

Key points

- In 2018, Governance ranked 20th out of 50 (unchanged since 2017) and received a score of 59.22 (-0.29 since 2017).
- Governance was Northern Ireland’s 3rd highest scoring dimension, and the highest ranked dimension in 2018.
- Governance has consistently been the highest ranking of the six dimensions for Northern Ireland since 2016.
- Within Governance, the highest scoring attribute was Rights & Fairness (4.69), and the lowest scoring attribute was Poverty (4.27).
- Governance received significantly higher scores from those who had visited Northern Ireland than those who had not.

Introduction

In order to assess and monitor its international reputation, Northern Ireland has been included on the Anholt GfK-Roper Nation Brands IndexSM (NBISM) since 2016.

The NBISM is an analytical tool which attempts to measure and rank the broad international reputation of 50 nations, across six dimensions of national competence: Exports; Governance; Culture; People; Tourism; and Immigration and Investment.

This bulletin examines how Northern Ireland is viewed in relation to the **Governance** dimension. The score for this dimension is calculated using scores from five attributes: Competent and Honest; Rights and Fairness; Peace and Security; Environment; and Poverty. For each attribute, respondents were presented with a statement and asked to state to what extent they agreed or disagreed on a seven point Likert scale, where one is strongly disagree, four is neither agree nor disagree, and seven is strongly agree. These statements are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Attribute statements, Governance dimension

Attribute	Statement
Competent and Honest	‘This country is competently and honestly governed.’
Rights and Fairness	‘This country respects the rights of its citizens and treats them with fairness.’
Peace and Security	‘This country behaves responsibly in the areas of international peace and security.’
Environment	‘This country behaves responsibly to protect the environment.’
Poverty	‘This country behaves responsibly to help reduce world poverty.’

All rankings presented in the report are out of 50 countries. The overall score for the Governance dimension is out of 100, while the score for each of the attributes is an average of respondents’ scores, based on a scale from one to seven (with seven being the highest and best, and one being the lowest and worst).

This bulletin is the first in a series on the six dimensions of the NBISM. The other five bulletins, associated data tables and infographics are available from:

<https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/six-dimensions-nation-brands-index-2018>.

The overall NBISM report (published February 2019), associated data tables and methodological documents are available from:

<https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/anholt-gfk-roper-nation-brands-index-2018-report-northern-ireland>.

Figure 1: Northern Ireland’s ranking and score on the Governance dimension of the NBISM



Northern Ireland received an overall score of 59.22 on the Governance dimension (down from 59.51 in 2017). This means that Northern Ireland was ranked 20th out of the 50 participating nations in 2018 (no change since 2017). This was the dimension for which Northern Ireland received the highest ranking in 2018.

