

# International Perceptions of Northern Ireland: Culture

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

Bulletin 6, 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 **Culture** dimension. The score for this dimension was calculated using scores from three questions (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. 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-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>.

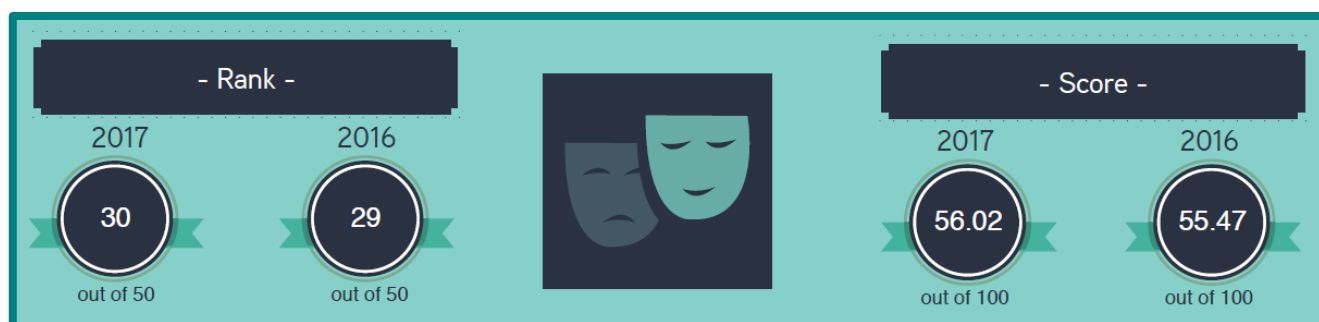
**Table 1: Attribute statements, Culture dimension**

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.'

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

Northern Ireland received an overall score of 56.02 on the Culture dimension (up from 55.47 in 2016). This means that Northern Ireland was ranked 30<sup>th</sup> out of the 50 participating nations in 2017 (down one place since 2016). This was the lowest ranking dimension of the six both in 2016 and 2017.

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



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

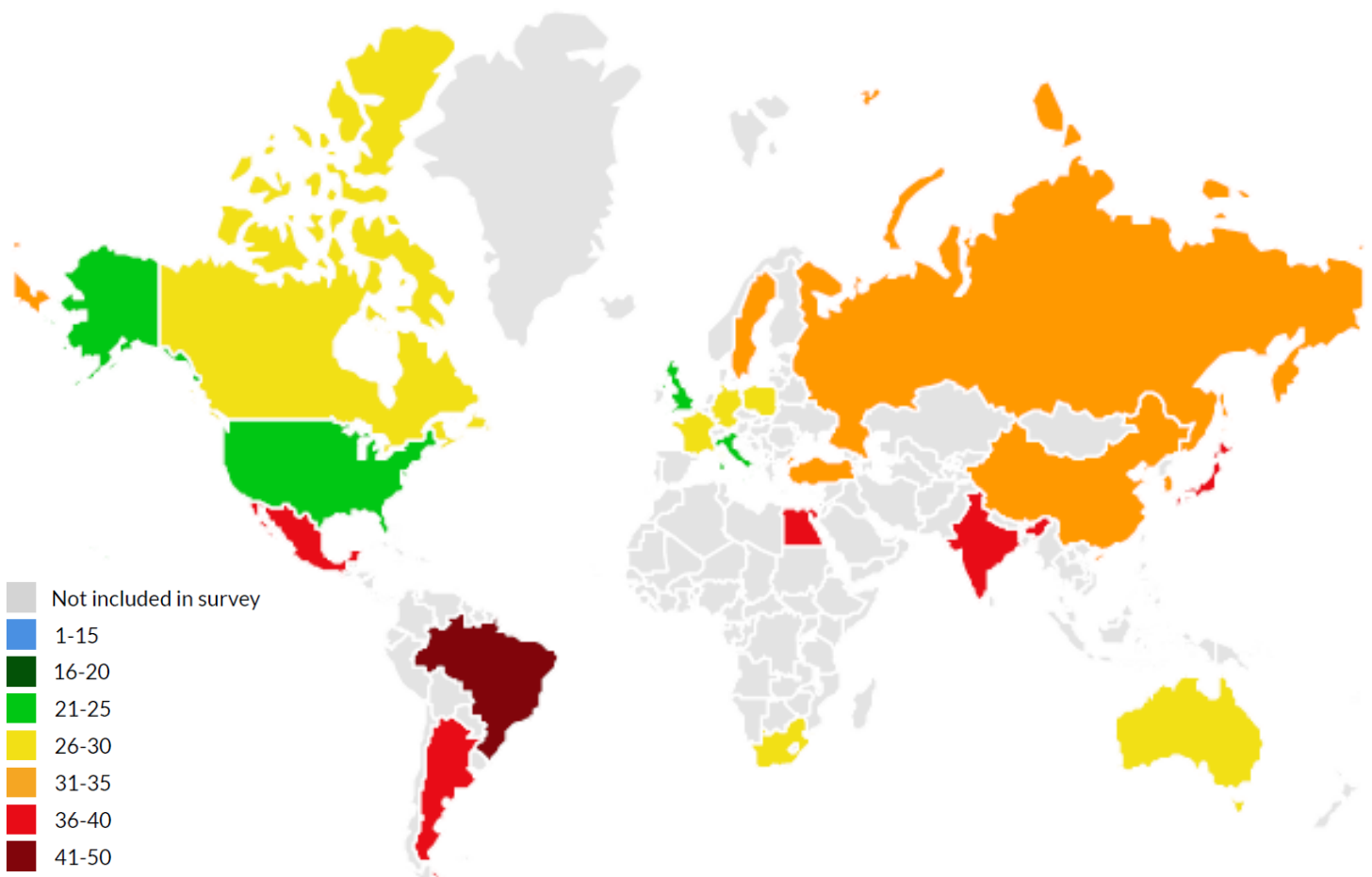
Northern Ireland received lower rankings from panel nations on the Culture dimension compared with the other five dimensions of the NBI<sup>SM</sup>, both in 2016 and 2017. In 2017, Northern Ireland's highest rankings were received from Italy (23<sup>rd</sup> out of 50), the United Kingdom and the United States (24<sup>th</sup> respectively). Northern Ireland's lowest rankings were received from Brazil (42<sup>nd</sup>), Egypt (37<sup>th</sup>), Argentina, India, Japan and Mexico (36<sup>th</sup> respectively).

