

Key points

- In 2018, Exports ranked 26th of 50 (unchanged since 2017) and received a score of 54.10 (-0.42 since 2017).
- Exports was Northern Ireland’s lowest scoring dimension but received a higher rank than two of the other six dimensions.
- The three Exports attribute statements had the highest proportion of neutral responses.
- Exports 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) for the first time in 2016 and then again in both 2017 and 2018.

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 **Exports** dimension. The score for this dimension is calculated using scores from three attributes: Science and Technology; Buy 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.

Table 1: Attribute statements, Exports dimension

Attribute	Statement
Science and Technology	‘This country makes a major contribution to innovation in science and technology.’
Buy 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 Buy 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).

All rankings presented in the report are out of 50 countries. 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 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 in 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 Exports dimension of the NBISM



Northern Ireland received an overall score of 54.10 on the Exports dimension (down slightly from 54.52 in 2017). This was the lowest score Northern Ireland received for any dimension. Northern Ireland was ranked 26th out of the 50 participating nations in 2018 (the same rank as in 2017).

Rankings and scores on the Exports dimension from around the world

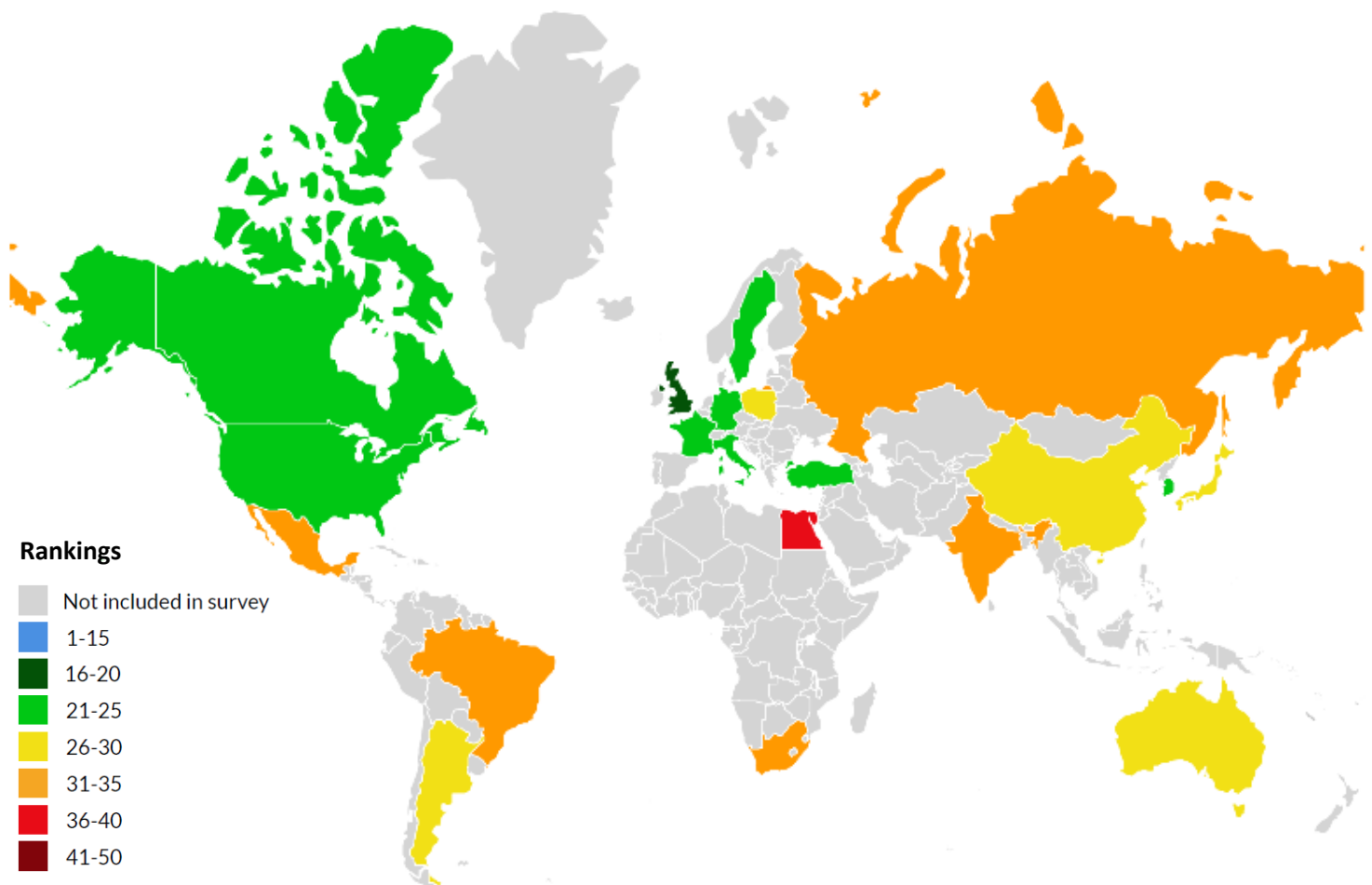
Northern Ireland received a range of rankings on the Exports dimension (Figure 2). While the overall Exports ranking remained the same between 2017 and 2018, 13 of 20 panel countries ranked Northern Ireland lower for this dimension in 2018 than they had in 2017. The highest rankings were received from the United Kingdom (20th), Turkey (23rd), France, Germany and Italy (all ranked 24th). Northern Ireland's lowest rankings were received from Egypt (39th), Mexico (35th) and India (33rd).

