banks is a senior reporter for the Parliament Magazine

Tags

[Brexit](#) [5]

Categories

[International Relations](#) [6]



Site Sections

- [Home](#)
- [Content](#)
- [Policy](#)
- [Magazines](#)
- [PM+](#)
- [Thought Leader](#)
- [EU Elections 2019](#)
- [Editorial Calendar](#)
- [Policy Events](#)
- [Event Coverage](#)
- [MEP Awards 2019](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

Services

[Dods PeopleDods](#)
[MonitoringDods](#)
[ResearchDods](#)
[EventsDods](#)
[Training](#)

Media & publishing titles

[Politics HomeThe](#)
[HouseThe](#)
[Parliament](#)
[MagazineHolyrood](#)
[Total PoliticsPublic](#)
[Affairs NewsCivil](#)
[Service](#)
[World](#)
[PublicTechnology](#)
[Training](#)
[JournalDods](#)
[Parliamentary](#)

[CompanionVacher's
Quarterly The
European Union and
Public Affairs
Directory](#)

Dods events

[Westminster
BriefingDigital
Health & Care
ScotlandMEP
AwardsThe Skills
SummitScottish
Public Service
AwardsPublic Sector
Procurement
SummitPublic
Sector ICT
SummitCyber
Security
SummitCyber
Security
2017Training
Journal Awards](#)

**Partnership
events**

[The Health and
Care Innovation
ExpoCivil Service
LiveCivil Service
AwardsChief
Nursing Officer for
England's
SummitWomen into
LeadershipThe
Youth Justice
ConventionSocitm
Spring
ConferenceNHSCC
Annual Members'
EventDods at Party
Conference](#)

Source URL: <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/news/charles-tannock-northern-ireland-assembly-should-choose-economic-alignment-eu>

Links

[1] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/news/elmar-brok-joins-calls-second-brexite-referendum>

[2] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/news/meps-stress-importance-northern-ireland-issue>

[3] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/news/eu-and-uk-gear-no-deal-brexite>

[4] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/articles/news/uk-brexite-secretary-threatens-withhold-divorce-bill>

[5] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/tags/brexite>

[6] <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/categories/international-relations>