

**Priority question for written answer P-000713/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Billy Kelleher (Renew)

Subject: Triggering of Article 16 of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland: who requested it?

Last week, the Commission made an unacceptable, yet totally avoidable, mistake by attempting to invoke Article 16 of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland.

For the past four years, the Commission, along with Parliament and the Member States, has been focused on finding a way to facilitate Brexit while still supporting the Good Friday Agreement.

The issues of borders, customs and the island of Ireland are nothing new to anyone. Therefore, the decision to attempt to invoke Article 16 was damaging and divisive.

Therefore, we must find out how it was allowed to be included in the proposals.

1. Was the inclusion of Article 16 requested by a Member-State government or by a government minister of a Member State? If so, which Member State and/or which government minister requested it?
2. Was the inclusion of Article 16 requested by a Commissioner or a member of their Cabinet? If so, which Commissioner and which Cabinet member requested it?
3. Was the inclusion of Article 16 proposed by an official? If so, which official? Please include their department and whose instruction they were acting under.