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 (63.63) with relatively high scores also received from the United States (61.70) and China (60.82). Northern Ireland's lowest scores were received from Japan (50.57), Sweden (51.49) and Italy (52.83).

Northern Ireland's relatively high rank (23<sup>rd</sup>) and low score (52.83) from Italy, contrasts with the relatively low rank (36<sup>th</sup>) and high score (63.63) from India. This suggests that the distribution of scores varies across different panel countries.

**Figure 2: Northern Ireland's rankings on the Culture 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 received a score of 3.96 for the Sports attribute, the only attribute of the 23 which received a score below the neutral value of four. This was also the only attribute for which Northern Ireland received a lower score in 2017 compared with 2016 (3.99).

The scores for the Cultural Heritage (4.68) and Contemporary Culture (4.36) attributes were noted to be positive (i.e. above the neutral value of 4) and both increased since 2016 (4.62 and 4.29 respectively).

When attribute scores were compared with the other participating nations, Northern Ireland was ranked relatively poorly (Figure 3) with the Sports attribute receiving the lowest ranking of all 23 attributes (36<sup>th</sup>, down from 31<sup>st</sup> in 2016).

## 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.

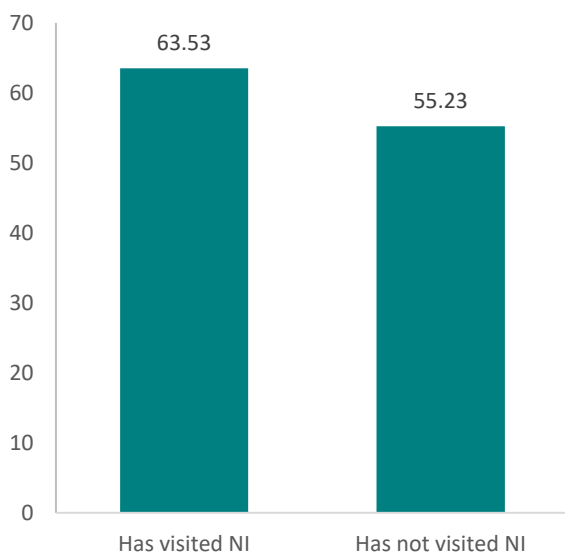
Respondents who had previously visited the region, scored Northern Ireland significantly higher on the Culture dimension, as well as on each of the composite attributes, than those who had not visited. (Figures 4 and 5). This pattern was also evident in 2016.

