

# International Perceptions of Northern Ireland: Exports

## Six Dimensions of the Nation Brands Index<sup>SM</sup> 2017

Bulletin 4, May 2018

### Introduction

In order to assess and monitor its international reputation, Northern Ireland was included on the Anholt GfK-Roper Nation Brands Index<sup>SM</sup> (NBI<sup>SM</sup>) for the first time in 2016 and then again in 2017.

The NBI<sup>SM</sup> 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.

The 2017 NBI<sup>SM</sup> involved the completion of over 20,000 online surveys, across 20 major developed and developing panel countries, with at least 1,000 surveys per panel country.

This bulletin examines how Northern Ireland is viewed in relation to the **Exports** dimension. The score for this dimension was calculated using scores from three questions (attributes): Science and Technology; Buying Products\*; and Creative Place. 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.

All rankings presented in the report are out of 50. The overall score for the Exports 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 fourth in a series on the six dimensions of the NBI<sup>SM</sup>. The other five bulletins, associated data tables and infographics are available from: <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/six-dimensions-nation-brands-index-2017>.

The overall NBI<sup>SM</sup> report (published in February 2018), associated data tables and accompanying methodological documents are available from: <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/anholt-gfk-roper-nation-brands-index-2017-report-northern-ireland>.

### Northern Ireland's NBI<sup>SM</sup> score and ranking for the Exports dimension

Northern Ireland received an overall score of 54.52 on the Exports dimension (up from 53.76 in 2016), which was the lowest score Northern Ireland received for any dimension. This means that Northern Ireland was ranked 26<sup>th</sup> out of the 50 participating nations in 2017 (down from 25<sup>th</sup> in 2016).

Figure 1: Northern Ireland's ranking and score on the Exports dimension of the NBI<sup>SM</sup>



Table 1: Attribute statements, Exports dimension

Attribute	Statement
Science and Technology	'This country makes a major contribution to innovation in science and technology.'
Buying Products*	'Imagine you are about to buy a product when you notice that it is made in Northern Ireland. Please indicate whether you think this would make you:*
Creative Place	'This country is a creative place with cutting-edge ideas and new ways of thinking.'

\*In relation to the Buying Products attribute, the anchoring words for the seven point scale were as follows: 7 meant that respondents would 'feel better about buying it' (product); 1 meant respondents would 'feel less good about buying it' (product); and a score of 4 meant that the respondent would 'feel the same about buying it' (product).

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## Rankings and scores on the People dimension from around the world