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 Exports dimension was lower in 2018 than in 2017. The highest score was received from India (58.56) with relatively high scores also received from Brazil (57.63) and China (57.18) in 2018. Northern Ireland's lowest score was received from Japan (49.82), with relatively low scores also received from Australia (50.60) and Sweden (50.75) in 2018.

Northern Ireland received a relatively high rank (23rd) but low score (52.64) from Turkey, which contrasts with the relatively low rank (33rd) but high score (58.56) received 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 Exports 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 attribute scores on the Exports dimension were positive (i.e. above the neutral value of 4) and ranged from 4.06 (Science & Technology) to 4.30 (Creative Place) in 2018 (see Figure 3). All three attribute scores decreased slightly from 2017.

When attribute scores were compared with the other participating nations, Northern Ireland was ranked between 23rd and 29th out of the 50 nations examined. The Science & Technology ranking dropped one place from 2017, with the other two attribute rankings (Buy Products and Creative Place) remaining the same.

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 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 and 2017.

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



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

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

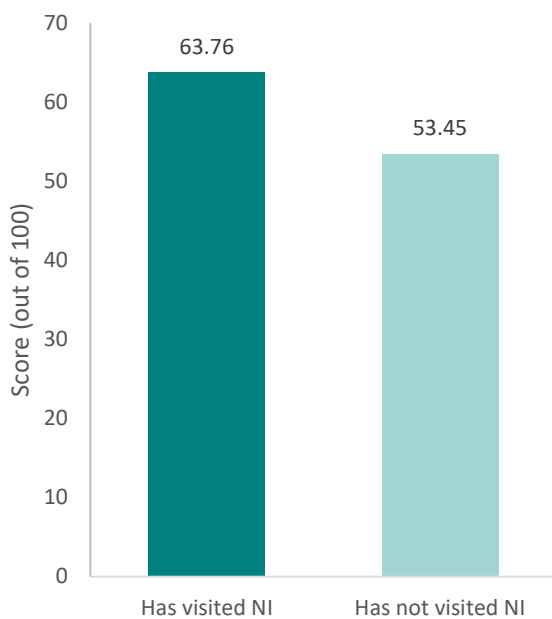
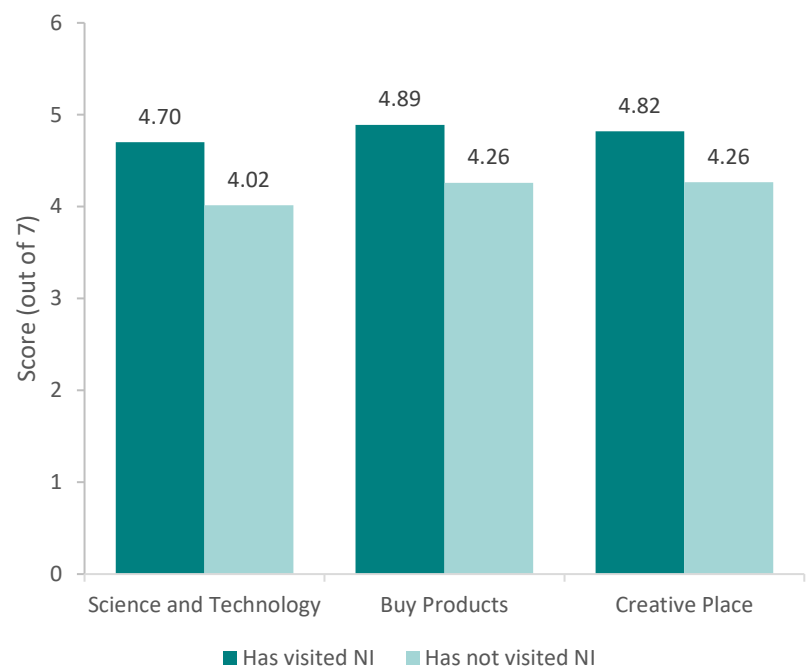


