

#### Key points

- In 2018, Culture ranked 35<sup>th</sup> of 50 (down 5 places since 2017) and received a score of 55.51 (-0.51 since 2017).
- Culture was Northern Ireland's second lowest scoring dimension and received the lowest rank of the six dimensions.
- Northern Ireland's lowest scoring attribute was in the Culture dimension (Sports = 3.93).
- The statement relating to the Sports attribute also had the lowest agreement rates of any of the 23 attributes for Northern Ireland (24.6 per cent).
- Culture 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 Index<sup>SM</sup> (NBI<sup>SM</sup>) for the first time in 2016 and then again in both 2017 and 2018.

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.

This bulletin examines how Northern Ireland is viewed in relation to the **Culture** dimension.

The score for this dimension is calculated using scores from three attributes: Sports; Cultural Heritage; and Contemporary Culture. 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 countries. The overall score for the Culture 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 last 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-2018>.

The overall NBI<sup>SM</sup> 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>.

**Table 1: Attribute statements, Culture dimension**

Attribute	Statement
<b>Sports</b>	'This country excels at sport.'
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	'This country has a rich cultural heritage.'
<b>Contemporary Culture</b>	'This country is an interesting and exciting place for contemporary culture such as music, films, art and literature.'

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



Northern Ireland received an overall score of 55.51 on the Culture dimension (down from 56.02 in 2017). This means that Northern Ireland was ranked 35<sup>th</sup> out of the 50 participating nations in 2018 (down five places since 2017). This was the lowest ranking dimension of the six in 2016, 2017 and 2018.

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

Northern Ireland received lower rankings from panel nations on the Culture dimension compared with the other five dimensions of the NBI<sup>SM</sup> in 2018. This was also the case in 2016 and 2017.

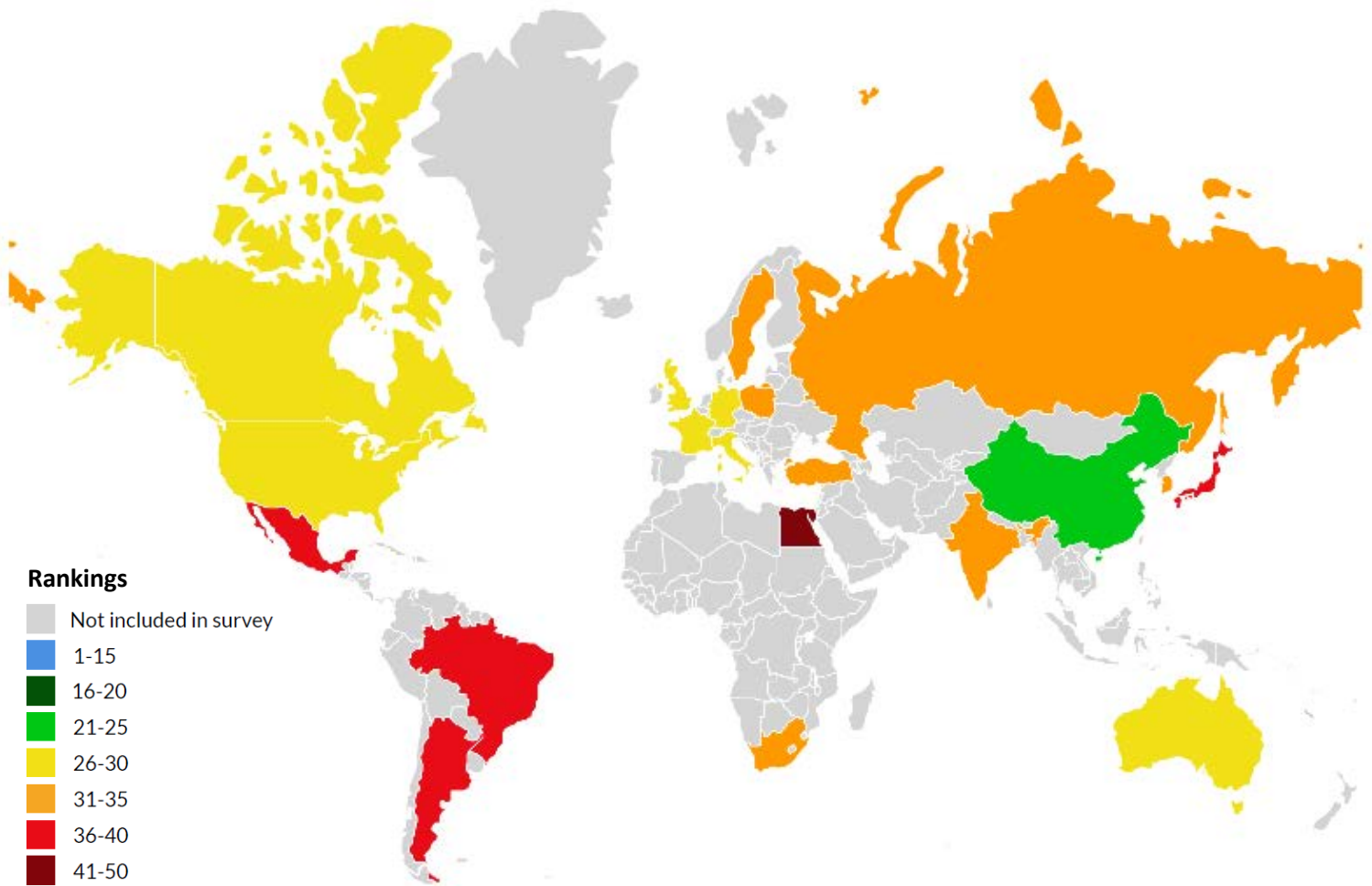
In 2018, Northern Ireland's highest rankings were received from China (25<sup>th</sup> of 50 participating nations), the United Kingdom (26<sup>th</sup>) and Canada (27<sup>th</sup>). Northern Ireland's lowest rankings were received from Egypt (45<sup>th</sup>), Mexico (40<sup>th</sup>) and Brazil (39<sup>th</sup>).

