STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2026 No. 75 (C. 9)

NORTHERN IRELAND

The Identity and Language (Northern Ireland) Act 2022 (Commencement No. 3) Regulations 2026

Made - - - - 28th January 2026

The Secretary of State makes these Regulations in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 10(2) and 10(3) of the Identity and Language (Northern Ireland) Act 2022(**a**).

Citation, interpretation and extent

1.—(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Identity and Language (Northern Ireland) Act 2022 (Commencement No. 3) Regulations 2026.

(2) In these Regulations "the 1998 Act" means the Northern Ireland Act 1998(**b**).

(3) These Regulations extend to Northern Ireland.

Provisions coming into force on the day after the day these Regulations are made

2. The following provisions of the Identity and Language (Northern Ireland) Act 2022 come into force on the day after the day these Regulations are made—

(a) section 1(1) (national and cultural identity) for the purpose of inserting—

(i) section 78F (national and cultural identity principles); and

(ii) section 78H (functions of the Office of Identity and Cultural Expression), except subsection 3(d),

into the 1998 Act;

(b) section 2(1) (Irish language) for the purpose of inserting—

(i) section 78J (recognition of the status of the Irish language), except subsection (1)(c);

(ii) section 78L (functions of the Commissioner), except subsection (2)(b) and (c);

(iii) section 78M (Irish language best practice standards);

(iv) section 78N (review and revision of best practice standards); and

(v) section 78Q (meaning of "public authority"),

into the 1998 Act;

(**a**) 2022 c. 45.
(**b**) 1998 c. 47.

(c) section 3(1) (the Ulster Scots and the Ulster British tradition) for the purpose of inserting—

(i) section 78S (functions of the Commissioner), except subsection (2)(c); and

(ii) section 78U (meaning of "public authority"),

into the 1998 Act.

Hilary Benn
Secretary of State
Northern Ireland Office

28th January 2026

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations bring into force specified provisions of the Identity and Language (Northern Ireland) Act 2022 (c. 45) ("the 2022 Act"). These are the third commencement regulations made under the 2022 Act.

Sections 1 to 3 of the 2022 Act were partially commenced for the purposes of inserting specified sections into the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (c. 47) ("the 1998 Act") by the Identity and Language (Northern Ireland) Act 2022 (Commencement) Regulations 2023 (S.I. 2023/566). Regulation 2 of these Regulations further commences parts of sections 1 to 3 of the 2022 Act, for the purposes of establishing national and cultural language principles, establishing the functions of the Office of Identity and Cultural Expression, recognising the status of the Irish language, establishing the functions of the Irish Language Commissioner (including Irish language best practice standards and the review of best practice standards), establishing the functions of the Commissioner for the Ulster Scots and the Ulster Scots tradition and defining what constitutes a "public authority", as provided for in the 2022 Act. This will insert sections 78F, 78H, 78J, 78L, 78M, 78N, 78Q, 78S and 78U into the 1998 Act.

A full impact assessment has not been produced for this instrument as no, or no significant impact on the private, voluntary or public sectors is foreseen.

NOTE AS TO EARLIER COMMENCEMENT REGULATIONS

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

The following provisions of the Identity and Language (Northern Ireland) Act 2022 have been brought into force by commencement regulations made before the date of these Regulations.

Provision	*Date of Commencement*	*S.I. No.*
Section 1 (partially)	22nd May 2023	2023/566
Section 2 (partially)	22nd May 2023	2023/566
Section 3 (partially)	22nd May 2023	2023/566
Section 4	26th February 2025	2025/214
Section 5	26th February 2025	2025/214
Section 6	22nd May 2023	2023/566
Section 7	22nd May 2023	2023/566
Schedule 1	22nd May 2023	2023/566
Schedule 2	22nd May 2023	2023/566

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ISBN 978-0-34-827894-1

£6.40

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/id/uksi/2026/75