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

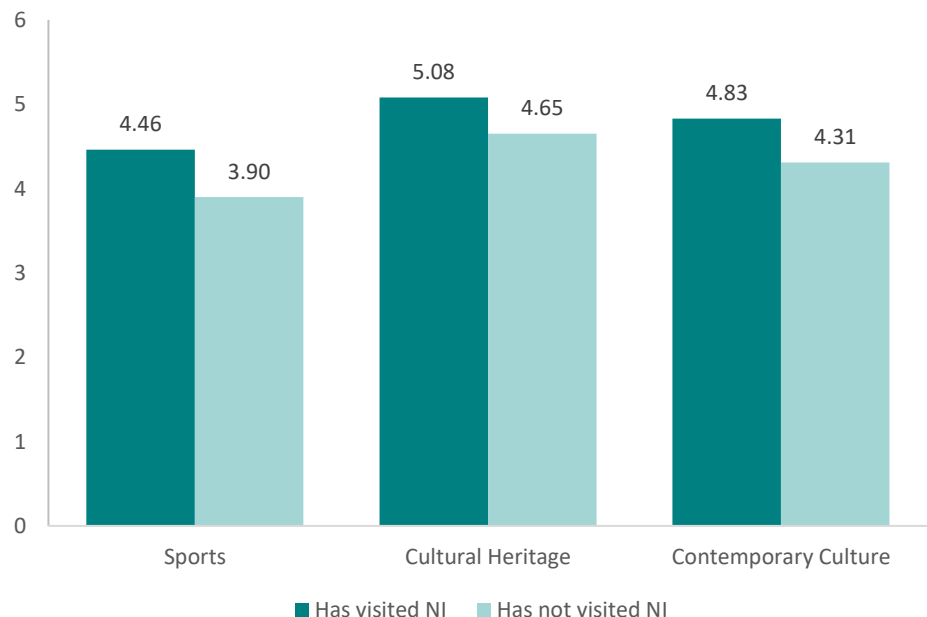


Note: Attribute scores range from 1 to 7 and all rankings are out of 50.

**Figure 4: Difference in Culture 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 – Culture dimension**



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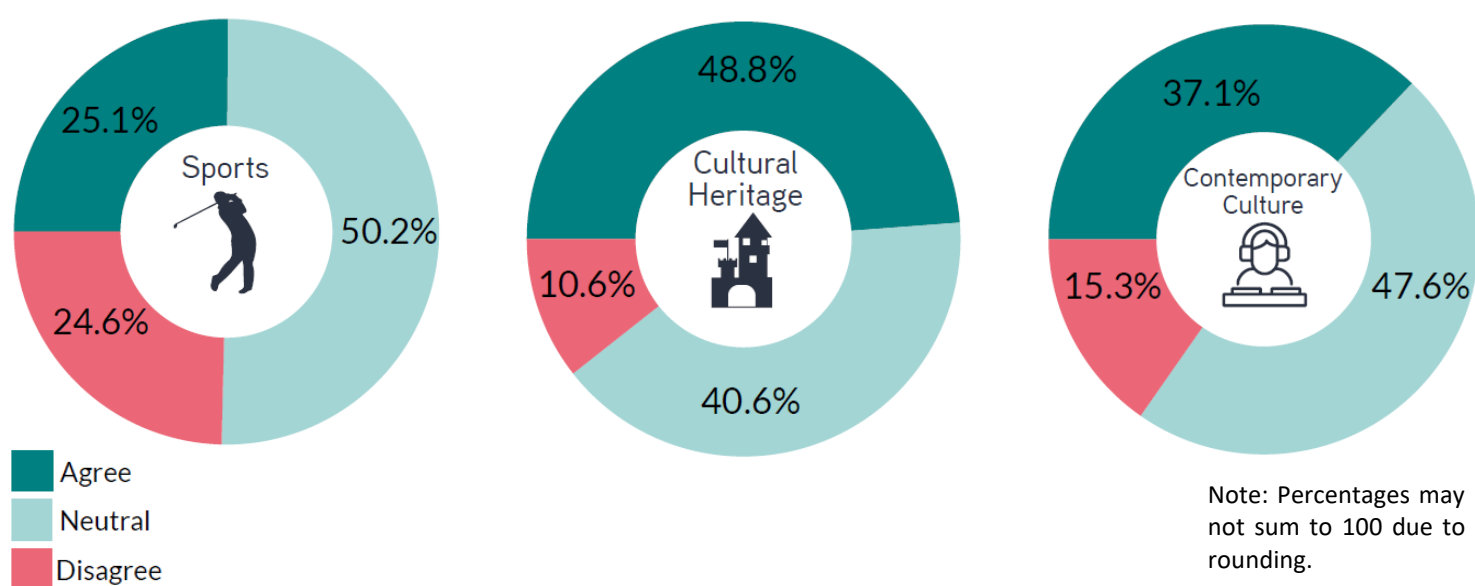
## Attributes of the Culture dimension: Proportion of respondents who agreed or disagreed with each attribute statement

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). These proportions were all similar to those observed in 2016.

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.

A large proportion of respondents agreed that Northern Ireland has a rich cultural heritage (49 per cent), while 37 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 (41 per cent and 48 per cent respectively) while disagreement rates were smaller for both attributes (11 per cent and 15 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 activities and products most commonly associated with Northern Ireland were 'Museums' (21 per cent), 'Music' (17 per cent) and 'Sports' (14 per cent).

A smaller proportion of respondents associated 'Modern Design' (ten per cent), 'Pop Videos' (nine per cent), 'Circus' and 'Opera' (seven per cent respectively) with Northern Ireland.

These proportions were similar to those observed in 2016.

**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.