Rankings and scores on the Governance dimension from around the world

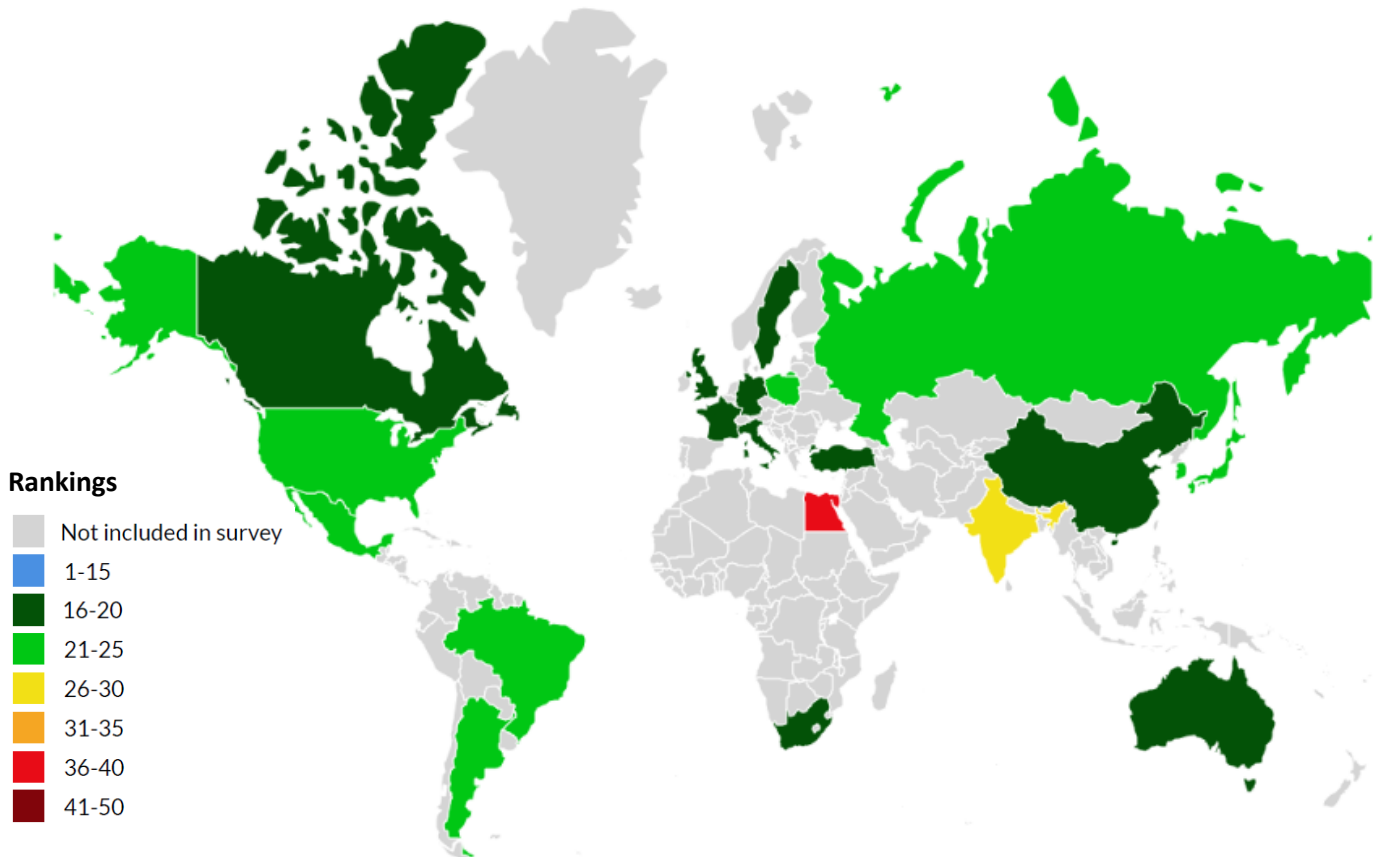
Northern Ireland's Governance was ranked relatively highly globally, with all but two of the panel nations providing a ranking between 18th and 24th (Figure 2). The highest rankings were received from Germany, Italy, United Kingdom (all placed Northern Ireland 18th) and Canada, Sweden and Turkey (19th for all three). Northern Ireland's lowest rankings were received from Egypt (36th) and India (27th). Northern Ireland was also ranked relatively highly on the Governance dimension in 2016 (the first year Northern Ireland was included in the survey) and 2017.

While rankings provide an insight into how Northern Ireland is viewed by panel countries relative to the other participating nations, they can be impacted year on year due to the inclusion of new countries in the survey. The dimension score provides a more absolute understanding of how Northern Ireland is viewed, both overall and by each of the individual panel countries. In this sense, it is useful to consider both rankings and scores.

Northern Ireland's score on the Governance dimension was slightly lower in 2018 than in 2017. The highest score was received from India (64.78) as was also the case in both 2016 and 2017. Northern Ireland also received relatively high scores also received from China (63.30), Mexico (62.73), South Africa (61.61), Germany (61.36), Brazil and South Korea (both 60.31) in 2018. Northern Ireland's lowest scores were received from Japan (54.18), Sweden (55.69) and Turkey (56.01).

Northern Ireland's relatively high rank (19th) and low score (55.69) from Sweden, contrasts with the relatively low rank (27th) and high score (64.78) from India. This suggests that scores from different panel countries are not necessarily comparable - it is important to consider both score and rank when evaluating responses from other countries.

Figure 2: Northern Ireland's rankings on the Governance dimension from around the world



Attribute scores and rankings

The score for each attribute is an average of respondents' scores, on a scale from one (lowest and worst) to seven (highest and best) with four being neither positive nor negative.

Northern Ireland's overall score for each attribute on the Governance dimension was noted to be positive (i.e. above the neutral value of 4) in 2016, 2017 and again in 2018. Scores ranged from 4.27 (Poverty) to 4.69 (Rights and Fairness) in 2018 and these were also the lowest and highest scoring attributes in 2017. The score for Rights and Fairness (4.69) was the sixth highest score Northern Ireland received for any of the 23 attributes across the six dimensions of the NBISM in 2018.

When attribute scores were compared with the other participating nations, Northern Ireland was ranked relatively highly (20th out of the 50 nations examined) in each case for all five Governance attributes (Figure 3).