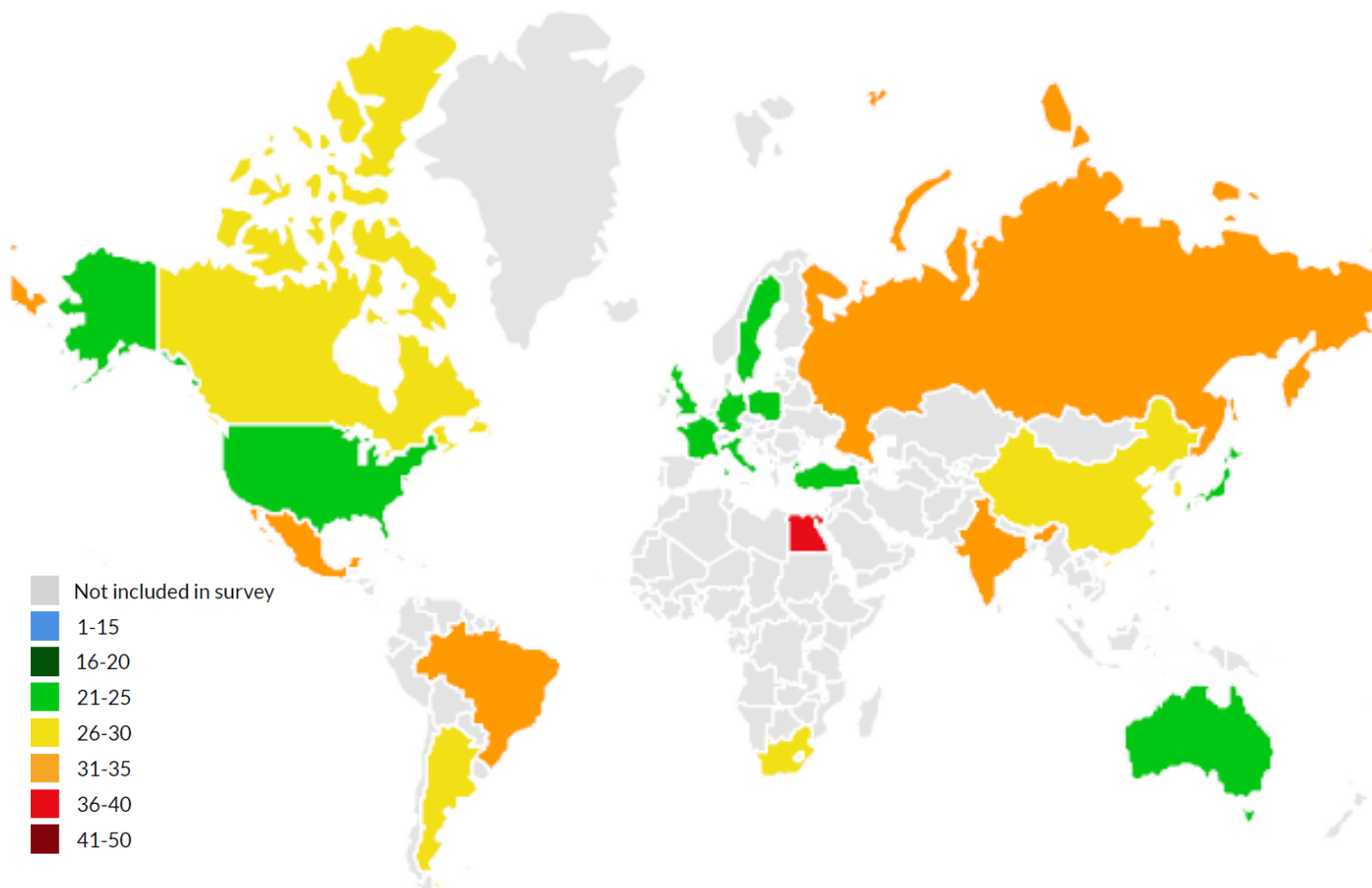
Northern Ireland received a range of rankings on the Exports dimension (Figure 2). The highest rankings were received from France (21<sup>st</sup>), Germany (22<sup>nd</sup>), Italy and the United Kingdom (23<sup>rd</sup> respectively). Northern Ireland's lowest rankings were received from Egypt (36<sup>th</sup>), India (33<sup>rd</sup>), Mexico, Russia (32<sup>nd</sup> respectively) and Brazil (31<sup>st</sup>). Northern Ireland was ranked well on the Exports dimension in 2016.

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 highest score was received from India (60.27) with relatively high scores also received from China (59.82) and Brazil (56.85) in 2017. Northern Ireland's lowest score was received from Japan (48.98), with relatively low scores also received from Sweden (51.58) and South Korea (51.59) in 2017.

Northern Ireland received a relatively high rank (25<sup>th</sup>) but low score (48.98) from Japan, which contrasts with the relatively low rank (33<sup>rd</sup>) and high score (60.27) received from India. This suggests that the distribution of scores varies across different panel countries.

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



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## 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 attribute scores for the Exports dimension ranged from 4.11 (Science and Technology) to 4.31 (Buy Products and Creative Place) in 2017 (see Figure 3), and a similar pattern was also observed in 2016.

When attribute scores were compared with the other participating nations, Northern Ireland was ranked relatively highly (between 23<sup>rd</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> out of the 50 nations examined).

## Attribute scores in relation to previous visits to Northern Ireland

In 2017, nine per cent of NBI<sup>SM</sup> respondents reported that they had previously visited Northern Ireland.