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 Culture dimension was lower in 2018 than in 2017. Northern Ireland's highest scores were received from India (62.79), China (59.81) and South Africa (59.51). Northern Ireland's lowest scores were received from Egypt (51.06), Japan (51.35) and Turkey (51.62).

Northern Ireland received a relatively high rank (28<sup>th</sup>) but low score (52.78) from Italy, which contrasts with the relatively low rank (40<sup>th</sup>) but high score (58.45) received from Mexico. 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 Culture 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 received a score of 3.93 for the Sports attribute, the lowest score of the 23 attributes and the only one which received a negative score (i.e. below the neutral value of four). The Sports attribute score was also lower in 2018 than in both 2016 (3.99) and 2017 (3.96).

The scores for the other Culture attributes, Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Culture, were positive (4.65 and 4.32 respectively). Both were lower than they had been in 2017 (Cultural Heritage: 4.68 and Contemporary Culture: 4.36) but higher than in 2016 (Cultural Heritage: 4.62 and Contemporary Culture: 4.29).

When attribute scores were compared with the other participating nations, Northern Ireland was ranked relatively poorly on the Culture dimension (Figure 3). All three attributes received a lower or equal ranking in 2018 relative to 2017 and the Sports ranking (similar to the Sports score) was the lowest of all 23 attributes (38<sup>th</sup>).

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

SCORE	ATTRIBUTE	RANK
3.93	Sports	38
4.65	Cultural Heritage	31
4.32	Contemporary Culture	28

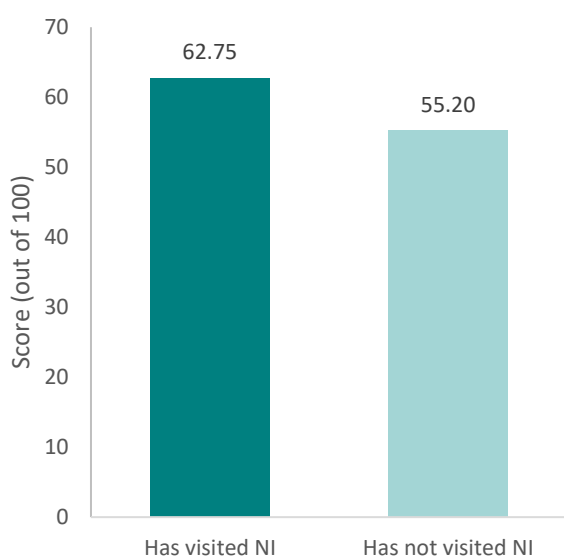
Note: Attribute scores range from 1 to 7 and all rankings are out of 50.

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

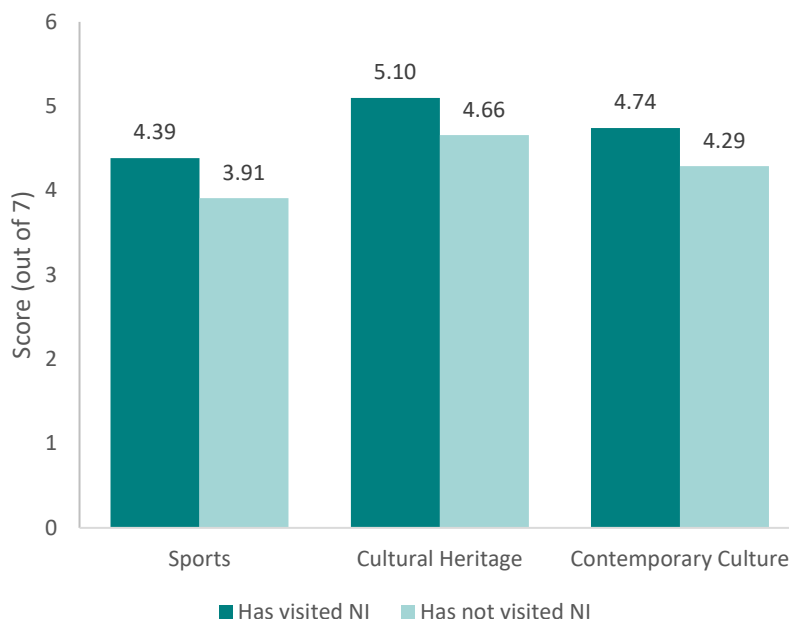
In 2018, seven per cent of NBI<sup>SM</sup> respondents reported that they had previously visited Northern Ireland.