Differences between those who have visited Northern Ireland and those who have not

In 2018, seven per cent of NBISM respondents reported that they had previously visited Northern Ireland.

Respondents who had previously visited the region scored Northern Ireland statistically significantly* higher on the Governance dimension, as well as on each of the composite attributes, than those who had not visited. (Figures 4 and 5). This pattern was also evident in both 2016 and 2017.

Figure 3: Rankings and scores for Northern Ireland's Governance attributes

SCORE	ATTRIBUTE	RANK
4.51	Competent & Honest	20
4.69	Rights & Fairness	20
4.57	Peace & Security	20
4.61	Environment	20
4.27	Poverty	20

Note: Attribute scores range from 1 to 7 and all rankings are out of 50.

Figure 4: Governance dimension scores – those who have visited Northern Ireland and those who have not

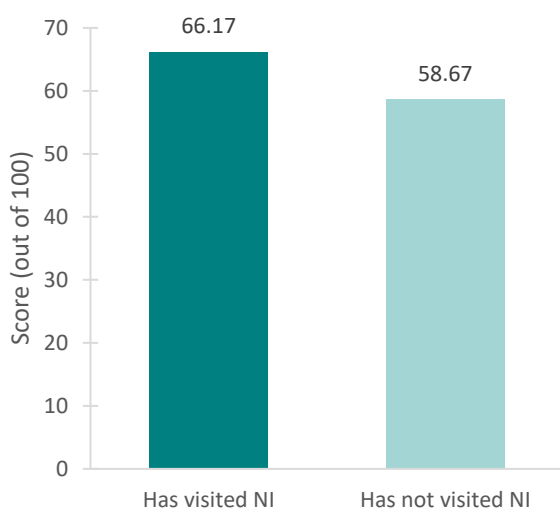
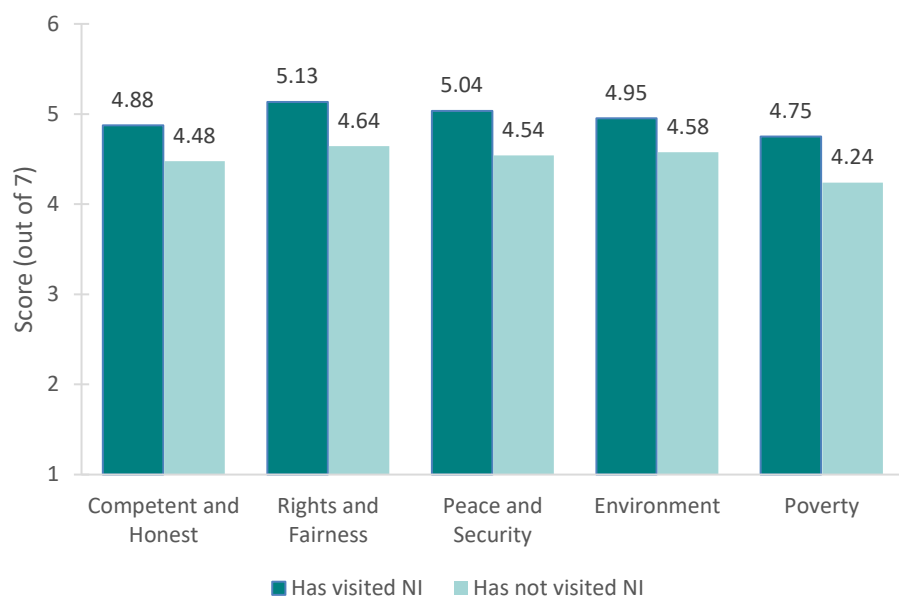


Figure 5: Attribute scores – those who have visited Northern Ireland and those who have not - Governance dimension



*Statistically significant differences are at the 95% confidence level. This means that we can be 95% confident that the differences between groups are actual differences and have not just arisen by chance.