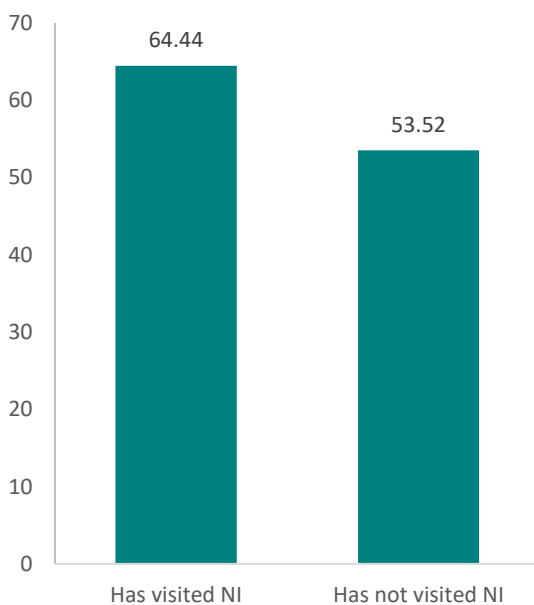
Respondents who had previously visited the region, scored Northern Ireland significantly higher on the Exports dimension, as well as on each of the composite attributes, than those who had not visited. (Figures 4 and 5). This pattern was also evident in 2016.

**Figure 3: Attribute scores and rankings for Northern Ireland's Exports**

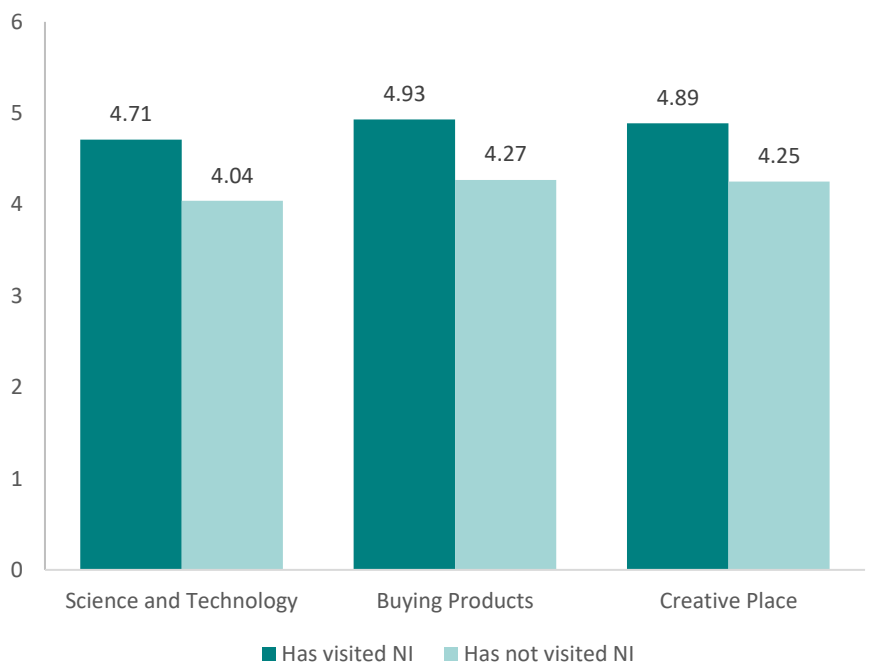


Note: Attribute scores range from 1 to 7 and all rankings are out of 50.

**Figure 4: Difference in Exports dimension scores between those who have visited Northern Ireland and those who have not**



**Figure 5: Difference in attribute scores between those who have visited Northern Ireland and those who have not – Exports dimension**