Figure 5: Attribute scores – those who have visited Northern Ireland and those who have not – Exports dimension



*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 Exports dimension: Proportion of respondents who agreed or disagreed with each attribute statement

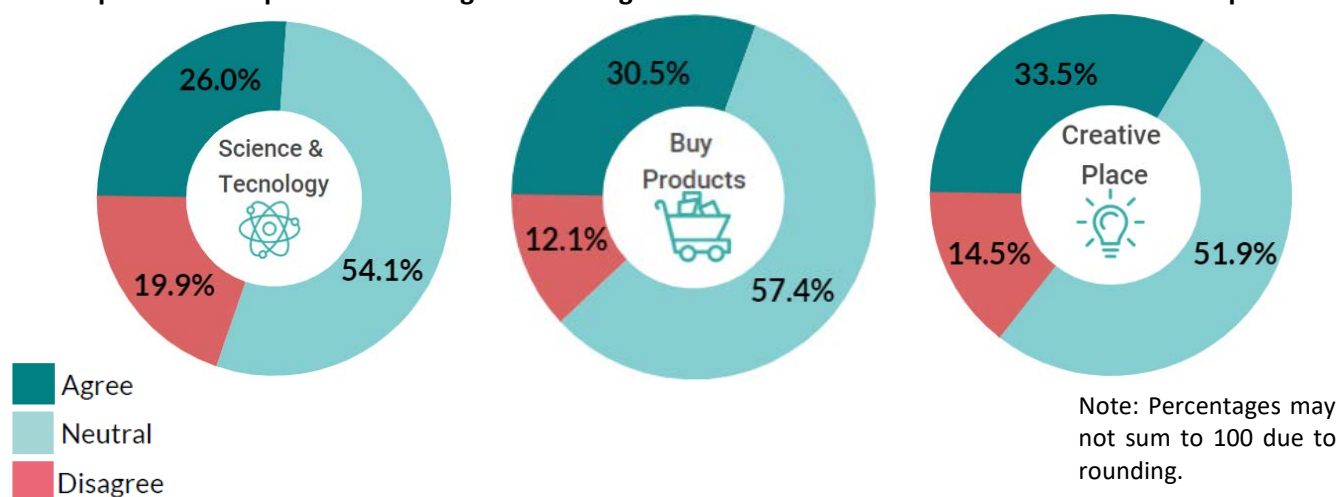
As well as examining scores and rankings, it is also useful to consider the proportion of respondents who either agreed or disagreed with each attribute statement* (see Figure 6). The proportions reported below for the attributes within the Exports dimension are all similar to those observed in 2016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

Around a third of respondents agreed that Northern Ireland is a creative place (34 per cent) and a similar proportion (31 per cent) indicated that they would feel better about buying a product knowing that it was made in Northern Ireland. A smaller proportion (26 per cent) agreed that Northern Ireland makes a major contribution to innovation in Science and Technology.

Approximately one in five respondents (20 per cent) disagreed that Northern Ireland makes a major contribution to innovation in Science and Technology while smaller proportions of respondents disagreed that Northern Ireland is a creative place (15 per cent) or said that they would feel less 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. These neutral proportions were higher for the three Exports attributes than for all for other attributes. This could suggest that respondents did not feel informed enough to agree or disagree confidently regarding Northern Ireland's contribution to innovation in science and technology, the appeal of its products or its creativity.

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 'none of these' response rate was particularly high for this question; it was selected less frequently for similar questions on all five other dimensions.

The product or service most commonly associated with Northern Ireland was 'Agriculture' (21 per cent), followed by 'Food' (13 per cent), 'Crafts' (12 per cent), 'Advertising' and 'Banking' (both eight per cent).

Smaller proportions of respondents associated 'High Technology', 'Fashion' (both seven per cent), 'Film and television' and 'Automotive' (both six per cent), and 'Oil' (four per cent) with Northern Ireland. These proportions were all similar to those observed in 2016 and 2017.

Figure 7: Products or services 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.