

Devolution

KEY:

N: Narrator

N: Through a process called devolution, Northern Ireland can make its own laws and decisions in areas that affect only the people of Northern Ireland.

Devolution means that the power has been transferred, or devolved, from the UK Parliament in London to the Northern Ireland Assembly in Stormont, Belfast.

Laws that affect the whole of the UK are made by the UK Parliament. This is for things like foreign affairs, income tax and defence.

The Northern Ireland Assembly makes laws for everyone living in Northern Ireland. It's made up of 90 people called Members of the Legislative Assembly, or MLAs for short. During an election, people aged 18 and older can vote for the MLAs they believe will do the best job in making and passing these laws.

The Assembly gives extra power to some MLAs who are appointed as Ministers. These Ministers work together in a group called the Executive, which is the government of Northern Ireland.

Ministers are responsible for delivering services in one of nine government departments:

- Agriculture & Environment
- Schools
- Health
- Economy
- The Police Service
- Transport
- Sport & Housing
- Finance; and
- Making Government work.

Because of devolution, MLAs and Ministers can make decisions on all the services we need. You can find out more about how the Assembly works on TV, radio, social media, and the Assembly website.

No matter what age you are, you can have your say in the things that matter. Devolution makes it possible for local decisions to be made by local people, giving us the opportunity to make the laws we need.