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

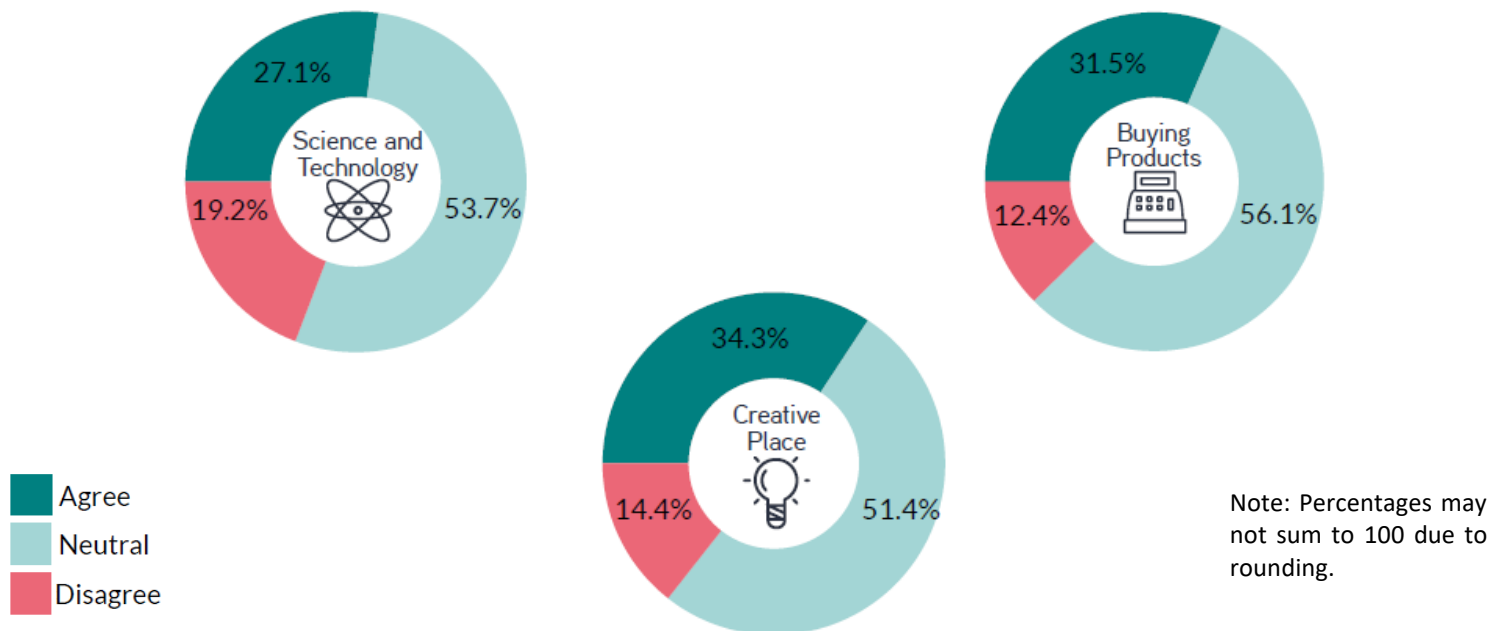
As well as examining scores and rankings, it is also useful to consider the proportion of respondents who either agreed or disagreed with each attribute statement\* (see Figure 6). The proportions reported below for the attributes within the Exports dimension are all similar to those observed in 2016.

Around a third of respondents agreed that Northern Ireland is a creative place (34 per cent) and a similar proportion (32 per cent) indicated that they would feel better about buying a product knowing that it was made in Northern Ireland. A smaller proportion (27 per cent) agreed that Northern Ireland makes a major contribution to innovation in Science and Technology.

Almost one in five respondents (19 per cent) disagreed that NI makes a major contribution to innovation while smaller proportions of respondents disagreed that Northern Ireland is a creative place (14 per cent) or said that they would not feel as good about buying a product knowing that it was made in Northern Ireland (12 per cent).

Over half of respondents provided a neutral response in relation to each of the attributes within the Exports dimension.

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



## Products and services associated with Northern Ireland

Respondents were asked to select, from a predetermined list, the products or services they most associated with Northern Ireland (respondents could choose as many responses as they liked). The most common response was 'none of these' (47 per cent of respondents). Figure 7 presents a word cloud of the adjectives that were chosen by remaining respondents.

The product or service most commonly associated with Northern Ireland was 'Agriculture' (21 per cent), followed by 'Food', 'Crafts' (12 per cent respectively), 'Advertising' and 'Banking' (nine per cent respectively).

A smaller proportion of respondents associated 'High Technology', 'Fashion' (seven per cent respectively), 'Film and television' and 'Automotive' (six per cent respectively), and 'Oil' (four per cent) with Northern Ireland.

These proportions were all similar to those observed in 2016.

**Figure 7: Products or services most associated with 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.