Attributes of the Governance dimension: Proportion of respondents who agreed or disagreed with each attribute statement

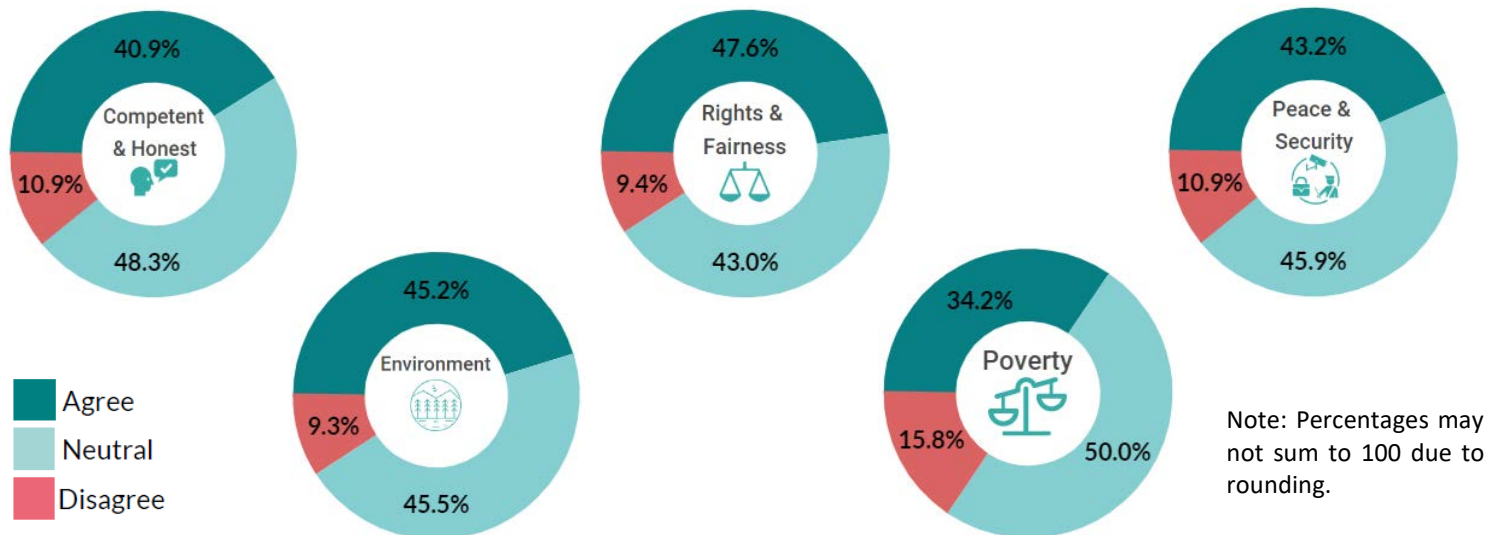
As well as examining scores and rankings, it is also useful to consider the proportion of respondents who either agreed or disagreed with each attribute statement* (see Figure 6). The proportions reported below for the attributes within the Governance dimension are all similar to those observed in 2016 and 2017.

Almost half of respondents (48 per cent) agreed that Northern Ireland respects the rights of its citizens and treats them with fairness; the highest proportion for attributes within this dimension. This was followed by Environment (45 per cent), Peace and Security (43 per cent), Competent and Honest (41 per cent) and Poverty (34 per cent).

Attributes in the Governance dimension received a large proportion of neutral responses, ranging from 50 per cent for Poverty, to 43 per cent for Rights and Fairness, which could suggest a lack of awareness or strong views on Northern Ireland's Governance.

The proportion of respondents who disagreed with any of the attribute statements displayed in Table 1 ranged from nine per cent to 16 per cent. Respondents were most likely to disagree with the statement that Northern Ireland behaves responsibly to help reduce world poverty (16 per cent).

Figure 6: Proportion of respondents who agreed or disagreed with each attribute statement within the Governance dimension



Words associated with the Government of Northern Ireland

Respondents were asked to select, from a predetermined list, the one adjective they thought most accurately described the government of Northern Ireland. The most common response was 'none of these' (22 per cent of respondents). Figure 7 presents a word cloud of the adjectives that were chosen by remaining respondents.

The words most commonly associated with Northern Ireland's government were 'Trustworthy' (18 per cent) and 'Reliable' (16 per cent). 12 per cent of respondents associated 'Unpredictable' with Northern Ireland's government.

A smaller proportion of respondents associated the words 'Reassuring' (ten per cent), 'Transparent' (nine percent), 'Unstable' (five per cent), 'Dangerous' (four per cent) and 'Corrupt' (three per cent) with Northern Ireland's government.

These proportions were all similar to those observed in 2016 and 2017.

Figure 7: Words associated with the Government of Northern Ireland



*For each attribute statement, respondents reported to what extent they agreed or disagreed on a seven point Likert scale, where one is strongly disagree, four is neither agree nor disagree, and seven is strongly agree. Respondents who provided scores between one and three were categorised as disagreeing with the statement, scores between five and seven were categorised as agreeing, while scores of four were categorised as neutral.