Respondents who had previously visited the region scored Northern Ireland statistically significantly\* higher on the Culture 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 4: Culture 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 – Culture 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.

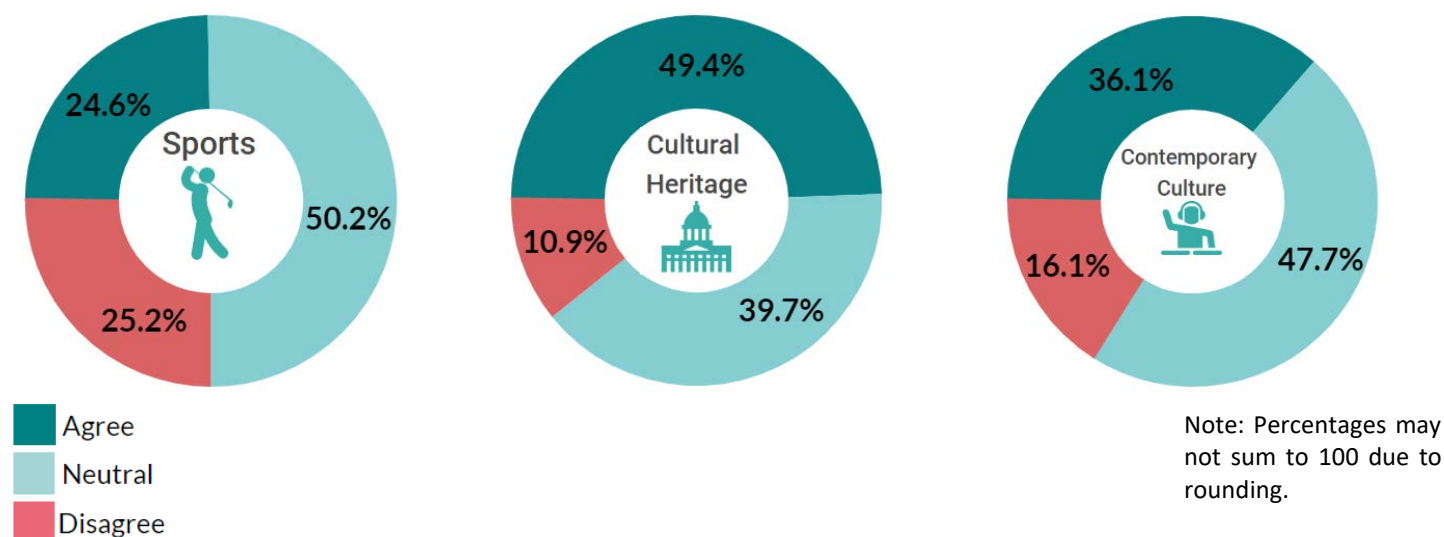
## Attributes of the Culture dimension: Proportion of respondents who agreed or disagreed with each attribute statement

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 Culture dimension are all similar to those observed in 2016 and 2017.

Only a quarter of respondents (25 per cent) agreed that Northern Ireland excels at sport, the lowest agreement rate of any of the 23 attributes. A similar proportion (25 per cent) disagreed with this attribute statement while the majority of respondents (50 per cent) gave a neutral response.

Almost half of respondents agreed that Northern Ireland has a rich cultural heritage (49 per cent), while 36 per cent agreed that Northern Ireland is an interesting and exciting place for contemporary culture. A large proportion of respondents gave a neutral response in relation to both of these attributes (40 per cent and 48 per cent respectively) while disagreement rates were smaller for both attributes (11 per cent and 16 per cent respectively).

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



## Cultural activities or products associated with Northern Ireland

Respondents were asked to select, from a predetermined list, the cultural activities or products they would most associate with Northern Ireland (respondents could choose as many responses as they liked). The most common response was 'none of these' (42 per cent of respondents). Figure 7 presents a word cloud of the options that were chosen by remaining respondents. The 'none of these' response rate was relatively high for this question; it was selected less frequently for similar questions on most of the other dimensions.

The activities and products most commonly associated with Northern Ireland were 'Museums' (20 per cent), 'Music' (17 per cent), 'Sculpture' and 'Sports' (both 13 per cent) and 'Film' (12 per cent).

Smaller proportions of respondents associated 'Street Carnival' and 'Modern Design' (both 11 per cent), 'Pop Videos' (ten percent), 'Circus' (seven per cent) and 'Opera' (six per cent) with Northern Ireland.

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

**Figure 7: Cultural activities or products 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.